

CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING

**The Opinions of Canadians
on Abortion**

Report



1.0 Research Findings

- Eight out of A Thousand Canadian Women Have Had an Abortion

Have you ever had an abortion?

n=775 (women only)	YES	NO	Dnk/Refusal
	8.4%	87.7%	3.9%

- Close to Half of Canadians are in Favour of Abortion

Are you personally FOR or AGAINST abortion?

n=1504	FOR	AGAINST	Dnk/Refusal
	46.6%	37.6%	15.8%

- The Decision to Have an Abortion Should Rest Solely with Women

Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the idea that only women should have the right to decide to have an abortion?

n=1504	Agree	Disagree	Dnk/Refusal
	54.5%	38.5%	7.0%

- The Fetus is a Human Being Right at Conception, Say Canadians

In your opinion, is the fetus a human being at conception?

n=1504	YES	NO	Dnk/Refusal
	51.8%	38.5%	9.8%

2.0 Results

2.1 Eight out of A Thousand Canadian Women Have Had an Abortion

8.4% of Canadian women have had an abortion while 87.7% of them have not and 3.9% refused to say.

12.0% of women between the ages of 35 and 44, 11.4% of those currently employed, 12.8% of office workers and 12.1% of University-educated Canadian women are those that have already had an abortion.

Q1 Have you ever had an abortion? n=775 (women only)	YES	NO	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic provinces	5.1%	88.1%	6.8%
Quebec	10.5%	87.6%	1.8%
Ontario	8.0%	86.5%	5.5%
Prairies	6.8%	87.7%	5.5%
Alberta	4.2%	93.1%	2.8%
British Columbia	11.6%	87.2%	1.2%
Canada	8.4%	87.7%	3.9%

However, 97.4% of women aged 65 and over and 91.8% of those who have only completed high school have never had an abortion.

Q1 Have you ever had an abortion? n=775 (women only)	YES	NO	Don't know / Refusal
18-24 years of age	10.9%	87.2%	1.9%
25-34 years of age	9.6%	87.5%	2.9%
35-44 years of age	12.0%	79.5%	8.4%
45-55 years of age	8.6%	87.3%	4.1%
55-64 years of age	6.8%	91.6%	1.6%
65 years of age and over	2.0%	97.4%	0.6%

In addition, 4.5% of Canadian men have already asked a woman to have an abortion.

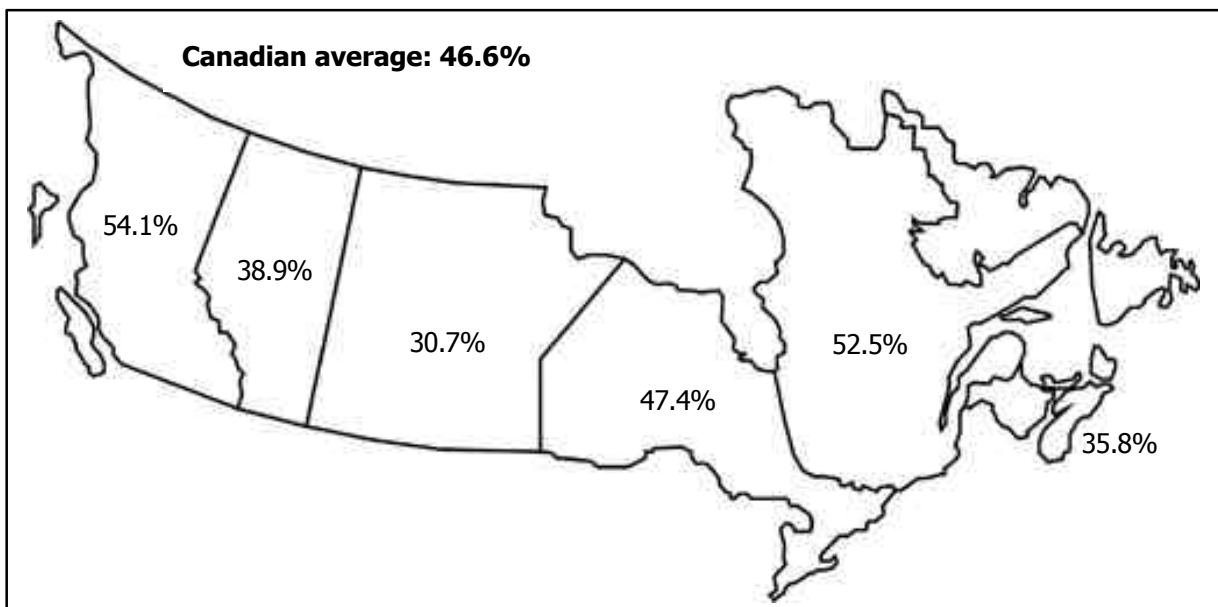
Q2 Have you ever asked a women to have an abortion? n=729 (men only)	YES	NO	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic provinces	2.4%	97.6%	0.0%
Quebec	7.1%	91.6%	1.3%
Ontario	4.5%	93.8%	1.8%
Prairies	1.9%	98.1%	0.0%
Alberta	2.1%	93.8%	4.2%
British Columbia	4.6%	93.9%	1.5%
Canada	4.5%	93.9%	1.5%

2.2 Close to Half of Canadians are in Favour of Abortion

46.6% of Canadians are for abortion while 37.6% are against and 15.8% did not say. We note that residents of British Columbia (54.1%) and those of Quebec (52.5%) stand out from other Canadians in that an absolute majority of the population of those two provinces is in favour of abortion.

Q3 Are you personally FOR or AGAINST abortion? n=1504	FOR	AGAINST	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic provinces	35.8%	49.1%	15.0%
Quebec	52.5%	35.6%	11.9%
Ontario	47.4%	36.0%	16.5%
Prairies	30.7%	46.6%	22.8%
Alberta	38.9%	39.6%	21.5%
British Columbia	54.1%	32.5%	13.4%
Canada	46.6%	37.6%	15.8%

Percentage of Canadians who are for abortion



The proportion of those who are in favour of abortion climbs to 73.7% if the pregnancy is the result of a rape, if the woman is too young or if the fetus is handicapped.

2.3 The Decision to Have an Abortion Should Rest Solely with Women

According to 54.5% of Canadians, women alone should have the right to decide whether or not to have an abortion. 38.5% disagree with this idea and 7% of respondents did not state their opinion in this matter.

68.4% of those who are in favour of abortion agree that this decision should rest solely with women. This opinion is also held by 62.1% of Francophones and 60.0% of those 45 years of age and over. Conversely, only 48.0% of those 45 years of age and under hold this view. Can this be interpreted as sign that younger people are increasingly responsible?

Q4 Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the idea that only women should have the right to decide to have an abortion? n=1504	AGREE	DISAGREE	DNK/Refusal
Atlantic provinces	55.3%	39.6%	5.2%
Quebec	60.6%	36.8%	2.6%
Ontario	51.4%	41.6%	7.0%
Prairies	43.6%	42.8%	13.6%
Alberta	49.2%	40.1%	10.7%
British Columbia	61.5%	28.7%	9.8%
Canada	54.5%	38.5%	7.0%

2.4 The Fetus is a Human Being Right at Conception, Say Canadians

51.8% of the population believes that the fetus is a human being at conception while 38.5% thinks the contrary. 9.8% did not know.

79.6% of those who are against abortion, 56.8% of women, 65.3% of Canadians 18 to 24 years of age, 60.3% of Francophones, 67.5% of residents from Atlantic Canada, 62.8% of homemakers and 57.4% of those with a high school education share this view.

However, 61.8% of those in favour of abortion, 42.6% of men, 48.4% of Canadians 45 to 54 years of age, 42.1% of Anglophones, 48.4% of British Columbians, 49.7% of those in the higher income brackets, 46.0% of professionals and 46.8% of people with a University degree believe that the fetus is not yet a human being at conception.

Q5 In your opinion, is the fetus a human being at conception? n=1504	YES	NO	DNK/Refusal
Atlantic provinces	67.5%	23.4%	9.1%
Quebec	57.7%	36.4%	6.0%
Ontario	47.9%	41.1%	11.0%
Prairies	56.5%	29.2%	14.3%
Alberta	48.1%	39.2%	12.7%
British Columbia	42.3%	48.4%	9.3%
Canada	51.8%	38.5%	9.8%

3.0 Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1506 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal call centre between September 18 and September 23, 2001. Up to ten recalls were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to geographic location, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1506 respondents is of $\pm 2.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.