

PRISONER VOTE

Most Britons Believe Prisoners Should Not Vote in Elections

Three-in-five respondents disagree with a European ruling, which claimed that disallowing inmates from voting is discriminatory.

[LONDON – 22 November 2010] – As the Government is expected to comply with a European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruling related to the rights of prisoners, a majority of Britons believe that people incarcerated in the United Kingdom should not be allowed to cast ballots in elections, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 2,001 British adults, 62 per cent of respondents oppose allowing prisoners in the UK to vote in elections, while 24 per cent support this notion.

Respondents aged 35-to-54 (66%) and those over the age of 55 (67%) are more likely to voice opposition to the idea of prisoners voting than those aged 18-to-34 (49%).

The decision to allow prisoners in the UK to vote follows a 2004 ruling from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), which claimed that disallowing inmates from voting is discriminatory and a breach of their civil liberties. Three-in-five Britons (61%) disagree with the court's ruling, including 70 per cent of those over the age of 55.

KEY FINDINGS

- **62% oppose allowing prisoners in the UK to vote in elections**
- **61% disagree with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), which claimed that disallowing inmates from voting is discriminatory and a breach of their civil liberties**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From November 3 to November 4, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,001 randomly selected British adults who are Springboard UK panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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Prisoner Vote

As you may know, the Government is expected to announce that prisoners in the UK will be entitled to vote for the first time. Overall, would you support or oppose allowing prisoners in the UK to vote in elections?

	Great Britain	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Support	24%	34%	21%	19%
Oppose	62%	49%	66%	67%
Not sure	8%	11%	9%	6%

Prisoner Vote

The decision to allow prisoners in the UK to vote follows a 2004 ruling from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), which claimed that disallowing inmates from voting is discriminatory and a breach of their civil liberties. Overall, do you agree or disagree with the Court's ruling?

	Great Britain	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Agree	24%	36%	20%	19%
Disagree	61%	45%	65%	70%
Not sure	7%	11%	6%	5%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specialising in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record in Canada and the United States can be found at:

<http://www.angus-reid.com/services/record-of-accuracy/>

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.visioncritical.com/what-we-do/practices/angus-reid-public-opinion/>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/>**

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