

ABORTION

# Canadians Call for Legislation to Deal with Gender-Based Abortion

*Three-in-five respondents—including two thirds of women—believe there should be laws to outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus.*

[VANCOUVER – Jan. 26, 2012] – Canadians are questioning the country’s lack of legal restrictions on pregnancy termination, and a majority is calling for a regulation that would deal with the use of abortion as a means of gender selection, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 1,001 Canadian adults, 51 per cent of respondents believe there should be laws which outline when a woman can have an abortion in Canada. Conversely, 37 per cent of Canadians think there should be no laws on this matter and want women to have the unrestricted right to have an abortion at any time up to the moment of birth.

Among the most populated provinces, Alberta (59%) has the highest proportion of respondents who want to establish abortion laws, while two-in-five Quebecers (40%) would not make any changes. More than half of Conservative and Liberal voters in the 2011 federal election (57% and 52% respectively) call for regulations, while Green Party and New Democratic Party (NDP) voters (51% and 47% respectively) disagree with this notion.

Earlier this month, Rajendra Kale, editor-in-chief of the Canadian Medical Journal (CMAJ),

## KEY FINDINGS

- **51% believe there should be laws which outline when a woman can have an abortion in Canada; 37% think there should be no laws on this matter and want a woman to have the unrestricted right to have an abortion at any time up to the moment of birth**
- **60% believe there should be laws which outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus; 30% think a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion in any circumstance**

*Full topline results are at the end of this release.*

*From January 19 to January 20, 2012, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,001 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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suggested in an editorial that a fetus's gender should not be revealed to expecting parents until after 30 weeks of pregnancy, in order to prevent female feticide.

Across the country, three-in-five Canadians (60%)—and two-thirds of women (66%)—believe there should be laws which outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus. Three-in-ten respondents (30%) think a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion in any circumstance.

It is important to note that, while there is a noticeable dissimilarity between supporters of specific political parties on the overall question of abortion laws, a majority of people who voted for each one of the five major parties in 2011 believe that there should be a regulation to deal with gender-based abortion.

Review our [August 2010](#) survey on abortion.

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*Angus Reid Public Opinion is a public affairs practice headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.*

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**For more information, please contact  
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**Abortion**

Thinking about abortion, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Canada	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
There should be laws which outline when a woman can have an abortion in Canada	51%	54%	59%	64%	52%	47%	32%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion at any time up to the moment of birth	37%	36%	31%	25%	35%	40%	56%
Not sure	12%	10%	10%	12%	12%	13%	11%

**Abortion**

Thinking about abortion, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Canada	Vote in the 2011 Federal Election				
		Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ	Grn.
There should be laws which outline when a woman can have an abortion in Canada	51%	57%	52%	43%	44%	41%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion at any time up to the moment of birth	37%	32%	39%	47%	38%	51%
Not sure	12%	11%	9%	10%	17%	9%

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**Abortion**

Thinking about abortion, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Canada	Gender	
		Male	Female
There should be laws which outline when a woman can have an abortion in Canada	51%	49%	53%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion at any time up to the moment of birth	37%	38%	36%
Not sure	12%	12%	11%

**Abortion**

Thinking about abortion, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Canada	Age		
		18-34	35-54	55+
There should be laws which outline when a woman can have an abortion in Canada	51%	51%	52%	50%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion at any time up to the moment of birth	37%	40%	36%	36%
Not sure	12%	9%	12%	14%

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**Abortion**

One issue that has raised debate recently concerns the use of abortion as a means of gender selection. In some cultures and groups, female fetuses are aborted because of a preference for males. Thinking about this, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Canada	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
There should be laws which outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus	60%	64%	75%	58%	63%	53%	48%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion in any circumstance	29%	28%	19%	25%	25%	37%	43%
Not sure	11%	8%	6%	17%	11%	10%	10%

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	Canada	Vote in the 2011 Federal Election				
		Con.	Lib.	NDP	BQ	Grn.
There should be laws which outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus	60%	66%	61%	56%	57%	56%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion in any circumstance	29%	24%	30%	35%	31%	41%
Not sure	11%	10%	10%	9%	12%	3%

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**Abortion**

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	Canada	Gender	
		Male	Female
There should be laws which outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus	60%	54%	66%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion in any circumstance	29%	33%	26%
Not sure	11%	13%	8%

**Abortion**

One issue that has raised debate recently concerns the use of abortion as a means of gender selection. In some cultures and groups, female fetuses are aborted because of a preference for males. Thinking about this, which one of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Canada	Age		
		18-34	35-54	55+
There should be laws which outline whether a woman can have an abortion based solely on the gender of the fetus	60%	58%	61%	62%
There should be no laws on this matter—a woman should have the unrestricted right to have an abortion in any circumstance	29%	33%	29%	27%
Not sure	11%	9%	11%	11%

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