



Opinion on Six Policy Items

Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – Winter 2013

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Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 89,074 residents (2012 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (71,260). A total of 43,011 Lethbridge residents are male (48.9%) while 44,871 are female (51.1%). South Lethbridge is home to 30,795 residents (34.5%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 32,847 residents (36.9%). There are 25,432 north Lethbridge residents (28.6%). Coaldale has a total population of 7,493 residents (2011 census).
-  **Sample Data** Collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods in the winter of 2013. Students interviewed 835 randomly selected, adult Lethbridge and Coaldale residents by telephone on February 9–10, 2013 under the supervision of School of Liberal Arts faculty members Faron Ellis and Marda Schindeler. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from InfoCanada directories. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge and Alberta Public Opinion Studies can be obtained by visiting the CSRL web pages at: www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl
-  **Representativeness** Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge. The sample has been statistically weighted to even better reflect that of the population (gender, age and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of ± 3.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data. For example, the Lethbridge subsample margin of error is ± 3.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, while the Coaldale subsample has a margin of error of ± 9.8 percentage points 19 times out of 20.
-  **IB Commons Call Centre** Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre and applications originally developed by the Dr. James Manis of the Open Source Learning Lab.
-  **Sponsorship** These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at Lethbridge College. This particular question was derived from student and faculty interest in the topics.

Policy Issues



Same-sex Marriage

A clear majority of Lethbridge (71.5%) and Coaldale residents (63.1%) continue to support same-sex marriages having equal legal status with traditional marriages. Support for same-sex marriages has increased significantly from only 33.5% in 2002 when we first asked Lethbridge residents about this issue. Women (75.2%), the nonreligious (85.2%), younger residents and university graduates (78.3%) are among the most supportive. Religion, age and education remain the most important predictors of opinion on this issue. Opinion is also divided along partisan lines with Wildrose voters least supportive (56.3%). More substantial majorities of PC (66.7%), Liberal (82.4%) and NDP supporters (85.7%) are supportive.



Abortion Choice

Substantial majorities of Lethbridge (81.2%) and Coaldale residents (62.8%) support a woman's right to choose to have an abortion. Men (81.1%) are just as supportive as are women (79.3%). Furthermore, substantial majorities in most demographic categories demonstrate strong support. Religion is the most important determinant of opinion on this issue with a slight majority of the most religious supportive (50.4%). Support climbs to 94.3% among the nonreligious. Only minor partisan differences are evident with PC (76.1%) and Wildrose (80.4%) partisans only slightly less supportive than Liberal (85.6%) and NDP (87.5%) partisans, although strong majorities of all provincial partisans are supportive.



Capital Punishment

Majorities of both Lethbridge (66.2%) and Coaldale residents (76.1%) support Canada reintroducing capital punishment for people convicted of first degree murder. Education and provincial partisanship are the most important determinants of opinion on this issue. Majorities of university grads (53.7%) and NDP voters (67.0%) are opposed while substantial majorities of PC (75.6%) and Wildrose (80.4%) voters are supportive.



Legal Medical Marijuana

Substantial majorities of Lethbridge (79.5%) and Coaldale residents (65.0%) support marijuana being legal for medical purposes. Although strong majorities in all demographic categories are supportive, support is tempered amongst the most religious (61.6%) and seniors (69.3%).



Decriminalize Recreational Marijuana

More than two in every five Lethbridge (42.0%) and Coaldale residents (42.7%) support decriminalizing marijuana for recreational purposes. Support is strongest among men (47.7%), upper income residents (51.4%), the nonreligious (56.5%), baby boomers (50.8%), and NDP voters (65.5%).



Legalize Doctor-Assisted Suicide

Substantial majorities of Lethbridge (74.4%) and Coaldale residents (75.7%) support making doctor-assisted suicide legal in Canada. Religion is the most important predictor of opinion with 88.4% of the nonreligious respondents supportive while a majority of the highly religious is opposed (56.1%).

Opinion on Six Policy Items (%)

Same-sex Marriage	Feb. '02	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12	Feb. '13
Agree	33.5	40.5	45.0	39.4	50.8	51.7	52.2	54.1	58.7	62.3	64.2	67.7	71.0
Disagree	66.5	59.5	55.0	60.6	49.2	48.3	47.8	45.9	41.3	37.7	35.8	32.3	29.0

Abortion Choice	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12	Feb. '13
Agree	69.9	75.3	73.3	70.3	75.4	73.0	77.9	75.0	76.2	79.2	74.1	76.6	80.2
Disagree	30.1	24.7	26.7	29.7	24.6	27.0	22.1	25.0	23.8	20.8	25.9	23.4	19.8

Capital Punishment	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12	Feb. '13
Agree	60.8	60.6	60.0	56.4	60.6	62.9	60.9	57.6	58.1	62.1	54.8	57.8	66.8
Disagree	39.2	39.4	40.0	43.6	39.4	37.1	39.1	42.4	41.9	37.9	45.2	42.2	33.2

Marijuana-medical	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12	Feb. '13
Agree	73.1	72.0	73.3	70.4	71.7	73.7	75.8	74.8	74.7	80.1	73.0	74.4	78.6
Disagree	26.9	28.0	26.7	29.6	28.3	26.3	24.2	25.2	25.3	19.9	27.0	25.6	21.4

Marijuana-recreation	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12	Feb. '13
Agree	36.1	35.2	37.6	31.5	34.2	37.9	33.4	35.4	35.8	39.0	38.9	38.6	42.0
Disagree	63.9	64.8	62.4	68.5	65.8	62.1	66.6	64.6	64.2	61.0	61.1	61.4	58.0

Doctor-ass't suicide	Feb. '03	Feb. '04	Oct. '04	Feb. '05	Oct. '05	Oct. '06	Oct. '07	Feb. '08	Feb. '09	Feb. '10	Feb. '11	Feb. '12	Feb. '13
Agree	—	—	60.7	59.2	67.9	63.4	63.9	61.5	61.7	67.0	61.9	66.4	74.4
Disagree	—	—	39.3	40.8	32.1	36.6	36.1	38.5	38.3	33.0	38.1	33.6	25.6

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Same-sex marriage by demographic group (February 2013) (%)

Gender*/Region*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	66.7	75.2	71.5	63.1
Disagree	33.3	24.8	28.5	36.9

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	70.2	67.1	76.0
Disagree	29.8	32.9	24.0

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	63.4	72.0	76.6
Disagree	36.6	28.0	23.4

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	39.4	83.8	85.2
Disagree	60.6	16.2	14.8

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	67.0	70.9	66.4	78.3
Disagree	33.0	29.1	33.6	21.7

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	75.9	78.2	72.2	58.3
Disagree	24.1	21.8	27.8	41.7

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	NDP	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	66.7	56.3	85.7	82.4	78.4
Disagree	33.3	43.7	14.3	17.6	21.6

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Abortion choice by demographic group (February 2013) (%)

Gender/Region*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	81.1	79.3	81.2	62.8
Disagree	18.9	20.7	18.8	37.2

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	79.2	78.0	85.5
Disagree	20.8	22.0	14.5

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	76.5	82.0	80.3
Disagree	23.5	18.0	19.7

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	50.4	87.4	94.3
Disagree	49.6	12.6	5.7

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	82.6	78.5	78.4	82.6
Disagree	17.4	21.5	21.6	17.4

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	77.7	84.3	80.2	78.6
Disagree	22.3	15.7	19.8	21.4

Provincial Vote	PC	Wildrose	NDP	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	76.1	80.4	87.5	85.6	75.5
Disagree	23.9	19.6	12.5	14.4	24.5

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Capital punishment by demographic group (February 2013) (%)

Gender/Region*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	67.6	65.9	66.2	76.1
Disagree	32.4	34.1	33.8	23.9

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	62.8	77.1	60.8
Disagree	37.2	22.9	39.2

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$80,000	Over \$80,000
Agree	68.5	64.1	63.5
Disagree	31.5	35.9	36.5

Religious Attendance	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	60.1	72.8	66.6
Disagree	39.9	27.2	33.4

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	86.9	71.6	70.7	46.3
Disagree	13.1	28.4	29.3	53.7

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	68.2	62.6	65.7	70.5
Disagree	31.8	37.4	34.3	29.5

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	NDP	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	75.6	80.4	33.0	58.0	64.3
Disagree	24.4	19.6	67.0	42.0	35.7

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Medical marijuana by demographic group (February 2013) (%)

Gender/Region*	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	79.1	78.0	79.5	65.0
Disagree	20.9	22.0	20.5	35.0

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	74.3	82.7	81.6
Disagree	25.7	17.3	18.4

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	74.6	80.7	86.3
Disagree	25.4	19.3	13.7

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	61.6	88.0	85.6
Disagree	38.4	12.0	14.4

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	73.8	82.8	74.9	83.1
Disagree	26.2	17.2	25.1	16.9

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	82.6	80.0	82.3	69.3
Disagree	17.4	20.0	17.7	30.7

Provincial Vote*	PC	Wildrose	NDP	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	74.5	73.3	90.6	84.9	78.6
Disagree	25.5	26.7	9.4	15.1	21.4

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Recreational marijuana by demographic group (February 2013) (%)

Gender*/Region	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	47.7	36.4	42.0	42.7
Disagree	52.3	63.6	58.0	57.3

Area*	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	36.3	46.9	43.7
Disagree	63.7	53.1	56.3

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	38.5	41.7	51.4
Disagree	61.5	58.3	48.6

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	22.3	36.6	56.5
Disagree	77.7	63.4	43.5

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	36.7	46.2	40.0	46.1
Disagree	63.3	53.8	60.0	53.9

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	44.6	43.3	50.8	28.7
Disagree	55.4	56.7	49.2	71.3

Provincial Vote	PC	Wildrose	NDP	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	33.6	39.3	65.5	48.9	35.7
Disagree	66.4	60.7	34.5	51.1	64.3

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Legalize doctor-assisted suicide by demographic group (February 2013) (%)

Gender/Region	Male	Female	Lethbridge	Coaldale
Agree	74.7	74.1	74.4	75.7
Disagree	25.3	25.9	25.6	24.3

Area*	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	70.0	72.7	79.9
Disagree	30.0	27.3	20.1

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	70.5	76.0	80.1
Disagree	29.5	24.0	19.9

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	43.9	82.6	88.4
Disagree	56.1	17.4	11.6

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	73.1	72.7	75.1	77.0
Disagree	26.9	27.3	24.9	23.0

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	68.1	79.1	79.3	69.8
Disagree	31.9	20.9	20.7	30.2

Provincial Vote	PC	Wildrose	NDP	Liberal	Undecided
Agree	67.4	75.9	80.4	78.5	70.1
Disagree	32.6	24.1	19.6	21.5	29.9

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	49.2	South	34.3	Under \$40,000	20.7	H-School/less	23.4	18-29	21.3
Female	50.8	North	27.3	\$40-\$80,000	42.2	Some P-Sec.	22.9	30-44	20.2
		West	38.4	Over \$80,000	37.0	Col-Tech-Grad	18.0	45-64	31.6
						University Grad	35.7	65 or older	26.9

Church Attendance (%)	
2-3/month +	29.7
Several/year	18.2
Rarely/never	52.1

Provincial Vote (%)	
PC	31.2
Wildrose	26.4
NDP	15.2
Liberal	11.7
Undecided	15.5

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

Questions

The federal government should continue to recognize same sex marriages giving them equal legal standing with traditional marriages.

Abortion is a matter of choice that should be decided between a woman and her doctor.

Canada should re-introduce capital punishment for people convicted of first-degree murder.

Marijuana should be legal for medical purposes.

Marijuana should be decriminalized for recreational purposes.

People with terminal illnesses should be allowed to legally access doctor assisted suicides.

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know (unprompted)
- Refused (unprompted)