

Opinion on Six Policy Items

Lethbridge Public Opinion Study – Winter 2018

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Methodology

Population The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 98,198 residents (2017 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (78,500). A total of 48,173 Lethbridge residents are male (49.1%) while 50,002 are female (50.9%). South Lethbridge is home to 31,660 residents (32.2%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 39,085 residents (39.8%). There are 27,453 north Lethbridge residents (28.0%).

Sample Data Collected by Lethbridge College students enrolled in 9 sections of 6 courses in a variety of Lethbridge College programs in the winter of 2018. Students interviewed 1,288 randomly selected adult Lethbridge residents by telephone from February 10-15, 2018 under the supervision of CSRL Research Chair, Dr. Faron Ellis. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes and results from previous Lethbridge and Alberta Public Opinion Studies can be accessed by visiting the CSRL web pages at: <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/departments/citizen-society-research-lab>.

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 (sex, age, and area of the city of Lethbridge).

Confidence The sample yields a margin of error of ± 2.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data.

IB Commons Call Centre The CSRL operates as a division of the Centre for Applied Arts and Sciences. Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre with support from the Lethbridge College Facility Management, Instructional Technology, and Audio Visual teams.

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 set of questions was derived from student, faculty and community interest in the topic.

Policy Issues - Summary

Same-sex Marriage

A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (77.3%) support same-sex marriages having equal legal status with traditional marriages. Support for same-sex marriage has increased significantly from only 33.5% in 2002 when we first asked Lethbridge residents about this issue. Women (81.8%), the non-religious (88.0%), upper income residents (84.1%), middle-aged residents, provincial NDP (88.9%) and Liberal (84.1%) voters are most supportive. Highly religious residents (56.6%), seniors (69.1%), and provincial UCP voters (68.2%) voters are less supportive, although majorities of each of those groups is supportive.

Abortion Choice

A clear majority of Lethbridge residents (81.7%) support a woman's right to choose to have an abortion. Men (81.2%) are just as supportive as are women (82.4%). Furthermore, substantial majorities in most demographic categories demonstrate strong support. Middle-aged Lethbridge residents (85.1%) are more supportive than are seniors (81.9%), those 30 to 44 years of age (80.7%), and the youth (80.0%). Religion, however, is the most important deterrent of opinion. But even here, a clear majority of the very religious (61.1%) are supportive of a woman's right to choose. Support climbs to 86.4% among the somewhat religious, peaking at 93.4% among the non-religious. Some partisan differences are measured with provincial UCP voters (74.4%) somewhat less supportive than are NDP (92.1%) and Liberal (89.2%) voters, but strong majorities of all provincial partisans are supportive.

Capital Punishment

A majority of Lethbridge residents (64.0%) support Canada reintroducing capital punishment for people convicted of first-degree murder. Religiosity, education, and provincial partisanship are the most important determinants of opinion on this issue. For example, the most religious Lethbridge residents are least supportive of reinstating capital punishment (59.5%), although a majority are still in favor. Majorities of university graduates (51.9%) and provincial NDP voters (60.8%) are opposed, while substantial majorities of all other education groups, and provincial UCP supporters (73.3%) are more supportive.

Legal Medical Marijuana

A substantial majority of Lethbridge residents (89.5%) support marijuana remaining legal for medical purposes. Strong majorities in all demographic categories are supportive.

Legal Recreational Marijuana

Lethbridge residents are evenly split in their support for (50.0%) and opposition to (50.0%) legal recreational marijuana. Support has fluctuated over past two years after steadily increasing from only 31.5% in 2005. Support is strongest among men (56.4%), the non-religious (61.3%), the youth (68.2%), and provincial NDP partisans (69.0%). Opposition is strongest among seniors (69.8%), provincial UCP supporters (61.6%) and the very religious (66.3%).

Legalize Doctor-Assisted Suicide

A substantial majority of Lethbridge residents support legal doctor-assisted suicide (79.5%). Religion is the most important predictor of opinion. A slim majority of the very religious are supportive (51.8%). Support climbs to 93.5% among the non-religious. Substantial majorities of all other demographic groups are supportive, including all groups of provincial party partisans.

Opinion on Six Policy Items 2002–2018 (%)

Same-sex Marriage	2002	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agree	33.5	39.4	51.7	52.2	54.1	58.7	62.3	64.2	67.7	71.0	74.3	76.0	74.2	78.9	77.3
Disagree	66.5	60.6	48.3	47.8	45.9	41.3	37.7	35.8	32.3	29.0	25.7	24.0	25.8	21.1	22.7

Abortion Choice	2003	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agree	69.9	70.3	73.0	77.9	75.0	76.2	79.2	74.1	76.6	80.2	77.7	77.0	79.7	81.8	81.7
Disagree	30.1	29.7	27.0	22.1	25.0	23.8	20.8	25.9	23.4	19.8	22.3	23.0	20.3	18.2	18.3

Capital Punishment	2003	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agree	60.8	56.4	62.9	60.9	57.6	58.1	62.1	54.8	57.8	66.8	60.8	60.3	59.4	62.7	64.0
Disagree	39.2	43.6	37.1	39.1	42.4	41.9	37.9	45.2	42.2	33.2	39.2	39.7	40.6	37.3	36.0

Marijuana-medical	2003	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agree	73.1	70.4	73.7	75.8	74.8	74.7	80.1	73.0	74.4	78.6	82.4	82.5	81.2	84.4	89.5
Disagree	26.9	29.6	26.3	24.2	25.2	25.3	19.9	27.0	25.6	21.4	17.6	17.5	18.8	15.6	10.5

Marijuana-recreation	2003	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agree	36.1	31.5	37.9	33.4	35.4	35.8	39.0	38.9	38.6	42.0	47.3	51.1	43.9	46.6	50.0
Disagree	63.9	68.5	62.1	66.6	64.6	64.2	61.0	61.1	61.4	58.0	52.7	48.9	56.1	53.4	50.0

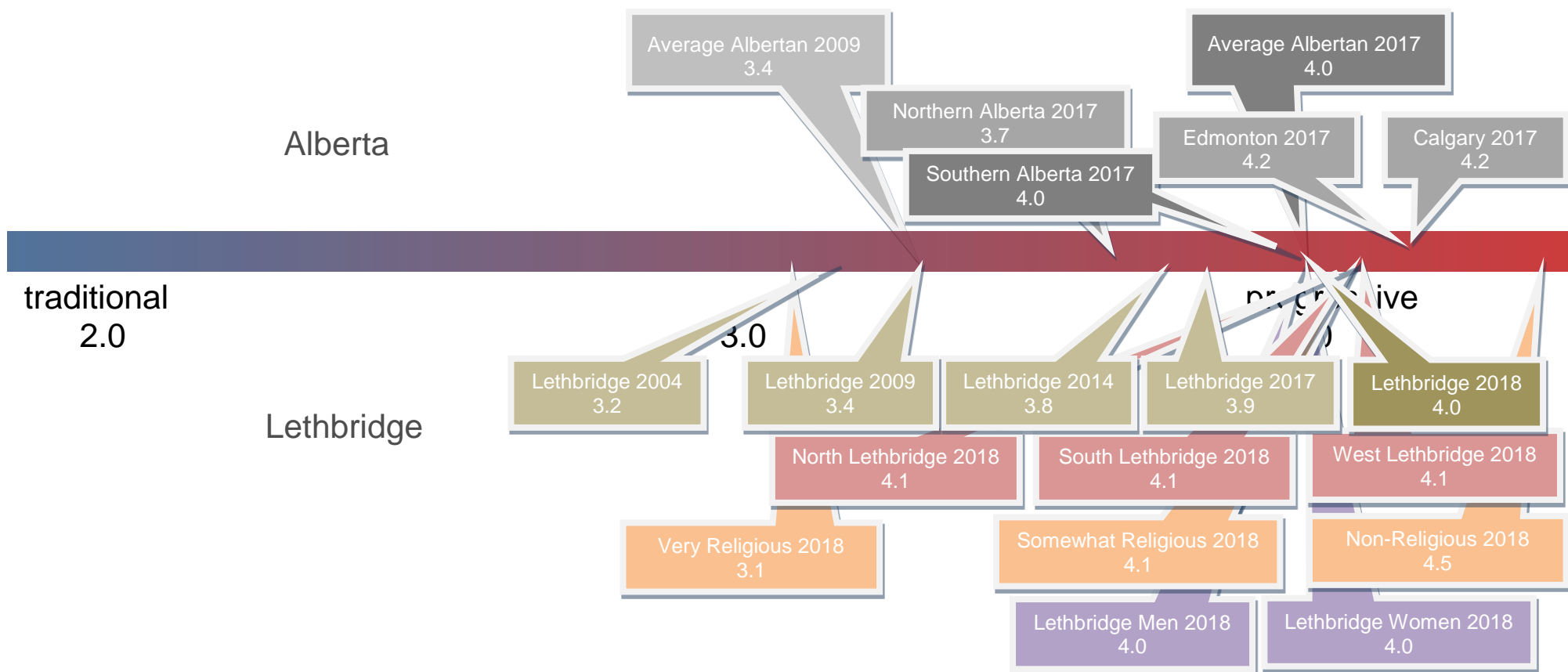
Doctor-ass't suicide	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Agree	60.7	59.2	63.4	63.9	61.5	61.7	67.0	61.9	66.4	74.4	77.5	80.5	76.9	79.5	79.5
Disagree	39.3	40.8	36.6	36.1	38.5	38.3	33.0	38.1	33.6	25.6	22.5	19.5	23.1	20.5	20.5

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

Policy Issues Index (means)

An index of opinion structure was created by summing the responses to the six questions thereby allowing for easier regional and demographic comparisons. The index scores range from a possible “0.0” for the most traditional respondents, to “6.0” for the most progressive. A score of 3.0 represented the midpoint of the range. The graph is organized with Alberta-wide data featured above the bar and Lethbridge data below the bar.

As the data demonstrate, over time, Lethbridge public opinion is becoming more progressive on this basket of issues, as is public opinion in the province as a whole. Over the course of a decade, Lethbridge public opinion has moved considerably towards the progressive end of the spectrum (3.2 in 2004, to 3.4 in 2009, to 4.0 in 2018).



Same-sex marriage by demographic group (February 2018) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	72.8	81.8	77.3
Disagree	27.2	18.2	22.7

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	77.4	78.7	80.1
Disagree	22.6	21.3	19.9

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	72.3	78.2	84.1
Disagree	27.7	21.8	15.9

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	56.6	80.6	88.0
Disagree	43.4	19.4	12.0

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	70.8	79.2	77.7	79.8
Disagree	29.2	20.8	22.3	20.2

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	76.3	80.9	83.8	69.1
Disagree	23.7	19.1	16.2	30.9

Provincial Vote*	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Agree	88.9	68.2	84.1	79.3	84.7
Disagree	11.1	31.8	15.9	20.7	15.3

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Abortion choice by demographic group (February 2018) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	81.2	82.4	81.7
Disagree	18.8	17.6	18.3

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	83.3	85.4	80.7
Disagree	16.7	14.6	19.3

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	82.1	80.4	85.9
Disagree	17.9	19.6	14.1

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	61.1	86.4	93.4
Disagree	38.9	13.6	6.6

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	82.2	80.5	79.2	85.9
Disagree	17.8	19.5	20.8	14.1

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	80.0	80.7	85.1	81.9
Disagree	20.0	19.3	14.9	18.1

Provincial Vote	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Agree	92.1	74.4	89.2	82.5	85.0
Disagree	7.9	25.6	10.8	17.5	15.0

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Capital punishment by demographic group (February 2018) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	63.7	64.5	64.0
Disagree	36.3	35.5	36.0

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	62.6	65.9	60.7
Disagree	37.4	34.1	39.3

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	67.2	62.4	60.7
Disagree	32.8	37.6	39.3

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	59.5	67.9	66.8
Disagree	40.5	32.1	33.2

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	76.9	61.7	72.1	48.1
Disagree	23.1	38.3	27.9	51.9

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	66.7	59.4	61.1	67.8
Disagree	33.3	40.6	38.9	32.2

Provincial Vote*	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Agree	39.2	73.3	60.6	67.9	65.1
Disagree	60.8	26.7	39.4	32.1	34.9

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Medical marijuana by demographic group (February 2018) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	88.1	90.7	89.5
Disagree	11.9	9.3	10.5

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	90.9	88.8	89.9
Disagree	9.1	11.2	10.1

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	91.2	90.8	90.9
Disagree	8.8	9.2	9.1

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	83.7	91.1	94.5
Disagree	16.3	8.9	5.5

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	87.2	92.2	87.3	91.5
Disagree	12.8	7.8	12.7	8.5

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	91.3	89.3	90.5	88.8
Disagree	8.7	10.7	9.5	11.2

Provincial Vote	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Agree	93.5	87.0	92.4	77.6	92.1
Disagree	6.5	13.0	7.6	22.4	7.9

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Recreational marijuana by demographic group (February 2018) (%)

Gender*	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	56.4	43.6	50.0
Disagree	43.6	56.4	50.0

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	49.1	51.6	50.9
Disagree	50.9	48.4	49.1

Household Income	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	53.2	49.3	51.6
Disagree	46.8	50.7	48.4

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	33.7	49.8	61.3
Disagree	66.3	50.2	38.7

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	49.8	56.9	44.0	51.6
Disagree	50.2	43.1	56.0	48.4

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	68.2	51.3	53.1	30.2
Disagree	31.8	48.7	46.9	69.8

Provincial Vote*	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Agree	69.0	38.4	68.8	55.2	47.6
Disagree	31.0	61.6	31.3	44.8	52.4

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Doctor-assisted suicide by demographic group (February 2018) (%)

Gender	Male	Female	Lethbridge
Agree	78.2	81.1	79.5
Disagree	21.8	18.9	20.5

Area	South Lethbridge	North Lethbridge	West Lethbridge
Agree	78.9	81.8	79.5
Disagree	21.1	18.2	20.5

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40,001 to \$100,000	Over \$100,000
Agree	78.0	75.8	87.4
Disagree	22.0	24.2	12.6

Religious Attendance*	2-3 times/month-more	Several times/year	Rarely-never
Agree	51.8	84.9	93.5
Disagree	48.2	15.1	6.5

Education	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Agree	78.5	76.6	81.2	80.7
Disagree	21.5	23.4	18.8	19.3

Age	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Agree	78.1	75.1	85.7	77.9
Disagree	21.9	24.9	14.3	22.1

Provincial Vote	NDP	UCP	Liberal	AB Party	Undecided
Agree	89.6	73.5	85.3	70.2	81.5
Disagree	10.4	26.5	14.7	29.8	18.5

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; * sig < 0.05

Demographics

Area of City (%)		Gender (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
South	32.0	Male	49.0	Under \$40,000	29.4	H-School/less	18.3	18-29	23.8
North	27.7	Female	50.3	\$40-100,000	45.8	Some P-Sec.	24.9	30-44	19.7
West	40.3	Other	0.7	Over \$100,000	24.8	Col-Tech-Grad	28.2	45-64	33.7
						University Grad	28.7	65 or older	22.7

Church Attendance (%)	
2-3/month/more	31.6
Several per year	20.5
Rarely or never	47.9

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 by a woman in consultation with 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 legal for recreational purposes.

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

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know (unprompted)
- Refused (unprompted)