

# SES National Poll

## Perception of Canadians on Marijuana Decriminalization and Possession

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SES Research (Ottawa)



**SES Toronto**  
401-250 Consumers Road,  
Toronto, CANADA M2J 4V6  
Phone (416) 493-1965  
Fax (416) 493-6403

**SES Ottawa**  
1001-100 Sparks Street,  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5B7  
Phone (613) 234-4666  
Fax (613) 235-1444

**SES Halifax**  
407-1959 Upper Water Street,  
Halifax, CANADA B3J 3N2  
Phone (902) 420-9523  
Fax (902) 422-2388

**SES St. John's**  
140 Water Street, Suite 140  
St. John's, NL A1C 6H6  
Phone (709) 726-6339  
Fax (709) 737-3572

**SES General Mail**  
Postal Station A,  
Box 5804  
Toronto, CANADA M5W 1P2  
Toll-free 1 888 737-5505

## 1.0 METHODOLOGY

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The purpose of public opinion research is to identify perceptions within reliable and acceptable statistical margins of accuracy. To that end, SES was retained to conduct a public opinion survey of Canadians with regards to the possession of marijuana.

Between January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005, SES conducted a total of 1,000 telephone interviews across Canada with eligible voters as part of the SES NationState Survey. Aggregate results of the survey are accurate  $\pm 3.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

Ten percent of the fieldwork was validated as part of the firm's quality and data integrity procedures. Validation and testing of key demographic cohorts indicate that the sample profiles were representative of the populations within acceptable margins of statistical accuracy.

This report includes an executive summary and an analysis of the poll findings. The research was registered with the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association, Canada's governing body for market and public opinion research.

Readers should also note that some total to some questions are greater than 100% and this is due to rounding.

The logo for Nanos, featuring the word "Nanos" in a stylized, blue, cursive font.

Nikita Nanos, CMRP  
SES Canada Research Inc.  
nnanos@sesresearch.com  
(613) 234-4666 ext. 237

## 2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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SES Research's survey of 1,000 Canadians reveals that one of every two Canadians (49%) believe that decriminalization will make marijuana possession legal. Forty one percent (41%) said marijuana possession would remain illegal. Three quarters of Canadians (78%) believed that the legal age to possess marijuana if it is legalized should be 18 years and older.

### The Decriminalization of Marijuana

- ⊕ **49% Equate Decriminalization with Legalization.** When asked if they believed that decriminalization makes possession legal or leaves possession illegal, almost a majority of Canadians (49%) said that it made possession legal while four in ten (41%) said it would keep marijuana possession illegal. This indicates that one half of Canadians do not know the true legal consequences of marijuana decriminalization.
- ⊕ **NDP and Bloc Supporters.** New Democratic Party and Bloc Quebecois supporters were more likely to believe that decriminalization means that possession of marijuana will be legalized.

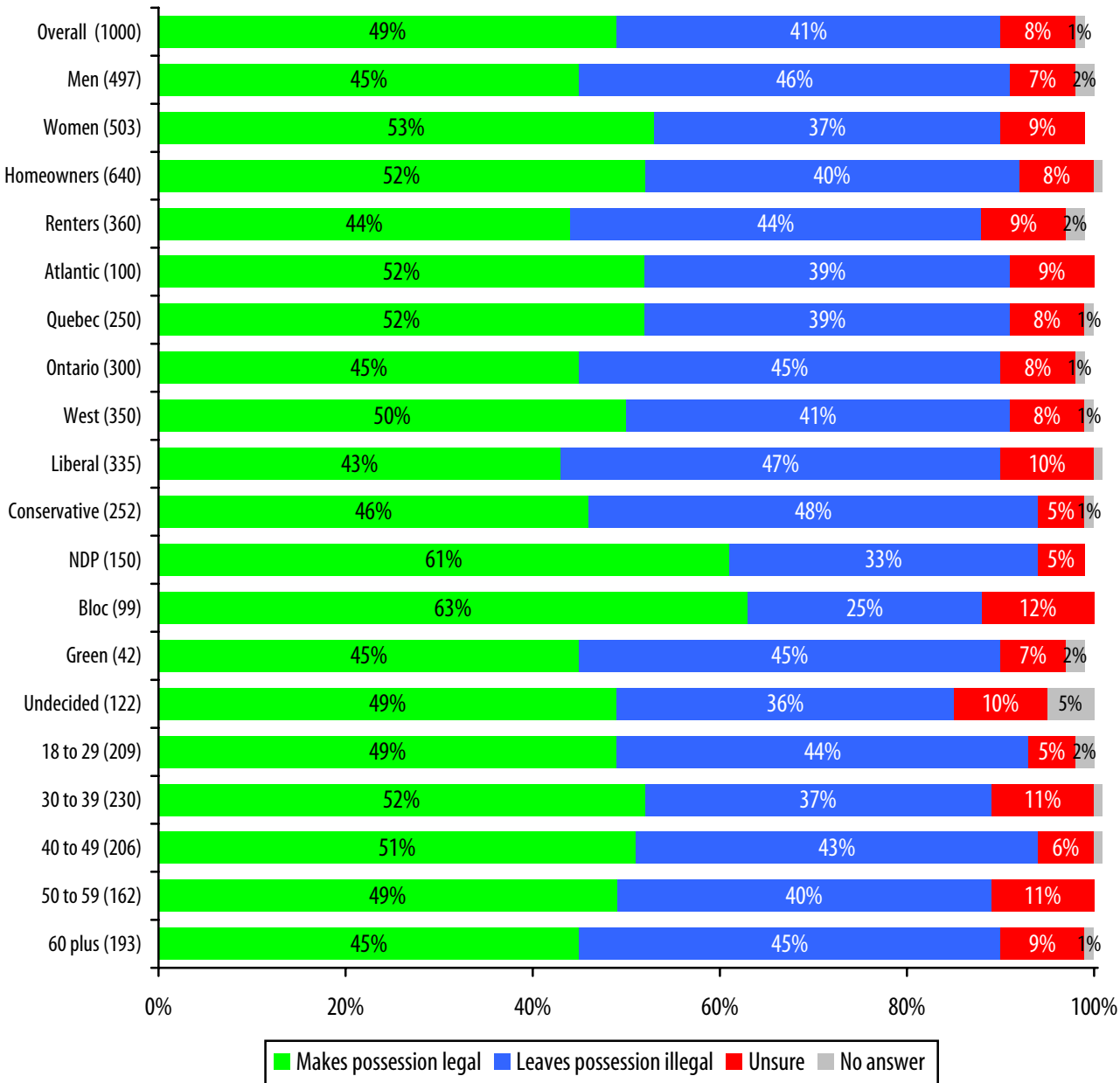
### Minimum Age to Possess Marijuana

- ⊕ **Eight in Ten said 18 years and older.** When asked what the minimum age for possession of marijuana should be, eight in ten Canadians (78%) said it should be 18 years and older, while five percent said it should be 16 years and older. Over one in ten Canadians (14%) did not give an age.

### 3.0 DECRIMINALIZATION OF MARIJUANA: LEGALIZATION?

Almost a majority of Canadians (49%) believed that decriminalization of marijuana will make personal possession of marijuana legal, while 41% believed that it will remain illegal to possess. Women, Atlantic and Quebec residents, NDP and Bloc Quebecois supporters were more likely to believe that marijuana possession will be made legal. Conversely, men, renters, Liberal and Conservative supporters and Canadians aged 60 years and over were more likely to believe it will remain illegal. It is clear that Canadians are unaware of the real legal consequences of decriminalization, and therefore an opportunity exists to educate Canadians that decriminalization does not mean legalization.

**The Canadian Government has recently moved to decriminalize the personal possession of marijuana. Do you believe that decriminalization makes possession legal or leave possession illegal?**  
 (Source: SES Research, NationState 2005Q1)

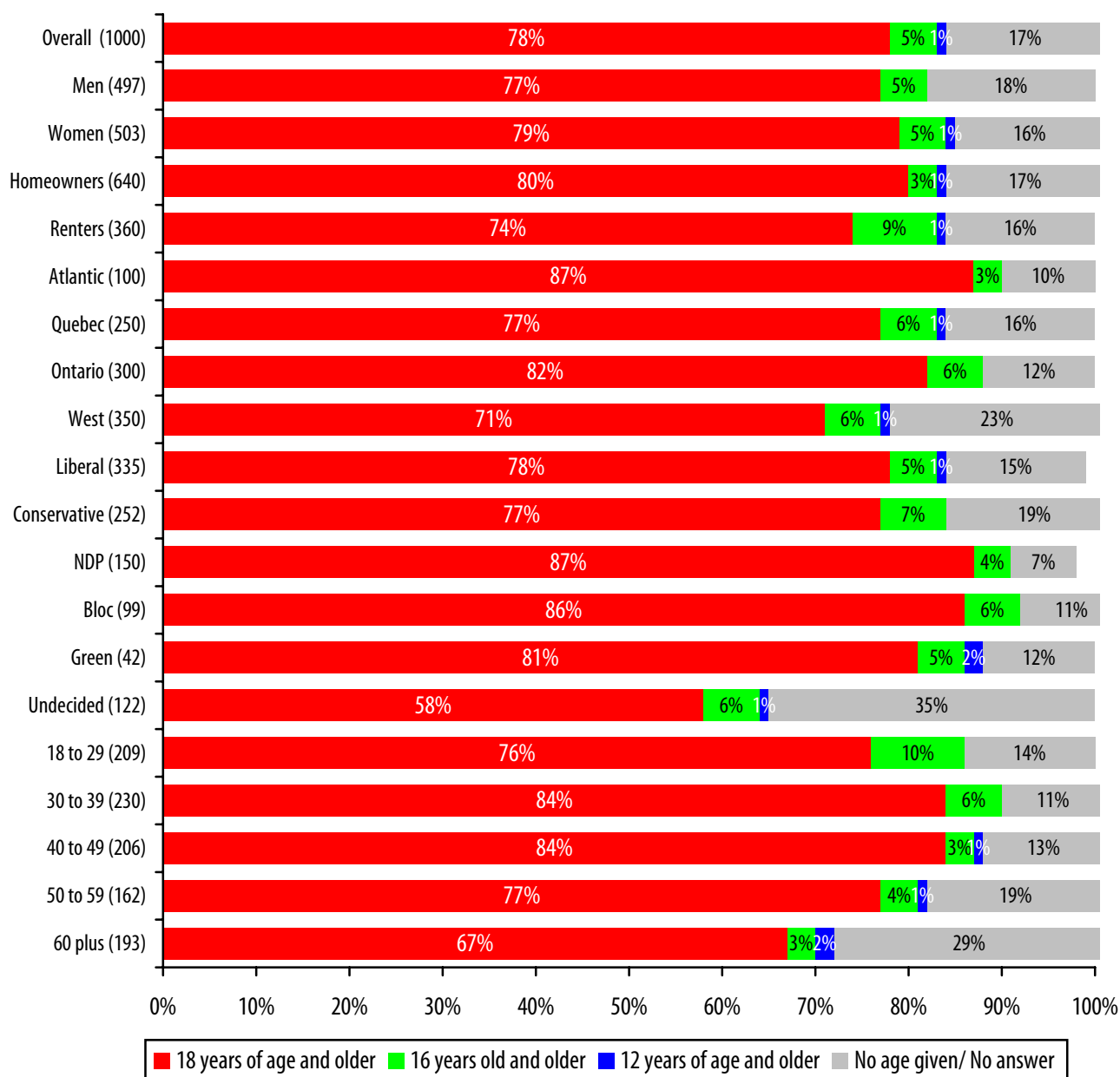


## 4.0 MINIMUM AGE TO POSSESS MARIJUANA

A significant majority of Canadians (78%) believed that the minimum legal age to possess marijuana if decriminalized should be 18 years and older. Five percent (5%) believed it should be 16 years of age and older, while one percent (1%) believed it should be 12 years of age and older. Over one in ten Canadians (14%) did not give an age. Renters and Canadians aged 18 to 29 were more likely to believe the legal age should be 16 years and older. A quarter of Canadians (24%) aged 60 and over did not give an age.

**If marijuana is decriminalized by the government of Canada, do you think the minimum age to possess marijuana should be 12 years of age and older, 16 years of age and older or 18 years of age and older?**

(Source: SES Research, NationState 2005Q1)





SES Canada Research Inc.  
NationState 2005Q1

Between January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005, SES completed a random telephone survey of 1,000 voters across Canada. It is accurate  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The research was completed in accordance with the standards of the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA) and was registered with the MRIA. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Question 23 - The Canadian Government has recently moved to decriminalize the personal possession of marijuana. Do you believe that decriminalization....					
	National	Makes possession legal	Leaves possession illegal	Unsure	No answer
	Interviews	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Aggregate	1000	49.3	41.4	8.2	1.1
18 to 29	209	49.3	43.5	4.8	2.4
30 to 39	230	51.7	36.5	10.9	.9
40 to 49	206	50.5	42.7	5.8	1.0
50 to 59	162	49.4	40.1	10.5	.0
60 plus	193	45.1	44.6	9.3	1.0
Own	640	52.0	39.7	7.5	.8
Rent	360	44.4	44.4	9.4	1.7
\$0 to \$15,000	91	48.4	41.8	6.6	3.3
\$15,000 to \$30,000	153	51.6	37.9	10.5	.0
\$30,000 to \$45,000	185	49.7	43.2	6.5	.5
\$45,000 to \$60,000	132	44.7	43.9	10.6	.8
\$60,000 to \$75,000	111	57.7	35.1	5.4	1.8
\$75,000 or more	198	49.5	42.9	6.1	1.5
Refused income	130	43.8	43.1	12.3	.8
Male	497	45.3	45.5	7.2	2.0
Female	503	53.3	37.4	9.1	.2
Atlantic	100	52.0	39.0	9.0	.0
Quebec	250	52.0	38.8	8.0	1.2
Ontario	300	45.0	45.3	8.3	1.3
West	350	50.3	40.6	8.0	1.1
Liberal	335	42.7	46.6	10.1	.6
Conservative	252	46.4	47.6	5.2	.8
NDP	150	61.3	33.3	5.3	.0
Bloc	99	62.6	25.3	12.1	.0
Green	42	45.2	45.2	7.1	2.4
Undecided	122	49.2	36.1	9.8	4.9



Question 24 - If marijuana is decriminalized by the government of Canada, do you think the minimum age to possess marijuana should be....						
	National	12 years of age and older	16 years of age and older	18 years of age and older	No age given	Unsure
	Interviews	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Aggregate	1000	.6	5.2	77.6	14.2	2.4
18 to 29	209	.0	10.0	76.1	10.0	3.8
30 to 39	230	.0	5.7	83.5	9.6	1.3
40 to 49	206	.5	3.4	83.5	12.1	.5
50 to 59	162	.6	3.7	76.5	16.7	2.5
60 plus	193	2.1	2.6	66.8	24.4	4.1
Own	640	.6	3.0	79.5	14.2	2.7
Rent	360	.6	9.2	74.2	14.2	1.9
\$0 to \$15,000	91	1.1	13.2	62.6	17.6	5.5
\$15,000 to \$30,000	153	1.3	8.5	75.8	13.7	.7
\$30,000 to \$45,000	185	.0	4.9	81.6	12.4	1.1
\$45,000 to \$60,000	132	.8	2.3	84.8	9.8	2.3
\$60,000 to \$75,000	111	.0	1.8	82.9	13.5	1.8
\$75,000 or more	198	.0	5.1	82.3	10.6	2.0
Refused income	130	1.5	2.3	65.4	25.4	5.4
Male	497	.4	5.4	76.7	15.1	2.4
Female	503	.8	5.0	78.5	13.3	2.4
Atlantic	100	.0	3.0	87.0	5.0	5.0
Quebec	250	.8	5.6	77.2	16.4	.0
Ontario	300	.3	6.0	82.0	10.0	1.7
West	350	.9	4.9	71.4	18.9	4.0
Liberal	335	1.2	6.6	77.6	12.8	1.8
Conservative	252	.0	3.6	77.4	15.5	3.6
NDP	150	.0	6.0	87.3	5.3	1.3
Bloc	99	.0	3.0	85.9	11.1	.0
Green	42	2.4	4.8	81.0	9.5	2.4
Undecided	122	.8	5.7	58.2	30.3	4.9