

NEWS RELEASE



MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Lorne Bozinoff, President
lbozinoff@forumresearch.com
416.960.9603

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

More than half want prostitution legalized

Majority disapprove of Bill C36

TORONTO January 6th, 2015 - In a random sampling of public opinion taken by the Forum Poll™ among 1741 Canadians 18 years of age and older, more than half believe prostitution should be legal for sex trade workers and their clients (54%), and this is a slight increase over levels noted in June 2013, well before the tabling of Bill C36 (50%) and equal to levels noted in June 2014 when the Bill was being debated (54%). Just more than a third disagree prostitution should be legal (34% now, 34% in June 2014 and 36% in 2013). About one seventh don't have an opinion (13% now, 12% in 2014, 14% in 2013). Incidence of thinking prostitution should be illegal is highest among Gen X (45 to 54 - 39%), females (40%), the least wealthy (41%), in Alberta (44%), Conservatives (43%) and among mothers of children under 18 (40%).

More than half disapprove of Bill C36

More than half of Canadian voters disapprove of Bill C36 (52%) which would seek to criminalize prostitution, while just one quarter approve (27%). One fifth do not have an opinion (21%). Incidence of approving of the bill is highest among the wealthier (\$80K to \$100K - 33%), in Quebec (32%), among Conservatives (37%) and Francophones (33%). Incidence of disapproving of the bill is highest among males (57%), in Alberta (58%), Liberals (57%), New Democrats (60%) and the best educated (post grad - 56%). When we asked this question in June, 2014, while the Bill was being debated, very similar proportions disapproved (51%) and approved of it (34%). One seventh didn't have an opinion then (15%).

Majority approve of \$20 million for sex workers to exit the trade

Close to 6-in-10 voters approve of the \$20 million fund to encourage sex workers to leave the sex trade (58%), while just one third disapprove (32%). One tenth don't have an opinion (10%). Approving of this fund is characteristic of mid income groups (\$60K to \$80K - 65%), in Atlantic Canada (65%) and Alberta (65%), but not Quebec (52%), among Conservative voters (68%), but not among the least educated (52%) or Francophones (53%).

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- More than half believe prostitution should be legal for sex trade workers and their clients (54%).
- More than half of Canadian voters disapprove of Bill C36 (52%) which would seek to criminalize prostitution, while just one quarter approve (27%).
- Close to 6-in-10 voters approve of the \$20 million fund to encourage sex workers to leave the sex trade (58%), while just one third disapprove (32%).
- More than 4-in-10 disagree the sum of \$20 million is adequate for the purpose of encouraging sex workers to leave the trade (43%), while fewer than a third (31%) think the sum adequate.

180 Bloor Street W., #1400
Toronto, ON M5S 2V6
T 416.960.9600
F 416.960.9602
forumresearch.com

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Most disagree \$20 million is enough to help sex workers leave the sex trade

More than 4-in-10 disagree the sum of \$20 million is adequate for the purpose of encouraging sex workers to leave the trade (43%), while fewer than a third (31%) think the sum adequate. As many as one quarter have not formed an opinion (26%). Thinking the sum is adequate is common to Gen X (45 to 54 - 35%), Atlantic Canada and Alberta (36% each), but not BC (28%), among Conservative voters (42%) and the least educated (35%).

One twentieth claim to have engaged a prostitute; one tenth won't answer

One twentieth of Canadian adults claim to have engaged the services of a prostitute (5%), and a further one tenth prefer not to answer, yet do not say no (10%). This implies as many as one seventh of Canadian adults have paid a sex worker for their services (15%). The remainder say they have not done so (85%). Explicit admission of engaging with a sex worker is common almost only to males (9%) rather than females (2%). Incidence of claimed sex worker engagement is highest among those in Atlantic Canada (8%), Alberta (9%), among Green Party voters (11%), Bloc voters (8%) and the least educated (7%). Of note, the oldest are particularly likely to decline to answer, rather than say no (16%). Curiously, incidence of engaging a prostitute has not changed at all since the last time we asked this question in June, 2014.

"Sex work is said to be the oldest profession, and the majority want its professionals to be allowed to practice in peace. It is interesting to note that Alberta, the most conservative province, is not in favour of legalizing prostitution, yet is also not in favour of any law to restrict it. That's the conundrum of the conservative; the urge to curtail behaviour not approved of coupled with a distaste for restrictive law. One thing that doesn't appear to change is the proportion who admit to hiring a sex worker. It is reasonable to assume those who do not say they haven't done so when given the chance to say no, have probably taken part as well," said Forum Research President, Dr. Lorne Bozinoff.

Lorne Bozinoff, Ph.D. is the president and founder of Forum Research. He can be reached at lbozinoff@forumresearch.com or at (416) 960-9603.

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- One twentieth of Canadian adults claim to have engaged the services of a prostitute (5%).
- "Sex work is said to be the oldest profession, and the majority want its professionals to be allowed to practice in peace. It is interesting to note that Alberta, the most conservative province, is not in favour of legalizing prostitution, yet is also not in favour of any law to restrict it. That's the conundrum of the conservative; the urge to curtail behaviour not approved of coupled with a distaste for restrictive law. One thing that doesn't appear to change is the proportion who admit to hiring a sex worker. It is reasonable to assume those who do not say they haven't done so when given the chance to say no, have probably taken part as well," said Forum Research President, Dr. Lorne Bozinoff.

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Methodology

The Forum Poll™ was conducted by Forum Research with the results based on an interactive voice response telephone survey of 1741 randomly selected Canadians 18 years of age or older. The poll was conducted on January 5 - 6th, 2015.

Results based on the total sample are considered accurate +/- 2%, 19 times out of 20. Subsample results will be less accurate. Margins of error for subsample (such as age, gender) results are available at www.forumresearch.com/samplestim.asp

Where appropriate, the data has been statistically weighted by age, region, and other variables to ensure that the sample reflects the actual population according to the latest Census data.

This research is not necessarily predictive of future outcomes, but rather, captures opinion at one point in time. Forum Research conducted this poll as a public service and to demonstrate our survey research capabilities. Forum houses its poll results in the Data Library of the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

With offices across Canada and around the world, 100% Canadian-owned Forum Research is one of the country's leading survey research firms. This Forum Poll™ and other polls may be found at Forum's poll archive at www.forumresearch.com/polls.asp

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Legality of Prostitution – Trending

%	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
January 6 th , 2015	54	34	13
June 15 th , 2014	54	34	12
June 19 th , 2013	50	36	14

Bill C36 Approval – Trending

%	Approve	Disapprove	Don't Know
January 6 th , 2015	27	52	21
June 15 th , 2014	34	51	15

Prostitute Services Engagement – Trending

%	Yes	No	Prefer not to answer
January 6 th , 2015	5	85	10
June 15 th , 2014	5	85	10

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Prostitution Legality

'Do you agree or disagree prostitution should be legal for sex trade workers and their clients?'

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	1741	358	283	353	364	383	937	804
Agree	54	54	56	52	56	51	64	44
Disagree	34	36	31	39	29	30	27	40
Don't know	13	11	13	10	14	18	9	17

Region / Language

%	Total	Atl	Que	ON	Man/Sask	AB	BC	English	French
Sample	1741	117	428	647	150	170	229	1345	396
Agree	54	49	59	52	48	49	57	52	60
Disagree	34	37	27	33	36	44	35	35	28
Don't know	13	14	14	15	16	7	8	13	13

Federal Vote Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Bloc	Other Parties
Sample	1741	521	557	320	113	67	72
Agree	54	47	59	59	55	57	55
Disagree	34	43	27	29	31	29	35
Don't know	13	10	14	12	14	14	10

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Bill C36 Approval

'Parliament recently passed Bill C36 which makes the advertisement and purchase of sexual services illegal. While performing sexual services would still be legal for sex workers, they are prohibited from charging for their services, advertising or employing staff. Do you approve or disapprove of Bill C36?'

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	1741	358	283	353	364	383	937	804
Approve	27	28	29	29	26	21	26	28
Disapprove	52	54	48	52	52	51	57	47
Don't know	21	18	23	19	22	28	17	25

Region

%	Total	Atl	Que	ON	Man/Sask	AB	BC	English	French
Sample	1741	117	428	647	150	170	229	1345	396
Approve	27	16	32	27	24	26	27	25	33
Disapprove	52	55	49	50	50	58	55	53	49
Don't know	21	29	19	23	26	16	18	22	18

Federal Vote Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Bloc	Other Parties
Sample	1741	521	557	320	113	67	72
Approve	27	37	25	21	20	33	22
Disapprove	52	41	57	60	62	43	57
Don't know	21	22	19	19	19	24	21

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Government Encouraging Sex Workers to Leave the Sex Trade Approval

'The government has pledged \$20 million dollars to encourage sex workers to leave the sex trade and earn their living in another manner. Do you approve or disapprove of this?'

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	1741	358	283	353	364	383	937	804
Approve	58	59	59	58	56	58	55	61
Disapprove	32	34	29	35	31	28	37	26
Don't know	10	7	12	7	13	14	7	13

Region / Language

%	Total	Atl	Que	ON	Man/Sask	AB	BC	English	French
Sample	1741	117	428	647	150	170	229	1345	396
Approve	58	65	52	57	60	65	64	60	53
Disapprove	32	26	37	33	29	28	26	30	37
Don't know	10	9	11	10	11	7	11	10	10

Federal Vote Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Bloc	Other Parties
Sample	1741	521	557	320	113	67	72
Approve	58	68	55	57	60	46	46
Disapprove	32	27	34	32	29	45	37
Don't know	10	6	11	11	11	10	17

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\$20 Million Dollars – An Adequate Sum

‘Do you agree or disagree \$20 million dollars is an adequate sum to encourage sex workers to leave the sex trade?’

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	1741	358	283	353	364	383	937	804
Agree	31	28	32	35	29	31	29	33
Disagree	43	47	41	41	45	39	47	39
Don't know	26	25	26	24	26	30	24	28

Region / Language

%	Total	Atl	Que	ON	Man/Sask	AB	BC	English	French
Sample	1741	117	428	647	150	170	229	1345	396
Agree	31	36	31	30	30	36	28	31	32
Disagree	43	37	42	43	46	46	46	43	42
Don't know	26	27	27	27	24	18	27	26	26

Federal Vote Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Bloc	Other Parties
Sample	1741	521	557	320	113	67	72
Agree	31	42	28	24	22	32	26
Disagree	43	34	46	48	60	40	48
Don't know	26	24	26	27	18	28	26

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Prostitute Services: Engagement

'We are going to ask a very personal question. We assure you the results will be kept confidential. If you prefer not to answer, you can just press 9. Have you, yourself ever engaged the services of a prostitute or not? If you prefer not to answer this question, just press 9.'

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	1741	358	283	353	364	383	937	804
Have	5	6	4	6	5	5	9	2
Have not	85	87	85	86	83	79	79	90
Prefer not to answer	10	7	11	8	12	16	12	8

Region / Language

%	Total	Atl	Que	ON	Man/Sask	AB	BC	English	French
Sample	1741	117	428	647	150	170	229	1345	396
Have	5	8	5	5	5	9	3	5	4
Have not	85	81	84	85	83	85	88	84	86
Prefer not to answer	10	11	11	10	12	6	9	10	10

Federal Vote Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Bloc	Other Parties
Sample	1741	521	557	320	113	67	72
Have	5	4	6	3	11	8	6
Have not	85	87	85	89	81	82	75
Prefer not to answer	10	10	10	8	8	10	19

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For more information:

Lorne Bozinoff, Ph.D.

President

Forum Research Inc.

Tel: (416) 960-9603

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