



ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH GROUP

Canadians' Attitudes Towards Euthanasia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents.....1
Introduction.....2
Executive Summary.....3
Top-of-mind Support for Legalization of Euthanasia5
Support for Legally Permitting a Doctor/Caregiver to Euthanize Someone with Their Consent ...7
Concern Elderly would be Pressured to Accept Euthanasia due to Rising Health Care Costs10
Concern Significant Number of Sick/Disabled/Elderly would be Euthanized Without Consent .13
Legalizing Euthanasia vs. Investing in Palliative Care16
Support for Euthanizing Terminally Ill/Severely Disabled Infants with Consent from Parents ...18
Support for Legalization of Euthanasia, after Information.....21
Attitudes toward Euthanasia in Quebec.....23
Methodology Report.....24

INTRODUCTION

The survey was conducted on behalf of LifeCanada by telephone among a representative sample of 2,025 adult Canadians between September 15 and 22, 2010. The survey was done in conjunction with Environics' National Omnibus survey.

The survey looks at Canadians' attitudes towards and concerns about euthanasia.

The margin of error for a sample of 2,025 is 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The reader is cautioned that margins of error for smaller subsamples are larger.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- When Canadians are told that euthanasia is against the law in Canada and asked if they support or oppose legalizing euthanasia, more than half strongly (21%) or somewhat (36%) support its legalization, while one-third are strongly (20%) or somewhat (13%) opposed.
- Top-of-mind support for legalizing euthanasia is highest in Quebec (69%) and lowest in the Prairies (47%).
- After being presented with a definition of euthanasia, a majority of Canadians support legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent, but strongly expressed support is down slightly since last year. Six in ten strongly (22%) or somewhat (37%) support permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent, while one-third are strongly (20%) or somewhat (15%) opposed.
- Since 2009, there has been a three-point decline in the proportion who strongly support legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent.
- Support remains highest in Quebec (69%). It is lowest in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (49%). Since 2009, overall support is down in Quebec (down 6 points). Looking specifically at strongly expressed support, this is down considerably in Montreal (down 15).
- When Canadians were asked how concerned are they that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada, a majority of just under two-thirds say they are very (33%) or somewhat (30%) concerned that this would happen, while one-third say they are not very (16%) or not at all (19%) concerned.
- Since 2009, concern is up seven points, and the proportion who are not concerned is down five points.
- Majorities across all regions express concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada. Concern continues to be highest in Quebec (75%) and lowest in British Columbia (52%). Since 2009, concern has increased in Alberta (up 17 points), Ontario (up 8) and Quebec (up 10), particularly in Montreal (75%, up 17).
- When Canadians were asked how concerned are they that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly persons being euthanized without their consent, a large majority of eight in ten say they are very (46%) or somewhat (32%) concerned that this would happen, while two in ten say they are not very (12%) or not at all (8%) concerned.
- Since 2009, concern is up eight points, and the proportion who are not concerned is down five points.
- Majorities across all regions express concern that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent.

Concern continues to be lowest in British Columbia (71%). Since 2009, concern has increased in British Columbia (up 14 points), the Prairies (up 6) and Quebec (up 8), particularly in Montreal (up 15). There has been increase in strong concern in Ontario (50%, up 10).

- Canadians were informed that palliative and hospice care can offer alternatives to euthanasia for the terminally ill by providing pain management, comfort care, and relief of suffering until natural death. When then asked which of two options should be the greater priority for the government, Canadians, by more than a three-to-one margin, choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care (71%) over legalizing euthanasia (19%).
- These figures are essentially unchanged since 2009.
- Majorities across all regions of the country choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care, but this view is higher than average in the Prairies (78%) and lower than average in Quebec (60%). Since 2009, support for this option has increased in British Columbia (75%, up 11 points) and Quebec (up 5).
- Opinion is divided on the question of legalizing the euthanizing of infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents. Fewer than half strongly (15%) or somewhat (30%) support, while half are strongly (29%) or somewhat (20%) opposed.
- Views on legalizing the euthanizing of terminally ill or severely disabled infants if there is a request and consent from the parents vary regionally. Clear majorities in Atlantic Canada (58%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (57%), Alberta (53%) and Ontario (51%) are opposed to this. Opinion is divided in British Columbia (50% oppose, 45% support). A clear majority in Quebec support this (55% support).
- After information was provided to them about euthanasia in previous questions, Canadians were again asked if they support or oppose legalizing euthanasia in Canada. Just under six in ten strongly (19%) or somewhat (38%) support its legalization, while four in ten are strongly (23%) or somewhat (15%) opposed.
- Support for legalizing euthanasia is highest in Quebec (69%) and lowest in the Prairies (48%).
- Although overall support, after information, does not differ from, overall support, top-of-mind, overall concern increases, as those who offered no opinion, top-of-mind, move to being opposed after given information on euthanasia. Opposition increases five points from 33 percent (top-of-mind) to 38 percent (after information). The proportion who offer no opinion declines from eight percent (top-of-mind) to three percent (after information). The increase in overall opposition is driven by increases in Atlantic Canada (up 8 points) and Ontario (up 6).

TOP-OF-MIND SUPPORT FOR LEGALIZATION OF EUTHANASIA

Just under six in ten Canadians support the legalization of euthanasia.

When Canadians are told that euthanasia is against the law in Canada and asked if they support or oppose legalizing euthanasia, more than half strongly (21%) or somewhat (36%) support its legalization, while one-third are strongly (20%) or somewhat (13%) opposed. Two percent say it depends and eight percent offer no opinion.

It is notable that the proportion of Canadians who are strongly supportive of legalizing euthanasia is similar to the number who are strongly opposed.

Support for legalizing euthanasia is highest in Quebec (69%) and lowest in the Prairies (47%).

Support is higher among Canadians aged 30 to 59 years (61%) and those with higher household incomes, and is lower among those aged 18 to 29 (53%), those aged 60 and older (53%), and among those with less than a high school education (49%).

Looking at political affiliation, support is highest among Bloc Québécois supporters (79%), and lowest among Conservative Party supporters (51%) and undecided voters (51%). Support is higher than average among Green Party supporters (67%) and NDP supporters (63%).

Top-of-mind support for legalizing euthanasia in Canada

2010

	2010
	%
Strongly support	21
Somewhat support	36
Somewhat oppose	13
Strongly oppose	20
dk/na	8

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	18	22	23	31	25	18
Somewhat support	33	33	40	48	42	33
Somewhat oppose	15	16	13	11	9	14
Strongly oppose	27	20	14	8	13	20
dk/na	6	8	9	*	8	11

* Less than one percent

Q.1C In Canada, euthanasia is against the law. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose legalizing euthanasia?

SUPPORT FOR LEGALLY PERMITTING A DOCTOR/CAREGIVER TO EUTHANIZE SOMEONE WITH THEIR CONSENT

After presented with a definition of euthanasia, six in ten Canadians support legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent. However, strong support is down three points since 2009.

In this question, Canadians were provided with a definition of euthanasia as “the use of lethal means, such as a drug injection, overdose or poisoning to take the life of someone who is sick, depressed, elderly or disabled.” They were then asked if they support or oppose legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent.

A majority of Canadians support legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent, but strongly expressed support is down slightly since last year. Six in ten strongly (22%) or somewhat (37%) support permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent, while one-third are strongly (20%) or somewhat (15%) opposed. Two percent say it depends and four percent offer no opinion. Since 2009, there has been a three-point decline in the proportion who strongly support this view.

The results indicate that the number who are strongly supportive (22%) is similar to the proportion who are strongly opposed (20%).

Support remains highest in Quebec (69%). It is lowest in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (49%). Since 2009, overall support is down in Quebec (down 6 points). Looking specifically at strongly expressed support, this is down considerably in Montreal (down 15).

Support is higher among Canadians aged 30 to 59 years (63%) and those with higher household incomes, and is lower among those aged 18 to 29 (56%), and those aged 60 and older (53%). Since 2009, support is down among those with household incomes below \$30,000 (down 11 points).

Looking at political affiliation, support remains highest among Bloc Québécois supporters (77% overall). It is lowest among Conservative Party supporters (51%). Support is higher than average among Green Party (69%) and NDP supporters (67%), and lower than average among undecided voters (54%). Although there is no significant decline in overall support since 2009, there have been declines in strongly expressed support among NDP (26%, down 7 points) and Conservative Party (17%, down 6) supporters.

Attitudes toward legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent directly correlate with initial attitudes toward euthanasia. Overall support declines from 91 percent among those who express strong support for legalizing euthanasia to only eight percent among those who are strongly opposed. In contrast, overall opposition increases from only six percent among those who express strong

support toward legalizing euthanasia to 89 percent among those who are strongly opposed. Looking specifically at strongly expressed opinions, strongly expressed support is at 77 percent among those who initially expressed strong support for legalizing euthanasia, while strongly expressed opposition is at 71 percent among those who initially expressed strong opposition for legalization of euthanasia.

Legally permitting doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent

2009 – 2010

	2009	2010
	%	%
Strongly support	25	22
Somewhat support	36	37
Somewhat oppose	14	15
Strongly oppose	19	20
dk/na	4	4

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	17	22	26	32	28	22
Somewhat support	34	37	41	45	41	32
Somewhat oppose	16	17	18	11	11	15
Strongly oppose	28	19	11	6	16	21
dk/na	4	4	3	2	2	6

By initial attitude towards euthanasia 2010

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	77	12	3	3
Somewhat support	14	73	29	5
Somewhat oppose	2	8	52	18
Strongly oppose	4	3	13	71
dk/na	1	2	3	2

Q.2C Euthanasia is the use of lethal means, such as a drug injection, overdose or poisoning to take the life of someone who is sick, depressed, elderly or disabled. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent?

CONCERN ELDERLY WOULD BE PRESSURED TO ACCEPT EUTHANASIA DUE TO RISING HEALTH CARE COSTS

Almost two-thirds of Canadians express concern that the elderly would feel pressured to accept euthanasia in order to reduce health care costs, and this proportion is up seven points since 2009.

Although a majority of Canadians support legalizing euthanasia, a majority also express concerns that the elderly would feel pressured to accept euthanasia to reduce health care costs. Moreover, the proportion who express concern has increased since 2009.

Canadians were asked how concerned are they that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada. A majority of just under two-thirds say they are very (33%) or somewhat (30%) concerned that this would happen, while one-third say they are not very (16%) or not at all (19%) concerned. Concern is up seven points since 2009, and the proportion who are not concerned is down five points.

It is notable that the proportion of Canadians who are very concerned that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada, outnumbers the proportion who are not at all concerned (33%, up 3 points vs. 19%, down 7, respectively). Moreover, there has been a slight increase in the proportion who say they are very concerned and a decline in the number who say they are not at all concerned.

Majorities across all regions express concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada. Concern continues to be highest in Quebec (75%) and lowest in British Columbia (52%). Since 2009, concern has increased in Alberta (up 17 points), Ontario (up 8) and Quebec (up 10), particularly in Montreal (75%, up 17).

Concern continues to be higher among women (68% overall, up 9 points) than among men (58%, up 6). However, it has increased among both women and men.

Majorities across all age, education and income groups express concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada. However, strong concern is higher among older Canadians and those with lower household incomes.

Looking at political affiliation, majorities across all parties express concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada. However, concern is highest among Bloc Québécois supporters (73%) and lowest among Green Party supporters (54%). Since 2009, concern has increased among Liberal Party (up 11 points), NDP (up 10), Bloc Québécois (up 10) and Conservative Party (up 7) supporters. Although overall concern has not

changed significantly among Bloc Québécois supporters, strongly expressed concern is up among this group (up 10).

Concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs if euthanasia were legalized in Canada, directly correlates with initial attitudes toward euthanasia. Overall concern increases from 48 percent among those who express strong support for legalizing euthanasia to 77 percent among those who are strongly opposed. In contrast, the proportions who are not concerned declines from 50 percent among those who express strong support toward legalizing euthanasia to 21 percent among those who are strongly opposed. Looking specifically at strongly expressed concern, the proportion who are very concerned increases from 23 percent among those who initially expressed strong support for legalization of euthanasia to 58 percent among those who initially expressed strong opposition to legalizing euthanasia.

Concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia to reduce health care costs
2009 – 2010

	2009	2010
	%	%
Very concerned	30	33
Somewhat concerned	26	30
Not very concerned	14	16
Not at all concerned	26	19

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very concerned	35	32	33	38	27	35
Somewhat concerned	27	30	29	35	27	33
Not very concerned	14	17	17	17	23	12
Not at all concerned	22	19	21	9	22	16

By initial attitude towards euthanasia 2010

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
	%	%	%	%
Very concerned	23	25	36	58
Somewhat concerned	25	35	40	19
Not very concerned	18	20	12	8
Not at all concerned	32	18	11	13

Q.3C If euthanasia were legalized in Canada, how concerned are you that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs? Are you very, somewhat, not very or not at all concerned that this would happen?

CONCERN SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF SICK/DISABLED/ELDERLY WOULD BE EUTHANIZED WITHOUT CONSENT

Eight in ten Canadians express concern that the legalization of euthanasia in Canada would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly would be euthanized without their consent, and this proportion is up eight points since 2009.

Although a majority of Canadians support legalizing euthanasia, a large majority also express concerns that this would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent. Moreover, the proportion who express concern has increased since 2009.

Canadians were asked how concerned are they that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly persons being euthanized without their consent. A large majority of eight in ten say they are very (46%) or somewhat (32%) concerned that this would happen, while two in ten say they are not very (12%) or not at all (8%) concerned. Concern is up eight points since 2009, and the proportion who are not concerned is down five points.

It is notable that the proportion of Canadians who are very concerned that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent is almost six times greater than the number who are not at all concerned (46%, up 5 points vs. 8%, down 3, respectively). Moreover, there has been a slight increase in the proportion who say they are very concerned and a slight decline in the number who say they are not at all concerned.

Majorities across all regions express concern that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent. Concern continues to be lowest in British Columbia (71%). Since 2009, concern has increased in British Columbia (up 14 points), the Prairies (up 6) and Quebec (up 8), particularly in Montreal (up 15). There has been increase in strong concern in Ontario (50%, up 10).

Concern is higher among women (83% overall, up 11 points) than among men (73%, up 4). However, it has increased among both women and men.

Majorities across all age, education and income groups express overall concern that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent. However, strong concern is higher among older Canadians, those with less education and those with lower household incomes.

Looking at political affiliation, large majorities across all parties express concern that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent. However, strong concern is lower than average among NDP supporters (39%). Since 2009,

concern has increased among Liberal Party (up 12 points), Bloc Québécois (up 12) and Conservative Party (up 9) supporters.

Concern that the legalization of euthanasia would lead to a significant number of the sick, disabled or elderly being euthanized without their consent directly correlates with initial attitudes toward euthanasia. Overall concern increases from 64 percent among those who express strong support for legalizing euthanasia to 92 percent among those who are strongly opposed. In contrast, the proportions who are not concerned declines from 36 percent among those who express strong support toward legalizing euthanasia to only seven percent among those who are strongly opposed. Looking specifically at strongly expressed concern, the proportion who are very concerned increases from 34 percent among those who initially expressed strong support for legalization of euthanasia to 75 percent among those who initially expressed strong opposition to legalizing euthanasia.

Concern that significant number of sick, disabled or elderly would be euthanized without their consent

2009 – 2010

	2009	2010
	%	%
Very concerned	41	46
Somewhat concerned	29	32
Not very concerned	14	12
Not at all concerned	11	8

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very concerned	49	45	39	46	44	49
Somewhat concerned	29	33	35	33	31	32
Not very concerned	11	12	14	17	14	9
Not at all concerned	10	8	10	3	10	7

By initial attitude towards euthanasia 2010

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
	%	%	%	%
Very concerned	34	37	45	75
Somewhat concerned	30	40	44	17
Not very concerned	20	15	7	3
Not at all concerned	16	8	4	4

Q.4C If euthanasia were legalized in Canada, how concerned are you that it would lead to a significant number of sick, disabled or elderly persons being euthanized without their consent? Are you very, somewhat, not very or not at all concerned that this would happen?

LEGALIZING EUTHANASIA VS. INVESTING IN PALLIATIVE CARE

When presented with a choice, Canadians, by more than a three-to-one margin, think that the greater priority for government should be investing in palliative care rather than legalizing euthanasia.

In this question, Canadians were informed that palliative and hospice care can offer alternatives to euthanasia for the terminally ill by providing pain management, comfort care and relief of suffering until natural death. They were then asked which of two options – investing in more and better palliative and hospice care, or legalizing euthanasia – should be the greater priority for the government.

By more than a three-to-one margin, Canadians choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care (71%) over legalizing euthanasia (19%) as the greater priority for the government. Five percent say both equally and three percent offer no opinion. Except for the proportion offering no response, which has declined slightly, these figures are essentially unchanged since 2009.

Majorities across all regions of the country choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care, but this view is higher than average in the Prairies (78%) and lower than average in Quebec (60%). Since 2009, support for this option has increased in British Columbia (75%, up 11 points) and Quebec (up 5).

Majorities in all demographic groups choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care, but this view is higher among women (75%) than among men (67%).

Looking at political affiliation, majorities of all affiliation choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care, but this view is dramatically lower among Bloc Québécois supporters (51%). Since 2009, support for this view has increased among NDP supporters (up 9 points).

Preference for investing in more and better palliative and hospice care over legalizing euthanasia directly correlates with initial attitudes toward euthanasia. Preference for investing in more and better palliative and hospice care increases from 42 percent among those who express strong support for legalizing euthanasia to 92 percent among those who are strongly opposed. In contrast, preference for legalizing euthanasia declines from 45 percent among those who express strong support toward legalizing euthanasia to only four percent among those who are strongly opposed.

Legalizing euthanasia vs. investing in palliative/hospice care

2009 – 2010

	2009	2010
	%	%
Investing in more and better palliative and hospice care	69	71
Legalizing euthanasia	18	19
Both equally	5	5
Neither	2	1
dk/na	6	3

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Investing in more and better palliative and hospice care	75	74	73	51	70	73
Legalizing euthanasia	16	18	19	40	22	16
Both equally	3	4	5	8	5	6
Neither	1	1	1	-	*	2
dk/na	5	3	2	1	3	4

By initial attitude towards euthanasia 2010

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
	%	%	%	%
Investing in more and better palliative and hospice care	42	71	89	92
Legalizing euthanasia	45	18	7	4
Both equally	10	6	3	1
Neither	1	1	-	2
dk/na	2	4	1	1

*Less than one percent

Q.5C Palliative and hospice care can offer alternatives to euthanasia for the terminally ill by providing pain management, comfort care, and relief of suffering until natural death. Which of the following should be the greater priority for the government ... ?

SUPPORT FOR EUTHANIZING TERMINALLY ILL/SEVERELY DISABLED INFANTS WITH CONSENT FROM PARENTS

Canadians are divided as to whether they support or oppose legalizing the euthanizing of terminally ill or severely disabled infants if there is a request and consent from the parents.

Canadians were told that, in the Netherlands, it is now legal to euthanize infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents. They were then asked if they support or oppose this.

Opinion is divided on this question. Fewer than half strongly (15%) or somewhat (30%) support legalizing the euthanizing of infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents, while half are strongly (29%) or somewhat (20%) opposed. Five percent offer no opinion.

It is notable that the proportion of Canadians who are strongly opposed to this is two times greater than the number who are strongly supportive.

Views on legalizing the euthanizing of terminally ill or severely disabled infants if there is a request and consent from the parents vary regionally. Clear majorities in Atlantic Canada (58%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (57%), Alberta (53%) and Ontario (51%) are opposed to this. Opinion is divided in British Columbia (50% oppose, 45% support). A clear majority in Quebec support this (55% support).

A majority of women (53%) are opposed to this, while men are divided in their opinion (49% support, 46% oppose).

Majorities in most age and education groups and those with a household income below \$30,000 are opposed to this. Opinion is divided among most income groups and university graduates. A majority of Canadians aged 45 to 59 are supportive.

Looking at political affiliation, majorities of Conservative Party supporters (54%) and undecided voters (53%) are opposed to legalizing the euthanizing of infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents. Opinion is divided among Liberal (46% support, 49% oppose) and NDP (48% support, 47% oppose) supporters. Majorities of Bloc Québécois (58%) and Green Party (54%) supporters support this.

Attitudes toward legalizing the euthanizing of infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents, directly correlate with initial attitudes toward euthanasia. Overall support declines from 72 percent among those who express strong support for

legalizing euthanasia to 11 percent among those who are strongly opposed. In contrast, overall opposition increases from 23 percent among those who express strong support toward legalizing euthanasia to 85 percent among those who are strongly opposed. Looking specifically at strongly expressed opinions, the proportion who are strongly opposed declines from 68 percent among those who initially expressed strong opposition for legalization of euthanasia to 12 percent among those who initially expressed strong support to legalizing euthanasia.

Legalizing the euthanizing of terminally ill/severely disabled infants with consent from parents
2010

	2010
	%
Strongly support	15
Somewhat support	30
Somewhat oppose	20
Strongly oppose	29
dk/na	5

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	12	17	17	20	15	13
Somewhat support	28	29	31	38	39	25
Somewhat oppose	19	21	19	31	19	18
Strongly oppose	35	28	28	6	24	35
dk/na	4	5	5	3	3	7

By initial attitude towards euthanasia 2010

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	39	10	5	5
Somewhat support	33	46	22	6
Somewhat oppose	11	24	32	17
Strongly oppose	12	16	37	68
dk/na	4	3	3	3

Q.6C In the Netherlands, it is now legal to euthanize infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose allowing this?

SUPPORT FOR LEGALIZATION OF EUTHANASIA, AFTER INFORMATION

Just under six in ten Canadians continue to support the legalization of euthanasia in Canada, after being provided information about euthanasia in previous questions.

After information was provided to them about euthanasia in previous questions, Canadians were again asked if they support or oppose legalizing euthanasia in Canada. Just under six in ten strongly (19%) or somewhat (38%) support its legalization, while four in ten are strongly (23%) or somewhat (15%) opposed. Three percent offer no opinion.

It is notable that the proportion of Canadians who are strongly supportive of legalizing euthanasia is slightly smaller than the number who are strongly opposed.

Although overall support, after information, does not differ from, overall support, top-of-mind, overall concern increases, as those who offered no opinion, top-of-mind, move to being opposed after given information on euthanasia. Opposition increases five points from 33 percent (top-of-mind) to 38 percent (after information). The proportion who offer no opinion declines from eight percent (top-of-mind) to three percent (after information). The increase in overall opposition is driven by increases in Atlantic Canada (up 8 points) and Ontario (up 6).

Support for legalizing euthanasia is highest in Quebec (69%) and lowest in the Prairies (48%).

Support is higher among men (62%) than among women (54%). It is also higher among Canadians aged 45 to 59 (64%), and among those with higher education and higher household incomes.

Looking at political affiliation, support is highest among Bloc Québécois supporters (78%), and lowest among Conservative Party supporters (50%) and undecided voters (50%). Support is higher than average among Green Party (69%) and NDP supporters (68%).

Support for legalizing euthanasia, after information

2010

	2010
	%
Strongly support	19
Somewhat support	38
Somewhat oppose	15
Strongly oppose	23
dk/na	3

By political affiliation 2010

	Con	Lib	NDP	BQ	Green Party	Undecided
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly support	17	18	23	29	25	16
Somewhat support	33	37	45	49	44	34
Somewhat oppose	18	15	13	11	11	16
Strongly oppose	30	23	15	5	18	26
dk/na	2	4	2	1	2	6

Q.7C You have been given some information about euthanasia in the last few questions. How do you feel about legalizing euthanasia in Canada? Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose it?

ATTITUDES TOWARD EUTHANASIA IN QUEBEC

- Seven in ten Quebecers (69%) express top-of-mind support for legalizing euthanasia in Canada.
- After being presented with a definition of euthanasia, the same proportion of Quebecers (69%) support legally permitting a doctor or caregiver to euthanize someone with their consent. However, this figure is down six points since 2009. In fact, strong support is down 15 points in Montreal.
- A large majority of three-quarters of Quebecers (75%) express concern that elderly people would feel pressured to accept euthanasia, in order to reduce health care costs. Moreover, this proportion is up since 2009 (up 10 points), particularly in Montreal (up 17).
- A large majority of eight in ten Quebecers (81%) express concern that legalizing euthanasia in Canada would lead to a significant number of sick, disabled or elderly persons being euthanized without their consent. Moreover, this figure is up since 2009 (up 8 points), particularly in Montreal (up 15).
- Quebecers, by a two-to-one margin choose investing in more and better palliative and hospice care (60%) over legalizing euthanasia (29%) as the greater priority for the government. Since 2009, preference for both options – investing in more and better palliative and hospice care (up 5 points), and legalizing euthanasia (up 7) – is up, while the proportion saying both options are of equal priority is down nine points.
- More than half of Quebecers (55%) support legalizing the euthanizing of infants who are terminally ill or with severe disabilities, if there is a request and consent from the parents.
- When Quebecers are again asked about their attitude towards legalizing euthanasia, after being presented with information about euthanasia in earlier questions, seven in ten (69%) continue to be supportive of legalizing euthanasia in Canada.

METHODOLOGY REPORT

The results are based on omnibus questions placed on an Environics' National Omnibus survey, conducted with a representative sample of adult Canadians between September 15 and 22, 2010.

QUESTION DESIGN

The questions were designed by senior Environics researchers in conjunction with representatives from LifeCanada. The questions were pre-tested as part of the overall survey, prior to being finalized.

SAMPLE SELECTION

The sampling method was designed to complete approximately 2,000 interviews within households randomly selected across Canada. The sample is drawn in such a way that it represents the Canadian population with the exception of those Canadians living in the Yukon, Northwest Territories or Nunavut, or in institutions (armed forces barracks, hospitals, prisons).

The sampling model relies on stratification of the population by 10 regions (Atlantic Canada, Montreal CMA, the rest of Quebec, Toronto CMA, the rest of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Vancouver CMA and the rest of British Columbia) and by four community sizes (1,000,000 inhabitants or more, 100,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants, 5,000 to 100,000 inhabitants, and under 5,000 inhabitants). The final sample was distributed as follows.

Sample distribution

	2006 Census*	Weighted N=2,025	Unweighted N=2,025	Margin of Error
CANADA	100	2,025	2,025	+/- 2.2%
Atlantic Canada	8	150	259	+/- 6.1%
Quebec	24	493	501	+/- 4.4%
Ontario	38	776	509	+/- 4.3%
Manitoba	4	72	135	+/- 8.4%
Saskatchewan	3	60	118	+/- 9.0%
Alberta	10	207	250	+/- 6.2%
British Columbia	13	268	253	+/- 6.2%

* Canadians aged 18 years or over in 2006, excluding those in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon

Environics uses a sampling method in which sample is generated using the RDD (random digit dialling) technique. Samples are generated using a database of active phone ranges. These ranges are made up of a series of contiguous blocks of 100 contiguous phone numbers and are revised three to four times per year after a thorough analysis of the most recent edition of an electronic phonebook. Each number generated is processed through an appropriate series of validation procedures before it is retained as part of a sample. Each number generated is looked up in a recent electronic phonebook database to retrieve geographic location, business indicator and “do not call” status. The postal code for listed numbers is verified for accuracy and compared against a list of valid codes for the sample stratum. Non-listed numbers are assigned a “most probable” postal code based on the data available for all listed numbers in the phone exchange. This sample selection technique ensures that both unlisted numbers and numbers listed after the directory publication are included in the sample.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING

Interviewing for this survey was conducted at Environics’ central facilities in Toronto. Field supervisors were present at all times to ensure accurate interviewing and recording of responses. Ten percent of each interviewer’s work was unobtrusively monitored for quality control in accordance with the standards set out by the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA). A minimum of five calls were made to a household before classifying it as a “no answer.” From within each household contacted, respondents 18 years of age and older were screened for random selection using the “most recent birthday” method. The use of this technique produces results that are as valid and effective as enumerating all persons within a household and selecting one randomly.