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A Report To The Globe and Mail and CTV

**Canadian Charter of Rights and
Freedoms**

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Introduction and Methodology

- ◆ Gregg, Kelly, Sullivan & Woolstencroft: *The Strategic Counsel* is pleased to present findings of a national survey of 1000 Canadians.
- ◆ Results are based on tracking among a proportionate national sample of Canadians 18 years of age or older.
- ◆ Interviews were conducted between March 10th and March 13th, 2007.
- ◆ The following table outlines the sample distribution and associated margin of error.
- ◆ Note: Proportions may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Sample Distribution and Margin of Error

	March 10-13	
Region	Sample Size	Margin of Error (\pm)
Canada	1000	3.1%
Quebec	247	6.3%
Rest of Canada	753	3.6%
Ontario	379	5.0%
West	297	5.7%

Detailed Tables

Do Canadians feel that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has had a positive or negative impact over the last 25 years?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL Positive Impact	53	61	50	51	50
Very positive	12	13	11	14	6
Positive	41	48	39	37	44
Neutral	25	24	26	26	26
Negative	9	9	8	9	8
Very negative	3	2	3	2	5
TOTAL Negative Impact	12	11	11	11	13
DK/NA/Ref	10	3	12	11	11

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. As you may know, we are approaching the 25th anniversary of the introduction of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Over that period of time, do you think the Charter has had a very positive, positive, neutral, negative or very negative impact on Canada and Canadians?

Base: Total sample

Do Canadians support or oppose changing the Charter to include property rights?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL Favour	73	73	72	71	74
Strongly favour	24	14	27	24	31
Favour	49	59	45	47	43
Oppose	11	13	10	8	11
Strongly Oppose	4	3	5	6	4
TOTAL Oppose	15	16	15	14	15
DK/NA/Ref	12	11	13	15	11

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. Property rights – that is the right to own property and to protect that right – are not included in the Canadian Charter. Would you personally strongly favour, favour, oppose or strongly oppose changing the Charter to include property rights?

Base: Total sample

How do Canadians view the guarantee of religious freedom under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
Might lead to abuses	35	56	29	31	29
The guarantee of religious freedom is a fundamental right that must be protected	55	41	59	59	58
DK/NA/Ref	10	3	12	10	13

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. The Charter does guarantee the freedom of religion. Looking ahead, some are concerned that this might lead to abuses where some groups use this guarantee to pursue religious practices that are against Canadian values. Others disagree and say that the guarantee of religious freedom is a fundamental right that must be protected in all instances. Which one of these views best represents your own?

Base: Total sample

Has the Supreme Court of Canada done a good or poor job of protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL Good	42	47	41	43	38
Very good	9	7	10	11	7
Good	33	41	31	32	31
Average	37	38	37	34	39
Poor	10	7	11	10	13
Very Poor	5	4	5	5	6
TOTAL Poor	15	11	16	15	19
DK/NA/Ref	5	4	6	8	4

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. One of the jobs of the Supreme Court of Canada is to interpret Canadian laws to see if they are or are not meeting the terms of the Charter. From what you know, would you say the Supreme Court has done a very good, good, average, poor or very poor job of protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms?

Base: Total sample

Which institution has done more to protect Canadian rights and freedoms?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
The Supreme Court of Canada	44	49	42	42	40
The Parliament of Canada	33	34	33	34	33
DK/NA/Ref	23	17	25	24	27

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. Which institution do you think has done more to protect Canadian rights and freedoms – the Supreme Court or the Parliament of Canada?
Base: Total sample

Who do Canadians trust more to serve their interests?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
The Supreme Court of Canada	47	50	47	48	42
The Parliament of Canada	37	41	36	36	37
DK/NA/Ref	15	9	17	16	21

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. Who do you trust more to serve the interests of the average Canadian – the Supreme Court or the Parliament of Canada?

Base: Total sample

Who do Canadians think should earn more ... a court judge or a member of Parliament?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
A court judge	59	67	56	54	55
A member of Parliament	23	23	23	24	23
DK/NA/Ref	18	10	21	22	22

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. Who do you think should be paid more – a court judge or a member of Parliament?

Base: Total sample

Do Canadians support or oppose the idea of judges being elected to serve at certain levels of court?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL Support	63	67	62	62	60
Strongly support	24	23	24	24	24
Support	39	44	38	38	36
Oppose	19	19	19	18	21
Strongly Oppose	11	9	11	10	13
TOTAL Oppose	30	29	30	28	33
DK/NA/Ref	7	4	8	10	7

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. Right now, judges are appointed. Would you strongly support, support, oppose or strongly oppose the idea of judges being elected to serve at certain levels of court?
 Base: Total sample

How would Canadians feel if the notwithstanding clause was used to override a Supreme Court ruling?

	Canada	Region			
		Quebec	Rest of Canada*	Ontario	West
	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13	Mar 10-13
n=	1000	247	753	379	297
	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL Upset	45	44	46	45	47
Very upset	14	11	16	15	15
Upset	31	33	30	30	32
Not very upset	26	27	26	24	27
Not upset at all	15	22	13	14	12
TOTAL Not upset	41	49	39	38	39
DK/NA/Ref	13	7	15	17	13

*Note: Rest of Canada includes all provinces except Quebec

Q. One of the features of the Canadian Charter is something called “the notwithstanding clause”. This clause has rarely been used but it does allow Parliament and provincial legislatures to strike down Court rulings if they disagree with them. Would you be very upset, upset, not very upset, or not upset at all if Parliament or a provincial legislature used the Charter’s notwithstanding clause to override a Supreme Court ruling?

Base: Total sample