

2018 Public Perception Survey on Singapore's Anti-Drug Policies

Key Findings

Objective

In 2018, the Ministry of Home Affairs conducted a public perception survey on Singapore's anti-drug policies.

Methodology

A stratified random sampling method was used to select a total of 2,000 Singapore residents (Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents) aged 13 and above to take part in the survey. They were representative of Singapore's resident population by age, race, gender, and citizenship status.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted between July and October 2018. The respondents were asked a set of questions under the following four categories:

- (a) Support for Singapore's anti-drug policies;
- (b) Views on punishment for drug traffickers;
- (c) Views on rehabilitation of drug abusers; and
- (d) Perception of youths towards drugs.

Key Findings

(a) Support for Singapore's Anti-Drug Policies

- There is very strong support among respondents for a tough stance against drugs.

| Question | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| I wish to live in a drug-free society. | 98.1% | 1.7% | 0.2% |
| We should continue to maintain tough laws to keep drugs out of Singapore. | 97.8% | 1.7% | 0.5% |
| Drug-taking should remain illegal in Singapore. | 97.5% | 2.0% | 0.5% |

- Nearly all respondents acknowledged the harms of drugs.

| Question | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree |
|--|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Drug-taking will harm one's health. | 97.8% | 1.7% | 0.6% |
| Drugs affect one's life negatively. | 97.4% | 1.6% | 1.0% |
| Drugs affect families negatively. | 98.2% | 1.1% | 0.7% |
| Drug-taking has a negative impact on society. | 97.2% | 1.9% | 0.9% |
| Drug-trafficking has a negative impact on society. | 97.9% | 1.1% | 1.0% |

- There is strong positive sentiment towards Singapore's drug situation and laws.

| Question | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Singapore's drug-free environment makes me feel safe in Singapore. | 92.7% | 4.8% | 2.6% |
| The drug situation in Singapore is under control. | 80.5% | 14.6% | 4.9% |
| Singapore's laws on drugs are effective in keeping it relatively drug-free. | 89.0% | 8.2% | 2.8% |

- A large majority of respondents were of the view that cannabis abuse is addictive and harmful, and should remain illegal in Singapore.

| Question | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Consumption of cannabis is addictive. | 82.4% | 14.5% | 3.1% |
| Consumption of cannabis is harmful to one's health. | 80.2% | 15.9% | 3.9% |
| Consumption of cannabis has a negative impact on society. | 83.2% | 14.2% | 2.6% |
| Cannabis abuse should remain illegal in Singapore. | 87.1% | 10.0% | 2.8% |

(b) Views on Punishment for Drug Traffickers

- There is strong support for imprisonment, caning and the death penalty as punishment for drug traffickers.

| Question | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Imprisonment is an appropriate punishment for drug traffickers. | 93.0% | 5.0% | 2.1% |
| Caning is an appropriate punishment for drug traffickers. | 80.1% | 13.3% | 6.5% |
| Death penalty is an appropriate punishment for drug traffickers who traffic a large amount of drugs*. | 69.6% | 18.1% | 12.2% |
| [*Threshold quantities: 15g of diamorphine (pure heroin); 250g of methamphetamine ('Ice'); 500g of cannabis.] | | | |

(c) Views on Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers

- There is very strong support for the mandatory rehabilitation of drug abusers.

| Question | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree |
|--|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| Drug abusers should undergo rehabilitation. | 97.6% | 2.0% | 0.4% |
| The Singapore Government should mandate rehabilitation for drug abusers. | 95.5% | 3.5% | 1.0% |
| Rehabilitation should be mandatory because: | | | |
| ▪ Abusers may not be able to make rational decisions because of their addiction. | 97.4% | 2.2% | 0.4% |
| ▪ Abusers may not want to stop taking drugs. | 92.3% | 6.0% | 1.7% |
| ▪ Abusers may not voluntarily seek treatment for fear of legal repercussions. | 93.6% | 5.1% | 1.3% |

(d) Perception of Youths towards Drugs

- The majority of youths (aged between 13 and 30) agree that drugs are harmful and should remain illegal, although to a lesser degree compared to the overall population.

| Question | Overall | 13-30 Years Old | Above 30 Years Old |
|---|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cannabis abuse should remain illegal in Singapore. | 87.1% | 79.9% | 89.2% |
| Drug-taking should remain illegal in Singapore. | 97.5% | 95.8% | 98.1% |
| Consumption of cannabis is addictive. | 82.4% | 73.6% | 84.6% |
| Drug-taking is addictive. | 94.4% | 92.5% | 95.4% |
| Consumption of cannabis is harmful to one's health. | 80.2% | 67.5% | 83.6% |
| Drug-taking will harm one's health. | 97.8% | 96.9% | 98.0% |
| Consumption of cannabis has a negative impact on society. | 83.2% | 71.4% | 86.4% |
| Drug-taking has a negative impact on society. | 97.2% | 93.9% | 98.4% |

- Among youths, there is majority support for tough punishment for drug trafficking, although at a lower level than the overall population.

| Question | Overall | 13-30 Years Old | Above 30 Years Old |
|--|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Imprisonment is an appropriate punishment for drug traffickers. | 93.0% | 89.9% | 94.0% |
| Caning is an appropriate punishment for drug traffickers. | 80.1% | 77.5% | 80.8% |
| Death penalty is an appropriate punishment for drug traffickers who traffic a large amount of drugs. | 69.6% | 52.7% | 74.6% |