

Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories

TECHNICAL REPORT

2023 SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

On October 17, 2018, Canada became the second country to legalize non-medical cannabis at the national level. The three territories, Yukon, Northwest Territories (NWT), and Nunavut, have the highest prevalence of per capita cannabis use in Canada. Despite the importance of the territories with respect to cannabis regulations, there are very little existing data to guide cannabis policy in the territories. The **Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories** is a population-based study designed to examine the public health impacts of cannabis policies in the territories, including legalization of medical and non-medical cannabis as well as the effectiveness of specific regulatory measures for the following outcomes:

- prevalence, consumption, and patterns of cannabis use;
- commercial retail environment, price and purchasing;
- risk behaviours, including driving after cannabis use and use in ‘high risk’ occupational settings;
- perceptions of risk and social norms; and
- effectiveness of specific regulatory policies, including advertising restrictions, product labelling and warnings, public education campaigns, and the use of cannabis in public spaces.

The Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories uses a cross-sectional survey conducted annually with participants aged 16 and over living in the three territories. The cross-sectional survey was piloted in 2021, and was repeated at 12 months (2022) and 24 months (2023) to monitor key mediators and moderators of use. This technical report describes the methods for the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 conducted in September to November 2023. For more information about the study, please visit the project website: www.cannabisproject.ca/territories.

The Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories is an extension of the International Cannabis Policy Study (ICPS), which examines the impact of cannabis legalization in the ten provinces in Canada, the United States (since 2018), Australia and New Zealand (since 2021), and the United Kingdom and Germany (since 2023). The methodology of the overall ICPS study is described in the study’s methodology paper.¹

STUDY PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

The Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 is a repeat cross-sectional study of individuals aged 16 and over, who use or do not use cannabis, and who reside in the three territories in Canada (Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut). For the 2023 data collection, participants were recruited through mail-push-to-web invitations sent via Canada Post residential mailing lists, which include a near census of households across the three territories. The 2023 study was conducted using an online survey between September 25 to October 31, 2023 in Yukon and NWT, and until November 10, 2023 in Nunavut. The study timeline was extended in Nunavut due to longer mail delivery

times in the territory. The online survey was available in English, French, Inuktitut, and Inuinnaqtun. The final analytic sample includes 2,438 respondents. Median survey time of the final analytic sample was 31.6 minutes, including 42.1 minutes among past 12-month cannabis consumers and 26.2 minutes among those who had not used cannabis in the past 12 months.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

As the online survey used in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories was adapted from the ICPS, the majority of the survey measures included were identical between the two studies. For the ICPS, survey measures were drawn or adapted from national surveys or selected based on previous research.

The ICPS survey was developed over a two-year period with dedicated grant funding, with subsequent refinements at each annual wave. First, focus groups were conducted in April 2017 with youth and young adults to examine key concepts. Second, leading international experts were consulted to identify and refine existing survey measures. Third, an extensive pilot test of the ICPS survey was conducted with 1,000 youth and young adults in 2017.² Fourth, cognitive interviews were conducted in October 2017 with cannabis consumers to examine comprehension and ease of use. A second round of cognitive interviewing was conducted in July and August 2019 to refine new measures related to emerging product types. Fifth, in September-December 2021, a pilot was conducted with 400 cannabis consumers to test the collection of product images through the ICPS survey. This work has yielded several methodological publications related to measurement of cannabis consumption.^{1,3-6}

The survey used in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories was piloted in 2018 with 350 participants aged 19 and over in Yukon and NWT. Pilot participants, recruited from the capital cities of Whitehorse, Yukon and Yellowknife, NWT, were alcohol consumers and had participated in a previous study focused on alcohol warning labels.⁷ A larger pilot was then conducted in September – December 2021, with 993 participants recruited from across Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut. As part of the research license application processes in each of the three territories, a description of the study and the survey tool were shared with territorial governments and Indigenous leaders and organizations in the territories for review, feedback, and support prior to the launch of the pilot work in 2018 and in 2021.

LANGUAGE

The survey was written in English and translated to French via Public Health Ontario and to Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun by Aglu Consulting and Training Inc. In 2023, 97.1% of the final analytic sample completed the survey in English (n=2,367), 2.9% in French (n=70), and 0.04% (n=1) completed the survey in Inuinnaqtun.

SURVEY CONTENT

The survey document is available at: www.cannabisproject.ca/territories. The survey includes modules in the following content areas:

- prevalence and patterns of cannabis use;
- cannabis purchasing and price;
- cannabis consumption and product types;
- commercial retail environment;
- risk behaviours;
- cannabis knowledge, perceptions of risk and social norms;
- exposure to health warnings and public educational campaigns;
- exposure to cannabis marketing and branding;
- substance use and other risk behaviours; and
- sociodemographics, postal code, and socio-economic status.

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT

SAMPLE ELIGIBILITY

Individuals were eligible to participate if they resided in the territories, were 16 years of age or older at the time of recruitment, and had access to the internet.

RECRUITMENT AND CONSENT

The study used a mail push-to-web recruitment method. Mailed postcards were sent to 35,972 residential household mailboxes, a near census of households across the three territories. The residential mailbox information was obtained from two data sources from Canada Post. First, a licensed list containing 28,678 addresses in the territories was rented from Canada Post (i.e., addressed/personalized mail). Second, a list containing 7,294 mailboxes in the territories not covered by the addressed mail list was used to maximize coverage across the territories (i.e., unaddressed/neighbourhood mail), which means there is no specific delivery address, but rather postcards without a specified address are sent in bulk to be delivered to all households in a neighbourhood.

The postcards included study information, an invitation for one person per household aged 16 and over to complete the survey, a link to the survey, and a unique access code. Mailboxes in the addressed mail list received two postcards, one invitation and one reminder postcard containing the same unique access code. The invitation postcard was mailed on September 22, 2023 and the reminder postcard on October 5, 2023. Mailboxes in the unaddressed mail list received only one invitation postcard which was sent out on September 20, 2023. Reminder postcards were not sent

to the unaddressed mail list because we were unable to deliver reminder postcards with the same unique access code to the corresponding mailboxes.

The study officially launched on September 25, 2023. The survey for Yukon and NWT closed on October 31, 2023; the survey for Nunavut was extended due to longer mail delivery times in the territory and closed on November 10, 2023.

The study was promoted using several methods. First, locally hired Research Assistants (RAs) in Whitehorse, Dawson City, Yellowknife, Inuvik, and Iqaluit shared study information in their communities. Second, Indigenous and government organizations shared study information with their networks. Third, study information was shared on public community pages on social media. Fourth, unpaid media interviews with researchers were conducted on local and regional radio and news outlets. Lastly, radio and digital ads were purchased from local media outlets.

Comparisons between the sample profile and national estimates from benchmark population-based surveys are provided herein.

RESPONSE RATES

Table 1 shows outcomes for respondent recruitment for the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023. Overall, 35,972 households were each mailed an invitation with a link to the online survey and a unique access code, of whom 3,607 (10.0%) accessed the survey link and entered the access code.

Of those who accessed the link and entered the access code, 546 (16.1%) respondents partially completed the survey (completed <80% of universal survey questions) and 2,846 (77.8%) fully completed the survey. As shown in Table 1, 215 (6.1%) respondents were terminated. Reasons for termination included 'forced' termination due to ineligibility, including residence outside Canada (n=1) or the territories (n=134), age less than 16 (n=1), and self-termination at initial consent (n=21). Respondents were also excluded if they did not provide a response to mandatory survey questions, including, 'Have you ever tried marijuana?' (n=47), 'When was the last time you used marijuana?' (n=7), and 'How often do you use marijuana?' (n=4). Respondents were discouraged from attempting to complete the main survey via a mobile device, but were not restricted from doing so.

Overall, the participation rate was 7.9%, including 3.1% in Nunavut, 7.3% in NWT, and 10.5% in Yukon (see Table 1). The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) recommends reporting the 'participation rate' defined as "the number of respondents who have provided a usable response divided by the total number of initial personal invitations requesting participation".⁸ The cooperation rate represents the percentage of respondents who completed the survey among all eligible respondents who accessed the survey link. Across all territories, the cooperation rate was 78.9% (2,846/3,607).

DATA INTEGRITY

Data integrity checks were conducted for all surveys (Table 1). A total of 408 surveys were excluded. Surveys were excluded if confirmed as a repeated respondent. Among surveys completed under identical email addresses, the first survey within a set was retained (n=36), and the subsequent survey(s) within the set completed under the same email address was/were excluded (n=68). An additional analysis of identical responses to 20 sociodemographic variables (e.g., age, sex at birth, education, postal code) was completed, and identified two surveys of which the survey completed at the later time was excluded. During routine data integrity checks conducted daily, a small number of completed surveys were flagged as potential repeated respondents based on multiple respondents sharing at least two of the following: i. similar email addresses, ii. identical responses across multiple sociodemographic and geographic variables, including city and postal code, iii. surveys submitted within a short time period, or iv. surveys completed in relatively short survey times.

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter, at the end of the survey, respondents were asked whether they felt they were able to answer the questions honestly. The 139 respondents who selected 'no' were excluded from the final analytic sample. Towards the end of the survey, respondents were also asked to select the current month from a list. The month selected by the respondent was compared to the month the respondent completed the survey. Respondents with discrepant responses were excluded from the analytic sample, unless the selected month was within two days of the date the survey was submitted (e.g., survey was completed on September 30 but respondent selected October). A total of 96 respondents were excluded from the analytic sample due to discrepancies with the month selected. Another 27 respondents were excluded because they entered a postal code that was not in the territories, a postal code that was incongruent with reported territory of residence, or a unique survey access code that did not match with territory and city. Respondents who identified as "intersex" and their gender identity as "other/unstated" (n=17) were excluded due to cell counts insufficient for weighting. Another data integrity check was conducted to identify speeders, such that respondents who completed the survey with a total survey time <25% of the median survey time would be excluded. The median survey time was calculated separately for two groups: those who had and those who had not used cannabis in the past 12 months (the latter were expected to complete the survey more quickly due to skip logic). Three respondents were identified as speeders and eliminated. The final analytic sample included 2,438 respondents, 68% of the total accessing the survey link.

Table 1: Dispositions of potential respondents in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023

Disposition	Total		Yukon		NWT		Nunavut	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total invitations	35,972	100%	15,073	100%	14,529	100%	6,370	100%
Accessed survey	3,607	10.0%	1,933	12.8%	1,319	9.1%	355	5.6%
Terminated survey	215	0.6%	82	0.5%	48	0.3%	85	1.3%
Partially completed survey	546	1.5%	263	1.7%	211	1.4%	72	1.1%
COMPLETED SURVEY	2,846	7.9%	1,588	10.5%	1,060	7.3%	198	3.1%
Excluded – dishonesty ^a	139	0.4%	79	0.5%	49	0.3%	11	0.2%
Excluded – identified current month incorrectly ^b	96	0.3%	50	0.3%	38	0.3%	8	0.1%
Excluded – repeated respondents ^c	69	0.2%	22	0.1%	43	0.3%	4	0.1%
Excluded – potential repeated respondents ^d	57	0.2%	5	<0.1%	51	0.3%	1	<0.1%
Excluded – ineligible/incongruent location ^e	27	<0.1%	15	0.1%	8	0.1%	4	0.1%
Excluded – unidentified sex ^f	17	<0.1%	10	<0.1%	6	<0.1%	1	<0.1%
Excluded – speeding ^g	3	<0.1%	2	<0.1%	1	<0.1%	0	0.0%
FINAL ANALYTIC SAMPLE	2,438		1,405		864		169	

NWT, Northwest Territories.

^a Respondents who answered ‘no’ to the question, “Were you able to provide ‘honest’ answers about your marijuana use during the survey?” were excluded.

^b Respondents who incorrectly answered the data integrity check question, “What is the current month?” were excluded. Respondents who indicated a month ≤2 days of the correct month (e.g., survey was completed on September 30, but respondent selected October) were retained.

^c Surveys completed under identical email addresses and surveys with identical responses to 20 sociodemographic variables were confirmed as repeated respondents. For surveys completed by repeated respondents, the first survey within a set was retained, and the subsequent survey(s) within the set was/were excluded.

^d During routine data integrity checks conducted daily, a small number of completed surveys were flagged as potential repeated respondents based on multiple respondents sharing at least two of the following: i. similar email addresses, ii. identical responses across multiple sociodemographic and geographic variables, including city and postal code, iii. surveys submitted within a short time period, or iv. surveys completed in relatively short survey times. All surveys completed by potential repeated respondents were excluded.

^e Respondents who entered a postal code that was not in the territories, a postal code that was incongruent with territory, or a unique survey access code that did not match territory or city were excluded.

^f For weighting and analytical purposes, individuals identifying as ‘intersex’ were assigned their gender identity if they selected woman/female or man/male. Those who identified their sex as ‘intersex’ and their gender identity as ‘other’/unstated were excluded due to insufficient cell counts for weighting.

^g Respondents were excluded if their total survey time was <25% of the median survey time; this median value was calculated separately for two groups: those who had and had not used cannabis in the past 12 months (the latter was expected to complete the survey more quickly due to skip logic).

PARTICIPANT COMPENSATION

Monetary incentives have been shown to increase response rates and to decrease response bias among subgroups commonly under-represented in surveys, including disadvantaged subgroups. Respondents were provided with a \$20 e-transfer as remuneration for completing the survey.

ETHICS CLEARANCE

The project has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee (ORE #42817) and from a Public Health Ontario Ethics Review Board (#2021-021.01 to 2021-021.03). In addition, the project has been reviewed and approved by the Scientists and Explorers Licencing Program in Yukon (research license #21-50S&E, 22-04S&E, and 23-24S&E), Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture, and Employment (research license #16891, 16960, and 17320), and Nunavut Research Institute in Nunavut (research license #05 013 21N-M, 05 001 22R-M, and 05 012 23R-M).

DATA MANAGEMENT

DATA CLEANING

The survey asked respondents about their current frequency of cannabis use in two ways: as a categorical variable (less than once per month, 1+ times per month, 1+ times per week, every day/almost every day) and also as an open-ended variable where the respondent entered the number of days they use cannabis per week/month/in the past 12 months. Where large discrepancies between responses to these two variables existed (e.g., respondent selected “less than once per month” but indicated that they used cannabis on 365 days in the past 12 months), the current frequency of cannabis use was reclassified. This affected 1.8% (n=17) of past 12-month cannabis consumers.

SURVEY WEIGHTS

Post-stratification sample weights were constructed based on 2021 Canadian Census estimates. Respondents from Canada were classified into age-by-sex-by-territory and education groups, using 2021 Canadian Census data. Correspondingly grouped population count and proportion estimates were obtained from Statistics Canada.⁹ A raking algorithm was applied to the cross-sectional analytic sample (n=2,438) to compute weights that were calibrated to these groupings. Weights were then rescaled to the sample size for the three territories, Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut.

DATA SUPPRESSION

All results are presented for the overall sample, by territory, and using specific subgroups in some cases, including past 12-month cannabis consumers, ever used cannabis, and by sex at birth and age group. Where sample denominators are small (i.e., <30) data are suppressed. The coefficient of variation (CV) was calculated for all percentages. Where $CV > 33.3\%$, the data are suppressed in the report due to high sampling variability. Where $CV \leq 33.3\%$ but $\geq 16.6\%$, the data are flagged and a note is made to interpret results with caution due to moderate sampling variability.

SAMPLE SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 2. In the sample, a higher percentage of females (54.9% unweighted) completed the survey compared to males (45.1%). By age, the largest age group was ages 26-35, making up 24.5% of respondents, followed by 22.8% that were ages 36-45. Sample composition by age and sex were similar across the territories, though with a lower proportion ages 55+ in Nunavut compared to the other territories. Regarding ethnicity/race, 64.2% of the sample was White, compared to 19.0% that self-identified as Indigenous (any Indigenous ethnicity or status identified in part or exclusively). A higher proportion of the sample in Northwest Territories and Nunavut compared to Yukon self-identified as Indigenous (25.5% and 55.0% respectively, and 10.7% in Yukon).

Residents of Yukon made up the largest percent of sample respondents (57.6%, $n=1,405$), followed by Northwest Territories at 35.4% ($n=864$), and Nunavut at 6.9% ($n=169$) (see Table 3).

Table 2: Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample characteristics by territory (n=2,438)

	Overall n=2,438		Yukon n=1,405		NWT n=864		Nunavut n=169	
	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted ^a % (n)	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted ^a % (n)	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted ^a % (n)	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted ^a % (n)
Sex								
Female	54.9 (1339)	49.6 (1208)	54.9 (771)	50.5 (710)	54.4 (470)	49.4 (427)	58.0 (98)	48.4 (82)
Male	45.1 (1099)	50.4 (1230)	45.1 (634)	49.5 (695)	45.6 (394)	50.6 (437)	42.0 (71)	51.6 (87)
Age (years)								
Mean (SD)	43.8 (16.5)	43.1 (16.9)	46.0 (17.1)	46.3 (18.2)	41.1 (15.3)	43.3 (16.5)	39.4 (13.6)	38.0 (14.0)
Age group								
16-25	12.2 (298)	16.9 (411)	10.5 (147)	14.3 (201)	13.9 (120)	14.9 (129)	18.3 (31)	23.5 (40)
26-35	24.5 (596)	21.6 (526)	21.6 (304)	18.0 (253)	29.1 (251)	22.0 (190)	24.3 (41)	26.3 (45)
36-45	22.8 (556)	20.5 (500)	23.0 (323)	21.2 (297)	22.2 (192)	21.2 (183)	24.3 (41)	18.6 (31)
46-55	14.6 (357)	14.7 (358)	13.9 (195)	12.6 (176)	14.8 (128)	14.2 (123)	20.1 (34)	18.4 (31)
56-65	12.1 (295)	13.4 (327)	13.1 (184)	14.1 (199)	11.1 (96)	15.4 (134)	8.9 (15)	9.4 (16)
66+	13.8 (336)	12.9 (315)	17.9 (252)	19.8 (279)	8.9 (77)	12.2 (105)	4.1 (7)	3.7 (6)
Education								
Less than high school	10.3 (251)	18.3 (446)	7.5 (105)	12.3 (173)	12.6 (109)	18.6 (161)	21.9 (37)	26.6 (45)
High school diploma or equivalent	8.6 (209)	14.7 (359)	7.8 (110)	13.0 (183)	8.6 (74)	13.6 (117)	14.8 (25)	18.9 (32)
Some college/technical training/diploma	30.2 (737)	44.8 (1092)	32.0 (449)	54.4 (765)	29.3 (253)	48.8 (421)	20.7 (35)	24.8 (42)
Bachelor's degree or higher	49.5 (1207)	20.5 (500)	51.7 (727)	19.2 (270)	47.7 (412)	17.1 (148)	40.2 (68)	27.3 (46)
Unstated ('don't know' and 'refuse to answer')	1.4 (34)	1.7 (41)	1.0 (14)	1.0 (14)	1.8 (16)	1.9 (16)	- ^c	- ^c
Ethnicity/race								
White	64.2 (1,566)	52.2 (1,272)	74.4 (1,046)	72.5 (1,019)	53.6 (463)	49.3 (426)	33.7 (57)	26.1 (44)
Indigenous ^b	19.0 (463)	34.4 (838)	10.7 (150)	14.7 (207)	25.5 (220)	34.6 (299)	55.0 (93)	63.1 (107)
Other/mixed/unstated	16.8 (409)	13.5 (328)	14.9 (209)	12.7 (179)	20.9 (181)	16.1 (139)	11.2 (19)	10.8 (18)

NWT, Northwest Territories; SD, standard deviation.

^a Weighted data are scaled to the unweighted sample size in each territory.

^b Self-identified any Indigenous ethnicity or status in part or exclusively.

^c Result suppressed due to small sample size (n<5 for demographic variables)

Table 3: Proportion of Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 respondents by territory of residence (n=2,438)

Territory (n=2,438)	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted^a % (n)
Yukon	57.6 (1,405)	37.8 (921)
NWT	35.4 (864)	36.7 (895)
Nunavut	6.9 (169)	25.5 (622)

NWT, Northwest Territories.

^a Weighted data are scaled to the unweighted sample size in each territory.

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

The unweighted and weighted Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample was compared with the 2021 Canadian Census, estimates from the territories (see Table 4) with data released on ethnicity and education.

The Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 unweighted sample includes an over-representation of respondents with a high level of education. Compared to the 2021 Canadian Census, the overall Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample (unweighted) includes a higher percent of respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher (49.5% in the Territories study sample v. 20.9% in the Census). People with more education are over-represented in the sample relative to the Canadian Census in each of the territories, in Yukon (51.7% in the Territories Study sample v. 27.3% in the Census), in NWT (57.7% v. 22.2%), and in Nunavut (40.2% v. 10.6%).

In terms of ethnicity/race, there was an under-representation of respondents that self-identify as Indigenous. In the 2021 Canadian Census, 51.7% of people in the territories identify as Indigenous, compared to only 19.0% (unweighted) in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample. Indigenous populations are under-represented in the sample compared to the Canadian Census in Yukon (10.7% in the Territories Study sample v. 22.3% in the Census), Northwest Territories (25.5% v. 49.6%), and Nunavut (55.0% v. 85.8%).

Table 4: Sociodemographic factors among respondents from the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 and the 2021 Canadian Census

	2021 Census ^a age ≥15	Cannabis Policy Studies in the Territories 2023 age ≥16 n=2,438	
	%	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted ^b % (n)
OVERALL (All three territories)			
Education			
Less than high school	29.0%	10.3% (251)	18.3% (446)
High school diploma or equivalent	23.1%	8.6% (209)	14.7% (359)
Some college/technical training/diploma	27.0%	30.2% (737)	44.8% (1092)
Bachelor's degree or higher	20.9%	49.5% (1207)	20.5% (500)
Unstated ('don't know' and 'refuse to answer')	-	1.4% (34)	1.7% (41)
Ethnicity/race			
White	38.6%	64.2% (1,566)	52.2% (1,272)
Indigenous ^c	51.7%	19.0% (463)	34.4% (838)
Other/mixed/unstated	9.7%	16.8% (409)	13.5% (328)
YUKON			
Education			
Less than high school	14.8%	7.5% (105)	12.3% (173)
High school diploma or equivalent	25.5%	7.8% (110)	13.0% (183)
Some college or technical training	32.3%	32.0% (449)	54.4% (765)
Bachelor's degree or higher	27.3%	51.7% (727)	19.2% (270)
Unstated ('don't know' and 'refuse to answer')	-	1.0% (14)	1.0% (14)
Ethnicity/race			
White	64.9%	74.4% (1,046)	72.5% (1,019)
Indigenous ^c	22.3%	10.7% (150)	14.7% (207)
Other/mixed/unstated	12.8%	14.9% (209)	12.7% (179)
NWT			
Education			
Less than high school	25.9%	12.6% (109)	18.6% (161)
High school diploma or equivalent	24.3%	8.6% (74)	13.6% (117)
Some college or technical training	27.7%	29.3% (253)	48.8% (421)
Bachelor's degree or higher	22.2%	47.7% (412)	17.1% (148)
Unstated ('don't know' and 'refuse to answer')	-	1.8% (16)	1.9% (16)
Ethnicity/race			
White	38.2%	53.6% (463)	49.3% (426)
Indigenous ^c	49.6%	25.5% (220)	34.6% (299)
Other/mixed/unstated	12.2%	20.9% (181)	16.1% (139)
NUNAVUT			
Education			
Less than high school	51.9%	21.9% (37)	26.6% (45)
High school diploma or equivalent	18.5%	14.8% (25)	18.9% (32)
Some college or technical training	19.0%	20.7% (35)	24.8% (42)
Bachelor's degree or higher	10.6%	40.2% (68)	27.3% (46)
Unstated ('don't know' and 'refuse to answer')	-	-	-
Ethnicity/race			
White	10.6%	33.7% (57)	26.1% (44)
Indigenous ^c	85.8%	55.0% (93)	63.1% (107)
Other/mixed/unstated	3.6%	11.2% (19)	10.8% (18)

NWT, Northwest Territories.

^a Data obtained from the 2021 Canadian Census.

^b Weighted data are scaled to the unweighted sample size in each territory.

^c Self-identified any Indigenous ethnicity or status in part or exclusively.

CANNABIS USE – COMPARISONS WITH BENCHMARK SURVEY

Table 5 shows cannabis use measures in each of the three territories. Overall, 79.1% of respondents (weighted) have ever used cannabis, which is similar across Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut. Frequency of use is similar across the three territories.

Table 6 presents cannabis use estimates among the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample compared with population estimates from the territories' sample in the Canadian Cannabis Survey (CCS) 2023.¹⁰ The Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample, with 2,438 respondents, is larger than the territories' sample in the CCS 2023 (n=245). Values are presented in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 for all three territories combined for comparison with the CCS 2023 sample, which is not broken down by individual territory due to the small sample size.

In the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample, cannabis use prevalence estimates were slightly higher than the territories' sample in the CCS 2023. Among all respondents, the weighted prevalence of lifetime cannabis use estimate was higher in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample compared to the CCS 2023 sample (79.1% v. 72.8%), whereas the prevalence of past 12-month use (40.7% v. 39.2%) and past 30-day use (29.2% v. 24.7%) were similar between the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample and CCS 2023 sample.

Among all respondents, prevalence estimates for past 12-month use were similar for males (43.0% v. 39.0%) and females (38.3% v. 39.5%) in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample compared to the CCS 2023 sample, respectively. Prevalence estimates for past 12-month use were also higher for ages 25+ in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories sample compared to the CCS sample (40.4% v. 34.5%). Of note, comparisons with CCS 2023 data for past 12-month use for ages 16-19 and ages 20-24 could not be made due to data suppression in the CCS sample.

Among all respondents, cannabis use frequency was similar between the samples in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories and the CCS 2023, with the exception of daily use/almost daily use (5+ days per week). The frequency of daily/almost daily use was higher in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories sample compared to the CCS sample (16.3% vs. 10.9%; Table 6).

Among past 12-month consumers, age of initiation and the types of cannabis products used were similar between the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories and the CCS 2023 samples (Table 6).

Table 5: Indicators of cannabis use among Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 cross-sectional respondents, weighted

Indicator	Among all respondents n=2,438 % (weighted n)				Among past 12-month cannabis consumers n=935 % (weighted n)			
	Overall n=2,438	Yukon n=1,405	NWT n=864	Nunavut n=169	Overall n=935	Yukon n=550	NWT n=312	Nunavut n=73
Ever tried cannabis								
Yes	79.1% (1,927)	79.4% (1,116)	74.5% (643)	85.1% (144)	-	-	-	-
Cannabis use status^a								
Never used	20.9% (511)	20.6% (289)	25.5% (221)	14.9% (25) ^b	-	-	-	-
Used >12 months ago	38.3% (935)	38.4% (540)	37.9% (327)	38.9% (66)	-	-	-	-
Used in past 12 months, <monthly	12.9% (315)	13.7% (192)	11.0% (95)	14.5% (24) ^b	31.7% (315)	33.3% (192)	30.0% (95)	31.4% (24) ^b
Monthly use	5.4% (131)	5.7% (80)	5.2% (44) ^b	- ^c	13.2% (131)	13.8% (80)	14.1% (45)	- ^c
Weekly use	6.1% (149)	6.1% (86)	5.9% (51)	6.5% (11) ^b	15.1% (149)	14.9% (86)	16.1% (51)	14.0% (11) ^b
Daily/almost daily use (5+ days per week)	16.3% (397)	15.5% (218)	14.5% (126)	19.9% (34) ^b	40.0% (397)	37.9% (218)	39.8% (126)	43.2% (34)

NWT, Northwest Territories.

^a Exclusive categories (e.g., 'used in past 12 months' does not include monthly, weekly, or daily/almost daily consumers).

^b Interpret with caution due to coefficient of variation $\geq 16.6\%$.

^c Suppressed due to coefficient of variation $>33.3\%$.

Table 6: Cannabis use in the three territories in the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 sample and Canadian Cannabis Survey 2023 sample

	CCS 2023 ^a , age ≥16 n=245	Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023, age ≥16 n=2,438	
	%	Unweighted % (n)	Weighted % (n)
Among all respondents (n=2,438)			
Cannabis use status			
Lifetime (ever) use	72.8%	77.2% (1,882)	79.1% (1,972)
Past 12-month use	39.2%	38.4% (935)	40.7% (993)
Past 30-day use	24.7%	25.8% (628)	29.2% (711)
Past 12-month use			
Male	39.0%	48.3% (452)	43.0% (529)
Female	39.5%	36.1% (483)	38.3% (463)
Age 16-19	-. ^b	29.0% (36)	34.7% (55)
Age 20-24	-. ^b	48.5% (65)	48.7% (100)
Age 25+	34.5%	38.3% (834)	40.4% (837)
Frequency of cannabis use^c			
Past 12-month use-less than monthly	11.3%	14.4% (352)	12.9% (315)
Monthly (1 to 3 days per month)	7.0%	5.9% (144)	5.4% (131)
Weekly (1 to 4 days per week)	10.0%	6.1% (148)	6.1% (149)
Daily/almost daily (5+ days per week)	10.9%	11.9% (291)	16.3% (397)
Among past 12-month consumers (n=935)			
Initiation to cannabis use			
Mean age (years)	19.7	19.0	18.4
Cannabis product type^d			
Dried flower	60.6	65.9% (616)	71.2% (707)
Edibles (foods)	43.1	66.7% (624)	58.5% (580)
Vaped	43.9	29.6% (277)	33.6% (333)
Hash/kief	11.5	19.0% (178)	26.6% (264)
Oil for oral ingestion (drops and capsules)	-. ^b	28.7% (268)	27.2% (270)
Solid concentrates	-. ^b	15.9% (149)	22.3% (221)
Topical ointments	-. ^b	14.6% (136)	11.1% (110)
Beverages	11.8	19.9% (186)	16.5% (164)

^a Data obtained from the Canadian Cannabis Survey (CCS) 2023 (https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H21-312-2023-2-eng.pdf) in which cannabis consumers may have been more likely to complete the study compared to other surveys such as the Canadian Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs Survey (CTADS).

^b Data could not be reported due to data suppression.

^c Recalculated CCS values presented among past 12-month consumers to examine frequency of use in overall population.

^d Note that the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories 2023 asks about dried herb (smoked or vaped) separate from oils/liquids for vaping, whereas CCS asks about use of dried flower versus use of a vape pen or cartridge. Thus, CCS estimates for vaping include vaporizing dried flower, which is captured in the 'dried flower' estimate for the Cannabis Policy Study in the Territories.

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