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# Regulating Cannabis for Public Health in Canada

USC Schaeffer Center and the Institute for Addiction  
Science

Rebecca Jesseman

October 13, 2021

# Bill C-45 (*Cannabis Act*)

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- Objectives
  - Prevent young persons from accessing cannabis
  - Protect public health and safety
  - Deter criminal activity
  - Reduce the burden on the criminal justice system

# The *Cannabis Act* (in brief)

Minimum age	18
Personal cultivation limit	4 plants
Public possession limit	30 g dried (or equivalent)
Product formats	Dried or oils (first year) Edibles, extracts and topicals (Oct. 17, 2019)
Penalties	Fine to 14 years in prison
Packaging	Can't appeal to youth Mandatory warnings Must specify THC & CBD levels
Advertising and marketing	Tightly restricted

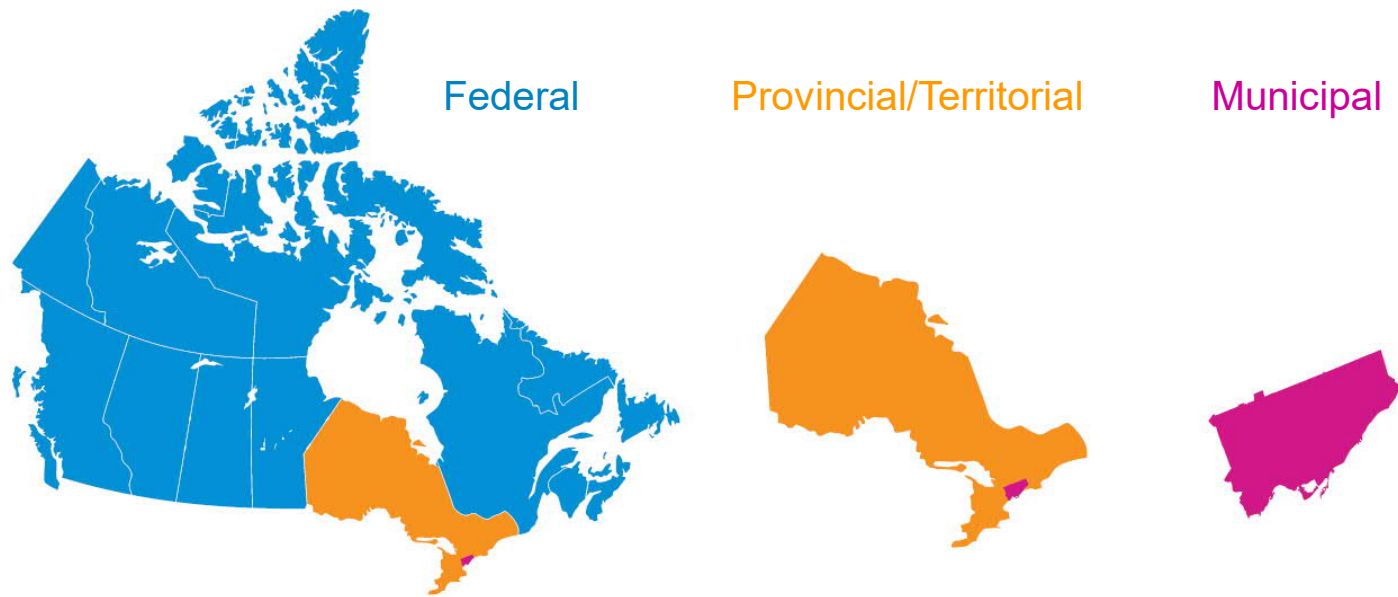
# Product Formats (federal)



# THC Restrictions (federal)

Product Type	THC/Weight Restrictions
Dried	1 g per pre-rolled joint
Edibles	10 mg per package
Extracts	10 mg per unit or dispensed dose 1,000 mg per package
Topicals	1,000 mg per package

# Division of Authority



# Taxation

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## Excise Taxes

- Paid by the producer to the federal government
- 75% goes back to the provinces and territories
- Dried, plants and seeds: the greater of \$1/gram or 10% of retail value
- Oils, edibles, extracts and topicals: \$0.01/mg total THC

## Additional Taxes

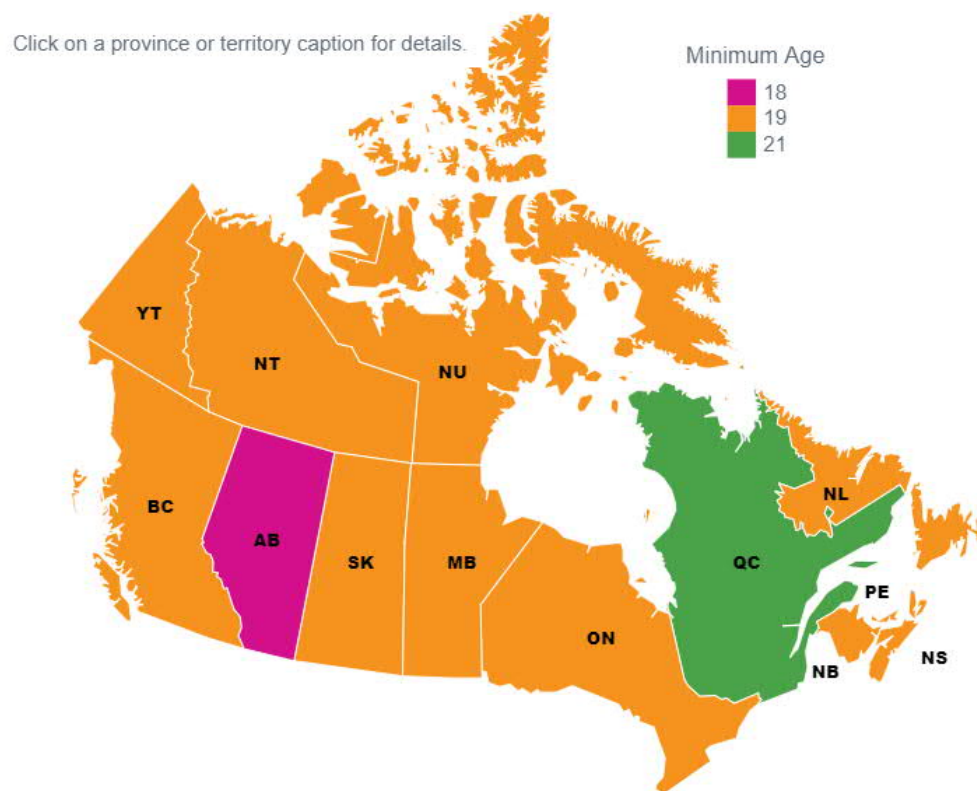
- Retail sales tax (GST)
- Provincial and territorial adjustment rates (e.g., 3.9% in Ont., 16.8% in Alta.)



# Provincial Differences: Legal Age

## Minimum legal age

- 18 in Alberta
- 21 in Quebec
- 19 for all other provinces and territories



# Provincial Differences

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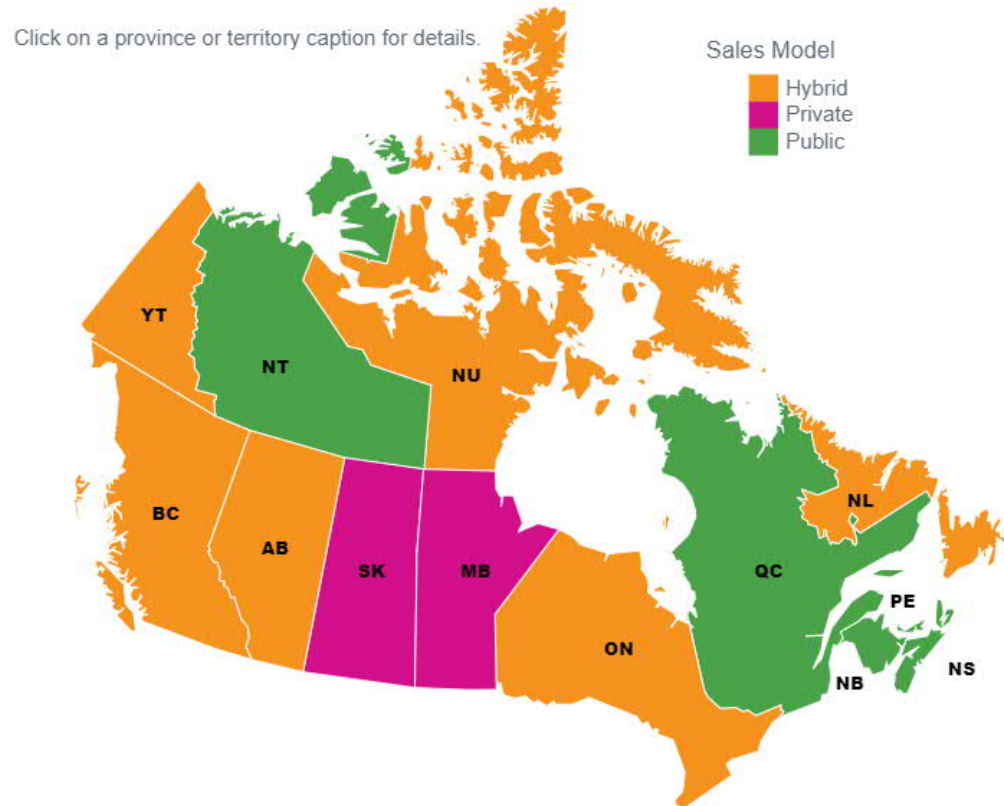
Additional differences include:

- Home cultivation prohibited in Manitoba and Québec
- Personal possession limits in British Columbia (1kg) and Québec (150g)
- Restrictions on edible flavours and formats in Québec
- Restrictions on vaping products in Québec, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia

# Provincial Differences: Retail Model

## Sales model

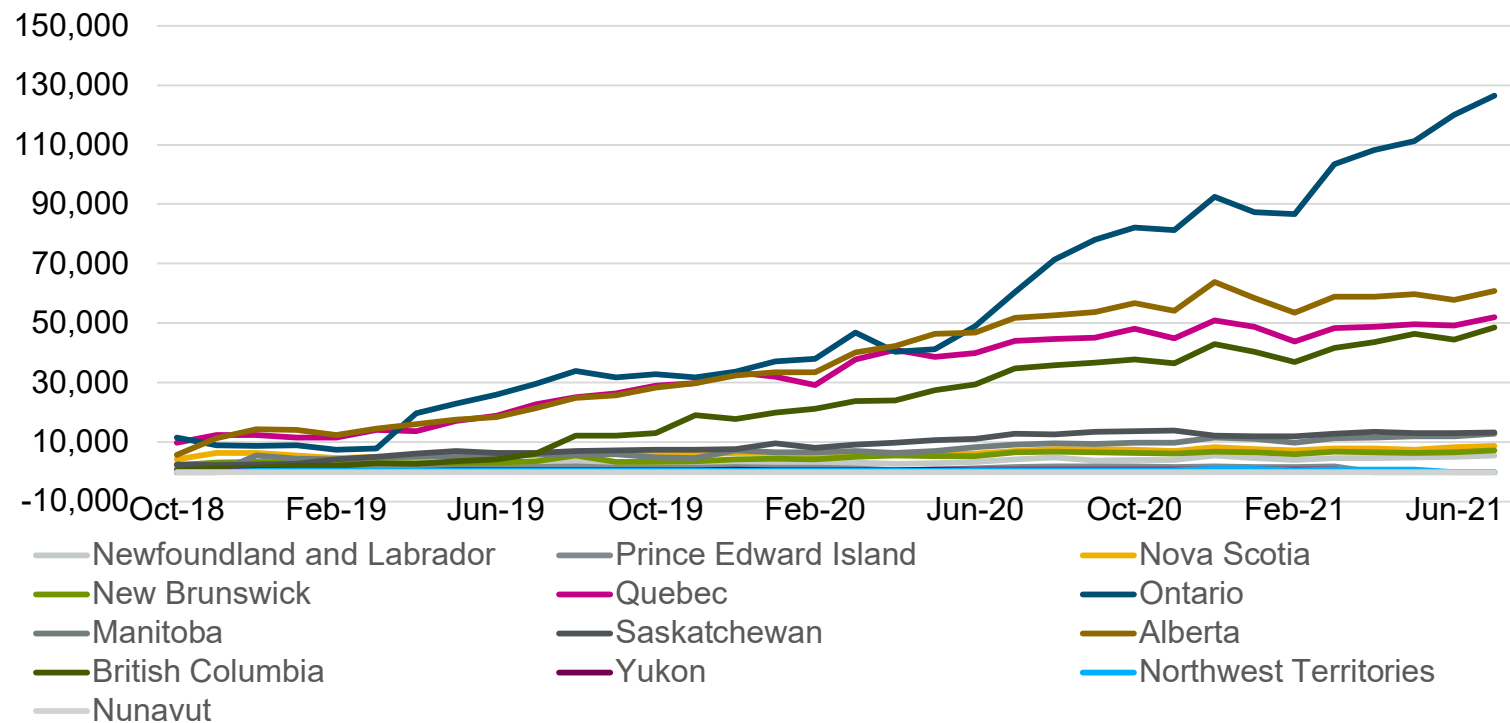
- Private (pink)
- Public (green)
- Hybrid (orange)



# Number of Retail Stores (pink=private)

Jurisdiction	March 31, 2019	August 28, 2020	January 13, 2021	September 7, 2021
British Columbia	5	282	331	399
Alberta	75	507	553	677
Saskatchewan	21	44	55	109
Manitoba	21	31	56	109
Ontario	0	58	347	1,072
Quebec	13	40	57	77
New Brunswick	20	20	20	20
Nova Scotia	12	12	21	33
Prince Edward Island	4	4	4	4
Newfoundland & Labrador	25	25	28	33
Yukon	1	5	5	5
Northwest Territories	5	5	5	6
Nunavut	0	0	0	1

# Retail Sales (\$CAD x 1,000)

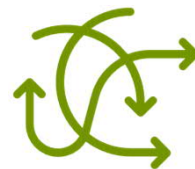
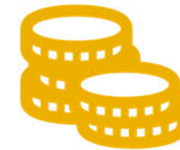


Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 20-10-0008-01 Retail trade sales by province and territory \(x 1,000\)](#)  
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# Summary: Challenges

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- Revenues versus implementation costs
- Timeline to implementation
- Clarity and consistency
- Data availability





# Early Observations

# Consumption

Prevalence of use (Source: [Statistics Canada National Cannabis Survey](#))

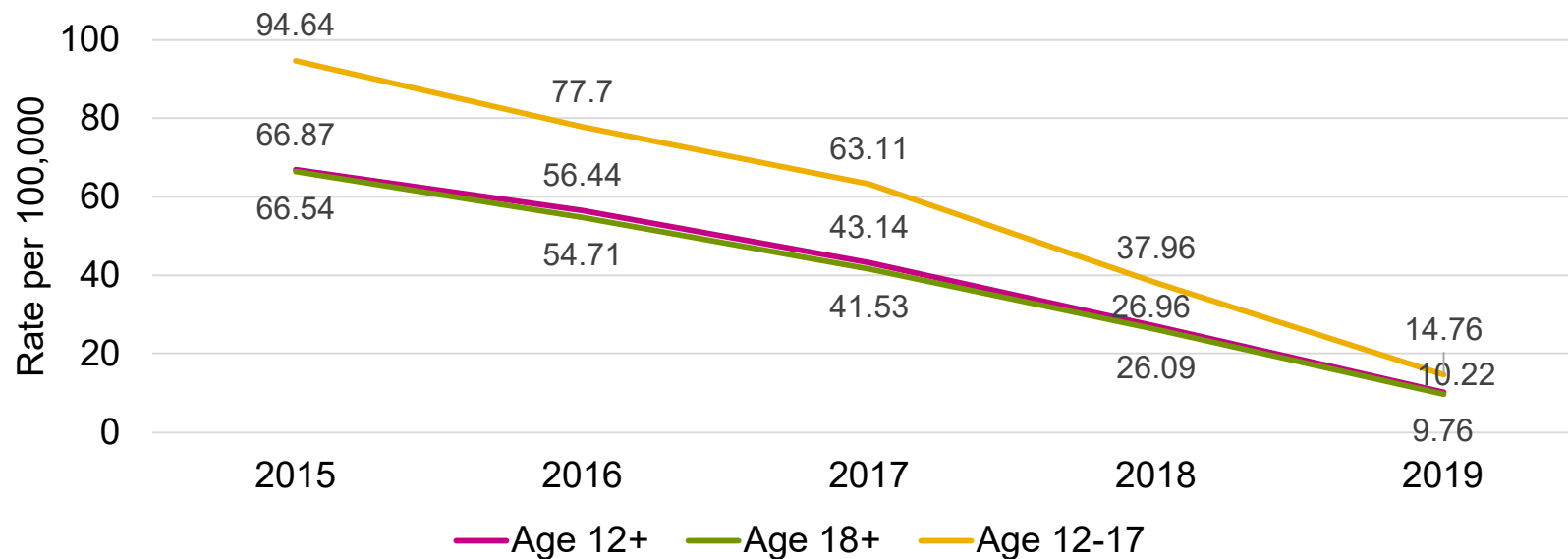
Timeframe	Past 3 Months	Daily/Near Daily
Q1 2018	14%	5.4%
Q1 2019	17.5%	6.1%
Q4 2020	20%	7.9%

- The gender gap is closing
  - No longer a significant difference between males and females in Q4 2020



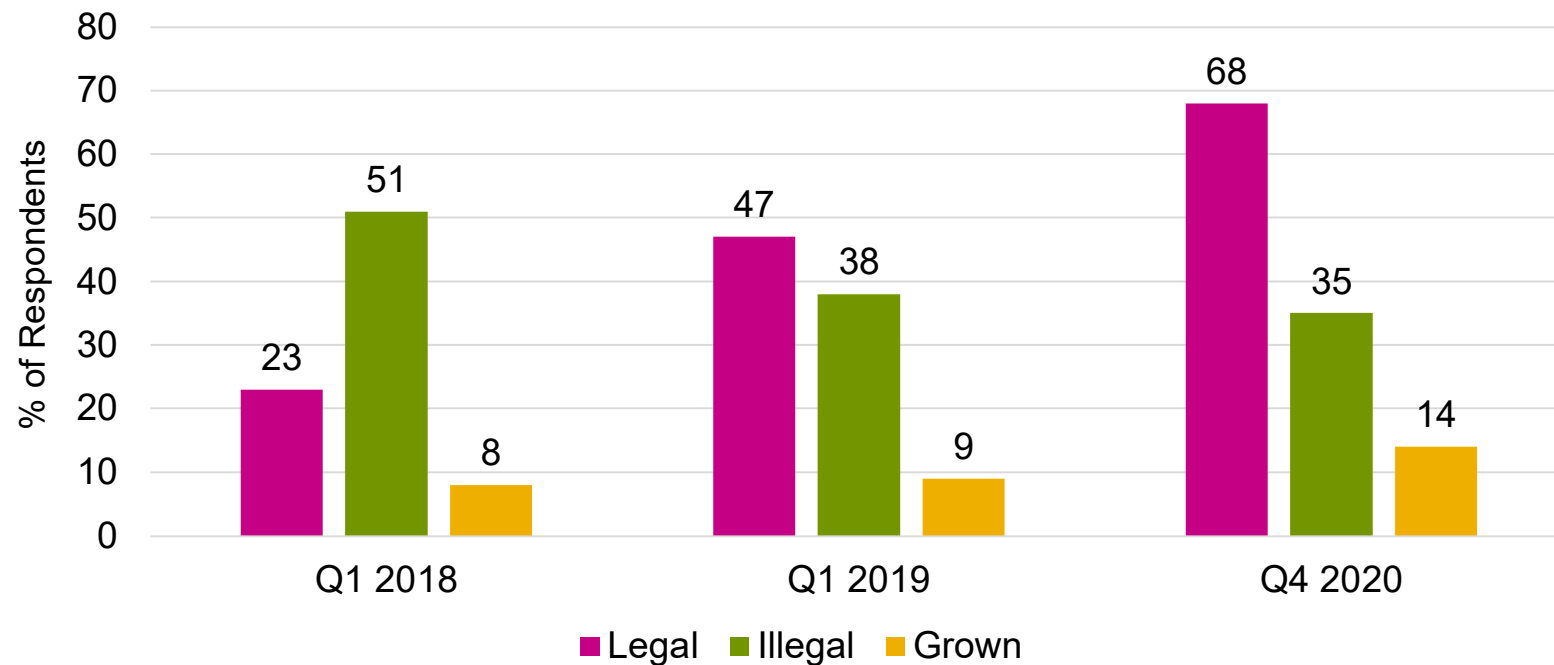
# Cannabis Possession Charges

Total Persons Charged: *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and *Cannabis Act* (2019)



Source: Statistics Canada, [Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2019](#)

# Cannabis Source



Source: [National Cannabis Survey, 2021](#)

# CCSA's Issues of Substance 2021

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**November 23–25 | 23-25 novembre**

- CCSA's Issues of Substance is Canada's premiere conference for the substance use and addiction field
- A three-day virtual experience!
- Early bird registration closes October 22, 2021
- #CCSAConference

# Contact Information

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