

ANTIGUA POLITICAL OPINION SURVEY SUMMARY

I. Background:

The ABLP administration celebrated its second anniversary during June of 2016, which is just six months short of the half-way point. At this time the political environment seems to have been complicated by a looming referendum which both political parties support, along with well-publicised instability in the opposition UPP. Against this background CADRES was commissioned to conduct a public opinion survey during September of 2016 and is now happy to report a summary of the poll's findings.

The methodology used to conduct this survey is consistent with others conducted by CADRES in Antigua and Barbuda, and would be expected to achieve a margin of error of +/- 5% with respect to the mainland of Antigua. Approximately 800 face to face interviews were conducted in all 16 constituencies across Antigua based on a standard interview schedule that sought information on major national and political issues.

II. National Issues

The major question that explored the issues of concern to Antiguanans at this time was based on an open-ended question asking respondents what they were most concerned about at this time. These data are presented in Figure 01 and the single largest quantity of persons (26%) were most preoccupied with employment, while the cost of living was a concern for the next largest quantity of persons (19%), and thereafter the economy was of concern to 13% of respondents. For all intents and purposes these concerns are all related and imply that 58% or close to two-thirds of persons are concerned about economic and survival issues at this time.

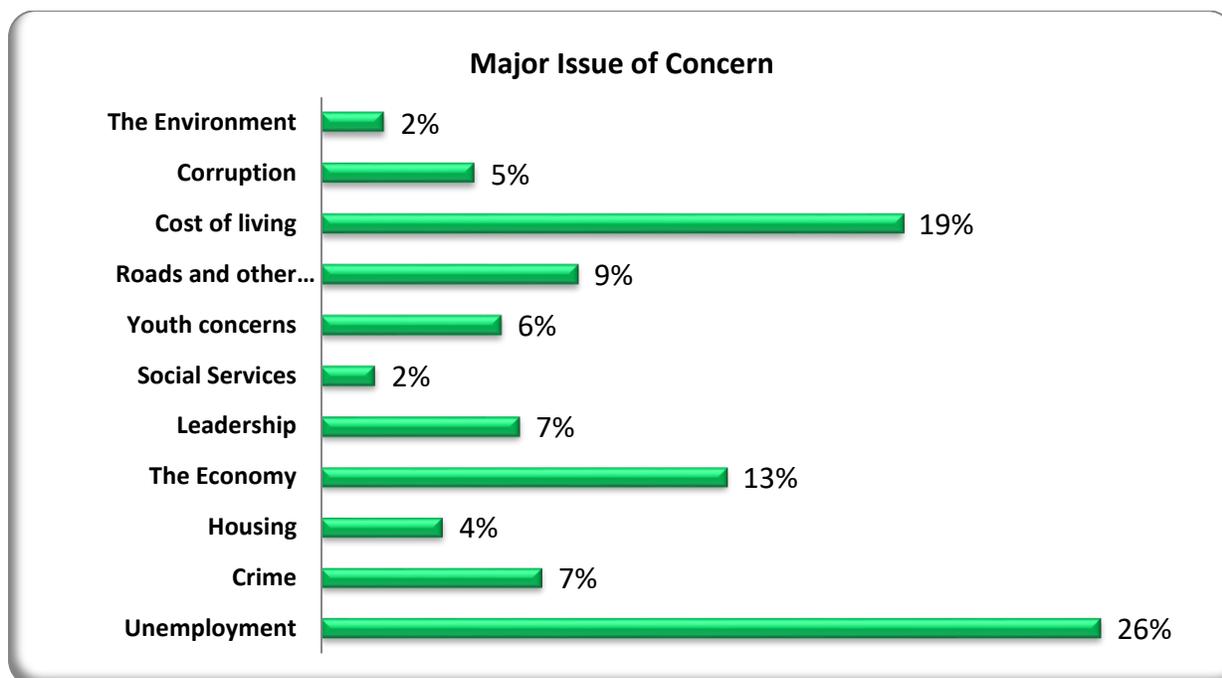


Figure 1: Major Issue of Concern

In an effort to contextualise the public's concern with issues Figure 02 compares this most recent survey with the most recent national poll conducted by CADRES in November of 2013 and this demonstrates that while Antiguanans are now as concerned about unemployment, their preoccupation with the issues of Cost of Living, The Economy and Crime has diminished since there has been a change of government.

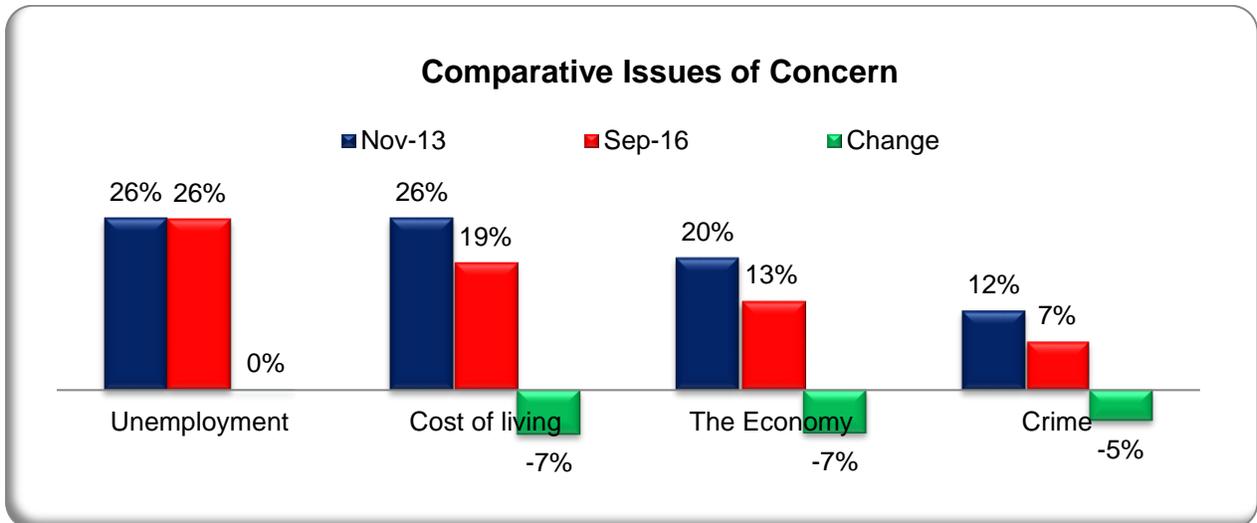


Figure 2: Comparative Issues of Concern

III. CCJ Referendum

The views of the Antiguan public on the CCJ are of interest now and the survey explored the different positions voters intend to take which are presented in Figures 3 and 4. Respondents were asked two related questions in the survey which sought to establish their views on the CCJ as distinct from how they expected to vote on this issue and it is significant that there is a close relationship between these two sets of data. If; however, the positive responses with respect to voting intention are isolated 65% of persons who now plan to vote will vote "For" the CCJ, while 35% will vote "Against" which marginally achieves the margin necessary for this measure to pass.

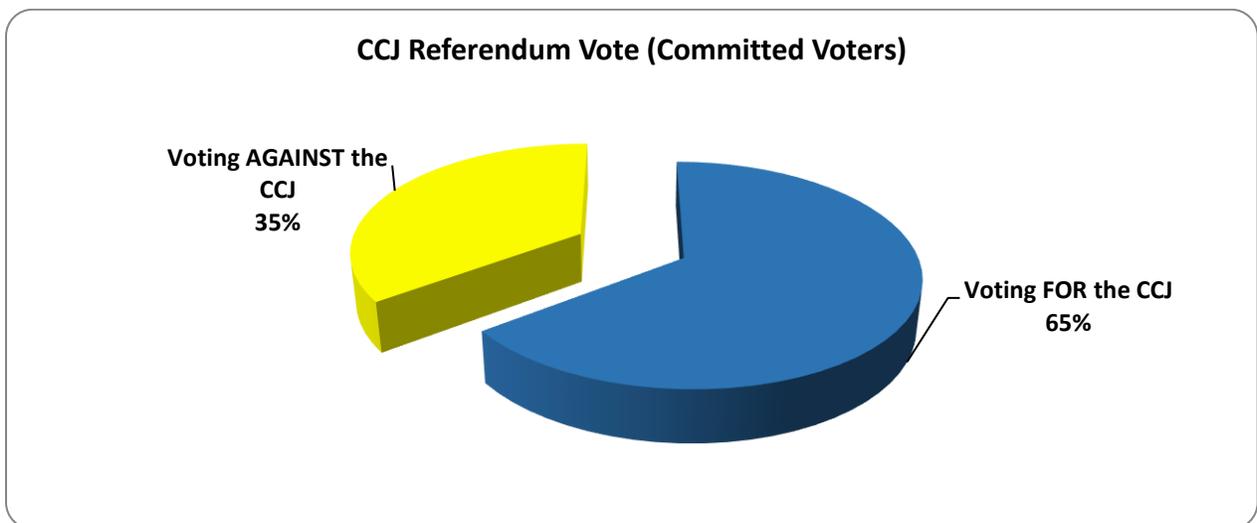


Figure 3: CCJ Referendum Vote (Committed Voters)

In the interest of transparency; however, CADRES also calls attention to Figure 04 which presents the data in its raw form and disaggregated from the perspective of party support. In addition to the “Yes” and “No” responses isolated above, respondents were also offered the opportunity to state that they were unsure, wouldn’t vote or simply that they would prefer not to say what their intentions were. This reality demonstrates that 30% promised to vote for the CCJ, while 16% will vote against it and cumulatively 55% were either not going to vote or were unsure how. A majority therefore supports the initiative but there is no guarantee of a two-thirds majority now. In addition, while this issue has not been politicised the largest cohort of opposition is among UPP supporters (30%), while 11% of ABLP supporters also oppose the move.

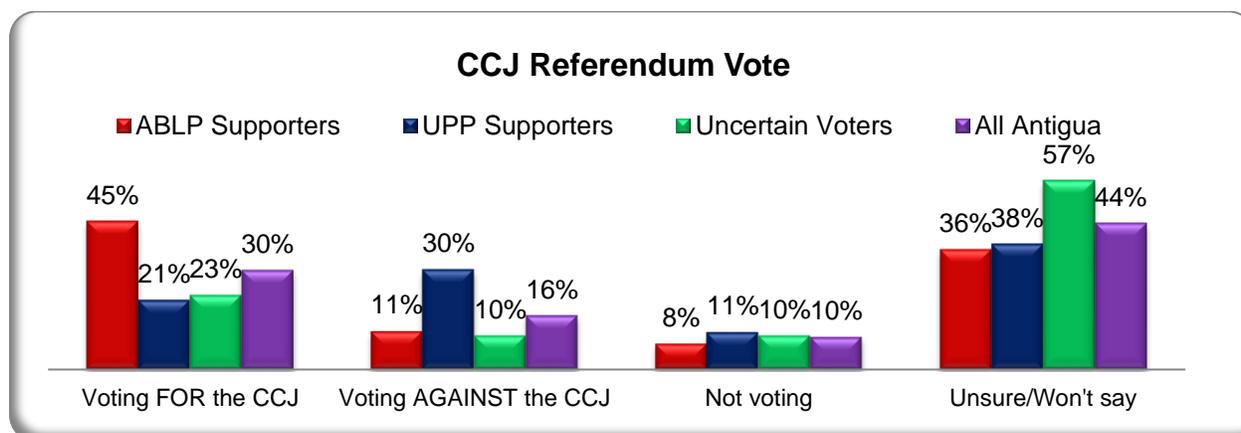


Figure 4: CCJ Referendum Vote (All Voters and Party Support)

IV. Leadership

Leadership is always a key political indicator and in this survey, it was explored from different perspectives beginning with the extent to which respondents would like both leaders to continue to lead their respective parties into the next election, or whether they would prefer someone else. Figure 5 presents these data and demonstrates that PM Browne is favoured to lead the ABLP going forward by an absolute majority, while Mr Harold Lovell is favoured by a majority but not a plurality of Antiguan, with equal quantities preferring former PM Spencer and Ms. Joanne Massiah who is currently facing an internal disciplinary procedure.

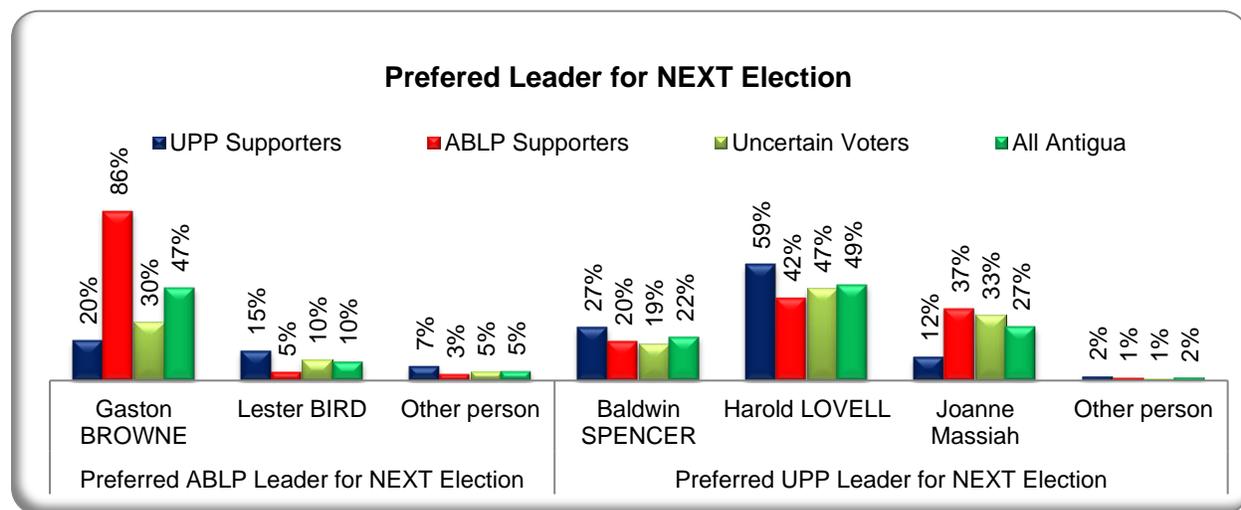


Figure 5: Preferred Leaders for the NEXT Election

The singular question that is most important when assessing leaders is presented in Figure 06 which is based on the open-ended question that sought to establish which person Antiguan and Barbudans would like to lead them at present. In this regard PM Browne is preferred by 49% of respondents while Mr. Harold Lovell is the next most popular with 24% support, followed by former PM Spencer with 13%. Interestingly MP Joanne Massiah is also mentioned as a potential leader with a support level that is almost similar to that of Spencer (10%).

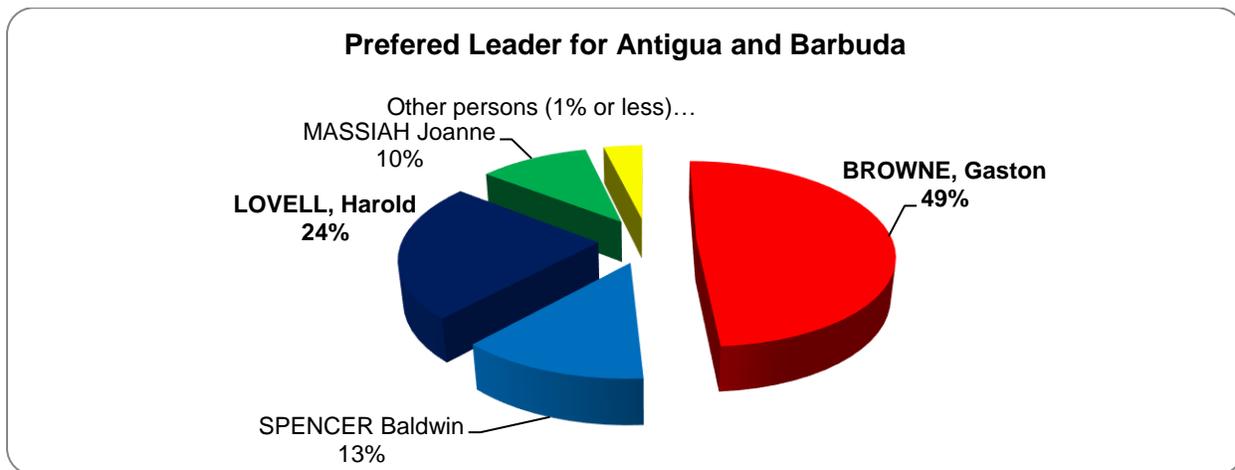


Figure 6: Preferred Leader for Antigua and Barbuda

Although the disaggregated data is not presented here, it might be of interest to note that PM Browne secured the support of 94% of ABLP supporters, while the Mr Lovell has the support of 55% of UPP supporters, with 31% of UPP support going to Spencer and 11% going to Massiah.

V. Party Support and Momentum

Finally, party support is explored based on a single question asking respondents which political party they would be more inclined to support if an election was called at this time and the results are presented in Figure 7. The ABLP was promised 35%, while the UPP would be likely to gain 28% and other parties or individuals 2%. Cumulatively some 35% of respondents said they were either unsure, unwilling to answer the question, or indicated that they would not vote in an election at this time and this quantity is theoretically large enough to alter the course of an election.

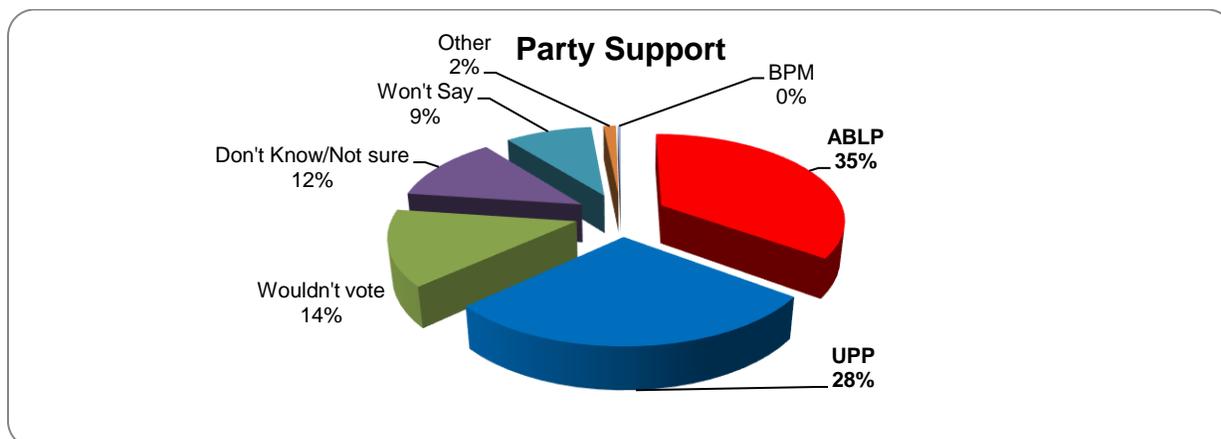


Figure 7: Party Support

Since 35% of respondents refused to indicate which party they were voting for it becomes necessary to estimate the allocation of support among existing parties, so that a more realistic prediction of the election outcome can be made. This is normally done by CADRES with considerable reliability using the historical support for both parties to project a likely outcome and this projection is presented in Figure 9. This estimation provides some comfort for the ABLP since it suggests that it would likely win an electoral contest at this time, notwithstanding the statistically insignificant negative swing of 1% which is not unusual for a mid-term scenario. The localised constituency analysis suggests that if an election were called, the ABLP could lose one seat; however, it is equally likely that it could gain an additional two seats in this current electoral environment.

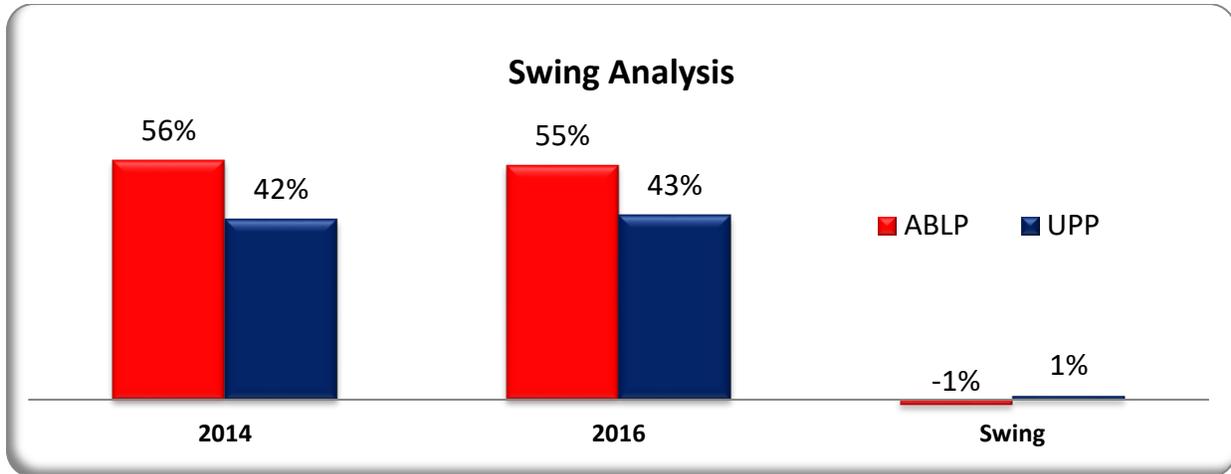


Figure 8: Swing Analysis

CADRES October 2016

ANTIGUA POLITICAL OPINION SURVEY MARIJUANA DECRIMINALISATION

Against the background of national discussions on the issue of marijuana decriminalisation, one question was included in the public opinion poll and the comprehensive data is presented here as a separate report to inform public discussion. Figure 01 presents these findings and demonstrates that at the national level, the single largest portion of the population now supports what is commonly referred to as “*decriminalisation*” as distinct from “*legalisation*”. 34% now support marijuana being made legal for medical and religious purposes, while 30% would prefer that marijuana remain illegal in all respects. Needless to say there is no plurality of citizens in any single category; however, if one were to add those who support partial and full decriminalisation (legalisation) some 62% (which is a plurality) is in support of some form of decriminalisation.

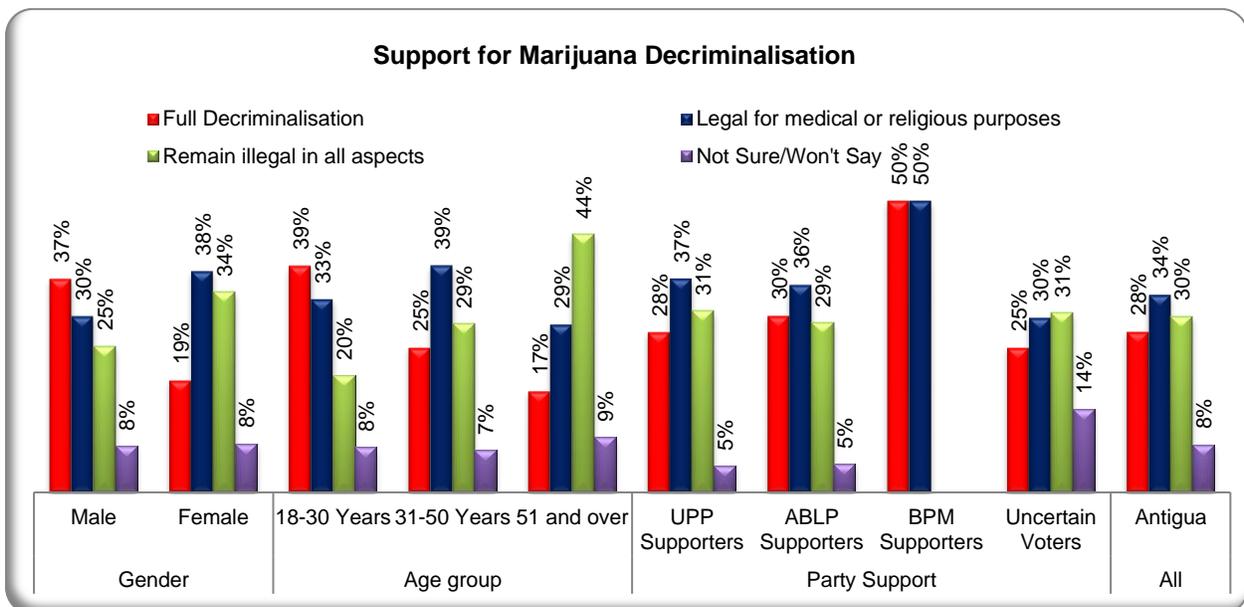


Figure 1: Support for Marijuana Decriminalisation

There are also other interesting correlations that emerge when responses are viewed from demographic and political perspectives and one of these relates to gender/sex. Women in Antigua are more inclined to support the status quo and while more of them would support partial decriminalisation, less are inclined towards a full legalisation of marijuana. Regarding age, younger people are more disposed towards full decriminalisation, while older Antiguan heavily support the retention of the status quo. The party support comparisons; however, demonstrate that there is no significant political correlation at this time which means that supporters of the ABLP or UPP are no more or less inclined to support or oppose decriminalisation.

In the interest of generating a comprehensive perspective, CADRES has presented data collected in Barbados and St Vincent on these issues in Figures 02 and 03 and it should be noted that the correlations identified in Antigua are common in these other countries as well. The type of opinion noted in Antigua and the dynamics of this opinion are therefore reflective of Caribbean trends and the only significantly different observation is the fact that the Antigua survey is the most recent and has benefited from an expressed position of this ABLP government and similarly supportive trends in the United States, St Vincent and Jamaica.

Figure 02 presents a useful comparison that demonstrates that Antigua has the lowest level of uncertainty on this issue in any of the three countries, while Antiguan opinion on partial decriminalisation is roughly similar to that in Barbados and St Vincent (*one-third of the population*). It is significant that Antigua has the highest level of support for full decriminalisation of three countries surveyed and the lowest level of support for the status quo. In this regard it is important to note that Barbados and Antigua could be considered Ganja consuming country while St. Vincent is presumably both a supplier and consumer, which might influence public opinion.

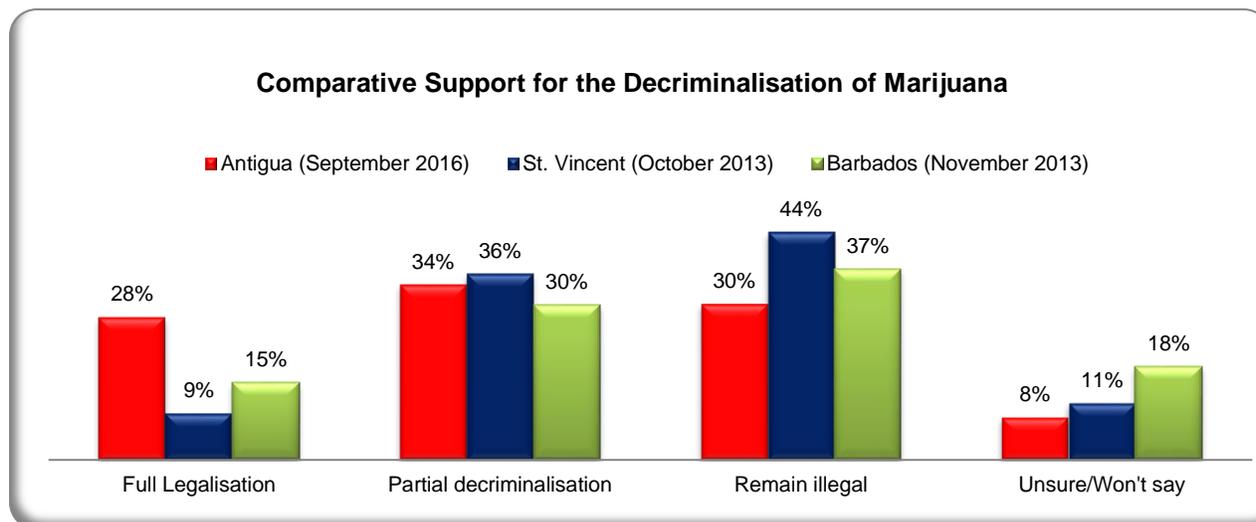


Figure 2: Comparative Support for the Decriminalisation of Marijuana

Figure 09 speaks to Barbados exclusively and compares CADRES surveys conducted in 2008 and 2014 in an effort to demonstrate how public opinion in a Caribbean country could advance on the issue, since there is no comparable base in the Antiguan case. In this instance support for the status quo has fallen significantly in the past ten years and has shifted towards support for partial decriminalisation.

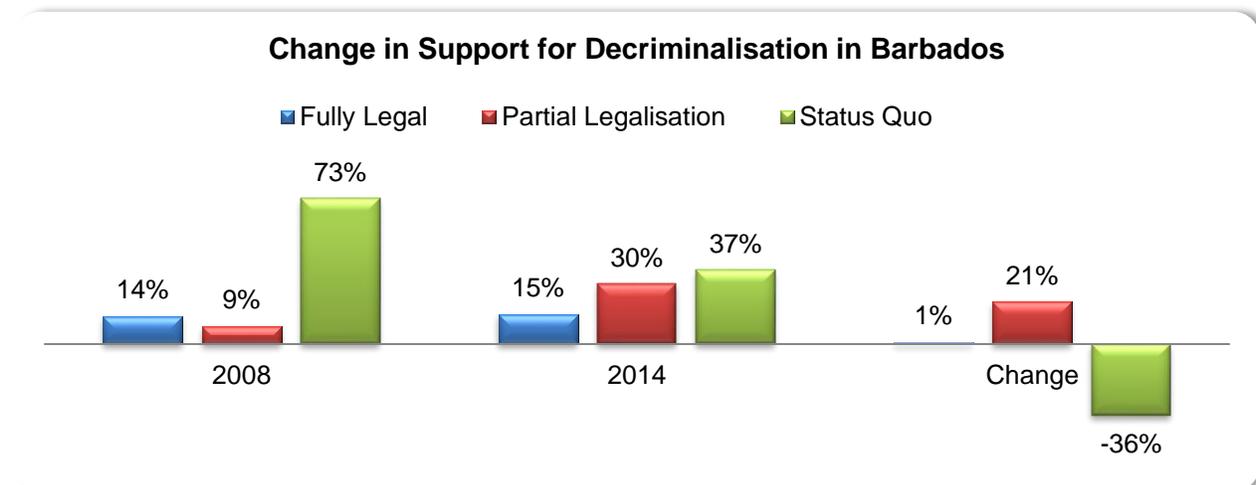


Figure 3: Change in Support Decriminalisation in Barbados

CADRES October 2016