



PRESS RELEASE | Canada and the United States

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from February 7 to February 9, 2020, among 1,000 Canadian adults, and an online study conducted from February 6 to February 8, 2020, among 1,000 American adults. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian and U.S. census figures for age, gender and region. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.1 percentage points for each study, nineteen times out of twenty.

Canada

As you may know, Canada eliminated the death penalty for murder in July 1976. All things considered, would you support or oppose reinstating the death penalty for murder in Canada?

Support – 51%
Oppose – 37%
Not sure – 13%

United States

As you may know, many countries around the world have abolished the death penalty, but not the United States. All things considered, do you support or oppose the possibility of prosecutors relying on the death penalty for murder cases in the United States?

Support – 59%
Oppose – 28%
Not sure – 12%

Death Penalty Splits Views in Canada and the United States

More Canadians than Americans select life imprisonment without parole as their preferred punishment for murder.

Vancouver, BC [March 3, 2020] – More than half of Canadians and Americans are supportive of capital punishment, a new two-country Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of representative national samples, 51% of Canadians are in favour of reinstating the death penalty for murder in their country, and 59% of Americans support the possibility of prosecutors relying on capital punishment for murder cases.

Support for reinstating the death penalty in Canada is highest among Canadians aged 55 and over (56%) and people who voted for the Conservative Party in the 2019 federal election (68%).

In the United States, the groups that voice the highest support for prosecutors relying on the death penalty are people who voted for Republican Party nominee Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election (76%) and those who reside in the West (69%).

Supporters of the death penalty in the two North American countries believe that, if a convicted murderer has taken a life, the death penalty fits the crime (60% in Canada and 68% in the United States).

"A sizeable majority of Canadians who are in favour of the return of the death penalty (57%) believe it would save taxpayers money and the costs associated with having murderers in prison," says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. "In the United States, only 43% of supporters of capital punishment feel the same way."

Opponents of the death penalty in both North American countries are primarily concerned with the possibility of executing a person who was wrongfully convicted (73% in Canada and 65% in the United States).

When asked about their personal point of view about the death penalty, Canadians are more likely to believe that it is "never appropriate" (27%) than Americans (18%).

Conversely, Americans are slightly more likely to say that capital punishment is "always appropriate" (16%) than Canadians (13%).



Almost half of Canadians (47%) select life imprisonment without the possibility of parole over the death penalty (34%) as their preferred punishment in cases of murder.

In the United States, respondents are evenly split when pondering the two approaches (42% for the death penalty and 42% for life imprisonment without parole).

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs.

We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth. We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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