



PRESS RELEASE | British Columbia

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from May 8 to May 17, 2020, among 1,600 adults in British Columbia. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in British Columbia. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 2.5 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, would you say the level of criminal activity in your community has increased, stayed the same, or decreased?

Increased – 38%
Stayed the same – 37%
Decreased – 13%
Not sure – 12%

Some British Columbians Perceive More Crime in Their Community

Since March, one-in-four residents of East Asian and South Asian descent have endured racial slurs or insults.

Vancouver, BC [June 4, 2020] – Almost two-in-five British Columbians believe that delinquency has risen where they live, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative provincial sample, 38% of British Columbians say the level of criminal activity in their community has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. A similar proportion (37%) report no change, while 13% think crime has decreased.

Men (49%) and Metro Vancouverites (47%)—as well as residents of East Asian and South Asian descent (55% and 50% respectively)—are more likely to claim that criminality has risen during the pandemic.

“More than half of British Columbians who voted for the BC Liberals in the 2017 provincial election (52%) believe crime has increased recently in their community,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “About a third of those who cast ballots for the BC New Democratic Party (NDP) (32%) and the BC Green Party (29%) concur with this assessment.”

When asked about specific law-breaking experiences since March, one-in-five British Columbians (20%) say someone attempted to extort them in an email or text message—a proportion that rises to 24% in Metro Vancouver.

Other instances of crime endured by the province's residents include someone breaking into their workplace or office (16%), someone attempting to extort them by phone (also 16%), someone breaking into or stealing something from their car (15%) and someone breaking into or stealing something from their home (14%).

Across the province, 11% of residents say someone directed racial slurs or insults at them since March. While only 7% of residents of European descent acknowledge that this happened to them, the proportion rises to 24% among those of East Asian and South Asian descent.

There are some remarkable differences among specific groups. More than seven-in-ten residents of Vancouver Island (73%), Southern BC (79%) and Northern BC (92%) have not experienced any of these problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. The



proportion is significantly lower in the Fraser Valley (55%) and Metro Vancouver (42%).

When asked about the factors that are to blame for the current situation regarding criminal activity in their communities, British Columbians primarily cite addiction and mental health issues (43%), gangs and the illegal drug trade (38%), poverty and inequality (36%) and an inadequate court system (32%).

Fewer British Columbians place "a great deal" of blame on lack of values and the improper education of youth (28%), bad economy and unemployment (28%), insufficient policing and lack of resources to combat crime (27%) and immigrants and minorities (19%).

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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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