

## **Methodology:**

Results are based on an online survey conducted from February 16 to February 18, 2025, among 1,002 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to census figures for age, gender and region in Canada. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.1 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

**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 – 54% (-3)  
Oppose – 32% (-3)  
Not sure – 14% (+5)

**All things considered, which of these two approaches would you prefer as a punishment for convicted murderers in Canada?**

Life imprisonment without the possibility of parole – 53% (-2)  
The death penalty – 35% (=)  
Not sure – 12% (+2)

## **Ambivalence on Death Penalty for Murder Endures in Canada**

*Most Canadians are willing to reinstate capital punishment but prefer a sentence of life imprisonment without parole.*

Vancouver, BC [February 28, 2025] – While a majority of Canadians continue to voice support for the return of the death penalty for murder convictions, most believe this particular crime should be punished with life imprisonment without parole, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, 54% of Canadians support reinstating capital punishment for murder in the country, down three points since a similar Research Co. poll [conducted in March 2024](#).

More than a third of Canadians (32%, -3) disagree with bringing back the death penalty, while 14% (+5) are not sure.

“Two thirds of Canadians of South Asian descent (66%) are in favour of reinstating capital punishment for murder,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “Majorities of Canadians whose origins are Indigenous (63%), East Asian (61%) or European (53%) concur.”

Canadians who voted for the Conservative Party in the 2021 federal election are more likely to endorse the return of the death penalty for murder (75%) than those who cast ballots for the New Democratic Party (NDP) (51%) or the Liberal Party (48%).

Fewer than half of Quebecers (45%) are in favour of reinstating capital punishment for murder. The proportions are higher in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (54%), Ontario (55%), Alberta (59%), British Columbia (also 59%) and Atlantic Canada (60%).

A separate question asked Canadians to choose between two different approaches for convicted murderers in Canada. More than half (53%, -2) prefer life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, while more than a third (35%, =) select the death penalty.

With this question, Quebec is once again at the bottom of the list when it comes to support for capital punishment (26%). The numbers are larger—but well short of majority support—in Ontario (37%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (also 37%), British Columbia (38%), Atlantic Canada (also 38%) and Alberta (39%).



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There is little change on personal perceptions of the death penalty as a concept, with more than half of Canadians (53%, =) believing it is "sometimes" appropriate, fewer than one-in-four (24%, -2) saying it is "never" appropriate, and 14% (=) considering it "always" appropriate.

More than half of Canadians who are in favour of reinstating capital punishment (52%) say it will serve as a deterrent for potential murderers.

Fewer supporters of the death penalty think the punishment fits the crime because a convicted murderer has taken a life (49%), expect to save taxpayers money and the costs associated with having murderers in prison (46%), assume it will provide closure to the families of murder victims (42%) and believe that murderers cannot be rehabilitated (26%).

Just over three-in-ten Canadians who are opposed to reinstating capital punishment (61%) express concerns about a person being wrongly convicted and then executed.

Fewer opponents of the death penalty think taking a convicted murderer's own life is wrong (41%), call for murderers to serve their time in prison, as indicated by a judge (40%), express doubts about capital punishment working as a deterrent (36%) and state that murderers can be rehabilitated (18%).

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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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