

### **Methodology:**

Results are based on an online survey conducted from April 11 to April 13, 2026, among 1,002 adults in Canada. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in Canada. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

### **All things considered, do you support or oppose each of the following proposals?**

#### **Banning head shots in professional hockey**

Support – 74% (-2)  
Oppose – 16% (+2)  
Not sure – 10% (-1)

#### **Banning fighting in professional hockey**

Support – 57% (-4)  
Oppose – 33% (+3)  
Not sure – 10% (+1)

### **Head Shot Ban Endorsed by Canadians and Hockey Fans Alike**

Canadians and “true fans” of hockey think the NHL has done a “very good” or “good” job in looking after player safety.

Vancouver, BC [May 7, 2026] – Majorities of Canadians continue to foresee benefits if professional hockey prohibits head shots and fights, although the level of support for change is not as high as it was two years ago, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample, 74% of Canadians are in favour of banning head shots in professional hockey (-2 since a similar Research Co. poll [conducted in May 2024](#)).

A majority of Canadians (57%, -4) voice agreement with banning fighting in professional hockey.

Among respondents who describe themselves as “true fans” of hockey, support for a ban on head shots at the professional level reaches 84%. This group has more nuanced views on ending on-ice fights, with 49% supporting this initiative and 47% opposing it.

Just under three-in-five Canadians (58%, -5) think hockey would be better off if head shots are banned in the professional game—a view shared by 66% of “true fans” of the game (-1).

Only 32% of “true fans” (-7)—and 37% of Canadians (-7)—expect a positive effect on the game if fighting is banned in professional hockey.

More than three-in-five Canadians (63%, +6)—and 87% of “true fans” of hockey (-1)—rate the efforts of the National Hockey League (NHL) in looking after the safety of its players as “very good” or “good”.

Fewer than a third of Canadians (31%, -2) think professional hockey become a more violent sport over the past five years.

On a regional basis, Quebecers are more likely to say that professional hockey is more violent now than in 2021 (33%, -4), followed by residents of Ontario (32%, -3), Atlantic Canada (also 32%, -1), Alberta (29%, +9), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (26%, -6) and British Columbia (26%, -3).

“About a third of women (32%) and Canadians aged 18-to-34 (34%) think professional hockey has become more violent,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “The proportions are lower among men (29%), and Canadians aged 55 and over (28%) and aged 35-to-54 (26%).”



At least one-in-four Canadians say that, as a result of recent violent incidents in hockey, they would refrain from buying products from companies that sponsor professional hockey (25%, +1), encourage their kids to avoid playing hockey (26%, +1) or watch fewer hockey games than they currently do (28%, +3).

The results on this question are similar when the views of “true fans” of hockey are analyzed: three-in-ten (30%) would watch fewer games because of violent incidents, while slightly smaller proportions would deter their kids from playing the game (29%) or avoid purchases from companies that sponsor professional hockey (28%).

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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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