



FACTUM

Eight in Ten (82%) Canadians Support Federal Government's Ban on Military-Style Assault Weapons

Doubts Remain Over Effectiveness; One-Third (32%) Doubt Measure Will Reduce Gun Violence in Canada

Toronto, ON, May 28, 2020 – In the aftermath of the country's deadliest mass shooting last month, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau swiftly announced a ban on military-style assault weapons, prohibiting their sale, transportation, importation, and use in Canada. A recent Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News has found that Canadians are largely approve of the ban; eight in ten (82%) agree (54% strongly/27% somewhat) with the government's action.

Agreement is stronger among women (87%) than among men (76%), as well as among older Canadians (88%, 55+ years) when compared to younger Canadians (78%, 18-54 years). Support for the ban is lowest in Saskatchewan/Manitoba (57%), but highest in Quebec (89%). That Quebec is the most supportive of a ban is not surprising, given that the province has experienced several mass shootings in recent history, with the incidents at a mosque in Quebec City, École Polytechnique, and Dawson College still not forgotten by many in the province.

One-Third Concerned about Federal Government Overreach

Although a majority do approve of the newly implemented measure, support for the Federal Government's action is by no means unanimous. In fact, one in three (33%) agree (15% strongly/18% somewhat) that the federal government's ban has gone too far. However, when combined with the fact that over 82% support the ban in some way, it seems that although some Canadians think that Ottawa is overstepping its boundaries, they nonetheless support the ban, albeit perhaps begrudgingly. Men (39%) are more likely than women (27%) to agree that the government is overstepping its boundaries, as are Canadians under 55 years old (40%, 18-34 years; 37%, 35-54 years, 24%, 55+ years). While there are no strong overall patterns when it comes to agreeing with this statement, those in Saskatchewan/Manitoba are more likely to feel strongly about their opposition to the ban; they are the most likely (25%) to say that they 'strongly agree' that the federal government has crossed a line with the ban on military-style assault weapons.

While some believe that the newly instated ban is too much, a sizeable portion of the population believes that it, in fact, doesn't go far enough. Seven in ten (71%) agree (38% strongly/33% somewhat) that the federal government's legislation should also include a ban on all handguns. Women (78%) are more likely to agree with this suggestion than men (63%), as are Canadians over 55 years (76%; 18-34 years, 66%; 35-54 years, 69%). Regionally speaking, those in Quebec (80%) are more likely to support an expanded ban, while those in Alberta (56%) are the least likely.



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Will a Ban Actually Be Effective?

While Canadians largely support a ban on military-style assault weapons, not all of them are convinced that it will be helpful in reducing gun violence in Canada. Just under 7 in 10 (68%) Canadians agree (30% strongly/38% somewhat) that the ban will be effective in lowering gun violence in the country. As with the previously mentioned trends, women (74%) are more likely to believe that the ban will help fight the problem of gun violence. While 8 in 10 (80%) in Quebec agree that this ban will have its intended effect of reducing gun violence, those in Saskatchewan/Manitoba (42%) are more skeptical of the ban's efficacy.

If not a ban on assault weapons, then what do Canadians think might work in resolving this serious problem? Almost 9 in 10 (87%) agree (48% strongly/39% somewhat) that the government should provide more funding towards preventing and cracking down on the smuggling of guns across the border into Canada. This sentiment is even more widespread among women (90%) and those aged over 55 years (94%). Agreement also reaches a staggering 96% in Atlantic Canada, where residents no doubt have last month's tragedy fresh in their minds and where it has recently come to light that the attacker may have got some of his firearms from south of the border.



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 8 and 11, 2020, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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About Ipsos

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