

HERE'S A SIMPLE IDEA: MOST CANADIANS WANT A STRICT BAN ON GUNS IN OUR CITIES

[Ottawa – December 4, 2017] Canadians are never far removed from a horrific story of gun violence. Whether it is the reports of ever escalating carnage in the United States, or the milder but still deeply concerning incidents in Canada, this problem is seen as blight on modern society. While Canada has only about one-seventh of the deaths per capita from gun violence that the United States endures, it is around the top of the list for other advanced western societies.

Interestingly, Canada explored a national long gun registry in the wake of the massacre of women at École Polytechnique. While this became a controversial political football for a range of reasons, the desire to minimise gun violence was never a point of much disagreement. As gun proponents threaten a pro gun rally at the monument of this disaster, we thought it would be useful to revisit Canadian attitudes to this issue.

There are all sorts of proposals for restricting access and flow of guns in Canada. We cut to a much simpler solution which finds very broad resonance with huge majority of Canadians (69 per cent versus 27 per cent). The question asks whether we should have a strict ban on guns in urban areas. Although support is much higher among Liberal and Bloc supporters, the clear majority of voters for all parties favour this idea.

Support is extremely strong in Quebec and Ontario. More affluent and educated Canadians are in favour. As recent headlines have reminded of the special risks that women endure due to gun violence, we note overwhelming support in this portion of society. Turning to settlement size, we see that support for banning guns in urban areas rises progressively as we move from rural to 'megapolitan' Canada. Even so, there is clear majority support for strict gun control across both rural and urban settlements.

Many will claim this is a Pollyannaish and intractable proposal. We disagree and clearly the public are drawn to the elegant simplicity of this solution. Rural Canadians (and rural caucuses) note real concerns with gun control. No problem; these areas will remain unaffected. Hunters will object but checking guns out from a secure depository should not be an undue hardship.

So, the question isn't really whether the public support it but rather could it actually be done (and would the world look any different if we did). While speculative we can offer the following evidence that this could be done and that it would have a positive impact in reducing deaths from guns. In 1996, Australia implemented a very strict set of controls on guns following a large massacre. There have been no large massacres since and Australia's rate of deaths from guns is well under half of ours. The UK introduced strict restrictions on guns some time ago. The rates of death from gun violence are less than one-fifth of ours. The closest model to the urban ban we are proposing is Japan which allows no guns (or swords). They have almost no deaths from gun violence.

Our relative smugness on gun issues is the fact that we look pretty darn good compared to the nightmarish carnage seizing the United States. Ignoring our southern neighbours, we don't look that good at all. The gun crisis in the United States is an incomprehensible stew of ideology and the profound influence of the NRA. These restrictions are largely absent from Canada. Moreover, Canadians are telling us in clear terms that they want to pivot in the opposite direction from where US policy is heading.

The case is pretty clear. Canadians think it's time to take guns out of our cities. Consider the inevitable saving of hundreds of lives every year as a major societal dividend.

Support for ban on guns in urban areas

Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I think that there should be a strict ban on guns in urban areas

November 2017



BASE: Canadians (half-sample); November 10-30, 2017, n=2,287, MOE +/- 2.1%, 19 times out of 20

November 2009



BASE: Canadians; November 11-17, 2009, n=3,051, MOE +/- 1.8%, 19 times out of 20

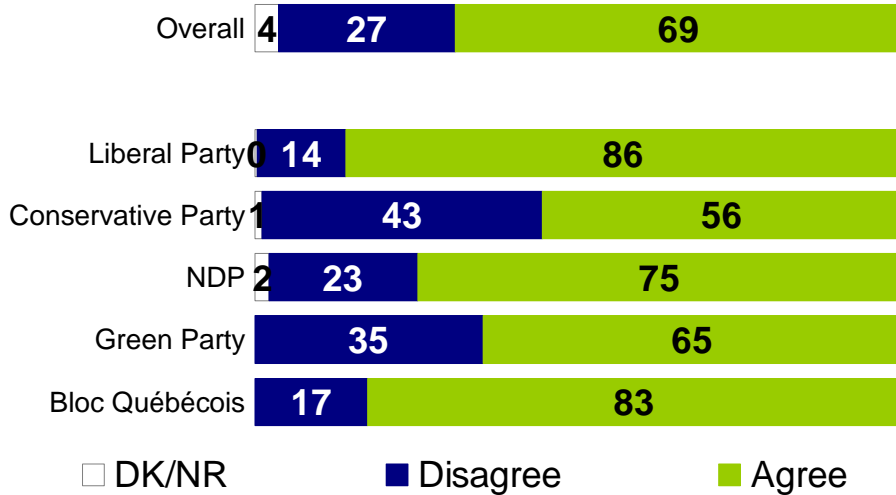
DK/NR

Disagree

Agree

Support for urban gun ban by party support

Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I think that there should be a strict ban on guns in urban areas

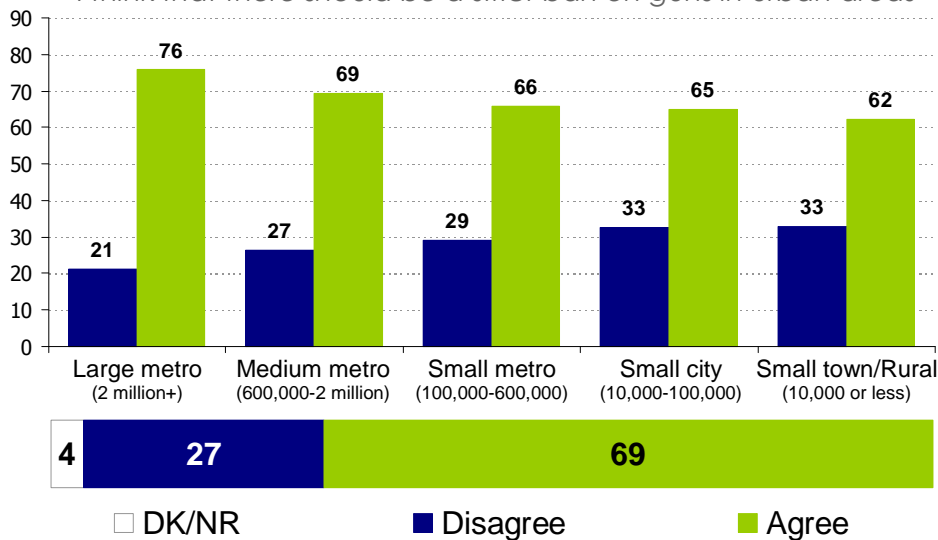


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BASE: Canadians (half-sample); November 10-30, 2017, n=2,287, MOE +/- 2.1%, 19 times out of 20

Support for gun ban by settlement size

Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I think that there should be a strict ban on guns in urban areas

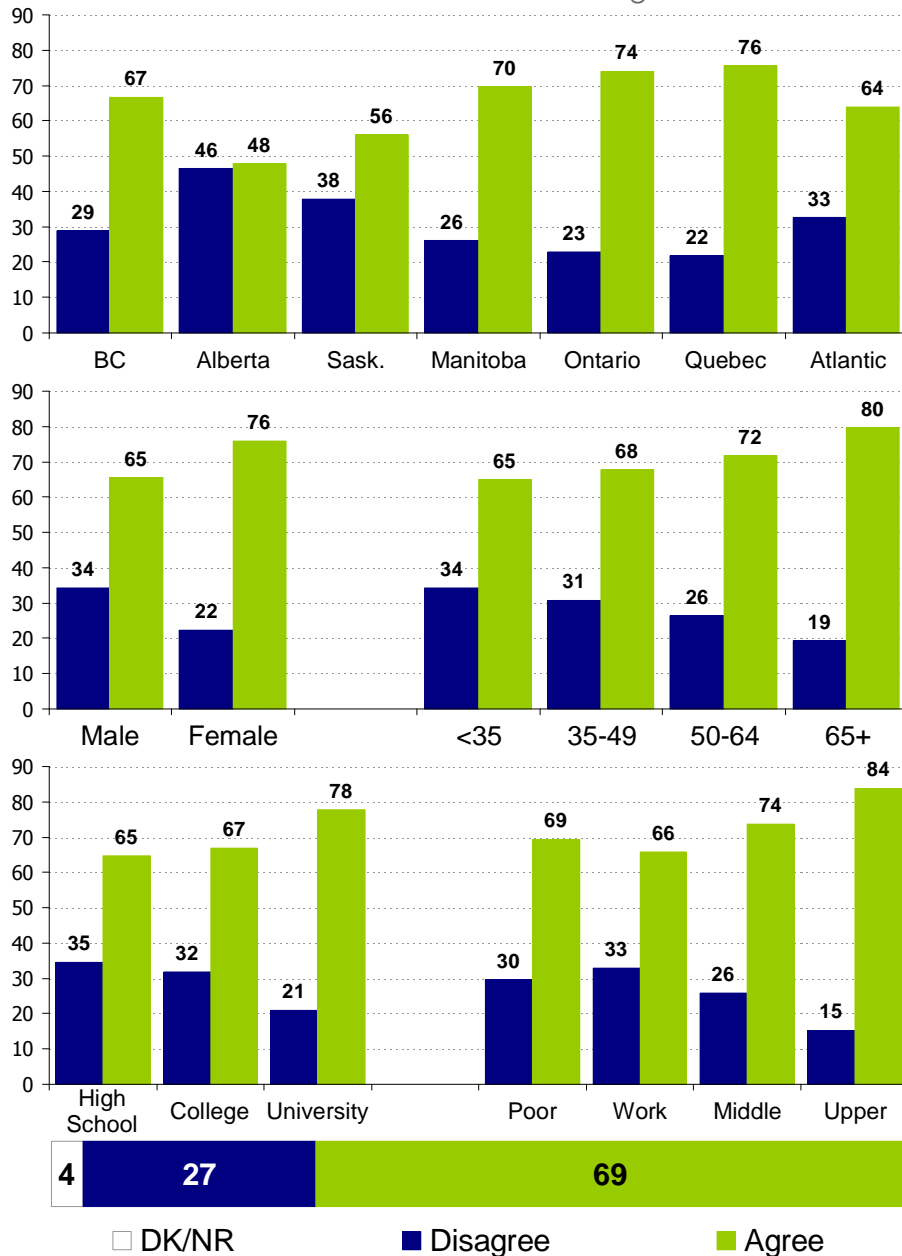


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Support for ban by region/demographics

Q. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I think that there should be a strict ban on guns in urban areas



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Detailed Tables:

<u>Support for Ban on Guns in Urban Areas</u>					
<i>Q. [HALF-SAMPLE ONLY] Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I think that there should be a strict ban on guns in urban areas.</i>					
	Agree	Disagree	Skip	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	69.0%	27.3%	3.7%	2287	2.1
REGION					
British Columbia	66.7%	28.7%	4.7%	278	5.9
Alberta	47.9%	46.4%	5.7%	298	5.7
Saskatchewan	56.0%	37.8%	6.2%	92	10.2
Manitoba	69.5%	26.2%	4.3%	84	10.7
Ontario	74.0%	22.9%	3.1%	903	3.3
Quebec	75.6%	21.7%	2.8%	452	4.6
Atlantic Canada	63.8%	32.7%	3.4%	180	7.3
GENDER					
Male	65.4%	34.2%	0.4%	1087	3.0
Female	75.9%	22.4%	1.7%	1128	2.9
AGE					
<35	65.1%	34.3%	0.6%	201	6.9
35-49	67.7%	30.8%	1.5%	439	4.7
50-64	71.8%	26.4%	1.8%	754	3.6
65+	79.8%	19.4%	0.8%	824	3.4
EDUCATION					
High school or less	64.6%	34.5%	0.9%	562	4.1
College or CEGEP	66.8%	31.8%	1.4%	745	3.6
University or higher	77.9%	20.9%	1.2%	909	3.3
SOCIAL CLASS					
Poor	69.2%	29.7%	1.1%	273	5.9
Working Class	65.8%	32.8%	1.3%	751	3.6
Middle Class	73.6%	25.8%	0.6%	1089	3.0
Upper Class	83.8%	15.3%	0.8%	99	9.9
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Liberal Party	85.9%	13.8%	0.3%	673	3.8
Conservative Party	55.5%	43.4%	1.1%	780	3.5
NDP	74.8%	22.9%	2.2%	261	6.1
Green Party	64.8%	35.2%	0.0%	113	9.2
Bloc Québécois	82.6%	17.4%	0.0%	73	11.5

Methodology:

This survey was conducted using High Definition Interactive Voice Response (HD-IVR™) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator. In an effort to reduce the coverage bias of landline only RDD, we created a dual landline/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able to reach those with a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households.

The field dates for this survey are November 7-30, 2017¹. In total, a random sample of 5,560 Canadian adults aged 18 and over responded to the survey. The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/- 1.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as region, sex, age, education). All the data have been statistically weighted by **age, gender, and region** to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.

¹ Note that the question on banning guns in urban areas was not added to the survey until November 10, 2017.