

**Forum:** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**Issue:** Exploring Coordinated International Approaches to Gun Control Measures for Crime Reduction

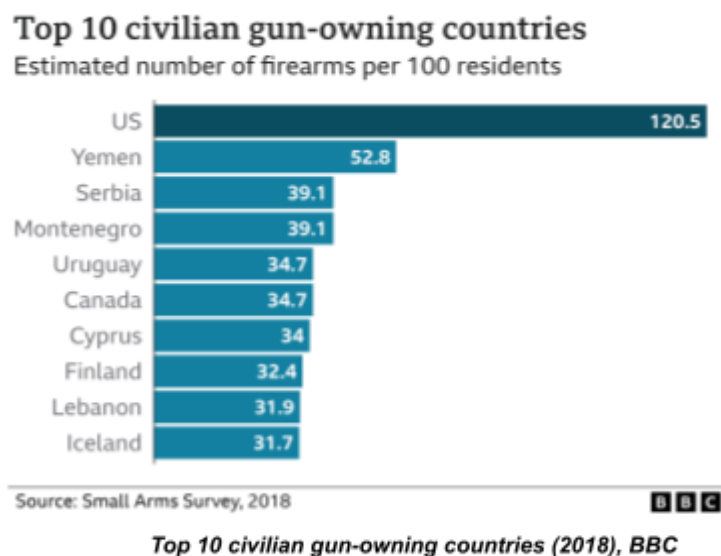
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## Introduction:

Gun control has become a central topic in global discussions on crime reduction, involving legislation and regulations limiting firearm ownership, types, and carrying locations. It raises debates on public safety, government oversight, and individual rights around the world. From countries with strict bans on civilian gun ownership to those with more lenient policies, the global approach to gun control underscores the complex interplay between personal freedoms and societal well-being. The first major federal firearms law passed in the 20th century was the National Firearms Act (NFA) of 1934. Even with timely measures taken to reduce crime rates regarding gun control, this results in illicit markets easily adapting to government restrictions on gun purchase and possession.



## Definition of Key Terms:

1. **Firearm:** A weapon designed to expel a projectile through explosive action.
2. **Coordinated International Approaches:** The idea of regular communication among countries' policy-makers to take certain approaches
3. **Government regulations:** Rules issued by government authorities that define the bounds of legal behaviour
4. **Straw purchasing:** When an individual makes a purchase on behalf of someone who otherwise would be unable to make the purchase

- 5. Mass shootings:** Violent crimes involving multiple individuals killed or injured using firearms.

## Background Information

### How the issue arose

Gun violence has always been a pressing issue throughout human history. It has existed in many different forms. The first gun ever made, during the 10th century called the “Chinese fire lance” was a bamboo tube that used gunpowder (invented in the 9th century) to fire a spear. Mongol conquests spread gunpowder knowledge across Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, but it was first transported to Europe in the 13th century via Silk Road traders. By 1350, gunpowder cannons were common in English and French militaries. Over time, cannons evolved, eventually developing the hand cannon in the 15th century. The invention of the lock, an internal firing mechanism, made shooting a hand-held firearm more efficient. Matchlocks followed, leading to modern-day guns.

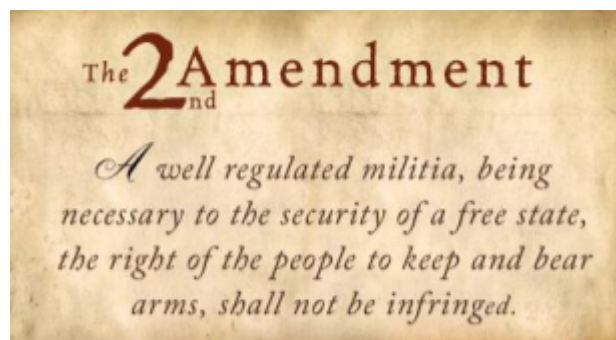


The first gun to exist; Chinese fire lance



First fully automatic machine gun; Maxim machine gun

Gun control debate in the United States originates from when the framers of the Constitution first wrote the Second Amendment, allowing private citizens to "keep and bear arms." Following this, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy (November 22, 1963) increased public awareness of the lack of control over the possession of firearms.



The 2nd Amendment

### Timeline of Legislation Events around the world

*Note: The following tables are only a few key events from top gun-owning countries, if your country is not mentioned here please do further research on their timeline of events*

Date	Description of event
15 December 1791	In the USA, The Second Amendment was ratified
26 June 1934	In the USA, the first piece of national gun control legislation was passed
1986	In the USA, the Firearm Owners Protection Act was passed by Congress. The law mainly enacted protections for gun owners — prohibiting a national registry of dealer records, and limiting ATF inspections to once per year.
1992	The Yemeni government passed; <i>Law Regulating Carrying Firearms, Ammunition &amp; their Trade.</i>
1 July 2004	In Brazil, the Federal Police were to confiscate firearms which were not possessed for a valid reason; self-defence was not considered a valid argument.
2005	In the USA, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, signed by President George W. Bush, prevents gun manufacturers from being named in civil suits for crimes involving their products.
2007	In Yemen, the government issued a decree banning weapons in major cities and limiting weapons carried by security personnel.
April 2012	Canada's Ending Long-gun Registry Act eliminates non-restricted firearm registration while requiring valid licenses for all owners.
15 January 2019	Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro signed the first decree to facilitate the purchase of guns.
21 October 2022	The government of Canada implemented a freeze on handgun sales and proposed a gun buyback program.

### Timeline of notable shootings in the past around the world

Date	Description of event
6 December 1989	The Montreal Massacre, a targeted attack on women at École Polytechnique in Quebec, resulted in 14 deaths and 10 injuries.
7 April 2011	On World Health Day, Wellington Menezes de Oliveira killed 12 children and seriously wounded 22 others at Tasso da Silveira Municipal School in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

12 June 2016	Orlando gunman killed 49 at Pulse nightclub, causing numerous injuries and a tragic incident.
1 October 2017	Stephen Paddock, 64, shot 60 people and wounded 413 at the Route 91 Harvest music festival in Las Vegas, shooting over 1,000 bullets from his Mandalay Bay hotel suites.
22 July 2018	A gunman in Toronto killed two people and injured 13 others in a shooting rampage on Danforth Avenue before the shooter committed suicide.

### **The impact of this issue**

#### ***Impact on women, communities of colour, marginalized groups in society and sexual violence***

Although young men make up the bulk of victims and perpetrators, women are especially vulnerable to gun violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. It is very common to see shootings or violence against minority groups which may stand out from the majority of the population. Firearms can also assist sexual violence and put women in vulnerable situations. Every 16 hours, in the US, a woman is fatally shot by a current or former intimate partner.

#### **Emotional and physical health damage**

Gunshot wounds are frequently life-changing and have a lasting influence on the victims' emotional and physical health. Some require long-term care, while others lose their capacity to work, particularly in physically demanding employment.

#### **Safety**

Guns pose safety risks, making people feel threatened and fearful, according to anti-violence experts, increasing the risk of violence. A 1998 study found that women in households with guns are more likely to be killed, and successful self-defence using a gun is rare.

#### **Access to affordable and quality healthcare services**

High-violence communities face challenges accessing healthcare due to armed criminal gangs, dividing neighbourhoods, and police curfews, potentially causing disruptions and potential danger.

#### **Gun Violence and the Right to Education**

Firearm violence disrupts school operations, unsafe commutes, and undermines education rights due to limited resources and difficulty in attracting and retaining teaching staff in gun-violent neighbourhoods.

## Current Situation

### Where society is at

Gun violence continues to become a pressing issue in many countries, especially the United States. Jonathan Jay, an assistant professor at Boston University School of Public Health, identifies two main factors driving community gun violence: neighbourhood disadvantage and individual exposure to gun violence. He believes that social conditions haven't changed much, suggesting that despite progress and learning from the COVID pandemic, individuals' social feelings haven't changed, and shootings still occur. This highlights the ongoing issue of gun violence in communities.

Gun homicides by intimate partners jumped 58% over the last decade, according to never-before-published FBI data analysed for Reveal from the Center for Investigative Reporting by James Alan Fox, a professor and criminologist at Northeastern University. Fox found; gun homicides involving intimate partners rose a stunning 25% in 2020 compared with the previous year.

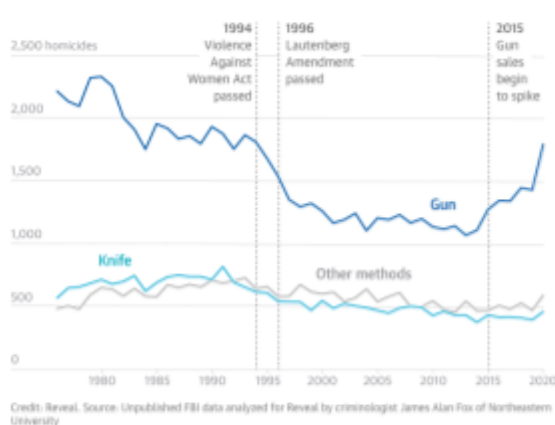
Johns Hopkins University researchers found that mental health has contributed to increased gun violence. Between 2019 and 2021, gun suicide rates increased by 10%, while non-gun suicide rates decreased by 8%. Gun homicide rates increased by 45%, while non-gun homicide rates increased by only 6%.

### US laws issue

The US has federal bans on weapons possession in every state, with domestic violence crimes requiring firearms in 33 states and the District of Columbia. However, these laws lack specific provisions for removing guns, surrendering prohibited criminals, confiscating them,

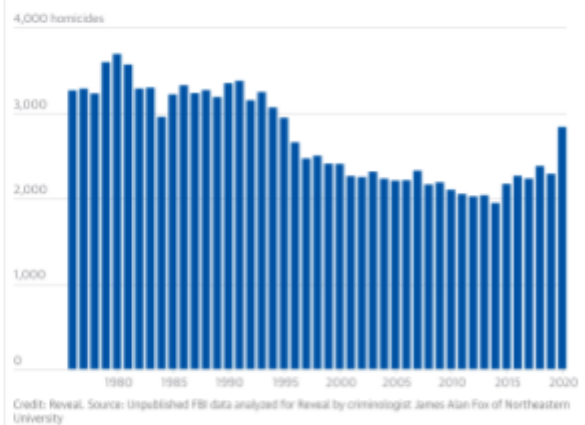
#### Intimate partner shooting deaths are soaring

Domestic violence gun homicides fell sharply in the 1990s, then began to rise in the Obama years, reaching a 26-year high during the pandemic. The change in killings by other methods has been less pronounced over time.



#### Intimate partner homicides in the US

At least 122,000 Americans have been slain since 1976, with more than 2,800 killings in 2020 alone.



Information of partner homicide rates in the US

and building legal infrastructure to protect abuse victims, families, and communities from hazardous criminals.

[How the US fails to take away guns from domestic abusers: 'These deaths are preventable](#)

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

### The United States of America

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 38,000 deaths from firearms (including suicides) occurred in the United States in 2016, and nearly 85,000 injuries from firearms occurred in 2015. This equates to an average of 105 deaths and more than 230 firearms injuries daily.

They have a high crime rate from gun violence as a result of the availability and accessibility of firearms in the country. The current laws put in place in all states are not specific enough to the consequences of gun violence, thus this results in major abuse and misuse of weapons.

### **Brazil**

Brazil leads the world in the number of firearm deaths and ranks sixth by country in the rate of firearm deaths per 100,000 people. Gun violence is common, particularly in urban areas. Factors such as organized crime, drug trafficking, and socio-economic disparities contribute to the prevalence of firearm-related violence.

### **Mexico**

Mexico has experienced high levels of gun violence, primarily driven by organized crime and drug cartels. Illicit firearms trafficking across the Mexico-U.S. border exacerbates the issue.

### **European Union**

The European Commission adopted a Proposal for a Council Regulation implementing Article 10 of the UN Firearms Protocol, aiming to harmonize firearm legislation and combat illegal trafficking. The proposal addresses extra-EU firearms transfers.

### **United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research**

UNIDIR conducts research and analysis on disarmament and arms control, including issues related to gun violence. They provide policy advice and facilitate discussions among governments, experts, and civil society organizations.

## **UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events**

The UN has played a significant role in the negotiation and adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty. The ATT, which entered into force on 24 December 2014, aims to regulate the international trade in conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons. It seeks to prevent the illicit transfer of firearms and promote responsible arms transfers. Moreover, the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes specific goals and targets related to peace, justice, and strong institutions. These goals aim to reduce violence and promote peaceful societies, including efforts to combat illicit arms trafficking and strengthen firearm regulation. Furthermore, the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA) is a globally agreed framework for activities to counter the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and control the negative consequences of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

- Resolution 2117 (Small Arms and Light Weapons) 26 September 2013 (**S/RES/2117**)
  - Contains effective solutions regarding signing and ratifying the Arms Trade Treaty, and effective implementations of law globally
- Resolution 2220 (Small Arms and Light Weapons) 22 May 2015 (**S/RES/2220**)

- Strong ideas about sharing information on suspected traffickers, implementing more laws for countries that do not have already
- Resolution 2370 (Small Arms and Light Weapons) 2 August 2017 (**S/RES/2370**)
  - Information about using technology and communications to prevent terrorists

## Possible Solutions

- Using enhanced border security measures to prevent trade, economic, and financial ties with ISIL, Al-Qaida, and associated individuals
- Member States should cooperate to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons, respecting human rights, and complying with international law obligations. Emphasizes civil society and private sector collaboration.
- Implementing stricter background checks and licensing to avoid straw purchasing
- Fostering economic development in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to provide income opportunities to avoid gun gangs
- Putting value to the "Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons" which aims to achieve effective physical security and management of stockpiles, contributing to eliminating weapons supply to terrorists.
- States can prevent and disrupt activities violating Council-mandated arms embargos in accordance with international law.

## Bibliography

### Useful Links

- [Gun Violence - Amnesty International](#)
- [Find all the UN resolutions on this link regarding this topic](#)
- [Small Arms: No Single Solution](#)
- [UNODC Crime Preventions from Firearms](#)
- [Find more information here about the impact of owning guns](#)
- [Further reasons why gun violence has an impact](#)
- [More in-depth timeline of legislation events in the USA](#)
- [Historical timeline of the development of modern weapons](#)
- [America's deadliest modern mass shootings timeline](#)
- [Preventing Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons](#)

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