

Firearm Registration, Gun Owner Licensing, and the Right to Possess Firearms – Global Comparisons

The web site [GunPolicy.org](https://gunpolicy.org), hosted at the Sydney School of Public Health, compares firearm legislation and regulation in more than 250 jurisdictions around the world. In December 2022 we updated our comparison of gun laws in 198 sovereign States¹ in three critical categories of firearm-related legislation. Referred to as the three pillars of firearm injury prevention, these are: firearm registration, gun owner licensing, and the right to possess firearms.

The official data and evidence on which this survey is based can be compared country-to-country by following the web links included beneath these overall results:

Firearm Registration

Of all 198 sovereign States, GunPolicy.org has data on civilian firearm registration in 171 (86.36%). Of these:

- 159 require that civilian firearms be registered in some capacity (92.98%)
- 12 countries prohibit civilian firearm ownership (i.e., no guns to register), or otherwise do not require civilian firearms to be registered (7.02%)

Gun Owner Licensing

Of all 198 sovereign States, GunPolicy.org has data on gun owner licensing in 192 (96.97%). Of these:

- 163 maintain a 'complete' licensing system for civilian gun owners (84.90%)
- 12 maintain partial licensing systems, in which only certain categories of persons or firearms require a current gun owner licence (6.25%)
- 16 States prohibit civilian firearm ownership (i.e., no licences issued), or otherwise do not maintain gun owner licensing systems (8.33%)

Right to Possess Firearms

GunPolicy.org has data on all 198 sovereign States regarding a right to possess firearms as enacted in national legislation. Of these:

- 2 guarantee a Constitutional right which is not limited by statute law (1.01%)
- 4 States provide conditional guarantees which are limited by statute law (2.02%)
- 192 States provide no explicit guarantee or right to possess firearms (96.97%)

¹ In addition to the 193 Member States of the United Nations we included both UN Observer States (Palestine and the Holy See), plus all three additional States with seats at the UN: Kosovo, Cook Islands and Niue. Each is a truly sovereign nation with its own, independent national firearm legislation.

Industrialised Nations

GunPolicy.org has data regarding civilian firearm registration in all 38 Member States of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Of these:

- 37 States require that civilian firearms be registered in some capacity (97.37%)
- 1 State does not require that civilian firearms be registered (2.63%)

GunPolicy.org has data regarding gun owner licensing in all 38 OECD States. Of these:

- 35 maintain a 'complete' national civilian gun owner licensing system (92.11%)
- 1 maintains a partial national licensing system in which only certain categories of persons or firearms require a licence to possess (2.63%)
- 2 States maintain no national licensing system for almost all gun owners (5.26%)

GunPolicy.org has data on all 38 OECD States regarding a right to possess firearms enacted in national legislation. Of these:

- 1 guarantees a Constitutional right not limited by statute law (2.63%)
- 2 States provide conditional guarantees which are limited by statute law (5.26%)
- 35 States provide no explicit guarantee of a right to possess firearms (92.11%)

See Our Data Sources

1. To compare for example civilian firearm registration in all countries, visit [GunPolicy.org](https://gunpolicy.org)
2. On the home page, select 'Facts by Country,' then choose for example 'Canada'
3. Select 'Gun Regulation,' then 'Firearm Registration'
4. To the right of 'Civilian Gun Registration,' click the 'Compare' button
5. In the list of countries to compare, highlight any number of countries or states
6. To compare all your selections, click the 'Add' button, then click 'Compare'
7. To see our sources of evidence for any country or state, hover over its book icon
8. Select any blue-superscript reference number to see its bibliographic reference

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