

Presentation title:

Liberal gun control reforms in Canada: Effective measures for reducing gun crime and extremism?

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In the last ten years, Canada has had fifteen mass or active shootings incidents. Gun-related violence is also rising in Canadian cities, especially in urban centers like Toronto and Vancouver. While in 2011, there were 134 shooting homicides, in 2021, this number increased to 297. To address gun violence, the current Liberal government introduced and proposed significant amendments to gun and criminal law aiming to freeze the sale of handguns and prohibit some types of firearms, including some sport and hunting rifles and shotguns. At the same time, some critics of these legislative changes argue that those measures would not be effective in reducing gun violence. Canada usually looks at European and other English-speaking countries for policy models of legal regulation. If the legislation passed, Canada would move towards a very restrictive regulation regime existing in countries such as the UK, which banned or restricted the sale of handguns and semi-automatic shotguns and rifles. The presentation examines recent gun-control measures introduced and proposed by the Liberal government in Canada. This presentation will explore the reasons for introducing such measures and discuss whether these measures can achieve the goals anticipated by the Canadian government. The presentation is based on the analysis of Parliamentary debates, witness testimonies at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security hearings, briefs submitted to the Parliament, and a survey of Canadian gun owners.