



Anti-death penalty activists protest against an execution in California, USA, 2001 © Getty Images

## ABOLITIONIST AND RETENTIONIST COUNTRIES AS OF DECEMBER 2024

More than two-thirds of the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty in law or practice. The numbers are as follows:

**Abolitionist for all crimes: 113**

**Abolitionist for ordinary crimes only: 9**

**Abolitionist in practice: 23**

**Total abolitionist in law or practice: 145**

**Retentionist: 54**

Following are lists of countries in the four categories: **abolitionist for all crimes, abolitionist for ordinary crimes only, abolitionist in practice and retentionist.**

At the end is a list of countries which have abolished the death penalty since 1976. It shows that in the past decade, more than one country a year have abolished the death penalty in law or, having done so for ordinary offences, have gone on to abolish it for all offences.

### ABOLITIONIST FOR ALL CRIMES

Countries whose laws do not provide for the death penalty for any crime.

Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Fiji, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niue, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome And Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vatican City, Venezuela, Zambia.

### ABOLITIONIST FOR ORDINARY CRIMES ONLY

Countries whose laws provide for the death penalty only for exceptional crimes such as crimes under military law or crimes committed in exceptional circumstances.

Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Israel, Peru, Zimbabwe.

### **ABOLITIONIST IN PRACTICE**

Countries which retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes such as murder but can be considered abolitionist in practice in that they have not executed anyone during the past 10 years and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions. The list also includes countries which have made an international commitment not to use the death penalty.

Algeria, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Eritrea, Eswatini<sup>1</sup>, Ghana, Grenada, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco/Western Sahara, Niger, Russia,<sup>2</sup> South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tonga, Tunisia.

### **RETENTIONIST**

Countries and territories that retain the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Botswana, China, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cuba, Dominica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, North Korea, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine (State of), Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen.

### **COUNTRIES THAT HAVE ABOLISHED THE DEATH PENALTY SINCE 1976**

1976: **Portugal** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Canada** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1978: **Denmark**, **Solomon Islands** and **Tuvalu** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Spain** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1979: **Kiribati**, **Luxembourg**, **Nicaragua** and **Norway** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Brazil**, **Fiji** and **Peru** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1980: **Vanuatu** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1981: **Cabo Verde**<sup>3</sup> and **France** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1982: The **Netherlands** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1983: **Cyprus** and **El Salvador** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1984: **Argentina** and Australia abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1985: **Australia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1986: **Micronesia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1987: **Haiti** the **German Democratic Republic**<sup>4</sup> and **Liechtenstein** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly known as Swaziland.

<sup>2</sup> Russia introduced a moratorium on executions in August 1996. However, executions were carried out between 1996 and 1999 in the Chechen Republic.

<sup>3</sup> Formerly known as "Cape Verde" in English.

<sup>4</sup> In 1990 the German Democratic Republic became unified with the Federal Republic of Germany, where the death penalty had been abolished in 1949.

1989: **Cambodia, New Zealand, Romania and Slovenia**<sup>5</sup> abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1990: **Andorra, Croatia**,<sup>6</sup> the **Czech and Slovak Federal Republic**,<sup>7</sup> **Hungary, Ireland, Mozambique, Namibia and Sao Tome and Principe** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Nepal** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1991: **North Macedonia**<sup>8</sup> abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1992: **Angola, Paraguay and Switzerland** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1993: **Guinea-Bissau, Hong Kong**<sup>9</sup> and the **Seychelles** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Greece** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1994: **Italy and Palau** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1995: **Djibouti, Mauritius, Moldova and Spain** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **South Africa** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1996: **Belgium** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1997: **Georgia, Nepal, Poland and South Africa** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Bolivia and Bosnia and Herzegovina** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

1998: **Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, Estonia, Lithuania and the United Kingdom** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

1999: **Kosovo**,<sup>10</sup> **Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Ukraine** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Latvia** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2000: **Côte d'Ivoire and Malta** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Albania** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2001: **Bosnia and Herzegovina** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Chile** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2002: **Cyprus and Yugoslavia (Serbia including Montenegro)**<sup>11</sup> abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Türkiye**<sup>12</sup> abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

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<sup>5</sup> Slovenia abolished the death penalty while it was still a republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It became independent in 1991.

<sup>6</sup> Croatia abolished the death penalty while it was still a republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It became independent in 1991.

<sup>7</sup> In 1993 the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic divided into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

<sup>8</sup> At the time of abolition, the country was known as Macedonia.

<sup>9</sup> In 1997 Hong Kong was returned to Chinese rule as a special administrative region of China. Since then, Hong Kong has remained abolitionist.

<sup>10</sup> Since 1999, the use of the death penalty has not been allowed by law (UNMIK/REG/1999/24). Kosovo declared independence in 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Montenegro had already abolished the death penalty in 2002 when it was part of a state union with Serbia. It became independent in 2006. Its ratification of Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights, abolishing the death penalty in all circumstances, came into effect on 6 June 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Prior to 2022, the country was known as Turkey.

2003: **Armenia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2004: **Bhutan, Greece, Samoa, Senegal** and **Türkiye**<sup>13</sup> abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2005: **Liberia** and **Mexico** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2006: The **Philippines** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2007: **Albania**, the **Cook Islands, Kyrgyzstan** and **Rwanda** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Kazakhstan** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2008: **Uzbekistan** and **Argentina** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2009: **Bolivia, Burundi** and **Togo** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2010: **Gabon** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2012: **Latvia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2015: **Congo, Fiji** and **Madagascar** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Suriname** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2016: **Benin** and **Nauru** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Guinea** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2017: **Guinea** and **Mongolia** and abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Guatemala** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes only.

2018: **Burkina Faso** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes.

2020: **Chad** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2021: **Suriname** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2022: The **Central African Republic, Kazakhstan, Papua New Guinea** and **Sierra Leone** abolished the death penalty for all crimes. **Equatorial Guinea** and **Zambia** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes only.

2023: **Zambia** abolished the death penalty for all crimes.

2024: **Zimbabwe** abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes only.

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<sup>13</sup> Prior to 2022, the country was known as Turkey.

## ANNEX I: ABOLITIONIST FOR ALL CRIMES<sup>14</sup>

Country	Date (abolitionist for all crimes)	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
ALBANIA	2007	2000	1995
ANDORRA	1990		1943
ANGOLA	1992		1985
ARGENTINA	2008	1984	
ARMENIA	2003		
AUSTRALIA	1985	1984	1967
AUSTRIA	1968	1950	1950
AZERBAIJAN	1998		1993
BELGIUM	1996		1950
BENIN	2016		1987
BHUTAN	2004		1964 (last known execution)
BOLIVIA	2009	1997	1974
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	2001	1997	
BULGARIA	1998		1989
BURUNDI	2009		2000
CABO VERDE <sup>15</sup>	1981		1835
CAMBODIA	1989		
CANADA	1998	1976	1962
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	2022		1981
CHAD	2020		2015

<sup>14</sup> Country names used here were correct at the time of publication.

<sup>15</sup> Now known as “Cape Verde” in English.

Country	Date (abolitionist for all crimes)	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
COLOMBIA	1910		1909
CONGO (Republic of)	2015		1982
COOK ISLANDS	2007		
COSTA RICA	1877		
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	2000		
CROATIA	1990		1987
CYPRUS	2002	1983	1962
CZECH REPUBLIC <sup>16</sup>	1990		1989
DENMARK	1978	1933	1950
DJIBOUTI	1995		Since independence
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	1966		
ECUADOR	1906		
ESTONIA	1998		1991
FINLAND	1972	1949	1944
FIJI	2015	1979	1964
FRANCE	1981		1977
GABON	2010		1985
GEORGIA	1997		1994 (last known execution)
GERMANY	1987		
GREECE	2004	1993	1972
GUINEA	2017	2016	2001
GUINEA-BISSAU	1993		1986 (last known execution)
HAITI	1987		1972 (last known execution)

<sup>16</sup> In 1993 the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic divided into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Country	Date (abolitionist for all crimes)	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
HONDURAS	1956		1940
HUNGARY	1990		1988
ICELAND	1928		1830
IRELAND	1990		1954
ITALY	1994	1947	1947
KAZAKHSTAN	2022	2007	2003
KIRIBATI	1979		Since independence
KOSOVO	1999		
KYRGYZSTAN	2007		1998
LATVIA	2012	1999	1996
LIECHTENSTEIN	1987		1785
LITHUANIA	1998		1995
LUXEMBOURG	1979		1949
MADAGASCAR	2015		1958
MALTA	2000	1971	1943
MARSHALL ISLANDS			Since independence
MAURITIUS	1995		1987
MEXICO	2005		1961
MICRONESIA	1986		Since independence
MOLDOVA	1995		
MONACO	1962		1847
MONGOLIA	2017		2008
MONTENEGRO	2002		
MOZAMBIQUE	1990		1986
NAMIBIA	1990		1988 (last known execution)

Country	Date (abolitionist for all crimes)	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
NAURU	2016		Since independence
NEPAL	1997	1990	1979
NETHERLANDS	1982	1870	1952
NEW ZEALAND	1989	1961	1957
NICARAGUA	1979		1930
NIUE	1974		
NORTH MACEDONIA <sup>17</sup>	1991		
NORWAY	1979	1905	1948
PALAU	1994		Since independence
PANAMA	1922		1903 (last known execution)
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	2022		1950s
PARAGUAY	1992		1928
PHILIPPINES	2006		2000
POLAND	1997		1988
PORTUGAL	1976	1867	1849 (last known execution)
ROMANIA	1989		1989
RWANDA	2007		1998
SAMOA	2004		Since independence
SAN MARINO	1865	1848	1468 (last known execution)
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE	1990		Since independence
SENEGAL	2004		1967
SERBIA	2002		1992

<sup>17</sup> Formerly known as Macedonia.

Country	Date (abolitionist for all crimes)	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
SEYCHELLES	1993		Since independence
SIERRA LEONE	2022		1988
SLOVAKIA <sup>18</sup>	1990		
SLOVENIA <sup>19</sup>	1989		
SOLOMON ISLANDS	1978	1966	Since independence
SOUTH AFRICA	1997	1995	1991
SPAIN	1995	1978	1975
SURINAME	2021	2015	1982
SWEDEN	1972	1921	1910
SWITZERLAND	1992	1942	1944
TIMOR-LESTE	1999		
TOGO	2009		1978
TÜRKIYE <sup>20</sup>	2004	2002	1984
TURKMENISTAN	1999		1997
TUVALU	1978		Since independence
UKRAINE	1999		1997
UNITED KINGDOM	1998	1973	1964
URUGUAY	1907		
UZBEKISTAN	2008		2005
VANUATU	1980		Since independence
VATICAN CITY	1969		
VENEZUELA	1863		

<sup>18</sup> In 1993 the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic divided into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

<sup>19</sup> Slovenia abolished the death penalty while it was still a republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It became independent in 1991.

<sup>20</sup> Prior to 2022, the country was known as Turkey.

Country	Date (abolitionist for all crimes)	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
ZAMBIA	2023	2022	1997

## ANNEX II: ABOLITIONIST FOR ORDINARY CRIMES ONLY

Country	Date (abolitionist for ordinary crimes only)	Date (last execution)
BRAZIL	1979	1855
BURKINA FASO	2018	1988
CHILE	2001	1985
EL SALVADOR	1983	1973 (last known execution)
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	2022	2014
GUATEMALA	2017	2000
ISRAEL	1954	1962
PERU	1979	1979
ZIMBABWE	2024	2005

## ANNEX III: ABOLITIONIST IN PRACTICE

Country	Date (last execution)
ALGERIA	1993
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	1957 (last known execution)
CAMEROON	1997
ERITREA	1989

ESWATINI <sup>21</sup>	1983
GHANA	1993
GRENADA	1978
KENYA	1987
LAOS	1989
LIBERIA	2000
MALAWI	1992
MALDIVES	1954
MALI	1980
MAURITANIA	1987
MOROCCO/WESTERN SAHARA	1993
NIGER	1976 (last known execution)
RUSSIA	1999
SOUTH KOREA	1997
SRI LANKA	1976
TAJIKISTAN	2004
TANZANIA	1995
TONGA	1982
TUNISIA	1991

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<sup>21</sup> Formerly known as Swaziland.