

Causa Justa - Facts about abortion access in Colombia

- Access to safe, legal, abortion in Colombia is still very limited and inequitable. Currently, between 1% and 12% of the estimated procedures per year occur within the health system, with a high concentration of services in the major cities.
- Since 2006, when Colombia's Constitutional Court overturned an absolute ban on abortion, prosecution and convictions for voluntary abortion have increased significantly instead of reducing. This situation affects those most vulnerable: women victims of violence, girls and adolescents.

* Cases at the Public Prosecutor's Office have increased significantly (by 320%) since 2006: from 130 in 2005 to about 400 annually as of 2008.

*The number of convictions has also increased. While in 2006 there were 12, in the years since the annual average of convictions has been 26.

*42% of criminalized women have been victims of violence (domestic, personal injury, sexual crimes, among others)

- Seventy-nine percent of the complaints were reported by health care providers and by the police. 56.4% of women convicted of abortion were reported by the health institutions themselves, which, instead of limiting themselves to providing care and protecting professional confidentiality, preferred to violate it.
- Increasingly, public opinion in Colombia disagrees that with the view that women should be jailed for having an abortion. The most recent [Polimétrica de Cifras y Conceptos](#) survey, which measured citizen perception of the voluntary interruption of pregnancy and the decriminalization of abortion, showed that only 20% of people agree that women should go to jail if they terminate a pregnancy outside of the three circumstances in which it is currently allowed (in the case of rape or incest, fetal non-viability, or to protect the life and health of the pregnant person).

Other places that have removed abortion from its criminal codes

- In Canada, where the Supreme Court removed abortion from the Criminal Code in 1988, the rate of abortions has been decreasing over time. For example, in 2015 a little more than 100,000 abortions were performed in clinics and hospitals, whereas in 2019, a little more than 83,000 were performed. Additionally, since abortion was decriminalized, more than 90% of abortions in Canada occur in the first trimester.

women's worldwide

- In the Australian Capital Territory, abortion has been regulated since 1993 through a health law that allows women to abort without restrictions of time or circumstance. However, this regulation subsisted with the crime of abortion typified in the Criminal Code for several years, which caused confusion, ignorance, and barriers for both women and doctors. For that reason, in 2002 it was decided to repeal the article that codified abortion as a crime and, in this way, give coherence to the legal system.
- The state of Queensland, in Australia, removed abortion from its Criminal Code in 2018. Until 22 weeks of gestation, there is no restriction on the provision of the service. From that moment, a comprehensive system of grounds has been contemplated that has taken into account the health and life of women, cases of sexual violence, and fetal infeasibility.
- In 2020, New Zealand enacted a law that decriminalized abortion, which was previously punishable by up to 14 years in prison, except in some cases. Since then, abortion has been treated only as a public health issue. In this country, health regulations allow any licensed and qualified health professional to provide the service. When the gestation exceeds 20 weeks, this health professional will take into account the mental and physical health of the woman and her general well-being to evaluate the provision of the service.