

# CAPITAL

## PUNISHMENT

Capital punishment, death penalty or execution is punishment by death. The sentence that someone be punished in this manner is a death sentence. Crimes that can result in a death penalty are known as capital crimes or capital offences. The term capital originates from the Latin capitalis, literally "regarding the head".

Capital punishment has, in the past, been practiced by most societies, as a punishment for criminals, and political or religious dissidents. Historically, the carrying out of the death sentence was often accompanied by torture, and executions were most often public. 36 countries actively practice capital punishment, 103 countries have completely abolished it de jure for all crimes, 6 have abolished it for ordinary crimes only maintaining it for special circumstances such as war crimes, and 50 have abolished it de facto.

Nearly all countries in the world prohibit the execution of individuals who were under the age of 18 at the time of their crimes. Since 2009, only Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan have executions of this kind are prohibited under international law.

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