



Press Release

More Canadians (29%, +3 Points) to Attend Remembrance Day Services This Year, Up To 35% For 100th Anniversary of Armistice in 2018

Most (84%) Say Important to Attend Ceremonies While Second World War Veterans Still Present

Toronto, Ontario, November 6, 2017 — The number of Canadians planning to attend official Remembrance Day ceremonies in 2017 is higher than in previous years, according to a new poll conducted for Historica Canada by Ipsos. The survey shows that almost three in 10 (29%) respondents plan to do so, marking a three-point rise over a year ago. The increase comes in a year marked by the 100th anniversaries of the Battles of Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele, and the 75th anniversary of Dieppe.

At the same time, the number of respondents who plan to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies next year – the centenary of the First World War armistice – is even higher, with 35 per cent saying they will do so.

The increase may be influenced by the changing face of veterans. For more than eight in ten (84%) Canadians, there is a sense (41% strongly / 42% somewhat) that it is important to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies now because of the declining number of Second World War veterans present – most of whom are well into their nineties. But most agree Remembrance Day has a broader meaning. Nine in ten (94%) agree (65% strongly / 29% somewhat) that on Remembrance Day, it is just as important to honour soldiers who have served in recent conflict as veterans of the First or Second World Wars. Nearly nine in ten (87%) agree (49% strongly / 38% somewhat) that Remembrance Day is a time to reflect on the horrors of conflict. Meanwhile, 90% consider (48% strongly / 41% somewhat) Canada to be primarily a peacekeeping nation now, despite the drop in the number of Canadian peacekeepers serving abroad in recent decades.

In fact, most Canadians feel it's important to have programs that emphasize Remembrance year-round, and to do something special in recognition of historic milestones. Eight in ten (83%) agree (38% strongly / 45% somewhat) it's important to mark Remembrance throughout the year, not just in November. A quarter of Canadians (26%) have visited the National War Memorial in Ottawa (+2 pts since 2016), and 18% have visited a war memorial overseas.

Generational Differences in How Canadians Remember

The survey also finds that how Canadians relate to the battles of the past is beginning to change.

The most likely group in terms of age to attend official services are Millennials (age 18-34) at 37 per cent, ahead of Gen X'ers (age 35-54) at 23 per cent and Baby Boomers (55 and over) at 29 per cent. Those age groups reverse that order when it comes to whether they will wear a poppy: 88 per cent of Baby Boomers plan to do so, measured against 72 per cent of Gen X'ers and 70 per cent of Millennials.

The survey also found that Canadians aren't lacking in opportunities to learn about the nation's military excursions: three in four (73%) have heard a veteran speak about his or her experience in the military, whether by speaking directly with a veteran they personally

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know (30%), online or on film (23%), or through a presentation to a school or community group (20%). Given the passing of time, the Millennial generation is significantly more likely to have come into contact with veterans' stories through school or community education initiatives (33%), while Boomers are more likely to know a veteran personally (42%).

Perhaps these personal connections are why half (49%) of Canadians have attended a Remembrance Day ceremony in the past by choice (in other words, not as part of a school assembly).

Remembering D-Day

Respondents reflected varying degrees of knowledge when asked about the role Canada played in the pivotal D-Day Allied invasion of Europe on June 6, 1944. Just over half (54%) of Canadians can correctly identify Juno Beach as the landing place for Canadian forces, while one in three (35%) aren't sure. Some mistakenly name other beaches such as Omaha (10%), Sword (1%), or Utah (1%). Awareness is less strong among younger Canadians: only 44% of Millennials can identify Juno Beach as the site of the D-Day landing, while 45% would not venture a guess. By comparison, nearly two in three Boomers (63%) know Juno Beach is the right answer, and one in four (25%) aren't sure.

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between October 24 and October 26, 2017, on behalf of Historica Canada. For this survey, a sample of 1,003 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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