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We Have Not Forgotten: Canadians Increasingly Likely to Attend Remembrance Day Ceremonies & Feel It Is Important While There Are Still Living WWII Veterans

Vast Majority Think It's Important to Have Year-Round Programs Which Emphasize Remembrance (87%) & Reflect on Horrors of Conflict (90%)

Toronto, Ontario, November 8th, 2019 — Canadians are increasingly making an effort to actively remember on November 11, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Historica Canada. Four in ten (41%) plan to attend an official Remembrance Day service this year, a two-point increase (+2 pts) over last year and a jump of twelve-points (+12 pts) compared to the 2017 version of this survey (29%). In fact, planned attendance is higher than in any previous iteration of this survey within the past decade¹.

More than half (55%) of respondents have attended a Remembrance Day ceremony in the past by choice (i.e., not a school assembly); that is up six points (+6) from two years ago. Well over four in five (85%) say they will wear a poppy in the lead-up to Remembrance Day, which marks a two-point (+2 pts) increase over last year and an eight-point increase (+8 pts) over 2014, 2016 and 2017.

The increased interest in Remembrance Day may reflect a realization of the fast-diminishing number of veterans still alive who served during the Second World War. Nearly nine in ten (88%) of respondents *agree* that it is important to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies now while there are still World War II veterans present. That marks a four per cent increase relative to 2017. Almost all (94%; +1 pts vs. 2018) *agree* that hearing veterans speak about their experiences is the best way for youth to understand conflict, and more (80%) say they have personally listened to a veteran discussing his or her experiences. That also marks an increase over responses when a similar question was asked in 2015 (75%) and 2017 (73%).

A little over half (55%) of Canadians taking an active interest in military history and two-thirds (67%) believe they know more about Canadian than American military history.

Nine in ten (90%) *agree* it's important to use Remembrance Day to reflect on the horrors of conflict and to offer programs emphasizing Remembrance year-round, not just in November (87%). Despite this belief, respondents acknowledge that many did not actually attend any D-Day ceremonies: only thirteen percent (13%) said they had done so. However, one in three (36%) say they will attend a ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII next year.

Another nine in ten say they are honouring Canadians who fell in conflict (91%; unchanged since 2015) as well as the goal of peace, more generally (91%; +10 pts vs. 2015) when in observance of Remembrance Day. A strong, but smaller (69%) majority extend those sentiments to fallen soldiers from other conflicts in which Canada was not necessarily an active participant.

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The vast majority (90%) of Canadians support making November 11th a national statutory holiday, a figure which exceeds already-high responses in previous iterations of this survey in 2018 (88%), 2014 (82%), as well as 2012 and 2015 (85% apiece).

Generational Differences Continue to Persist

When it comes to Remembrance, the attitudes and behaviours of Canadians vary by age. Baby Boomers (55+) are among the most likely to *agree* that it's important to use Remembrance Day to reflect on the horrors of conflict (93% vs. 87% under 55) and having veterans speak about their experiences is the best way for youth to understand conflict (96% vs. 92%). This group is also more likely to have attended a Remembrance Day ceremony in the past by choice (60% vs. 51%) and indicate that they plan on wearing a poppy in the lead-up to Remembrance Day (92% vs. 81%). However, Millennials (at 45%) continue to be among the most likely to plan on attending official services on Remembrance Day, followed by Gen Xers (40%), and Baby Boomers (38%), and were more likely to have attended a ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-day (18%, compared to 13% Gen X and 10% Baby Boomer).

Overall, about four in five Canadians (80%) claim to have heard a veteran speak about their military experiences at some point in the past, a figure which is flat across the key age groups. However, the manner in which this has occurred varies considerably by age. Millennials (18-34) are about twice as likely to have heard veterans speak at a school presentation or community group (52% vs. 27% 35+). Conversely, adults over 35 are twice as likely to have personally known a veteran who spoke about their experiences directly (44% vs. 23% under 35).

When observing Remembrance Day, virtually all Baby Boomers say they will be thinking about Canadians who perished in any conflict (97% vs. 87% under 55) as well as in WWI & WWII specifically (96% vs. 89%).



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between October 21st and 24th, 2019, on behalf of Historica Canada. For this survey, a sample of 1,000 Canadians were interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian 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 Canadians 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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ⁱ Planned attendance by year: 2018 (39%), 2017 (29%), 2016 (26%), 2015 (32%), 2014 (27%), 2012 (30%), 2010 (22%), 2009 (20%), and 2008 (16%)

