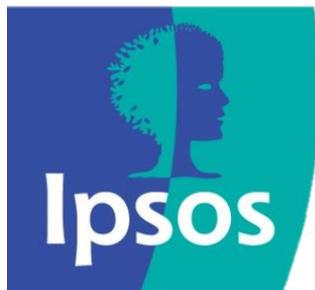


**Survey of Six “Western Front” Nations Shows Canadians Most Likely to Have Attended War Remembrance Ceremony in Past Year**

*But Canadians are Among the Least Likely to Remember Learning about First World War in School; All Countries, including Canada, Over-estimate Canadian Soldier Deaths in First World War*

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## **Survey of Six “Western Front” Nations Shows Canadians Most Likely to Have Attended War Remembrance Ceremony in Past Year**

*But Canadians are Among the Least Likely to Remember Learning about First World War in School; All Countries, including Canada, Over-Estimate Canadian Soldier Deaths in First World War*

**Toronto, ON** – A survey of six countries whose soldiers fought on the Western Front in the First World War has revealed that Canadians are the most likely to have attended a war remembrance ceremony in the past 12 months, but they’re among the least likely to say that they remember learning about the First World War in school. The survey was conducted for the Vimy Foundation, and comprised 1,000 interviews in each of Canada, the United States, Great Britain, France and Germany, and 500 interviews in Belgium.

Fully one quarter (25%) of Canadians say they’ve attended a war remembrance ceremony in the past 12 months, while fewer residents of Great Britain (18%), the US (16%), Belgium (14%), France (11%) and Germany (4%) say the same.

While Canadians are the most likely to have been to a remembrance ceremony, they’re the least likely – perhaps due to proximity – to say that they’ve visited a First World War battlefield, cemetery or historic site (18%), less likely than residents of the US (24%), Great Britain (27%), Germany (29%), France (48%) and Belgium (59%). Moreover, Canadians are among the least likely (5%) to say they’ve attended a First World War anniversary event in the past 12 months. While more likely than Germans (3%) to have done so, Canadians are less

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likely than those in Great Britain (9%), France (10%), the US (11%) and Belgium (11%) to say they have.

Similarly, four in ten (43%) Canadians have visited a museum which contained an exhibit on the First World War, slightly more likely than those in the US (42%) and Germany (38%), on par with those in France (43%), but well behind those in Belgium (53%) and Great Britain (57%).

### ***Doing Enough to Mark the Occasion***

For the last two years, and for two more upcoming, countries around the world have been commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War. But only one half (52%) of Canadians agree that Canada is doing enough to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War, meaning that the other half (48%) of Canadians disagree that enough is being done. While only Americans (33%) lag Canadians in believing their country has done enough to mark the occasion, Canadians are less likely than those in Germany (58%), France (60%), Great Britain (63%) and Belgium (70%) to say so.

Moreover, Canadians trail most of the European countries in saying that they remember learning about the First World War in school. Two thirds (66%) of Canadians and those in Great Britain (64%) remember learning about the First World War in school, behind those in Germany (70%), the US (72%), France (78%) and Belgium (80%), more of whom remember learning about the Great War in school.

### ***Personally Remembering those who Served***

Nearly one half (46%) of those in Great Britain say that they are a descendant of someone who served in the First World War, meaning that they're the most likely to have a personal



connection to the Great War. Fewer residents of France (36%), Germany (34%), the US (31%), Belgium (30%) and Canada (29%) have this type of connection.

In an effort to stay connected to the First World War, many intend to visit a First World War battlefield, cemetery or historic site before the end of 2018, led by those in Belgium (25%), followed by those in the US (19%), France (17%), Canada (11%), Great Britain (10%) or Germany (7%).

### *The Battle of Vimy Ridge*

The year 2017 marks the centenary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, where it has been argued that Canada became a nation on account of fighting under its own command (not alongside British soldiers) for the first time. Given its significance to Canada, it's not surprising that Canadians are by far the most likely to have heard of the battle (61%). However, only 17% of those in France have heard of it, despite being the location of the battle. Moreover, only two in ten (20%) Germans have heard of the battle, despite being the opposing force to Canada.

### *Remembering those Who Died*

Respondents of each country were asked to identify, unaided, the number of soldiers that died while serving in the First World War, not only those serving for their own country, but for other countries as well. The chart below outlines the average guess, compared to the actual number of deaths that occurred.

		<i>Average Guess by Respondents in...</i>						<i>ACTUAL</i>
		<i>Canada</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>Belgium</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Germany</i>	
<i>Soldier death among...</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<b>174,772</b>	66,675	131,299	165,562	137,067	150,389	62,305 <sup>a</sup>
	<i>USA</i>	267,062	<b>234,398</b>	266,373	276,241	364,415	337,116	116,516 <sup>b</sup>
	<i>Belgium</i>	186,704	113,895	<b>213,016</b>	269,882	180,301	183,008	40,936 <sup>c</sup>
	<i>UK</i>	436,475	310,249	433,467	<b>889,100</b>	399,214	480,543	744,075 <sup>d</sup>
	<i>France</i>	583,850	417,013	564,318	657,776	<b>915,047</b>	835,661	1,397,800 <sup>e</sup>
	<i>Germany</i>	788,649	582,822	981,924	1,084,340	1,394,803	<b>1,149,436</b>	1,900,876 <sup>f</sup>
	<i>Avg Error</i>	440,426	487,980	408,996	365,586	299,286	337,978	

The numbers reveal some interesting findings:

- Average error puts France as the most accurate; Canada and USA as the least accurate
- Canada, USA, Belgium, UK over-estimate their own losses; France and Germany under-estimate their own losses
- Canada over-estimates own losses, US and Belgium, under-estimates, UK, France (massively) and Germany (under by more than a million people!)
- Everyone over-estimates Canadian losses

<sup>a</sup> Includes 61,000 from Canada and 1,305 from Newfoundland. <http://www.warmuseum.ca/firstworldwar/history/after-the-war/legacy/?anchor=475>

<sup>b</sup> Includes 53,402 battle deaths and 63,114 other deaths in service (non-theater): [http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs\\_americas\\_wars.pdf](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf)

<sup>c</sup> Includes dead and missing, as reported by the Belgian Government in 1924: International Labour Office, Enquête sur la production. Rapport général. Paris [etc.] Berger-Levrault, 1923-25.

<sup>d</sup> Includes 702,410 from the Army, 32,287 from the Royal Navy, and 9,378 from the Royal Air Force: Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire During the Great War 1914-1920, The War Office March 1922.

<sup>e</sup> Huber, Michel (1931). La Population de la France pendant la guerre. Paris.

<sup>f</sup> Includes army and navy casualties: [http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war\\_losses\\_germany](http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war_losses_germany) taken from Robert Weldon Whalen's Bitter Wounds, German Victims of the Great War, Ithaca 1984.



- Everyone grossly under-estimates French and German losses
- Only people in the UK have a reasonably clear understanding of their own losses; everyone else under-estimates by at least a quarter million, with the Americans being the furthest off.

*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between March 29 and April 1, 2016, on behalf of the Vimy Ridge Foundation. For this survey, a sample of 1,005 Canadians from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online. 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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