

CANADIAN OPINION ON WHETHER A GENOCIDE WAS COMMITTED AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA?

ASSOCIATION FOR CANADIAN STUDIES

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INTRODUCTION

That which follows we provide insights into how genocide is understood by Canadians via a national opinion survey and focus specifically on the extent to which it is felt that the country's indigenous peoples have been the victims of genocide. To do so we focus on the following questions:

- 1) In one sentence please tell us what you think about when you hear the word Genocide?
- 2) Indigenous peoples in Canada have been the victims of Genocide?
- 3) If you agree a Genocide took place what form did it take?
- 4) Who Canadians believe is responsible for injustices towards indigenous peoples?
- 5) Are you proud of Canada's history?

METHODOLOGY

The data were collected via a web survey conducted by Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies from June 7 to 11, 2019 among a representative sample of 1,560 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older. An equivalent phone survey would have a margin of error of 3.5 points 19 times out of 20.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to gender, age, region, language spoken at home, education and whether or not children are present in the household to ensure a sample representative of the entire population under review.

MASS KILLING IS WHAT OFTEN COMES TO MIND WHEN CANADIANS HEAR THE WORD GENOCIDE: (Q. IN ONE SENTENCE PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD GENOCIDE)

I prefer not to answer	23%
Extermination/elimination/eradication of a specific race/religious/ethnic group	5%
Atrocious / awful / horrible	5%
Killing / murder / assassination of people	4%
Deliberate/organized killing/eradication of a race / deliberate killing of a race/ethnic group	4%
Mass killing/murder	4%
Mass killing/murder of people/a population/a group of people	4%
Mass killing/murder of a race/a particular ethnical/religious group	4%
Extermination/elimination/eradication of a population/group of people	4%
The Holocaust / Hitler / Germany / concentration camps / Nazi regime	4%
Destroying a group/race / human destruction / intentional action to destroy (a group of people, people's culture, et.)	4%
Death	3%
Killing people of a certain race/religion / killing people based on their race/religion/ideology	3%
It is bad / It is sad / I am against it	3%
Mass death	2%
Killing a lot of people / killing a large group of people	2%
State-sponsoring mass murder / government targeting eradication of specific groups/ethnic groups	2%
Deliberate/organized killing/eradication of a group/large group of people	2%
Killing a certain group of people	2%
The Rwandan genocide / Rwanda	2%
What happened to the First nations / missing/murdered indigenous women	2%

A MAJORITY OF CANADIANS AGREE THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA HAVE BEEN THE VICTIMS OF GENOCIDE

	Indigenous peoples in Canada have been the victims of genocide					
	Total	Man	Woman	18-34	35-54	55+
TOTAL AGREE	53%	48%	58%	64%	52%	47%
Strongly agree	21%	18%	24%	31%	21%	14%
Somewhat agree	32%	30%	34%	33%	31%	33%
TOTAL DISAGREE	34%	42%	26%	21%	33%	45%
Somewhat disagree	18%	21%	14%	11%	19%	21%
Strongly disagree	17%	22%	12%	10%	13%	24%
I prefer not to answer	13%	10%	15%	15%	15%	8%

ONE IN THREE CANADIANS THAT AGREE THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WERE VICTIMS OF GENOCIDE PREFER NOT TO RESPOND WHEN ASKED WHAT FORM IT TOOK

You said that you agreed with the fact that indigenous peoples in Canada have been victims of genocide. Please tell us in what form you believe the genocide took place.	
I prefer not to answer	36%
Colonialization / lose of lands / the settling of Canada / Europeans coming to Canada	17%
The establishment of Residential schools	15%
Destruction of their cultural identity / erasing their culture/heritage/religion from younger age / cultural genocide / forced assimilation	15%
Due to battle/conflicts/massacre in colonial days	12%
The “Sixties Scoop” / removal of indigenous children from their parents	9%
Missing/murder of aboriginal women/girls / not putting enough effort to solve the issue	7%
The establishment of Indian reserves / isolating them from the community	6%
Forced relocation / mass displacement from their land	4%
Murder of indigenous peoples	4%
Mistreatment leading to premature death/suicide	4%
Racism / discrimination / they considered a second level citizens	3%
Denial of their human rights / crimes against them are ignored	3%
They gave them blankets contaminated with smallpox	2%
Lack of proper housing, amenities / unhealthy living conditions	2%
They have been neglected	2%
Attempts to suppress their language / laws prohibiting the use of their language	2%
The Indian Act / aboriginal treaties	2%

CANADIANS ABSOLVE GOVERNMENT(S) OF BLAME FOR INJUSTICES TOWARDS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND POINT TO BRITISH AND FRENCH FOUNDERS AND CHURCHES

	Total	French	English	Others
All Canadians	21%	22%	22%	16%
The British and French that founded Canada	32%	26%	33%	40%
Catholic and Protestant Churches	25%	30%	24%	20%
The government / the Canadian government / the government of the time	1%	1%	1%	2%
The indigenous populations / themselves	1%	0%	1%	0%
Please specify:	3%	2%	4%	3%
I prefer not to answer	16%	19%	14%	20%

THOSE WHO DISAGREE THAT A GENOCIDE WAS COMMITTED AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE LEAST LIKELY TO HOLD “ALL CANADIANS” RESPONSIBLE FOR INJUSTICES COMMITTED AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Please tell us in one sentence who you think is responsible for the injustices committed towards aboriginal/indigenous peoples	Indigenous peoples in Canada have been the victims of genocide			
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
All Canadians	26.4%	25.9%	20.8%	10.8%
The British and French that founded Canada	34.0%	37.7%	31.4%	27.4%
Catholic and Protestant Churches	28.5%	25.1%	28.1%	26.6%
The government / the Canadian government / the government of the time	0.9%	0.6%	1.5%	3.9%

A MAJORITY OF CANADIANS ARE PROUD OF THE COUNTRY'S HISTORY

	I am proud of Canada's History			
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
TOTAL AGREE	71%	59%	69%	81%
Strongly agree	22%	18%	21%	25%
Somewhat agree	49%	42%	48%	56%
TOTAL DISAGREE	23%	30%	25%	16%
Somewhat disagree	19%	23%	21%	14%
Strongly disagree	4%	7%	4%	2%
I prefer not to answer	6%	11%	6%	3%

EVEN A MAJORITY OF THOSE CANADIANS WHO ARE MOST CONVINCED A GENOCIDE WAS COMMITTED TOWARDS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE PROUD OF CANADA'S HISTORY

Indigenous peoples in Canada have been the victims of genocide				
I am proud of Canada's history	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
TOTAL AGREE	53.1%	73.1%	80.3%	83.7%
Strongly agree	17.8%	15.4%	23.7%	37.8%
Somewhat agree	35.3%	57.7%	56.6%	45.9%
Somewhat disagree	34.0%	20.8%	13.9%	8.9%
Strongly disagree	10.1%	2.0%	2.2%	4.2%
I prefer not to answer	2.8%	4.2%	3.6%	3.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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