



Polling Research

Most Canadians are poorly informed
about the History of the Israeli-
Palestinian Conflict and Canada's
role

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October, 2025



Introduction

In the many surveys conducted in Canada and abroad about the conflict between Israel and Hamas and Palestinians in Gaza, it is common to ask whether people feel they have a good understanding of the conflict. Leger surveys conducted as recently as June of this year reveal that some 50% of Canadians feel they have a good understanding of the conflict. Generally whether it is Canada or elsewhere such questions are based on self-assessments of said knowledge and not on one's actual ability to correctly answer basic questions that help us understand the current situation.

As a way to better evaluate historic knowledge about the conflict and Canada's role Leger marketing was commissioned to conduct a survey for the Association for Canadian Studies which asked basic questions on the history of the conflict and on Canada's role in that regard. The survey reveals that the majority of Canadians are either unable to answer questions that are key to knowledge of the origins of the conflict or answer incorrectly. For example Canadians incorrectly think that between 1948 and 1967 Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza when in fact it was Egypt and Jordan. They incorrectly believe that during the second World War, Canada was open to the admission of Jewish refugees.

Amongst other responses the survey raises questions about Canadians and for that matter broader capacity to make informed assessments about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the absence of proper knowledge of the background to the conflict.

The findings are based on surveys conducted via web panel by the firm Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies between October 5 and 7, 2025 with 1564 Canadians. While no margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample of 1564 respondents would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.52\%$, 19 times out of 20

Most Canadians don't know much about the origins of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians and Canada's role; And they're ill informed on key issues

Answer	True	False	False	False	False	True
	Canada supported the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948	Canada was very open to the admission of Jewish refugees to the country during the second world war	In 1975 Canada supported a UN resolution saying that Zionism is racism	Prior to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 Jews and Muslims lived in harmony in the region	From 1948 to 1967 the State of Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza	Since 1948, the Palestinians have had opportunities to establish their own State
True	44%	44%	21%	22%	32%	25%
False	5%	19%	13%	29%	15%	24%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	51%	37%	66%	50%	54%	50%

Most Canadians aren't aware that Canada supported the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 but for those responding to the statement most are aware that Canada did extend such support

Canada supported the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
True	44%	52%	36%	35%	36%	41%	34%	50%	56%
False	5%	6%	5%	13%	10%	6%	3%	2%	3%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	51%	42%	60%	52%	54%	54%	63%	48%	41%

Most Canadians don't know whether prior to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 Jews and Muslims lived in harmony in the region but for the rest more correctly think that was not the case

Prior to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 Jews and Muslims lived in harmony in the region	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
True	22%	24%	20%	21%	24%	18%	18%	25%	23%
False	29%	35%	23%	27%	25%	31%	27%	30%	31%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	50%	41%	57%	52%	52%	52%	54%	45%	46%

Most Canadians wrongly believe that Canada was very open to the admission of Jewish refugees to the country during the second World War

Canada was very open to the admission of Jewish refugees to the country during the second world war	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
True	44%	45%	43%	34%	42%	46%	38%	49%	49%
False	19%	24%	14%	22%	17%	16%	17%	19%	23%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	37%	30%	43%	44%	41%	38%	46%	32%	28%

Majority of Canadians don't know whether from 1948 to 1967 the State of Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza but by more than a two to one ratio more wrongly believe that to be the case

From 1948 to 1967 the State of Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza -	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
True	32%	37%	27%	35%	33%	29%	23%	33%	37%
False	15%	21%	9%	12%	12%	11%	18%	16%	17%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	54%	42%	64%	53%	55%	60%	59%	51%	46%

Majority of Canadians are unaware if Canada supported a UN resolution saying that Zionism is racism but more wrongly believe that Canada supported the resolution

In 1975 Canada supported a UN resolution saying that Zionism is racism	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
True	21%	24%	18%	24%	21%	24%	16%	22%	20%
False	13%	17%	9%	16%	14%	15%	15%	8%	12%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	66%	59%	73%	61%	66%	61%	69%	70%	68%

One in two Canadians are unaware when asked whether since 1948, the Palestinians have had opportunities to establish their own State but the rest are divided when asked about the issue

Since 1948, the Palestinians have had opportunities to establish their own State	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
True	25%	30%	21%	27%	23%	27%	23%	24%	28%
False	24%	29%	20%	23%	28%	20%	21%	24%	28%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	50%	41%	59%	50%	49%	53%	55%	52%	44%

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