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## Canadians Doubt Prospects for Global Reconciliation as International Divisions Strain Friendships

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# Introduction

A Leger survey conducted for the Association for Canadian Studies from September 4 to 6, 2026, finds considerable pessimism about the prospects for resolving several major international conflicts. Among the four conflicts examined, Canadians view the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians as the least reconcilable: only 14% believe reconciliation is possible, compared with 23% for Russia and Ukraine, 26% for Iran and Western countries, and 35% for Russia and the United States. Younger Canadians are generally more optimistic than older respondents, while men are more likely than women to see the conflicts as reconcilable. Francophones express particularly strong pessimism, with 68% describing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as irreconcilable, compared with 55% of anglophones.

This pessimism extends beyond international relations into Canadians' personal lives. Just over half of respondents, 52%, believe it is becoming increasingly difficult for people with opposing views on major international conflicts to remain friends, while only 21% disagree. This perception is remarkably consistent across French-speaking, English-speaking and allophone Canadians, suggesting that the polarizing effects of international conflicts cross linguistic boundaries. The findings point to a broader concern: global conflicts increasingly shape domestic relationships and make it more difficult to preserve dialogue across deeply held political differences.

# Methodology

The findings arise from a survey of Canadians conducted by the firm Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies between September 4-6, 2026. The survey was conducted with 1538 respondents in Canada. A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey for comparison purposes. A probability sample of 1538 respondents would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

Across a selected list of global conflicts, Canadians regard the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians as the least reconcilable

| Do you regard the following conflicts as reconcilable... | Total | Male | Female | Between 18 and 24 | Between 25 and 34 | Between 35 and 44 | Between 45 and 54 | Between 55 and 64 | 65+ |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----|
| Israelis and Palestinians                                | 14%   | 16%  | 11%    | 23%               | 18%               | 15%               | 11%               | 11%               | 9%  |
| Russia and Ukraine                                       | 23%   | 30%  | 16%    | 30%               | 23%               | 18%               | 20%               | 25%               | 25% |
| Iran and Western Countries                               | 26%   | 28%  | 23%    | 36%               | 31%               | 28%               | 22%               | 21%               | 21% |
| Russia and the United States                             | 35%   | 45%  | 26%    | 43%               | 37%               | 31%               | 38%               | 35%               | 32% |

# Francophones are most likely to think that the conflict is irreconcilable between Israelis and Palestinians

| Israelis and Palestinians - Do you regard the following conflicts as reconcilable or irreconcilable? | Total | French | English | A language other than French or English |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------------|
| Reconcilable                                                                                         | 14%   | 7%     | 16%     | 14%                                     |
| Irreconcilable                                                                                       | 58%   | 68%    | 55%     | 57%                                     |
| I don't know                                                                                         | 28%   | 25%    | 29%     | 29%                                     |

# Allophones are most likely to believe that the conflict between the United States and Russia is irreconcilable

| Russia and the United States | Total | French | English | A language other than French or English |
|------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------------|
| Reconcilable                 | 35%   | 31%    | 36%     | 37%                                     |
| Irreconcilable               | 29%   | 31%    | 28%     | 35%                                     |
| I don't know                 | 36%   | 38%    | 36%     | 27%                                     |

# Francophones most likely to regard the conflict between Iran and Western countries as irreconcilable

| Iran and Western countries | Total | French | English | A language other than French or English |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------------|
| Reconcilable               | 26%   | 23%    | 26%     | 26%                                     |
| Irreconcilable             | 41%   | 45%    | 41%     | 37%                                     |
| I don't know               | 33%   | 32%    | 33%     | 36%                                     |

# Francophones are most likely to agree that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is irreconcilable

| Russia and Ukraine | Total | French | English | A language other than French or English |
|--------------------|-------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------------|
| Reconcilable       | 23%   | 17%    | 25%     | 23%                                     |
| Irreconcilable     | 50%   | 56%    | 48%     | 50%                                     |
| I don't know       | 27%   | 26%    | 27%     | 27%                                     |

A majority agree that It is increasingly difficult for people who hold opposing views on major international conflicts to remain friends

| It is increasingly difficult for people who hold opposing views on major international conflicts to remain friends | Total | Male | Female | Between 18 and 24 | Between 25 and 34 | Between 35 and 44 | Between 45 and 54 | Between 55 and 64 | 65+ |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----|
| Yes                                                                                                                | 52%   | 54%  | 50%    | 54%               | 52%               | 61%               | 51%               | 45%               | 51% |
| No                                                                                                                 | 21%   | 26%  | 17%    | 23%               | 23%               | 19%               | 24%               | 23%               | 18% |
| I don't know                                                                                                       | 27%   | 20%  | 33%    | 22%               | 25%               | 19%               | 26%               | 32%               | 31% |

Language background is not a factor in the extent to which it is seen as increasingly difficult for people who hold opposing views on major international conflicts to remain friends

| It is increasingly difficult for people who hold opposing views on major international conflicts to remain friends | Total | French | English | A language other than French or English |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------------|
| Yes                                                                                                                | 52%   | 53%    | 52%     | 52%                                     |
| No                                                                                                                 | 21%   | 19%    | 22%     | 21%                                     |
| I don't know                                                                                                       | 27%   | 29%    | 26%     | 27%                                     |

# Contact

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