

SCHOEN CONSULTING

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), commissioned Schoen Consulting to conduct a comprehensive national study of Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness in France. Schoen Consulting conducted 1,100 interviews with French adults aged 18 and over between November 9 and 16, 2019. The margin of error is 3.1 percent.

Executive Summary

The France study finds critical gaps in Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness in France*.

The **majority** of French respondents surveyed (**57 percent**) and **more than two-thirds** of Millennials and Gen Z—defined as those under 38 years of age—**surveyed (69 percent) do not know that six million Jews were killed during the Holocaust.**

Meanwhile, a majority of French citizens (**52 percent**) believe that something like the Holocaust could happen again in Europe.

Survey participants responded to questions which included the following categories:

- Knowledge and Awareness
- France during the Holocaust
- Neo-Nazism and Antisemitism

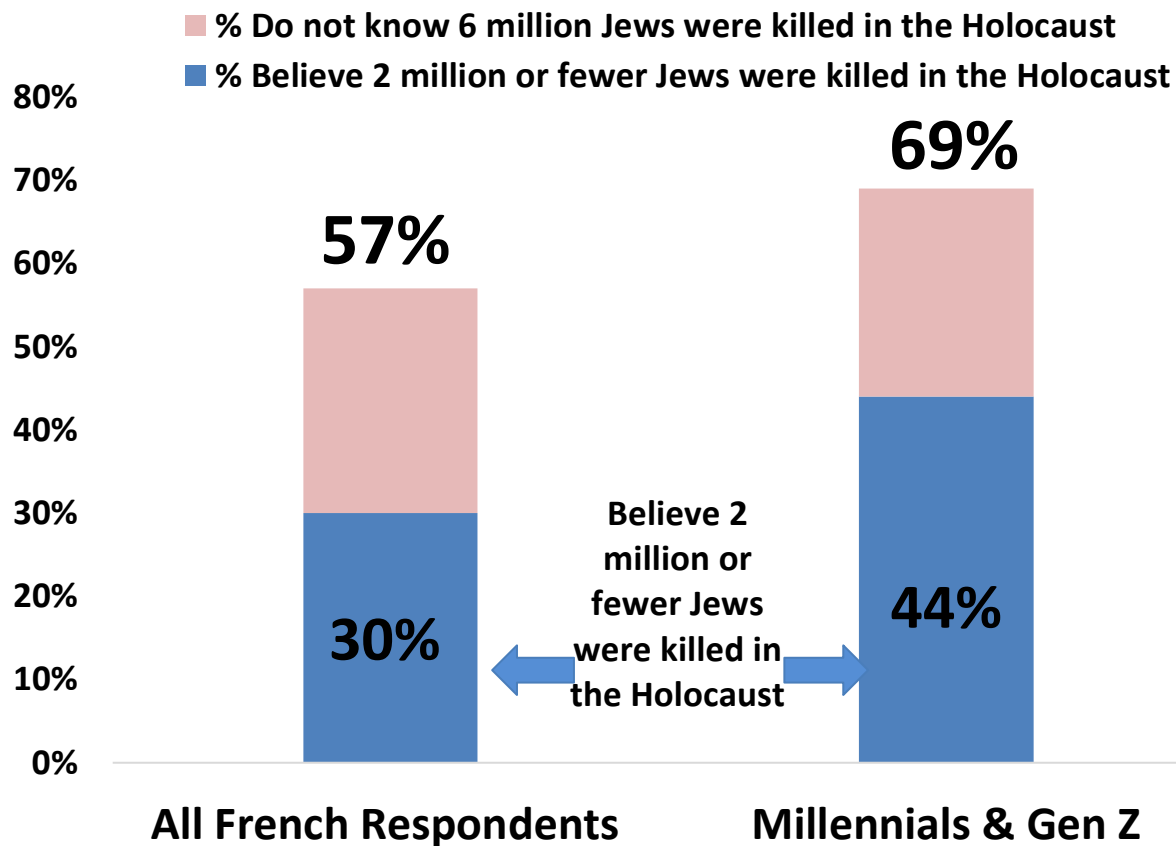
* Note: *The term "Shoah" is used in place of "Holocaust" in France

- Holocaust Education

Knowledge and Awareness

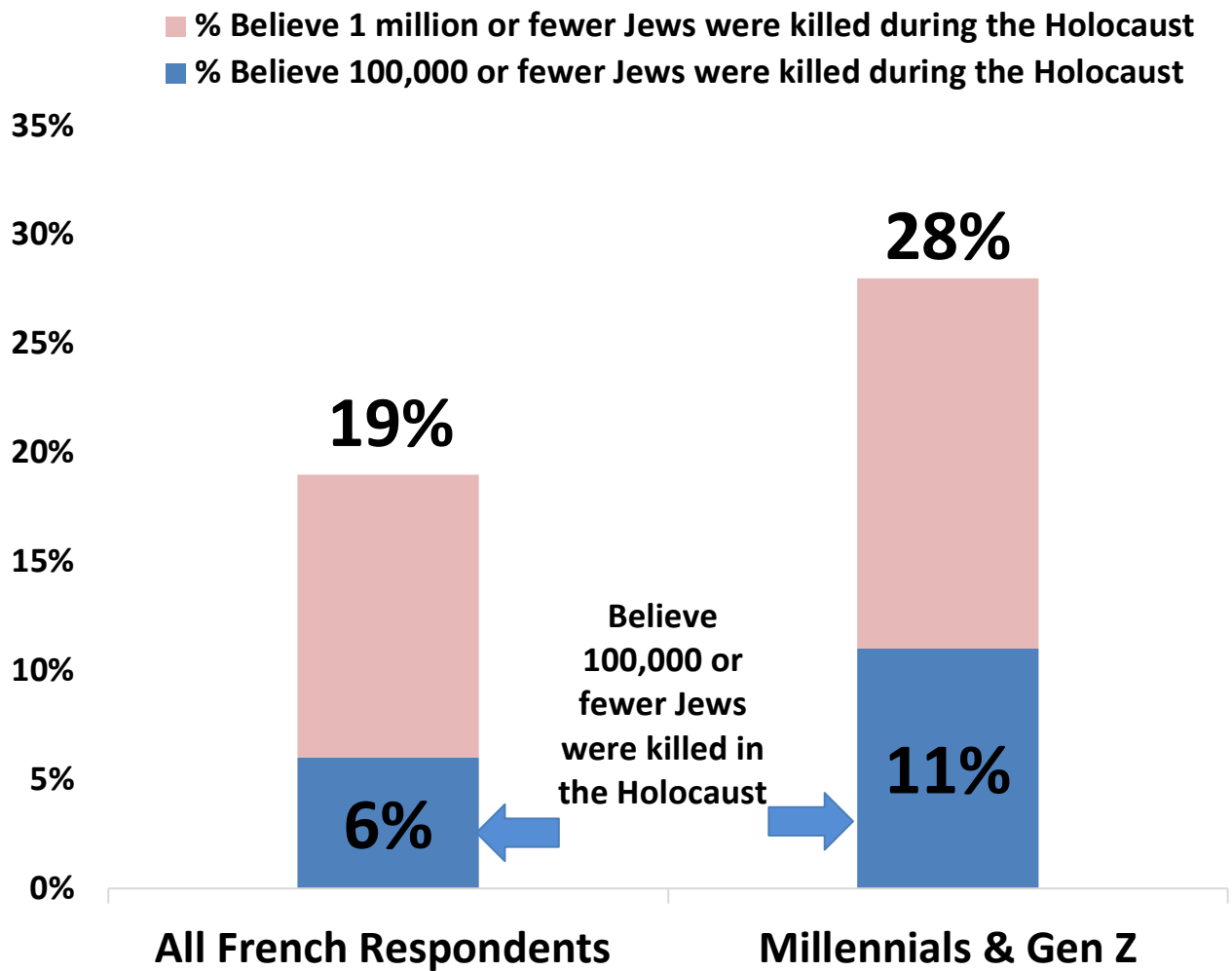
57 percent of all French respondents and 69 percent of Millennials and Gen Z do not know that 6 million Jews were killed during the Holocaust and just under one-third (30 percent) of French respondents overall, and 44 percent of Millennials and Gen Z, believe two million Jews or fewer were killed during the Holocaust.

**Chart 1. Misperceptions About Holocaust
Death Toll
Showing % of All French Respondents &
Millennials/Gen Z Who Do Not Know Jewish Death Toll**



Additionally, 28 percent of French Millennials and Gen Z believe that fewer than one million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. This compares to 19 percent of all French respondents, showing a large gap in knowledge for the younger cohort.

**Chart 2. Misperceptions About Holocaust
Death Toll
Showing % of All French Respondents & Millennials/Gen Z Who Believe 1 Million or Fewer Jews Were Killed in Holocaust**



Notably, across all four countries studied – that is, the United States, Canada, Austria and, now, France – more than half of both all respondents and Millennials/Gen Z do not know that six million Jews were killed in the Holocaust – with France having the highest percentage of people unaware that 6 million Jews were killed.

Chart 3. Misperceptions About Holocaust Death Toll - CROSS COUNTRY

Showing % Who DO NOT KNOW 6 Million Jews Were Killed In the Holocaust; Among All Respondents in France, Austria, Canada, USA

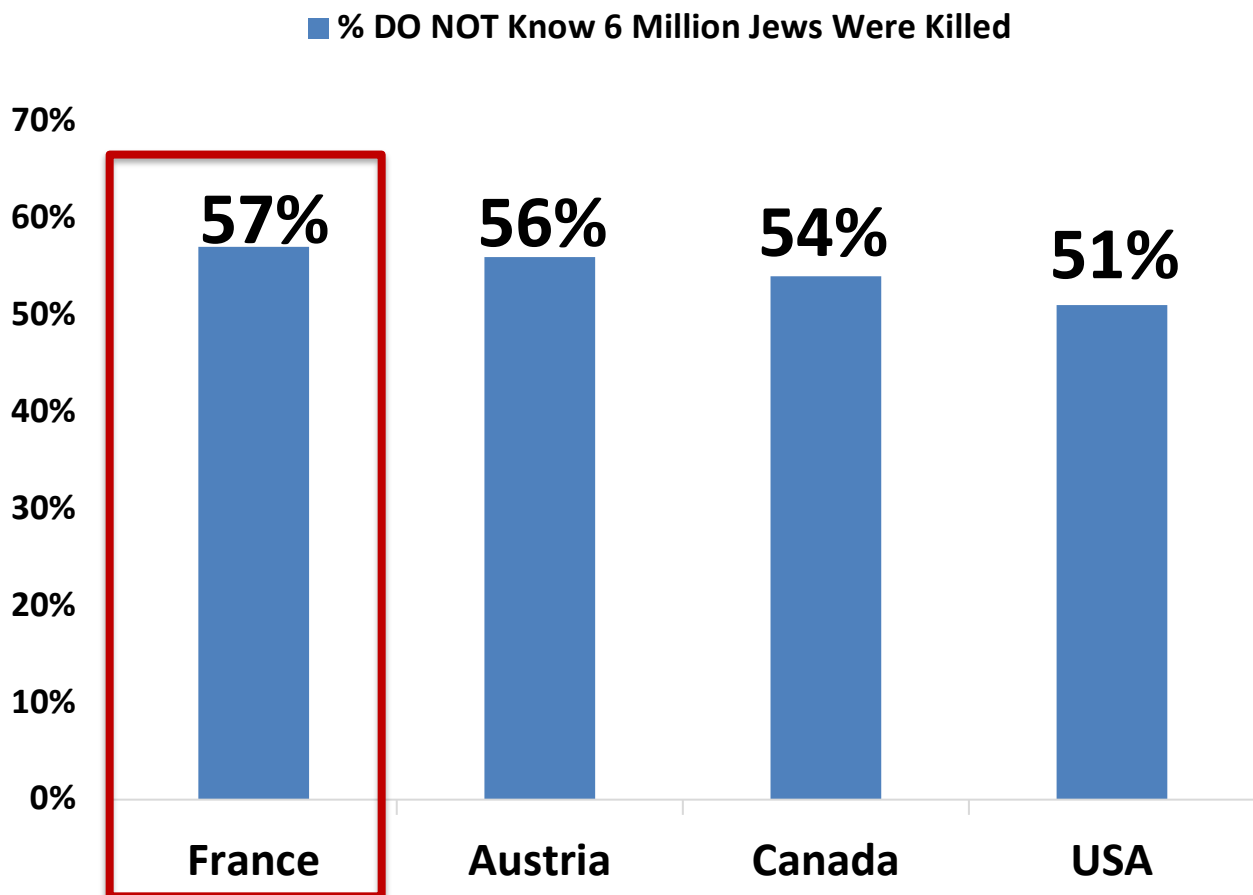
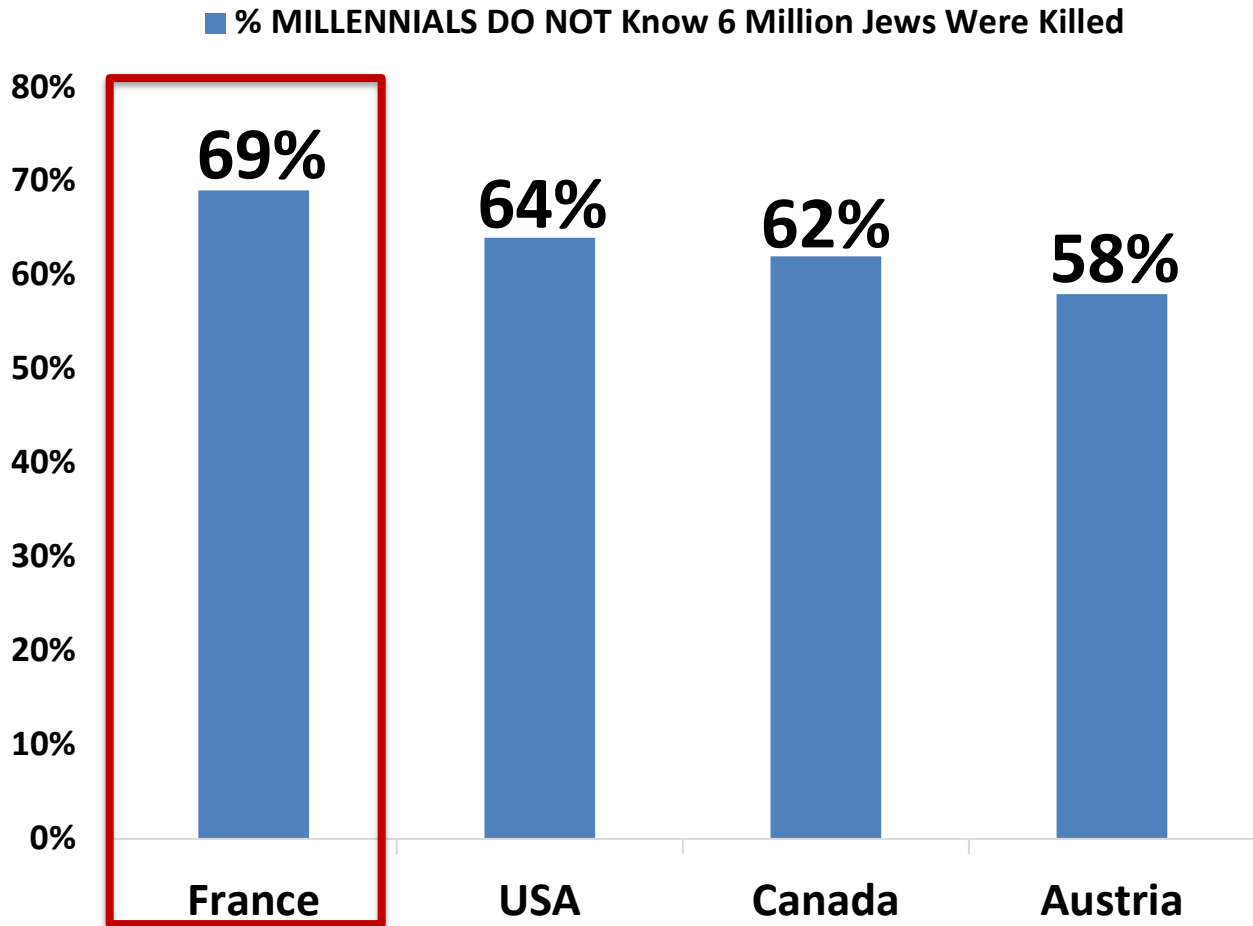
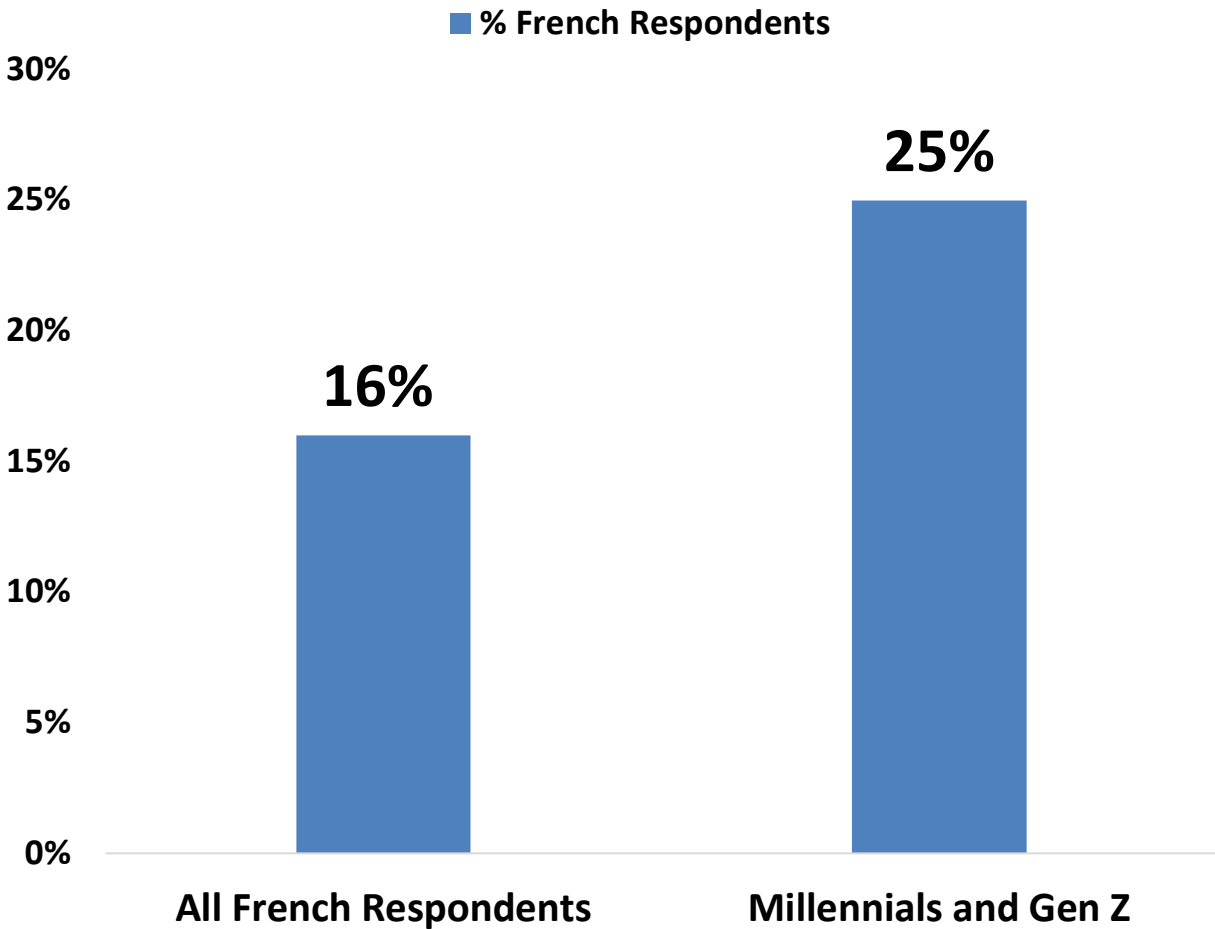


Chart 4. Misperceptions About Holocaust Death Toll - CROSS COUNTRY MILLENNIALS
Showing % Who DO NOT Know 6 Million Jews Were Killed In the Holocaust; Among MILLENNIALS in France, USA, Canada, Austria



Of concern, a full 25 percent of French Millennials & Gen Z have never seen or heard the word Shoah (Holocaust) before. This compares to 16 percent of all French respondents.

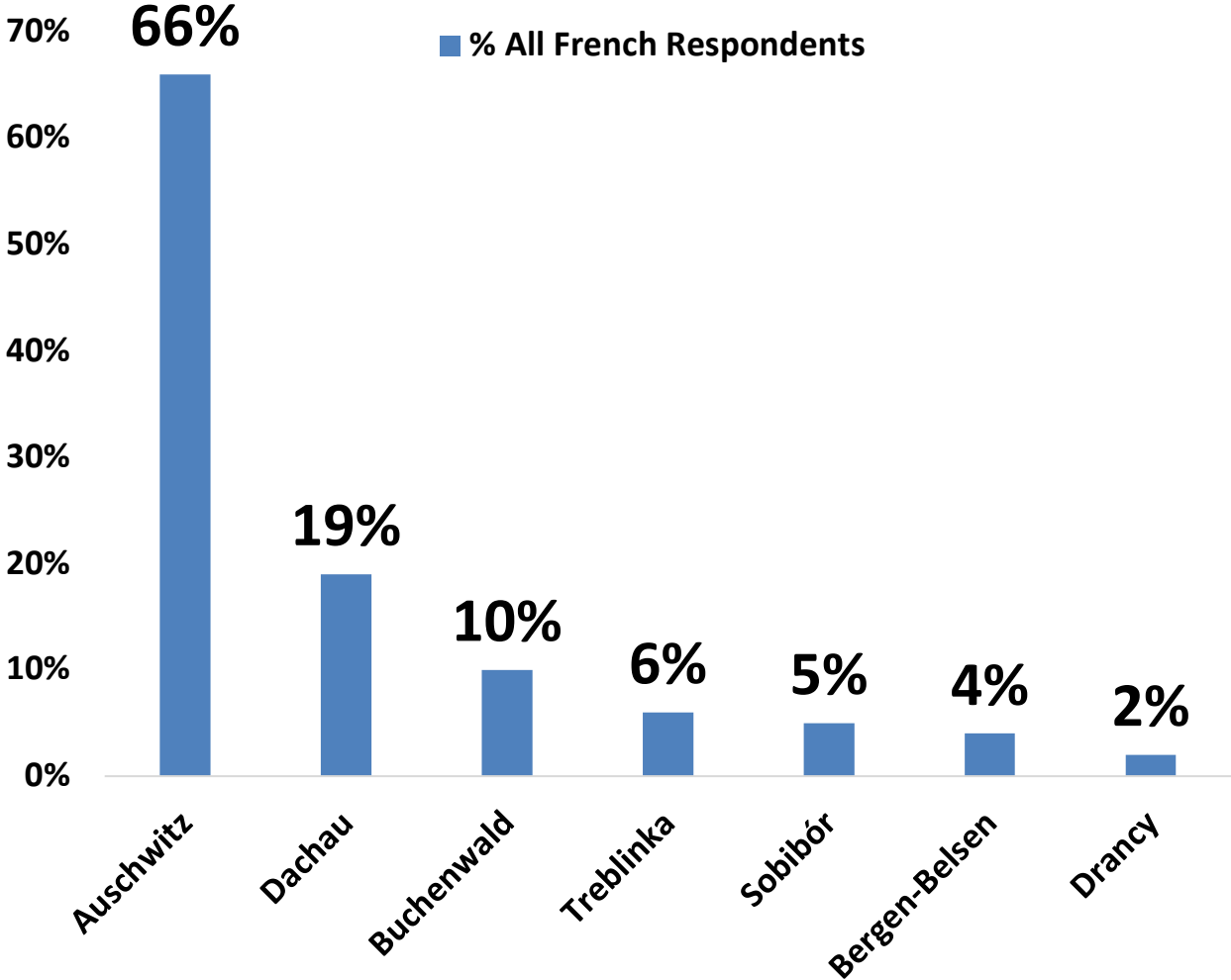
Chart 5. Never Seen or Heard The Word "Shoah"
Showing % of All French Respondents & Millennials/Gen Z



There is little knowledge about concentration camps and ghettos other than Auschwitz-Birkenau, with just 19 percent of French respondents familiar with the infamous Dachau camp, while awareness of Buchenwald (10 percent), Treblinka (6 percent), Sobibor (5 percent), and Bergen-Belsen (4 percent) is incredibly low.

Strikingly, only 2 percent of all French respondents know about the Drancy Internment Camp, located in a suburb just outside of Paris.

**Chart 6. Familiarity With Nazi Camps
Showing % of All French Respondents**



A majority of all French respondents (52 percent) believe something like the Holocaust could happen in other European countries today, while 34 percent believe something like the Holocaust could happen in France today.

Additionally, over one-third (36 percent) of all French respondents believe something like the Holocaust could happen in the United States today.

Table 1. Belief that the Holocaust Could Happen Again Showing Percent of All French Respondents	
Statement	Percent French Respondents
Something like the Holocaust could happen in other European countries today	52 Percent
Something like the Holocaust could happen in the United States today	36 Percent
Something like the Holocaust could happen in France today	34 Percent

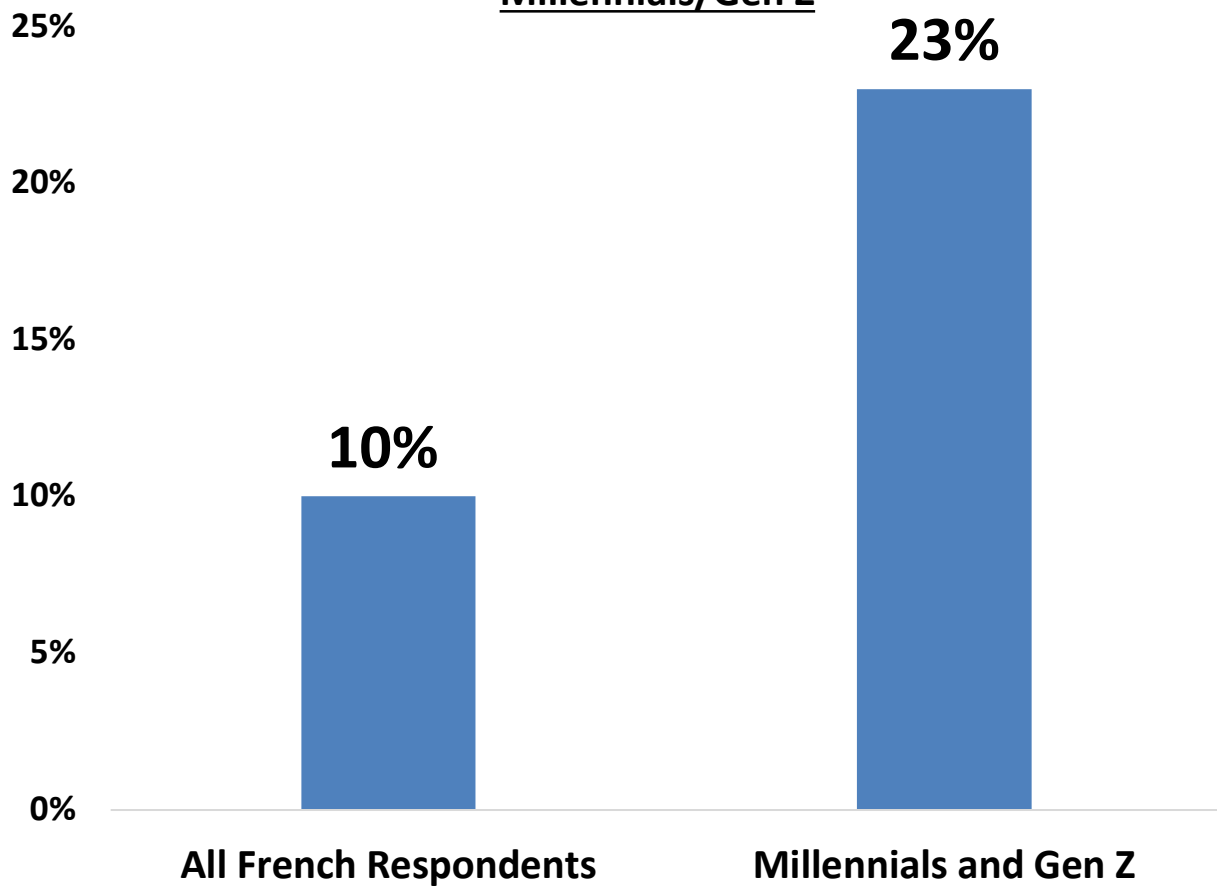
Notably, over one-half (52 percent) of American respondents feel the Holocaust could happen in the United States, compared to slightly under one-half (47 percent) of Austrian respondents, and just over one-third (36 percent) of French respondents.

Table 2. Belief that the Holocaust Could Happen in the USA Showing All Respondents—USA, Austria, France			
Statement	USA Respondents	Austrian Respondents	French Respondents
Something like the Holocaust could happen in the United States today	52 Percent	47 Percent	36 Percent

23 percent of Millennial and Gen Z French, and 10 percent of all French respondents believe that either the Holocaust is a myth or that the reported number of Jews murdered during the Holocaust has been greatly exaggerated.

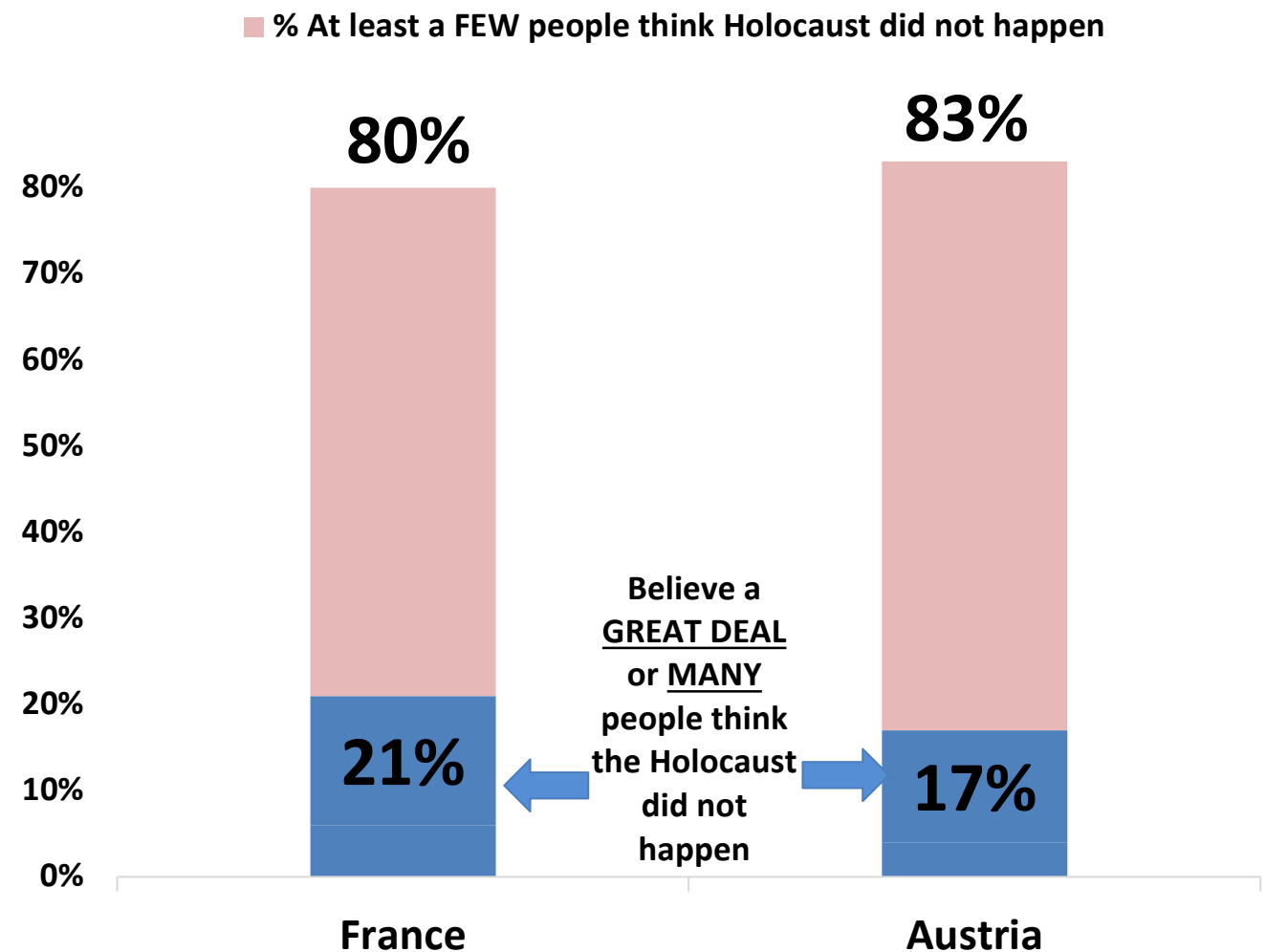
Chart 7. Belief That Holocaust is a Myth or the Number of Jews Killed in Holocaust Has Been Exaggerated

Showing % of All French Respondents & Millennials/Gen Z



Concerningly, in both France and Austria, an overwhelming number of respondents—80 and 83 percent, respectively—say at least a few people in their country believe the Holocaust did not happen – and 21 percent of all French respondents say that a great deal or many French people believe it did not happen.

**Chart 8. CROSS-COUNTRY COMPARISON
Perceptions Of Holocaust Denial– Showing % France and Austria That Believe at Least a FEW People in Their Country Believe Holocaust Did Not Happen**



59 percent of all French respondents agree that fewer people seem to care about the Holocaust than they used to. And 18 percent believe that people still talk too much about what happened during the Holocaust.

Table 3. Holocaust Perception Agree/Disagree Statements Showing Percent of All French Respondents	
Statement	Percent Agree
<i>“Fewer people seem to care about the Holocaust today than they used to”</i>	59 Percent
<i>“People still talk too much about what happened during the Holocaust”</i>	18 Percent

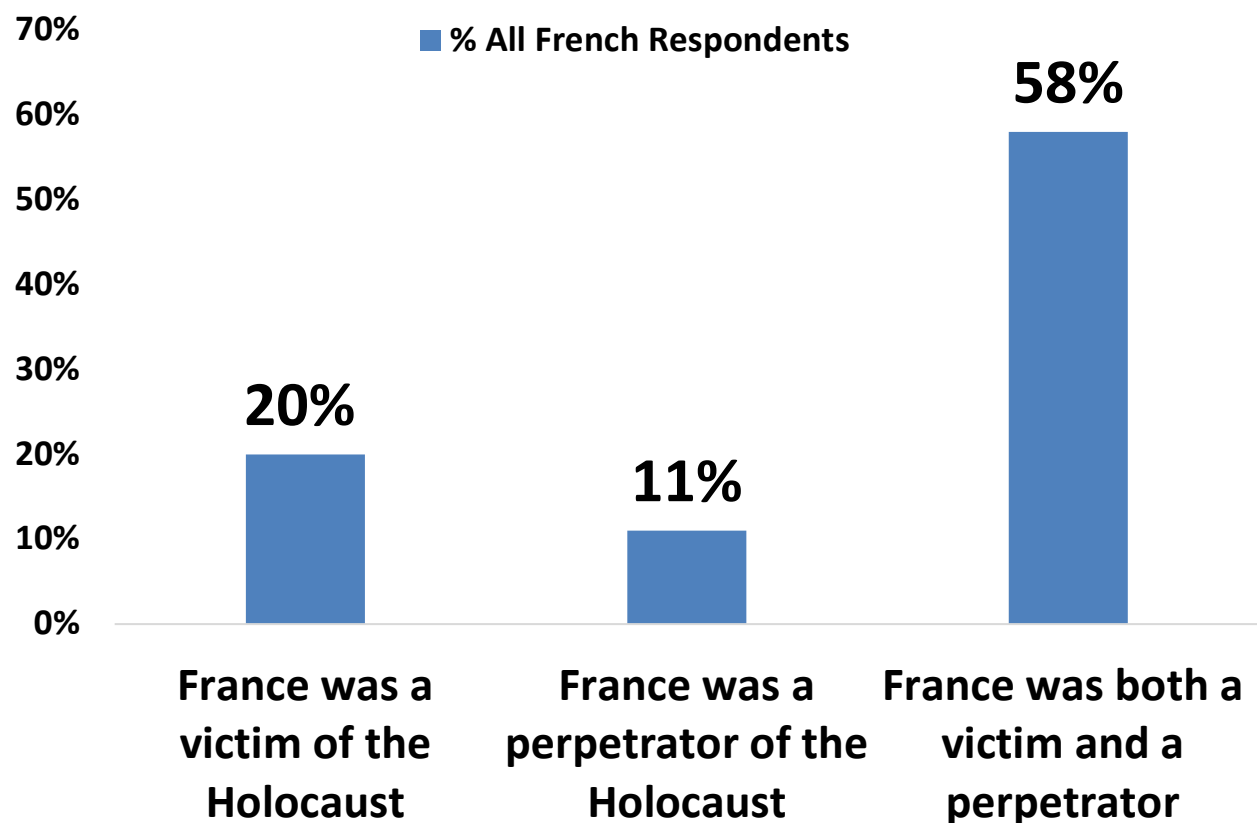
France During the Holocaust

When it comes to France's legacy during the Holocaust, our survey finds both conflicted and concerning perceptions.

An overwhelming number of French respondents (58 percent) believe France was both a victim and a perpetrator of the Holocaust.

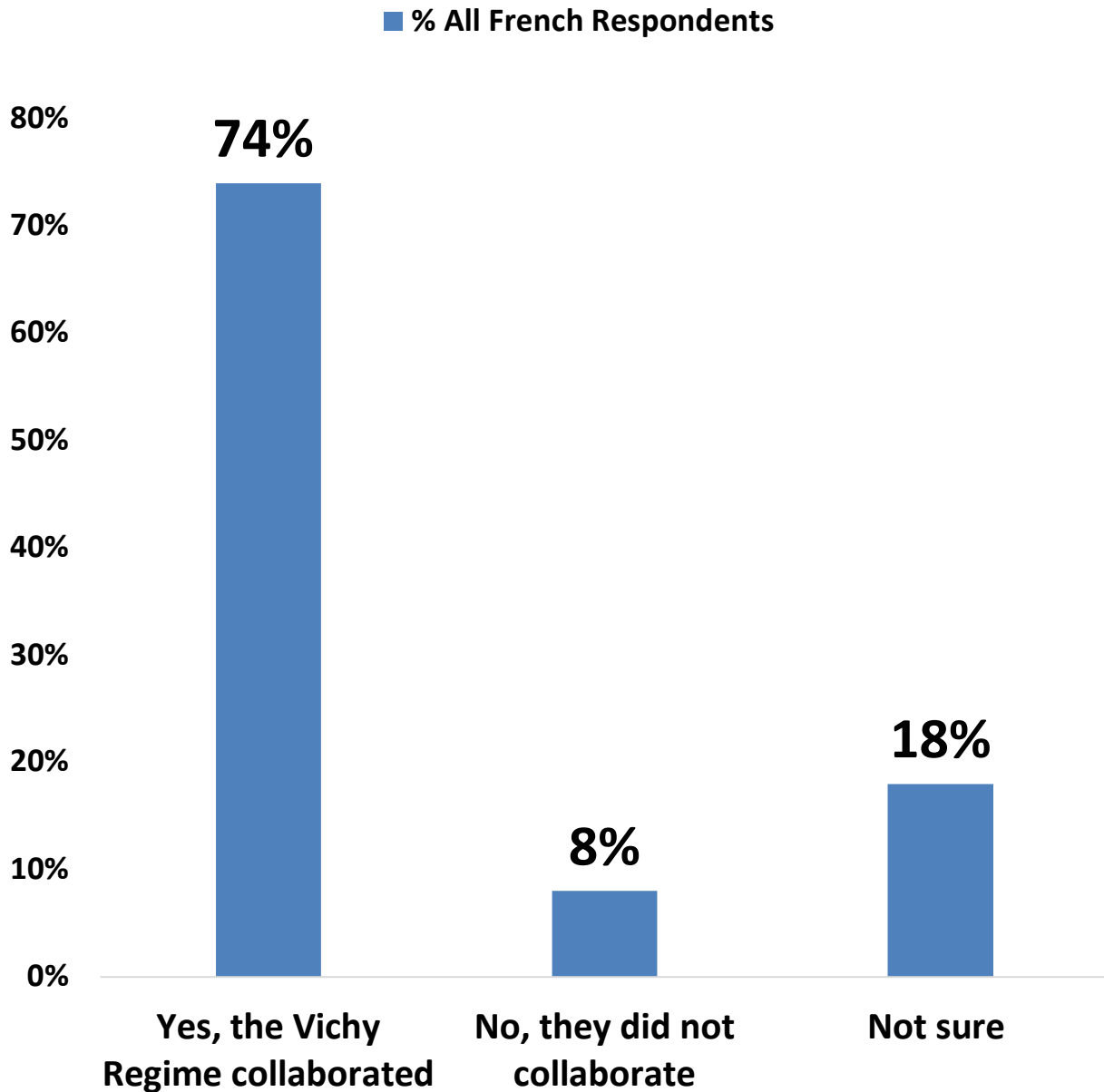
Chart 9. France: Perpetrator or Victim of the Holocaust?

Showing % of All French Respondents



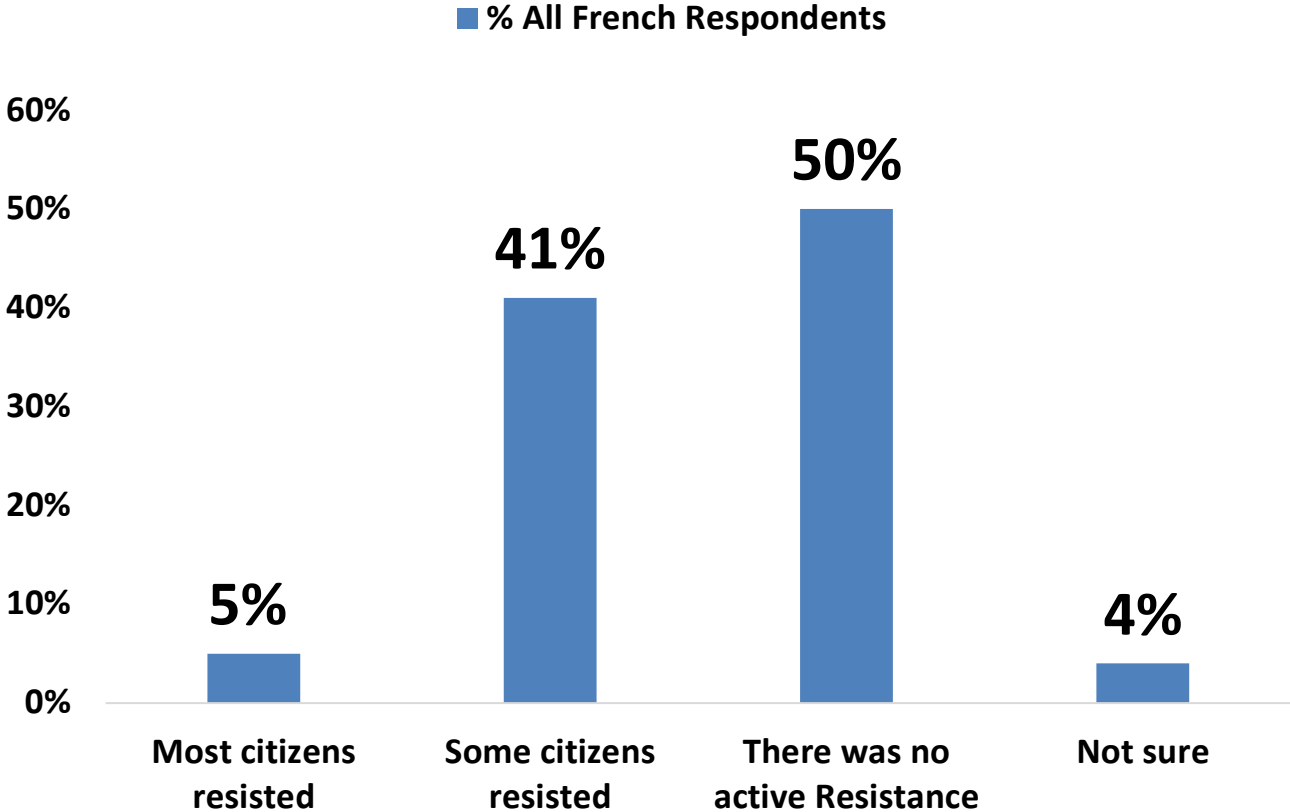
Almost three-quarters (74 percent) of French respondents say that the Vichy Regime actively collaborated with the Nazis during the Holocaust.

Chart 10. French Attitudes Towards Vichy Regime
Showing % of All French Respondents



Only five percent of French respondents believe that most citizens resisted the Nazis, and exactly half of French respondents believe there was no active resistance to the Nazis.

Chart 11. Perceptions of French Resistance
Showing % of All French Respondents



Neo-Nazism and Antisemitism

More French respondents believe that neo-Nazism is more prevalent in the United States than in their own country.

Almost one-third of French respondents (30 percent) say there are a great deal or many neo-Nazis in France today. A solid plurality (44 percent) say there are a few.

Table 4. Neo-Nazism in France Showing Percent of All French Respondents	
There are a great deal or many neo-Nazis in France today	30 Percent
There are a few neo-Nazis in France today	44 Percent
There are NO neo-Nazis in France today	1 Percent

By comparison, 43 percent of all French respondents believe that there are a great deal/many neo-Nazis in the United States today. Around one-third (31 percent) say that there are a few neo-Nazis in the United States.

Table 5. Neo-Nazism in the United States Showing Percent of All French Respondents	
There are a great deal or many neo-Nazis in the USA today	43 Percent
There are a few neo-Nazis in the USA today	31 Percent
There are NO neo-Nazis in the USA today	1 Percent

More than 8-in-10 (85 percent) of French respondents believe there is antisemitism in France today, and 70 percent believe there is antisemitism in the United States. These numbers are slightly lower among Millennials & Gen Z, with 77 percent believing there is antisemitism in France today, and 69 percent believing antisemitism exists in the United States.

Table 6. Antisemitism in France vs. United States Showing Percent of All French Respondents & Millennials and Gen Z		
Statement	Percent All French Respondents	Percent French Millennials & Gen Z
There is antisemitism in France today	85 Percent	77 Percent
There is antisemitism in the United States today	70 Percent	69 Percent

Table 7. Antisemitic People in France Showing Percent of All French Respondents	
There are a great deal or many antisemitic people in France today	43 Percent
There are a few antisemitic people in France today	33 Percent
There are NO antisemitic people in France today	2 Percent

Holocaust Education

Most French surveyed (79 percent) say that all students should learn about the Holocaust in school, and three-quarters (75 percent) believe Holocaust education should be compulsory at school. Additionally, almost all French surveyed (82 percent) say that it is important to continue to teach about the Holocaust, in part, so it doesn't happen again.

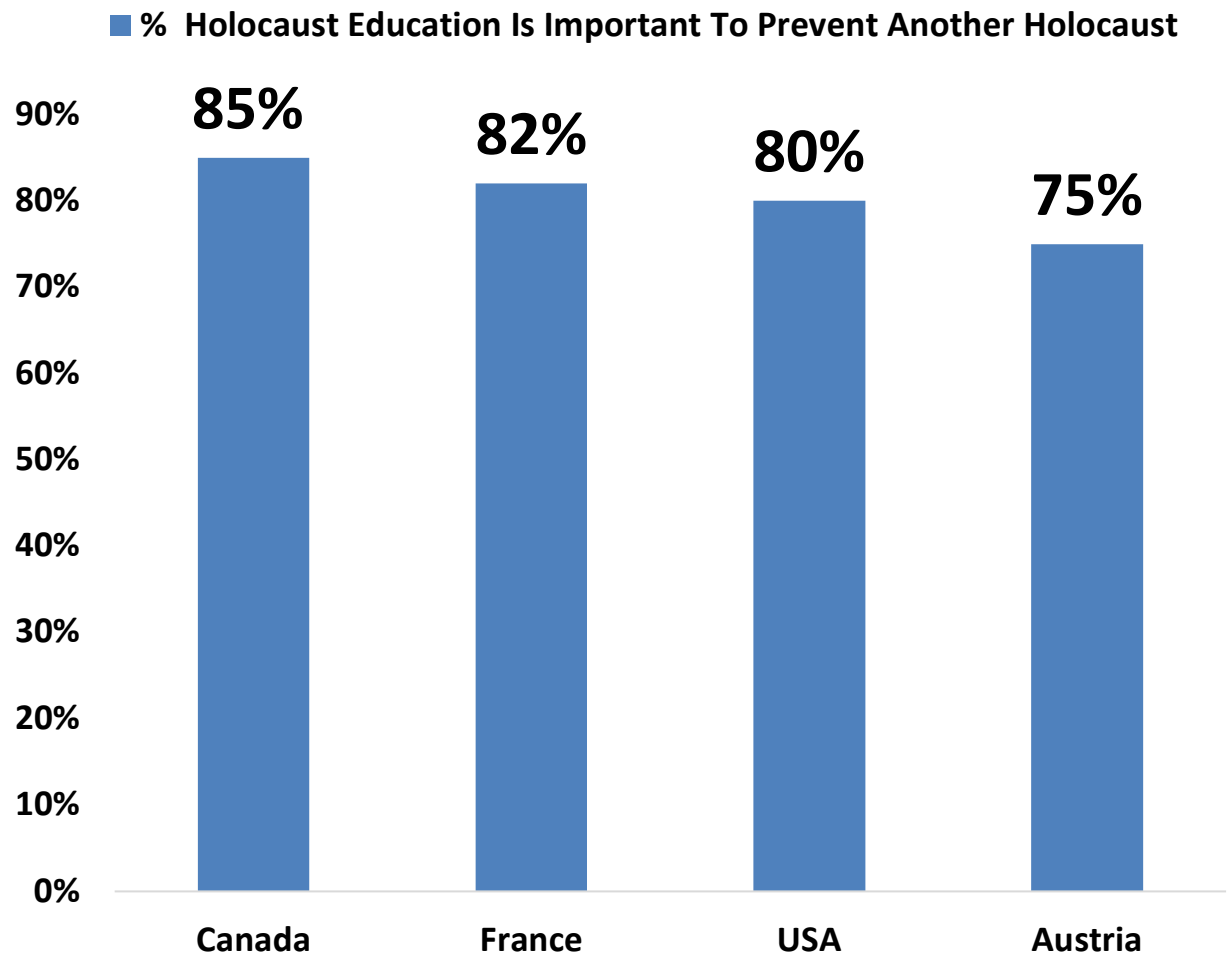
Furthermore, 41 percent say that the current lessons taught about the Holocaust could be better.

Table 8. Holocaust Education Perceptions
Showing Percent of All French Respondents & Millennials and Gen Z

Statement	Percent All French Respondents	Percent French Millennials & Gen Z
It is important to continue to teach about the Holocaust, in part, so it doesn't happen again	82 Percent	80 Percent
All students should learn about the Holocaust while at school	79 Percent	77 Percent
Holocaust education should be compulsory in school	75 Percent	67 Percent
Lessons about the Holocaust are mostly historically accurate, but could be better	41 Percent	38 Percent

Notably, at least three-quarters of the general population across all four countries studied believe Holocaust education is important to ensure that it does not happen again.

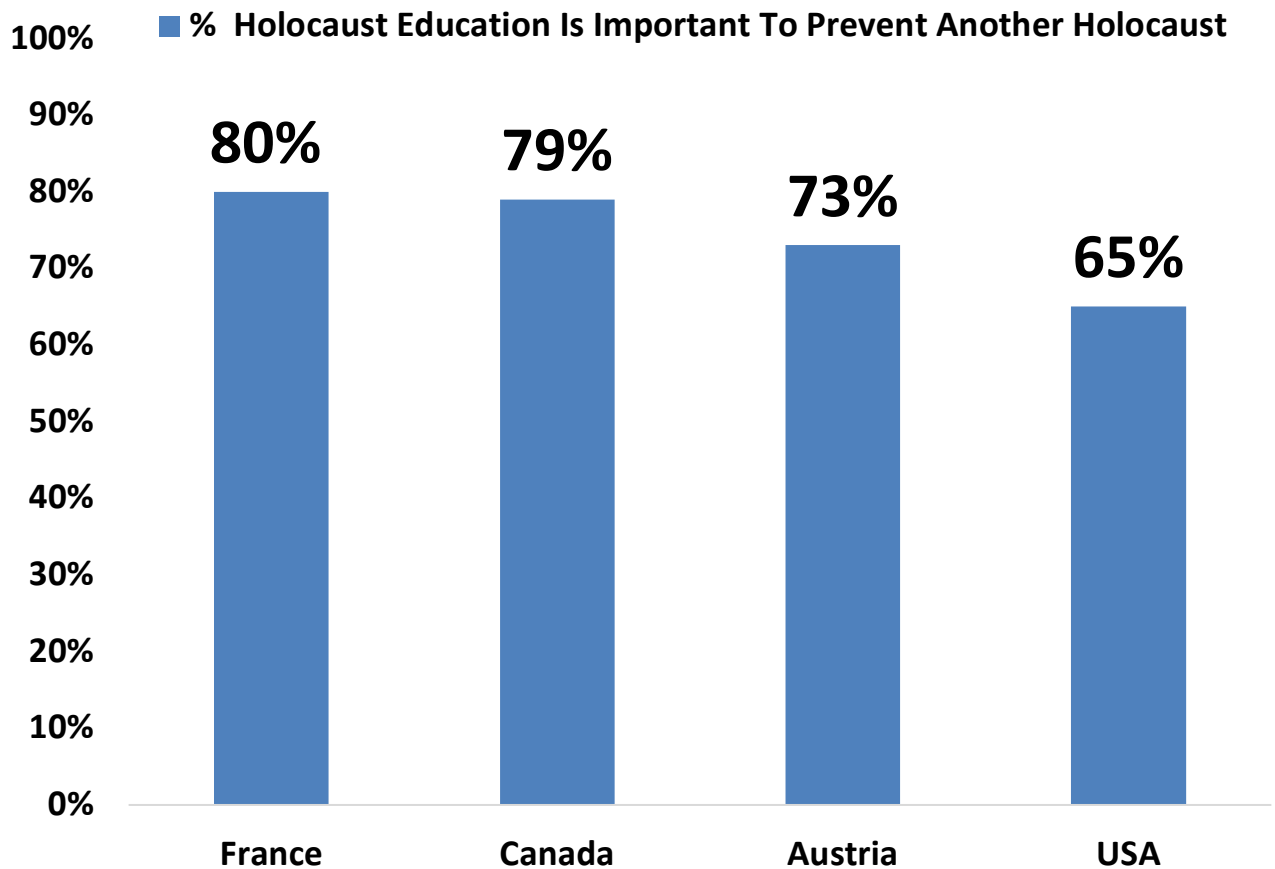
Chart 12. Holocaust Education
Showing % ALL RESPONDENTS--Believe Holocaust Education Is Important to Prevent Another Holocaust;
Canada, France, USA, Austria



Among the younger age cohort, French and Canadian Millennials and Gen Z are more likely than those in Austria or the United States to say that Holocaust education is important in preventing something like the Holocaust from happening again.

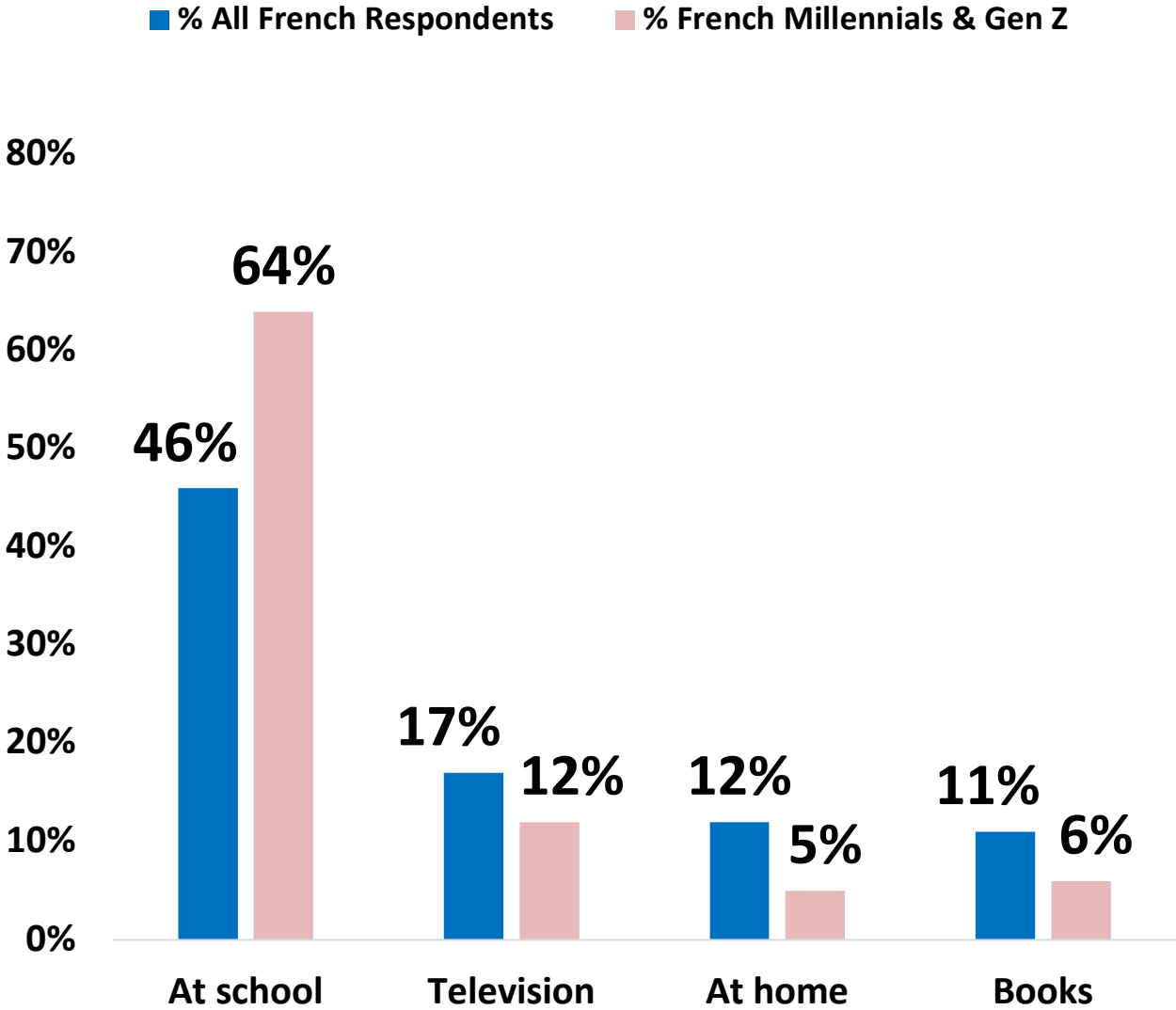
Chart 13. Holocaust Education; MILLENNIALS & Gen Z

Showing % MILLENNIALS & Gen Z Who Believe Holocaust Education Is Important to Prevent Another Holocaust; France, Canada, Austria, USA



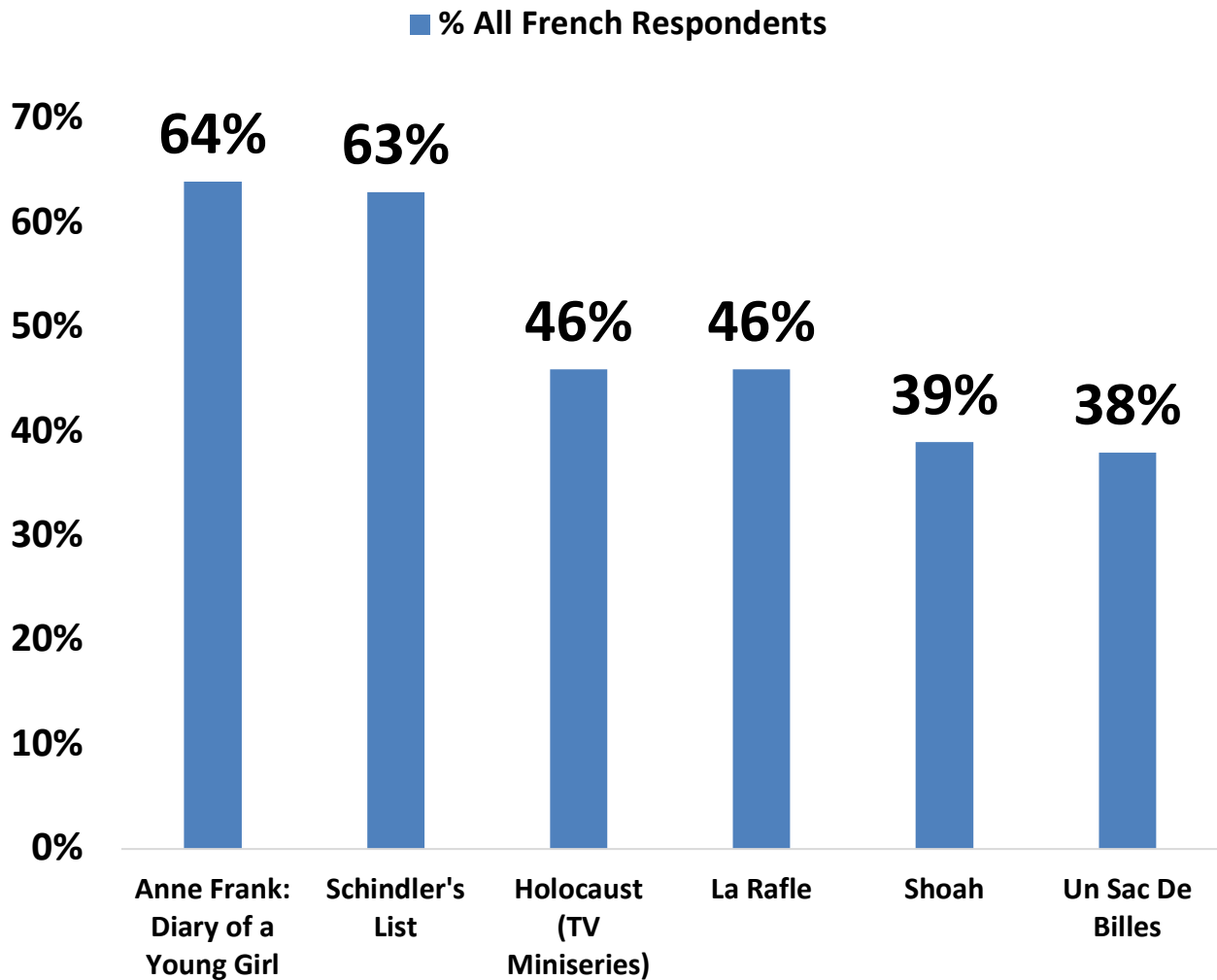
Interestingly, nearly two-thirds of Millennials and Gen Z (64 percent) first learned about the Holocaust in school, compared to 46 percent of all French adults surveyed.

Chart 14. Where Respondents First Learned of the Holocaust
Showing % of All French Respondents & Millennials/Gen Z



Among the 33 percent of all French respondents who first learned of the Holocaust through books, TV, or movies, a majority (64 percent) cite “Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl” and “Schindler’s List” (63 percent).

Chart 15. Books, TV, and Movies in which Respondents First Learned of the Holocaust
Showing % of All French Respondents

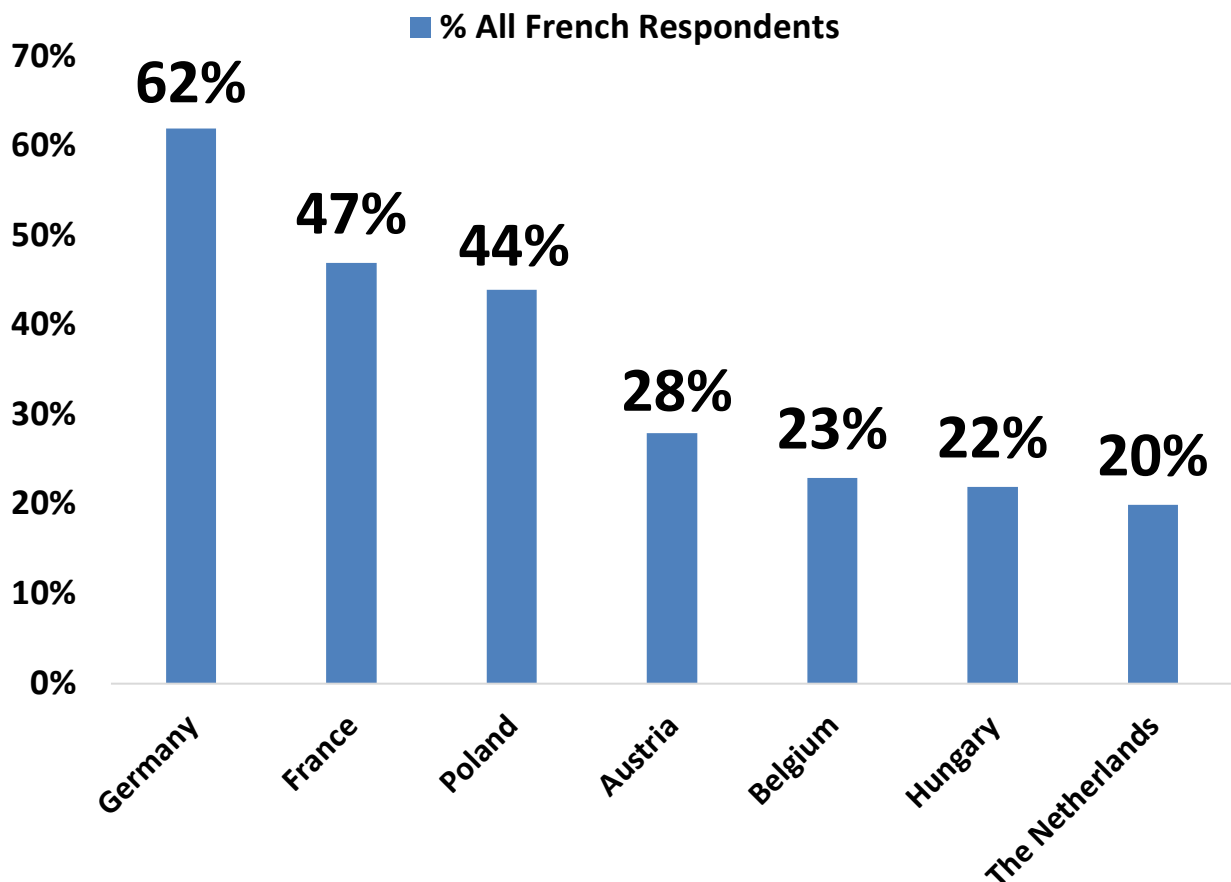


Appendix: Additional Data Collected

Many French respondents know that the Holocaust occurred in Germany (62 percent). Fewer than half know that the Holocaust also took place in France (47 percent), and Poland (44 percent).

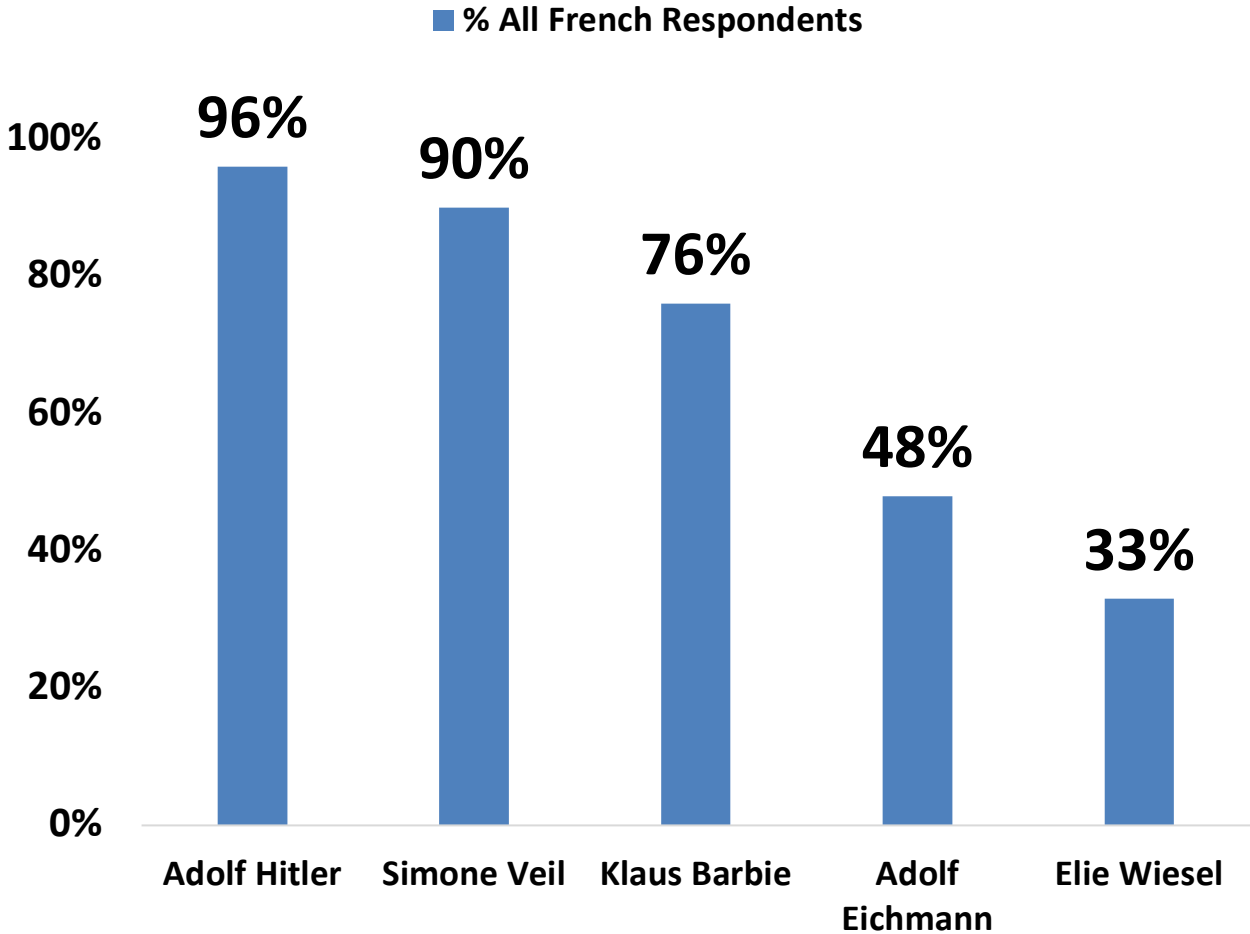
Even fewer identified Austria (28 percent), Belgium (23 percent), Hungary (22 percent), or the Netherlands (20 percent) as countries in which the Holocaust took place.

Chart 16. Knowledge of Where Holocaust Occurred
Showing % of All French Respondents



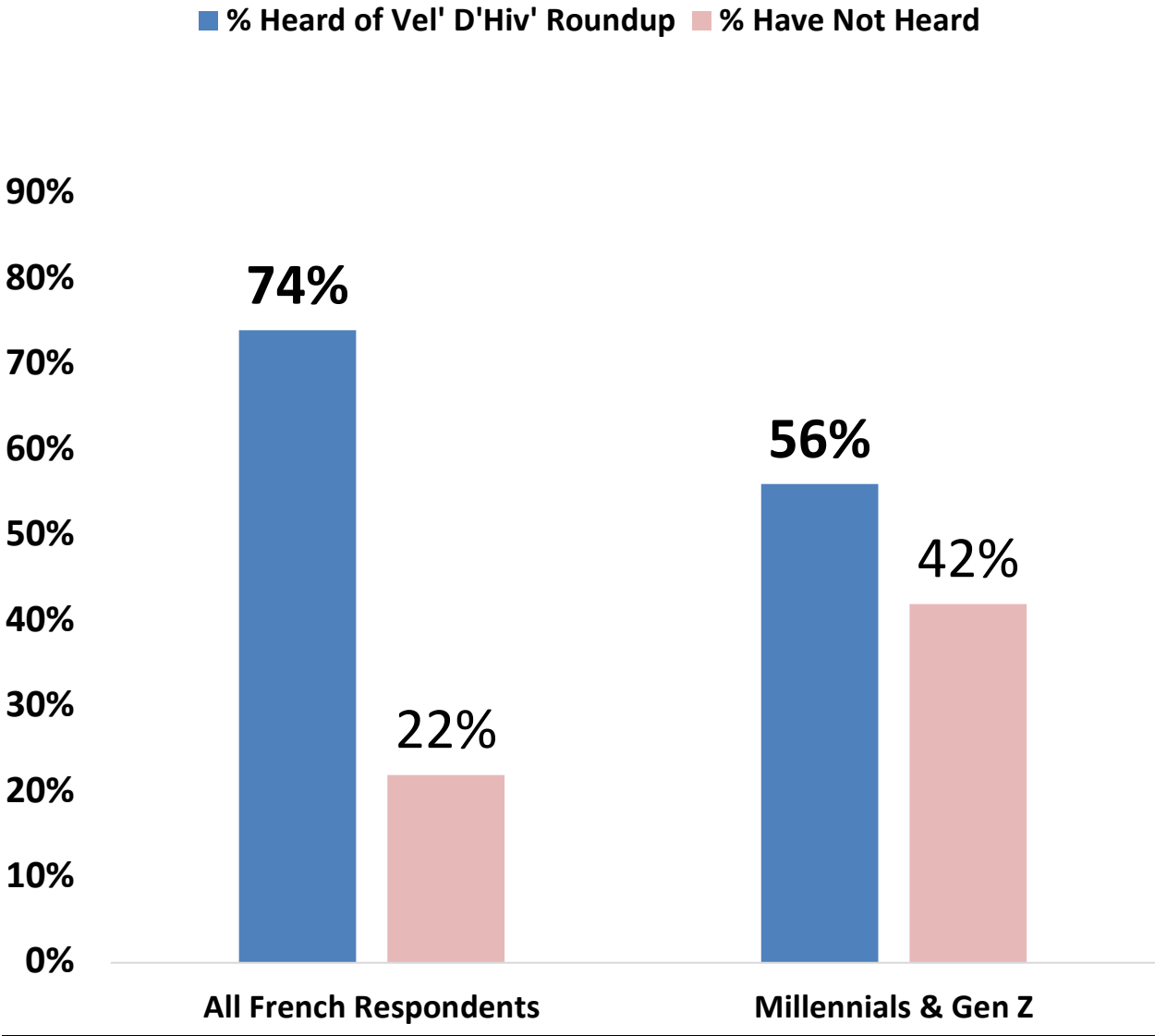
While there is broad familiarity with some major French Holocaust figures, such as Simone Veil (90 percent) and Klaus Barbie (76 percent), less than half of respondents (48 percent) are familiar with Adolf Eichmann, the administrator and organizer of Hitler’s “Final Solution,” and just one-third are familiar with Holocaust survivor and author Elie Wiesel (33 percent), who wrote many of his books in French.

**Chart 17. Familiarity With Key Holocaust Figures
Showing % of All French Respondents**



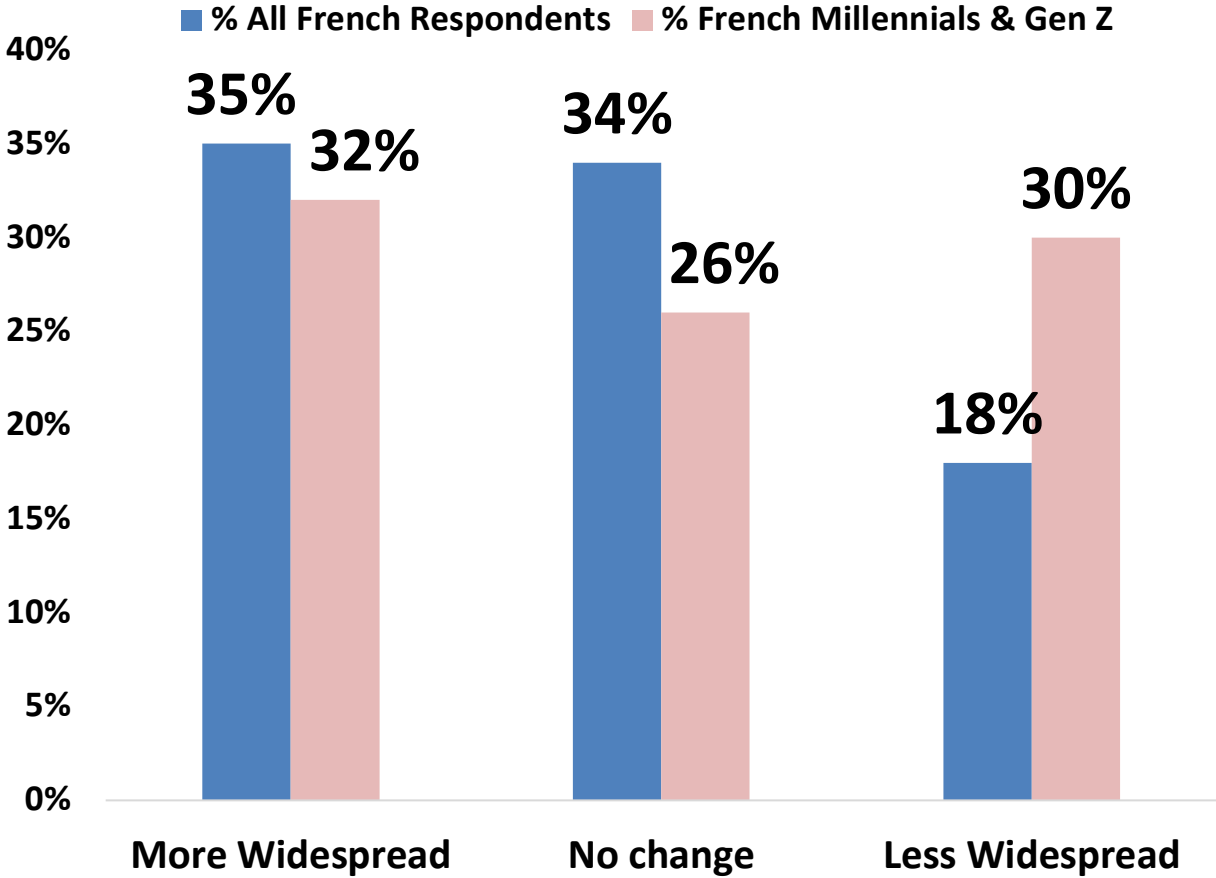
There is a clear age gap when it comes to awareness of the Vel d'Hiv' Roundup – with just 56 percent of Millennials and Gen Z aware of it, compared to 74 percent of all French respondents overall.

Chart 18. Awareness of The Vel d'Hiv' Roundup
Showing % of All French Respondents & Millennials
and Gen Z



Ominously, 69 percent of all French respondents believe antisemitism is either **MORE widespread** (35 percent) in France or **just as widespread** (34 percent) as it was 10 years ago. Just 18 percent say antisemitism is **less widespread**. French Millennials & Gen Z, however, are more likely to believe antisemitism is less widespread (30 percent), with 58 percent believing it is either **MORE** widespread compared to 10 years ago or just as widespread.

Chart 19. Belief That Antisemitism is More Widespread in France than 10 Years Ago
Showing % of All French Respondents VS. % Millennials & Gen Z



Also worrisome is the divide between Millennials and all French respondents over the acceptability of antisemitic views. Twice as many Millennials (20 percent vs. 10 percent of all French respondents) feel it is acceptable for an individual to hold antisemitic views.

Chart 20. It is Acceptable For an Individual to Hold Antisemitic Views
Showing % of All French Respondents & Millennials and Gen Z

