

# SCHOEN CONSULTING

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany commissioned Schoen Consulting to conduct a comprehensive national study of Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness in Austria. Schoen Consulting conducted 1,000 interviews with Austrian adults aged 18 and over between February 22 and March 1, 2019. The margin of error is 3.1 percent.

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## Executive Summary

The Austria study finds critical gaps in Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness in Austria. The majority of Austrian respondents surveyed (56 percent) do not know that six million Jews were killed during the Holocaust, and a majority of Austrians (58 percent) believe that something like the Holocaust could happen again in Europe.

Survey participants responded to questions which included the following categories:

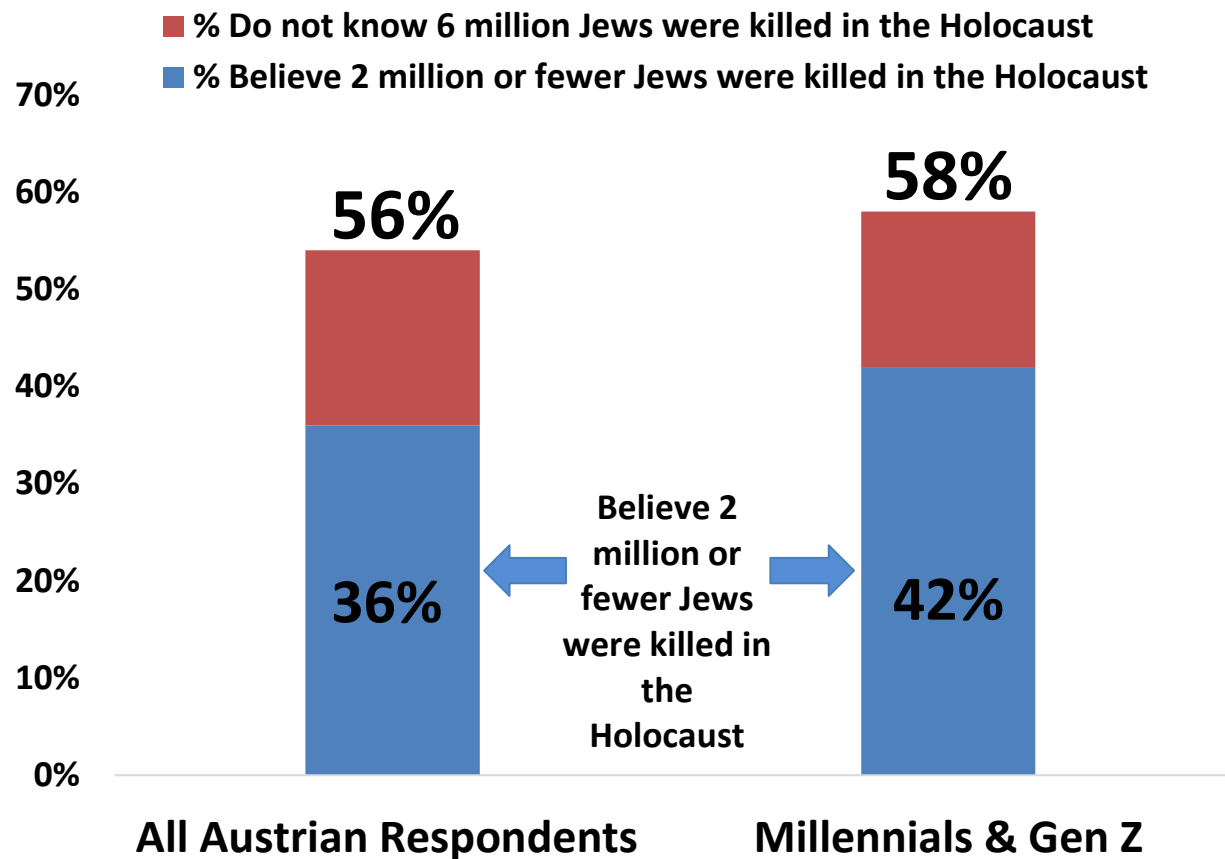
- Knowledge and Awareness
- Austria During the Anschluss
- Neo-Nazism and Antisemitism
- Holocaust Education

## Knowledge and Awareness

More than one-third (36 percent) of Austrians overall, and 42 percent of Millennials and Gen Z, believe two million Jews or fewer were killed during the Holocaust.

### **Chart 1. Misperceptions About Holocaust Death Toll**

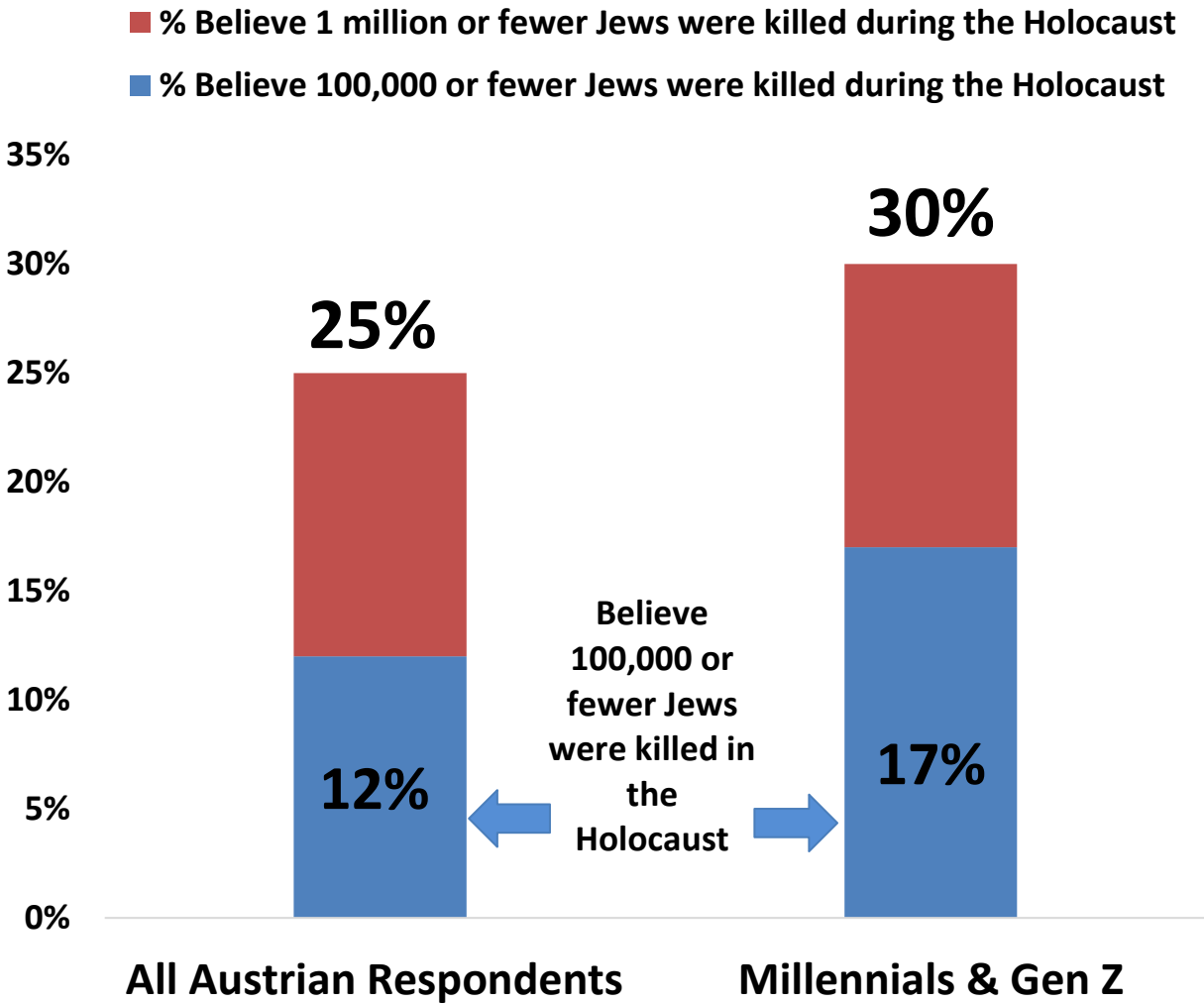
**Showing % of All Austrian Respondents Who Do Not Know Jewish Death Toll**



Additionally, one-quarter of Austrian respondents (25 percent) believe that one million or fewer Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. The number is even higher among Millennials & Gen Z, almost one-third of whom (30 percent) believe that one million or fewer Jews were murdered.

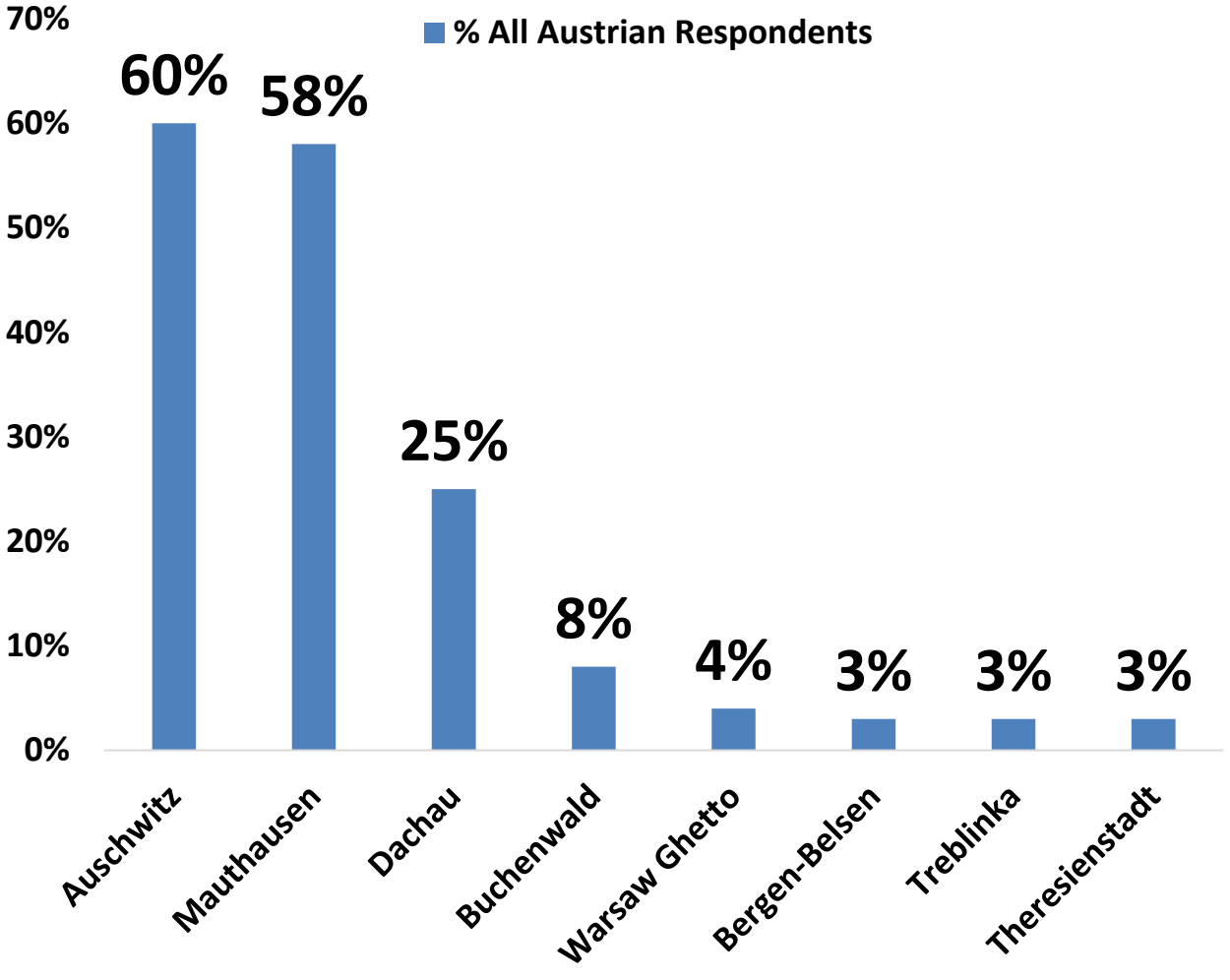
### **Chart 2. Misperceptions About Holocaust Death Toll**

**Showing % of All Austrian Respondents Who Believe 1 Million or Fewer Jews Were Killed in Holocaust**



There is little knowledge of concentration camps and ghettos other than Auschwitz, with just 25 percent of Austrians familiar with the infamous Dachau, while awareness of the Warsaw Ghetto (4 percent), Treblinka (3 percent), and Bergen-Belsen (3 percent) is in the low single digits. Just 58 percent of Austrians are aware of Mauthausen, a concentration camp located in Austria just 100 miles from Vienna.

**Chart 3. Familiarity With Nazi Camps and Ghettos**  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents



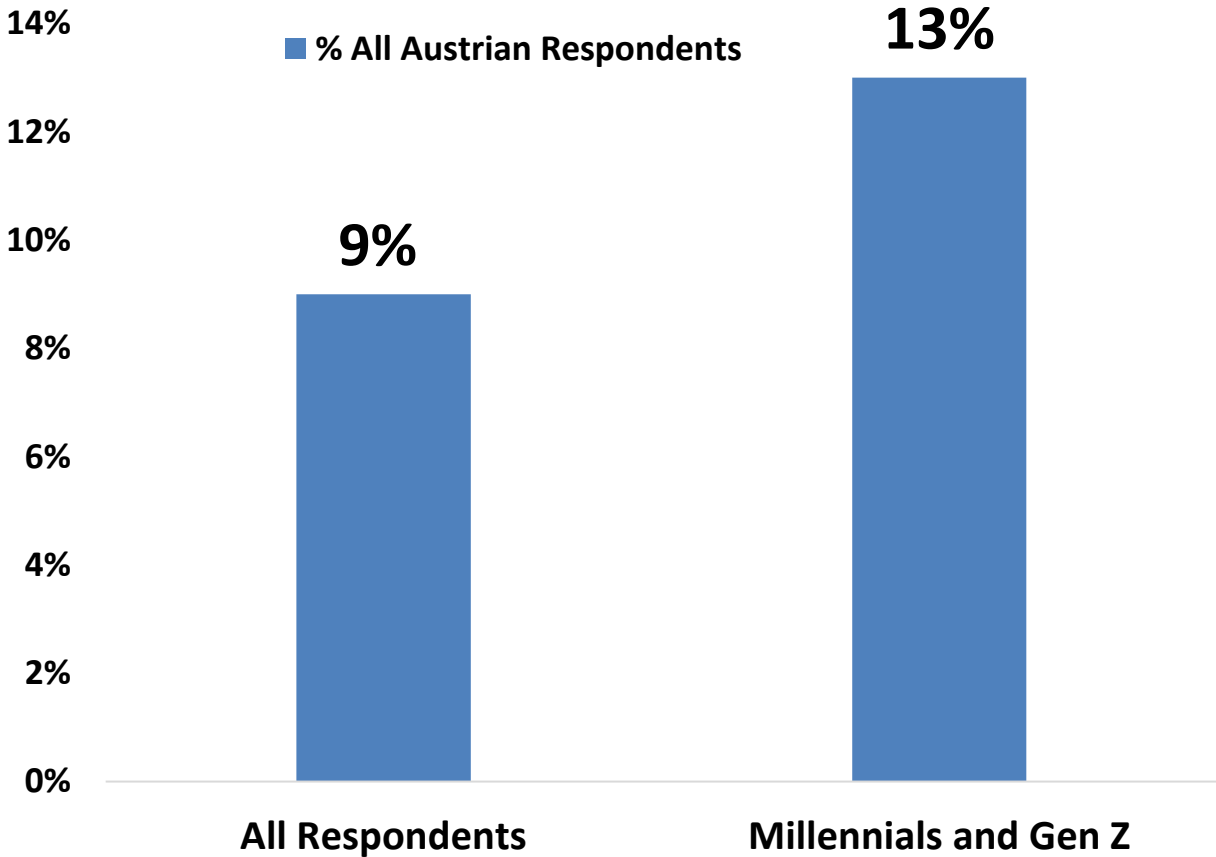
A majority of Austrians (58 percent) believe something like the Holocaust could happen in other European countries today, while 31 percent believe something like the Holocaust could happen in Austria.

Additionally, almost half (47 percent) of Austrian respondents believe something like the Holocaust could happen in the United States today.

<b>Table 1. Belief that the Holocaust Could Happen Again Showing Percent of All Austrian Respondents</b>	
<b>Statement</b>	<b>Percent Austrian Respondents</b>
<b>Something like the Holocaust could happen in other European countries today</b>	<b>58 percent</b>
<b>Something like the Holocaust could happen in the United States today</b>	<b>47 percent</b>
<b>Something like the Holocaust could happen in Austria today</b>	<b>31 percent</b>

About 1-in-10 Austrian respondents and 13 percent of Millennial and Gen Z Austrians believe that the reported number of Jews murdered during the Holocaust has been greatly exaggerated.

**Chart 4. Belief That Number of Jews Killed in Holocaust Has Been Exaggerated**  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents



63 percent of Austrians agree that fewer people seem to care about the Holocaust than they used to. And more than one-third (36 percent) believe that people still talk too much about what happened during the Holocaust.

<b>Table 2. Holocaust Perception Agree/Disagree Statements Showing Percent of All Austrian Respondents</b>	
<b>Statement</b>	<b>Percent Agree</b>
<i>“Fewer people seem to care about the Holocaust today than they used to”</i>	<b>63 percent</b>
<i>“People still talk too much about what happened during the Holocaust”</i>	<b>36 percent</b>

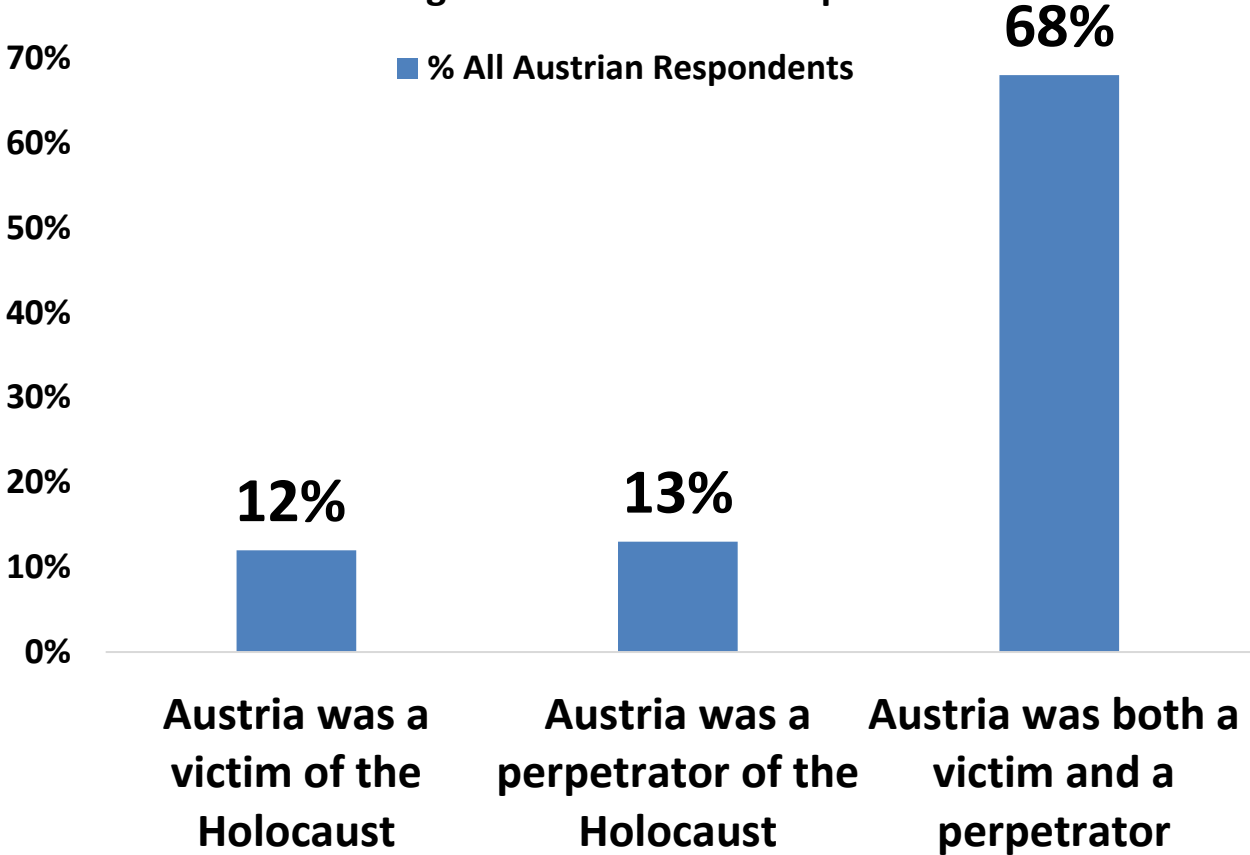
# Austria During the Anschluss – Perceptions

When it comes to Austria’s legacy during the Holocaust and the Anschluss\*, our survey finds both conflicted and concerning perceptions.

An overwhelming number of Austrians (68 percent) believe Austria was both a victim and a perpetrator of the Holocaust.

**Chart 5. Austria: Perpetrator or Victim of the Holocaust?**

Showing % of All Austrian Respondents

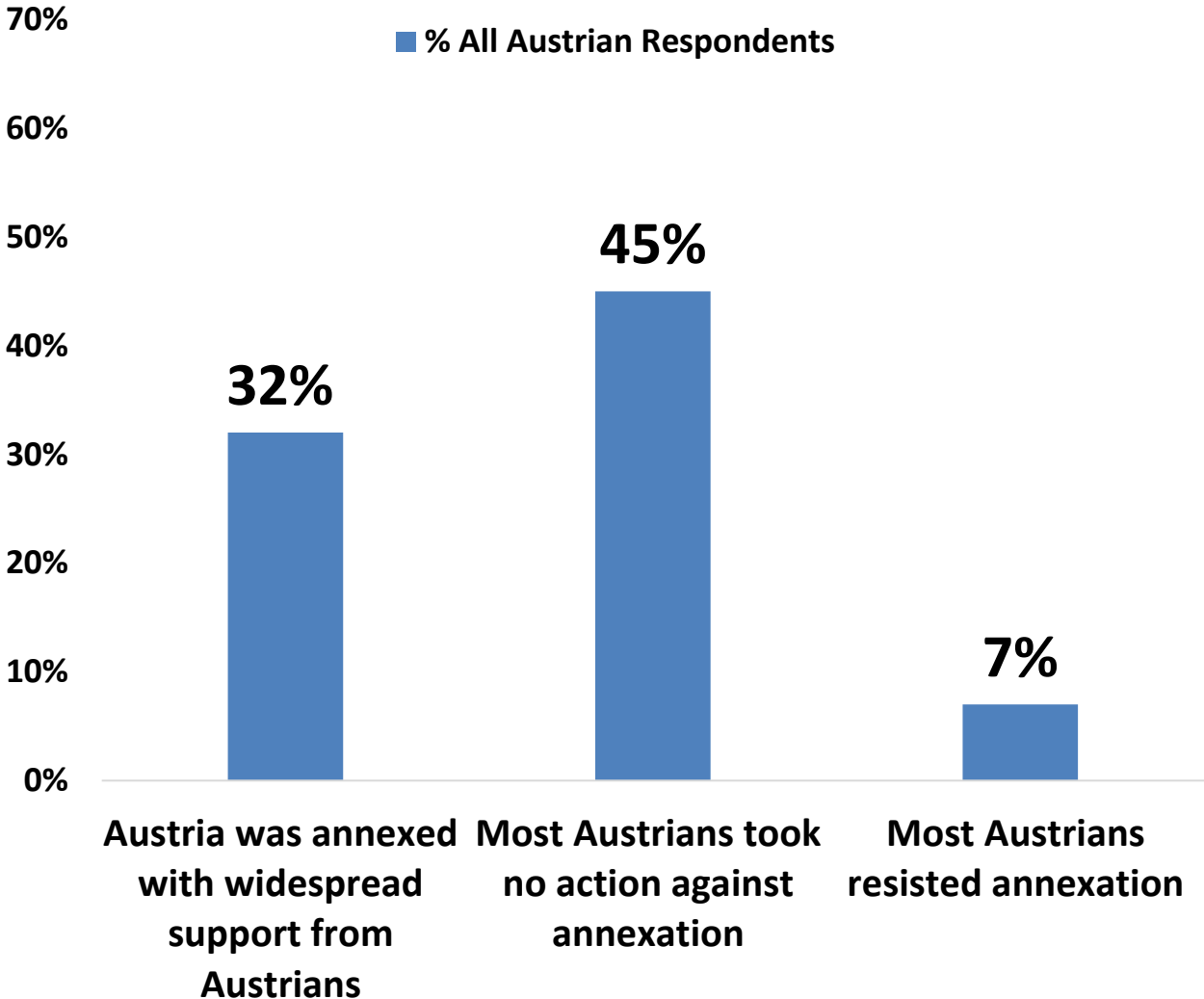


\*Anschluss: The annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany in March 1938.



More than three-quarters (77 percent) of Austrian respondents say that Austria was annexed by Nazi Germany with either widespread support (32 percent) or inaction (45 percent) by the Austrian people.

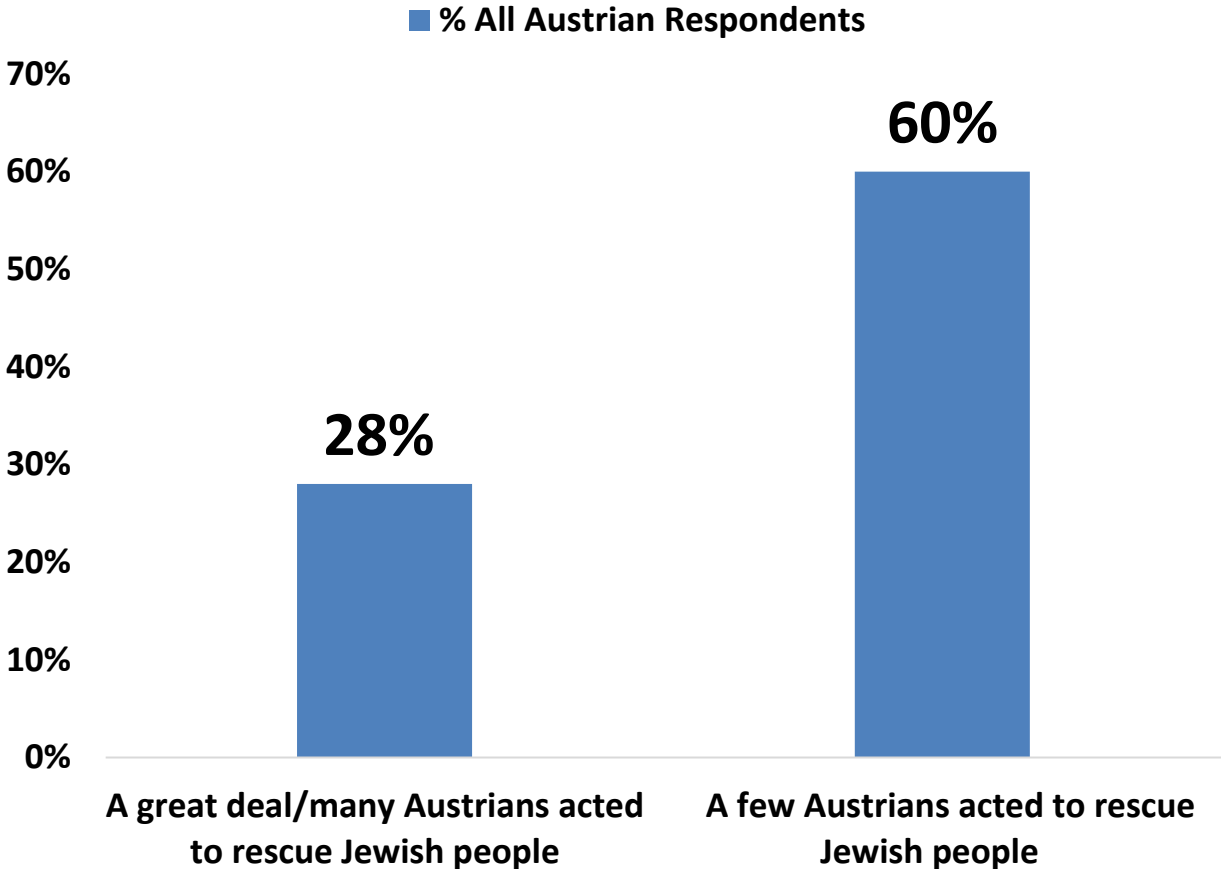
**Chart 6. Austrian Attitudes Towards Annexation  
by Nazi Germany  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents**



More than one-quarter (28 percent) of Austrians believe a great deal or many Austrians acted to rescue the Jewish people.

In fact, only 109 Austrians of the approximately 6.7 million people living in Austria during the time of the Holocaust are recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations for having risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust.†

**Chart 7. Perceptions of Austrian Citizens'  
Attempts to Rescue Jewish Austrians  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents**



†The numbers of Righteous are not necessarily an indication of the actual number of rescuers in each country, but reflect the cases that were made available to Yad Vashem. For more information, visit <https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous.html>

## Neo-Nazism and Antisemitism

While there is a broad consensus that antisemitism is prevalent in Austria today, Austrians believe that neo-Nazism is more prevalent in the United States than in their own country.

Approximately one-third of Austrians (36 percent) say there are a great deal or many neo-Nazis in Austria today. Almost half (48 percent) say there are a few.

**Table 3. Neo-Nazism in Austria  
Showing Percent of All Austrian Respondents**

<b>There are a great deal or many neo-Nazis in Austria today</b>	<b>36 percent</b>
<b>There are a few neo-Nazis in Austria today</b>	<b>48 percent</b>
<b>There are NO neo-Nazis in Austria today</b>	<b>3 percent</b>

By comparison, half of all Austrian respondents (50 percent) believe that there are a great deal/many neo-Nazis in the United States today. About one-third (29 percent) say that there are a few neo-Nazis in the United States.

**Table 4. Neo-Nazism in the United States  
Showing Percent of All Austrian Respondents**

<b>There are a great deal or many neo-Nazis in the US today</b>	<b>50 percent</b>
<b>There are a few neo-Nazis in the US today</b>	<b>29 percent</b>
<b>There are NO neo-Nazis in the US today</b>	<b>3 percent</b>

More than two-thirds (67 percent) of Austrians believe there is antisemitism in Austria today, and 70 percent believe there is antisemitism in the United States. These numbers are lower among Millennials & Gen Z.

<b>Table 5. Antisemitism in Austria Today</b> <b>Showing Percent of All Austrian Respondents &amp; Millennials and Gen Z</b>		
<b>Statement</b>	<b>Percent All Respondents</b>	<b>Percent Millennials &amp; Gen Z</b>
<b>There is antisemitism in Austria today</b>	<b>67 percent</b>	<b>58 percent</b>
<b>There is antisemitism in the United States today</b>	<b>70 percent</b>	<b>59 percent</b>

## Holocaust Education

Most Austrians surveyed (82 percent) say that all students should learn about the Holocaust in school, and three-quarters (76 percent) believe Holocaust education should be compulsory at school. An additional three-quarters (75 percent) say that it is important to continue to teach about the Holocaust, in part, so it doesn't happen again.

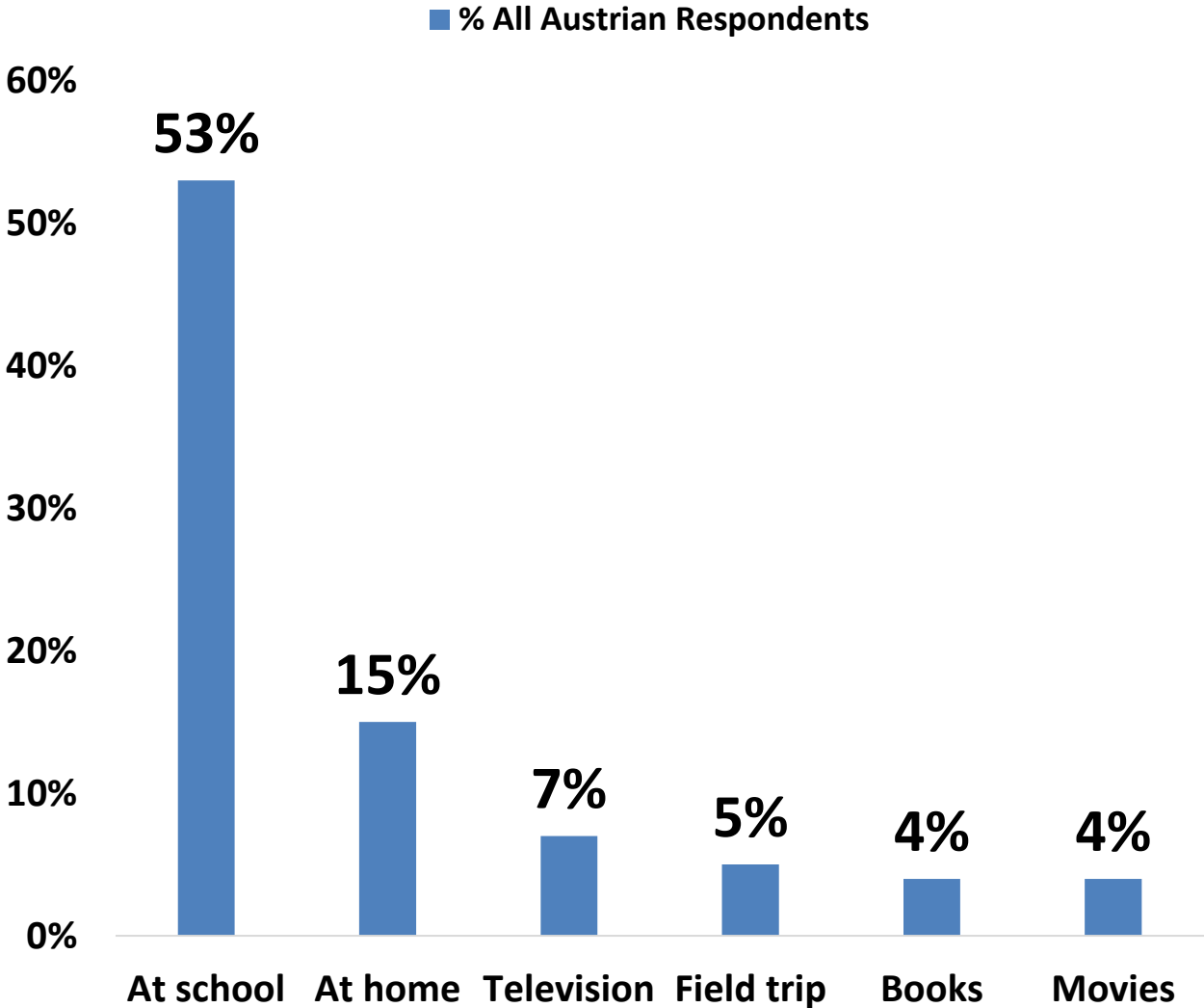
More than one-half (55 percent) say that the current lessons about the Holocaust could be better.

**Table 6. Holocaust Education Perceptions**  
Showing Percent of All Austrian Respondents & Millennials and Gen Z

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Percent Austrian Respondents</b>	<b>Percent Millennials &amp; Gen Z</b>
<b>All students should learn about the Holocaust while at school</b>	<b>82 percent</b>	<b>87 percent</b>
<b>Holocaust education should be compulsory in school</b>	<b>76 percent</b>	<b>77 percent</b>
<b>It is important to continue to teach about the Holocaust, in part, so it doesn't happen again</b>	<b>75 percent</b>	<b>73 percent</b>
<b>Lessons about the Holocaust are mostly historically accurate, but could be better</b>	<b>55 percent</b>	<b>55 percent</b>

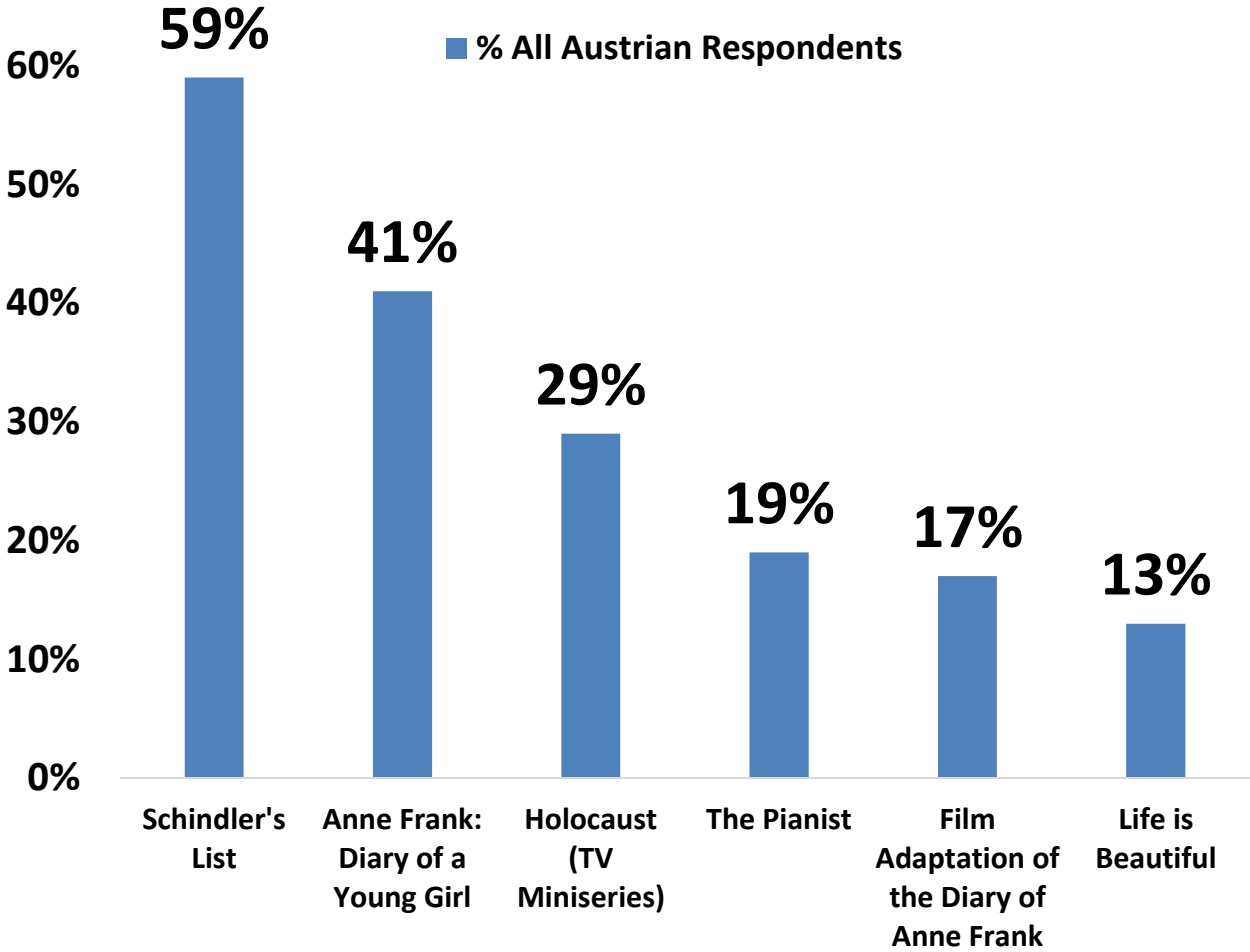
More than half of all Austrians (53 percent) and 63 percent of Millennials learned about the Holocaust in school.

**Chart 8. Where Respondents First Learned of the Holocaust**  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents



Among the 15 percent of all Austrians who first learned of the Holocaust through books, TV, or movies, a majority (59 percent) cite “Schindler’s List” as their first source of Holocaust education.

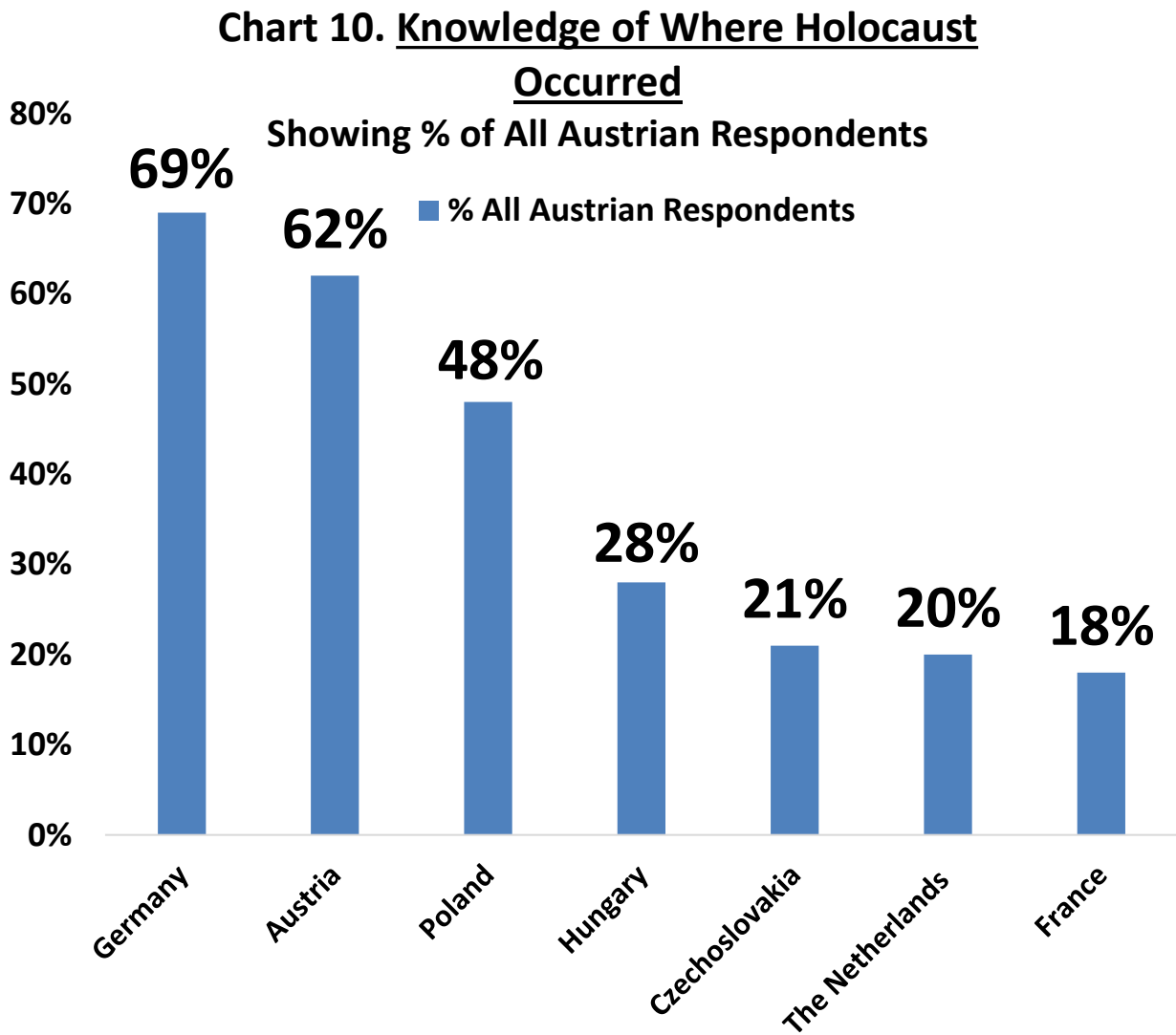
**Chart 9. Books, TV, and Movies in which Respondents First Learned of the Holocaust**  
**Showing % of All Austrian Respondents**



## Appendix: Additional Data Collected

Many Austrian respondents know that the Holocaust occurred in Germany (69 percent) and Austria (62 percent); less than half (48 percent) know that it took place in Poland.

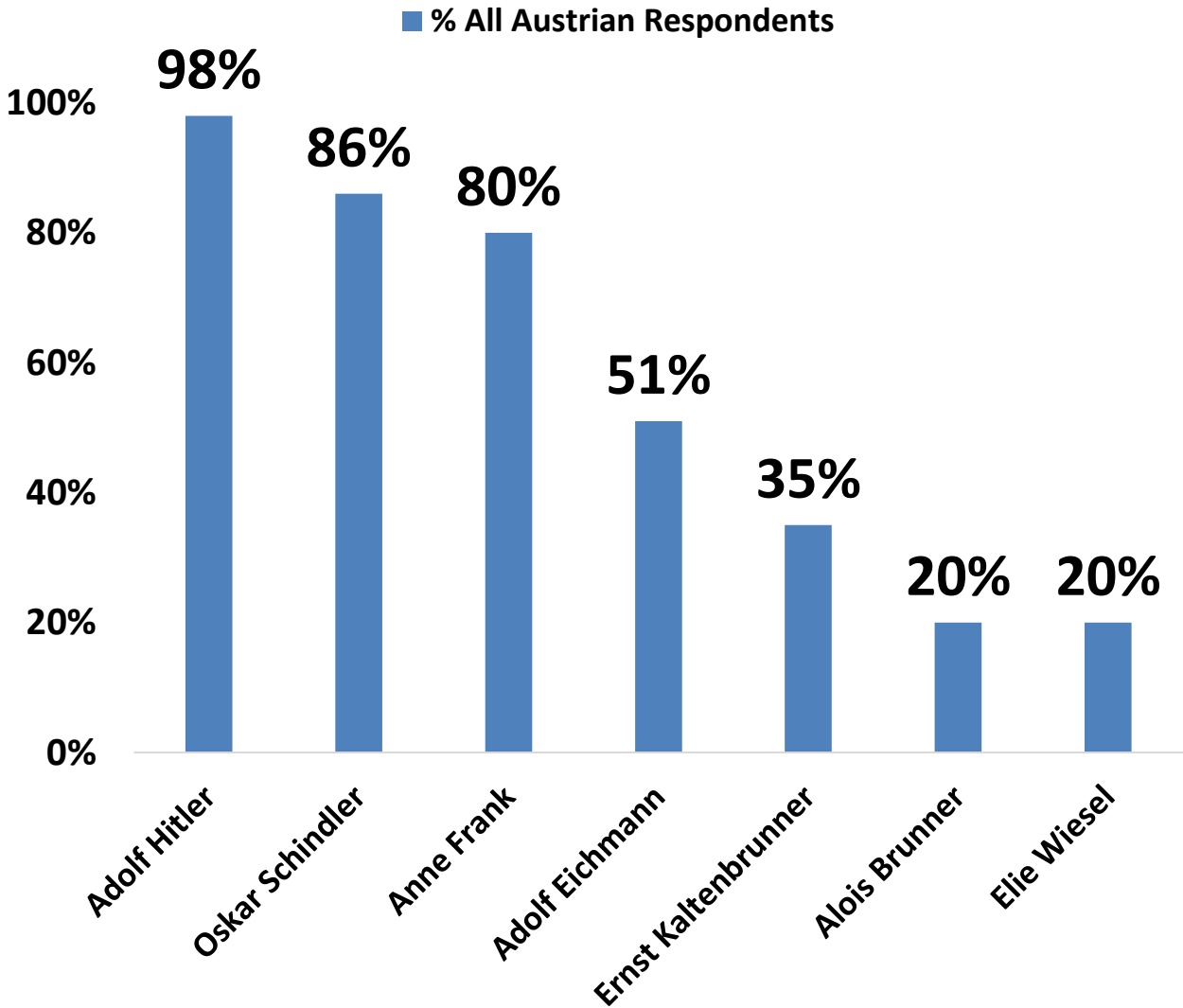
Even fewer could identify Hungary (28 percent), Czechoslovakia (21 percent), the Netherlands (20 percent), or France (18 percent) as countries in which the Holocaust took place.





Only half of respondents (51 percent) are familiar with Adolf Eichmann, the administrator and organizer of Hitler’s “Final Solution.” Even fewer are aware of other major Austrian Nazi figures such as Ernst Kaltenbrunner (35 percent) and Alois Brunner (20 percent), or other prominent (non-Austrian) persons linked to the Holocaust, such as Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel.

**Chart 11. Familiarity With Key Holocaust Figures**  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents



79 percent of Austrian respondents know that Hitler was Austrian; just one-third know that Ernst Kaltenbrunner—a senior official in Nazi Germany who was among the first of the SS to be tried at the Nuremberg trials—was also Austrian, and only 14 percent know that Adolf Eichmann was Austrian.

**Chart 12. Awareness That Key Nazis Were Austrian**  
Showing % of All Austrian Respondents

