

# Canada This Month Ontario Politics

Public Opinion Research  
Release Date: May 07, 2020  
Field Dates: May 01, 2020 to May 05, 2020



# Ontario Politics in the time of COVID-19

The COVID-19 outbreak has set off a series of changes in the Canadian political landscape. In Ontario, Ford is seeing very high approval on his handling of the outbreak, which has translated into a massive turnaround in his personal favourables. Ontarians have never been more satisfied with the provincial government since our online tracking began in 2012.

Today, INNOVATIVE is releasing results from our May 2020 Canada This Month survey. This online survey was in field from May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup> with a weighted sample size of 600 Ontario residents. Detailed methodology is provided in the appendix.

This report covers key results on how those from Ontario are rating their government's handling of the COVID-19 outbreak and the impacts that is having on more general government approval and provincial vote choice.

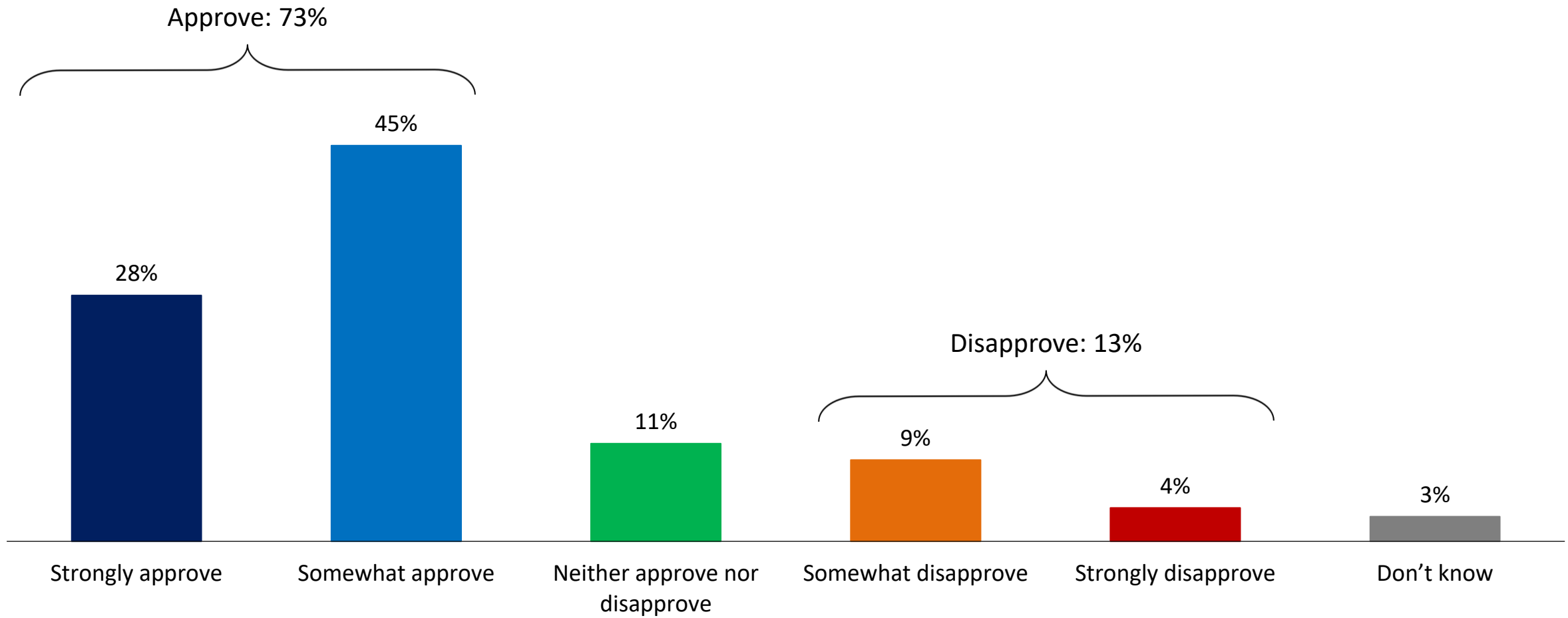
**The Ontario government is receiving very high approval on handling of COVID-19**

# COVID-19 Handling: Nearly 3-in-4 (73%) are satisfied with the Ontario government's handling of the COVID-19 epidemic <sup>4</sup>



Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Ontario Government has handled the outbreak of COVID-19?

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



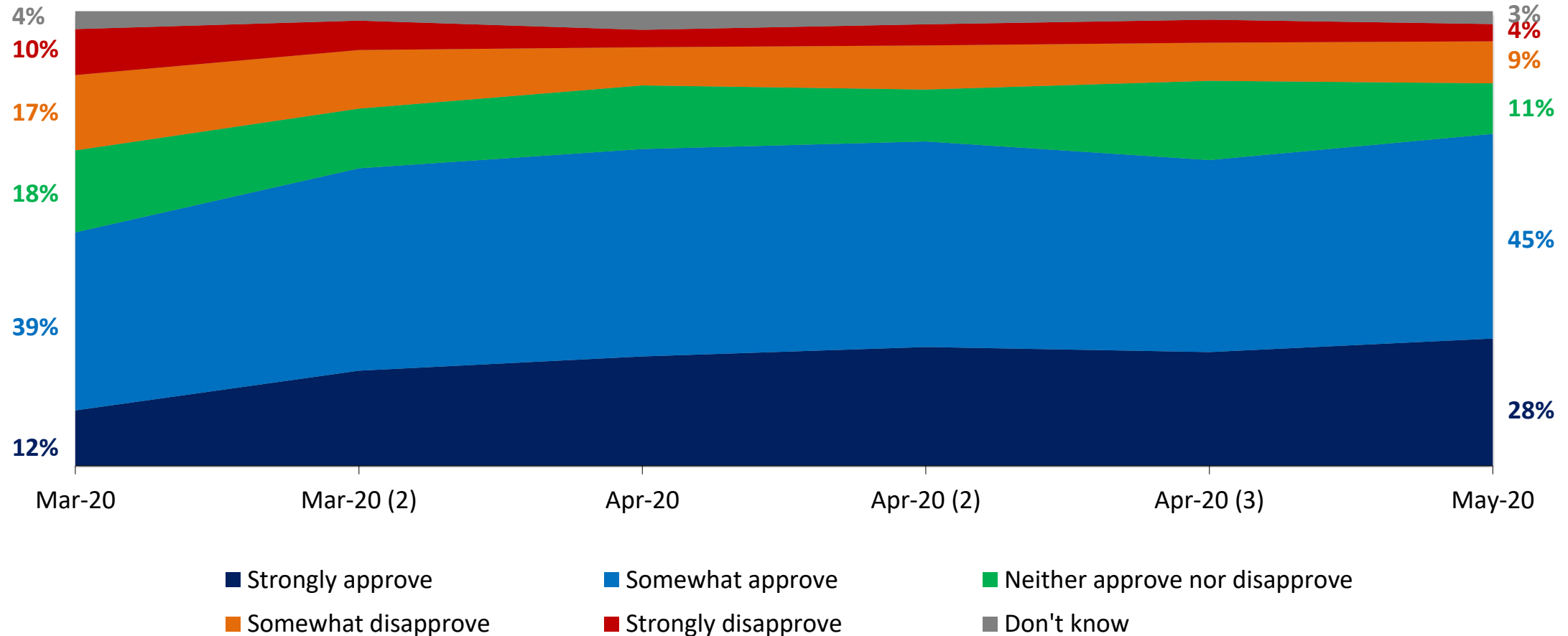
# COVID-19 Handling Tracking: Approval of the Ontario government's handling of the outbreak is trending up since March

5



Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Ontario Government has handled the outbreak of COVID-19?

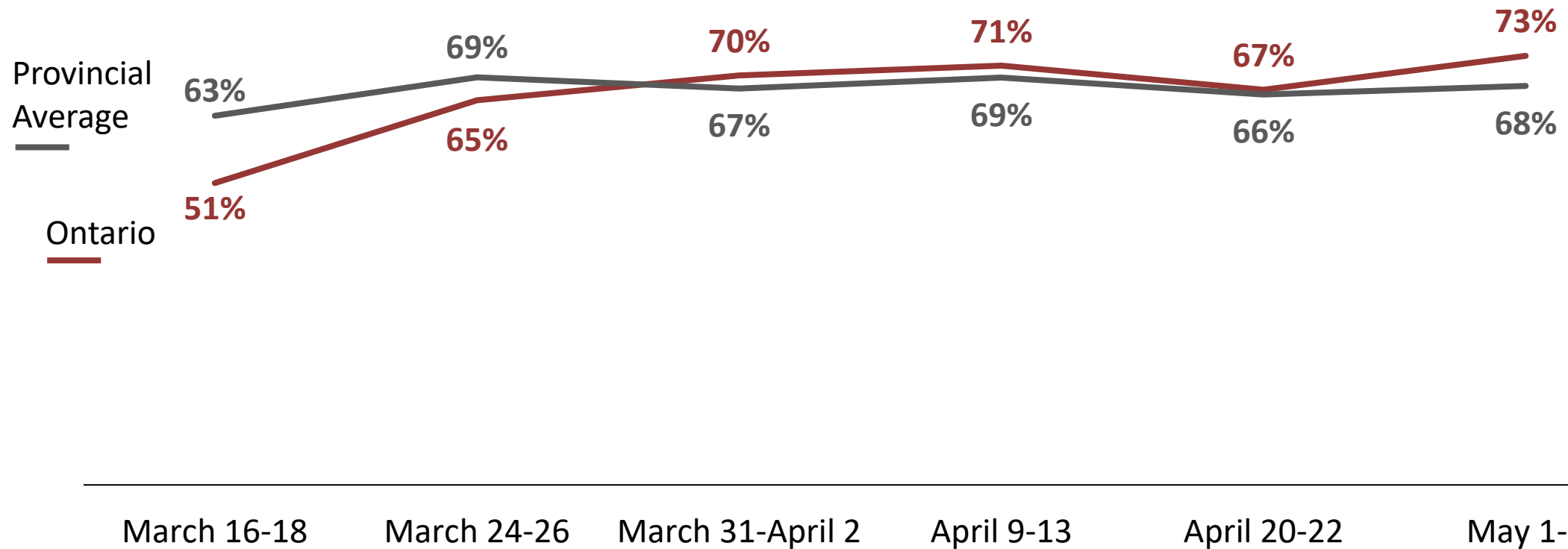
[asked of all respondents; n=600]



# COVID-19 Handling Tracking: Ontario has gone from 8 points below the provincial average in March to 5 points above average now

% who approve of government's handling of COVID-19 outbreak: Ontario Vs. Provincial Average

[asked of all respondents; Ontario n=600]



**This approval of COVID-19 handling has created a halo effect for general government satisfaction, driving it up to its highest point in years**

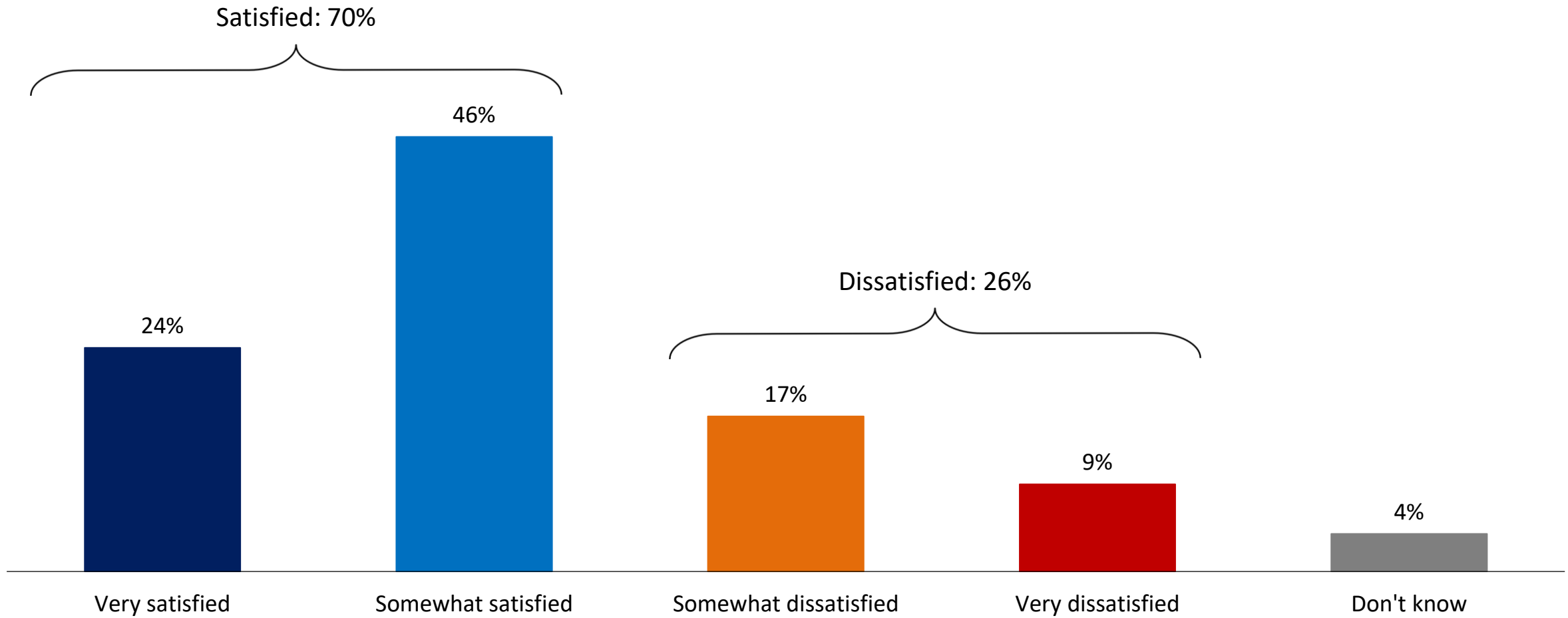
# Ontario Mood: 7-in-10 (70%) are satisfied with the Ontario provincial government, only 1-in-4 (26%) feel dissatisfied

8



Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the performance of the PROVINCIAL government in Ontario? Would you say you are...?

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

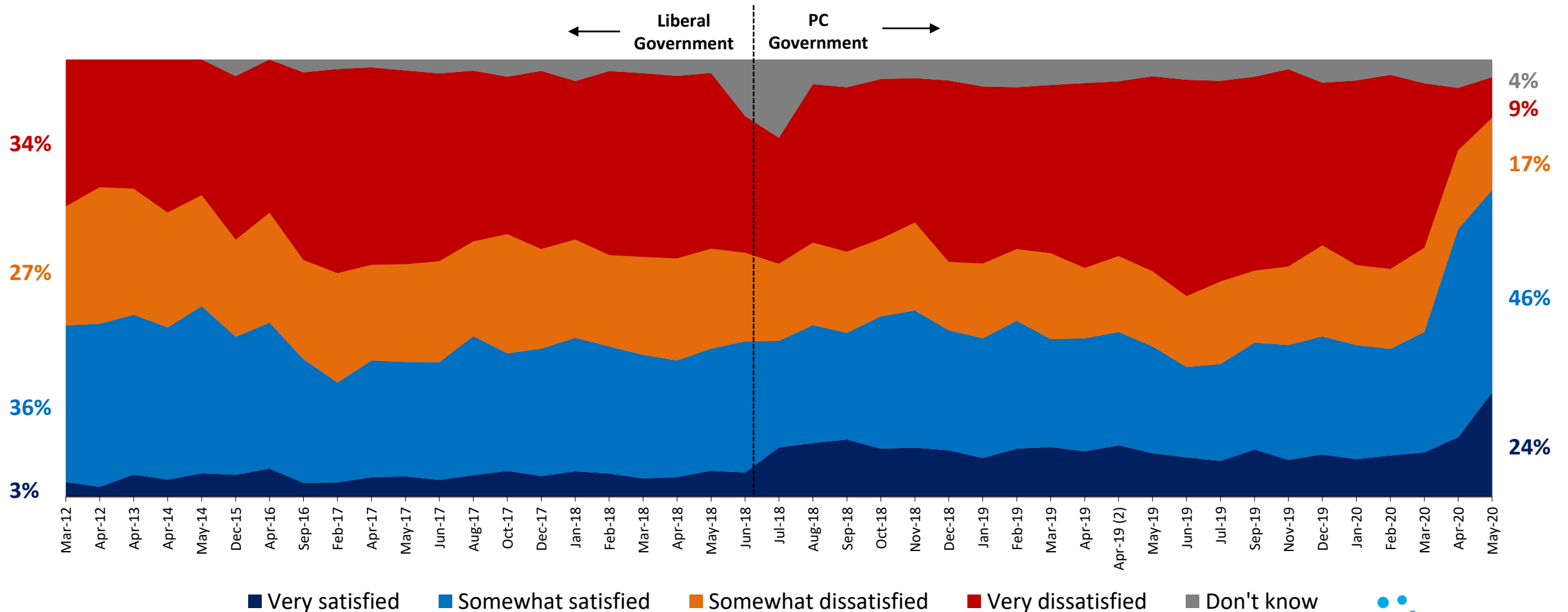




# Ontario Mood Tracking: Satisfaction up substantially since March 2020<sup>9</sup> (38%), now 70% are satisfied with the Ontario government



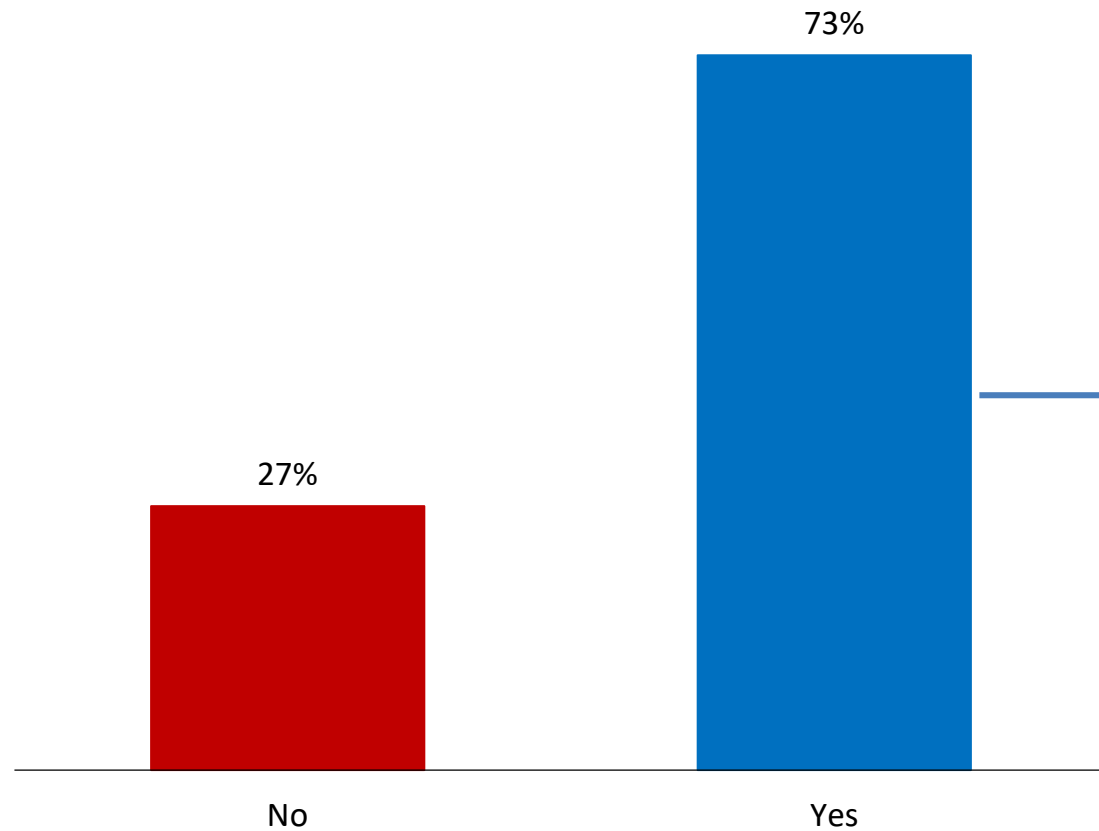
Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the performance of the PROVINCIAL government in Ontario? Would you say you are...?  
[asked of all respondents; n=600]



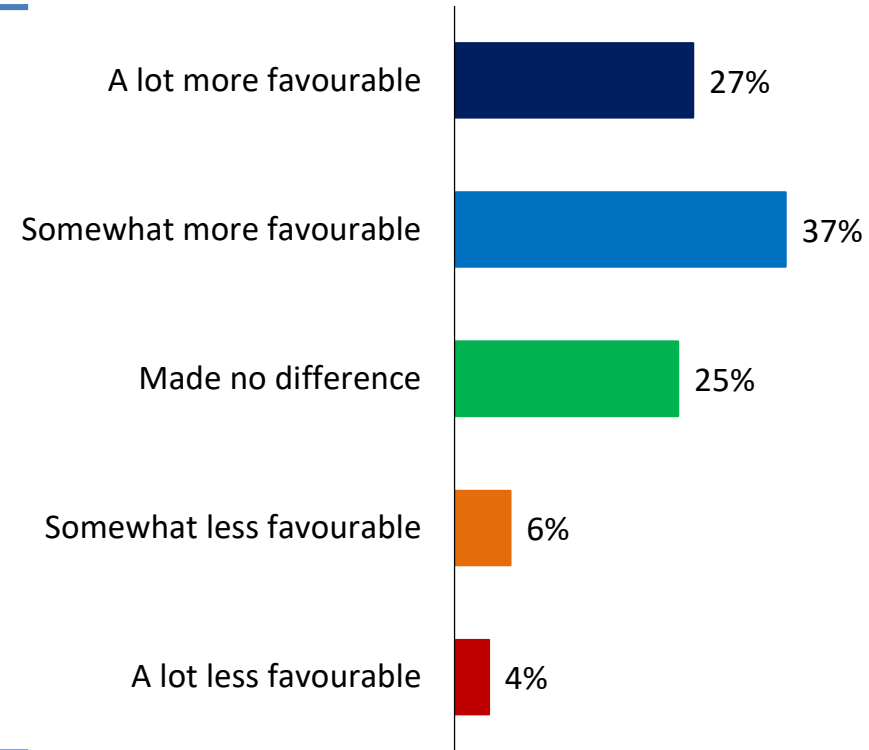
**Over 7-in-10 have read, seen, or heard something about Ford and a strong majority say it had a positive impact**

# Ontario Read, Seen, Heard: 3-in-4 (73%) recall something about the Premier, and 64% of those people felt more favourably towards Ford

**Q** Have you read, seen or heard anything about [PREMIER] in the last few days?  
[Asked of those who have RSH; n=600]



**Q** Did what you read, see or hear leave you feeling a lot more favourable, somewhat more favourable, somewhat less favourable or a lot less favourable towards [PREMIER], or did it make no difference?  
[Asked of those who have RSH; n=438]

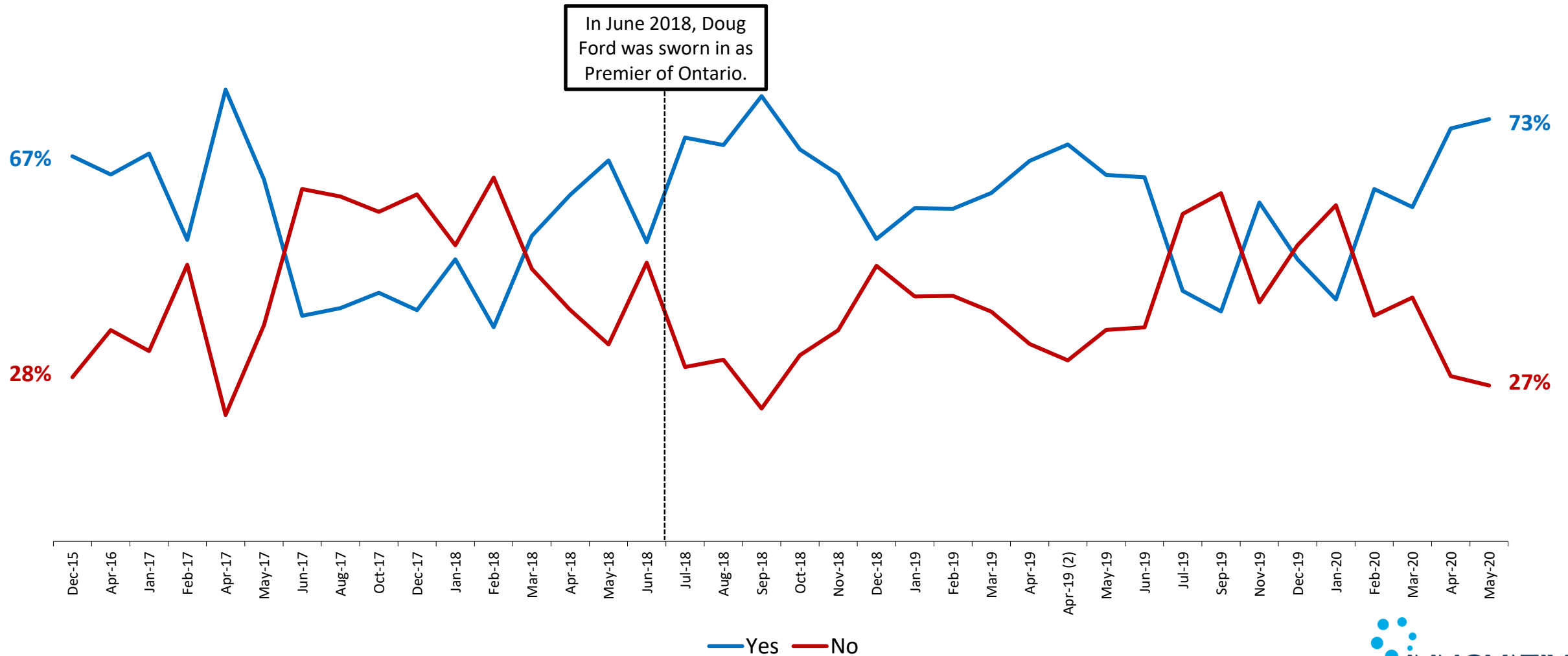


# Read, Seen, Heard Tracking: Recall about the Premier is trending up; it now reaches the highest since the middle of last year



Have you read, seen or heard anything about [PREMIER] in the last few days?

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



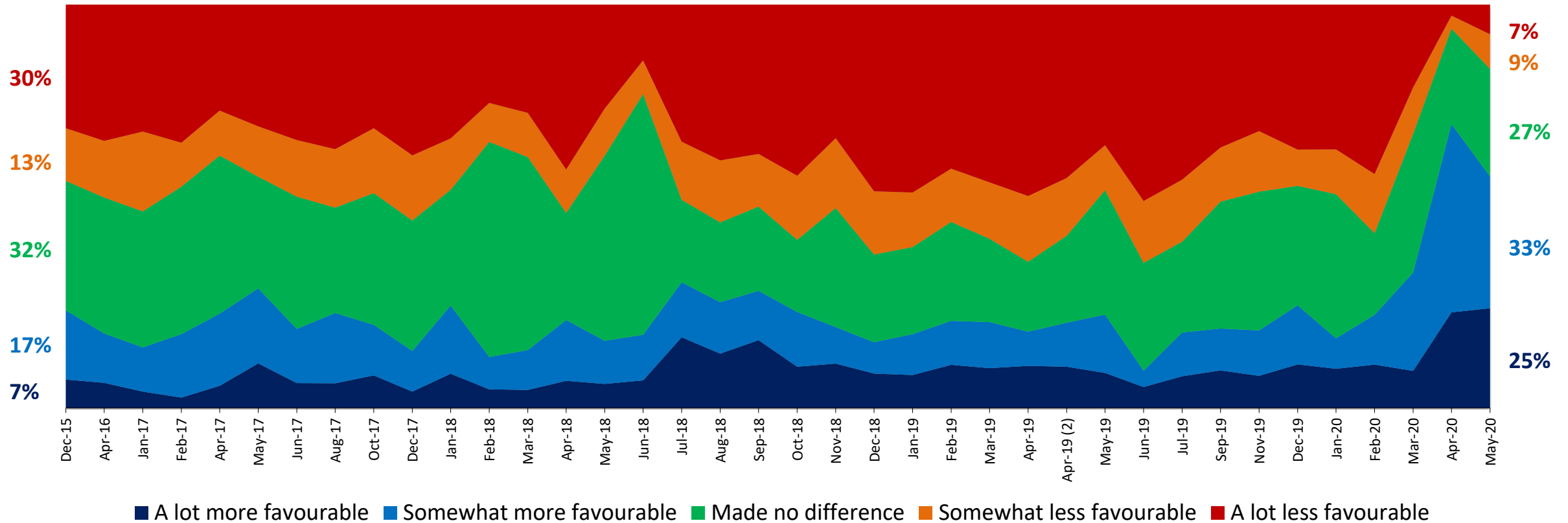


# Ontario Read, Seen, Heard, Impact Tracking: Nearly 6-in-10 (57%) of those who have R/S/H about Ford feel more favourable



Did what you read, see or hear leave you feeling a lot more favourable, somewhat more favourable, somewhat less favourable or a lot less favourable towards [PREMIER], or did it make no difference?

[asked of those who have RSH; n=438]



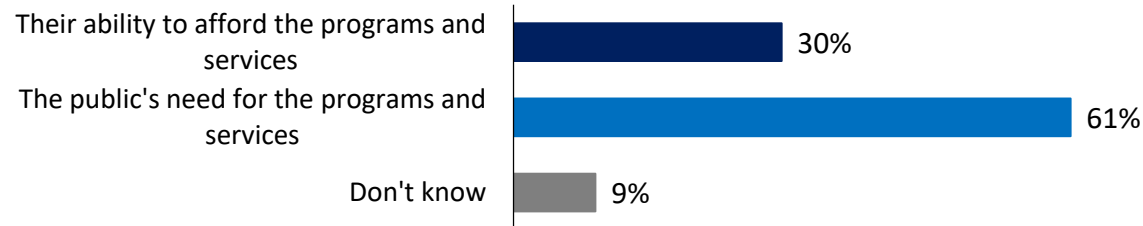
# **We group individuals into segments based on key political and economic values and attitudes**

We use these segments throughout the remainder of the report to analyze vote leadership results.

# Core Political Values: Half (50%) feel government should listen to experts when it comes to policy

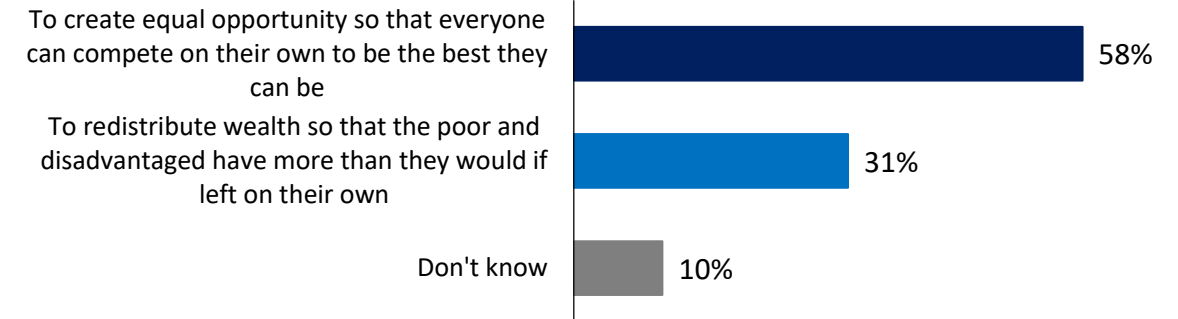
Q Now we would like to ask a few questions about basic values and society...When governments make major decisions concerning spending on programs and services, do you think they should be basing their decisions mainly on...?

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



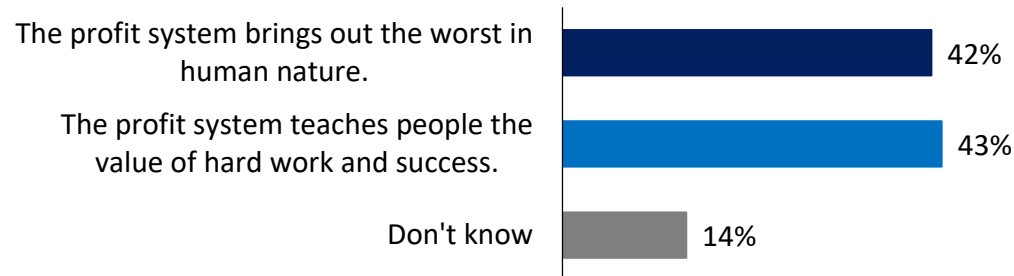
Q Is the main role of government to...?

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



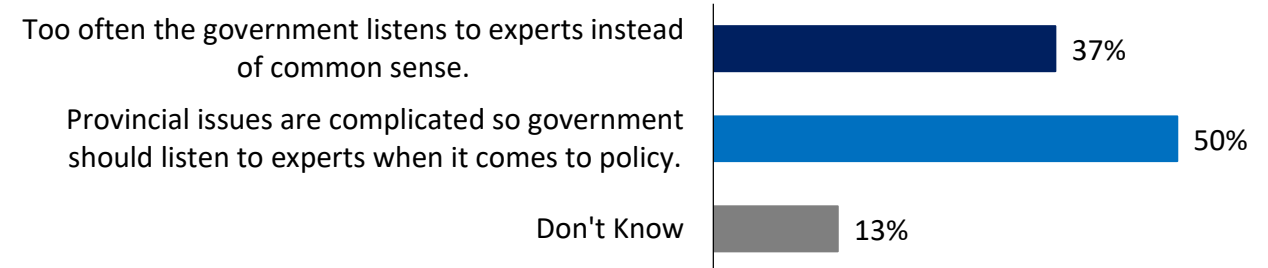
Q Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



Q When it comes to government decision making, which of the following statements is closest to your view?

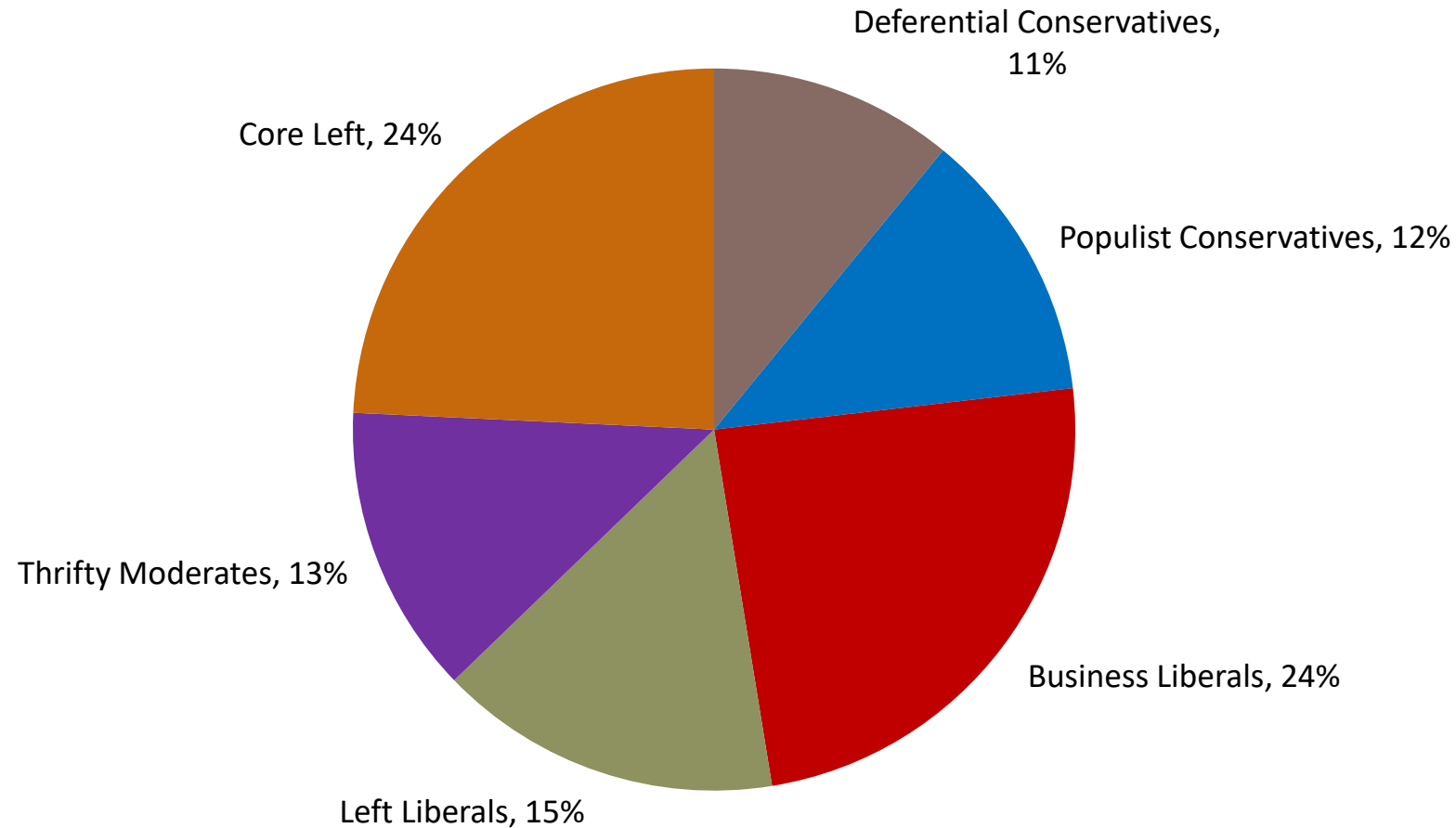
[asked of all respondents; n=600]



# Value Clusters: Largest clusters in Ontario are Core Left (24%) and Business Liberals (24%); only 11% are Deferential Conservatives

**Value clusters:** Clusters are based on 4 basic values: equal opportunity versus redistribution; trust in the profit system; whether spending should be based on ability to afford or public need; and whether government should listen to experts or common sense.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]





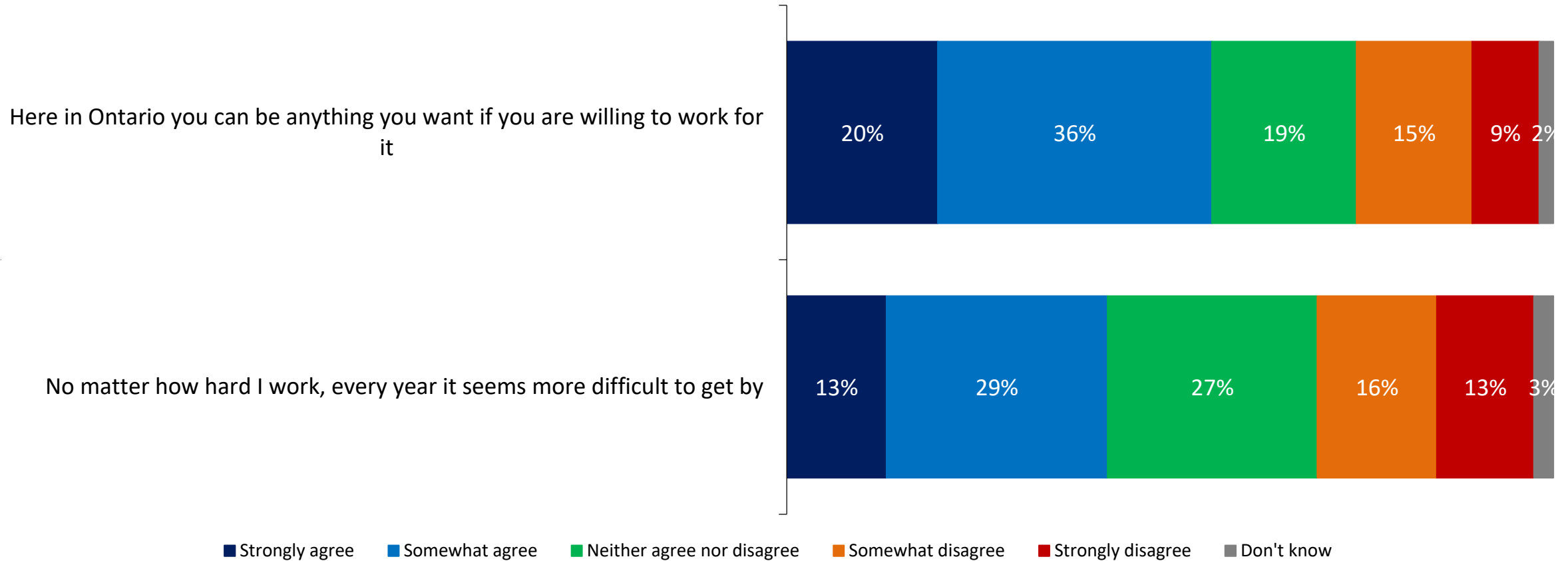
# Defining Value Clusters: 6 important value clusters are defined by 4 key value statements

Core Political Values by Value Clusters

Column %		Deferential Conservatives	Populist Conservatives	Business Liberals	Left Liberals	Thrifty Moderates	Core Left
Governments should base decisions on...	Ability to afford	97%	90%	0%	0%	61%	0%
	Public Need	0%	0%	98%	92%	0%	97%
Is the main role of government to .?	Create equal Opportunity	90%	99%	74%	95%	29%	0%
	Redistribute wealth	7%	0%	15%	0%	29%	96%
When it comes to government decision making...	Rely on common sense	0%	100%	28%	47%	36%	24%
	Listen to experts	84%	0%	61%	42%	23%	68%
The profit system...	Brings out the worst in human nature	0%	0%	0%	89%	56%	88%
	Teaches value of hard work and success	98%	93%	85%	0%	5%	0%

# Segmentation Attitudes: Majority (55%) feel that you can be anything in Ontario if you are willing to work for it <sup>18</sup>

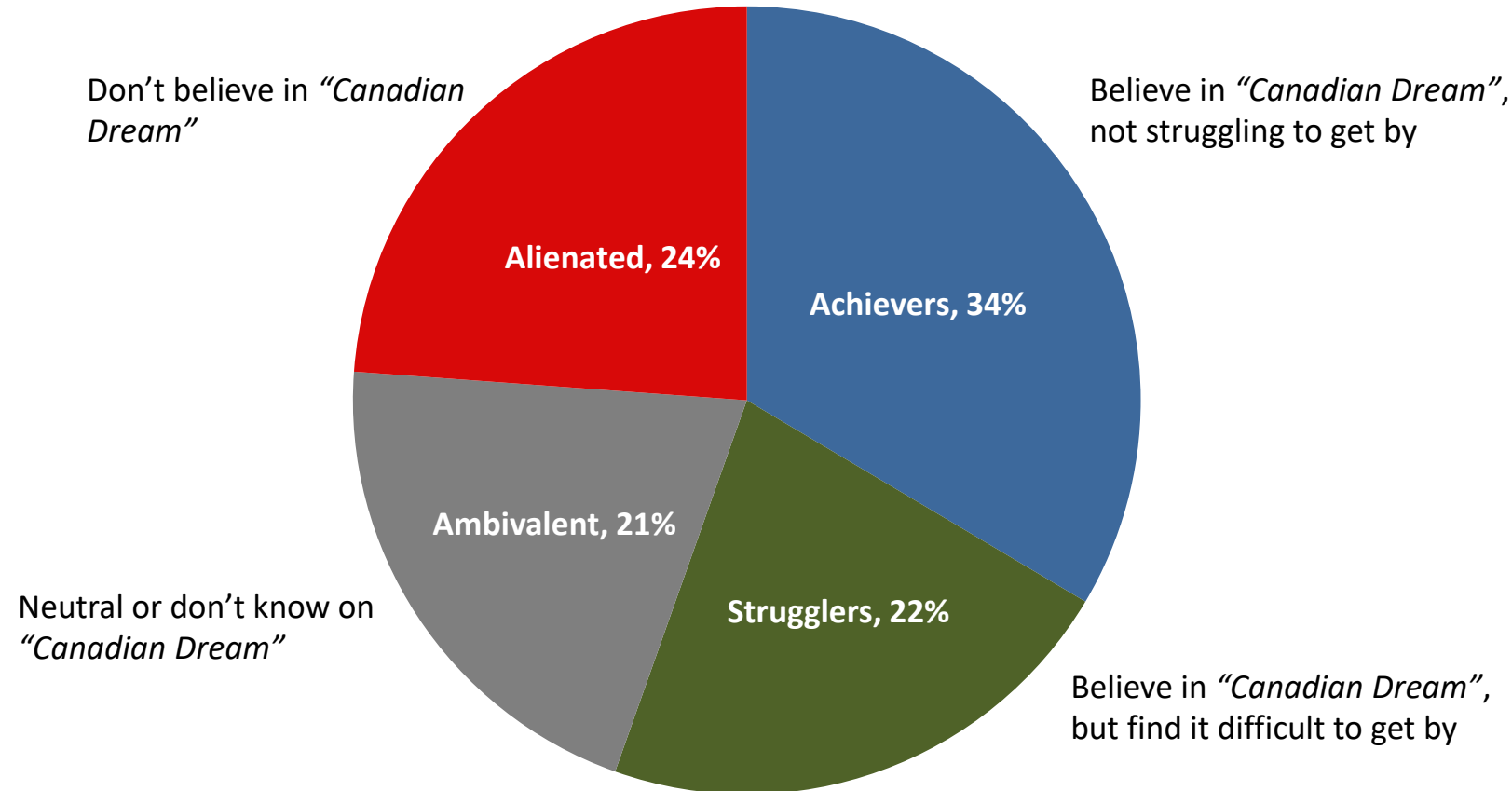
Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? -  
[asked of all respondents; n=600]



# Economic Gap Segmentation: Achievers (34%) are largest economic segment, followed by Alienated (24%)

**Gap segmentation:** Agree with 'Here in Ontario you can be anything you want if you are willing to work for it' (*"the Canadian Dream"*) BY Agree with 'No matter how hard I work, every year it seems more difficult to get by'.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



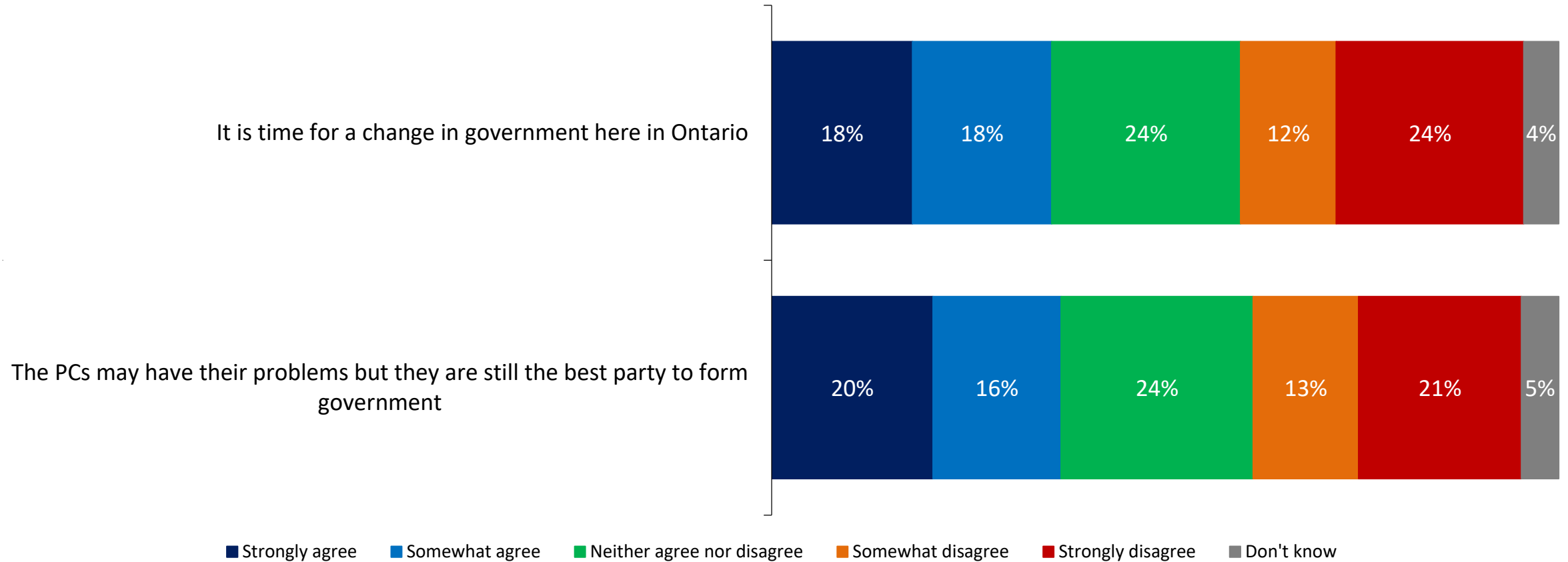
# Time for Change Attitudes: Respondents are evenly split on whether or not it is time for a change in government

20



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? -

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

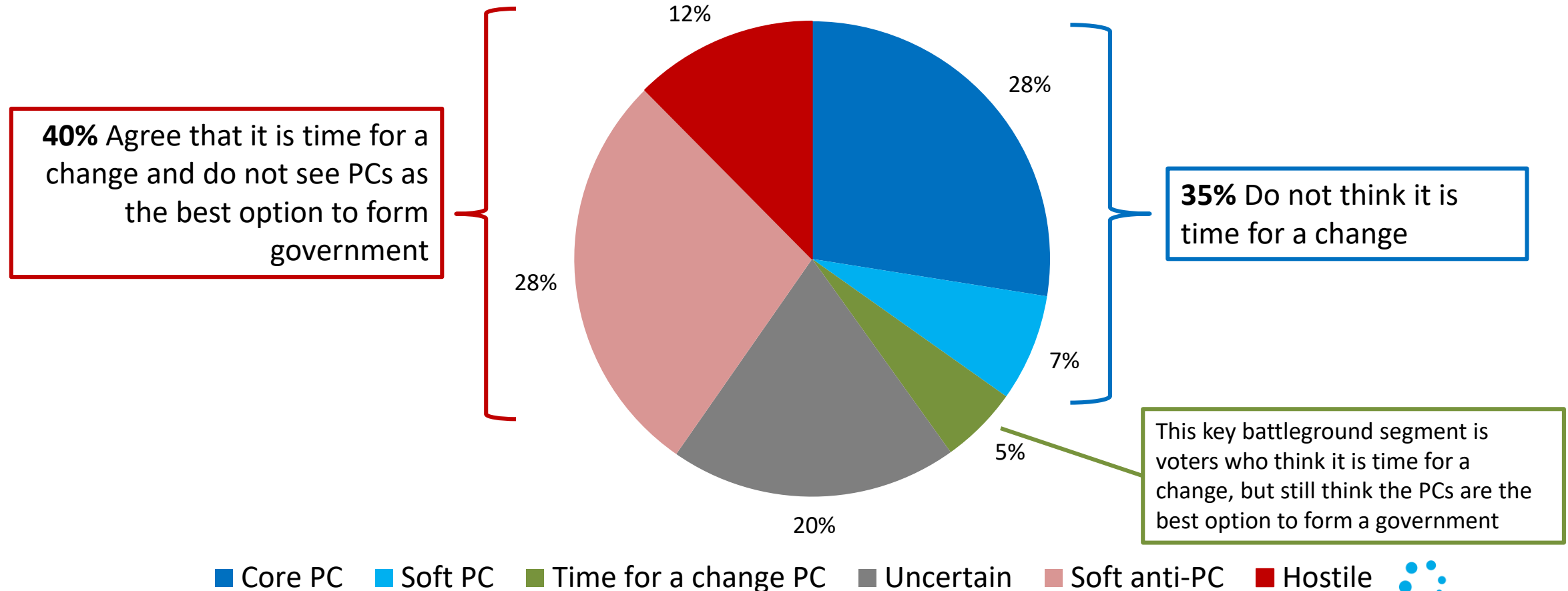




# Time for Change Segmentation: 40% of respondents are either Soft anti-PC or Hostile

Time for Change segmentation: Agree with 'The PCs may have their problems but they are still the best party to form government' BY Agree with 'It is time for a change in government here in Ontario'.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

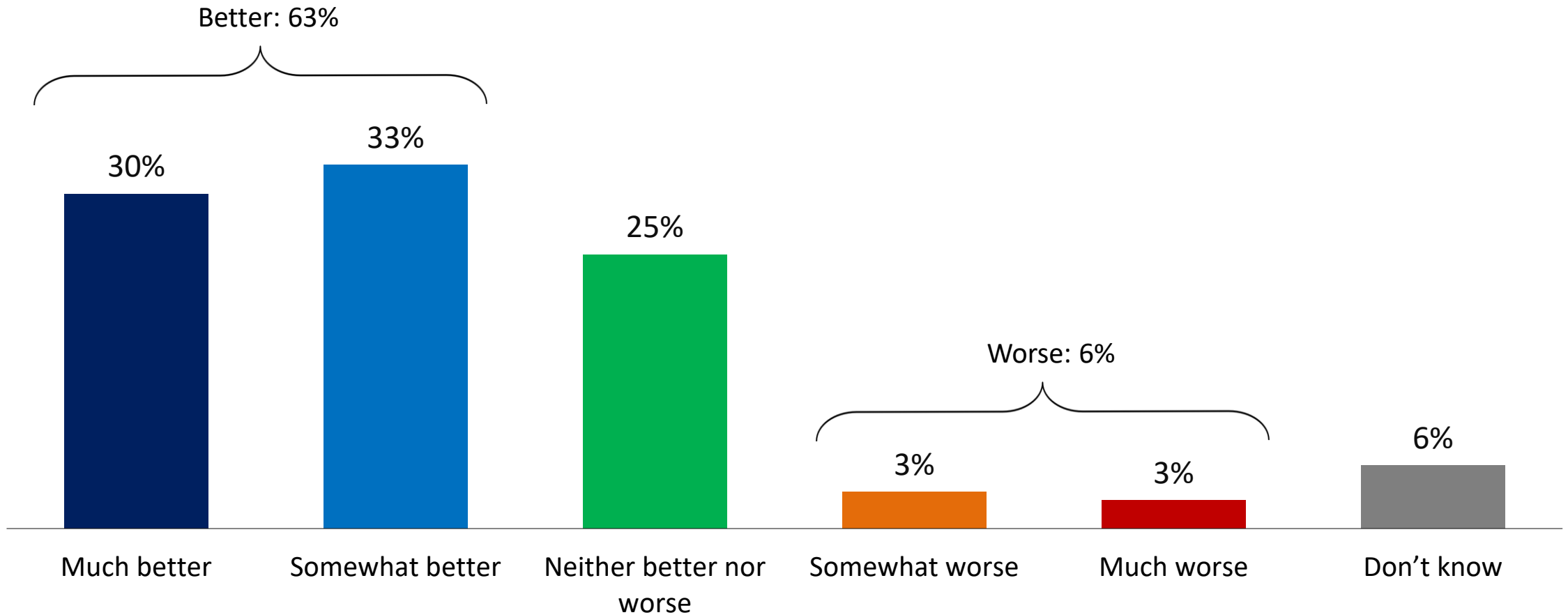


**Ford has seen a remarkable turnaround in his personal favourability during the outbreak**

# Impact on Doug Ford: Over 3-in-5 (63%) say Ford's response to the outbreak has left them with a better impression of him



Has the way premier Doug Ford has responded to the COVID-19 outbreak left you with a better or worse impression of him?  
[asked of all respondents, n=600]

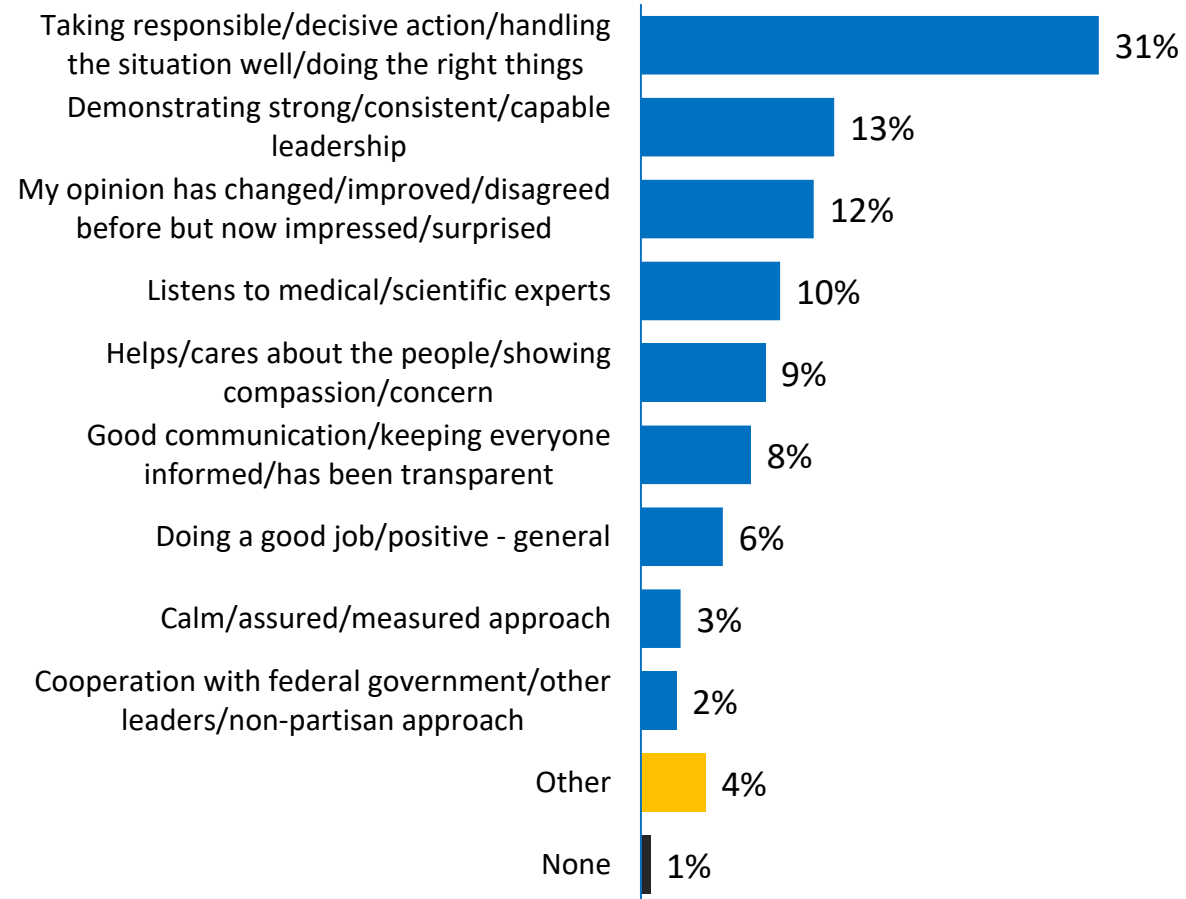


# Impression of Premiers, Ontario: Plurality (31%) of those who said “better” think Doug Ford is taking responsibility, showing decisive action



And why do you feel that way? [OPEN ENDED]

[asked of all respondents who said ‘better’, n=377]

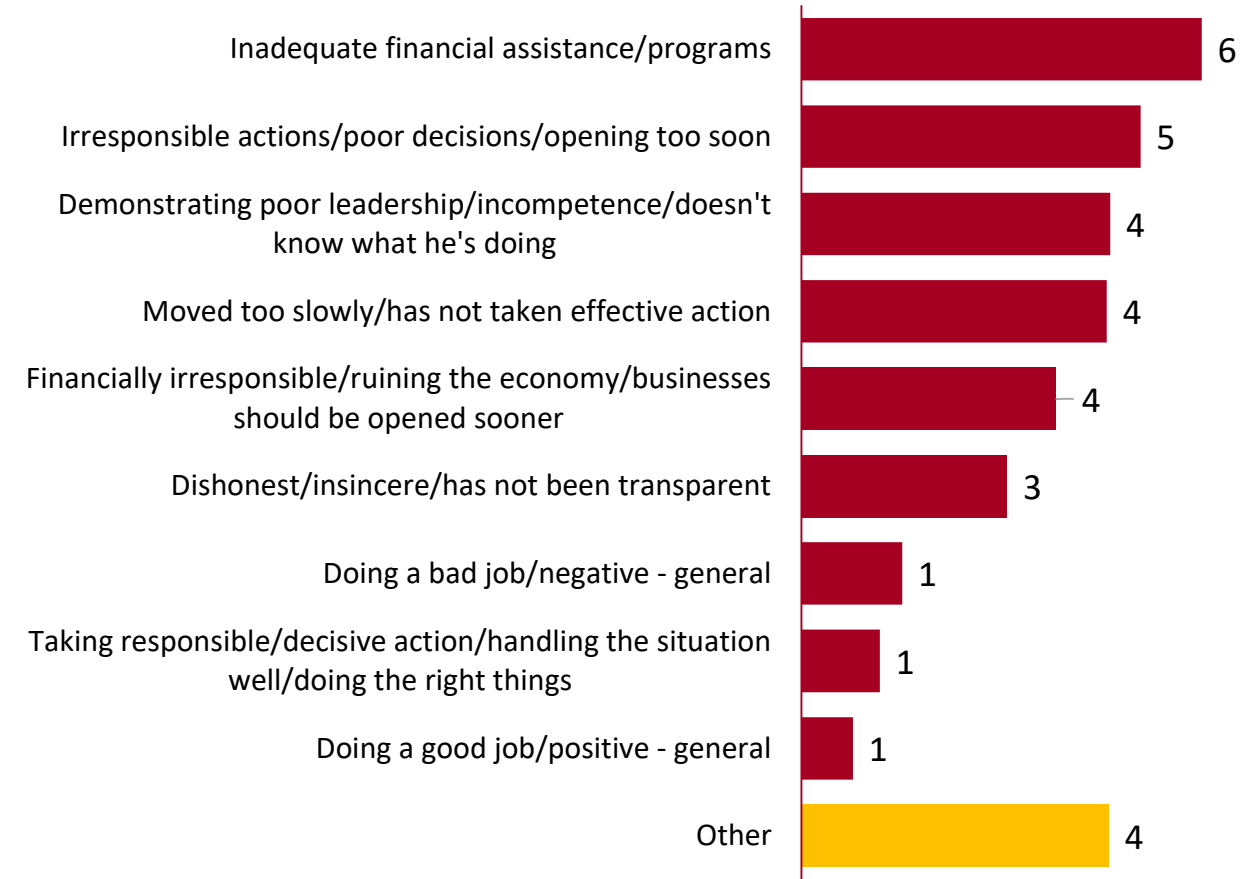


**Note:** Don't know (0%), Refused (2%) not shown.



And why do you feel that way? [OPEN ENDED]

[asked of all respondents who said ‘worse’, FREQUENCIES SHOWN; n=36]



**Note:** Refused (n=2) not shown.

\*Small n size, interpret results with caution

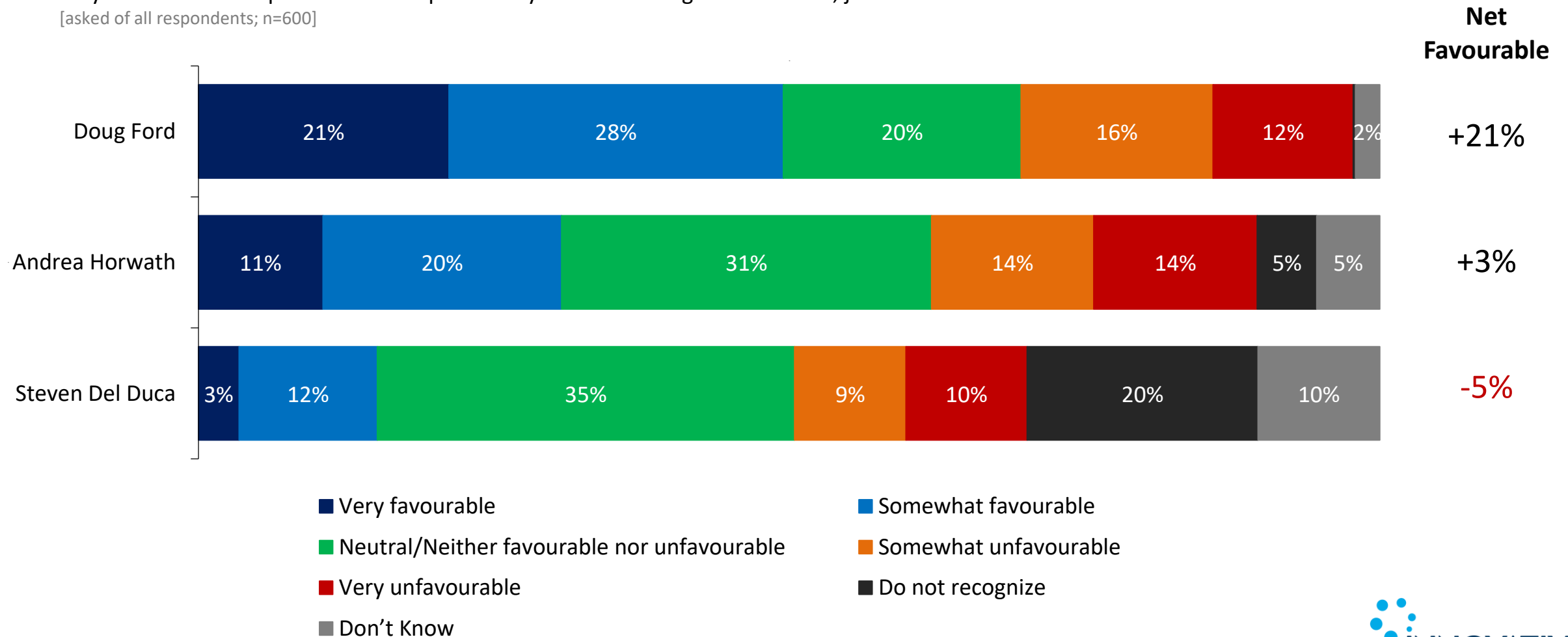


# Leader Favourables: Majority of respondents (50%) report mostly favourable impression of Premier Doug Ford



Below are the names of several individuals who have been mentioned in the news recently. For each one, please indicate whether you have heard of that person and, if so, whether you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, neither favourable or unfavourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable impression of that person. If you do not recognize the name, just indicate.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

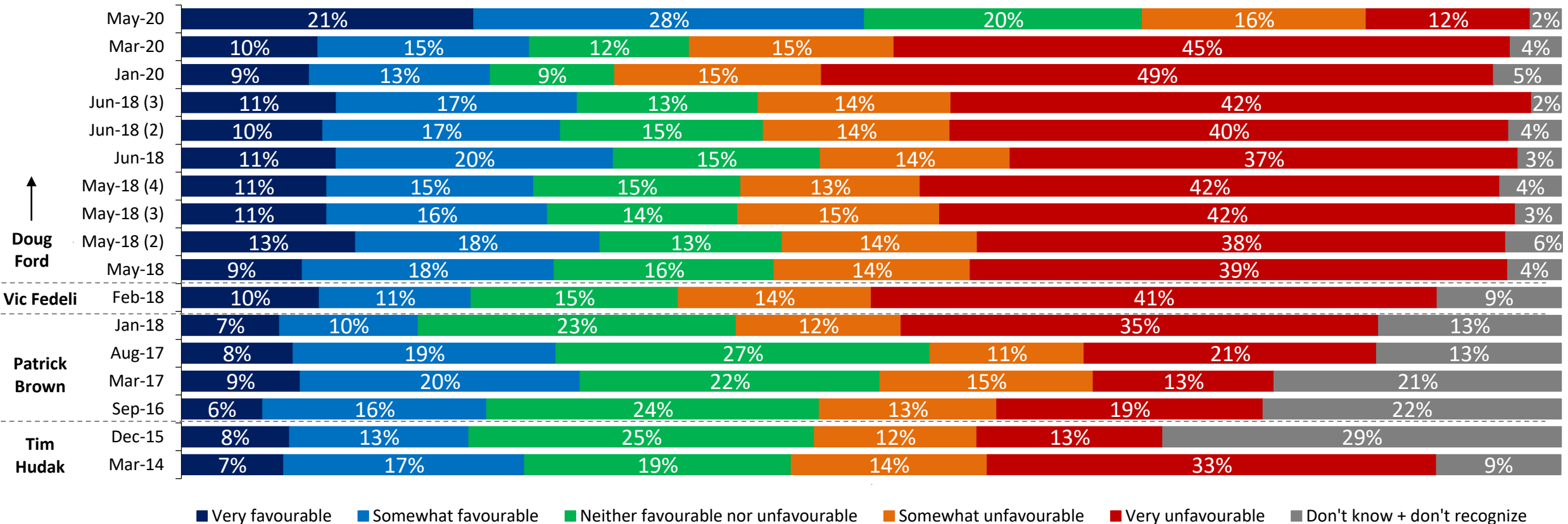


# Doug Ford Favourability: Half (50%) of respondents say they have a favourable opinion of Doug Ford



Below are the names of several individuals who have been mentioned in the news recently. For each one, please indicate whether you have heard of that person and, if so, whether you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, neither favourable or unfavourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable impression of that person. If you do not recognize the name, just indicate.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

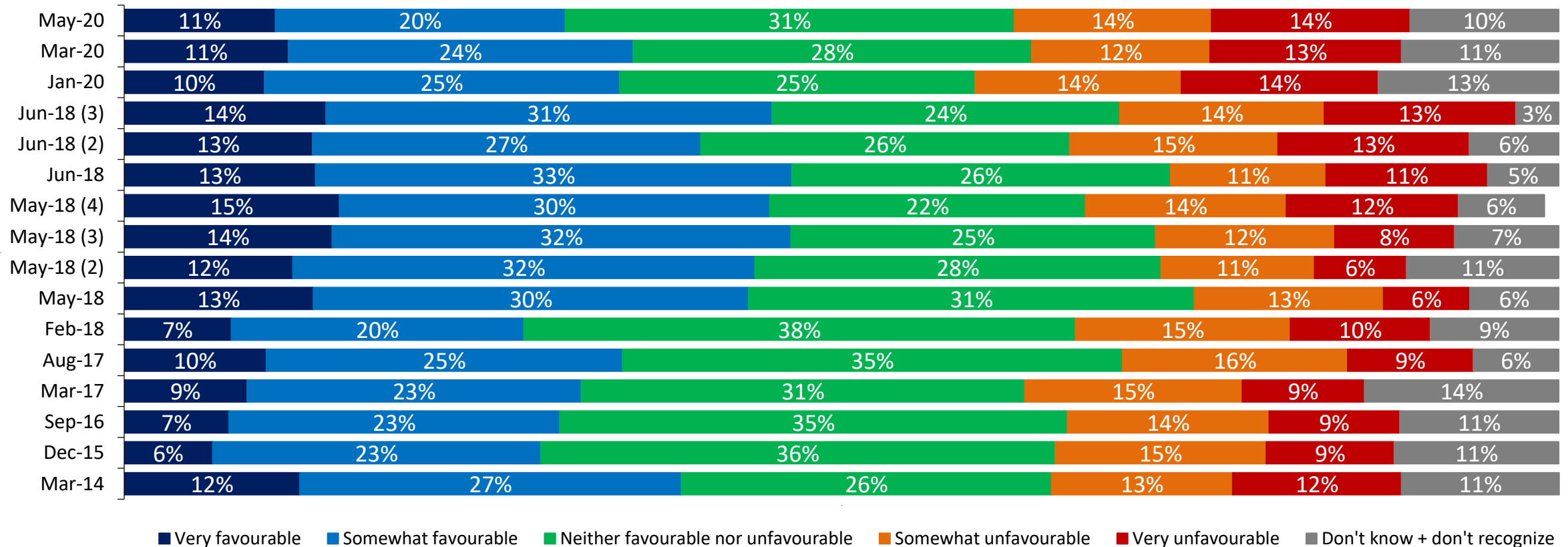


# Andrea Horwath Favourability: Horwath sees a decline in the portion saying “favourable”; those saying unfavourable is steady



Below are the names of several individuals who have been mentioned in the news recently. For each one, please indicate whether you have heard of that person and, if so, whether you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, neither favourable or unfavourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable impression of that person. If you do not recognize the name, just indicate.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

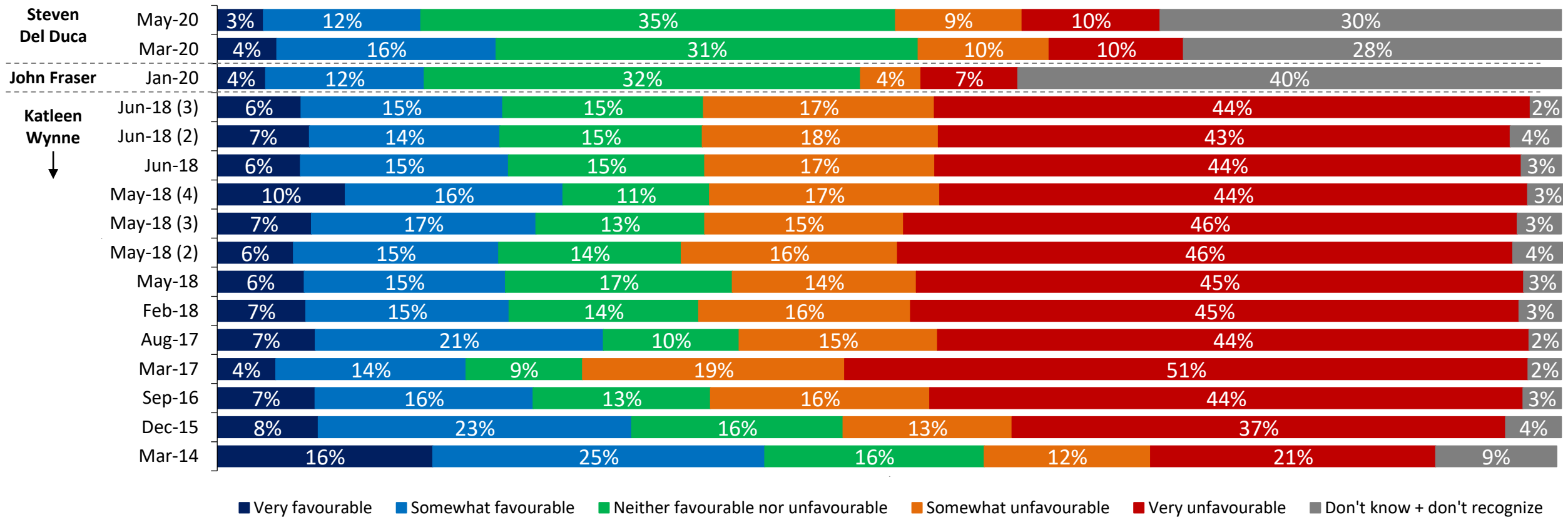


# Steven Del Duca Favourability: Most respondents don't have a firm opinion of Del Duca



Below are the names of several individuals who have been mentioned in the news recently. For each one, please indicate whether you have heard of that person and, if so, whether you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, neither favourable or unfavourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable impression of that person. If you do not recognize the name, just indicate.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

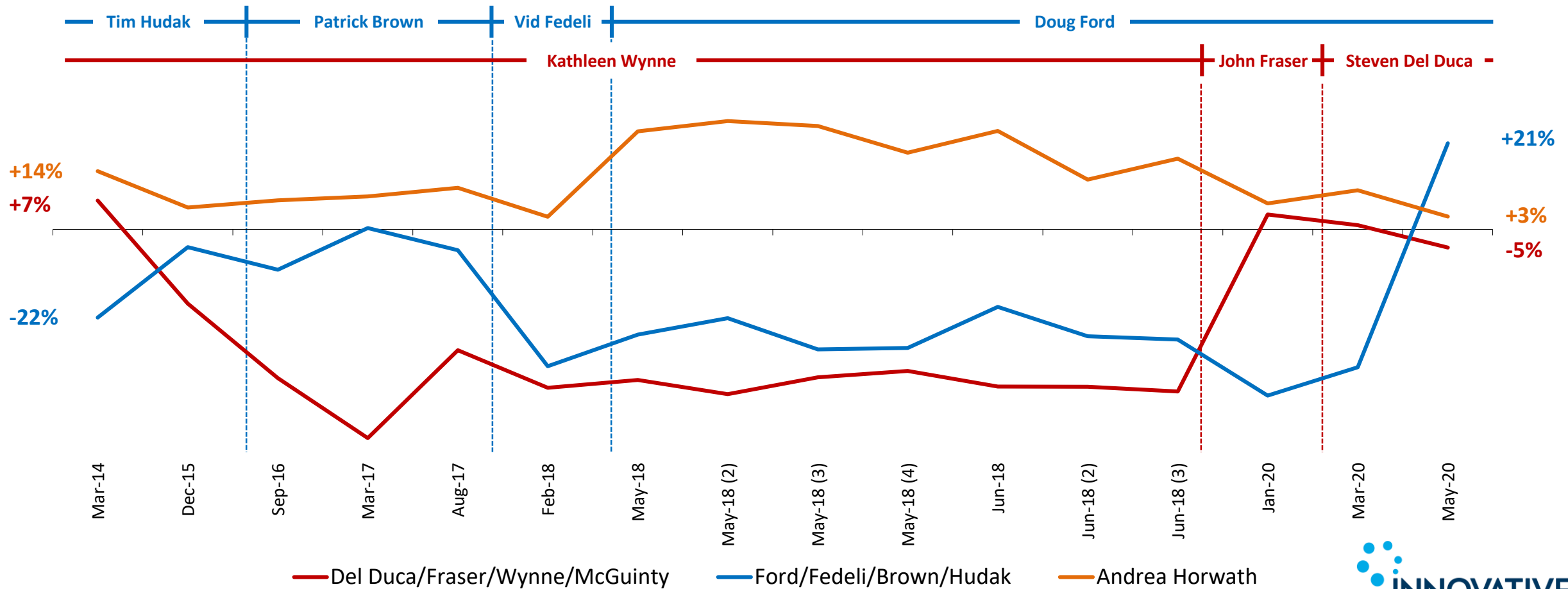


# Ontario Party Leader NET Favourables Tracking: Ford's favourability has jumped 56 points since March

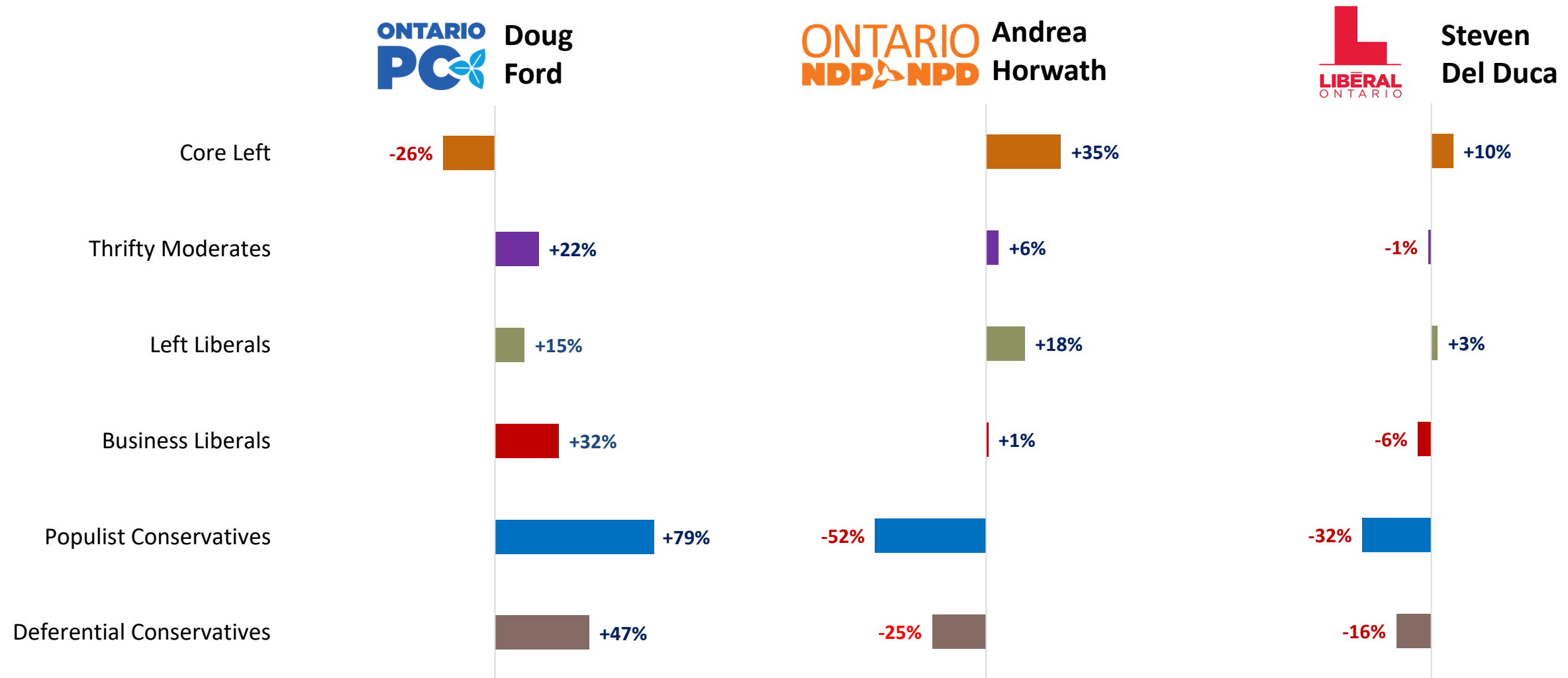


Below are the names of several individuals who have been mentioned in the news recently. For each one, please indicate whether you have heard of that person and, if so, whether you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, neither favourable or unfavourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable impression of that person. If you do not recognize the name, just indicate.

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



# Leader favourability by Value Clusters: More Ontarians see Ford favourably than unfavourably across all groups except the Core Left



## NET Favourability by Value Clusters:

Each chart shows the net favourability (% favourable minus % unfavourable) for each leader within INNOVATIVE's 6 value cluster segments.

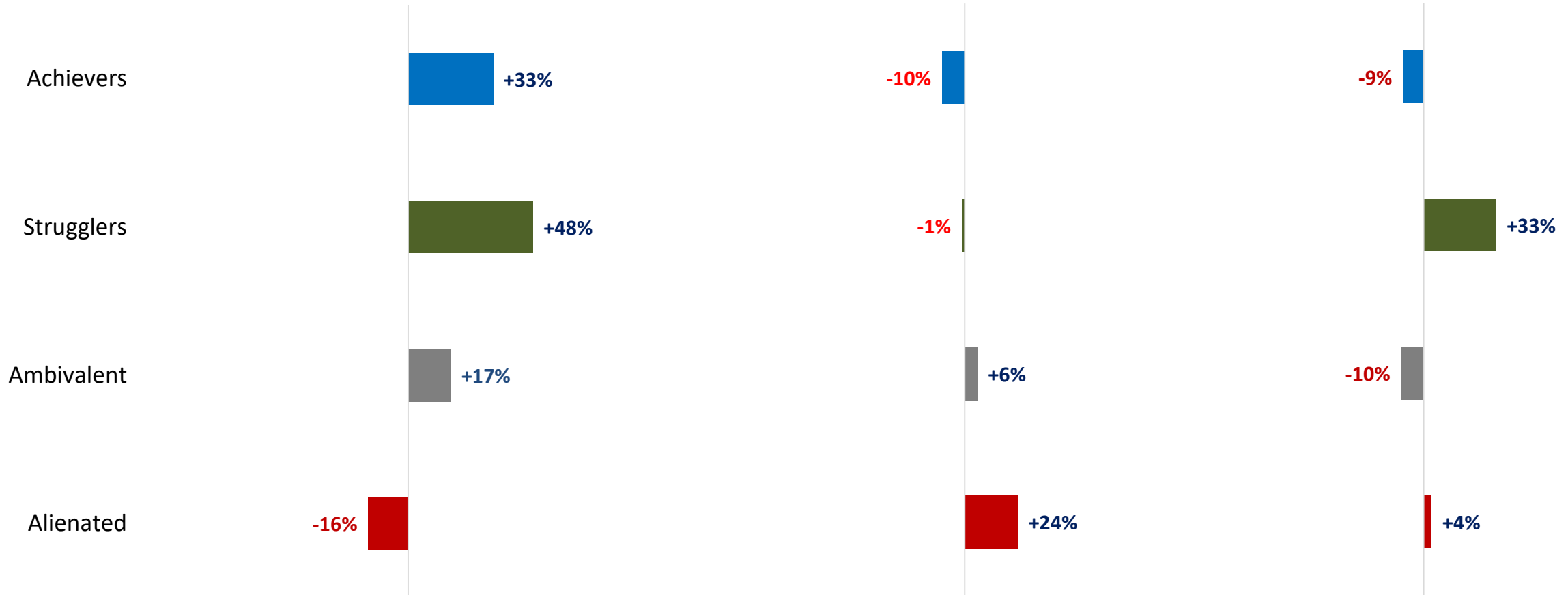


# Leader favourability by Economic Gap: Ford receives the highest net favourability from Strugglers (+48%) and lowest from Alienated (-16%)

**ONTARIO PC** Doug Ford

**ONTARIO NDP** Andrea Horwath

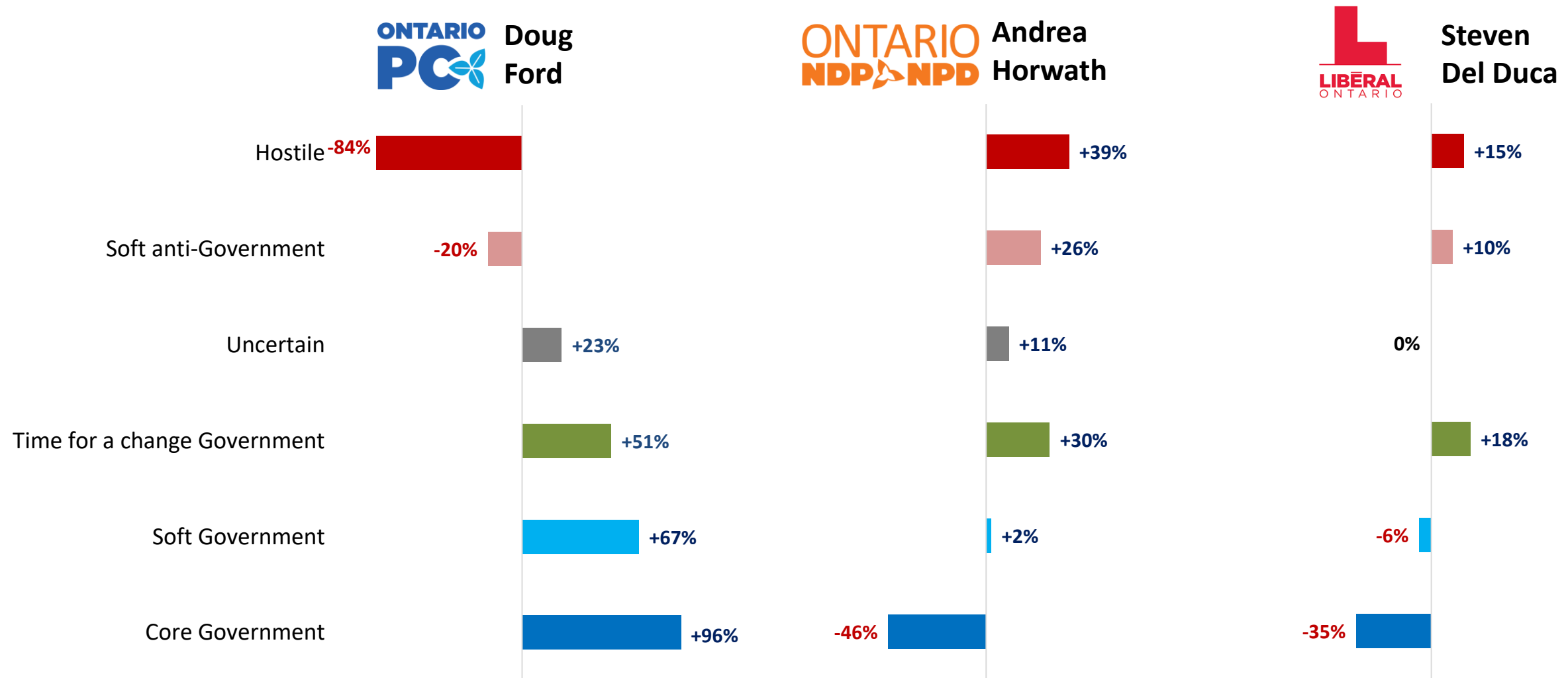
**LIBERAL ONTARIO** Steven Del Duca



## NET Favourability by Value Clusters:

Each chart shows the net favourability (% favourable minus % unfavourable) for each leader within INNOVATIVE's 6 value cluster segments.

# Leader favourability by Time for a Change: Those hostile towards the government show highest favourability towards Horwath (+39% net)

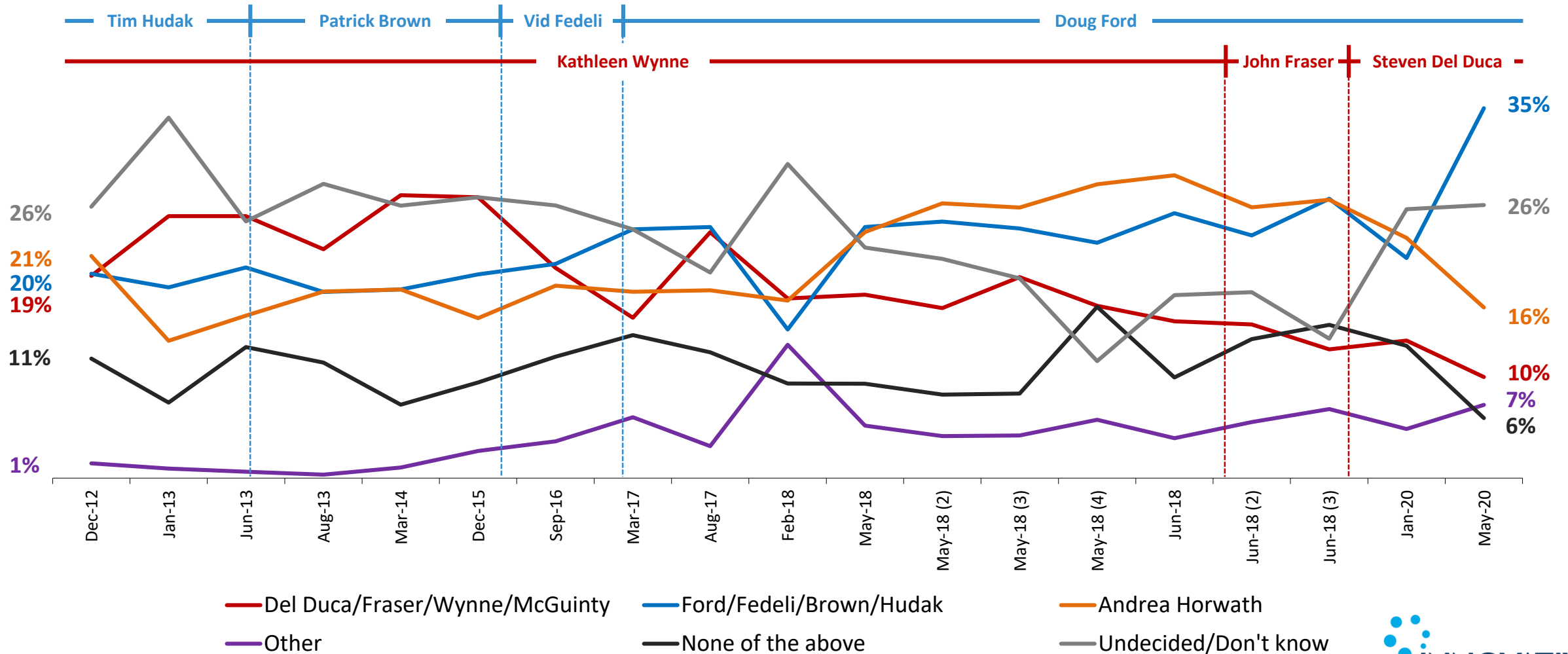


## NET Favourability by Value Clusters:

Each chart shows the net favourability (% favourable minus % unfavourable) for each leader within INNOVATIVE's 6 value cluster segments.

# Best Premier Tracking: Doug Ford now leads the pack by nearly 20 points<sup>33</sup> on Best Premier (35%); Horwath (16%) and Del Duca (10%) trail distantly

Q Which of the following leaders would make the best Premier of Ontario?  
[asked of all respondents; n=600]



# Ontario PC is trending up in vote, but still lagging behind Ontario Liberals

Innovative reports on vote intention in two ways.

When we ask people who they would vote for if an election were held today, and who they lean towards if they are unsure, we call those results Combined vote. This accounts for the views of everyone in the population including decided voters, undecided voters, and non-voters.

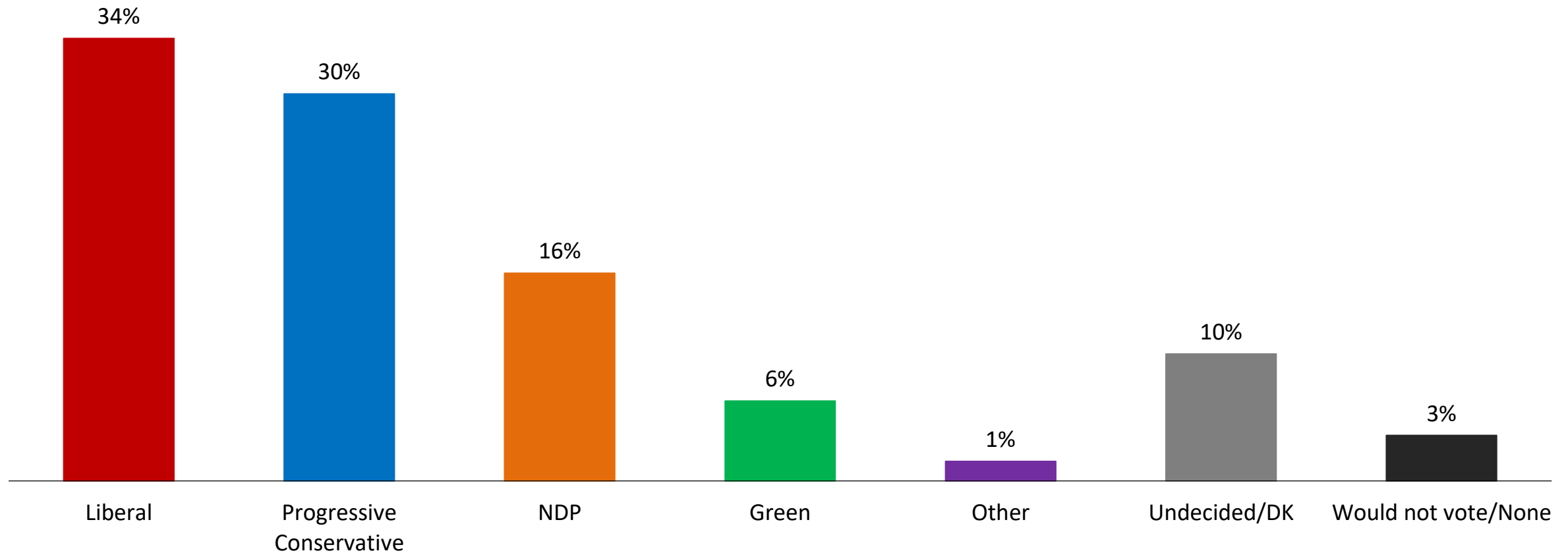
When we look at the results among *only* decided voters, we call that Decided vote. These results most tell us what the election results would be like if the survey results matched the election exactly.

# Provincial Combined Vote: 1-in-3 (34%) would vote Liberal, 3-in-10 (30%) PC, and 16% for NDP with 10% Undecided



If a provincial election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly? **[Vote + Lean]**

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

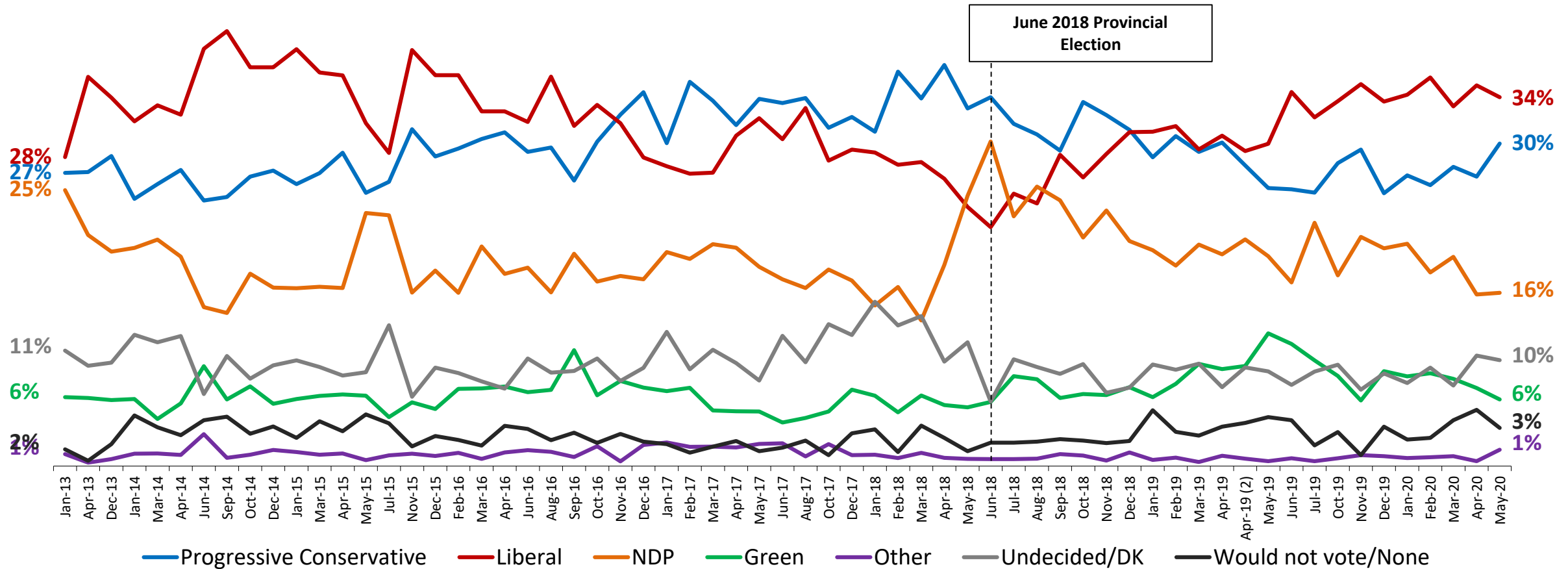


# Provincial Vote Tracking: PCs gain slightly (30%) month-to-month, now<sup>36</sup> within striking distance of Liberals (34%)



If a provincial election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly? **[Vote + Lean]**

[asked of all respondents; n=600]

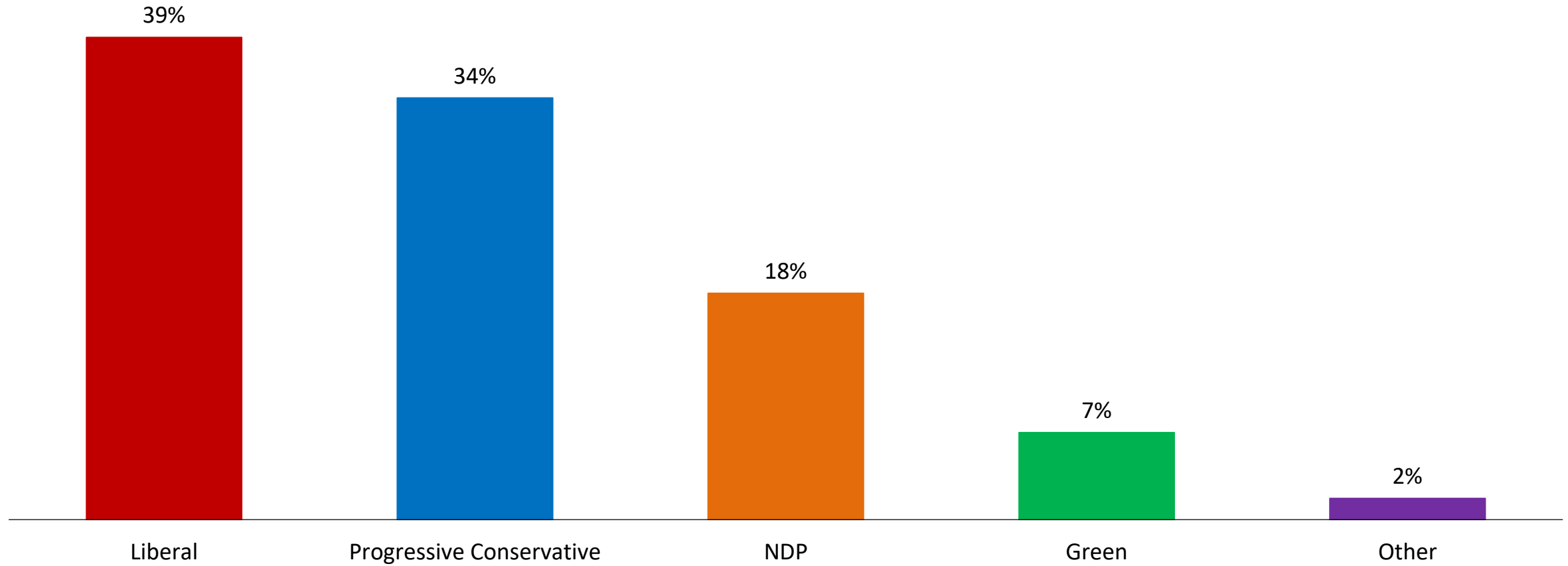


# Provincial Decided Vote: Among decided, 4-in-10 (39%) would vote Liberal, 1-in-3 (34%) for PC, and 18% for NDP



If a provincial election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly? **[DECIDED]**

[decided voters only; n=521]

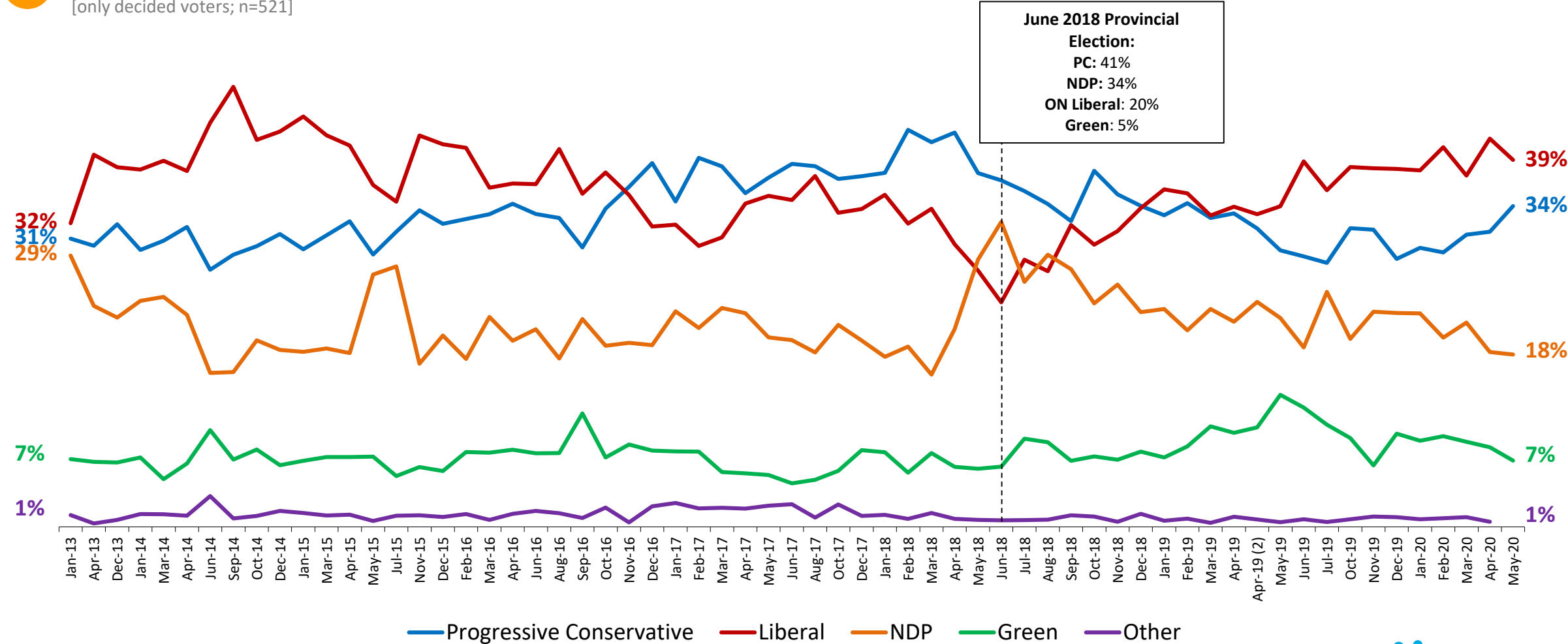




# Provincial Decided Vote Tracking: Small gain (34%) for PCs on decided vote, now within five points of Liberals (39%)



If a provincial election were held today, which party would you vote for? In that case, which party do you lean toward slightly? **[DECIDED]**  
 [only decided voters; n=521]



# Decided Vote by Region: Strong lead for Liberals in Toronto and slight lead for Liberals in North/East

Decided vote by Region

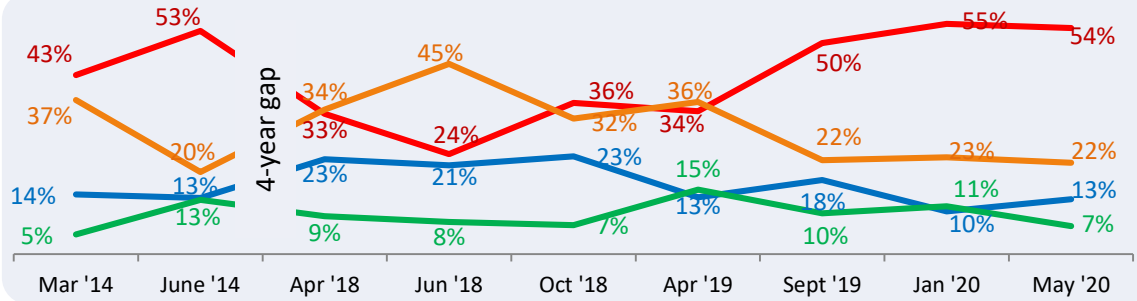
		Region			
		Toronto	Rest of GTA	South/West	North/East
		(N=111)	(N=136)	(N=136)	(N=138)
Decided Vote	Liberal	44%	39%	34%	40%
	Progressive Conservative	28%	39%	34%	35%
	NDP	19%	19%	20%	16%
	Green	9%	4%	8%	7%
	Other	1%	0%	4%	2%

# Decided Vote by Value Cluster: PCs are competitive with Liberals among Business Liberals and Thrifty Moderates

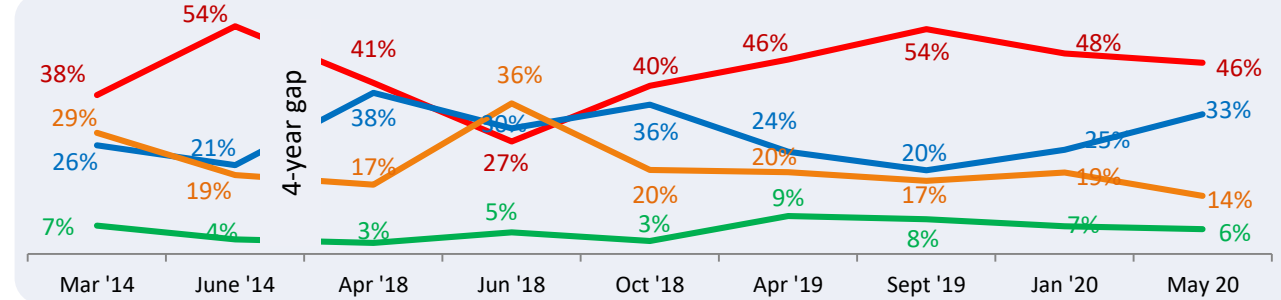
Provincial Decided Vote	Value Clusters					
	Deferential Conservatives	Populist Conservatives	Business Liberals	Left Liberals	Thrifty Moderates	Core Left
	(N=59)	(N=69)	(N=129)	(N=82)	(N=54)	(N=129)
Liberal	23%	10%	46%	54%	33%	48%
Progressive Conservative	66%	84%	33%	13%	33%	7%
NDP	8%	2%	14%	22%	19%	33%
Green	1%	2%	6%	7%	14%	11%
Other	2%	2%	1%	5%	1%	1%

# Tracking Decided Vote by Cluster: The PCs are up in both Conservative clusters and among Business Liberals

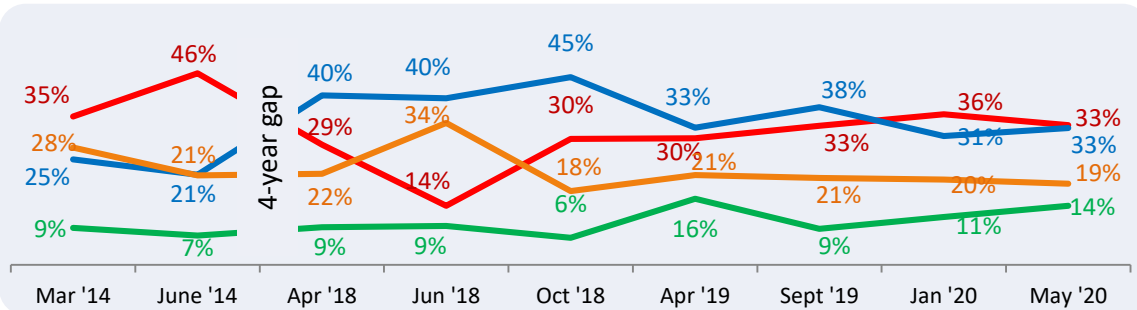
## Left Liberals



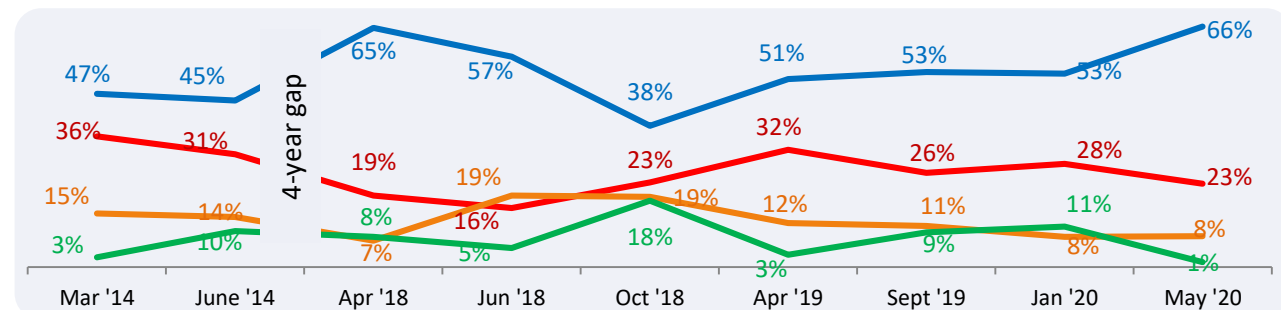
## Business Liberals



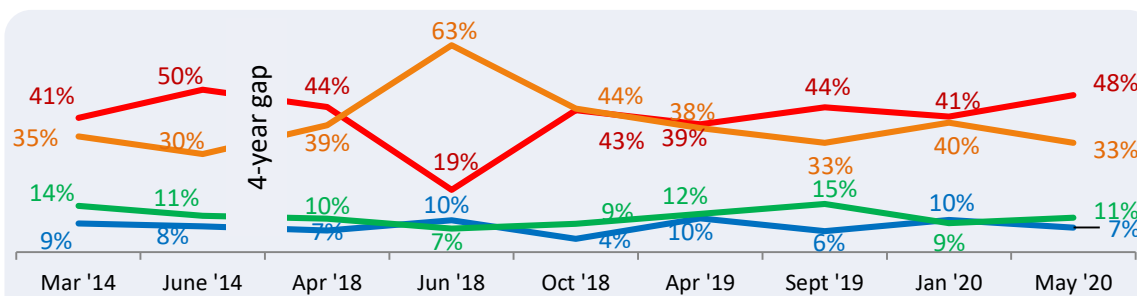
## Thrifty Moderates



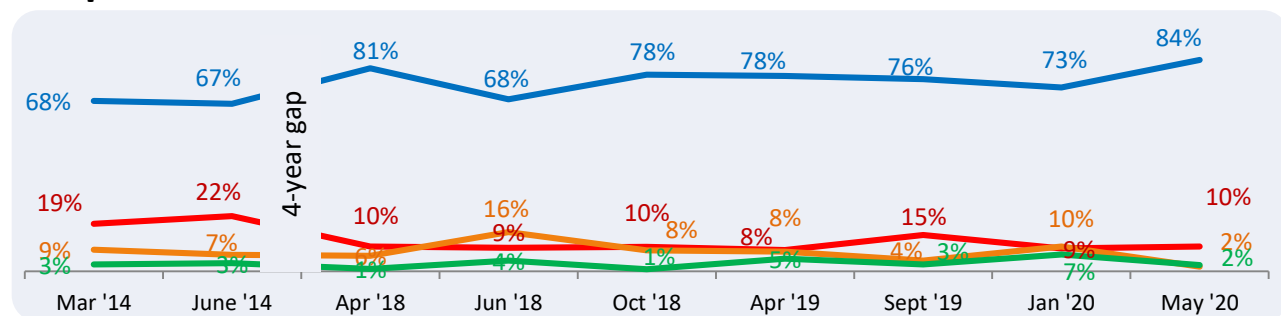
## Deferential Conservatives



## Core Left



## Populist Conservatives



Decided vote: Liberal PC NDP Green

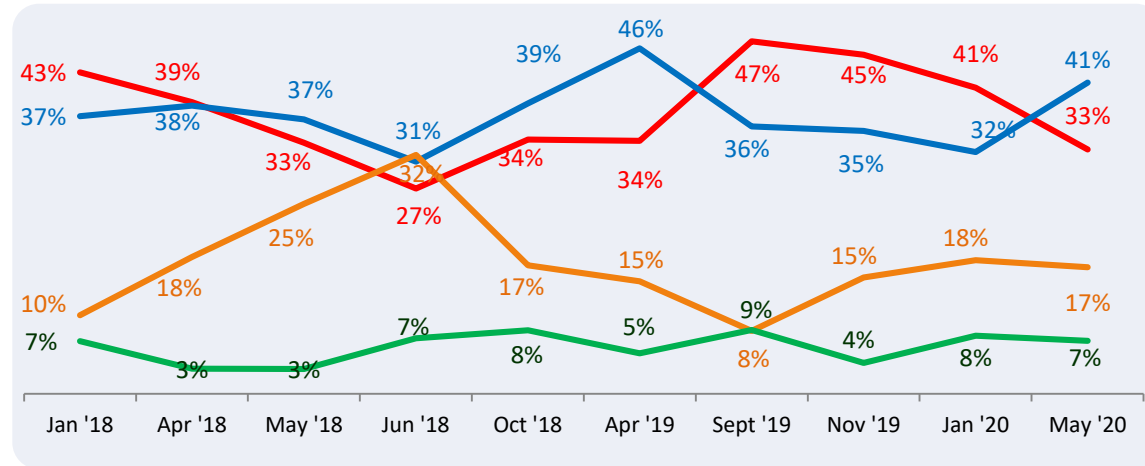
# Decided Vote by Economic Gap: Liberals lead among Alienated, other segments are competitive between Liberals and PCs

		Economic Gap			
		Achievers	Strugglers	Ambivalent	Alienated
		(N=183)	(N=115)	(N=98)	(N=124)
Provincial Decided Vote	Liberal	33%	44%	35%	47%
	Progressive Conservative	41%	41%	35%	16%
	NDP	17%	13%	18%	26%
	Green	7%	2%	10%	9%
	Other	2%	0%	2%	2%

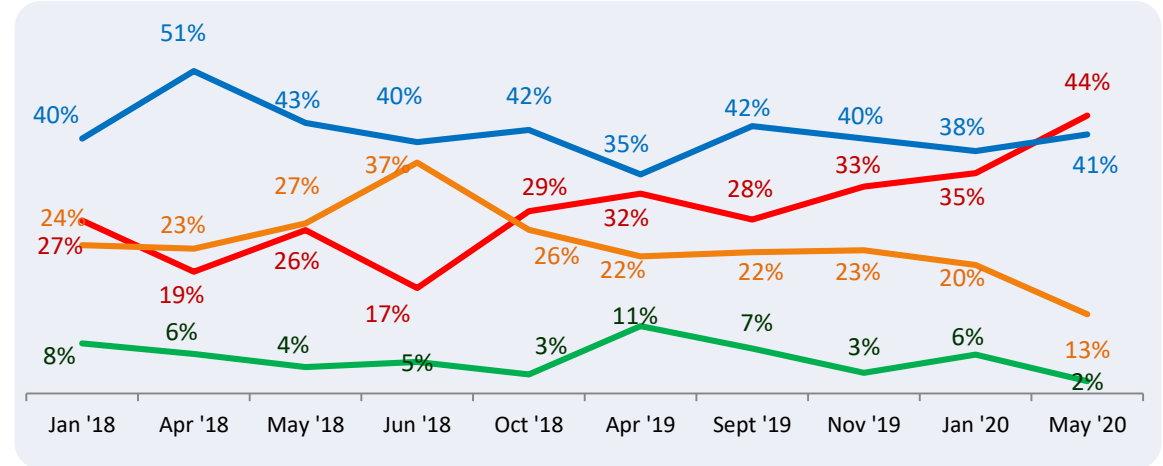
**Note:** Current data: May 2020

# Tracking Decided Vote by Alienation Segmentation: Liberals are up among the Alienated group, while PCs gain among Achievers

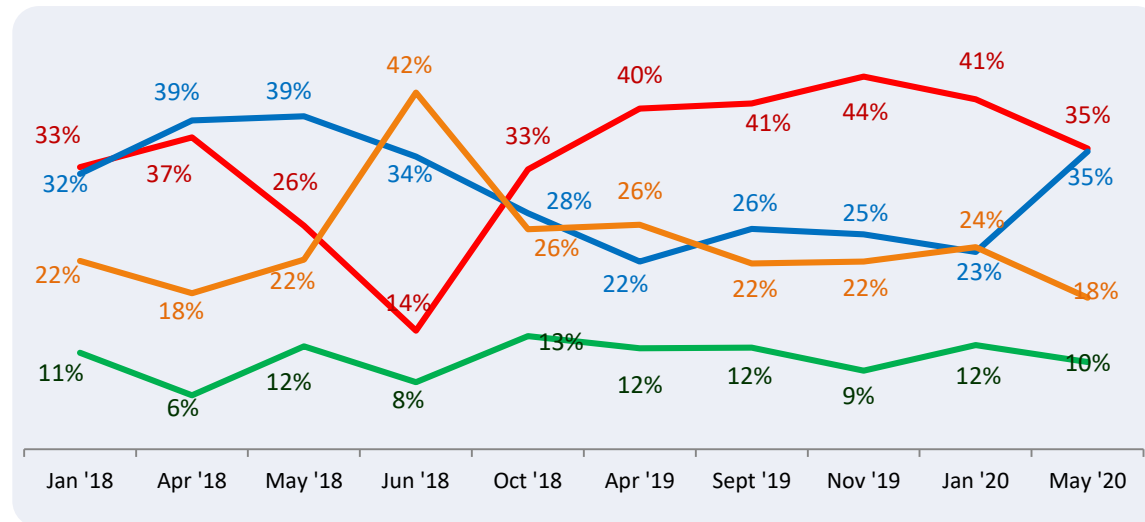
## Canadian Dream Achievers



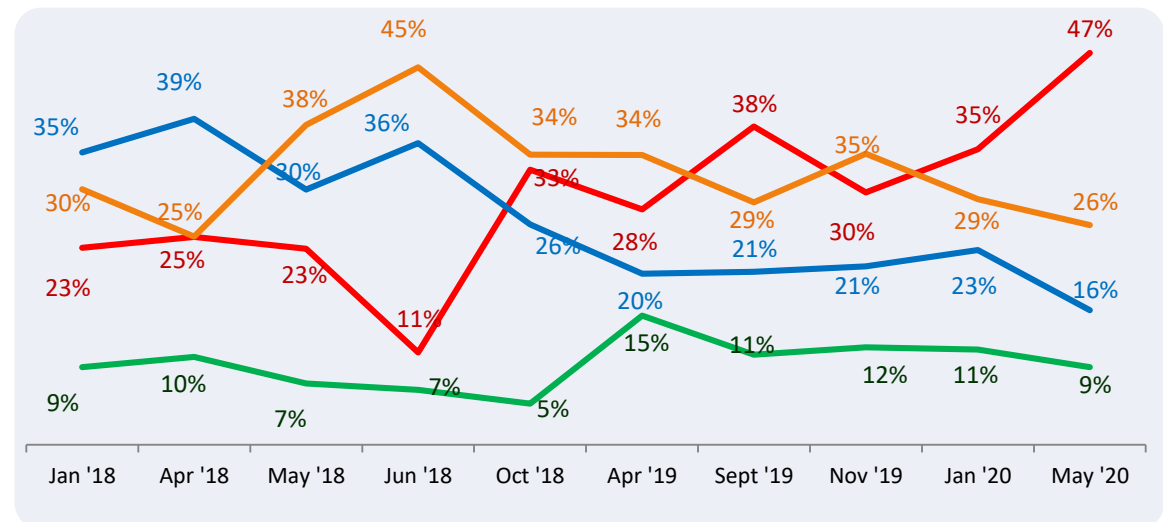
## Canadian Dream Strugglers



## Ambivalent



## Alienated



Decided vote: Liberal PC NDP Green

# Decided Vote by Time for Change: PCs (37%) trail Liberals (46%) among Time for a Change PCs

Provincial Decided Vote	Time for Change					
	Core PC	Soft PC	Time for a change PC	Uncertain	Soft anti-PC	Hostile
	(N=156)	(N=36)	(N=30)	(N=77)	(N=154)	(N=68)
Liberal	11%	38%	46%	48%	61%	40%
Progressive Conservative	83%	44%	37%	15%	6%	0%
NDP	1%	11%	16%	24%	20%	51%
Green	4%	2%	0%	10%	11%	8%
Other	0%	3%	1%	3%	2%	1%

Note: Current data: May 2020

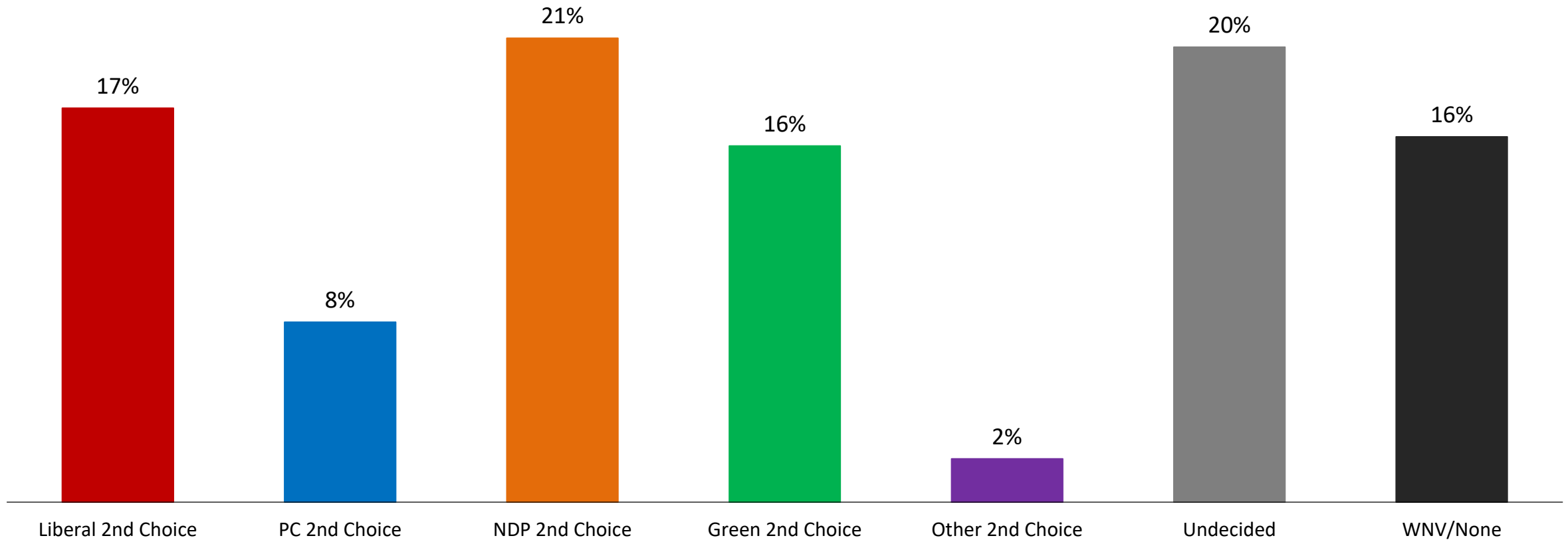


# Provincial 2nd Choice: 1-in-5 (21%) would pick NDP as their second choice; more than a third (36%) remain undecided or would not vote



And which party would be your second choice?

[only decided voters; n=521]



# Provincial 2nd Choice: A majority (57%) of NDP 1<sup>st</sup> choice voters would pick Liberals as their second choice<sup>46</sup>

And which party would be your second choice? BY [Vote+Lean]

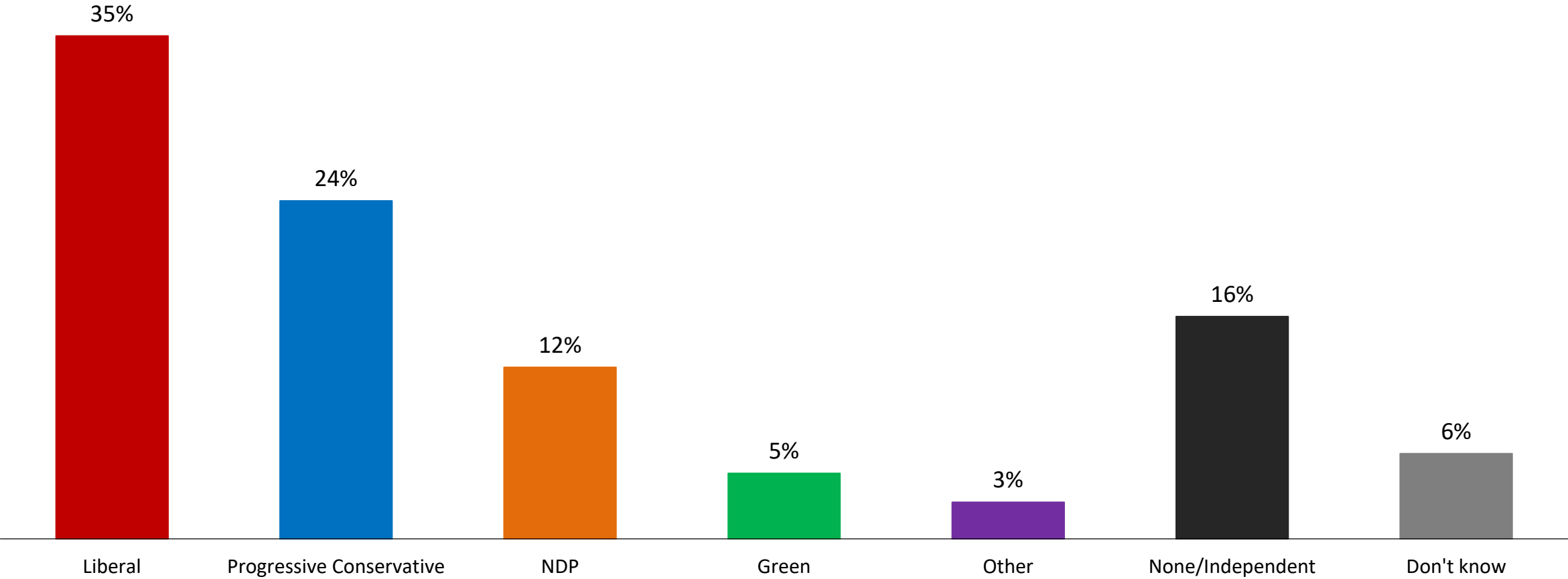
		First Choice			
		Liberal 1st Choice	PC 1st Choice	NDP 1st Choice	Green 1st Choice
		(N=203)	(N=177)	(N=95)	(N=37)
Second Choice	Liberal 2nd Choice		15%	57%	30%
	PC 2nd Choice	15%		7%	8%
	NDP 2nd Choice	37%	12%		27%
	Green 2nd Choice	22%	9%	21%	
	Other 2nd Choice	1%	4%	0%	3%
	Undecided	17%	30%	10%	23%
	WNV/None	8%	31%	6%	9%

**Note:** 'Other' in Combined Vote not shown due to insufficient sample size.  
Current data: May 2020

# Provincial Party ID: Over a third (35%) identify as Liberal, 1-in-4 (24%) as PC, and 12% as NDP with 16% Independent <sup>47</sup>



Thinking about politics in Ontario, generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a...  
[asked of all respondents; n=600]

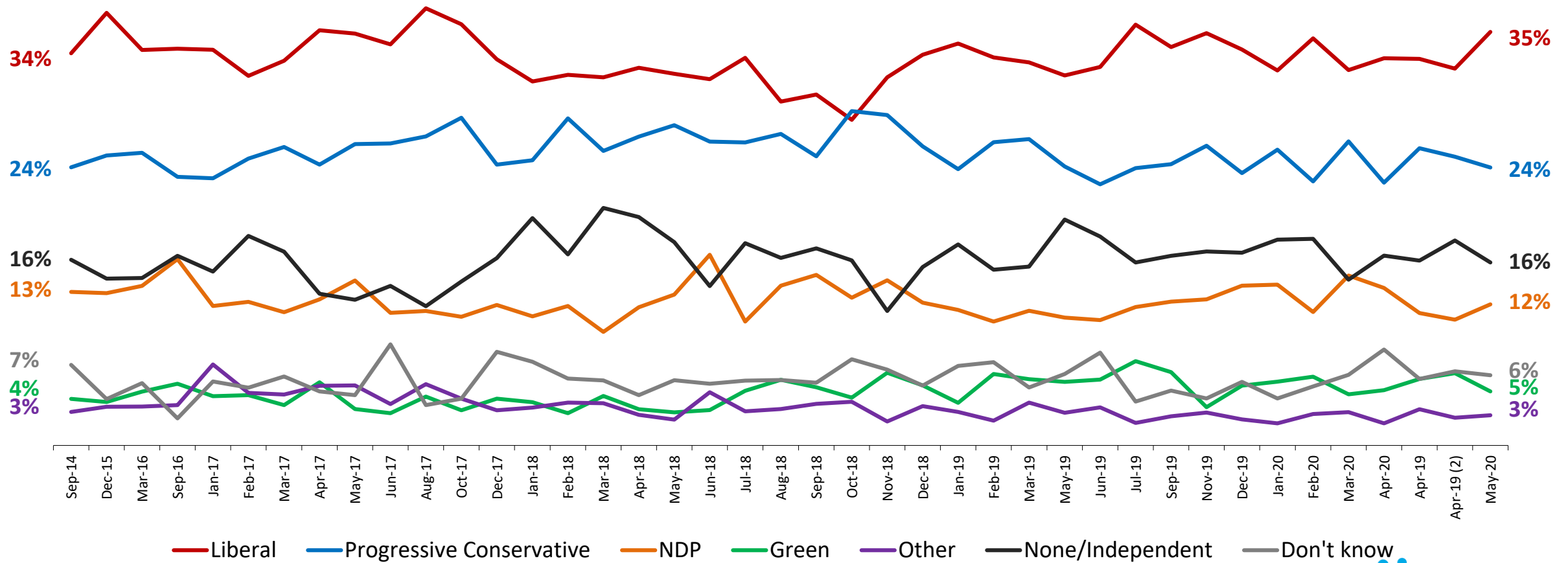


# Provincial Party ID Tracking: Slight increase in Liberal (35%) identification month-to-month, now 12 points ahead of PC Party ID



Thinking about politics in Ontario, generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a...

[asked of all respondents; n=600]



# Combined Vote by Party ID: Strong majority of PC- (91%), NDP- (82%), and Liberal-identifiers (79%) would vote with their parties

		Provincial Party Identification					
		Liberal	Progressive Conservative	NDP	Green/Other	Other	Unaligned
		(N=212)	(N=143)	(N=72)	(N=28)	(N=15)	(N=130)
Provincial Combined Vote	Liberal	79%	4%	7%	16%	8%	15%
	Progressive Conservative	7%	91%	8%	0%	45%	16%
	NDP	8%	4%	82%	1%	0%	11%
	Green	2%	0%	1%	83%	7%	7%
	Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	32%	3%
	Undecided/DK	5%	2%	3%	0%	8%	32%
	Would not vote/None	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%

# Methodology

# Survey Methodology

**These are the results of an online survey conducted between May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

**Method:** This online survey was conducted using INNOVATIVE's Canada 20/20 national research panel with additional respondents from Lucid, a leading provider of online sample. Each survey is administered to a series of randomly selected samples from the panel and weighted to ensure that the overall sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample.

**Sample Size:** n=791 Ontario residents, 18 years or older. The results are weighted to n=600 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

**Field Dates:** May 1st and May 5th, 2020.

**Weighting:** Results for Ontario are weighted by age, gender, and region to ensure that the overall sample's composition reflects that of the actual population according to Census data; in order to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. Weighted and unweighted frequencies are reported in the table.

**Margin of Error:** This is a representative sample. However, since the online survey was not a random probability based sample, a margin of error cannot be calculated. Statements about margins of sampling error or population estimates do not apply to most online panels.

**Note:** Graphs may not always total 100% due to rounding values rather than any error in data. Sums are added before rounding numbers.

	Unweighted (n)	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (n)	Weighted (%)
<b>Males 18-34</b>	61	7.7%	83	13.8%
<b>Males 35-54</b>	74	9.4%	100	16.6%
<b>Males 55+</b>	281	35.5%	106	17.7%
<b>Females 18-34</b>	67	8.5%	83	13.8%
<b>Females 35-54</b>	103	13%	107	17.8%
<b>Females 55+</b>	205	25.9%	122	20.3%
<b>Toronto</b>	172	21.7%	125	20.9%
<b>Rest of GTA</b>	187	23.6%	156	26%
<b>South/West</b>	198	25%	155	25.8%
<b>North/East</b>	234	29.6%	164	27.3%

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