



Profiling Protest Supporters

Public Opinion Research
Release Date: February 18, 2022
Field Dates: February 4 to 14, 2022

Protest Supporters

Just under 3-in-10 Canadians say they support the ongoing protests (28%) and 16% strongly support them.

Today, INNOVATIVE is releasing the results from our February *Canada This Month* survey. This online survey was in field from February 4th to 14th, 2022 with a weighted sample size of 1,000 Canadian residents. Detailed methodology is provided in the appendix.

This report compares Canadians who support the ongoing protests and those who oppose them across a range of attitudes related to COVID-19, psychographics, and demographics to understand what drives support for the protests.

Key Findings

- 1 Support for the protest is defined by the issue of COVID-19.**

There is a very strong relationship between support for the ongoing protests and opposition to restrictions related to COVID-19. Among strong supporters for the protest, 67% are strongly against COVID related restrictions.
- 2 The broader pool of support are largely libertarians.**

Two-thirds (67%) of strong protest supporters agree that most things would run pretty well without any government involvement, including 42% who strongly agree.
- 3 Protest supporters feel alienated from government decision making.**

More than 4-in-5 strong protest supporters agree that government cares more about special interest than it does about the average person, compared to 56% who agree among strong opponents of the protests.
- 4 There is a concerning decline in one measure of democratic legitimacy**

The number of people who say they trust that the results of the next election will be correct has dropped from 68% in fall of 2020 to 55% today. Most of that decline is in strong agreement. However, while protesters are more likely to disagree, protesters still tend to trust elections.
- 5 While supporters are more likely to see immigration as a threat, it does not define them.**

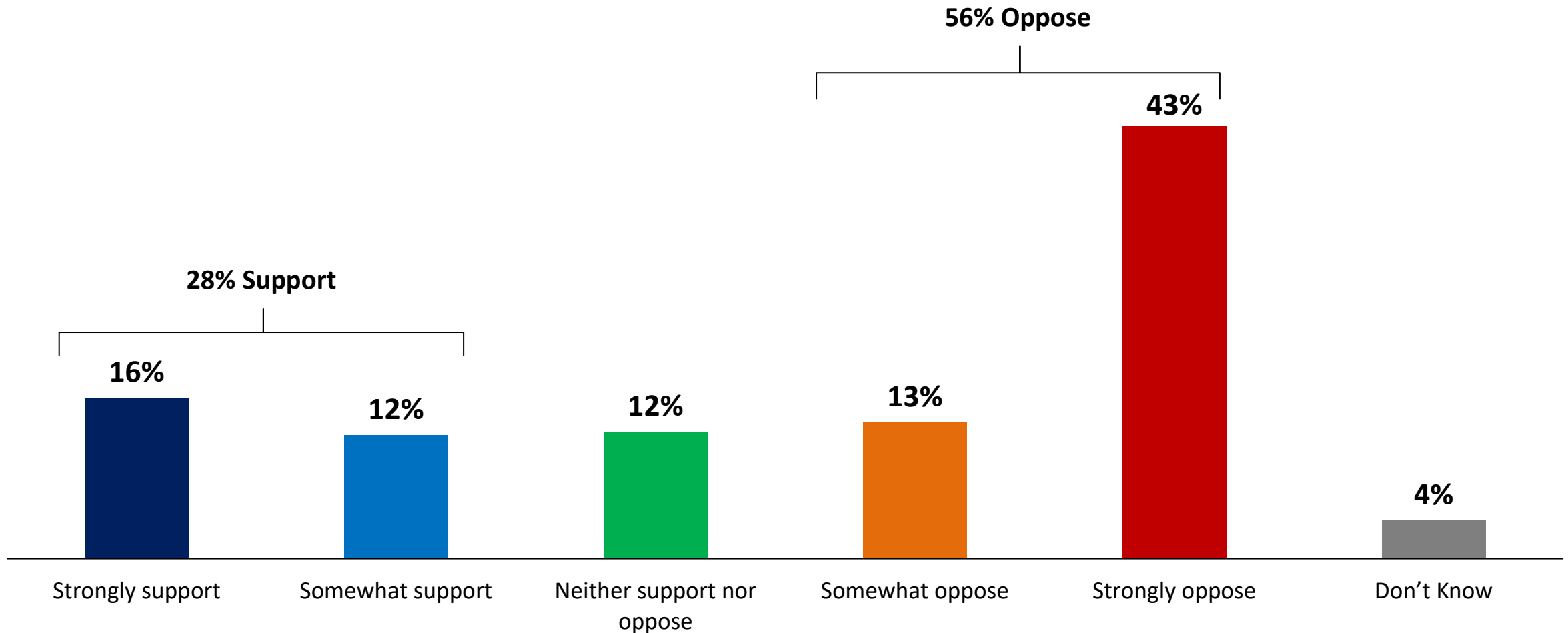
A plurality of strong protest supporters feel the growing number of newcomers to Canada threaten traditional customs, but 38% say that newcomers strengthen Canadian society. This pattern is seen in other cultural measures as well.

Protest Support

Protest Support: 6-in-10 (56%) Canadians oppose the protests while 28% support them

From what you have read, seen, or heard, do you support or oppose the general idea of the truckers' protest?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



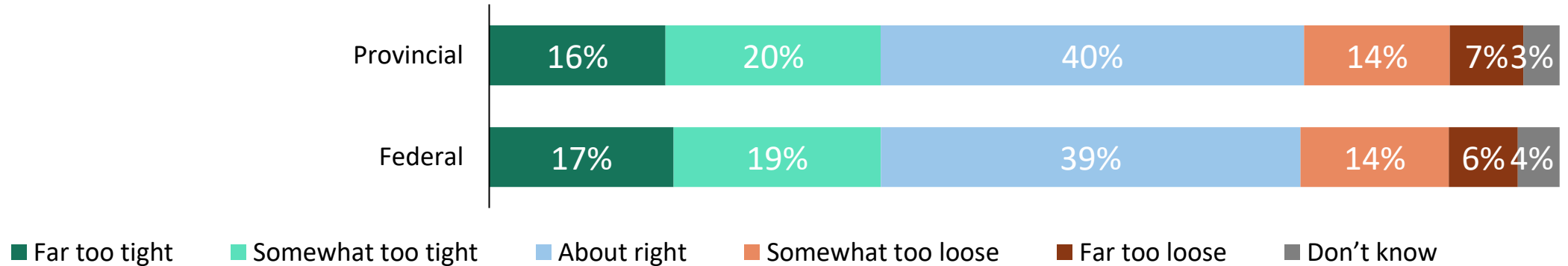
COVID Drivers

COVID Restriction Index: Five attitudes are used to create an index of Canadians' general orientation towards COVID-19 restrictions



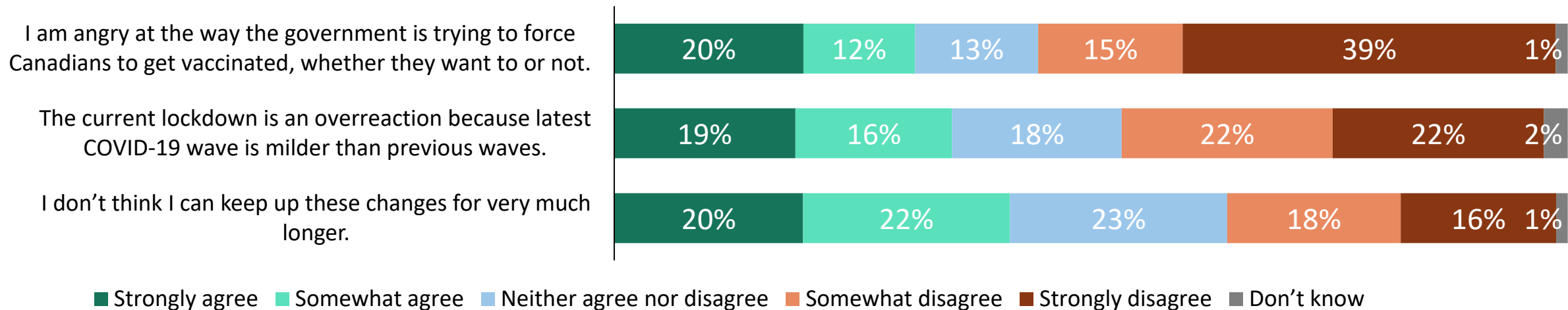
Now, thinking about the restrictions the **federal/provincial government in [PROV]** currently has in place to reduce social contacts and combat the spread of COVID-19, do you think the restrictions are too tight, too loose, or are they about right?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

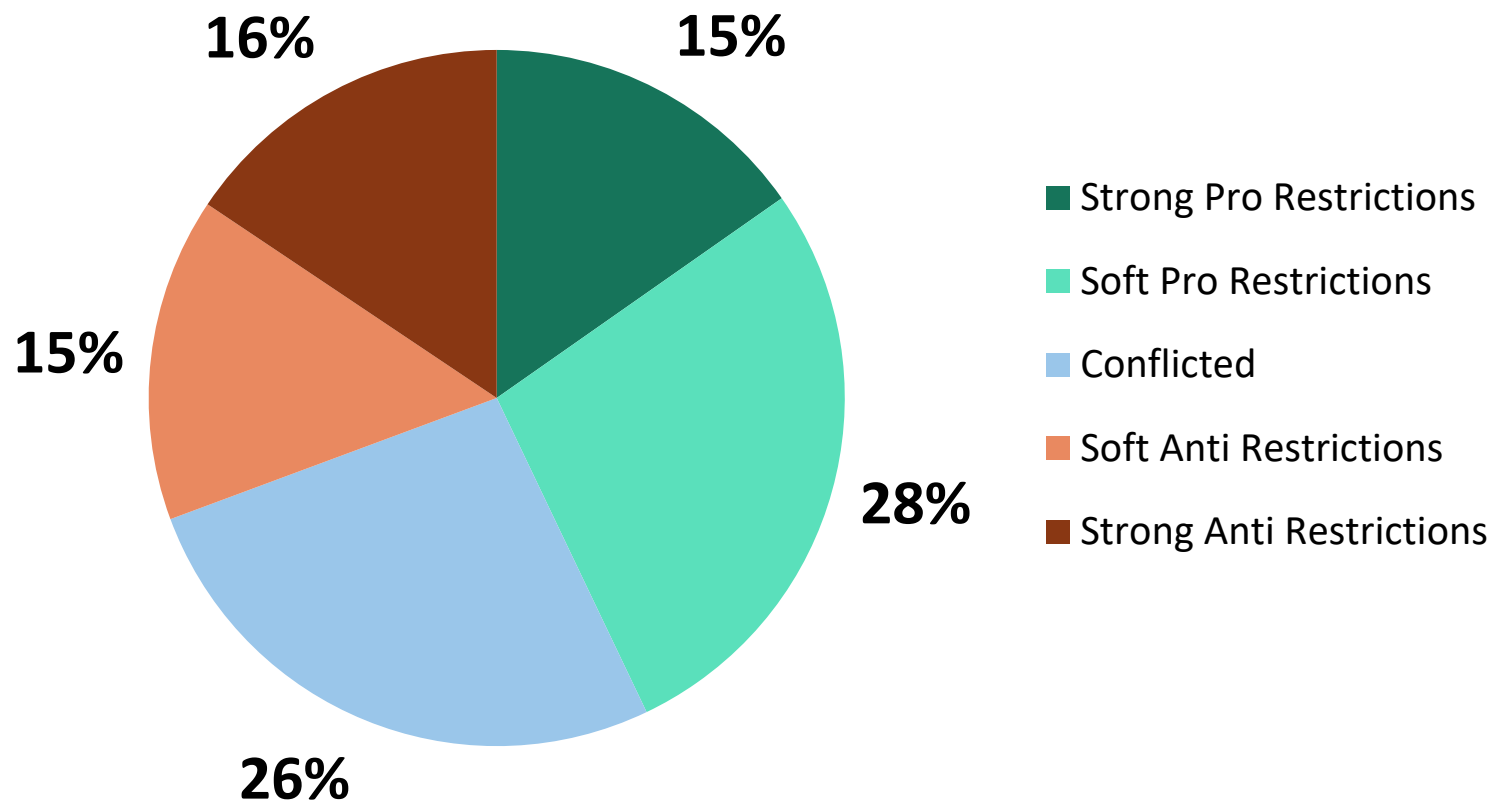
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



COVID Restriction Index: The plurality of Canadians are at least softly in favour of restrictions

COVID Restriction Index: We combined the following five questions into an index measuring how Canadians feel about the current COVID-19 related restrictions

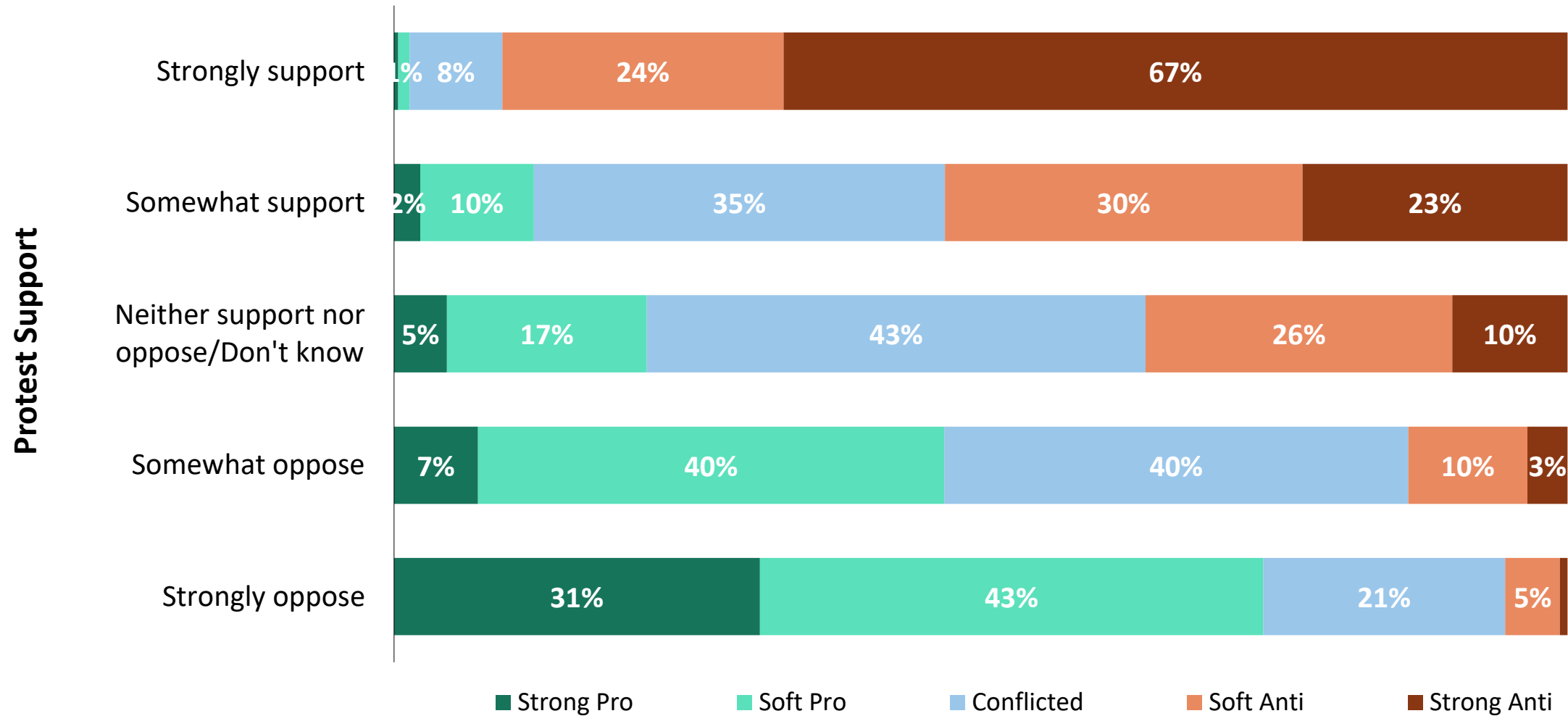
- Agree/Disagree: *I don't think I can keep up these changes for very much longer.*
- Agree/Disagree: *The current lockdown is an overreaction because latest COVID-19 wave is milder than previous waves.*
- Agree/Disagree: *I am angry at the way the government is trying to force Canadians to get vaccinated, whether they want to or not.*
- Do you think provincial restrictions are too tight, too loose, or are they about right?
- Do you think federal restrictions are too tight, too loose, or are they about right?



COVID Restriction Index: Two-thirds of protest supporters are strongly against restrictions ⁹ against restrictions

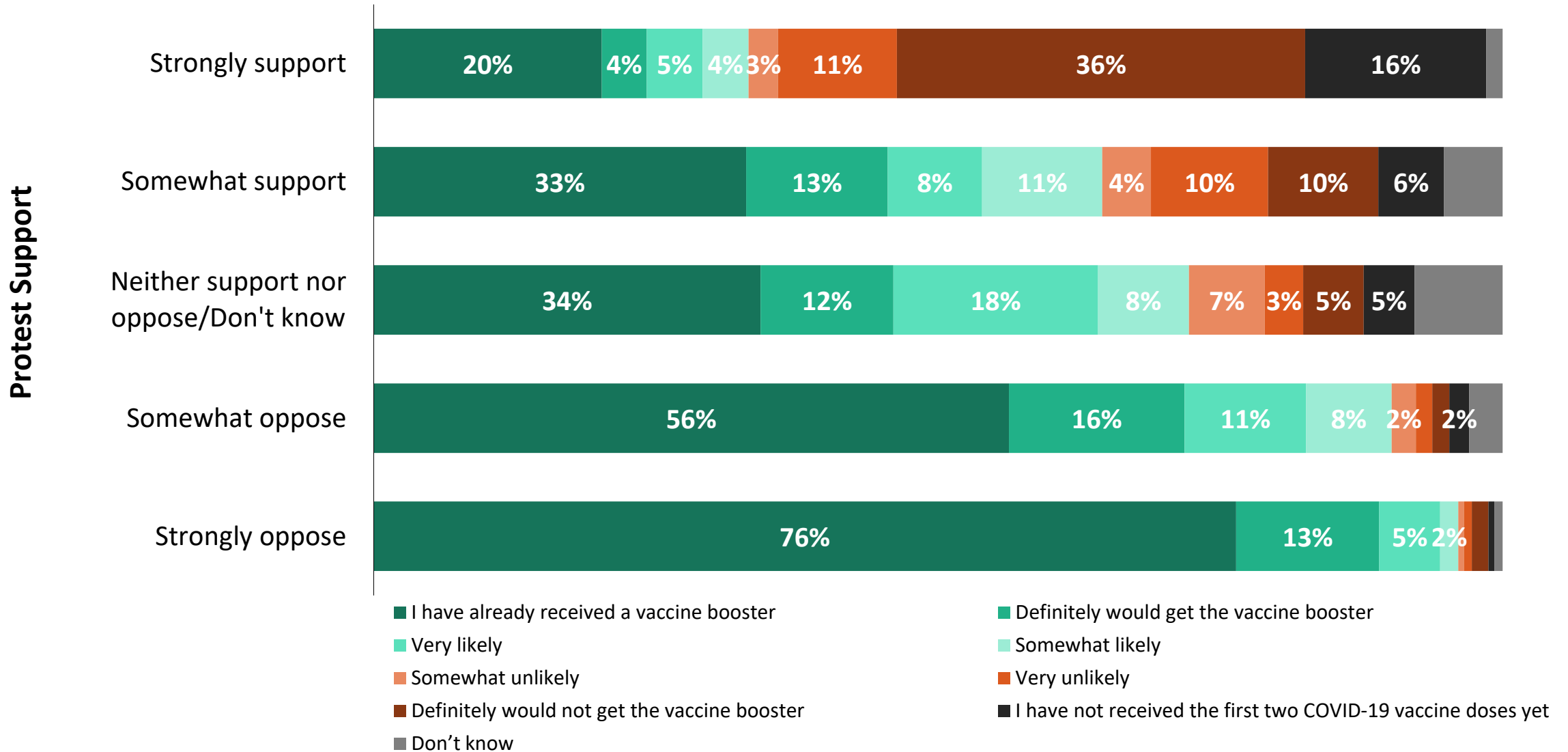


COVID Restriction Index
[all respondents]



Vaccination: Half of strong protest supporters either aren't vaccinated or will not get the booster ¹⁰

Likelihood to receive a COVID-19 Vaccine Booster

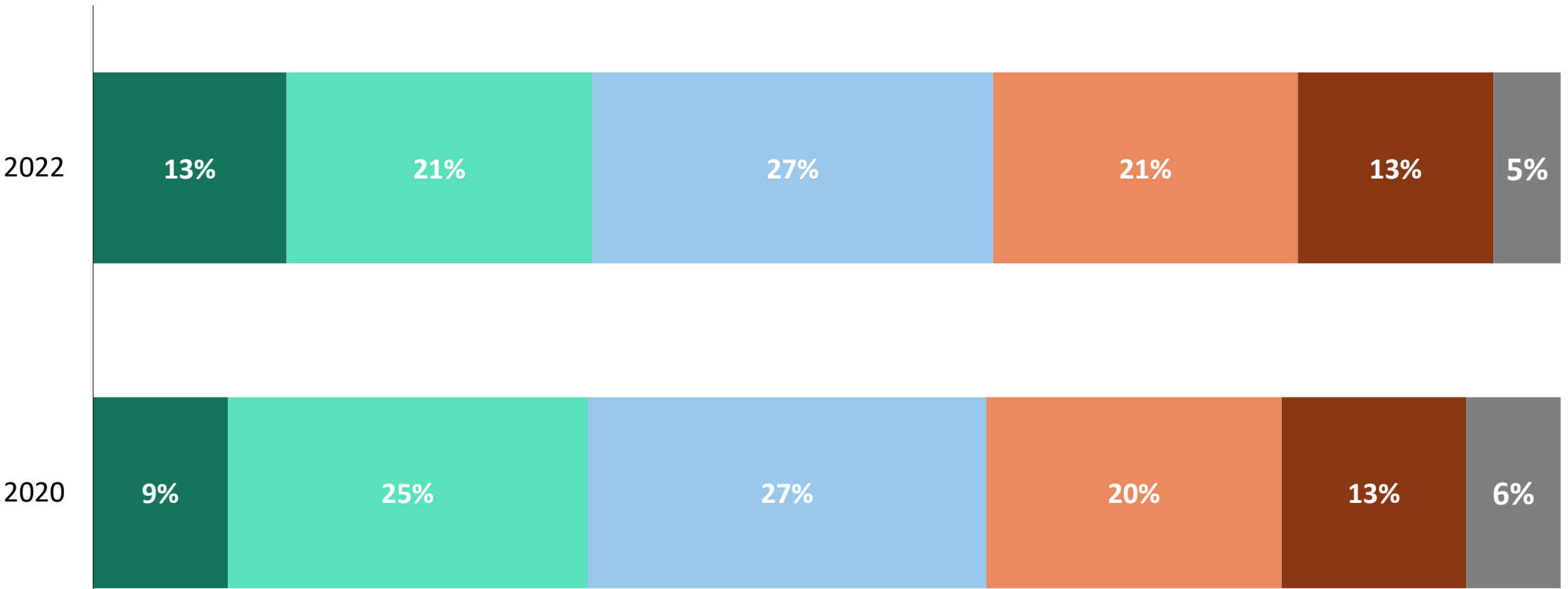


Psychographic Drivers

Role of Govt: Canadians remain split on whether or not things would run well without government



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Most things would run pretty well by themselves if the government just didn't interfere*



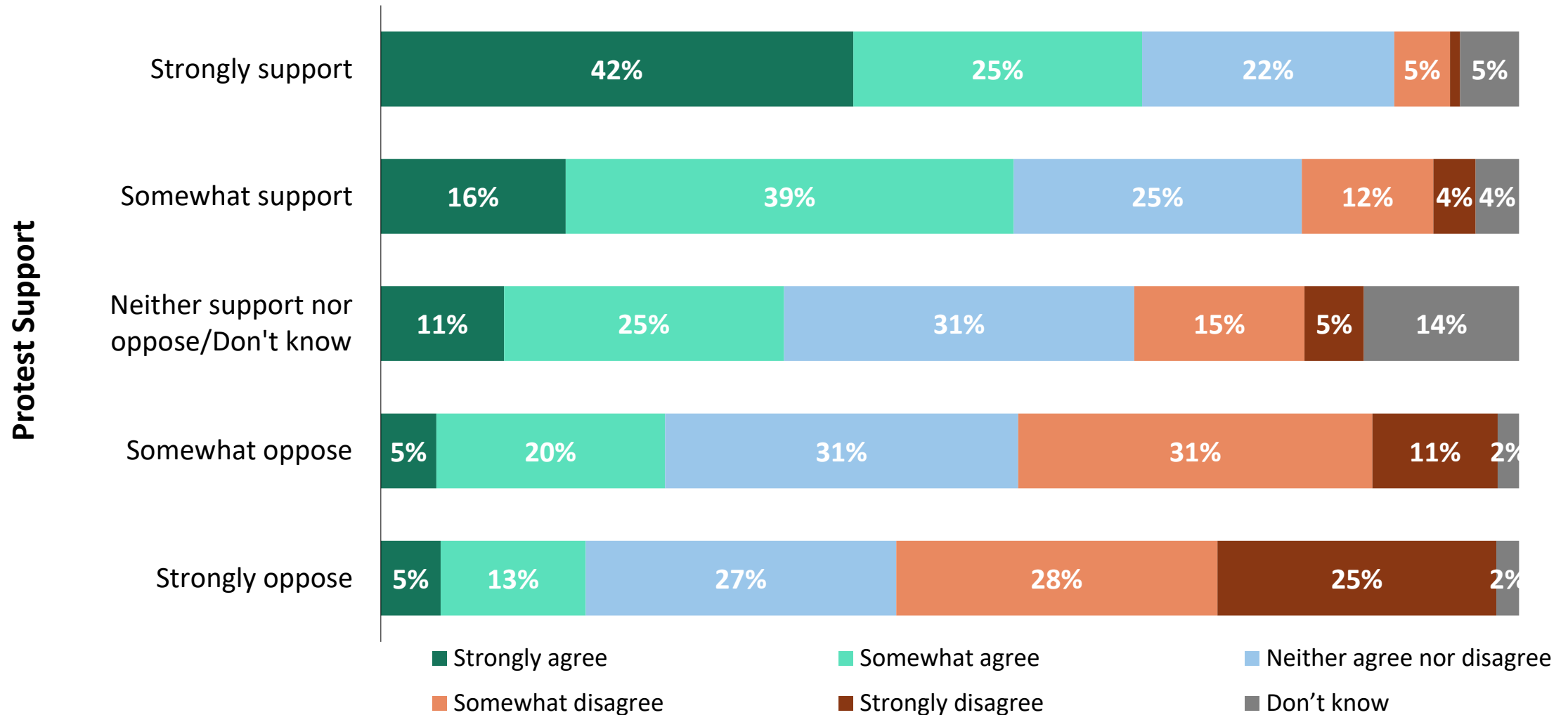
Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know



Role of Government: A majority of protest supporters agree that things would run pretty well by themselves



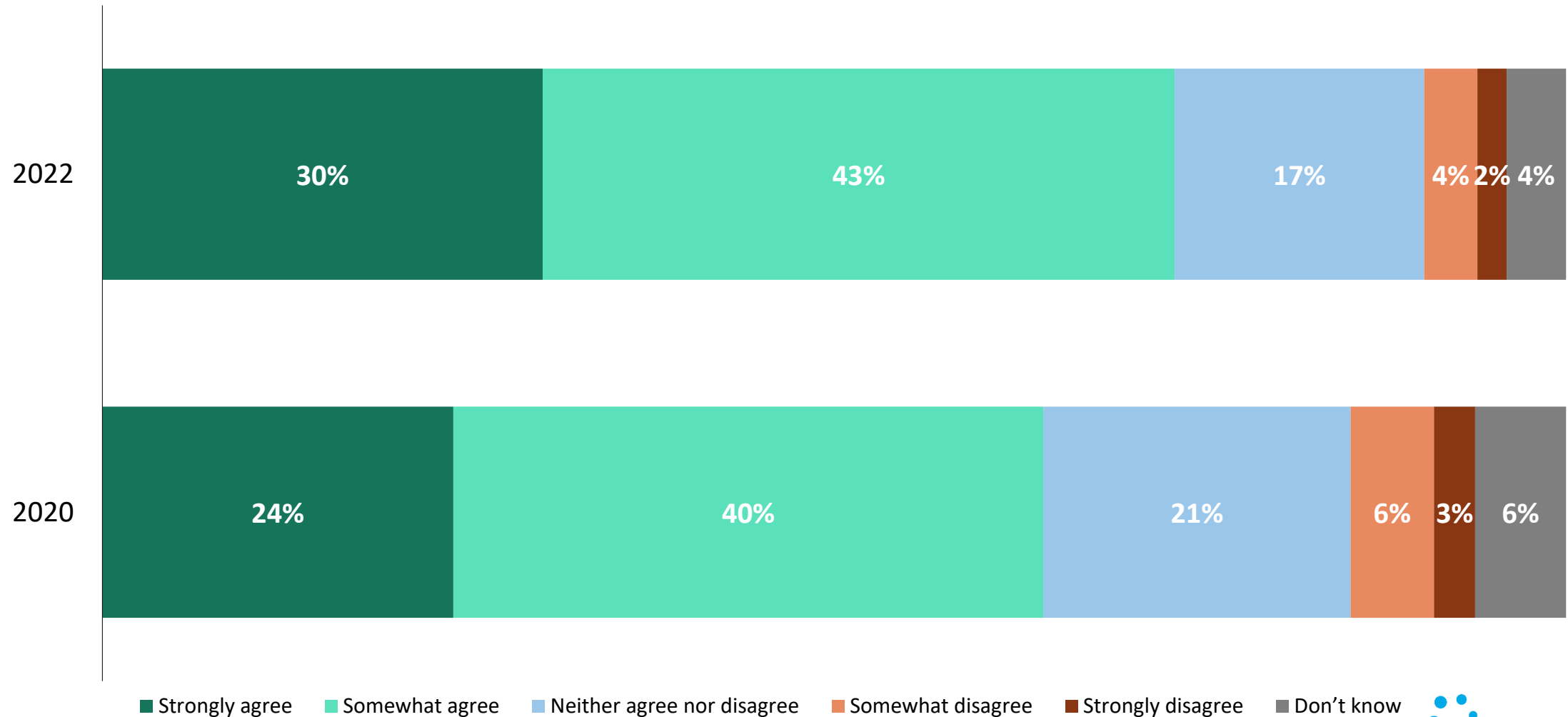
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Most things would run pretty well by themselves if the government just didn't interfere.*
[asked of all respondents]



Centralization: Agreement that we need a strong central government to handle modern economic problems is up since 2020



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *We need a strong central government to handle modern economic problems efficiently*

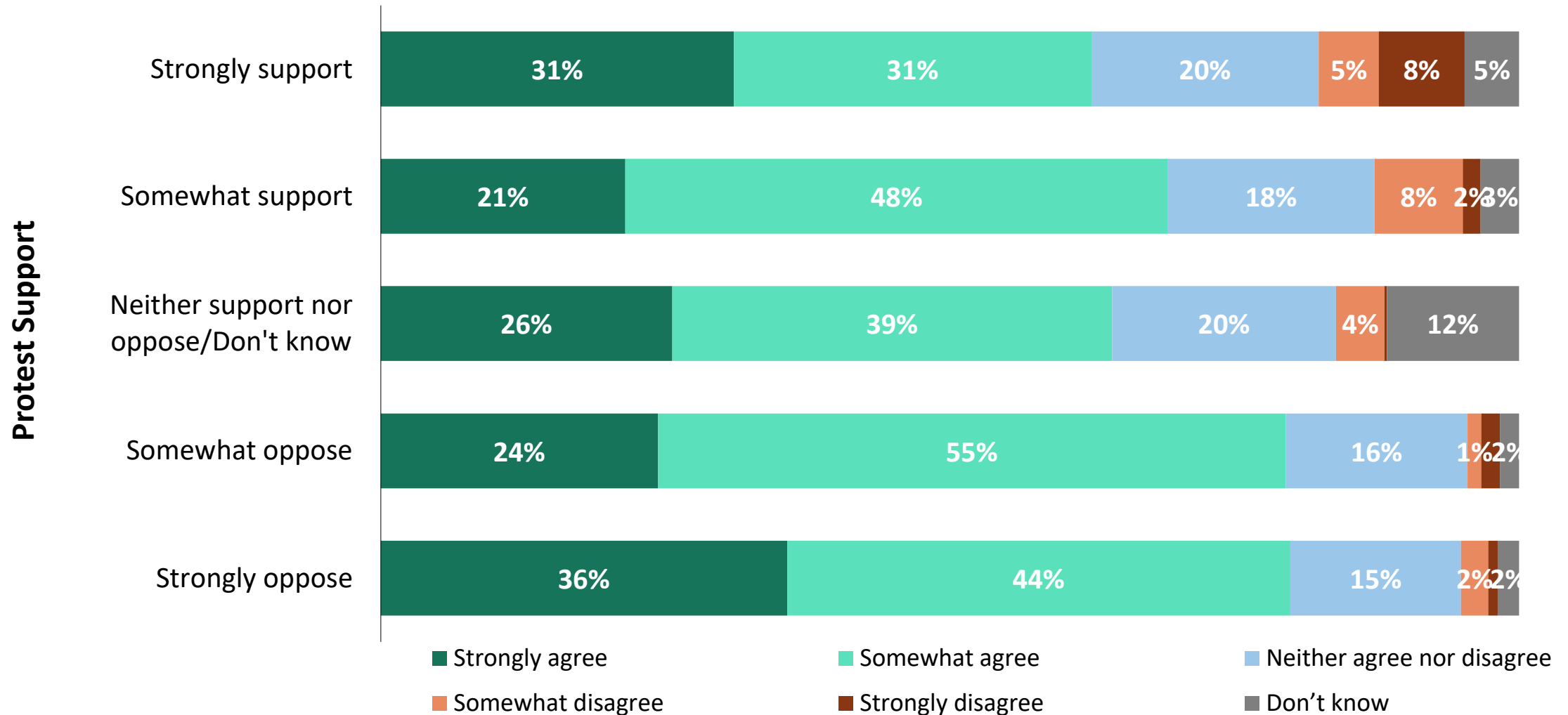


Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Centralization: Protest opponents are more likely to say we need a strong central government



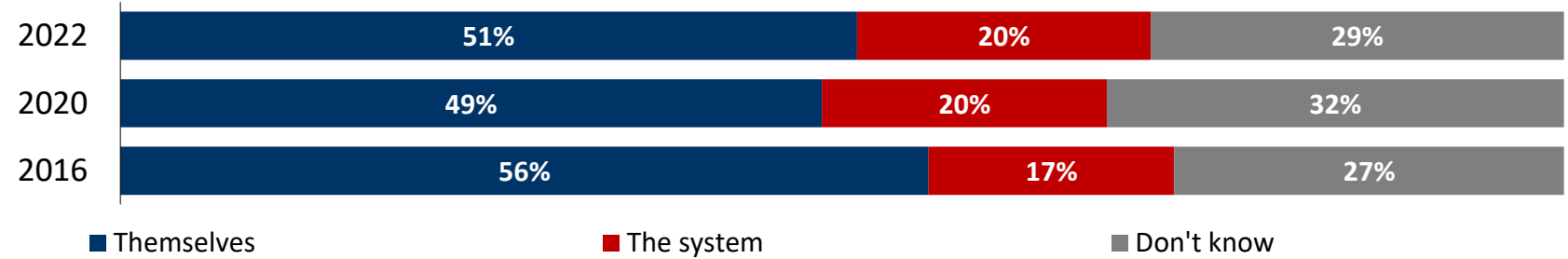
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *We need a strong central government to handle modern economic problems efficiently.*
[asked of all respondents]



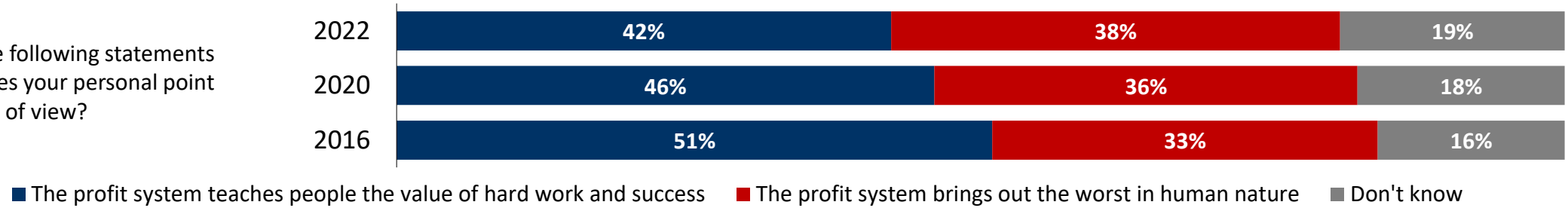
Equality and Opportunity: Support for the profit system is down from 2016, now 38% say the profit brings out the worst in human nature



Generally, do you think people who don't get ahead in life should blame...



Which of the following statements best describes your personal point of view?



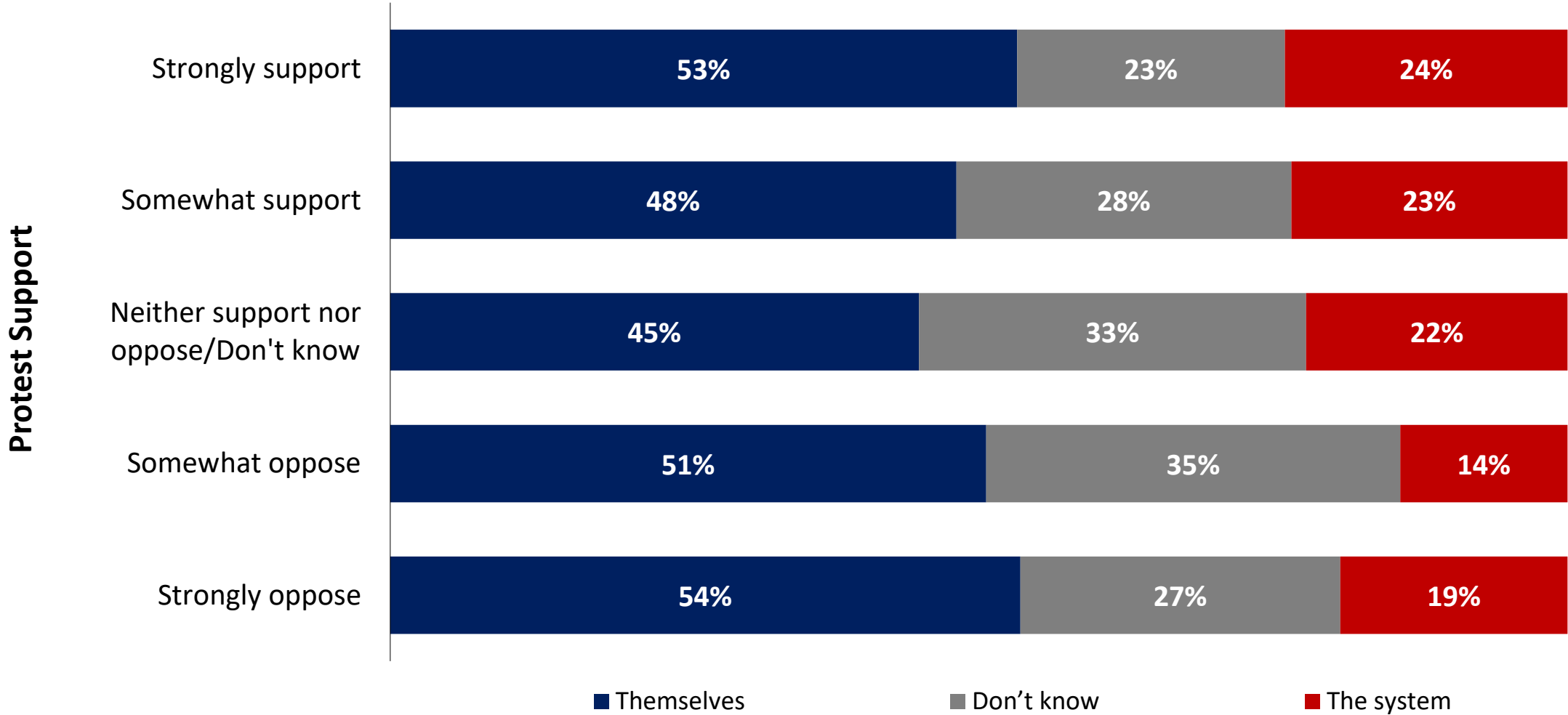
Is the main role of government...?



Personal Initiative: Both strong protest supporters and opponents are most likely to say those who can't get ahead should blame themselves



Generally, do you think people who don't get ahead in life should blame...
[asked of all respondents]

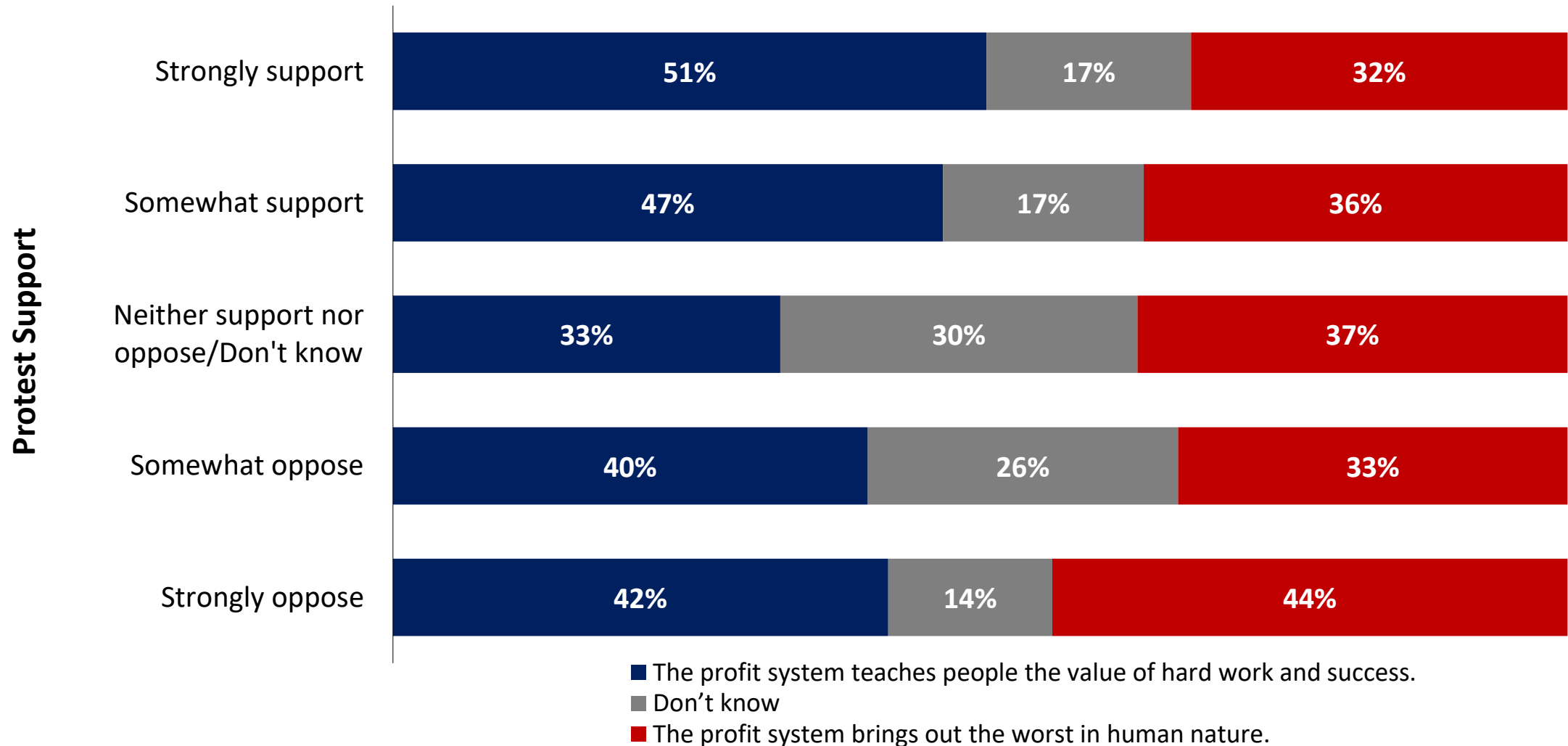


Profit System: Strong protest supporters are most likely to say the profit system teaches the value of hard work



Which of the following statements best describes your personal point of view?

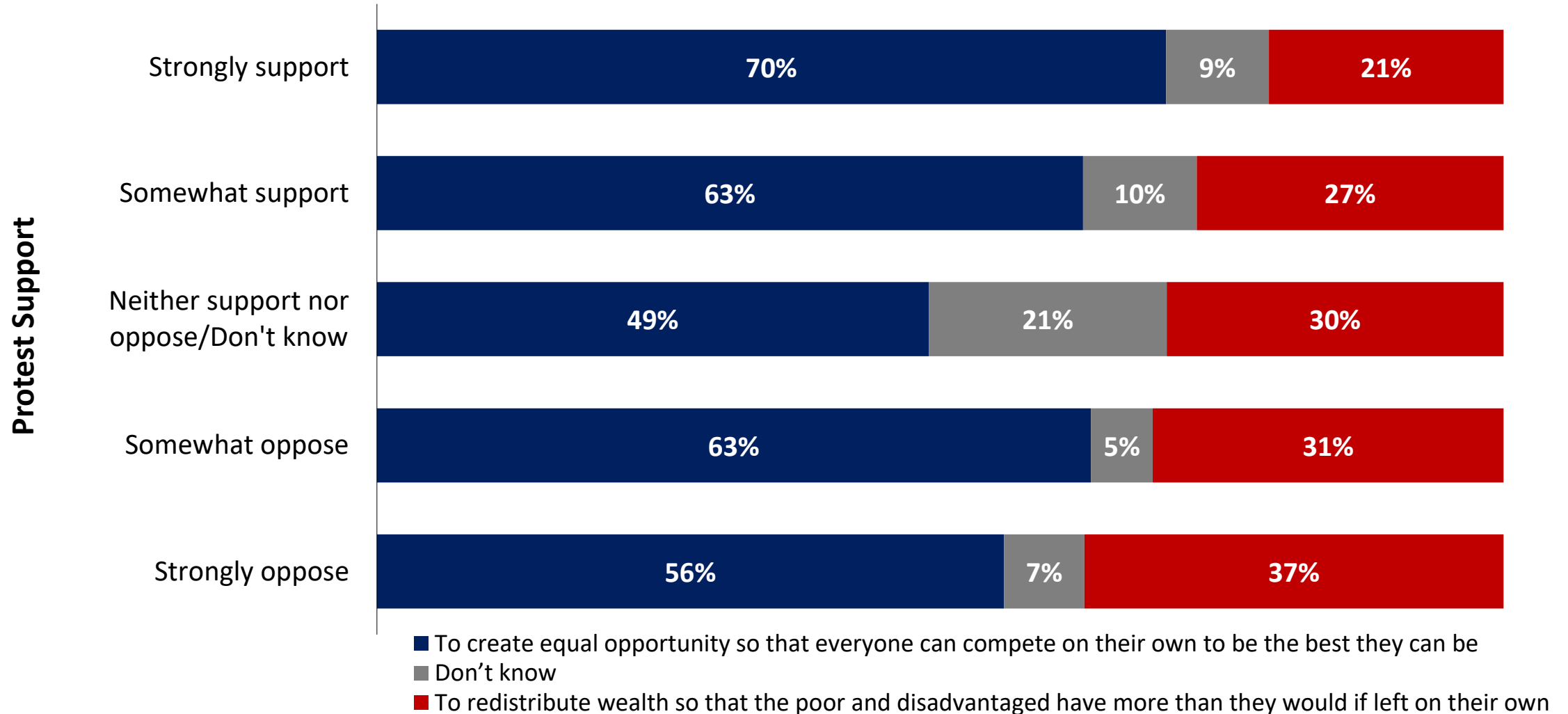
[asked of all respondents]



Equality: Strong protest opponents are the most likely to say the role of government is to redistribute wealth



Is the main role of government...?
[asked of all respondents]

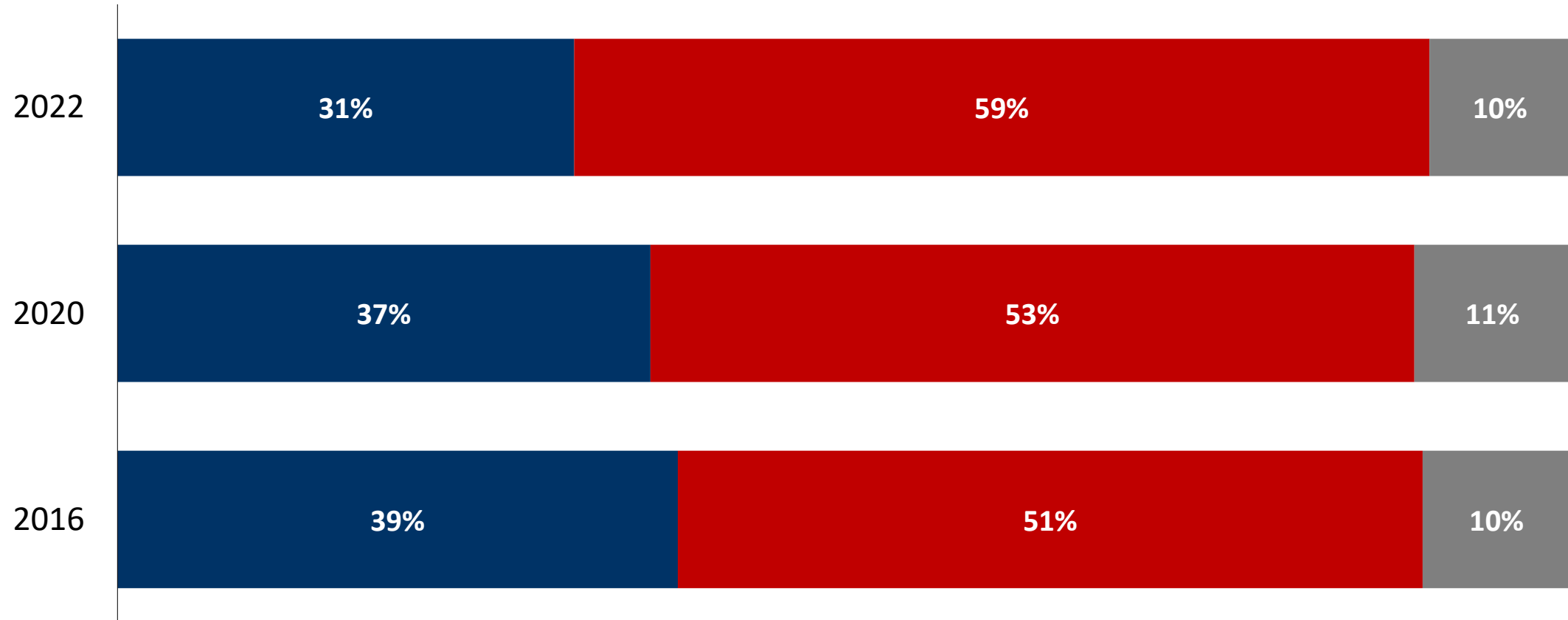


Fiscal Conservatism: Fiscal conservatism has dropped from a high in 2016; now 59% say government should prioritize need over cost



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]



■ Their ability to afford the programs and services

■ The public's need for the programs and services

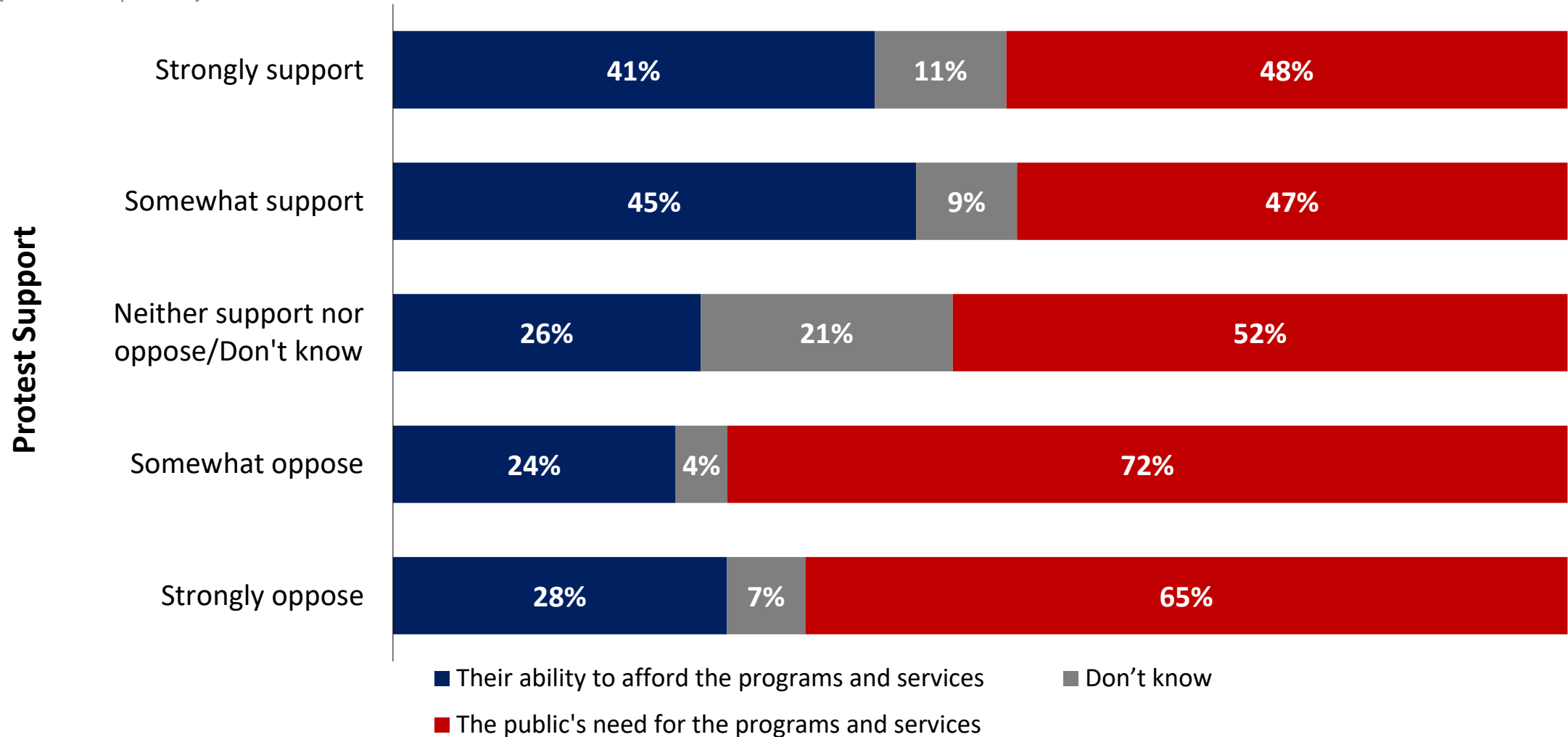
■ Don't know

Fiscal Conservatism: Protest supporters are more likely to prioritize cost over need when it comes to major government decisions



When governments make major decisions concerning spending on programs and services, do you think they should be basing their decisions mainly on...?

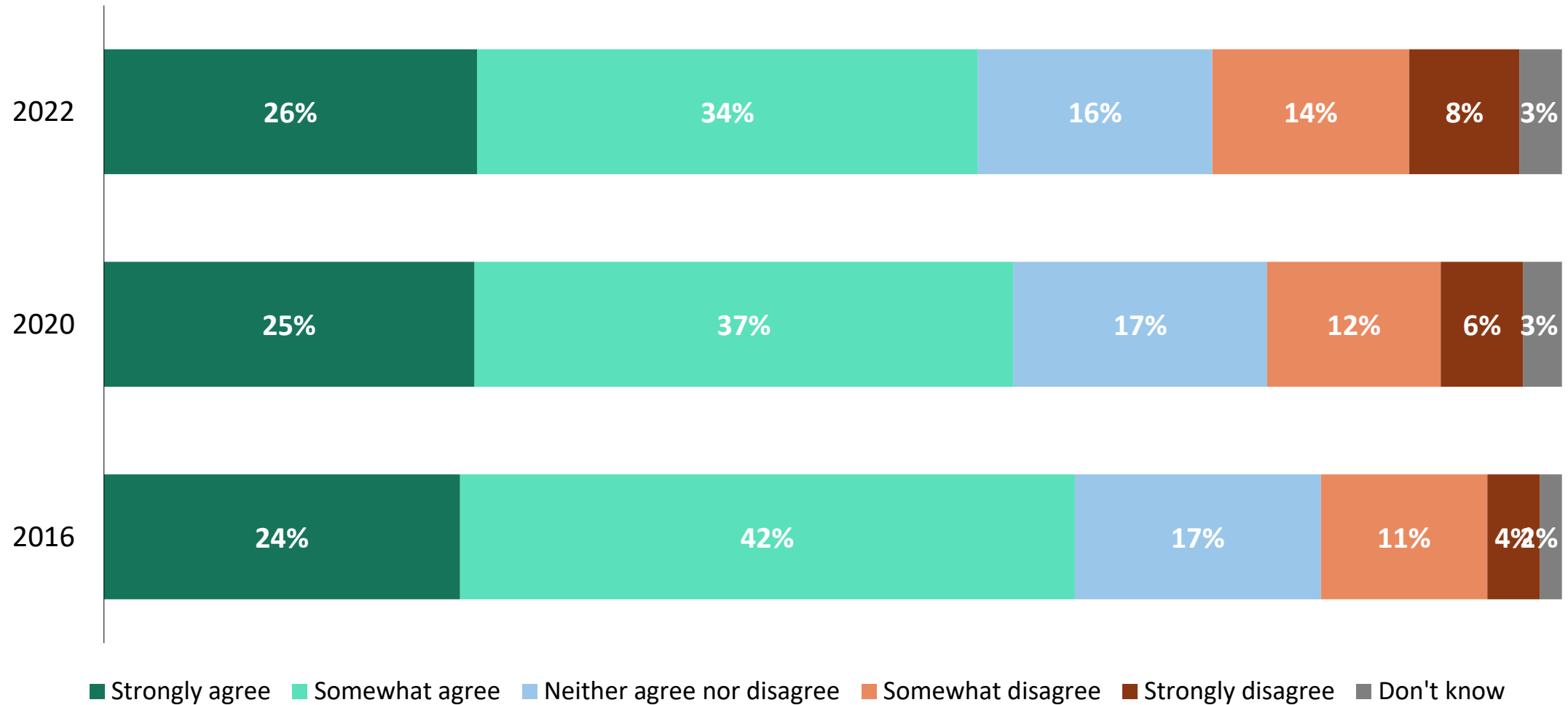
[asked of all respondents]



Canadian Dream: Agreement in the Canadian dream is down directionally since 2020



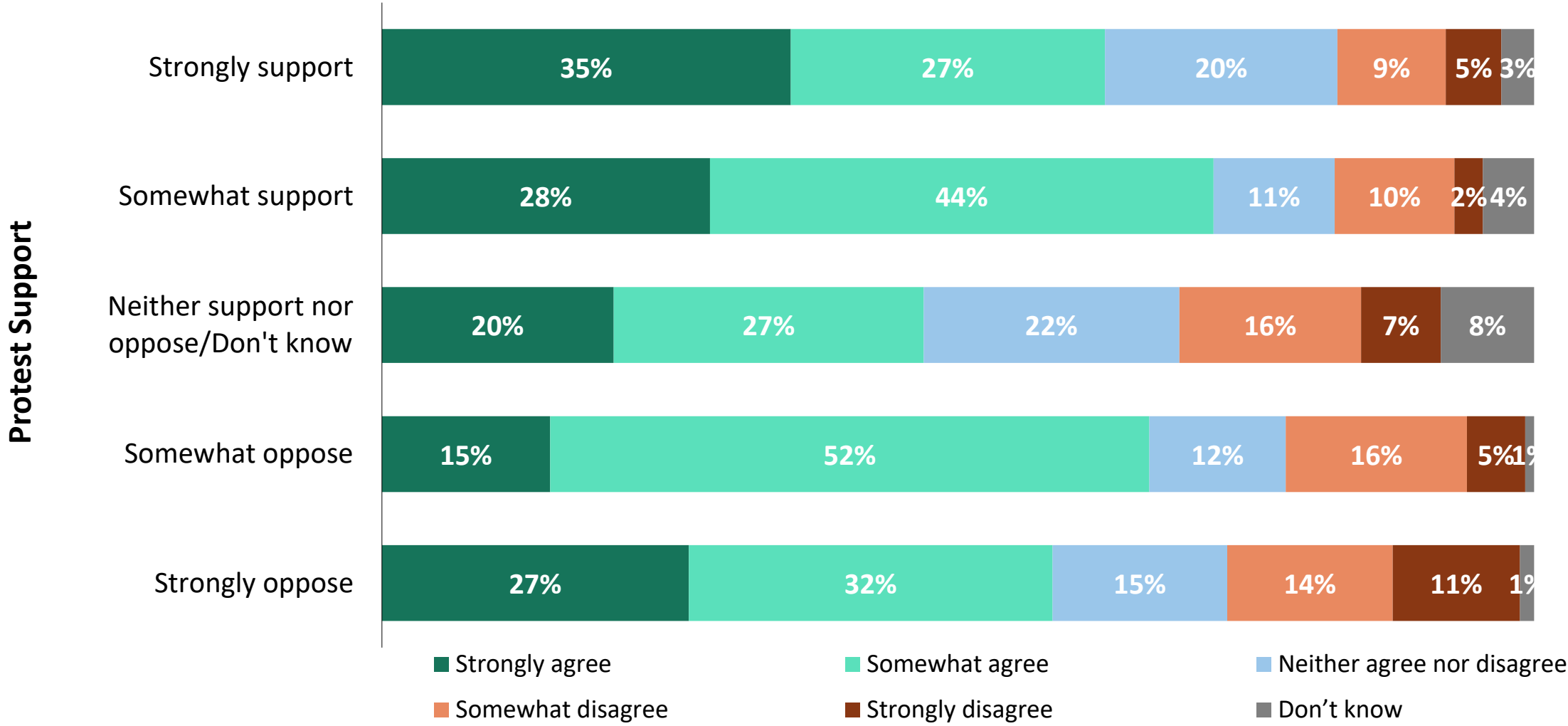
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - *Here in Canada you can be anything you want if you are willing to work for it.*



Canadian Dream: Across most groups, a majority believe in the Canadian dream

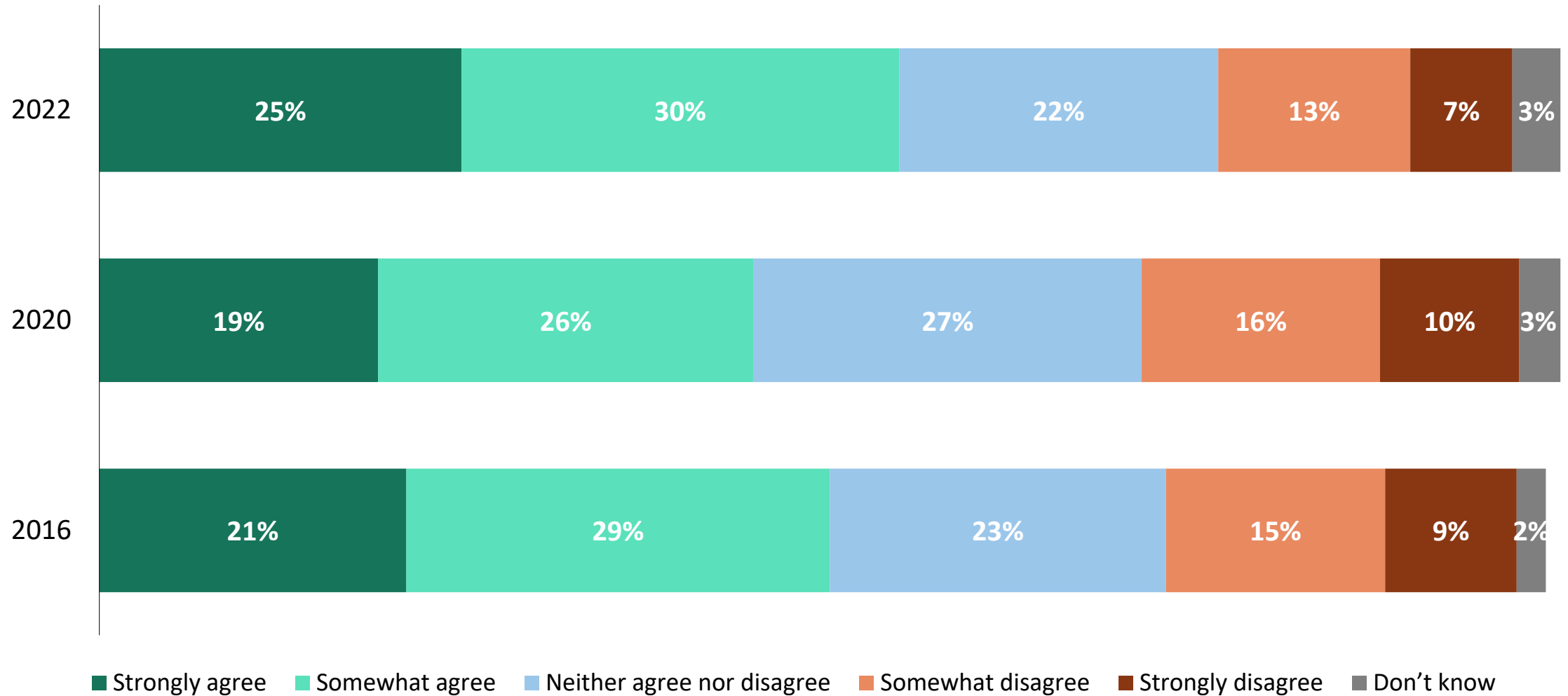


Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - *Here in Canada you can be anything you want if you are willing to work for it.*
[asked of all respondents]



Economic Alienation: A majority now agree that no matter how hard they work, every year it seems more difficult to get by

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *No matter how hard I work, every year it seems more difficult to get by*

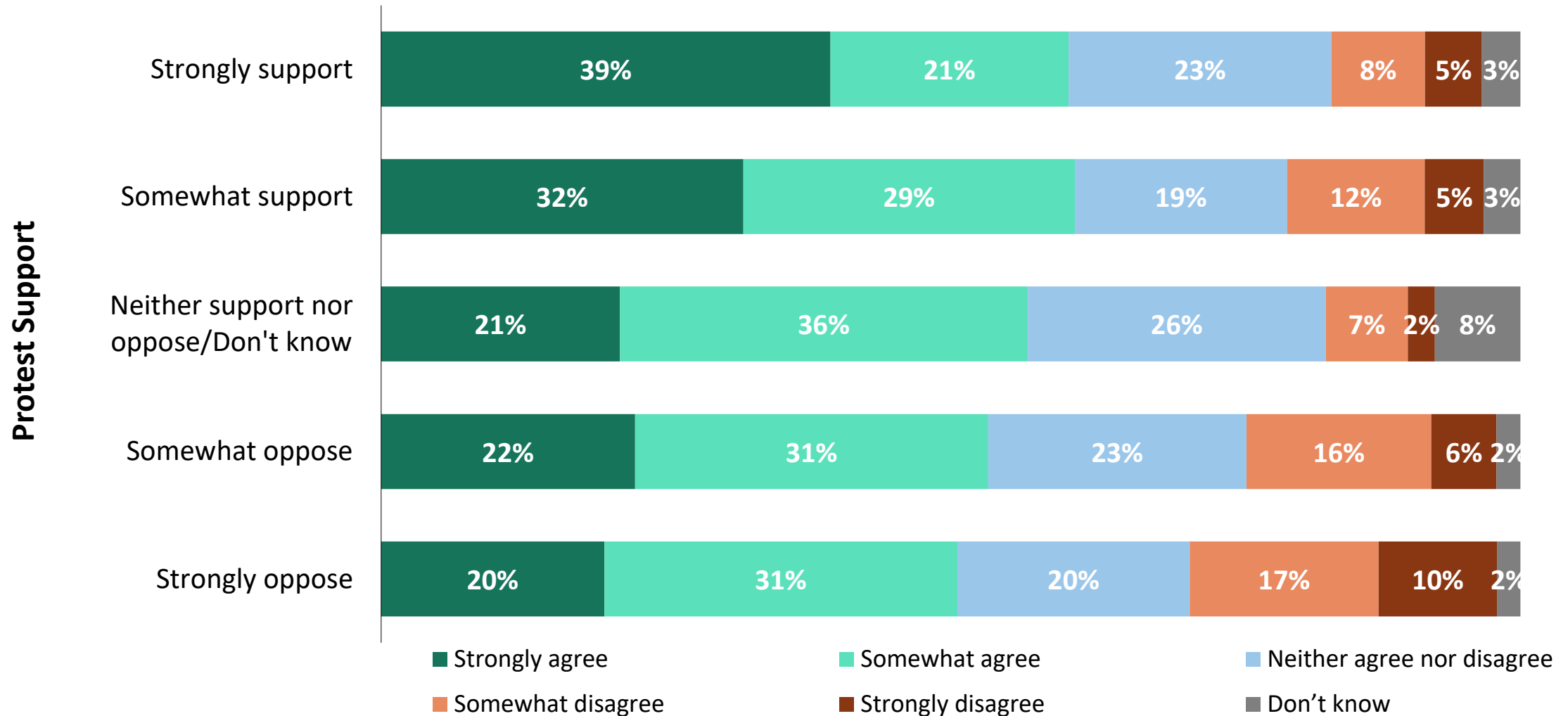


Economic Alienation: Protest supporters are more likely to be economically alienated than opponents



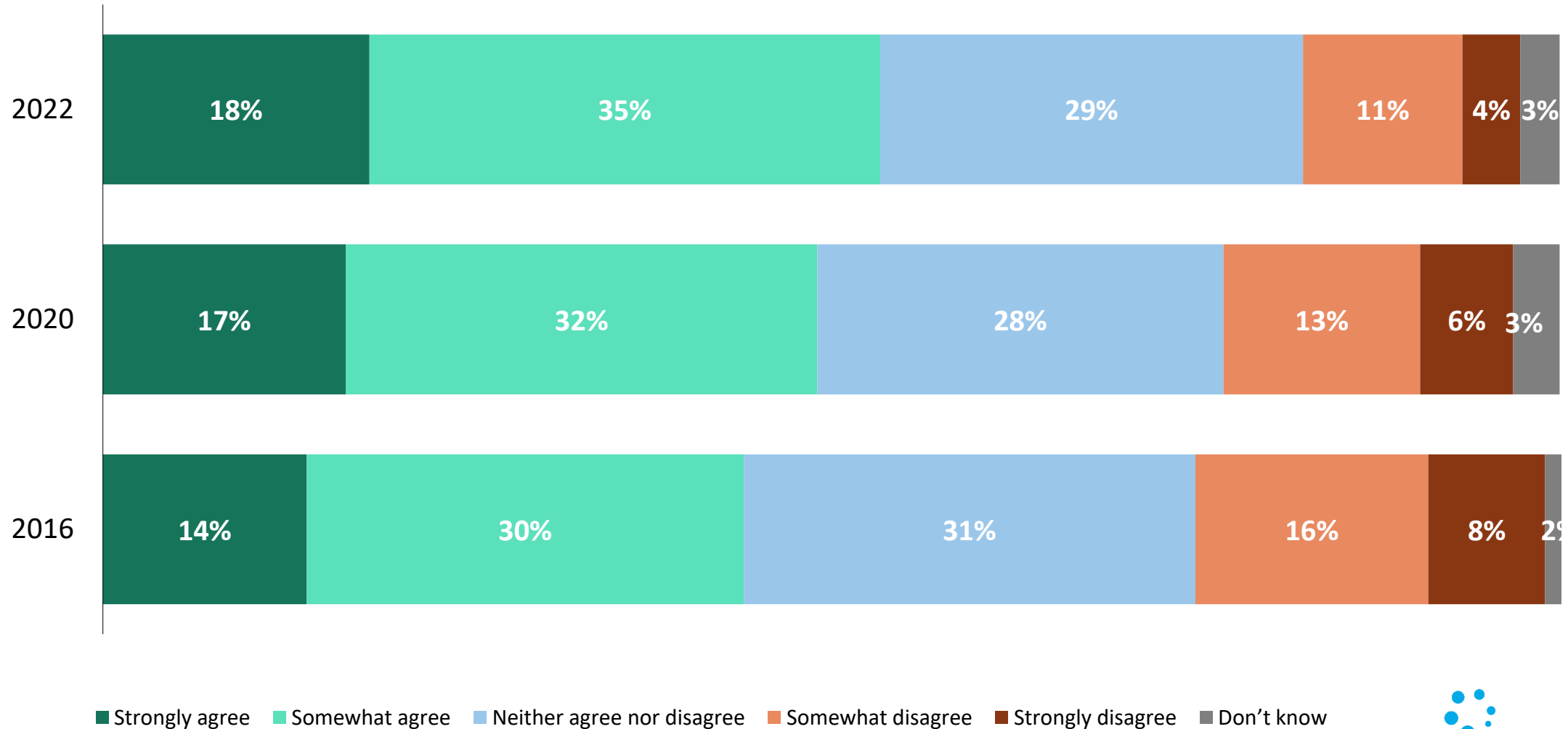
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *No matter how hard I work, every year it seems more difficult to get by.*

[asked of all respondents]



Cultural Alienation: Agreement that everything is changing too fast has continued to grow

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? **Everything is changing too fast today**

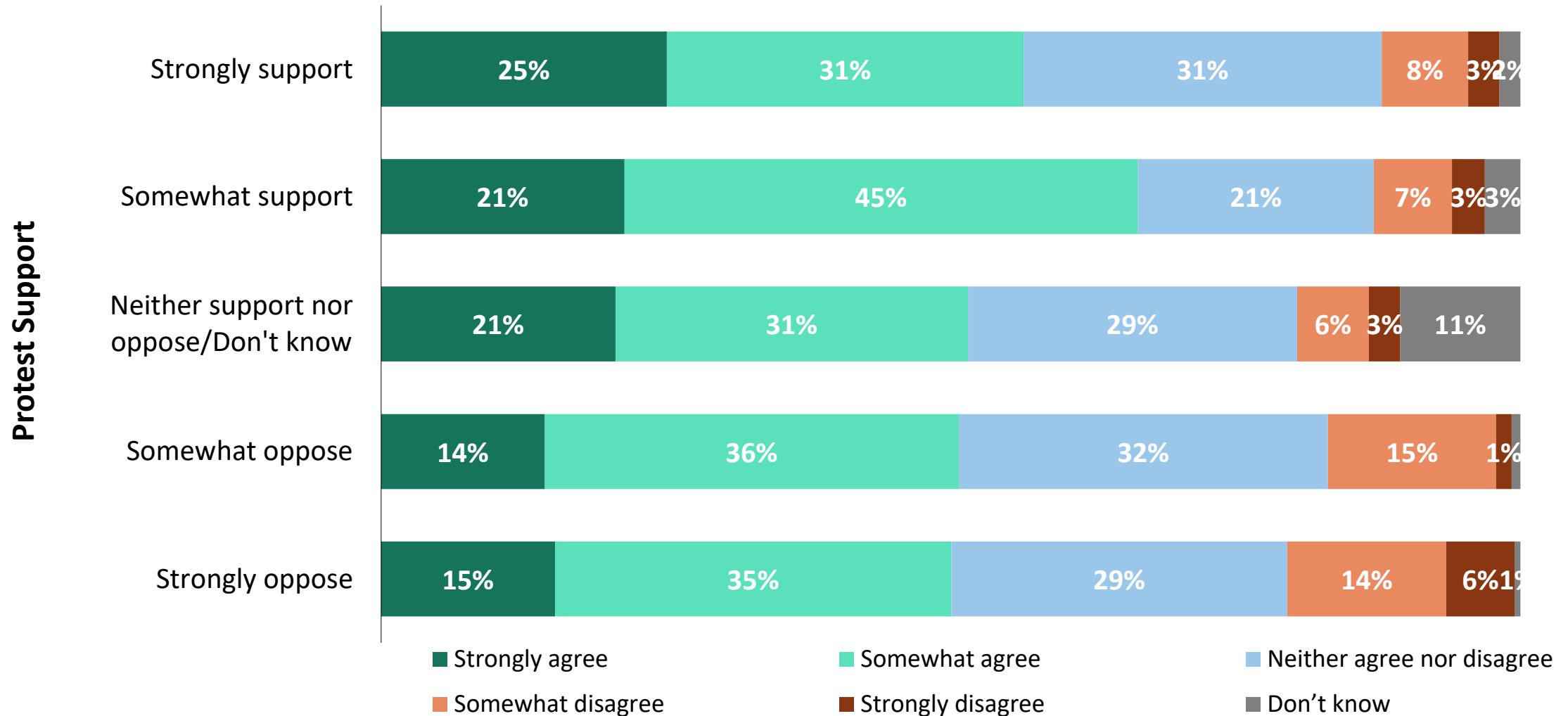


Cultural Alienation: Protest supporters are somewhat more likely to agree that everything is changing too fast



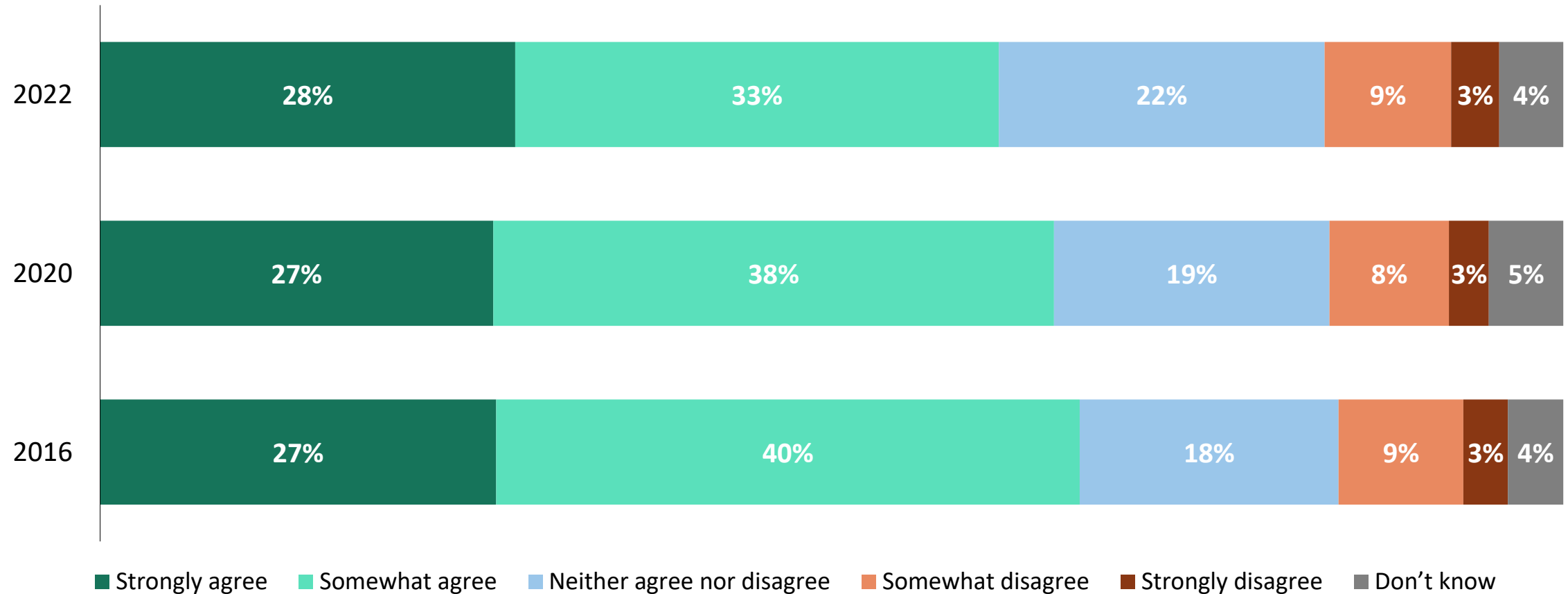
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Everything is changing too fast today.*

[asked of all respondents]



Political Alienation: The overall share of Canadians who feel alienated is down, but intensity remains the same

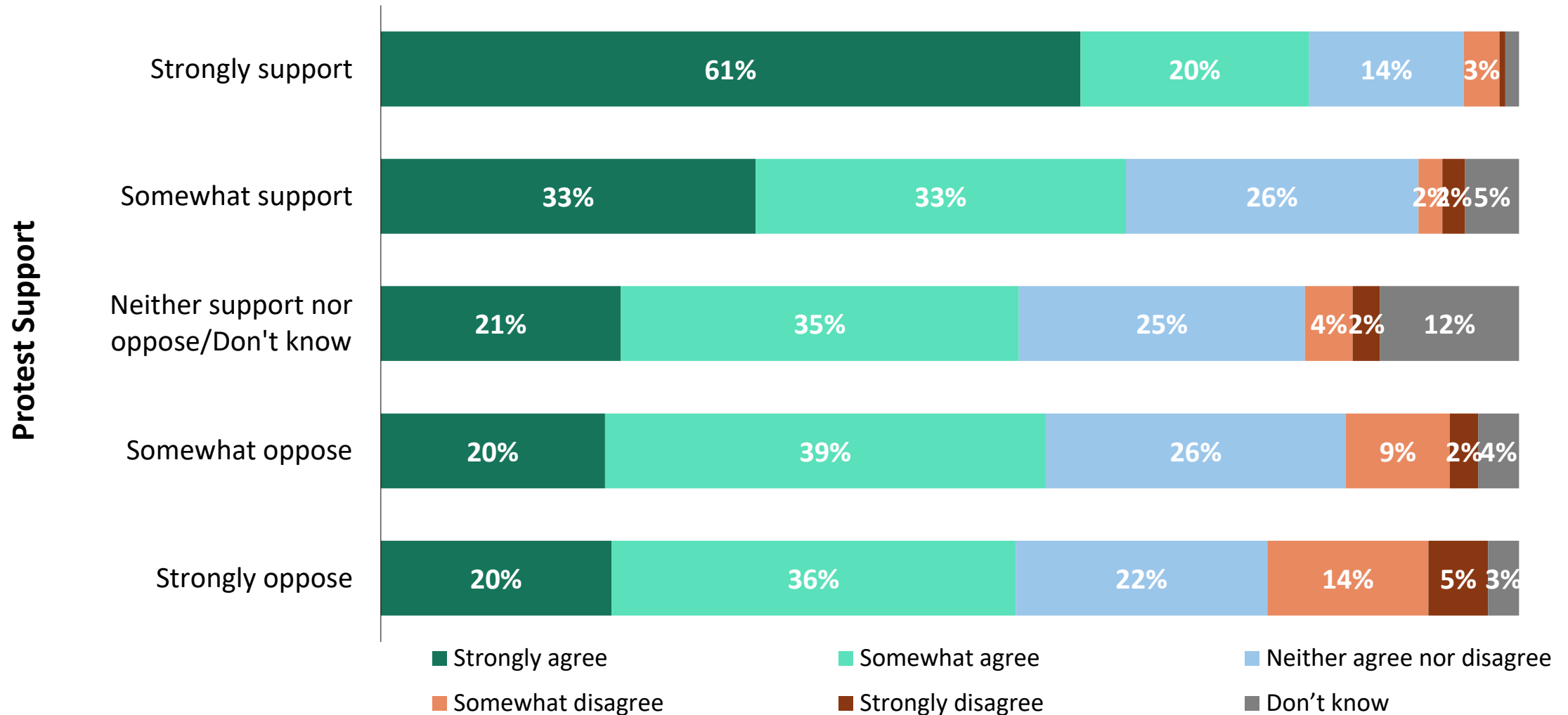
Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Governments care more about special interests than they do about the average person.*



Political Alienation: Protest supporters are far more likely to strongly agree that governments only care about special interests

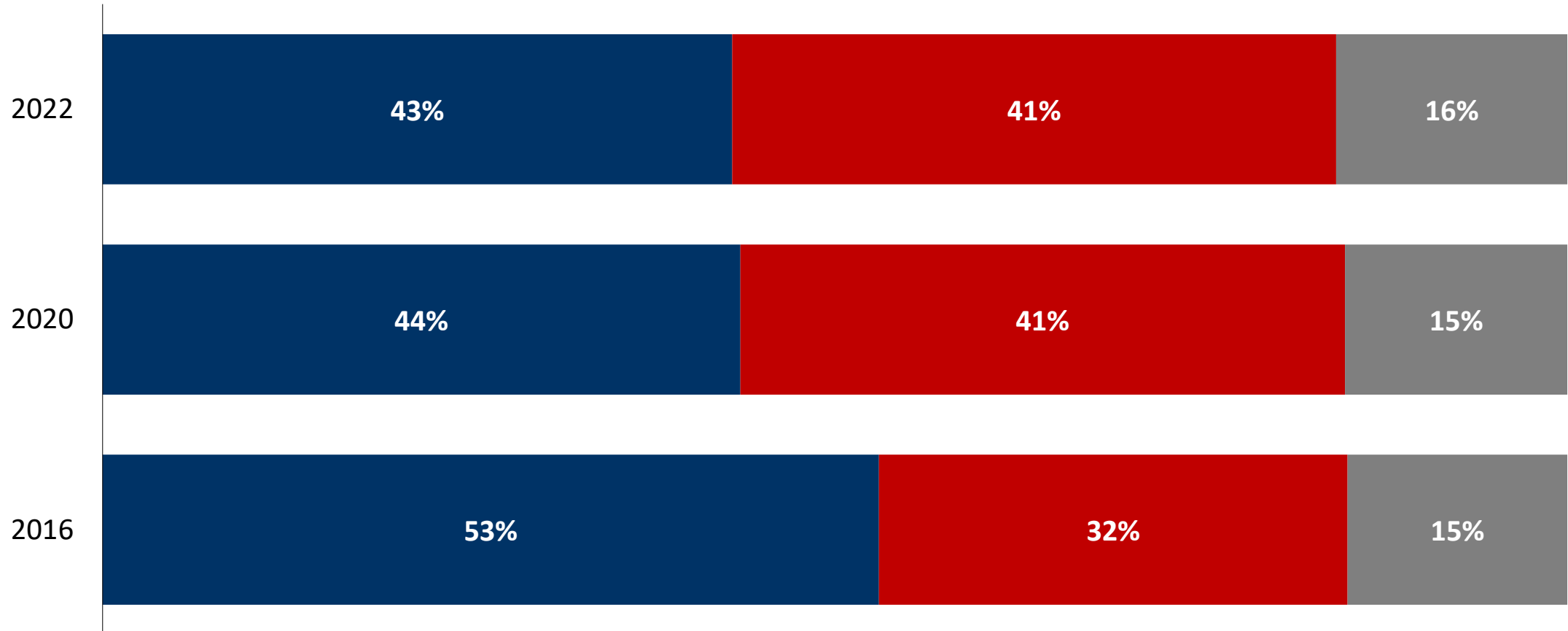


Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Governments care more about special interests than they do about the average person.*
[asked of all respondents]



Political Populism: Populism is steady since 2020, down from a high in 2016

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



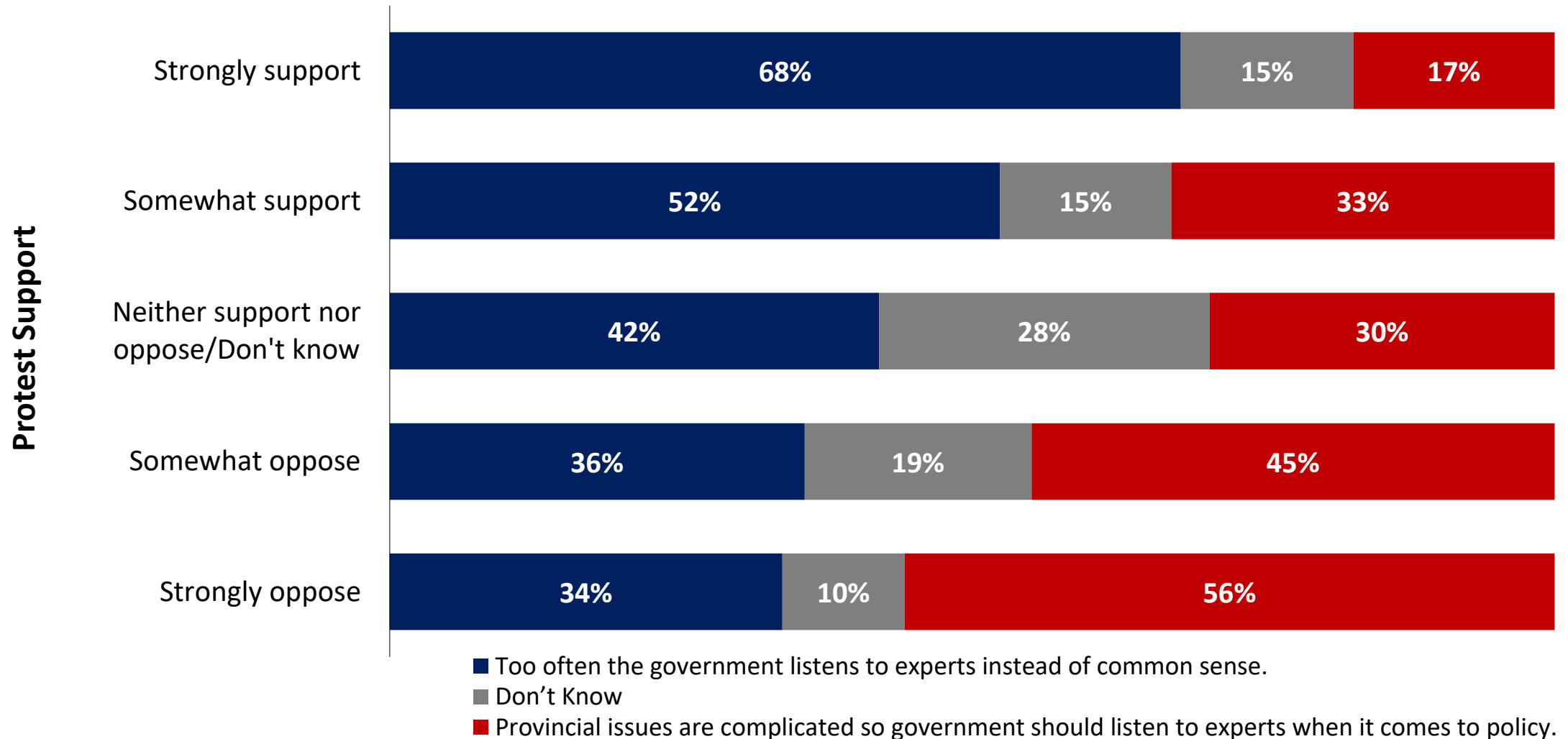
- Too often the government listens to experts instead of common sense
- Political issues are complicated so government should listen to experts when it comes to policy
- Don't know

Political Populism: Supporters are more likely to say government listens to experts instead of common sense too often



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

[asked of all respondents]

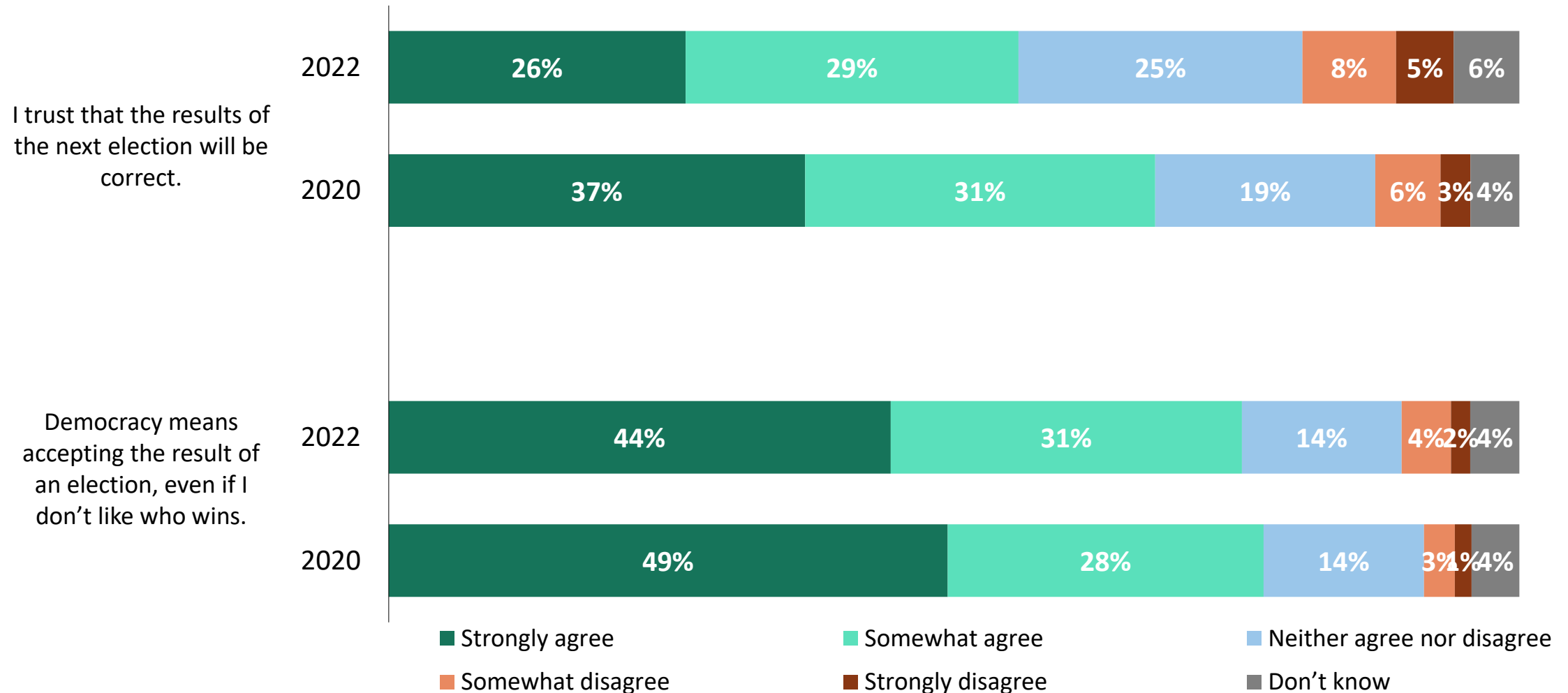


Democracy: Trust in the next election result is down since 2020, but a majority still agree they trust the results will be correct



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[asked of all respondents]

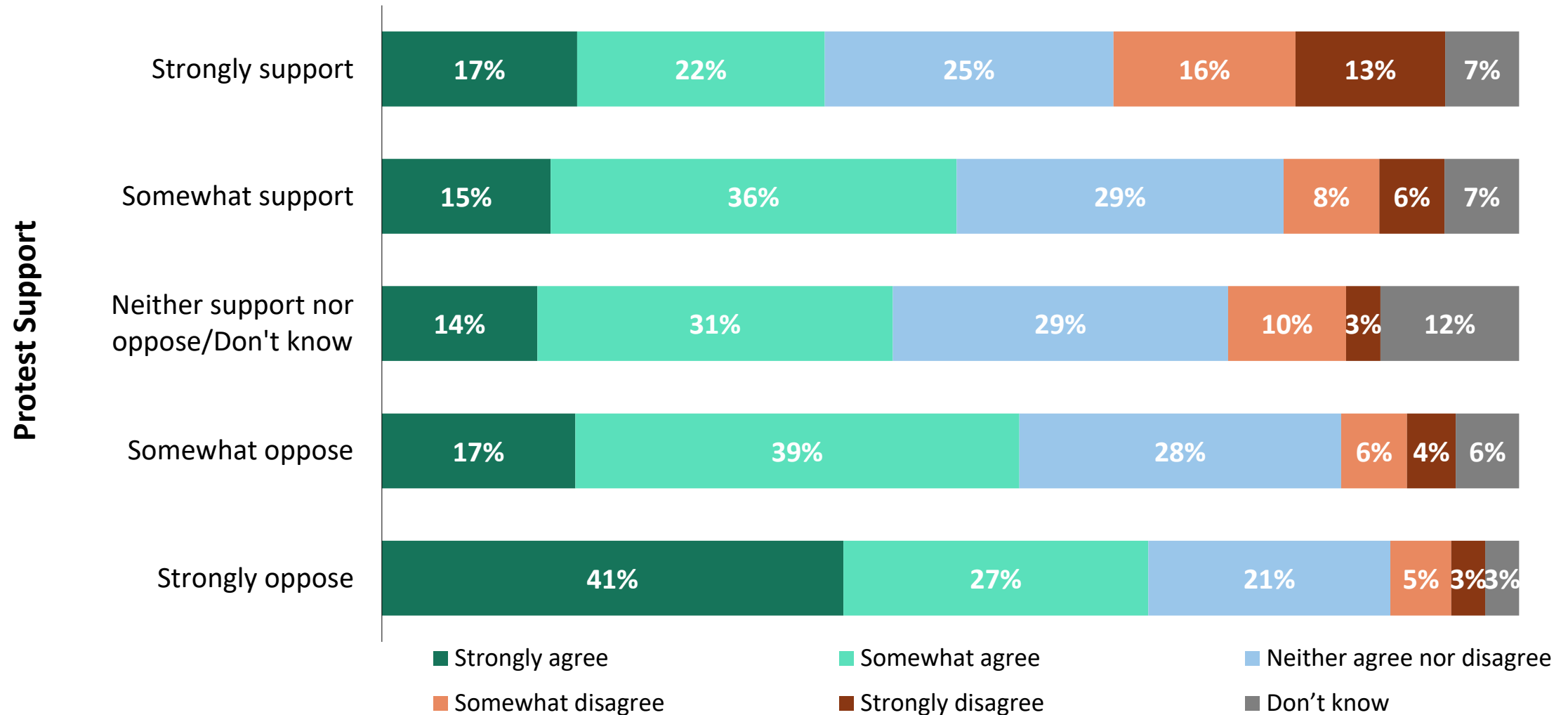


Trust the Next Election: Strong protest opponents are most likely to agree that the results of the next election will be correct



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *I trust that the results of the next election will be correct.*

[asked of all respondents]

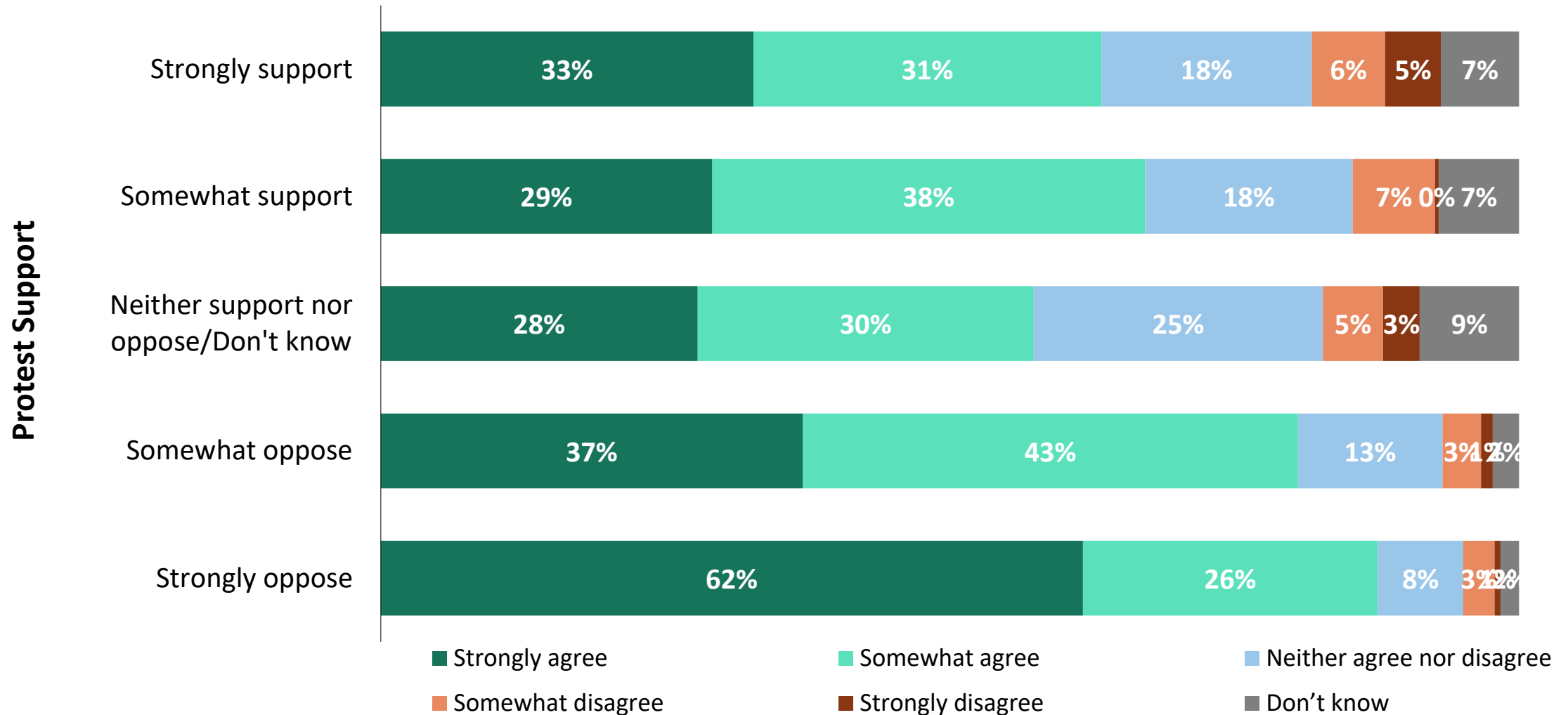


Accepting Results: Protest opponents are more likely to agree that democracy means accepting election results they don't like



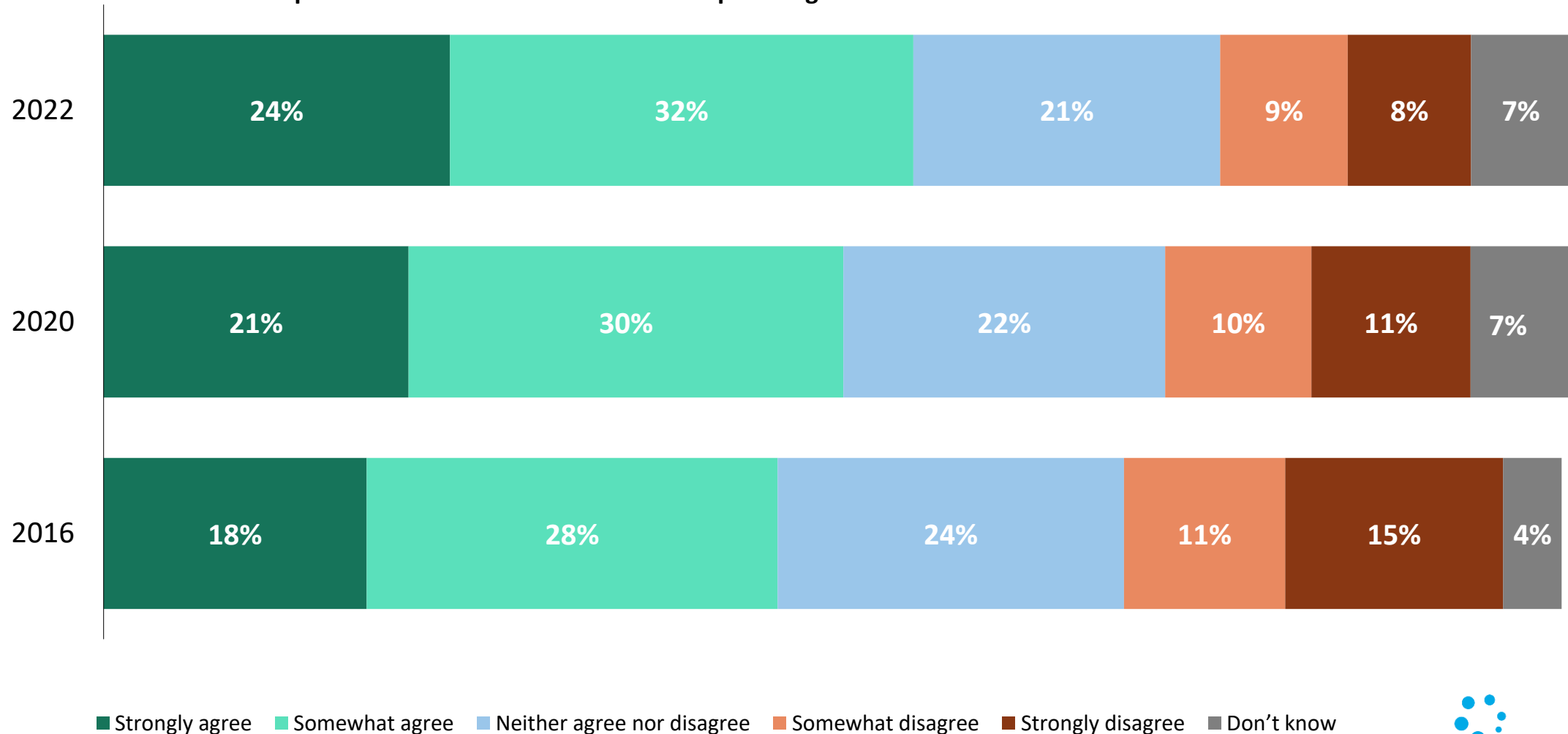
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Democracy means accepting the result of an election, even if I don't like who wins.*

[asked of all respondents]



Authoritarianism: Agreement has risen since 2016; now 56% agree while only 17% disagree

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? **What this country needs is strong, determined leaders who will destroy the negative forces that have taken us from our true path and silence the trouble makers spreading bad ideas.**

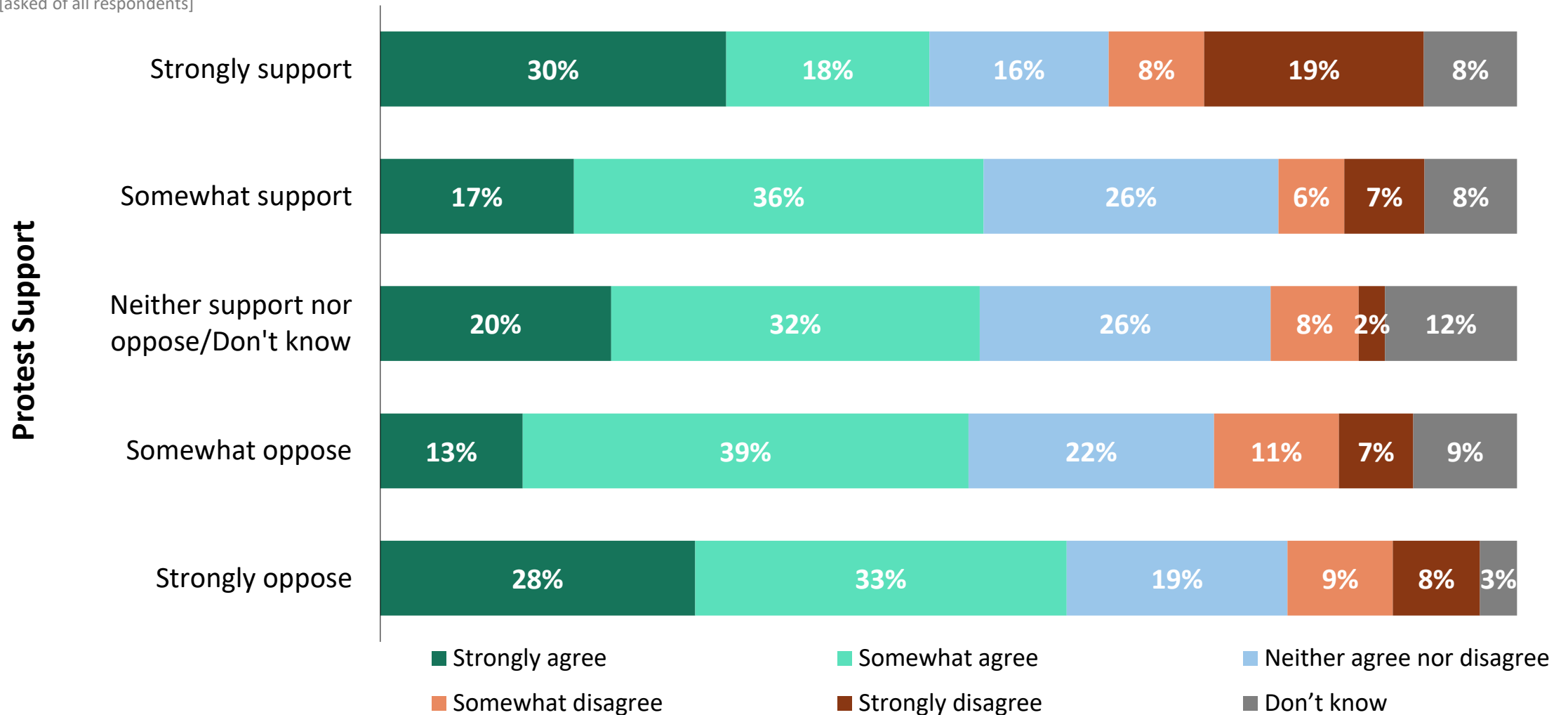


Authoritarianism: Strong protest supporters are more polarised on authoritarianism



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *What this country needs is strong, determined leaders who will destroy the negative forces that have taken us from our true path and silence the trouble makers spreading bad ideas.*

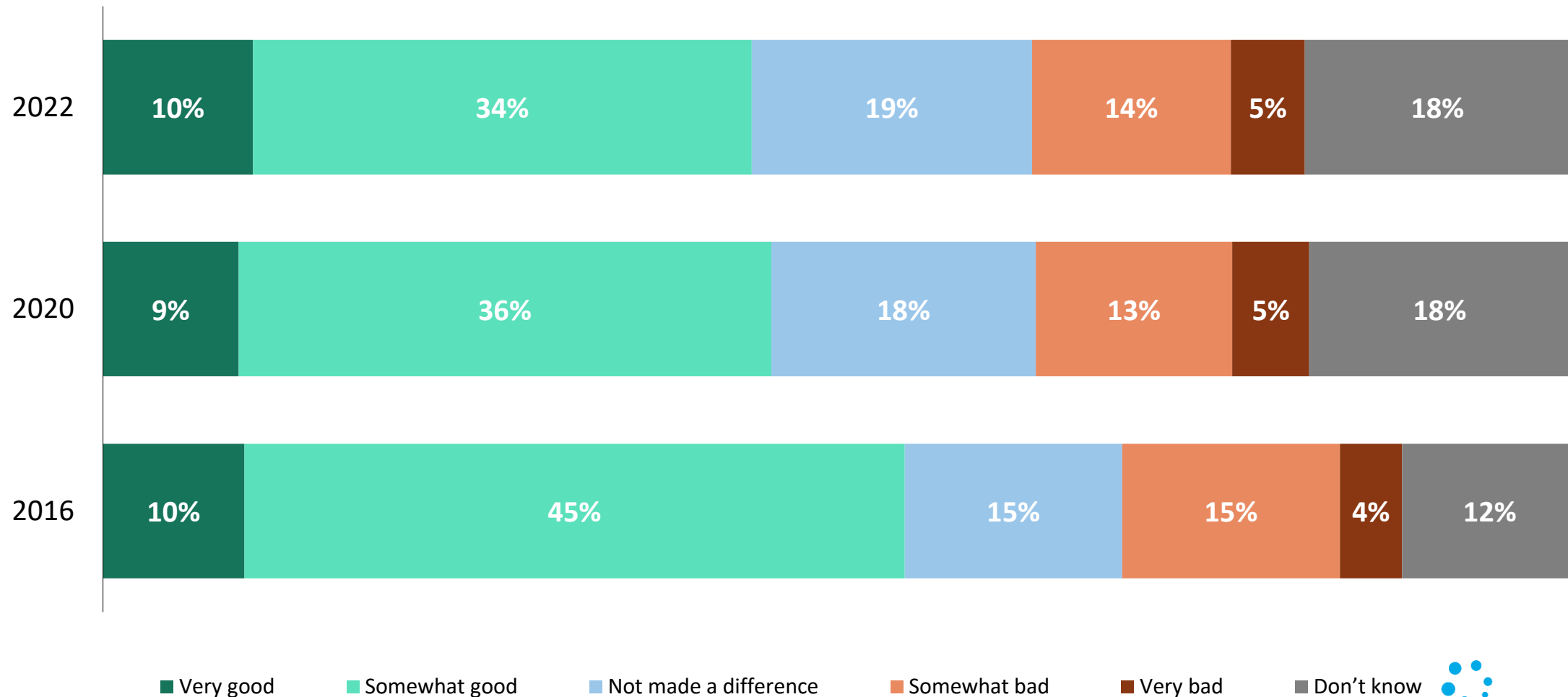
[asked of all respondents]



Globalization: Belief that globalization has been good for Canada is down since 2016 but a plurality still believe it has been good



Thinking about globalization, the way in which the economies of different countries have become more closely connected, do you feel globalization has generally been a good thing for Canada or a bad thing for Canada?



Very good

Somewhat good

Not made a difference

Somewhat bad

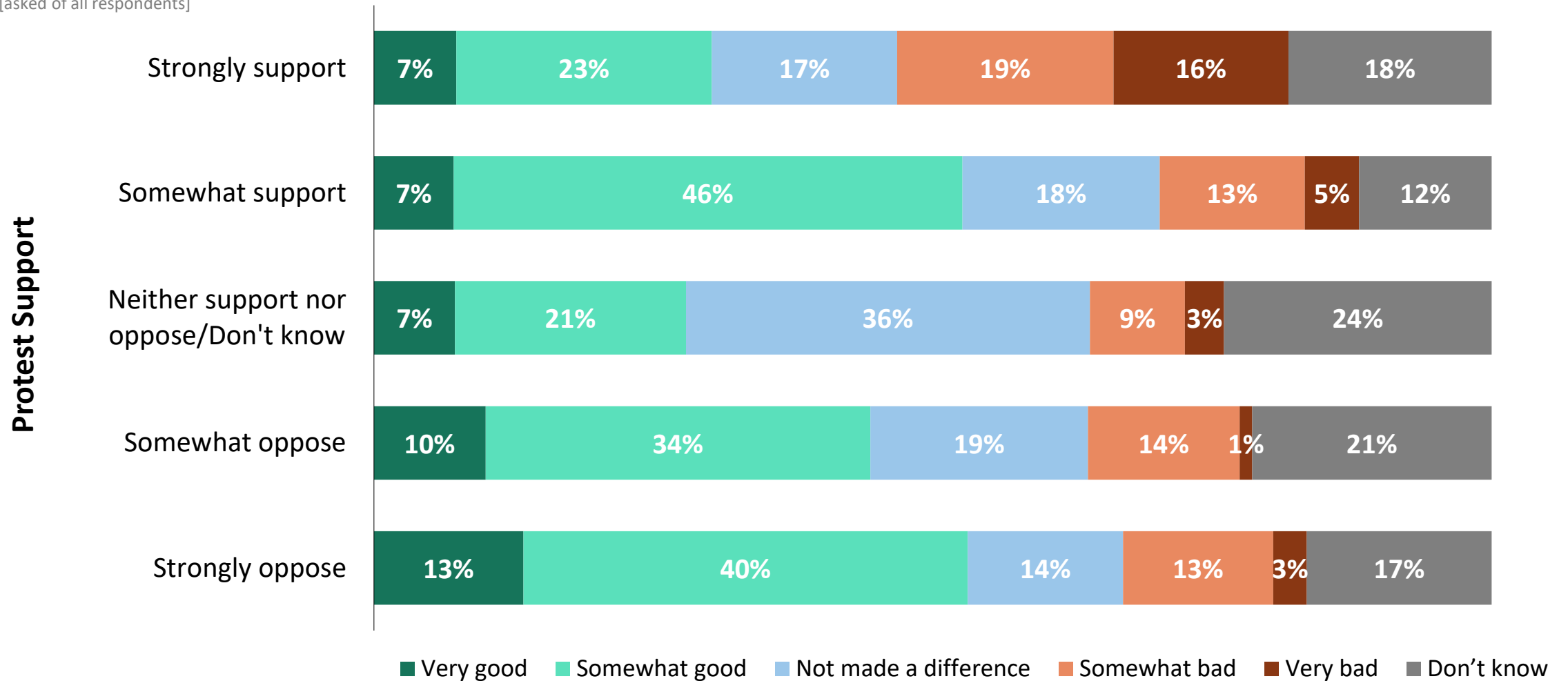
Very bad

Don't know

Globalization: Strong supporters are more skeptical of globalization

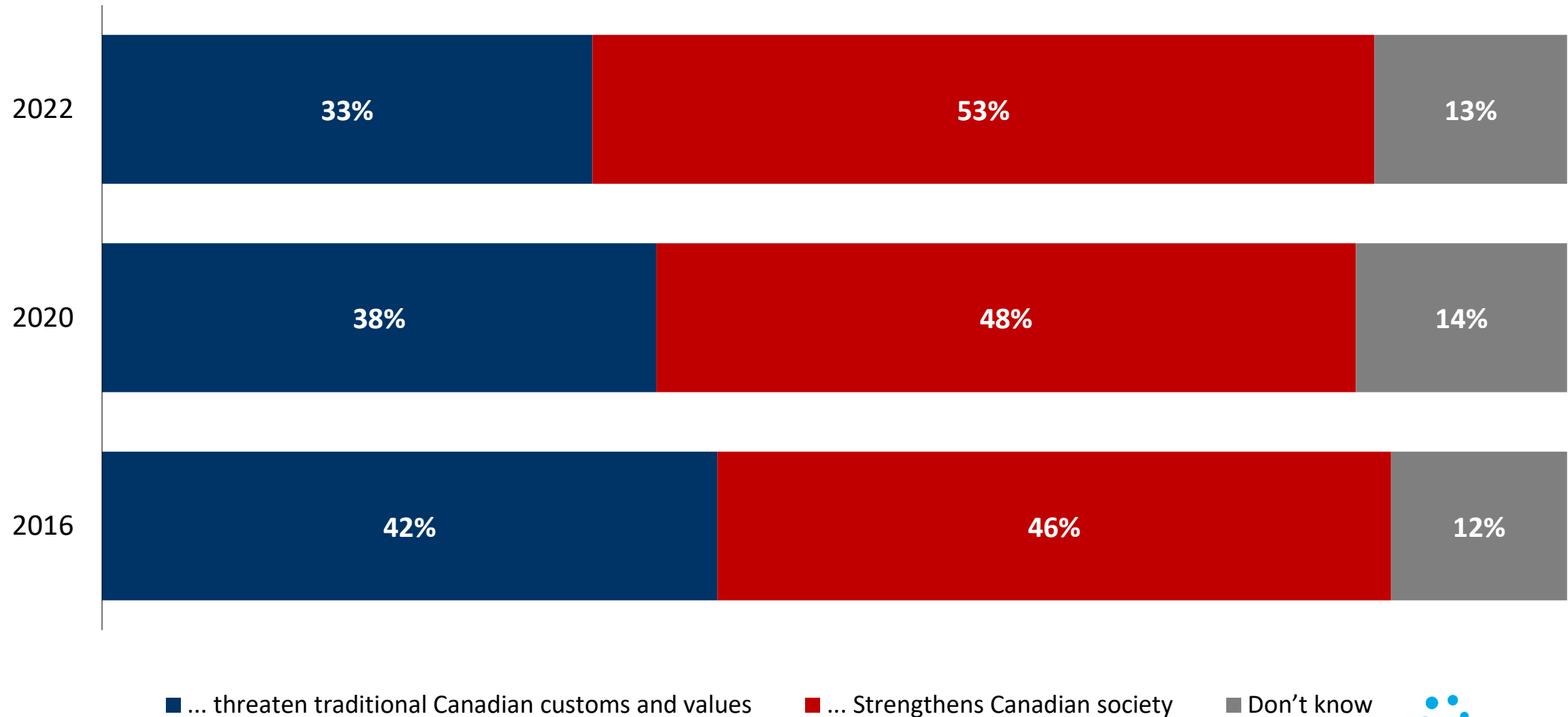
Thinking about globalization, the way in which the economies of different countries have become more closely connected, do you feel globalization has generally been a good thing for Canada or a bad thing for Canada?

[asked of all respondents]



Immigration: The share of Canadians who say newcomers threaten Canadian customs and values is down since 2016

Q Which of the following statements best describes your personal point of view? The growing number of newcomers...



■ ... threaten traditional Canadian customs and values

■ ... Strengthens Canadian society

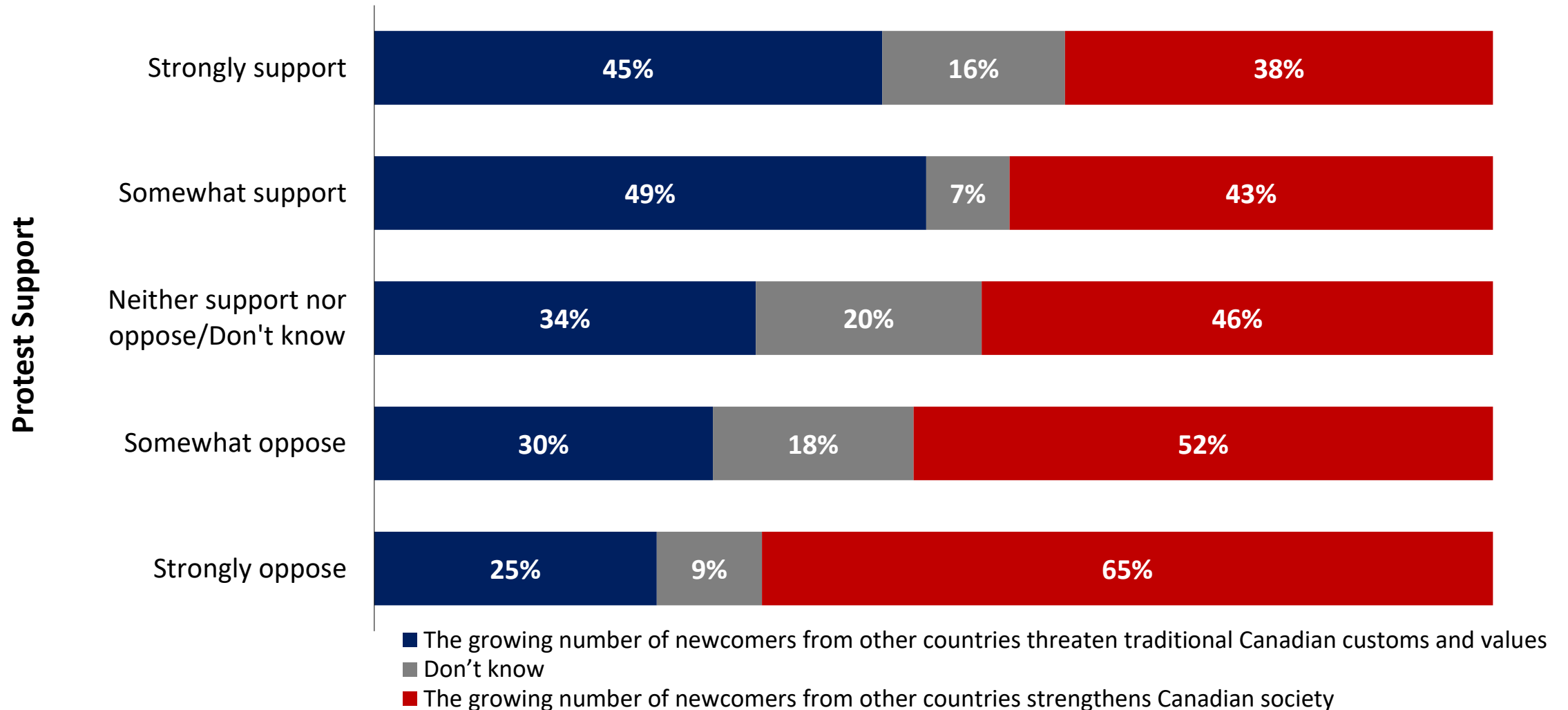
■ Don't know

Immigration: Nearly 2-3rds of strong protest opponents say the growing number of newcomers strengthen Canadian society



Which of the following statements best describes your personal point of view? The growing number of newcomers...

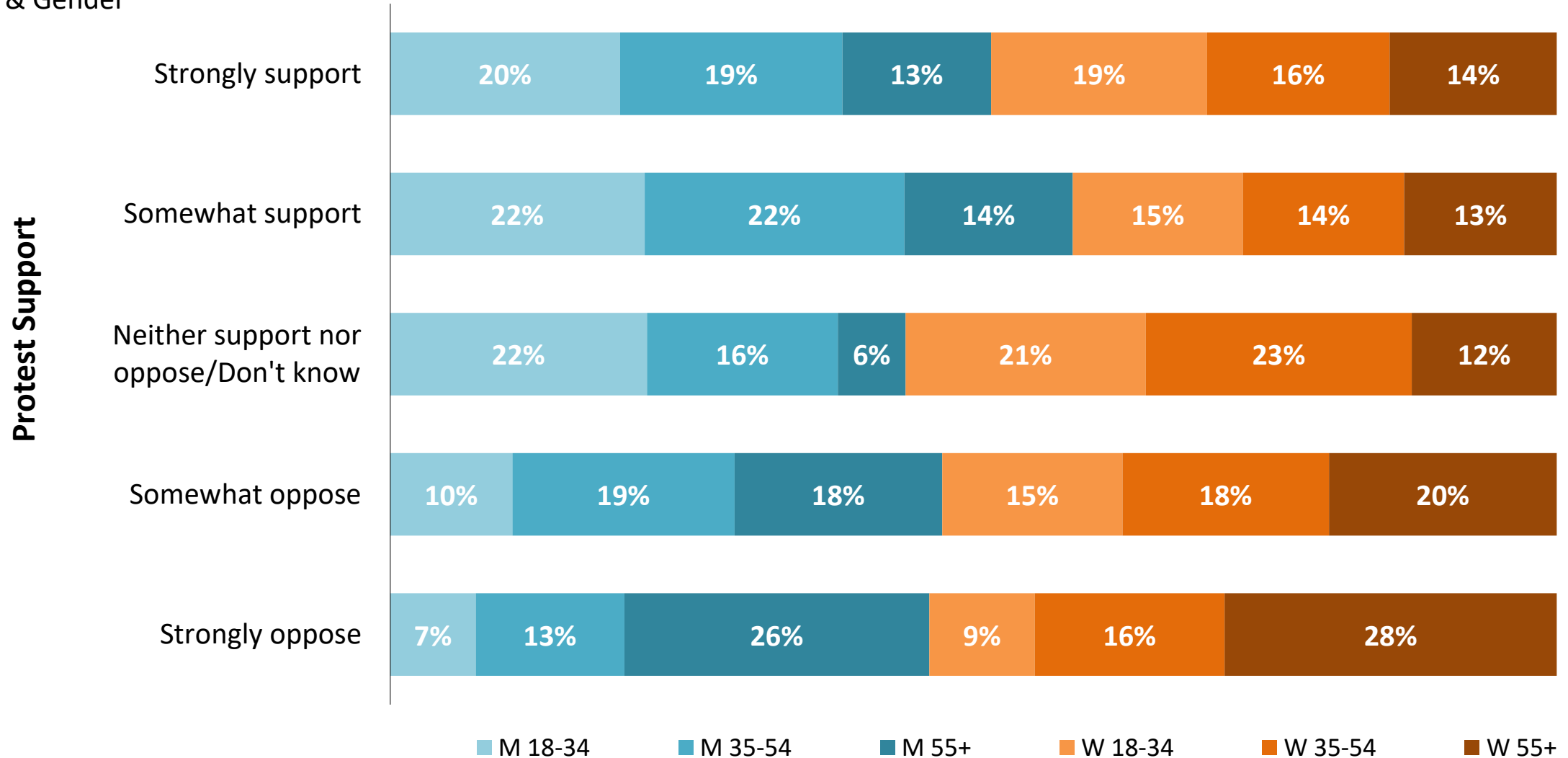
[asked of all respondents]



Demographic Drivers

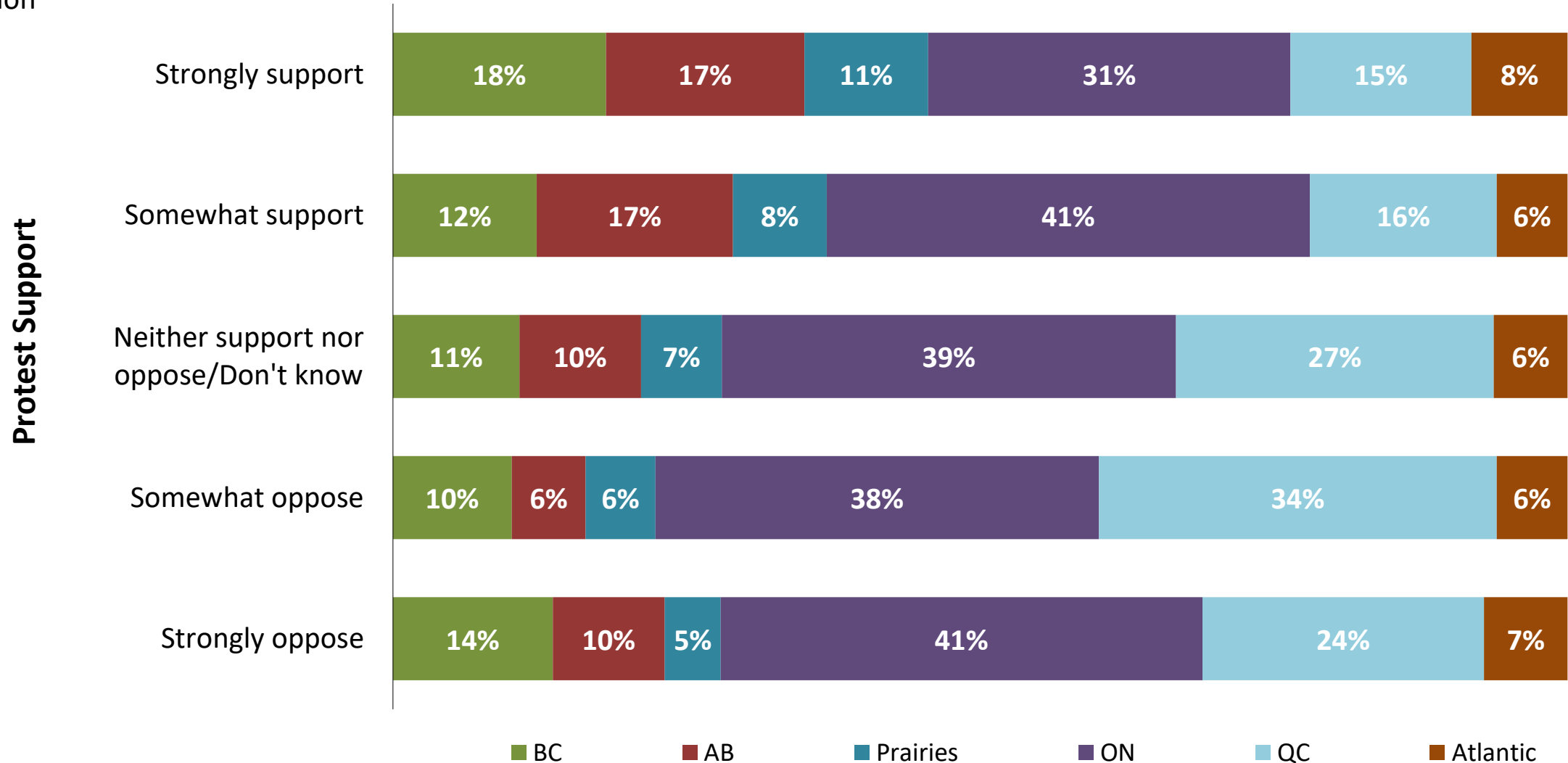
Age & Gender: Protest supporters are more likely to be younger and among men; opponents most likely to be older men and women

Age & Gender



Region: Protest opposition is concentrated in Ontario and Quebec while protest support is strong in the west

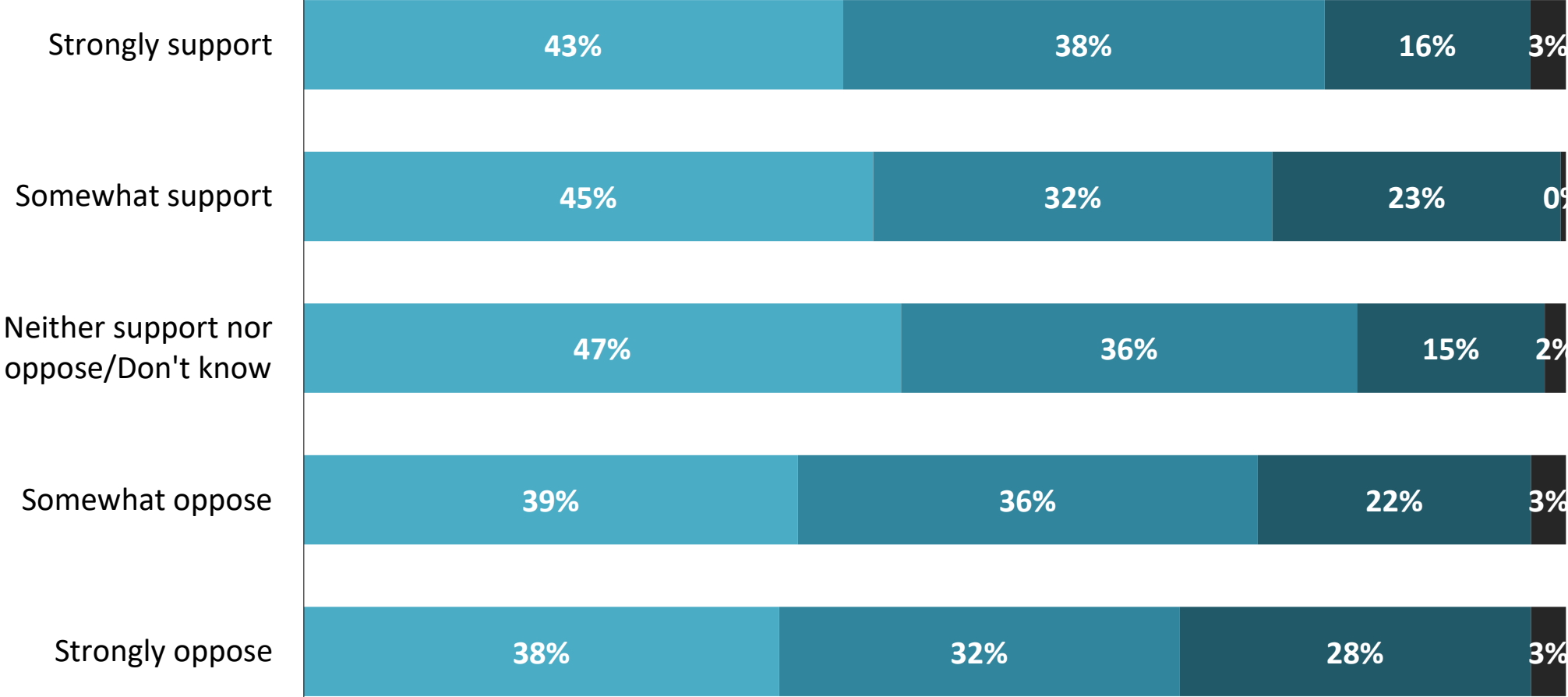
Region



Education: Protest opponents are more likely to have a university education

Educational Attainment

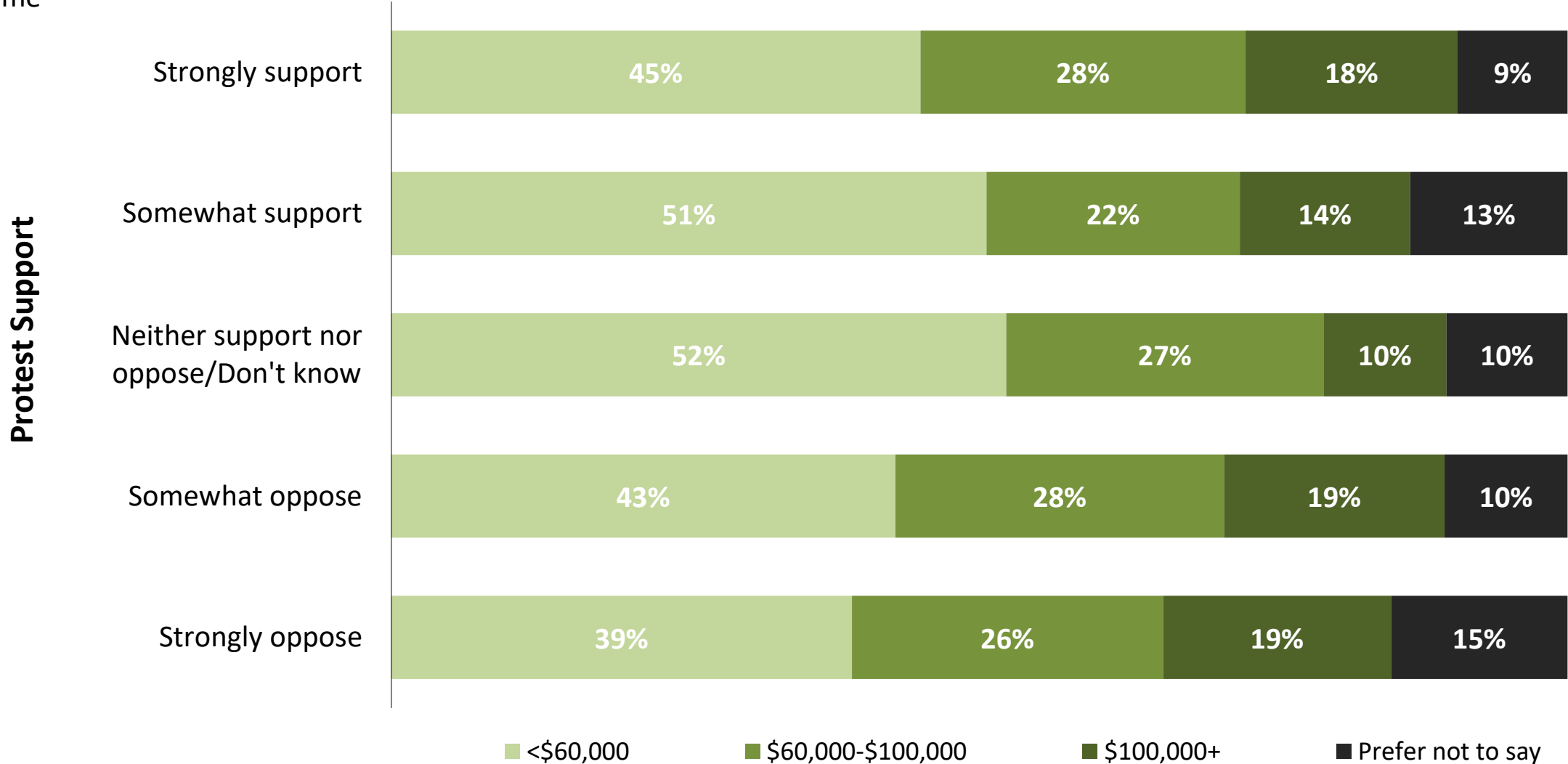
Protest Support



■ High school or less ■ College or trades certificate ■ At least some university ■ Prefer not to say

Income: Protest supporters are more likely to have incomes below \$60,000 a year

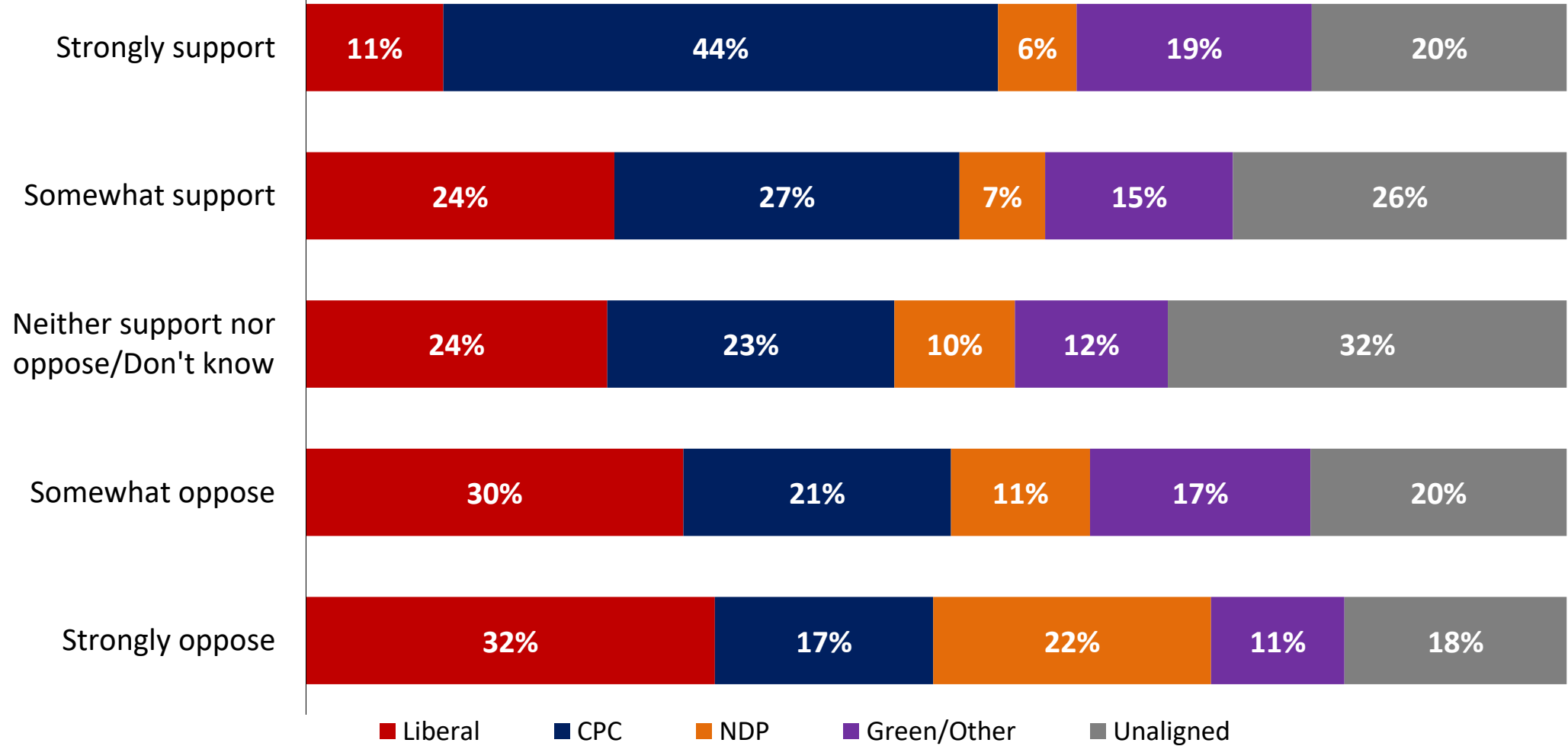
Income



Party ID: Nearly half of strong protest supporters are Conservative partisans

Partisanship

Protest Support



Methodology

Survey Methodology

These are the results of an online survey conducted between February 4th and February 14th, 2022.

Method: This online survey was conducted using INNOVATIVE's Canada 20/20 national research panel with additional respondents from Dynata, a leading provider of online samples. 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=1598 Canadian citizens, 18 years or older. The results are nationally weighted to n=1000 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

Field Dates: February 4th and February 14th, 2022.

Weighting: Results for Canada are weighted by age, gender, region, and party identification 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 (%)
Men 18-34	131	8.3%	137	13.9%
Men 35-54	221	13.9%	161	16.4%
Men 55+	369	23.3%	178	18.1%
Women 18-34	214	13.5%	137	14.0%
Women 35-54	296	18.7%	168	17.1%
Women 55+	355	22.4%	201	20.5%
Region				
BC	293	18.3%	132	13.2%
AB	163	10.2%	113	11.3%
Prairies	76	4.8%	66	6.6%
ON	682	42.7%	386	38.6%
QC	284	17.8%	235	23.5%
Atlantic	100	6.3%	69	6.9%



For more information, please contact:

Greg Lyle

President

(416) 642-6429

glyle@innovativeresearch.ca

Building Understanding.

