



Canada This Month

The Politics of

Trading With Trump

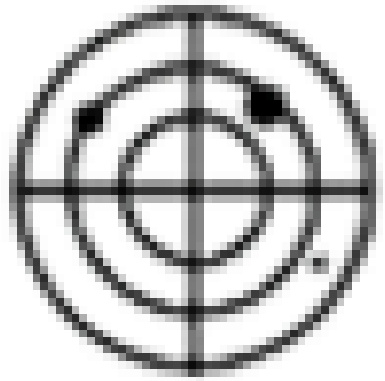
Federal Report

Public Opinion Research
Release Date: May 22, 2026
Field Dates: April 30 to May 12, 2026

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Study Overview



Building on findings from previous waves, this report tracks April data on Canadians' approval of the federal government in the context of **Managing Canada - US Relations**.

Key Findings

- 1 Attention to Canada-US news is still high but softening while approval of fed gov's response to Trump remains stable.**
Attention has dropped from a February peak of 74% to 66%, yet federal government's approval of response to Trump holds at 41% (net +18%).
- 2 Most Canadians don't believe a deal will get done, and even fewer trust Trump to honor one.**
51% say a trade agreement is unlikely (net -18), and 64% say Trump would not stick to any agreement reached (net -39). Skepticism about the deal is maintained across regions, age groups, and economic segments. Just 14% of Canadians believe we are likely to get a deal and that Trump will stick with it if we do, with Liberals and Conservatives equally skeptical.
- 3 The US bears the blame but not unanimously.**
55% place blame on the US if no deal is reached, with strongest agreement among Liberals (72%), NDP (73%), and those 55+ (65%). Only 35% of Conservatives agree pointing to a significant partisan divide on responsibility.
- 4 Approval of Fed's support for Canadian businesses & workers amid the Canada-US trade dispute is net positive, but confidence not strong.**
40% agree the government is doing enough for businesses (net +13) up 7 points from Aug. '25, and 38% that it is doing enough for workers (net +8). Support is highest among Liberals (63% and 61%) and Achievers (54% and 57%), and lowest among Alienated and Ambivalent segments (26–29%) and Conservatives.
- 5 Carney leads on Canada-US relations, but the safety net coalition is partisan in nature.**
Carney leads Poilievre 49% to 28% as best leader for Canada-US relations. 54% say he is putting in enough effort (net +18). However, 30% are safety-net skeptics concentrated among Conservatives (47%) and the Alienated (45%).

Key Voter Segments

Key Segmentation: We use attitudinal clusters to explore opinions within groups that share common motivations

Political Value Clusters

We group Canadians into six “values” clusters based on 4 key political values:

1. **Populist Conservatives** (12%) - Believe government should listen to common sense, not experts, and trust the profit system.
2. **Deferential Conservatives** (11%) - Support government decisions based on affordability and trust expert guidance over public opinion.
3. **Business Liberals** (22%) - Champion equal opportunity and public need, favoring expertise in policy decisions.
4. **Left Liberals** (16%) - Balance equal opportunity with wealth redistribution while respecting both experts and common sense.
5. **Core Left** (17%) - Believe the profit system brings out the worst in people and government should redistribute wealth
6. **Pay-as-you-go Moderates** (21%) - Want government spending based on affordability but support creating equal opportunity.

Economic Gap Clusters

The economic gap segmentation divides Canadians by their outlook on their economic future, splitting them into four groups:

1. **Canadian Dream Achievers** (20%) - Optimistic Canadians who believe hard work still leads to success.
2. **Canadian Dream Strugglers** (31%) - Believe in the dream but find it increasingly difficult to get ahead.
3. **Ambivalent** (23%) - Uncertain about whether opportunity exists or if hard work pays off anymore.
4. **Alienated** (25%) - Don't believe in the Canadian Dream and feel the system doesn't work

Federal Party ID

We group Canadians into six groups based on their self-identifying with one of the following:

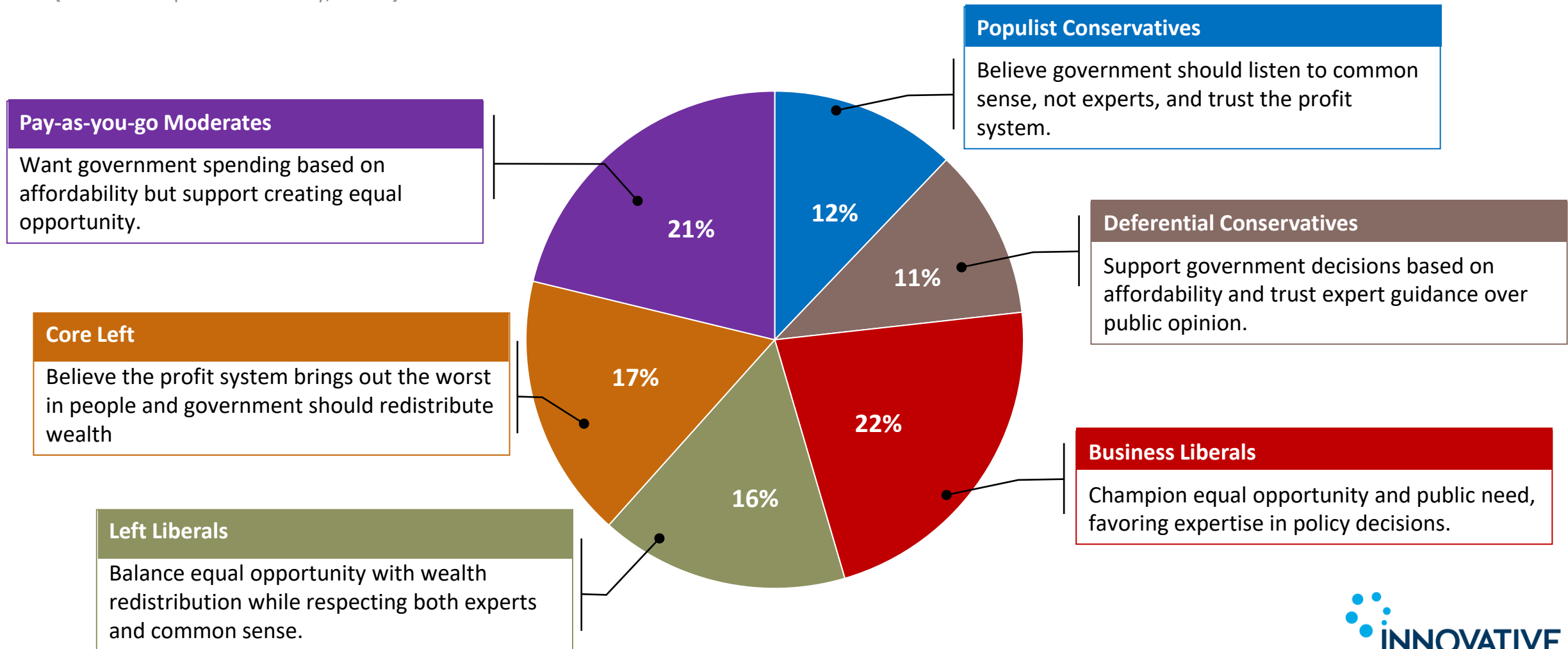
1. **Conservative** (31%)
2. **Liberal** (32%)
3. **NDP** (8%)
4. **Bloc Québécois** (6%)
5. **Green/Other** (5%)
6. **Unaligned** (19%)

Value clusters: 1-in-5 Canadians are Business Liberals or Pay-as-you-go Moderates



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 nationally; n=2000]

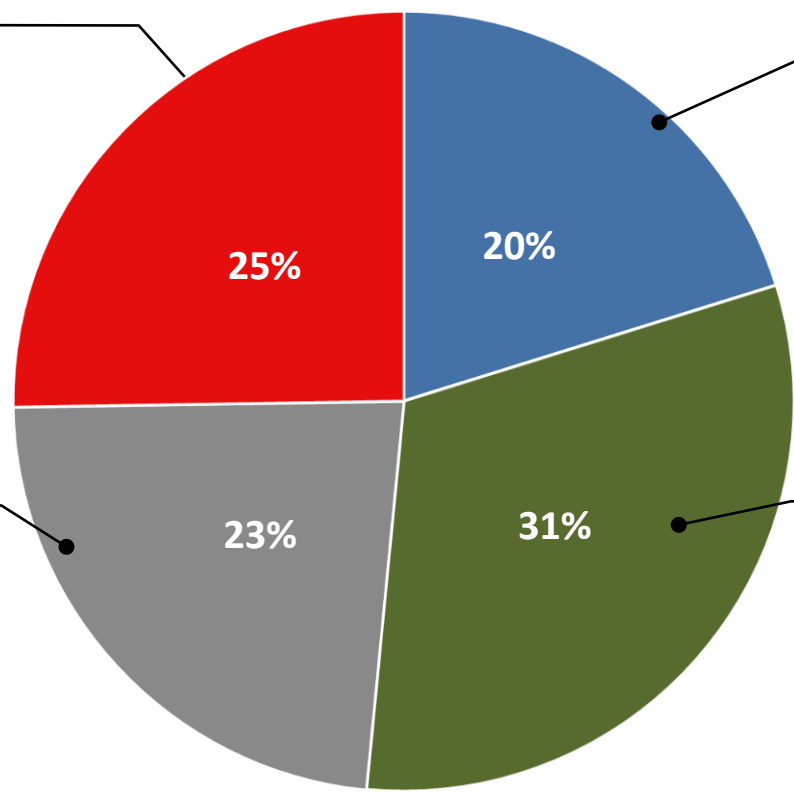


Economic Gap Segmentation: Canadians are almost equally split between four economic segments, around 1-in-4 belonging to each

Q Gap segmentation: Agree with 'Here in [your province] you can be anything you want if you are willing to work for it' BY Agree with 'No matter how hard I work, every year it seems more difficult to get by'.
[asked of all respondents nationally; n=1,500]

Alienated
Locked out and let down on every front
Reject the idea that opportunity exists and firmly believe hard work no longer pays off.

Ambivalent
Checked out from the system
Neither convinced that opportunity exists nor that hard work is futile.



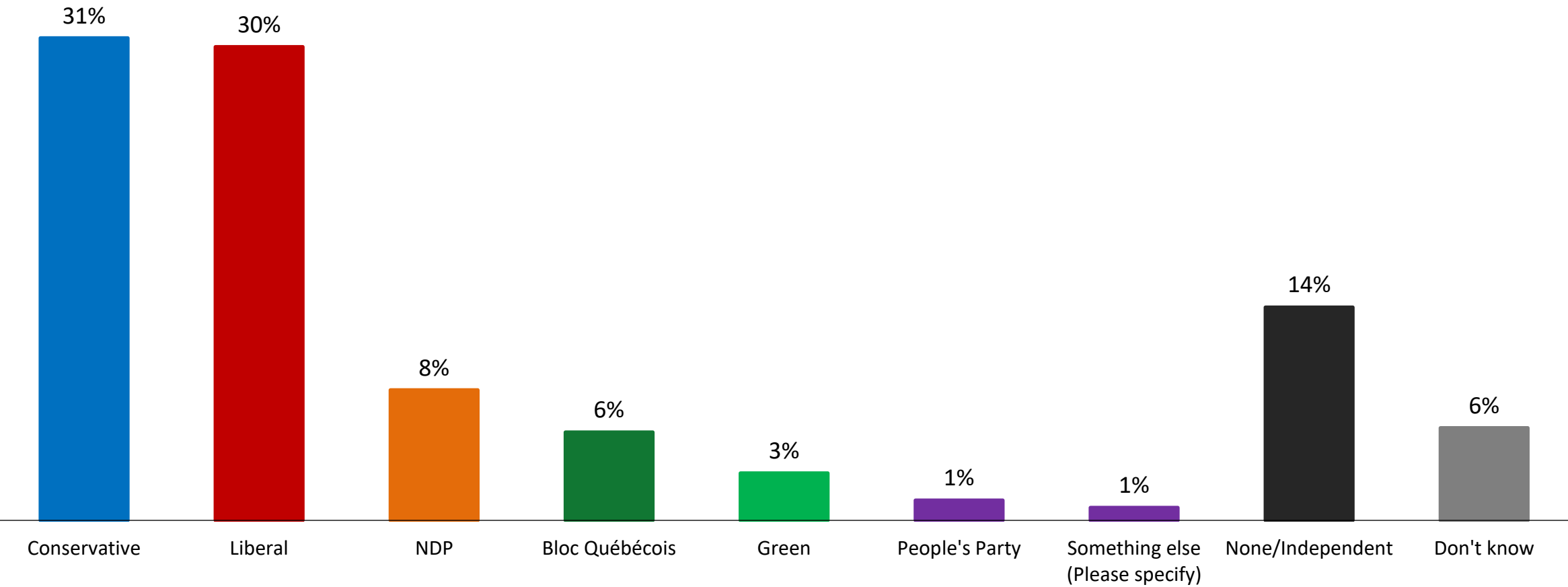
Achievers
The system is working for them
Believe opportunity exists in their province and feel confident that hard work still pays off.

Strugglers
Getting ahead is becoming increasingly hard
Believe opportunity exists in principle, but feel that no matter how hard they work, getting ahead is becoming increasingly out of reach.

Federal Party ID: Plurality of Canadians identify as conservatives (31%) or liberals (30%) ⁹



Thinking about politics in Canada, generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a...
[asked of all respondents nationally; n=2000]

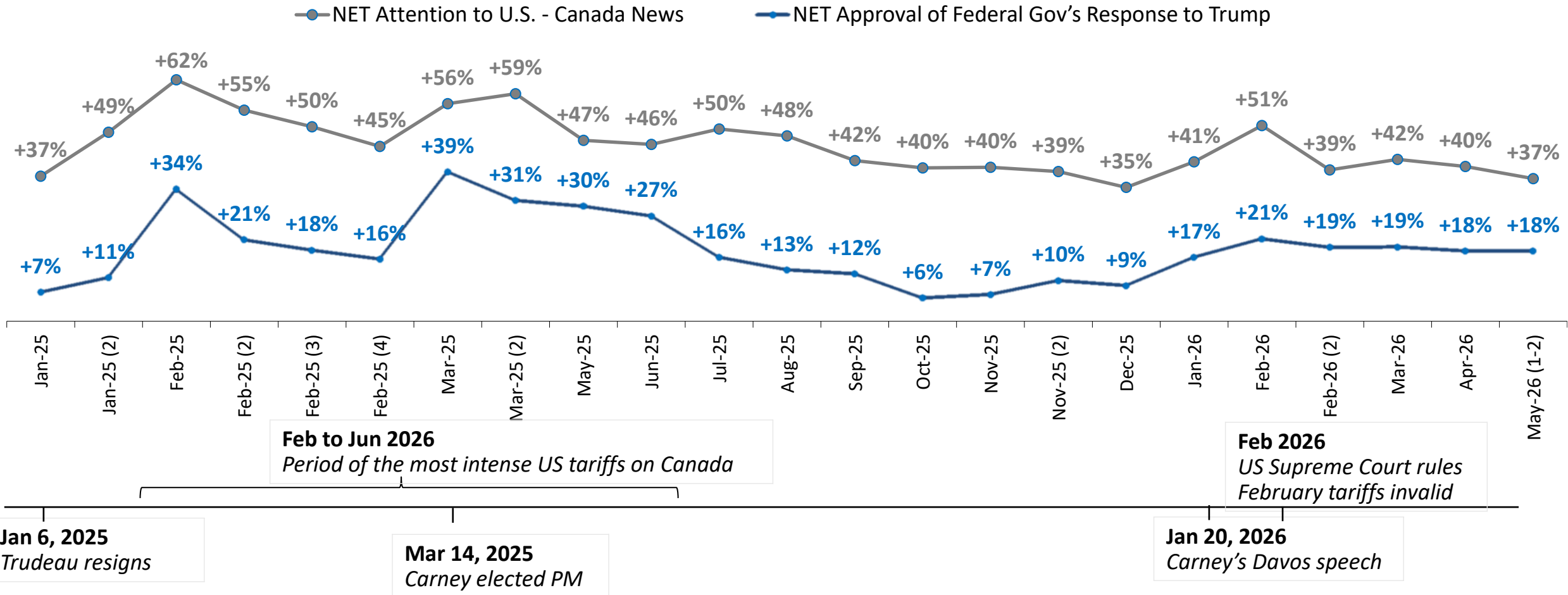


Reaction to Trump

NET Approval of Federal Gov's Response to Trump: Net attention to U.S.¹ Can news in decline since Mar. while Net approval marginally unchanged



How closely are you following the news about the relationship between Canada and the US now Donald J. Trump is the President of the United States once again?
 Now thinking about the federal government, do you approve or disapprove of the way the Federal government is responding to issues resulting from Donald Trump's presidency? [asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Note: No, Don't know not shown.
 Current data: May 2026 (W1-2)

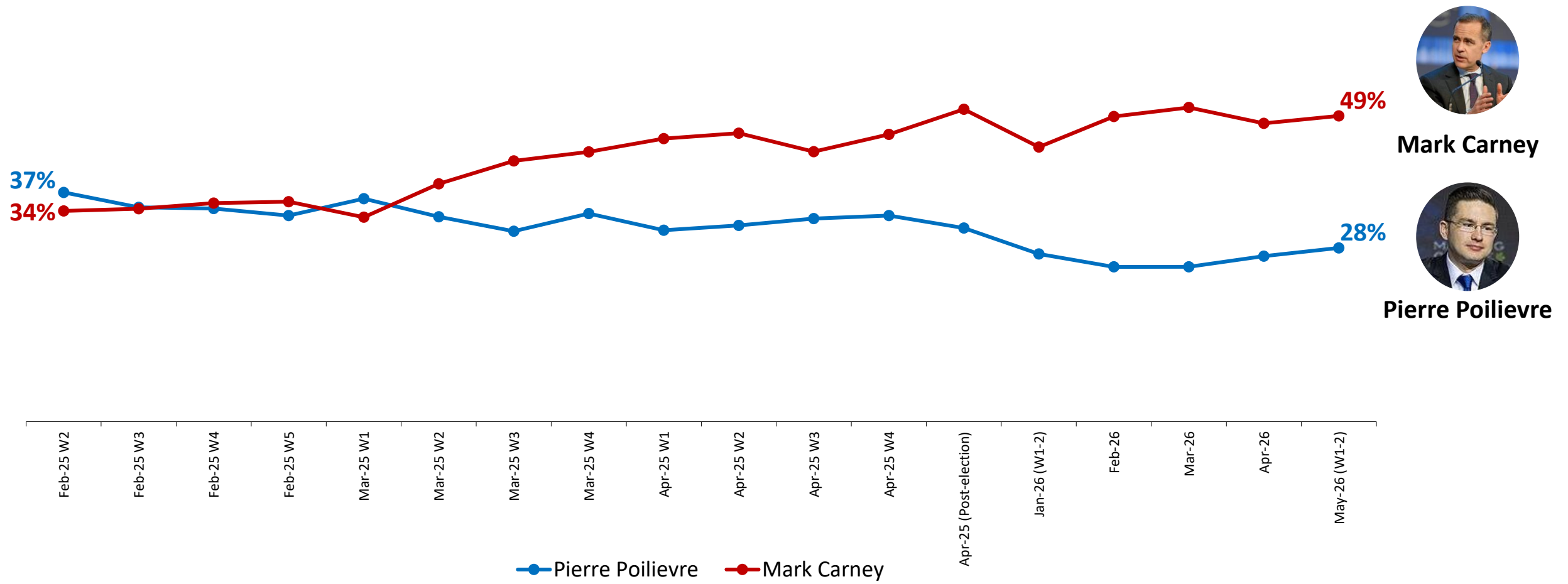
Best Leader for Canada-US Relations

Best Leader for Canada-US Relations Tracking: Carney leads Poilievre by 21 points on Canada-US relations



Which of the following leaders do you believe is best equipped to handle Canada-US relations during Trump's renewed presidency?

[asked of all respondents, Feb. '25 W2, W3, W4, W5 each n=1,200; Mar. '25 W1, W2, W3, W4 each n=1,200; Apr. '25 W1, W2 each n=1,200; Apr. '25 W3 n=1,200, W4=2,000, W(post election) n=2,000, Jan. '26 (W1-2) n=1,000, Feb. '26 n=2,000, Mar. '26 n=2,000, Apr. '26 n=3,000, May. '26 (W1-2) n=1,500]



Mark Carney



Pierre Poilievre

Best Leader for Canada-US Relations: Carney leads among all clusters except Populist Conservatives



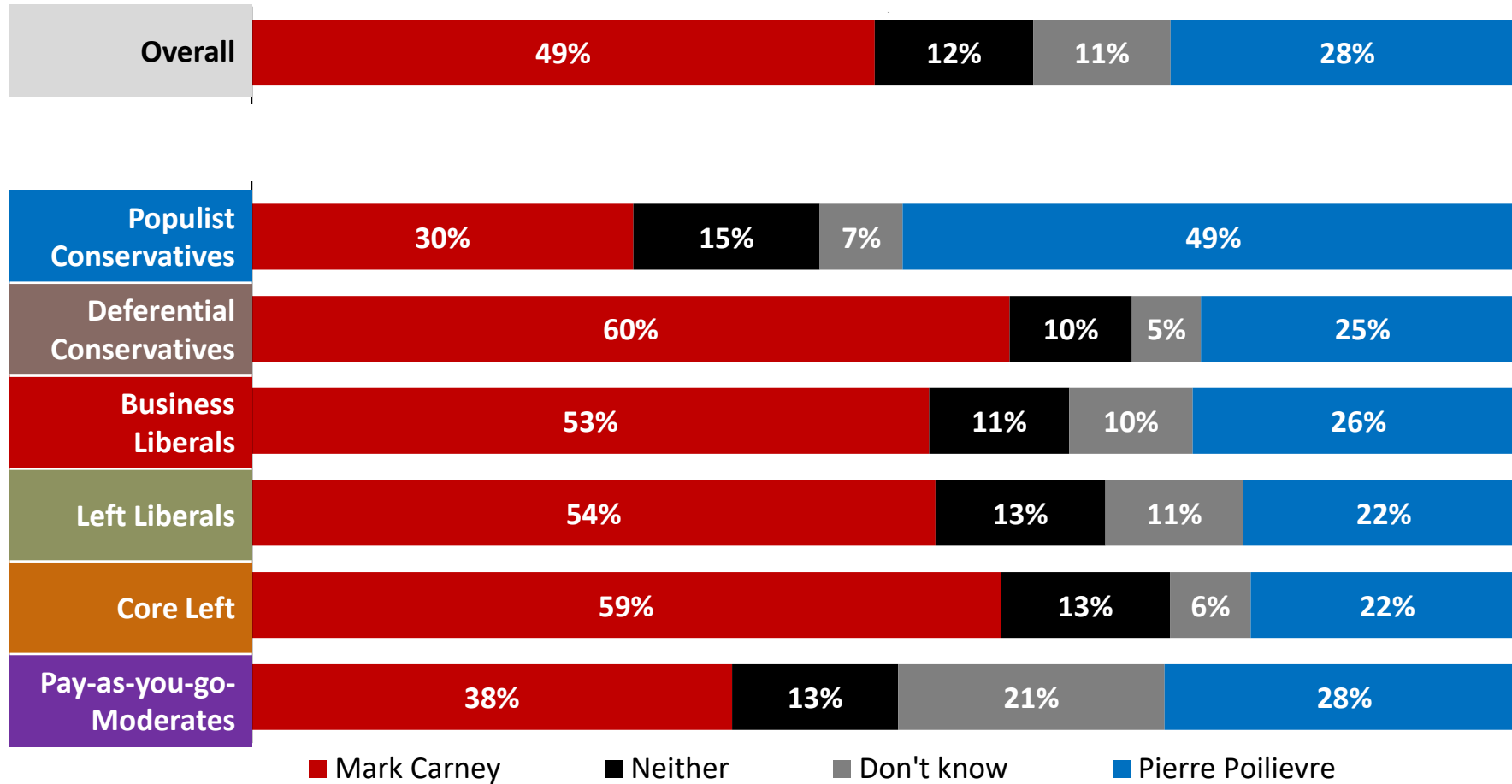
Which of the following leaders do you believe is best equipped to handle Canada-US relations during Trump's renewed presidency? **BY Value Cluster**
 [Asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Mark Carney



Pierre Poilievre



Trading With Trump

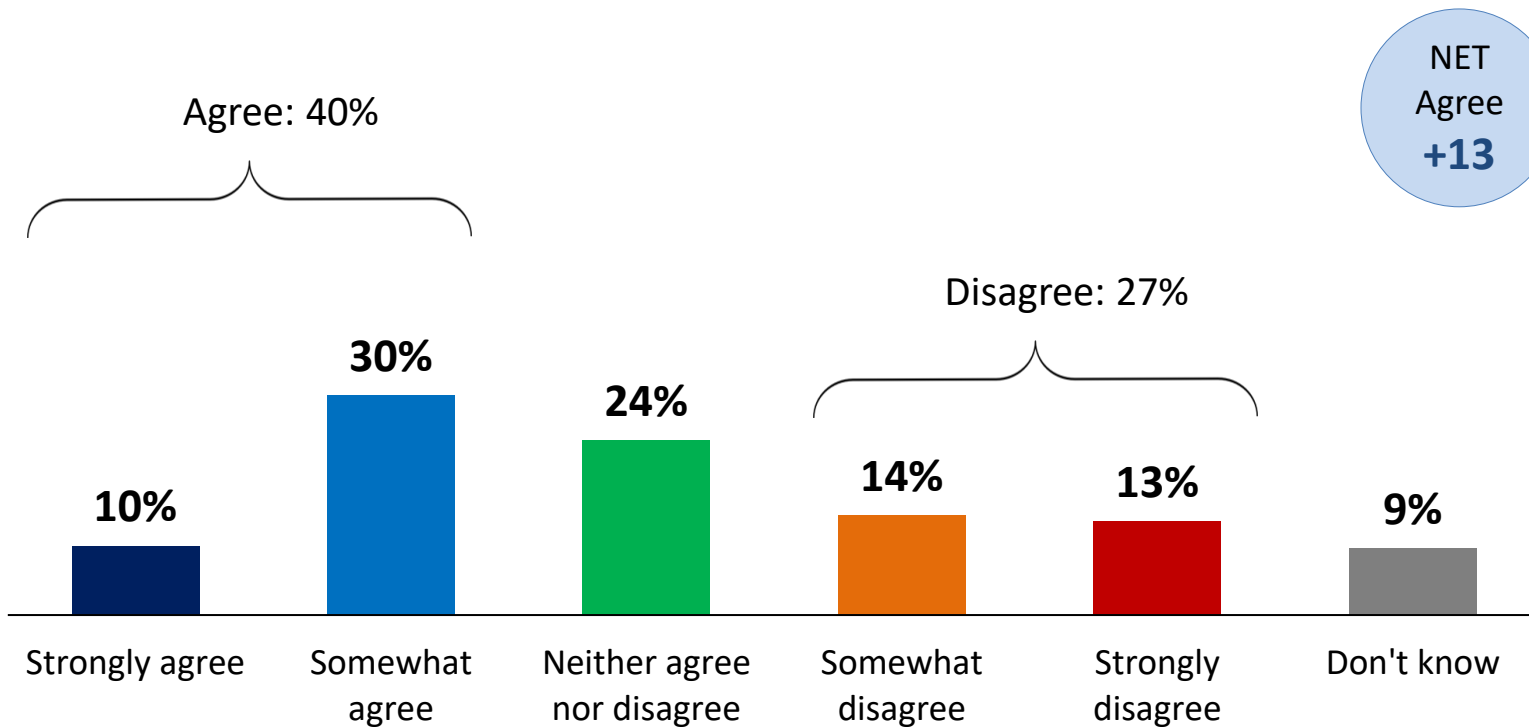
Fed's Supporting Canadian Businesses: 2-in-5 agree that the federal gov't is doing enough for businesses; higher among men



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

The Federal government is doing enough to support **Canadian businesses** during this trade dispute with the United States.



Segmentation

Those who say 'Agree'

Gender



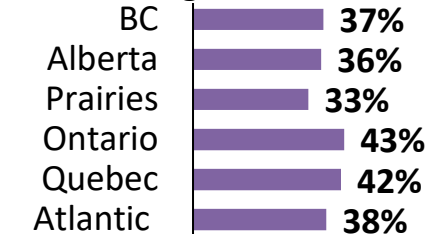
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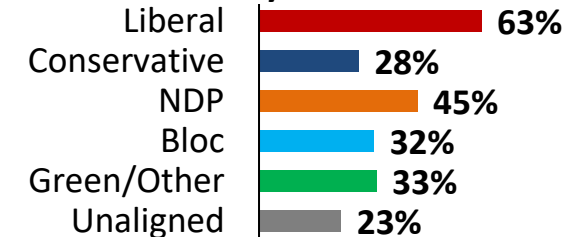
Economic Gap



Region



Party ID



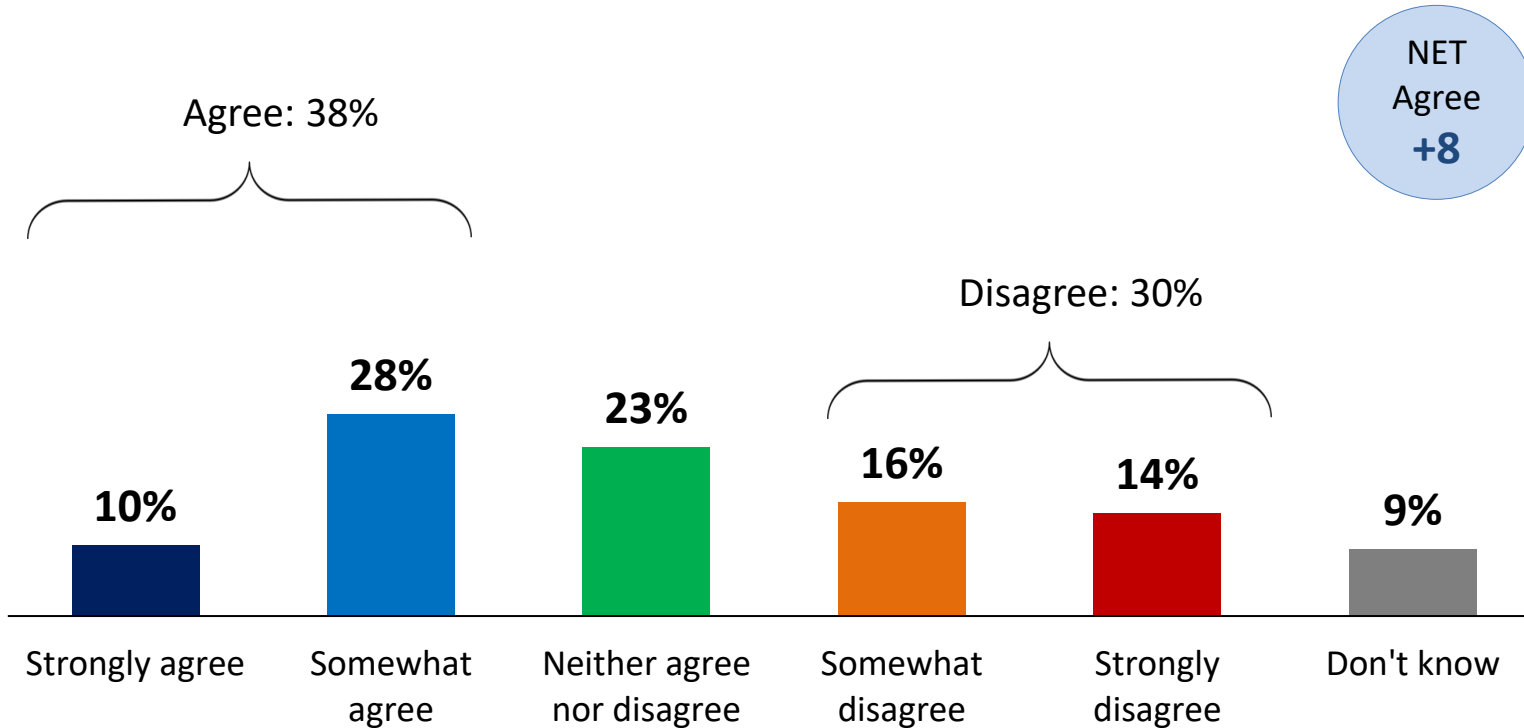
Fed's Supporting Canadian Workers: 38% of respondents say gov't supports workers enough; Achievers, men and 55+ more likely to agree



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

The Federal government is doing enough to support **Canadian workers** during this trade dispute with the United States.



Segmentation

Those who say 'Agree'

Gender



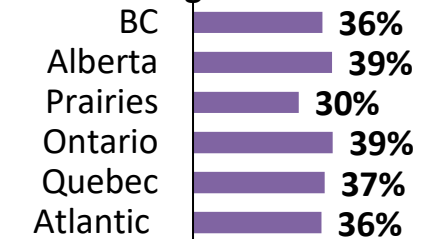
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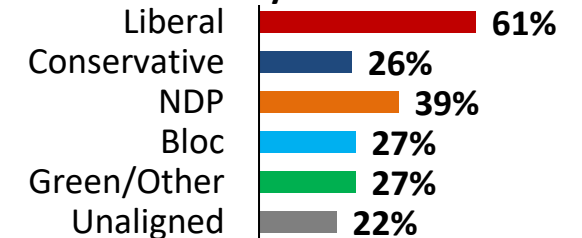
Economic Gap



Region



Party ID

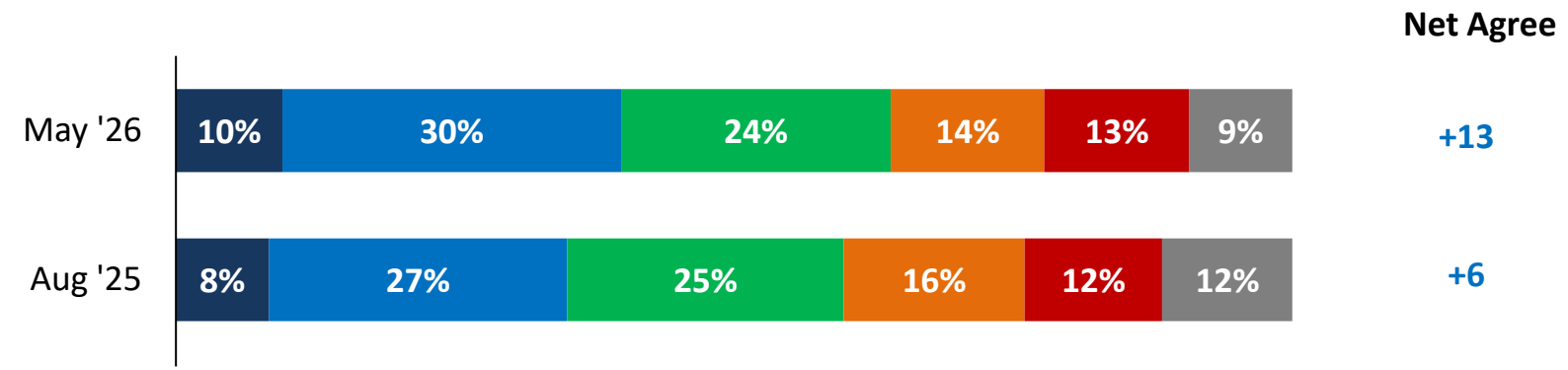


Fed's Supporting Canadian Businesses & Workers: Net agreement that federal gov't is doing enough for businesses has increased by 7 points

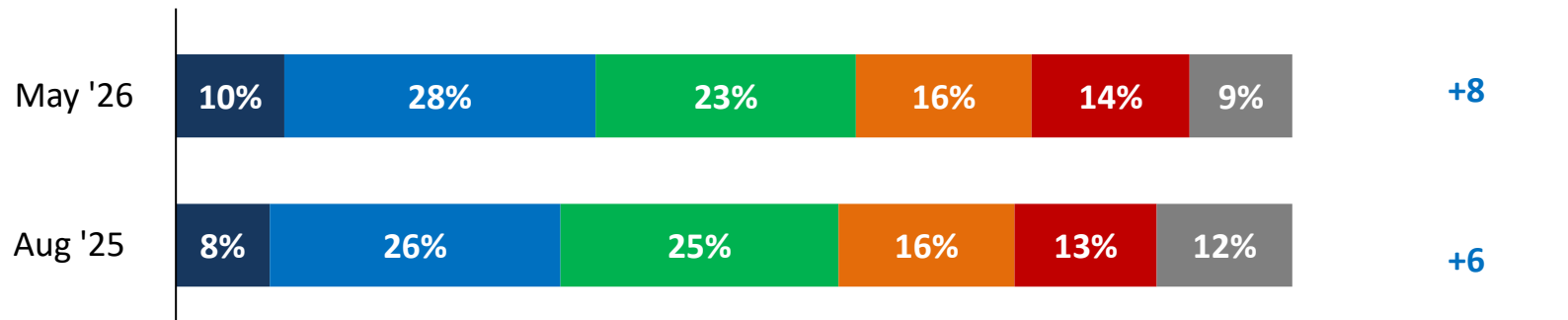


Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

The Federal government is doing enough to support **Canadian businesses** during this trade dispute with the United States.



The Federal government is doing enough to support **Canadian workers** during this trade dispute with the United States.



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

Fed's Response Safety-net Segmentation: Nearly half (42%) are safety net optimists, while 30% are safety net skeptics



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Federal support for Canadian businesses: The Federal government is doing enough to support Canadian businesses ...

Federal support for Canadian workers: The Federal government is doing enough to support Canadian workers ...

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

Safety-net Optimists: They trust the federal government to protect either businesses or workers through the trade dispute.

Safety-net Skeptics: They lack confidence that the federal government will protect either businesses or workers during the trade dispute.

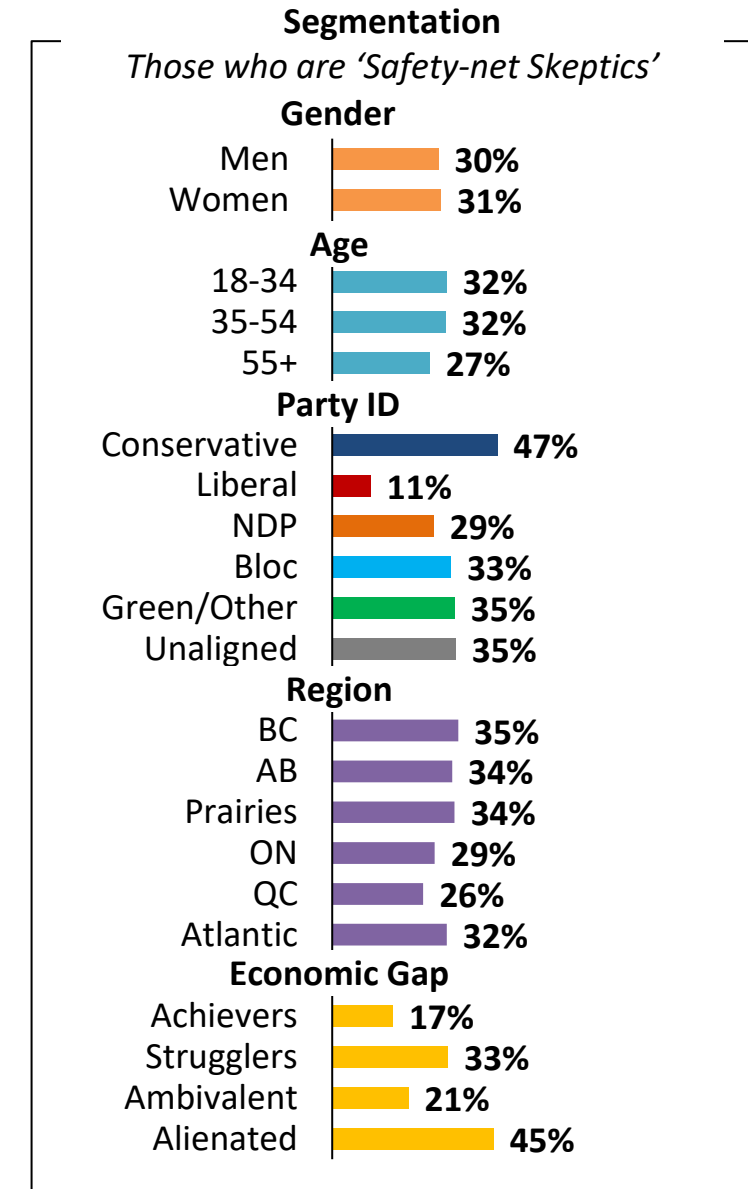
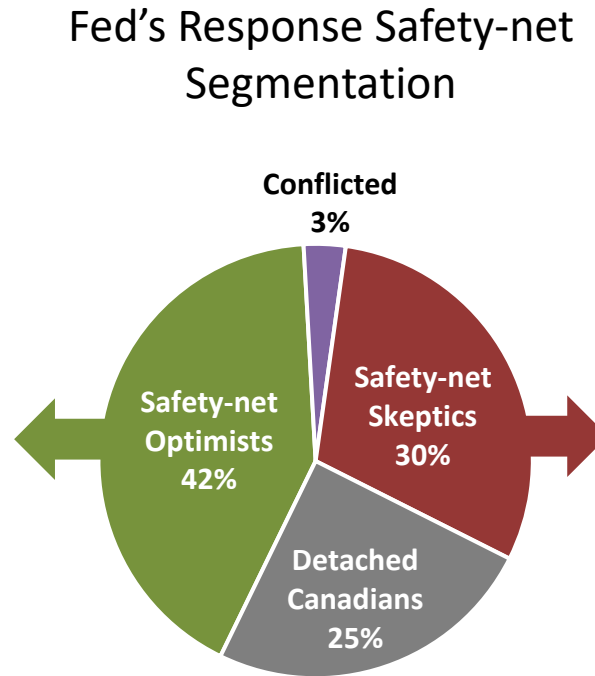
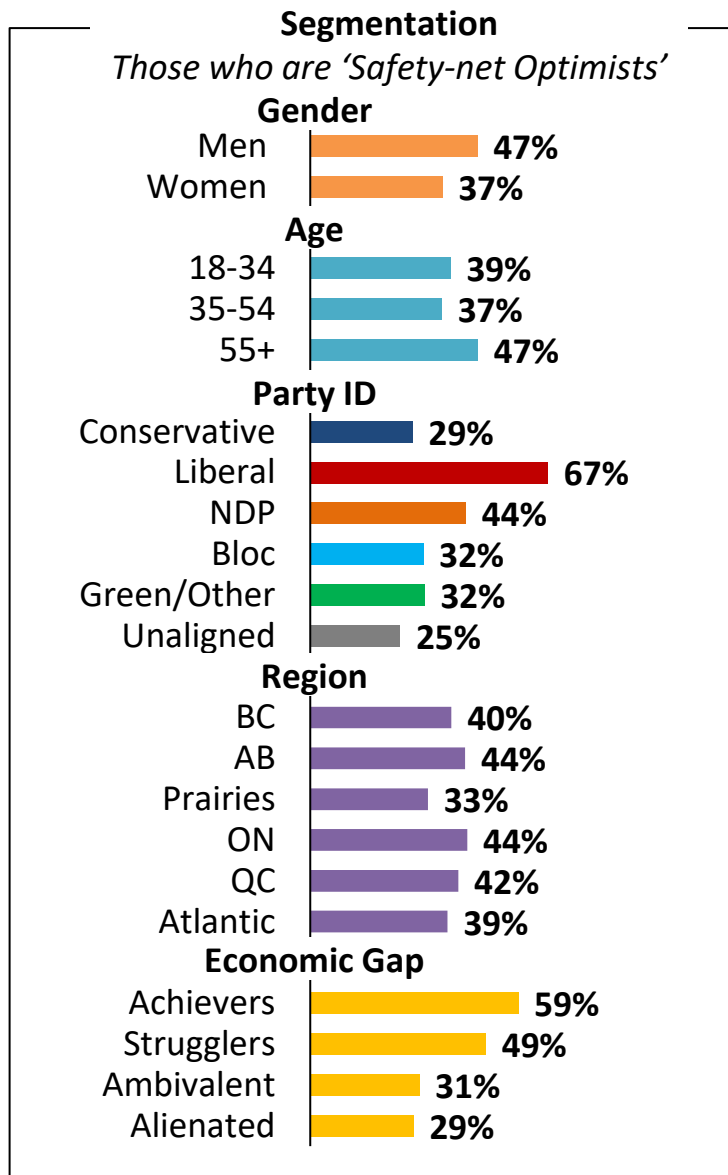
Worker Leaning: They believe the federal government will protect workers but not businesses.

Business Leaning: They believe the federal government will protect businesses but not workers.

Detached Canadians: They have no strong sense of whether the federal safety net will hold.

Fed's Response Safety-net Segmentation		Federal support for Canadian businesses		
		Agree	Don't know	Disagree
Federal support for Canadian workers	Agree	42% Safety-net Optimists		Conflicted*
	Don't know		25% Disengaged Canadians	30% Safety-net Skeptic
	Disagree	Conflicted*		

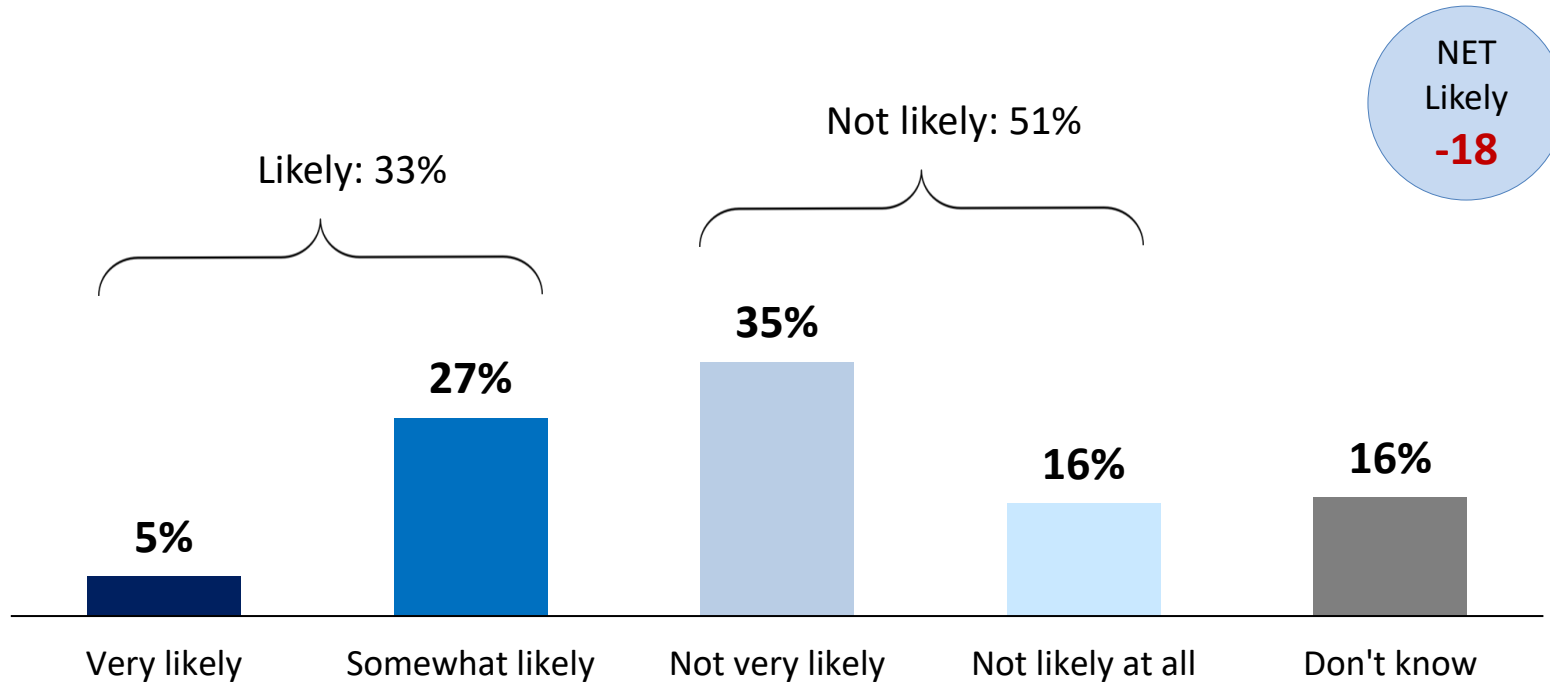
Fed's Response Safety-net Segmentation: 42% are optimists, higher among men and Liberals; 30% are skeptics, higher among Conservatives



Likelihood of Reaching Agreement: More than half believe it's not likely²¹ that Canada will reach a trade agreement; lower among Liberals



How likely do you think it is that Canada will reach a new trade agreement with the United States during Donald Trump presidency?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Segmentation

Those who say 'Not likely'

Gender



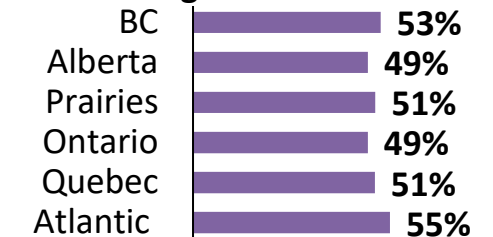
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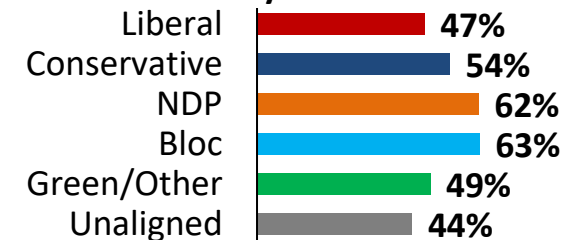
Economic Gap



Region



Party ID

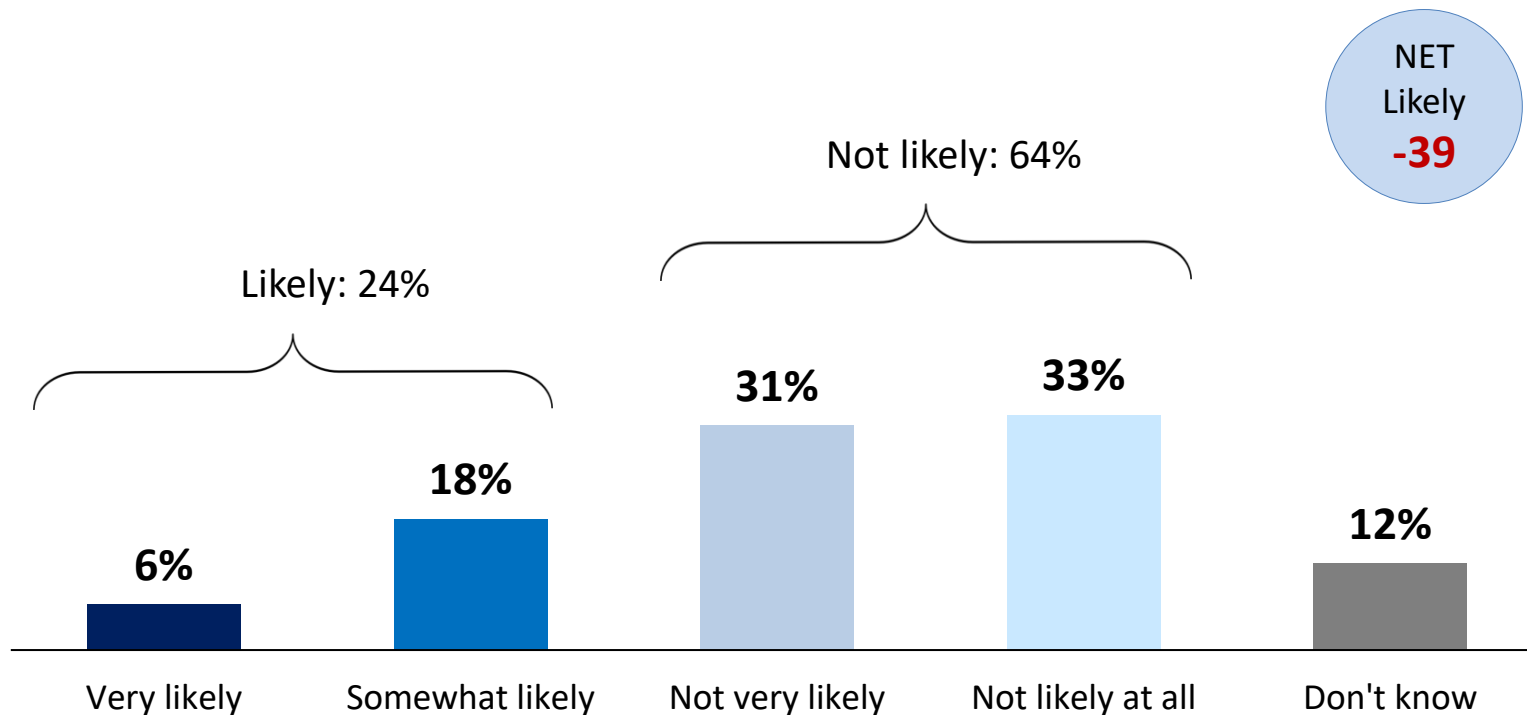


Likelihood of Trump Following Through: Nearly 2-in-3 believe Trump would not stick to a new trade agreement; higher among 55+



If a trade agreement were reached between Canada and United states, how likely do you think it is that Donald Trump would stick to that agreement?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Segmentation

Those who say 'Not likely'

Gender



Age



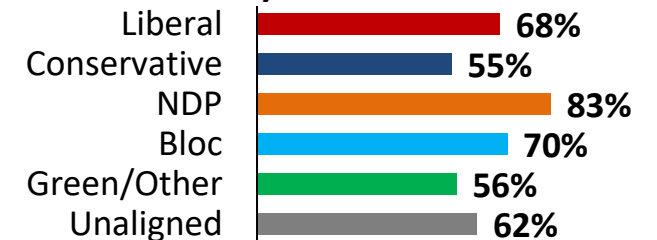
Economic Gap



Region



Party ID



Confidence in Canada-US Deal Segmentation: Most Canadians (50%) are Deal Skeptics, doubting any agreement with Trump



Likelihood of reached Canada – US agreement: How likely do you think it is that Canada will reach a new trade agreement with the United States ...

Federal support for Canadian workers: The Federal government is doing enough to support Canadian workers ...

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

Deal Believers: The true optimists. They believe Canada can reach a trade agreement with the US and that Trump would honor it.

Trump Believers: They trust Trump to keep his word, but don't believe a deal will actually materialize. There's a disconnect, faith in the person without faith in the outcome.

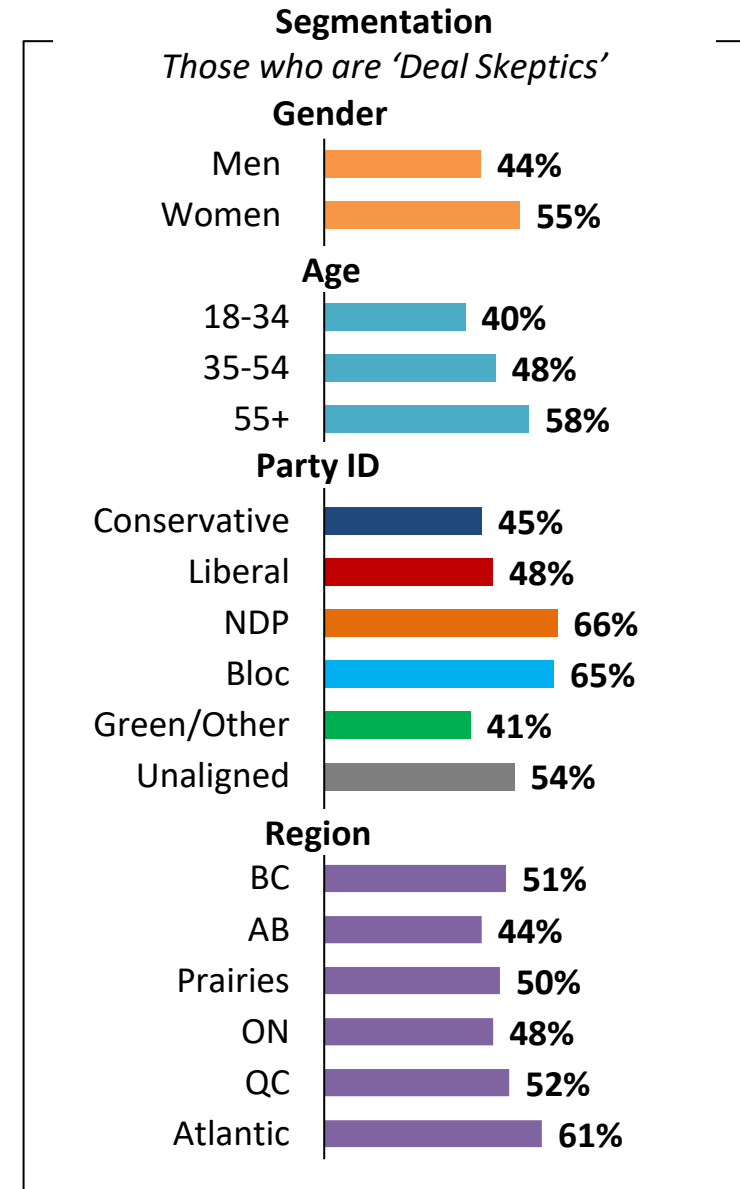
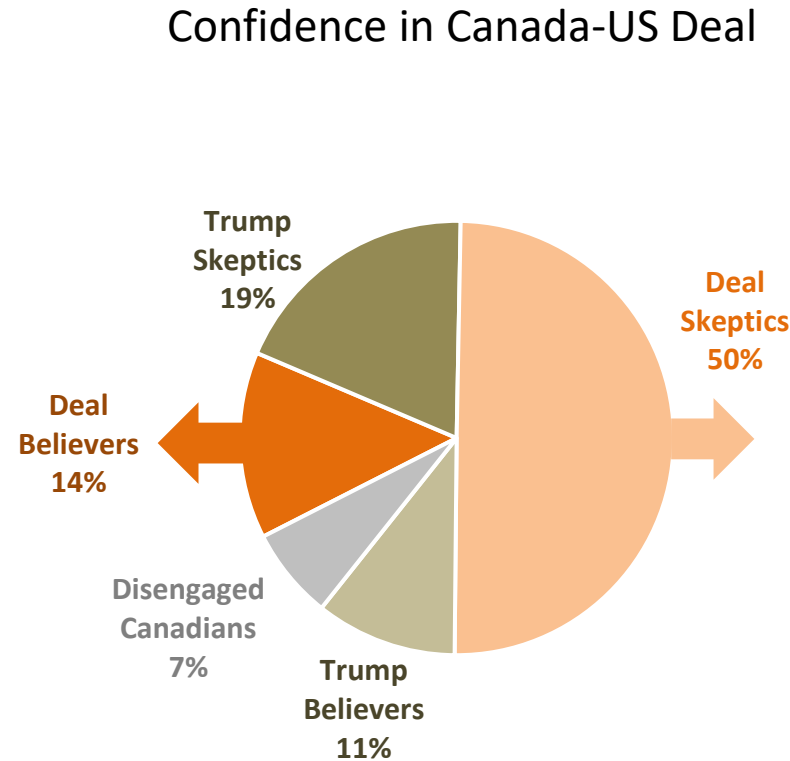
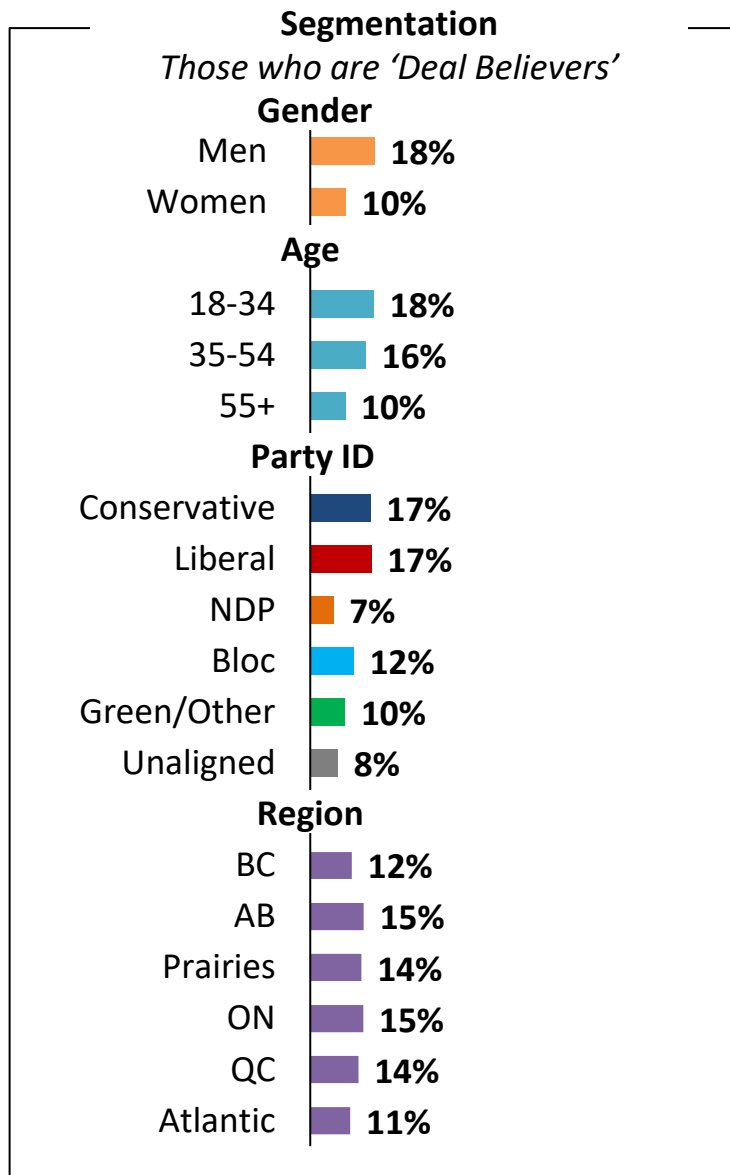
Trump Skeptics: They think Canada can get to an agreement, but don't trust Trump to follow through on it. This group sees the negotiation as achievable but the commitment as hollow.

Deal Skeptics: The most pessimistic group, no deal is coming, and even if it did, Trump wouldn't honor it. They've essentially written off the entire trade negotiation as a dead end.

Disengaged Canadians: They do not know if they will be a deal nor if Trump will follow through

Confidence in Canada-US Deal		Likelihood of reached Canada – US agreement		
		Likely	Don't know	Not likely
Likelihood of Trump Following Through	Likely	14% Deal Believers	11% Trump Believers	
	Don't know	19% Trump Skeptics	7% Disengaged Canadians	50% Deal Skeptics
	Not likely			

Confidence in Canada-US Deal Segmentation: Just 14 % of Canadians believe we are likely to get a deal and that Trump will stick with it

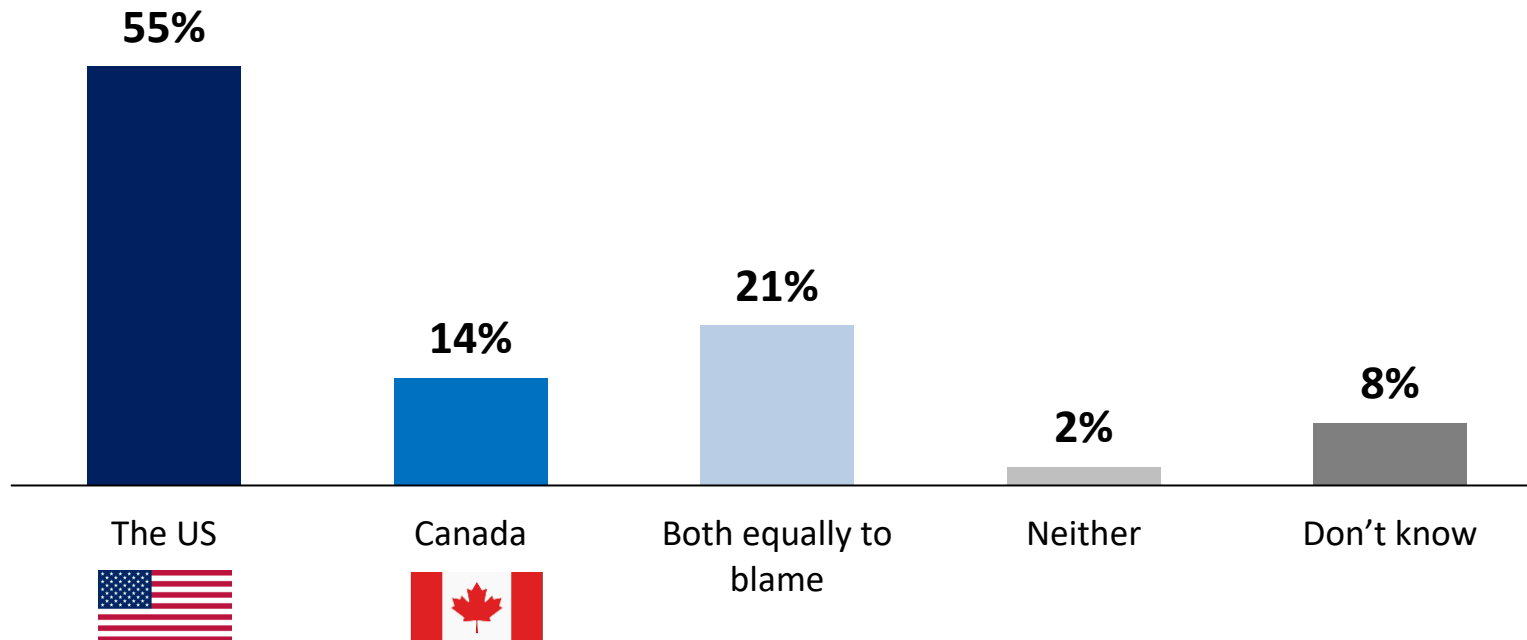


Placing The Blame: 55% say the US is most to blame; those 55+, NDP, and Liberals more likely to agree



If we do not reach a new trade agreement with the United States during Donald Trump presidency, which government do you feel will be most to blame?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Segmentation

Those who say 'the US'

Gender



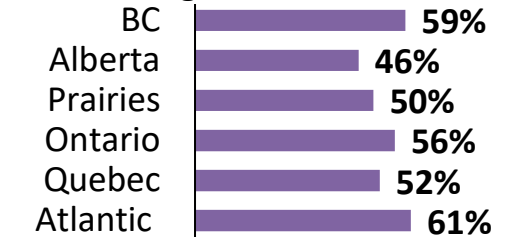
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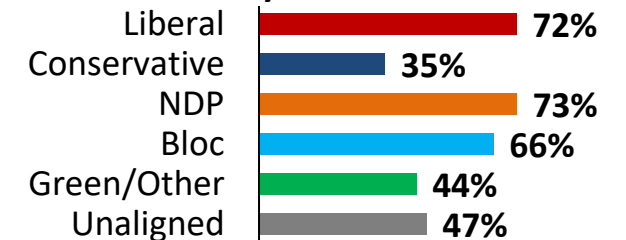
Economic Gap



Region



Party ID

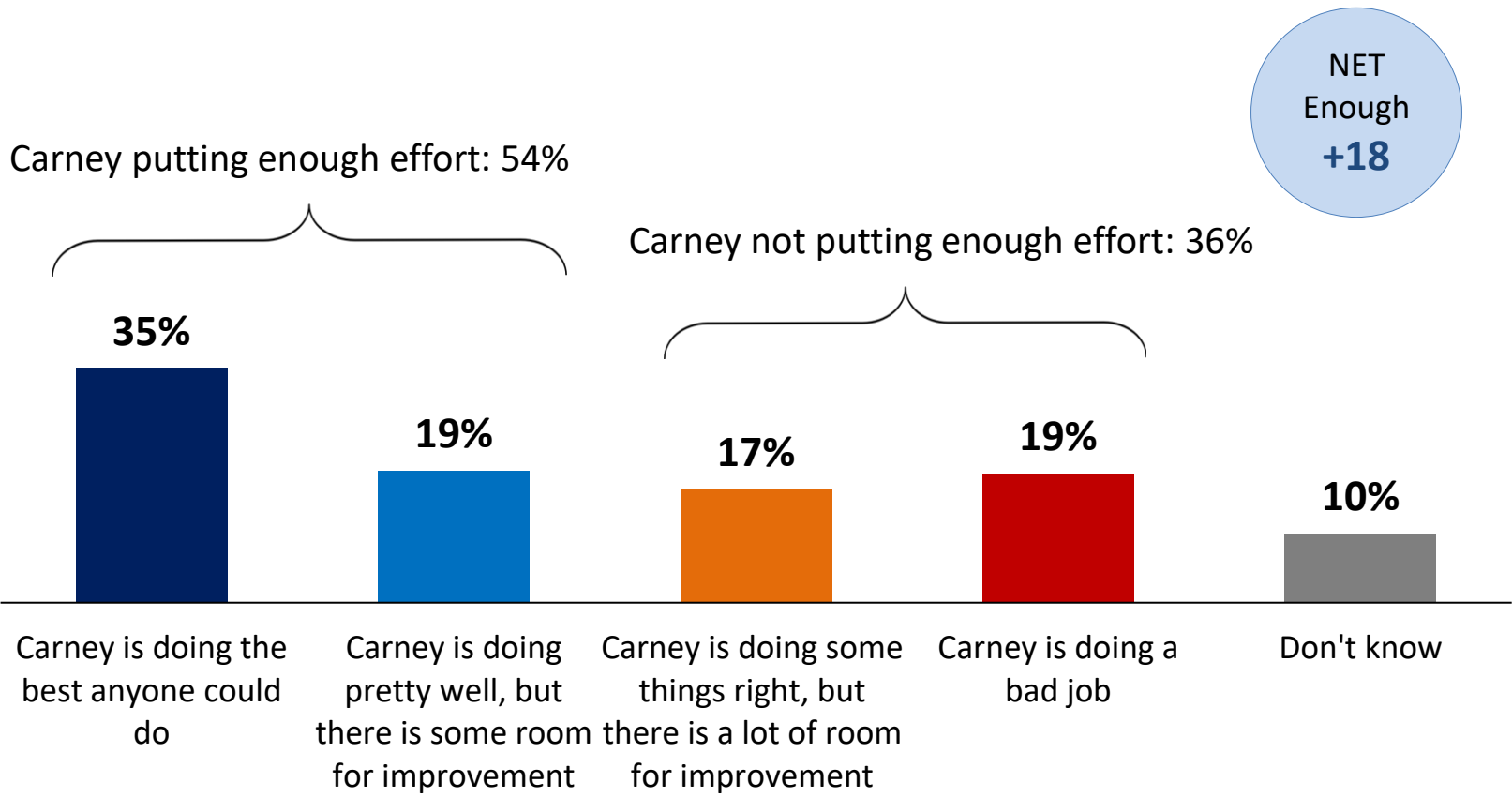


Assessing Carney's Effort: Over half of respondents say Carney is putting enough effort; lower among Conservatives and Alberta region



Which statement best reflects what you think about the effort Prime Minister Carney has made to reach a new trade deal with the US?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Segmentation

Those who say 'Enough effort'

Gender



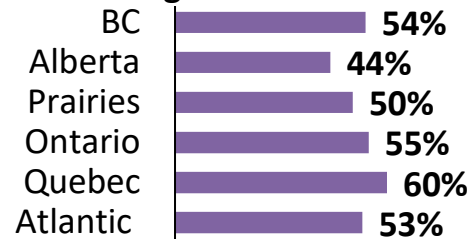
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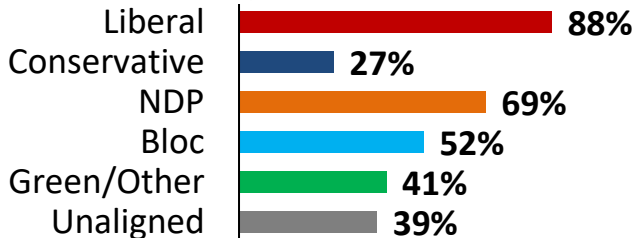
Economic Gap



Region



Party ID



Methodology

Survey Methodology – National



These are the results of an online survey conducted between April 30th, 2026, and May 12th, 2026.

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 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=2,215 Canadian citizens, 18 years or older. The results are nationally weighted to n=1,500 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

Field Dates: April 30th, 2026 to May 12th, 2026

Weighting: Results for Canada are weighted by age, gender, region, education, and self-reported federal past vote 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.

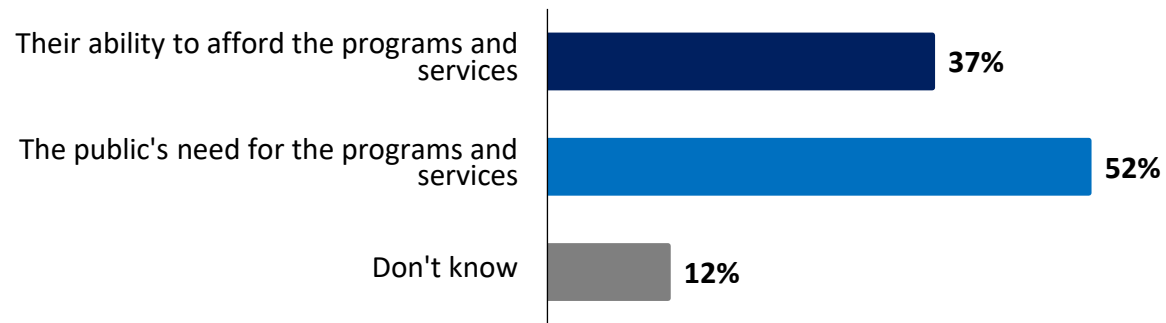
	Unweighted (n)	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (n)	Weighted (%)
Men 18-34	225	10.2%	200	13.4%
Men 35-54	338	15.3%	238	15.9%
Men 55+	488	22.1%	288	19.3%
Women 18-34	239	10.8%	197	13.2%
Women 35-54	396	17.9%	247	16.5%
Women 55+	525	23.7%	325	21.7%
Region				
British Columbia	289	13.0%	209	13.9%
Alberta	261	11.8%	167	11.1%
Prairies	152	6.9%	96	6.4%
Ontario	748	33.8%	581	38.7%
Québec	426	19.2%	346	23.1%
Atlantic	339	15.3%	101	6.7%

Appendices

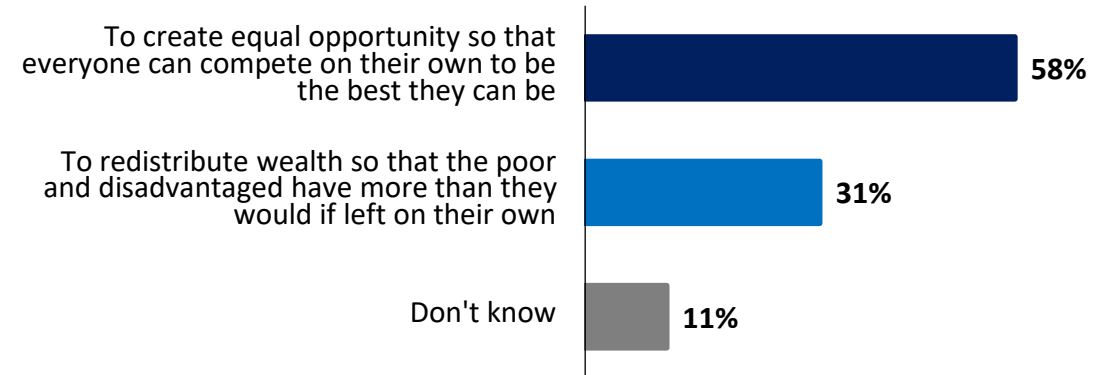
Value Clusters

Core Political Values: Over half (52%) believe the gov't should make decisions based on the public's need for programs/services

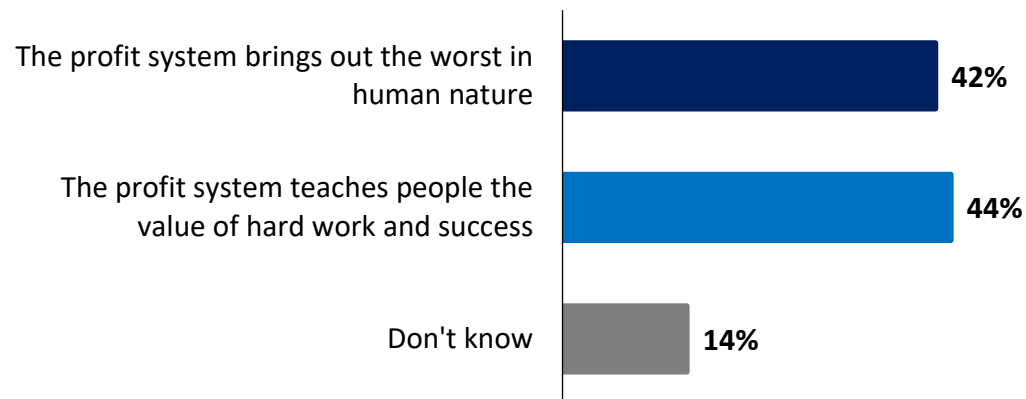
Q When governments make major decisions concerning spending on programs and services, do you think they should be basing their decisions mainly on...?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



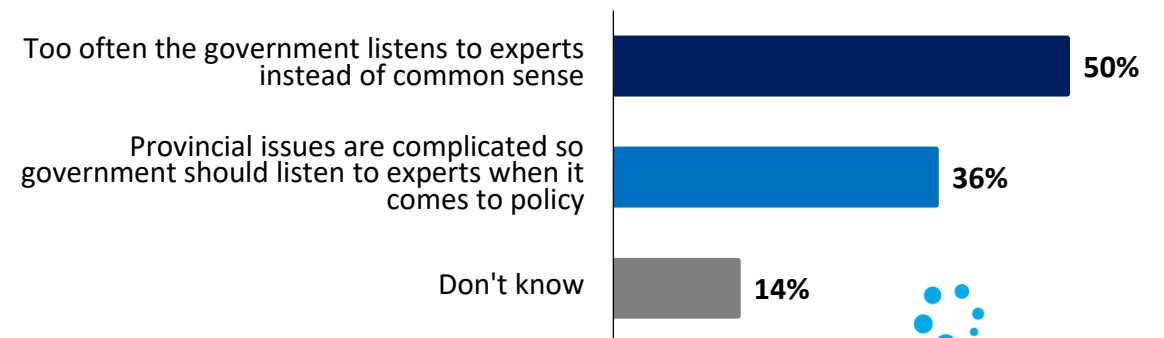
Q Is the main role of government to...?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Q Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Q When it comes to government decision making, which of the following statements is closest to your view?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

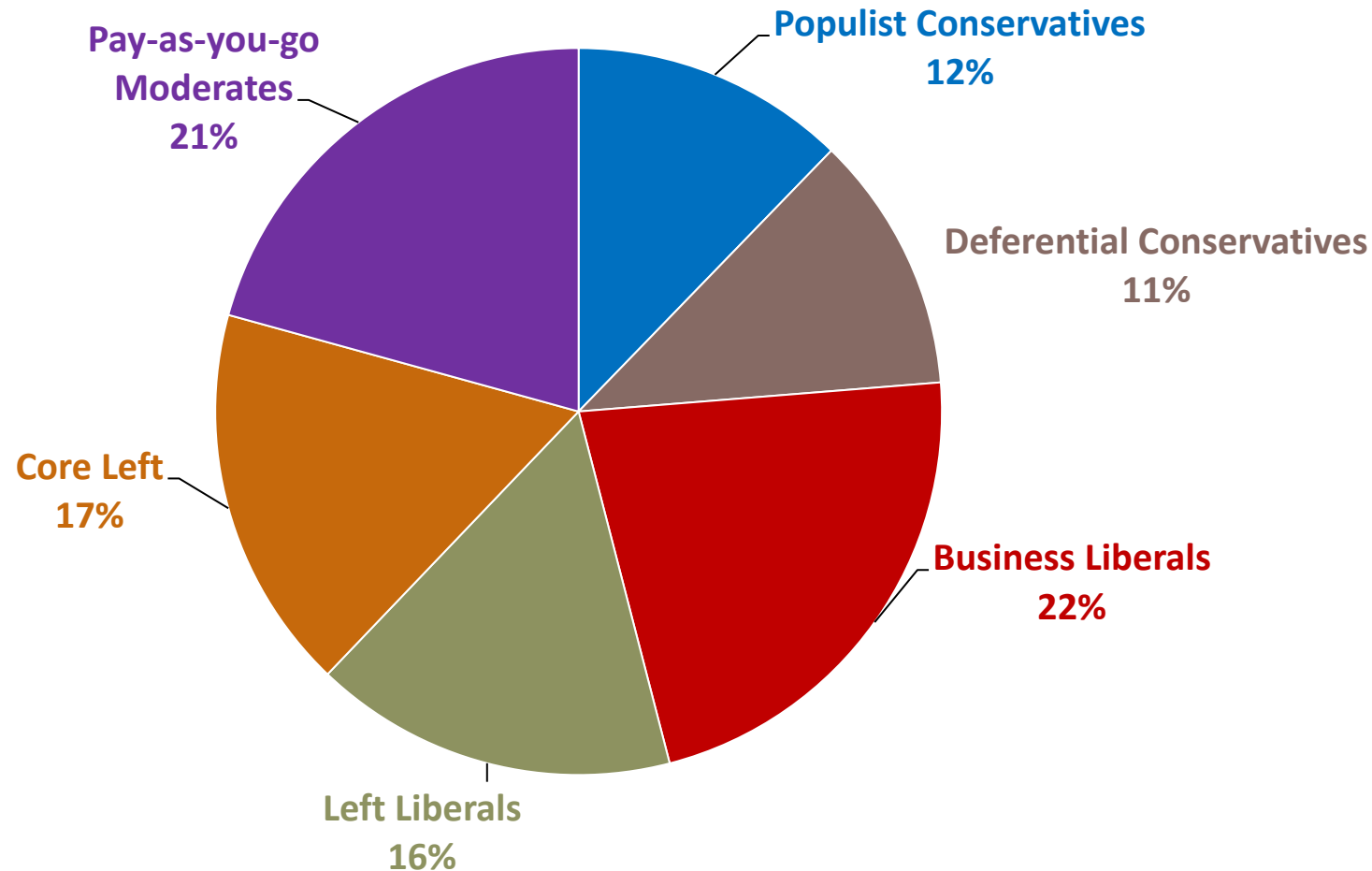


Value Clusters: A plurality of Canadians are Business Liberals (22%), followed by PAYG Moderates (21%) and the Core Left (17%)



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=1,500]



Defining Value Clusters: 90% of both PCs and DCs think the gov't should base decisions on ability to afford

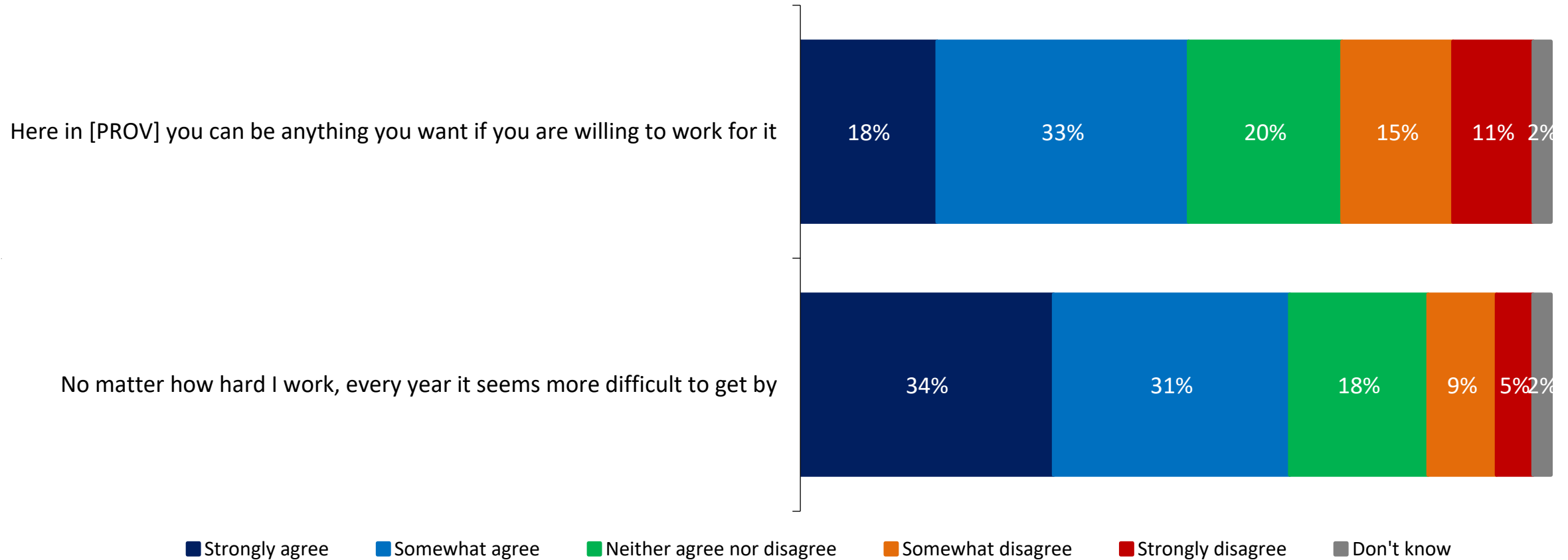
Core Political Values by Value Clusters

Column %		Populist Conservatives	Deferential Conservatives	Business Liberals	Left Liberals	Core Left	Pay-as-you-go Moderates
Governments should base decisions on...	Ability to afford	90%	90%	0%	0%	0%	74%
	Public Need	0%	0%	95%	93%	91%	0%
Is the main role of government to...?	Create equal opportunity	98%	72%	67%	96%	0%	34%
	Redistribute wealth	0%	23%	22%	0%	97%	35%
When it comes to government decision making...	Rely on common sense	100%	0%	43%	62%	46%	52%
	Listen to experts	0%	92%	43%	28%	43%	18%
The profit system...	Brings out the worst in human nature	0%	0%	0%	84%	88%	65%
	Teaches value of hard work and success	94%	91%	92%	0%	0%	7%

Economic Gap

Segmentation Attitudes: 65% of Canadians say every year it's more difficult to get by; 52% say you can be anything you want in their province

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? -
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



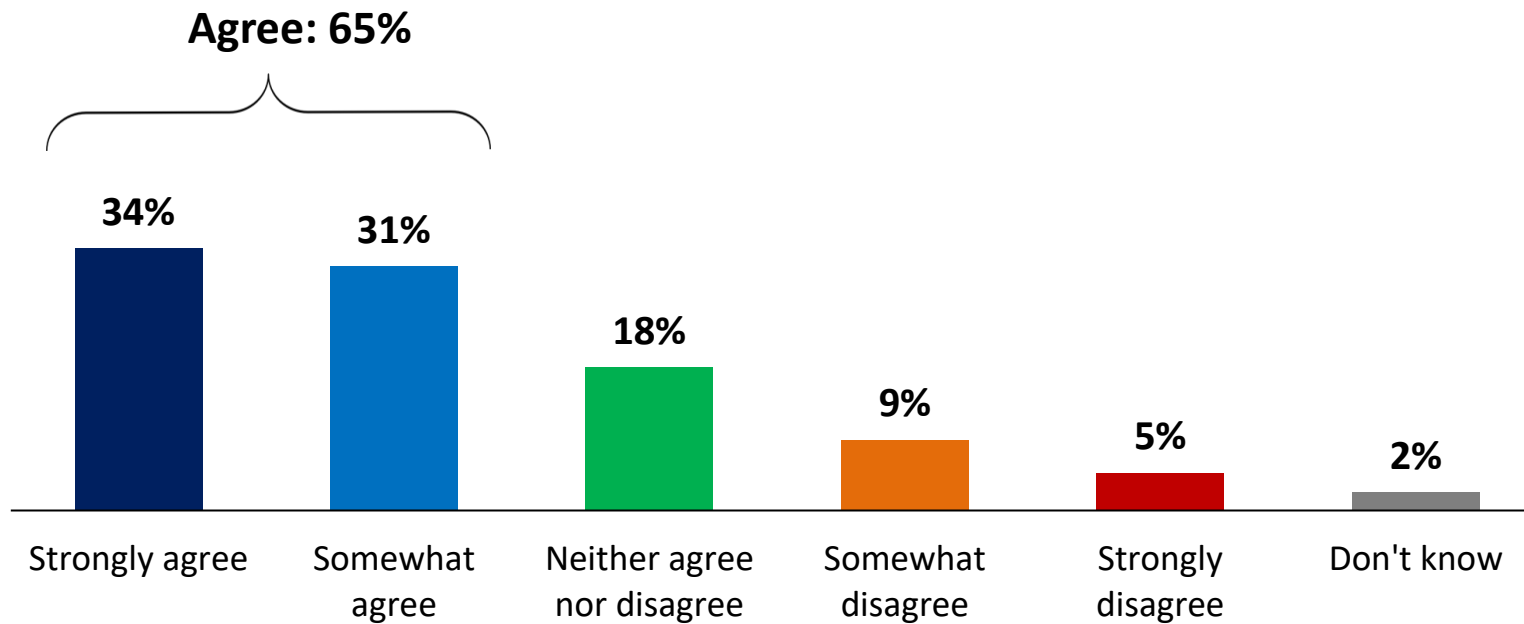
Economic Gap Segmentation Attitudes: Nearly 2-in-3 agree that hard to get by, regardless of how hard they work; higher among NDP



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

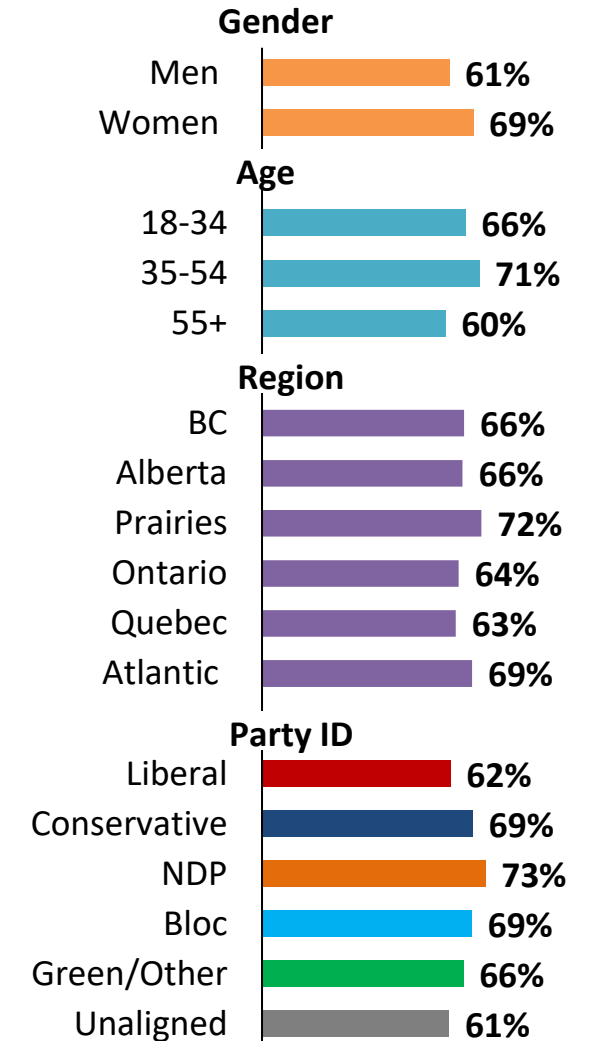
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

“No matter how hard I work, every year **it seems more difficult to get by**”



Segmentation

Those who say 'Agree'



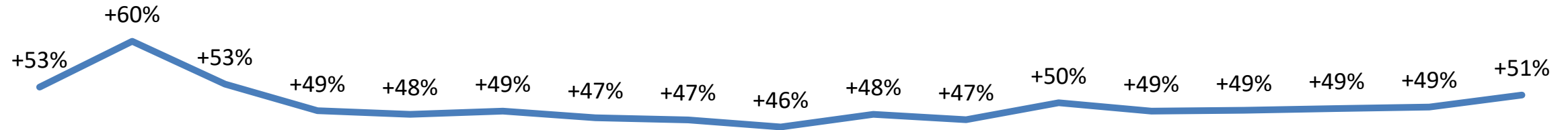
Segmentation Attitudes: Net agreement that getting by is becoming more difficult holds steady in 2026 at +51



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?:

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

“No matter how hard I work, every year it **seems more difficult to get by**”



Jan. '25 Feb. '25 Mar. '25 Apr. '25 May '25 Jun. '25 Jul. '25 Aug. '25 Sep. '25 Oct. '25 Nov. '25 Dec. '25 Jan. '26 Feb. '26 Mar. '26 Apr. '26 May. '26

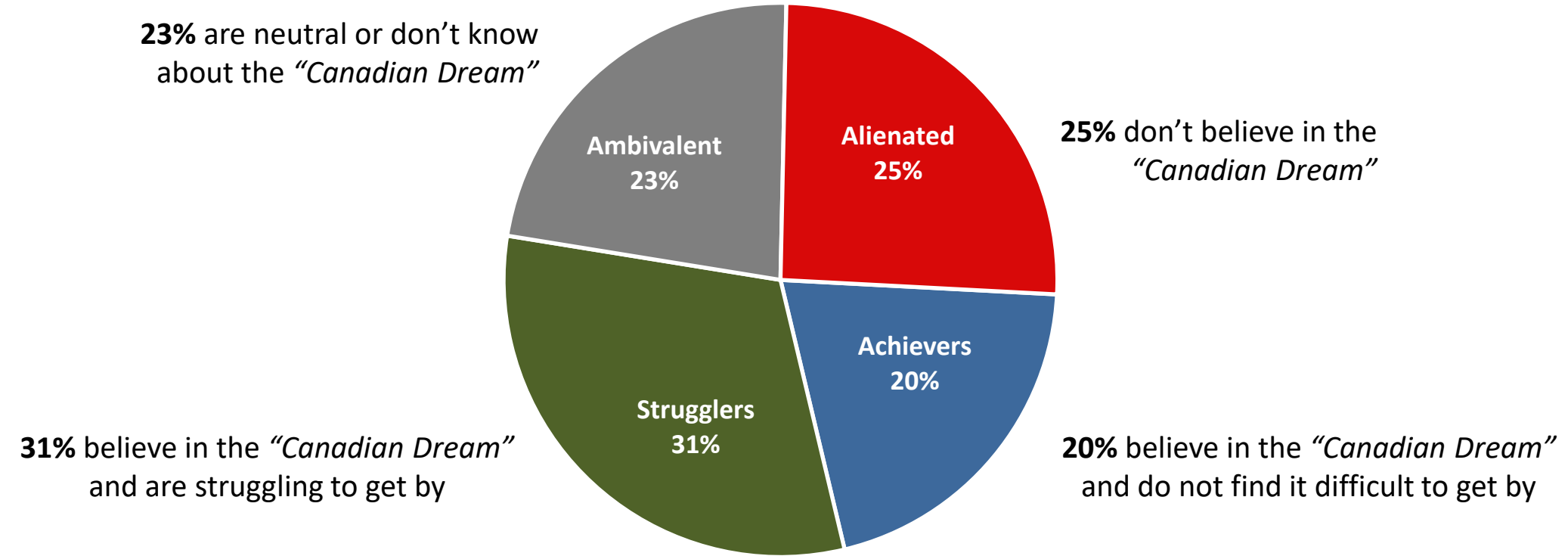
— NET Agreement



Economic Gap Segmentation: Most Canadians are in Strugglers segment (31%), followed by those who are Alienated (25%)



Gap segmentation: Agree with 'Here in [PROVINCE] you can be anything you want if you are willing to work for it' BY Agree with 'No matter how hard I work, every year it seems more difficult to get by'.
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

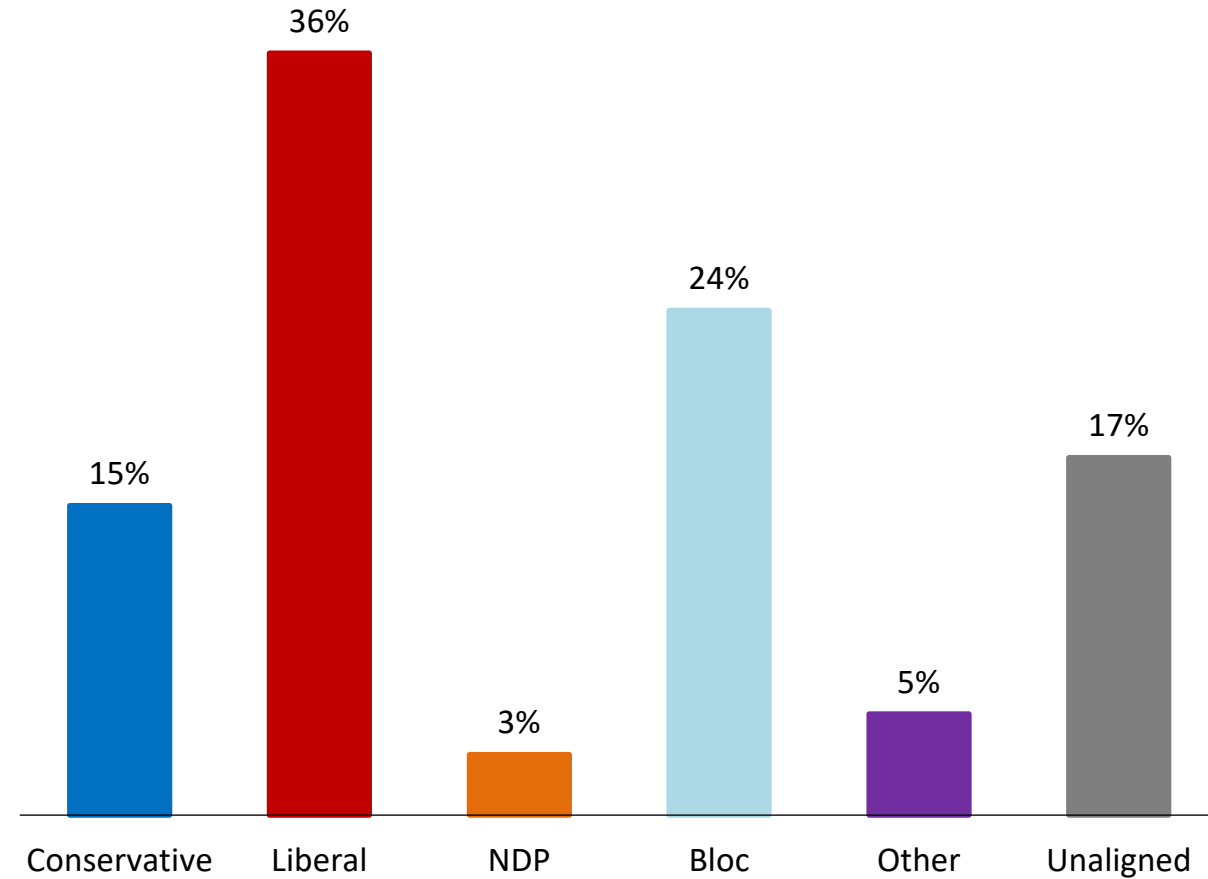


Party ID

Federal Party ID (Quebec vs. ROC): Those in Quebec are more likely to identify as Liberal (36%) than those in the Rest of Canada (31%)

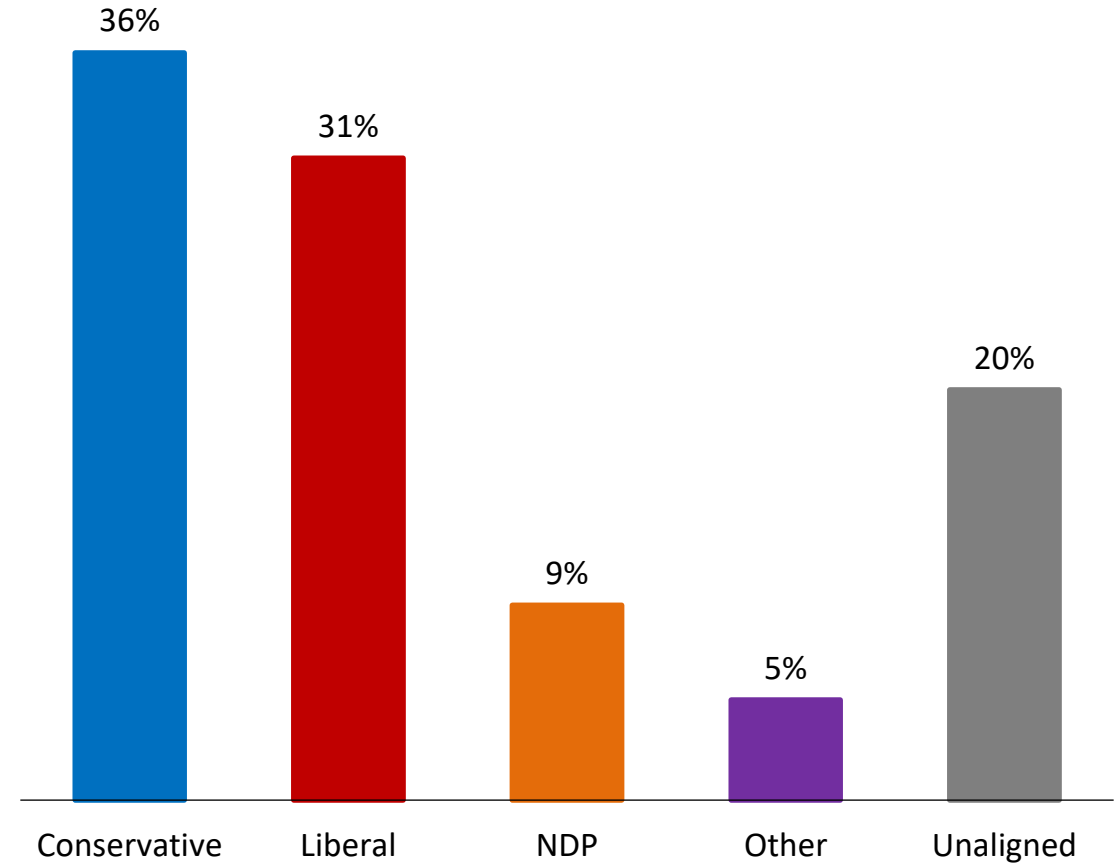
Party ID: Quebec

[Respondents in Quebec; n=346]



Party ID: Rest of Canada

[Respondents in the rest of Canada; n=1,154]

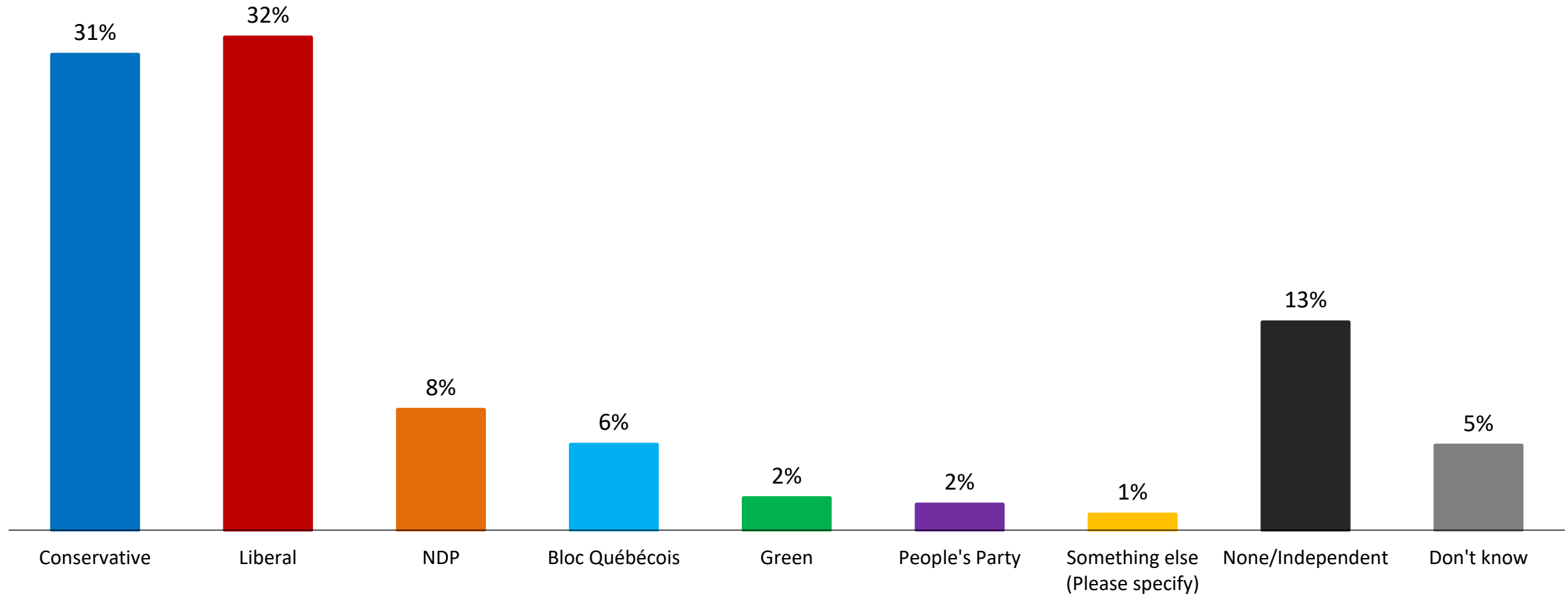


Federal Party ID: Conservative and Liberal are marginally tied; 13% identify as independent



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

[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]





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Building Understanding.

