



Canada This Month Smith Under Pressure

Public Opinion Research
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Field Dates: Sept. 04 to Sept. 18, 2026

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Study Overview



This September 2026 report highlights how:

- **Albertans view Premier Danielle Smith and the provincial government**
- **Examines Smith's standing overall and among UCP identifiers with different views on independence**
- **What Albertans recall hearing about her**
- **How they would vote on the October referendum question**

This deck presents selected findings. Contact INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP for a detailed briefing on the full results.

Key Findings

- 1 Smith's standing has weakened within the UCP coalition.** Her very favourable rating among UCP identifiers who would definitely vote for independence fell from 91% in October 2025 to 61% in September 2026. Her standing also softened among UCP identifiers who would definitely vote to stay in Canada.
- 2 The broader public is more negative about Smith and her government.** Smith's net favourability is -11, down from +5 in April. Among Albertans who recently heard about her, 52% say what they heard made them less favourable, while 23% say it made them more favourable.
- 3 The top three issues recalled are** Separatism and provincial autonomy (18%), U.S. tariffs and trade (16%), and the October referendum (16%) all with a negative impact on her favourability (net impact scores respectively -15, -17, -24).
- 4 Views on the October referendum question have changed little.** In September, 69% choose to remain in Canada and 23% choose to begin the process for a later binding separation referendum. Smith's declining ratings have not been accompanied by a comparable shift on this question.

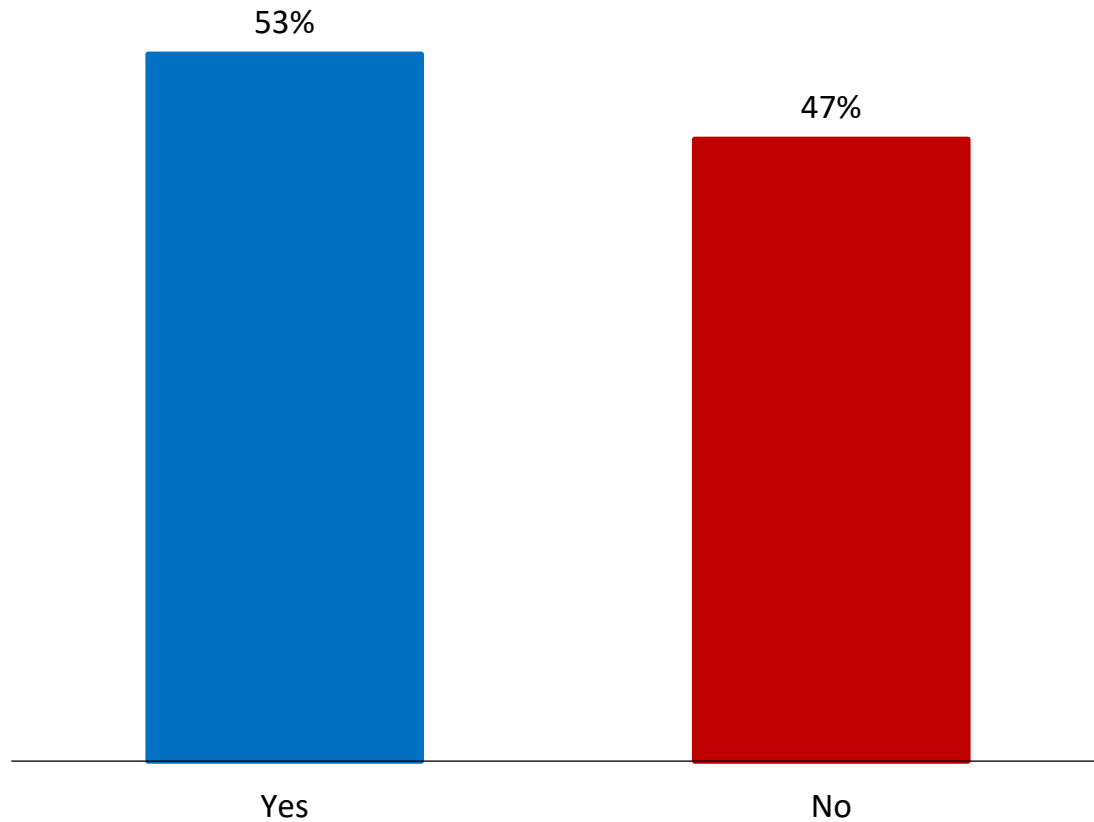
For a detailed briefing on the findings, including differences across UCP groups and what Albertans recall hearing about the Premier, please contact INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP.

Danielle Smith's Standing

The Winds of Public Debate are Blowing Against Danielle Smith and the UCP

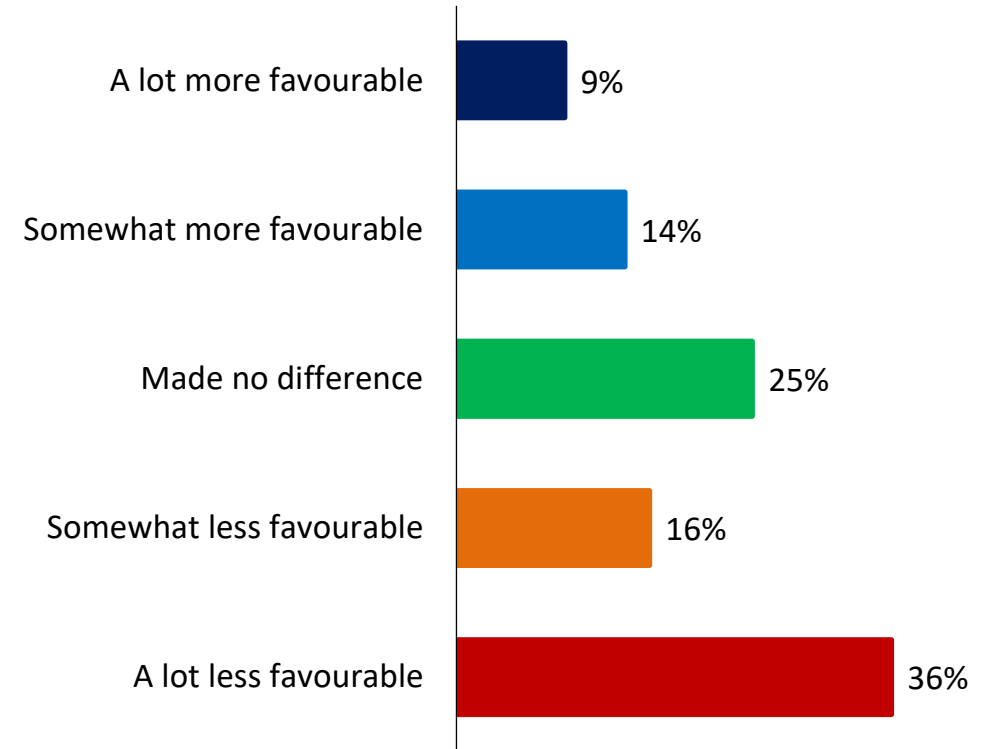
Q Have you read, seen or heard anything about Danielle Smith in the last few days?

[Asked of those who have RSH; n=500]



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 Danielle Smith, or did it make no difference?

[Asked of those who have RSH; n=266]

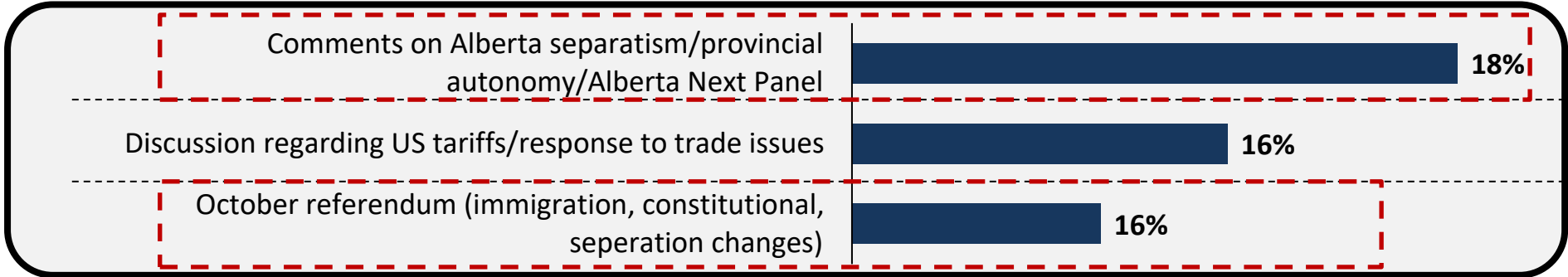


Alberta Separatism, US Tariffs, and the Referendum are the Top Issues⁷ Recalled; All Three Leading Issues have a Clear Negative Impact

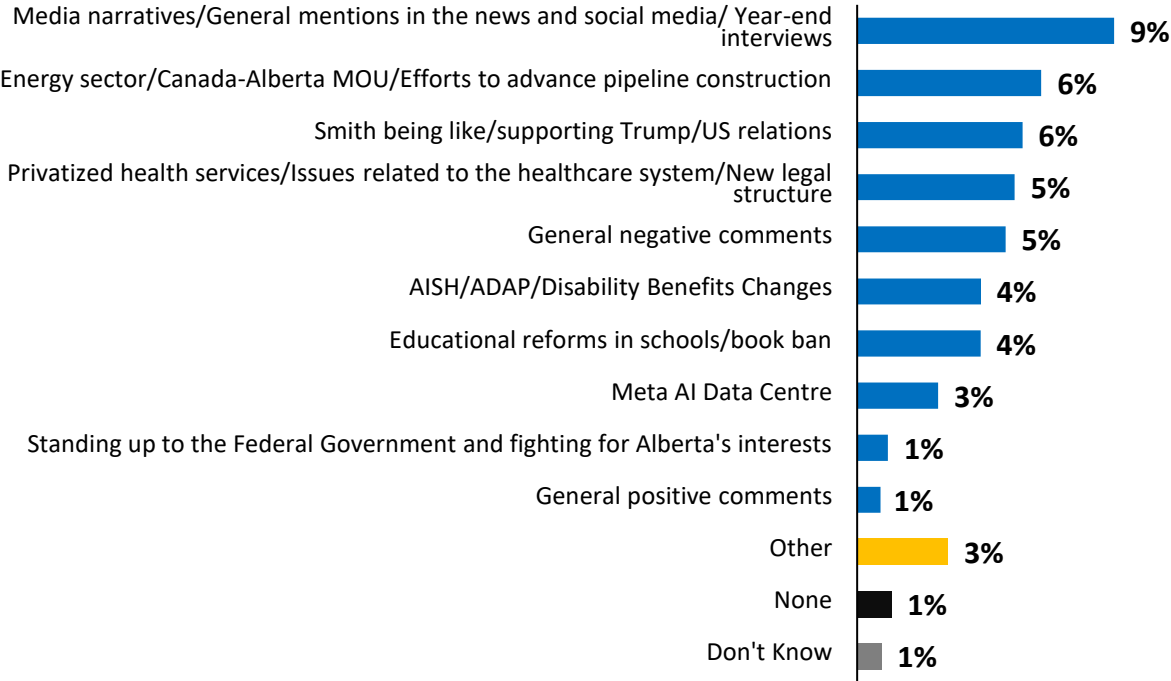


And what have you read, seen or heard about Alberta’s Premier Danielle Smith and the provincial government in the last few days?

[Asked of those who RSH about Danielle Smith and Gov’t; n=193]



Impact by RSH			
More fav.	No Difference	Less fav.	NET
36%	12%	52%	-15
28%	27%	45%	-17
23%	31%	47%	-24



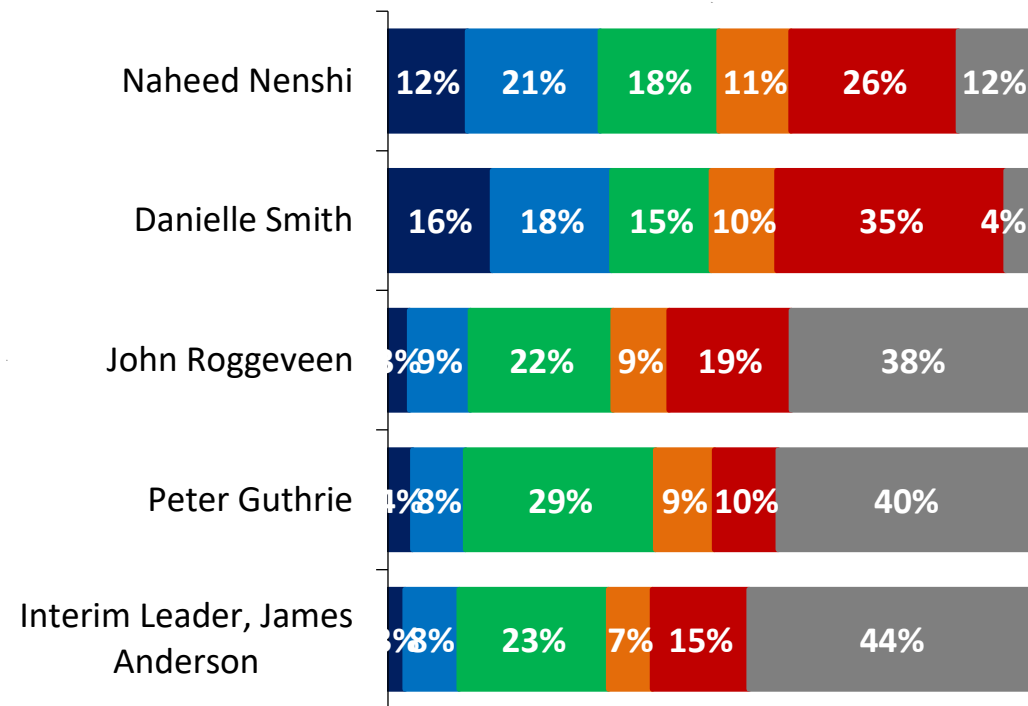
Note: Other includes responses <1% and ‘Refused’ (1%) not shown.

Danielle Smith's Favourability Has Declined Since Trudeau Was Replaced



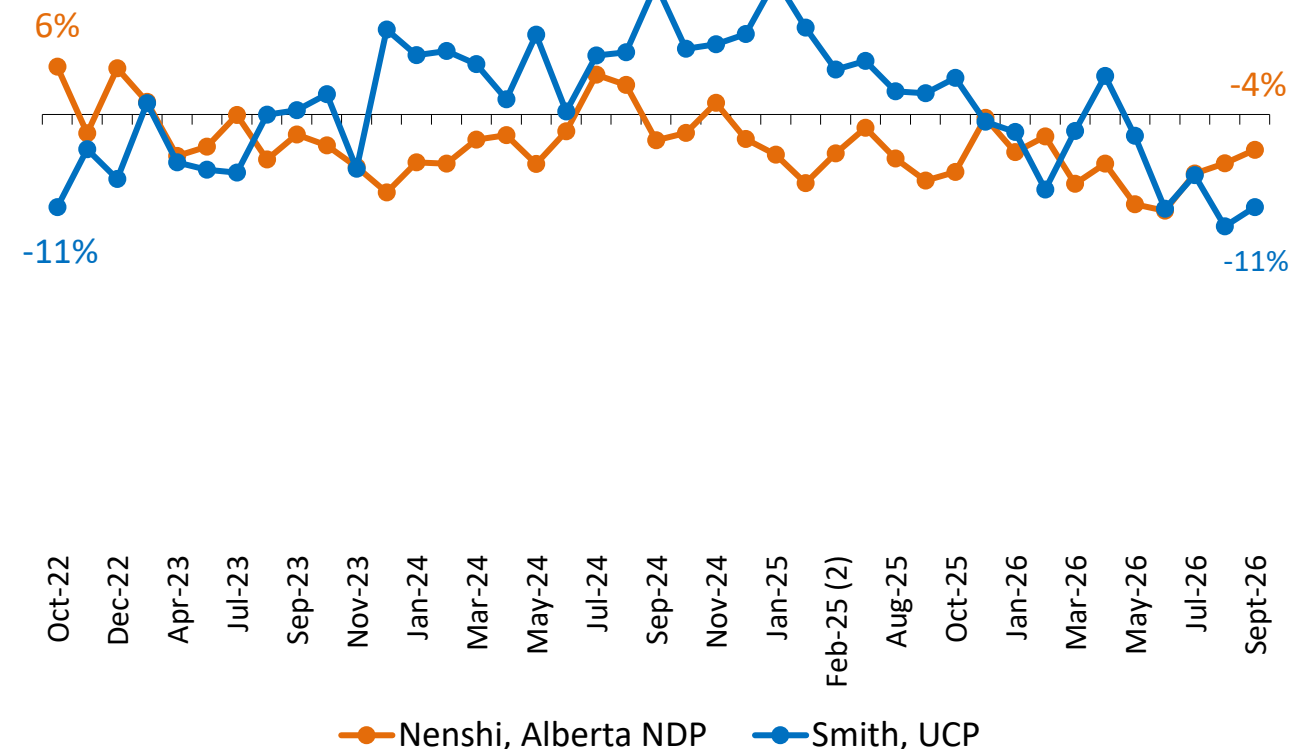
Below are the names of several individuals who have been mentioned in the news recently. For each one, please indicate whether you have heard of that person and, if so, whether you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, neither favourable or unfavourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable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

[asked of all respondents; n=500]



■ Very favourable
 ■ Somewhat favourable
 ■ Neither favourable nor unfavourable
 ■ Somewhat unfavourable
 ■ Very unfavourable
 ■ Don't know + don't recognize

Net leader favourables

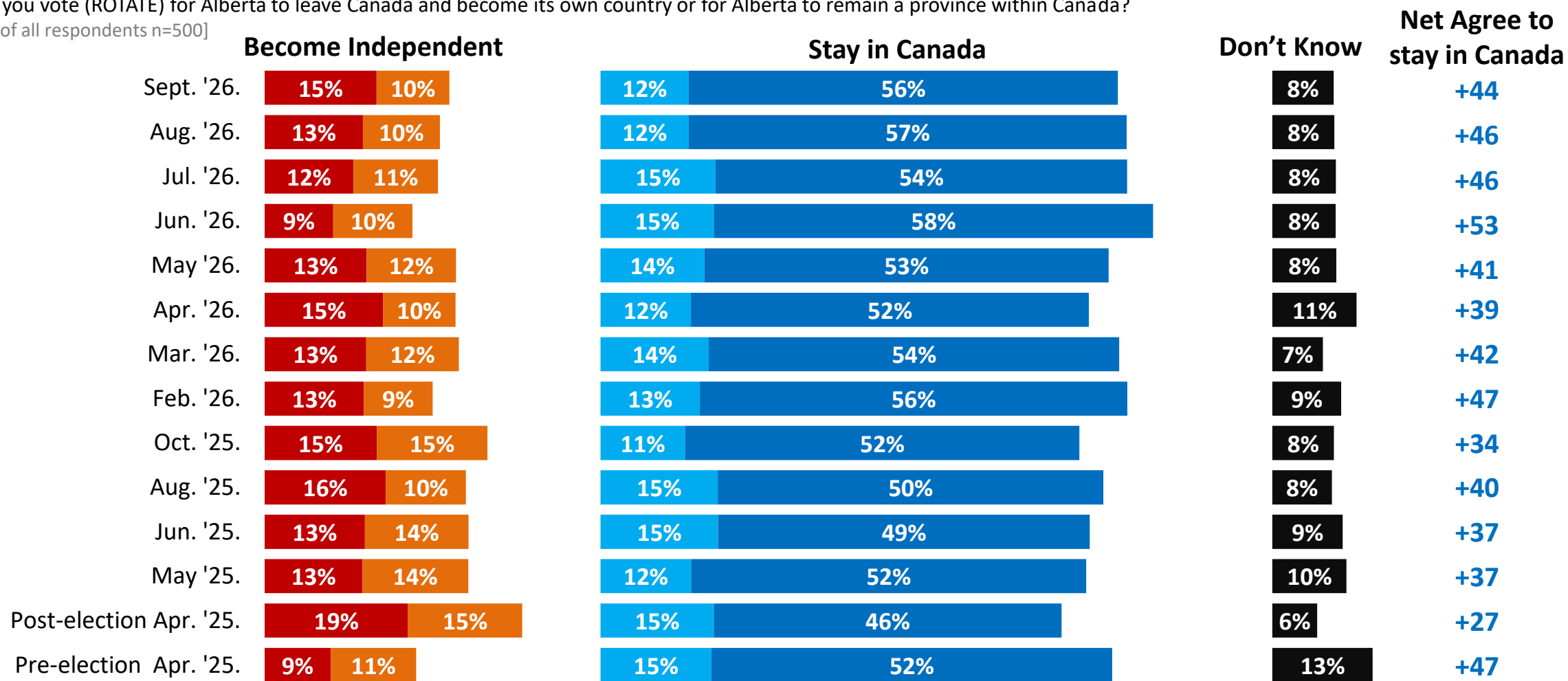


On the Generic Separation Question, Albertans' net support for staying⁹ in Canada is +44, 5 points higher than this year's April low



There has been growing attention lately in some provinces to the idea of some provinces leaving Canada to become their own countries. If there was a referendum in your province, would you vote (ROTATE) for Alberta to leave Canada and become its own country or for Alberta to remain a province within Canada?

[asked of all respondents n=500]



■ Definitely would vote for my province to become an independent country

■ Probably would vote for my province to stay in Canada

■ Don't know

■ Probably would vote for my province to become an independent country

■ Definitely would vote for my province to stay in Canada

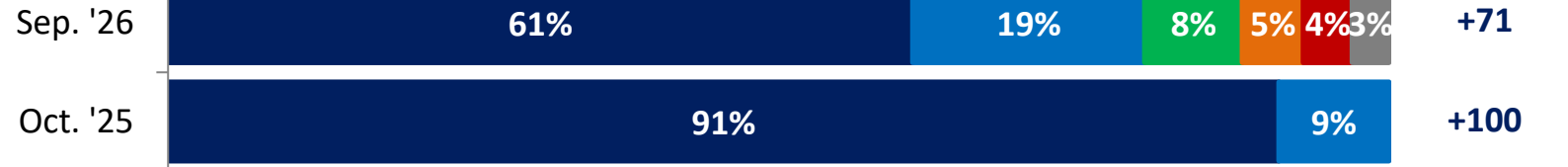
Within the UCP Base, Smith's Support Declines Most Among Strong Separatists



For Danielle Smith - 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.
If there was a referendum in your province, would you vote (ROTATE) for Alberta to leave Canada and become its own country or for Alberta to remain a province within Canada?

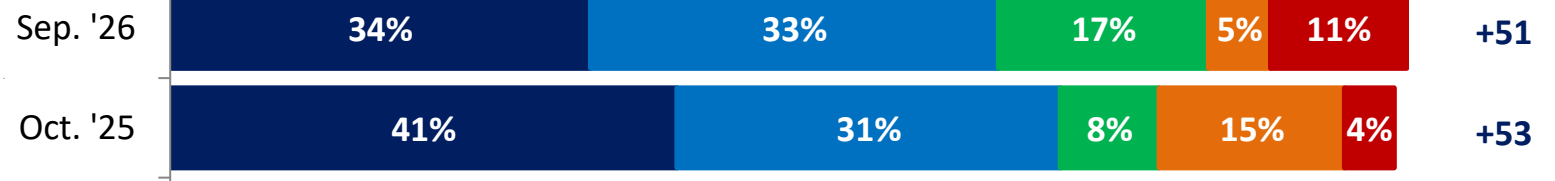
UCP

Definitely would vote for my province to become an independent country



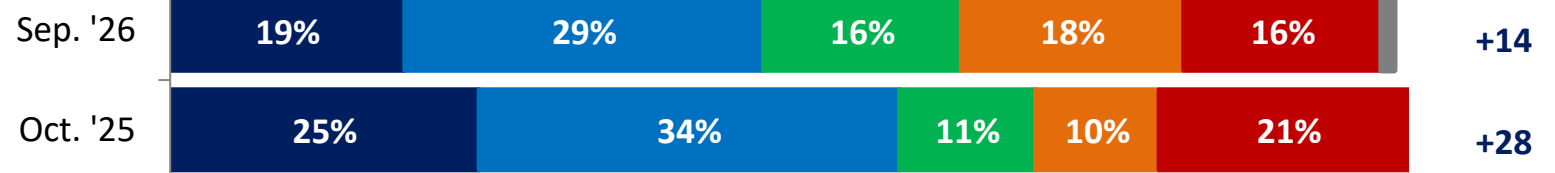
UCP

Ambivalent



UCP

Definitely would vote for my province to stay in Canada



Very favourable

Somewhat unfavourable

Don't know

Somewhat favourable

Very unfavourable

Neutral/Neither favourable nor unfavourable

Do not recognize

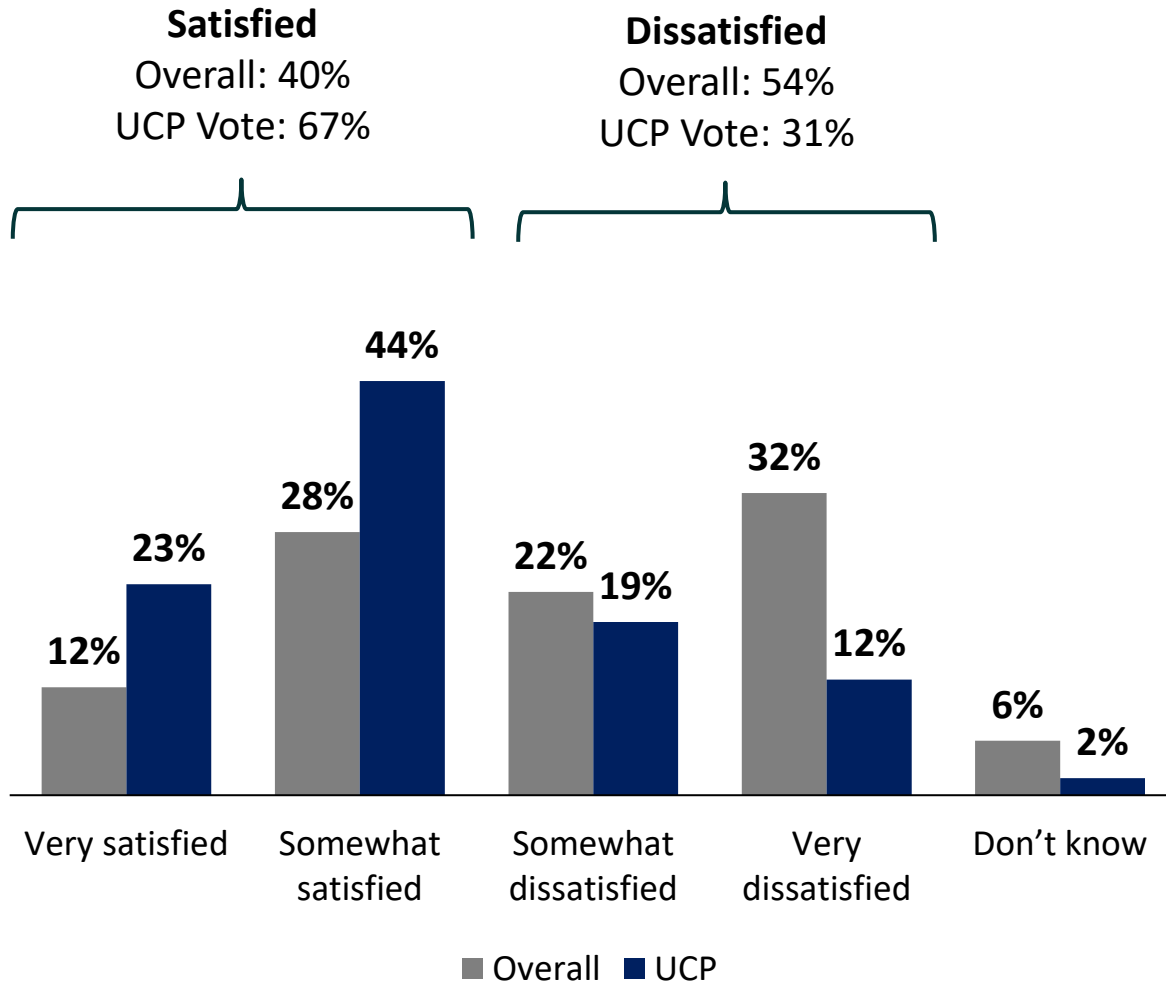
Approval of the Government

Overall provincial satisfaction at 40%; 31% of potential UCP voters are dissatisfied

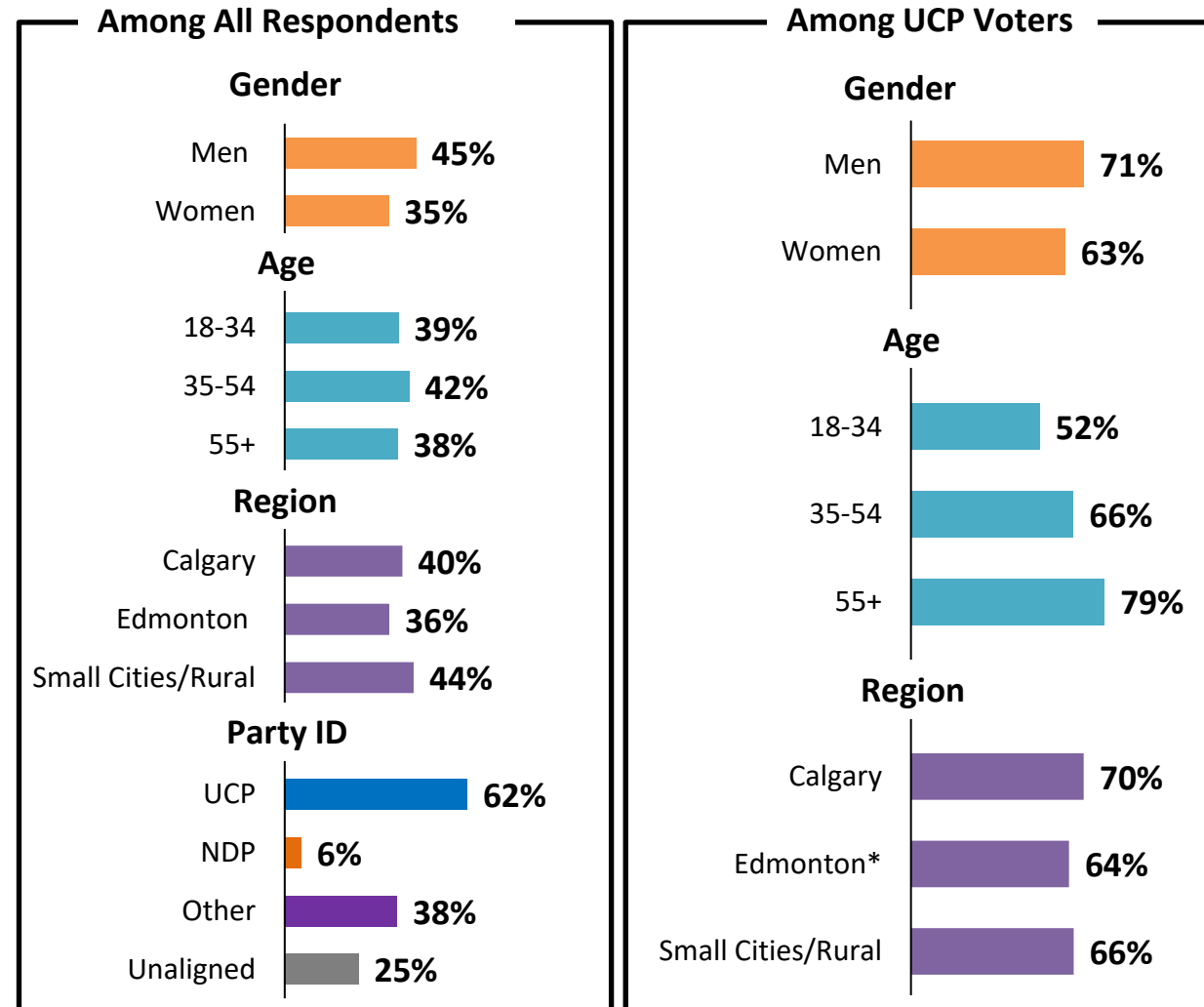


Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the performance of the PROVINCIAL government in Alberta? Would you say you are...?

[asked of all respondents; overall, n=500; UCP, n=205]



Segmentation: "Satisfied"



Current data: September 2026

Note: * indicates small sample size (<50) | UCP vote represents the combined UCP vote | Party ID are those that self-identify with a particular party

Referendum Vote

Specific Referendum Ballot: Support for remaining in Canada remains stable at 69%, with a majority engaged (80%) and very likely to vote

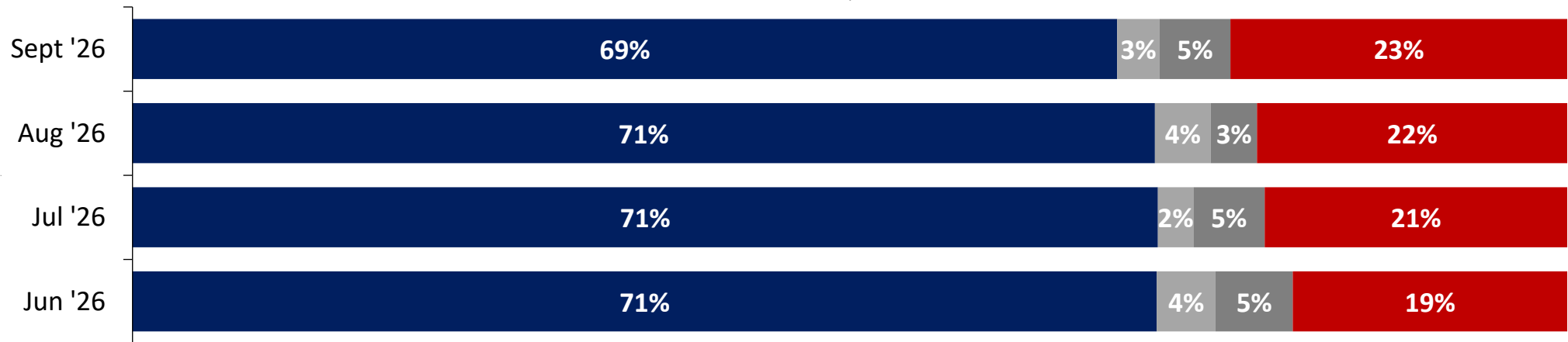
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Q

In October, Albertans will be asked to vote on the following referendum question - which answer would you vote for?

Should Alberta remain a province in Canada, or should the Government of Alberta commence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial referendum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada?

[asked of all respondents; n=500]



■ Alberta should remain a province in Canada.

■ I won't vote

■ Don't know

■ The Government of Alberta should commence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial referendum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada

Methodology

Survey Methodology



These are the results of an online survey conducted between September 04, 2026, to September 18, 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=543 Albertans, 18 years or older. The results are weighted to n=500 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

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Weighting: Results for Alberta 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	52	9.6%	71	14.1%
Men 35-54	92	17%	89	17.8%
Men 55+	118	21.8%	86	17.3%
Women 18-34	59	10.9%	71	14.1%
Women 35-54	92	17%	89	17.9%
Women 55+	129	23.8%	94	18.8%
Calgary	187	34.4%	159	31.8%
Edmonton	182	33.5%	164	32.9%
Small Cities / Rural	174	32%	177	35.3%



Building Understanding.

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