

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Public Opinion Research

Private Investment in Airports

Public Support and Reservations

Release Date: November 6, 2026
Field Dates: October 15th to November 2, 2026

© Copyright 2026 Innovative Research Group Inc.

Table of Contents

Study Overview	3
Key Findings	4
Reaction to the Airport Proposal	5
Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)	9
Airport Proposal and P3 Attitudes	12
Appendices	20
Methodology	22
Party ID	23
Ideology Clusters	25
Contact	28

Study Overview

This report examines Canadians' attitudes toward public-private partnerships (P3s) and the proposal to allow private investment in major airports. It covers:

1. **Familiarity with and support for public-private partnerships**
2. **Familiarity with, support for, and interpretation of the airport proposal**
3. **How broader P3 attitudes shape reactions to the airport proposal**
4. **Rule-based Airport/P3 audience segments and their demographic and political profiles**
5. **Airport support and interpretation by familiarity and by general P3 support**

Key Findings

1. **Canadians divide over the proposal's purpose.** Forty-one percent (41%) see a new way to get things done; 38% see corporate agendas taking priority. The split is not a simple partisan divide. Aligned supporters are 42% Liberal and 31% Conservative, while opposition-inclined respondents are 35% Conservative and 20% Liberal.

2. **Support has a narrow lead, with many yet to take a side.** Thirty-one per cent support the airport proposal, 25% oppose it, and 44% are neutral or unsure. The neutral or unsure group includes a large 'uncommitted' segment (28% of Canadians). A third of that segment (33%) does not align with any federal party.

3. **General P3 support does not automatically extend to airports.** Twenty-two per cent support both approaches; 16% support P3s without supporting the airport proposal, and 9% show the reverse pattern. The gap runs both ways. Airport-specific supporters (9%) back the proposal without backing P3s generally. Among P3-specific supporters, 42% see corporate agendas and 38% see new ways to get things done.

4. **Perceptions of government intent differ sharply across segments.** Seventy-six per cent of aligned supporters select "getting things done," while 70% of opposition-inclined respondents select "corporate agendas." The uncommitted segment is the least settled on this question: 44% don't know which statement fits, compared with 3% of aligned supporters.

5. **Familiarity is associated with higher support.** Airport support ranges from 58% among the very familiar to 16% among those unaware or unsure; this does not establish that increasing awareness would change opinions. The familiarity gap is wide, but the airport proposal is also less understood than P3s generally. Only 32% say they are familiar with P3s, so many opinions rest on limited information.

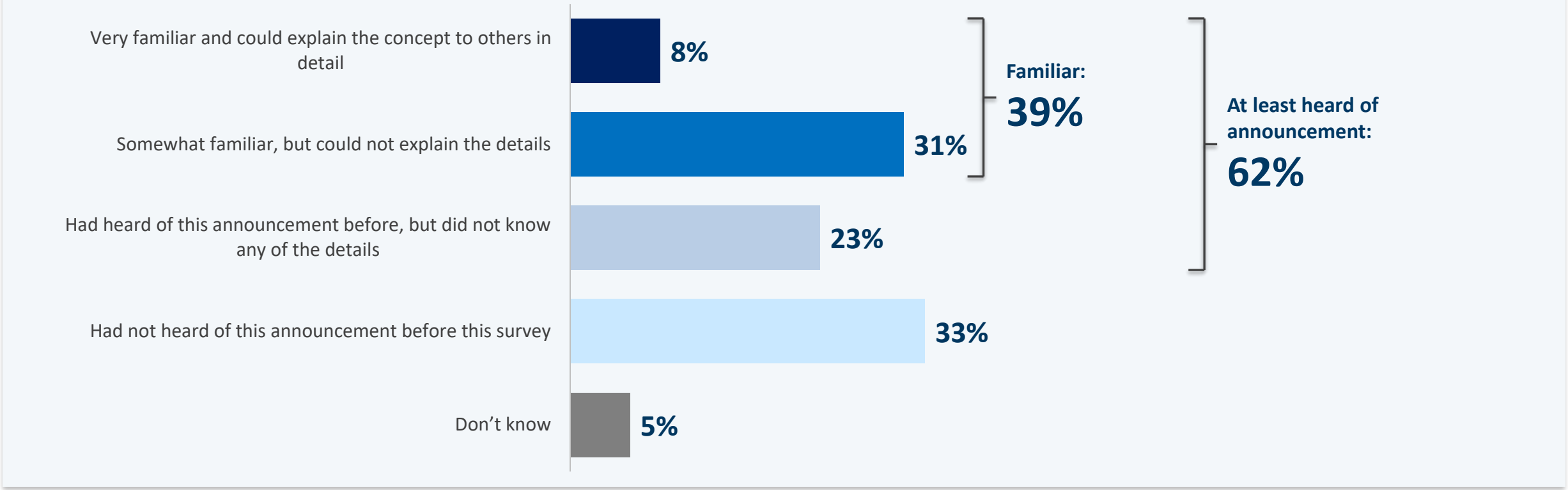
Reaction to The Airport Proposal

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Airport Proposal: 4-in-10 (39%) Canadians at least somewhat familiar with the announcement, 62% have at least heard something

On September 15th, 2026, the federal government led by Prime Minister Mark Carney's announced a proposal to open Canada's four largest airports – *Toronto-Pearson, Vancouver, Montréal-Trudeau, and Calgary* – to private investment through long-term agreements to operate the airports.

Before this survey, how familiar were you with this announcement?
[asked of all respondents nationally, n=1,500]



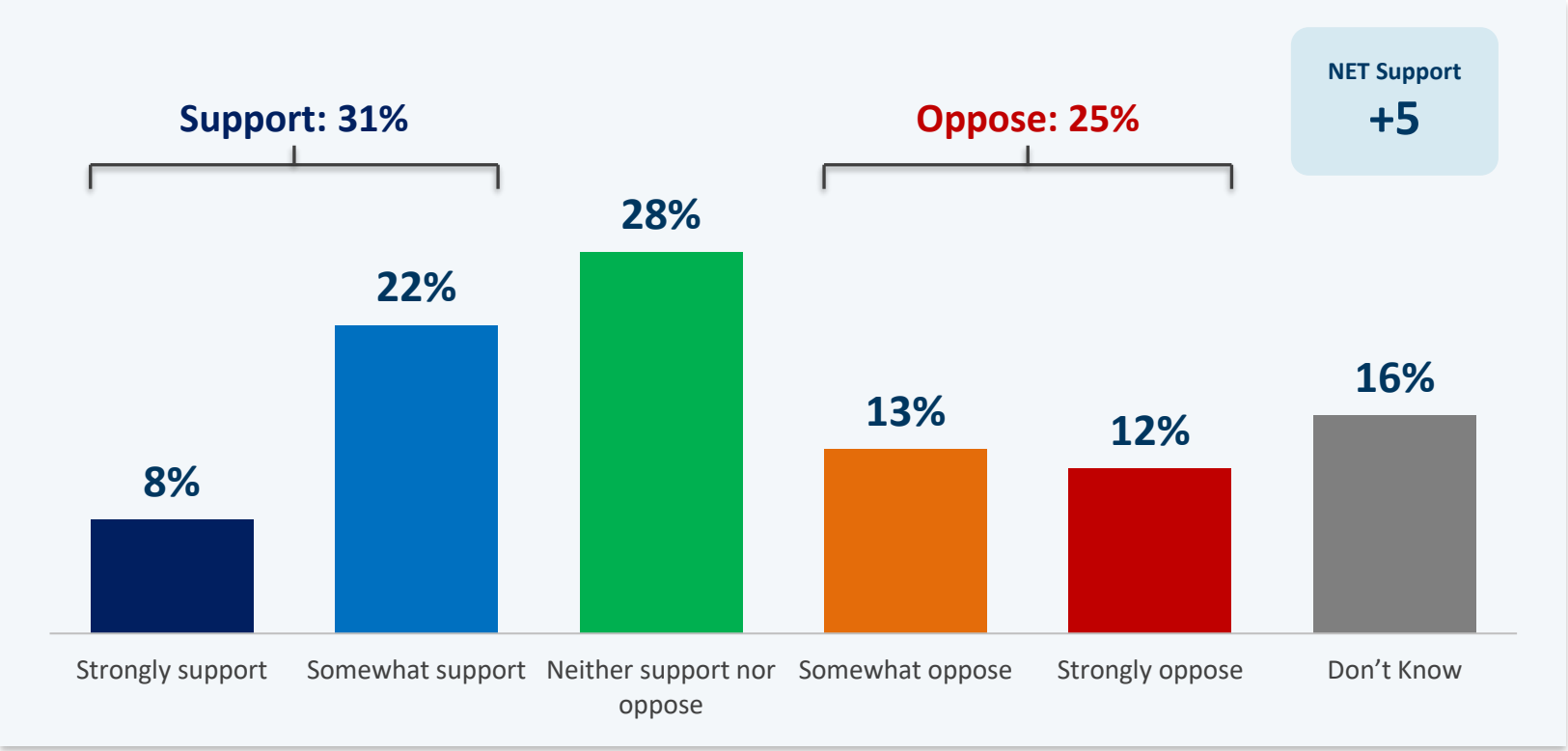
Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

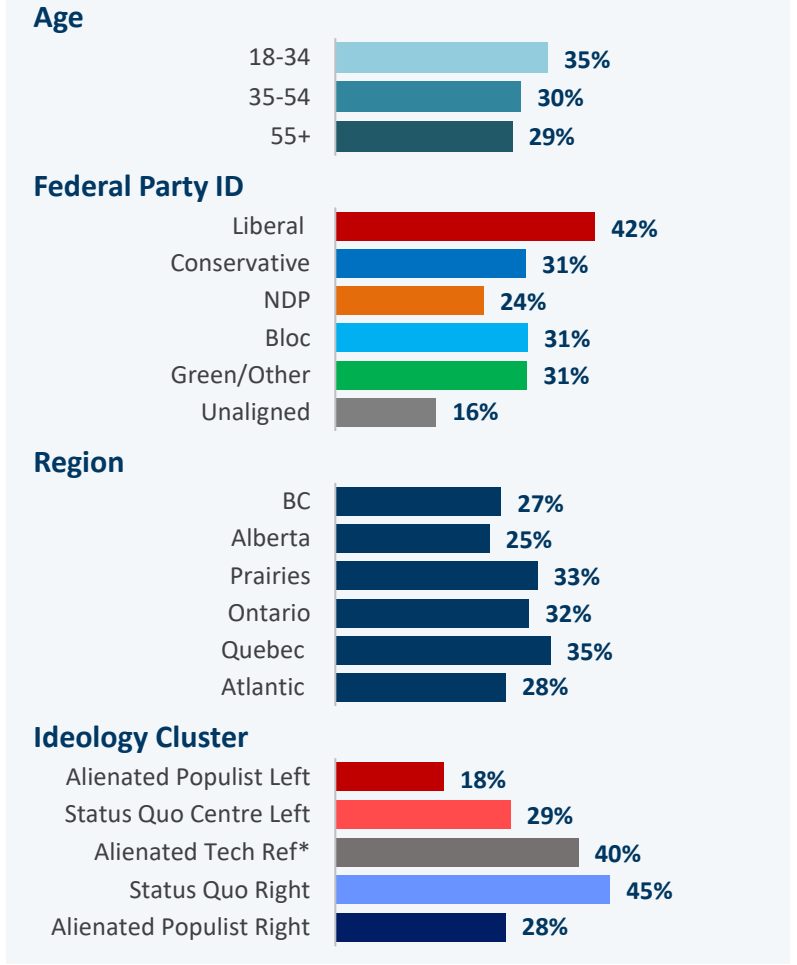
Airport Proposal: Opinion on the proposal is open for most Canadians, as 44% neither support, oppose, or are unsure. Among those decided NET support is +5

Under this proposal, private investors would be able to invest in and operate these airports through long-term agreements. Airports would be funded by revenue sources such as rents and fees charged to airlines and passengers. The federal government would retain underlying ownership of the airport land and assets.

To what extent do you support or oppose this proposal?
[asked of all respondents nationally, n=1,500]



Segmentation
Those who say 'Support'



Data source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)
*Alienated Technocratic Reformers

Perception of the Proposal: Canadians are split on the govt's motives, 41% see a new way to get things done, 38% see corporate interests put ahead of the public

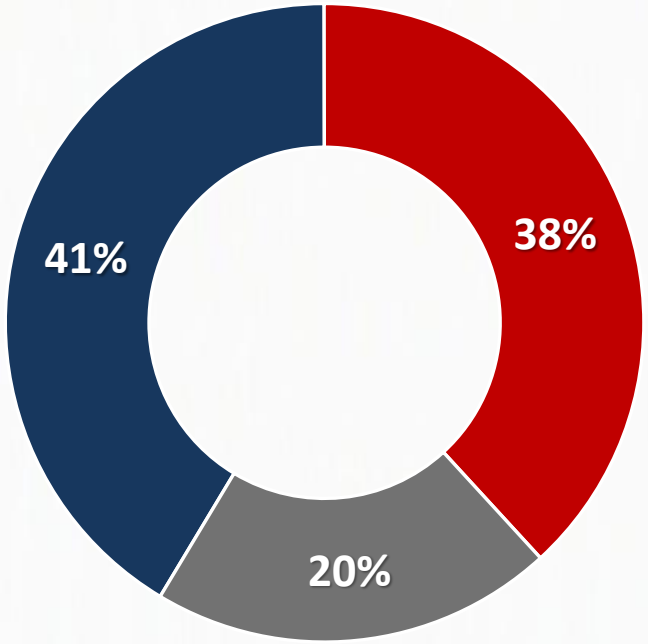
Which of the following statements best reflects your feelings about this proposal?

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

VIEWPOINT 1

New ways to get things done

I like that the Carney government is looking for new ways to get things done in Canada.



VIEWPOINT 2

Corporate agendas ahead of public interest

I feel that this is an example of the Carney government putting corporate agendas ahead of the public interest.

Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

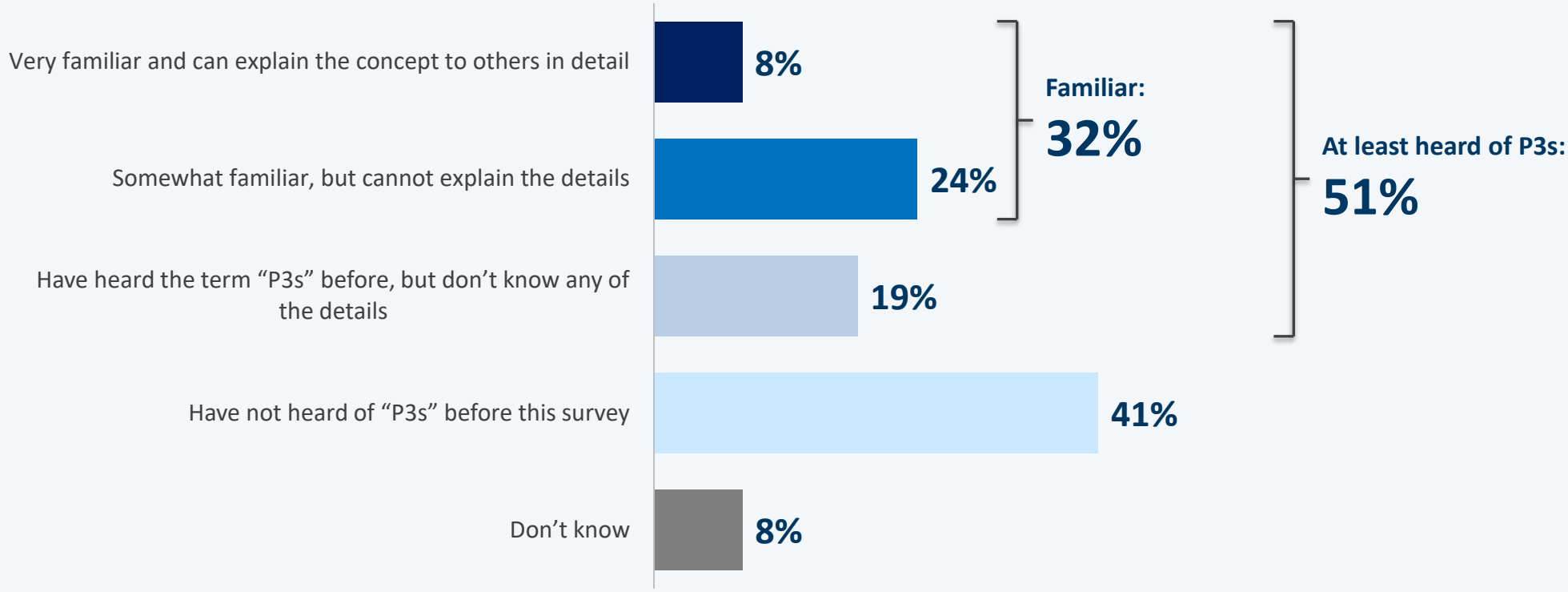
Public-private Partnerships (P3s)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Public-Private Partnerships: 32% Canadians are familiar with P3s and about half have at least heard of them, while 41% had never heard before this survey

Familiarity: … There are a number of different ways the private sector can become involved in delivering government services such as roads and public transit. One way is called "Public-Private Partnerships", "PPP" or "P3s".

How familiar are you with the concept of public-private partnerships?
[asked of all respondents nationally, n=1,500]



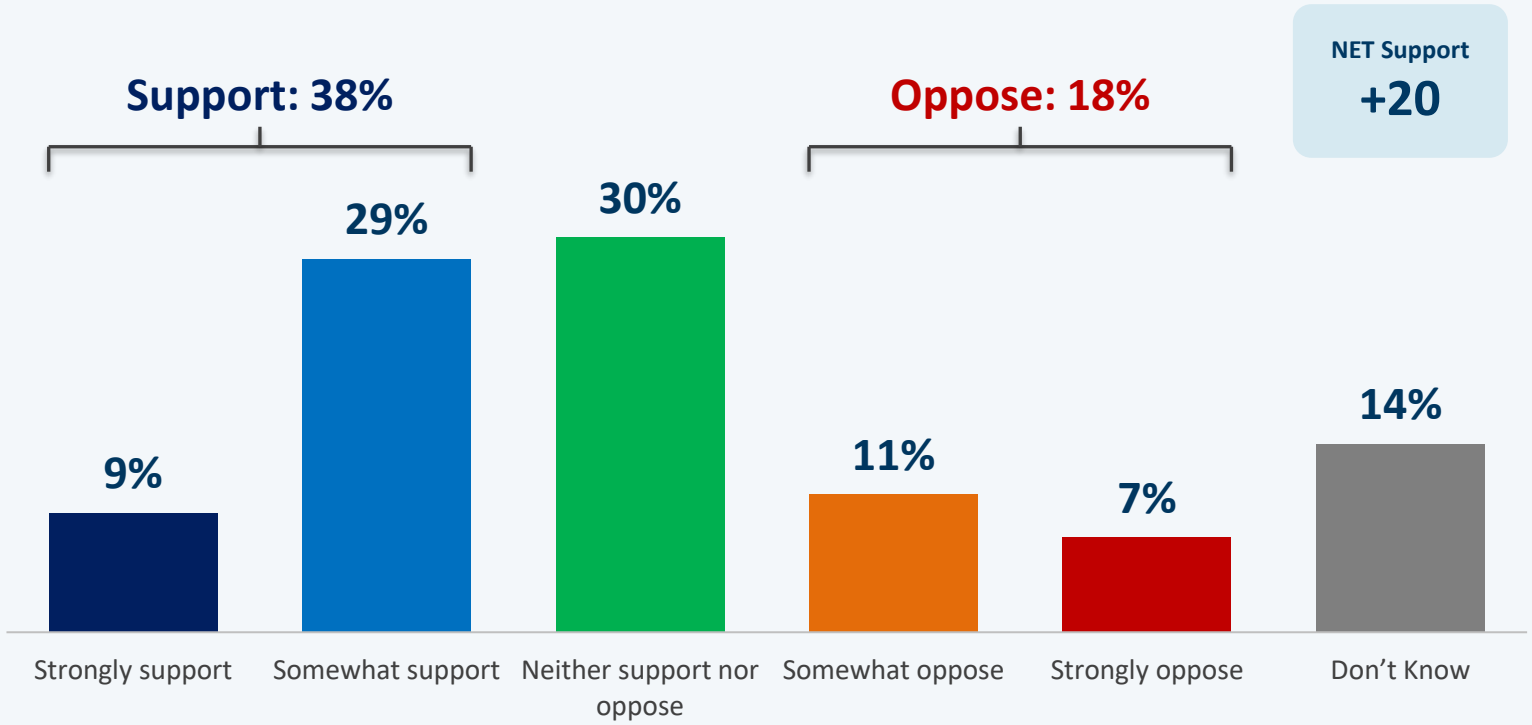
Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

P3 Support: Among Canadians, 38% support and 18% oppose (NET +20) the idea of P3s, though a plurality (44%) are either unsure or don't know

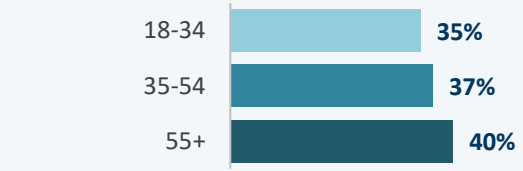
As you may know, public-private partnerships are projects that involve the private sector in delivering of government services.

Do you support or oppose the general idea of increasing the involvement of the private sector in the delivery of government services?
[asked of all respondents nationally, n=1,500]

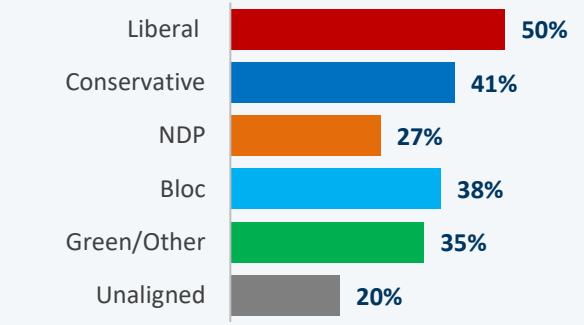


Segmentation
Those who say 'Support'

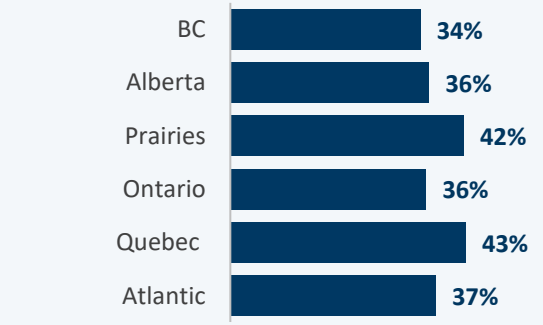
Age



Federal Party ID



Region



Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

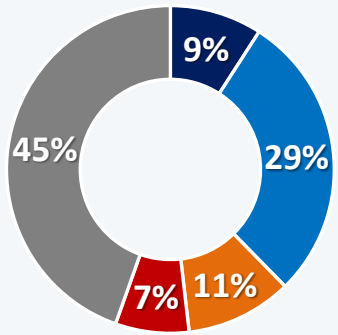
Airport Proposal and P3 Attitudes

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Airport Support BY P3 Support: While proposal and P3 support coincide, where support for P3s is undecided (45%) it is also undecided on the proposal (64%)

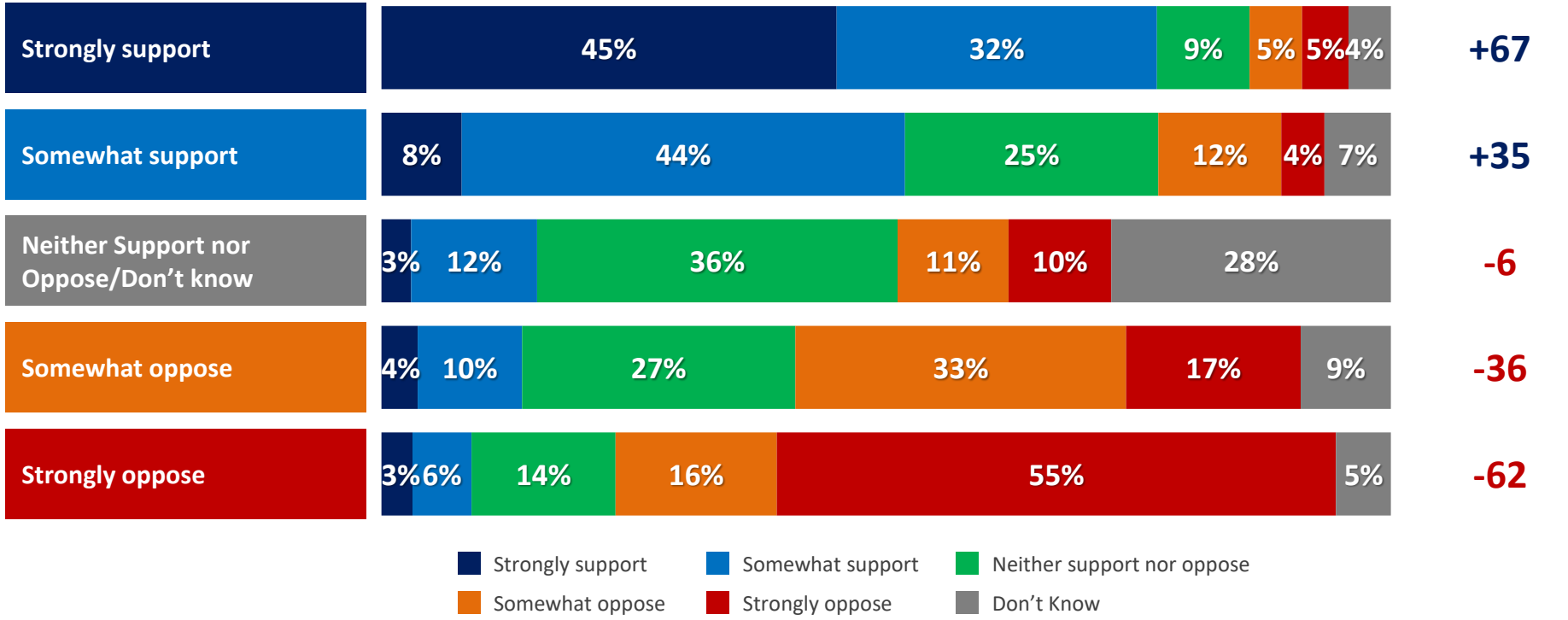
To what extent do you support or oppose this proposal?
BY Do you support or oppose the general idea of increasing the involvement of the private sector in the delivery of government services?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

P3 Support



- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Neither/Don't know

P3 Support — **Support for the Airport Proposal** — **Net Support**

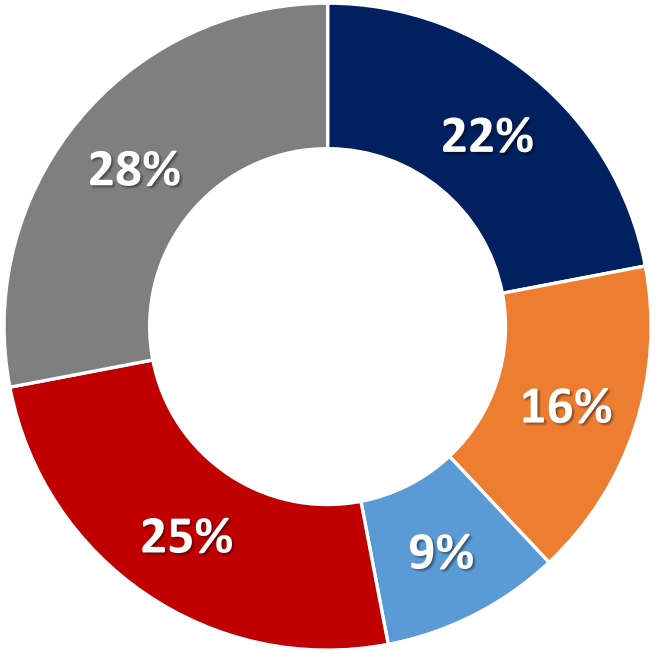


Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Airport and P3 Segments: Only 1-in-5 (22%) of Canadians support both ideas, 25% lean opposed, and the largest group (28%) is neutral or unsure on both

Airport proposal: Support or opposition to allowing private investors to invest in and operate major airports through long-term agreements.
P3s: Support or opposition to increasing private-sector involvement in delivering government services.



Aligned supporters (22%)
Support both the airport proposal and P3s.

P3-specific supporters (16%)
Support P3s. Neutral / DK or oppose the airport proposal.

Airport-specific supporters (9%)
Support the airport proposal. Neutral / DK or oppose P3s.

Opposition-inclined (25%)
Oppose at least one proposal and support neither.

Neutral / uncommitted (28%)
Neutral / DK on both the airport proposal and P3s.

Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

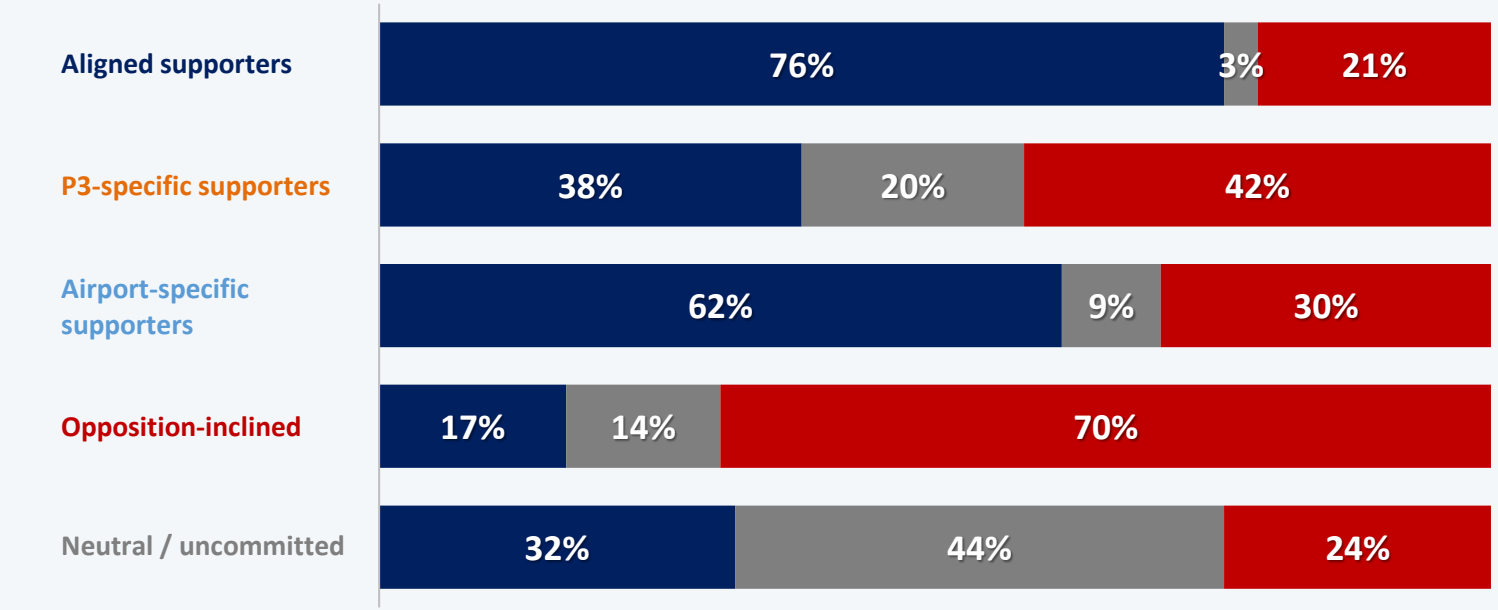
Note: "Specific supporters" support only one proposal and may be neutral, don't know, or opposed to the other. DK = don't know.

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Interpretation by Segment: Proposal supporters see “new ways to get things done” (76%), opponents see “corporate agendas” (70%)

Which of the following statements best reflects your feelings about this proposal?

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



Segment definitions

Aligned supporters
Support both the airport proposal and P3s.

P3-specific supporters
Support P3s; neutral / DK or oppose the airport proposal.

Airport-specific supporters
Support the airport proposal; neutral / DK or oppose P3s.

Opposition-inclined
Oppose at least one proposal and support neither.

Neutral / uncommitted
Neutral / DK on both the airport proposal and P3s.

Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Segment Profiles: Supporters lean Liberal (42%) and status-quo right (29%); opponents lean Conservative (35%) and populist (56% left or right)

		Aligned supporters (n=327)	Airport-specific supporters (n=135)	Opposition-inclined (n=377)	P3-specific supporters (n=238)	Neutral / uncommitted (n=424)
Age	18-34	28%	33%	26%	19%	28%
	35-54	32%	32%	34%	32%	32%
	55+	40%	34%	40%	49%	40%
Party ID	Liberal	42%	33%	20%	33%	23%
	Conservative	31%	33%	35%	38%	25%
	NDP	6%	9%	14%	7%	7%
	Bloc	7%	5%	4%	6%	8%
	Green/Other	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%
	Unaligned	9%	14%	21%	12%	33%
Ideology Cluster	Alienated Populist Left	9%	18%	32%	18%	22%
	Status Quo Centre Left	21%	25%	22%	20%	29%
	Alienated Tech Ref*	22%	24%	13%	18%	16%
	Status Quo Right	29%	16%	8%	22%	15%
	Alienated Populist Right	19%	16%	24%	22%	19%

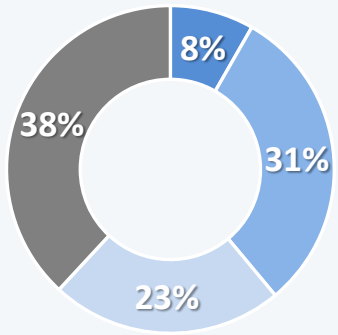
Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Airport Support by Familiarity: The more people know about the proposal, the more they support it; 58% of those very familiar support it vs. 16% of those who hadn't heard of it

To what extent do you support or oppose this proposal?
BY Familiarity With The Airport Privatization Proposal
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

Familiarity with The Airport Privatization Proposal

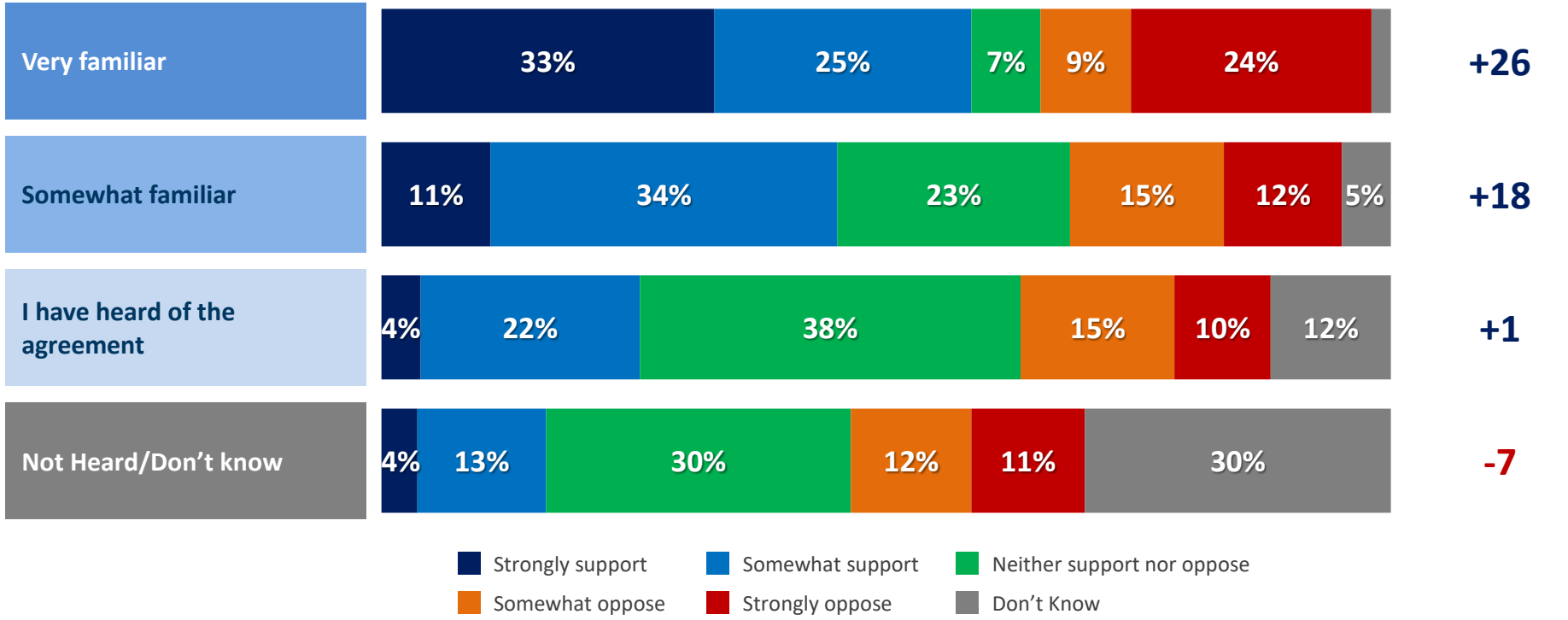


- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- I have heard of the agreement
- Not Heard/Don't know

Familiarity with The Airport Privatization Proposal

Support for the Airport Proposal

Net Support



Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Airport Support by Familiarity: More familiarity shrinks the undecided (50% → 9%) and adds to both sides – support +32 pts, oppose +8 pts

To what extent do you support or oppose this proposal?
BY Familiarity With The Airport Privatization Proposal
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

		All who support / oppose		Strongly support / oppose	
	Undecided	Support	Oppose	Strongly support	Strongly oppose
I have heard of the agreement *Had heard of it, but did not know any of the details*	50%	26%	25%	4%	10%
Very familiar *Could explain the concept to others in detail*	9%	58%	33%	33%	24%
Change *very familiar vs. heard of it*	▼ –41	▲ +32	▲ +8	▲ +29	▲ +14

Undecided = Neither support nor oppose + Don't know. **Support / Oppose** = strongly + somewhat. Change = difference between the rounded percentages shown.

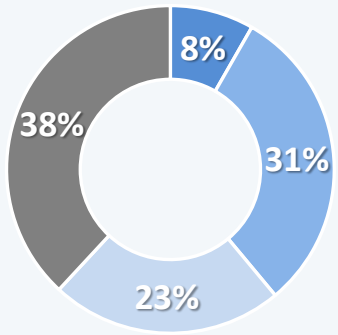
Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

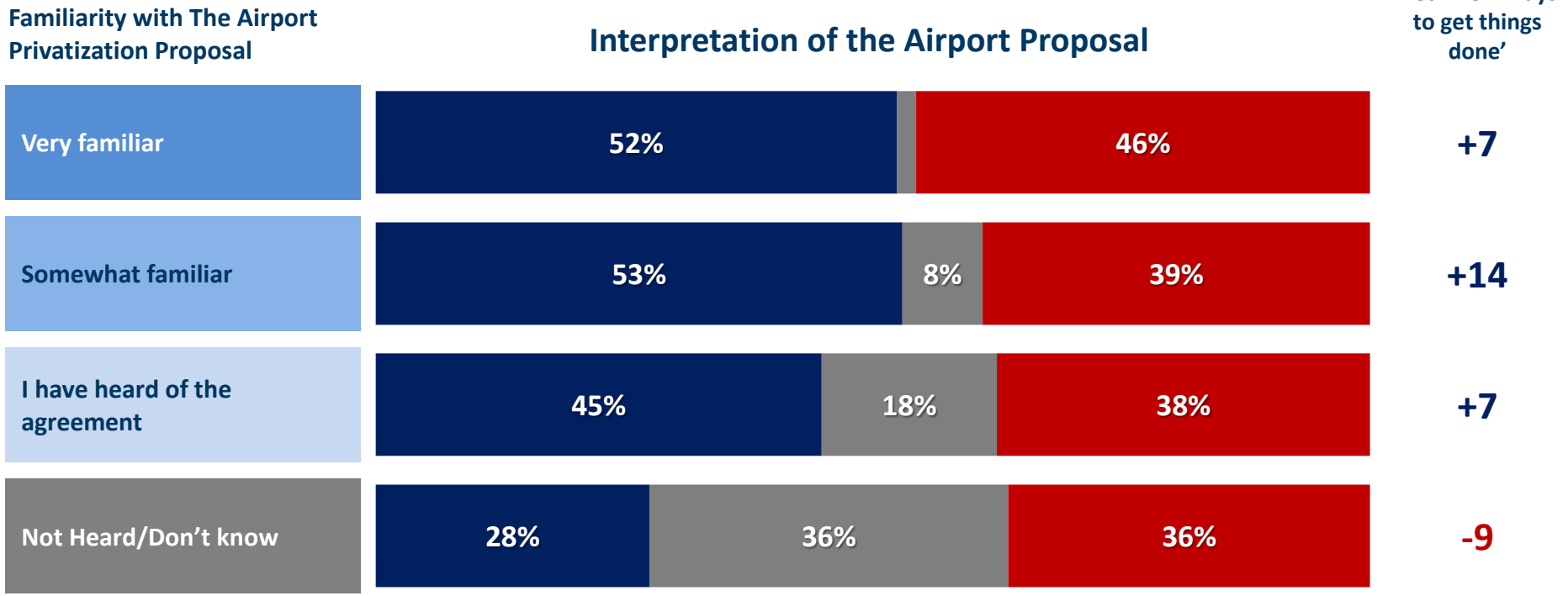
Airport Interpretation by Familiarity: Regardless of familiarity, Canadians are split between “new ways to get things done” and “corporate agenda”

Which of the following statements best reflects your feelings about this proposal?
BY Familiarity With The Airport Privatization Proposal
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

Familiarity with The Airport Privatization Proposal



- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- I have heard of the agreement
- Not Heard/Don’t know



Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Interpretation by Familiarity: Greater familiarity with the proposal moves people off the fence both ways; "Don't know" falls 18% → 2% and both views gain (+7 / +8 pts)

Which of the following statements best reflects your feelings about this proposal?
BY Familiarity With The Airport Privatization Proposal
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

		How people read the government's motives	
	Don't know	**New ways to get things done**	**Corporate agendas ahead of public interest**
I have heard of the agreement *Had heard of it, but did not know any of the details*	18%	45%	38%
Very familiar *Could explain the concept to others in detail*	2%	52%	46%
Change *very familiar vs. heard of it*	▼ −16	▲ +7	▲ +8

Change = difference between the rounded percentages shown. Statements shortened; full wording in the question above and on the Perception of the Proposal slide.

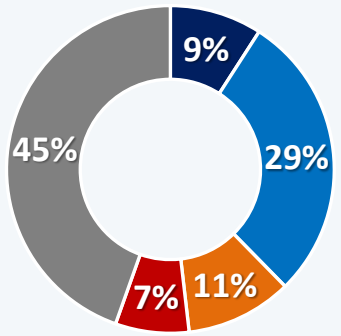
Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Interpretation BY P3 Support: P3 support shape the perception of gov't motives, while the those unsure about P3s remain evenly divided on the proposal

To Which of the following statements best reflects your feelings about this proposal?
BY Do you support or oppose the general idea of increasing the involvement of the private sector in the delivery of government services?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]

P3 Support



- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Neither/Don't know

Interpretation of the Airport Proposal

P3 Support	I like that the Carney government is looking for new ways to get things done in Canada.	Don't know	I feel that this is an example of the Carney government putting corporate agendas ahead of the public interest.	Net 'New ways'
Strongly support	69%	6%	26%	+43
Somewhat support	57%	12%	31%	+26
Neither Support nor Oppose/Don't know	34%	32%	34%	-1
Somewhat oppose	28%	16%	56%	-27
Strongly oppose	11%	7%	81%	-70

Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Appendices

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Methodology

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Survey Methodology – National October W3-4-5



These are the results of an online survey conducted between October 15, 2026, and November 2, 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=3,562 Canadian citizens, 18 years or older. The results are nationally weighted to n=1,500 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

Field Dates: October 15, 2026 to November 2, 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	418	11.8%	202	13.5%
Men 35-54	519	14.6%	238	15.9%
Men 55+	787	22.1%	290	19.4%
Women 18-34	415	11.7%	194	13.0%
Women 35-54	604	17.0%	249	16.7%
Women 55+	811	22.8%	322	21.5%
British Columbia	970	27.3%	211	14.1%
Alberta	829	23.3%	168	11.2%
Prairies	152	4.3%	96	6.4%
Ontario	886	24.9%	579	38.6%
Québec	573	16.1%	345	23.0%
Atlantic	149	4.2%	101	6.7%

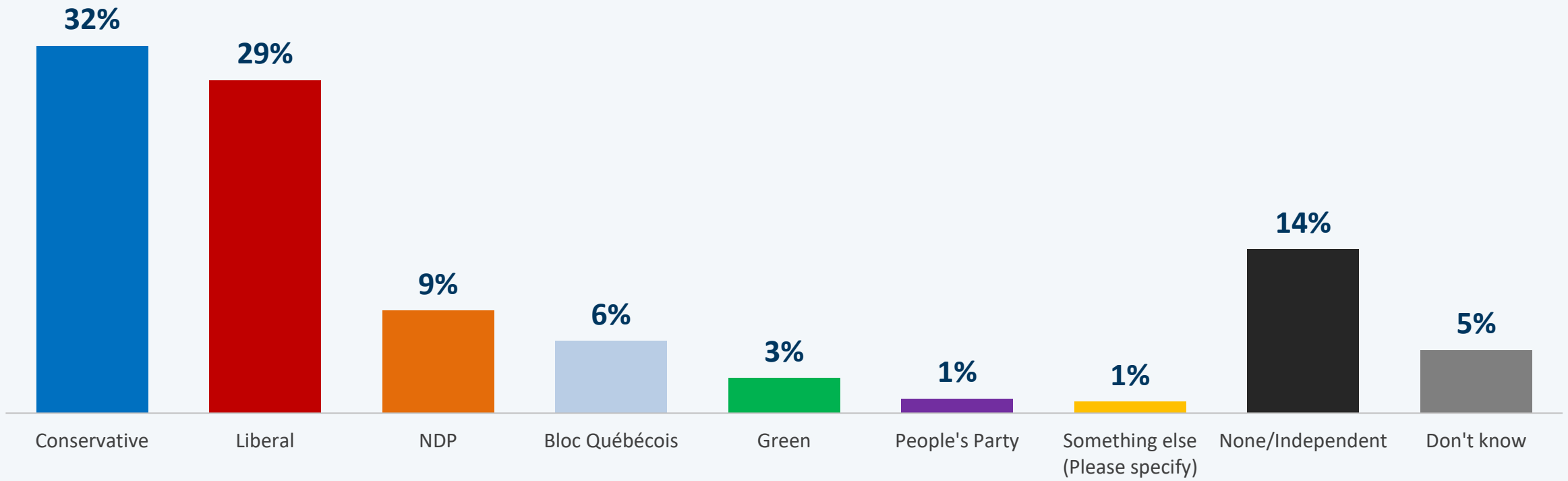
INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Party ID

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Federal Party ID: 32% of Canadians identify as a Conservative, while 29% identify as a Liberal; 14% say none or independent

Thinking about politics in Canada, generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a…
[asked of all respondents; n=1,500]



Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

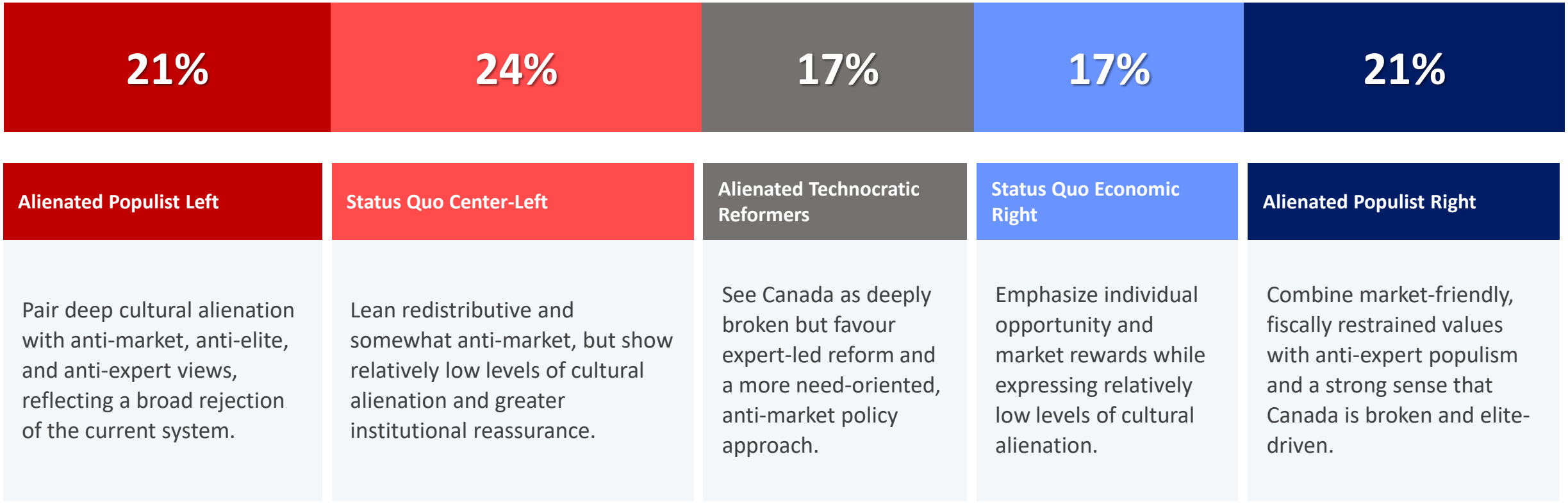
INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Ideology Clusters

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH GROUP

Ideology Clusters: Six-in-ten Canadians (59%) fall into one of the three "alienated" clusters; the largest single cluster is the Status Quo Centre-Left (24%)

Respondents' opinions on how things fare in six areas (Canadian identity, history, the system, institutions, elites, and future generations) were used to group them into five clusters.



Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

Defining Ideology Clusters: Economic values separate left and right; alienation separates populists from the status quo

Core Issue Priorities by Value Cluster · Column %

Alienated Populist Left | Status Quo Center-Left | Alienated Technocratic Reformers | Status Quo Economic Right | Alienated Populist Right

Economic values *left vs right*

		Alienated Populist Left	Status Quo Center-Left	Alienated Technocratic Reformers	Status Quo Economic Right	Alienated Populist Right
Governments should base decisions on...	Ability to afford	0%	19%	0%	69%	92%
	Public Need	92%	57%	96%	24%	0%
Is the main role of government to...?	Create equal opportunity	38%	40%	70%	75%	68%
	Redistribute wealth	52%	40%	23%	22%	22%
The profit system...	Brings out the worst in human nature	88%	73%	0%	0%	31%
	Teaches value of hard work and success	0%	0%	91%	94%	51%

Alienation *populists vs status quo*

		Alienated Populist Left	Status Quo Center-Left	Alienated Technocratic Reformers	Status Quo Economic Right	Alienated Populist Right
When it comes to government decision making...	Rely on common sense	70%	17%	62%	22%	76%
	Listen to experts	18%	58%	25%	70%	13%
Canada's political, economic and social systems...	Serves average Canadians well	3%	51%	29%	80%	7%
	Are rigged to benefit Canada's elites at the expense of average Canadians	88%	20%	56%	10%	80%
Canadian institutions are broken	Net agree	66%	-1%	21%	-19%	55%
Canadian elites don't care about ordinary Canadians	Net agree	85%	51%	52%	8%	70%
When experts or authorities dismiss something as a conspiracy theory, I think it usually is	true and they just want to hide the truth from us	59%	10%	47%	13%	59%
	because the theory really is false	15%	57%	32%	67%	14%

Data Source: Canada This Month (CTM) October 2026 (W3-4-5)

Building Understanding.

For more information, please contact:

Jason Lockhart
Vice President
416-642-7177
jlockhart@innovativeresearch.ca

Yam Wachiralappaitoon
Consultant
437-433-9700
ywachi@innovativeresearch.ca

© Copyright 2026 Innovative Research Group Inc.