

A decorative graphic consisting of a long, thin blue line that starts in the middle of the page and extends towards the top right corner, and a solid blue circle on the right edge of the page.

DISCOVER

November 4, 2025

Perceptions of the rule of law among Canadians

Research Findings

EMBARGOED UNTIL 6AM on TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025

Survey Methodology

Discover undertook an online survey among 1,500 Canadians who voted in the last federal election.

The survey was in field from July 22nd, 2025, to July 23rd, 2025, and took about 18 minutes to complete.



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Technical Details:

A completely random survey with this sample size ($n=1,500$) would yield a margin of error of ± 2.53 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

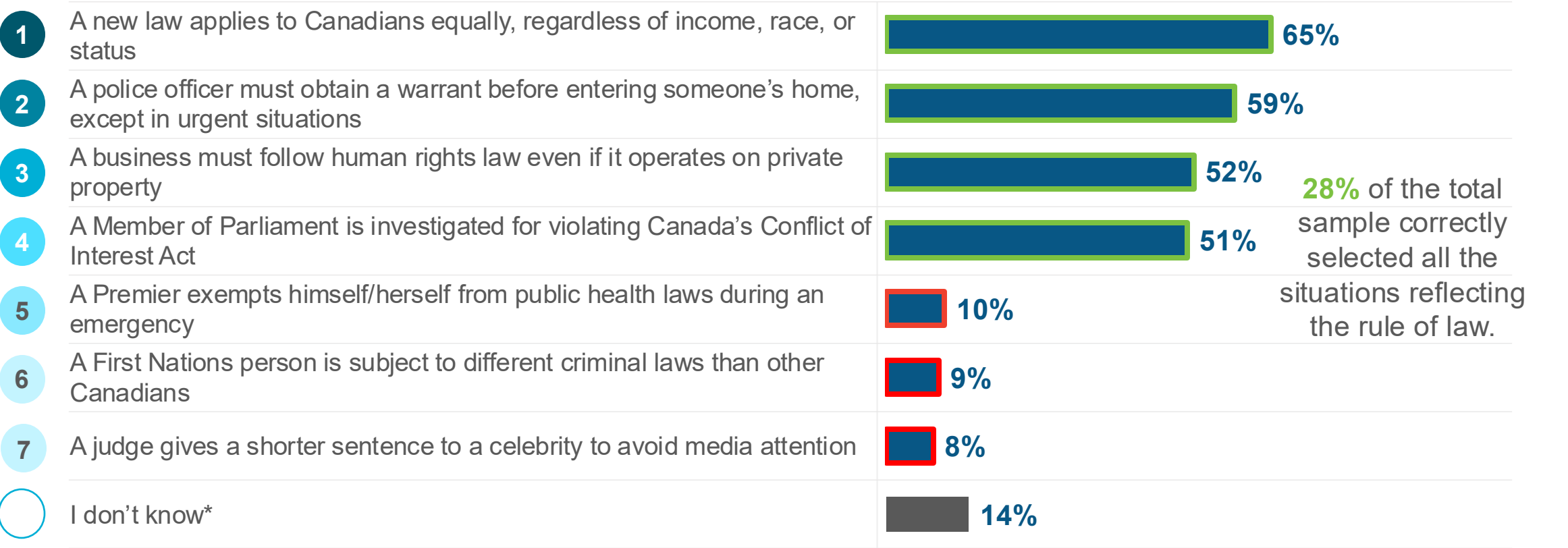
Quotas and weighting were employed for the general population to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population with regard to gender, age, and education, according to Statistics Canada census data.

Throughout this report, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. As such, there may be instances where results do not add to 100 percent.

Base sizes under 50 are considered small and findings should be considered with caution.



What is the rule of law? Fewer than one in three Canadians accurately identified the situations below that reflect this principle



Q16. Which of the following situations best reflect the principle of the rule of law in Canada? Select all that apply.
Base: Total sample (n=1,500)
*Exclusive response option

Legend

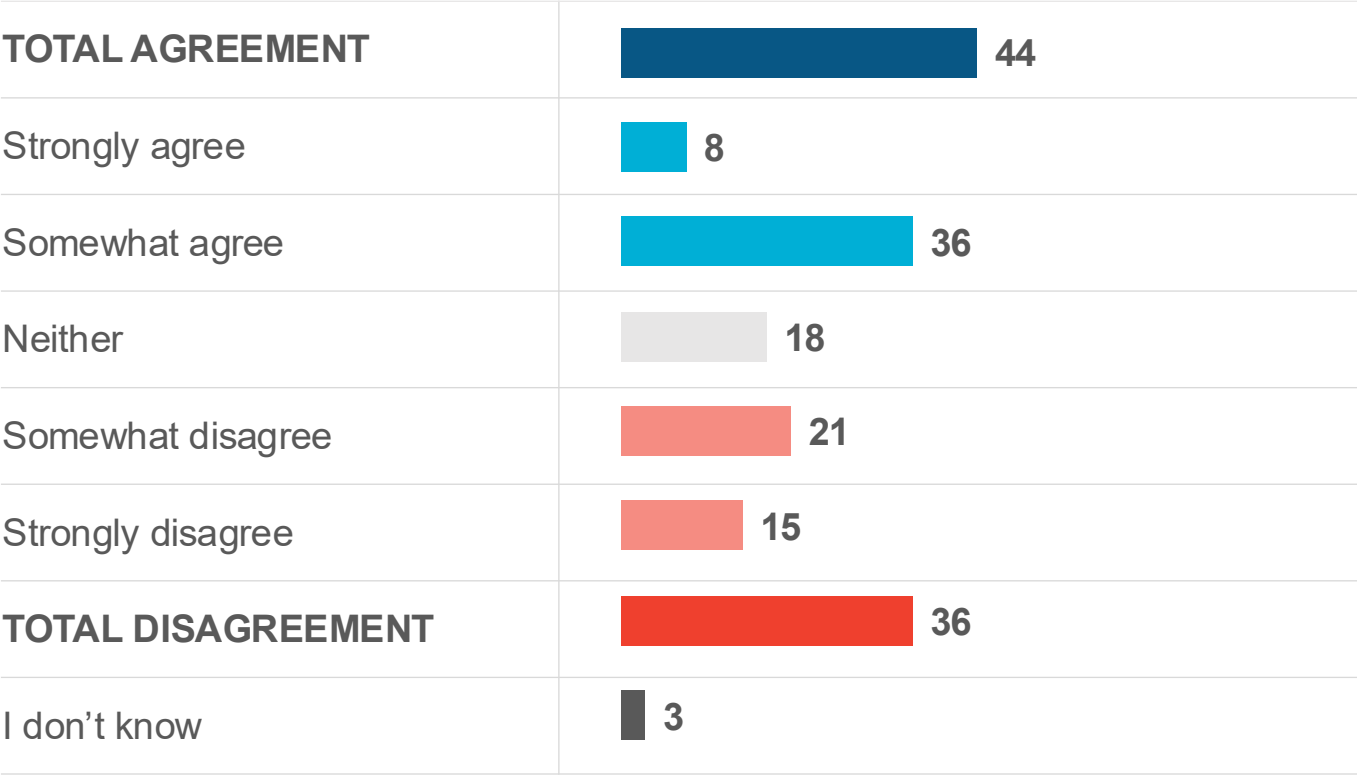
Correct answer

Incorrect answer

Fewer than half of Canadians agree that Canada's justice system is working as intended

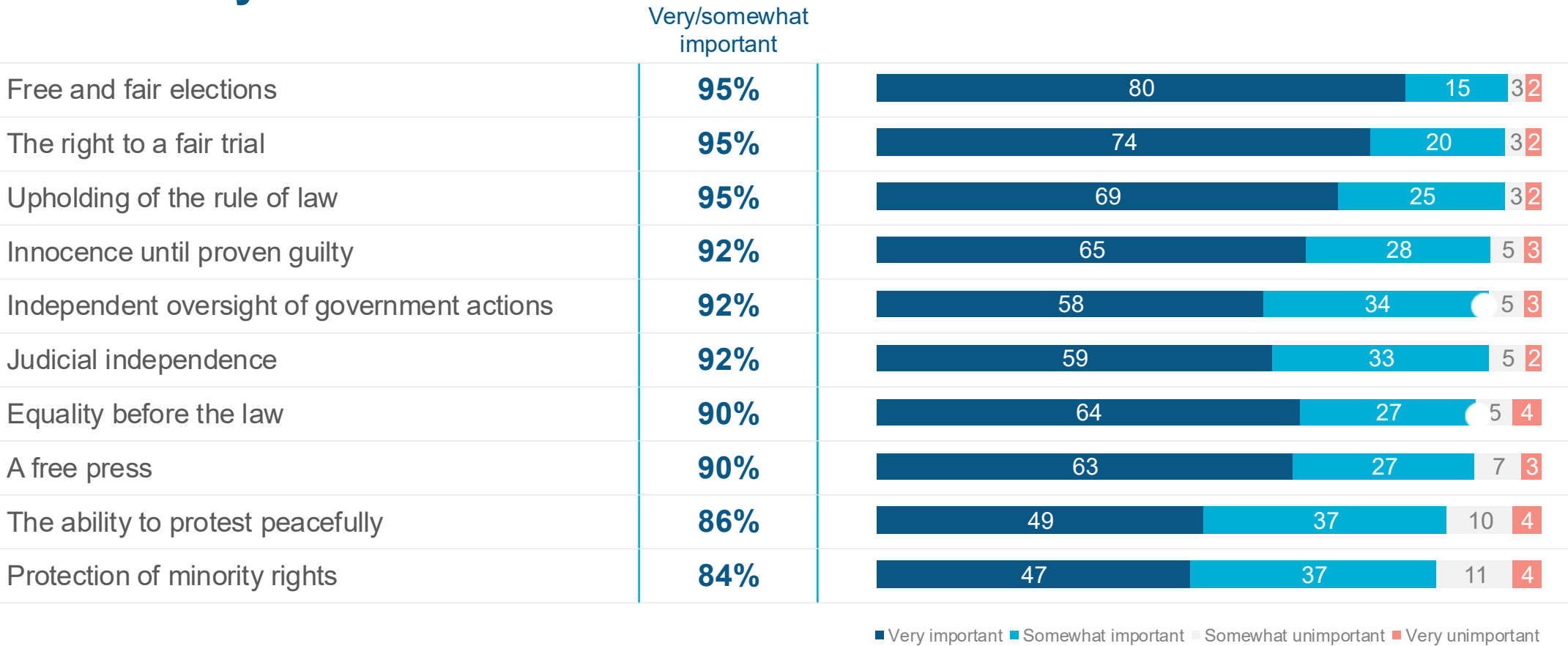
To what extent to you agree or disagree with this statement:

Canada’s justice system is working as intended.



Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
Base: Total sample (n=1,500)

Canadians overwhelmingly agree that free and fair elections, the right to a fair trial, and upholding the rule of law are important to Canada's democracy



Q11. How important are each of the following to the strength of Canadian democracy?
Base: Total sample, excluding 'don't know' responses – Base sizes vary

Respondents answered initial questions about the rule of law on an unaided basis, after which they were presented with the following definition:

“THE RULE OF LAW means that everyone must follow the law – no one is above it, not even government leaders. Laws should be clear, fair and applied equally. This helps protect people’s rights and keeps society fair and orderly. The rule of law is present in every legal activity in which citizens engage from the sale of real property to the prosecution of a crime to international trade.”

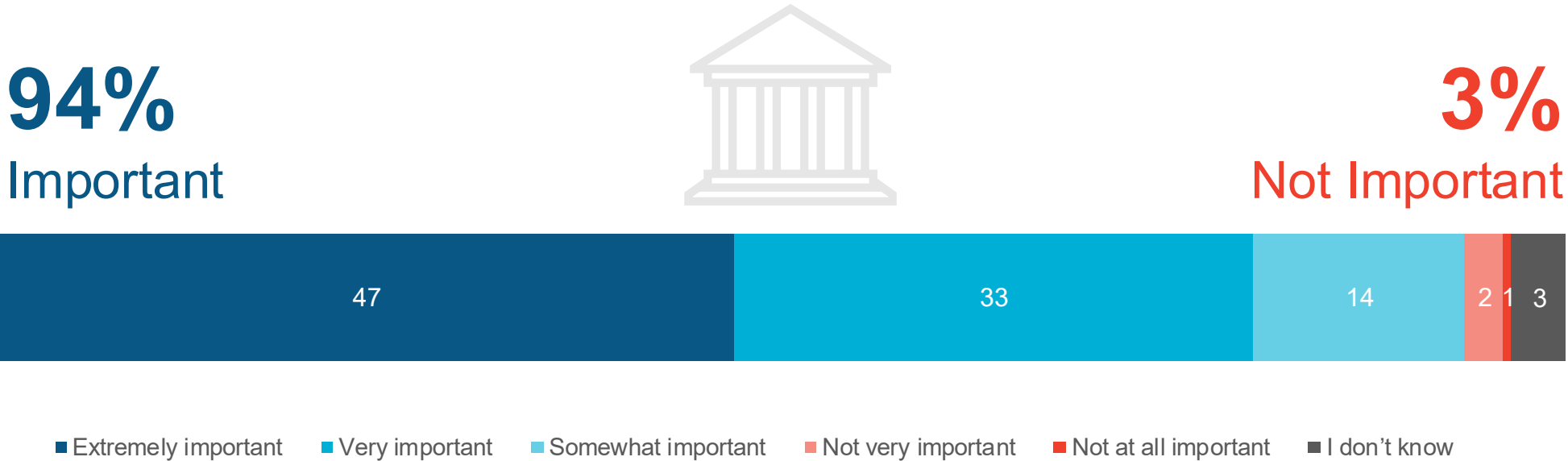
With this definition in mind, we asked them to answer another series of questions...

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The rule of law is personally important to virtually all Canadians

How important is the rule of law to you personally?



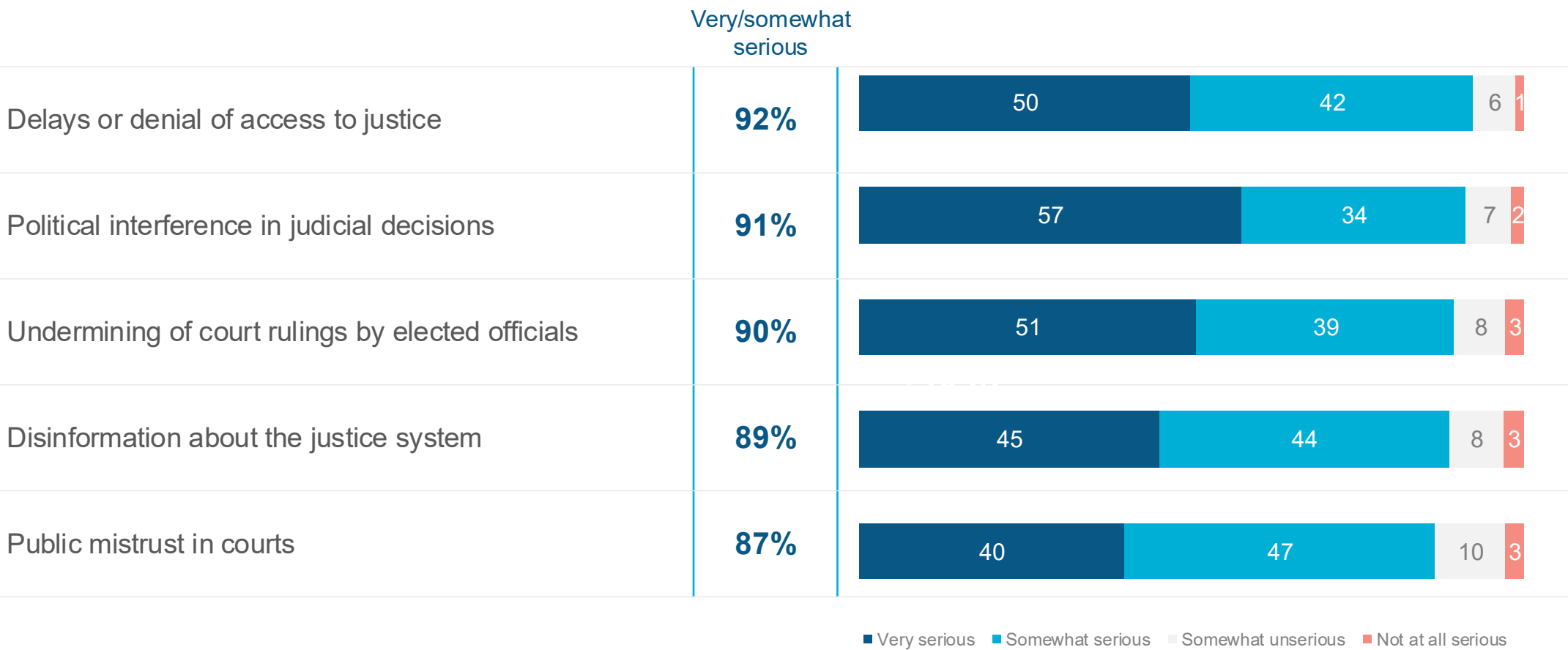
Q21. How important is the rule of law to you personally?
Base: Total sample (n=1,500)

A strong majority of Canadians say the rule of law is essential for a just society, and that everyone should learn about their rights



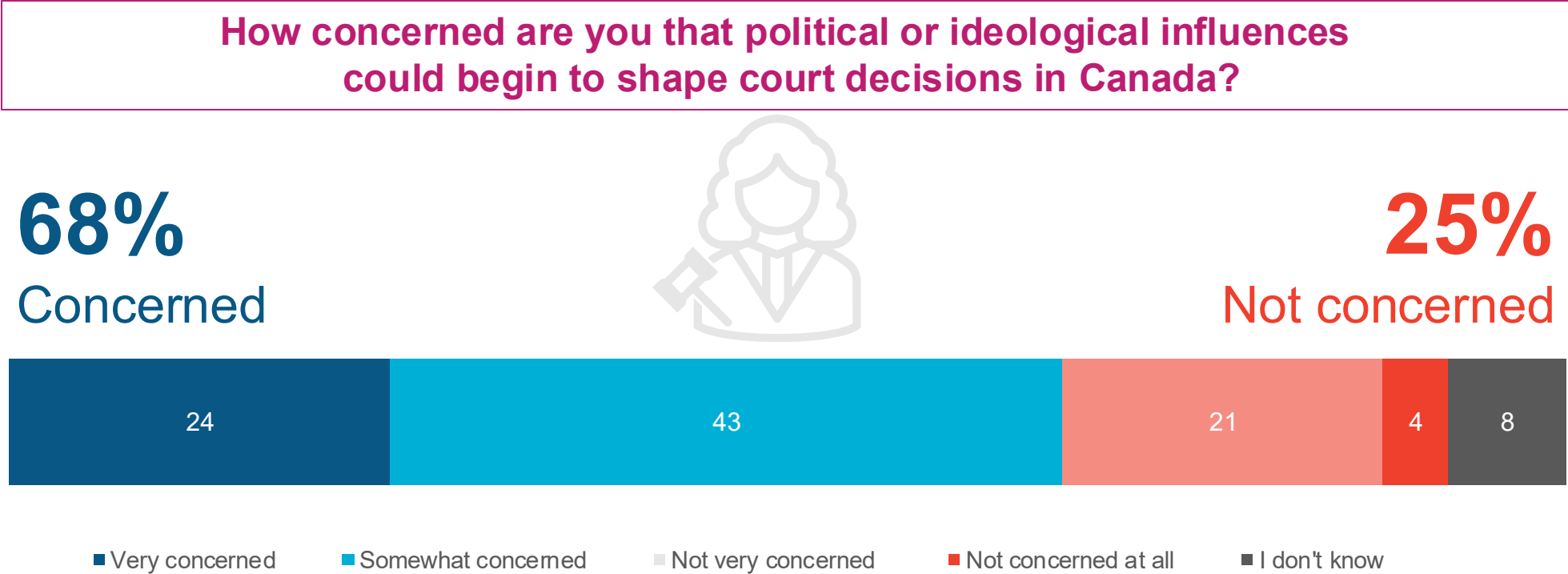
Q28. Below, we list two contrasting positions on a topic. While you may not fully agree with the messaging in either, please select the position that aligns most with your own personal perspective.
Base: Total sample (n=1,500)

Canadians include delays, political interference, and disinformation among serious potential threats to the rule of law in Canada



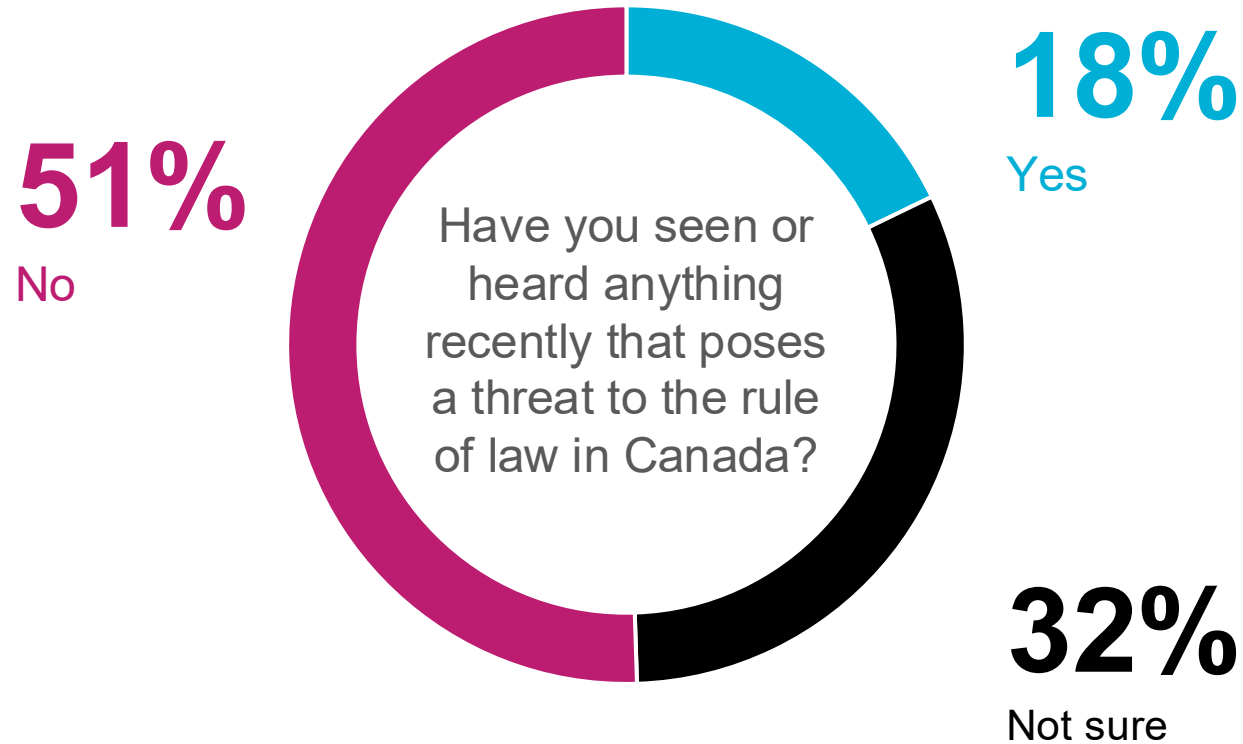
Q18. In your view, how serious are the following potential threats to the rule of law in Canada?
Base: Total sample, excluding 'don't know' responses – Base sizes vary

Over two-thirds of Canadians believe that political or ideological influences could begin to shape court decisions in Canada



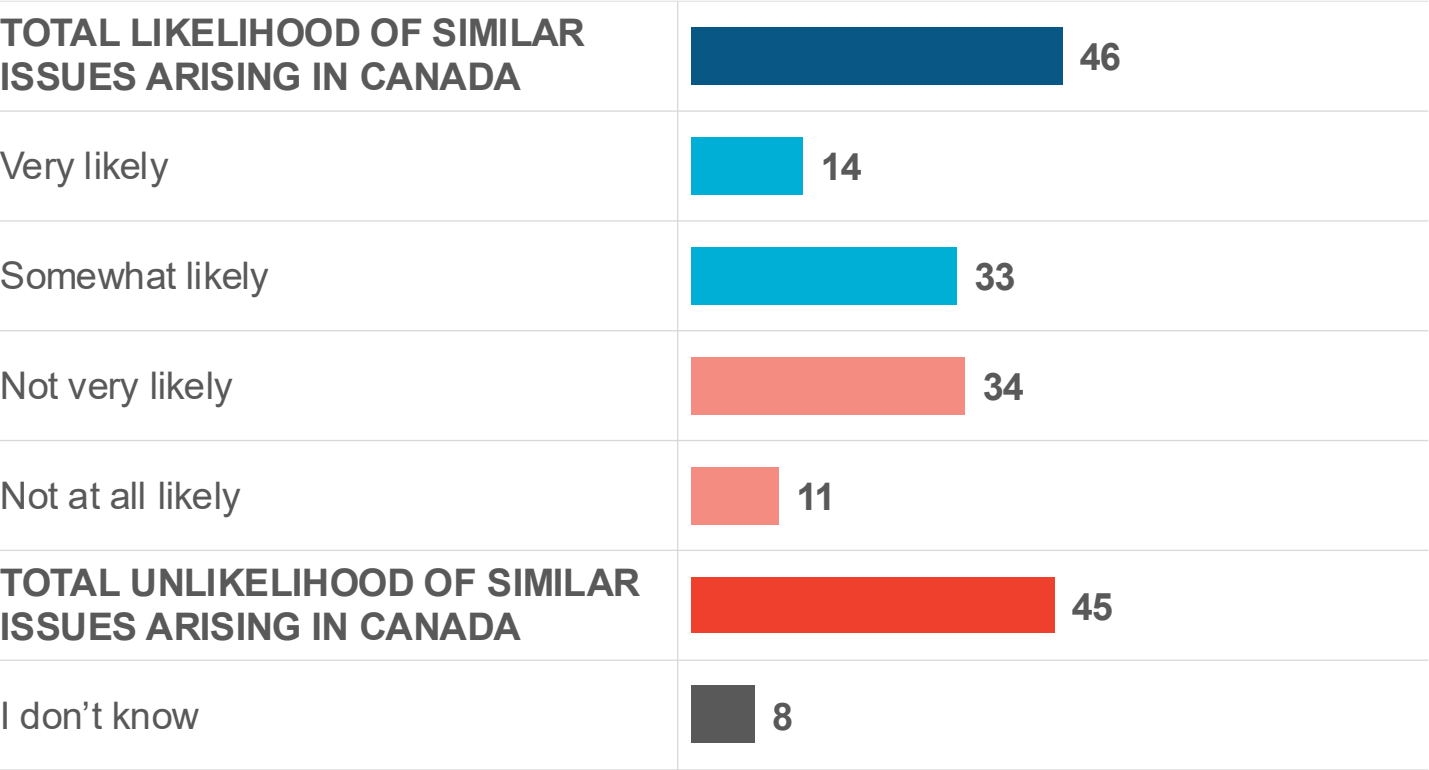
Q20. How concerned are you that political or ideological influences (i.e., the ideas and values we absorb, often unconsciously, that shape our world view) could begin to shape court decisions in Canada?
Base: Total sample (n=1,500)

Nearly one-in-five Canadians have seen or heard about something recently that poses a threat to the rule of law in Canada



Q17. Have you seen or heard anything recently that you believe poses a threat to the rule of law in Canada?
Base: Total sample (n=1,500)

Nearly half of Canadians feel that the erosion of the rule of law witnessed in the United States could happen here



Q19. In the United States, there have been public concerns about political interference in the judiciary and erosion of the rule of law. Recent examples include President Trump's verbal attack on judges and Immigration and the authorization of Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s authorization for warrantless searches and arrests. How likely do you think it is that similar issues could arise in Canada?

Base: Total sample (n=1,500)





Respondent Profile

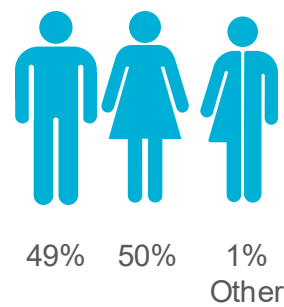
DISCOVER



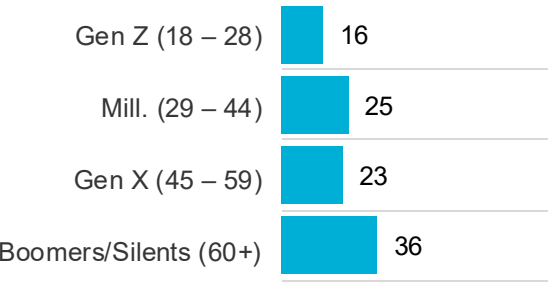
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Demographics

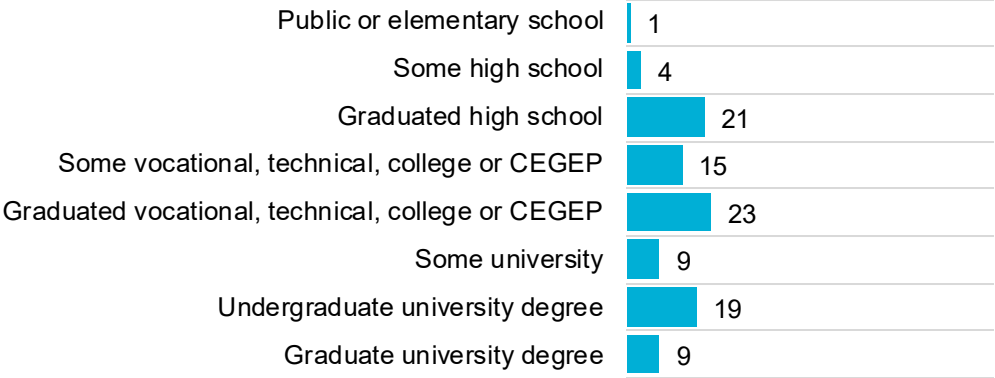
GENDER



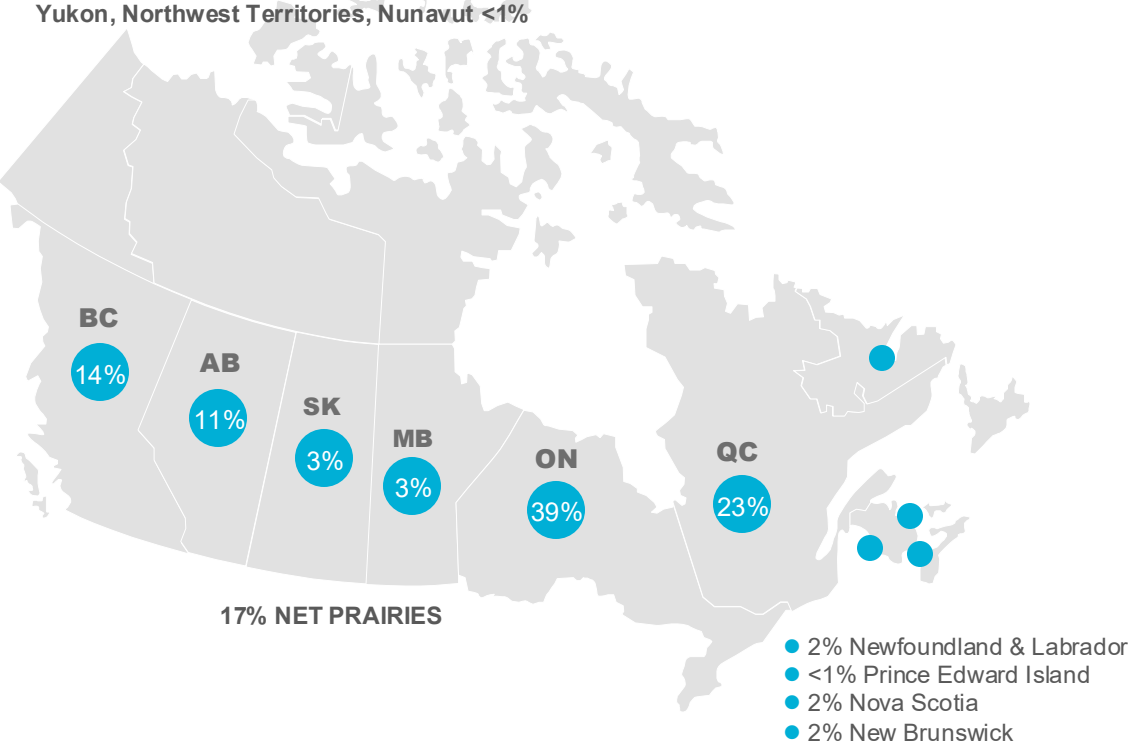
AGE



EDUCATION



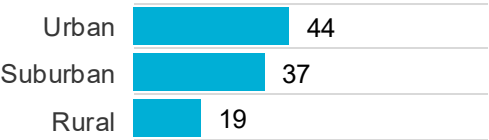
PROVINCE/TERRITORY



17% NET PRAIRIES

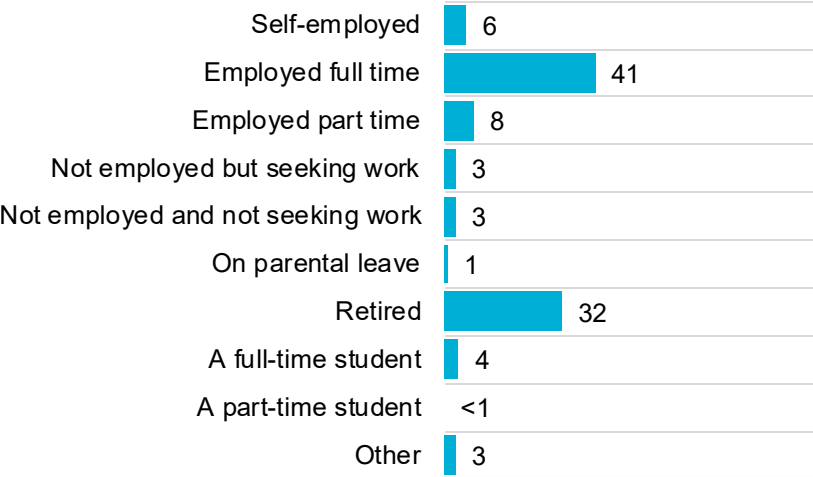
7% NET ATLANTIC

COMMUNITY

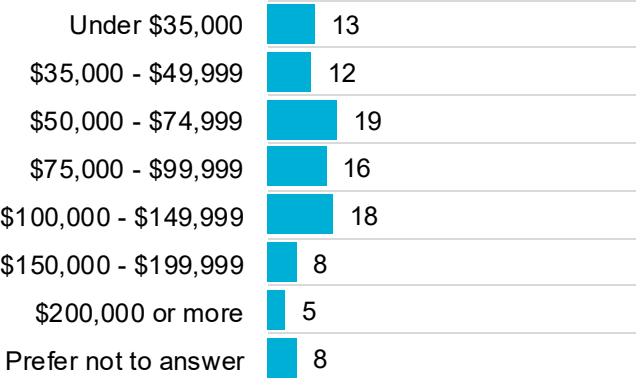


Demographics

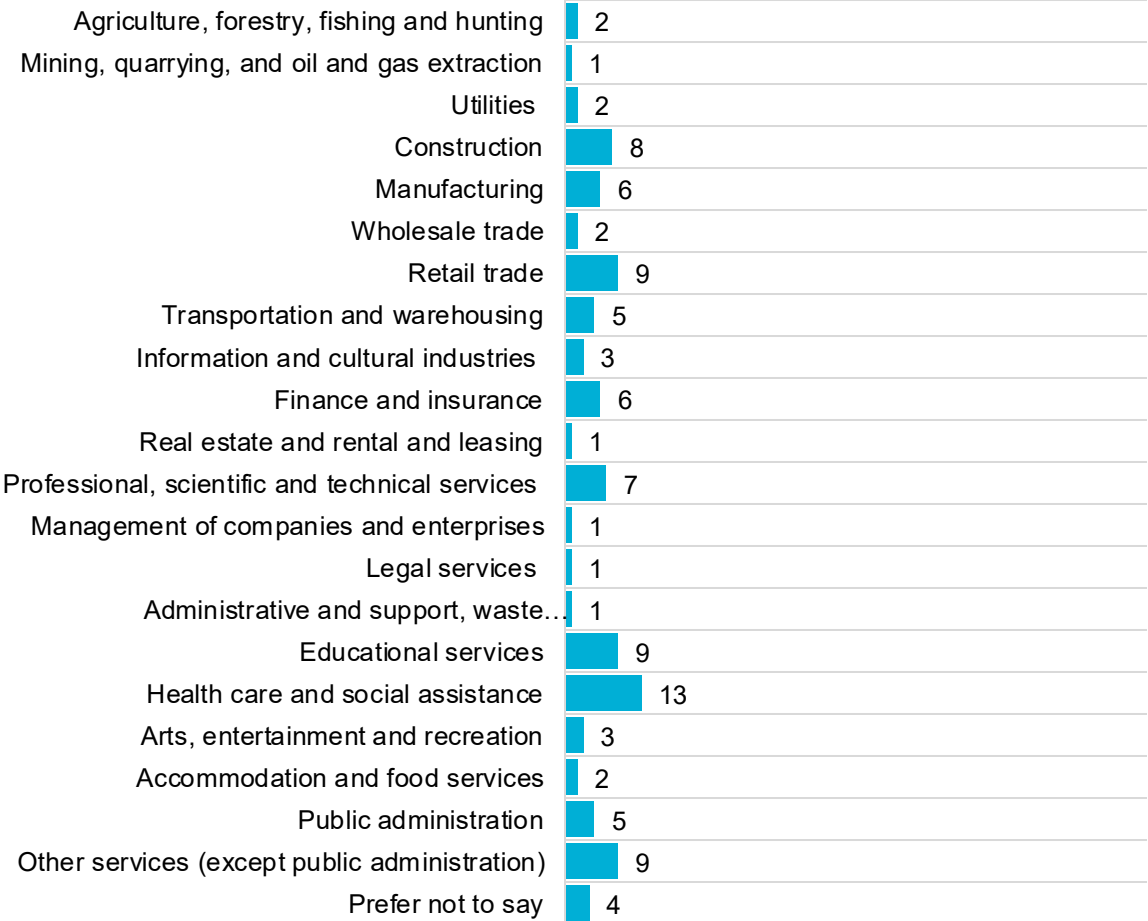
EMPLOYMENT STATUS



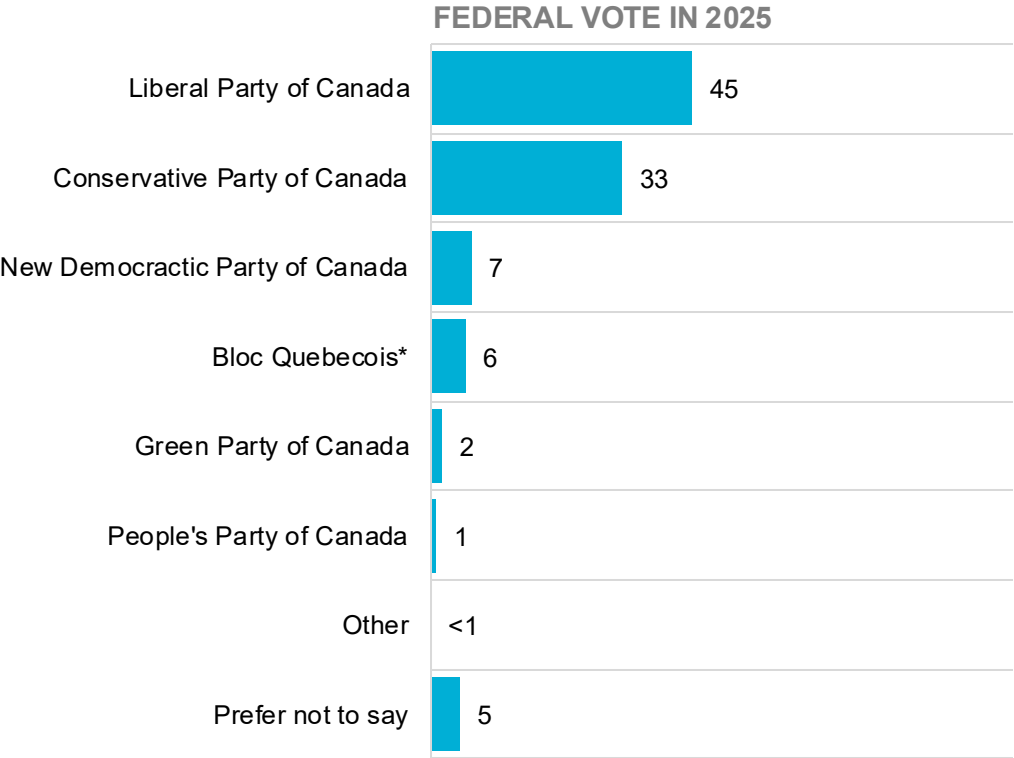
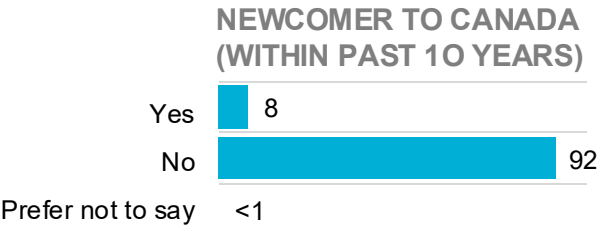
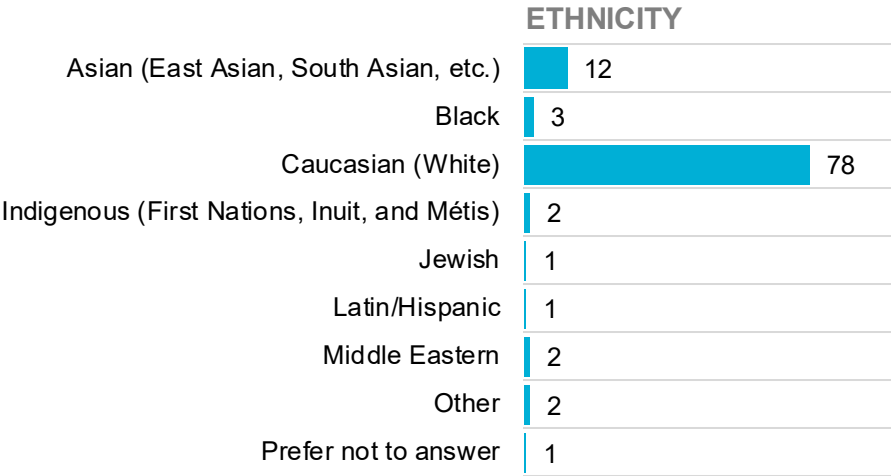
HOUSEHOLD INCOME



INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT



Demographics



*Only among the residents of Quebec

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