



# STUDENT BUDGET CONSULTATION

## Preliminary Report

16 March 2022

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## ***Methodology***

Between 1 January and 7 March 2022, Vox Pop Labs and CIVIX engaged high school students and teachers from all across Canada for the 2021 - 2022 Student Budget Consultation.

A total of 1608 online responses were included in this report to provide a preliminary snapshot of the perceptions and priorities of the next generation of the Canadian workforce.

To ensure representative results, the Statistics Canada population estimates for July 2021 (17-10-0005-01) were used to weight the data to reflect the distribution of males and females, aged 12 to 18, in Canada.

This report includes incomplete responses, meaning that sample sizes will vary from question to question. Moreover, due to rounding, percentages presented throughout this document may not add up to 100% and precisely reflect the absolute figures.

## ***Main Findings***

### **Current and Future Outlooks**

80% of students are somewhat or very confident that they will be able to find a job that interests them in Canada after they finish school ([Figure 1](#)), despite 47% believing that the Canadian economy will be somewhat or much worse off in the next few years ([Figure 2](#)). Students are almost evenly split over whether they think they will be better or worse off than their parents. 32% believe they will be better off, compared to 38% who believe otherwise ([Figure 3](#)). 72% of students are optimistic about their own future whereas 70% are pessimistic about the future of the world ([Figure 32](#)).

Although 33% of students reported their mental health as being somewhat or much better than a year ago, 35% reported that their mental health was worse ([Figure 4](#)).

## Wealth Inequality

66% of young Canadians support increasing the amount of tax large corporations pay ([Figure 5](#)). 55% believe that wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than others to help those who are in need ([Figure 6](#)) and 47% believe that wealthy people should pay a tax on their overall wealth, not just their annual income ([Figure 7](#)). In addition, 58% believe that the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large ([Figure 8](#)). However, fewer than half of students (42%) are in favour of the government providing all Canadians with a guaranteed minimum income, regardless of employment status ([Figure 9](#)).

## Environment and Climate Change

Addressing climate change was the most important priority for students ([Figure 10](#)). Three-quarters of students (75%) believe that Canada has a responsibility to take action on climate change, even if the countries with the largest emissions don't follow suit ([Figure 11](#)). More than half (52%) of students support stricter environmental protections even if this increases prices for consumers ([Figure 12](#)). 80% of students believe that more of Canada's energy should come from renewable sources ([Figure 13](#)). In addition, only 26% believe that the government should do more to help the oil and gas industry ([Figure 14](#)). 77% of students support giving Indigenous peoples more say over how Canada's natural resources are used ([Figure 35](#)).

## Health Care Coverage

59% of students believe that health care coverage should be expanded to include dental care ([Figure 15](#)) and 69% of students believe that the government should cover the cost of common prescription drugs ([Figure 16](#)). In addition, 68% of students believe that the federal government should increase the amount of money it gives to the provinces and territories to pay for health care ([Figure 17](#)).

## Government Supports for Young Canadians

### Housing Affordability

As well as being the second-highest budget priority for students ([Figure 10](#)), the plurality of respondents (24%) believe that making housing more affordable is the most important step that the government could do to support young Canadians ([Figure 18](#)). 61% of students believe that owning a home is no longer an option for most young Canadians ([Figure 19](#)). 83% of students think helping first-time homebuyers afford their mortgage and giving money to renters to help cover their rent (66%) would be helpful in terms of making life more affordable ([Figure 33](#)). However, 53% disagree with the notion that foreigners who live abroad should be banned from owning homes in Canada ([Figure 20](#)).

### Education

22% of students believe that access to affordable post-secondary education is the most important step the federal government can take to support young Canadians, and a further 16% believe that making student debt more manageable is the most important step ([Figure 18](#)). 88% of students believe that reducing tuition fees for college and universities would be helpful in terms of making life more affordable ([Figure 33](#)). More than a third of students (39%) believe that post-secondary education should be free, even if it means higher taxes for everyone ([Figure 21](#)). 77% of students support making it mandatory for schools to teach Indigenous history and culture ([Figure 35](#)).

### Mental Health

Although only 18% of students consider increased access to mental health support to be the most important step the federal government can take to support young people ([Figure 18](#)), three-quarters of students (75%) believe the Canadian government should invest more in mental health services ([Figure 22](#)). 35% of students report that their mental health has worsened in the past year ([Figure 3](#)).

### Employment

For only 15% of students, increasing employment opportunities is the most important step the federal government can take to support young Canadians ([Figure 17](#)); however,

creating more jobs is one of their top three Budget priorities ([Figure 10](#)). 81% of students believe that raising the minimum wage would be helpful in terms of making life more affordable ([Figure 33](#)).

## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Immigration

Expanding family sponsorship is popular among students: over half of students (57%) agree with the notion that there should be no limit as to how many Canadians can sponsor their foreign parents or grandparents to live in Canada, compared to only 8% of respondents who disagree ([Figure 30](#)).

Only 20% of students believe that the federal government shouldn't give priority to visible minorities when hiring; 39% of respondents believe the federal government should prioritize visible minority candidates when hiring, and 41% are either neutral or unsure ([Figure 24](#)).

Canadian youth are generally satisfied with the amount spent to protect the French language in Canada: 41% of respondents think that the federal government is spending about the right amount on French language protection. While one-fifth of respondents (20%) believe that less should be spent to protect the French language, 30% believe that more should be spent ([Figure 25](#)).

## Indigenous Relations

Although reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is only 6th on the list of main priorities for Budget 2022 ([Figure 10](#)), almost three-quarters of students (73%) believe that the Canadian government should do more to ensure that the treaty rights of Indigenous peoples are upheld ([Figure 23](#)). Young Canadians support independent investigations into former residential schools (81%), increasing funding for health care in Indigenous communities (89%), giving Indigenous peoples more say over how Canada's natural resources are used (77%), and settling all outside land claims, regardless of cost (71%) ([Figure 35](#)). Most students (94%) believe that Indigenous and non-Indigenous children should receive the same quality of education ([Figure 35](#)). 82% of students support increasing government funding to protect Indigenous languages ([Figure 35](#)). More than three-quarters (77%) of students support mandating schools to teach Indigenous history and culture ([Figure 35](#)).

## Fiscal Policy

Students are generally divided over government spending; 54% of respondents prefer higher taxes and more government spending, versus 46% who prefer lower taxes and fewer government services ([Figure 26](#)). Similarly, while 25% of students agree that the federal budget deficit should be reduced, even if it leads to fewer public services, 24% of respondents disagree with the notion. Half of respondents (50%) were either unsure or neutral ([Figure 27](#)). 81% of respondents believe that lowering taxes for middle and working class Canadians would help make life more affordable ([Figure 33](#)).

## Other Government Expenditures

In terms of spending, over half of Canadian youth (52%) believe that the federal government should give money directly to parents for child care costs, instead of funding more daycare spaces ([Figure 28](#)). 89% of respondents think making child care more affordable would help make life more affordable ([Figure 33](#)).

39% of students are satisfied with the amount of spending on arts and culture in Canada, and 36% of respondents would like more spending on arts and culture ([Figure 29](#)).

Just under half of respondents (43%) think that Canada should spend somewhat or much more on foreign aid ([Figure 31](#)).

## Institutional Trust

Young Canadians have a high degree of trust in government workers, particularly doctors and nurses (91%), public health officials (78%), military personnel (76%) and law enforcement (67%) ([Figure 34](#)). In contrast, their trust in elected officials (24%) and news media (39%) is noticeably low ([Figure 34](#)).

## Graphs of the Results

Figure 1 (Q5)

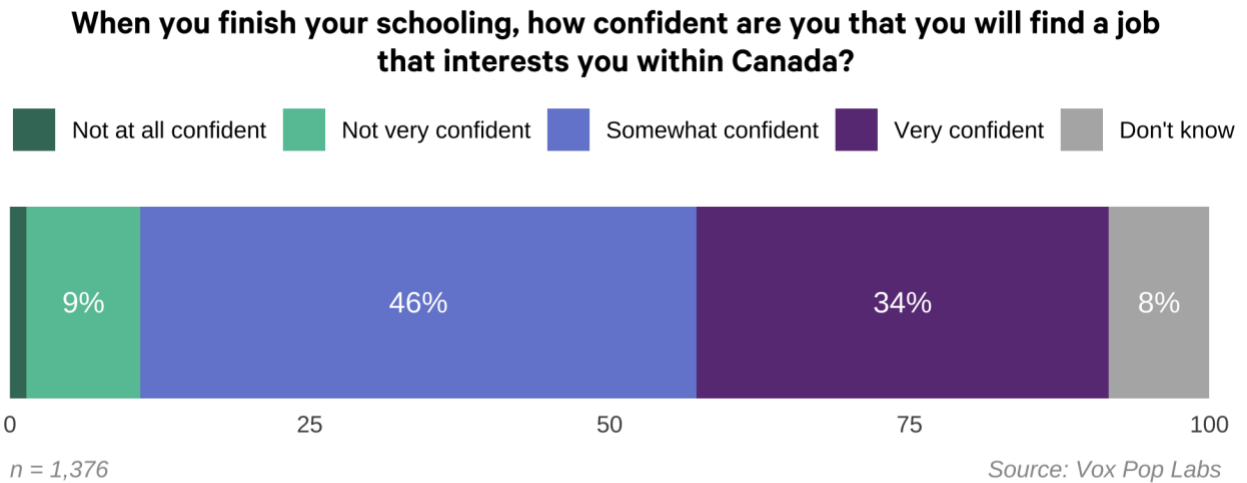


Figure 2 (Q11)

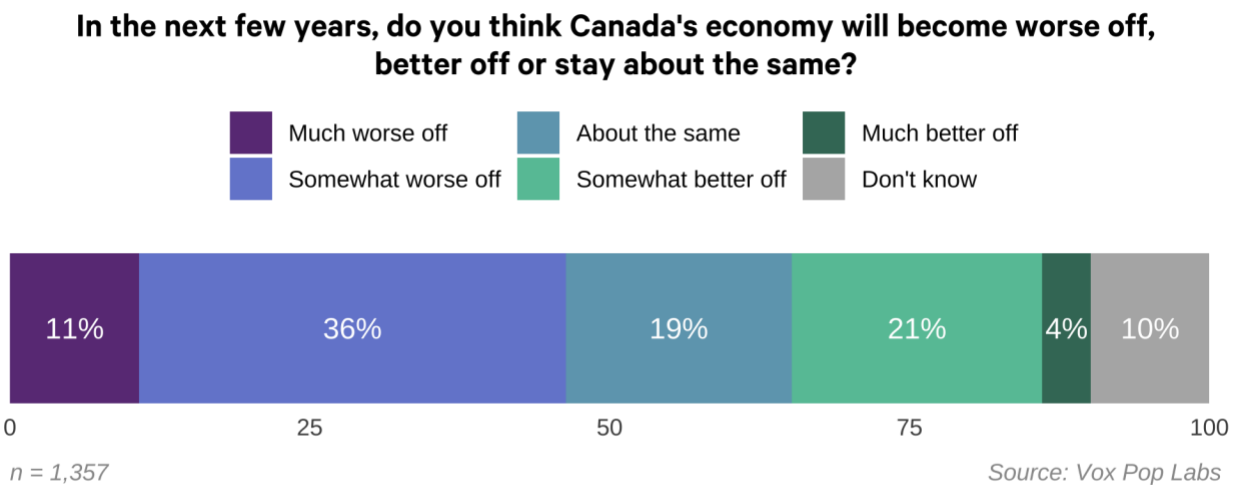


Figure 3 (Q8)

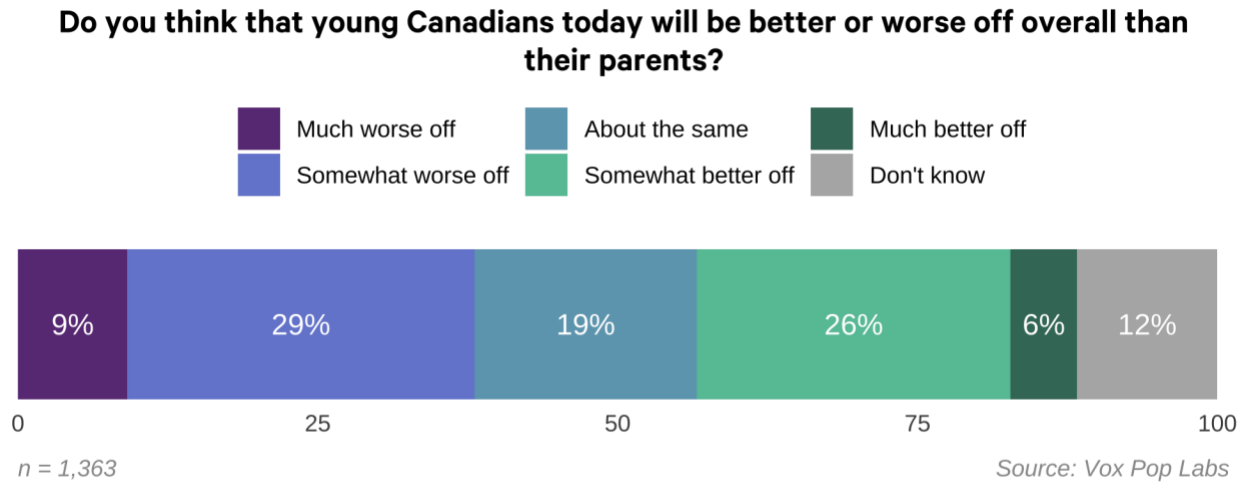


Figure 4 (Q7)

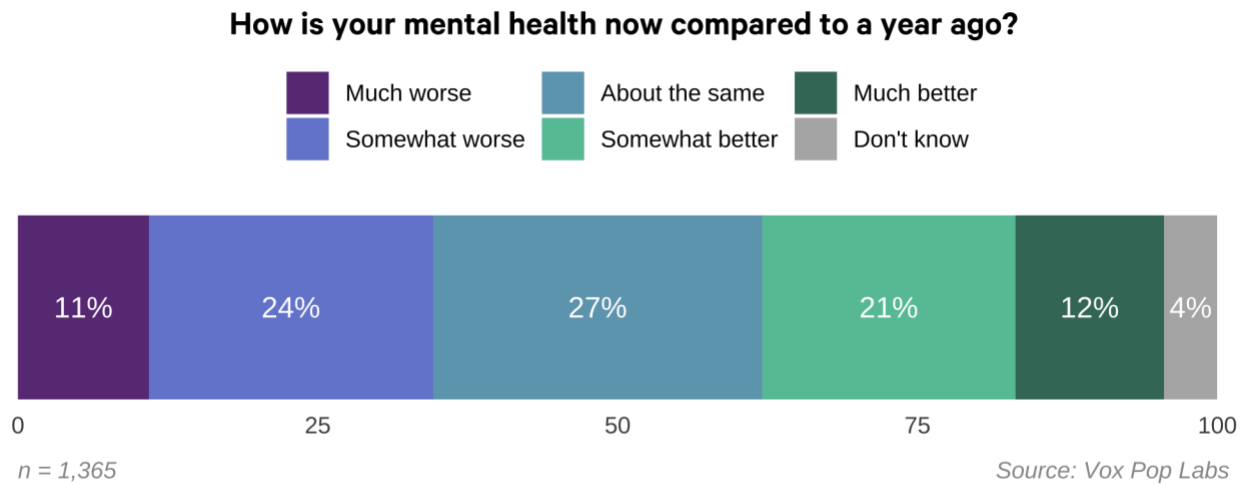




Figure 5 (Q40)

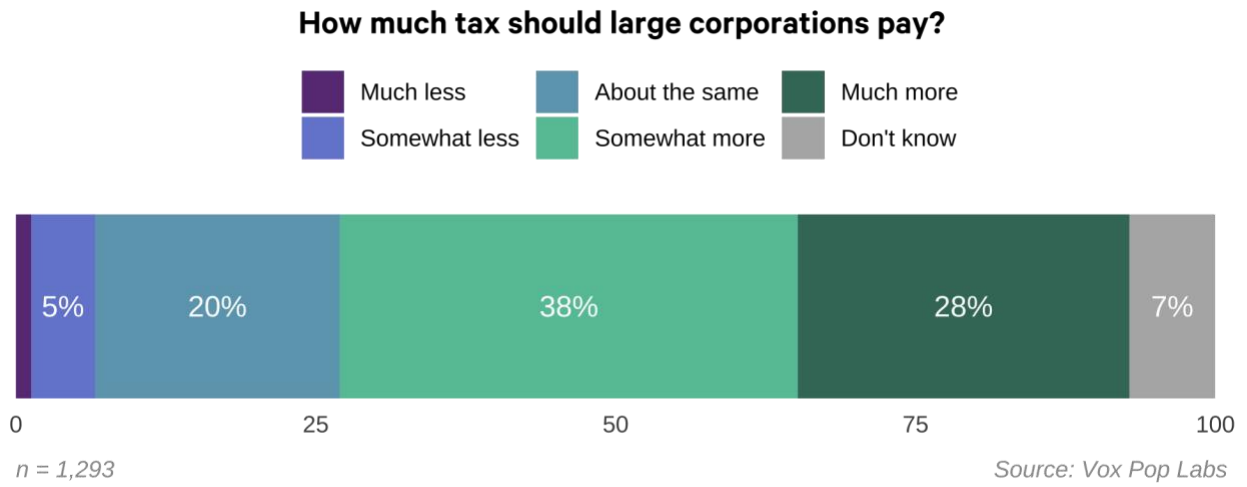


Figure 6 (Q42)

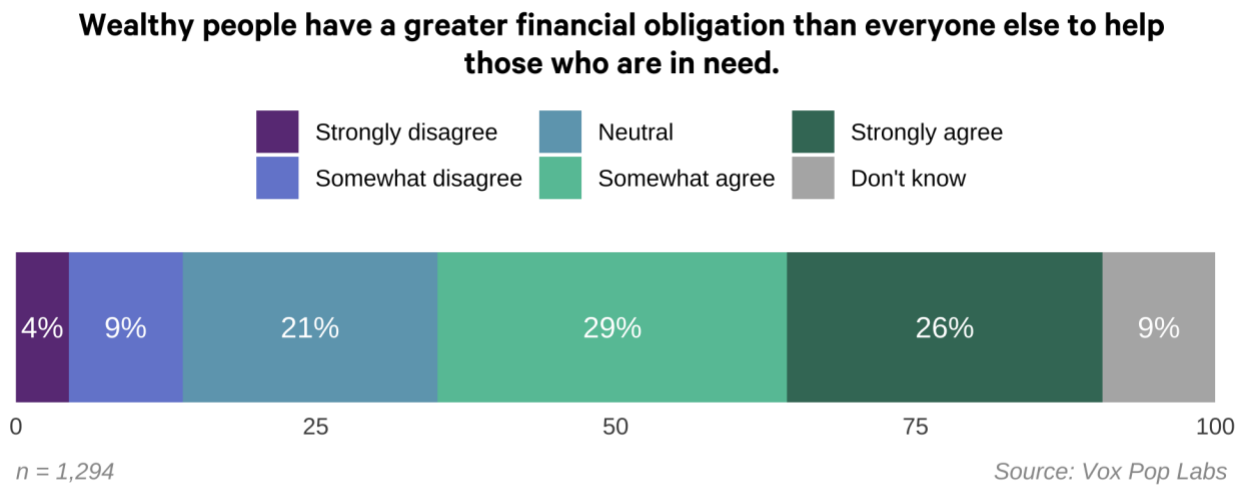


Figure 7 (Q44)

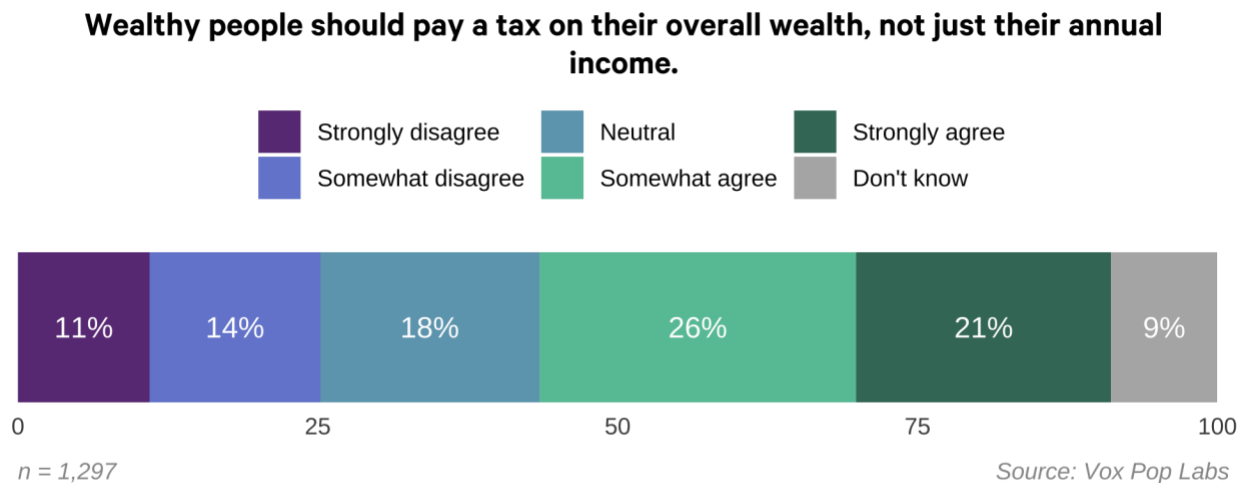


Figure 8 (Q64)

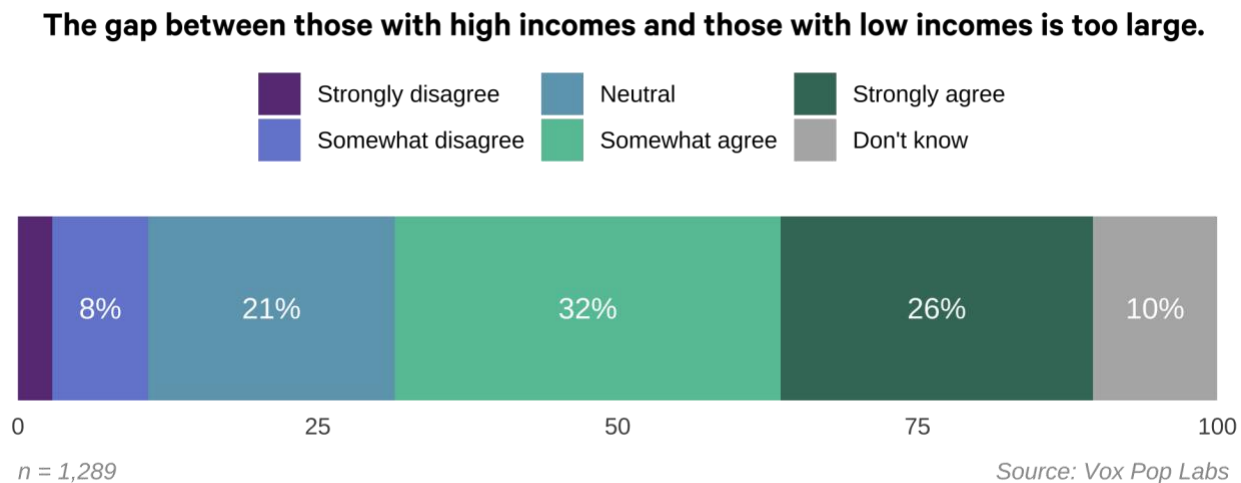


Figure 9 (Q56)

**The government should guarantee a minimum income for all Canadians, regardless of whether or not they have a job.**

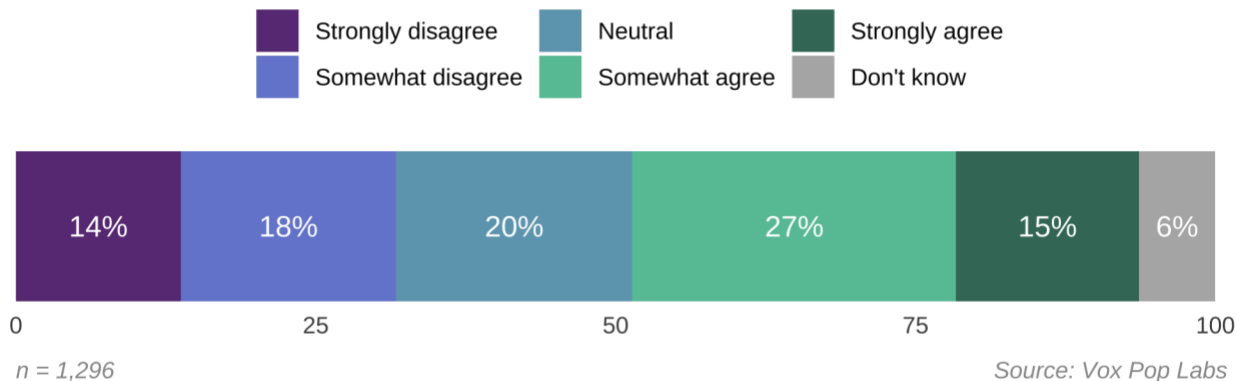


Figure 10 (Q70)

**Which of the following should be the main priorities of Budget 2022?**

Respondents had to select three priorities.

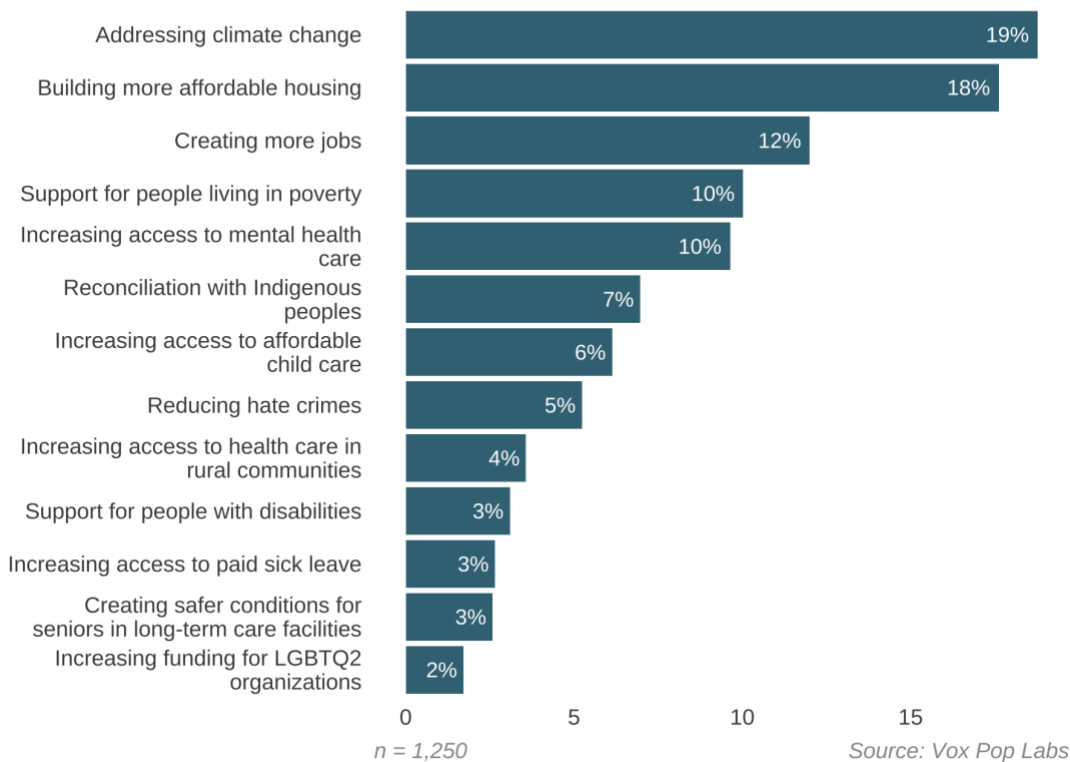


Figure 11 (Q26)

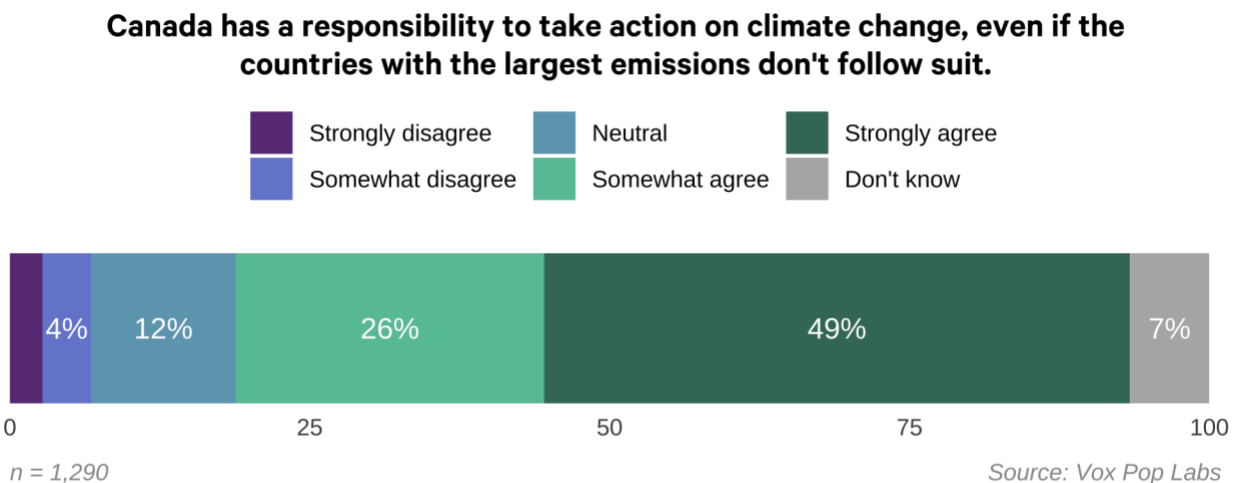


Figure 12 (Q24)

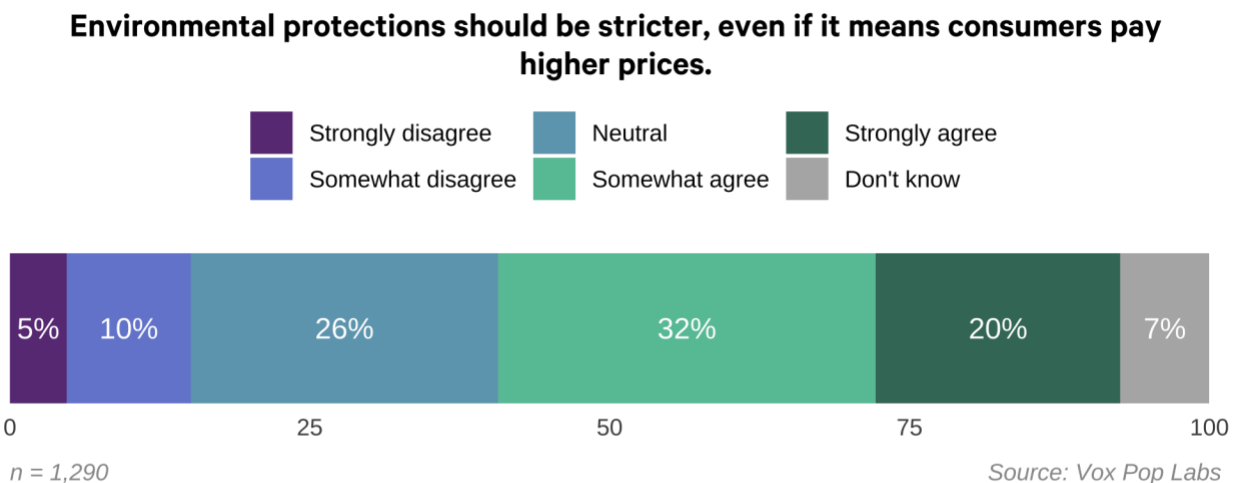


Figure 13 (Q28)

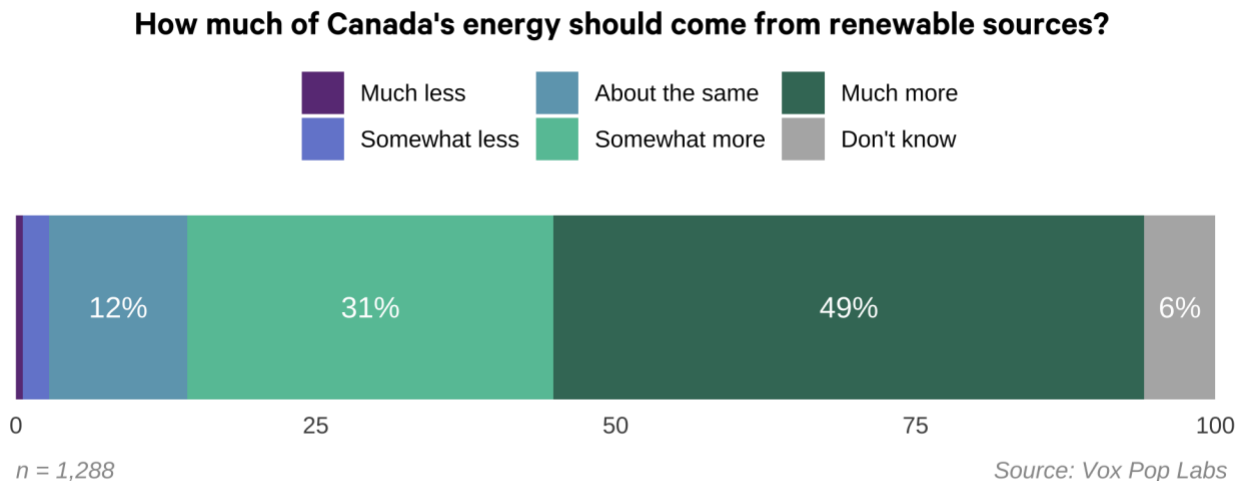


Figure 14 (Q22)

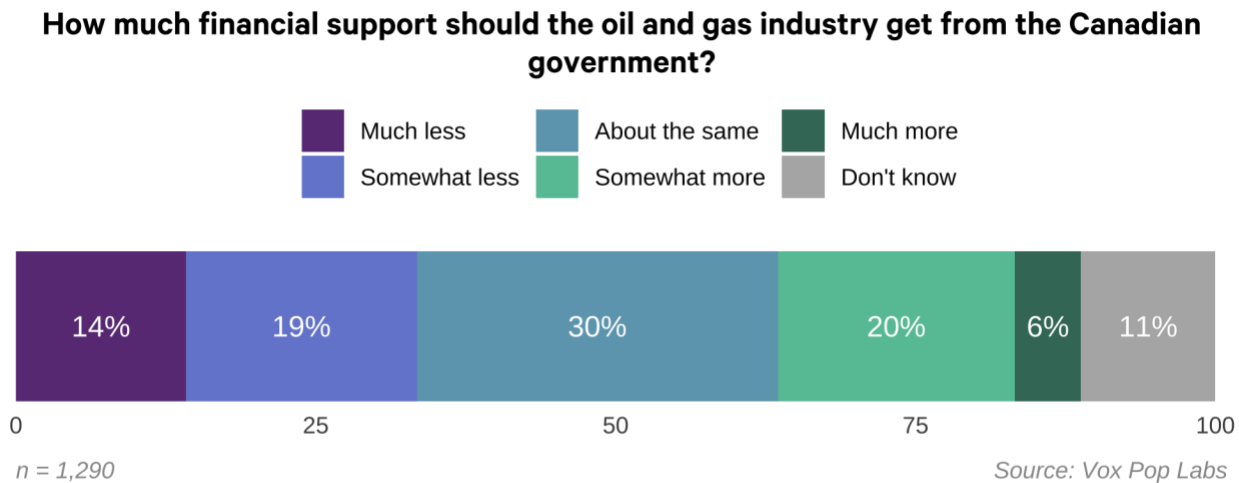


Figure 15 (Q32)

**Dental care should be covered for those Canadians who do not have insurance of their own.**

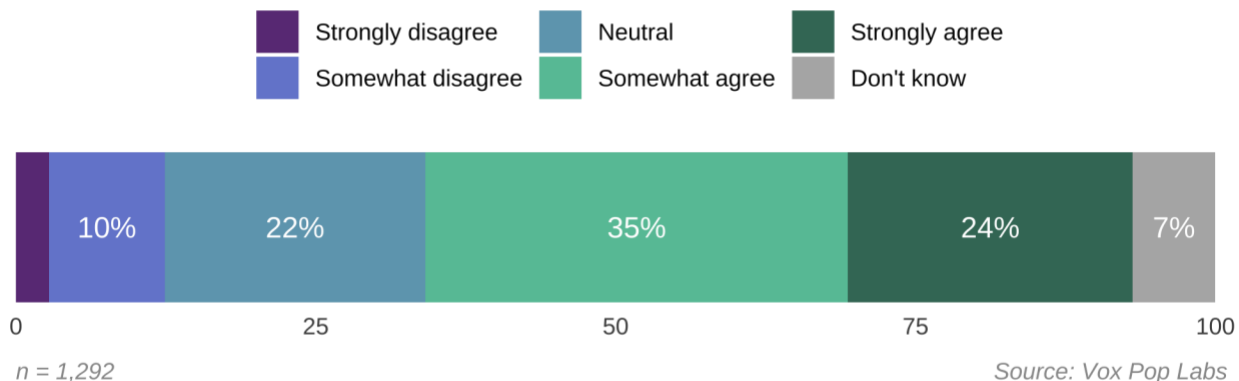


Figure 16 (Q30)

**The Canadian government should cover the cost of common prescription drugs.**

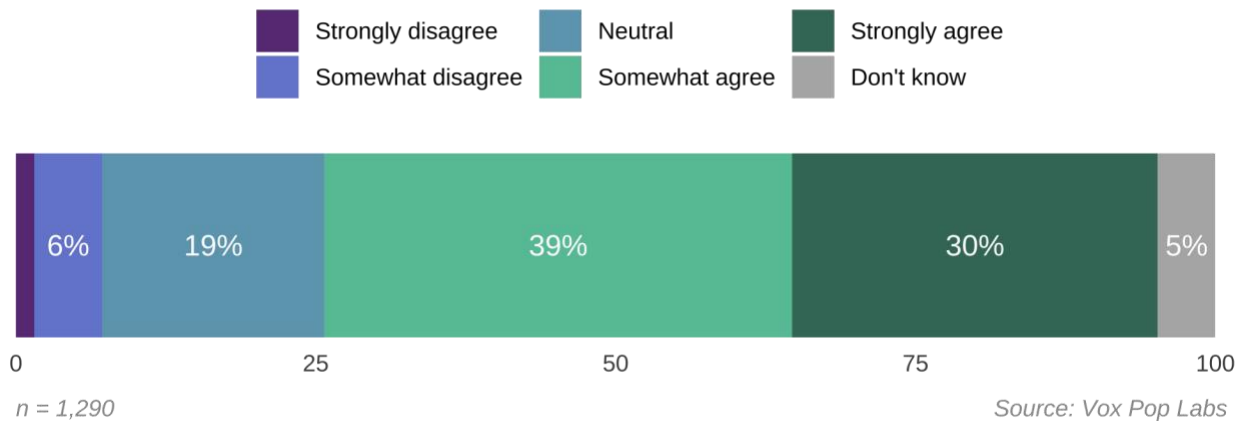


Figure 17 (Q34)

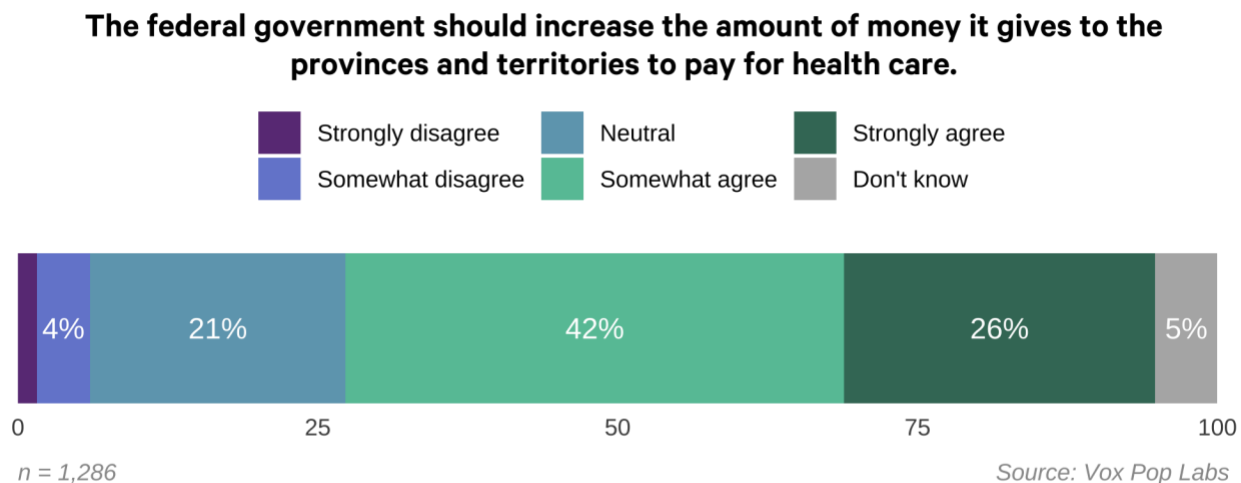


Figure 18 (Q14)

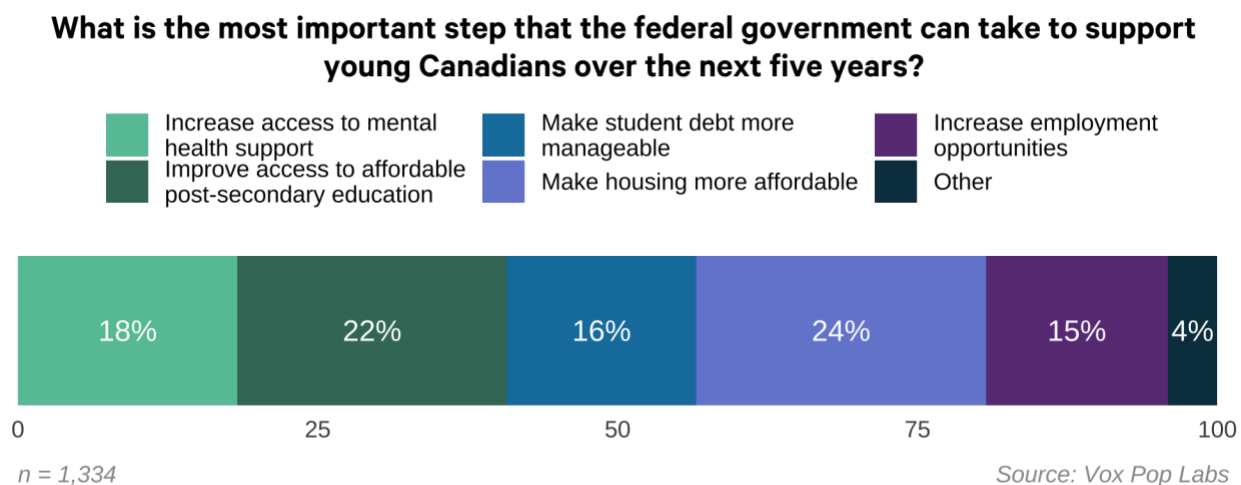


Figure 19 (Q18)

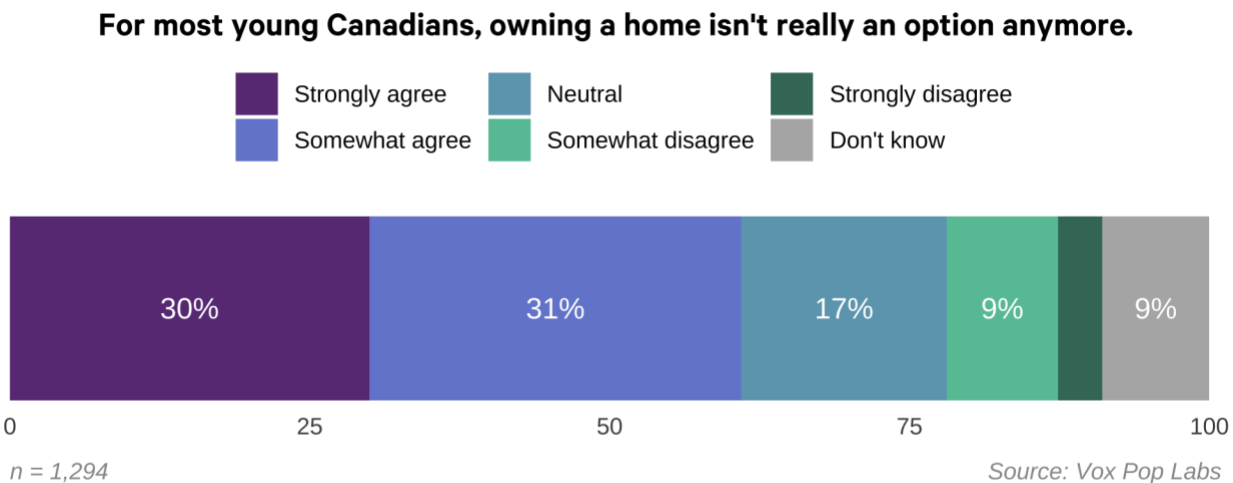


Figure 20 (Q46)

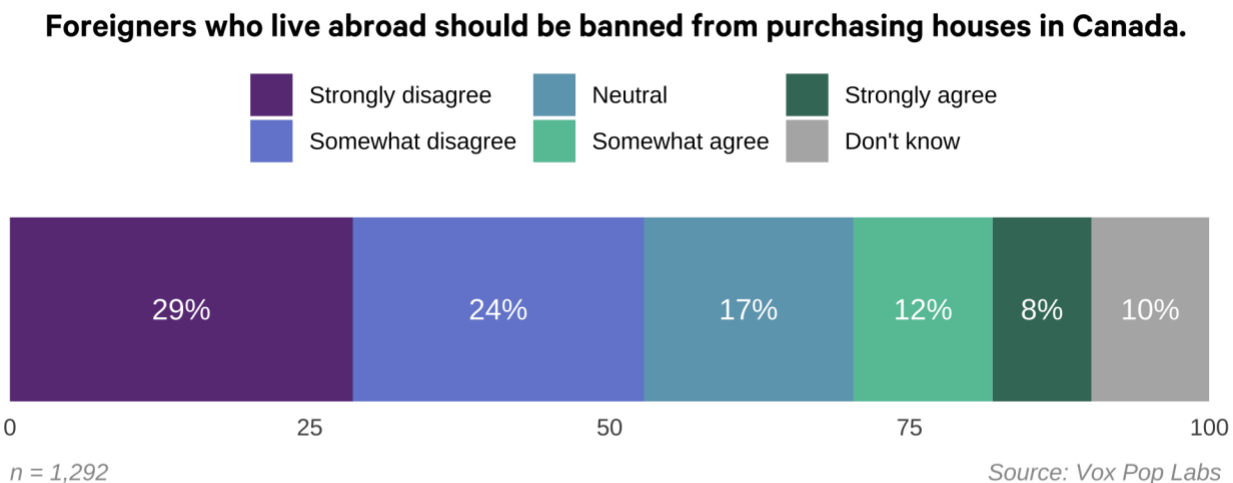




Figure 21 (Q60)

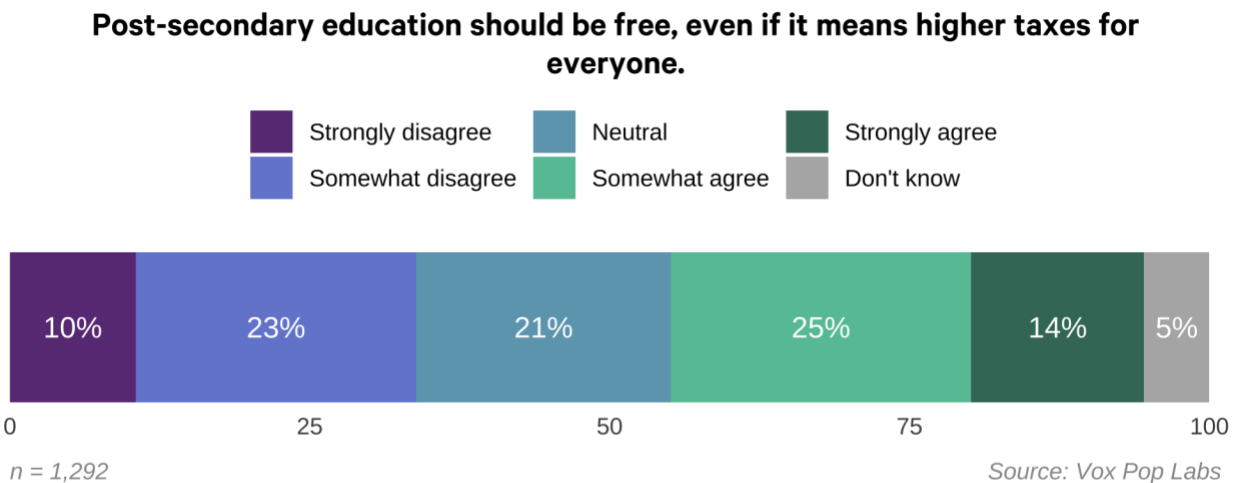


Figure 22 (Q36)

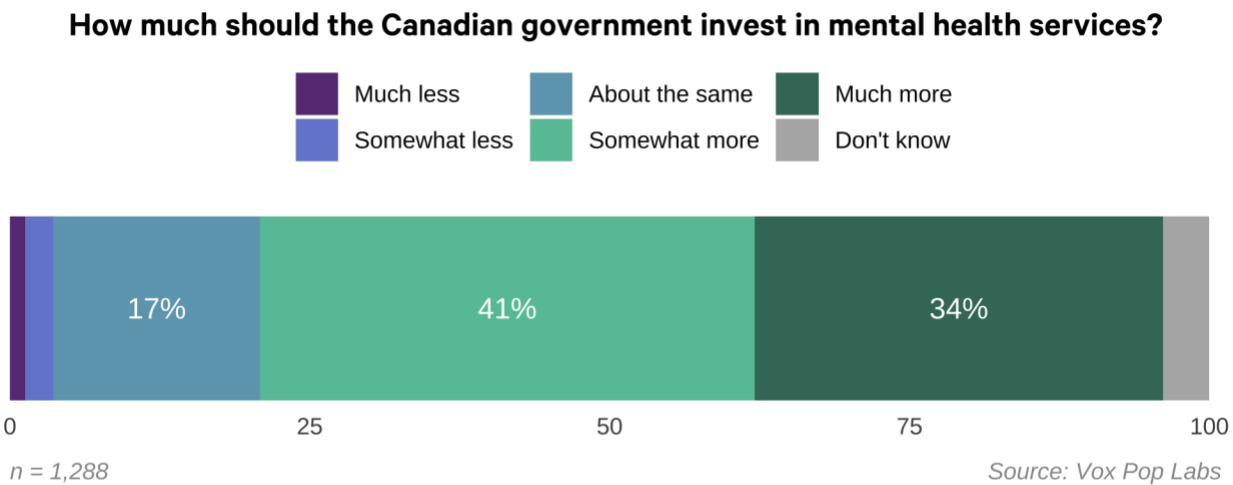


Figure 23 (Q38)

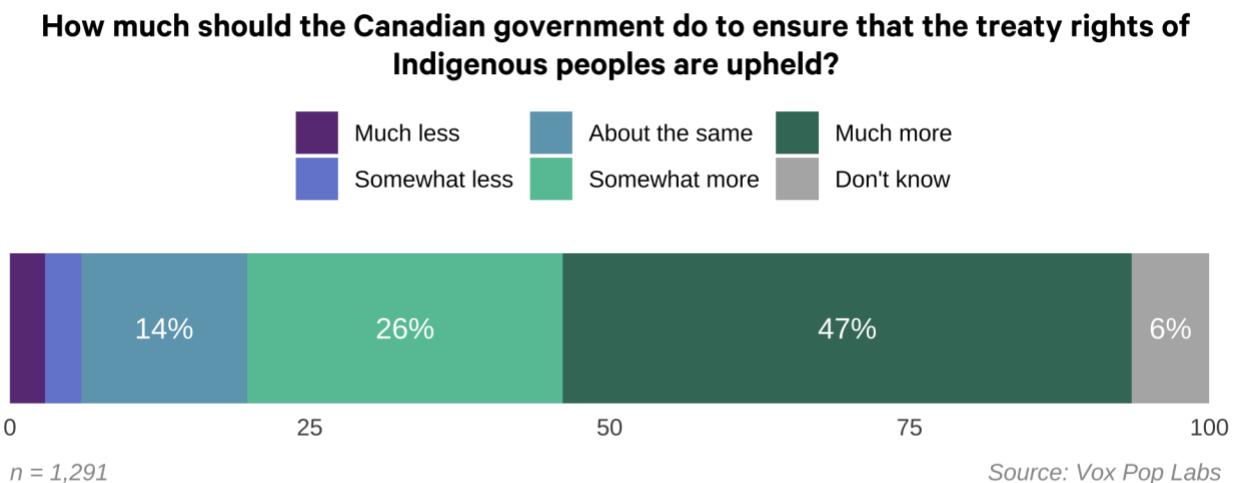


Figure 24 (Q50)

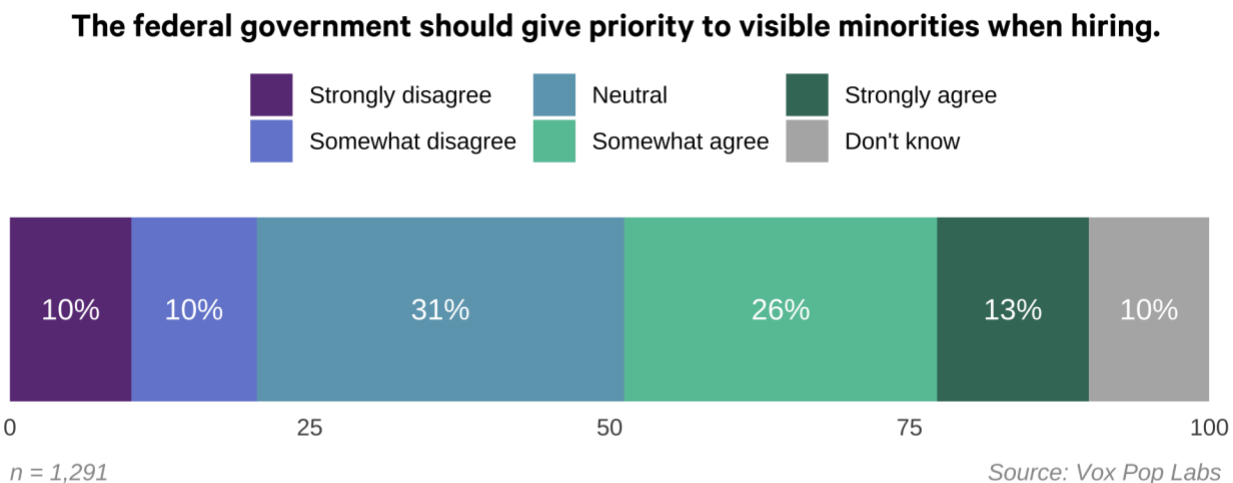


Figure 25 (Q54)

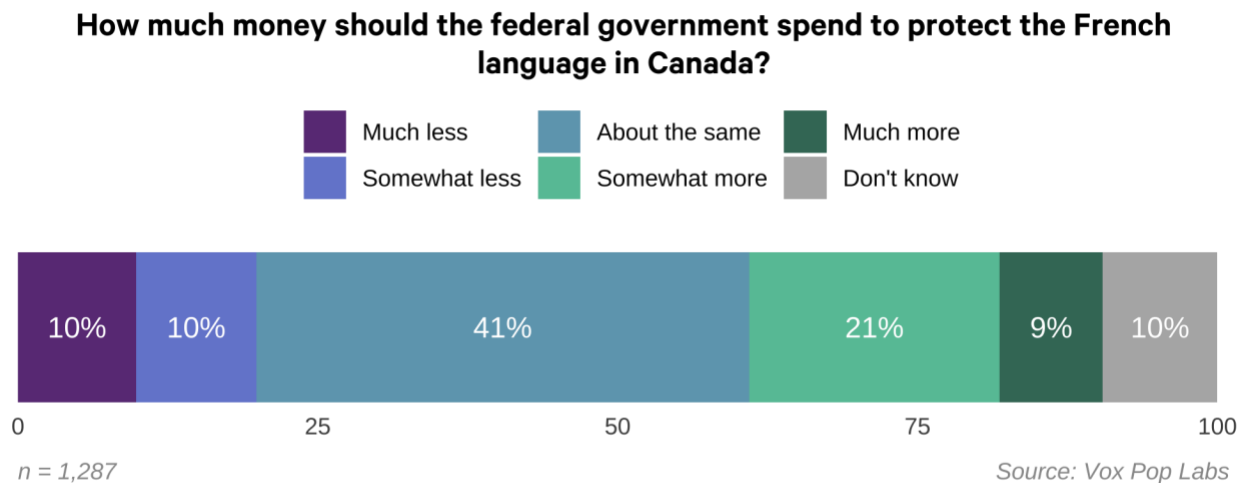


Figure 26 (Q68)

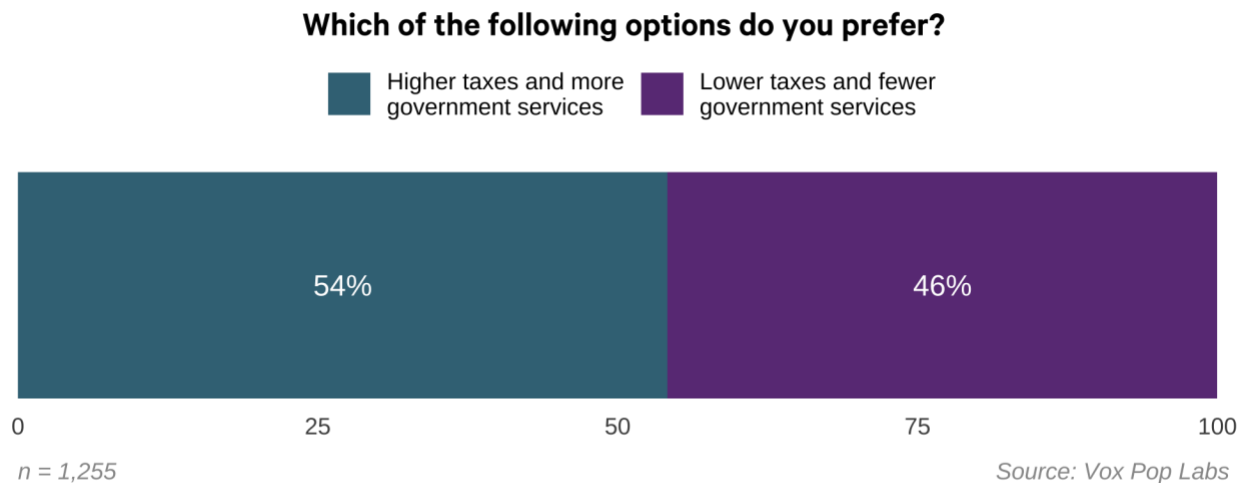


Figure 27 (Q20)

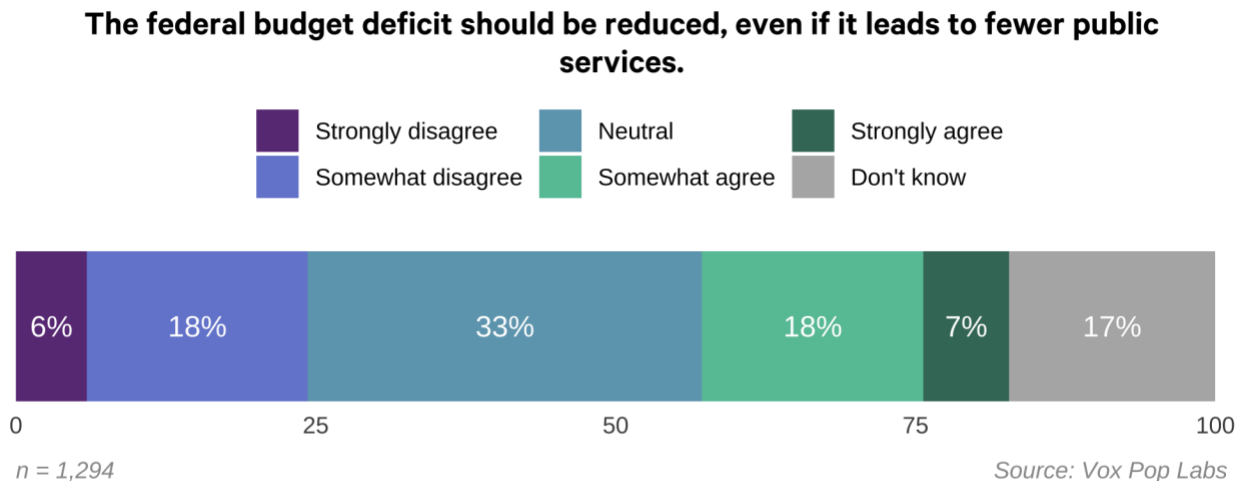


Figure 28 (Q58)

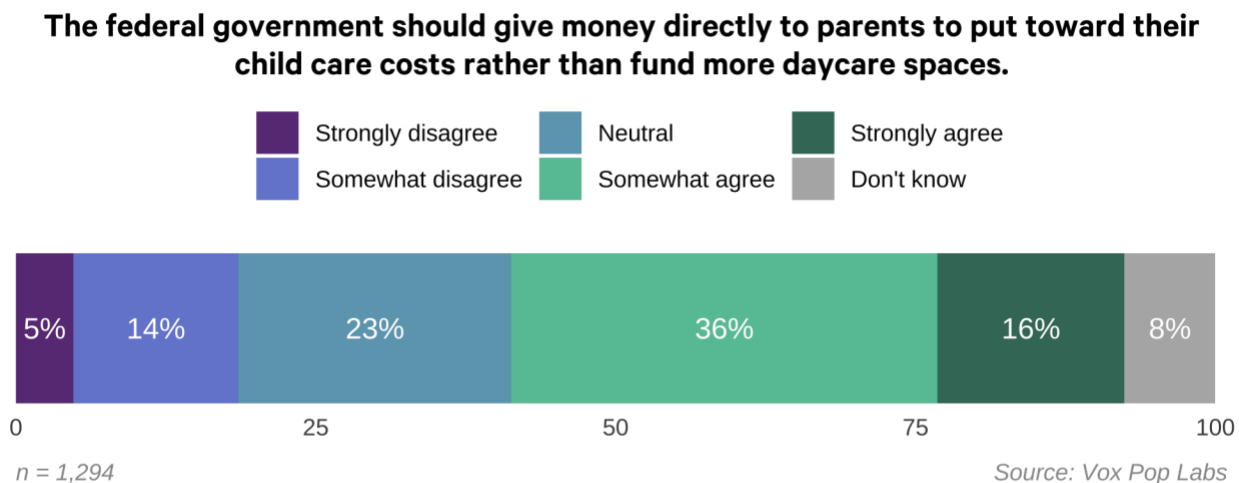


Figure 29 (Q52)

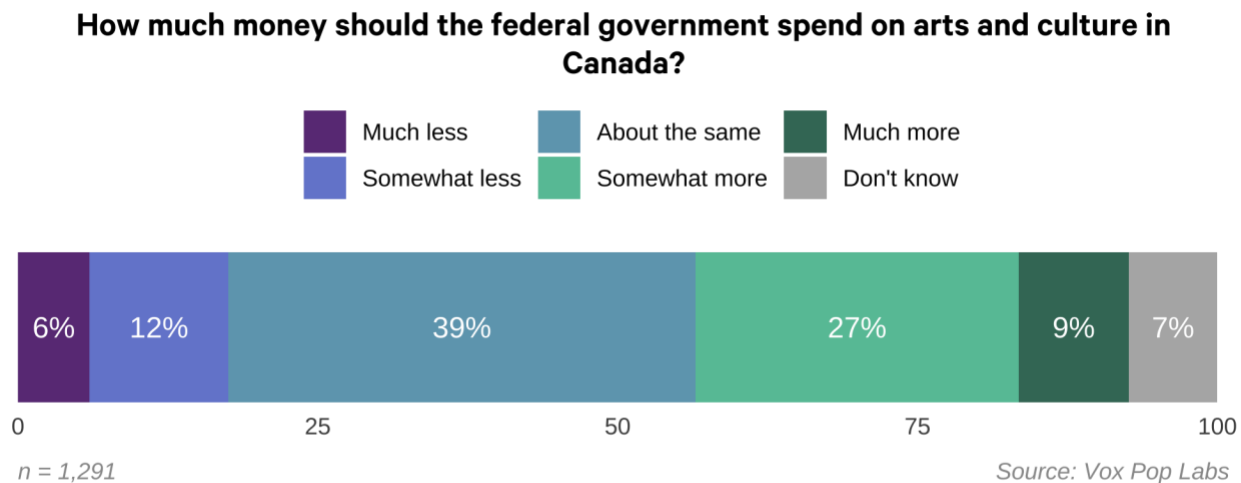


Figure 30 (Q48)

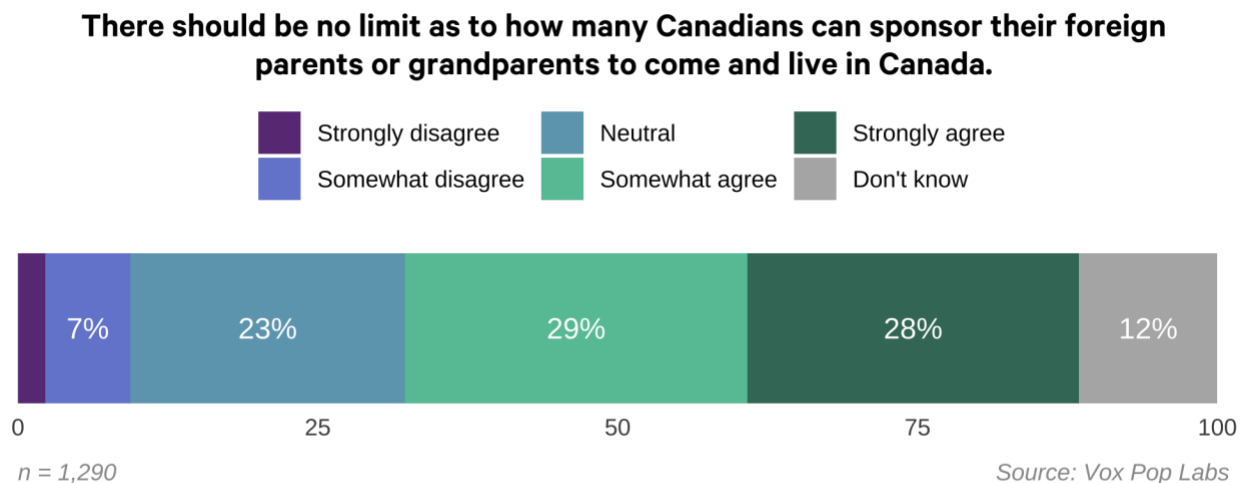


Figure 31 (Q62)

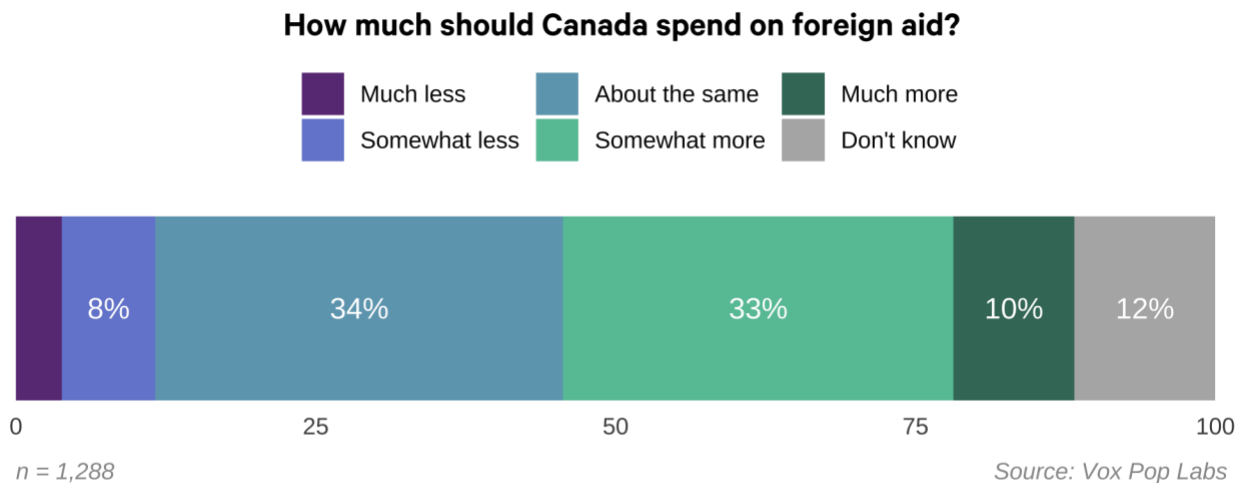


Figure 32 (Q9)

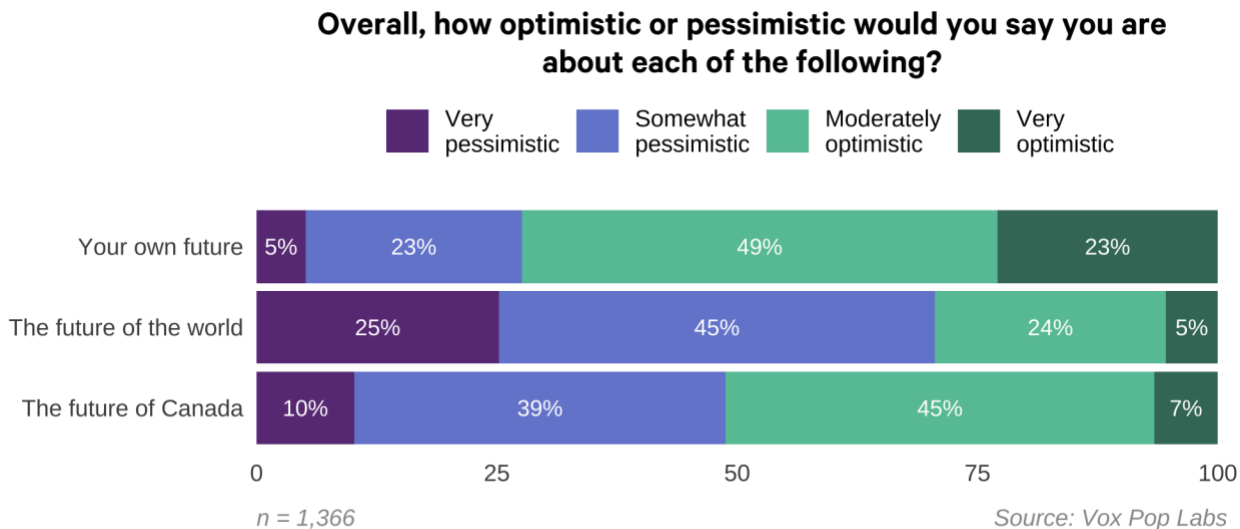


Figure 33 (Q13)

**How helpful do you think the following actions would be in terms of making life more affordable for Canadians?**

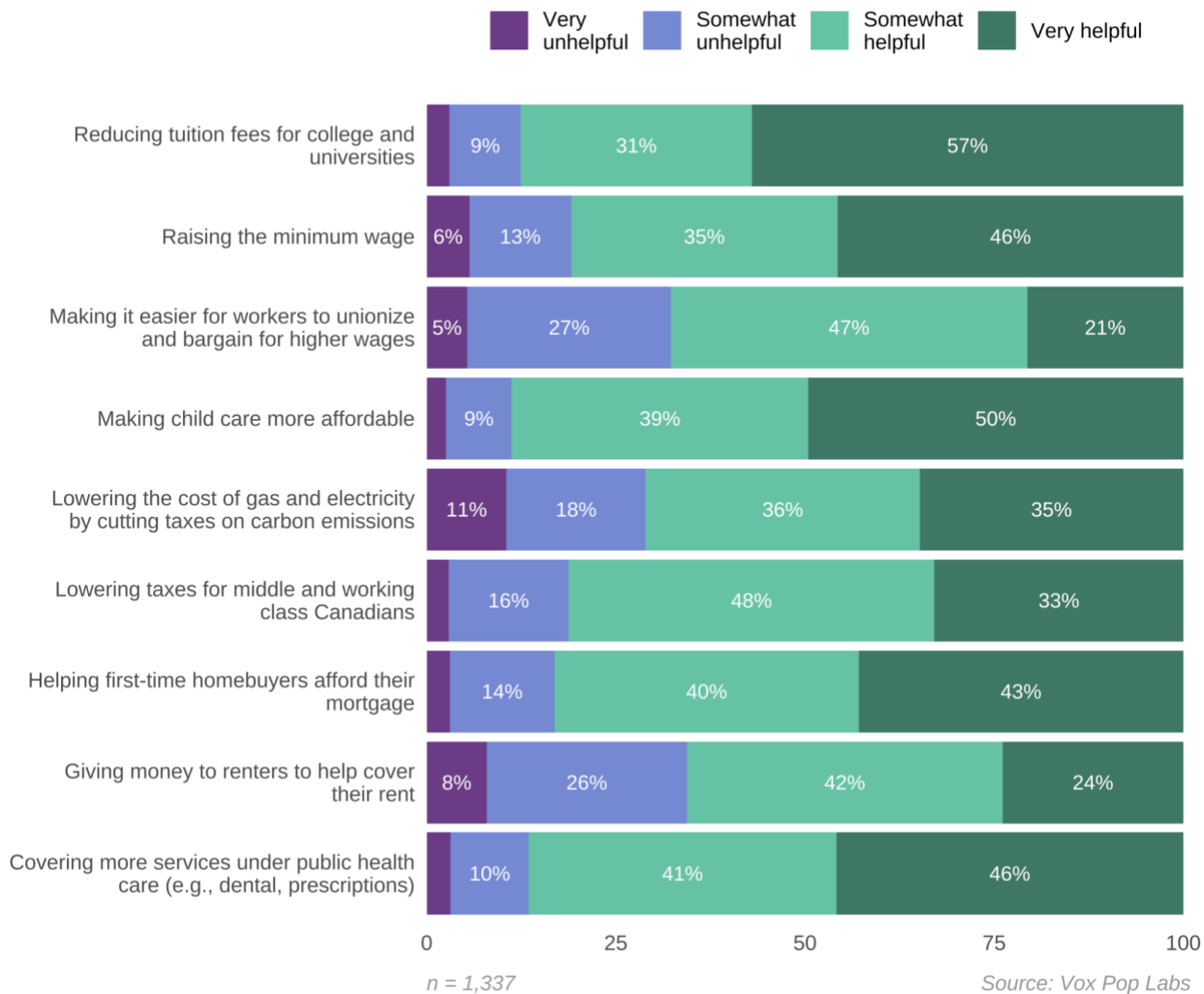


Figure 34 (Q16)

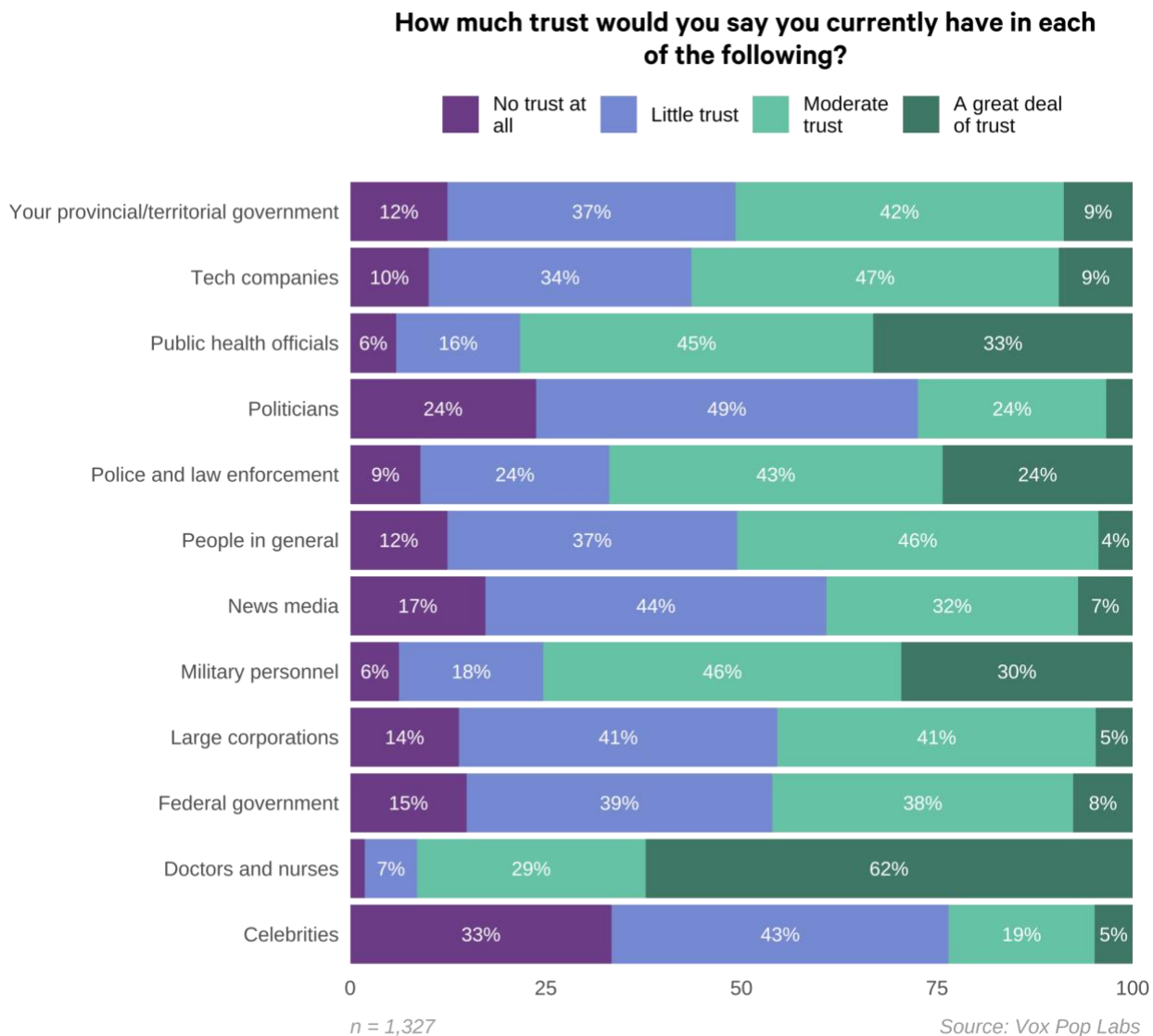
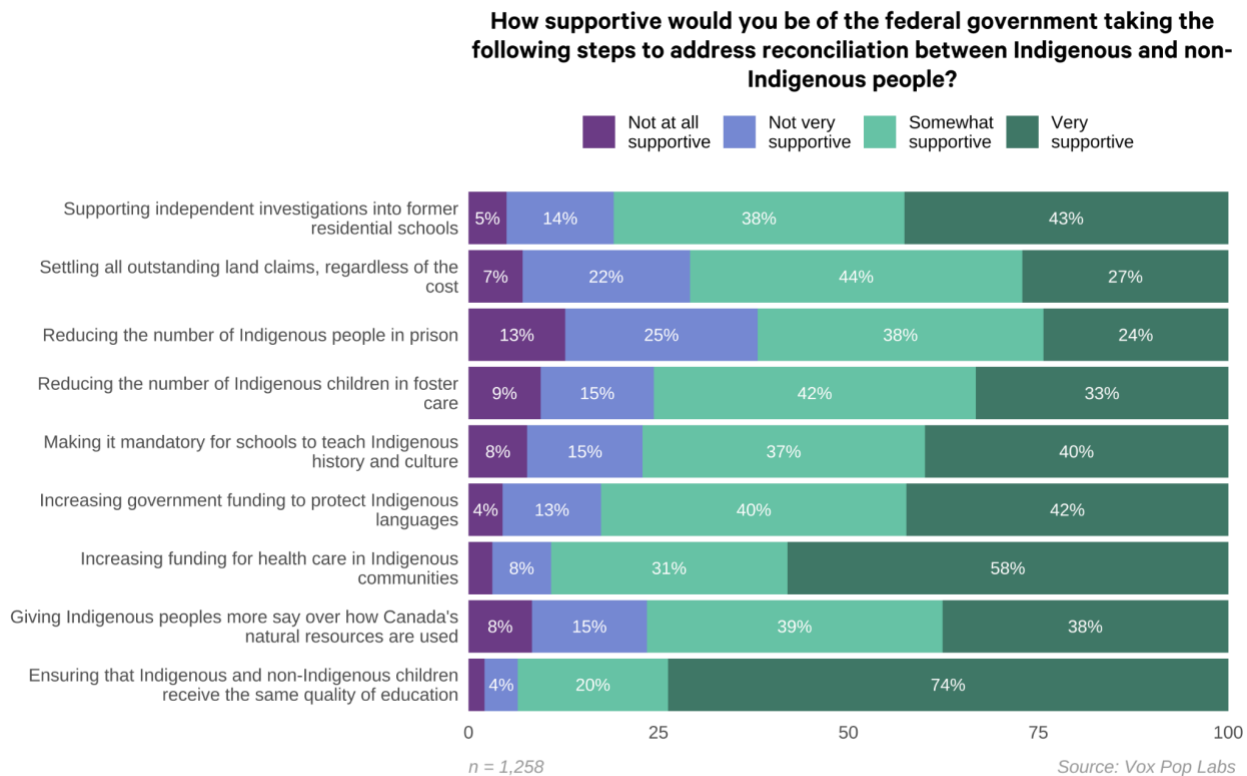


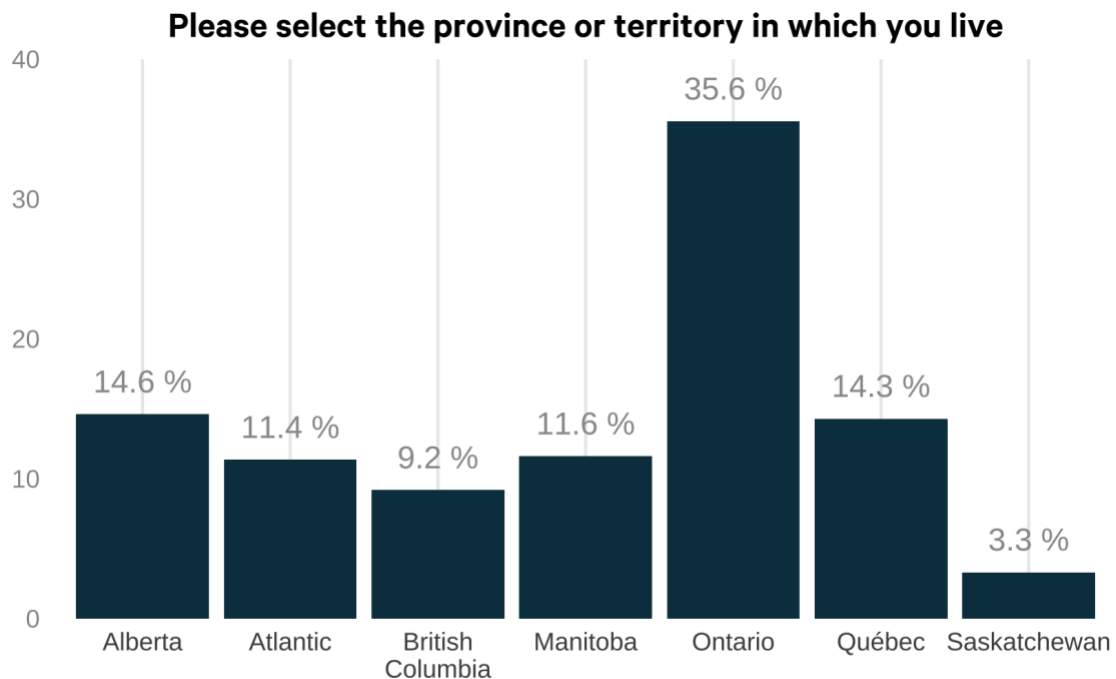


Figure 35 (Q66)



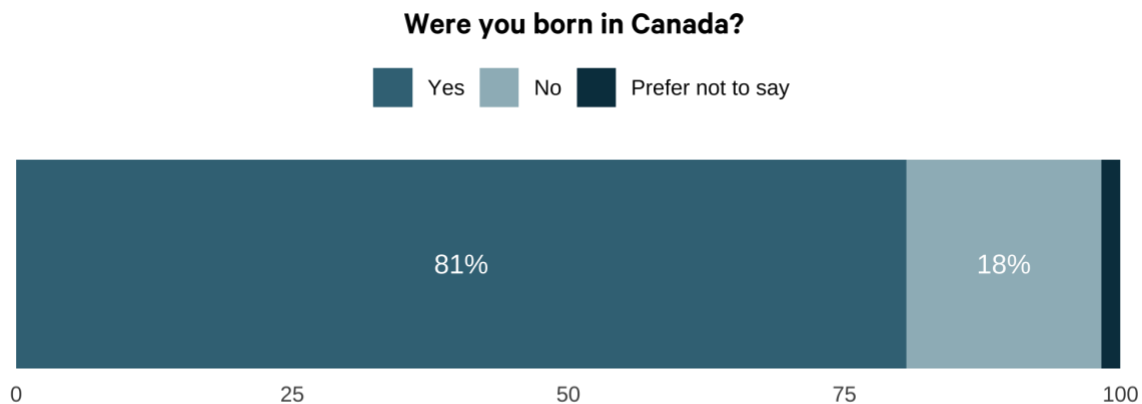
## Demographic Profile (before weighting)

### Province



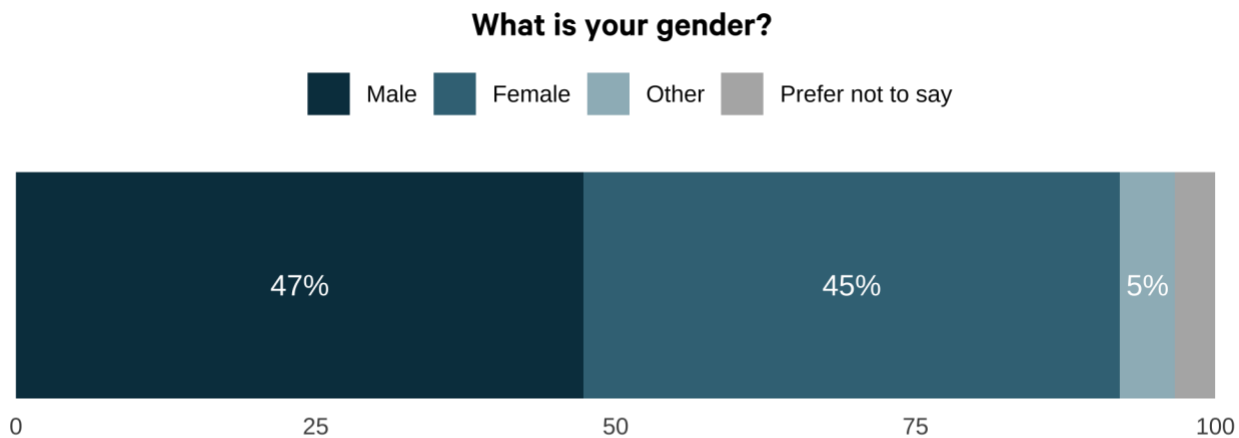
Source: Vox Pop Labs

### Country of Birth



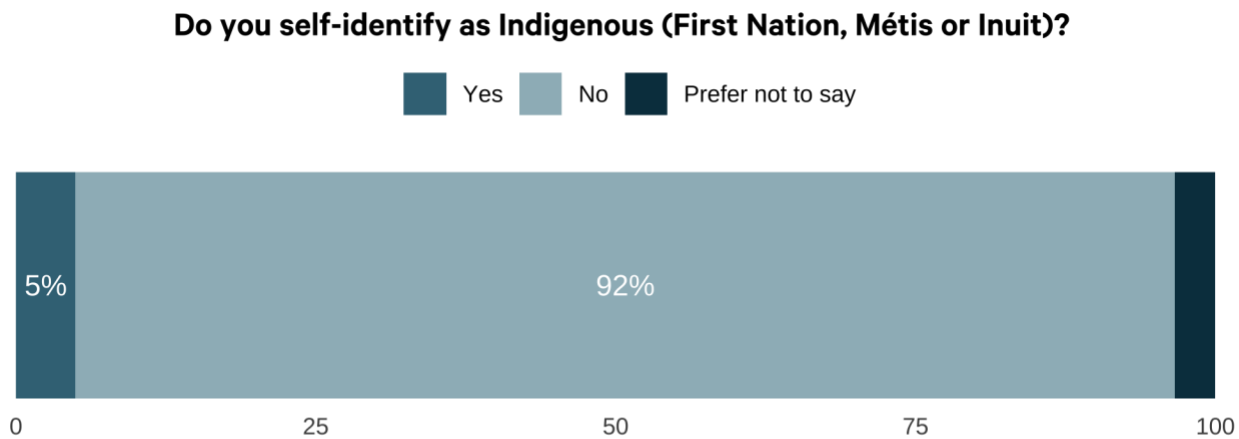
Source: Vox Pop Labs

### Gender



Source: Vox Pop Labs

### Indigenous

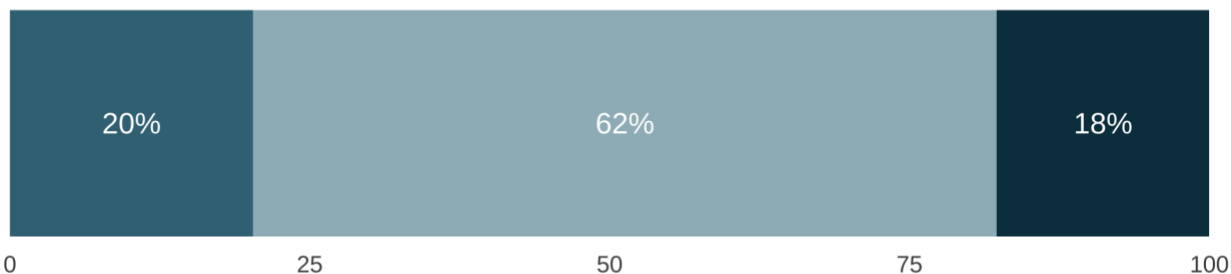


Source: Vox Pop Labs

### Visible Minority

**Are you a member of a visible minority group?**

Yes No Prefer not to say

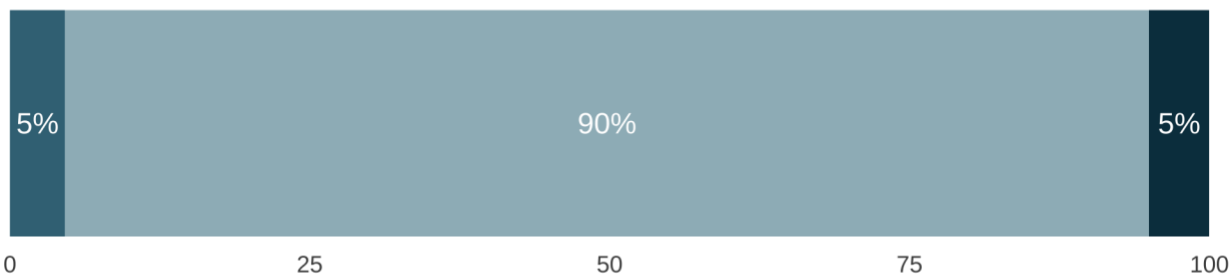


Source: Vox Pop Labs

### Disability

**Are you a person with a disability?**

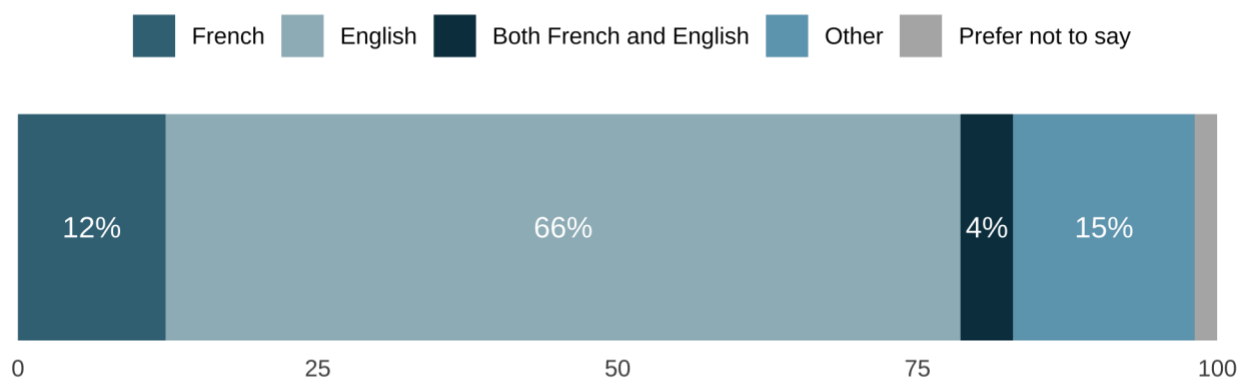
Yes No Prefer not to say



Source: Vox Pop Labs

## Language

### What language do you speak most often at home?



Source: Vox Pop Labs