



STUDENT BUDGET CONSULTATION

Review of Results

March 18, 2019



METHODOLOGY

The 2019 Student Budget Consultation survey was launched on November 23, 2018. The cut-off date for reporting, however, was 24 January 2018. Thus, while this report may only include **4,062** responses, more than 8,000 responses have been collected using both paper and online formats, since November 2018.

To increase the representativeness of the results, the 2016 Canadian census was used to weight the data in this report to reflect the distribution of males and females, aged 12 to 18, in Canada.

The following report includes incomplete responses, meaning that sample sizes will vary from question to question. The numbers of student participants from Quebec and the Territories, in particular, are too small to draw valid inferences about these samples. Their responses have been accordingly removed from all provincial analyses but retained in aggregate graphs.

A subset of 2018 Student Budget Consultation data was also used in this report, in order to maximize comparability with this year's sample of students. Finally, due to rounding, percentages presented throughout this document may not add up to 100% and precisely reflect the absolute figures.

8 MAJOR THEMES

CURRENT AND FUTURE OUTLOOKS

Although students are unsure of whether their families' financial situations have improved in the last 3 years, they are overwhelmingly confident about their own future job prospects.

THE ENVIRONMENT

While there is clear support among students for protecting the environment, there is also some disconnect in their environmental positions. Students are somewhat divided on the issue of government funding for the oil and gas industry and are, for the most part, neutral on the issue of a federally imposed carbon tax.

EDUCATION

Education remains a top priority for students. Students believe that the best ways for the government to help families and youth are by making post-secondary education more affordable and by managing student debt. Moreover, in the students' ranking of the most important government issues, education was ranked highest on average.

8 MAJOR THEMES

TAXATION

Students would like the income tax exemption limit in Canada to be raised. They also believe that wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than everyone else to help those in need. That being said, students are divided when it comes to raising the corporate tax rate and do not support high-income tax rates that exceed 25%. As such, the perceived greater obligation of high-income earners does not necessarily equate to paying more in income tax.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students want to see the government commit to debt reduction and lowering taxes, even if this means less government services. They also believe that the government should do more to address tax evasion.

8 MAJOR THEMES

THE MEDIA

Half of students are neutral to government support for struggling private media companies. More broadly, media and public broadcasting ranks lowest in the students' prioritization of issues. A likely explanation for the lack of interest is that half of students today get their news from social media and may therefore be less exposed to, or reliant on, traditional news media.

TRADE

Students are divided on what the main focus of Canada's free trade agreements should be, but are opposed to trading with countries that have records of human rights abuse. Overall, free trade and foreign affairs ranks low in their prioritization of issues.

DEFENCE

In general, students are split on the issue of defence spending and do not consider national defence, as a whole, to be a high priority.

CURRENT AND FUTURE OUTLOOKS

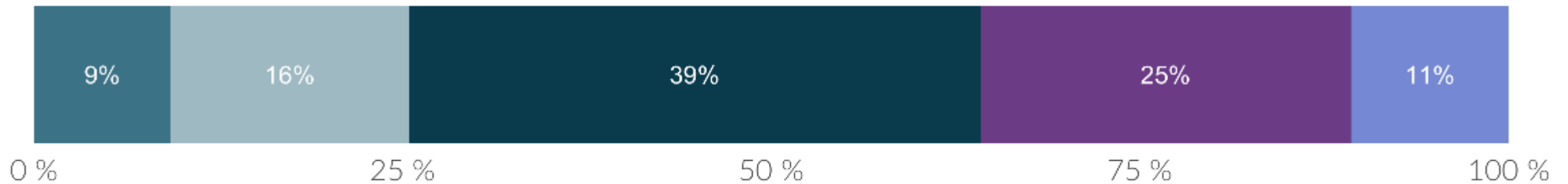
Although students are unsure of whether their families' financial situations have improved in the last 3 years, they are overwhelmingly confident about their own future job prospects.

Financial situation

Students are split on whether the financial situations of their families have improved, since the election of the Liberal government in 2015. 25% have not seen any improvements, 36% believe that their situations have improved, and the highest proportion of students (39%) are neutral.

Your family is better off financially than it was three years ago.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree

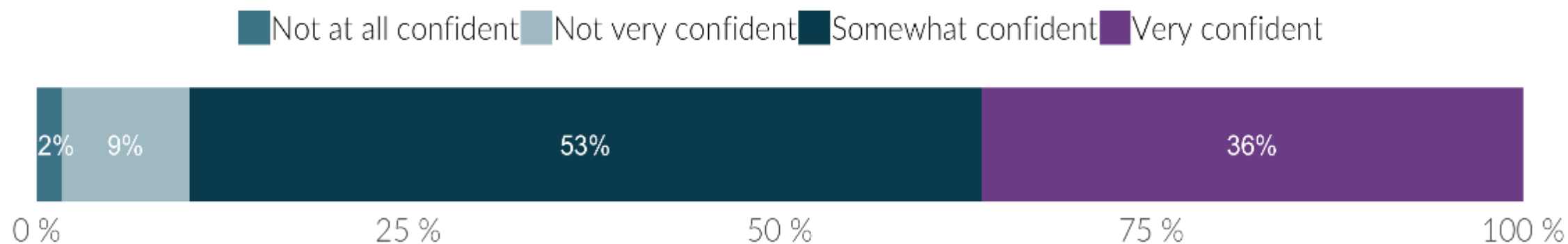


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Career prospects

Despite the fact that 39% of students are neutral or unsure of their families' financial situations, the overwhelming majority of students remain confident that they will find jobs which interest them after they finish their schooling.

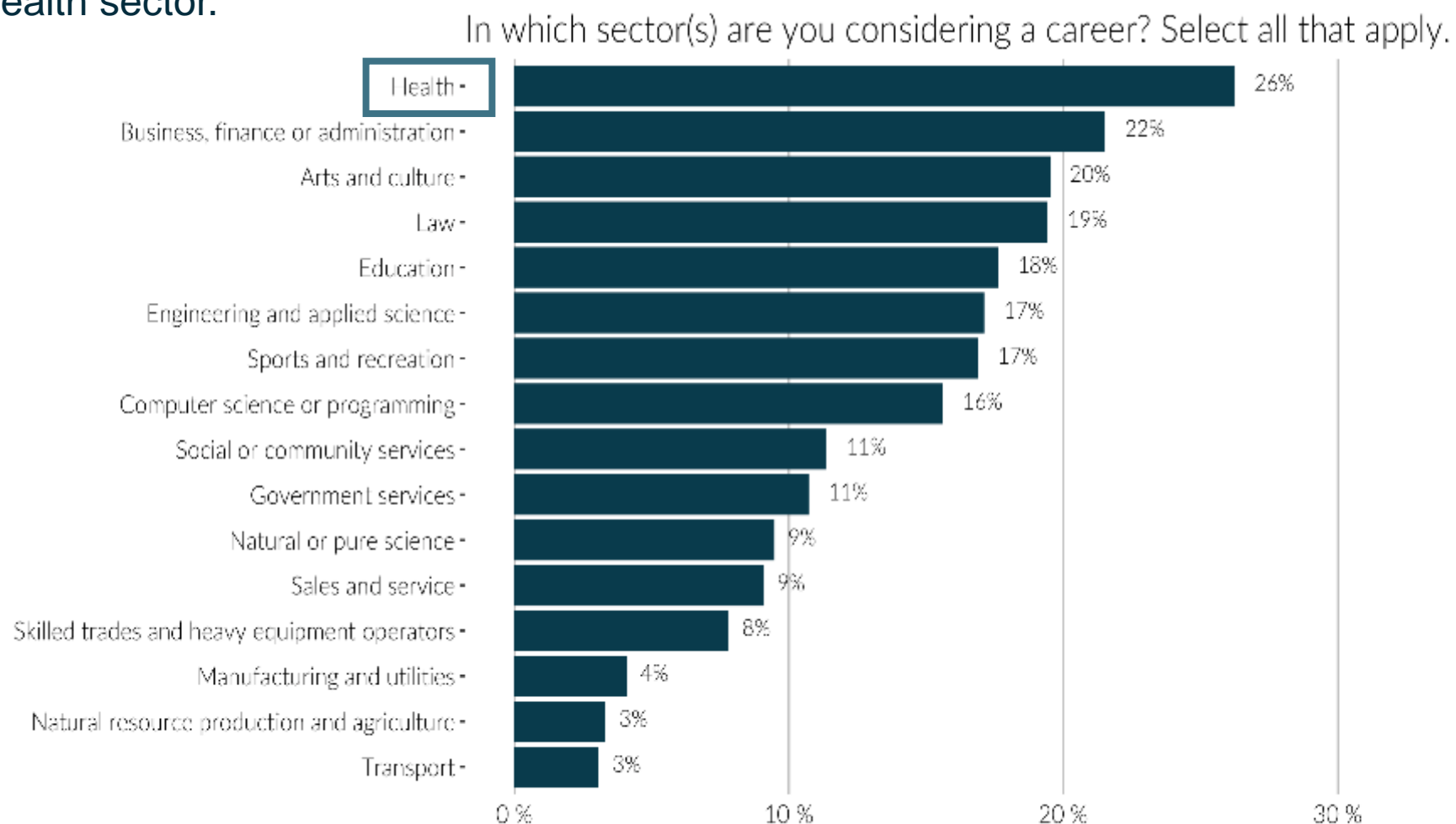
When you finish your schooling, how confident are you that you will find a job that interests you within Canada?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Sectors of work

With regard to the job sectors they are considering careers in, students most frequently cite the health sector.

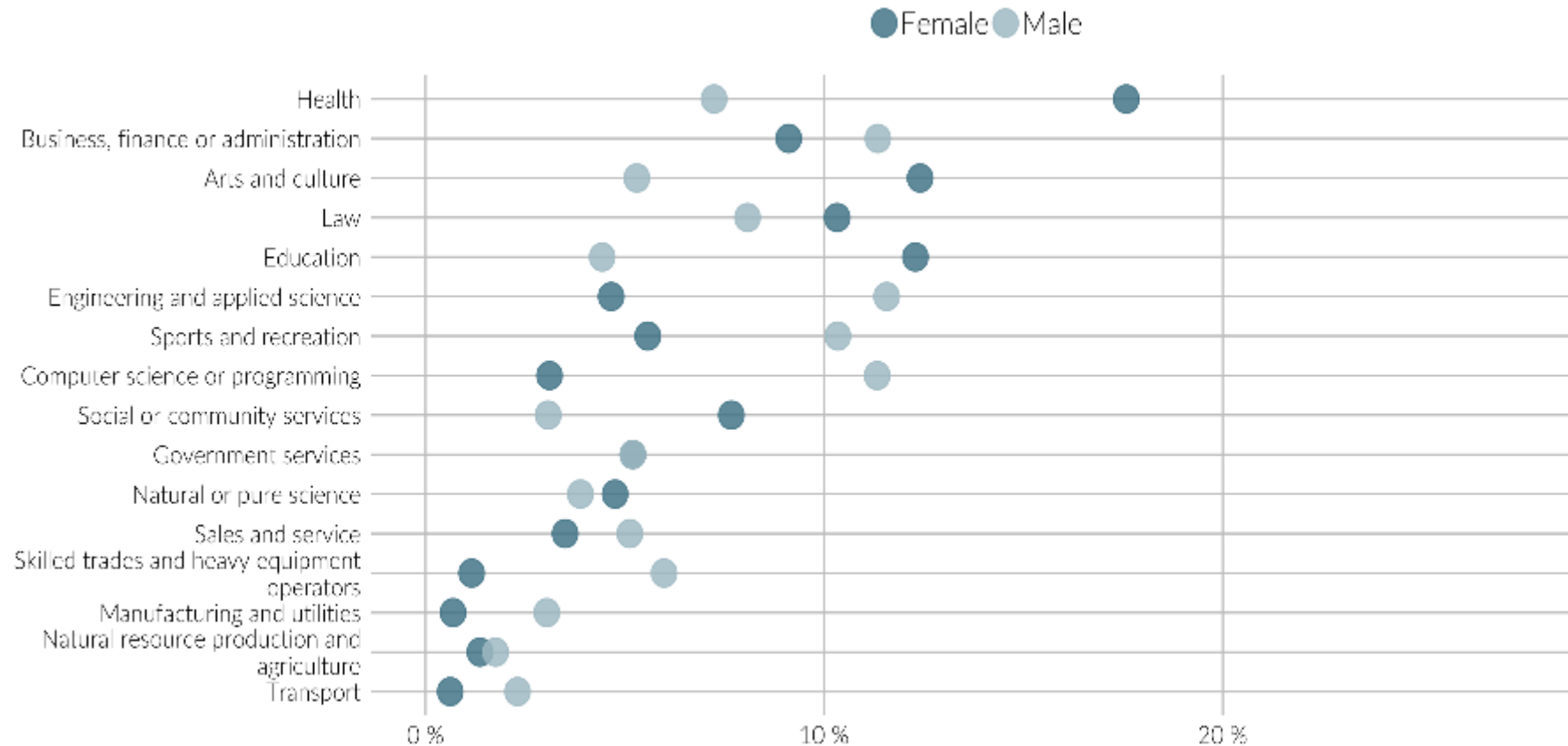


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Sectors of work: *By gender*

Female students, in particular, are more likely to choose health, education and the arts as their preferred job sectors, while male students are more likely to choose business and STEM sectors other than health, namely engineering and computer science.

In which sector(s) are you considering a career? Select all that apply.



Source: Vox Pop Labs

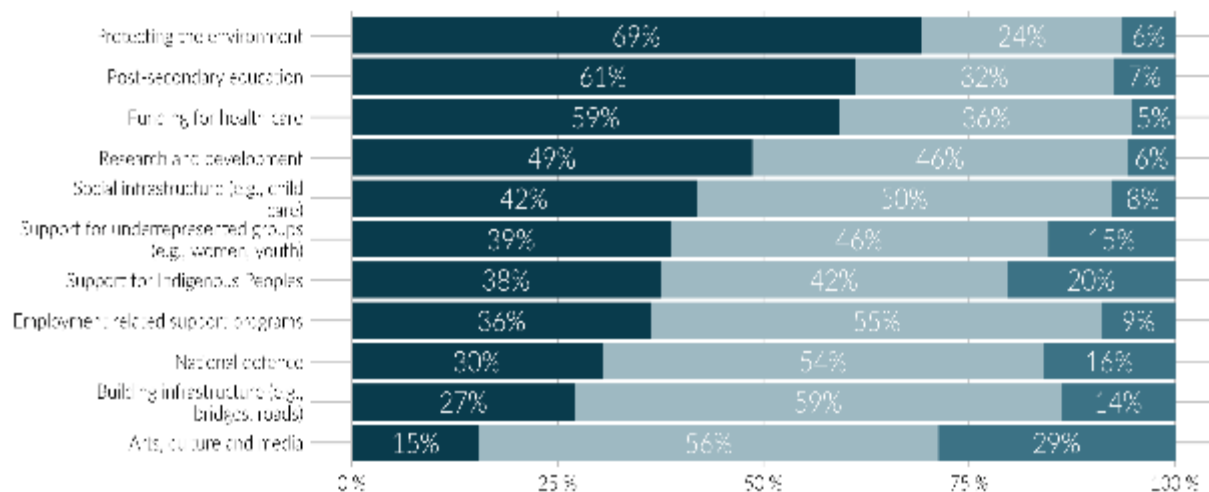
THE ENVIRONMENT

While there is clear support among students for protecting the environment, there is also some disconnect in their environmental positions. Students are somewhat divided on the issue of government funding for the oil and gas industry and are, for the most part, neutral on the issue of a federally imposed carbon tax.

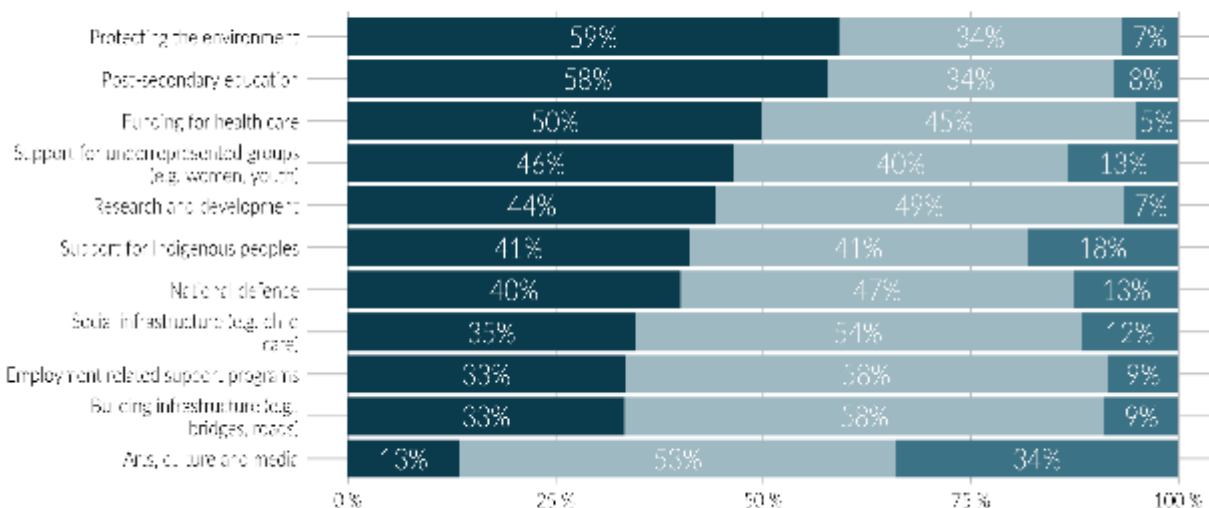
2019

Please indicate whether you think the government should increase or decrease spending on the following items in the next federal budget:

■ Spending should be increased ■ Spending should be decreased ■ Spending should stay the same



2018



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Source: Vox Pop Labs

Budgetary priorities

For the second year in a row, the environment remains the area in which students would like to see the most government spending.

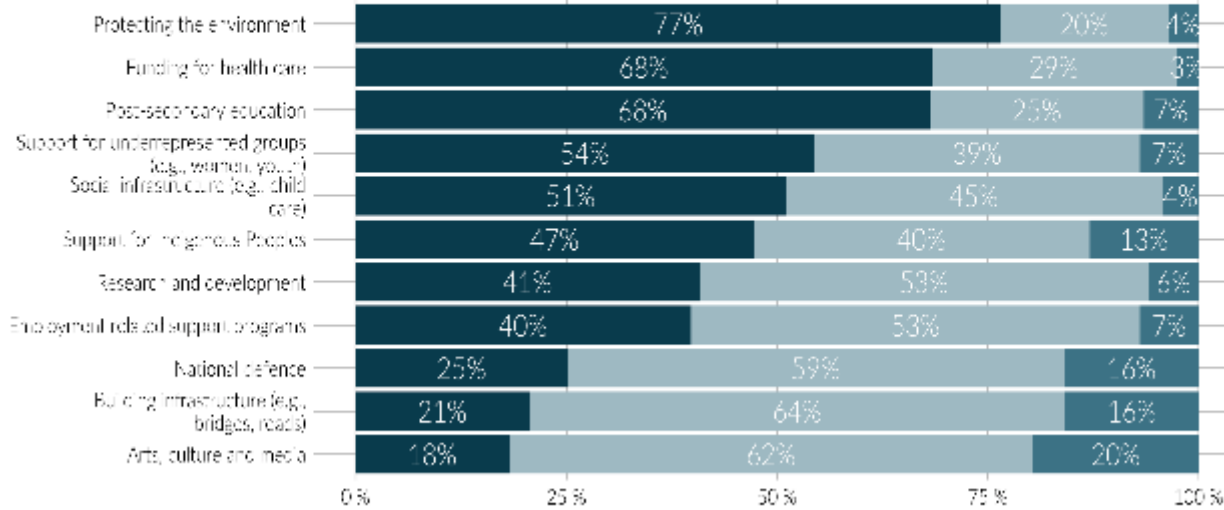
In fact, the environment, higher education and health care are still the top 3 budgetary priorities of students.

A comparison of the 2018 and 2019 further shows that support for environmental protections and health care spending is increasing among students.

Females

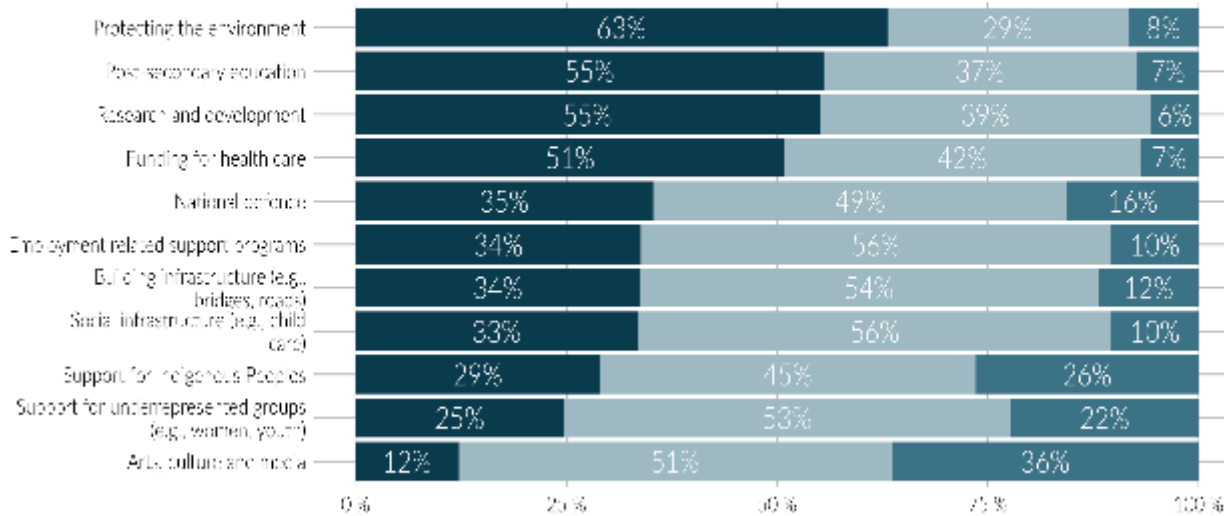
Please indicate whether you think the government should increase or decrease spending on the following items in the next federal budget:

■ Spending should be increased ■ Spending should be decreased
■ Spending should stay the same



Males

Source: Vox Pop Labs



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Budgetary priorities: By gender

Notable gender differences emerge in the data.

77% of female students want the government to increase spending on the environment, compared to only 63% of male students.

Female students are also more likely to prioritize increased spending in health care, higher education, and support for women, youth and Indigenous Peoples.

Male students, in contrast, are more likely to prioritize investments in research and development and national defence.

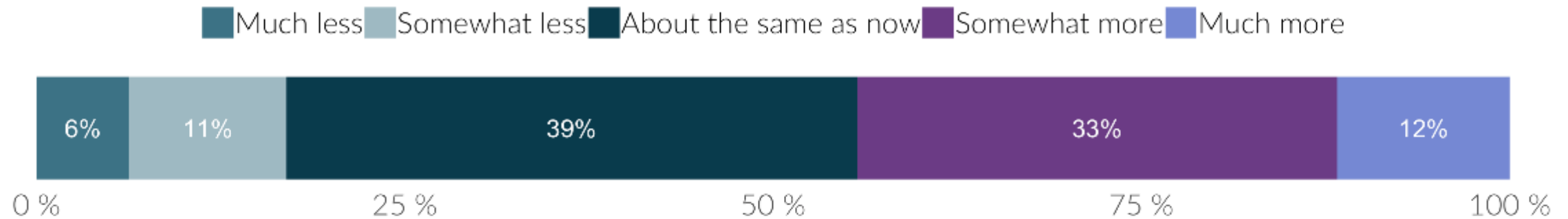
CIVIX

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Oil and gas industry

However, when asked about how much the government should support Canada's oil and gas industry, the highest proportion of students (45%) favour an increase in support, and a marginally smaller proportion (39%) are reluctant to take a stance.

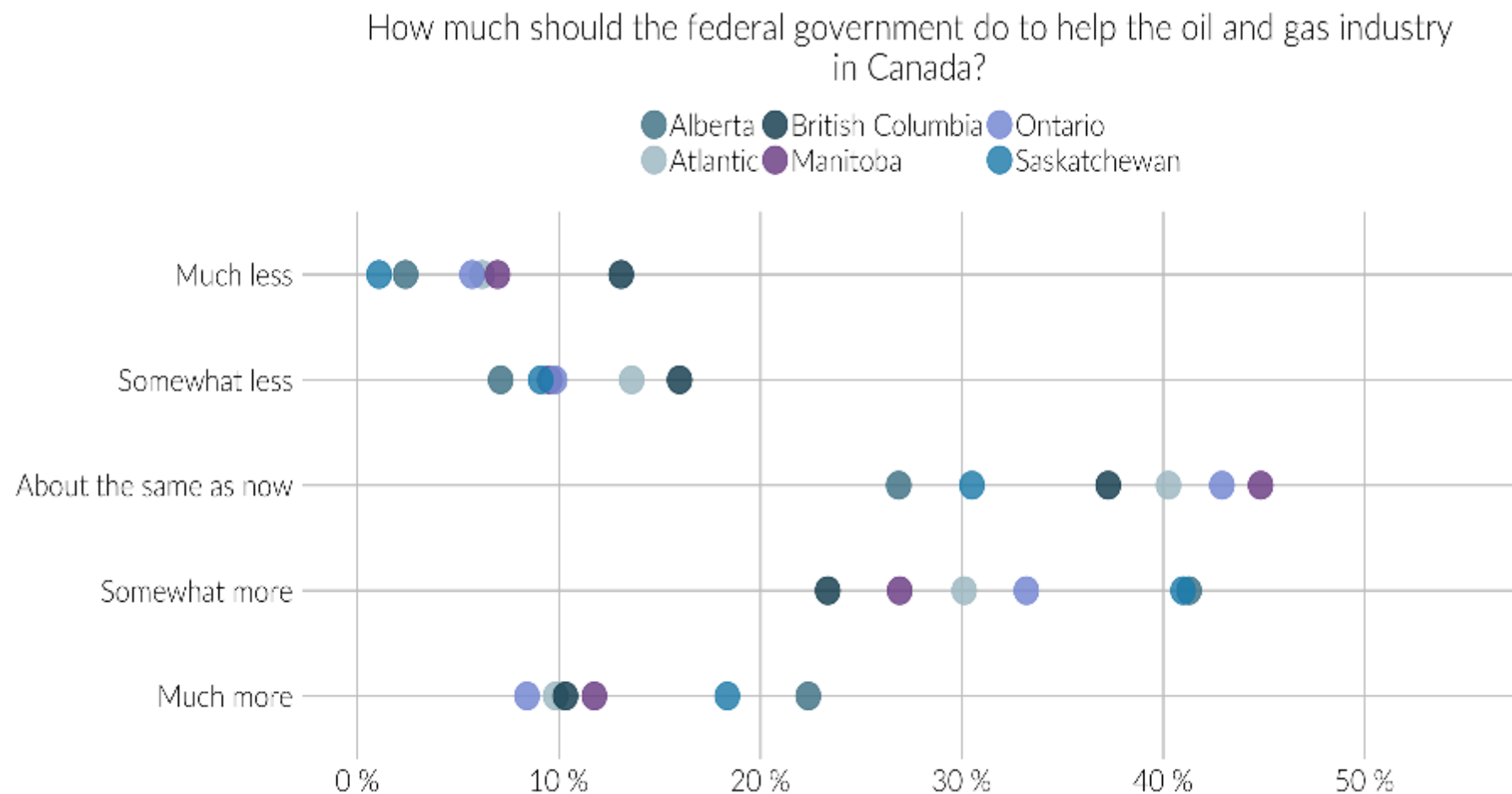
How much should the federal government do to help the oil and gas industry in Canada?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Oil and gas industry: By province

A provincial analysis shows that students from Alberta and Saskatchewan are the most likely to favour increased government support for the oil and gas industry.



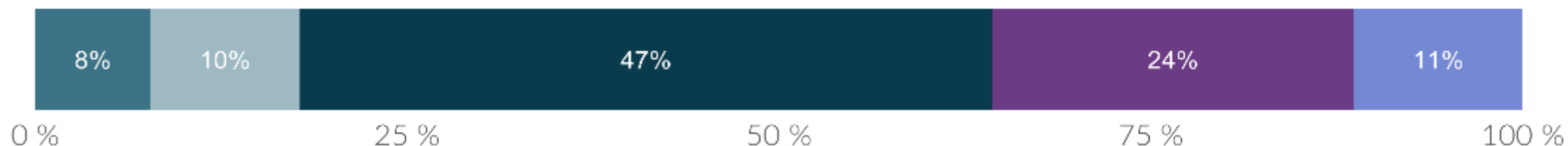
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Carbon tax

Moreover, on the issue of carbon pricing, 47% of students are neutral to the federal government's plans to impose a carbon tax on provinces that have no systems of their own. Only 35% of students agree with a federally imposed carbon pricing system.

The federal government should impose a carbon tax on provinces with no systems of their own.

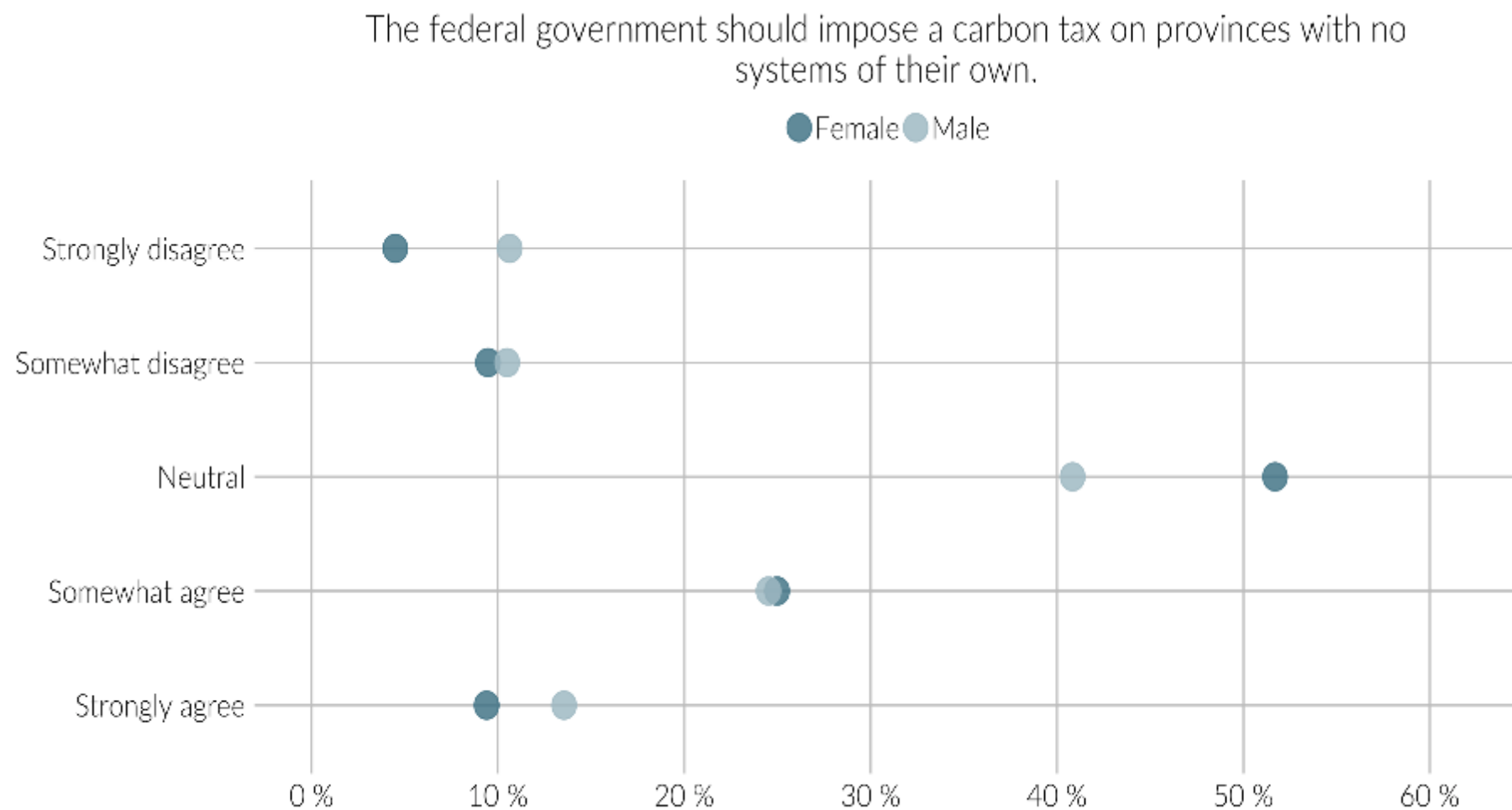
Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Carbon tax: *By gender*

Female students, in particular, are more likely to be neutral on this issue than male students.



Source: Vox Pop Labs

EDUCATION

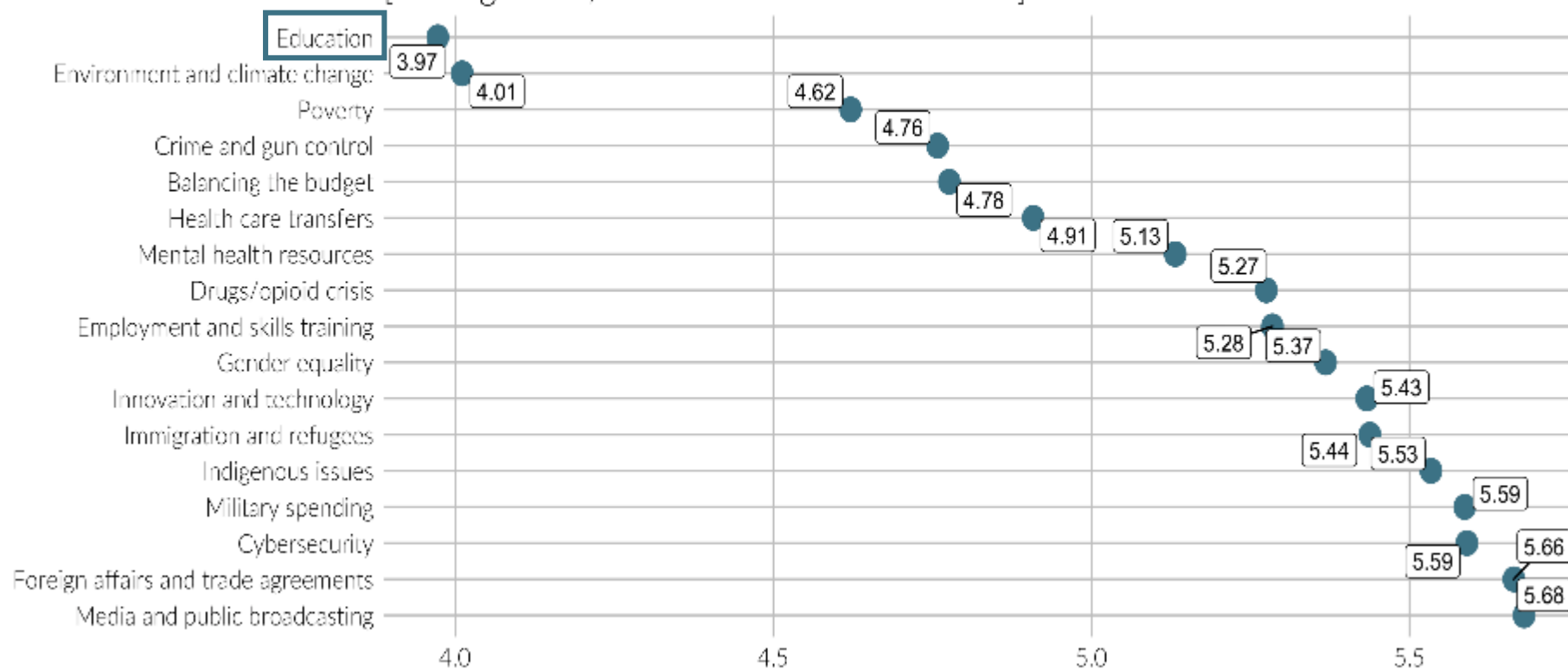
Education remains a top priority for students. Students believe that the best ways for the government to help families and youth are by making post-secondary education more affordable and by managing student debt. Moreover, in the students' ranking of the most important government issues, education was ranked highest on average.

Most important issues

In their ranking of the most important issues for the government, students ranked education highest on average.

Please choose what you think are the 5 most important issues, and drag and drop them into the box provided in order of what you believe the government should prioritize, with 1 being your highest priority.

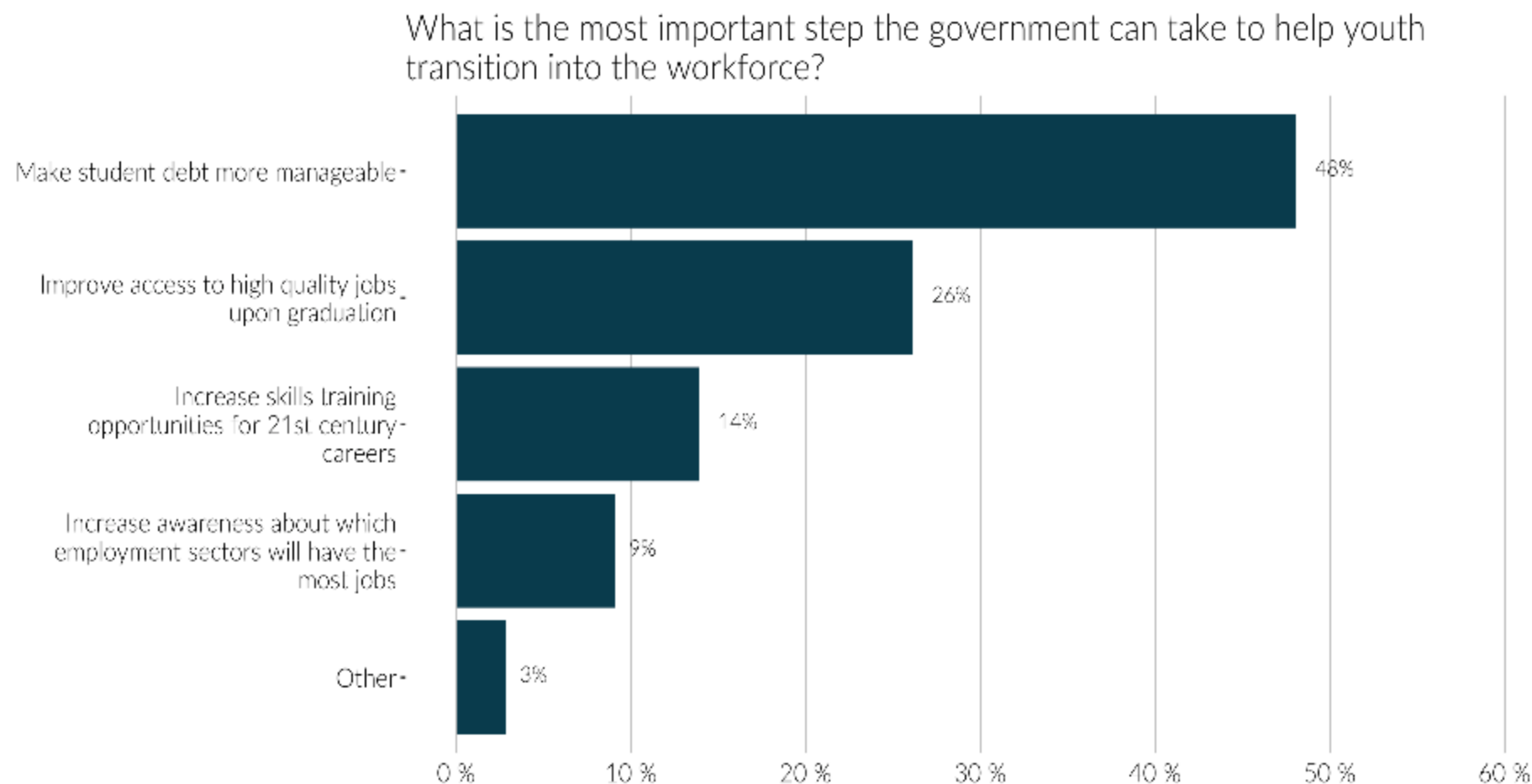
[Average rank; non-ranked item coded as 6]



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Student debt

Moreover, almost half of students (48%) believe that the most important step that the government can take to facilitate the workforce entry of young Canadians is to make student debt more manageable.

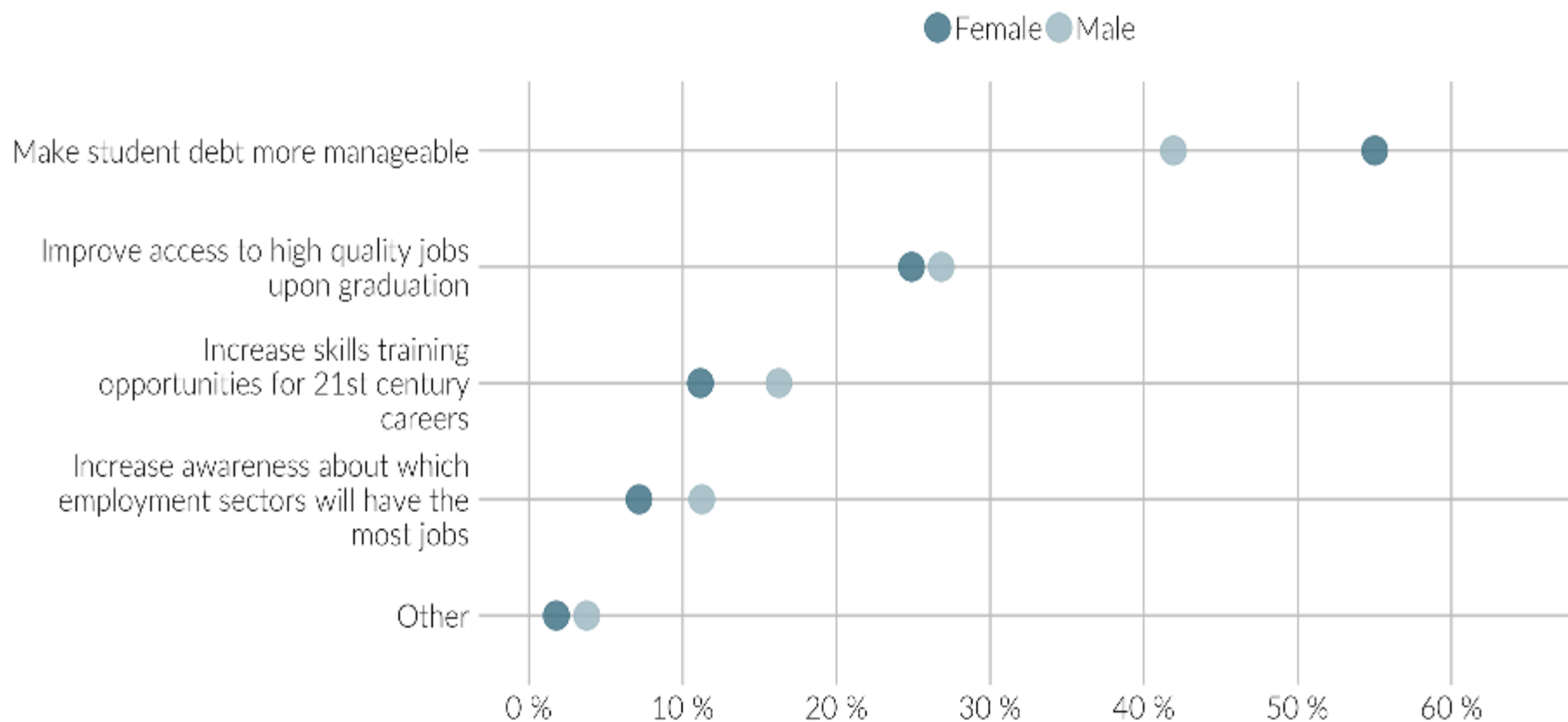


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Student debt: By gender

Whereas 55% of female students consider student debt management to be an important course of action for the government, only 42% of male students hold this view.

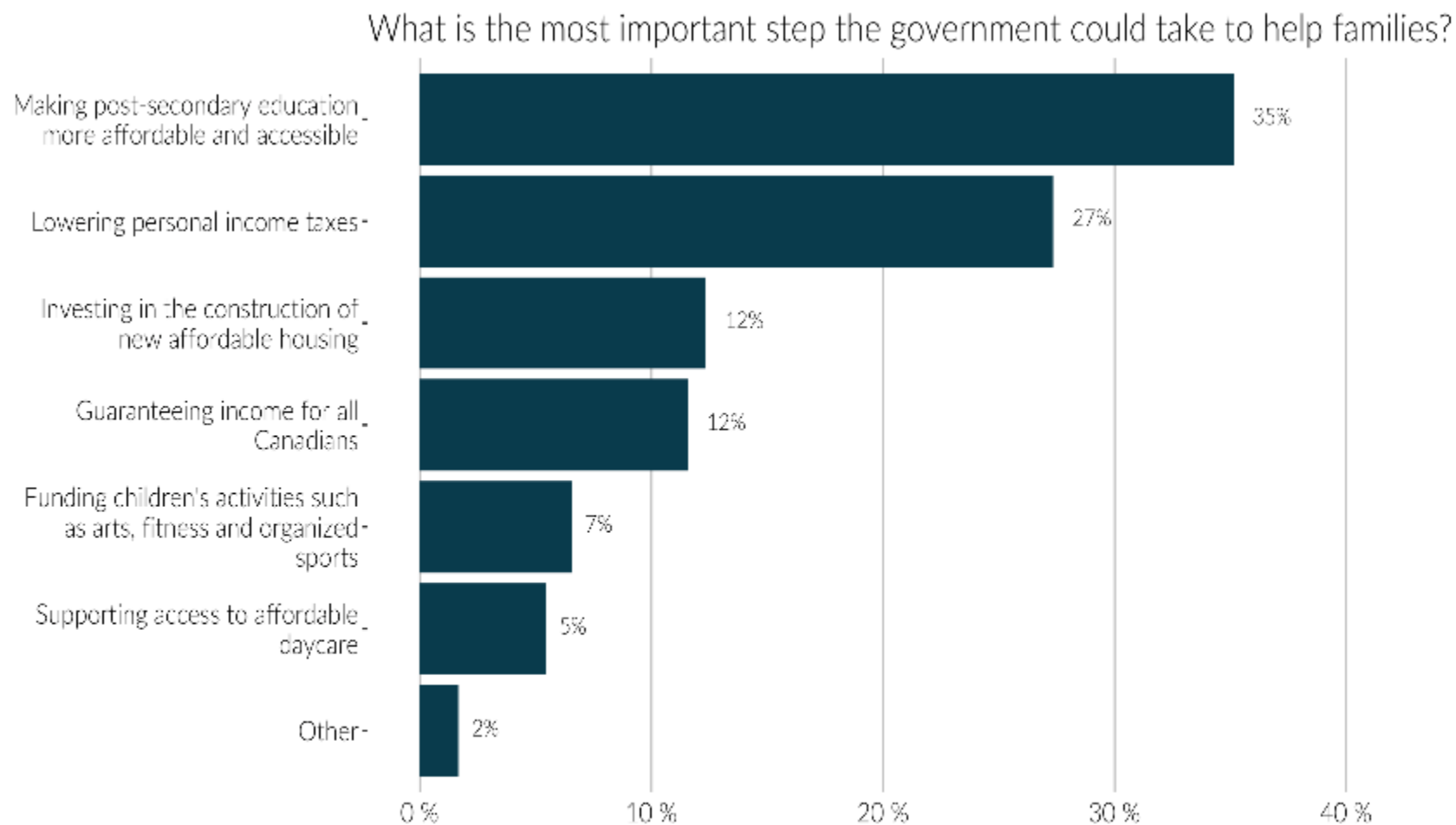
What is the most important step the government can take to help youth transition into the workforce?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Affordable education

On a similar note, more than a third of students (35%) believe that the most important step that the government can take to help families is to make post-secondary education more affordable and accessible.

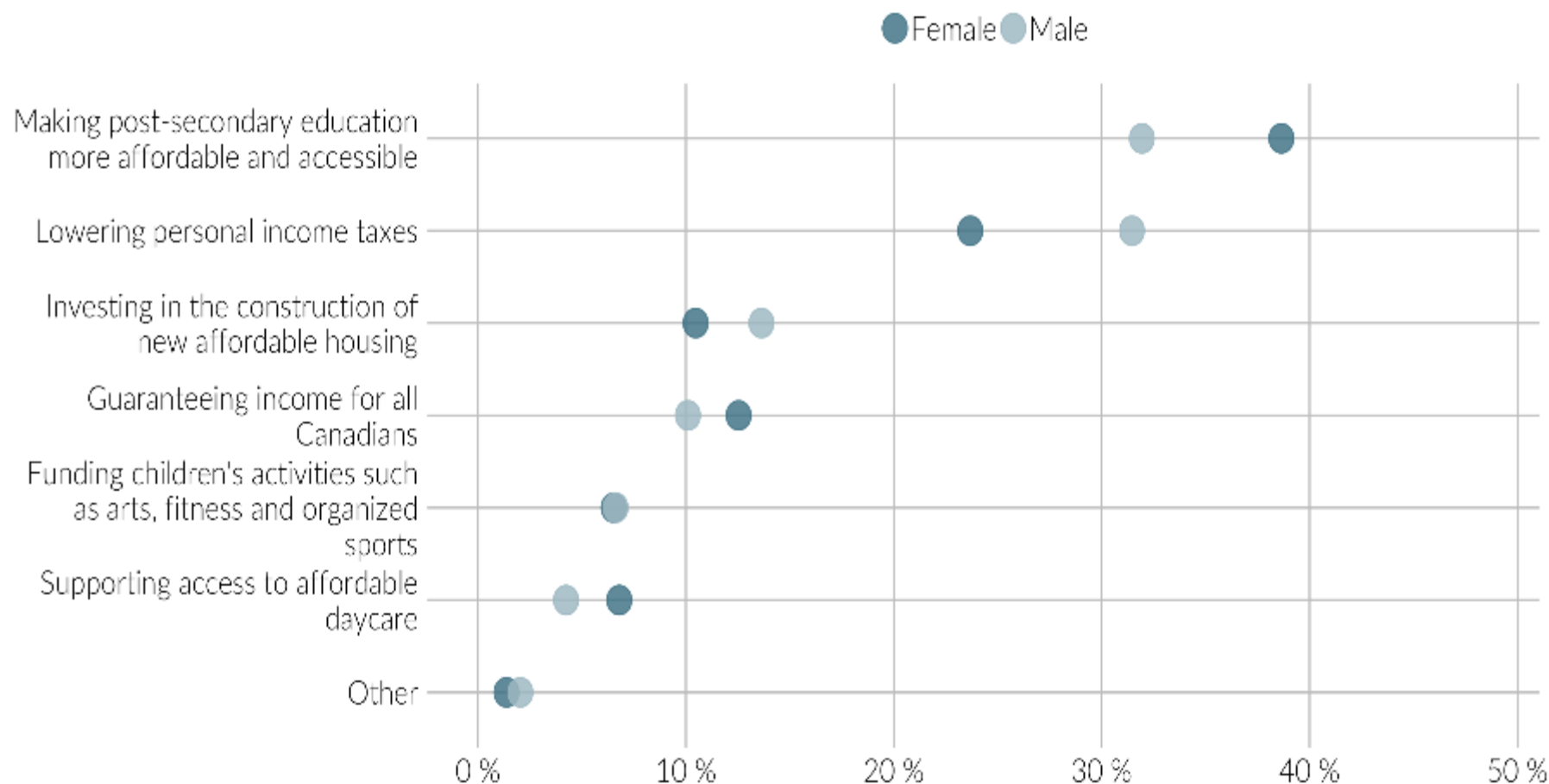


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Affordable education: By gender

However, for male students, income tax cuts are just as important as access to affordable post-secondary education.

What is the most important step the government could take to help families?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

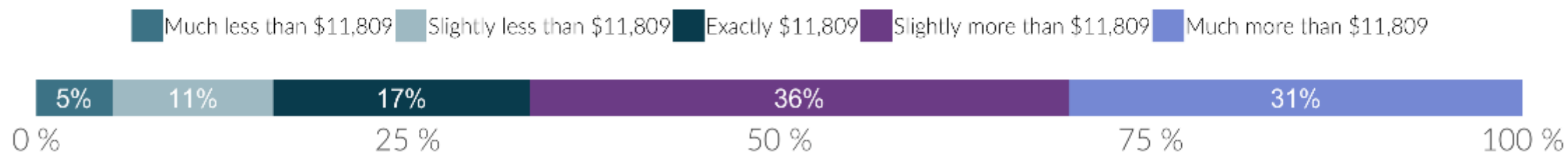
TAXATION

Students would like the income tax exemption limit in Canada to be raised. They also believe that wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than everyone else to help those in need. That being said, students are divided when it comes to raising the corporate tax rate and do not support high-income tax rates that exceed 25%. As such, the perceived greater obligation of high-income earners does not necessarily equate to paying more in income tax.

Low-income earners

Two-thirds of students believe that a person should earn more than \$11,809 before being required to pay income tax. In most parts of Canada, \$11,809 is the maximum amount a person can earn and be exempt from income tax.

In most parts of Canada, people earning \$11,809 CAD per year are taxed at 0%, meaning they would not pay anything in combined federal and provincial income tax. How much should a person earn before being required to pay income tax?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

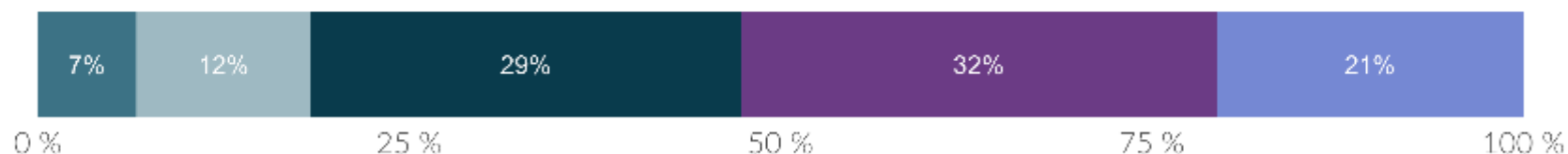
High-income earners

Like last year, more than half of students believe wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than everyone else to help those in need.

Wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than everyone else to help those who are in need.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree

2019

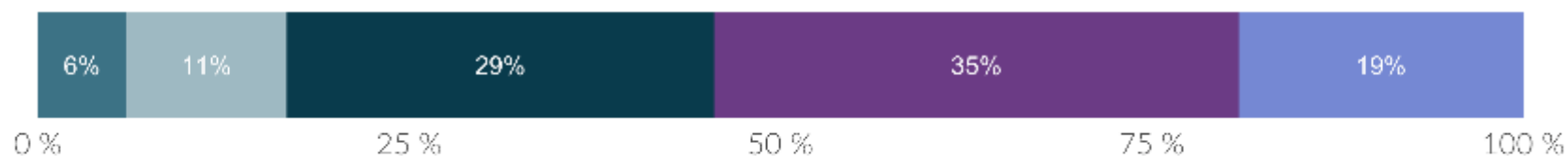


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than everyone else to help those who are in need.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree

2018



Source: Vox Pop Labs

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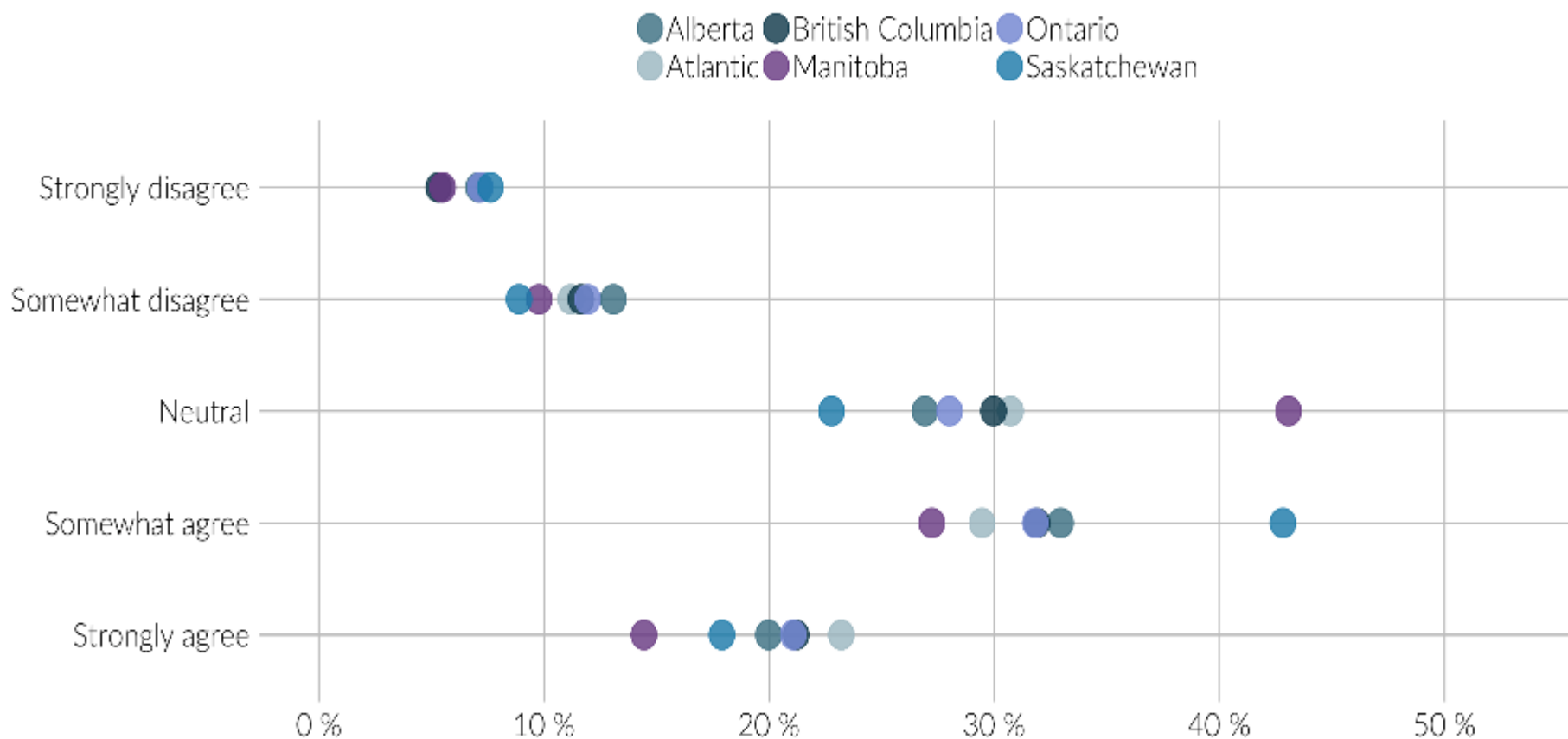


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High-income earners: By province

Saskatchewan students, in particular, are the most likely to agree with this statement.

Wealthy people have a greater financial obligation than everyone else to help those who are in need.

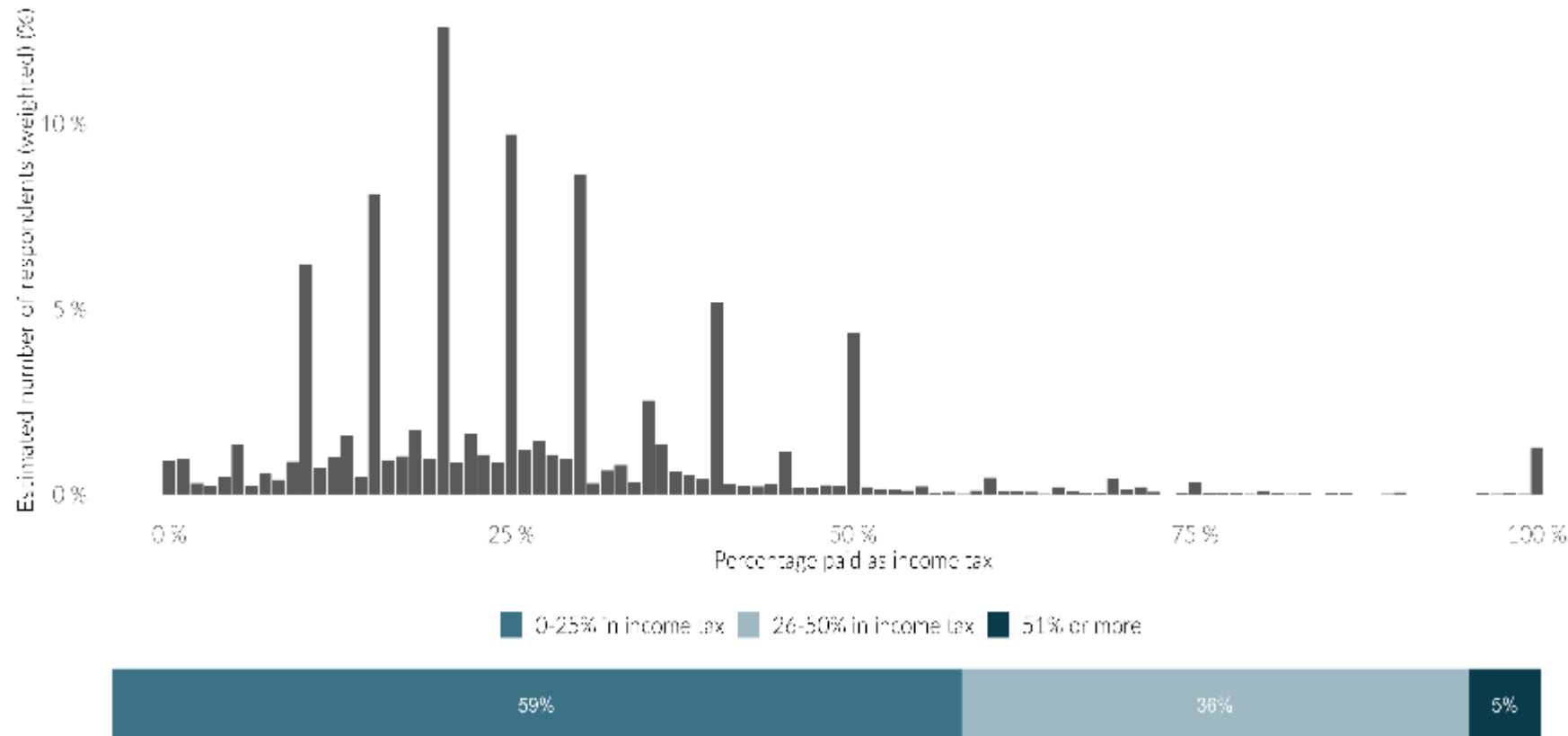


Source: Vox Pop Labs

High-income earners

At the same time, however, 59% of students believe that the combined provincial and federal income tax on high-income earners should not exceed 25%. As such, the greater contributions of wealthy people need not necessarily come in the form of paying more in income tax.

Excluding any tax credits or deductions, people who make \$210,000 CAD per year are generally taxed at 36%, meaning they could pay as much as \$75,600 CAD in combined federal and provincial income tax, regardless of where they live in Canada. What is the highest percentage you think would be fair for anyone to pay in income tax, no matter how high their income?

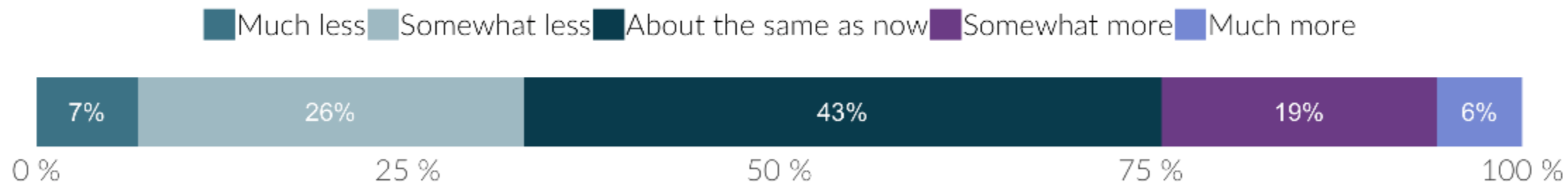


Corporations

And although there are more students (33%) favouring a corporate tax decrease than students favouring an increase, the highest proportion of students (43%) are reluctant to take a position on this issue. Their reluctance suggests that students may not know enough about how tax systems operate in this country.

Excluding tax credits or deductions, many corporations in Canada are taxed at an average rate of 27% by both the federal and provincial governments.

In your view, how much tax should corporations pay?



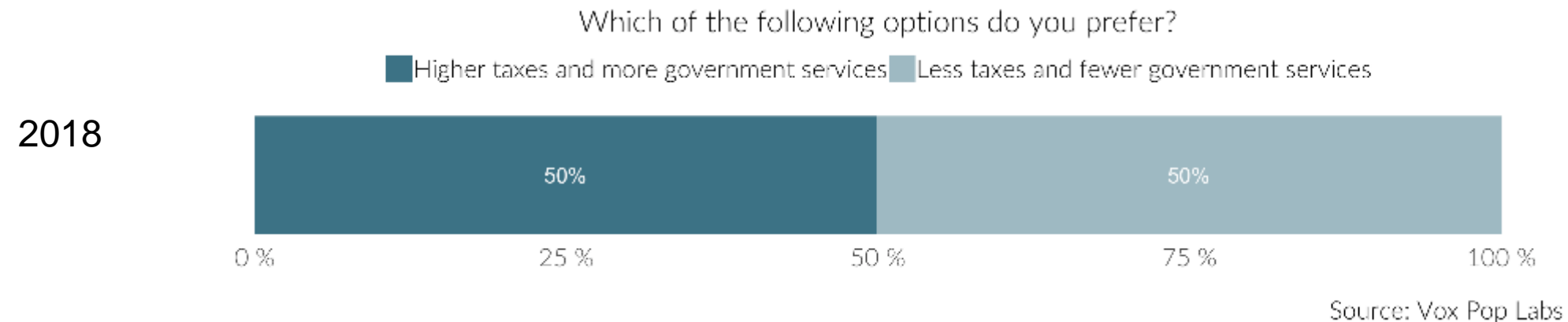
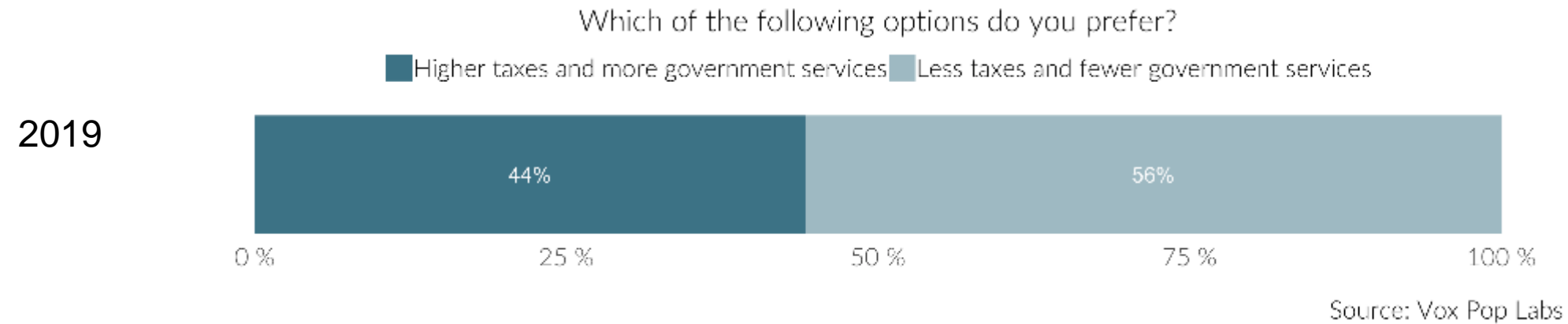
Source: Vox Pop Labs

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students want to see the government commit to debt reduction and lowering taxes, even if this means less government services. They also believe that the government should do more to address tax evasion.

Taxes and services

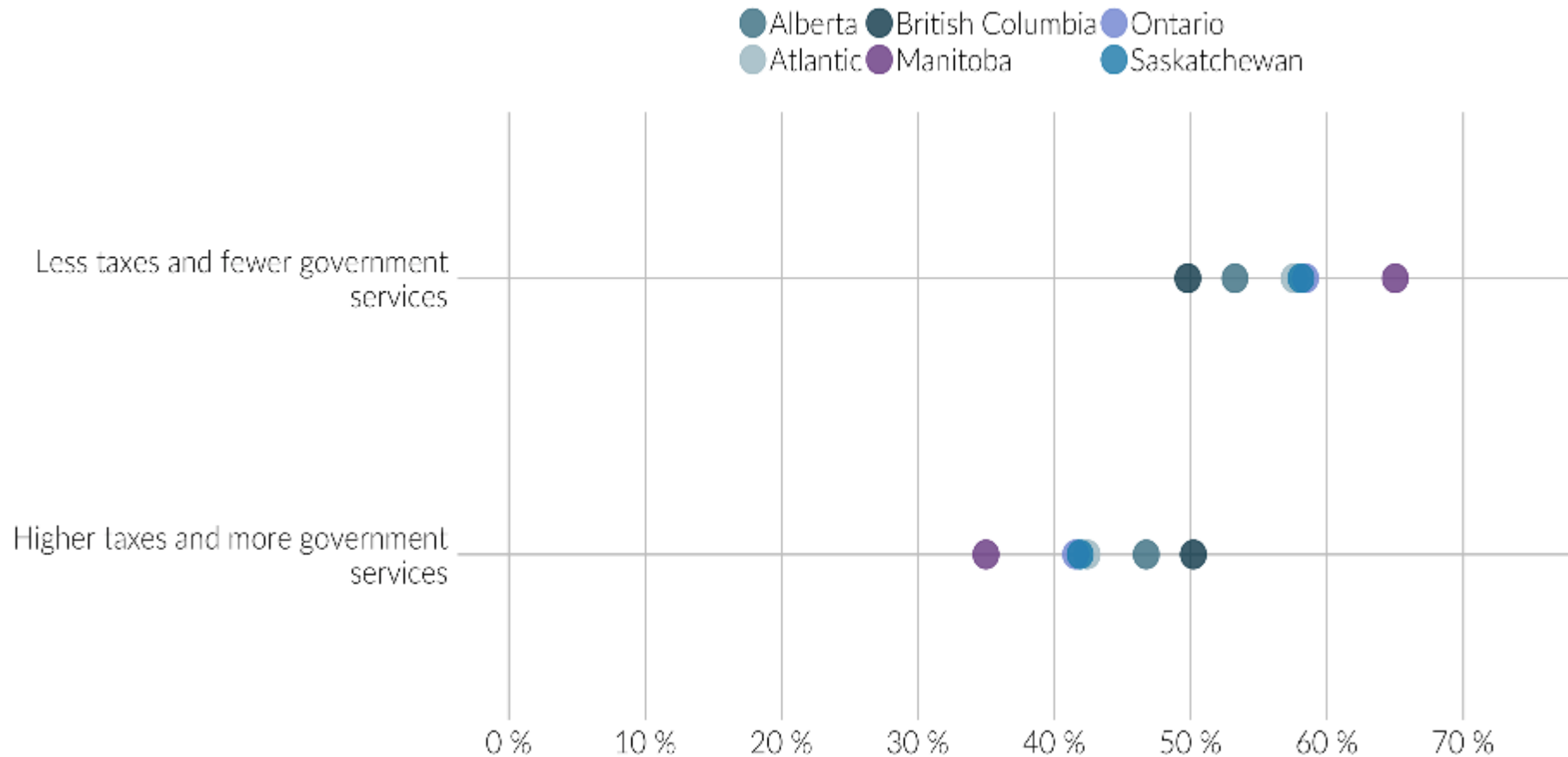
Unlike last year when students were evenly split, there is a clear preference among students today for less taxes and fewer government services.



Taxes and services: By province

Almost two-thirds of Manitoban students (65%) are in favour of less taxes for fewer government services. BC students are noticeably split on this issue.

Which of the following options do you prefer?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

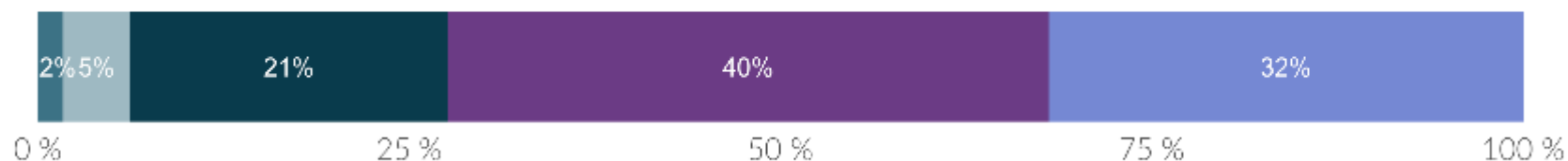
Debt reduction

Similar to last year, the majority of students today believe the government should prioritize lowering the debt as much as possible.

The government should place a high priority on lowering the debt as much as possible.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree

2019

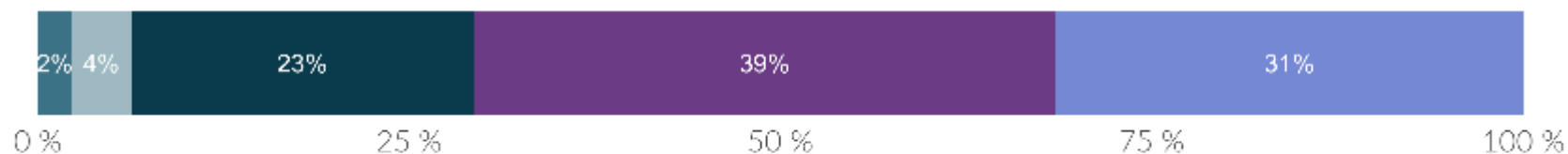


Source: Vox Pop Labs

The government should place a high priority on lowering the debt as much as possible.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree

2018



Source: Vox Pop Labs

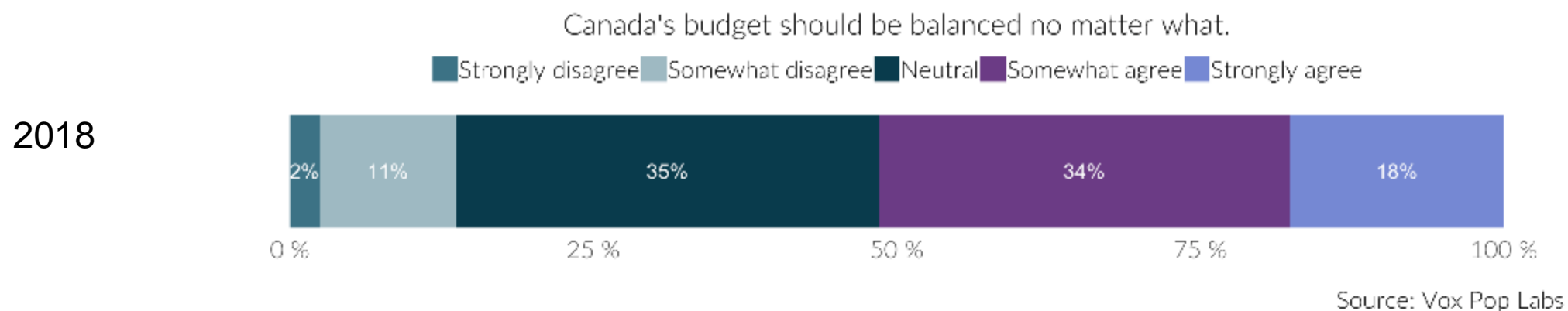
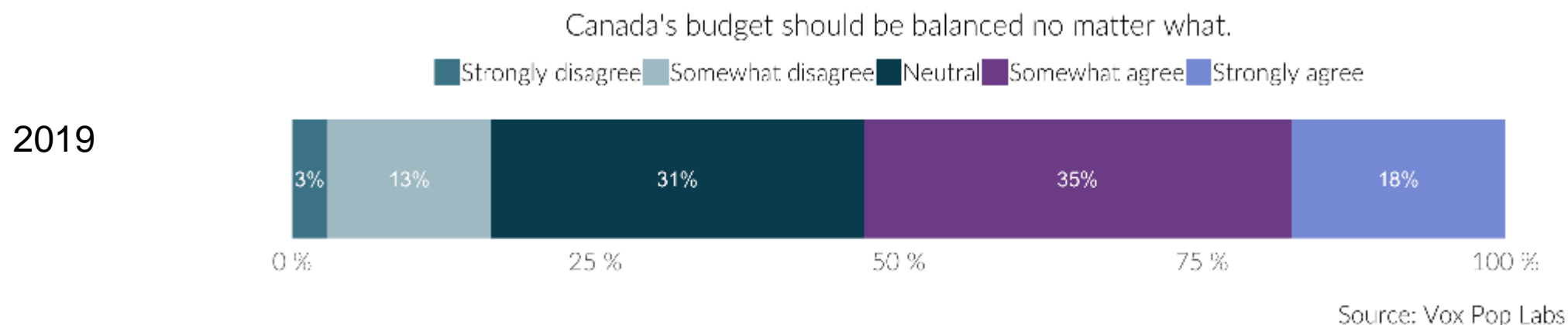
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Balancing the budget

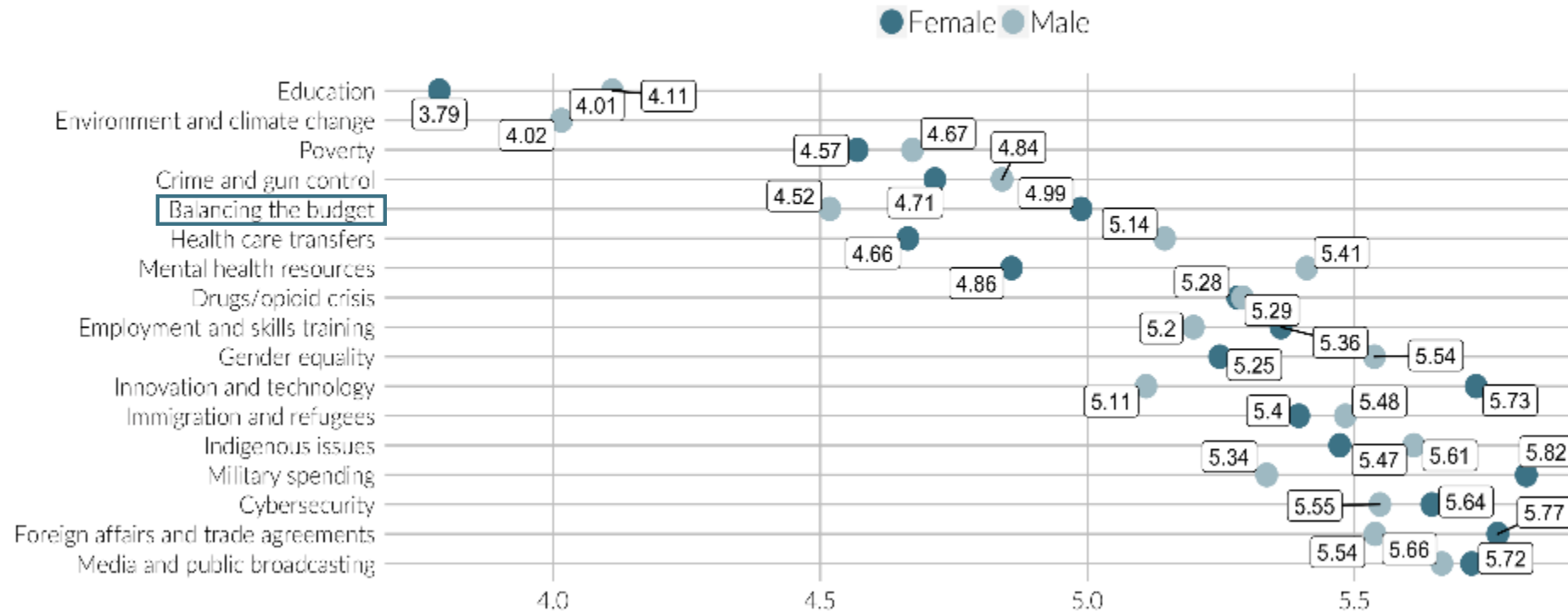
A comparable proportion of students (53%) also believe that Canada's budget should be balanced no matter what. Once again, there has been little to no change in the proportion of students who hold this view, since last year's Student Budget Consultation.



Most important issues: By gender

In their overall prioritization of issues, however, male students are noticeably more likely to prioritize balancing the budget than female students.

Please choose what you think are the 5 most important issues, and drag and drop them into the box provided in order of what you believe the government should prioritize, with 1 being your highest priority.
[Average rank; non-ranked item coded as 6]



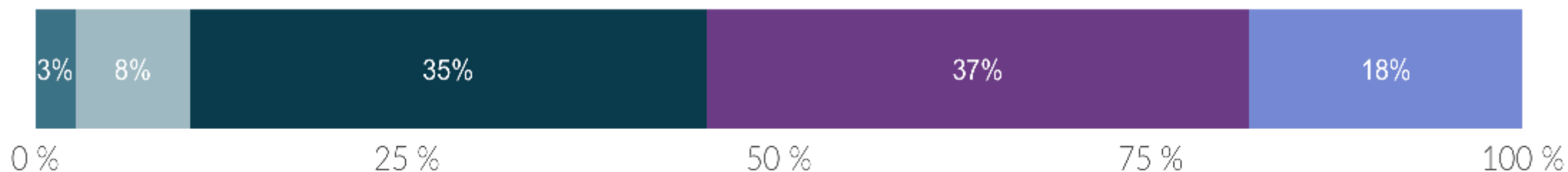
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Tax evasion

Finally, on the issue of tax evasion, 55% of students believe the government should do more to stop people from cheating the tax system.

The government should invest more resources to stop people from cheating the tax system.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neutral Somewhat agree Strongly agree



Source: Vox Pop Labs

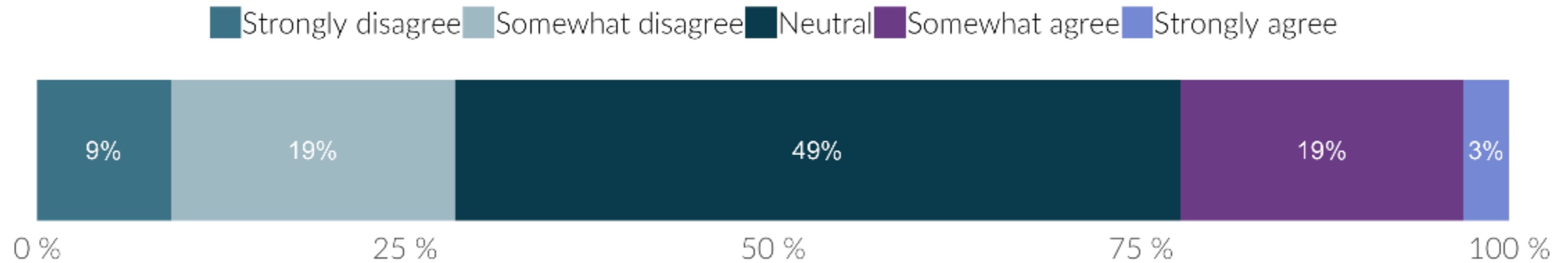
THE MEDIA

Half of students are neutral to government support for struggling private media companies. More broadly, media and public broadcasting ranks lowest in the students' prioritization of issues. A likely explanation for the lack of interest is that almost half of students today get their news from social media and may therefore be less exposed to, or reliant on, traditional news media.

Support for struggling media

49% of students are "neutral" to government support for struggling private media companies. "Neutral," in this sense, means that they either genuinely have no opinion on this issue or do not know enough about it to have a stance.

The government should support struggling private media companies.



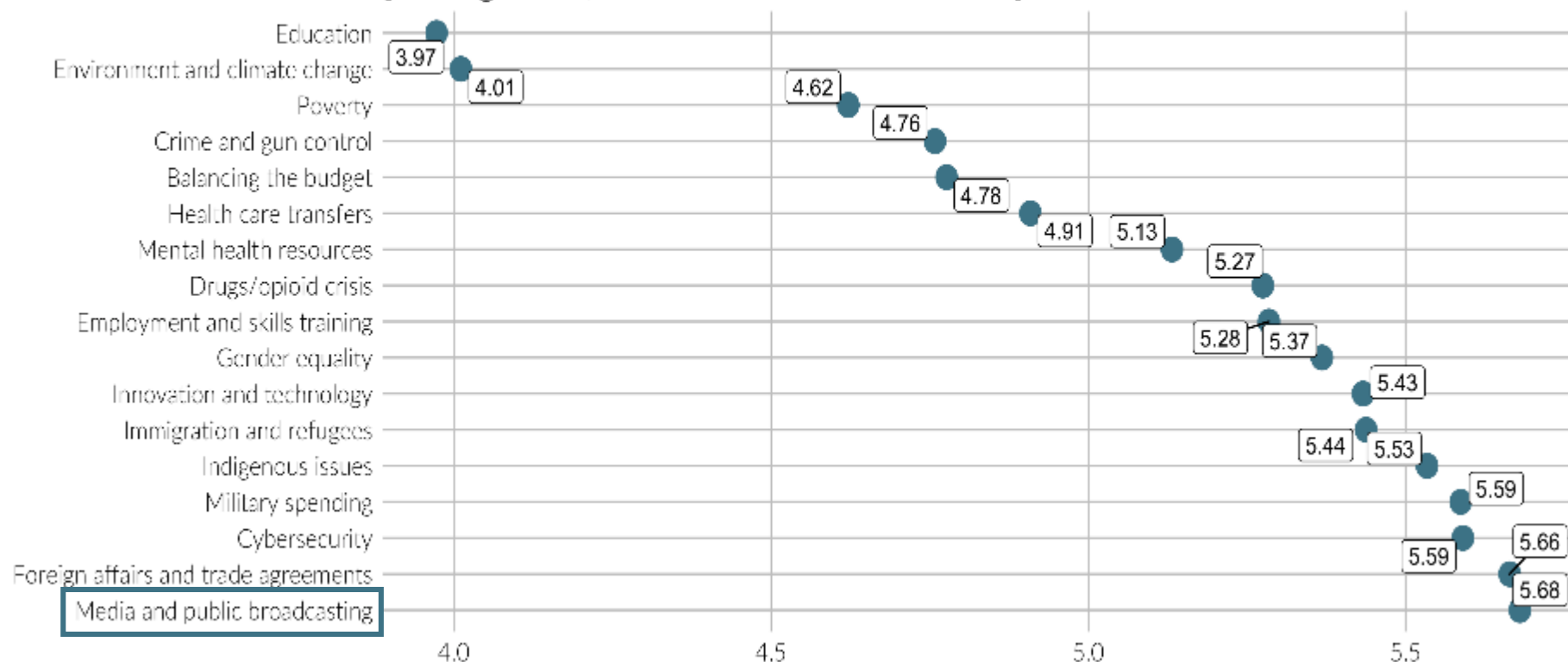
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Most important issues

Media and public broadcasting, more broadly, is also the issue that students are least likely to consider a government priority.

Please choose what you think are the 5 most important issues, and drag and drop them into the box provided in order of what you believe the government should prioritize, with 1 being your highest priority.

[Average rank; non-ranked item coded as 6]



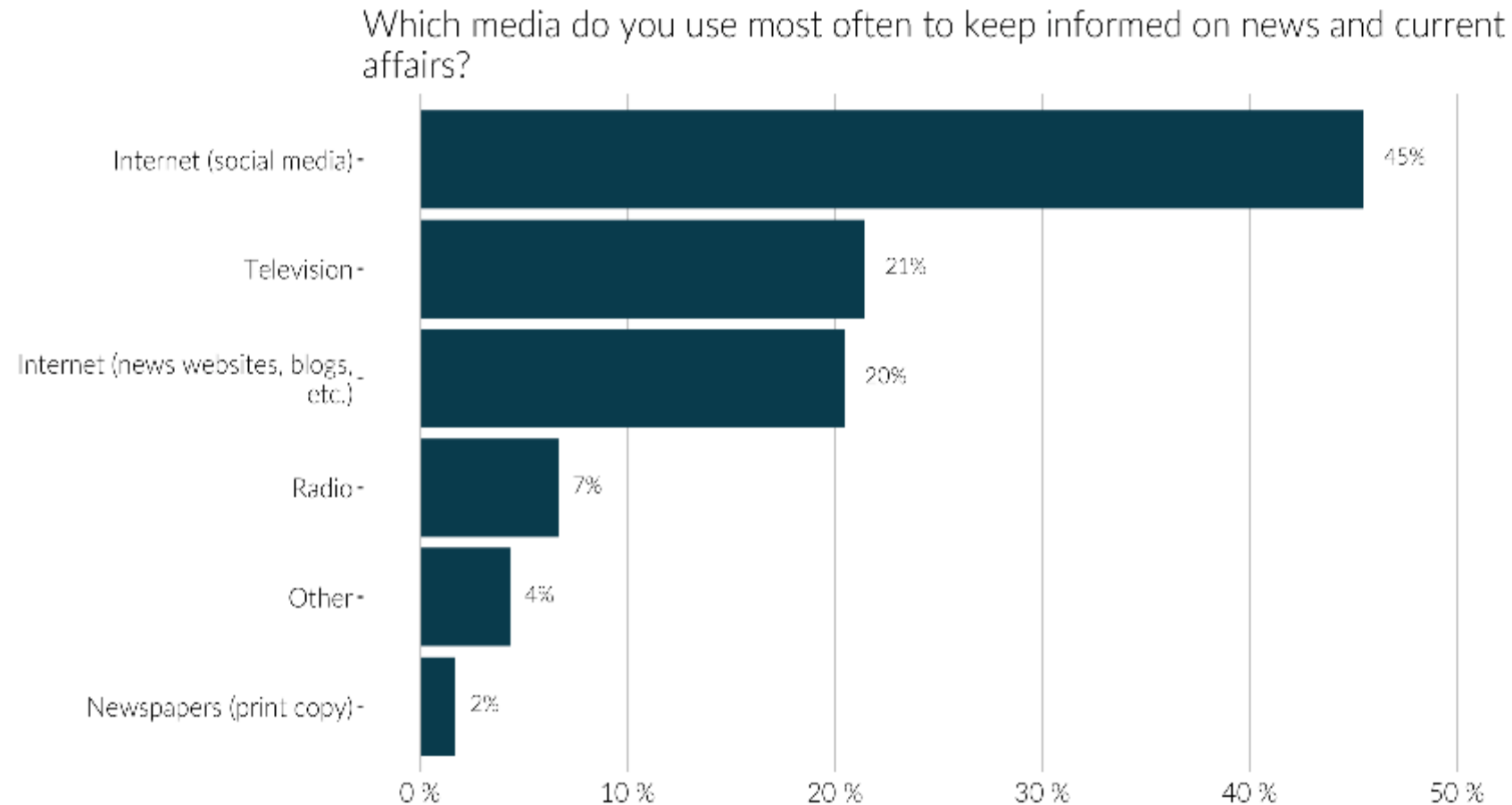
Source: Vox Pop Labs



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News consumption

A likely explanation for the lack of interest is that 45% of students today get their news from social media and may therefore be less exposed to, or reliant on, traditional news media.

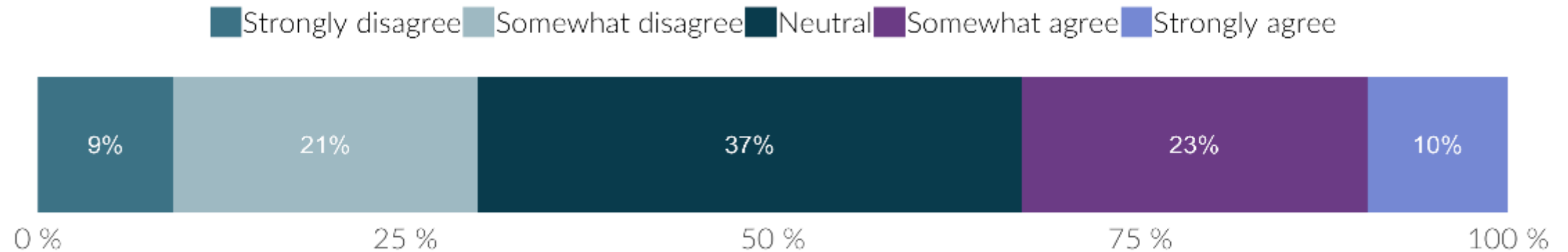


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Social media and democracy

Despite the fact that students use social media more than any other news source, they have divided opinions on whether it is doing more harm than good to Canadian democracy. 30% disagree, 33% agree, and 37% are neutral.

Social media does more harm than good to Canadian democracy.



Source: Vox Pop Labs

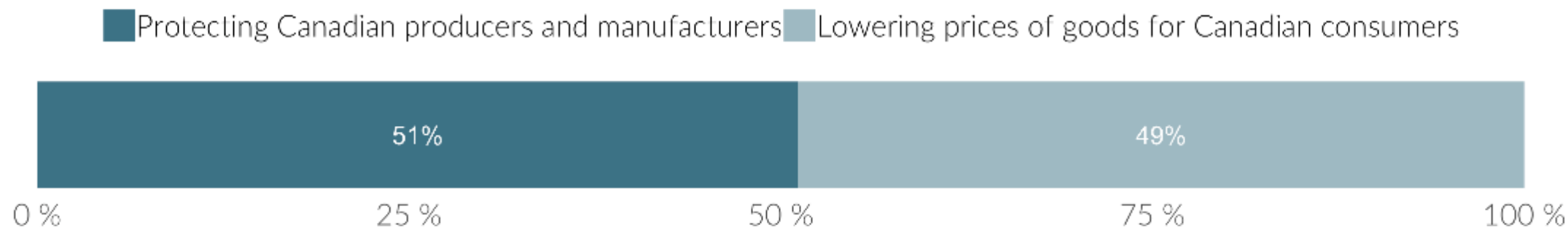
TRADE

Students are divided on what the main focus of Canada's free trade agreements should be, but are opposed to trading with countries that have records of human rights abuse. Overall, free trade and foreign affairs ranks low in their prioritization of issues.

Focus of free trade agreements

There is only a marginal difference between students who prefer free trade agreements that principally protect Canadian producers and manufacturers (e.g., dairy farmers, steelworkers) from international competition (51%), and students who prefer trade deals that lower prices for Canadian consumers (49%).

If you had to choose, which of these two outcomes should be prioritized in a free trade agreement (e.g. NAFTA/USMCA):

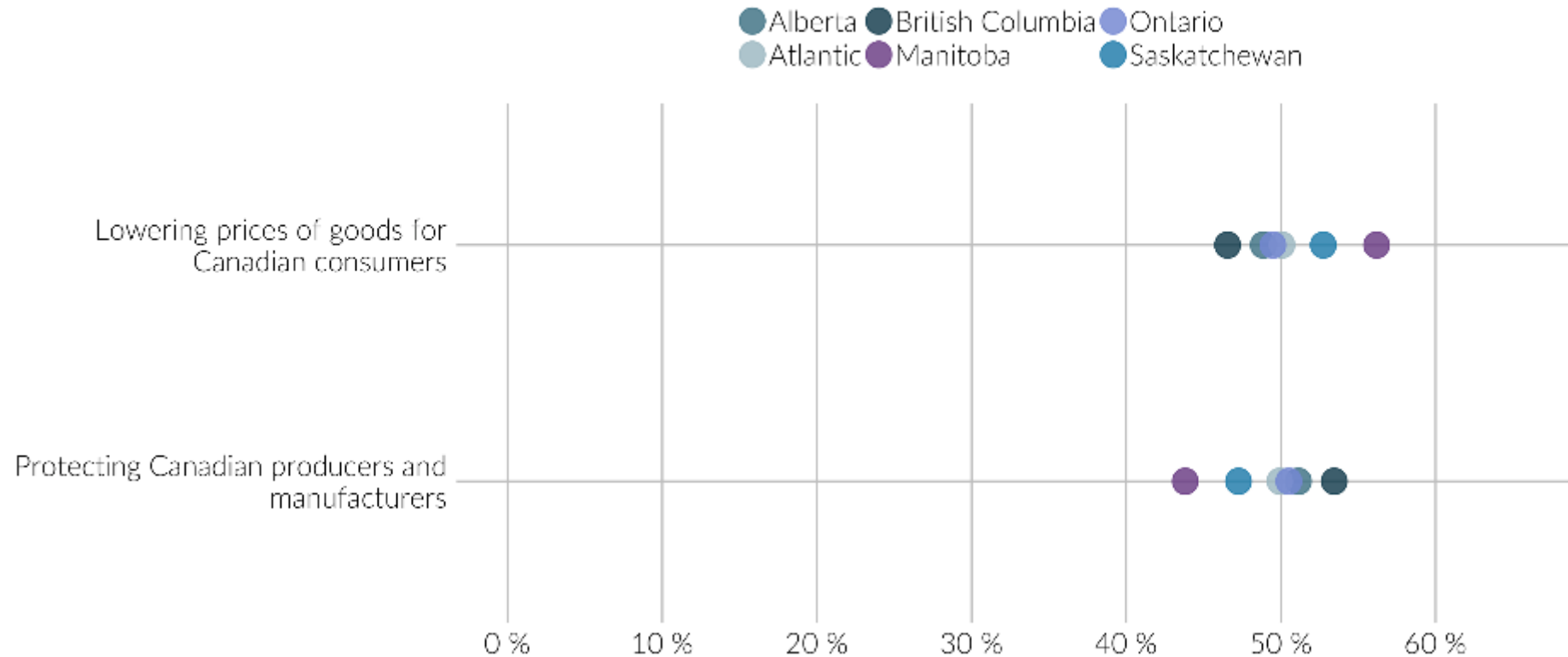


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Focus of free trade agreements: By province

Students from BC and Manitoba have taken the clearest stances on trade. Manitoban students generally prefer trade agreements that advantage consumers over producers, while BC students generally prefer the opposite.

If you had to choose, which of these two outcomes should be prioritized in a free trade agreement (c.g. NAFTA/USMCA):

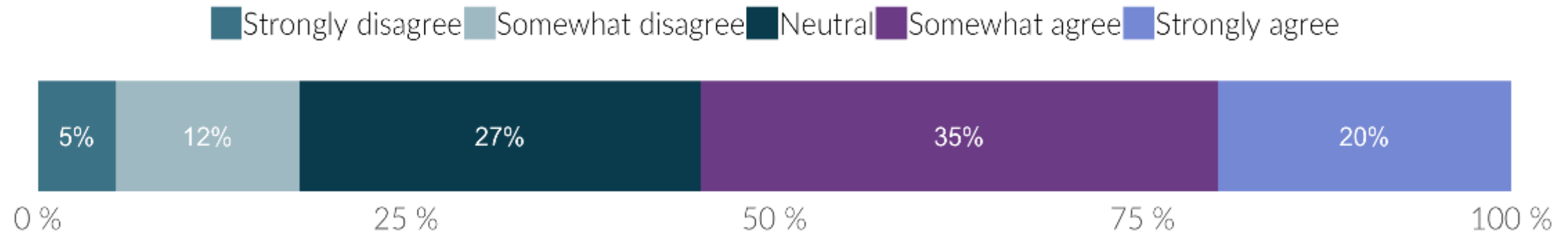


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Trade partners

When it comes to Canada's trading partners, over half of students (55%) believe that Canada should not trade with countries that have a record of human rights abuses.

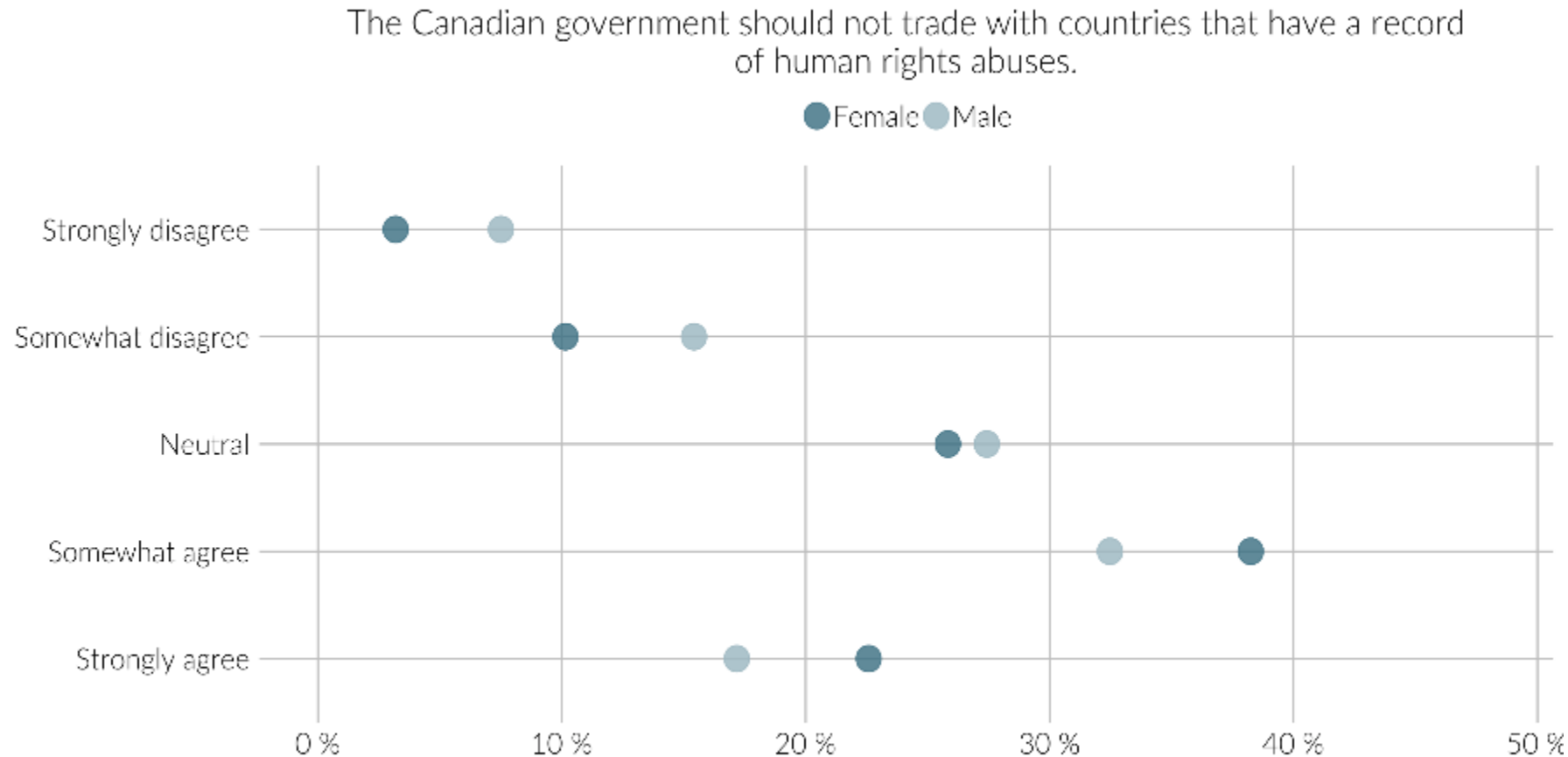
The Canadian government should not trade with countries that have a record of human rights abuses.



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Trade partners: By gender

Despite the consensus among students that Canada should not trade with these countries, there are some gender differences that should be noted. Whereas 61% of female students believe that Canada should not trade with countries known for human rights abuse, only 50% of male students hold this view.



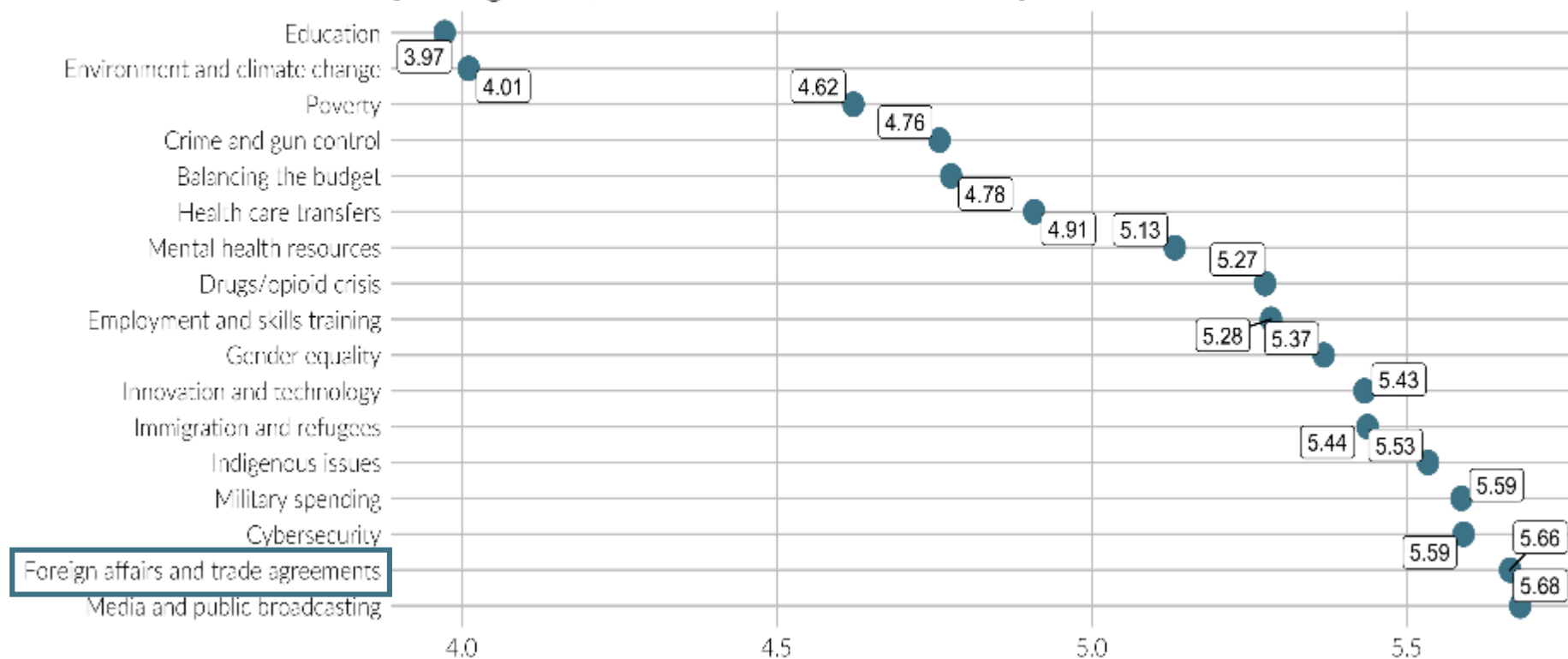
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Most important issues

That being said, students overall consider foreign affairs and trade to be a low priority for the government.

Please choose what you think are the 5 most important issues, and drag and drop them into the box provided in order of what you believe the government should prioritize, with 1 being your highest priority.

[Average rank; non-ranked item coded as 6]



Source: Vox Pop Labs



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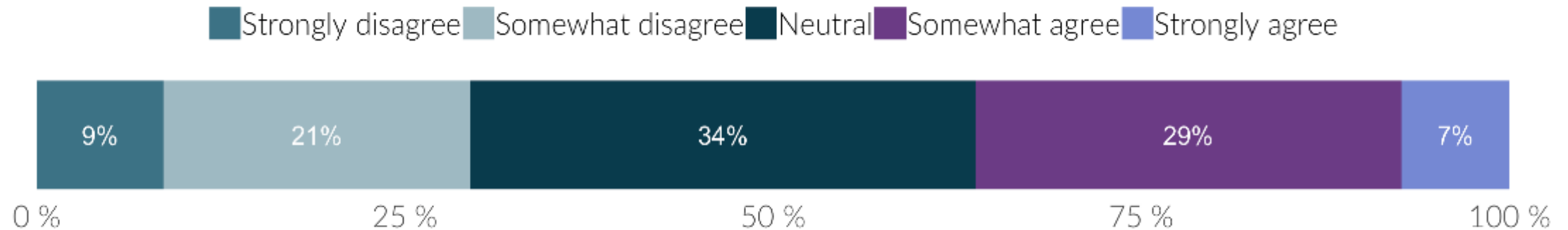
DEFENCE

In general, students are split on the issue of defence spending and do not consider national defence, as a whole, to be a high priority.

Defence spending

Students are split on the issue of defence spending. 30% do not believe that the military has what it needs, 34% are neutral on this issue, and the highest proportion of students (36%) believe that the military is sufficiently equipped.

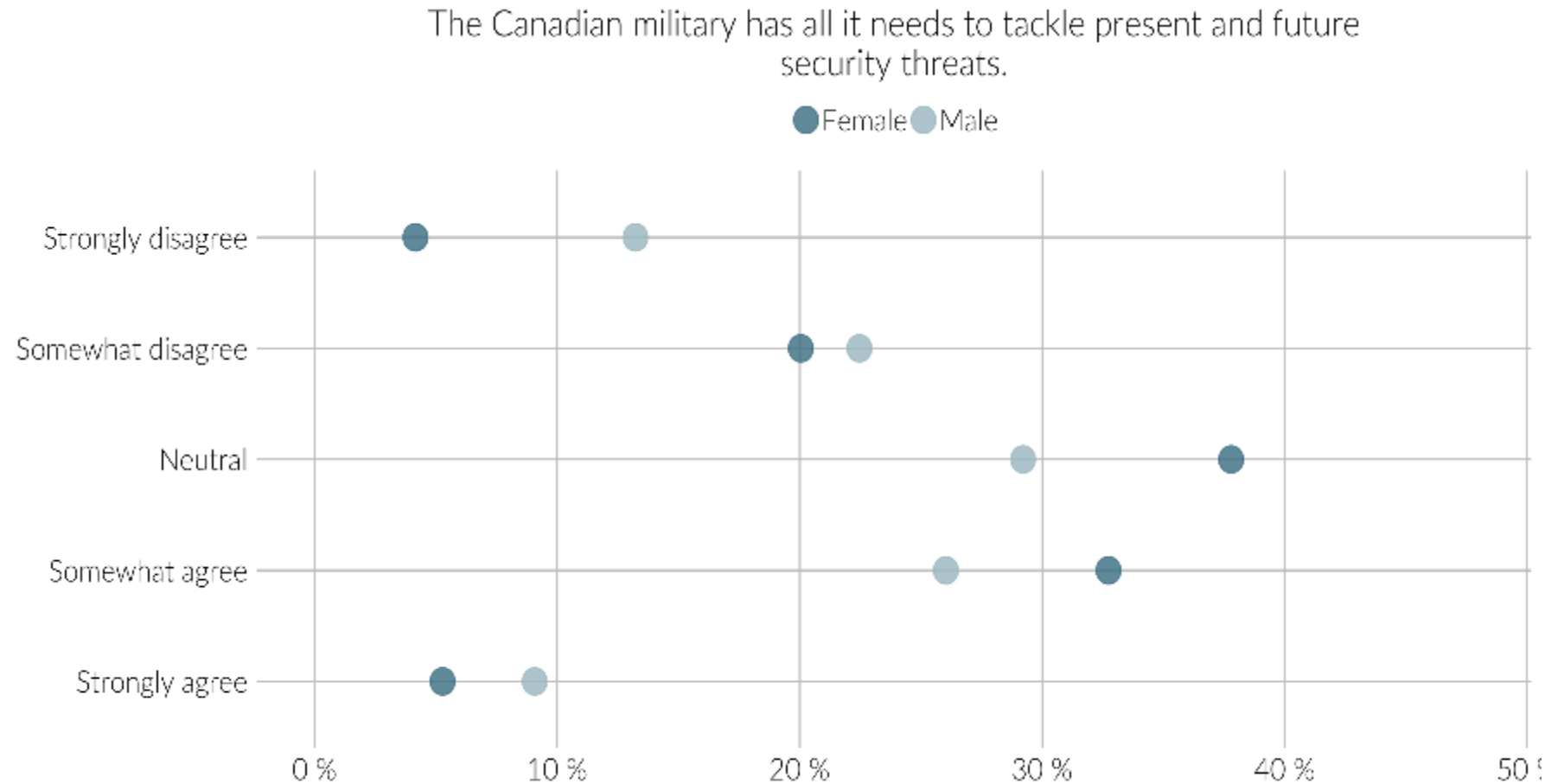
The Canadian military has all it needs to tackle present and future security threats.



Source: Vox Pop Labs

Defence spending: By gender

Nevertheless, there is a much higher proportion of male students (36%) than female students (24%) who disagree with this proposition.

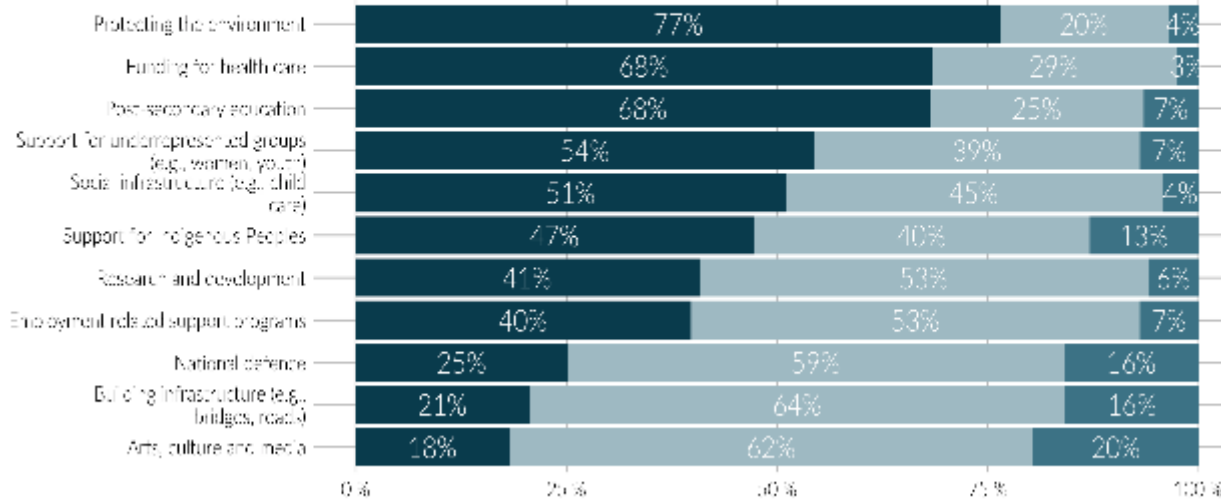


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Females

Please indicate whether you think the government should increase or decrease spending on the following items in the next federal budget:

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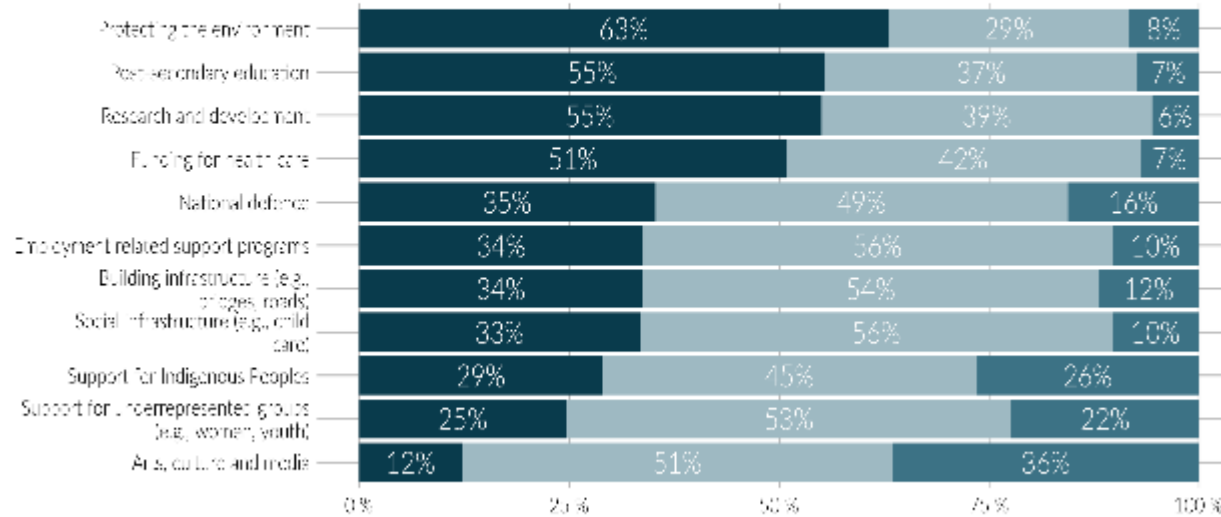


Budgetary priorities: By gender

As mentioned previously, male students are also more likely to prioritize government spending in national defence than female students.

Males

Source: Vox Pop Labs



Source: Vox Pop Labs

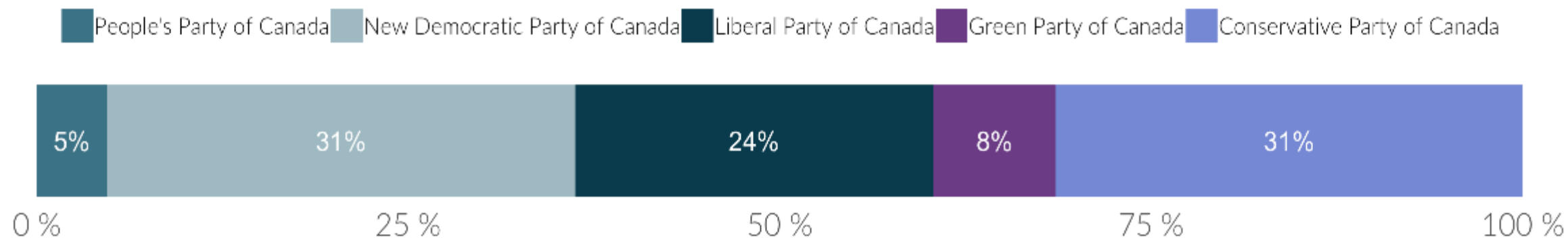
PARTY AFFINITY

Where the students stand after hearing from the parties

Party affinity

NDP and Conservative support is evenly split among students.

After watching the videos from the federal political party representatives,
which party do you agree with the most? - Selected Choice

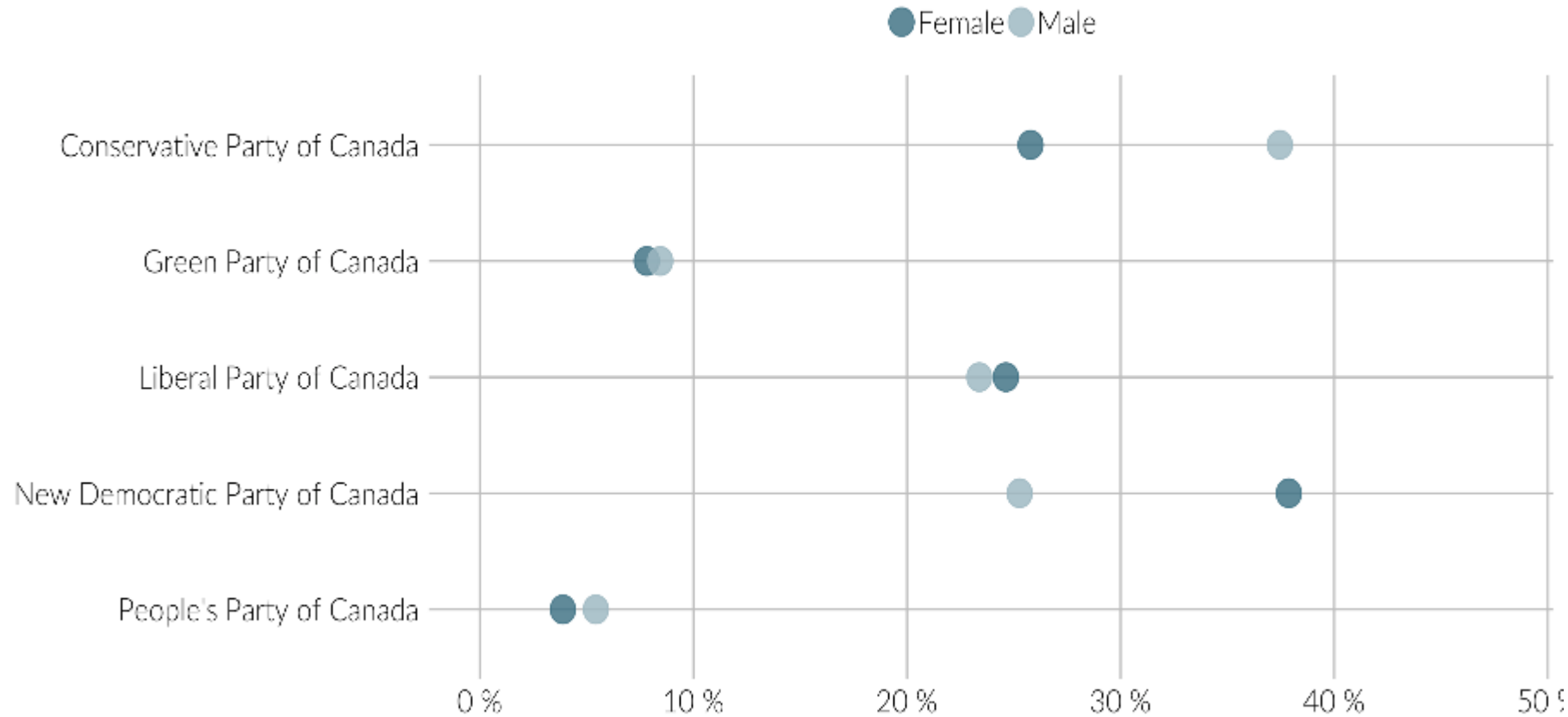


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Party affinity: By gender

Female students are more likely to agree with the NDP, while male students are more likely to agree with the Conservative Party.

After watching the videos from the federal political party representatives,
which party do you agree with the most? - Selected Choice

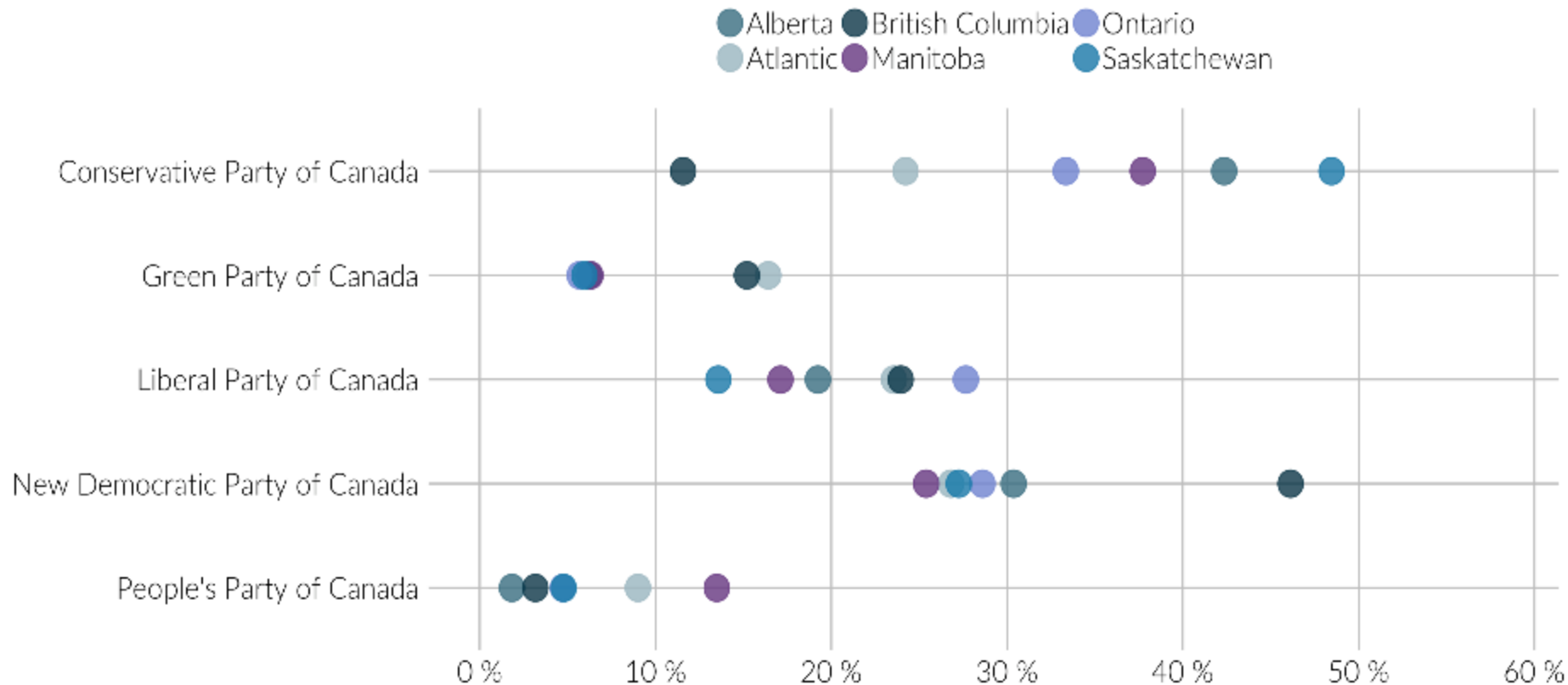


Source: Vox Pop Labs

Party affinity: By province

Albertan, Manitoban and Saskatchewan students agree most with the Conservatives, while BC students favour the NDP the most. Atlantic and Ontarian students are more divided across party lines.

After watching the videos from the federal political party representatives, which party do you agree with the most? - Selected Choice

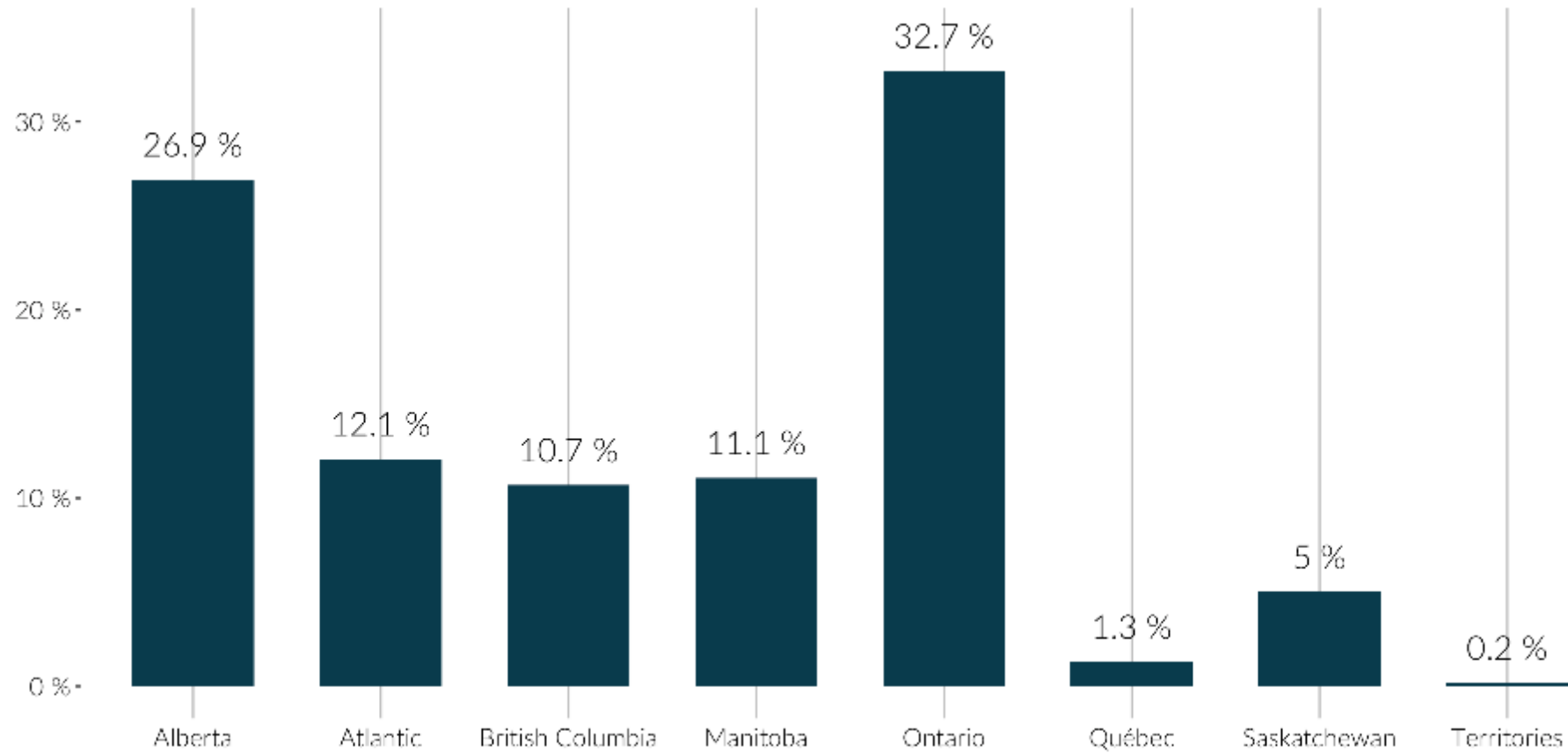


Source: Vox Pop Labs

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

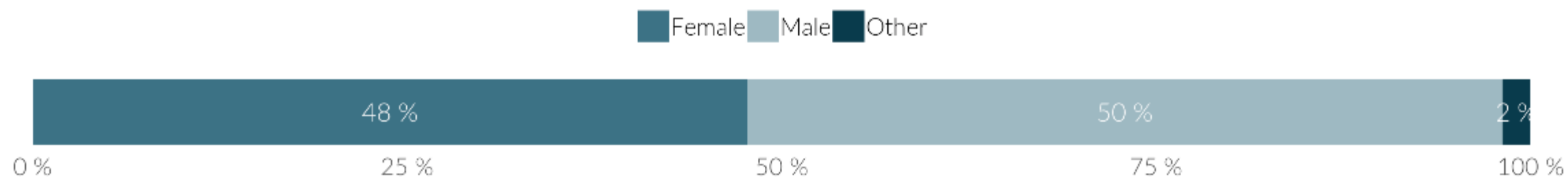
Before weighting

Please select the province or territory in which you live?



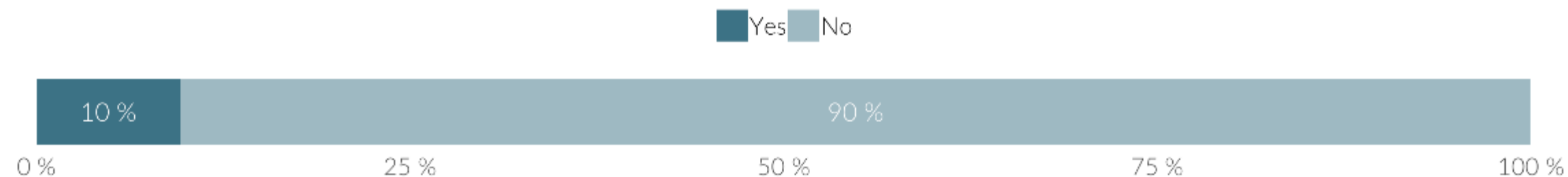
Source: Vox Pop Labs

What gender do you identify



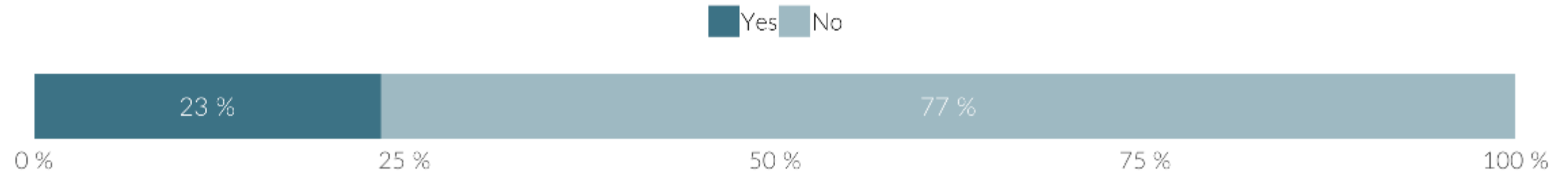
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Do you self-identify as Indigenous (First Nation, Métis or Inuit)?



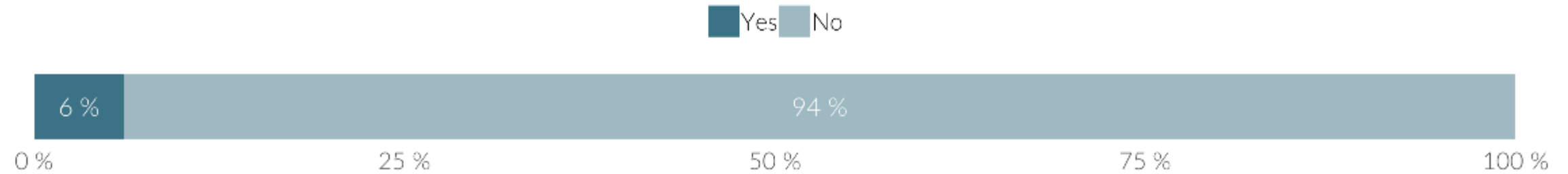
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Are you a member of a visible minority group?



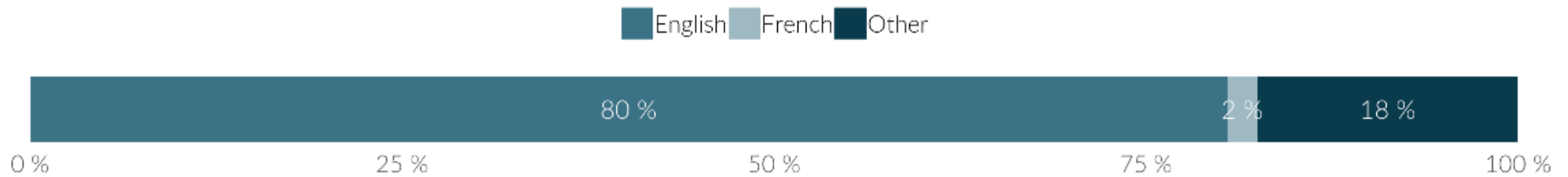
Source: Vox Pop Labs

Are you a person with a disability?



Source: Vox Pop Labs

What language do you speak most often at home?



Source: Vox Pop Labs