

Commissioned by:



**CBC,  
Toronto Star,  
SRC,  
La Presse,  
EKOS Poll**

***Trust and the Monarchy: an  
examination of the shifting  
public attitudes toward  
government and institutions***



**EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES**

**May 30, 2002**

# Outline

**A** Methodology

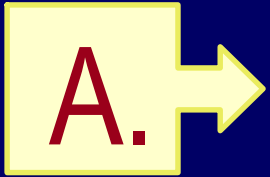
**B** Highlights

**C** Corruption & Trust

**D** Performance & Approval Rating

**E** Federal Political Outlook

**F** Monarchy



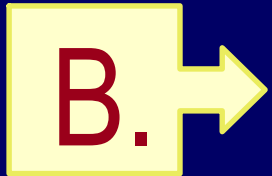
# Methodology



# Methodology

- **Telephone surveys of the general public**
  - Most recent survey includes 1,217 completed interviews with a national random sample of Canadians 18 years of age and over (n=362 in Quebec)
  - Interview period: May 27-29, 2002
  - National results valid within +/- 2.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20 (Quebec:  $\pm 5.2\%$ )
    - ✓ The margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided.
    - ✓ It should also be noted that the refusal rate and other measurement errors could also increase the margin of error.
  - Tracking results from EKOS *Rethinking Government* study
- **All the data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, gender and age composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data**





# Highlights



# Highlights - Trust & Federal Political Landscape (a)

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- Ethics issues are now registering with the public but the movement is very recent and quite modest given media focus
- Liberals continue to enjoy a strong lead in voting intentions but some significant erosion over past month which deepened in past couple of weeks
- Little evidence that ethics problems have benefited opposition parties and no one appears poised to exploit what little political advantage has emerged
- Trust levels in government are declining after a decade of modest recovery (but overall the dominant sentiment is stability of views)
- Long term tracking reinforces conclusion of stability in problem, or mild improvement. Public comparisons to Mulroney era show current regime seen as the same or better than Mulroney

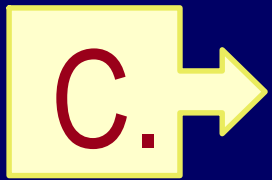


# Highlights - Trust & Federal Political Landscape (b)

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- Comparative assessments reveal:
  - Politicians fare worse than bureaucrats but better than multinational corporations; municipalities better
  - Federal government, provincial government and national media all generate similar levels of trust
  - Canada seen as same or better than other western societies (including USA)
- Public largely approve of ethics package and Eggleton firing. Overall direction of government still seen as “right”. Awareness levels low to moderate
- A plurality accept rationale for sponsorship program
- Ethics issues are not top concerns with public and while on the radar screen have not yet produced any structural shifts in political landscape.
- Results while worrisome, for Liberals, are by no means disastrous and government’s current response is largely managing these problems. Recent trajectory of public opinion justifies vigilance but not alarm





# Corruption & Trust



# Trust, Ethics and Corruption

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- Trust in Government fairly flat recently; way down from 60's, 70's, up slightly from early 90's
- Federal government, national media, and provincial politicians all receive similar, fairly negative, ratings
  - 43 per cent think Govt. of Canada is at least somewhat corrupt; 26 per cent think it is honest, But:
  - Public paints provincial governments, politicians, bureaucrats and national media with same brush/politicians fare somewhat poorer
  - Priests and municipal governments fare better and multinationals do worse
  - Comparatively, Canadians think corruption is lower problem in Canada than in Italy, Russia and U.S.
  - Ratings of "corruption" are fairly mild; most lean to neither or somewhat
- Historically, politicians and public servants have always scored low on ethics and trust
  - Single points in time can overstate nature of current environment
  - In fact, compared to 10 years ago, most think "corruption" is the same
- Confidence in existence of "sufficient safeguards" highly polarised but actually rising



# Nature of Problem

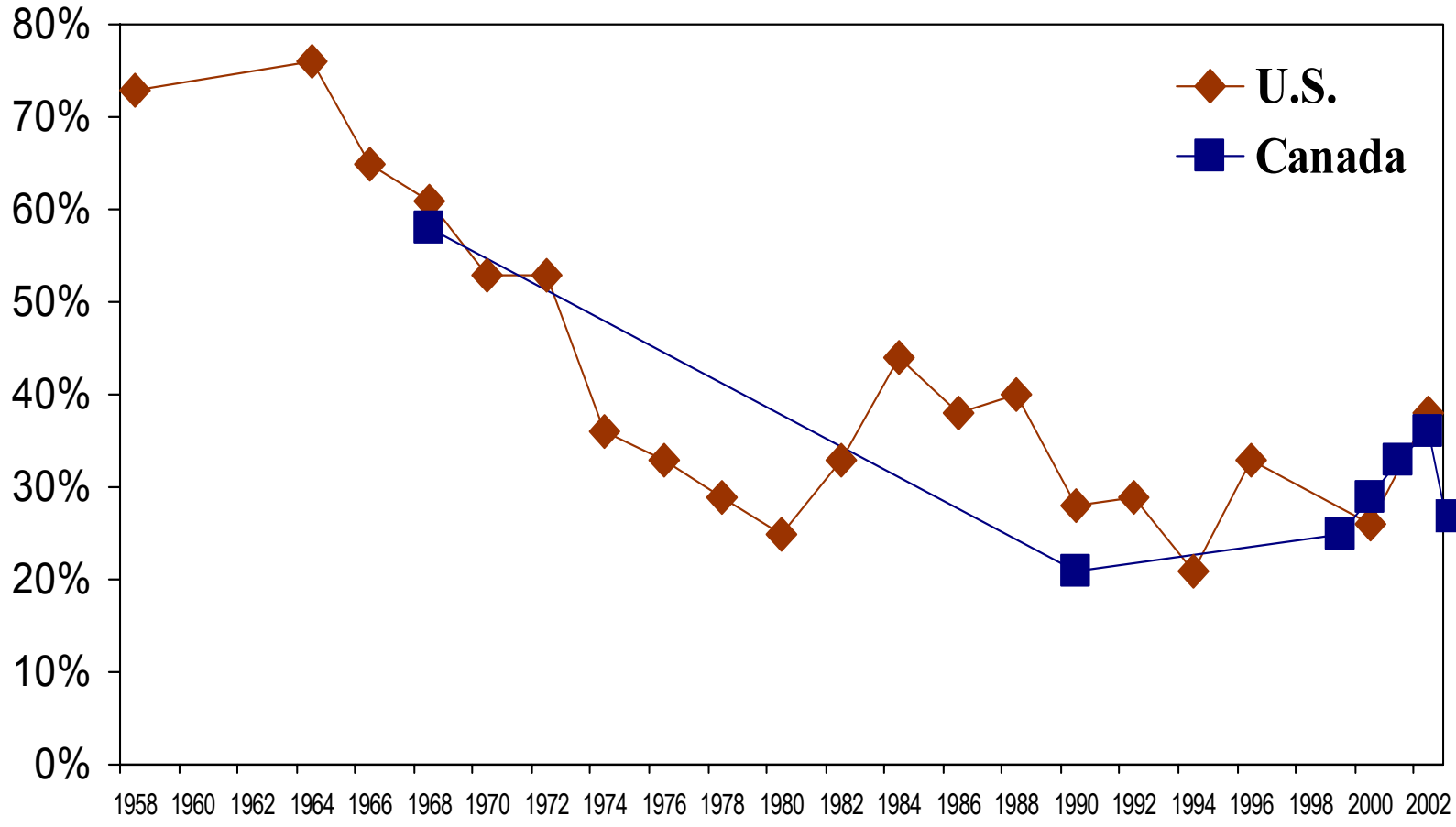
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- Perceptions of trust, ethics, honesty and “corruption” a problem but not unusually enflamed today
  - Should not overstate current problem; current public environment not unusually enflamed
- Honesty and “corruption”
  - Lean is toward seeing government as corrupt but compared to 10 years ago, most think corruption is the same
  - Clear East-West gradient to perceptions with West much more negative about federal government/politicians/bureaucrats; strong links to party affiliation/voting intention
  - Economically insecure more likely to perceive corruption problem
  - Very wide range in ratings depending on question
- Using the same tracking indicators there is no real evidence of erosion over short or medium term
  - Trust in government still on modest upward trajectory over past decade
  - Perceptions of ethical standards remain stable or somewhat better compared to 8 years ago
  - Only 15% think things worse than with Mulroney regime, but 50% think it is the same (30% better)



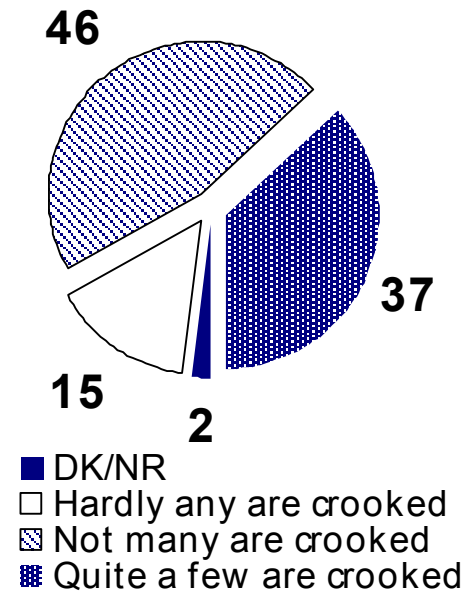
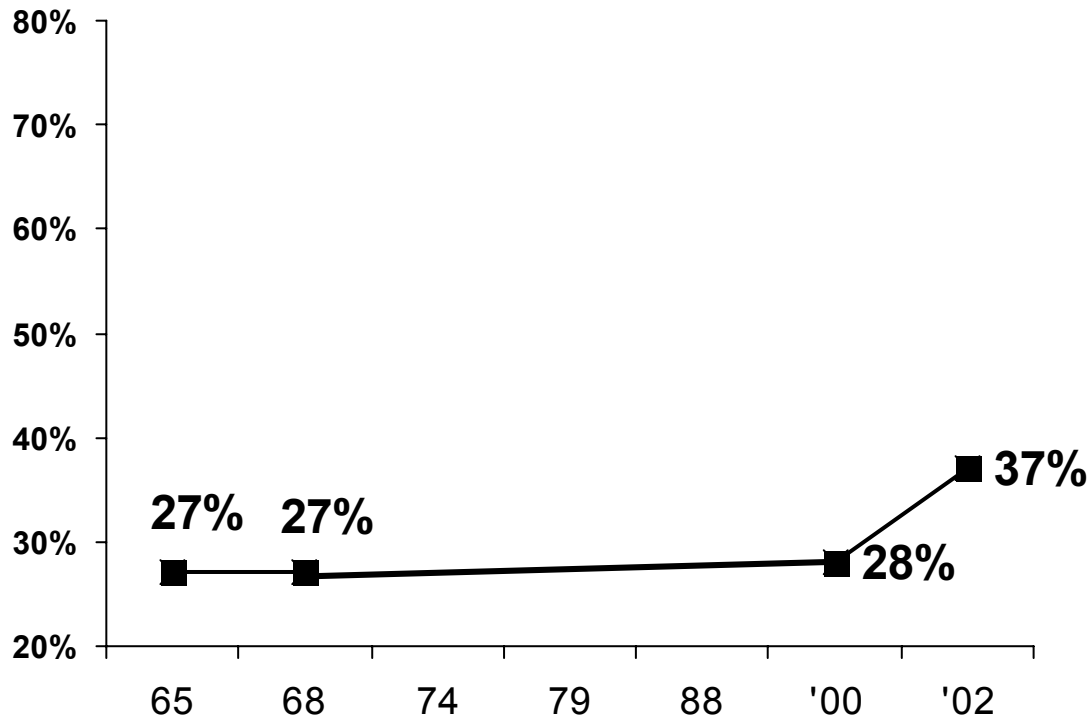
# Trust in Government: Canada and US (Long Term)

Q: How much do you trust the government in Ottawa/Washington to do what is right?



# Tracking Political Cynicism in Canada

**Q:** Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government/federal government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think that hardly any of them are crooked?

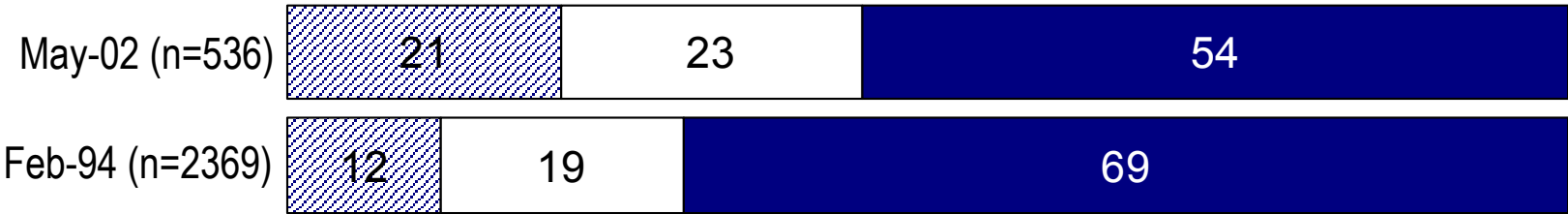


May 27-29, 2002  
(n=1,217)

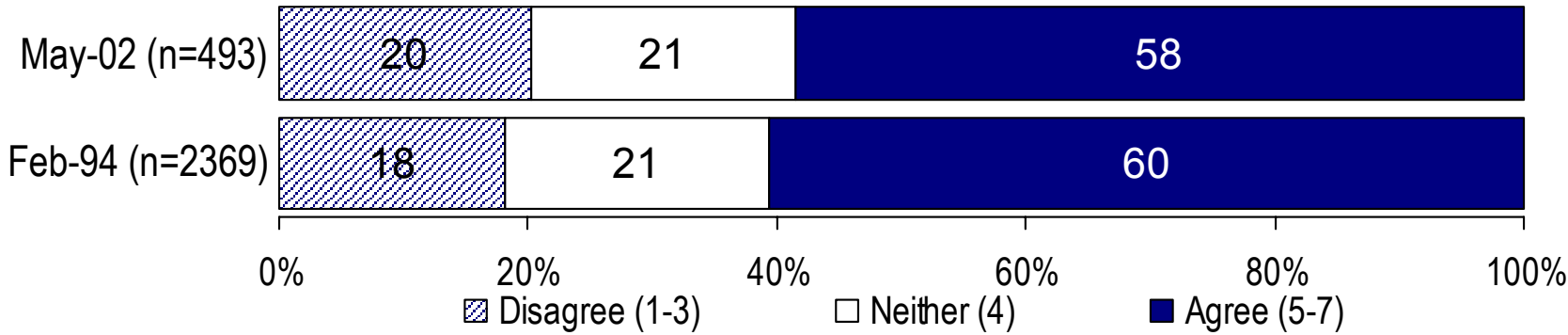


# Tracking Ethical Standards

I think the ethical standards of the **federal government** have slipped badly in the past decade



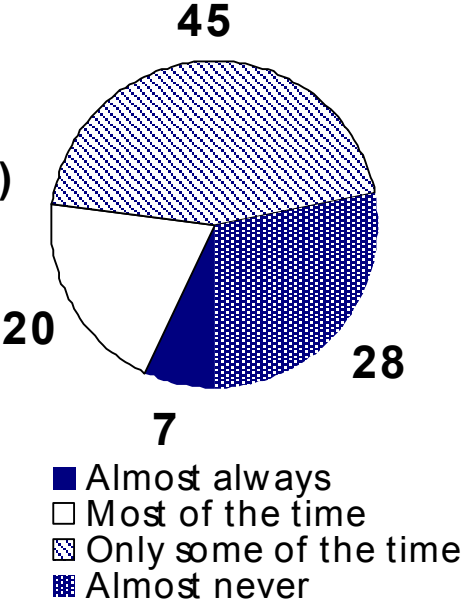
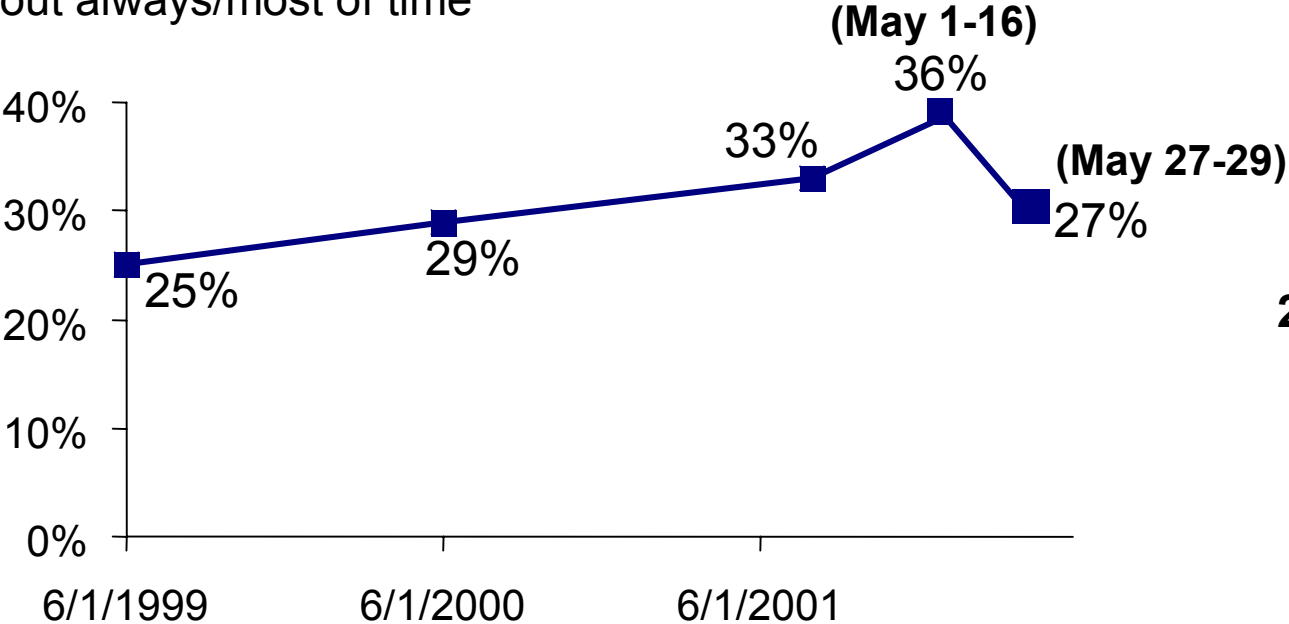
I think the ethical standards of **people in business** have slipped badly in the past decade



# Trust in Federal Government: Canada (Short Term)

Q: How much do you trust the government in Ottawa to do what is right?

per cent who trust just about always/most of time

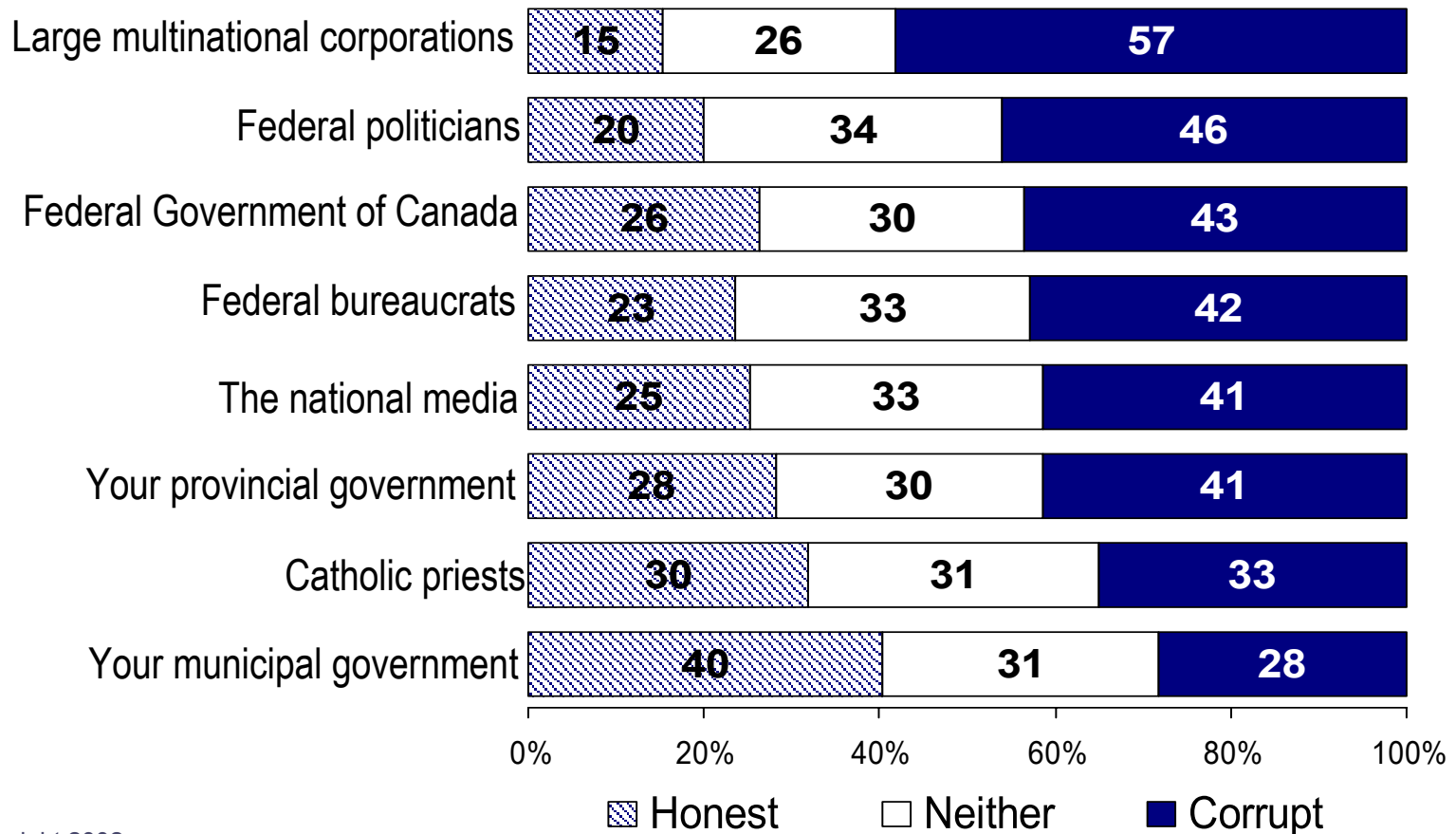


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# Honesty of Offices/Organizations

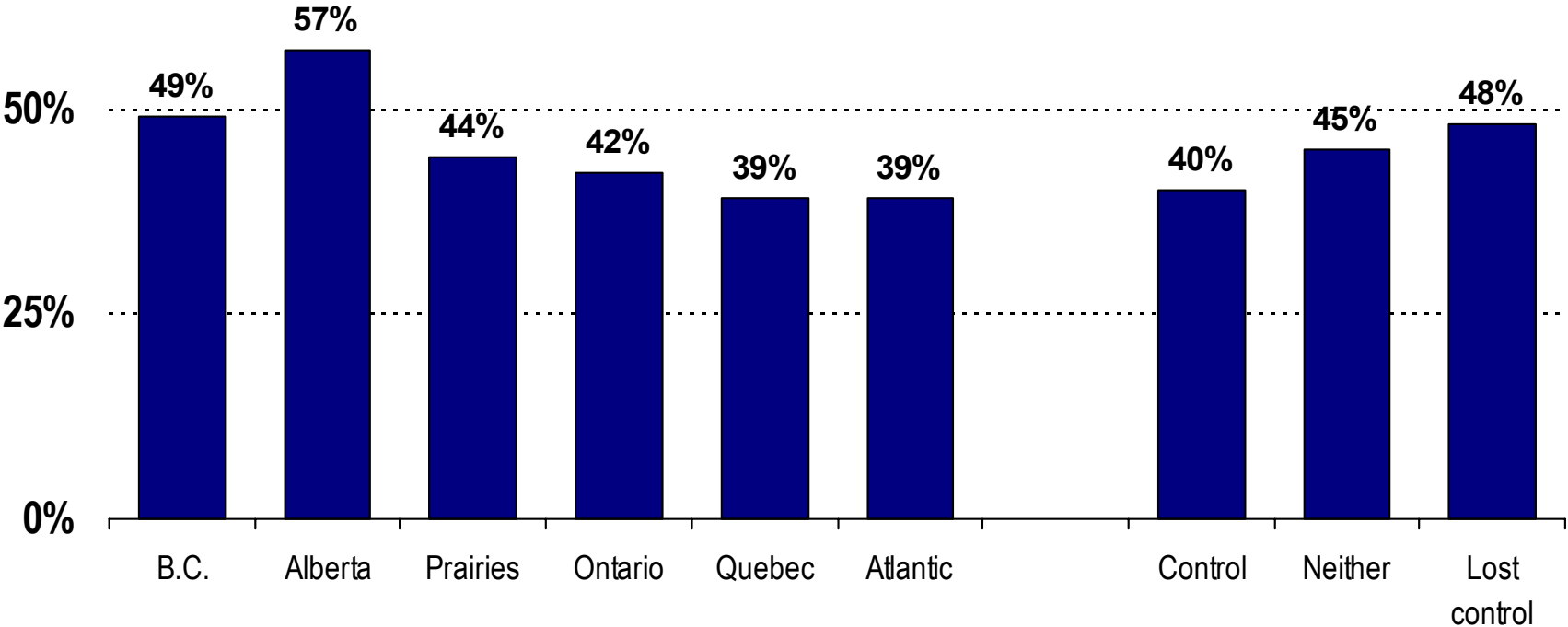
**Q:** Please rate the following offices/organizations on a scale from totally honest to totally corrupt with 4 being neither corrupt nor honest.



# Western Regions & Economically Vulnerable Most Negative

Q: Please rate the following offices/organizations on a scale from totally honest to totally corrupt with 4 being neither corrupt nor honest.”

per cent federal government “corrupt”



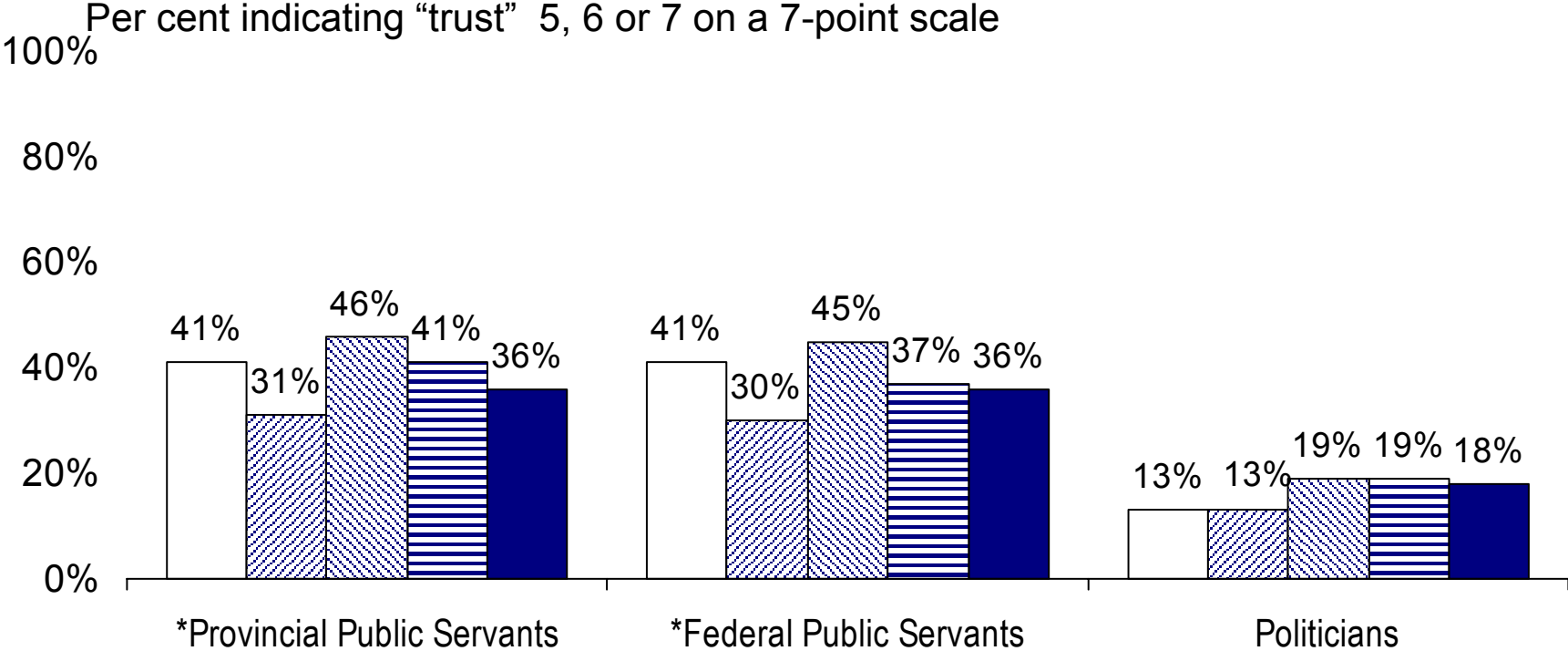
**Economic vulnerability**

“I feel I have lost all control over my economic future”



# Trust in Occupational Groups

**Q:** Using a scale from 1, no trust at all, to 7, a great deal of trust, with 4 meaning a moderate amount of trust, please rate how much trust you have in the following occupational groups

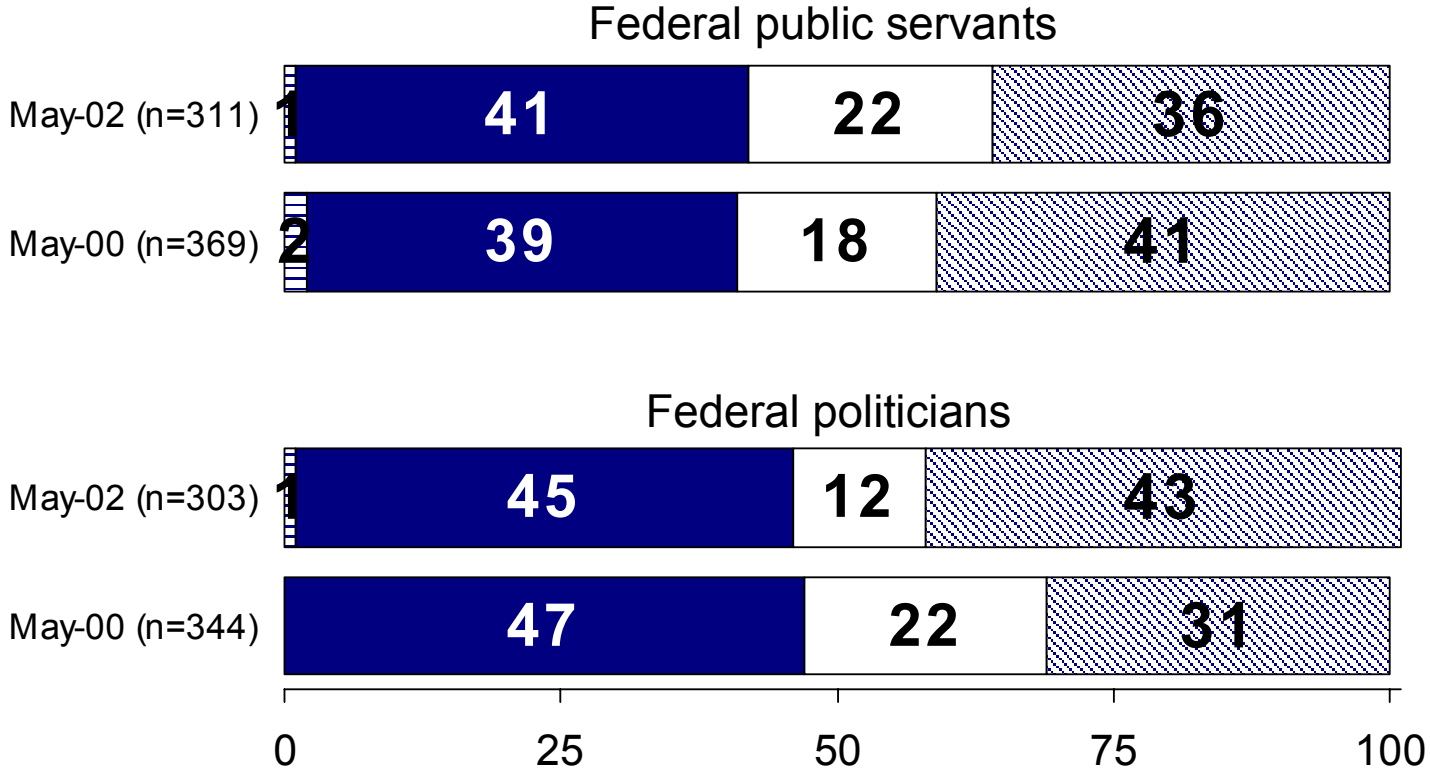


- Mar-97 (n=1501)
- ▨ Mar-99 (n=1506)
- Mar-98 (n=1515)
- ▤ May-00 (n=713; \*half sample)
- May-02 (n=612)



# Government Safeguards Regarding Ethics

**Q:** I think that our system of government has sufficient safeguards to ensure that federal public servants (B: federal politicians) conduct themselves in an ethical manner.

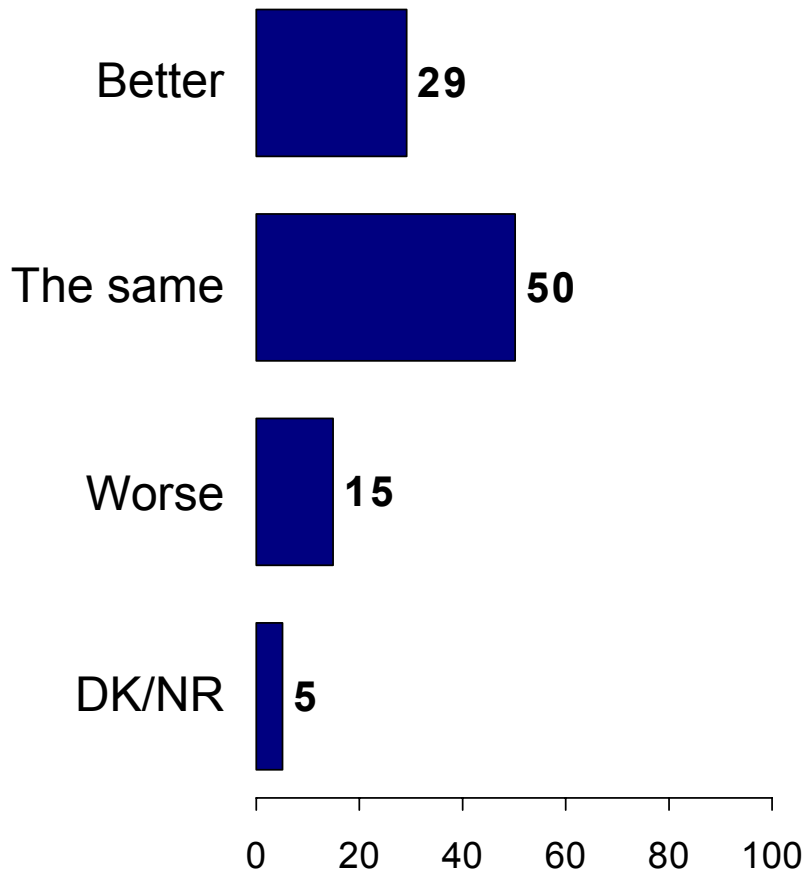


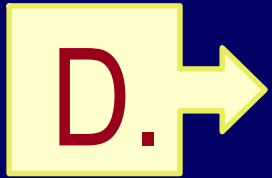
DK/NR ■ Insufficient safeguards □ Neither ▨ Sufficient safeguards



# Ethical Standards: Chrétien vs. Mulroney

**Q:** Compared to the Brian Mulroney era do you think the current ethical standards of the Jean Chrétien government are worse, the same or better?





# Performance & Approval Rating



# Ethics and Performance Rating

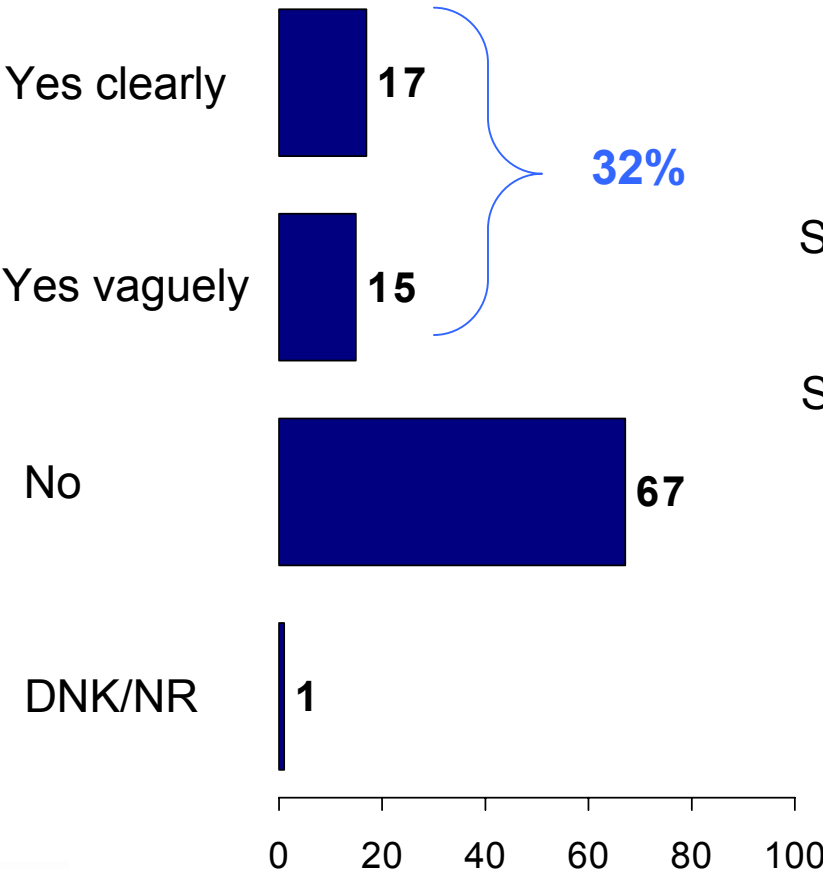
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- Ethics package approved by a strong majority but most unaware (66 per cent haven't heard about it)
- Eggleton firing endorsed by a clearer majority with less undecided
- Rationale for sponsorship program seen as justified by a plurality
- All in all, Canadians think government is heading in the right direction – surprisingly up in last two months but long term trajectory unchanged

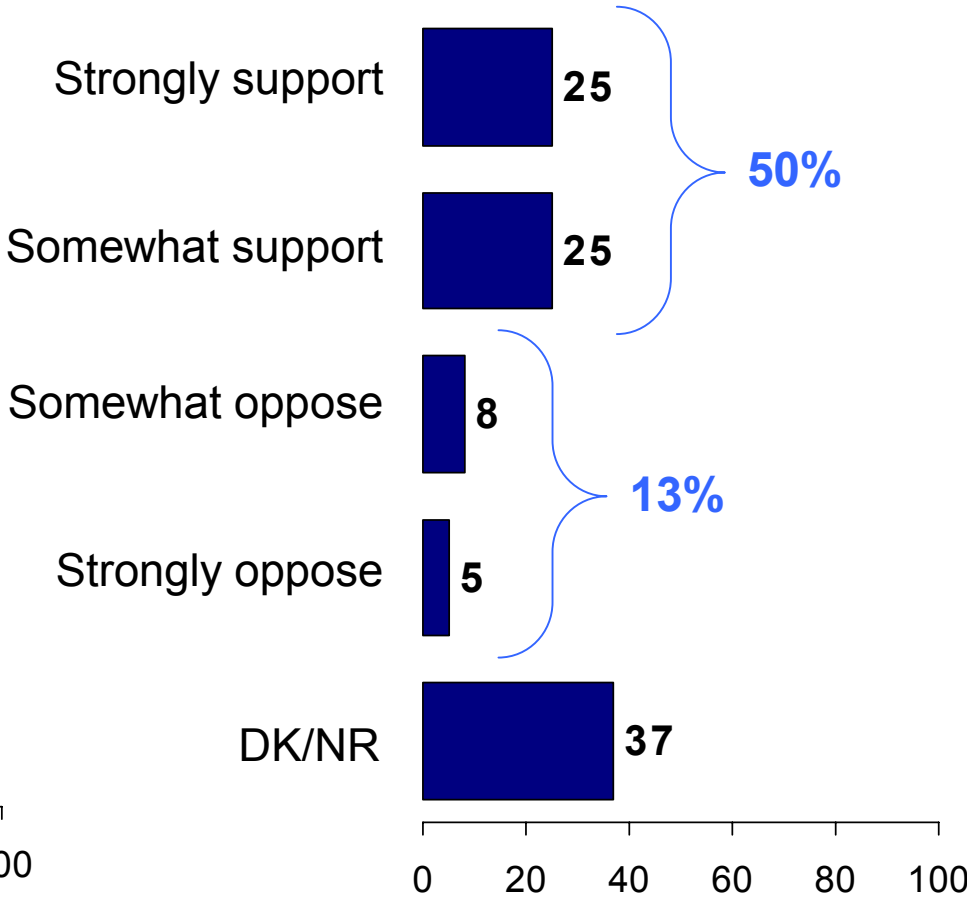


# Support for “Ethics Package”

**Q:** Last week the federal government introduced an “ethics package” designed to improve accountability and transparency. Do you recall having heard or read anything about this “ethics package”?

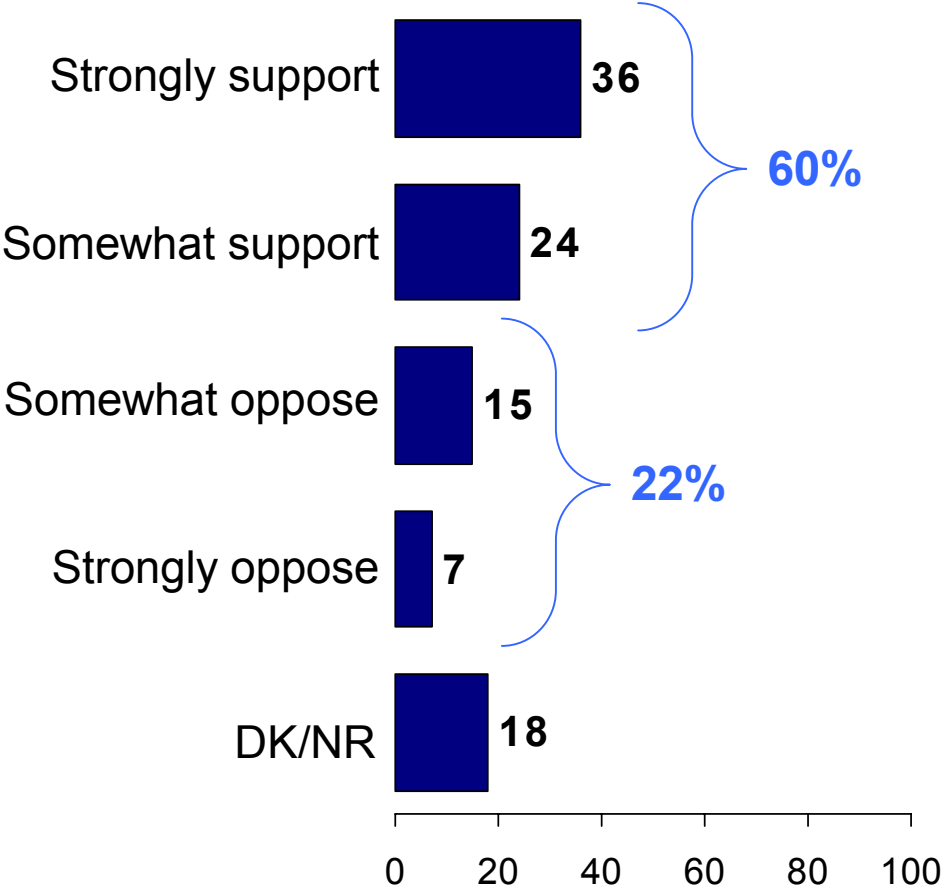


**Q:** Do you support or oppose this "ethics package"?



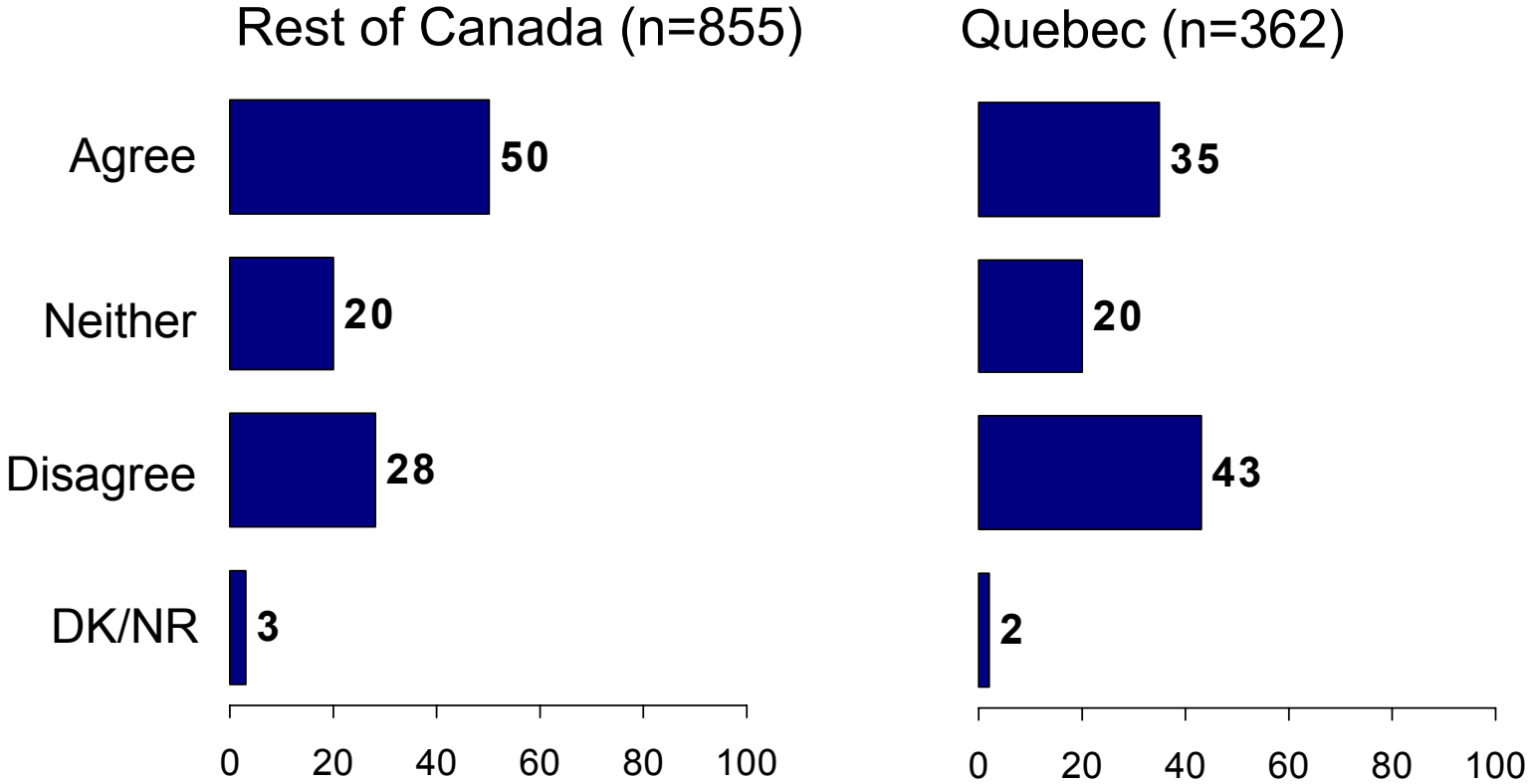
# Support for Art Eggleton out of Cabinet

**Q:** Do you oppose or support the decision to remove the former Defense Minister Art Eggleton from Cabinet?



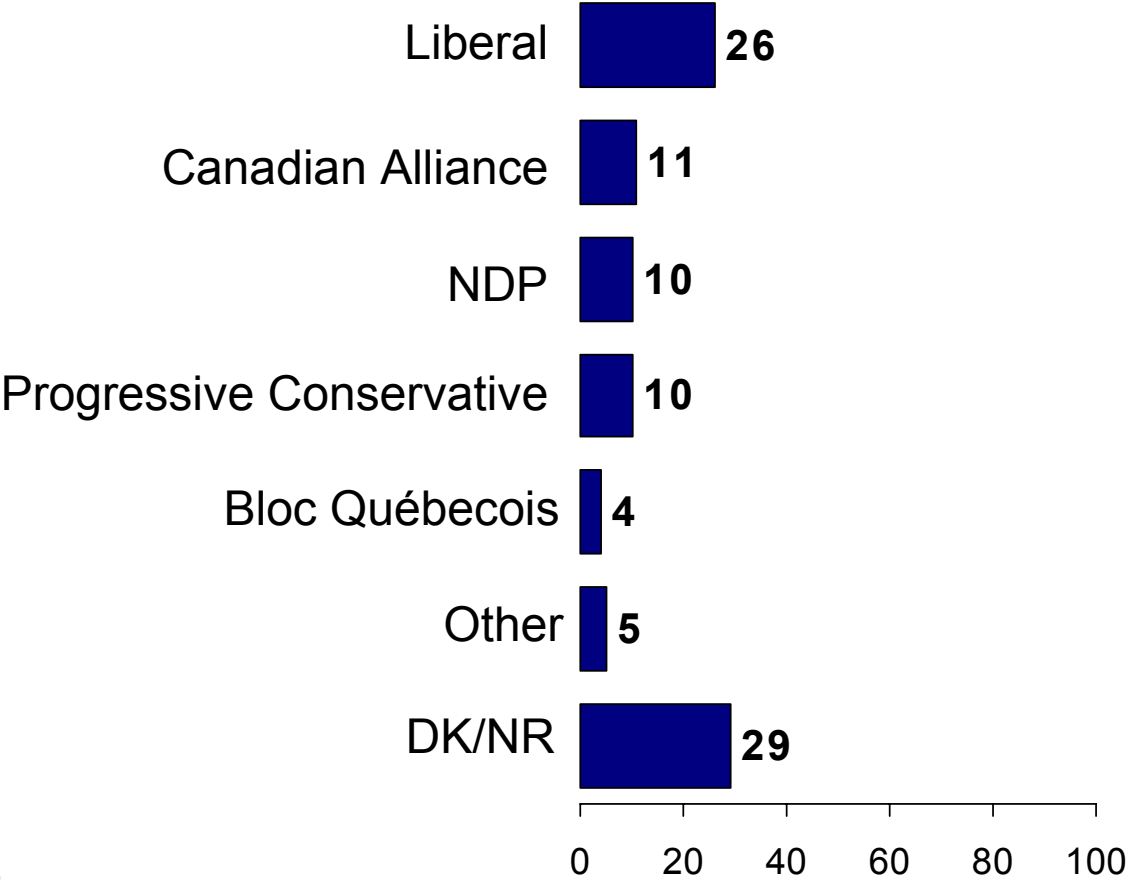
# Raising Government of Canada Profile in Quebec

**Q:** Following the narrow referendum results in Quebec in 1995, I think the federal government was justified in attempting to raise the profile and visibility of the Government of Canada in Quebec .



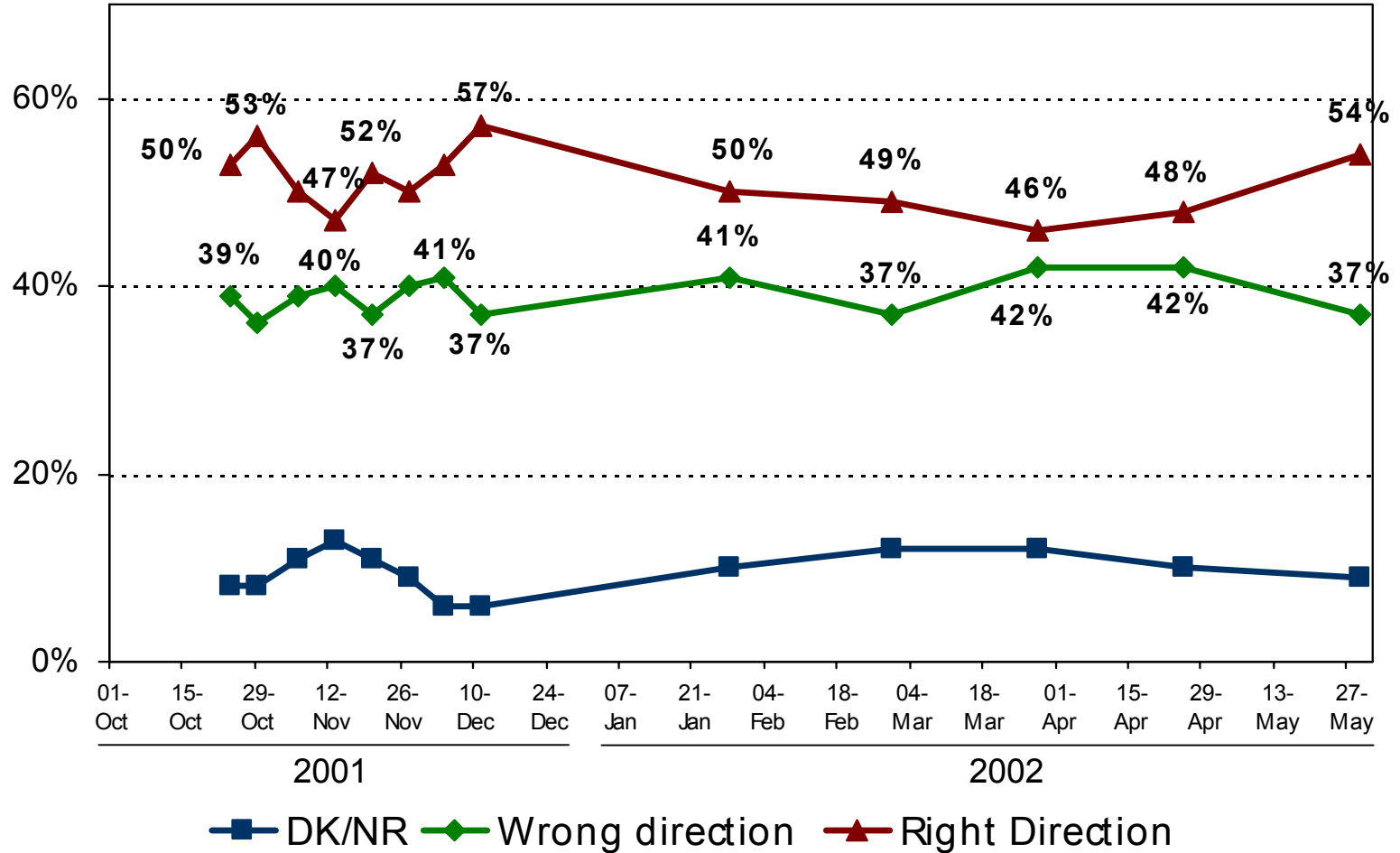
# Party Best Able to Deal with Corruption

Q: Which of the federal political parties is best able to deal with issues of trust and corruption?



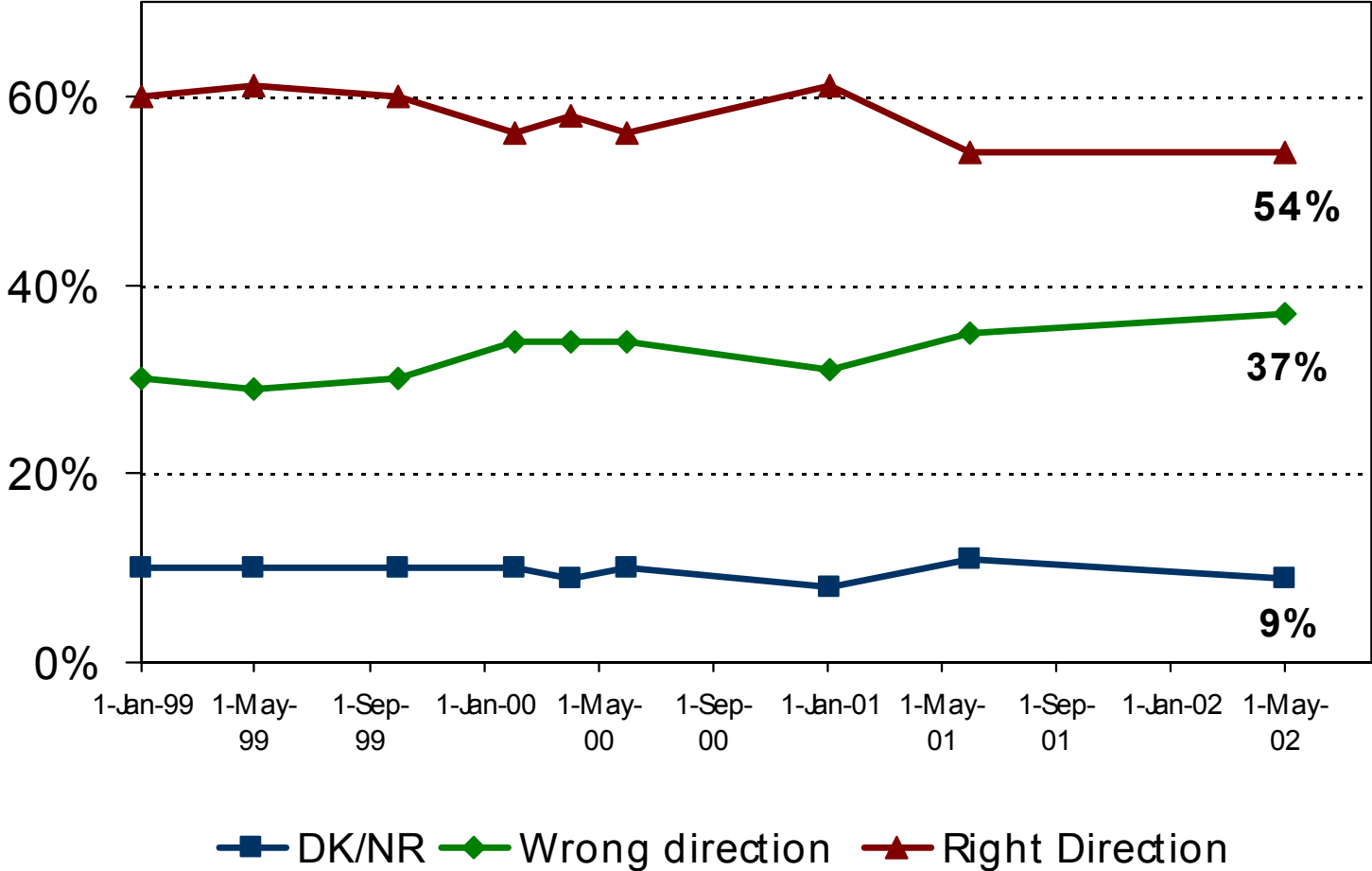
# Satisfaction with Government Direction (Short Term)

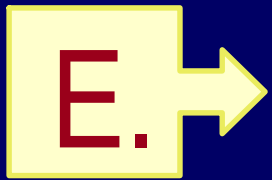
Q: All things considered, would you say the Government of Canada is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?



# Satisfaction with Government Direction (Long Term)

Q: All things considered, would you say the Government of Canada is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?





# Federal Political Outlook

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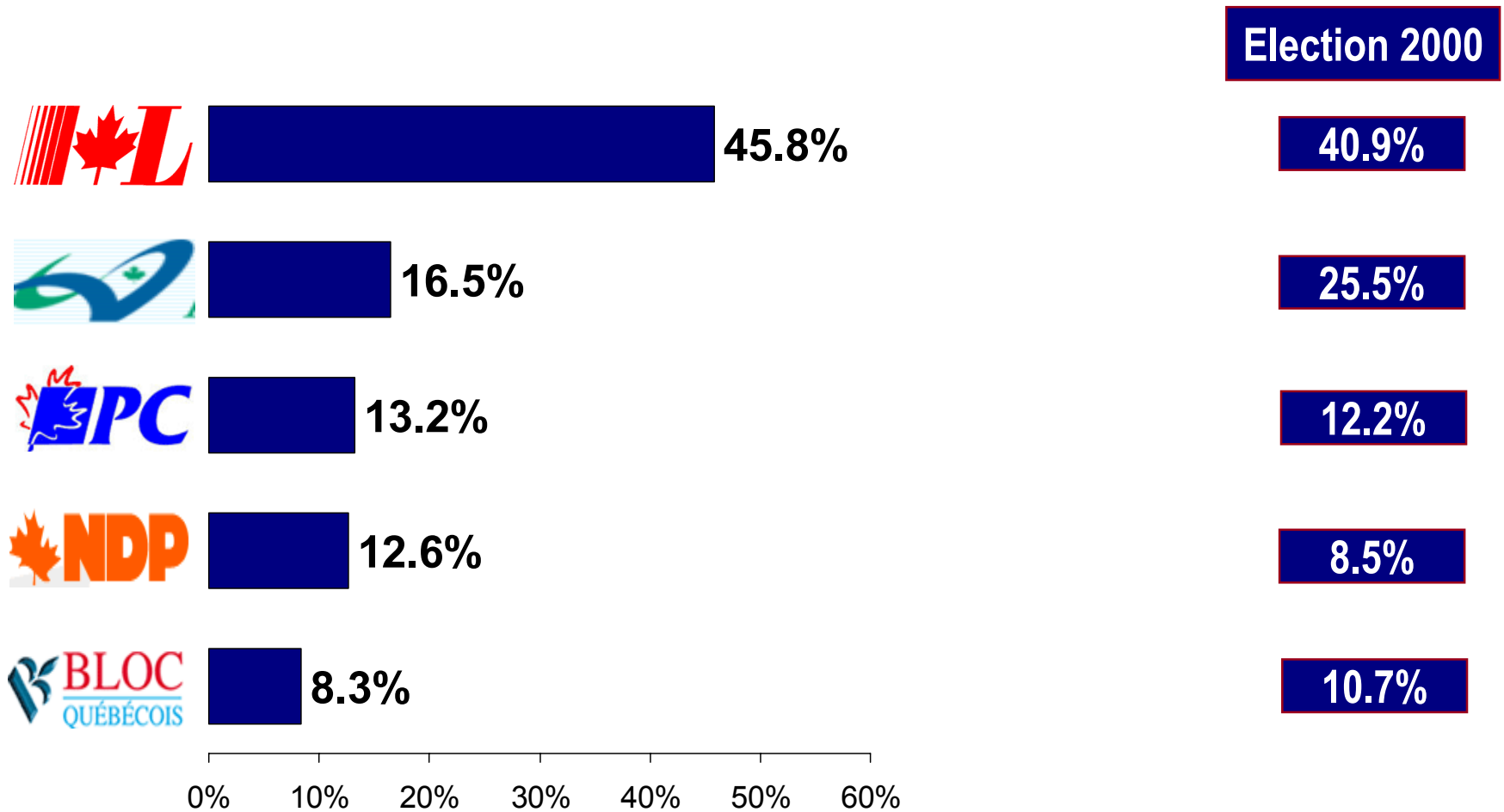
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- Federal voting intention shifting
  - LPC down by 9 points since January 2002 (from 54 to 45) , CA up by 8 points (from 9 to 17) and PC down by 5 points (19 to 14)
  - Provincially, Liberals maintain stronghold with a plurality or a majority in all regions but Alberta where the CA leads by 10 points
  - No clear beneficiary from Liberal decline



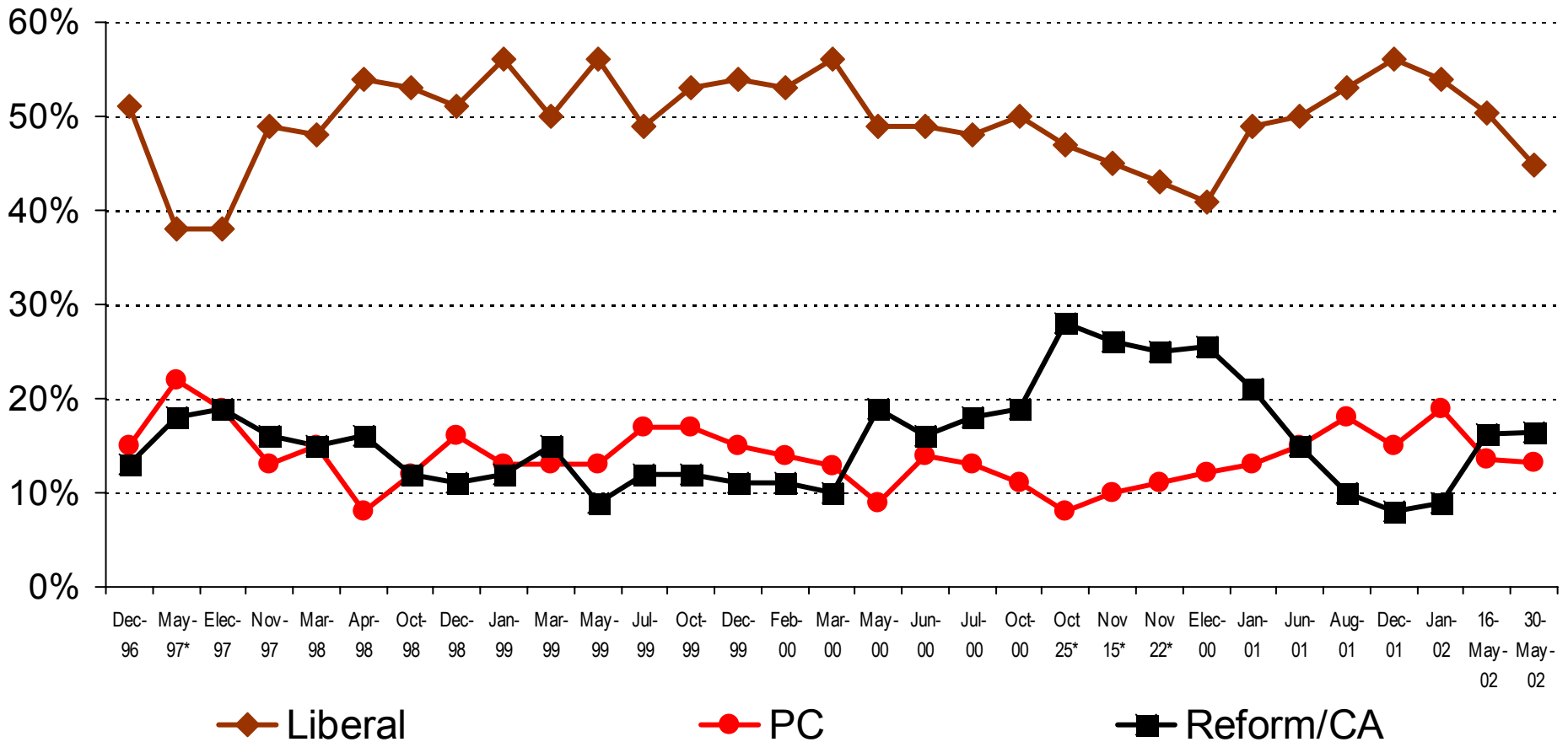
# Federal Voting Preference

Q: If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for? [Decided voters only\*]



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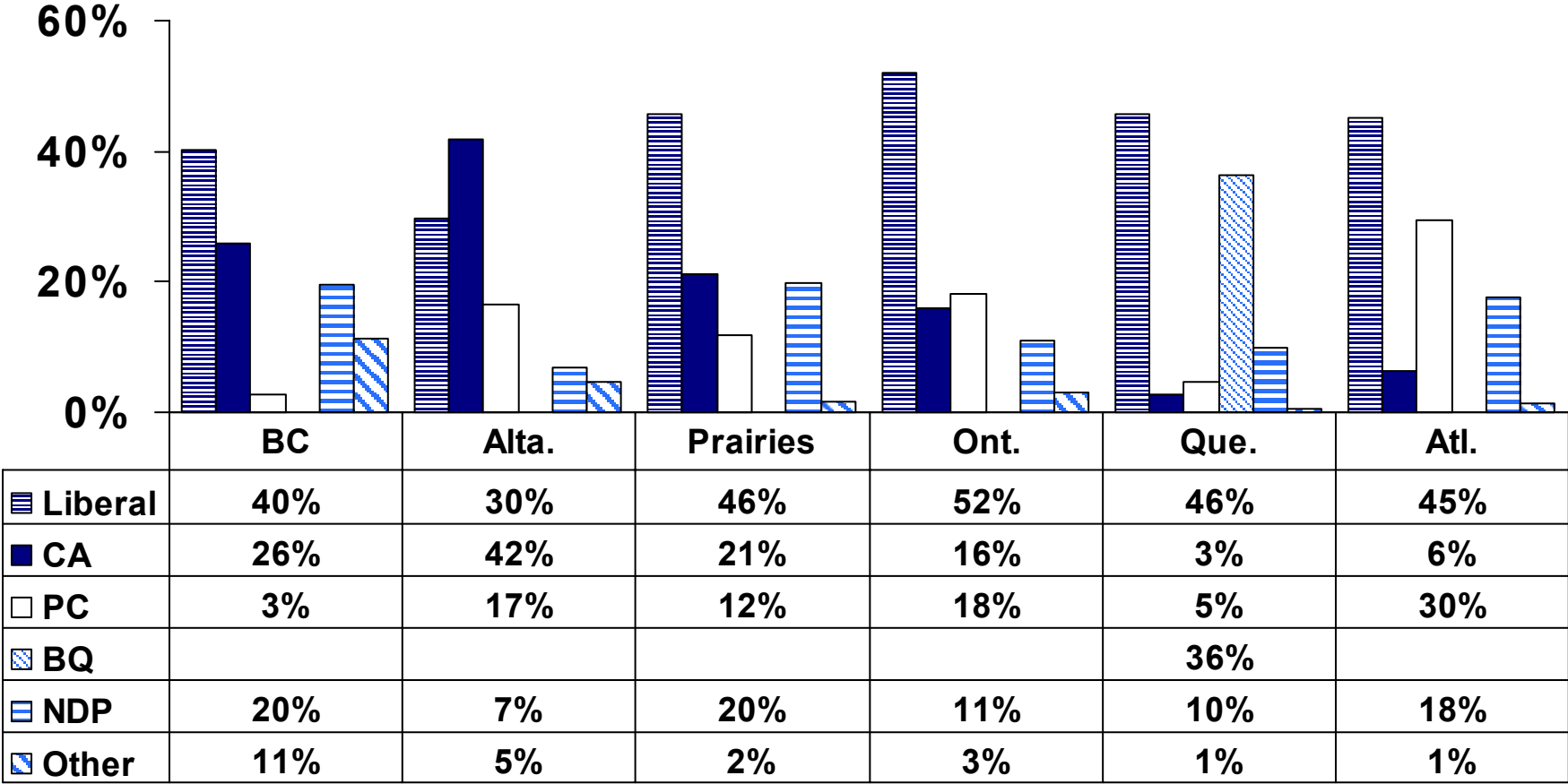
\* During federal election campaigns  
 ^The samples for these surveys are based on a minimum size of 1,450 respondents

Decided voters only: won't vote, undecided and refused respondents excluded; "leaners" included



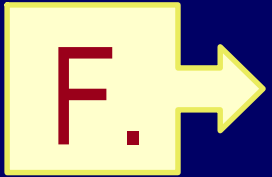
# Federal Voting Preferences: Regional

Q: If a federal election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?  
 [Decided voters only\*]



Liberal
CA
PC
BQ
NDP
Other





# Monarchy



# Monarchy

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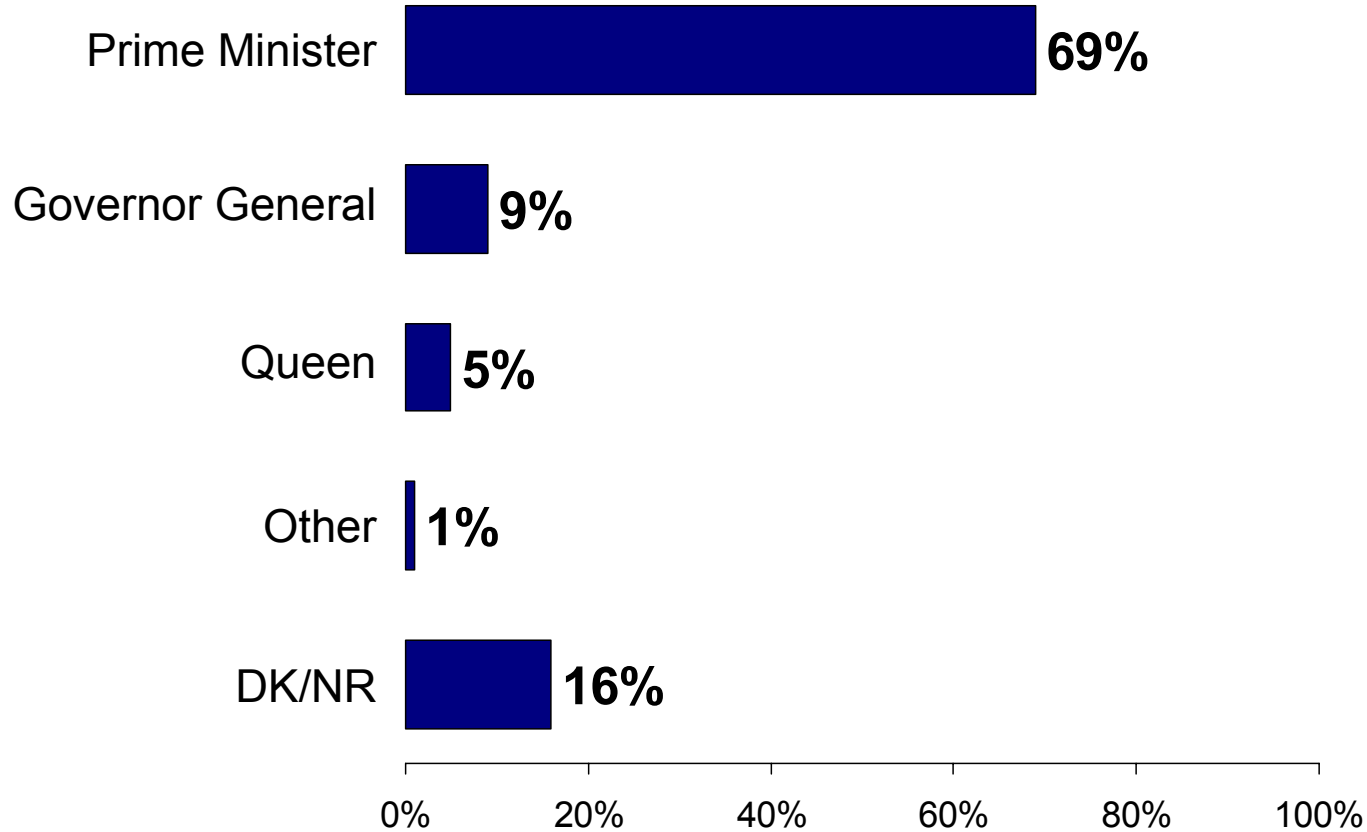
- Highly polarized views (intensely held) little consensus for moving forward with institutional renewal
- Low fluency on constitutional role of monarchy
- More positive views in English Canada, women, seniors and middle (not upper) class
- Royals are seen as “interesting” but also “tired”; public highly split on relevance
- Their historical-institutional significance is much more important than their celebrity-star role in Canada; but only 5% knew monarch was our head of state
- Outside Quebec fairly strong lean to view of Queen as source of identity/distinctness from US
- Slim majority think monarchy is regressive and outdated
- No broad support for Queen to abdicate in favour of Charles (except Quebec); positive support for a Canadian Head of State (most already think Chrétien is)
- High polarization on abolishing; support for abolition is declining



# Literacy Test

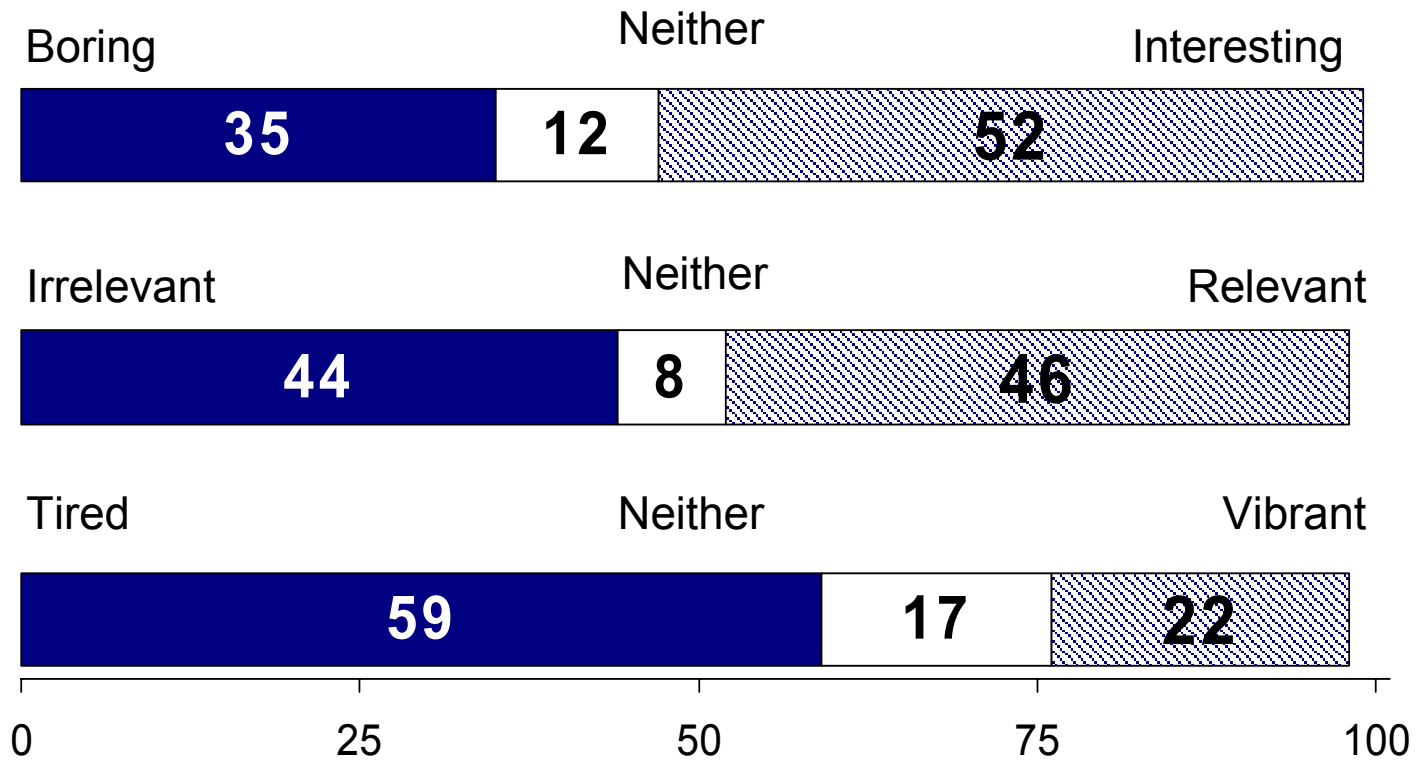
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**Q:** Who is the head of the State in Canada?



# Broad Perceptions of the Monarchy

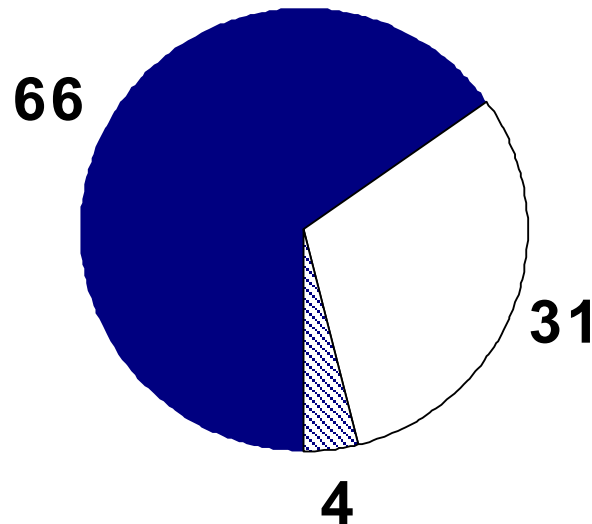
**Q:** Thinking about the monarchy and the Royal Family which of the following terms best describe them



# Historical Significance or Celebrities

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**Q:** Which of the statements is closest to your own point of view? Some people say that the real importance of the British monarchy lies in its institutional and historical significance as head of the Commonwealth. Others say that today their real importance is as celebrities like Hollywood actors or sporting stars.



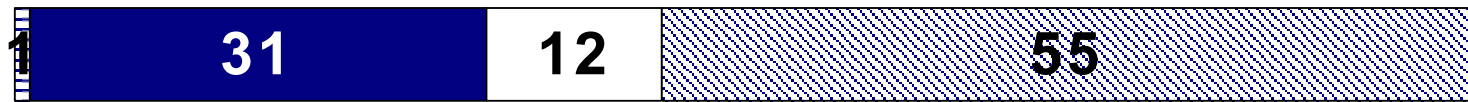
- Historical significance as head of the Commonwealth
- Celebrities like Hollywood actors or sporting stars
- ▨ DK/NR



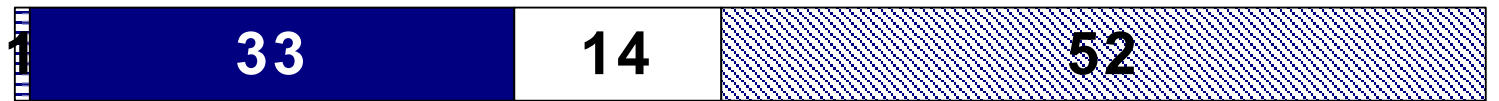
# Monarchy and Canadian Identity

**Q:** Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with these statements using a 7-point scale where 1 means you strongly disagree, 7 means you strongly agree, and the mid-point 4 means you neither agree nor disagree.

The monarchy is one of those important things that provides Canadians with a unique identity separate from the U.S.



The monarchy is an outdated and regressive institution that has no real relevance to most Canadians today.



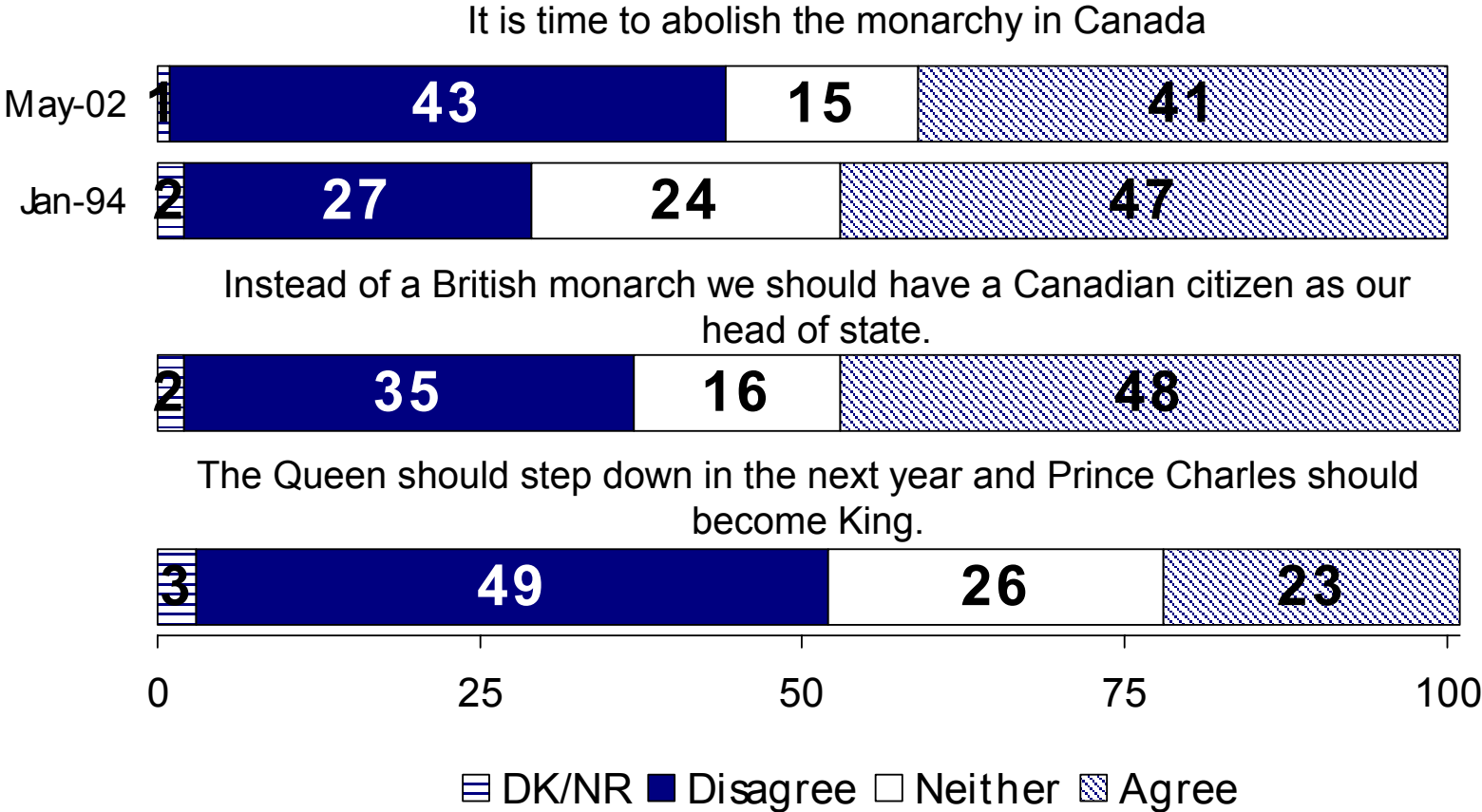
0 25 50 75 100

DK/NR Disagree Neither Agree



# Support for Abolishing the Monarchy (a)

**Q:** Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with these statements using a 7-point scale where 1 means you strongly disagree, 7 means you strongly agree, and the mid-point 4 means you neither agree nor disagree.



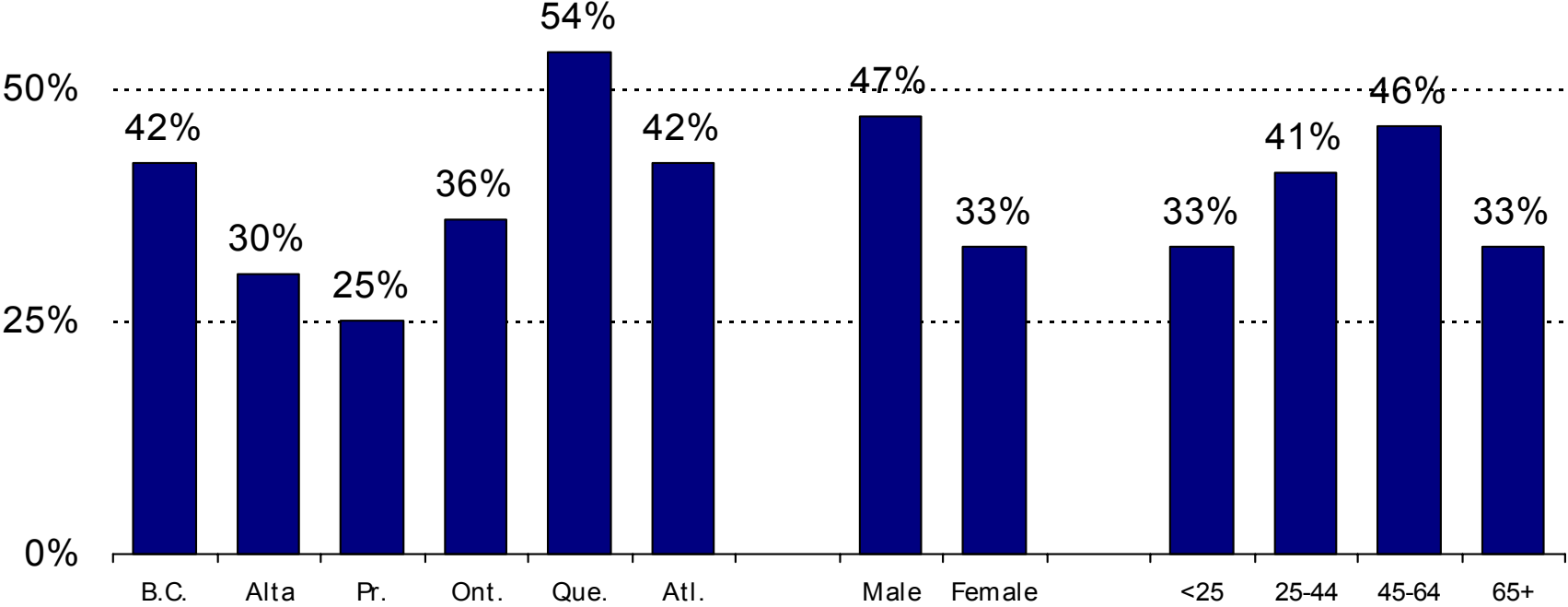
{Base: All Canadians; n=1,217}



# Support for Abolishing the Monarchy (b)

Q: It is time to abolish the monarchy in Canada.

per cent "agree"





**EKOS**

**For more information:  
Frank Graves, President  
[fgraves@ekos.com](mailto:fgraves@ekos.com)**

**Christian Boucher, Senior Director  
[cboucher@ekos.com](mailto:cboucher@ekos.com)**

**t: 613 235 7215**



**EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES**