

Views on Western Alienation and Canada Day


The
Free Press

June 2025 Omnibus Survey

PROBE RESEARCH

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The Story

Most Manitobans have a strong wish to remain part of Canada, but a surprisingly large minority would opt for independence.

Compared to Alberta and Saskatchewan, in the past half-century, Manitoba has not expressed the same degree of frustration with the federal government. However, a sizable proportion of Manitobans – including majorities of federal and provincial Conservative supporters – would likely vote to leave Canada if a referendum was held in this province too.

In this regard, Manitoba is not all that different than Alberta, with a largely rural and frustrated base of right-leaning voters expressing dissatisfaction with a Liberal government in Ottawa and wondering if their province would be better off leaving Confederation. There is also a relatively broad degree of acknowledgement that people in western Canada are justified in their anger towards the federal government, which for the past decade has been a Liberal one.

The outpouring of pride in Canada in recent months remains quite strong, but even it seems to have diminished recently. While this will be a more exuberant Canada Day for some – especially older Manitobans – swept up in the “elbows up” fervor of the past few months, for others it will be a fairly typical summer holiday weekend.

Key Findings

A strong majority of Manitobans would vote to stay in Canada rather than separate alongside other western provinces. If Manitoba were to hold a referendum along the lines of what Alberta is proposing, seven in 10 would choose to stay, including six in 10 who would definitely vote to stay and another one in 10 would probably remain in Canada. More than one in five, meanwhile, would choose to leave Canada (22%, including 14% who would definitely vote to leave). Seven per cent are undecided.

Support for leaving is concentrated in rural Manitoba, and among right-of-centre voters. Slight majorities of those who voted for the federal Conservatives in this year's federal election and those who voted for the provincial Progressive Conservatives (PCs) in the 2023 provincial election would definitely or probably vote to leave Canada. There are three times as many "leave" supporters in rural and northern Manitoba as there are in Winnipeg, with men also more likely to be open to independence.

The vast majority of Manitobans agree discussing separation from Canada makes the country weaker.

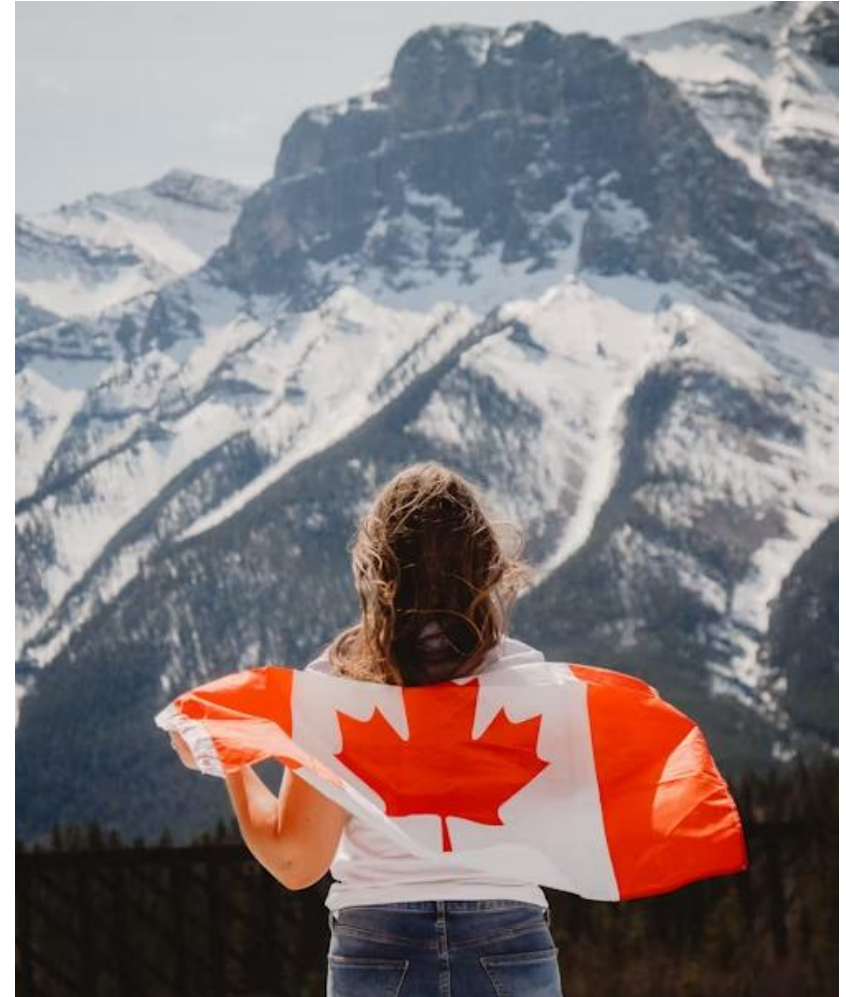
However, a large proportion also agree there are legitimate grievances with the federal government. More than eight in 10 think the separatism discussion coming out of Alberta make the country weaker in the face of U.S. tariffs and talk of making Canada the 51st state. While this is a widely shared concern, more than six in 10 also say they don't take these discussions very seriously.

At the same time, though, more than six in 10 agree people in the West have legitimate reason to be angry with the federal government. Manitobans are split, however, on whether having a federal Liberal government is bad for Western Canada, with nearly one-half agreeing with this sentiment and slightly more than one-half disagreeing.

Key Findings (cont'd)

Pride in Canada remains quite strong, with more people expecting to celebrate Canada Day in a bigger way this year.

Six in 10 feel prouder of Canada today than they did a year ago. While this is down from 77 per cent who felt this way in March, a majority still feel prouder of the country now. More than one-half expect to do more to celebrate Canada Day this year, with older Manitobans more likely to do more to mark the day in a bigger way.



Methodology

Probe Research surveyed a random and representative sample of 1,000 Manitoba adults between May 28 and June 10, 2025.

The sample includes 501 Manitobans randomly recruited via live-agent operator, 246 randomly recruited via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and 253 members of Probe Research's online panel. All respondents completed the survey on an online platform.

Probe reached out to Manitobans through modified random digit dialing, including both landline and wireless numbers. This ensured all Manitoba adults had an equal opportunity to participate in this survey.

With a sample of 1,000, one can say with 95 per cent certainty that the results are within ± 3.1 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Manitoba had been surveyed. The margin of error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups.

The sample has been weighted slightly by age, gender, region and educational attainment so it properly reflects the province's population, based on Census data. Probe used SPSS software to conduct all statistical analysis.

About the Probe Research Omnibus

For nearly 30 years, Probe Research has conducted quarterly omnibus surveys of random and representative samples of Manitoba adults. These surveys have provided strategic and proprietary insights to hundreds of public, private and not-for-profit clients on many different social, cultural and public policy topics. The Probe Research Omnibus Survey is the province's largest and most trusted general population survey.

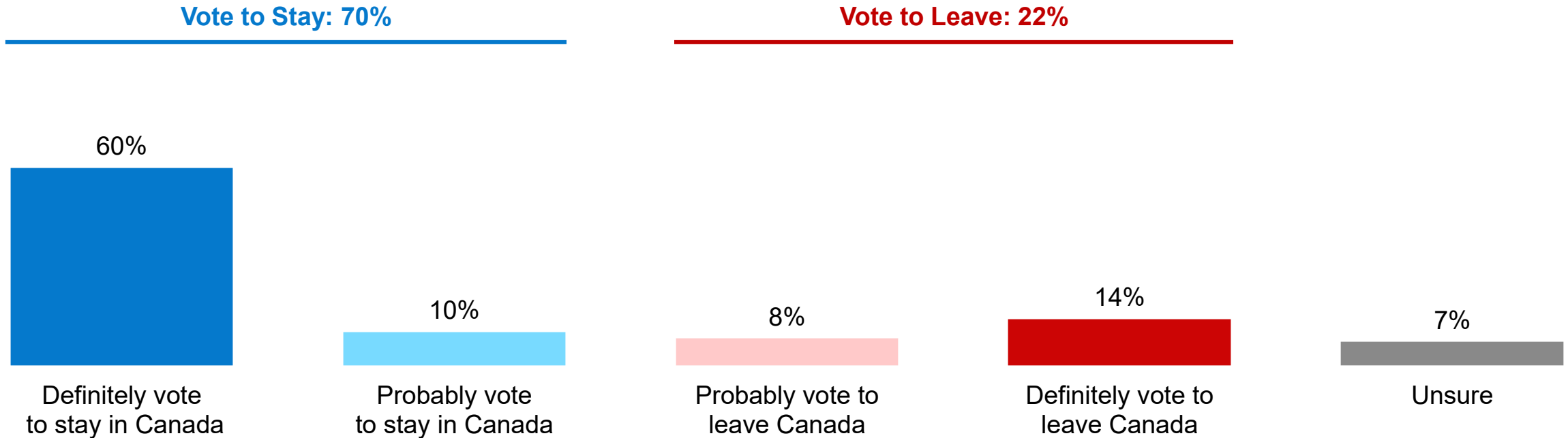
Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed by Probe Research in close consultation with the Winnipeg Free Press.

Support for Manitoba Staying or Leaving Canada

While a strong majority want Manitoba to remain in Canada, more than one in five would leave

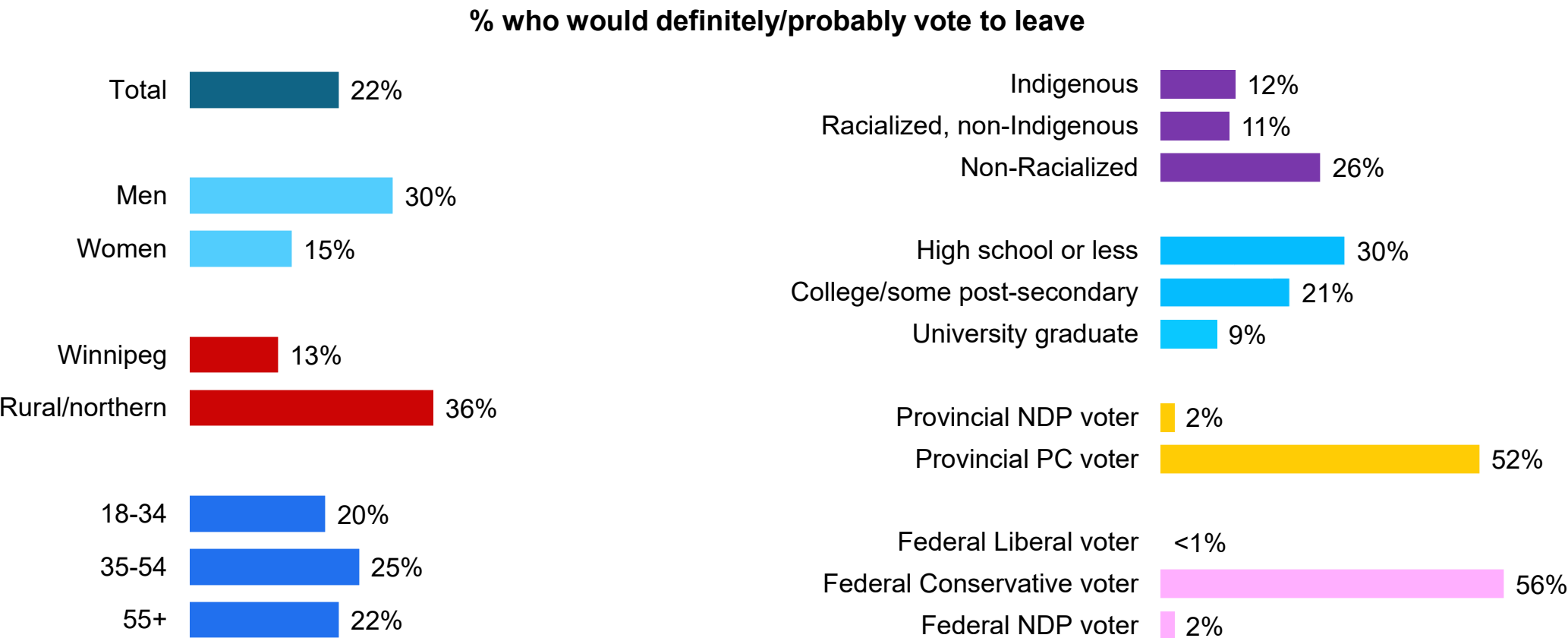
FP2. Some people in Alberta want to hold a referendum that would ask Albertans if they should seek to form an independent country or remain in Canada. There is also some talk about doing the same thing in Saskatchewan. If there was a referendum on independence in Manitoba, would you definitely or probably vote for the province to leave Canada, or to stay in Canada? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)



Support for Manitoba Leaving Canada: By Subgroup

Majorities of federal and provincial Conservative supporters would likely vote to leave Canada

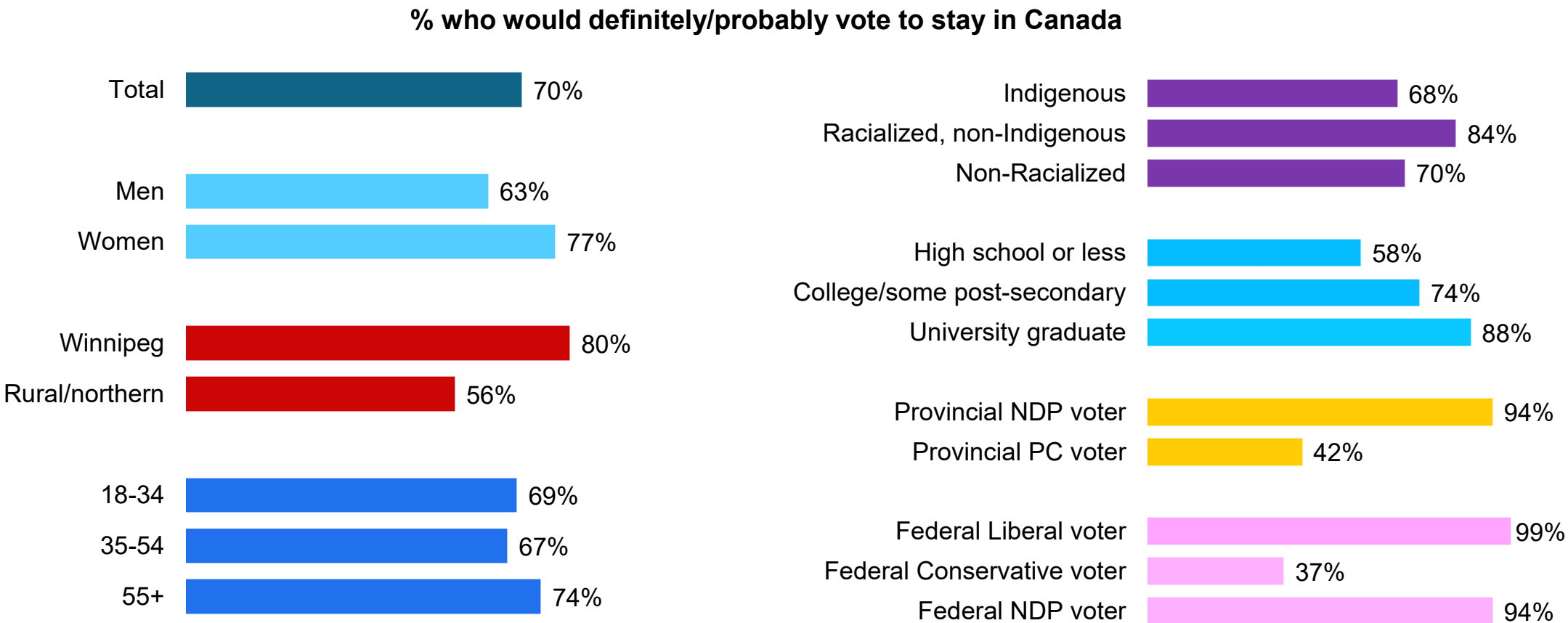
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Support for Remaining in Canada: By Subgroup

Winnipeg residents and women are much more likely to want to remain in Canada

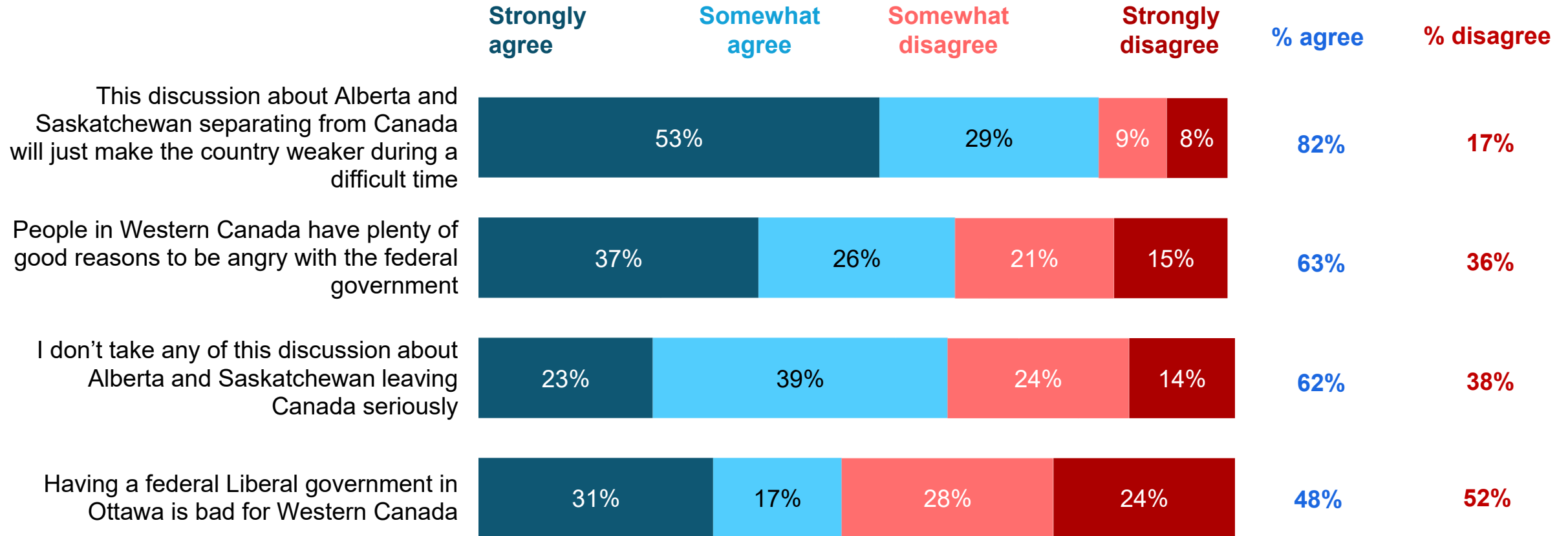
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Views on Western Separation/Alienation

More than eight in 10 agree the discussion about separation will make the country weaker

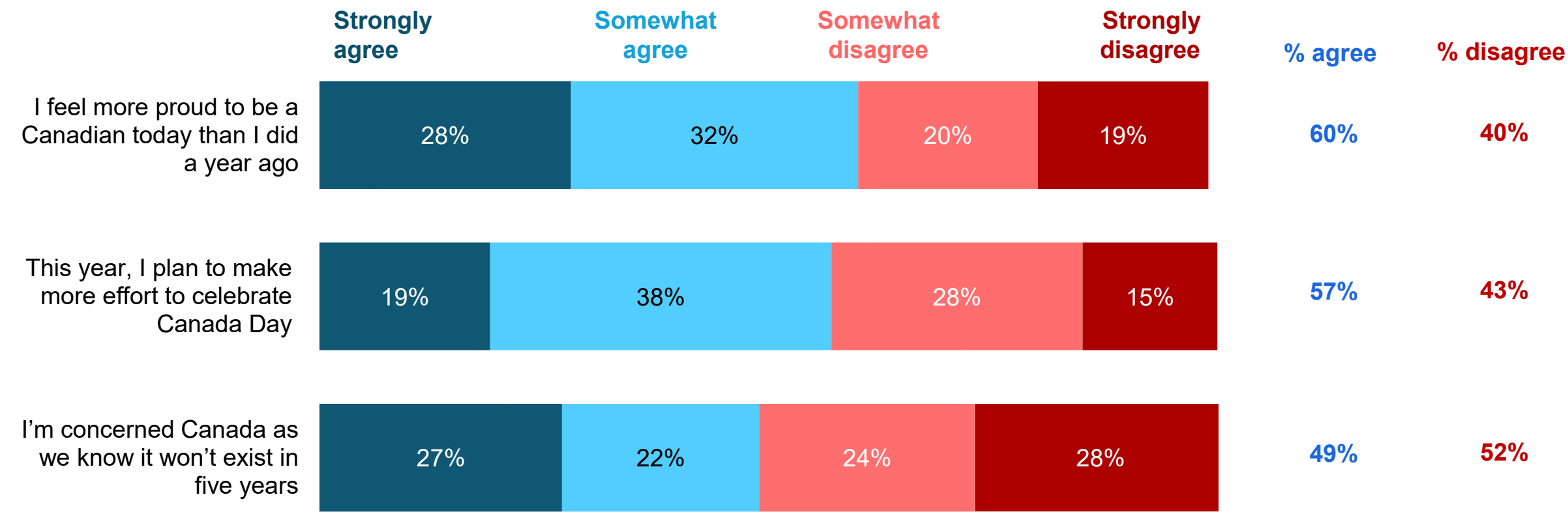
FP3. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements about this issue. (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)



Views on Patriotism and Pride in Canada

Nearly six in 10 plan to do more this year to mark Canada's national holiday

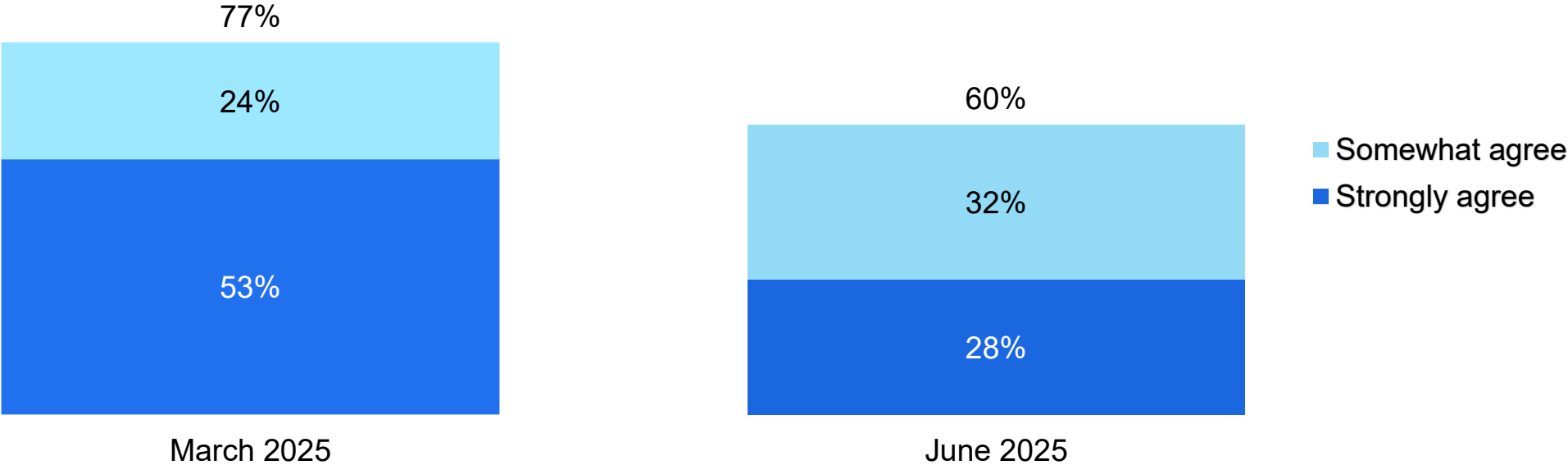
FP1. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)



Evolving Views on Pride in Canada: Tracking

The degree of pride in the country has declined somewhat in the past three months

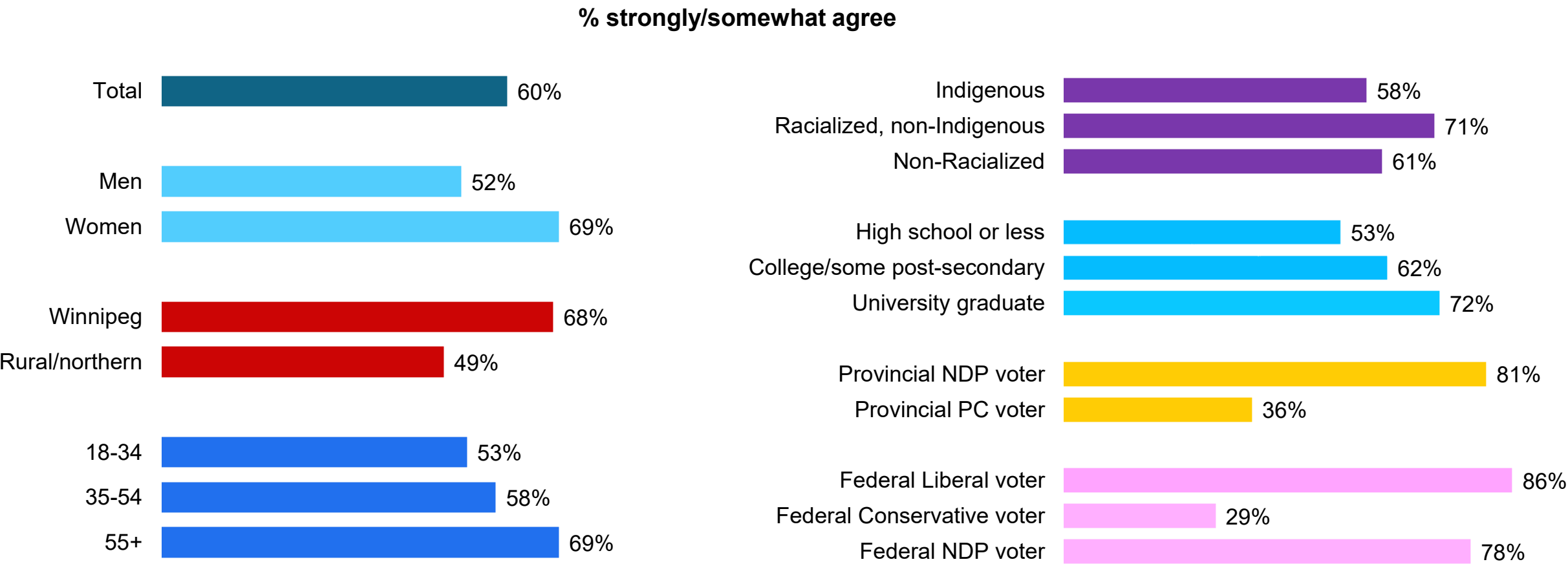
FP1c. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statement: I feel more proud to be a Canadian today than I did at this time last year. (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)



Evolving Views on Pride in Canada: By Subgroup

Older Manitobans, Winnipeggers and women are most likely to feel prouder of Canada today

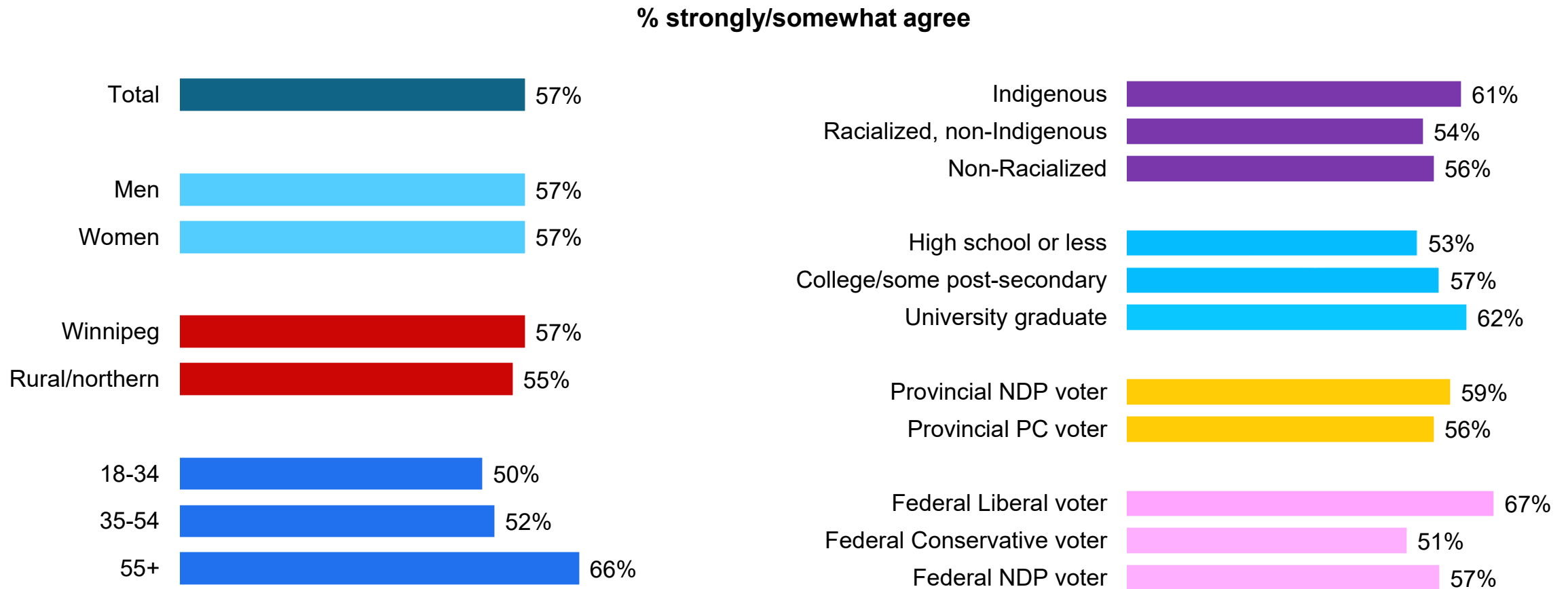
FP1a. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statement: I feel more proud to be a Canadian today than I did at this time last year. (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)



Intent To Do More To Celebrate Canada Day: By Subgroup

Older Manitobans, Liberal voters are more likely to mark Canada Day in a bigger way

FP1c. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statement: This year, I plan do make more effort to celebrate Canada Day.
(Base: All respondents, N=1,000)



Concern About Canada's Future: By Subgroup

Rural Manitobans and Conservative voters are among those most worried about Canada's future

FP1b. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statement: I am concerned Canada as we know it will not exist in five years.
(Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

