

Winnipeg Free Press

Views on Canadian Sovereignty and Trade

March 2026

PROBE Research



The Story

When it comes to the future security of their country, many Manitobans are contemplating scenarios they wouldn't have imagined five years ago. Donald Trump's return to the White House upended both Canada-U.S. relations and America's global approach. Besides musing about annexing Greenland and making Canada the 51st state, during the past few months, the Trump administration has forcibly removed Venezuela's president, blockaded Cuba – and now attacked Iran.

Against this backdrop, **a significant share of Manitobans believe Canada may be the next target very soon.** More than one in five believe it is at least somewhat likely the U.S. will invade Canada in the next two years. Women – especially younger women – are most likely to believe this could happen. Related to this, there continues to be very little support for voluntarily joining the U.S. (13% support today vs. 11% in June 2025).

A broad consensus has emerged that investing in Canada's military is a good idea. More than eight in 10 are in favour of putting more money into the Canadian Armed Forces to better protect the country. This sentiment is widely shared across most demographic groups and is one of the few areas where there is broad agreement among both federal Liberal and Conservative supporters.

There is less agreement, however, on the need to forge military alliances with other countries. While seven in 10 agree that Canada should ally itself with others to protect against a potential U.S. annexation, fewer than one-half of Conservative voters think this is a good idea. Support for seeking out other allies is also higher among older Manitobans.

The Story (continued)

Those who might see themselves as being in relatively comfortable circumstances are more willing to endure the negative economic fallout of shifting Canada's trading relationships. Overall, slightly more than one-half of Manitobans are very or somewhat willing to deal with economic pain in the form of higher prices or job losses if Canada reduces how much it trades with the U.S. However, this sentiment is stronger among older/retired Manitobans, as well as those who are employed in white collar professions. Although there is little difference in terms of household income, younger adults (especially men), as well as those who work in blue collar and service jobs, are much less willing to endure economic hardship if Canada's trading relationship starts to orient away from the U.S.

These results point to a major difference in Manitobans' mindsets when it comes to navigating the Canada-U.S. relationship. Those who see their economic circumstances as more precarious – such as younger, blue-collar men – may see the U.S. as less of an economic and military threat to Canada than older, more secure Manitobans. Although the vast majority of Manitobans do not want to become Americans, significant swaths of the public still see the U.S. as an ally and are reluctant to endure a situation where Canada might be economically weaker and less reliant on the U.S.



Methodology

Probe Research surveyed a random and representative sample of 1,000 Manitoba adults between March 1 and 17, 2026.

Respondents were contacted using four different methods. The sample includes 466 Manitobans randomly recruited via live-agent operator, 139 randomly recruited via text message/SMS, 195 randomly recruited via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and 200 members of Probe Research's online panel. All respondents completed the survey using 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.

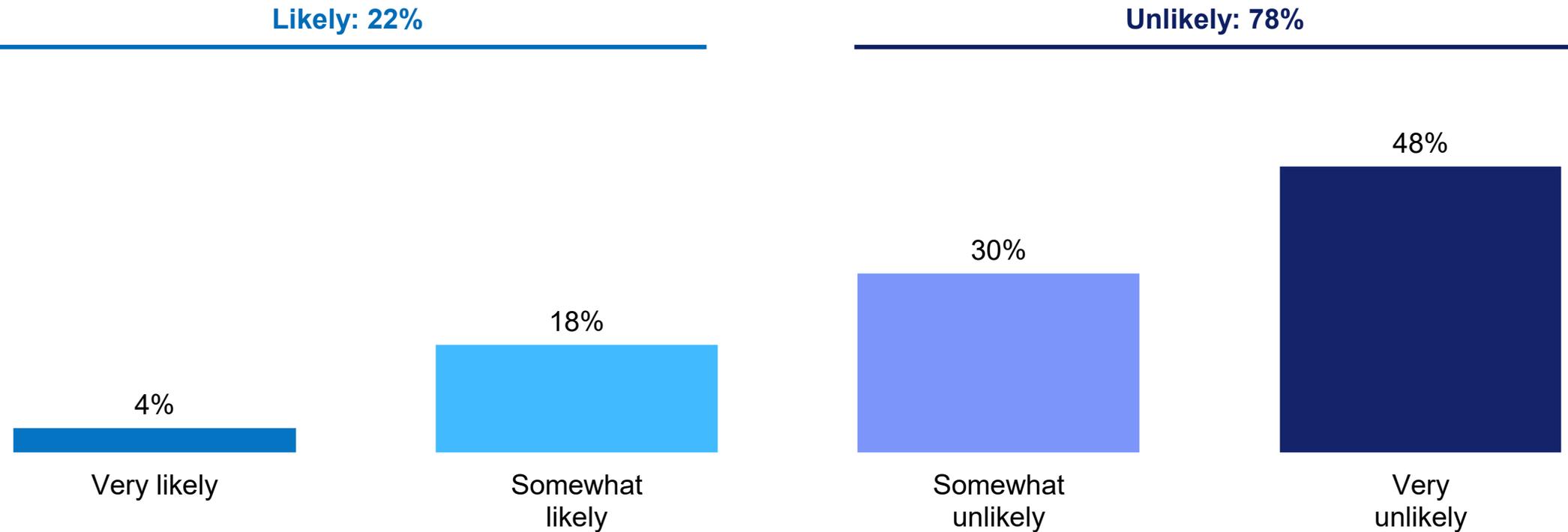
The sample has been weighted slightly by age, gender, region and educational attainment so it properly reflects the province's population, based on Census data. Probe used SPSS software to conduct all statistical analysis.

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.

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

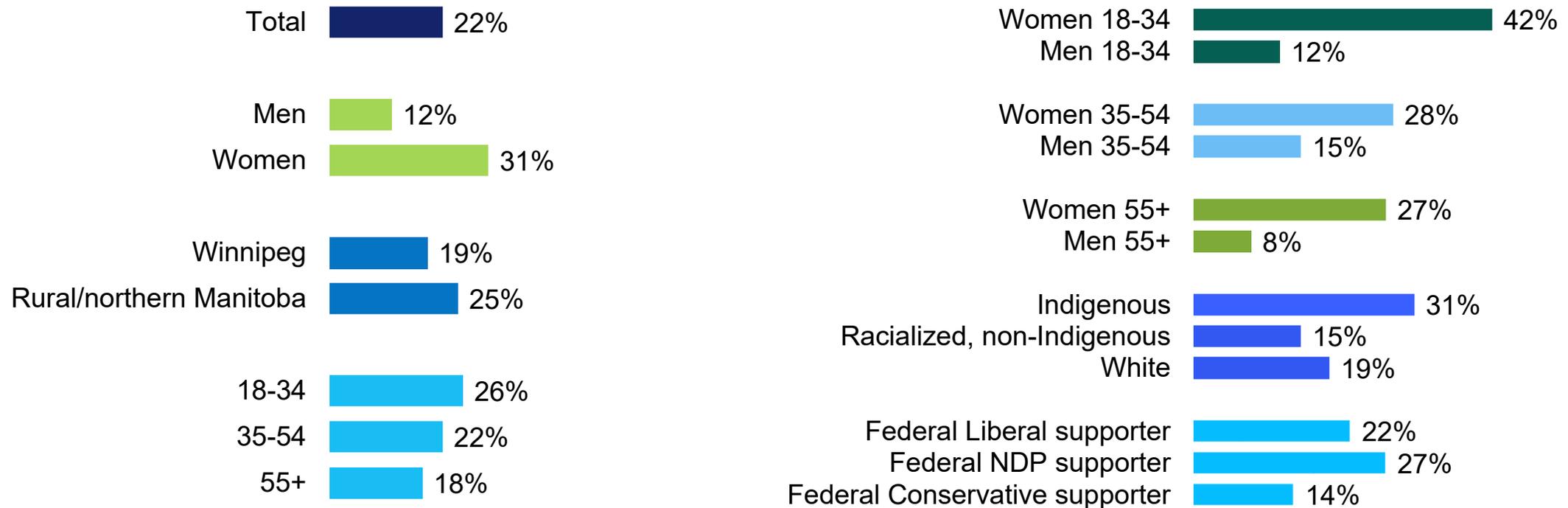
One in five believe there is a possibility of the U.S. invading Canada in the next two years



FP2. How likely do you think it is that the U.S. will use its military to invade Canada within the next two years? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

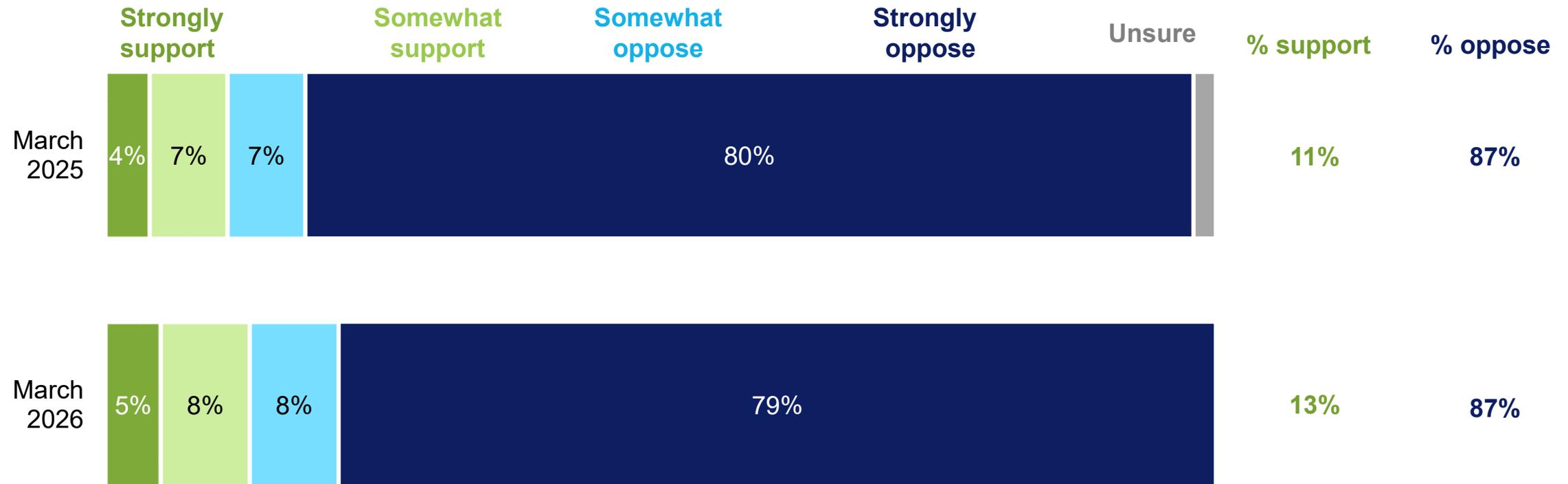
Women – especially those under 35 – are most likely to anticipate a U.S. invasion

% who think a U.S. invasion is very/somewhat likely



FP2. How likely do you think it is that the U.S. will use its military to invade Canada within the next two years? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

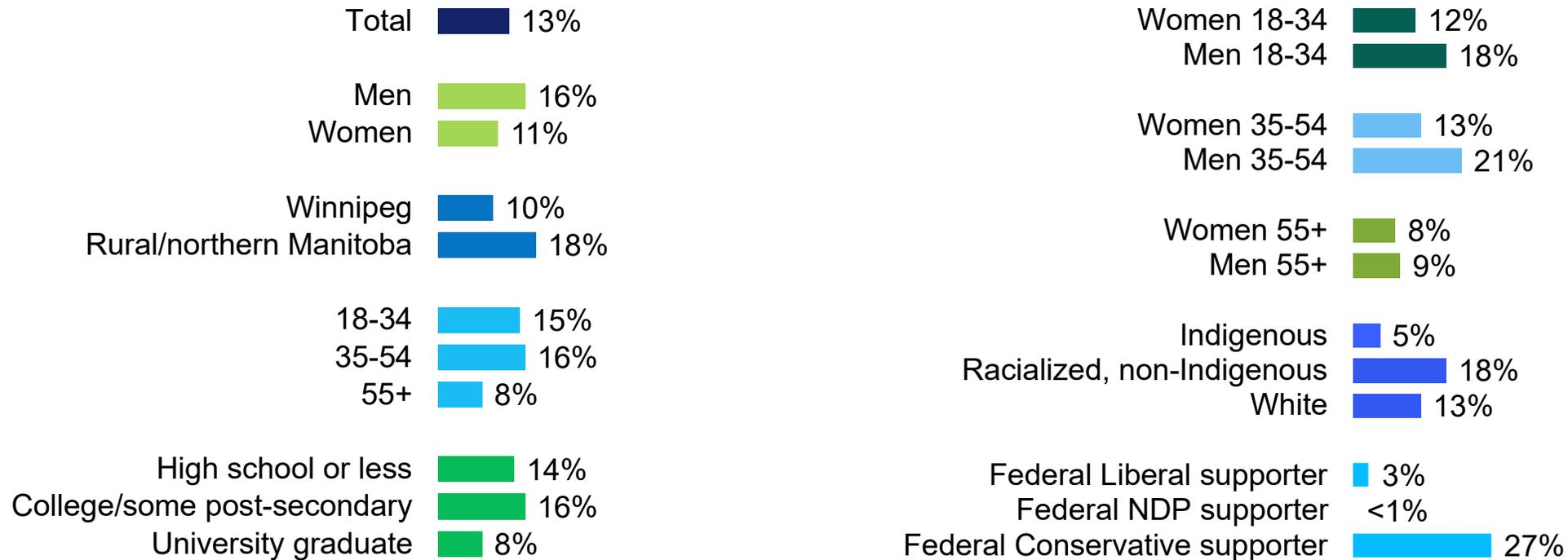
The vast majority of Manitobans continue to strongly oppose Canada joining the U.S.



FP1. Do you support or oppose Canada becoming part of the United States? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

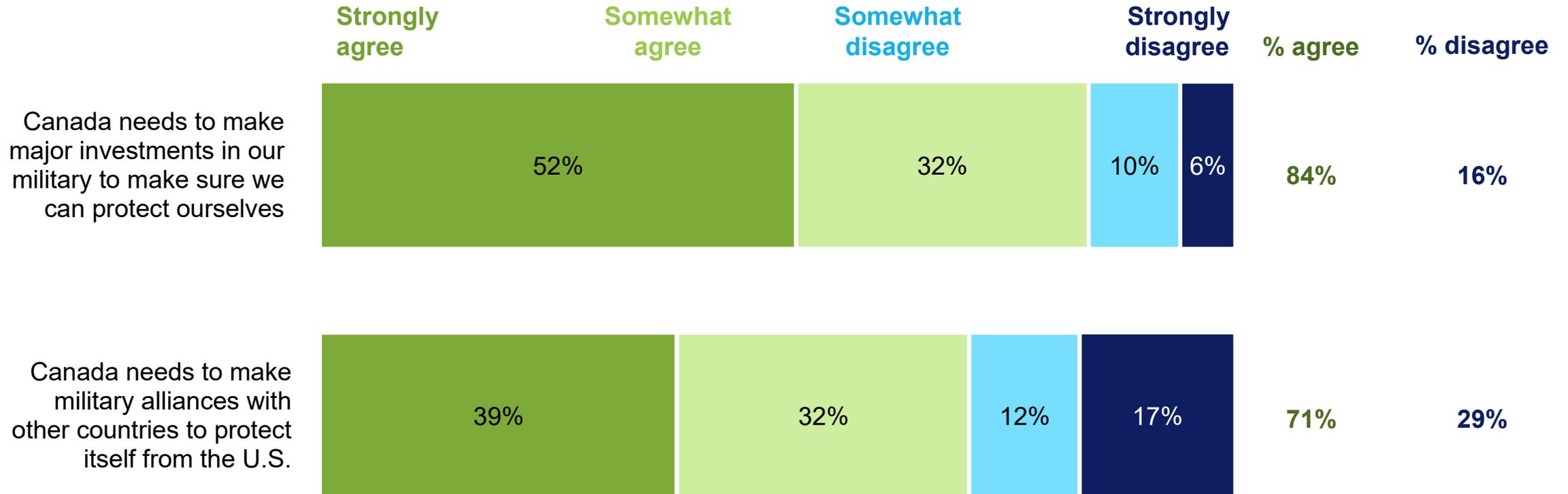
Support for joining the U.S. still higher among Conservatives, those under 55

% who strongly/somewhat support joining the U.S.



FP1. Do you support or oppose Canada becoming part of the United States? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

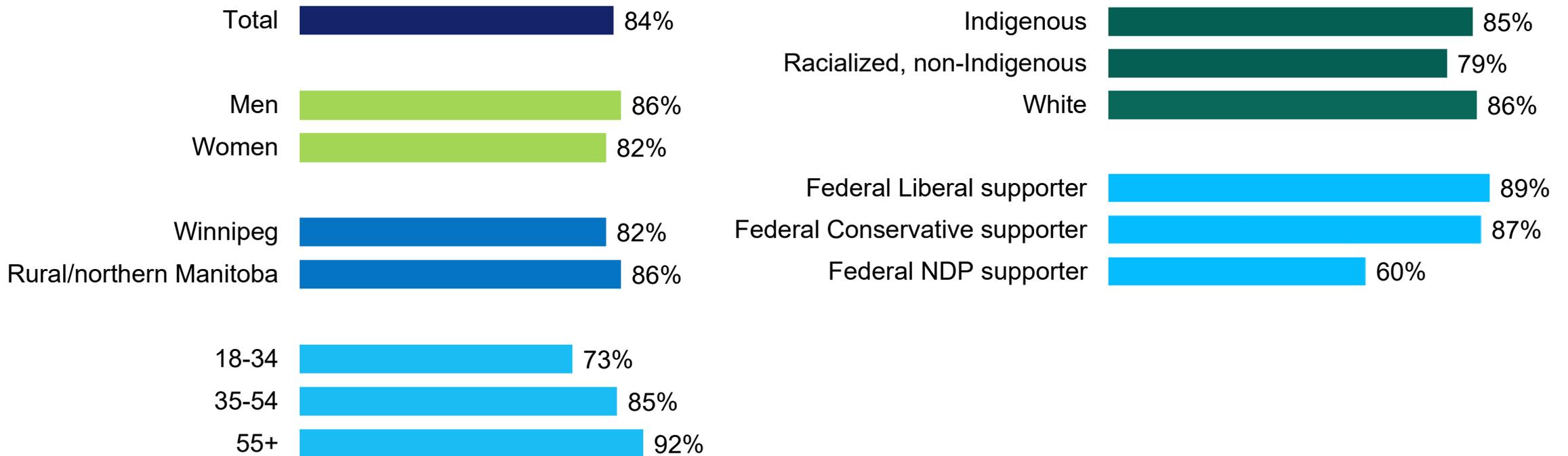
Strong majorities support military investments, building alliances with other countries



FP3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

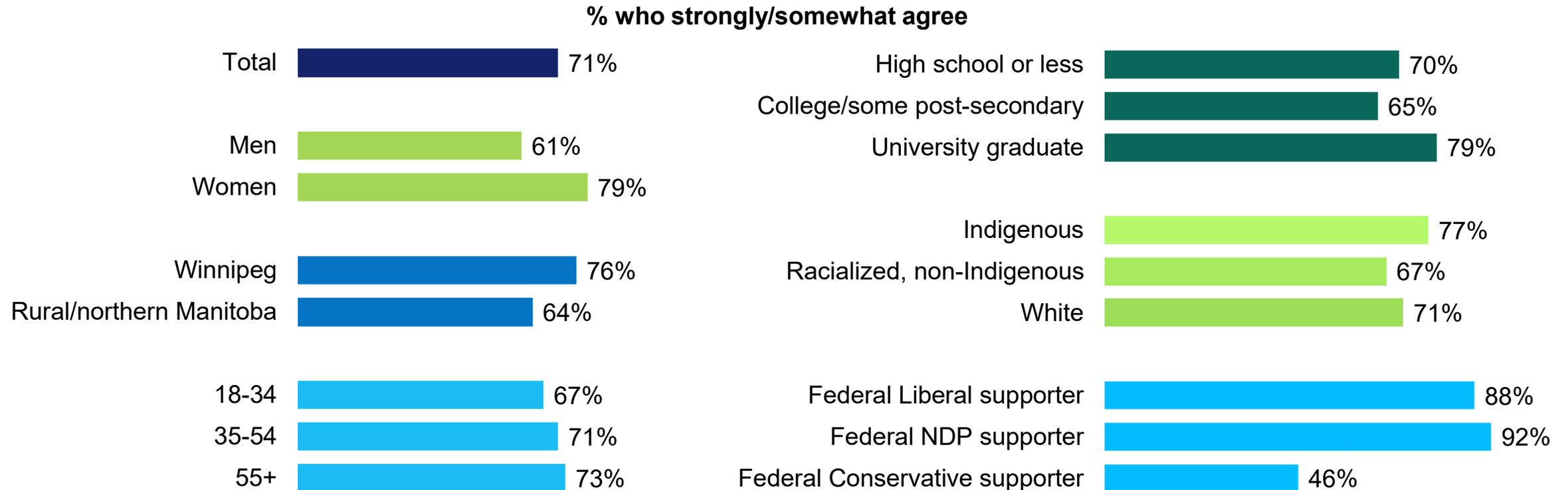
Younger Manitobans are less likely to back military investments to protect Canada

% who strongly/somewhat agree



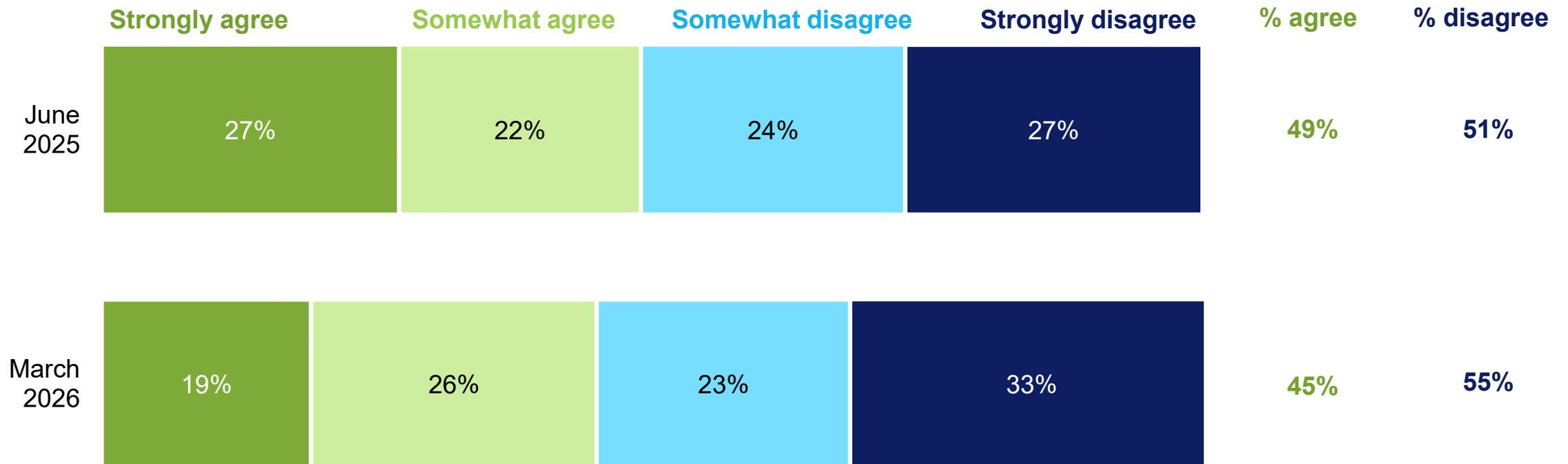
FP3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **Canada needs to make major investments in our military to make sure we can protect ourselves** (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

Conservative supporters are much less likely to support alliances beyond the U.S.



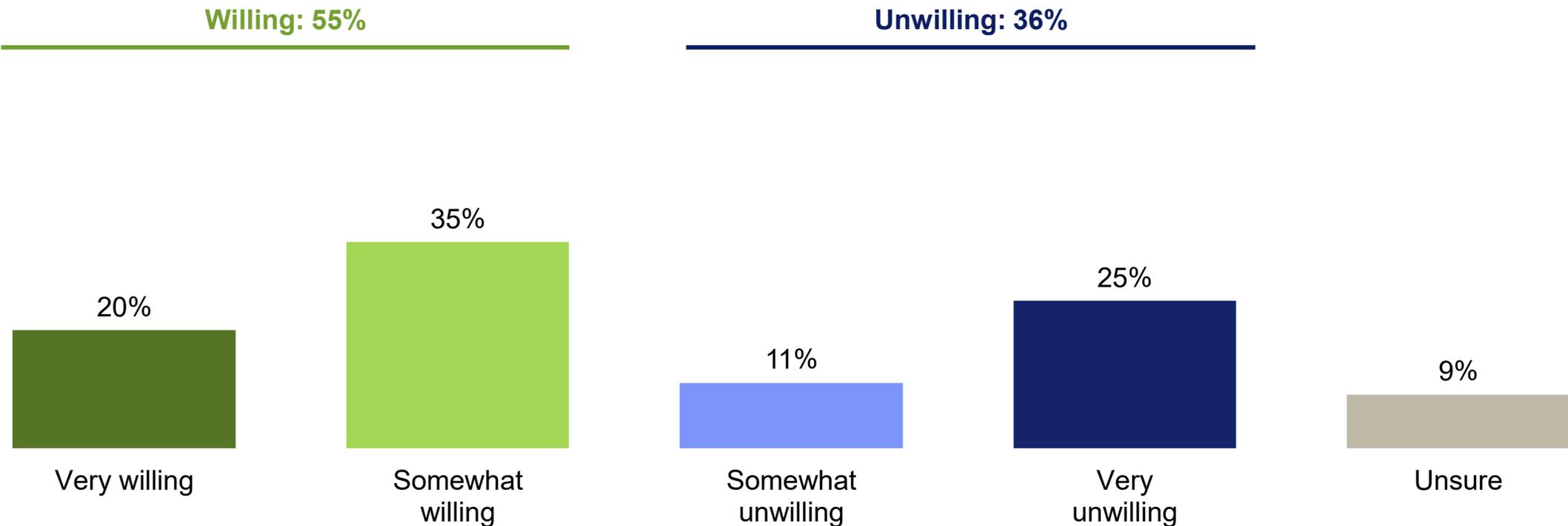
FP3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **Canada needs to make military alliances with other countries to protect itself from the U.S.** (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

Nearly one-half continue to agree Canada as we know it will not exist in five years



FP3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements: **I'm concerned Canada as we know it won't exist in five years.** (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

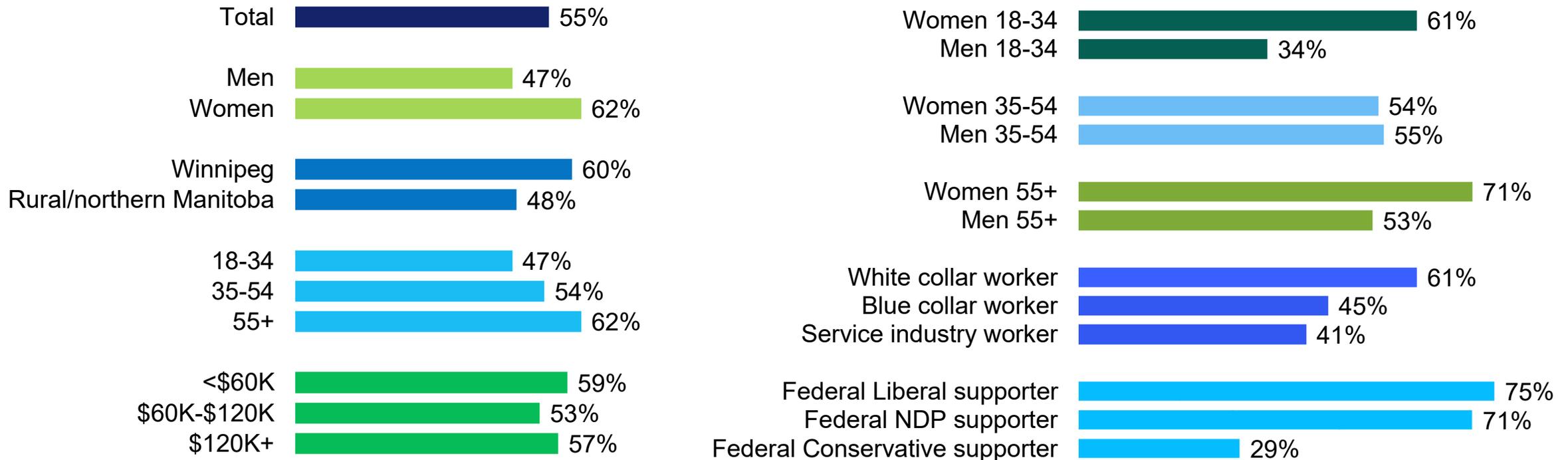
Slightly more than one-half are willing to endure economic shocks as part of transition from U.S.



FP4. How willing are you, if at all, do accept some economic pain (higher prices, job losses, etc.) if Canada deliberately reduces its trading relationship with the United States? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

Conservative voters are much less willing to deal with negative economic circumstances

% very/somewhat willing to accept economic difficulty



FP4. How willing are you, if at all, do accept some economic pain (higher prices, job losses, etc.) if Canada deliberately reduces its trading relationship with the United States? (Base: All respondents, N=1,000)

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