LOCAL NEWS AND VOTING STUDY

Report

July, 2025



PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

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Methodology

A sample of n= 1000 Canadians residents 18 years of age and older have been surveyed online.

- Small communities – less than 10,000 people (n=250)
- Medium communities – 10,000 to less than 100,000 people (n=250)
- Large communities – 100,000+ people (n=500)

The survey was fielded between July 9th and July 18th, 2025.

Quotas and weighting were used to ensure the sample was representative of the surveyed population by:

Age

Gender

Region

Sampling quotas and weighting were designed to match the latest Statistics Canada Census figures (2021).

The precision of online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case the results are considered accurate to within +/- 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had all Canadian adults been surveyed.



01
KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings

1) 70% of Canadians said **more local news would have made them better informed** about the election, and 56% say that greater availability of local news may have impacted their vote.
2) 63%of those in local news-deprived communities were **unfamiliar with local candidates' views** (vs. 35 percent in areas with local news); moreover, 53% of those in local news-deprived communities **weren't able to find information about the local candidates** in their electoral district through trusted media sources.
3) 57% of Canadians said they **didn't have enough information or could have used more information from the media**, to make an informed choice.
4) Only 19% of voters voted the way they did primarily based on the local candidates, compared to 49% who voted for the party and 32% for the leader. Notably, three in four (74%) Canadians believe **too much attention is placed on party leaders and not enough on local candidates** and issues.
5) Fourteen percent of voters cited **Facebook as a main source of information** driving their voting intention – this despite news stories not being shareable on the platform.
6) **34% of those living in communities without local news say they didn't vote**; only 22% of those living in communities with local news voted – suggesting a link between local news availability and efficacy.

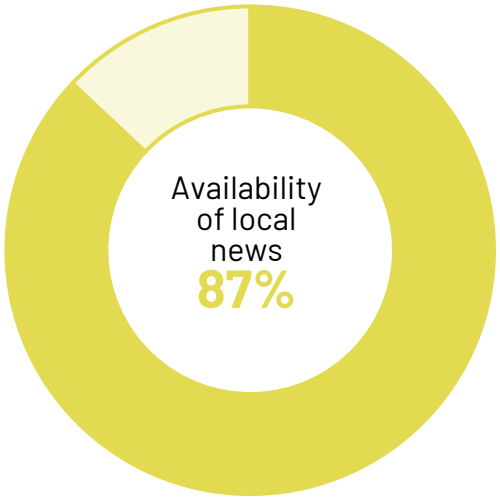


02
DETAILED FINDINGS

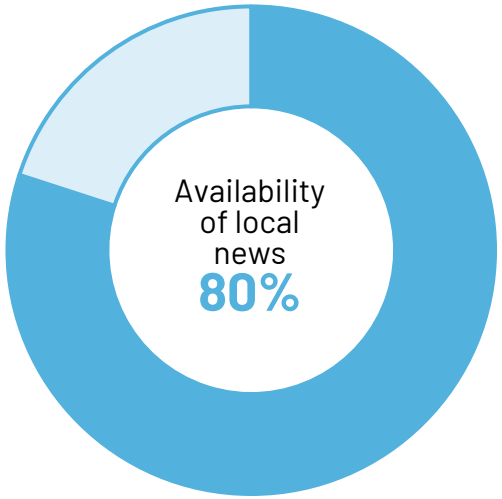
Availability of Local News in Community

Local news was widely available in large communities (93%), but less accessible in smaller centres (84% in medium and just 80% in small communities).

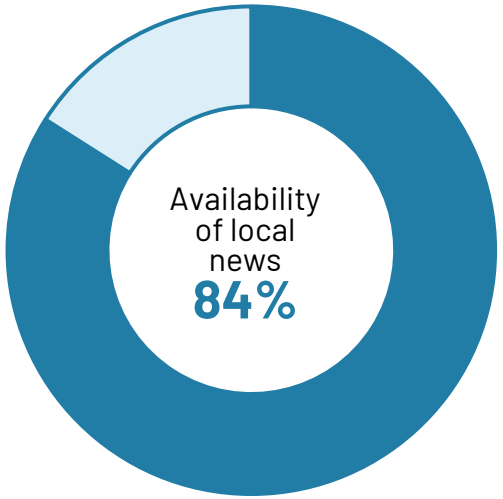
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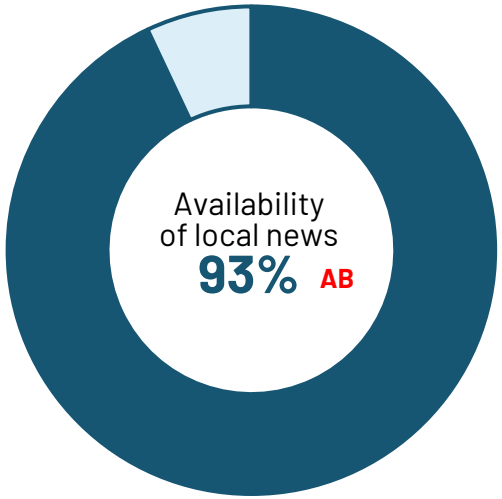
SMALL-SIZED COMMUNITY (A)



MEDIUM-SIZED COMMUNITY (B)



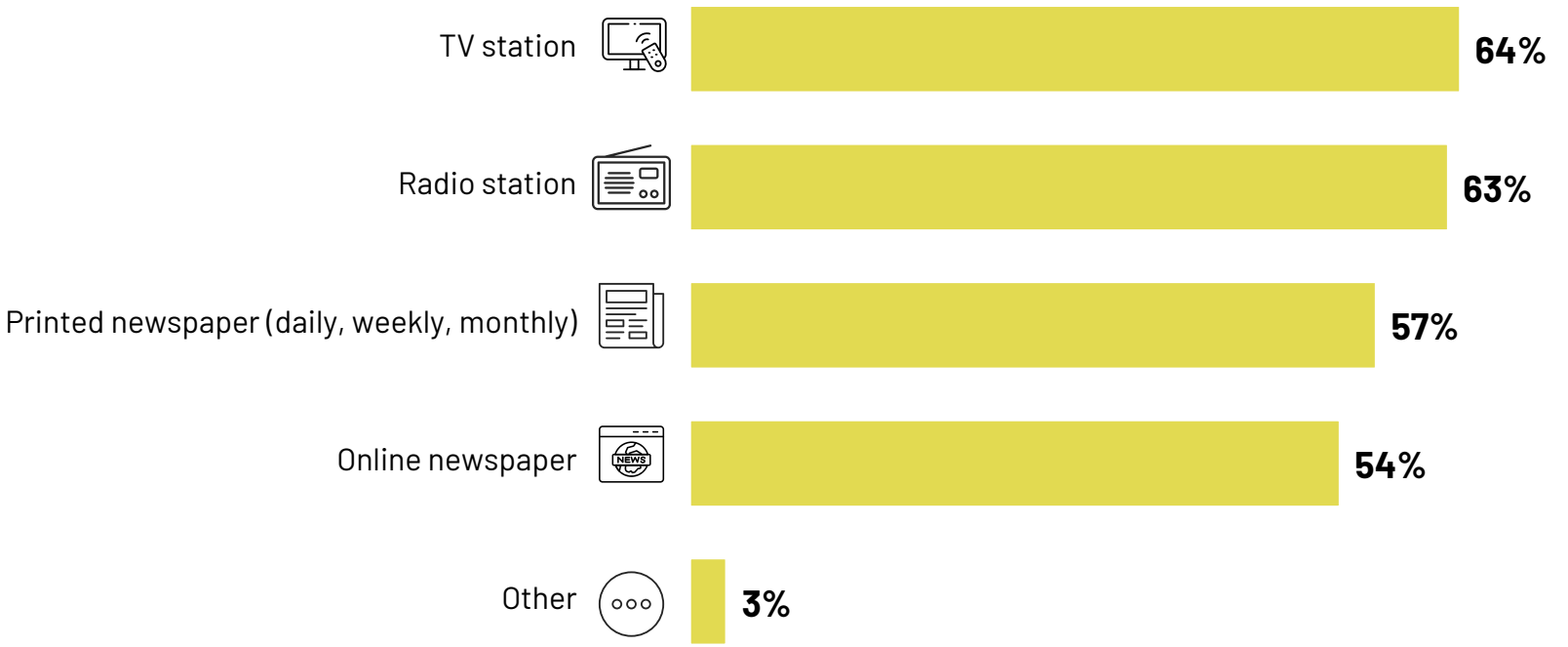
LARGE-SIZED COMMUNITY (C)



Base: All respondents (n=1000), Small-sized community (n=250), Medium-sized community (n=250), Large-sized community (n=500)
Q10. Is there local news available in your area?

Local Media Sources in Your Area (among those with a source)

Among those with local media sources, traditional TV and radio sources remained highly available across the board, however TV station plays a more significant role in large sized communities (75%) as opposed to medium (58%) or small (46%) while radio stations have a relatively even distribution. Large communities enjoyed stronger digital infrastructure with 63% reporting access to online newspapers, compared to 54% in small and 51% in medium areas.

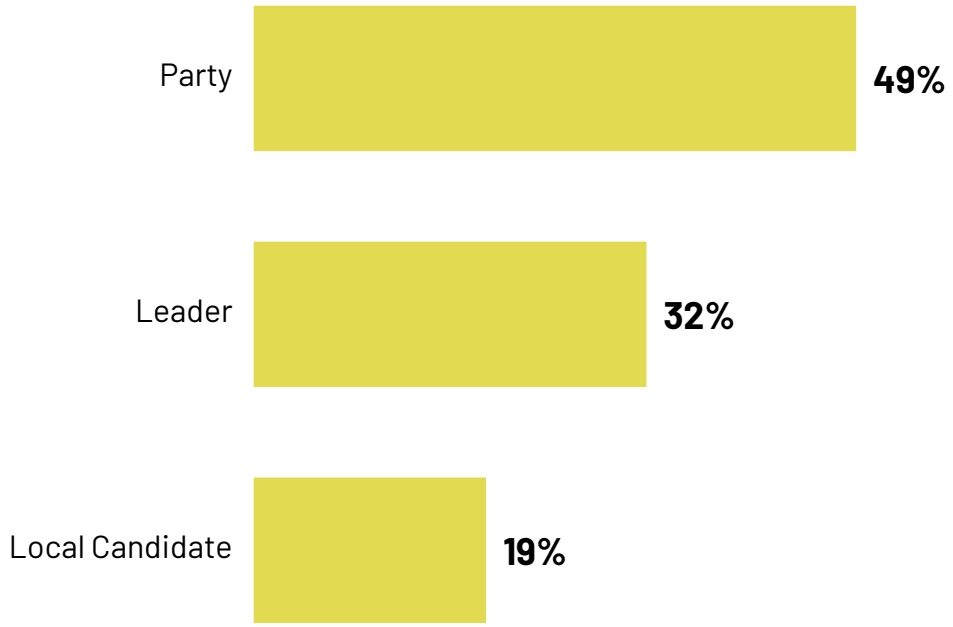


	Small-sized community **(A)** (n=196)	Medium-sized community **(B)** (n=219)	Large-sized community **(C)** (n=463)
TV station	46%	58% A	75% AB
Radio station	57%	64%	66%
Printed newspaper (daily, weekly, monthly)	58%	55%	57%
Online newspaper	38%	51% A	63% AB
Other	3%	5%	2%

Base: All respondents (n=878)
Q11. What sources of local media are available in your area?

Primary Motivation Behind Vote

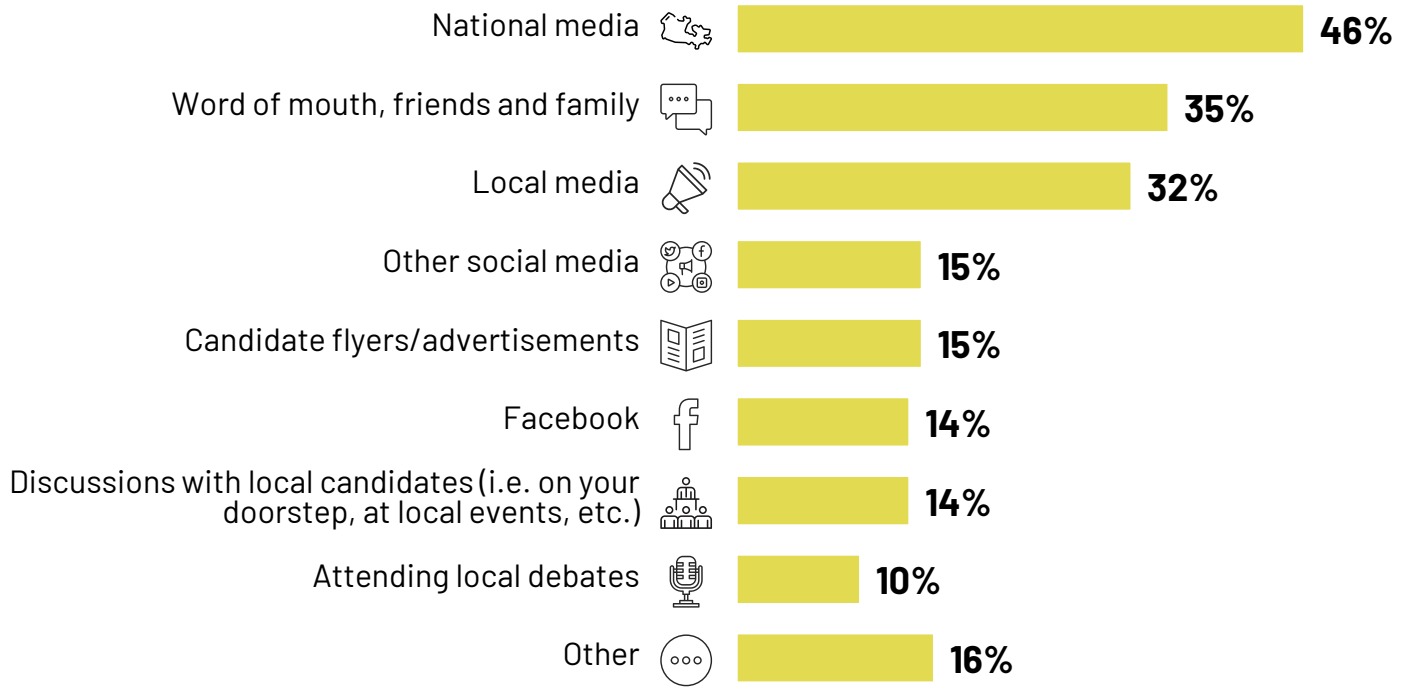
Across Canada, nearly half (49%) of voters say they voted the way they did because they liked the party the best, while 32% were motivated primarily by the leader. This leaves just 19% voting specifically because of their local preferred candidate.



Base: Those who voted in the recent federal election held on April 28 (n=801)
Q4. Did you vote primarily for the party, the leader or the local candidate?

Top Sources Influencing Vote Decision

National media was the top influence for all three communities, especially for large communities (51%). Top sources for large communities also includes word of mouth (39%) and local media (37%). Small communities leaned more heavily on Facebook (18%) and other sources (19%). Those in small communities were least likely to say that local media contributed to their vote decision making (just 26%).

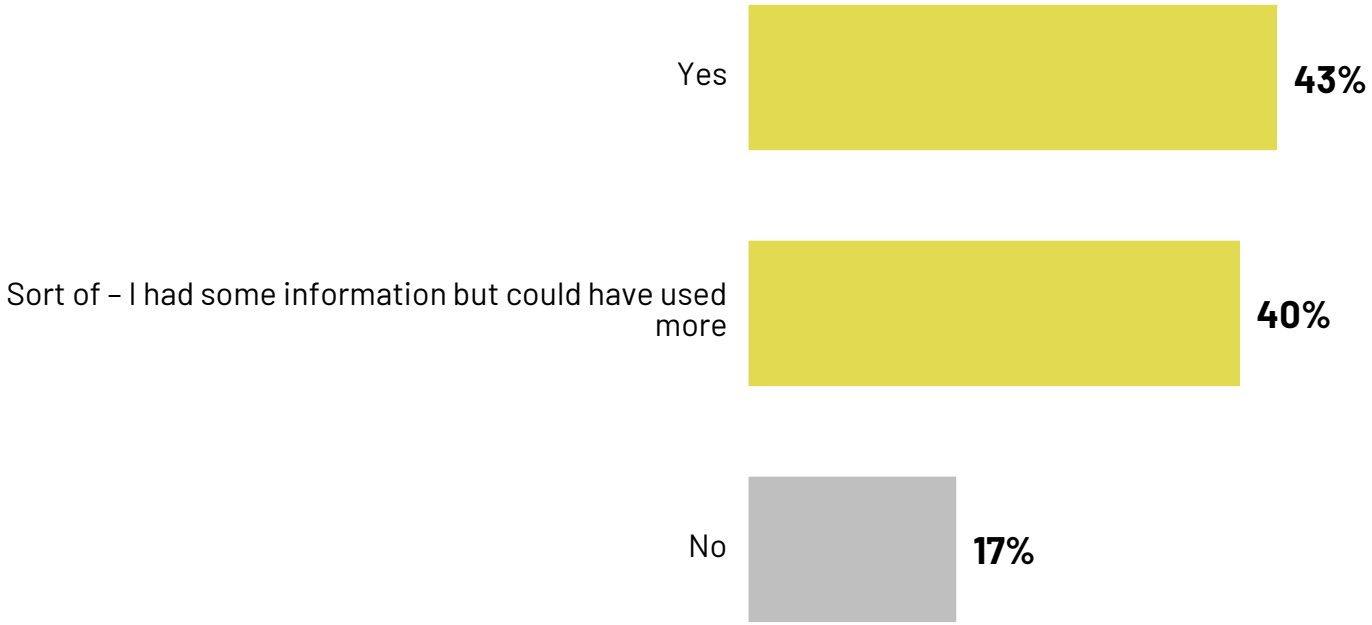


Small-sized community **(A)** (n=214)	Medium-sized community **(B)** (n=189)	Large-sized community **(C)** (n=398)
39%	42%	51% AB
31%	32%	39%
26%	29%	37% A
6%	20% A	19% A
17%	10%	16%
18%	17%	11%
12%	15%	14%
8%	13%	8%
19%	18%	13%

Base: Those who voted in the recent federal election held on April 28 (n=801)
Q5. What sources of information most contributed to your vote decision-making? Please choose up to 3.

Media Support for Informed Choice

Only 43% of Canadians say they received enough information from the media to make an informed choice about who to vote for. The remainder said they had some information but not enough (40%) or felt they didn't have enough at all (17%). Those in communities without a source of local news were significantly more likely to say they didn't have enough information to make an informed choice.

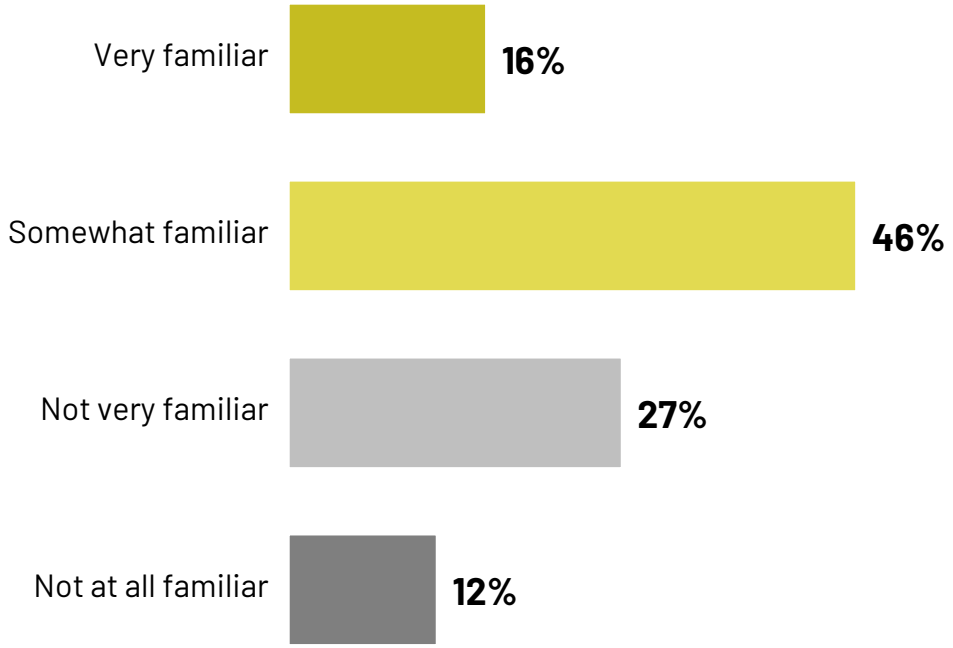


	Local News Available	
	Yes (n=878) [A]	No (n=122) [B]
Yes	44%	37%
Sort of – I had some information but could have used more	41%	30%
No	15%	33%[A]

Base: All respondents (n=1000)
Q6. Did you feel that the media provided you with enough information to help you make an informed choice?

Familiarity with Local Candidates

Among respondents with access to local news, 65% were familiar with local candidates, suggesting that local media exposure significantly boosts voter awareness. In stark contrast, only 37% of those without local news access reported similar levels of familiarity—revealing a notable 28-point gap in candidate knowledge, which appears linked to local media availability.



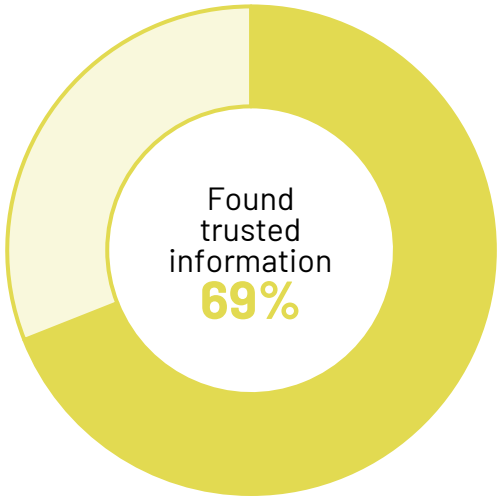
	Local News Available	
	Yes (n=878) [A]	No (n=122) [B]
Familiar T2B 62%	17%	7%
	65%B	37%
	48%	30%
Not Familiar B2B 38%	35%	37%
	35%	63%A
	25%	26%

Base: All respondents (n=1000)
Q7. How familiar were you with the views and positions of the local candidates running for Member of Parliament in your electoral district?

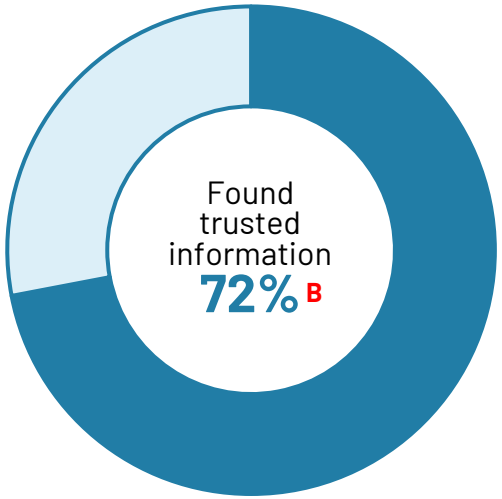
Access to Local Candidate Information via Trusted Media

Across Canada, 69% of respondents found trusted media sources for information on local candidates. Notably, those with access to local media reported higher success (72%) in finding trustworthy information versus just 47% among those without local media access—highlighting a nearly 25-point gap in outcomes.

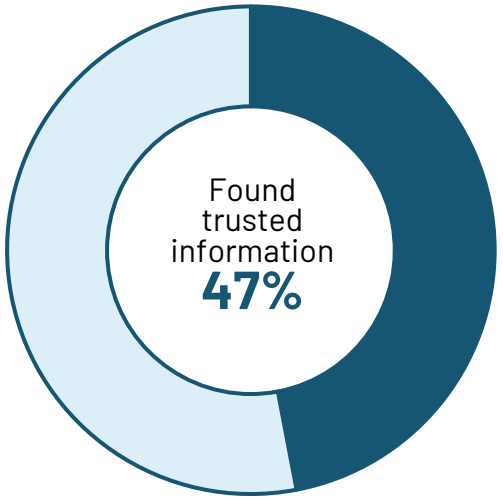
TOTAL



Yes – Access to Local Media [A]



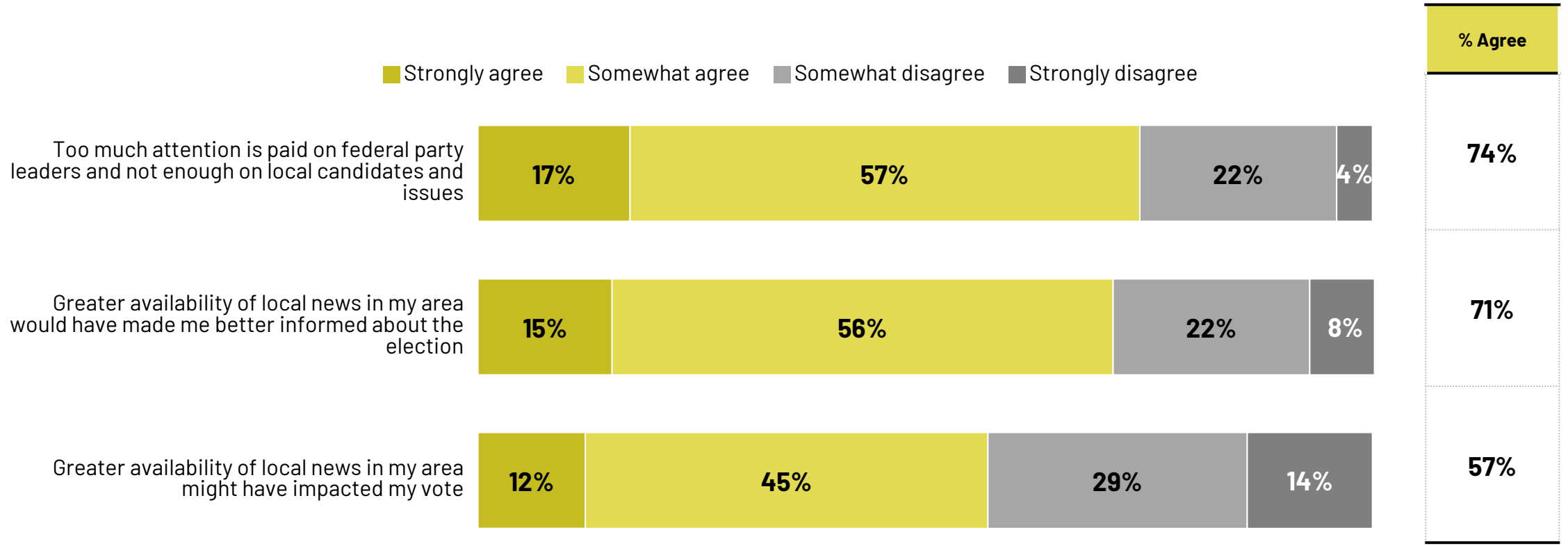
No – Access to Local Media [B]



Base: All respondents (n=1000), Small-sized community (n=250), Medium-sized community (n=250), Large-sized community (n=500)
Q8. Were you able to find information about the local candidates running for Member of Parliament in your electoral district through trusted media sources?

Agreement with Key Electoral Statements

A strong majority of Canadians (74%) believes that too much attention is paid on federal party leaders, and not enough on local candidates an issues. In fact, seven in ten (70%) agree that greater availability of local news in their area would have made them better informed about the election. Taking it a step further, 56% say greater availability of local news might have impacted their vote.



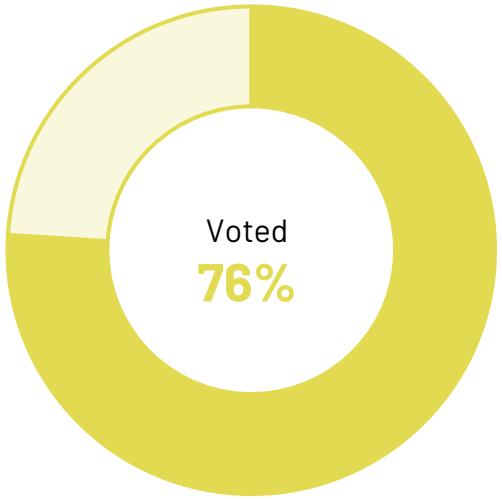
Base: All respondents (n=1000)
Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



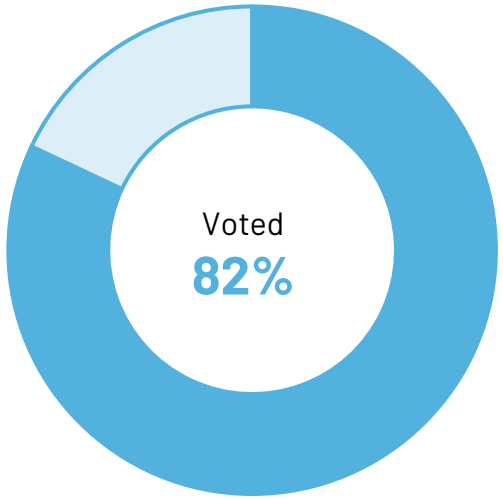
03
APPENDIX

Recalled Participation in the April 28 Federal Election

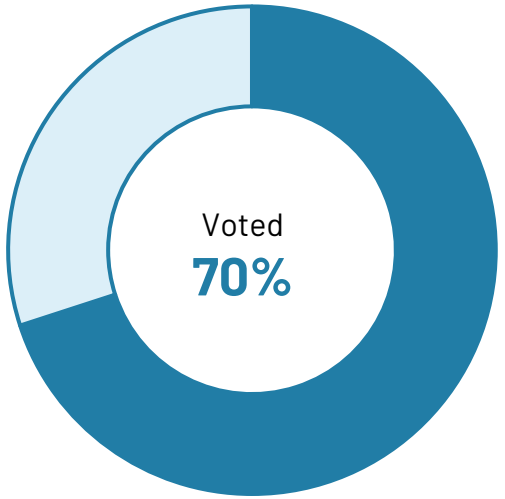
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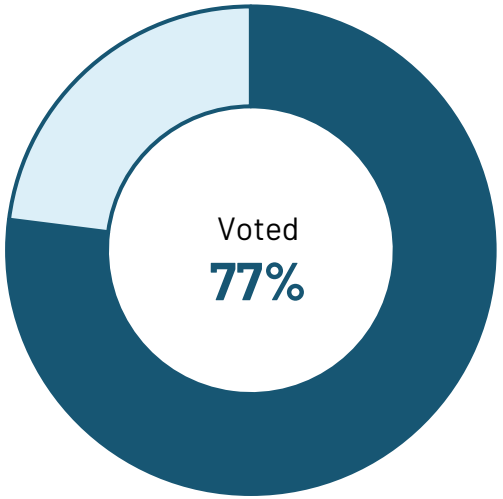
SMALL-SIZED COMMUNITY (A)



MEDIUM-SIZED COMMUNITY (B)



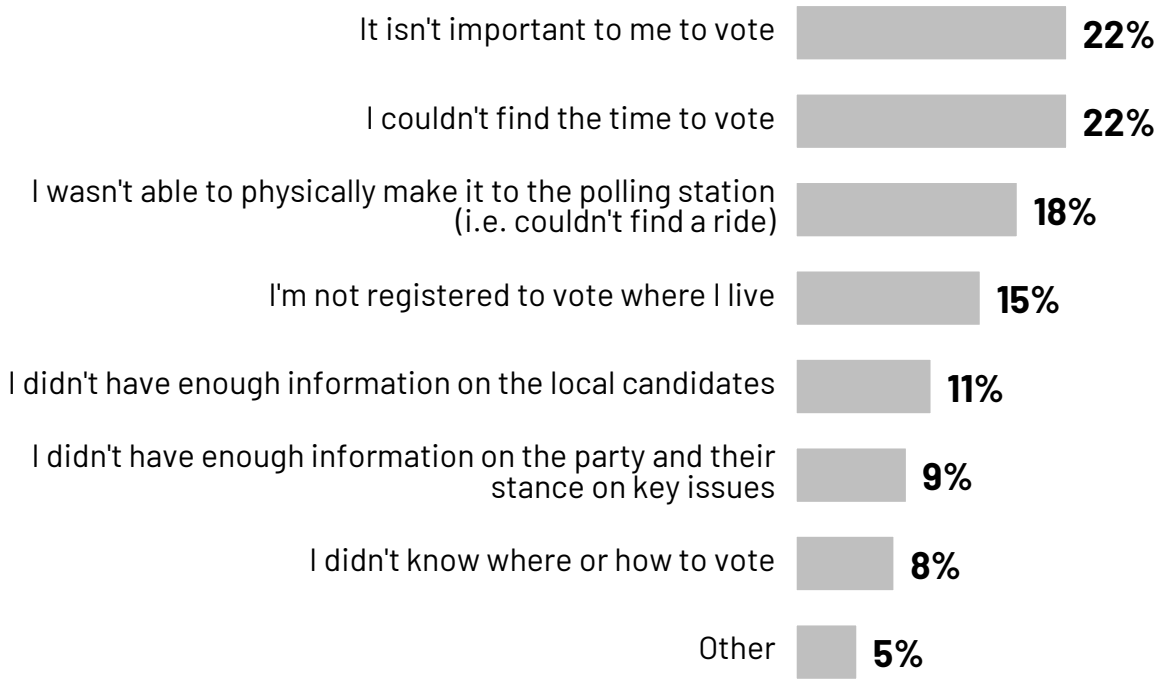
LARGE-SIZED COMMUNITY (C)



Base: All respondents (n=1000), Small-sized community (n=250), Medium-sized community (n=250), Large-sized community (n=500)
Q2. Sometimes things come up and people aren't able to vote in elections. Did you vote in the recent federal election held on April 28?

Reasons for Not Voting

One in ten non-voters say they didn't have enough information on the local candidates, and 9% say they didn't have enough information on the party and their stance on key issues. While lack of information isn't the leading force of voter apathy, it is a contributing factor to participation rates.

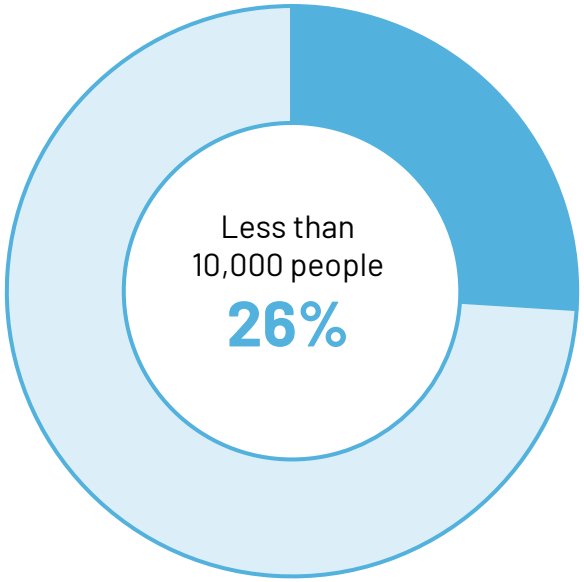


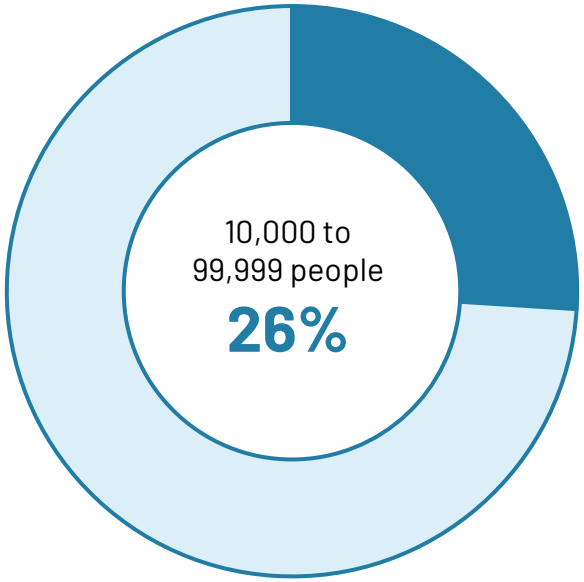
Small-sized community **(A)** (n=36)	Medium-sized community **(B)** (n=61)	Large-sized community **(C)** (n=102)
26%	17%	24%
17%	33%	17%
14%	24%	16%
13%	15%	15%
4%	10%	14%
6%	4%	13%
11%	9%	6%
11%	2%	4%

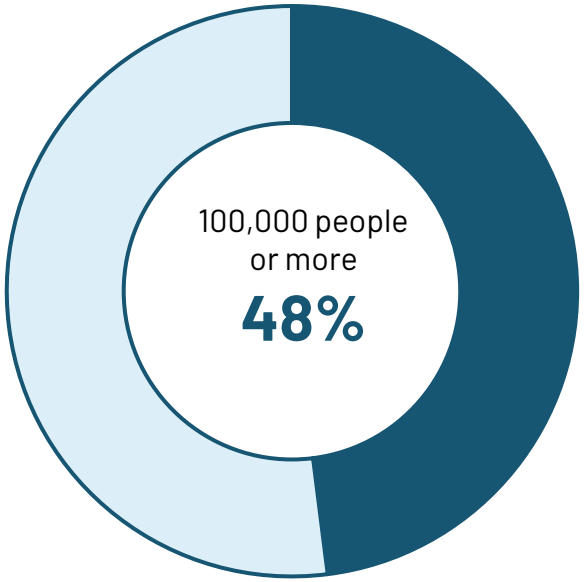
Base: Those who didn't vote in the recent federal election held on April 28 (n=199)
Q3. Why didn't you vote in the election? Please choose all that apply?

Community Size

Almost half of respondents (48%) live in large communities (100,000+ residents), making up the largest share of the sample. Small and medium communities each account for 26% of respondents, providing balanced input for comparative insights.





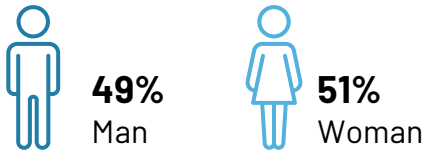


Base: All respondents Small-sized community (n=250), Medium-sized community (n=250), Large-sized community (n=500)
Q1. What is the population of the city, town, village or community in which you live?

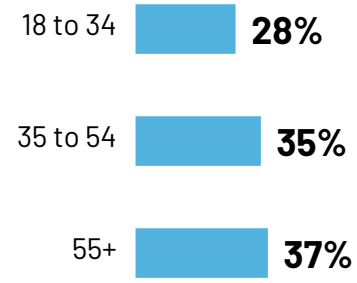
Demographics

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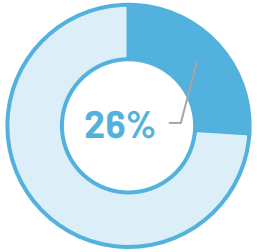
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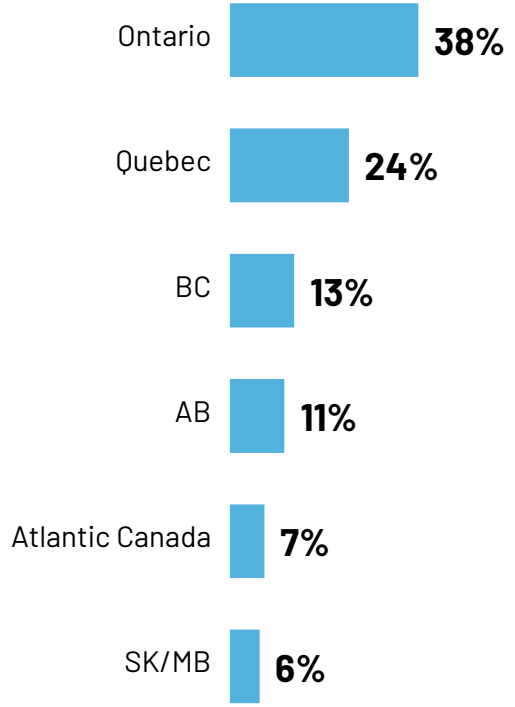
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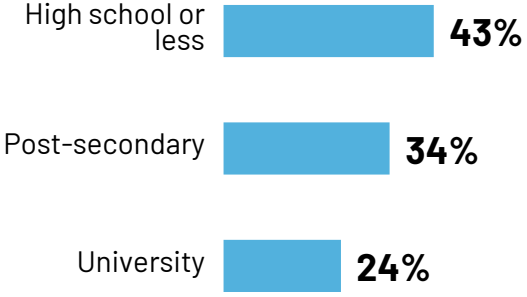
CHILDREN



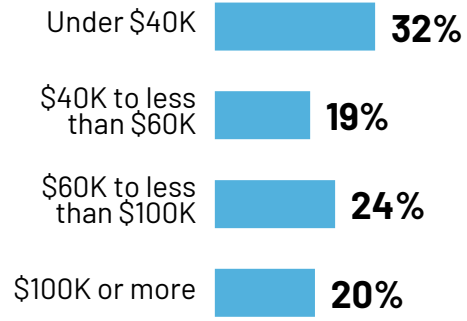
PROVINCE



EDUCATION



INCOME



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

THANK YOU



NAME:
Sean Simpson

DETAILS:
Sean.Simpson@ipsos.com

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