

The Corporation of the City of Cambridge

50 Dickson Street, P.O. Box 669
Cambridge ON N1R 5W8
(519) 740-4517



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
AND COUNCIL

Delivered by hand and electronic mail.

August 15, 2024

Dear Mayors, CAOs, Provincial, and Federal Party Leaders,

Re: Mental Health and Addictions Crisis

I do not think it is an overstatement: the current mental health and addictions crisis is the greatest calamity of our time. This crisis has leached into the very fabric of our lives – it has turned our streets into the theatre of mental crises and places for open drug use, it has affected economic development on a micro and macro scale, and most importantly, the negative impact to the health and wellness of our community members of all ages will be felt for generations.

For about three decades, we have debated and engaged in discourse on this topic with very little to show for it. The situation has never been worse. Actions taken to this point have only exacerbated the crisis. Daily, my office is inundated with calls and emails regarding the lack of mental health and addiction services in our community.

When I became mayor, one of the goals I set out to accomplish was to make a difference where it counted, to change the ever-increasing numbers of people in the throes of addiction and mental health crises; or at the very least stabilize the numbers. We have been spinning in circles, not achieving anything while we continue to talk at people. I felt I knew what needed to be done but I wanted to hear from the people who live with this every day. As the leader of my community, I realized I needed to take it to the people and then listen carefully, so I decided to do a poll. I believe this poll captures what every government needs to know when allocating funds, which is how do we help in the best way possible. If we as leaders do this, we can change the catastrophic future of our current path

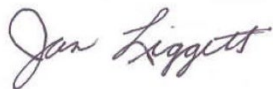
Last year, I was presented with the opportunity to begin work on an Ontario-wide study to determine how Ontarians feel about the current state of mental health and addictions

services. The study, conducted by Campaign Research, indicates that Ontarians want to see this crisis addressed. Ontarians overwhelmingly support the idea of a dedicated revenue stream to solve the problem and have expressed a desire for the provincial government to institute legislative changes to allow families and physicians to provide mental health and addiction treatment to involuntary patients. I attach herewith the condensed findings for your review.

I am comforted to see that across regional and political lines and market segments Ontarians want to see this crisis solved.

I encourage you to share the results of this study with your network. I am eager to discuss this matter further and work together towards a solution for this is happening on our collective watch. Please feel free to reach out to my Executive Assistant, Ana Djukic, by email at djukica@cambridge.ca, should you wish to obtain a full copy of the results or schedule a time for us to speak.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jan Liggett". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Jan Liggett
Mayor



MARKET RESEARCH & BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

WHAT'S YOUR CHALLENGE? ?

Aug 1st, 2024

**Public Opinion Research
City of Cambridge
Mental Health and Addictions
1 August 2024**



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METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

Mental Health and Addictions

Public Opinion Research

Quantitative Market Research - Ontario



This study was conducted from July 30th 2024 to July 31st 2024, among a sample of 2027 respondents who are residents of Ontario and are members of Maru Blue's online panel. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of a similar size would have a margin of error of +/- 2%, 19 times out of 20.

Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

Where & How is the Study Conducted?

The study included respondents from an online panel of eligible voters in Ontario, 18 years old and older. The sample is weighted to regional, age and gender demographics, as per Statistics Canada.

STATS TESTING

-  Significantly higher than Ontario
-  Significantly lower than Ontario

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Awareness of existing mental health and addiction services in the community

67% of Ontario adults were aware of existing mental health and addiction services in their community while 33% said they were “not very aware” or “not at all aware”. Awareness of these services was somewhat higher with younger male respondents (under 35 years of age) and somewhat higher with females under 55 years of age. Interestingly, respondents who resided outside the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) were more aware of existing mental health and addiction services compared to residents in the GTHA. [Slides 13-14](#)

Importance of accessible and timely mental health and addiction services

Nearly all Ontario adults believed it was “important” to have accessible and timely mental health and addiction services in their community. Six out of 10 respondents believed it was “very important”. Females were much stronger in their views that it was “very important”. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario. [Slides 15-16](#)

Are current mental health and addiction services adequate

22% of respondents believed that current mental health and addiction services were adequate while 44% disagreed. 34% of the respondents were “unsure”. Females were more of the view that these services were inadequate. Respondents were consistent across Ontario. [Slides 17-18](#)

Who has accessed mental health or addiction services

1 out of 3 Ontario adults said that they had personally accessed mental health or addiction services. Nearly half of all respondents under 35 years of age said that they had personally accessed these services. [Slides 19-20](#)

6 out of 10 respondents said they knew someone who had accessed either mental health or addiction services. Two-thirds of those under 35 years of age said they knew someone who had accessed these services. [Slides 21-22](#)

Quality of mental health and addiction services that are currently available

Respondents were split on the quality of the mental health and addiction services available. 33% of the respondents said “excellent” or “good” while 44% said “fair” or “poor” and 24% said they were “unsure” (only 16% said “poor”). Younger respondents were more positive about the quality of services compared to older respondents. Female respondents who were somewhat more negative about the quality compared to males. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across Ontario. [Slides 23-24](#)

Is a lack of government funding seen as the overall problem with mental health and addictions (Forced Choice)

33% of respondents believed the overall problem with mental health and addiction was not necessarily a lack of government funding while 45% believed that government needed to spend much more on mental health and addiction services to address the ever-growing problem. Females were much more of the view that government needed to spend much more money on mental health and addiction services. [Slide 25-26](#)

Support/ oppose government creating a dedicated stream of money to fund mental health and addiction services

Four out of 5 respondents supported the government of Ontario creating a dedicated a stream of money to specifically fund mental health and addiction services. Despite strong support from males, females were even more supportive of a creating a dedicated stream of money to fund these services. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario. [Slides 27-28](#)

Support/ oppose a new tax to fund mental health and addiction services

Respondents were more split on whether the government should create a new tax to fund mental health and addiction services. 40% of respondents supported a new tax to fund these services while 48% were opposed. Respondents who were over 54 years of age were much more opposed to a new tax compared to younger respondents. Respondents residing in more rural areas of Ontario were more opposed to the creation of a new tax to fund these services. [Slides 29-30](#)

Willingness to pay additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services

50% of respondents were not willing to pay additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services while 30% said they would. Those over 34 years of age were much more opposed compared to respondents under 35 years of age. Respondents broke out the same way across most regions across Ontario. [Slides 31-32](#)

How much in additional taxes would Ontarian's be willing to pay to support mental health services

33% of respondents were not willing to pay any additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services. Another 34% of respondents were willing to pay between \$0-\$25 per year in new taxes and another 19% were willing to pay between \$25-\$100 in new taxes per year to fund these services. Younger respondents were more willing to pay a new tax compared to older respondents. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario. [Slides 33-34](#)

Perceived effectiveness of a dedicated revenue stream to improve mental health and addiction services

Two to 1, respondents believed a dedicated revenue stream would be effective to improve mental health and addiction services. Younger respondents held this view much more than older respondents. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across Ontario. [Slides 35-36](#)

Mental health and addiction services that should be prioritized with new funding [Slide 37](#)

57% - Youth and adult mental health services

51% - Mental Health Crisis intervention services

37% - Rehabilitation programs and facilities

23% - Community-based support groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous etc.

16% - Inpatient detox facilities

Support/ oppose a political candidate (political party) willing to raise taxes to fund mental health and addiction services

Nearly half of the respondents said they would support a political candidate who was willing to raise taxes to increase mental health/ addiction services while 36% were opposed. Males were slightly more opposed compared to females. Respondents residing in Eastern region (not including the City of Ottawa) were much more opposed (48%) compared to others in Ontario, who were more supportive. [Slides 38-39](#)

Necessity of building new brick-and-mortar facilities for mental health and addiction services

Two to 1, respondents believed that building new facilities for mental health and addiction services was necessary. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario. [Slides 40-41](#)

Barriers faced when trying to access mental health and addiction services [Slide 42](#)

- 54% - Availability of services
- 44% - Cost
- 29% - Quality of services
- 27% - Stigma
- 19% - Lack of information

How government should sustain the funding for mental health and addictions services [Slide 43](#)

- 59% - Reallocate existing funds
- 48% - Public-private partnerships
- 44% - Private donations and grants
- 26% - Increase taxes (to create a dedicated revenue stream for mental health and addiction services)

Agree/ disagree to government partnerships with private organizations to fund mental health and addictions services

Three out of 4 respondents agreed that the government of Ontario should explore partnerships with private organizations to fund mental health and addiction services. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across Ontario. [Slides 44-45](#)

Agree/ disagree that larger corporations should contribute a portion of profits to fund mental health and addiction services

Seven out of 10 respondents agreed that larger corporations should contribute a portion of their profits to fund mental health and addictions. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across Ontario. [Slides 46-47](#)

Agree/ disagree that laws in Ontario need to change for involuntary patients

Two-thirds of respondents agreed that Ontario's laws needed to change to allow families and physicians to provide mental health and addiction treatment to involuntary patients. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across Ontario. [Slides 48-49](#)

Agree/ disagree that "Drug Treatment Courts" should be offered more widely in Ontario

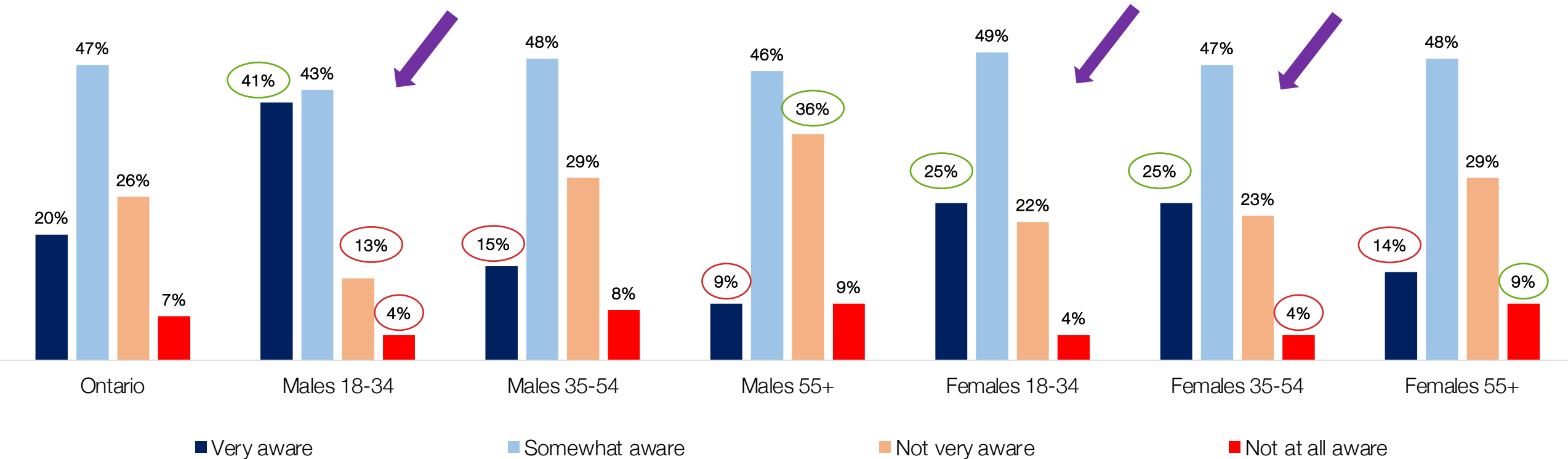
68% of respondents agreed that Drug Treatment Courts should be offered more widely in Ontario. Females were even stronger in their support of Drug Treatment Courts compared to males. Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario. [Slides 50-51](#)

DETAILED FINDINGS

Awareness of existing mental health and addiction services in the community

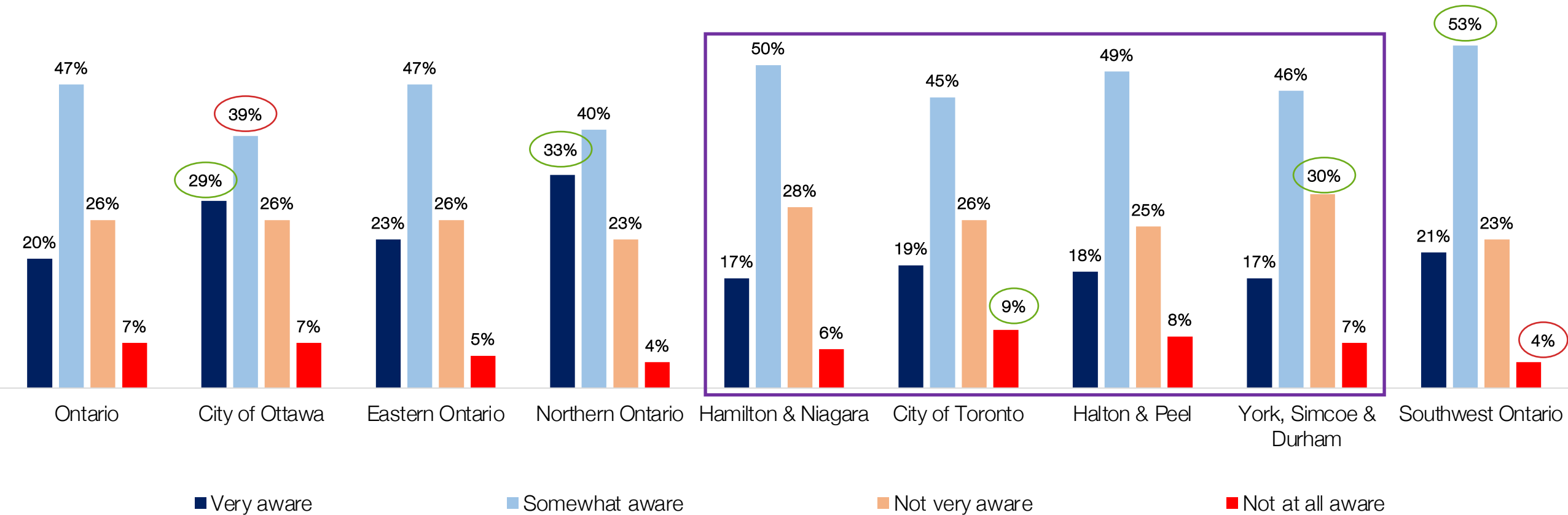
Age and Gender

67% of Ontario adults were “aware” of existing mental health and addiction services in their community while 33% said they were “not very aware” or “not at all aware”. Awareness of these services was somewhat higher among younger male respondents (under 35 years of age) and females (under 55 years of age) compared to older respondents (over 54 years of age).



Awareness of existing mental health and addiction services in the community

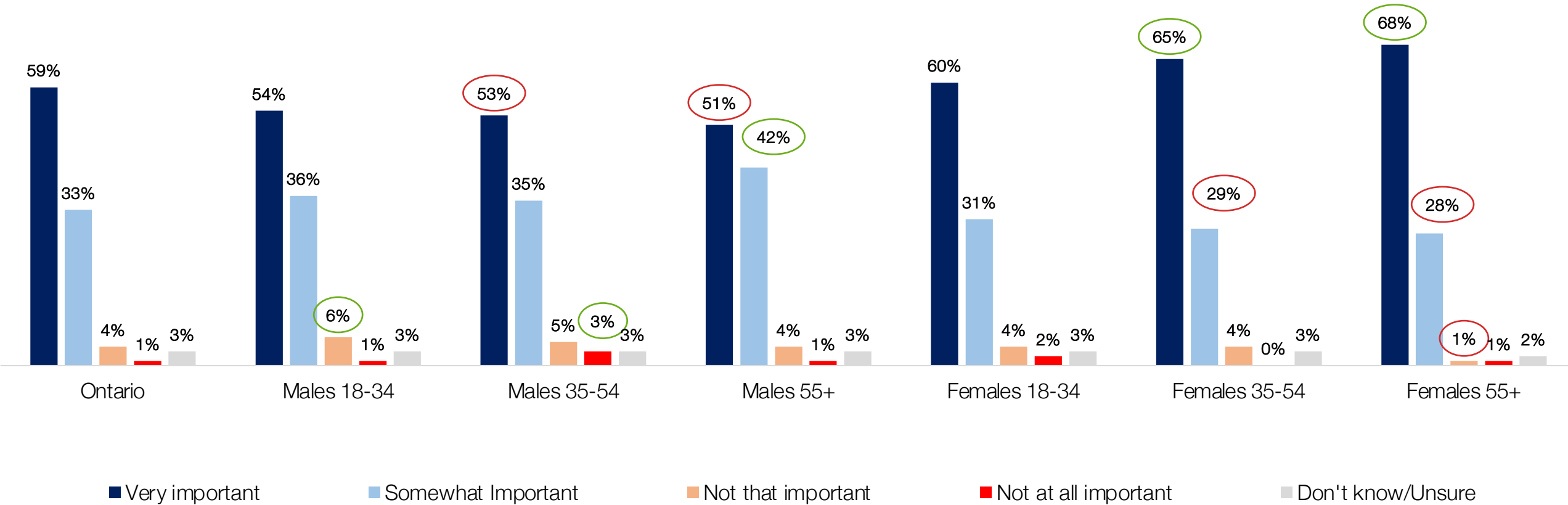
Awareness of existing mental health and addiction services was slightly higher in all the regions outside the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).



Importance of accessible and timely mental health and addiction services

Age and Gender

Nearly all Ontario adults believed it was 'important' to have accessible and timely mental health and addiction services in their community, with six out of 10 respondents indicating it was 'very important'. Females were much stronger in their view that it was “very important” compared to males.

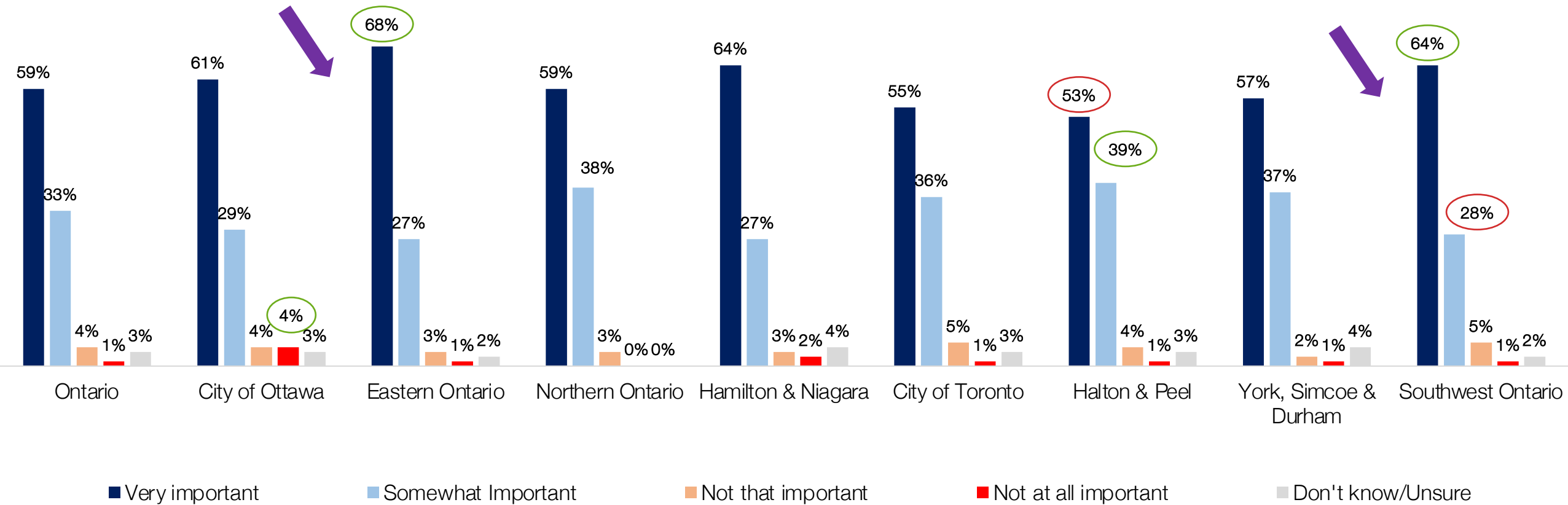


Q2 - How important do you think it is to have accessible and timely mental health and addiction services in your community? Base = 2027

Importance of accessible and timely mental health and addiction services

Regions

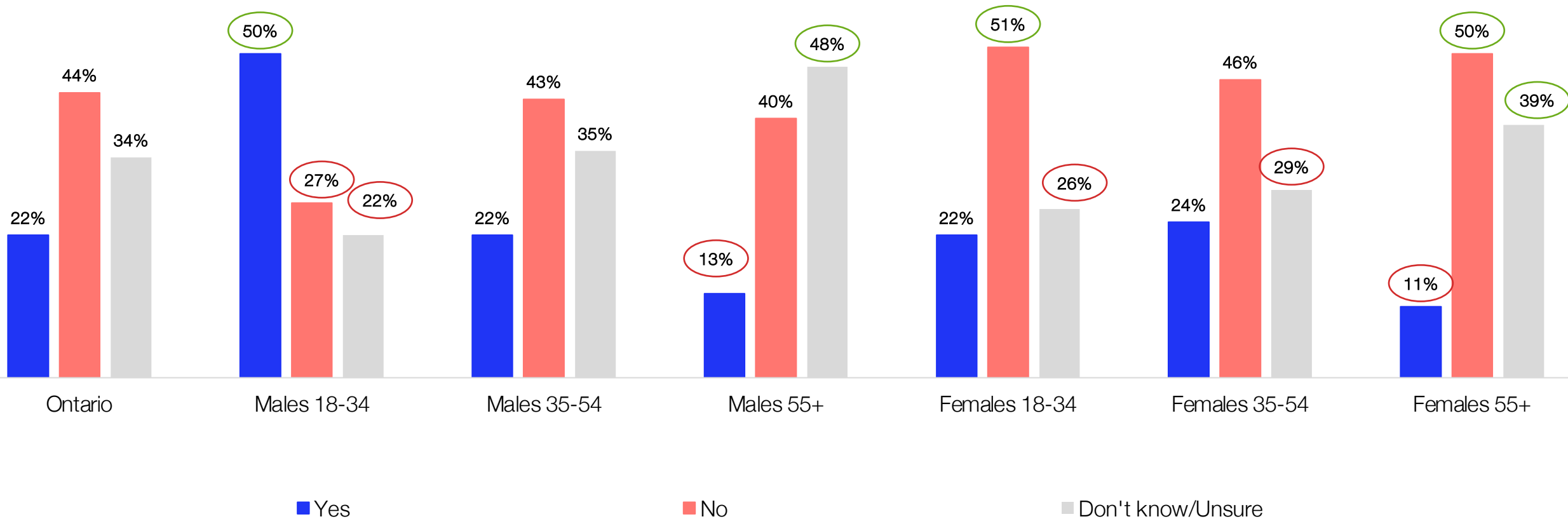
Findings were consistent across the regions of Ontario, with significantly more respondents residing in the Eastern and Southwestern regions who believed it was “very important”.



Q2 - How important do you think it is to have accessible and timely mental health and addiction services in your community? Base = 2027

Are current mental health and addiction services adequate

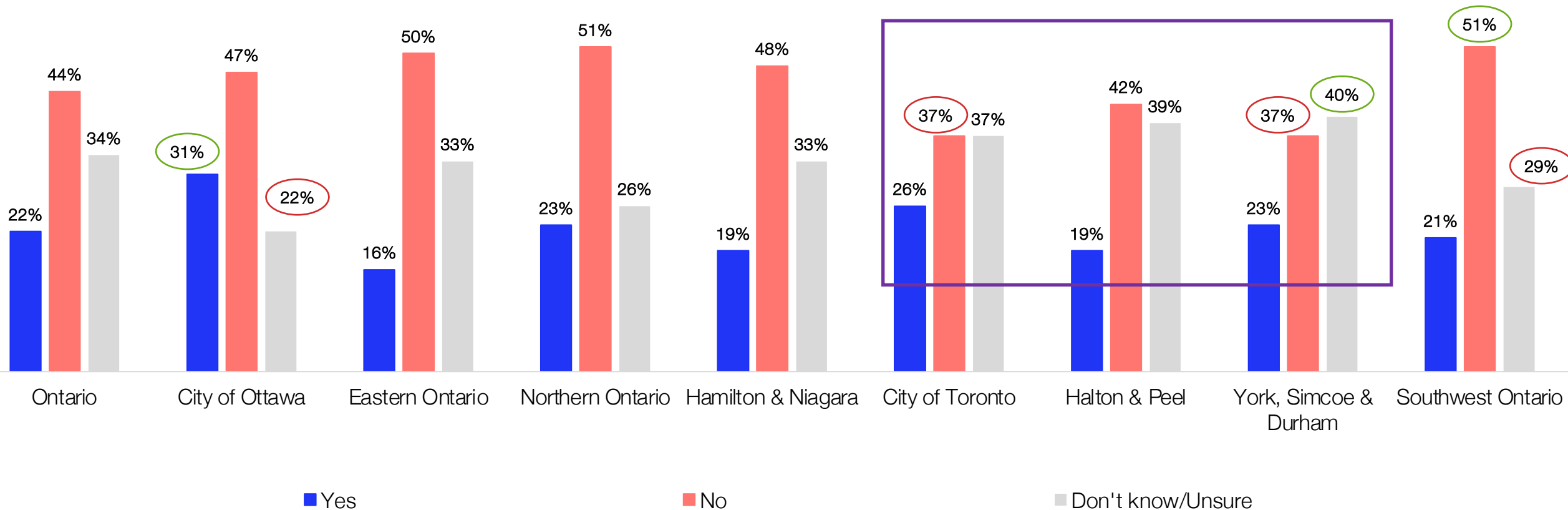
Only 22% of respondents believed that current mental health and addiction services (in their communities) were adequate while twice as many, (44%) disagreed. 34% of the respondents were “unsure”. Females were much more of the view that these services were inadequate compared to males.



Are current mental health and addiction services adequate

Regions

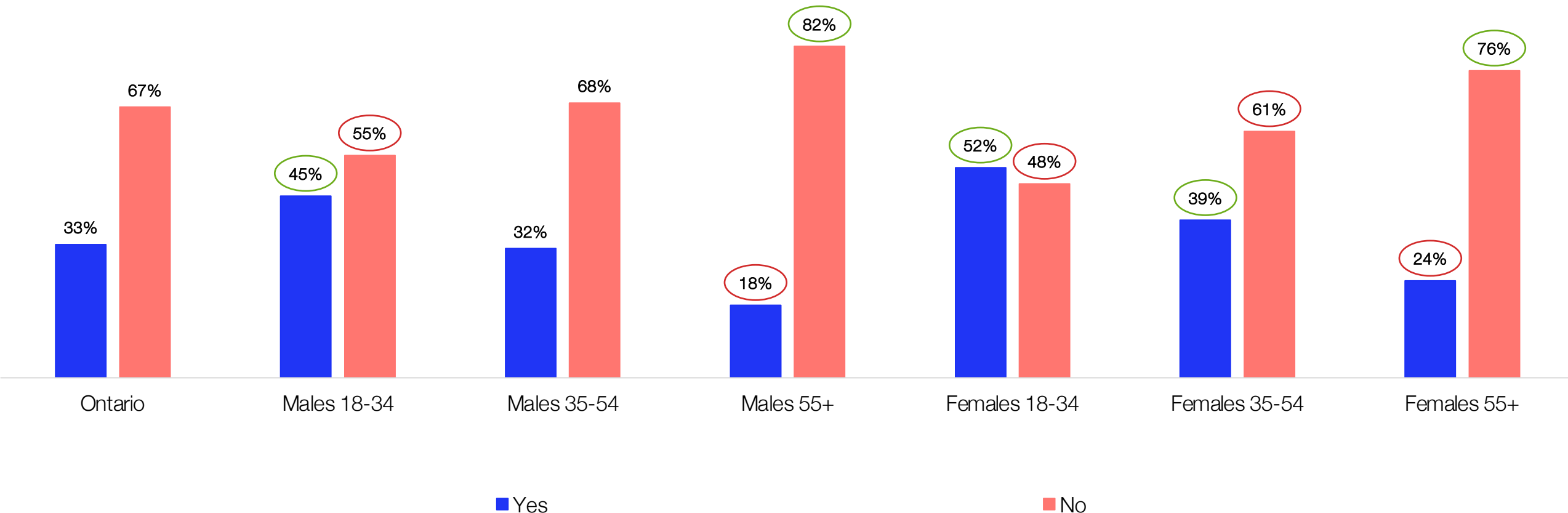
Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario. In the GTA respondents were somewhat more “unsure” compared to those residing in other regions.



Personally accessed mental health or addiction services

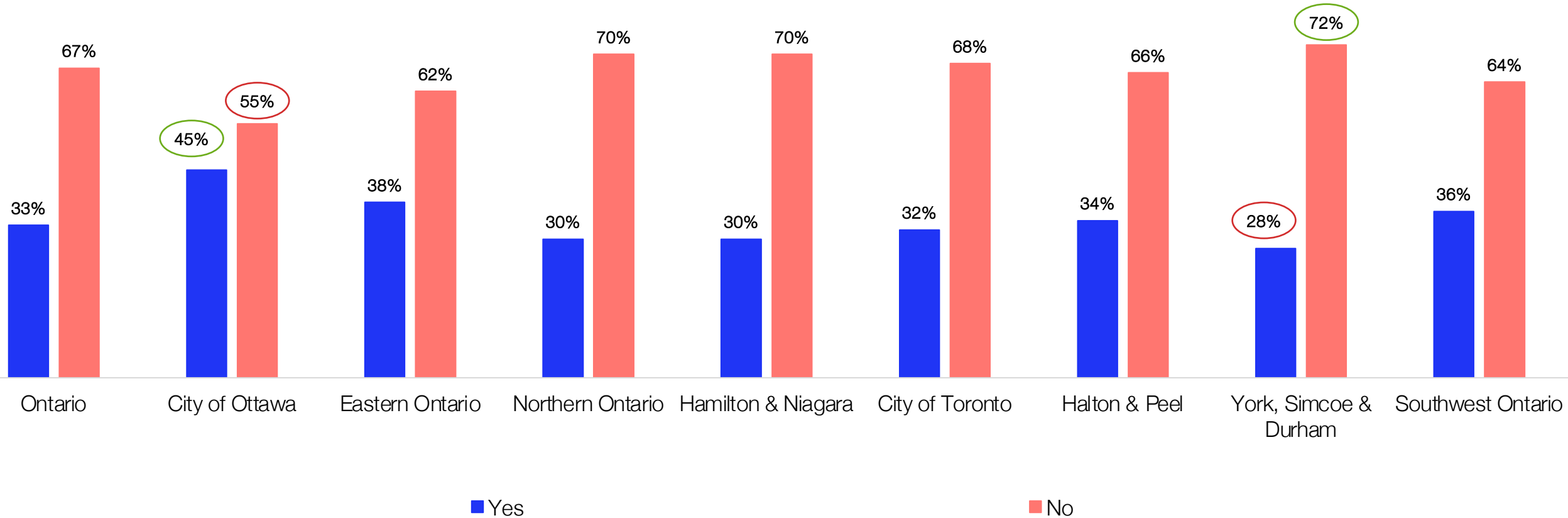
Age and Gender

1 out of 3 respondents said they had personally accessed mental health or addiction services. Nearly half of all respondents under 35 years of age said they had personally accessed these services.



Personally accessed mental health or addiction services

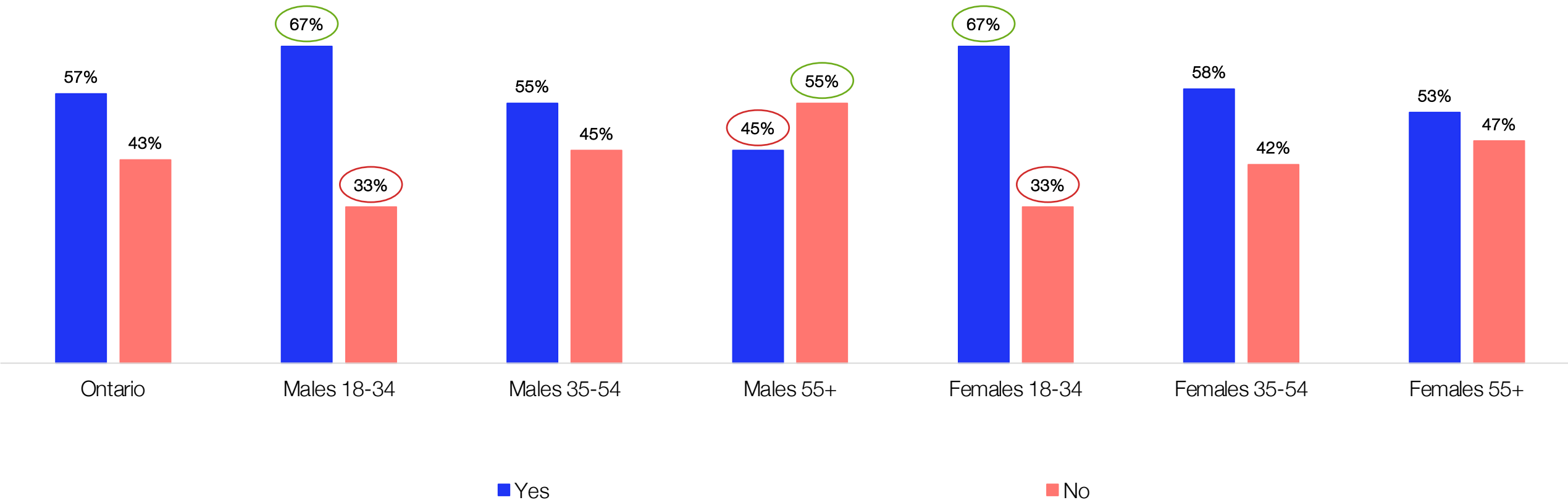
Responses were largely uniform across all regions of Ontario with those respondents residing in the City of Ottawa region saying they had accessed mental health and/or addiction services much more than all others.



Has anyone you know ever accessed mental health or addiction services

Age and Gender

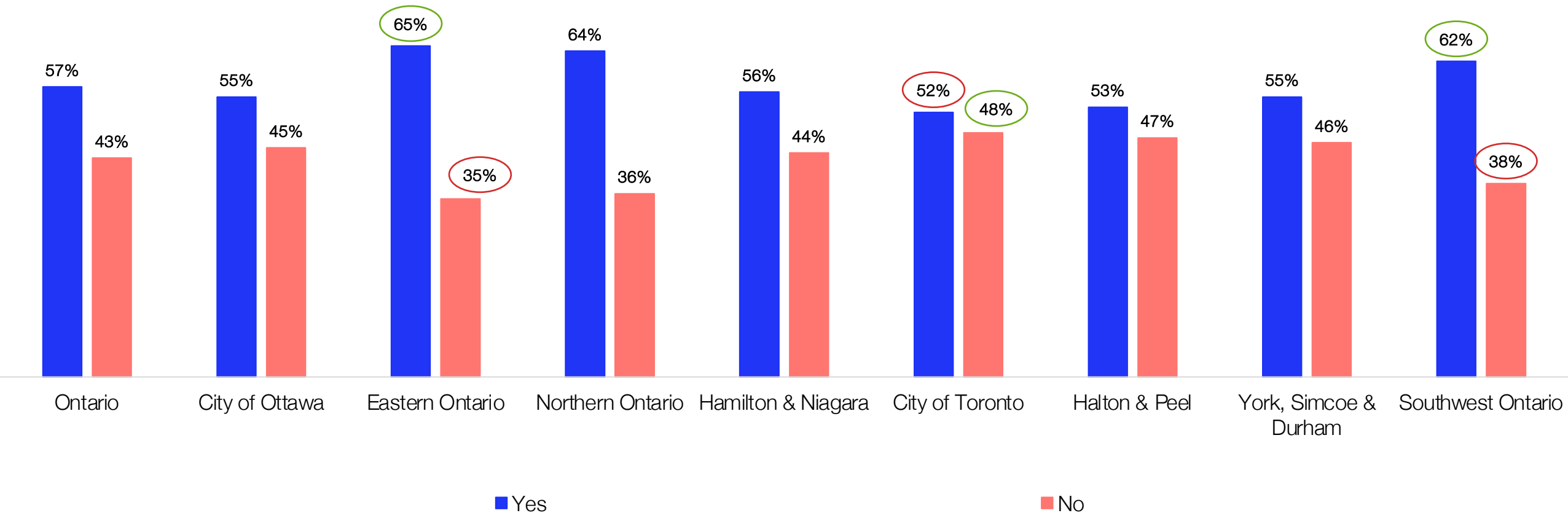
Overall, nearly 6 out of 10 respondents said they knew someone who had accessed either mental health or addiction services. 2/3rds of respondents under 35 years of age said they knew someone who had accessed these services.



Has anyone you know ever accessed mental health or addiction services

Regions

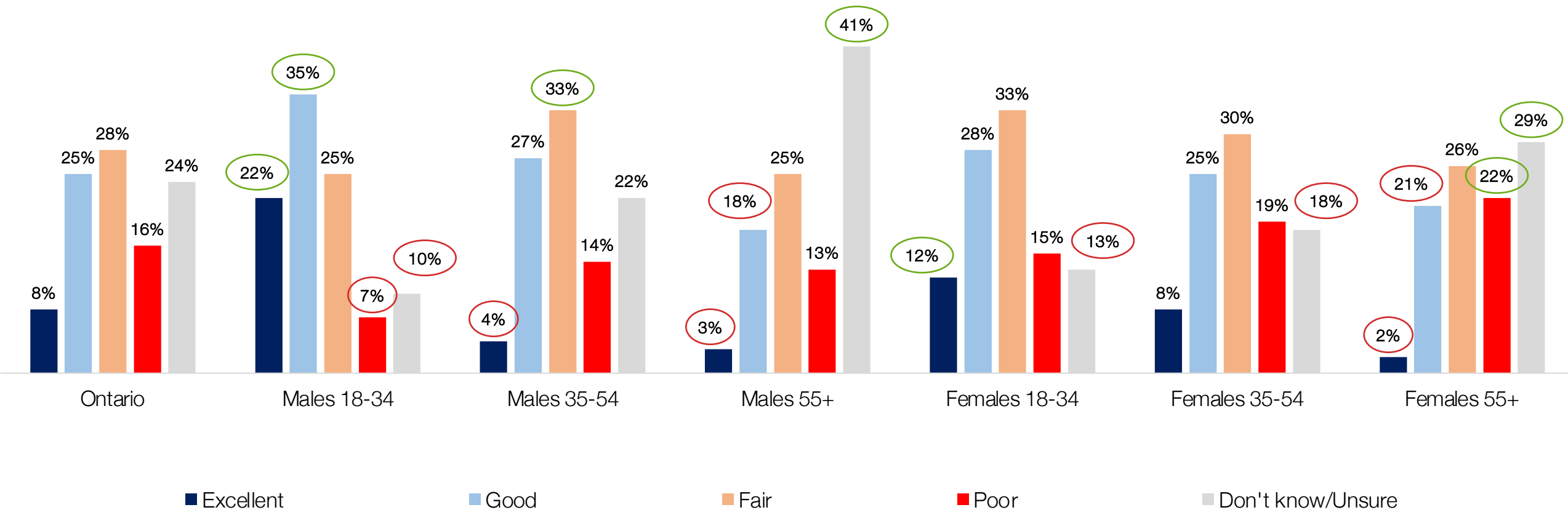
Interestingly, residents in less urban/ more suburban and/ or rural regions were more likely to know someone that had accessed these services compared to those residing in the GTA regions.



Rate the quality of mental health and addiction services that are currently available

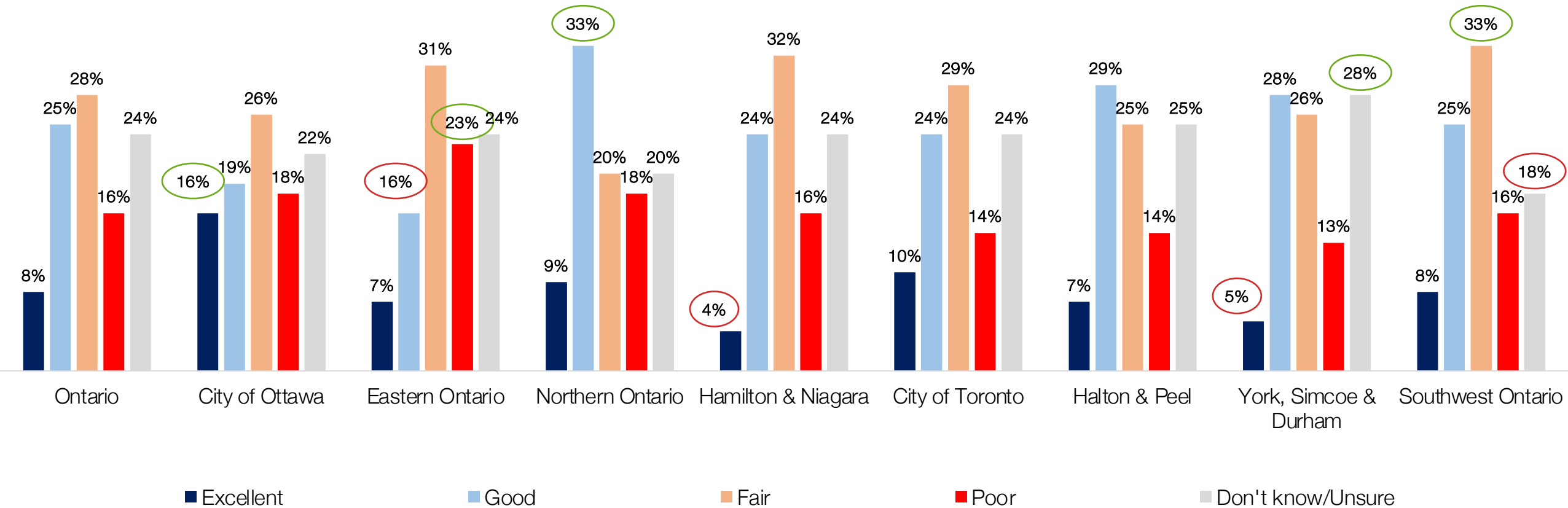
Age and Gender

Respondents were split on the quality of the mental health and addiction services available in their area. 33% of the respondents said “excellent” or “good” while 44% said “fair” or “poor” and 24% said they were “unsure”. Younger respondents were more positive about the quality of services compared to older respondents and female respondents who were somewhat more negative.



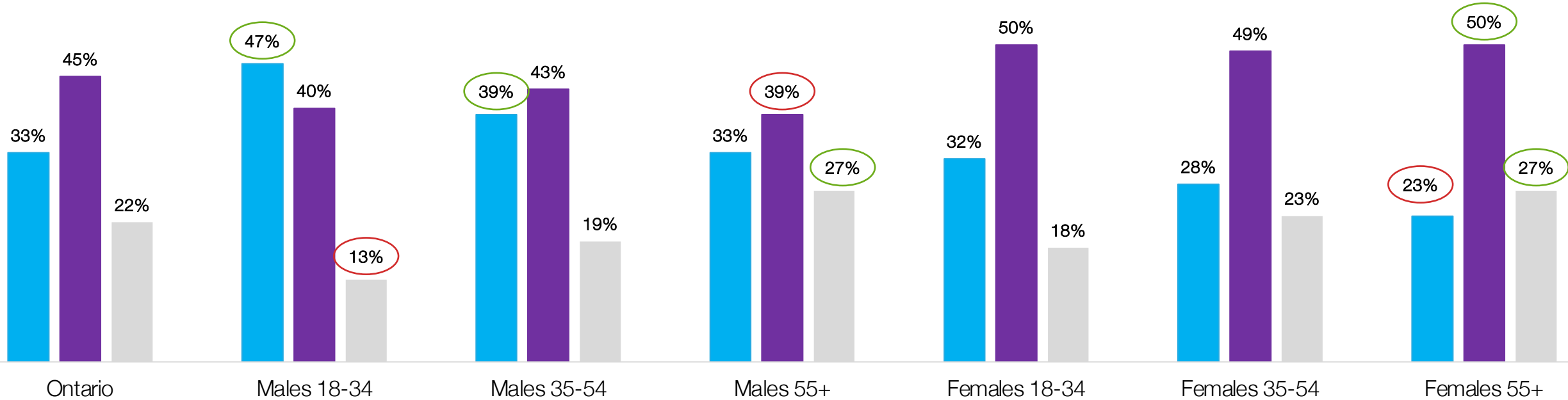
Rate the quality of mental health and addiction services that are currently available

Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.



Forced Choice: Is the overall problem around mental health and addictions a lack of government funding or something else?

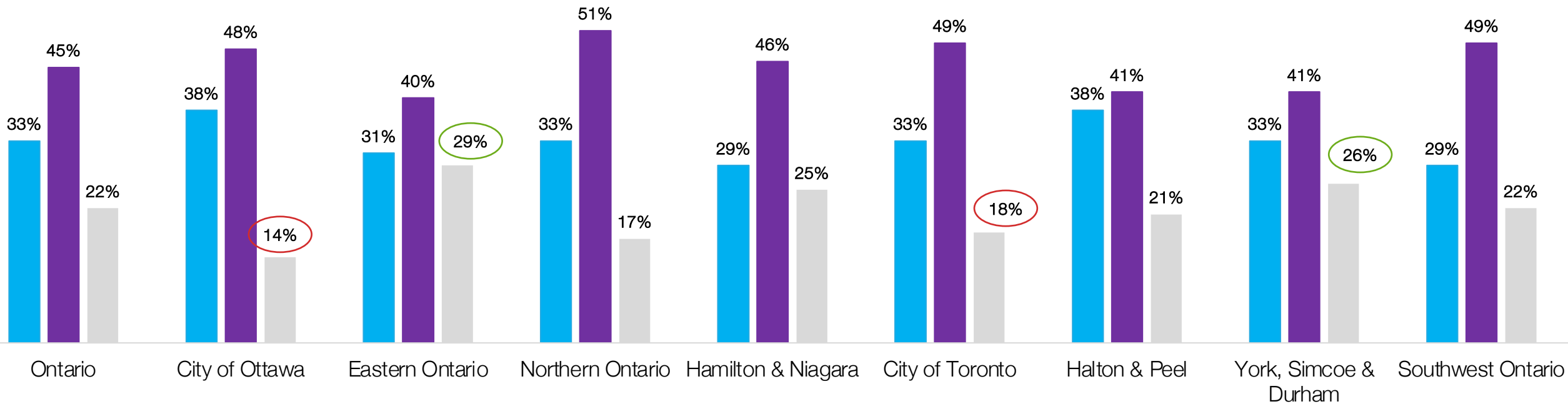
33% of respondents believed the overall problem with mental health and addiction was not necessarily a lack of government funding while 45% believed that government needed to spend much more on mental health and addiction services to make progress with the ever-growing problem. Females were much more of the view that government needed to spend much more on mental health and addiction services.



- Some people say that governments are already spending billions upon billions of dollars on mental health and addiction services and the overall problem isn't a lack of funding
- Other people say that governments must spend much more on mental health and addiction services to make significant progress on getting ahead of this ever growing problem
- Don't know/Unsure

Forced Choice: Is the overall problem around mental health and addictions a lack of government funding or something else?

Responses were aligned across the regions of Ontario.

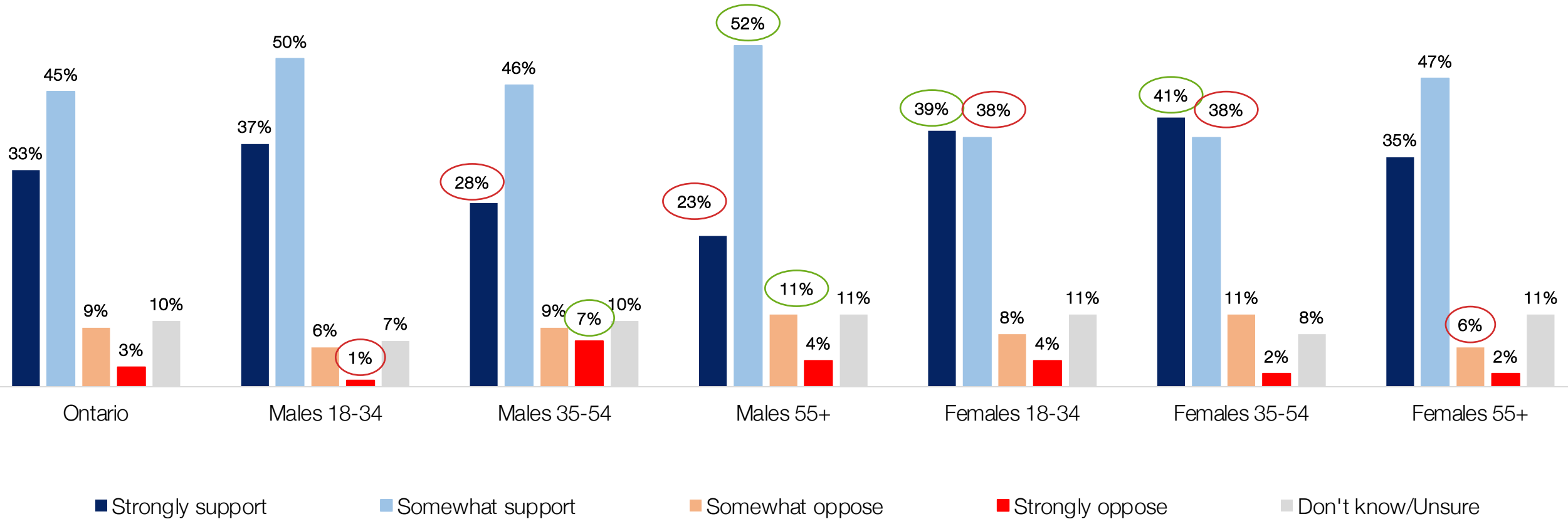


- Some people say that governments are already spending billions upon billions of dollars on mental health and addiction services and the overall problem isn't a lack of funding
- Other people say that governments must spend much more on mental health and addiction services to make significant progress on getting ahead of this ever growing problem
- Don't know/Unsure

Support/ oppose government creating a dedicated stream of money to fund mental health and addiction services

Age and Gender

4 out of 5 respondents supported dedicating a stream of money to specifically fund mental health and addiction services in Ontario. Even with the high level of support coming from males, females were even more supportive of a dedicated stream of money to fund these service.

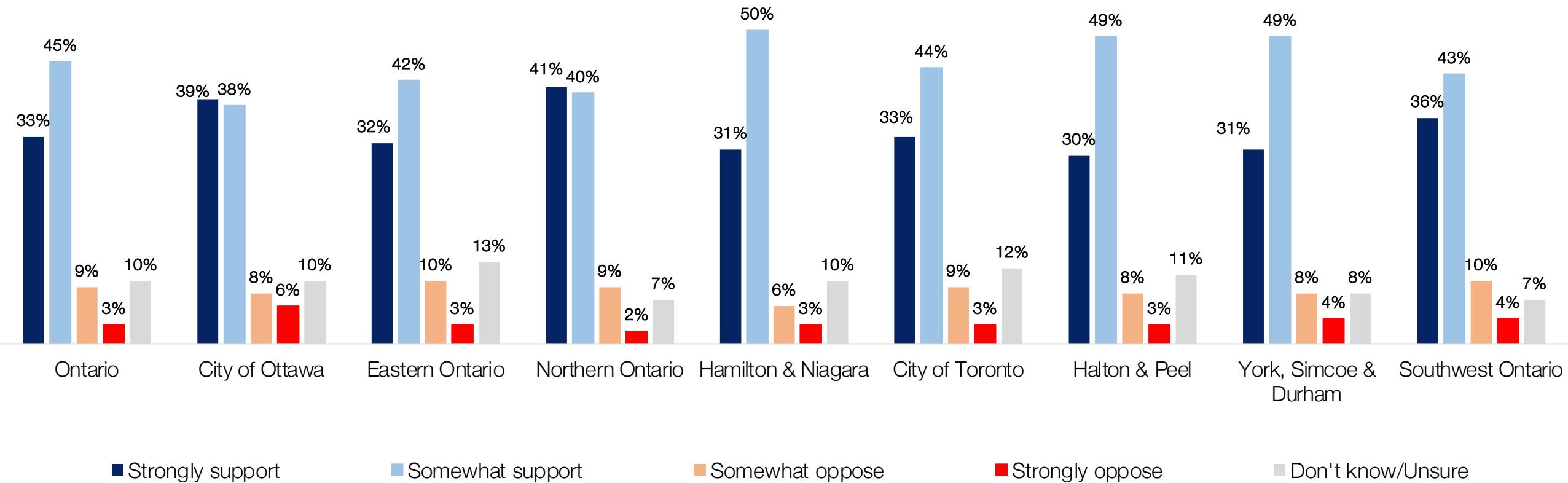


Q8 - Do you support or oppose the government of Ontario creating a dedicated stream of money that would be specifically set aside each year to fund mental health and addiction services in Ontario? Base = 2027

Support/ oppose government creating a dedicated stream of money to fund mental health and addiction services

Regions

Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.

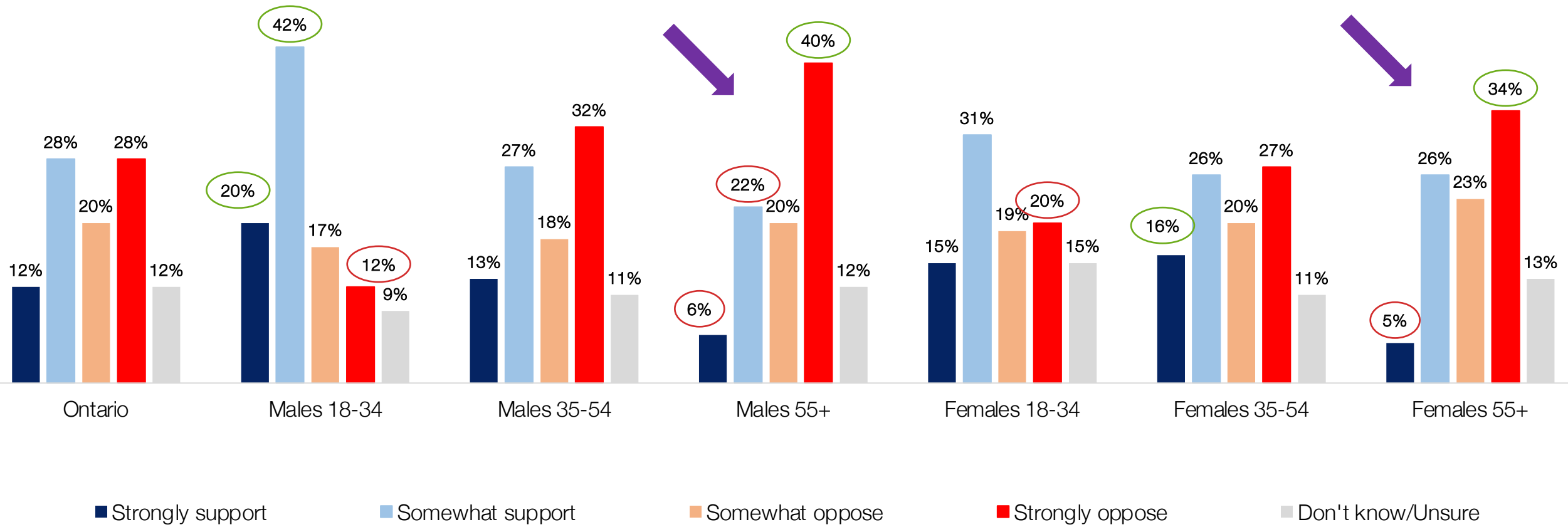


Q8 - Do you support or oppose the government of Ontario creating a dedicated stream of money that would be specifically set aside each year to fund mental health and addiction services in Ontario? **Base = 2027**

j Support/ oppose a new tax to fund mental health and addiction services

Age and Gender

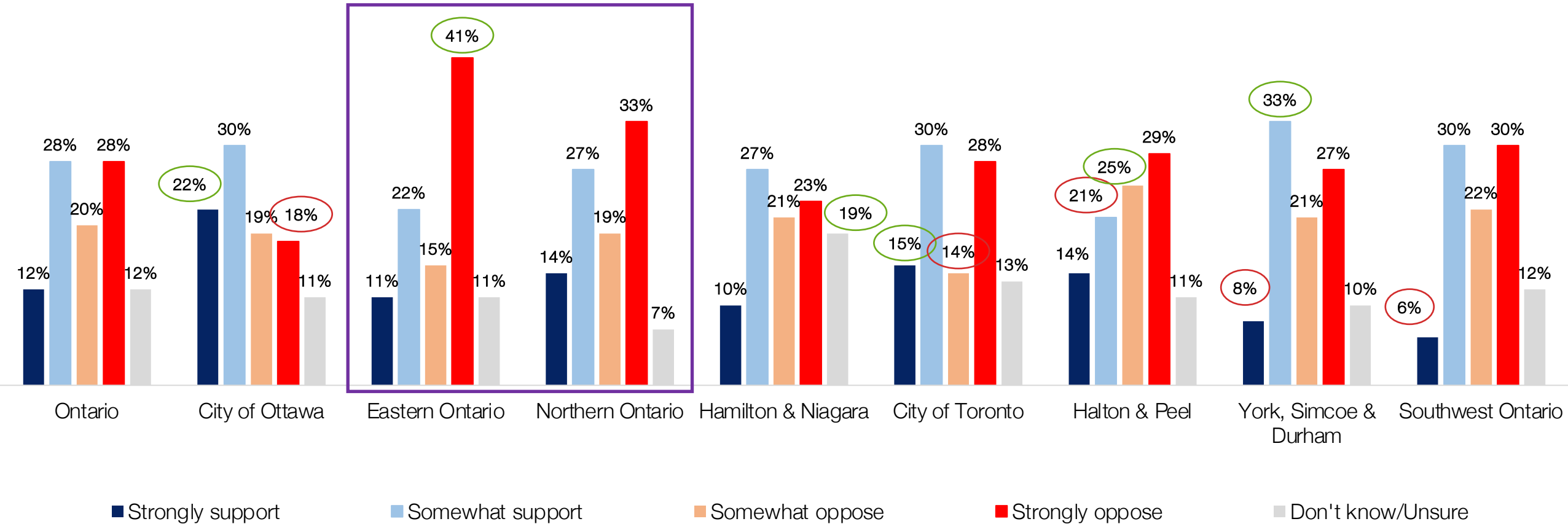
Respondents were split when it came to whether the government should create a new tax to use to fund mental health and addiction services in Ontario. 40% of respondents were supportive while 48% were opposed. Respondents over 54 years of age were much more opposed compared to younger respondents.



Q9 - More specifically, do you support or oppose the government of Ontario creating a new tax that would be collected and used specifically to fund mental health and addiction services in Ontario? Base = 2027

Support/ oppose a new tax to fund mental health and addiction services

Respondents residing in the more rural areas of Ontario were more opposed to the government creating a new tax to use to fund mental health and addiction services.

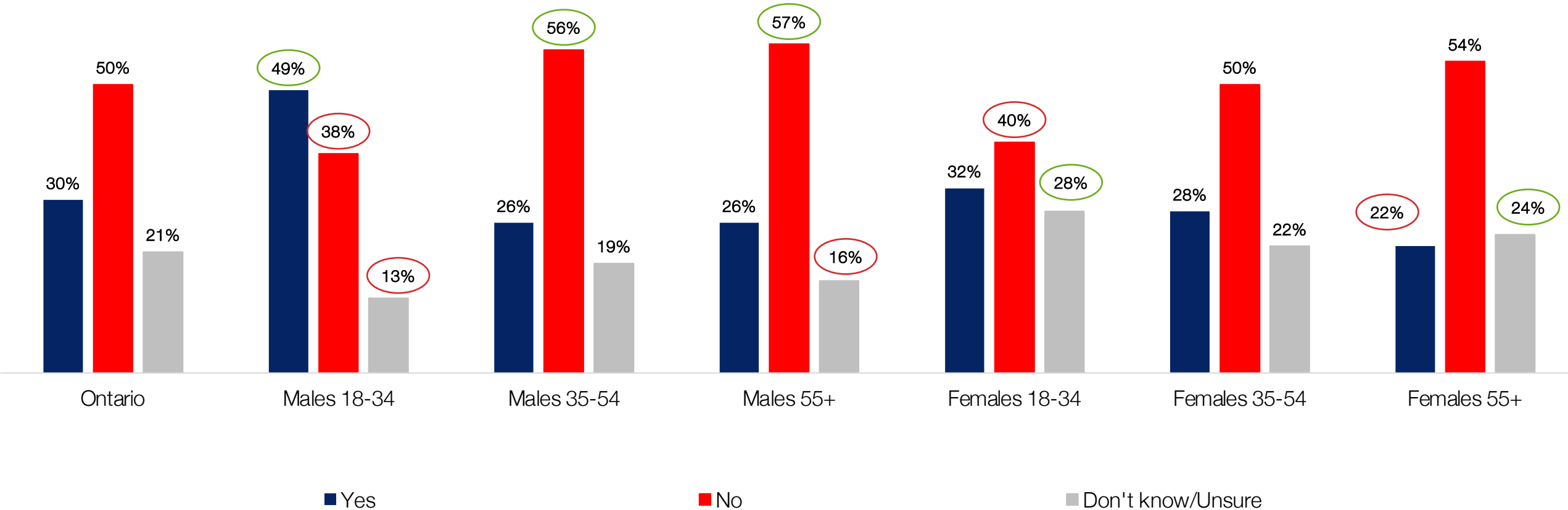


Q9 - More specifically, do you support or oppose the government of Ontario creating a new tax that would be collected and used specifically to fund mental health and addiction services in Ontario? **Base = 2027**

Willingness to pay additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services

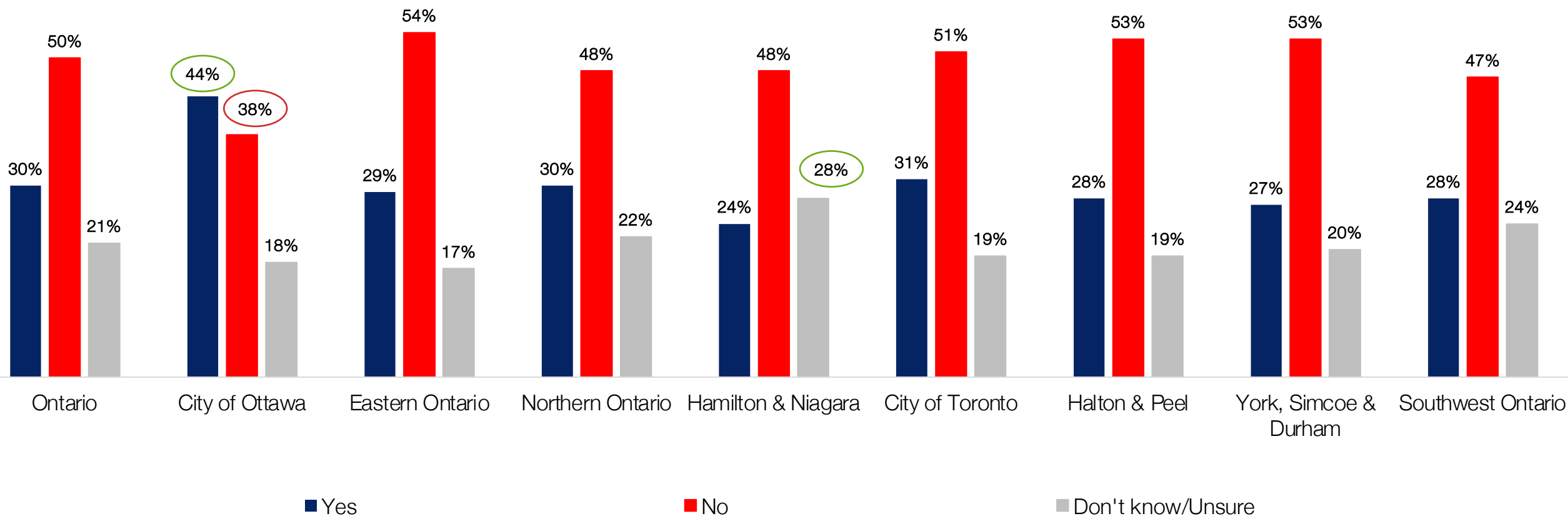
Age and Gender

Half of the respondents (50%) were not willing to pay additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services while 30% said they would. Respondents over 34 years of age were much more opposed to paying additional taxes to support these services compared to respondents under 35 years of age.



Willingness to pay additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services

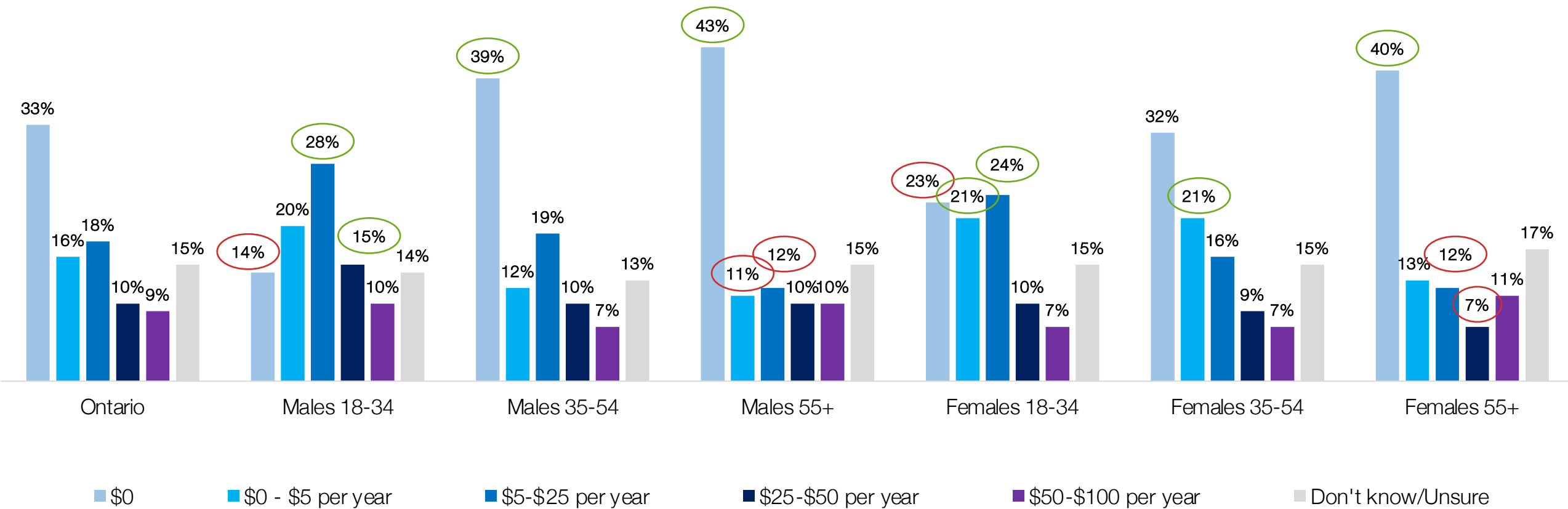
Most regions of Ontario broke out the same way (50% unwilling to pay additional taxes and 30% willing to pay) except for the City of Ottawa region where they were much more evenly split on the question (38% unwilling to pay additional taxes and 30% willing to pay).



How much in additional taxes would Ontarian's be willing to pay to support mental health services?

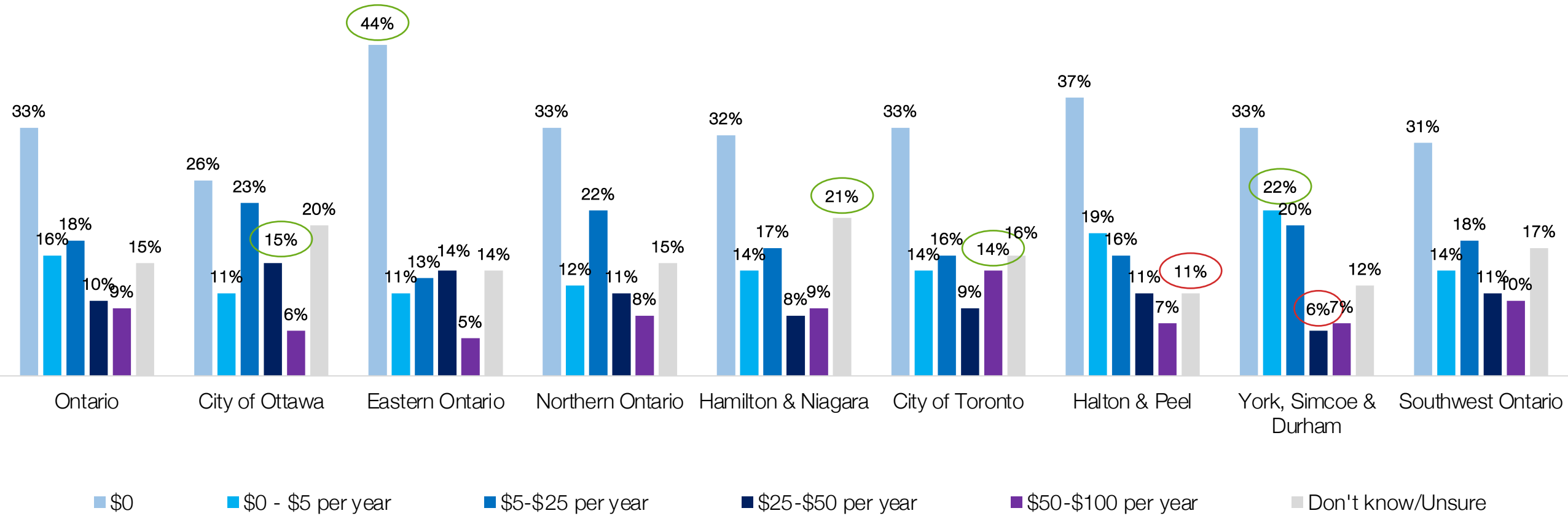
Age and Gender

33% of respondents were not willing to pay any additional taxes to support mental health and addiction services. Another 34% of respondents were willing to pay between \$0-\$25 per year in new taxes to support mental health and addiction services and another 19% were willing to pay between \$25-\$100 in new taxes per year to fund these services. Younger respondents were more willing to pay a new tax compared to older respondents.



How much in additional taxes would Ontarian's be willing to pay to support mental health services?

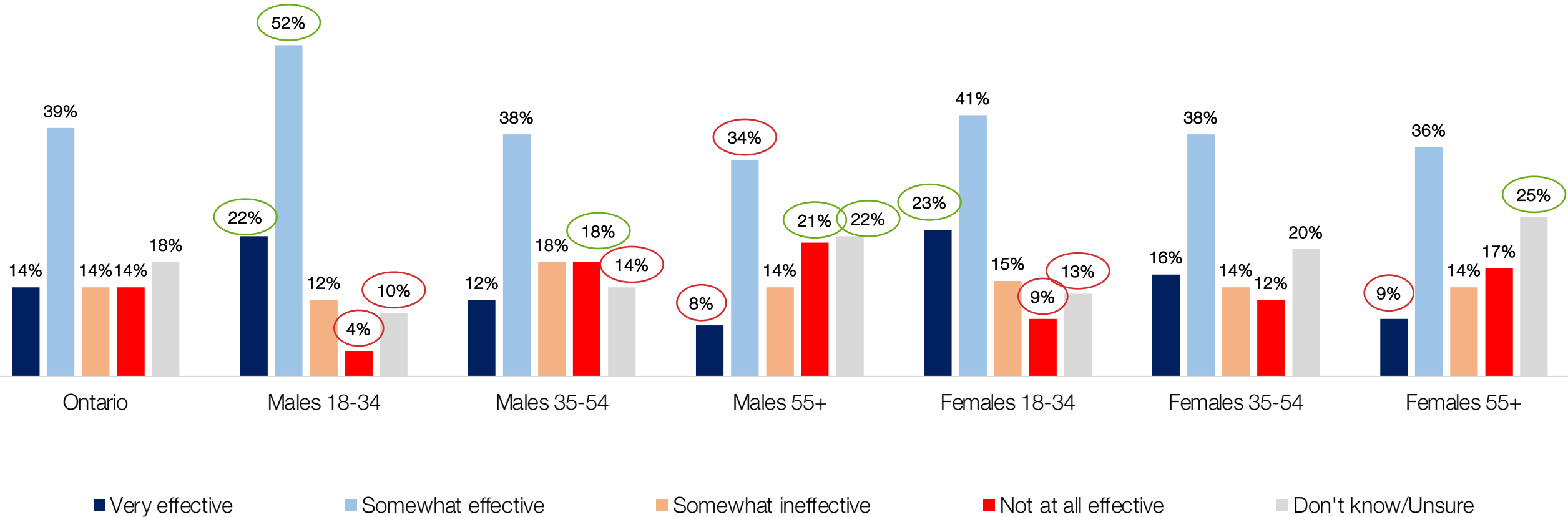
Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.



Perceived effectiveness of a dedicated revenue stream to improve mental health and addiction services

Age and Gender

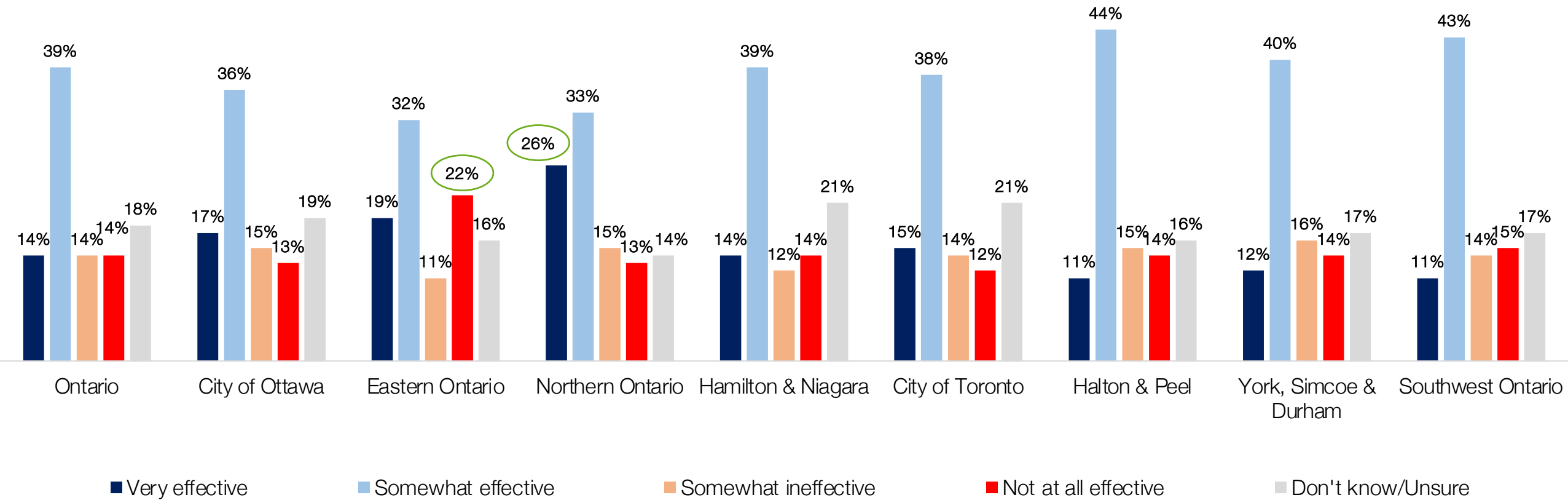
2 to 1, respondents believed a dedicated revenue stream would be effective in improving mental health and addiction services. Younger respondents were more of this view compared to older respondents.



Q12 - How effective do you believe a dedicated revenue stream would be in improving mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

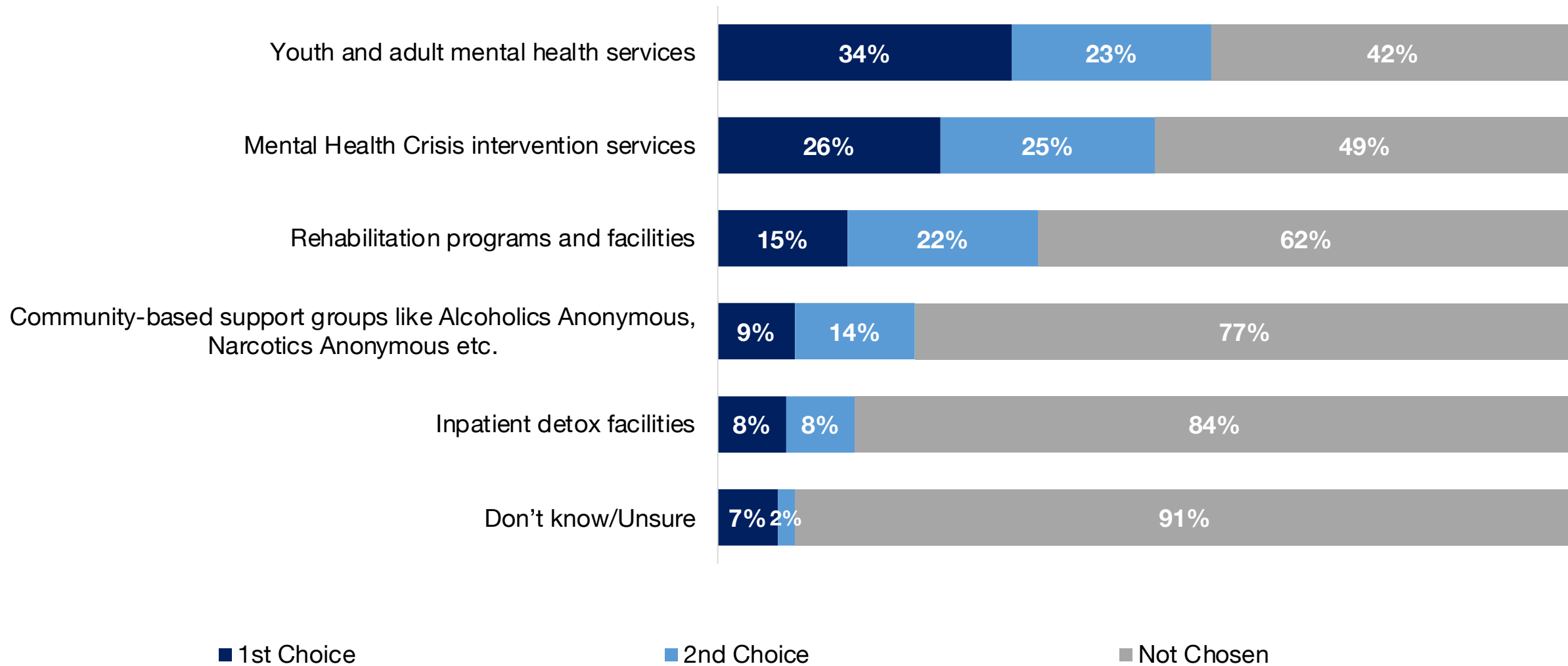
Perceived effectiveness of a dedicated revenue stream to improve mental health and addiction services

Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.



Q12 - How effective do you believe a dedicated revenue stream would be in improving mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

i Top 2 choices: Mental health and addiction services that should be prioritized with new funding

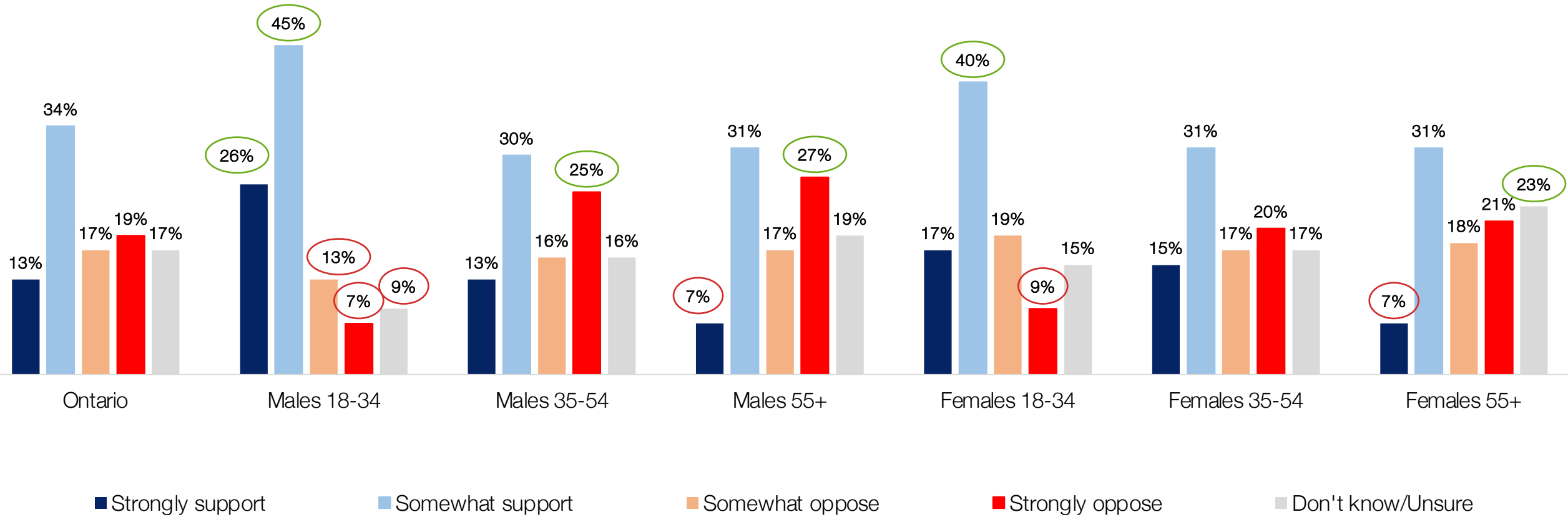


Q13 - Which type of mental health and addiction services do you think should be prioritized with new funding? Please select your top 2 choices with a "1" and a "2" beside your preferred choice. Base = 2027

Support/ oppose a political candidate/ political party willing to raise taxes to fund mental health and addiction services?

Age and Gender

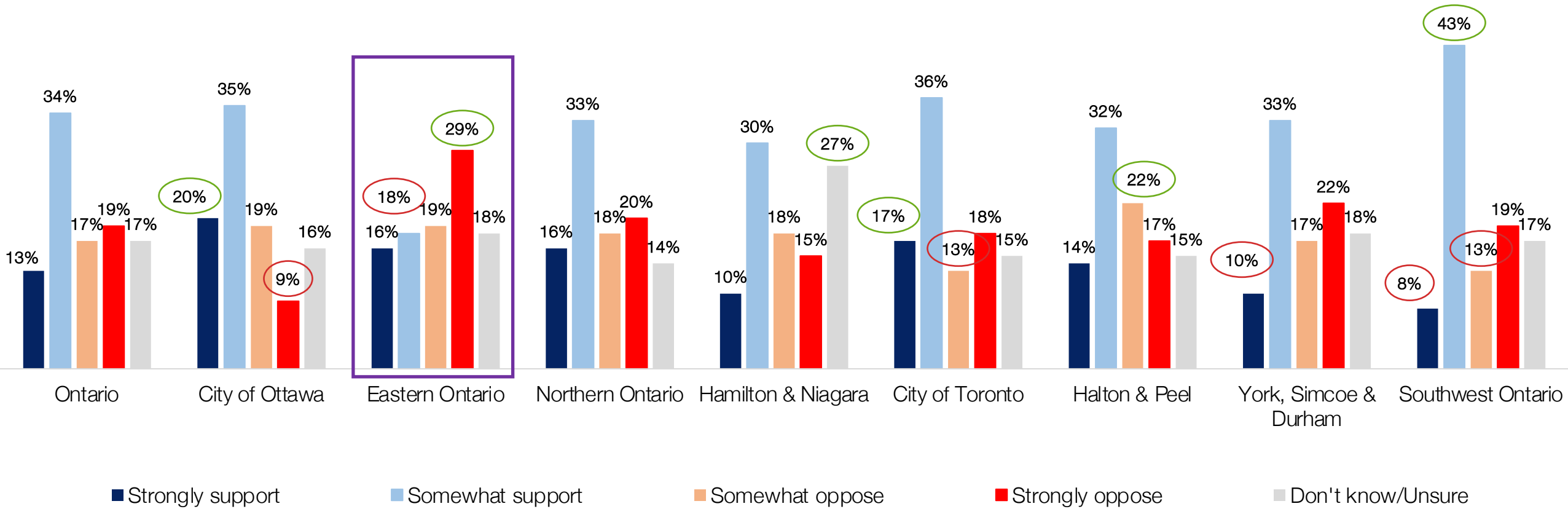
Nearly half of the respondents (47%) would support a political candidate who was willing to raise taxes to increase mental health and addiction services while 36% were opposed. Males were slightly more opposed compared to females.



Q14 - Would you support or oppose a political candidate/ political party who was willing to raise taxes for increased funding for mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

Support/ oppose a political candidate/ political party willing to raise taxes to fund mental health and addiction services?

Except those respondents residing in Eastern region (not including the City of Ottawa), the remaining respondents broke out roughly the same way in the question.

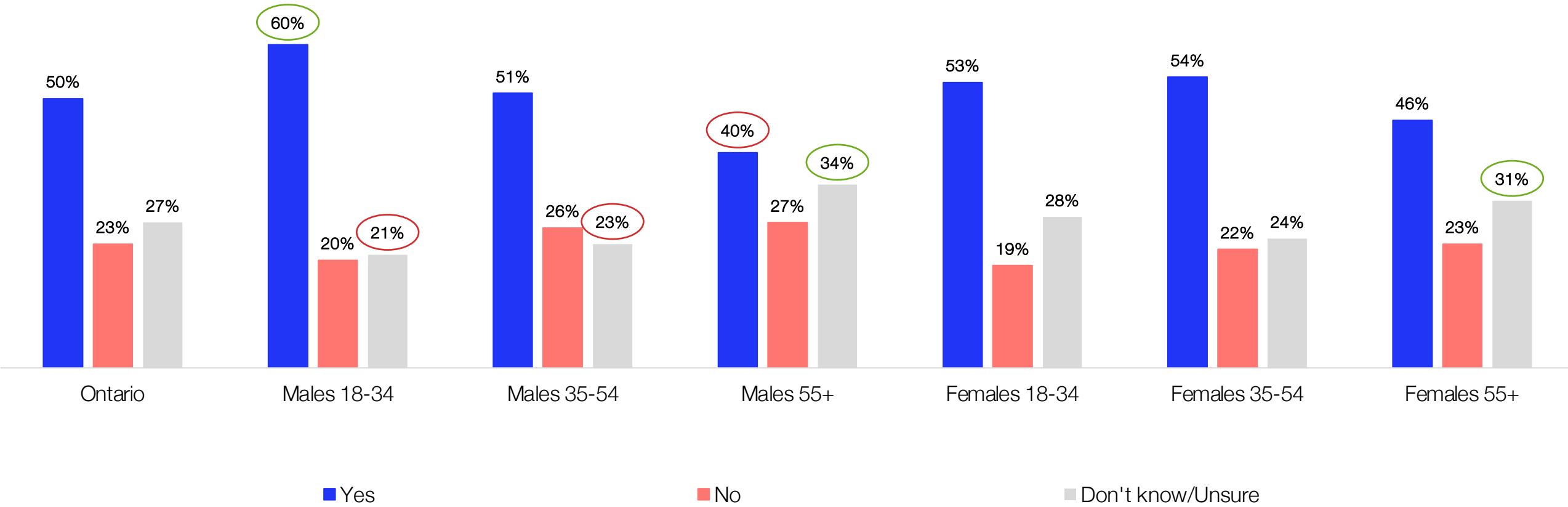


Q14 - Would you support or oppose a political candidate/ political party who was willing to raise taxes for increased funding for mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

Necessity of building new brick-and-mortar facilities for mental health and addiction services?

Age and Gender

2 to 1, respondents believed that building new facilities for mental health and addiction services was necessary.

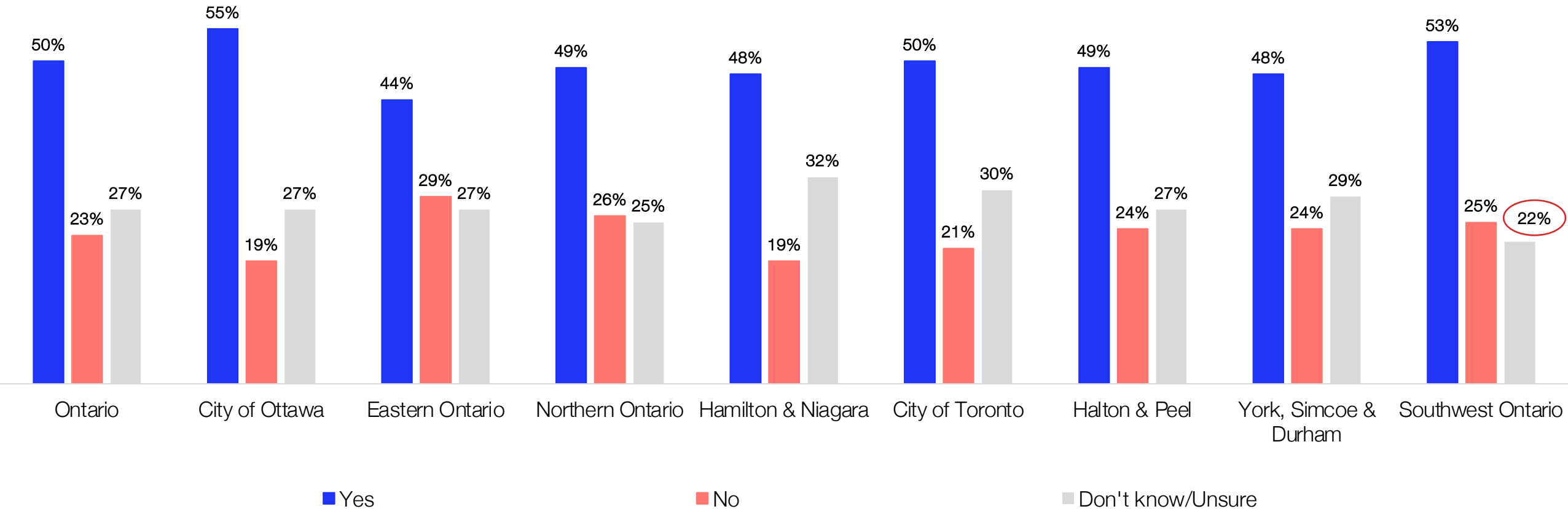


Q15 - Do you think building new brick-and-mortar facilities for mental health and addiction services is necessary in Ontario? Base = 2027

Necessity of building new brick-and-mortar facilities for mental health and addiction services?

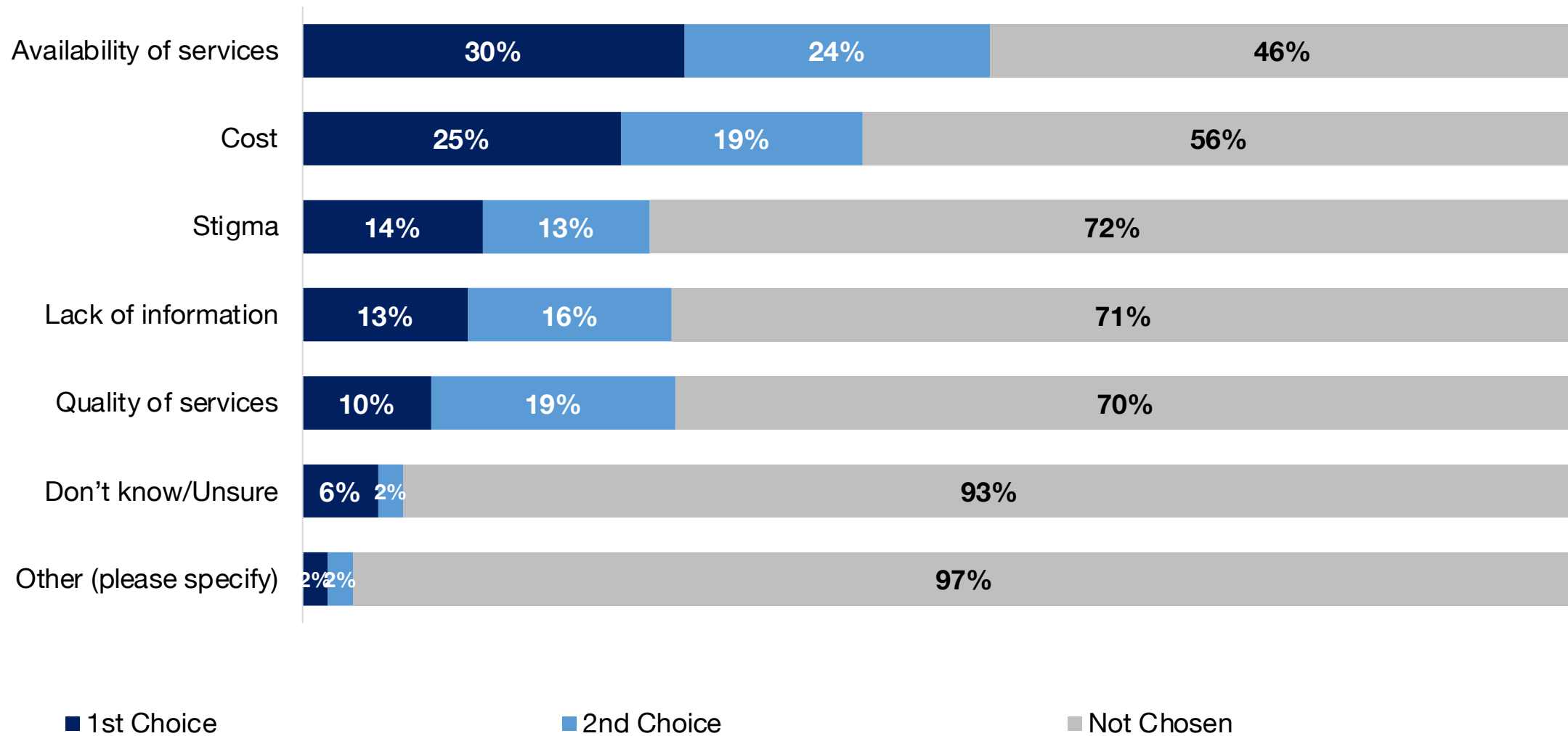
Regions

Results were consistent across the regions of Ontario.



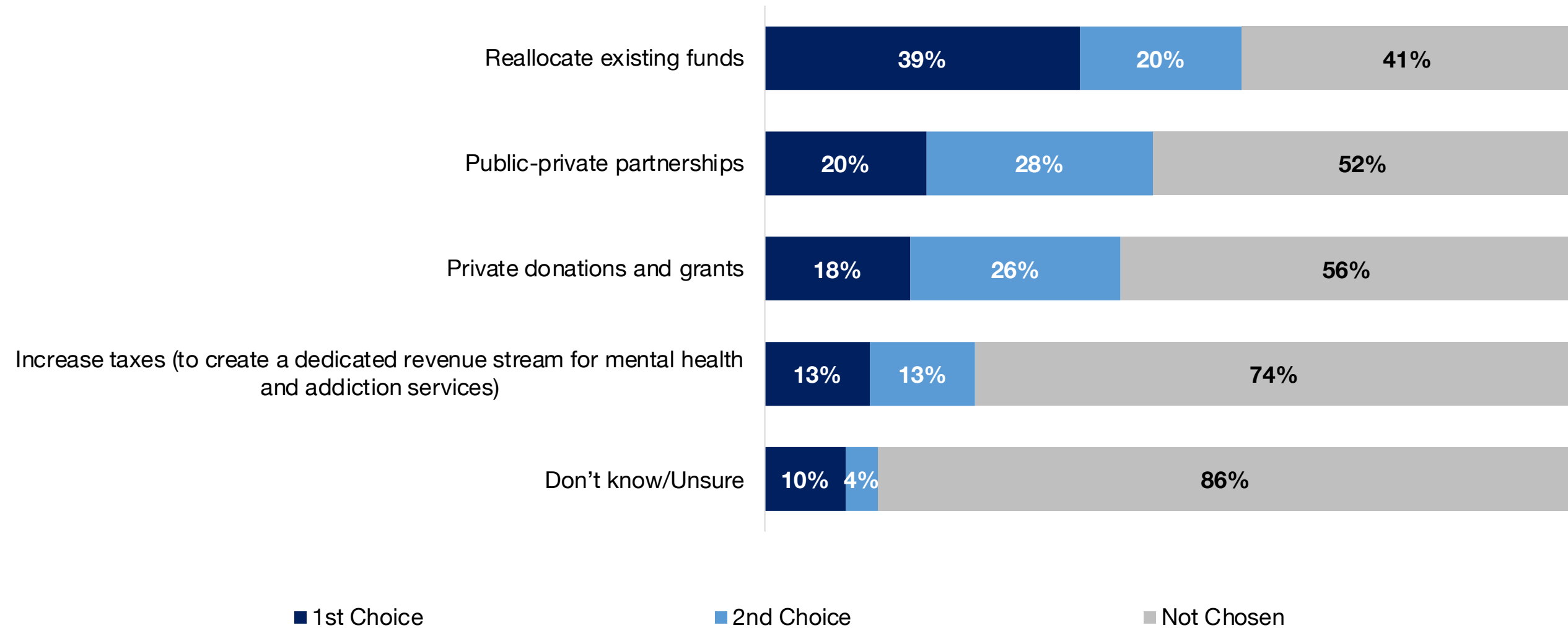
Q15 - Do you think building new brick-and-mortar facilities for mental health and addiction services is necessary in Ontario? Base = 2027

i Top 2 choices: Barriers faced when trying to access mental health and addiction services



Q16 - What barriers do you think people face when trying to access mental health and addiction services? Please select your top 2 choices with a "1" and a "2" beside your preferred choice. **Base = 2027**

i Top 2 choices: How government should sustain the funding for mental health and addictions services

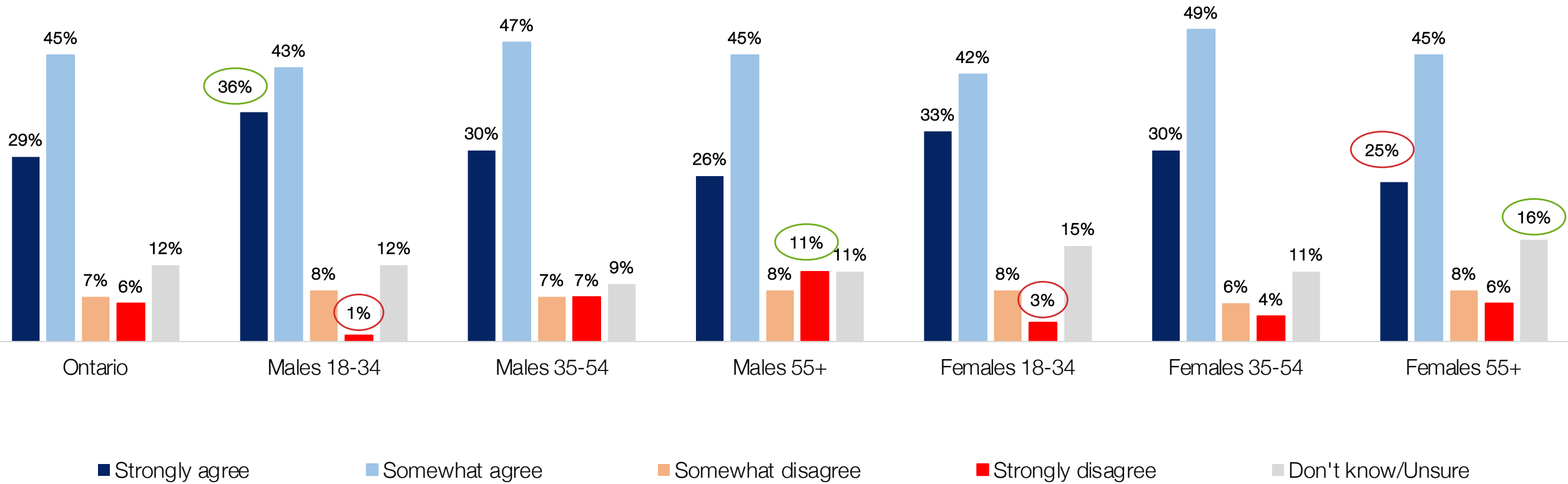


Q17 - How should the government ensure the sustainability of funding for mental health and addiction services? Please select your top 2 choices with a "1" and a "2" beside your preferred choice. **Base = 2027**

Agree/ disagree to government partnerships with private organizations to fund mental health and addictions services?

Age and Gender

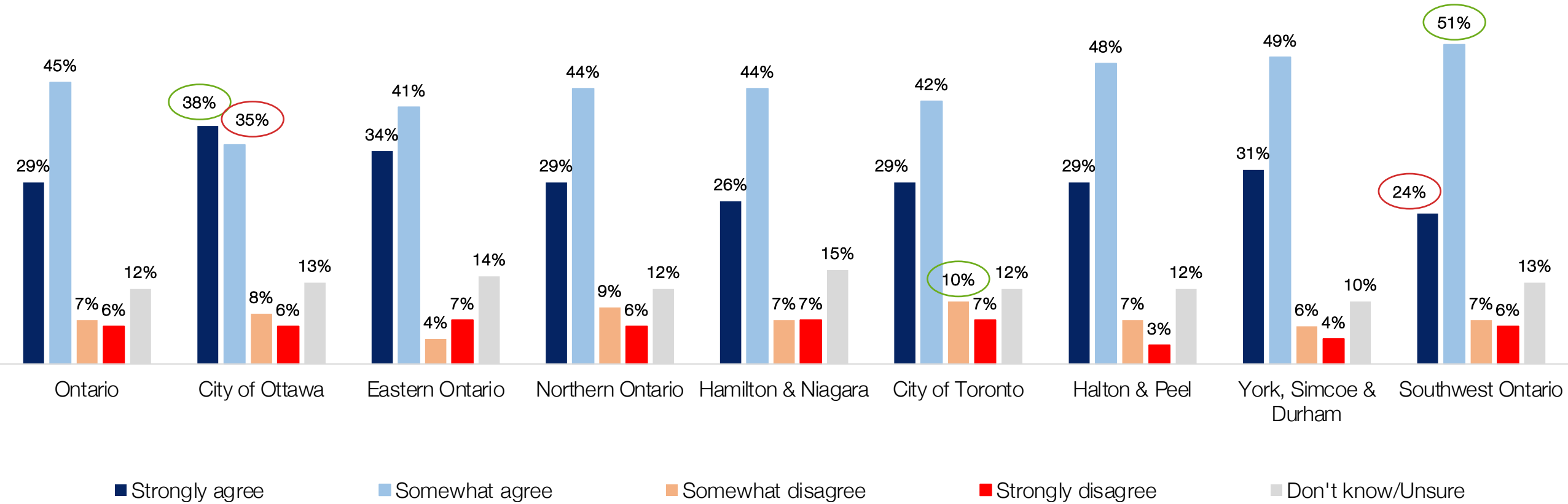
3 out of 4 respondents agreed that the government of Ontario should explore partnerships with private organization to fund mental health and addiction services.



Q18 - Do you agree or disagree that the government of Ontario should explore partnerships with private organizations to fund mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

Agree/ disagree to government partnerships with private organizations to fund mental health and addictions services?

Findings were consistent across the regions of Ontario.

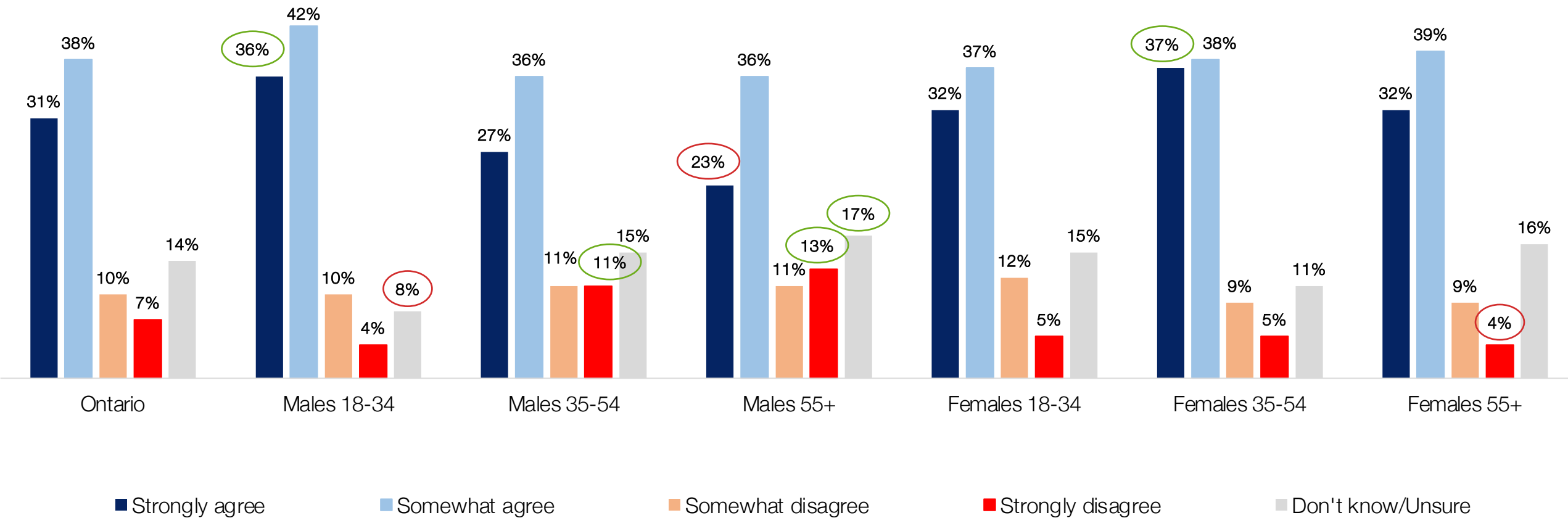


Q18 - Do you agree or disagree that the government of Ontario should explore partnerships with private organizations to fund mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

Agree/ disagree that larger corporations contribute a portion of profits to fund mental health and addiction services?

Age and Gender

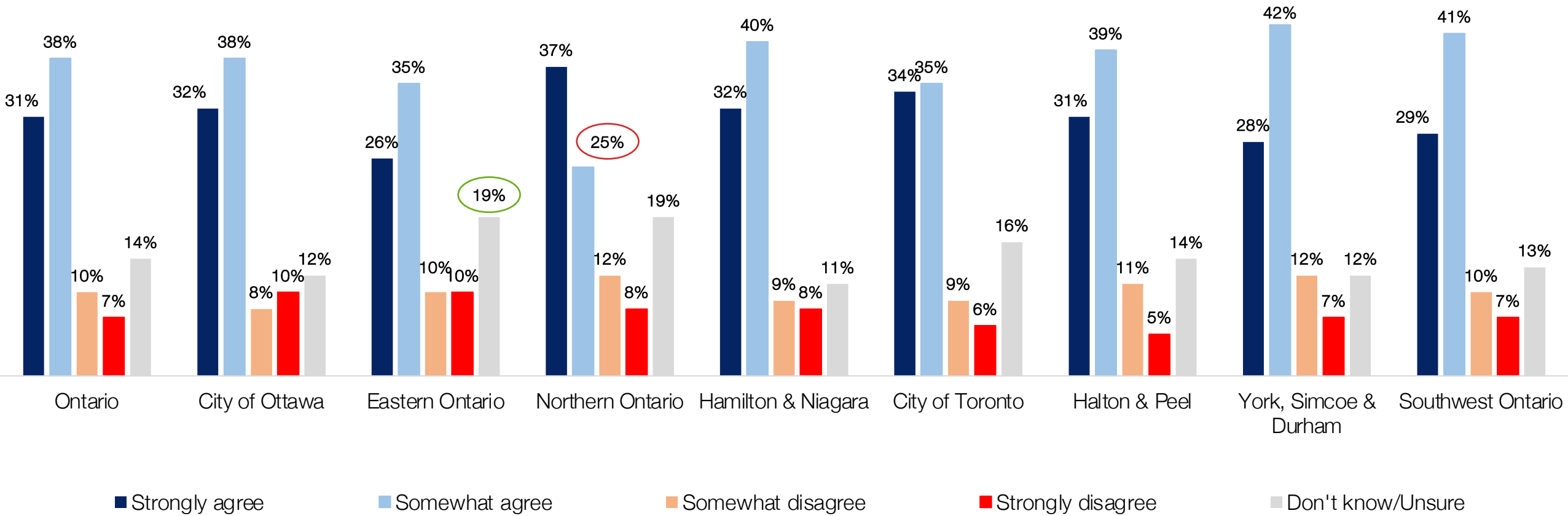
7 out of 10 respondents agreed that larger corporations should contribute a portion of their profits to fund mental health and addictions.



Q19 - Do you agree or disagree that larger corporations operating in Ontario should contribute a portion of their profits a new tax to fund mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

Agree/ disagree that larger corporations contribute a portion of profits to fund mental health and addiction services?

Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.

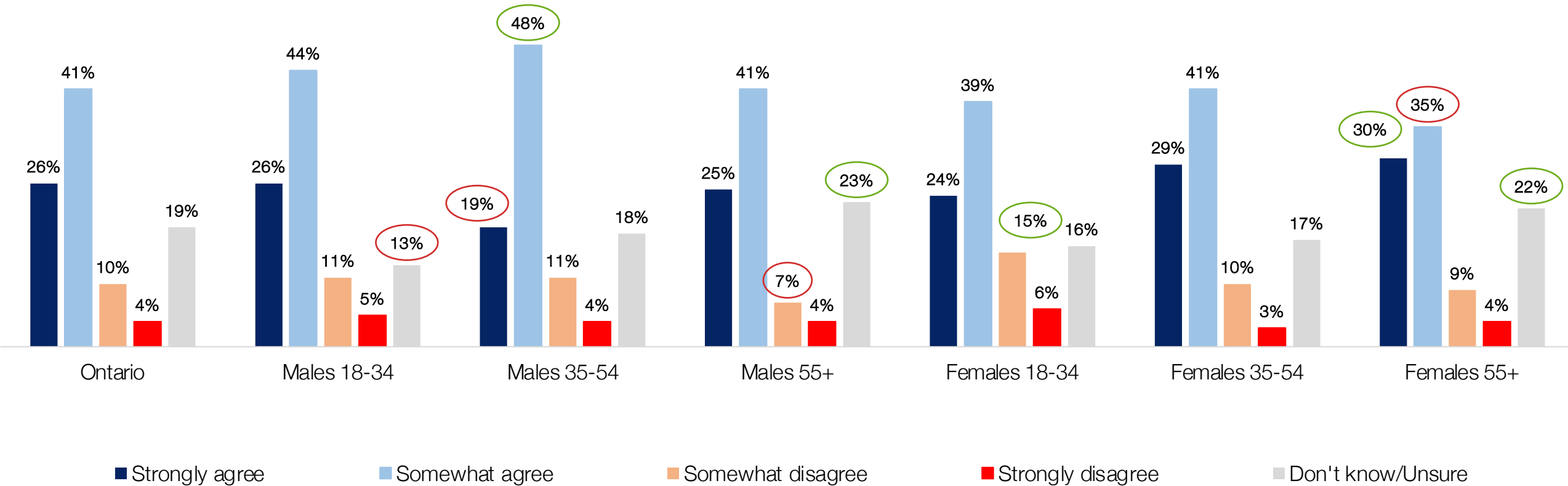


Q19 - Do you agree or disagree that larger corporations operating in Ontario should contribute a portion of their profits a new tax to fund mental health and addiction services? Base = 2027

Agree/ disagree that laws in Ontario need to change for involuntary patients

Age and Gender

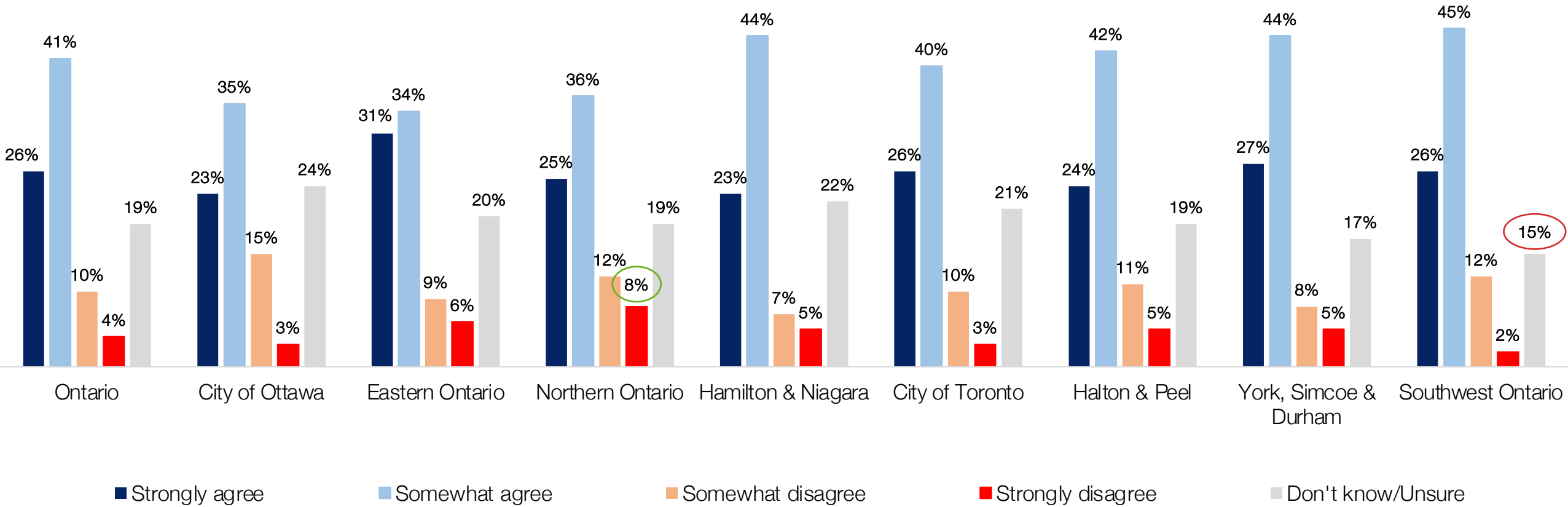
2/3rd's of respondents agreed the laws in Ontario needed to change so that families and physicians could provide mental health and addiction treatment to involuntary patients.



Q20 - Do you agree or disagree that the laws in Ontario need to change so that families and physicians can provide mental health and addictions treatment to involuntary patients? **Base = 2027**

Agree/ disagree that laws in Ontario need to change for involuntary patients

Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.

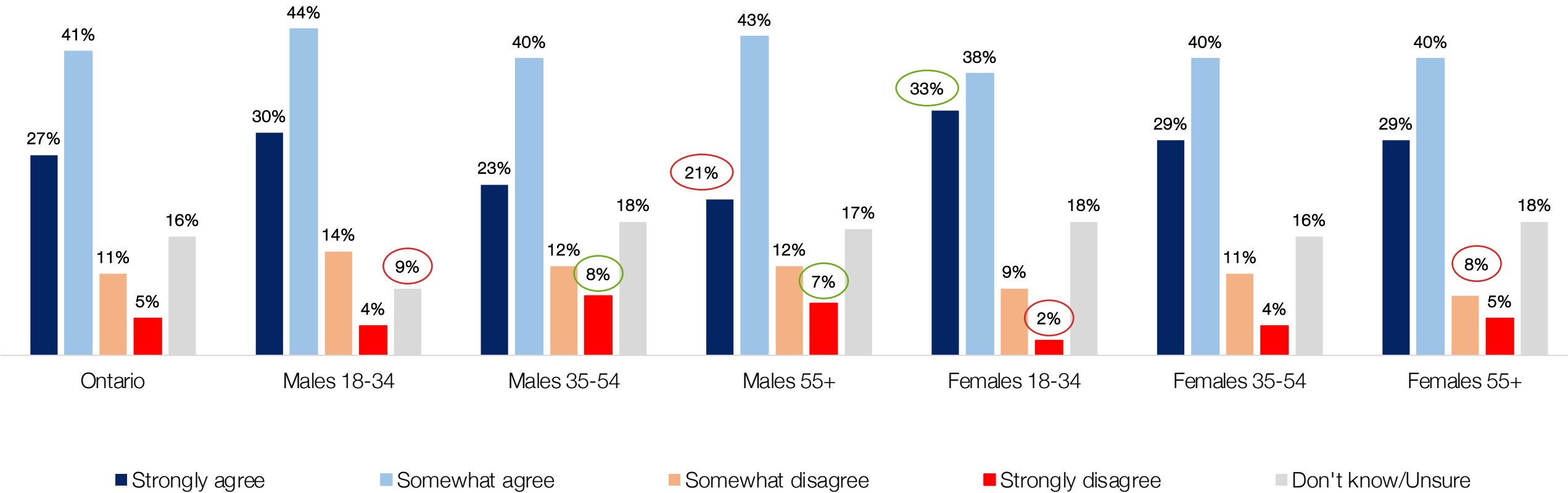


Q20 - Do you agree or disagree that the laws in Ontario need to change so that families and physicians can provide mental health and addictions treatment to involuntary patients? Base = 2027

Agree/ disagree that "Drug Treatment Courts" should be offered more widely in Ontario

Age and Gender

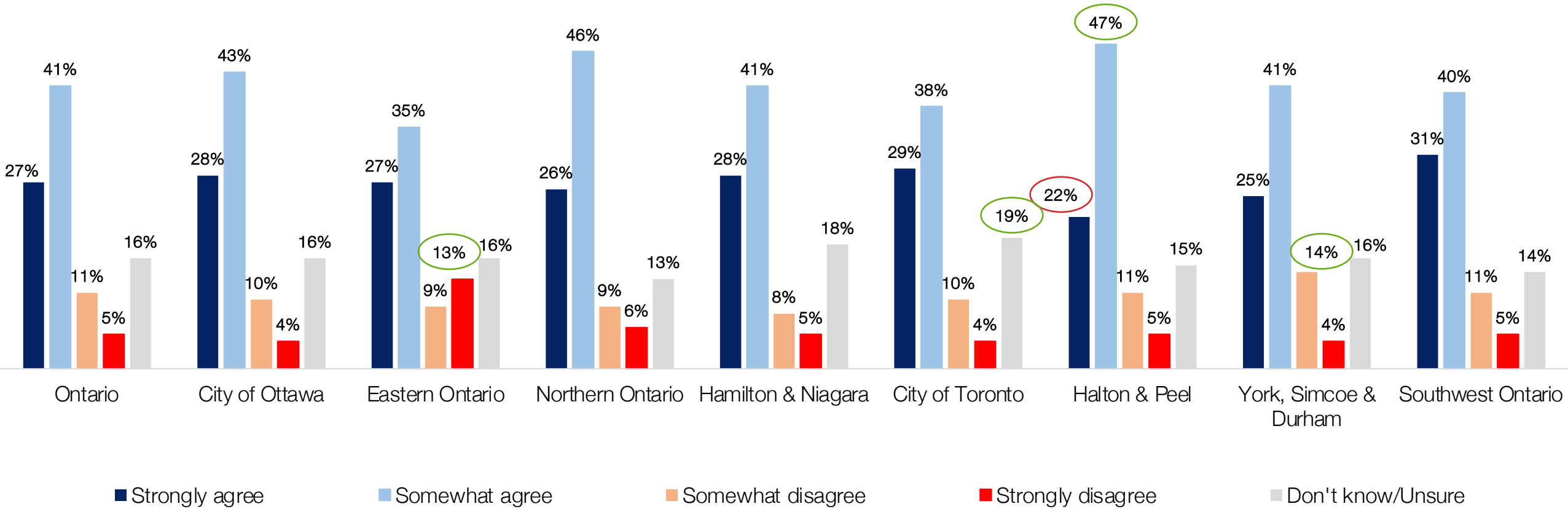
7 out of 10 respondents agreed that drug treatment courts should be offered more widely in Ontario. Females were even stronger in their support of drug treatment courts compared to males.



Q21 - Drug Treatment Courts provide judicially-supervised treatment instead of incarcerating individuals who have a substance use problem that is related to their criminal activities (e.g., drug-related offences such as drug possession, use, or non-commercial trafficking and/or property offences committed to support their drug use). Do you agree or disagree that "Drug Treatment Courts" should be offered more widely throughout Ontario? Base = 2027

Agree/ disagree that "Drug Treatment Courts" should be offered more widely in Ontario

Respondents broke out roughly the same way across the regions of Ontario.



Q21 - Drug Treatment Courts provide judicially-supervised treatment instead of incarcerating individuals who have a substance use problem that is related to their criminal activities (e.g., drug-related offences such as drug possession, use, or non-commercial trafficking and/or property offences committed to support their drug use). Do you agree or disagree that "Drug Treatment Courts" should be offered more widely throughout Ontario? Base = 2027