



How Changing Values, Demographics, and Economic Context are Reshaping Canada

Implications for the Future

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Outline

1. What are the crucial shifts going on in our society over the last 20 years?
2. How do they reflect or influence the current state of news and journalism?
3. What guidance do they give us for the future?

The Four Trends

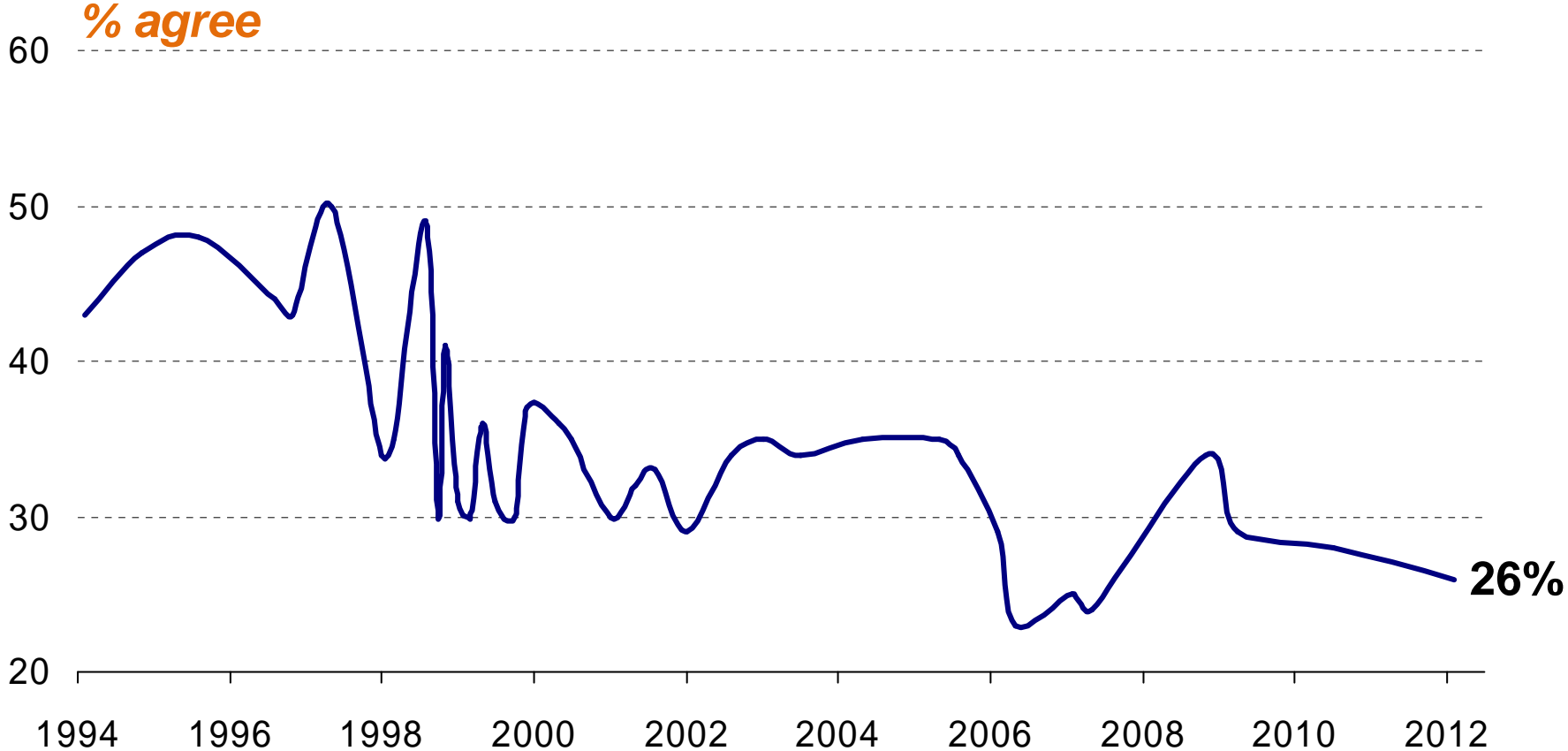
1. From nervous 90s to End of Progress
2. Gerontocracy and generational tensions
3. Mainstream and new media/dramatic shifts
4. A polarizing landscape and an apocryphal right shift



1. From “Nervous 90s” to the security decade to an end of progress

Tracking perceptions of economic security

Q. Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: ***I feel I have lost all control over my economic future.***

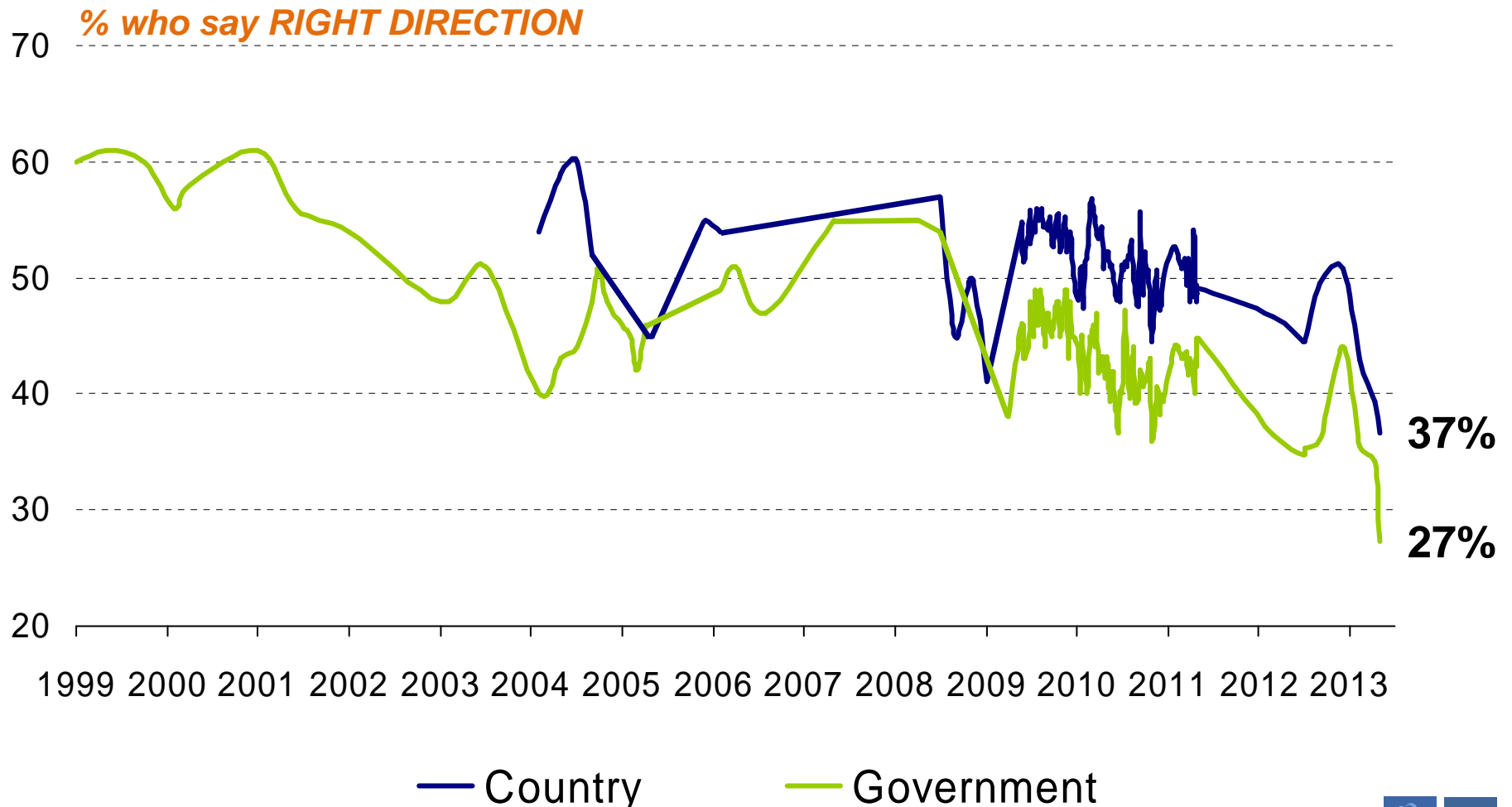


BASE: Canadians; most recent data point January 27 – February 8, 2012 (n=1,922)

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Direction of country/government

Q. All things considered, would you say the country/government is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

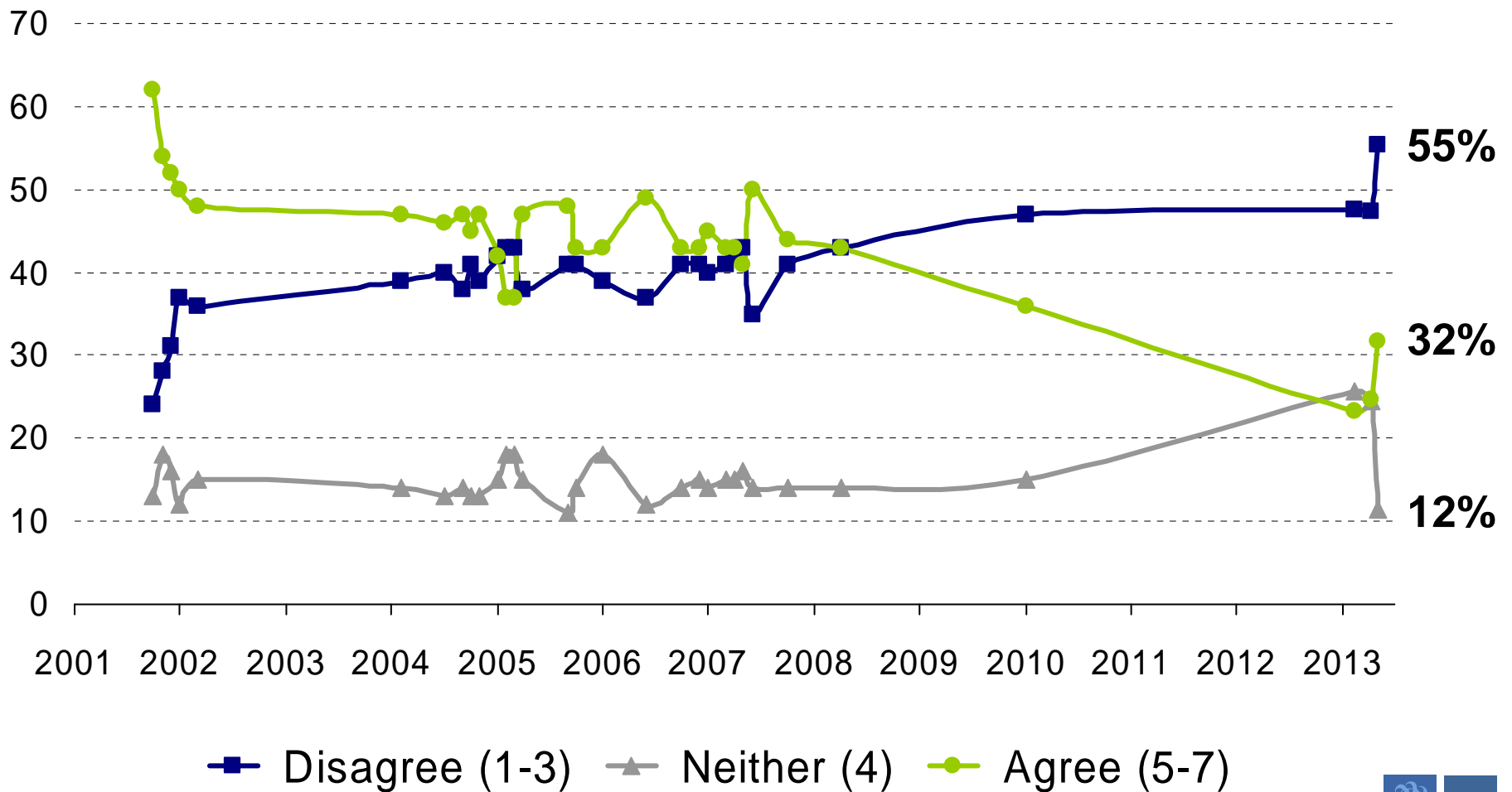


BASE: Canadians; most recent data point April 30-May 2 (n=644/665)

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Additional powers for law enforcement

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: police and intelligence agencies should have more powers to ensure security even if it means Canadians have to give up some personal privacy safeguards?

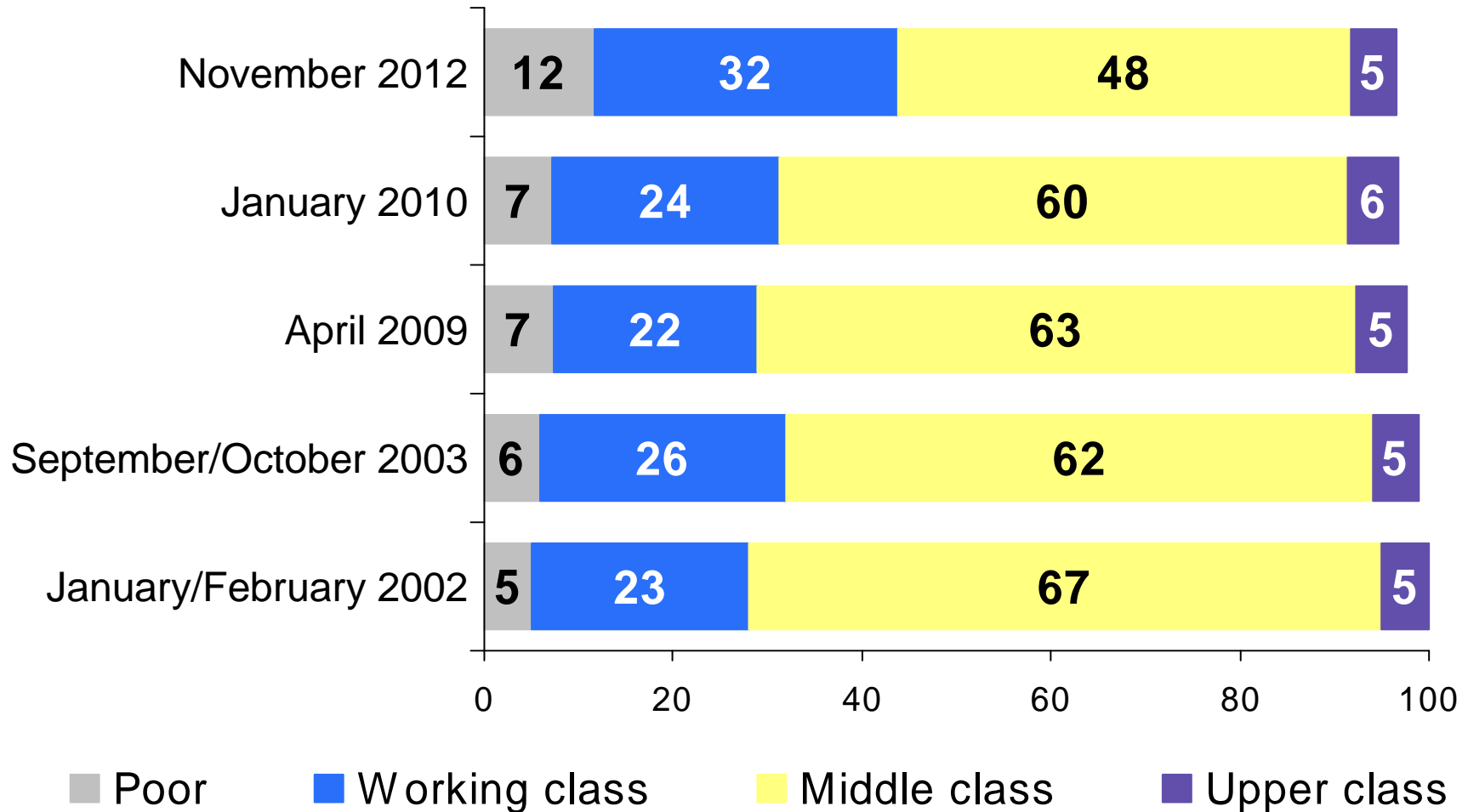


BASE: Canadians; most recent data point April 30-May 2, 2013 (n=1,309)

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Self-rated social class

Q. *Would you describe you and your household as poor, working class, middle class, or upper class?*



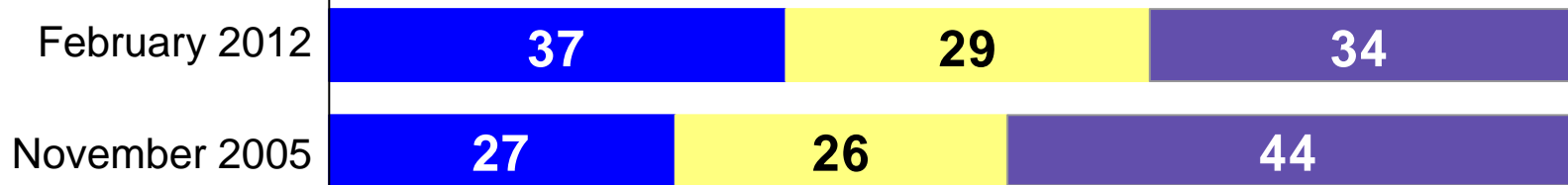


**2. A growing generational fracture:
aging, gerontocracy, and the kids
aren't alright**

Changes in quality of life over time

25 years ago

Thinking about your overall quality of life, would you say that **you are** better off, worse off, or about the same as the previous generation was **25 years ago**?



25 yrs from now

Thinking about your overall quality of life do you think **the next generation will be** better off, worse off, or about the same as you are **25 years from now**?



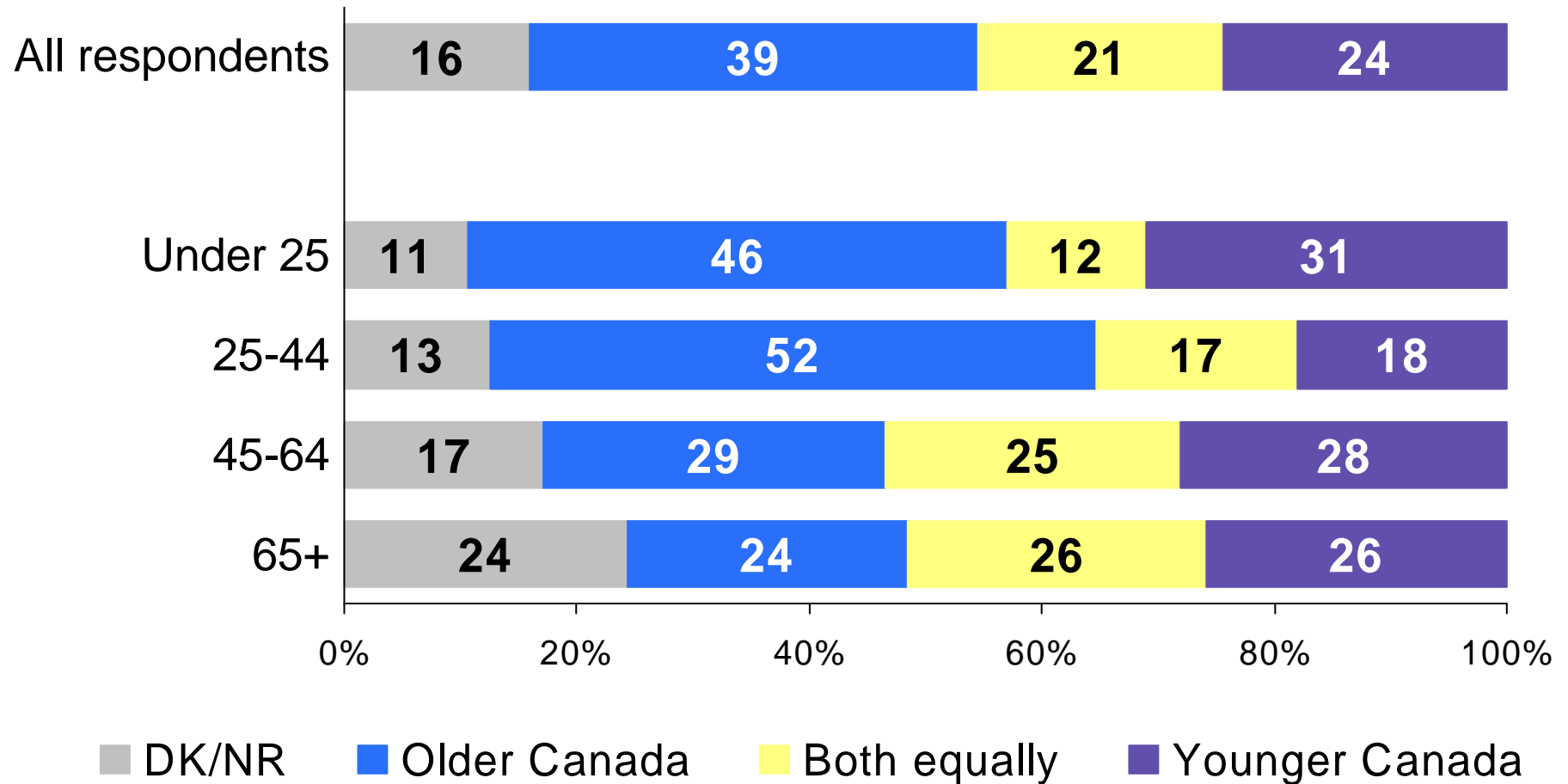
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Worse off ■ About the same ■ Better off



Treatment of older vs. younger Canada

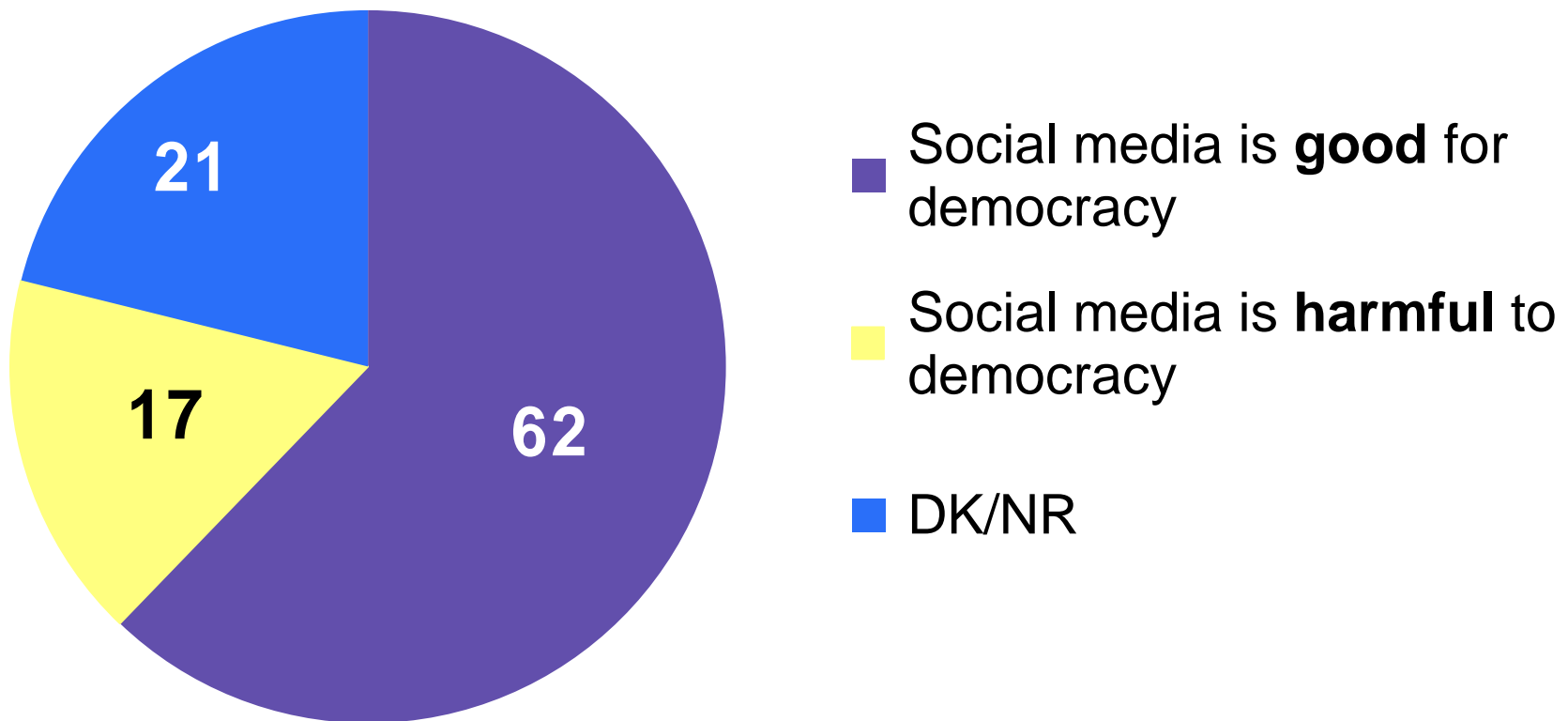
Q. About half of Canada's population, younger Canada, is under the age of 42, while the other half, older Canada, is over 42. Do you think the Government of Canada focuses more on the values and interests of younger Canada or older Canada?



3. Shifts in Mainstream and New Media

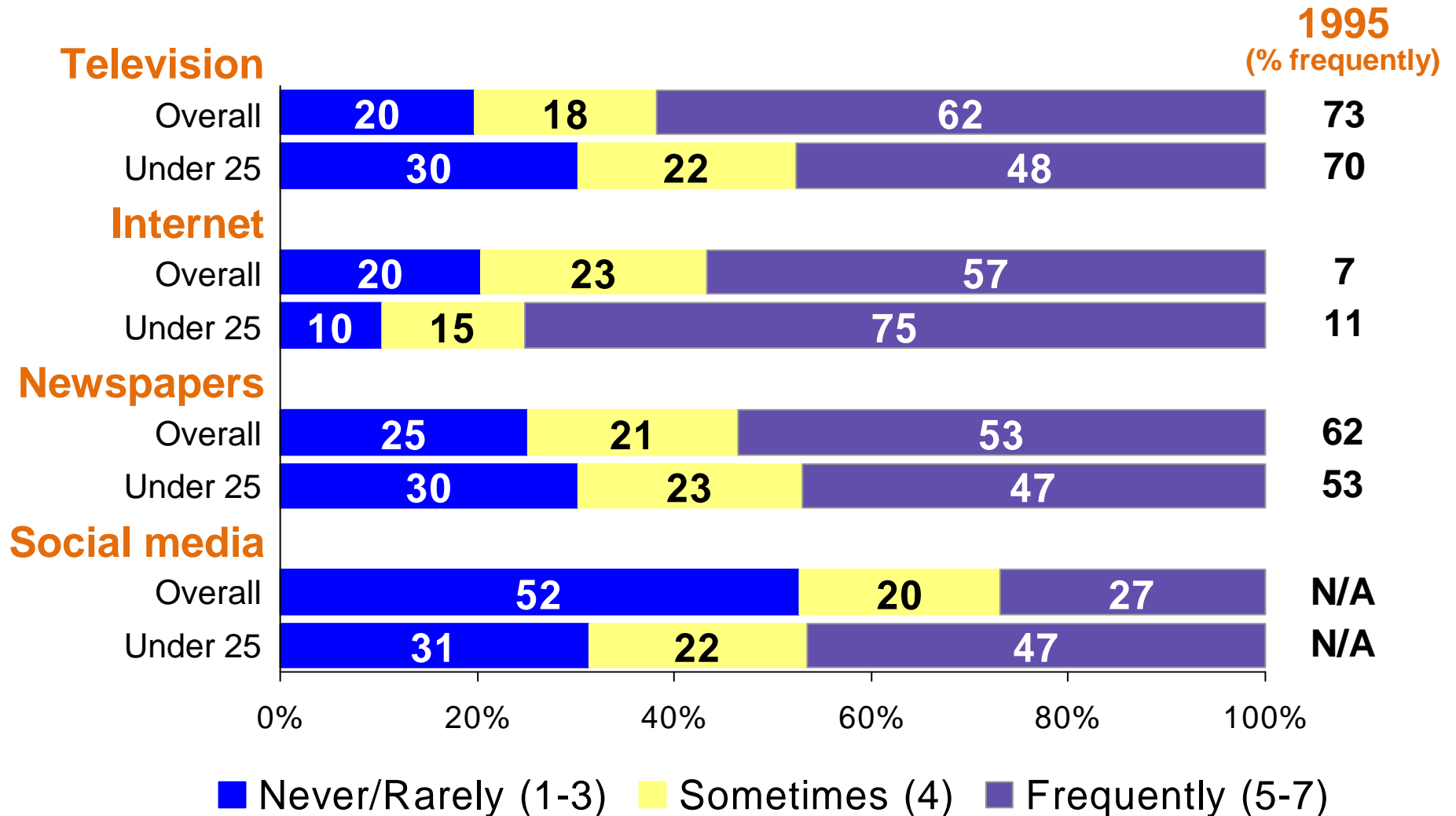
Role of social media in democracy

Q. As you know, the use of social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter has increased dramatically in recent years. **Some people argue that social media is good for democracy** since it offers new ways of participating in politics and communicating with the public. **Other people argue that social networking is harmful to democracy**, since many people will use these websites as a substitute for real world action. **Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?**



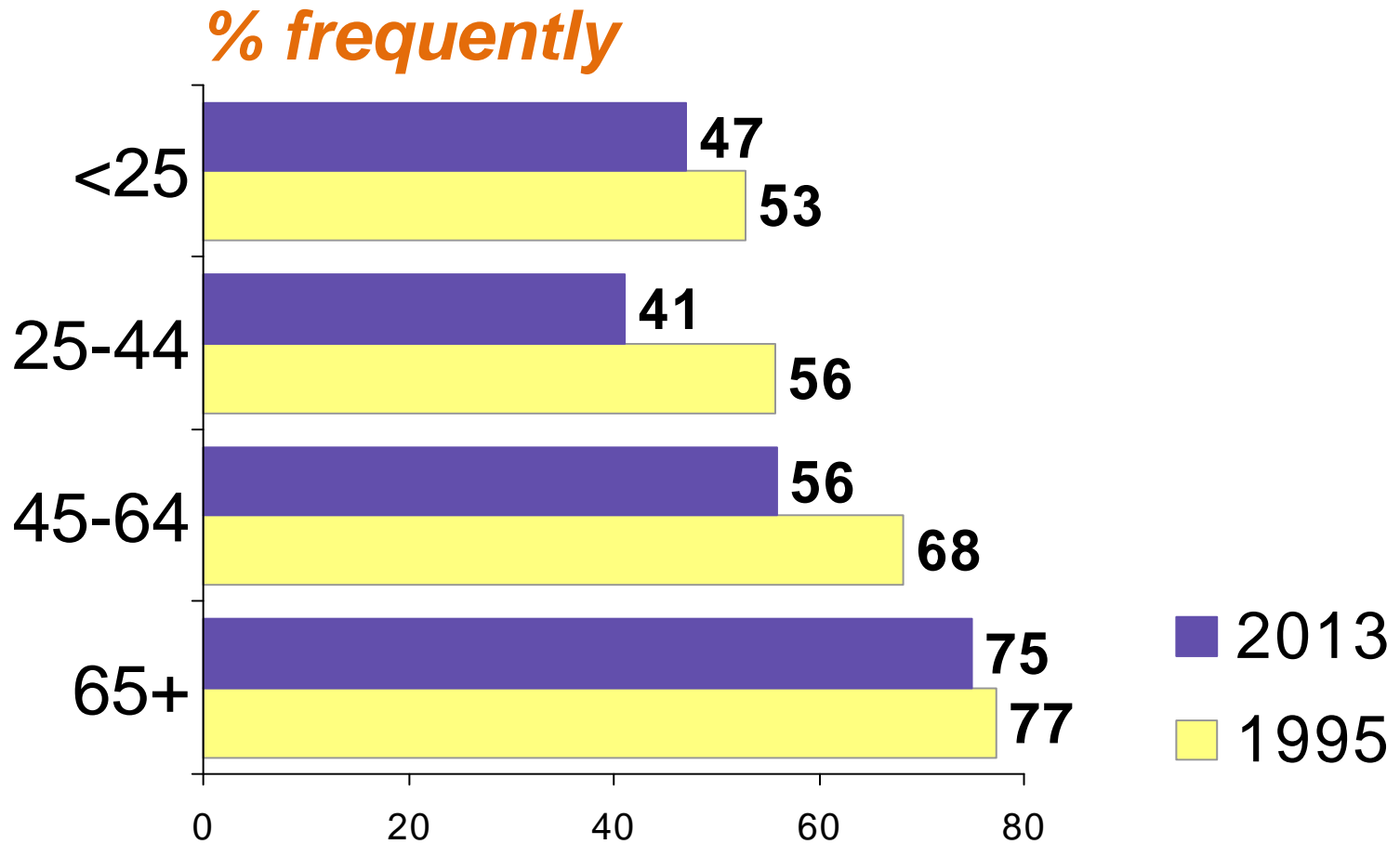
Preferred news medium

Q. How frequently do you follow **political and governmental affairs** in each of the following?



Shifts in newspaper readership by age

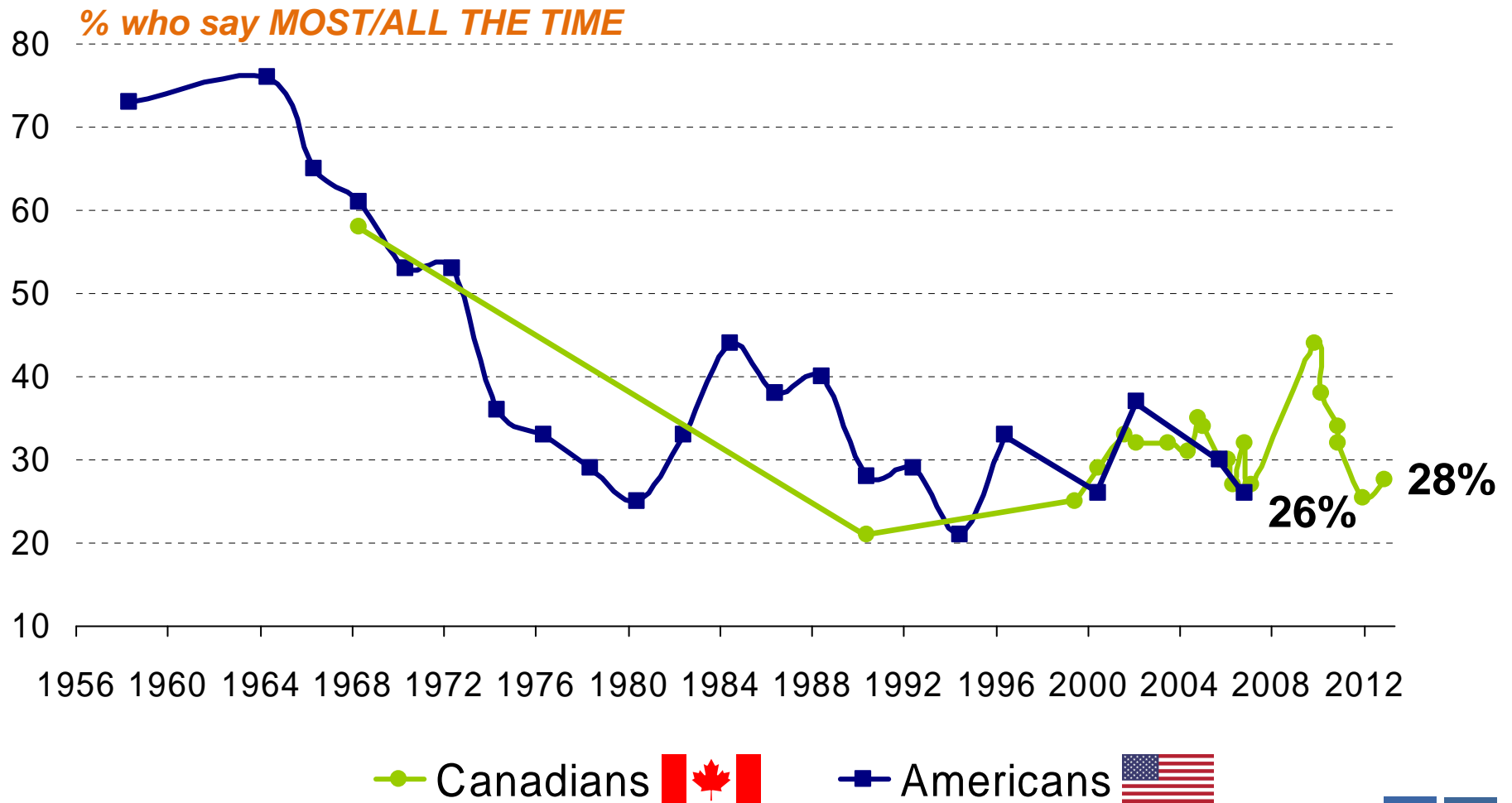
Q. How frequently do you follow political and governmental affairs in each of the following? **Newspapers**



**4. Values evolving: Post-materialism,
trust disappearing, the apocryphal
right shift**

Tracking trust in government

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

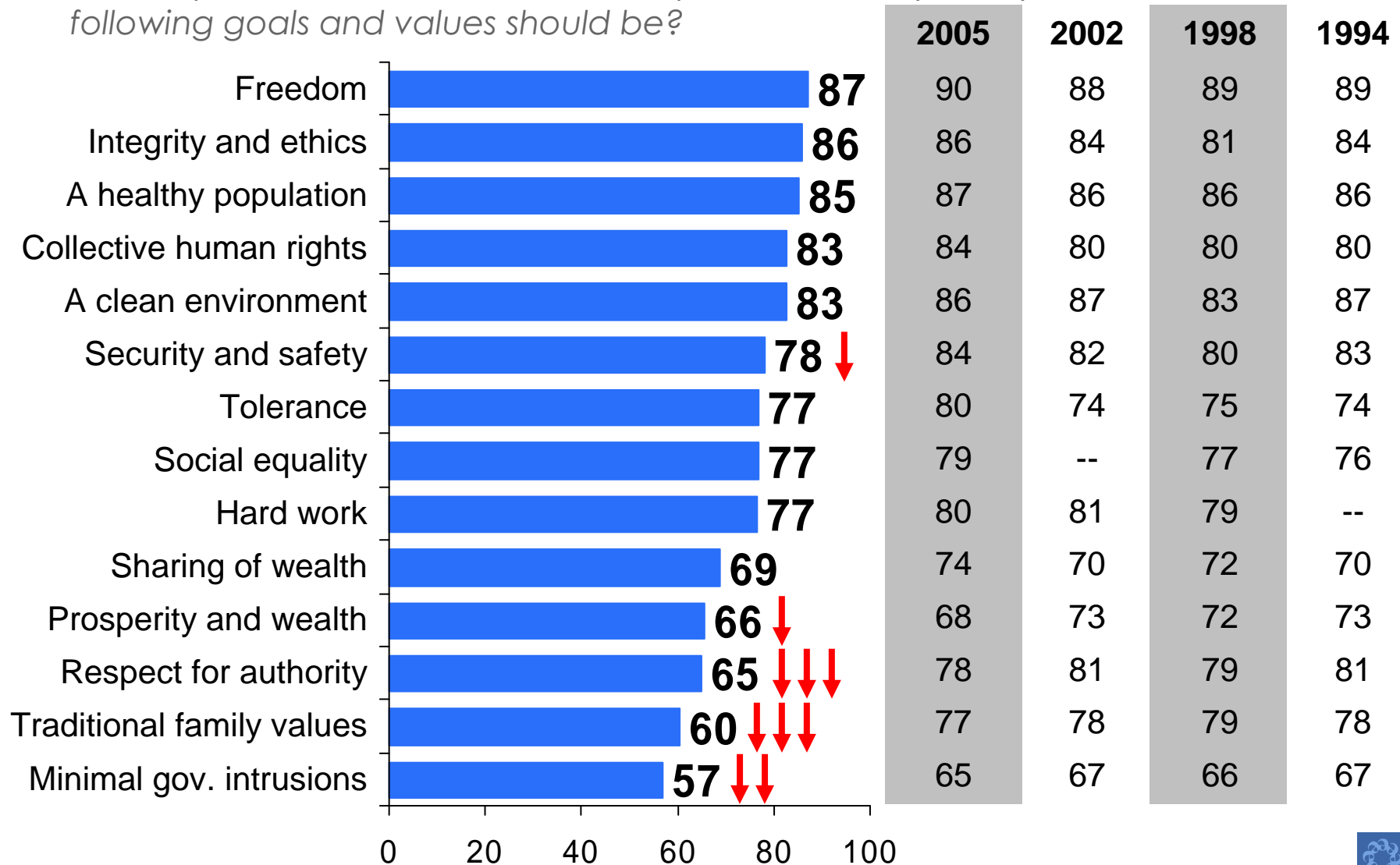


BASE: Canadians; most recent data point November 20-28, 2013 (n=1,500)

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Most important goals and values

Q. If you were to direct Canadian society as to which goals or values should be most important in its direction, how important would you say each of the following goals and values should be?



BASE: Canadians; November 20-29, 2012 (n=1,181)

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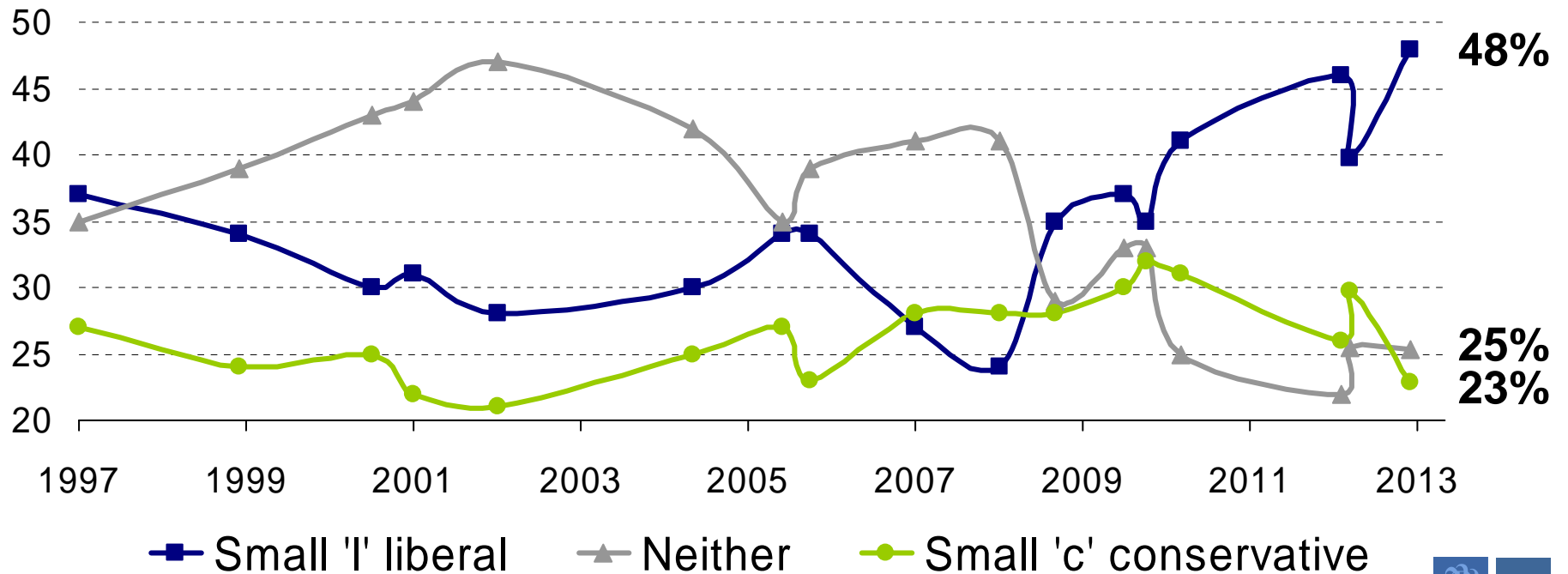
Perceived shift in ideology

Q. When it comes to political ideology, some people say that Canada is moving to the right while others say it is moving to the left. Do you believe Canada is moving right, moving left, or not moving at all?



■ DK/NR
 ■ Moving left
 ■ Not moving at all
 ■ Moving right

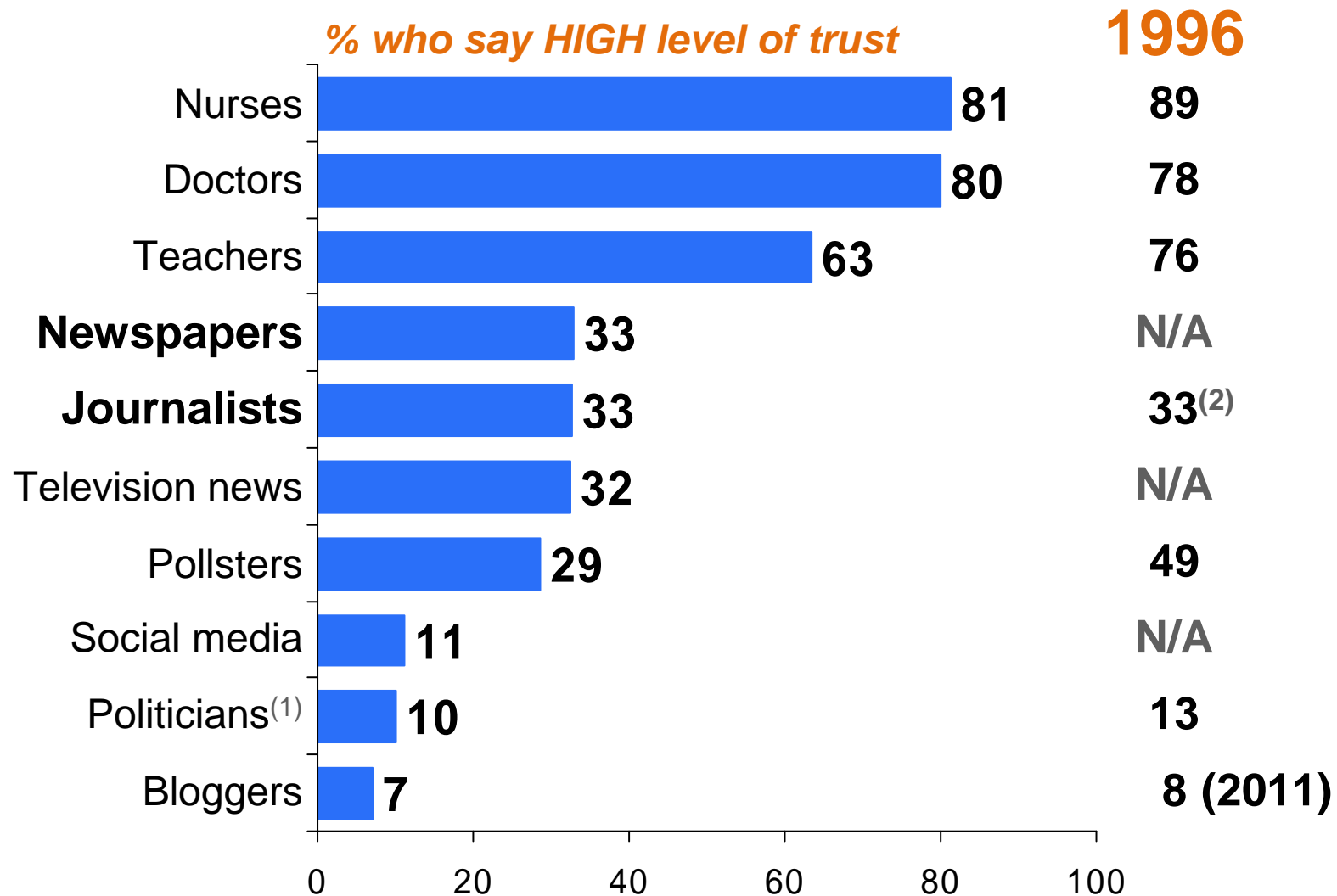
Q. Do you consider yourself a small "c" conservative or a small "l" liberal?



■ Small 'l' liberal
 ▲ Neither
 ● Small 'c' conservative

Trust in institutions/occupations

Q. How much trust do you have in each of the following?



(1) Data from March 2011

(2) 1996 question worded "Journalists and Reporters"

BASE: Canadians; April 30-May 1, 2013 (n=1,309)

A Note on Polling Survey Methodology and the Media

A Note on Polling and the Media (i)

- » Polling confronts same challenges
- » Highly mixed response
- » Declining trust
- » Media-Pollster relationship broken
- » Pollsters participate in promiscuous auction to the bottom
- » Statistical literacy low, competing claims which occlude commercial interests

A Note on Polling and the Media (ii)

- » Correspondence to election outcome increasingly flawed yardstick
- » Statistical theory still requires random probability
 - Complex, counterintuitive
- » Problems affect measuring your audience
- » Flawed feedback not advisable in such a turbulent climate
- » NADbank (and others) still committed to accuracy

Conclusions

Conclusions (i)

- » Newspapers remain trusted, widely read
 - Seen as crucial public institution
- » As a business, despite huge market penetration, profound financial pressures
- » Future is digital, but this accounts for picayune fraction of current revenues
- » Hard to focus on the 10% when the 90% is struggling to pay bills and has little future
- » Savage cutting is producing content reductions which are reducing readership/loyalty (Pew)

Conclusions (ii)

- » These problems are being driven by major societal shifts
- » While technology has been the immediate engine of change, demographic, cultural, and economic shifts are ultimately just as critical
- » Top of list is a looming generational rupture which is exacerbated by the political field
- » The tepid engagement of younger Canada in democracy mirrors a similar challenge for newspapers and journalism
- » Just as younger, “next” Canada has become relatively smaller, they are opting out of democracy and public institutions (e.g. newspapers)

Conclusions (iii)

- » A sclerotic gerontocracy will not solve the end of progress challenge
- » Social media, underneath the surface allure, may be part of the problem
 - Are we amusing ourselves to death?
 - Is Twitter the new *soma*?
- » The digital generation eschews paying for intellectual property

Fitting news and journalism into this picture

- » Among the glitter, what is the continued case for news/journalism?
 - Digital yes, but what about the 90%?
 - Content, intellectual property, and sorting through the disruptions
 - Crowd-sourced journalism and punditry will be temporary (public not impressed)
 - How to deal with the remaining “free” source (CBC? Huffington Post?)
 - The vortex of the permanent campaign

Three preconditions for future success

1. The future is digital but it can *not* be free
2. Quality content, engagement, and independence are the bedrock
3. The shared challenge of our times is to recapture a belief in progress that actively includes a succession to “next” Canada



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