



Human rights in Canada today

A national opinion survey

The Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation's
7th Annual Conference on Public Policy
Winnipeg, MB November 18-20, 2010



ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH GROUP



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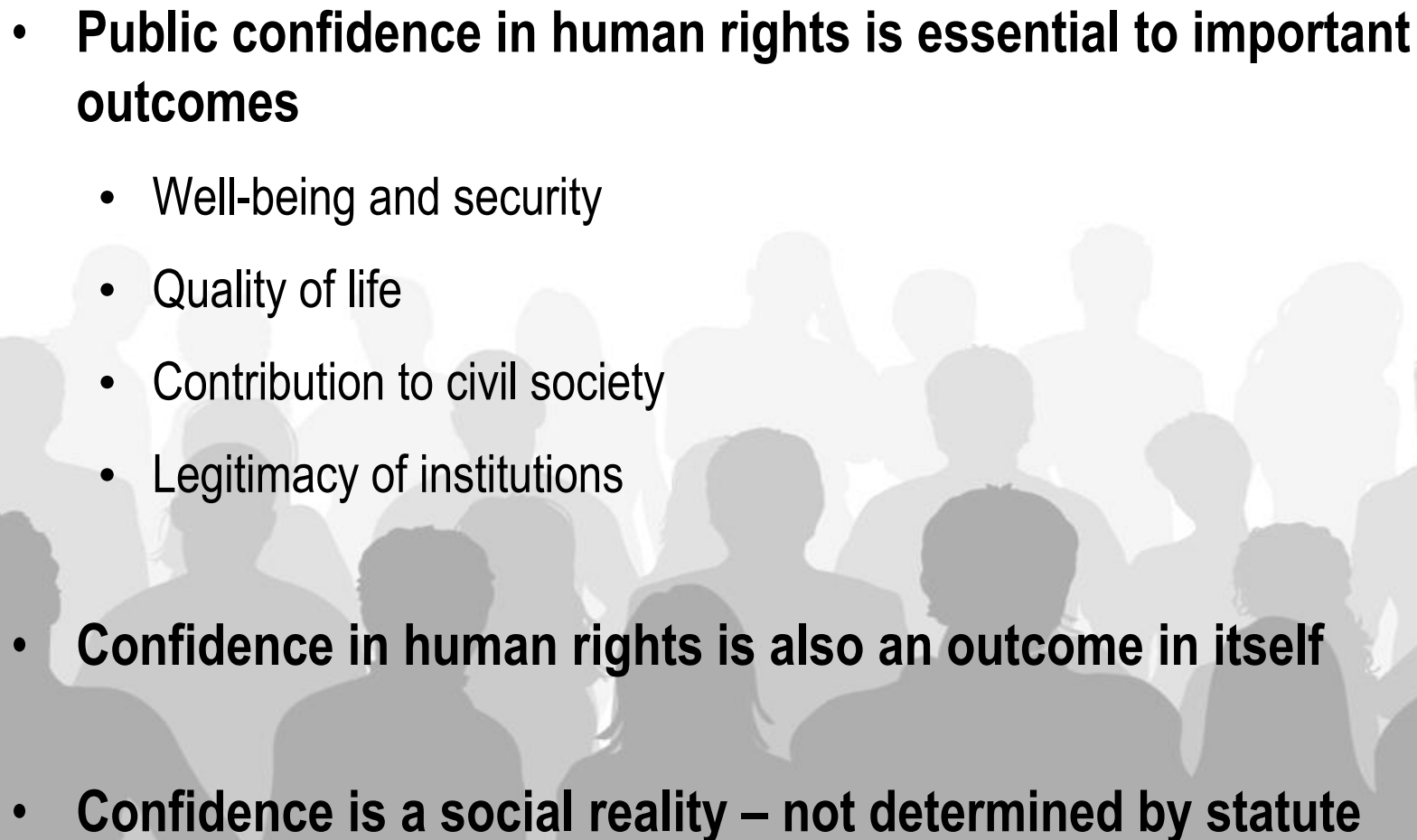
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Why public opinion matters

- **Public confidence in human rights is essential to important outcomes**
 - Well-being and security
 - Quality of life
 - Contribution to civil society
 - Legitimacy of institutions
 - **Confidence in human rights is also an outcome in itself**
 - **Confidence is a social reality – not determined by statute**
- 
- A background image showing a large crowd of people in silhouette, rendered in various shades of gray. The silhouettes are of diverse shapes and sizes, representing a multicultural and diverse group of individuals. They are scattered across the slide, with some appearing more prominent than others, creating a sense of a large gathering or public opinion.

Why do a survey

- **Public views on human rights are rarely heard through systematic research**
 - **Determine how well we are doing in meeting citizen expectations and priorities**
 - **Identify gaps and misperceptions that call for attention**
- 
- A background image showing a large crowd of people in silhouette, rendered in shades of gray. The silhouettes are of various shapes and sizes, representing a diverse group of individuals. They are arranged in a way that suggests a dense crowd, with some figures in the foreground being more prominent than others in the background.

Survey focus

- State of human rights in Canada today
- Impact of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Responsibilities of governments to address past violations
- Generational differences in perspectives

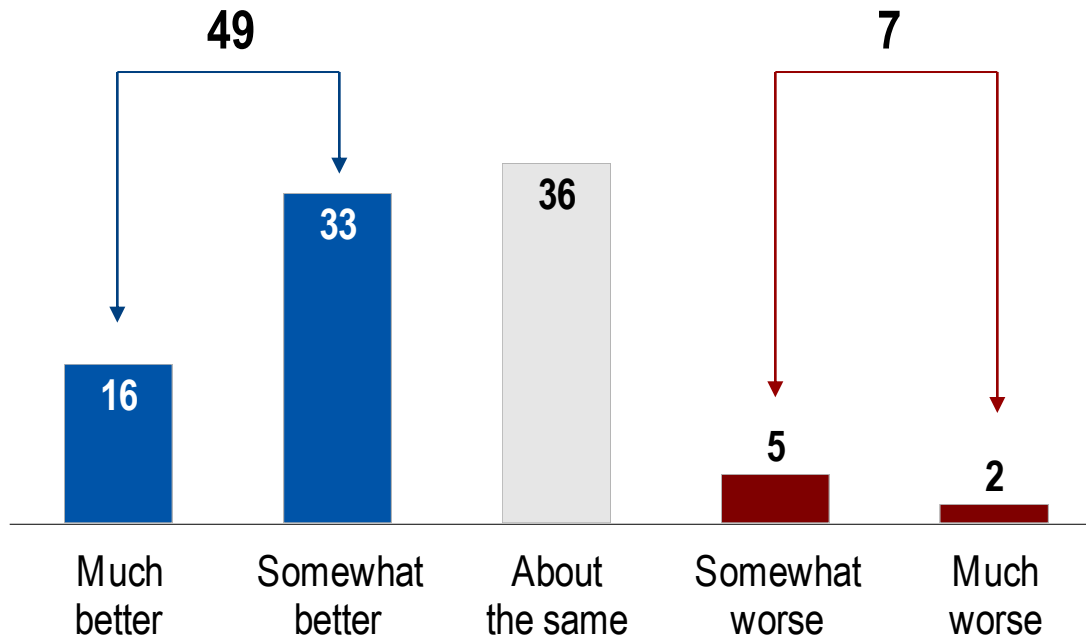
The research

- **Trudeau Foundation** – commissioned national survey of Canadians
 - Telephone survey with 2,117 Canadians (18+)
 - Conducted September 29 – October 21, 2010
 - Margin of sampling error: +/-2.1% (19 in 20 samples)
 - Questions developed by Environics, in consultation with sponsors



State of human rights in Canada today

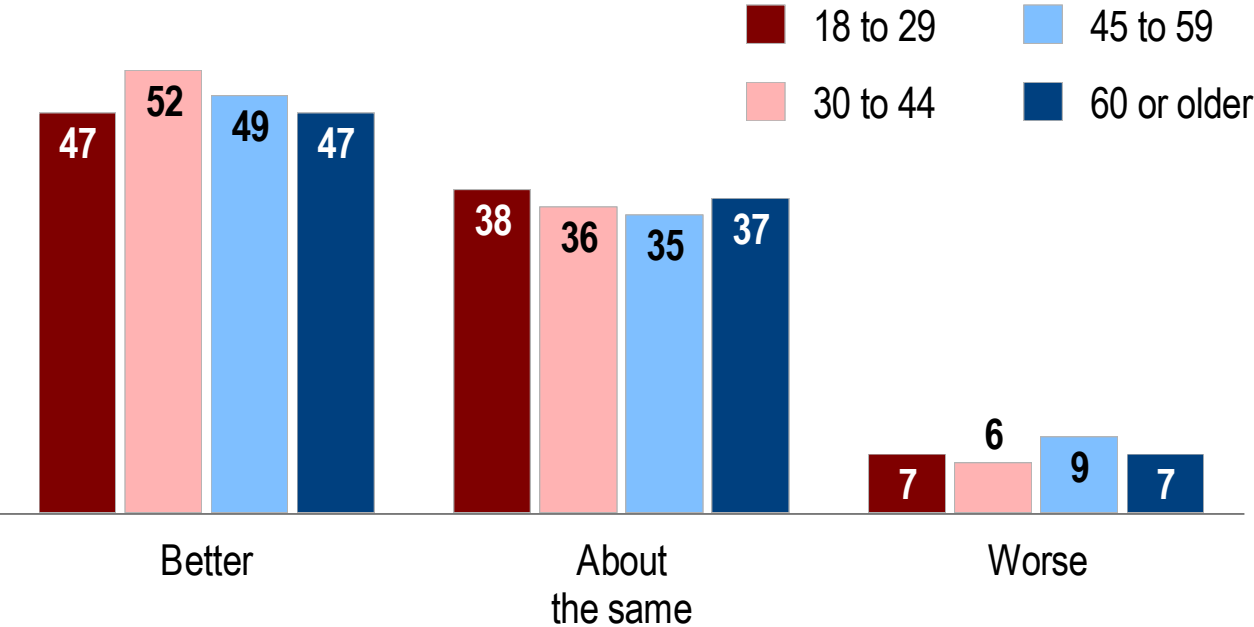
Canada's record on human rights, compared with other western democracies



Q.7

Canada's record on human rights compared to other western democracies

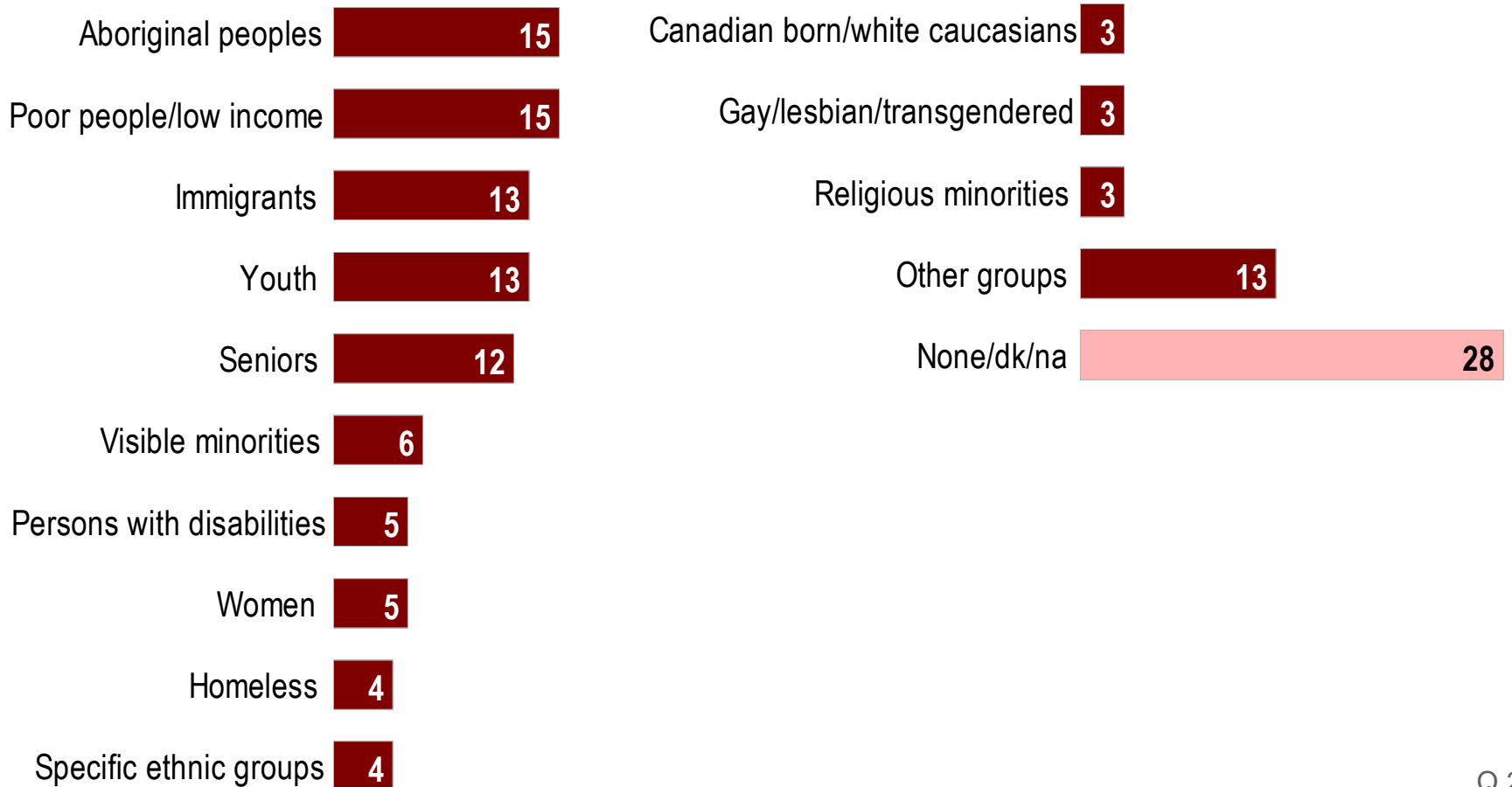
By age



Q.7

Which groups in Canada are most vulnerable today?

Unprompted responses



Q.2

Which groups in Canada are most vulnerable today?

Regional and demographic differences

Low income (15%)

Quebec
High income

< Low income (10%) >

Aboriginal peoples

Toronto
Manitoba
Saskatchewan
University educated

Immigrants

Quebec
University educated

Youth (13%)

Rural
Francophone

< Youth (6%) >

Seniors (12%)

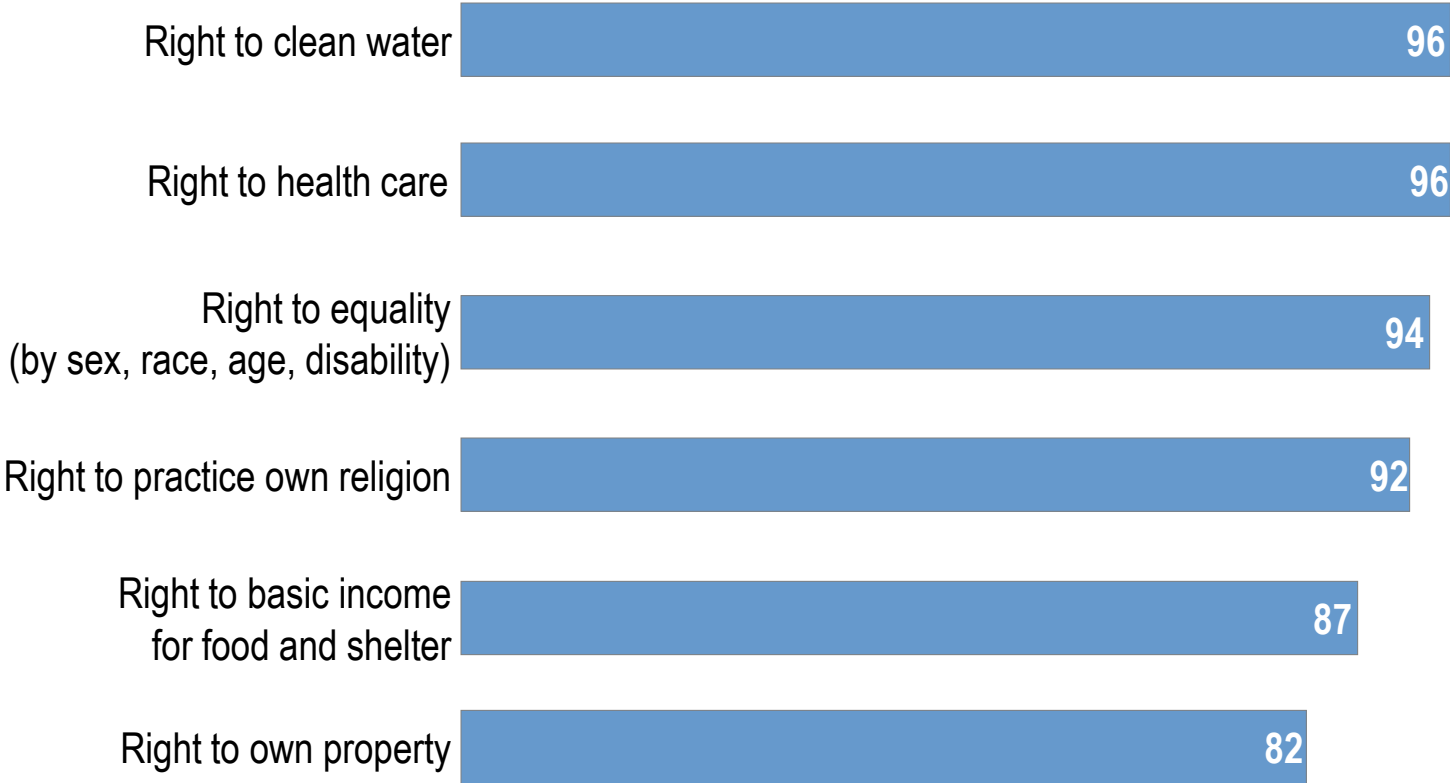
Quebec
Women
Seniors (16%)

Women (5%)

Women (6%)

Q.2

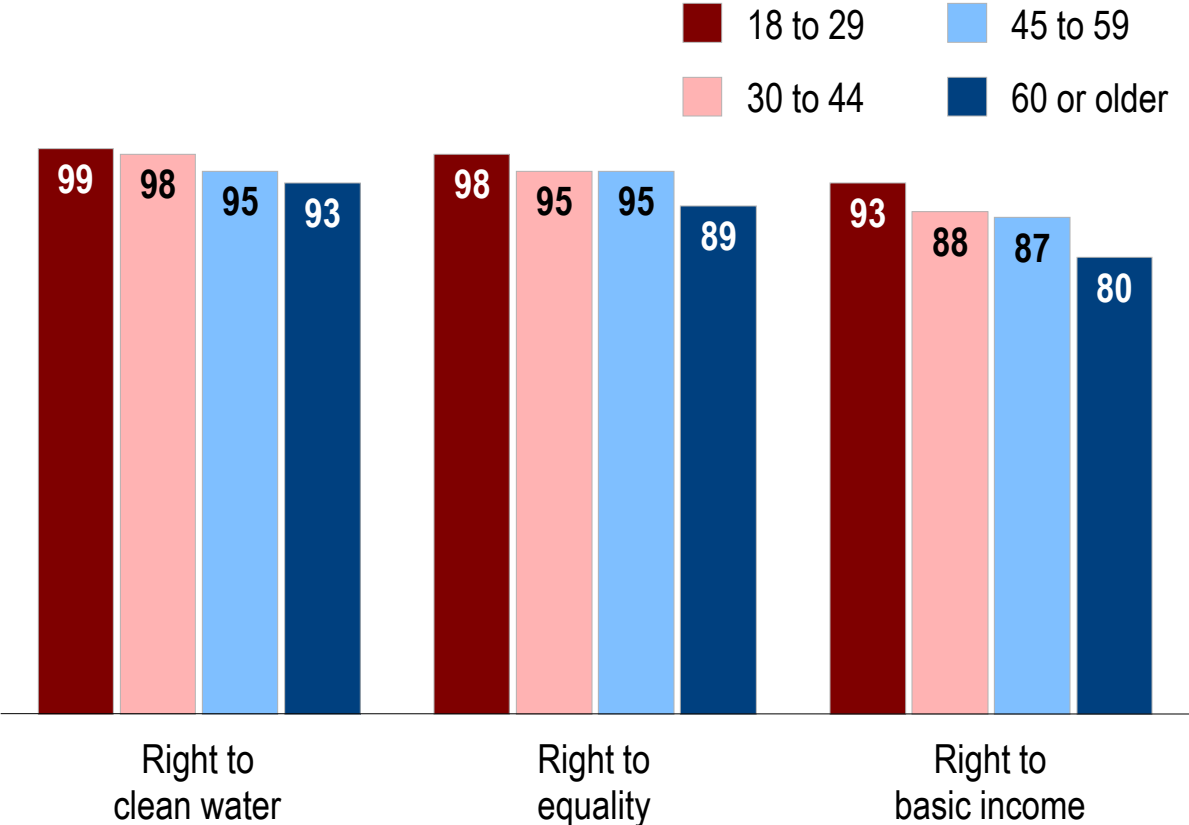
Should be guaranteed as a human right for all Canadians



Q.1a-f

Should be guaranteed as a human right in Canada

By age



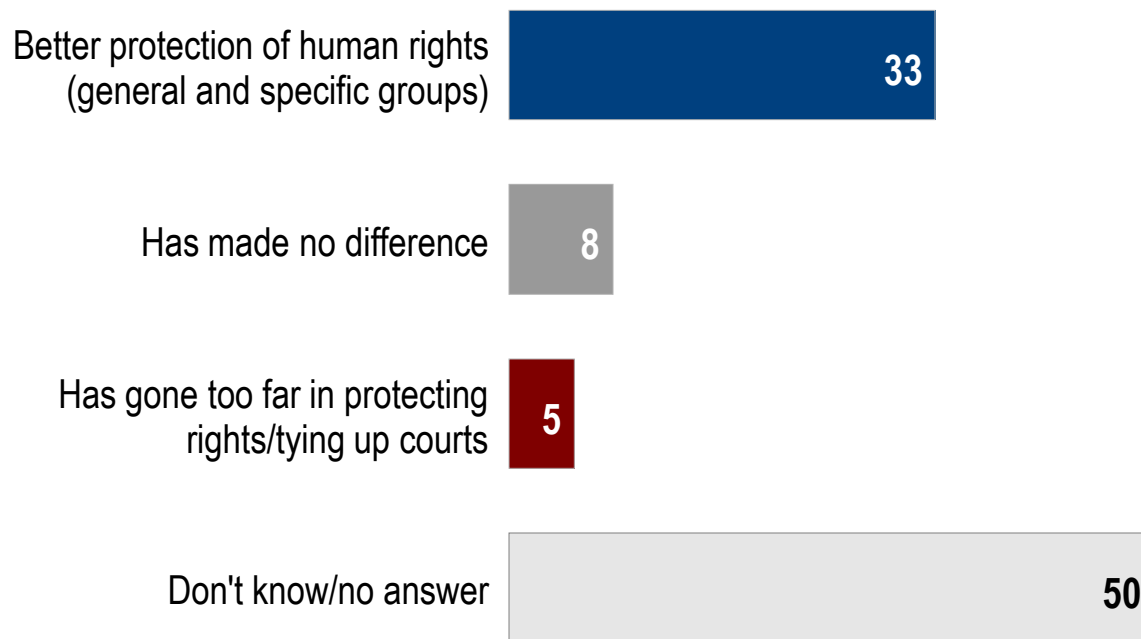
Q.1



Impact of the Charter

How has Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms made a difference in how human rights are protected?

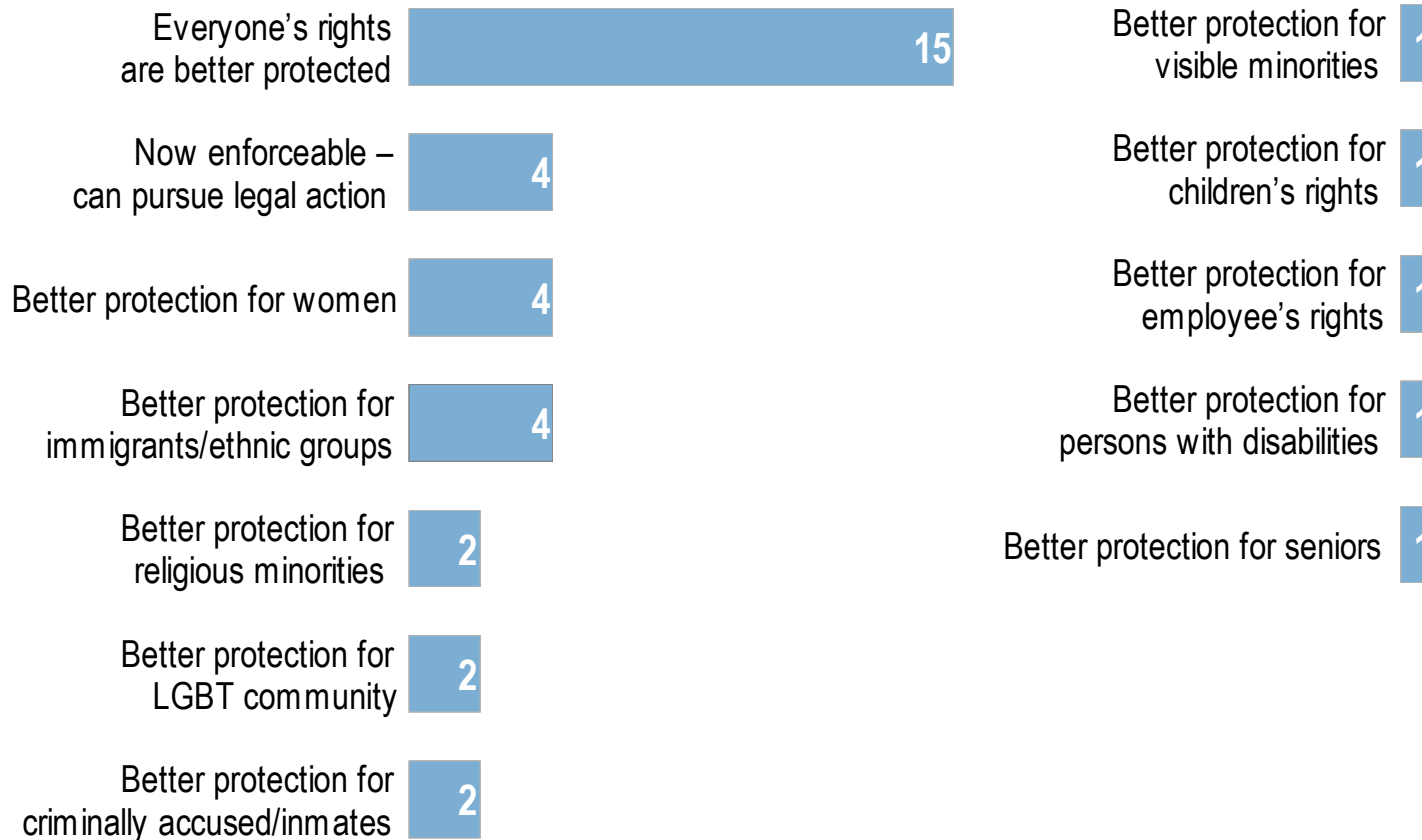
Unprompted responses – net categories



Q.3

How Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms has better protected human rights

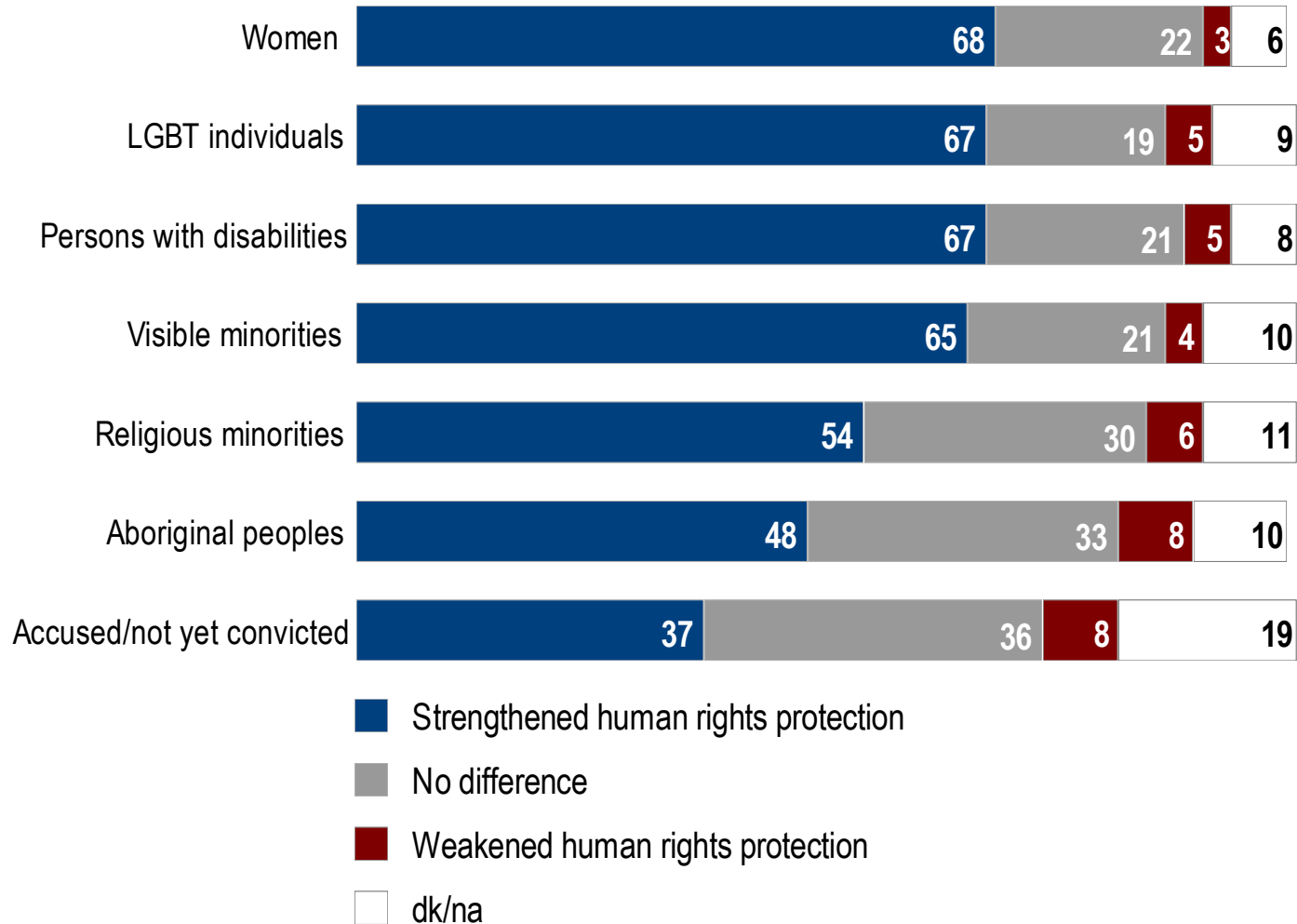
Unprompted responses among those who say Charter has provided better protection



Q.3

Charter's impact on specific groups of Canadians

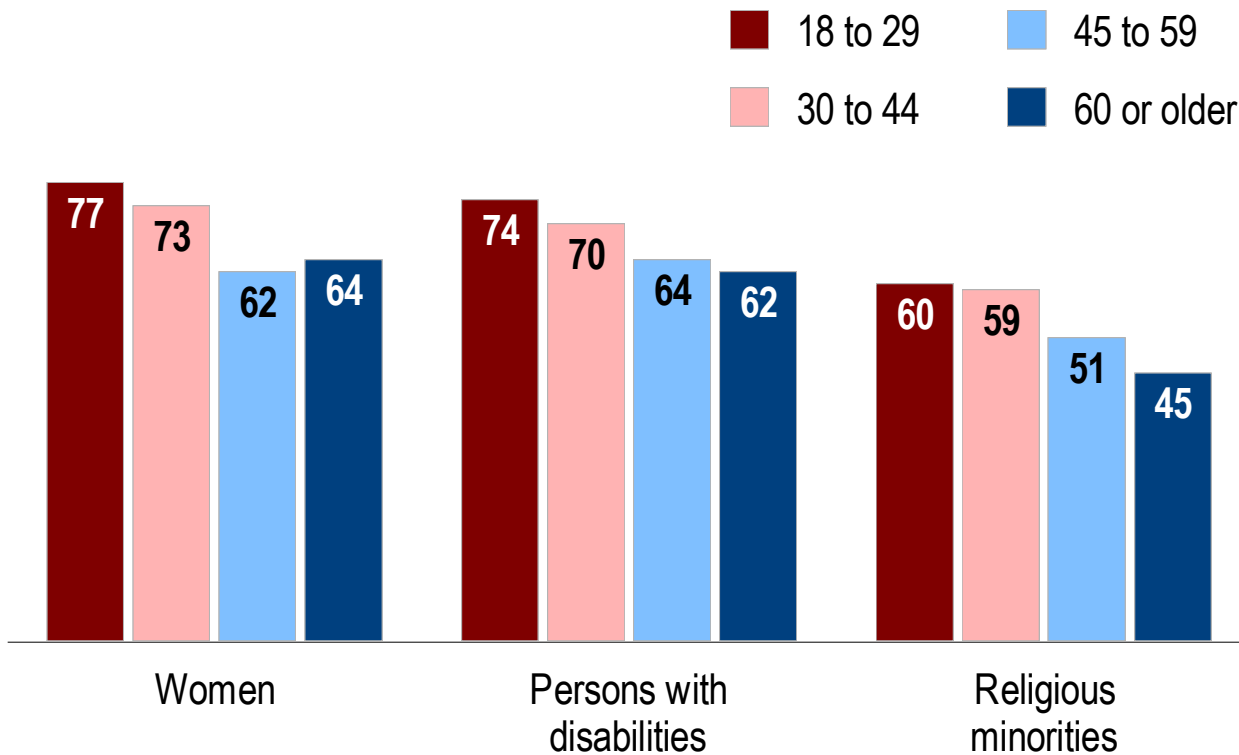
Prompted responses



Q.4

Charter has strengthened protection of specific groups

By age

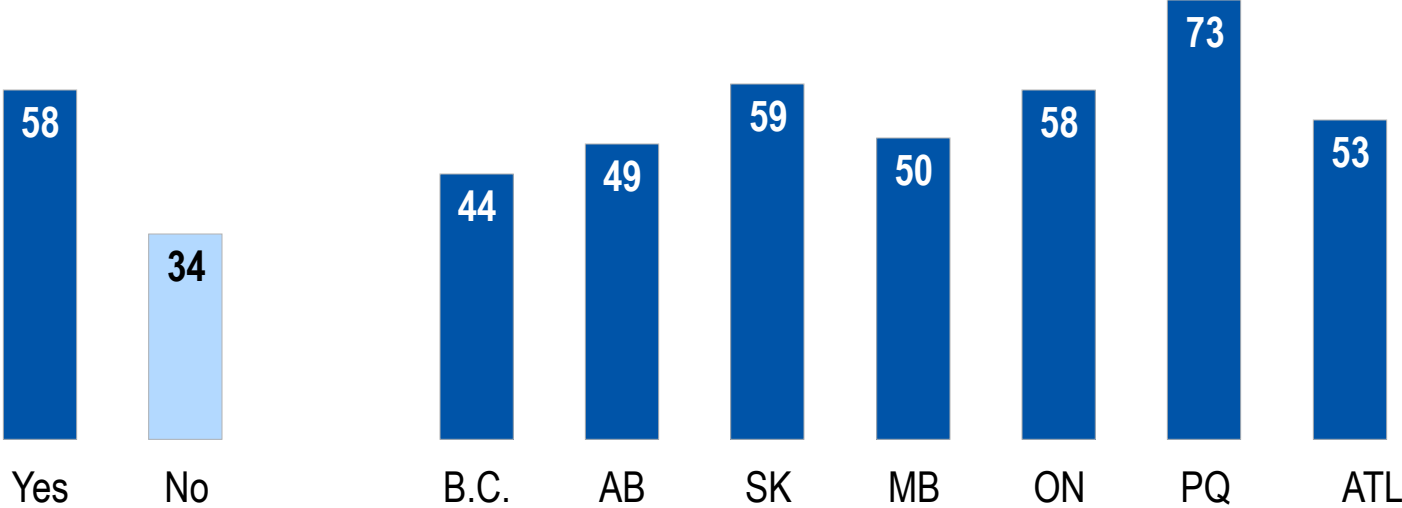


Q.4

Responsibility of government to address past wrongs



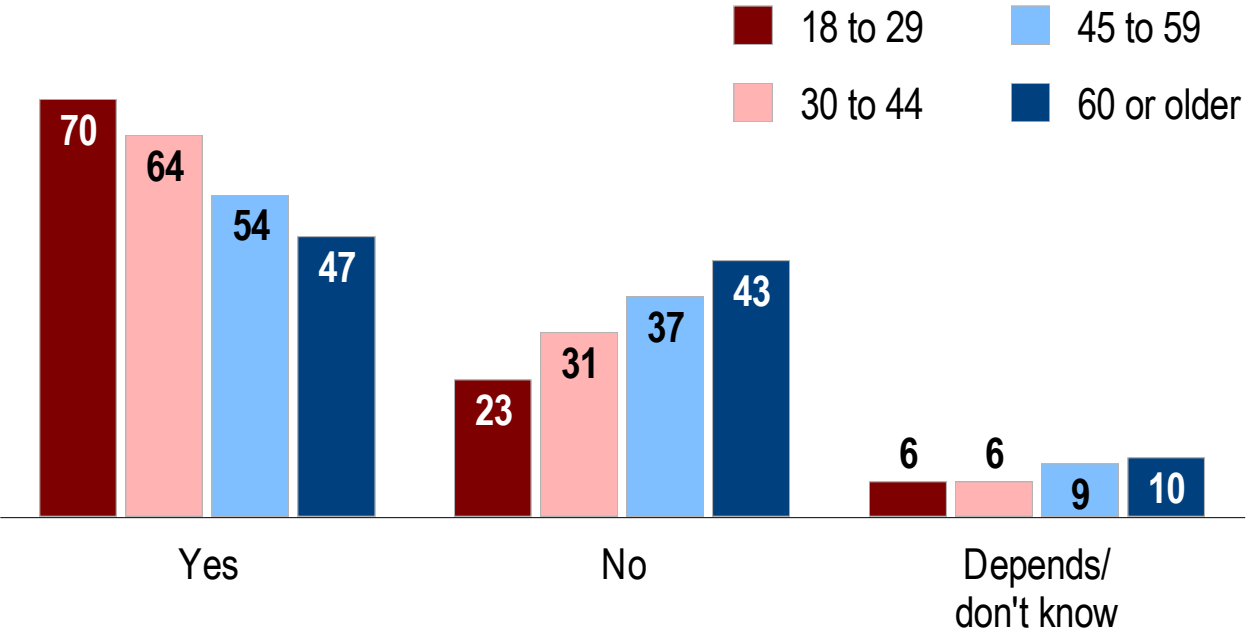
Is a current federal government responsible to address human rights violations of past governments?



Q.5

Current federal government is responsible to address human rights violations of past governments

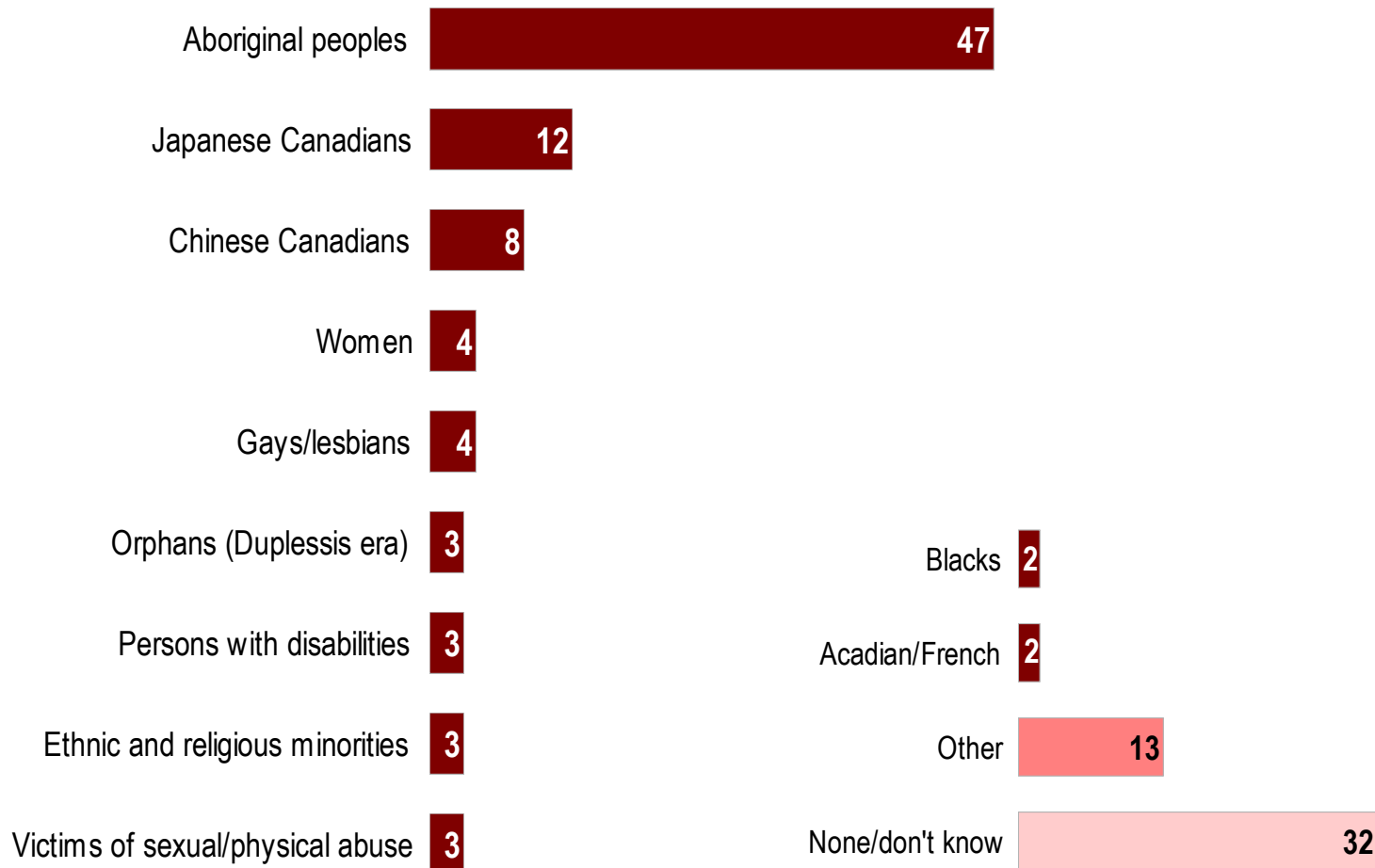
By age



Q.5

Which groups should receive redress from the federal government?

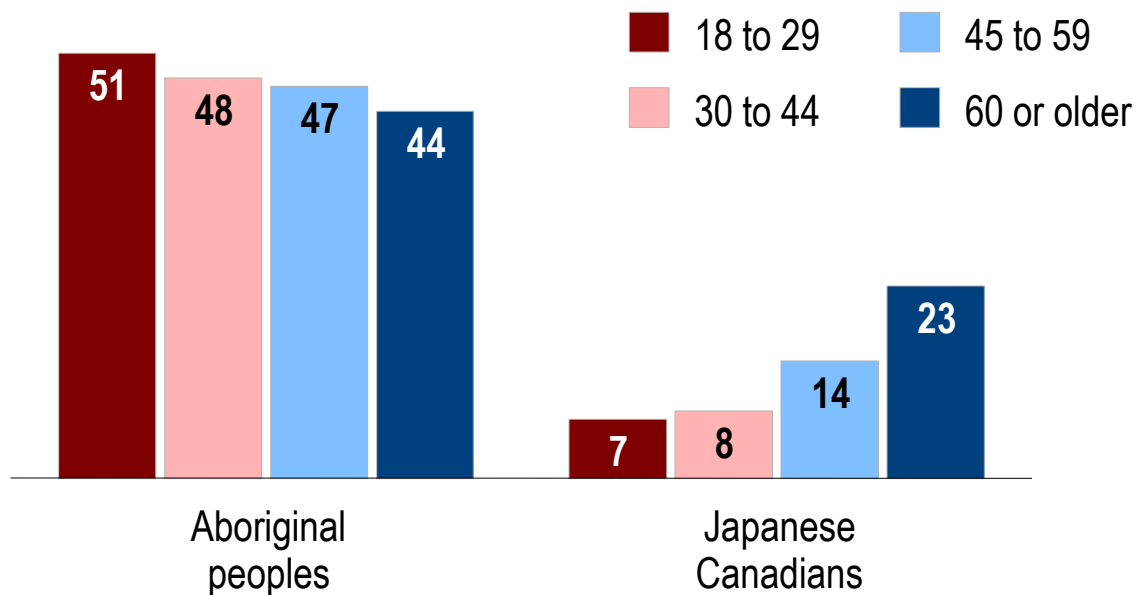
Unprompted responses



Q.6

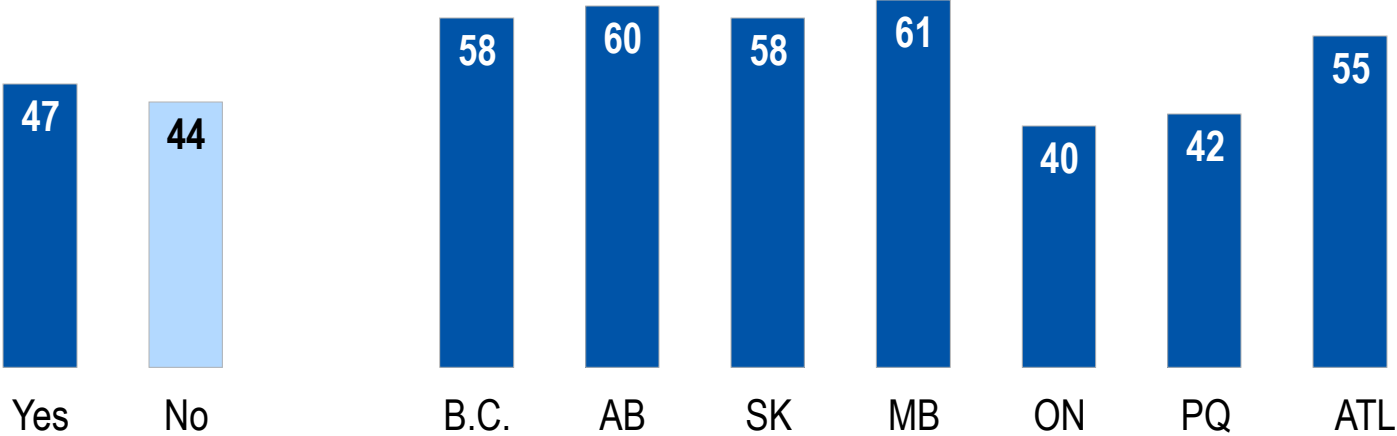
Which groups should receive redress from the federal government?

By age



Q.6

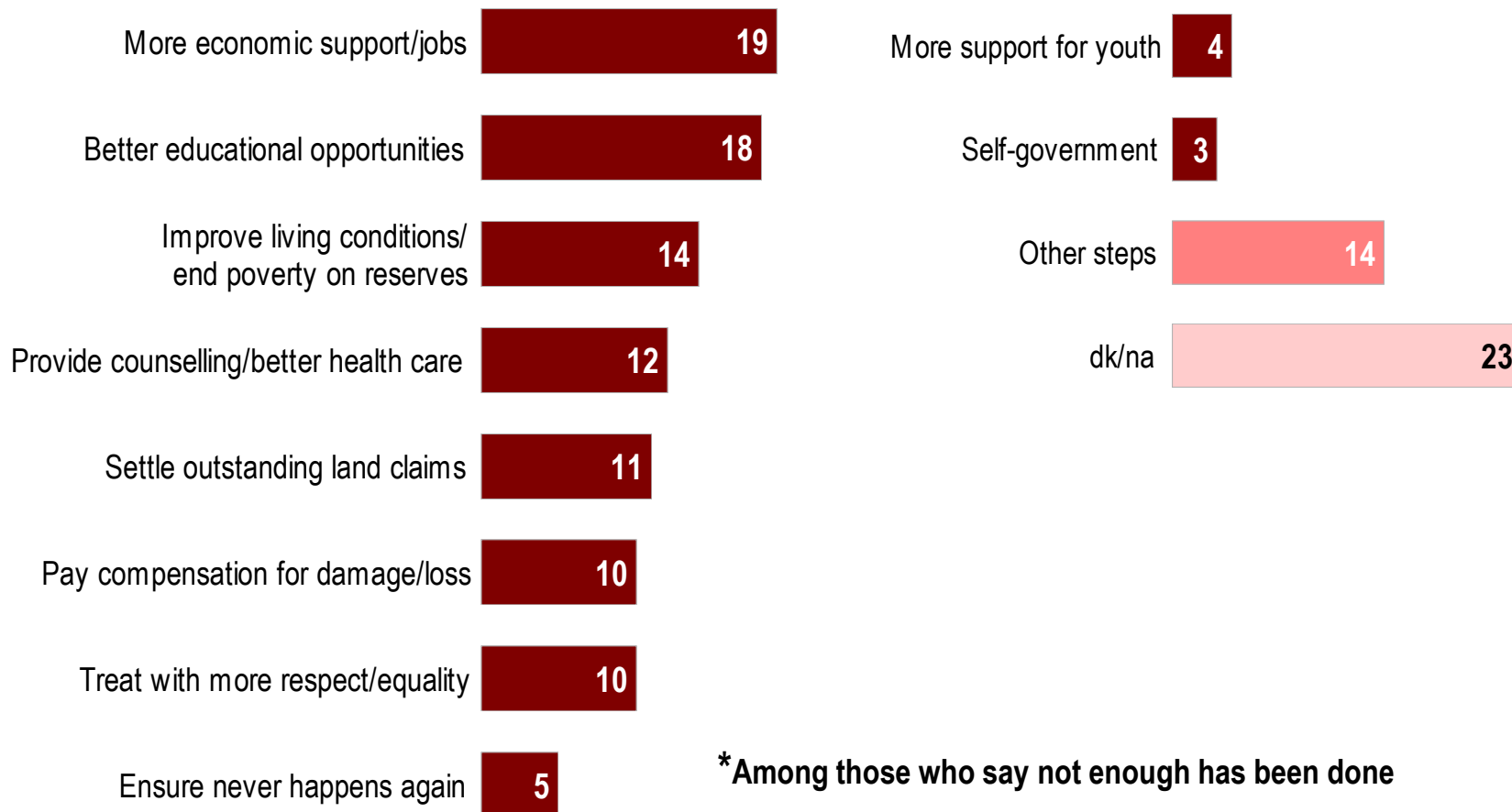
Has federal government done enough to address human rights violations against Aboriginal peoples?



Q.8

What else should the federal government do to address wrongs committed against Aboriginal peoples?

Unprompted responses*



*Among those who say not enough has been done

Q.9

Concluding Thoughts



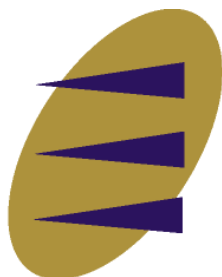
What this research tells us

- Canadians demonstrate strong confidence in human rights protection
- Few understand the Charter, but most feel it has strengthened human rights and is firmly established as a positive national icon
- Governments are seen as responsible for addressing past wrongs -- and Aboriginal peoples are the first priority for many
- Perspectives are notably similar across generations -- today's youth are adopting the values of their elders

Questions arising from the research

- Are Canadians maturely confident or dangerously naïve about the state of human rights in their country today?
- Do Canadians need to better understand what their beloved Charter is actually about? Would this make a difference?
- What is the public prepared to support in the way of legislated human rights guarantees for clean water and health care?





ENVIRONICS
R E S E A R C H G R O U P

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