



Briefing Note

To: Members of the House of Commons Committee on Canadian Heritage
Subject: Voters and the CBC
Date: 29 April 2009

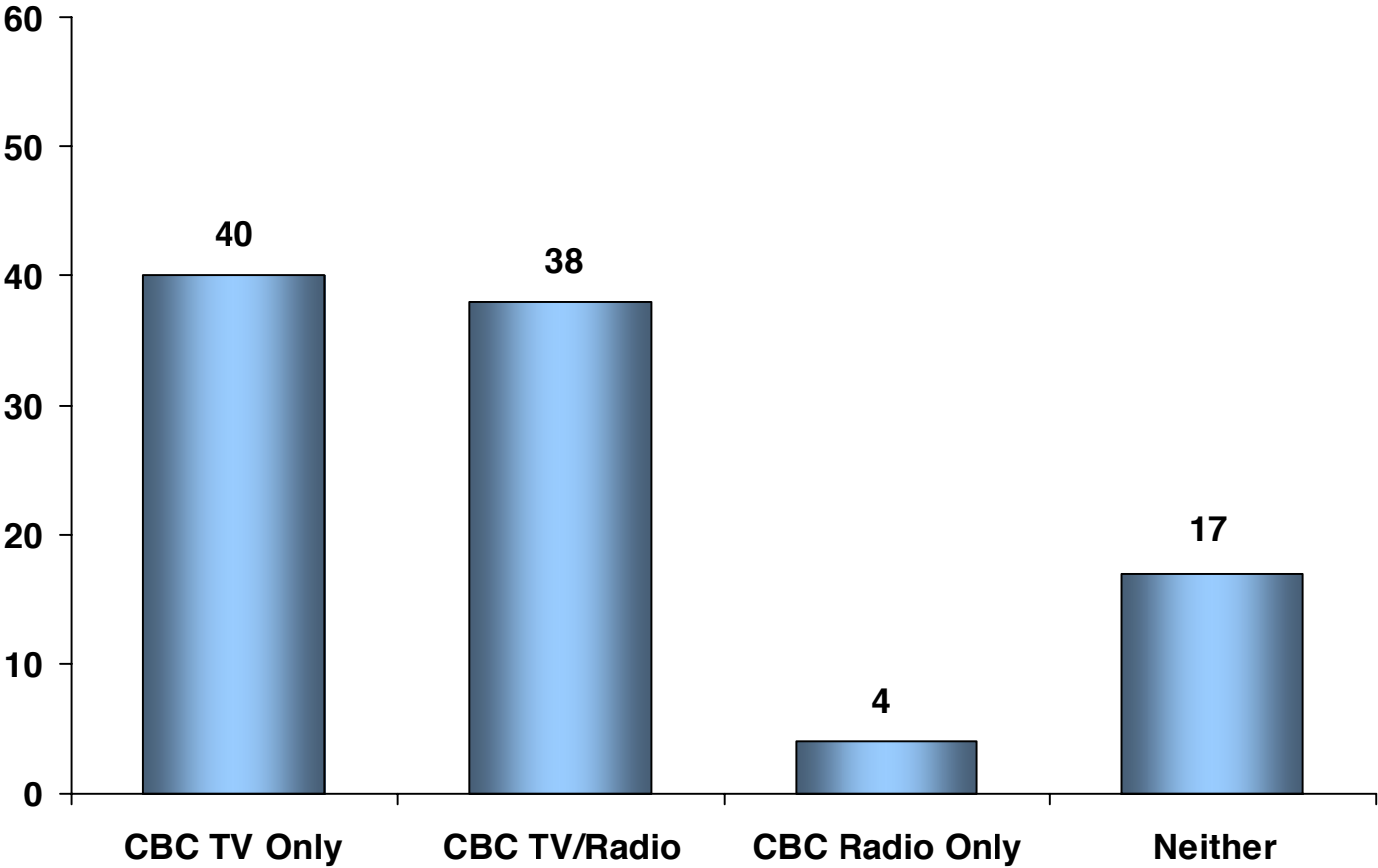
As your committee prepares to hear testimony from Heritage Minister Moore, the views of Canadians on matters related to the CBC/SRC may be of interest to you. Pollara, one of Canada's leading public opinion research firms, has conducted a new research project to gauge the attitudes of Canadians when it comes to their public broadcaster.

Commissioned by Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, the online survey of 3,361 voting age Canadians found an electorate that:

- Places high trust in the CBC/SRC to protect Canadian culture and identity on television. Voters hold CBC/SRC above all other players in the broadcasting system on this measure of trust.
- Gives CBC/SRC high marks for meeting its mandate through programs that inform, enlighten and entertain (seven in ten voters).
- Worries cuts to the CBC/SRC will diminish local and regional programming (six in ten voters).
- Believes Prime Minister Harper and the Conservative government are hostile to the CBC/SRC and would like to diminish public broadcasting in Canada (six in ten voters).
- Regards as insufficient Canada's level of funding of the CBC/SRC to maintain a unique and vibrant Canadian identity and culture (seven in ten voters).
- Has advice for their MPs: over half recommend increasing funding for the CBC from current levels while three in ten voters urge you to maintain CBC funding at current levels; only one in ten recommends decreasing CBC funding

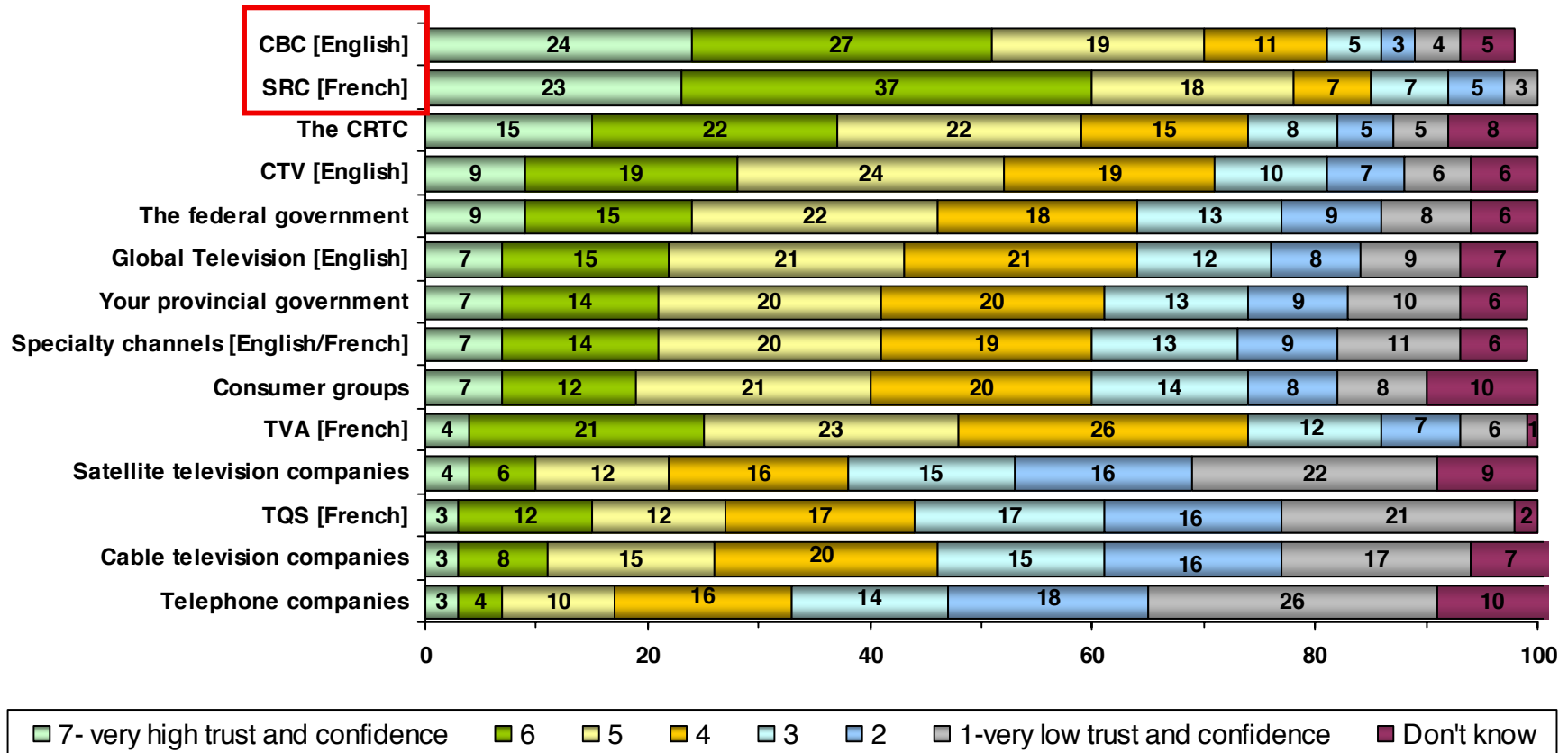
Finally, 54% of voters support the Heritage Committee's recommendation to increase the CBC's per citizen funding from \$33 to \$40, and a further 20% believe this increase is insufficient.

Most Canadians Tune into CBC/SRC



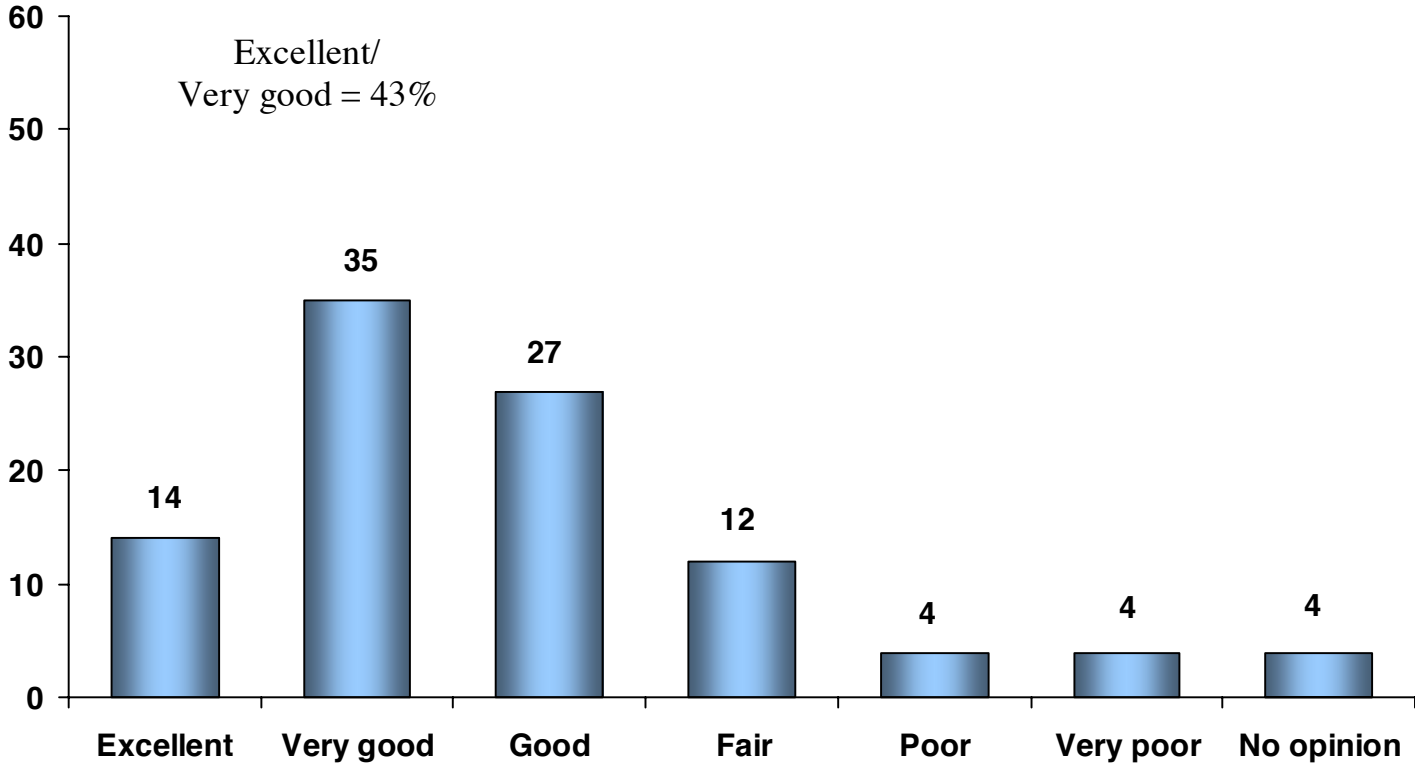
Q. In a typical week, do you watch CBC television or tune into CBC radio?

CBC/SRC is most trusted to protect Canadian culture & identity on TV



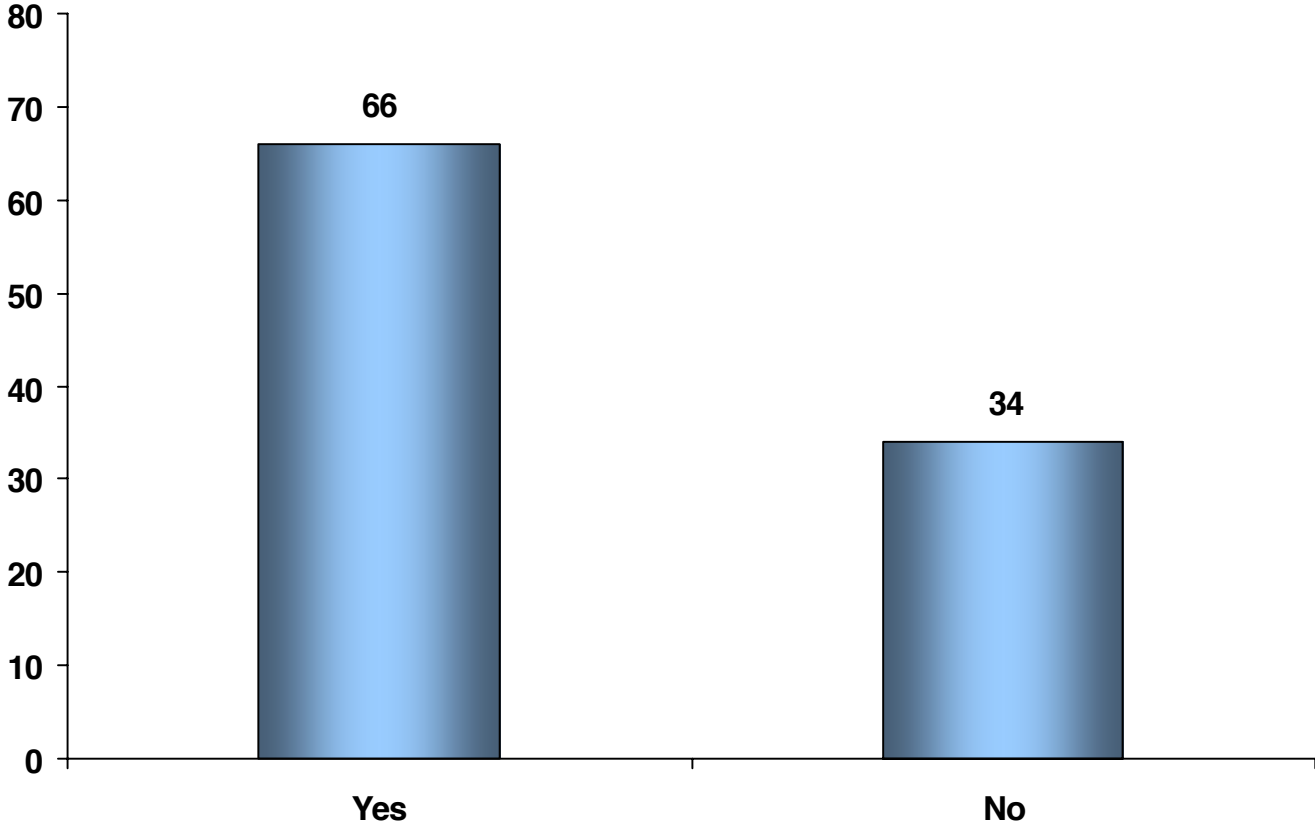
Q. How much confidence or trust do you personally have in each group to protect Canadian culture and identity on television. Please use a scale of 1 meaning very low trust and confidence to 7 meaning very high trust and confidence.

CBC/SRC gets high marks for programming that informs, enlightens and entertains



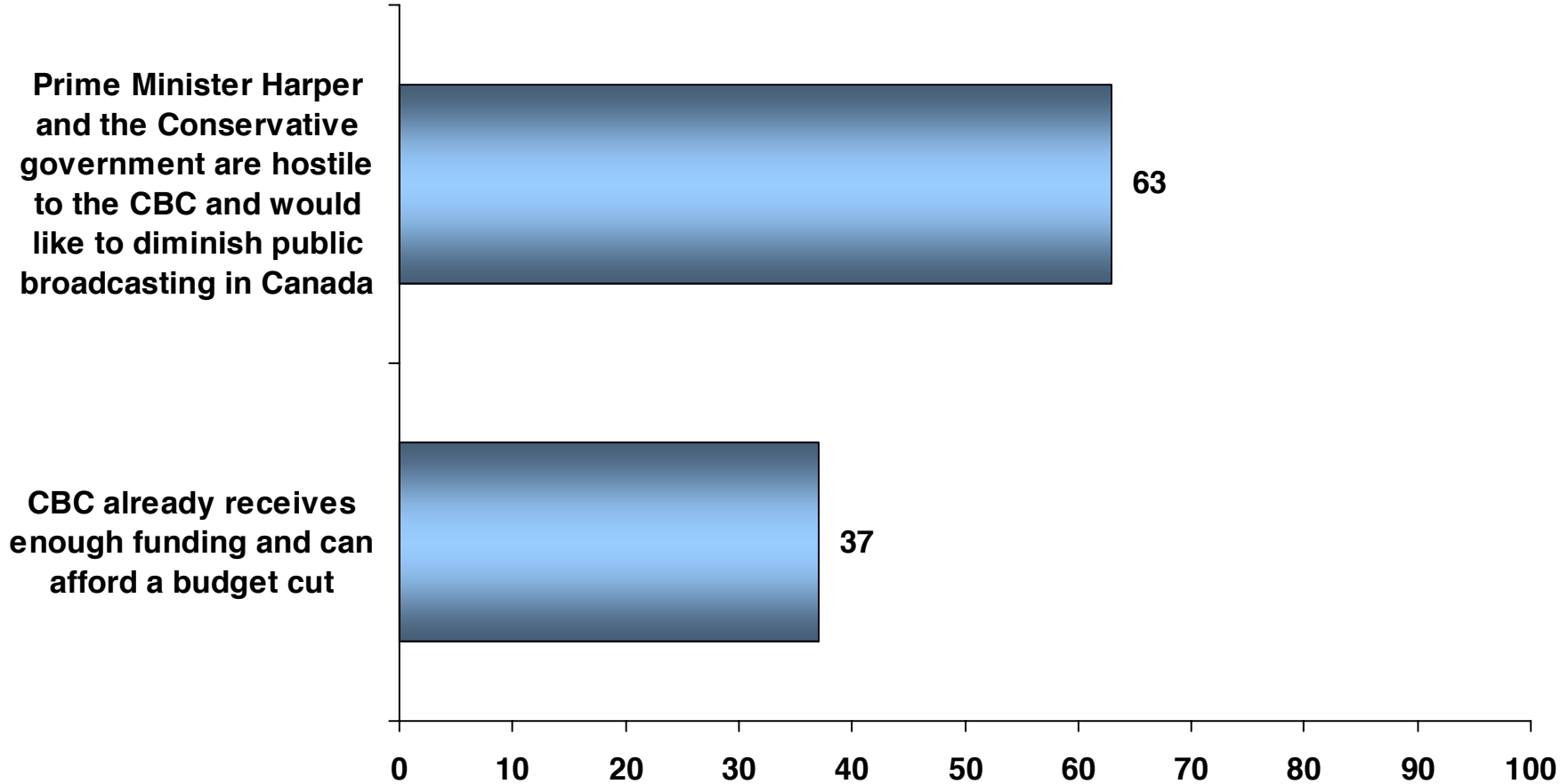
Q. As you may know, as the national broadcaster the mandate of the CBC is to provide radio and television services incorporating a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens, and entertains. Overall, how would you rate the performance of the CBC in fulfilling this mandate to date?

Canadians fear cuts to the CBC will diminish local and regional programming



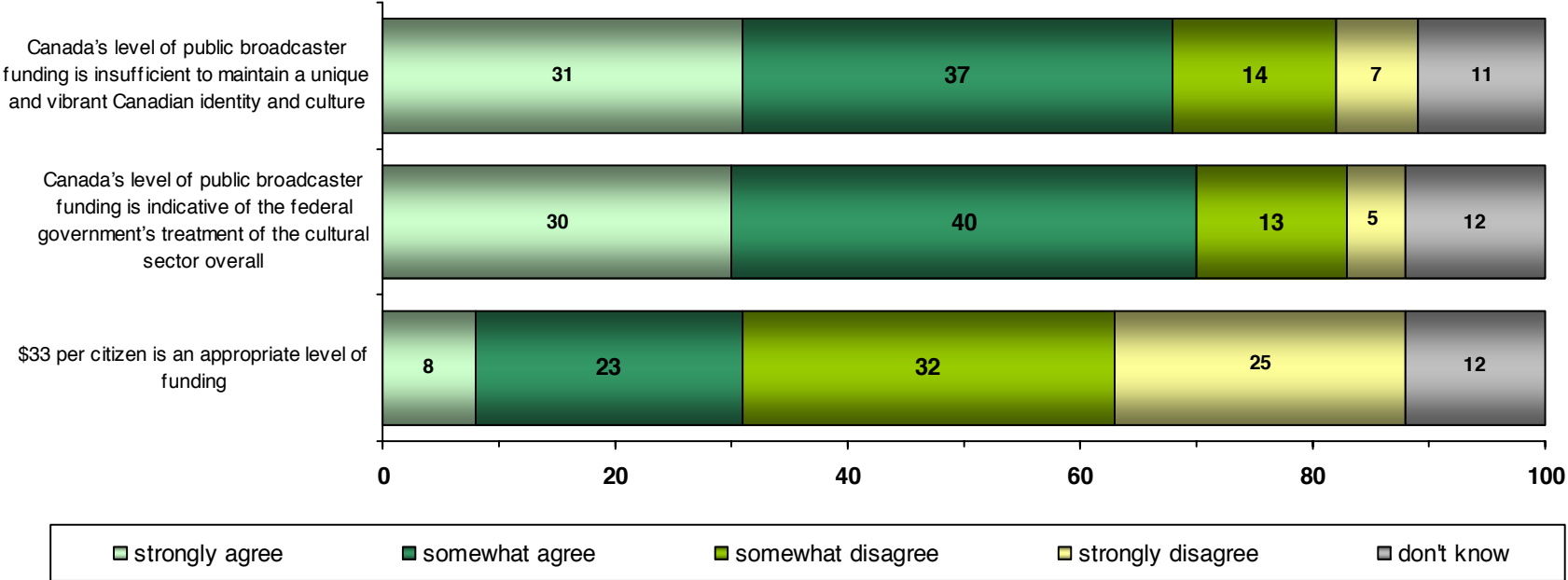
Q. Are you concerned that recently announced cuts to the CBC budget will reduce the amount of local news and regional coverage on television and radio?

Canadians view the Harper government as hostile toward the CBC/SRC



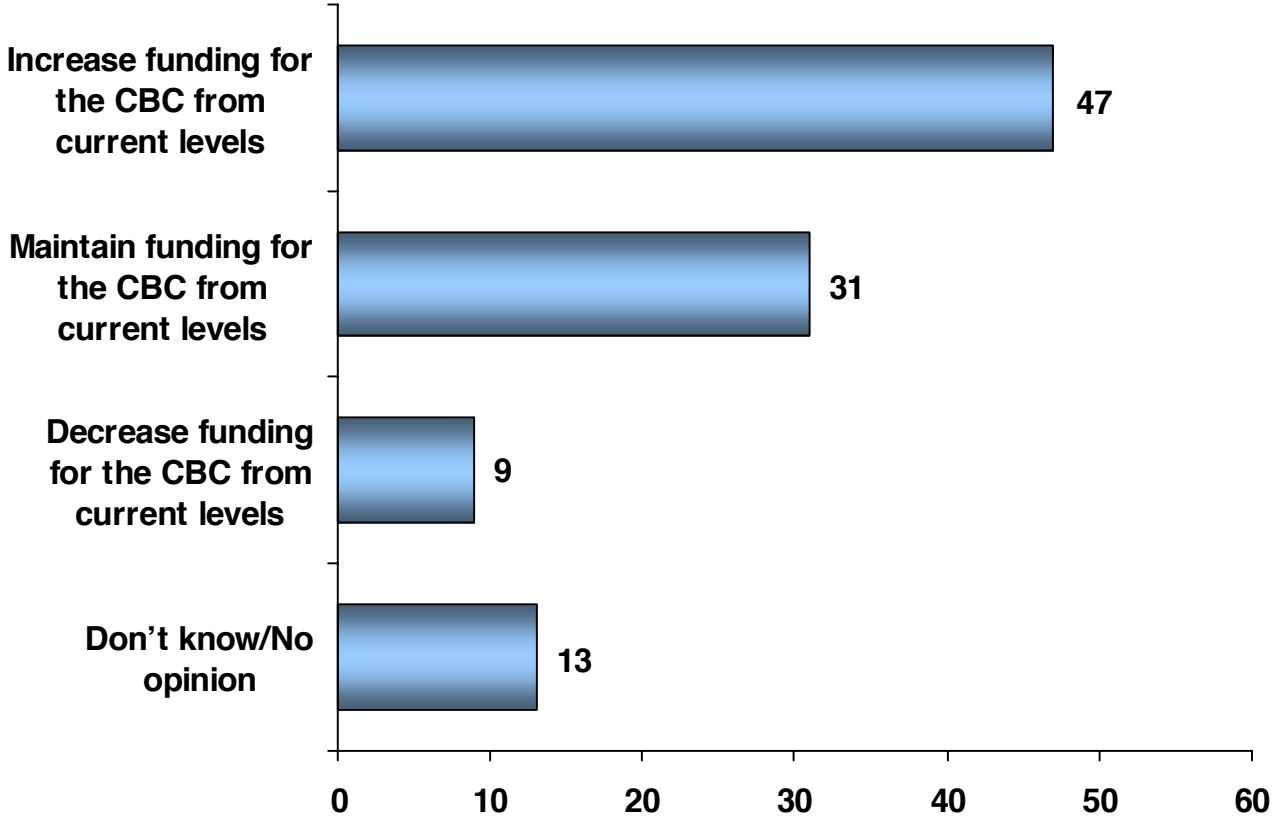
Q. Mr. Harper's government has cut CBC funding by almost 6% in its most recent spending plan tabled in Parliament on February 23, 2009, and on March 25 the CBC laid-off 800 of its creative staff. Which of the following statements is closest to your own opinion?

CBC funding is inadequate and is indicative of the federal government's overall treatment of culture



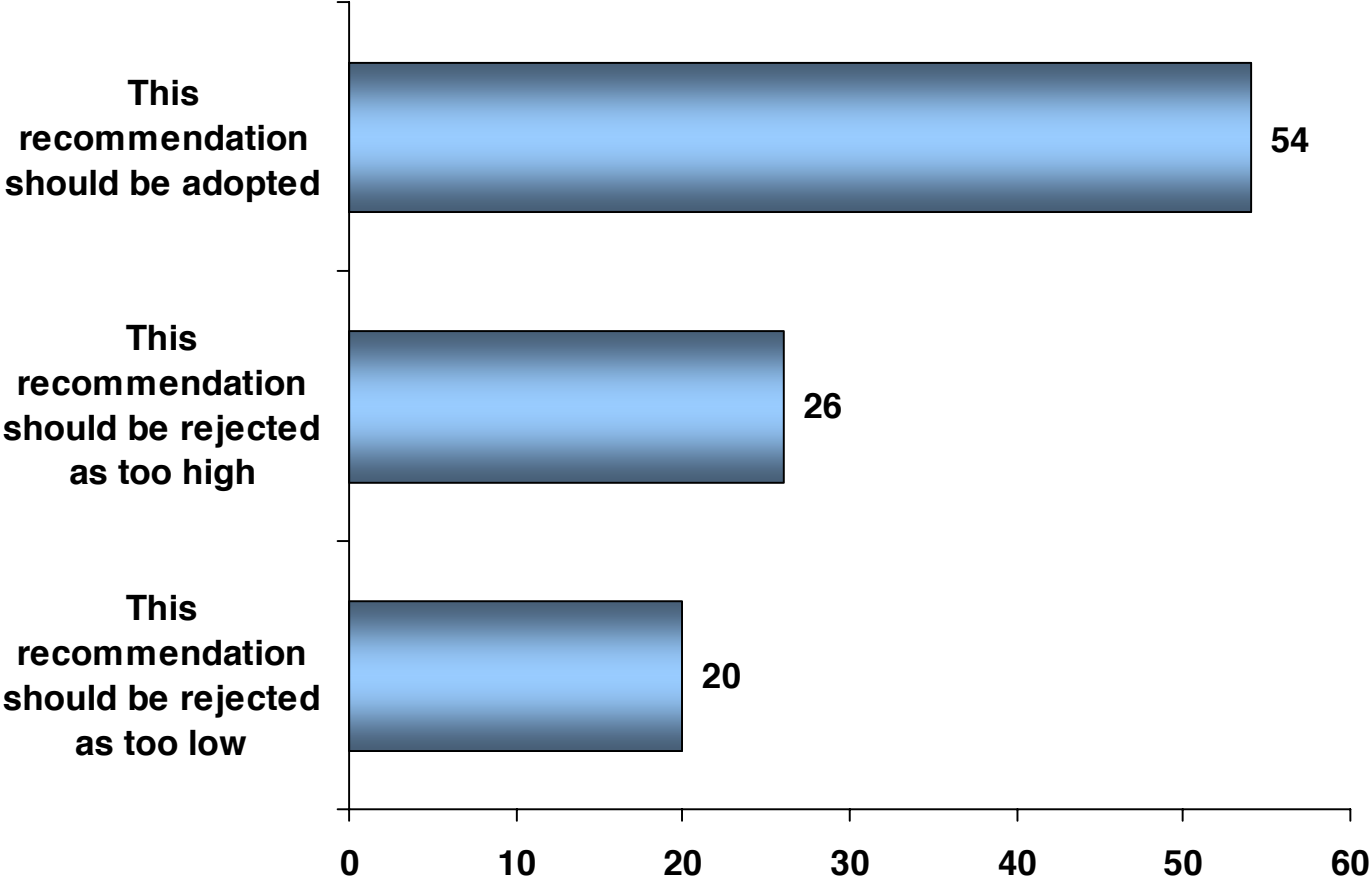
Q. Canada ranks 16th out of 18 major Western democracies in per capita annual funding of its public broadcaster in a recent survey, at \$ 33 per citizen, compared to an average of \$80 per citizen. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

Advice from your constituents: increase or maintain CBC funding



Q. Assume for a moment that your federal Member of Parliament asked for your advice on an upcoming vote in the House of Commons on what to do about CBC funding. Which of the following three options would you advise him/her to vote for...

Canadians support the Heritage Committee recommendation to increase the CBC's funding from \$33 to \$40 per citizen



The House of Commons Heritage Committee has recommended an increase in annual funding of the CBC from \$33 per citizen to \$40 per citizen. Which of the following most closely reflects your view:

Methodology

This report details the results of an online survey conducted among Pollara's 100,000 member panel of Canadians 18 years of age and older.

- The representative sample consisted of 3,361 Canadians
- Results are considered accurate to $\pm 1.69\%$ nineteen times out of twenty
- No quotas were set, but upon completion of the survey the data was weighted by age, gender and region to ensure that the results shown in this report are representative of the opinions of the Canadian general public.
- The survey was fielded from April 20th to April 24th, 2009.
- Unless otherwise specified, the sample sizes for all questions is 3,361 respondents.

For information

Jim Thompson, Friends of Canadian Broadcasting
613-447-9592

Robert Hutton, Pollara
416-828-7301