

**COST IS A BARRIER TO A  
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE FOR 1  
IN 3 CANADIANS**

**OVER HALF BELIEVE THE  
GOV'T SHOULD CREATE A  
TAX EXEMPTION FOR  
FITNESS EXPENSES**

**ADDING ATHLETIC AND FITNESS  
FEES IS A VIABLE OPTION TO  
MAKING FITNESS MORE ACCESSIBLE  
FOR ALL**

**ABACUS DATA**

**DETAILED RESULTS FOR FITNESS INDUSTRY COUNCIL**

# **PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH**

**RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS FROM CANADA'S LEADING PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS AND MARKET RESEARCH EXPERTS**

# METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted with 1,500 Canadian adults between the dates of July 9 to 14, 2021. A random sample of panelists were invited to complete the survey from a set of partner panels based on the Lucid exchange platform. These partners are typically double opt-in survey panels, blended to manage out potential skews in the data from a single source.

The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 2.5, 19 times out of 20.

The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

# KEY FINDINGS

- 1. Cost is a barrier for over 1 in 3 Canadians when it comes to establishing a healthy lifestyle.**
- 2. Half of Canadians (53%) have had a medical professional recommend exercise/a fitness routine as a way for them to stay healthy.**
- 3. Asked about the general premise of a tax exemption for fitness expenses like gym memberships, 59% agree the federal government should implement it.**
- 4. 40% of Canadians say including athletic and fitness club fees as a medical expense would motivate them to create a healthy fitness routine. 36% say it would motivate them to purchase a membership.**
  - Among those who've had a medical professional recommend an exercise/fitness routine 51% say this change would motivate them to create that routine.
  - While more popular among higher income Canadians, the policy is wide-reaching. Even among the lowest HH income bracket (\$50K), 38% say this change would motivate them to create a healthy fitness routine.
  - And finally, 27% of those who never worked out in a gym prior to the pandemic say it would motivate them to create a healthy routine. Suggesting these policy wouldn't just motivate those who are already working out in a fitness facility.
- 5. 46% of Canadians say a fitness tax credit would motivate them to create a healthy fitness routine. 42% say it would motivate them to purchase a membership.**
  - Among those who've had a medical professional recommend an exercise/fitness routine 57% say this change would motivate them to create that routine.
  - This policy is also more popular for higher income Canadians yet still wide-reaching as well. Among the lowest HH income bracket (\$50K), 39% say this change would motivate them to create a healthy fitness routine.
  - 31% of those who never worked out in a gym prior to the pandemic say it would motivate them to create a healthy routine.

# COST, COMFORT, MOTIVATION ALL EQUALLY PRESENT CHALLENGES TO LEADING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

**Costs of membership fees at fitness studios/gyms**

**37%**

**Not feeling comfortable in a fitness facility environment**

**35%**

**Difficulty finding motivation to establish a fitness routine**

**35%**

**Lack of access to fitness facilities**

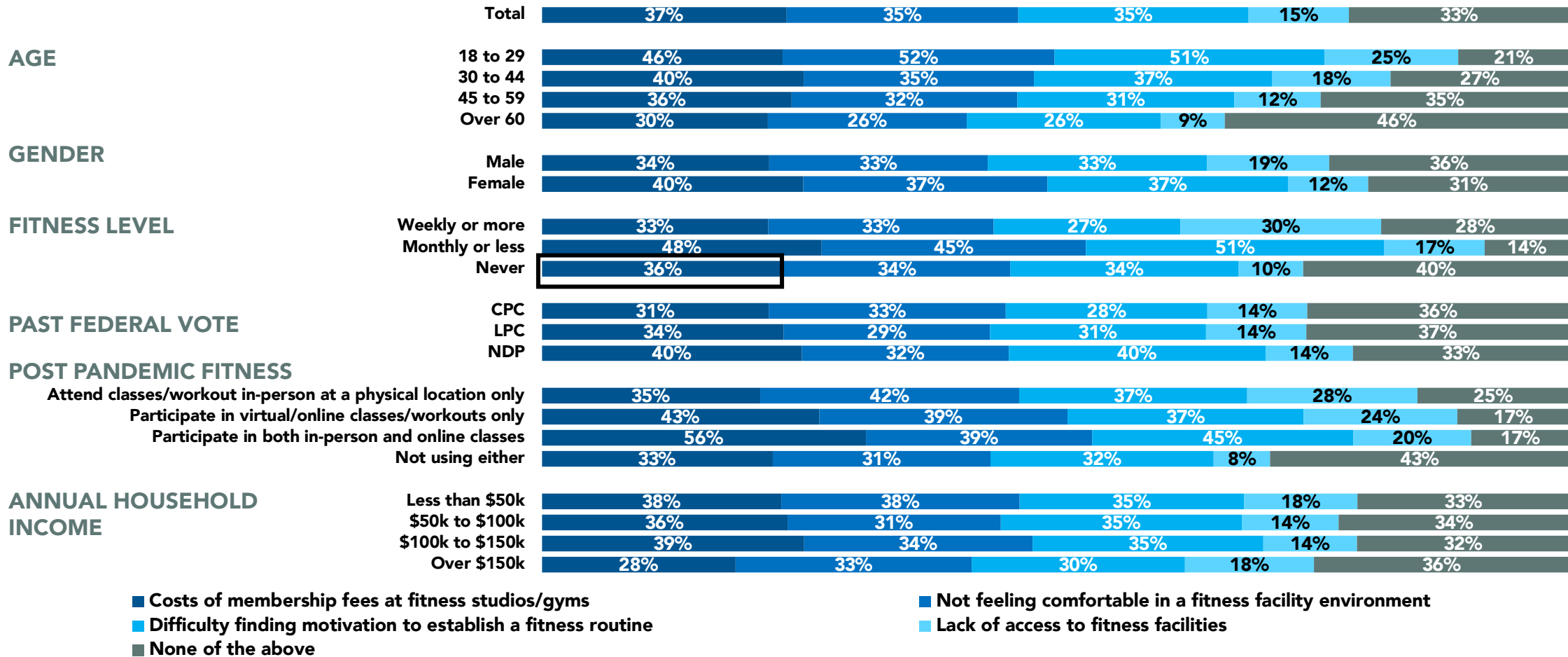
**15%**

**None of the above**

**33%**

The following are some challenges individuals might face when it comes to being active and leading a healthy lifestyle. Do any of the following apply to you? Please select all that apply:

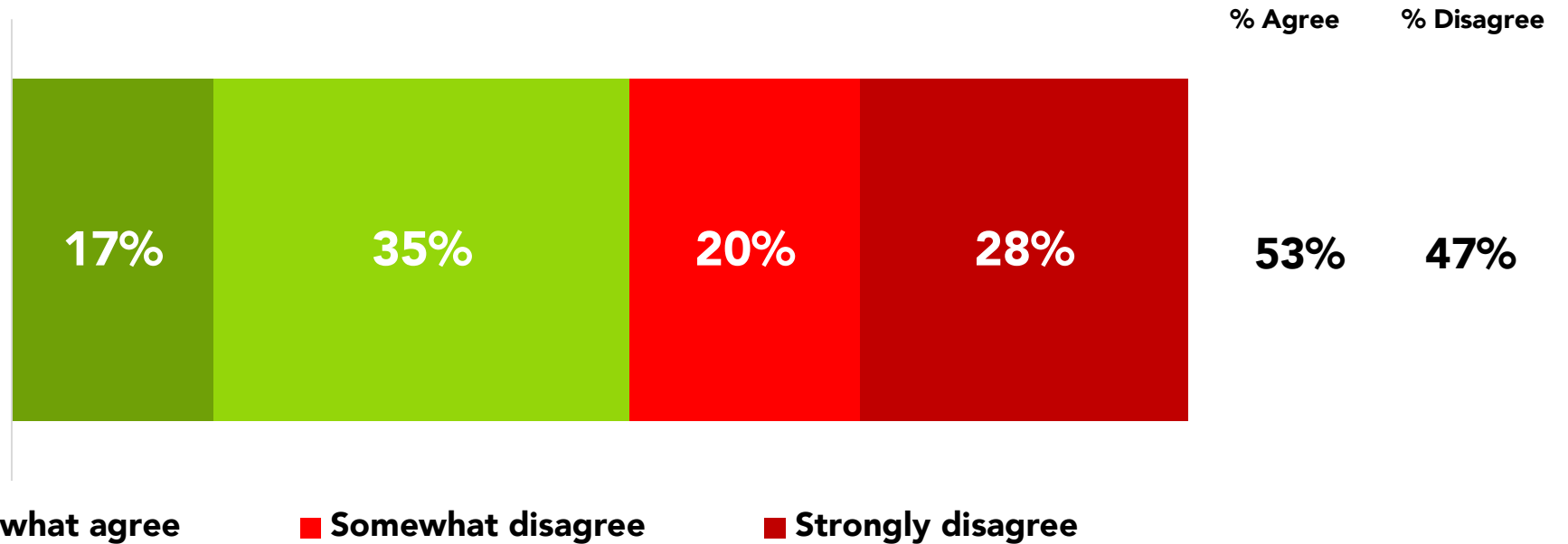
# CHALLENGES TO BEING ACTIVE AND LEADING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



The following are some challenges individuals might face when it comes to being active and leading a healthy lifestyle. Do any of the following apply to you? Please select all that apply:

# HALF OF CANADIANS HAVE HAD A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL RECOMMEND A FITNESS ROUTINE FOR HEALTHY LIVING

I've had a medical professional (like a family doctor) recommend exercise/a fitness routine as a way for me to stay healthy



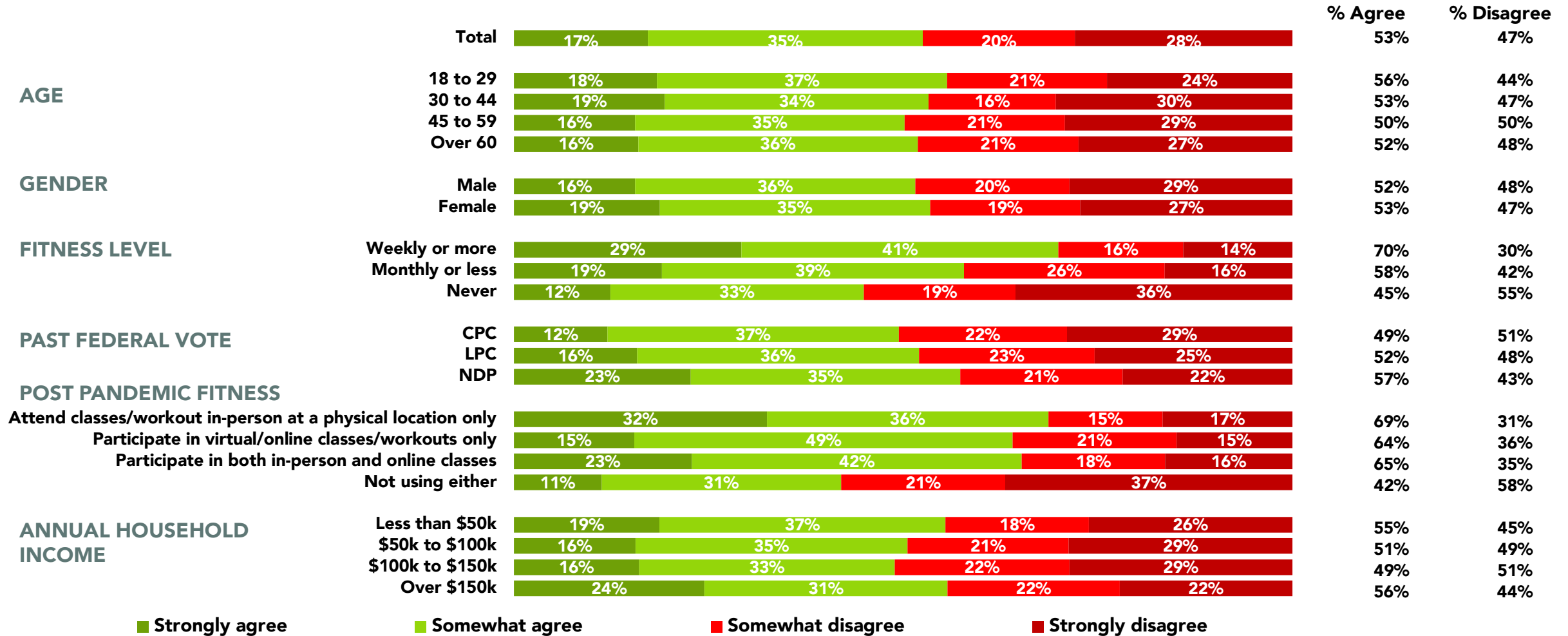
It seems as though fitness and exercise routines are already considered a tool for healthy living in the medical community. 53% of Canadians have had a medical professional recommend exercise/fitness routine as a way for them to stay healthy.

Those who already work out are, naturally, more likely to agree. However, 45% of those who've never worked out in a fitness studio prior to the pandemic have had a recommendation from a medical professional to have a fitness/exercise routine.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

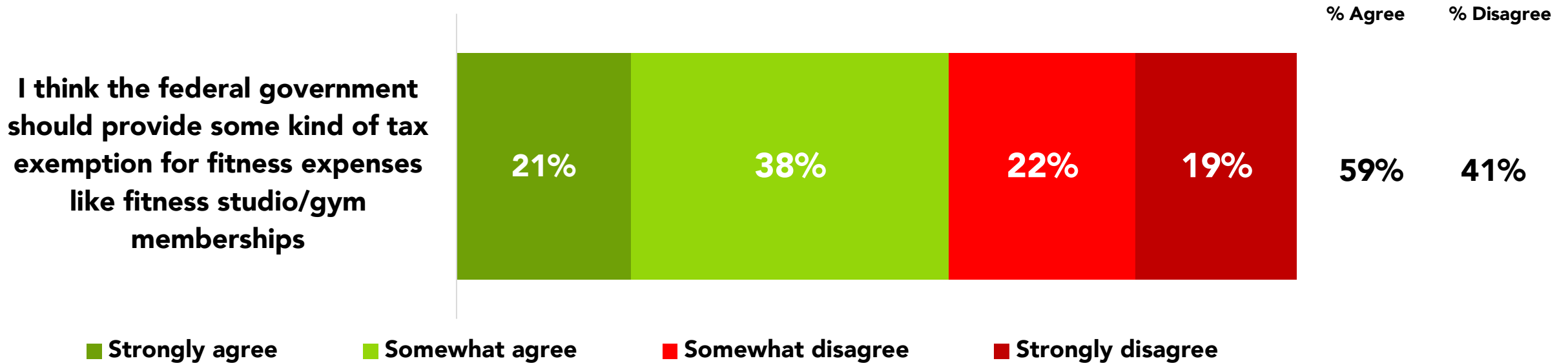


# >50% AGREE THAT A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL RECOMMEND EXERCISE OR A FITNESS ROUTINE FOR THEM TO STAY HEALTHY



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

# 6 IN 10 AGREE THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE A TAX EXEMPTION FOR FITNESS EXPENSES



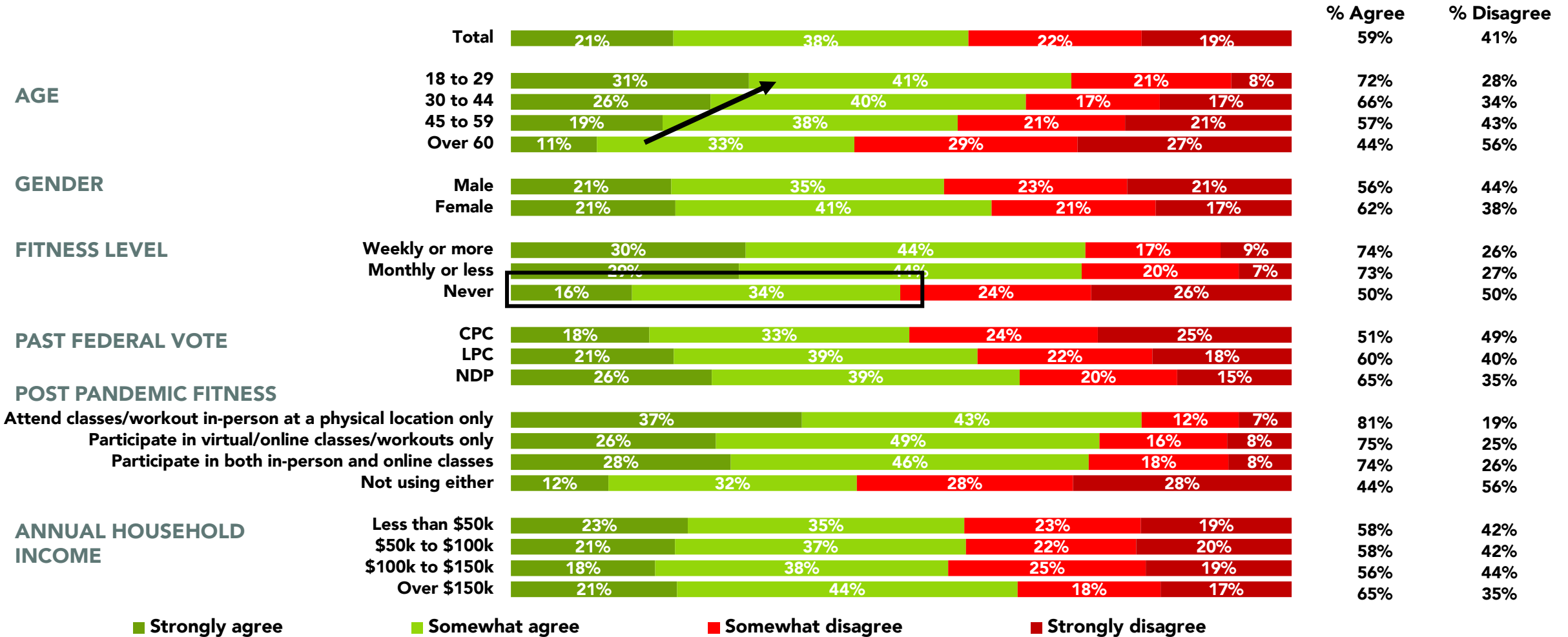
Nearly 60% of Canadians agree the government should provide a tax exemption for fitness expenses like fitness studios or gym memberships. There is a strong correlation between age and agreement- younger Canadians are much more likely to agree (72% among 18-29 vs. 44% among 60+), and those who already workout (70-75%).

That said, half of Canadians who said they haven't used a fitness facility prior to the pandemic support a tax exemption for facilities. This suggests an exemption in general could be used to motivate those who aren't as active.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

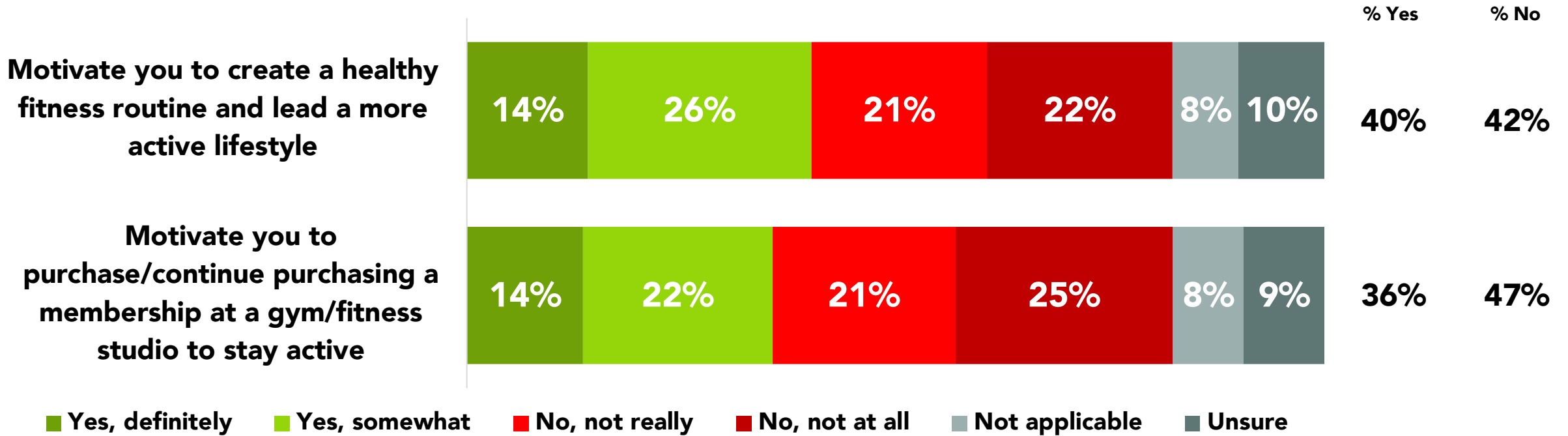


# 6 IN 10 AGREE THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE SOME KIND OF TAX EXEMPTION FOR FITNESS EXPENSES



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

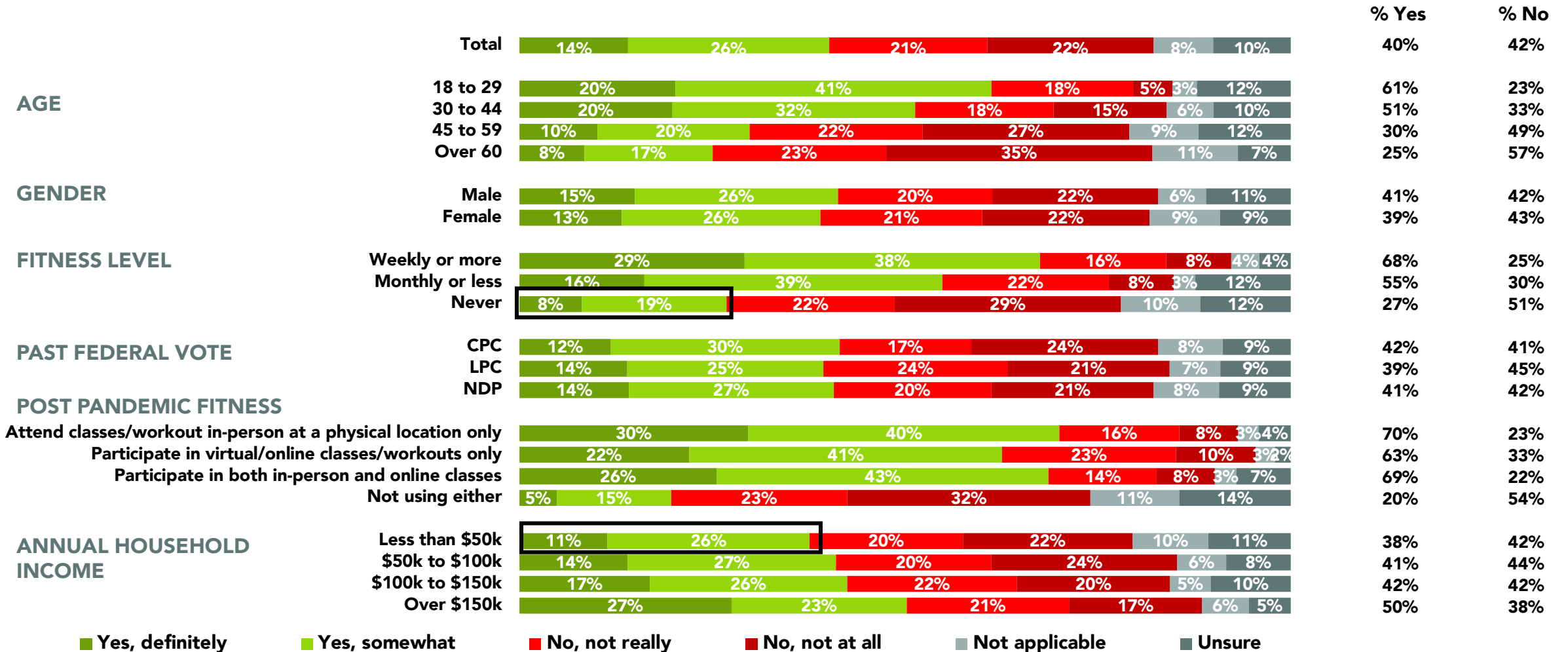
# ATHLETIC AND FITNESS CLUB FEES AS A MEDICAL EXPENSE WOULD MOTIVE CANADIANS A THIRD TO PURCHASE A MEMBERSHIP TO STAY ACTIVE, WOULD MOTIVATE 4 IN TEN TO CREATE A MORE HEALTHY FITNESS ROUTINE



A third of Canadians say this kind of expense would motivate them to purchase a membership to stay active. More than a purchase, 40% say it would motivate them to create a healthy fitness routine. Most importantly, among those who've had fitness recommended by a medical professional: 51% say it would motivate them to start a fitness routine, 46% say it would motivate them to purchase a membership. This type of incentive is more popular for those with higher household incomes, however 38% of those making \$50K or less say it would motivate them to create a healthy lifestyle.

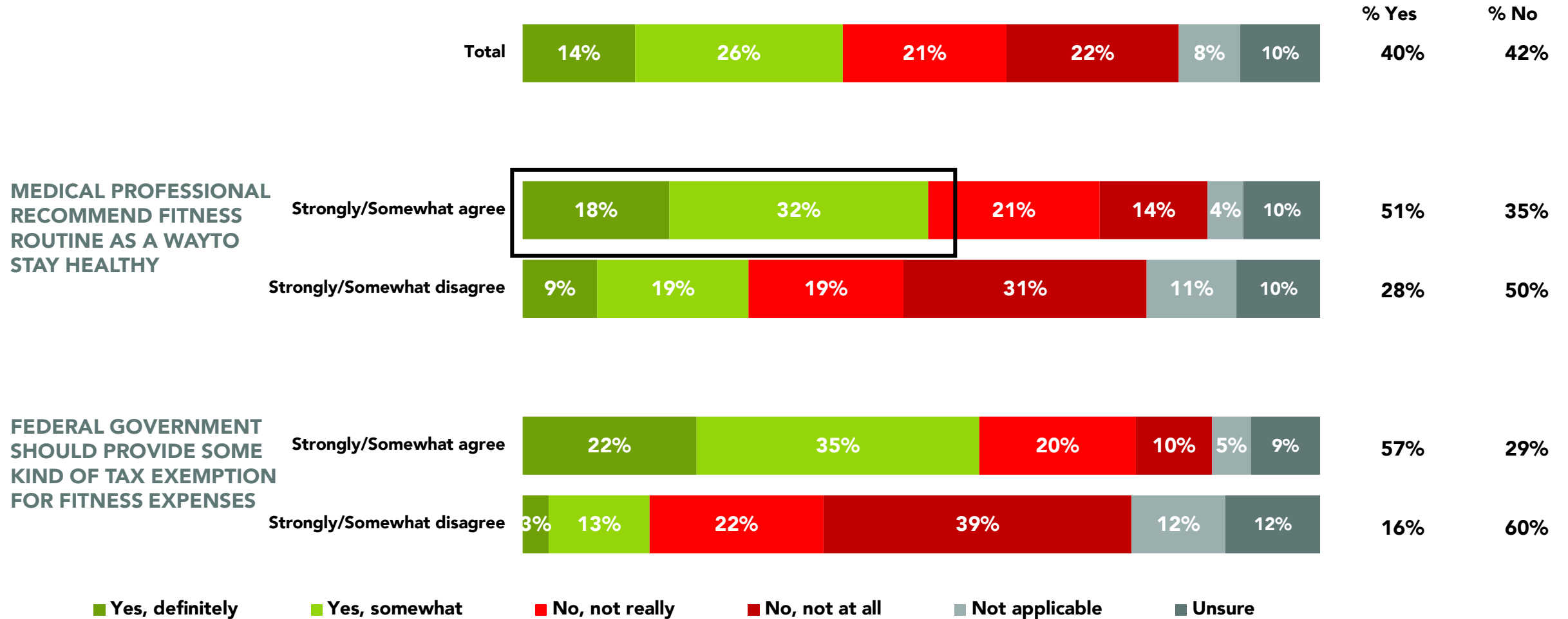
One possible way to motivate Canadians to work out is include athletic and fitness club fees (like a gym, fitness studio, yoga, or spin membership) as an eligible medical expense when you file your income tax. To take advantage of the medical expense tax credit you would need to spend more than \$2,400 or 3% of your annual income (whichever is lower) on total eligible medical expenses (yearly fitness expenses, medical devices, etc.) Based on this description, would including athletic and fitness club fees as a medical expense....

# IF ATHLETIC AND FITNESS CLUB FEES AS A MEDICAL EXPENSE WOULD MOTIVE CANADIANS TO CREATE FITNESS ROUTINE



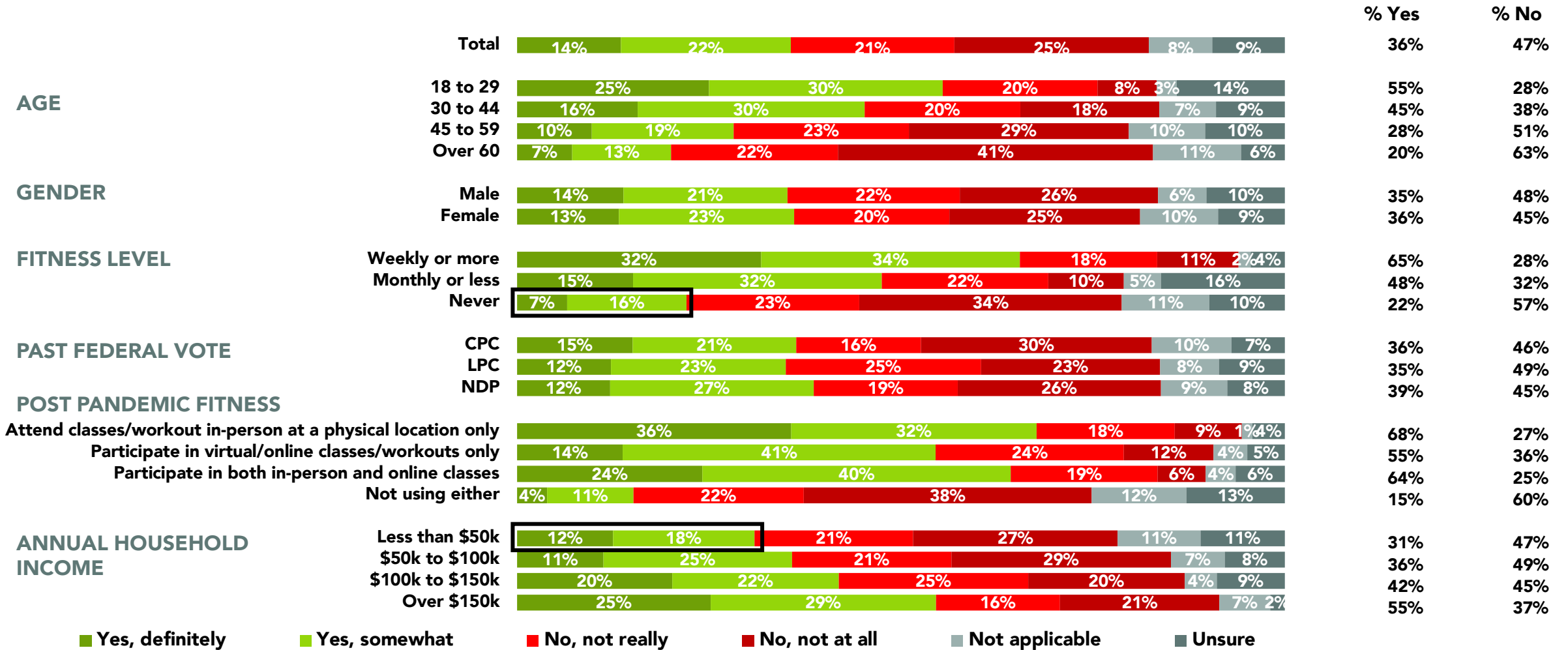
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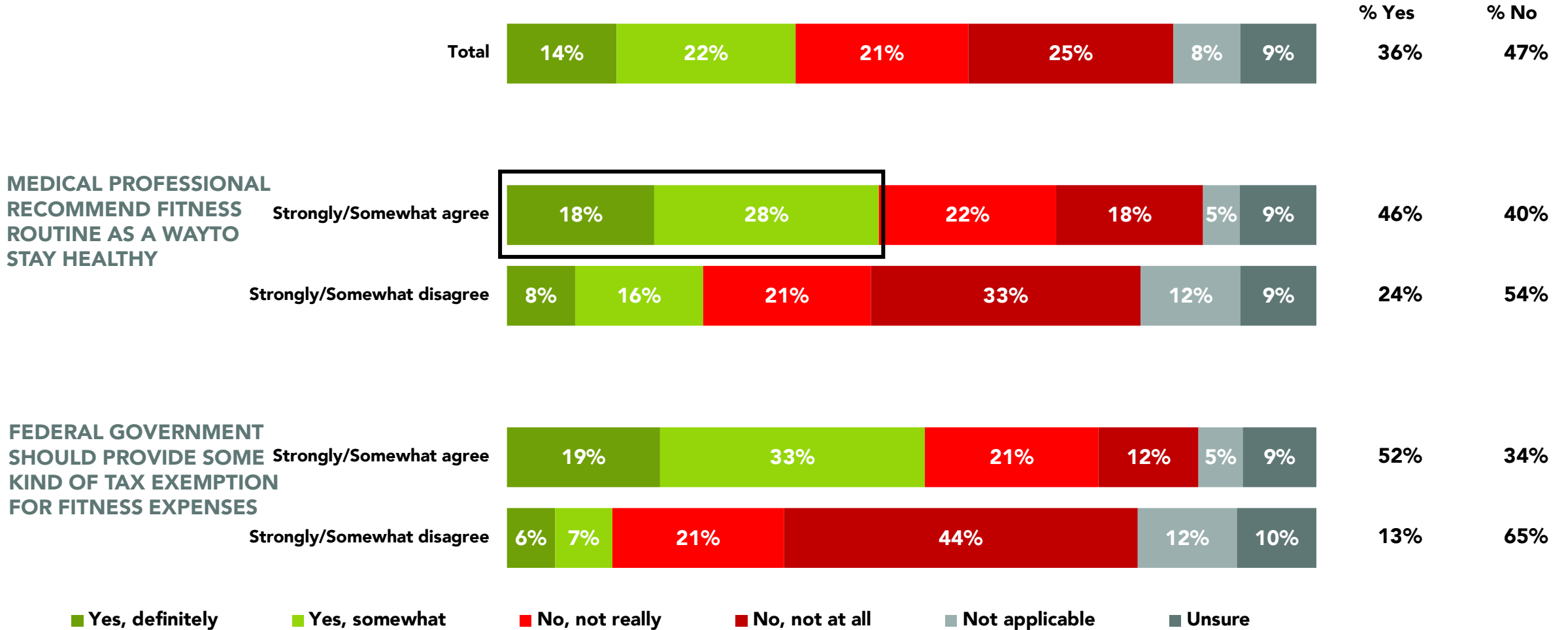
# IF ATHLETIC AND FITNESS CLUB FEES AS A MEDICAL EXPENSE WOULD MOTIVE CANADIANS TO PURCHASE MEMBERSHIP



■ Yes, definitely   
 ■ Yes, somewhat   
 ■ No, not really   
 ■ No, not at all   
 ■ Not applicable   
 ■ Unsure

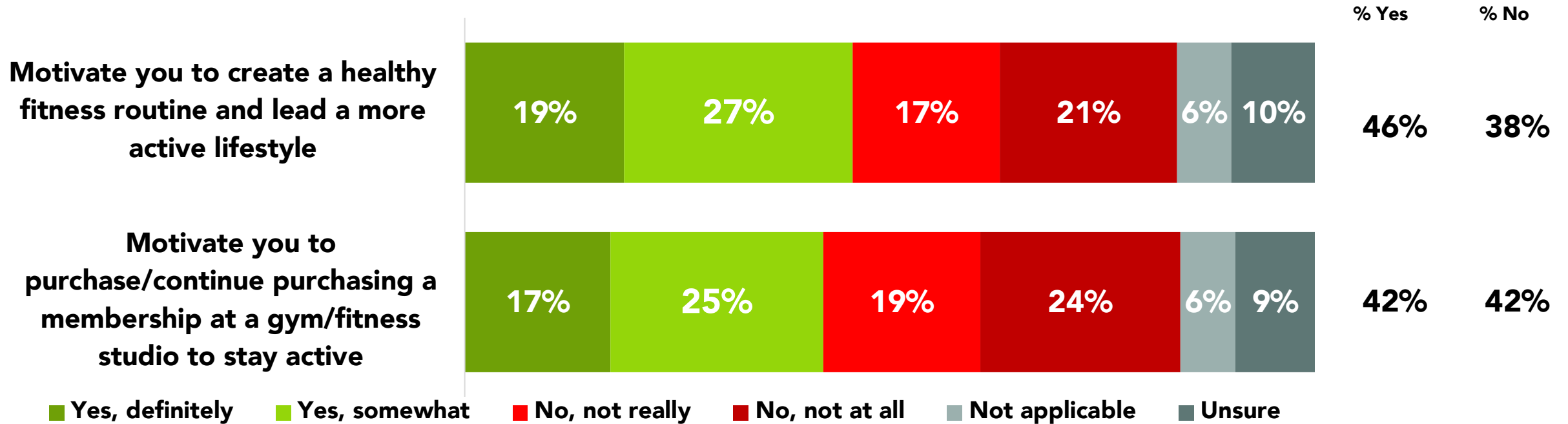
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# A FITNESS TAX CREDIT IN GENERAL IS EFFECTIVE FOR MOTIVATING 4 IN 10 CANADIANS TO CREATE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND MOTIVATE MEMBERSHIP PURCHASES



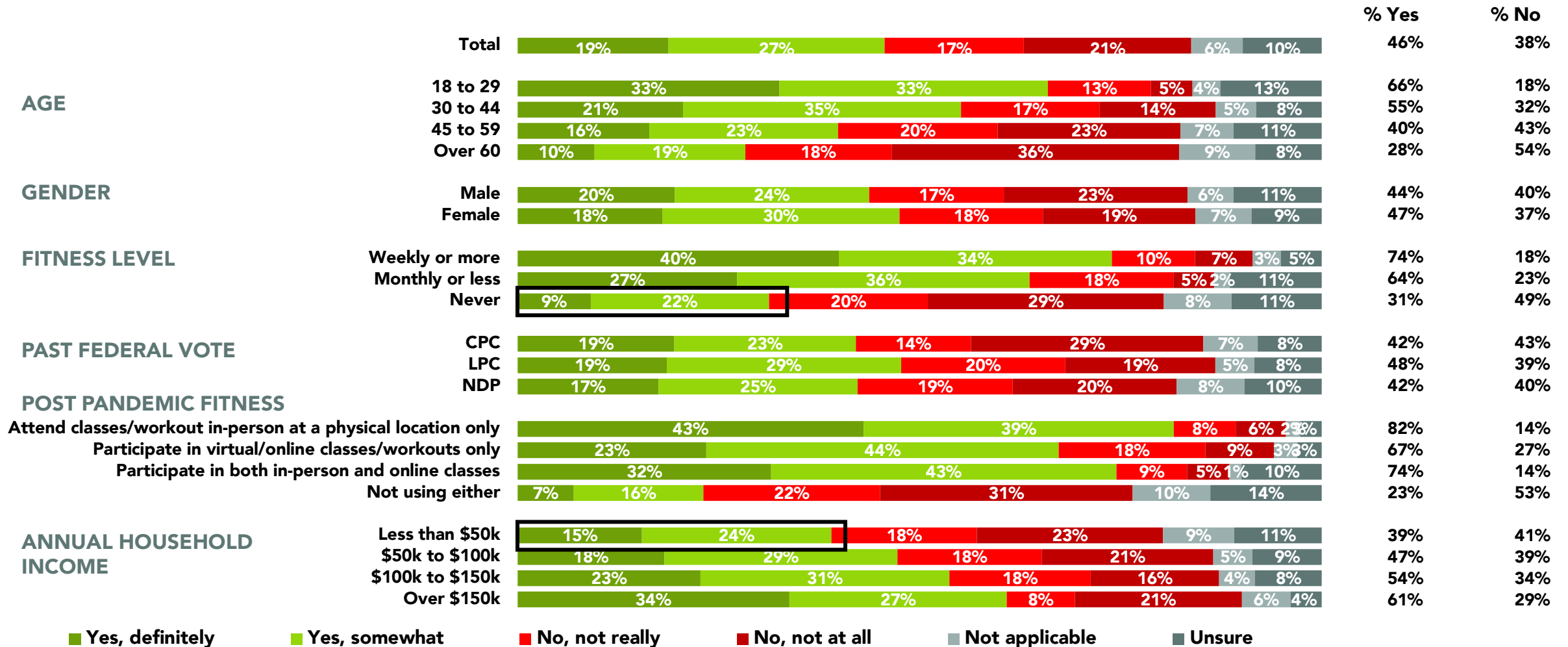
46%, nearly half of Canadians, say a fitness tax credit would motivate them to create a healthy fitness routine, 42% say it would motivate them to make a purchase of a membership.

Again, those who've had a medical professional recommend a fitness routine are more motivated by this type of credit. 57% say it would motivate them to start a fitness routine, 52% say it would motivate them to purchase a membership. This type of credit is more motivating for higher income Canadians. That said, 39% of those making \$50K or less say a credit would motivate them to create a fitness routine.

One other possible way to motivate Canadians to be active is a fitness tax credit. This would be a refundable tax credit, available for athletic and fitness club fees (like a gym, fitness studio, yoga or spin membership). Based on this description, would a fitness tax credit...



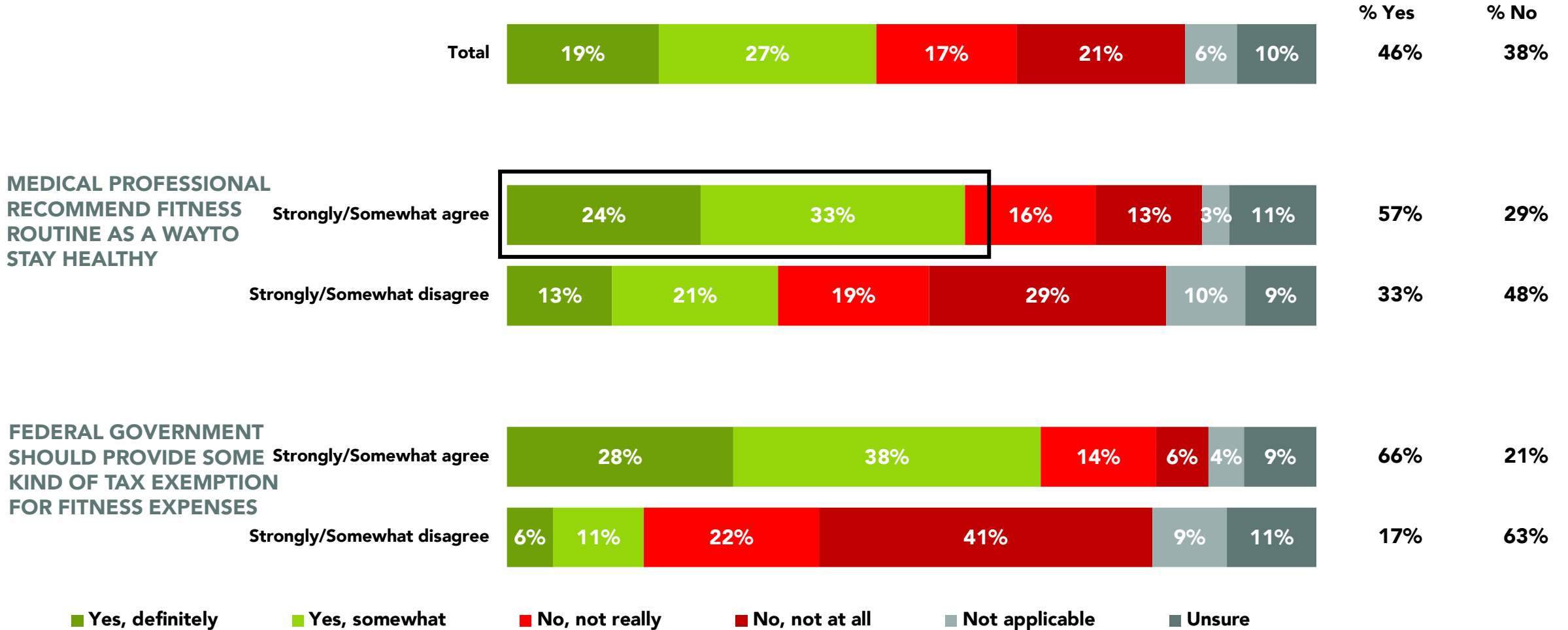
# IF A FITNESS TAX CREDIT WOULD MOTIVE CANADIANS TO CREATE FITNESS ROUTINE



■ Yes, definitely   
 ■ Yes, somewhat   
 ■ No, not really   
 ■ No, not at all   
 ■ Not applicable   
 ■ Unsure

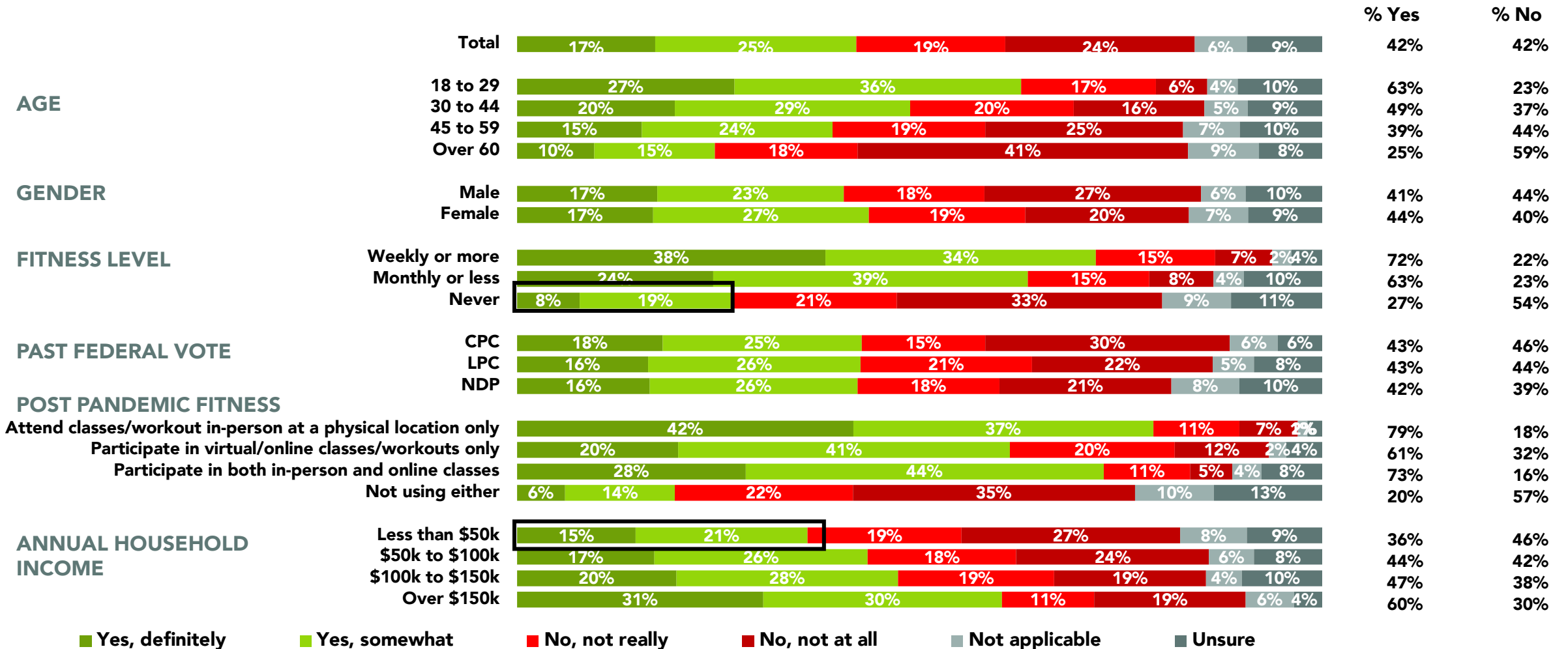
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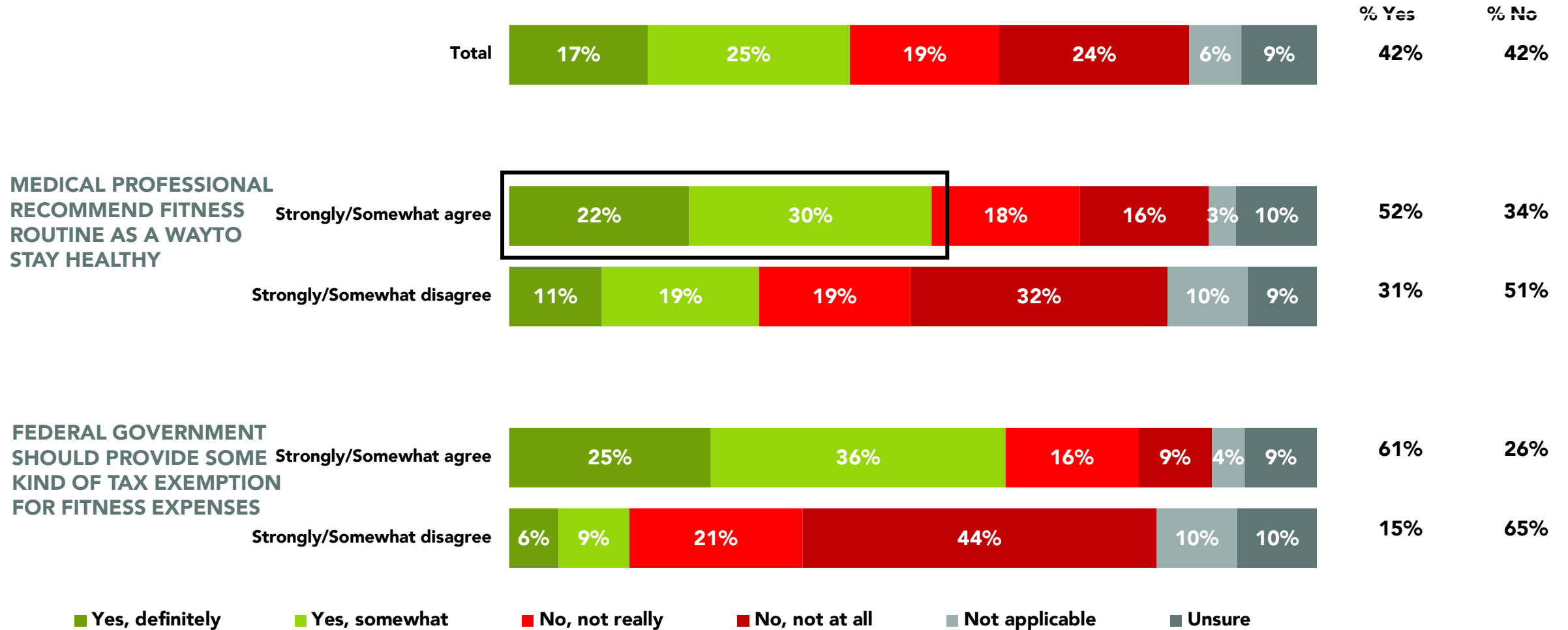
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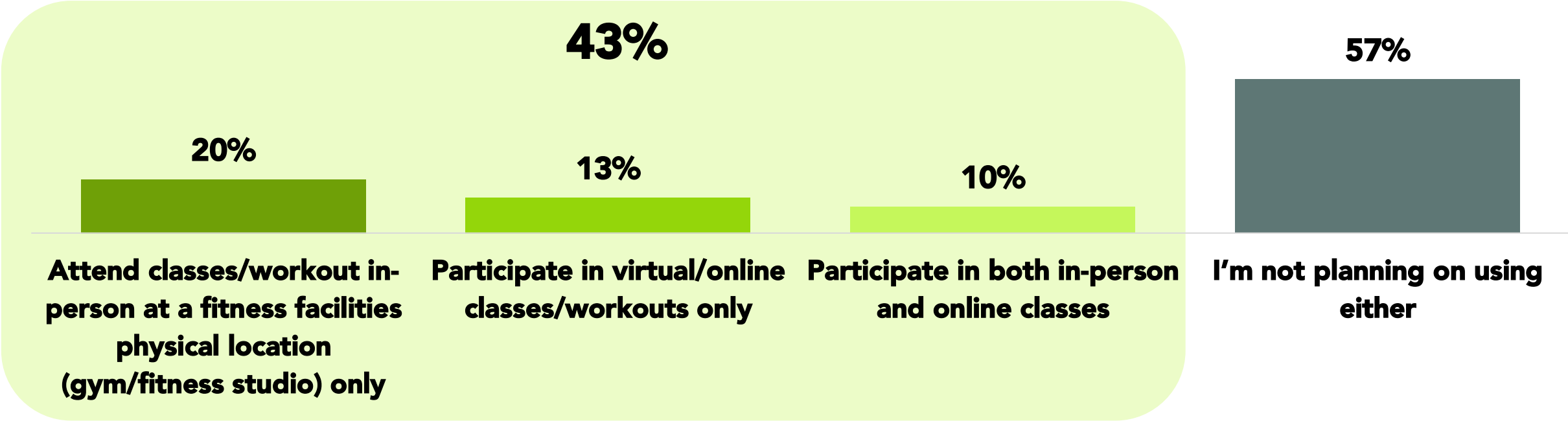
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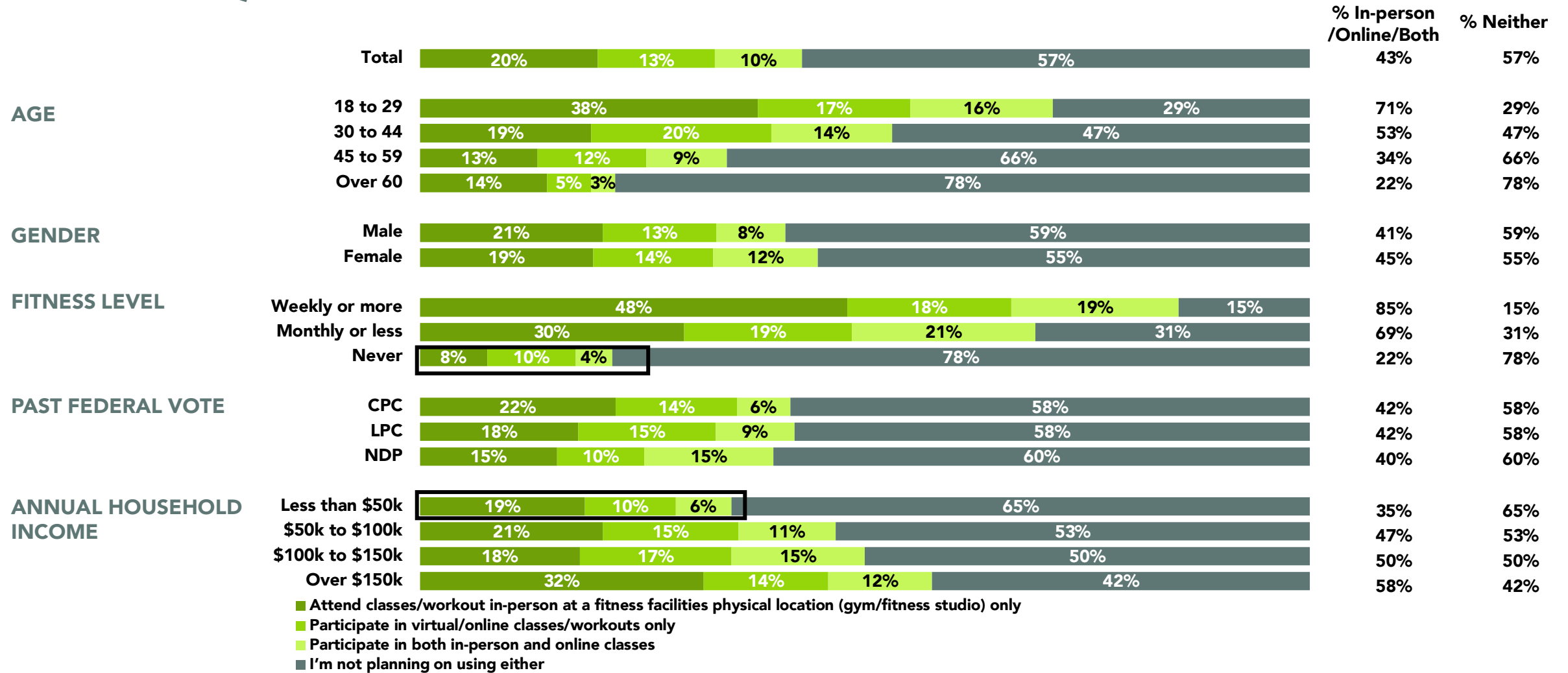
# 4 IN 10 INTERESTED IN POST-PANDEMIC FITNESS CLASSES, IN-PERSON MOST POPULAR

Following the pandemic, 4 in 10 Canadians are interested in using fitness facilities in some capacity, in-person only use is the most popular with 20% of Canadians indicating they are interested in this type of membership. Young Canadians, and those already familiar with fitness facilities are much more likely to be interested in in-person classes.



Once the pandemic passes, which of the following best describes your plans to use fitness facilities? Do you think you will...

# POST PANDEMIC FITNESS PLANS WITH REGARDS TO IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL WORKOUT



Once the pandemic passes, which of the following best describes your plans to use fitness facilities? Do you think you will...