



albertapatient
Your Voice Matters

Patient Views on Physician-Assisted Death

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>> Research Methodology

- Study fielded via online research panel
 - Field dates: March 17-27, 2016
 - Panel Source: **albertapatient**s and Voice of Alberta
- n= 1508
- Weighted to reflect gender, age and region of Albertans who have used the health care system within the past year.
- This online survey utilizes a non-random sample; therefore, margin of error is not applicable. However, a probability sample of this size would yield a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval.
- Accuracy of sub-samples of the data decline based on sample size.

>> Patient Views on Physician-Assisted Death - Overview

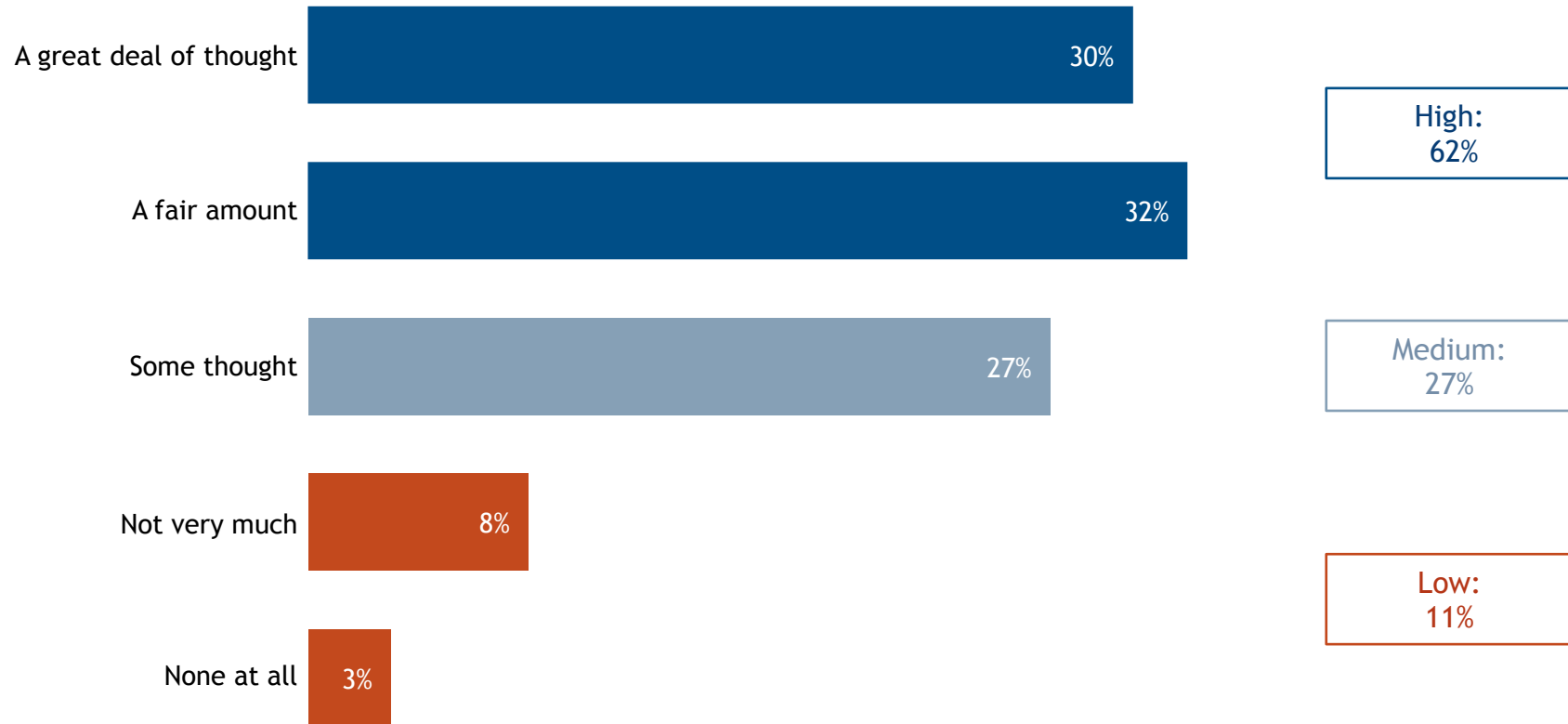
- There is strong public approval for physician-assisted death among patients in Alberta.
 - 4 in 5 patients approve of allowing PAD in some circumstances
 - More than 3 in 5 patients feel comfortable with PAD being introduced in Canada, having either few or no concerns about it
 - Only 1 in 10 patients have not given much thought to the issue of PAD
- Only one-in-five Alberta patients say they would not consider PAD for themselves, if circumstances warranted
 - Fully 39% say they would consider it, while 37% say they might/might not, but would like the option available to them
- Views on physician-assisted death are influenced by gender and household composition.
 - More women (69%) than men (55%) have deliberated the issue, and women approve of PAD more than men do (83% approval among women compared to 76% approval among men)
 - Patients with children living at home have more reservations about PAD - 29% are specifically uncomfortable with the idea (compared to 23% discomfort among patients in general), and 23% would not consider PAD for themselves (compared to 17% of all patients)
 - When asked how much they approve of Canada moving to allow PAD in some circumstances, 1 in 4 patients with children living at home said they disapprove of this decision (compared to 18% of all patients who said the same)

>> Patient Views on Physician-Assisted Death - Overview

- Most patients in Alberta agree with the draft guidelines established to govern who can access PAD and how each request is evaluated
 - There is public support for the draft guidelines to establish patient competence: 77% either strongly or somewhat agree with the current draft guidelines, with particular support for consulting with two physicians and maintaining understanding and decision-making capacity throughout the physician-assisted death process (83% agreement for each requirement).
- Patients have specific views about how and where PAD should be performed
 - More than 4 in 5 patients who might consider PAD in the case of terminal illness and/or intolerable pain would feel comfortable being assisted by a physician who specializes in palliative and end-of-life care, compared to only 54% comfort with death assisted by a family physician
 - **90% feel at least somewhat strongly about dying in a location of their choosing, such as their own home**
- A majority (56%) of Alberta patients believe in an afterlife, although a plurality (29%) of those interviewed have no certain views on what happens to people after they die: 21% say they simply “stop existing”, 17% believe they go to “Heaven or Hell” depending on how they have lived, 9% say they go to “Heaven”, 8% somewhere else and 7% believe in reincarnation

>> Public Deliberation of Physician-Assisted Death

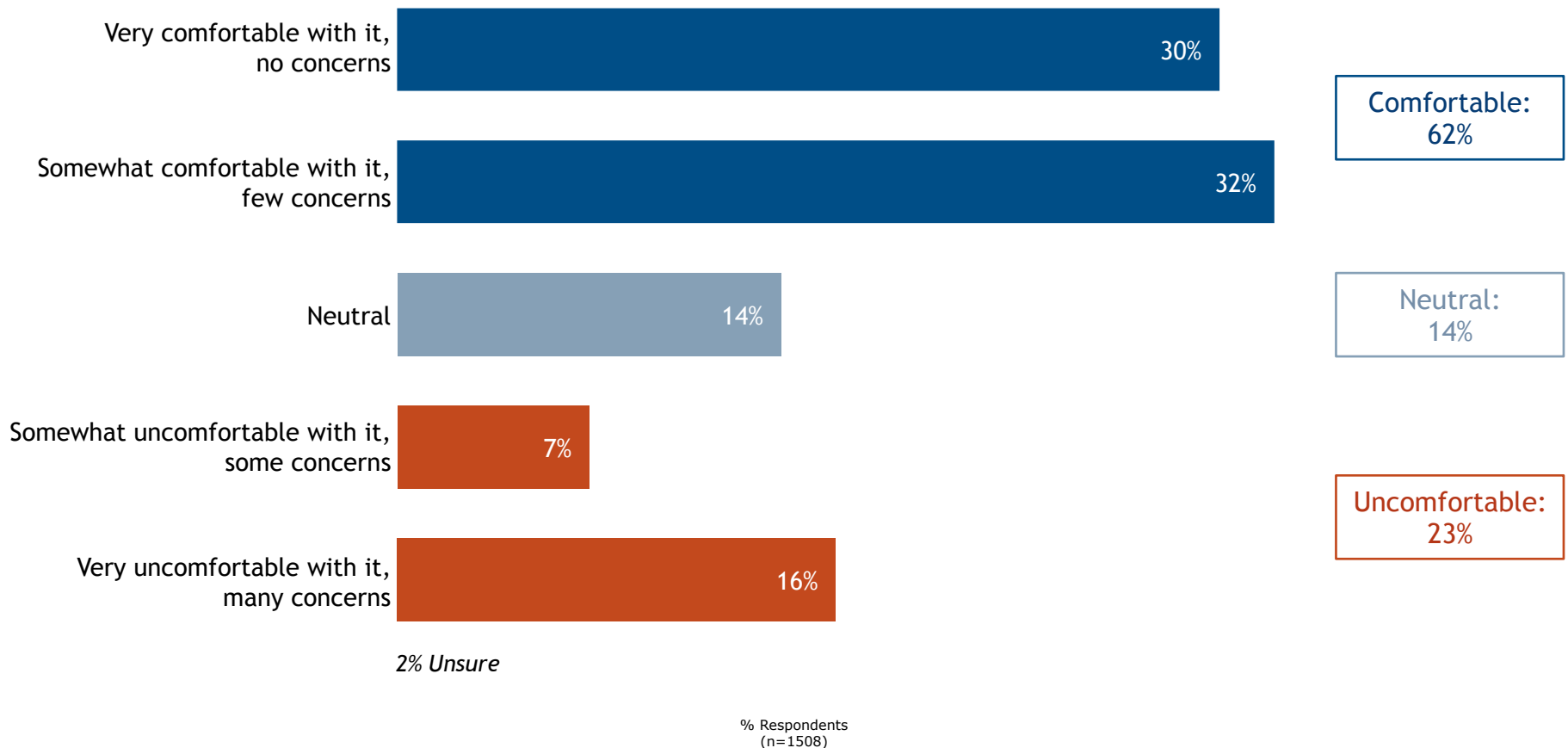
How much thought have you personally given to the issue of **physician-assisted death** before today?



% Respondents
(n=1508)

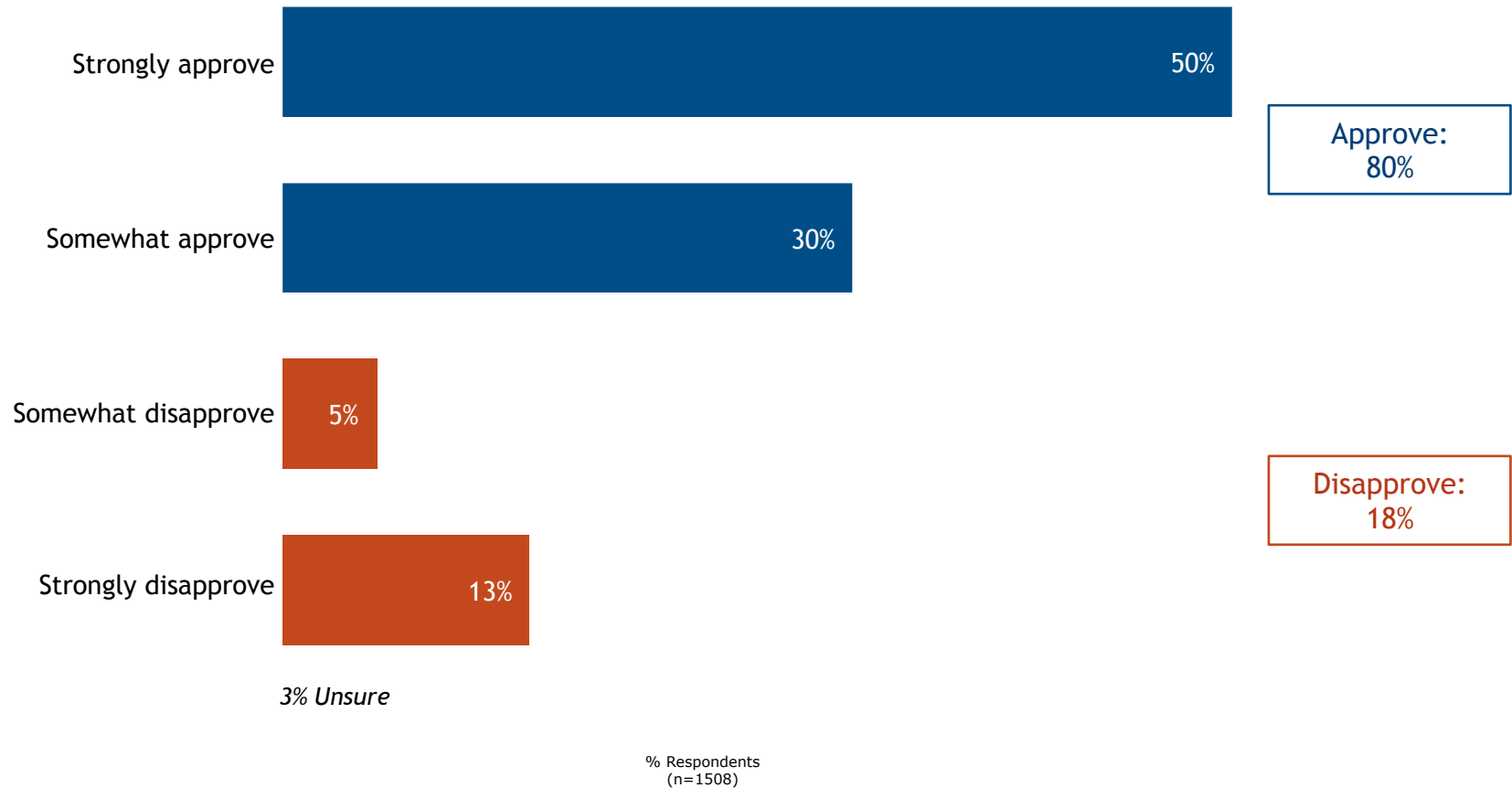
>> Personal Comfort with Physician-Assisted Death

How would you rate your own personal level of comfort with physician assisted death being introduced in Canada?
Please rate your feelings using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means you are “Very comfortable with it, having no concerns”
and 5 means you are “Very uncomfortable with it, having many concerns”.



>> Public Approval of Physician-Assisted Death

Generally speaking, would you say that you **approve** or **disapprove** of Canada moving to allow physician-assisted death in some circumstances?

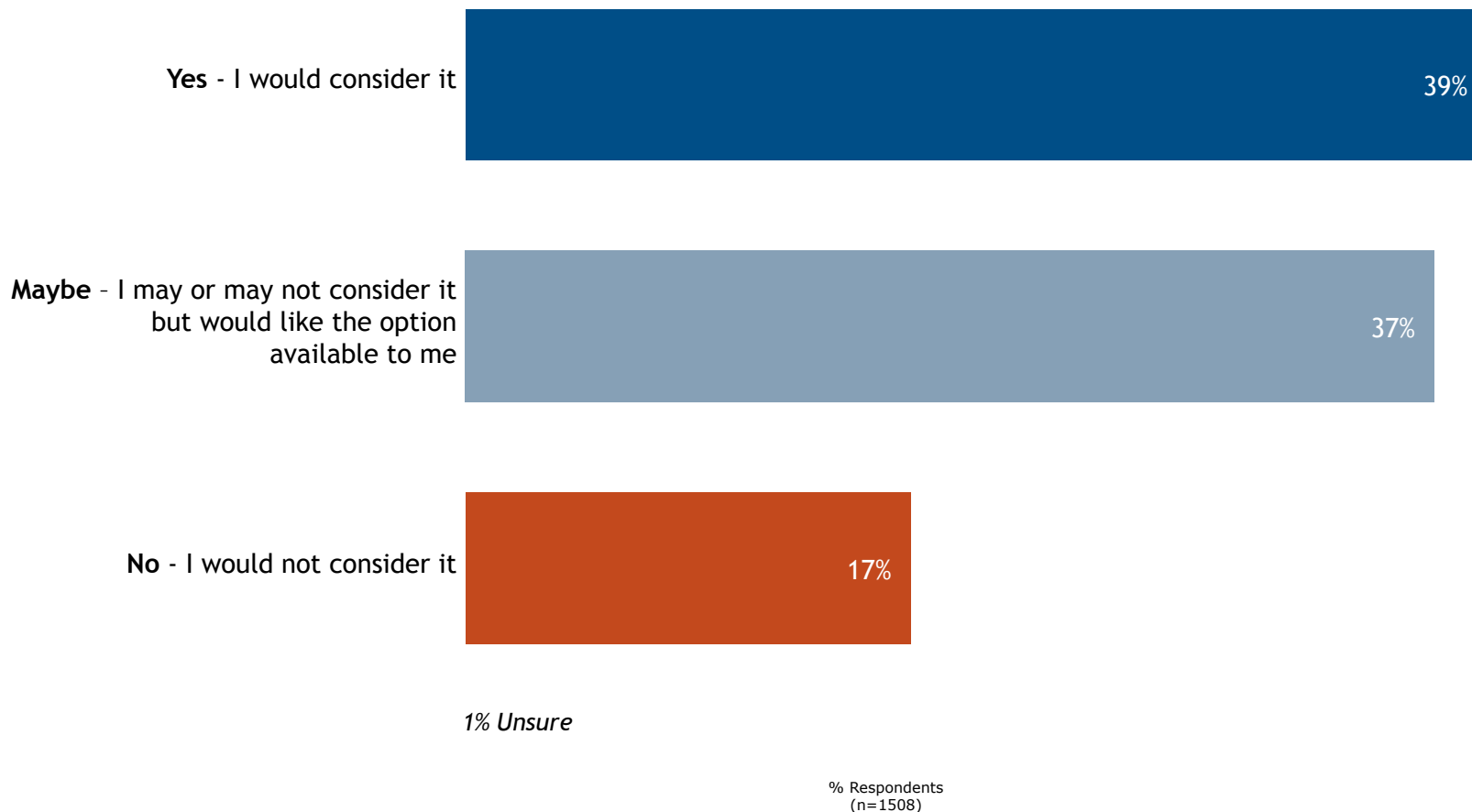


>> Deliberation, Comfort & Approval of Physician-Assisted Death - By Key Demographics -

		<u>Gender</u>			
		TOTAL (n=1508)	Male (n=769)	Female (n=739)	Have Kids at Home (n=638)
Deliberation of Physician-Assisted Death	High	62%	55%	69%	60%
	Medium	27%	30%	23%	29%
	Low	11%	14%	8%	11%
Comfort with Physician-Assisted Death	Comfortable	62%	59%	63%	53%
	Neutral	14%	16%	16%	18%
	Uncomfortable	23%	25%	21%	29%
Approval of Physician-Assisted Death	Approve	80%	76%	83%	73%
	Disapprove	18%	22%	14%	25%

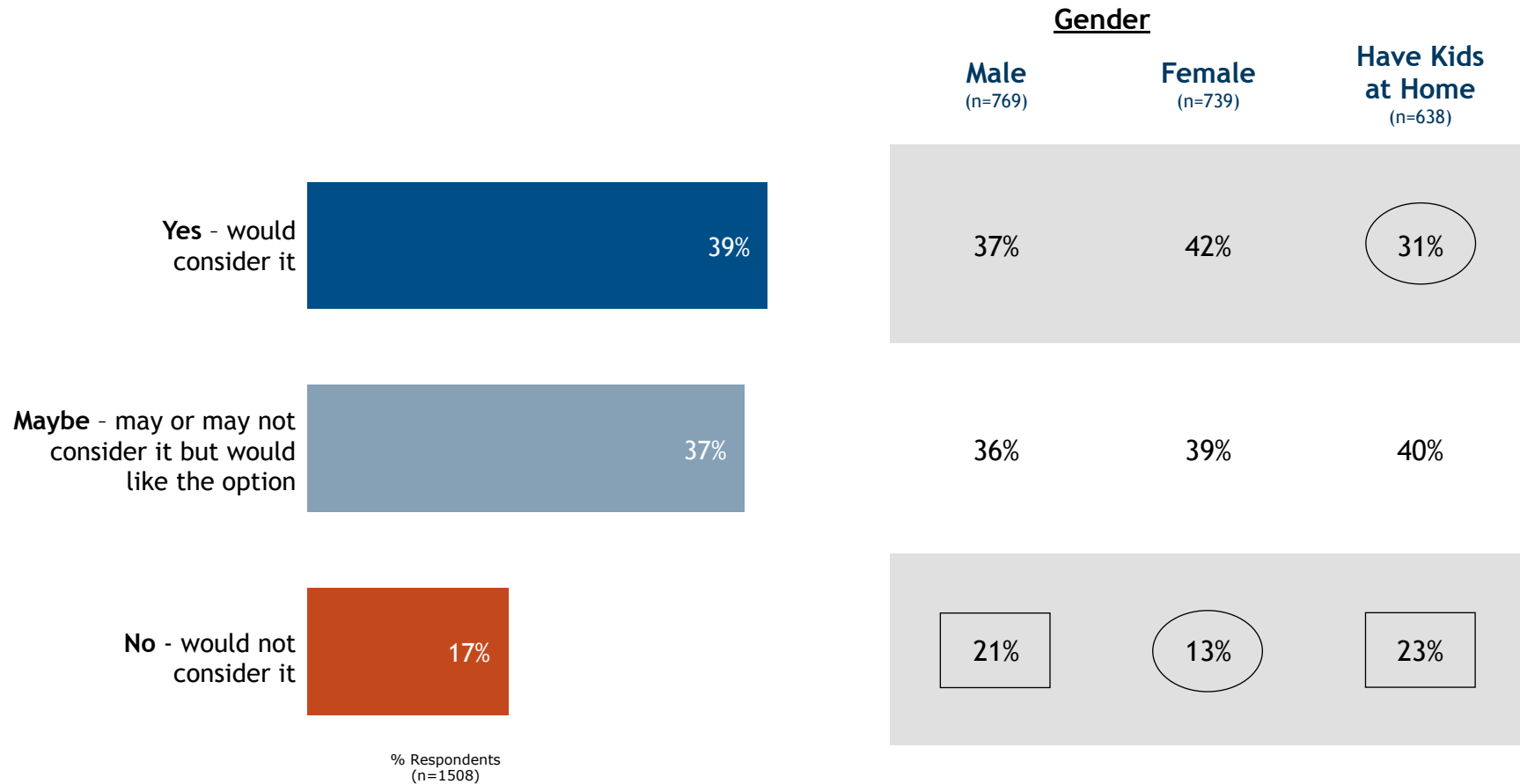
>> Personal Consideration of Physician-Assisted Death

If you were personally suffering from a grievous and irremediable medical condition (including an illness, disease or disability), to what degree would you consider physician-assisted death?



>> Personal Consideration of Physician-Assisted Death - By Key Demographics -

If you were personally suffering from a grievous and irremediable medical condition (including an illness, disease or disability), to what degree would you consider physician-assisted death?

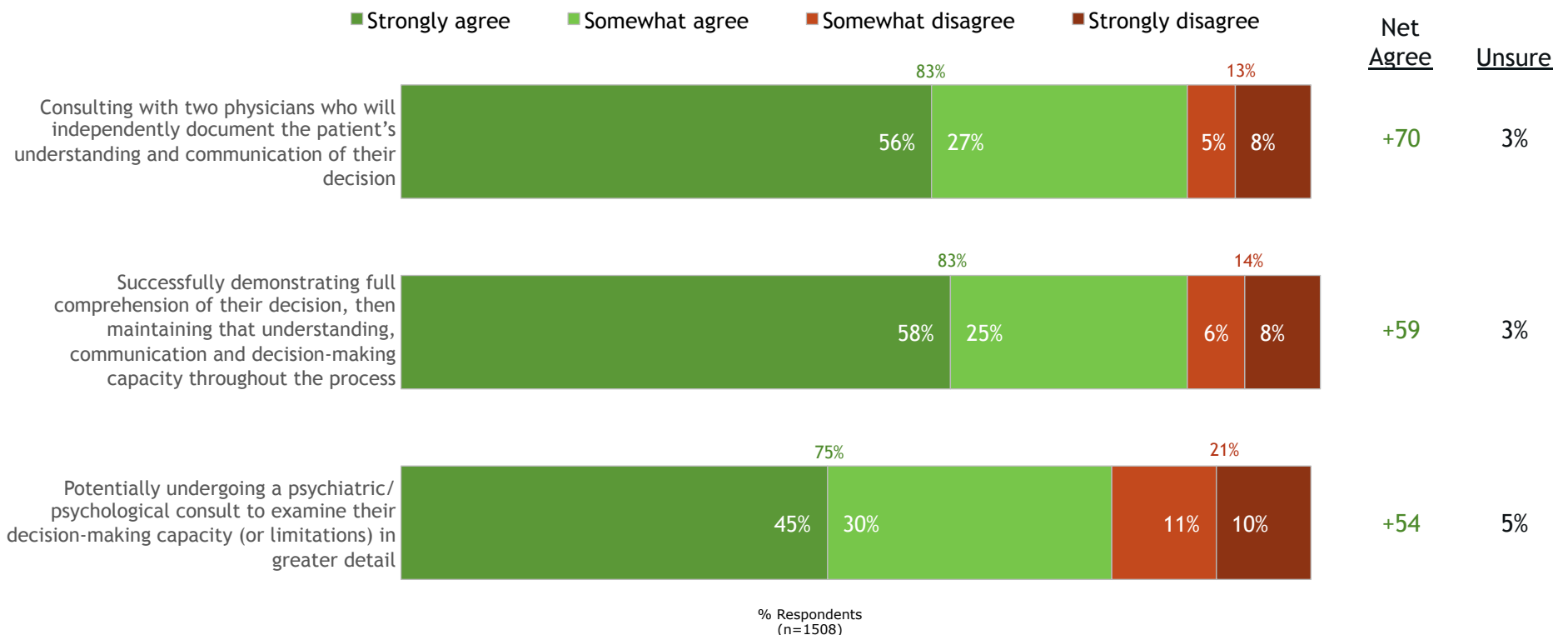


>> Views on Draft Criteria to Determine Patient Competence for Physician-Assisted Death

Additionally, the Supreme Court's ruling only grants access to physician-assisted death to **competent** patients: that is, to patients who are mentally competent to make this decision about seeking physician-assisted death. Professionals have drafted the following guidelines for determining a patient's competence:

To be considered **competent**, a patient 1) Must consult with two physicians who will independently document the patient's understanding and communication of their decision; 2) Must successfully demonstrate their full comprehension of their decision and then maintain that understanding, communication and decision-making capacity throughout the process; and 3) May be asked to undergo a psychiatric/psychological consult to examine their decision-making capacity (or limitations) in greater detail.

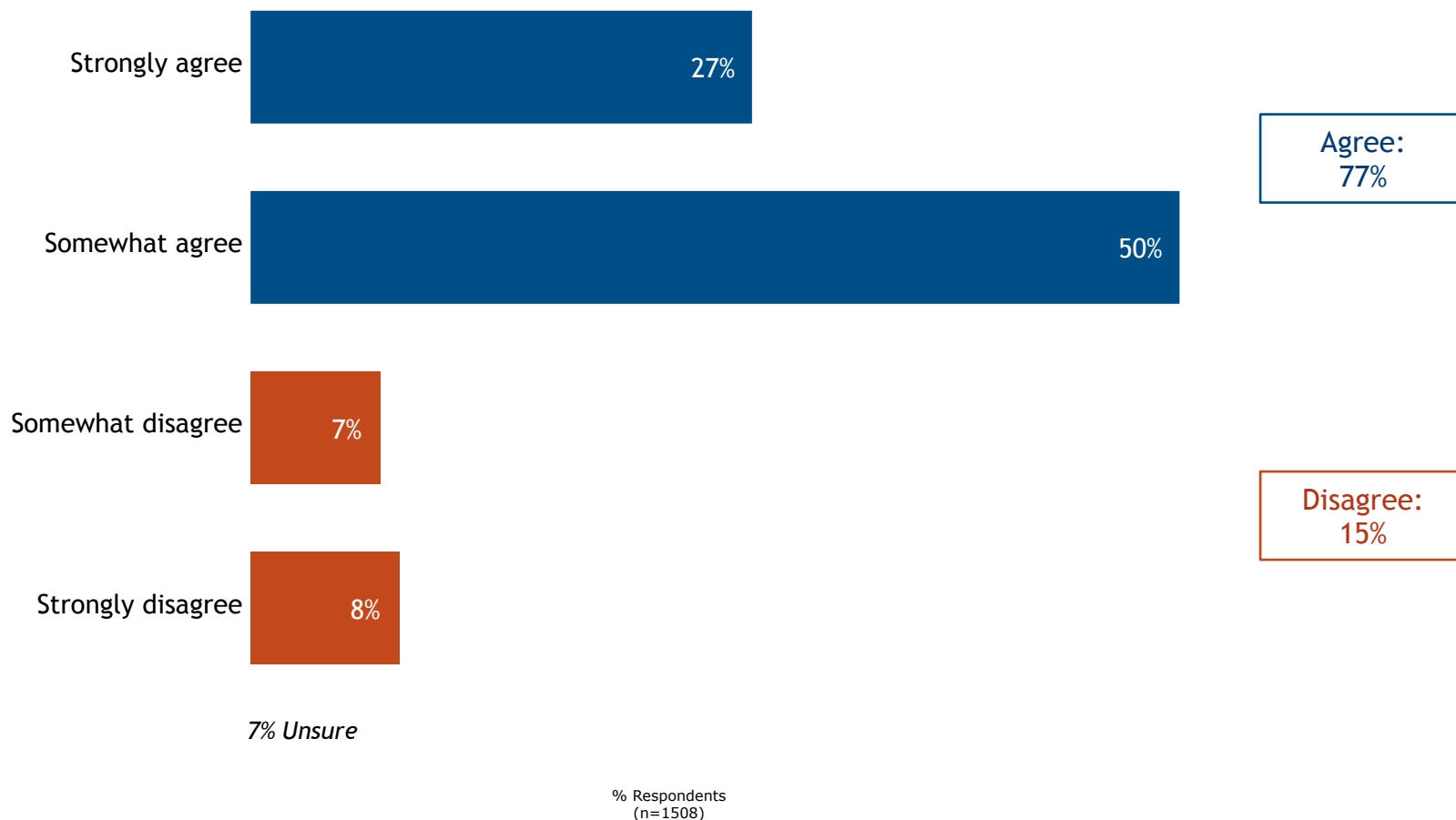
Would you say you personally **agree** or **disagree** with each of the draft criteria for determining competence?





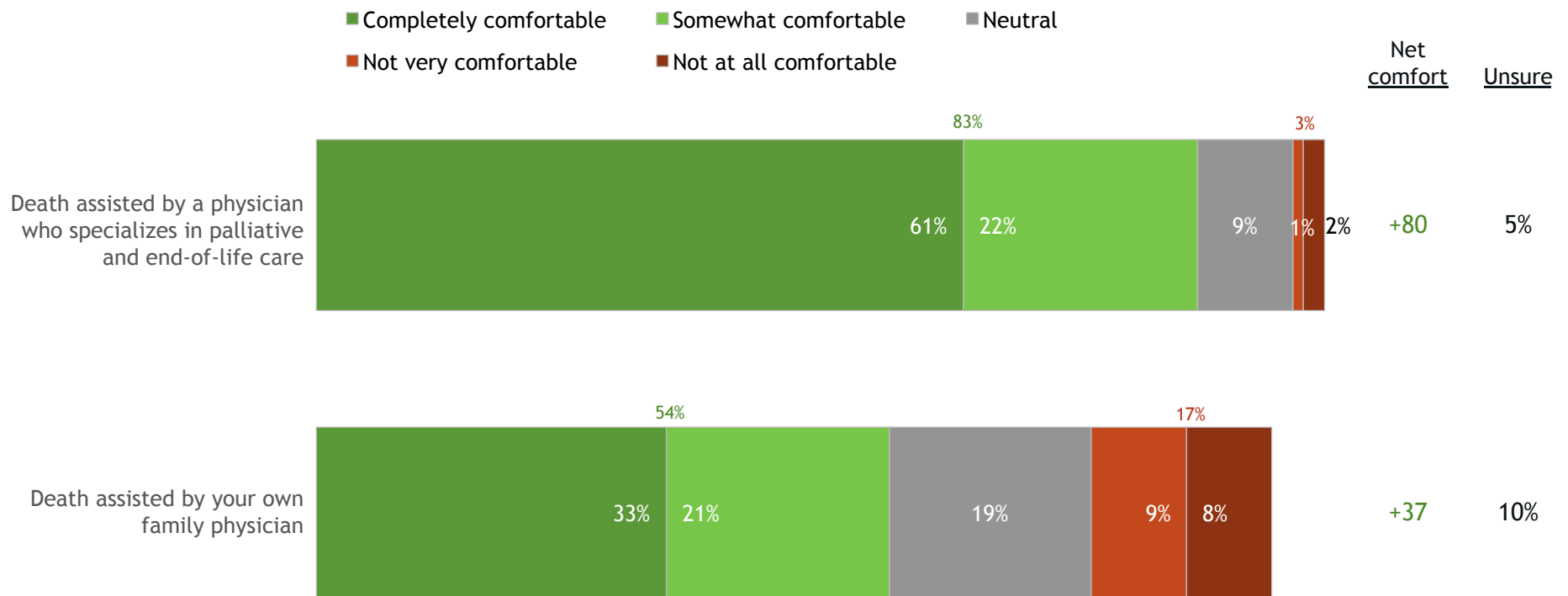
Views on Draft Guidelines to Determine Patient Competence Overall

Do you generally **agree** or **disagree** with the draft guidelines for determining patient competence overall?



>> Level of Comfort with Physician-Assisted Death - By Administering Physician Expertise -

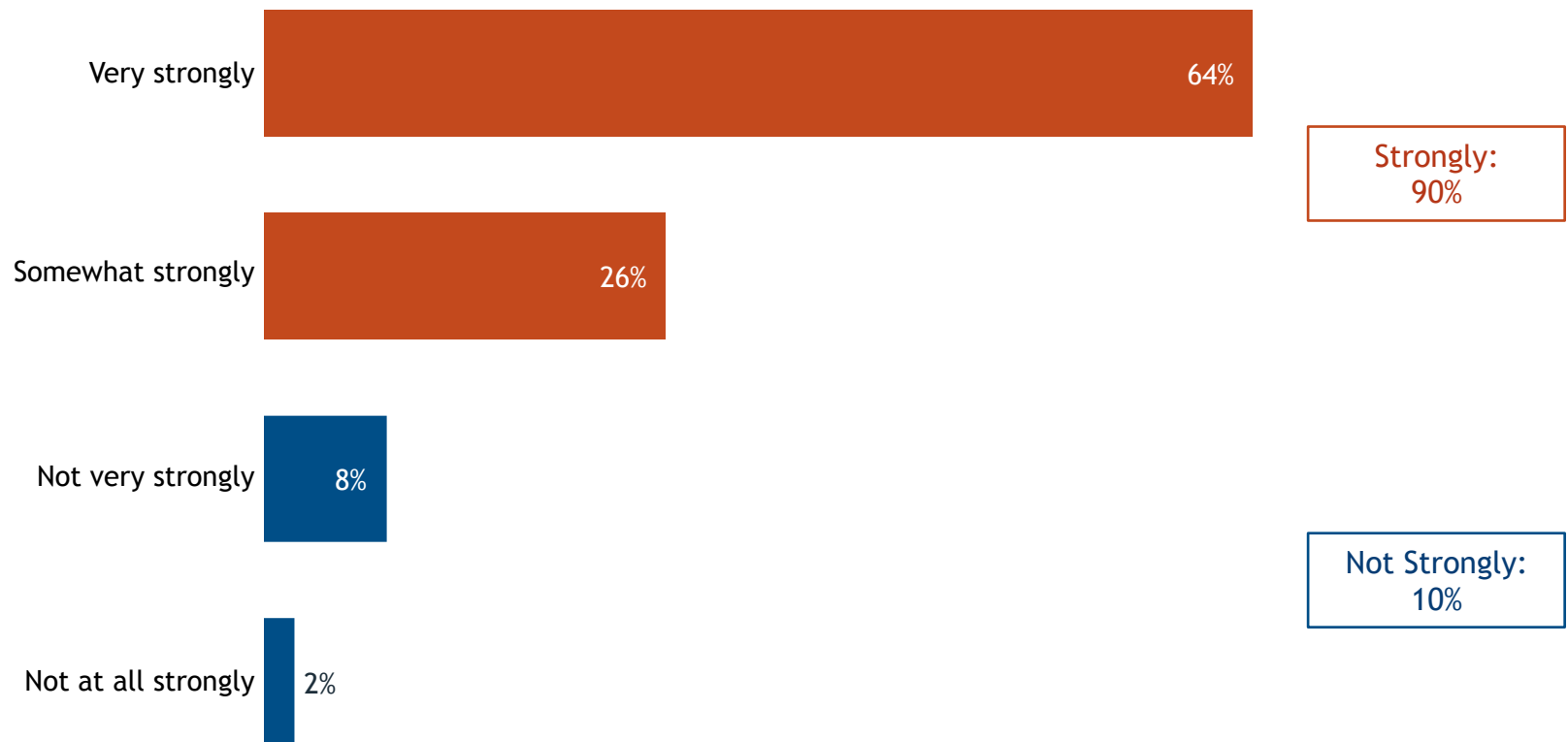
Medically assisted death is new to Canada, so the protocols on how it is done are still being established. As a patient who might consider assisted death in the case of terminal illness and/or intolerable pain, **how comfortable** would you personally be with each of the following options? Please rate each on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means you would be “Not at all comfortable with that” and 5 means you would be “**Completely comfortable with that**”.



% Respondents
Would consider physician-assisted death, or want option available
(n=1248)

>> Importance of Ability to Choose Location of Death

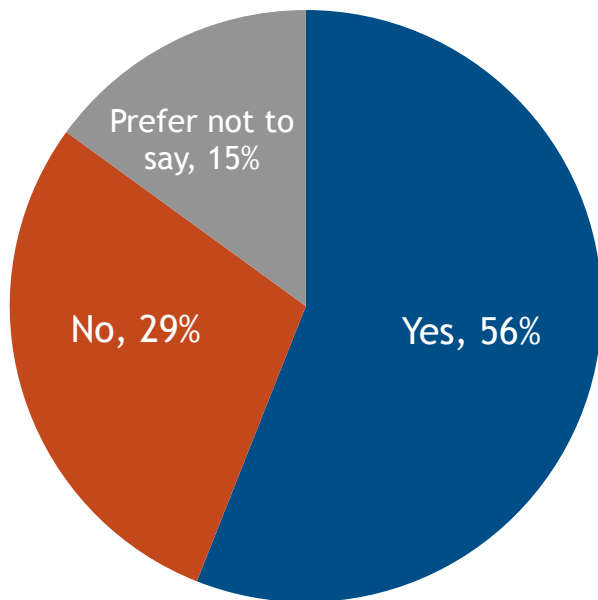
And if you were to consider physician-assisted death for yourself in the case of terminal illness and/or intolerable pain, how strongly would you feel about dying in a location of your choosing, such as your own home?



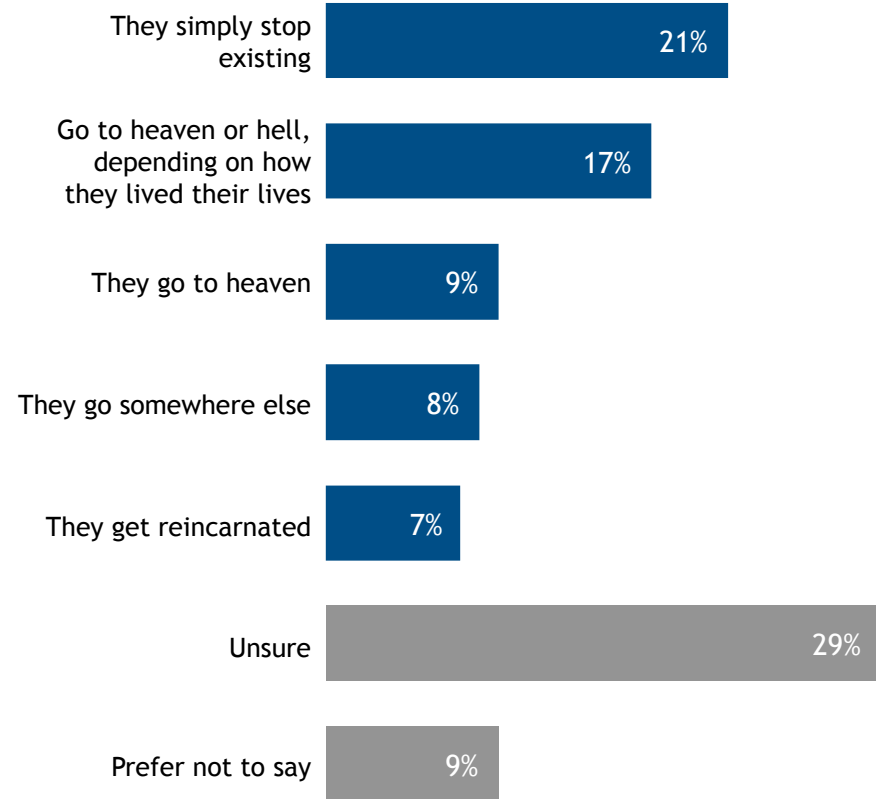
% Respondents
Would consider physician-assisted death, or want option available
(n=1248)

>> Views on Existence of Afterlife

Do you believe in an **afterlife**, or some form of life after death?



What do you think happens to people after they die?



% Respondents
(n=1508)



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