

# Canadians and the News Media

March 12, 1998

Canadian  
Corporate  
News



W. John Wright  
Senior Vice President

## Perspective

- The face of information technology has been almost completely transformed since 1989.
  - The 1991 Gulf War elevated CNN as the Voice of Record for the modern world.
  - The legacy: from Princess Diana and Mother Theresa to the Bill Clinton sex scandal and the Nagano Olympics.
  - 1998's Canadian Corporate News Annual Study of Canadians' Media Habits and Attitudes Regarding the News Media
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## Perspective

- 1962 — the Roper Organization: Americans relying on television more than newspapers.
  - In 1996 Canadians shipped more PCs than television.
  - Today, of those interested in the news, 9% indicate that they use the Internet ‘a great deal’ to obtain their news information.
  - MacLuhan was right: *The message is the medium*
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## Perspective

- National coverage that Canadians would like to see more of: health, environment and technology.
  - Health: not just emergency wards and health care cuts, but demographic wellness.
  - Responsible journalism: an oxymoron?
  - The apparent symbiotic relationship between the press and the public.
  - Boycotts.
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# Perspective

- Two apparent forces pulling at those who are interested in the news:
    - reorienting of the media consumer to the new global news outlet of the Internet
    - a revitalization of news issues: personal health and communities
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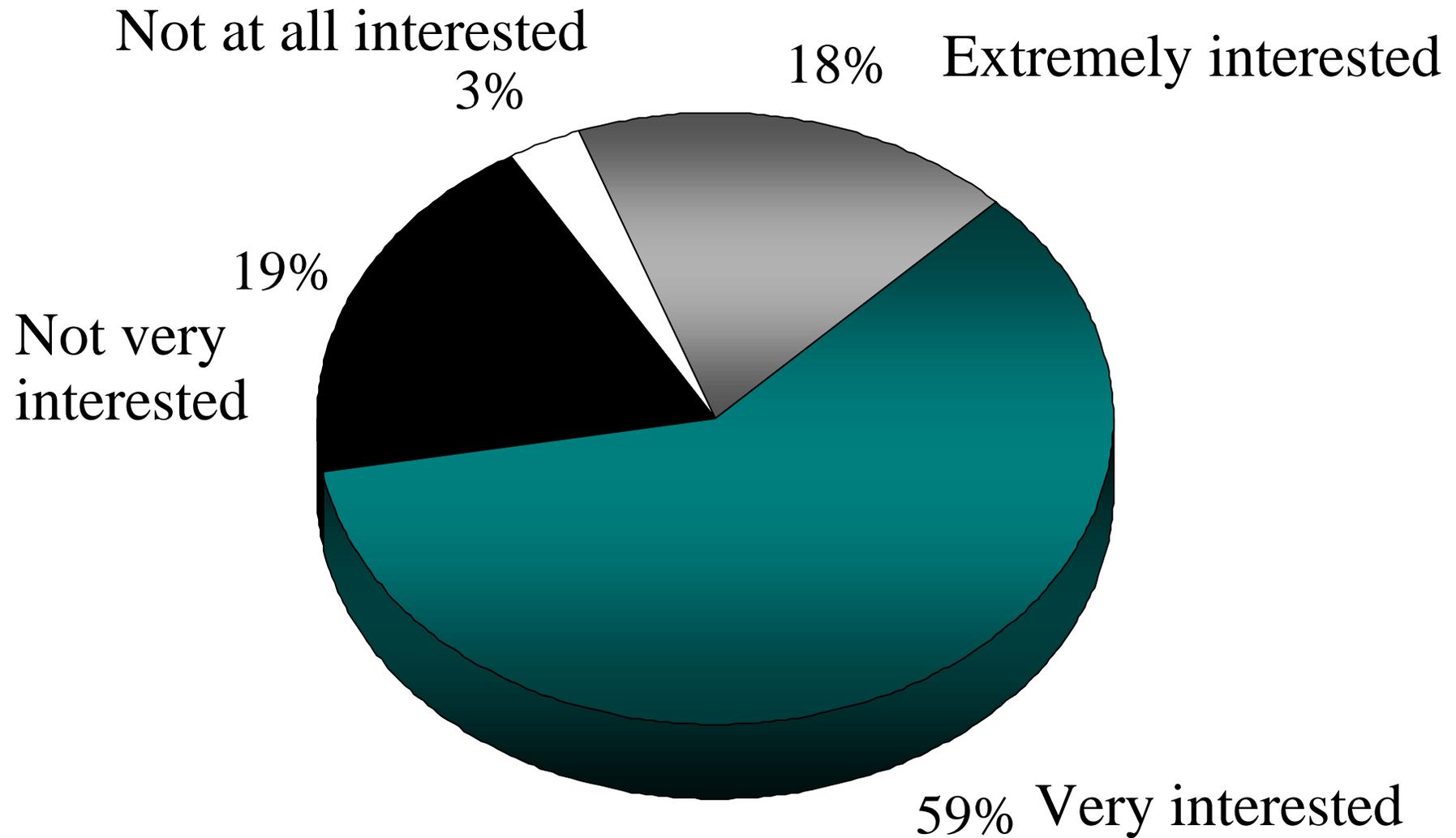
# Methodology

- Telephone interviews with 1,500 Canadian adults, aged 18 and older
    - Scope narrowed to 77% (N=1,176) who reported being ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ interested in following the news
  - All interviews conducted between January 21st and 27th, 1998
  - Margin of error is  $\pm 2.9\%$
  - Data were statistically weighted to reflect 1996 Census data.
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# Who's Interested in the News?

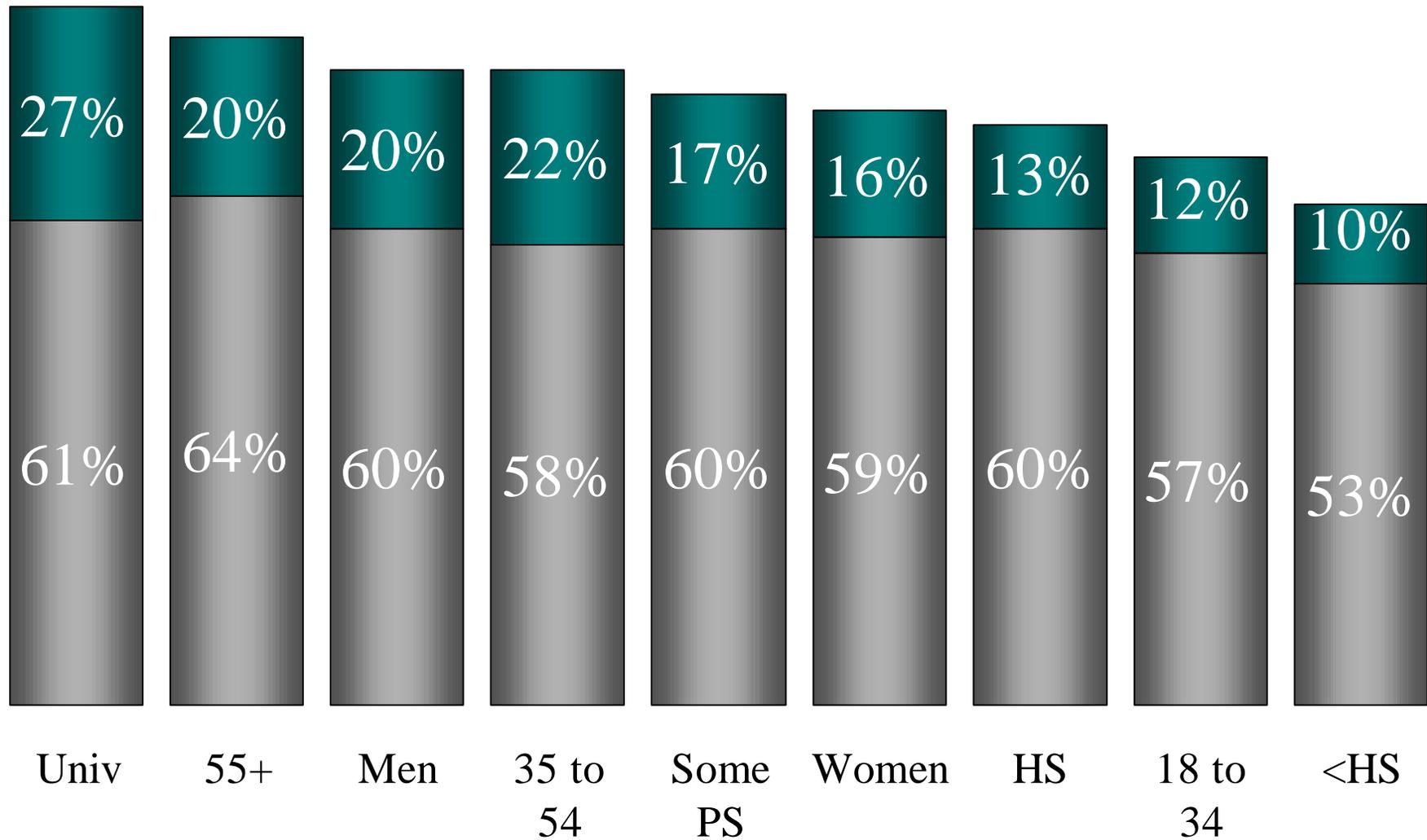


# Interest in the News



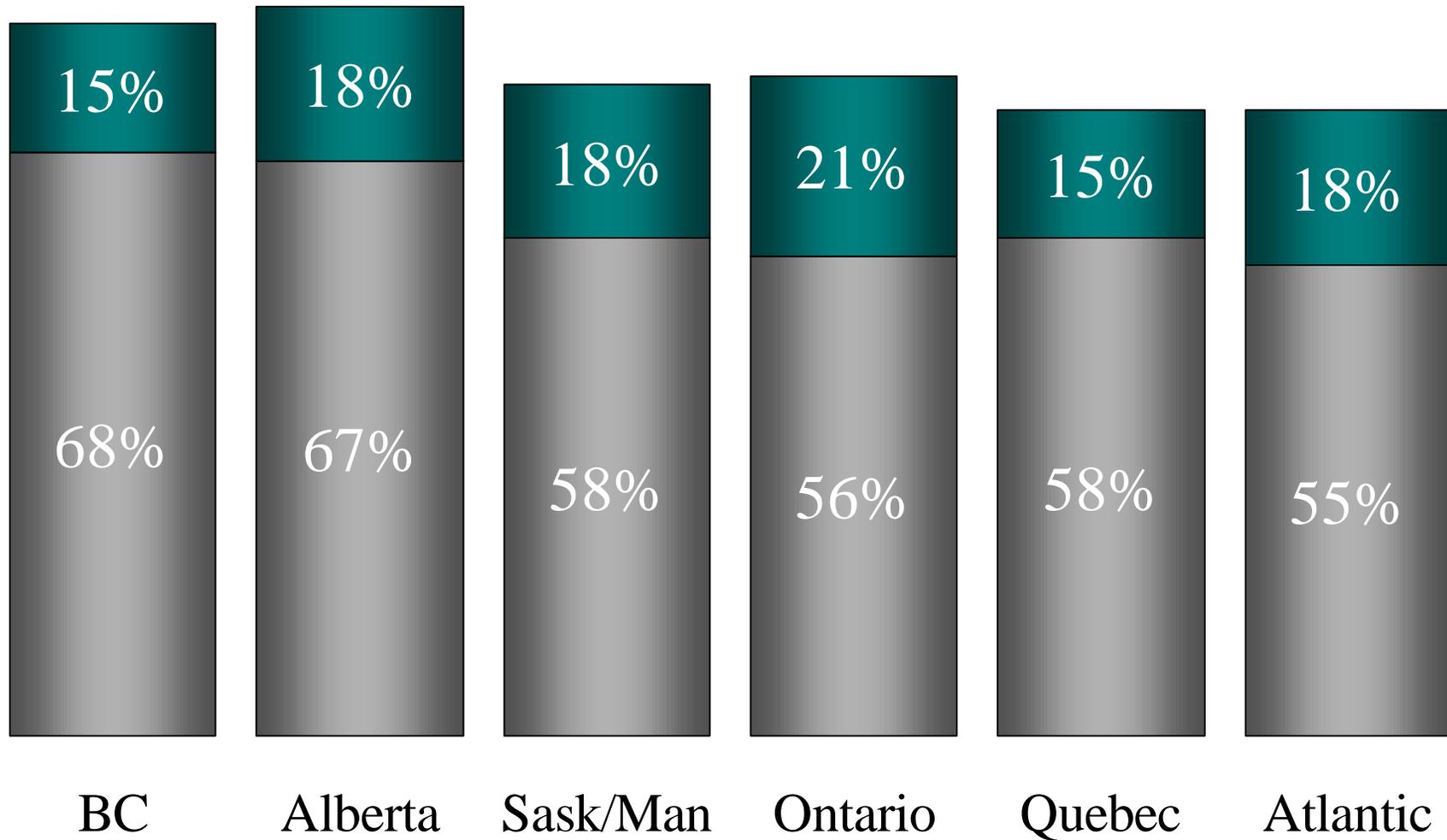
# Interest in the News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



# Interest in the News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



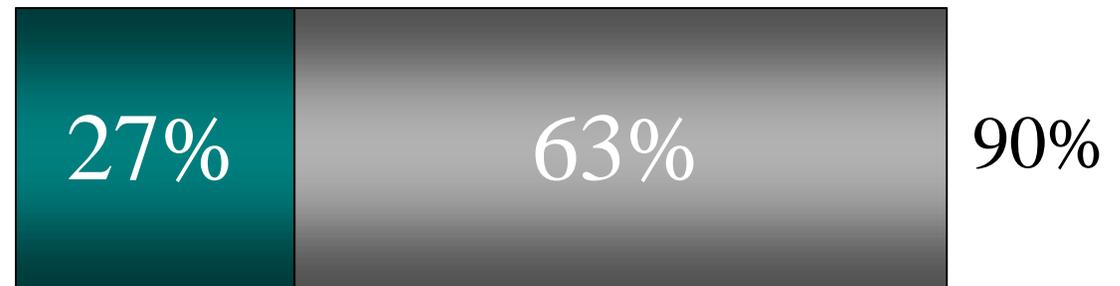
# Interest in the News

Very Interested Extremely Interested

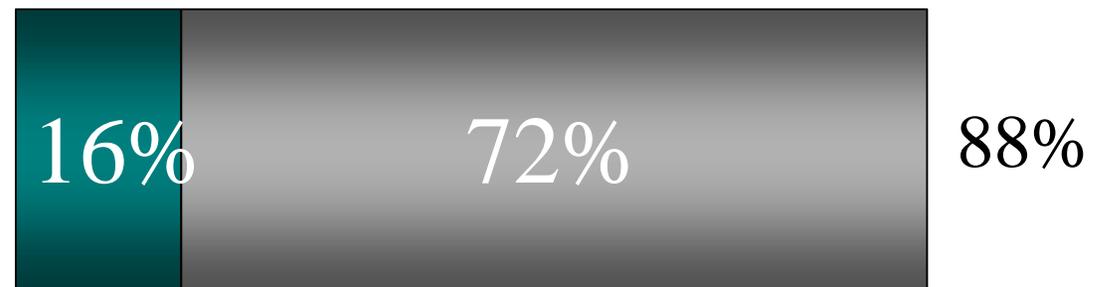


# Interest in Specific Types of News Stories

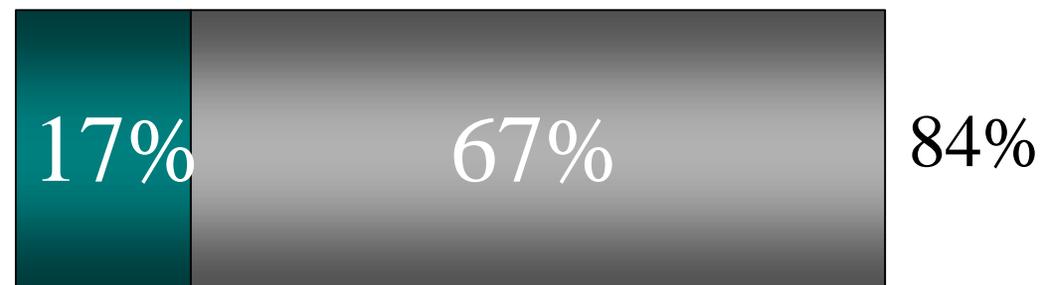
Local news stories about what's happening in your community



National news stories about various Canadian issues & events



International news stories about other countries



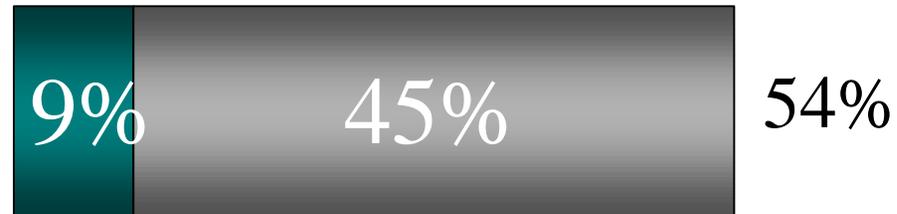
■ Extremely interested    ■ Very interested

# Interest in Specific Types of News Stories

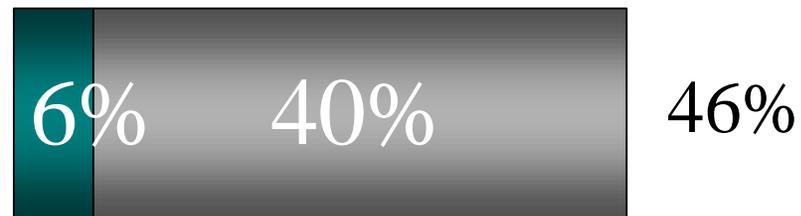
News stories about government and politics



Business, financial and investment stories



Stories about the arts and entertainment



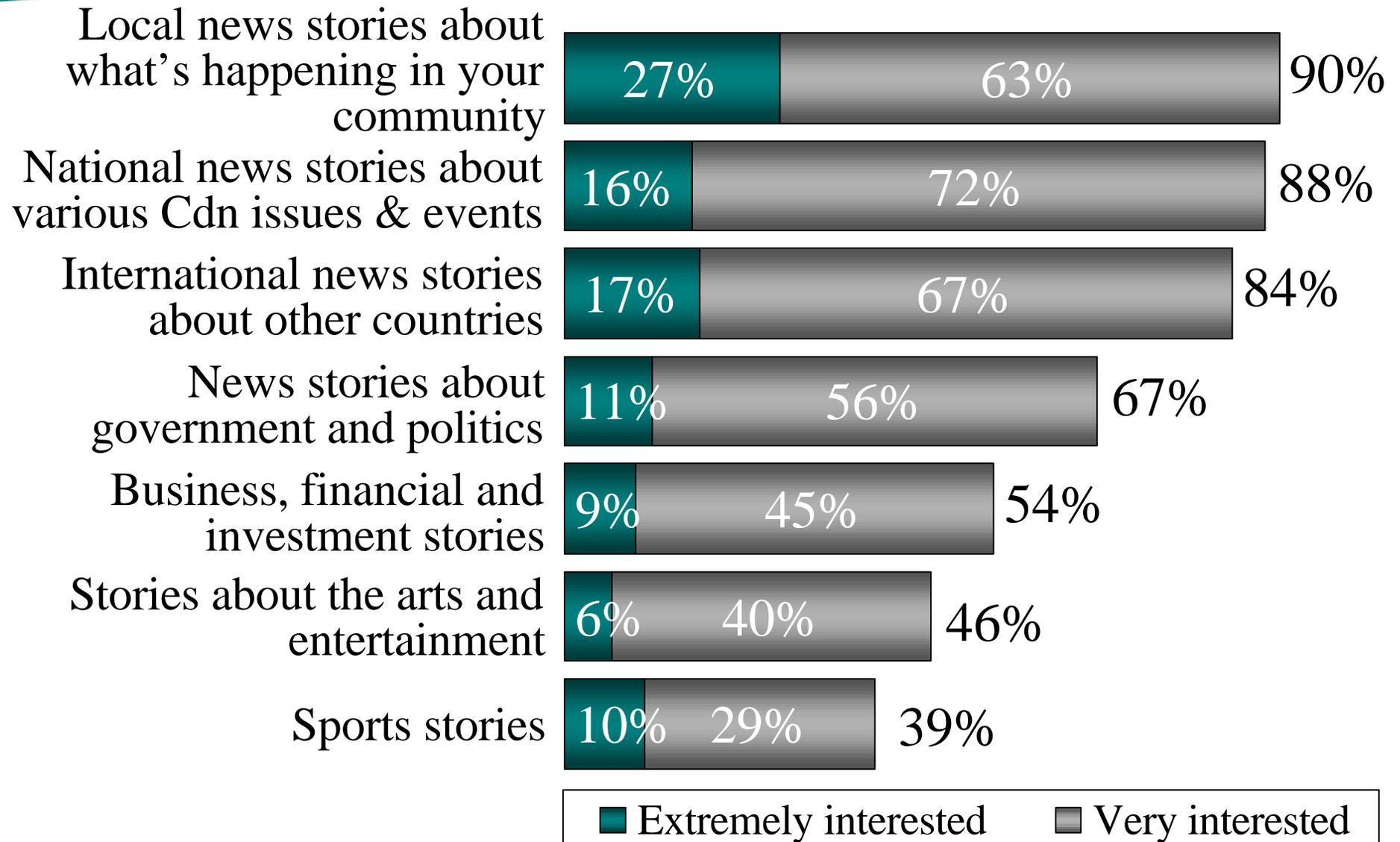
Sports stories



Extremely interested

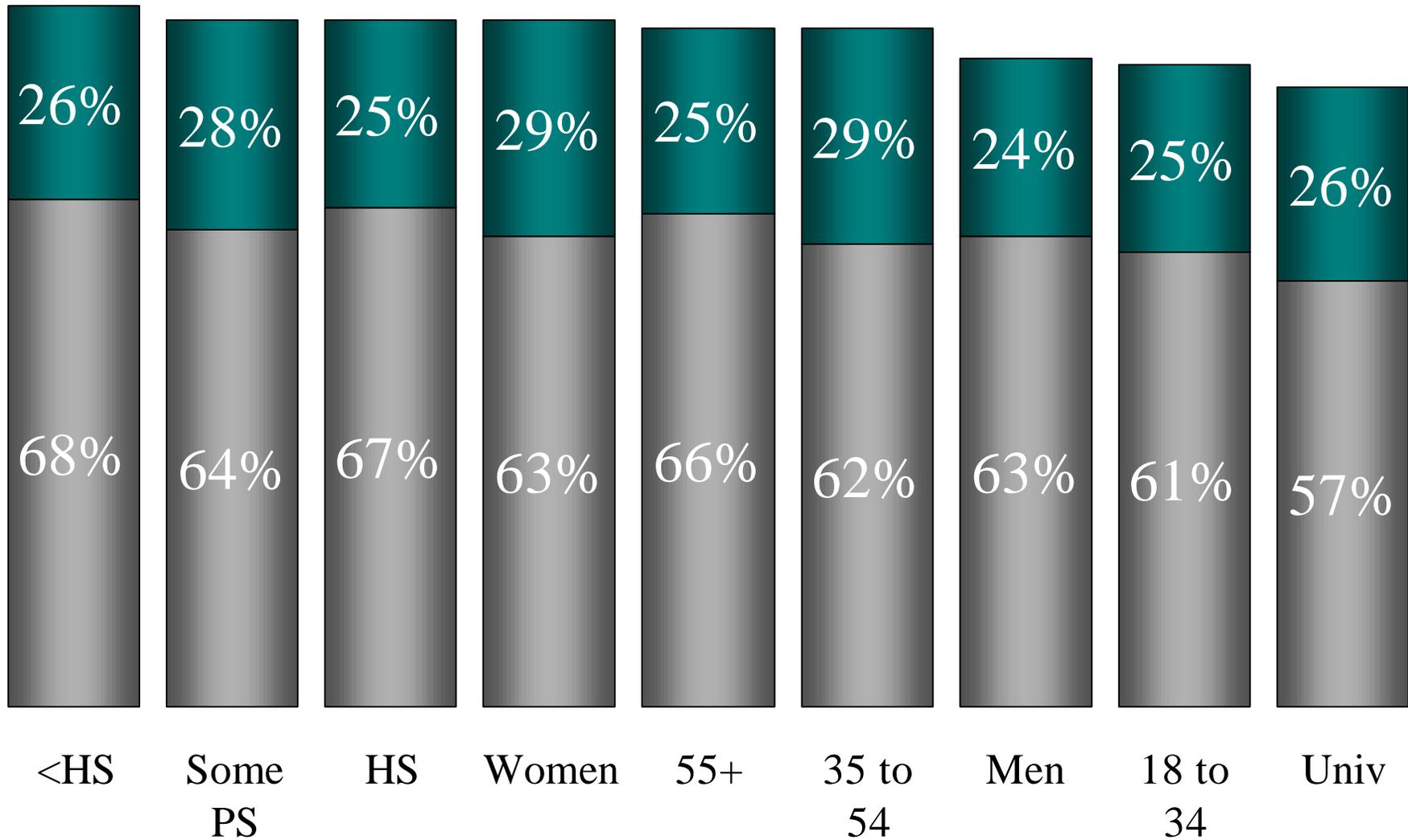
Very interested

# Interest in Specific Types of News Stories



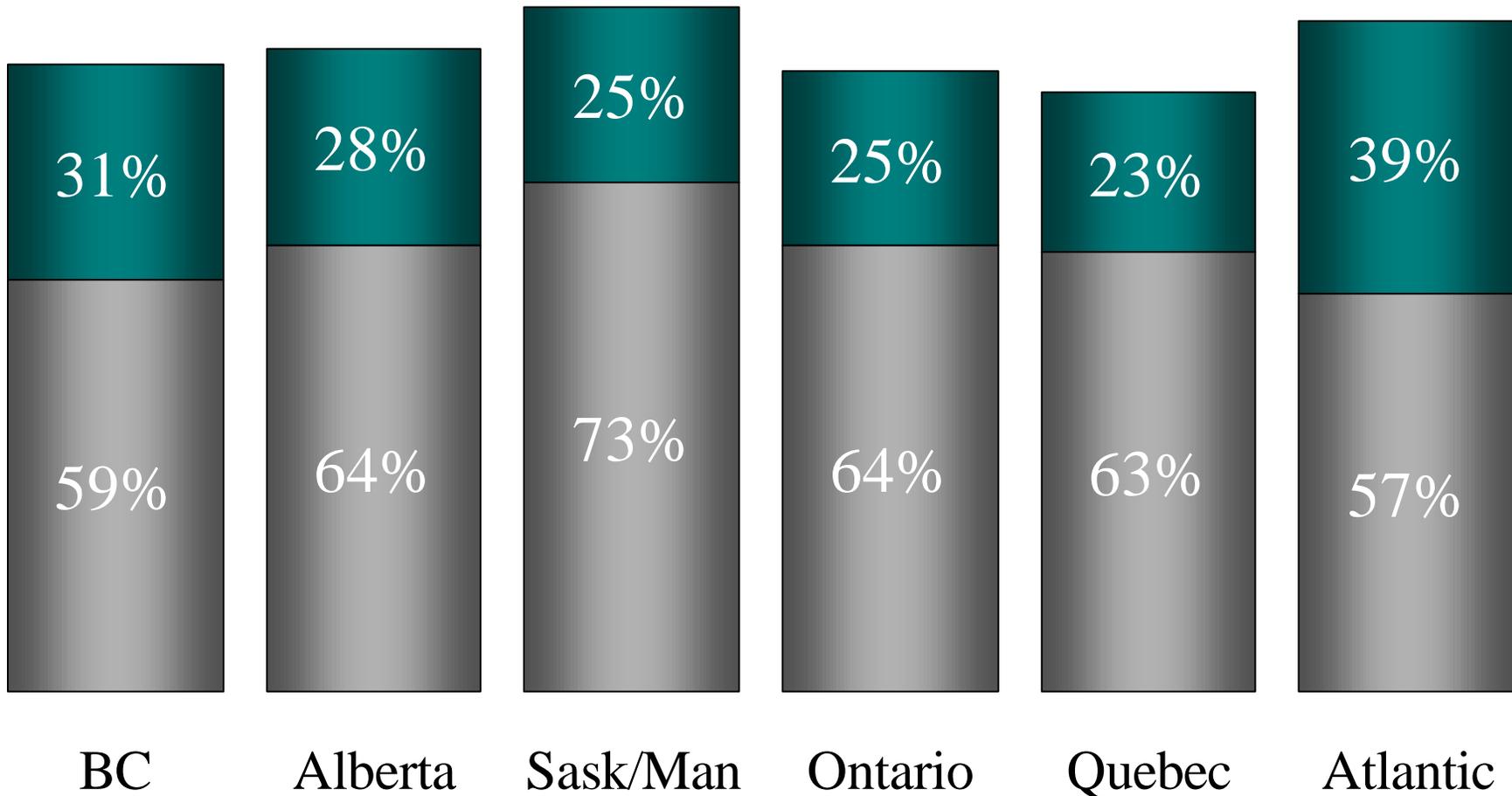
# Interest in Local News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



# Interest in Local News

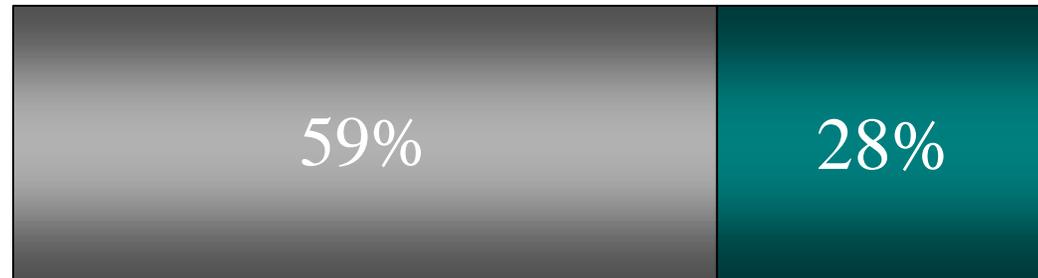
Very Interested Extremely Interested



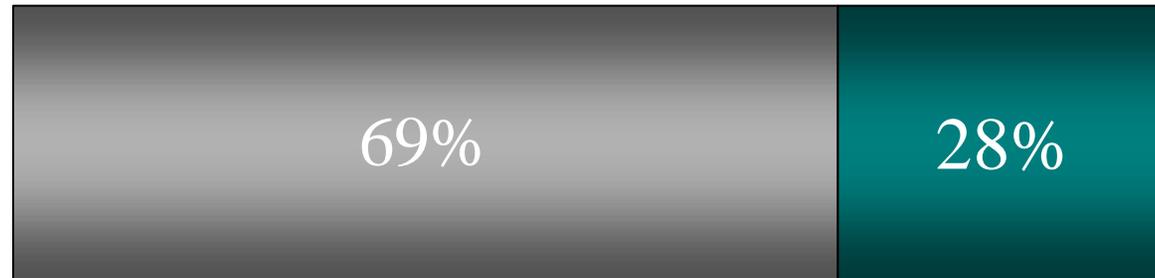
# Interest in Local News

Very Interested Extremely Interested

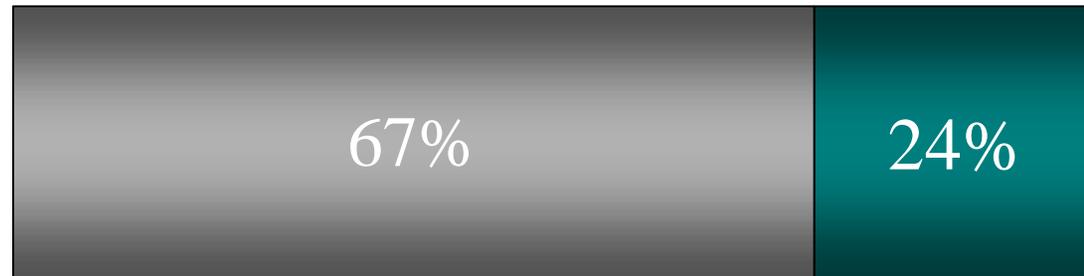
Full Time



Part Time

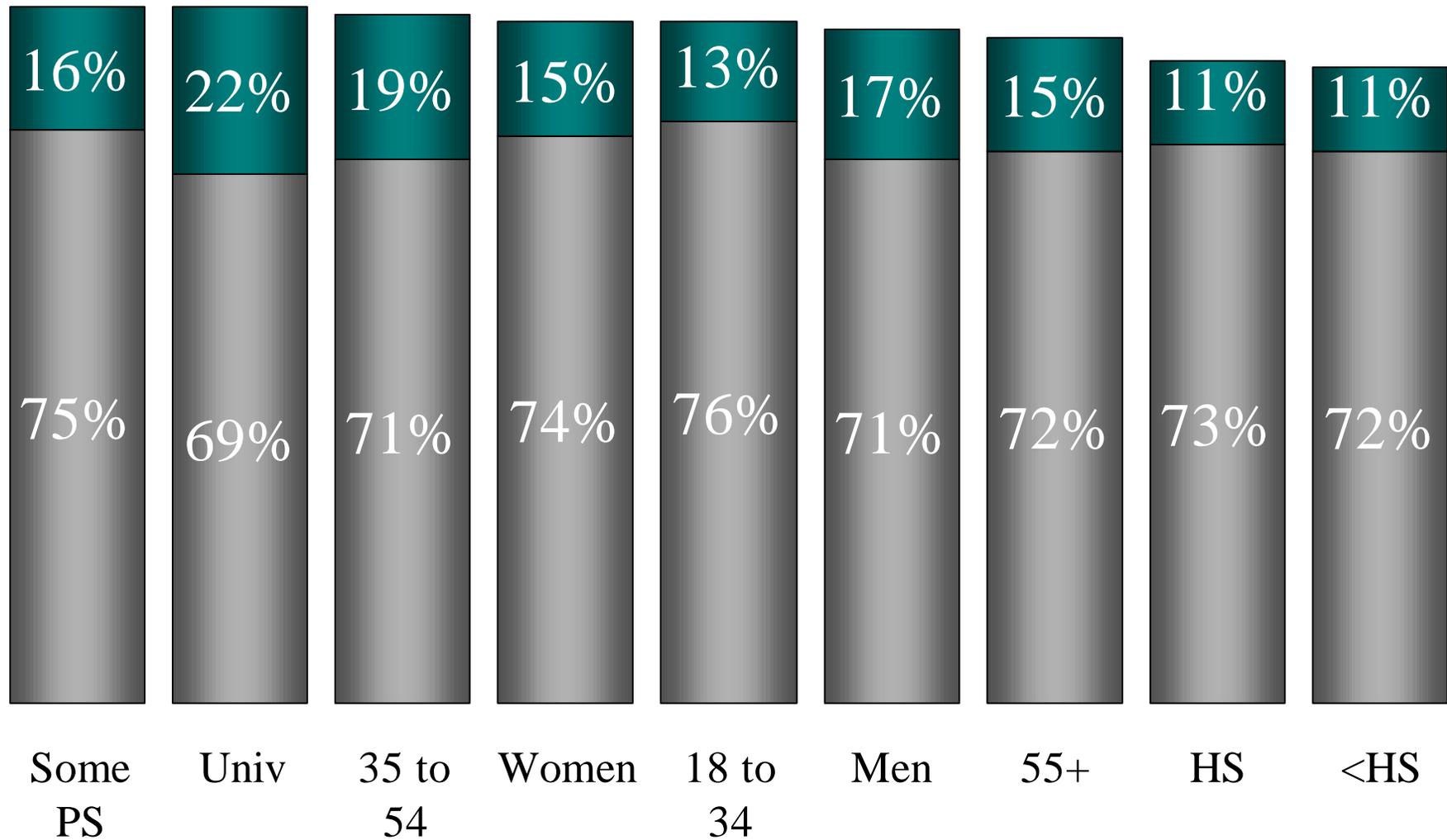


Self Empl



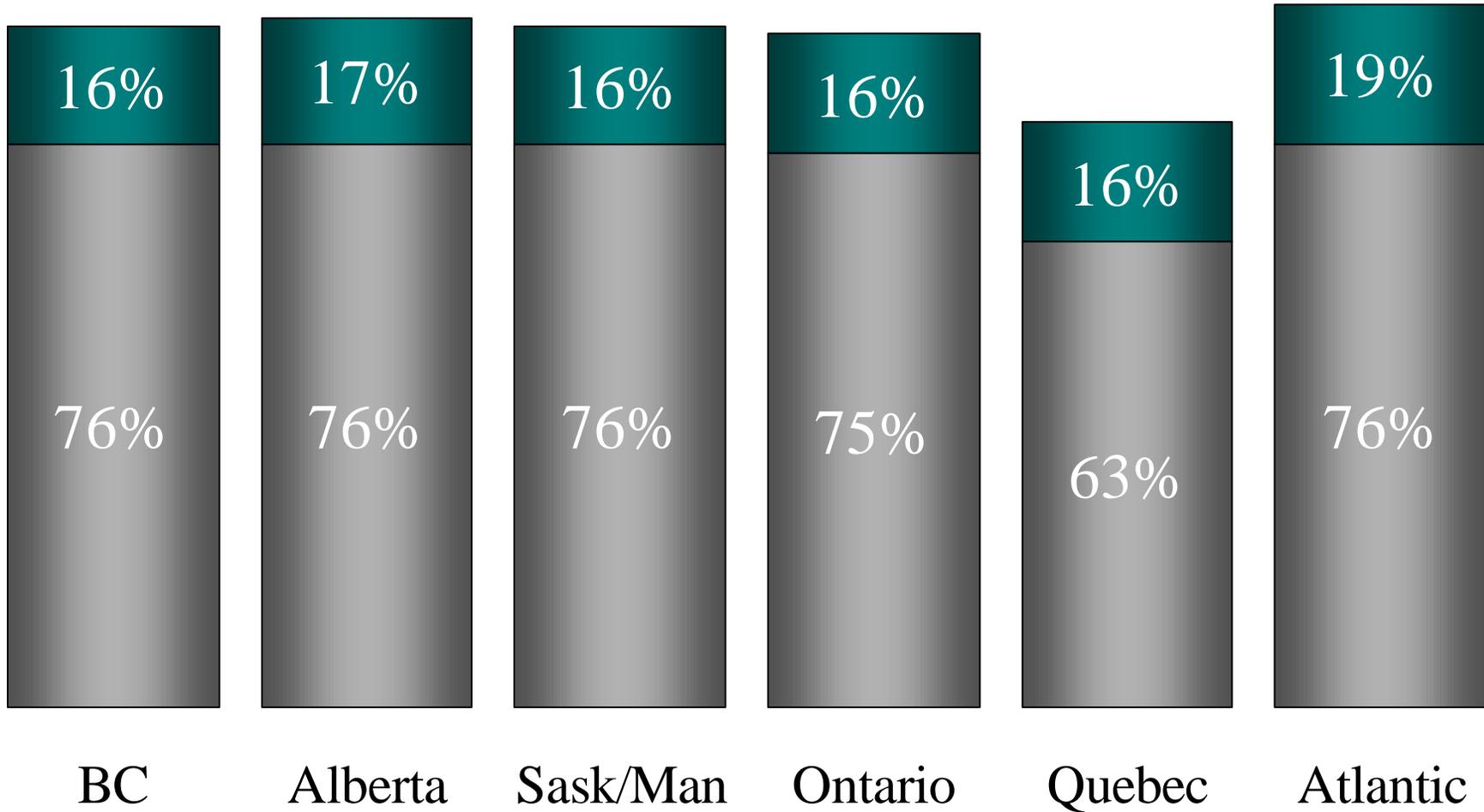
# Interest in National News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



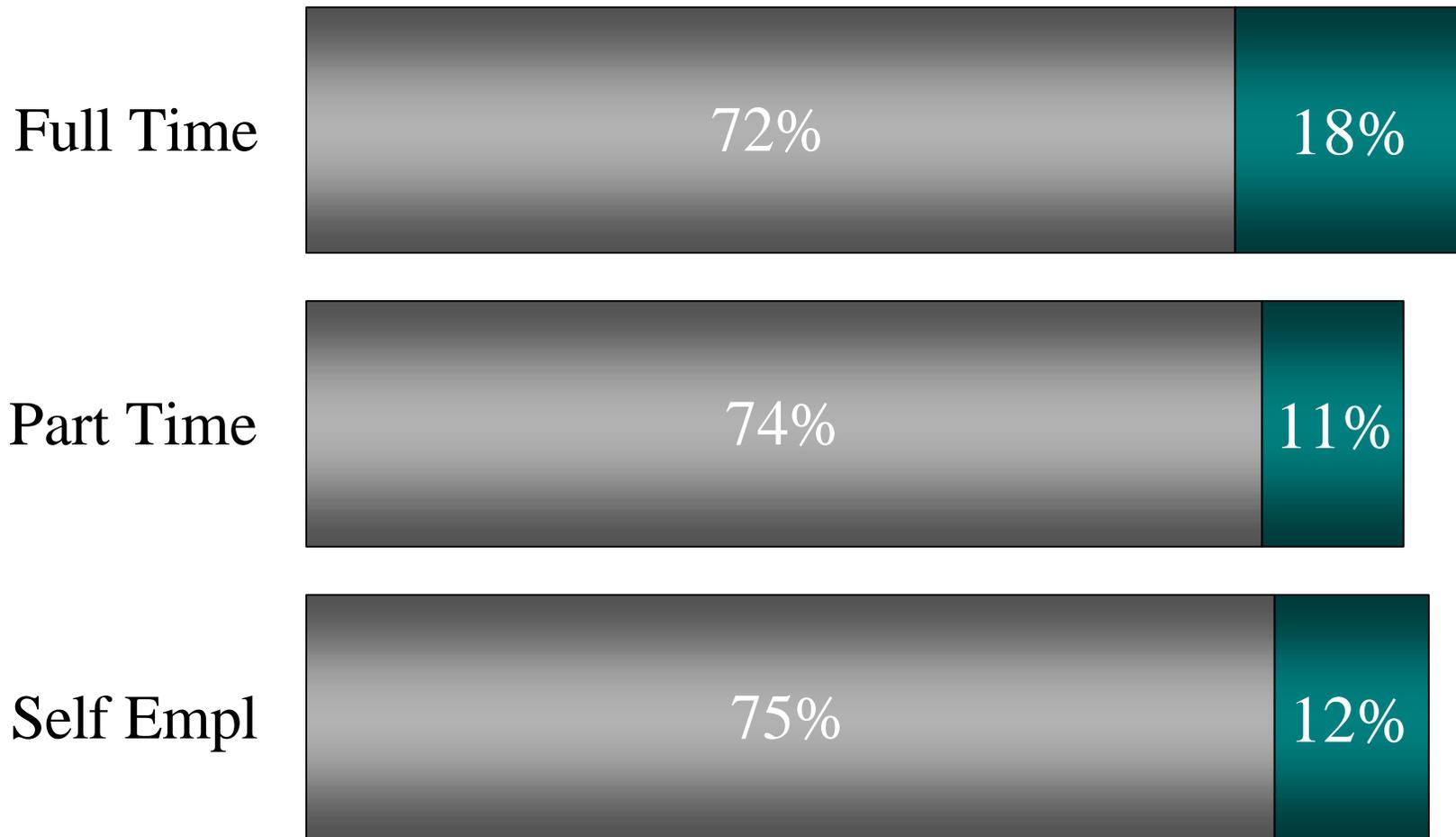
# Interest in National News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



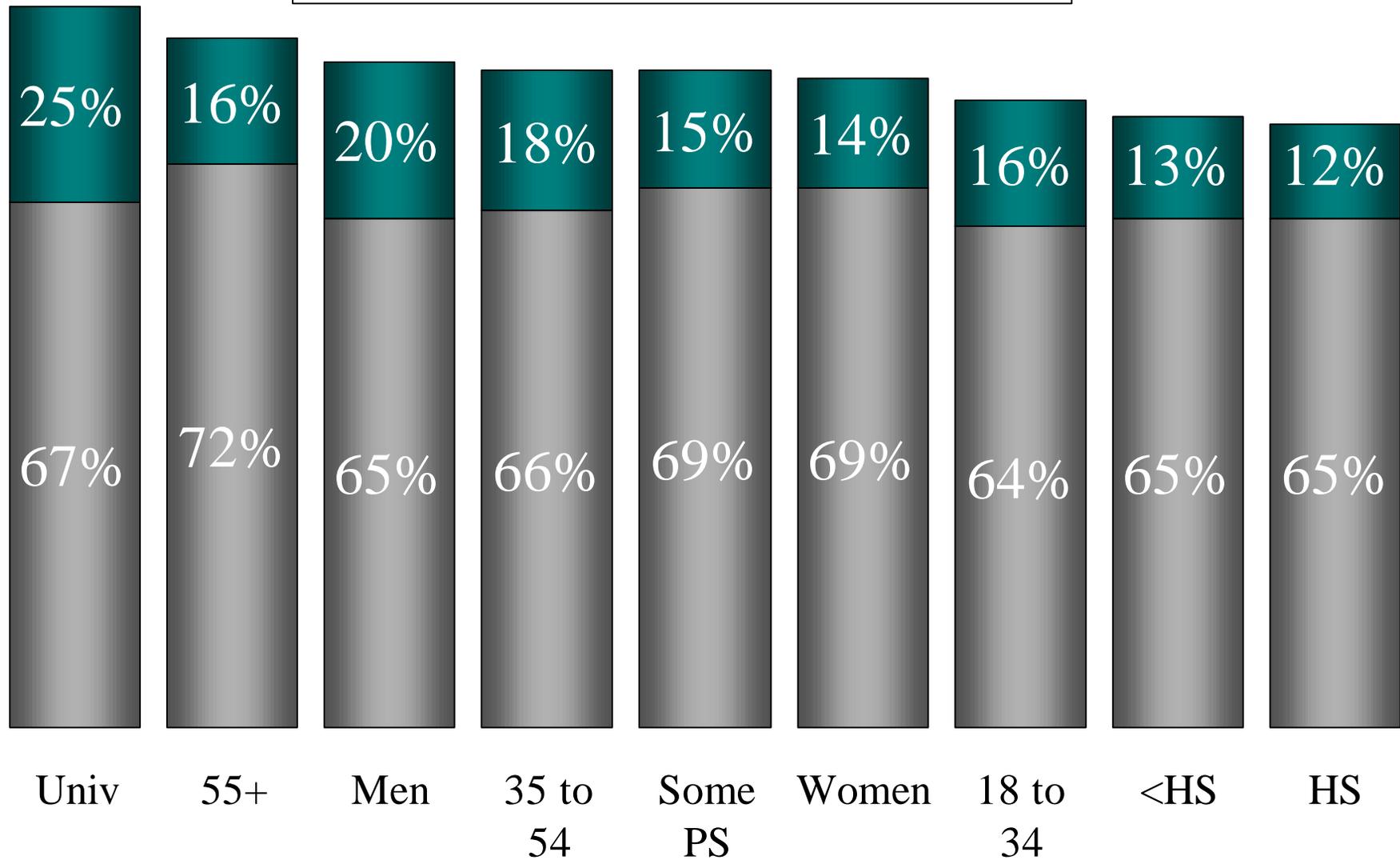
# Interest in National News

■ Very Interested ■ Extremely Interested



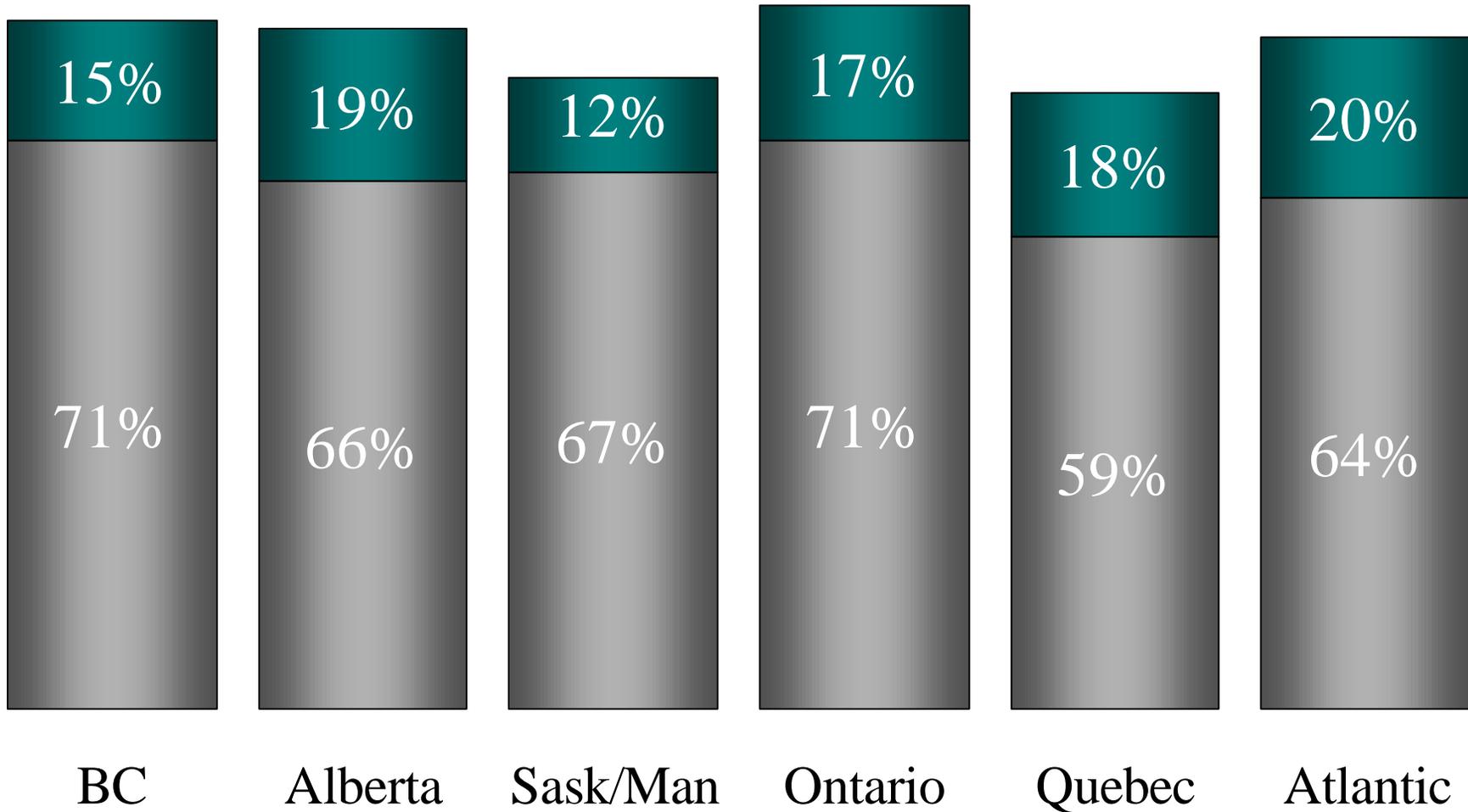
# Interest in International News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



# Interest in International News

Very Interested Extremely Interested



# Interest in International News

Very Interested Extremely Interested

Full Time

67%

17%

Part Time

71%

14%

Self Empl

67%

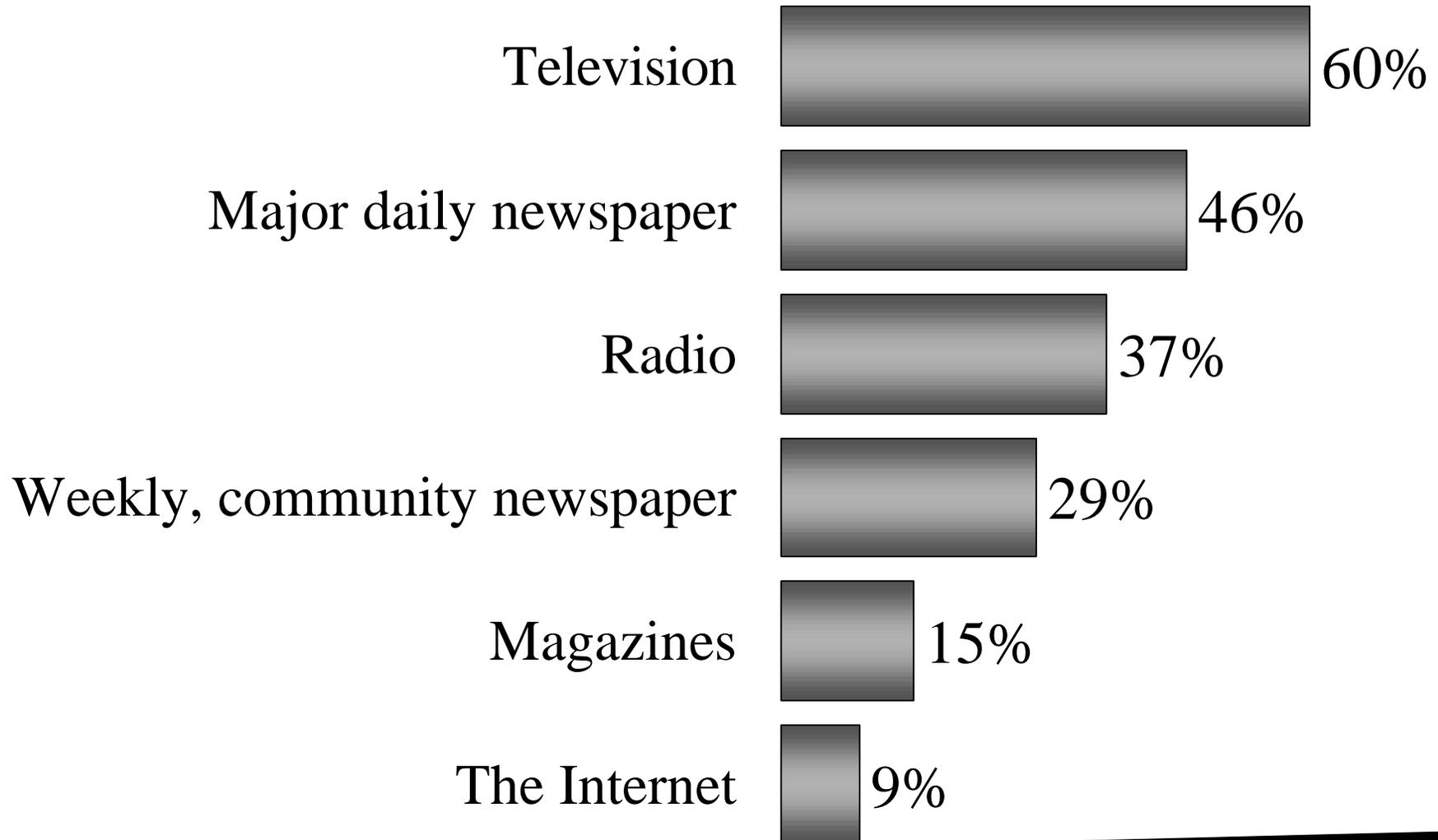
18%

# News Coverage: Who Wants What and Where?

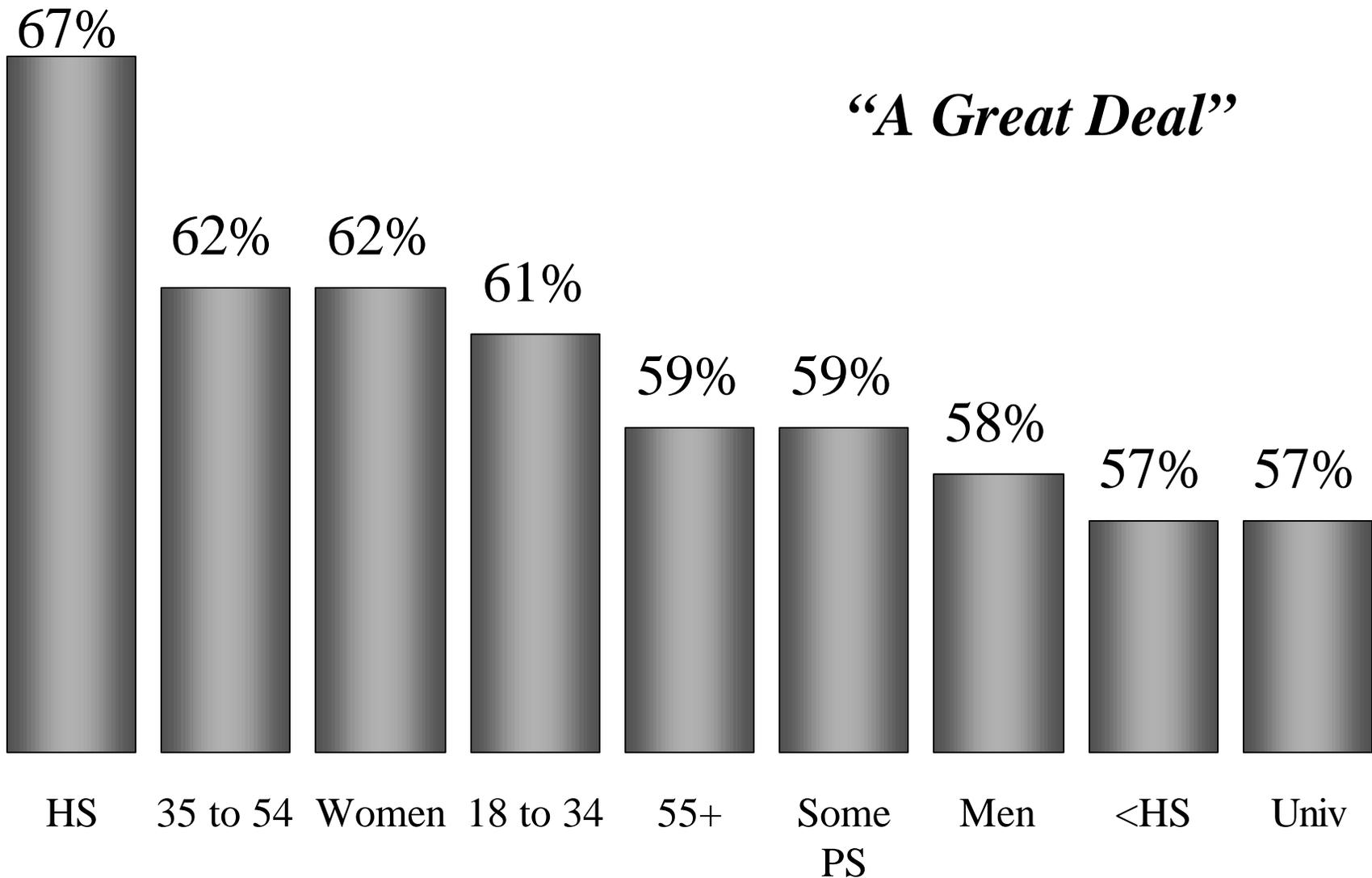


# Usage of Various News Media

*"A Great Deal"*

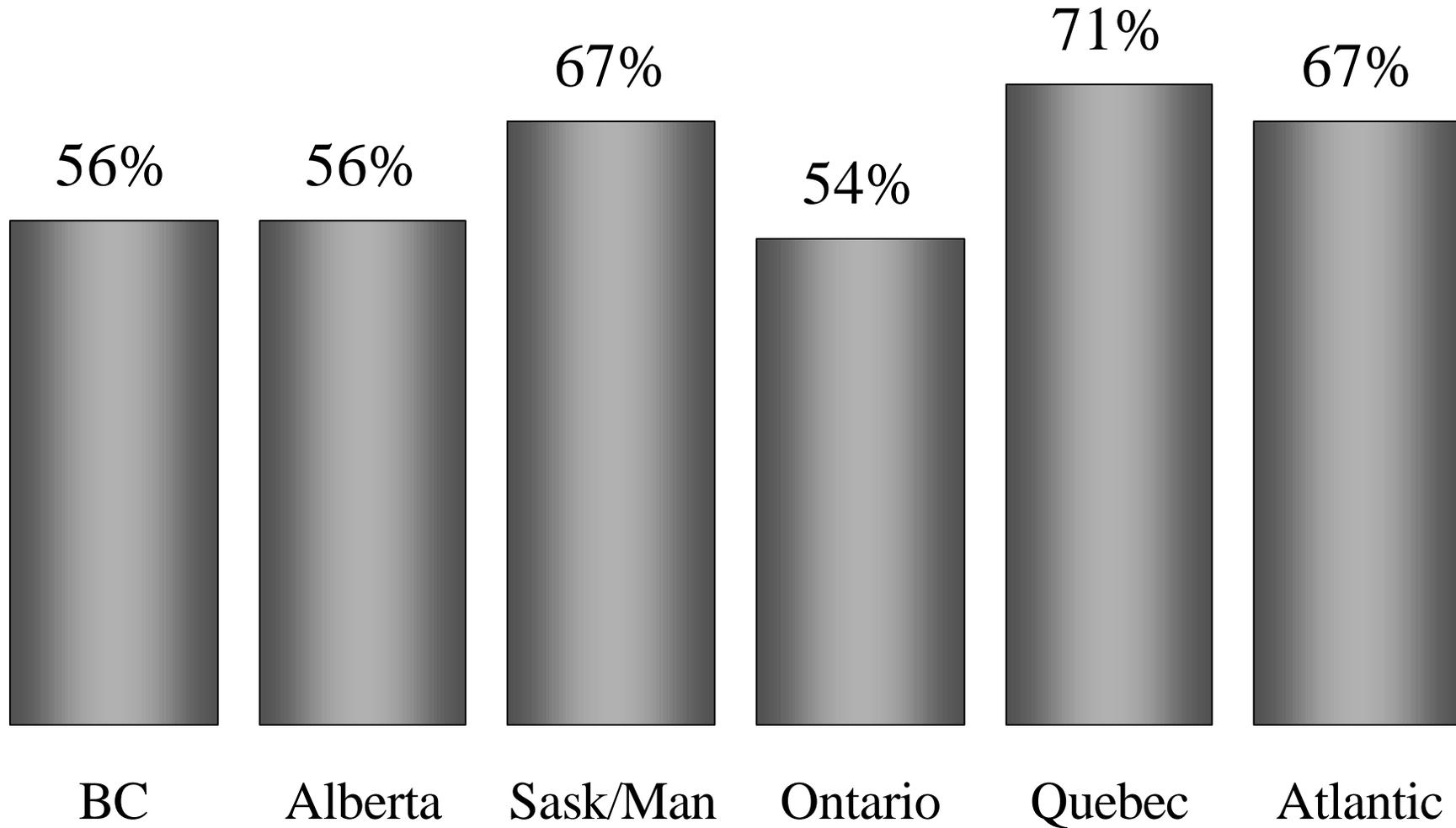


# Television Usage

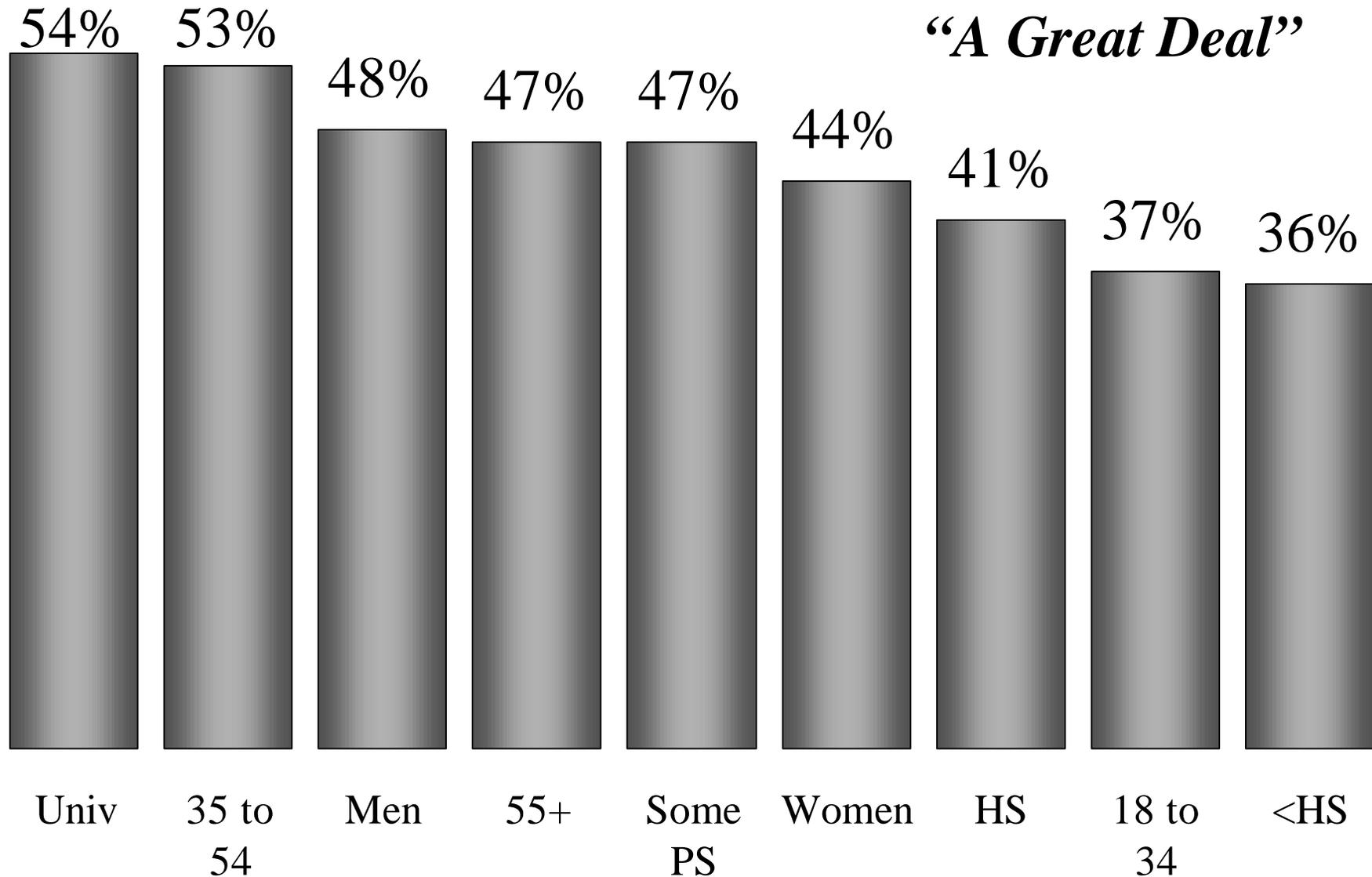


# Television Usage

*“A Great Deal”*

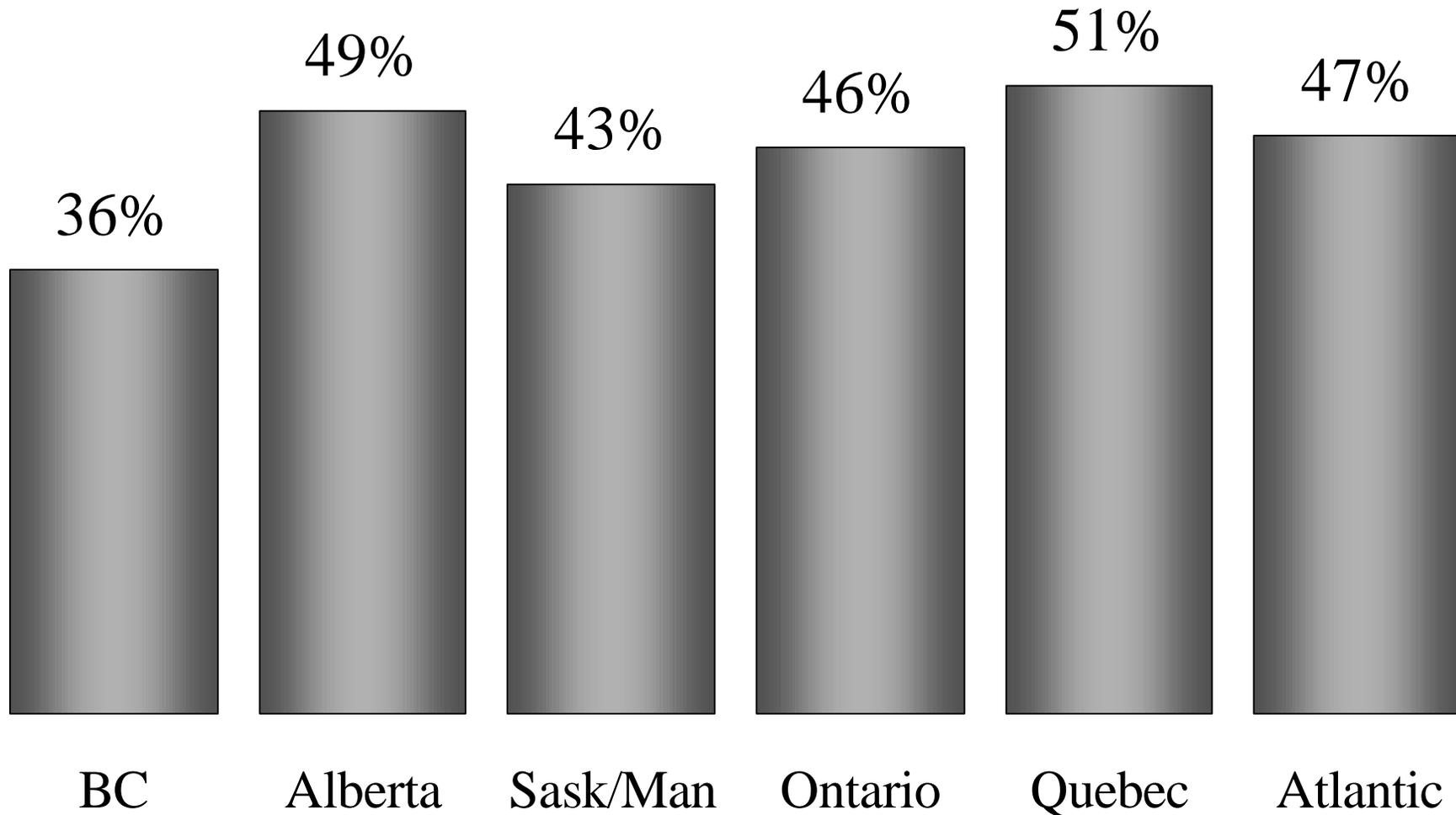


# Major Daily Newspaper Usage



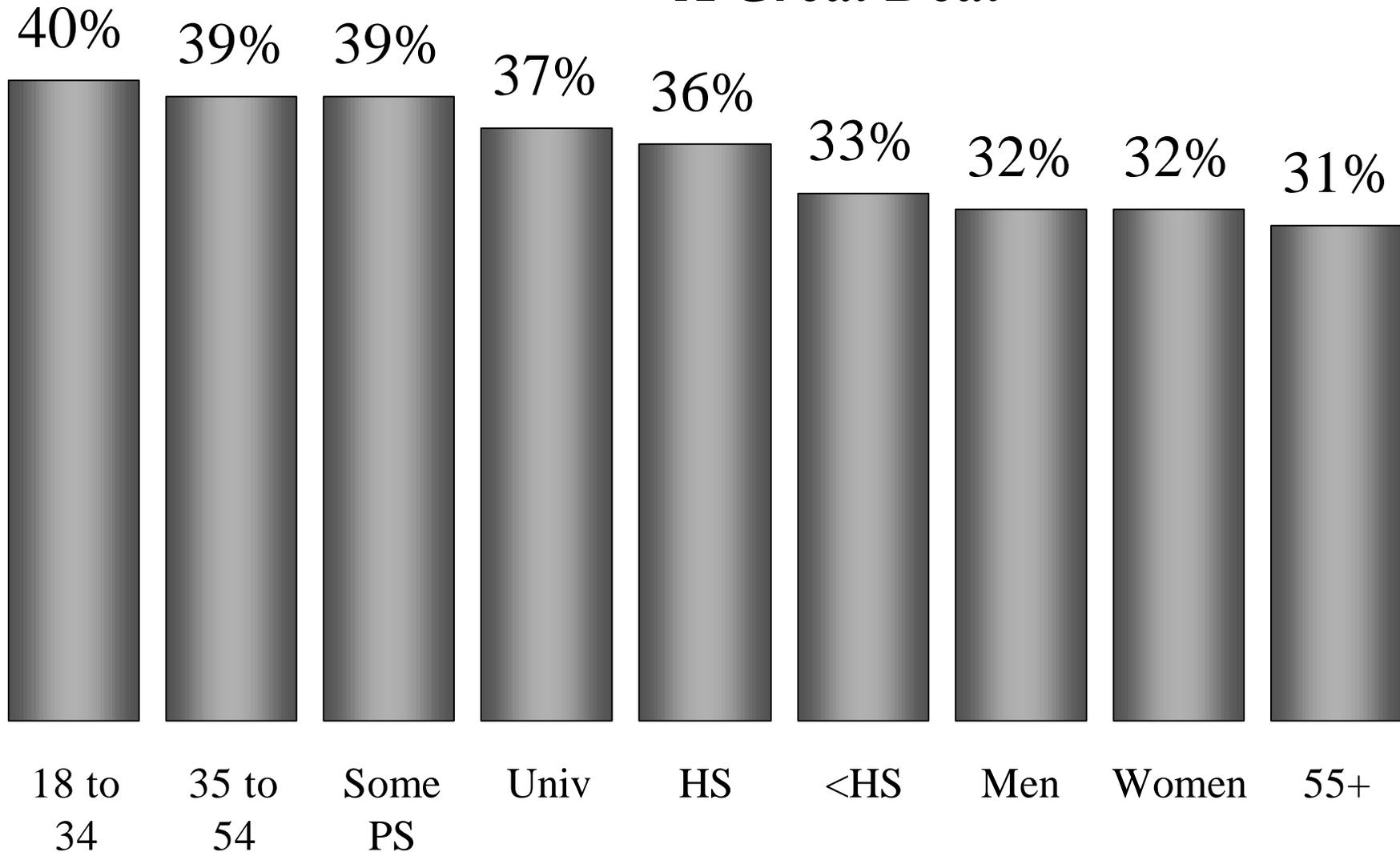
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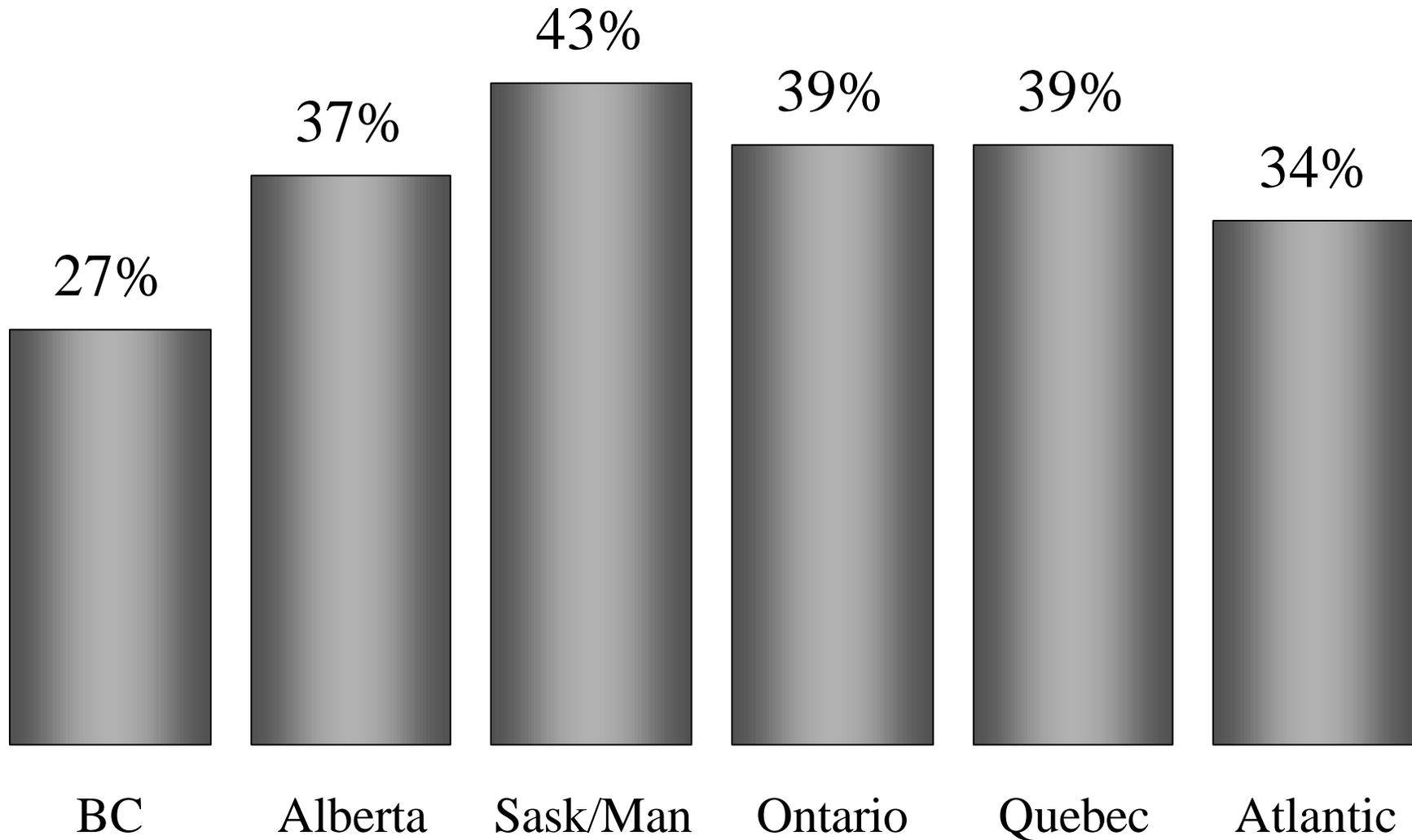
# Radio Usage

*“A Great Deal”*



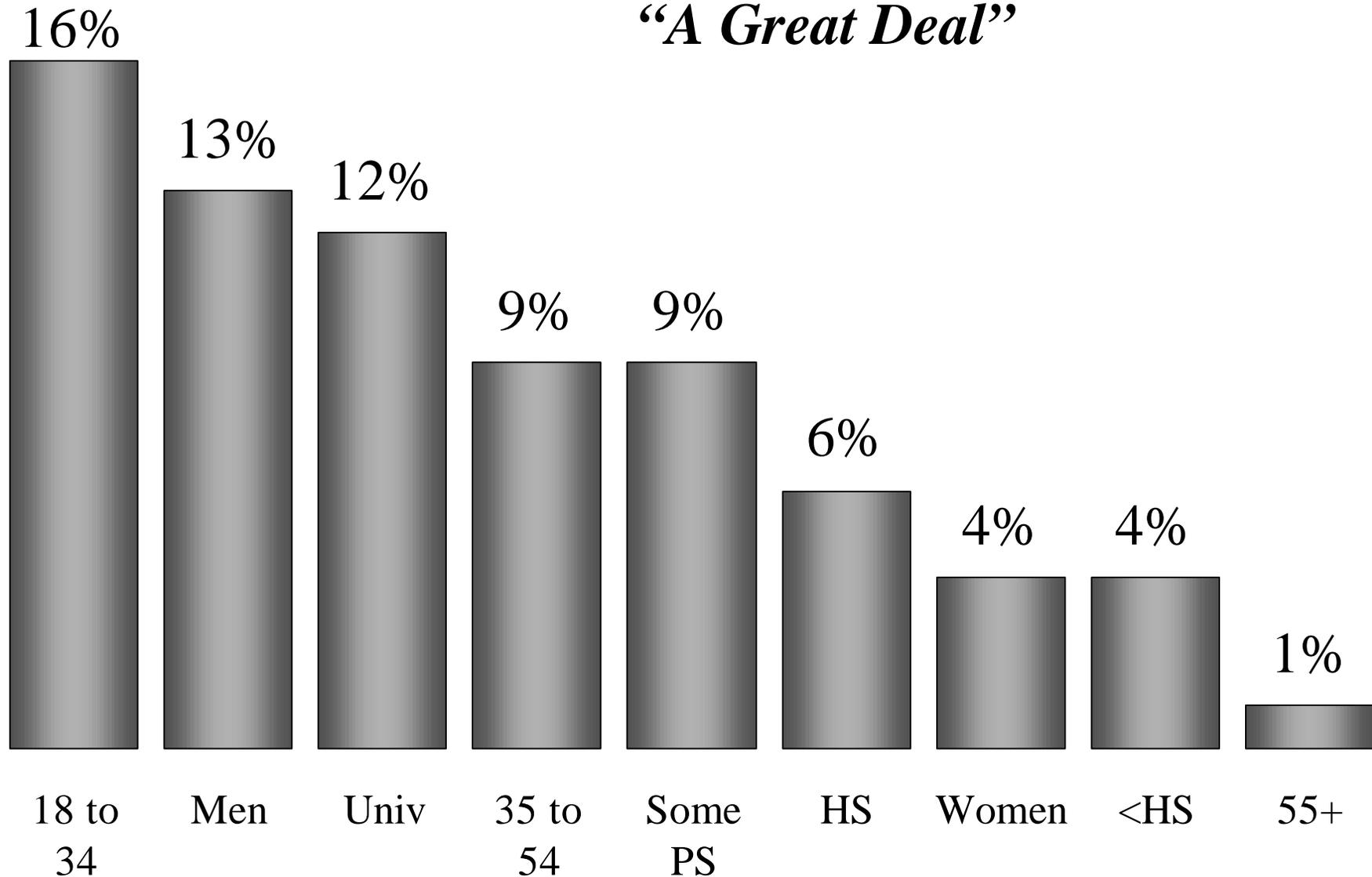
# Radio Usage

*“A Great Deal”*



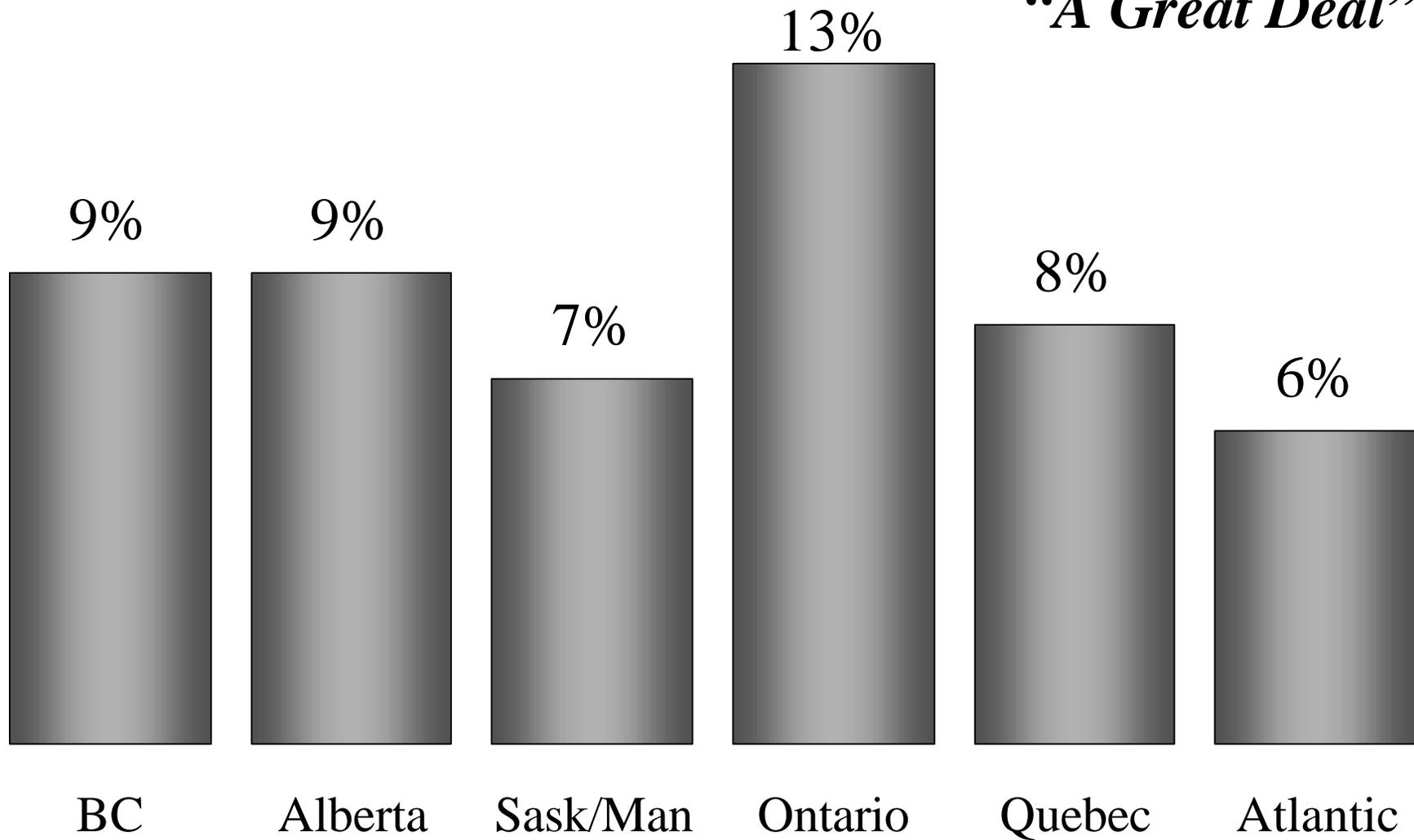
# Internet Usage

*“A Great Deal”*

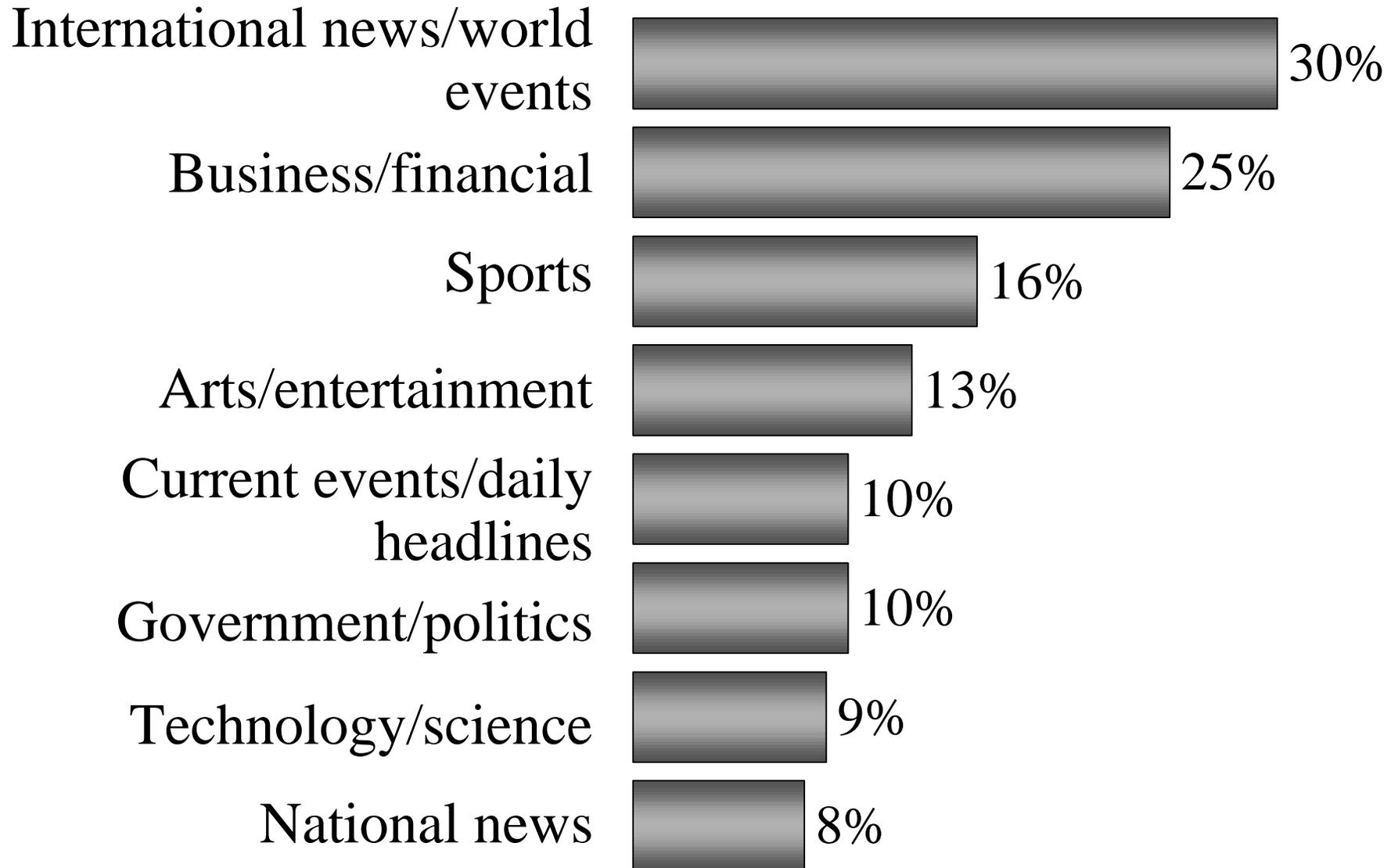


# Internet Usage

*“A Great Deal”*

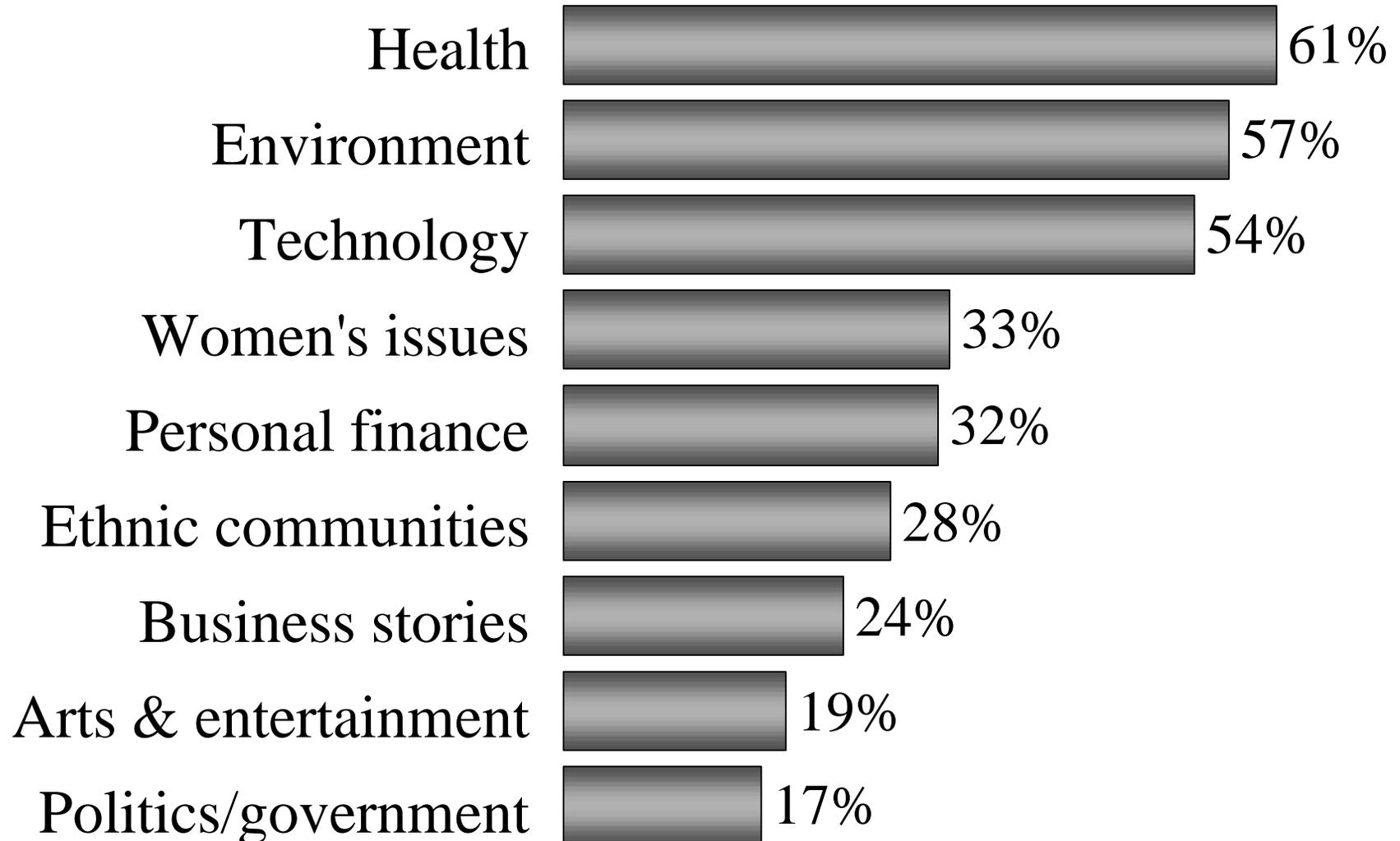


# Internet Use



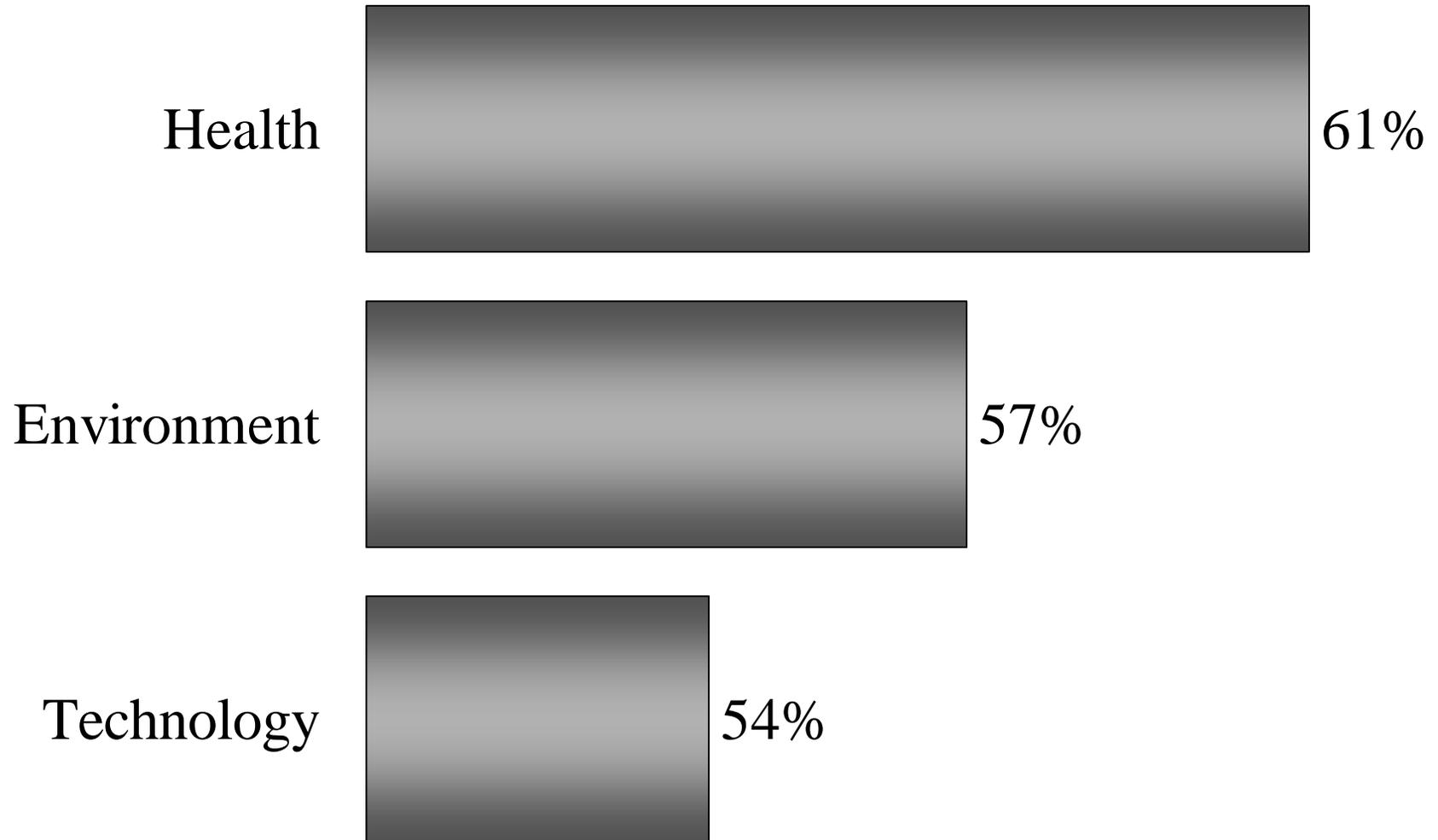
# Desired Amount of News Coverage

*"More Coverage"*

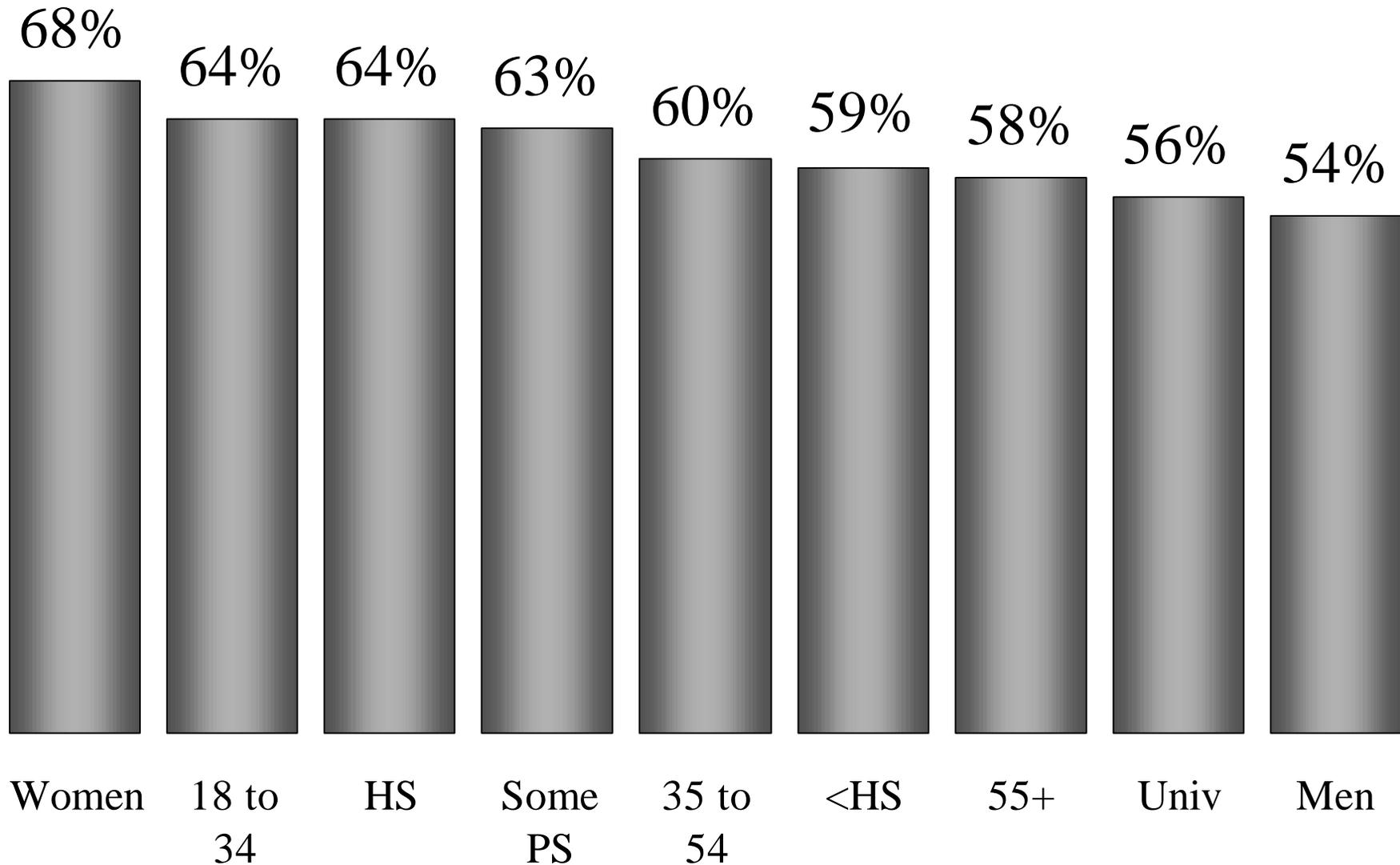


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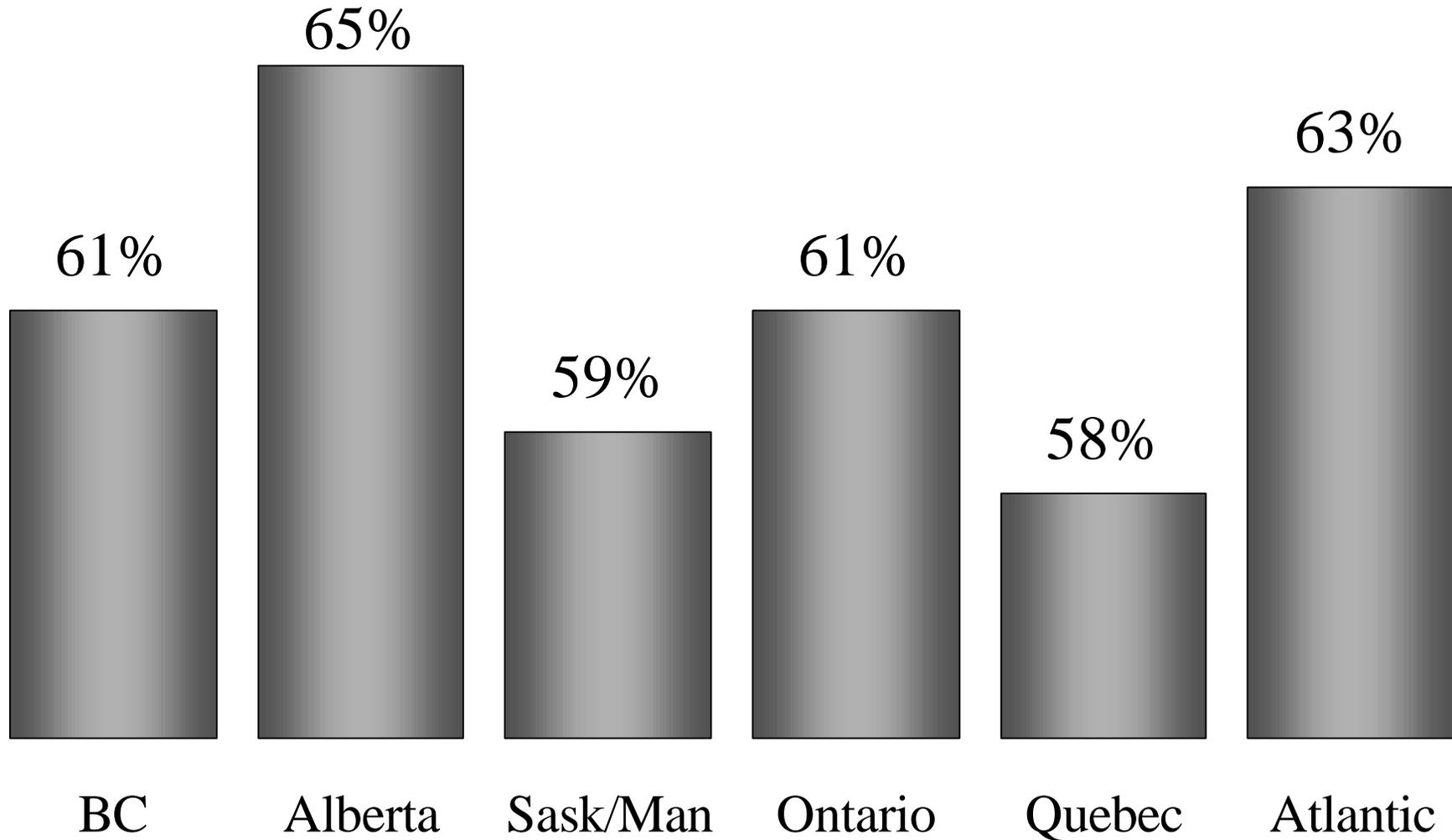
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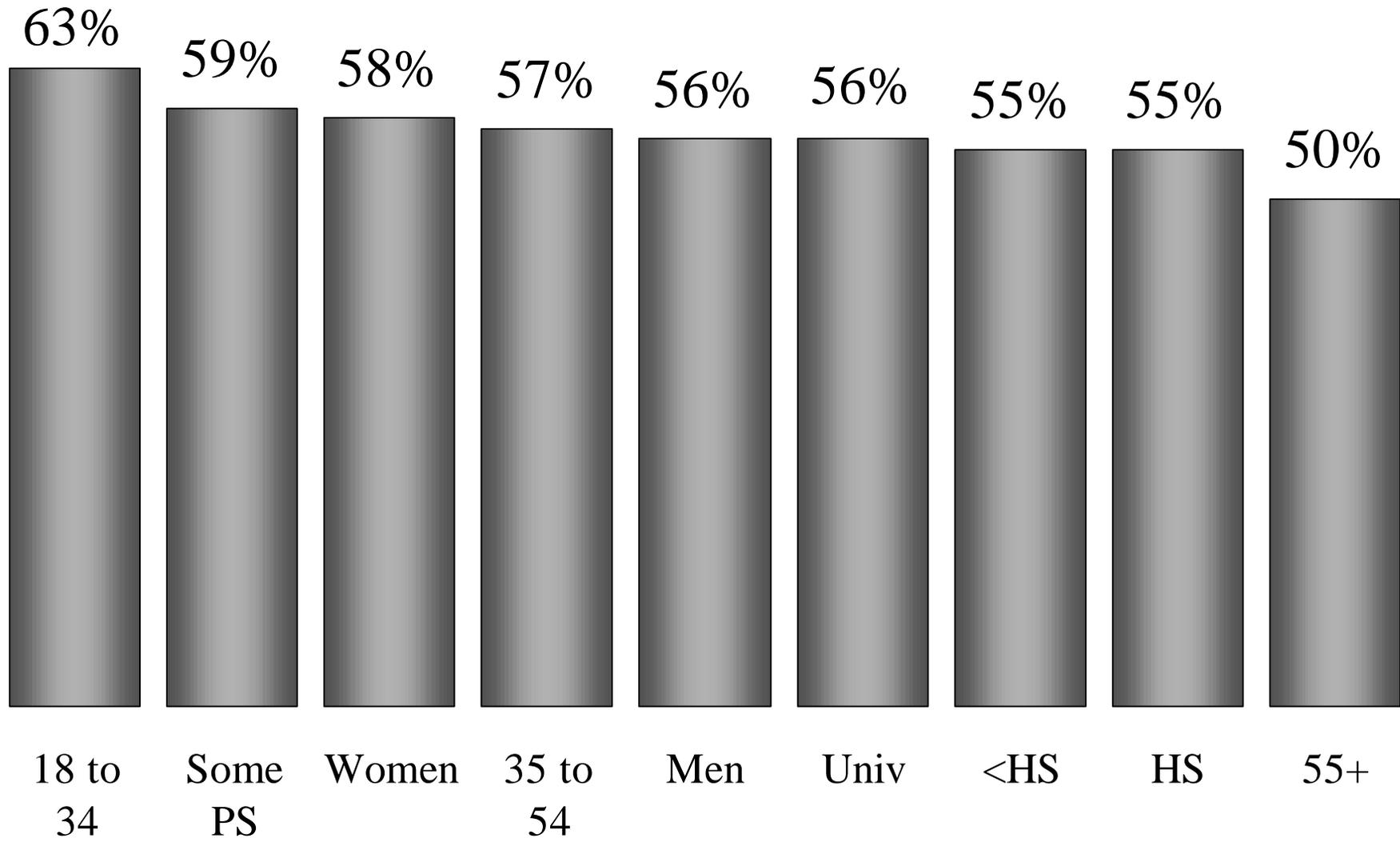
# "More Health News Coverage"



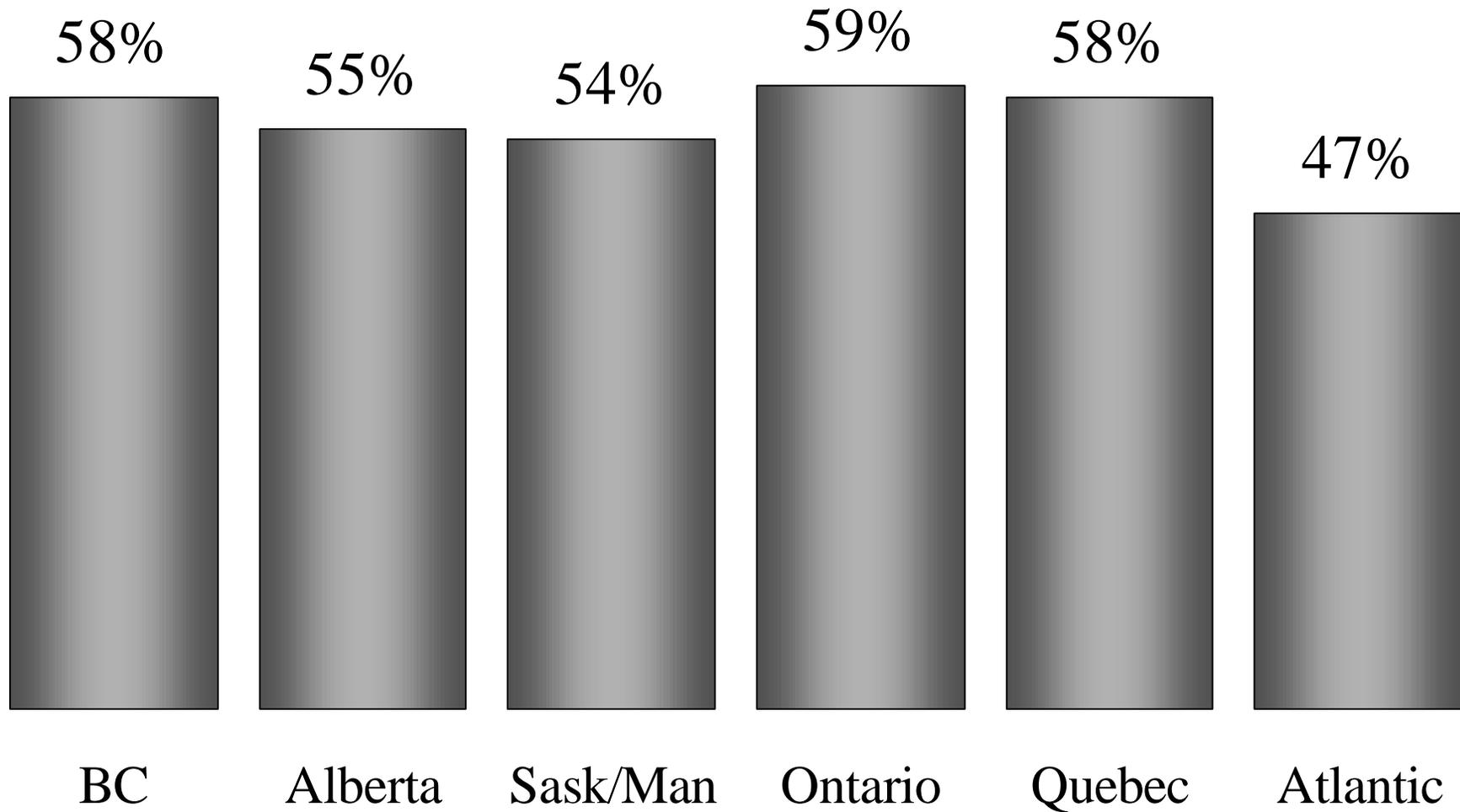
# "More Health News Coverage"



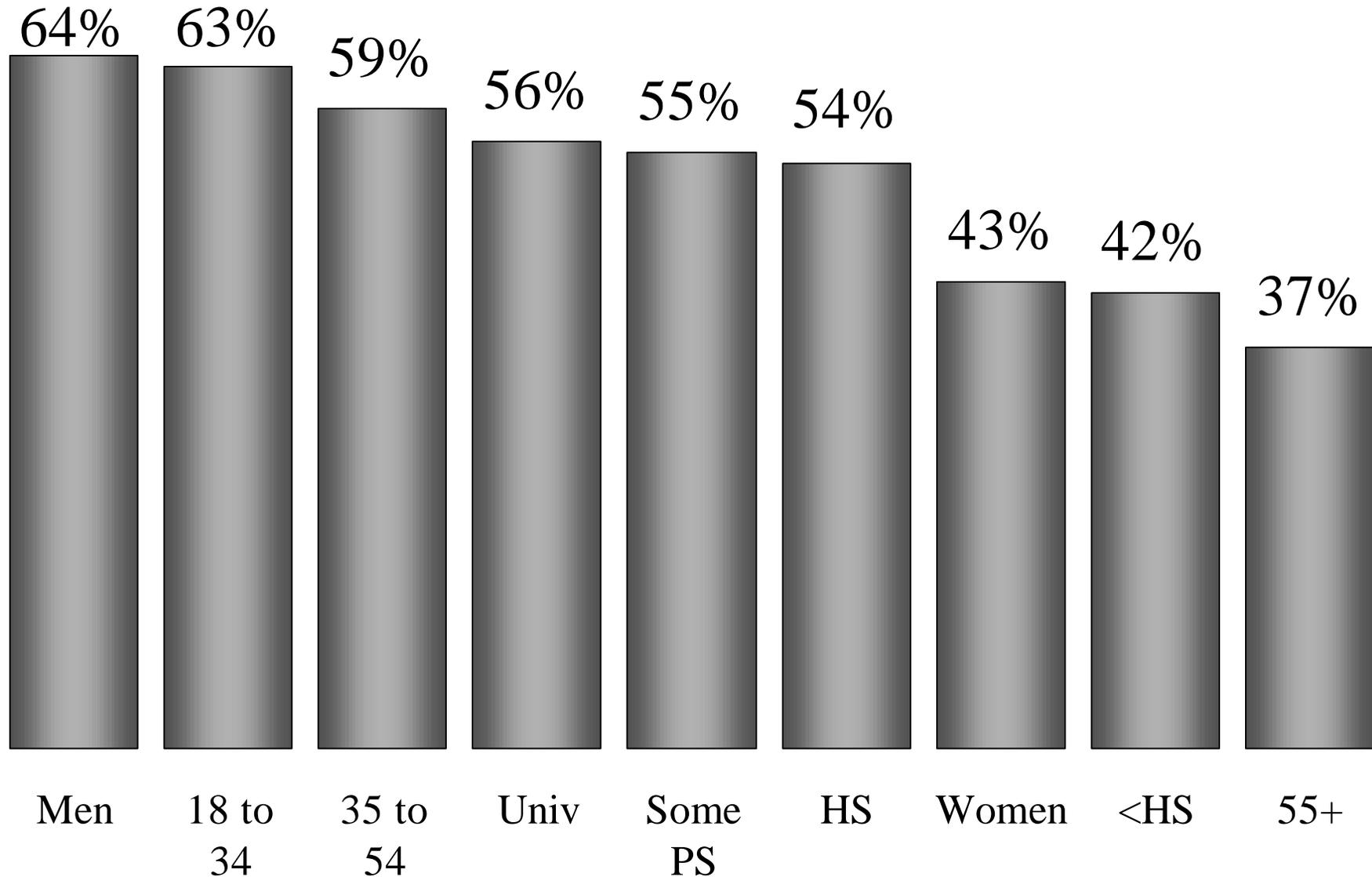
# "More Environment News Coverage"



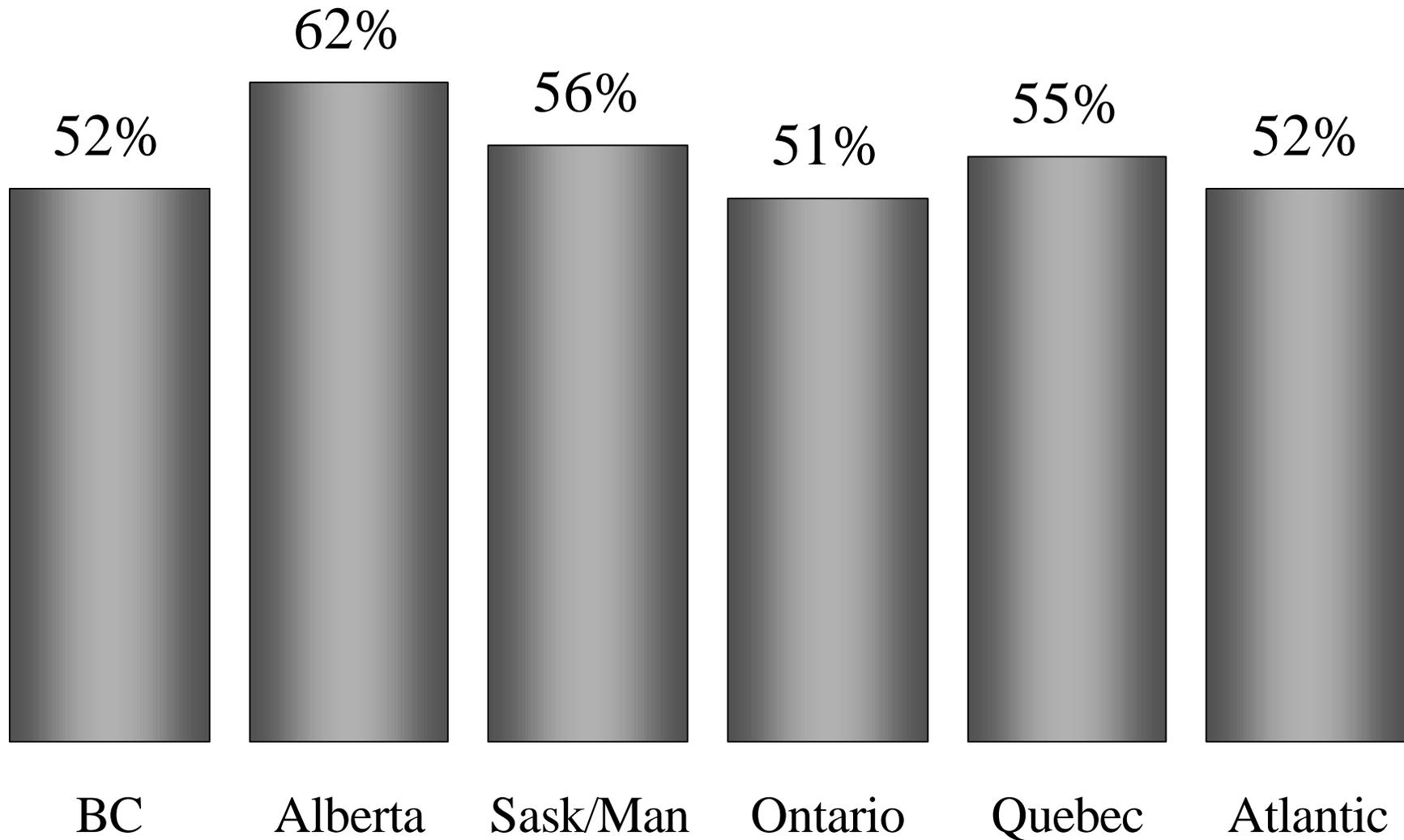
# "More Environment News Coverage"



# "More Technology News Coverage"



# "More Technology News Coverage"



# The Age Factor: 18 to 34 Year Olds

- Lowest level of interest in following issues in the news (69% extremely or very interested)
  - Higher level of interest in stories about arts & entertainment and sports than other age groups
  - Biggest users of the Internet and radio as news sources
  - Would most like to see more coverage on women's issues, the environment, health, and technology
-

## The Age Factor: 35 to 54 Year Olds

- Second highest level of interest in following issues in the news (80% extremely or very interested)
  - Higher level of interest in business/financial stories than other age groups
  - Biggest users of television, major daily newspapers, and magazines as news sources
  - Would most like to see more coverage on business stories and personal finance
-

# The Age Factor: 55 and Older

- Highest level of interest in following issues in the news (84% extremely or very interested)
- Higher level of interest in international news stories and government/politics than other age groups
- Biggest users of weekly community newspapers as news source
- Would most like to see more coverage on politics and government

## The Gender Gap: Men

- Slightly higher level of interest in following issues in the news (79% extremely or very interested)
  - Higher level of interest in business/financials stories, sports and government/politics than women
  - Bigger users of daily newspapers and the Internet as news sources
  - Would most like to see more coverage on business stories, technology, and personal finance
-

## The Gender Gap: Women

- Slightly lower level of interest in following issues in the news (75% extremely or very interested)
  - Higher level of interest in local news, and the arts & entertainment than men
  - Bigger users of television, radio, community newspapers and magazines as news source
  - Would most like to see more coverage on women's issues, health, and arts & entertainment
-

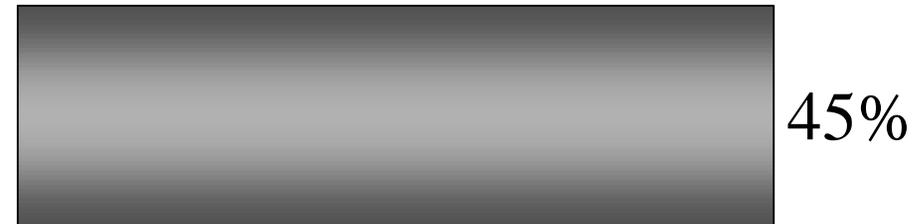
# Attitudes About Business News Reporting



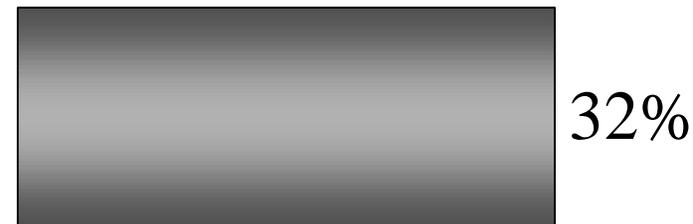
# Business and News Reporting

*Rated 8, 9 or 10 on Scale of 1 to 10\**

Business reporters rely too much on what companies tell them and should put more effort into researching the facts behind a story



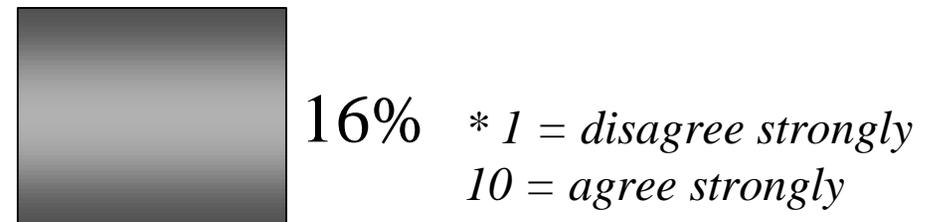
Canada's news media present information and stories with an adequate amount of in-depth coverage



In general, there are too many negative business stories reported in the news



The news I read about Canadian companies really helps me make investment decisions



\* 1 = disagree strongly  
10 = agree strongly

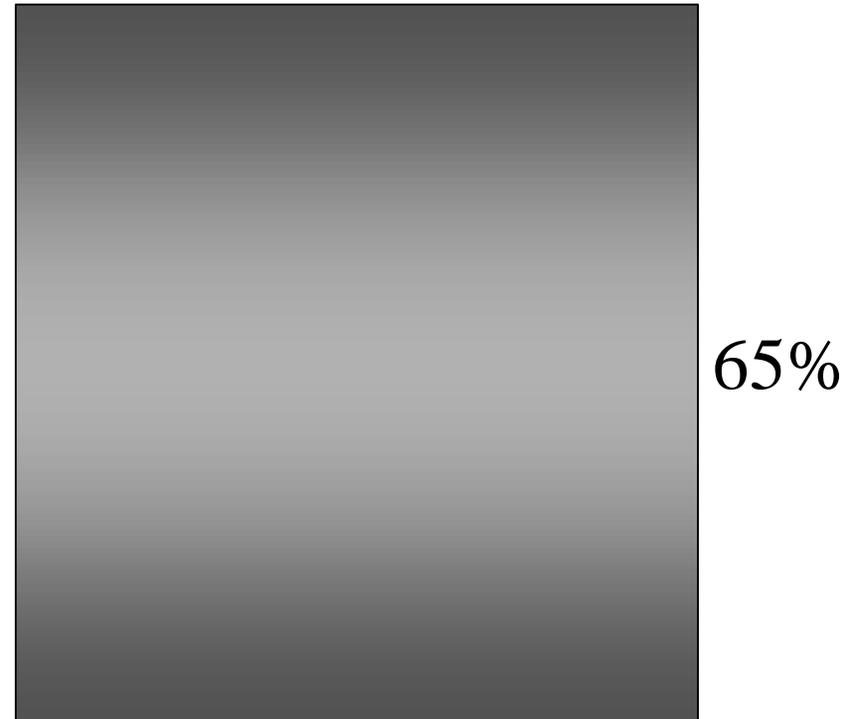
# Current Issues and Attitudes



# Opinions Regarding News Reporting

*Rated 8, 9 or 10 on Scale of 1 to 10\**

Reporters delve too deeply into the personal lives of public figures rather than reporting their thoughts and actions on important issues



*\* 1 = disagree strongly  
10 = agree strongly*

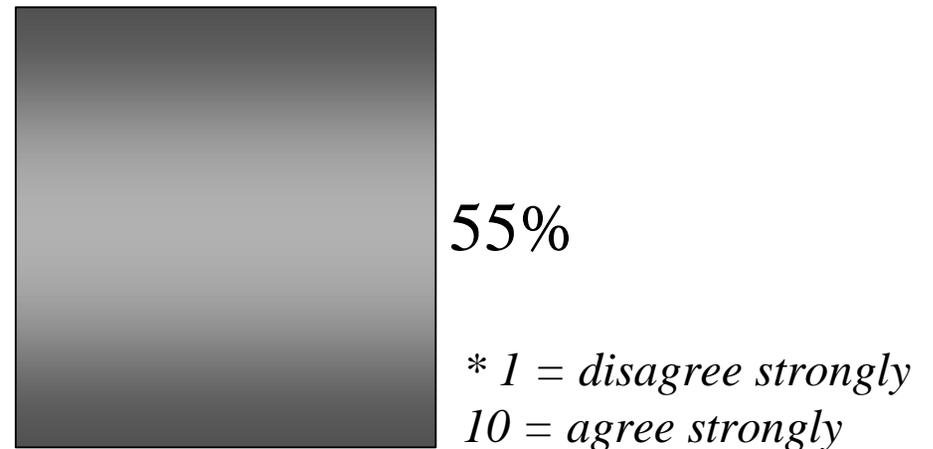
# Opinions Regarding News Reporting

*Rated 8, 9 or 10 on Scale of 1 to 10\**

The media is responsible for the sensationalism of big scandals, because all they want to do is sell newspapers and television programs



The public is responsible for the sensationalism of big scandals, because they might complain about the coverage, but they are buying newspapers and watching television programs



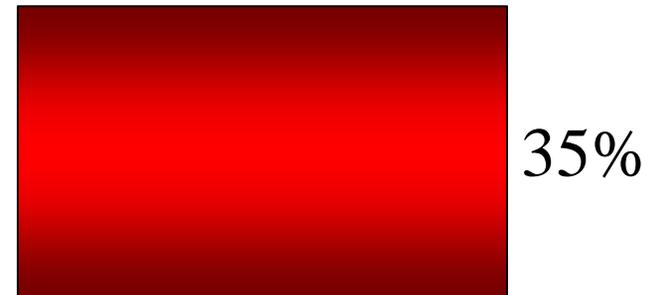
# Opinions Regarding News Reporting

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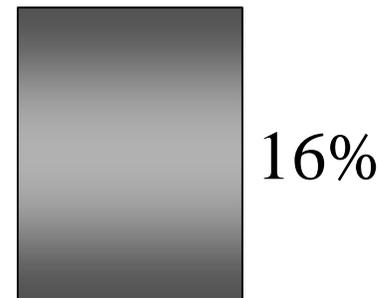
The thing I most dislike about following issues such as the Clinton scandal or Princess Diana is not what the media report, but the way they cover the story



Because of the way the media have reported ... I have actually boycotted certain magazines, newspapers & television programs



When a scandal like OJ Simpson or the recent one involving President Clinton happens, I watch and read a lot about the event



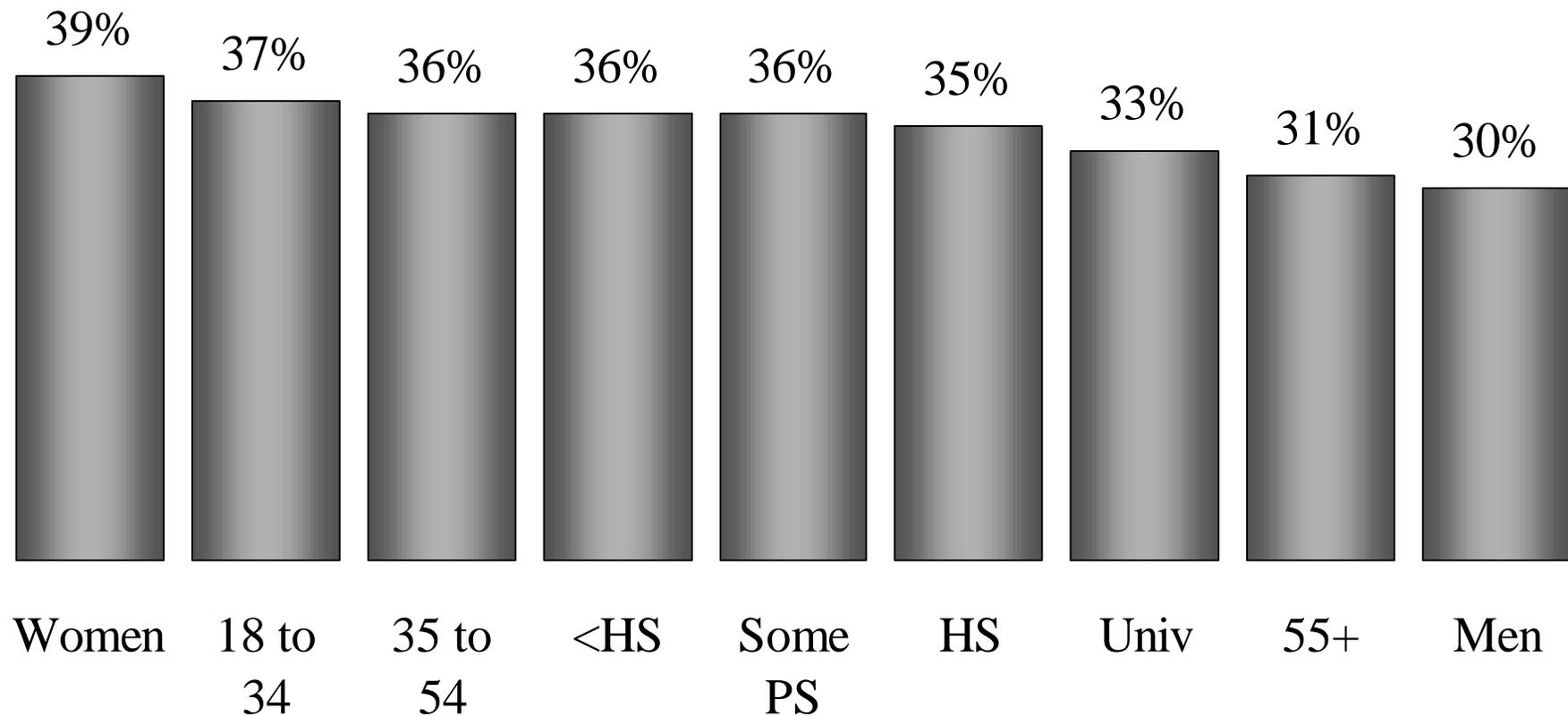
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# Boycotting

*Because of the way the media have reported on things such as Princess Diana and Bill Clinton, I have actually boycotted certain magazines, newspapers and television programs*

*Rated 8, 9 or 10 on Scale of 1 to 10*

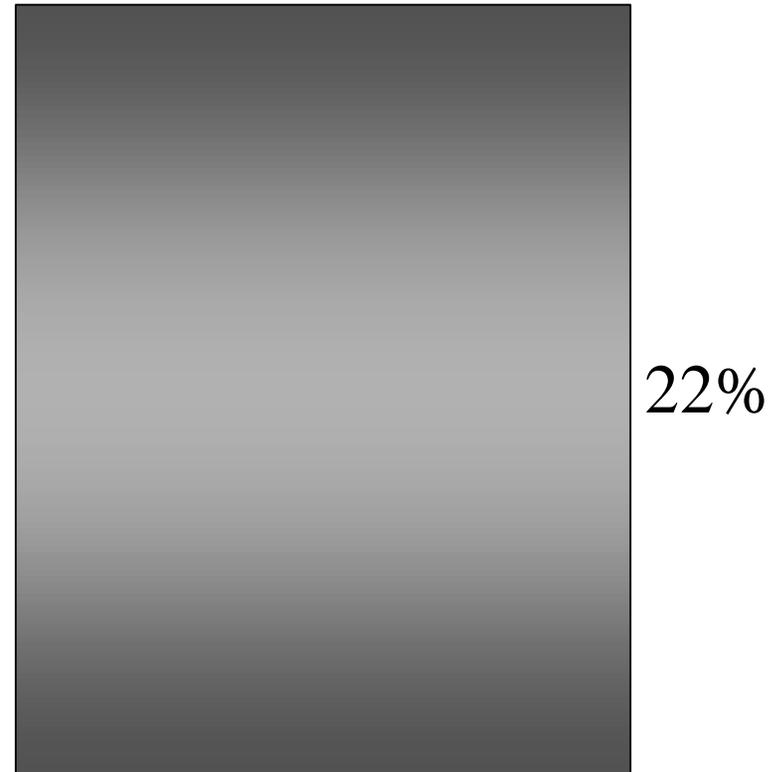
*1 = disagree strongly  
10 = agree strongly*



# Opinions Regarding News Reporting

*Rated 8, 9 or 10 on Scale of 1 to 10\**

As long as they stay within the law, reporters and on-air personalities should have the right to say and write about anything they wish, regardless of what may be considered to be in poor taste



*\* 1 = disagree strongly  
10 = agree strongly*

# Conclusions

- Given comparable data, Canadians are as interested in the news as they were two years ago -- but the Internet is the new tool and the emphasis on health care and health related issues reflects current national concerns.
  - This study continues to confirm the growth of the community focus: media interest as Canadians look to their own backyard.
-

# Conclusions

- The data confirms a symbiotic relationship between the media and the public -- scandals are like traffic accidents: it's hard to turn your head away.



# Conclusions

- For media and corporate affairs specialists, there are some interesting issues:
  - community equity -- building community relations programs appear to be in line with interest amongst the public
  - demographics will be increasingly important in terms of identifying who is using what, where
  - health care, the environment and technology may be the top three issues that Canadians want more coverage on, but they are all intertwined: where science and technology would save everything they are now “value” neutral/negative

## Conclusions

- Media hype discounting is going on: despite the sensationalized amounts of coverage, the public is able to contextualize and to separate out some of the key issues.
  - Clearly, the scandal issues have hurt the media's reputation.
  - The media own the barrel of ink.
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