

# Perceptions of Public Libraries

## - Omnibus Research -

Field work conducted between  
January 16 to 28, 2026

Prepared by



In partnership with

**Trend Research**

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# Methodology

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Survey questions were administered through the *TrendWatch Alberta Omnibus Survey* between January 16 to 28, 2026.

*TrendWatch Alberta* is a monthly omnibus survey of 900 Albertans, ages 18 and over.

It is a probability-based sample and has a margin of error of  $\pm 3.3$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20 (i.e., at a 95% confidence interval).

## Survey Design

- Survey respondents were initially contacted at random by live telephone interviewers and given the option of:
  - answering the survey over telephone at that time,
  - answering over the telephone at a more convenient time, or
  - receiving the link and answering the survey on-line.
- The initial sample list contained approximately 70 per cent cellphones and 30 per cent landlines.
- Interviewers made up to five attempts to reach each phone number in the sample before classifying it as unreachable.

## Interviews

- All surveys were conducted by qualified interviewers working out of Trend Research's centralized CATI facility in Edmonton. Field supervisors were always present to ensure accurate interviewing and recording of responses.
- The interviewing staff at Trend receives extensive training on the proper administration of interviews and are closely monitored by supervisors. A minimum of 10 percent of each interviewer's work was unobtrusively monitored for quality control in accordance with the standards set out by the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC).

Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

"Totals" in report may not match net scores in detailed tables due to rounding.

# Research Findings

# Trust in Decision Making

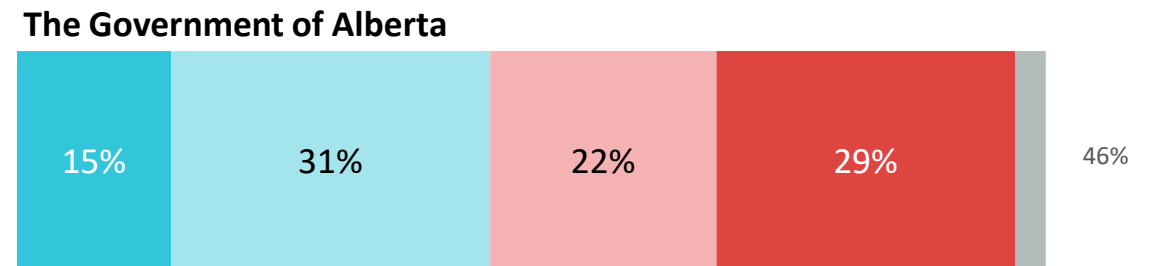
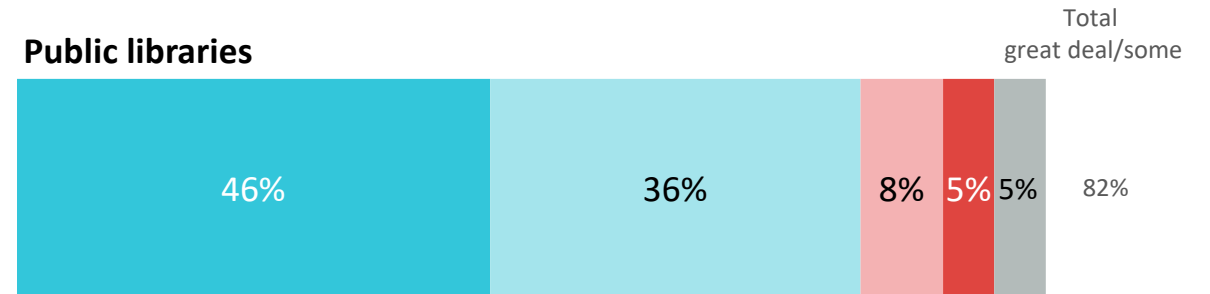
Just over eight in ten Albertans (82%) say they have at least some trust in public libraries to make appropriate decisions about what materials are available (including 46% who have a great deal of trust and 36% who have some trust). Trust in the Government of Alberta is markedly lower, as fewer than half of Albertans (46%) say they have at least some trust in the provincial government (including 15% who have a great deal of trust and 31% who have some trust).

Those most likely have a great deal of trust in public libraries include:

- Those who lean left on the political spectrum (72%),
- Those who think libraries should receive a funding increase above population growth and inflation (65%),
- Those using libraries weekly (64%),
- Those with a post-graduate education (63%),
- Those who oppose regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (60%),
- Students (59%),
- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by library staff rather than government (57%),
- Public sector workers (55%),
- Those with an annual household income between \$60,000 to \$120,000 (53%), and
- Women (52%).

Those most likely to have a great deal of trust in The Government of Alberta include:

- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by government rather than library staff (39%),
- Those who support regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (29%),
- Those who lean right on the political spectrum (24%),
- Racial or ethnic minorities (22%), and
- Private sector workers (20%).



■ A great deal of trust ■ Some trust ■ Little trust ■ No trust ■ Not sure

Thinking about decisions that are made on which materials are available in Alberta's public libraries, how much do you trust each of the following to make appropriate decisions?

# Decisions about Available Materials

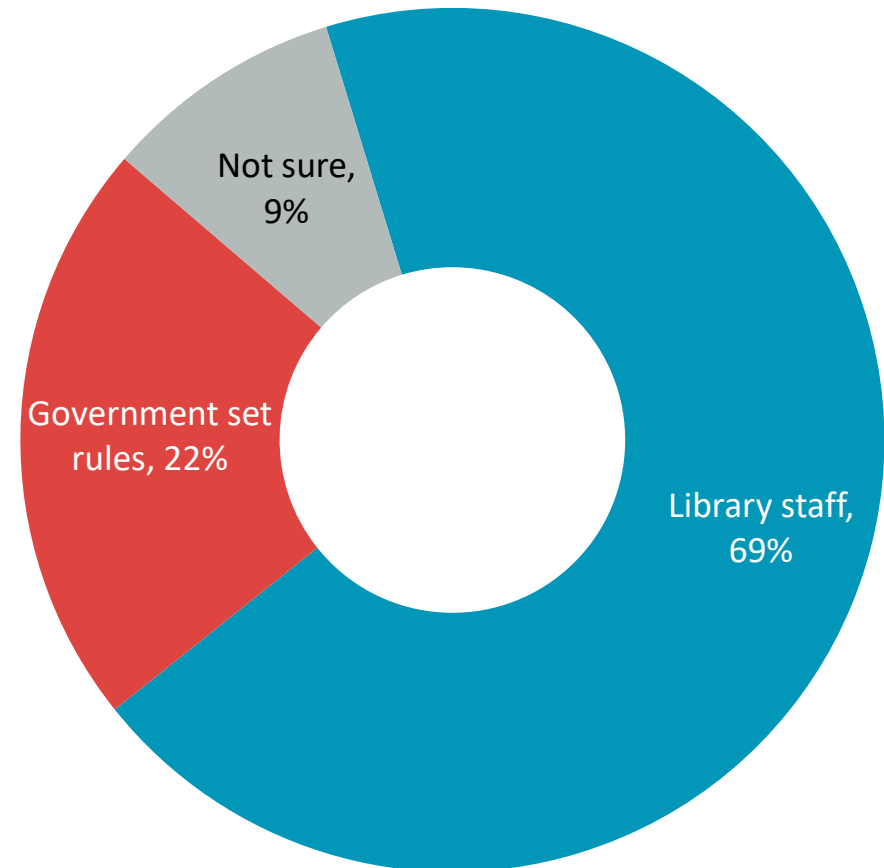
Approximately seven in ten Albertans (69%) believe decisions about materials that are available at public libraries should be made locally by trained library staff guided by library boards. Just over two in ten (22%) believe the provincial government should set province-wide rules, and nine per cent (9%) are not sure.

Those most likely believe decisions about materials that are available in public libraries should be made locally by trained library staff, guided by policies set by local library boards include:

- Those who lean left on the political spectrum (93%),
- Those who oppose regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (88%),
- Those who think libraries should receive a funding increase above population growth and inflation (83%),
- Those aged 18 to 24 (80%),
- Those with a post-graduate education (80%),
- Public sector workers (79%),
- Those using libraries monthly (77%),
- Those with an annual household income between \$60,000 to \$120,000 (75%), and
- Women (74%).

Those most likely believe the provincial government should set province-wide rules about what materials public libraries can make available include:

- Those who support regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (49%),
- Those who think libraries should receive no increase in funding (48%),
- Those who lean right on the political spectrum (35%),
- Those using libraries less than yearly (32%),
- Men (28%),
- Those aged 45 to 64 (27%),
- Private sector workers (26%), and
- Those with some post-secondary education, but not a degree (26%).



Which of the following statements is closest to your own point-of-view?

- Decisions about what materials are available in public libraries should be made locally by trained library staff, guided by policies set by local library boards, or
- The provincial government should set province-wide rules about what materials public libraries can make available.

# Support for Restricting Access

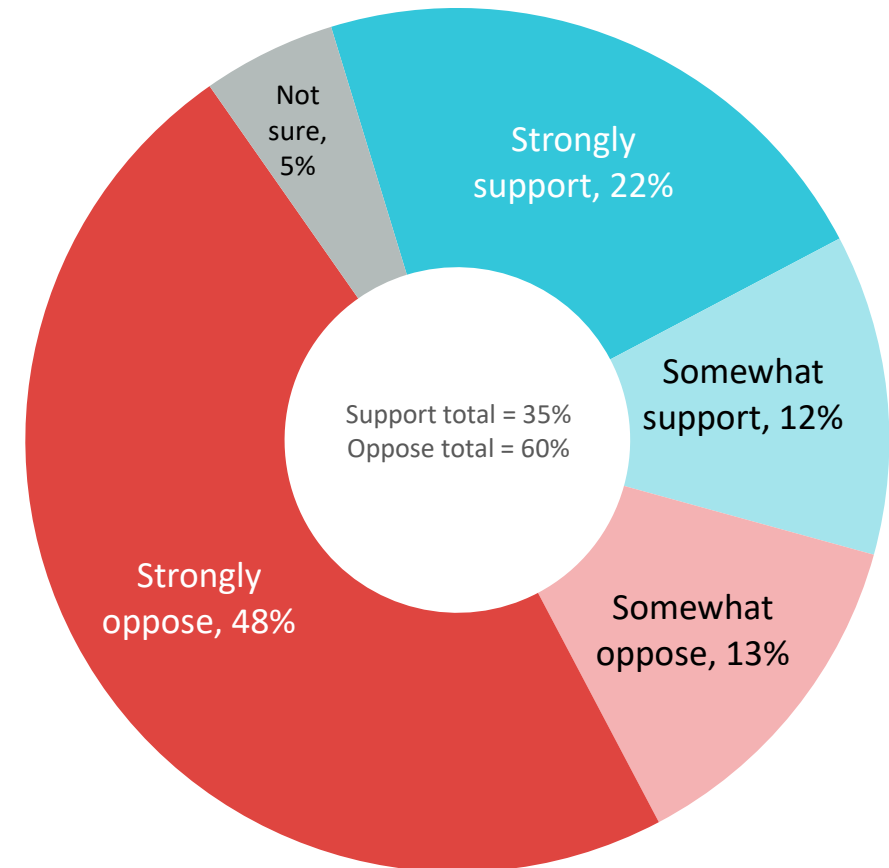
Albertans are almost twice as likely to oppose regulations that would restrict access to certain materials in public libraries than they are to support restrictions. Six in ten (60%) would oppose such measures (Including 48% who strongly oppose, and 13% who somewhat oppose). Just over one in three (35%) would either strongly (22%) or somewhat (12%) support such measures. Five per cent (5%) are unsure.

Those who are most likely to oppose the Alberta government passing a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials include:

- Those who lean left on the political spectrum (91%),
- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by library staff (78%),
- Those who think libraries should receive a funding increase above population growth and inflation (72%),
- Those using libraries weekly (68%),
- Women (67%),
- Those who identify as white or European (65%),
- Those without children under 18 in their household (64%), and
- Those with an annual household income between \$60,000 to \$120,000 (64%).

Those who are most likely to support the Alberta government passing a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials include:

- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by the provincial government (75%),
- Those who think libraries should receive no increase in funding (59%),
- Those who lean right on the political spectrum (51%),
- Racial or ethnic minorities (43%),
- Those using libraries less than yearly (42%),
- Those with children under 18 in their household (41%), and
- Men (40%).



Would you support or oppose the Alberta government passing a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials in public libraries?

# Non-Compliance by Libraries

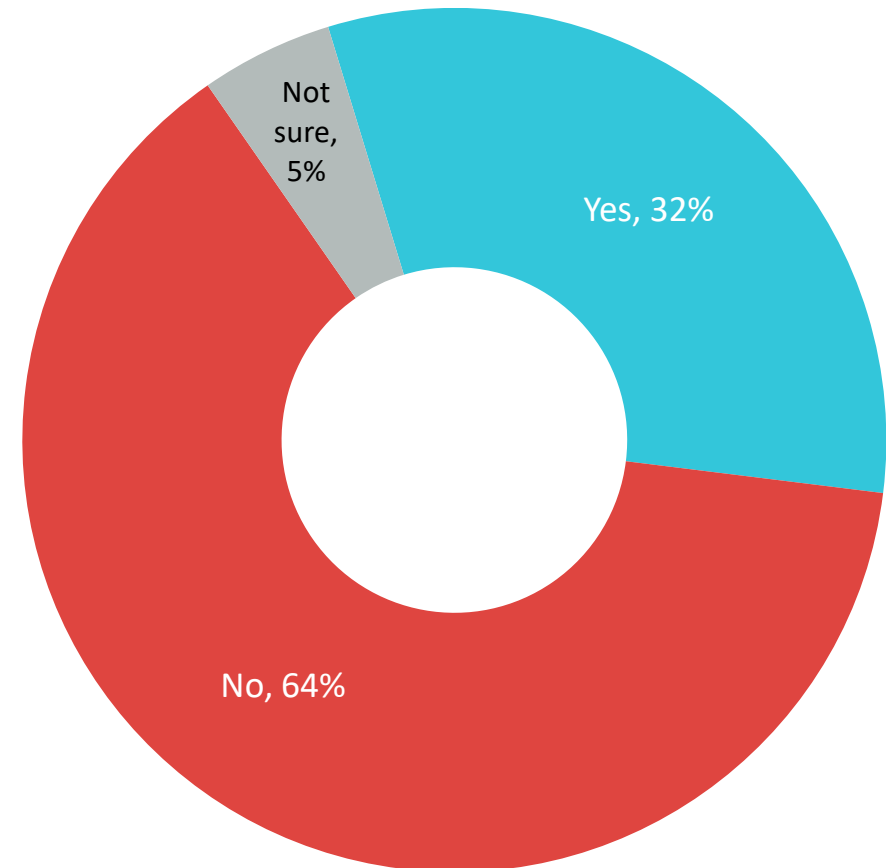
In the event government does pass a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials in public libraries, almost two in three Albertans (64%) believe funding should not be withheld from libraries that does not comply. In contrast, only one in three (32%) say funding should be withheld. Five per cent are not sure.

Those who are most likely to say government should not withhold funding from non-complying libraries include:

- Those who lean left on the political spectrum (91%),
- Those who oppose regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (88%),
- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by library staff (80%),
- Those who think libraries should receive a funding increase above population growth and inflation (80%),
- Students (80%),
- Those aged 18 to 24 (75%),
- Those using libraries monthly (73%),
- Edmontonians (70%),
- Women (69%).

Those who are most likely to say government should withhold funding from non-complying libraries include:

- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by the provincial government (71%),
- Those who support regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (71%),
- Those who think libraries should receive no increase in funding (64%),
- Those who lean right on the political spectrum (50%),
- Those using libraries less than yearly (42%),
- Those outside of Calgary and Edmonton (39%),
- Those with an annual household income over \$120,000 (39%),
- Men (37%), and
- Those aged 45 to 64 (36%).



If the Alberta government does pass a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials in public libraries, do you think government should withhold government funding to libraries if they do not comply with these laws or regulations?



# Funding for Libraries

Two in three Albertans (67%) believe public libraries should receive a spending increase in the next provincial budget that matches population growth and inflation. Just under one in six Albertans (15%) want libraries to receive a funding increase above population growth and inflation. Only a few Albertans want an increase below population growth and inflation (3%), no increase (7%), or a cut (2%). Another six per cent are not sure.

Those who are most likely to say libraries should receive an increase that matches population growth and inflation include:

- Those using libraries yearly (77%),
- Students (76%),
- Those with an annual household income between \$60,000 to \$120,000 (73%),
- Those who think decisions about available materials should be made by library staff (71%),
- Those who lean left on the political spectrum or also centrists (70%), and
- Those who oppose regulations that restrict access to materials in public libraries (70%).

## Do you think libraries should receive ...

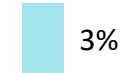
### A funding Increase above population growth and inflation



### A funding increase that matches population growth and inflation



### A funding increase that is below population growth and inflation



### No funding increase



### A funding cut



### Not sure



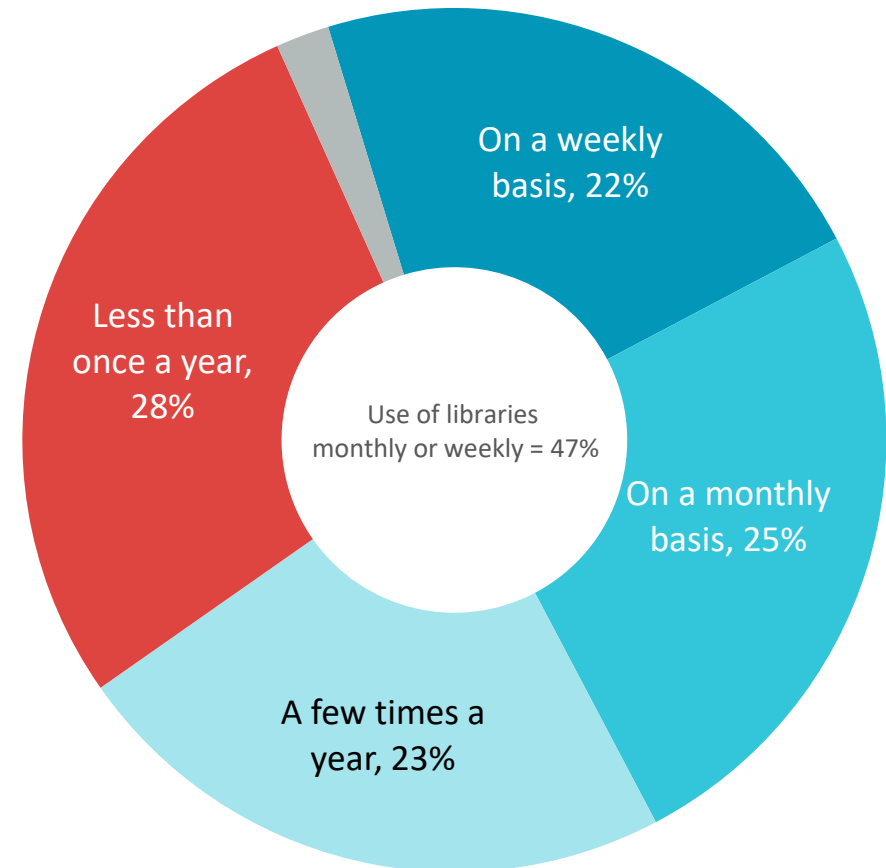
In the next provincial budget, do you think libraries should receive ...

# Frequency of Use of Libraries

Almost half of Albertans (47%) say they or someone in their household use public libraries at least monthly (including 22% who use them weekly and 25% who use them monthly). Another 23 per cent use libraries a few times a year. Just under three in ten (28%) use libraries less than once a year and two per cent are not sure.

Those who are most likely to use libraries on a weekly basis include:

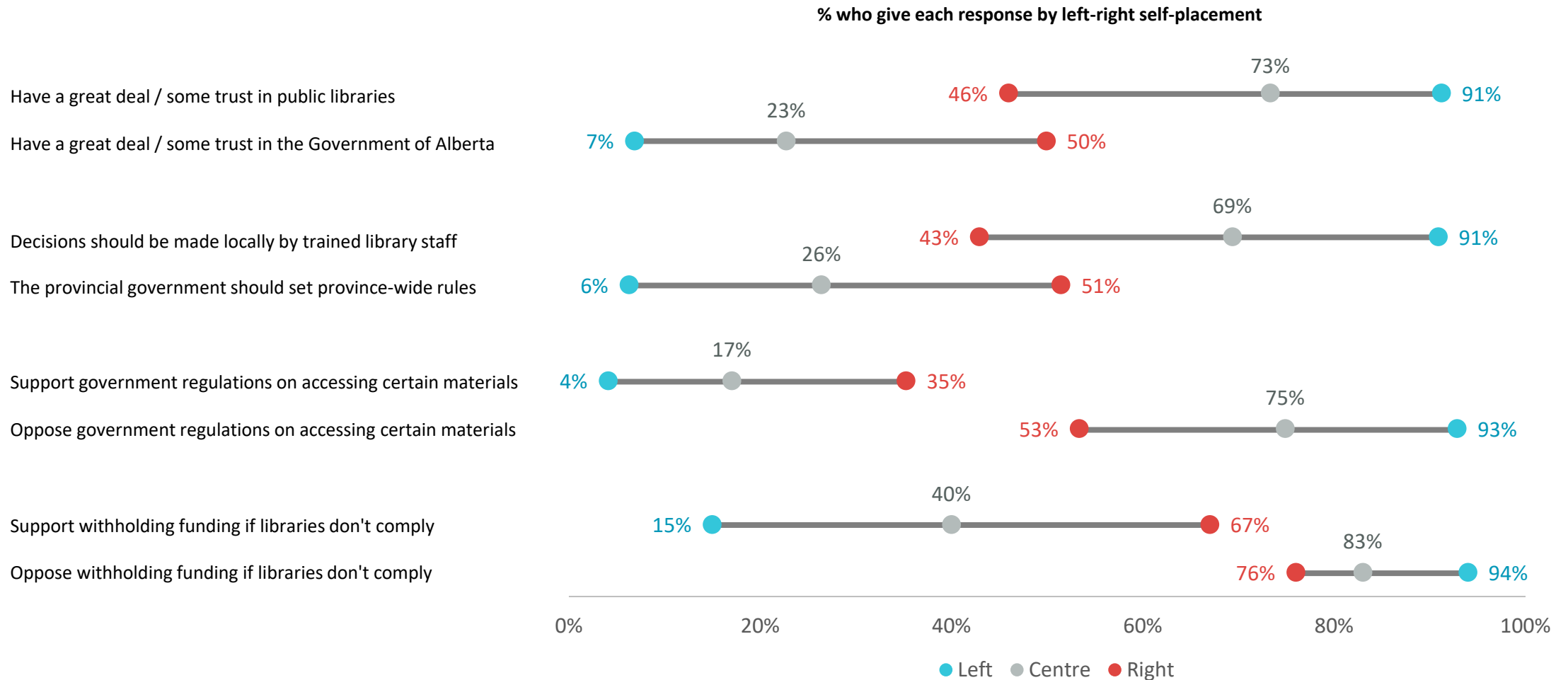
- Those who think libraries should receive a funding increase above population growth and inflation (40%),
- Those with a post-graduate education (35%), and
- Those who lean left on the political spectrum (32%).



How often do you or someone in your household use public libraries? Do you use them ...

# Responses by Political Placement

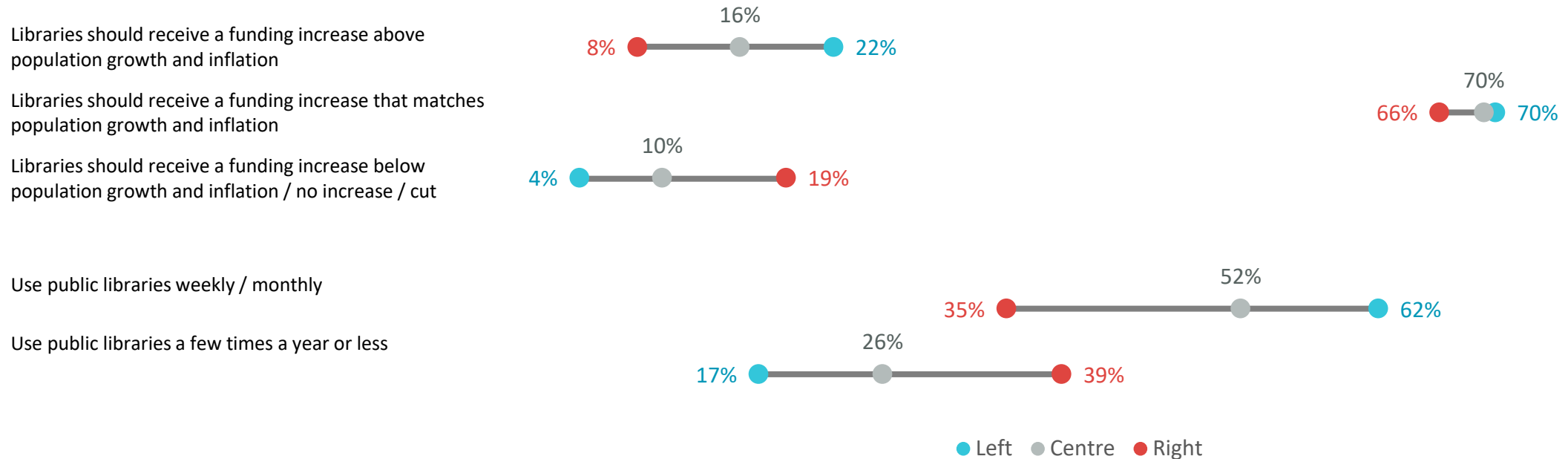
# Responses by Political Placement



In politics, people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means left, and 10 means right.

# Responses by Political Placement

% who give each response by left-right self-placement



In politics, people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means left, and 10 means right.

# Questionnaire

Coalition of Libraries  
Draft Omnibus Questions

January 15, 2026

QUOTAS FOR ALBERTA: N=900

Calgary 300

Edmonton 300

OTHER: North = 100, Central = 100, South = 100

Telephone script in red. Online script in green.

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from Trend Research, an Alberta-based research company. We are conducting an important study about issues that concern Albertans. Please be assured that we are not trying to sell you anything. We are just interested in your opinions.

A. DO NOT ASK: Gender

1 – Male

Quota = 450

2 – Female

Quota = 450

B. Which of the following categories best describes your age?  
**READ - CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 - 18-19 years
- 2 - 20-24 years
- 3 - 25-34 years
- 4 - 35-44 years
- 5 - 45-54 years
- 6 - 55-64 years
- 7 - 65 and over
- 9 - DK/NA

Insert quotas

C. What are the first three digits of your postal code?

\_|\_|\_|\_|\_|

The next few questions deal with public libraries in Alberta.

L1. Thinking about decisions that are made on which materials are available in Alberta's public libraries, how much do you trust each of the following to make appropriate decisions? Do you have a great deal of trust, some trust, little trust, or no trust? **READ AND ROTATE**

	A great deal of trust					Some trust	Little trust	No trust	DK/NA
a) Public libraries	1	2	3	4	9				
b) The Government of Alberta	1	2	3	4	9				

L2. Which of the following statements is closest to you own point-of-view? **READ AND ROTATE**

- 1 – Decisions about what materials are available in public libraries should be made locally by trained library staff, guided by policies set by local library boards.
- 2 – The provincial government should set province-wide rules about what materials public libraries can make available
- 9 – Don't know / not sure

- L3. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the Alberta government passing a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials in public libraries?
- 1 – Strongly support
  - 2 – Somewhat support
  - 3 – Somewhat oppose
  - 4 – Strongly oppose
  - 9 – Don't know / not sure

- L4. If the Alberta government does pass a law or regulations that restrict access to certain materials in public libraries, do you think government should withhold government funding to libraries if they do not comply with these laws or regulations?

- 1 – Yes
- 2 – No
- 9 – Don't know / not sure

- L5. In the next provincial budget, do you think libraries should receive ... **READ**

- 1 – A funding increase above population growth and inflation
- 2 – A funding increase that matches population growth and inflation
- 3 – A funding increase that is below population growth and inflation
- 4 – No funding increase, or
- 5 – A funding cut
- 9 – Don't know / not sure

- L6. How often do you or someone in your household use public libraries? Do you use them ... **READ**

- 1 – On a weekly basis
- 2 – On a monthly basis
- 3 – A few times a year, or
- 4 – Less than once a year
- 9 – Don't know not sure

## DEMOGRAPHICS

*Just before we finish, I'd like to ask you a few questions strictly for classification purposes*

- D1. In politics, people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means left, and 10 means right.

<u>Left</u>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	<u>Right</u>	
												Don't know/ No answer

- D2. Which of the following best describes your present employment status? **READ LIST**

- 1 – Working full-time
- 2 – Working part-time
- 3 – Unemployed or looking for a job
- 4 – Stay at home full-time
- 5 – Student, or
- 6 – Retired
- DO NOT READ**
- 9 – DK/NA



D3. Do you work in the public or private sector? **(IF NOT WORKING, ASK ABOUT LAST JOB)**

- 1 – Public sector, meaning any level of Government
- 2 – Private sector, meaning private industry or business
- 9 – DK/NA

D4. What is the highest level of education that you have reached?  
**DO NOT READ - CIRCLE ONE ONLY**

- 1 – Completed / some elementary school
- 2 – Completed / some high school
- 3 – Completed / some college, vocational or trade school
- 4 – Some university
- 5 – Completed university (Bachelor's Degree)
- 6 – Post graduate/professional school (Master's Degree or PhD)
- 7 – No schooling
- VOLUNTEERED**
- 9 - DK/NA

D5. Do you have any children in your household age 17 and under?

- 1 – Yes
- 2 – No

D6. Do you identify as **READ (DO NOT RANDOMIZE)**

- 1 – White or European
- 2 – First Nations, Metis, Indigenous or Inuit
- 3 – A visible racial or ethnic minority?
- DO NOT READ**
- 4 – Mixed
- 5 – Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 – Don't know / no answer / rather not say

D7. For statistical purposes only, we need information about your income. All individual responses will be kept confidential. Please tell me which category applies to your **total household income** before taxes in **2025. READ - CIRCLE ONE ONLY**

- 01 - Under \$10,000
- 02 – \$10,000 to less than \$20,000
- 03 - \$20,000 to less than \$30,000
- 04 - \$30,000 to less than \$40,000
- 05 - \$40,000 to less than \$60,000
- 06 - \$60,000 to less than \$80,000
- 07 - \$80,000 to less than \$100,000
- 08 - \$100,000 to less than \$120,000
- 09 – Over \$120,000
- 10 – Don't know / refused

These are all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your participation.



Janet Brown  

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OPINION RESEARCH

 [janetbrown.ca](http://janetbrown.ca)