



The Executive
Programme on
Paramilitarism &
Organised Crime

Ending The Harm

'Paramilitary Gangs'

December 2024

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Methodology & Sample

- Aims and objectives to evaluate awareness and impact of DOJ's Ending The Harm – Paramilitary Gangs campaign:
 - *Perceived safety of areas where respondents live*
 - *Attitudes towards paramilitary gangs*
 - *Campaign awareness*
 - *Campaign influence*
 - *Changes in attitude as a result of seeing the campaign*
- Fieldwork conducted as part of an online Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey.
- Fieldwork conducted between 2nd – 17th December 2024.
 - Total sample of n=1,000 respondents
 - Sample representative of the Northern Ireland adult (18+) population in terms of age, sex, socio-economic grouping and area.
- All research conducted in accordance with the Market Research Society ethical Code of Conduct.

Tracking Overview

- Over one in ten (11%) claimed they did not feel safe living in their area, a perception that was slightly more prevalent amongst younger respondents, those from C2DE socio-economic backgrounds and those living in urban areas. Higher proportions suggested the area they lived in was not safe for children (16%) or women (18%).
- For over two-thirds (67%), there was a personal connection to the area they lived in, with over a half (53%) who felt positive about the future of their area.
- Almost one in five (18%) did not feel protected by the law and justice system.
- Over one in ten (14%) respondents stated they, or friends and family, had been affected by the activities of paramilitary gangs, a trend that was more notable amongst respondents in the younger age categories, those residing within Belfast City and those from a Protestant background.
- Around one in ten (12%) were in agreement that paramilitaries provided 'an important service within the community' (12%) and helped to 'protect my community'. The vast majority did not agree with these sentiments.
- The vast majority agreed that paramilitary gangs 'controlled communities with violence, intimidation and drug dealing' (67%), 'exploited hard-working local businesses' (65%), 'forced children into violence, stealing their future' (63%), 'robbed businesses by taking their hard-earned money' (61%) and groomed children to force them to sell drugs (59%). We can also observe the impact of advertising awareness at this early stage of analysis, with agreement of these statements being notably more prevalent amongst those who had prior exposure to the campaign.

Tracking Overview

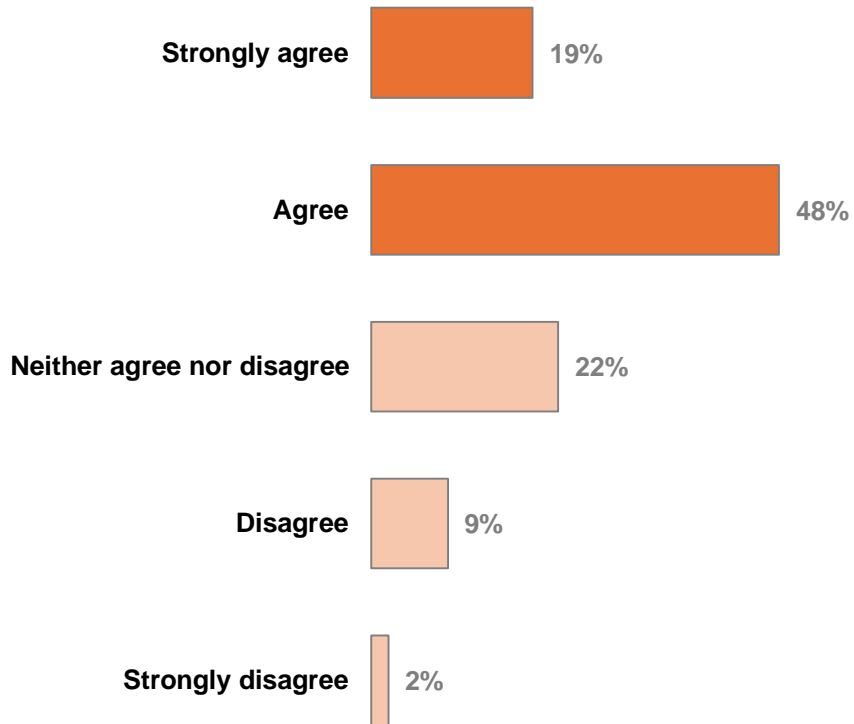
- Some 46% of respondents could recall having heard or seen an advertising or publicity campaign recently regarding paramilitary gangs and the impact they have on people and communities.
- When prompted with the six advertising images, half (50%) could recall having seen the campaign. Awareness was more prevalent amongst males (53%), those from the ABC1 socio-economic category (57%), as well as those residing within greater Belfast (60%) and Belfast City (65%).
- Takeout from the campaign was both significant and powerful, with the vast majority in agreement the campaign told them that 'paramilitaries are just criminals' (79%), 'there was no place for paramilitary gangs in Northern Ireland's future' (77%), 'paramilitaries don't protect you, they intimidate their own communities' (76%), and they exploited local businesses (71%) and women and children (69%).
- The campaign was regarded as both believable (77%) and impactful (66%).
- Almost nine in ten (89%) respondents fully supported what the campaign was saying and trying to do.
- Agreement levels for all of the above takeout statements was significantly higher amongst those who were already aware of the campaign, therefore had prior exposure in advance of the survey.
- The overall impact of the campaign proved to be very strong. Having been prompted with the campaign stimulus, levels of agreement on how paramilitary gangs negatively affected people and local communities rose significantly across all the key metrics.

*Perceived safety
of living in
area*



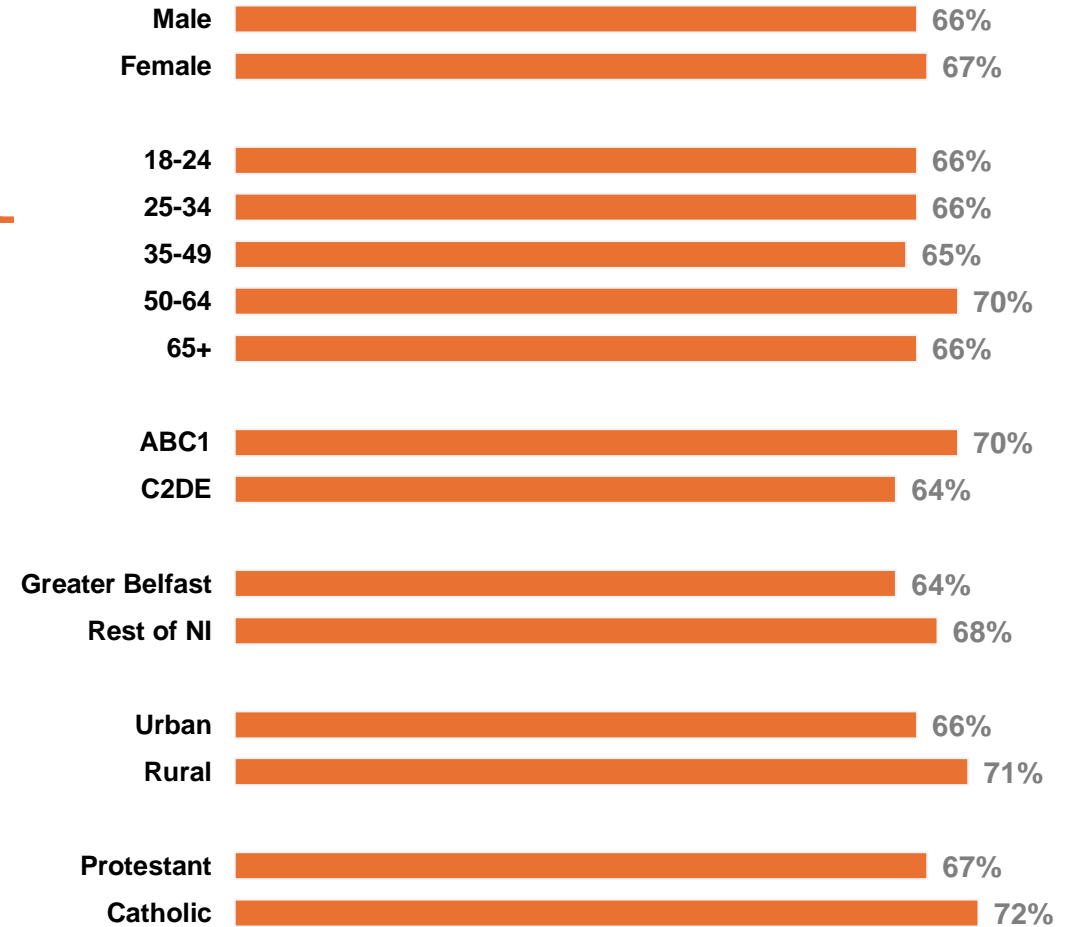
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'I feel a personal connection to this area'



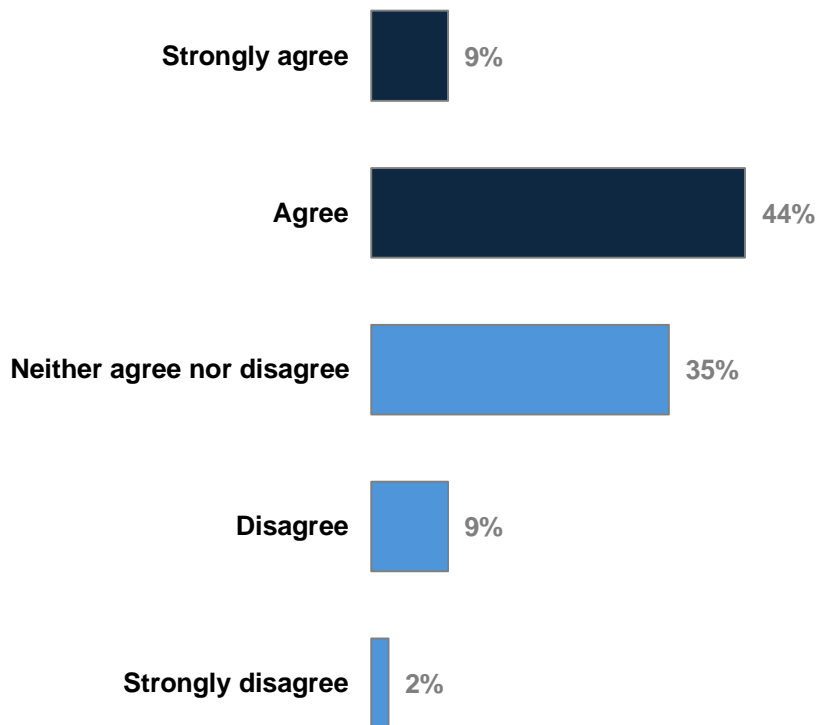
Overall Agreement
67%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



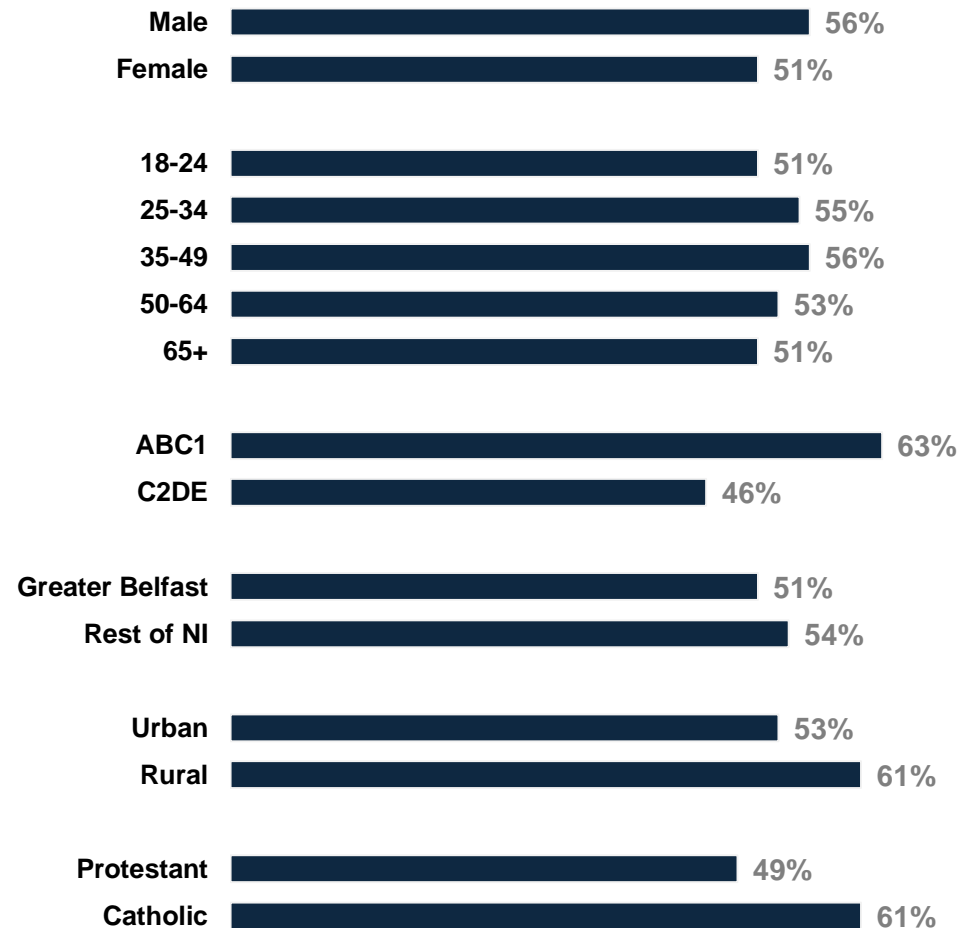
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I feel a personal connection to this area'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'I feel positive about the future of this area'



Overall Agreement
53%

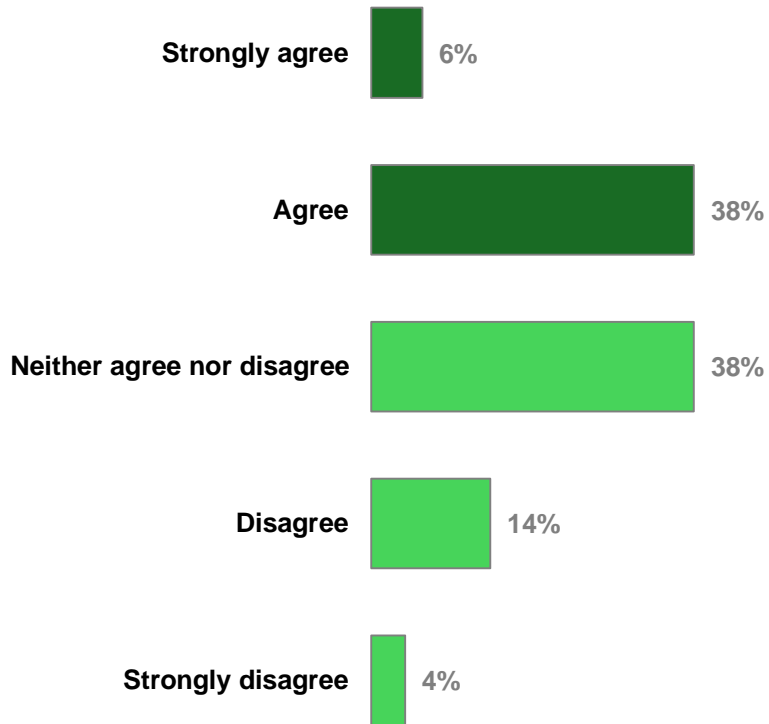
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I feel positive about the future of this area'

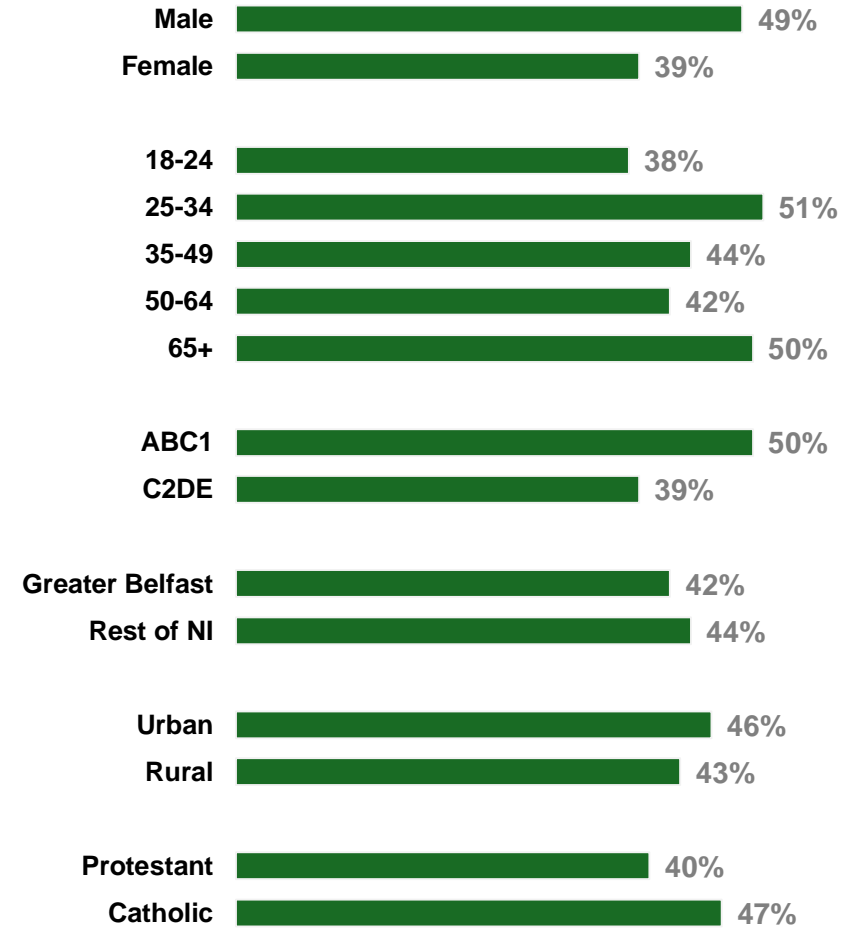
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'I feel protected by the law and justice system'



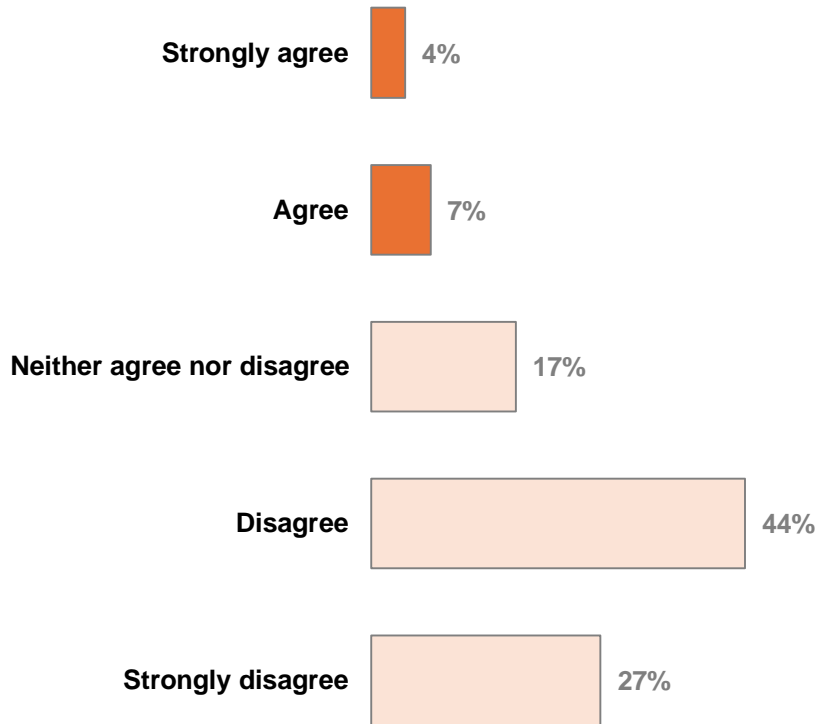
Overall Agreement
44%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



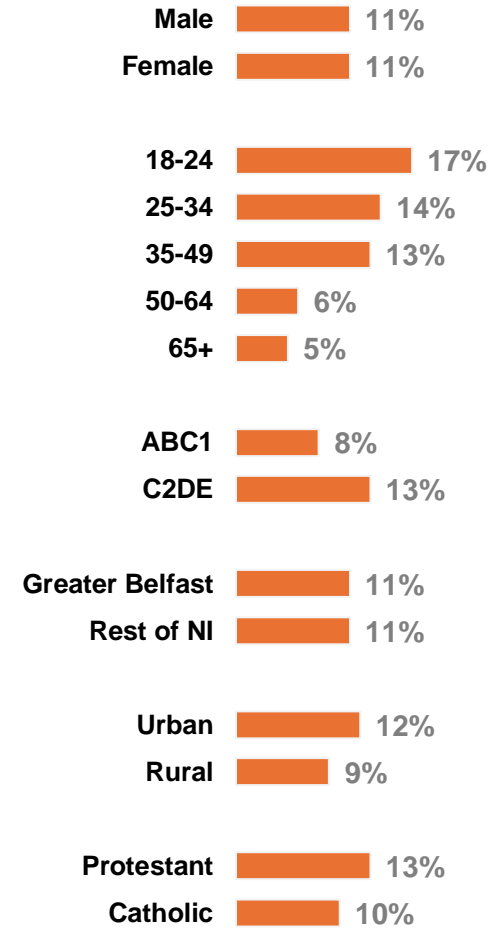
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I feel protected by the law and justice system'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'I do not feel safe living in my area'



Overall Agreement
11%

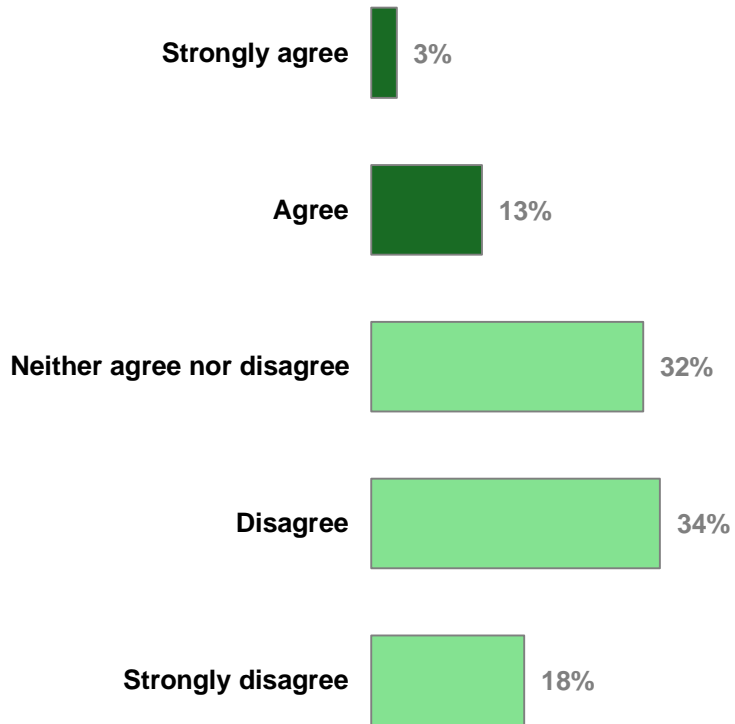
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I do not feel safe living in my area'

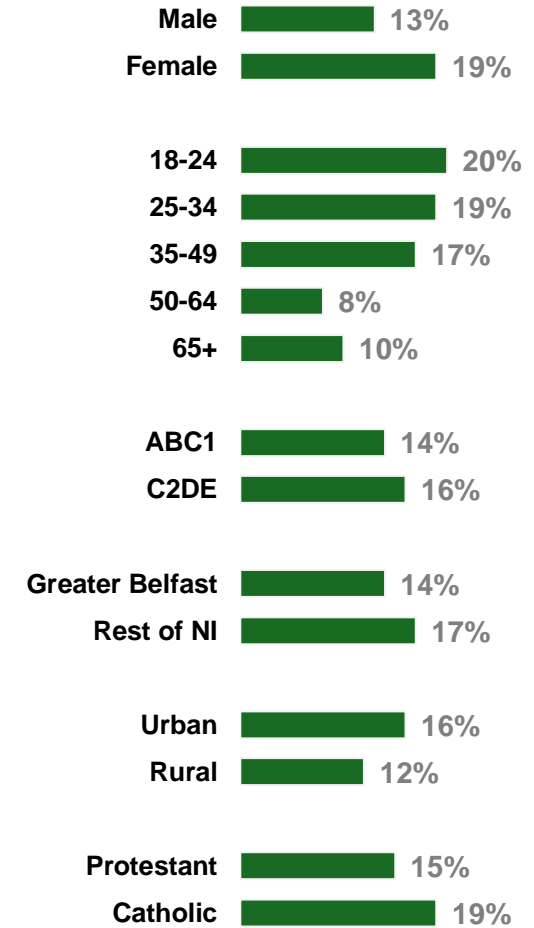
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

*'I do not feel children
are safe in this area'*



**Overall
Agreement
16%**

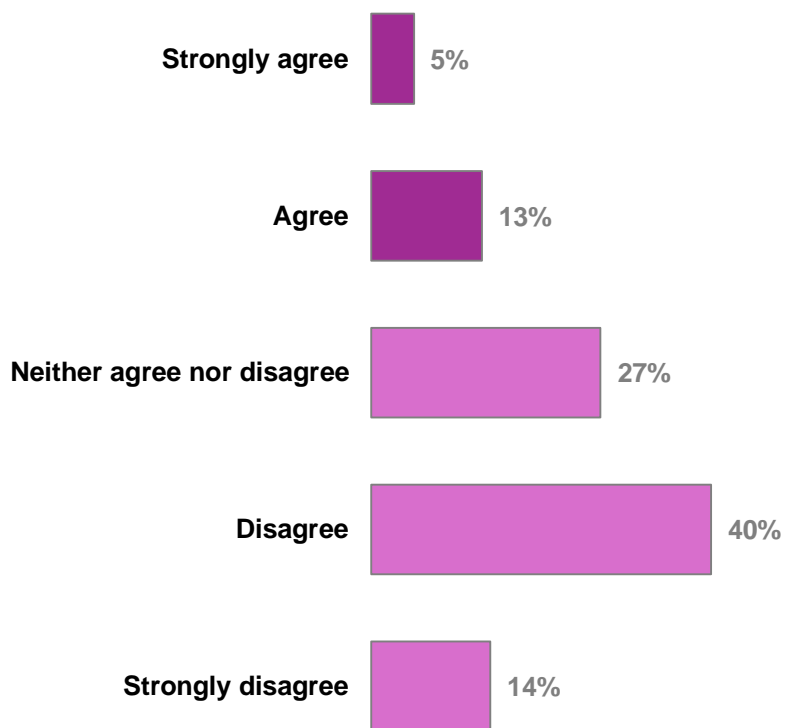
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I do not feel children are safe in this area this area'

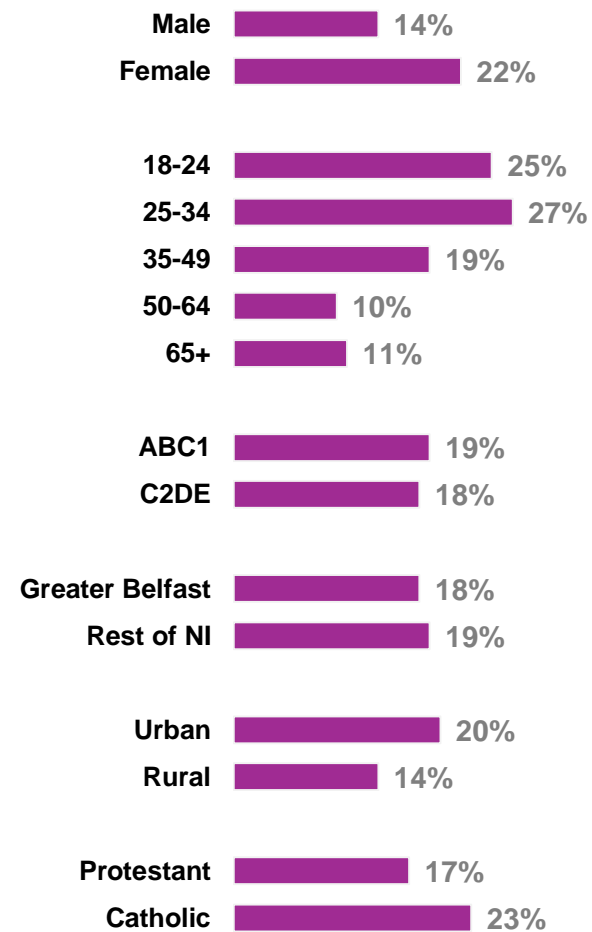
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'I don't believe women are safe in this area'



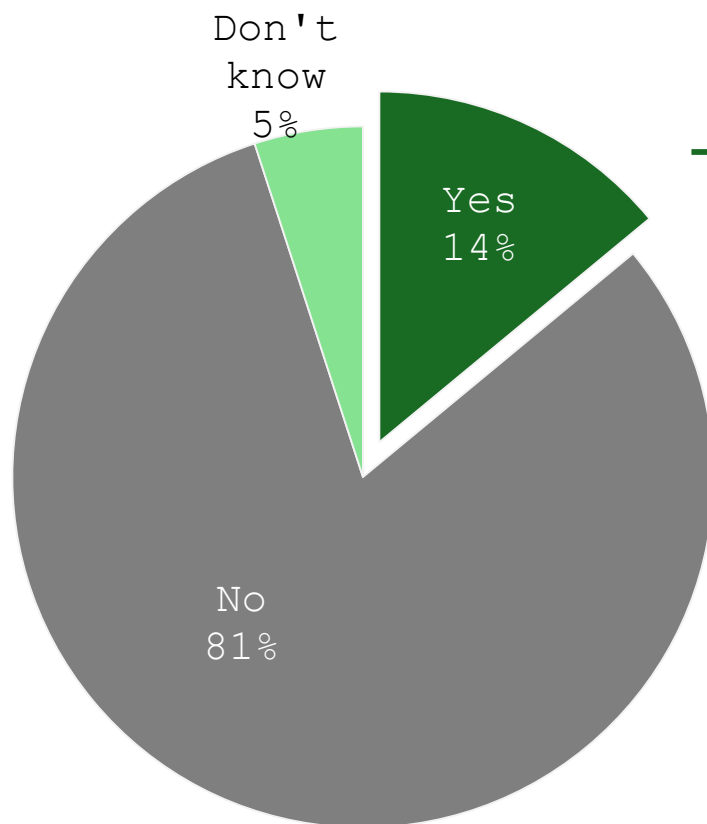
Overall Agreement
18%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or

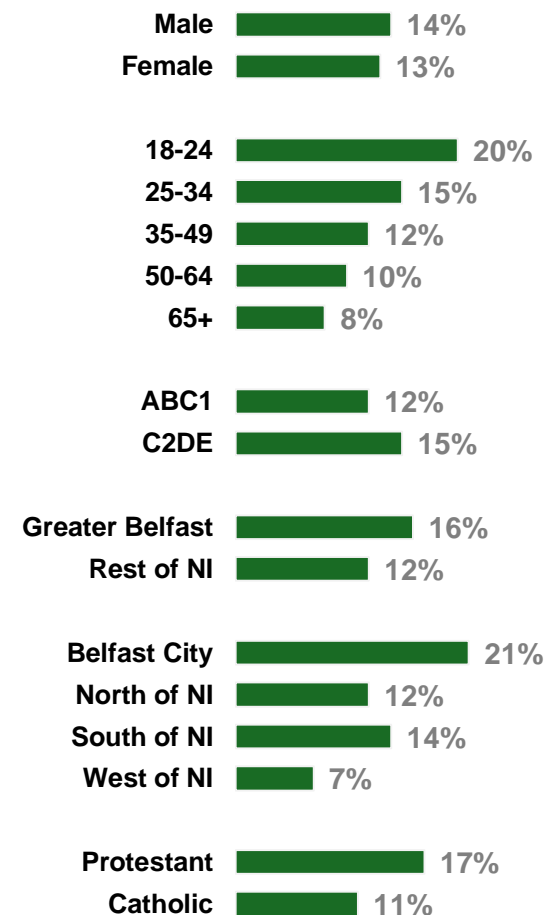


Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I don't believe women are safe in this area this area'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

*Affected by the activities
of Paramilitary Gangs*



who have been affected by Paramilitary Gangs



Q. Have you, or any of your friends and family living in your area, been affected by the activities of Paramilitary Gangs?

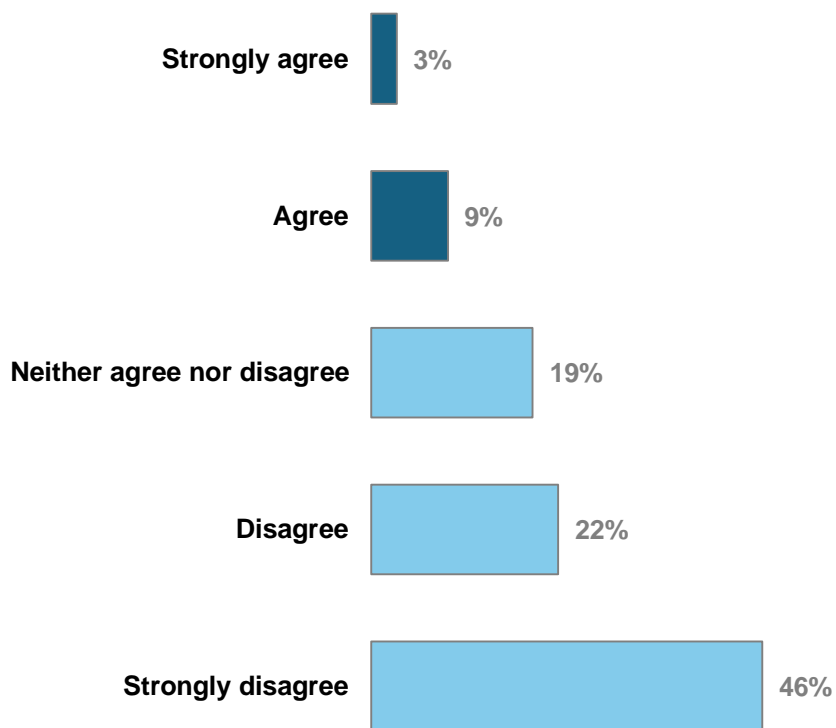
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

Perceptions of paramilitary gangs



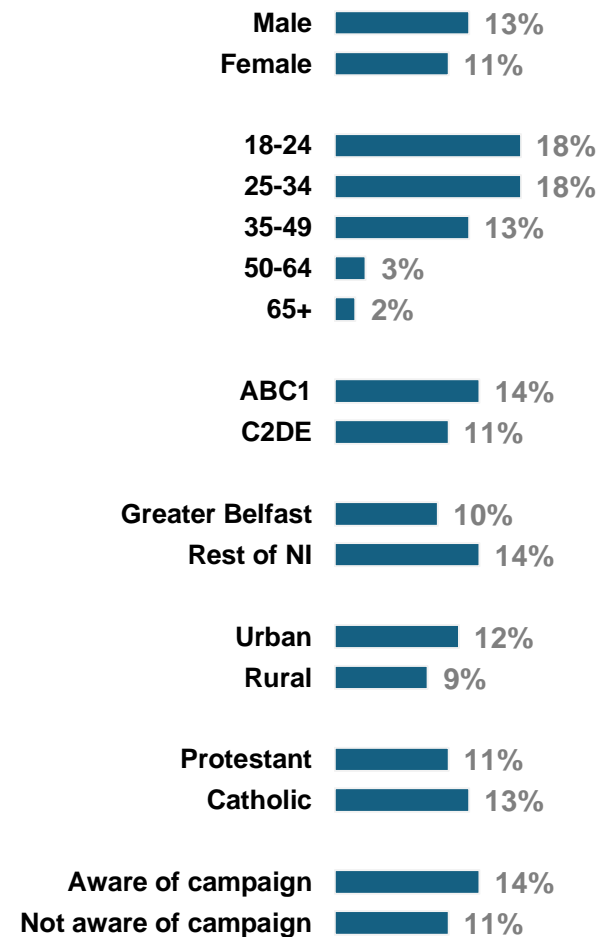
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'Paramilitaries provide an important service within the community'



Overall Agreement
12%

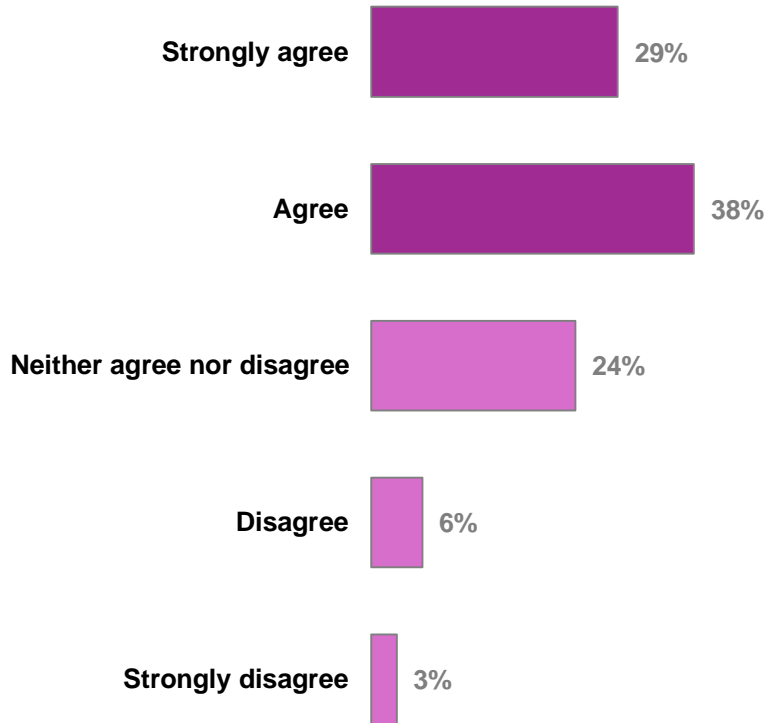
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitaries provide an important service within the community'

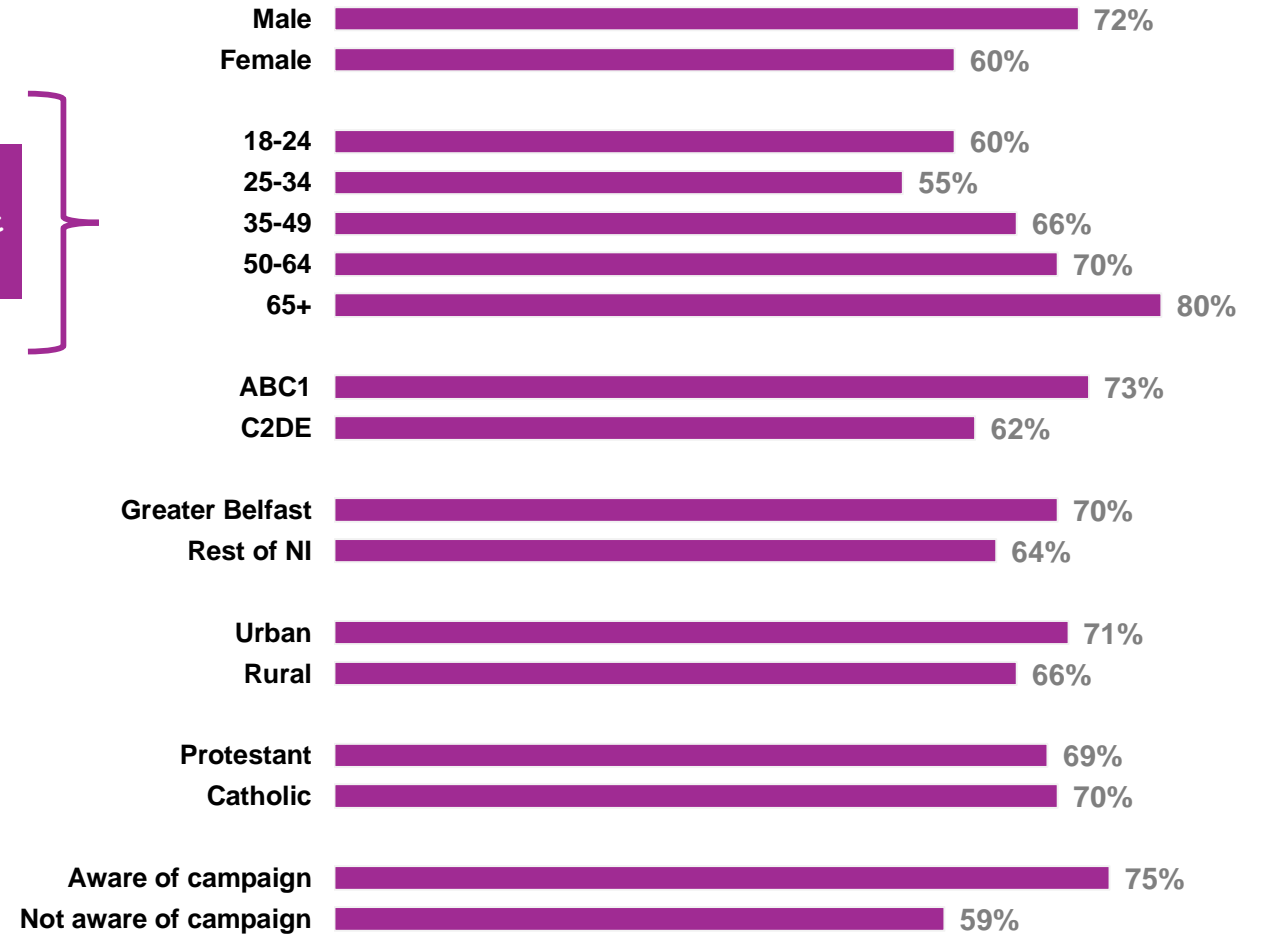
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitary Gangs
control our communities
with violence,



**Overall
Agreement
67%**

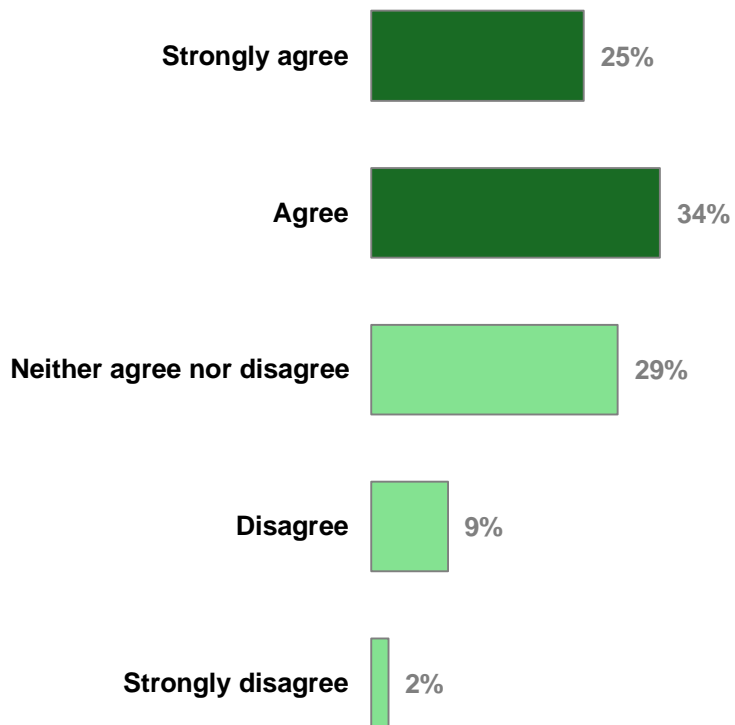
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitary Gangs control our communities with violence, intimidation and drug dealing'

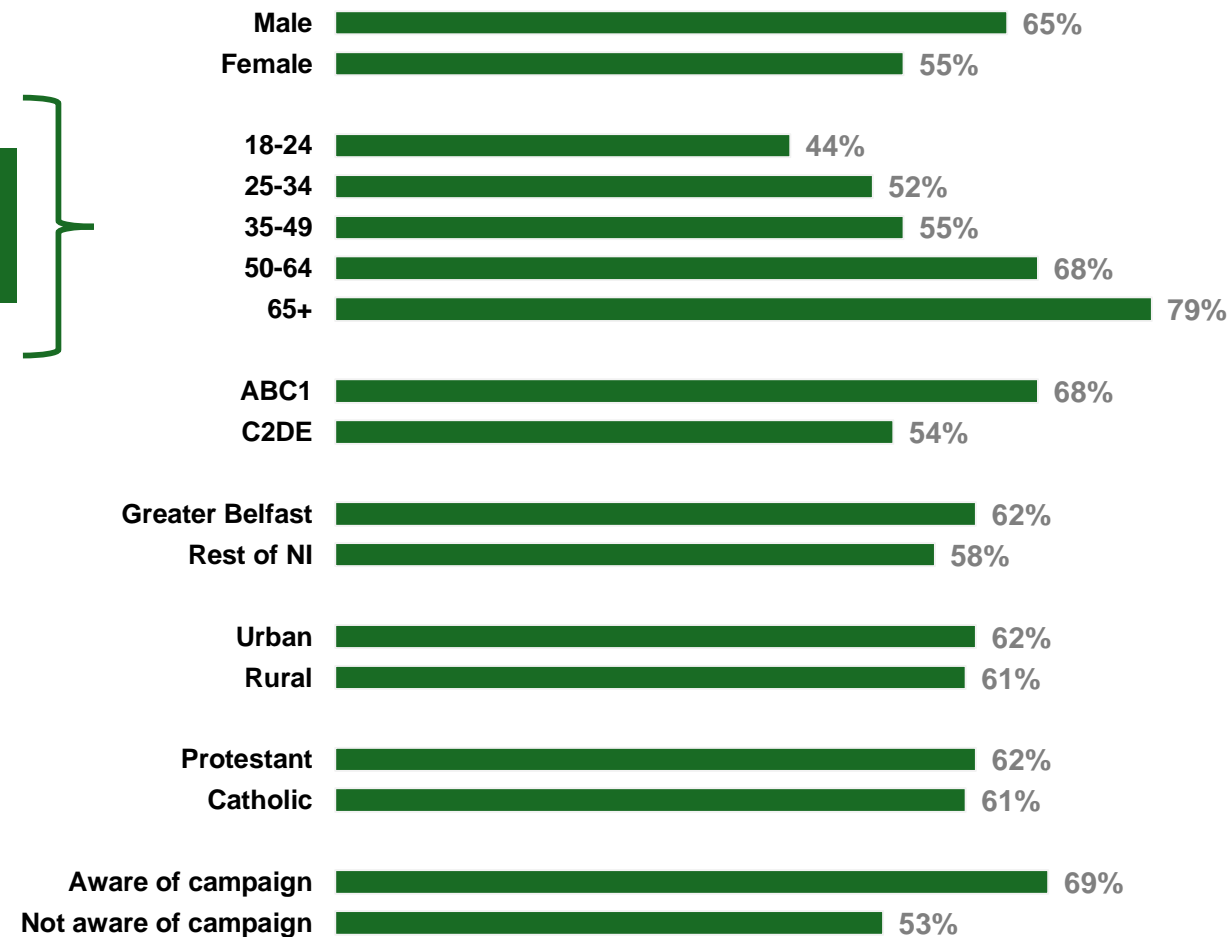
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitary Gangs groom children and force them to sell drugs'



Overall Agreement
59%

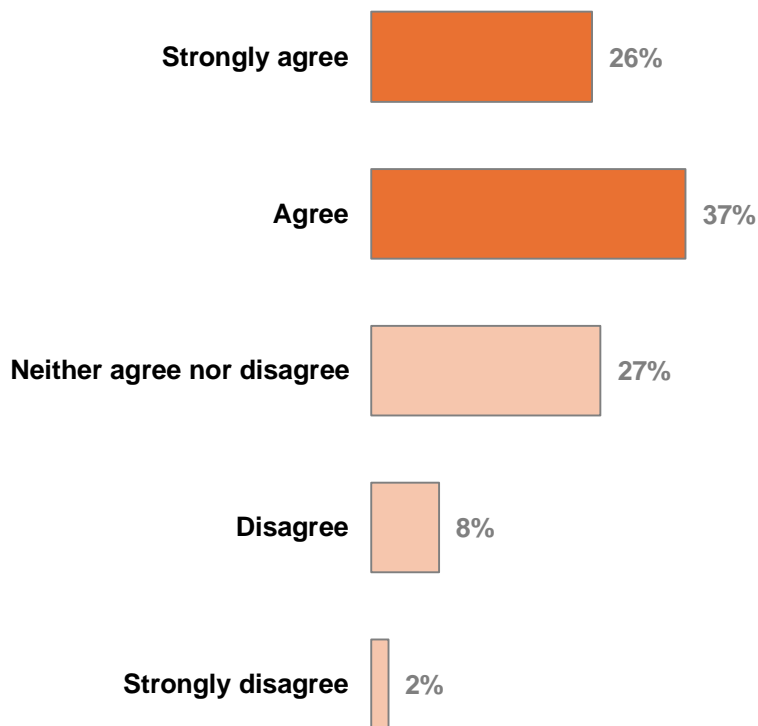
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitary Gangs groom children and force them to sell drugs'

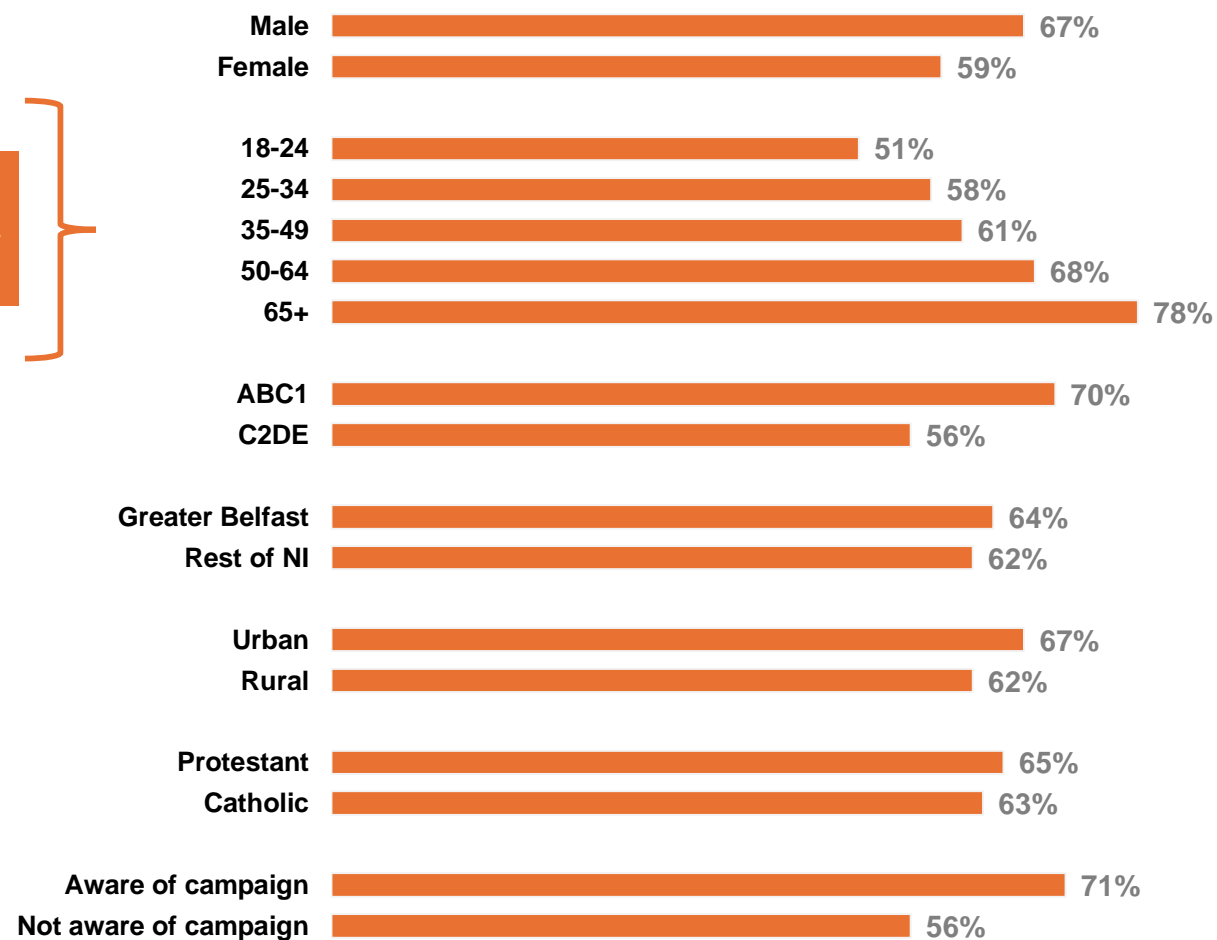
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitary Gangs force children into violence, stealing their future'



Overall Agreement
63%

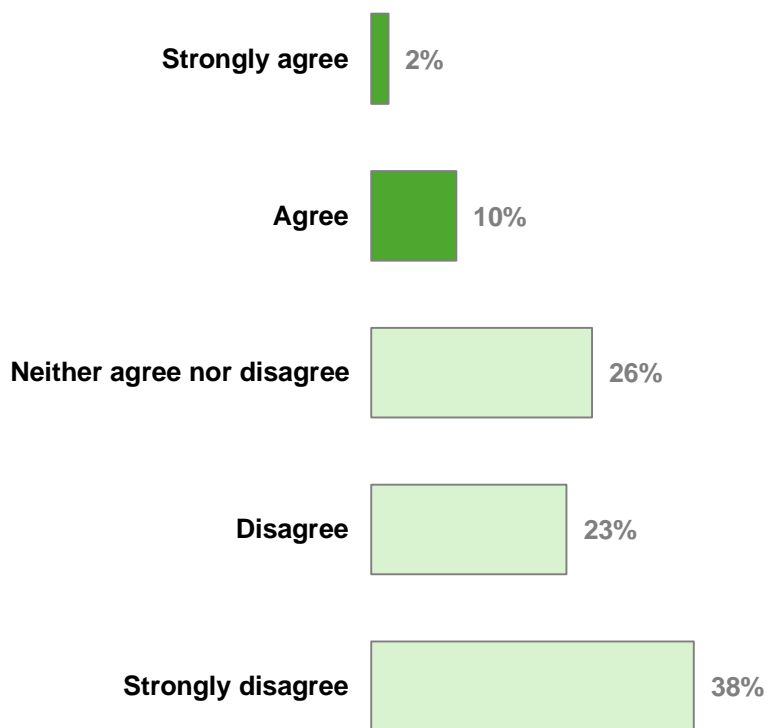
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitary Gangs force children into violence, stealing their future'

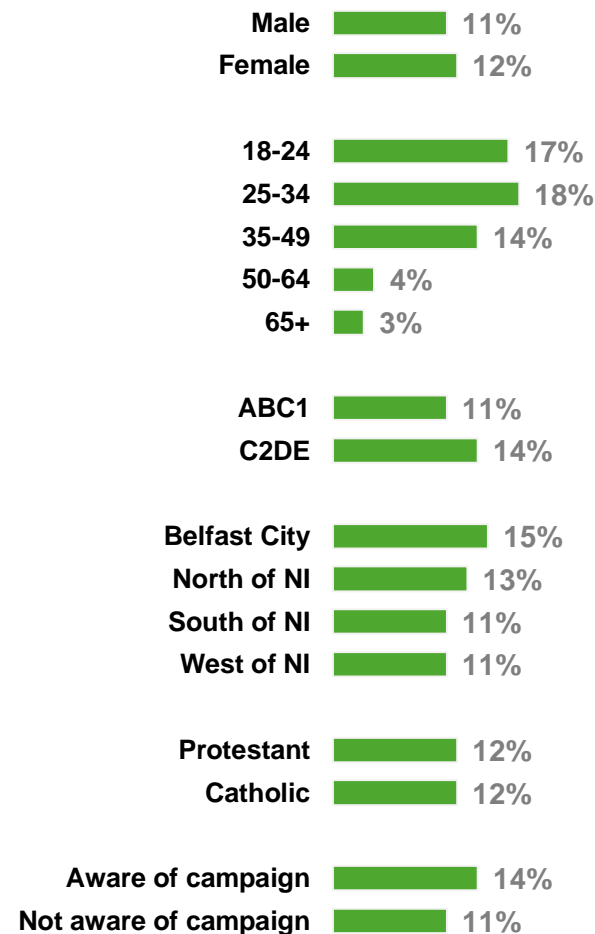
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitaries help protect my community'



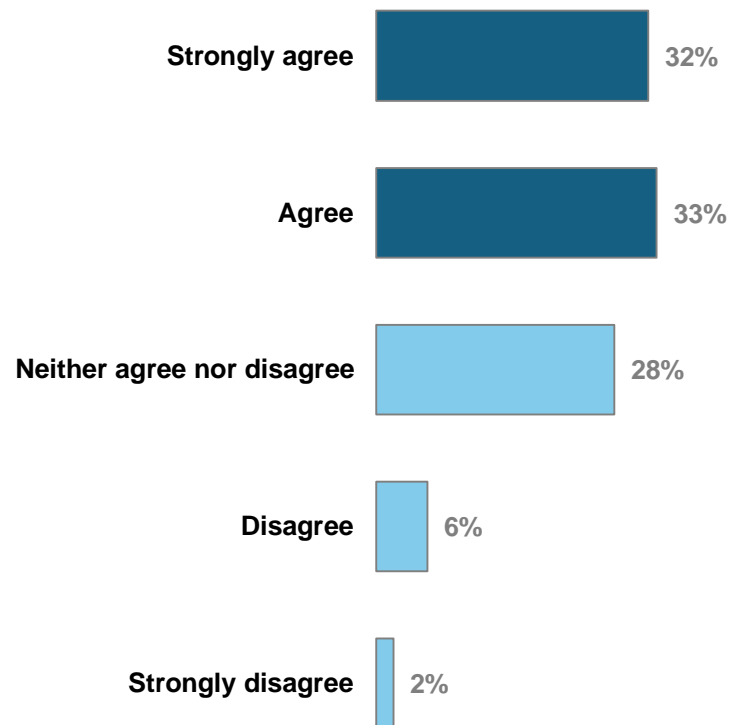
Overall Agreement
12%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



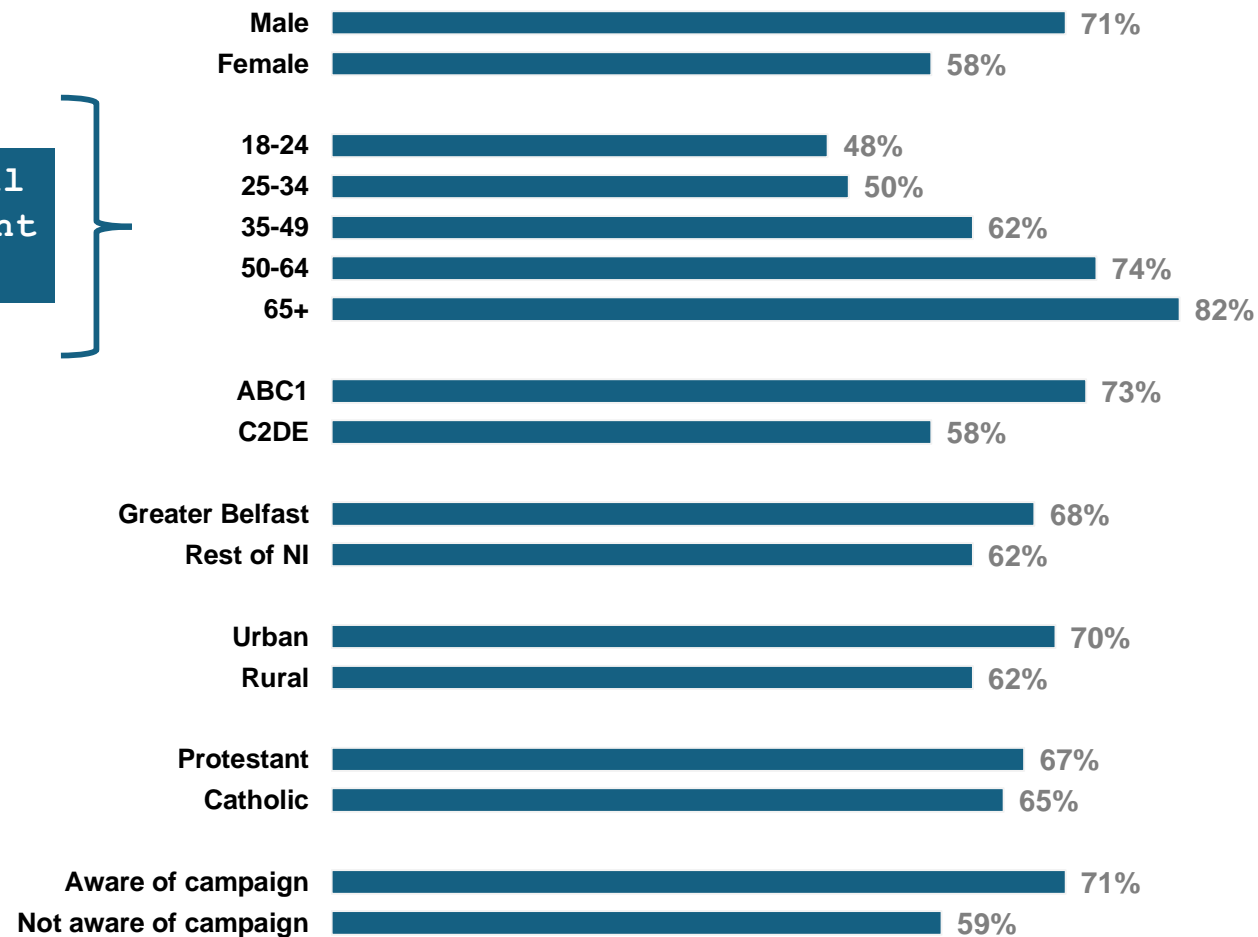
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitaries help protect my community'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitary Gangs exploit hard-working local businesses'



Overall Agreement
65%

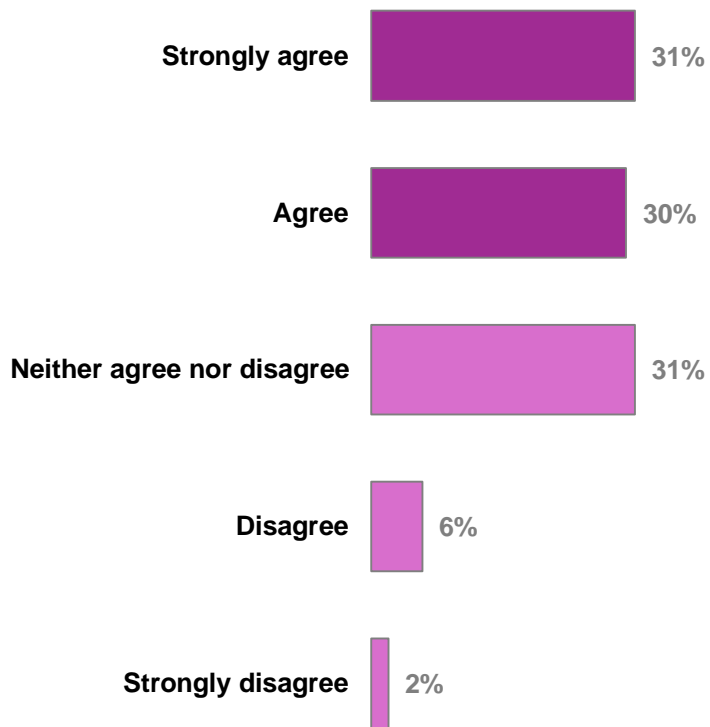
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitary Gangs exploit hard-working local businesses'

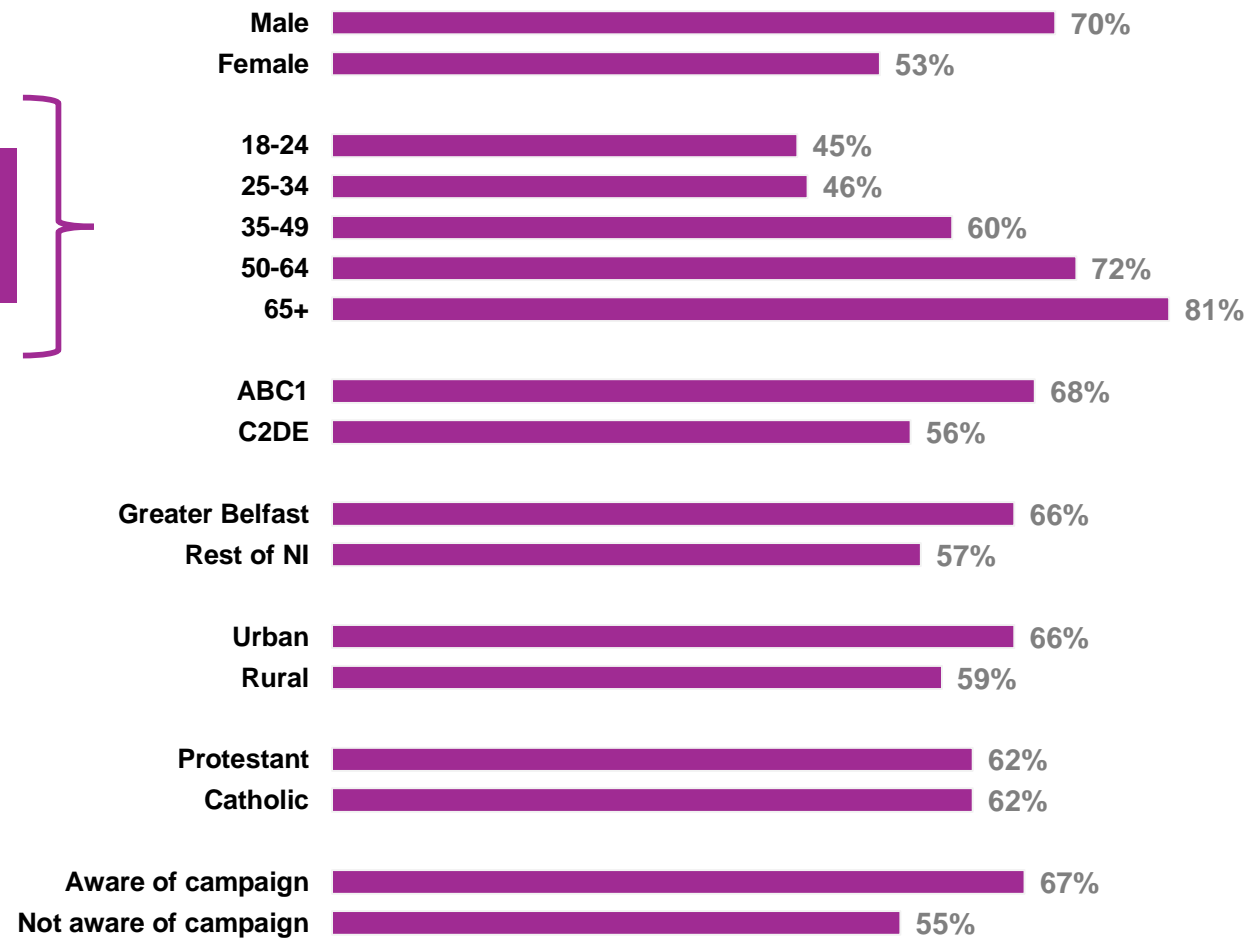
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitary Gangs rob local businesses by taking their hard-earned money'



Overall Agreement
61%

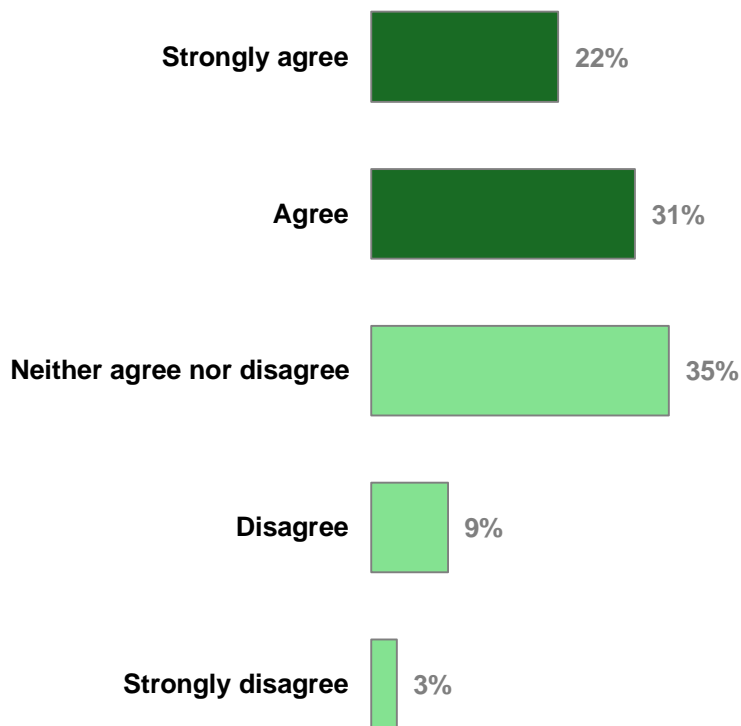
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitary Gangs rob local businesses by taking their hard-earned money'

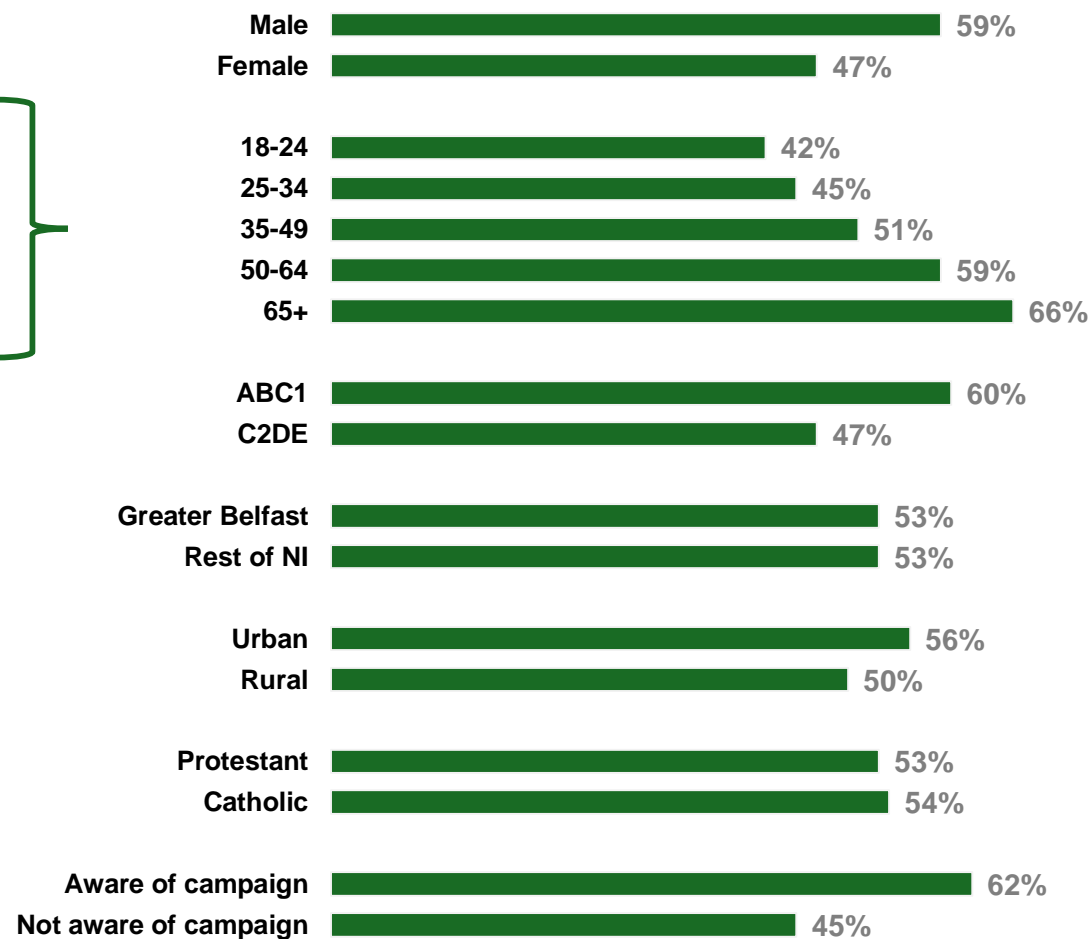
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitary Gangs abuse women and girls'



Overall Agreement
53%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitary Gangs abuse women and girls'

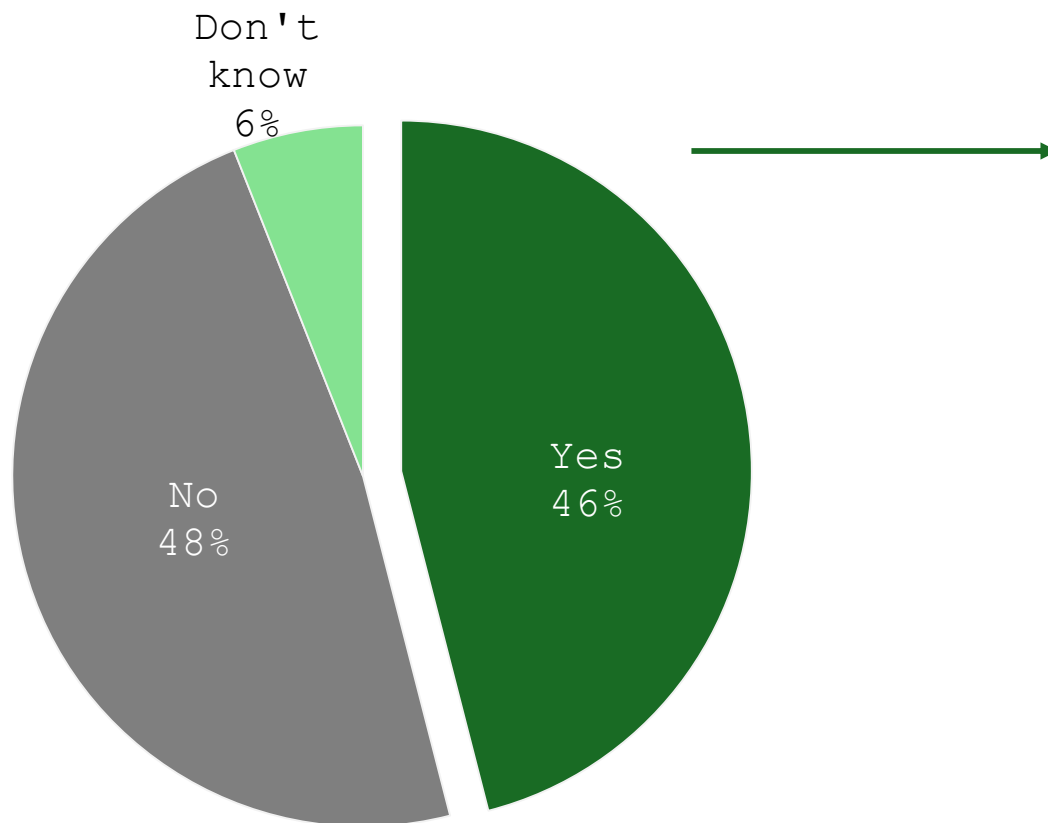
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

*Campaign
awareness and
takeout*

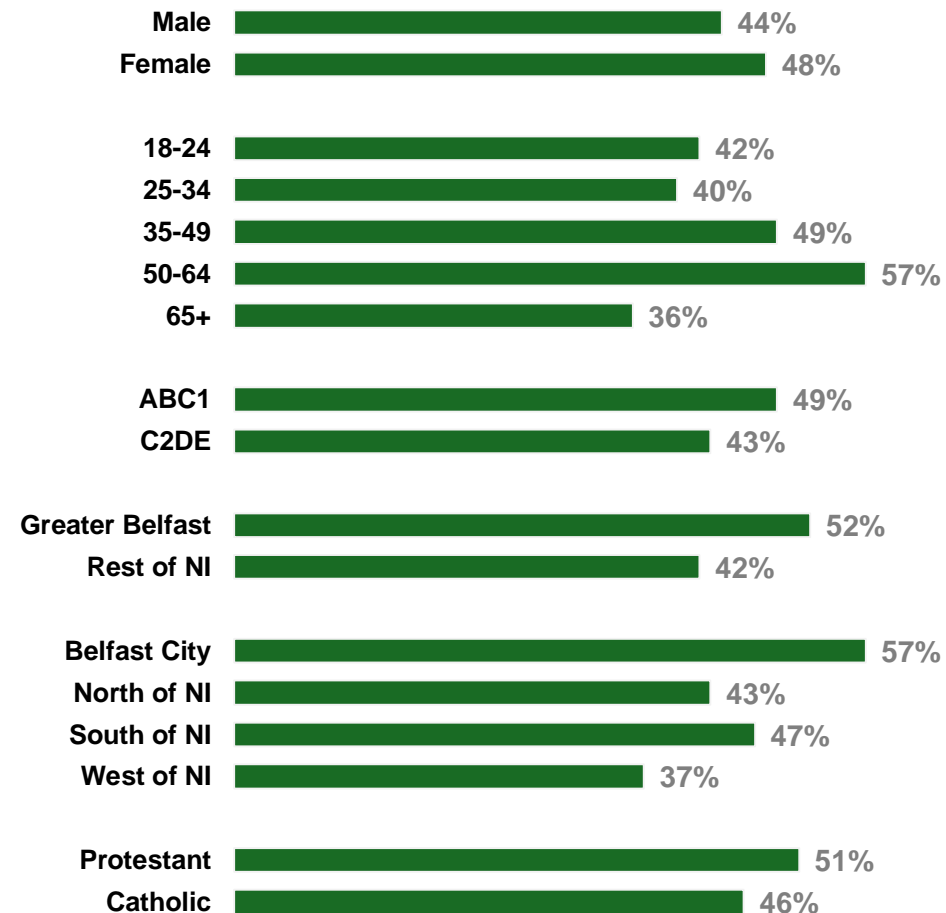


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Spontaneous Awareness



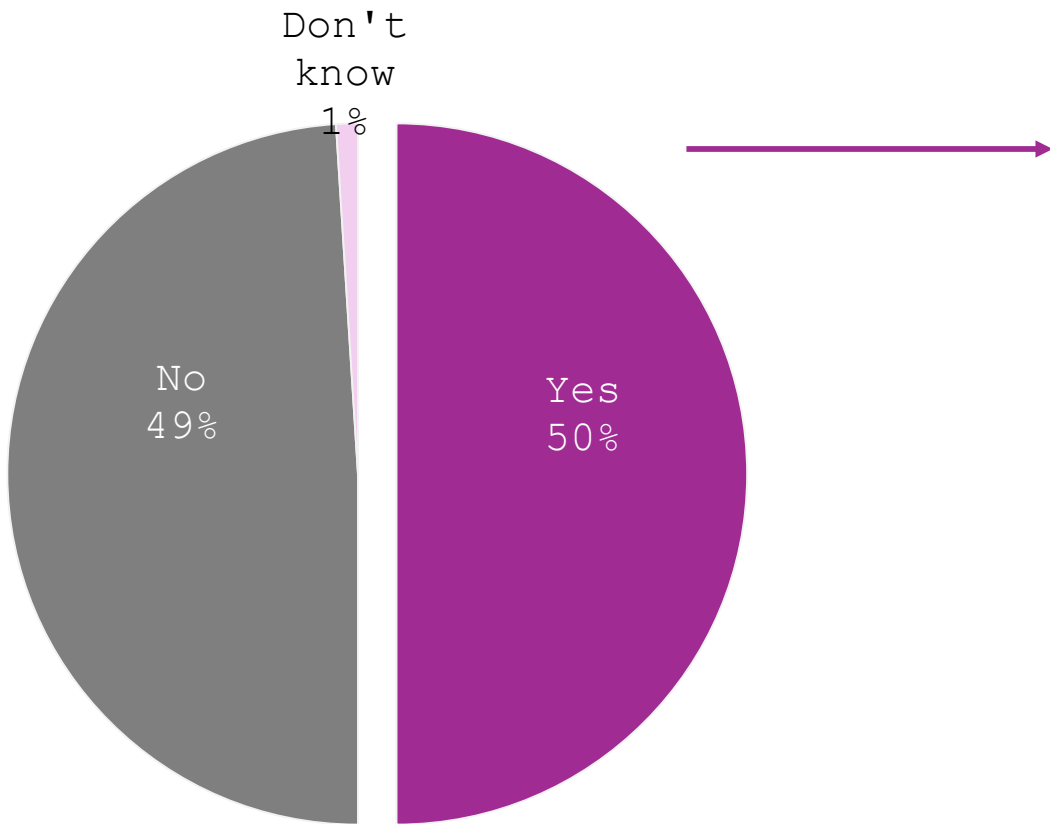
spontaneously aware of publicity campaign



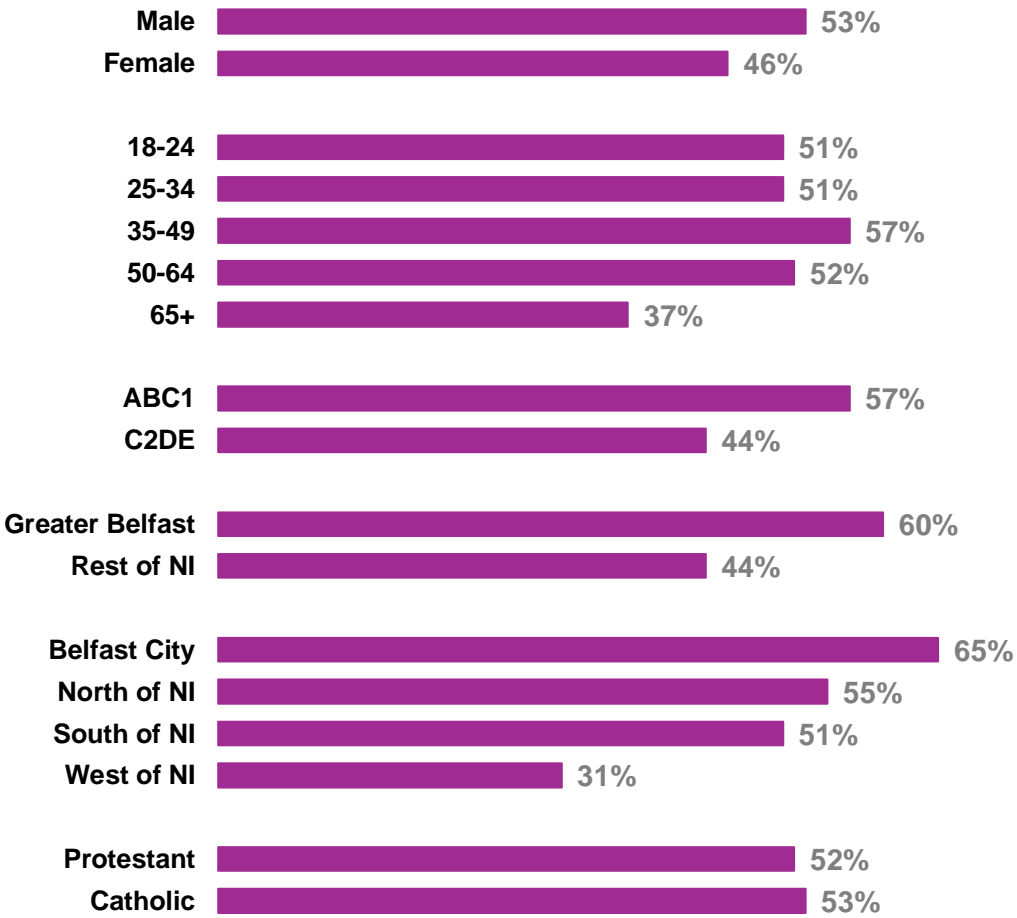
Q. Can you recall having heard or seen an advertising or publicity campaign recently regarding Paramilitary Gangs and the impact they have on people and communities?

[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

Prompted Awareness (6

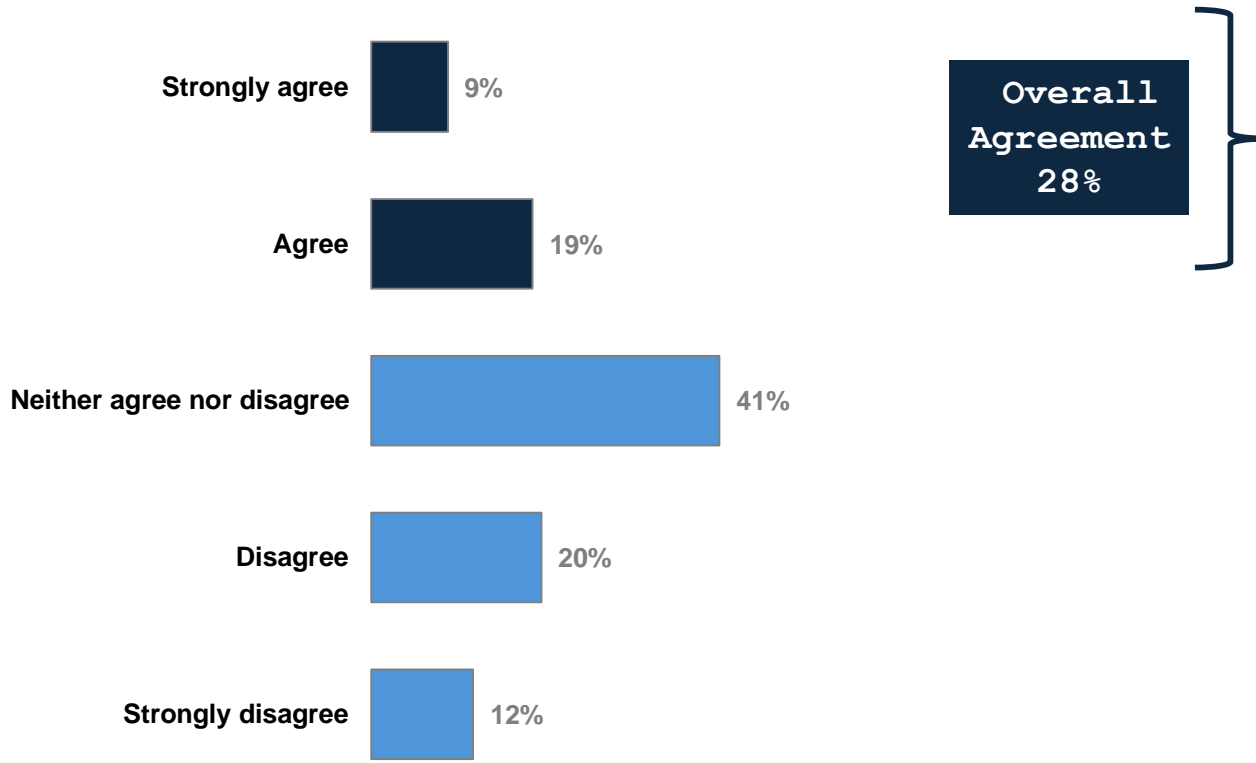


11 aware of campaign when prompte

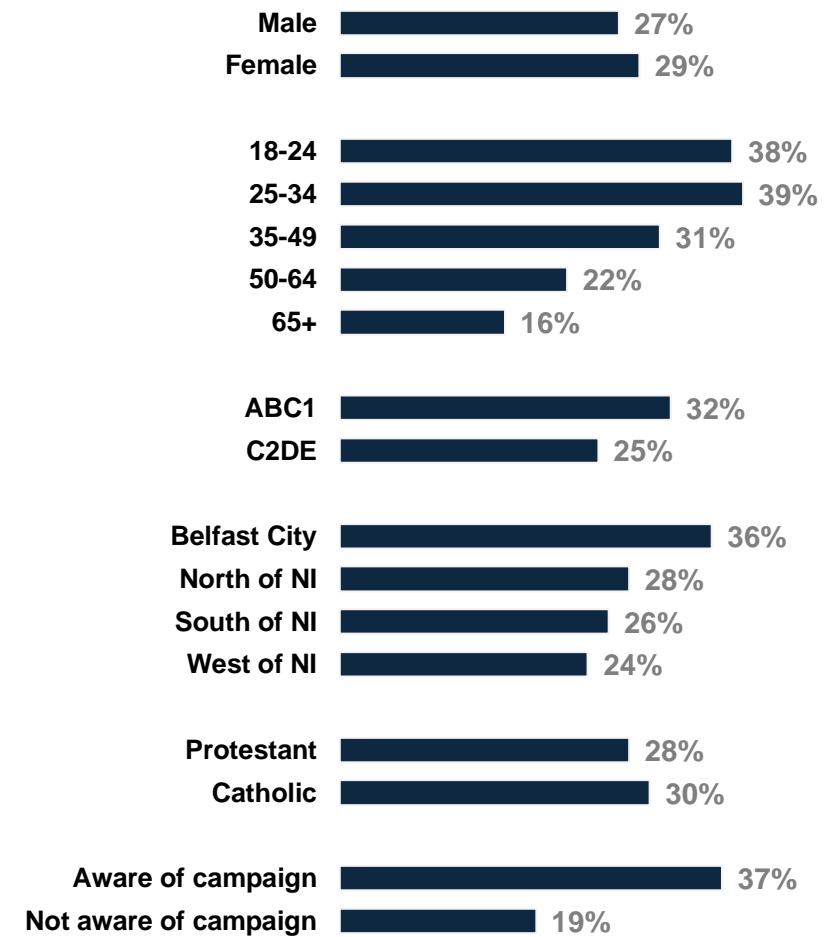


Q. Can you recall having seen these advertising images on outdoor posters or billboards or on social media recently?
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'The advertising challenges my views about

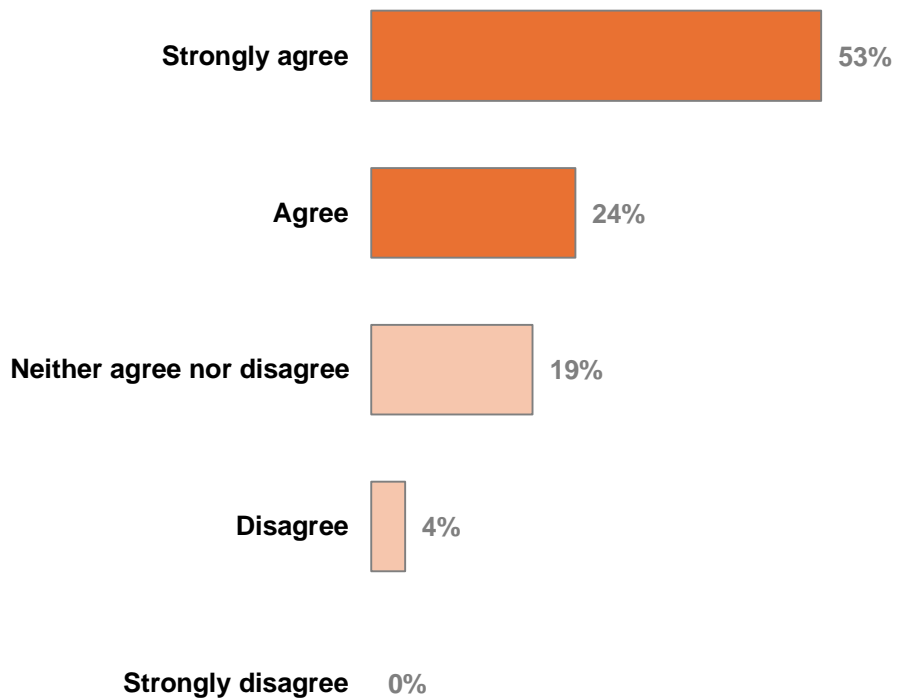


All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



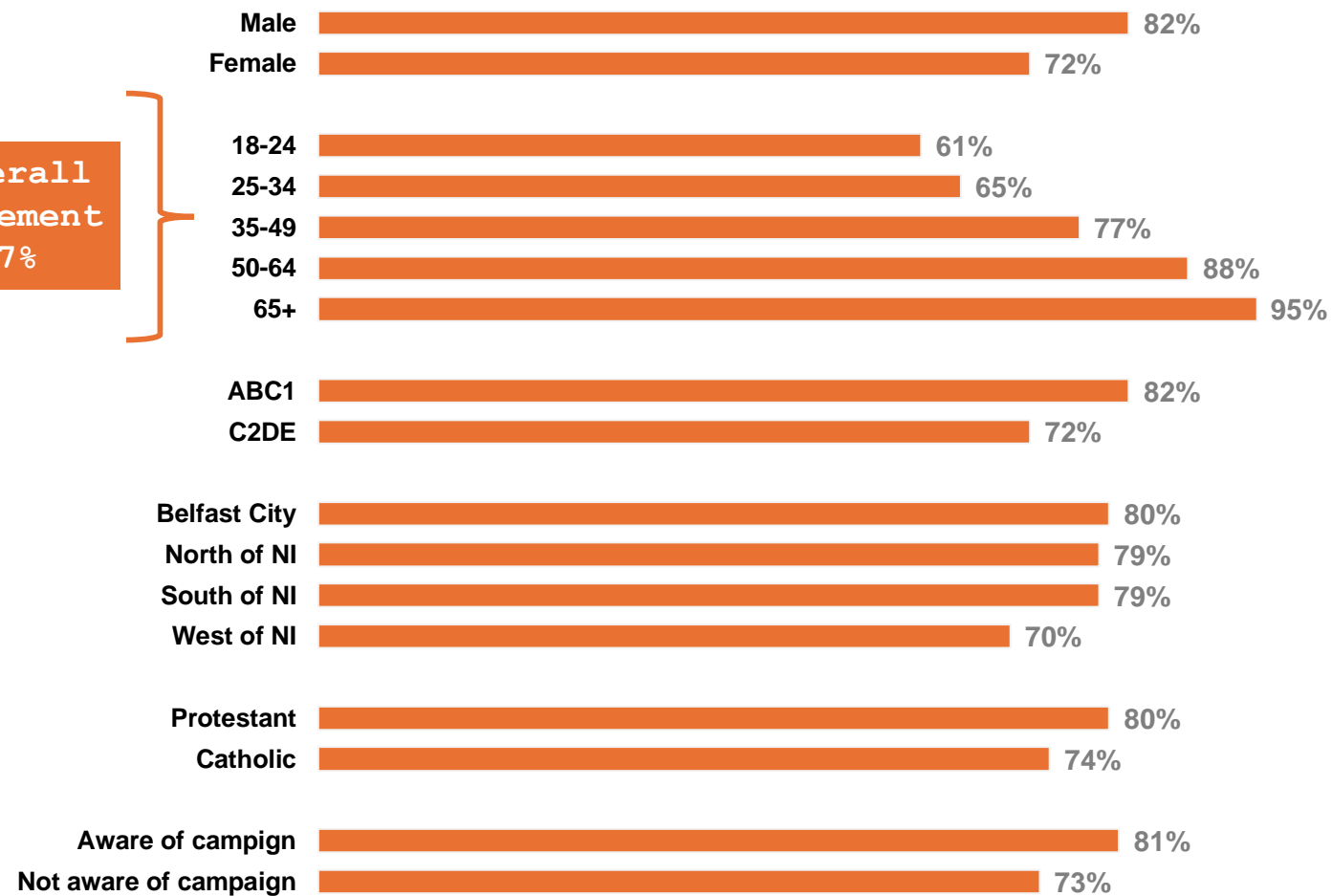
Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'The advertising challenges my views about Paramilitary Gangs'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Having seen the campaign, I believe there is no place for Paramilitary Gangs in Northern Ireland's future'



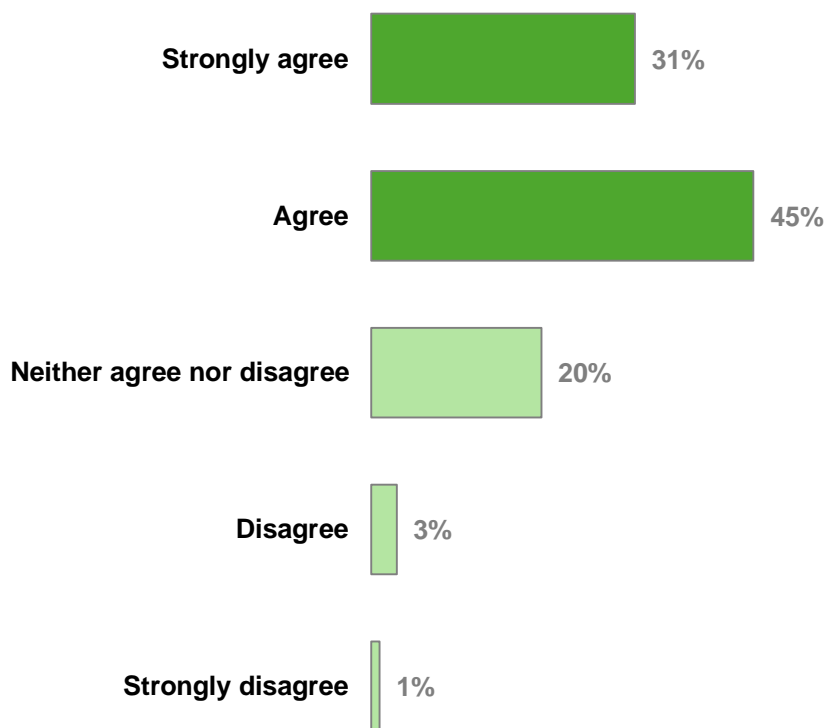
Overall Agreement 77%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



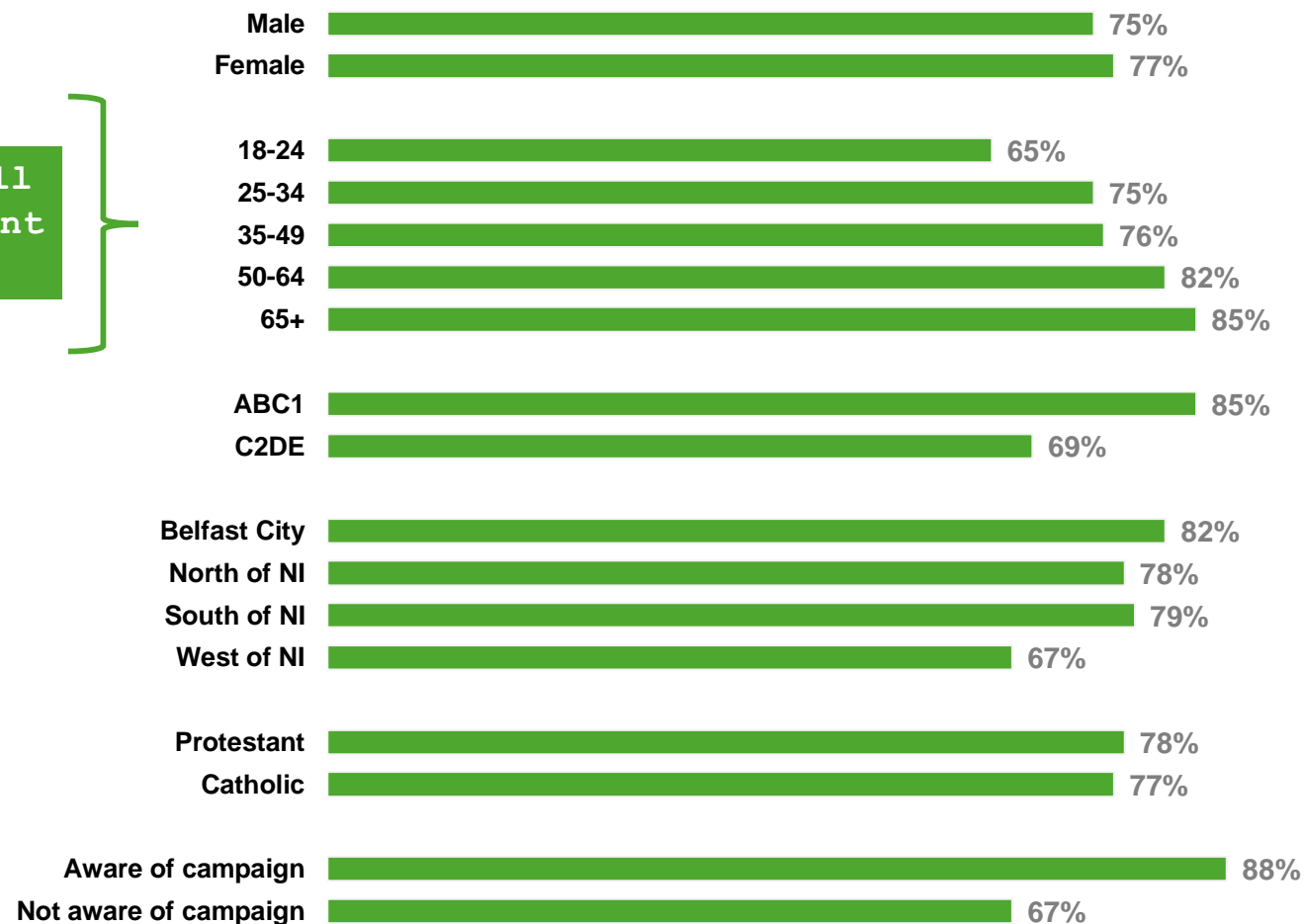
Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Having seen the campaign, I believe there is no place for Paramilitary Gangs in Northern Ireland's future'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'The advertising campaign was believable'



Overall Agreement
76%

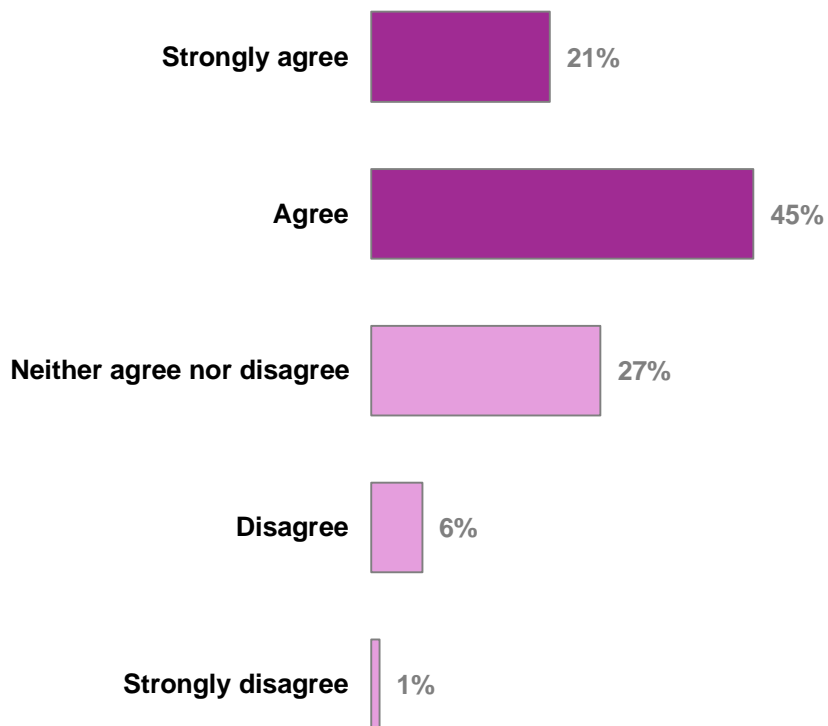
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'The advertising campaign was believable'

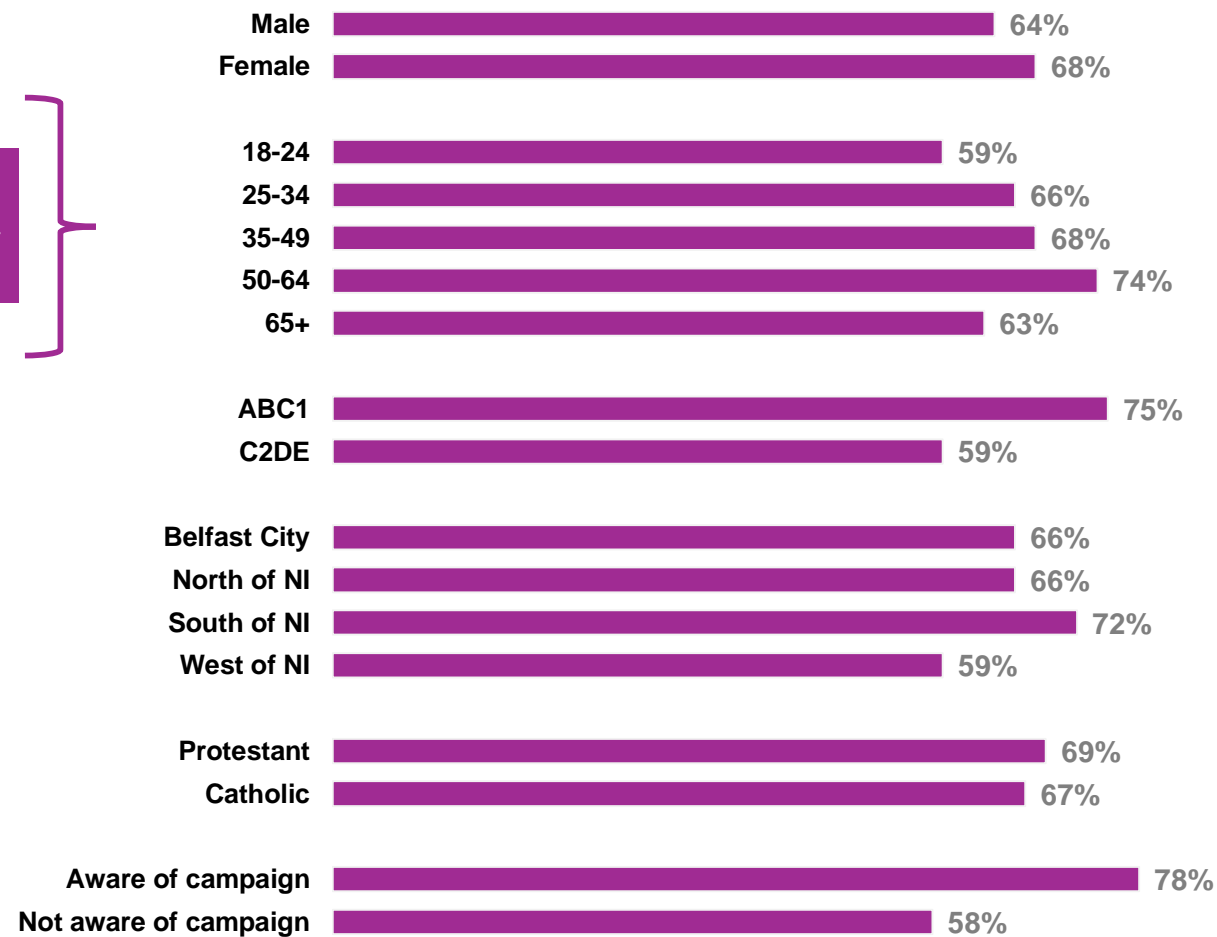
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'The advertising campaign was impactful'



Overall Agreement
66%

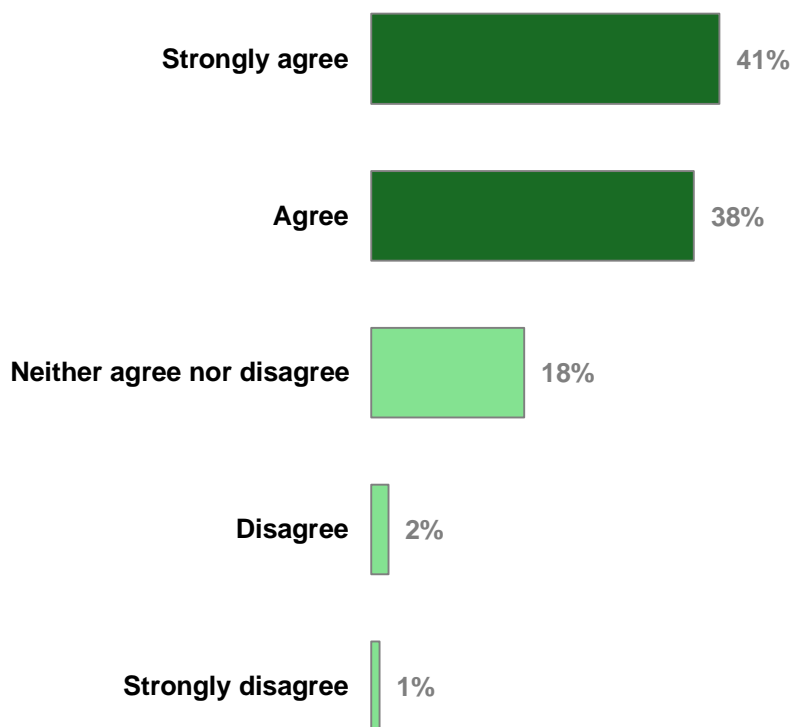
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'The advertising campaign was impactful'

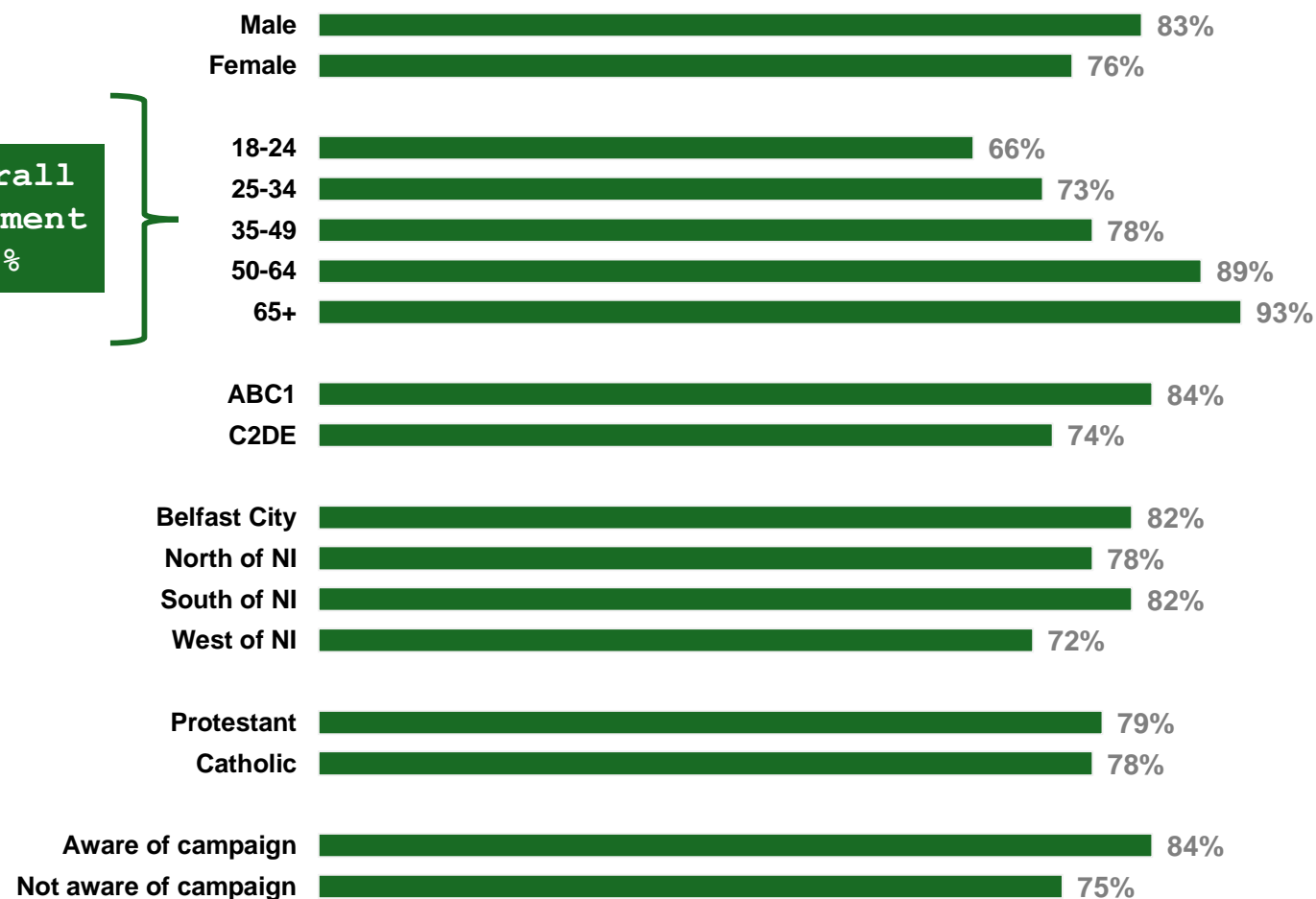
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'The advertising campaign
tells me that
Paramilitaries are just



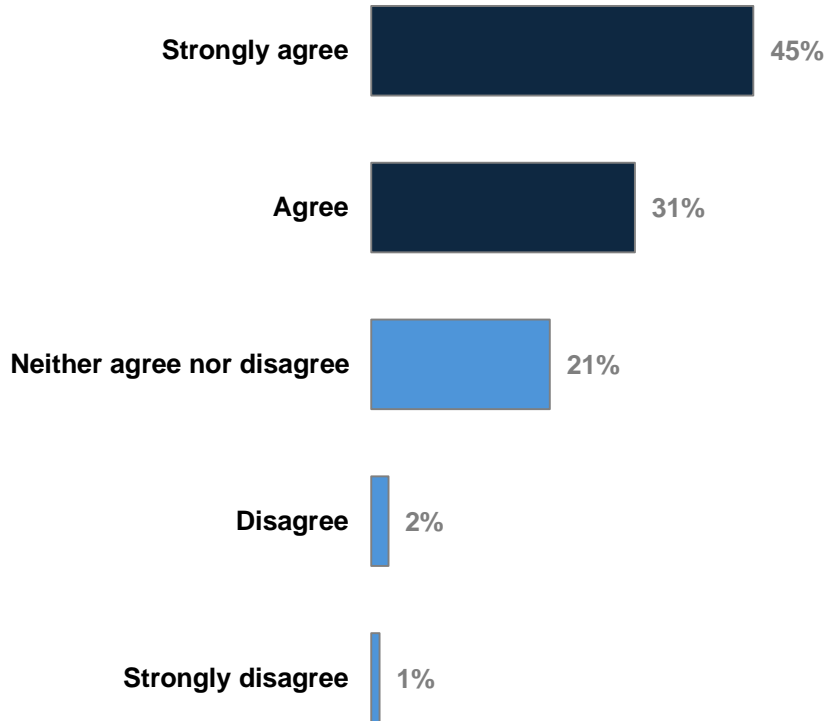
**Overall
Agreement
79%**

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



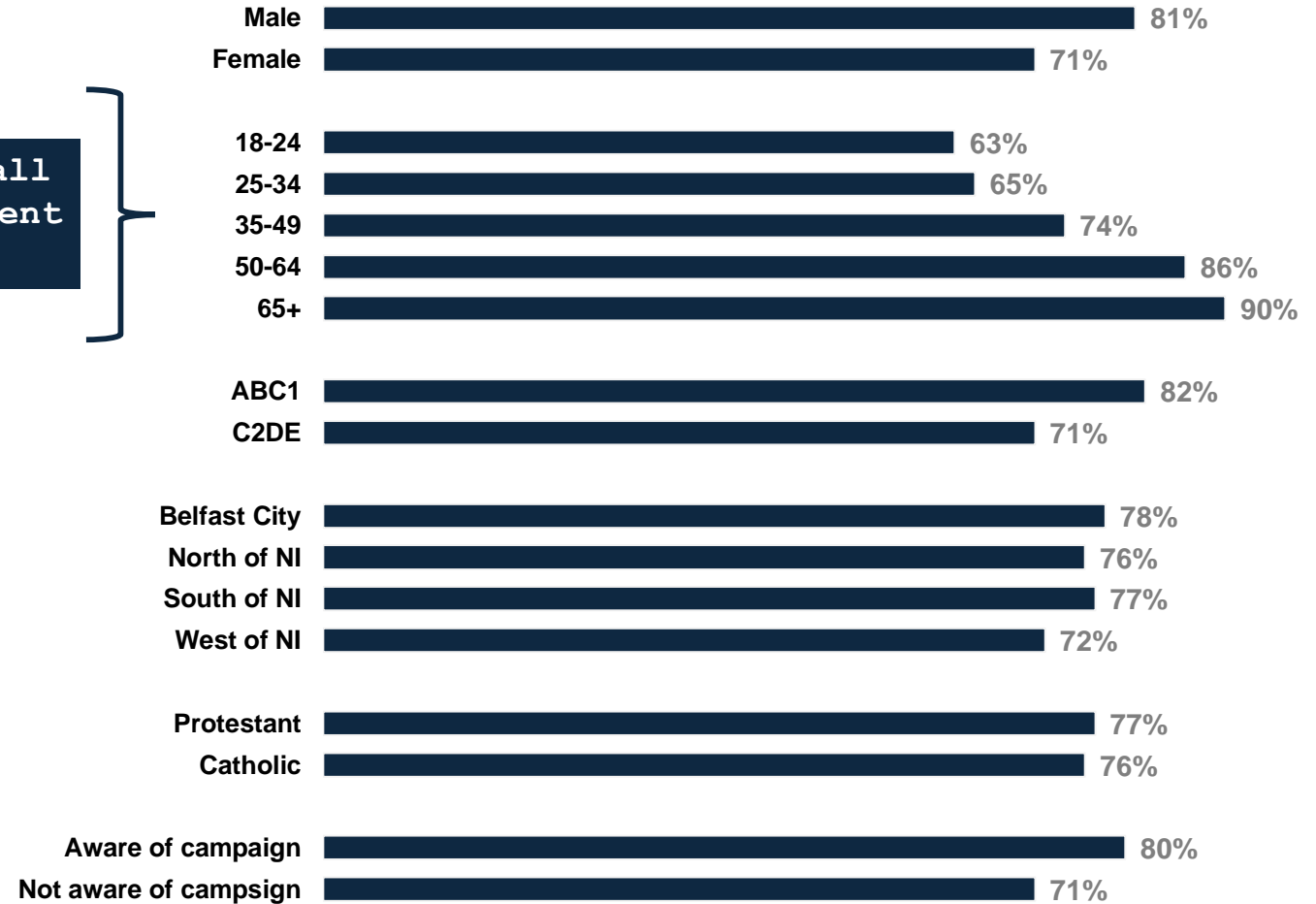
Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'The advertising campaign tells me that Paramilitaries are just criminals'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'Paramilitaries don't protect you, they intimidate their own communities'



Overall Agreement
76%

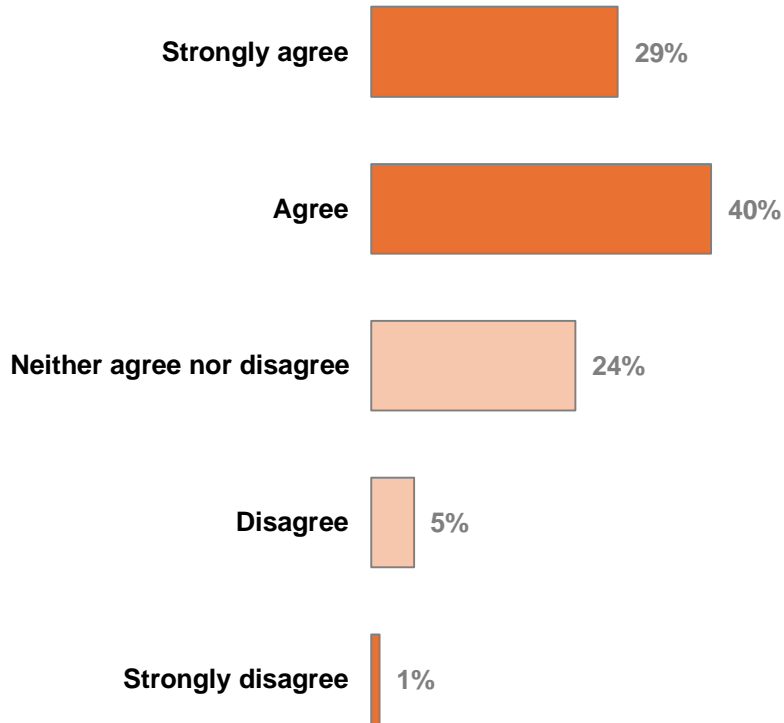
All who stated 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'



Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'Paramilitaries don't protect you, they intimidate their own communities'

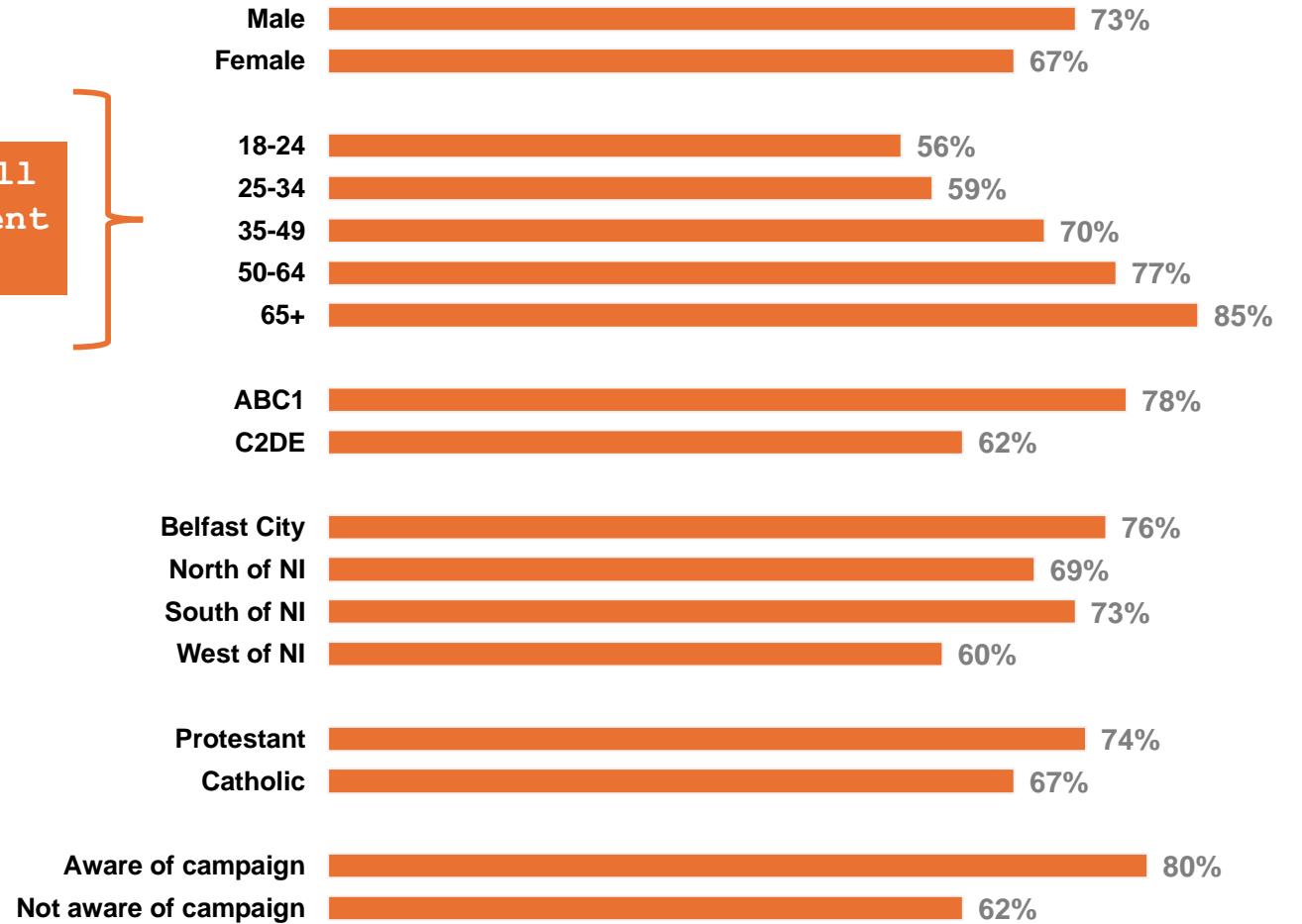
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'The advertising shows how
Paramilitary Gangs exploit
women and children'



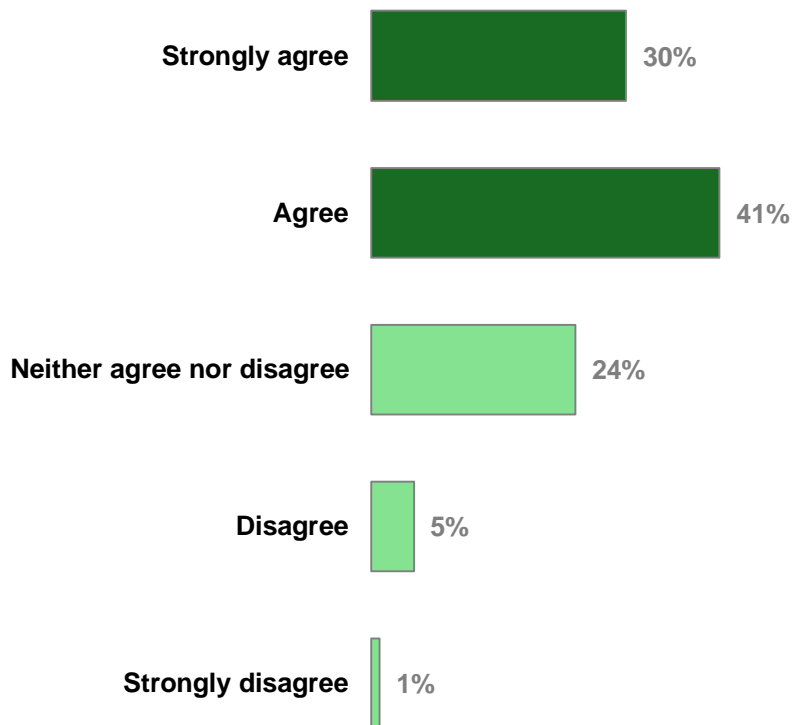
Overall
Agreement
69%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



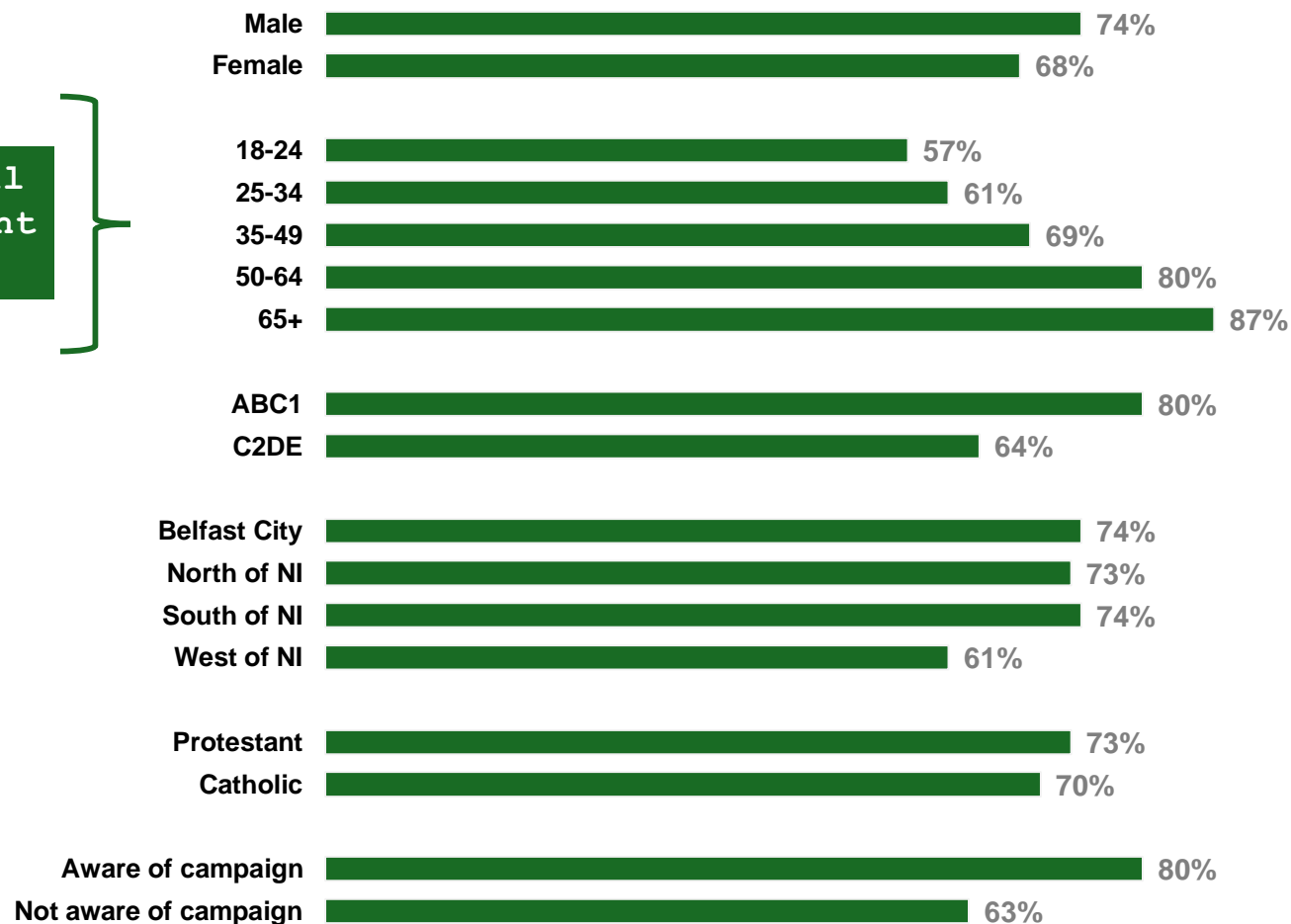
Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'The advertising shows how
Paramilitary Gangs exploit women and children'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'The advertising shows how
Paramilitary Gangs exploit
our local businesses'



Overall
Agreement
71%

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or

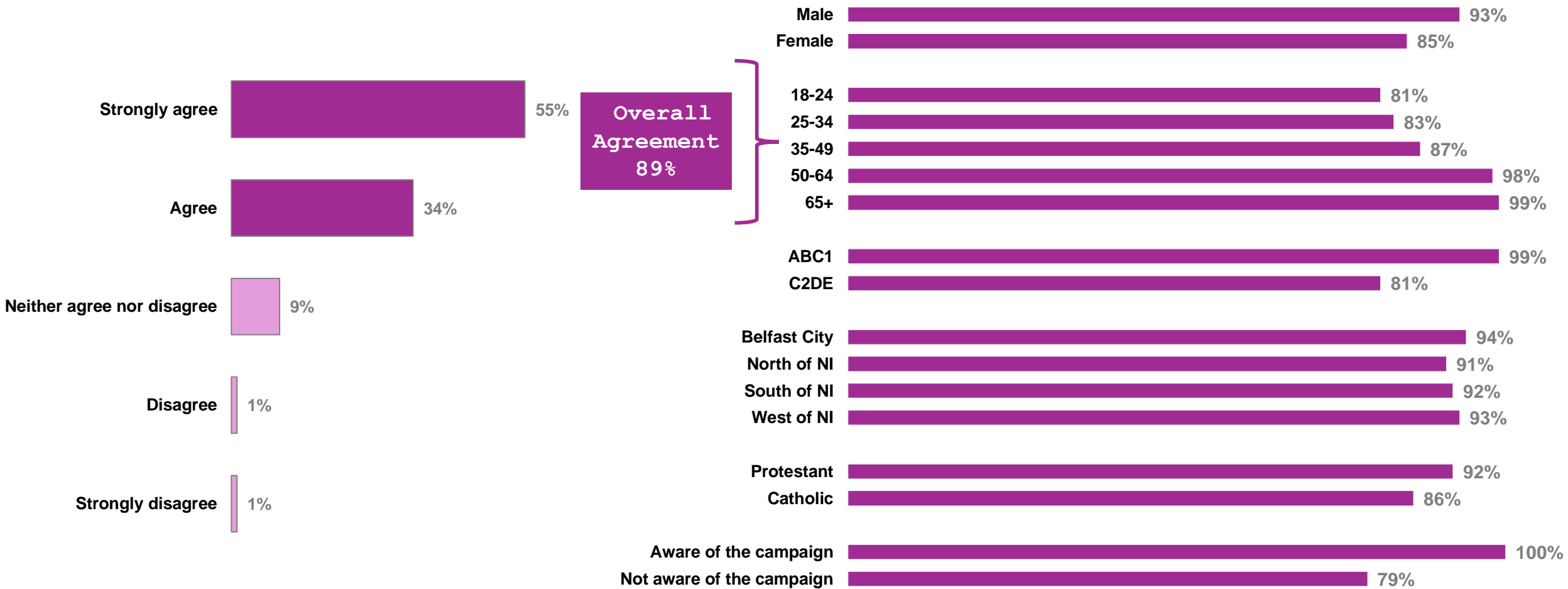


Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'The advertising shows how
Paramilitary Gangs exploit our local businesses'

[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

'I fully support what the campaign is saying and

All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



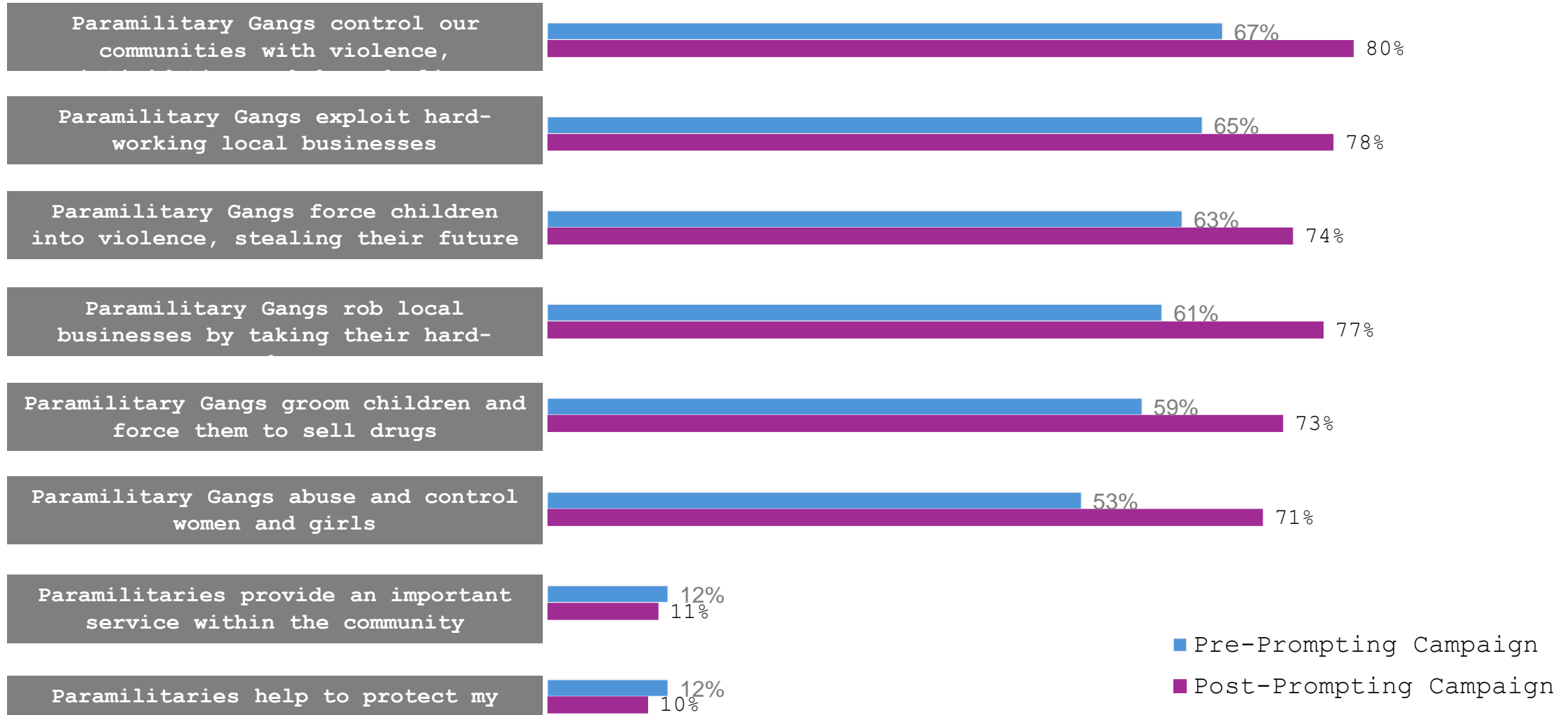
Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'I fully support what the campaign is saying and trying to do'
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]

Campaign impact



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All who stated 'Strongly agree' or



Q. Having seen the advertising, to what extent do you NOW agree or disagree with the following:
[Base: All respondents: n=1,000]



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