



Report

# Spring Sports Market Behaviours and Attitudes in Canada and the U.S.

## March Madness & NBA/NHL Playoffs

April 2025



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# Methodology & Objectives



# Methodology



## Where

- Canada 
- Unites States 



## Target

- General Population (18+ years)



## Sample Size

- n=1,630 
- n=1,007 



## How

- Online Survey



## Field Dates

- April 11-13, 2025

➔ Notes:  
Data weighted to census data to ensure samples are representative of the respective general populations:  
Canada: Age-Gender-Region, CMAs, Language x Region, Education and Kids in HH  
US: Age-Gender, Gender-Region, Race, Hispanic, HH size and Education  
Certain numbers that are netted (i.e., aggregation of multiple metrics) do not add up based on whole number reported due to rounding.

## Objectives

### The **Key Objectives** for this Study:



- Determine key market behaviour insights regarding March Madness and compare differences in key trends between Canadians and Americans, and the Men's and Women's tournaments.
- Find out the expected activity of Canadians and Americans during the NHL and NBA playoff seasons and uncover a sports fans' behavioural differences between regular season and the playoffs.
- Gauge the impact the current political situation between Canada and U.S. has on certain perspectives regarding the sports world.

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# Key Findings



# Key Findings



1

Americans are more likely to follow March Madness (both Men's and Women's) than Canadians.

2

Both Canadians and Americans followed the 2025 tournaments to the same extent as last year's tournaments, with the Men's tournaments *slightly* outpacing the Women's in terms of interest/followship.

3

While Americans are more likely to follow March Madness in general, activity consumption among those who do follow the tournaments is quite similar between the countries, and between the tournaments (Men's and Women's).

4

Overall, a higher proportion of Canadians said they will follow the NHL playoffs (55%) than Americans (33%), while Americans are more likely to follow the NBA playoffs (40%) than Canadians (27%).



5

In both countries and leagues (NHL/NBA), there are more people who will follow the playoffs than the regular season. Most who will follow the playoffs but did not follow the regular season will follow the playoffs slightly, while those who already follow the regular season will now follow the playoffs more closely.

6

Both Canadians and Americans who will follow the playoffs will bet on the games, play contests and fantasy, go out to bars/restaurants to watch, pay for streaming subscriptions to watch, and buy merchandise more than they did in the regular NHL and NBA seasons.

7

Among those who will follow the playoffs, Americans are more likely to bet on NBA games (22%) than NHL (14%), and Canadians following either league (12% for NHL and 14% for NBA). Additionally, Americans who will follow the NBA playoffs are expected to show a greater increase in activity across all forms of consumption compared to Canadians.

8

Around one-in-three Canadians are less likely to support a US-based sports team or league now due to the current political/economic climate between the two countries, and nearly half of Canadians believe it is more important than ever that a Canadian team wins the Stanley Cup.



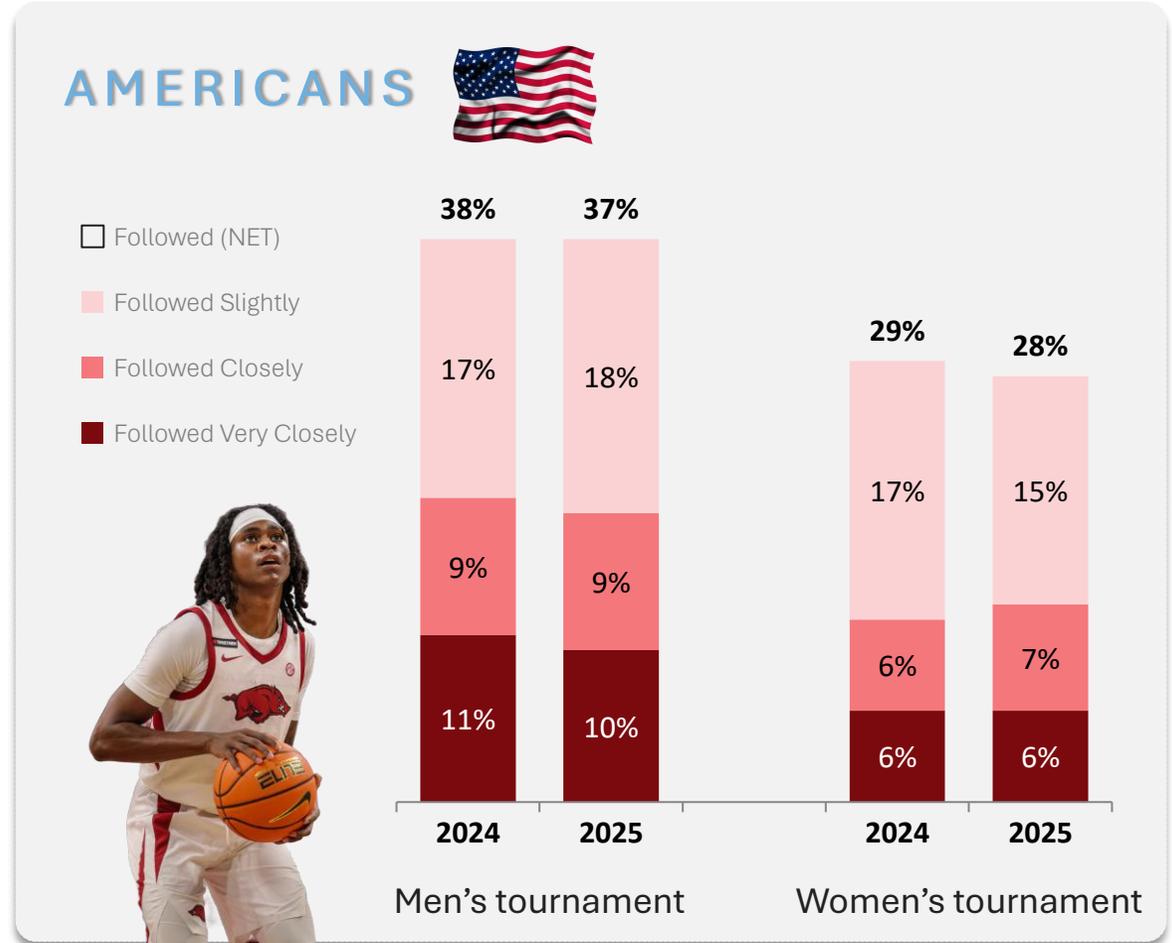
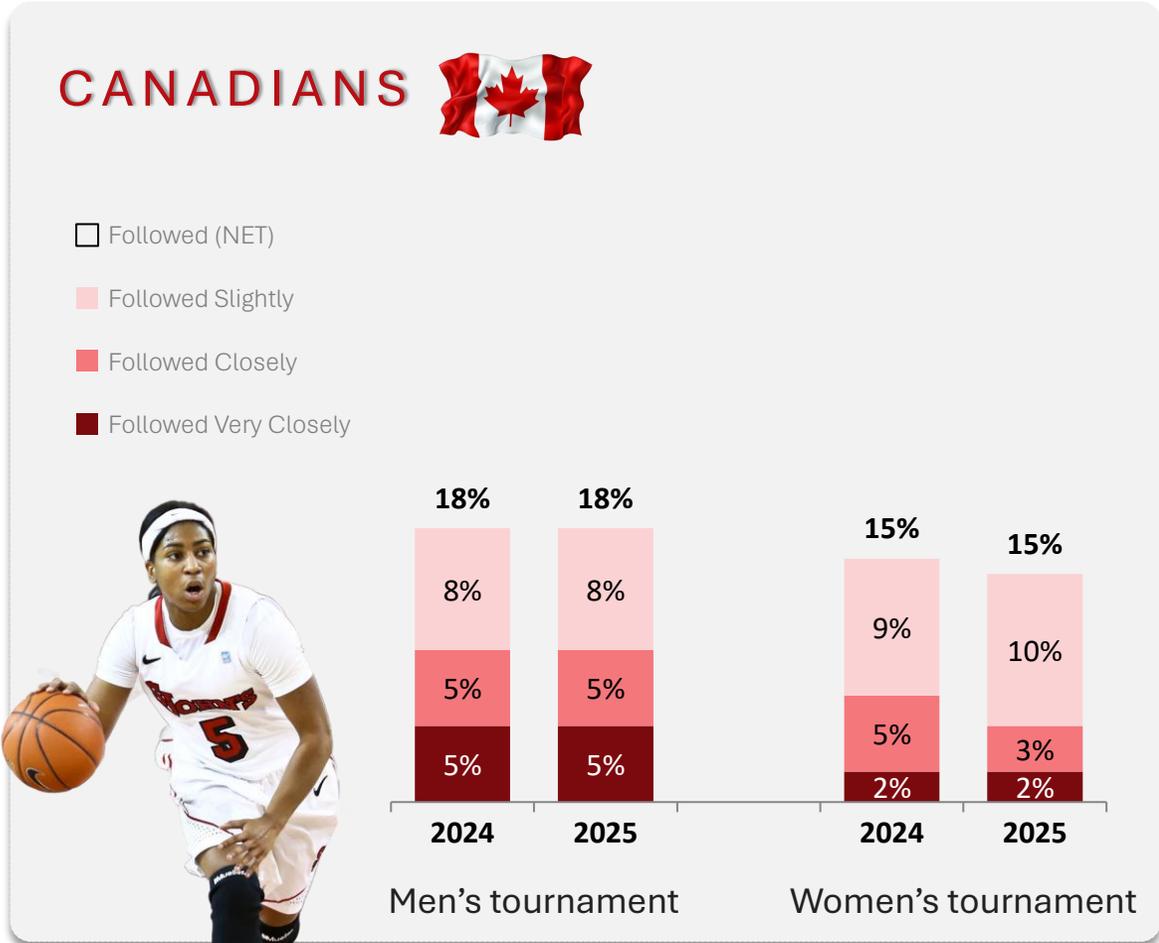
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# Detailed Results



# % Following March Madness 2025 vs. 2024

Canadians and Americans both followed March Madness to a similar extent as last year (for both tournaments), with the Men’s tournament having slightly more followers than the Women’s in both countries. However, Americans are significantly more likely than Canadians to follow either tournament.

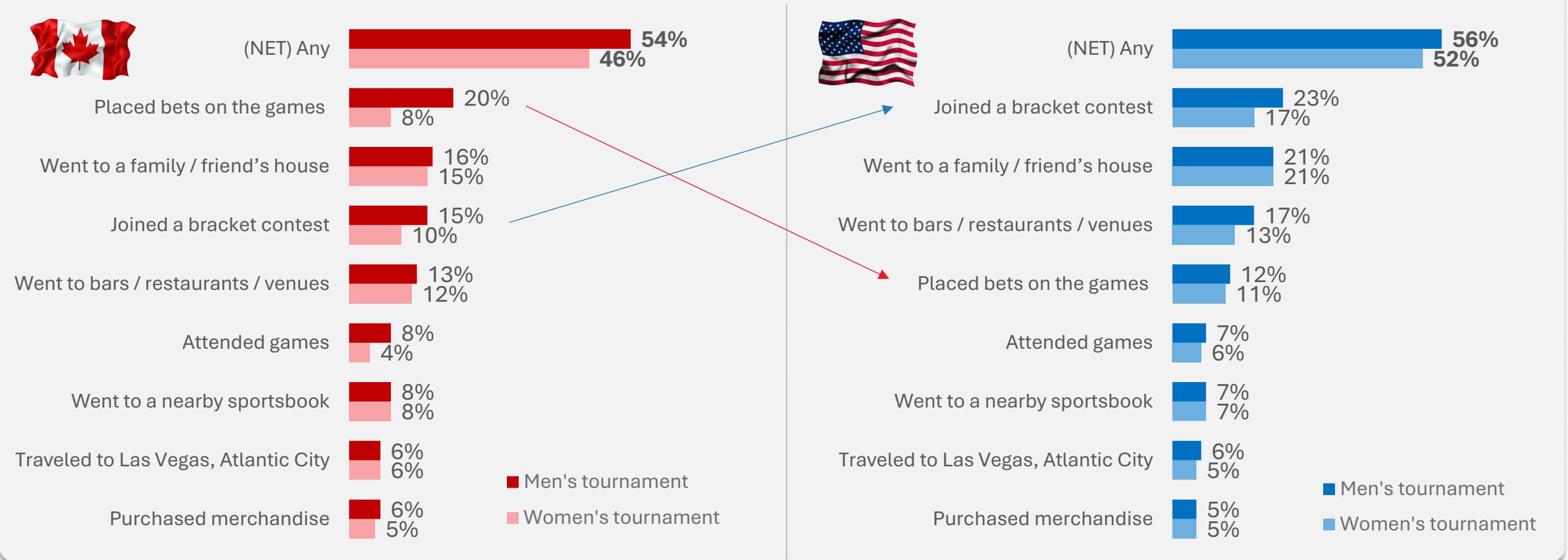


Base: Canadian (n=1,630) and American (n=1,007) General Population  
 How closely did you follow the 2025 Men’s and Women’s College Basketball March Madness tournaments? How closely did you follow the 2024 (i.e., last year) Men’s and Women’s College Basketball March Madness tournaments?

# Men's and Women's March Madness Activity Participation

While Americans are more likely to follow March Madness in general, activity consumption among those who do follow is quite similar among Canadians and Americans, and largely similar between Men's and Women's across most activities. Bracket participation is higher among Americans who follow March Madness, while placing actual bets on the games is higher among Canadians (for Men's games).

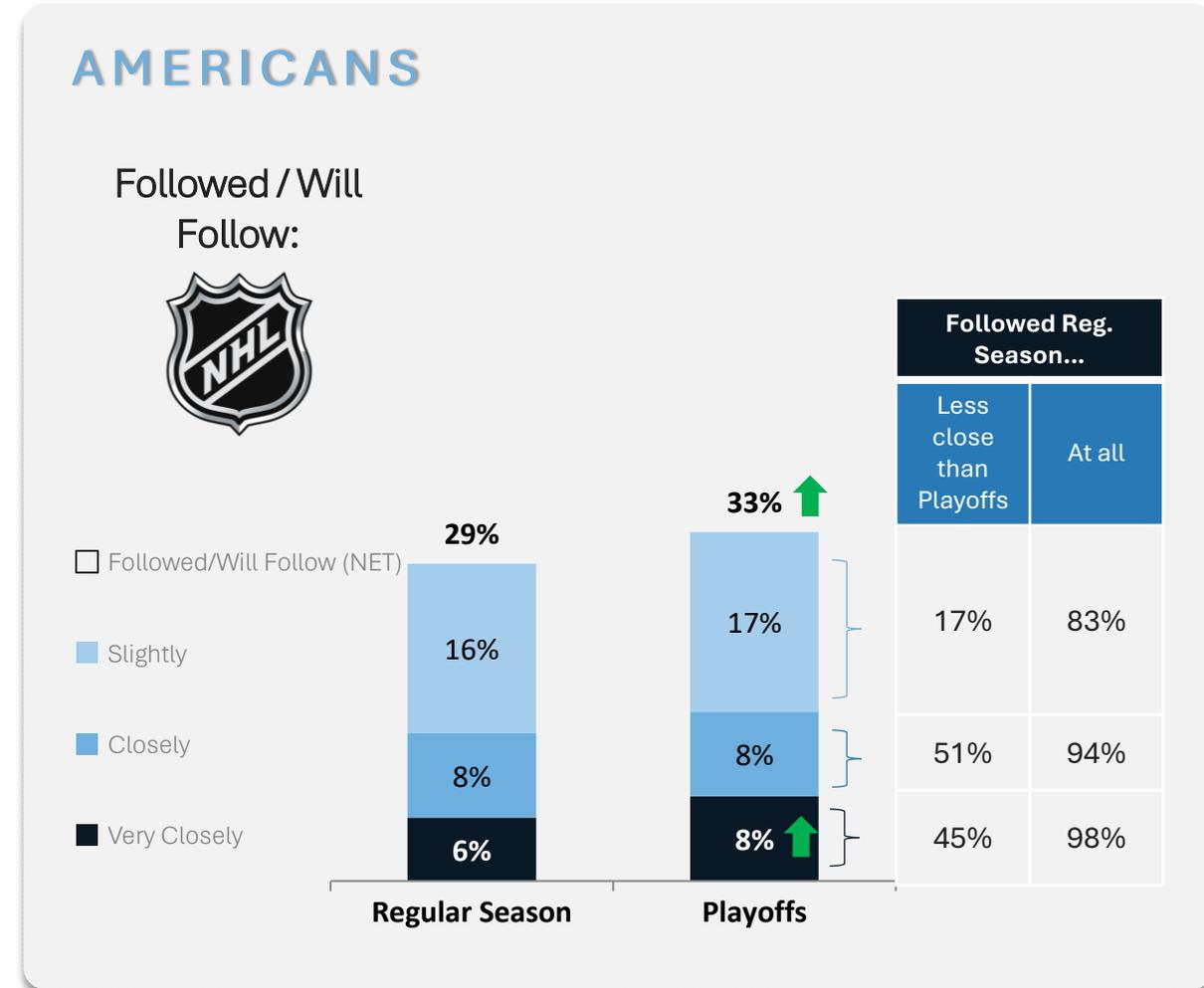
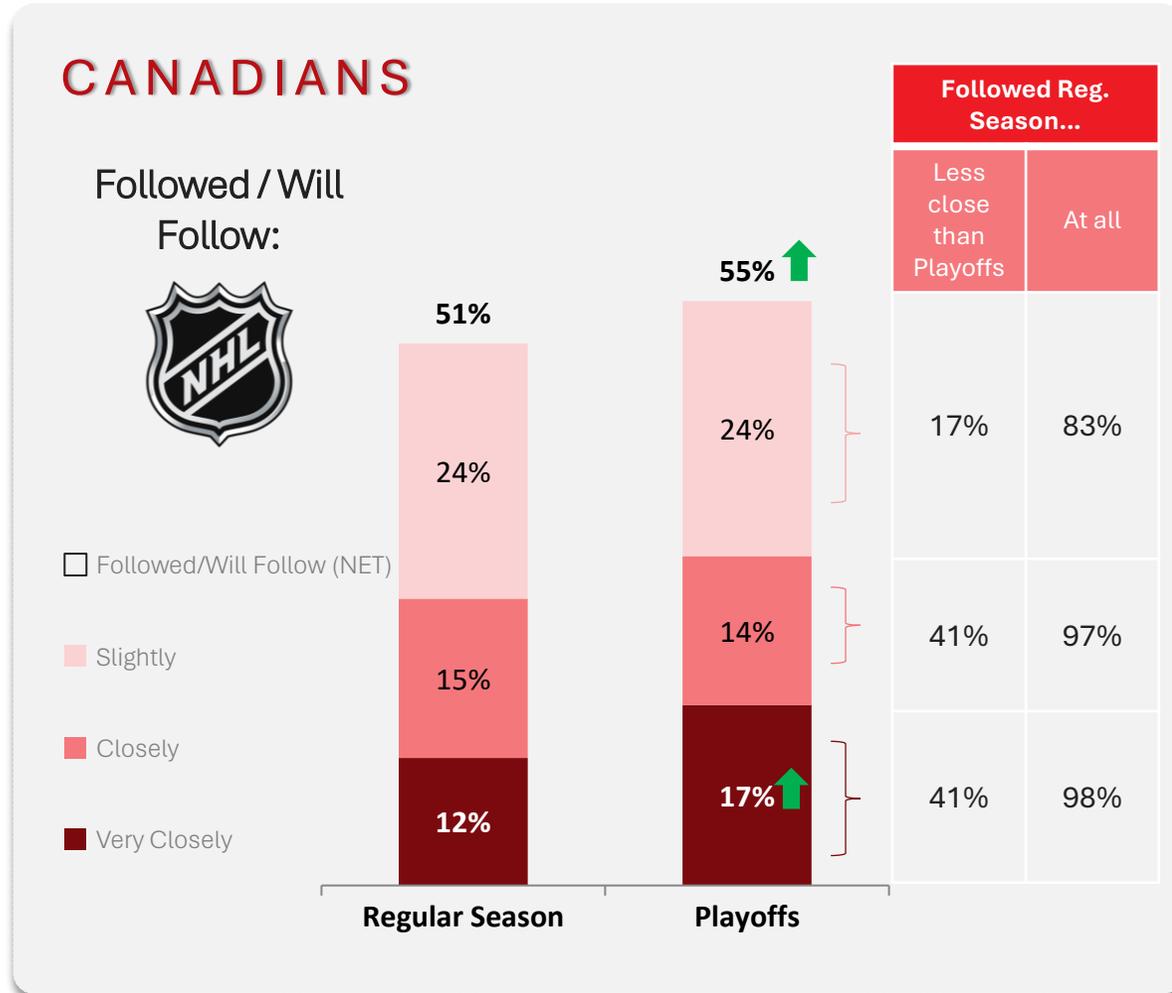
**% OF MARCH MADNESS FOLLOWERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING FOR MARCH MADNESS:**



Base: Canadian (n=317, n=261) and American (n=363, n=269) men's and women's March Madness basketball followers. Did you participate in any of the following activities for the 2025 college basketball tournament games?

# % Following the NHL Regular Season and Playoffs

Canadians and Americans said they will follow the NHL playoffs at a significantly higher rate than they did the regular season, driven in part by significantly more Canadians and Americans saying they will watch the playoffs “very closely”. Many who already followed the regular season increase their fandom in the playoffs, whereas many who don’t follow the regular season at all will start following in the playoffs (albeit slightly).



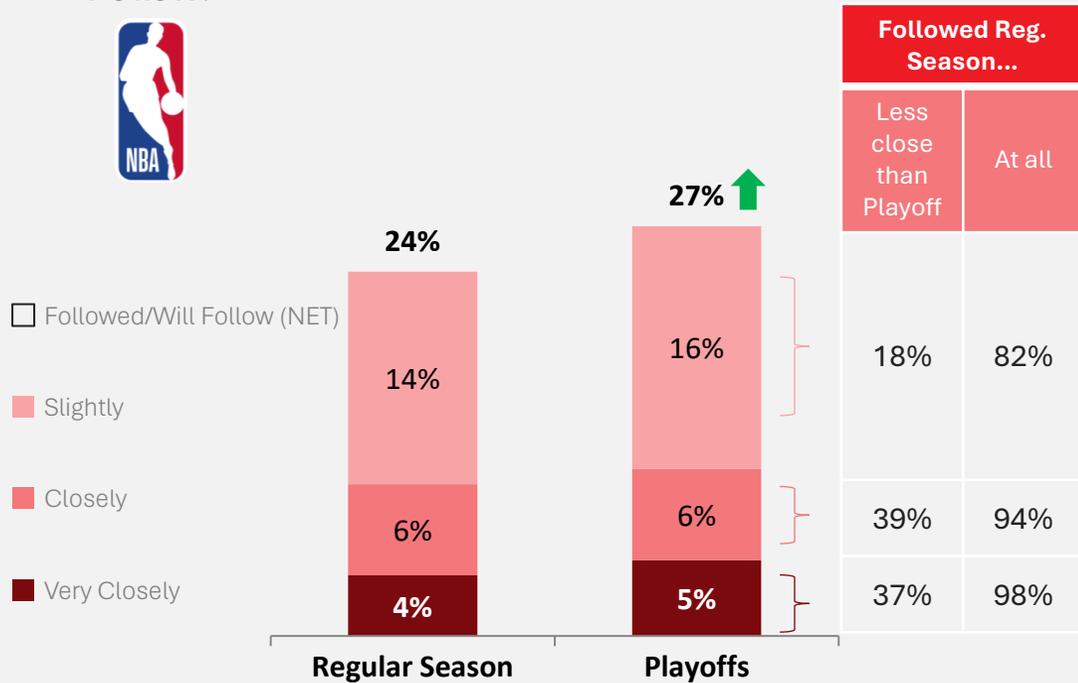
Base: Canadian (n=1,630) and American (n=1,007) General Population  
 How closely will you follow / watch the upcoming NBA and NHL playoffs? How closely did you follow / watch the NBA and NHL during this past regular season?  
 Arrow indicates significant difference between regular season and playoffs at 90%.

# % Following the NBA Regular Season and Playoffs

More Canadians and Americans will also follow the NBA Playoffs than the Regular Season, driven largely by more who will follow slightly who did not follow at all before.

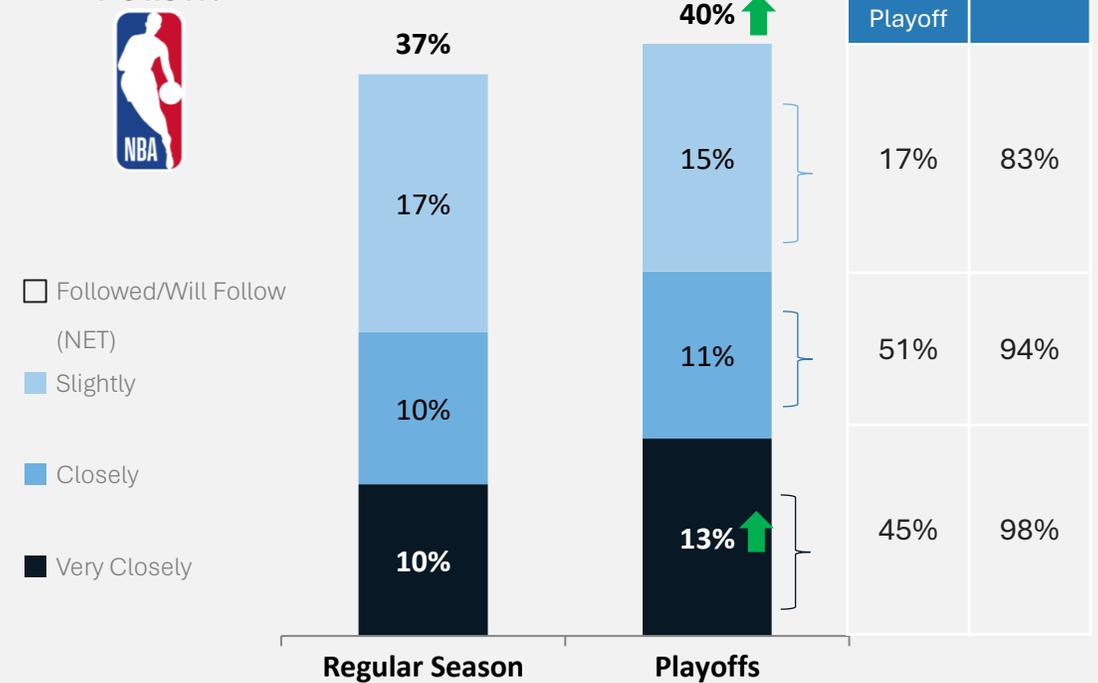
## CANADIANS

Followed / Will Follow:



## AMERICANS

Followed / Will Follow:

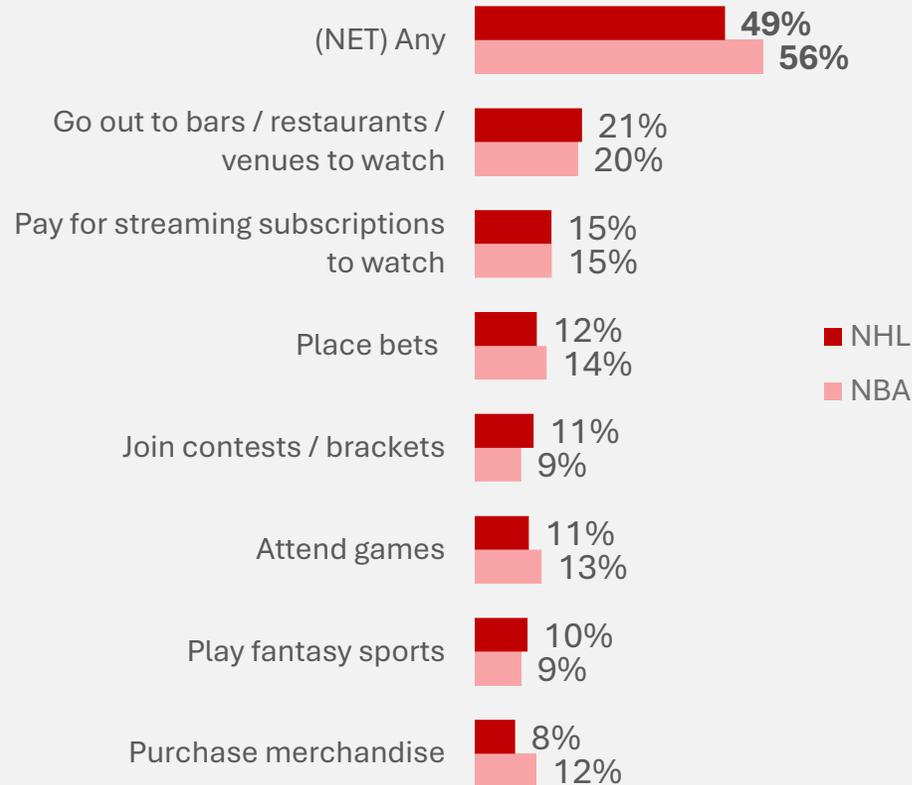


Base: Canadian (n=1,630) and American (n=1,007) General Population  
 How closely will you follow / watch the upcoming NBA and NHL playoffs? How closely did you follow / watch the NBA and NHL during this past regular season?  
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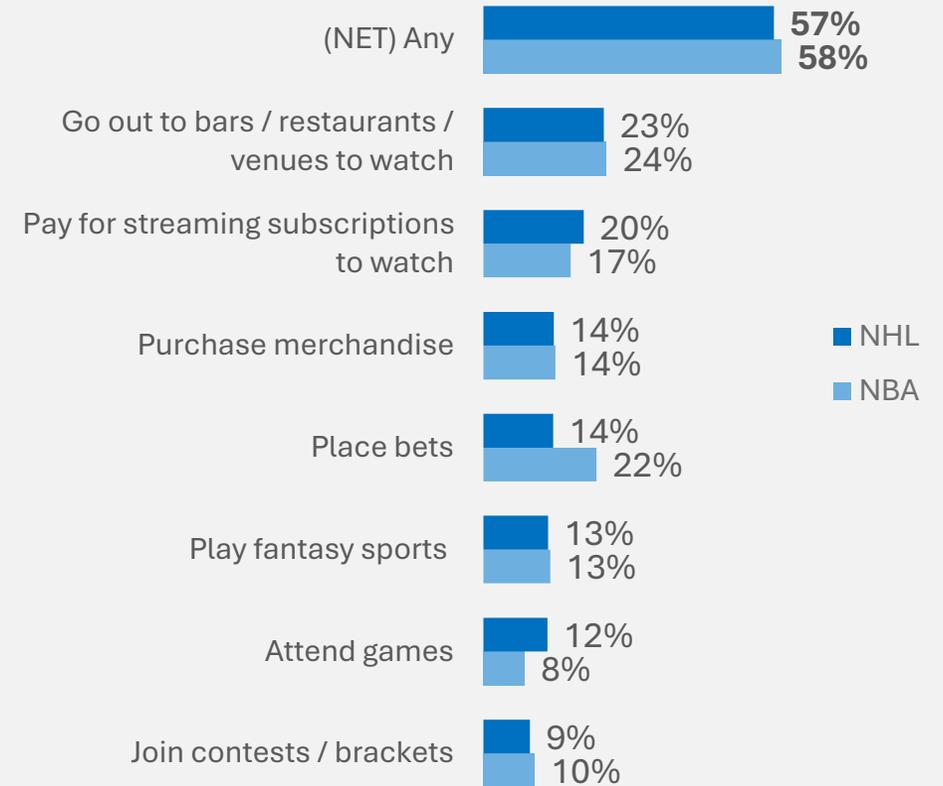
# NHL and NBA Playoff Activity Participation

While there are more NHL fans in Canada than NBA (and vice versa for the U.S.), the activity participation for respective league playoffs are largely similar between leagues and countries. Going out to bars/restaurants/venues to watch, paying for streaming subscriptions to watch, and placing bets will all be common spending activities for fans.

## % OF CANADIAN NHL/NBA PLAYOFF FOLLOWERS WHO WILL PARTAKE IN THE FOLLOWING DURING THE PLAYOFFS



## % OF AMERICAN NHL/NBA PLAYOFF FOLLOWERS WHO WILL PARTAKE IN THE FOLLOWING DURING THE PLAYOFFS





# NHL Activity Change During Playoffs vs. Regular Season

During the NHL Playoffs, fans will partake in several different activities significantly more than they do during the regular season.

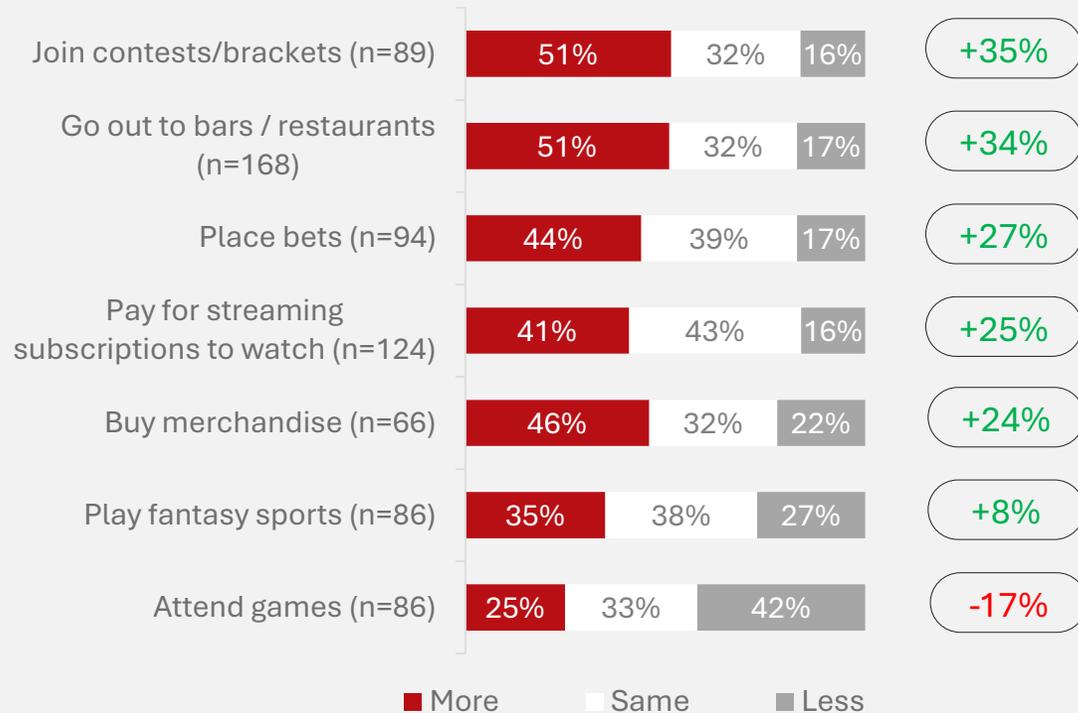
## PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES FOR NHL PLAYOFFS COMPARED TO REGULAR SEASON AMONG...



### CANADIANS

WHO PARTAKE IN THE FOLLOWING

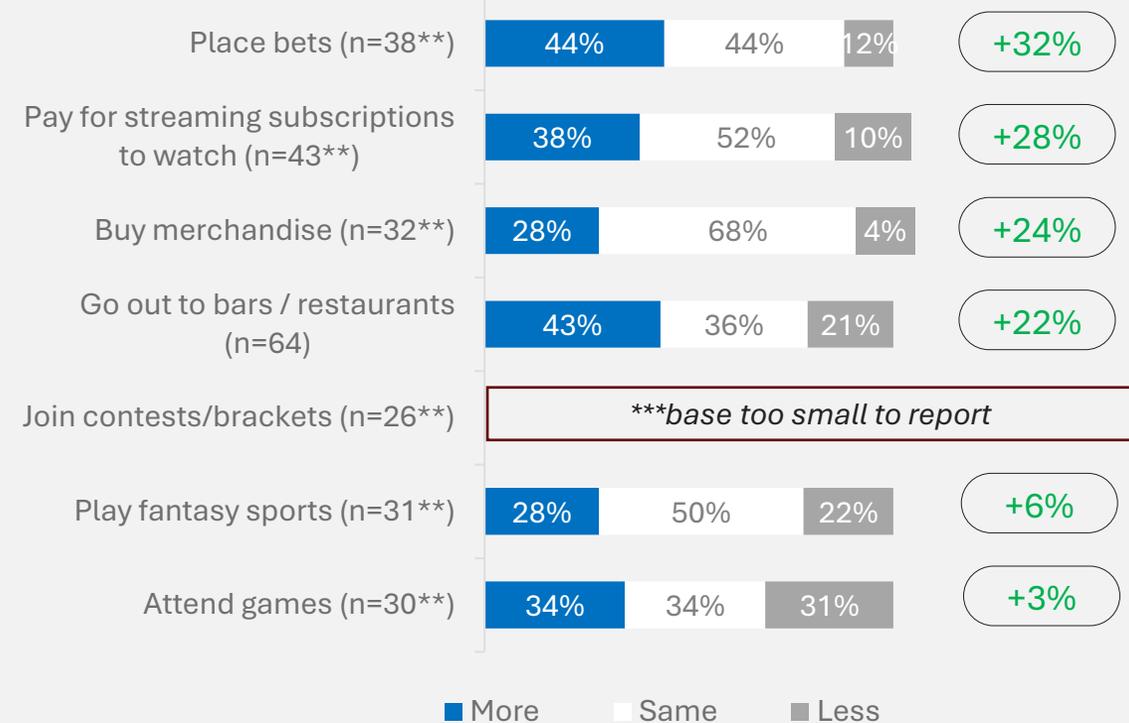
NET  
IMPACT\*



### AMERICANS

WHO PARTAKE IN THE FOLLOWING

NET  
IMPACT\*



You mentioned you will do the following activities for the upcoming NHL playoffs. Please tell us if you plan to do each activity more often, less often, or the same compared to this past regular season.

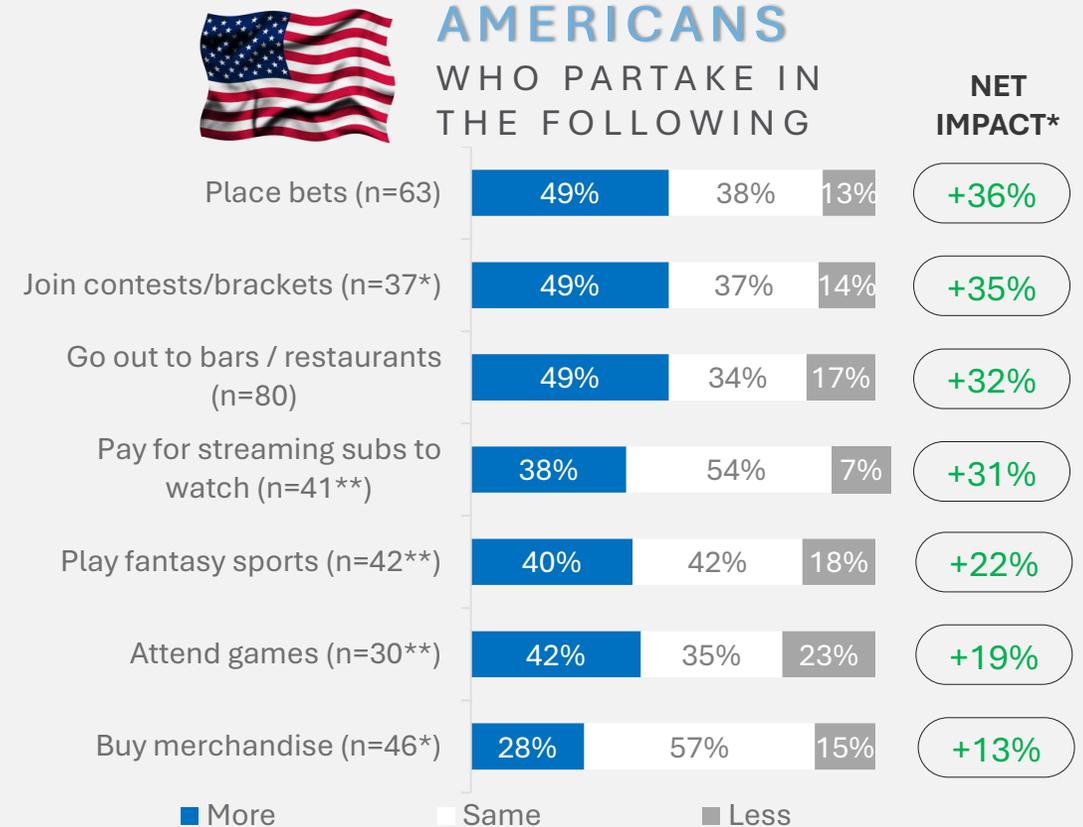
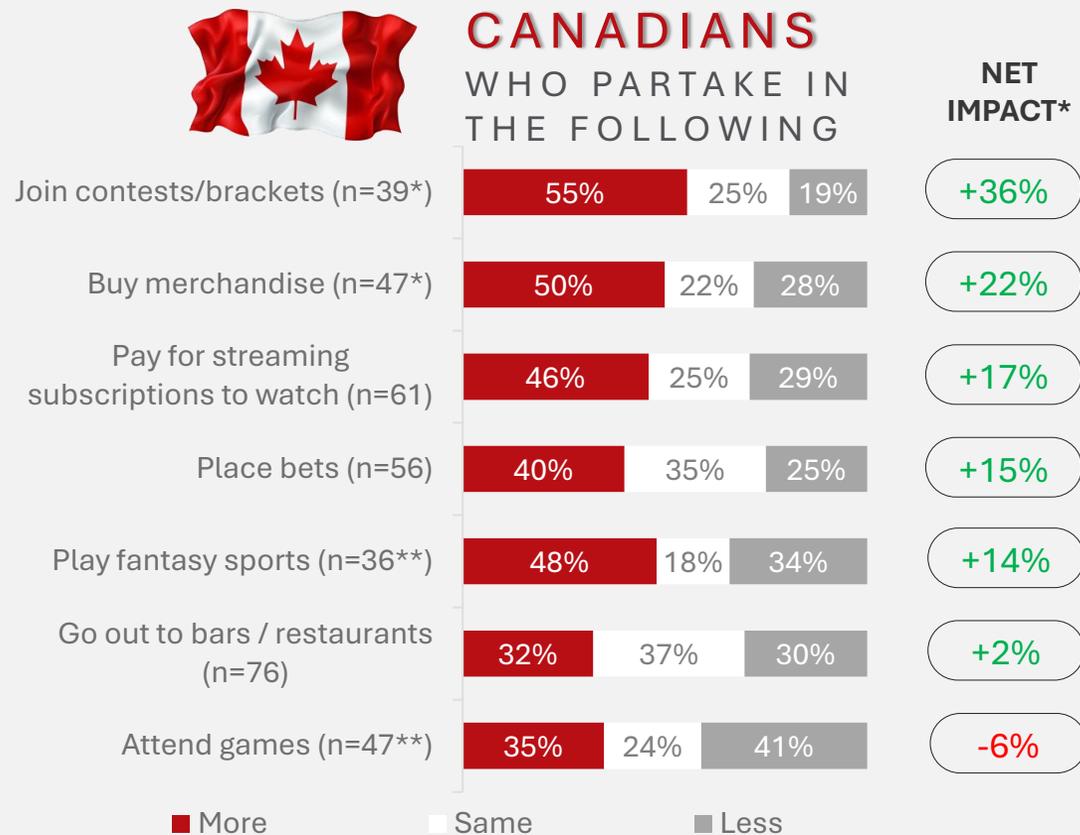
\*Net impact = More minus Less \*\*Very low base, interpret caution. \*\*\*base too small to report



## NBA Activity Change During Playoffs vs. Regular Season

Similar to the NHL, NBA fans will participate in several different playoff-related activities significantly more than they do in the regular season. While this true for both countries, American NBA fans will tend to have even greater exuberance in their consumption for the NBA playoffs than Canadian fans.

### PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES FOR NBA PLAYOFFS COMPARED TO REGULAR SEASON AMONG...



You mentioned you will do the following activities for the upcoming NBA playoffs. Please tell us if you plan to do each activity more often, less often, or the same compared to this past regular season

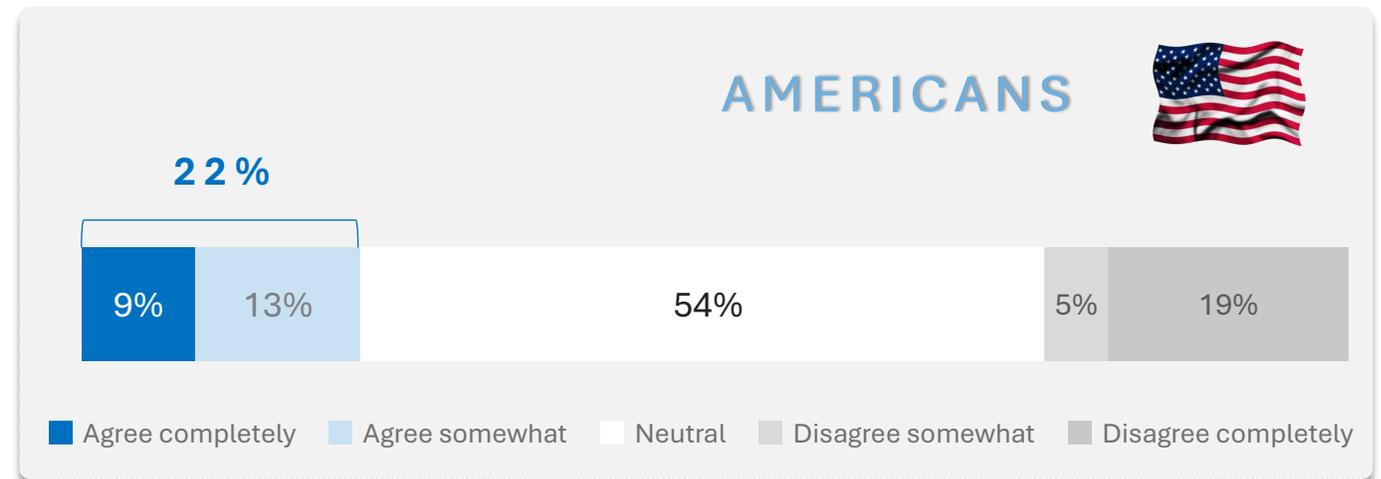
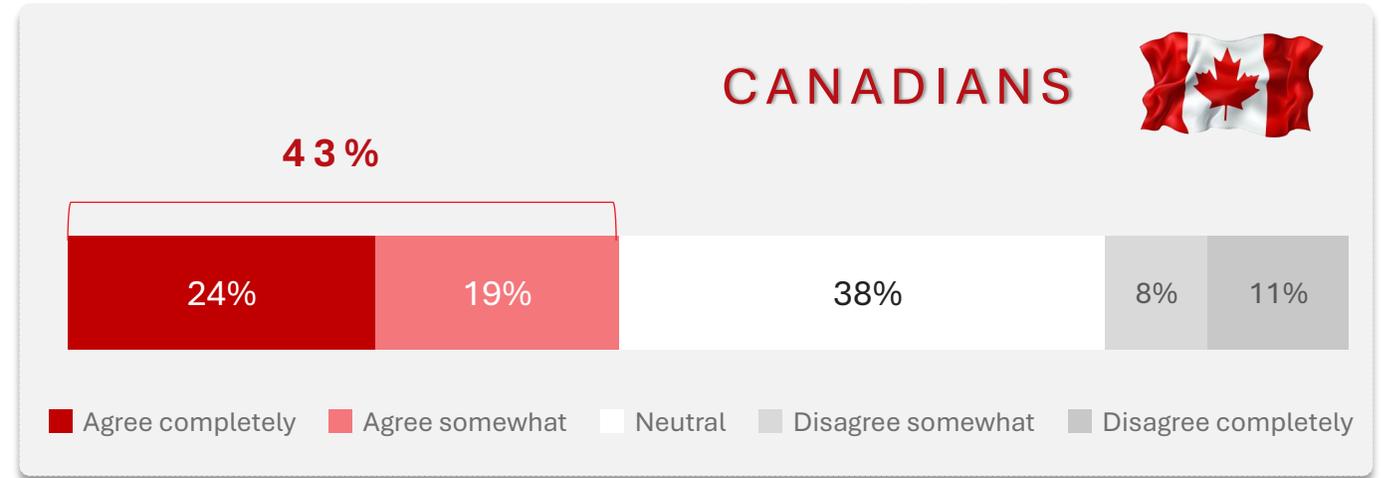
\*Net impact = More minus Less. \*\*Very low base, use caution.

*% of General Population who believe it's more important than ever for their countries' team to win the Stanley Cup this year because of the political/economic situation between Canada and the U.S.*



**More Canadians (43%)**

believe it's more important than ever for their country's team to win the Stanley Cup this year because of the **political/economic situation** between the countries compared to Americans (22%).



Base: Canadian (n=1,630) and American (n=1,007) General Population

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: For Canadians: I believe it's more important than ever for a Canadian team to win the Stanley Cup this year because of the political / economic situation between Canada and the U.S.

For Americans: I believe it's more important than ever for an American team to win the Stanley Cup this year because of the political / economic situation between Canada and the U.S.

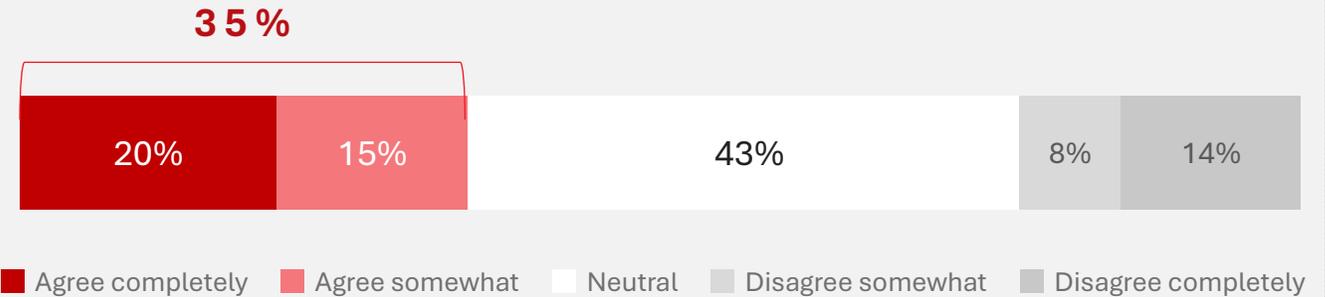
% of Canadians who agree with the following statements...

CANADIANS

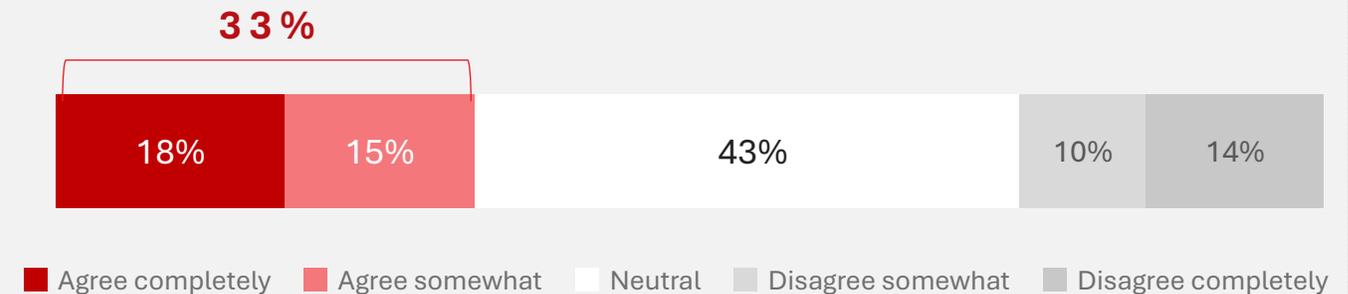


Around **one-in-three** Canadians claim to be less likely to support a US-based sports team or league now because of the current **political/ economic situation** between Canada and the U.S.

*I am less likely to support a US-based sports team now because of the political/economic situation between Canada and the U.S*



*I am less likely to support US-based sports/sports leagues now because of the political/economic situation between Canada and the U.S*



Base: Canadian General Population (n=1,630)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements: I am less likely to support a US-based sports team now because of the political / economic situation between Canada and the U.S.

I am less likely to support US-based sports / sports leagues now because of the political / economic situation between Canada and the U.S.

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# Demographics



# Demographics



## CANADIAN

General  
Population

Male	49%
Female	51%
Age 18-34	27%
Age 35-54	32%
Age 55+	41%
HS or less	32%
College +	68%
<\$40K	21%
\$40K to <\$100K	44%
\$100K+	30%



## AMERICAN

General  
Population

Male	49%
Female	51%
Age 18-39	37%
Age 40-64	41%
Age 65+	22%
HS or less	37%
College +	63%
<\$35K	36%
\$35K to <\$100K	41%
\$100K+	19%

# Contact Us

For more information on this study, or related research, please contact our experts:

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