

UTokyo ROLES Survey SAFER

(Security, Alliance, and Foreign Engagement Research project)

Sep 2025



東大先端研

Research Center for
Advanced Science and Technology
The University of Tokyo

ROLES

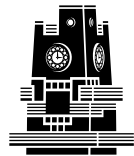
UTokyo ROLES Survey – Sep. 2025

Security, Alliance, and Foreign Engagement Research (SAFER) project

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<https://roles.rcast.u-tokyo.ac.jp> / X: @roles_hq / FB: @roleshq

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Cover photo: [MSDF, Japan-U.S.-India-Australia Joint Exercise \(Malabar 2024\)](#)

Aim and Scope of this Survey:

The primary purpose of this survey is to elucidate how people perceive Japan's diplomacy, national security, and the international situation surrounding Japan. The media have conducted similar surveys on these themes in the past. Nonetheless, the questions were often limited in scope and conducted sporadically. Thus, they were not necessarily designed to capture long-term trends. Our survey aims to understand the public's perceptions amid the rapidly changing international environment surrounding Japan. Further, it seeks to examine them from a long-term perspective while comparing them with similar surveys conducted in other countries to achieve a deeper understanding.

On our 3rd Survey:

There has been no significant change in the overall perception of the Japanese public regarding diplomatic and security issues compared to the results of the previous survey conducted in February 2025. However, notable shifts are evident in relations with the United States: the proportion of respondents who view Japan–U.S. relations as favorable, as well as those who support strengthening the Japan–U.S. alliance, declined. In contrast, trust in U.S. military intervention has remained relatively stable. In addition, despite the developments in the Russia-Ukraine war due to the new policies of the second Trump administration, Japanese public support for economic assistance to Ukraine and for sanctions against Russia remained largely unchanged.

Past Survey: (<https://roles.rcast.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/publications?team=208>)

Methodology

Survey Title: UTokyo ROLES Survey – SAFER (Security, Alliance, and Foreign Engagement Research)

Survey Period: August 6-8, 2025

Sample Size: N=2000

Margin of Errors: 2.19% (Confidence level 95%)

Survey Mode: CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing)

Population: Japanese citizens aged 18 -79.

Sampling Method (Quota sampling):

Stratification: Stratified by sex, age group, and region* of residence based on census data.

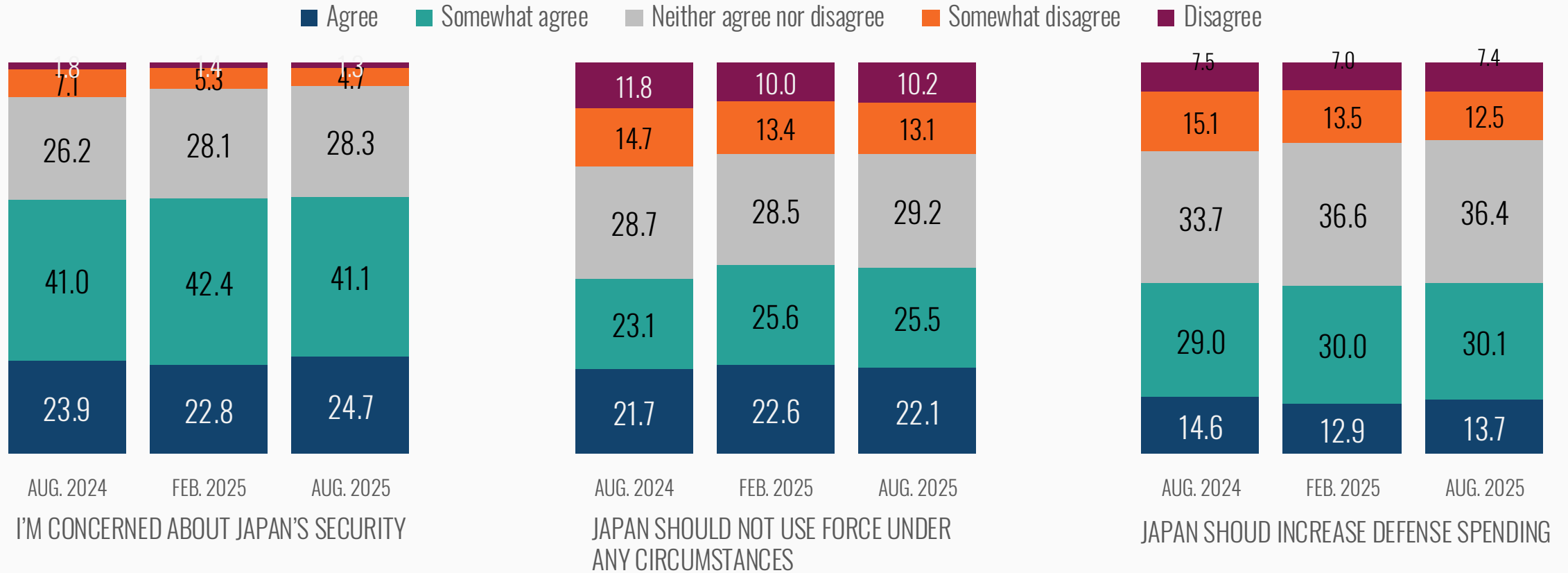
* 7 regions: Hokkaido/Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, and Kyushu/Okinawa

Sample: Distributed to registered monitors of Rakuten Insight, Inc. via Survey Research Center, Co.,LTD.

This survey was approved by the IRB - The Ethics Review Expert Committee, The University of Tokyo (Review No. 23-363).

Survey Results

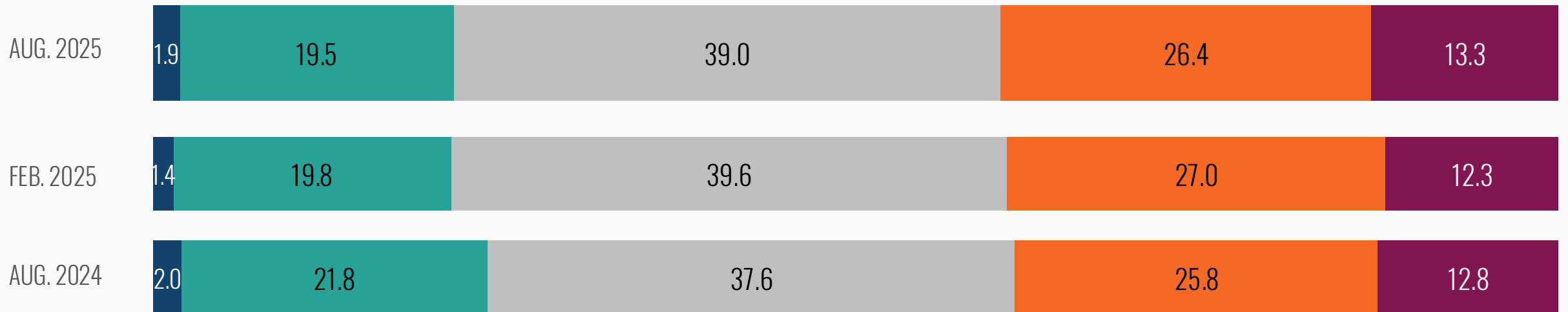
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? (%) n = 2000



- 65% of respondents expressed concern about Japan's security.
- Over 45% of respondents think that force should not be used under any circumstances.
- Those who favor an increase in defense spending are twice as likely as those who are against it.

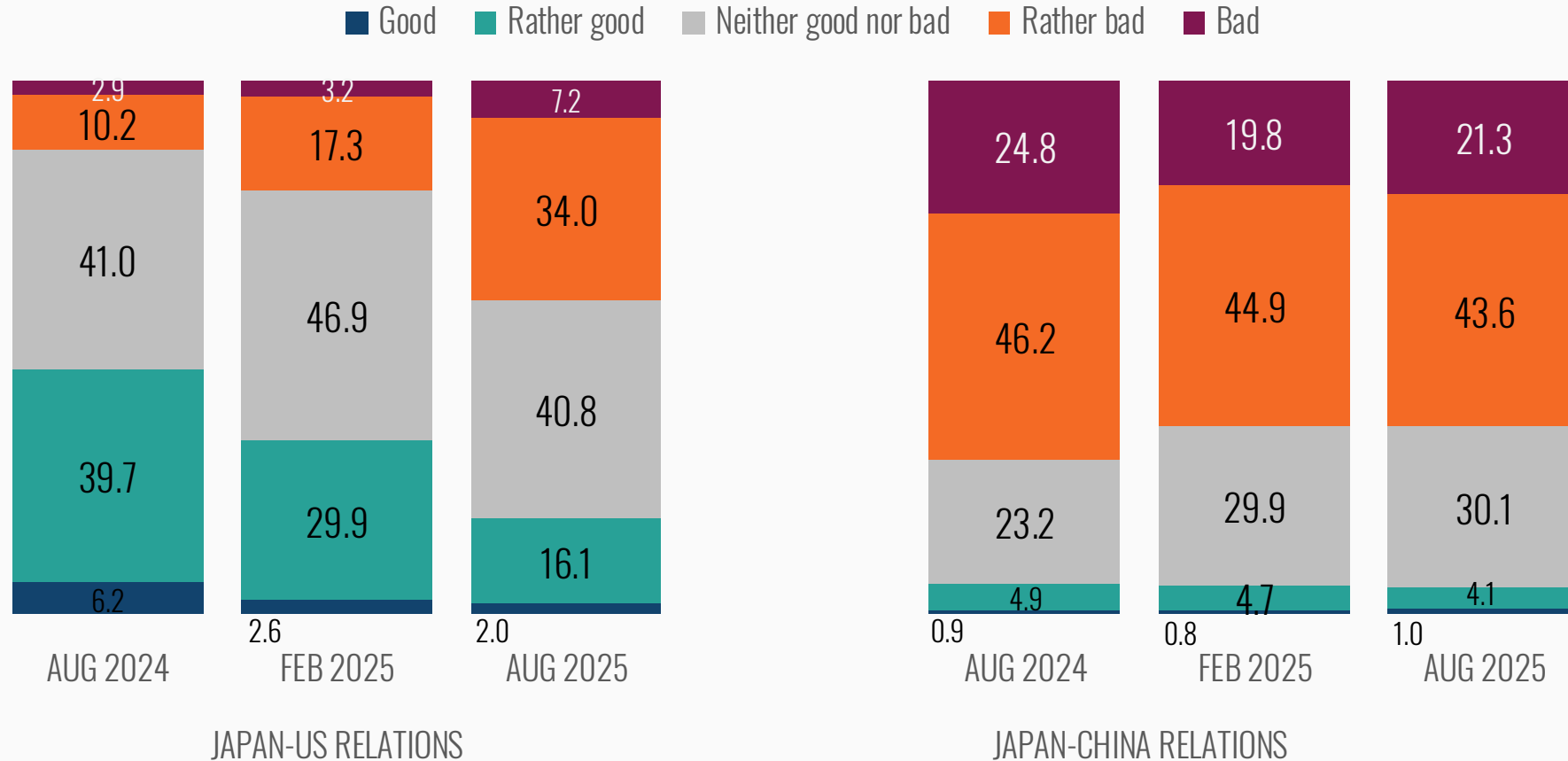
Do you approve or disapprove of how the current Japanese government handles foreign and security issues in general?
(%) n = 2000

■ Approve ■ Somewhat approve ■ Neither approve nor disapprove ■ Somewhat disapprove ■ Disapprove



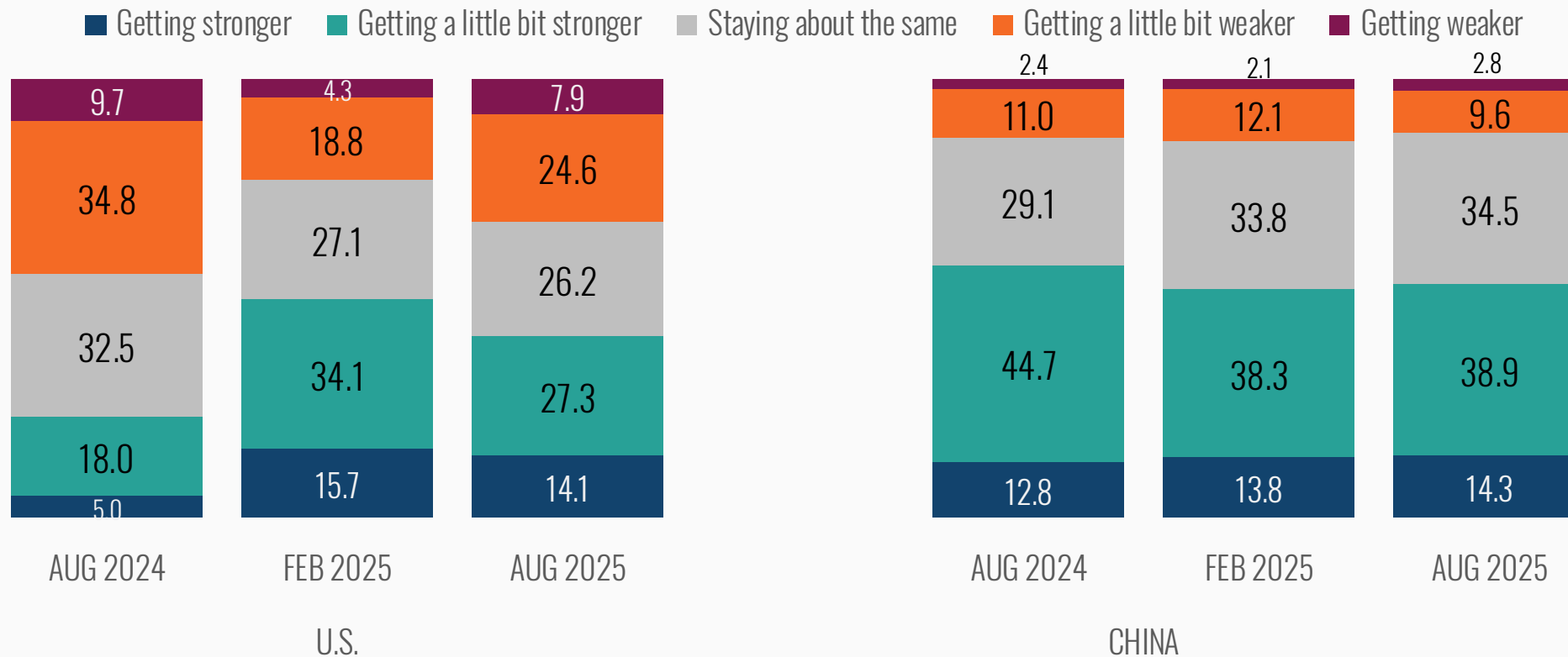
➤ There are more people who are not in favor of the current administration's handling of foreign policy and security issues.

Do you think the current Japan-U.S. and Japan-China relations are good or bad? (%) n = 2000



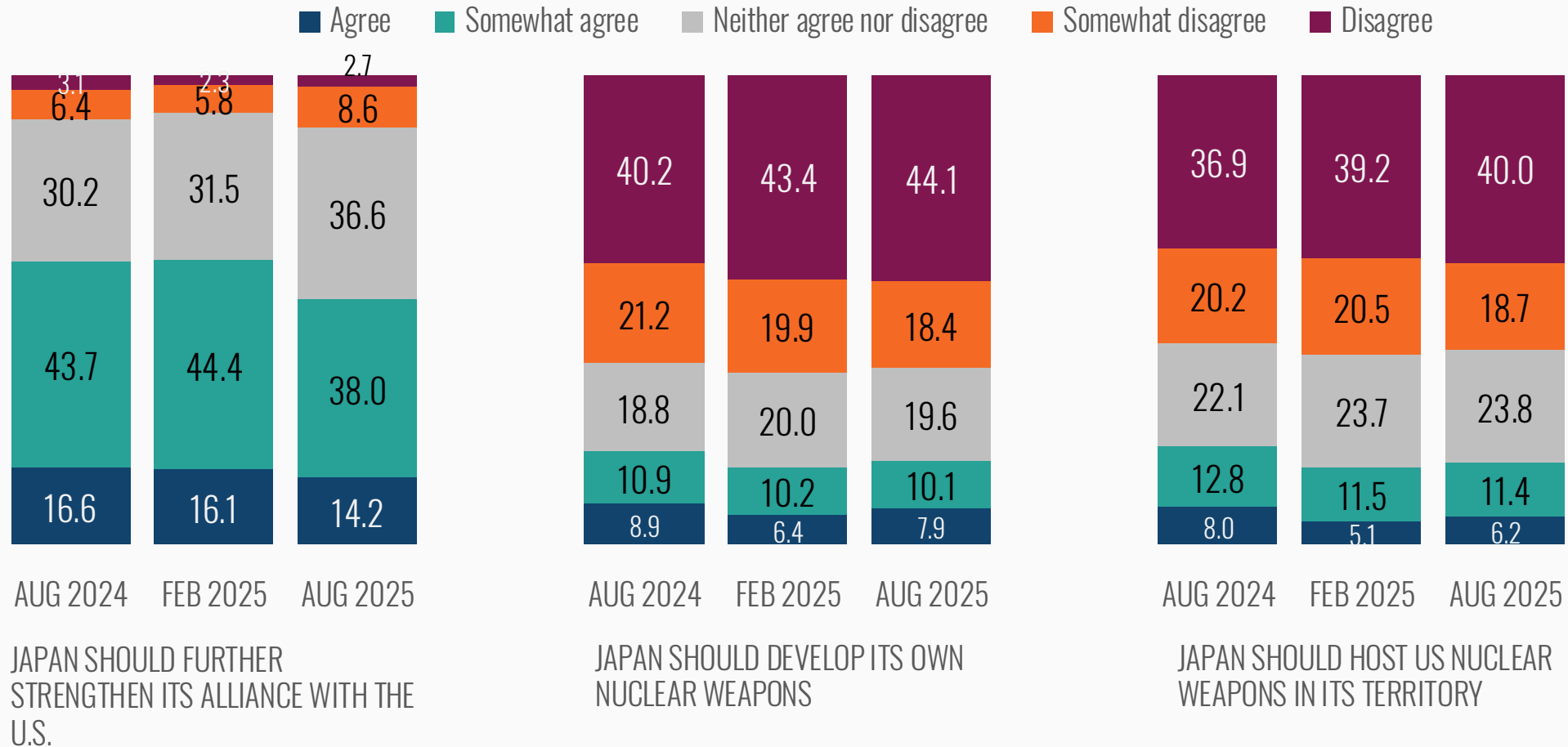
- The percentage of respondents who view Japan-U.S. relations as favorable has fallen below 20%.
- The majority view Japan-China relations as bad.

Do you think the U.S./China influence in the world is currently getting stronger or weaker? (%) n = 2000



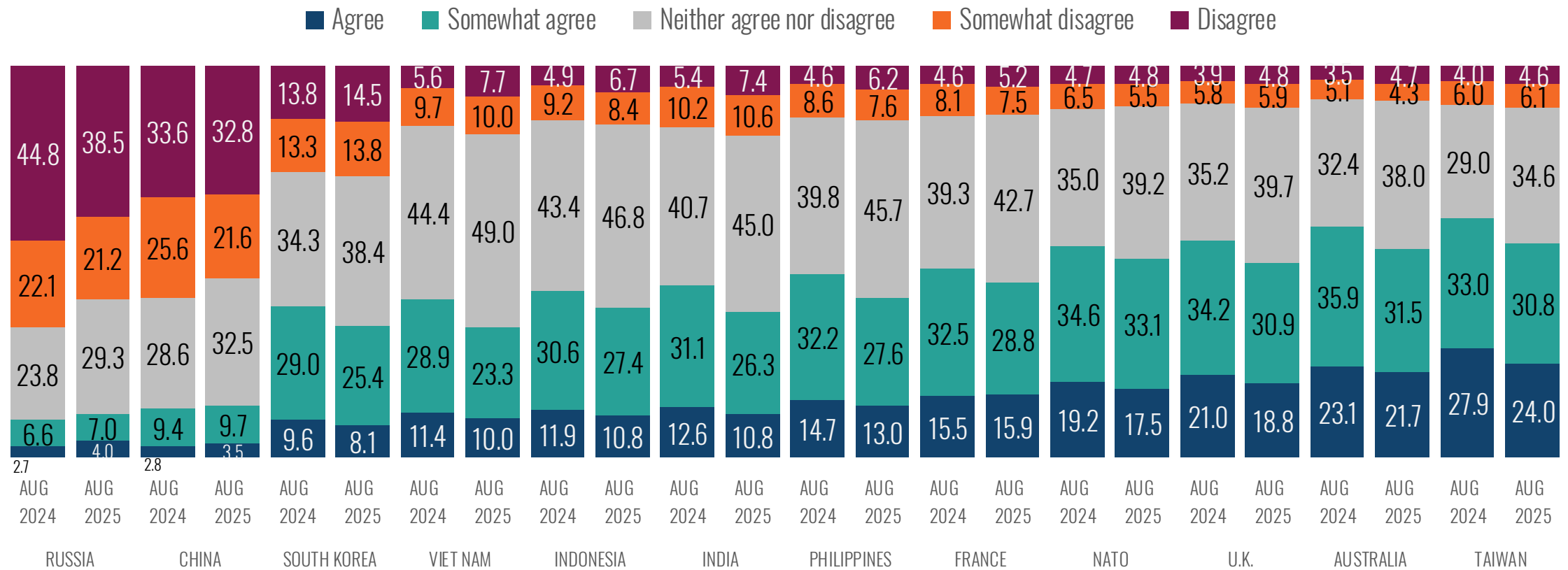
➤ The percentage of respondents who say that U.S. influence is growing stronger has decreased since the last survey.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? (%) n = 2000



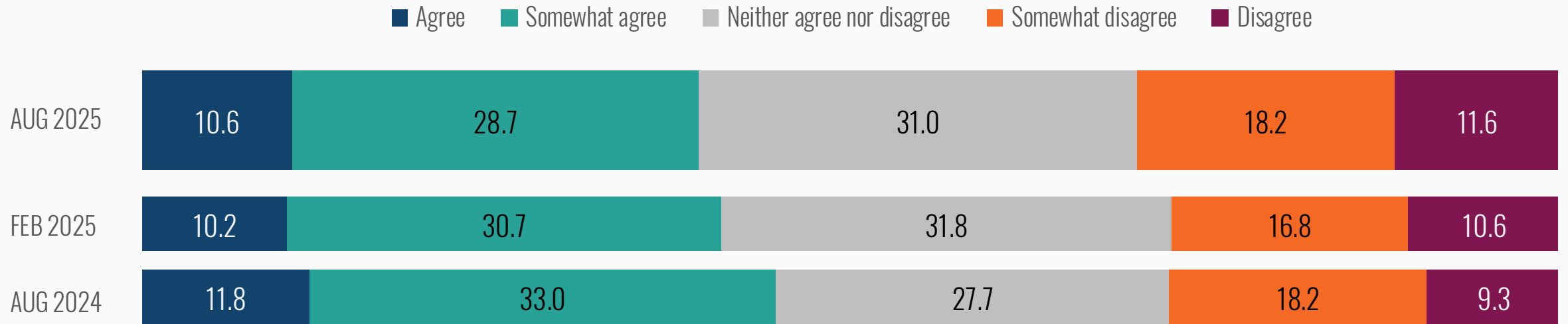
- The proportion of respondents in favor of the strengthening of the Japan–U.S. alliance has decreased slightly.
- About 60 percent of respondents expressed reluctance or opposition to Japan developing its own nuclear weapons and to the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons within Japan.

Do you agree or disagree with the opinion that Japan should strengthen security and defense cooperation with the following countries other than the U.S.? (%) n = 2000



- Support for security and defense cooperation with the above countries outweighed the opposition, except China and Russia.
- In particular, there is a majority of support for security and defense cooperation with Taiwan, Australia, the United Kingdom, and NATO.

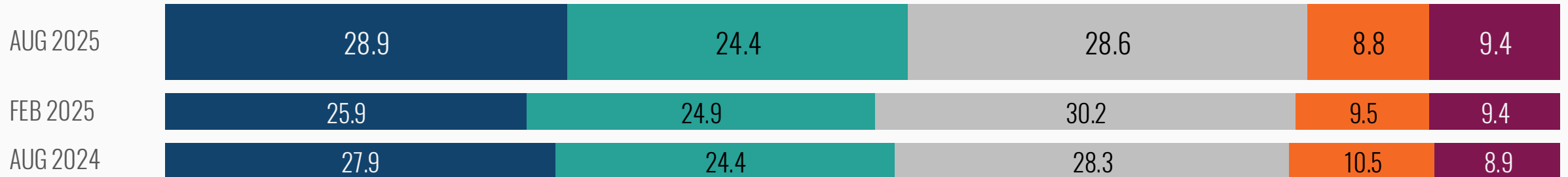
Do you agree or disagree with the view that U.S. nuclear weapons make Japan more secure and safe? (%) n = 2000



➤ Those who believe Japan's security is protected by the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" have outweighed those who do not.

Do you agree or disagree with the opinion that Japan should join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) ? (%) n = 2000

■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree



(Respondents who choose “Neither,” “Somewhat disagree,” or “Disagree”)

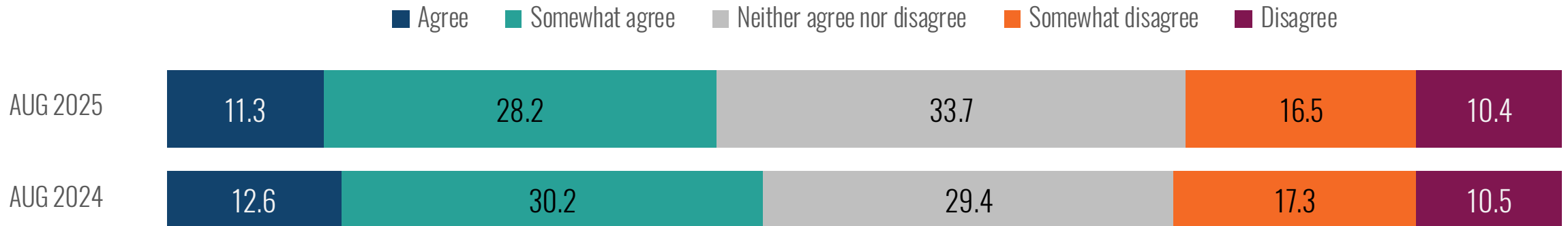
Do you agree or disagree with the opinion that Japan should join the TPNW as an observer? (%) n = 935

■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree



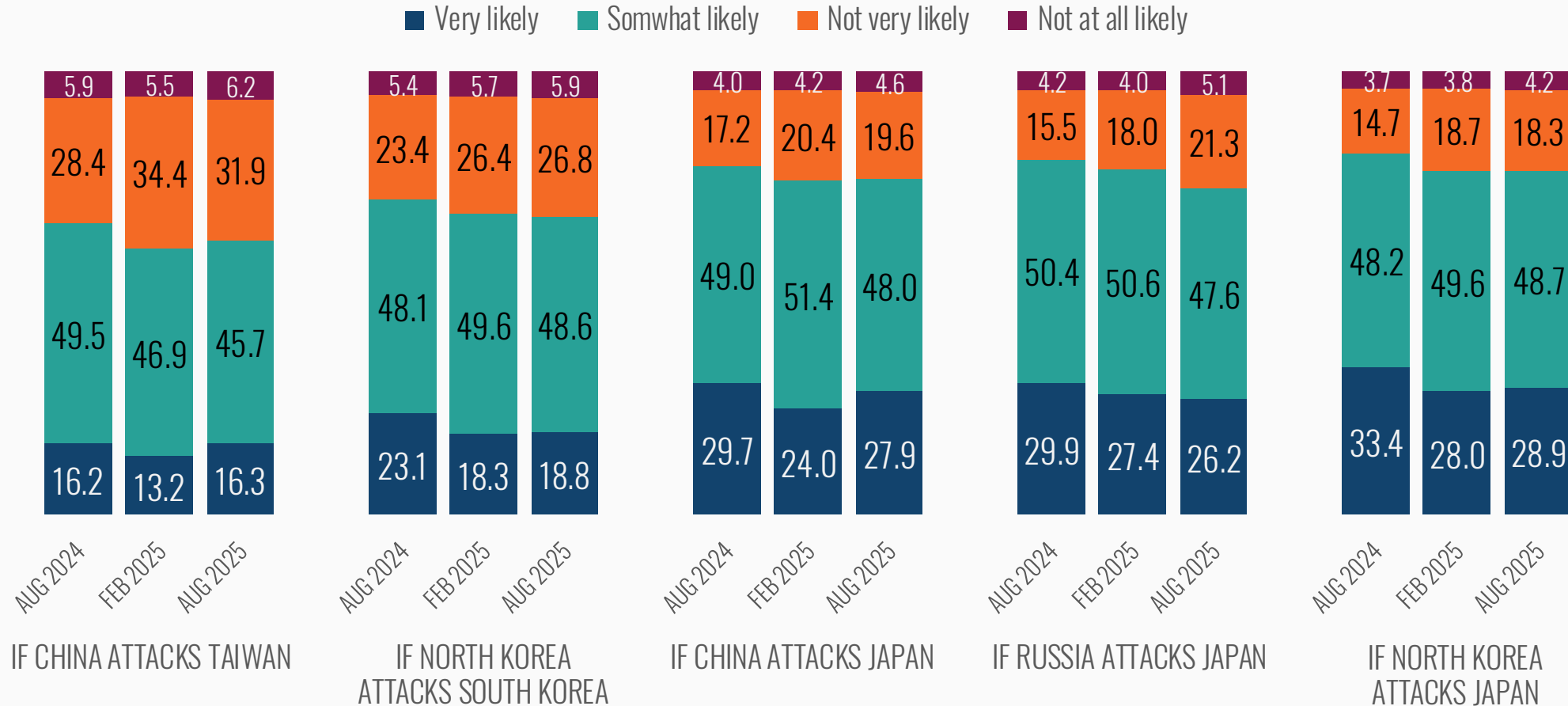
➤ Half of the respondents are in favor of joining the TPNW.

Currently, U.S. military bases in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa, and the burden on Okinawa is excessive. Conversely, there is an opinion that even if the burden on Okinawa is excessive, the current concentration of bases is unavoidable because of Okinawa's strategic importance. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?(%) n = 2000



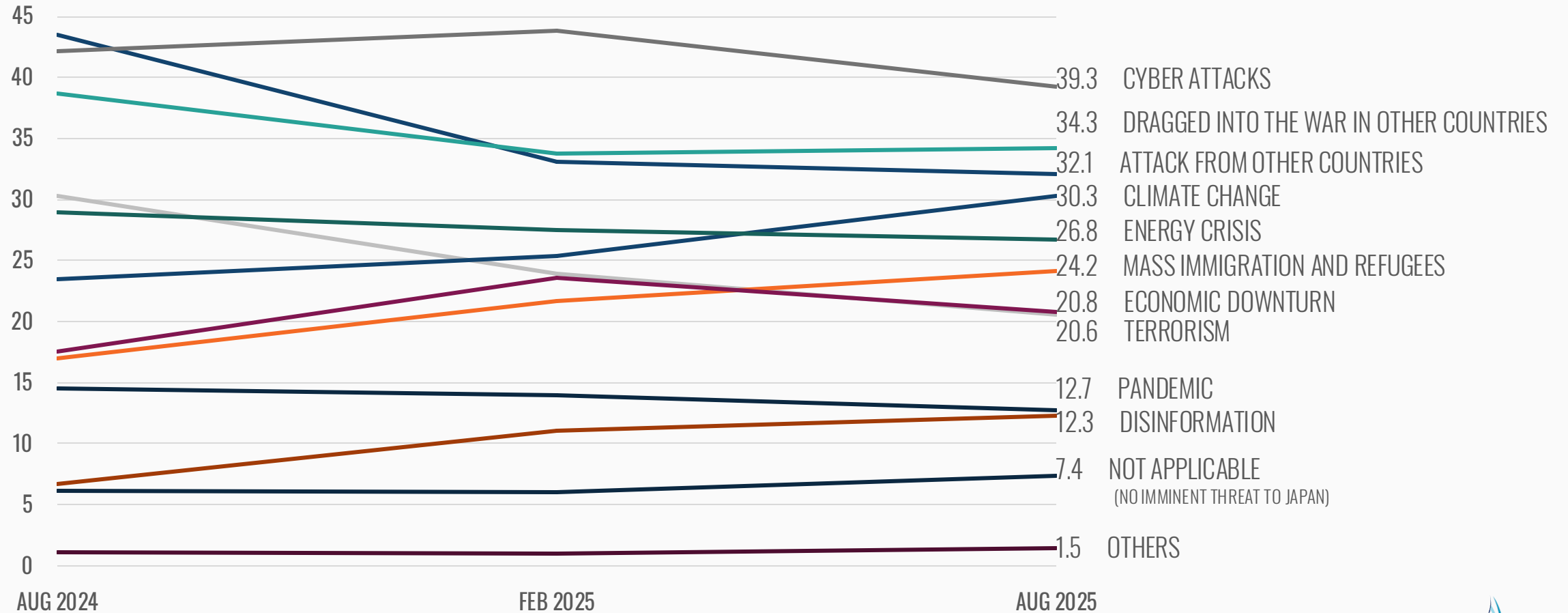
- Approximately 40% of respondents believe that the current situation, in which U.S. military bases are concentrated in Okinawa due to its strategic importance, is unavoidable, even if the burden on Okinawa is excessive.

How likely do you think the U.S. would militarily intervene if the following circumstances happened?(%) n = 2000



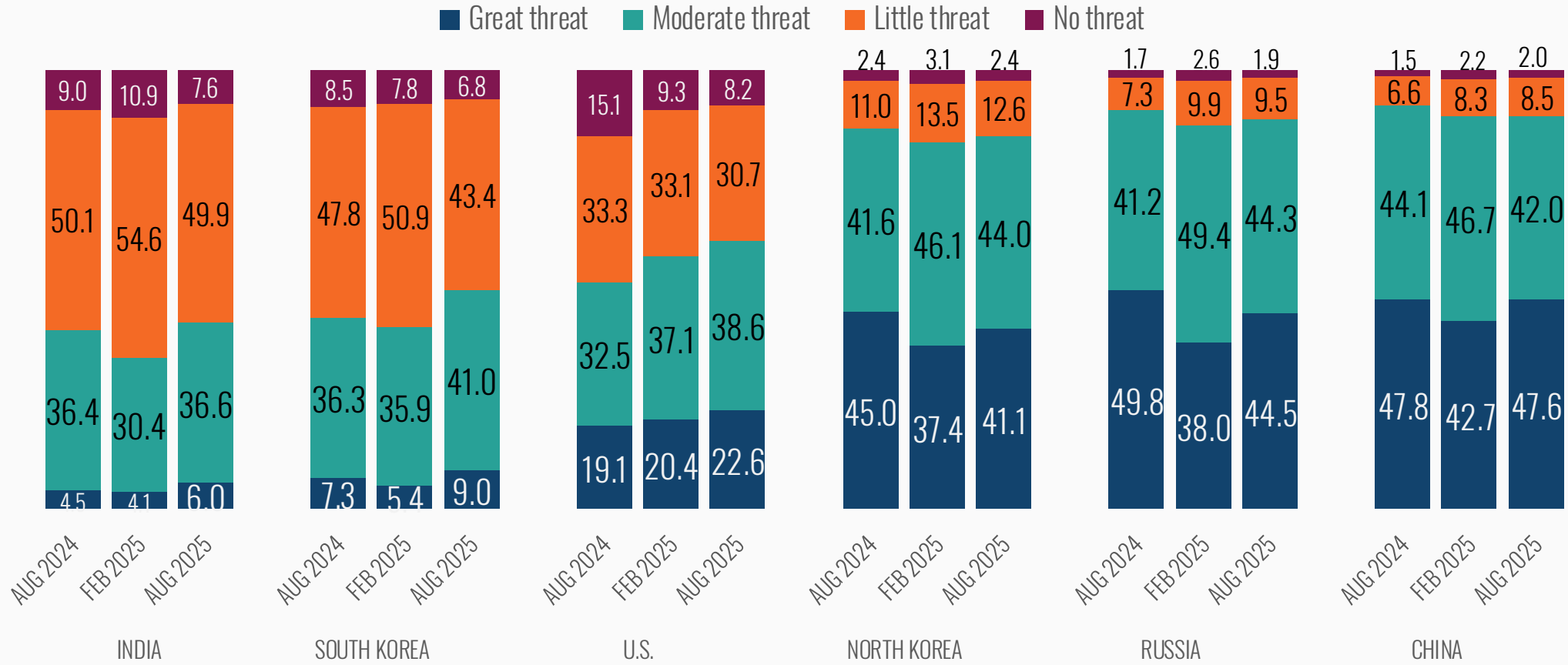
- The majority of respondents believe that the U.S. is likely to intervene militarily when North Korea, Russia, or China attacks Japan.

Please select three of the following options that you believe are imminent threats to Japan's security. (up to 3; %) n = 2000



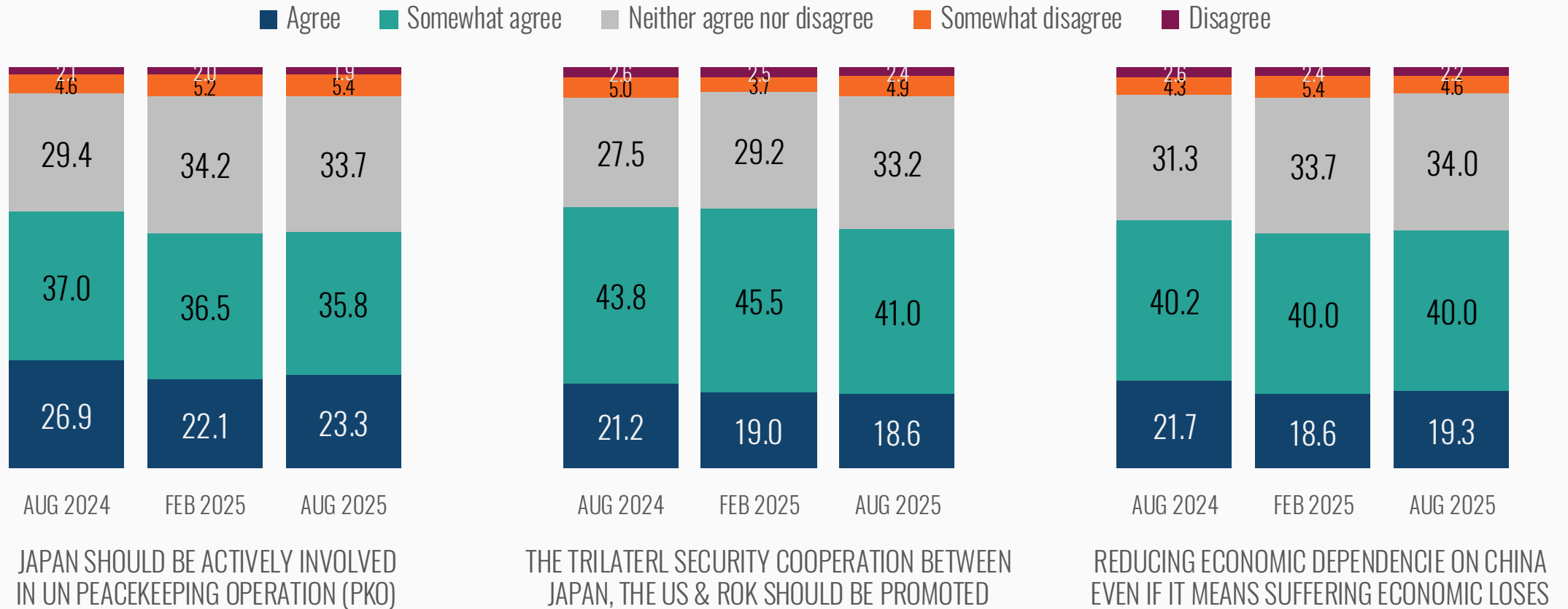
- The top three imminent threats to Japan's security remain unchanged.
- An increasing number of respondents view climate change and immigration as imminent threats.

To what extent do you think each of the following countries is a threat to Japan's security? (%) n = 2000



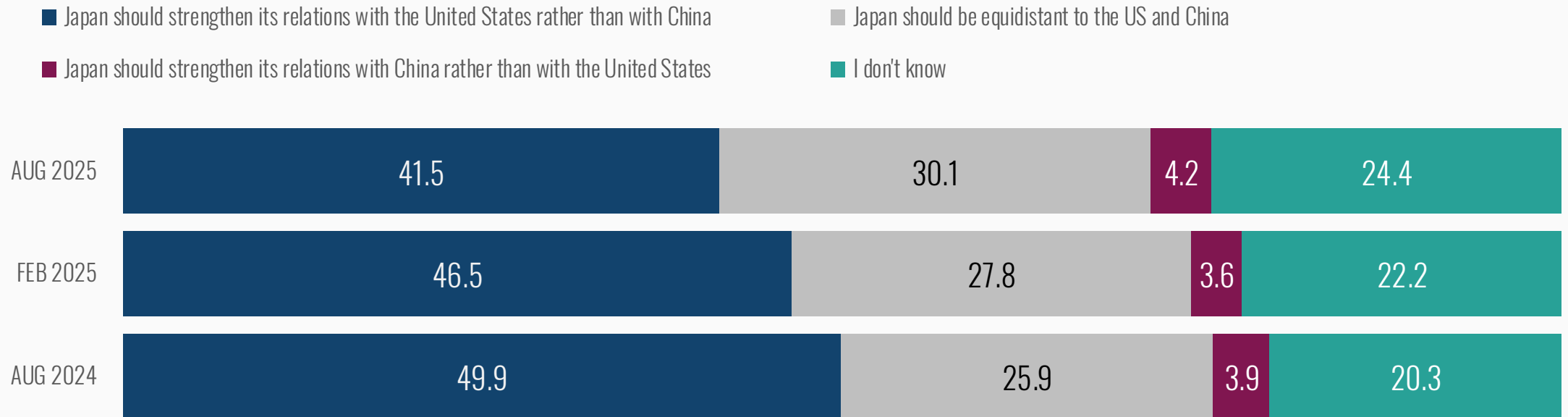
- A substantial number of respondents perceive China, Russia, and North Korea as threats to Japan's security. Furthermore, approximately half of the respondents view the U.S. as a threat.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (%) n = 2000



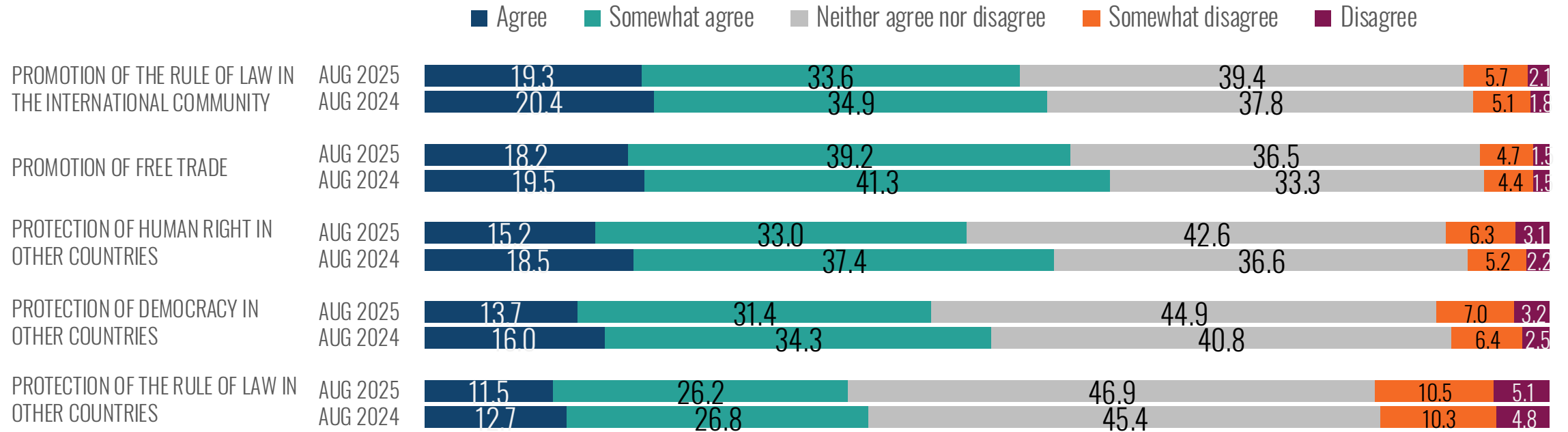
- About 60% of respondents think that Japan should reduce its economic dependence on China even if it means suffering economic losses.
- About 60% of respondents think that trilateral security cooperation between Japan, the U.S., and South Korea should be promoted.
- About 60% of respondents think that Japan should be more actively involved in Peacekeeping Operations.

What kind of relationships should Japan build amid growing U.S.-China strategic competition with both countries? (%) n = 2000



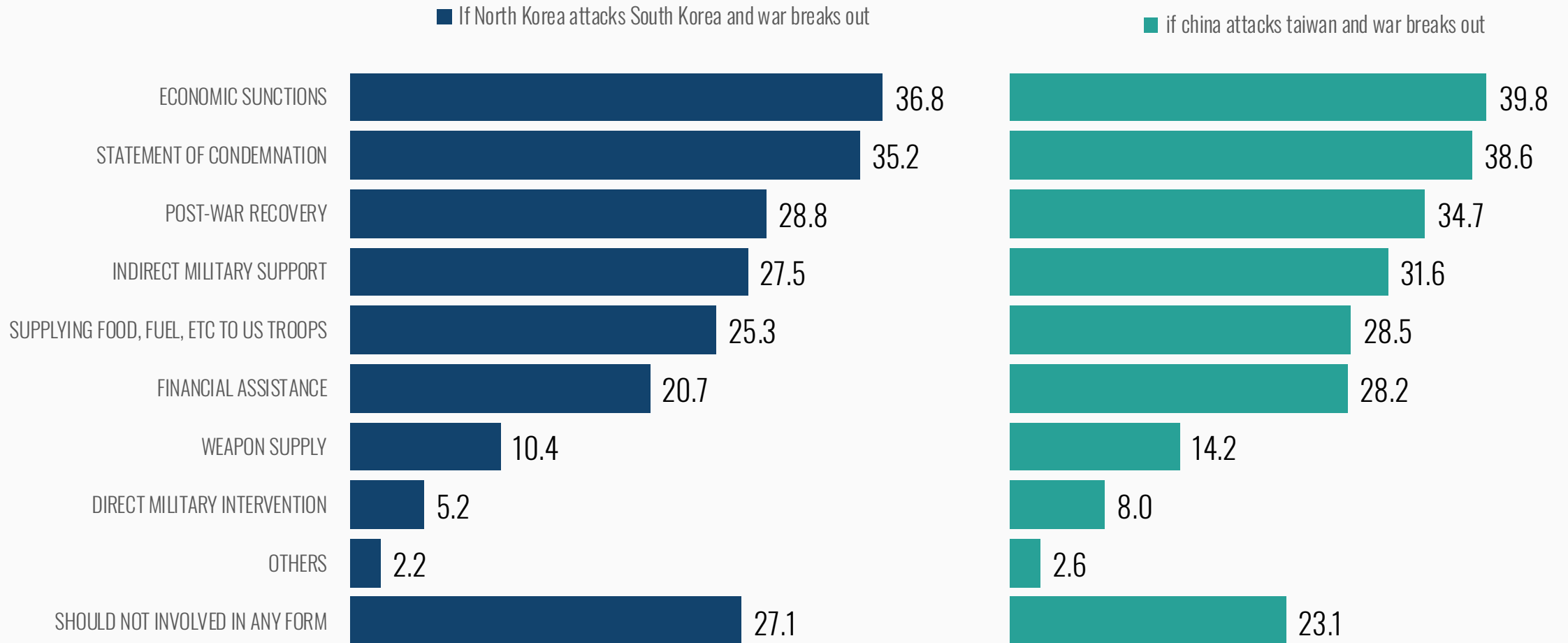
➤ The number of respondents who believe that relations with the United States should be strengthened is decreasing.

Do you agree or disagree that Japan should pursue the following values as diplomatic goals, even in conflict with other countries?
 (%) n = 2000



- The majority of the respondents support pursuing values such as “the rule of law in the international community” and “promotion of free trade” as diplomatic goals, even if this leads to conflict with other countries.

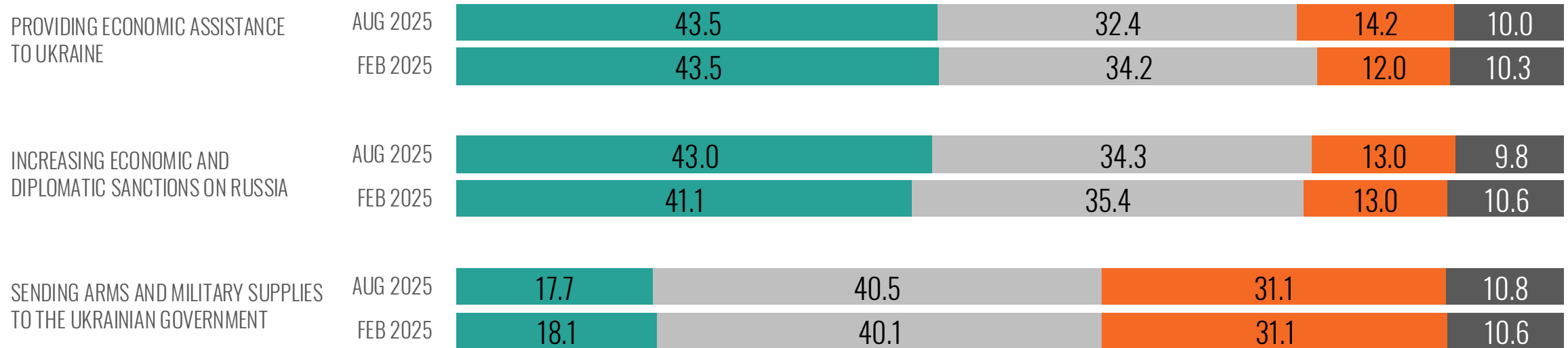
How should Japan get involved in each of the following cases? Please select as many of the following options as you like. (%) n = 2000



- “Economic sanctions” are perceived as the most preferred option for Japan's involvement in the event of a crisis in Korea or Taiwan, as in the previous two surveys
- More than 20% of respondents chose “Japan should not get involved in any form.”

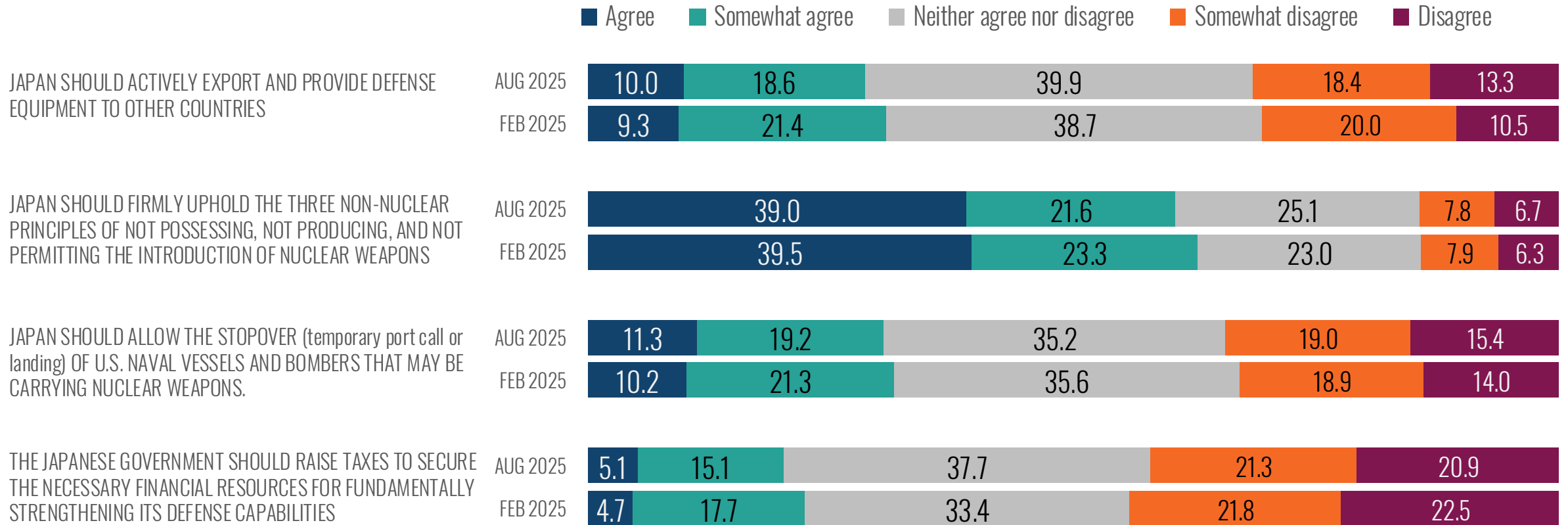
In response to the situation involving Russia and Ukraine, would you support or oppose Japan. (% support) n = 2000

Support Neither Oppose I don't know



➤ There has been no significant change in Japanese respondents' stance towards the response to Russia's war in Ukraine.

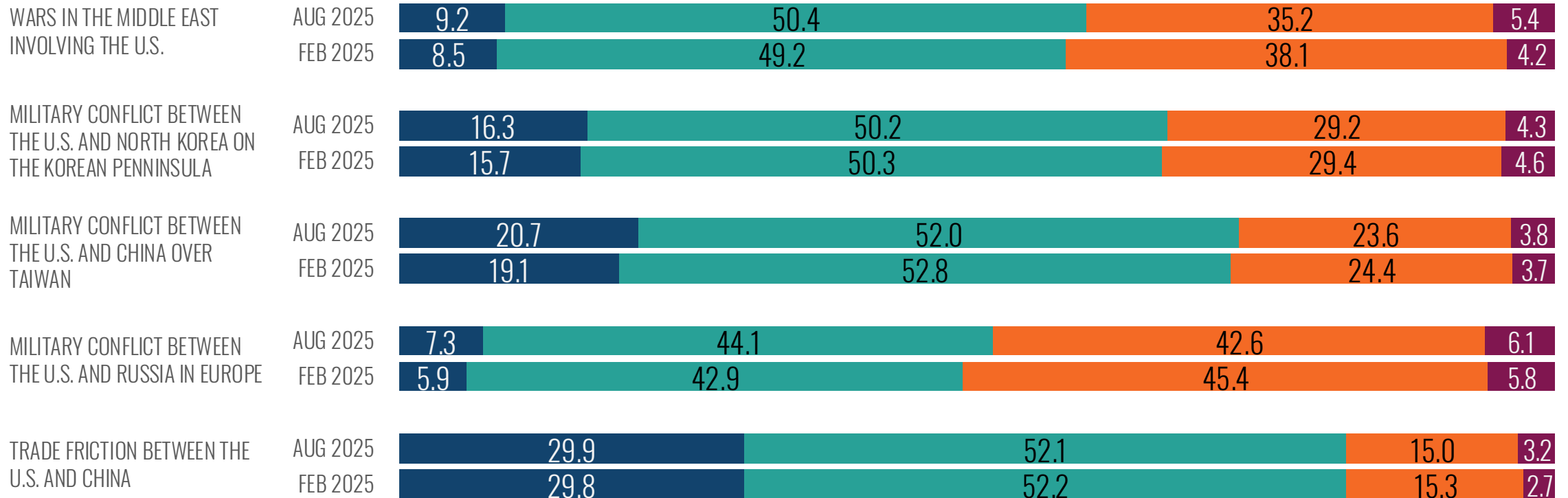
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? (%) n = 2000



➤ Approximately 60% of respondents agree upholding the Three Non-Nuclear Principles.

How likely do you think it is that Japan will get involved in the following situation? (%) n = 2000

■ Very likely ■ Somewhat likely0 ■ Not very likely ■ Not at all likely



➤ 60-70% of respondents believe that Japan could be involved in a Korean or Taiwanese contingency.