

# Manitobans' Views on COVID-19

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March 2022 Probe Research Omnibus Survey

The  
**Free Press**

**PROBE**  
RESEARCH INC.

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# Key Findings

A new Probe Research survey for the *Winnipeg Free Press* finds that while nearly one-half of Manitobans think the provincial government is lifting health restrictions too quickly, about one-quarter think re-opening is taking place at the right speed – and more than one in five feel it is not happening fast enough. Older Manitobans (especially older women), Winnipeg residents and those who support the opposition New Democratic Party are much more likely to think the restrictions are being lifted too quickly.

More than six in ten Manitobans expect to continue wearing face masks in public places for the foreseeable future, while three in ten are unlikely to do so now that this is no longer required and one in ten say it depends on the circumstances. Again, older Manitobans, women and those living in Winnipeg are more likely to continue masking up, while men under the age of 55 are much less inclined to do so.

While three-quarters expect public health restrictions to be part of our lives for the foreseeable future, the proportion of the population who strongly agree this will be the case has decreased significantly during the past six months. Women in all age groups and men over the age of 55 are more likely to expect some form of public health restrictions in the future.

The pandemic has shaken Manitobans' faith in the ability of governments to deal with major challenges, with three-quarters agreeing these public institutions are not well-equipped to deal with significant crises. Meanwhile, nearly nine in ten Manitobans agree the divisions caused by the pandemic will last for a long time. Manitobans are somewhat split on whether things will return to how they were prior to the pandemic, with a majority disagreeing that this will be the case.

## Key Findings (cont'd)

The proportion of Manitobans touched directly by COVID-19 increased significantly during the spread of the Omicron variant in early 2022. Today, nearly four in ten are certain they have had COVID-19 (37%, up from 29% in January), with fewer than one in ten not knowing anyone who has had this virus. A majority of men between the ages of 18 and 34 say they have had COVID-19 at some point during the past two years, with younger adults and those with children (as well as those who are not fully vaccinated) much more likely to have experienced COVID-19 themselves.



## About the Probe Research Omnibus

For more than two decades, Probe Research Inc. has undertaken quarterly omnibus surveys of random and representative samples of Manitoba adults. These scientific telephone surveys have provided strategic and proprietary insights to hundreds of public, private and not-for-profit clients on a range of social, cultural and public policy topics. The Probe Research Omnibus Survey is the province's largest and most trusted general population survey.

## Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed by Probe Research in close consultation with the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

## Methodology

Probe Research surveyed a random and representative sampling of 1,000 adults residing in Manitoba between March 9 and 21, 2022.

With a sample of 1,000, one can say with 95 per cent certainty that the results are within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Manitoba had been surveyed. The margin of error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups.

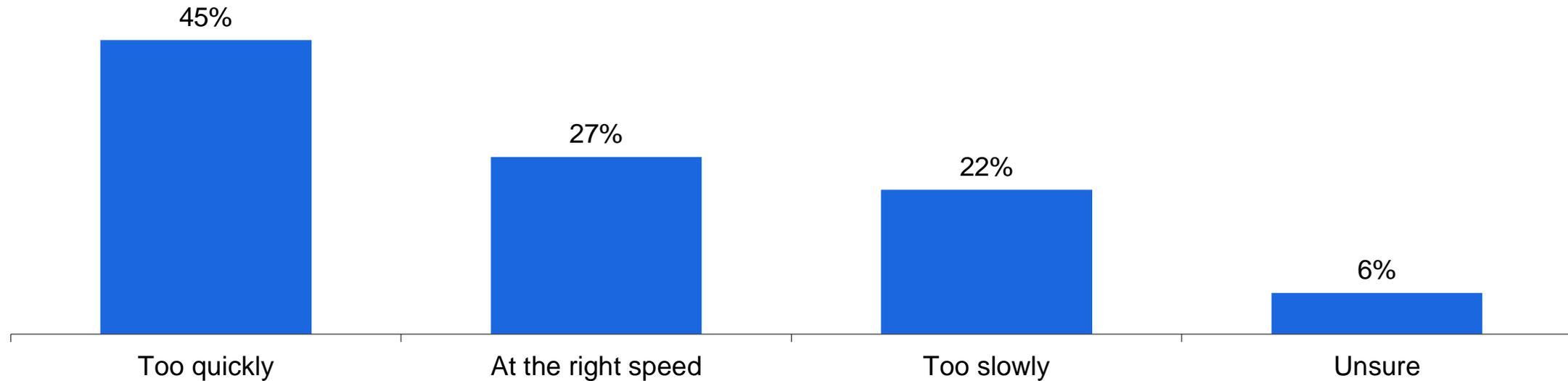
The sample consists of 390 Manitobans randomly recruited via live-agent operator; 363 Manitobans randomly recruited via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and 247 members of Probe Research's online panel. All respondents completed the survey on an online platform.

Modified random digit dialing, including both landline and wireless numbers, ensured all Manitoba adults had an equal opportunity to participate in this Probe Research survey.

Minor statistical weighting has been applied to this sample to ensure that age and gender characteristics properly reflect known attributes of the province's population. All data analysis was performed using SPSS statistical analysis software.

# Speed of Government Lifting Health Restrictions

Nearly one-half feel restrictions are being lifted too quickly; one in five want restrictions lifted sooner

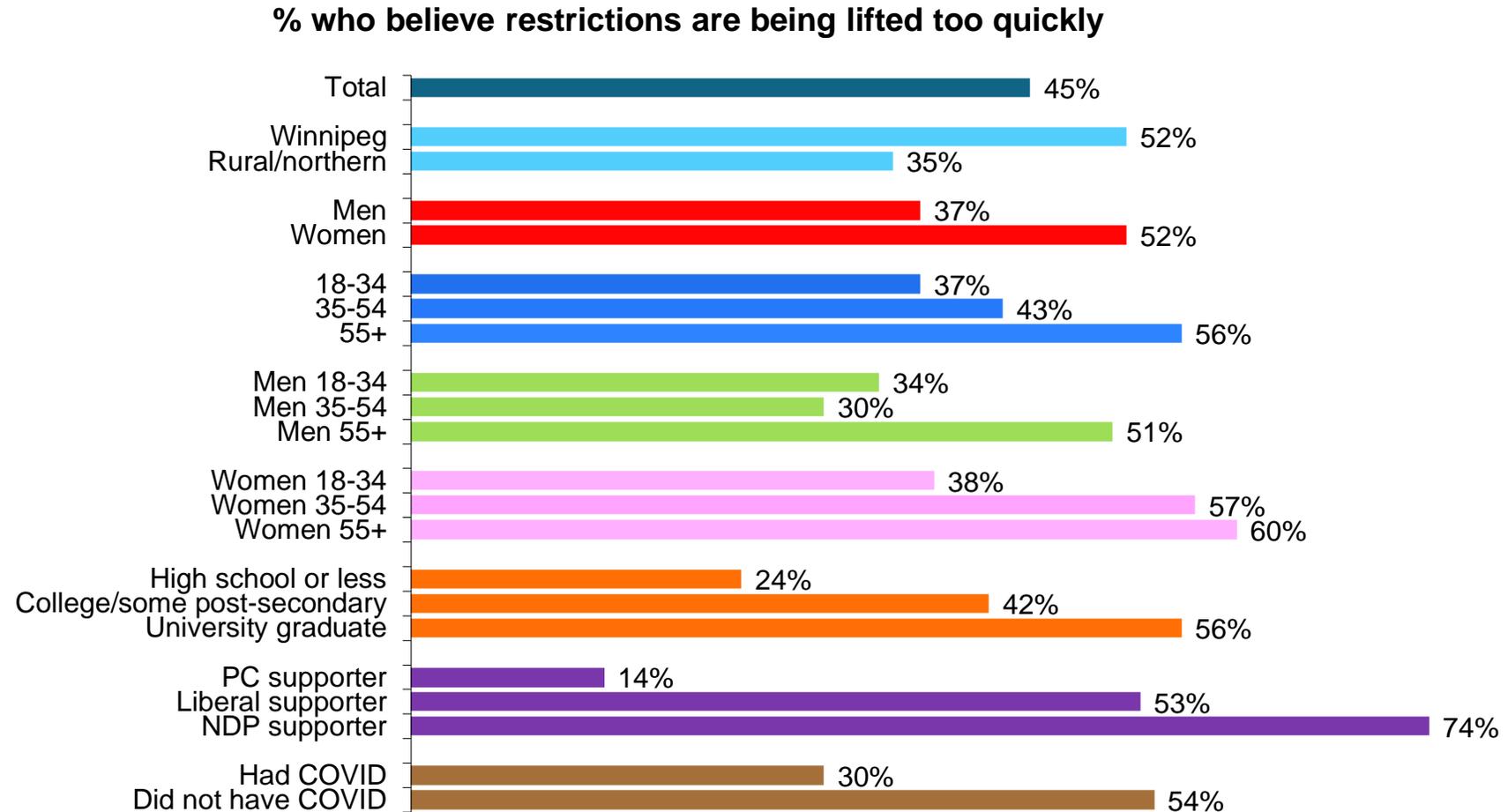


WFP1. The provincial government has announced that all COVID-19 related public health restrictions will be lifted this month. Would you say the provincial government is lifting restrictions...

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Views on Speed of Re-opening: By Subgroup

Winnipeg residents, older Manitobans most likely to think restrictions being lifted too quickly

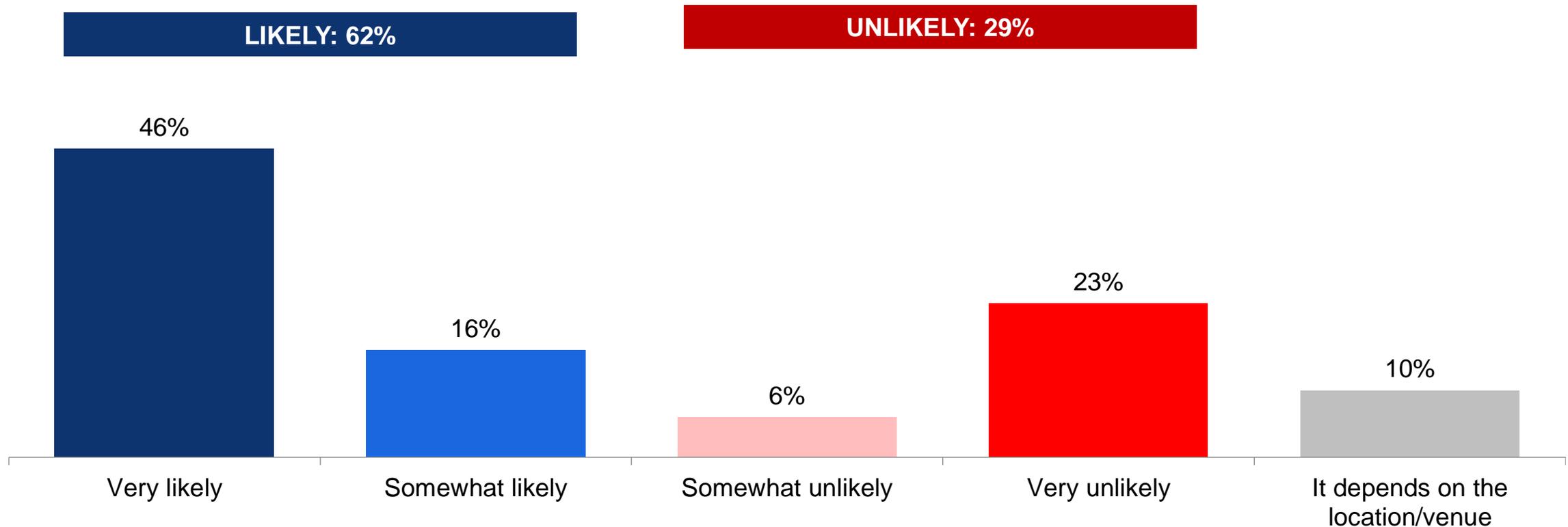


WFP1. The provincial government has announced that all COVID-19 related public health restrictions will be lifted this month. Would you say the provincial government is lifting restrictions...

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Likelihood of Wearing Face Masks in Public Spaces

More than six in ten will continue to wear a face mask, even if it is no longer required



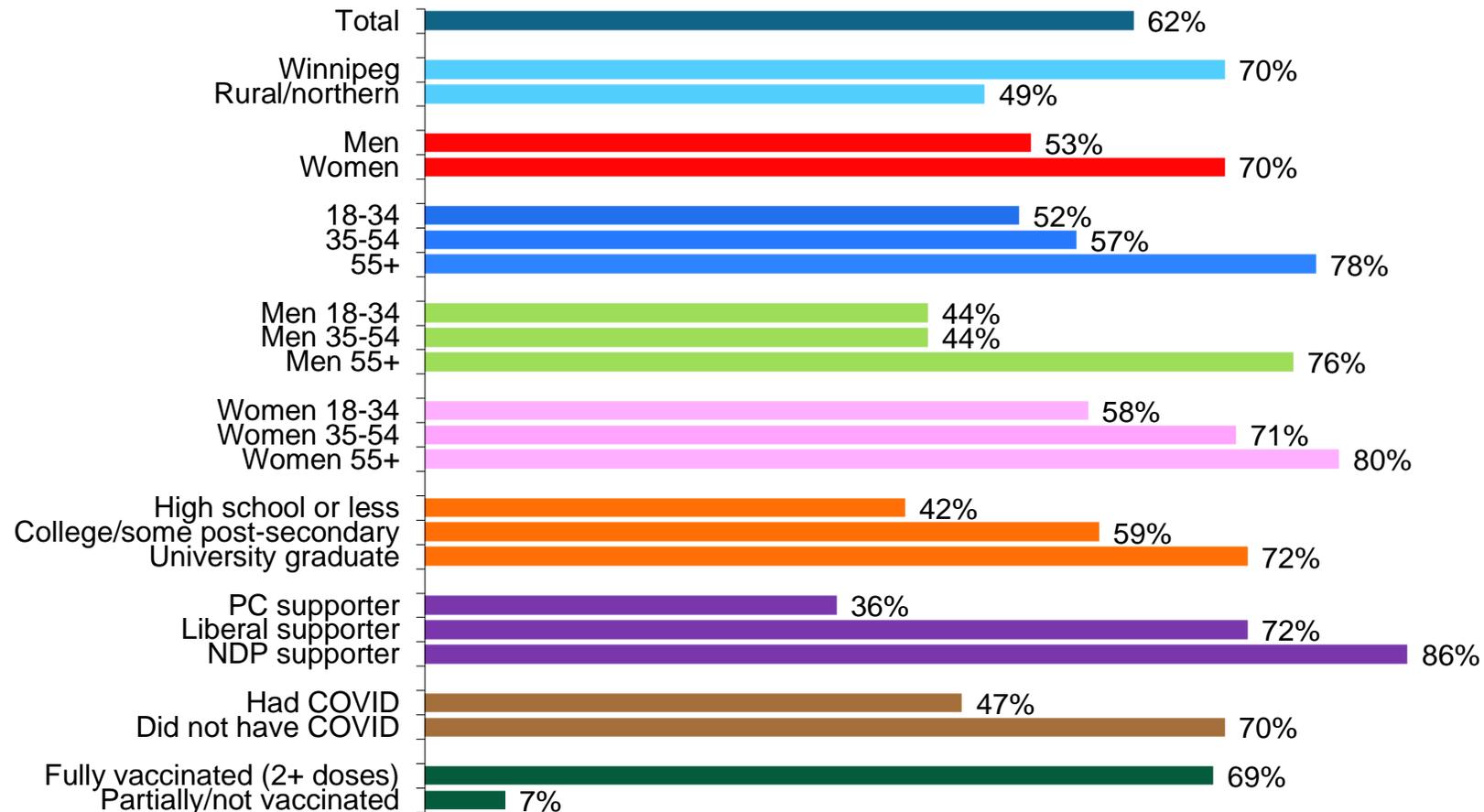
WFP2. Personally, how likely are you to continue wearing face masks in public spaces even if this is no longer required as part of public health restrictions?

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Likelihood of Wearing Face Masks in Public: By Subgroup

Younger adults, rural Manitobans less likely to continue masking up in public venues

**% who are very/somewhat likely to continue wearing face masks in public spaces**

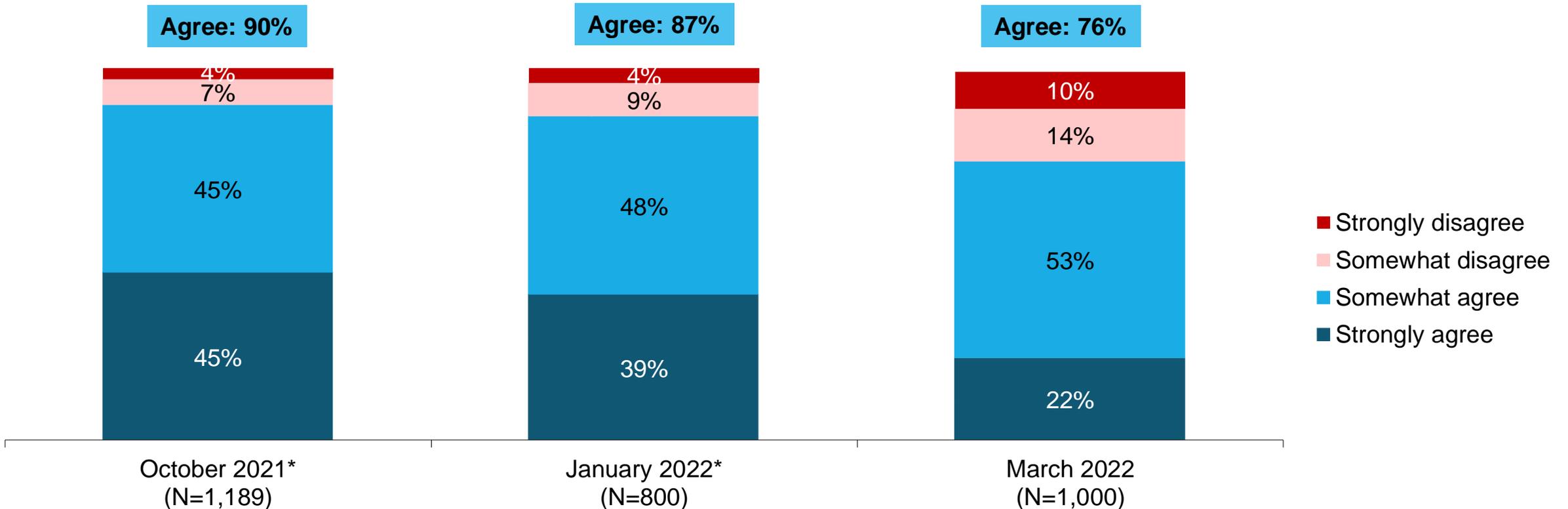


WFP2. Personally, how likely are you to continue wearing face masks in public spaces even if this is no longer required as part of public health restrictions?

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Views on Endurance of Public Health Restrictions

Only one in five now strongly agree public health restrictions will be an ongoing part of our lives



WFP3c. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding COVID-19: we are going to be living with some degree of public health restrictions for the foreseeable future.

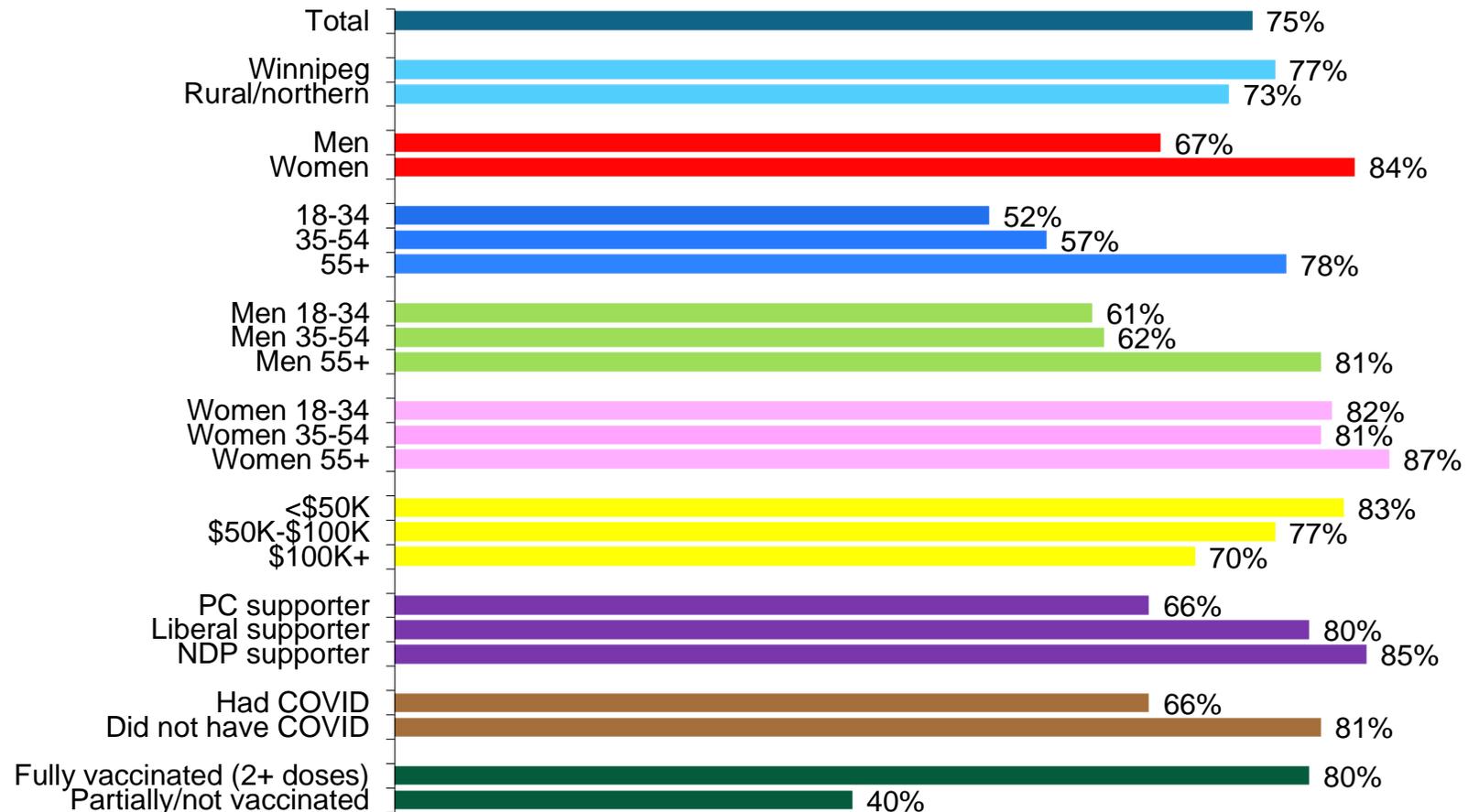
Base: All respondents

(\*Probe Research custom Surveys among Manitoba adults)

# Views on Endurance of Public Health Restrictions: By Subgroup

Younger adults, men and PC supporters less likely to agree public health restrictions will continue

**% who strongly/somewhat agree public health restrictions will continue**

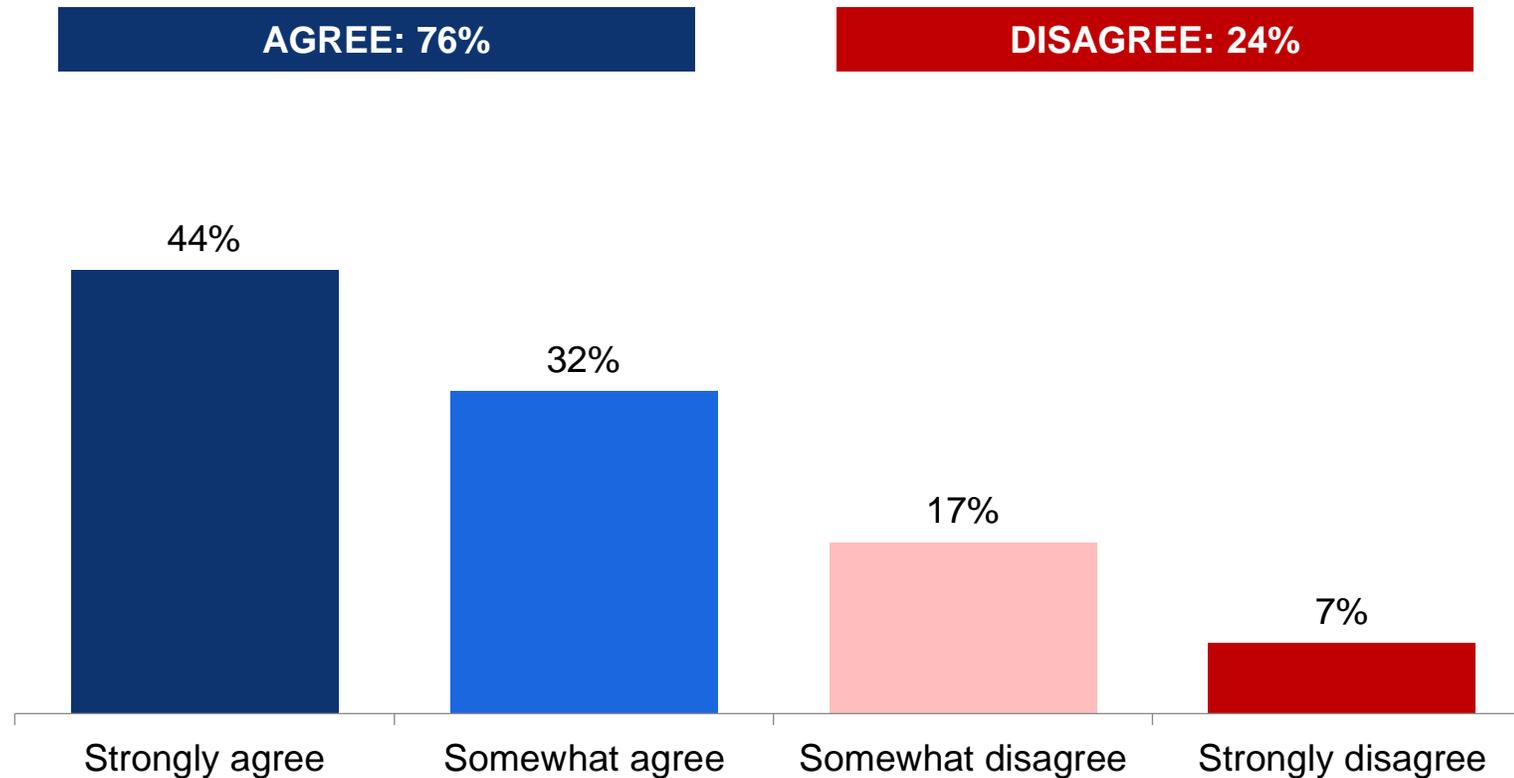


WFP3c. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding COVID-19: We are going to be living with some degree of public health restrictions for the foreseeable future

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Views on Governments' Ability to Handle Major Challenges

Three-quarters believe COVID-19 showed governments are ill prepared to deal with crises



Those most likely to **strongly or somewhat agree the pandemic demonstrated governments are not equipped to solve major challenges** include:

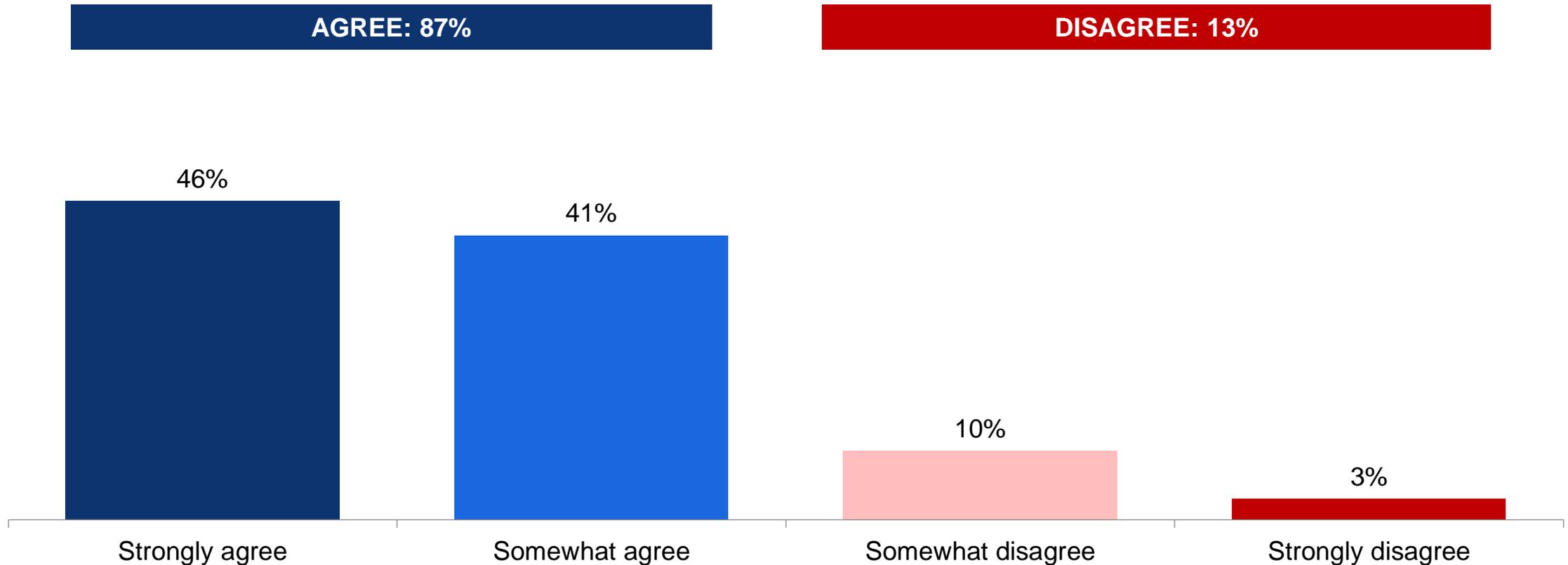
- NDP and PC supporters (78% and 76% respectively vs. 67% among provincial Liberal supporters).
- Those who are not fully vaccinated (89% vs. 75% among those with 2+ doses).

WFP3b. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding COVID-19: the COVID-19 pandemic proved our governments are not equipped to solve major challenges.

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Will COVID-19 Cause Lasting Divisions?

Nearly nine in ten think societal tensions caused by the pandemic will last a long time

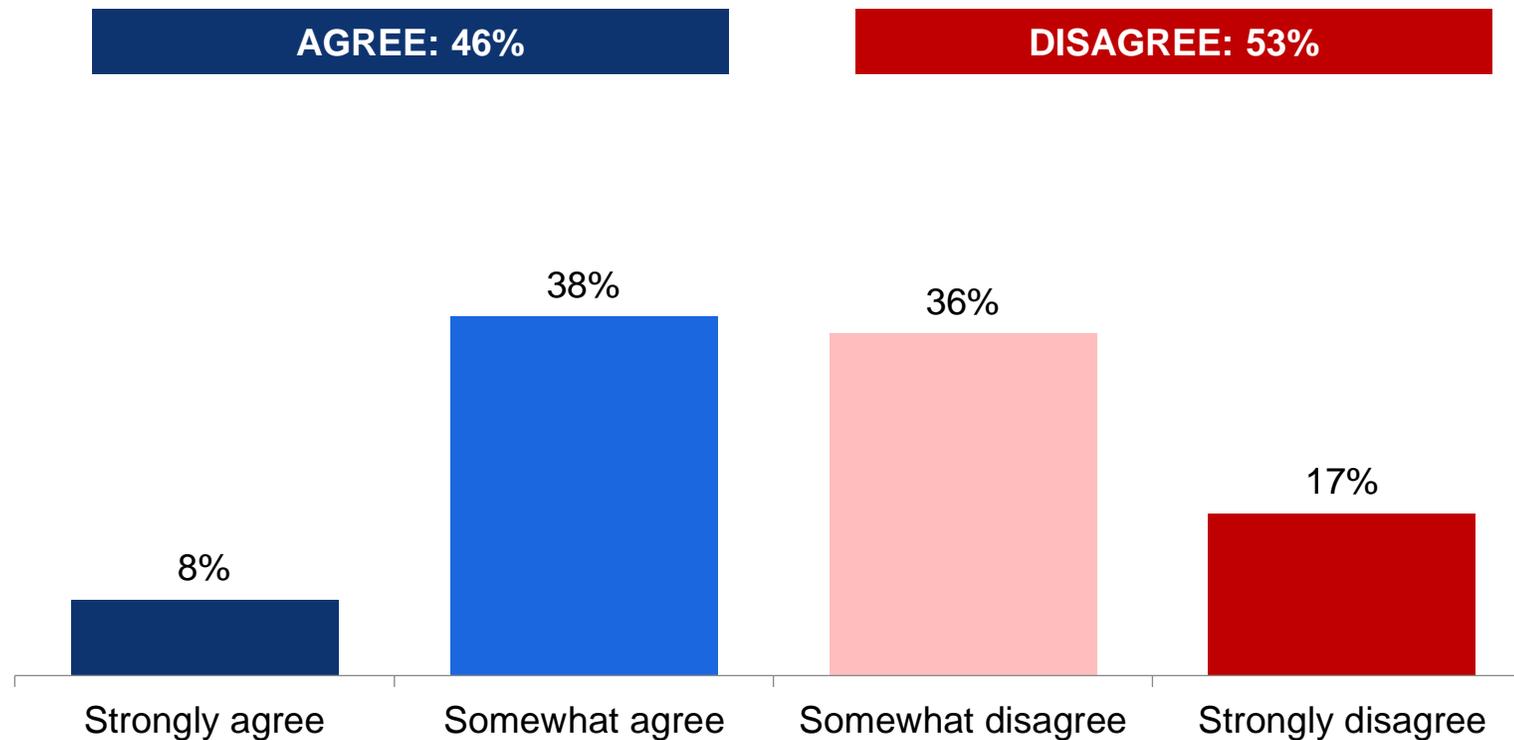


WFP3a. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding COVID-19: the divisions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will last for a very long time.

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Will Things Return to How They Were Prior to the Pandemic?

Manitobans nearly split on their view of the future



Those most likely to **strongly or somewhat agree things will return to how they were pre-COVID** include:

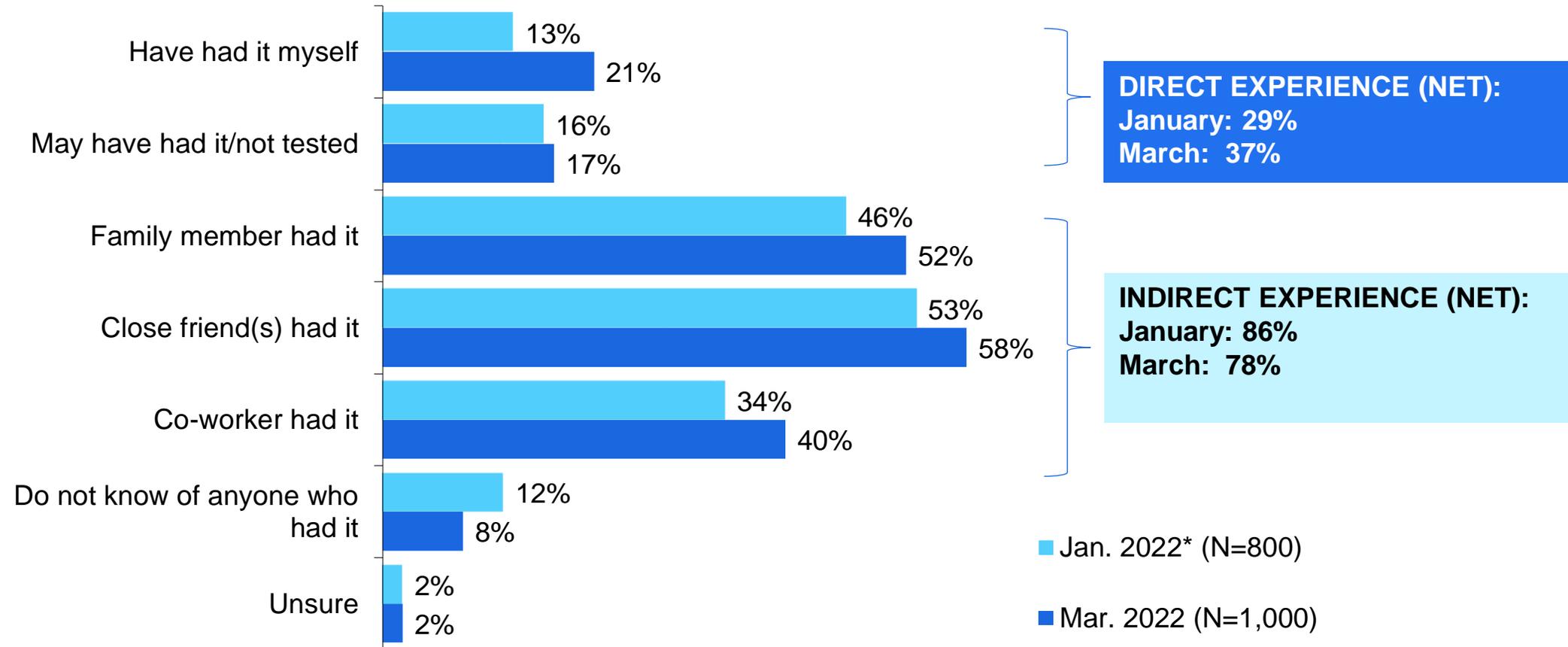
- Younger adults (52% aged 18-34 vs. 41% among those aged 55+).
- Men (52% vs. 41% among women).
- Progressive Conservative and provincial Liberal supporters (59% and 50% vs. 36% among NDP supporters).

WFP3d. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding COVID-19: by and large, things are going to return to the way they were prior to the pandemic.

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

# Personal Experience with COVID-19

Nearly four in ten Manitobans have likely had COVID-19 at some point



Q5. Which of the following best describes your own personal experience with COVID-19?

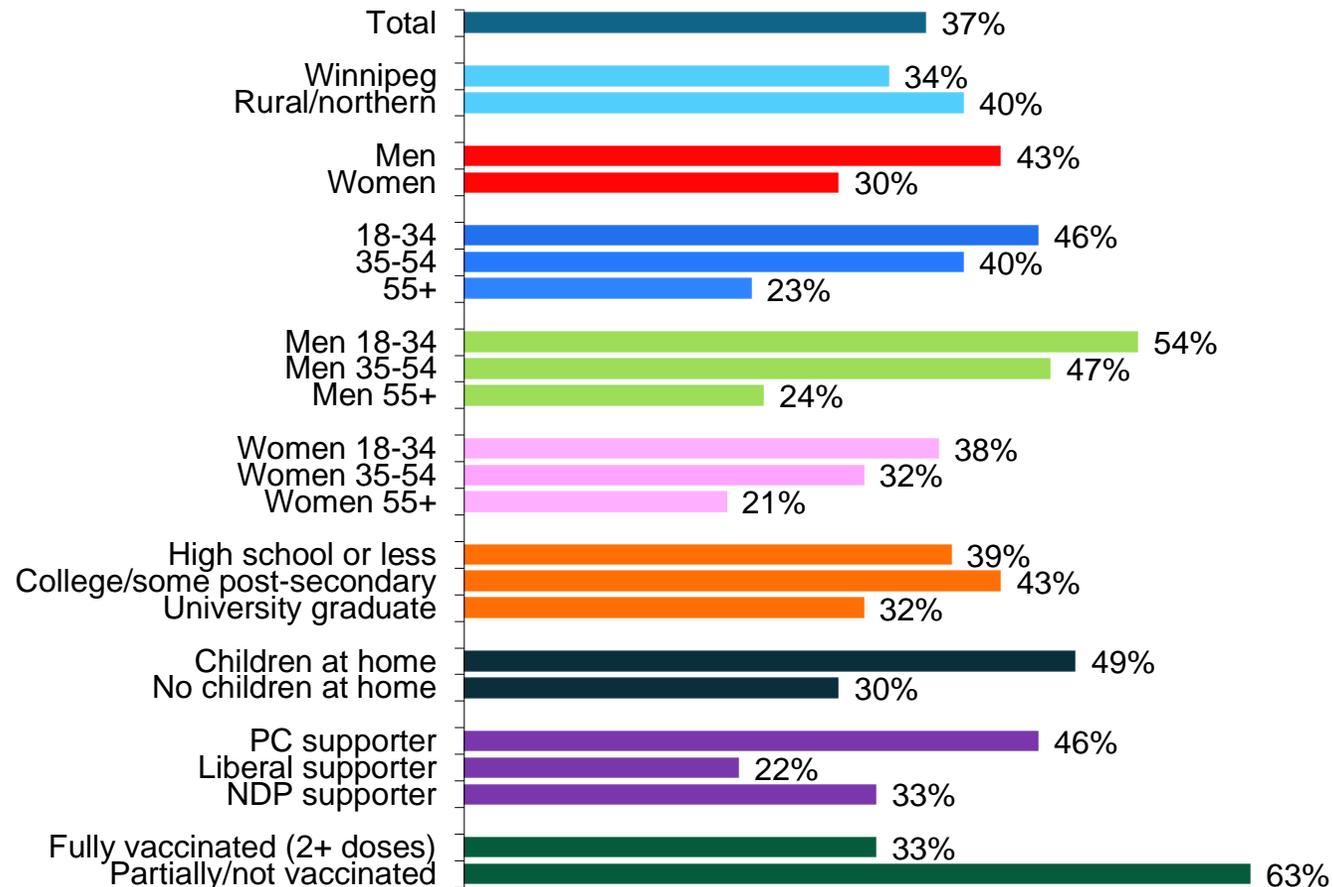
Base: All respondents

(\*Probe Research custom Survey among Manitoba adults)

# Experience With COVID-19: By Subgroup

Younger men, those with children more likely to have caught COVID-19

**% who were diagnosed with COVID-19 or believe they had it**



Q5. Which of the following best describes your own personal experience with COVID-19?

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)