



# MANITOBA PROVINCIAL PARTY SUPPORT AND VIEWS ON COVID-19 PERFORMANCE

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## KEY FINDINGS

- During the past three months, Premier Brian Pallister has been front and centre as the face of Manitoba's Progressive Conservative government while it grappled with the public health and economic consequences of COVID-19. A new Probe Research survey conducted for the *Winnipeg Free Press* shows support for Pallister and his party has eroded significantly during this period – particularly in Winnipeg – to the point where the Progressive Conservatives are statistically tied with the rival New Democratic Party (NDP).
- PC support among decided and leaning Manitoba voters is now 38 per cent, down five points compared the last Probe Research survey conducted in March 2020. More than one-third of Manitobans would now back the provincial NDP (36%, +3% vs. March), with support for the Manitoba Liberals increasing to nearly two-in-five Manitobans (18%, +4%). Seven per cent would cast ballots for the provincial Green Party (-1%), while overall 14 per cent of Manitobans are undecided.
- Shifts in party support are most dramatic in Winnipeg, with the NDP holding a commanding 19-point advantage over the PCs (44% vs. 25%, compared to 21% for the Liberals and 8% for the Greens). The NDP holds a clear lead over the PCs in most areas of the city – with the exception of southeast Winnipeg, where the parties are statistically tied. Outside Winnipeg, nearly six-in-ten support the PCs (58% vs. 21% for the NDP and 12% for the Liberals).
- The PCs continue to benefit from a significantly higher level of support among older voters (47% among those aged 55+ vs. 28% NDP and 20% Liberal), while the NDP holds a slight advantage over the PCs among younger and middle-aged voters. The NDP also holds a small lead among female voters (38% vs. 33% PC), with men significantly more likely to prefer the PCs (42% vs. 33%).

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## KEY FINDINGS (cont'd)

- While a strong majority of Manitobans approve of how the Manitoba government has protected public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, approval of how it dealt with the economic consequences of this virus is much more muted.
- More than three-quarters of Manitobans (77%) strongly or somewhat approve of the provincial government's efforts to protect citizens' health during the pandemic. Approval of the government's pandemic initiatives is consistently high across most demographic groups, with rural Manitobans, those over the age of 55 and non-Indigenous Manitobans most likely to praise the provincial government for taking steps to protect public health.
- On the other hand, only six-in-ten (61%) approve of the government's efforts to address the economic fallout of COVID-19. On this issue, there is a much sharper divide between Winnipeg residents and those living outside the provincial capital, as Winnipeggers are less likely to approve of the government's economic performance. Younger Manitobans and those with higher levels of education and income are also less likely to be satisfied with the government's work in this area.
- There are also critical differences of opinion based on party preference. While majorities of those who would vote for the opposition New Democrats or Liberals approve of the government's steps to protect public health, only one-third of NDP supporters (33%) and one-half of provincial Liberal supporters (51%) give the Progressive Conservatives high marks for dealing with the economic impact. Roughly nine-in-ten PC supporters, on the other hand, believe their preferred party did a good job of managing the public health and economic effects of the pandemic.

# 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

- Between June 2 and 11, 2020, Probe Research surveyed a random and representative sampling of 1,000 adults residing in Manitoba.
- With a sample of 1,000, one can say with 95 percent 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.
- 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. A CATI-to-web approach was employed whereby a live-voice operator randomly recruited respondents by telephone, inviting them to complete the survey via a secure online questionnaire. In addition, 221 randomly recruited Probe Research panel members were included in this general population adult sampling.
- 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.

# PROVINCIAL VOTING INTENTIONS



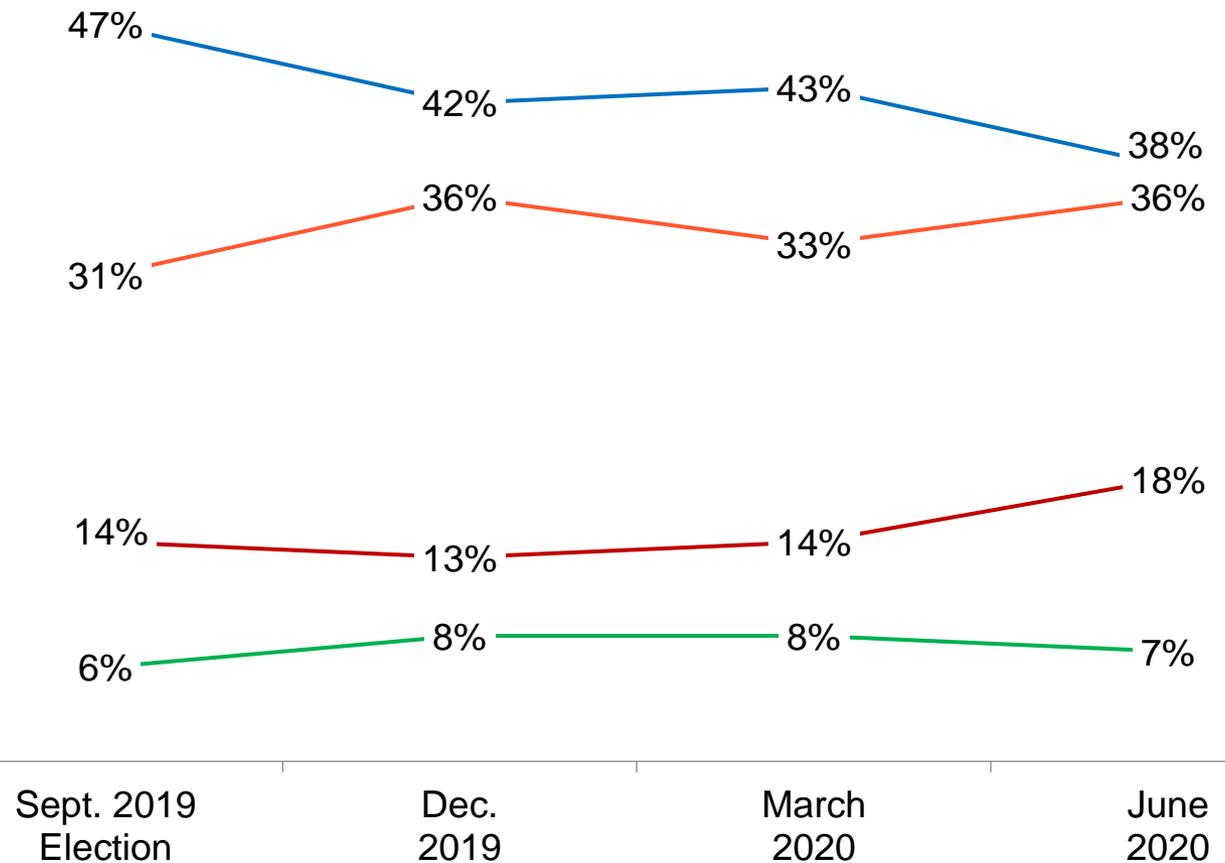
Undecided: 14%

# PARTY SUPPORT IN MANITOBA

— PC — NDP — Liberal — Green

## TRACKING

Q1/2. "If a provincial election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support? Even though you have not decided whom you would vote for, is there nonetheless a provincial party's candidate that you think you might want to support or are currently leaning toward?"



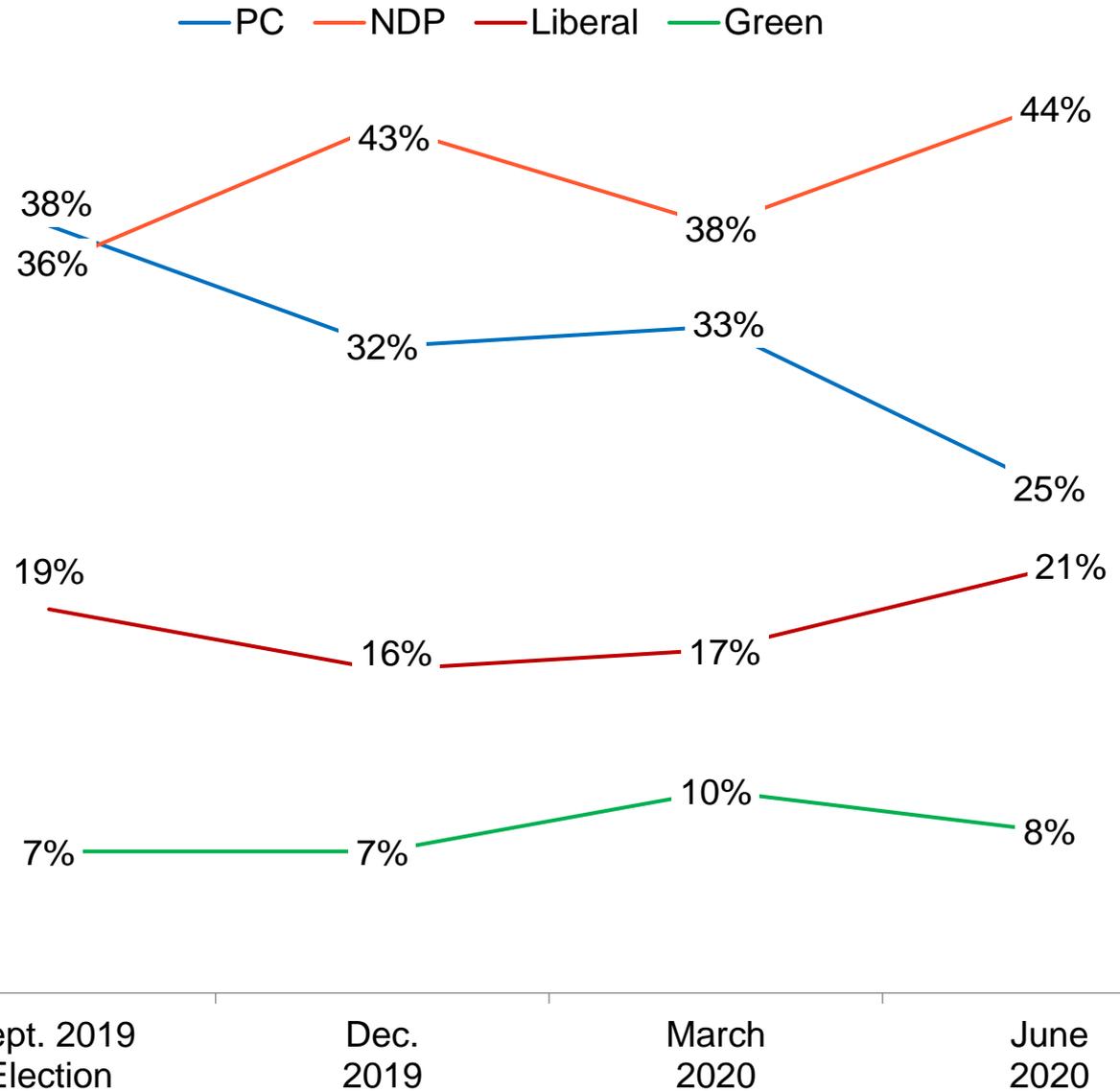
Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

Undecided: 13%

# PARTY SUPPORT IN WINNIPEG

## TRACKING

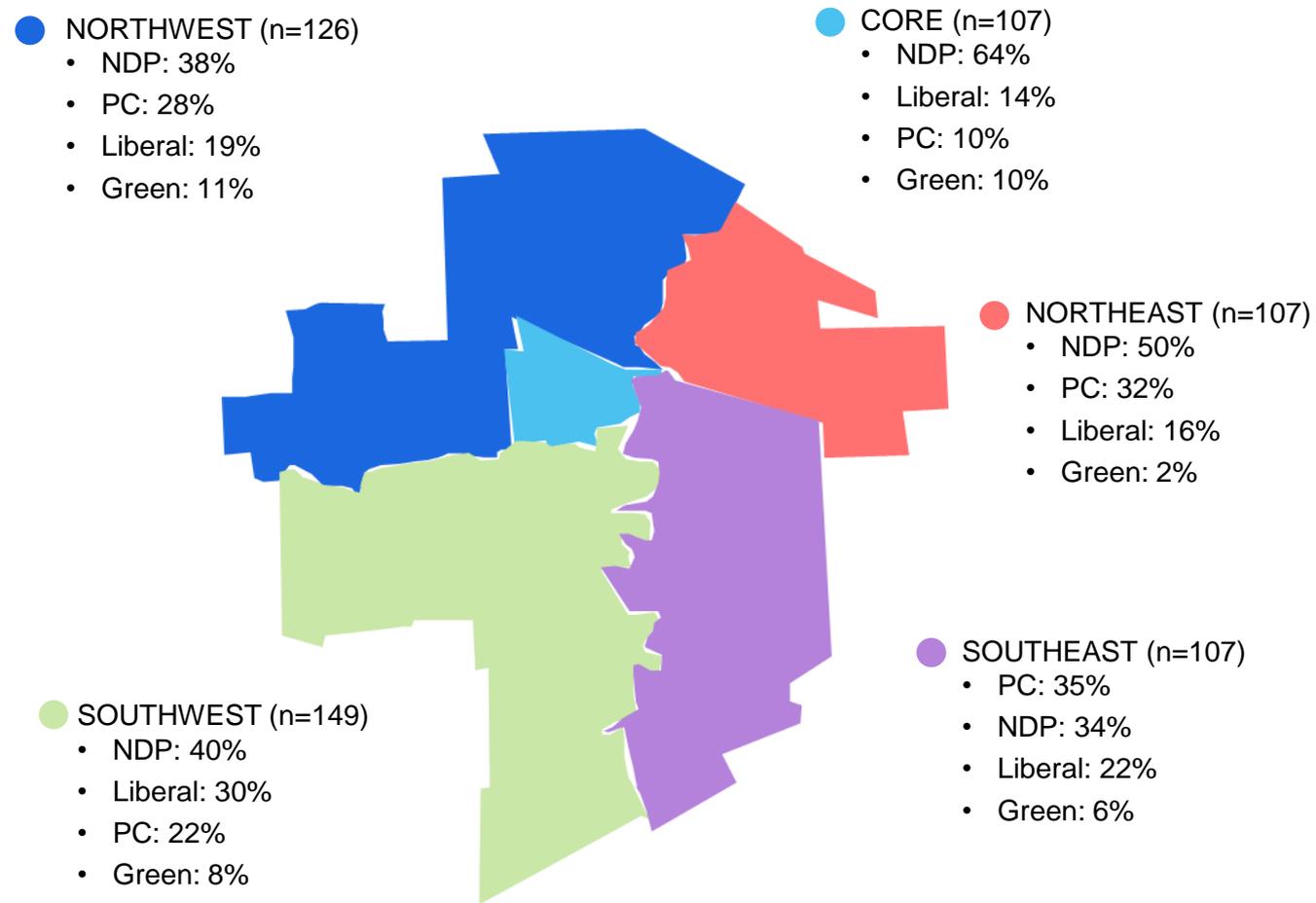
Q1/2. "If a provincial election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support? Even though you have not decided whom you would vote for, is there nonetheless a provincial party's candidate that you think you might want to support or are currently leaning toward?"



Base: Winnipeg adults (N=600)

# NDP LEAD IN FOUR OF FIVE CITY QUADRANTS

Q1/2. "If a provincial election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support? Even though you have not decided whom you would vote for, is there nonetheless a provincial party's candidate that you think you might want to support or are currently leaning toward?"



Base: Winnipeg adults (N=600)

# PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES ENJOY MAJOR LEAD AMONG SENIORS

## RESULTS BY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC SUB-GROUP

Q1/2. "If a provincial election were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you be most likely to support? Even though you have not decided whom you would vote for, is there nonetheless a provincial party's candidate that you think you might want to support or are currently leaning toward?"

Decided and leading voters. Valid responses only, DK/NS removed

\*Caution: Small base

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
(Unweighted)	(1,000)	(490)	(510)	(229)	(436)	(435)
(Base)	(1,000)	(483)	(517)	(330)	(374)	(297)
PC	38%	42%	33%	35%	33%	47%
NDP	36%	33%	38%	39%	39%	28%
Liberal	18%	16%	19%	14%	19%	20%
Green	7%	6%	8%	10%	7%	4%
	Education			Region		
	HS or Less	Some Post-Sec.	Post-Sec. Grad	Winnipeg	Rest of Manitoba	
(Unweighted)	(148)	(363)	(472)	(600)	(400)	
(Base)	(162)	(365)	(456)	(600)	(400)	
PC	52%	43%	28%	25%	58%	
NDP	29%	28%	44%	44%	21%	
Liberal	13%	18%	19%	21%	12%	
Green	6%	8%	7%	8%	7%	
	Income			Indigenous		
	<\$50K	\$50K-\$99K	\$100K+	Yes	No	
(Unweighted)	(176)	(317)	(357)	(99)*	(851)	
(Base)	(182)	(328)	(343)	(101)	(849)	
PC	33%	42%	33%	23%	39%	
NDP	37%	35%	37%	53%	34%	
Liberal	15%	14%	23%	12%	18%	
Green	10%	7%	6%	8%	7%	

# VIEWS ON THE MANITOBA GOVERNMENT'S COVID-19 PERFORMANCE



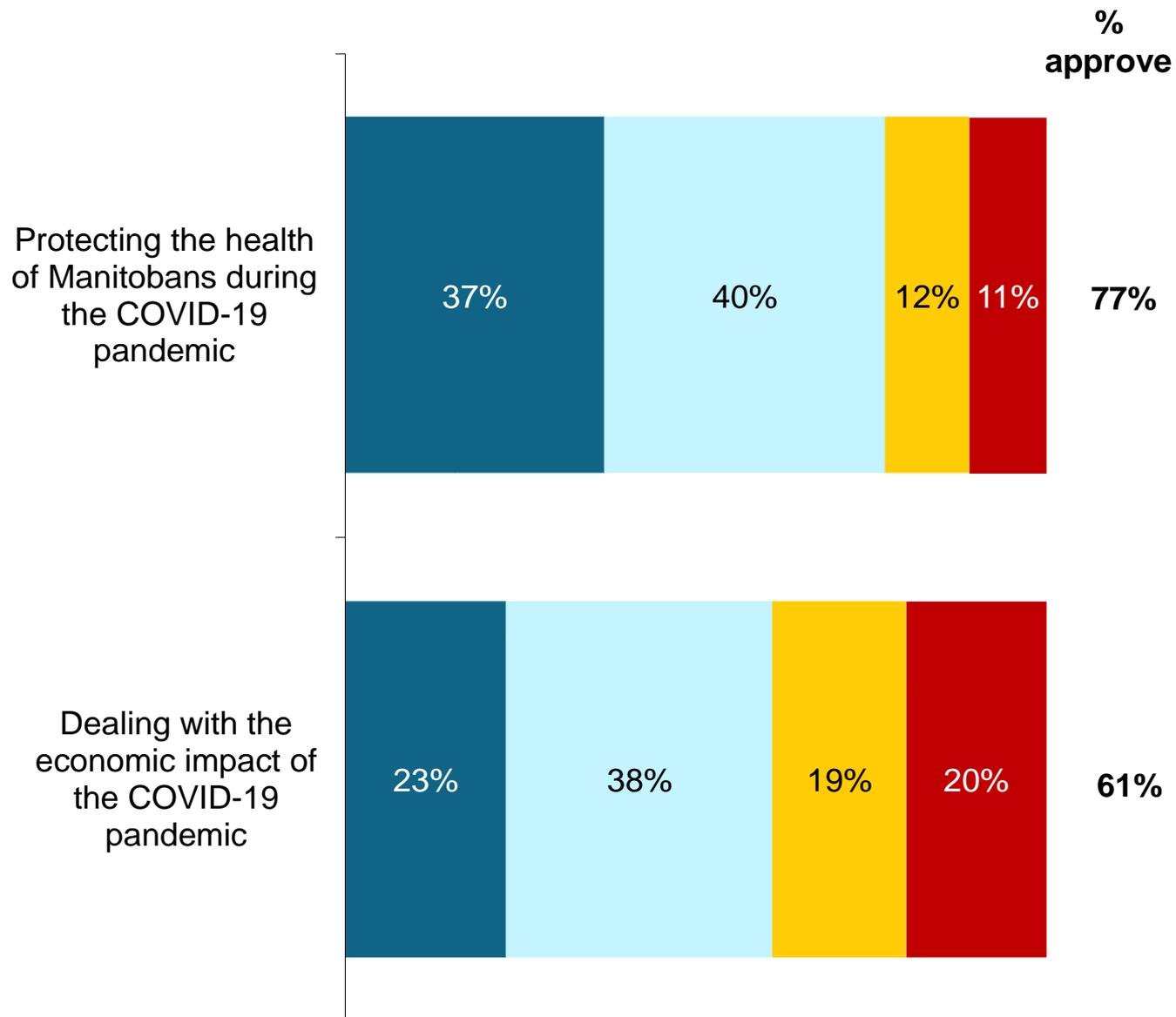
PHOTO: MIKAELA MACKENZIE/WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

# THREE- QUARTERS APPROVE HEALTH MEASURES; SIX- IN-TEN APPROVE THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

WFP1a/b. "Overall, how would you rate the performance of the Pallister government when it comes to..."

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

- Strongly approve
- Somewhat approve
- Somewhat disapprove
- Strongly disapprove



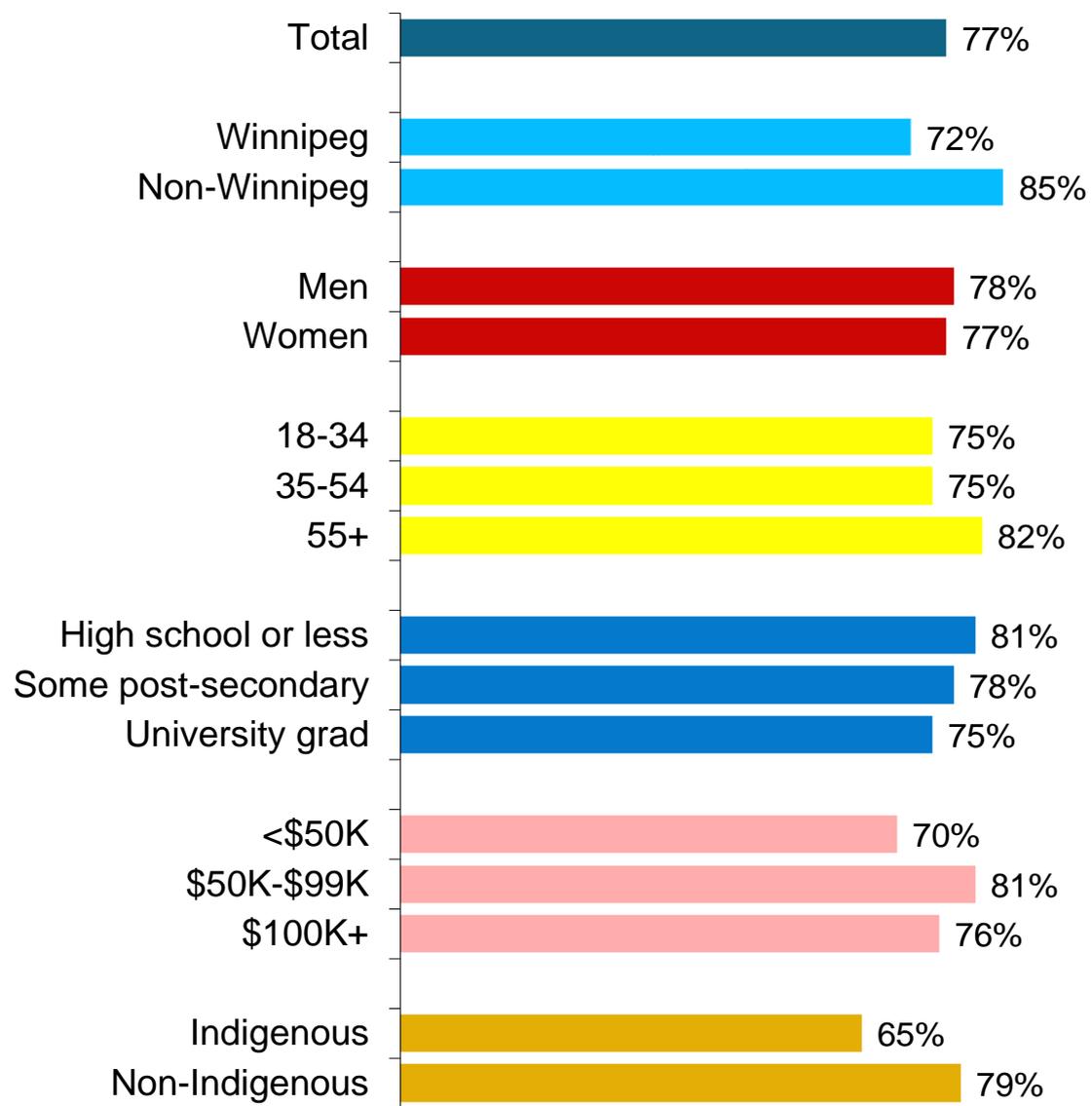
# RURAL MANITOBANS, OLDER ADULTS MOST LIKELY TO APPROVE OF GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO PROTECTING HEALTH

## VIEWS AMONG SUB- GROUPS

WFP1a. "Overall, how would you rate the performance of the Pallister government when it comes to protecting the health of Manitobans during the COVID-19 pandemic?"

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

% who strongly/somewhat approve of the government's **health** measures



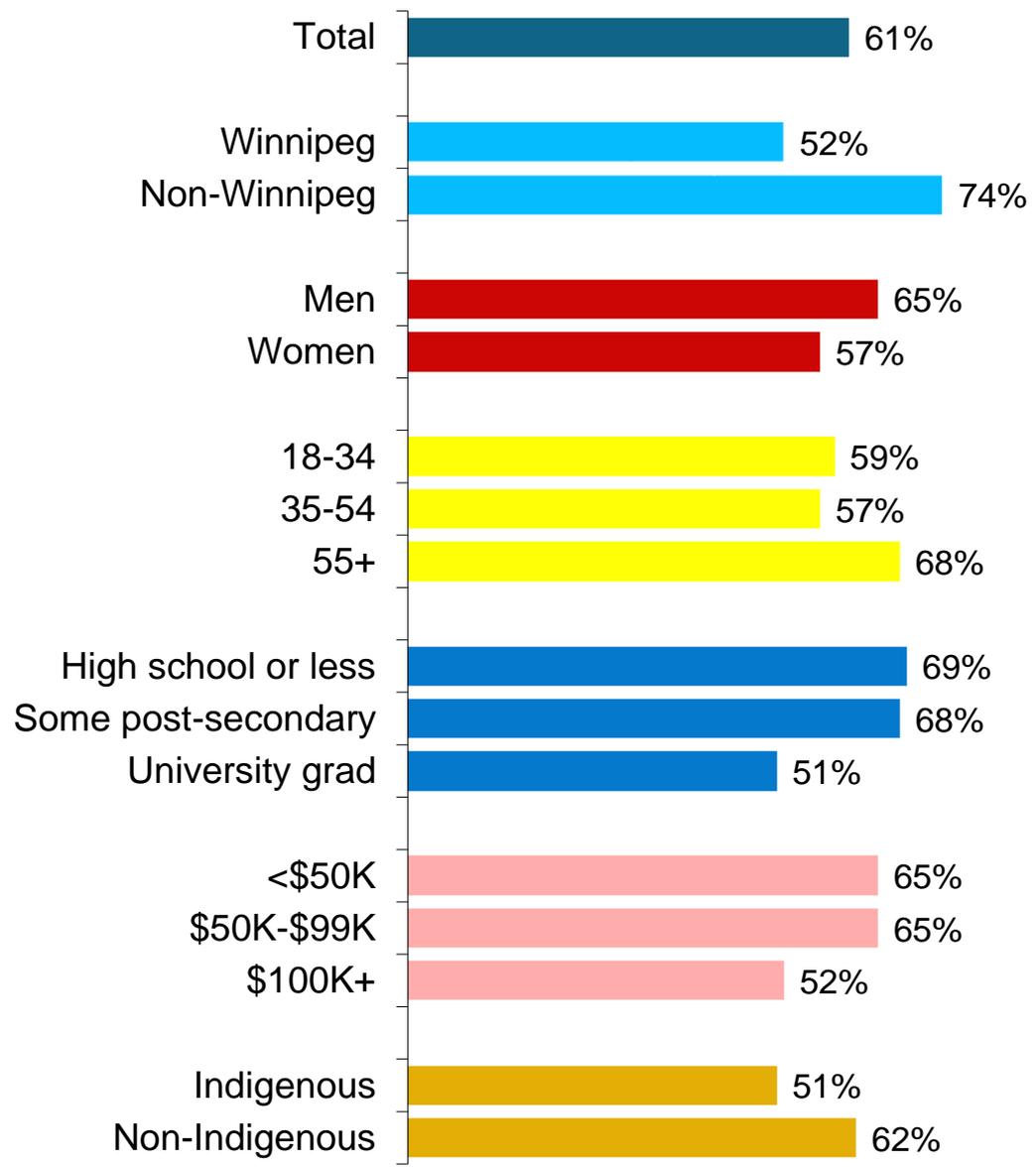
# WINNIPEG RESIDENTS LESS LIKELY TO APPROVE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE ON ECONOMIC MEASURES

## VIEWS AMONG SUB-GROUPS

WFP1b. "Overall, how would you rate the performance of the Pallister government when it comes to dealing with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic?"

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

% who strongly/somewhat approve of the government's **economic** measures



# ONLY ONE-IN-THREE NDP SUPPORTERS, ONE-HALF OF LIBERAL VOTERS APPROVE THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

## VIEWS BY POLITICAL PARTY PREFERENCE

WFP1a/b. "Overall, how would you rate the performance of the Pallister government when it comes to..."

Base: All respondents (N=1,000)

