

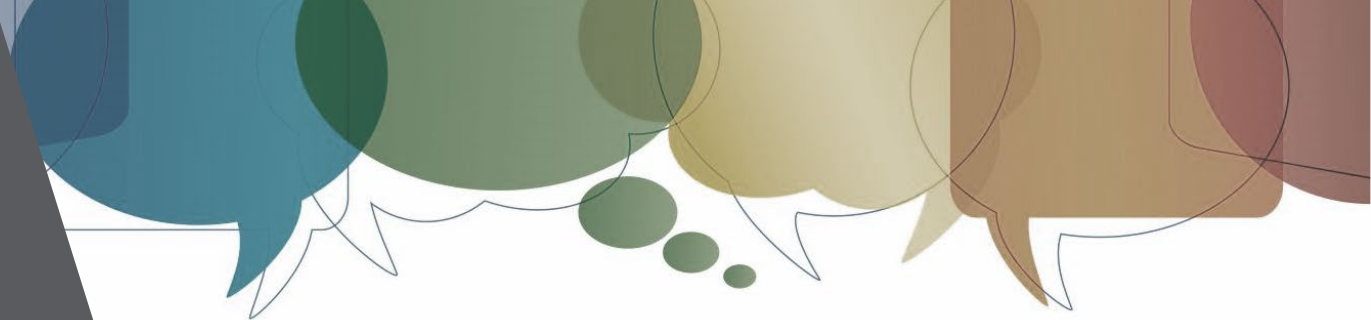


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PULSE REPORT ON COVID-19 – REPORT #67

CABINET OFFICE

February 5th 2021



KEY FINDINGS

Key Findings

1 The government's 'right track' scores have remained remarkably stable at 67% for the past five weeks.

2 COVID-19 continues to climb and is now at its highest point as a priority – about 76% of Ontarians now view it as the top priority. Its peak last spring was 56%.

Economy has declined to 5%, although we know that the pandemic and economy are interwoven issues.

Education has disappeared as a priority, although to some degree it is entangled with the COVID-19 issue.

3 The government's performance on the metrics 'effectively managing the vaccinations' (-13) and 'effectively managing long-term care' (-31) remain stable, but they continue to be the weakest government issue areas.

4 The second COVID-19 wave has weakened perception towards the government's handling of the economy. The government's scores on 'creating/protecting jobs' and 'improving Ontario's finances' slipped again this past week, continuing a previously noted trend. 'Building the provincial economy' scores are stable, but remain much lower compared to last spring/summer.

5 Findings over the past three weeks suggest that Ontarians' support for the state of emergency and province-wide shutdown remains strong, but is lower compared to last April.

On a positive note, the preliminary results indicate that a clear majority of Ontarians believe that province-wide shutdown has helped to cause a decline in the reported COVID-19 cases.

6 Trust in the government taking measured and appropriate measures to fight COVID-19 has risen since early January. In contrast, there continues to be a steady decline in 'trust' in the government's communications regarding the management of the provincial economy.

As well, trust in the communication about the COVID-19 situation has gradually declined since early January.

Key Findings

There appears to be a slight decline in the perception that the government is trying to balance the interests of economic and health considerations, while there has been a modest increase in those who think the government is putting economic interests ahead of the health of the population.

Over the past three weeks, Ontarians are increasingly believe that the province has 'not done enough' in response to the public health modelling.

The preliminary results indicate that Ontarians have a very high awareness of the UK, Brazilian, South African variants of the COVID-19 virus. These findings suggest that that most Ontarians see these COVID-19 variants as more dangerous. Virtually no thinks they are less dangerous.

Given the perceived threats from COVID-19 variants, the preliminary results indicates that Ontarians are highly concerned about these COVID-19 mutations.

As reported previously, Ontarians overwhelmingly support different initiatives to prevent COVID-19 variant spread from outside Canada.

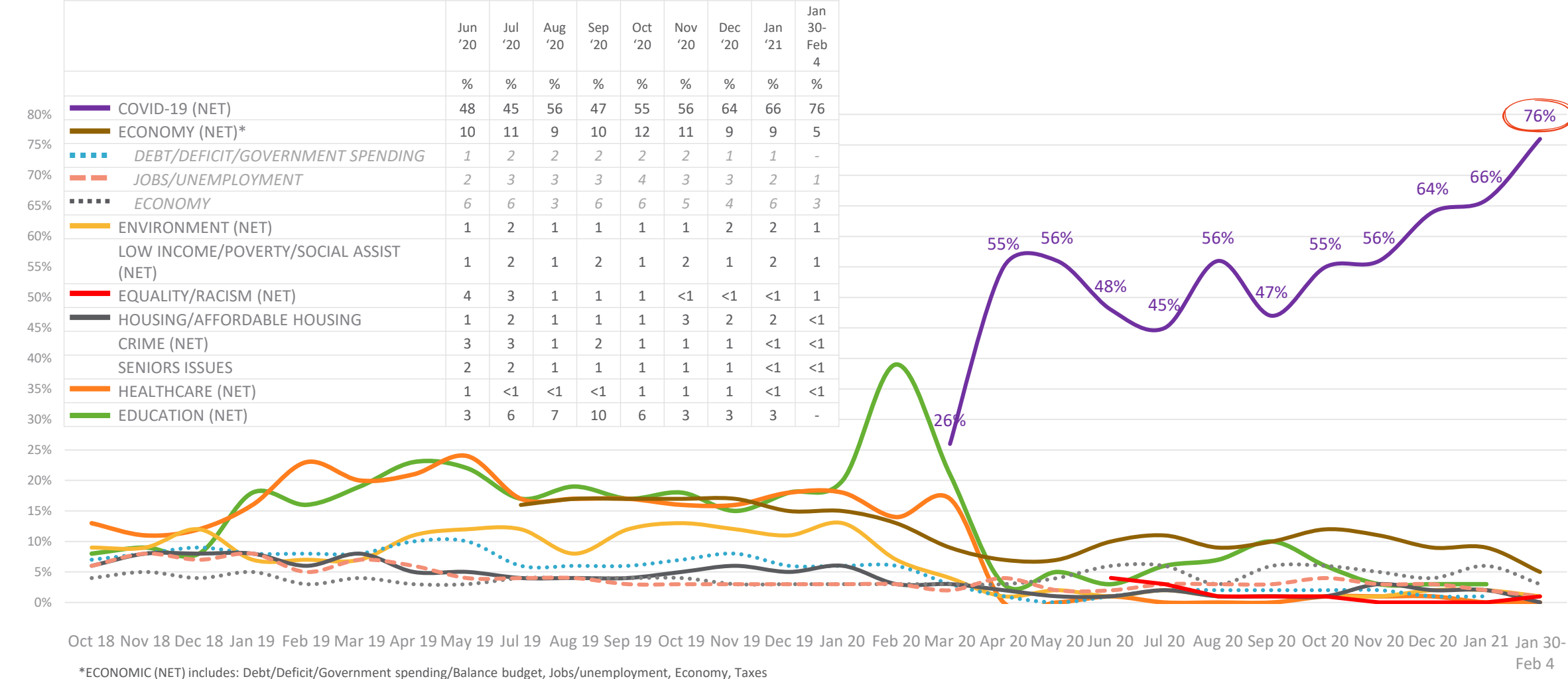
However, they do see the policing of Ontario's international border crossings as a federal government responsibility.

TOP ONTARIO GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES



ONTARIANS' TOP PRIORITIES REQUIRING ATTENTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT

The 'COVID-19' priority has reached its highest point: 76% (much higher than the early days of the pandemic). The 'Economy' dropped to 5%, while 'Education' has largely disappeared as a priority.

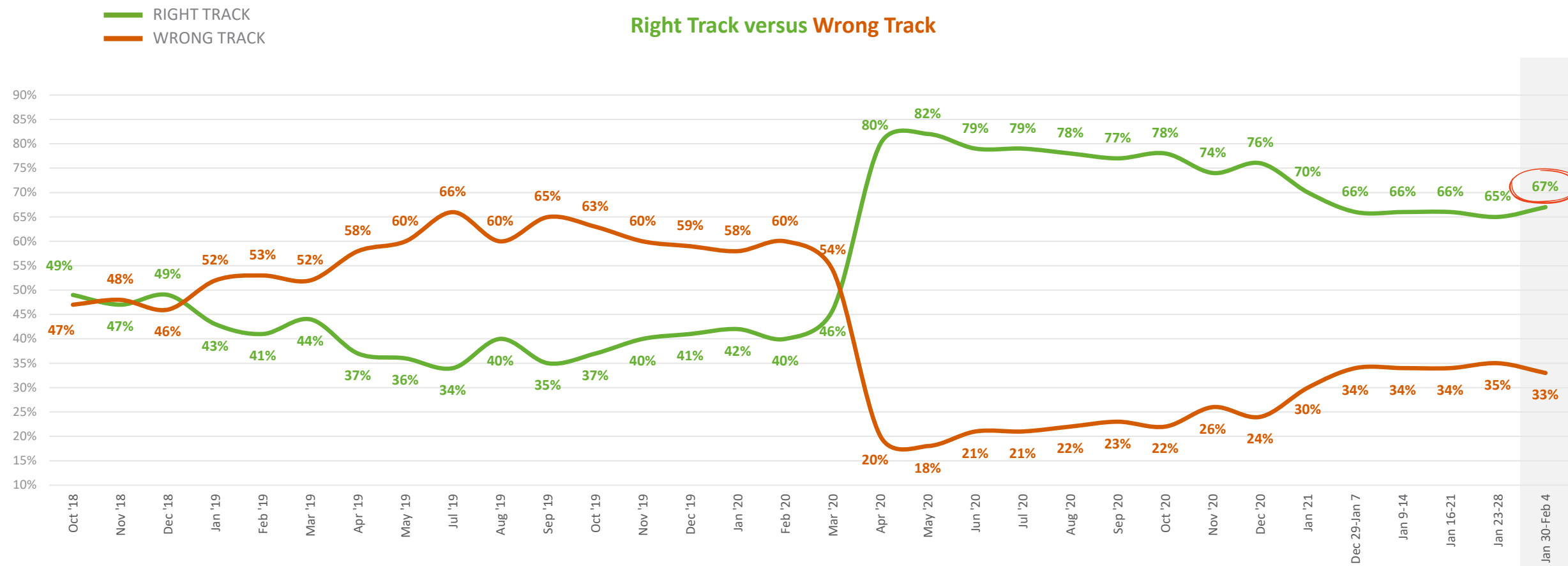


Q1. Thinking about the issues presently facing Ontario, which ONE do you feel should receive the GREATEST attention from the Ontario provincial government? That is, what should be the top priority?

RIGHT TRACK
WRONG TRACK



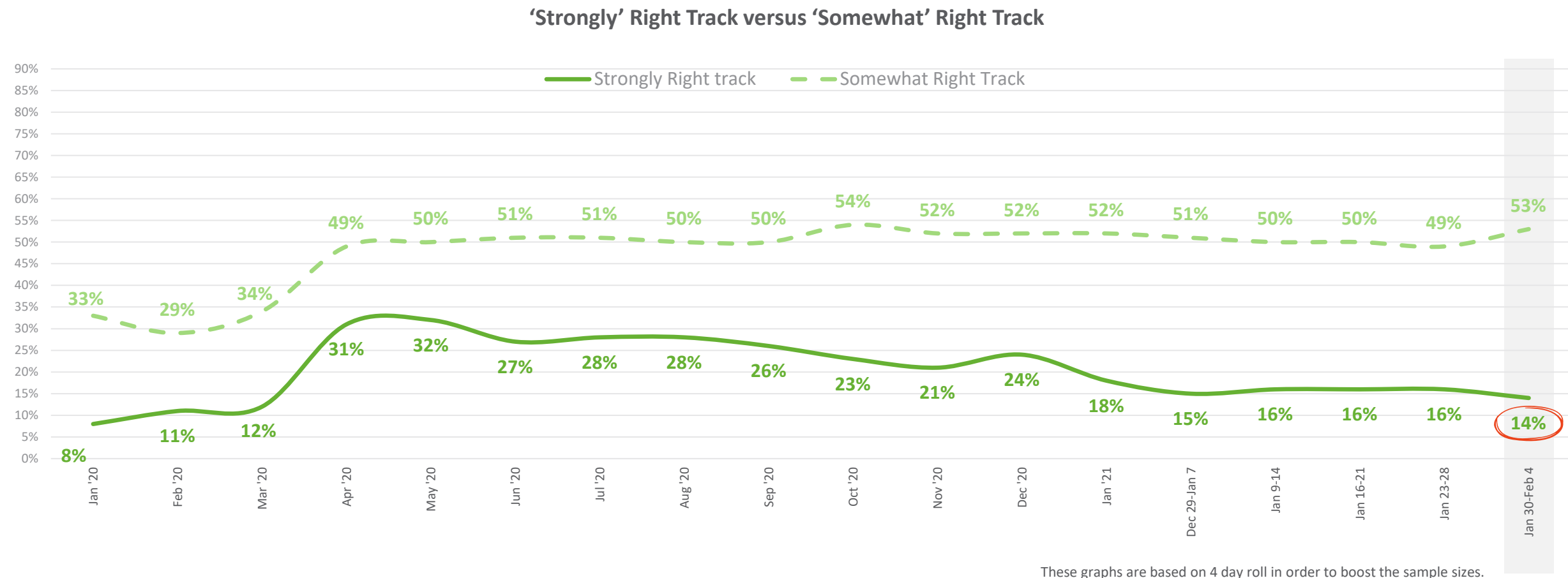
The government’s ‘right track’ scores have remained relatively stable at 67% over the past five weeks.



These graphs are based on 4 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province?
Base: Total sample

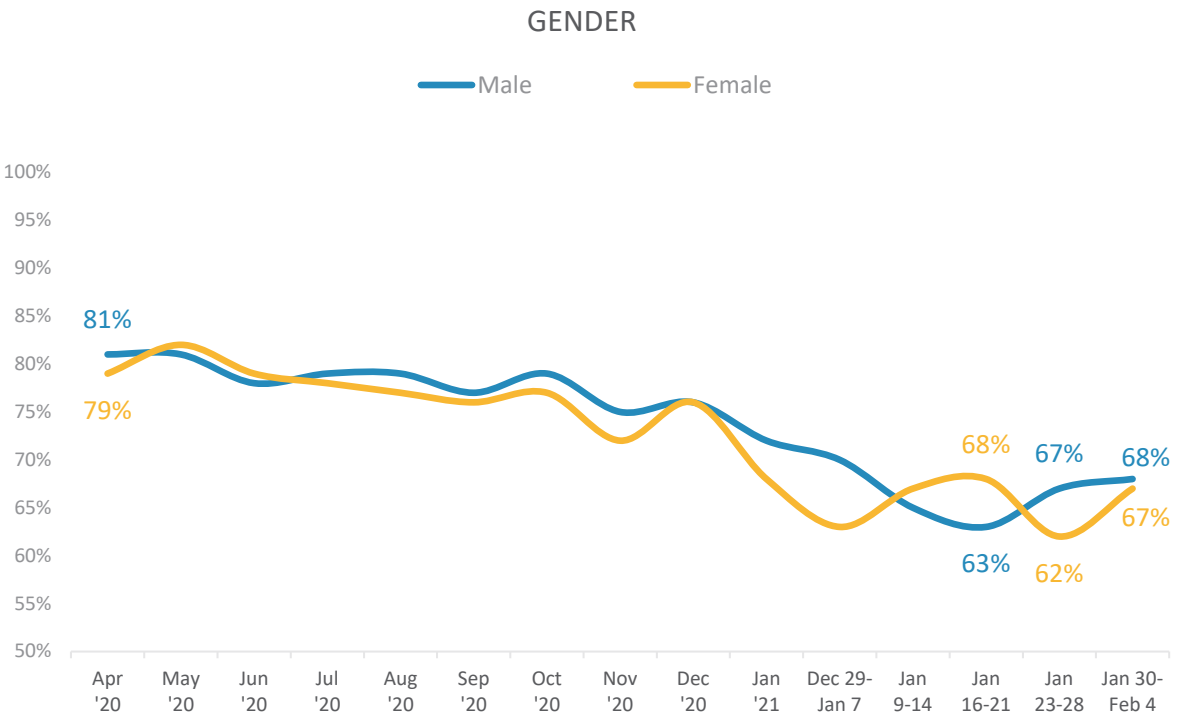
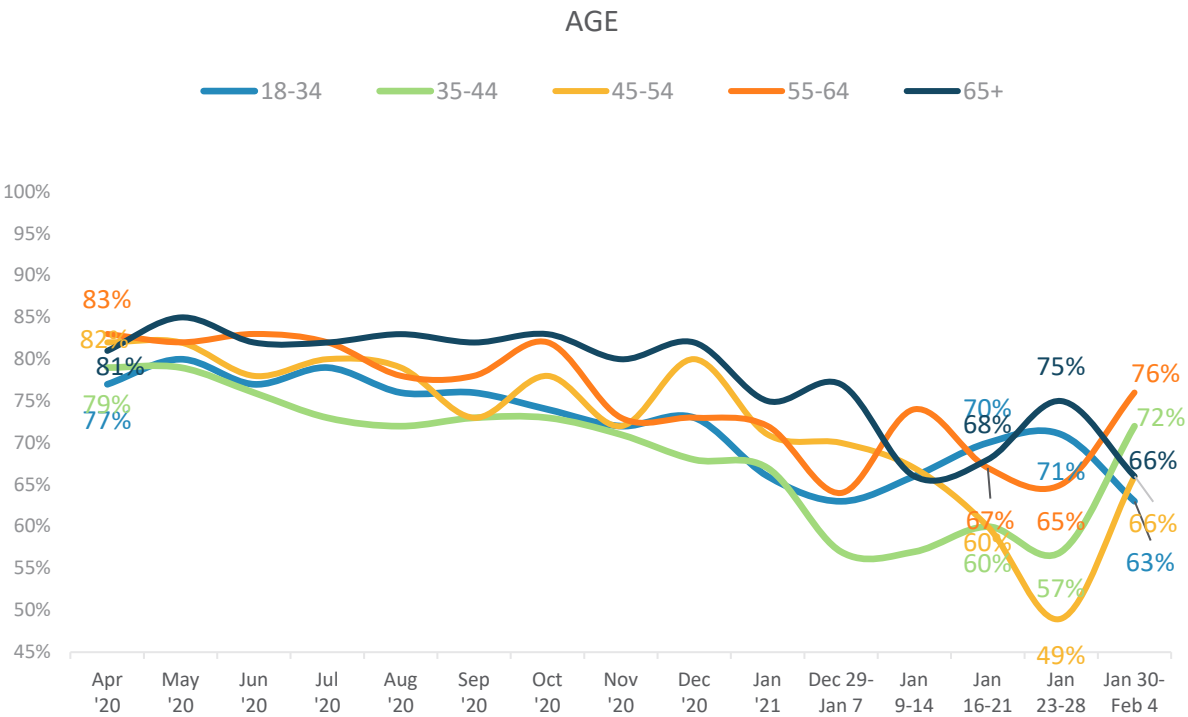
The government’s ‘strongly right track’ scores have also stabilized at 14% over the past five weeks.



Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province?
Base: Total sample

The ‘right track’ scores among women nudged upward over the past week.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

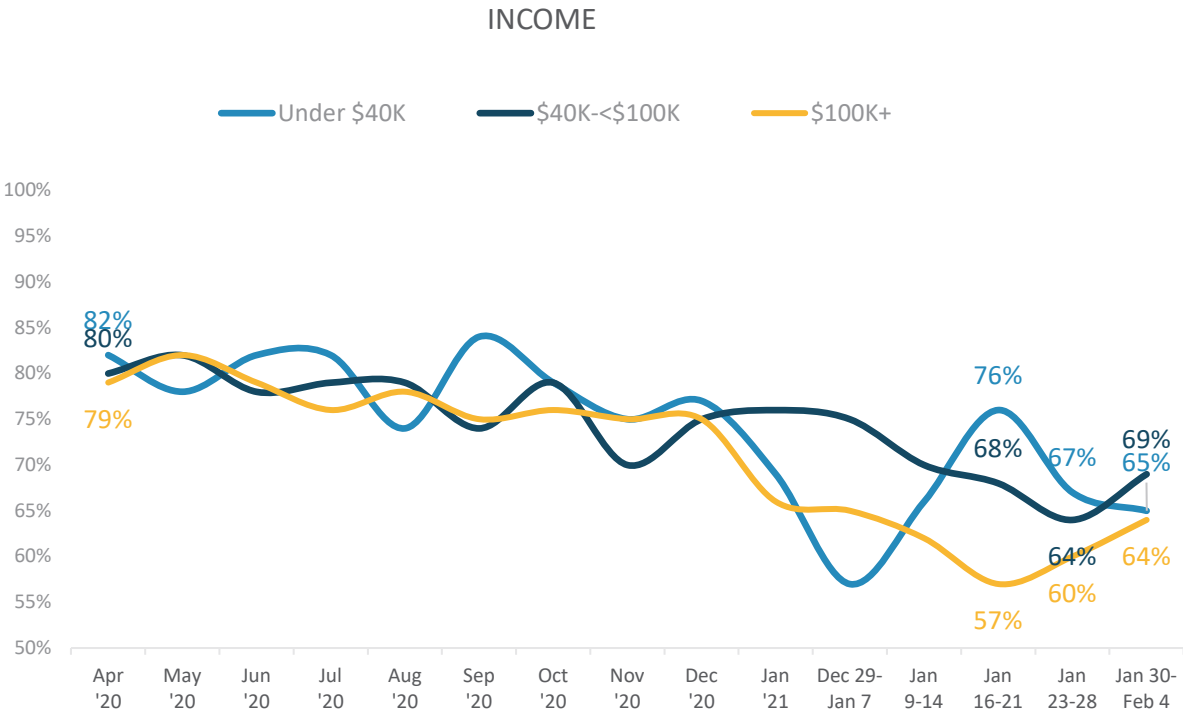
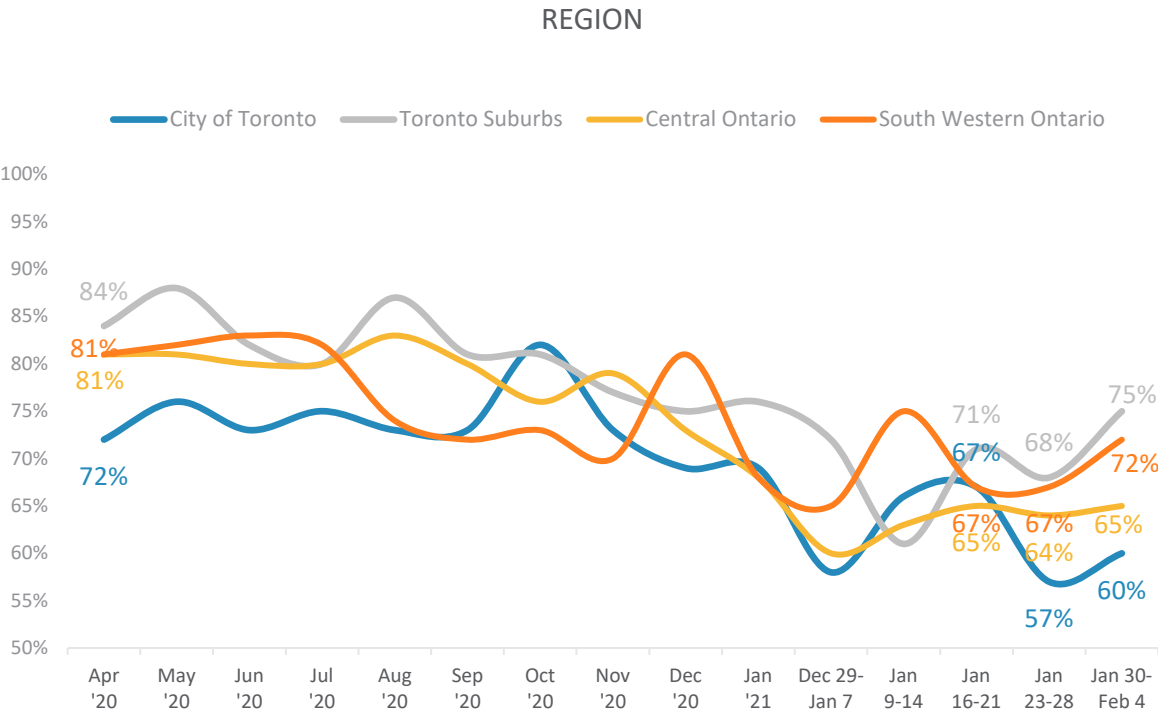


These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province?
Base: Total sample

The ‘right track’ scores is strongest in the Toronto suburbs, while weaker in the City of Toronto. The scores increased in these regions over the past week.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll



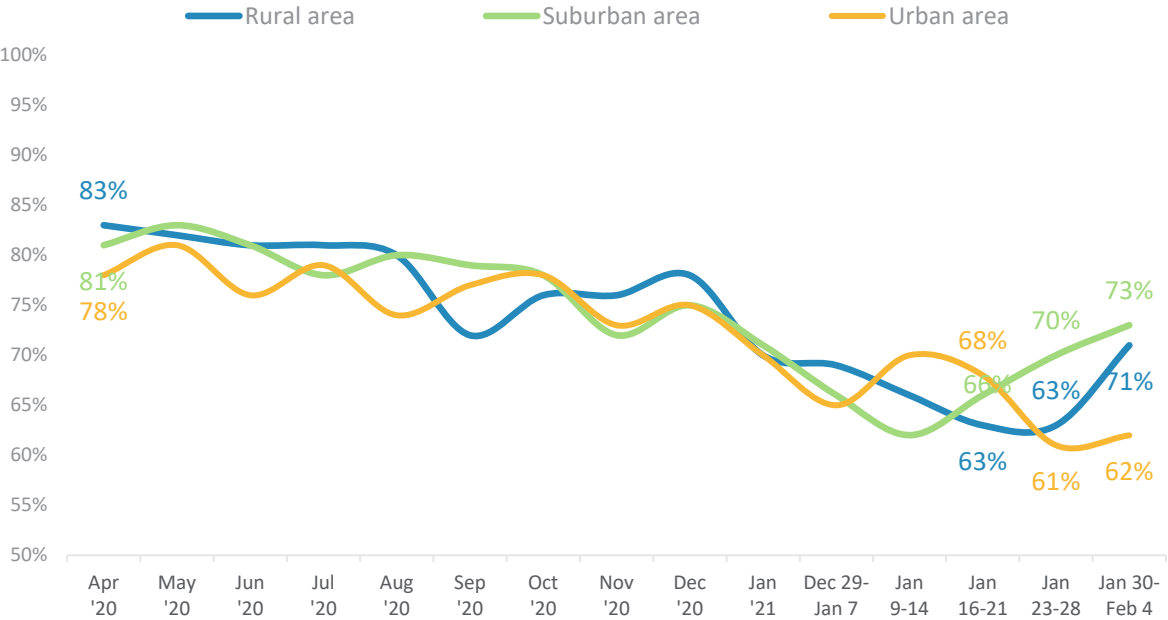
These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province?
Base: Total sample

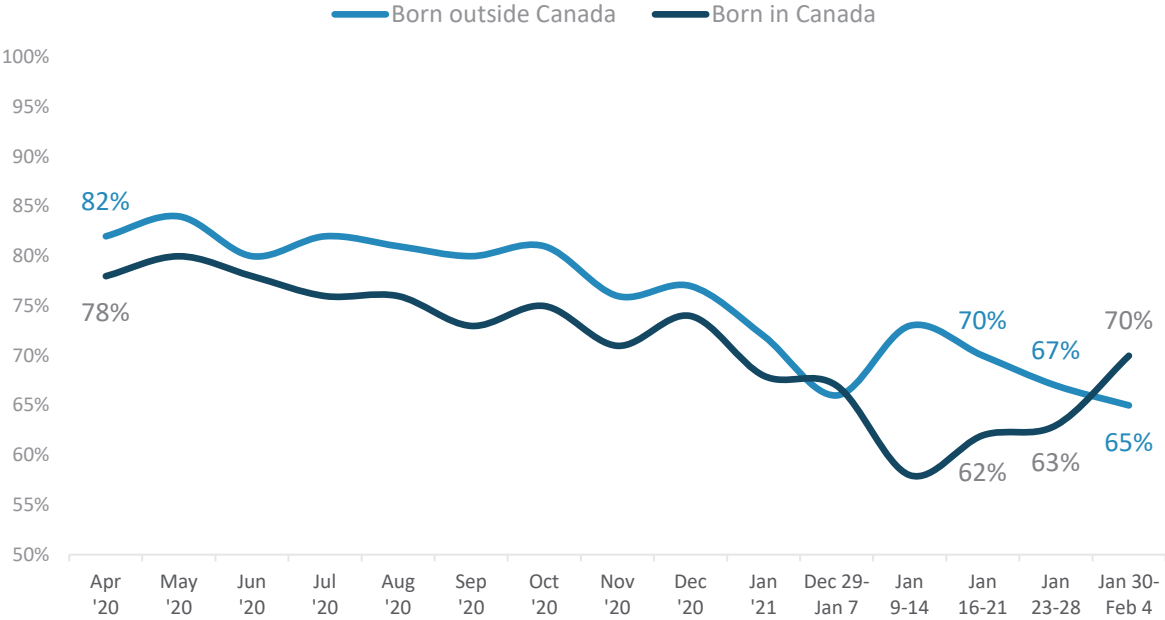
The ‘right track’ scores increased among those born in Canada, while declining among those born outside Canada. These scores are higher in rural and suburban areas compared to urban areas.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

RURAL/URBAN/SUBURBAN



BORN OUTSIDE/WITHIN CANADA



These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

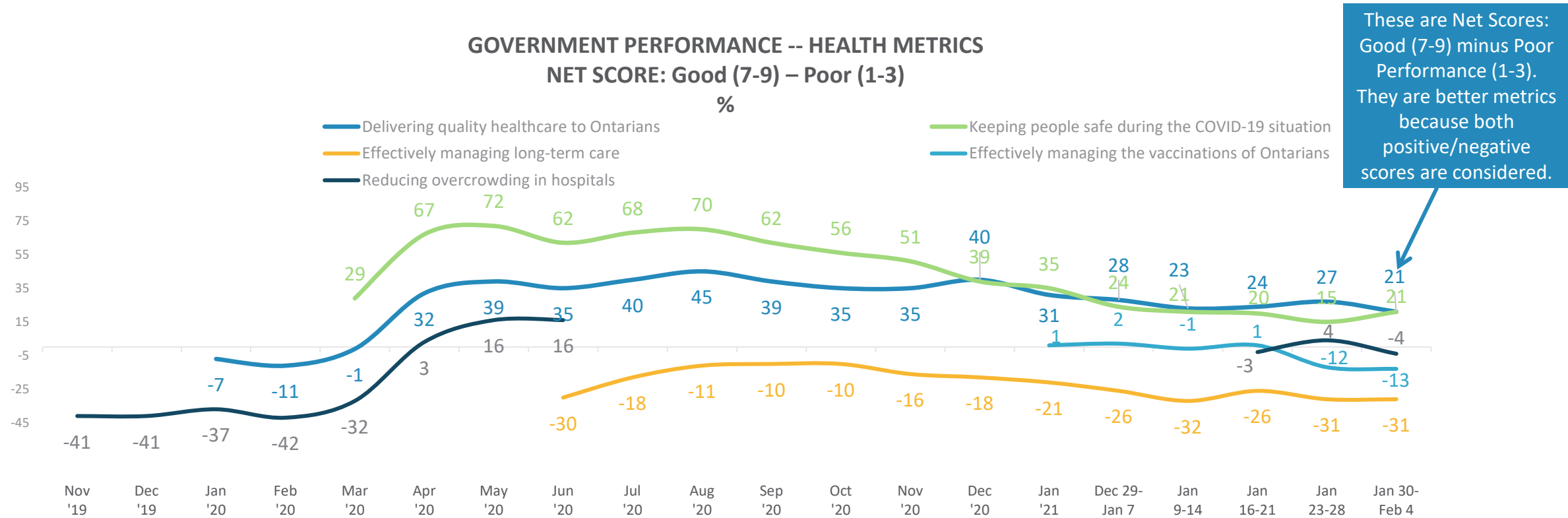
Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province?
Base: Total sample

PERCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The government’s performance on the metrics ‘effectively managing the vaccinations’ (-13) and ‘effectively managing long-term care’ (-31) remain stable, but they continue to be the weakest government issue areas.

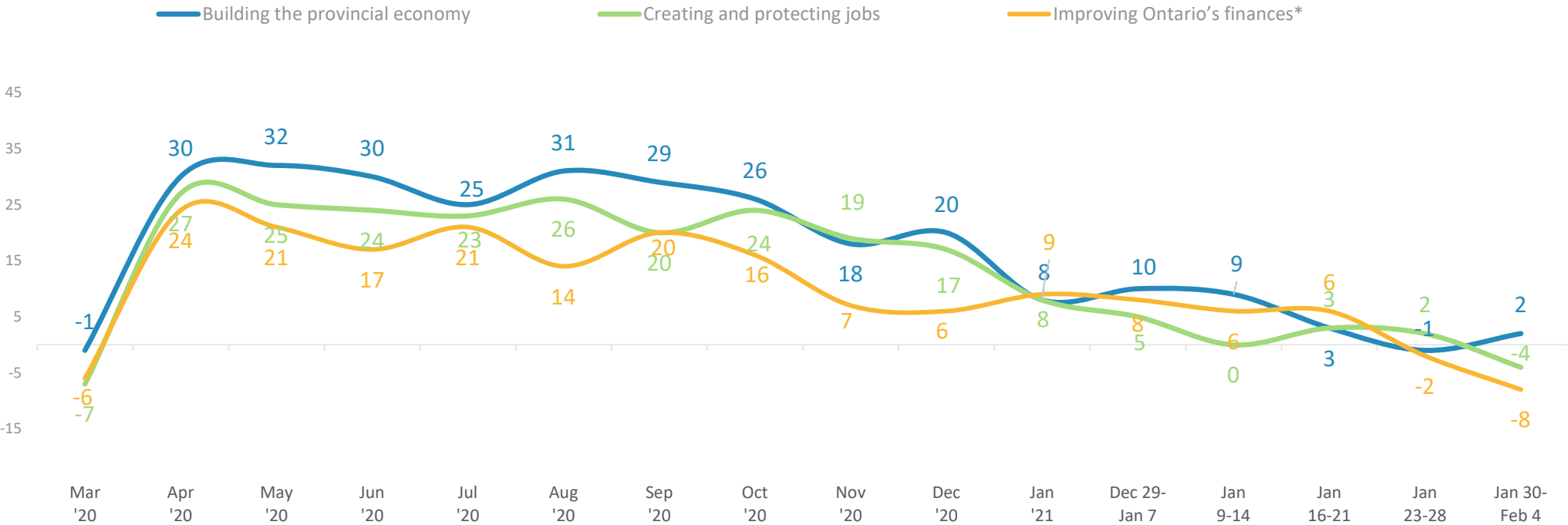
- Over the past week, ‘delivering quality healthcare to Ontarians’ declined, while ‘keeping people safe during the COVID-19 situation’ increased.



Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?
Bases vary

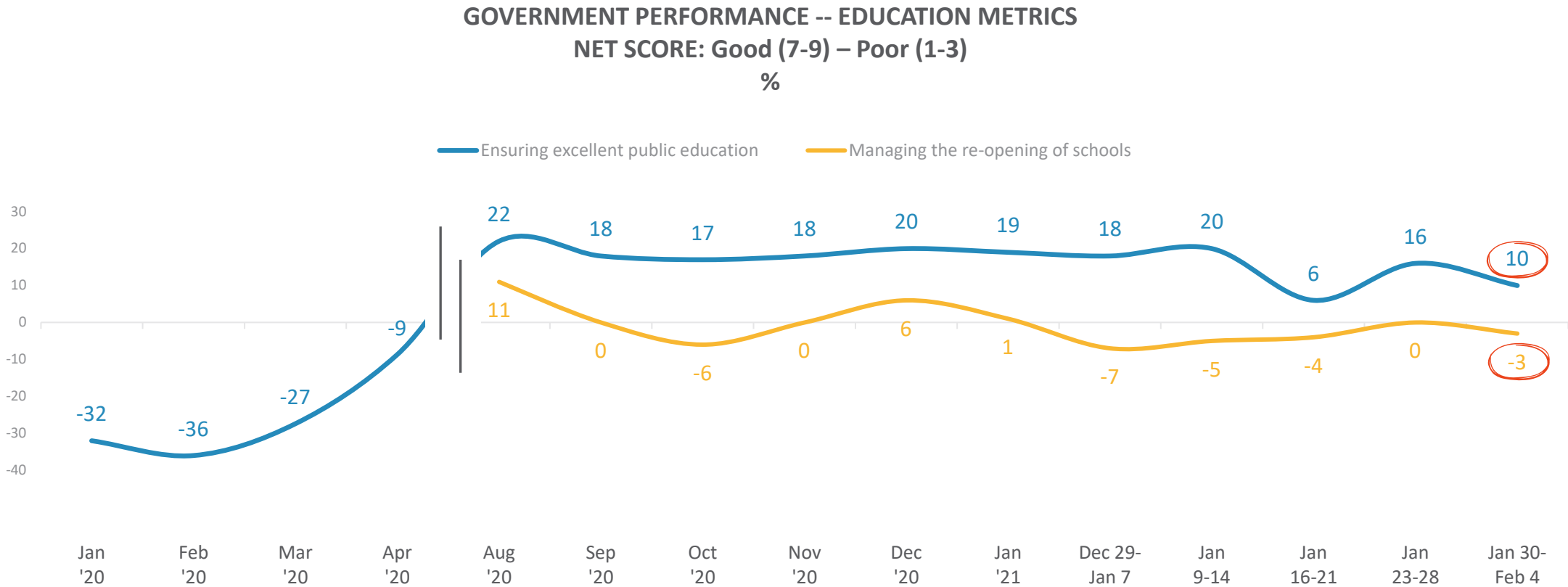
The government’s scores on ‘creating/protecting jobs’ and ‘improving Ontario’s finances’ slipped again this past week, continuing a previously noted trend. ‘Building the provincial economy’ scores are stable, but remains much lower compared to last spring/summer.

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE – ECONOMIC/GOVERNMENT SPENDING METRICS
NET SCORE: Good (7-9) – Poor (1-3)
%



Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?
*Former phrasing: “Improve Ontario’s finances”
**Former phrasing: “Sufficient business support during the COVID-19 situation”
Bases vary

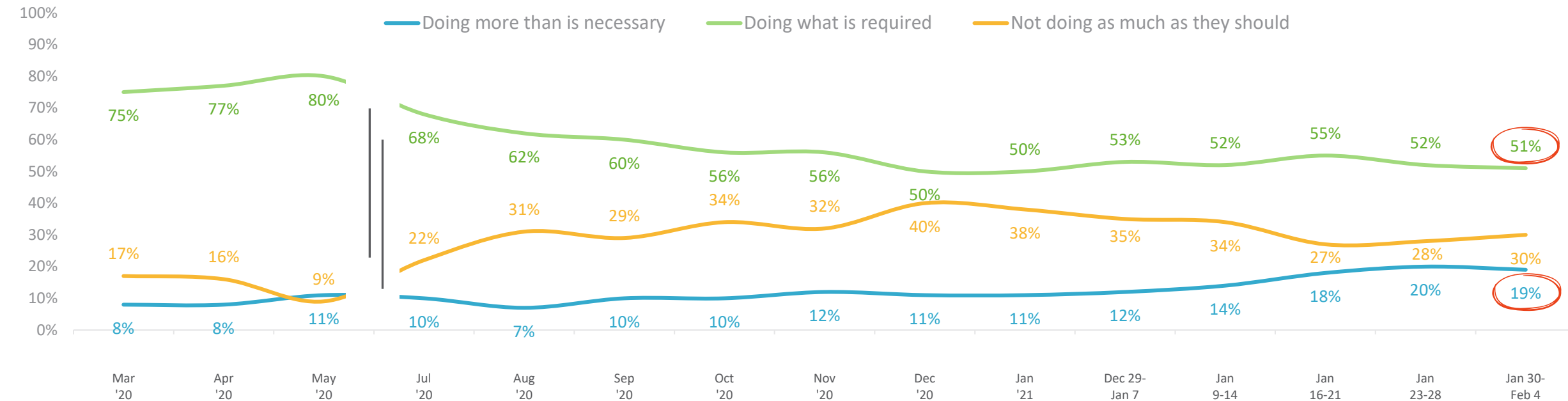
Perceptions toward the government’s performance on ‘ensuring excellent public education’ dropped slightly, while ‘managing the re-opening of schools’ remained relatively stable.



Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?
Bases vary

Just over 1-in-2 believe the province has done enough, with increasing numbers of Ontarians (now up to 19% from 11% December) who feel that the government has done too much.

	Doing what is required																Not doing as much as they should															
	Mar '20	Apr '20	May '20	June '20	Jul '20	Aug '20	Sep '20	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4	Mar '20	Apr '20	May '20	June '20	Jul '20	Aug '20	Sep '20	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
Right Track	76%	79%	82%	n/a	75%	70%	68%	66%	66%	60%	61%	62%	64%	71%	64%	59%	15%	13%	8%	n/a	15%	23%	21%	25%	22%	31%	29%	28%	29%	17%	20%	23%
Wrong Track	73%	66%	66%	n/a	42%	33%	35%	25%	26%	19%	26%	34%	29%	25%	29%	37%	21%	26%	19%	n/a	48%	57%	56%	61%	60%	66%	60%	50%	43%	47%	43%	43%



QCV-6. Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including declaring a second state of emergency and a stronger stay at home order until the middle of February, at this time would you say they are ... (previous phrasing) Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including advising the public and businesses about prevention measures, shutting down the province for several weeks, and keeping kids out of school, at this time would you say they are ... (previous phrasing) Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including advising the public and businesses about prevention measures, gradually reopening the province, and planning for the return to school in the fall, at this time would you say they are ... (previous phrasing) Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including issuing a Declaration of Emergency, ordering non-essential businesses to close, advising the public and businesses about prevention measures and closing publicly funded schools, at this time would you say they are ... (READ LIST. RANDOMIZE ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.) (previous phrasing) Thinking about the measures that the Government of Ontario has already taken to limit the spread of the virus, including advising the public and businesses about prevention measures and closing publicly funded schools, at this time would you say they are ...

Base: Total sample, base varies

SUPPORT FOR THE PROVINCIAL SHUTDOWN



Findings over the past three weeks suggest that Ontarians’ support for the state of emergency and province-wide shutdown remains strong, but is lower compared to last April.

	Apr '20	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	1206	300	300	300
	%	%	%	%
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE	96	77	76	82
Very supportive	81	51	53	50
Somewhat supportive	15	25	23	32
Somewhat opposed	3	10	10	8
Very opposed	1	14	13	8
TOTAL OPPOSED	3	23	23	17
Don't know	-	-	1	1

QCV-8A. The Government of Ontario has declared a state of emergency, issued a stay at home order, placed further restrictions on all non-essential stores among other actions. Would you say you are ... (READ LIST. ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.] ...of the government taking this step? (previous phrasing) The Government of Ontario has declared a state of emergency, closed all non-essential stores, and introduced a number of restrictions to limit the spread of the virus. Would you say you are ... (READ LIST. ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY.] ...of the government taking this step?

Base: Total sample

DECLINING COVID-19 CASES CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO PROVINCIAL SHUTDOWN

The preliminary results indicate that a clear majority of Ontarians believe that province-wide shutdown has helped to cause a decline in reported COVID-19 cases.

	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300
	%
TOTAL ALL/MOST OF IT	60
All of it	16
Most of it	45
Some of it	32
None of it	6
TOTAL SOME/NONE OF IT	38
Don't know/not sure	2

QCV-188. Given the recent decline in reported COVID 19 cases, how much of this decline do you attribute to the Ontario Government lockdown?

Base: Total sample

Ontarians are divided over whether the schools should be reopened for in-class learning even if the state of emergency and stay at home order continue.

- There are very few demographic differences except for those aged 65+ who are much more supportive.

	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300	300
	%	%
TOTAL SUPPORTIVE	52	52
Very supportive	24	25
Somewhat supportive	28	27
Not too supportive	15	21
Not at all supportive	32	24
TOTAL NOT SUPPORTIVE	47	46
Don't know/Not sure	1	2

QCV-184. In response to the modelling that showed COVID-19 infections increasing significantly, the provincial government declared a second state of emergency and imposed a stay at home order. This included closing all schools in southern Ontario. Given that cases continue to be high, how supportive are you of reopening these schools for in-class learning?

Base: Total sample

Ontarians increasingly believe the provincial government is acting on the recommendations from public health leaders.

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300	300	229
	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	72	69	78
Strongly agree	27	28	32
Somewhat agree	45	41	46
Neither agree nor disagree	9	11	5
Somewhat disagree	10	12	10
Strongly disagree	7	5	6
TOTAL DISAGREE	16	17	16
Don't know	2	4	1

QCV-176. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Ontario government is acting on the recommendations from public health leaders?

Base: Total sample

There appears to be a slight decline in the perception that government is trying to balance the interests of economic and health considerations, while there has been a modest increase in those who think the government is putting economic interests ahead of the health of the population.

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	Varies		
	%	%	%
The provincial government has put the interests of the economy above that of the health of the population	14	14	22
The provincial government has tried to balance the interests of the economy with the health of the population	50	48	43
The provincial government has put the health of the population ahead of the interests of the economy	31	34	32
Don't know/Not sure	5	3	3

QCV-178. Which of the following statements best describes the provincial government’s actions regarding COVID-19. Would you say...

Base: Total sample

Slightly fewer Ontarians think the government should be trying to balance the interests of economic and health considerations, while just over 4-in-10 believe it should be putting health ahead of the economy.

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	Varies		
	%	%	%
The provincial government should put the interests of the economy above that of the health of the population	3	3	6
The provincial government should balance the interests of the economy with the health of the population	55	59	49
The provincial government should put the health of the population ahead of the interests of the economy	40	35	44
Don't know/Not sure	2	2	1

QCV-179. And which statement best reflects your own point of view as to what the provincial government should do:

Base: Total sample

Over the past three weeks, there has been shift in Ontarians view that the province has ‘not done enough’ in response to the public health modelling.

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	V		
	%	%	%
It has done far more than enough	11	13	7
It has done enough	51	42	41
It has not done enough	36	42	48
Don't know/not sure	2	3	4

QCV-183. In response to the modelling that shows that COVID-19 infections will increase significantly should things remain the same, the provincial government declared a second state of emergency and issued a stay at home order. In light of these recent actions, to what extent do you think the provincial government has done enough to stop the spread of COVID-19? Do you think it has done...

Base: Total sample

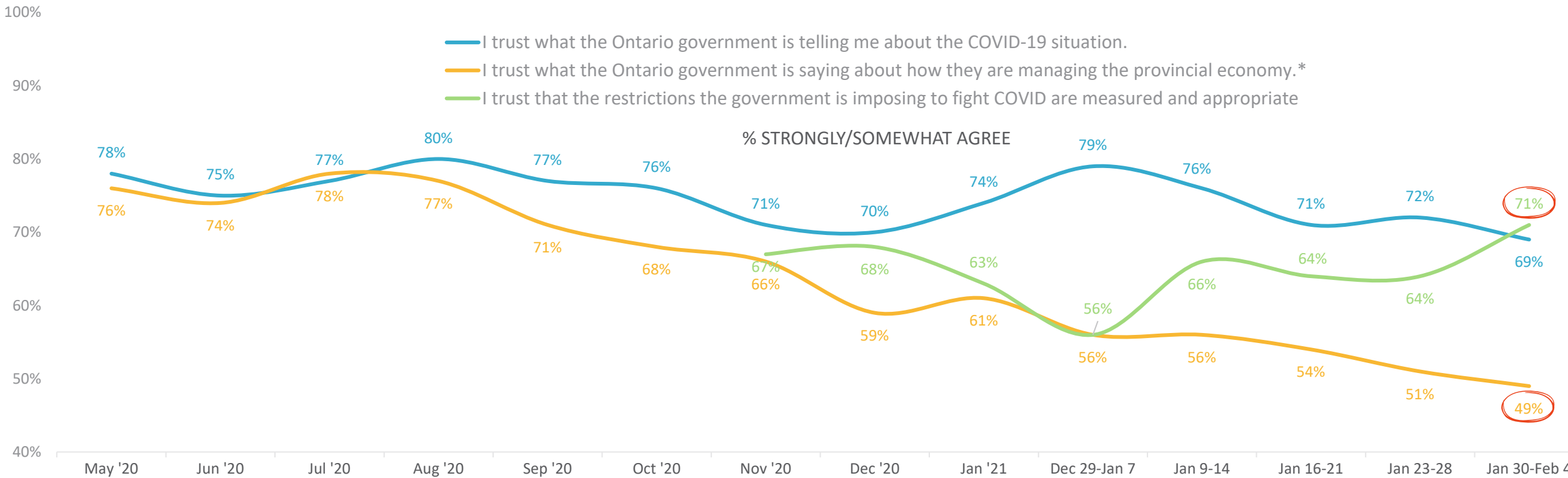
CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT COVID-19 MESSAGING



TRUST IN THE GOVERNMENT’S COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT COVID-19

Trust in the government taking measured and appropriate measures to fight COVID-19 has risen since early January. In contrast, there continues to be a steady decline in ‘trust’ in the government’s communications regarding the management of the provincial economy

- As well, trust in the communication about COVID-19 situation has gradually declined since early January.



QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...
* Previous phrasing: I trust what the Ontario government is saying about how they are re-opening the provincial economy. /I trust what the Ontario government is saying about how they plan to re-open the provincial economy
Base: Total sample, base varies

FAITH IN PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERSHIP



Just over one-third of Ontarians indicate they have lost faith in the decisions about COVID-19 by public health leaders.

I have lost faith in the decisions made about COVID by public health leaders

	Oct 31- Nov 5	Nov 7-12	Nov 14-19	Nov 21-26	Nov 28- Dec 3	Dec 5-10	Dec 12-17	Dec 19-23	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
n=	varies												
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	27	26	30	39	38	31	34	28	-	47	36	33	37
Strongly agree	12	17	15	20	17	17	13	16	-	23	17	14	18
Somewhat agree	15	9	15	19	21	13	21	12	-	23	19	19	20
Neither agree nor disagree	3	5	2	10	11	12	3	7	-	8	3	8	9
Somewhat disagree	27	23	22	21	10	29	32	24	-	22	31	21	25
Strongly disagree	41	44	43	31	38	27	30	40	-	23	30	38	29
TOTAL DISAGREE	68	66	66	52	48	57	62	64	-	45	61	59	54
Not applicable	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	2	2	2	-	3	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Total sample

Many Ontarians believe the public health projections on COVID-19 infections, but the believability in the modelling has declined.

I don't believe as many people will become ill with COVID-19 as the government projections say

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Apr '20	May '20
n=	varies	
	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	27	35
Strongly agree	11	13
Somewhat agree	17	22
Neither agree nor disagree	11	10
Somewhat disagree	26	25
Strongly disagree	32	28
TOTAL DISAGREE	58	53
Not applicable	<1	<1
Don't know	4	2

I don't believe as many people will become ill with COVID-19 as the new public health projections say

Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
varies		
%	%	%
32	27	35
14	12	15
18	15	21
8	5	9
20	20	13
37	44	37
57	64	50
-	-	-
3	4	6

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about COVID-19:
QCV-8B Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...
Base: Total sample

The preliminary results suggest that Ontarians believe in the threat of the COVID-19 variants. When the issue of COVID-19 variants is mentioned, most Ontarians believe the COVID-19 infection projections outlined by public health leaders.

As you may know, the Ontario government released new modelling developed by public health officials on Jan 12, 2021 that suggests, based on current projections, that there will be a significant increase in COVID infections and no more intensive care beds available for COVID 19 patients by early February. How believable is this to you?

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28
n=	300	300
	%	%
TOTAL BELIEVABLE	77	77
Very believable	41	43
Somewhat believable	36	34
Not too believable	14	12
Not at all believable	8	11
TOTAL NOT BELIEVABLE	22	22
Don't know/not sure	1	1

As you may know, the Ontario government has recently released updated public health modelling, which shows that as a result of new COVID variants coming into Ontario, there is a risk that the rate of daily infections will increase faster. How believable is the modelling that shows an increase in cases due to these new variants?

Jan 30-Feb 4
300
%
85
35
49
5
6
11
5

QCV-182. As you may know, the Ontario government has recently released updated public health modelling, which shows that as a result of new COVID variants coming into Ontario, there is a risk that the rate of daily infections will increase faster. How believable is the modelling that shows an increase in cases due to these new variants? (previous phrasing) As you may know, the Ontario government released new modelling developed by public health officials on Jan 12, 2021 that suggests, based on current projections, that there will be a significant increase in COVID infections and no more intensive care beds available for COVID 19 patients by early February. How believable is this to you?

Base: Total sample

COVID-19 INFECTIONS



Likely due to declining infection cases, there has been jump in the proportion of Ontarians who believe the threat of contracting COVID-19 is much less now.

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE	Jun '20	Jul '20	Aug '20	Sep '20	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	varies										
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I think the threat of contracting COVID-19 is much less now than it was a month ago	58	61	64	54	25	21	17	18	22	22	35

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
*Original phrasing: I see people everyday not following the social distancing guidelines
Base: Total sample

Again, probably reflecting the declining infection rates, there has been an increase in the number of Ontarians who don't think someone themselves will get COVID-19.

I don't think someone like me will get COVID-19

	Apr '20	May '20	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	varies								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	25	22	14	18	18	19	20	15	27
Strongly agree	8	8	6	7	10	8	8	5	9
Somewhat agree	16	15	8	11	9	11	11	10	18
Neither agree nor disagree	13	10	8	9	8	8	8	5	13
Somewhat disagree	22	25	21	23	17	24	23	16	18
Strongly disagree	38	40	56	48	54	47	46	61	37
TOTAL DISAGREE	60	64	76	71	70	71	70	77	55
Not applicable								1	2
Don't know								1	4

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Total sample

There continues to be widespread belief that staying home mean saving lives.

I believe that I am saving lives by staying at home

	Apr '20	May '20	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
n=	varies						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	90	87	83	88	75	81	83
Strongly agree	69	63	59	73	50	60	59
Somewhat agree	21	24	23	14	25	21	24
Neither agree nor disagree	2	4	2	3	2	4	2
Somewhat disagree	4	6	6	3	8	7	3
Strongly disagree	2	2	8	6	13	7	9
TOTAL DISAGREE	6	8	14	9	21	14	12
Not applicable	1	1	2	-	-	1	1
Don't know	<1	<1	<1	1	3	-	2

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Total sample

Only 19% (down from 26% over the past 2 weeks) believe they would rather take a chance on getting COVID-19 than continue staying at home.

I am starting to feel that I would rather take a chance on getting COVID-19 than continue staying at home

	May '20	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
n=	varies					
	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	17	19	20	26	26	19
Strongly agree	8	12	10	14	18	12
Somewhat agree	9	7	9	12	8	7
Neither agree nor disagree	3	3	6	3	2	4
Somewhat disagree	16	14	7	8	13	13
Strongly disagree	63	62	67	61	57	63
TOTAL DISAGREE	79	76	74	69	70	76
Don't know	1	2	<1	3	2	1

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...

Base: Total sample, base varies

Still, most Ontarians continue to say that they are only leaving their homes to go to the grocery store and the pharmacy.

I am only leaving my house to go to the grocery store and the pharmacy

	Apr '20	May '20	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
n=	varies						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	79	77	76	72	64	65	67
Strongly agree	62	57	56	52	51	51	54
Somewhat agree	16	20	20	20	13	14	14
Neither agree nor disagree	2	2	3	3	2	3	2
Somewhat disagree	8	10	11	6	6	7	11
Strongly disagree	8	9	7	17	17	22	12
TOTAL DISAGREE	16	19	18	24	23	29	23
Not applicable	3	1	2	2	9	2	5
Don't know	1	1	1	-	3	-	2

QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Total sample

DID ALL IT COULD OR COULD HAVE ACTED DIFFERENTLY

The perception that the government ‘could have acted differently’ in dealing with the 2nd wave of the pandemic has increased since early November, with about two-thirds taking this view over the past week.

	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
n=	621	1200	1200	1200	400	300	300	300	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Has done all it can reasonably be expected to do/ All it could reasonably be expected to do	47	45	38	35	31	30	37	32	33
Should have done more/ Could have acted differently	52	53	58	63	67	68	61	66	64
Don't know/Not sure	1	1	5	2	2	2	2	2	4

	Has done all it can reasonably be expected to do/ All it could reasonably be expected to do									Should have done more/ Could have acted differently								
	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4	Oct '20	Nov '20	Dec '20	Jan '21	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
Right Track	56%	54%	46%	44%	41%	41%	53%	44%	40%	43%	44%	49%	54%	57%	59%	46%	54%	57%
Wrong Track	12%	21%	11%	13%	13%	10%	8%	9%	16%	88%	77%	85%	84%	87%	87%	89%	90%	79%

QCV-130. Overall, do you believe the Ontario Government has done all it can reasonably be expected to do to stop the spread of COVID 19 or should it have done more? (previous phrasing) Overall, given the recent increases in reported cases, do you believe the Ontario Government has done all it can reasonably be expected to do or could it have acted differently?

Base: Total sample

COVID-19 VARIANTS



The preliminary results indicate that Ontarians have very high awareness of the UK, Brazilian, South African variants of the COVID-19 virus.

	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300
	%
Yes	93
No	7
Don't know/not sure	<1

QCV-190. Have you heard about COVID variants identified in the UK, Brazil and South Africa that has public health leaders have identified as possible threats to Ontarians?

Base: Total sample

The early results suggest that most Ontarians see these COVID-19 variants as more dangerous. Virtually no one thinks they are less dangerous.

	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300
	%
More dangerous	70
As dangerous	22
Less dangerous	3
Don't know/not sure	6

QCV-191. To the best of your knowledge, are these new variants more dangerous, as dangerous, or less dangerous than the original COVID 19 infection?

Base: Total sample

LEVEL OF CONCERN ABOUT NEW COVID-19 VARIANTS

Given the perceived threats from COVID-19 variants, the preliminary results indicates that Ontarians are highly concerned about these COVID-19 mutations.

	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300
	%
TOTAL CONCERNED	85
Very concerned	49
Somewhat concerned	37
Not very concerned	9
Not at all concerned	5
TOTAL NOT CONCERNED	13
Don't know/Not sure	1

QCV-174. As you may have heard, a new COVID variant identified in the UK was apparently brought into Canada by international travellers. Ontario health officials have confirmed several cases of this new strain of COVID in Ontario. How concerned are you about this new COVID variant?

Base: Total sample

The initial results indicate that a slight majority of Ontarians believe the government should be doing more to stop the spread of the new variant.

	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	227
	%
Has done all it can reasonably be expected to do	39
Should be doing more	56
Don't know/not sure	5

QCV-130A. With the arrival of a new COVID variant identified in the UK, do you believe the Ontario Government has done all it can reasonably be expected to do to stop the spread of the new variant or should it be doing more?

Base: Total sample

VACCINE



Over the past week, there appears to have been a rebound in the confidence levels that the end of COVID-19 is nearer now that the vaccination program is being rolled out.

I am confident the end of COVID-19 is near now that it appears a vaccine is nearly ready

	Nov 21-26	Nov 28-Dec 3	Dec 5-10
n=	varies		
	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	35	38	38
Strongly agree	12	15	14
Somewhat agree	23	24	24
Neither agree nor disagree	10	10	12
Somewhat disagree	18	20	22
Strongly disagree	32	30	25
TOTAL DISAGREE	50	50	47
Don't know	5	2	3

*I am confident the end of COVID-19 is nearer now that a vaccine is ready and now being administered**

Dec 12-17	Dec 19-23	Dec 29-Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
varies						
%	%	%	%	%	%	%
53	51	48	52	53	41	48
19	10	17	19	24	14	14
34	41	30	33	29	27	34
5	9	6	4	7	10	8
19	20	20	22	20	21	19
21	20	26	21	20	27	24
40	40	45	44	39	48	42
2	-	1	1	-	1	1

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...
*Previous phrasing: *I am confident the end of COVID-19 is nearer now that a vaccine is ready and being used*

Base: Total sample, base varies

SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESS DURING COVID-19



After dropping to its lowest level last week, an increasing number of Ontarians claim knowledge of government support for small business impacted by the COVID-19 virus.

	Dec 12-17	Dec 19-23	Dec 29-Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300	250	400	300	300	300	300
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL A GREAT DEAL/SOME	58	53	59	58	52	49	56
A great deal	9	11	11	10	14	11	12
Some	49	42	47	48	38	39	44
Not too much	27	34	28	24	29	31	30
None at all	9	6	8	9	11	11	6
TOTAL NOT TOO MUCH/NONE AT ALL	35	39	36	33	40	42	36
Don't know/not sure	7	8	5	9	8	8	8

QCV-164. Overall, and to the best of your knowledge, how much support has the Ontario government provided to small business and especially those impacted by the public health restrictions?

Base: Total sample

Support for the government ordering even more businesses to close has dropped over the past two weeks compared to early January.

The provincial government should order even more businesses to close

	Apr '20	May '20	Dec 29- Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30- Feb 4
n=	varies						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TOTAL AGREE	43	29	35	42	37	31	33
Strongly agree	23	15	19	23	18	17	19
Somewhat agree	21	14	17	19	20	14	15
Neither agree nor disagree	11	8	6	5	6	7	10
Somewhat disagree	25	29	24	18	18	23	21
Strongly disagree	20	34	33	33	38	38	34
TOTAL DISAGREE	45	63	57	51	56	61	55
Don't know	1	-	2	1	1	1	2

QCV-8B. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the effects of COVID-19. The first is ...

Base: Total sample, base varies

A large majority of Ontarians think that the province-wide shutdown is unfair to small business while favouring big box stores and that smaller retailers should be allowed to reopen.

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	Varies		
	%	%	%
Some people say that the current provincial shut down is unfair to small businesses, especially retailers, and is largely benefiting big box stores. Smaller retailers should be allowed to open.	69	70	66
Other people say that the current approach of keeping smaller retailers closed is necessary to combat COVID-19 and should not be changed.	26	23	30
Don't know/not sure	6	7	4

QCV-180. Thinking of these two points of view which one best reflects your own?

Base: Total sample

Most Ontarians are concerned about the impact of the province-wide shutdown on small business. The intensity of the concern is high.

	Jan 16-21	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	Varies		
	%	%	%
TOTAL CONCERNED	89	88	89
Very concerned	50	49	48
Somewhat concerned	39	39	42
Not too concerned	7	7	8
Not at all concerned	2	4	2
TOTAL NOT CONCERNED	10	11	10
Don't know/not sure	2	1	1

QCV-181. Overall, how concerned or not are you about the impact of the state of emergency and strict stay at home requirement on smaller businesses in the province?

Base: Total sample

PROVINCIAL INSPECTIONS OF WORKPLACES



Over 7-in-10 say they are aware of provincial inspectors visiting stores, restaurants and other essential businesses to ensure they are complying with the public health guidelines.

	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300	300
	%	%
Yes	64	73
No	35	26
Don't know/Not sure	1	2

QCV-185. Have you seen, read or heard about provincial government inspectors visiting stores, restaurants and other essential businesses to ensure they are complying with the public health guidelines during the state of emergency and stay home order?

Base: Total sample

Over 7-in-10 also believe that inspections will be effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19.

	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300	300
	%	%
TOTAL EFFECTIVE	61	72
Very effective	15	16
Somewhat effective	47	55
Not too effective	22	18
Not at all effective	12	7
TOTAL NOT EFFECTIVE	34	26
Don't know/Not sure	4	3

QCV-186. In fact, inspectors have been visiting stores, restaurants and other essential business workplaces and fining those that are not in compliance with the regulations. Overall, how effective to do think these inspections are in reducing the spread of COVID 19?

Base: Total sample

Most Ontarians believe that inspections of essential workplaces for public health compliance is appropriate and necessary.

	Jan 23-28	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	300	300
	%	%
Some people say they believe inspections of essential workplaces for their compliance with the regulations is appropriate and necessary in order to reduce the spread of COVID 19.	70	76
Other people say they believe inspections of essential workplaces is not appropriate as it is excessive meddling with business that are already facing enough challenges	26	21
Don't know	4	3

MANAGING ONTARIO'S INTERNATIONAL BORDER CROSSINGS



The preliminary results reveal that most Ontarians believe the federal government is responsible for testing at Ontario’s international border crossings.

	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	223
	%
The federal government	69
The Ontario government	25
Don’t know/not sure	6

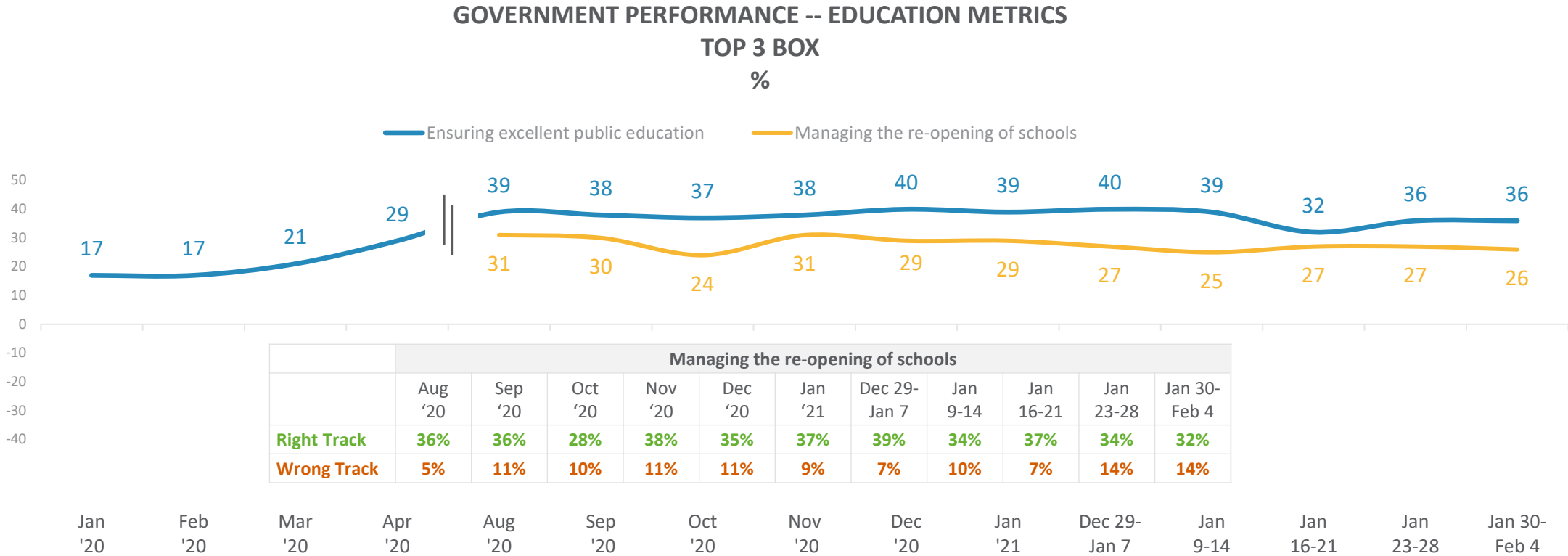
Ontarians overwhelmingly support different initiatives to prevent the COVID-19 variant spread from outside Canada.

% Strongly/Somewhat agree	Dec 29-Jan 7	Jan 9-14	Jan 30-Feb 4
n=	400	300	300
	%	%	%
All travellers, regardless of their point of origin, should be tested for COVID-19 on arrival in Canada and ordered to self-isolate for 14 days	95	96	94
The federal government should ban flights originating from the destinations where COVID variants have been identified/The federal government ban on flights from the UK, which will expire on January 6th, should be extended to the end of January	83	84	80

APPENDIX

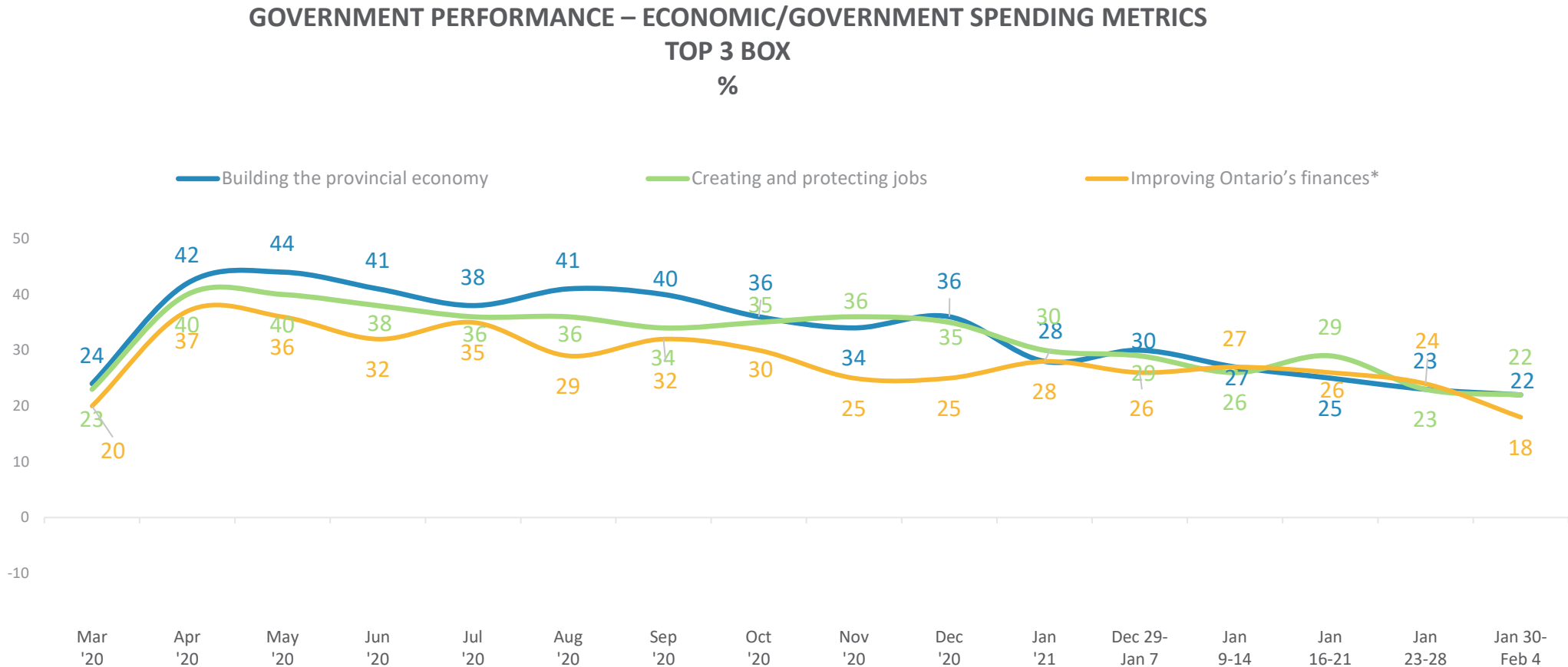


Positive perceptions on the education metrics remain stable over the past week.



Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?
Bases vary

Positive perceptions toward ‘improving Ontario’s finances’ continue to track downward, while perceptions are stable for ‘building the provincial economy’ and ‘creating/protecting jobs’.

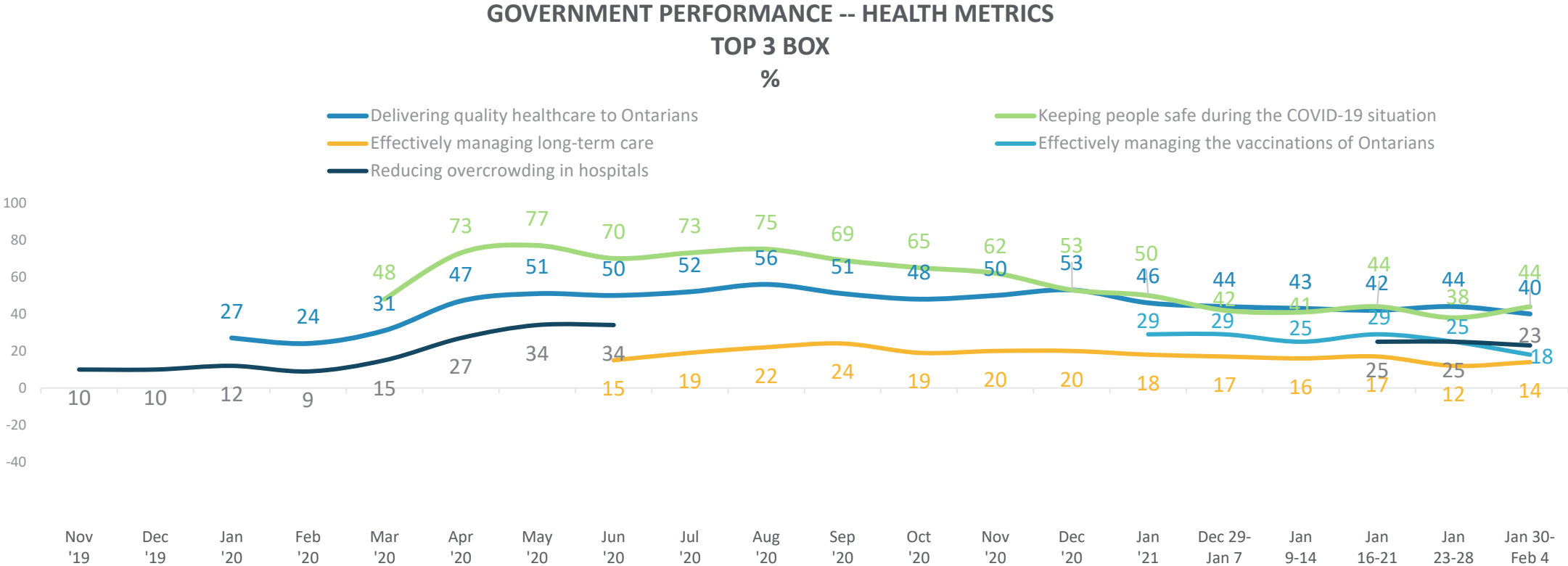


Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?

*Former phrasing: “Improve Ontario’s finances”
**Former phrasing: “Sufficient business support during the COVID-19 situation”

Bases vary

Positive perceptions of the government’s performance on ‘effectively managing the vaccinations of Ontarians’ have slipped slightly, while those views for ‘keeping people safe during COVID-19 situation’ has risen.



Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?
Bases vary