

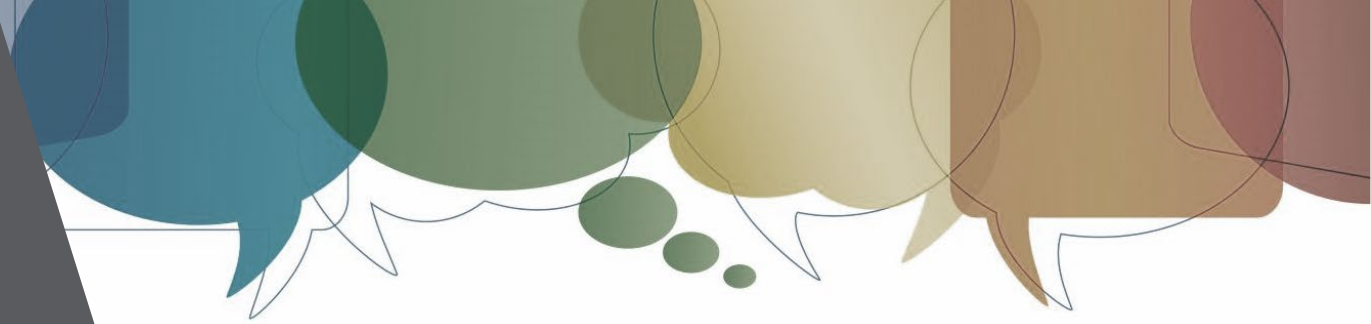


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## PULSE REPORT ON COVID-19 – REPORT #71

CABINET OFFICE

March 5<sup>th</sup> 2021



# KEY FINDINGS

# Key Findings

1 The government's 'right track' scores remains remarkably stable, at 64%, since early January.

2 The 'COVID-19' priority has dropped slightly (from 76% to 70%) over the past month.

This decline may reflect declining infection cases, lifting of the provincial shutdown, and the vaccine rollout starting to pick up steam.

3 Despite the gradual reopening of the economy, the government's performance on 'building the provincial economy' and 'creating/protecting jobs' have dropped.

4 The government's performance for 'effectively managing the vaccinations' and 'effectively managing long-term care' have dropped over the past week.

Other health metrics – 'reducing overcrowding in hospitals', 'keeping people safe during the COVID-19 situation' and 'delivering quality healthcare in Ontario' - are stable.

5 Perceptions toward the government's performance on 'ensuring excellent public education' have moved upwards, while 'managing the re-opening of schools' remained flat over the past week.

6 On a positive front, trust in the government's communications about the 'COVID-19 situation' and 'managing the economy' has risen over the past week.

In contrast, trust that the government's 'restrictions to fight COVID-19 are measured/appropriate' has dropped over the past two weeks.

# Key Findings

7 After declining over several weeks, Ontarians have renewed confidence the end of COVID-19 is nearer now that the vaccination program is being rolled out.

8 Just over one-third are aware of the government/private sector investment of \$1b to expand internet access in unserved or underserved communities.

These findings also suggest that over three-quarters believe it is a good use of taxpayers' dollars to expand Ontarians' access to high speed internet.

9 The preliminary results indicate that a plurality of Ontarians think that the best option to improve conditions for long-term care home residents is to require monthly/annual reports on the living conditions in these homes.

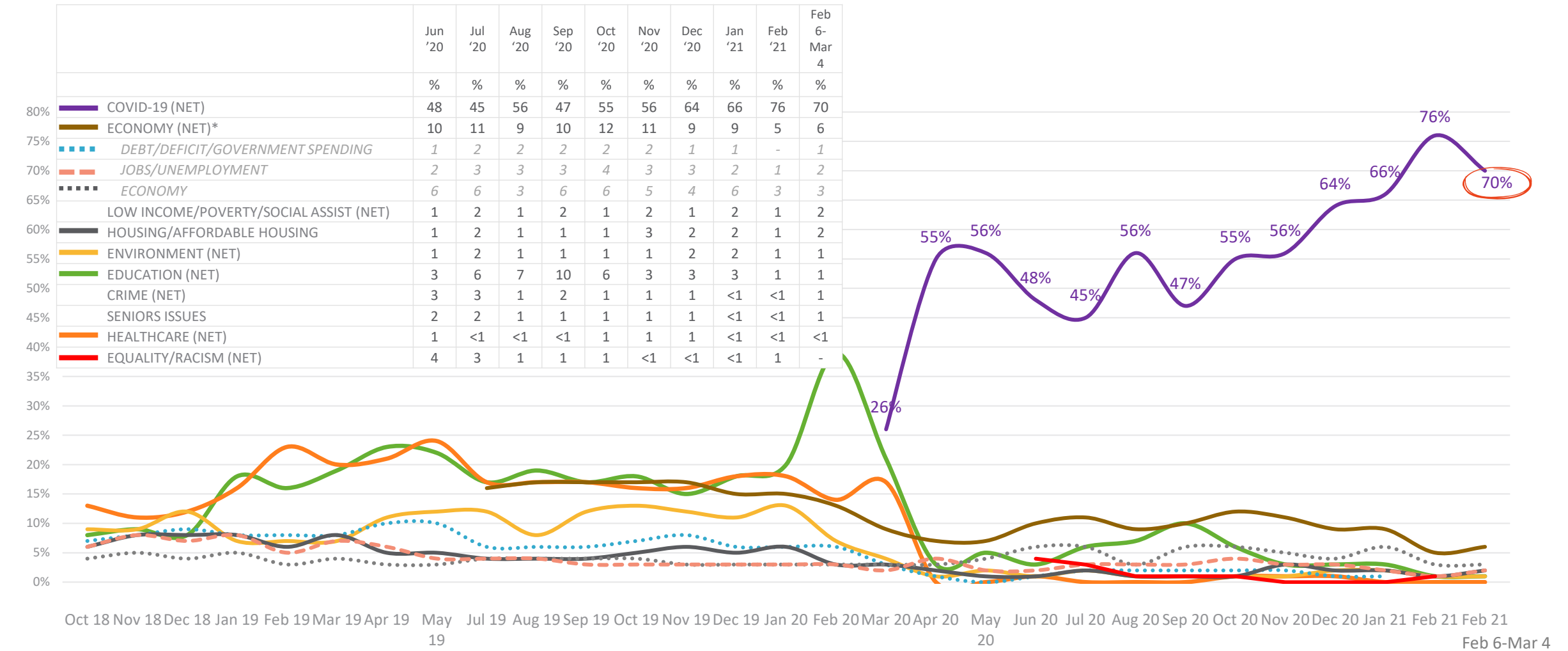
The early results suggest that Ontarians' top priority for long-term care homes is to increase the number of hours per day staff spend with each patient.

# TOP ONTARIO GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES



ONTARIANS' TOP PRIORITIES REQUIRING ATTENTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT

The 'COVID-19' priority has dropped slightly over the past month. This decline may reflect declining infection cases, lifting of the provincial shutdown, and the vaccine rollout starting to pick up steam.

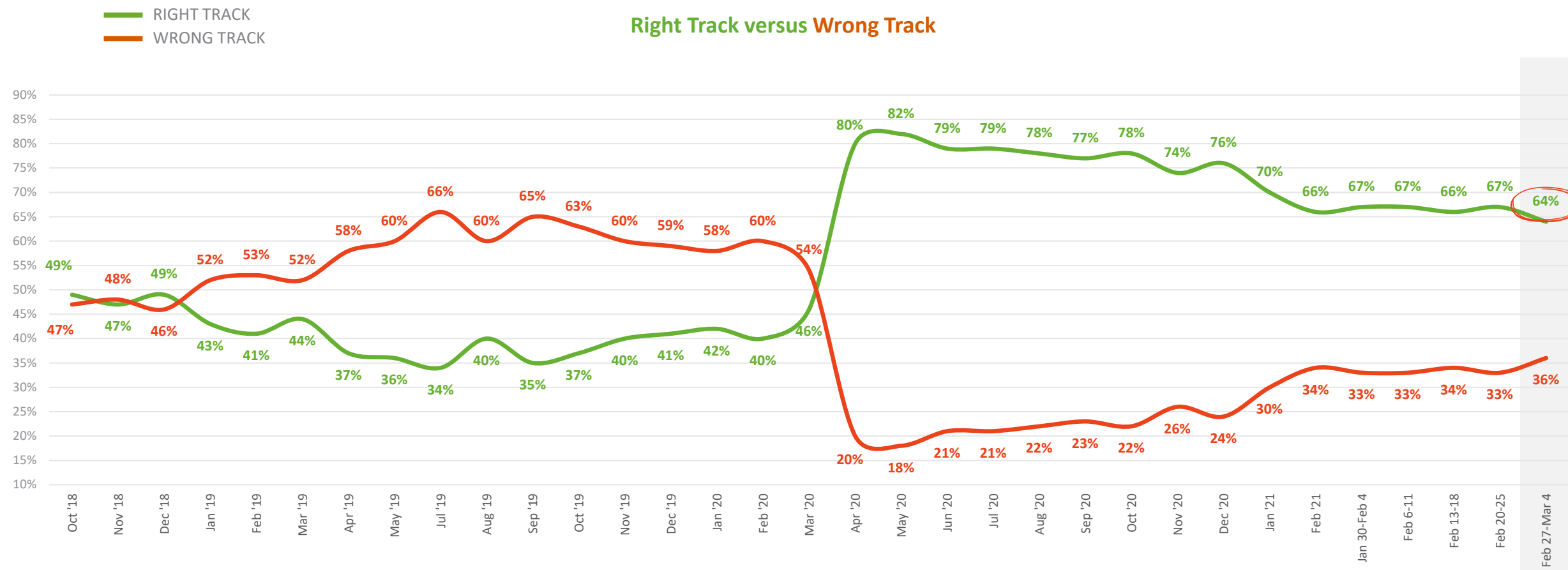


Q1. Thinking about the issues presently facing Ontario, which ONE do you feel should receive the GREATEST attention from the Ontario provincial government? That is, what should be the top priority?

RIGHT TRACK  
WRONG TRACK



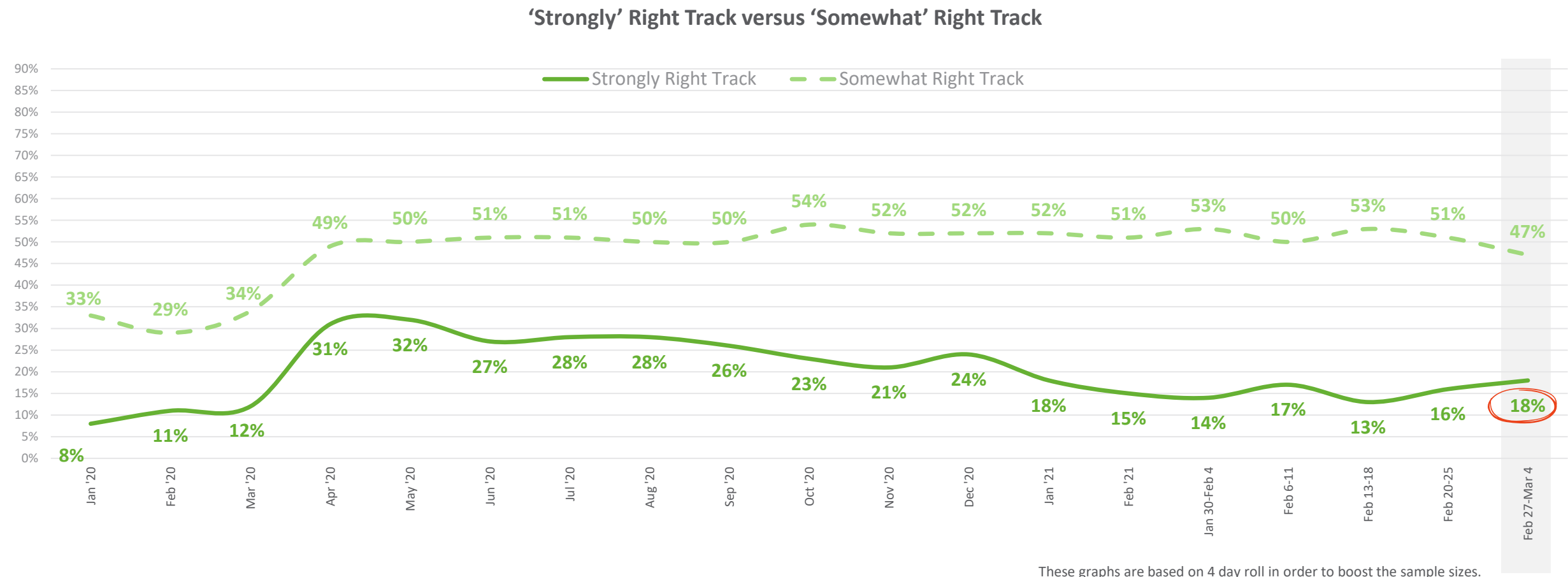
The government's 'right track' scores remains remarkably stable, at 64%, since early January.



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

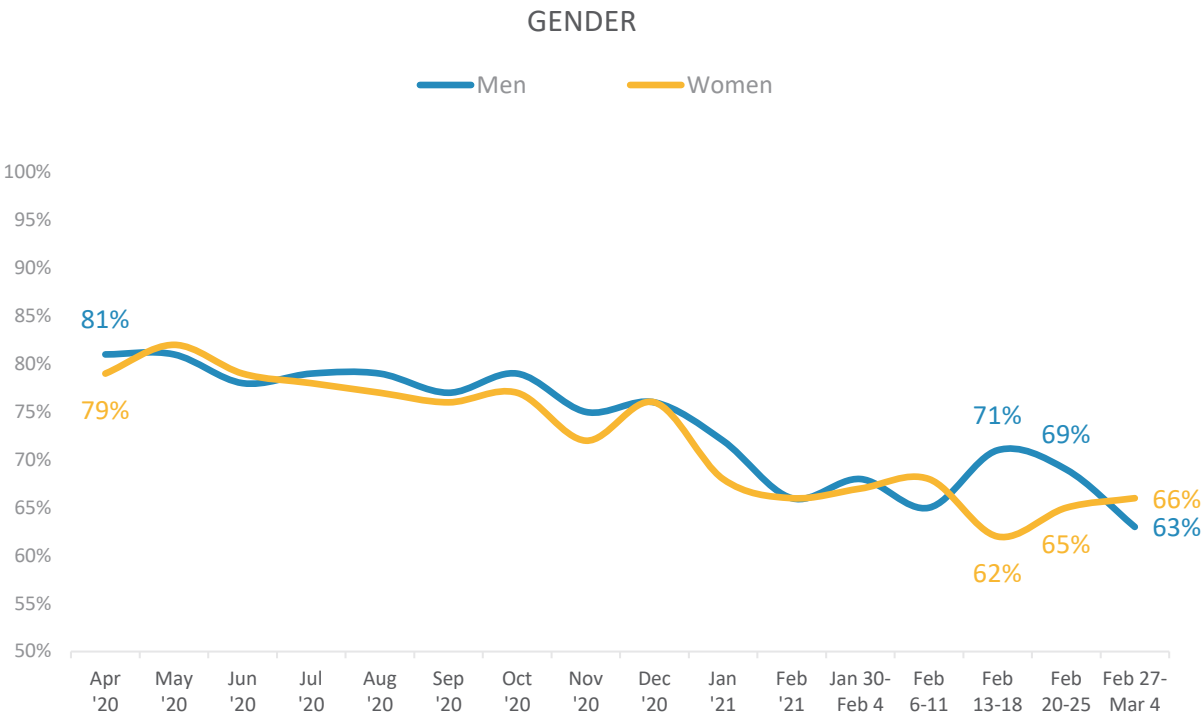
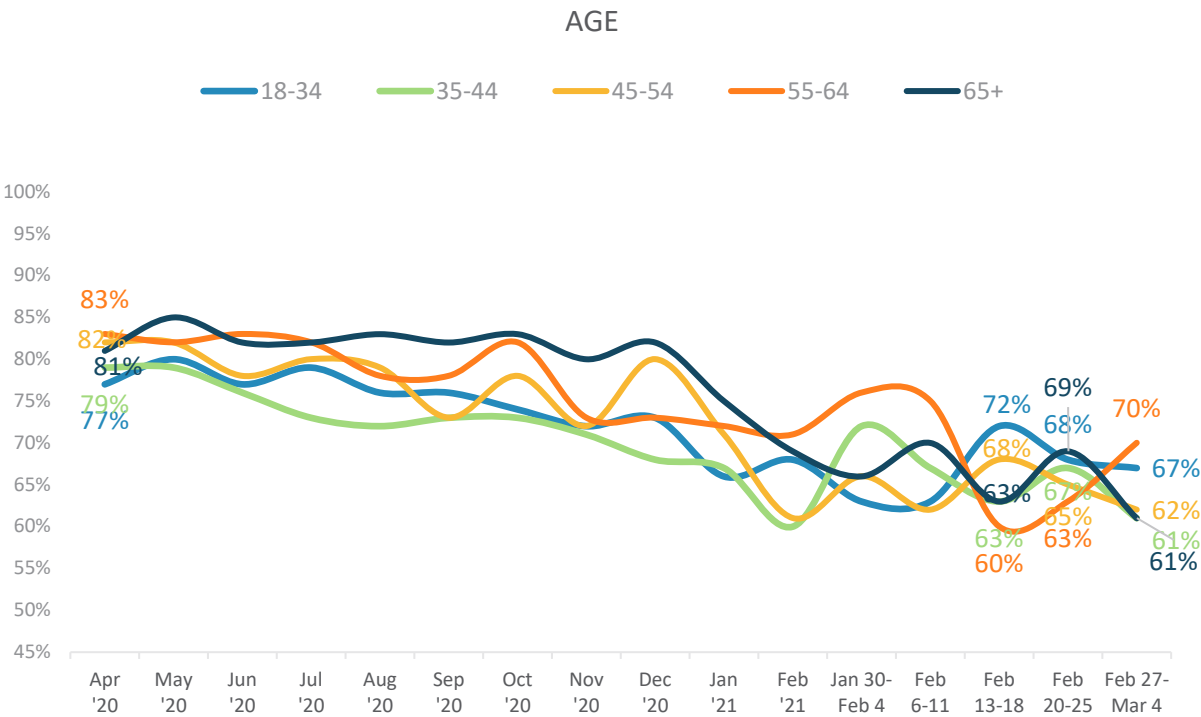
Since early January, the government’s ‘strongly right track’ scores continue to be stable at 18%.



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 dropped among men over the past two weeks to its lowest point since the start of the pandemic.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

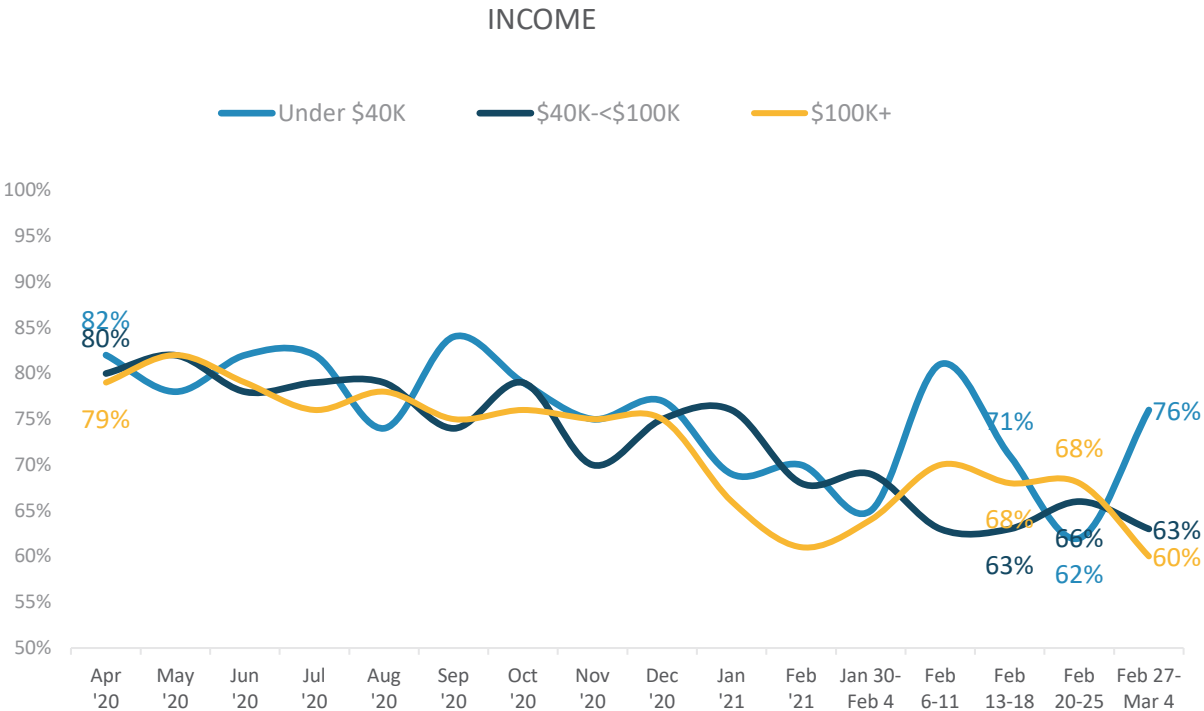
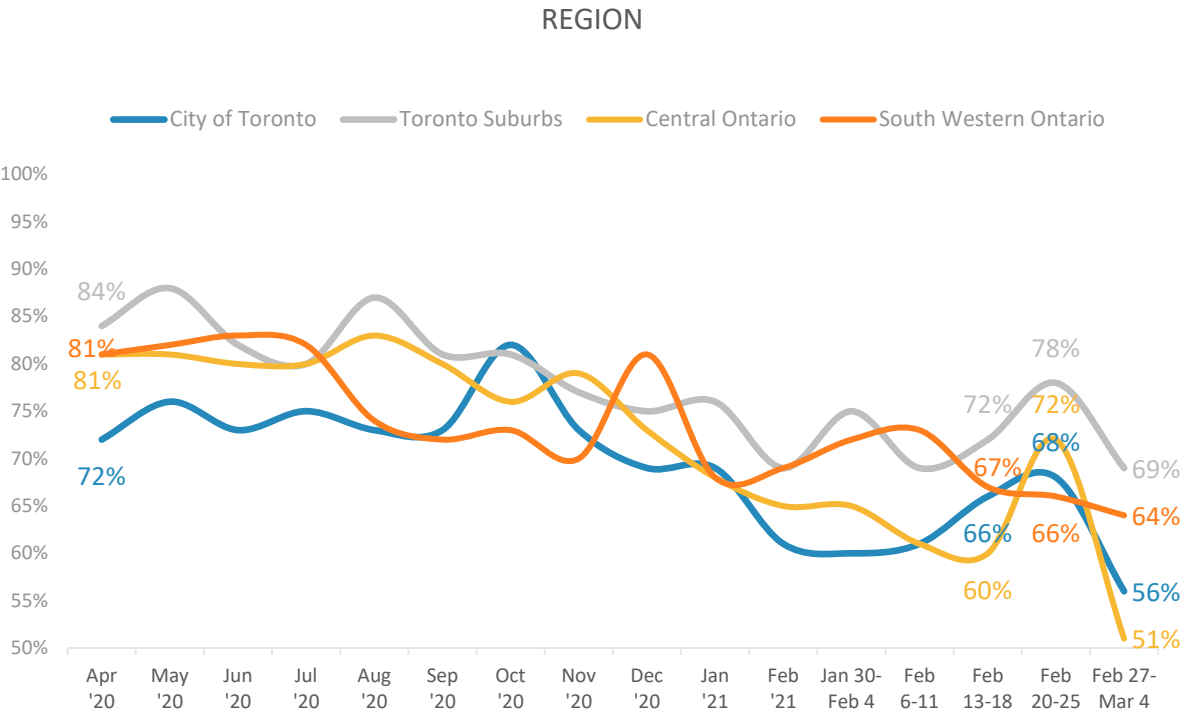


These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

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 remain strongest in suburban Toronto.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll



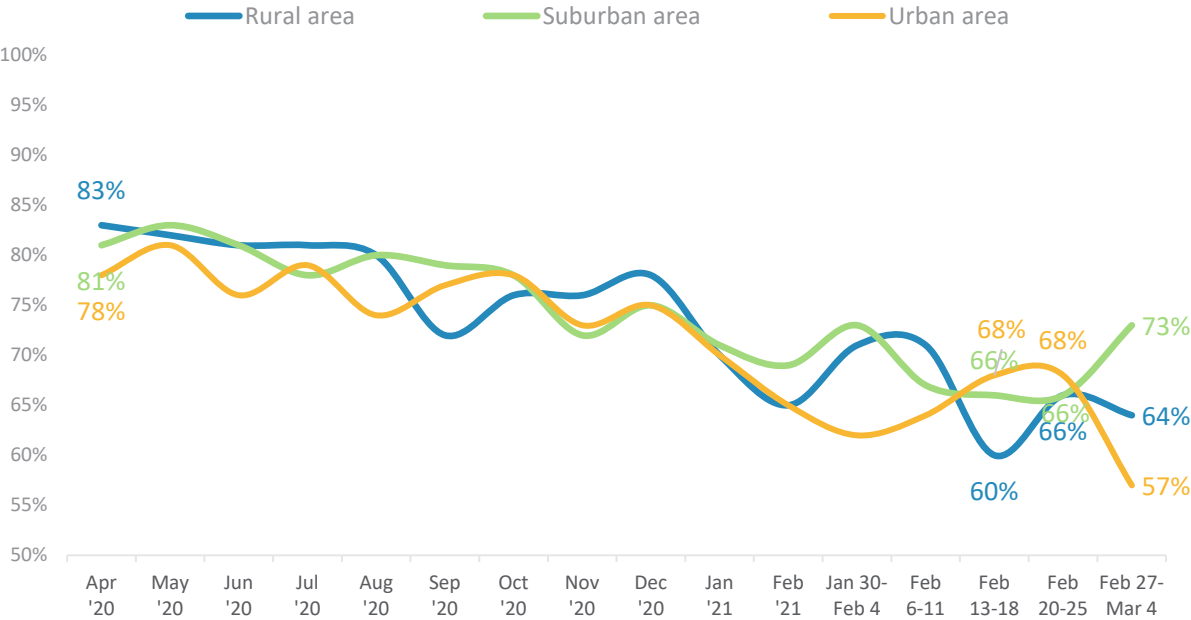
These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

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

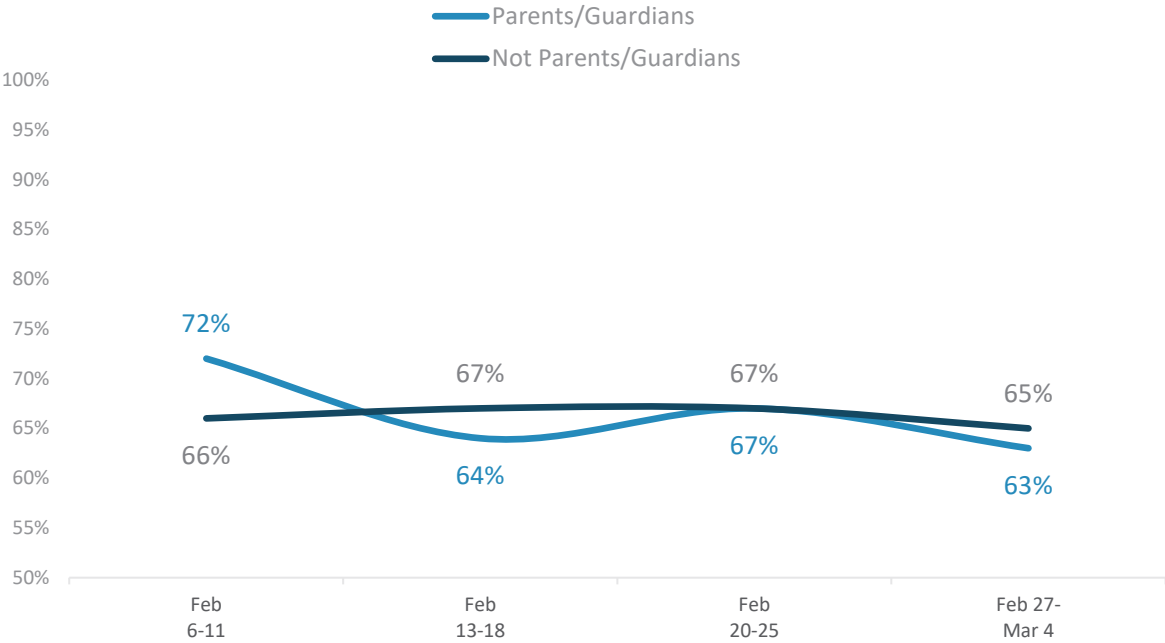
The ‘right track’ scores are highest for suburban residents.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

RURAL/URBAN/SUBURBAN



PARENTS/GUARDIAN JK-G12 VS NOT PARENTS/GUARDIANS



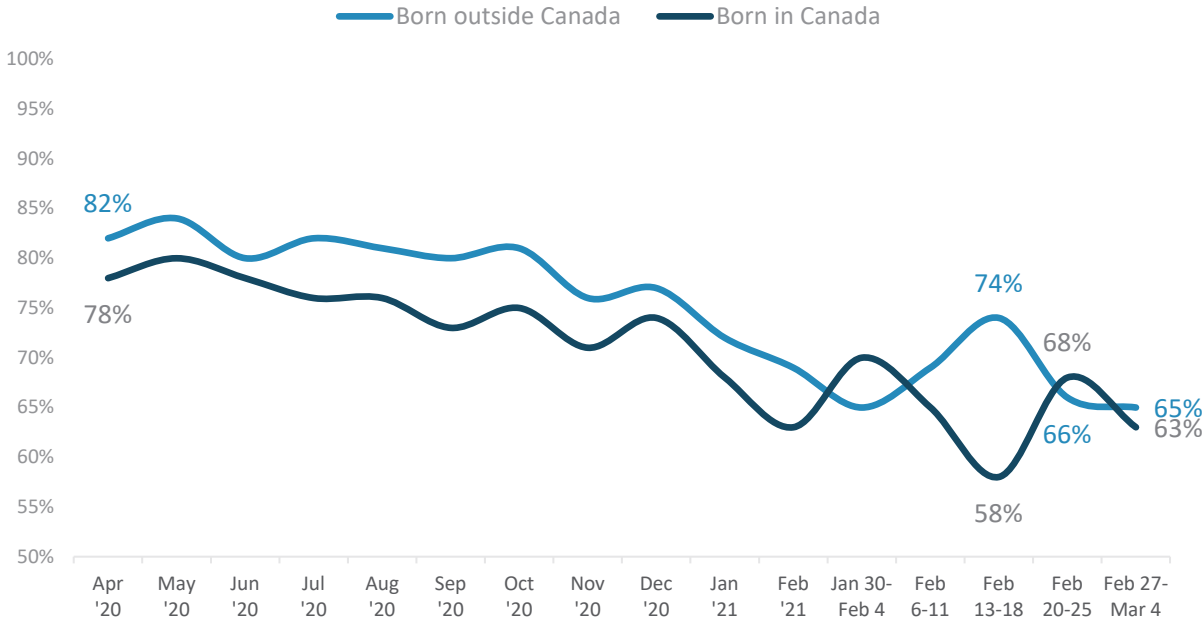
These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

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

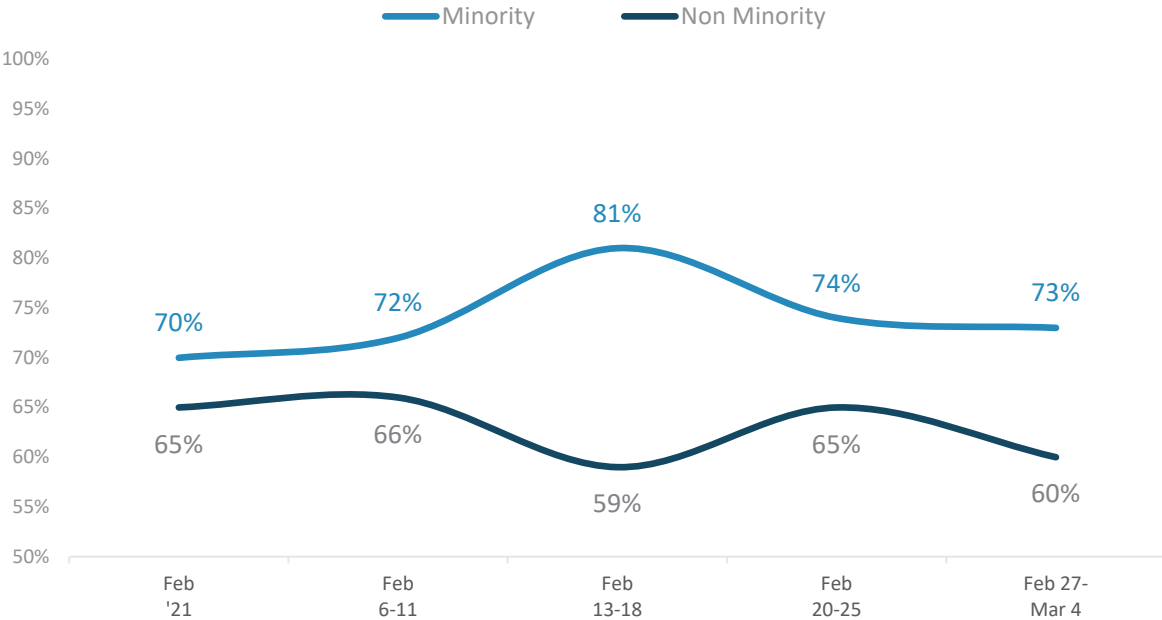
The ‘right track’ scores are significantly higher among those that identify as a minority.

Right Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

BORN OUTSIDE/WITHIN CANADA



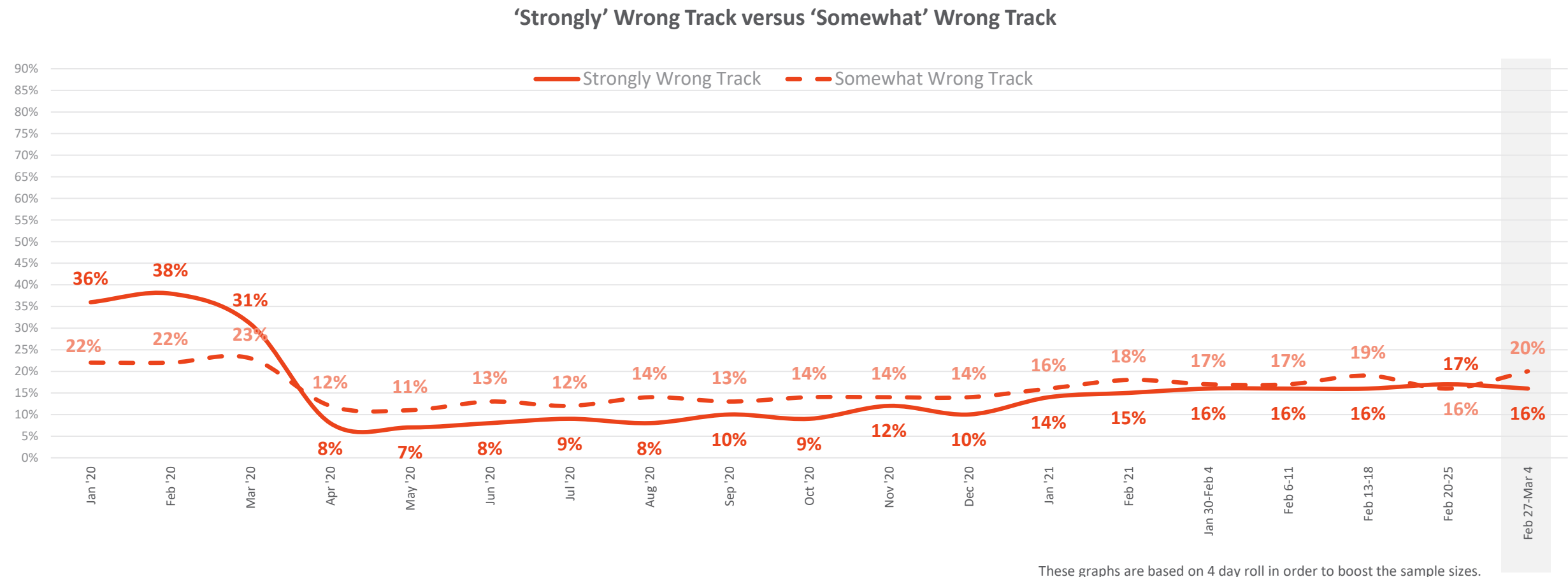
MINORITY VS NON MINORITY



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

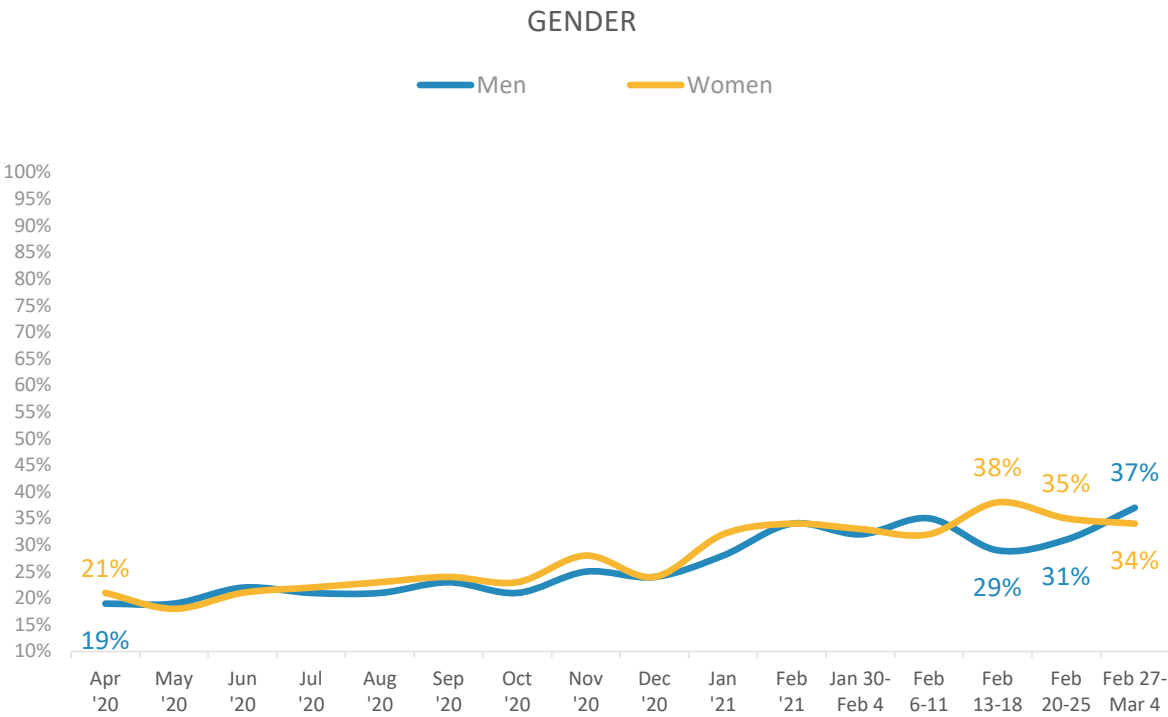
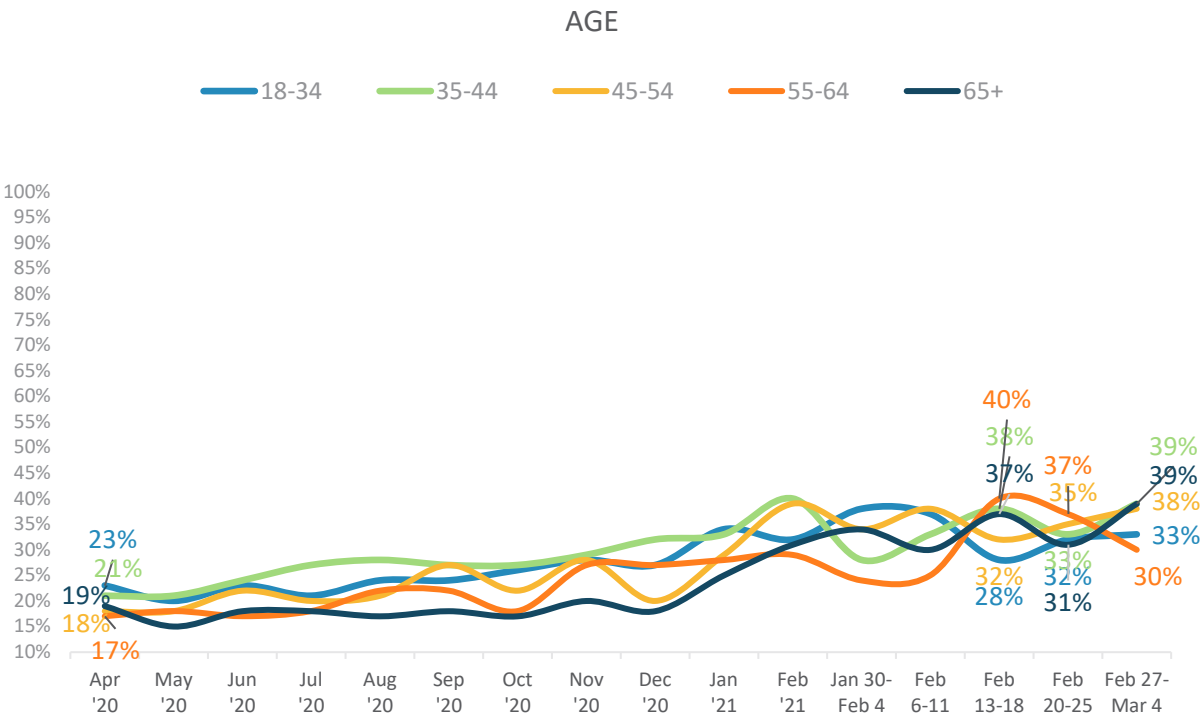
‘Strongly wrong track’ and ‘somewhat wrong track’ remained stable over the past week.



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

Paralleling changes in ‘right track’, men’s ‘wrong track’ have risen to their highest point since the start of the pandemic.

Wrong Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

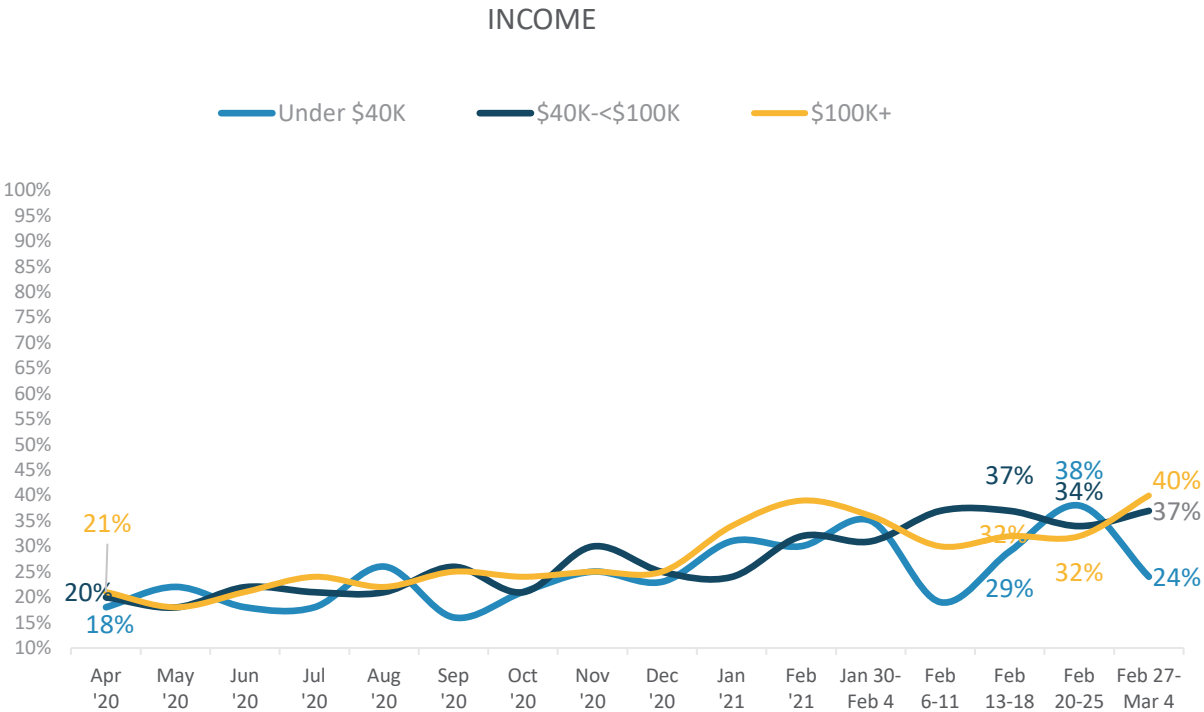
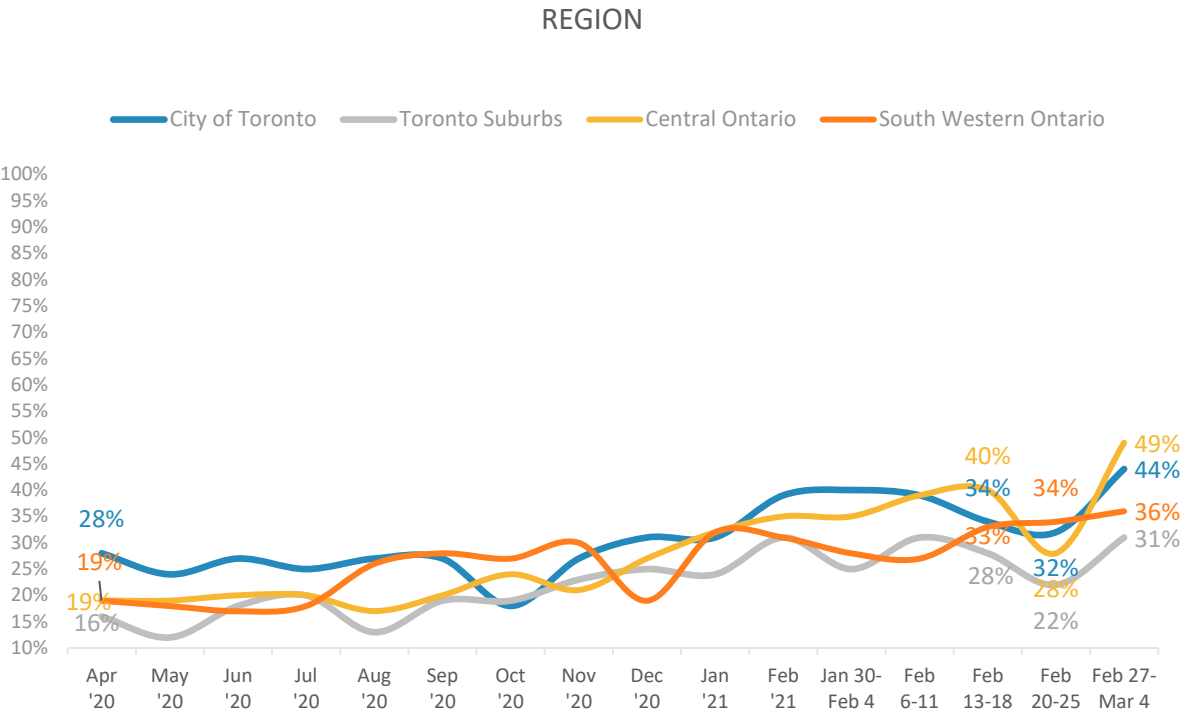


These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

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 highest ‘wrong track’ scores are in the City of Toronto and Central Ontario.

Wrong Track Scores – 6-Day Roll



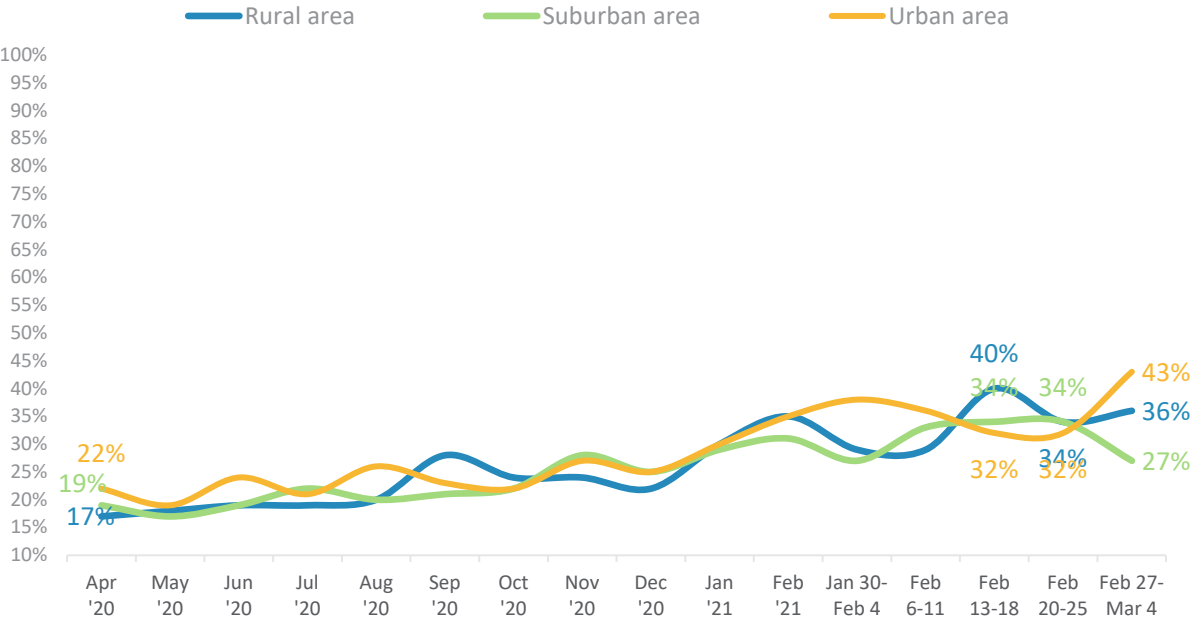
These graphs are based on 5 day roll in order to boost the sample sizes.

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

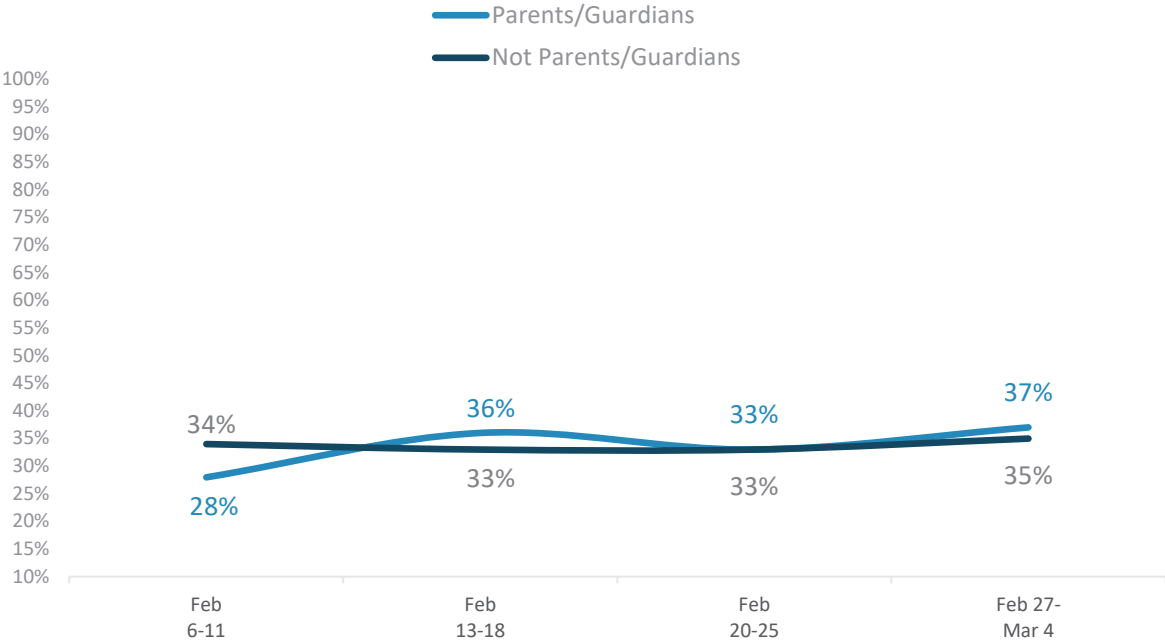
‘Wrong track’ scores are higher among urban residents.

Wrong Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

RURAL/URBAN/SUBURBAN



PARENTS/GUARDIAN JK-G12 VS NOT PARENTS/GUARDIANS

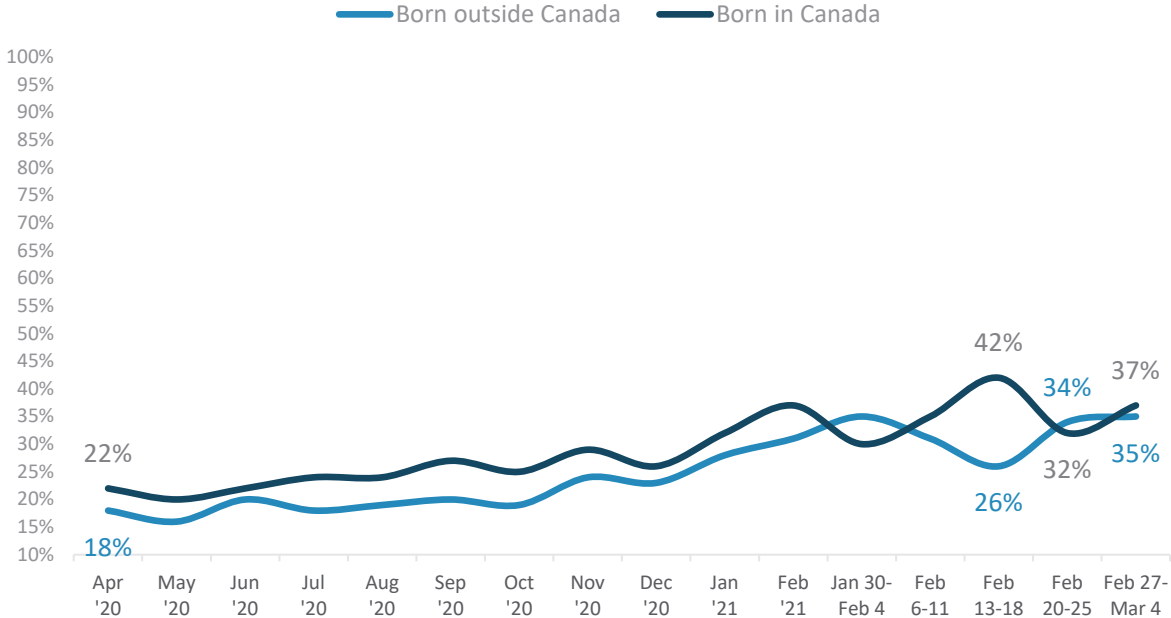


Q2. Overall, do you feel that the Ontario provincial government is on the right track or the wrong track, in terms of how it is governing the province?  
Base: Total sample

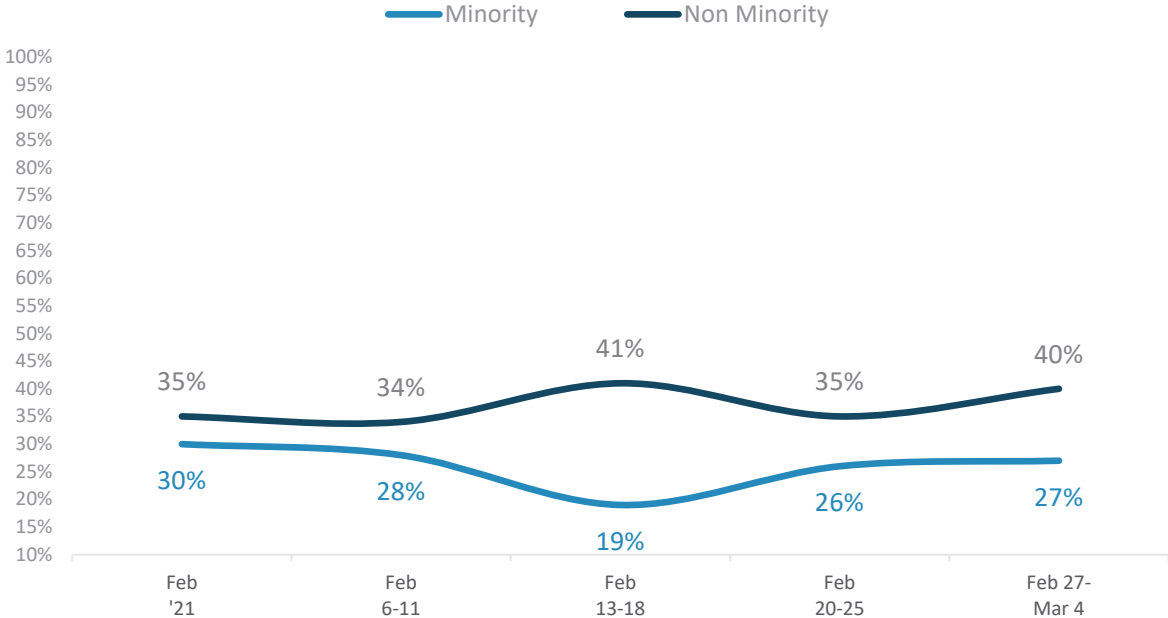
Those who identify as non-minority have higher ‘wrong track’ scores.

Wrong Track Scores – 6-Day Roll

BORN OUTSIDE/WITHIN CANADA



MINORITY VS NON MINORITY

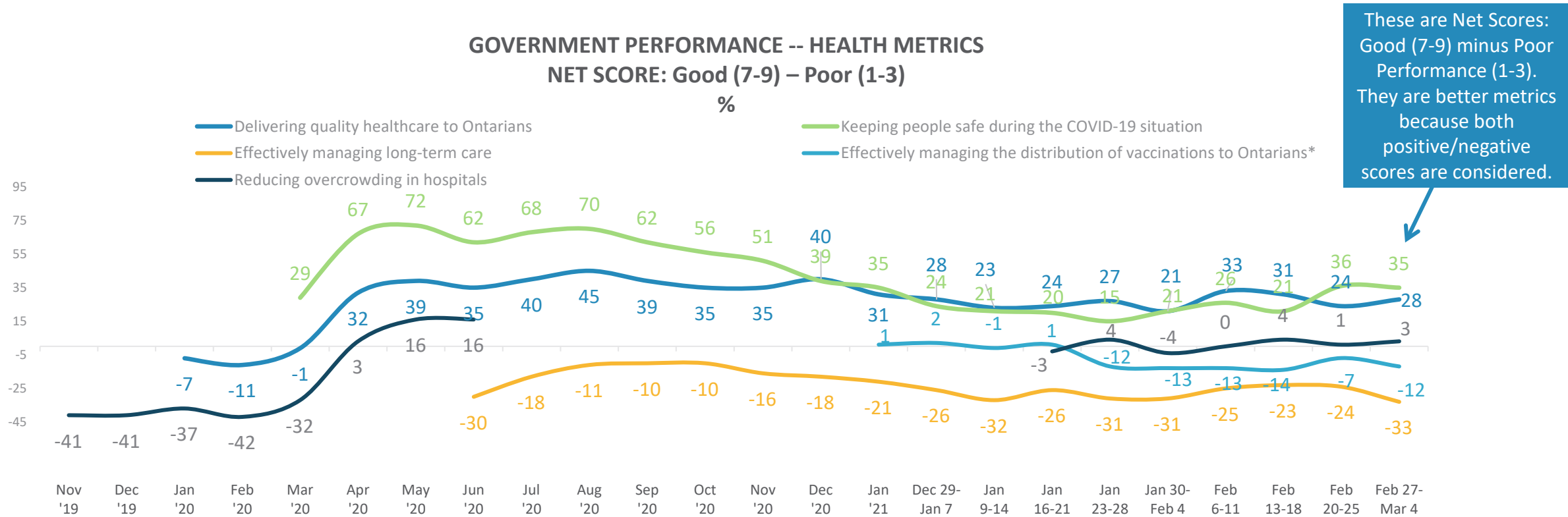


# PERCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC



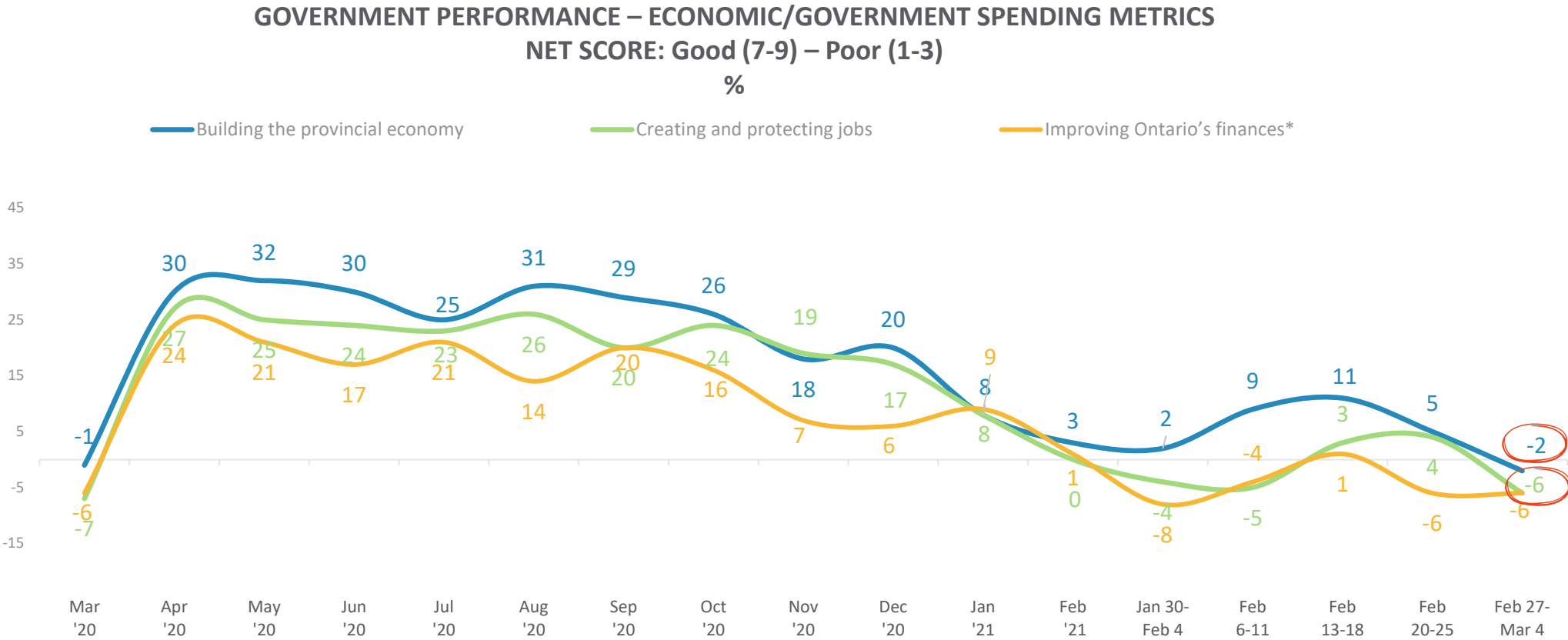
The government’s performance for ‘effectively managing the vaccinations’ and ‘effectively managing long-term care’ have dropped over the past week.

- Other health metrics – ‘reducing overcrowding in hospitals’, ‘keeping people safe during the COVID-19 situation’ and ‘delivering quality healthcare in Ontario’ - are 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?  
\*Former phrasing: “Effectively managing the vaccinations of Ontarians”  
Bases vary

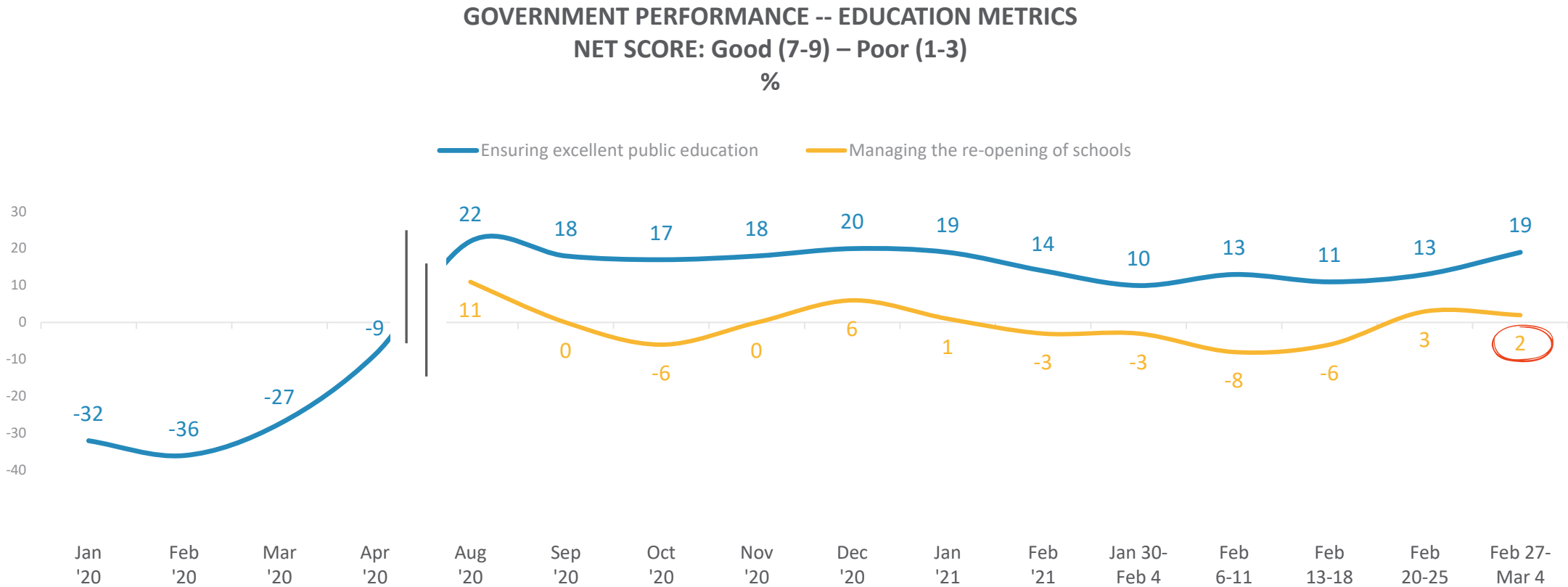
Despite the gradual reopening of the economy, the government’s performance scores on ‘building the provincial economy’ and ‘creating/protecting jobs’ have dropped.



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’ have moved upwards, while ‘managing the re-opening of schools’ remained flat 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

# SUPPORT FOR THE PROVINCIAL SHUTDOWN



Most Ontarians think the province should continue to slowly reopen the province despite the new modeling that the UK variant may cause a spike in infection cases.

- Those who see the government on the ‘right track’ are only slightly more inclined to think the government should continue with its approach to slowly reopen the province compared with those who see it on the ‘wrong track’.

|                                                          | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                                                       | 260       | 300       | 300          |
|                                                          | %         | %         | %            |
| Rethink its approach to provincial shutdown              | 37        | 33        | 32           |
| Continue with its approach to slowly reopen the province | 61        | 62        | 63           |
| Don’t know/Not sure                                      | 2         | 5         | 5            |

|             | CONTINUE WITH ITS APPROACH TO SLOWLY RE-OPEN THE PROVINCE |              |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
|             | Feb 20-25                                                 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|             | %                                                         | %            |
| Right Track | 65                                                        | 68           |
| Wrong Track | 56                                                        | 55           |

QCV-193. Ontario’s Public Health officials have released new modelling that shows that the UK variant for COVID-19 will significantly increase the number of cases in Ontario. Should the provincial government rethink its approach to ending the provincial shutdown or should it continue with its strategy of slowly opening parts of the province based on recent declines in the number of cases overall?

Base: Total sample

CONCERN ABOUT THE SAFETY OF SCHOOLS DUE TO THE IMPACT OF NEW COVID-19 VARIANTS

Over two-thirds of Ontarians say they are concerned about the impact of the new COVID-19 variants regardless of the safety protocols.

*I do not believe schools are safe and am very concerned about the impact of the new COVID variants on children who attend class*

|                            | Feb 6-11 | Feb 13-18 |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| n=                         | varies   |           |
|                            | %        | %         |
| TOTAL AGREE                | 49       | 56        |
| Strongly agree             | 33       | 39        |
| Somewhat agree             | 17       | 17        |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 4        | 6         |
| Somewhat disagree          | 19       | 11        |
| Strongly disagree          | 24       | 26        |
| TOTAL DISAGREE             | 44       | 37        |
| Not applicable             | -        | -         |
| Don't know                 | -        | 1         |

*Even with the safety protocols schools have in place, I am very concerned about the impact of COVID variants on children*

| Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|-----------|--------------|
| varies    |              |
| %         | %            |
| 66        | 68           |
| 51        | 44           |
| 14        | 24           |
| 12        | 4            |
| 14        | 14           |
| 8         | 11           |
| 23        | 26           |
| -         | 2            |
| -         | 1            |

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

Base: Total sample

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

|                            | Jan<br>16-21 | Jan<br>23-28 | Jan 30-<br>Feb 4 | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                         | varies       |              |                  |             |              |              |                  |
|                            | %            | %            | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| TOTAL AGREE                | 72           | 69           | 78               | 74          | 79           | 73           | 71               |
| Strongly agree             | 27           | 28           | 32               | 26          | 34           | 26           | 23               |
| Somewhat agree             | 45           | 41           | 46               | 48          | 45           | 47           | 48               |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 9            | 11           | 5                | 12          | 4            | 6            | 7                |
| Somewhat disagree          | 10           | 12           | 10               | 9           | 9            | 12           | 10               |
| Strongly disagree          | 7            | 5            | 6                | 4           | 7            | 6            | 9                |
| TOTAL DISAGREE             | 16           | 17           | 16               | 12          | 17           | 18           | 20               |
| Don't know                 | 2            | 4            | 1                | 2           | 1            | 3            | 2                |

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

A slight plurality (48%) hold the perception that the government is trying to balance the interests of economic and health considerations, while 27% think the government is putting the health of the population ahead of the economy.

- Those who believe the government is on the ‘right track’ tend to think that the government is both balancing the interests of the economy with the health of the general public and health of the population ahead of the economy.

|                                                                                                               | Jan<br>16-21 | Jan<br>23-28 | Jan 30-<br>Feb 4 | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                                                                                                            | varies       |              |                  |             |              |              |                  |
|                                                                                                               | %            | %            | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| The provincial government has put the interests of the economy above that of the health of the population     | 14           | 14           | 22               | 12          | 14           | 16           | 19               |
| The provincial government has tried to balance the interests of the economy with the health of the population | 50           | 48           | 43               | 51          | 43           | 46           | 48               |
| The provincial government has put the health of the population ahead of the interests of the economy          | 31           | 34           | 32               | 31          | 36           | 34           | 27               |
| Don't know/Not sure                                                                                           | 5            | 3            | 3                | 7           | 6            | 5            | 5                |

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

- It is interesting to note that, as infection cases ease, the proportion of Ontarians who think the province should put a higher priority on the economic compared to health has risen.

|                                                                                                              | Jan<br>16-21 | Jan<br>23-28 | Jan 30-<br>Feb 4 | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                                                                                                           | varies       |              |                  |             |              |              |                  |
|                                                                                                              | %            | %            | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| The provincial government should put the interests of the economy above that of the health of the population | 3            | 3            | 6                | 2           | 4            | 4            | 10               |
| The provincial government should balance the interests of the economy with the health of the population      | 55           | 59           | 49               | 53          | 51           | 57           | 49               |
| The provincial government should put the health of the population ahead of the interests of the economy      | 40           | 35           | 44               | 42          | 43           | 38           | 39               |
| Don't know/Not sure                                                                                          | 2            | 2            | 1                | 2           | 2            | 1            | 2                |

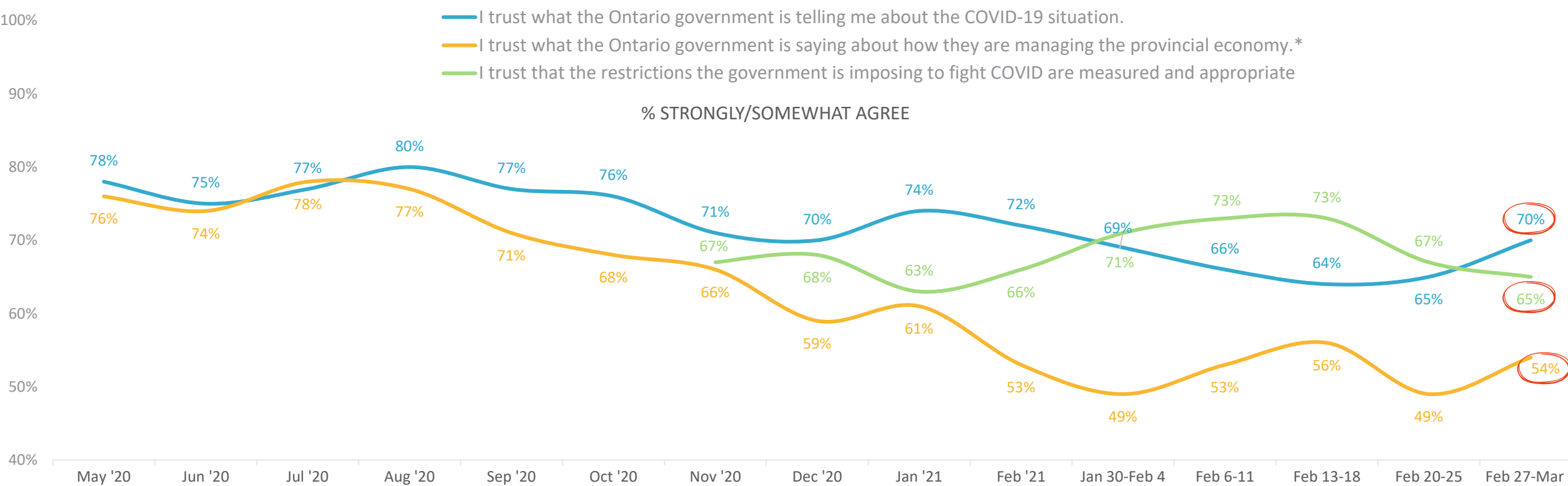
QCV-179. And which statement best reflects your own point of view as to what the provincial government should do:  
Base: Total sample

# CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT COVID-19 MESSAGING



TRUST IN THE GOVERNMENT’S COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT COVID-19

On a positive front, trust in the government’s communications about the COVID-19 situation and managing the economy has risen over the past week. In contrast, trust that the government’s restrictions to fight COVID-19 are measured/appropriate has dropped over the past two weeks.



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



This past week, fewer Ontarians believe the public health projections on COVID-19 infections.

| <i>I don't believe as many people will become ill with COVID-19 as the government projections say</i> |         |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| % 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>I don't believe as many people will become ill with COVID-19 as the new public health projections say</i> |           |              |          |           |           |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Jan 16-21                                                                                                    | Jan 23-28 | Jan 30-Feb 4 | Feb 6-11 | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
| varies                                                                                                       |           |              |          |           |           |              |
| %                                                                                                            | %         | %            | %        | %         | %         | %            |
| 32                                                                                                           | 27        | 35           | 40       | 34        | 34        | 41           |
| 14                                                                                                           | 12        | 15           | 18       | 14        | 14        | 16           |
| 18                                                                                                           | 15        | 21           | 22       | 20        | 20        | 25           |
| 8                                                                                                            | 5         | 9            | 8        | 7         | 7         | 11           |
| 20                                                                                                           | 20        | 13           | 15       | 18        | 20        | 17           |
| 37                                                                                                           | 44        | 37           | 31       | 36        | 32        | 24           |
| 57                                                                                                           | 64        | 50           | 46       | 54        | 52        | 41           |
| -                                                                                                            | -         | -            | -        | -         | -         | -            |
| 3                                                                                                            | 4         | 6            | 6        | 5         | 7         | 7            |

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

However, most Ontarians believe in the threat of the COVID-19 variants.

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 | Feb 6-11 | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| 300          | 300      | 260       | 300       | 300          |
| %            | %        | %         | %         | %            |
| 85           | 73       | 84        | 81        | 81           |
| 35           | 33       | 40        | 39        | 33           |
| 49           | 40       | 44        | 42        | 48           |
| 5            | 11       | 8         | 6         | 11           |
| 6            | 9        | 4         | 7         | 5            |
| 11           | 20       | 12        | 14        | 16           |
| 5            | 7        | 4         | 5         | 3            |

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?

# COVID-19 INFECTIONS



Likely due to declining infection cases, there has been a significant increase (from 22% in mid-January to 40% this past week) 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 | Feb 6-11 | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 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           | 35       | 44        | 41        | 40           |

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

About one-quarter of Ontarians don't think someone like 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 | Feb 6-11  | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                         | varies    |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |              |           |           |           |              |
|                            | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %            | %         | %         | %         | %            |
| <b>TOTAL AGREE</b>         | <b>25</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>27</b>    | <b>26</b> | <b>26</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>26</b>    |
| Strongly agree             | 8         | 8         | 6         | 7         | 10        | 8         | 8         | 5         | 9            | 16        | 13        | 16        | 16           |
| Somewhat agree             | 16        | 15        | 8         | 11        | 9         | 11        | 11        | 10        | 18           | 10        | 13        | 8         | 10           |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 13        | 10        | 8         | 9         | 8         | 8         | 8         | 5         | 13           | 7         | 8         | 11        | 7            |
| Somewhat disagree          | 22        | 25        | 21        | 23        | 17        | 24        | 23        | 16        | 18           | 10        | 17        | 19        | 21           |
| Strongly disagree          | 38        | 40        | 56        | 48        | 54        | 47        | 46        | 61        | 37           | 52        | 47        | 43        | 41           |
| <b>TOTAL DISAGREE</b>      | <b>60</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>76</b> | <b>71</b> | <b>70</b> | <b>71</b> | <b>70</b> | <b>77</b> | <b>55</b>    | <b>62</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>62</b> | <b>62</b>    |
| Not applicable             |           |           |           |           |           |           |           | 1         | 2            | 2         | 1         | -         | 1            |
| Don't know                 |           |           |           |           |           |           |           | 1         | 4            | 3         | -         | 3         | 3            |

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

Base: Total sample

Still, two thirds of Ontarians (67%) 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-<br>Jan 7 | Jan<br>9-14 | Jan<br>16-21 | Jan<br>23-28 | Jan 30-<br>Feb 4 | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                         | varies  |         |                  |             |              |              |                  |             |              |              |                  |
|                            | %       | %       | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| TOTAL AGREE                | 79      | 77      | 76               | 72          | 64           | 65           | 67               | 75          | 76           | 70           | 67               |
| Strongly agree             | 62      | 57      | 56               | 52          | 51           | 51           | 54               | 59          | 63           | 52           | 47               |
| Somewhat agree             | 16      | 20      | 20               | 20          | 13           | 14           | 14               | 16          | 13           | 18           | 20               |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 2       | 2       | 3                | 3           | 2            | 3            | 2                | 2           | 3            | 10           | 5                |
| Somewhat disagree          | 8       | 10      | 11               | 6           | 6            | 7            | 11               | 4           | 7            | 10           | 9                |
| Strongly disagree          | 8       | 9       | 7                | 17          | 17           | 22           | 12               | 10          | 10           | 6            | 16               |
| TOTAL DISAGREE             | 16      | 19      | 18               | 24          | 23           | 29           | 23               | 14          | 17           | 17           | 25               |
| Not applicable             | 3       | 1       | 2                | 2           | 9            | 2            | 5                | 8           | 4            | 3            | 2                |
| Don't know                 | 1       | 1       | 1                | -           | 3            | -            | 2                | 1           | -            | -            | 1                |

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

Base: Total sample

# COVID-19 VARIANTS



Most Ontarians (albeit declining from 70% to 55%) see these COVID-19 variants as more dangerous. The proportion who thinks these variants are less dangerous has doubled (from 3% to 6%) over the past five weeks.

|                     | Jan 30-<br>Feb 4 | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                  | 300              | 300         | 260          | 300          | 300              |
|                     | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| More dangerous      | 70               | 56          | 61           | 57           | 55               |
| As dangerous        | 22               | 27          | 24           | 27           | 26               |
| Less dangerous      | 3                | 4           | 5            | 5            | 6                |
| Don't know/not sure | 6                | 13          | 10           | 12           | 13               |

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

Some 63% (up from 56% five weeks ago) believe the government should be doing more to stop the spread of the new variants.

|                                                  | Jan 30-<br>Feb 4 | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                                               | varies           |             |              |              |                  |
|                                                  | %                | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| Has done all it can reasonably be expected to do | 39               | 37          | 37           | 34           | 31               |
| Should be doing more                             | 56               | 56          | 57           | 60           | 63               |
| Don't know/not sure                              | 5                | 7           | 5            | 5            | 6                |

QCV-130A. With the arrival of new COVID variants identified in the UK and South Africa, do you believe the Ontario Government has done all it can reasonably be expected to do to stop the spread of these new variants or should it be doing more? (previous phrasing) 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

CURRENT RESTRICTIONS – ARE THEY SUFFICIENT OR SHOULD THERE BE MORE RESTRICTIONS

A majority of Ontarians (albeit declining to its lowest point, 58%) believe that current restrictions are sufficient to deal with the COVID-19 variants.

|                                     | Feb<br>6-11 | Feb<br>13-18 | Feb<br>20-25 | Feb 27-<br>Mar 4 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| n=                                  | 300         | 260          | 300          | 300              |
|                                     | %           | %            | %            | %                |
| Should do more                      | 23          | 27           | 32           | 35               |
| Current restrictions are sufficient | 73          | 67           | 62           | 58               |
| Don't know/not sure                 | 4           | 6            | 7            | 7                |

QCV-192. In light of the new COVID-19 variants, should the Ontario government place more restrictions on businesses and the public or are the current restrictions sufficient?

Base: Total sample

VACCINE



After declining over several weeks, Ontarians have renewed confidence 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 | Feb 6-11 | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| varies    |           |              |          |           |           |              |          |           |           |              |
| %         | %         | %            | %        | %         | %         | %            | %        | %         | %         | %            |
| 53        | 51        | 48           | 52       | 53        | 41        | 48           | 55       | 48        | 42        | 52           |
| 19        | 10        | 17           | 19       | 24        | 14        | 14           | 17       | 14        | 15        | 22           |
| 34        | 41        | 30           | 33       | 29        | 27        | 34           | 38       | 34        | 27        | 30           |
| 5         | 9         | 6            | 4        | 7         | 10        | 8            | 4        | 9         | 5         | 6            |
| 19        | 20        | 20           | 22       | 20        | 21        | 19           | 18       | 14        | 19        | 20           |
| 21        | 20        | 26           | 21       | 20        | 27        | 24           | 19       | 28        | 32        | 19           |
| 40        | 40        | 45           | 44       | 39        | 48        | 42           | 38       | 41        | 51        | 39           |
| 2         | -         | 1            | 1        | -         | 1         | 1            | 3        | 2         | 3         | 3            |

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



About 1-in-2 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 | Feb 6-11 | Feb 13-18 | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                             | 300       | 250       | 400          | 300      | 300       | 300       | 300          | 300      | 260       | 300       | 300          |
|                                | %         | %         | %            | %        | %         | %         | %            | %        | %         | %         | %            |
| TOTAL A GREAT DEAL/SOME        | 58        | 53        | 59           | 58       | 52        | 49        | 56           | 52       | 53        | 49        | 49           |
| A great deal                   | 9         | 11        | 11           | 10       | 14        | 11        | 12           | 11       | 12        | 11        | 15           |
| Some                           | 49        | 42        | 47           | 48       | 38        | 39        | 44           | 41       | 41        | 38        | 34           |
| Not too much                   | 27        | 34        | 28           | 24       | 29        | 31        | 30           | 31       | 33        | 29        | 36           |
| None at all                    | 9         | 6         | 8            | 9        | 11        | 11        | 6            | 10       | 6         | 12        | 8            |
| TOTAL NOT TOO MUCH/NONE AT ALL | 35        | 39        | 36           | 33       | 40        | 42        | 36           | 41       | 39        | 41        | 44           |
| Don't know/not sure            | 7         | 8         | 5            | 9        | 8         | 8         | 8            | 8        | 8         | 10        | 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

# REGULATION OF LONG-TERM CARE HOMES



The preliminary results indicate that a plurality of Ontarians think that the best option to improve conditions for long-term care home residents is to require monthly/annual reports on the living conditions in these homes.

- A significant minority think that there should be heavy fines on long-term homes that failed to meet any compliance rules.
- Those who see the government on the ‘right track’ are much more likely to want the monthly/annual reporting option compared to those who those see it on the ‘wrong track’.

|                                                                               | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| n=                                                                            | 300          |
|                                                                               | %            |
| Heavy fines for long-term care homes that failed to meet any compliance rules | 36           |
| Monthly and annual reports on conditions in individual long-term care homes   | 46           |
| Both                                                                          | 8            |
| Neither                                                                       | 5            |
| Don't know                                                                    | 6            |

LTC-1Q. As you may know, there has been some discussion lately on how best to improve conditions for residents of long-terms care homes. Which one of the following two options do you think would be more effective in improving conditions for residents in long-term care homes?

Base: Total sample

The early results suggest that Ontarians’ top priority for long-term care homes is to increase the number of hours per day staff spend with each patient.

- Those who see the government on the ‘wrong track’ are much more likely to prioritize more daily staff time commitment compared to those who see it on the ‘right track.’

|                                                                                       | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| n=                                                                                    | 300          |
|                                                                                       | %            |
| Increasing the number of hours per day staff spend with each patient                  | 42           |
| Increasing the number of beds in the long-term care system                            | 21           |
| Ensuring that all long-term care homes having cooling systems in place for the summer | 25           |
| Don’t know/not sure                                                                   | 11           |

# BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE



SATISFACTION WITH INTERNET CONNECTION SPEED AT HOME

Ontarians are satisfied with the speed of their internet connection at home. And, even rural residents are satisfied (albeit at a lower level of satisfaction).

|                                    | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                                 | 300       | 300          |
|                                    | %         | %            |
| TOTAL SATISFIED                    | 73        | 74           |
| Very satisfied                     | 40        | 39           |
| Somewhat satisfied                 | 33        | 34           |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 3         | 5            |
| Somewhat dissatisfied              | 10        | 8            |
| Very dissatisfied                  | 8         | 9            |
| TOTAL DISSATISFIED                 | 18        | 17           |
| Don't know/not sure                | 6         | 5            |

|                    | Satisfaction with Home Internet Speeds |              |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------|
|                    | Feb 20-25                              | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|                    | %                                      | %            |
| Rural residents    | 55                                     | 64           |
| Suburban residents | 79                                     | 75           |
| Urban residents    | 80                                     | 79           |

BBQ1. How satisfied are you with the speed of your internet connection at home?

Base: Total sample

Just over one-third are aware of the government/private sector investment of \$1b to expand internet access in unserved or underserved communities.

|                     | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                  | 300       | 300          |
|                     | %         | %            |
| Yes                 | 35        | 37           |
| No                  | 63        | 62           |
| Don't know/not sure | 2         | 2            |

BBQ2. The Ontario government, working with all levels of governments and the private sector, should invest up to \$1 billion over five years to expand internet access in unserved or underserved communities. Are you aware of the provincial government’s plan to significantly expand Ontario residents’ access to high-speed internet?

Base: Total sample

Over three-quarters believe it is a good use of taxpayers’ dollars to expand Ontarians’ access to high speed internet.

|                     | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                  | 300       | 300          |
|                     | %         | %            |
| TOTAL VERY/GOOD USE | 77        | 78           |
| Very good use       | 30        | 25           |
| Good use            | 47        | 53           |
| Poor use            | 13        | 12           |
| Very poor use       | 7         | 7            |
| TOTAL VERY/POOR USE | 19        | 19           |
| Don’t know/not sure | 4         | 3            |

BBQ3. Do you believe this investment in expanding Ontarian’ access to high-speed internet is a good or poor use of taxpayers’ money?

Base: Total sample

BEST REASON FOR INVESTING IN ONTARIO’S BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

The best reason for expanding Ontario’s broadband infrastructure is to help schools to provide online instruction in rural or Northern Ontario communities where internet service is not available or is of poor quality.

|                                                                                                                                                            | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                                                                                                                                                         | 300       | 300          |
|                                                                                                                                                            | %         | %            |
| It will help small businesses in rural or Northern Ontario communities to offer their products and services to the global market                           | 20        | 20           |
| It will improve or allow for e-commerce in communities where internet service is not available or is of poor quality.                                      | 16        | 17           |
| It will help schools to provide online instruction in rural or Northern Ontario communities where internet service is not available or is of poor quality. | 54        | 50           |
| Don’t know/not sure                                                                                                                                        | 10        | 13           |

BBQ4. In your opinion, which of the following reasons is the best reason for this government investment?

Base: Total sample

Ontarians think that the government should put a priority on investing in infrastructure to ensure everyone across Ontario has access to high-speed internet.

*The government should put a priority on investing in infrastructure to ensure everyone across Ontario has access to high-speed internet*

|                            | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                         | varies    |              |
|                            | %         | %            |
| TOTAL AGREE                | 79        | 82           |
| Strongly agree             | 60        | 51           |
| Somewhat agree             | 19        | 31           |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 3         | 5            |
| Somewhat disagree          | 7         | 8            |
| Strongly disagree          | 9         | 3            |
| TOTAL DISAGREE             | 16        | 12           |
| Don't know                 | 2         | 1            |

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

Base: Total sample

Ontarians think investing in infrastructure to ensure that everyone has access to high-speed internet is a good use of taxpayer dollars.

*The government should invest in infrastructure to ensure that everyone has access to high-speed internet is a good use of taxpayer dollars.*

|                            | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                         | varies    |              |
|                            | %         | %            |
| TOTAL AGREE                | 75        | 85           |
| Strongly agree             | 49        | 52           |
| Somewhat agree             | 26        | 33           |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 4         | 4            |
| Somewhat disagree          | 7         | 5            |
| Strongly disagree          | 13        | 5            |
| TOTAL DISAGREE             | 19        | 10           |
| Don't know                 | 2         | 1            |

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

Base: Total sample

Just over one-third (34%) say that increases in their current internet speed would have an impact on their overall quality of life.

*Increases to my current internet speed will have no impact on my overall quality of life.*

|                            | Feb 20-25 | Feb 27-Mar 4 |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| n=                         | varies    |              |
|                            | %         | %            |
| TOTAL AGREE                | 54        | 55           |
| Strongly agree             | 39        | 36           |
| Somewhat agree             | 15        | 19           |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 4         | 7            |
| Somewhat disagree          | 15        | 14           |
| Strongly disagree          | 24        | 20           |
| TOTAL DISAGREE             | 40        | 34           |
| Not applicable             | -         | 1            |
| Don't know                 | -         | 3            |

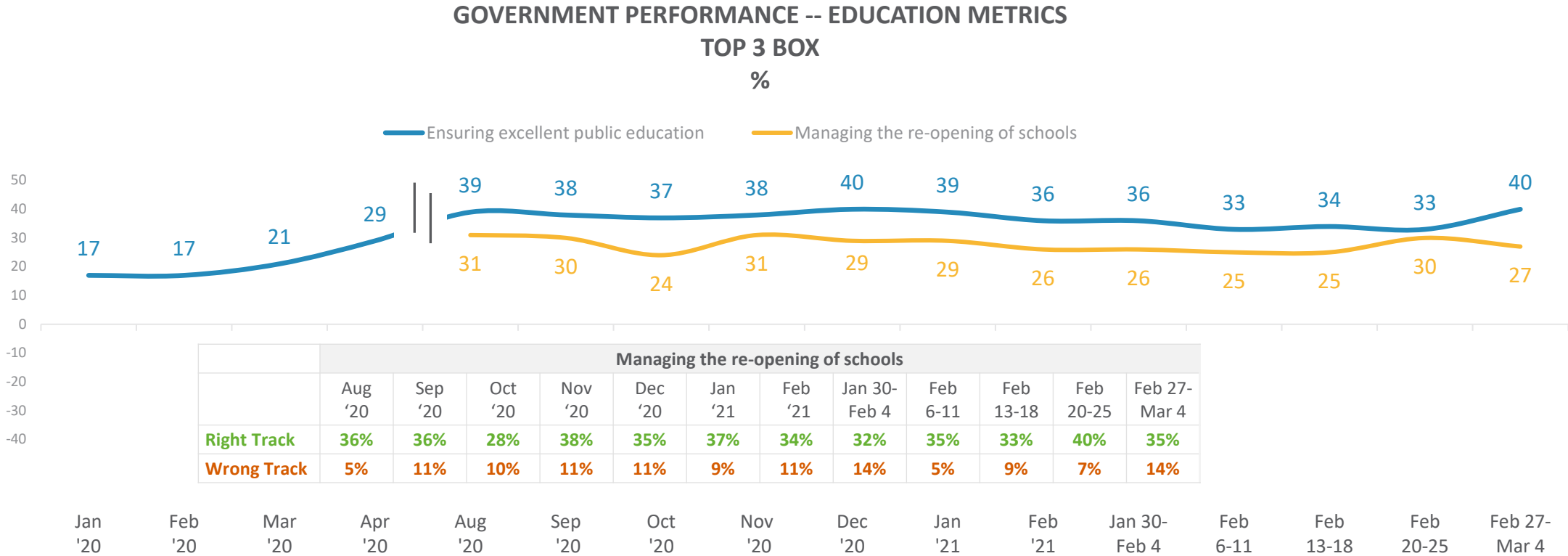
QCV-14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Total sample

# APPENDIX

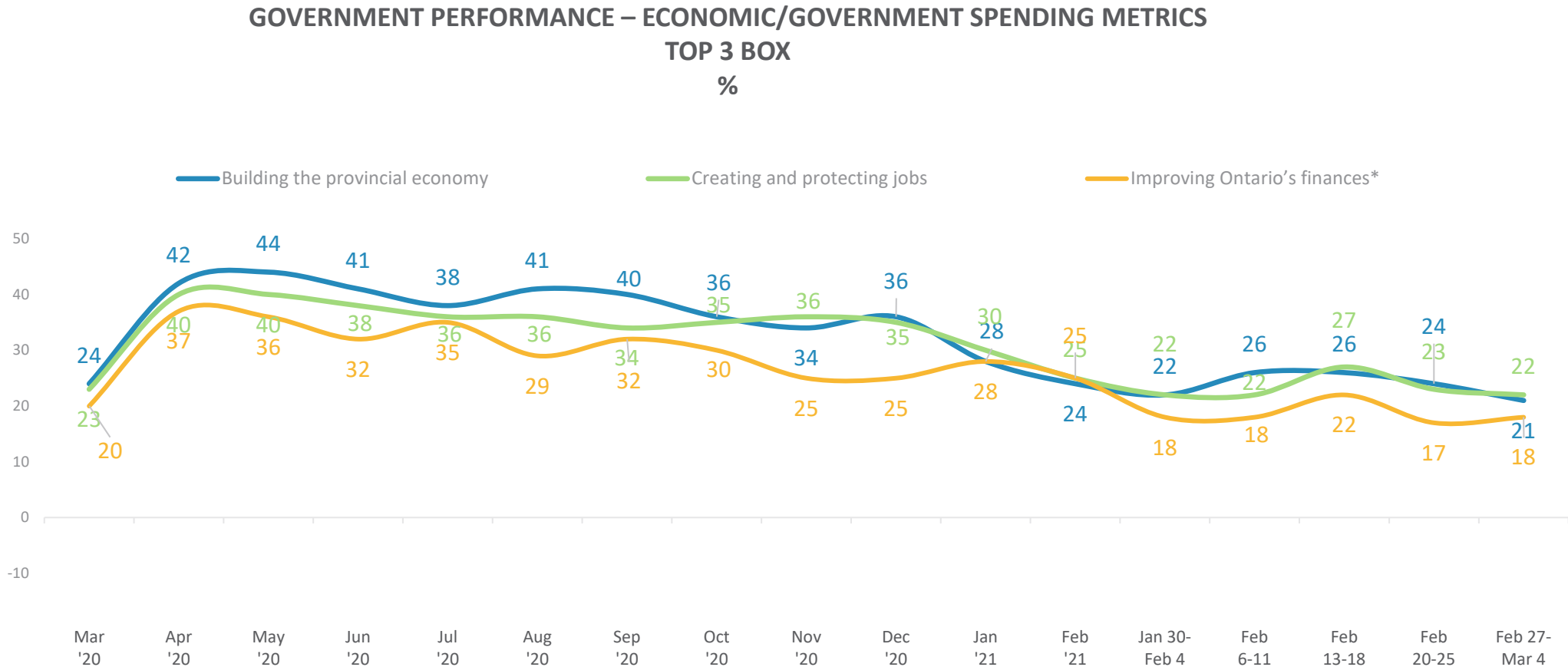


Positive perceptions on ‘ensuring excellent public education’ has risen over the past week.



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 ‘building the provincial economy’ metrics have dipped slightly.



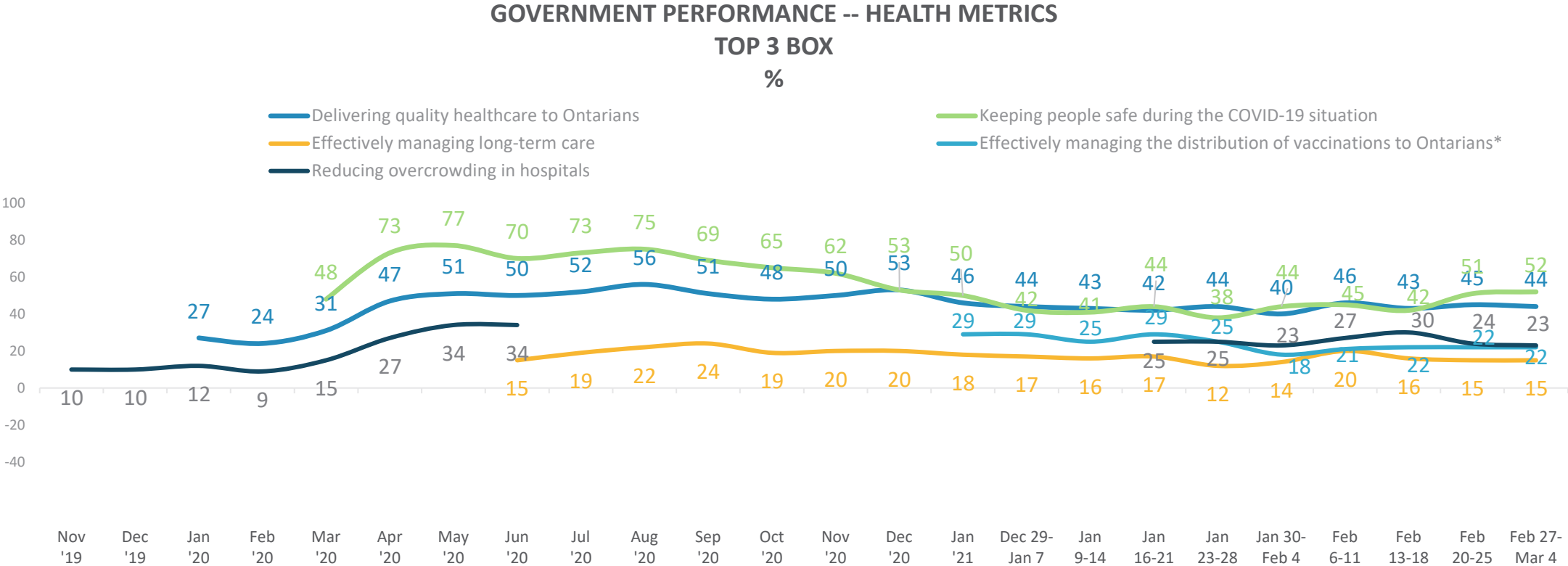
Q5. Using a scale where, where 1 means “poor” and nine is “excellent”, how would you rate the performance of Ontario government at managing each of the following?

\*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 all five metrics remain 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?  
\*Former phrasing: “Effectively managing the vaccinations of Ontarians”  
Bases vary