

## Federal Election 2021 Survey – Sept. 2021

### Introduction

In collaboration with Leger and the Canadian Global Cities Council (CGCC), a coalition of CEOs of nine of Canada's largest urban Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce conducted a federal election survey of its members to create a clear picture of what its members want to see from Canada's next government. The federal election survey includes the public and business community views on key election issues.

This report provides the key findings from a survey of 500 citizens in Winnipeg and 681 members of the Winnipeg chamber, conducted between August 19 and August 30, 2021, using Leger's online panel for the general population data and an open link sent to the Chamber membership for the business data.

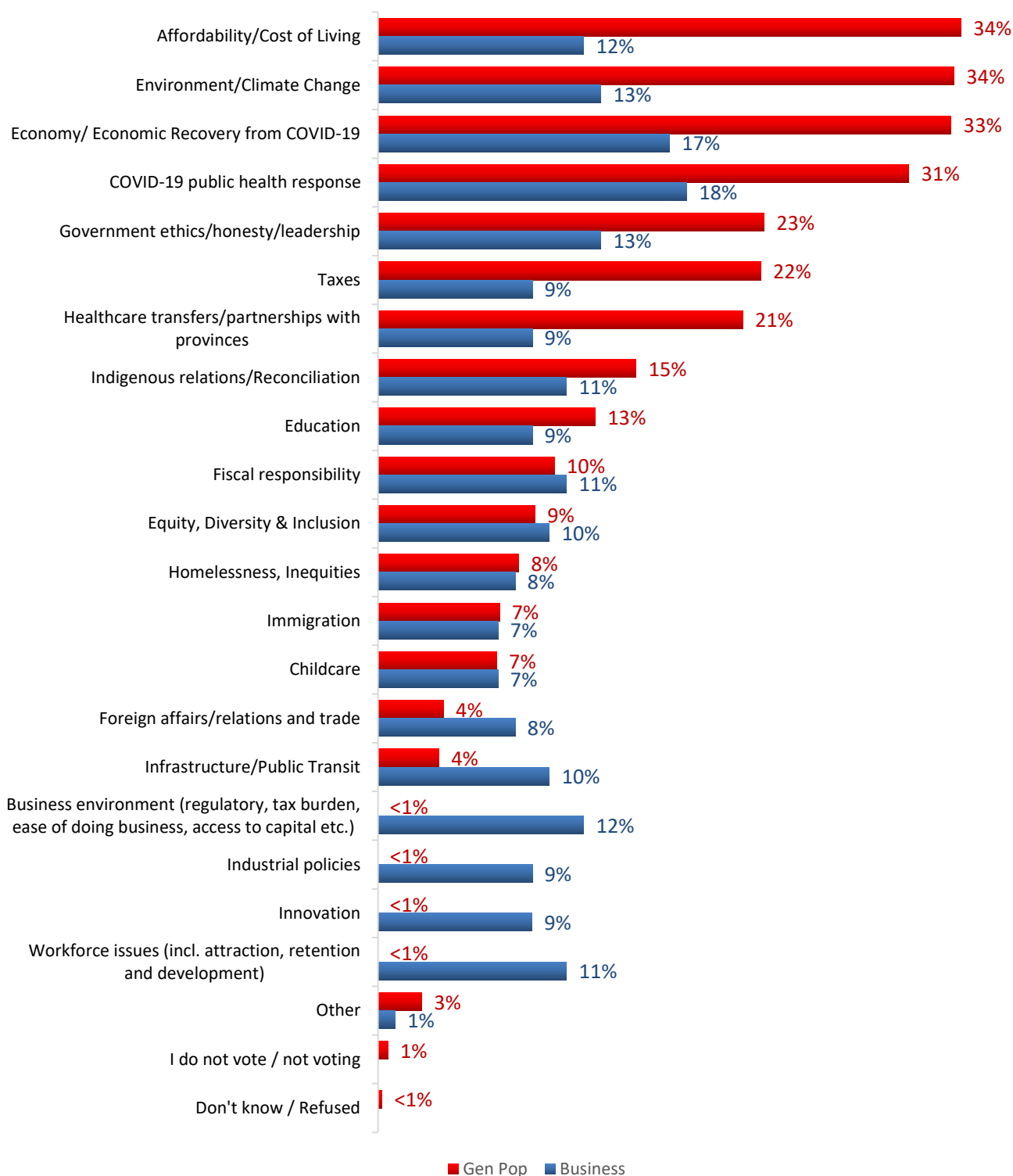
Weighting has been employed to ensure that the *general population* sample composition accurately reflects the adult population of the region, as per the latest Census Data. No margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample (i.e. a web panel in this case). For comparative purposes, though, a probability sample of 500 respondents as is the case with the *general population* data would have a margin of error of [ $\pm 4.4\%$ ], 19 times out of 20.

### Key Findings

#### MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

- Despite the dominating nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, housing affordability and climate change are the most important issues that will influence how Winnipeg's general population votes in the upcoming Federal Election – with 34% mentioning at least one of those two issues. However, the pandemic is still very much on voters' minds – 33% of Winnipeggers mentioned economic recovery from the pandemic and 31% mentioned the public health response to the pandemic.
- For a plurality of Winnipeg businesses, economic recovery from COVID-19 and the public health response to COVID-19 garnered the most mentions with 18% and 17% respectively. This suggests that businesses are hoping for a government that can help usher in a return to pre-pandemic levels of economic activity.
- Indigenous issues, which have been prominent of late, were mentioned 15% of times by the general population and 11% among business.
- Childcare, a policy debate that each of the major parties has engaged in on the campaign trail, ranks relatively low for both businesses and the general population – at 7% of mentions for both samples.

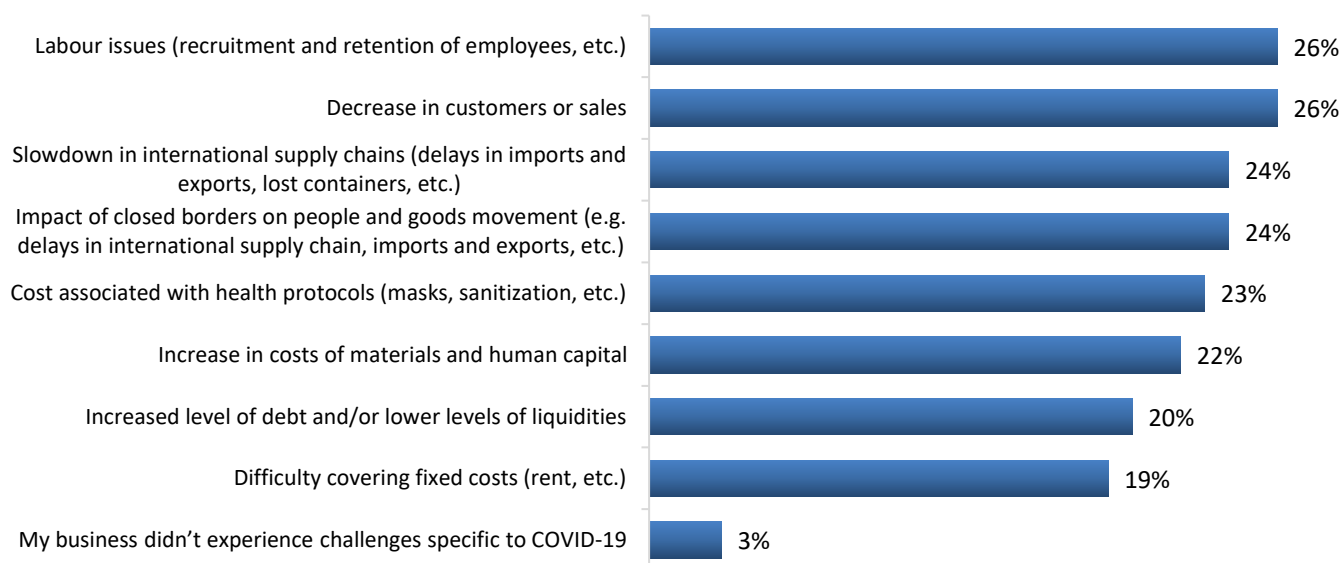
## What are the most important issues that will influence how you vote in the Federal Election on September 20th, 2021?



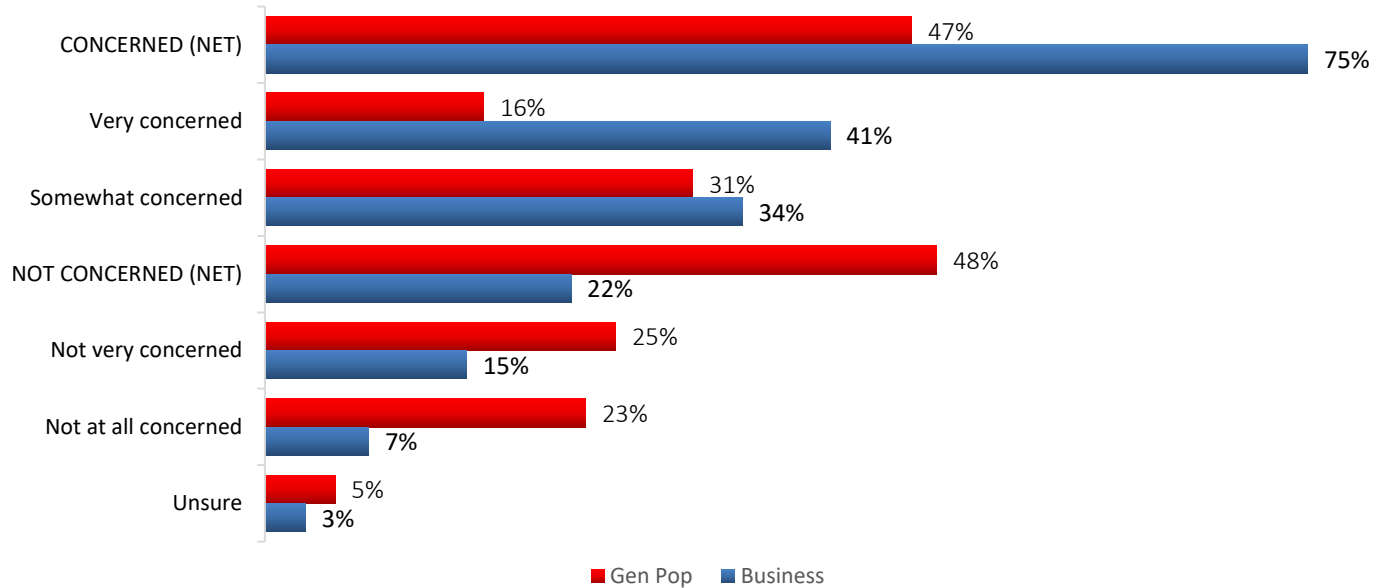
## COVID RESPONSE

- Regarding COVID-19 business challenges, over a quarter of Winnipeg’s businesses mentioned labour issues such as recruitment and retention of employees, as well as a decrease in customers or sales. Impacts in international supply chains, and costs associated with health protocols also ranked relatively high.
- 75% of Winnipeg’s businesses are concerned about government COVID-19 supports coming to an end while 45% of the general population feels the same. 41% of those businesses are very concerned, while just 16% of the general population matches that intensity. Nearly half of the general population is not concerned about those supports coming to an end,
- Support for proof of vaccination to enter certain businesses is notably high among both Winnipeg’s businesses and general population – over 8 in 10 of both businesses and the general population are supportive of this.
- 68% of the general population feels the primary benefit of certifying COVID-19 safety is avoiding future lockdowns, while 64% of businesses feel its ensuring safety and health in the workplace.

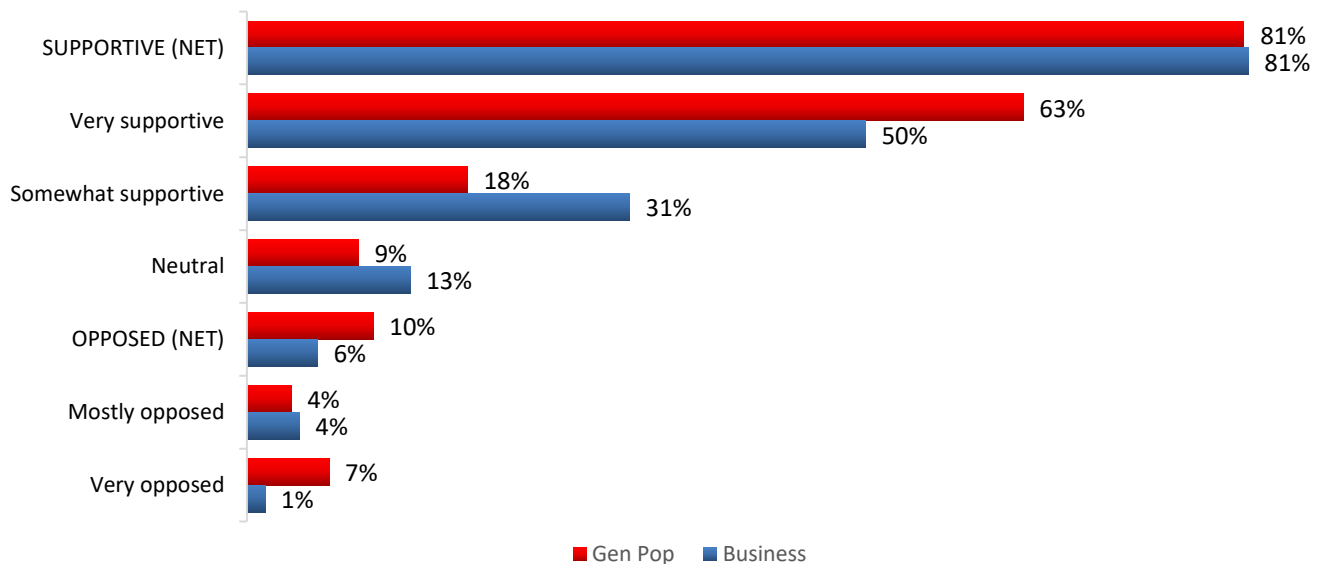
### What are the key challenges your business is facing as a result of COVID-19?



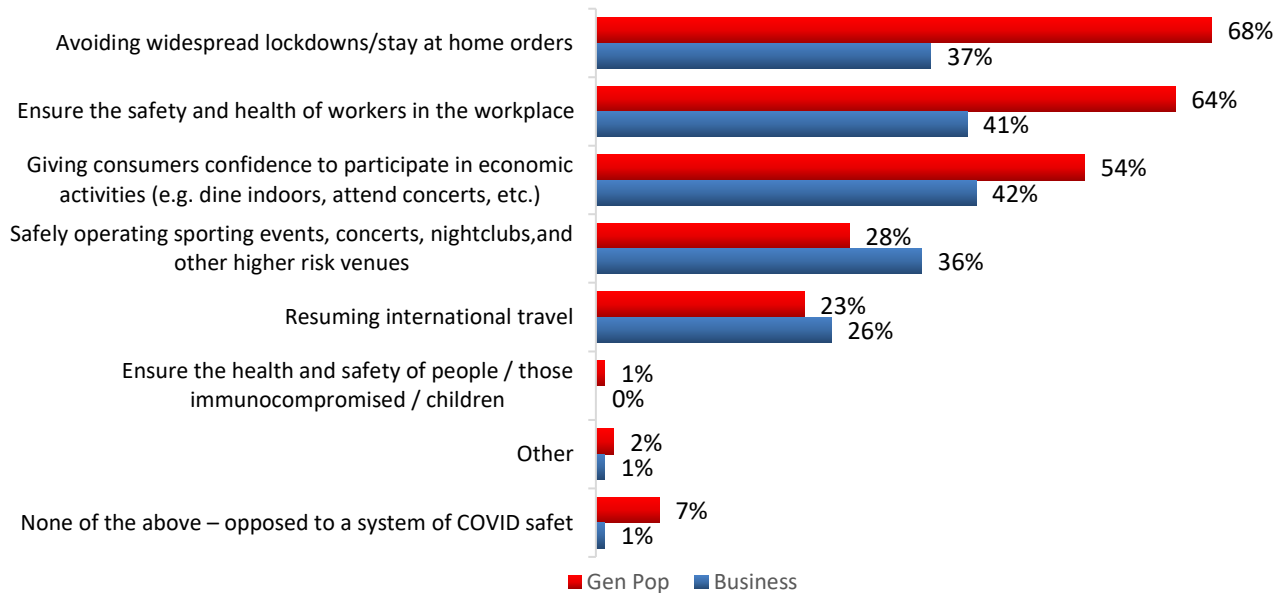
**To what degree are you concerned or not concerned about the Federal government COVID-19 assistance programs coming to an end?**



**With the threat of a fourth wave of COVID-19 in the fall, how supportive would you be of a system that requires Canadians to show proof of vaccination to access certain businesses or services, with exemptions and accommodations for those who cannot be vaccinated?**



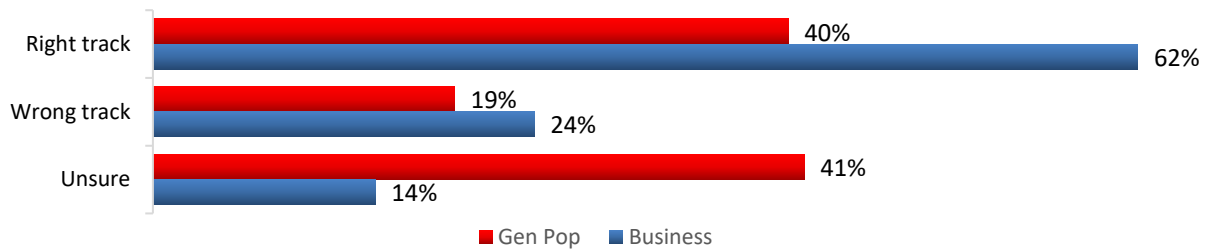
## What would you see as the primary benefits of a system of certifying COVID safety?



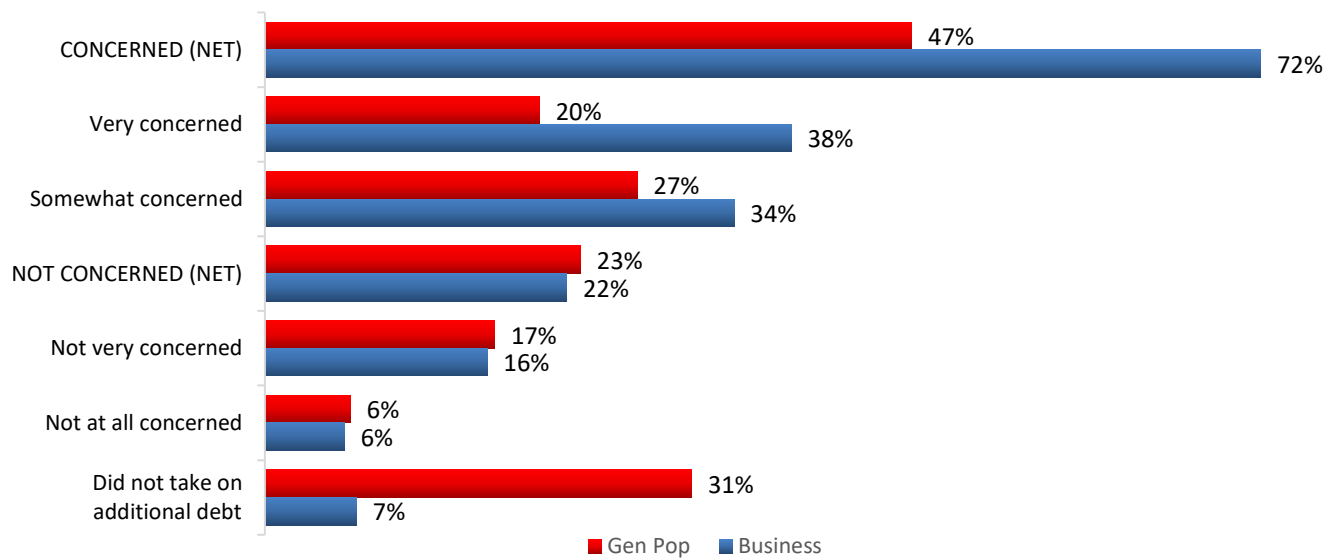
## ECONOMY

- While a significant portion of Winnipeg’s general population remains unsure if the Canadian economic recovery is on the right track or wrong track, 62% of businesses feel it is on the right track.
- While roughly 2 in 10 businesses and 2 in 10 of Winnipeggers are not concerned about the additional debt they’ve taken on during the pandemic, nearly half of the general population is concerned and, notably, 72% of businesses are concerned. 38% of those businesses are very concerned compared to 20% of the general population, illustrating the elevated sense of financial stress businesses have been feeling.
- Concern about the rising cost of goods is notably high among both businesses and the general population – 79% and 90% respectively are concerned. Over half of the general population is very concerned, while 20% of businesses are not concerned.
- Around 8 in 10 of both businesses and the general population are concerned about the tax burden increasing in light of the federal debt situation.
- Just 16% of the general population feels their standard of living will improve over the next five years, while over a third (34%) say it will worsen.

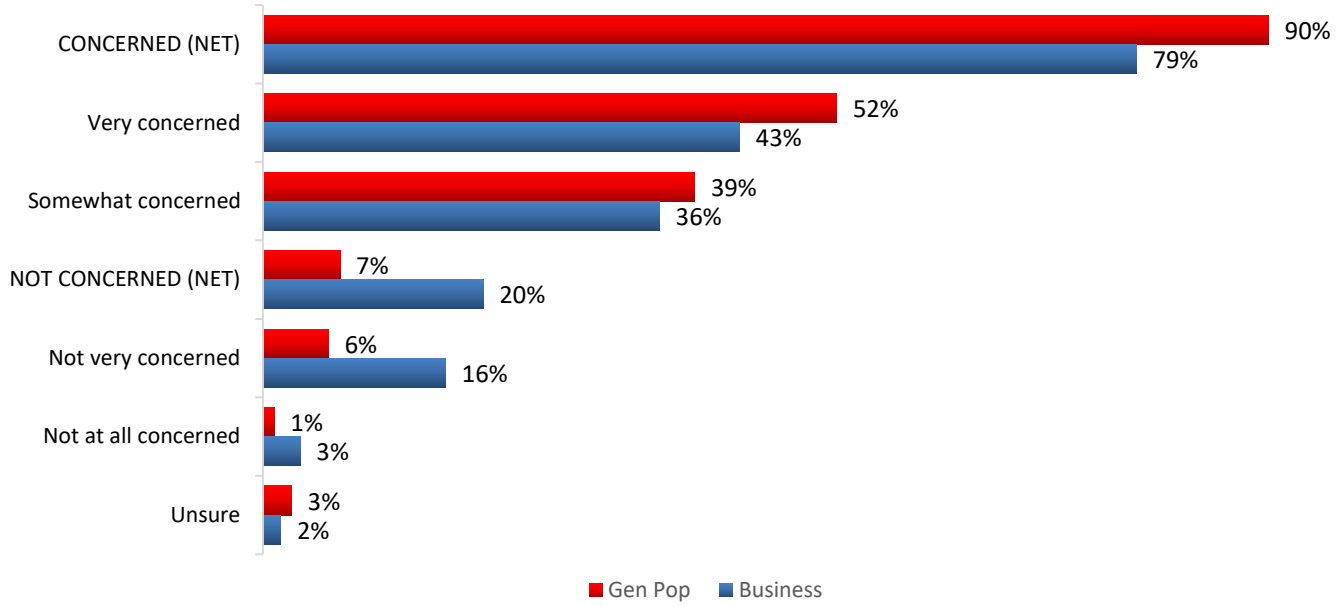
**Do you believe the Canadian economic recovery is on the right track or wrong track?**



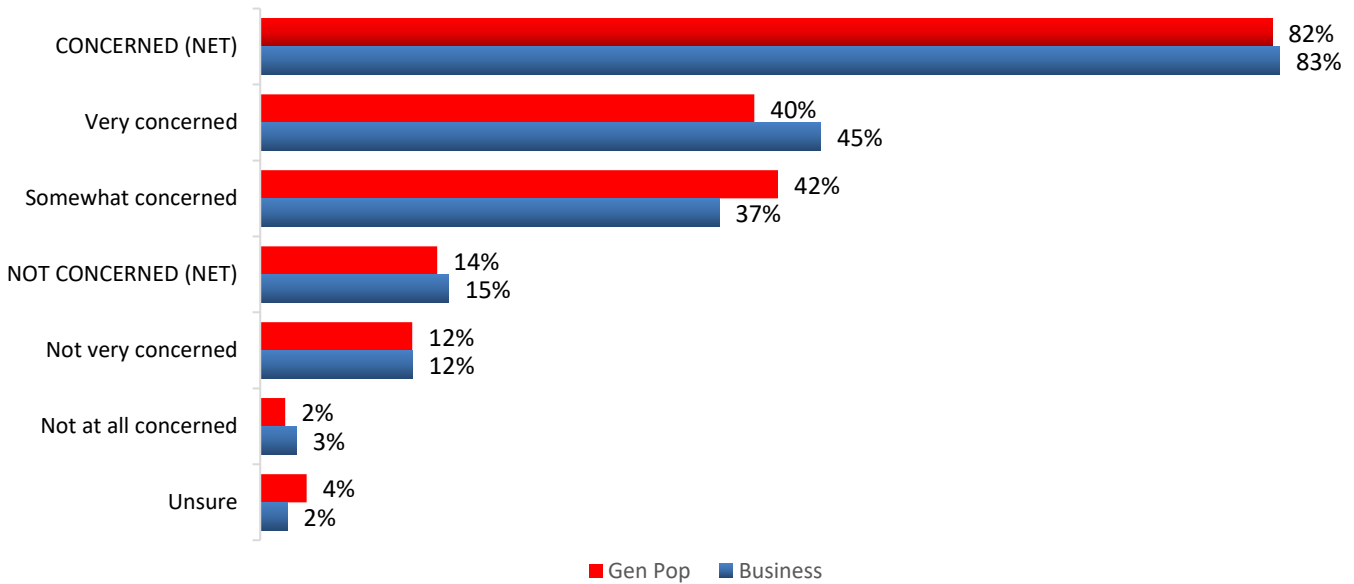
**To what degree are you concerned or not about the additional debt you/your businesses took on in response to the pandemic?**



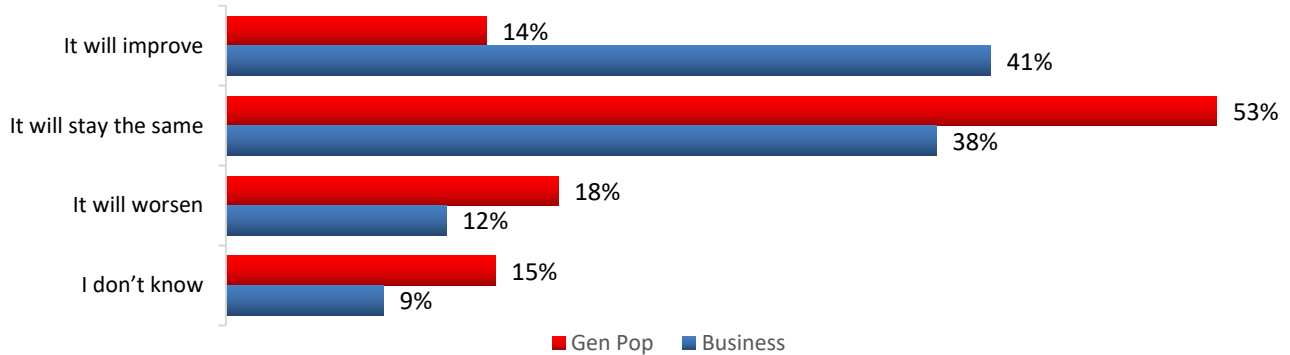
**To what degree are you concerned about the rising cost of goods?**



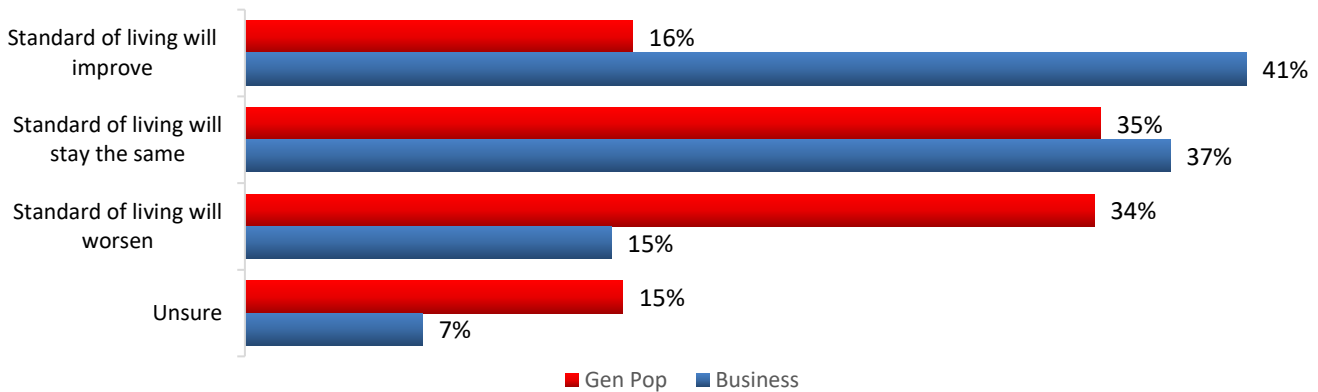
**To what degree are you concerned about the tax burden increasing in light of increased federal debt?**



**How confident are you about your own/your business's financial security over the next year?**



**How do you anticipate your standard of living will change over the next five years?**



**ENVIRONMENT**

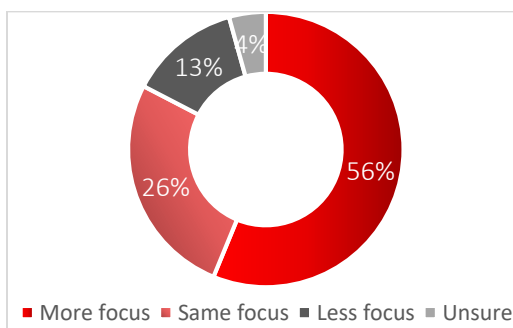
- Roughly half of both businesses and the general population would like to see more focus on climate change - 47% and 56% respectively. Nearly 4 in 10 businesses are okay with seeing the same amount of focus
- Just over 50% of the general population and businesses are aligned on their desire to see more supports provided to businesses and local clean technologies to address climate change
- Just under 50% of the general population and businesses are also closely aligned on their desire to see more support of local low carbon innovation.
- Overall, roughly half of businesses and the general population are inclined to see more measures taken to fight climate change overall.



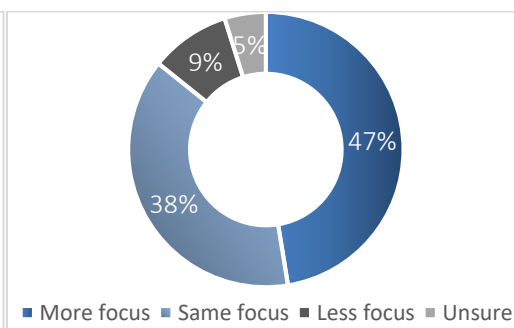
Would you like to see more focus, about the same or less focus on...

...climate change?

Gen Pop

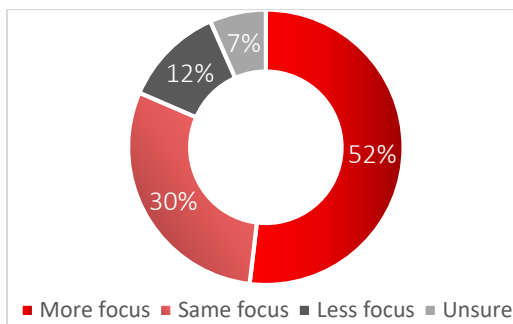


Business

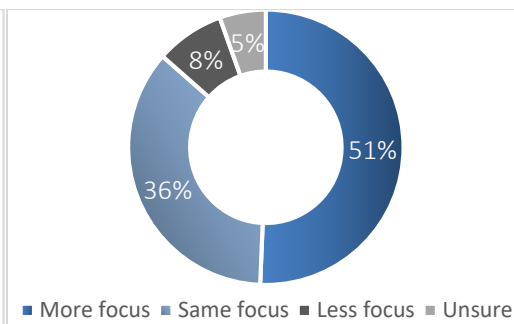


... supports provided to businesses and local clean technologies to address climate change?

Gen Pop

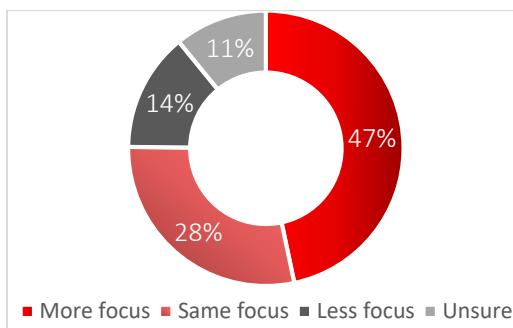


Business

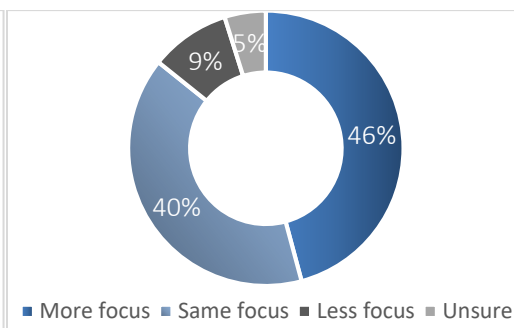


... supporting local low carbon innovation?

Gen Pop



Business

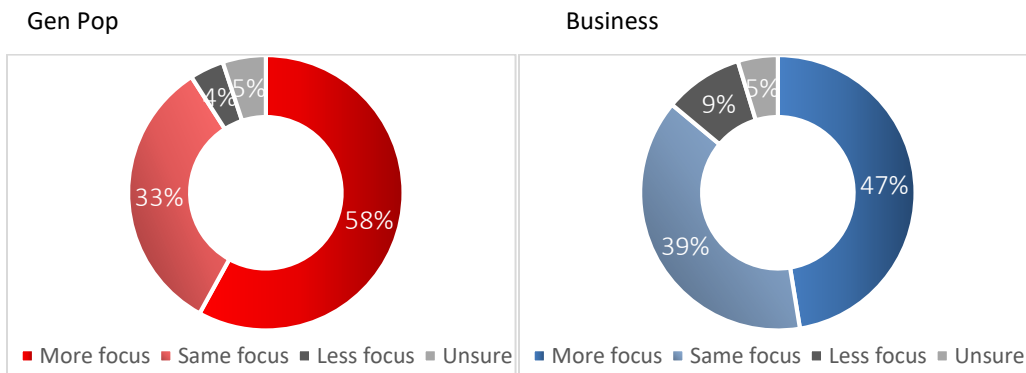


## AFFORDABILITY AND WORKFORCE

- Nearly 6 in 10 of Winnipeg’s general population want to see more focus on addressing housing affordability – nearly half of businesses feel the same.
- Over 7 in 10 of Winnipeg’s businesses have had trouble recruiting or retaining employees due to affordability issues, while over 6 in 10 of businesses have also had trouble hiring due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 10% of Winnipeg’s businesses feel changes in Canada’s regulatory environment have worsened our ability to attract investment or do business – nearly half believe this has improved.

### Would you like to see more focus, about the same or less focus on...

...addressing housing affordability?



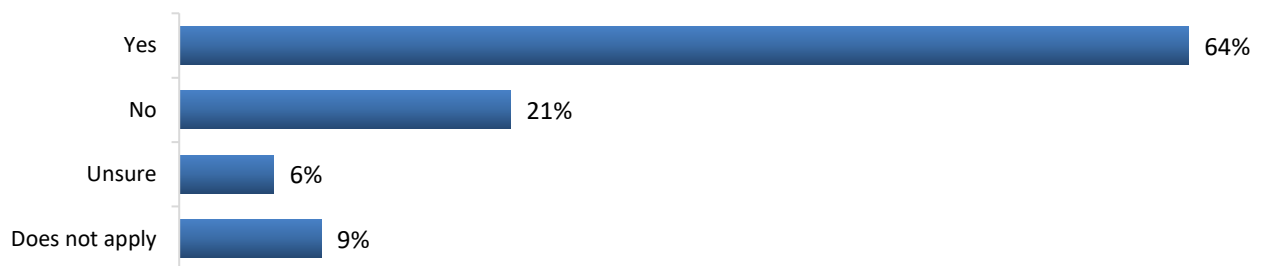
### Have you recently moved or are you considering leaving/moving due to the cost of housing?



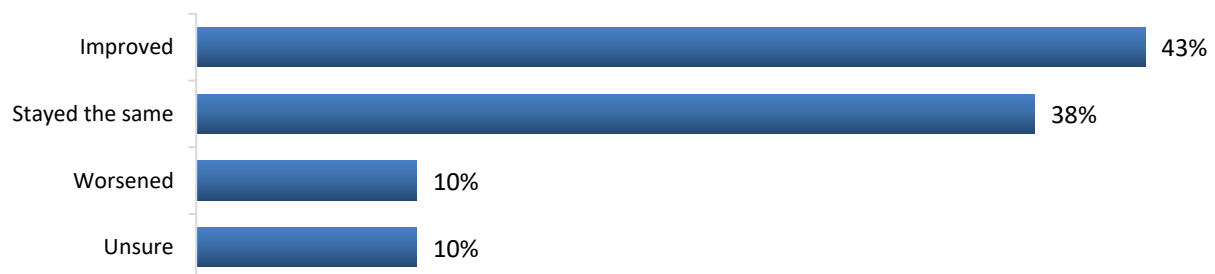
**Has your business's ability to recruit or retain employees been affected by affordability issues?**



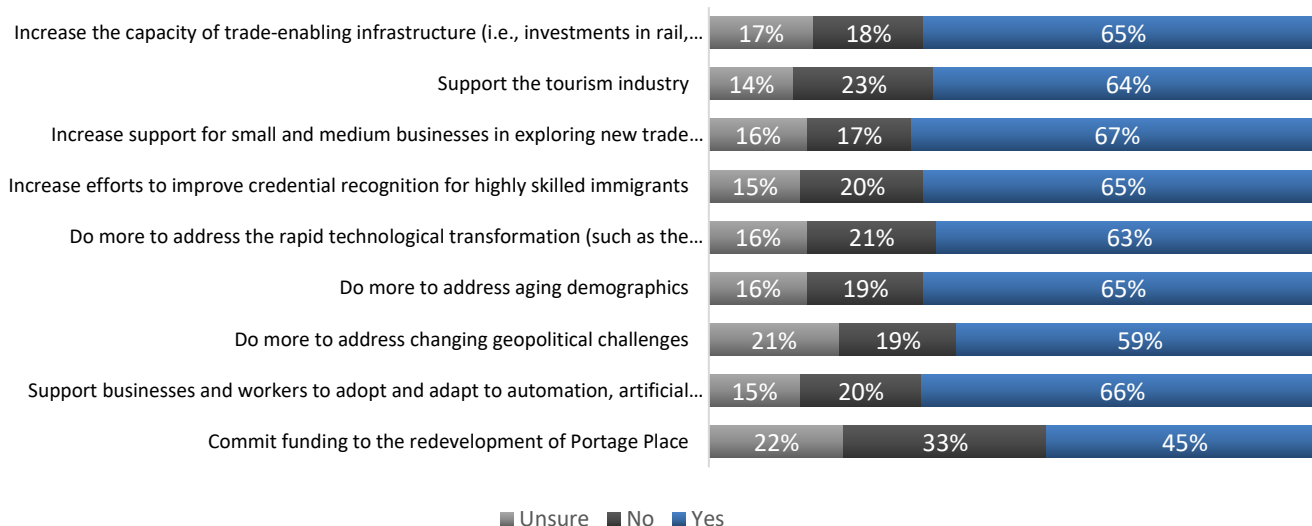
**Has your business experienced difficulties recruiting/hiring employees since the onset of the pandemic?**



**Compared to other jurisdictions, how have changes in Canada's regulatory environment over the past two years impacted our ability to attract investment or do business?**



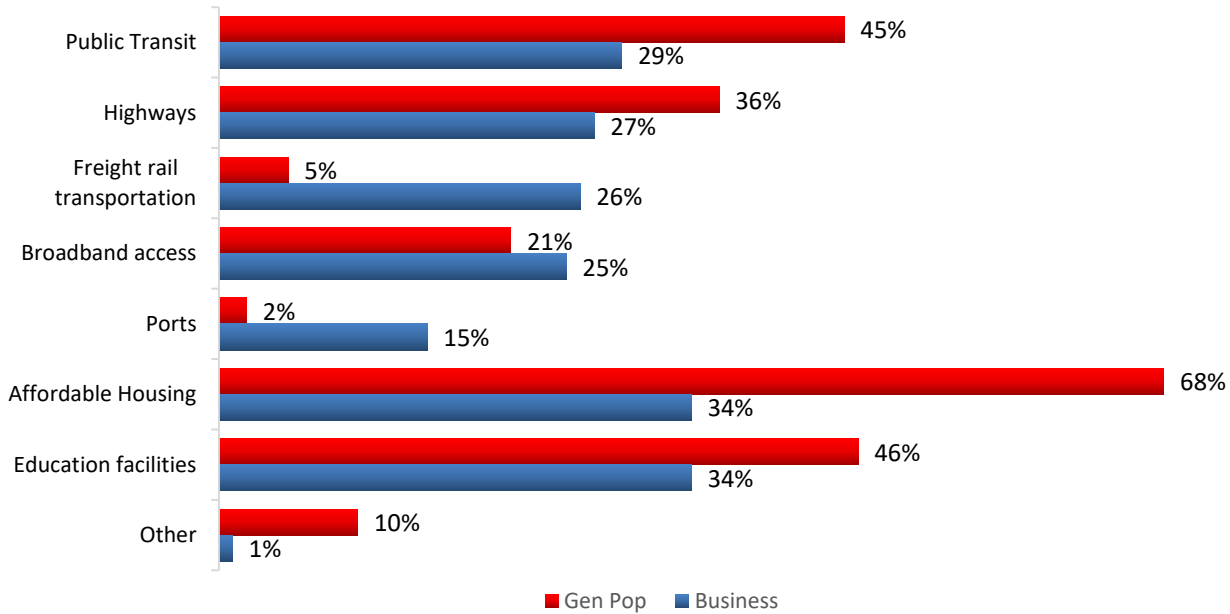
## Would you like to see the next Federal Government:



## INFRASTRUCTURE

- When asked about local infrastructure, affordable housing remains the strongest pain point among the general population, as it has throughout the current election campaign. Education facilities and public transit also rank highly, suggesting these issues stand top-of-mind for Winnipeg voters.
- Businesses share the affordable housing and education facilities pain points with the general population but worry about freight rail transportation and ports more than the general population does.

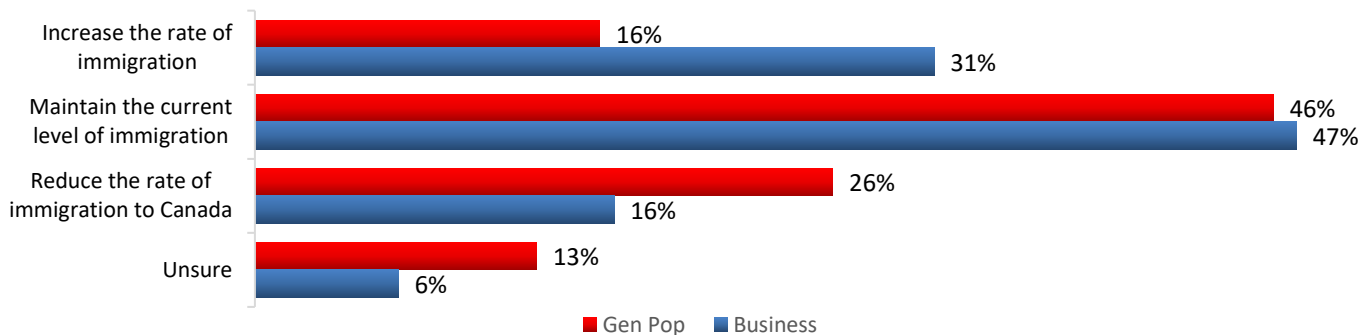
**As we emerge from the pandemic, what are the key infrastructure pain points in your region?**



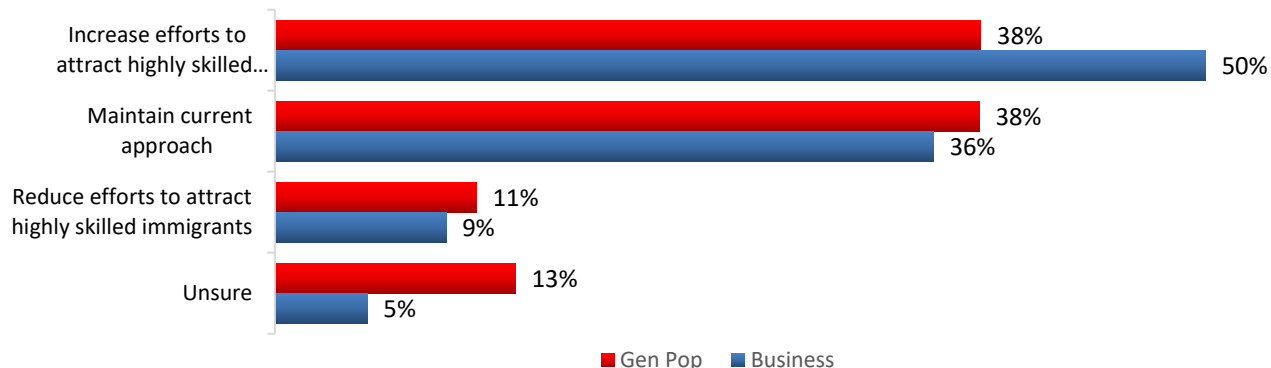
**IMMIGRATION**

- Slightly less than half of businesses and the general population are aligned in their belief of maintaining the current level of immigration – while 31% of businesses think it should be increased compared to only 16% among the general population.
- 50% of businesses want the federal government to increase efforts to attract highly skilled immigrants to Canada, while 38% of the general population feels comfortable maintaining the current approach.

**Do you believe the next Federal government should:**



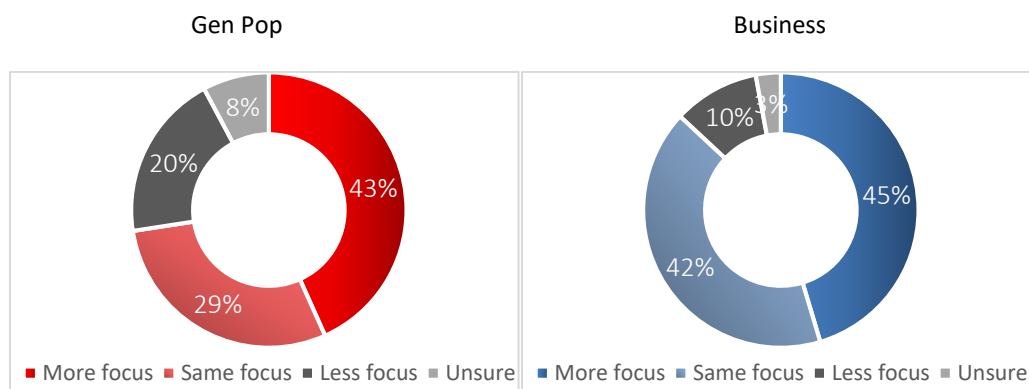
**Do you think the Federal Government should increase or decrease efforts in attracting and bringing highly skilled immigrants to Canada to address workforce needs?**



**INDIGENOUS RELATIONS**

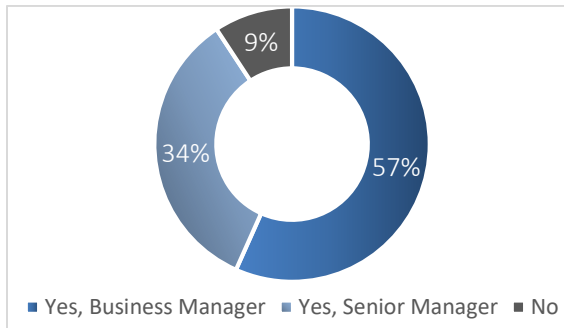
- Businesses are split on putting more focus on Indigenous reconciliation or maintaining the same focus.
- A clear plurality of the general population wants to see more focus on Indigenous reconciliation.

**Would you like to see the next Federal Government focus more/about the same/less on Indigenous reconciliation?**

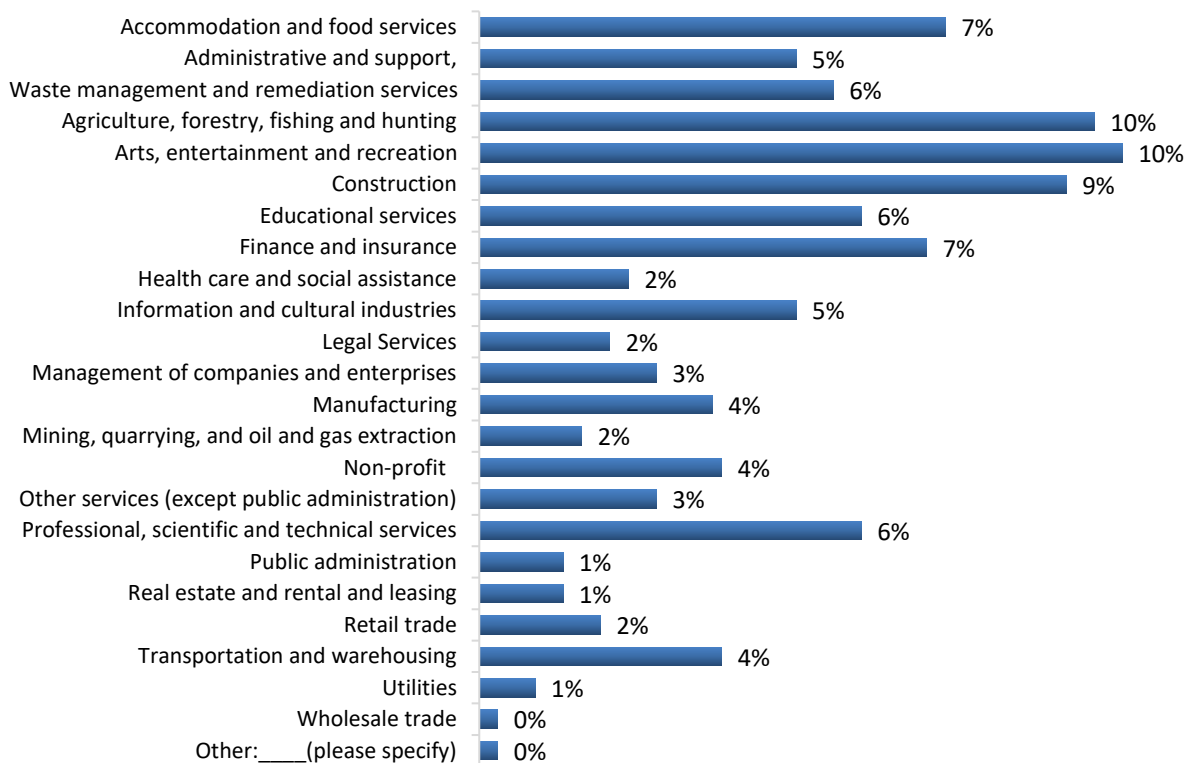


## DEMOGRAPHICS

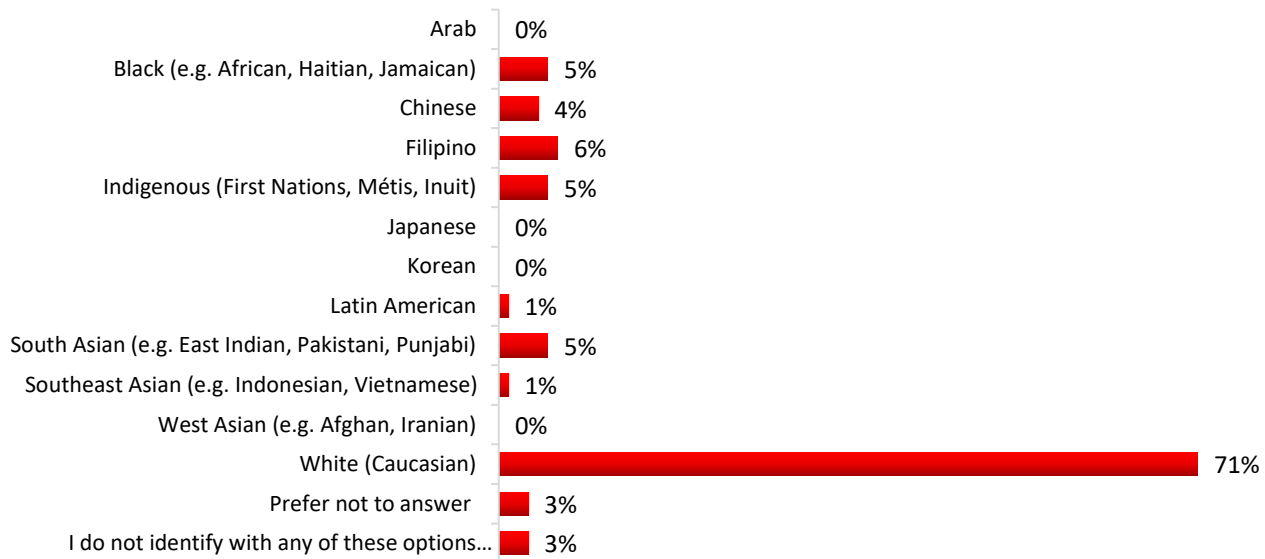
### Are you a business owner or senior manager?



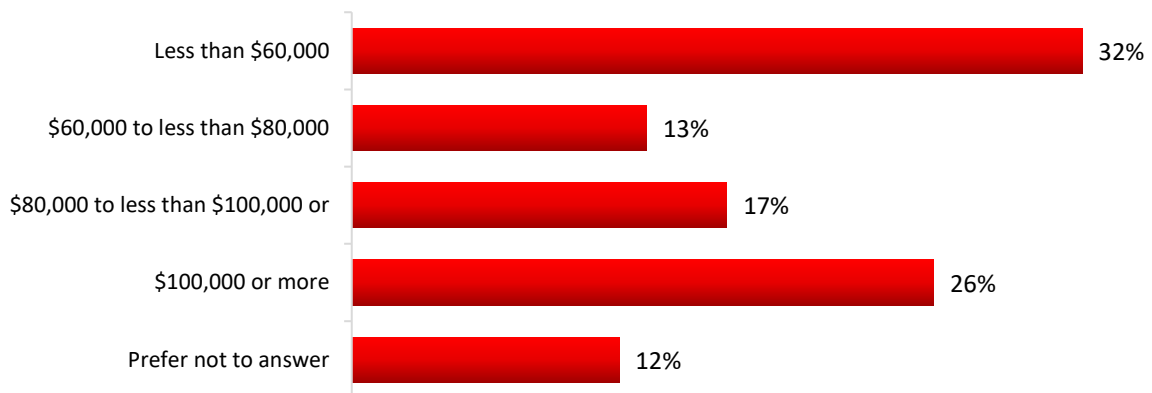
### What industry does your business/organization operate in?



**I would describe my ethnic or cultural background as (select all that apply):**



**Which of these broad ranges best describes your total annual household income before taxes?**





**What is the highest level of school/education that you have completed?**