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Reaction to Protests in Ottawa

Public Opinion Research
Release Date: February 9, 2022
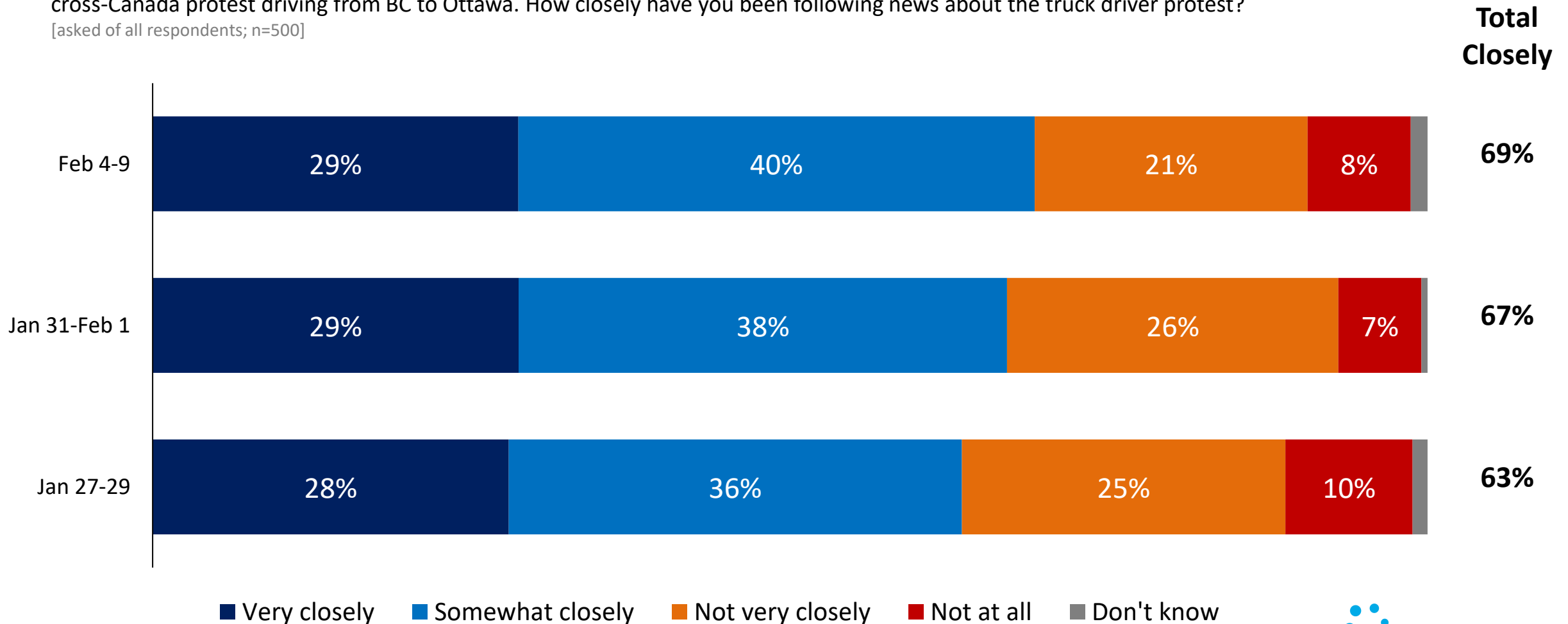**Field Dates: February 4 to 9, 2022**

What Changed?

Following News: Attention to the protests has continued to rise with 7-in-10 Canadians now paying close attention

Q The federal government has generally been requiring that anybody entering Canada from the US must be vaccinated against COVID-19. There has been an exemption for truckers but the government recently ended that exemption and now requires truckers also be vaccinated. A group of truckers have started a cross-Canada protest driving from BC to Ottawa. How closely have you been following news about the truck driver protest?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Total Closely

	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not very closely	Not at all	Total Closely
Feb 4-9	29%	40%	21%	8%	**69%**
Jan 31-Feb 1	29%	38%	26%	7%	**67%**
Jan 27-29	28%	36%	25%	10%	**63%**

■ Very closely ■ Somewhat closely ■ Not very closely ■ Not at all ■ Don't know

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Following News: Attention is highest among Conservative partisans and in Alberta and Ontario [4]

Q The federal government has generally been requiring that anybody entering Canada from the US must be vaccinated against COVID-19. There has been an exemption for truckers but the government recently ended that exemption and now requires truckers also be vaccinated. A group of truckers have started a cross-Canada protest driving from BC to Ottawa. How closely have you been following news about the truck driver protest?
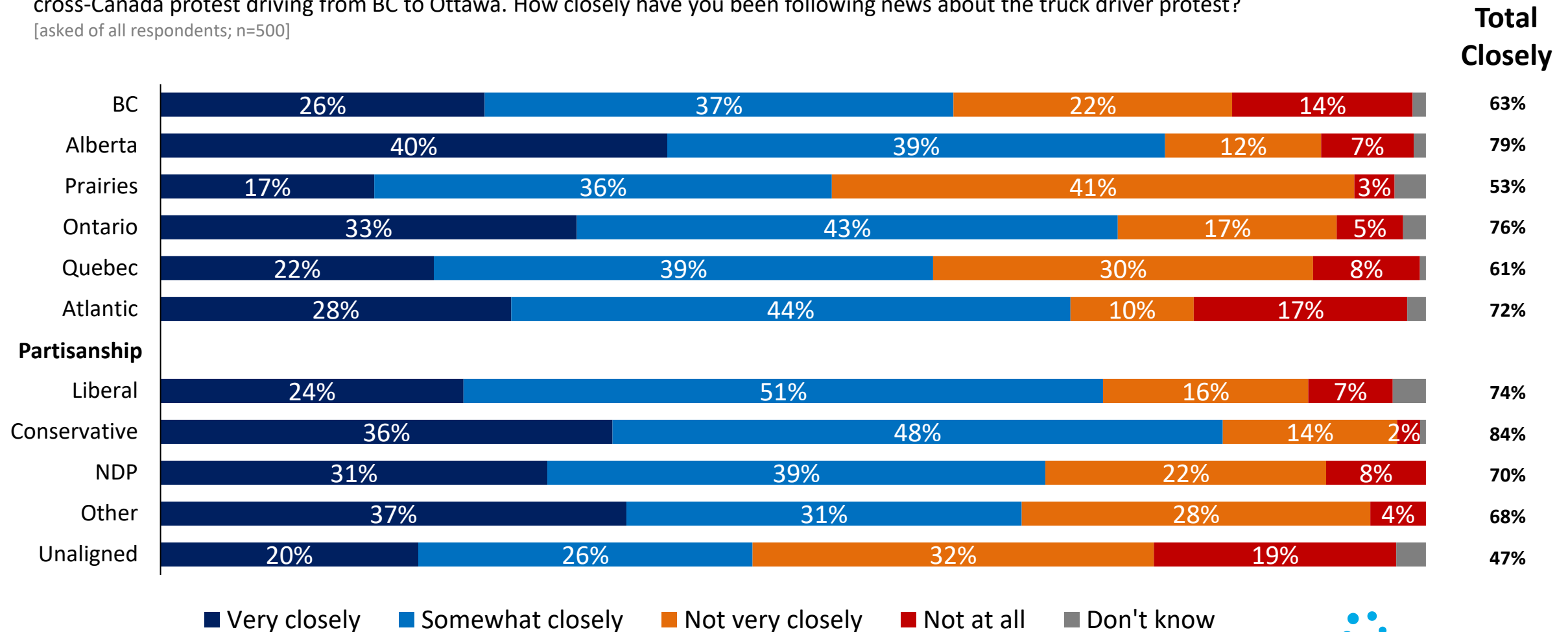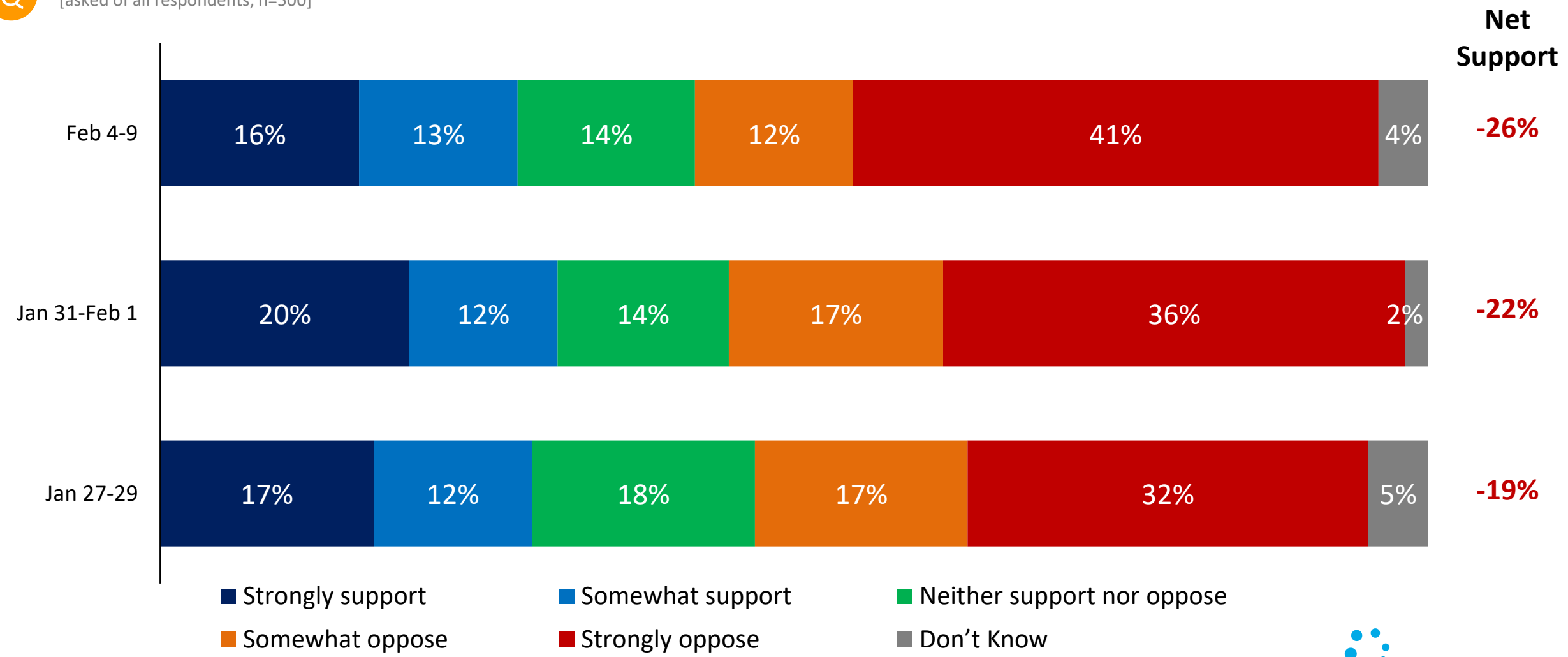[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Total Closely

Region	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not very closely	Not at all	Total Closely
BC	26%	37%	22%	14%	63%
Alberta	40%	39%	12%	7%	79%
Prairies	17%	36%	41%	3%	53%
Ontario	33%	43%	17%	5%	76%
Quebec	22%	39%	30%	8%	61%
Atlantic	28%	44%	10%	17%	72%

Partisanship

	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not very closely	Not at all	Total Closely
Liberal	24%	51%	16%	7%	74%
Conservative	36%	48%	14%	2%	84%
NDP	31%	39%	22%	8%	70%
Other	37%	31%	28%	4%	68%
Unaligned	20%	26%	32%	19%	47%

■ Very closely ■ Somewhat closely ■ Not very closely ■ Not at all ■ Don't know

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Protest Support: Opposition to the protests has continued to grow; now 41% are strongly opposed

Q From what you have read, seen, or heard, do you support or oppose the general idea of the truckers' protest?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Support

Date	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't Know	Net Support
Feb 4-9	16%	13%	14%	12%	41%	4%	**-26%**
Jan 31-Feb 1	20%	12%	14%	17%	36%	2%	**-22%**
Jan 27-29	17%	12%	18%	17%	32%	5%	**-19%**

- ■ Strongly support
- ■ Somewhat support
- ■ Neither support nor oppose
- ■ Somewhat oppose
- ■ Strongly oppose
- ■ Don't Know

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Protest Support: Support for the protests is highest in Alberta; lowest among NDP and Liberal partisans

Q From what you have read, seen, or heard, do you support or oppose the general idea of the truckers' protest?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

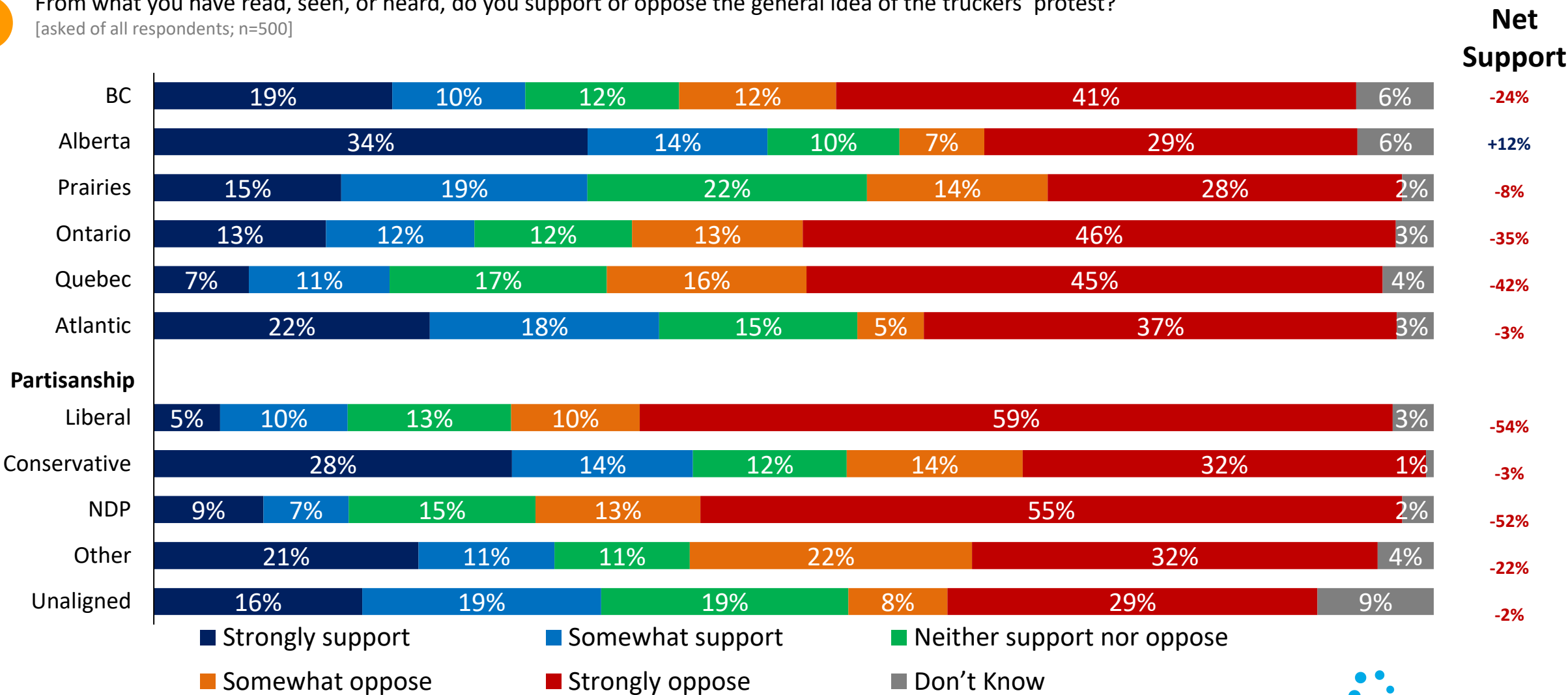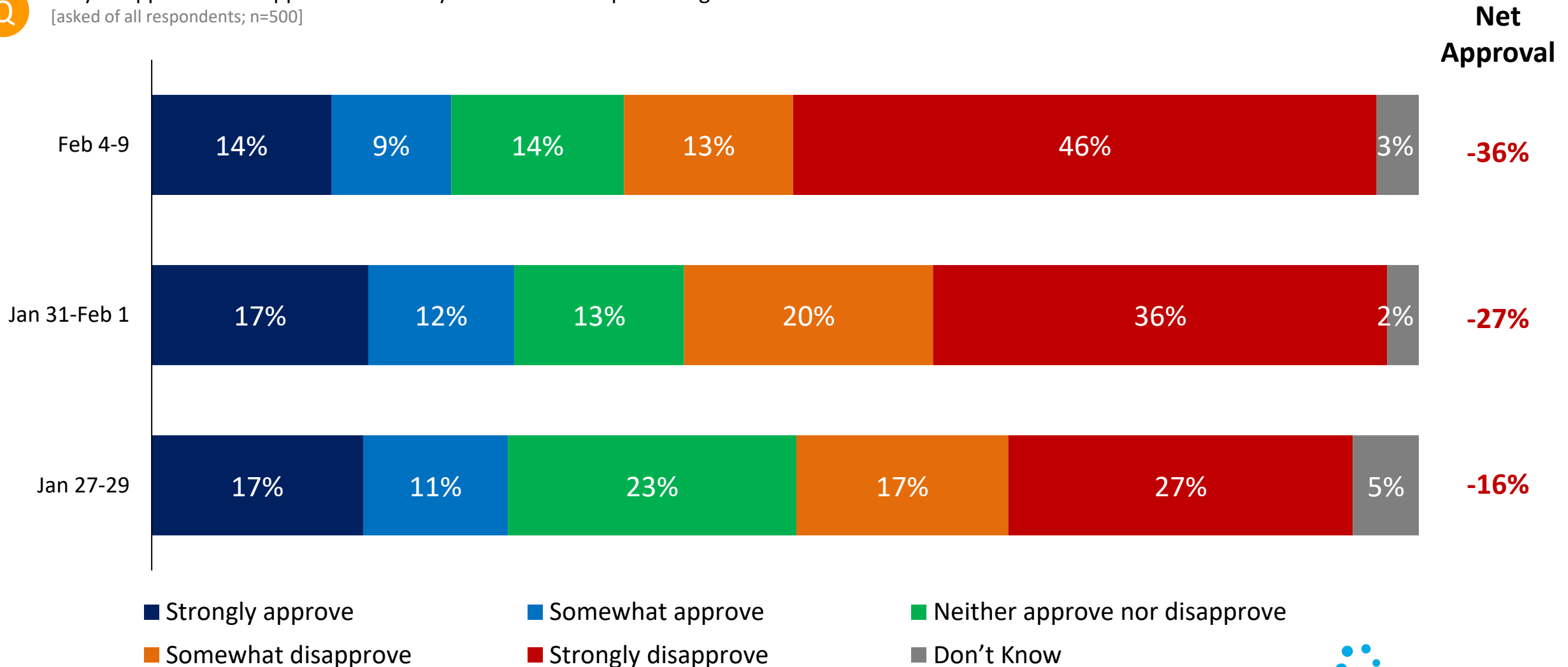**Net Support**

Region	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't Know	Net Support
BC	19%	10%	12%	12%	41%	6%	-24%
Alberta	34%	14%	10%	7%	29%	6%	+12%
Prairies	15%	19%	22%	14%	28%	2%	-8%
Ontario	13%	12%	12%	13%	46%	3%	-35%
Quebec	7%	11%	17%	16%	45%	4%	-42%
Atlantic	22%	18%	15%	5%	37%	3%	-3%

Partisanship

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't Know	Net Support
Liberal	5%	10%	13%	10%	59%	3%	-54%
Conservative	28%	14%	12%	14%	32%	1%	-3%
NDP	9%	7%	15%	13%	55%	2%	-52%
Other	21%	11%	11%	22%	32%	4%	-22%
Unaligned	16%	19%	19%	8%	29%	9%	-2%

■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Neither support nor oppose
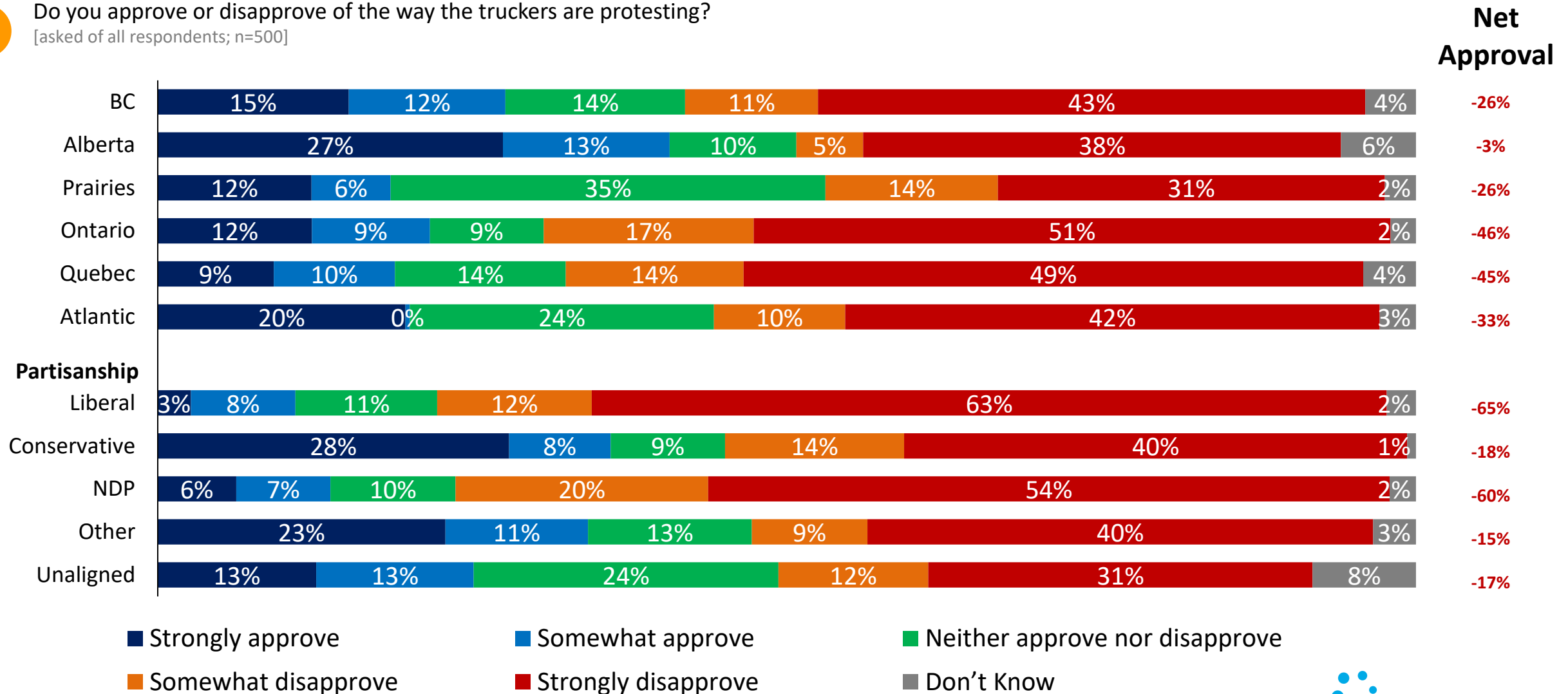■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Don't Know

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Tactics: Nearly half (46%) strongly disapprove of the tactics the protesters are using

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the truckers are protesting?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Approval

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
Feb 4-9	14%	9%	14%	13%	46%	3%	**-36%**
Jan 31-Feb 1	17%	12%	13%	20%	36%	2%	**-27%**
Jan 27-29	17%	11%	23%	17%	27%	5%	**-16%**

■ Strongly approve ■ Somewhat approve ■ Neither approve nor disapprove
■ Somewhat disapprove ■ Strongly disapprove ■ Don't Know

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Tactics: Support for protestor tactics is lowest among Liberal partisans; highest in Alberta

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the truckers are protesting?
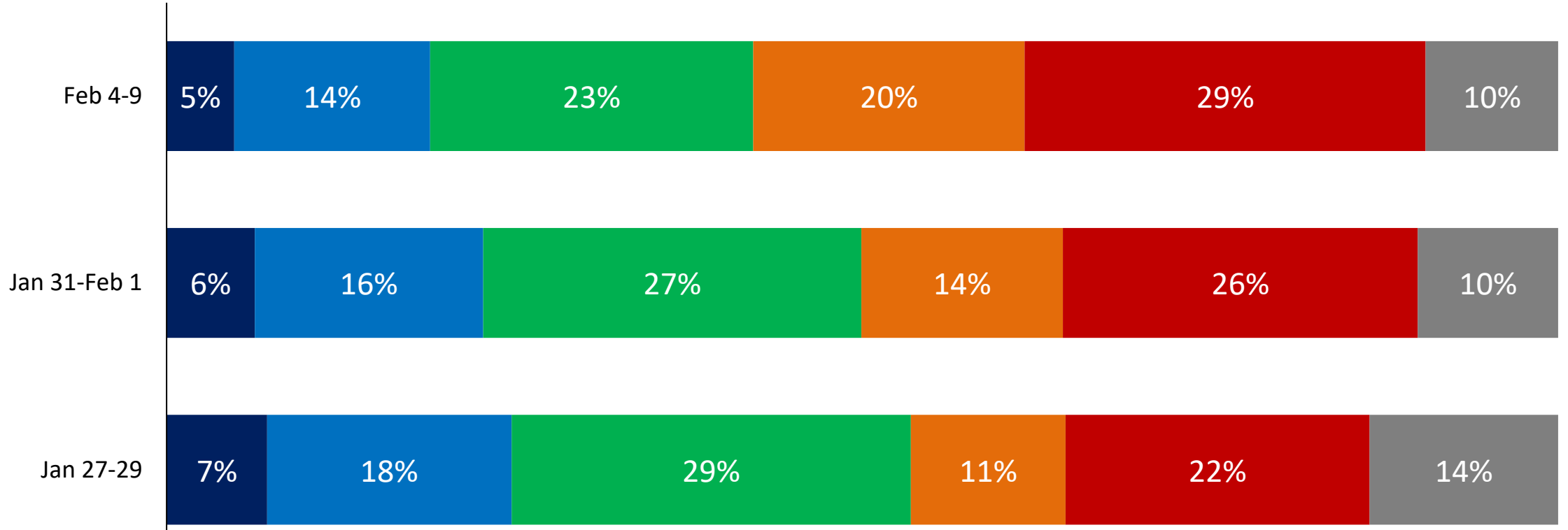[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Approval

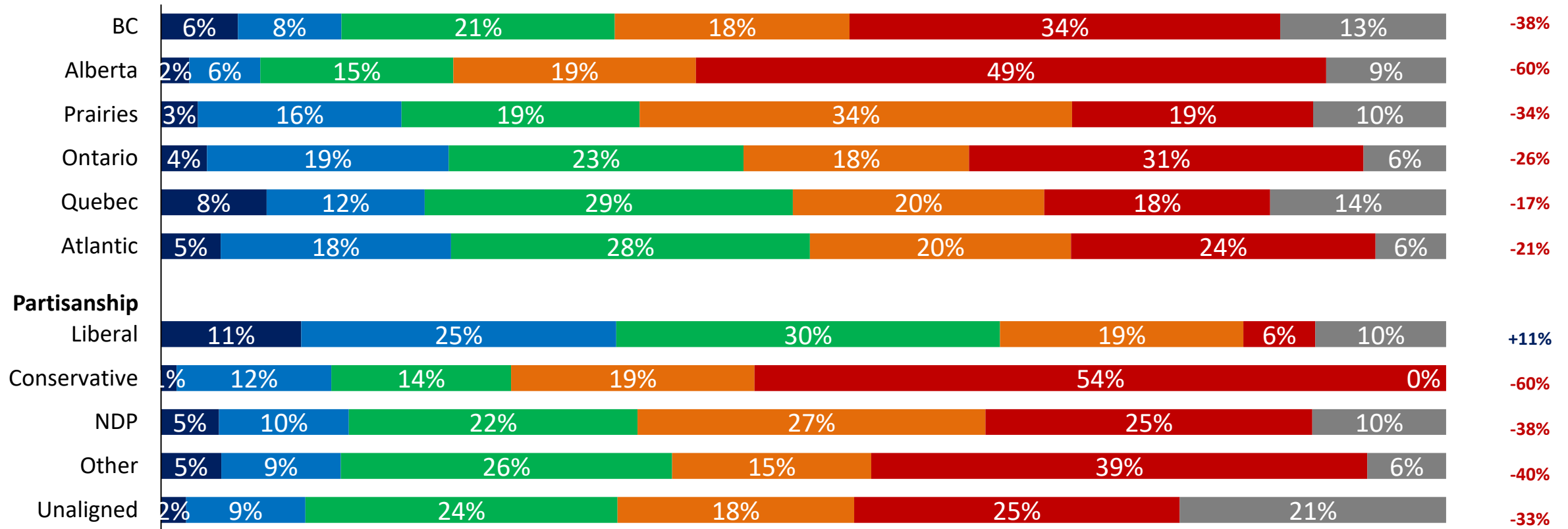|	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
BC	15%	12%	14%	11%	43%	4%	-26%
Alberta	27%	13%	10%	5%	38%	6%	-3%
Prairies	12%	6%	35%	14%	31%	2%	-26%
Ontario	12%	9%	9%	17%	51%	2%	-46%
Quebec	9%	10%	14%	14%	49%	4%	-45%
Atlantic	20%	0%	24%	10%	42%	3%	-33%

Partisanship

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
Liberal	3%	8%	11%	12%	63%	2%	-65%
Conservative	28%	8%	9%	14%	40%	1%	-18%
NDP	6%	7%	10%	20%	54%	2%	-60%
Other	23%	11%	13%	9%	40%	3%	-15%
Unaligned	13%	13%	24%	12%	31%	8%	-17%

■ Strongly approve   ■ Somewhat approve   ■ Neither approve nor disapprove
■ Somewhat disapprove   ■ Strongly disapprove   ■ Don't Know

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Liberal Response: Net approval of the Liberal response to the issue has dropped to a low of -29%

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Liberal Party has handled the issue since it emerged?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Approval

Date	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
Feb 4-9	5%	14%	23%	20%	29%	10%	**-29%**
Jan 31-Feb 1	6%	16%	27%	14%	26%	10%	**-17%**
Jan 27-29	7%	18%	29%	11%	22%	14%	**-8%**

■ Strongly approve   ■ Somewhat approve   ■ Neither approve nor disapprove
■ Somewhat disapprove   ■ Strongly disapprove   ■ Don't Know

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Liberal Response: Only Liberal partisans on net approve of the Liberal response

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Liberal Party has handled the issue since it emerged?
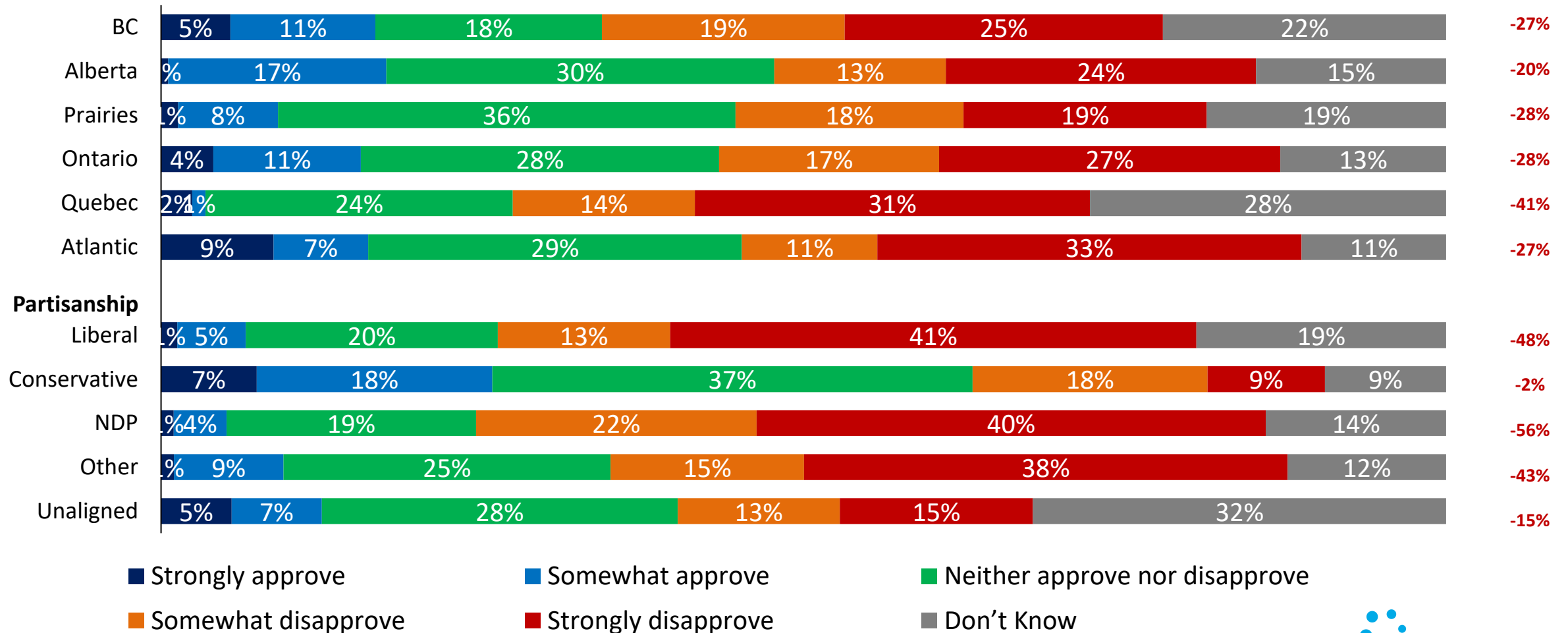[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Approval

Region	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
BC	6%	8%	21%	18%	34%	13%	-38%
Alberta	2%	6%	15%	19%	49%	9%	-60%
Prairies	3%	16%	19%	34%	19%	10%	-34%
Ontario	4%	19%	23%	18%	31%	6%	-26%
Quebec	8%	12%	29%	20%	18%	14%	-17%
Atlantic	5%	18%	28%	20%	24%	6%	-21%

Partisanship

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
Liberal	11%	25%	30%	19%	6%	10%	+11%
Conservative	1%	12%	14%	19%	54%	0%	-60%
NDP	5%	10%	22%	27%	25%	10%	-38%
Other	5%	9%	26%	15%	39%	6%	-40%
Unaligned	2%	9%	24%	18%	25%	21%	-33%

■ Strongly approve ■ Somewhat approve ■ Neither approve nor disapprove
■ Somewhat disapprove ■ Strongly disapprove ■ Don't Know

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Conservative Response: Net approval of the Conservative response has[11] remained negative

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Conservative Party has handled the issue since it emerged?
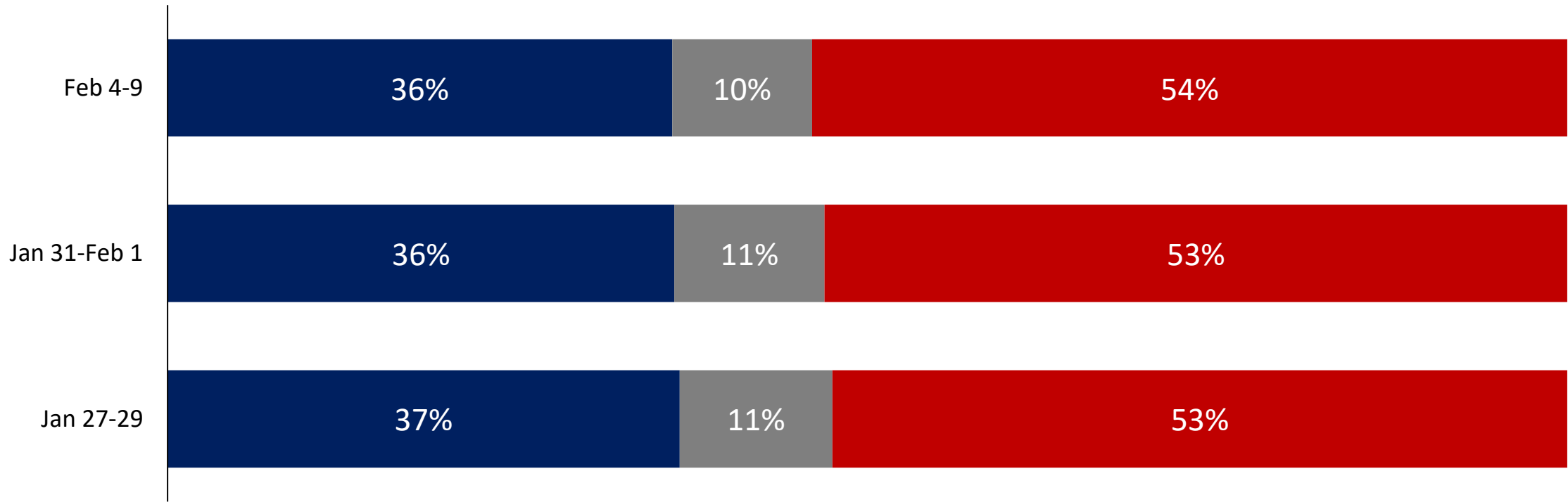[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Approval

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
Feb 4-9	4%	9%	26%	16%	27%	18%	**-30%**
Jan 31-Feb 1	3%	11%	24%	17%	28%	18%	**-31%**
Jan 27-29	3%	8%	30%	15%	23%	21%	**-26%**

■ Strongly approve ■ Somewhat approve ■ Neither approve nor disapprove
■ Somewhat disapprove ■ Strongly disapprove ■ Don't Know

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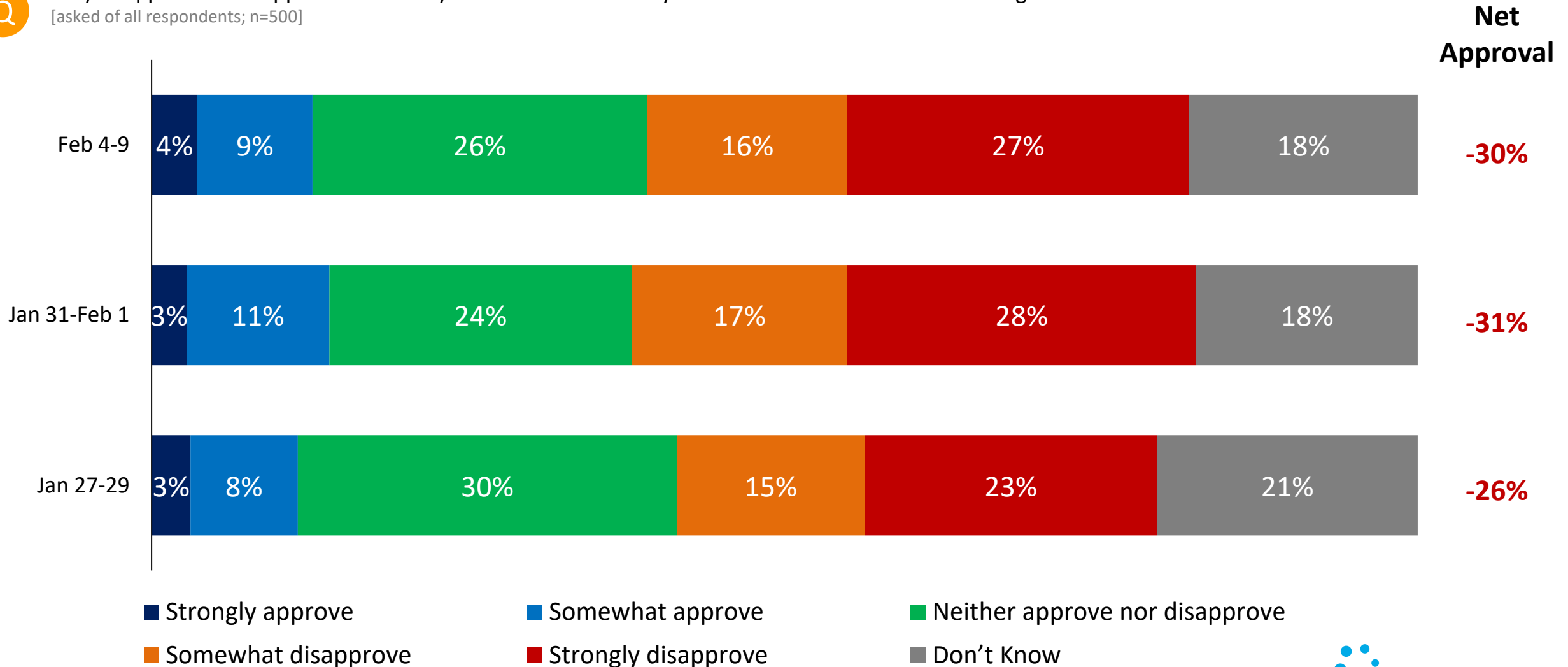
Conservative Response: In all groups, more disapprove than approve of the way the Conservative Party has handled the issue

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Conservative Party has handled the issue since it emerged?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

Net Approval

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
BC	5%	11%	18%	19%	25%	22%	-27%
Alberta	%	17%	30%	13%	24%	15%	-20%
Prairies	1%	8%	36%	18%	19%	19%	-28%
Ontario	4%	11%	28%	17%	27%	13%	-28%
Quebec	2%	1%	24%	14%	31%	28%	-41%
Atlantic	9%	7%	29%	11%	33%	11%	-27%

Partisanship

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither approve nor disapprove	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't Know	Net Approval
Liberal	1%	5%	20%	13%	41%	19%	-48%
Conservative	7%	18%	37%	18%	9%	9%	-2%
NDP	%	4%	19%	22%	40%	14%	-56%
Other	%	9%	25%	15%	38%	12%	-43%
Unaligned	5%	7%	28%	13%	15%	32%	-15%

- ■ Strongly approve
- ■ Somewhat approve
- ■ Neither approve nor disapprove
- ■ Somewhat disapprove
- ■ Strongly disapprove
- ■ Don't Know

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Trucker Exemptions: Support for an exemption at borders has remained[13] stable at 36%

Q **Which of the following comes closest to your point of view?**
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

	The exemption should be brought back	Don't know	Continue to require vaccination
Feb 4-9	36%	10%	54%
Jan 31-Feb 1	36%	11%	53%
Jan 27-29	37%	11%	53%
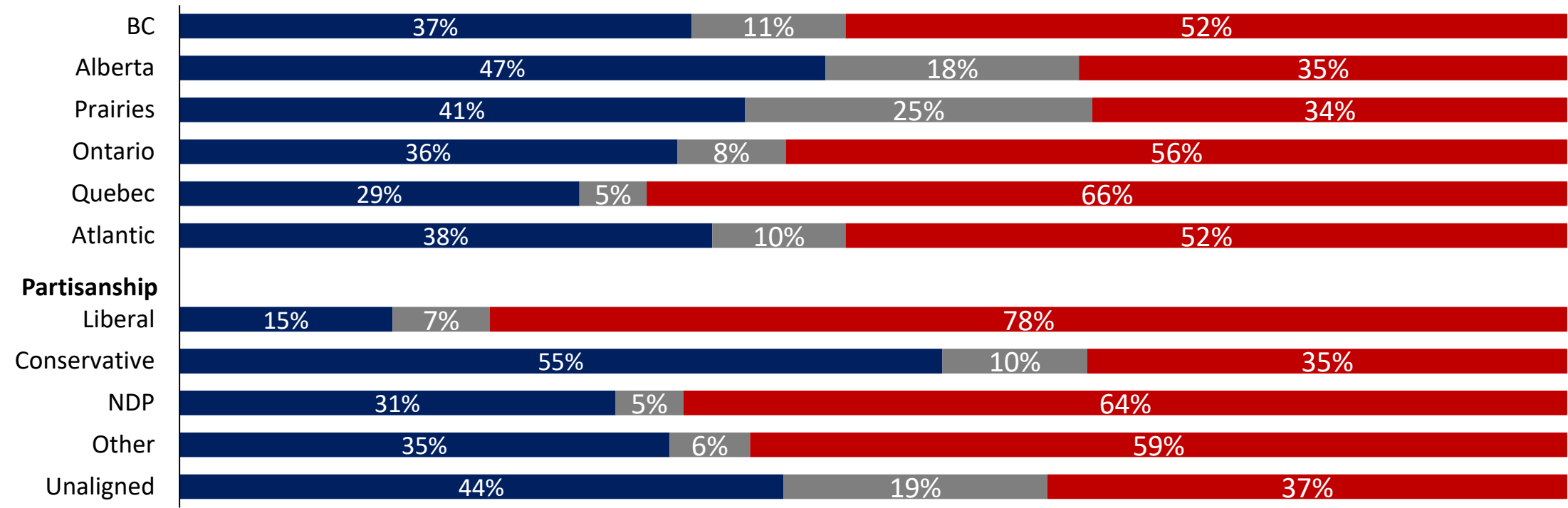
■ The federal government should bring back the exemption for unvaccinated truck drivers to protect supply chains and ensure Canada does not experience any shortages.

■ Don't know

■ The federal government should continue to require that all truckers crossing the border should be vaccinated to reduce the spread of COVID-19 across the border and protect Canadians.

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Who moved?

What We Believe Frames the Way We Perceive the World

We want to understand how the events surrounding the protest are impacting public attitudes regarding the protest. But people react differently to the same information, depending on their underlying attitudes towards that issue.

We are fortunate that we ended up tracking reaction to a protest about COVID-19 restrictions in a survey that already has other questions about COVID-19. We can group respondents based on whether they consistently hold pro or anti-restriction attitudes (or are conflicted) on five survey questions, including:

- Perceptions of whether federal restrictions are too tight, too loose or about right.
- Perceptions of whether provincial restrictions are too tight, too loose or about right.
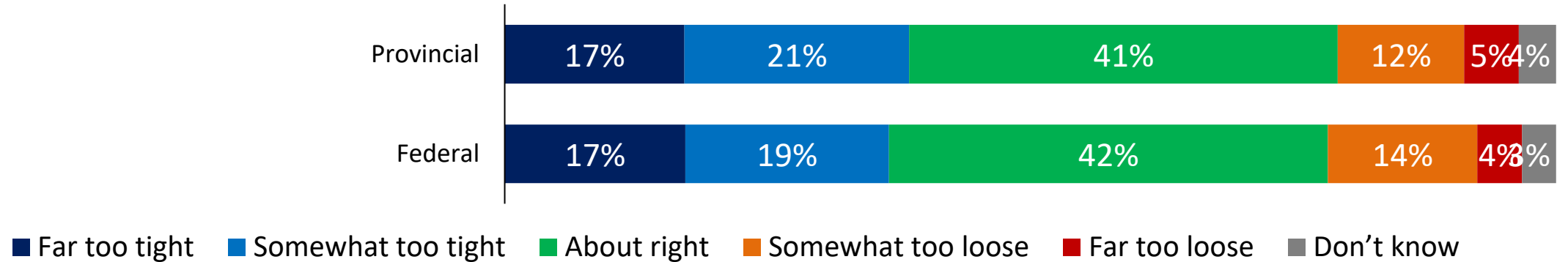- Agreement or disagreement with three attitudes about current COVID-19 restrictions

We are interested in not just whether the protesters are gaining or losing support, but among whom they are gaining or losing support. Are they "rallying their base" by gaining support among people generally opposed to restrictions? Are they pulling people conflicted on restrictions to their side? Are they driving up opposition among people who normally support COVID-19 restrictions.

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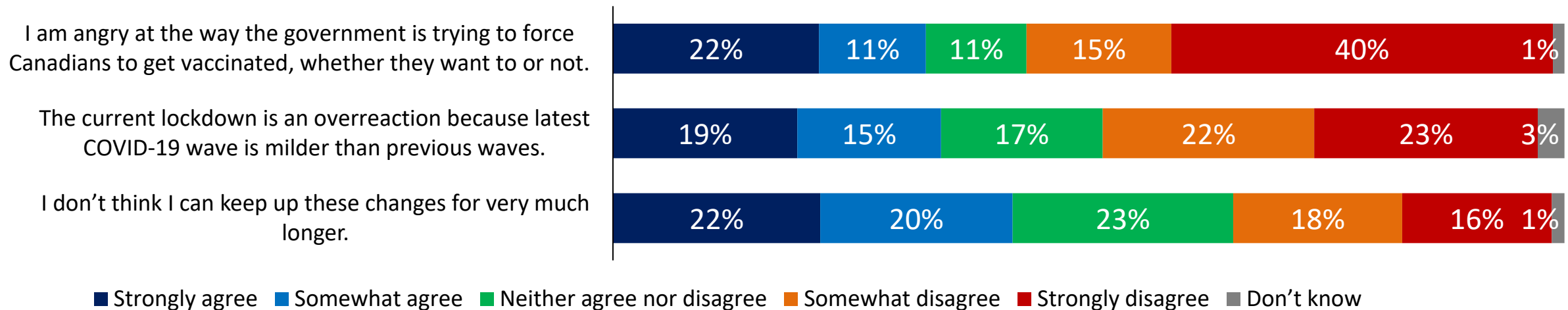# COVID Restriction Index: These five items make up the COVID Restriction Index

Q Now, thinking about the restrictions the *federal/provincial government in [PROV]* currently has in place to reduce social contacts and combat the spread of COVID-19, do you think the restrictions are too tight, too loose, or are they about right?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

	Far too tight	Somewhat too tight	About right	Somewhat too loose	Far too loose	Don't know
Provincial	17%	21%	41%	12%	5%	4%
Federal	17%	19%	42%	14%	4%	3%

■ Far too tight ■ Somewhat too tight ■ About right ■ Somewhat too loose ■ Far too loose ■ Don't know

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
[asked of all respondents; n=500]

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I am angry at the way the government is trying to force Canadians to get vaccinated, whether they want to or not.	22%	11%	11%	15%	40%	1%
The current lockdown is an overreaction because latest COVID-19 wave is milder than previous waves.	19%	15%	17%	22%	23%	3%
I don't think I can keep up these changes for very much longer.	22%	20%	23%	18%	16%	1%

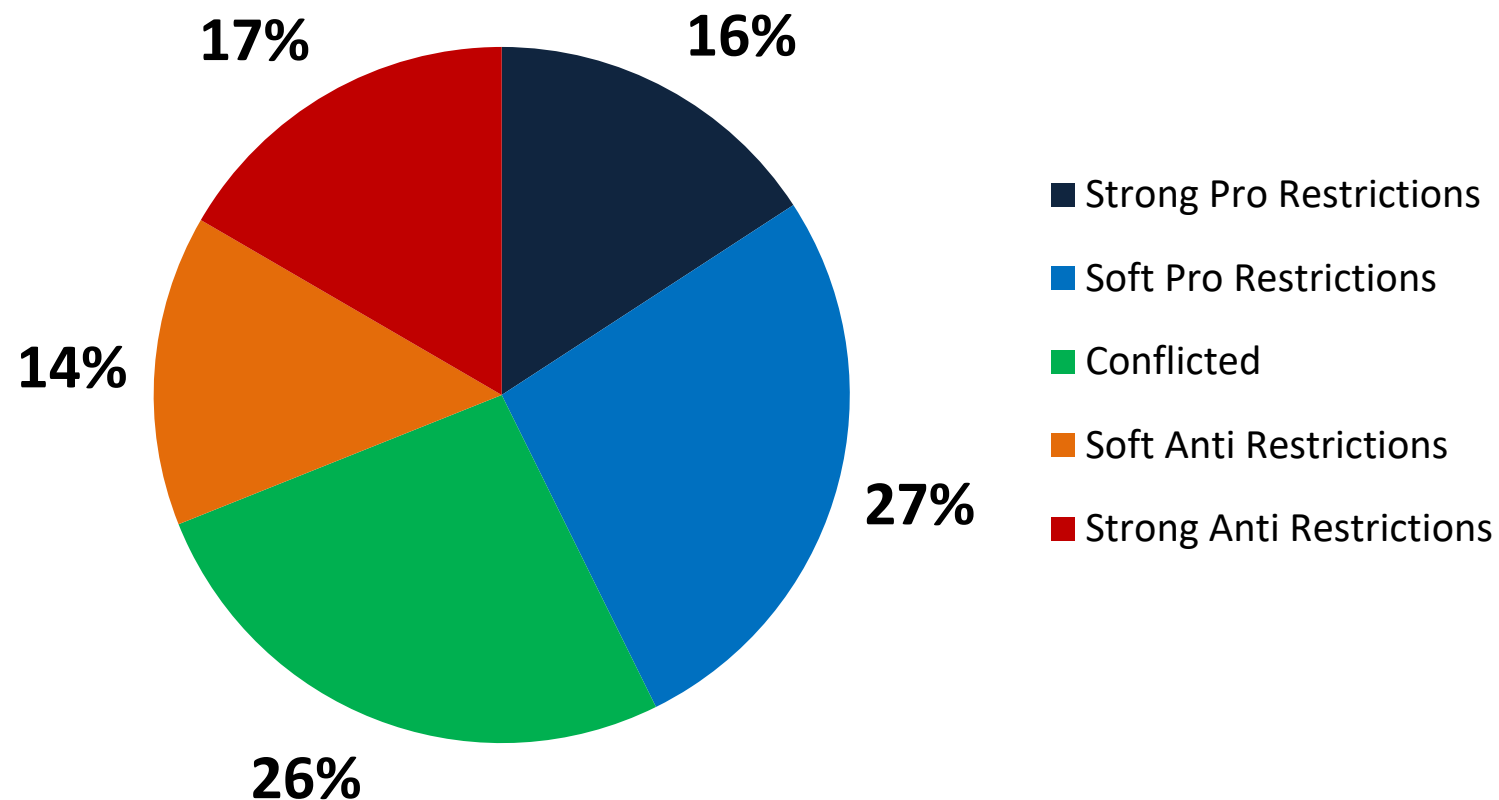■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

COVID Restriction Index: 31% of Canadians are at least softly against restrictions

COVID Restriction Index: We combined the following five questions into an index measuring how Canadians feel about the current COVID-19 related restrictions
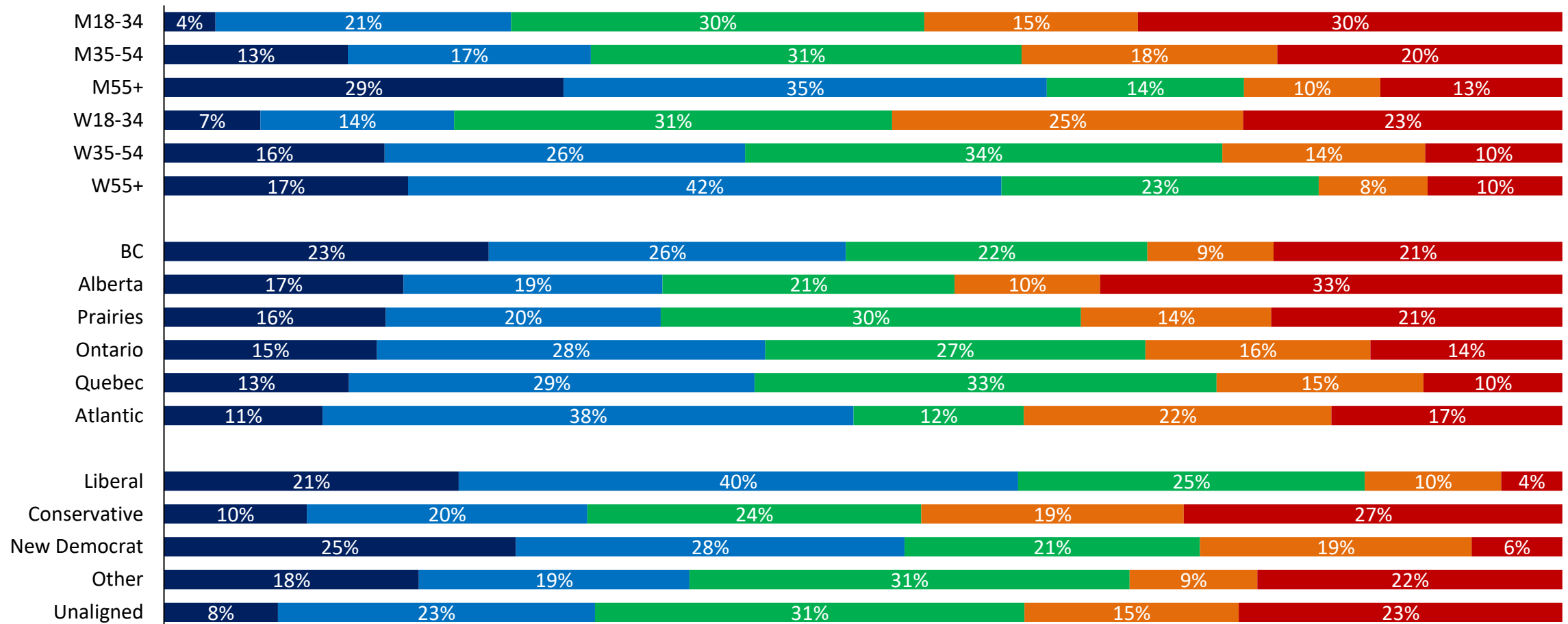
- Agree/Disagree: ***I don't think I can keep up these changes for very much longer.***
- Agree/Disagree: ***The current lockdown is an overreaction because latest COVID-19 wave is milder than previous waves.***
- Agree/Disagree: ***I am angry at the way the government is trying to force Canadians to get vaccinated, whether they want to or not.***
- Do you think provincial restrictions are too tight, too loose, or are they about right?
- Do you think federal restrictions are too tight, too loose, or are they about right?

- Strong Pro Restrictions
- Soft Pro Restrictions
- Conflicted
- Soft Anti Restrictions
- Strong Anti Restrictions

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COVID-19 Restriction Index: Younger Canadians and Albertans are most likely to be against restrictions

COVID-19 Restriction Index by age, gender, region, and party identification.

[asked of all respondents; n=500]

	Strong Pro	Soft Pro	Conflicted	Soft Anti	Strong Anti
M18-34	4%	21%	30%	15%	30%
M35-54	13%	17%	31%	18%	20%
M55+	29%	35%	14%	10%	13%
W18-34	7%	14%	31%	25%	23%
W35-54	16%	26%	34%	14%	10%
W55+	17%	42%	23%	8%	10%
BC	23%	26%	22%	9%	21%
Alberta	17%	19%	21%	10%	33%
Prairies	16%	20%	30%	14%	21%
Ontario	15%	28%	27%	16%	14%
Quebec	13%	29%	33%	15%	10%
Atlantic	11%	38%	12%	22%	17%
Liberal	21%	40%	25%	10%	4%
Conservative	10%	20%	24%	19%	27%
New Democrat	25%	28%	21%	19%	6%
Other	18%	19%	31%	9%	22%
Unaligned	8%	23%	31%	15%	23%

■ Strong Pro ■ Soft Pro ■ Conflicted ■ Soft Anti ■ Strong Anti

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Protest Support Change: Net support for the protests is down again among conflicted Canadians

Q From what you have read, seen, or heard, do you support or oppose the general idea of the truckers' protest?
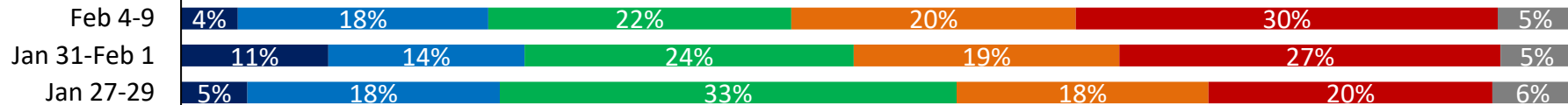[asked of all respondents; n=500]

COVID Restriction Index

Change in Net Support

Strong Pro
- Feb 4-9: 3% / 6% / 7% / 82% / 1% — **-85%**
- Jan 31-Feb 1: 2% 2% / 6% / 17% / 73% — **-86%**
- Jan 27-29: 3% / 9% / 8% / 75% / 5% — **-80%**

Soft Pro
- Feb 4-9: 5% / 7% / 17% / 68% / 3% — **-80%**
- Jan 31-Feb 1: 3% / 9% / 8% / 24% / 54% / 1% — **-67%**
- Jan 27-29: 7% / 15% / 30% / 43% / 5% — **-67%**

Conflicted
- Feb 4-9: 4% / 18% / 22% / 20% / 30% / 5% — **-29%**
- Jan 31-Feb 1: 11% / 14% / 24% / 19% / 27% / 5% — **-22%**
- Jan 27-29: 5% / 18% / 33% / 18% / 20% / 6% — **-16%**

Soft Anti
- Feb 4-9: 23% / 24% / 31% / 7% / 11% / 3% — **+29%**
- Jan 31-Feb 1: 29% / 22% / 20% / 14% / 15% — **+22%**
- Jan 27-29: 38% / 22% / 15% / 14% / 7% / 4% — **+39%**

Strong Anti
- Feb 4-9: 67% / 14% / 6% / 2% 3% / 7% — **+76%**
- Jan 31-Feb 1: 76% / 13% / 9% / 2% — **+88%**
- Jan 27-29: 72% / 15% / 9% / 3% — **+86%**

Legend:
- ■ Strongly support
- ■ Somewhat support
- ■ Neither support nor oppose
- ■ Somewhat oppose
- ■ Strongly oppose
- ■ Don't know

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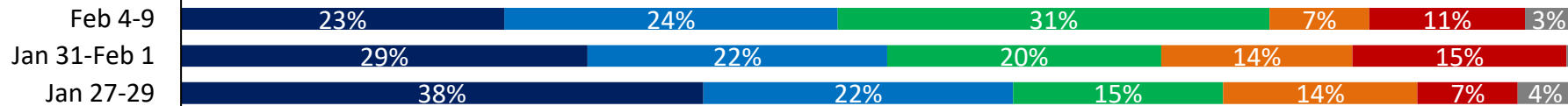
Tactics Support Change: Net support for the tactics is down among conflicted Canadians and those softly against restrictions

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the way the truckers are protesting?
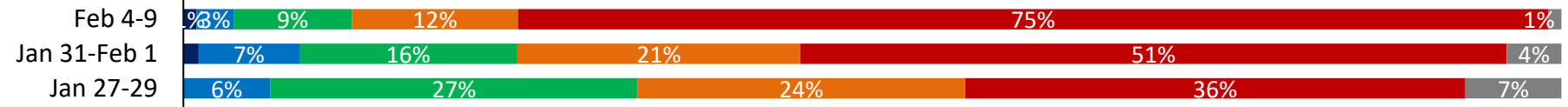[asked of all respondents; n=500]
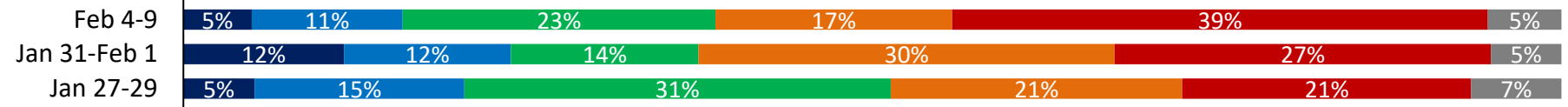
COVID Restriction Index
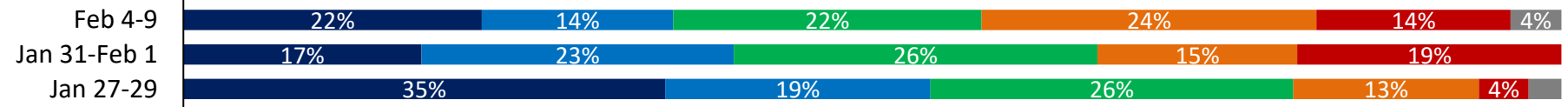
Change in Net Approval

Strong Pro
Period	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know	Change in Net Approval
Feb 4-9	0%	3%	5%	9%	82%	1%	-87%
Jan 31-Feb 1	4%	5%	3%	22%	67%		-80%
Jan 27-29	2%	7%	14%	12%	62%	3%	-66%

Soft Pro
Period	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know	Change in Net Approval
Feb 4-9	1%	3%	9%	12%	75%	1%	-83%
Jan 31-Feb 1		7%	16%	21%	51%	4%	-63%
Jan 27-29		6%	27%	24%	36%	7%	-54%

Conflicted
Period	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know	Change in Net Approval
Feb 4-9	5%	11%	23%	17%	39%	5%	-40%
Jan 31-Feb 1	12%	12%	14%	30%	27%	5%	-34%
Jan 27-29	5%	15%	31%	21%	21%	7%	-22%

Soft Anti
Period	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know	Change in Net Approval
Feb 4-9	22%	14%	22%	24%	14%	4%	-3%
Jan 31-Feb 1	17%	23%	26%	15%	19%		+6%
Jan 27-29	35%	19%	26%	13%	4%		+37%

Strong Anti
Period	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Neither	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	Don't know	Change in Net Approval
Feb 4-9	56%	21%	8%	4%	5%	6%	+68%
Jan 31-Feb 1	70%	15%	7%	3%	5%		+77%
Jan 27-29	71%	11%	6%	3%	3%	5%	+76%

■ Strongly approve　■ Somewhat approve　■ Neither approve nor disapprove
■ Somewhat disapprove　■ Strongly disapprove　■ Don't know

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Methodology

Survey Methodology

These are the results of an online survey conducted between February 4th and February 9th, 2022.

Method: This online survey was conducted using INNOVATIVE's Canada 20/20 national research panel with additional respondents from Dynata, a leading provider of online samples. Each survey is administered to a series of randomly selected samples from the panel and weighted to ensure that the overall sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample.

Sample Size: n=756 Canadian citizens, 18 years or older. The results are nationally weighted to n=500 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

Field Dates: February 4th and February 9th, 2022.

Weighting: Results for Canada are weighted by age, gender, region, and party identification to ensure that the overall sample's composition reflects that of the actual population according to Census data; in order to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. Weighted and unweighted frequencies are reported in the table.

Margin of Error: This is a representative sample. However, since the online survey was not a random probability based sample, a margin of error cannot be calculated. Statements about margins of sampling error or population estimates do not apply to most online panels.

Note: Graphs may not always total 100% due to rounding values rather than any error in data. Sums are added before rounding numbers.

	Unweighted (n)	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (n)	Weighted (%)
Men 18-34	67	8.9%	69	14.0%
Men 35-54	99	13.2%	81	16.4%
Men 55+	172	22.9%	88	17.9%
Women 18-34	100	13.3%	69	14.0%
Women 35-54	139	18.5%	85	17.3%
Women 55+	173	23.1%	100	20.4%
BC	189	25.0%	67	13.3%
AB	83	11.0%	57	11.4%
Prairies	35	4.6%	33	6.5%
ON	250	33.1%	192	38.4%
QC	148	19.6%	118	23.5%
Atlantic	51	6.7%	34	6.8%

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