



# Reporting on the State of Small Business

Key Survey Results from CFIB's  
Monthly Omnibus Survey:  
April 2022 Your Voice Survey

**CFIB**

CANADIAN FEDERATION  
OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

*In business for your business.*

# This report includes the following data:

- ✓ An update on the current situation as experienced first-hand by Canada's small business owners
- ✓ Highlights based on data from CFIB's monthly omnibus survey\*

## Survey data featured:

### + April *Your Voice* survey - final results

- Active dates: April 8-22, 2022 (online survey)
- Sample: Results are based on responses from 2,886 business owners in Canada.
  - For comparison purposes, a probability sample with the same number of respondents would have a margin of error of +/-1.8%, 19 times out of 20.



# Key Takeaways



## State of small business

- Small businesses are still feeling the impacts of the pandemic, with only 2 in 5 making normal sales (40%), just over a third reporting no pandemic related debt (35%) and less than 1 in 5 indicating they are recovered from pandemic-related stress (18%)
- Less than 3 in 10 businesses describe themselves as fully recovered from the impacts of COVID-19



## Recovery of Downtown Cores

- A quarter of businesses report that their revenues are impacted by a slow return to the office by downtown workers
- 3 in 5 of these businesses say government and big business have a role to play in getting their workers to return to those areas



## Business Challenges

- Overwhelmingly, small businesses are having great difficulty keeping up with general costs, such as gas and inputs (90%), and with government costs, such as taxes and fees (82%)
- A strong majority are also finding it difficult finding staff (80%), getting the products they need (79%), and making a profit (76%)



## 2022 Federal Budget

- The majority of business owners (72%) did not find the measures announced in the 2022 federal budget to be helpful (not helpful at all - 32%; or not very helpful - 40%)

# State of Small Business

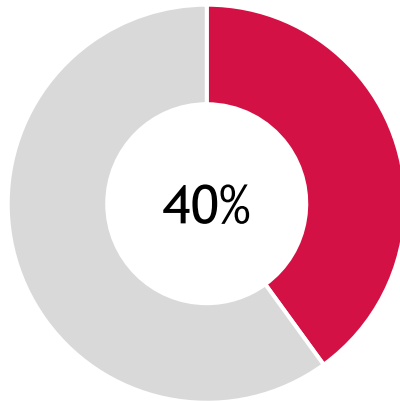


# State of Small Business

Small businesses are still feeling the impacts of the pandemic, with only 2 in 5 making normal sales (40%), just over a third reporting no pandemic related debt (35%) and less than 1 in 5 indicating they are recovered from pandemic-related stress (18%).



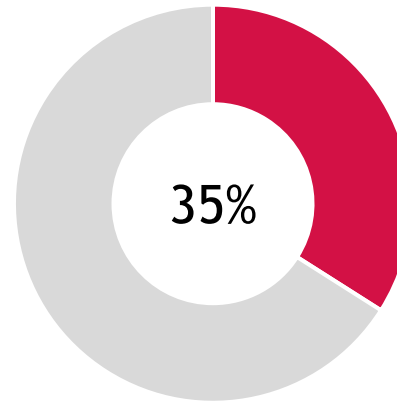
Normal sales



- About the usual (32%)
- Better than usual (8%)



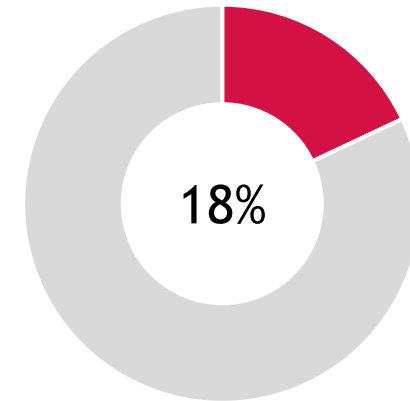
No pandemic debt



- Repaid all of it (11%)
- Not applicable - never took on pandemic-debt (24%)



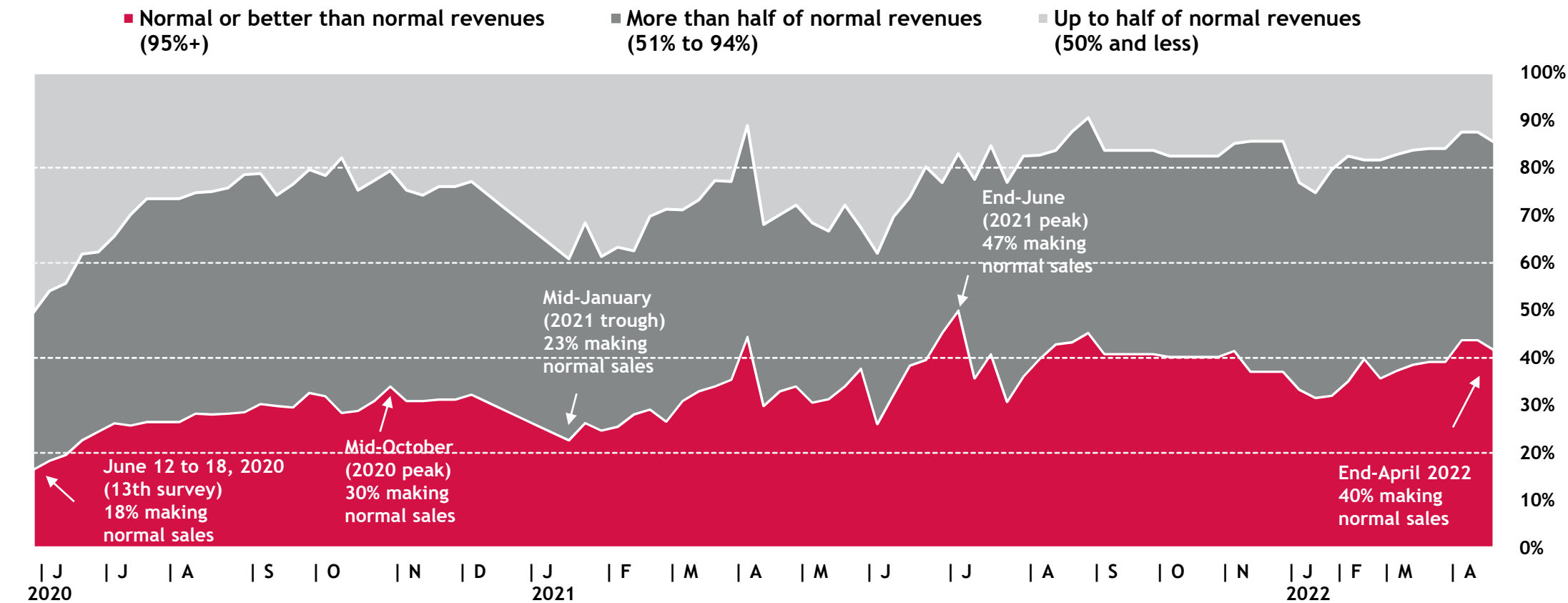
Recovered from pandemic stress



- Completely recovered (10%)
- Not applicable - never had pandemic-stress (8%)

Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n (sales) = 2,778, n (debt) = 2,774 and n (stress) = 2,777.

# About 2 in 5 Canadian small businesses are making normal revenues as of April 2022 (% response)

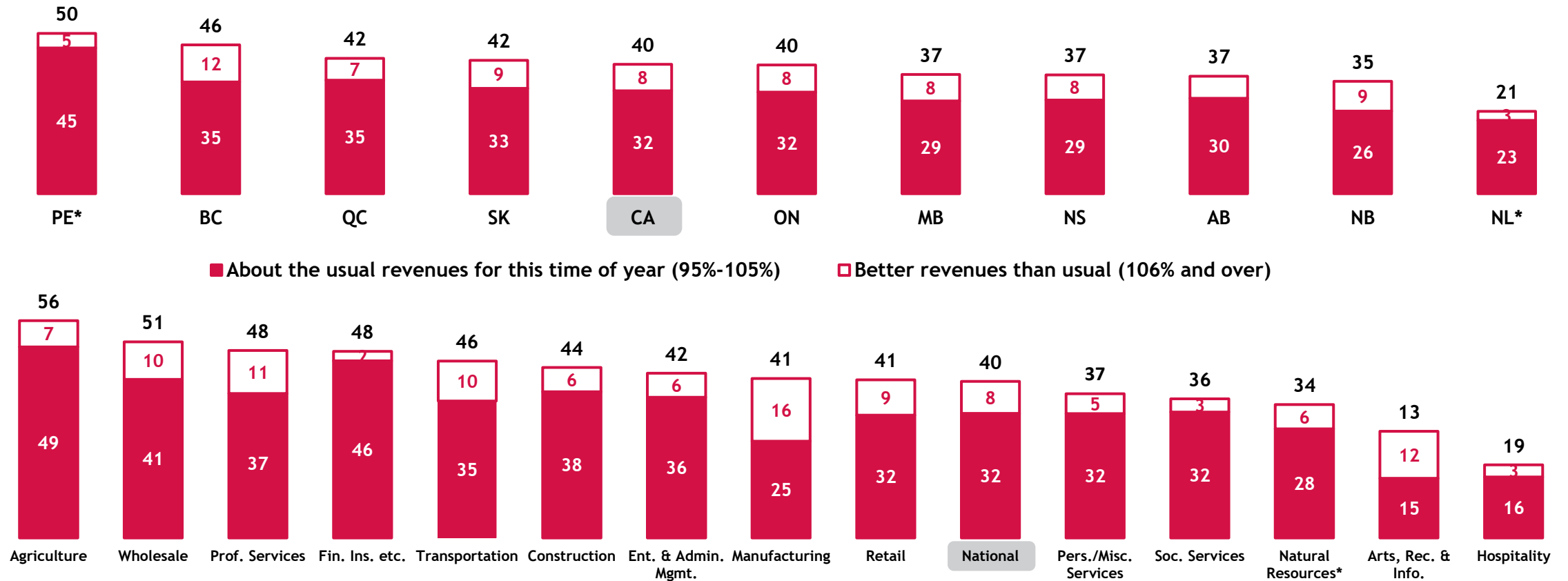


➡ 40% of Canadian business are making normal sales, up 5 percentage points from February 2022.

Source: CFIB, COVID-19 and Your Voice surveys - June 2020 to April 2022.

# Normal or better revenues, April 2022

(By province and sector, % response)

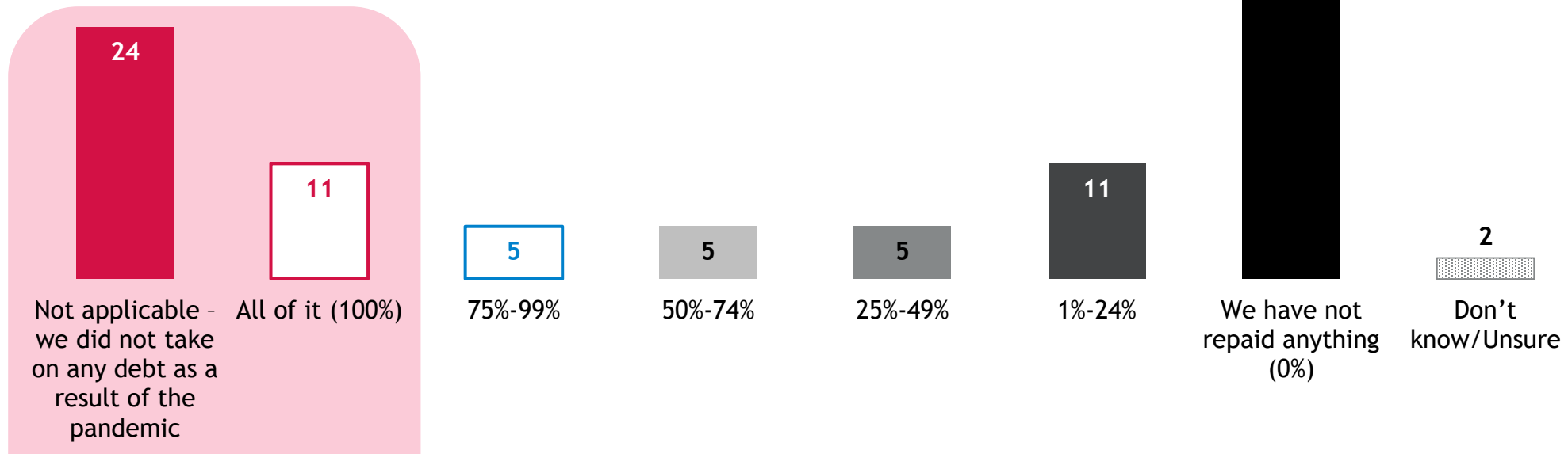


Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,778.  
 Question: How much of your usual revenues for this time of year is your business currently making?  
 Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).  
 2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

# Only a third of businesses have no pandemic debt

Of business owners holding pandemic debt, 2 in 5 (38%) have not repaid anything and half (49%) have repaid less than a quarter.

Businesses with no pandemic debt

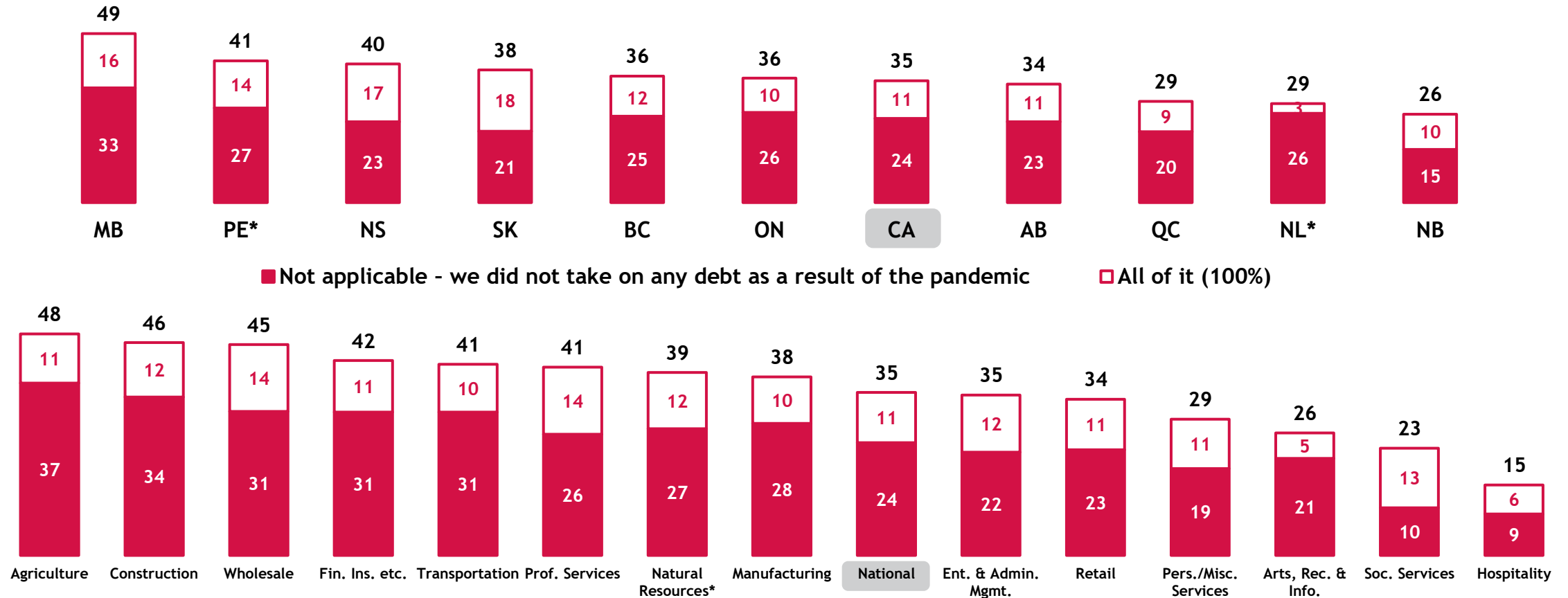


Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,774.  
Question: How much of your pandemic-related debt has your business been able to repay?  
Note: Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.



# Businesses with no pandemic debt, April 2022

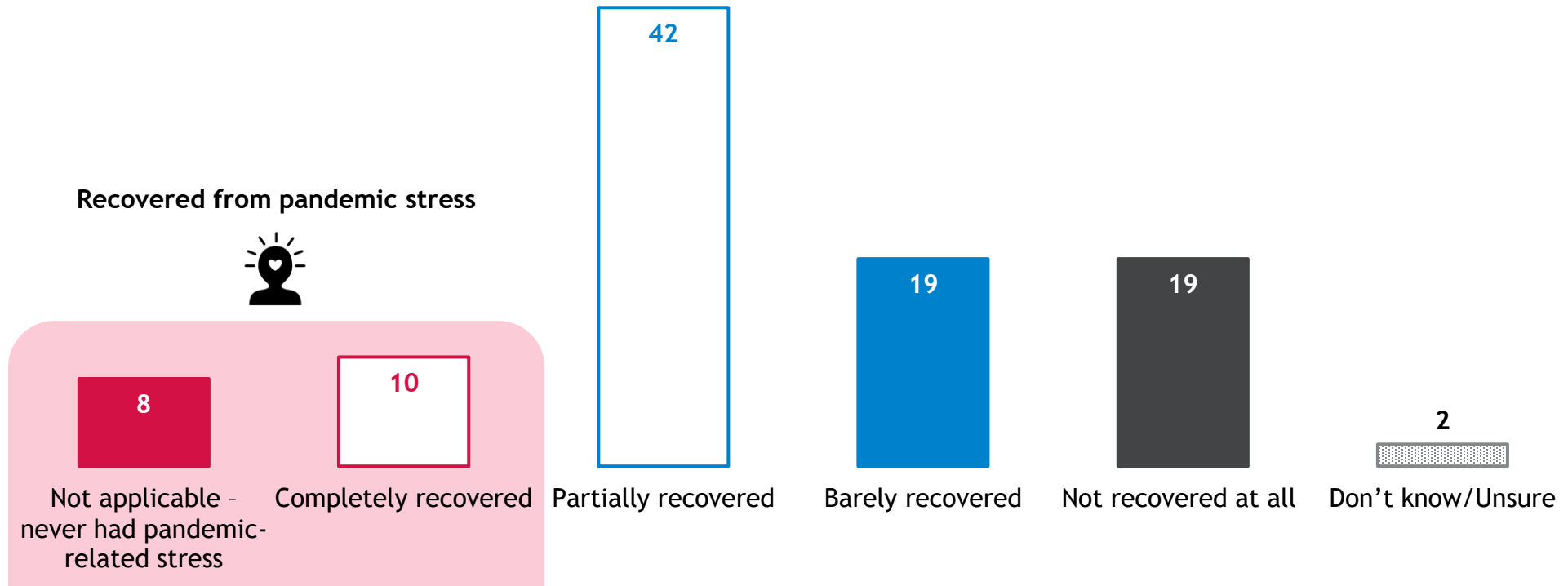
(By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,774.  
 Question: How much of your pandemic-related debt has your business been able to repay?  
 Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).  
 2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

# Less than 1 in 5 business owners have recovered from pandemic stress (% response)

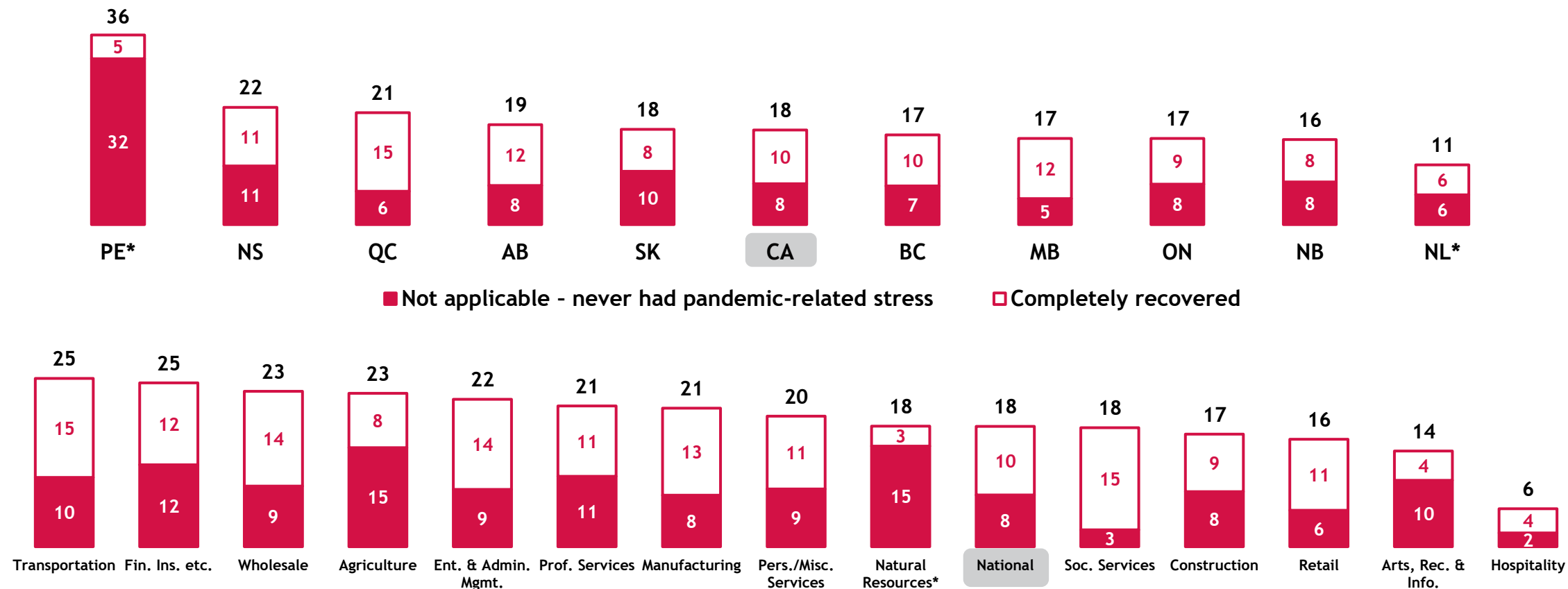
Also, 1 in 5 business owners (19%) have not recovered at all from their pandemic-related stress.



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,777.  
Question: To what degree have you recovered from your pandemic-related stress as a business owner?

# Recovered from pandemic stress, April 2022

(by province and sector, % response)



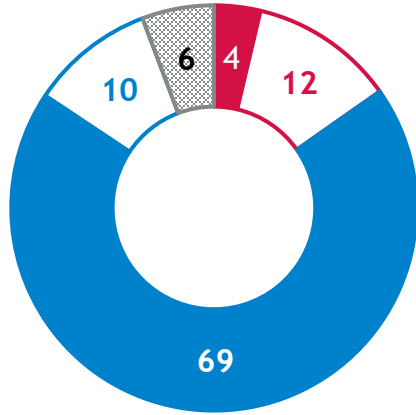
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,777.

Question: To what degree have you recovered from your pandemic-related stress as a business owner?

Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).

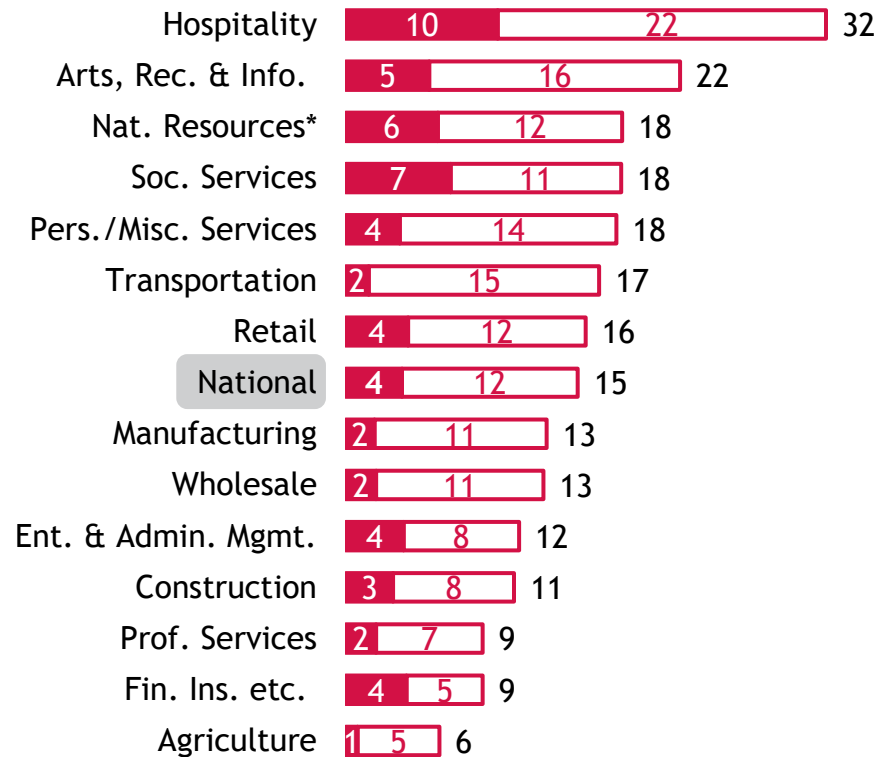
2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

# 16% of businesses are currently considering bankruptcy or winding down as a result of COVID-19 (% response)



■ Strongly agree      □ Somewhat agree  
■ Strongly disagree      □ Somewhat disagree  
■ Don't know/Unsure

The share of businesses considering bankruptcy varies considerably by sector, with the highest shares reported by hospitality (32%) and arts, rec. & info. businesses (22%)



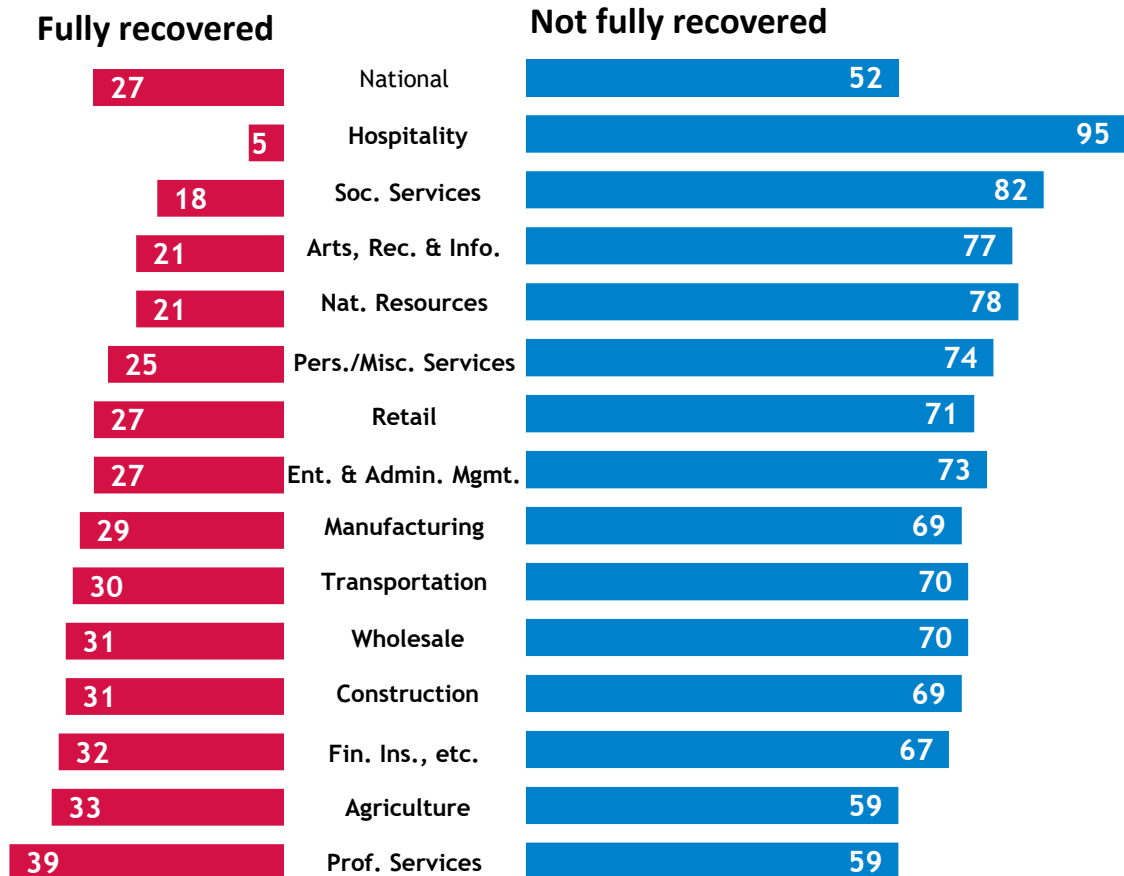
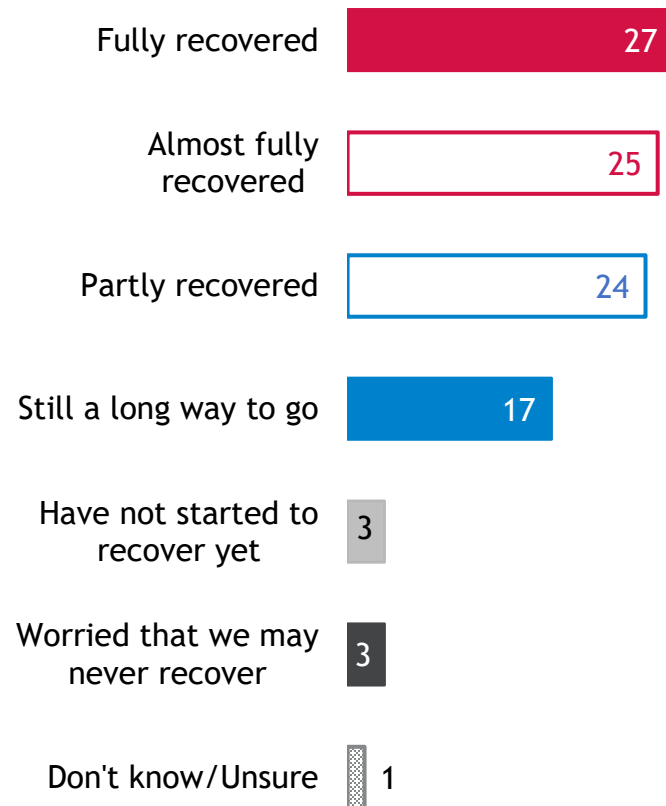
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,759.

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement: "We are actively considering bankruptcy/winding down our business as a result of COVID-19".

Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).

2) Total may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

# Less than 3 in 10 businesses describe themselves as fully recovered from the impacts of COVID-19 (% response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,822.

Question: In terms of recovery, how would you describe the state of your business?

Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).

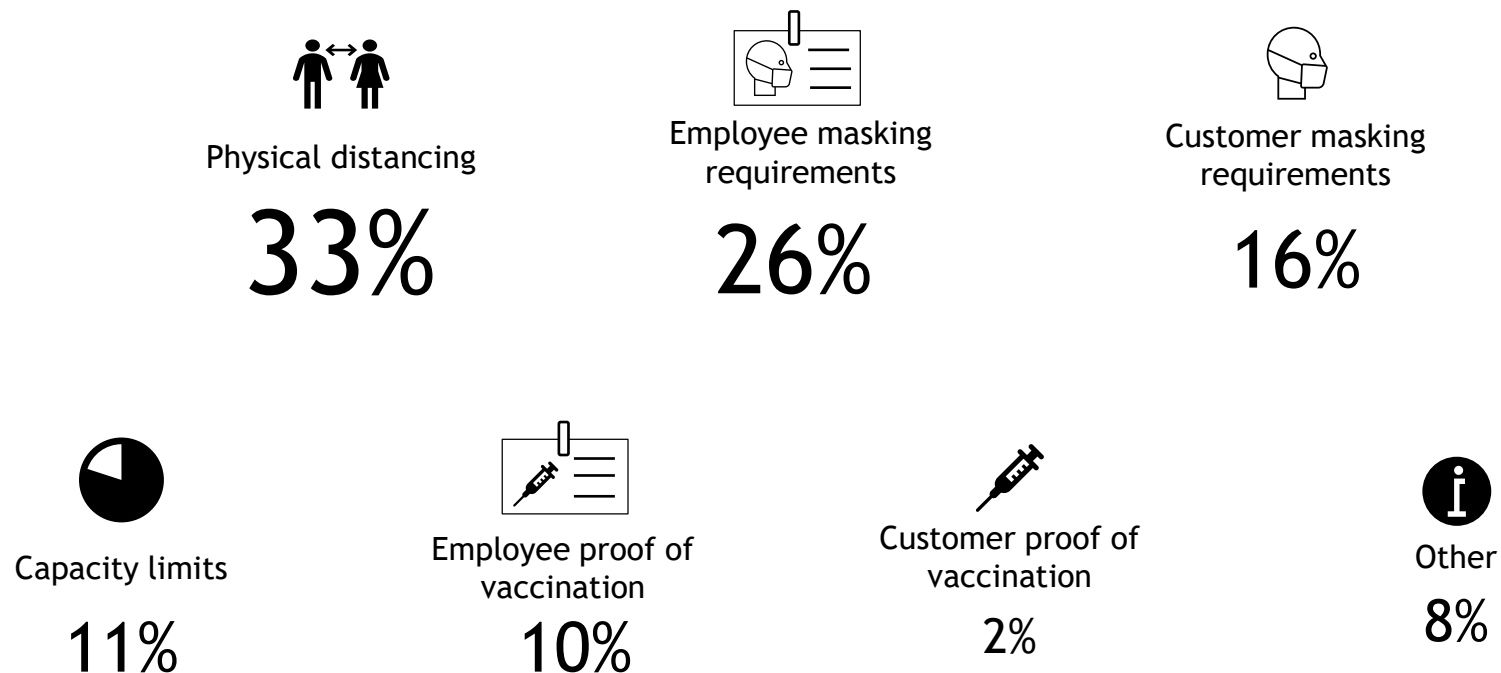
2) Total may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

3) "Not fully recovered" includes almost fully recovered, partly recovered, still a long way to go, have not started to recover yet and worried that we may never recover.

# About half of the businesses will not continue with pandemic-related restrictions



Of businesses continuing to use restrictions, physical distancing takes up the highest share (33%), followed by employee masking requirements (26%) and customer masking requirements (16%)



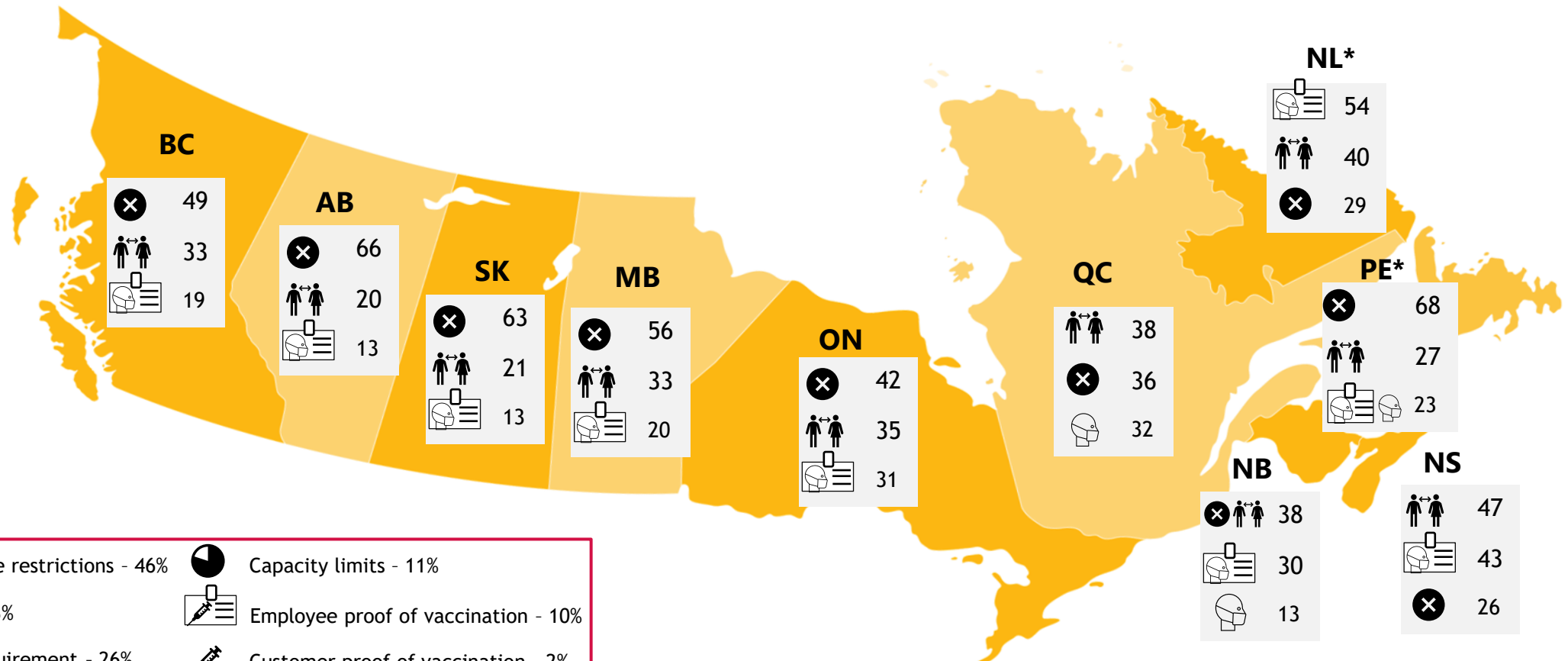
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,886.

Question: As government restrictions are being lifted, which of the following pandemic-related restrictions will your business continue to use?

Note: Respondents were allowed to select more than one answer choices. Percentage will not add to 100%.

# Business intentions regarding pandemic-related restrictions

(Top 3 by province, % response)
















































## CANADA

	Will not continue to use restrictions - 46%		Capacity limits - 11%
	Physical distancing - 33%		Employee proof of vaccination - 10%
	Employee masking requirement - 26%		Customer proof of vaccination - 2%
	Customer masking requirement - 16%		Other - 8%









Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,790.  
 Question: As government restrictions are being lifted, which of the following pandemic-related restrictions will your business continue to use?  
 Note: \*Small sample size (<40).

# Business intentions regarding pandemic-related restrictions

## (Top 3 by sector)

National	Agriculture	Nat. Resources*	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale	Retail	Transportation	Arts, Rec. & Info.	Fin. Ins. etc.	Prof. Services	Ent. & Admin. Mgmt.	Soc. Services	Hospitality	Pers./Misc. Services
 46%	 59%	 67%	 57%	 49%	 44%	 45%	 44%	 42%	 59%	 49%	 44%	 61%	 47%	 47%
 33%	 29%	 24%	 31%	 33%	 39%	 32%	 35%	 34%	 30%	 38%	 35%	 46%	 31%	 31%
 26%	 13%	 26%	 22%	 22%	 31%	 28%	 25%	 26%	 20%	 32%	 24%	 30%	 21%	 21%

### CANADA

 Will not continue to use restrictions - 46%	 Capacity limits - 11%
 Physical distancing - 33%	 Employee proof of vaccination - 10%
 Employee masking requirement - 26%	 Customer proof of vaccination - 2%
 Customer masking requirement - 16%	 Other - 8%

Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,790.  
 Question: As government restrictions are being lifted, which of the following pandemic-related restrictions will your business continue to use?  
 Note: \*Small sample size (<40).

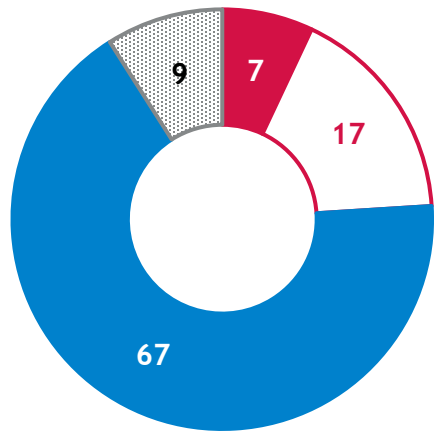


# Recovery of Downtown Cores

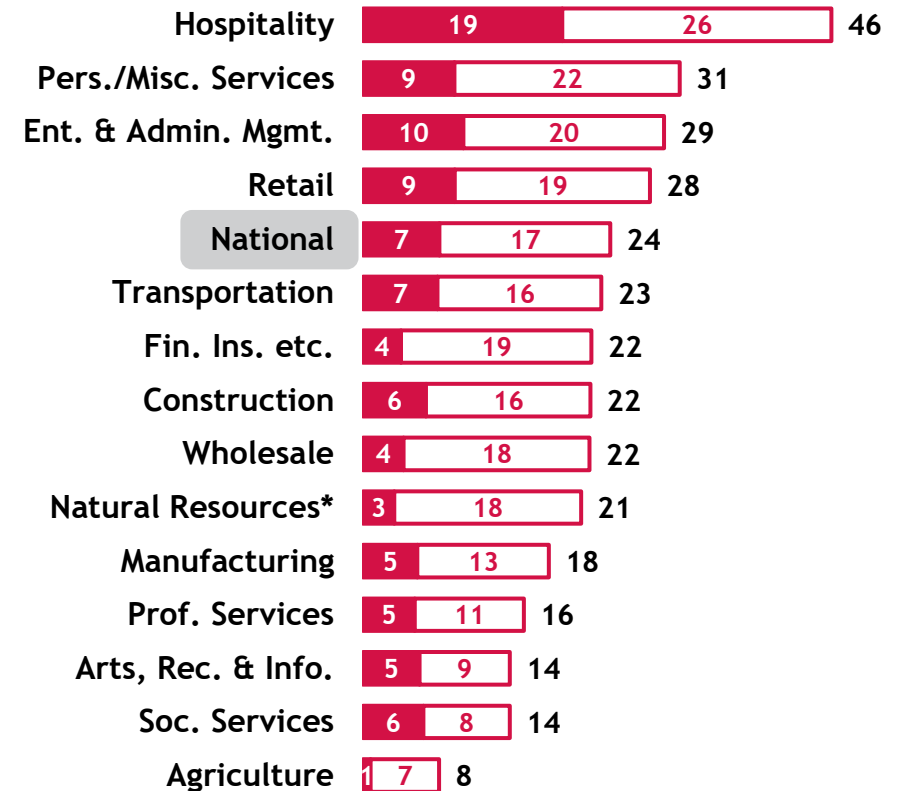
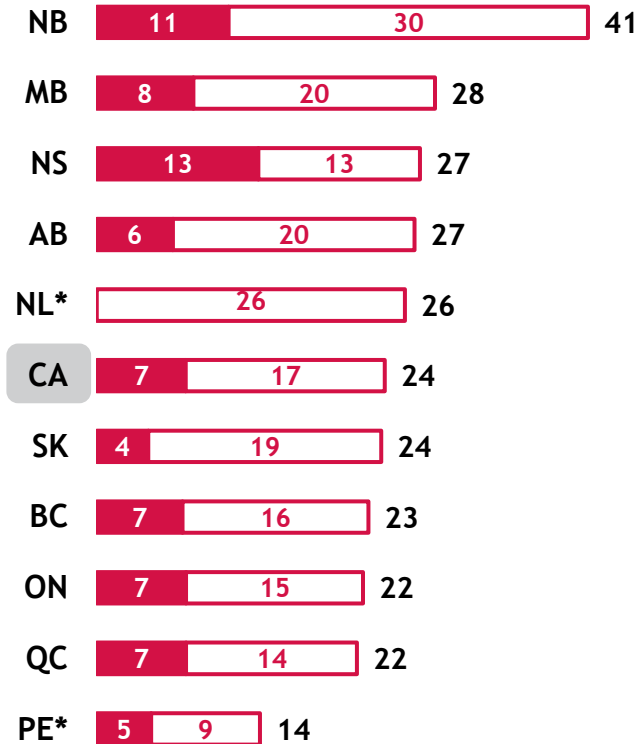


# About 1 in 4 businesses report that their revenues are impacted by a slow return to the office by downtown workers

(By province and sector, % response)



- Yes - significantly
- Yes - somewhat
- No
- Don't know/ Unsure



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,800.

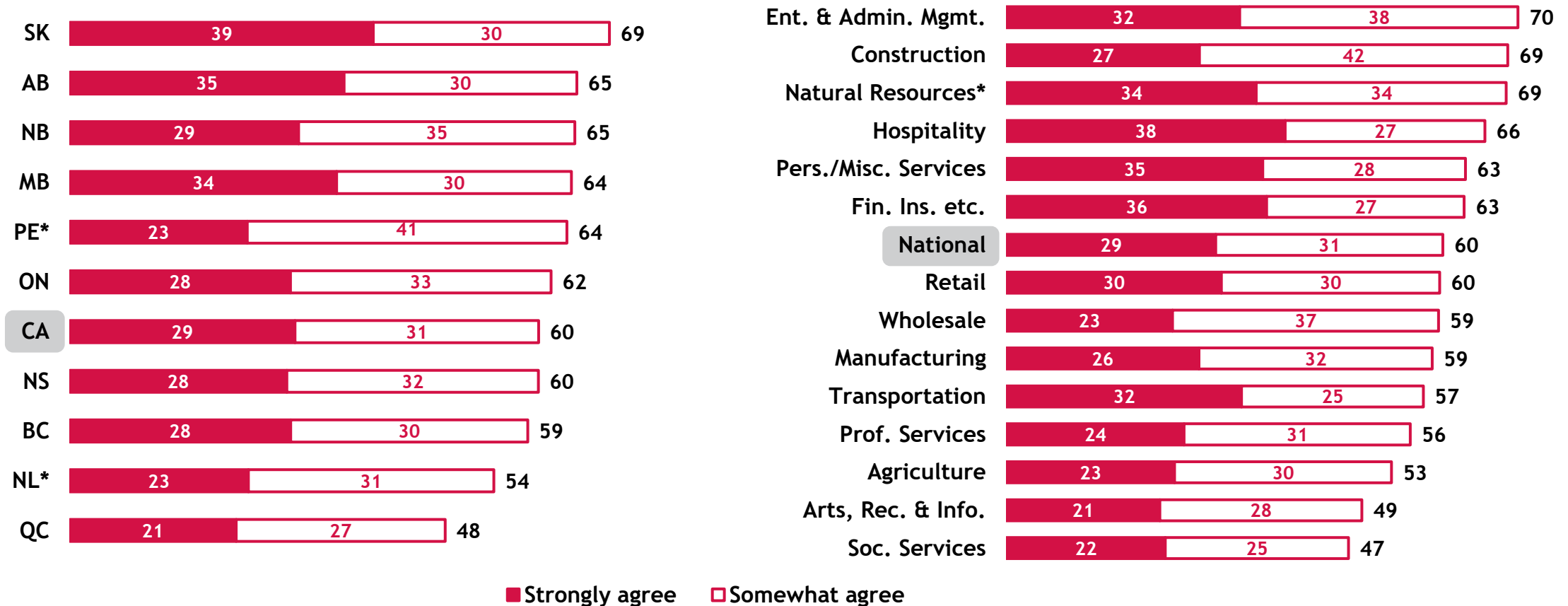
Question: Are your business's revenues currently impacted by a slow return to the office by downtown workers?

Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

# 3 in 5 businesses agree that governments and big businesses should increase their efforts to get their workers back to downtown cores

(By province and sector, % response)



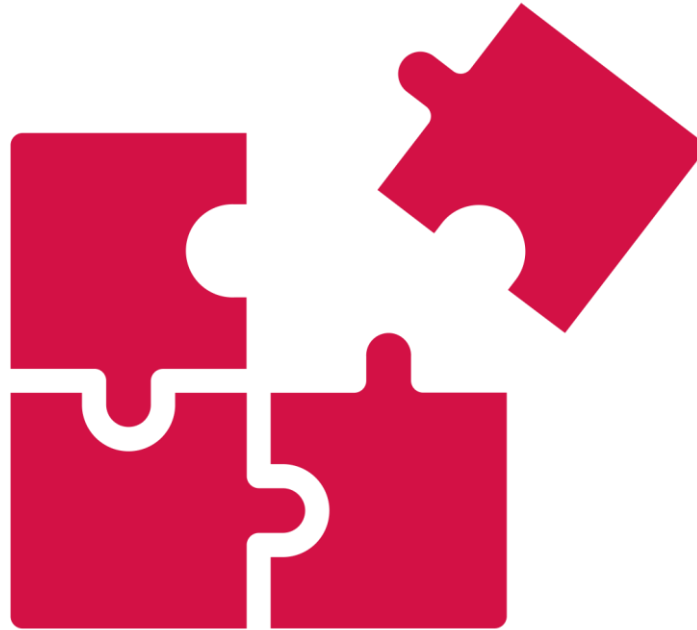
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,787.

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that governments and big businesses should increase their efforts to get their workers back to downtown cores.

Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).

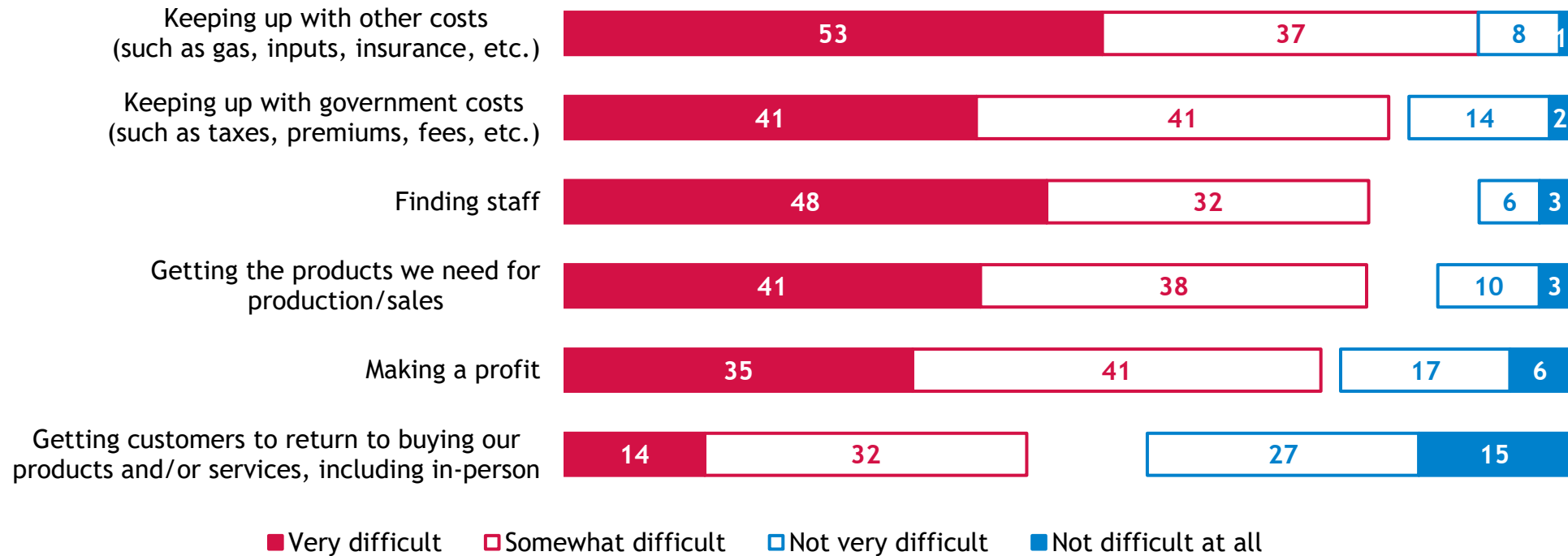
2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

# Business Challenges



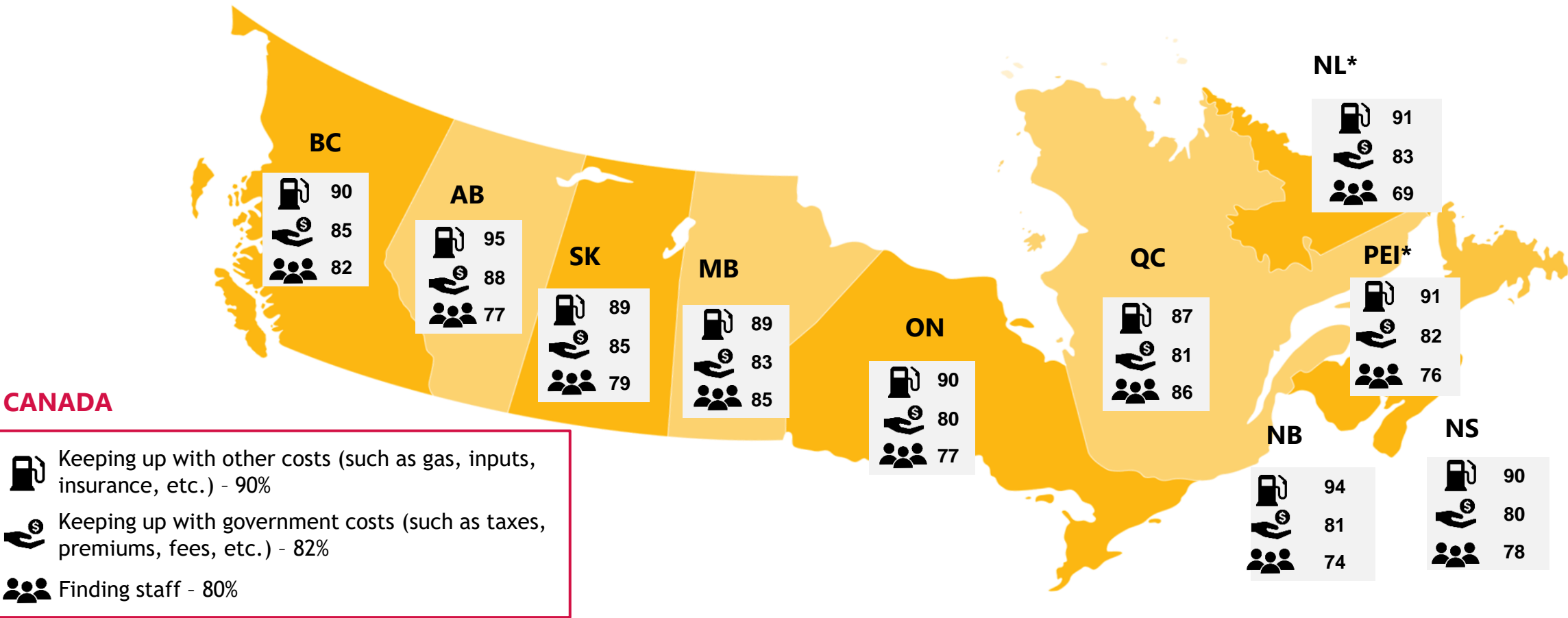
# Top business difficulties currently facing small entrepreneurs

Small businesses are having the greatest of difficulties keeping up with general costs, such as gas and inputs (90%), and with government costs, such as taxes and fees (82%). A majority are also finding it difficult finding staff, getting the products they need, and making a profit.






Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = between 2,673 and 2,791 per option.  
Question: Currently, how difficult are the following for your business?  
Note: Not shown in the middle of the bars: shares of respondents indicating "Don't know/Unsure" and "Not applicable".

# Top 3 business difficulties by province (% response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = between 2,673 and 2,791 per option.  
Question: Currently, how difficult are the following for your business?  
Note: \*Small sample (<40).

# Top 3 business difficulties by sector

	National	Agriculture	Nat. Resources	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale	Retail	Transportation	Arts, Rec. & Info.	Fin. Ins. etc.	Prof. Services	Ent. & Admin. Mgmt.	Soc. Services	Hospitality	Pers./Misc. Services
	90%	94%	94%	93%	92%	89%	89%	94%	87%	85%	79%	92%	87%	94%	93%
	82%	88%	85%	86%	84%	77%	80%	91%	67%	84%	71%	88%	76%	89%	91%
	80%	69%	90%	90%	83%	78%	72%	86%	79%	68%	80%	90%	79%	88%	81%



Keeping up with other costs (such as gas, inputs, insurance, etc.)



Keeping up with government costs (such as taxes, premiums, fees, etc.)



Finding staff

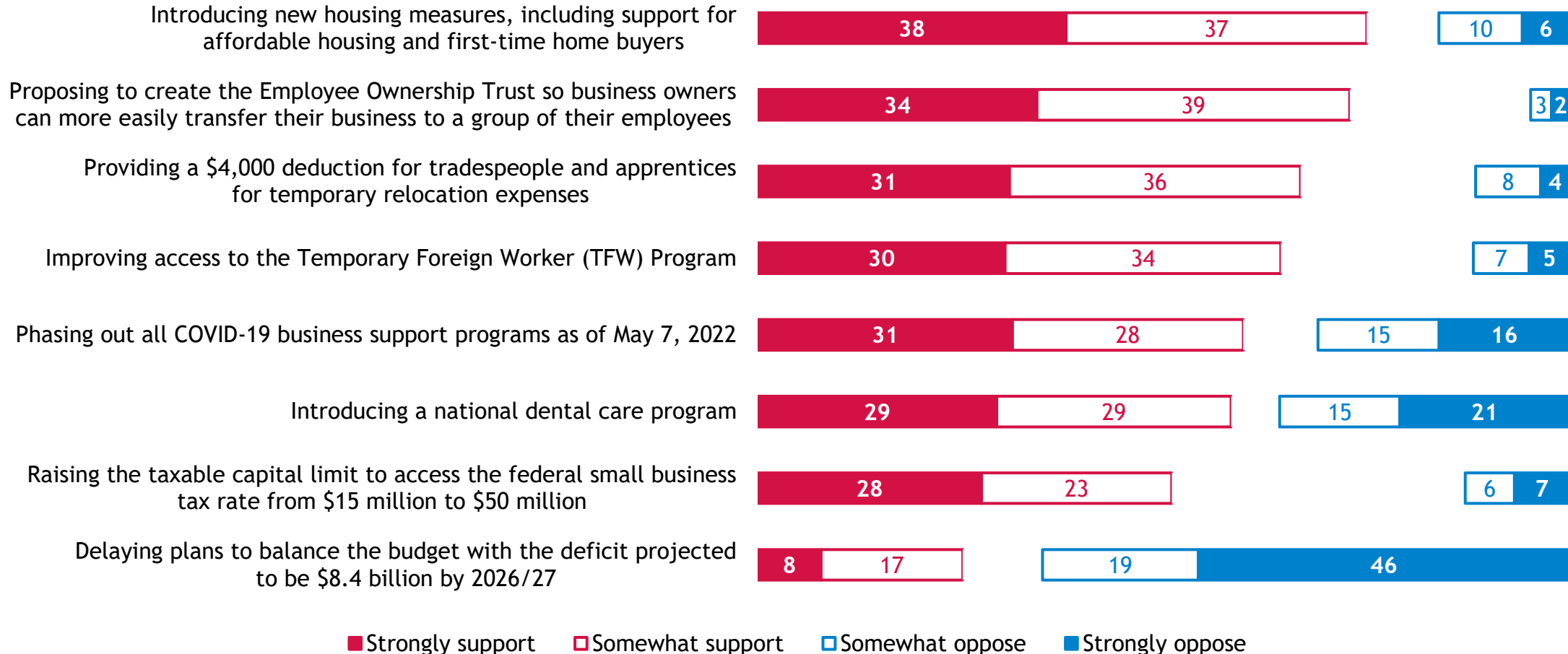
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = between 2,673 and 2,791 per option.  
 Question: Currently, how difficult are the following for your business?  
 Note: \*Small sample (<40).

# 2022 Federal Budget



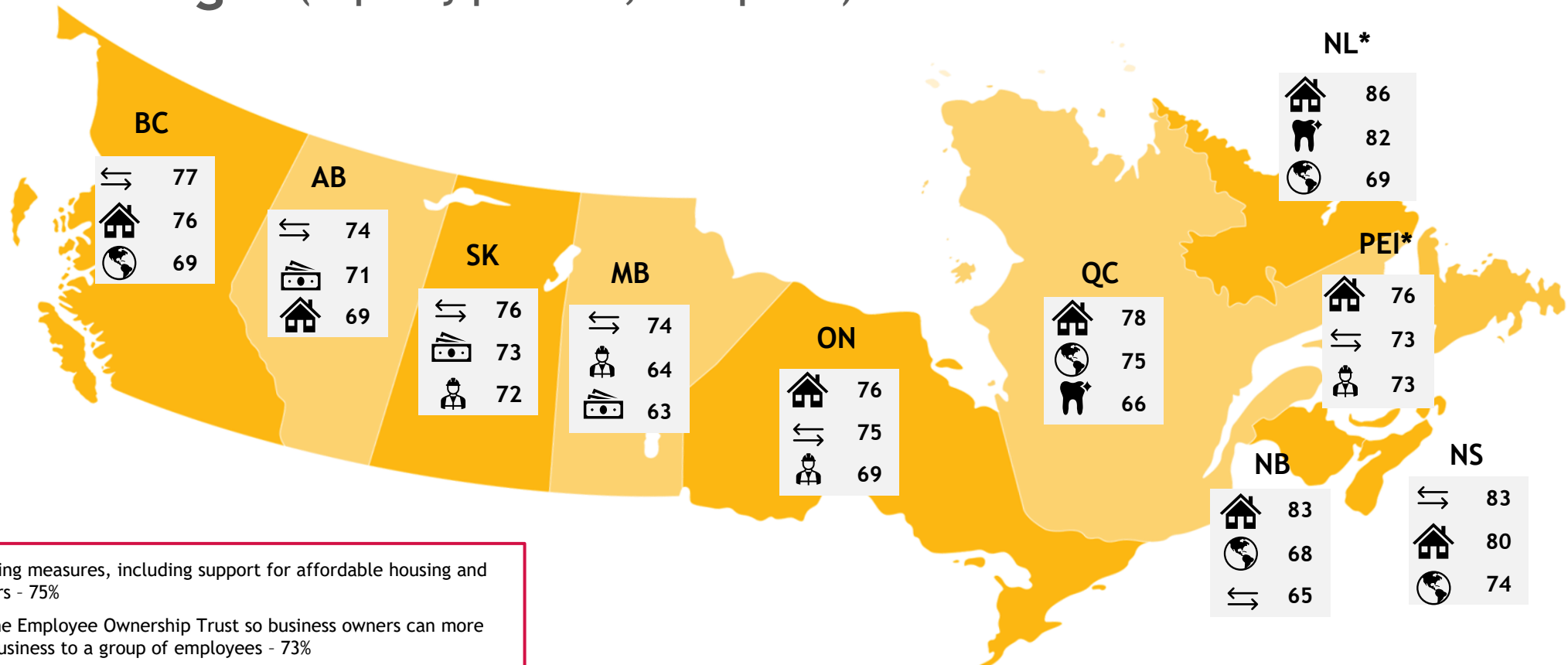


# Level of support for different initiatives announced in the 2022 federal budget



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = between 2,811 and 2,848 per option.  
 Question: Please indicate your level of support for each of the following elements that may impact your business that were announced in the 2022 federal budget.  
 Note: Not shown in the middle of the bars: shares of respondents indicating "Don't know/Unsure" and "Not applicable".

# Level of support for different initiatives announced in the 2022 federal budget (Top 3 by province, % response)



## CANADA

- Introducing new housing measures, including support for affordable housing and first-time home buyers - 75%
- Proposing to create the Employee Ownership Trust so business owners can more easily transfer their business to a group of employees - 73%
- Providing a \$4,000 deduction for tradespeople and apprentices for temporary relocation expenses - 67%
- Improving access to the Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) program - 64%
- Phasing out all COVID-19 business support programs as of May 7, 2022 - 60%
- Introducing a national dental care program - 58%

Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = between 2,822 and 2,835 per option.

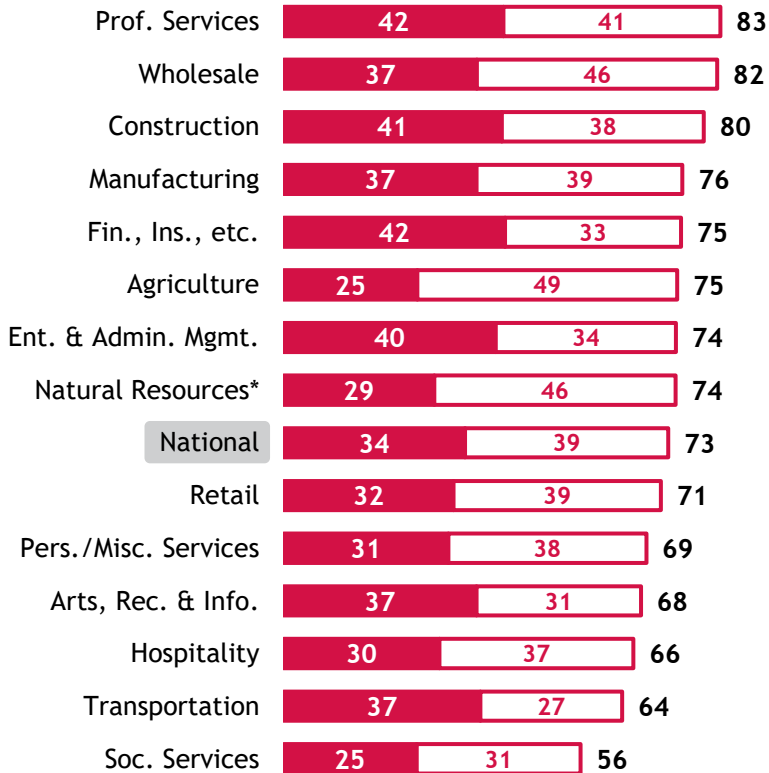
Question: Please indicate your level of support for each of the following elements that may impact business that were announced in the 2022 federal budget.

Note: \*Small sample size (<40).

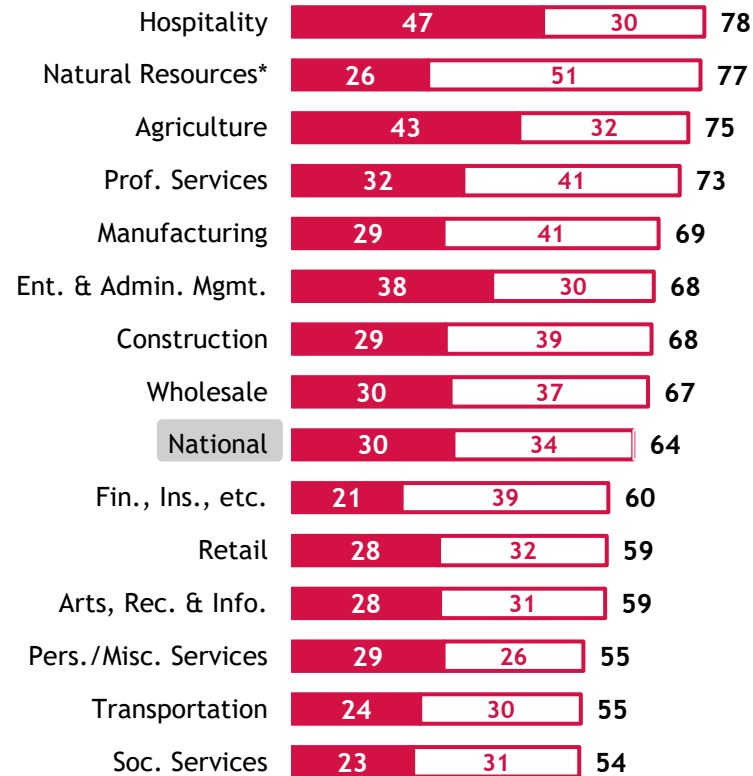
# Level of support for different initiatives announced in the 2022 budget

(By sector, % response)

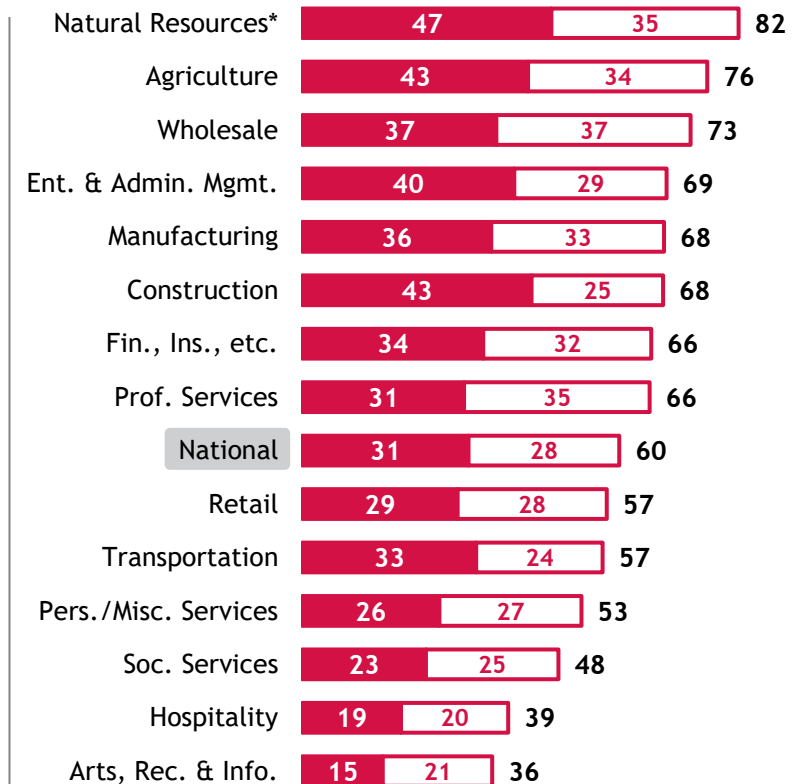
Proposing to create the Employee Ownership Trust so business owners can more easily transfer their business to a group of employees



Improving access to the Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) program



Phasing out all COVID-19 business support programs as of May 7, 2022



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = between 2,822 and 2,831 per option.

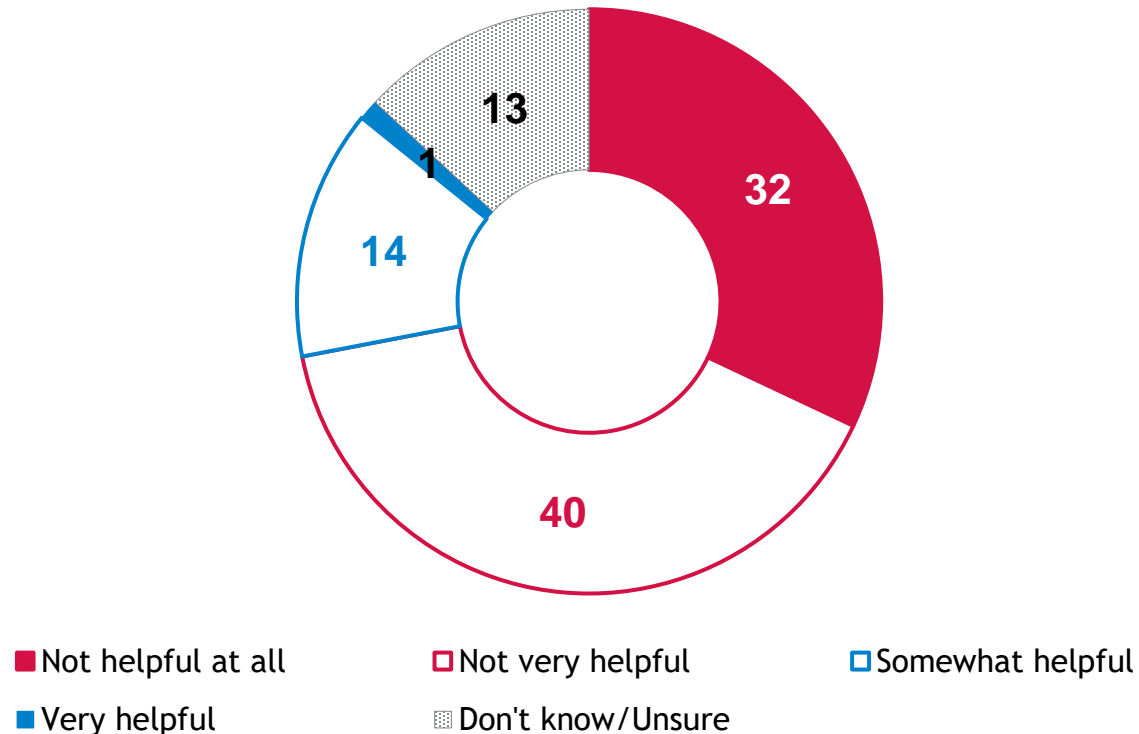
Question: Please indicate your level of support for each of the following elements that may impact your business that were announced in the 2022 federal budget.

Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

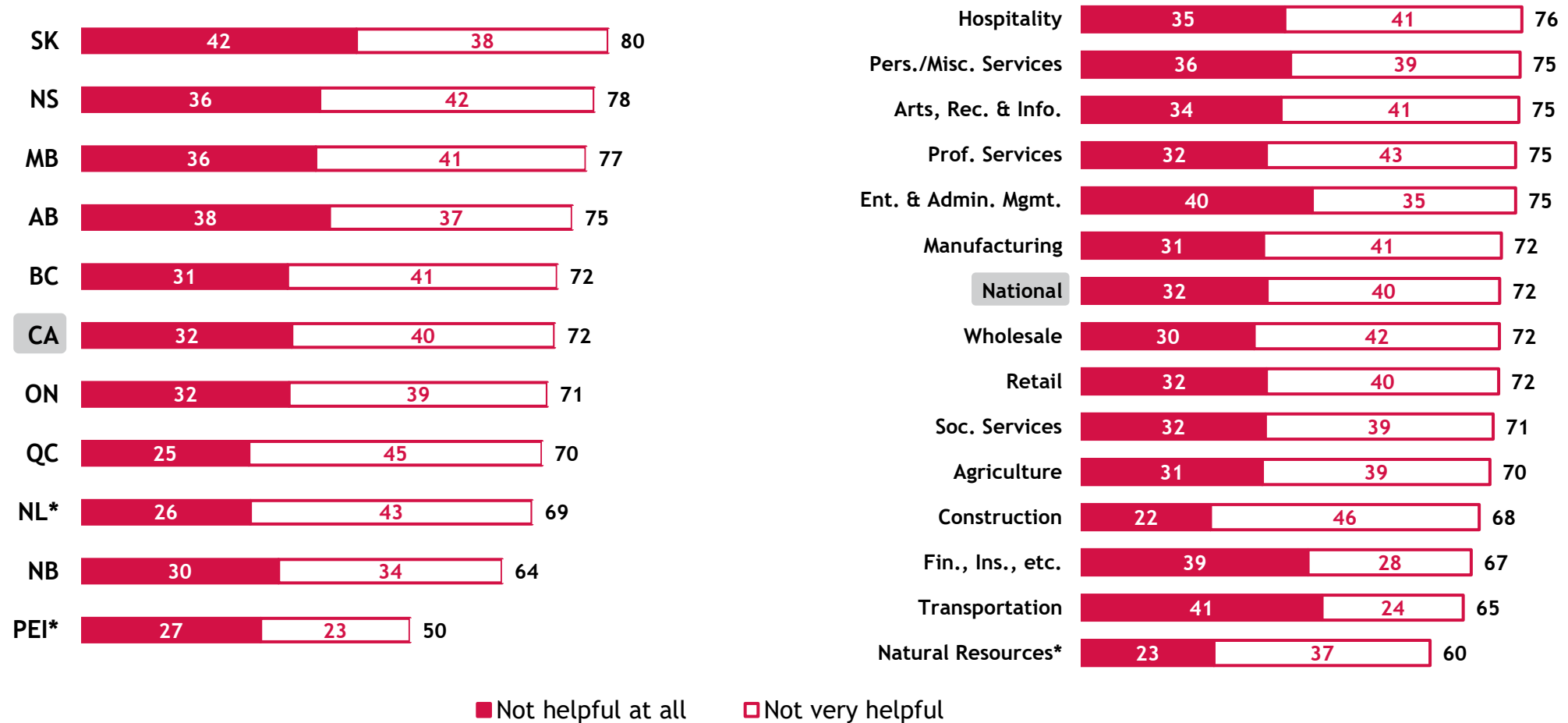
# Helpfulness of the measures announced in the 2022 federal budget according to small businesses (% response)

The majority of business owners, **72%**, did not find the measures announced in the 2022 federal budget to be helpful (not helpful at all - **32%**; or not very helpful - **40%**).



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,862.  
Question: How helpful will the measures announced in the 2022 federal budget be to your business?

# Helpfulness of the measures announced in the 2022 federal budget according to small businesses (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - April 2022 survey, April 8-22, 2022, final results, n = 2,862.  
 Question: How helpful will the measures announced in the 2022 federal budget be to your business?  
 Notes: 1) \*Small sample size (<40).  
 2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

# CFIB Research & Economics Resources

## Questions or data requests

**Simon Gaudreault**  
Vice-President, National Research  
[simon.gaudreault@cfib.ca](mailto:simon.gaudreault@cfib.ca)

**Marvin Cruz**  
Director, Research  
[marvin.cruz@cfib.ca](mailto:marvin.cruz@cfib.ca)

**Andreea Bourgeois**  
Director, Economics  
[andreea.bourgeois@cfib.ca](mailto:andreea.bourgeois@cfib.ca)

## Additional information

**Monthly Business Barometer**  
[cfib.ca/barometer](https://cfib.ca/barometer)

**Small business recovery dashboard**  
[smallbusinesseveryday.ca/dashboard/](https://smallbusinesseveryday.ca/dashboard/)

**All CFIB research**  
[cfib.ca/research](https://cfib.ca/research)



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