



Your Voice

Monthly Omnibus Survey

Key Results
February 2023

CFIB

**CANADIAN FEDERATION
OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS**

In business for your business™

About the data in this report



Your Voice survey - final results for February 2023

- Type: An omnibus, controlled-access online CFIB survey.
- Active dates: February 8-28, 2023.
- Results: Based on responses from 3,023 CFIB members who are owners of Canadian independent businesses, from all sectors and regions of the country.
- 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.

Highlights featured in this report

Slides

Business outlook



- Over the next 12 months, about 2 in 3 (65%) businesses are optimistic about their business performance, while 3 in 10 businesses are pessimistic (29%).
- Regarding business concerns, about 9 in 10 businesses are concerned with inflation (92%) and a potential recession (85%), and about 2 in 3 are concerned about staffing issues (66%).

5-6

7-11

Business conditions



- 61% of business owners are making below normal profits and 49% make below normal revenues.
- Top reasons for below-normal revenues in small businesses include: customers spending less (61%), price increases (47%), and lack of customers (47%).
- About 3 in 5 (58%) businesses are still holding pandemic debt, 1 in 3 have not been able to repay anything.
- Among businesses that are still holding debt incurred due to the pandemic, the average amount held is \$104,792.

13

14-15

16-18

Business permits and licenses



- 2 in 5 business owners find it difficult to obtain permits and licenses. Governments can ease the process by reviewing and publishing expected timeframes and tracking the processing time.

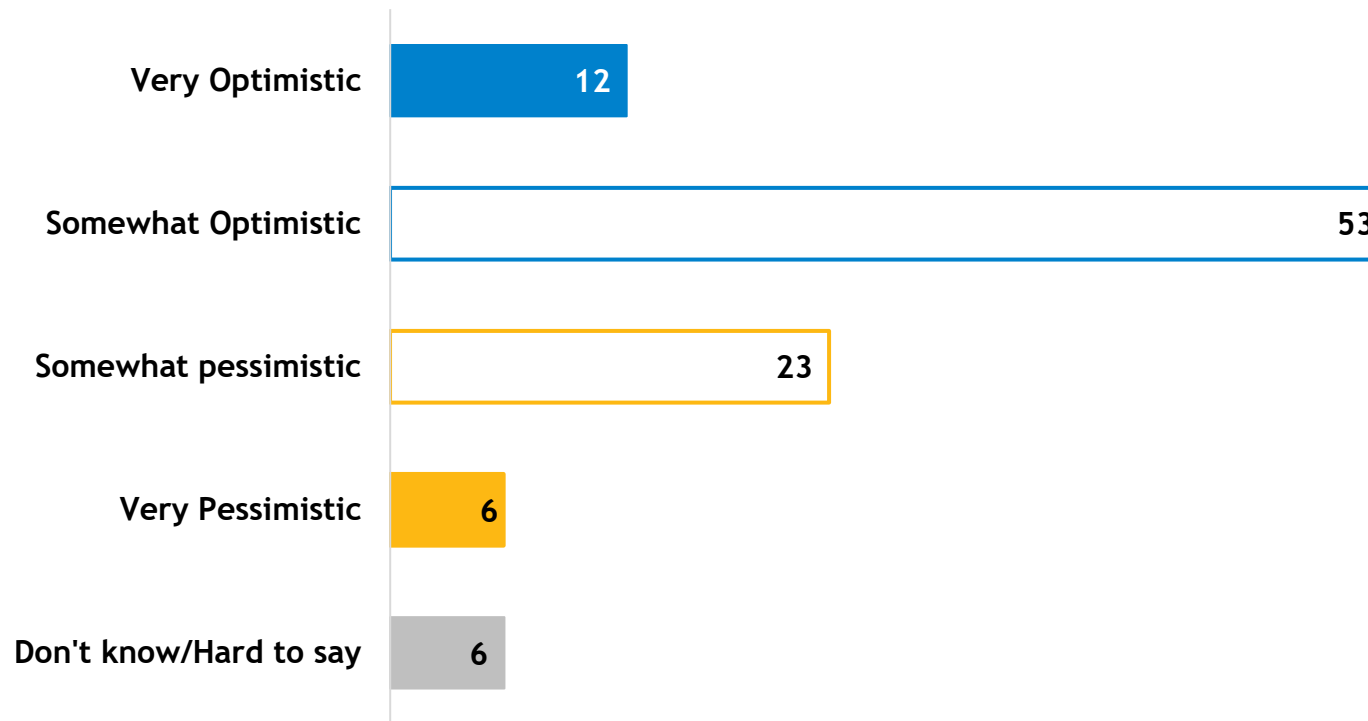
20-24

Business Outlook



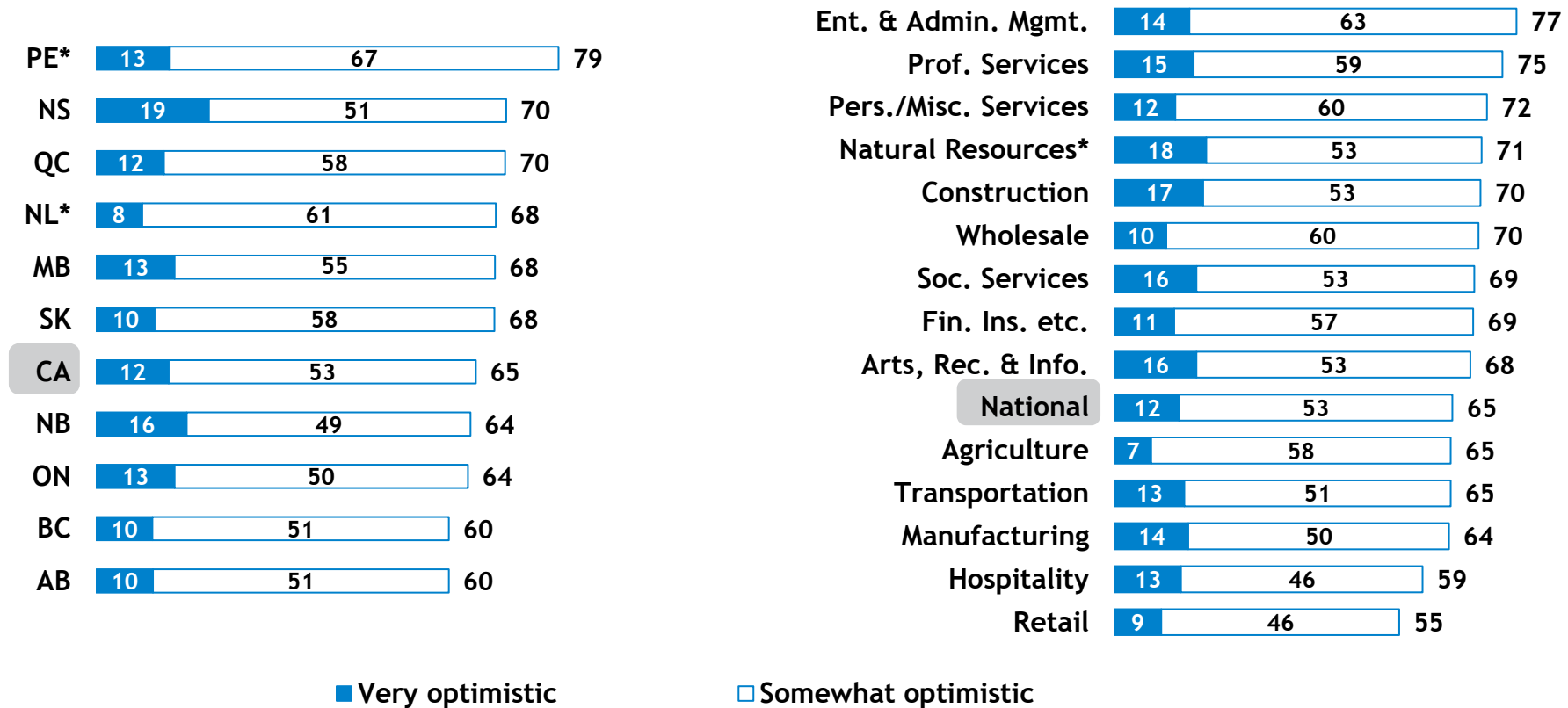
About **2 in 3** businesses are **optimistic** about their business performance over the next 12 months, while **3 in 10** are pessimistic

Business owner outlook about their business performance over the next 12 months (% response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 3,018.
Question: "How are you feeling about your business performance over the next 12 months?" (Select one)

Share of business owners that are **optimistic** about their business performance over the next 12 months (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 3,018.
 Question: "How are you feeling about your business performance over the next 12 months?" (Select one)

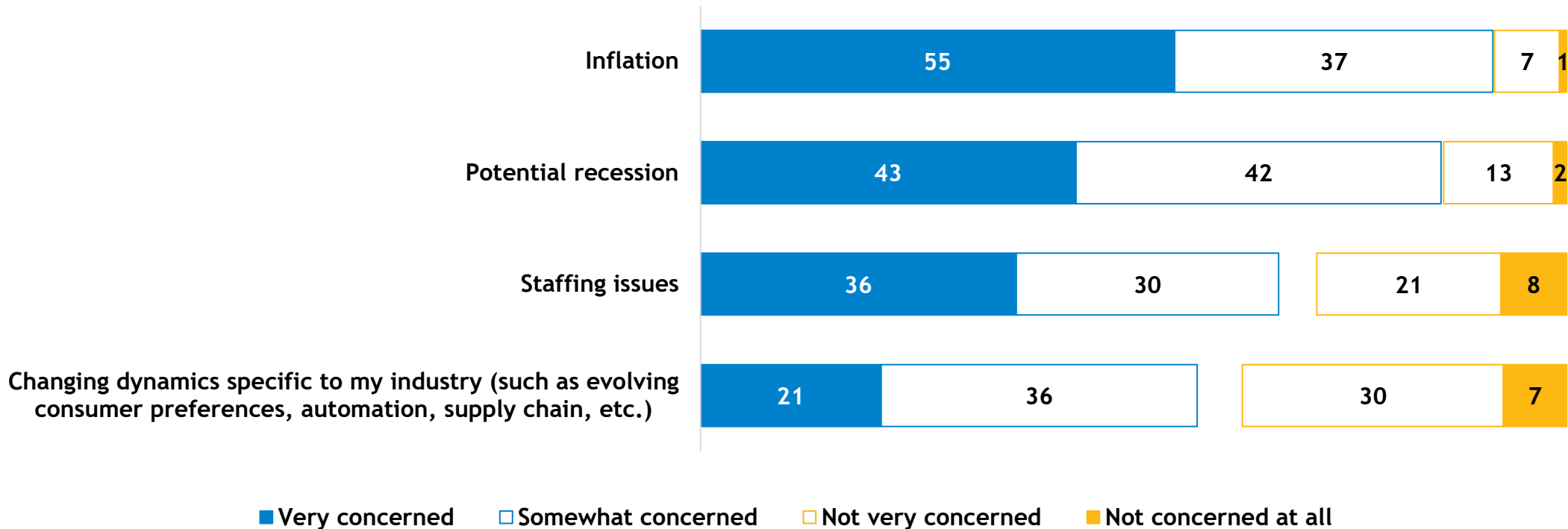
National Results: Very optimistic= 12%; Somewhat optimistic = 53%; Somewhat pessimistic = 23%; Very pessimistic = 6%; Don't know/Hard to say = 6%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

About **9 in 10** businesses are **concerned with inflation (92%)** and a **potential recession (85%)**, and about **2 in 3** are concerned about **staffing issues (66%)**

How concerned are business owners about each of the following factors? (% response)

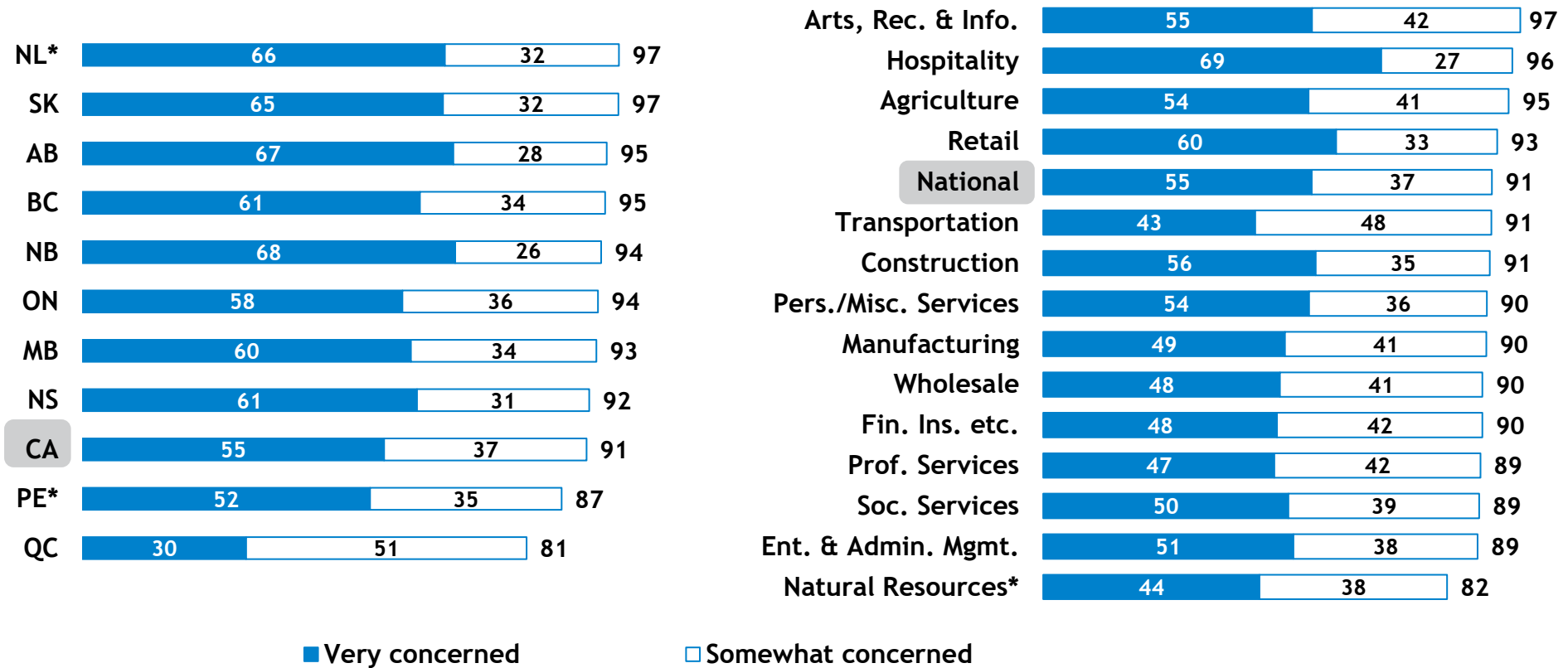


Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,874 to 2,954.

Question: "How concerned are you about the following factors affecting your business in the first half of 2023?" (Select one for each line)

Note: Respondents that selected "Don't know/Not applicable" are not displayed. Totals will not add to 100%

Share of business owners that are concerned about inflation in the first half of 2023 (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,954.

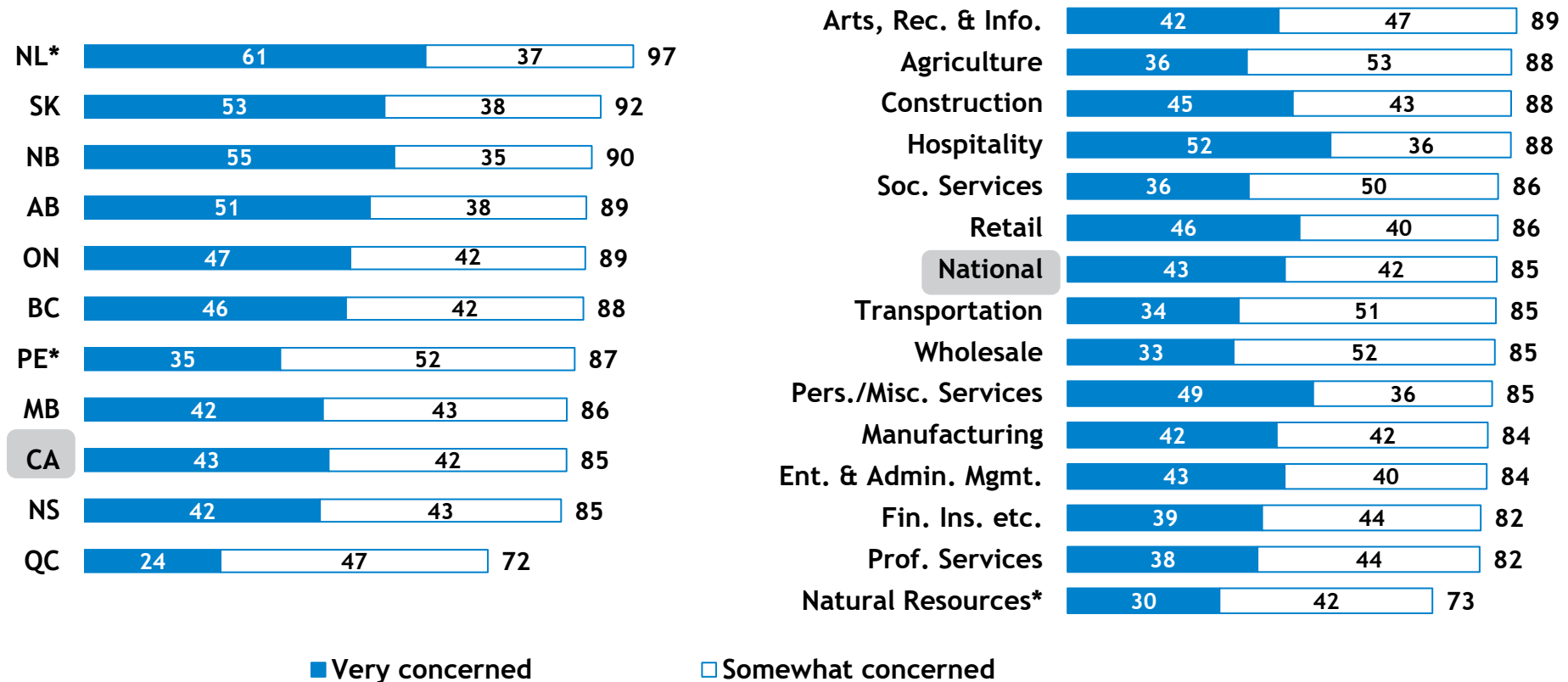
Question: "How concerned are you about the following factors affecting your business in the first half of 2023?" (Select one for each line) – Inflation

National Results: Very concerned = 55%; Somewhat concerned = 37%; Not very concerned = 7%; Not concerned at all = <1%; Don't know/Not applicable = <1%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Share of business owners that are concerned about a potential recession in the first half of 2023 (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,937.

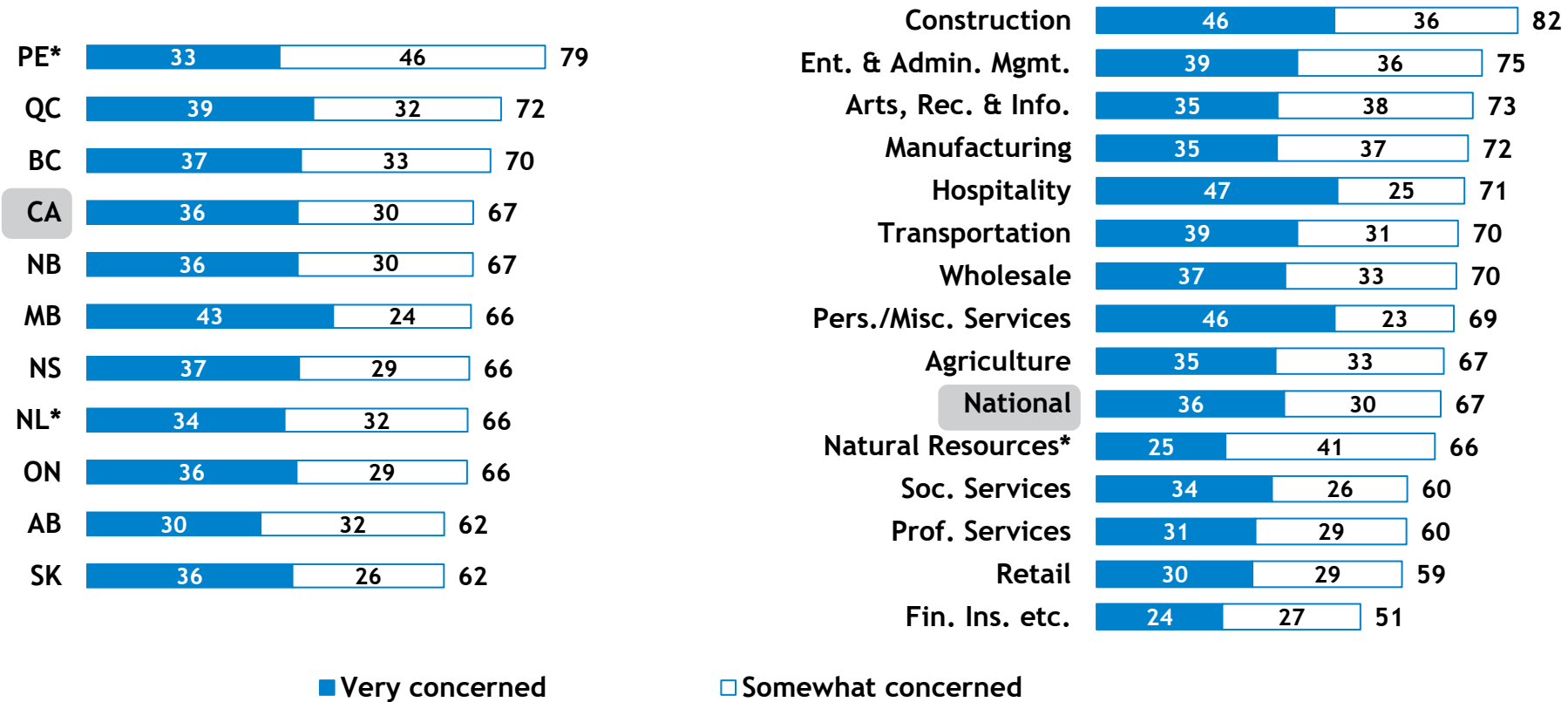
Question: "How concerned are you about the following factors affecting your business in the first half of 2023?" (Select one for each line) — Potential recession

National Results: Very concerned = 43%; Somewhat concerned = 42%; Not very concerned = 13%; Not concerned at all = 2%; Don't know/Not applicable = <1%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Share of business owners that are **concerned** about **staffing issues** in the first half of 2023 (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,884.

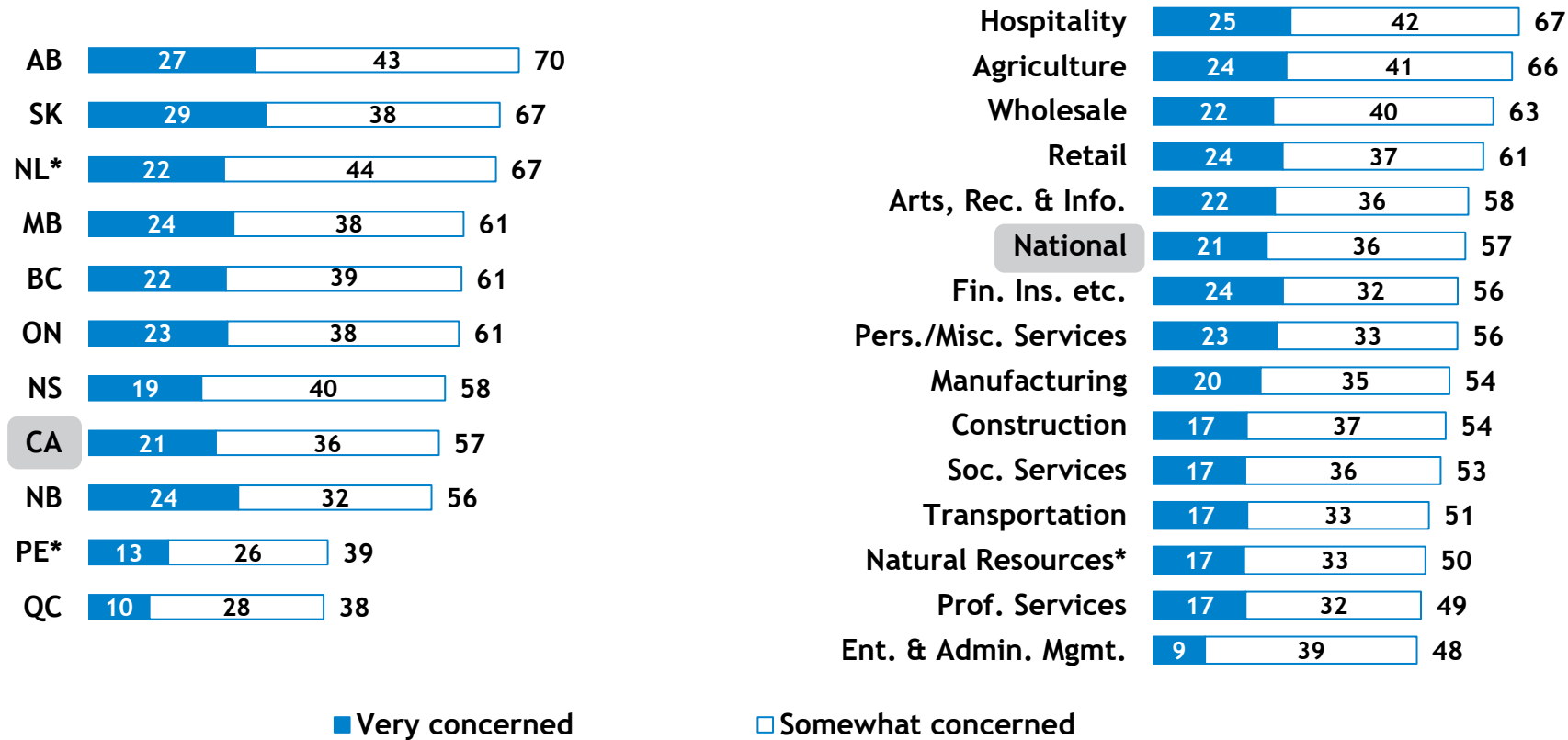
Question: "How concerned are you about the following factors affecting your business in ,the first half of 2023?" (Select one for each line) – Staffing issues

National Results: Very concerned = 36%; Somewhat concerned = 30%; Not very concerned = 21%; Not concerned at all = 8%; Don't know/Not applicable = 4%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Share of business owners that are concerned about changing dynamics specific to their industry in the first half of 2023 (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,874.

Question: "How concerned are you about the following factors affecting your business in the first half of 2023?" (Select one for each line) – Changing dynamics specific to my industry

National Results: Very concerned = 21%; Somewhat concerned = 36%; Not very concerned = 30%; Not concerned at all = 7%; Don't know/Not applicable = 5%.

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

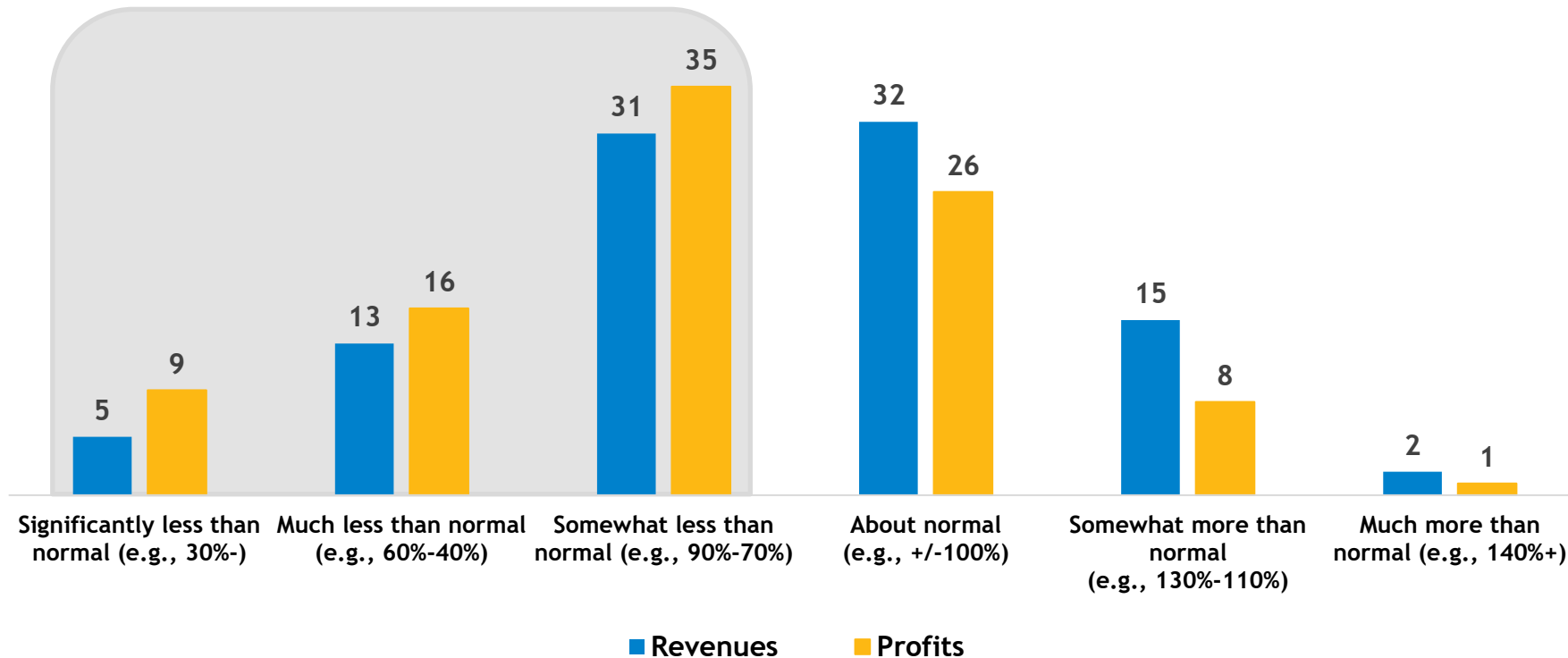
2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Business Conditions



49% of business owners are making **below normal revenues** and **61%** are making **below normal profits**

Current level of revenues and profits compared to normal levels at this time of year (% response)



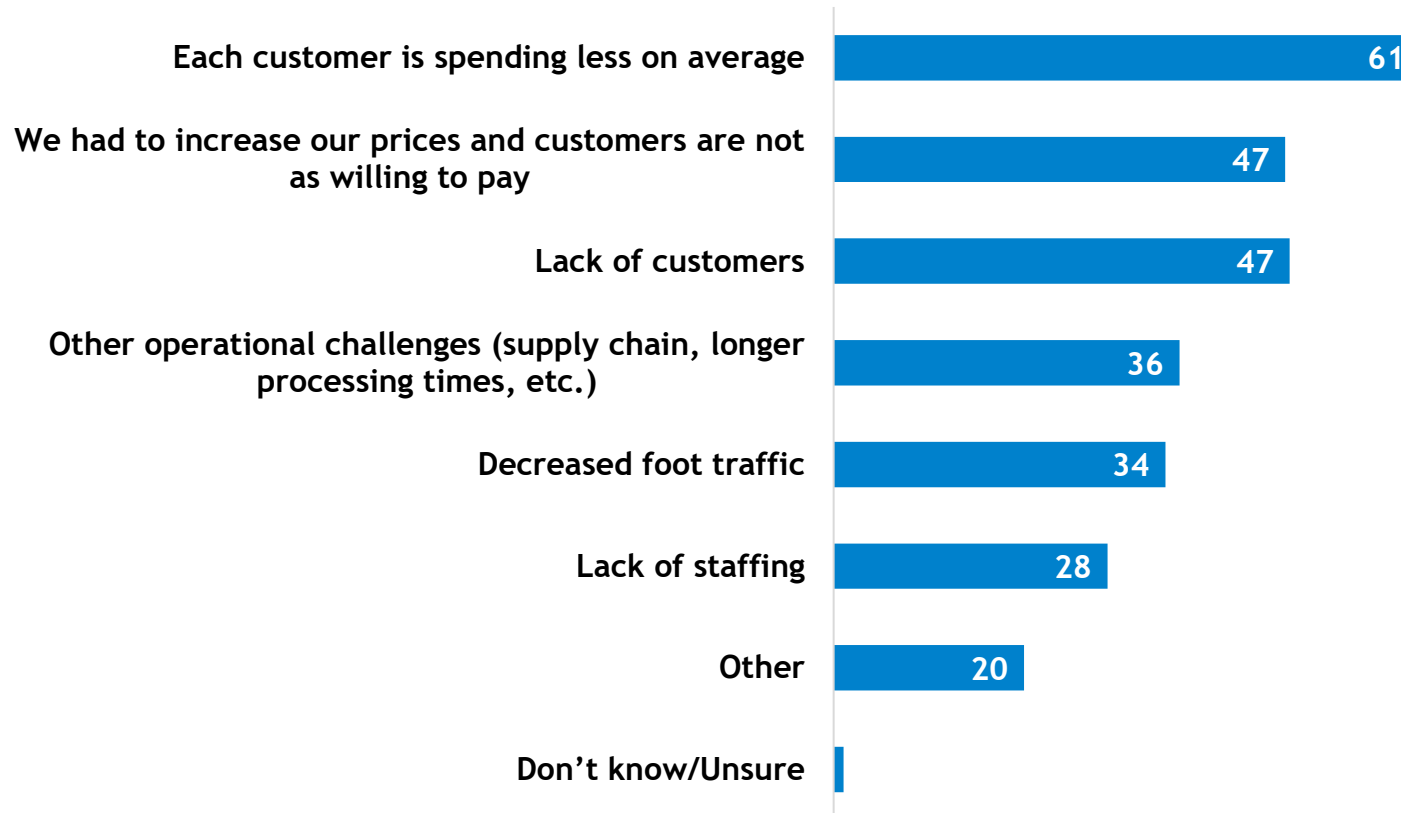
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,746 to 2,760.

Question: "Compared to normal levels for your business at this time of year, at what levels are the following currently?" (For each line, indicate your best estimate as a share of what normal/full means for your business)

Note: Respondents that selected "0%", "Off season", and "Don't know/Not applicable" are not displayed. Totals will not add to 100%

Customers spending less is the top reason small businesses are making below normal revenues

Main reasons businesses are below normal revenues (% response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 1,351.
Question: "What are the main reasons that your business is below normal revenues?" (Select all that apply)

Top 3 reasons why small businesses are making below normal revenues

(By province, % response)

| | #1 | #2 | #3 |
|-----|--|--|--|
| BC | Customers spending less on average 54% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 49% | Lack of customers 49% |
| AB | Customers spending less on average 66% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 56% | Lack of customers 51% |
| SK | Customers spending less on average 64% | Lack of customers 47% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 42% |
| MB | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 70% | Customers spending less on average 67% | Lack of customers 54% |
| ON | Customers spending less on average 64% | Lack of customers 51% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 46% |
| QC | Customers spending less on average 51% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 38% | Lack of staffing 38% |
| NL* | Customers spending less on average 73% | Decreased foot traffic 60% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 53% |
| NB | Customers spending less on average 62% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 51% | Lack of customers 51% |
| NS* | Customers spending less on average 63% | Price increase and customers not willing to pay 47% | Lack of customers 38% |

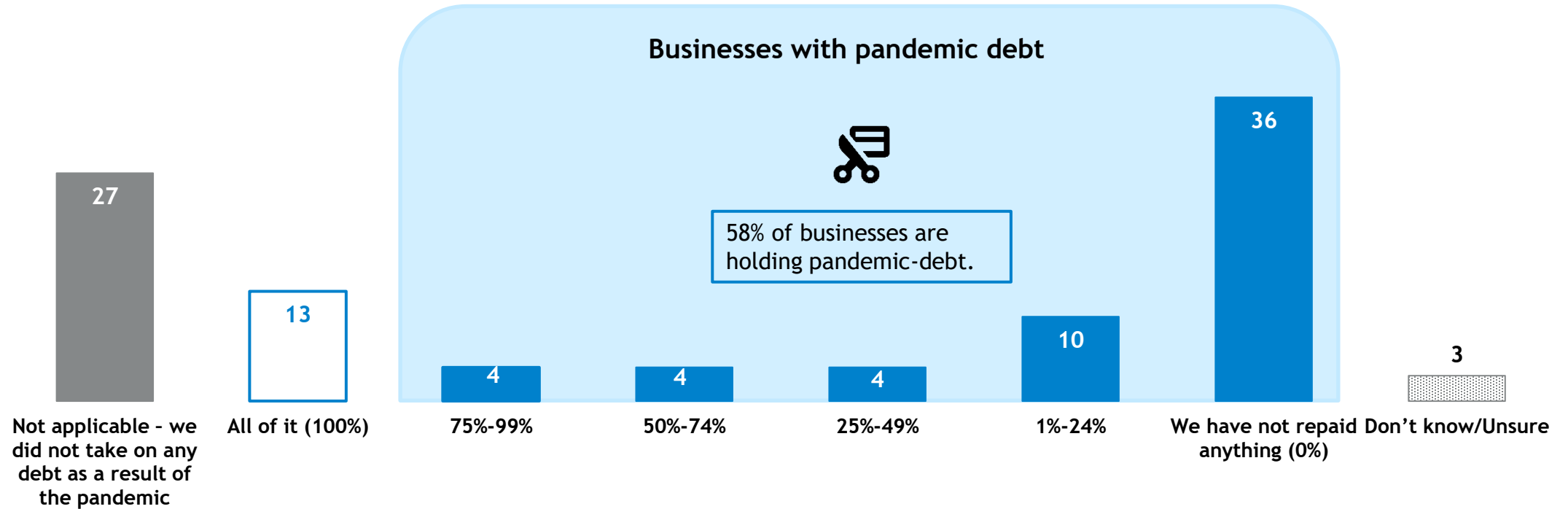
Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 1,351.

Question: "What are the main reasons that your business is below normal revenues?" (Select all that apply)

Note: PE is not displayed in this table due to an unrepresentative sample.

About 3 in 5 (58%) businesses are still holding pandemic debt, 1 in 3 have not been able to repay anything

Amount of pandemic debt businesses have been able to repay (% response)

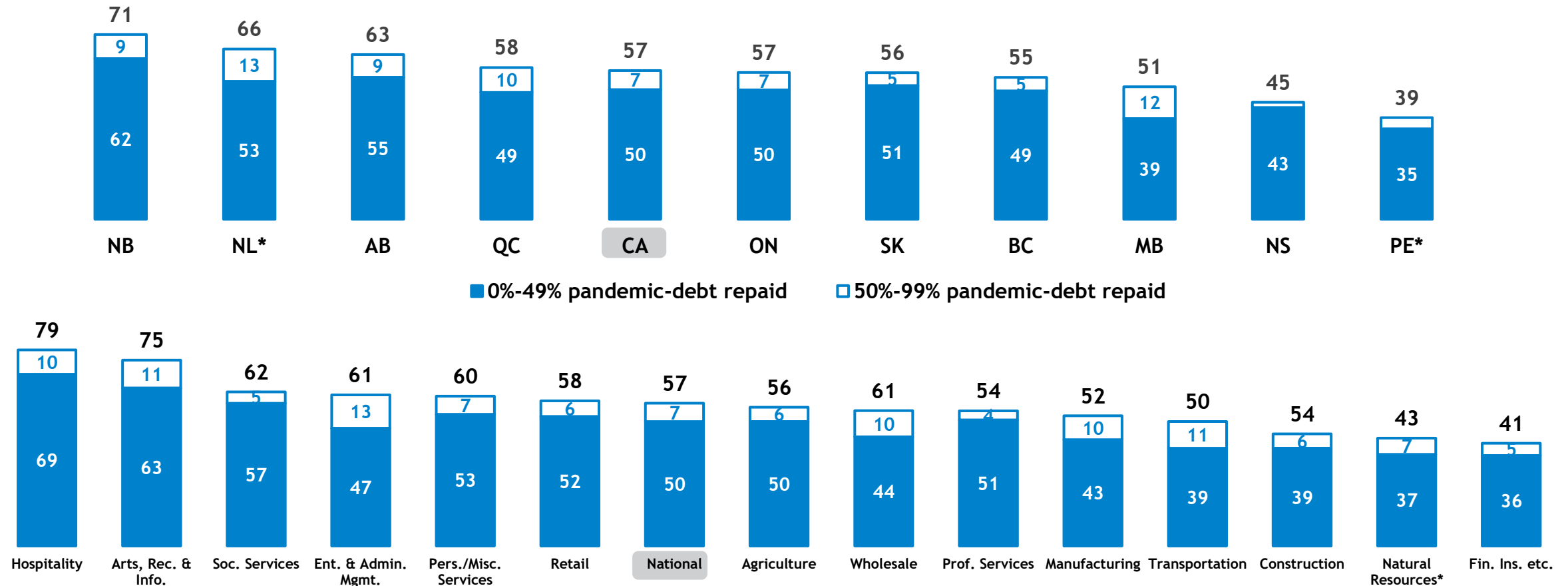


Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,757.

Question: "How much of your pandemic-related debt has your business been able to repay? When responding consider all forms of debt taken on, including provincial and/or federal government loans (such as CEBA or HASCAP), credit cards, lines of credit, loans from family and friends, unpaid taxes/rent/bills, etc." (Select one)

Businesses with pandemic debt, February 2023

(By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,757.

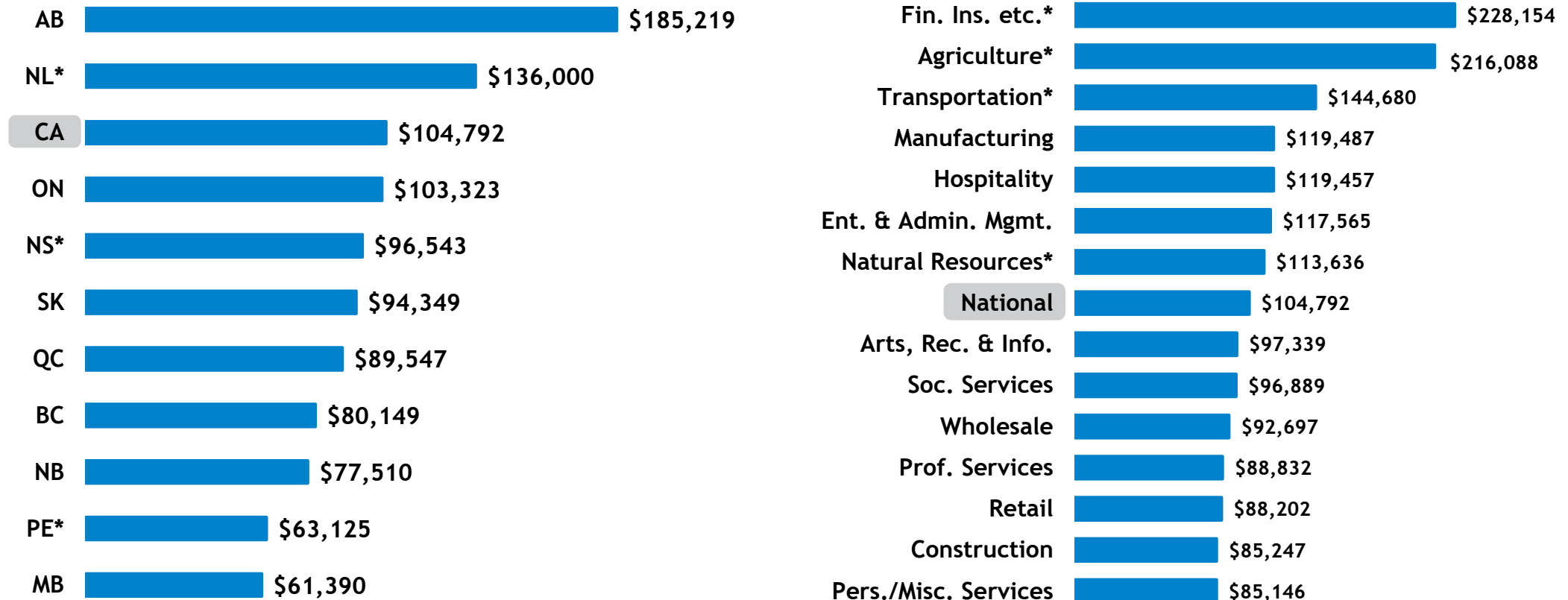
Question: "How much of your pandemic-related debt has your business been able to repay? When responding consider all forms of debt taken on, including provincial and/or federal government loans (such as CEBA or HASCAP), credit cards, lines of credit, loans from family and friends, unpaid taxes/rent/bills, etc." (Select one)

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Among businesses that are still holding debt incurred due to the pandemic (58%), the average amount held is **\$104,792**

Amount of pandemic debt businesses are still holding



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 1,278.

Question: "Are you in a position to tell us roughly how much additional debt incurred due to COVID-19 your business is still holding?" (Please enter approximate amount)

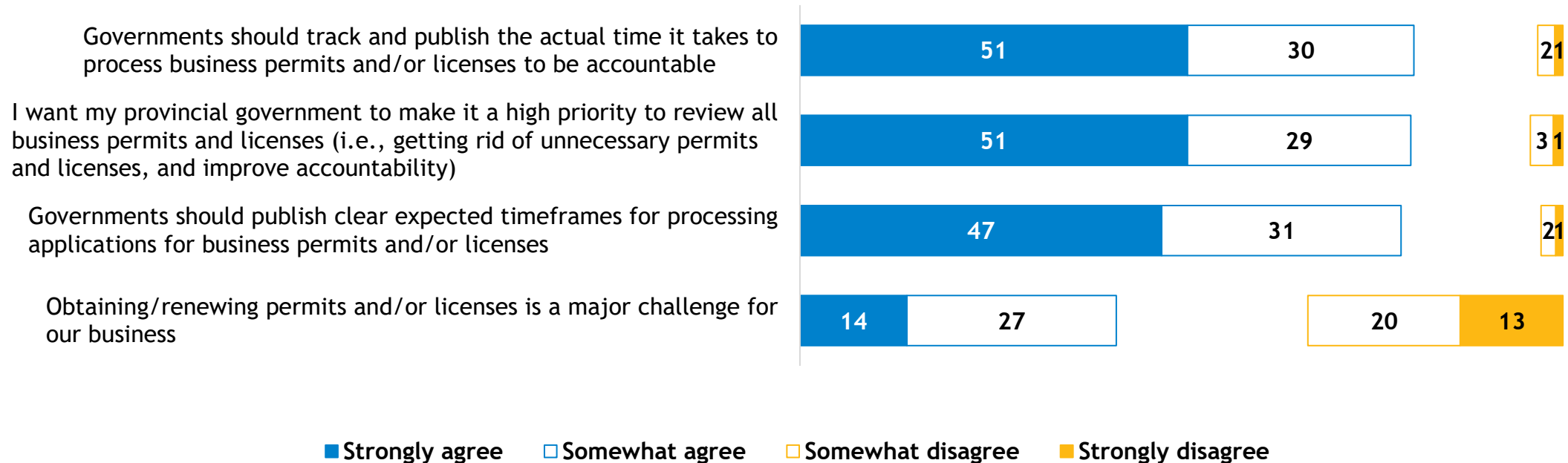
Note: *Small sample size (<40).

Business permits and licenses



2 in 5 business owners find it difficult to obtain permits and licenses. Governments can ease the process by reviewing and publishing expected timeframes and tracking the processing time.

Business owner's level of agreement with the following statements about permits and licenses (% response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,656 to 2,670.

Question: "Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding business permits and/or licenses?" (Select one for each line)

Note: Respondents that selected "Don't know/Unsure" are not displayed. Totals will not add to 100%

Share of business owners that agree obtaining/renewing permits and/or licenses is a major challenge for their business (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,656.

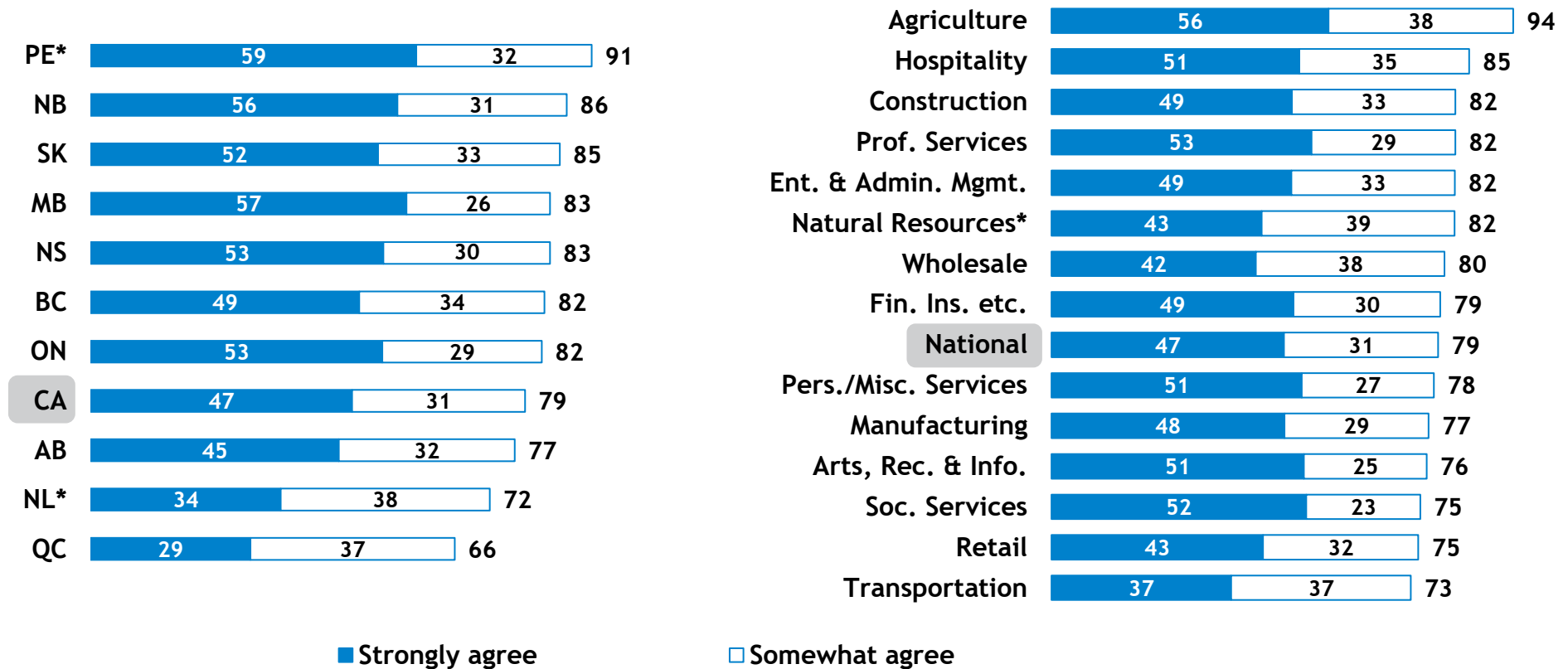
Question: “Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding business permits and/or licenses.” (Select one for each line)
 – Obtaining/renewing permits and/or licenses is a major challenge for our business

National Results: Strongly agree = 14%; Somewhat agree = 27%; Somewhat disagree = 20%, Strongly disagree = 13%; Don’t know/Unsure = 25%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Share of business owners that **agree** governments should **publish clear expected timeframes** for processing applications for business permits and/or licenses (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,655.

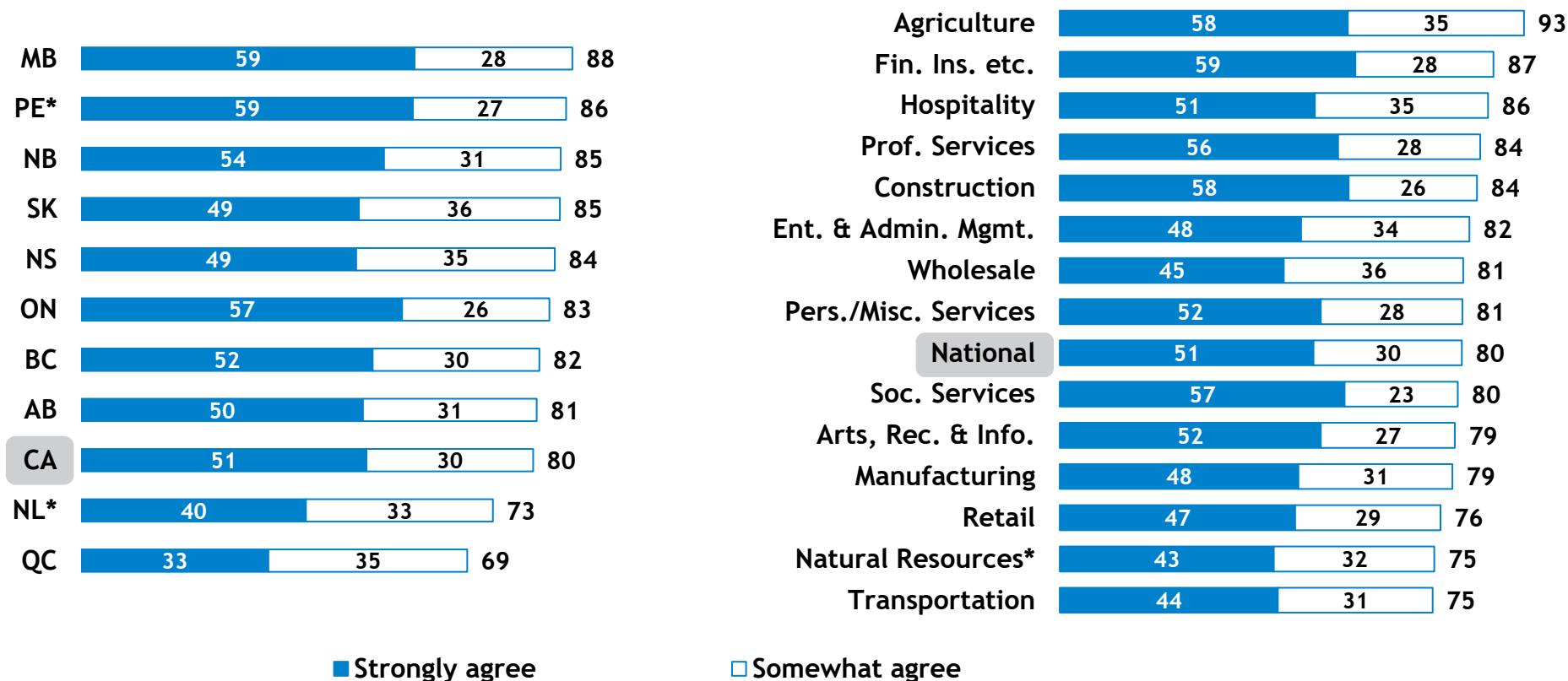
Question: "Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding business permits and/or licenses." (Select one for each line)
 – Governments should publish clear expected timeframes for processing applications for business permits and/or licenses

National Results: Strongly agree = 47%; Somewhat agree = 31%; Somewhat disagree = 2%; Strongly disagree = <1%; Don't know/Unsure = 18%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Share of business owners that agree governments should track and publish the actual time it takes to process business permits and/or licenses to be accountable (By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,654.

Question: "Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding business permits and/or licenses." (Select one for each line)
 – Governments should track and publish the actual time it takes to process business permits and/or licenses to be accountable

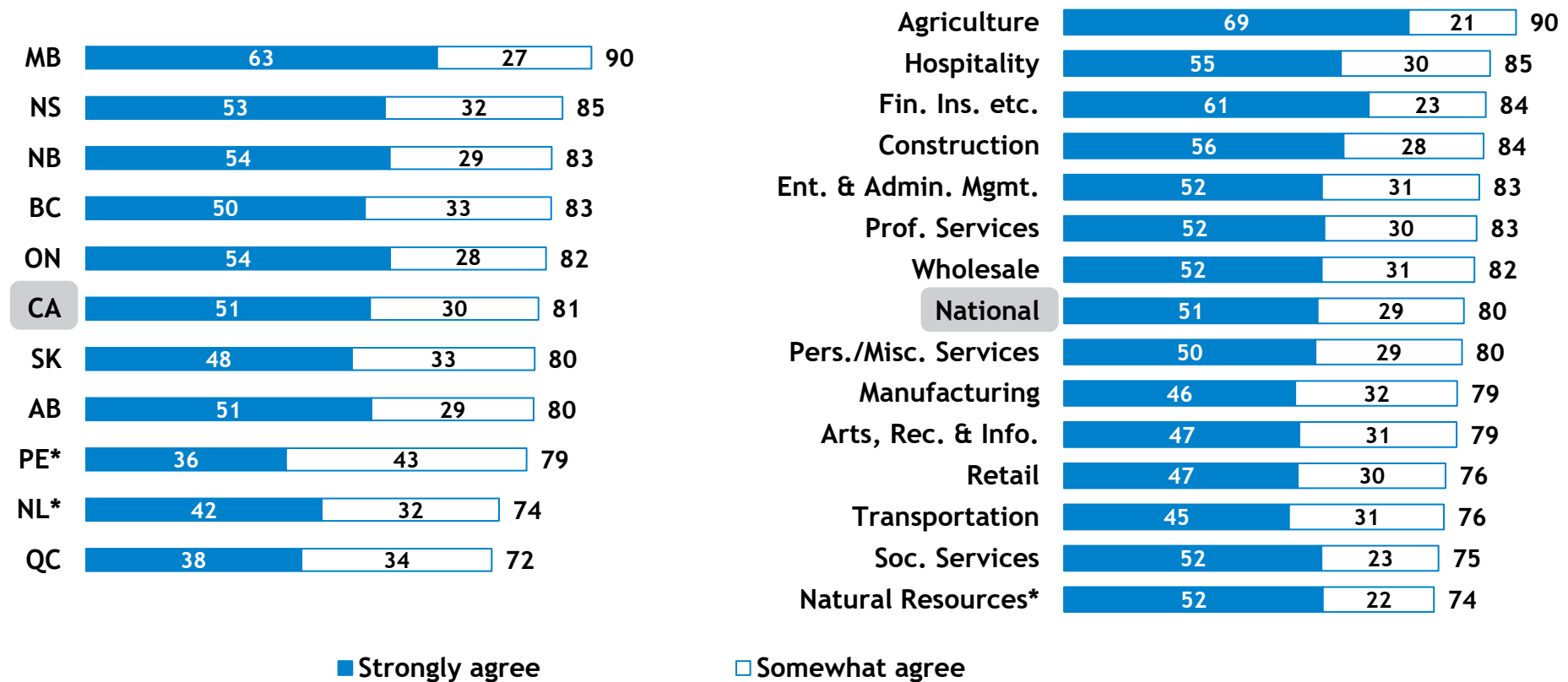
National Results: Strongly agree = 51%; Somewhat agree = 30%; Somewhat disagree = 2%; Strongly disagree = 1%; Don't know/Unsure = 16%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Share of business owners that **agree** their provincial governments should **make it a priority to review** all business permits and licenses

(By province and sector, % response)



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - February 2023 survey, February 8-28, 2023, final results, n = 2,670.

Question: "Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding business permits and/or licenses." (Select one for each line)
 – I want my provincial government to make it a high priority to review all business permits and licenses

National Results: Strongly agree = 51%; Somewhat agree = 29%; Somewhat disagree = 3%; Strongly disagree = 1%; Don't know/Unsure = 16%.

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

2) Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Questions or data requests

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