

More Canadians willing to roll up their sleeves right away as national COVID-19 vaccine rollout begins

Majority express confidence in federal government's ability to effectively manage vaccine distribution

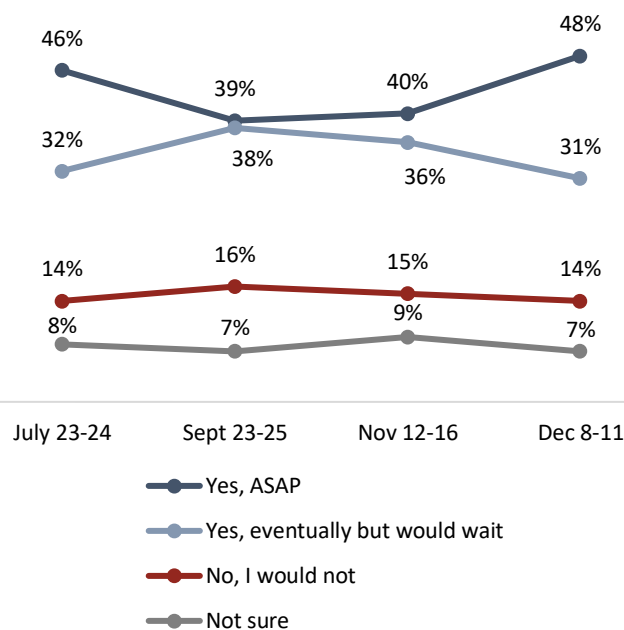
December 14, 2020 – Perhaps it was the reassurance of the [first, chipper, elderly patients in Britain](#) who spoke about their experience that has made the difference. Perhaps, as the coronavirus pandemic casts its longest shadow onto what are already the darkest days of the year, the transition of the vaccine conversation from abstract concept to tangible reality has had an impact.

Either way, the latest data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute indicates a notable increase in the number of Canadians who say they are willing to be immunized against COVID-19 as soon as a vaccine is available to them. A month ago, a plurality of Canadians (40%) said they were keen to be vaccinated ASAP as opposed to wanting to wait a while first. Today, half (48%) now want an immediate jab, a boost of eight percentage points.

Those 65 and over are among the most likely to say they're eager to be immunized (61%). But while more in this country express a desire for inoculation sooner rather than later, the number of those who say they will not get a vaccine has remained static at roughly one-in-seven. This rate varies from province to province, making the task for public health officials in some places potentially more challenging than others.

Despite recent speculation and [criticism](#) that Canada would lag behind in obtaining doses, it has turned out to be one of the first countries globally to approve the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. As a result, half in this country say the Trudeau government has done a "good job" securing vaccine for its citizens, while a majority express confidence in its ability to effectively manage distribution nationally (58%).

If a vaccine against the coronavirus became available to you, would you get vaccinated, or not?



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from December 8 – 11, 2020 among a representative randomized sample of 1,603 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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More Key Findings:

- There is near unanimous agreement that older and more at-risk people should get the vaccine first. Fewer than one-in-ten say it should be “first come first serve”.
- Among those who say they would wait to be vaccinated or not get a vaccine at all, the majority (70%) express concerns over the potential for long-term side effects.
- Asked whether vaccination should be mandatory in certain scenarios or places, a majority say it should be for healthcare workers and those in extended care homes.

About ARI

*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

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Part One: Vaccine Vivacity

Increase in willingness for immediate vaccination

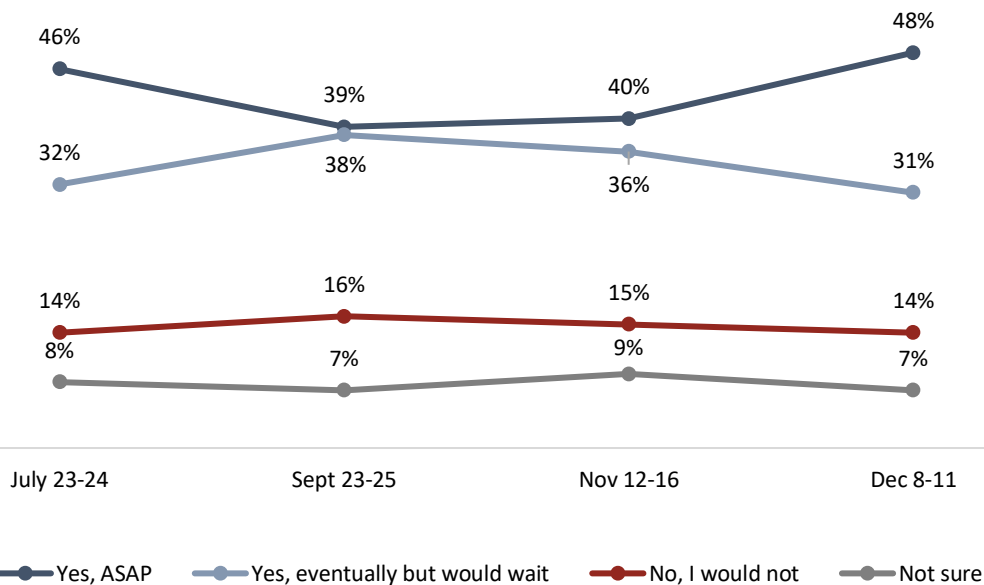
The federal government announced this week that it had approved the first COVID-19 vaccine for delivery to Canadians. This made Canada the third nation worldwide to approve the Pfizer-BioNTech-developed inoculation, after the United Kingdom and Bahrain had already done so. Nearly 250,000 doses of the vaccine will be taken by Canadians before the end of the year, beginning this week. The longer-term plan is for everyone who wants the vaccine to receive it by the [end of 2021](#).

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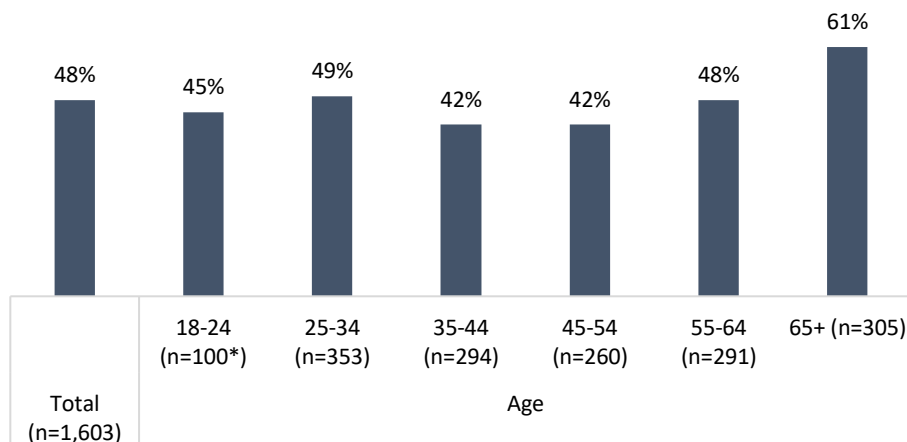
It appears Canadians are showing more willingness to be inoculated as soon as possible. Half of Canadians (48%) now say they would get the vaccine as soon as it became available, a significant jump from [previous studies](#) over the past five months.

If a vaccine against the coronavirus became available to you, would you get vaccinated, or not?



Frontline healthcare workers and those at risk in long-term care are the first priority for federal and provincial governments in targeting groups that will receive early rounds of vaccination. If older residents do indeed get priority afterward, which is a [subject of much debate](#), this news will be welcome by this segment. Canadians over 65 years of age are by far the most likely to say they would take the vaccine immediately:

Percentage who would get vaccinated as soon as it became available - by age



**indicates small sample size, results should be interpreted with caution*

Willingness for inoculation as soon as possible varies across the country. It is lowest in Saskatchewan, where two-in-five (40%) say they would take a vaccine immediately. At least half of residents in British Columbia, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada would opt to get vaccinated right away.

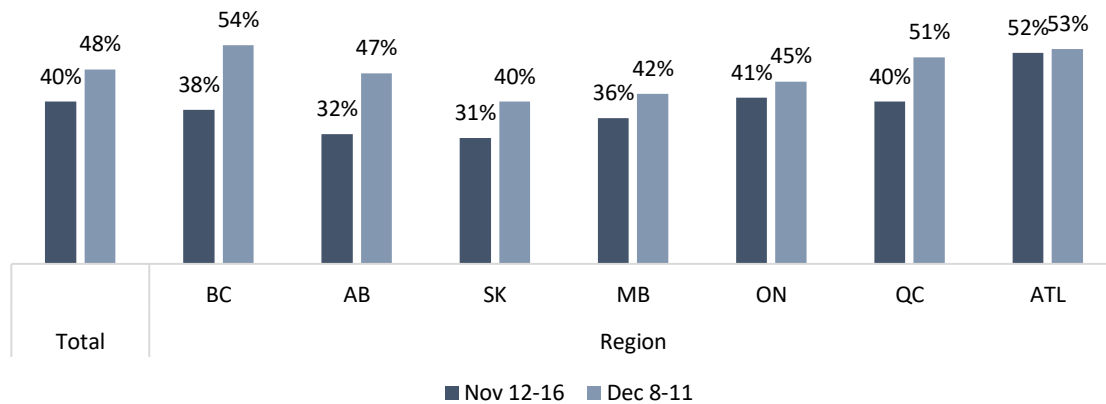
If a vaccine against the coronavirus became available to you, would you get vaccinated, or not?								
	Total (n=1,603)	Region						
		BC (n=202)	AB (n=150)	SK (n=129)	MB (n=125)	ON (n=458)	QC (n=394)	ATL (n=145)
Yes, ASAP	48%	54%	47%	40%	42%	45%	51%	53%
Yes, eventually	31%	31%	19%	31%	30%	36%	28%	34%
No	14%	9%	27%	21%	19%	12%	13%	9%
Not sure	7%	6%	7%	8%	8%	7%	8%	5%

Restrictions on businesses and socializing that will last until at least early January have been announced in both [B.C.](#) and [Alberta](#), throwing a damper over the holiday season. Perhaps this helps explain why the steepest increases in vaccine receptiveness have been in both of these provinces, as the contrast between normalcy and pandemic-induced lockdowns feels sharper than ever.

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Change in willingness to be vaccinated as soon as COVID-19 vaccine available - between November 16 and December 11



Concerns over side effects persist

While half of the population is anxiously awaiting the vaccine, others are less enthusiastic. Those who did not say they would get a vaccine as soon as it was available were asked a follow up question about their specific concerns. For most, the long-term potential side effects are the most worrisome aspect of this issue. Canadians of all ages and backgrounds share this concern. While some short-term side effects are documented and to be expected, longer term concerns are unknown by virtue of the speed of developments and trials. That said, for one-in-four among this group, trust of government and public health officials is a key driver of opposition:

Reasons for not getting the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it becomes available (Asked of those who would not get vaccinated as soon as it became available)							
	Total (n=831)	Age and Gender					
		Male			Female		
		18-34 (n=116)	35-54 (n=166)	55+ (n=119)	18-34 (n=120)	35-54 (n=156)	55+ (n=154)
Concerned about longer-term side effects that we don't know about yet	70%	62%	70%	61%	76%	81%	68%
Don't trust it because it has been rushed	39%	33%	47%	39%	37%	41%	34%
Concerned about short-term side effects, getting sick from it or not feeling well	38%	38%	40%	36%	36%	37%	37%
Don't trust politicians/public health officials who say it's safe	27%	25%	32%	41%	18%	27%	17%
COVID-19 isn't really a serious disease	9%	15%	12%	12%	8%	5%	4%
Other	18%	22%	17%	15%	20%	14%	19%

Near-unanimity over who should be vaccinated first

One aspect of the vaccine rollout plan appears uncontroversial, as nearly all Canadians say that once frontline healthcare workers and those involved in long-term care are vaccinated, the next population to be targeted should be those with specific risk factors. Nine-in-ten say (88%) that older people and those with doctor-assessed risks should be first in line, as opposed to a first come first serve, or an equal opportunity lottery approach. Canadians across different age and income categories agree on this:

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Once it is more widely available, how do you think the vaccine should be distributed?							
	Total (n=1,603)	Age			Household Income		
		18-34 (n=453)	35-54 (n=554)	55+ (n=596)	<\$50K (n=391)	\$50K - <\$100K (n=529)	\$100K+ (n=503)
Those who are at risk should go first	88%	87%	86%	90%	87%	88%	87%
First come, first serve, even if supplies are limited	6%	8%	8%	3%	7%	7%	6%
Lottery or random draw, everyone has the same chance	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Other	5%	3%	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%

Less agreement on mandatory vaccination

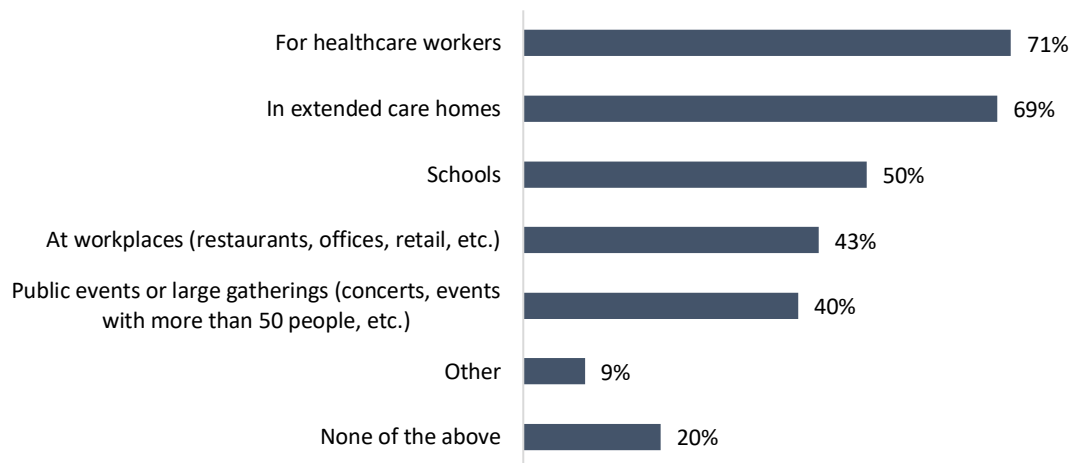
As Canadians think about their own personal choice to be vaccinated, there is another question of whether vaccines should be mandatory – and under what circumstances. For seven-in-ten (71%), vaccination for frontline health and long-term care workers is a key area of consensus. Beyond that however, there is less agreement.

Half of Canadians believe a person should have to be vaccinated in order to work at schools. Further, two-in-five would extend mandatory inoculation to those who work in public spaces or wish to attend large gatherings such as concerts or sports events. Fully one-in-five say vaccination shouldn't be a requirement under any circumstances.

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In which of these scenarios or places, if any, do you think a vaccination should be mandatory?



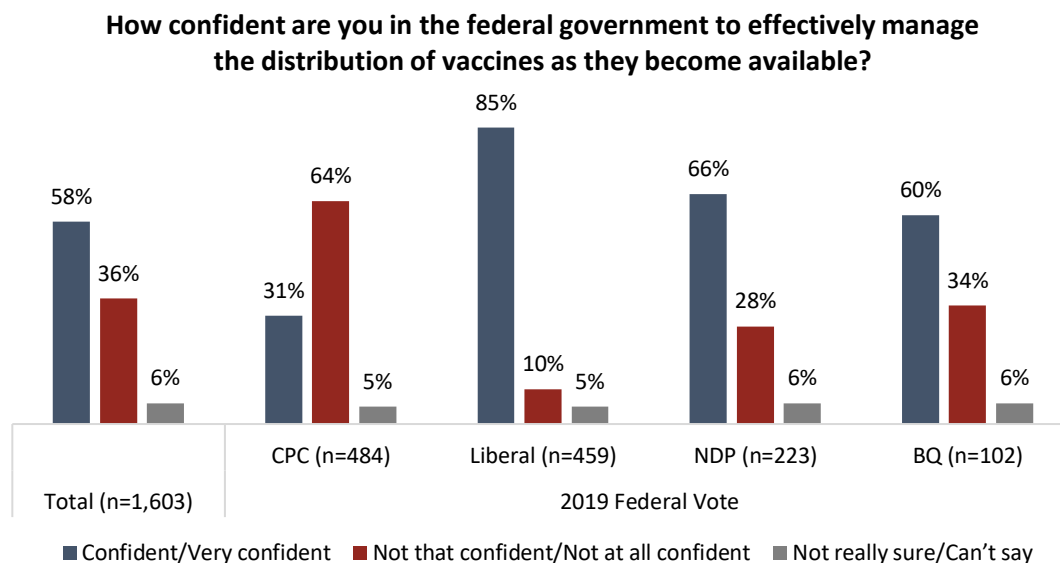
Notably, those who would get vaccinated overwhelmingly say that people in high-risk areas like healthcare and extended care should have to be vaccinated as well. However, this is a similarity they share with one-quarter of those who would not get vaccinated themselves. In fact, 35 per cent of those who will not get vaccinated say that immunization should be mandatory in at least some parts of society.

In which of these scenarios or places, if any, do you think a vaccination should be mandatory?					
	Total (n=1,603)	Willingness to get a coronavirus vaccine			
		Yes, immediately (n=772)	Yes, eventually (n=500)	Will not get vaccinated (n=221)	Not sure (n=110)
For healthcare workers	71%	86%	74%	24%	54%
In extended care homes	69%	84%	70%	22%	52%
Schools	50%	68%	46%	7%	31%
At workplaces (restaurants, offices, retail, etc.)	43%	61%	38%	4%	20%
Public events or large gatherings	40%	58%	32%	6%	13%
Other	9%	11%	7%	9%	10%
None of the above	20%	6%	18%	65%	38%

Part Two: Grading the government on doses and delivery

Majority have confidence in federal government to deliver the vaccine

There had been recent criticism from the [official opposition](#) and [national columnists](#) that the Liberal federal government would be late to deliver vaccines because of [mismanagement](#). While the timeline is yet to be fully determined, a firm majority of Canadians are offering the federal government a vote of confidence on this file. Three-in-five (58%) say they are confident in Trudeau and the Liberals to manage the rollout – much of which will be then handed over to the provinces for delivery and decisions over which populations to target. This question delineates along political lines, however:



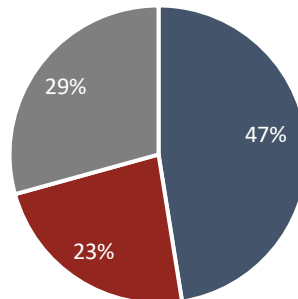
Half say government has done a good job in securing doses, many unsure

Canada has reserved the [highest number of COVID-19 vaccines per capita](#) in the world, reportedly enough doses for [more than four times](#) the population. Amid this news, half of Canadians (47%) are satisfied with the federal government's efforts to secure these vaccines, twice the amount that say the opposite (23%). A significant portion (29%), however, say they are not sure how to assess this issue:

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Based on what you have read, seen, or heard, what is your assessment of Canada's efforts to secure doses of a potential COVID-19 vaccine?
(All respondents, n=1,603)



- Canada has done a good job in securing sufficient doses for Canadians
- Canada has done a poor job in securing sufficient doses for Canadians
- Not really sure/Can't say

Part Three: Concern and Restrictions

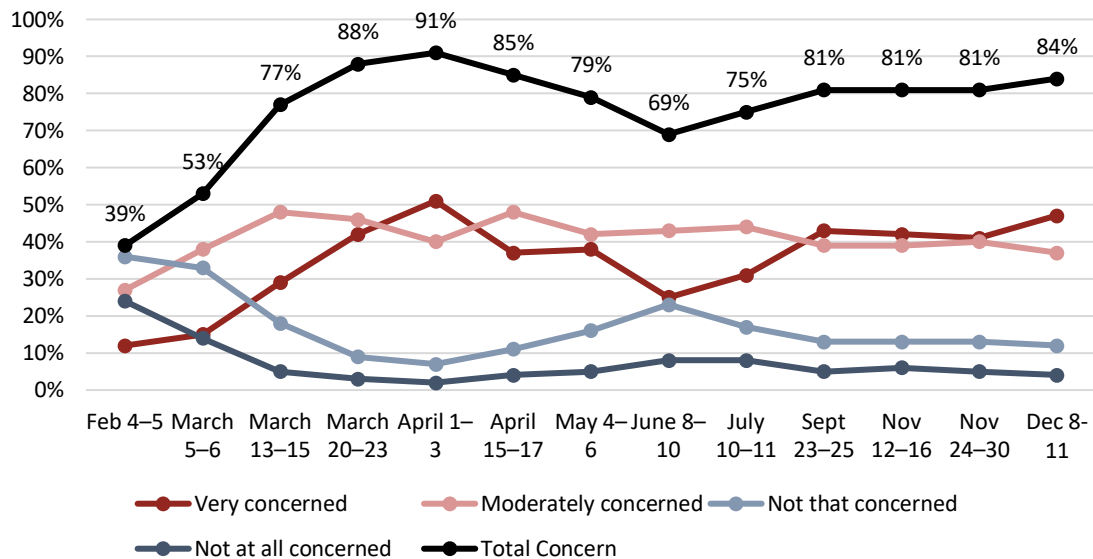
Concern over COVID rises again

Canada is now firmly entrenched in a **second wave** of the coronavirus. Provinces are imposing restrictions in order to flatten this subsequent curve, with some success becoming evident in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Atlantic Canada, and the upward trajectory continuing in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec. Amid this, concern levels have jumped again, with 84 per cent of residents now worried about their friends and family becoming sick. This is the highest point since April:

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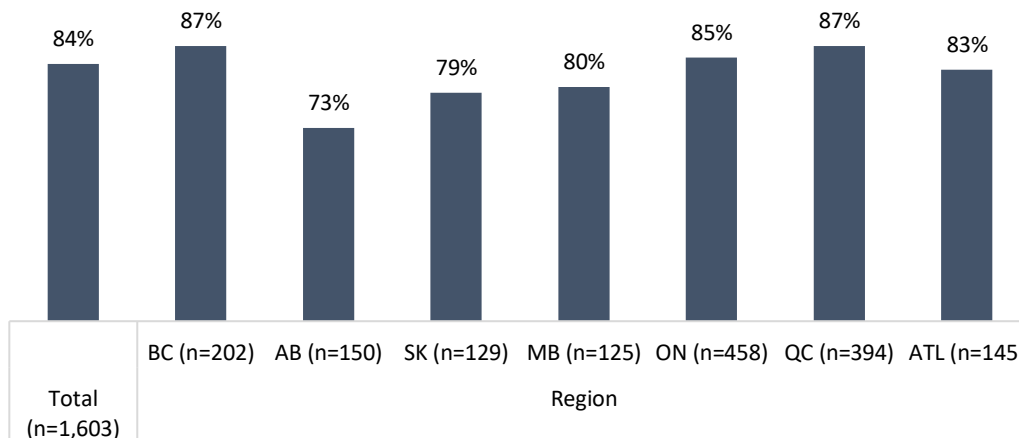
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Concern about friends and family contracting COVID-19



At least three-quarters of residents in each part of the country say that they have worries about their social circle as the holidays approach:

Percentage who are concerned about friends or family becoming sick

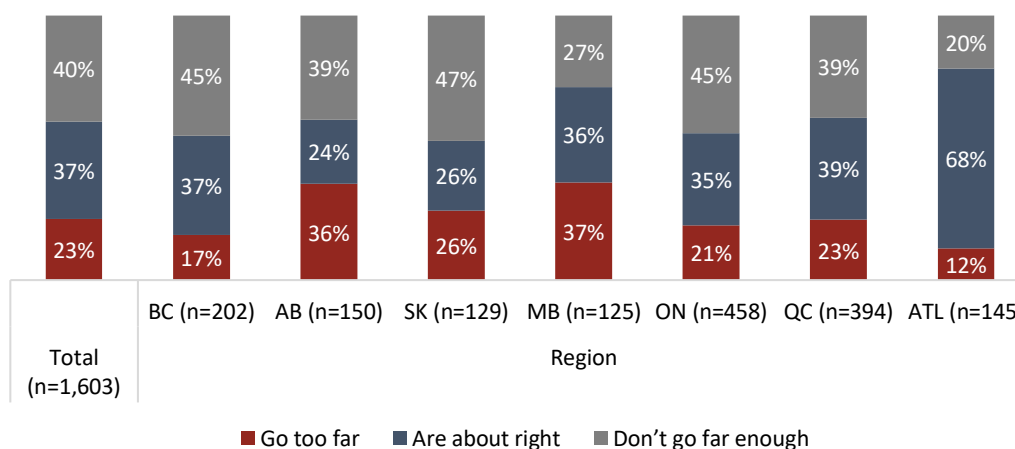


Finding balance on restrictions proves a provincial challenge

Despite high levels of concern, however, there is no unanimity when it comes to how the pandemic should be handled from province to province. Asked how they feel about the current restrictions, which feature a mandatory mask mandate in every province, and varying levels of lockdown depending on the community, Canadians are deeply divided. Two-in-five say that their province has hit the right mark, with the highest proportion saying this in Quebec and Atlantic Canada. That said, a near equal number say

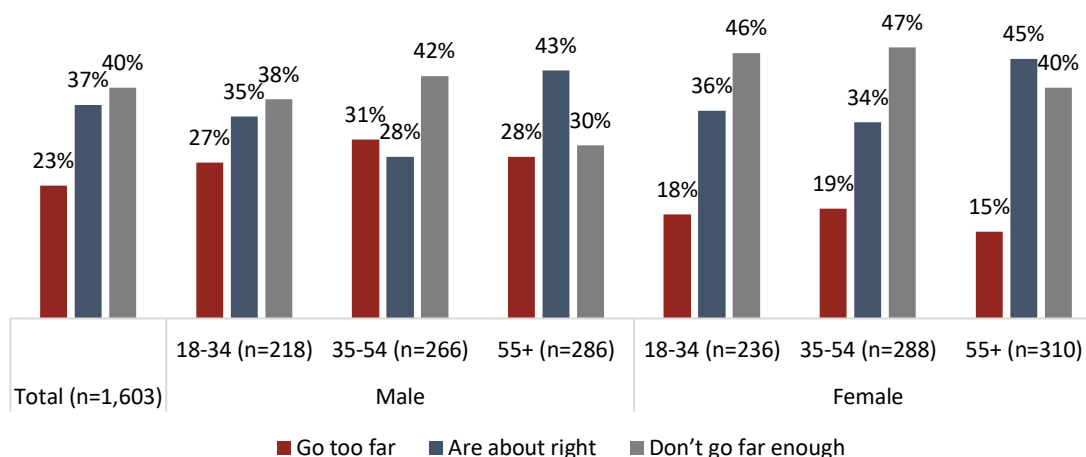
that the restrictions do not go far enough; half in British Columbia and Saskatchewan hold this view. One-in-five say the restrictions are too strict:

Overall, thinking about restrictions that have been put in place , do you think these restrictions go too far, don't go far enough, or are about right?



Men are much more likely than women to say that the restrictions go too far, but each group expresses all three views to a great extent.

Overall, thinking about restrictions that have been put in place , do you think these restrictions go too far, don't go far enough, or are about right?



For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

For detailed results by willingness to get a COVID-19 vaccine, [click here](#).