

COVID-19: Canadians' willingness to be inoculated right away increases again as new vaccine approved

Concern over personally falling ill from COVID-19 plunges to lowest level since July 2020

March 8, 2021 – A winter of severe COVID-19 infection spread – and severe discontent over Canada's inability to receive much-anticipated vaccine supplies from manufacturers is grinding towards spring. A new month is not only hinting at signs of renewal seasonally, but also in the Canadian outlook.

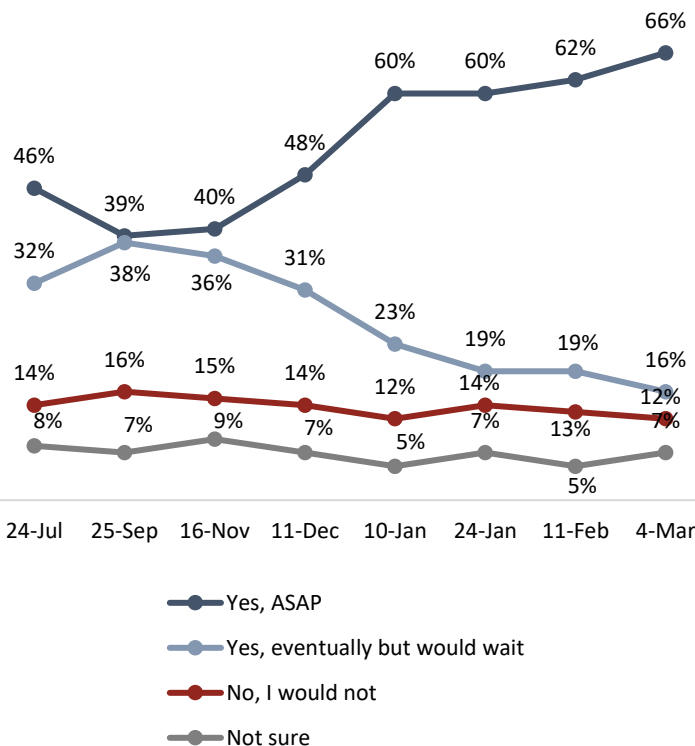
The latest public opinion survey from the Angus Reid Institute, conducted in partnership with CBC British Columbia – shows increases in the number of people across the country – and in Canada's westernmost province specifically – eager to roll up their sleeves and be vaccinated as soon as they are eligible.

This, despite [recent confusion](#) over the efficacy and best use of certain vaccines on the general public, and the announcements that several provinces would be [further extending](#) the period of time between the administration of first and second doses of multi-dose vaccines.

Those in Quebec are most optimistic about being vaccinated sooner than later – while those in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba express expectations for a longer wait.

Further, the number of Canadians worried about personally falling ill from COVID-19 has plummeted nearly ten points over the last two months, from 71 per cent in early January to 62 per cent in early March.

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 March 1 - 4 2021 among a representative randomized sample of 1,748 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 +/- 2.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

See notes at end of release for further detailed information about methodology.

Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was commissioned and paid for by ARI and CBC British Columbia. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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Despite a slightly warmer outlook about their own lives in the thirteenth month of this unprecedented pandemic – views of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s own performance on the file remain frigid. For the first time, fewer than half of Canadians (44%) now say Trudeau has done a “good job”.

More Key Findings:

- Quebecers are three times as likely to say the amount of time they expect to wait to be vaccinated is “acceptable” than people one province over in Ontario (29% versus 11%)
- While nearly two-thirds of British Columbians (63%) are willing to be vaccinated as soon as they are eligible, vaccination hesitancy and rejection grows the further away from Metro Vancouver they live. In the province’s most populous region, the number saying they will *not* accept a vaccine stands at seven per cent – this rises to 20 per cent in Northern British Columbia
- Eight-in-ten (82%) British Columbians are motivated by protecting family when assessing their reasons for wanting a vaccine. This rises to nine-in-ten among those who self-identify as being of South Asian descent

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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Notes on Methodology

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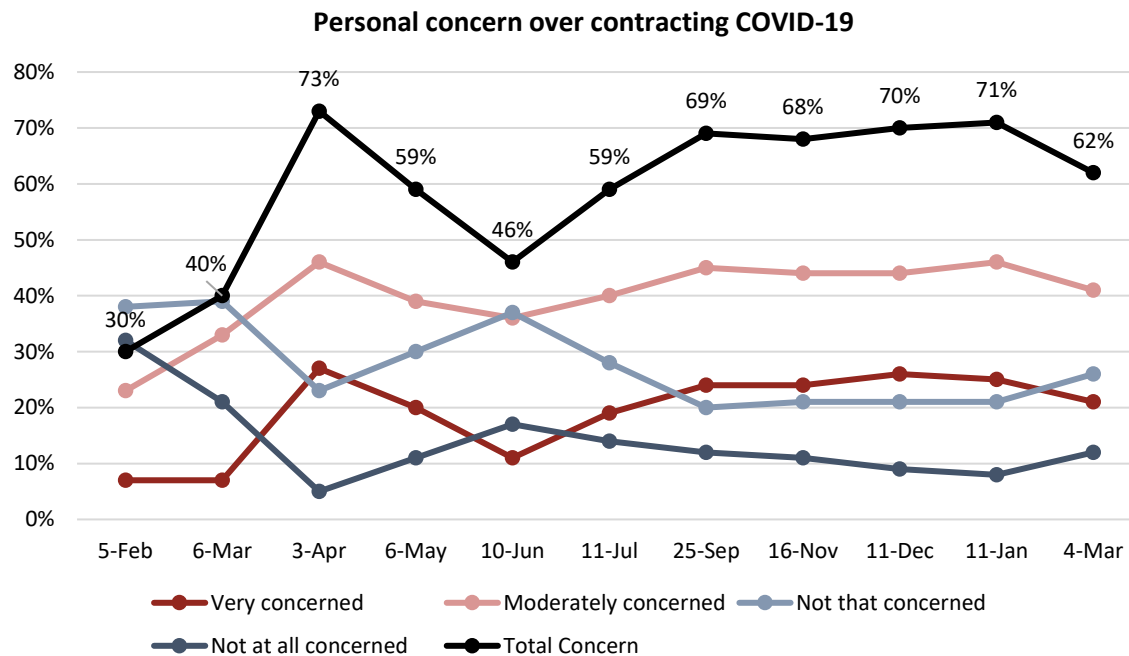
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Part One: The National Picture

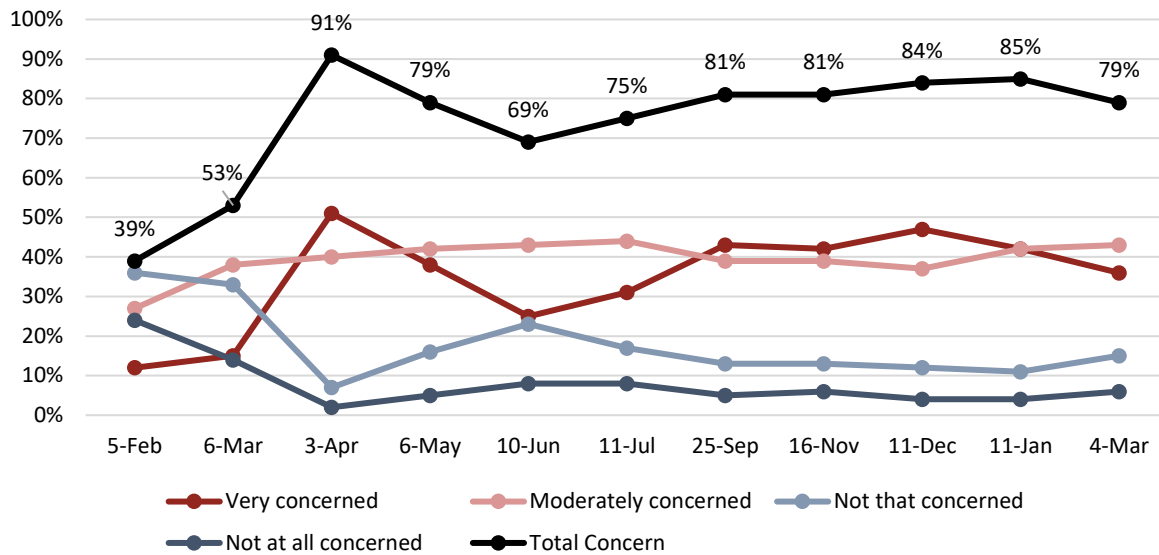
Concerns over contracting COVID-19 easing

While the COVID-19 virus continues to affect the entire country and the death toll climbs daily, case counts have dropped since the latest surge. The vaccination rollout is [picking up in pace](#), and news of accelerated deliveries of the [Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine](#), along with the latest [approval in Canada](#) of the one-shot vaccine produced by Johnson and Johnson also offer some hope.

The pandemic is by no means over, but the situation may improve soon. In British Columbia for example, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry has even said the province may well be in a “post-pandemic world by this summer.” This optimism is reflected nationally in levels of concern about personally becoming sick from COVID-19, or seeing friends and family fall ill. Both remain high but have begun to drop for the first time in six months. Public health officials continue to urge vigilance, as [COVID-19 variants](#) have become more common in many parts of the country in recent weeks:



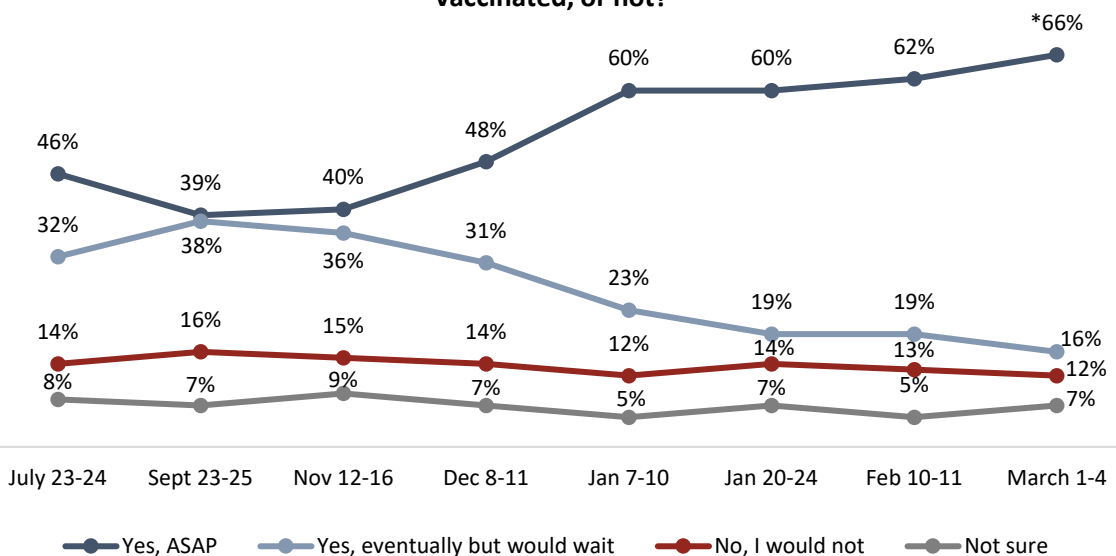
Concern about friends and family contracting COVID-19



Immunization willingness grows

A bumpy start to the new year regarding vaccine delivery timelines increased frustration in Canadians but had no effect on their willingness to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Now, news of increasing supply correlates with ever increasing eagerness to get a jab. The proportion of Canadians who say they would get one as soon as possible has risen rapidly since December, accelerating now to two-thirds (66%). This has been driven by many of those who had said they would take a wait-and-see approach shifting to now wanting a vaccine immediately. The overall number of Canadians who say they will *not* be vaccinated remains stable at 12 per cent.

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



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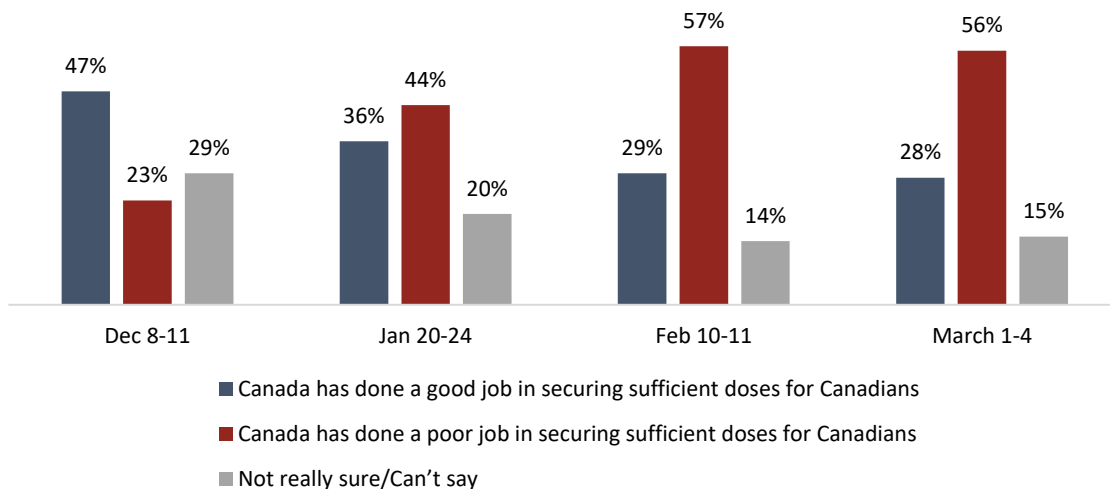
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**this wave includes ASAP and those who have already had at least one dose*

Criticism over rollout persists

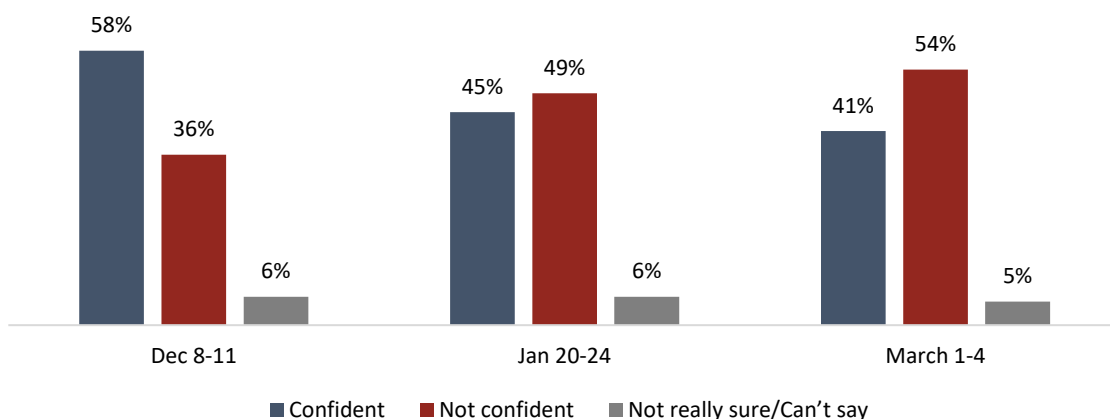
Over half (56%) of Canadians are critical of the government's efforts to acquire vaccine doses, a share that is stable since February, though double what it was in December. Opinions soured after delivery and production delays caused the [pace of inoculations to slip](#).

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?



Perceptions are similarly negative regarding how well the federal government can distribute vaccines as they receive more supply. A slim majority (54%) say they are not confident in its ability to manage distribution.

And how confident are you in the federal government to effectively manage the distribution of vaccines as they become available?

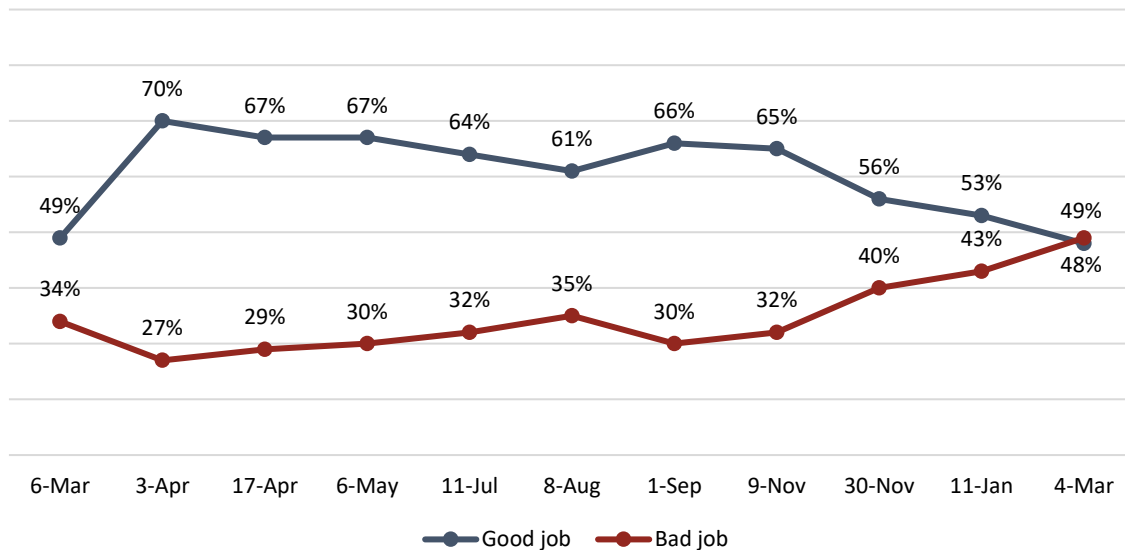


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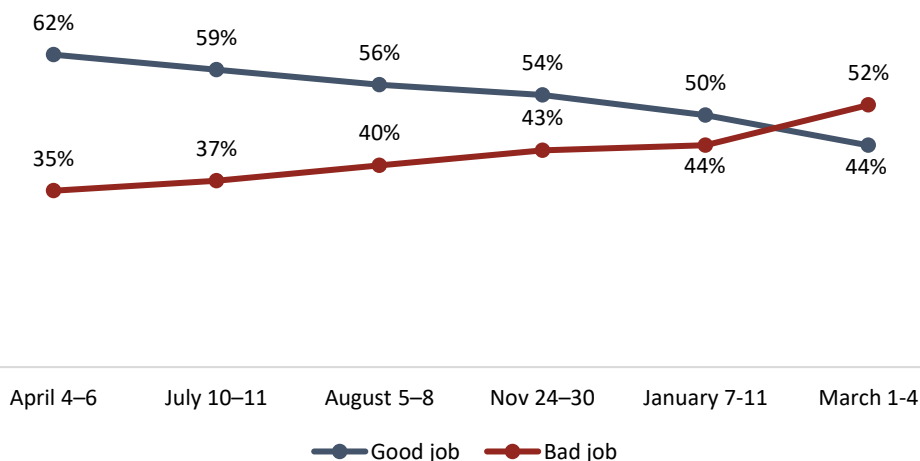
Unimpressed with how the vaccine rollout has been handled, Canadians have become steadily less pleased with how the government is dealing with coronavirus in general. The public is now evenly split between saying it has done well and saying it has done poorly. This is a first: for much of the pandemic, twice as many had viewed the government's performance positively as viewed it negatively.

Views on the federal government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic over time



This parallels the shift in opinions on how well Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is handling the pandemic, which have gradually deteriorated since spring of last year. Half (52%) now say he is doing poorly on this issue, compared to one-third (35%) who said the same in April.

**Do you think the following are doing a good or bad job handling the Covid-19 pandemic overall?
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau**



Vaccination expectations

Given the complexities and uncertainty of the vaccine rollout, and priority for being vaccinated based largely on age, it is unsurprising that Canadians have a wide array of estimates of when they themselves will have the chance to be inoculated.

However, there are some regional differences worth noting. Those in Quebec appear more optimistic, being more likely than the national average to guess that they will be able to get a job sometime this spring. Residents of the prairies, in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, skew more pessimistic, and are nearly twice as likely as the average Canadian to expect to wait until 2022.

Based on what you have read, seen, or heard, when do you think the COVID-19 vaccine will be available to you, personally?							
Regional sample sizes unweighted	Total (n=1,748)	Region					
		BC (n=812)	AB (n=155)	SK/MB (n=112)	ON (n=305)	QC (n=259)	ATL (n=105)
March	7%	4%	7%	8%	6%	11%	4%
April or May	12%	15%	8%	10%	9%	19%	14%
June or July	17%	26%	17%	15%	18%	13%	12%
August or September	23%	26%	23%	23%	27%	13%	29%
Later in 2021	20%	13%	18%	20%	24%	17%	20%
Not until 2022	8%	7%	15%	15%	7%	7%	6%
No idea/Can't say	12%	9%	13%	8%	9%	19%	15%

Across the country, the most common attitude regarding the length of the wait for a vaccine is that it is not great, but understandable given the situation. A further 17 per cent consider the wait “acceptable”, leaving a sizable minority of one-in-four (24%) who say it is unacceptable. This proportion is highest in Alberta, where one-third say (32%) the wait is unacceptable. By contrast, Quebec has the highest share who say the wait is acceptable: three-in-ten (29%) feel this way.

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Thinking about yourself, individually, would you say the amount of time you expect to wait for a vaccination is...?
(Excluding those already vaccinated or who will not get vaccinated)

	Total (n=1,500)	Region					
		BC (n=707)	AB (n=123)	SK/MB (n=97*)	ON (n=261)	QC (n=222)	ATL (n=90*)
Acceptable	18%	20%	15%	15%	11%	29%	18%
Not ideal but OK given the circumstances	51%	52%	48%	50%	52%	51%	42%
Unacceptable	24%	22%	32%	25%	29%	13%	28%
Not sure/Don't know when I'm able to get it	8%	7%	5%	9%	8%	7%	12%

**Small sample size, interpret with caution*

Part Two: The View from BC

This study, conducted in partnership with CBC British Columbia (which will be hosting a [townhall on this issue](#) on March 10) focused especially on what people in Canada's westernmost province have been thinking and feeling in every major region of the province, and among demographics whose voices may frequently be heard anecdotally, but not as often empirically, nor in the aggregate.

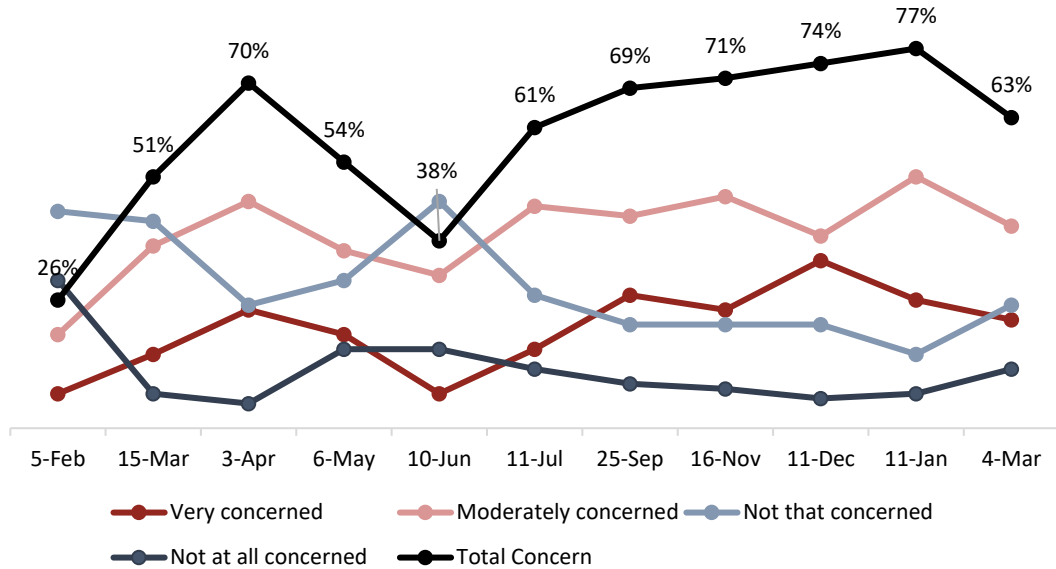
Vaccination willingness and concerns

After a full year of the COVID-19 pandemic and all it has entailed (loss of life and health, social restrictions, economic difficulties), British Columbians are anxious to see this period of history come to an end. As with the rest of the country, concern about the virus has been high for most of the last year, but has now dipped slightly amid the vaccination rollout:

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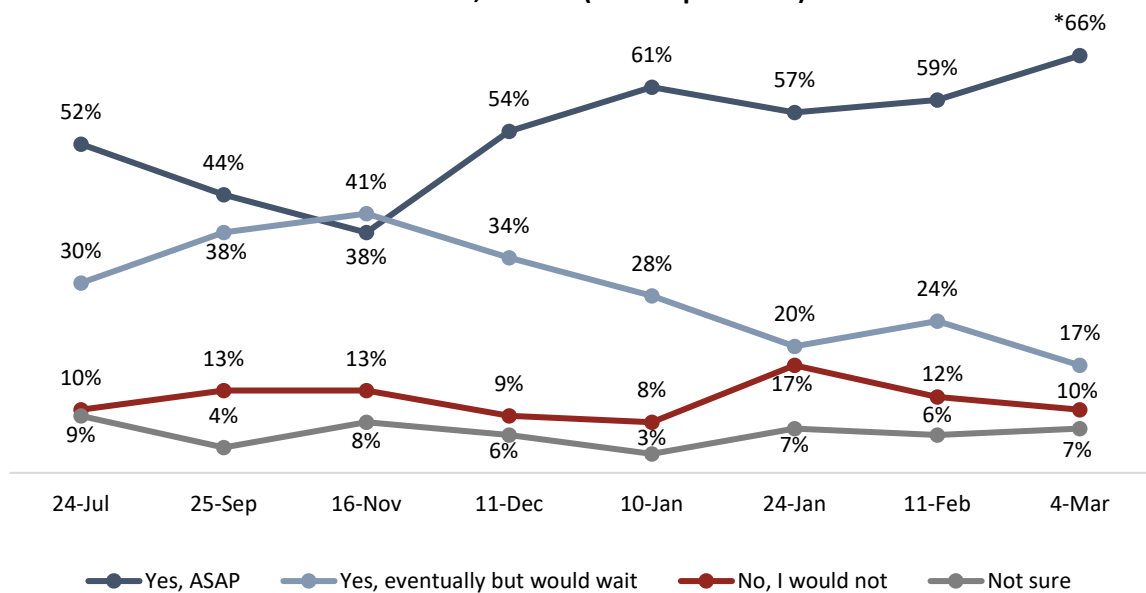
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Personal concern over contracting COVID-19 - B.C. respondents



Two-thirds (66%) of those in BC say they will be inoculated as soon as possible (or already have been). Another 17 per cent are happy to wait and see before having a job that is available to them, while ten per cent say they won't, and a further seven per cent say they aren't sure.

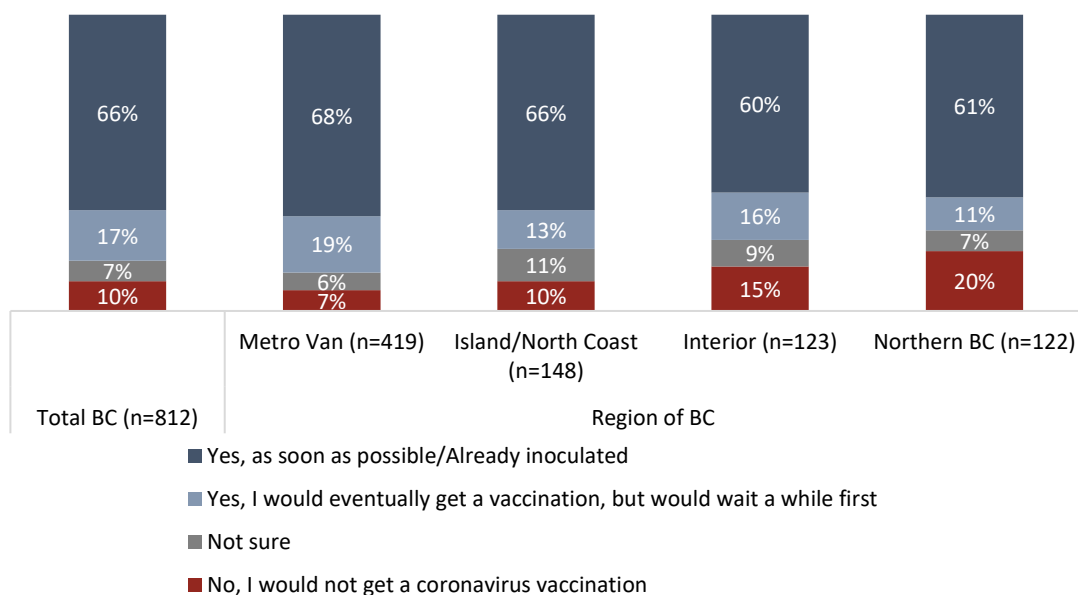
If a vaccine against the coronavirus became available to you, would you get vaccinated, or not? (B.C. respondents)



**this wave includes ASAP and those who have already had at least one dose*

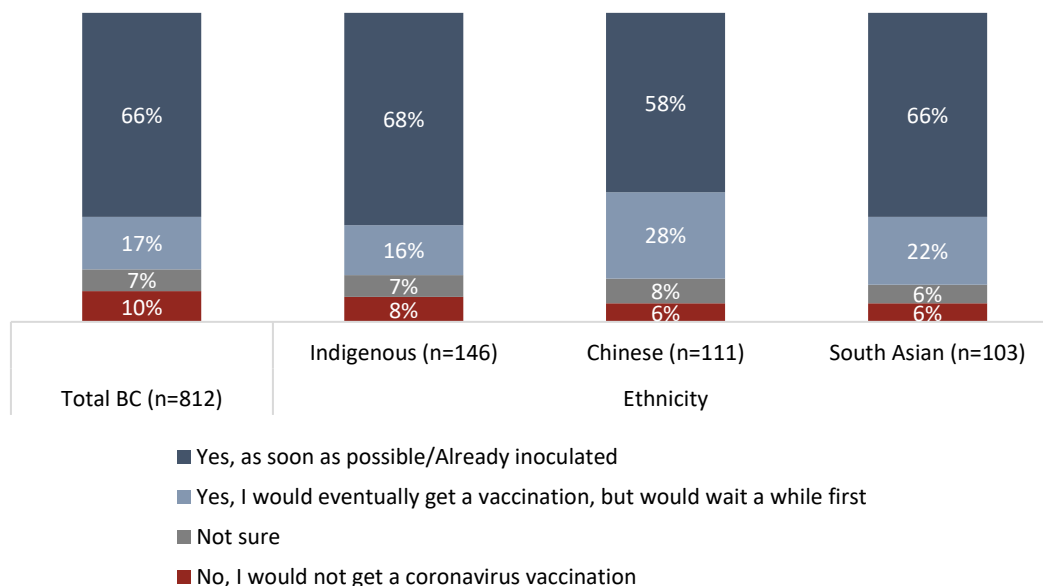
It should be further noted that while a full majority of residents across B.C. say they would take the vaccine as soon as they can, those outside of Metro Vancouver are more likely to show hesitancy or to say that they won't be inoculated.

When a vaccine against the coronavirus becomes available to you, will you get vaccinated, or not?



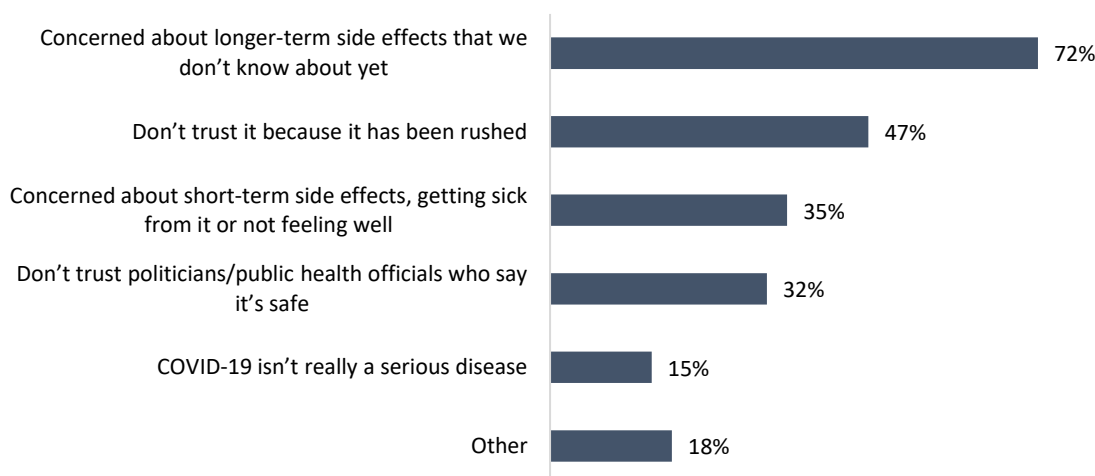
Among those who self-identify as being of Indigenous, Chinese, or South Asian descent, there are only marginal differences in willingness to be vaccinated relative to the general population of BC overall:

When a vaccine against the coronavirus becomes available to you, will you get vaccinated, or not?



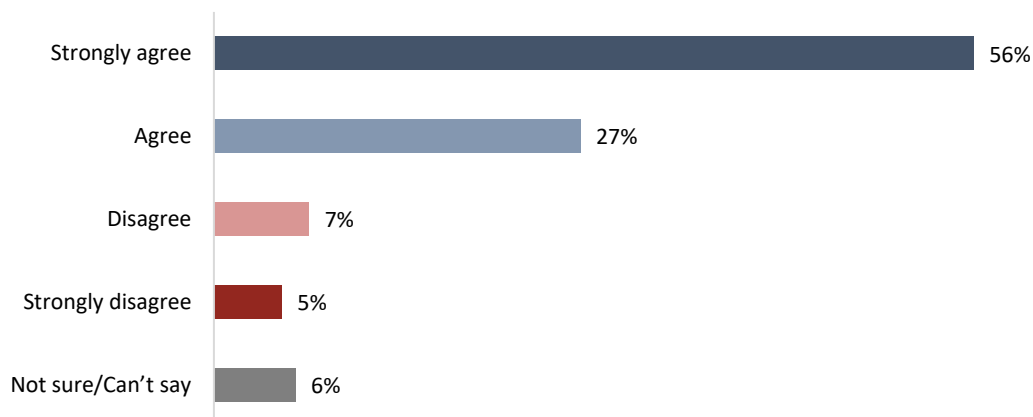
The Angus Reid Institute canvassed the more than one-third (36%) of British Columbians who say they do not intend to avail themselves of a vaccination as soon as one were available to them to understand their reservations. The top two concerns, as has been the case [throughout the vaccination production process](#) is the potential for long-term side effects and the speed with which the vaccine was developed.

**You've indicated that you would not get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it becomes available to you, what are the reasons for this?
(Among those in BC who would not get vaccinated asap, n=275)**



If public health officials are looking to increase public confidence in the vaccine, there are a number of avenues that appear effective in motivating individuals to get the vaccine. More than four-in-five British Columbians (83%) say they would take the vaccine to protect their family. This would be a number high enough to establish herd immunity against COVID-19 [by most estimates](#).

**Agree vs. Disagree: I would get a vaccine to protect my family
(All BC respondents, n=812)**



Two-thirds (66%) also say they would take the vaccine if it was recommended by their family doctor or a pharmacist that they have a relationship with. Respondents who self-identify as being of Indigenous, South Asian, or Chinese descent are even more likely than the general population to say that this would make them more likely to be vaccinated.

Percentage that agree with each of the following statements about getting vaccinated				
	B.C. General Population (n=812)	Ethnicity		
		Indigenous (n=146)	Chinese (n=111)	South Asian (n=103)
I would get a vaccine to protect my family	82%	87%	86%	90%
The benefits of a COVID-19 vaccine would outweigh its risks	75%	79%	78%	77%
I'm more likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine if my friends and family do	41%	40%	58%	59%
If my family doctor / pharmacist / public health nurse tell me to get the vaccine I am much more likely to do so	68%	68%	73%	79%

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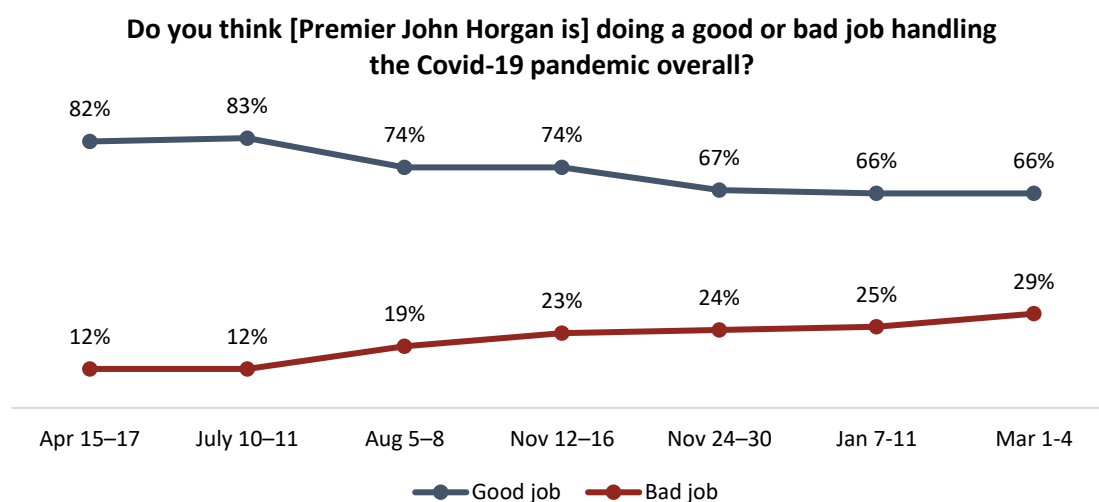
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Vaccine hesitancy in northern B.C. is again more evident than in other parts of the province on this question. Those in the north are least likely to agree with all four of these statements:

Percentage that agree with each of the following statements about getting vaccinated					
	B.C. General Population (n=812)	Region of B.C.			
		Metro Van (n=419)	Island/No rth Coast (n=148)	Interior (n=123)	Northern BC (n=122)
I would get a vaccine to protect my family	82%	86%	80%	75%	76%
The benefits of a COVID-19 vaccine would outweigh its risks	75%	80%	69%	69%	64%
I'm more likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine if my friends and family do	41%	47%	34%	32%	28%
If my family doctor / pharmacist / public health nurse tell me to get the vaccine I am much more likely to do so	66%	69%	66%	61%	53%

Assessing provincial leadership

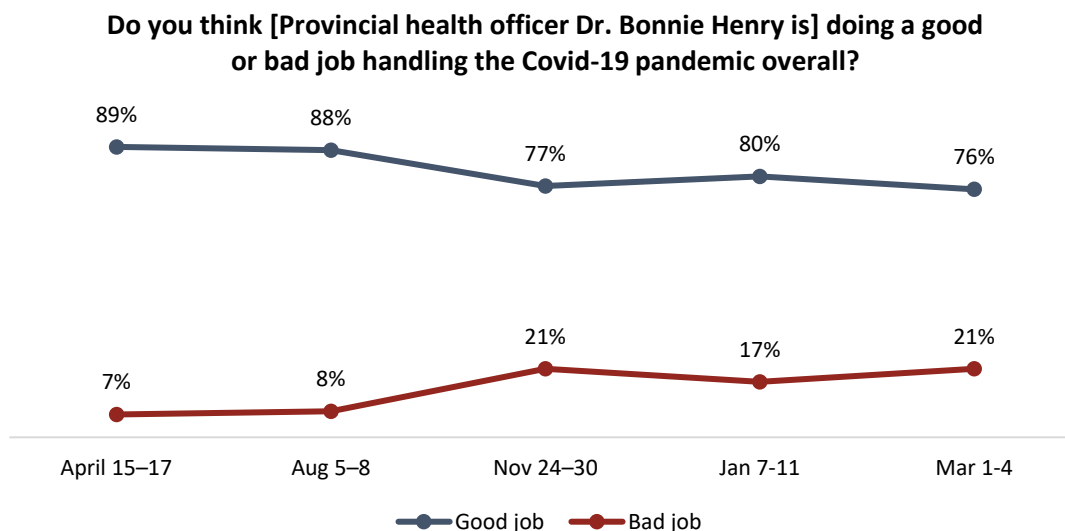
Public opinion regarding British Columbia's leadership managing the COVID-19 crisis continues to show a strong level of confidence in Premier John Horgan. Horgan himself is perceived by the public as doing a good job when it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic, with two-thirds saying this, a finding that is consistent across most demographics with the exception of region ([see detailed tables](#)). While these levels have declined considerably from the highs of a year ago (when all political leaders received a boost in positive public sentiment), he [has remained](#) among the highest rated premiers in the country on pandemic response.



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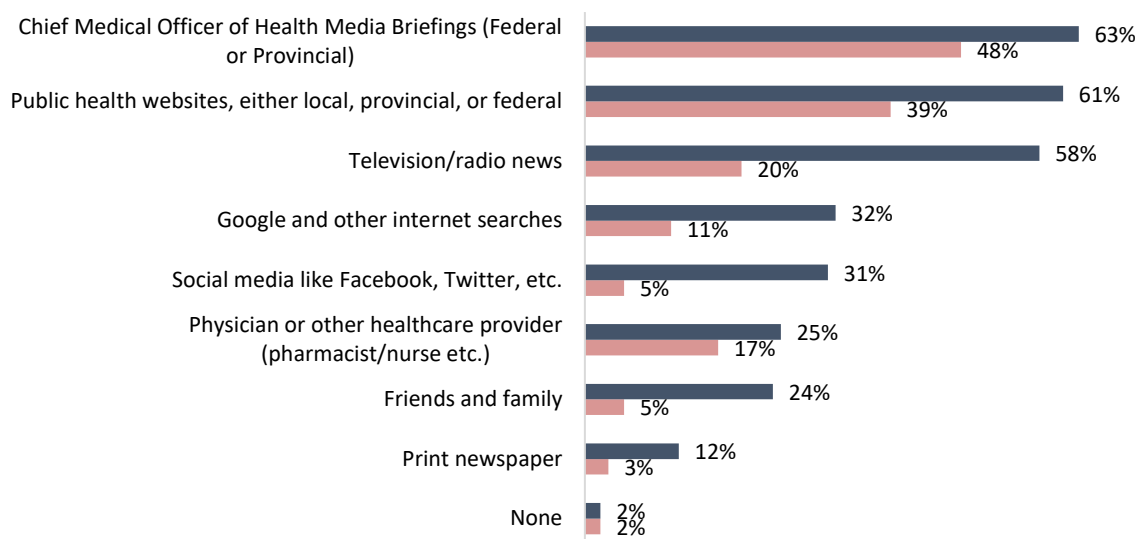
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Another person at the forefront of the pandemic response, and one likely one of the province's most recognizable faces, provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, is seen to be doing a good job by three-quarters of British Columbians (76%). Criticism has grown slightly over time, as has been the case with all individuals in positions of authority through the pandemic, but Henry is exceeded in public approval only by top doctors [in Atlantic Canadian provinces](#):



The importance of B.C.'s top doctor cannot be overstated. Indeed, briefings from Dr. Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix are the top source of COVID-19 information for residents in the province. Not only are these briefings the most consumed type of public health information, but British Columbians deem them to be the most trusted, as seen in the graph below. Public health websites are also a commonly consulted medium for information:

**Where do British Columbians go for COVID-19 information, and whom do they trust?
(All BC Respondents, n=812)**

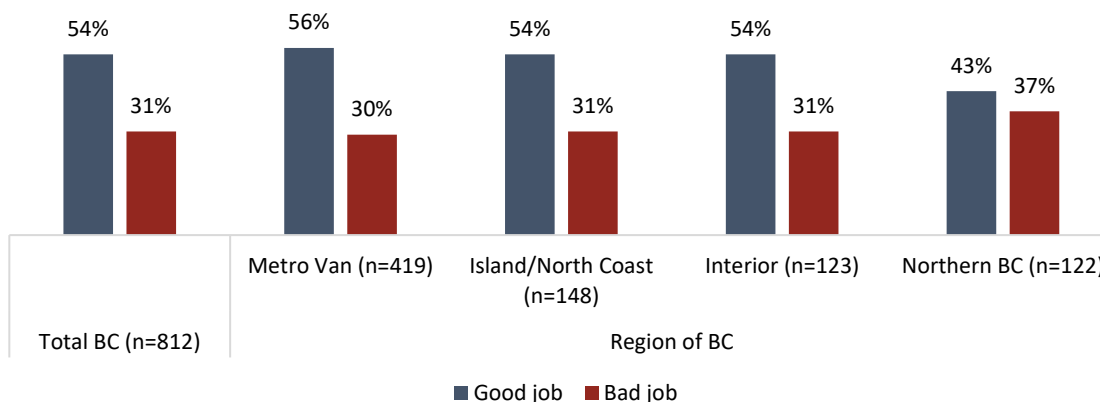


■ Which do you follow for information on COVID19? ■ Which do you trust most?

Confidence in provincial rollout; better communication needed

While individual political and health leaders in the province earns praise, assessments of their rollout of the vaccine in BC receives more muted response. The outcome of vaccination programs is the top issue on the minds of Canadians across the country, and in British Columbia, just over half (54%) say their province is currently managing it well. Three-in-ten (31%) are critical; this number rises among northern residents.

And thinking specifically about the distribution of vaccines in your province, do you think your provincial government is doing a good job or bad job? (B.C. representative sample)

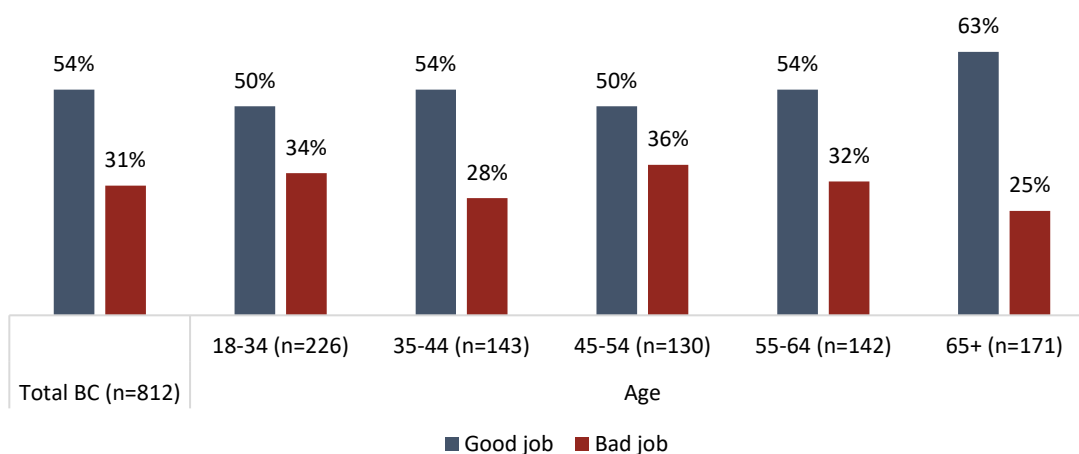


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Notably, one-in-four residents over the age of 64 – those who bear the most risk from the coronavirus – say the provincial government has done a poor job so far:

And thinking specifically about the distribution of vaccines in your province, do you think your provincial government is doing a good job or bad job? (B.C. representative sample)



The vaccination plan itself, which was released in January and then updated early in March, is perceived as being fair by most residents. Indeed, across different age and ethnic groups, there is little disagreement about how vaccines will be prioritized ([see detailed tables](#)).

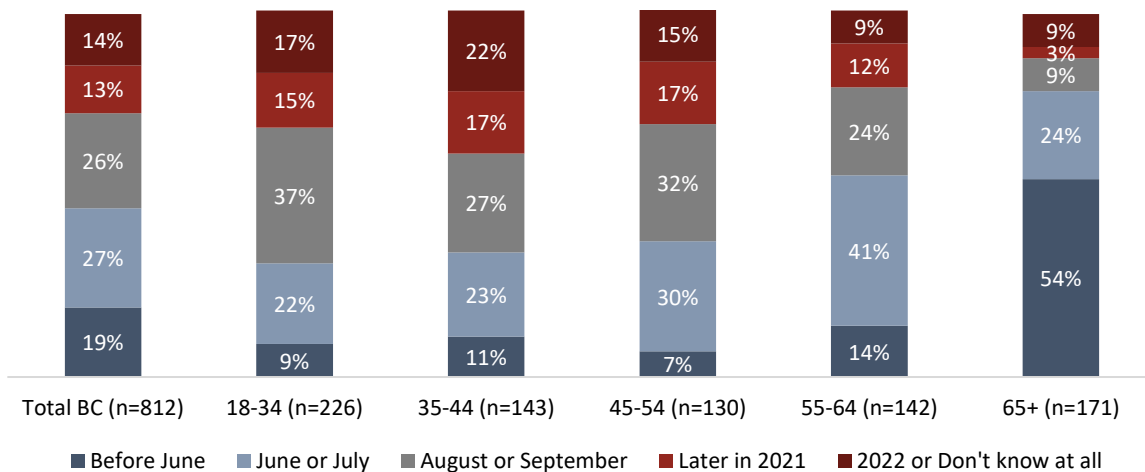
That said, there are considerable gaps in public confidence when it comes the communication of the plan and the likelihood that it will meet its intended targets. Only 44 per cent of British Columbians feel that the plan has been well-communicated such that people know what to do and when, while just 42 per cent say they feel the timeline is one that will be met:

Percentage that agree with each statement about provincial vaccination plan				
	B.C. rep. sample (n=812)	Ethnicity		
		Indigenous (n=146)	Chinese (n=111)	South Asian (n=103)
Fair, e.g., people who need vaccination the most are prioritized	69%	66%	71%	70%
Overall – a good plan	55%	49%	61%	59%
Clear and easy to understand	53%	51%	66%	64%
Something that has been well thought out	53%	48%	53%	50%
Well communicated – People know what they are supposed to do and when	44%	43%	52%	46%
A plan that will meet its targets/timelines	42%	46%	42%	41%

Expected timelines

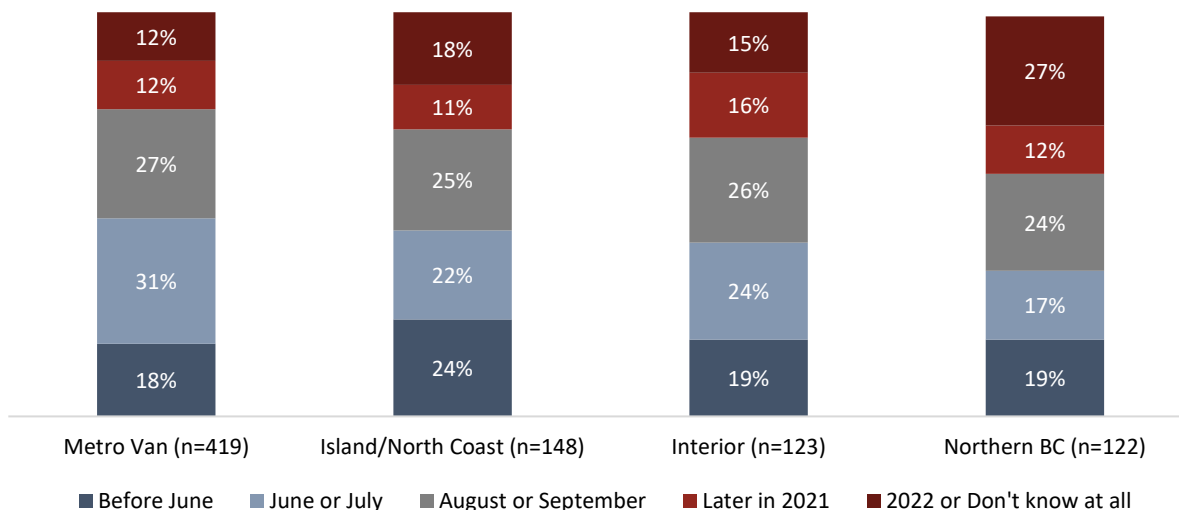
So, when do British Columbians feel they will actually be vaccinated? With trust in the timeline provided by the government lacking, the Angus Reid Institute asked residents for their own expectations. As might be expected, older residents have a much higher expectation to be vaccinated over the next three months. Half (54%) of those over the age of 64 say this. More than half of those between that ages of 55 and 64 say they will likely be vaccinated by the end of July:

Based on what you have read, seen, or heard, when do you think the COVID-19 vaccine will be available to you, personally?



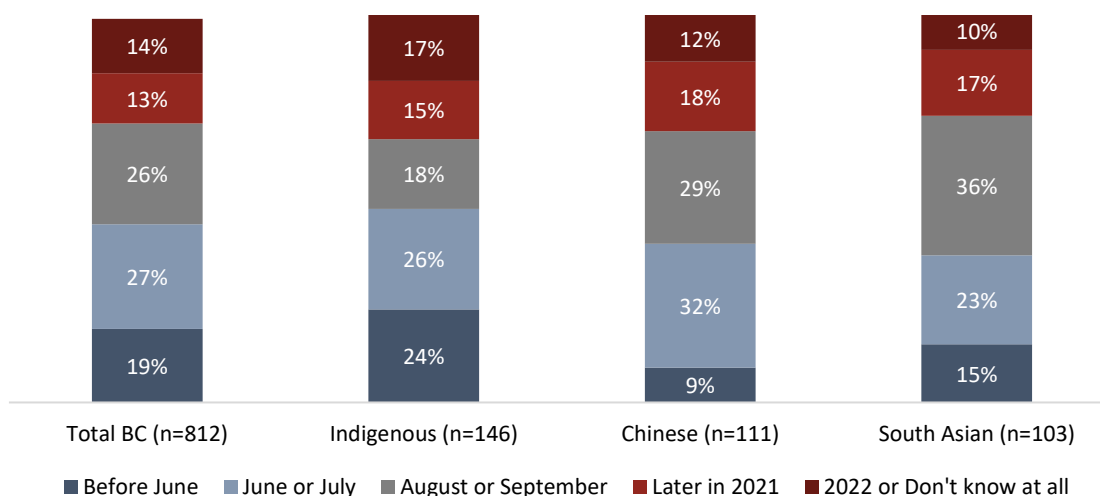
There is a notable group, one-quarter of northern residents (27%), who say they either do not know when they will be vaccinated or believe it will not be until 2022. This is considerably higher than other regions of the province. Overall, two-in-five northern residents (39%) do not think they will be vaccinated by September, compared to just 24 per cent in Metro Vancouver.

Based on what you have read, seen, or heard, when do you think the COVID-19 vaccine will be available to you, personally?



Indigenous people in British Columbia have been a priority group for the government in rolling out its vaccination plan. This is reflected to a certain extent in expectations, as half of respondents who self-identify as Indigenous expect to be vaccinated by the end of July. That said, one-in-three do not expect to have a vaccine available before at least October:

Based on what you have read, seen, or heard, when do you think the COVID-19 vaccine will be available to you, personally?



Is the wait time acceptable?

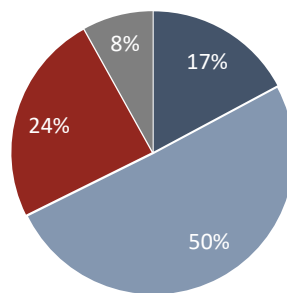
British Columbians are broadly accepting of these predicted personal timelines. Half say that they understand the circumstances and while they would prefer to be vaccinated earlier, they're OK with the

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amount of time they expect to wait. For close to one-in-five (17%) the timeline is acceptable and for one-quarter (24%) it is unacceptable.

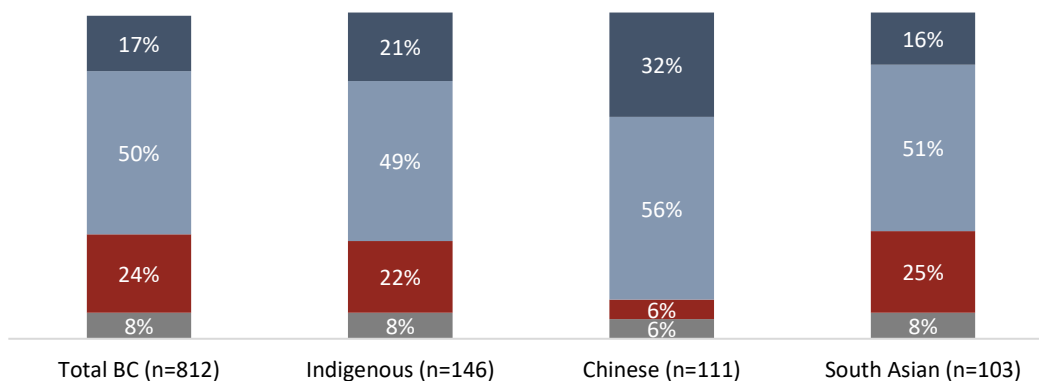
Thinking about yourself, individually, would you say the amount of time you expect to wait for a vaccination is...?



- Acceptable
- Not ideal but OK given the circumstances
- Unacceptable
- Not sure/Don't know when I'm able to get it

Opinions about wait times differ across the population. British Columbians who self-identify as Chinese, for example, are by far the least likely group (6%) to say that their wait time is unacceptable, while approximately one-quarter of Indigenous (22%) and South Asian (25%) respondents say this:

Thinking about yourself, individually, would you say the amount of time you expect to wait for a vaccination is...?



- Not sure/Don't know when I'm able to get it
- Unacceptable
- Not ideal but OK given the circumstances
- Acceptable

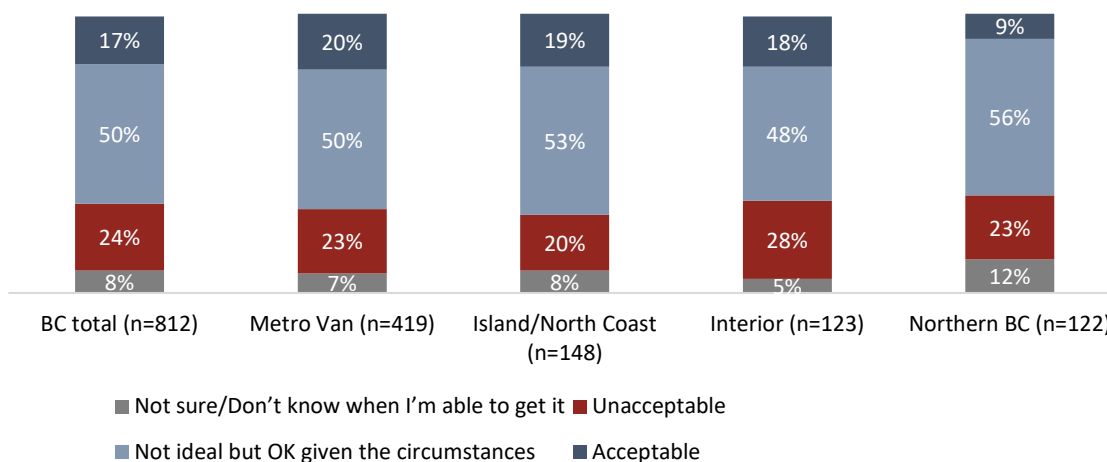
Regionally, at least one-in-five British Columbians across the province feel their wait time is unacceptable, while only nine per cent in northern B.C. say they anticipate an acceptable timeline. For

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most of the province, the sentiment is that they would like to be inoculated sooner but they are OK with the delay given the scale of the project and needs of others:

Thinking about yourself, individually, would you say the amount of time you expect to wait for a vaccination is...?



Notes on Methodology

This survey included a total sample of 2,000 respondents. A special sampling plan was devised to provide insight into some key population groups. The survey sample includes:

- A sample of 936 Canadians living outside, for a representative randomized national sample of 1,748. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- A province-wide BC sample of 812 British Columbians, including an augment of Northern BC residents to raise that sample for this region to a reportable sub-sample size (final n=122). For comparison purposes only, the probability sample of n=812 would carry a margin of error of +/- 3.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- An additional sample augment of a total of 360 BC residents of self-identified Indigenous (n=146), Chinese (n=111) and South Asian (n=103) heritage to provide useable sub-samples for these three groups. For comparison purposes only, probability sample of these sizes would carry a margin of error of at least +/- 8.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Statistical weighting was applied to ensure the overall Canadian and BC samples are representative by region/sub-region, ethnicity, and other socio-demographic characteristics of the Canadian/BC population.

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

For detailed results for B.C. only, [click here.](#)

For detailed results for B.C. ethnicity boosts, [click here.](#)

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