

## Majority of Canadians say at least 75% should be vaccinated at home before Canada-U.S. border re-opens

*Half say Trudeau has handled pandemic well, highest level since January*

**July 15, 2021** – As tens of millions of vaccinated Canadians begin to re-imagine a post pandemic life, caution and concern remain a significant part of their psyches, especially when it comes to issues of unsealing the land border this country shares with the United States.

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds the vast majority (69%) would wait until at least three-quarters of this country has been fully vaccinated before welcoming Americans across the line for non-essential travel – the threshold floated by the Trudeau government.

Tellingly, a plurality (38%) say they would wait until *more* than 75% of Canadians have been fully vaccinated before allowing U.S. visitors.

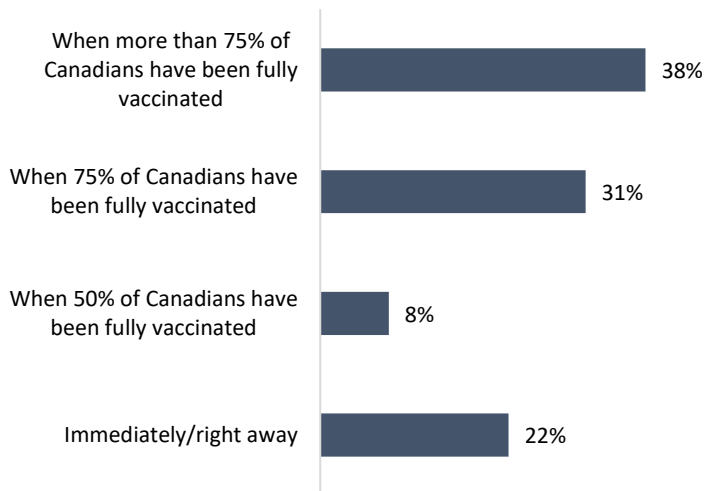
By contrast, one-in-five (22%) say that the government is taking too much time and should open the border right away. This group is led by people who travelled frequently before the pandemic.

As for the timing of the Trudeau government's decision to drop quarantine requirements for fully vaccinated Canadians returning home from abroad, slightly more than half (54%) say that this change – implemented in early July – is well-timed. Close to equal numbers take opposite positions, however, with one-fifth saying Ottawa waited too long to implement the change (21%), and one-quarter saying the decision was too rushed (25%).

### **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.*

### Suppose it was your decision. When would you re-open the Canada-U.S. land border?



### **METHODOLOGY:**

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from July 9-13, 2021, among a representative randomized sample of 2,040 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 +/- 2.0 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:

- Half of Canadians (50%) now say Prime Minister Trudeau has done a good job of handling the pandemic. This is the highest mark since January. Forty-six per cent say he has done a poor job
- Personal concern over becoming ill with COVID-19 has dropped to 47 per cent. This is the lowest level since June 2020
- Canadians overwhelmingly feel that the worst of the negative health impacts from the pandemic have passed; just 12 per cent disagree. A much larger group, 28 per cent, say that the worst economic effects are still ahead, though 72 per cent feel the worst of this has passed as well

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### Part One: Concern and expectation

#### **Personal concern over COVID-19 drops, but remains at half**

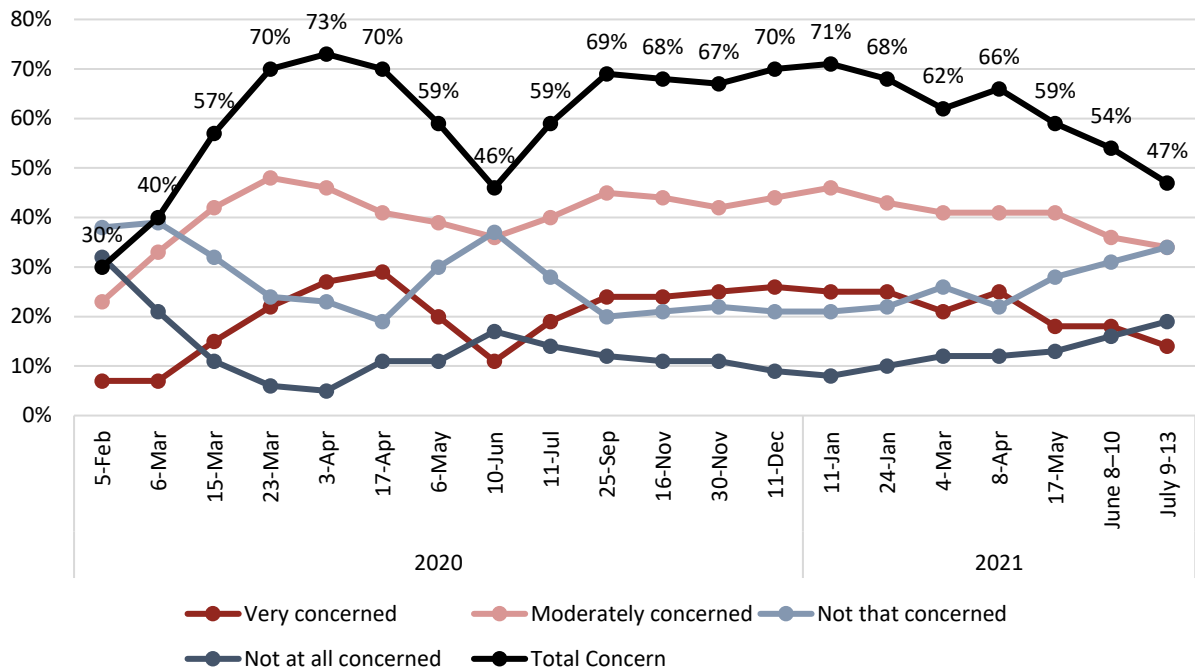
As Canada's active COVID-19 cases continue to drop and restrictions on travel and business are removed, concern about personally contracting the virus maintains a downward trend. Fewer than half of Canadians (47%) say they are worried about becoming sick themselves, the lowest level since June 2020:

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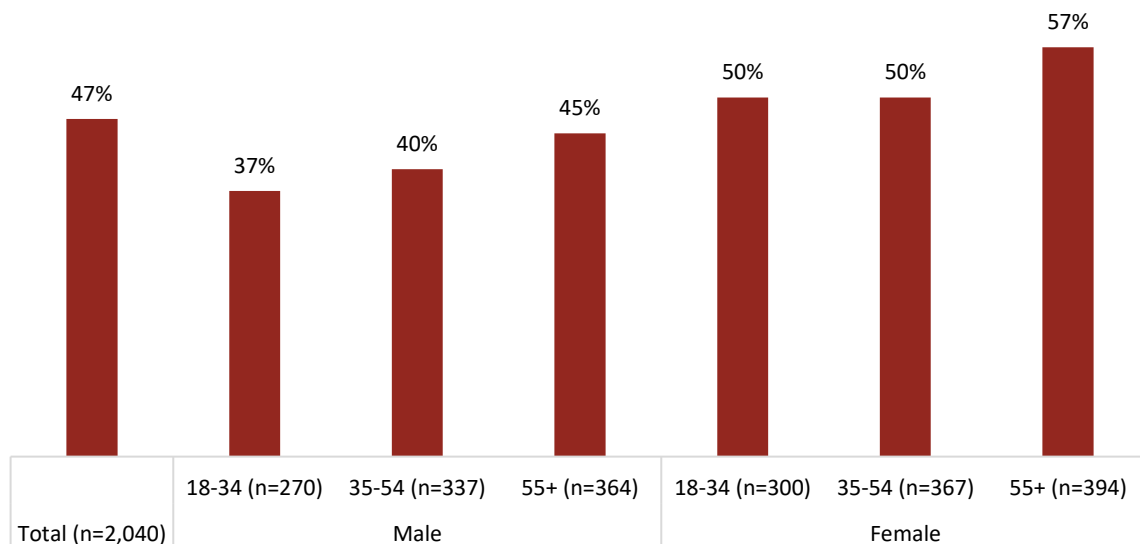
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**Personal concern over contracting COVID-19**



Notably, among both men and women, those who are older and more at risk from serious health impacts if they contract the virus continue to voice more concern, despite the fact that they are also most likely to be fully vaccinated by now. Women of all ages are more worried than men of the same age group:

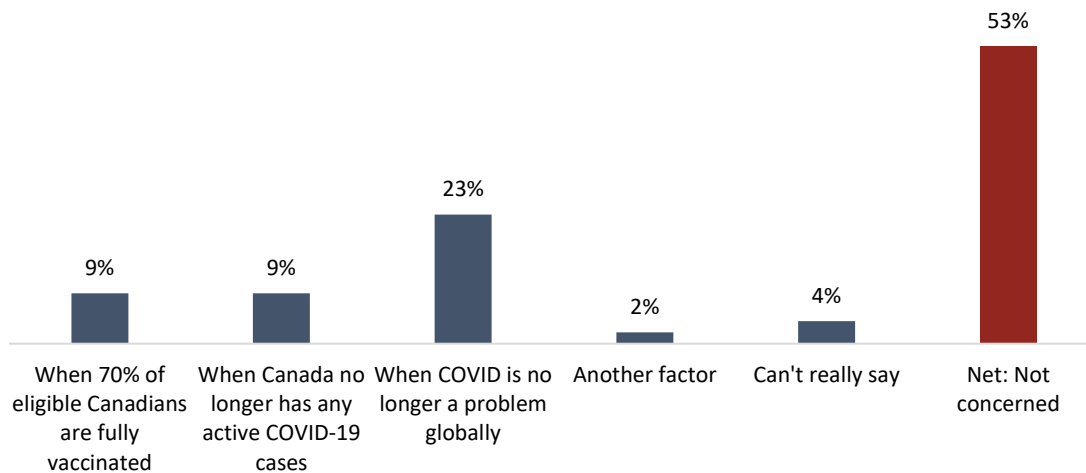
**Remain concerned about becoming sick from COVID-19**



**One-in-five say they will not be comfortable until global risk is gone**

While worry is waning, it is evidently not going to disappear completely any time soon. Those who continue to be concerned were asked what would alleviate their fears. One-in-ten (9%) say that when 70 per cent of Canadians are fully vaccinated, they will no longer worry, while the same number (9%) say that it will take complete annihilation of the virus in Canada to get to a less anxious place. One-quarter of Canadians (23%) say that until COVID-19 is no longer a global threat, they will not be entirely comfortable:

**You mentioned that you are still concerned about potentially becoming sick – when do you anticipate that you will no longer be worried?  
(Base=All, n=2,040)**



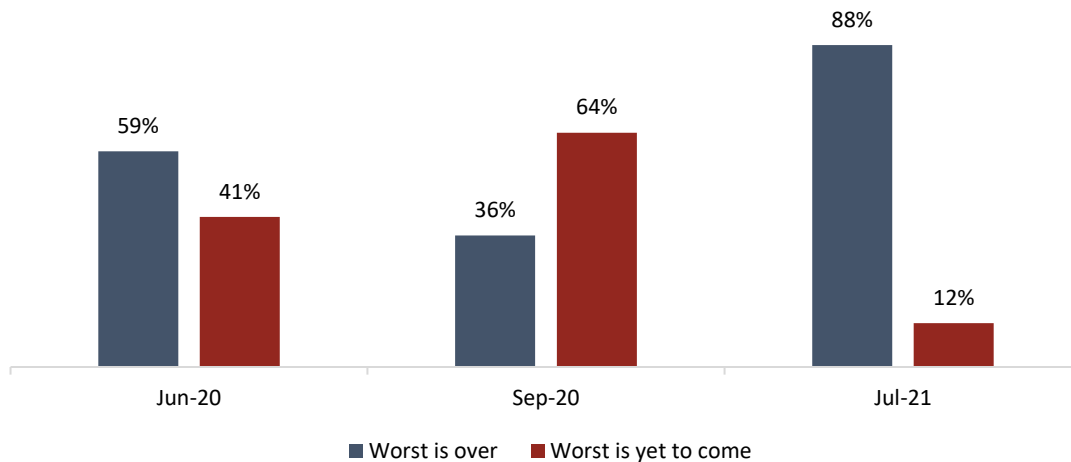
**Despite concern, most think the worst is over on the health front**

Many Canadians are remaining vigilant, driven by these significant levels of concern. Most, however, do feel that the worst has passed. This is particularly true of the potential health risks posed by COVID-19. Just 12 per cent feel that the worst is still yet to come, while 88 per cent say that, at least in their province, the worst has passed. Last summer, 59 per cent held the same view, well ahead of Canada’s second and third waves, which continued to take Canadian lives:

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**Worst is over or yet to come?  
"More people in my province becoming sick and dying due to COVID-19"**

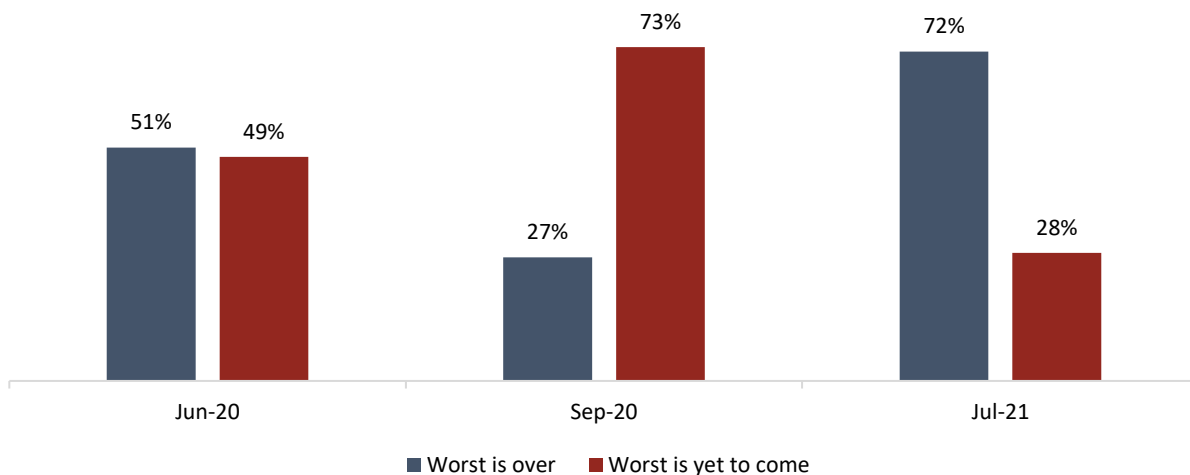


**Part Two: The economic story**

**Concern over economic impacts remains for three-in-ten**

That said, more Canadians worry about the economic challenges ahead. While just 12 per cent say that health impacts may still worsen, three-in-ten (28%) say this about the potential damage to businesses in their province:

**Worst is over or yet to come?  
"Further loss of jobs and damage to businesses in my province due to COVID-19"**

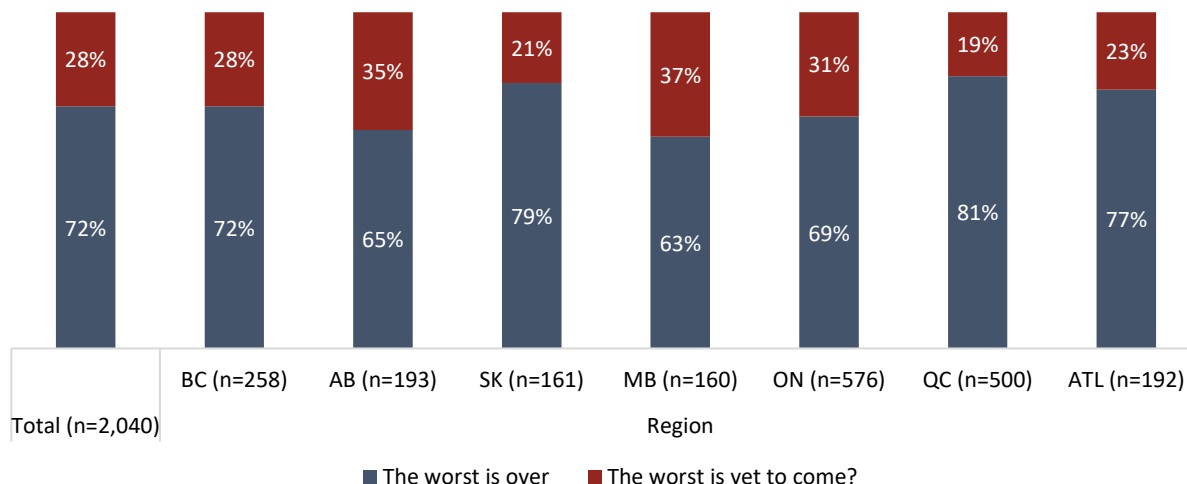


This concern is particularly acute in Alberta and Manitoba, where more than one in three feel it. At least one-in-five Canadians in every region remain worried:

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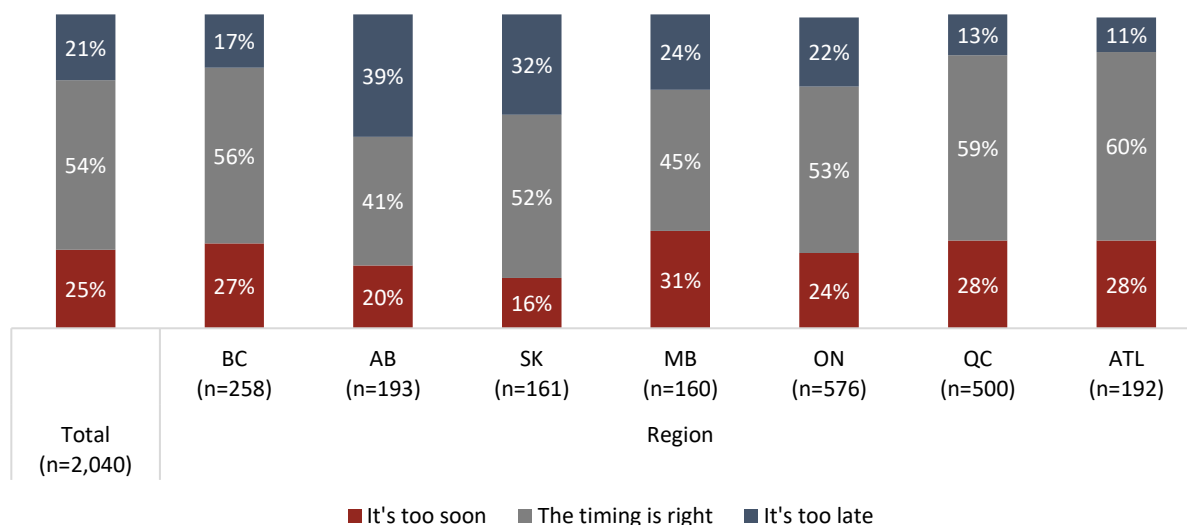
**Worst is over or yet to come?**  
**"Further loss of jobs and damage to businesses in my province due to COVID-19"**



**Most say government made right call removing border restrictions for fully vaccinated**

For fully vaccinated Canadians, there is no longer a requirement to stay in a government-mandated hotel or to quarantine for two weeks upon return to Canada. This represents a shift in a policy all travelers were subject to for most of 2021. The [announcement](#), made in late June and implemented in early July, is well received by more than half (54%) who say the timing was right. One-in-five (21%) say the government waited too long. One-quarter (25%) feel this is a step too far at this point and would have waited longer. There are considerable regional differences of opinion on removing these restrictions:

**As of July 6, Canadians citizens and permanent residents can skip the quarantine requirements if they are double vaccinated. Is this:**



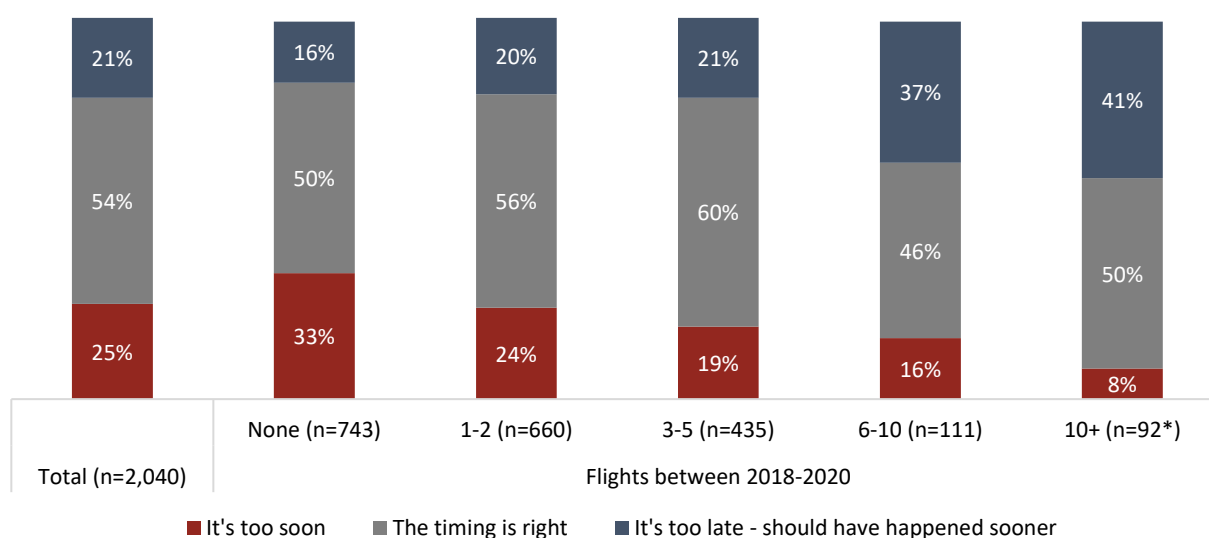
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The impacts of continued border closures are significant to businesses in the country. A [study](#) done by Statistics Canada in October of last year estimated that travel restrictions contributed to the loss of between 400,000 and 500,000 jobs and a reduction in Canada's gross domestic product of between 1.2% and 1.7% when compared to 2019. Further, some business owners say that the damage for this [year is already done](#).

Frequent travellers are leading the push to open borders. As seen in the graph below, the more a person travelled in the two years prior to the pandemic, the more likely they are to say that the federal government should have removed restrictions sooner:

**As of July 6, Canadians citizens and permanent residents can skip the quarantine requirements if they are double vaccinated. Is this:**



**\*Small sample size, interpret with caution**

### **When to reopen the border? Frequent travelers itching for re-opening**

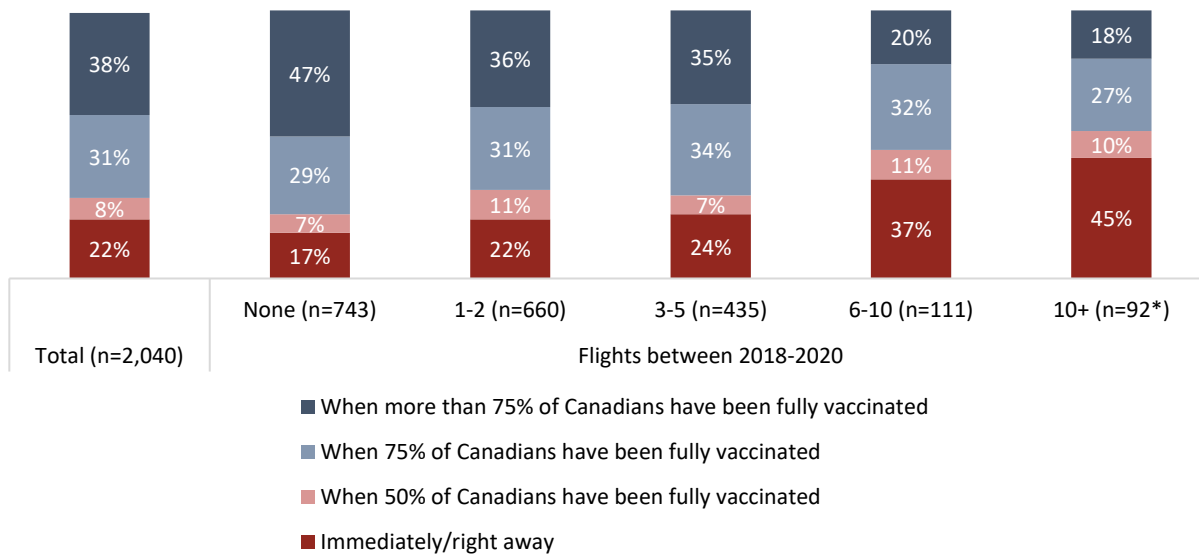
While fully vaccinated Canadians have always been allowed to return home from the U.S. and overseas, the land border that runs extensively along the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel has been closed to non-essential travel. Public Safety Minister Bill Blair [has stated](#) this will remain the case until 75 per cent of Canadians are fully vaccinated.

Had it been up to them, three-in-ten Canadians would have had the border open already, while the same number (31%) say that this vaccination target is appropriate. That said, the largest group – 38 per cent – say that they would like the vaccination target to be set even higher than that before opening up to non-essential and international travellers. Here, again, frequency of travel plays a significant role in opinions:

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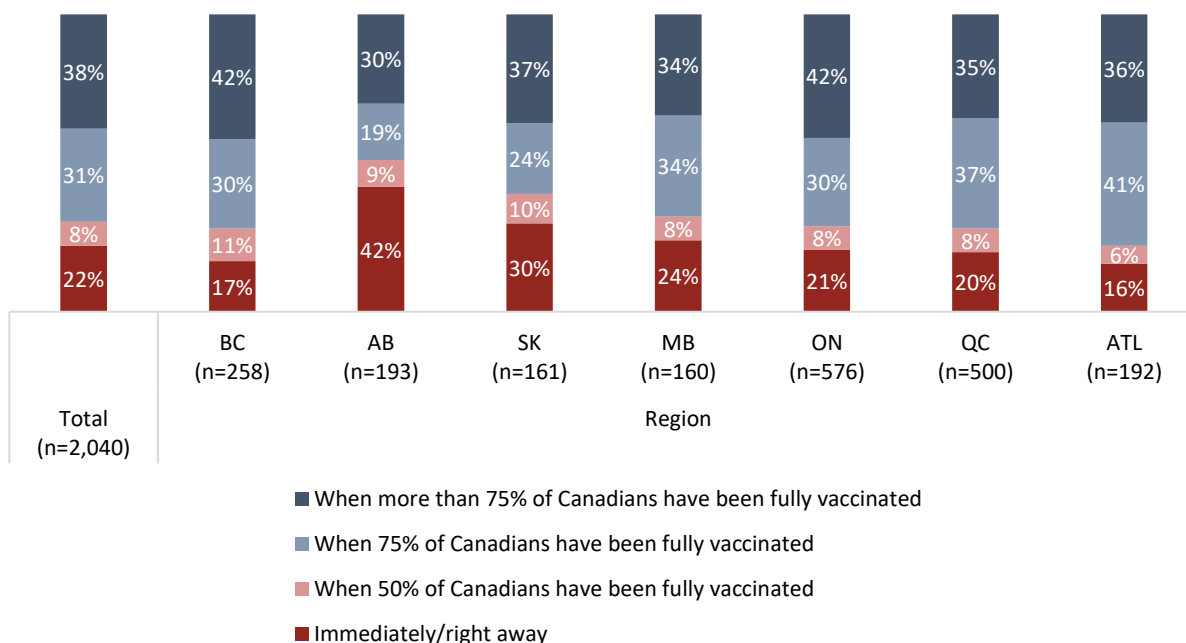
**When would you re-open the Canada-U.S. land border?**



**\*Small sample size, interpret with caution**

Ontario and B.C. residents are most hesitant to open the border even after 75 per cent of Canadians are fully vaccinated. For 42 per cent in each province, that is not enough. Meantime, 42 per cent of Albertans and 30 per cent of Saskatchewan residents say the border should be open now:

**When would you re-open the Canada-U.S. land border?**



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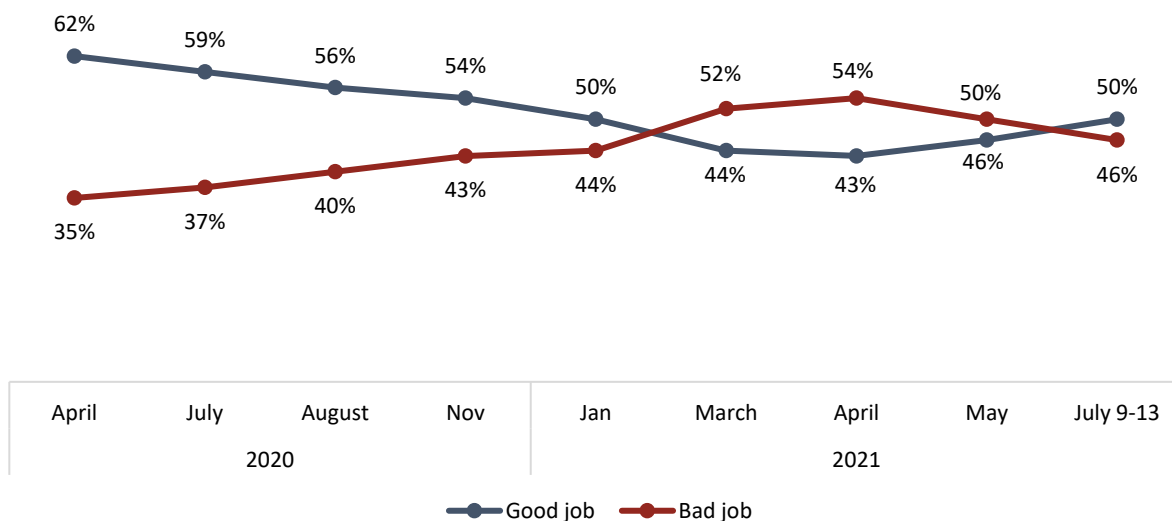


**Part Three: Views of Trudeau’s pandemic handling improves**

Most political watchers agree that Canada is heading toward an election before the calendar turns to 2022.

With this in mind, performance on the most significant issues to have dominated the last 18 months – the pandemic – may well take on heightened importance. The good news for Trudeau is that the perception of his own handling of COVID-19 – after suffering in the early months of 2021 amid a third wave of the virus – has recovered to the 50 per cent mark. This is the first time since January that positive appraisal has outnumbered the negative:

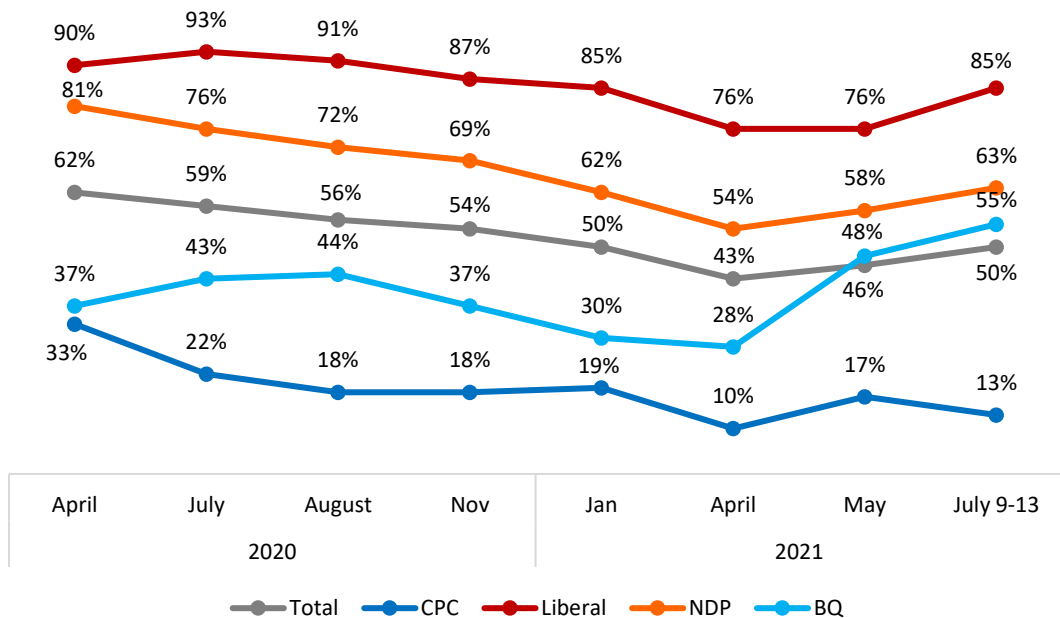
**Do you think Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is doing a good or bad job handling the COVID-19 pandemic overall?**



**Past Conservative voters disagree**

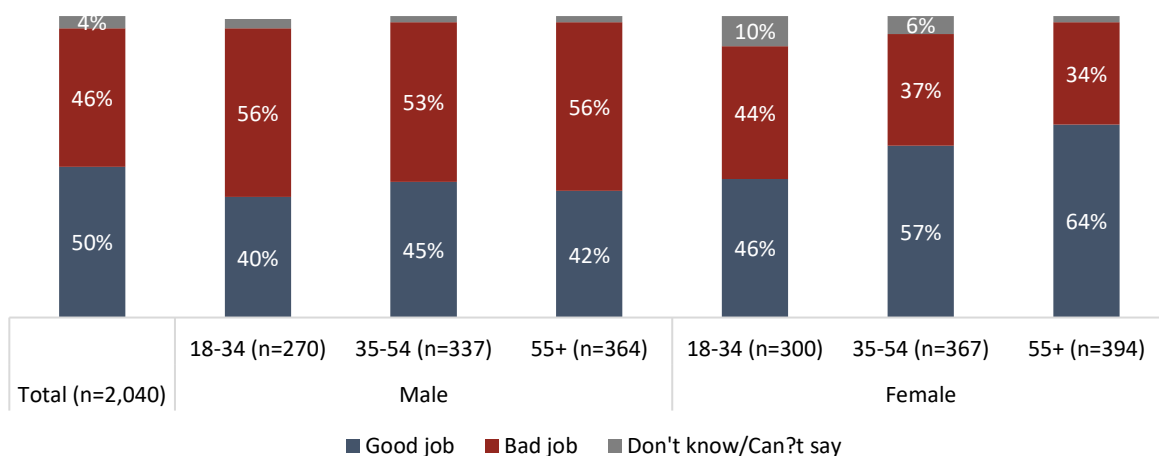
More than four-in-five past Liberal voters (85%) now say that they think Trudeau is handling the pandemic well, alongside three-in-five past New Democrats (63%) and just over half of those who supported the Bloc Quebecois in 2019 (55%). By contrast, past CPC voters continue to offer little praise:

**Percentage saying Justin Trudeau is doing a 'good job' in handling the COVID-19 pandemic by 2019 federal vote**



Trudeau’s strongest support on this file comes from women, particularly those over the age of 34. Women over the age of 55, the largest group of voters in the 2019 federal election, offer the highest levels of praise.

**Prime Minister Trudeau pandemic handling - Good job versus Bad job**



**Regional divisions**

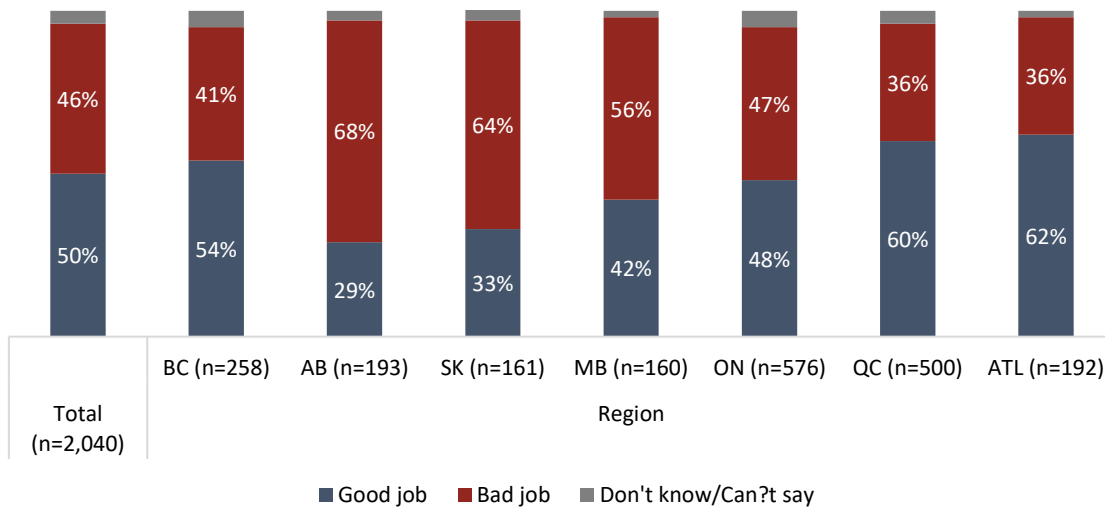
As with a number of issues involving the federal government, there are considerable divisions in the country based on region. Consider that those living in Quebec and Atlantic Canada are approximately twice as likely as those living in Alberta and Saskatchewan to say that Trudeau is performing well. Ontario

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residents are the most divided within their own province. Half say he has done a good job (48%) and half say bad (47%):

**Prime Minister Trudeau pandemic handling - Good job versus Bad job**



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

*For detailed results by travel frequency, [click here](#).*