

Premiers' Performance: Good and bad for Houston. Horgan, Legault see their approval slide

Ontario's Doug Ford sees approval virtually unchanged after election victory

June 14, 2022 – While some of Canada's premiers approach the summer in a decidedly more "chill" place with their respective electorates, others are feeling the burn.

The latest data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute shows Nova Scotia's Tim Houston holding the distinction of being Canada's most approved-of premier, while simultaneously seeing goodwill towards him decline the most over the last three months. Last quarter, Houston's approval stood at 73 per cent. It's since dropped 11 points, to 62 per cent.

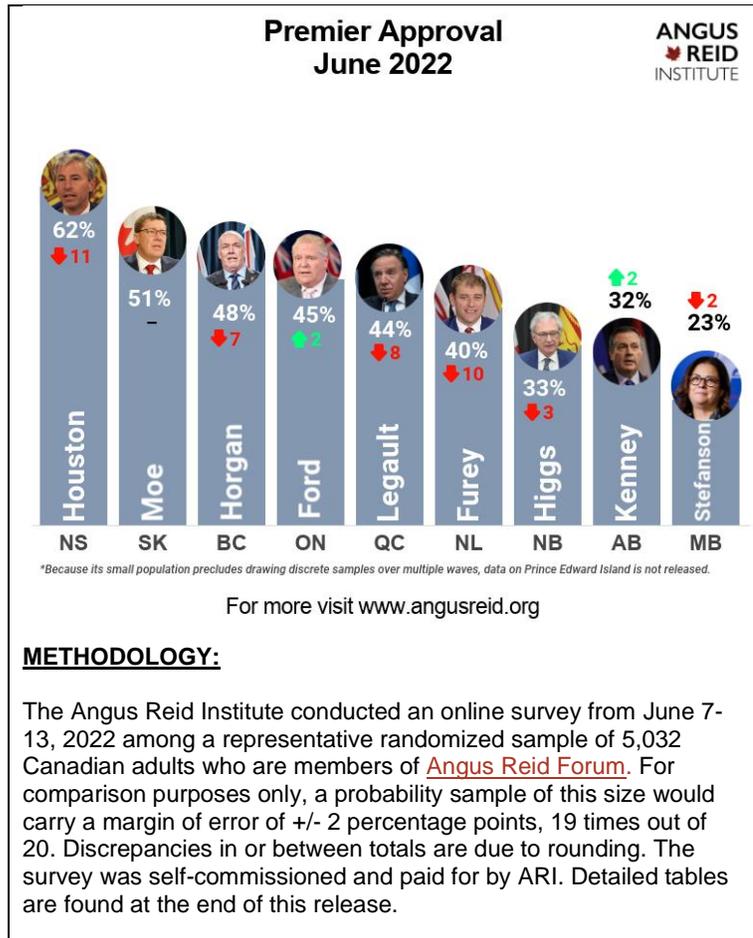
Movement has trended downward for most of the rest of the premier pack, with notable drops for B.C.'s John Horgan and Quebec's François Legault (seven and eight points respectively).

Two premiers see statistically insignificant increases in approval. If Doug Ford was hoping for a renewed honeymoon with Ontarians on the heels of a [majority re-election](#), he'll have to settle instead for a two-point bump. And outgoing Premier Jason Kenney is also given a two-point increase in approval by Albertans [on his way out the door](#) after a [fractious](#) political civil war within the ranks of the governing UCP saw him put to a leadership review that [failed to provide enough of an endorsement](#) to convince Kenney to carry on.

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.

Note: *Because its small population precludes drawing discrete samples over multiple waves, data on Prince Edward Island is not released.*



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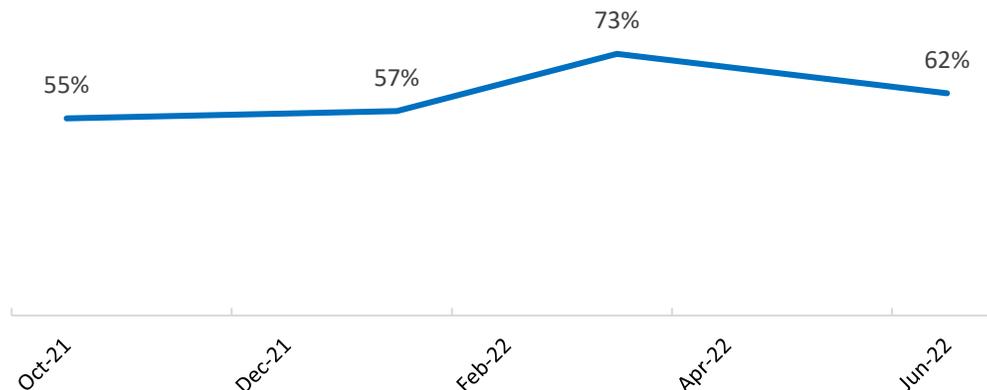
Majority approval for two

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston continues to be the most approved-of premier in the country, though he’s tumbled from a March peak of 73 per cent approval. Three-in-five Nova Scotians approve of the leader of the Nova Scotia Progressive Conservatives.

It appears Houston has suffered little from a recent policy reversal which saw his government scrap [a proposed non-resident property tax](#) just over a month after it was introduced. While the measure would have raised \$65-million in taxes, Nova Scotians were quick to criticize the tax as [“punitive” to non-residents](#) and [“un-Canadian”](#).

Meanwhile, Houston and the PC government have tried to kill two birds – a growing affordability problem driven by rising inflation and labour shortages in key trades – with one stone – [an income tax rebate for young people working in 73 skilled trades](#). The measure was announced in the province’s spring budget, and [was applauded by the province’s business leaders at the time](#).

Approval of Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston



In Saskatchewan, Premier Scott Moe finds himself with the same approval he had last quarter. Half of Saskatchewanians approve of Moe.

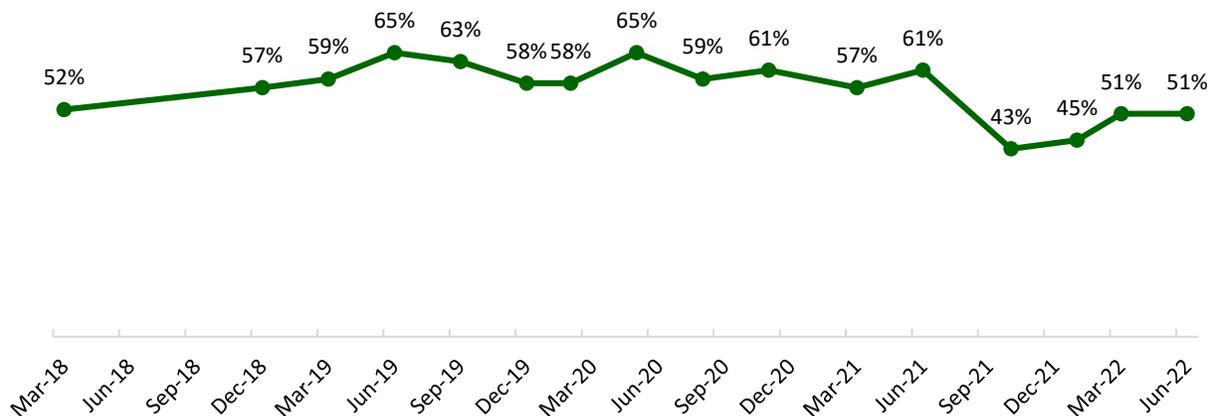
The Saskatchewan Party leader continues to be a vocal critic of the federal Liberal government, most recently calling Ottawa’s freeze on the sales of handguns [“virtue signalling”](#). That criticism echoes the belief of a significant proportion of Saskatchewan residents that provinces should have the flexibility to

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decide their own gun laws – two-in-five (41%) said so in January, [the largest proportion of any province in the country](#).

Approval of Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe



Horgan's and Legault's ongoing attrition

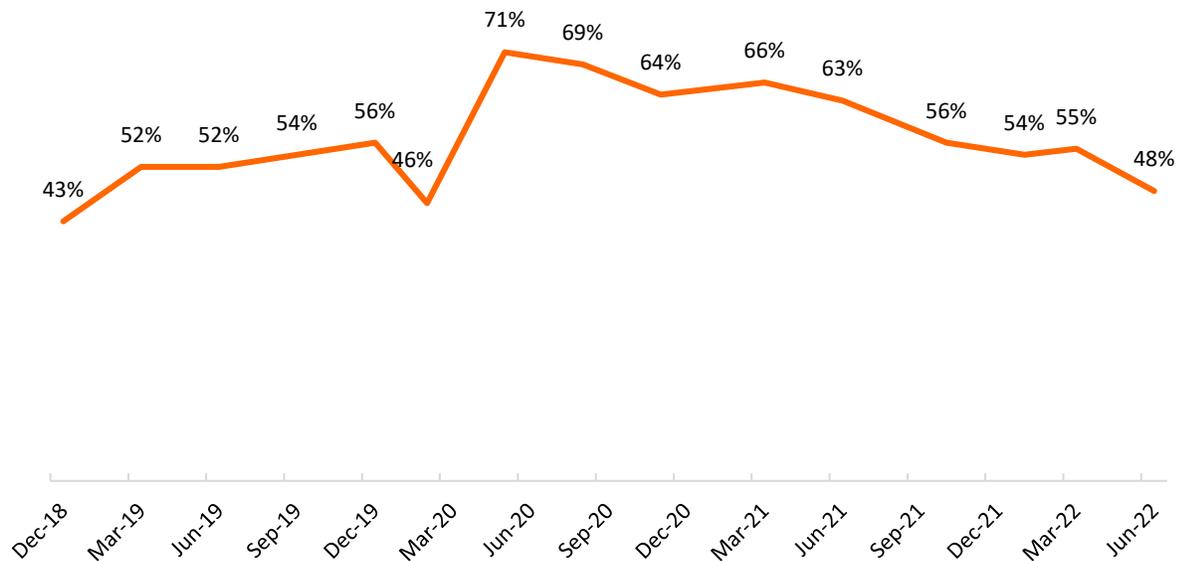
British Columbia Premier John Horgan's approval continues a downward trend. Just under half of British Columbians approve of Horgan, the lowest approval measured for the BC NDP leader since before the onset of the pandemic in 2020.

In addition to a growing [debacle surrounding the near \\$1-billion plan to demolish and rebuild the Royal B.C. Museum](#) (more on that will be coming from ARI), Horgan's government was forced to defend a lack of funding for [new school construction](#), a [shortage of family doctors](#) and overall being "out of touch" with [regular British Columbians](#) by opposition parties. The problems – [and more](#) – keep piling up at the door of the premier's office.

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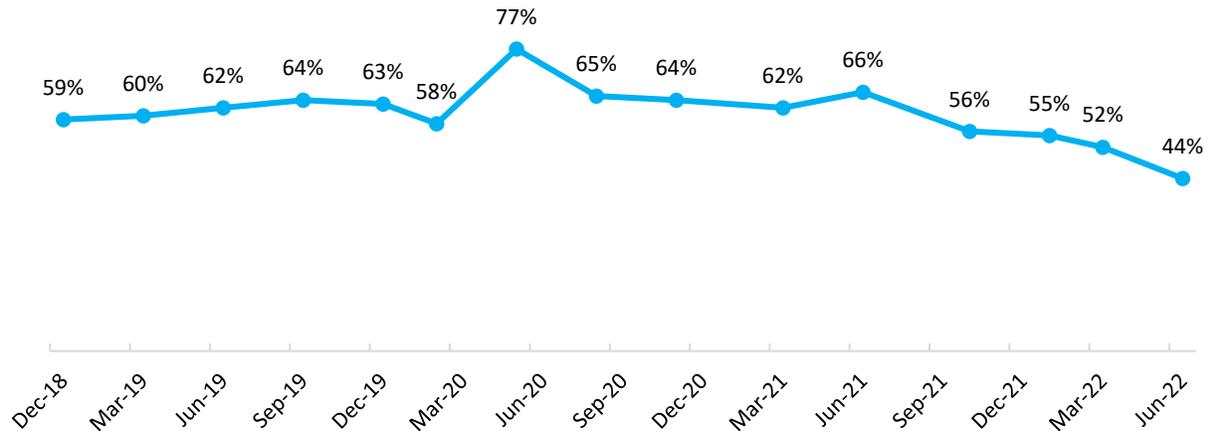
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Approval of British Columbia Premier John Horgan



The leader of Canada’s second most populous province has also seen declining approval since the beginning of the pandemic. Fewer than half (44%) of Quebecers approve of Premier François Legault, a new low in his term at the head of the assemblée nationale.

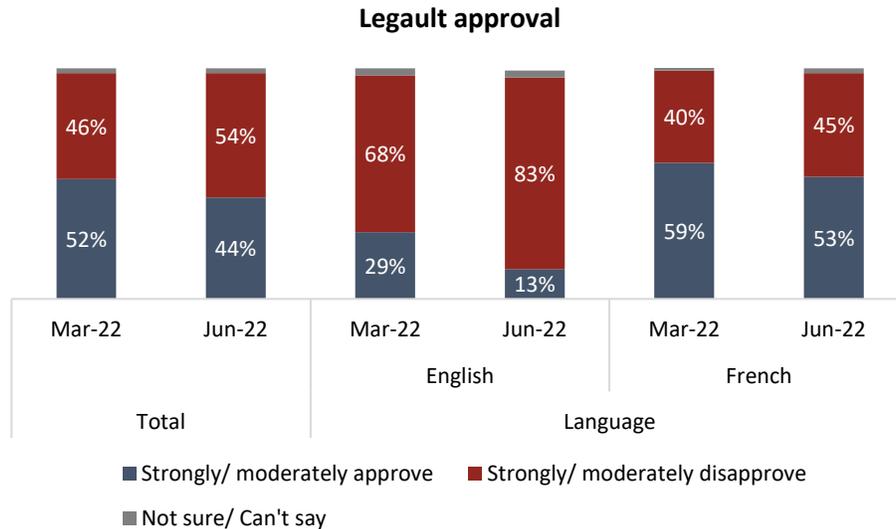
Approval of Quebec Premier François Legault



Language politics have risen to the forefront again in Quebec, as Legault and the Coalition Avenir Québec’s Bill 96 received royal assent. The bill enforces the use of French in many aspects of Quebec public life – education, government services, health – and has been criticized for using the notwithstanding clause to override the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The bill has drawn out hundreds of anglophone protesters. Indeed, for Legault, there is a sharp language divide in his approval – four-in-five (83%) English-speaking Quebecers disapprove of Legault while more than half (53%) of French-speakers instead approve of him.

While Legault’s approval has trended slightly downwards over the last quarter among French-speaking Quebecers, it has dropped much more precipitously among Anglophones.

Elsewhere, perhaps the Quebec government’s performance on key issues is also dragging down Legault’s approval across the electorate. As a fall election looms, three-quarters (73%) of Quebecers say Legault and the CAQ government is doing a “poor job” on healthcare – more on this to come from ARI soon.

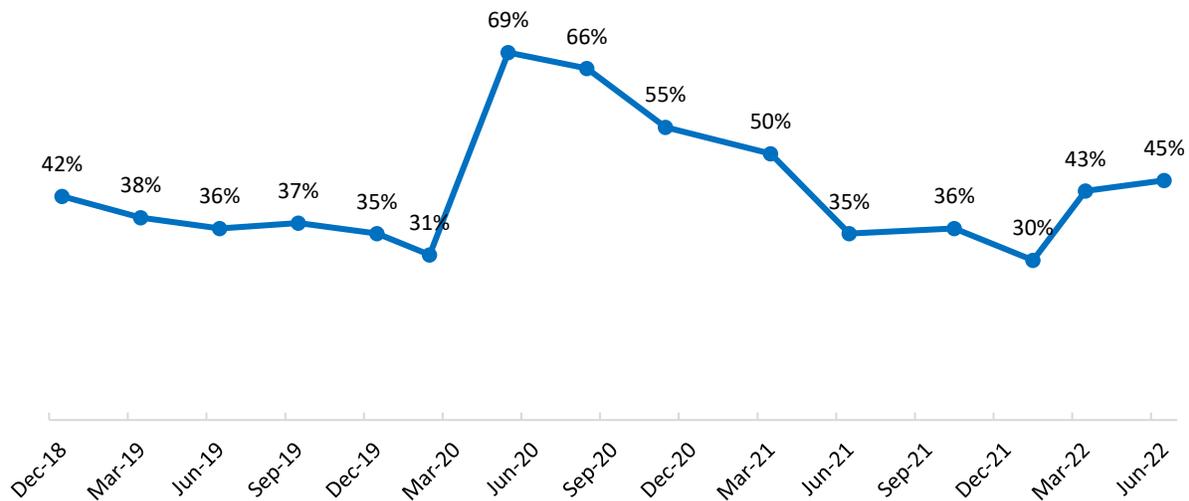


Ford's next four begin with little change in approval

The 'bleah' election is over and Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario leader Doug Ford begins another term much like he started his first one, with approval of slightly more than two-in-five Ontarians. The middling approval is at odds with the election results – a stronger majority than Ford and the PCPO won in 2018. That said, most voters didn't bother voting; turnout was the lowest in the province's history.

For Ford, majority control of the provincial parliament comes paired with little in the way of a platform, except building highways and expanding hospitals. Ford and the provincial government proposed the latter to address a key issue for many Ontario voters, and a pandemic backlog of almost 22 million health-care services, including one million surgeries.

Approval of Ontario Premier Doug Ford



The 40 and below club

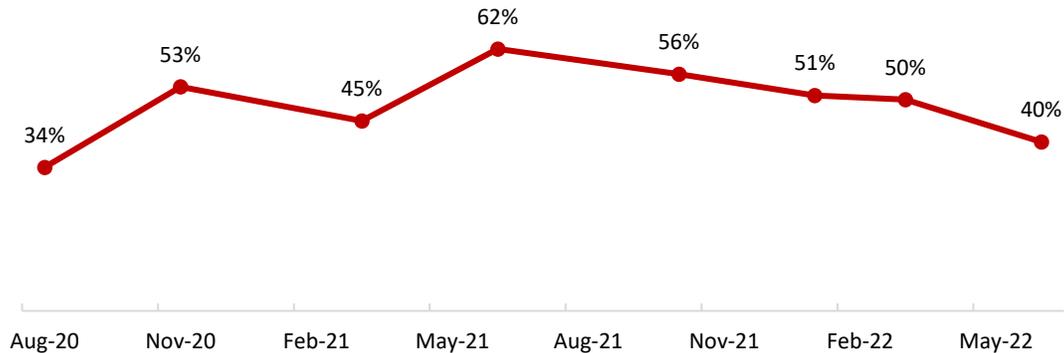
Approaching the two-year anniversary of his election as premier, Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Andrew Furey has the approval of two-fifths of the province’s residents. It represents a low of his term since the initial reviews of Furey’s performance [in August 2020](#), when more than half of respondents said they were unsure of how they feel about him.

As is the case across the country, high inflation is driving up the cost of living in Canada’s eastern most province. In response, Furey and the Liberal government have [slashed the gas tax and said they would raise minimum wage to \\$15 by 2023](#). The measures appear to have done little to quell disapproval of the premier – three-in-five in the province give Furey a thumbs down. [Critics believe they don’t go far enough](#) as prices climb.

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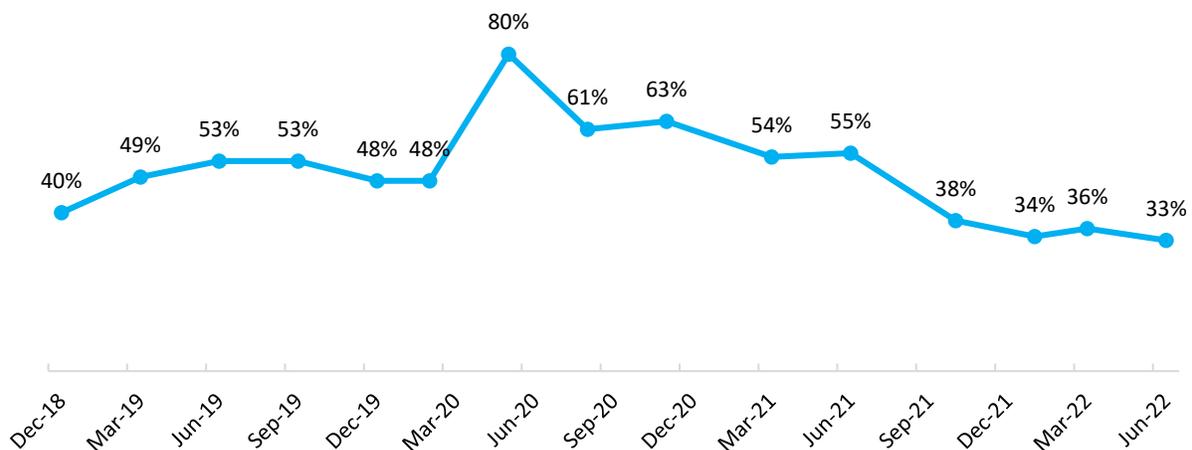
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Approval of Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Andrew Furey



In New Brunswick, Premier Blaine Higgs and the PC government have, too, been accused of not doing enough to fight inflation in that province. One-third of New Brunswickers say they approve of Higgs, while nearly double that disapprove. Last year at this time, more than half in New Brunswick approved of the PC leader. However, opinions of Higgs soured in the fall as the province struggled to deal with a wave of COVID-19 and have yet to recover.

Approval of New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs

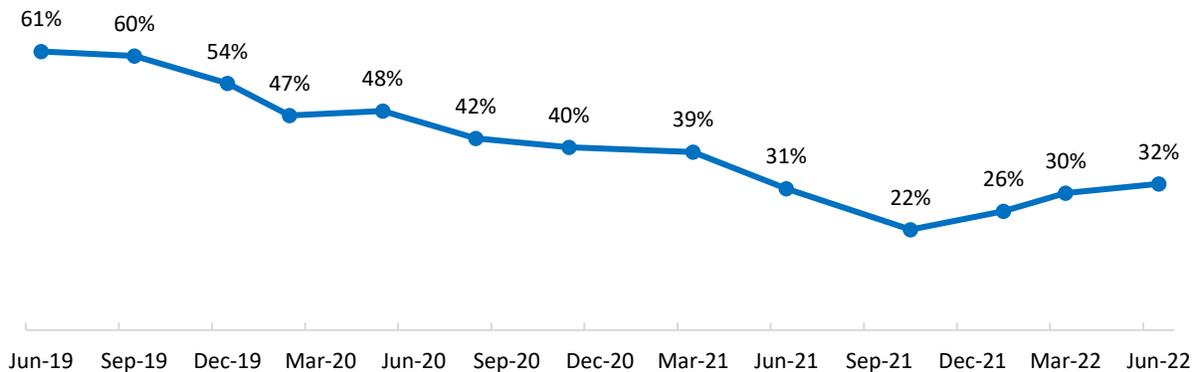


Until the UCP leadership race concludes, Premier Jason Kenney will be premier, currently with approval that has been at or below one-third in the last 12 months. Whomever steps into the role next will likely have an oil-fueled tailwind at their back, as high energy prices mean the UCP government will likely rake in much more cash than projected in the spring budget.

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Approval of Alberta Premier Jason Kenney



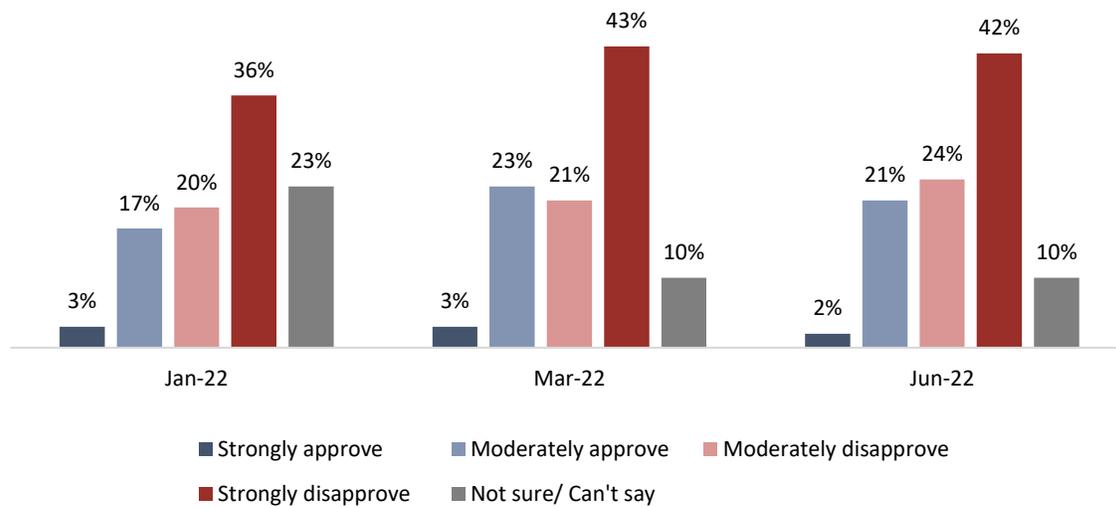
If familiarity breeds contempt, that does not bode well for Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson. Since ascending to the premier's seat in the wake of Brian Pallister's resignation, no higher than one-quarter of Manitobans have approved of Stefanson. In the last two quarters, two-in-five have strongly disapproved of her performance as premier. Lately, she's come under criticism for Manitoba's minimum wage, [which will be the lowest in the country by the fall](#). Her response is that the current labour shortage should raise the wage itself, [a stance panned by labour leaders](#) in the province.

Meanwhile, Stefanson has been accused of [regularly dodging questions from the media](#) and [opposition MLAs in the legislature](#). There is still over a year before she faces an election, however, which is scheduled for Oct. 3, 2023 at the latest.

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Approval of Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson



Margins of error								
BC (615)	AB (592)	SK (594)	MB (468)	ON (1,041)	QC (814)	NB (247)	NS (330)	NL (201)
+/- 4%	+/- 4%	+/- 4%	+/- 5%	+/- 3%	+/- 3%	+/- 6%	+/- 5%	+/- 7%

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