

Quebec Spotlight: Governing CAQ hold comfortable lead, one-in-five each support Liberals and Conservatives

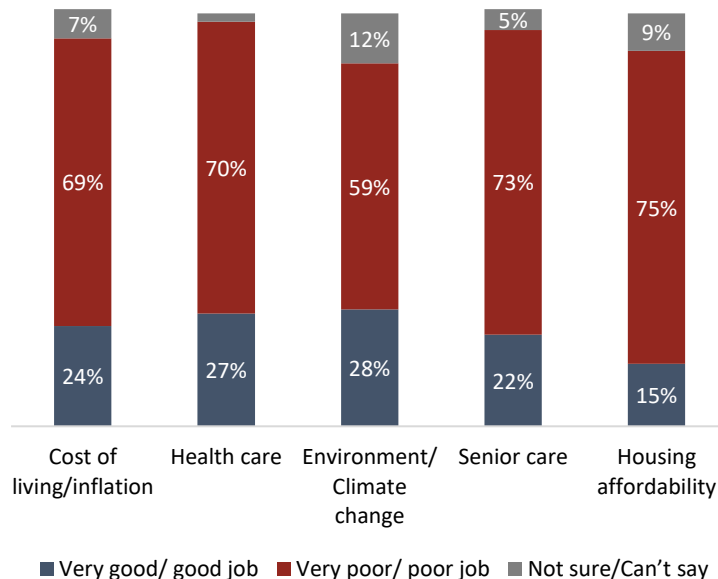
Cost of living and health care outweigh all other provincial concerns for Quebec residents

July 5, 2022 – Premier François Legault has spent the majority of his mandate since a late 2018 election victory leading the province through the COVID-19 pandemic, but his election campaign will likely focus on at least two other key issues if he hopes to garner a second term.

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Quebec residents reporting significant levels of concern over the cost of living and inflation in their province, and health care. These two issues are each chosen by three-in-five, well ahead of the third highest priority – the environment and climate change. COVID-19 response is now a top-three concern for only five per cent.

Notably, among all of the top five issues chosen by Quebec residents – senior care and housing affordability rounding out that list – at least three-in-five say the government is currently doing a poor job handling each. This includes seven-in-ten who say their provincial government has performed poorly on health care and the cost of living (69%).

Do you think the current government of Quebec is doing a good job or a poor job in each of the following areas?
(Quebec, n=1,211; top five issues shown)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from June 7-13, 2022 among a representative randomized sample of 1,211 Quebec 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 +/- 2.5 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.

The good news for the CAQ is two-fold. The first positive datapoint is half of residents (52%) give the government commendation on handling of the economy – second in the country to only Saskatchewan (53%). Additionally, the CAQ, even with criticism increasing in the province, holds a comfortable 16-point advantage in vote intention. More than one-in-three (35%) say they would vote for the governing party if an election were held tomorrow, while 19 per cent say this of the Conservative Party, and 18 per cent of the Liberals.

Those two latter parties are united in [criticism of](#), if not [outright opposition](#) to the government's recently passed Bill 96. Quebecers were asked about that piece of legislation, and a majority say they support it (56%), with 44 per cent in opposition. That said, 90 per cent of would-be Liberal voters and 72 per cent of those intending to support the Conservatives oppose it.

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

More Key Findings:

- The CAQ's score on the Angus Reid Institute's Government Performance Index has dropped to 32. This, from a high of 58 in 2019. The score represents the average number of residents saying the government has done a "good job" of handling 13 different provincial issues
- The Conservative Party of Quebec leads among men 18- to 34- and 35- to 54-years-old. The CAQ holds an important advantage among both male and female voters over the age of 54.

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: Issues and government performance

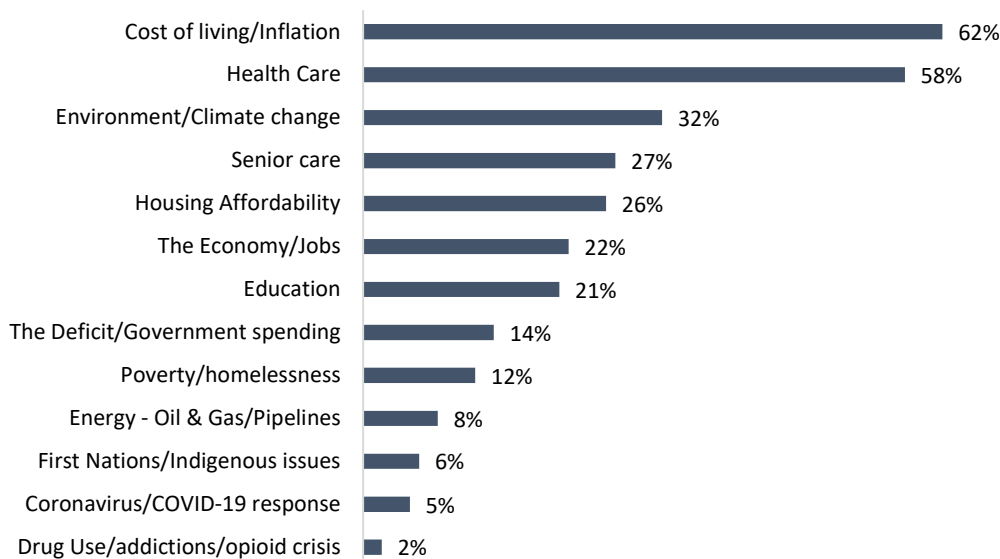
Cost of living and health care dominate priorities

Two pandemic-related issues now consume much attention of Quebecers: the inflation crisis affecting most of the globe is the top concern for residents, followed closely by health care. The province's health-care [system has been hampered](#) by doctor shortages and long wait times.

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**Top issues in Quebec
(Quebec, n=1,211; select up to three)**



Not all would-be voters have the same concerns, however. Aside from cost of living and health care, which are consistently chosen by all groups, there are more niche concerns across age and gender categories. Young people are far more concerned about climate change, men younger than 55 show the most concern for the economy, and those over the age of 54 are significantly more focused on senior care:

Top issues in Quebec (Quebec, n=1,211; select up to three)							
	Total (n=1,211)	Male			Female		
		18-34 (n=152)	35-54 (n=206)	55+ (n=230)	18-34 (n=145)	35-54 (n=206)	55+ (n=266)
Cost of living/Inflation	62%	63%	64%	54%	69%	69%	60%
Health Care	58%	31%	51%	66%	55%	71%	67%
Environment/Climate change	32%	41%	33%	28%	45%	28%	24%
Senior care	27%	5%	8%	45%	11%	22%	50%
Housing Affordability	26%	30%	15%	24%	35%	21%	32%
The Economy/Jobs	22%	46%	31%	15%	13%	18%	15%
Education	21%	19%	23%	17%	27%	31%	13%
The Deficit/Government spending	14%	19%	25%	17%	5%	8%	8%
Poverty/homelessness	12%	5%	9%	13%	14%	13%	15%

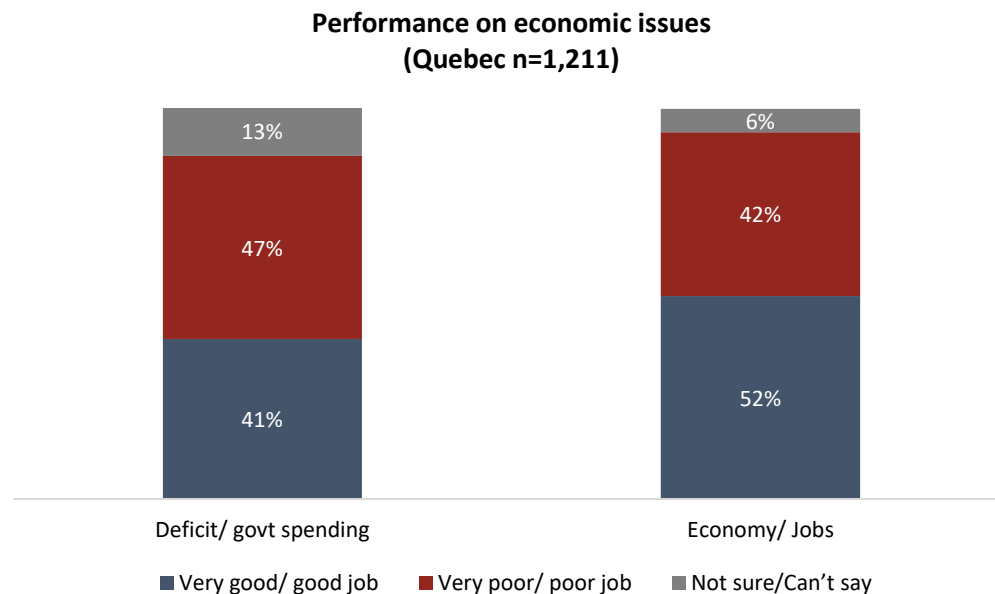
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Economic performance strong for CAQ, concerns over affordability and health care

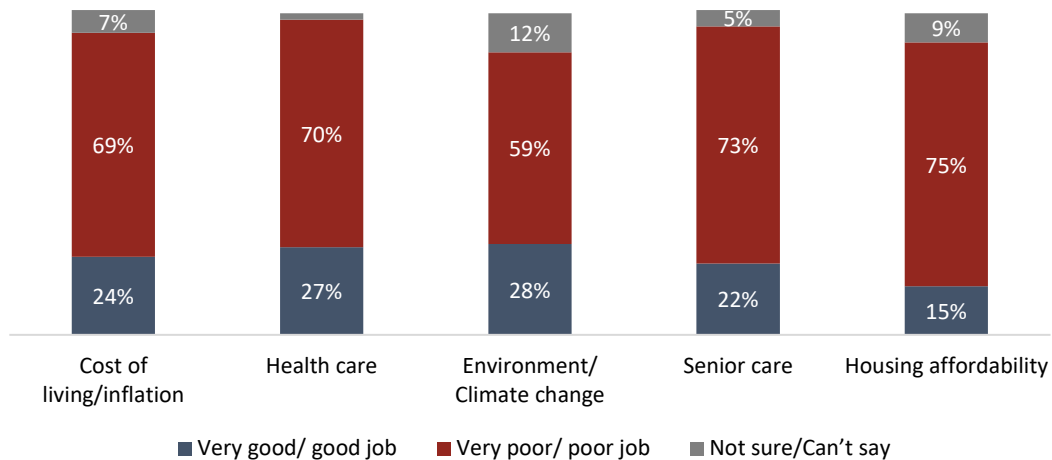
Economic growth in the province has been “stronger than expected” for 2021/22, and Quebec has revised its projected deficit to \$4.6 billion from an initial budget estimate of \$7.4 billion. Uncertainty is still a factor, however, as inflation and volatility in the global markets continue to stress both policymakers and residents alike.

Overall, half of Quebec residents (52%) say the government has done a good job in economic stewardship – second only to Saskatchewan (53%) on this issue. Two-in-five (41%) say the CAQ have handled the deficit well:



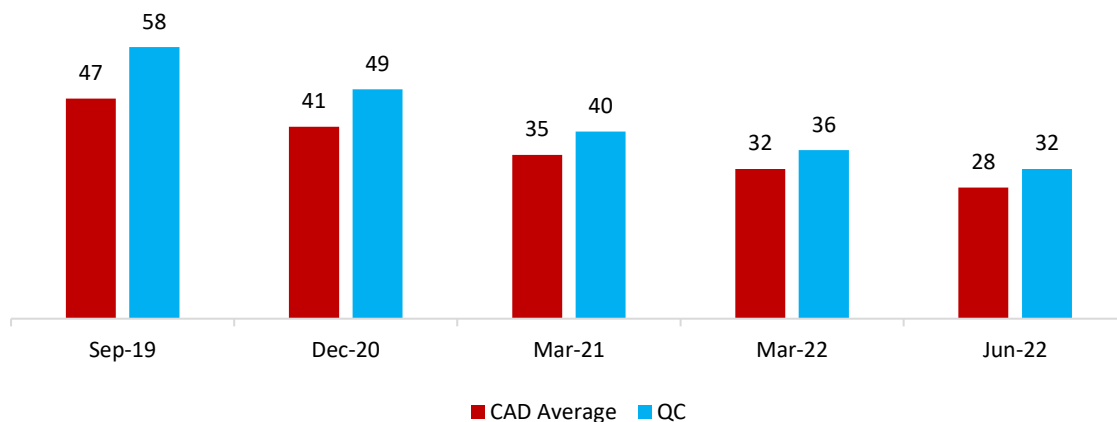
The news is not, however, as good on a number of other key issues. Across each of the five files that Quebecers identify as most important to them, at least three-in-five say the government has done a poor job, including seven-in-ten who say this on cost of living and health care, the two top issues in the province:

**Do you think the current government of Quebec is doing a good job or a poor job in each of the following areas?
(Quebec, n=1,211; top five issues shown)**



As with most provincial governments in the country, there has been an overall attrition in public support for Quebec's Government Performance Index score, which still compares favourably with the national average, but poorly relative to previous levels the CAQ had achieved:

**Government Performance Index
(Average number of respondents saying provincial government has done a "good job" across all issues)**



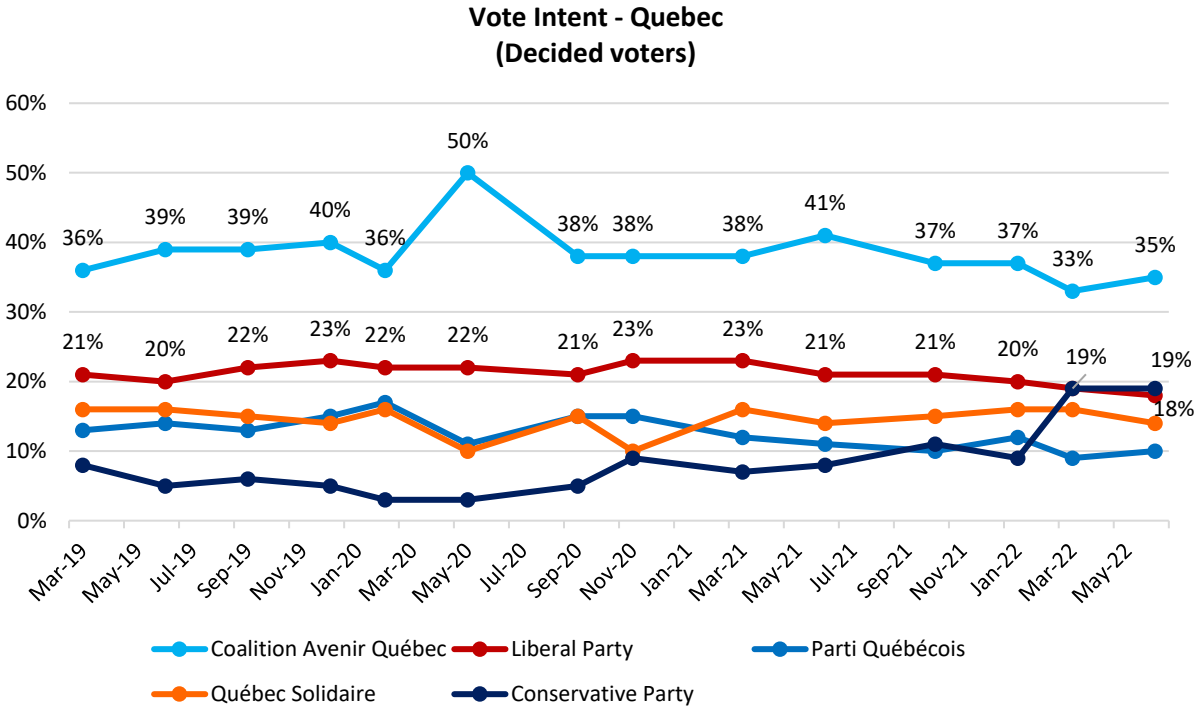
Part Two: Vote intention

Comfortable lead in vote intention for CAQ, but interest in upstart Conservatives

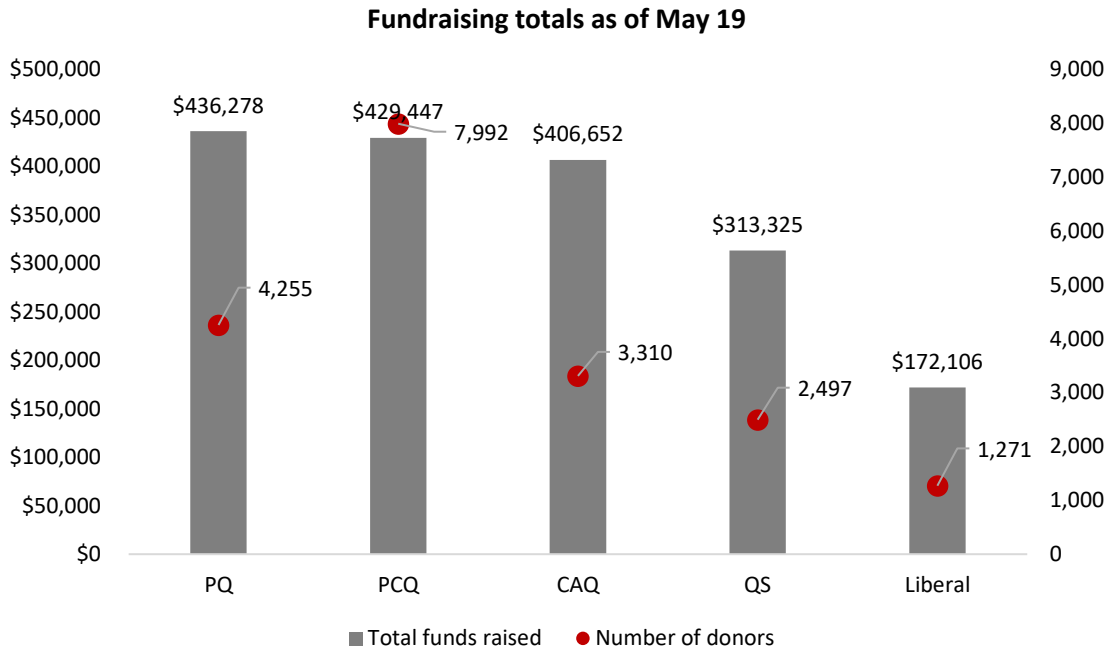
Currently, the governing CAQ boasts a comfortable 16-point advantage in vote intention, though a number of competitors garner support. The opposition Liberals are chosen by 18 per cent of residents, while Conservative Party – which surged over the spring – continues to be supported by one-in-five:

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An increase in support for the Conservative Party of Quebec (PCQ) aligns with strong fundraising through the first half of the year. As of May 19, the PCQ had received a far higher number of donations than its competitors, and had fundraised a close to equal amount overall compared with Parti Québécois and the CAQ, as seen in the graph below:



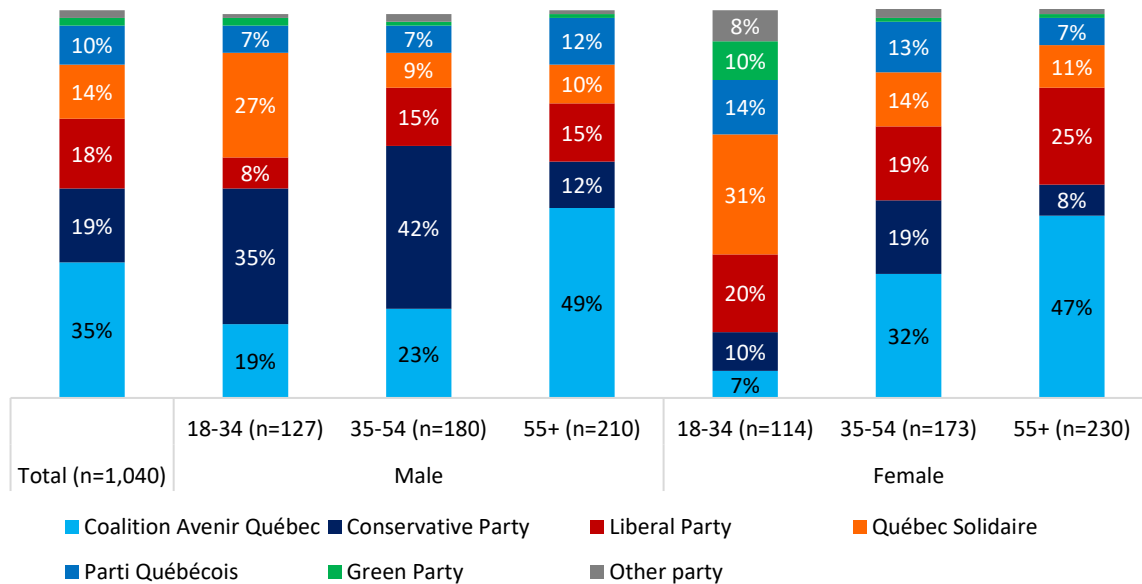
***Source for data**

The surge in support for the increasingly better-funded Conservative Party is concentrated among men under the age of 55. For both 18- to 34-year-old and 35- to 54-year-old men, the PCQ is the top choice. That said, for older men and women alike, the CAQ lead by a considerable margin over their closest competition:

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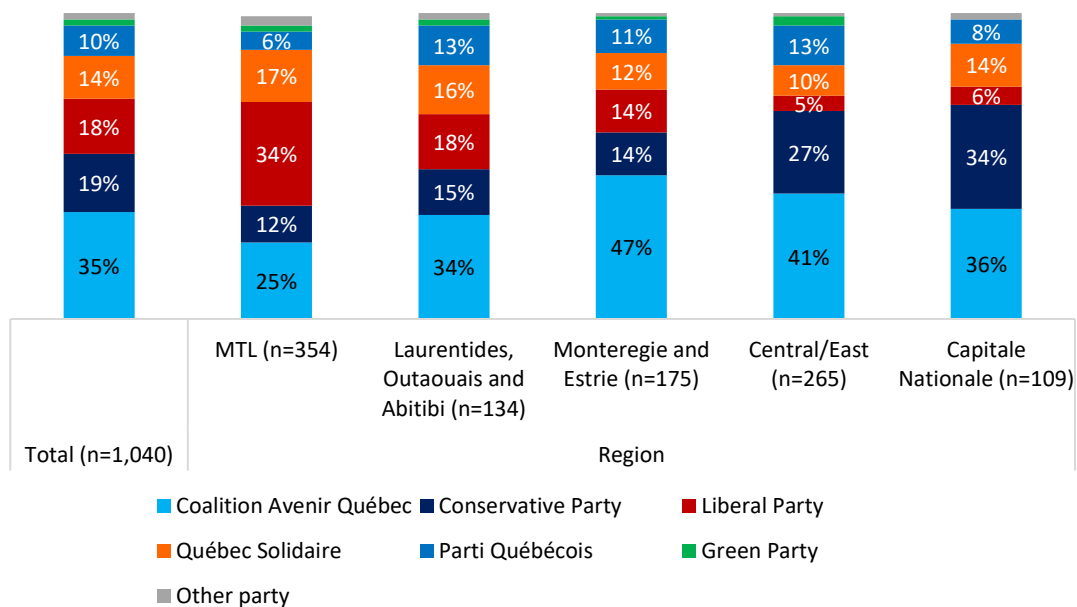
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**Current vote intention
(Leaning and decided voters)**



Regionally, the CAQ holds a comfortable lead in most of the province, though the Liberal Party is stronger in Greater Montreal, and the Conservatives are competitive in and around the capital city of Quebec.

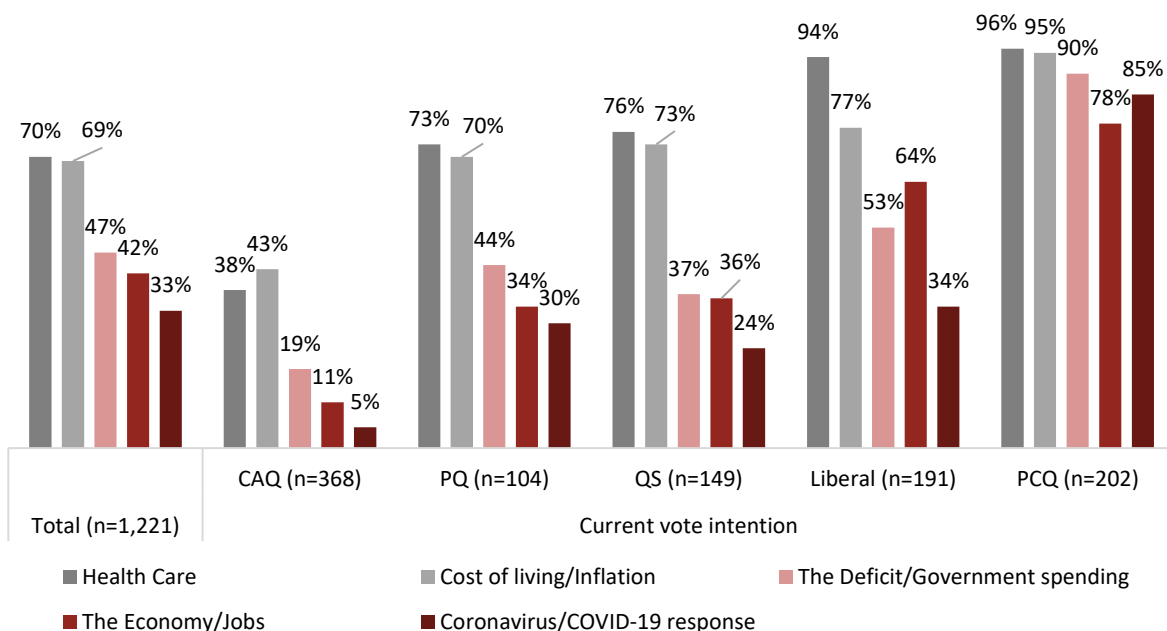
Current Vote Intention (Leaning and decided voters)



The Conservative factor

The rise of the provincial Conservative Party appears to rely on overwhelming criticism of the current government, in addition to pushback against prominent legislation (see below). At least nine-in-ten current PCQ voters say the government has performed poorly on health care, the cost of living, and the deficit. Notably, they stand far apart from the rest of Quebec in assessing the CAQ's COVID-19 handling – which has [been consistently highly grade](#) by residents.

Percentage who say government has performed poorly on each issue:



Part Three: The politics of Bill 96

Bill 96 and the linguistic divide

Bill 96 gained royal assent earlier this month. The bill [reforms the province's French language charter in a way that restricts the use of English in public settings](#) in an effort to protect the use of French in Quebec. Premier François Legault and the CAQ government said the use of the notwithstanding clause in Bill 96's case is necessary because it [protects a law that is supported by the majority of the province](#).

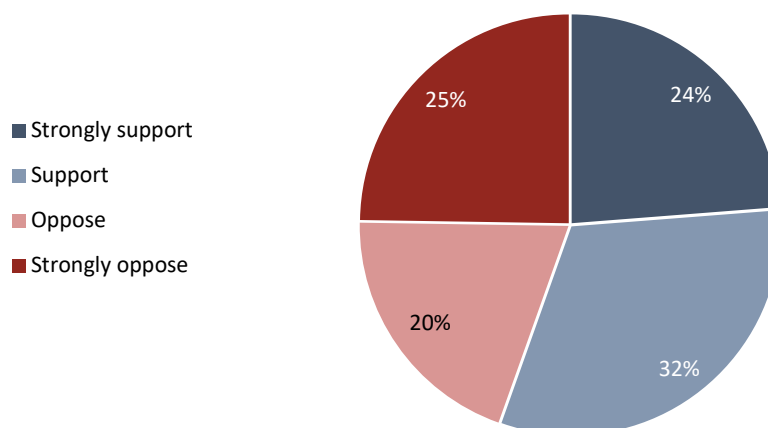
That is indeed the case. More than half (56%) of Quebecers support the bill after considering some of the elements it contains (see below), while 44 per cent oppose it. Another recent survey from Leger found that a [majority of Quebec residents](#) (57%) felt that the bill requires further amendment to protect English speakers who are seeking health care and social services.

Legault has claimed that those worried about access to health and social services in English [are victims or disinformation](#), and that nothing will change. Some in the health-care industry, as well as legal observers, [disagree](#), and have questioned why these services are included in the bill if they are not affected:

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**Support or Oppose Bill 96
(Quebec, n=1,211)**



Bill 96 has wide-ranging implications for the province. Quebecers were asked whether or not they support or oppose key aspects of the bill.

Support among Quebecers is stronger for the aspects applied to businesses as well as the enforcement from the Office Québécois de la langue française, but weaker for the new rules for communication with immigrants, caps on English Cégep attendance and removing the English-language proficiency requirement for judges:

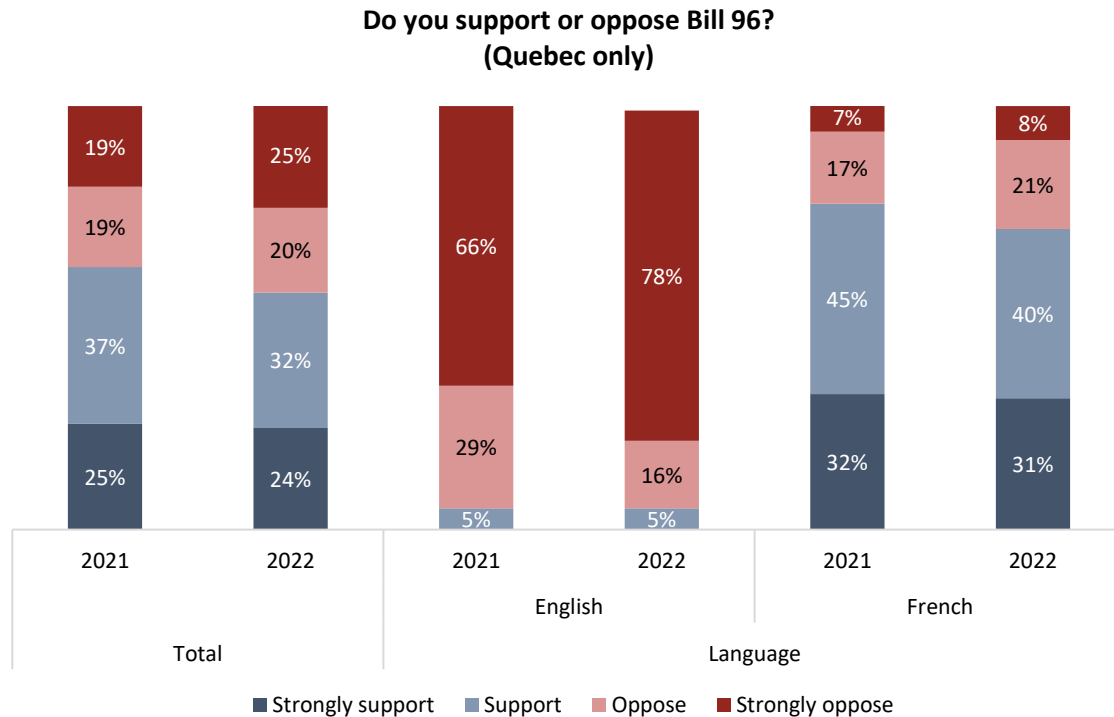
Support or Oppose some aspects of Bill 96 (Quebec, n=1,211)			
	Strongly support/ Support	Strongly oppose/ Oppose	Not sure /Can't say
Employers must demonstrate that a job requires knowledge of a language other than French if they wish to include it in the job description	69%	29%	3%
Businesses with 25 employees or more must ensure French is the common language of the workplace – documents and communications with employees must be available in the official language	67%	31%	2%
The Office québécois de la langue française has the ability to monitor and audit compliance with new French language standards	59%	36%	6%
Shifting all government communication with immigrants to French after 6 months of their arrival	45%	51%	4%
Limiting the number of students who can attend English Cégeps (junior colleges) to 17.5% of the overall student population	40%	52%	7%
Judges in Quebec will no longer need to be bilingual – that is, they are not required to have a proficiency in English, just French.	34%	62%	4%

Anglophones are much more likely than Francophones to oppose Bill 96 – nearly all English-speaking Quebecers (94%) do. A majority (71%) of Francophones support the bill.

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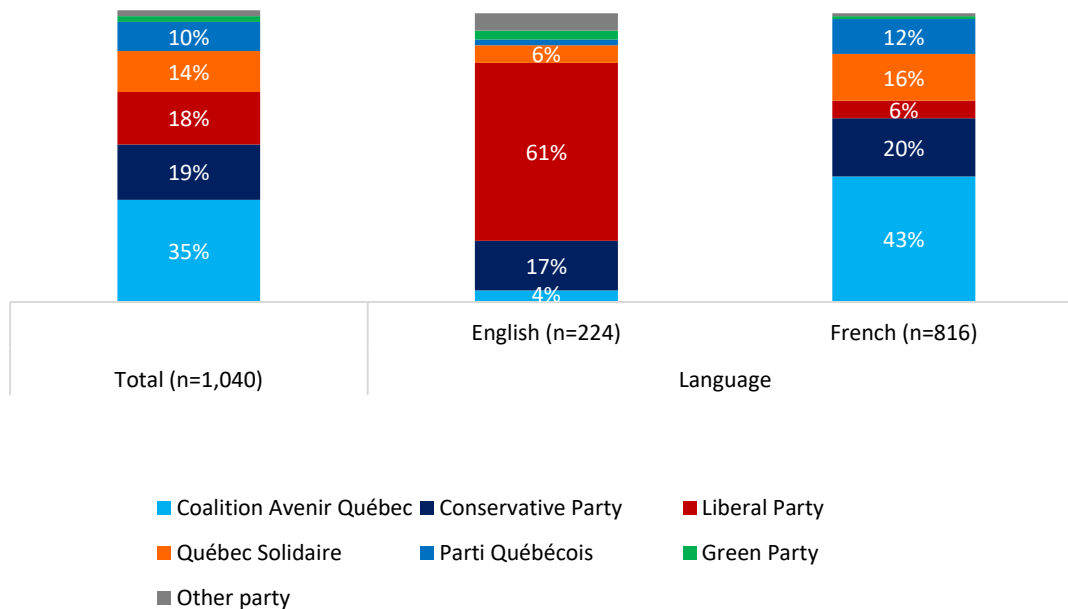
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ARI last asked about support for Bill 96 [in July last year](#):



The prominence of this issue in the public debate over recent months, of course, carries political implications. Just four per cent of those whose first language is English say they would support Legault's party, while most prefer the Liberals (61%). More than two-in-five (43%) French speakers choose the CAQ as their top choice:

**Current vote intention
(Leaning and decided voters)**



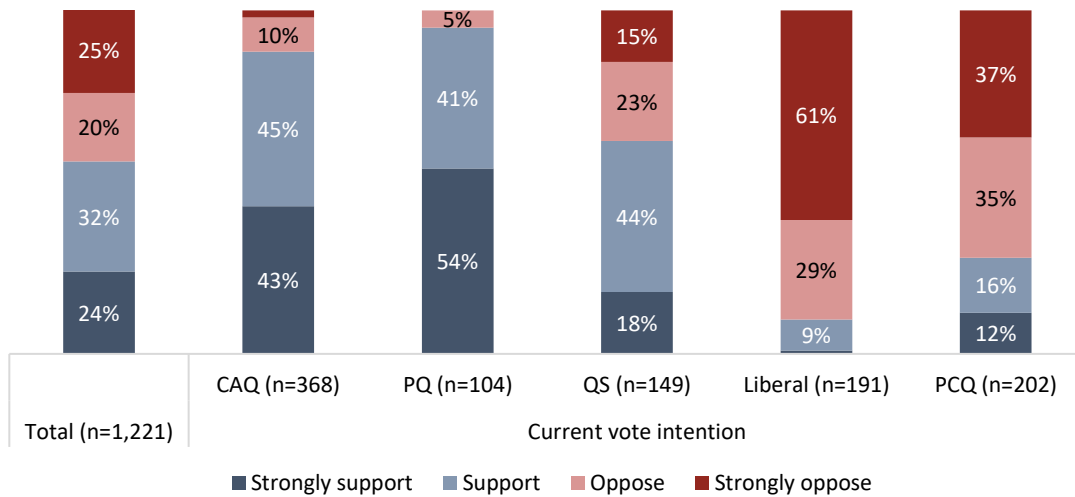
Conservatives, Liberals push back on Bill 96

The burgeoning Conservative Party of Quebec has been staunchly opposed to Bill 96, with leader Éric Duhaime calling the legislation “divisive and discriminatory”. Liberal Party leader Dominique Anglade, meanwhile, has said that if elected her party will alter but not repeal the bill. Notably, Anglade’s own current party supporters are most opposed to the bill at 90 per cent. They are joined by seven-in-ten (72%) who currently say they would vote for the Conservatives. Support for Bill 96 is strong among CAQ and Parti Québécois supporters, and those who would vote for Québec Solidaire:

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Support vs Oppose Bill 96



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

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