

Prairie Politics: Moe and Stefanson share a border, but residents' government satisfaction is worlds apart

Moe's government receives higher ratings, but both are panned on health care, cost of living

July 8, 2022 – Canada's summer of inflation has arrived and no part of the country is insulated from the rising cost of living.

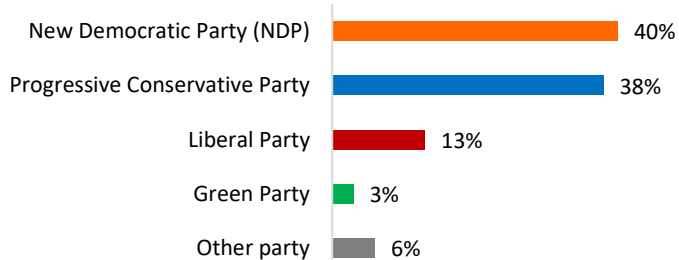
Indeed, new data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds cost of living to be the most pressing concern for residents in the middle of the country. Two-thirds in Saskatchewan (68%) and Manitoba (67%) select inflation as a top-three issue their province faces. Health care is in second place in both provinces (47% Saskatchewan, 55% Manitoba), while no other issue reaches such a high level of concern.

In both provinces, residents are critical of government performance on those two files. More than four-in-five in Manitoba say the government has mishandled health care (83%) and inflation (87%). The Saskatchewan government fares slightly better, but at least two-thirds believe Premier Scott Moe and the Saskatchewan party government has done a poor job with cost of living (68%) and health care (66%).

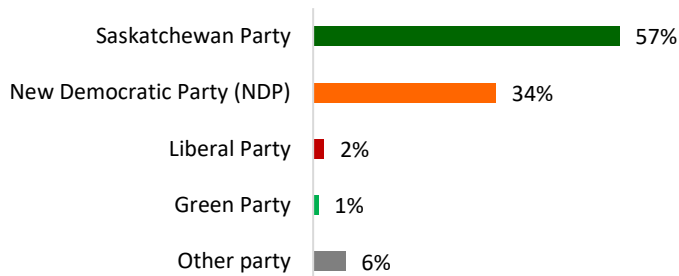
Still, for Moe there is plenty of political sunshine to be enjoyed this summer. The Saskatchewan Party holds a commanding 23-point lead in vote intention, with the second place NDP emerging from a leadership race and looking to find a way to close the gap before the 2024 election.

In Manitoba, the skies are increasingly gloomy for Premier Heather Stefanson and the Conservatives. Stefanson faces [strong unfavourability towards her performance as premier](#), significant criticism of her government's performance on every key issue, and a

Vote Intent - Manitoba (Decided voters, n=402)



Vote Intent - Saskatchewan (Decided voters, n=513)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from June 7-13, 2022 among a representative randomized sample of 594 Saskatchewanian who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

A representative randomized sample of 468 Manitoban adults who are members of Angus Reid Forum was surveyed at the same time. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 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.

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statistical tie with that province's NDP when it comes to vote intention. The next election in Manitoba is scheduled for 2023, leaving Stefanson less runway to correct course.

More Key Findings:

- At least half in Saskatchewan believe the government is doing a good job on the economy (53%) and the response to COVID-19 (51%). Manitoba's government gets the highest praise on the latter (44%), but notably in both provinces few (7%) consider the ongoing pandemic to be a top issue.
- The Saskatchewan Party's advantage over the NDP in vote intent is much greater outside of Saskatoon and Regina. Three-times as many people in those areas of the province say they would vote Saskatchewan Party (68%) as NDP (21%).
- In Manitoba, outside of the capital, half (51%) say they intend to support PC. In Winnipeg, half (51%) say they would vote NDP.

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: Saskatchewan

Top issues

The financial picture for the Saskatchewan government is rosier than initially projected. The province had a deficit of \$1.47 billion in the 2021-22 fiscal year, \$1.14 billion lower than expected due to high oil and potash prices and higher-than-expected revenue from taxes. That's the good news. The bad news is that, like everywhere else, Saskatchewan is dealing with record inflation. While the rate of inflation is lower than other parts of the country, people in the province are feeling the pain of higher prices, as food banks in Saskatchewan experience spikes in clients.

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Two-thirds (68%) of those living in Saskatchewan feel the rising cost of living is one of the top issues the province is facing, soaring above health care (47%), the economy and jobs (31%), the deficit (26%) and energy (24%).

Priorities are different for supporters of the province's two largest political parties. For those who say they would vote NDP if an election were held today, the issues of cost of living and health care are at the top. Two-in-five likely NDP voters pick climate change as a top issue, making it the third most selected issue among that group. For those who support the ruling Saskatchewan Party, two-in-five say each of oil and gas, the economy and jobs and the economy are top issues, putting those concerns on equal footing with health care:

Top provincial issues (Up to three chosen)			
	Total (n=594)	Provincial Vote Intent	
		Saskatchewan Party	NDP
Cost of living/Inflation	68%	73%	60%
Health Care	47%	42%	57%
The Economy/Jobs	31%	44%	11%
The Deficit/Government spending	26%	36%	7%
Energy - Oil & Gas/Pipelines	24%	39%	2%
Senior care	17%	18%	17%
Housing Affordability	15%	10%	19%
Environment/Climate change	15%	2%	40%
Education	14%	10%	20%
Poverty/homelessness	11%	4%	22%
First Nations/Indigenous issues	9%	4%	18%
Coronavirus/COVID-19 response	7%	3%	12%
Drug Use/addictions/opioid crisis	7%	6%	9%

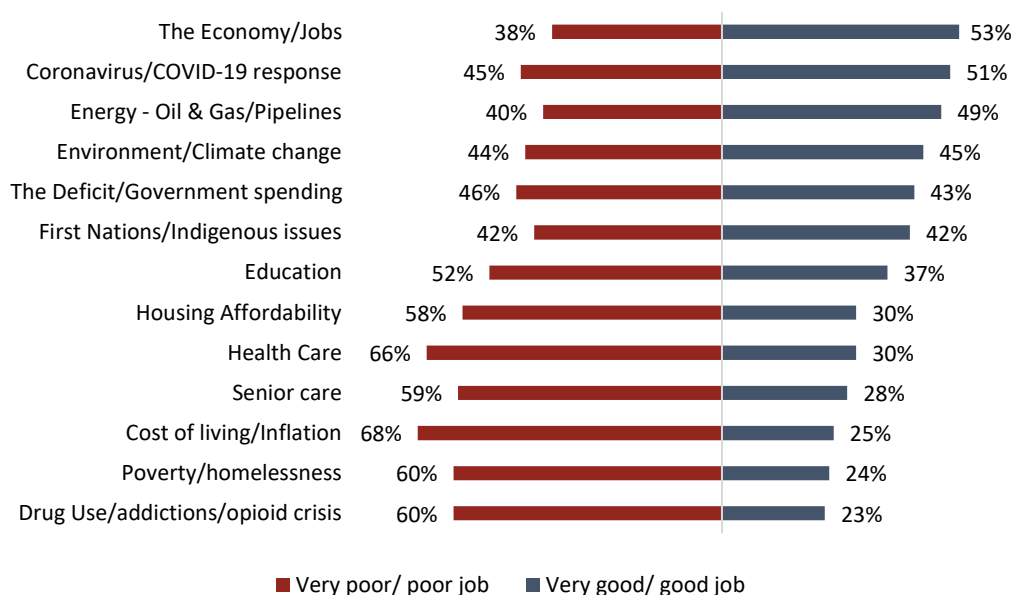
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Government performance

On average, two-in-five say the Saskatchewan government is doing a good job on the above issues, with praise highest on the economy (53%), COVID-19 response (51%) and energy and pipelines (49%). Residents offer the least kudos on the government's performance on the opioid crisis (23%), poverty (24%) and the residents' top issue, cost of living (25%).

Do you think the current government of Saskatchewan is doing a good job or a poor job in each of the following areas? (Saskatchewan, n=594)

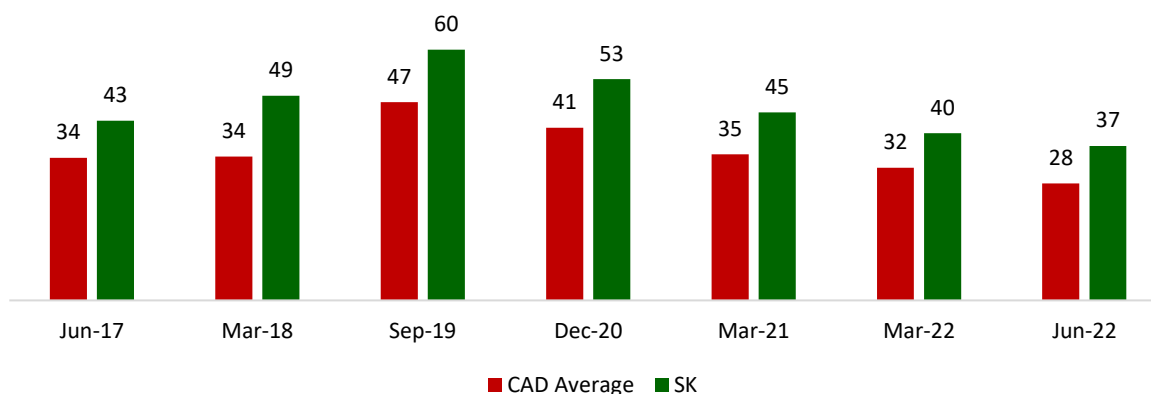


Still, Saskatchewan fares **the best of any province** on Angus Reid Institute's Government Performance Index, and maintains a gap between itself and the national average:

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



Vote intent

The Saskatchewan Party maintains a strong level of support. Three-in-five (57%) say they would vote for Premier Scott Moe's party if an election were held today.

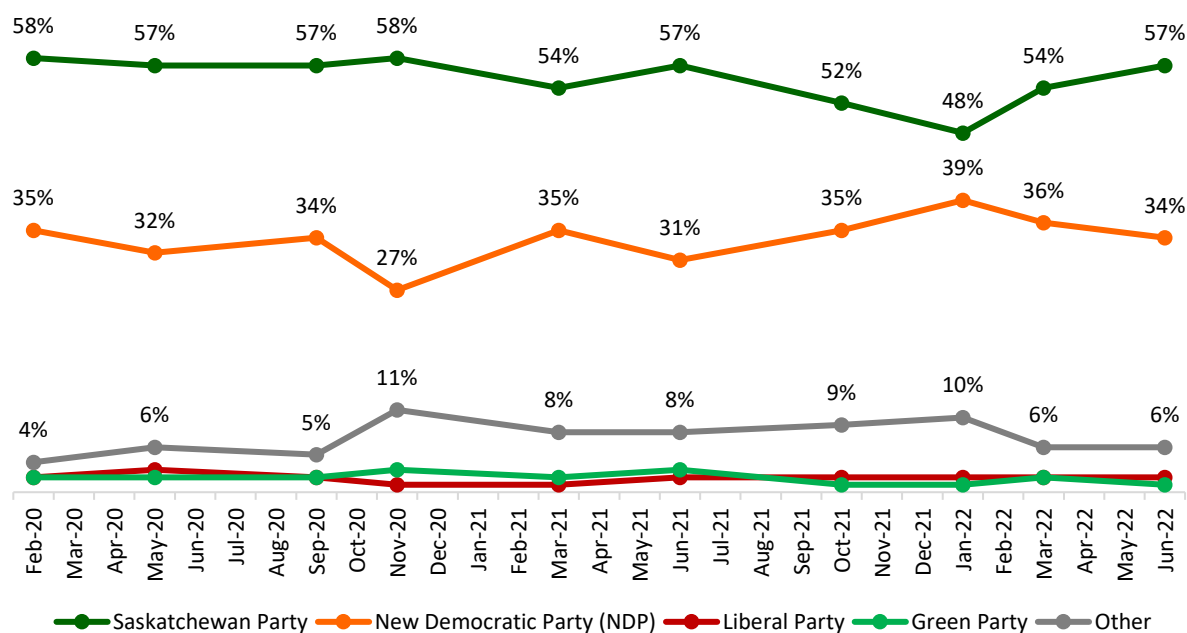
Except for a brief, two-quarter dip in late 2021 and early 2022, support for the Saskatchewan Party has remained relatively consistent over the course of the last two years.

One-third (34%) say they would vote for the rival NDP, led now by newly elected leader Carla Beck, the first woman to lead the party. Beck and the NDP face a steep hill to climb between now and the 2024 election. As support for the Saskatchewan Party remains consistently strong, the NDP have bled members in the four years since the party last held a leadership race. There are just over 7,000 registered NDP members now, almost half the number there were in 2018.

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Vote Intent - Saskatchewan (Decided voters)

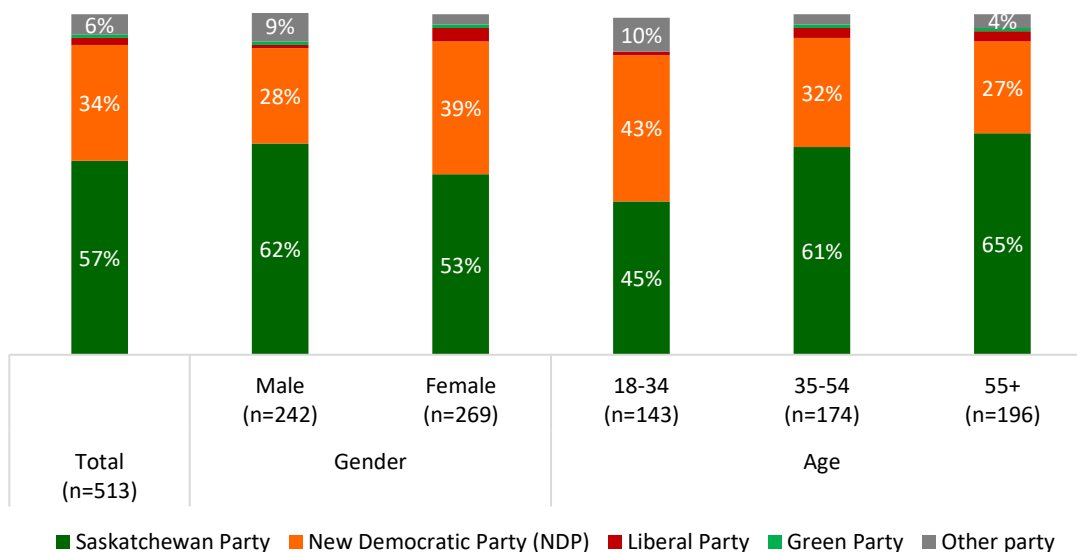


The Saskatchewan Party's 23-point advantage in vote intent narrows to 14 points among women, but still more than half (53%) say they would cast their ballot for Moe's party. The NDP is most competitive among those aged 18- to 34-years-old, but among other age groups, support is half that of the Saskatchewan Party:

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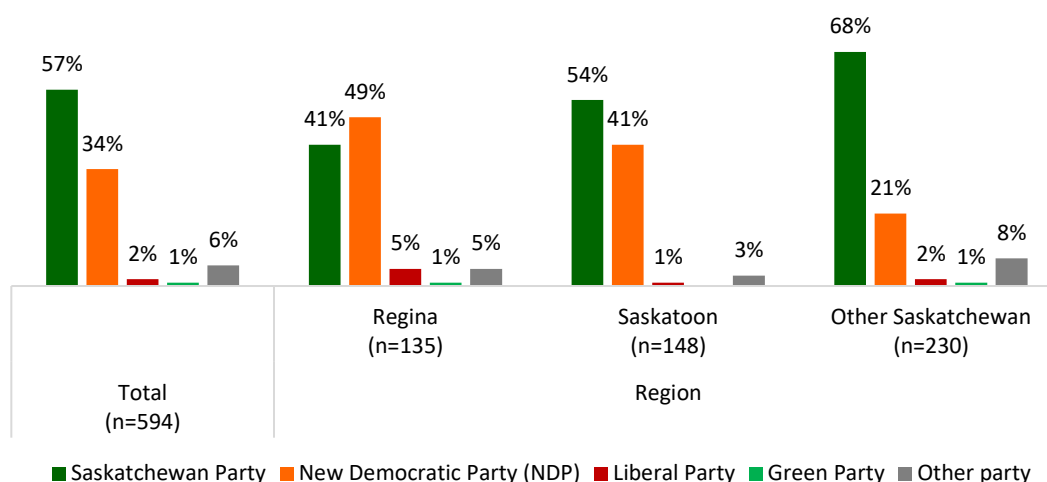
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Vote Intent - Saskatchewan (Decided voters)



If the NDP hope to make a competitive race in the next election, they'll have to make inroads outside the province's two largest cities. Support for the Saskatchewan party is nearly triple that of the NDP in areas of the province not contained within Saskatoon and Regina:

Vote Intent - Saskatchewan (Decided voters)



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Part Two: Manitoba**Top issues**

In Manitoba, the top two issues are also cost of living and health care. Two-thirds (67%) of Manitobans select the former as a top-three concern and more than half (55%) select the latter. Those are followed by housing affordability (24%) and jobs (24%).

Inflation is adding heat to various labour conflicts in the province. Already, there have been demonstrations by [Manitoba Hydro natural gas workers](#) and [health-care support workers](#), while collective agreements for unionized supermarket workers in the province [will expire this summer](#) as well. However, labour unrest is not a situation unique to Manitoba, some expect it will be [a national one this summer](#).

For those say they intend to vote NDP, health care is a more pressing concern than cost of living. For PC supporters, nothing comes close to cost of living, which is selected as a top-three issue by four-in-five (78%). The two camps of partisans differentiate in their concern over health care (44% PC, 64% NDP), the economy (34% PC, 11% NDP), the deficit (39% PC, 4% NDP), climate change (5% PC, 32% NDP), energy (30% PC, 4% NDP), poverty (5% PC, 26% NDP) and Indigenous issues (3% PC, 13% NDP).

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Top provincial issues (Up to three chosen)			
	Total (n=468)	Provincial Vote Intent	
		Progressive Conservative	NDP
Cost of living/Inflation	67%	78%	57%
Health Care	55%	44%	64%
Housing Affordability	24%	21%	27%
The Economy/Jobs	24%	34%	11%
The Deficit/Government spending	20%	39%	4%
Senior care	18%	15%	19%
Environment/Climate change	17%	5%	32%
Energy - Oil & Gas/Pipelines	16%	30%	4%
Education	16%	11%	19%
Poverty/homelessness	15%	5%	26%
First Nations/Indigenous issues	7%	3%	13%
Coronavirus/COVID-19 response	7%	4%	9%
Drug Use/addictions/opioid crisis	6%	3%	9%

Government performance

Premier Heather Stefanson can only look enviously across the border at [both approval for Moe](#) and appraisal of their respective governments' performance.

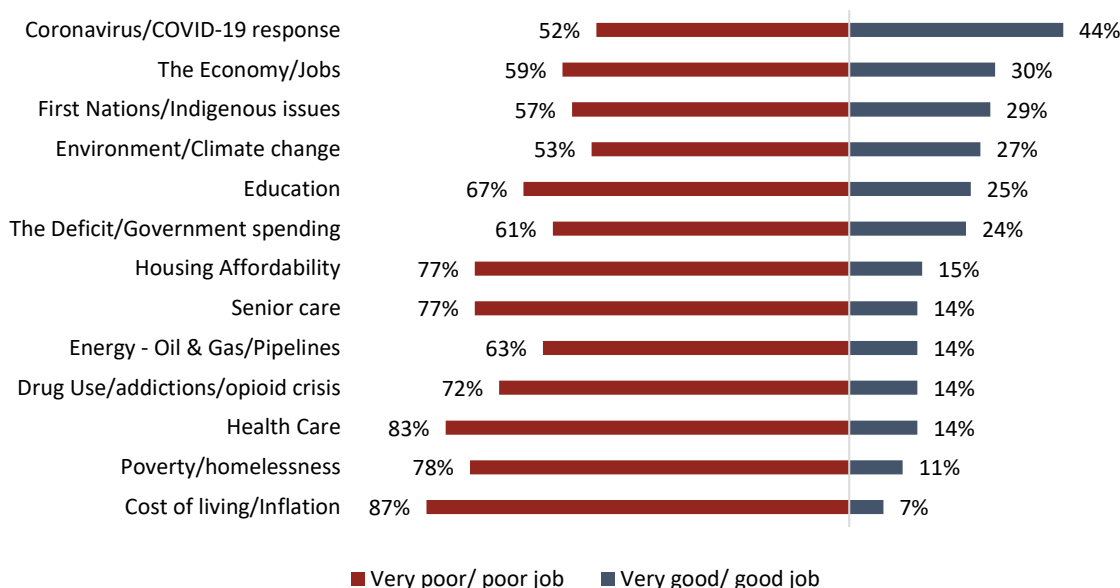
Related: [Premiers' Performance: Good and bad for Houston. Horgan, Legault see their approval slide](#)

Few believe the Manitoba government is handling health care (14%) well, half (7%) say the same of inflation, the two top issues as selected by residents. Appraisal is highest for the Manitoba government on the COVID-19 response (44%). Still, at least half of respondents believe the government is performing poorly on all the issues surveyed:

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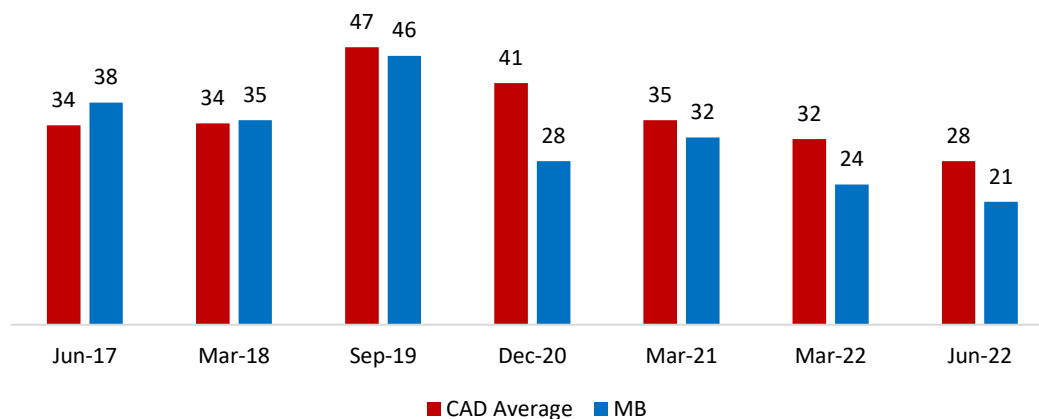
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**Do you think the current government of Manitoba is doing a good job or a poor job in each of the following areas?
(Manitoba, n=468)**



By ARI's Government Performance Index, the PC government gets the lowest ratings in the country from its constituents.

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

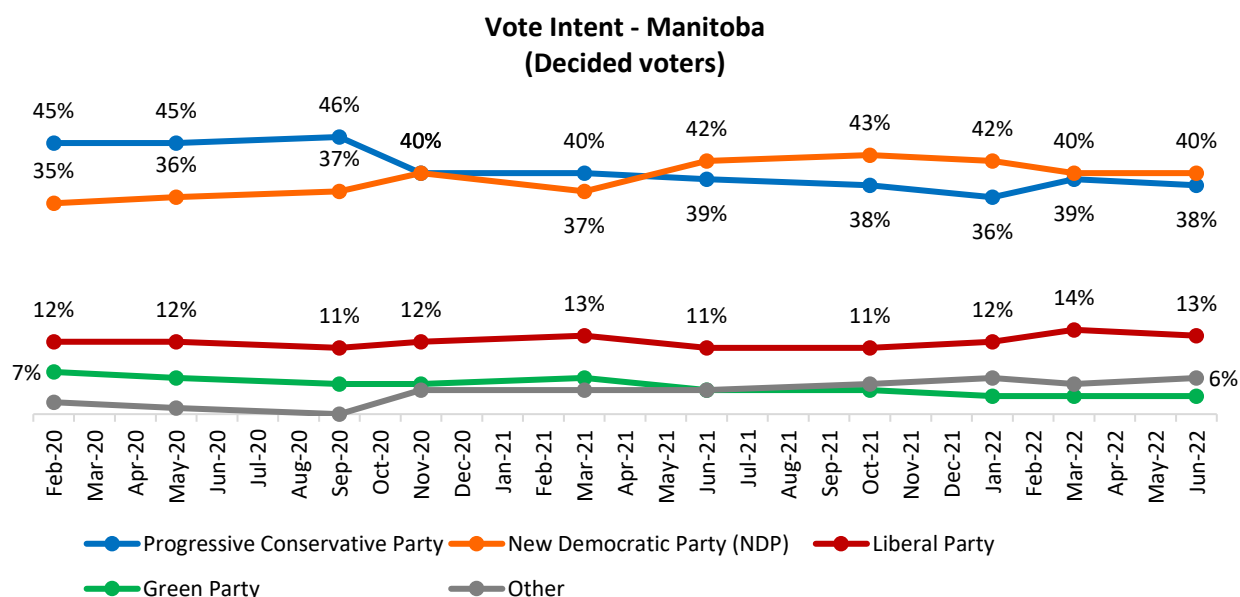


Vote intent

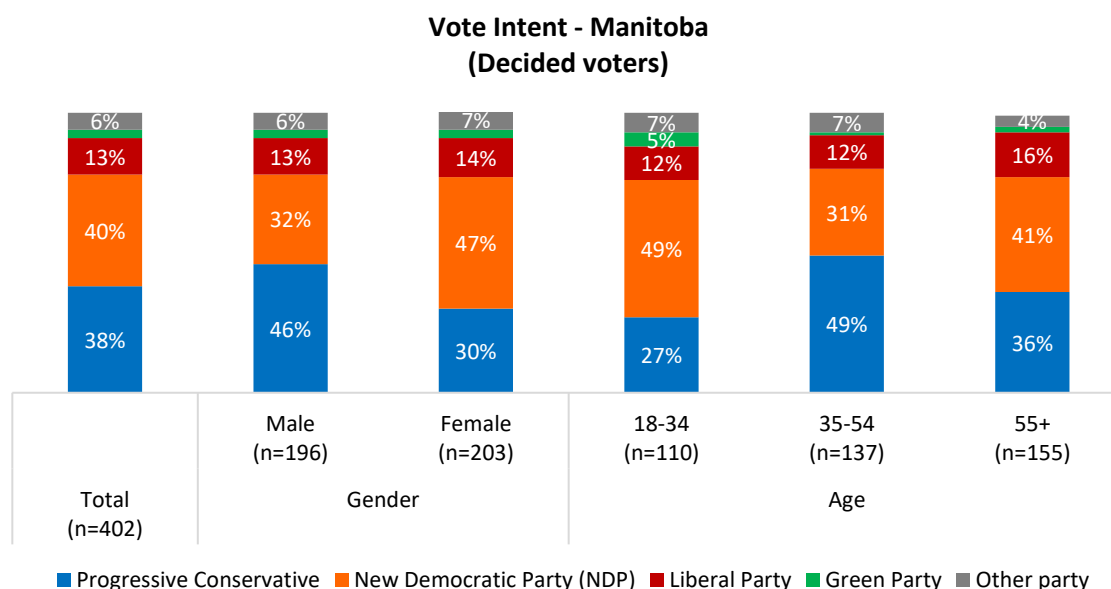
Despite pervasive negative attitudes to Stefanson and her government, support for the PC party she leads has remained consistent since November 2020 at two-in-five, in a statistical tie with the Manitoba NDP over the last two quarters.

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There are notable age and gender splits when it comes to vote intention. Nearly half of men (46%) support the PCs, while three-in-ten (32%) say they would vote NDP if an election were held today. Vice versa is true of women. The NDP hold a significant lead among the youngest voters, aged 18- to 34-years old, while the PCs hold a sizable advantage among those aged 35- to 54-years-old. The gap between the parties is narrowest among those over the age of 54:

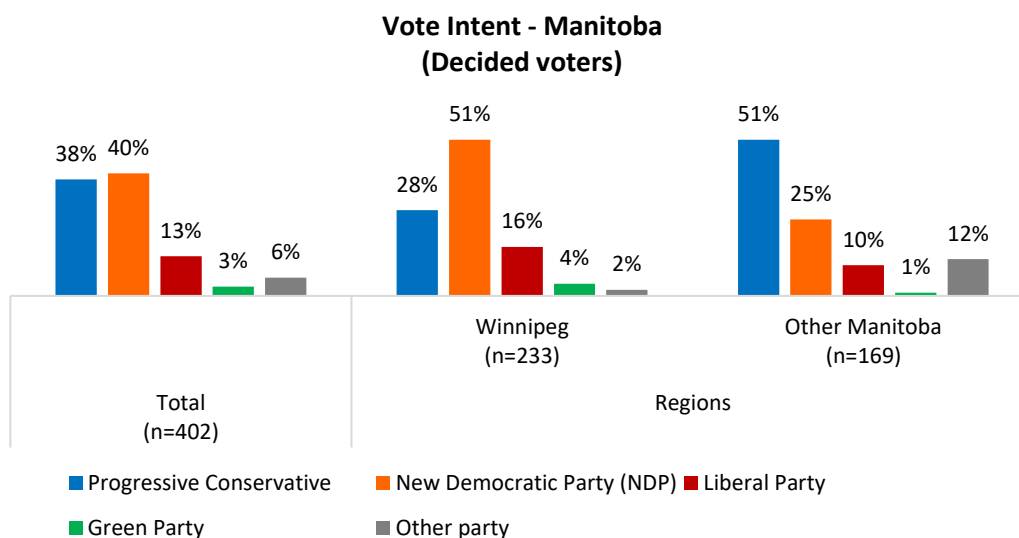


There are significant regional differences in support for the two parties as well. Half of those in Winnipeg (51%) say they would vote for the NDP. Outside the capital, half (51%) instead would vote PC:

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

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