

Cross-Canada Outlook: In Manitoba, Kinew's popularity not necessarily driving government satisfaction

Despite challenges of health care and cost of living, more say Manitoba on right track than wrong track

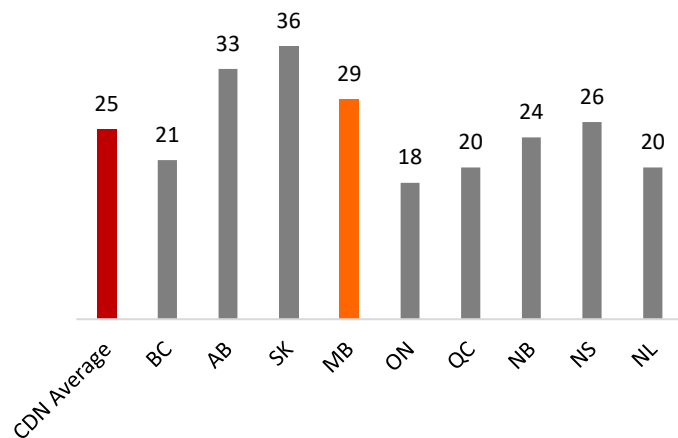
April 8, 2026 – While Premier Wab Kinew continues to stand out as the most approved premier in the country, Manitobans remain more tempered in their assessments of government performance, even as they express relatively high confidence in the province's overall direction.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Manitobans divided on their personal economic trajectory, with twice as many saying they are worse off than better off compared to a year ago (37% vs. 19%), and the largest group reporting little change.

Looking ahead, optimism remains cautious – one-in-five expect improvement but more anticipate further decline. As in much of the country, cost of living and health care dominate public priorities. This presents the largest challenge to both Kinew's government and his provincial counterparts. Just one-quarter say the government is handling each of those two top priorities well.

Despite these pressures, Manitoba stands among the most optimistic provinces in Canada. More than two-in-five (45%) say the province is on the right track, a level matched by only their neighbours in Saskatchewan.

**Angus Reid Institute Weighted Provincial Government Performance Index
March 2026**



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from March 11-17, 2026, among a randomized sample of 356 Canadian adults who are residents of Manitoba. Respondents are drawn from the [Angus Reid Forum](#), a large-scale online panel developed to include Canadian residents in each of the 343 federal ridings in Canada and representative of the Canadian population by age, gender, family income, ethnic status and education. The sample was weighted to be representative of adults nationwide according to region, gender, age, household income, and education, based on the Canadian census. 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.

For more information on our polling methods, [click here](#).

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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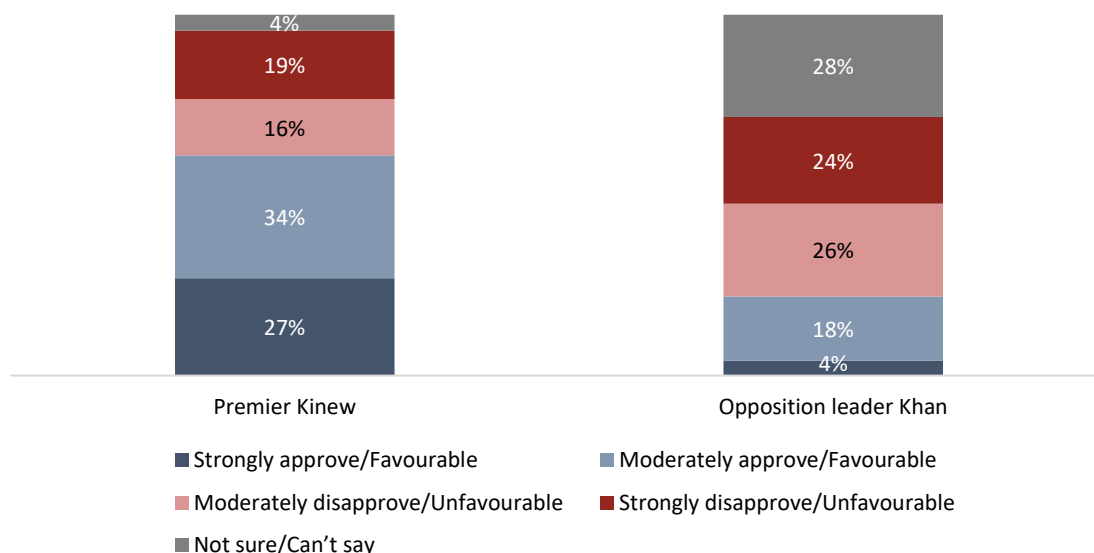
INDEX

- Views of the premier and opposition leader
- Government Performance Index
- Government performance trend
- Top issues
- Performance on top issues
- Economic Outlook
- Right track or wrong track?

Views of the premier and opposition leader

Manitoba NDP leader and Premier Wab Kinew has received new federal NDP leader Avi Lewis more warmly than some provincial New Democrats, and for Lewis, this is likely an important endorsement. While Alberta [NDP leader Naheed Nenshi](#) and Saskatchewan [NDP leader Carla Beck](#) expressed early frustration with Lewis' position on fossil fuels, with both rebuking him, Kinew – the most popular New Democrat in the country – embraced Lewis at the convention in Winnipeg. While Lewis finds his footing, Kinew may prove a valuable example, as he remains the [most popular premier](#) in the country. His opposition, CPC leader Obby Khan is disapproved of by half and unknown to many:

**Views of Manitoba leaders -
Approval for premier, favourability for opposition leader**



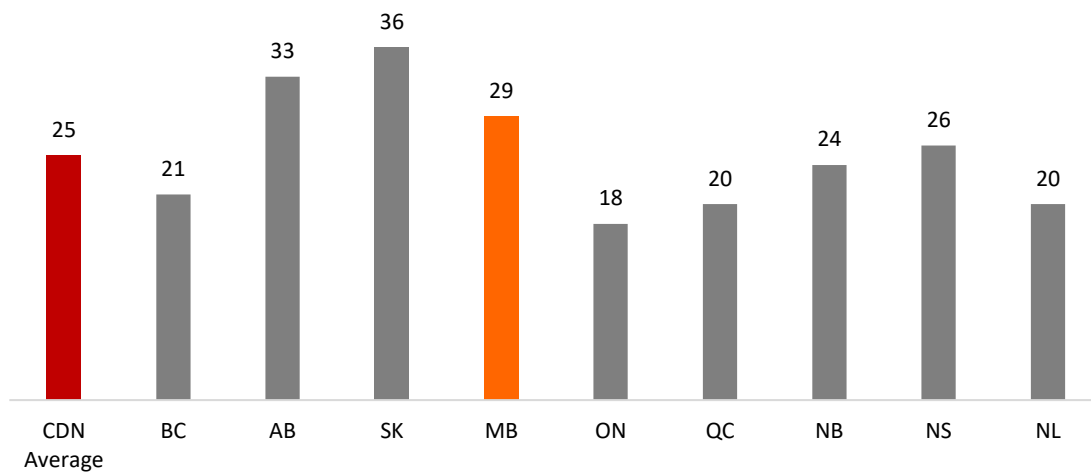
Government Performance Index

While Manitobans generally like their premier, they – like most of the country – are not overly positive about the performance of the government he leads. Manitoba's NDP scores better than most provinces on the Angus Reid Institute's Weighted Provincial Government Performance Index – which scores performance across 16 different provincial issues – but still rates relatively poorly in the broader context.

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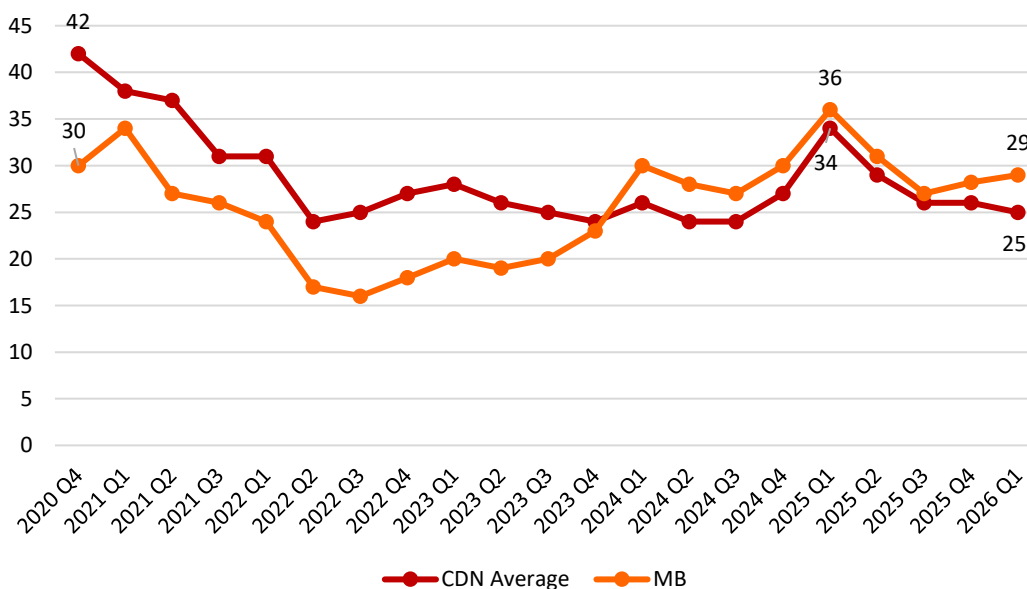
**Angus Reid Institute Weighted Provincial Government Performance Index
March 2026**



Government performance trend

This score of a 29, based on those saying the government has done a good job on issues in the province – [see detailed tables for more](#) – represents a slight increase in satisfaction over the past six months, but a considerable dip compared to the beginning of 2025. This, as [concerns over the deficit grow](#) and residents continue to be frustrated by cost of living challenges.

Weighted Government Performance Index over time



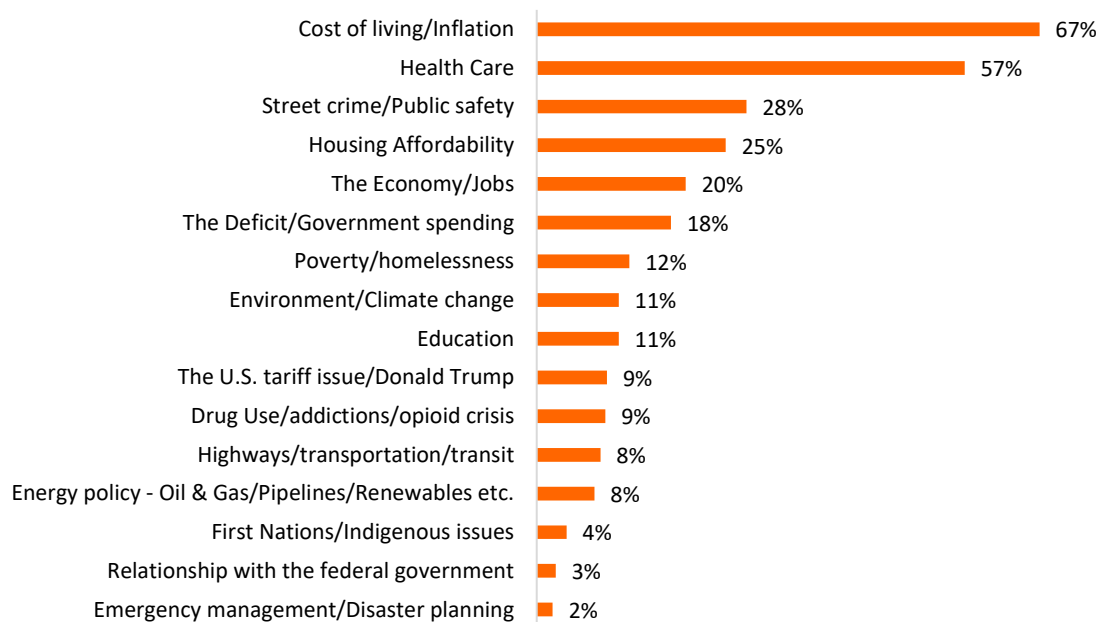
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Top issues

The Manitoba government has attempted to soften affordability challenges with [the removal of PST on all groceries, and an increase in government spending](#). That issue, the cost of living, alongside healthcare, continues to dominate residents' priorities. The government will invest more than \$1 billion more in the coming year on health care:

Which of these issues would you say are the most important to you, personally. Please select up to three:



Performance on top issues

Much of the government's elevated performance compared to other provinces is based on a few issues. The relationship between the Manitoba NDP and Mark Carney's Liberal government is viewed as strong. This may be partially due to the [federal-provincial collaboration regarding Port of Churchill Plus](#), which was announced as one of the Major Projects in the Liberal agenda last year.

First Nations and Indigenous issues are also viewed as a source of strong government performance. Kinew, Manitoba's first First Nations Premier, has made nation-to-nation cooperation and reconciliation a key priority. More troublingly, performance on the two top issues facing Manitobans is viewed much less positively. One-quarter say the government is doing a good job of handling the cost of living and health care:

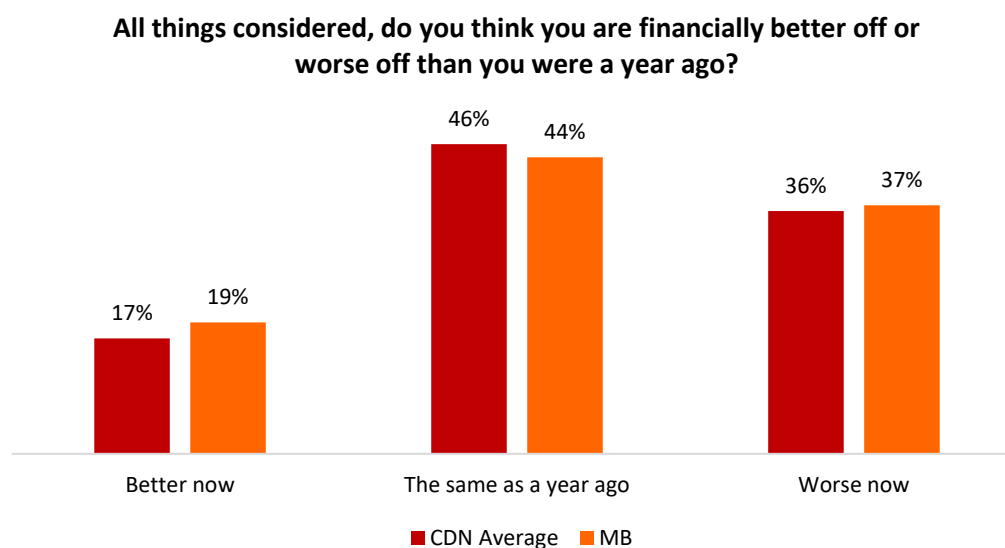
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Percentage saying their provincial government has done a “good job” of handling each file:		
Top Five Issues are highlighted:		
	CDN Average	MB
Relationship with the federal government	45%	64%
The U.S. tariff issue/Donald Trump	36%	45%
First Nations/Indigenous issues	32%	57%
Emergency management/Disaster planning	32%	36%
Highways/transportation/transit	32%	34%
Energy policy - Oil & Gas/Pipelines/Renewables etc.	31%	37%
Environment/Climate change	30%	38%
The Economy/Jobs	29%	38%
Education	28%	42%
Street crime/Public safety	26%	27%
Health Care	20%	26%
The Deficit/Government spending	19%	23%
Drug Use/addictions/opioid crisis	19%	28%
Cost of living/Inflation	16%	26%
Housing Affordability	16%	23%
Poverty/homelessness	16%	23%

Economic Outlook

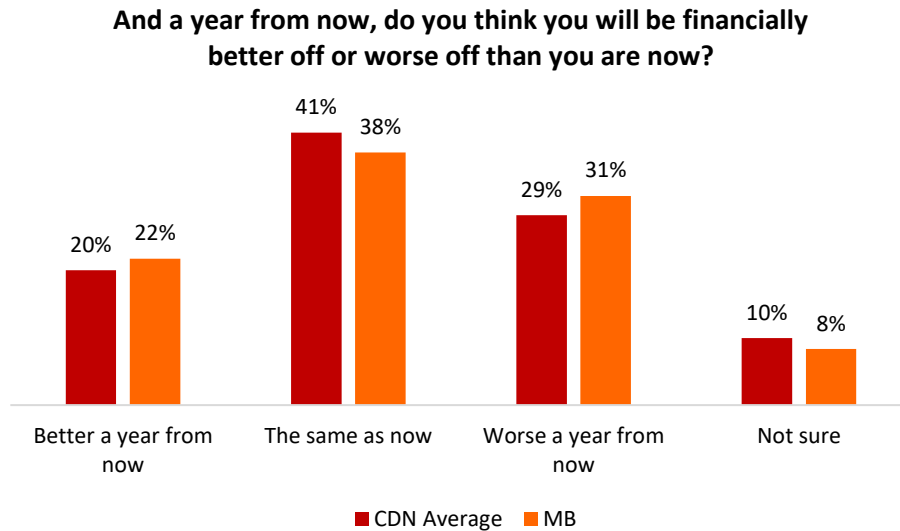
With the cost of living weighing heavily on the minds of most residents, Angus Reid Institute asked two core questions about the past twelve months and the next twelve months. Manitobans are twice as likely to say that they’re worse off now financially than better off compared to last year (37% vs 19%), while the largest group say their position is essentially the same:



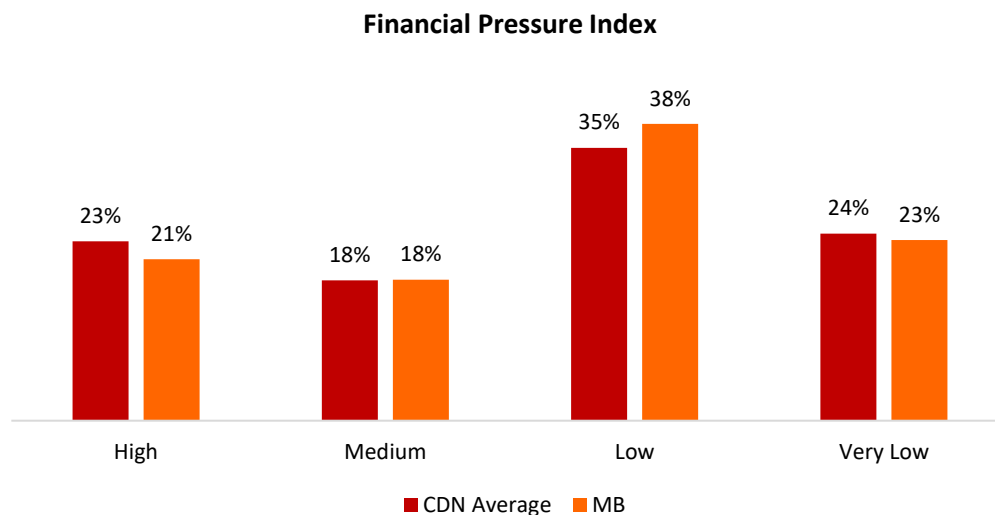
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And while one-in-five residents say they expect to be better off next year at this time (22%), still, a larger number say they'll be worse off (31%). Both numbers mirror the national average and show the broad challenges that Canadians are facing:



To understand and compare the realities of Canadians across the country, ARI created a [Financial Pressure Index](#), which scores respondents on eight questions and sorts them into one of four groups based on the intensity of the financial pressure they face. The proportion of those dealing with High financial pressure is slightly lower than the Canadian average, while – in a more encouraging finding – three-in-five Manitobans are facing Low or Very low levels of financial distress:



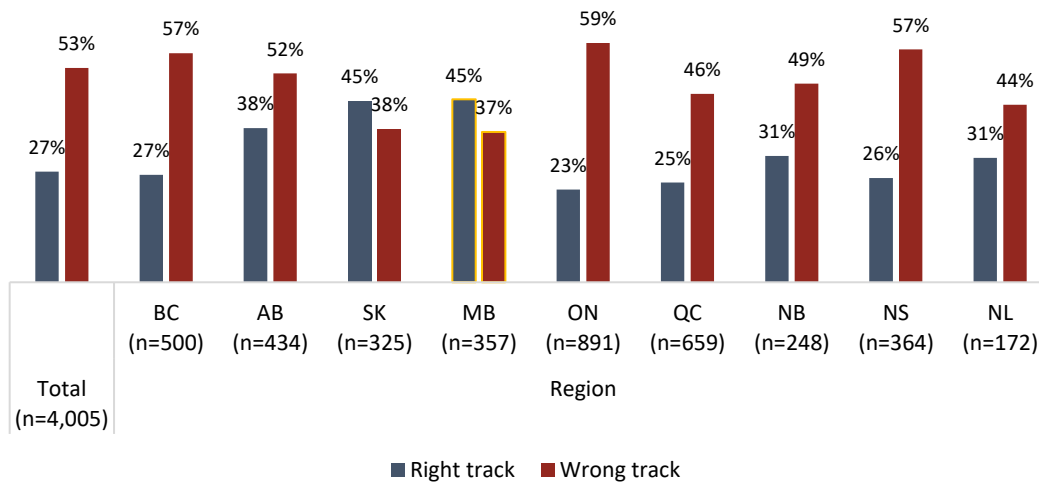
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Right track or wrong track?

While challenges are clear for the province, optimism remains high compared to most of the federation. More than two-in-five (45%) say that their province is on the right track, tied with Saskatchewan for the highest level in the country:

Overall, do you feel your province is on the right track or the wrong track?



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

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