



Results ▶▶

BC HST Telephone Survey



Prepared for:
Canadian Restaurant and
Food Services Association

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Methodology

- A random digit dialled telephone survey was conducted among 604 residents of BC. Interviews were made across five nights, from November 14th to November 19th, 2009.
- A sample of this size is considered accurate to an estimated margin of error of ± 4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- The margin of error will be larger within each sub-grouping of the sample
- *Note: Graphs may not always total 100% due to rounding values rather than any error in data.*



Restaurants matter

- Restaurants play a significant part in many BCers lives:
 - Half (51%) go to a QSR at least once a week
 - Over half (57%) go to a full service restaurant at least several times a month
- Almost a quarter have a direct connection to the sector:
 - 17% either work in the sector themselves or have an immediate family member who does.
 - Another 6% are in a household that works for a business that depends significantly on the restaurant sector.



Strong and deeply held HST opposition is driving provincial dissatisfaction

- Three quarters oppose the HST decision, 63% strongly oppose it.
- HST is tied for number one among open-ended responses to the question “Is there any particular issue in the provincial government’s performance that concerns you?”
- 67 per cent are less likely to support a new meal tax to be applied to restaurants and coffee shops when told that the “HST will raise more money from consumers to give tax breaks to business and there won’t be more money for health or social programs.”
- 64 per cent are less likely to support a new meal tax when told that “prepared food sold in groceries, such as frozen pizza, won’t be taxed while pizza made by local workers in a local pizzeria will be taxed.”
- 59 per cent are less likely to support a new meal tax when told that “there are 173,000 jobs in B.C. coffee shops and restaurants at stake.”



Federal conservatives are not immune to HST damage

- Currently, 35% of BCers are aware that the HST is being initiated by the federal Conservative government
- When informed that the HST was proposed by the federal government and that they offered the provincial government a \$1.6 billion incentive to go along, 54% indicated they had a less favourable impression of the federal Conservatives.
- 40% of current Conservatives voters are less favourable towards the federal government when learning about the federal government's involvement.



Strong support for exempting food in restaurants

- 64% favour exempting food in restaurants if HST proceeds
- 64% favour gradual implementation if food in restaurants is taxed
- 81% agree it is not fair to implement a tax that will hurt some workers and businesses more than others without doing something to help those feeling the greatest impact.

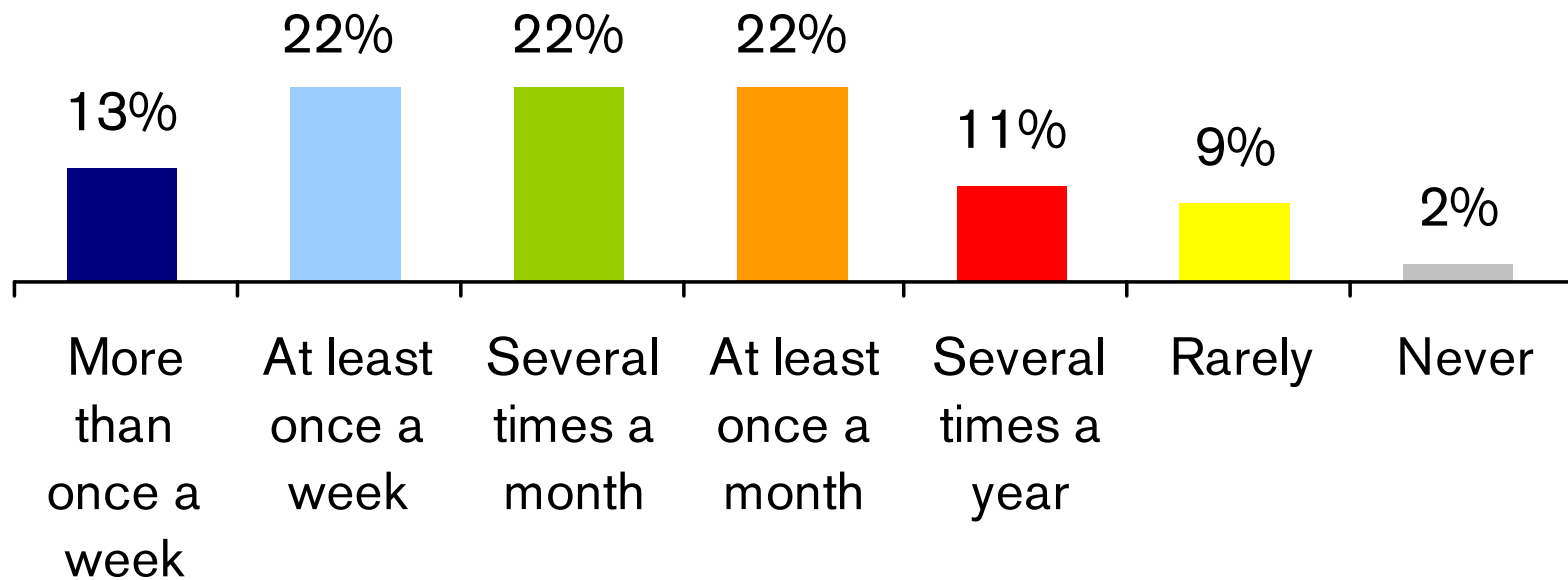


Restaurant Connections



Majority go to full service restaurant at least several times a month

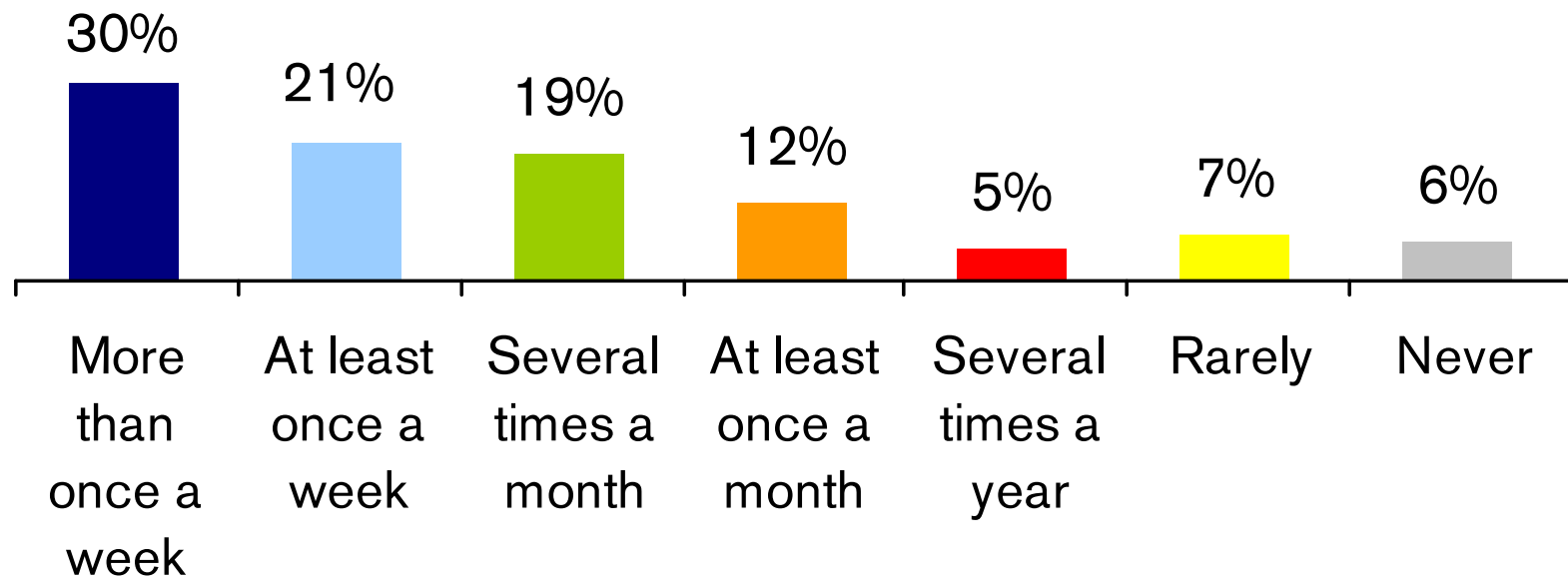
Q How often to you go out to a full service restaurant for a sit down meal?



Majority go to QSR at least once a week

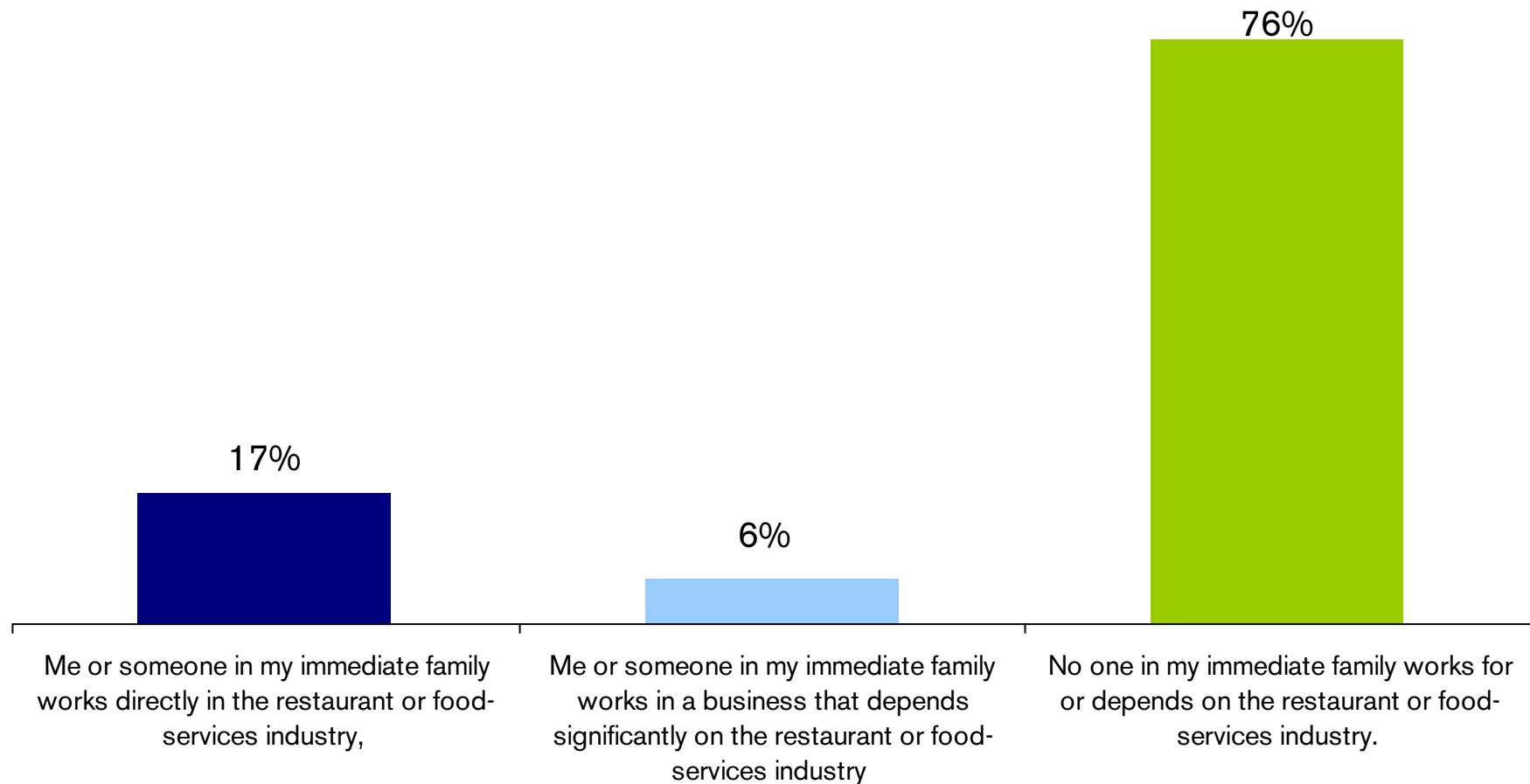
Q

How often do you go out to a coffee shop or fast food restaurant whether it is to eat in or take out?



Almost one in four work directly in or indirectly for ¹⁰ the restaurant industry

Q Which of the following statements best represents your point of view?



Note: DK (1%) not shown

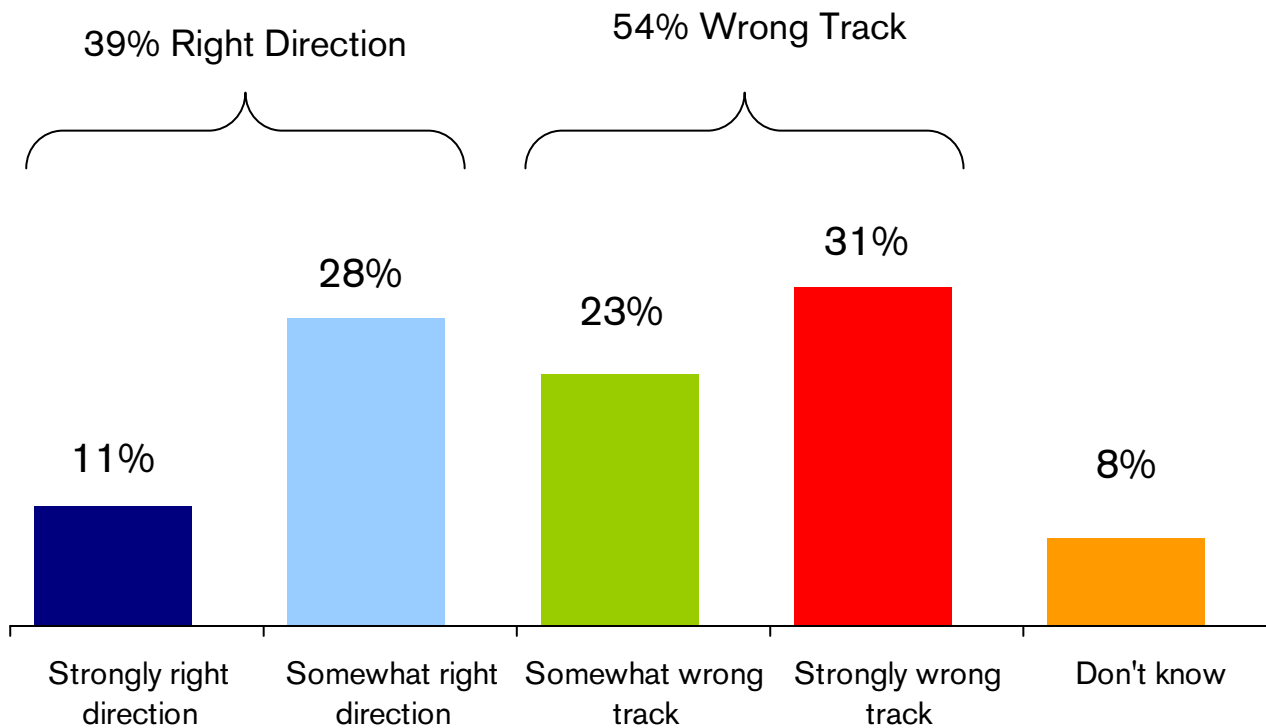
Context



A majority feel BC on the wrong track



Generally speaking, do you feel things in BC are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track? And do you feel strongly or somewhat strongly about that?



Those that responded 'Strongly wrong track'

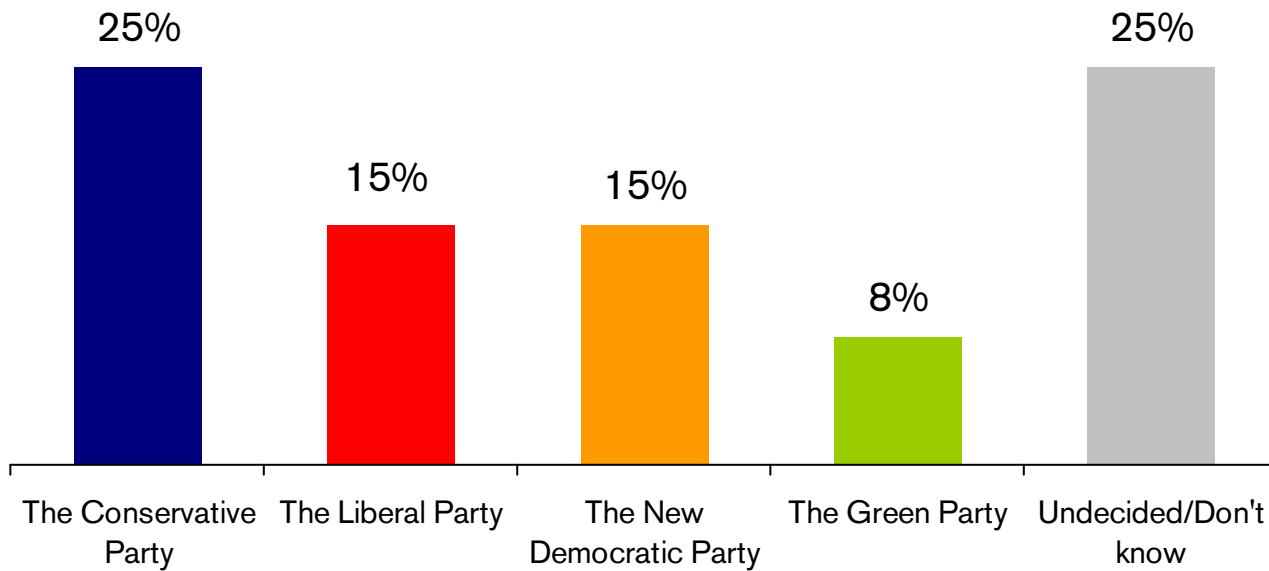
| Federal Vote | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| Conservative | 22% |
| Liberal | 8% |
| NDP | 50% |
| Green | 26% |

| HST support | Percentage |
|-------------|------------|
| Support | 8% |
| Oppose | 36% |
| Neither | 25% |



Federal Conservatives enjoy strong lead

Q If a FEDERAL election were held today, which party would you vote for?



Note: Other (2%) not shown

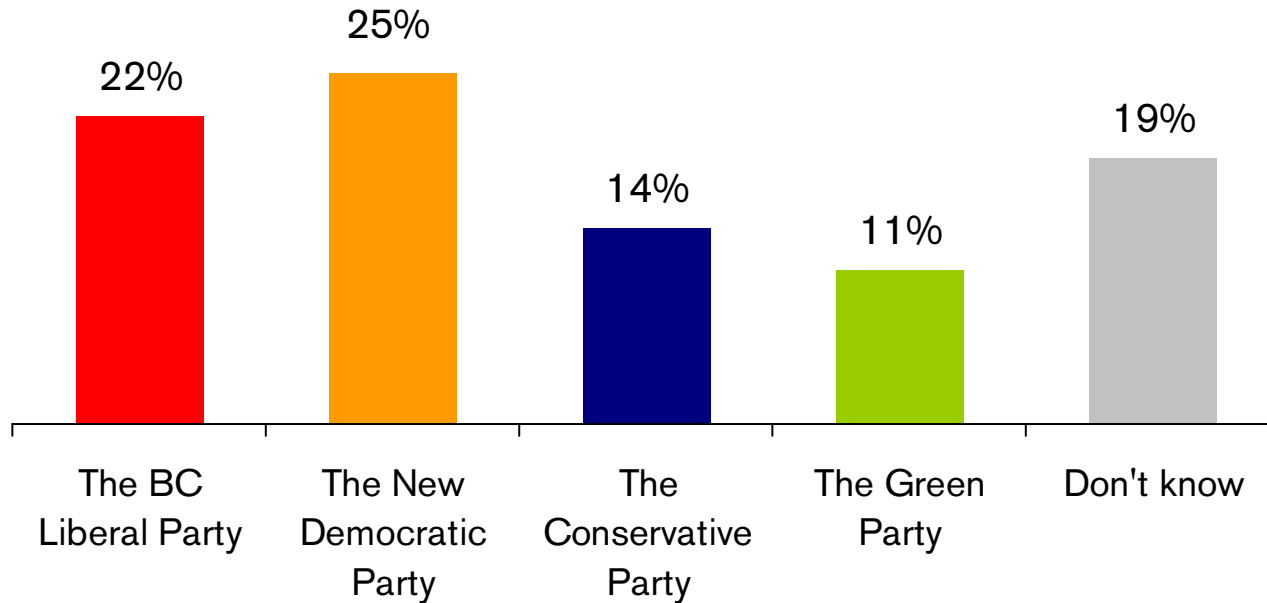
Those that responded 'The Liberal Party'

| HST support | |
|-------------|-----|
| Support | 29% |
| Oppose | 12% |
| Neither | 23% |

Provincial NDP hold marginal lead over Liberals



Now, if the provincial election was held today, which party's candidate would you vote for in your local riding? Would it be...?



Those that responded 'The BC Liberals'

| HST support | |
|-------------|-----|
| Support | 41% |
| Oppose | 17% |
| Neither | 35% |

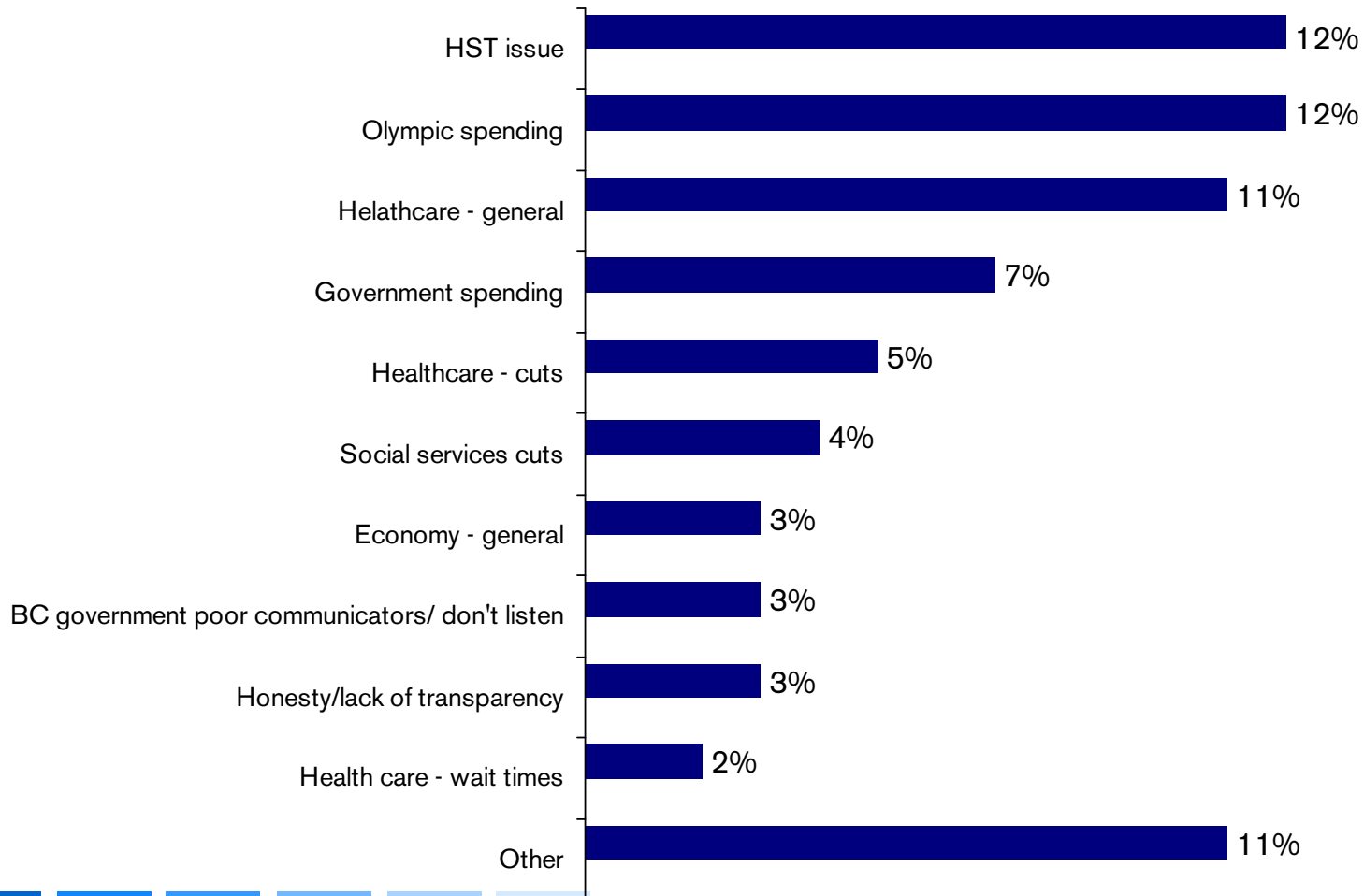


Note: Other (4%) not shown

HST issue tied for first among issues driving BC Liberal dissatisfaction



Is there any particular issue in the provincial government's performance that concerns you? (IF BREAKING PROMISES, LIES, ETC PROBE FOR SPECIFICS – WHAT PROMISE IN PARTICULAR, WHAT DID THEY LIE ABOUT?) Issues above three percent



Note: Don't know (1%) not shown



Detailed Verbatims



Is there any particular issue in the provincial government's performance that concerns you? (IF BREAKING PROMISES, LIES, ETC PROBE FOR SPECIFICS – WHAT PROMISE IN PARTICULAR, WHAT DID THEY LIE ABOUT?)

HST issue

- “Disapprove of the HST. Government does not do enough public consultation before implementing changes.”
- “HST is too high for consumers and food services and I really dislike this new tax rate.”
- “HST concerns me a lot.”
- “The HST: The fact that the government wasn't honest with it beforehand.”

Olympic spending

- “The Olympics~~ amount of \$\$ spending, and benefit of the Olympics only goes to small part of BC, and not the entire province.”
- “2010 Olympics-overspending on the Olympic games.”
- “Winter Olympics costing the province.”
- “I don't like the way they just splurge on the Olympic and left the poor people in the city to fend for themselves we need stuff for the poor people like social housing and treatment centers for the people who get addicted to drugs and things...”

Health Care - general

- “The direction health care is going.”
- “Reduction of health care services.”
- “Health care is the worst in the country.”



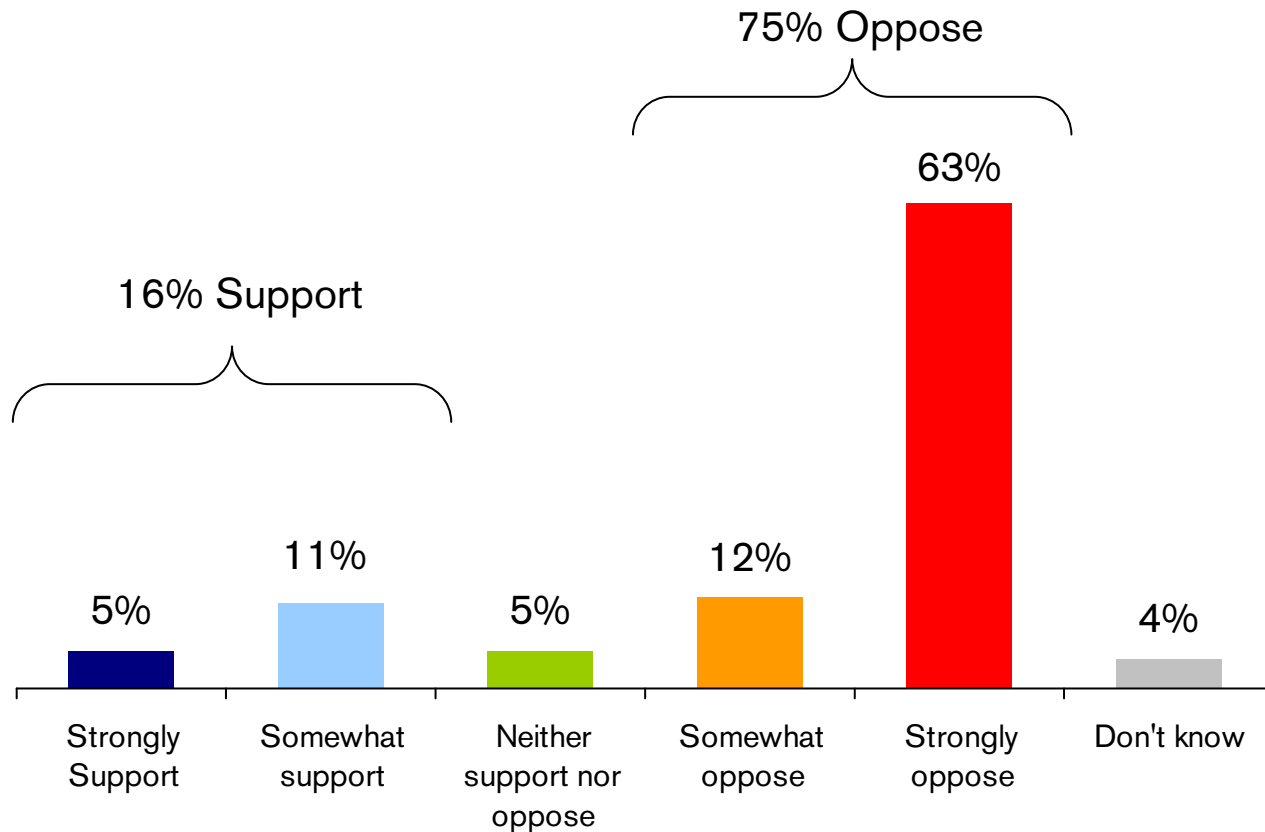
Harmonization



Three quarters oppose HST with high level of intensity



On July 23rd, the provincial government announced it would implement a Harmonized Sales Tax, which will combine the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) in to a single sales tax using the GST as the tax base. Do you support or oppose harmonizing provincial sales taxes with the GST in BC?



Those that responded 'Support'

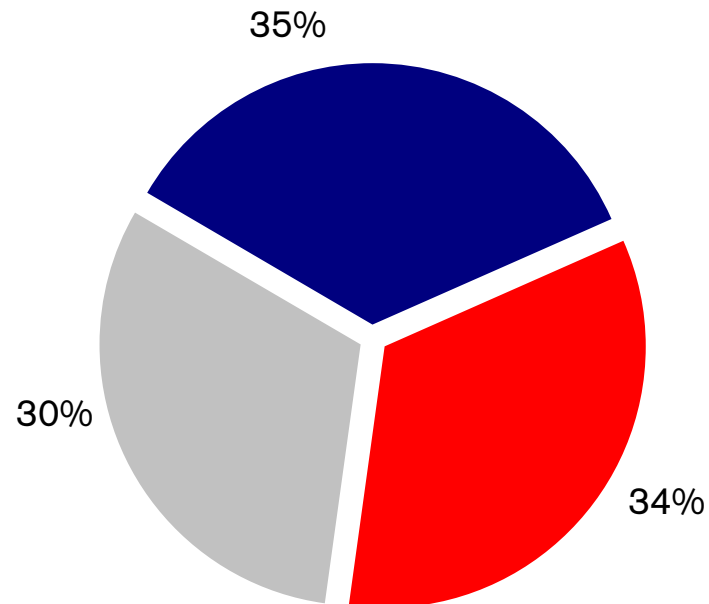
| Federal Vote | |
|--------------|-----|
| Conservative | 19% |
| Liberal | 31% |
| NDP | 8% |
| Green | 9% |
| Prov Vote | |
| BC Liberal | 30% |
| NDP | 10% |
| Conservative | 12% |
| Green | 5% |



Confusion over who proposed HST



From what you have read, seen or heard, did the idea to combine the provincial sales tax and the GST come from the (ROTATE) the provincial Liberal government or the federal Conservative government?

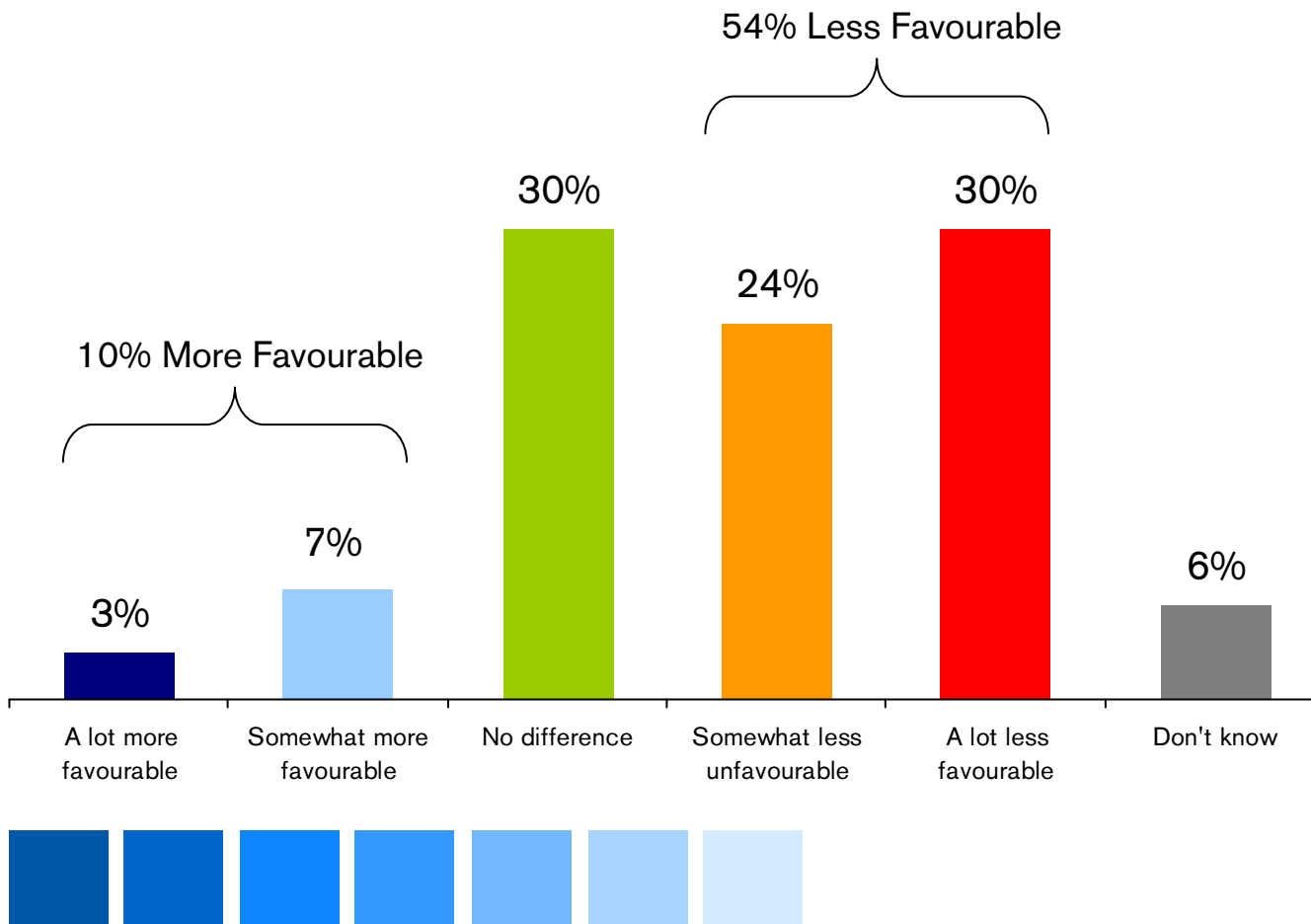


■ Federal Government ■ Provincial Government ■ Don't know/refused



Majority less favourable to feds once they learn feds proposed HST

Q In fact, it was the federal government that proposed the idea of harmonizing the provincial sales tax and the GST offering the provincial government a \$1.6 billion incentive to do so. Does the fact the federal government first suggested the idea of harmonizing the provincial sales tax and the GST leave you feeling more or less favourable towards the federal government? Is that a lot or somewhat more or less?



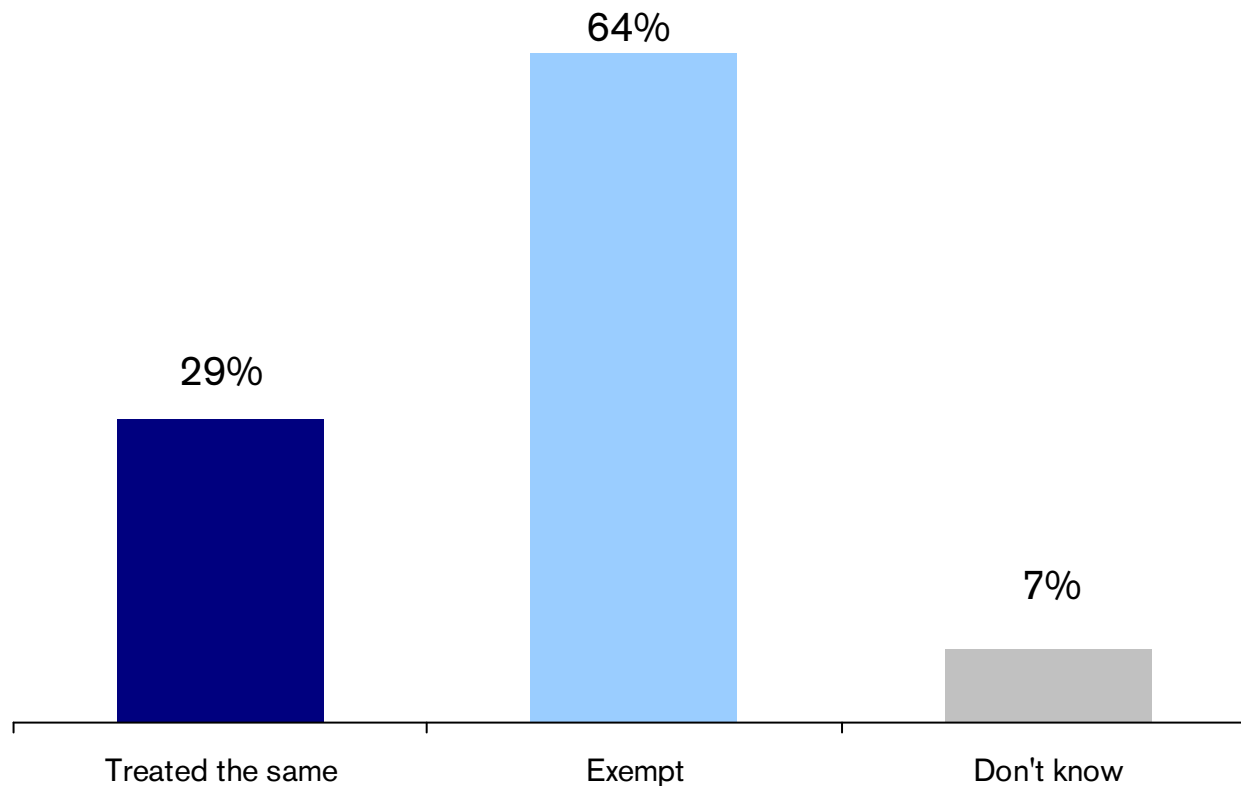
Percent that responded 'less favourable'

| Fed Vote | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|
| Conservative | 40% |
| Liberal | 60% |
| NDP | 67% |
| Green | 58% |
| Undecided | 57% |

More than 6-in-10 favour exemption for food in restaurants



Should food in coffee shops and restaurants be taxed the same as other goods or services if the HST is implemented or should food in coffee shops and restaurants be treated like food in grocery stores and exempted from the HST if it is implemented?



Those that responded 'Treated the same'

| HST support | Percentage |
|-------------|------------|
| Support | 44% |
| Oppose | 25% |
| Neither | 19% |

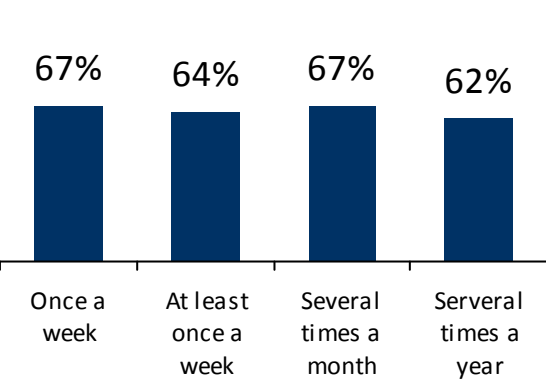


Broad base for support for exemption

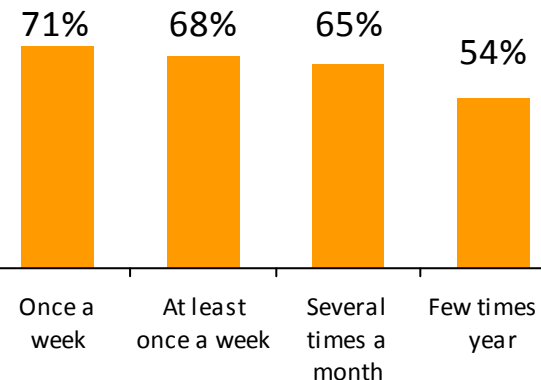
64%

Those that responded restaurants and coffee shops should be "Exempt" from taxes

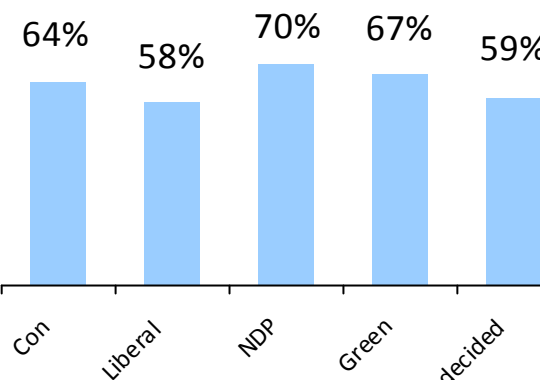
Full service visits



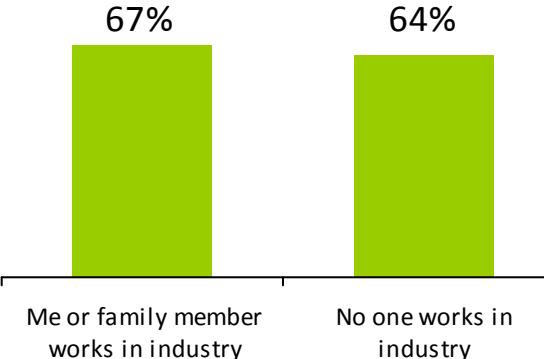
Fast food visits



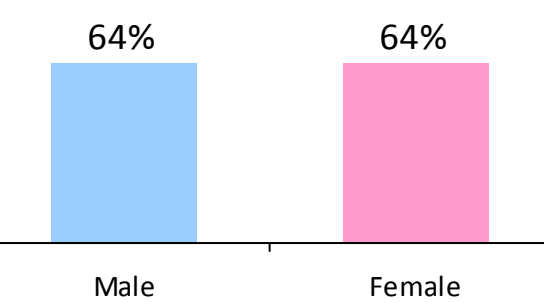
Provincial Vote



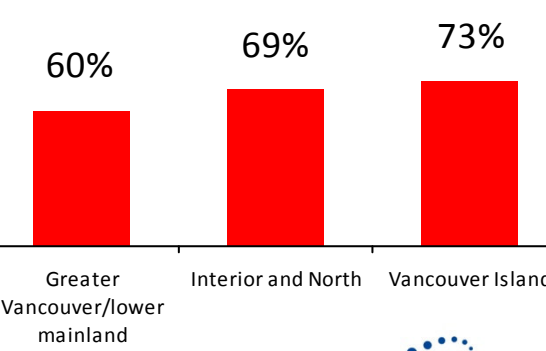
Work in Industry



Gender



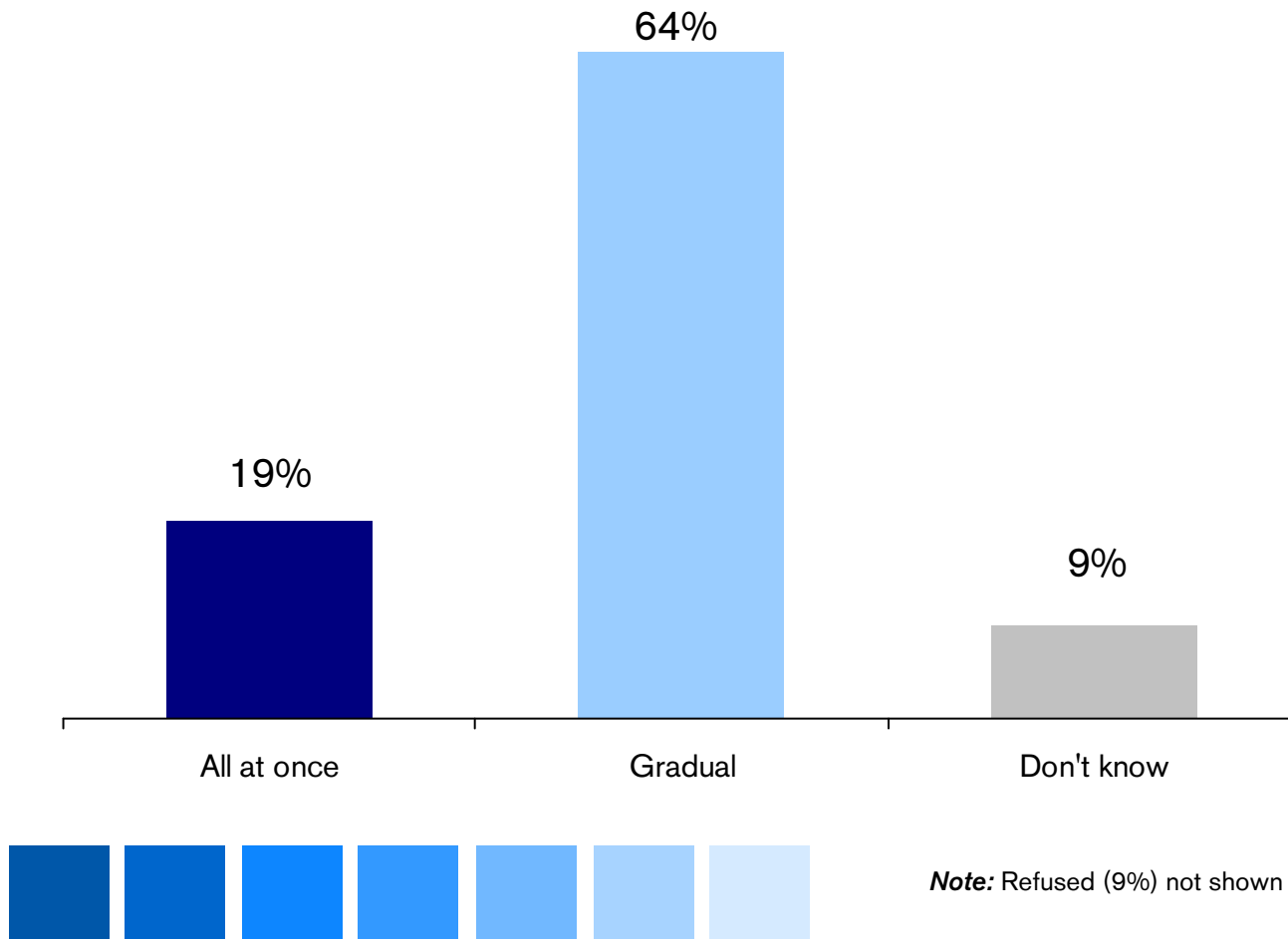
Region



More than 6-in-10 favour gradual implementation

Q

When the HST is implemented, the tax on businesses such as coffee shops and restaurants will go up from the current 5% GST to 12% HST. Do you think the government should raise taxes on those businesses and consumers by 7 percent all at once, or should they implement it gradually over several years to avoid any dramatic impacts.



Those that responded 'All at once'

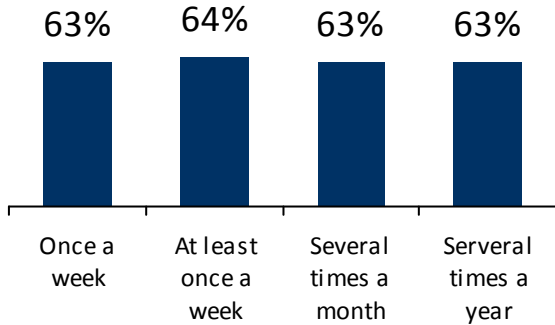
| HST support | Percentage |
|-------------|------------|
| Support | 37% |
| Oppose | 15% |
| Neither | 20% |

Women particularly strong supporters of phase-in

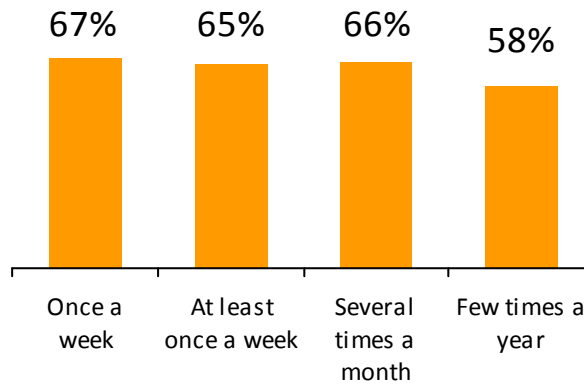
64%

Those that responded government should raise taxes "Gradually" over several years

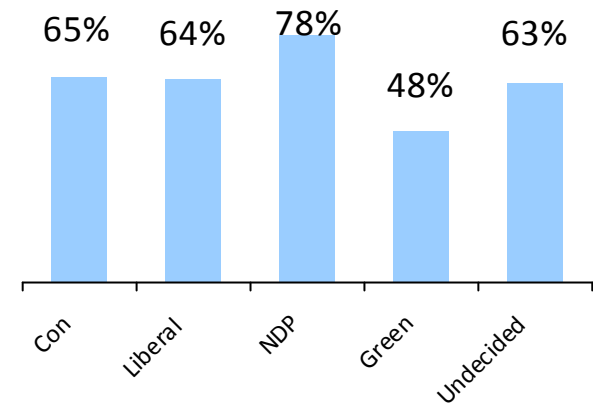
Full service visits



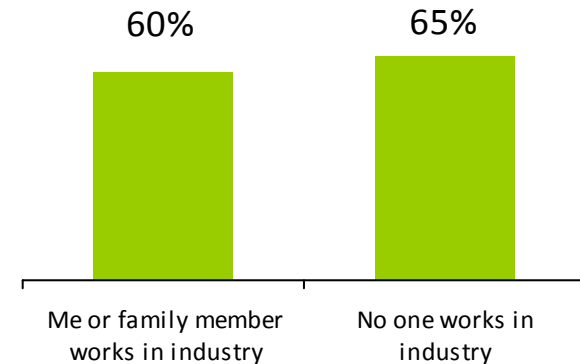
Fast food visits



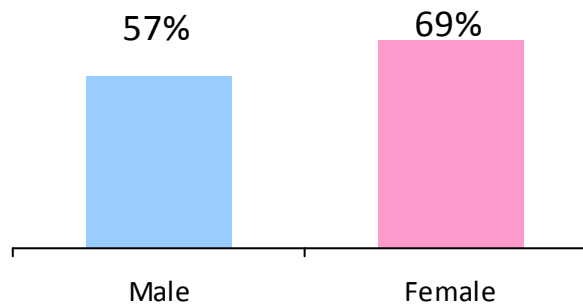
Provincial Vote



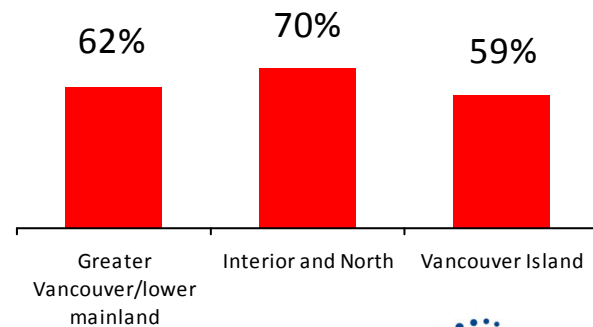
Work in Industry



Gender



Region



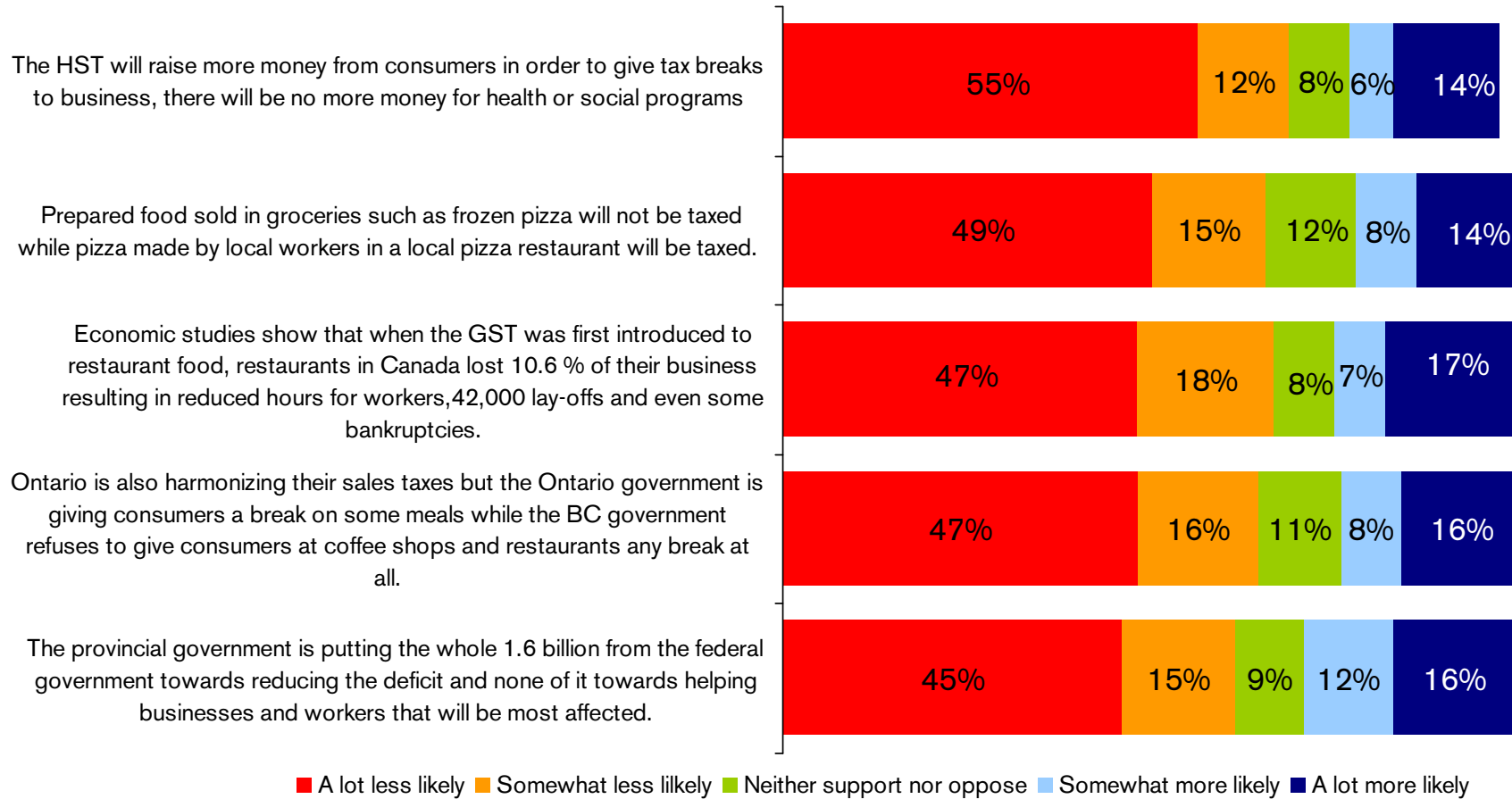
Tactics and Messages



Tax shift from business to personal biggest weakness



Now, I am going to read you a series of statements about the issue of applying the new HST to coffee shops and restaurants. For each statement, tell me whether it makes you more or less likely to support applying the HST to coffee shops and restaurants or if it makes no difference to you.

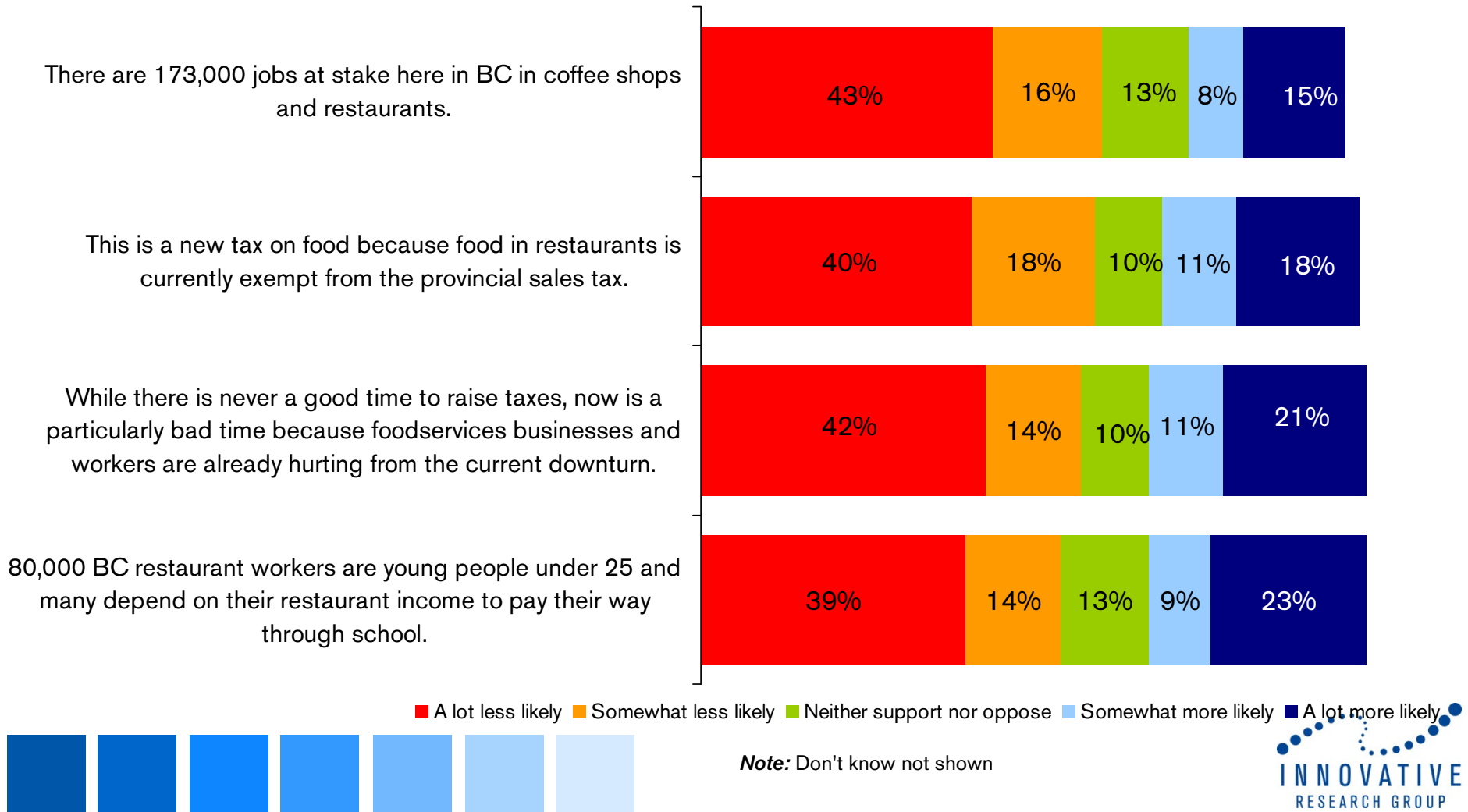


Note: DK/Other not shown



Even weakest argument leaves a majority more opposed

Q Now, I am going to read you a series of statements about the issue of applying the new HST to coffee shops and restaurants. For each statement, tell me whether it makes you more or less likely to support applying the HST to coffee shops and restaurants or if it makes no difference to you.





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