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**Pacific peoples' attitudes
towards reopening the border
and other aspects of the
COVID-19 response**

October 2021



KEY RESULTS

Method:
Online survey of 301 18 years and over Pacific peoples

Fieldwork:
5-13 October 2021

MOE:
Maximum margin of error of +/-5.7%

1 Concern around Delta



81%

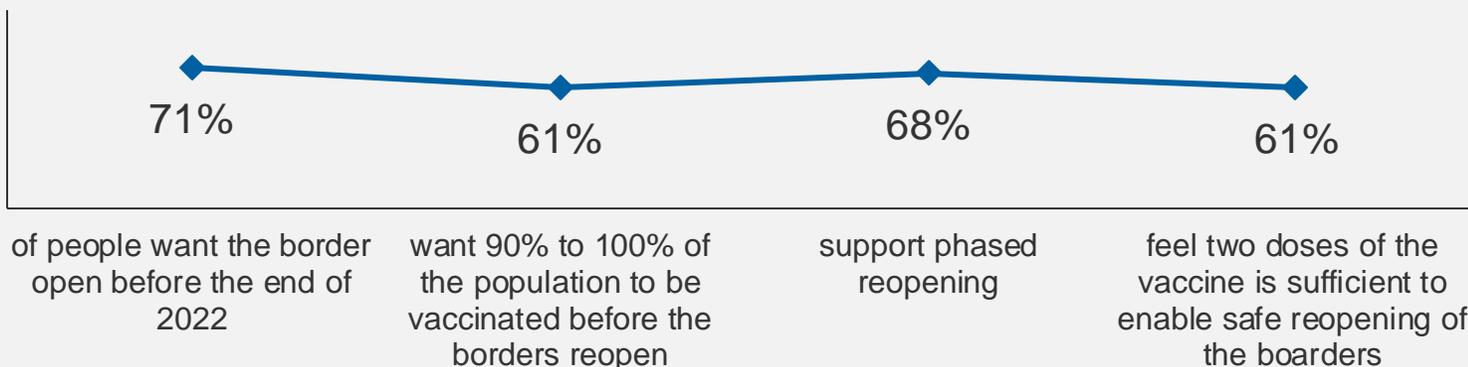
of people are now more concerned about the pandemic than they were before the Delta variant emerged

2 Support for mandatory tracer app use, and COVID-19 testing and vaccination is uniformly high

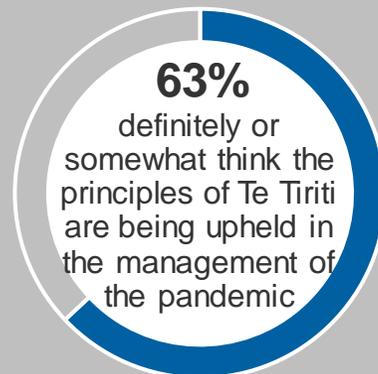
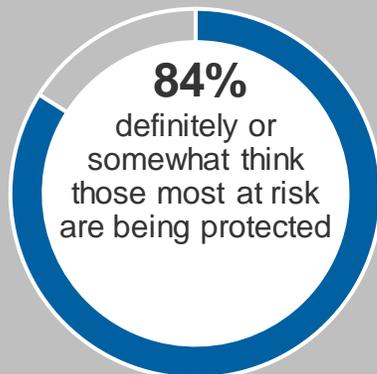
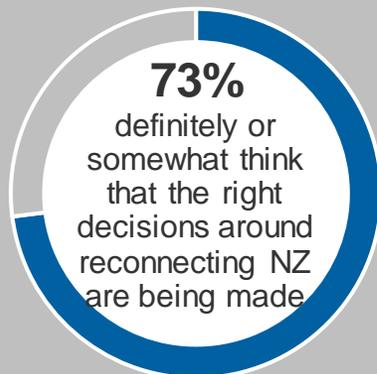


80 to 87% of people support mandatory COVID-19 tracer app use, and testing and vaccination of border workers, frontline workers, essential workers, and maritime and port workers

3 Reopening Aotearoa's borders to the world



5 Overall reactions to the COVID-19 strategy



4 Personal impact of COVID-19

Nearly half of people feel the pandemic has had a positive impact on their overall wellbeing

48%

52%

feel the pandemic has had a negative impact on their wellbeing

19%

report experiencing negative emotions or challenging domestic situations nearly every day

31%

have experienced verbal or physical abuse since the most recent lockdown

16%

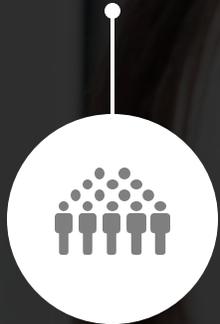
have been drinking more since the most recent lockdown

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Ministry of Health are committed to improving Pacific peoples' health outcomes and reducing health inequalities faced by Pacific peoples. In this context, the Ministry commissioned Kantar Public to help understand Pacific peoples reaction to border reopening, how the border reopening may impact behaviour, and attitudes towards mandatory vaccination and testing.

METHODOLOGY

TARGET AUDIENCE



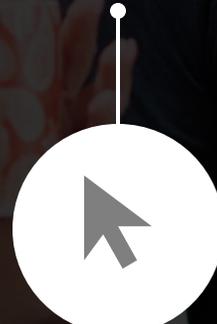
Pacific people aged 18 and over.

INTERVIEW DATES



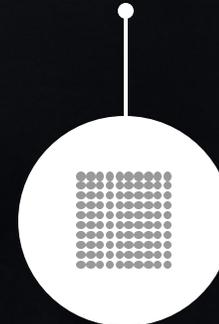
5 to 13 October, 2021.

METHOD



Online survey using Colmar Brunton's consumer panel.

SAMPLE SIZE AND MORE



301 respondents. Maximum margin of error of +/-5.7%.

WEIGHTING



Results post-weighted by age, gender, age, and vaccination status.

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7	Overall reactions to the COVID-19 strategy	37.

1.

The Delta variant and COVID-19 becoming endemic

Eighty one percent of Pacific peoples are now more concerned about the pandemic than they were before the Delta variant emerged. Around half feel the more infectious strains put themselves, their family and their community more at risk. Those who are vaccinated have higher rates of concern.

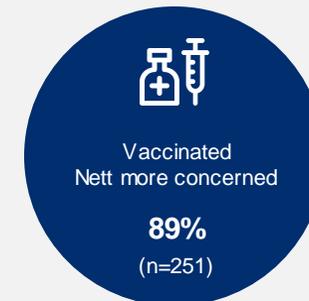


Change in levels of concern since Delta emerged

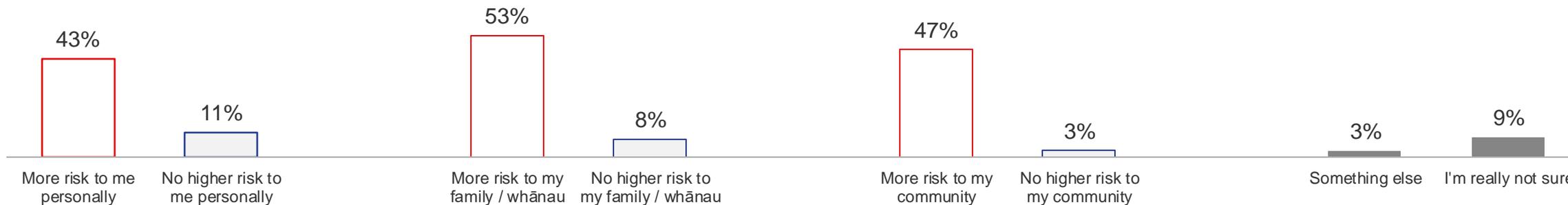
81% more concerned



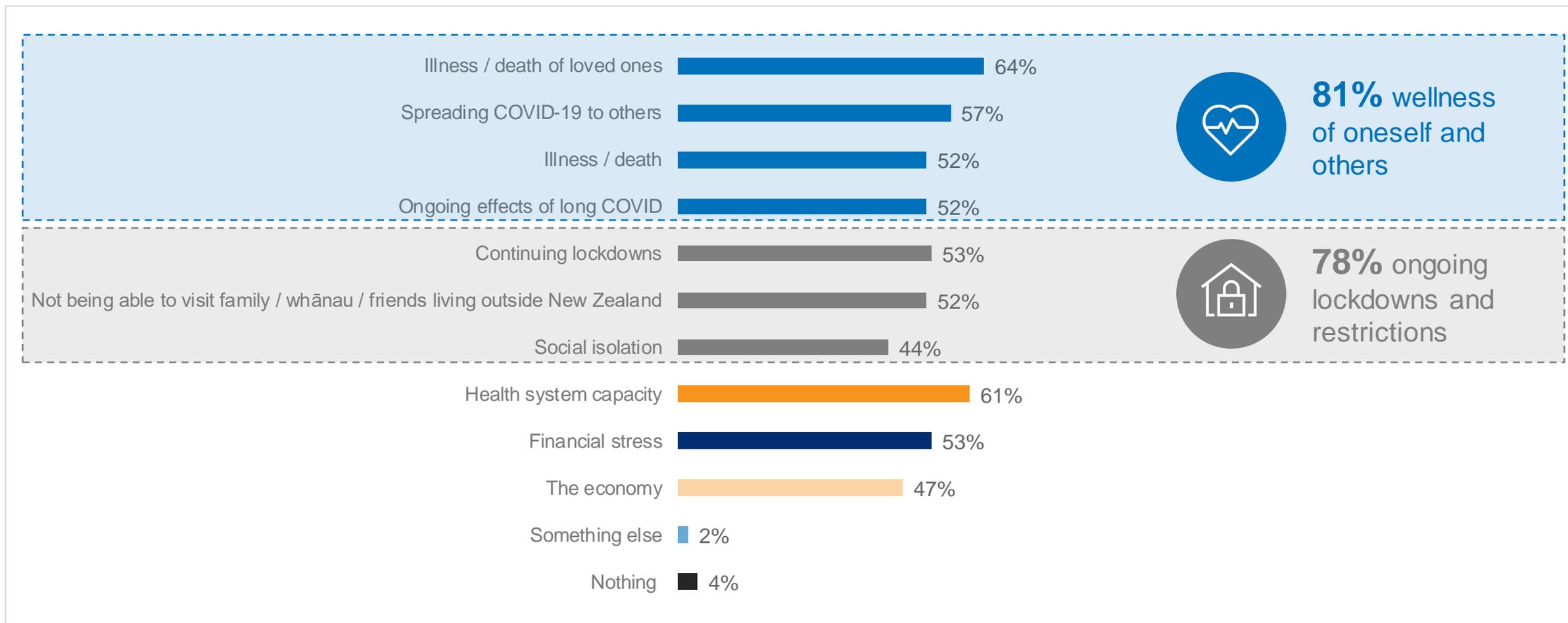
■ Much less concerned ■ Somewhat less concerned ■ Somewhat more concerned ■ Much more concerned ■ I really don't know



Perceptions of increased risk



Peoples' greatest concerns about COVID-19 becoming endemic in New Zealand are the health of themselves and others, as well as the possibility of ongoing lockdowns and restrictions. Six in ten are also concerned about the capacity of health system.



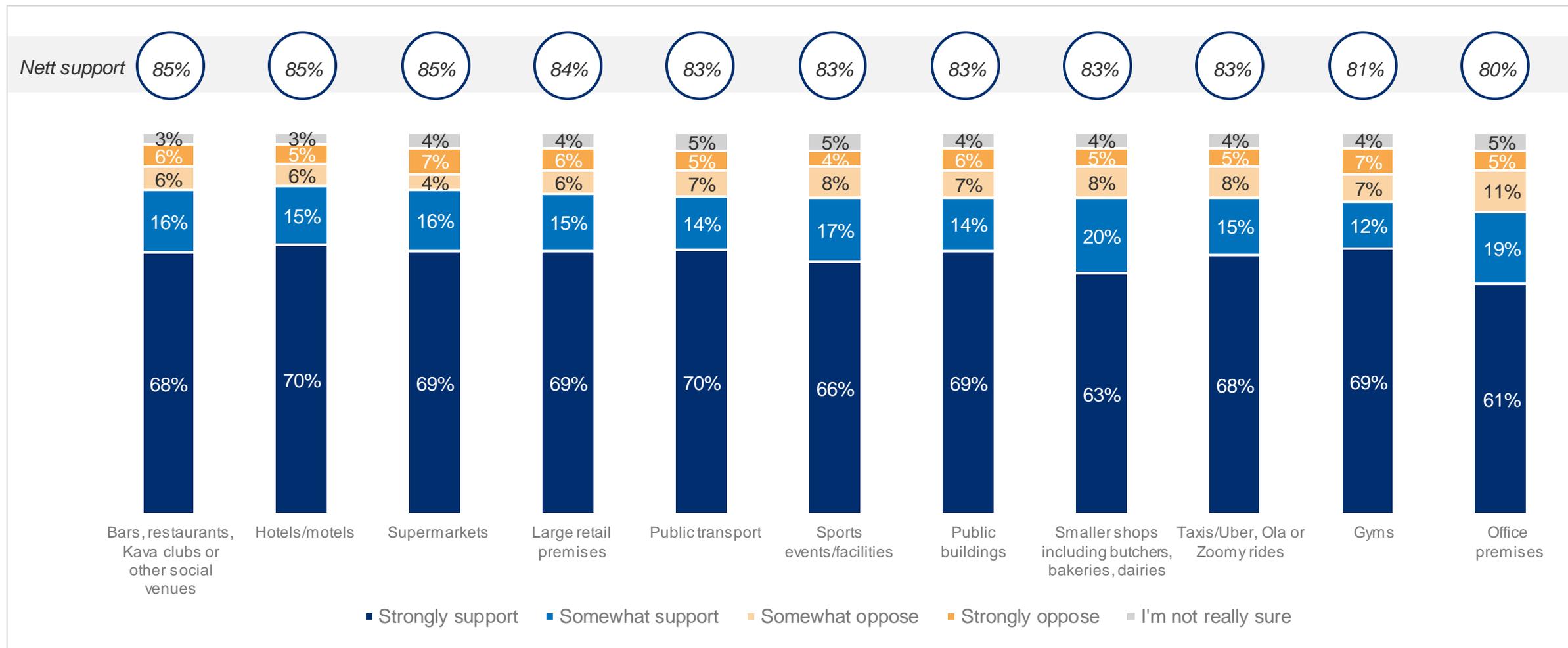
People over the age of 50, women, and those who are currently vaccinated tend to be more concerned than average about COVID-19 becoming endemic.

	All Pacific peoples (n=301)	Aged 50+ (n=79)	Women (n=185)	Vaccinated (n=251)
NETT wellness of oneself and others	81%	90%	83%	87%
<i>Illness / death of loved ones</i>	64%	80%	68%	67%
<i>Spreading COVID-19 to others</i>	57%	74%	65%	64%
<i>Illness / death</i>	52%	68%	59%	55%
<i>Ongoing effects of long COVID</i>	52%	71%	62%	60%
NETT ongoing lockdowns and restrictions	78%	83%	84%	80%
<i>Continuing lockdowns</i>	53%	62%	57%	54%
<i>Not being able to visit family / whānau / friends living outside New Zealand</i>	52%	56%	59%	54%
<i>Social isolation</i>	44%	54%	47%	47%
<i>Health system capacity</i>	61%	82%	67%	67%
<i>Financial stress</i>	53%	65%	60%	55%
<i>The economy</i>	47%	61%	52%	51%
<i>Something else</i>	2%	-	3%	2%
Nothing would concern me about COVID-19 becoming established in the community	4%	3%	1%	2%

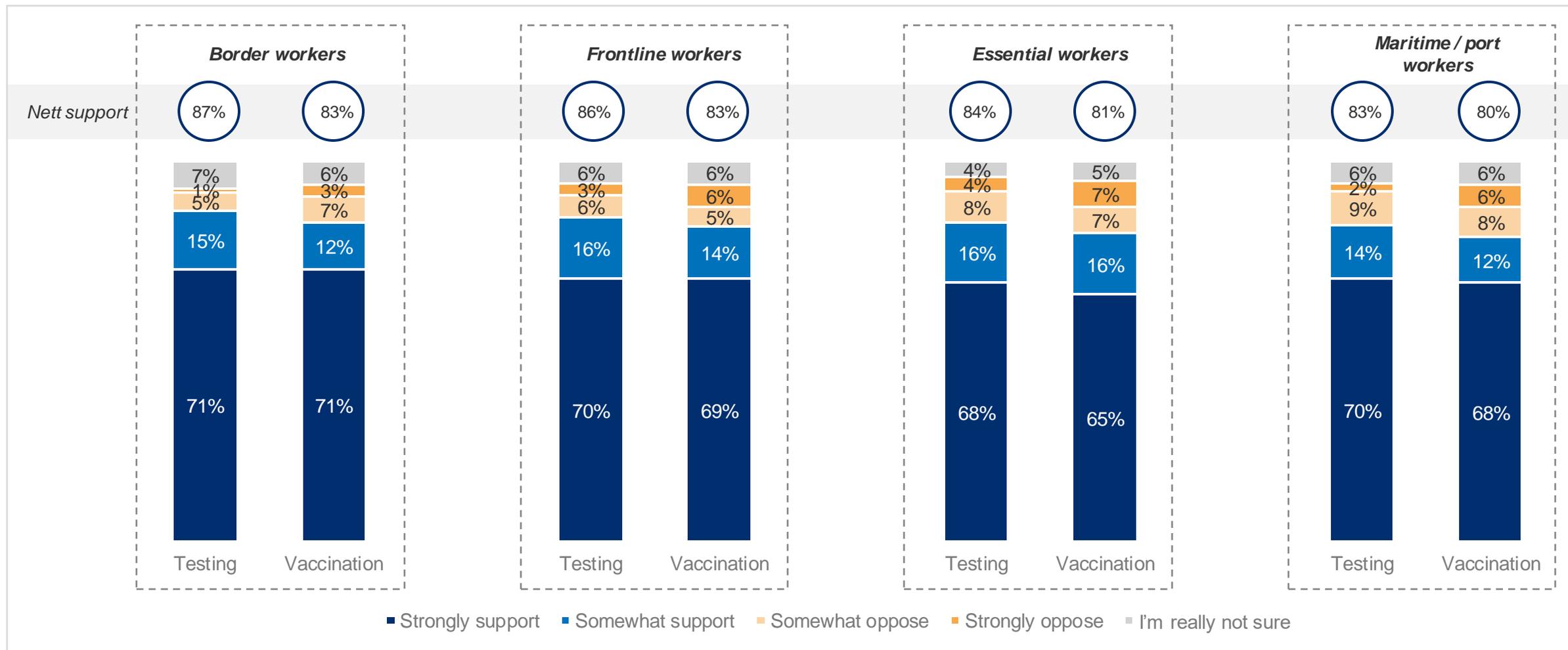
2.

COVID-19 tracer app, mandatory testing, mandatory vaccination, and health behaviours

Pacific peoples are generally very supportive of mandatory use of the COVID-19 tracing app.



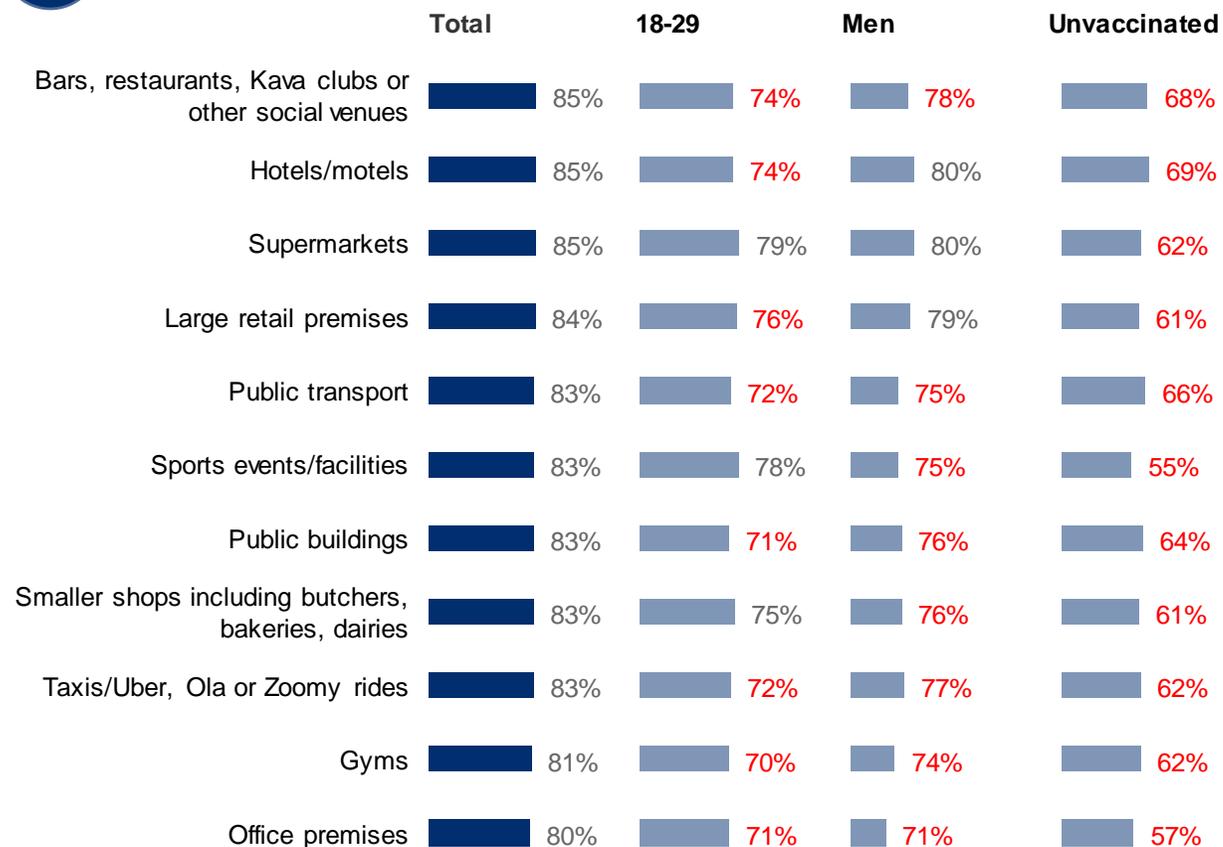
Support is also strong for mandatory testing and vaccination for border workers, frontline workers, essential workers, and maritime and port workers.



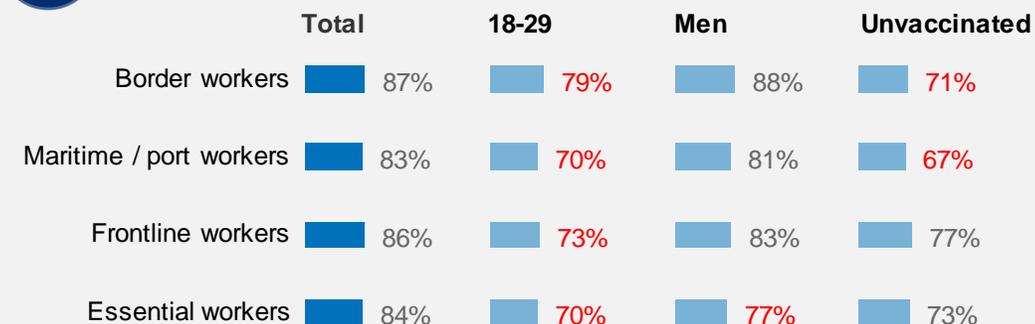
Younger Pacific peoples (under 30), males, and those who are unvaccinated are less supportive than average of mandatory tracer app use, and mandatory COVID-19 testing and vaccination.



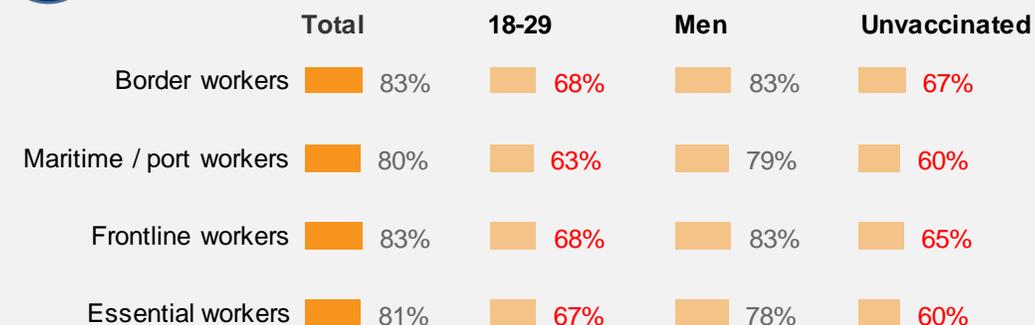
Mandatory use of the COVID tracer app



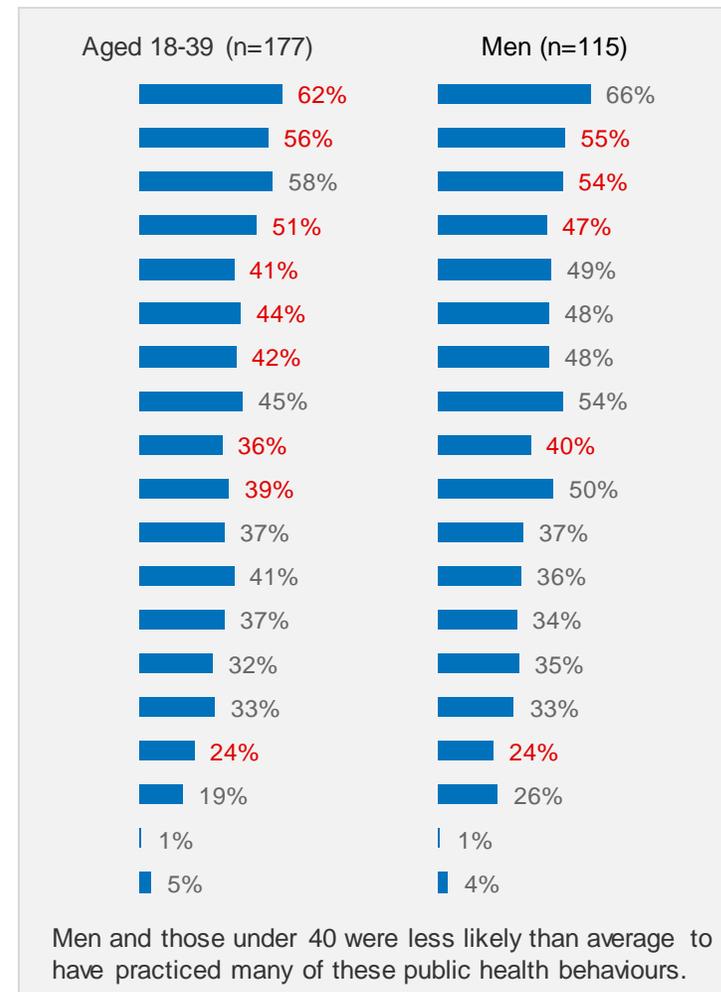
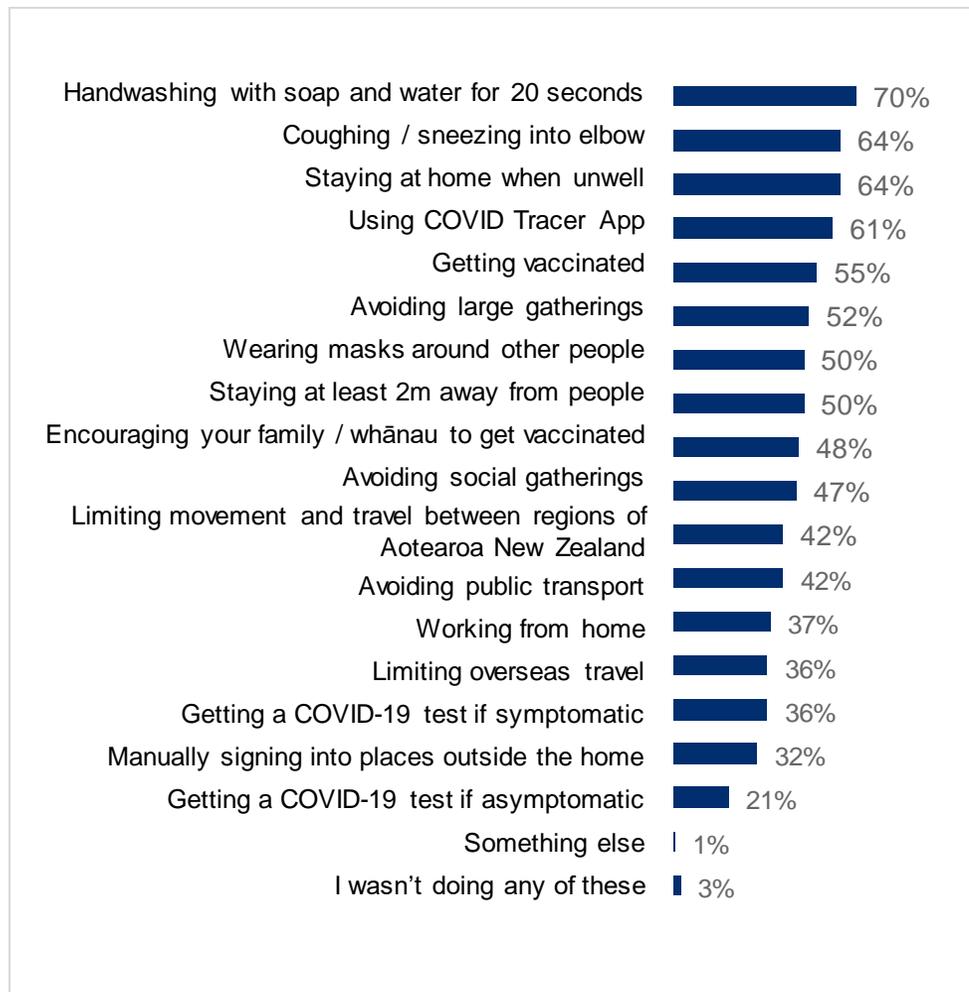
COVID Testing



COVID Vaccination



Before the most recent outbreak, 7 in 10 people were washing their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, and 6 in 10 were coughing or sneezing into their elbow, staying home when unwell, and using the COVID-19 tracer app.



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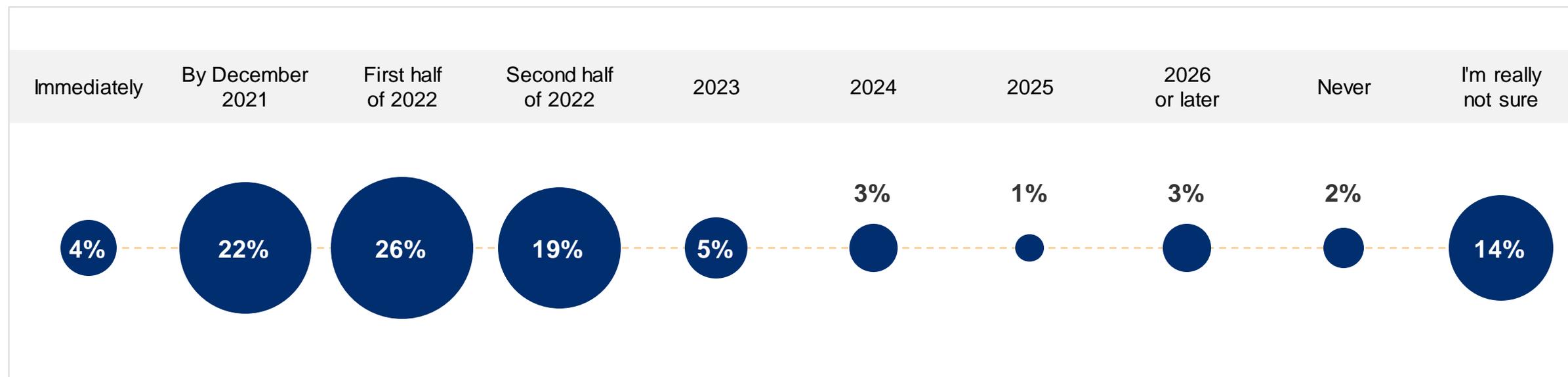
3.

Reopening New Zealand's borders



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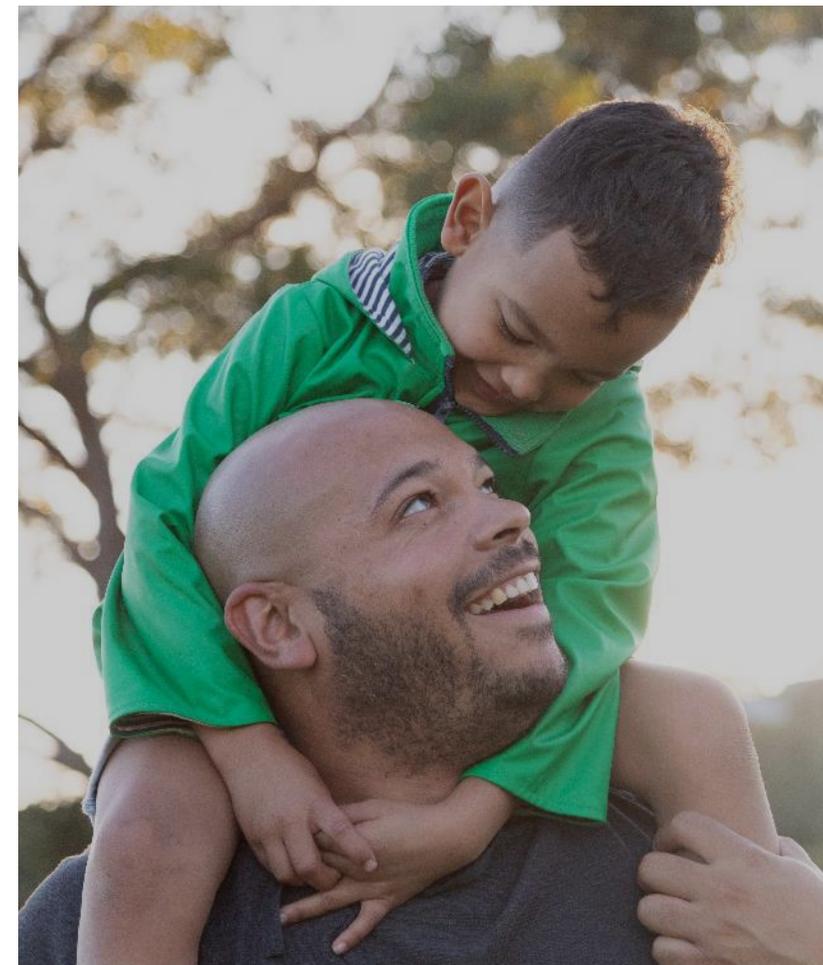
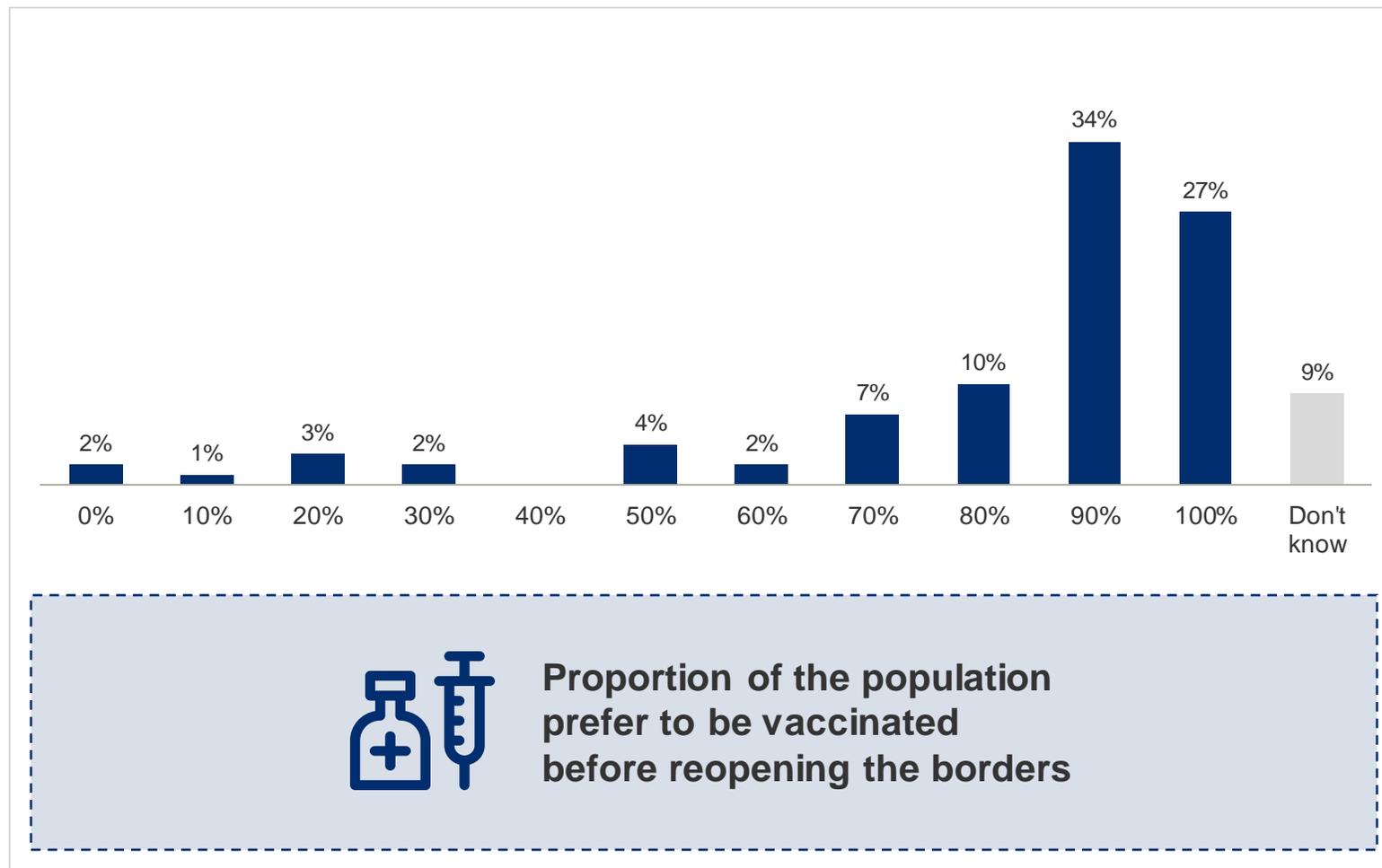
Opinion on exactly when New Zealand should re-open its borders is mixed – however most think it should be before the end of 2022.



When it comes time to open the borders, people believe the key things to consider are our ability and capacity to keep all New Zealanders safe and healthy, and ensuring high levels of vaccination. People who prefer the border be open before the end of this year are more likely than average to be concerned about personal freedom. Those who want the borders open in the first half of 2022 are more concerned about supporting jobs and businesses. Those who want the borders open in the second half of 2022 are concerned about health and the health system.

	All Pacific peoples	Want the borders open by the end of the year	Want the borders open in the first half of 2022	Want borders open in the second half of 2022
	(n=301)	(n=69)	(n=76)	(n=65)
The ability to keep New Zealanders safe	61%	49%	68%	70%
The percentage of New Zealanders who have been vaccinated	52%	45%	57%	62%
The capacity and capability of the New Zealand health system	51%	40%	57%	56%
Reconnecting / re-uniting families	50%	48%	58%	49%
The ability to specifically keep New Zealand children safe	50%	29%	56%	56%
Allowing more New Zealand citizens and permanent residents to return	47%	49%	56%	44%
The capacity of the New Zealand contact tracing system	40%	23%	41%	60%
Jobs for New Zealanders	39%	33%	54%	36%
Allowing skilled workers to come to New Zealand	37%	38%	53%	31%
Maximising benefit to the economy	35%	42%	46%	22%
Allowing migrant workers to come to New Zealand to support our primary industries	31%	32%	32%	32%
Encouraging tourists back to New Zealand	28%	42%	38%	18%
Allowing overseas students at our universities and schools	27%	35%	33%	21%
Personal freedom	27%	46%	24%	22%
Maximising exports	24%	30%	30%	16%
Reducing dependence on imports	20%	16%	28%	20%
Allowing for sporting events	18%	31%	18%	17%
Facilitating business travel	17%	25%	29%	7%
Allowing immigration	16%	24%	15%	14%
People should be able to travel where they want to and when they want to	15%	26%	17%	14%
Something else	2%	-	2%	11%
I don't believe the borders should be opened	8%	3%	4%	10%

Most people prefer very high levels of vaccination to be achieved before reopening the borders.



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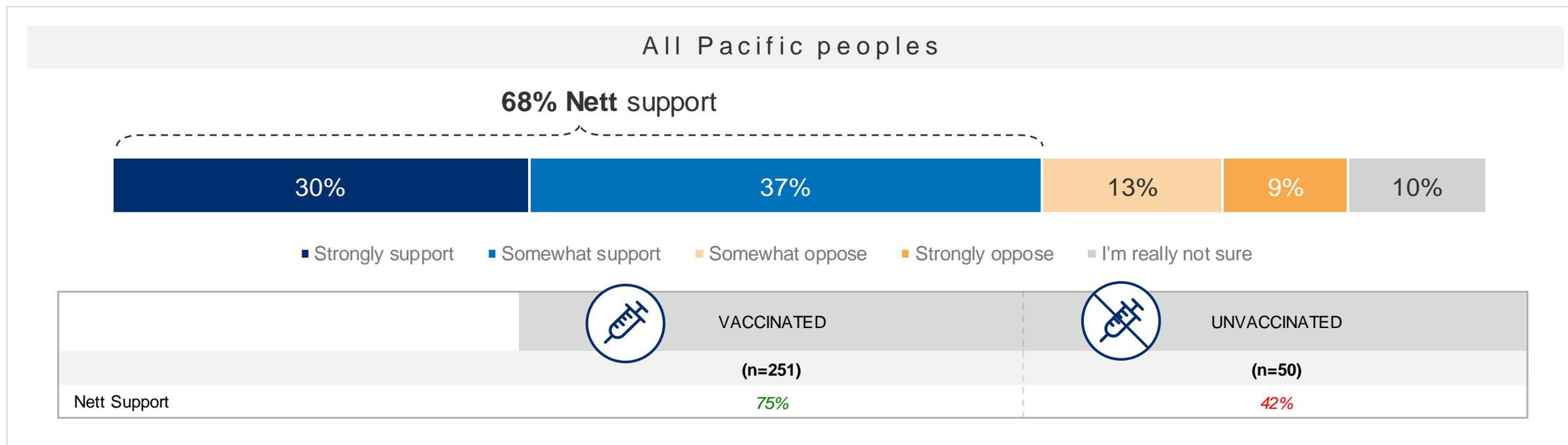


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4.

Phased border reopening plan

Respondents were given a description of the phased border reopening plan and then asked their level of support. Two thirds indicated they support it. Those who are vaccinated tend to be more supportive than average.

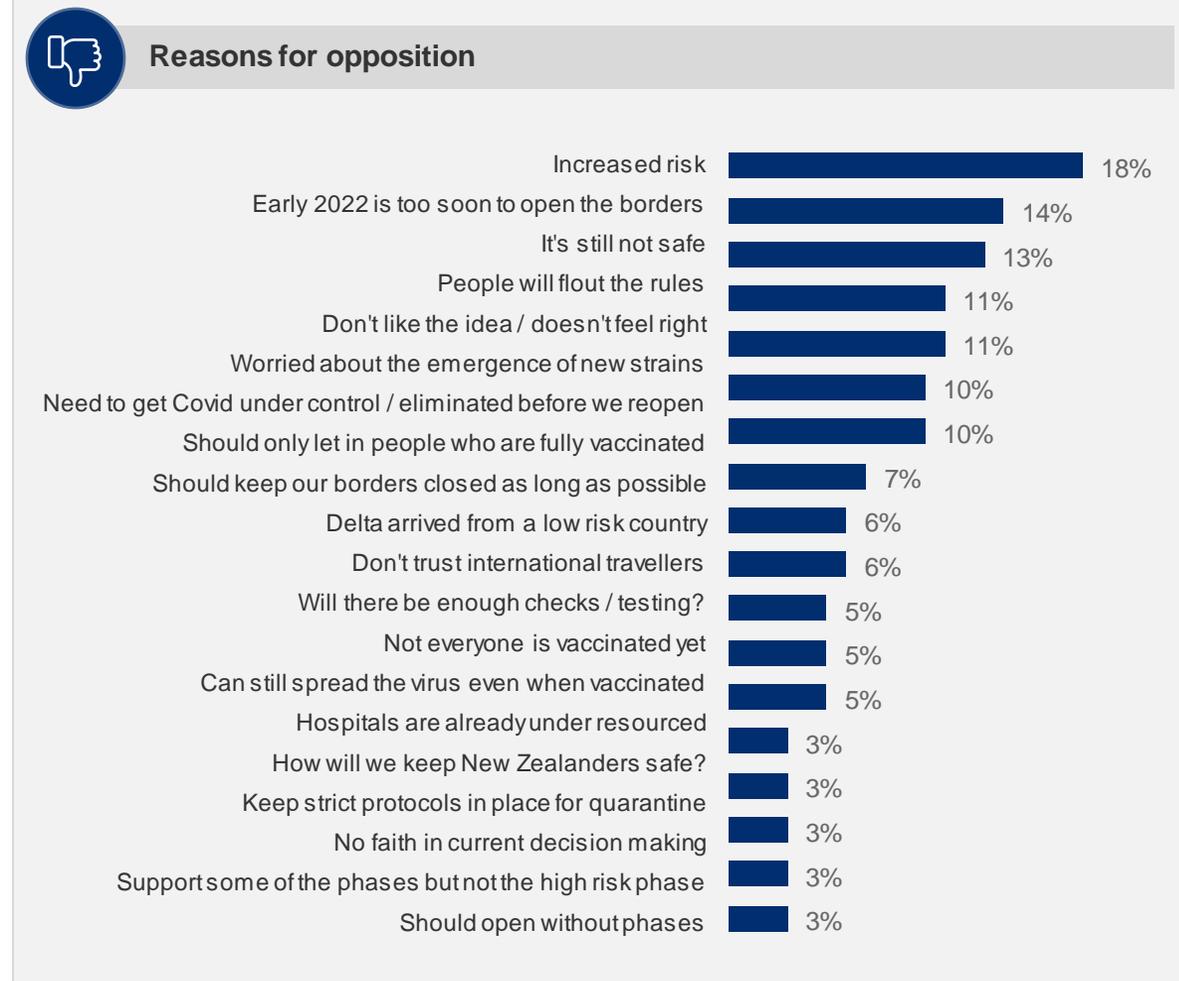
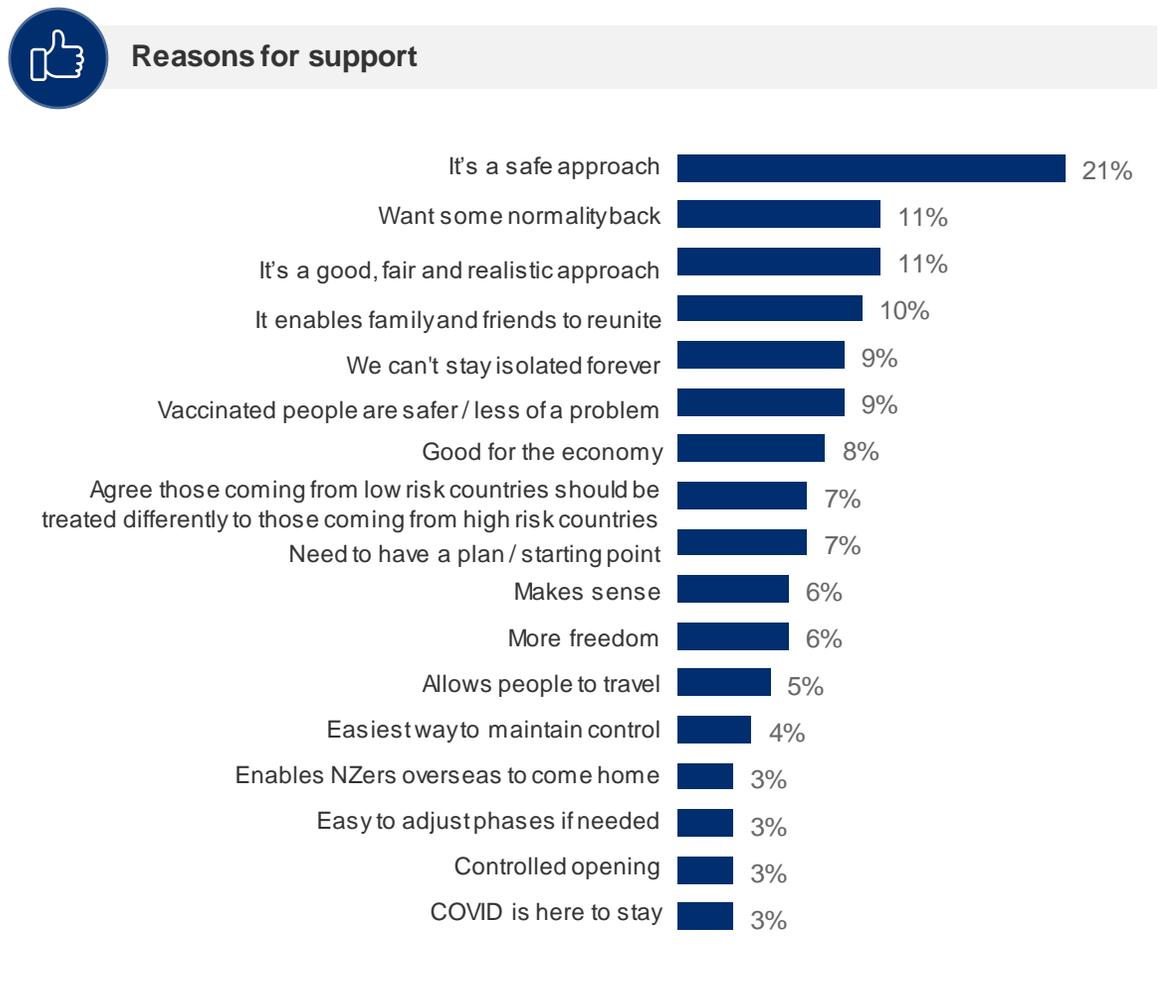


Description provided to respondents:

The Government has announced that it will use the second half of 2021 to vaccinate as many New Zealanders as possible while it prepares and tests the safety of having three “Pathways” to allow people to enter Aotearoa New Zealand in 2022. This will involve allowing quarantine-free entry to vaccinated travellers from low-risk countries from early 2022 while those from medium- and high-risk countries will have to go through a combination of quarantine measures ranging from self-isolation to spending 14 days in quarantine. The phased reopening is looking to introduce:

- A *Low-Risk pathway* allowing quarantine-free entry for vaccinated travellers who have been in low-risk countries.
- A *Medium-Risk pathway* allowing a combination of self-isolation and/or reduced time in managed isolation for vaccinated travellers who have been in medium-risk countries.
- A *High-Risk pathway* continuing a full 14 days in managed isolation and testing for unvaccinated travellers and any traveller, including vaccinated travellers, who have been in high-risk countries.

Those who support the phased reopening generally feel it's a safe approach. Those opposed tend to focus on the risk it poses to New Zealanders.



Below are a selection of comments people made when asked why they support or oppose the phased reopening.



Reasons for support

“There are so many Kiwis stuck overseas who want and need to come home and it should be easier for them to do so. I miss my whānau and friends who are overseas so I want to be able to see them as soon as possible. As someone who loves to travel and experience new cultures it is difficult to watch people in other countries be able to enjoy the freedoms of travel purely because they are fully vaccinated, just as I am. I understand that our country does not have the best systems in place to be able to cope with a surge of Covid-19. I also want to keep my community safe so I have been doing my bit by following all of the gov't's guidelines. I just really want to move towards reconnecting with the world as soon as it is safe to do so. I love Aotearoa New Zealand but feel as though being fully vaccinated should provide pathways to travel that are not there yet. I would happily self-isolate at home upon my return for the full 2 weeks if it meant reconnecting with loved ones overseas.”

“It's better to open things slowly rather than all at once to give an indication of the rapid spread of the delta variant. It's a smart move from cabinet to do this. If we were to enter level 2 and almost everything opening up at once, it would be chaotic and our cases would be increasing rather decreasing. I also believe that the phases give people more incentive to get vaccinated to enjoy what is going to open. However, if we stay in level 3 with hardly anything open to support the economy, it will turn out to be Level Free. I strongly support phased opening!”

“To allow as long as possible to get people vaccinated, in particular vulnerable groups such as Māori, Pasifika and the elderly. Plus I'd like to see 5-11 year olds added to the rollout.”



Reasons for opposition

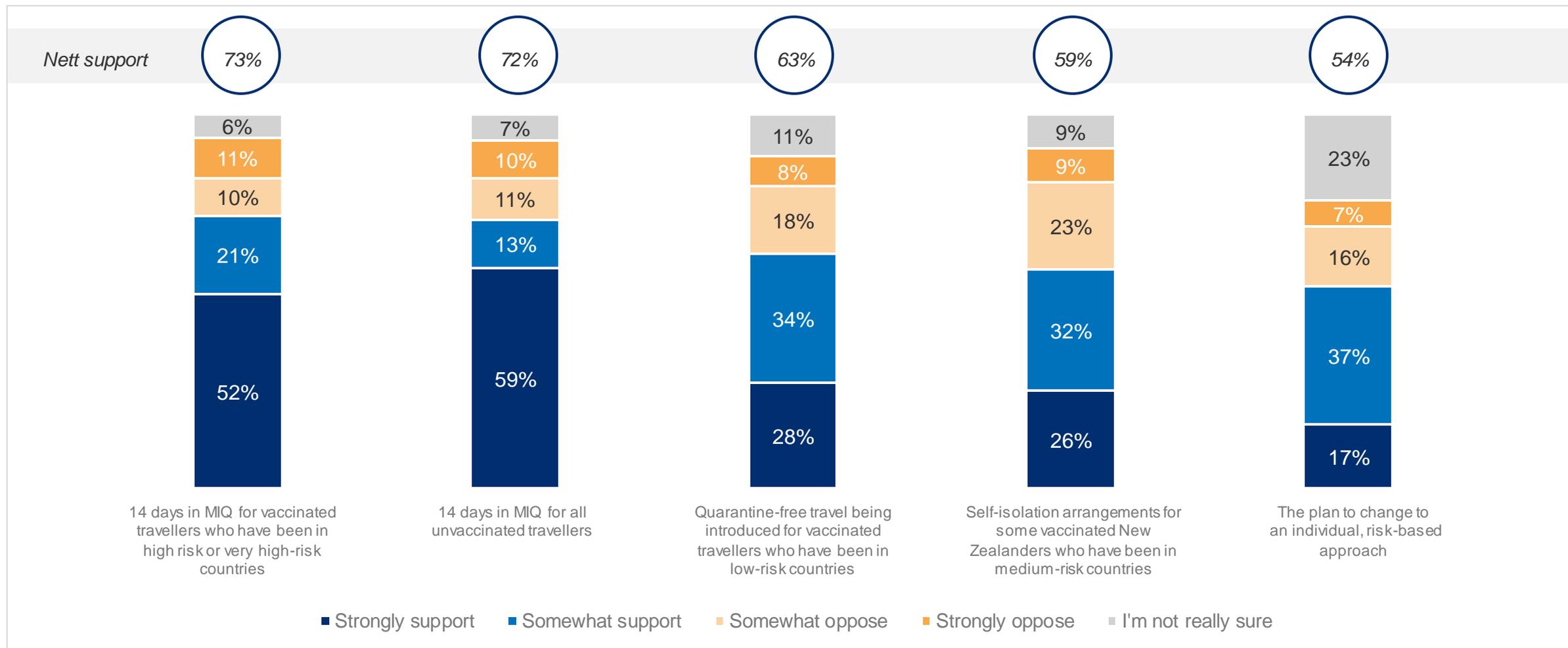
“The borders were completely shut and then we opened to a low risk country and ended up with covid back in the community and after an even longer level 4 lockdown than 2020 still have not been able to reduce the numbers. Opening up to more countries increases the chances of covid spreading like wildfire.”

“Because we are opening up our own country to places that are worse off, I believe that sorting out our own country is the best thing we can do at this stage before opening it up to the rest of the world. I do know that at some stage we need to but until we are under control I do not think this should be an option especially when many are still experiencing Level 3 lockdown.”

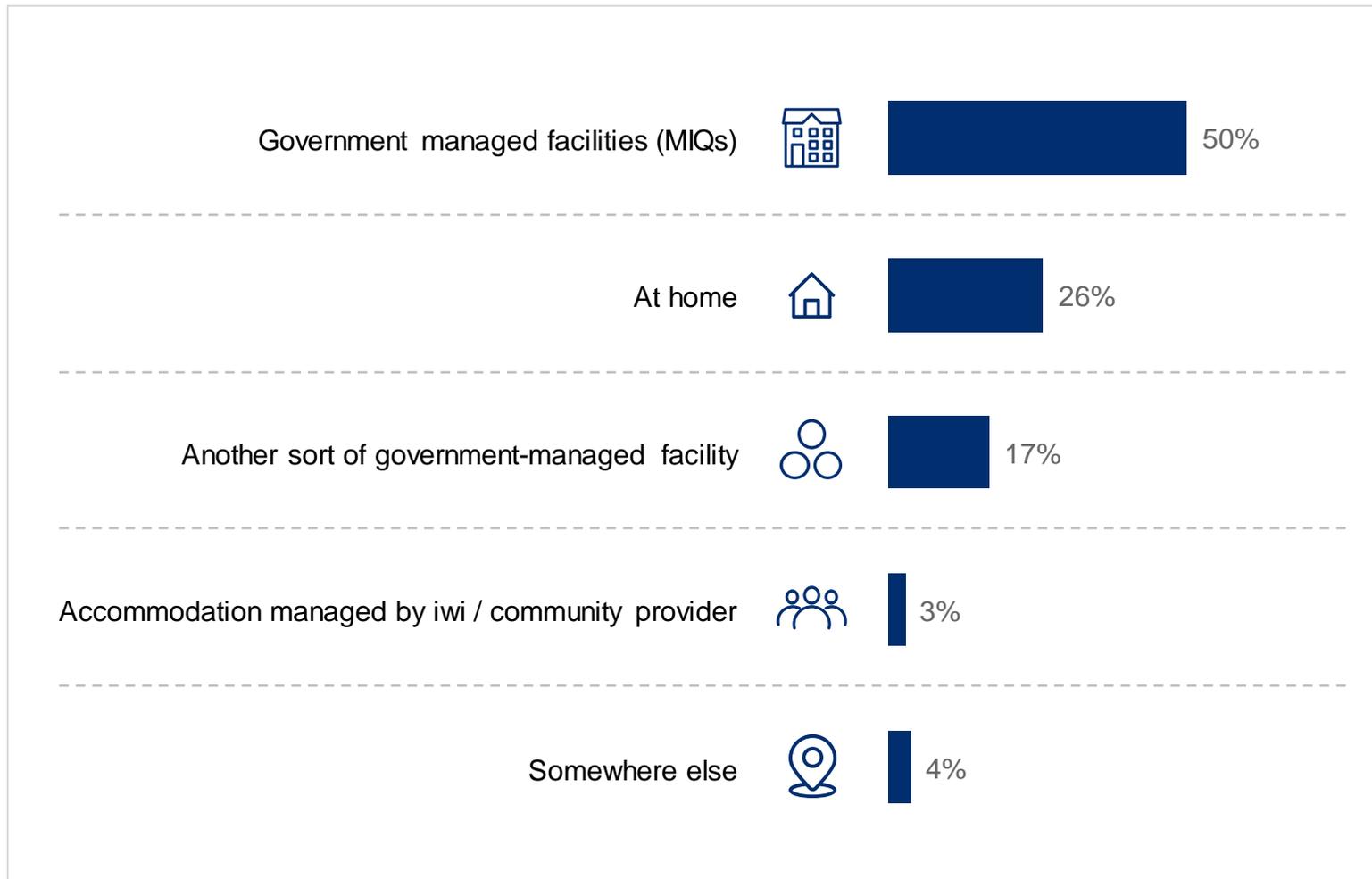
“Potential risk of getting in a new mutation into the country that the vaccine may not be affective on. Also the vaccine does not eliminate infection so compromised individuals with commodities and immune compromise can still end up really sick and in need of specialized health care which is crucially understaffed and underpaid.”

“Concerned about the safety of my whānau and community.”

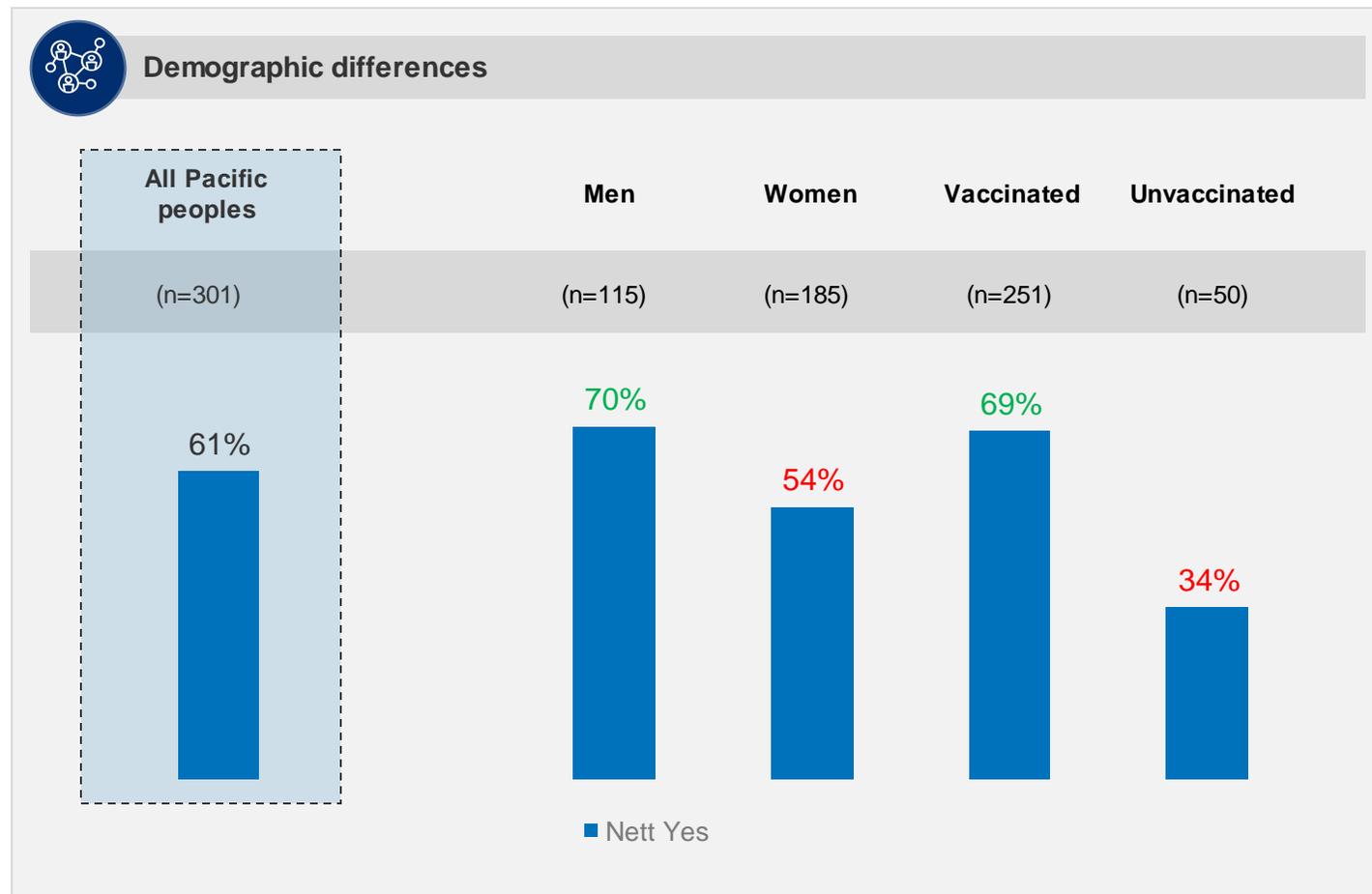
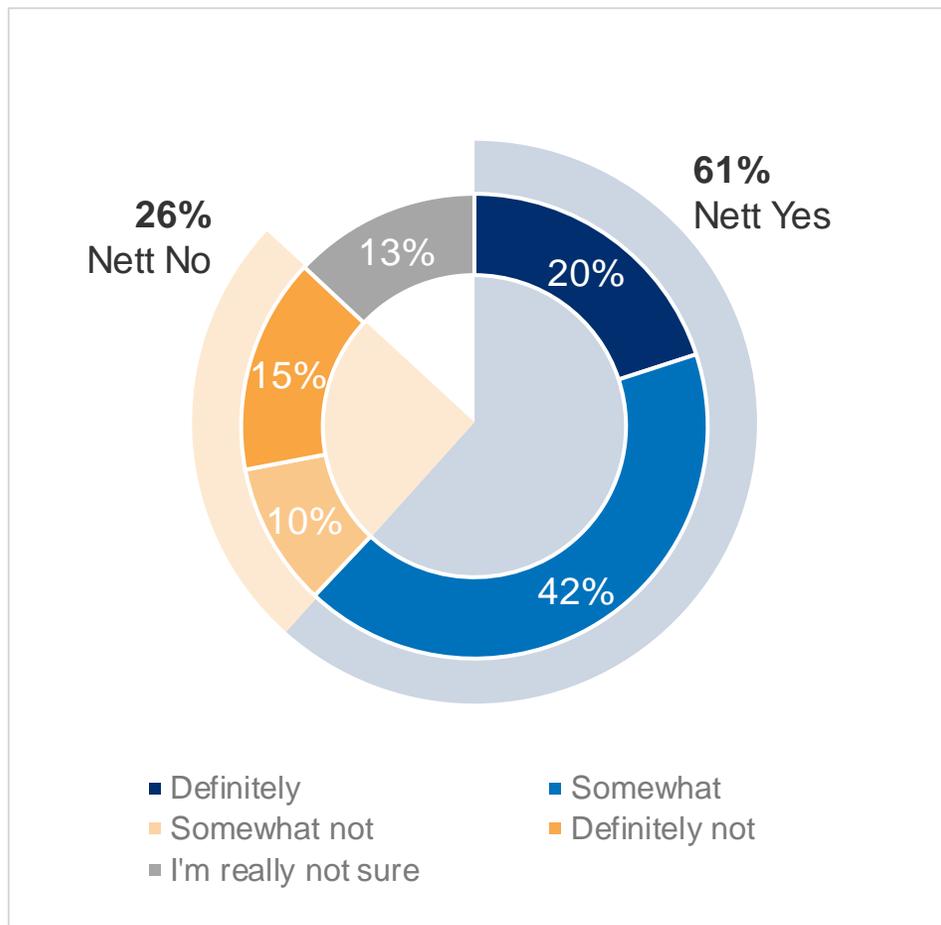
When looking at specific aspects of the proposal, people are most supportive of using MIQ facilities for travellers from high-risk countries and unvaccinated travellers.



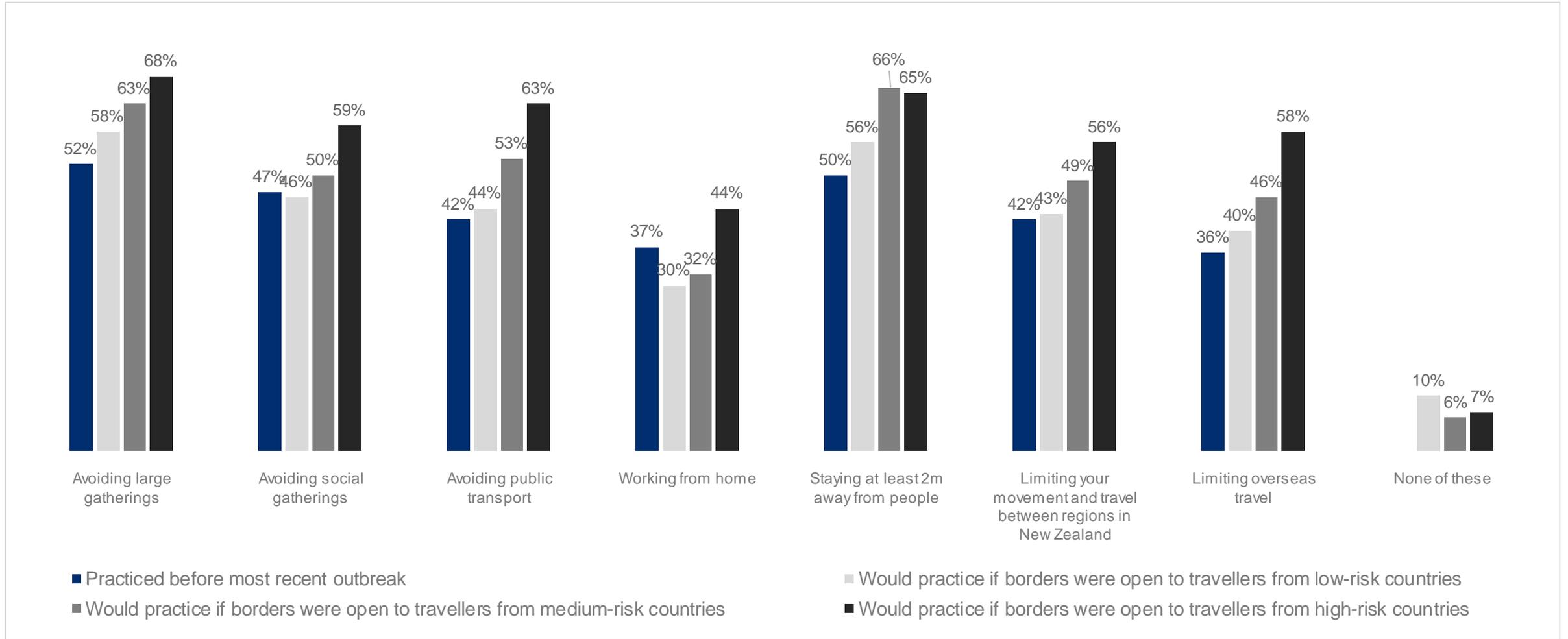
Where isolation is required half the sample feel it should be done in MIQ. A quarter feel it would be sufficient for it to be done at home.



Sixty-one percent of people feel two doses of the vaccine is enough to enable safe reopening of the borders. A quarter disagree.



When New Zealand's borders open to the world Pacific peoples believe they are likely to be more vigilant in practicing public health behaviours. Especially so when we start admitting people from high-risk countries.



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5.

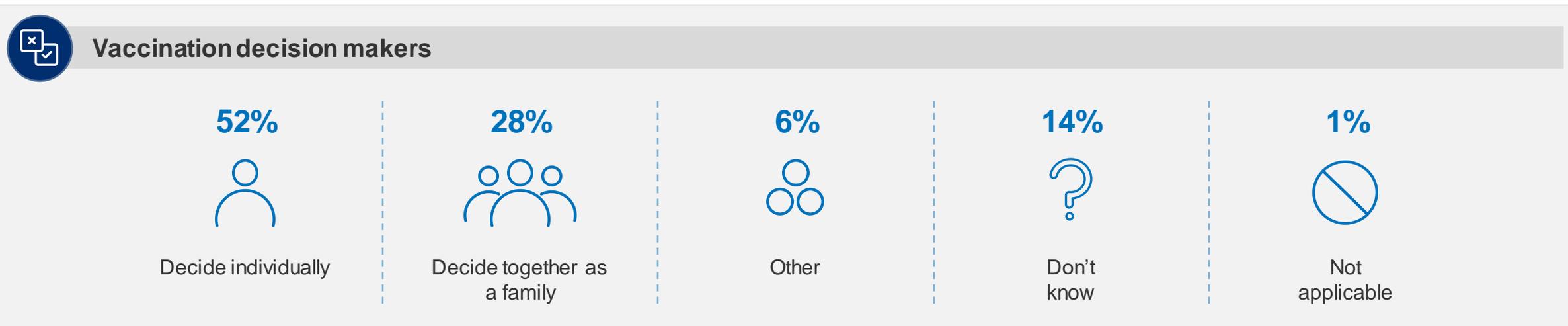
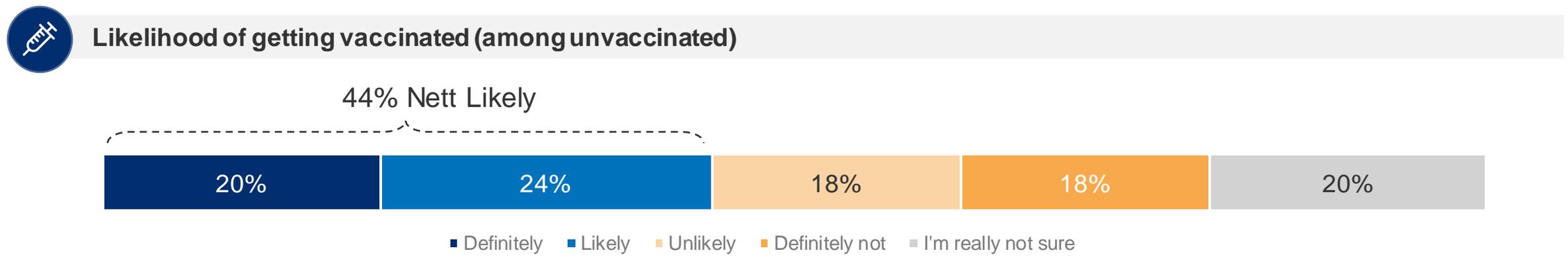
Vaccination



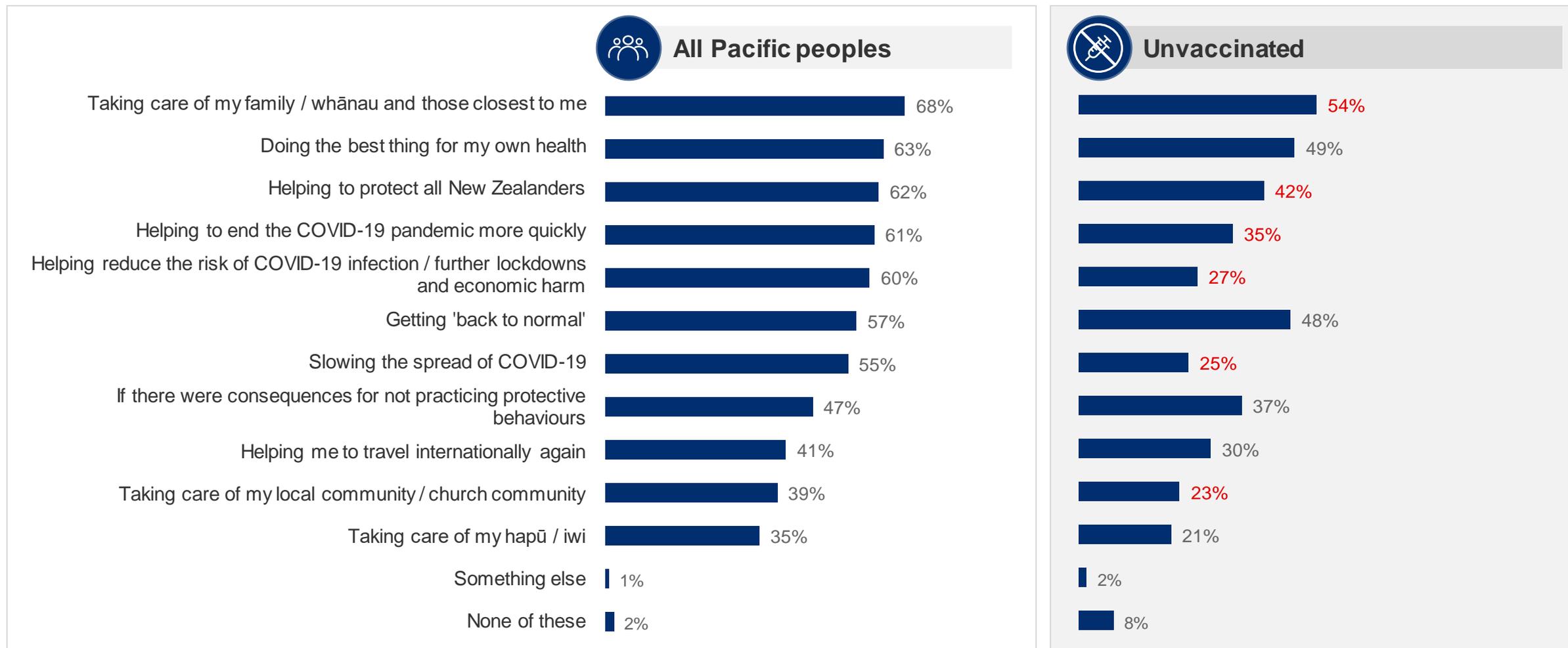
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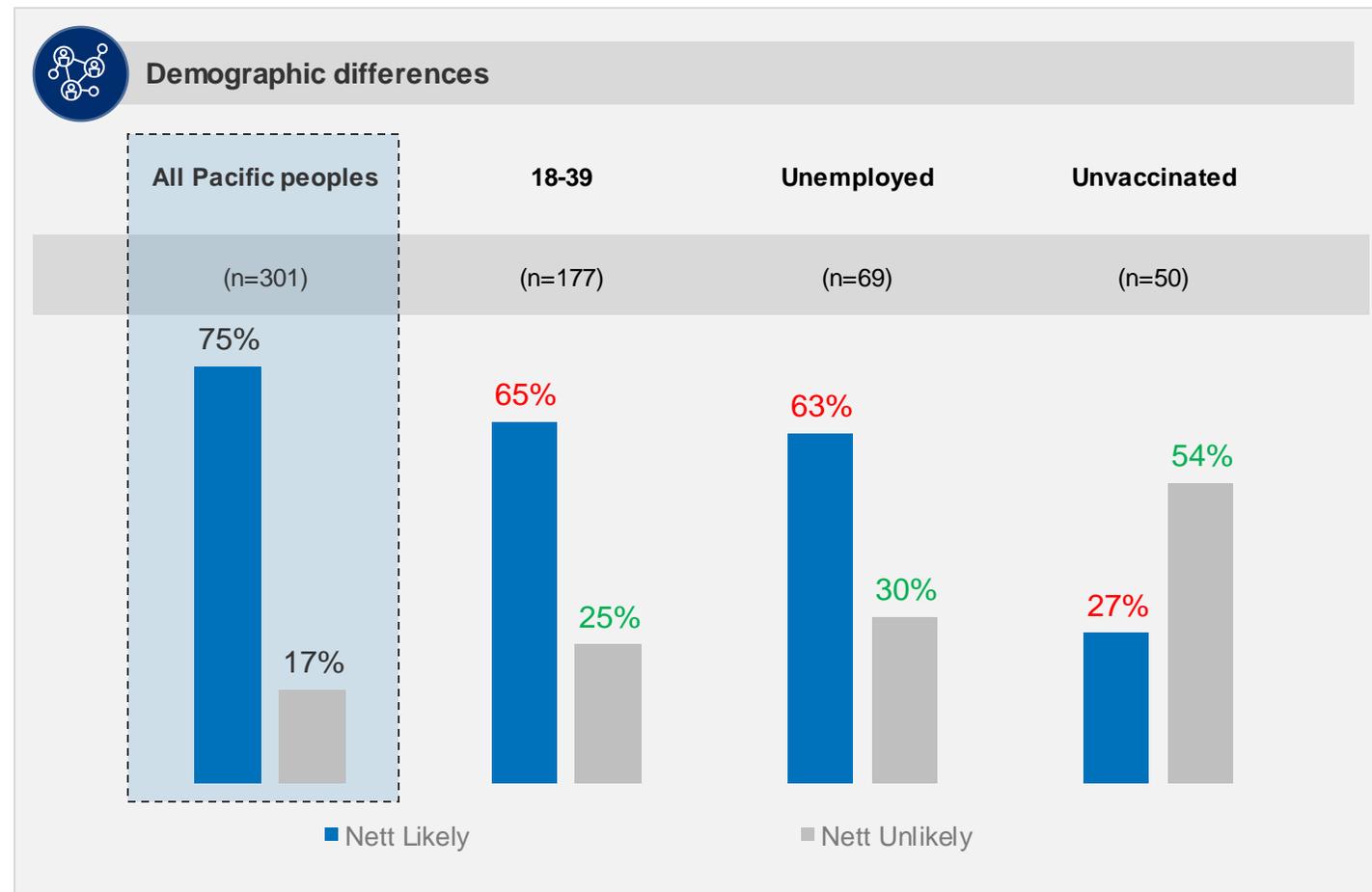
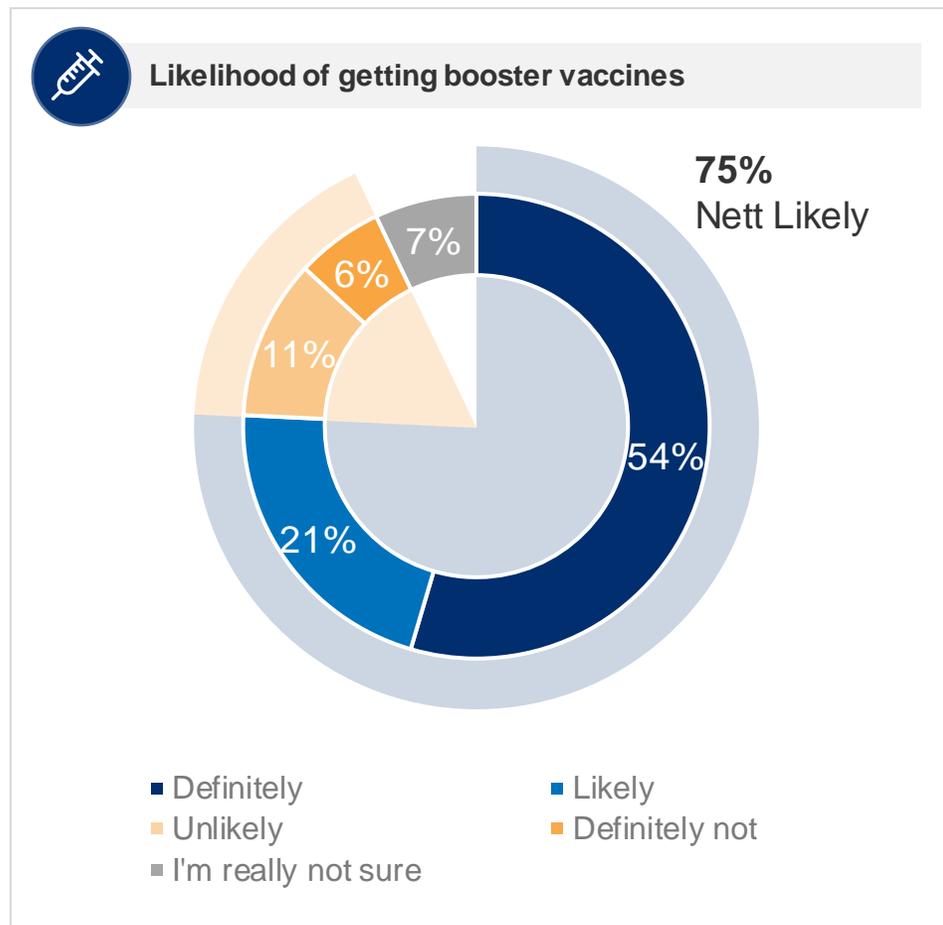
Of those who are not yet vaccinated, nearly half say they are likely to do so. One in five are unsure what they will do. When deciding whether or not to be vaccinated around half say they plan to make the decision autonomously, while more than a quarter will decide as a family unit.



Protecting those closest to them is the biggest vaccination motivator for both all Pacific peoples and the unvaccinated. For the unvaccinated, getting back to normal is a much more important motivator than for all people.



Three quarters of people say they are likely to participate in annual booster vaccinations. Those under 40, those who are unemployed, and those who are currently unvaccinated are least likely to get annual boosters.

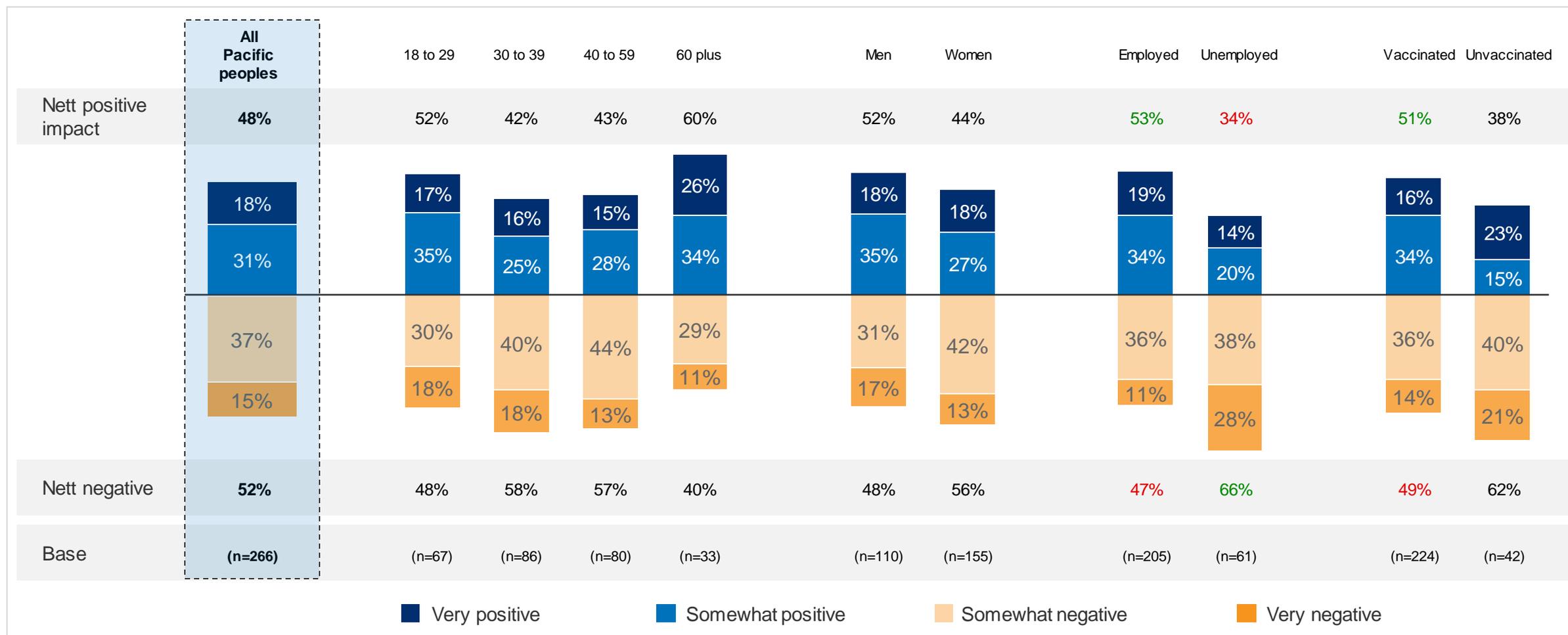


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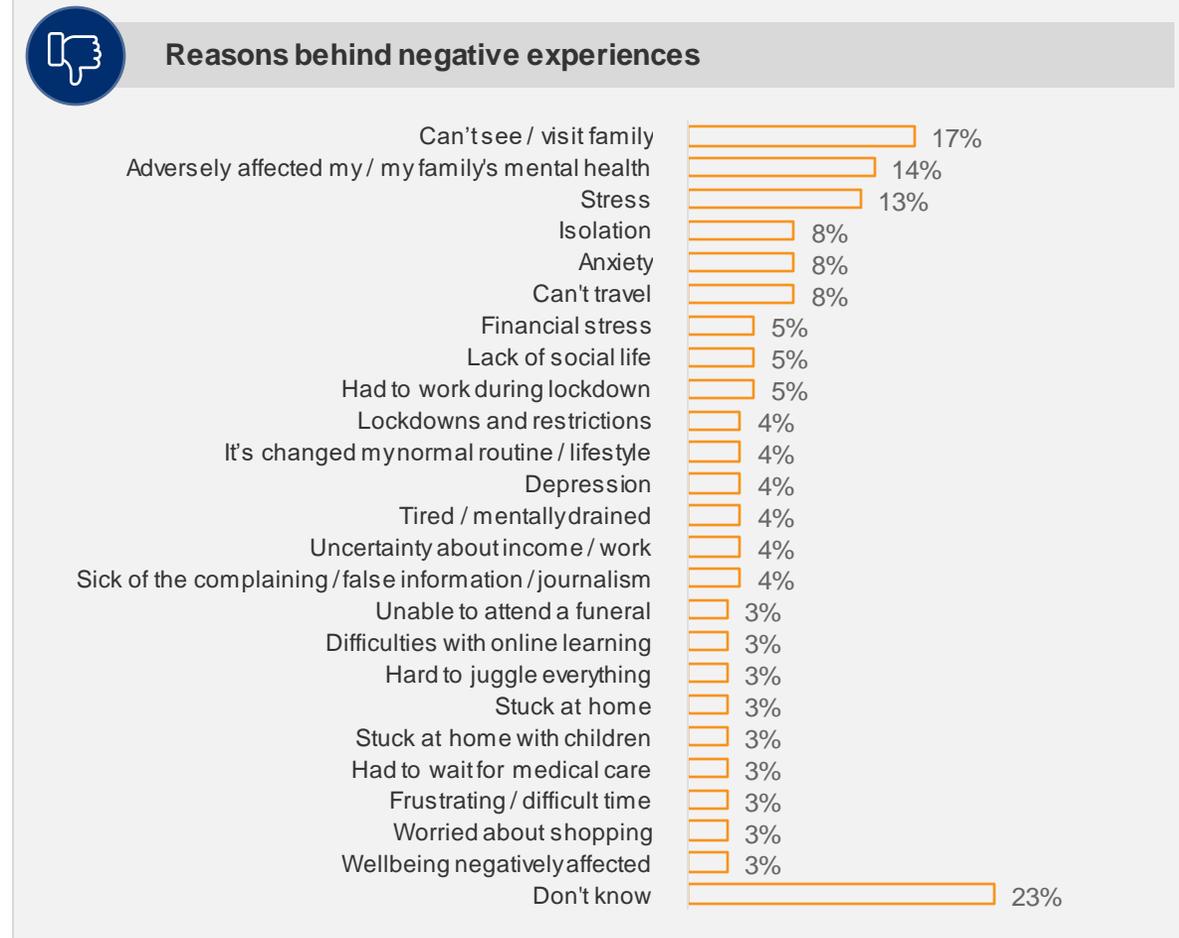
Impact of COVID-19 and
the latest lockdown on
wellbeing



Just as many people say the COVID-19 pandemic has had a positive impact on their personal wellbeing as say it has had a negative impact.



Many of those who have had a positive experience attribute it to being able to spend quality time with family, while others appreciate the feelings of safety evoked by New Zealand's approach. Those who have had a negative experience say they feel this way because of the restrictions limiting their ability to see family and feelings of deteriorated mental health.



Below are a selection of comments people left when asked for the reasons behind their positive or negative lockdown experiences.



Reasons behind positive experiences

“Routine work home life has lead to a shortage of family time. Lockdown gave us heaps of what we were missing.”

“The lockdown has given me the opportunity to reflect on life and appreciate what I have. I have managed to get things done that I wouldn't have otherwise been able to do. I have learned to communicate and connect with people using technology like zoom and other application that I would not have had time to learn during the normal scheme of things. There are a lot of positive things that came out of lockdown so I have no complaints.”

“Save money, have peace of mind, do things in the comfort of home, see the world get a chance to heal itself, get to experience wildlife interaction with nature.”

“Bought whānau / iwi together.”

“We finally have a government who cares about us personally and not just about the economy.”



Reasons behind negative experiences

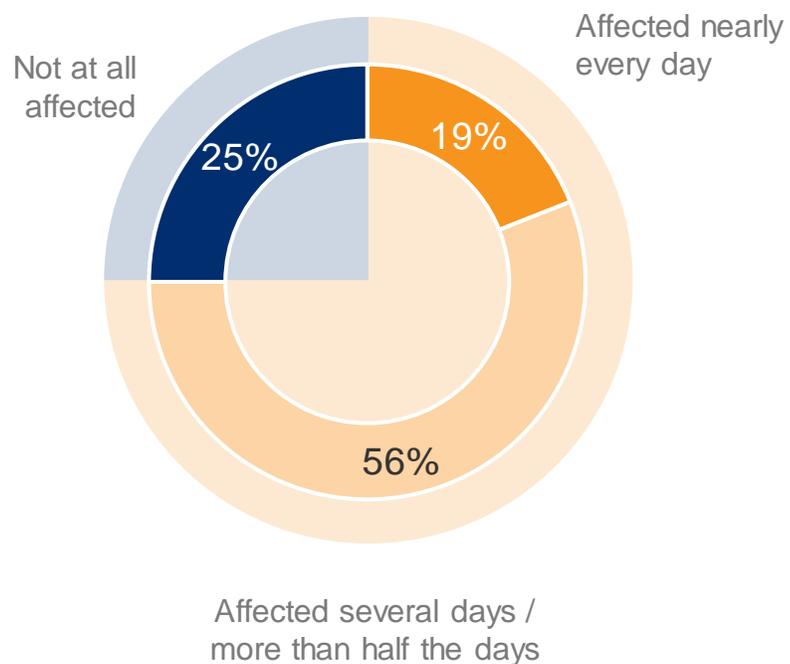
“It's hard when some of us (of the team of 5 million) are actually doing everything in the best of our ability to follow the rules and everything, just for others to ruin that effort. I live away from home for university, and I honestly struggle with the constant changes in alert levels and the lockdowns. You're separated from your family and you just struggle alone. There are many times, I feel like I am given false hope with borders re-opening so I can see family again, but then again new cases arises and it is just mentally draining.”

“Lockdowns are mentally draining, the financial impact is huge, the emotional impact is huge, coping with it as an adult is hard but supporting children to cope with it is even harder and the mortality and hospitalisation statistics don't warrant lockdowns.”

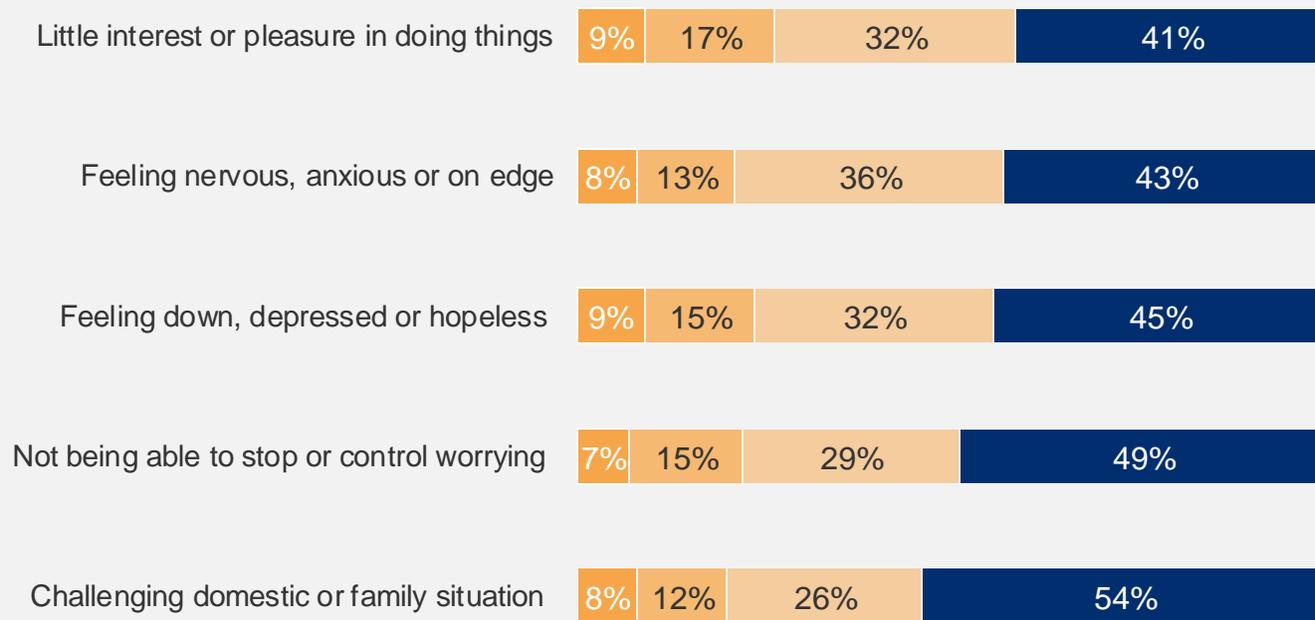
“I feel that racism and prejudice really took a hold once Covid-19 hit. Lots of double standards came out e.g. a brown family was at the heart of the August 2020 lockdown and EVERYONE in South Auckland took bullets. A man from the shore was the first Delta case for this lockdown and no bullets went that way, but as soon as the AOG church in Mangere was named, more bullets came flying. I thought it would be safe to raise our kids here but I don't think it is. Covid is nothing compared to people's prejudices.”

In the last two weeks, nearly one in five people report experiencing negative emotions or challenging domestic situations nearly every day.

 **Total level**

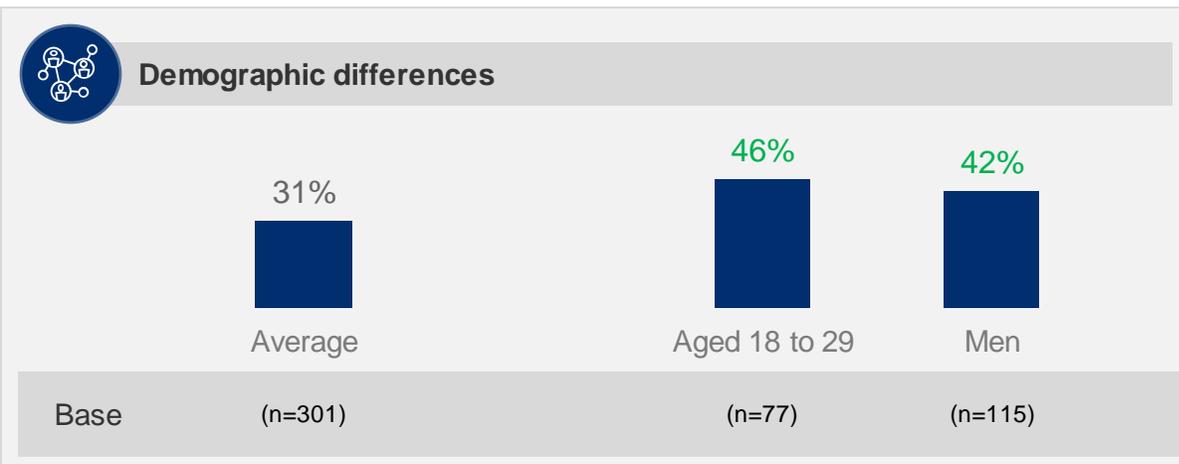
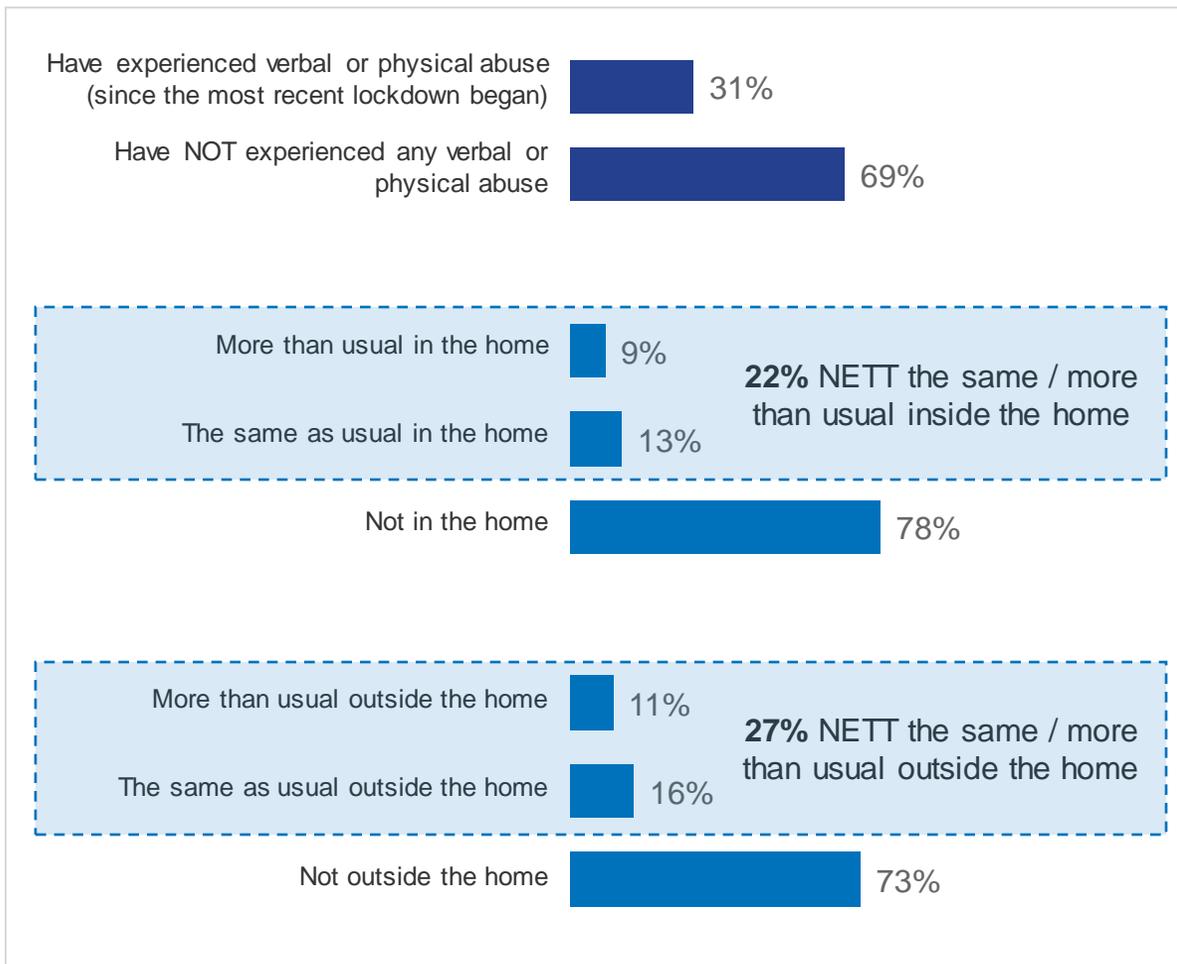


 **Specifically affected by...**

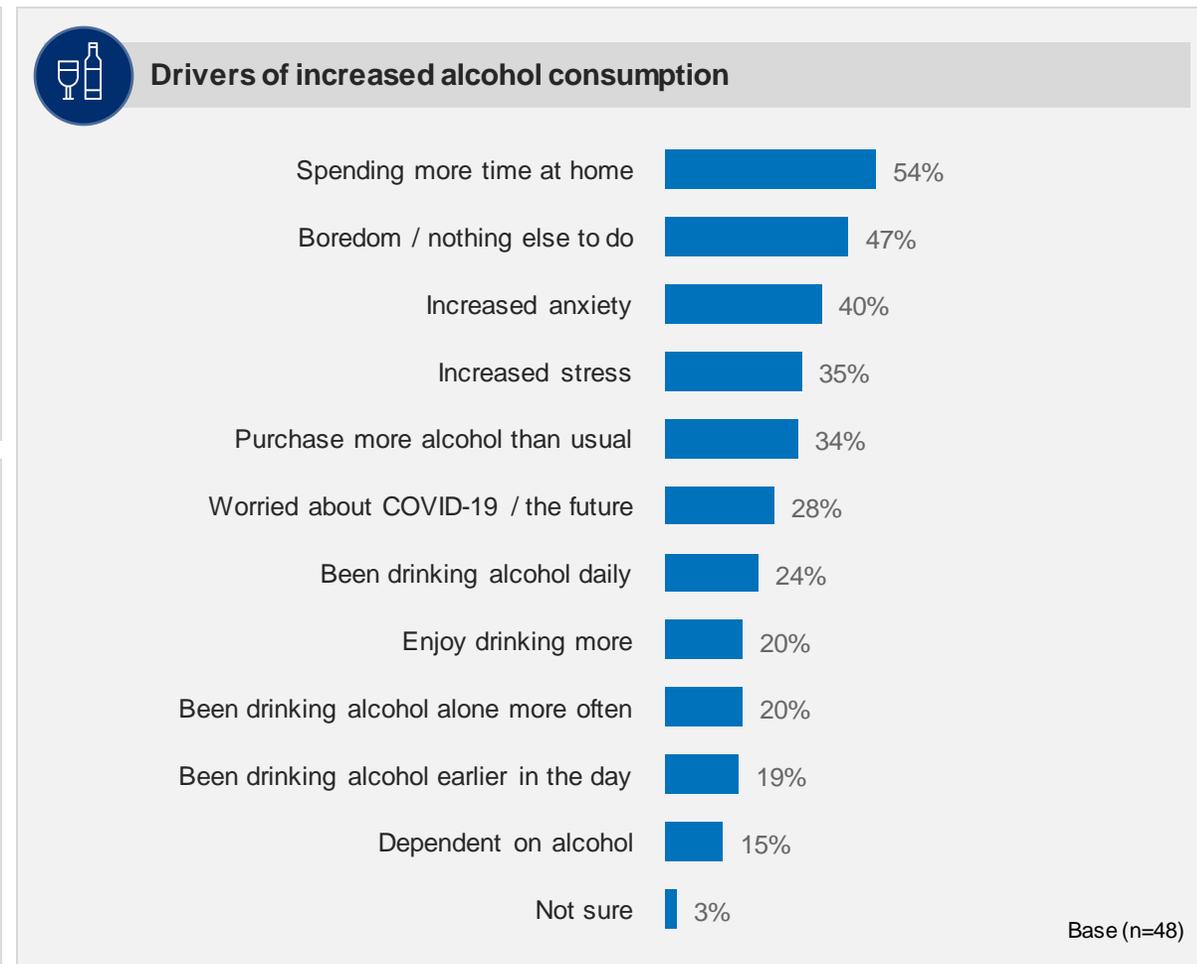
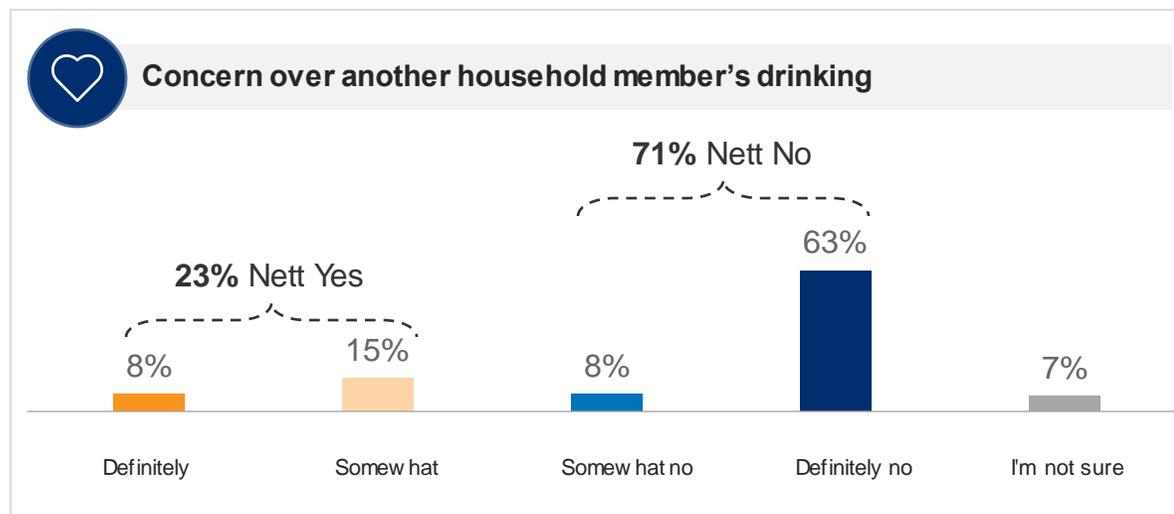
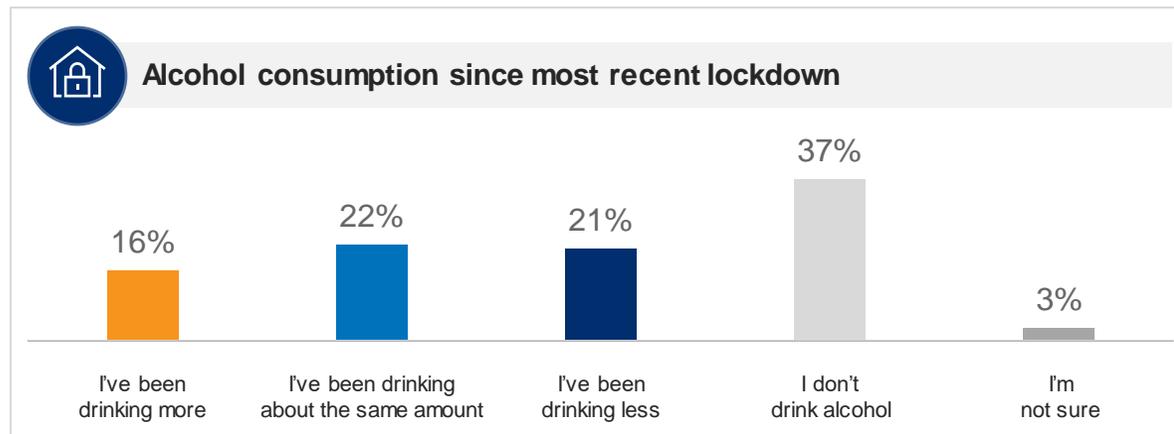


■ Nearly every day ■ More than half the days ■ Several days ■ Not at all

Nearly a third of people have experienced some form of verbal or physical abuse since the most recent lockdown came into effect. Men and those under 30 are most likely to report having experienced some form of verbal or physical abuse.



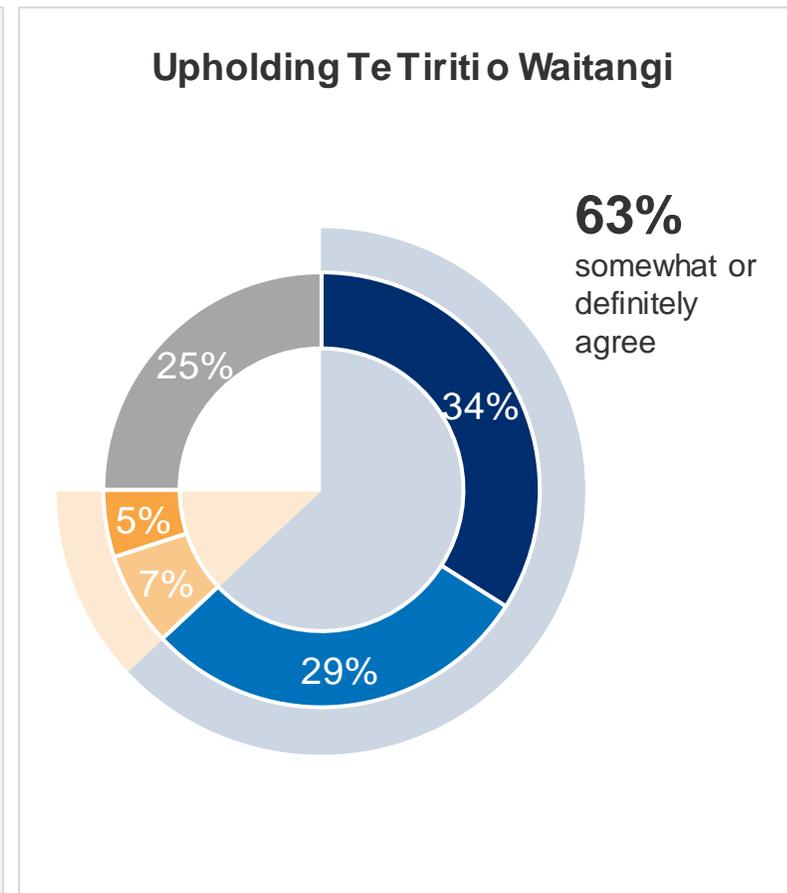
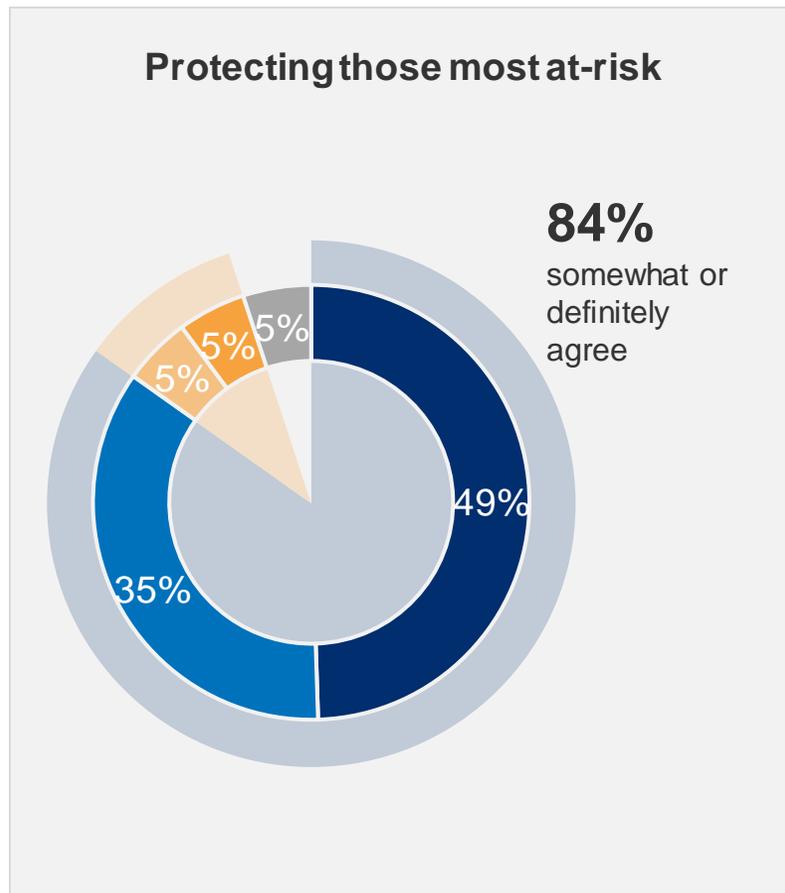
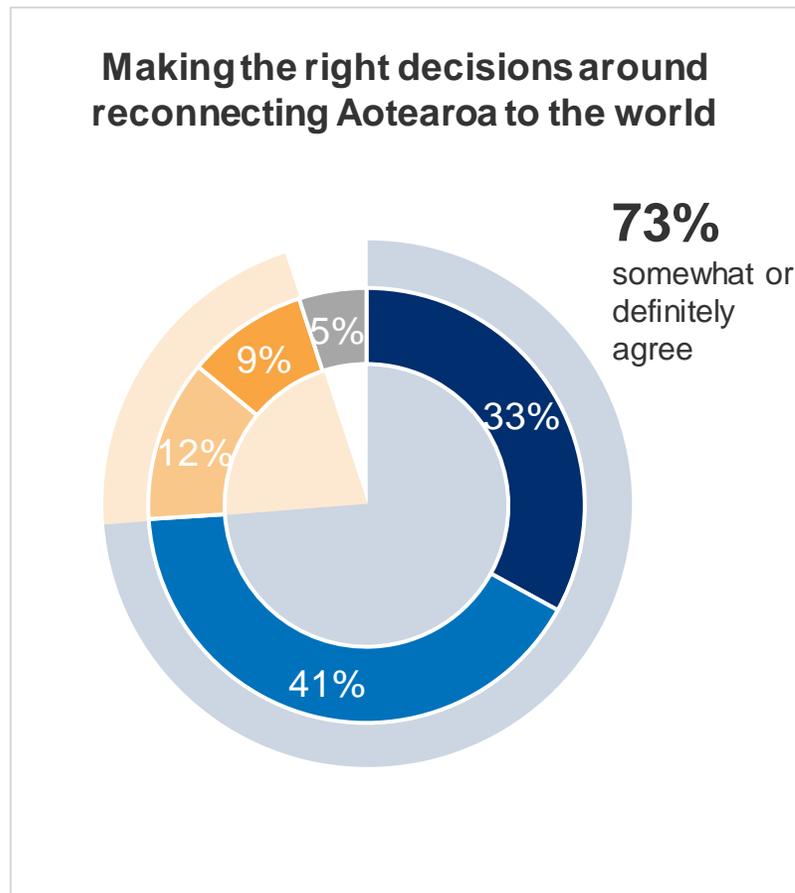
Around one in six people say they are drinking more alcohol now than they were before the start of the most recent lockdown. Nearly than one in four are concerned about the drinking of someone else in their household.



7.

Overall reactions to the
COVID-19 strategy

People generally feel the right decisions are being made when it comes to: reconnecting Aotearoa to the world, protecting those most at-risk, and upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi.



■ Definitely ■ Somewhat ■ Somewhat not ■ Definitely not ■ I'm really not sure



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Article 31 of the Research Association NZ Code states:

Where a client publishes any of the findings of a research project the client has a responsibility to ensure these are not misleading. The Researcher must be consulted and agree in advance to the form and content for publication. Where this does not happen the Researcher is entitled to:

- a. Refuse permission for their name to be quoted in connection with the published findings
- b. Publish the appropriate details of the project
- c. Correct any misleading aspects of the published presentation of the findings

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