



# Your Voice Survey Results

October 2024

Top Concerns and Priorities of  
Canada's Small Business Community



# Methodology

## *Your Voice* October 2024

**Survey Type:** An omnibus, controlled-access online CFIB survey.

**Survey period:** October 10 - November 07, 2024.

**Sample:** Based on responses from 3,003 CFIB members who are owners of Canadian independent businesses, from all sectors and regions of the country. For comparison purposes, a probability samples with the same number of respondents would have a margin of error of +/-1.79%, 19 times out of 20.

**Purpose and Context:** The CFIB *Your Voice* omnibus survey is conducted bi-monthly, focusing on issues that matter most to small business owners across Canada. For over five decades, CFIB has harnessed the collective voice of its members to produce data-driven policy strategies that reflect the needs of small businesses. Our in-house survey capacity is a powerful tool designed to empower business owners to share insights on topics from government support to regulatory burdens.

**Impact:** The survey's insights are gathered directly from CFIB members, ensuring an authentic representation of small business priorities. These responses help shape CFIB's advocacy efforts, driving policies that are aligned with the evolving needs of the small business community.

# Survey insights

The CFIB's October *Your Voice* survey dives into the pressing priorities of Canadian businesses, spotlighting their top policy concerns and needs for government support. Here are the key findings from this month's responses:

## Low Confidence in Government Support

Canadian business owners are feeling the strain, with nearly two-thirds expressing a lack of confidence that their provincial or territorial government is truly supportive of their interests. Alberta leads in relative confidence levels, while Quebec sees the lowest figures, suggesting that support for small business varies widely across provinces.

## Tax Cuts on the Agenda

Tax relief is high on the priority list, with a strong call to reduce the small business corporate income tax, personal income tax, carbon tax, and gasoline/fuel taxes. Interestingly, some provinces—particularly Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan —place a higher emphasis on carbon taxes, indicating region-specific tax concerns.

## Federal Election Priorities

As federal election discussions emerge, business owners are clear on what they want to see prioritized: controlling government spending, reducing the small business tax rate, and eliminating the carbon tax. Western provinces, in particular, are keen on carbon tax reductions, reflecting a regional push for policies to lower operational costs.

## Mixed Views on Tariffs

The introduction of a 25% tariff on steel and aluminum imports from China garners mixed support, with about half of the business community in favor. Notably, the construction sector leads in support for this measure, signaling a sector-specific push.

In summary, the October survey presents a focused view of the policy areas where business owners seek immediate action, guiding policymakers on the support and reforms that small businesses need most.



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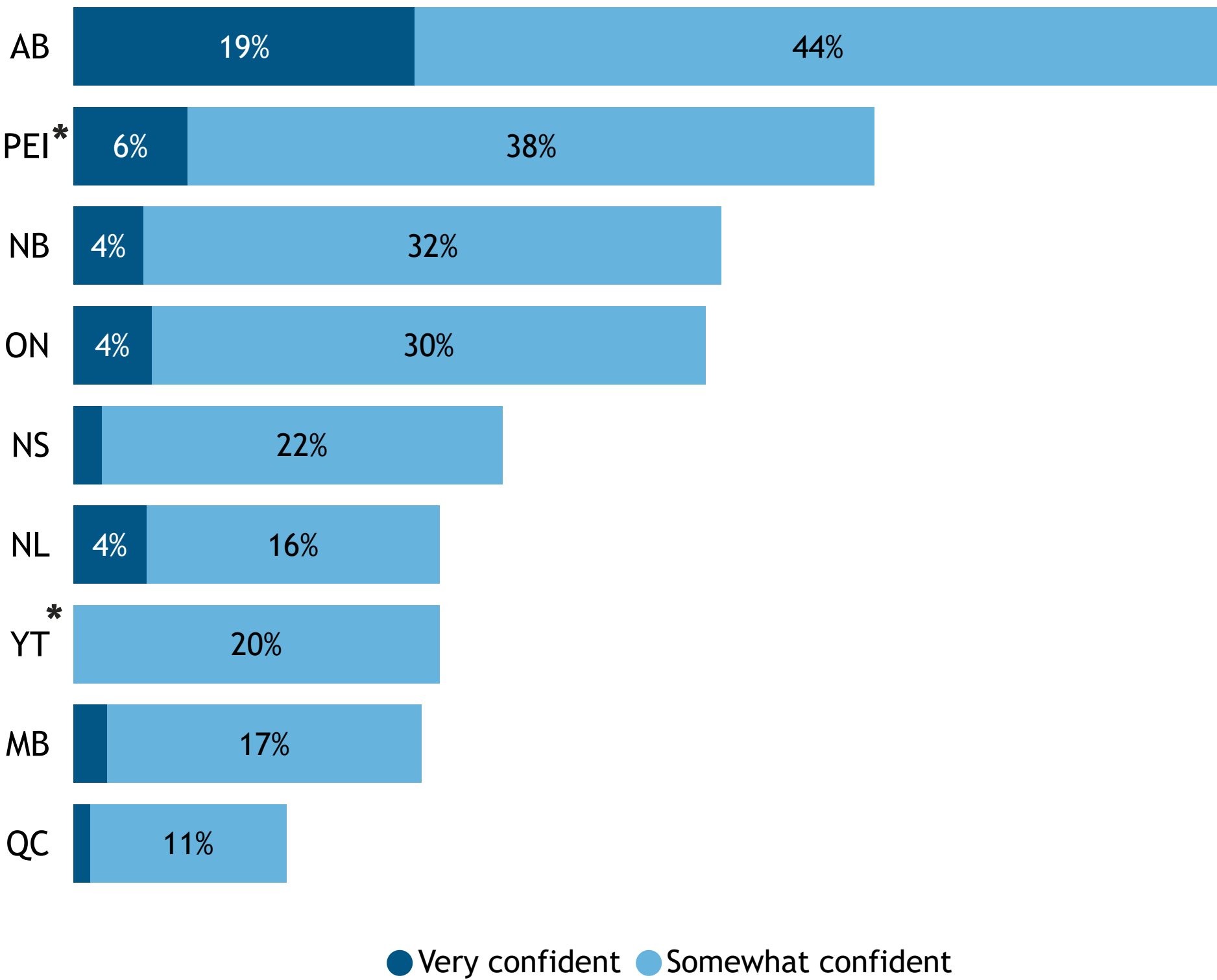
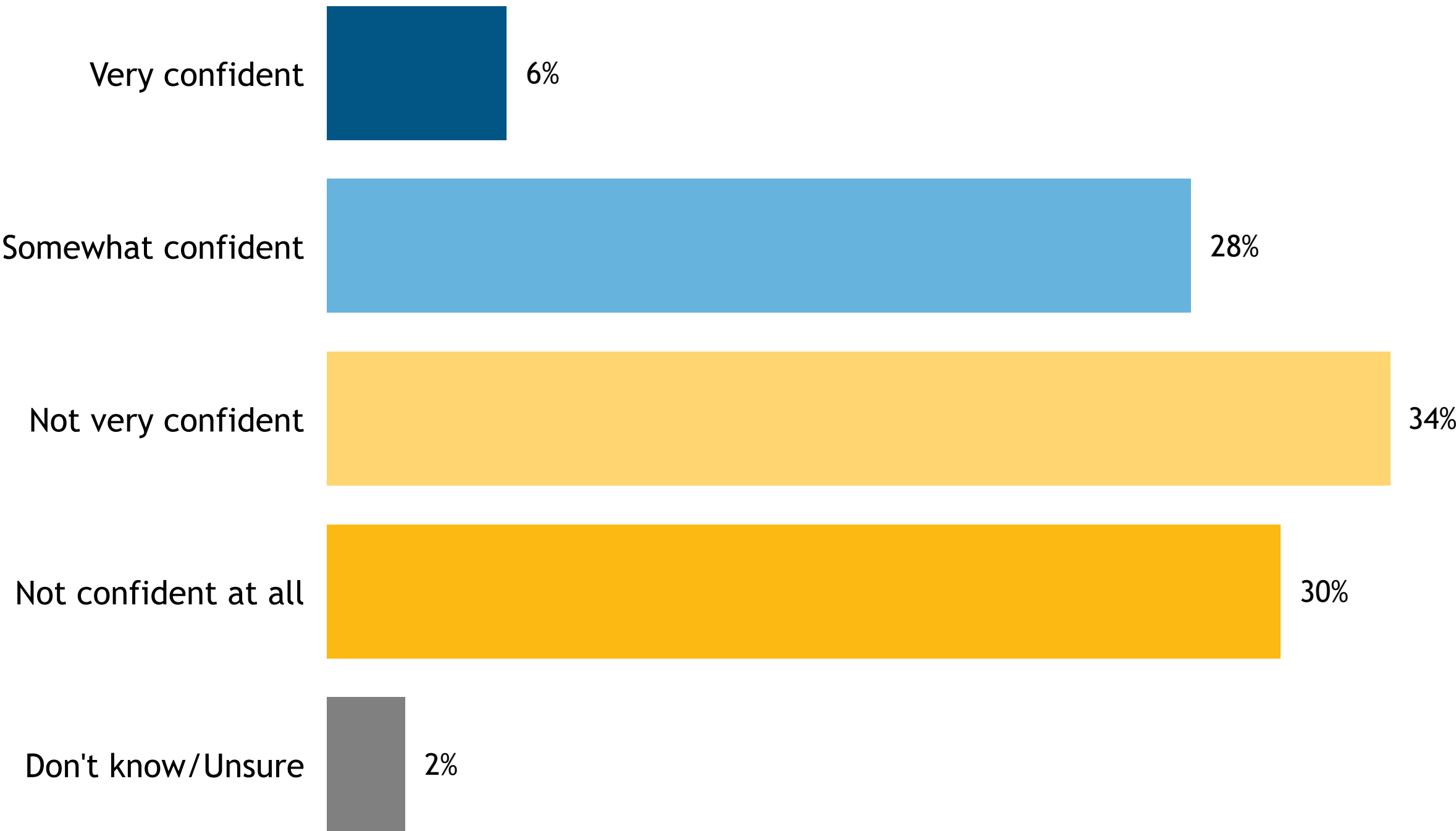
# Confidence in the provincial/territorial government

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Nearly two-thirds of SMEs lack confidence in their provincial or territorial government to support them effectively as business owners. Confidence levels are highest in Alberta, and lowest in Quebec.

Business confidence that provincial/territorial governments have their backs



2,532 Responses

**Question:** How confident are you that the provincial/territorial government has your back as a business owner (i.e. supports your business, looks out for the interests of small business, makes your life easier)? (Select one)

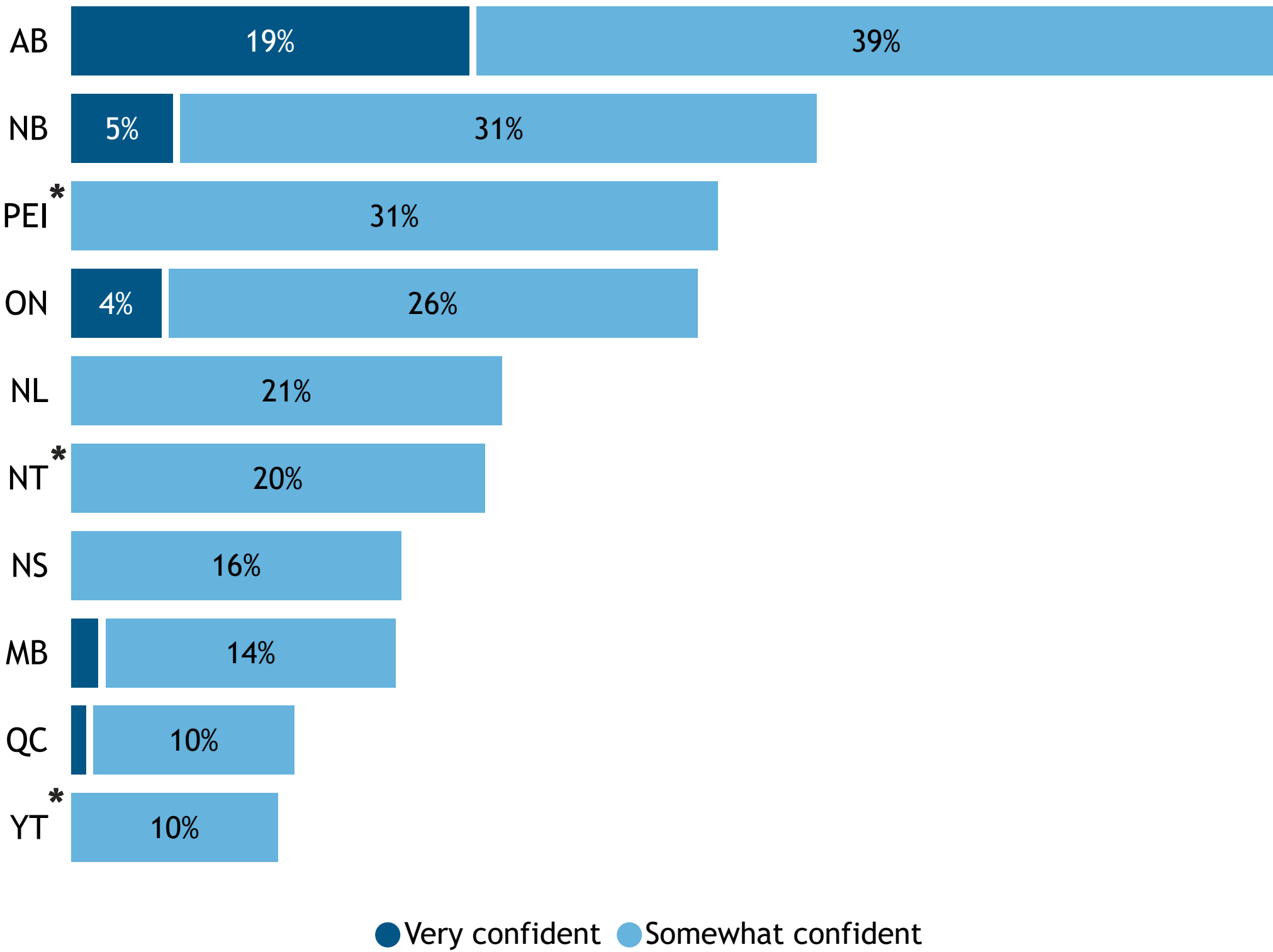
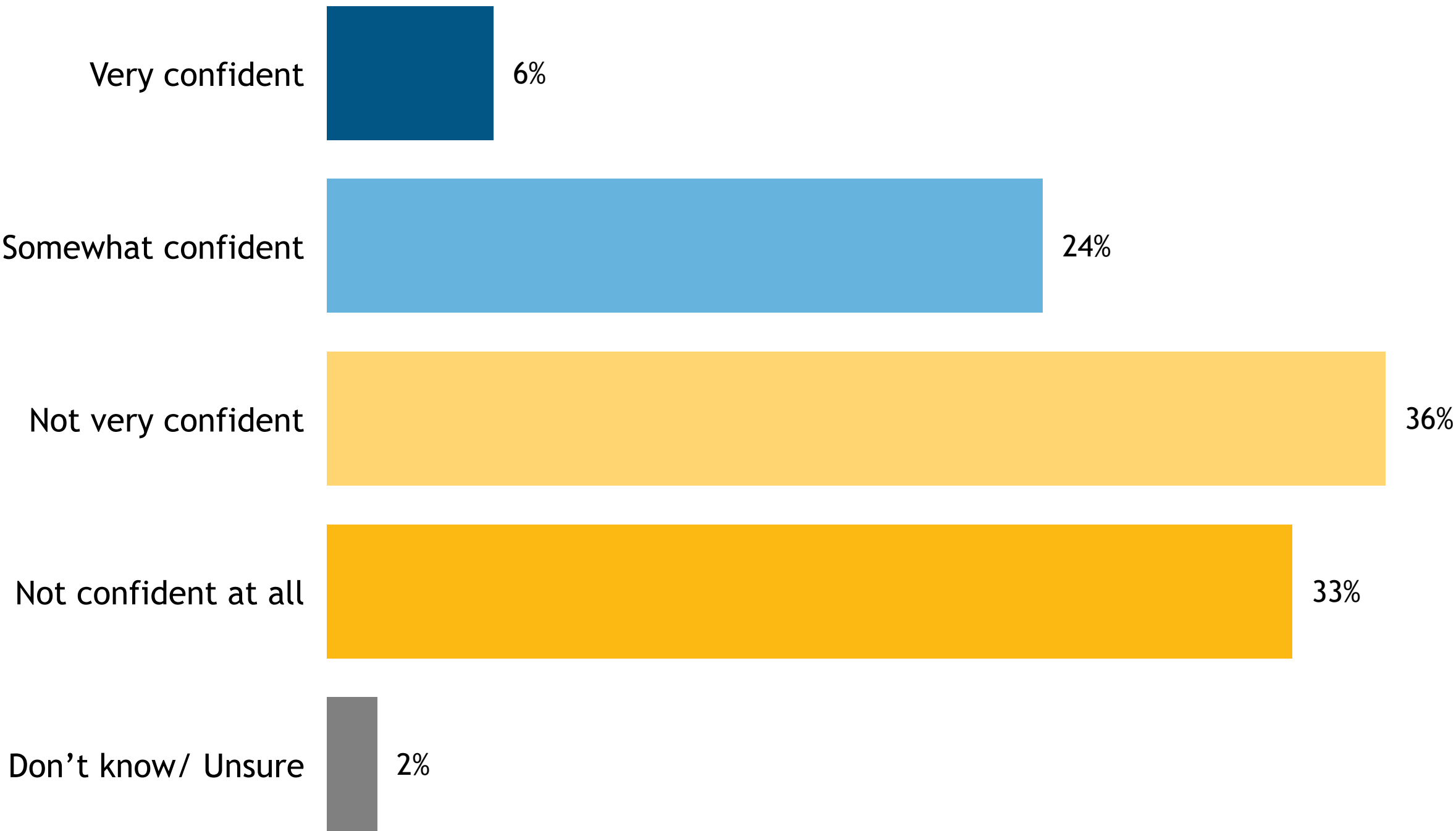
**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

**Note:** Data for British Columbia (BC) and Saskatchewan (SK) are not included, as this question was not administered in these provinces due to their ongoing electoral processes.

\*Small sample size (<40).

More than two-thirds of SMEs lack confidence that their provincial or territorial government understands the impact of operational and regulatory cost pressures. Confidence levels are highest in Alberta, and lowest in Quebec.

Business confidence that provincial/territorial governments understand the impact of operational and regulatory cost pressures



2,416 Responses

**Question:** The provincial/territorial government understands the impact of operational and regulatory cost pressures on small businesses

**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

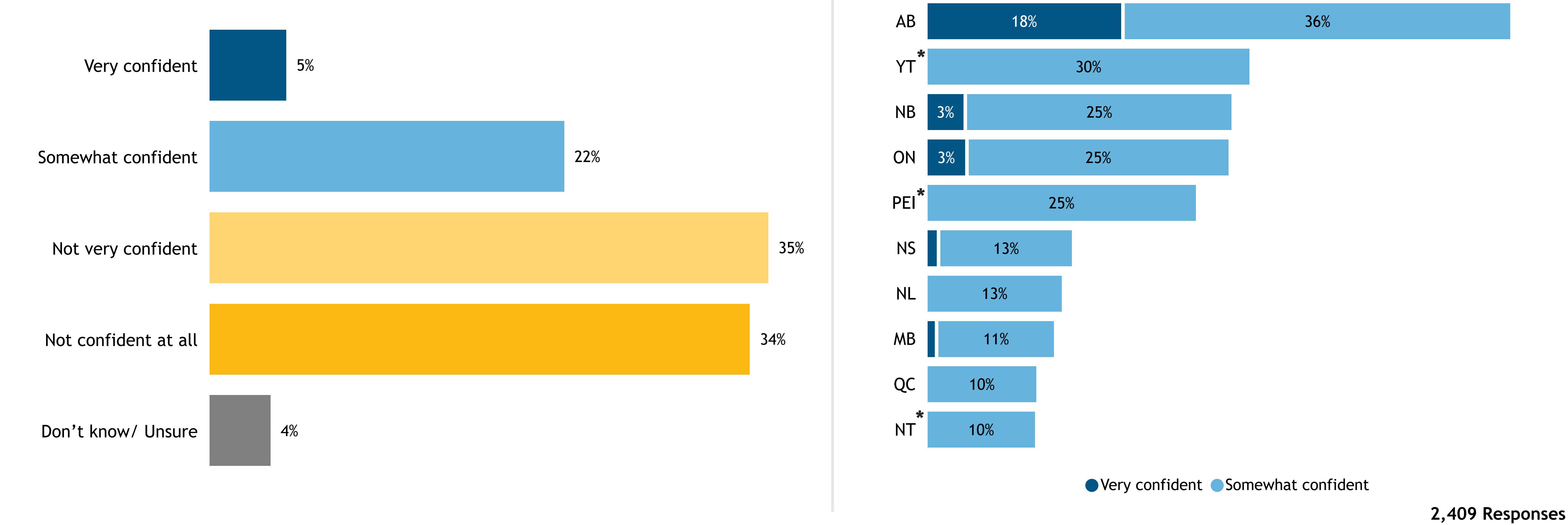
**Note:** Data for British Columbia (BC) and Saskatchewan (SK) are not included, as this question was not administered in these provinces due to their ongoing electoral processes.

\*Small sample size (<40).



More than two-thirds of SMEs lack confidence that their provincial or territorial government has a vision that supports small business and entrepreneurship. Confidence levels are highest in Alberta, and lowest in Quebec.

Business confidence that provincial/territorial governments have a vision that supports small business and entrepreneurship



Question: The provincial/territorial government has a vision that supports small business and entrepreneurship

Source: CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

Note: Data for British Columbia (BC) and Saskatchewan (SK) are not included, as this question was not administered in these provinces due to their ongoing electoral processes.

\*Small sample size (<40).



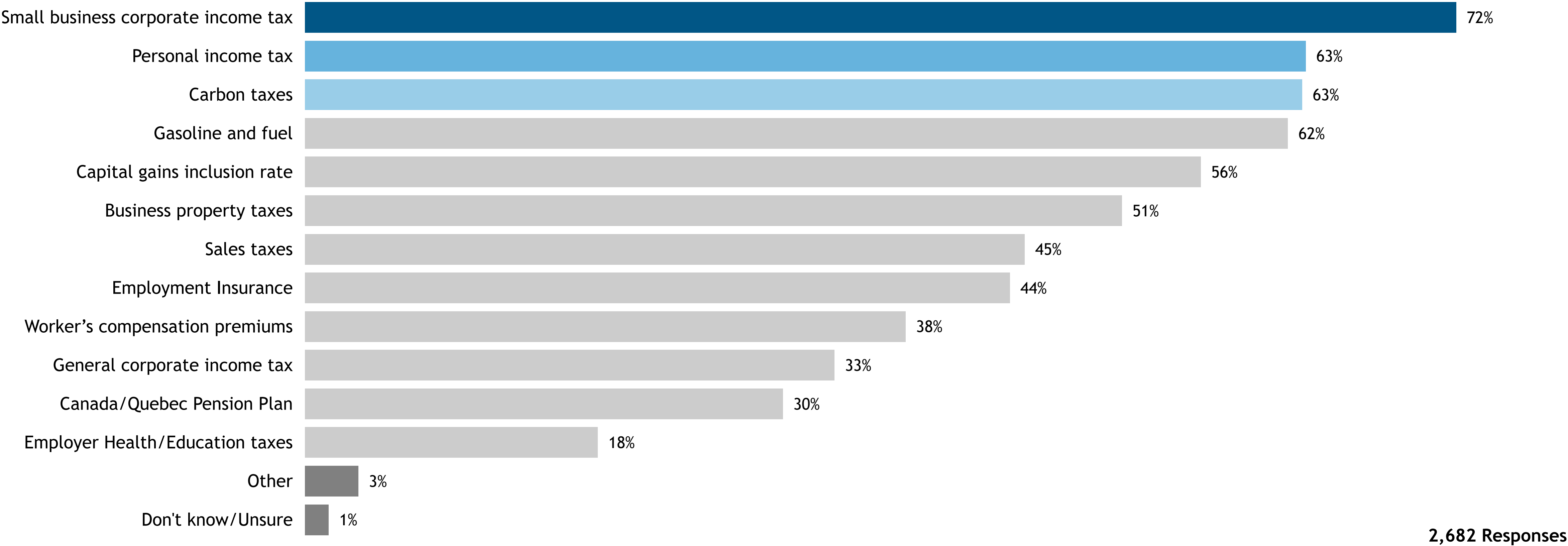
# Taxation

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# SMEs prioritize potential tax cuts in the small business tax rate, personal income taxes, carbon taxes and gasoline and fuel taxes.

## Top tax cut priorities

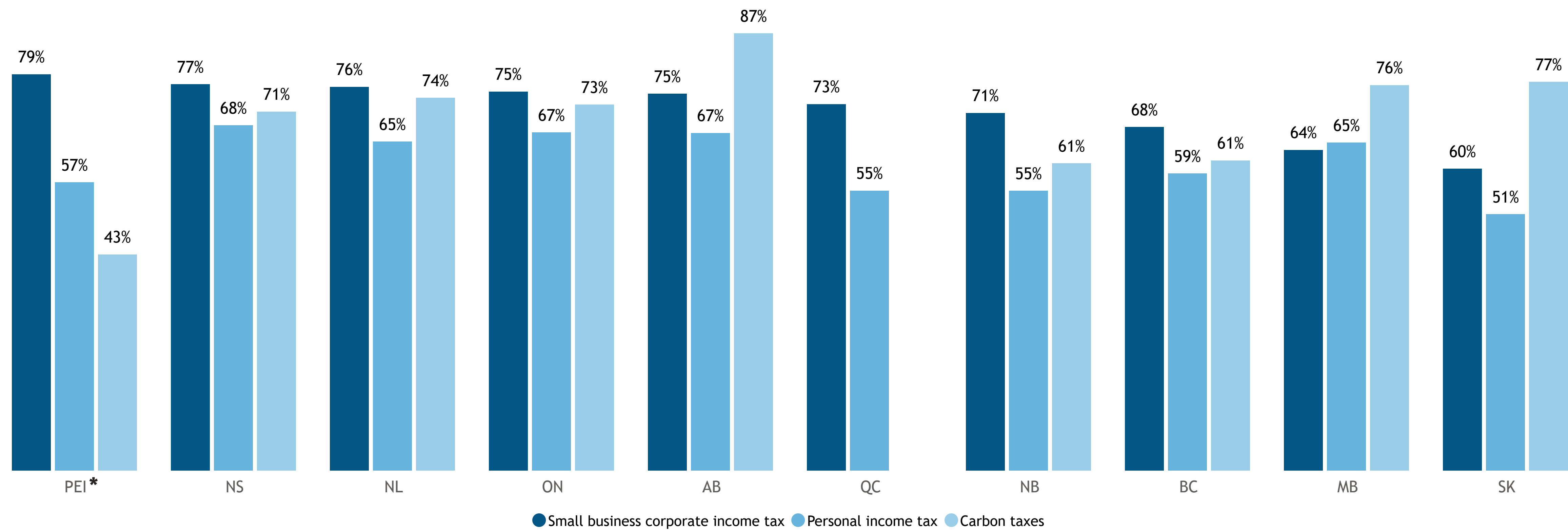


**Question:** If governments (federal, provincial/territorial and municipal) were to reduce taxes, which areas should be prioritized for tax cuts? (Select all that apply)

**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

Most provinces prioritize reducing small business corporate income tax, followed by personal income and carbon taxes, though in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan carbon taxes take precedence over personal and small business corporate income taxes.

Top tax cut priorities, by province



2,682 Responses

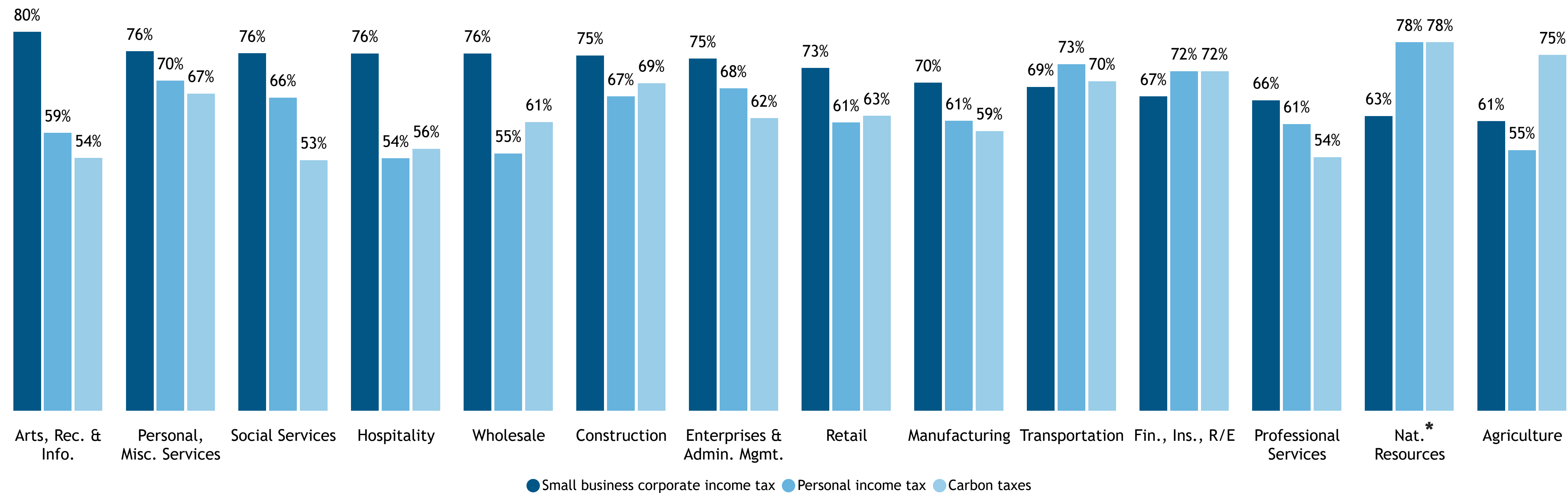
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**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

**Note:** \*Small sample size (<40).

Most sectors prioritize small business income tax cuts, especially Arts, Recreation & Information, Personal, Misc. Services, Social services, Hospitality and Wholesale. While Finance, Insurance & Real Estate, and Transportation prioritize personal income tax cuts.

Top tax cut priorities, by sector



2,682 Responses

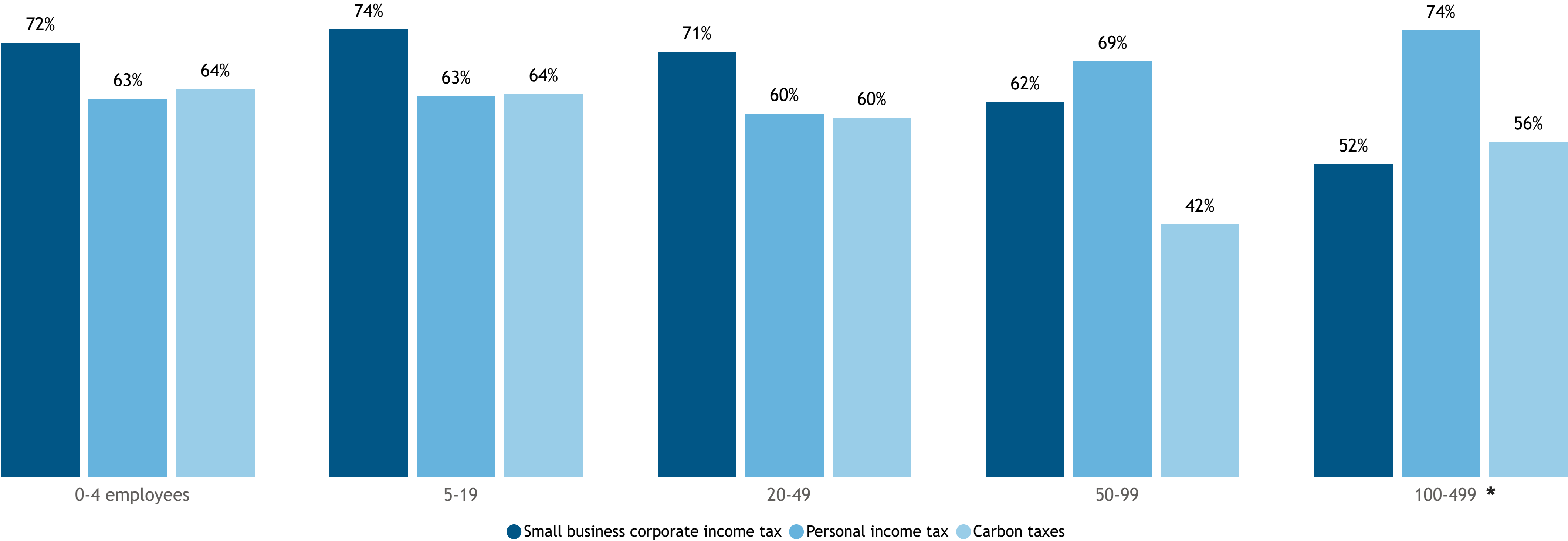
Question: If governments (federal, provincial/territorial and municipal) were to reduce taxes, which areas should be prioritized for tax cuts? (Select all that apply)

Source: CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

Note: \*Small sample size (<40).

# Smaller businesses (0-49 employees) prioritize small business corporate income tax cuts, while larger businesses (50+ employees) lean toward personal income tax cuts.

Top tax cut priorities, by business size



2,682 Responses

**Question:** If governments (federal, provincial/territorial and municipal) were to reduce taxes, which areas should be prioritized for tax cuts? (Select all that apply)

**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

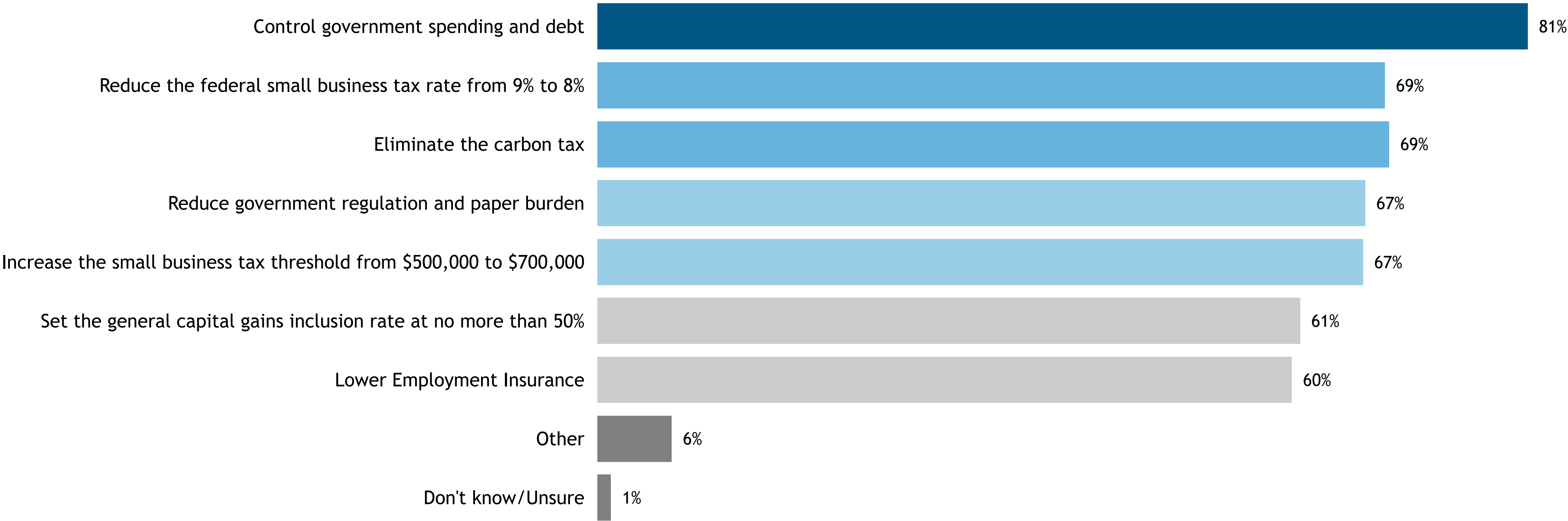
**Note:** \*Small sample size (<40).



# Federal priorities

Business owners prioritize federal election platforms that address controlling government spending and debt, reducing the federal small business tax rate, eliminating the carbon tax, reducing regulatory burdens, and increasing the small business tax threshold.

Top federal priorities to include in election platforms



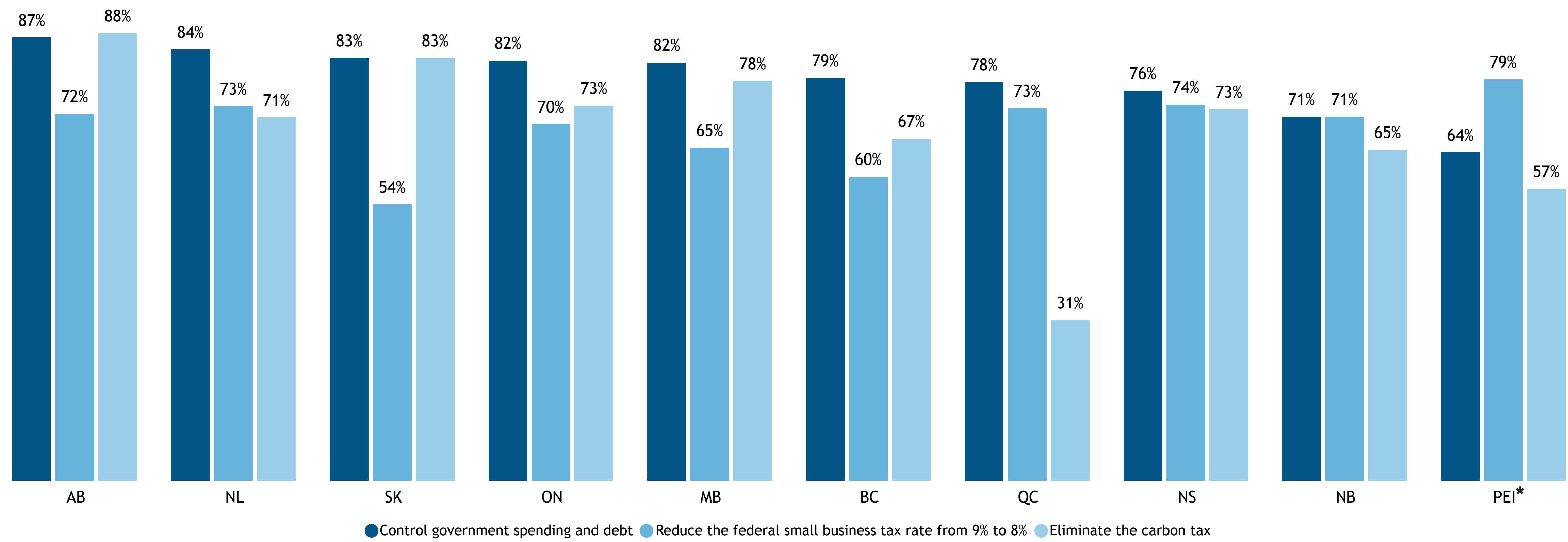
2,644 Responses

**Question:** Federally, which of the following are most important for political parties to include as part of their election platform to address your concerns as a small business owner? (Select all that apply)

**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

# Controlling government spending is the top priority for business owners across most provinces. Western provinces prioritize eliminating the carbon tax over reducing the federal small business tax rate.

Top federal priorities to include in election platforms, by province



2,644 Responses

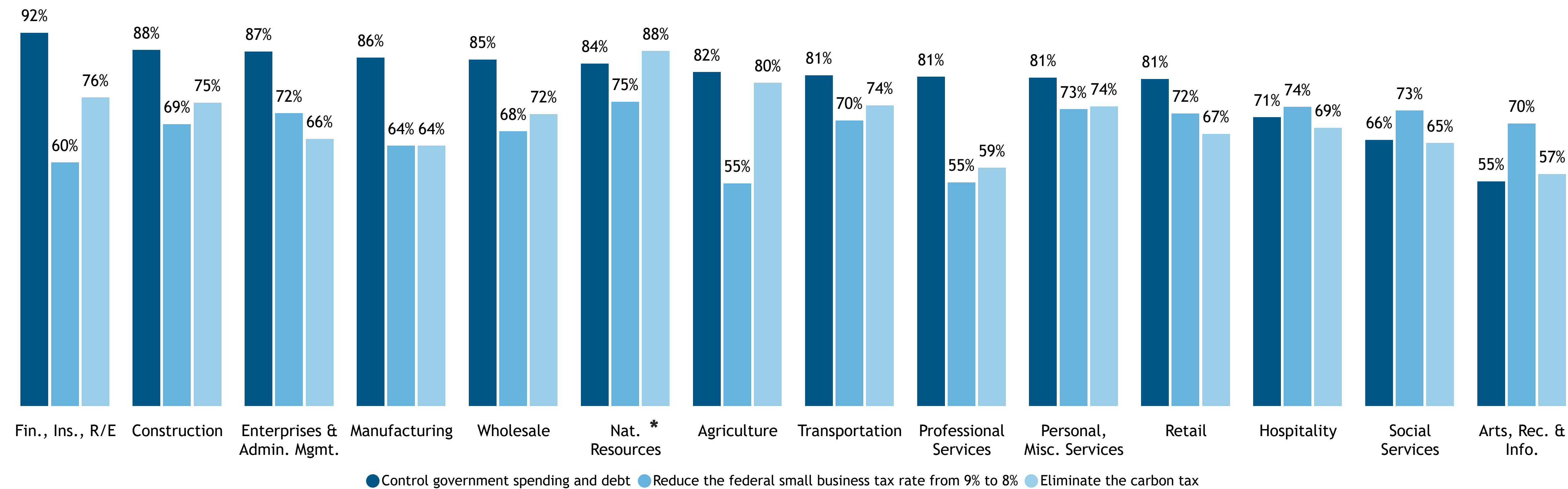
**Question:** Federally, which of the following are most important for political parties to include as part of their election platform to address your concerns as a small business owner? (Select all that apply)

**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

**Note:** \*Small sample size (<40).

# Most sectors prioritize controlling government spending. Social services, and arts and recreation sectors’ top priority is reducing the federal small business tax rate.

Top federal priorities to include in election platforms, by sector



2,644 Responses

**Question:** Federally, which of the following are most important for political parties to include as part of their election platform to address your concerns as a small business owner? (Select all that apply)

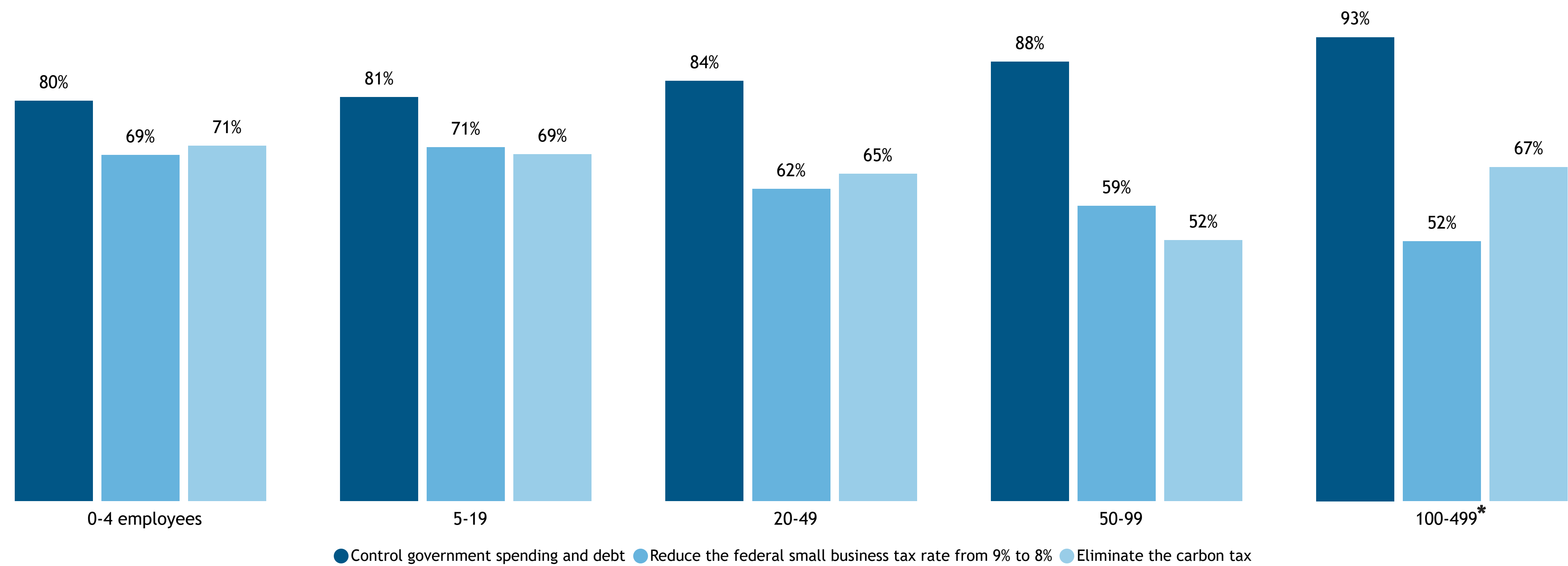
**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

**Note:** \*Small sample size (<40).



# Larger businesses prioritize controlling government spending more and seem less preoccupied with reducing the small business tax rate and eliminating the carbon tax than smaller businesses.

Top federal priorities to include in election platforms, by business size



2,644 Responses

**Question:** Federally, which of the following are most important for political parties to include as part of their election platform to address your concerns as a small business owner? (Select all that apply)

**Source:** CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

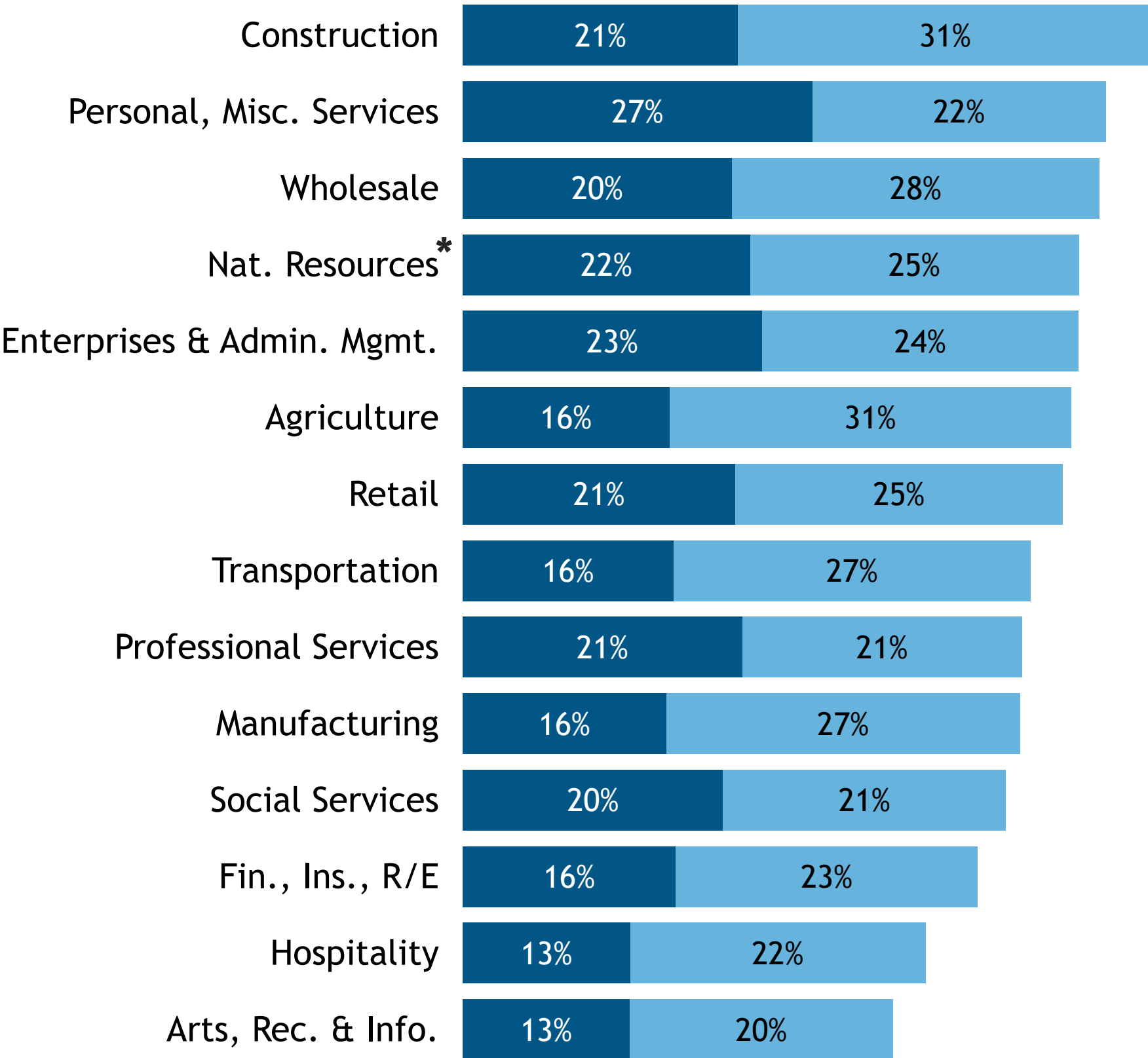
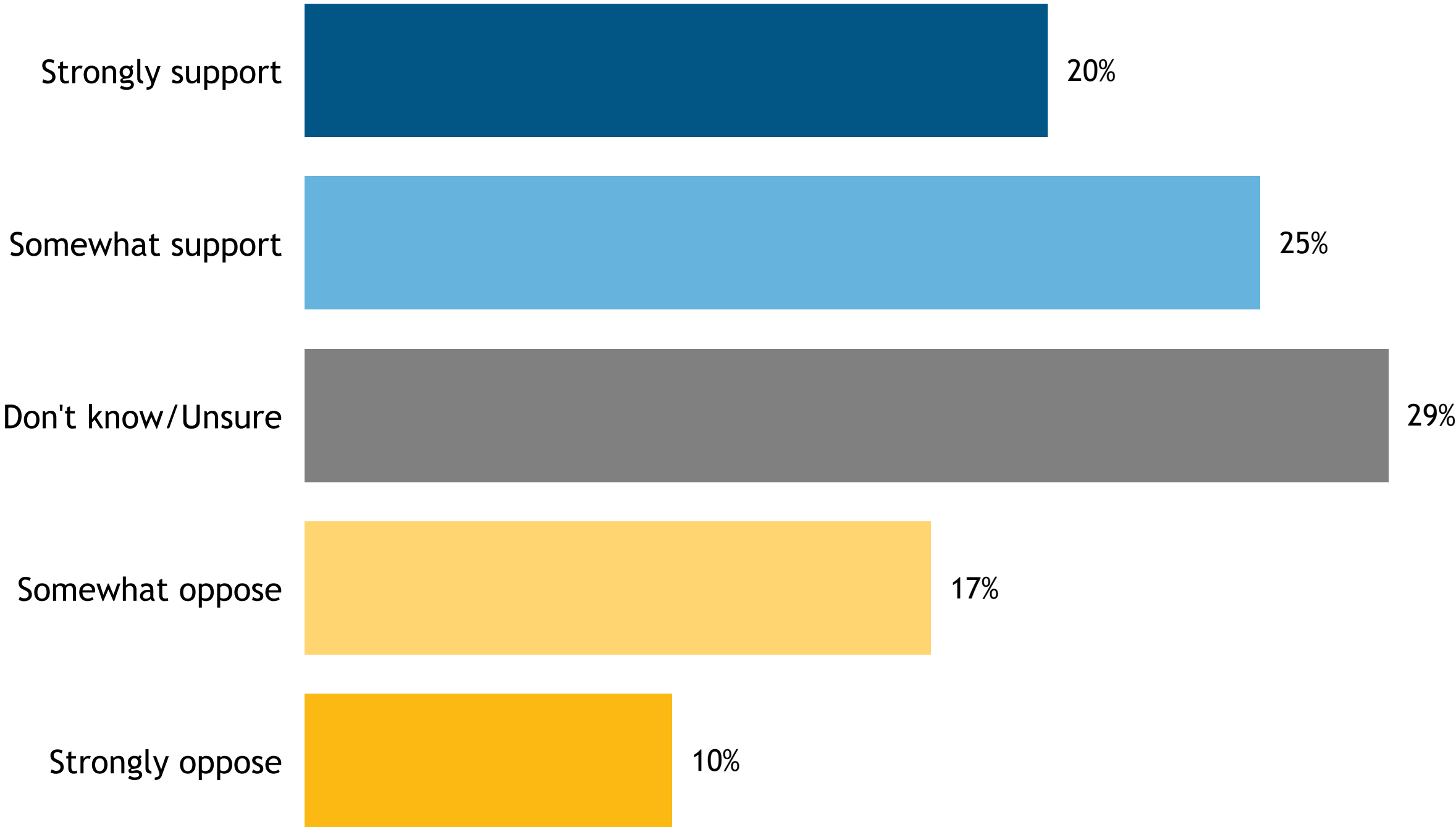
**Note:** \*Small sample size (<40).

# Tariffs

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Support for the 25% tariff on steel and aluminum imports from China is mixed, with nearly half expressing support, while another half either oppose it or remain unsure.

Views on 25% tariff on steel and aluminum imports from China



● Strongly support ● Somewhat support 2,612 Responses

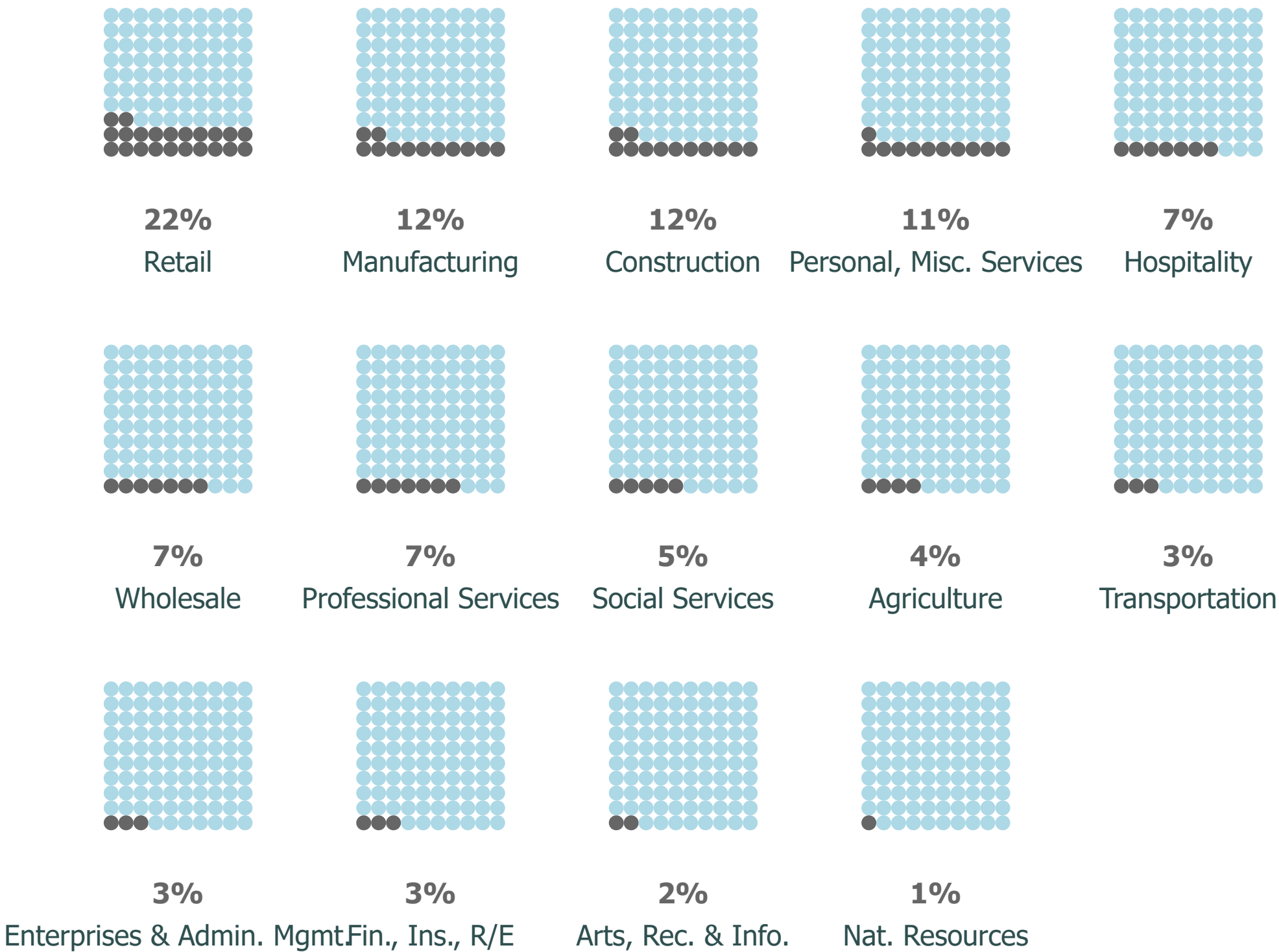
Question: To what extent do you support or oppose the 25% tariff on steel and aluminum imports from China? (Select one)

Source: CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.

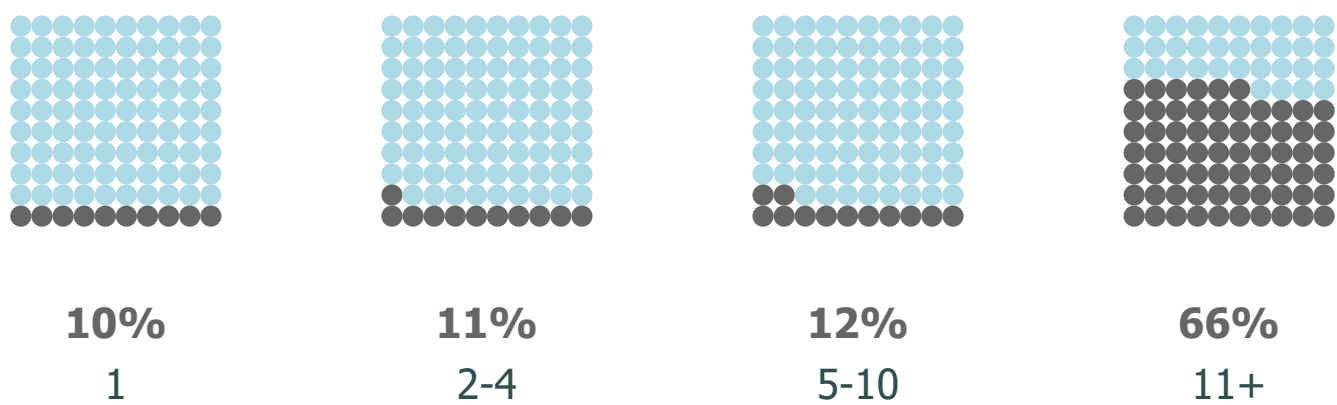
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# Appendix: Sample distribution

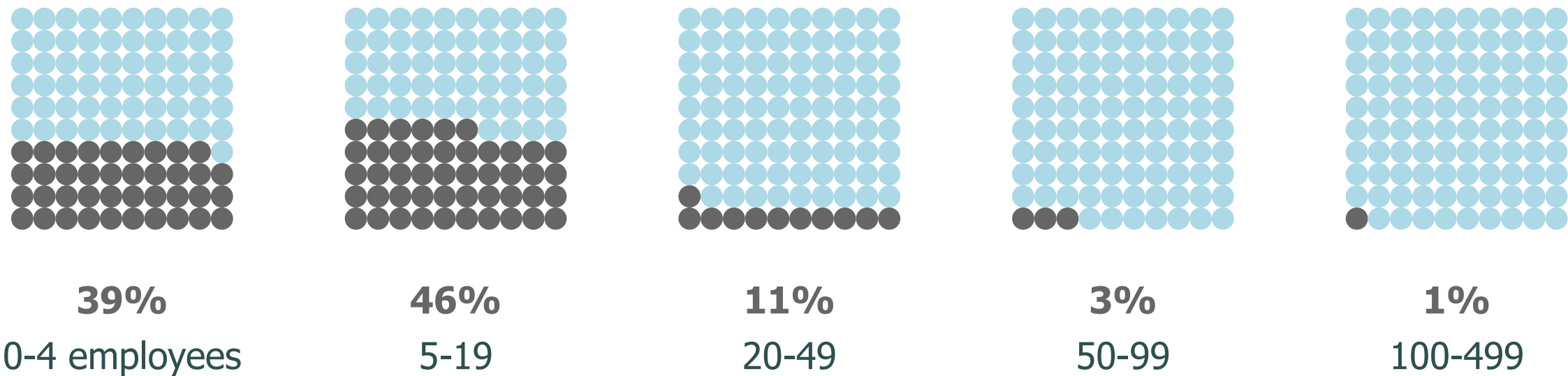
By sector



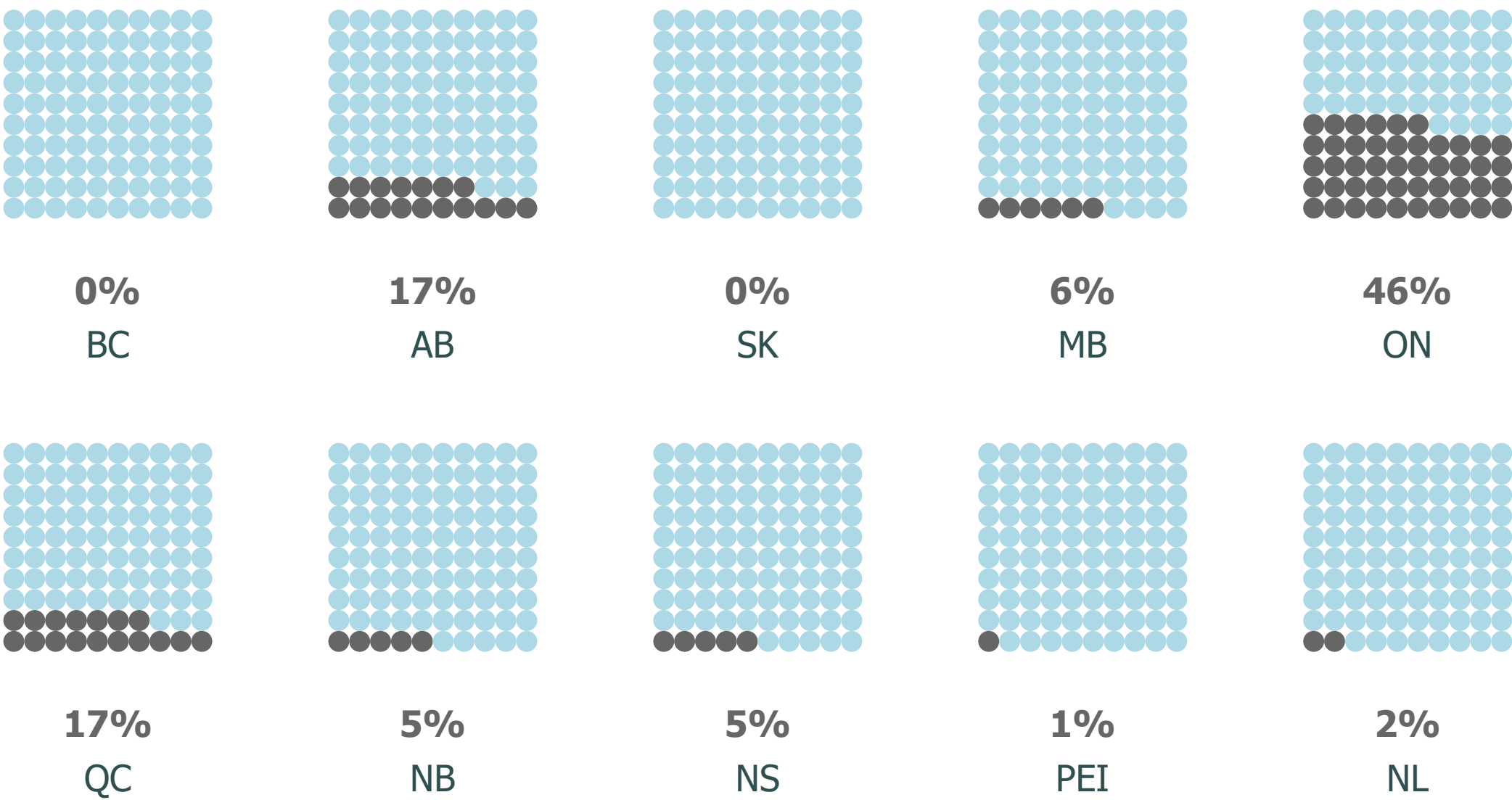
By year(s) in business



By no. of employees



By province



Source: CFIB, Your Voice - October 2024 survey, October 10 - November 07, 2024.



# CFIB Research Publications and Business Stats



## Monthly Business Barometer®

Our monthly survey tracks small business confidence, expectations and operating conditions in Canada.



## Enterprise Pulse

Q2 2024 - Entrepreneurship in Canada is improving, but still not fully back to pre-pandemic strength.



## Private Sector Job Vacancies in Canada

The job vacancy rate in Canada's private sector in Q1 2024 dropped to 3.5%, slowly approaching its 2019 level (3.3%).

# Questions or data requests

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# Additional information

## All CFIB research



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