State of Winnipeg's Queer Community: Highlights



RAINBOW RESOURCE CENTRE

January 2025

PROBE RESEARCH



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About This Project

Background and Approach

Objectives

As it builds a first-of-its-kind community gathering space in Winnipeg, the Rainbow Resource Centre (RRC) wished to create a snapshot of the needs and experiences of 2SLGBTQ+ people in Winnipeg, along with the state of allyship among straight Winnipeggers. These insights will help Rainbow spark conversations with partners, find opportunities for advocacy and better coordinate services for 2SLGBTQ+ people.

These insights will also help Winnipeg City Council's Human Rights Committee understand the views of Winnipeggers and the needs of the Queer community.

How We Did It

Working closely with Rainbow, Probe Research conducted two parallel surveys to understand the state of Winnipeg's 2SLGBTQ+ community and to benchmark views on acceptance, allyship and wellbeing among Winnipeggers. Some questions were inspired directly from public feedback RRC has received on hot-button issues.

The representative survey of N=1,000 Manitobans, including N=600 Winnipeggers, was in field in June 2025. The survey of N=623 members of the province's Queer community (including N=552 in Winnipeg) was in field for several months over the course of 2025. This survey was shared by RRC among partners and networks and on social media, and reached the clients, staff, volunteers and supporters of several 2SLGBTQ+-serving organizations.

This Report

We compare the experiences of Winnipeg's 2SLGBTQ+ community with the views and experiences of Winnipeg's general population to highlight gaps in access to services, feelings of social connection and wellbeing and views on 2SLGBTQ+ rights.

For the detailed report on all questions, including all weighted and unweighted data tables and a full methodology, please visit: add link here



Key Findings

Five Key Takeaways

1 Nearly one-half of Winnipeggers have no close relationships with a 2SLGBTQ+ person. These relationships tend to trigger more accepting views.

Though 55 per cent of Winnipeggers say they have a close family member or friend who is Queer, that leaves 45 per cent of Winnipeggers who have no close, day-to-day ties to a 2SLGBTQ+ person. Men, especially older men, and those with lower levels of education are the least likely to have friends or family who identify as Queer.

By almost every measure, Winnipeggers who are most comfortable and supportive of 2SLGBTQ+ people and their rights are those with ongoing, close relationships with a Queer person. For example:

- Those with friends and family who are Queer are nearly twice as likely to say being 2SLGBTQ+ is a normal and natural thing.
- Those with close Queer friends and family are almost twice as likely to be comfortable sharing a washroom with a trans person.
- People with no relationships are twice as likely to agree gender ideology has gone too far.

2 Winnipeggers are broadly supportive of 2SLGBTQ+ rights.

Most Winnipeggers (63%) say the Queer community is generally thriving in Manitoba – on par with the perception of members of the Queer community itself.

But, most Winnipeggers also say there is more work to do – only 30 per cent say 2SLGBTQ+ people have reached full equality, and there is solid support for strong laws to continue to protect the Queer community.

Winnipeggers also see a notable difference in the prejudice faced by transgender people versus lesbian, gay and bisexual people. About 41 per cent of Winnipeggers say transgender people face a lot of unfair treatment, while only 25 per cent say 2SLGBTQ+ people face significant prejudice.

Five Key Takeaways

3 Among Winnipeggers, there are still some big gaps in acceptance of 2SLGBTQ+ people.

Though most Winnipeggers are broadly supportive of gay rights and inclusion, there are some significant gaps in perceptions that could hinder progress on equality.

- About 21 per cent of Winnipeggers don't think being gay is a normal and natural thing.
- Similarly, 41 per cent think there are only two genders – male and female.
- One-half of Winnipeggers think gender ideology has gone too far. This means even some of those who are open-minded about sexual and gender diversity feel that gender-related policies and concepts have been excessive.

Similarly, Winnipeggers are more comfortable with gay and lesbian people than trans people. For example, Winnipeggers are generally very comfortable seeing 2SLGBTQ+ people displaying affection in public or being fellow church members. But, only about one-half are very comfortable sharing a washroom with a trans person.

4 Winnipeggers are deeply polarized on policies and services for 2SLGBTQ+ youth.

Winnipeggers are generally supportive of gender and sexual diversity among adults, but many are much more hesitant when it comes to youth.

Most (61%) agree gender affirming care should not be offered to anyone under 18, and one-half favour the rights of parents to be notified if their child uses a different name or pronoun at school.

Just as one in four Winnipeggers think society is focused too much on gender ideology, the same proportion feel 2SLGBTQ+ issues take up too much space in schools.

As well, one in five Winnipeggers agree with a commonly heard criticism of drag performers – that they distort gender identities and even "groom" children.

Five Key Takeaways

5 The quality-of-life gap between Queer and non-Queer Winnipeggers is surprisingly small.

On nearly every measure of wellness, social connection and even access to basic needs, Queer Winnipeggers report about the same level of satisfaction as Winnipeggers overall.

For example:

- More than 80 per cent of both Queer respondents and Winnipeggers feel their lives are heading in a good direction.
- About 70 per cent of both populations feel they usually have enough money to get what they need, they and are pretty satisfied with their overall health.
- About 70 per cent also generally feel included in society for who they are and have a good network of friends and family. One gap, though, is that 2SLGBTQ+ people are more likely to feel lonely.

Queer people and Winnipeggers also believe they have similar access to basic services like housing, jobs, health care and nutritious food.

Interestingly, Queer Winnipeggers have a much stronger sense that they can make positive change in their community compared to other Winnipeggers, which suggests a stronger sense of political power.

However, there is a slight gap in feelings of belonging. Winnipeggers on average are more likely than the Queer people to say they feel valued by society. About 37 per cent of Winnipeggers strongly agree they feel included in society for who they are – a low number, but one that's nearly double the proportion of Queer people surveyed.

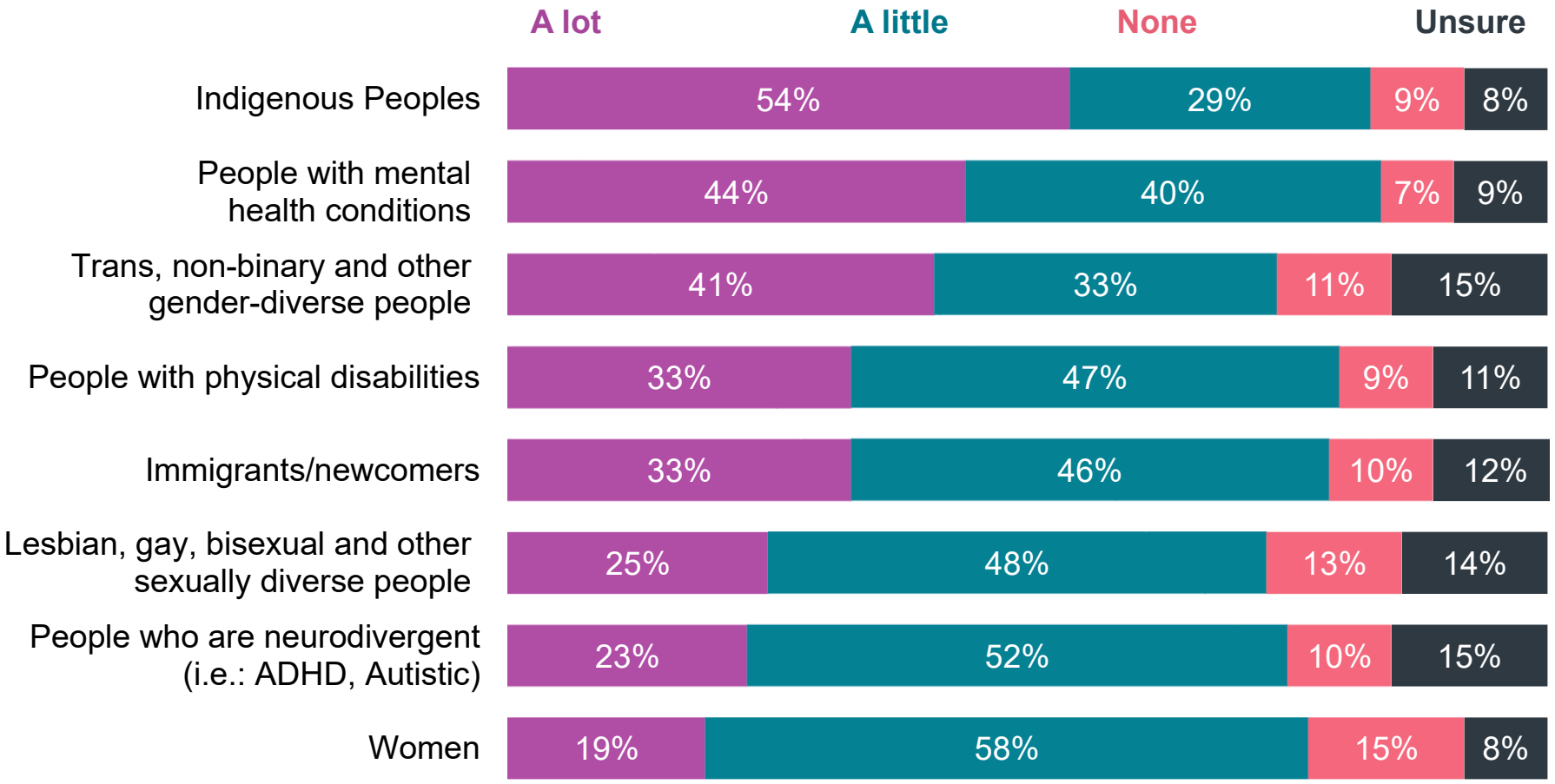
State of 2SLGBTQ+ Rights and Acceptance



Perceptions of Unfair Treatment

Indigenous peoples, those with mental illnesses and trans people face the most inequality

Q4. For each of the following groups, please indicate how much unequal or unfair treatment, if any, each group generally experiences in Manitoba today? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Most likely to say **trans people experience a lot of unfairness**:

- **Those with close friends or family who are Queer** (55% with family member and 48% with friendships vs. 30% none).
- **High-income earners** (49% $100K+ vs. 36% <$50K).

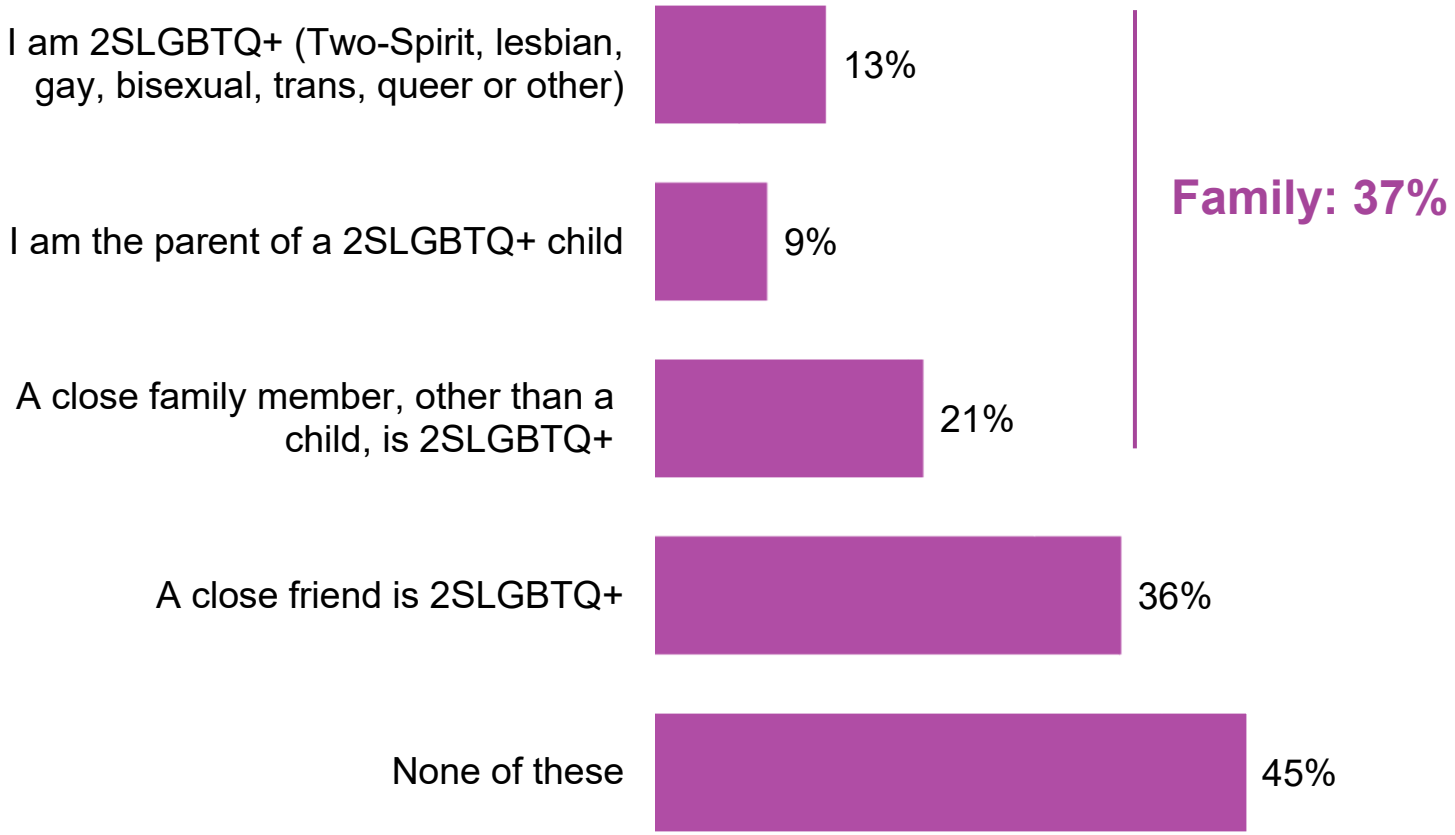
Most likely to say **LGB+ people experience a lot of unfairness**:

- **Women** (28% vs. 20% of men).
- **Men over 55** (26% vs. 11% <35).
- **Those with Queer family members** (36%).
- **Indigenous people** (40%).

Relationships to 2SLGBTQ+ People

Nearly one-half of Winnipeggers have no close relationship with a 2SLGBTQ+ person

Q6. Which one best describes you? (Please select all that apply.) (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



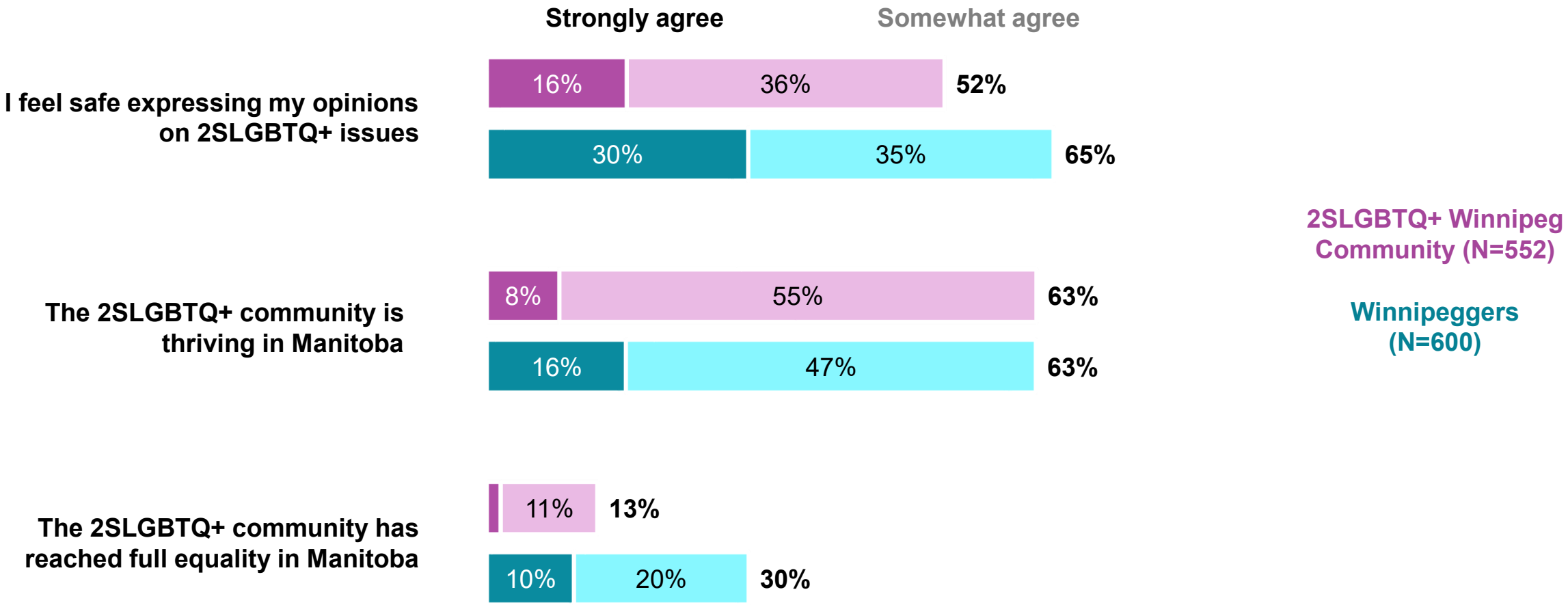
Most likely to have **no close relationship** with an 2SLGBTQ+ person:

- **Men** (53% vs. 40% of women), especially older men 55+ (67%).
- **Those with high school or less** (51% vs 37% among university grads).

State of the Queer Community

Only one-third of Winnipeggers believe 2SLGBTQ+ people have reached full equality

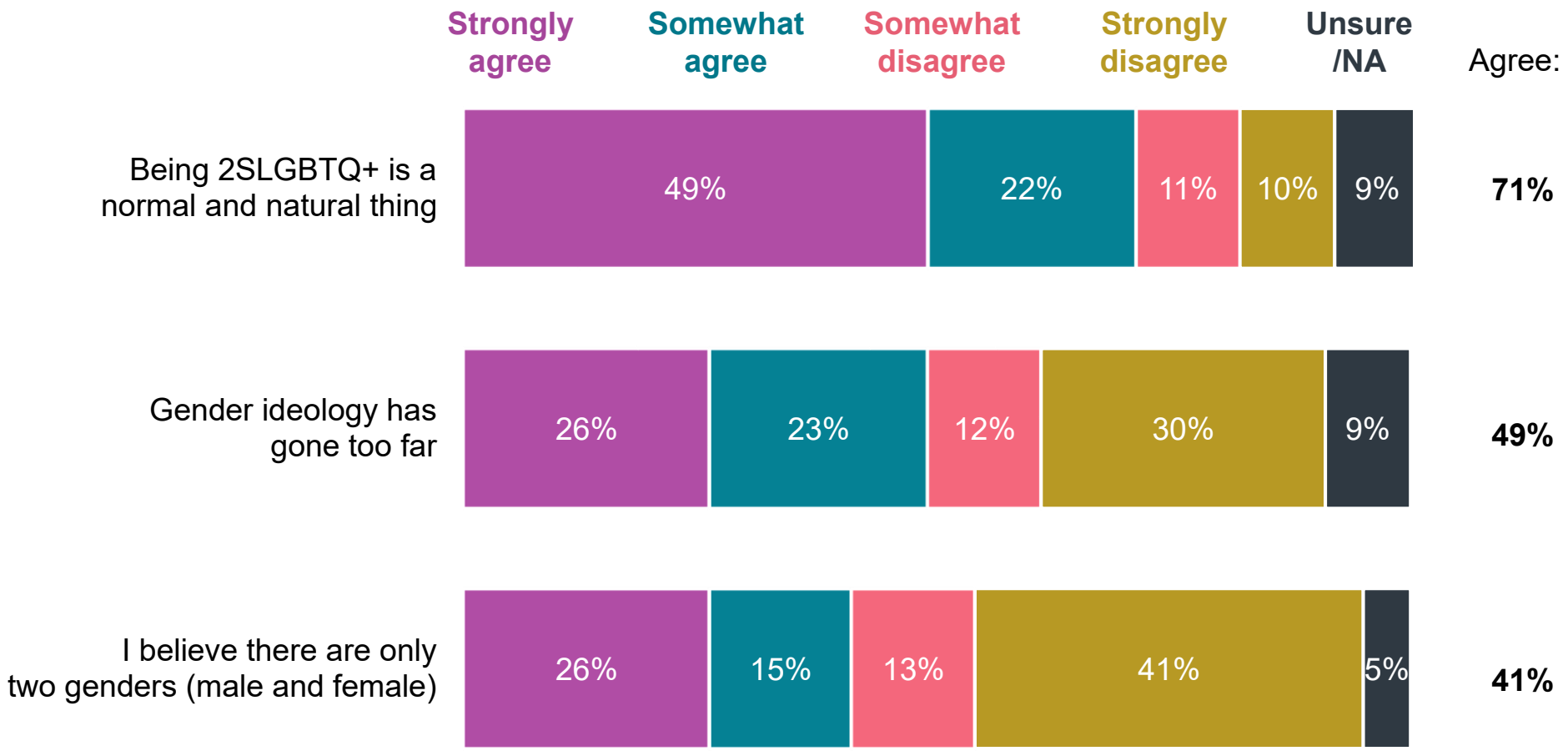
Q8. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Attitudes Toward Gender Identity

More than four in 10 believe gender ideology has gone too far and there are only two genders

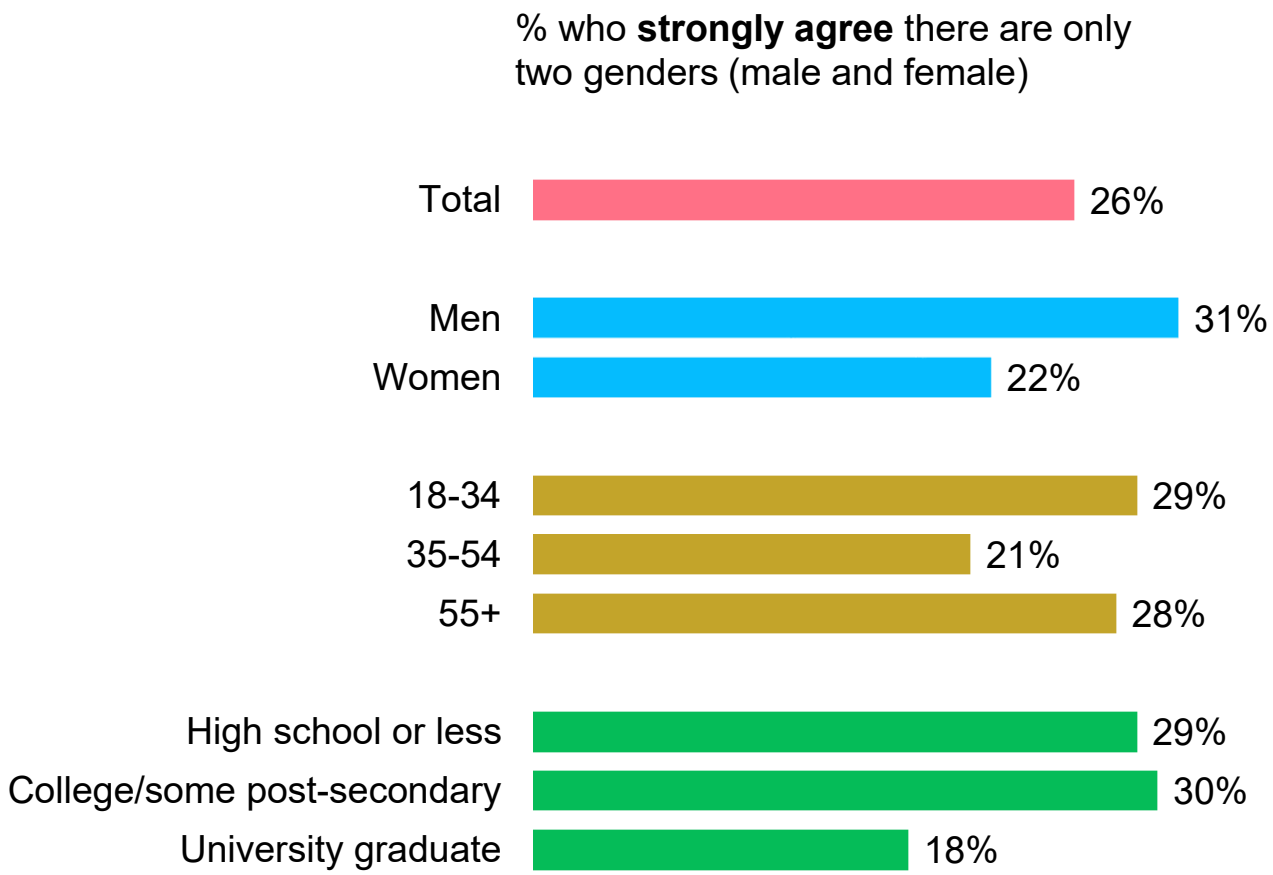
Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Attitudes Toward Gender Diversity: By Sub-Groups

Men and those with lower levels of education are most likely to say there are only two genders

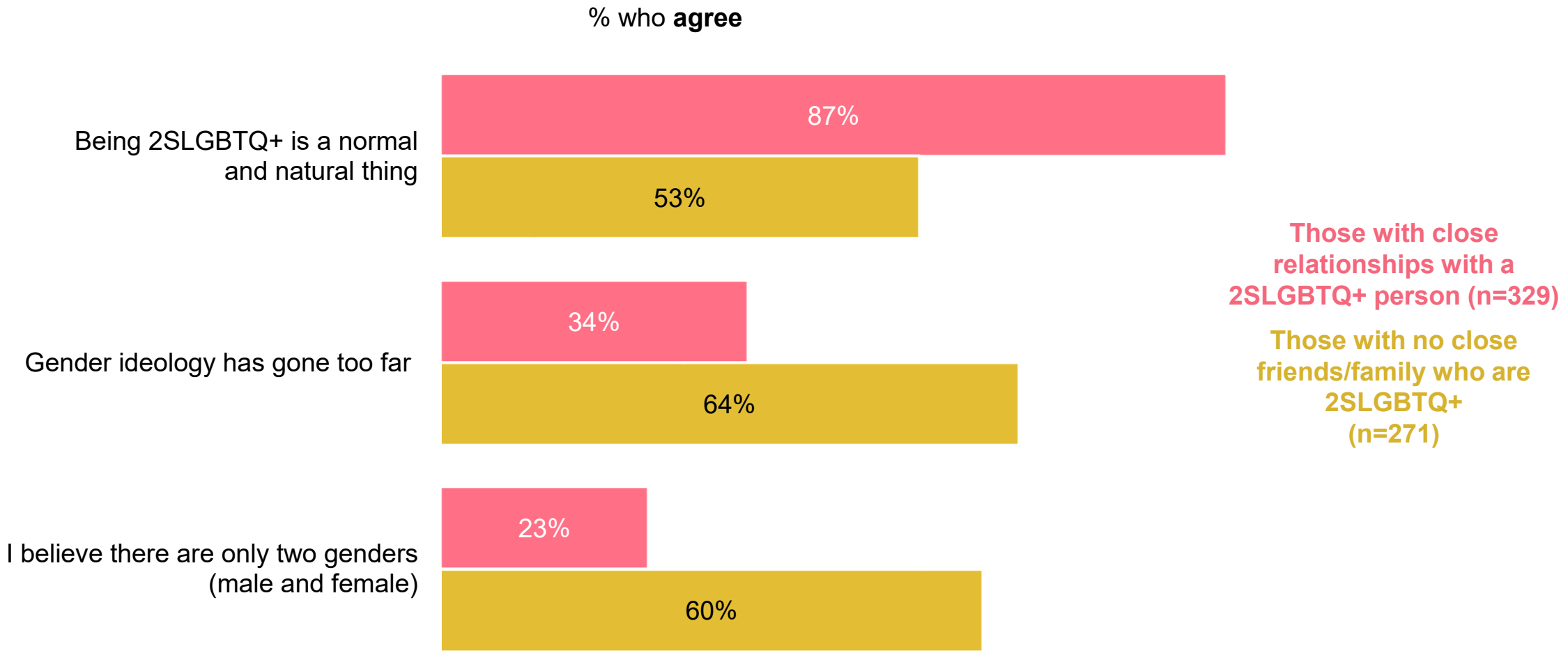
Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Attitudes Toward Gender Diversity: By Relationship

Winnipeggers with no 2SLGBTQ+ friends or family are far less likely to say being gay is a normal thing

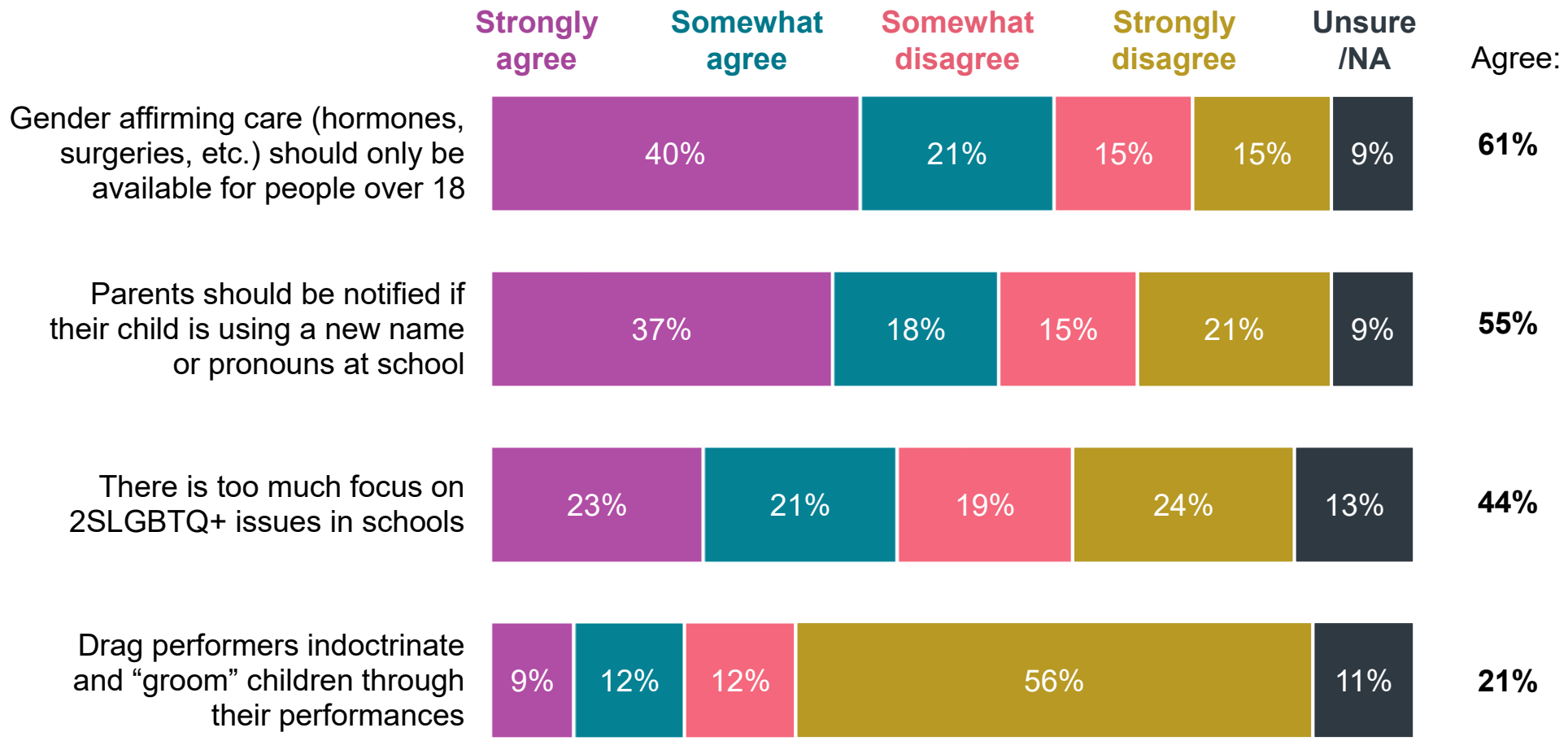
Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Attitudes Toward 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Issues

Winnipeggers generally believe gender affirming care should not be offered to youth

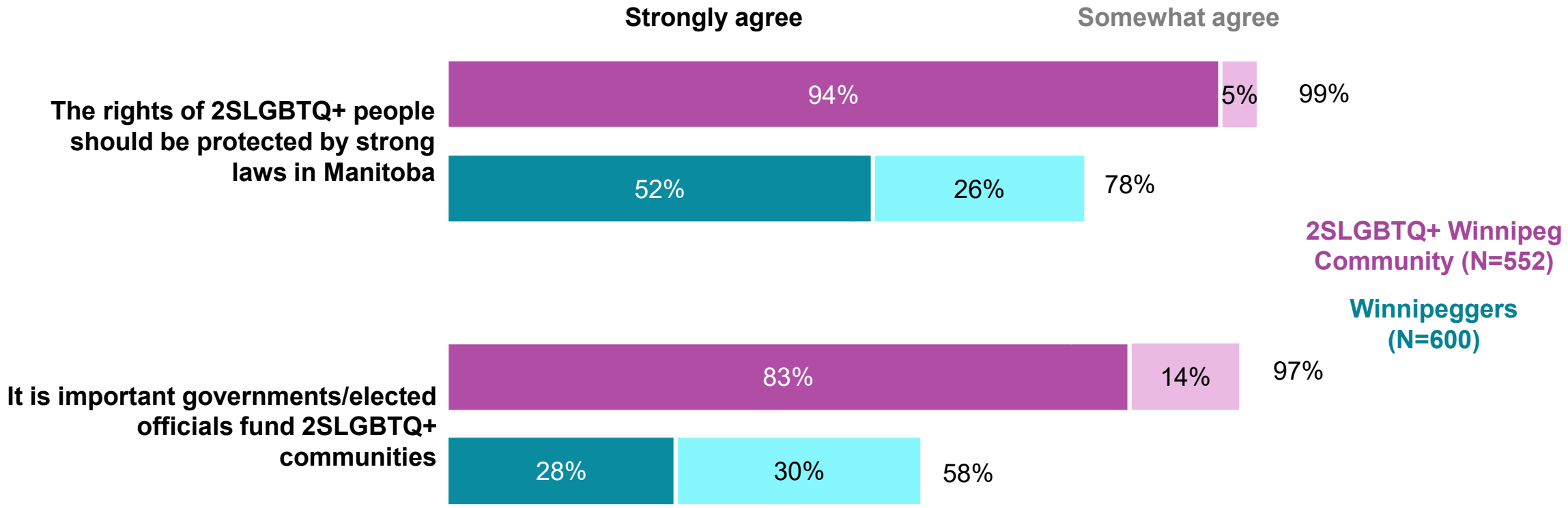
Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Attitudes Toward 2SLGBTQ+ Policies

Winnipeggers are less likely than 2SLGBTQ+ people to favour strong legal protections and funding

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



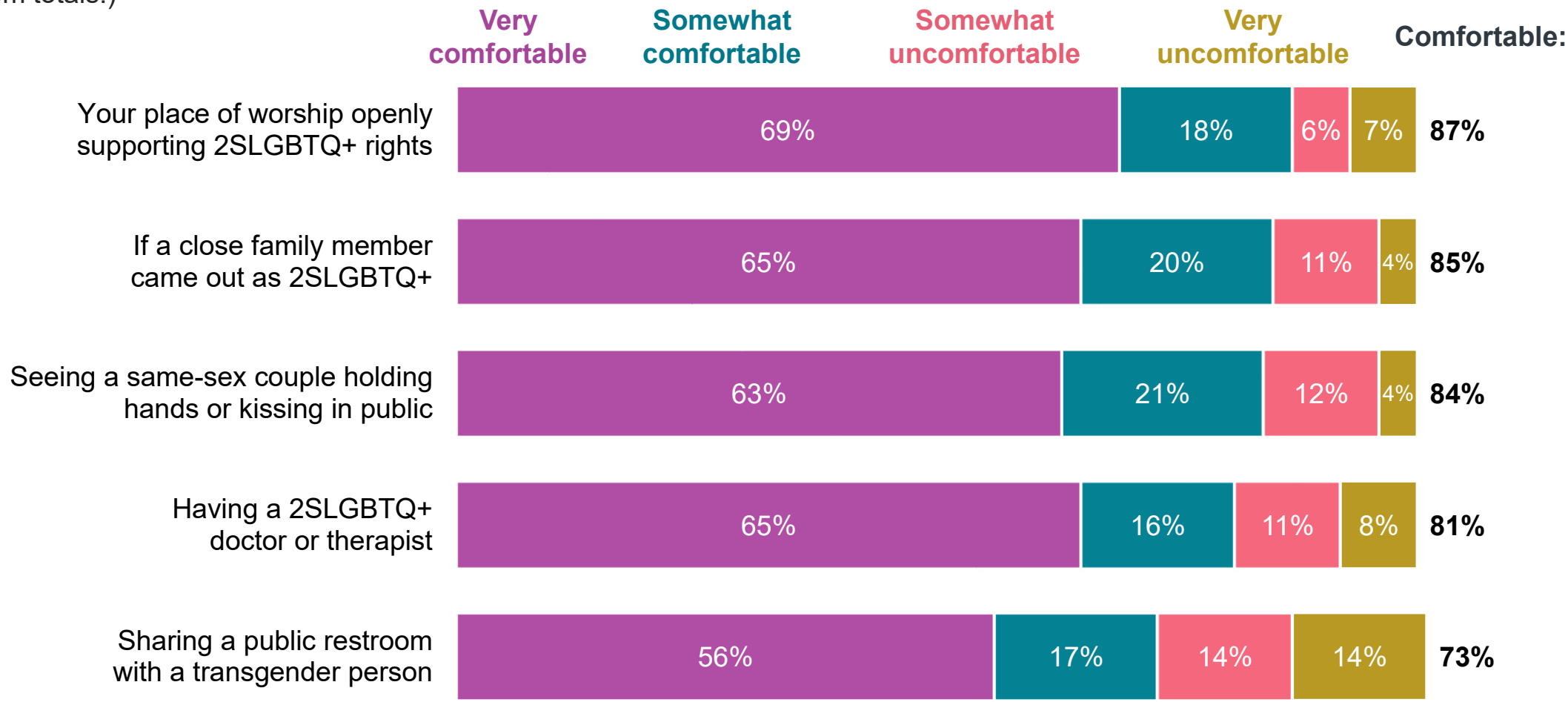


State of Allyship among Winnipeggers

Comfort with the Queer Community

Winnipeggers are very comfortable in most scenarios, less so sharing a restroom with a trans person

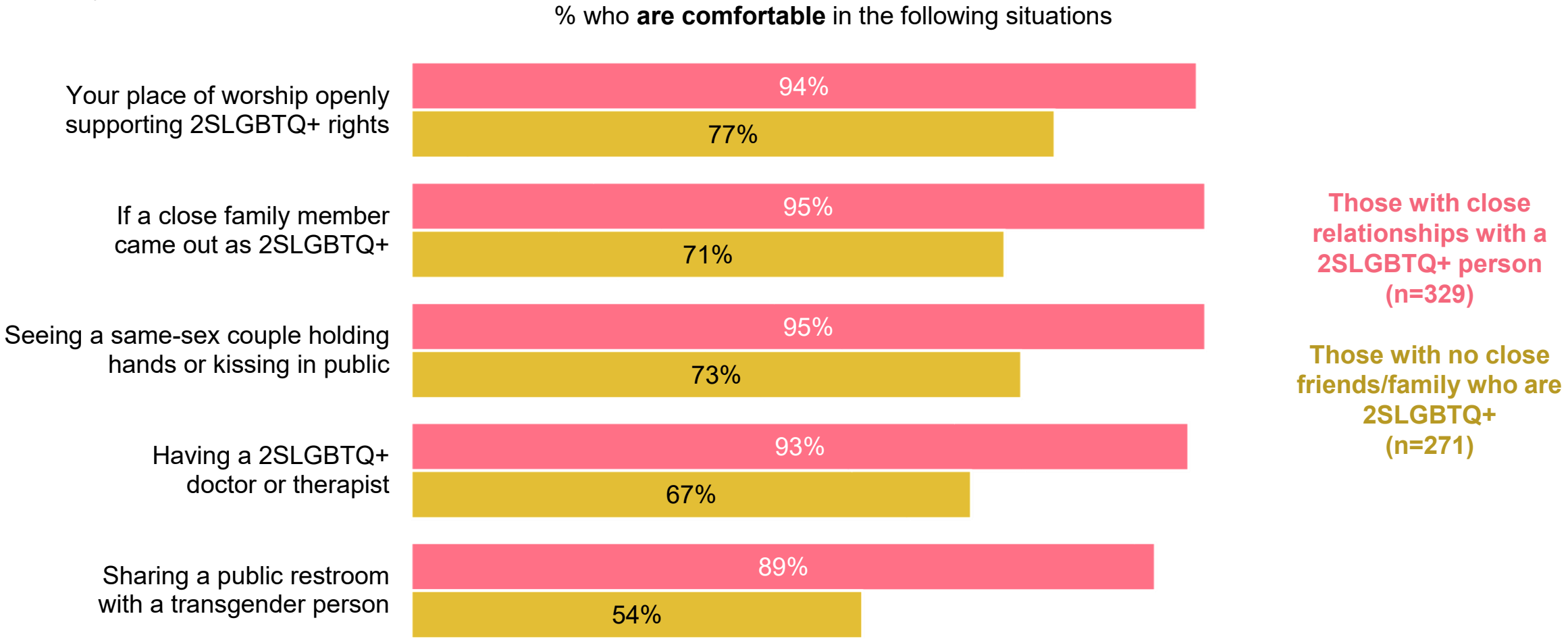
Q7. How comfortable would you be, if at all, in the following situations? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600. Unsure/not applicable removed from totals.)



Comfort with the Queer Community: By Relationship

Winnipeggers with no 2SLGBTQ+ friends or family are far less comfortable in interactions

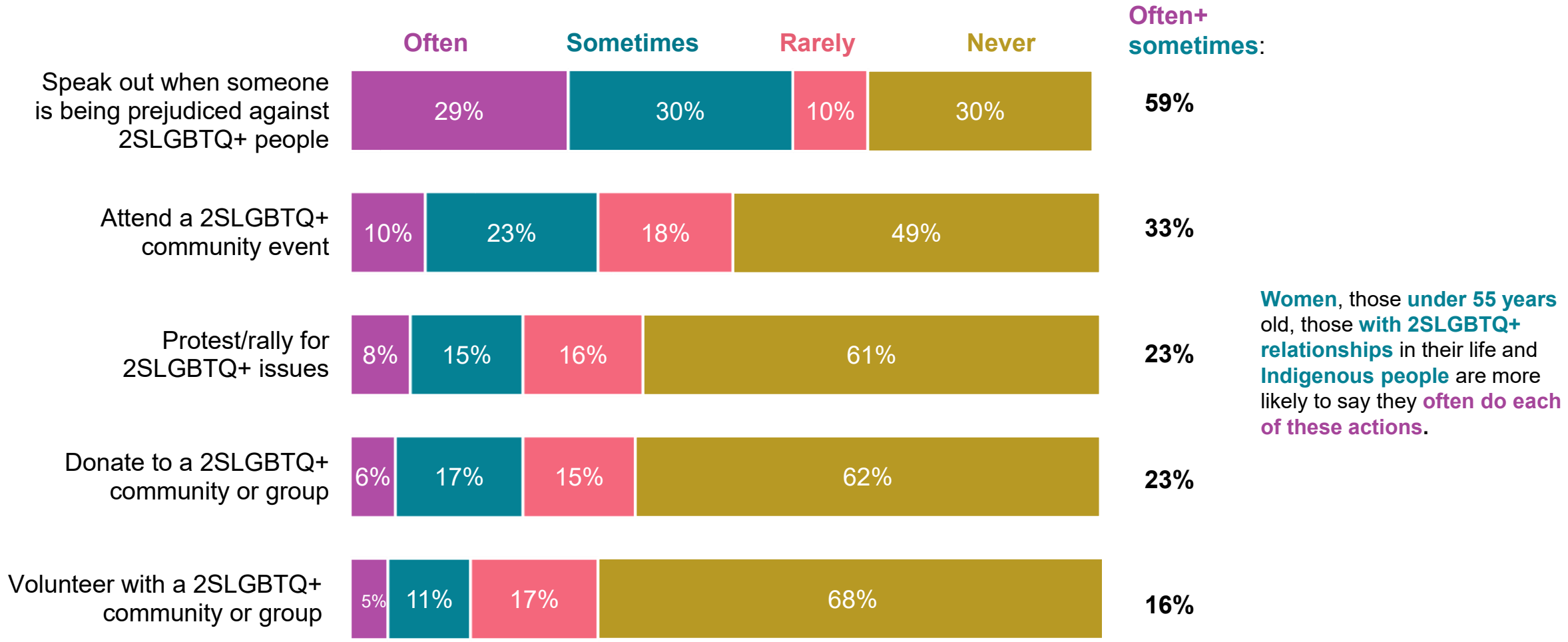
Q7. How comfortable would you be, if at all, in the following situations? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600. Unsure/not applicable removed from totals.)



Actions to Advocate for 2SLGBTQ+ Equity

Six in 10 Winnipeggers will speak out when they witness homophobia

Q11. How often, if at all, do you…? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Women, those **under 55 years** old, those **with 2SLGBTQ+ relationships** in their life and **Indigenous people** are more likely to say they **often do each of these actions**.

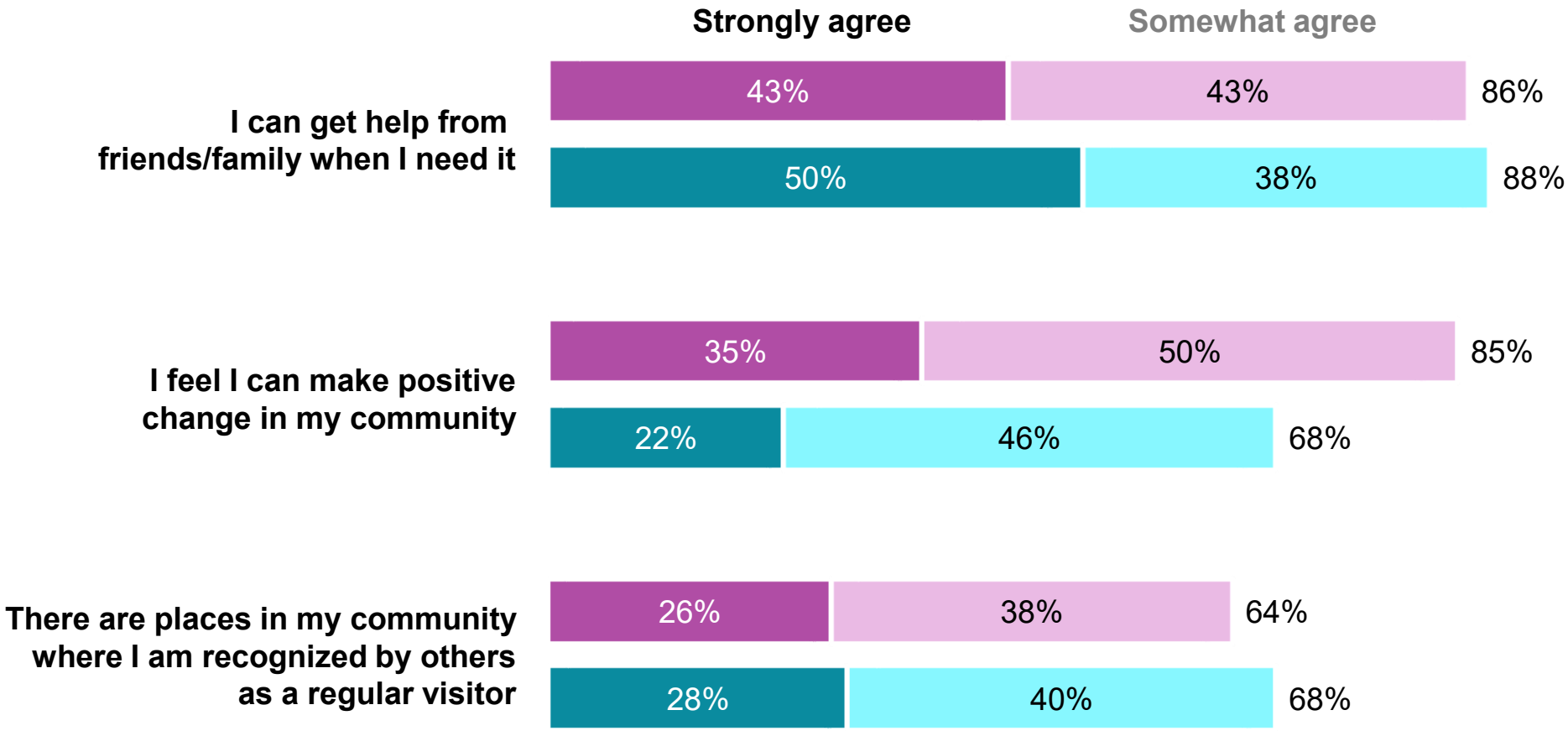


Gaps in Wellbeing and Social Connections

Access to Social Capital: Community

2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeggers are much more likely than average to feel they can make real change

Q2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeg Community (N=552)

Winnipeggers (N=600)

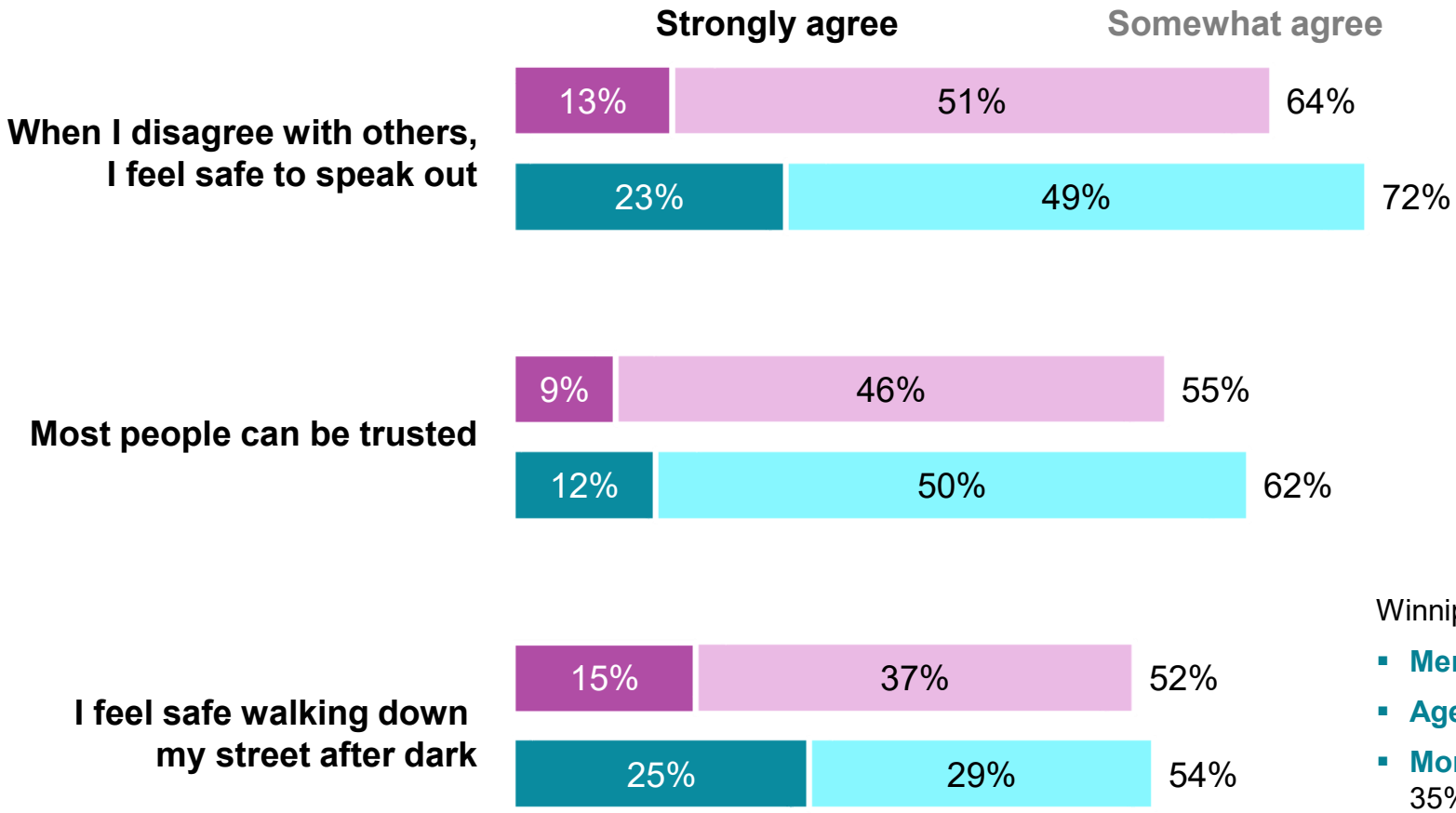
Winnipeggers most likely to **feel they can make positive change:**

- **Newcomers** (79% vs. 66% born in Canada).
- **More educated** (83% university and 72% college vs. 53% high school or less).
- **Higher income earners** (77% $100K+ vs. 55% <%50K).

Access to Social Capital: Trust and Safety

2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeggers feel slightly less safe on city streets and less trusting of others

Q2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeg Community (N=552)

Winnipeggers (N=600)

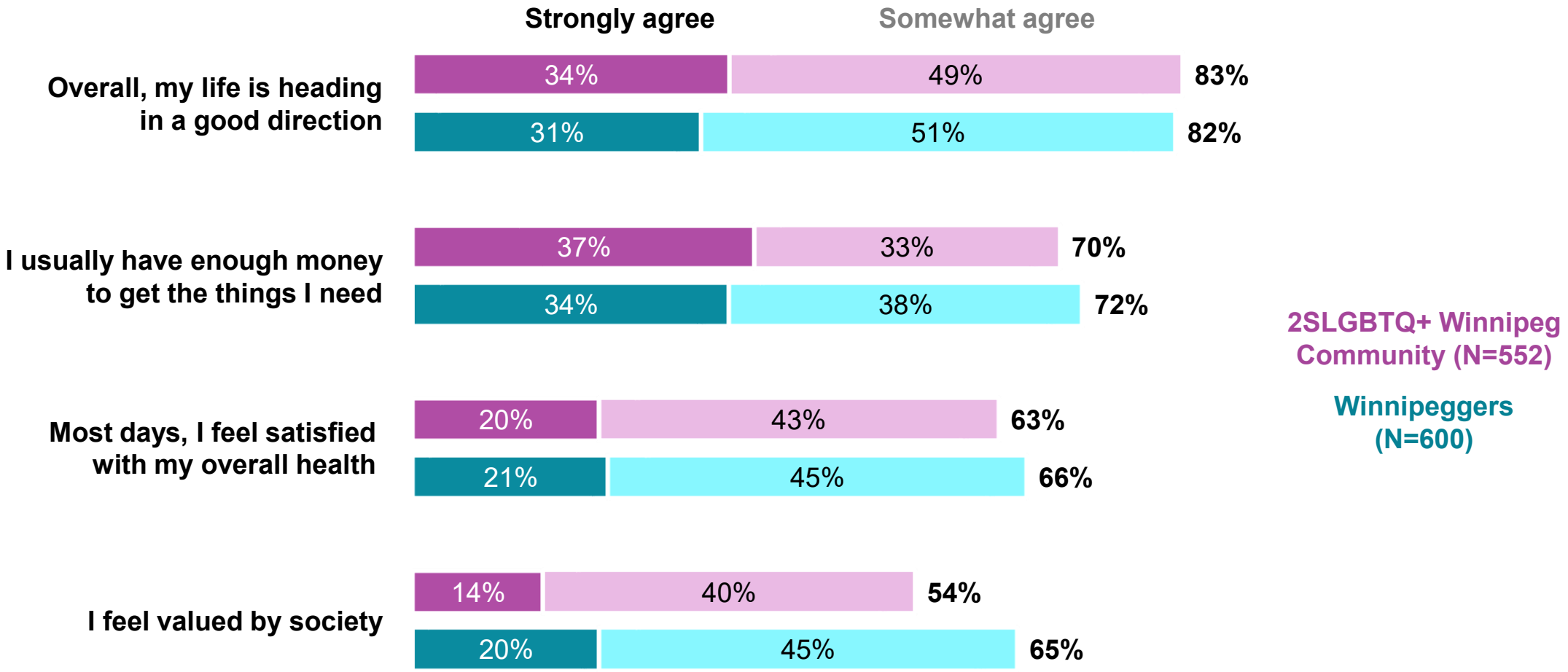
Winnipeggers most likely to **feel safe walking after dark:**

- **Men** (71% vs. 40% of women).
- **Ages 35-54** (63% vs. 48% 55+).
- **More educated** (73% university and 59% college vs. 35% high school or less).
- **High-income earners** (66% $100K+ vs. 41% <$50K).

Personal Wellbeing: Quality of Life

2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeggers have strong feelings of wellbeing, but tend to feel less valued by society

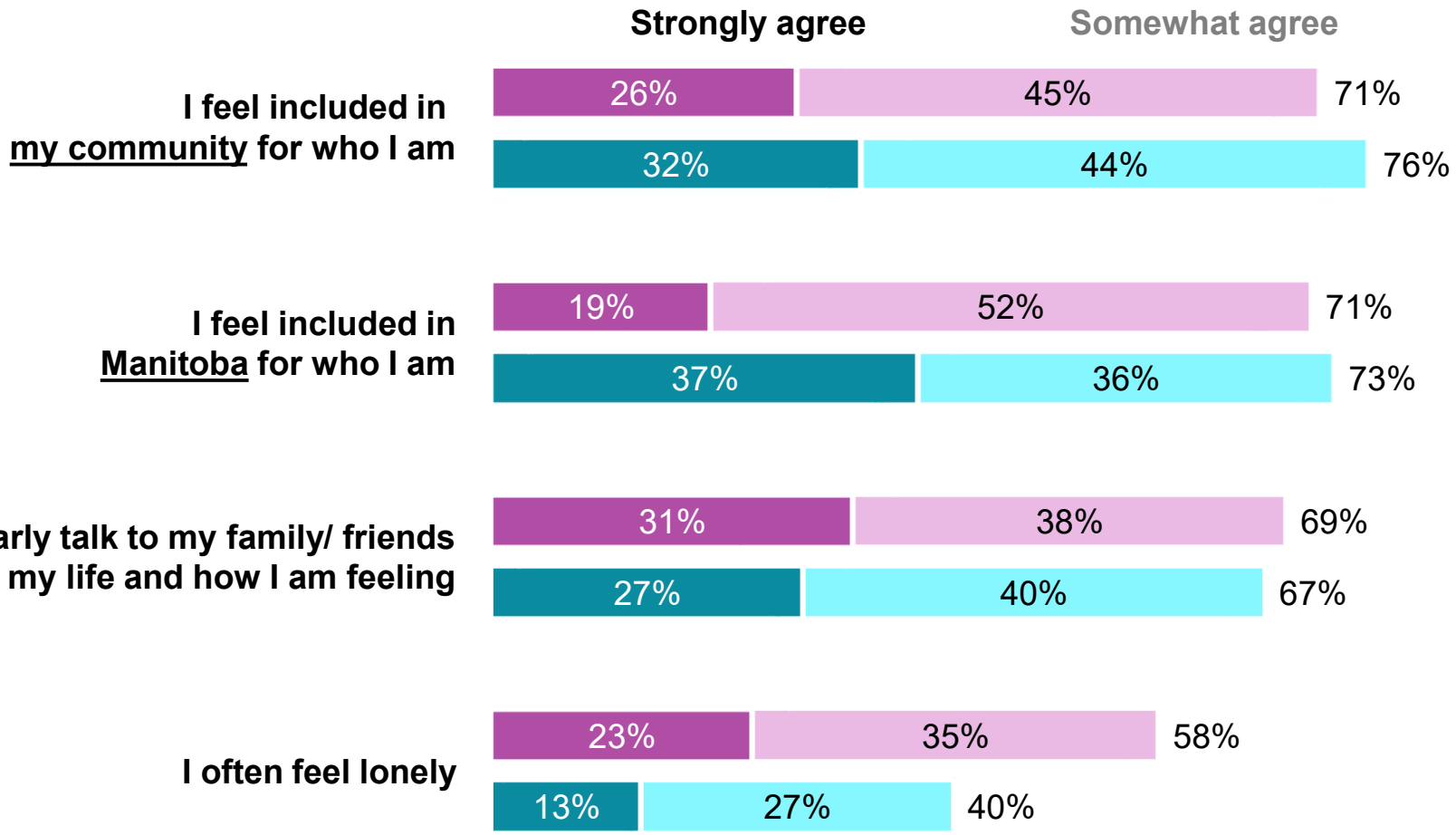
Q1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Personal Wellbeing: Inclusion and Connection

Those in the Queer community generally feel included, but are a lot more likely to feel lonely

Q1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeg Community (N=552)

Winnipeggers (N=600)

Winnipeggers more likely to **agree they often feel lonely:**

- **Women** (45% vs. 34% of men).
- **Low-income earners** (56% <$50K vs. 33% $100K+).

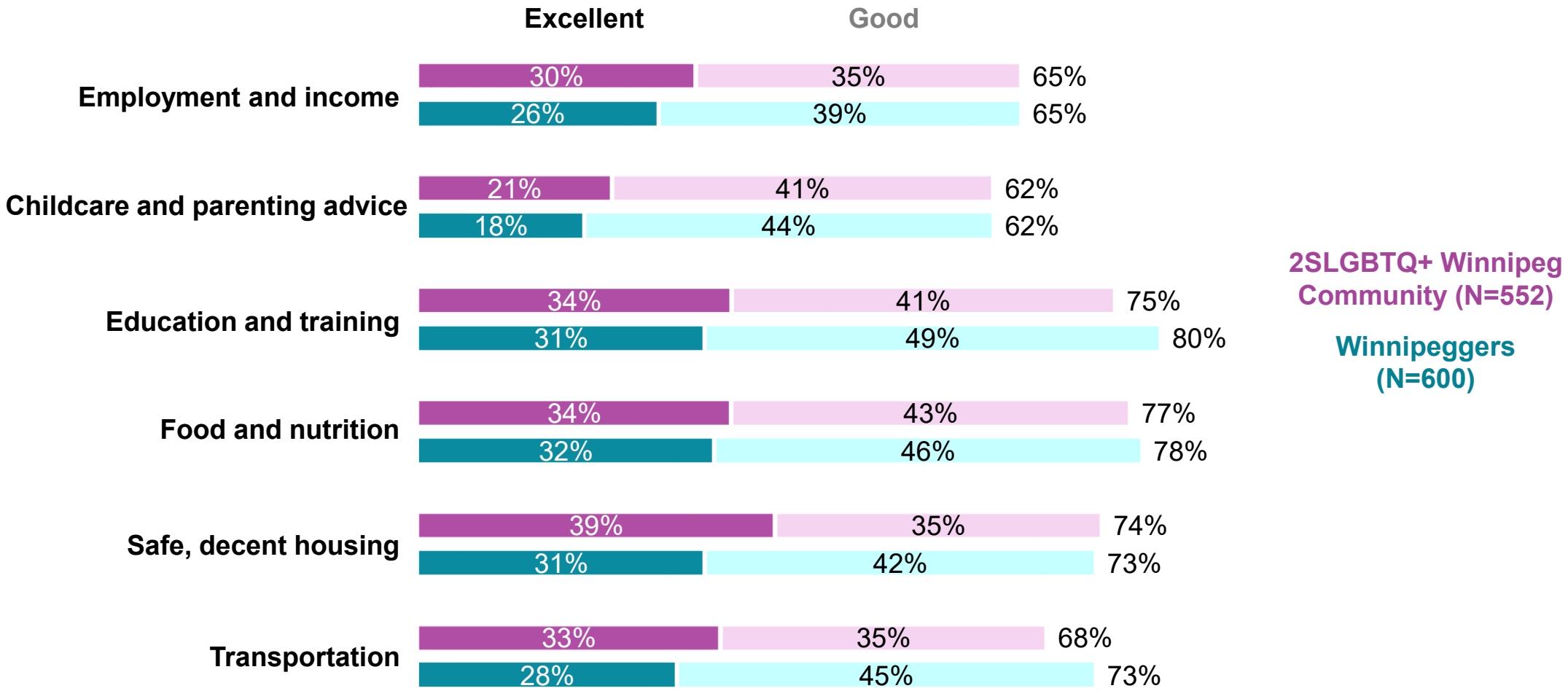


Gaps in Access to Services

Access to Basic Needs and Services

Winnipeggers and 2SLGBTQ+ people report similar, and reasonably strong, access to the basics

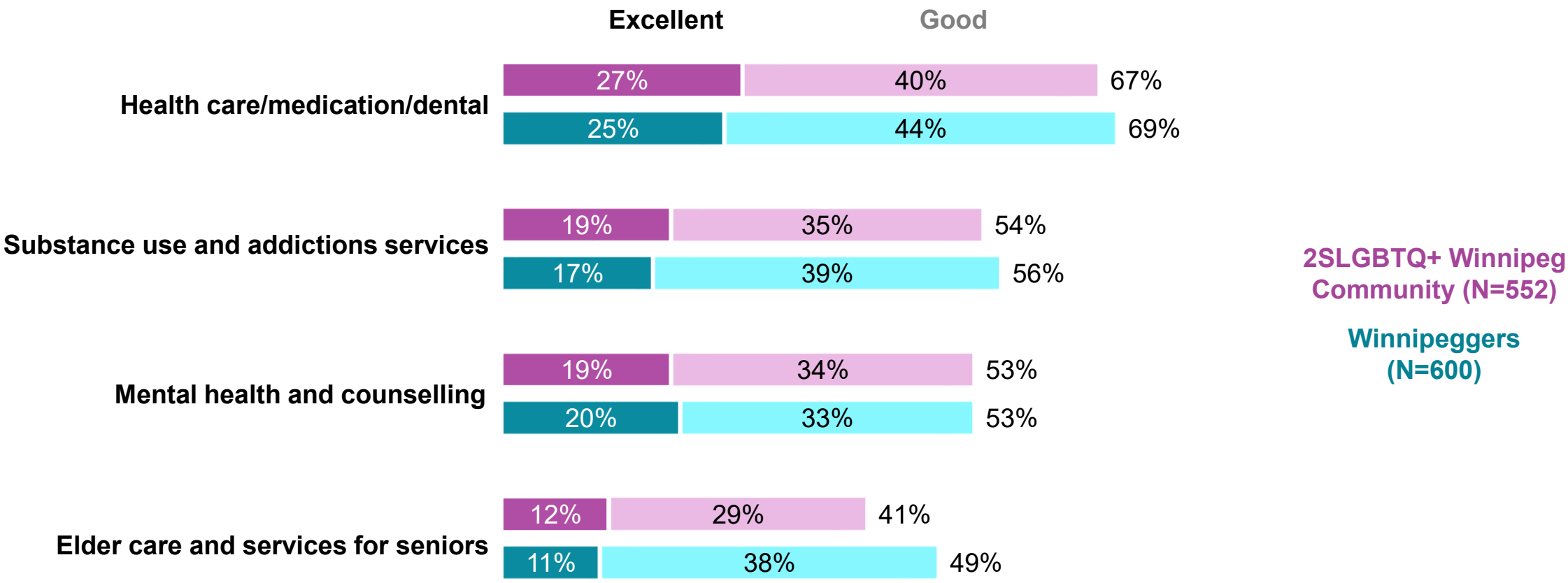
Q3. How would you describe your access to each of the following services? (Base: Those with opinions)



Access to Health Care Services

2SLGBTQ+ Winnipeggers say their access to health services is generally on par, except seniors' care

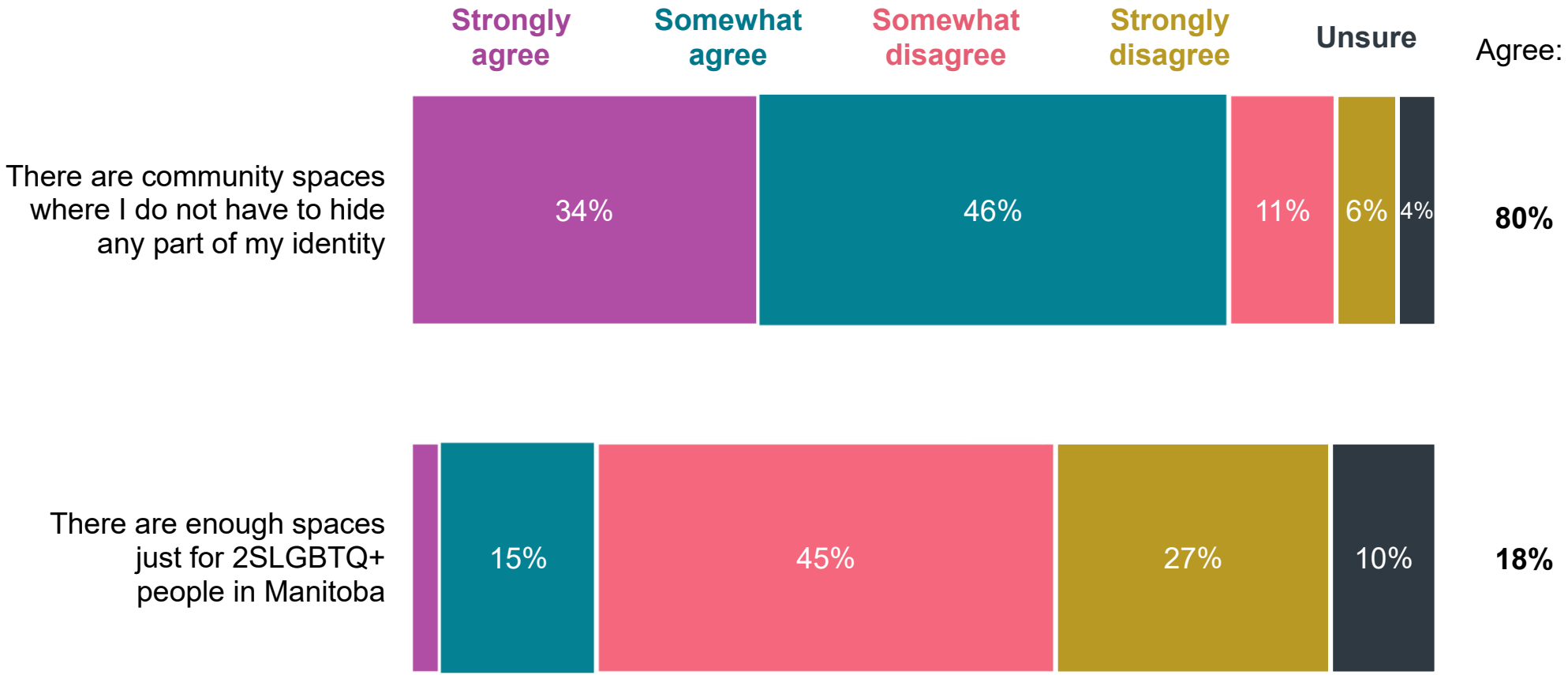
Q3. How would you describe your access to each of the following services? (Base: Those with opinions)



Perspectives on 2SLGBTQ+ Spaces

Just one in five Queer Winnipeggers say there are enough Queer-friendly spaces

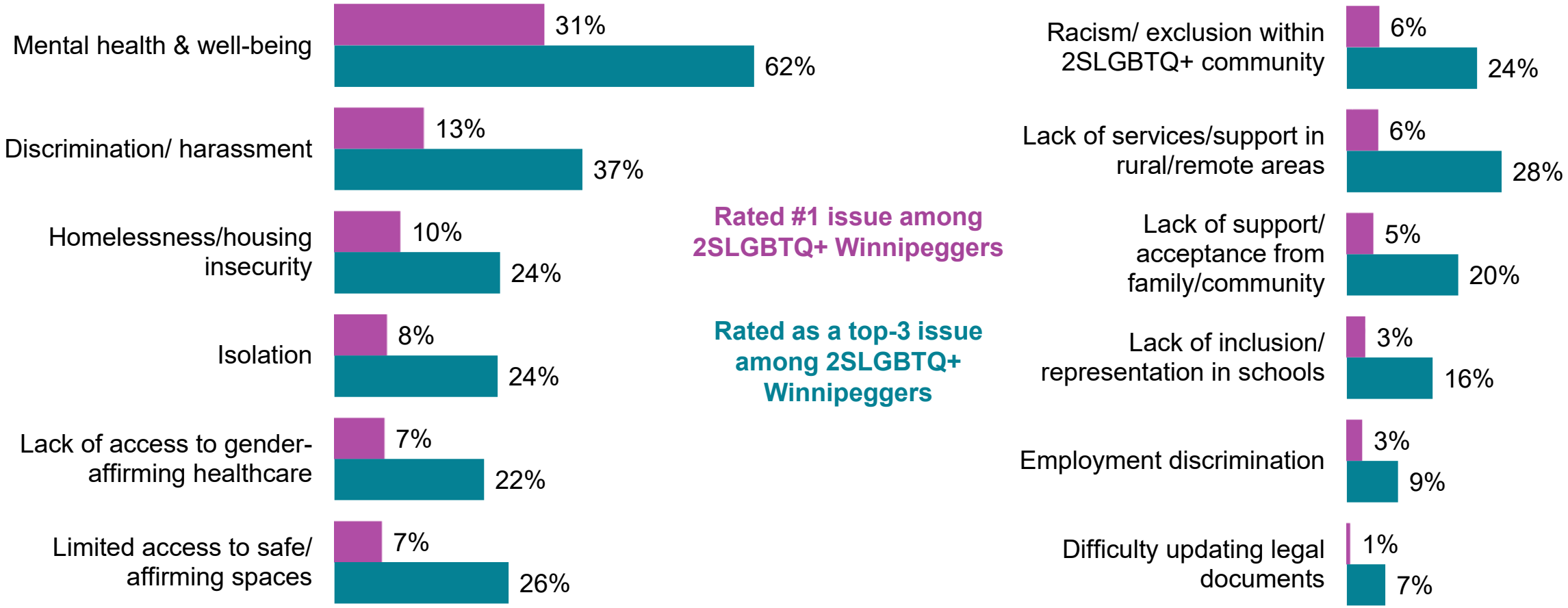
Q11. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Base: All Winnipeg 2SLGBTQ+ respondents, N=552)



Top Issues for the 2SLGBTQ+ Community

About three in five believe mental health the most pressing issue among the Queer community

Q3. What are the top three issues facing 2SLGBTQ+ people in Manitoba today? Please select up to three and rank them in order of importance, with one being the most important. (Base: All Winnipeg 2SLGBTQ+ respondents, N=552)





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