

Heritage Field Survey – May 2022



Report date: July 18, 2022

BACKGROUND, METHODOLOGY & RESPONDENT PROFILES

As part of a broader heritage RESET initiative, the National Trust for Canada conducted research with the Canadian heritage conservation field via an online survey May 3rd - 30th, 2022.

The research objective was to get a sense for how the heritage conservation field perceives itself; namely its actions, priorities, challenges, resources and ongoing level of success. This research and feedback received will help inform further RESET initiatives across the heritage conservation field regarding conservation efforts, field alignment, and greater engagement with the general public.

Survey details:

- Online survey comprising seventeen closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions, plus participant demographic profiles.
- Nationally conducted in English and French with 559 participants (over the age of 18), invited from across the heritage conservation field.

COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS: ROLES

Survey participants were invited to identify their role from the following list.

Roles were then grouped to facilitate data analysis and comparison.

Participants were not recruited to fill a “quota” nor to precisely model how many people work in what kinds of capacities across the field itself. The number of participants shown serves only as context for the responses generated.

Grouping 1: 142 participants (25% of total)

- Community Advocate / Activist
- Volunteer (eg. heritage tour guide; active member of historical society, heritage committee; interpreter at Indigenous cultural centre)

Grouping 2: 356 participants (64% of total)

- Designer / Researcher / Advisor (eg. heritage architect, engineer, planner, landscape architect; archaeologist, historian, heritage consultant, heritage revitalization practitioner, etc.)
- Academia (eg. University/College academics and students)
- Leader / Administrator (eg. non-profit director or board chair)
- Policy-maker / Regulator / Funder (eg. government heritage officials - municipal, provincial, federal, Indigenous)
- Programmer / Interpreter (eg. heritage non-profit staff, cultural site guide, interpreter, educator, curator, museum worker)
- Heritage Trades / Construction

Grouping 3: 31 participants (6% of total)

- Heritage Property Owner or Developer
- Heritage Tourism Industry Member

+ Other (30 participants, 5% of total)

COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS: EXPERIENCE

Training / Education:

- Earned a heritage conservation degree (139 participants)
- Self-educated (114 participants)
- Attended heritage conservation workshops/ conferences (111 participants)
- On-the-job training (94 participants)
- Completed heritage conservation course work (64 participants)
- Learned from a mentor or knowledge keeper (37 participants)

Locational impact:

- Urban/Suburban (364 participants)
- Rural (139 participants)
- Remote (17 participants)
- On reserve (2 participants)

+ Other (36 participants)

Tenure in Heritage Conservation:

- 15+ years (241 participants)
- 11-15 years (112 participants)
- 0-5 years (107 participants)
- 6-10 years (98 participants)

Scale of Involvement:

- Local (294 participants)
- Provincial (120 participants)
- Regional (84 participants)
- National (60 participants)

COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS

Region:

- Ontario (222 participants)
 - British Columbia (84 participants)
 - Quebec (72 participants)
 - Alberta (52 participants)
 - Saskatchewan (33 participants)
 - New Brunswick (27 participants)
 - Nova Scotia (18 participants)
 - Manitoba (15 participants)
 - Newfoundland and Labrador (13 participants)
 - Yukon (11 participants)
 - Prince Edward Island (8 participants)
 - Northwest Territories (2 participants)
- + Other (1 participant)

Ethnicity:

- White, European, Caucasian (469 participants)
 - First Nations, Métis, Inuit (14 participants)
 - East Asian, South East Asian (6 participants)
 - Black, African, Caribbean (5 participants)
 - Middle Eastern, Northern African, Arab (N/A)
 - South Asian (N/A)
- + Prefer not to answer (41 participants)
- + Other (19 participants)

Age:

- 50 – 69 years old (250 participants)
 - 30 – 49 years old (157 participants)
 - 70+ years old (119 participants)
 - Under 30 years old (33 participants)
- Mean: 56 years of age

Gender:

- Female (340 participants)
 - Male (206 participants)
 - Non-binary/Gender fluid (4 participants)
 - Transgender (1 participant)
- + Other (8 participants)

RANGE OF QUESTIONS ASKED

- Personal motivation and interest in heritage conservation?
- How heritage conservation generates impact?
- Sense of heritage sector purpose?
- Range of sector practices and actions?
- Degree of success achieved by the sector?
- Guidelines and standards referenced and used?
- Need for change?
- Sector issues to address?
- Sustainability and climate action work; perspectives and level of support?
- Reconciliation, diversity, accessibility and inclusivity; work, perspectives and level of support?
- Economic and cultural vitality; work, perspectives and level of support?
- Information and learning preferences?

SHOWN TO ALL PARTICIPANTS AT SURVEY START

Survey participants were required to read the introduction below prior to answering any questions to help ensure everyone had the same understanding of terminology used throughout the survey.

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for engaging with this important heritage sector research initiative.

This survey is part of a larger project – the Heritage Reset – designed to accelerate key conversations within the heritage conservation field about our values and the purpose of our work.

For the purpose of this survey, we are using some terms throughout in order to be consistent from one question to the next:

“Heritage conservation field” includes all those who would self-identify as heritage practitioners or are involved with heritage places, whether employed or as volunteers.

“Heritage places” include but are not limited to landscapes, sites, areas of land, buildings and structures, archaeological sites and other physical places that are valued by individuals, communities, or governments for their cultural, social, or historic heritage significance.

This study will help inform actions heritage practitioners can take to reach a broader audience with heritage conservation in a way that is informed by society’s priorities and values. Thank you for your interest and participation.

For each question’s exact wording, please refer to the “notes” section for each charted page in this report.

DETAILED RESULTS

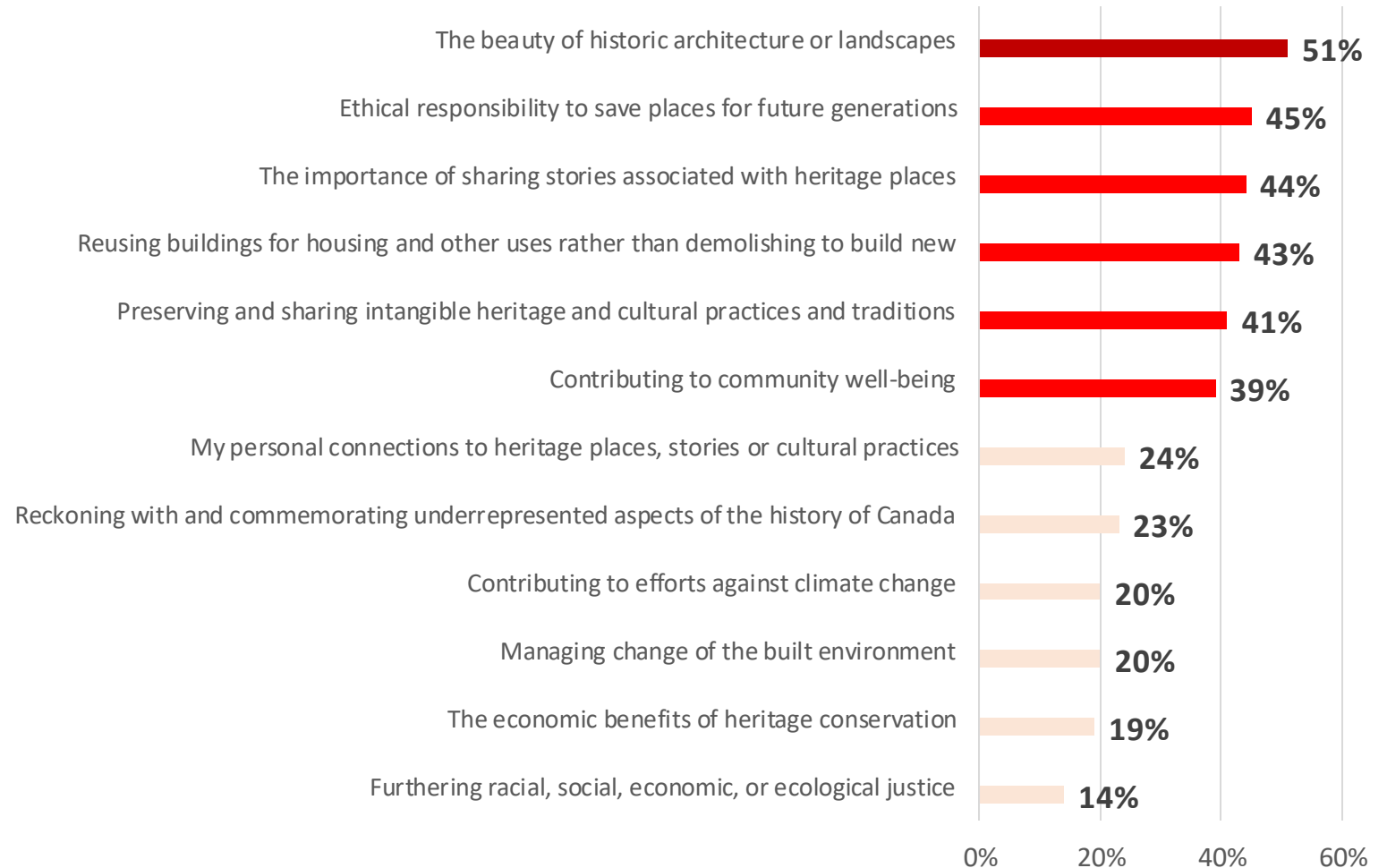


WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR CONNECTION TO HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Highest ranking personal motivations for working in the heritage conservation field are emotive in nature; rational reasons tend to appear lower in the overall ranked list.

- Emotive reasons include the appreciation of heritage places, consideration of future generations, sharing stories and preserving cultural practices and traditions.

What motivates your personal connection to heritage conservation?



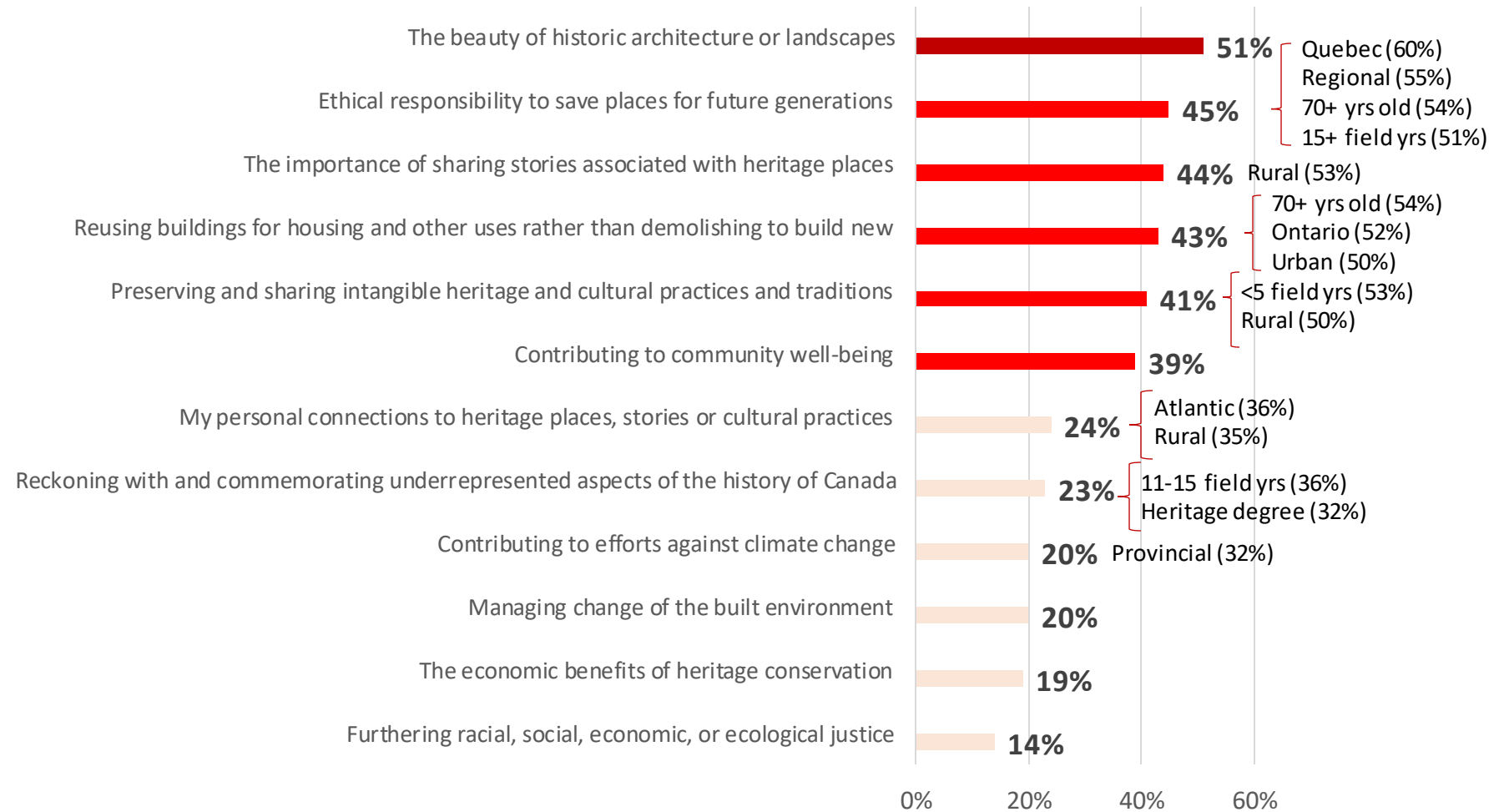
WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR CONNECTION TO HERITAGE CONSERVATION

**Quebec participants
overskew in their
motivation to consider
future generations.**

**Ontario participants
overskew in their
motivations related to
reuse of buildings
over demolition.**

**Atlantic participants
are particularly
motivated by their own
personal connections
with heritage places
and stories.**

What motivates your personal connection to heritage conservation?

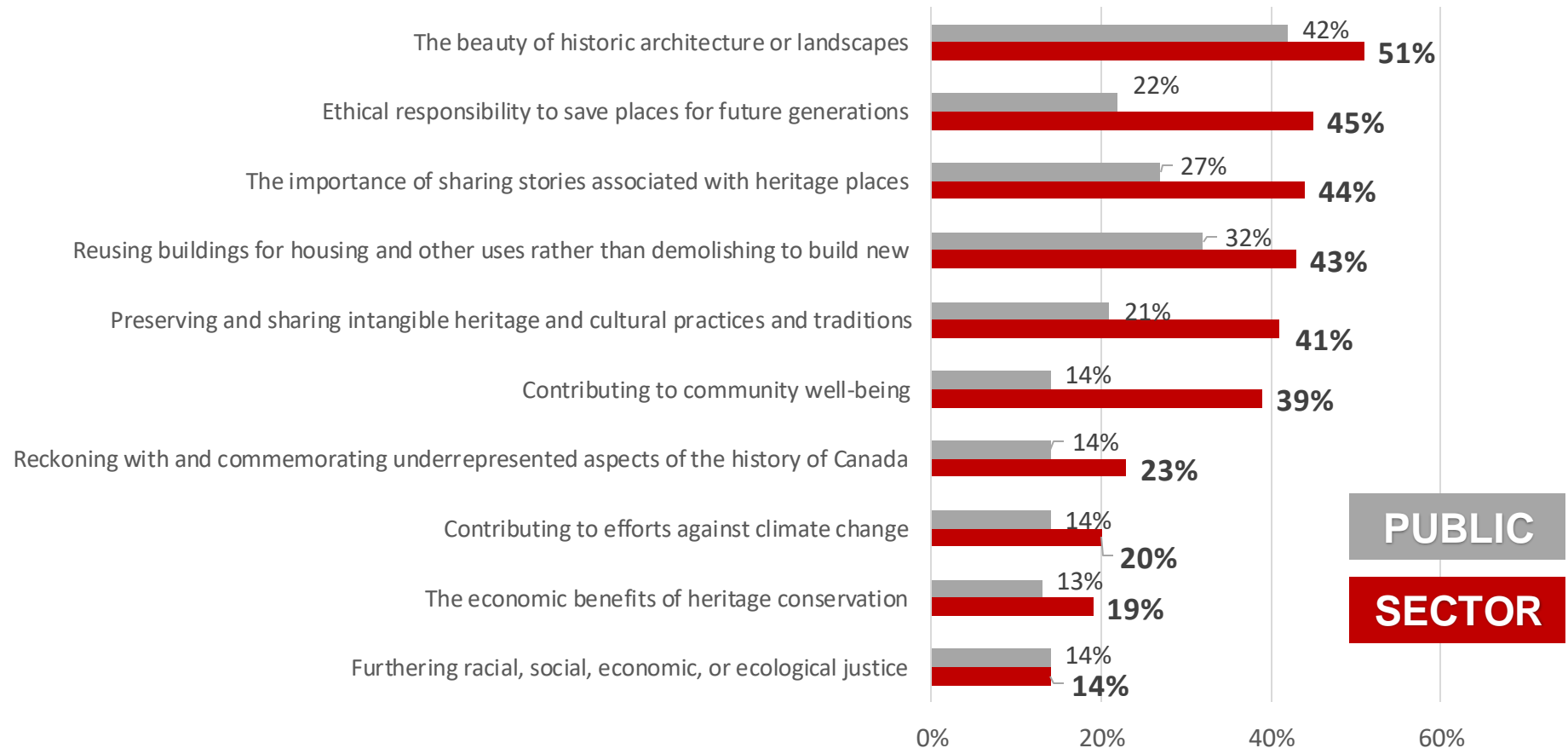


WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR CONNECTION TO HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Heritage field participants are similar to the general public in their appreciation of the aesthetic beauty of historic places, as well as in the belief that reuse of heritage buildings is better than demolition.

- The greatest differences in interest between the heritage field and the public relate to thinking about future generations and in contributing towards community well-being.

What motivates your personal connection to heritage conservation?

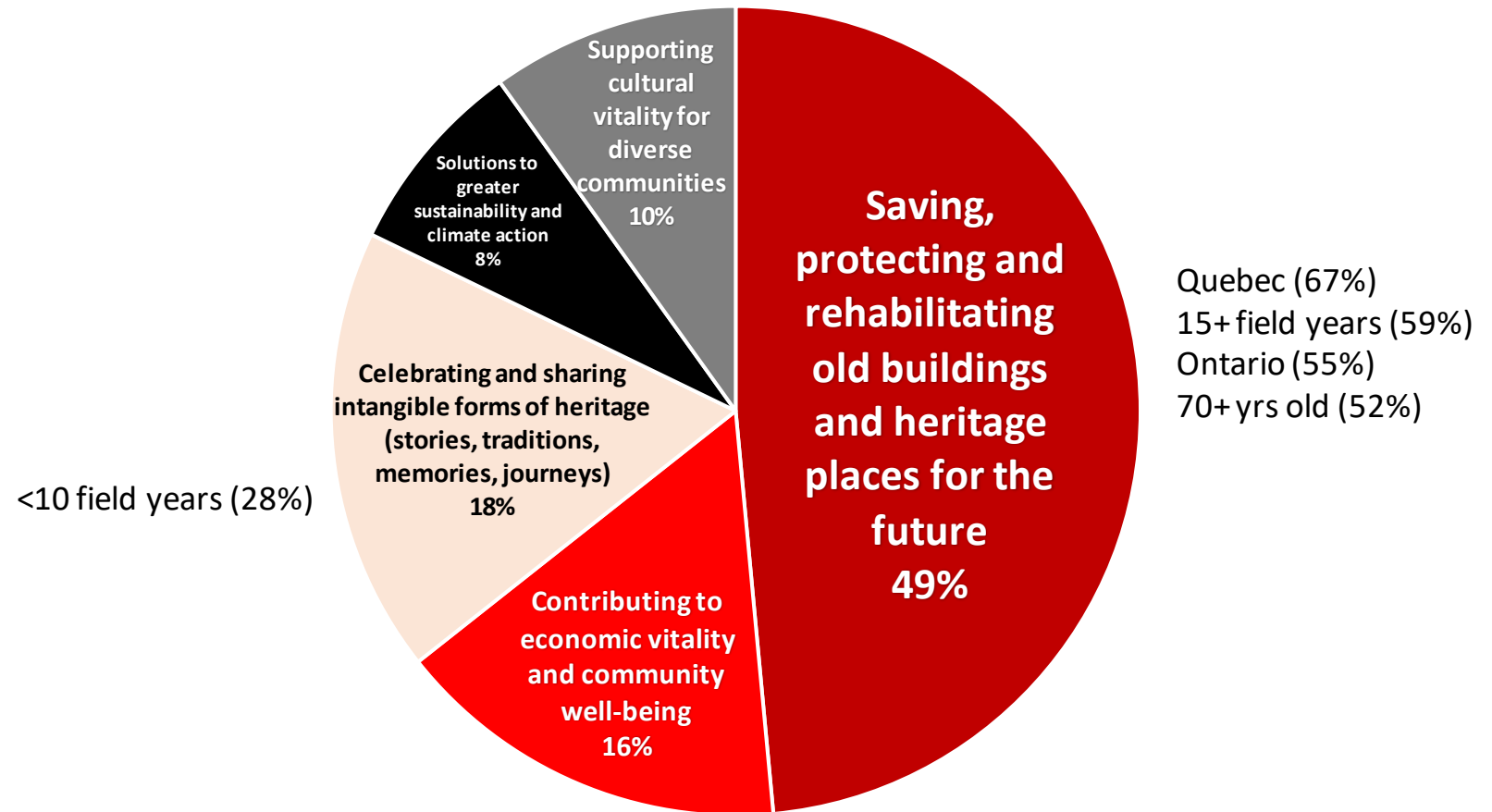


WHERE HERITAGE CONSERVATION GENERATES IMPACT

Approximately half of the heritage field feel the protection and rehabilitation of heritage places represents the area in which the most positive benefits and impact are generated.

- There is less perceived benefit and impact achieved in areas related to intangible aspects of heritage places, cultural diversity, and economic/community well-being.

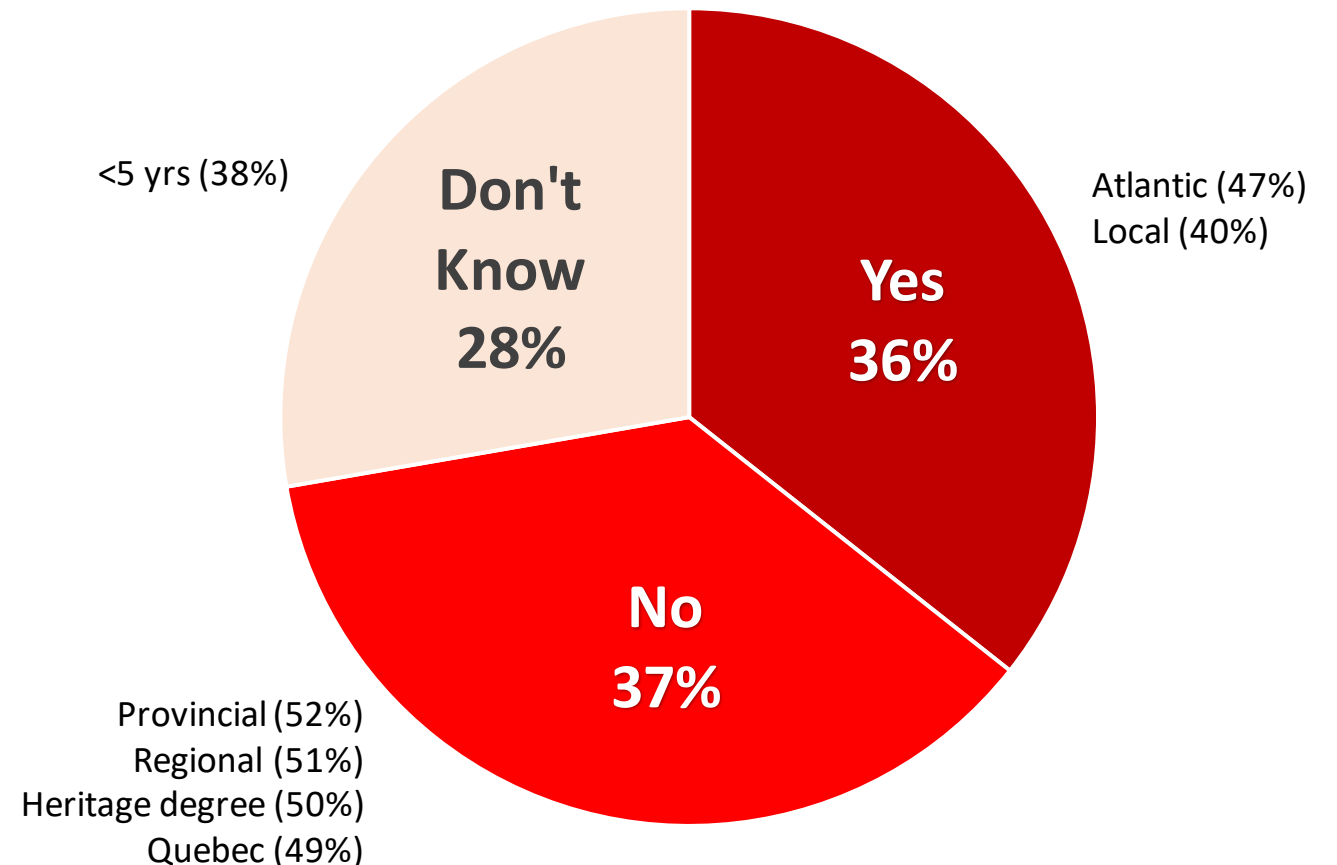
Where does the heritage field generate the greatest positive benefits?



The field is approximately split into thirds as to how many people feel there is a common sense of purpose that unites the field's efforts.

- Those involved in provincial and regional heritage activity are more apt to not feel there is a common sense of purpose whereas those at a local level are slightly more likely than average to feel there is a common sense of purpose that unites the field.

Does the heritage field share a common sense of purpose?



AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS ABOUT CURRENT PRACTICES

High agreement

The heritage conservation field actively contributes to economic vitality and community resilience

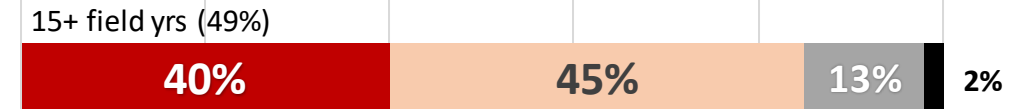


High agreement

The heritage conservation field actively fosters cultural vitality



The heritage conservation field actively contributes to sustainability and climate action through the reduction of waste, resource depletion and destruction through continued or adaptive use and renewal



Less certainty

The heritage conservation field recognizes the full stories that places reflect, including the challenging truths



Split 50/50

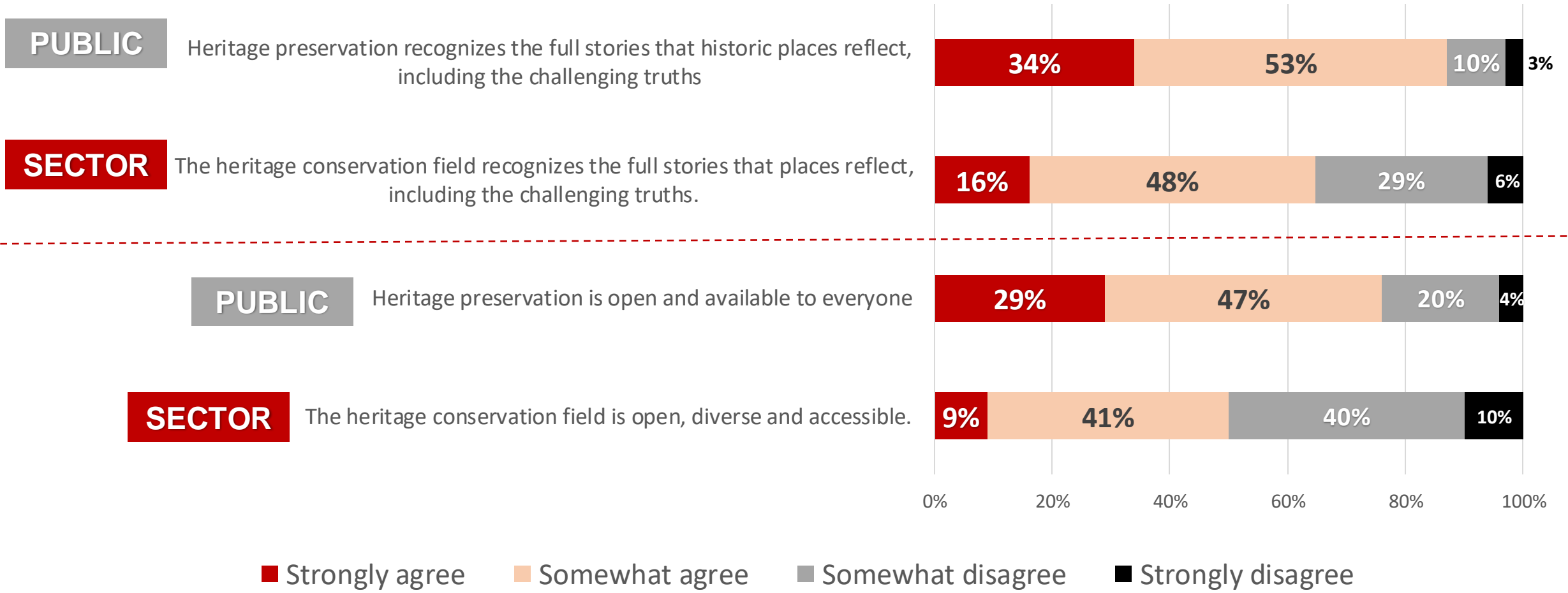
The heritage conservation field is open, diverse and accessible



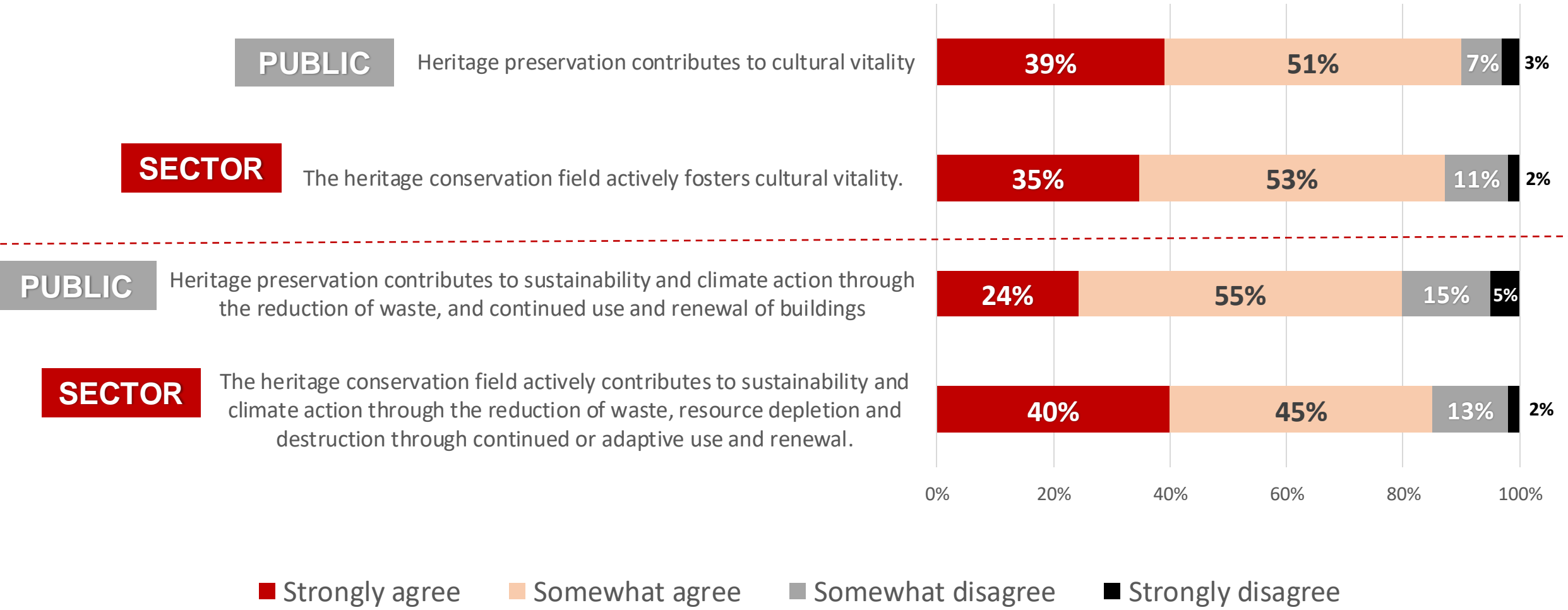
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

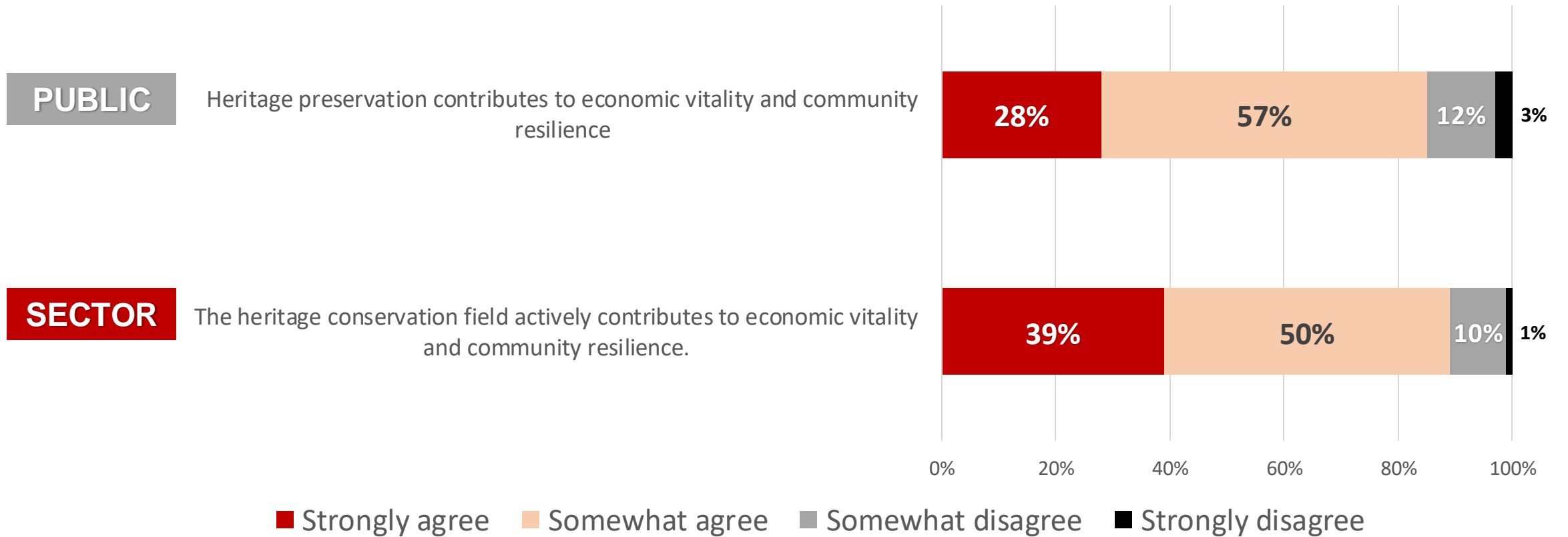
AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS - SECTOR vs. PUBLIC



AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS - SECTOR vs. PUBLIC



AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS - SECTOR vs. PUBLIC

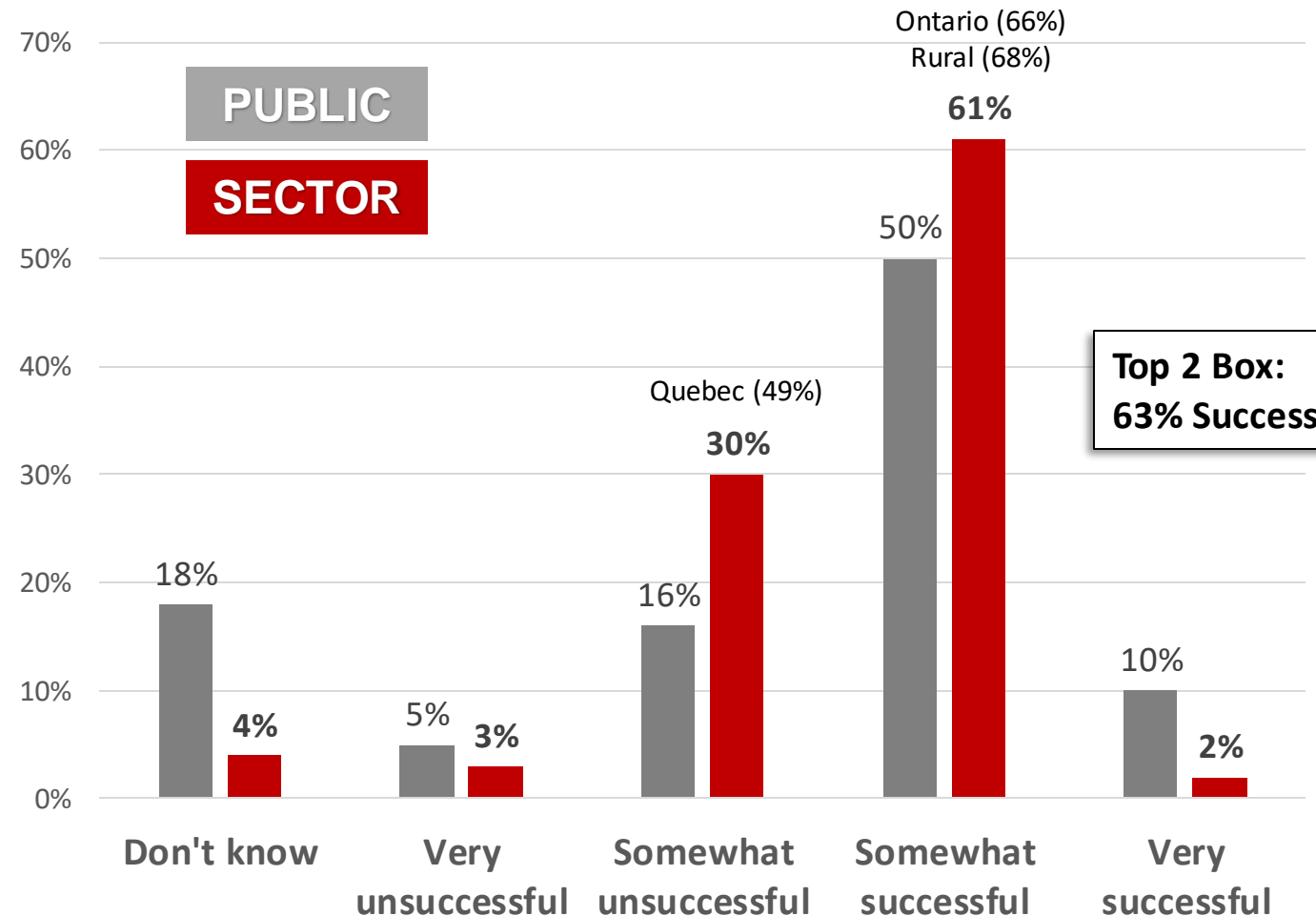


PERCEIVED SUCCESS OF HERITAGE CONSERVATION EFFORTS

How successful are heritage conservation efforts?

The heritage field is slightly more critical of its own level of success as compared to the public's opinion regarding the success of heritage conservation efforts.

- This is particularly noteworthy in Quebec where approximately half of participants feel that efforts have been somewhat unsuccessful.
- This differs in Ontario where a greater proportion than the average feel efforts have been successful.



RELEVANT AND HELPFUL GUIDELINES & STANDARDS

1. Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (33% of comments)
2. Various provincial policy / heritage acts & guidelines (12% of comments)
3. Ontario Heritage Act and tool kits (8% of comments)
4. Local / municipal heritage conservation plans and guidelines (8% of comments)
5. UNDRIP (3% of comments)
6. ICOMOS (3% of comments)
7. UNESCO Convention (3% of comments)
8. Foreign principles / standards (2% of comments)
9. Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2% of comments)
10. Burra Charter (2% of comments)
11. Eight Guiding Principles (1% of comments)
12. CCI Notes (1% of comments)
13. National Trust of Canada material (1% of comments)
14. UN Sustainable Development Goals (1% of comments)

Nothing – can't think of anything specific / not familiar enough or relevant to my work (18%)

Guidelines & standards help spread knowledge of preserving the past, historical buildings and information (12%)

Government officials don't follow / support / fund these policies (7%)

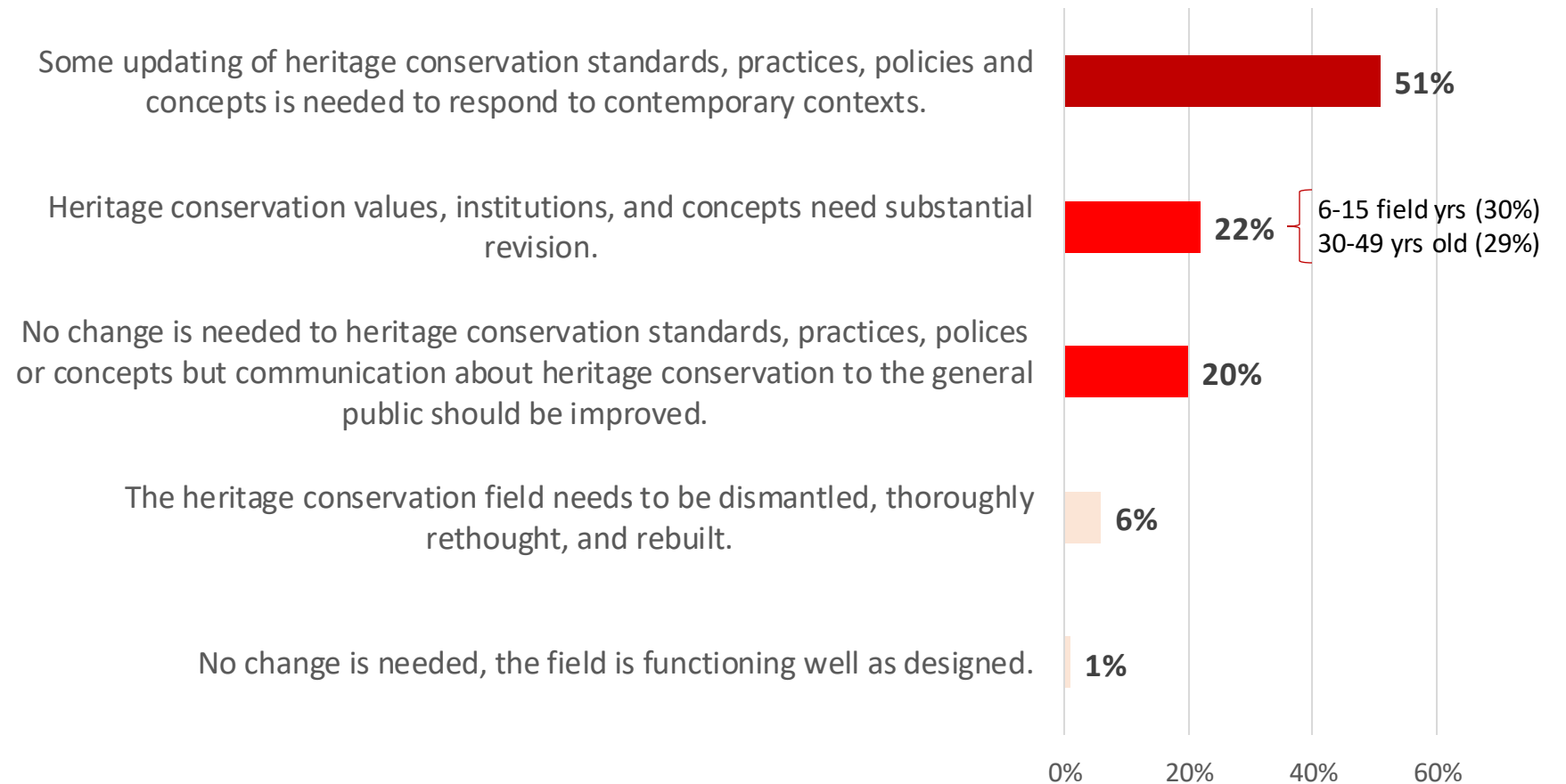
Many of the policies that exist are out of date and need to be updated (3%)

There is insufficient Canadian guidance, principles and collaboration between different levels of government (4%)

Only a very small percentage (6%) of participants feel the heritage field needs dramatic change, with the majority stating that it is standards and practices that most primarily need updating.

- However, one in five do feel that the field's values, institutions and concepts need revision.

What change is needed in the heritage conservation field?

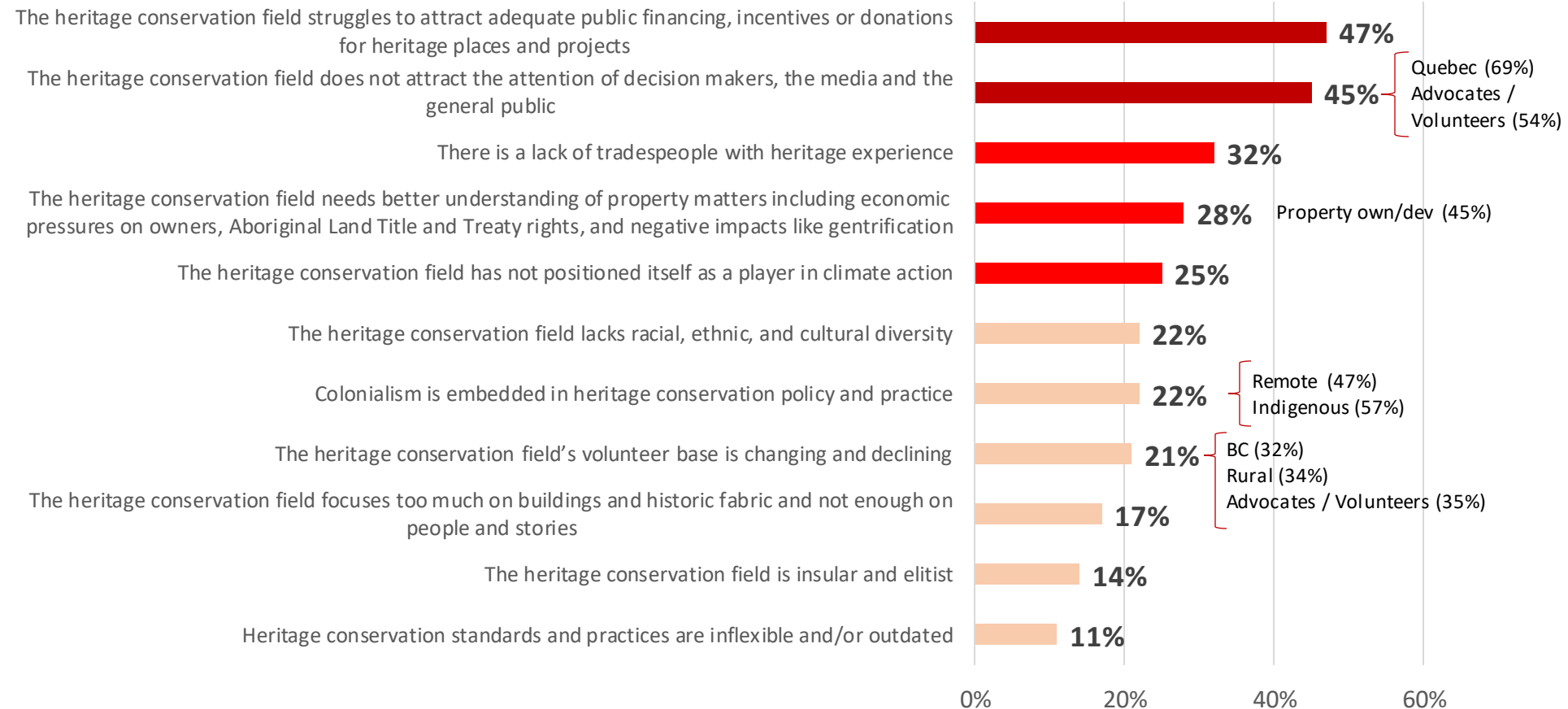


WHY CONSERVE HERITAGE PLACES

Insufficient funding and the need to generate greater support and attention are seen as the Top 2 most important issues facing the sector.

- Issues related to colonialism are rated much higher in importance for participants working in remote areas and those representing Indigenous interests.
- BC, rural field workers, and volunteers also overskew in flagging a shrinking volunteer base more than the average.

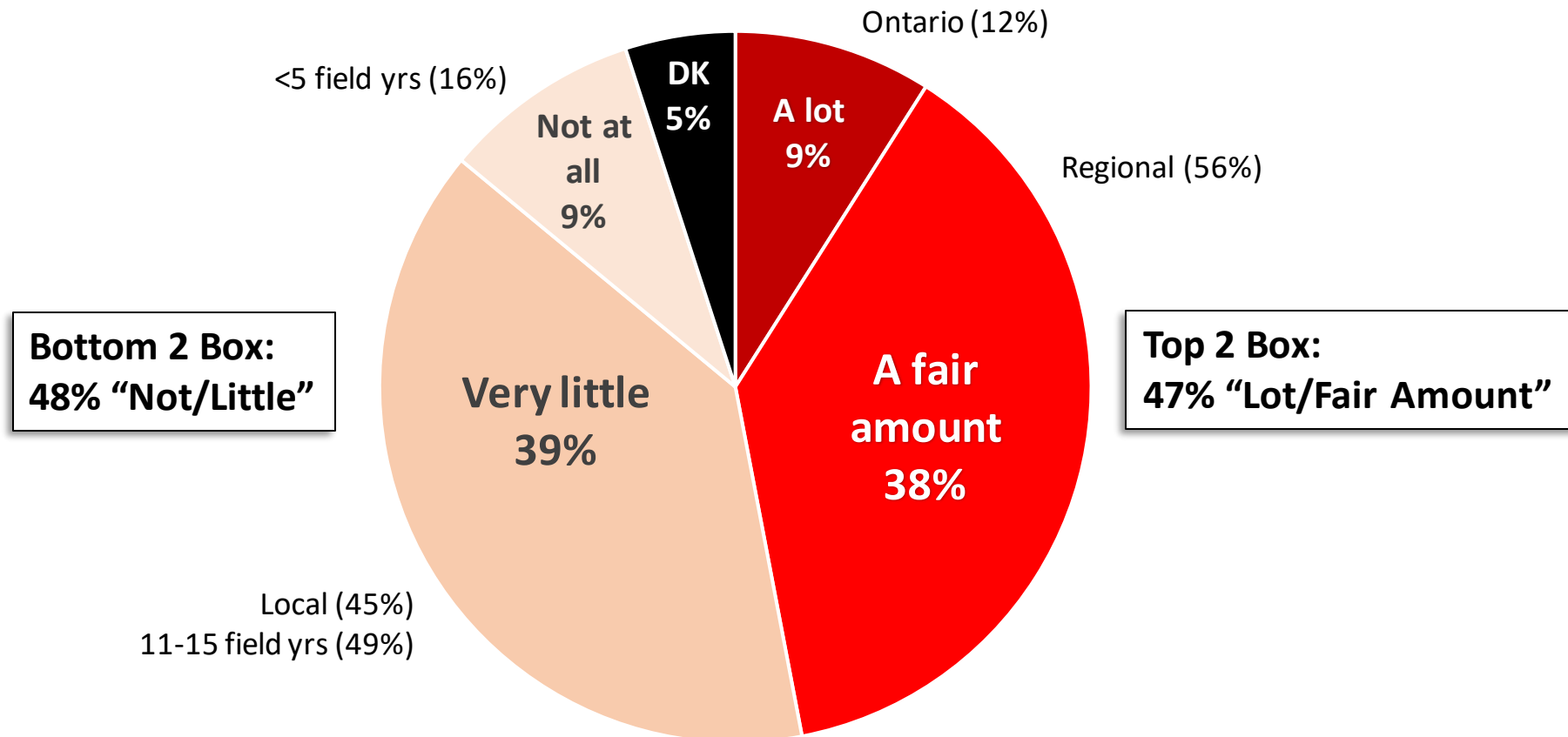
What are the most important issues facing heritage conservation?



The heritage field is split evenly between those who are generally active in the area of sustainability and climate action versus those who are not.

- The more local the work, the less likely that sustainability comprises part of ongoing heritage activity.

How much of your action/effort relates to sustainability & climate action?



Bottom 2 Box:
48% "Not/Little"

Top 2 Box:
47% "Lot/Fair Amount"

EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE ACTION

1. Adaptive re-use of existing structures / repurposing heritage buildings (30% of comments)
2. Conserving/restoring rather than replacement/demolition (28% of comments)
3. Addressing ways to reduce GHG / carbon emissions / footprints from new buildings (12% of comments)
4. Reducing unnecessary waste from demolition / re-using same materials after demolition (11% of comments)
5. Conservation of embodied energy (11% of comments)
6. Education / studies / using old knowledge and practices of the Elders in conservation of old buildings (6% of comments)
7. Buildings upgraded to meet highest energy efficiency standards while maintaining heritage exterior (6% of comments)
8. Conservation of habitat and species (5% of comments)
9. “Greenest structure is the one that is already built” (4% of comments)
10. Saving on resources / need for new materials (4% of comments)

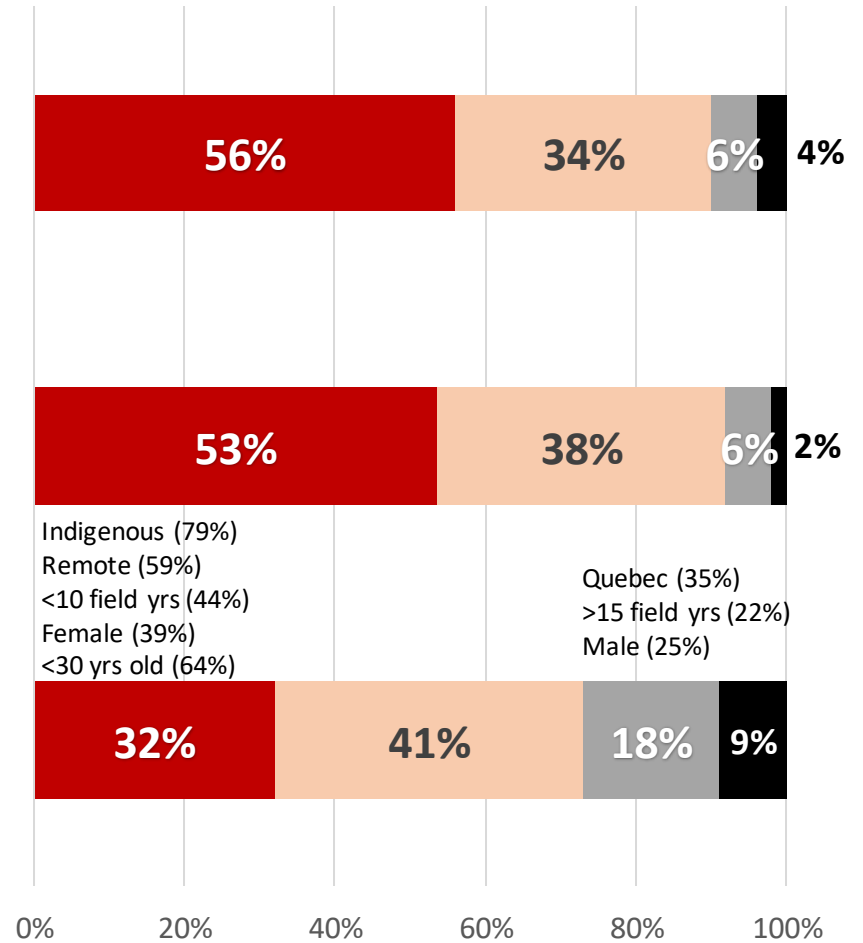
AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS ABOUT HERITAGE & CLIMATE CRISIS

Despite only half of the heritage field being active in the area of sustainability, a significant portion of the field do nonetheless agree that heritage efforts can play an important role in climate action.

Saving existing buildings and heritage places from demolition is a significant contribution to climate action

Heritage standards and practices must allow as many older buildings as possible to be adapted to reduce carbon emissions

The heritage conservation field needs guidance and advice from Indigenous Peoples to better respond to the climate crisis

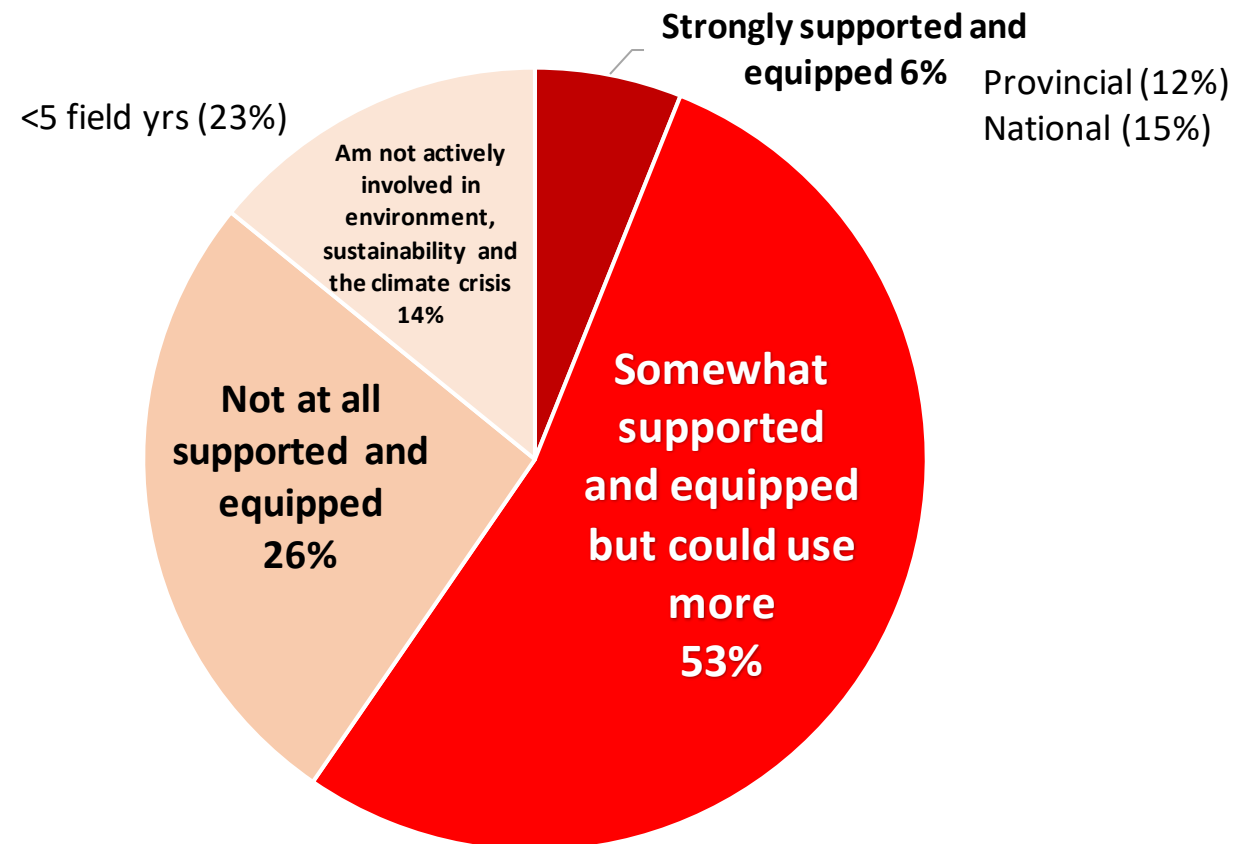


■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

A very small portion of the field feels they are strongly supported and well equipped when it comes to work and activity related to heritage and climate action.

- Approximately half recognize they receive some support but more is required and a quarter do not feel they have sufficient support at all.
- Overall, 79% of participants require more resources and support.

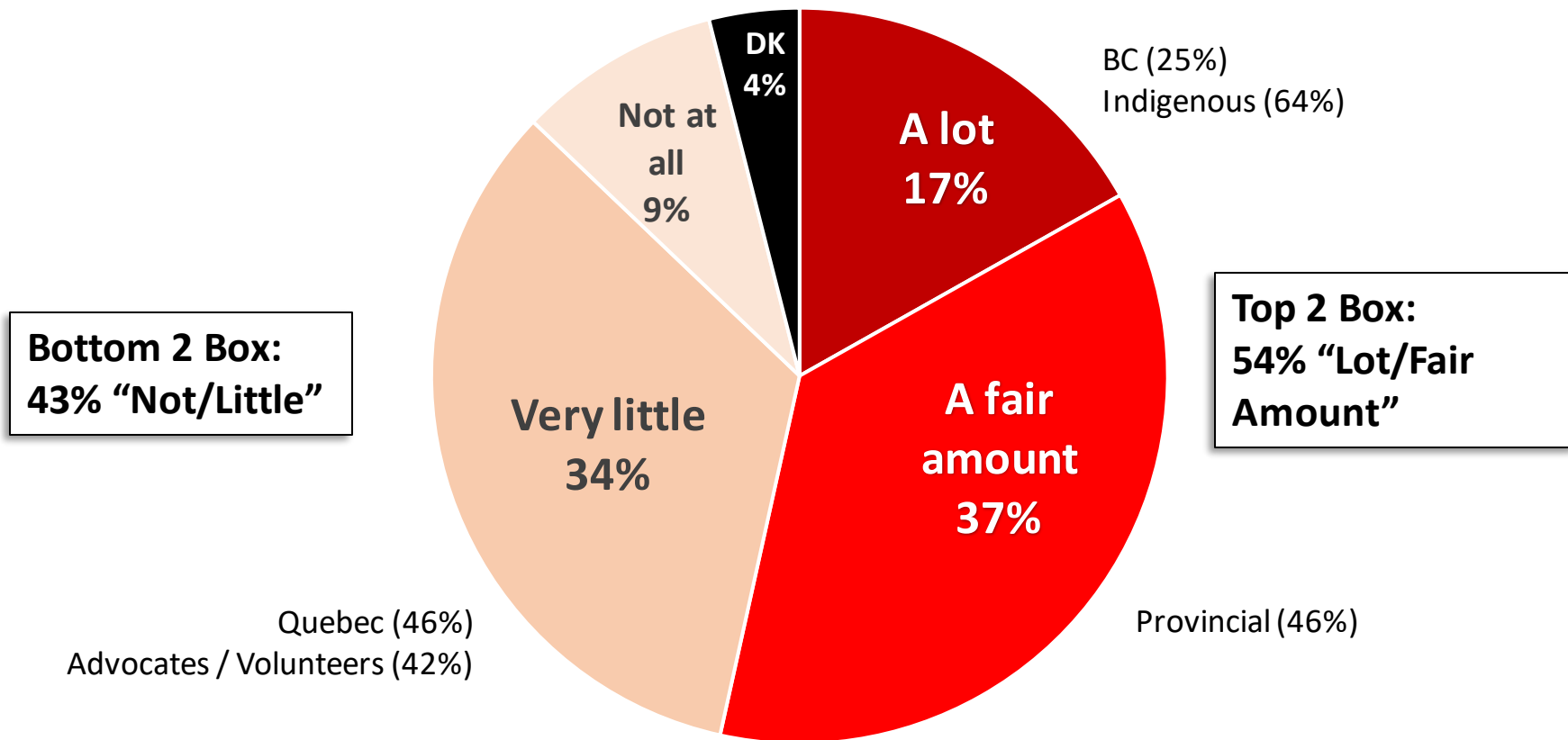
How well supported are you with resources, information and partnerships regarding heritage and the environment / sustainability?



Over half of participants indicate that they are active in the areas of reconciliation, diversity and inclusion.

- This rates higher in BC and with Indigenous populations.
- Quebec is less likely to be active in this area vs. average, as are volunteers.

How much of your action/effort relates to reconciliation, diversity, inclusion access or cultural vitality?



EXAMPLES OF RECONCILIATION, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ACCESS, OR CULTURAL VITALITY.

1. Partnering with local Indigenous groups (24% of comments)
2. Repurposing / rehabilitating heritage buildings as museums and art venues (18% of comments)
3. Working with Indigenous groups for conservation of cultural landscapes (13% of comments)
4. Consulting communities in matters related to them (10% of comments)
5. Bringing people into the heritage field from all areas (8% of comments)
6. Contributing to better reconciliation efforts (6% of comments)
7. Funding training / courses / educational materials (5%)
8. Acknowledgement of diverse contributions in shaping Canada's culture and history (5%)
9. Understanding the negative effects of colonialism on heritage (4%)
10. Increased Indigenous participation & consultation (4%)

AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS ABOUT HERITAGE & RECONCILIATION, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ACCESS, OR CULTURAL VITALITY

82% recognize bias

Heritage stories and interpretations are dominated by certain perspectives such as white, western, cisgender, and/or male

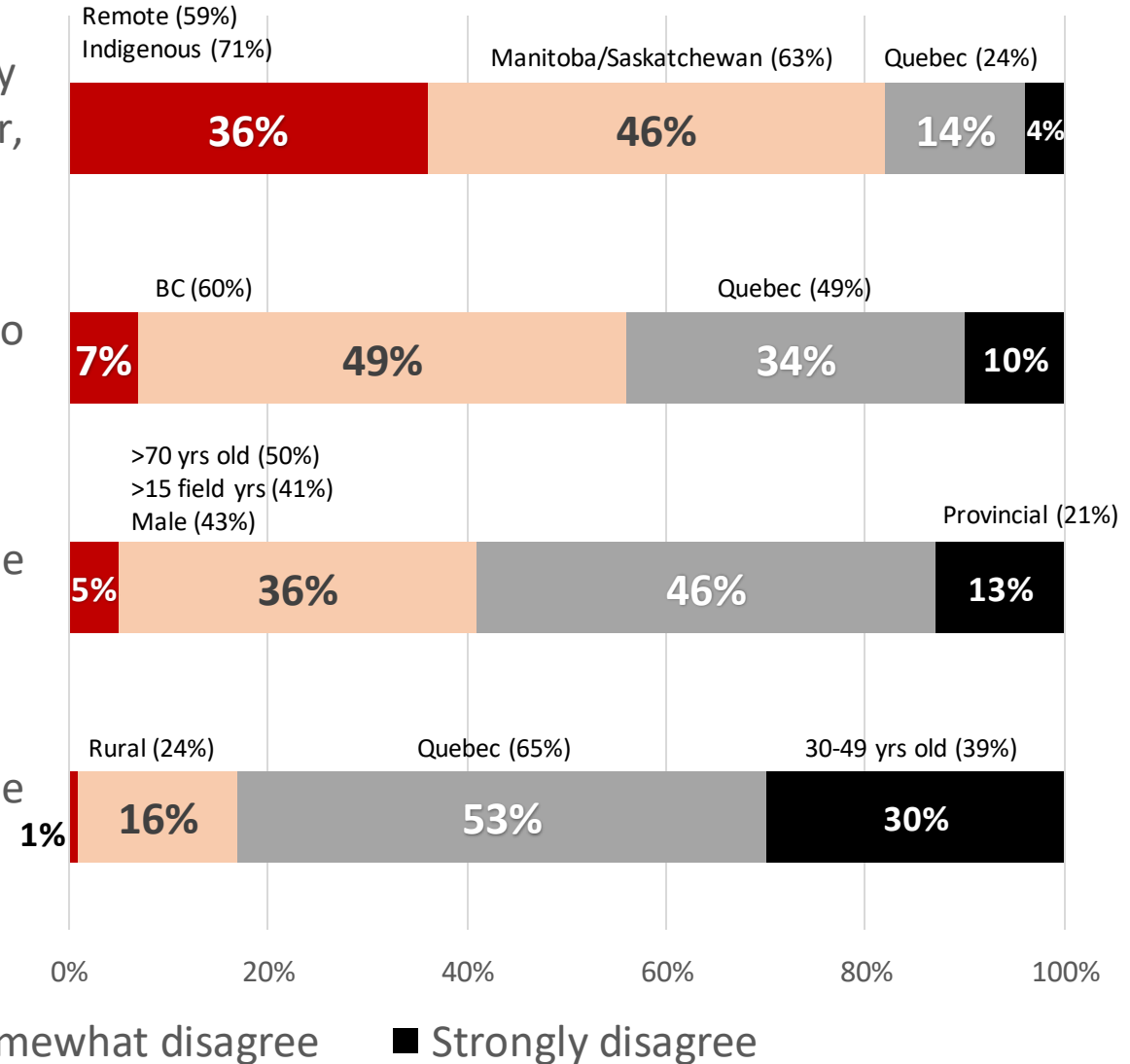
The heritage conservation field is responding to the need to accommodate different physical and cognitive abilities

Disagree > Agree

The people active in the heritage conservation field are diverse

The heritage conservation field has a clear position on the treatment of contested monuments

High concern being expressed

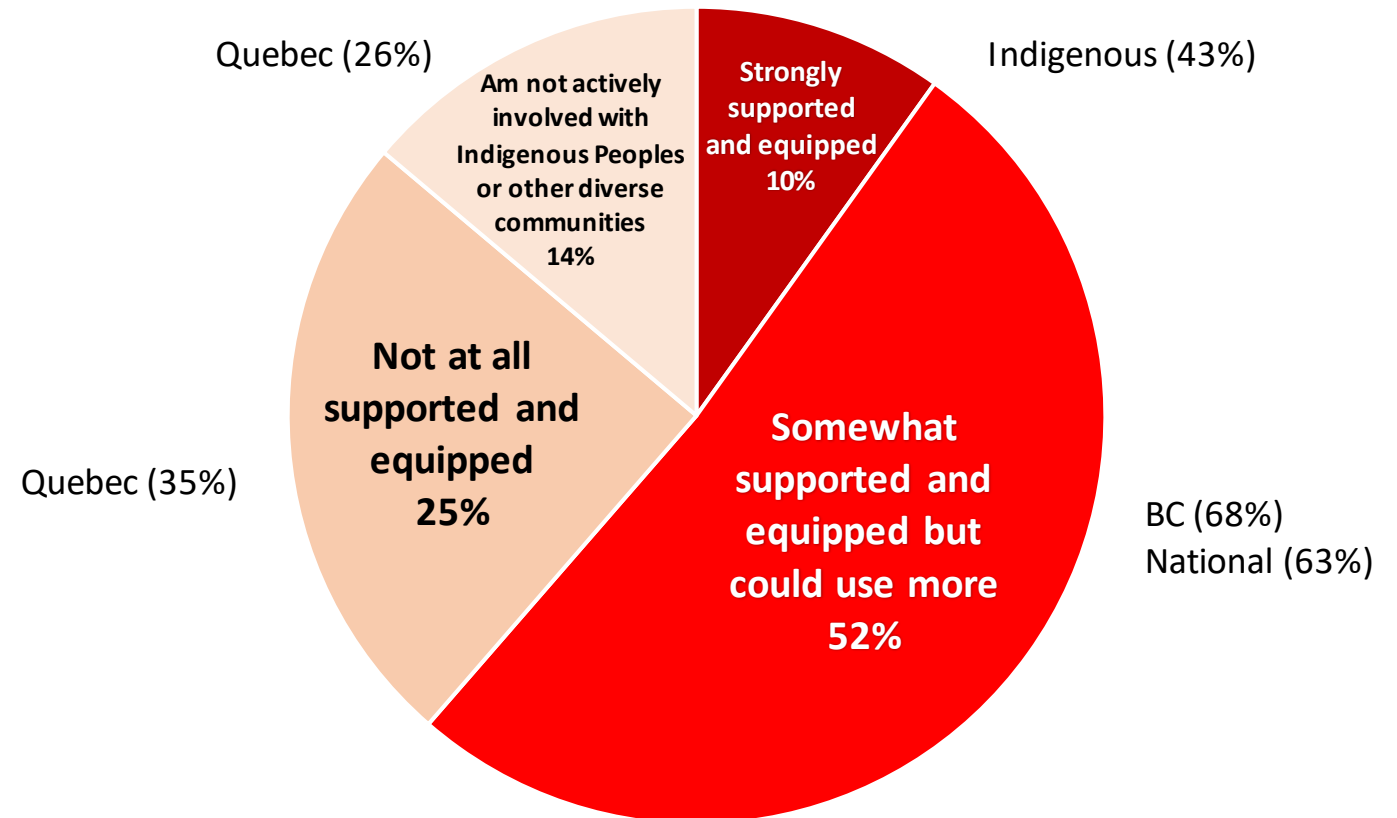


LEVEL OF SUPPORT & WELL-EQUIPPED

Approximately half of the heritage field state they could use more support, and one quarter suggest they lack any kind of support whatsoever related to resources and information regarding reconciliation, diversity and inclusion efforts.

- This is further pronounced in Quebec with 35% saying they have no support.
- Overall, 77% of participants require more resources and support.

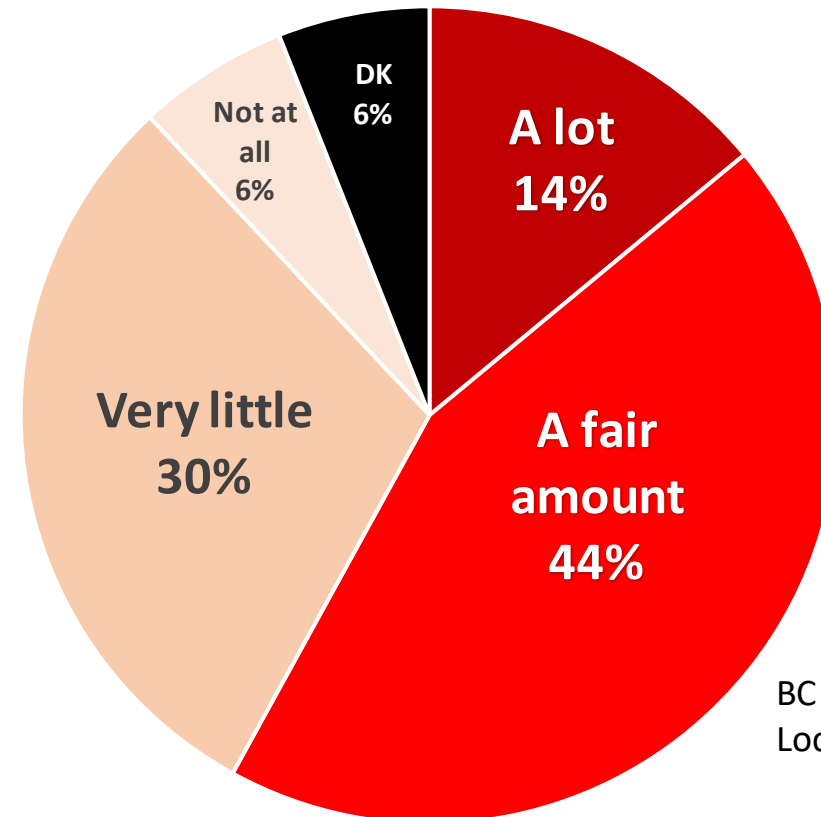
How well supported are you with resources, information and partnerships regarding reconciliation, diversity, inclusion access or cultural vitality?



How much of your action/effort relates to economic vitality and community resilience?

Economic vitality and community resilience engages well over half of participants, particularly those in BC and those working at a local level.

Bottom 2 Box:
36% "Not/Little"



Top 2 Box:
58% "Lot/Fair Amount"

BC (55%)
Local (49%)

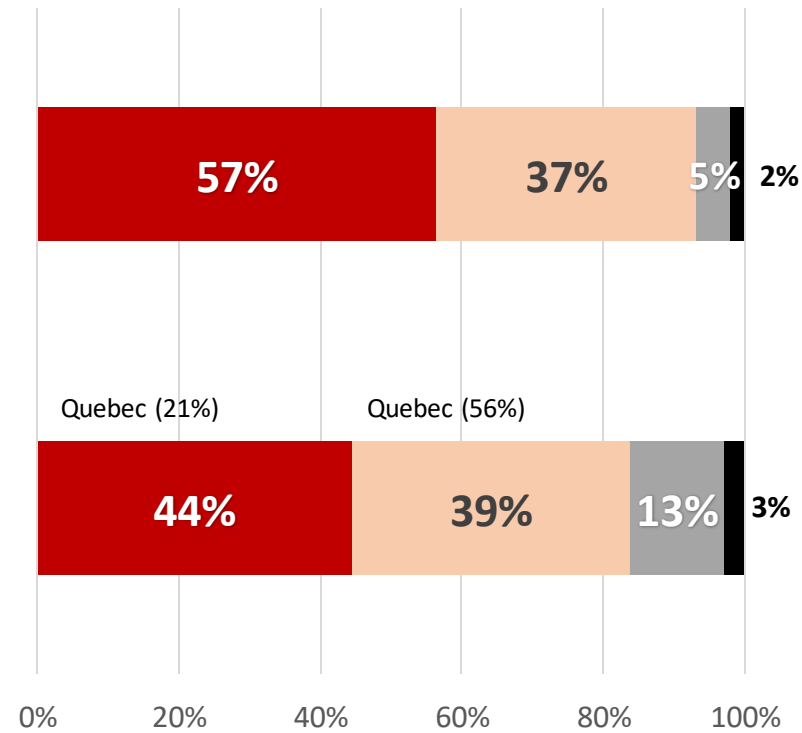
AGREE / DISAGREE STATEMENTS ABOUT ECONOMIC VITALITY & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Very high agreement

The rising costs of heritage conservation for owners and developers are concerns the field must address.

Quebec = less inclined to agree

Indigenous heritage places and other culturally diverse places should be a priority for governments and funders.

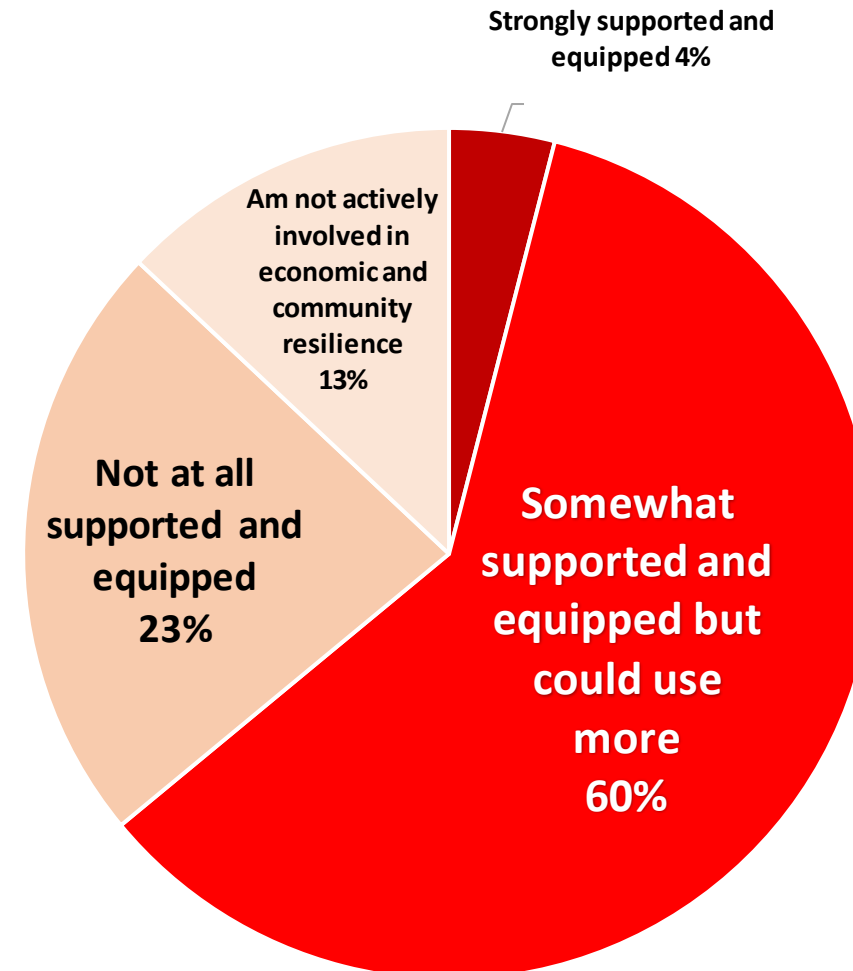


■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

How well supported are you with resources, information and partnerships regarding economic vitality and community resilience?

Economic vitality and community resilience receives the most support currently, but nonetheless many would welcome more beyond what is presently available.

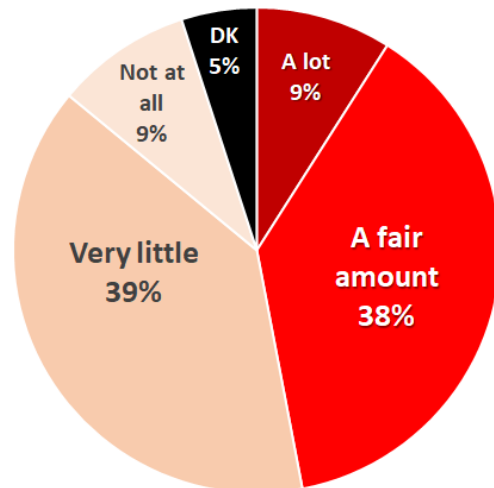
Overall, 83% of participants require more resources and support.



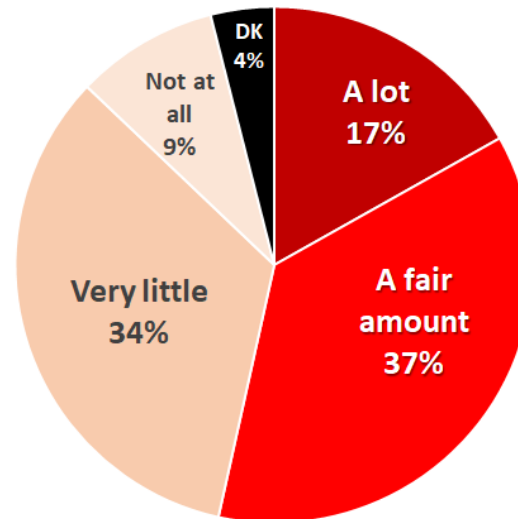
SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF HERITAGE ACTIVITY AND EFFORT

The three subject areas are fairly similar in level of current activity, with economic vitality and community resilience being slightly higher in overall amount of focus.

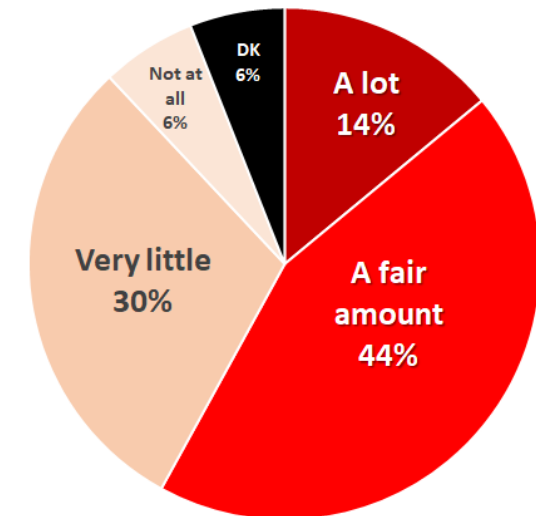
How much of your action/effort relates to sustainability & climate action?



How much of your action/effort relates to reconciliation, diversity, inclusion access or cultural vitality?



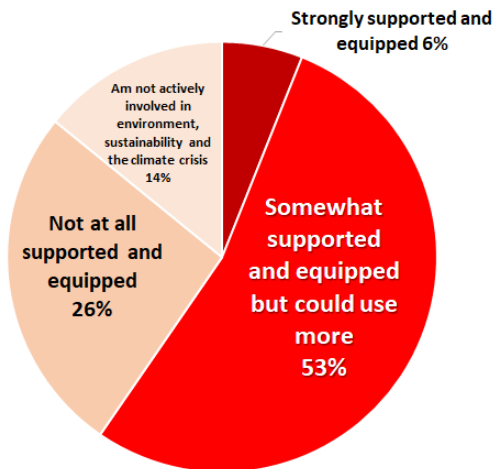
How much of your action/effort relates to economic vitality and community resilience?



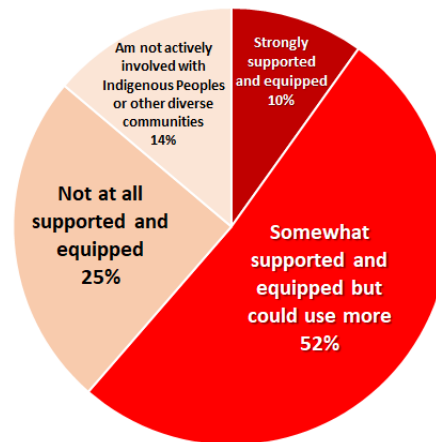
SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF LEVEL OF SUPPORT

Complementing the level of activity and effort across the three subject areas, economic vitality and community resilience sees the most level of current support, albeit only marginally more than the others. It appears that current levels of support does not correlate with subject area but overall level of resources available across the field in general.

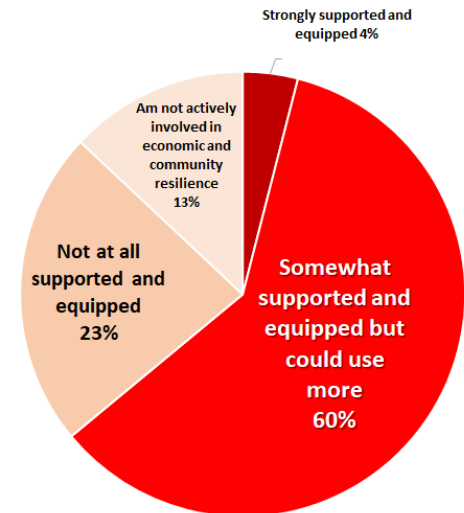
How well supported are you with resources, information and partnerships regarding heritage and the environment / sustainability?



How well supported are you with resources, information and partnerships regarding reconciliation, diversity, inclusion access or cultural vitality?



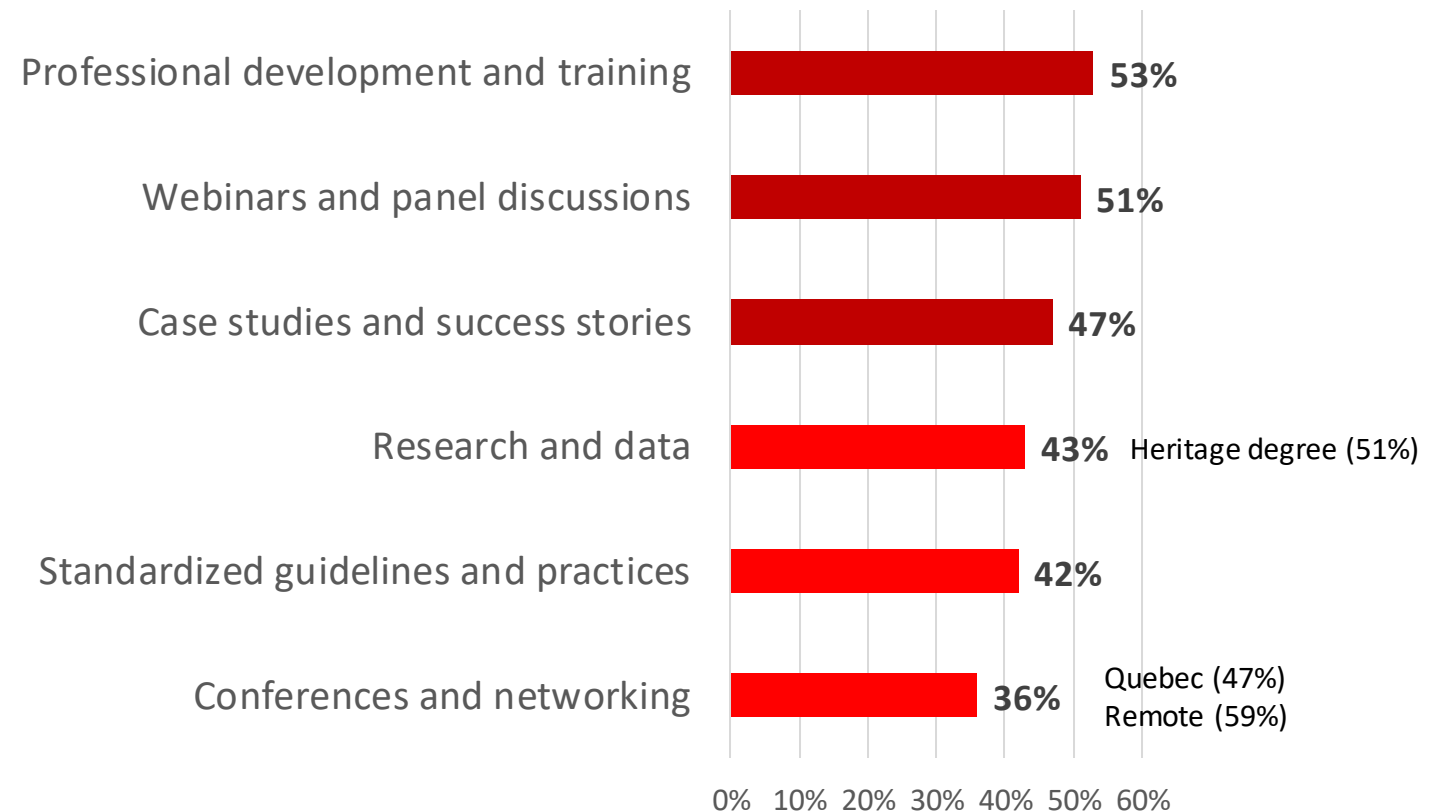
How well supported are you with resources, information and partnerships regarding economic vitality and community resilience?



Heritage field participants do not identify much distinction between information and learning options, with most formats being equally well received.

- Quebec and those working in remote locations exhibit higher-than-average preferences for conferences and networking.

How do you prefer to learn about or receive information re. heritage conservation?



FACTS & INSIGHTS SUMMARY



THANK YOU

Research questionnaire development, analysis and reporting

APER+URE 1

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