# Introduction

The objective of the research project is to understand the demographics, attitudes and professional concerns of public health professionals in Canada with particular emphasis on the interaction between scientific evidence and with policymakers. The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated the challenging environment of balancing the optimal public health and public interest outcomes. The limitations of scientific evidence include the adjudication of competing normative values and protecting civil liberties. While public health professionals have been relied upon by policymakers to provide expert advice and policy recommendations, the science underpinning these recommendations is complex and evolving.

The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) is the national scientific organization of the public health discipline, and the professional voice for many of those who work in public health across Canada. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CPHA is struggling to understand better how experts (specifically its own members) interpret scientific evidence, advise elected policymakers and reconcile expert public health advice with competing public values. The CPHA has therefore partnered with our research team to determine the demographics, attitudes and professional concerns of the public health professionals in Canada with a particular emphasis on how they interact with scientific evidence and policymakers. Based on these needs, three research questions will guide this research project.

1. How do public health professionals assess their relationships with their politically accountable superiors (e.g. premiers, mayors, city councilors, ministers)?

2. What political attitudes do Canada’s public health professionals hold, and are there identifiable divisions among them?

3. How do these attitudes and potential divisions compare with those found in the broader public?

To answer these questions, we will design and execute a pair of surveys that will be fielded to two different populations: Canadian public health professionals and the general population. These surveys will ask questions that solicit respondents’ experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic, their general political attitudes and demographic characteristics. Public health professionals will be asked unique questions about how they interacted with policy makers and political leaders during the COVID19 pandemic. The information gleaned from this analysis will improve the capacity to advocate for public health measures and provide effective advice to the public and policymakers.

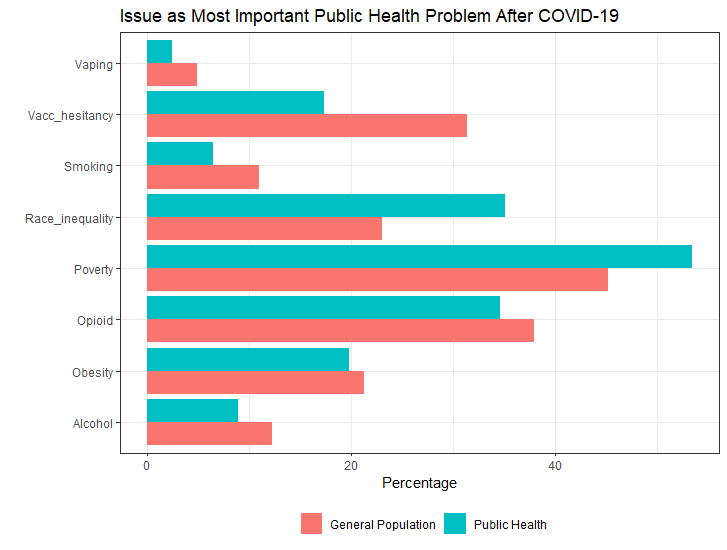
# Research Design and Methodology

In order to accomplish our aforementioned goals, a survey was developed and distributed to members of the public health workforce. A parallel survey was distributed to the general population. The survey was developed by a team of veteran researchers that included Drs. Erick Lachapelle, Simon Kiss, Patrick Fafard, Ketan Shankardass & Andrea Perrella. The respective surveys were distributed in February and March 2021 by Dynata. The general population version consisted of a representative sample of 2,000 completed surveys of Canadians at least 18 years old. The survey of the public health workforce consisted of 202 completed surveys of the Canadian public workforce. This survey was distributed through the following membership networks: Public Health Physicians of Canada (PHPC), Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA), Health Promotion Canada and the following provincial associations – Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and New Brunswick/Prince Edward Island.

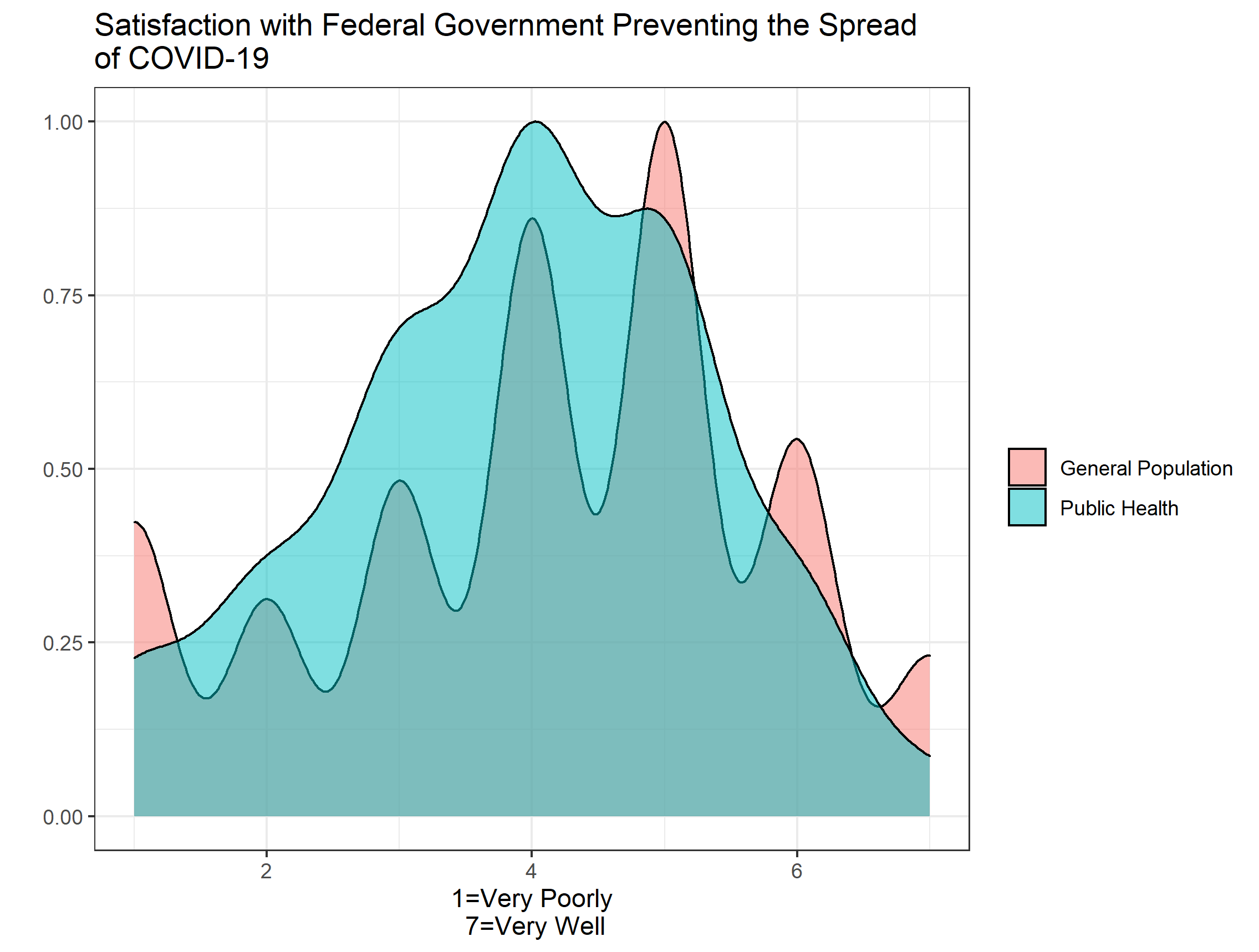
# Juxtaposing General Population and Public Health Professions

## Most important public health problem after COVID-19

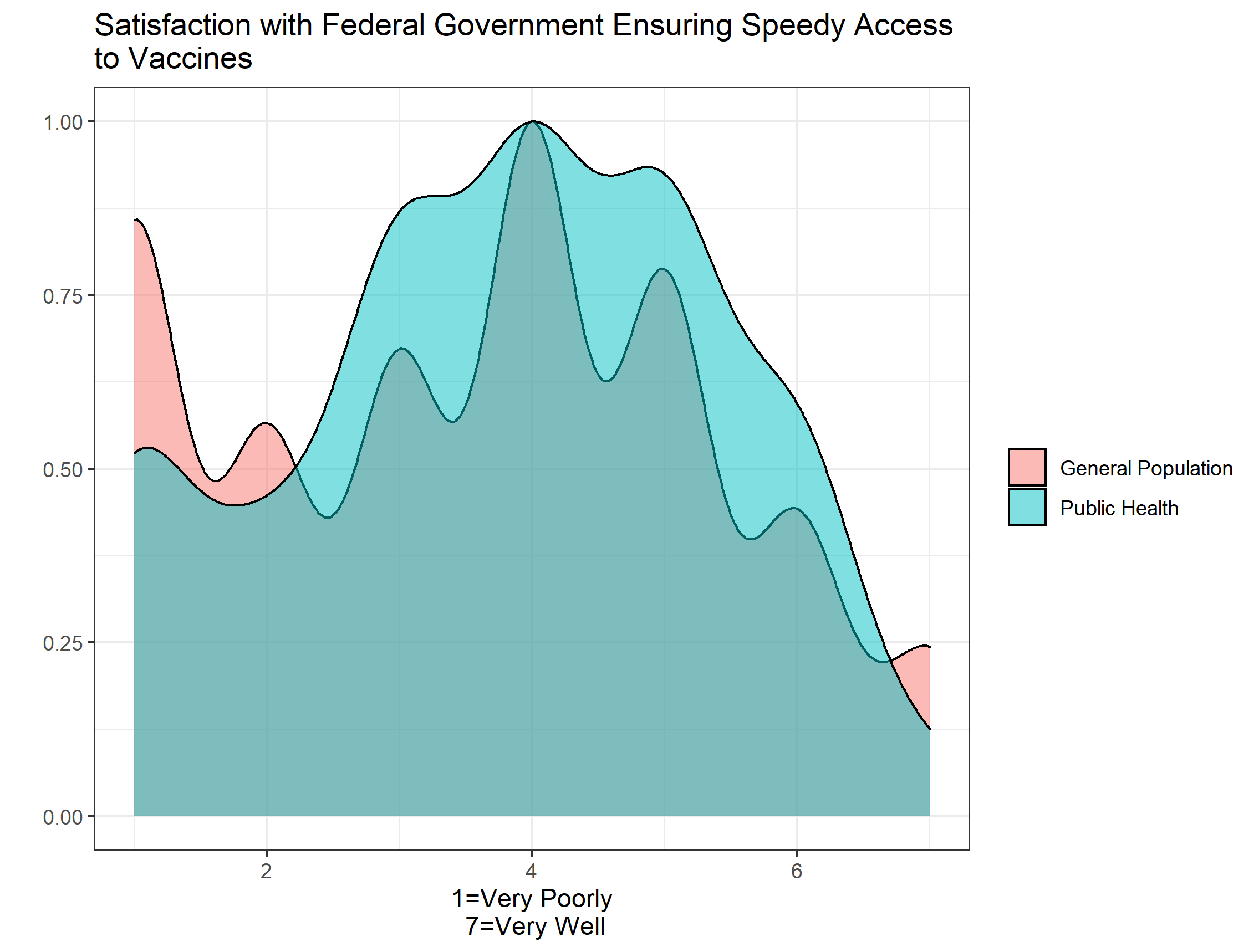
Respondents were asked “What are the two most important public health issues Canada faces?” Respondents were able to choose two from eight different options, including obesity, vaccine hesitancy, smoking, vaping, poverty, excessive opioid use, excessive alcohol use, racial inequalities and other. The most important public health problems among the public health sample is poverty (58%), excessive opioid use (39%) and racial inequality (39%). Among the general population, the most important problems are poverty (47%), excessive opioid use (40%) and vaccine hesitancy (32%). Vaping, smoking an excessive alcohol use were rated as lowest importance by both public health and general population samples.



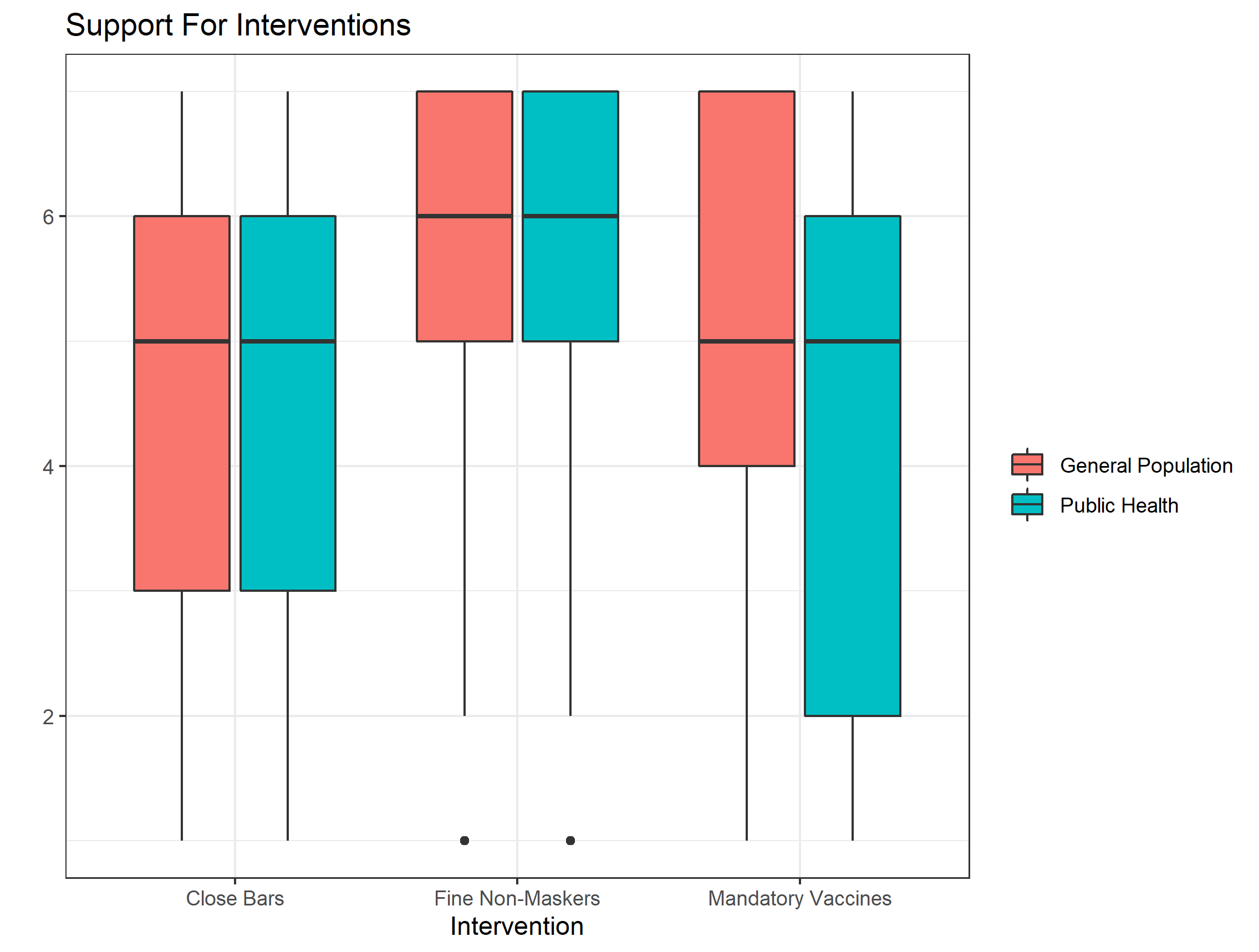
## Federal Government Management of COVID-19



Spread: p-value = 0.03523\*\*

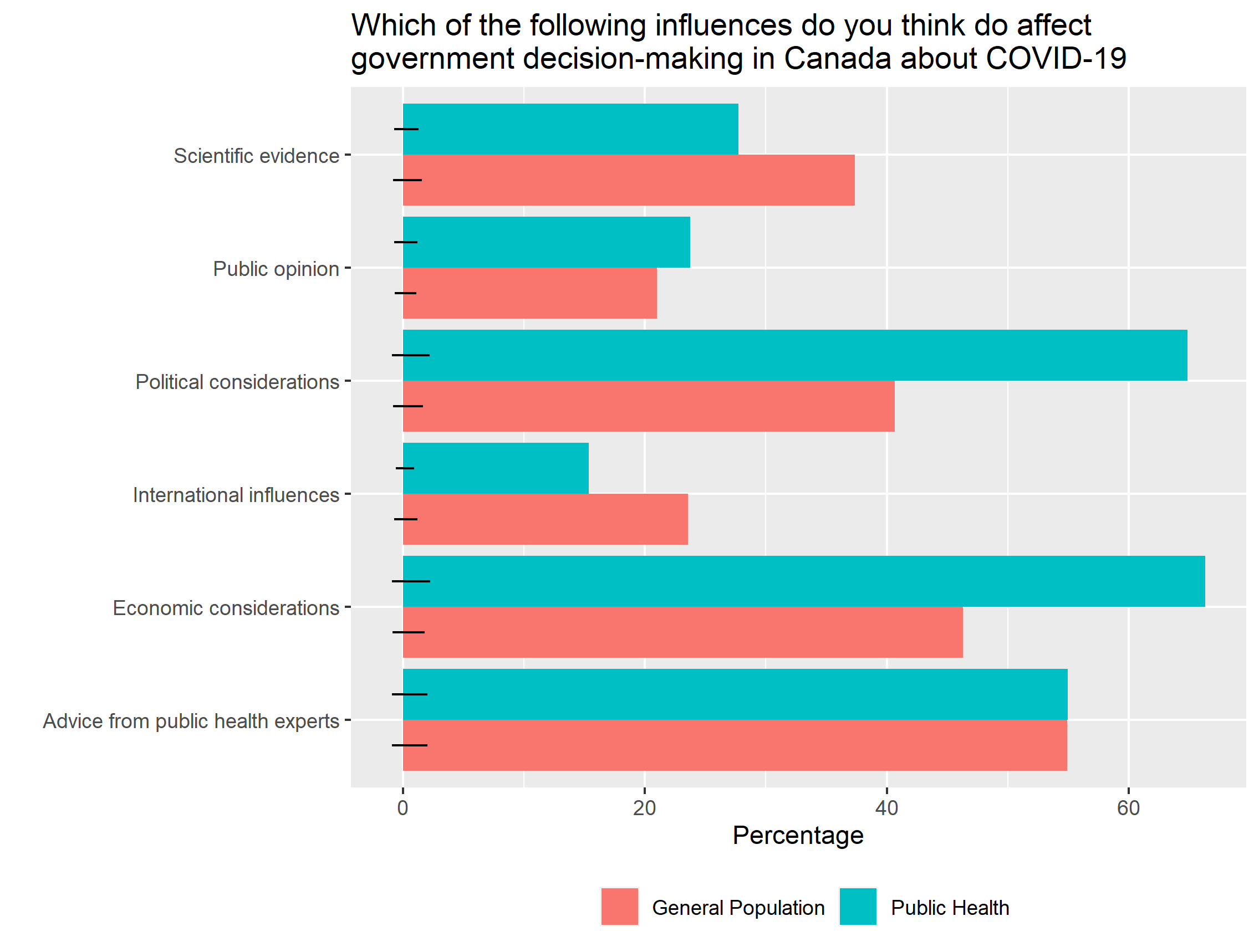
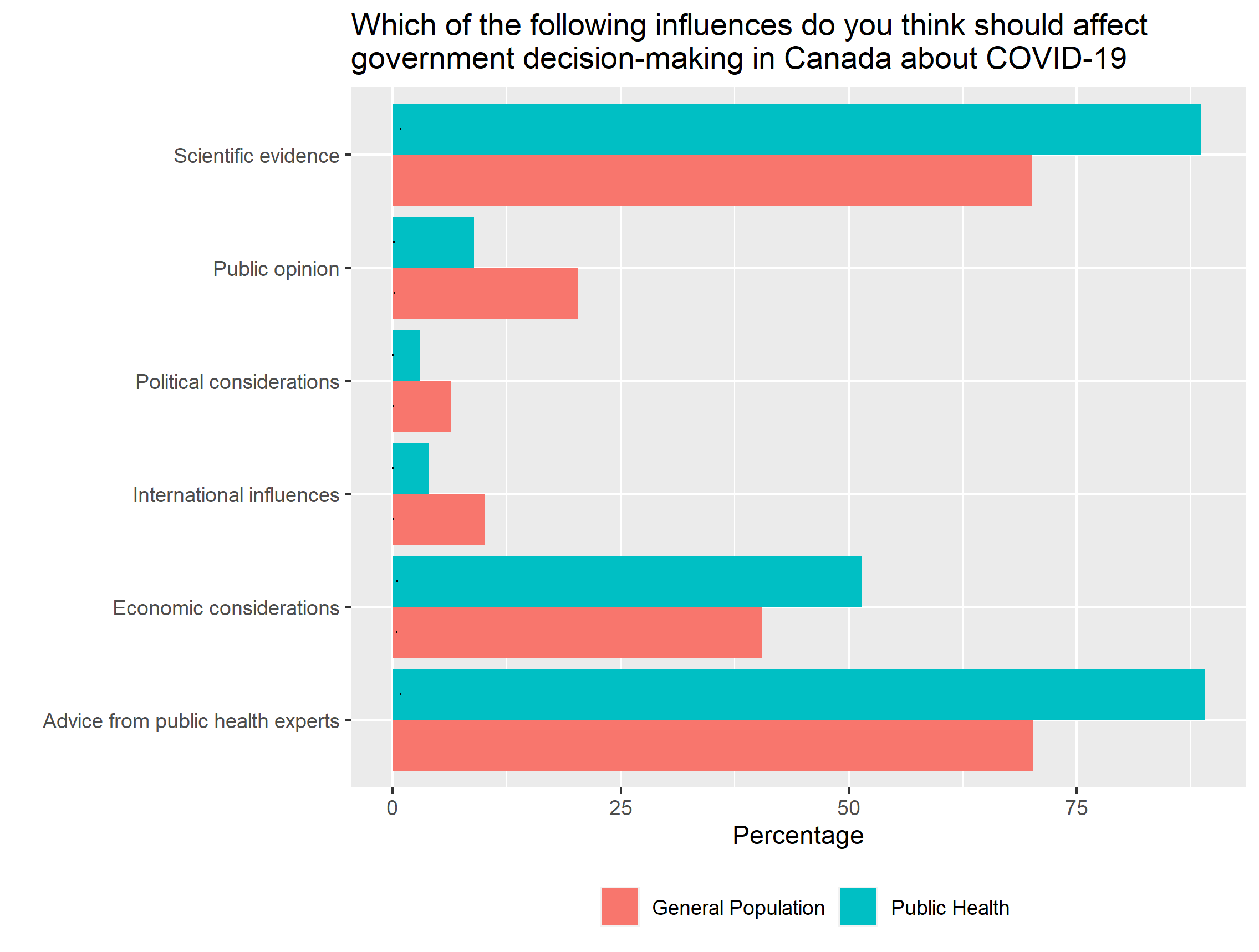


p-value = 0.0831

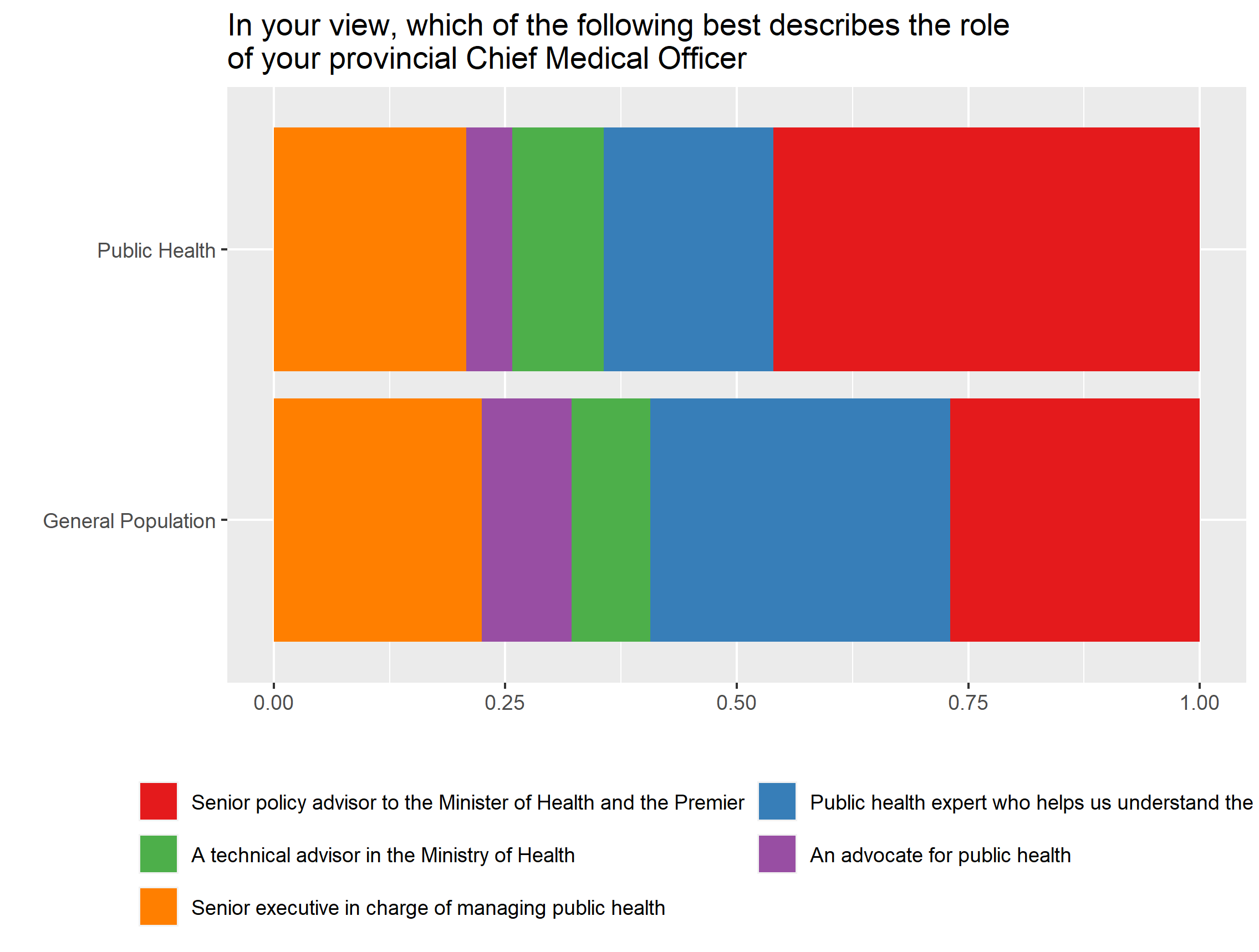


p-value = 0.08013

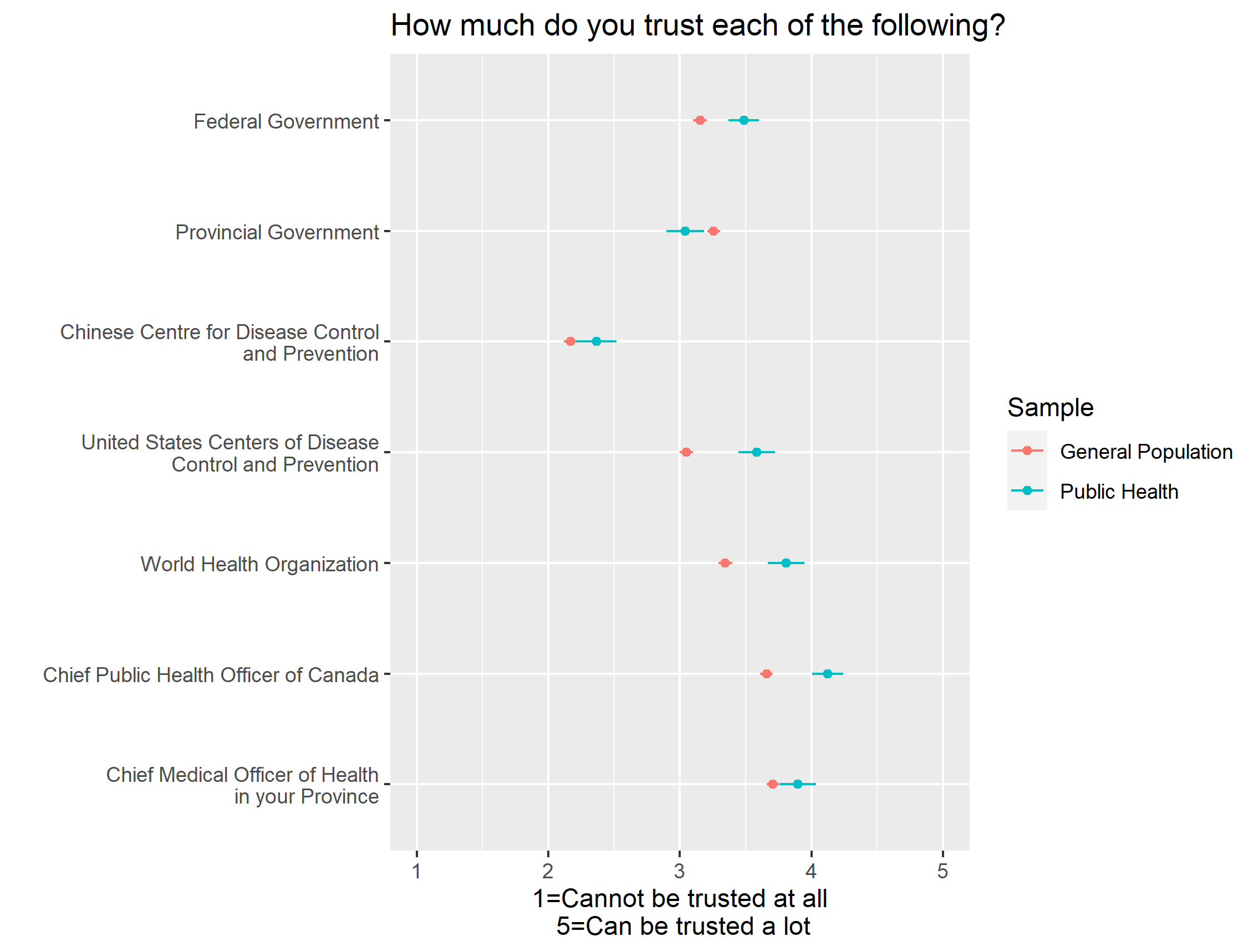
## Influences affecting government decision-making



## Views on Chief Medical Officer



## Trust



Federal government: p-value = 0.0003485\*\*\*

Provincial government: p-value = 0.003482\*\*

Chinese CDC: p-value = 0.007338\*\*

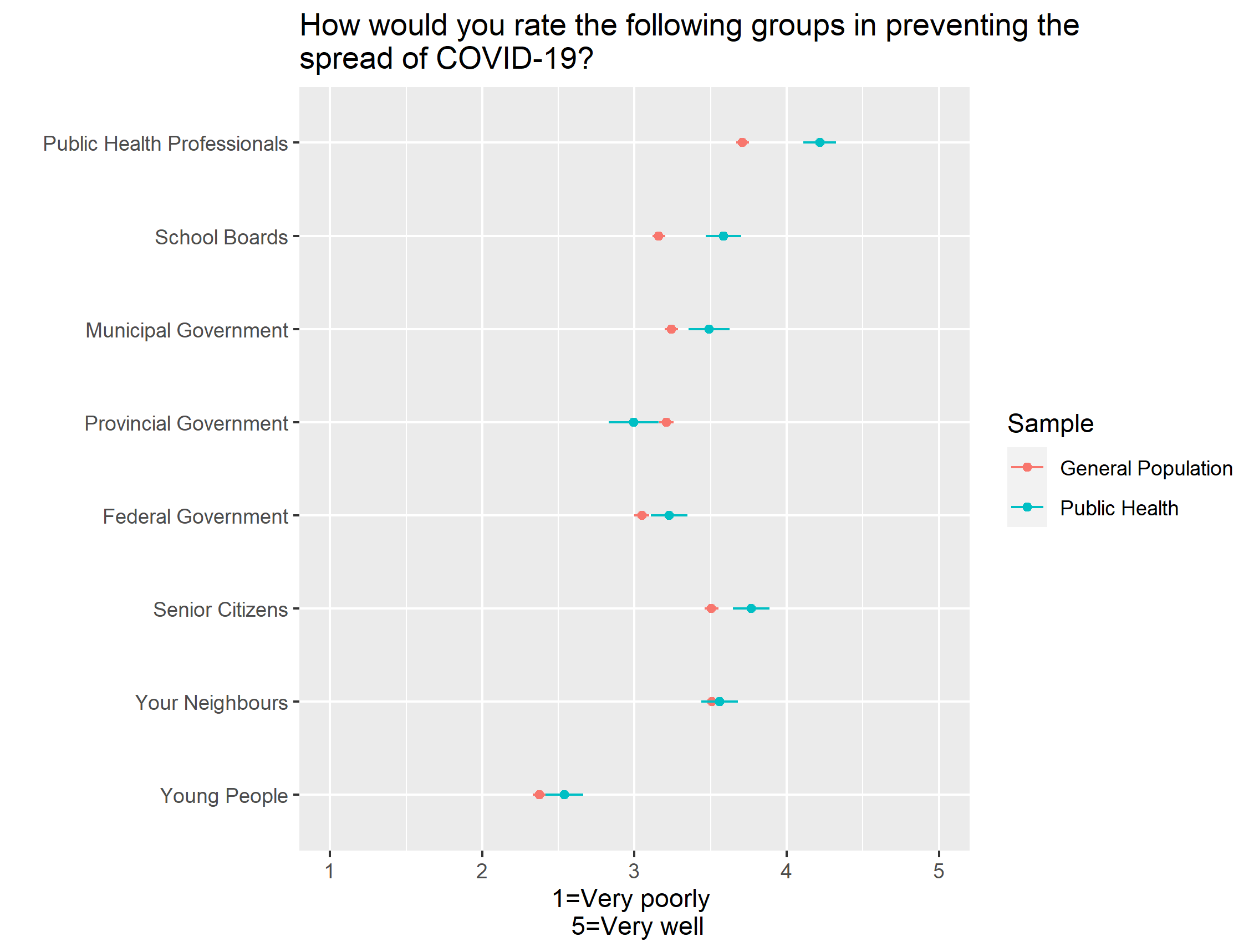
US CDC: p-value = 1.876e-10\*\*\*

WHO: p-value = 1.006e-07\*\*\*

Chief Public Health Officer: p-value = 1.776e-08\*\*\*

Provincial Chief Public Health Officer: p-value = 0.01768\*\*

## Rate groups in preventing the spread



Public Health: p-value = 1.108e-13

School Boards: p-value = 9.529e-10

Municipal: p-value = 0.0009629

Provincial: p-value = 0.006931

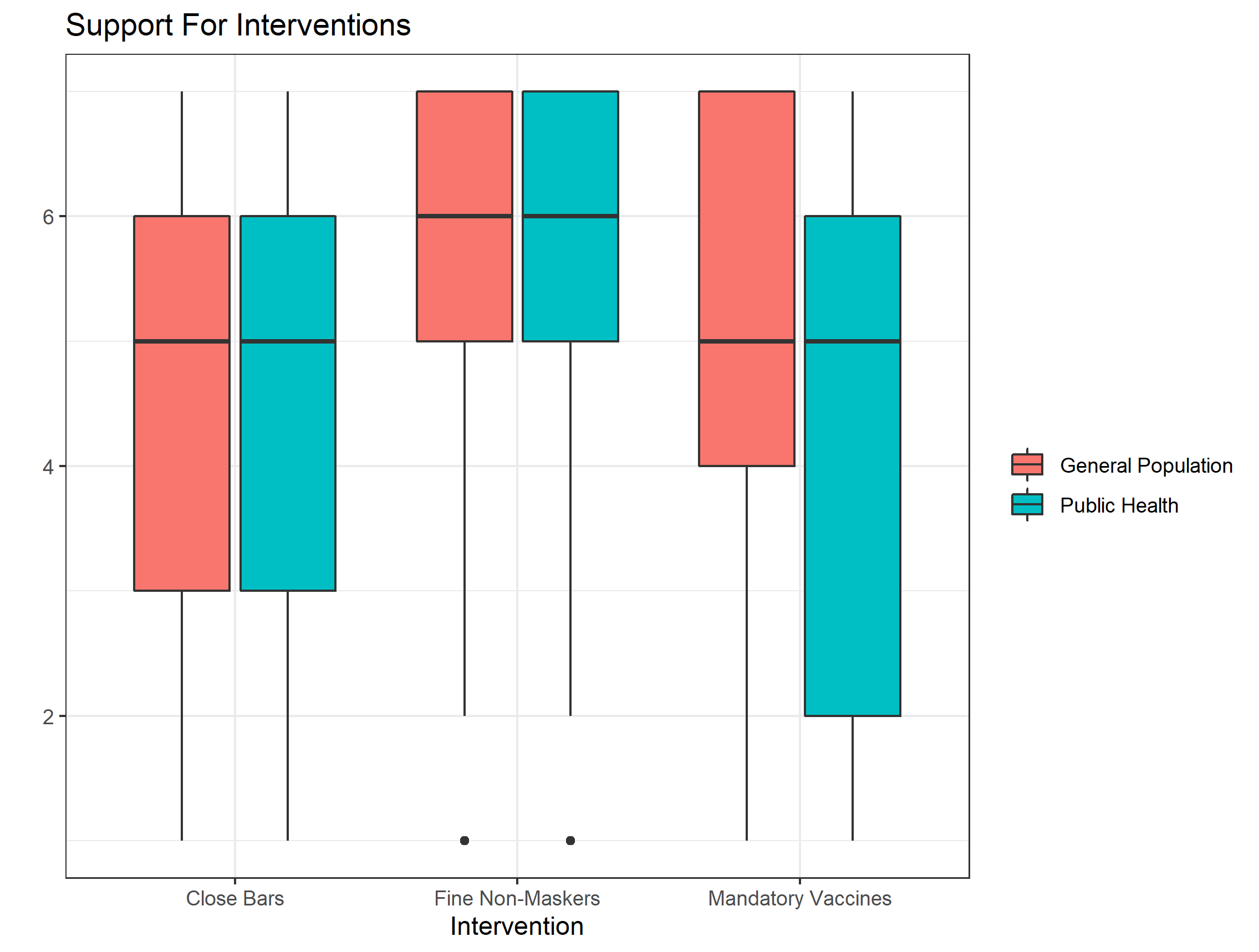
Federal: p-value = 0.04725

Seniors: p-value = 0.000448

Neighbours: p-value = 0.4895

Young People: p-value = 0.008423

## Short-term restrictions

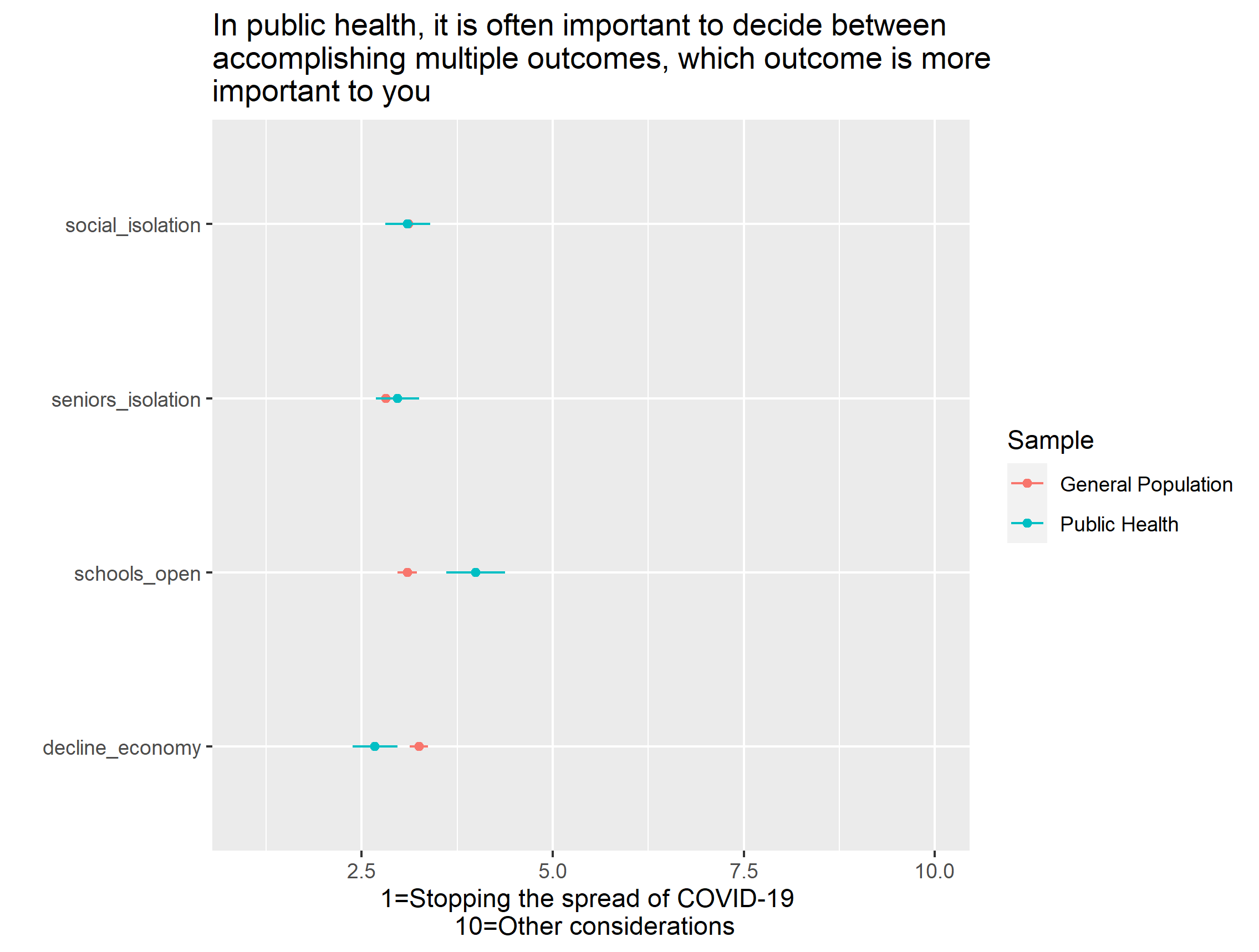


Mandatory Vaccines: p-value = 2.061e-06

Bars/Res: p-value = 0.8764

Mask Fines: p-value = 0.108

## Outcomes/Trade-offs



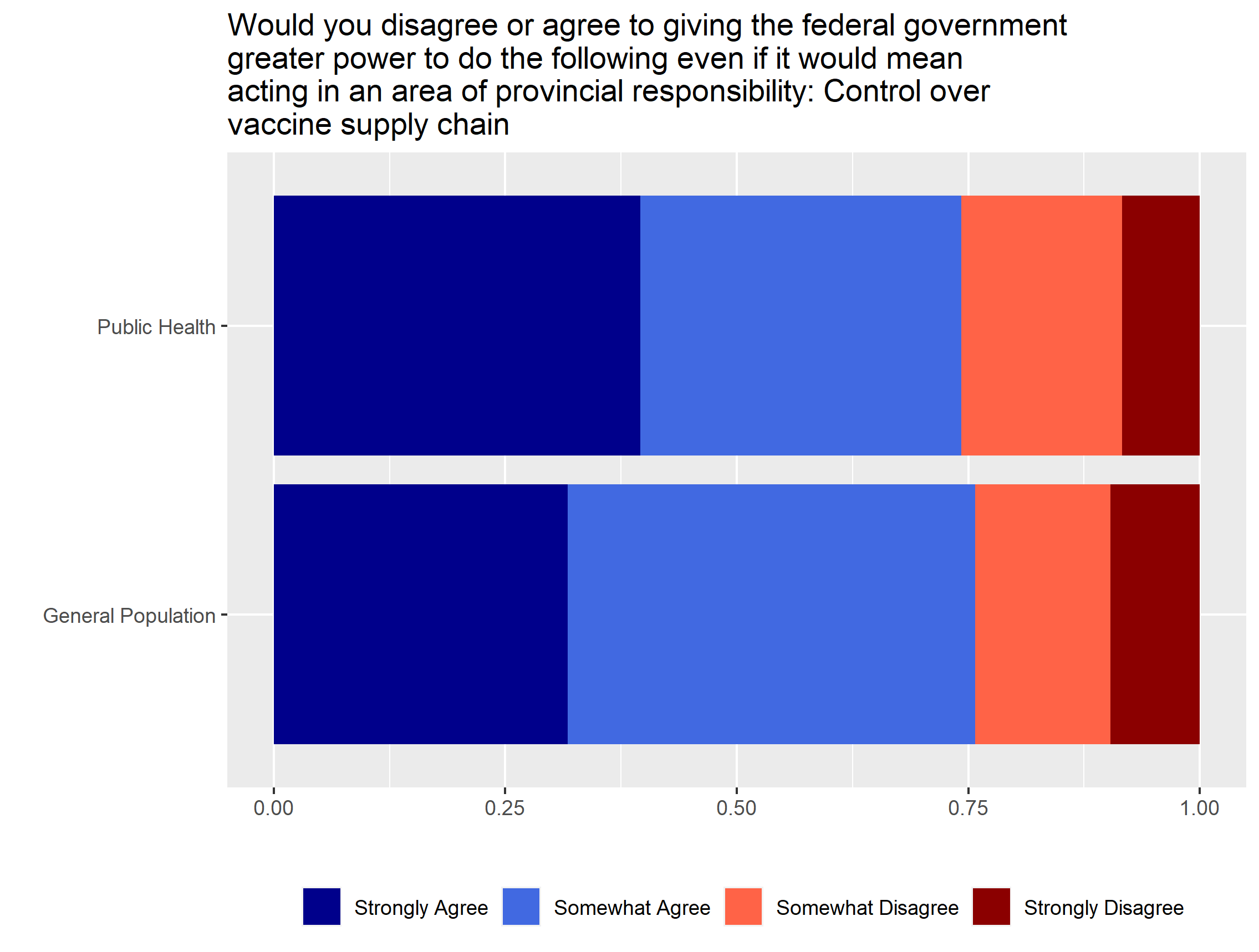
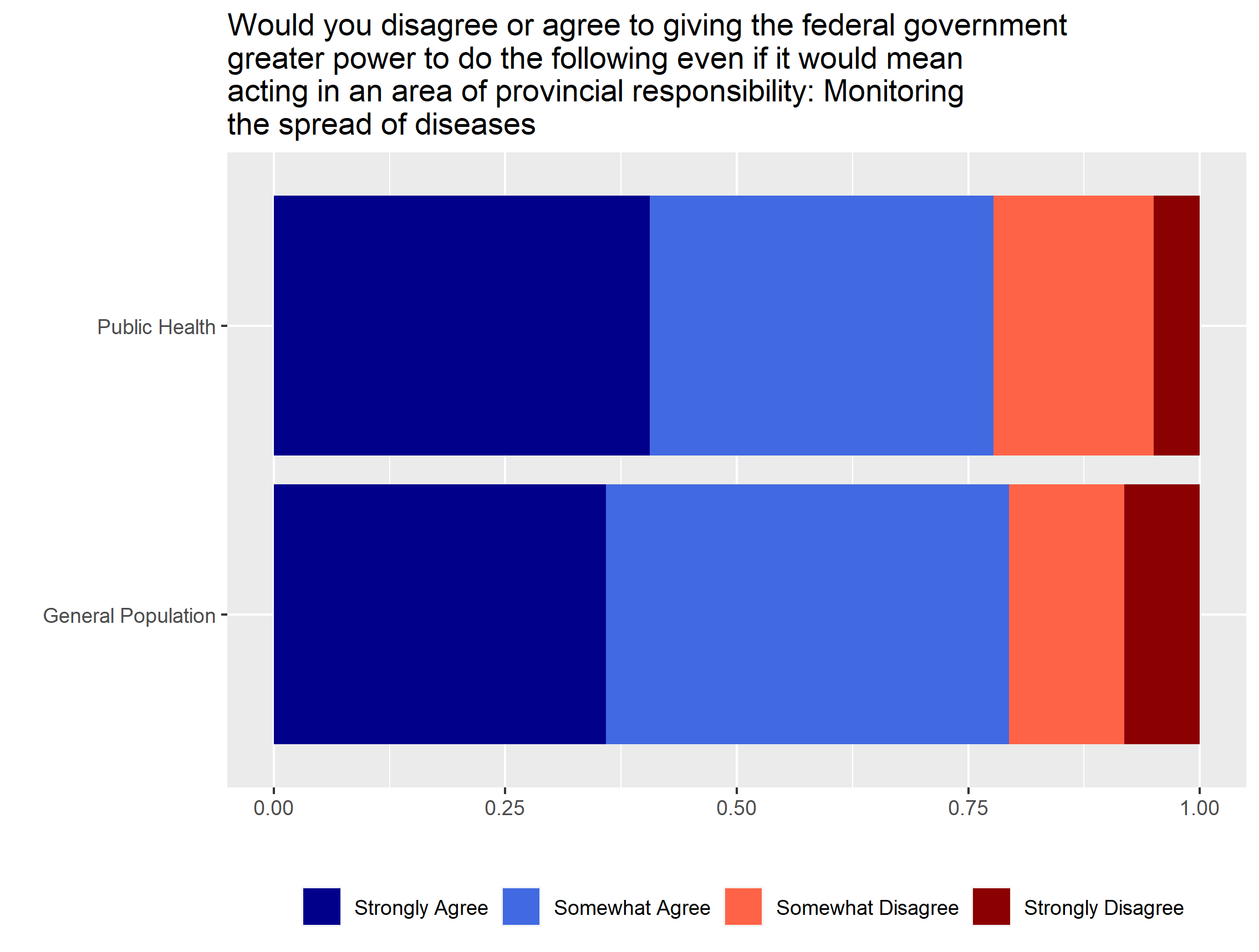
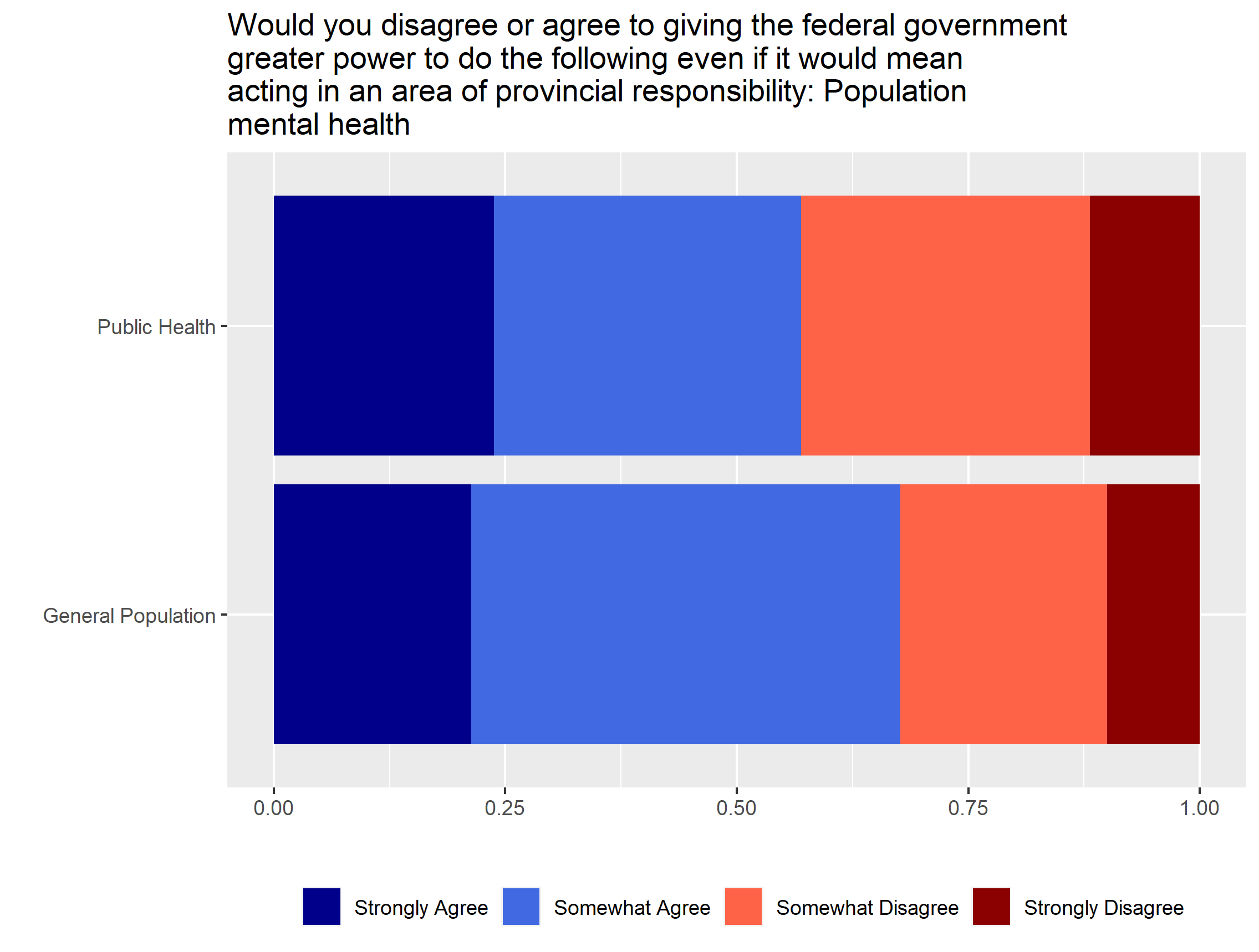
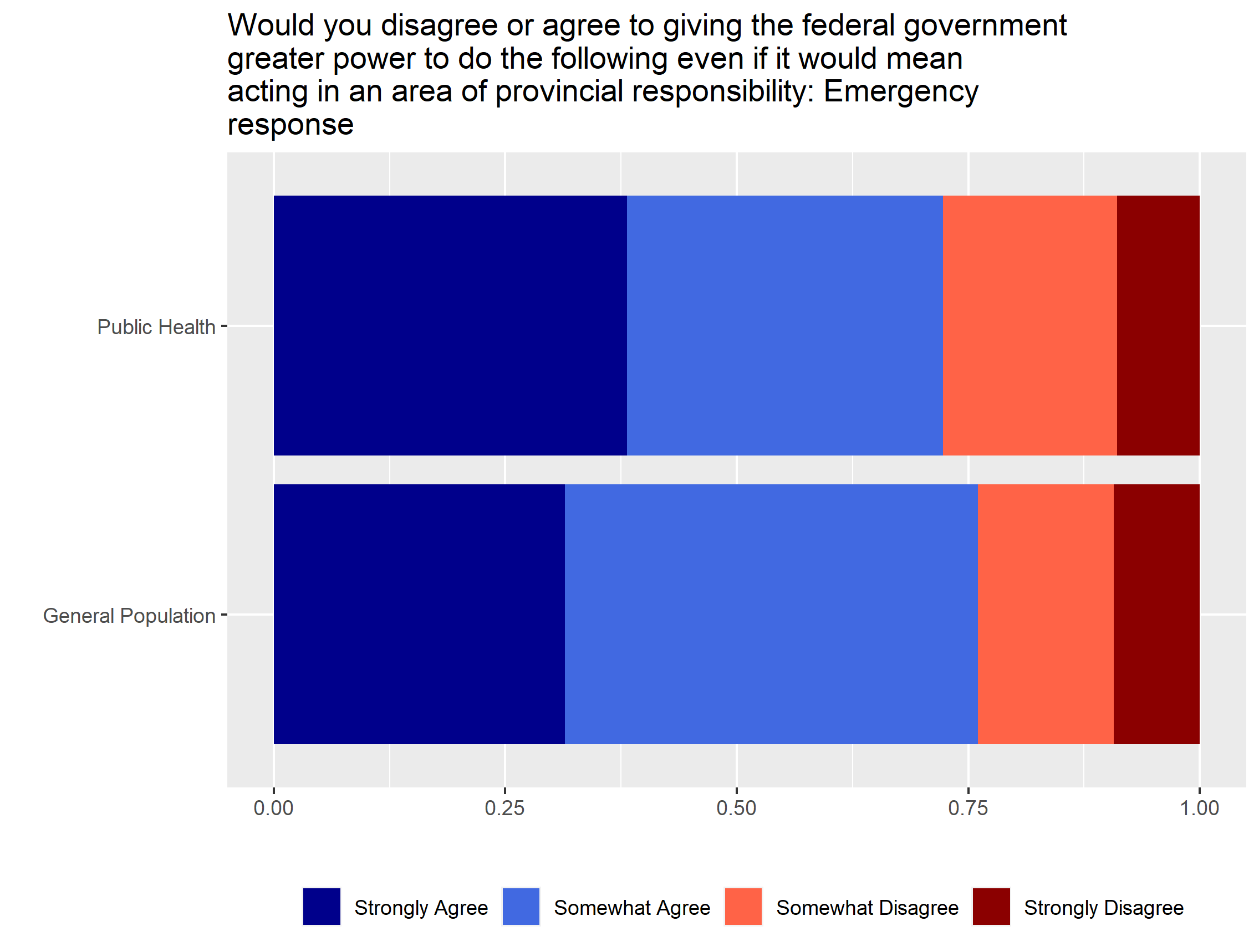
Social: p-value = 0.2257

Seniors: p-value = 0.02599

Schools: p-value = 3.903e-06

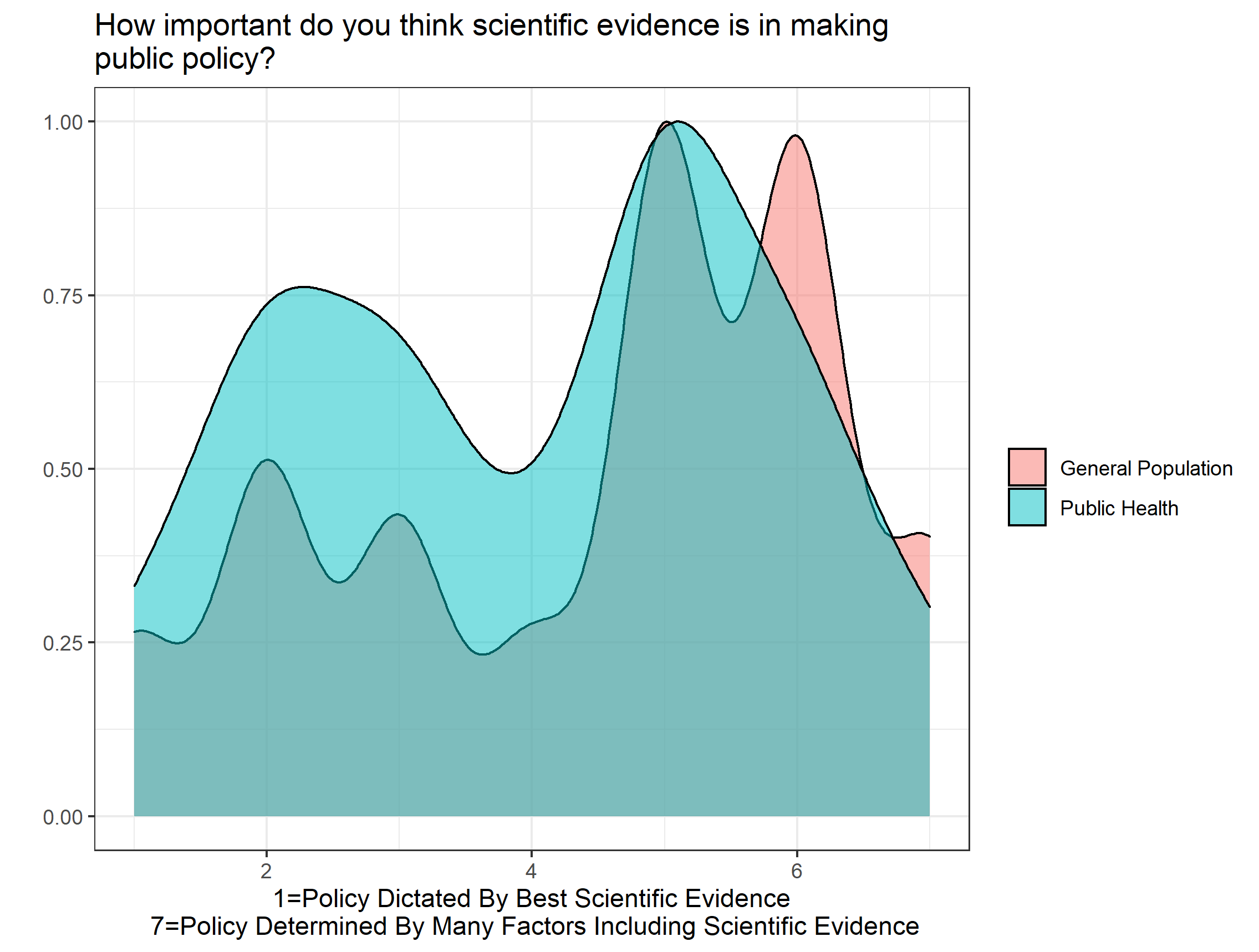
Economy: p-value = 0.04001

## Increasing Federal Power

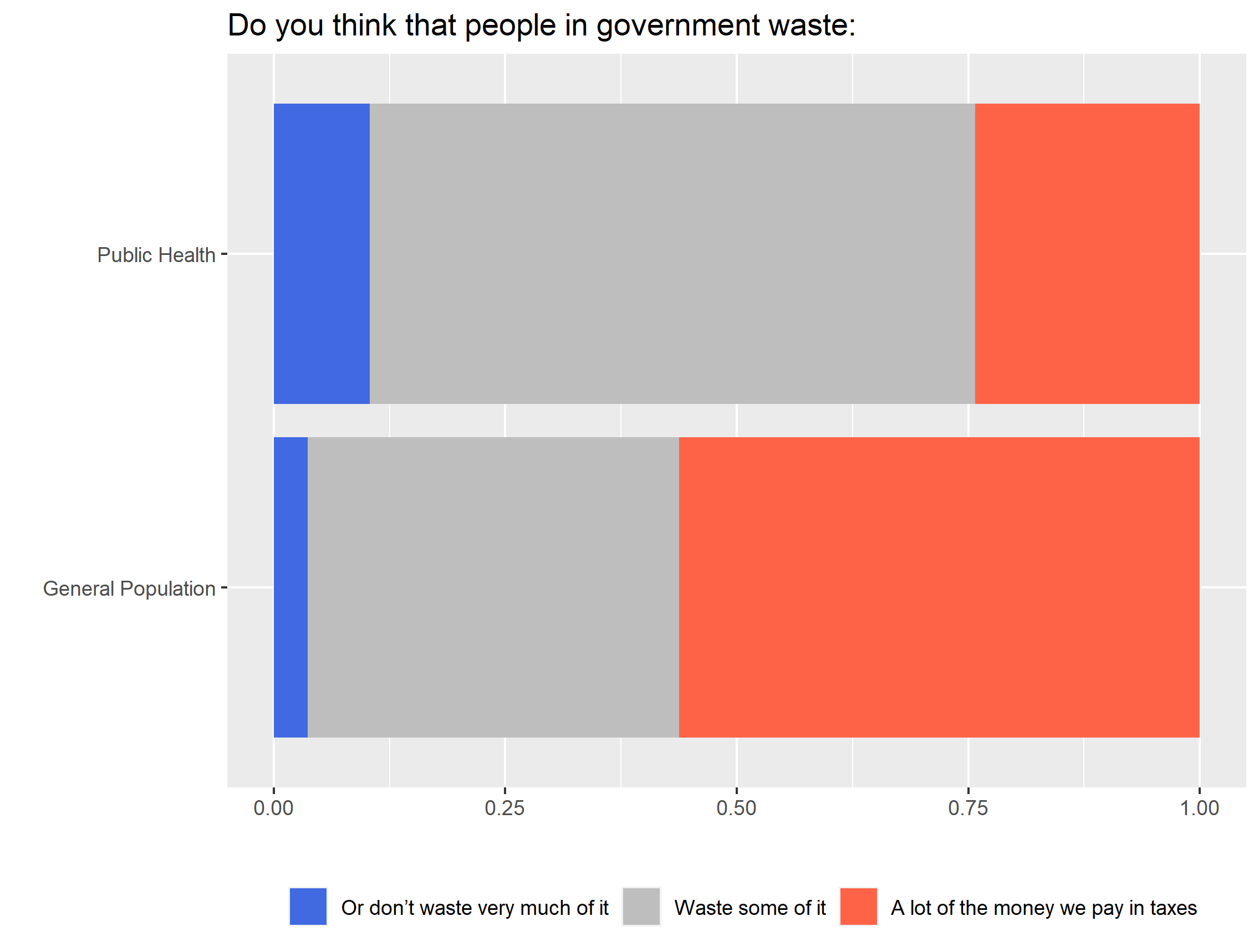
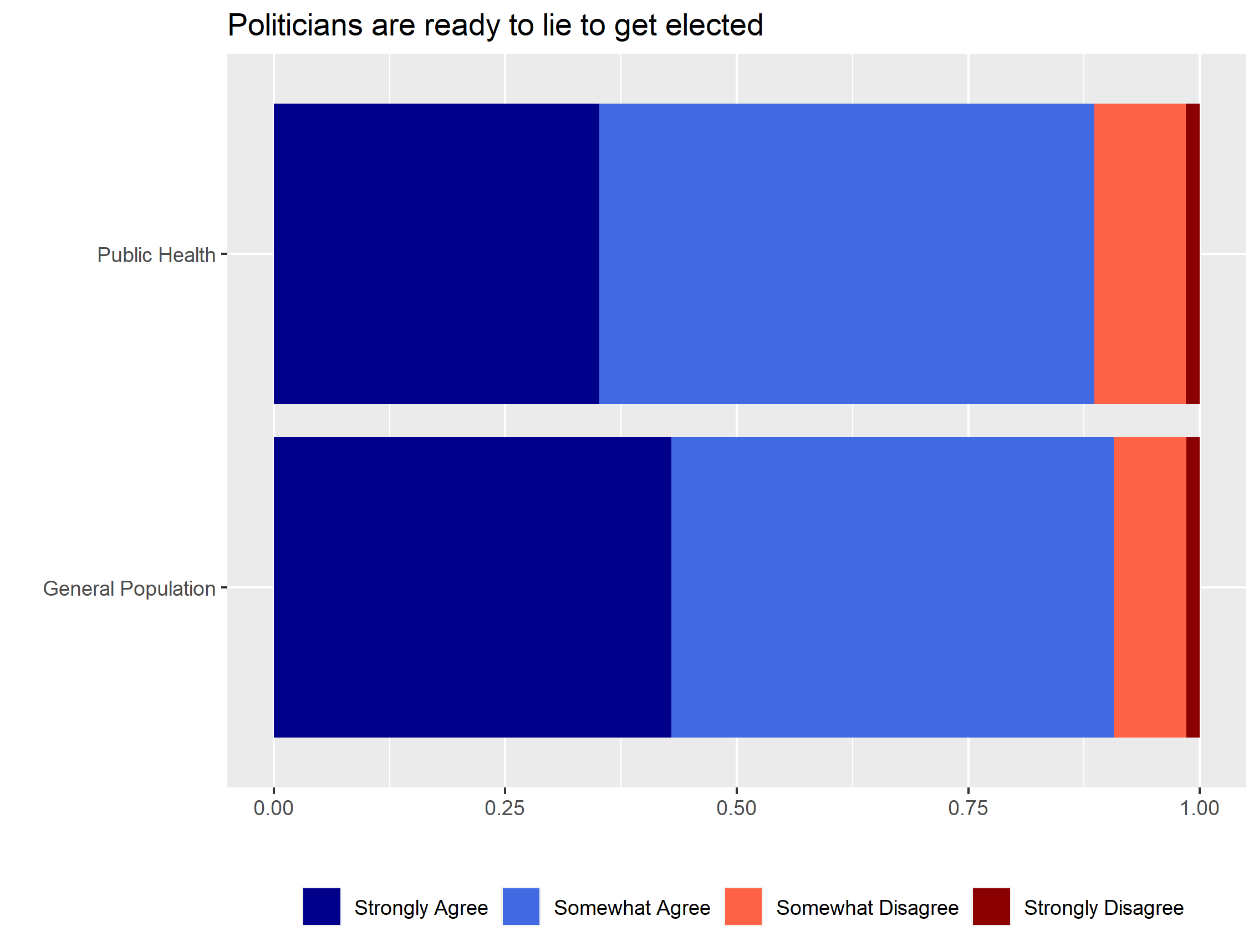
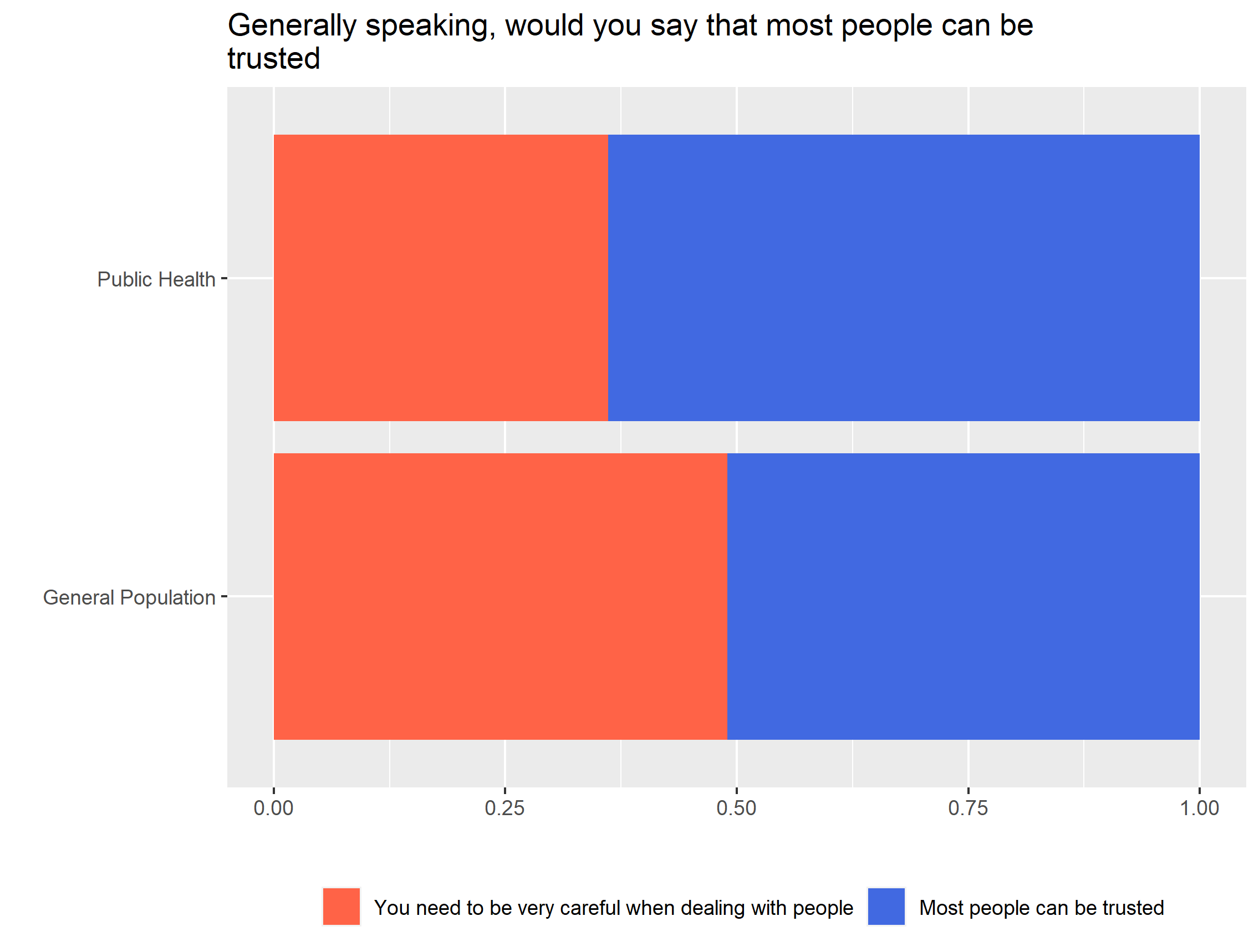
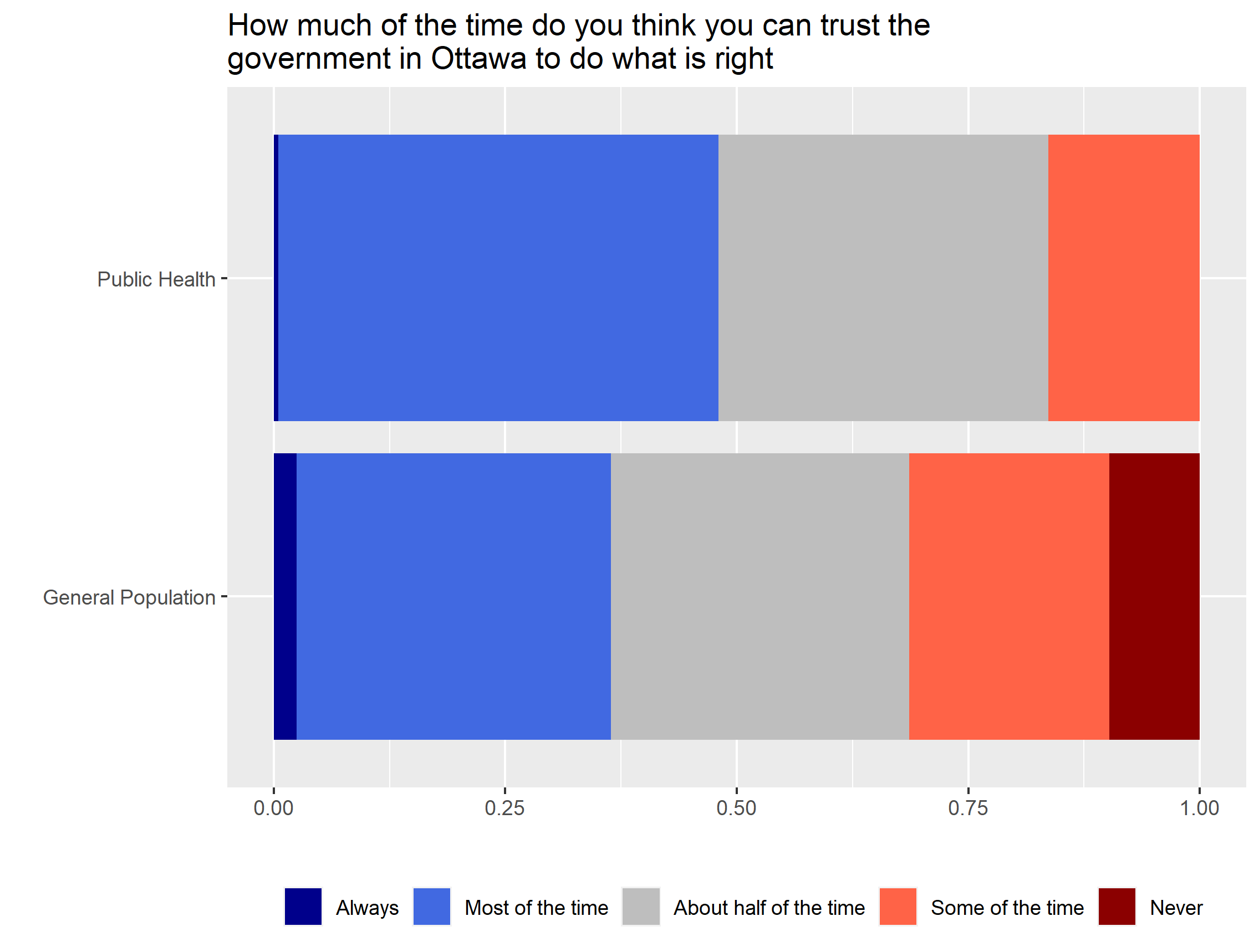
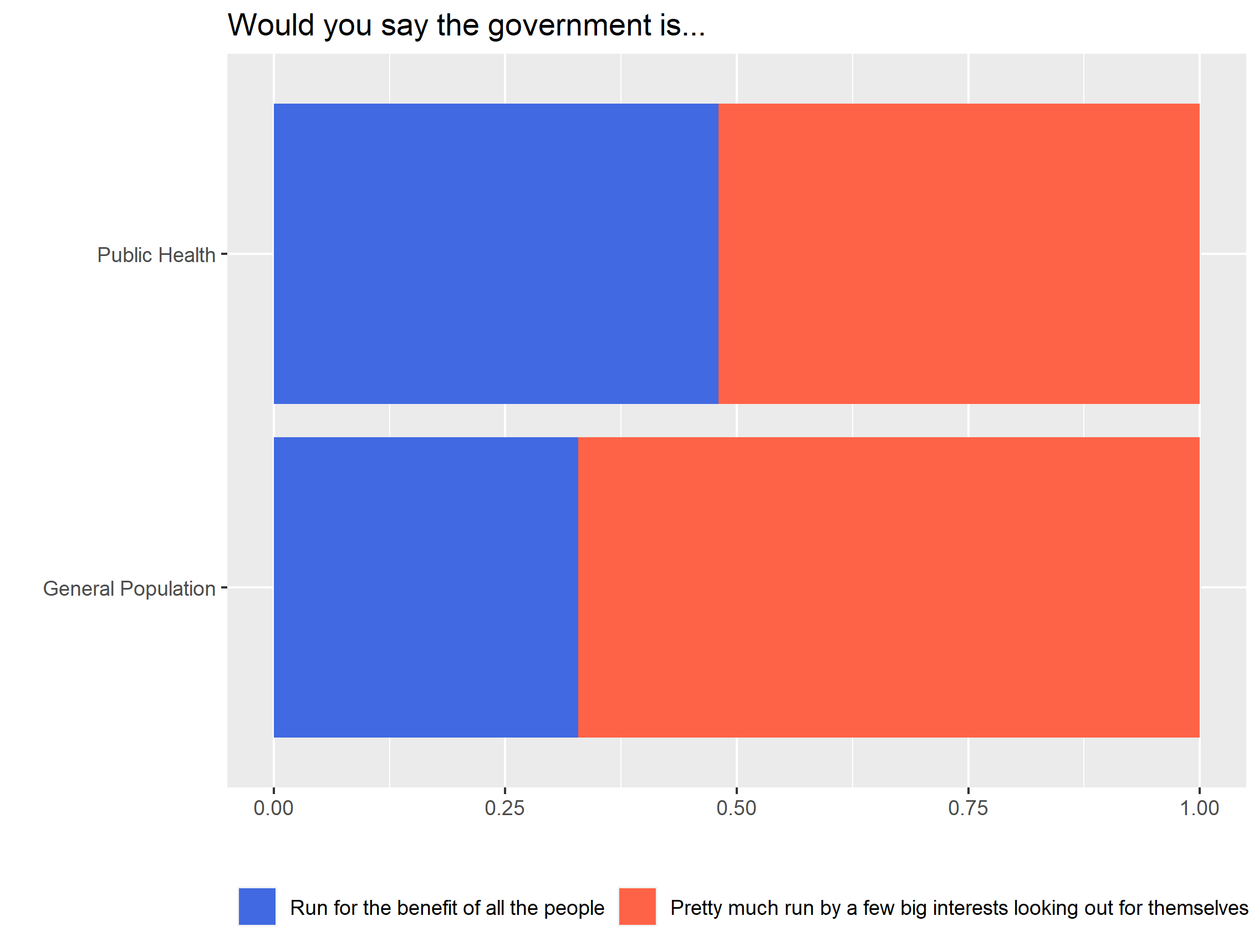


## Government Priority to ensure speedy recovery

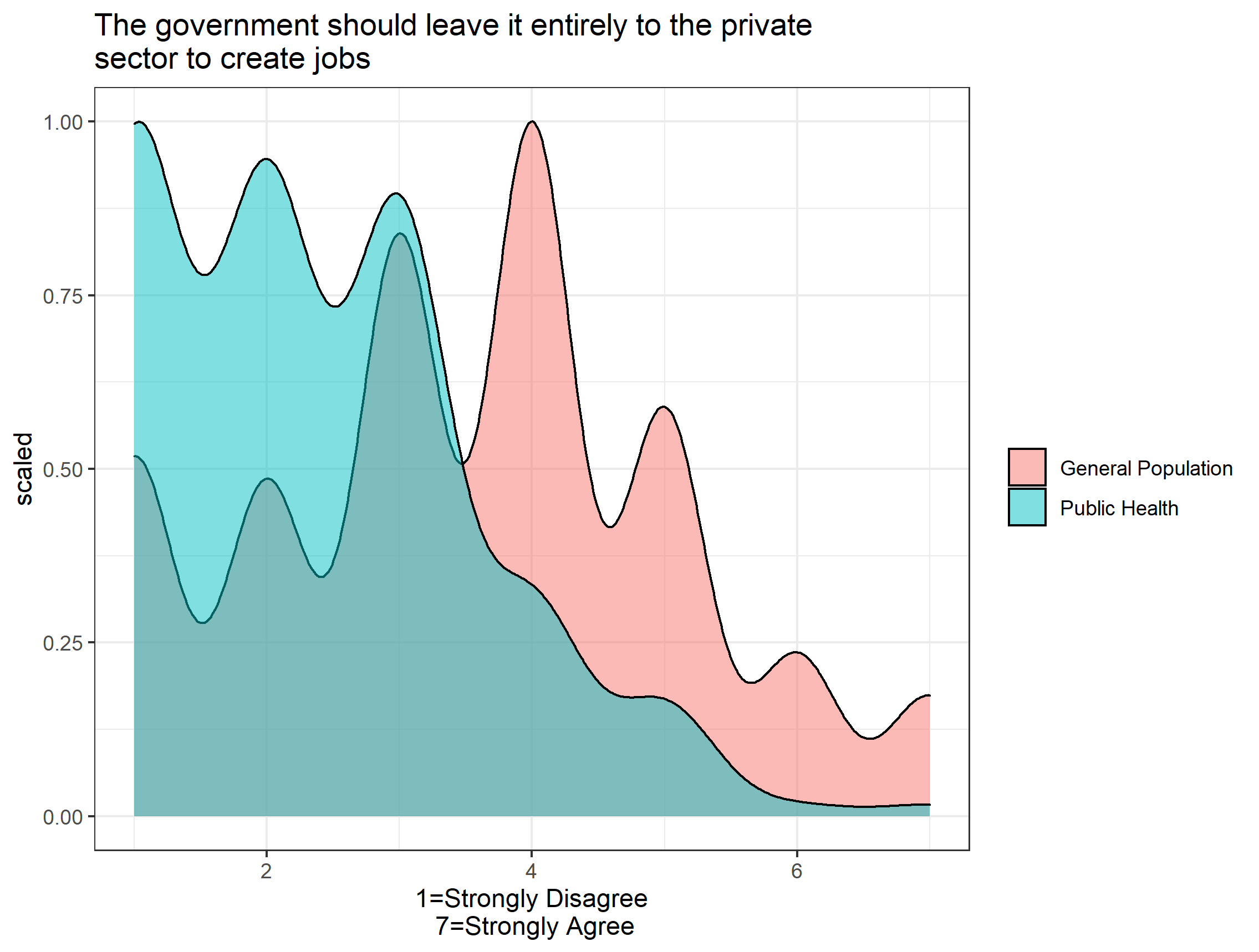
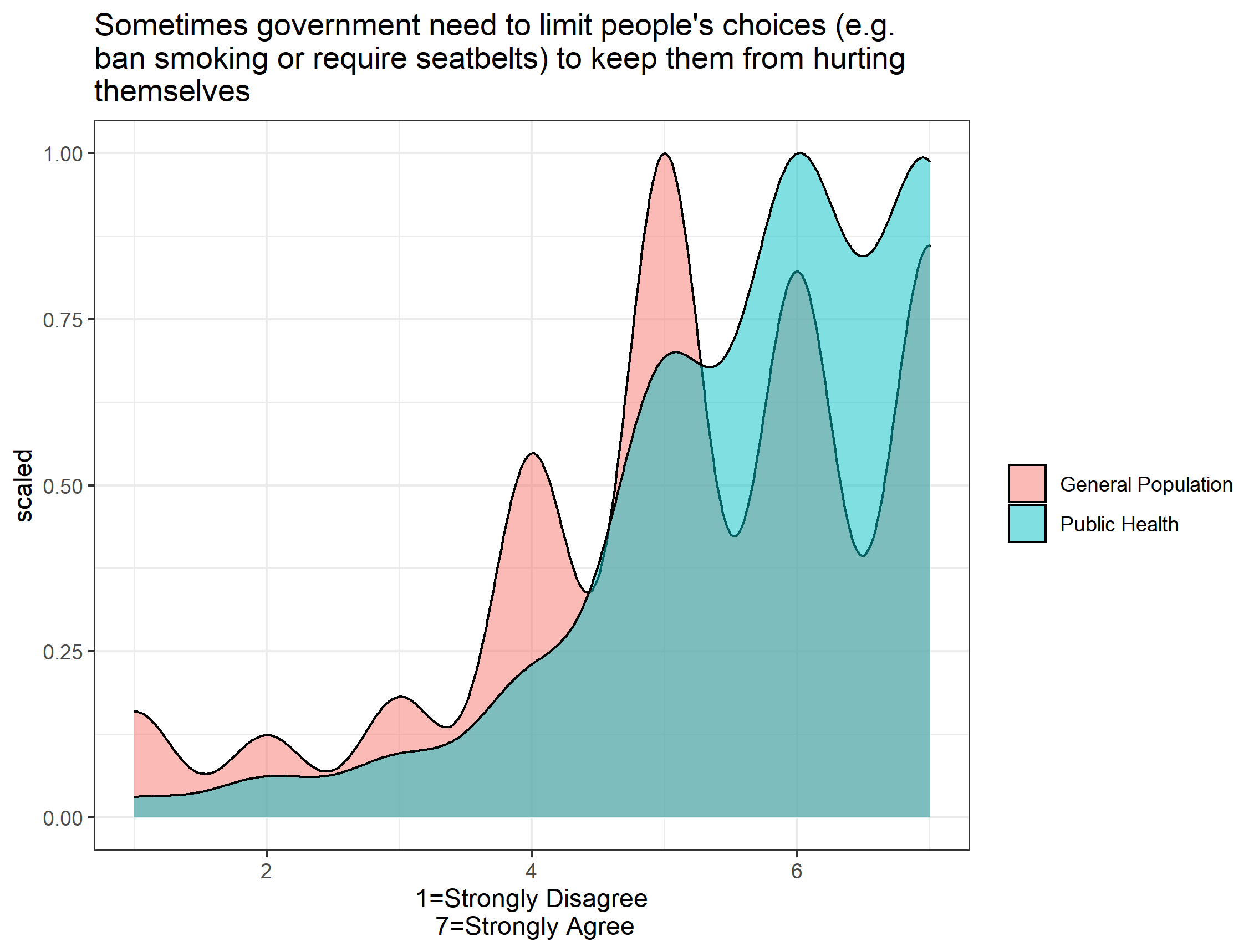
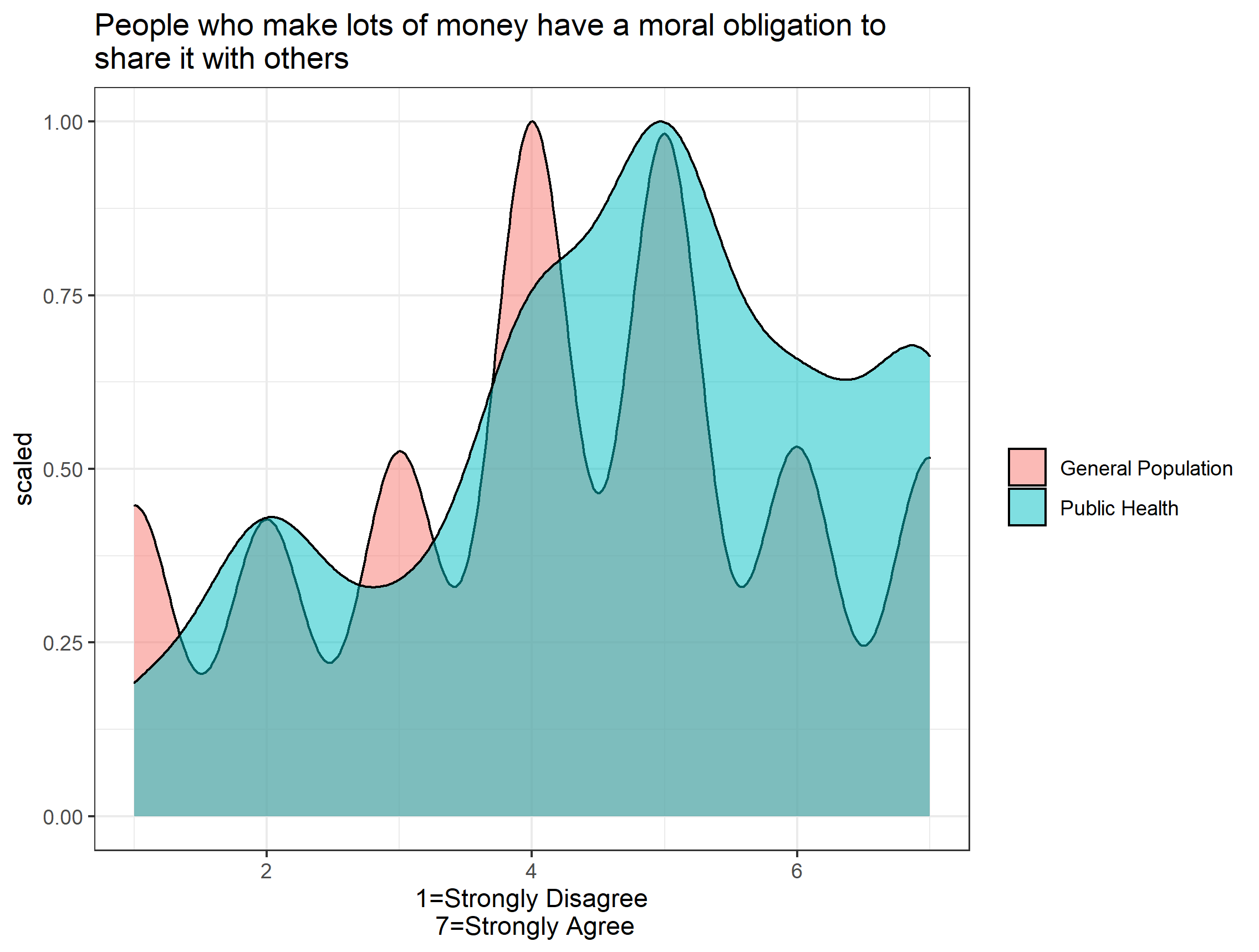
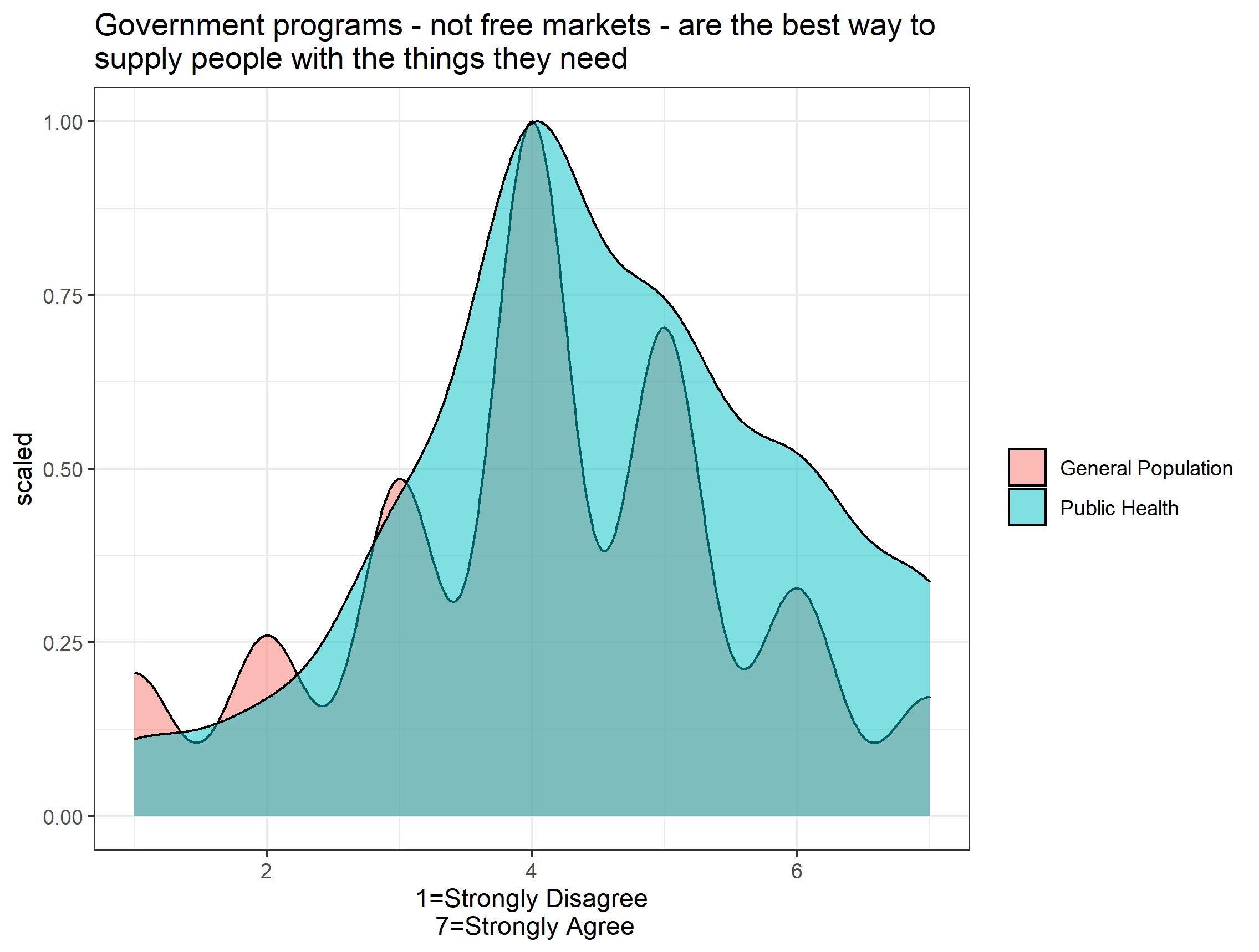
## Views on science in policy



## Trust pt.2



## Individualism



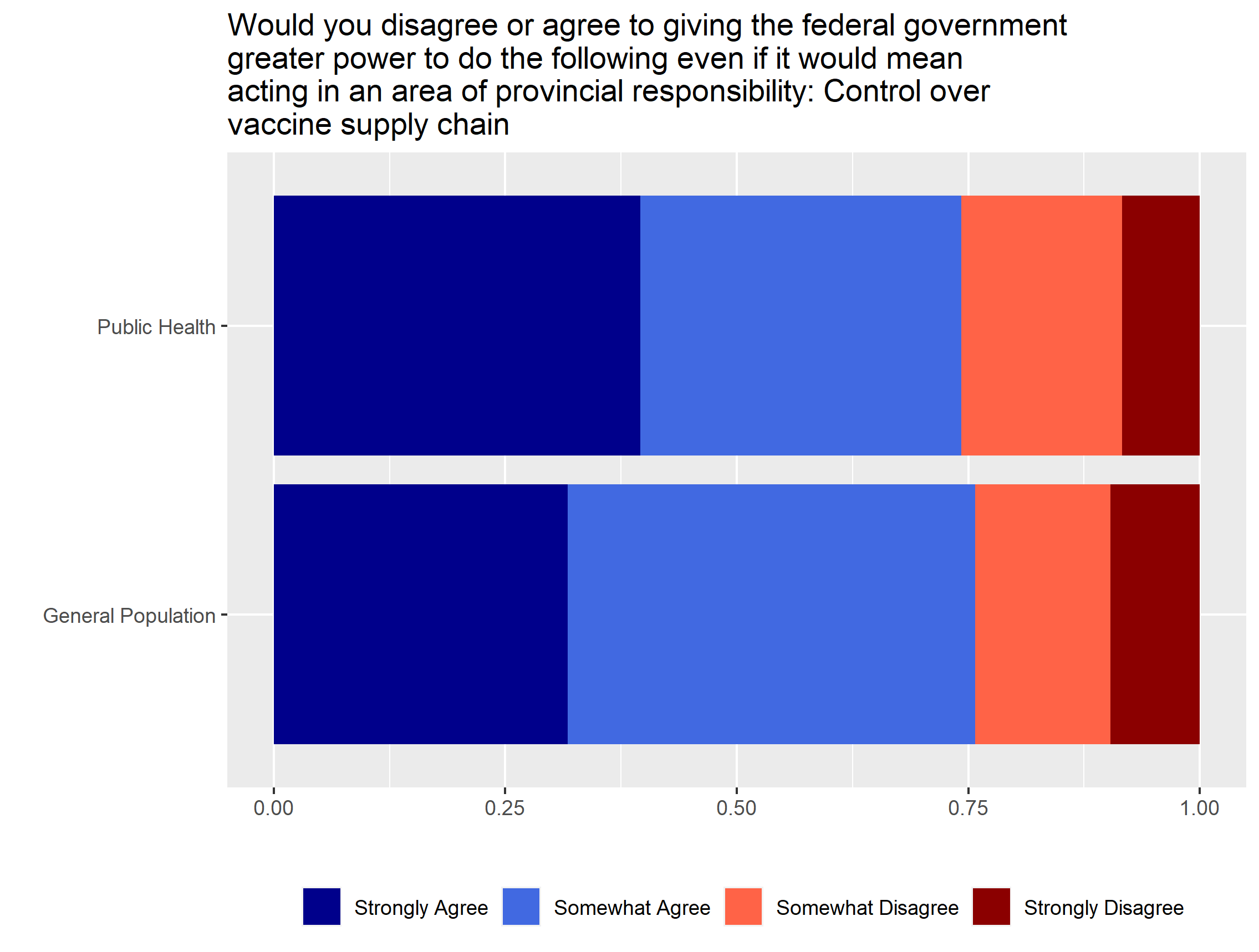
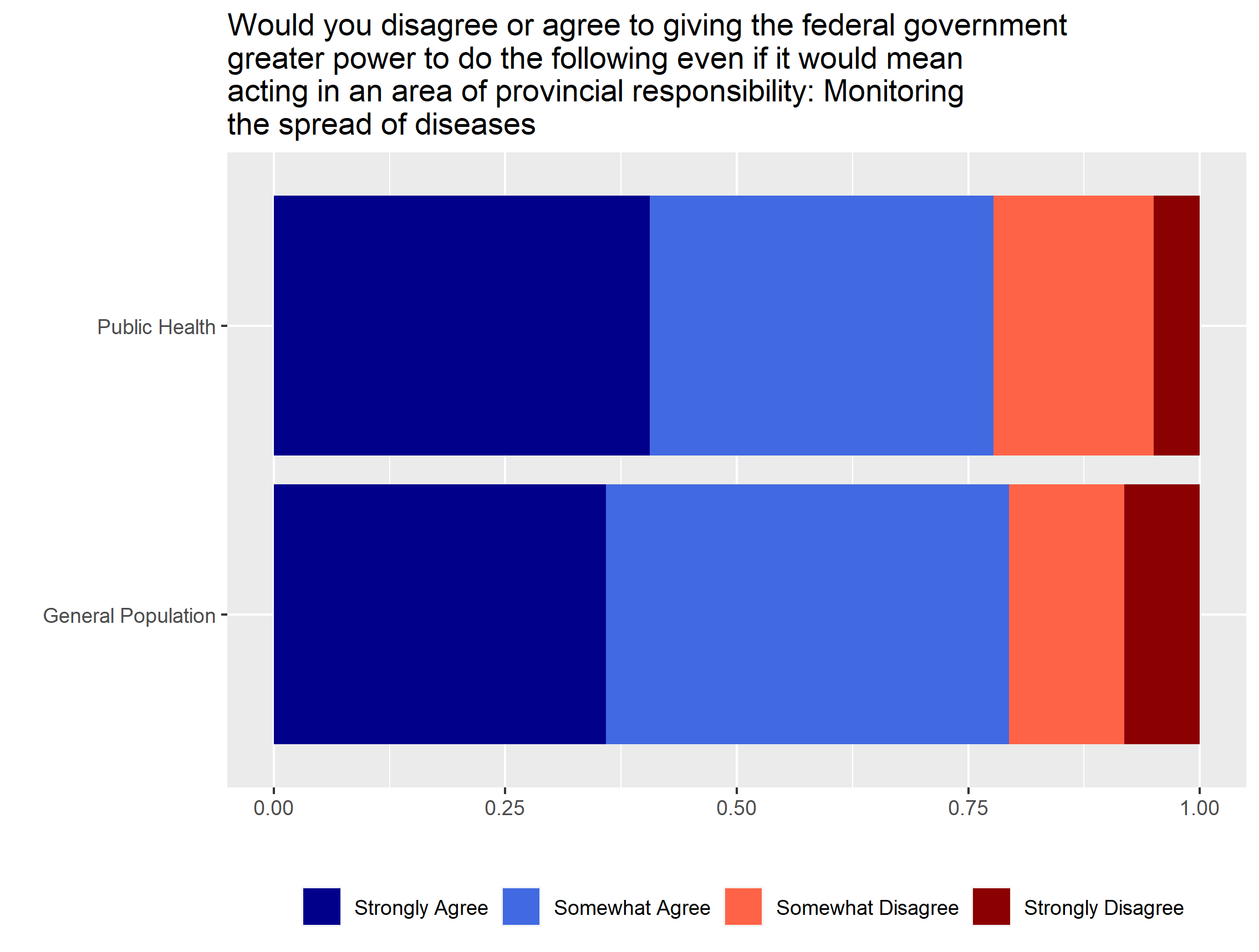
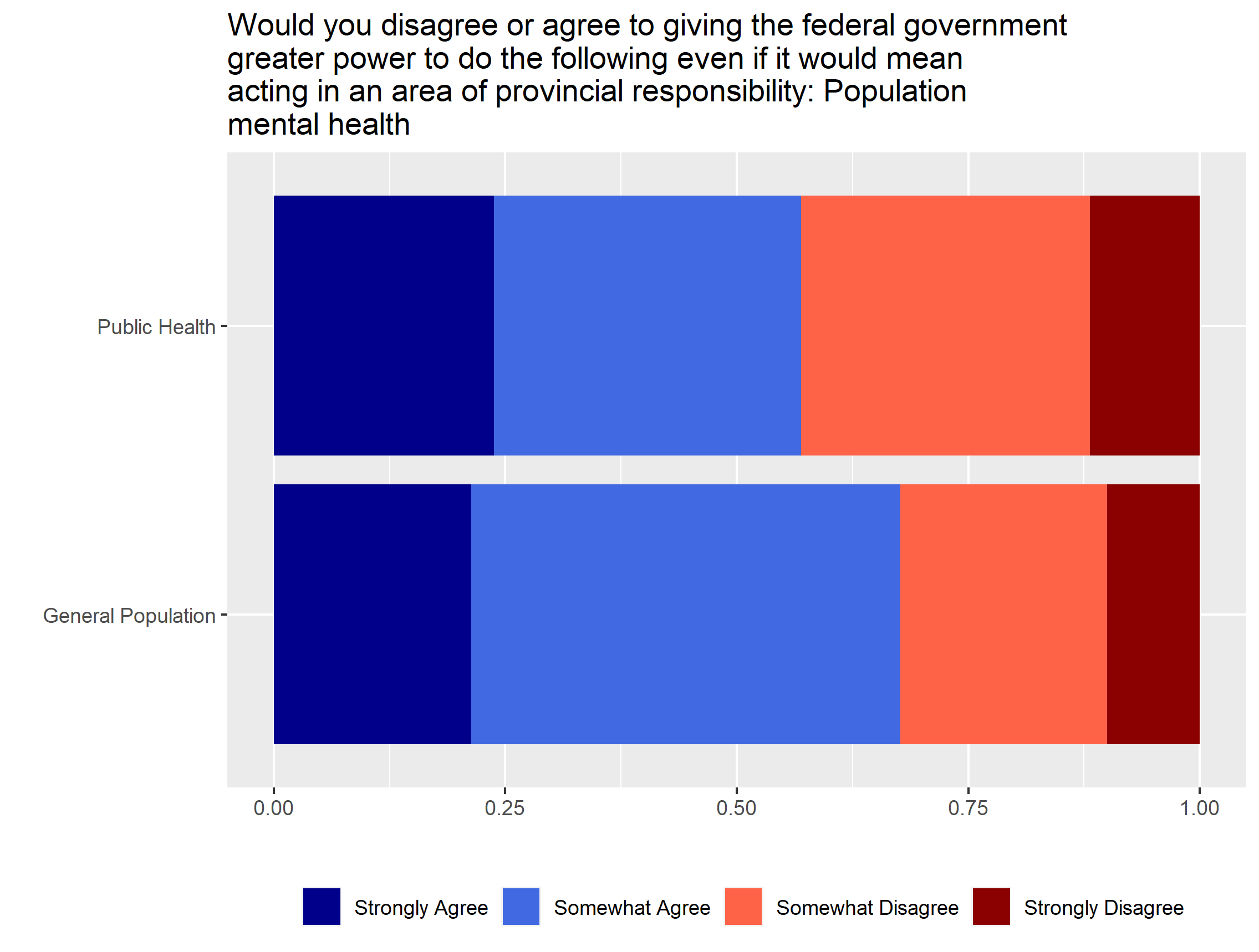
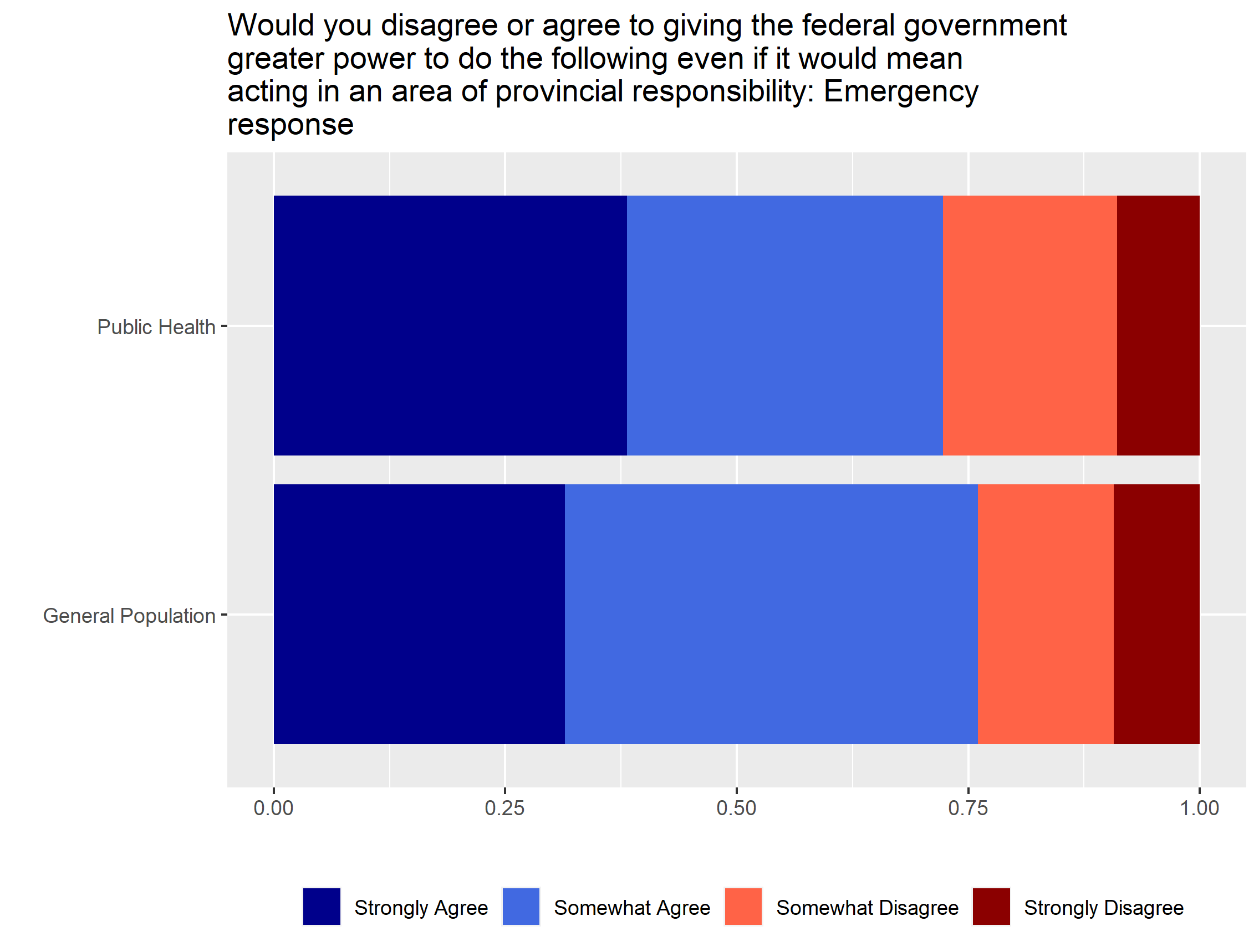
## Equality and discrimination

## Institutions and Law

## Free Will

## Ideology

# Generational Divide



# Rural vs. Urban