

EMPLOYER PULSE SURVEY 2023



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark (LMG) extends sincere thanks to all the employers in Renfrew and Lanark Counties who participated in the 2023 Employer Pulse Survey. Your input is invaluable to various stakeholders, including local municipalities, employment services providers, Chambers of Commerce, industry groups, and individual employers. We also appreciate the support from stakeholders and community partners who encouraged employer participation in the survey, including organizations focused on business support, economic development, and job seekers.

In the fall of 2022, the Local Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark introduced the Employer Pulse Survey to gather insights into current labour market conditions experienced by employers in the region. This survey replaced the former, more time-consuming EmployerOne survey and was designed to provide localized intelligence for labour market planning and strategy development. Moving forward, the LMG plans to refine and use the pulse survey more frequently to stay updated on changing labour market conditions.

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

We acknowledge the Anishinaabe Algonquin People whose traditional unceded, unsundered territory is where the newsletter was produced.



Mission

TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS ON THE CREATION OF INNOVATIVE LABOUR MARKET SOLUTIONS THAT MEET LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.



Highlights

The Employer Pulse Survey took place over a 12-week period from September to December of 2023, providing valuable insights that aligned with the assumptions made by the LMG. These assumptions were based on a comprehensive review of unemployment statistics, client activity levels within employment services offices, local intelligence gathered through community consultations, and our own observations derived from monitoring job postings online, within businesses, and through media channels.

In total, the survey elicited responses from 105 employers. The majority of respondents (69%) are situated in Renfrew County, with 24% located in Lanark County. Additionally, 7% of respondents are based in adjacent areas such as Ottawa, Stormont, and Ashton.

Business Profile:

- Responses came from Social Services (16.19%), Manufacturing (14.29%), Education (10.48%), Skilled Trades (9.52%).
- Private sector-based (55.24%), Public sector-based (44.76%).
- Most businesses (34.29%) had less than 10 employees, followed by 24.76% with over 100 employees.

Hiring Trends:

- 73.33% faced difficulty hiring, with 51.95% struggling to hire both full-time and part-time employees.
- Incentives: 32.69% introduced incentives, including increased wages, bonuses, and flexible work options, with varying impacts

Employee Turnover:

- 39.39% experienced employee retirements in the past year.
- 28.79% hired newcomers/immigrants in the past year.

- 65.15% posted jobs multiple times due to limited applications, and 57.58% reposted due to unqualified applicants.
- 50% lost employees to competing employers.

Social Issues:

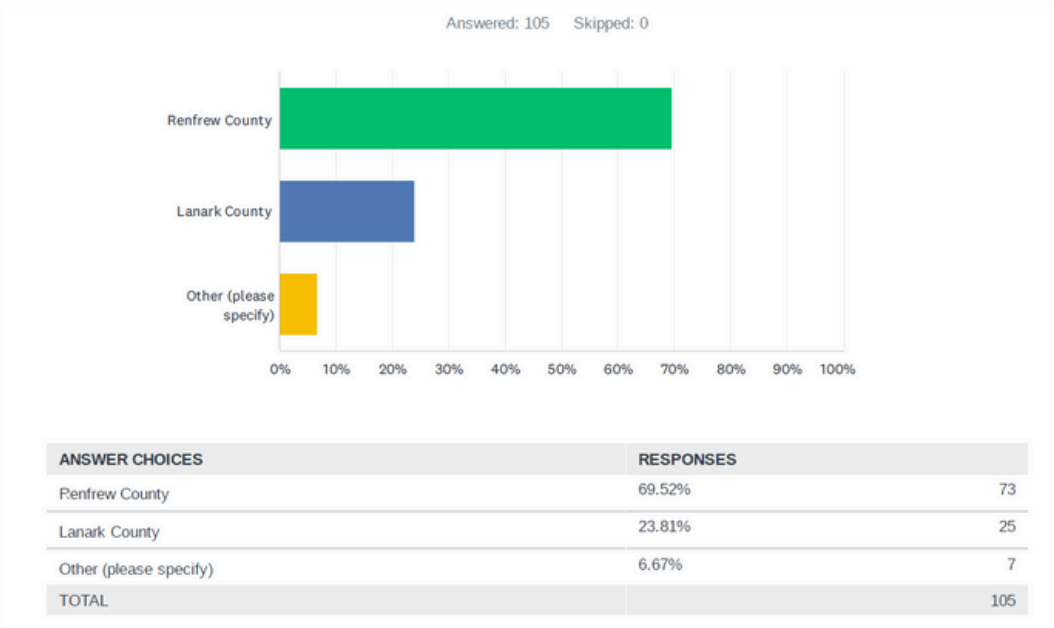
- 18.84% were affected by the lack of affordable housing.
- 26.09% reported the lack of adequate public transportation affecting recruitment and retention.
- 25% were affected by the lack or limited availability of childcare services.

Workplace Conditions:

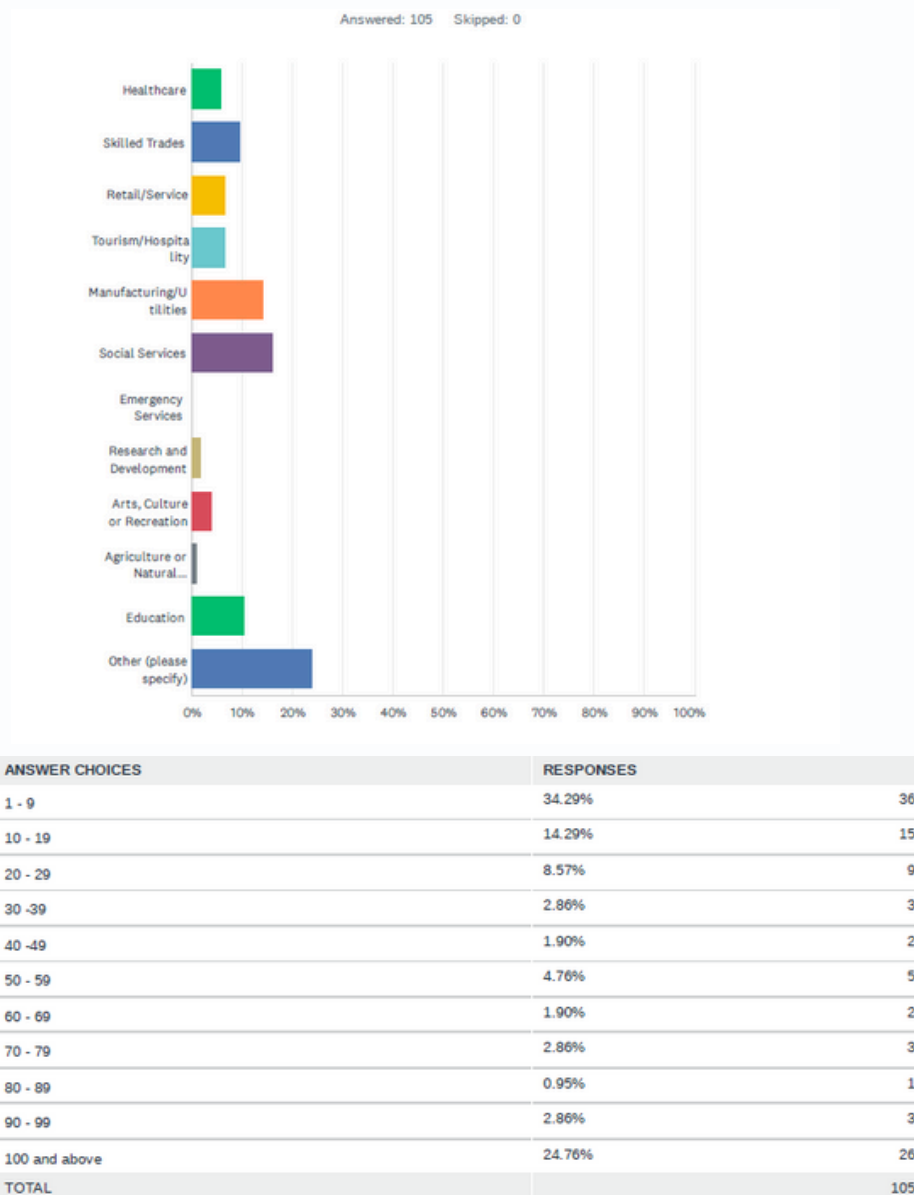
- 25.76% altered operational hours due to difficulty filling positions.
- 34.85% offered hybrid/remote positions, while 19.70% found remote work options inapplicable.
- 65.59% did not engage in training activities to address recruitment challenges.



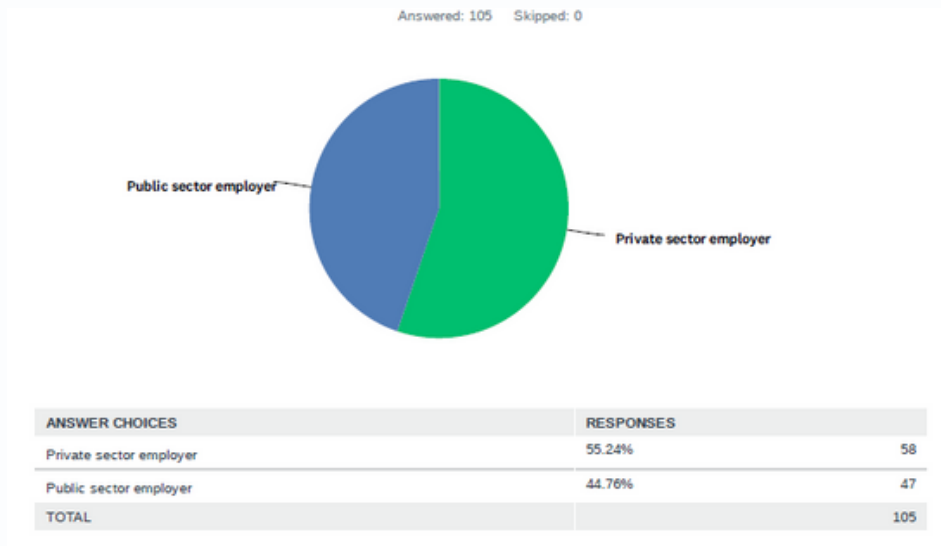
Q.1 MY BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION IS PRIMARILY LOCATED IN:



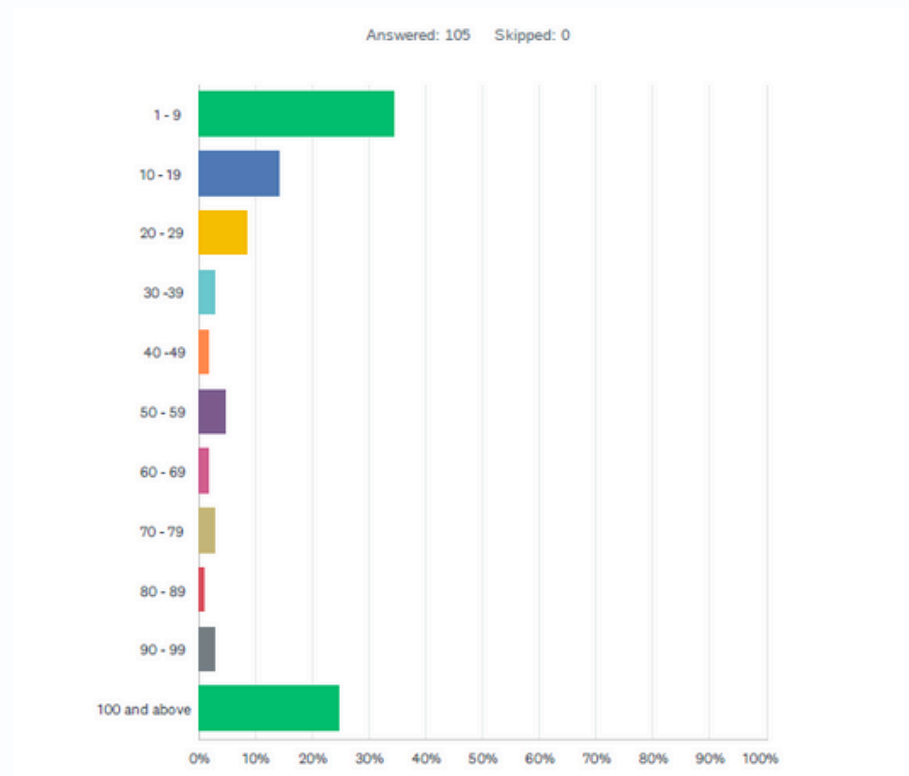
Q.2 IDENTIFY THE LABOUR MARKET SECTOR THAT YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION PRIMARILY RESIDES IN:



Q.3 IS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION A PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYER?

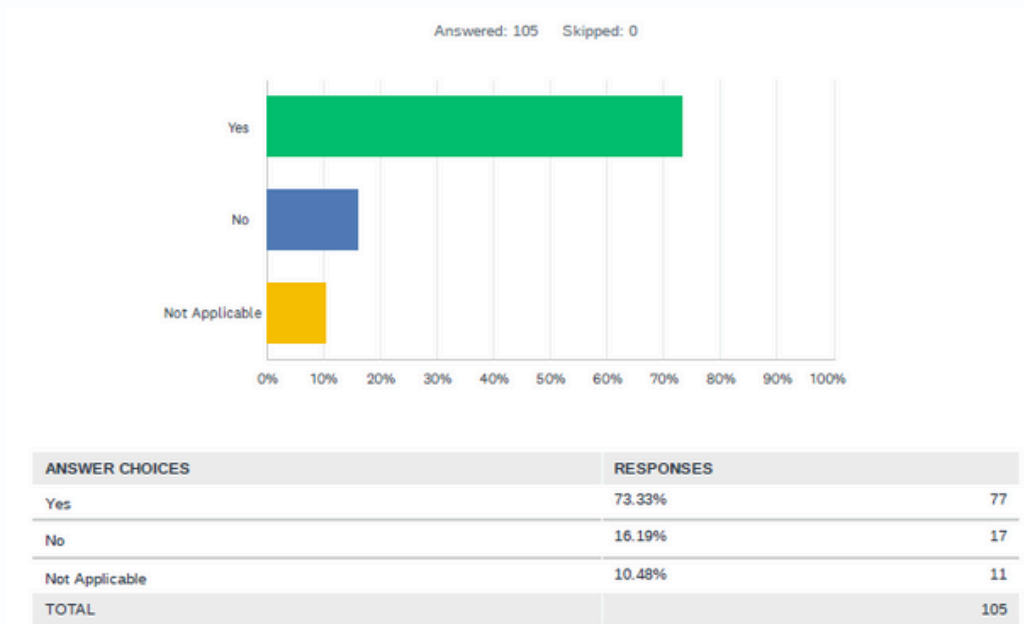


Q.4 WHAT IS THE APPROXIMATE TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF EMPLOYED BY YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION?

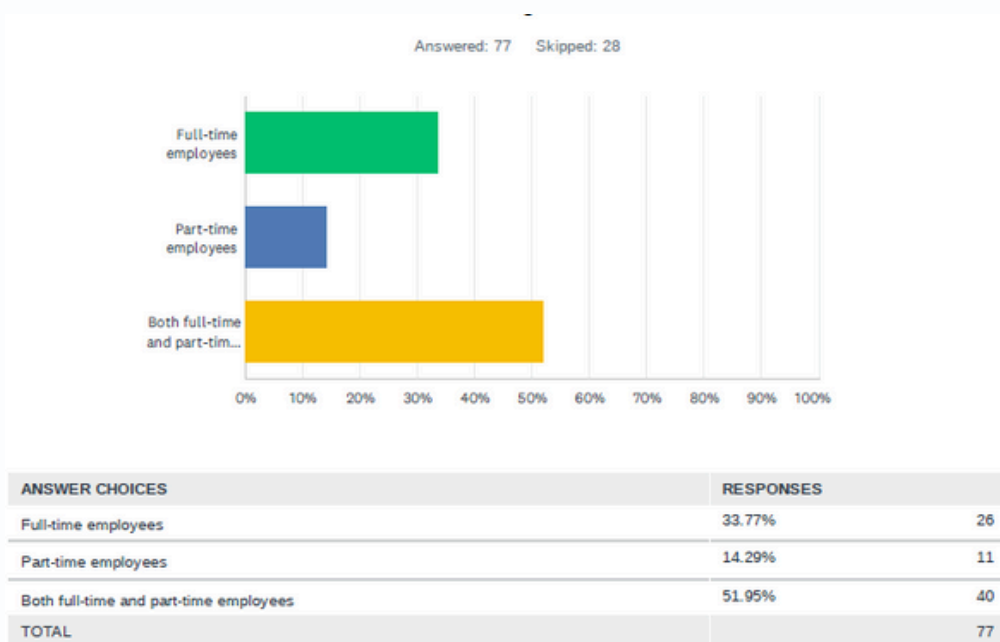


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1 - 9	34.29%	36
10 - 19	14.29%	15
20 - 29	8.57%	9
30 - 39	2.86%	3
40 - 49	1.90%	2
50 - 59	4.76%	5
60 - 69	1.90%	2
70 - 79	2.86%	3
80 - 89	0.95%	1
90 - 99	2.86%	3
100 and above	24.76%	26
TOTAL		105

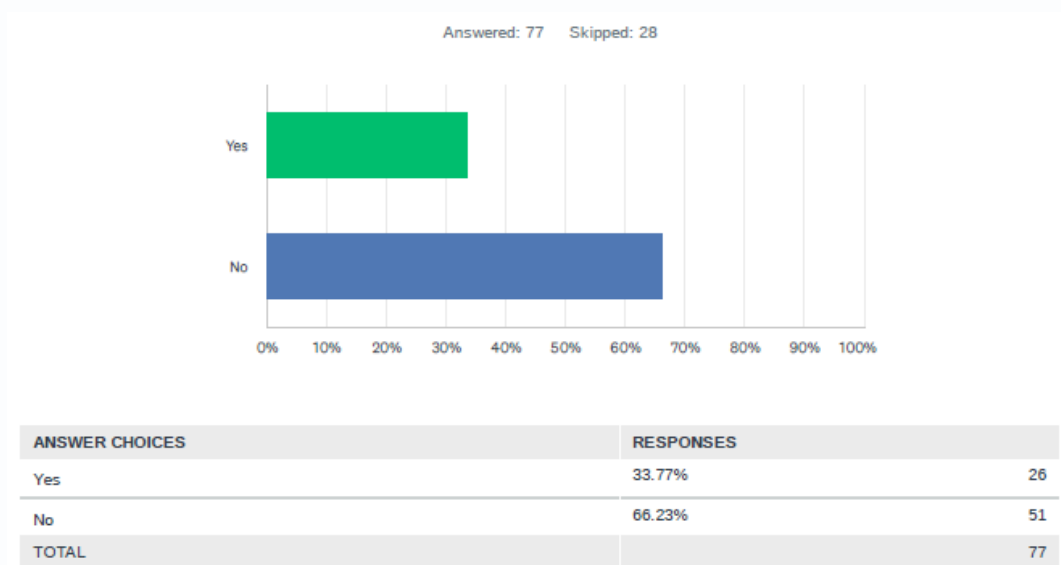
Q.5 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD DIFFICULTY HIRING EMPLOYEES IN THE PAST YEAR?



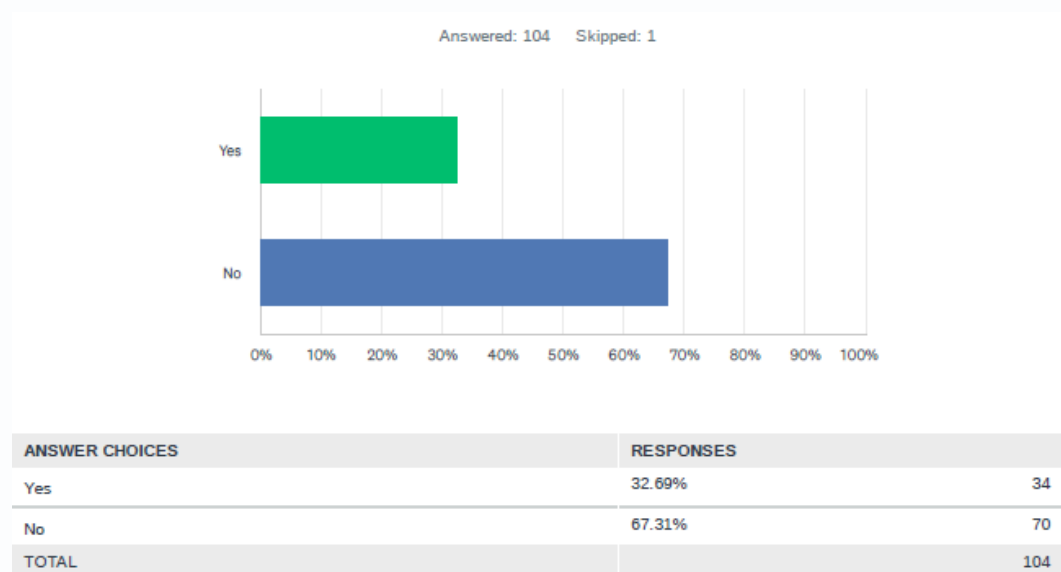
Q.6 WHAT CATEGORY OF EMPLOYEES HAS YOUR BUSINESS HAD MORE DIFFICULTY HIRING?



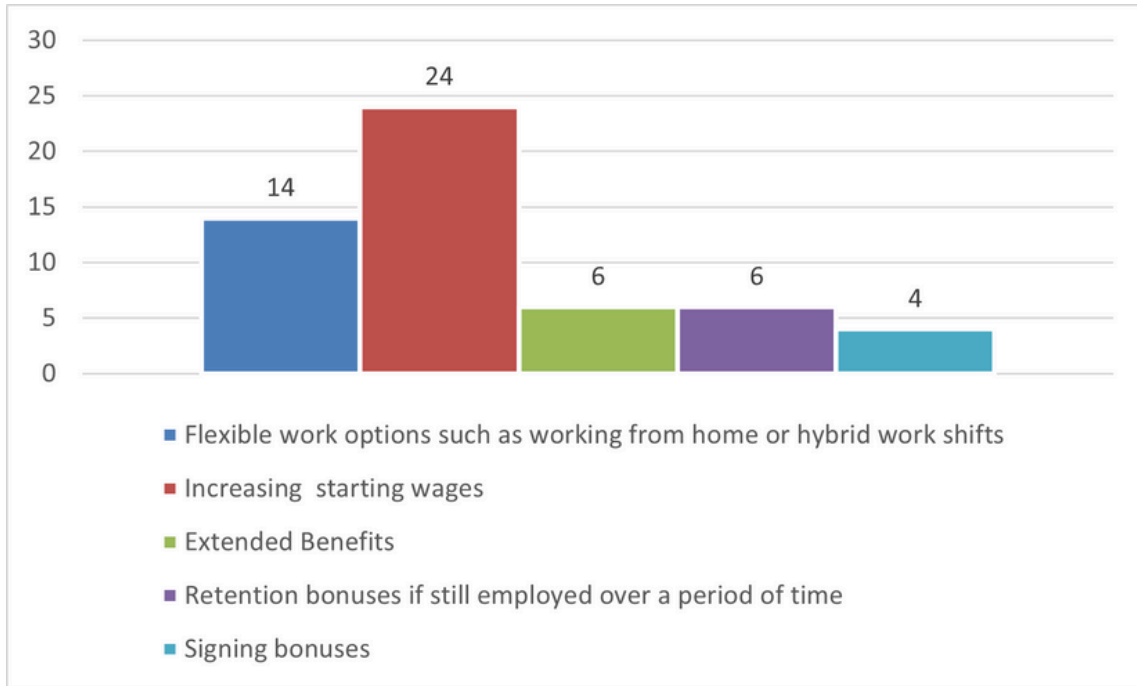
Q.7 DOES YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAVE A PREDOMINANTLY UNIONIZED WORKFORCE?



Q.8 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION INTRODUCED INCENTIVES TO ADDRESS YOUR HIRING NEEDS?

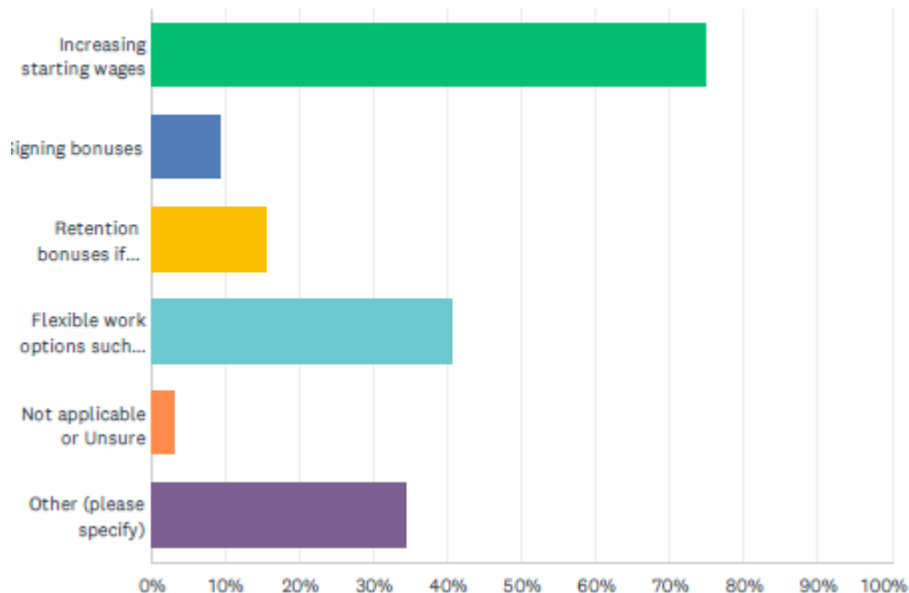


Q.9 WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID INTRODUCING INCENTIVES HAVE ON EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION?



Q.10 WHAT TYPE OF INCENTIVES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

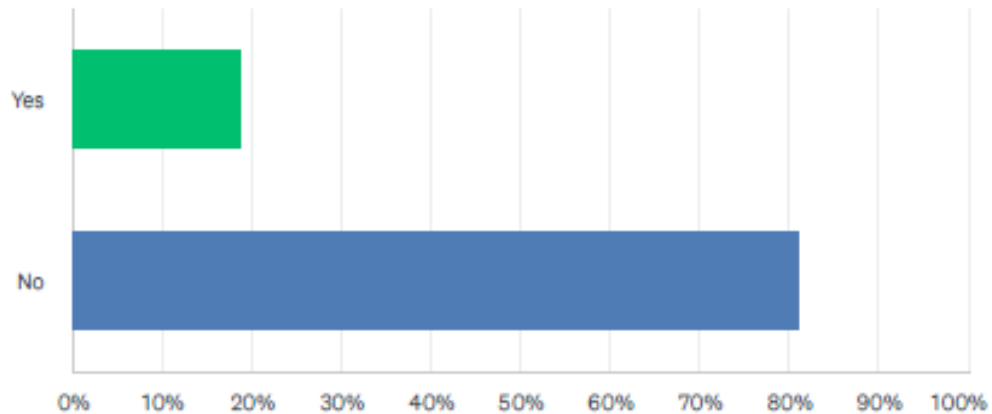
Answered: 32 Skipped: 73



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Increasing starting wages	75.00% 24
Signing bonuses	9.38% 3
Retention bonuses if still employed over a period of time	15.63% 5
Flexible work options such as working from home or hybrid work shifts	40.63% 13
Not applicable or Unsure	3.13% 1
Other (please specify)	34.38% 11
Total Respondents: 32	

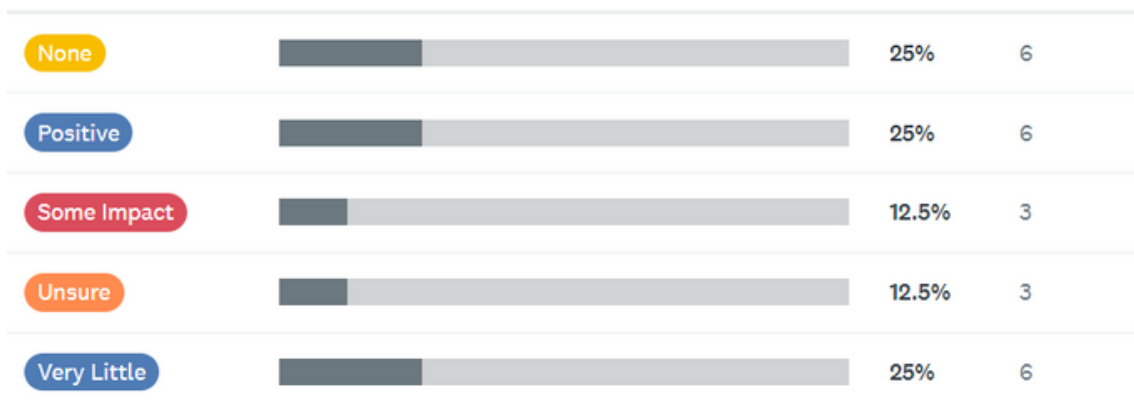
Q.11 HAS THE AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE HOUSING AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION'S ABILITY TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN EMPLOYEES?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 36



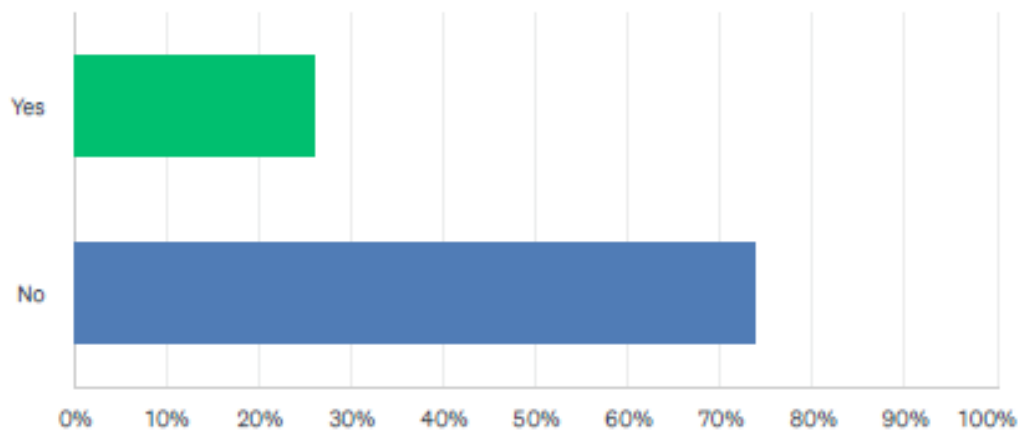
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	18.84%	13
No	81.16%	56
TOTAL		69

Q.12 WHAT IMPACT DID THE AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE HOUSING HAVE ON YOUR ORGANIZATION?



Q.13 HAS THE AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION AFFECTED RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 36



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	26.09%	18
No	73.91%	51
TOTAL		69

Q.14 HOW DID THE AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION AFFECT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

WE RECEIVED 15 RESPONSES, SOME COMMENTS INCLUDED:



WE HAVE HAD TO ADOPT POLICIES THAT REQUIRE ALL EMPLOYEES TO HAVE A RELIABLE VEHICLE AND 2 MILLION INSURANCE TO HELP TRANSPORT PEOPLE BEING SUPPORTED, AND TO MOVE BETWEEN LOCATIONS DURING A TYPICAL SHIFT, THIS MIGHT BE 4-6 LOCATIONS



PEOPLE MUST TRAVEL TO OUR WORK SITES AS WE ARE IN CONSTRUCTION. IF THE EMPLOYEE LIVES IN OUR TOWN THEN THEY CAN TRAVEL. MOST PEOPLE ARE NOT WILLING TO TRAVEL FOR WORK



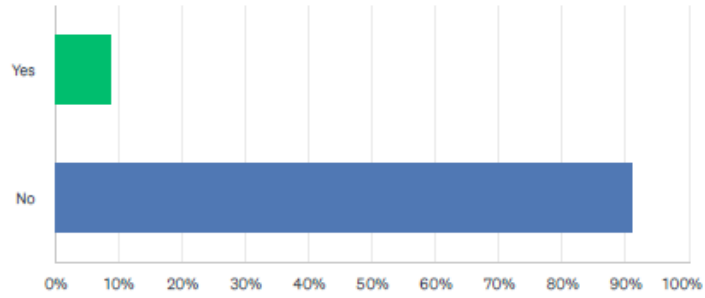
POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES FROM OTTAWA DID NOT REALIZE THEY COULDN'T TAKE TRANSIT HERE.



CLIENTS ARE UNABLE TO MAKE IT TO THEIR APPOINTMENTS OR JOB-RELATED APPOINTMENTS DUE TO THE LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND THE RISING COST OF LIVING.

Q.15 HAS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN YOUR ORGANIZATION/BUSINESS BEEN AFFECTED BY THE AVAILABILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES?

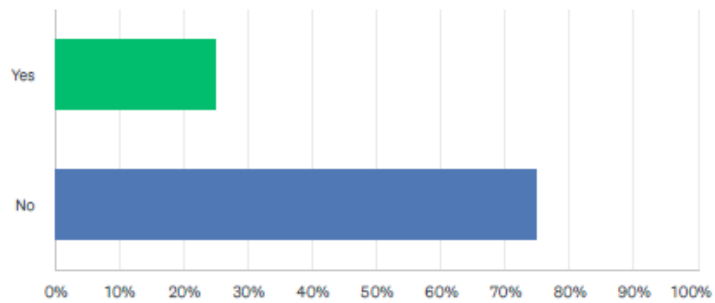
Answered: 68 Skipped: 37



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	8.82%	6
No	91.18%	62
TOTAL		68

Q.16 HAS THE AVAILABILITY OF CHILDCARE SERVICES AFFECTED RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN YOUR ORGANIZATION/BUSINESS?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 37



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	25.00%	17
No	75.00%	51
TOTAL		68

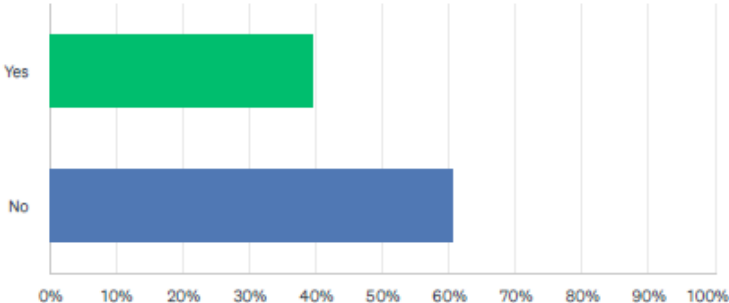
Q.17 HOW WAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION IMPACTED BY THE AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE CHILDCARE SERVICES?

SIXTEEN EMPLOYERS RESPONDED THAT EMPLOYEES FACE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES WITH CHILDCARE, INCLUDING LIMITED AVAILABILITY AND HIGH COSTS OF LICENSED DAYCARE PROVIDERS. THIS LEADS TO DIFFICULTIES IN SECURING RELIABLE CHILDCARE, RESULTING IN JOB OFFER DECLINES, RESIGNATIONS, AND DELAYS IN STARTING OR RETURNING TO WORK. THE LACK OF AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE OPTIONS ALSO IMPACTS CLIENT AVAILABILITY FOR WORK.



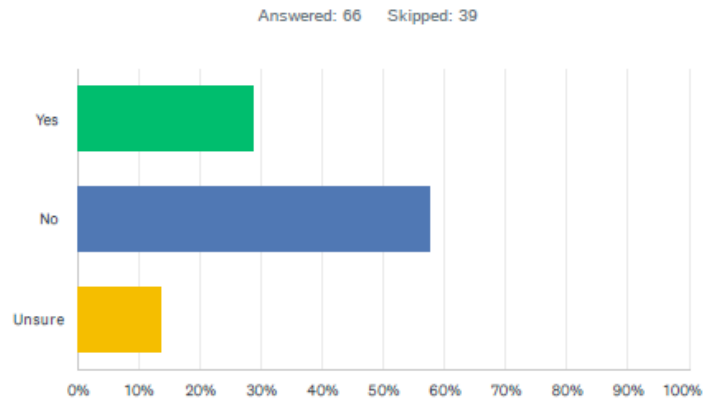
Q.18 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD EMPLOYEE RETIREMENTS IN THE PAST YEAR?

Answered: 66 Skipped: 39



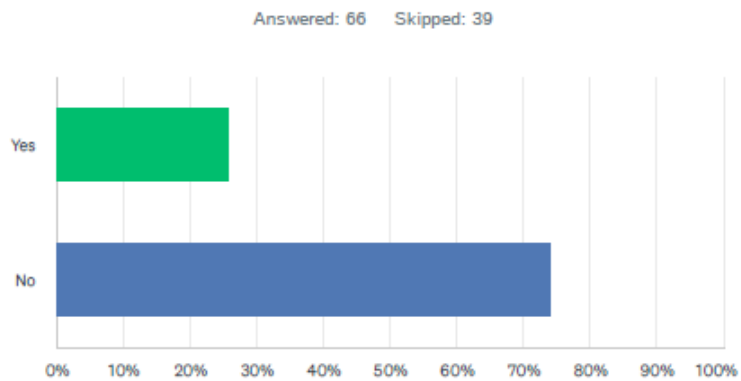
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	39.39% 26
No	60.61% 40
TOTAL	66

Q.19 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HIRED A NEWCOMER/IMMIGRANT IN THE PAST YEAR?



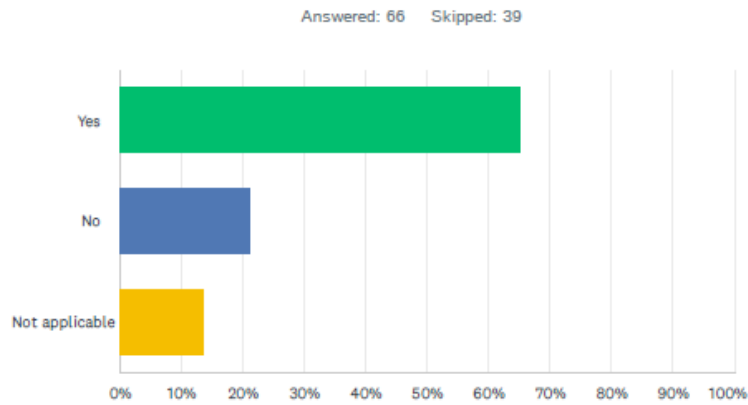
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	28.79%	19
No	57.58%	38
Unsure	13.64%	9
TOTAL		66

Q.20 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD TO ALTER ITS OPERATIONAL HOURS IN THE PAST YEAR BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTY FILLING SHIFTS/POSITIONS AT WORK?



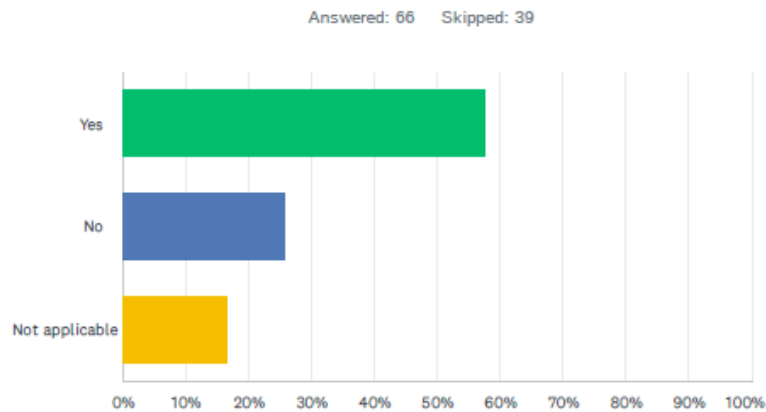
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	25.76%	17
No	74.24%	49
TOTAL		66

Q.21 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD TO POST POSITIONS MORE THAN ONCE IN THE PAST YEAR BECAUSE OF LIMITED APPLICATIONS?



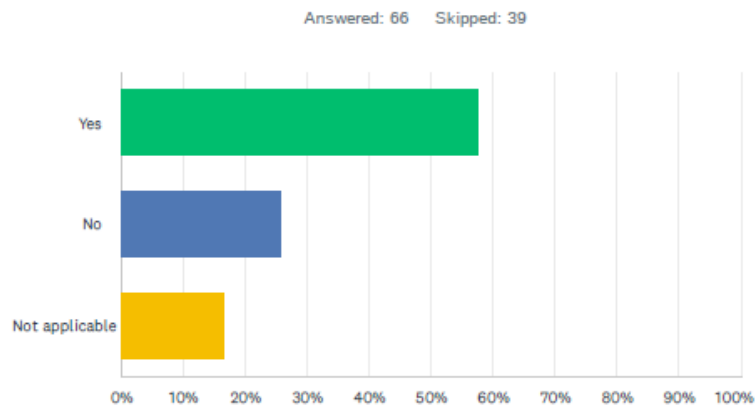
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	65.15%	43
No	21.21%	14
Not applicable	13.64%	9
TOTAL		66

Q.22 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD TO POST POSITIONS MORE THAN ONCE IN THE PAST YEAR BECAUSE APPLICANTS WERE NOT QUALIFIED?



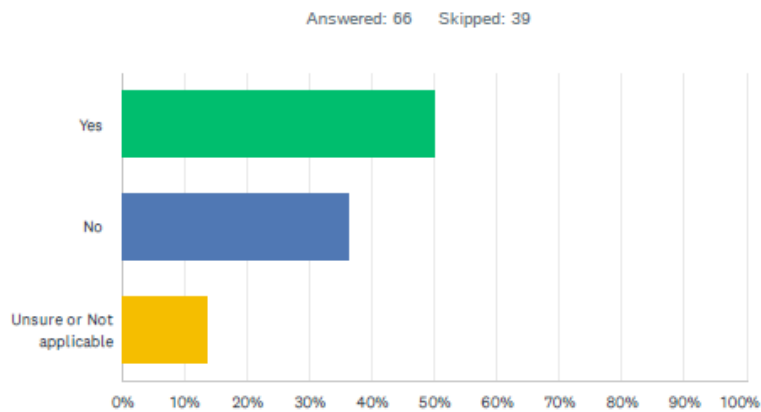
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	57.58%	38
No	25.76%	17
Not applicable	16.67%	11
TOTAL		66

Q.23 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD TO POST POSITIONS MORE THAN ONCE IN THE PAST YEAR BECAUSE APPLICANTS WERE NOT QUALIFIED?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	57.58%	38
No	25.76%	17
Not applicable	16.67%	11
TOTAL		66

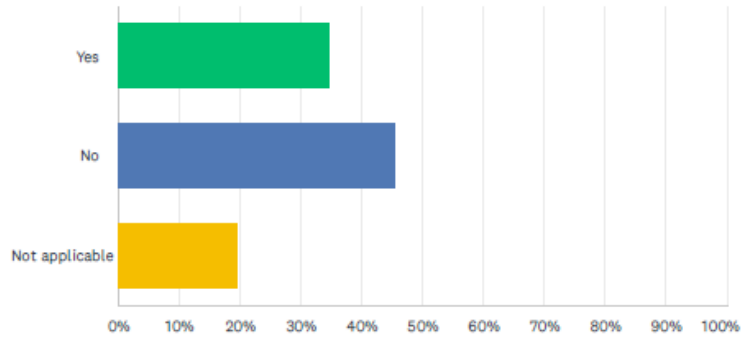
Q.24 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION LOST EMPLOYEES TO COMPETING EMPLOYERS IN THE PAST YEAR?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	50.00%	33
No	36.36%	24
Unsure or Not applicable	13.64%	9
TOTAL		66

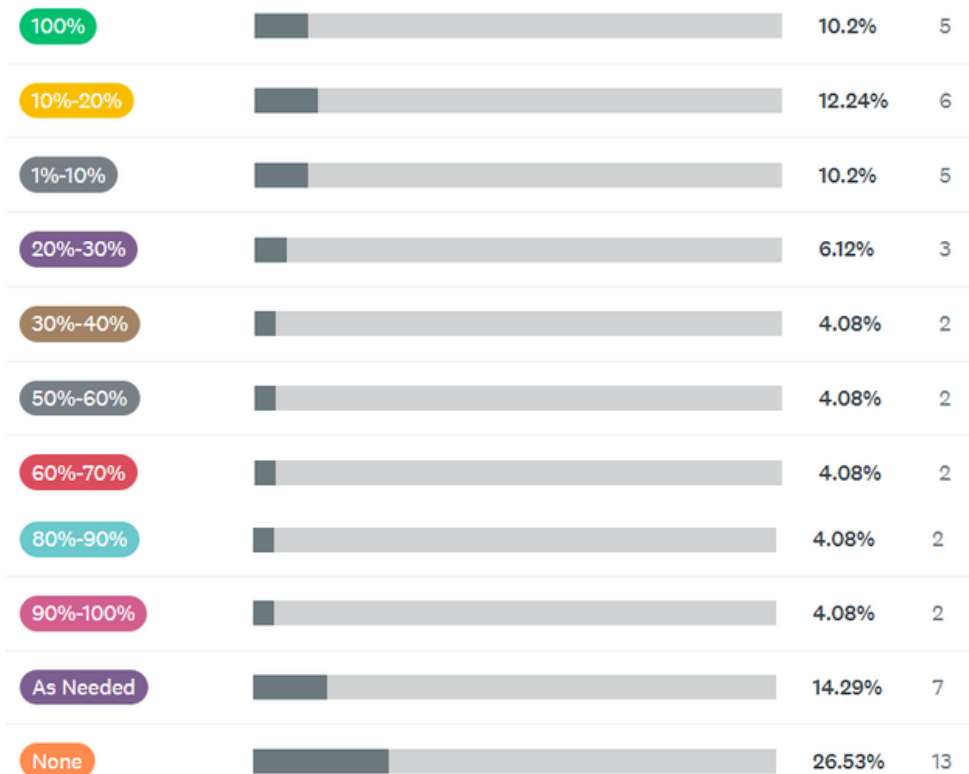
Q.25 DOES YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION OFFER HYBRID OR REMOTE WORKING OPPORTUNITIES TO EMPLOYEES?

Answered: 66 Skipped: 39

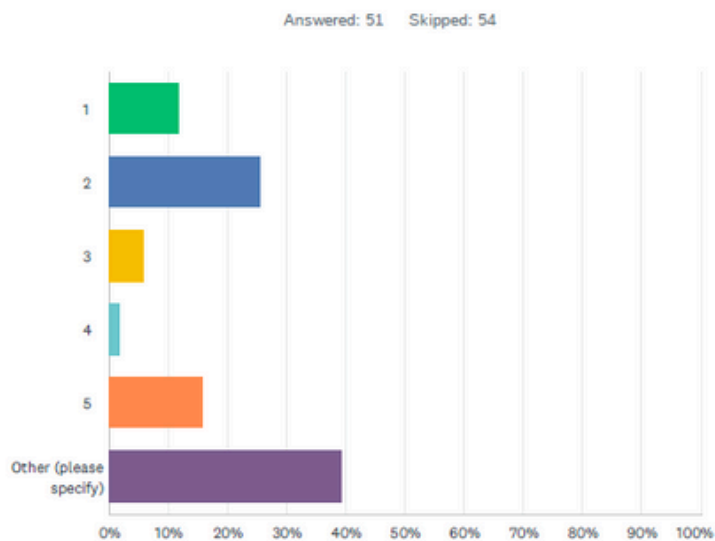


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.85%	23
No	45.45%	30
Not applicable	19.70%	13
TOTAL		66

Q.26 APPROXIMATELY WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES WORK REMOTELY?

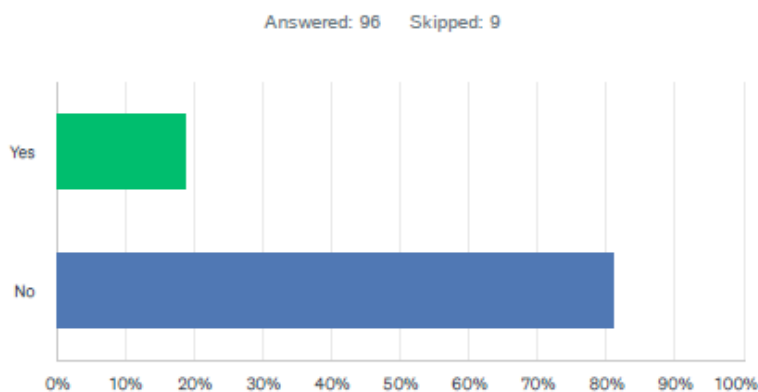


Q.27 ON AN AVERAGE, HOW MANY DAYS A WEEK ARE EMPLOYEES WORKING REMOTELY?



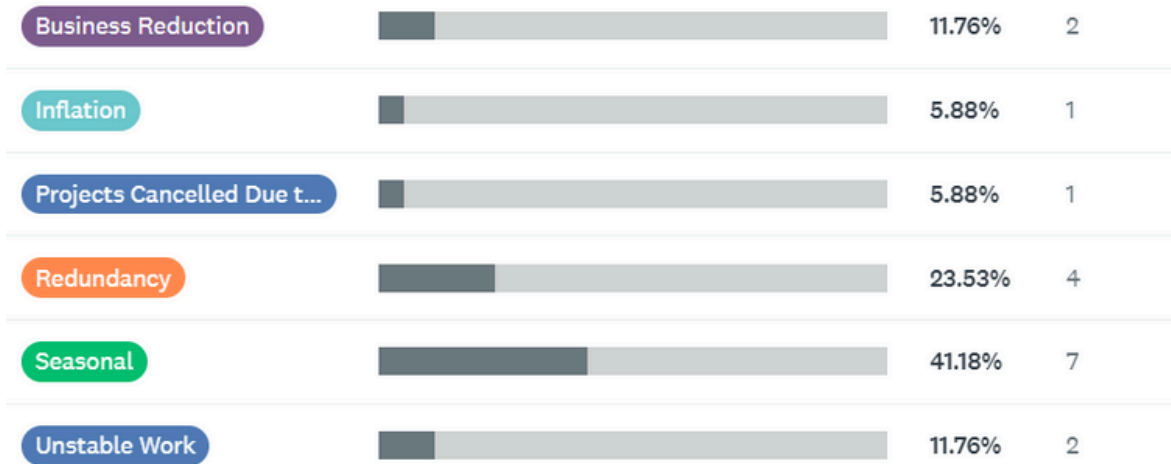
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	11.76%	6
2	25.49%	13
3	5.88%	3
4	1.96%	1
5	15.60%	8
Other (please specify)	39.22%	20
TOTAL		51

Q.28 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD TO LAY OFF ANY EMPLOYEES IN THE PAST YEAR?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	18.75%	18
No	81.25%	78
TOTAL		96

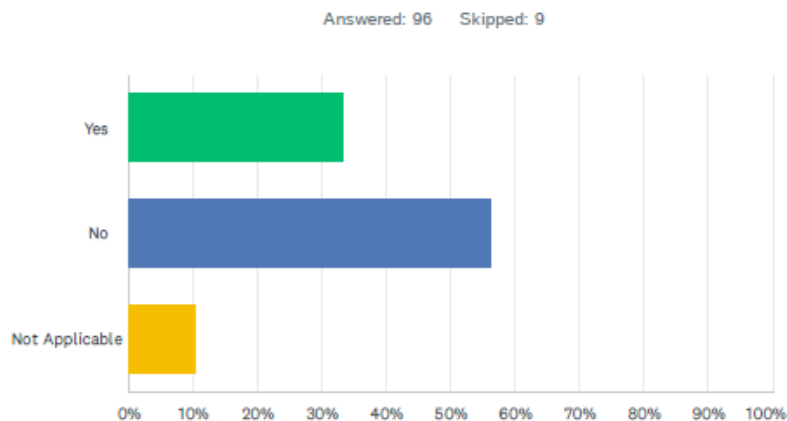
Q.29 WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WAS THE PRIMARY REASON FOR THE LAYOFF?



RESPONSES INCLUDED:

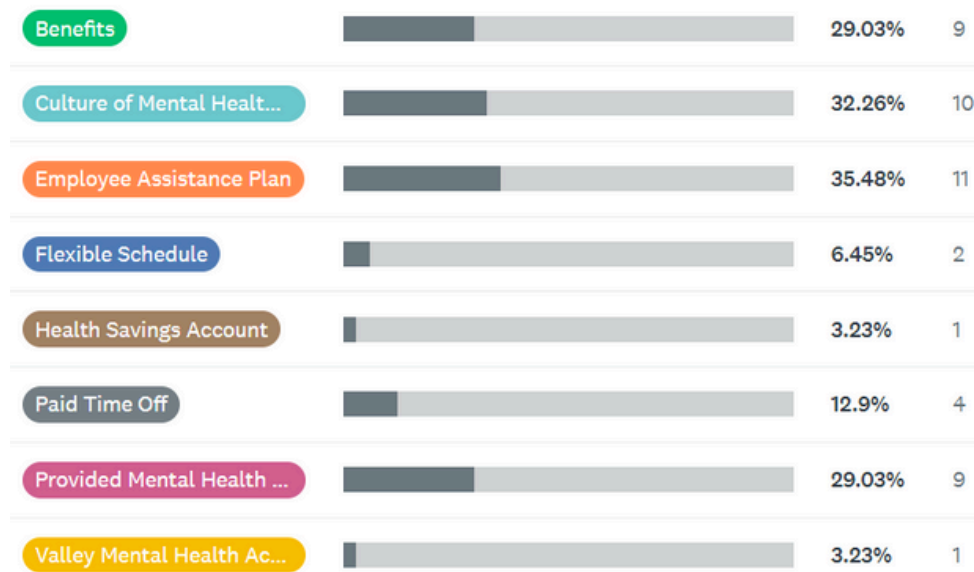
- POSITION DECLARED REDUNDANT
- REDUCED BUSINESS DUE TO HIGH MORTGAGE INTEREST RATES
- SLOWING SALES, END OF BUILDING SEASON
- END OF SEASON
- INCOMPETENCE
- UNSTABLE WORK
- CANCELLATION OF PROJECTS DUE TO LIMITED LABOUR
- END OF THE CONSTRUCTION SEASON.
- INFLATION
- INABILITY TO PERFORM THE WORK AND/OR ATTEND REGULARLY.
- LACK OF WORK, NEW BUSINESS

Q.30 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION HAD TO PUT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN PLACE TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH IN THE PAST YEAR?



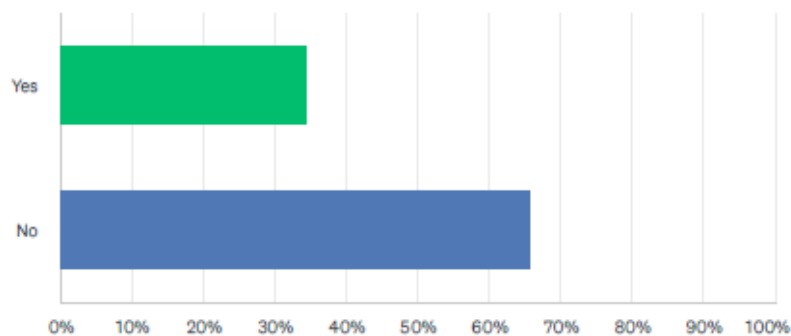
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	33.33%	32
No	56.25%	54
Not Applicable	10.42%	10
TOTAL		96

Q.31 WHAT MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION OFFERED TO EMPLOYEES IN THE PAST YEAR?



Q.32 HAS YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION PURSUED TRAINING IN THE PAST YEAR TO TRY TO ADDRESS THE RECRUITMENT AND/OR RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES?

Answered: 93 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.41%	32
No	65.59%	61
TOTAL		93

Q.33 PLEASE SHARE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF THE LABOUR MARKET FOR YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION.

THIS FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS SEVERAL CHALLENGES:

- **DIFFICULTY RETAINING STAFF DUE TO THE INABILITY TO OFFER COMPETITIVE SALARIES AND BENEFITS.**
- **CHALLENGES IN RECRUITING QUALIFIED CANDIDATES, EXACERBATED BY INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC CHANGES.**
- **IMPACT OF MILITARY MOVEMENTS ON STAFFING, WITH NEW HIRES STRUGGLING TO FIND DAYCARE AND HOUSING.**
- **DIFFICULTY RECRUITING FRANCOPHONES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SKILLS.**
- **SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT MODEL WITH HISTORICALLY HIGH TURNOVER RATES.**
- **SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOR AND LACK OF INTEREST IN TRADES AMONG YOUNGER GENERATIONS.**
- **COMPETITION WITH LARGER MARKETS AND REMOTE WORK PREFERENCES AMONG EMPLOYEES.**
- **INCREASE IN APPLICATIONS LACKING PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OR SEEKING SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT.**
- **AGING WORKFORCE IN THE TRADES AND LACK OF INTEREST FROM YOUNGER GENERATIONS.**
- **PREFERENCE FOR A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT OVER HIGHER PAY AND BENEFITS AMONG STAFF.**
- **INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES AND LACK OF STAFF TRAINING CONTRIBUTING TO POOR WORK ENVIRONMENT.**
- **CHALLENGES IN HIRING RELIABLE EMPLOYEES, PARTICULARLY DURING THE PANDEMIC.**
- **SOLE PROPRIETOR EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IN THE LABOR MARKET.**
- **GENERAL RELUCTANCE TO WORK FOR MINIMUM WAGE OR IN PHYSICALLY DEMANDING ROLES AMONG POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES.**
- **RELIANCE ON STUDENT HIRES FOR SEASONAL WORK.**



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