



Town of Hanover

BR+E 2026



Town of Hanover
Economic, Tourism & Cultural Development Advisory Committee
Business, Retention & Expansion Study Report
hanover.ca/economicdevelopment

Introduction

The Town of Hanover's Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) initiative is part of a province-wide, community-based economic development program supported by the **Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness**. The BR+E program is designed to strengthen local economies by helping communities understand the needs of existing businesses, identify opportunities for growth, and develop actions that support long-term investment and job creation.

The Ministry provides communities with structured tools and resources—including a coordinator's manual, implementation guidance, and standardized survey templates. These templates ensure consistency and reliability in data collection across core themes such as business climate, workforce, development opportunities, and community needs. Additional sector-specific surveys allow communities to tailor their approach while maintaining a formalized and comparable methodology.

In Hanover, BR+E surveys were conducted between **August and October 2025**, resulting in **61 responses** from businesses representing a range of sectors. Respondents were advised of the **"skip it" rule**, meaning they were free to skip any questions they could not answer or preferred not to answer. This ensured that participants could engage comfortably and voluntarily with the survey process. All information provided is **strictly confidential**—responses are aggregated and presented only as **percentages, averages, or grouped summaries**, guaranteeing complete anonymity for all participating businesses.

These responses provide meaningful insight into the current business environment, future plans, operational challenges, and supports needed to enhance local economic resilience and growth.

This report reflects all findings from the 2025 BR+E survey. Additional reporting will be developed to highlight key themes and recommended actions emerging from this data, as well as comparative analysis with the Town's previous BR+E surveys conducted in **2015** and the **2021 Recovery Report**. This comparative work will help identify long-term trends, shifts in business sentiment, and areas of improvement since the post-pandemic recovery period.

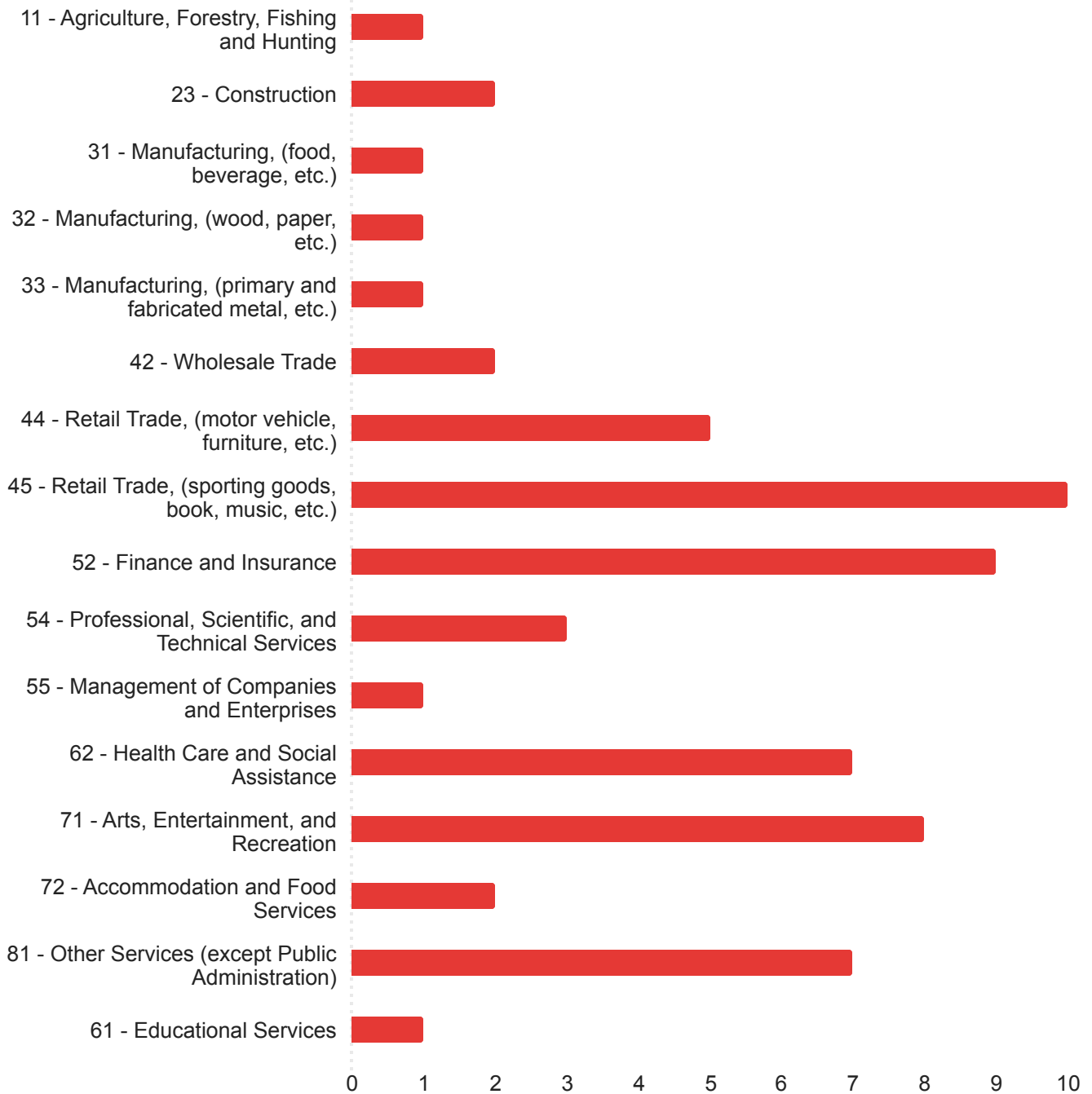
Beyond benchmarking past performance, the insights gathered through this BR+E process will provide **significant added value** to Hanover's economic development efforts. These findings will:

- **Inform policy and program development** by pinpointing priority areas where municipal support can have the greatest impact.
- **Guide strategic planning** for business retention, workforce development, and investment attraction.
- **Support evidence-based decision-making** for council, economic development partners, and community stakeholders.
- **Strengthen communication and partnerships** with local businesses by identifying both immediate concerns and long-term opportunities.
- **Enhance resiliency planning**, helping the Town prepare for future economic shifts by understanding emerging challenges and sector-specific needs.

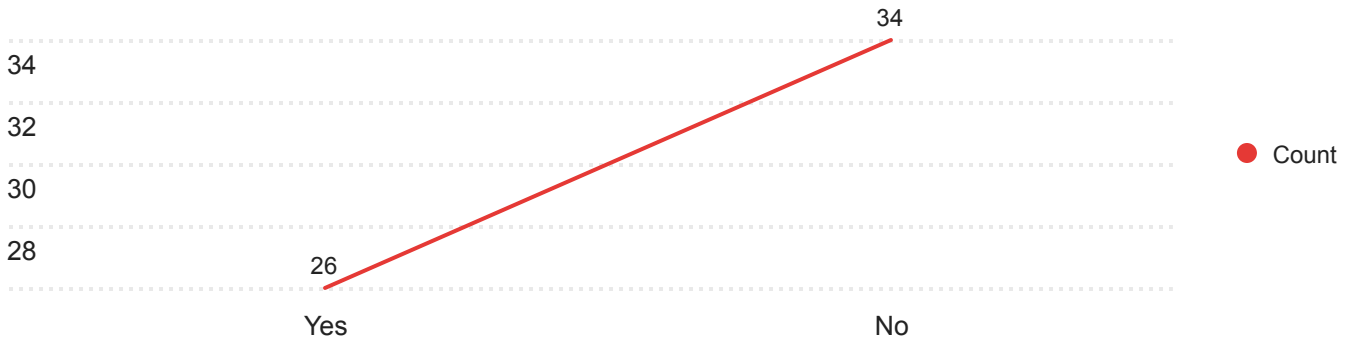
The Town of Hanover extends sincere appreciation to all participating businesses for their time and contributions. Their insights play an essential role in shaping informed, community-driven economic development strategies and ensuring Hanover remains a vibrant and competitive place to do business.

BUSINESS INFORMATION

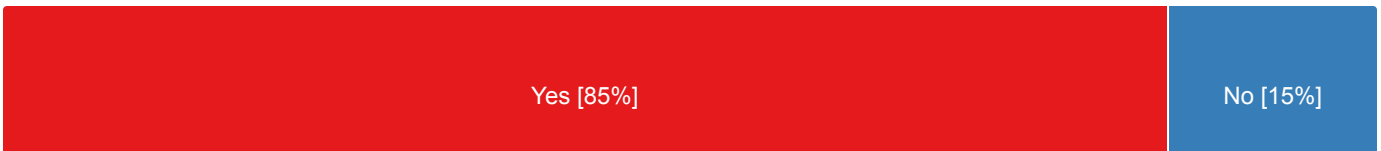
Which NAICS code(s) best describes your business?



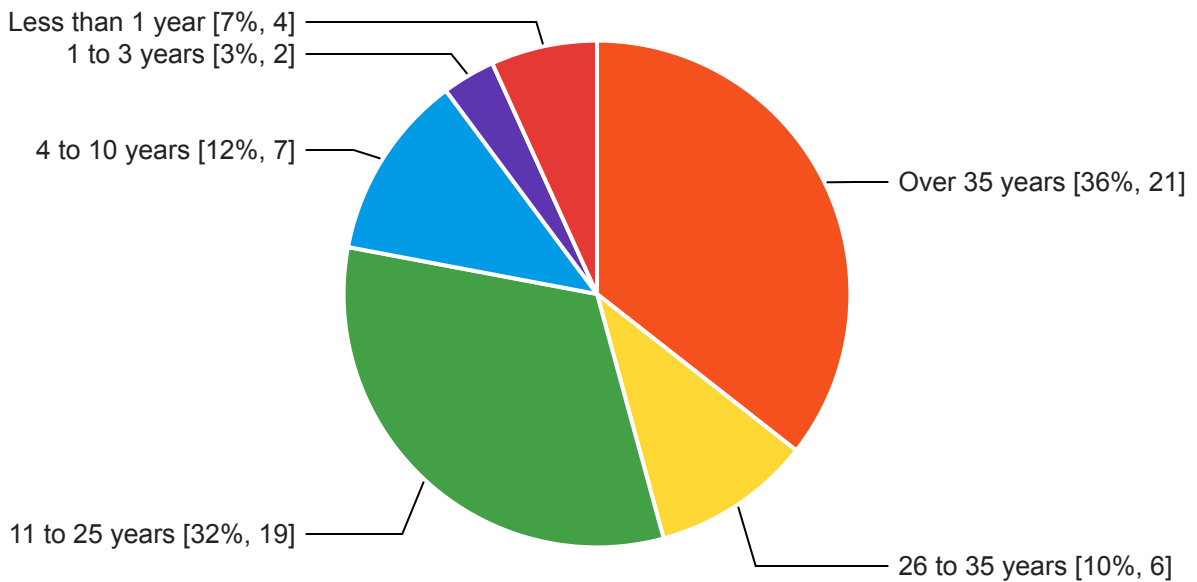
Is your business a sole-proprietorship?



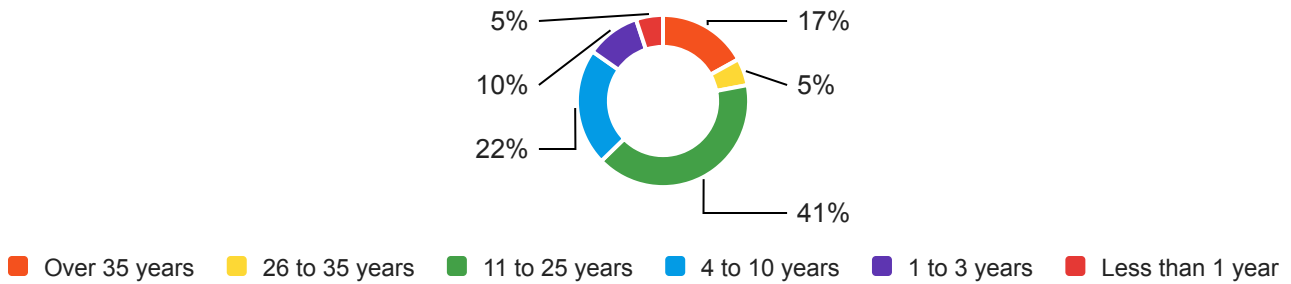
Is at least one of the owners involved in the day-to-day operation of the business?



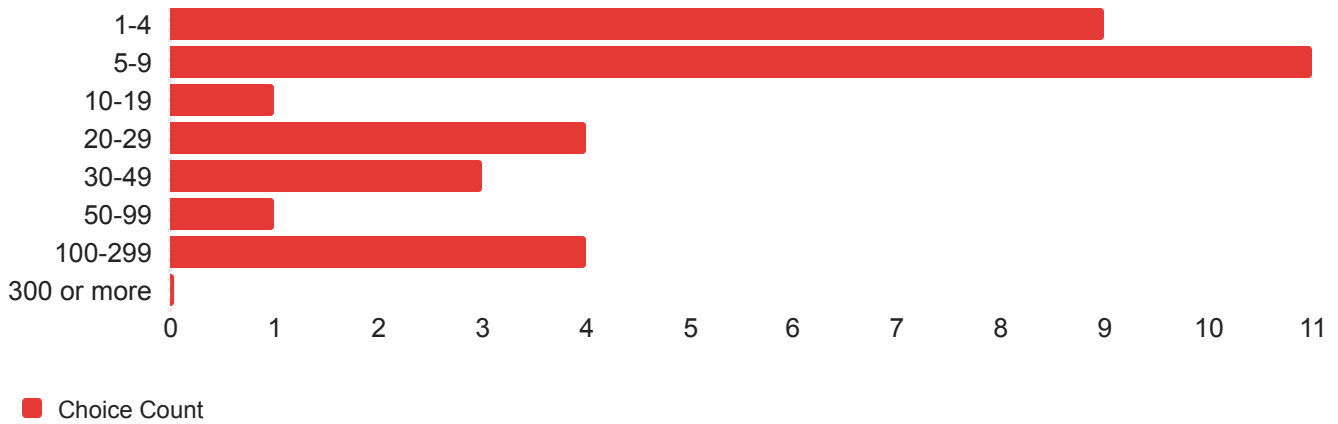
How many years has your business been in operation in this community?



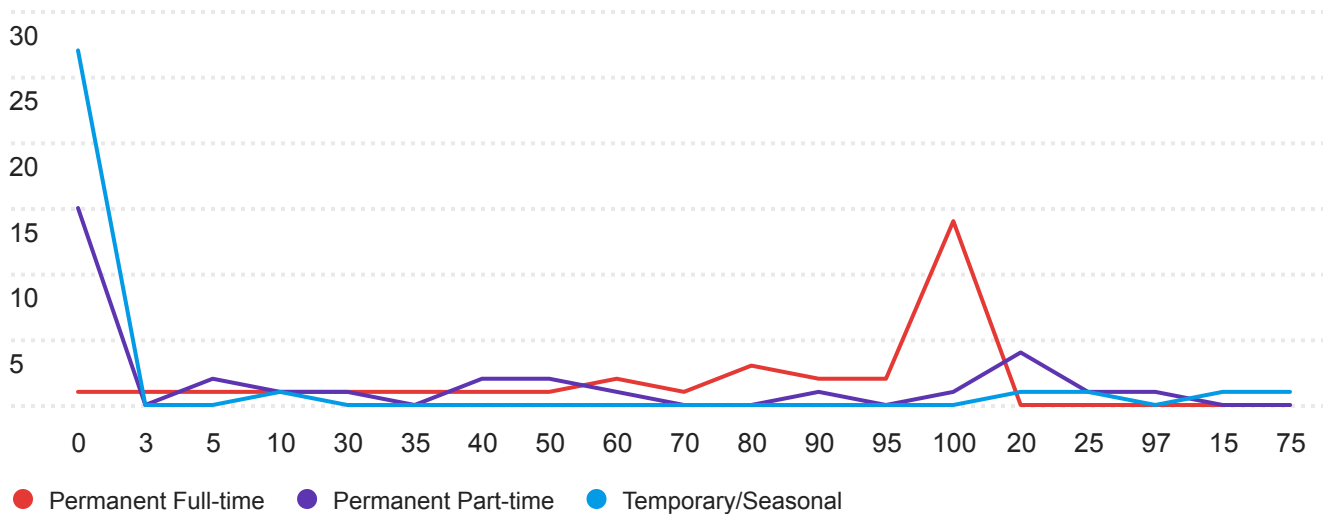
How many years have the current owner/owners been operating this business?



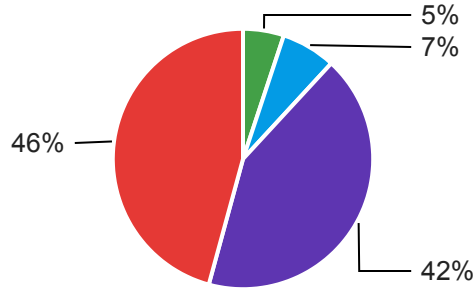
Including owner/owners, how many employees work at this location?



What percentage of these employees are:

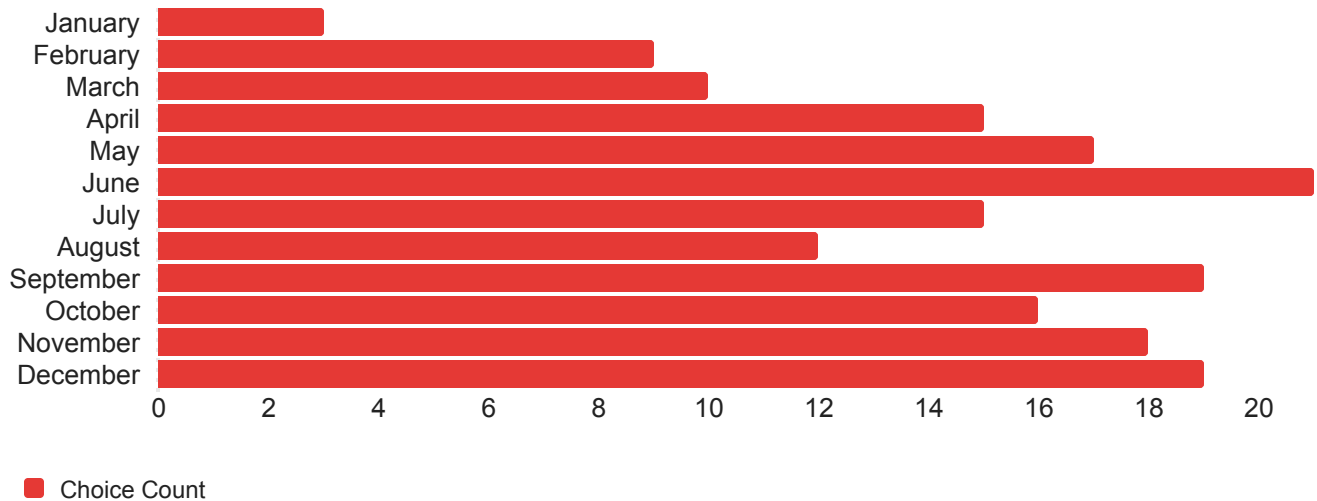


The primary market of your business is:

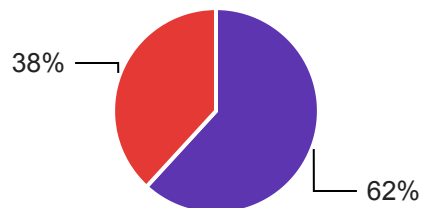


■ International
 ■ National
 ■ Regional
 ■ Local

What are the three busiest months of the year for this business?



Do you as the business owners or any composition of your workforce, identify as part of an equity-seeking group?



■ No
 ■ Yes

If yes, please indicate which equity-seeking group(s) applies to you:

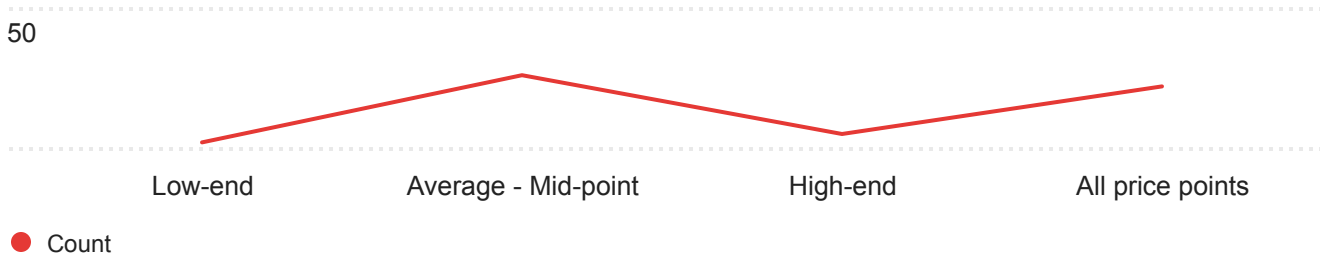
- Women [28%]
- Indigenous Peoples [7%]
- French Language Communities [5%]
- Youth (15-29 years old) [16%]
- Persons with Disabilities [9%]
- Newcomers to Canada [8%]
- Visible Minorities [11%]
- LGBTQ2+ [15%]



Top Products and/or Services that separate respondent's business from their competition:

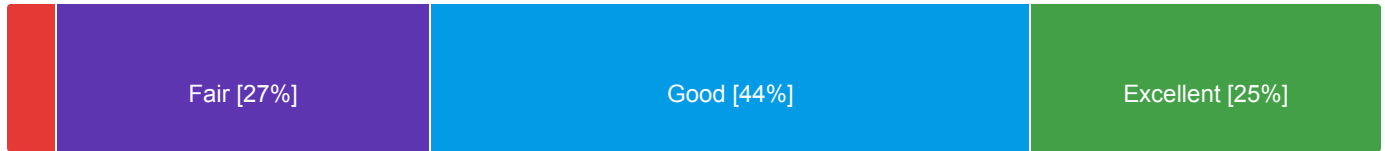


Relative to other businesses in your trade area, what price point do you target?



BUSINESS CLIMATE

What is your general impression of Hanover as a place to do business?



In the past 3 years has your attitude about doing business in this community changed?



Yes, more positive [20%] Yes, more negative [11%] No Change [69%]

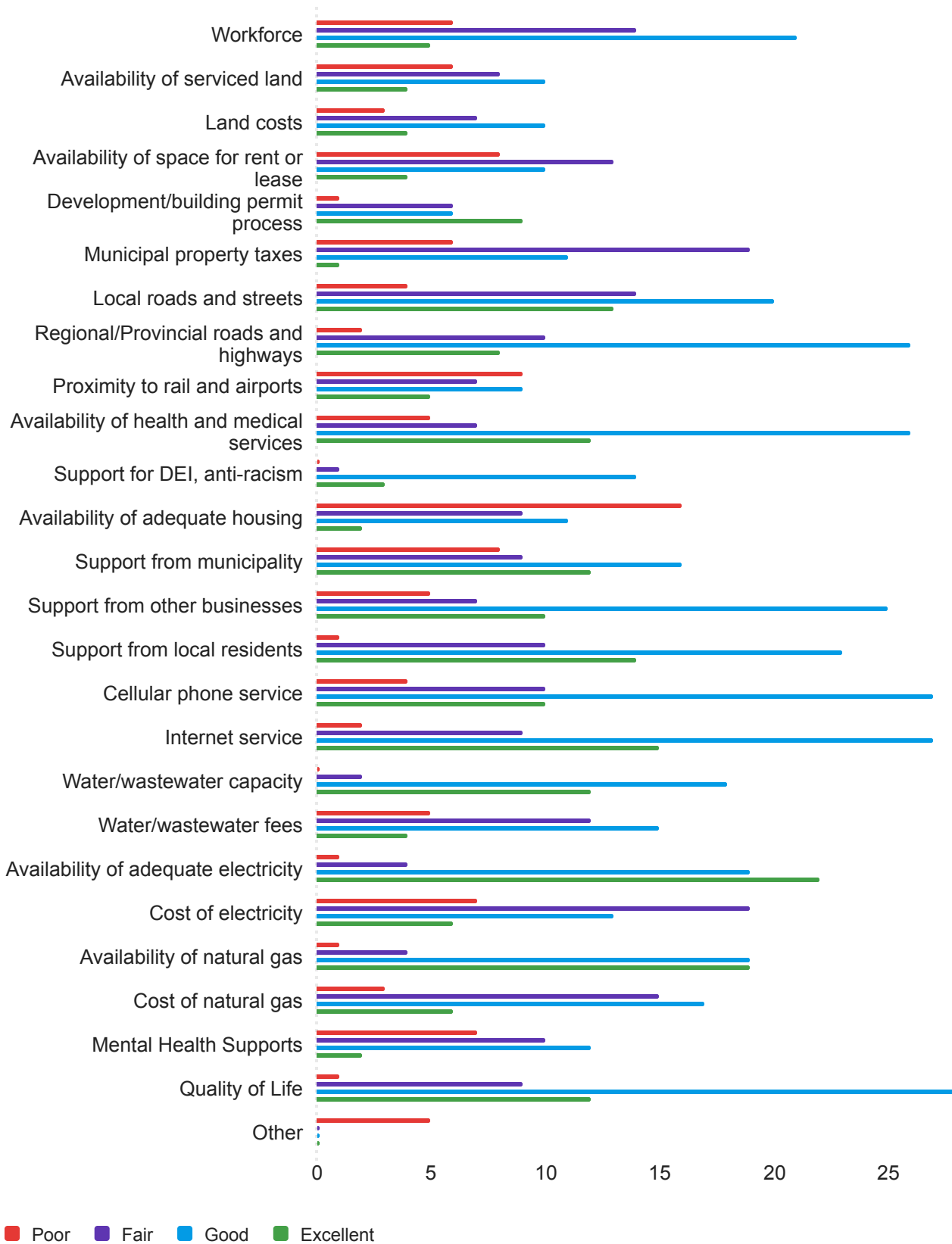
Please explain your positive change in attitude:



Please explain your negative change in attitude:



How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community?

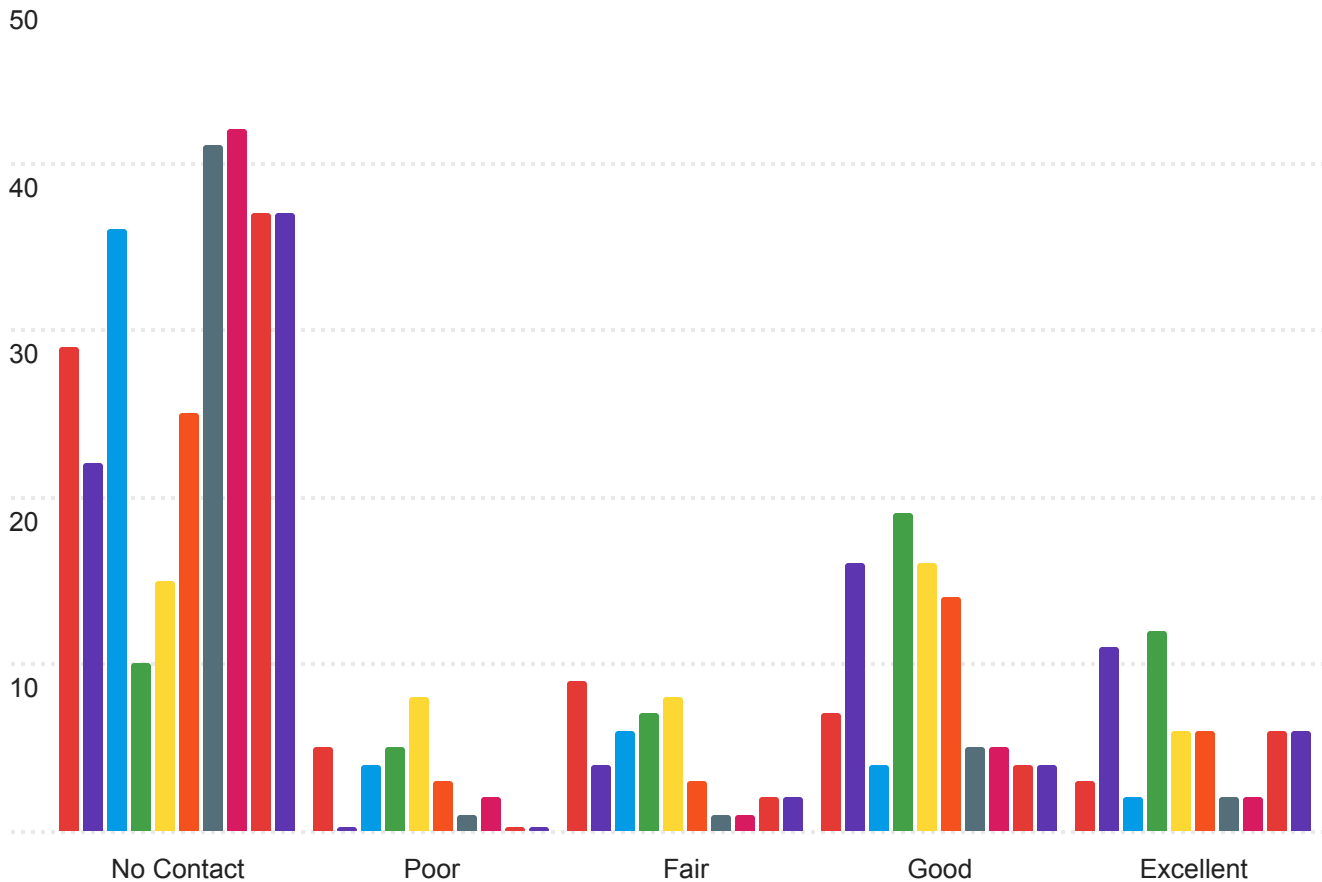


Other items rated poor:

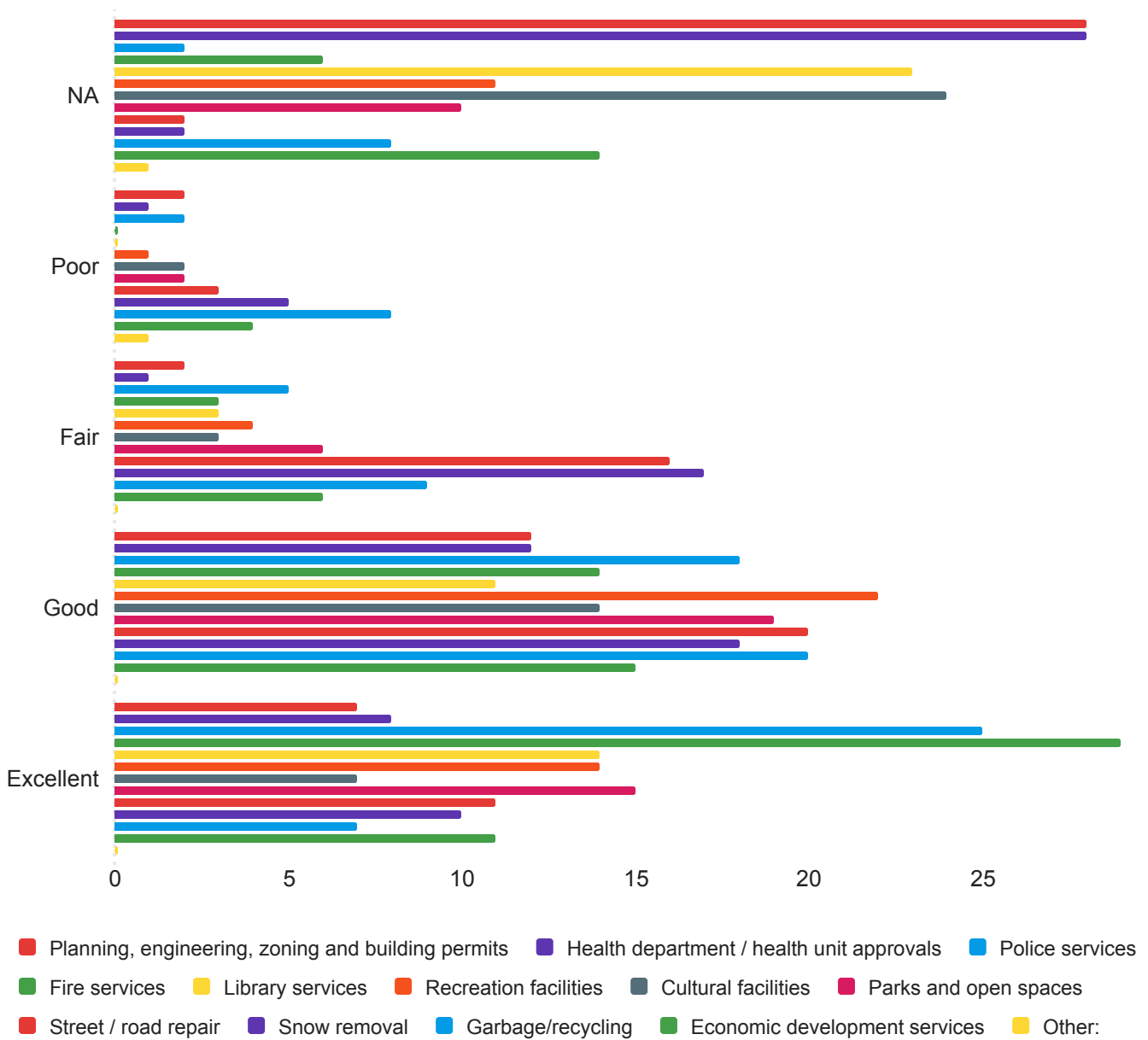


From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with the following community services?

- Child care services
- Schools (elementary and secondary)
- Workforce planning/development board
- Chamber of Commerce / Board of Trade
- Downtown Improvement Area (DIA)
- Saugeen Economic Development Corporation (SEDC)
- Grey Business Enterprise Centre
- Settlement & Newcomer Services
- Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership / YMCA
- Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership / YMCA



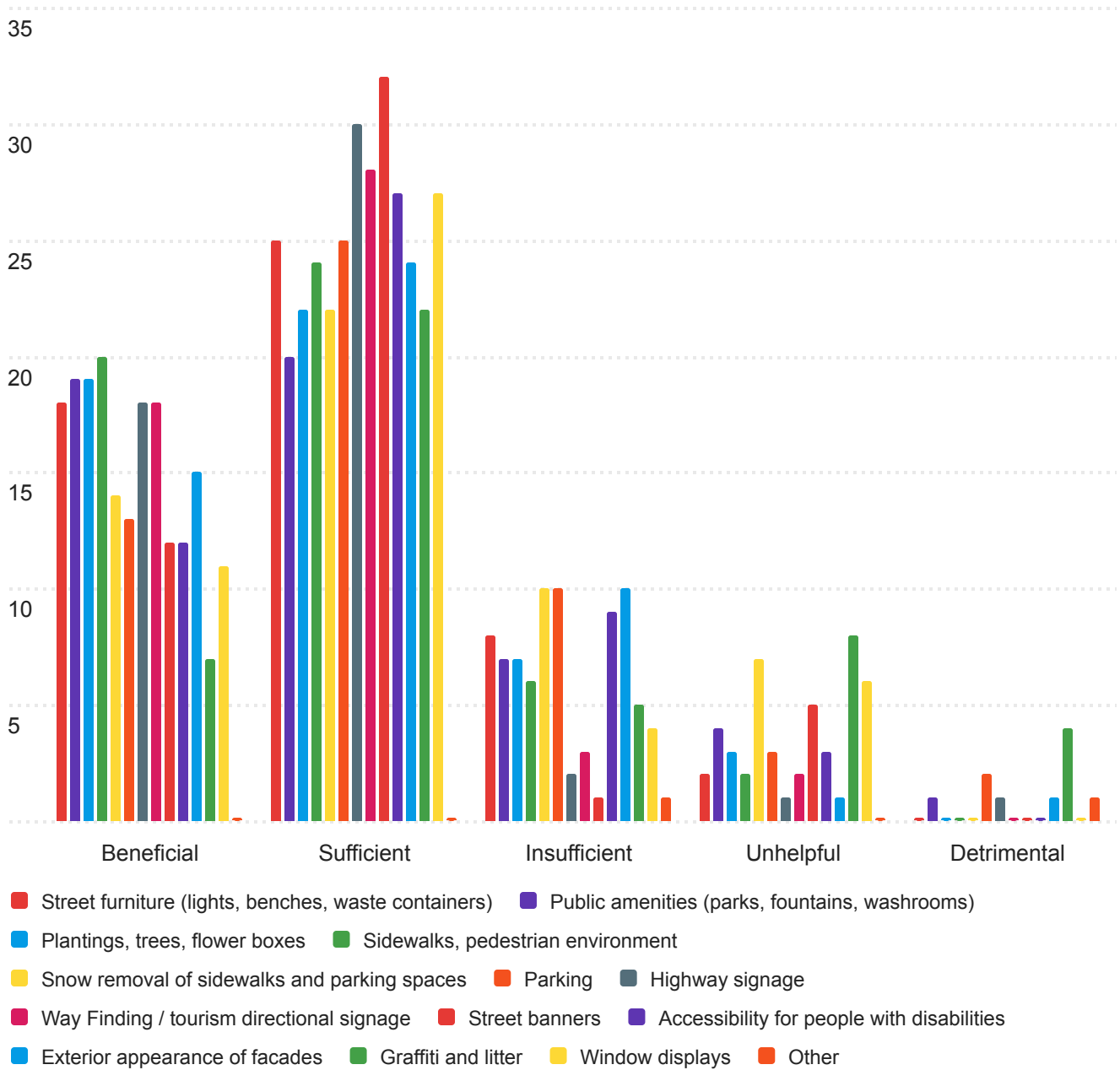
From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with the following government services?



Other items rated poorly:



How effective do you rate the function/condition of the area surrounding your business?



Other items noted:

speed downtown love sign walk
 support financial cut drive quick
 school high block garbage vehicle
 receive leave digital move student
 property

What is your impression of this community as welcoming to equity seeking individuals, groups, and businesses?

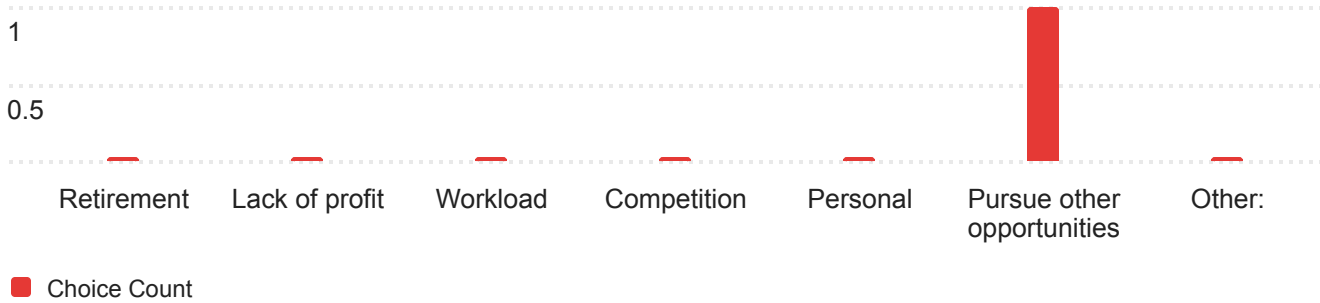


Next section to follow. This space has intentionally been left blank.

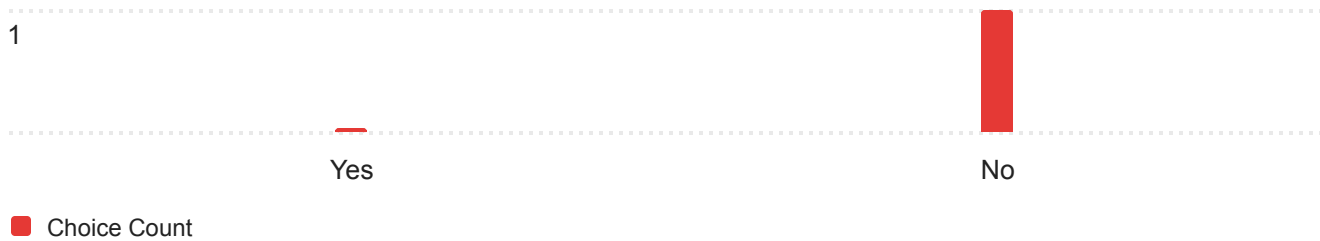
Why are you planning to relocate the business?

better for the company, more efficient and more space, offer new services

Why are you selling your business?



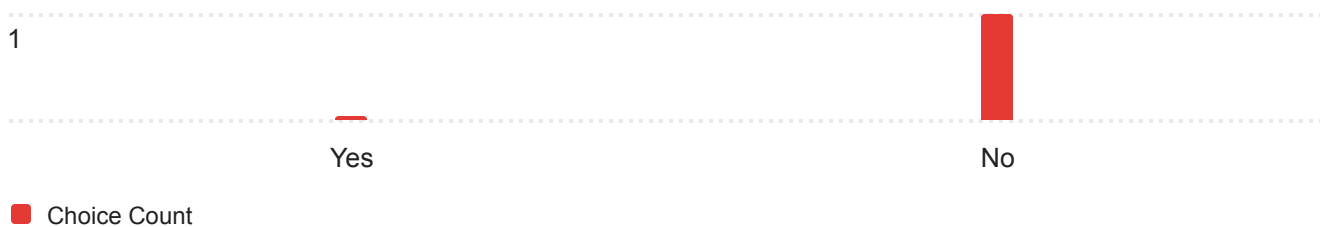
Do you have a succession plan for your business?



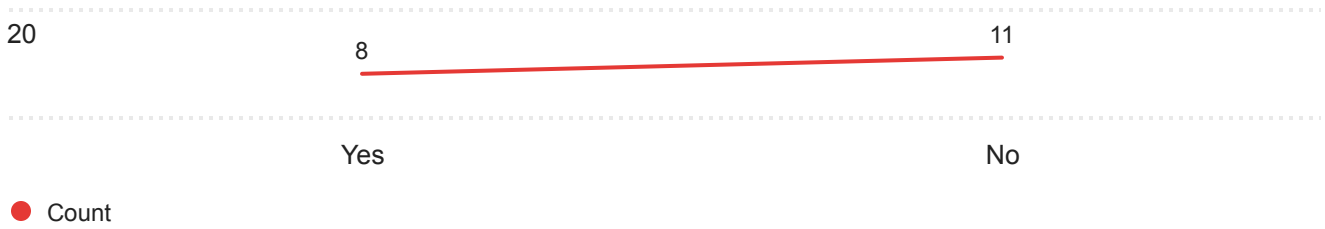
Would you like assistance/information with developing a succession plan?



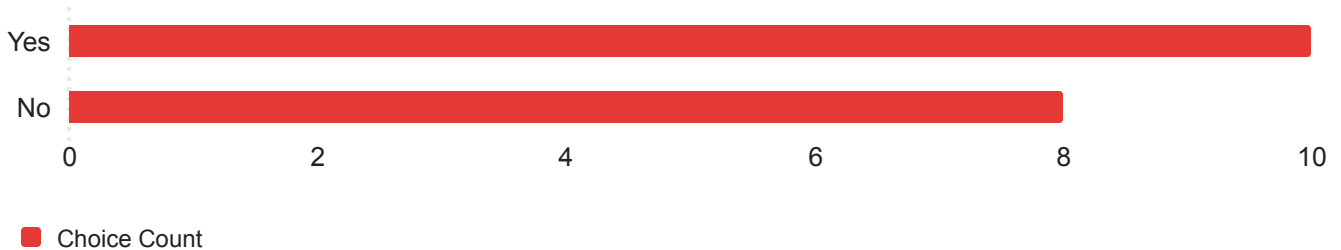
Would you like assistance/information on selling your business?



Are you planning on accessing any Federal or Provincial programs/services to assist with the expansion?



Is your business currently experiencing difficulties with your expansion plans?



Areas of difficulty:

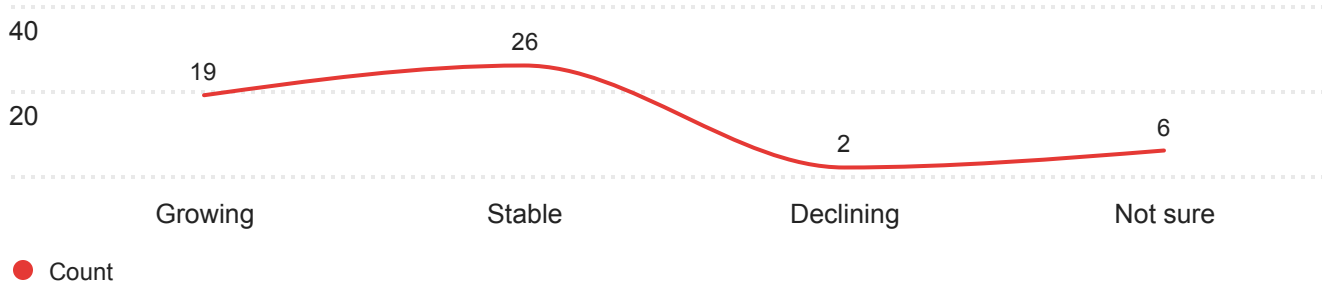


Could the community potentially provide some assistance to support your expansion plans?



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

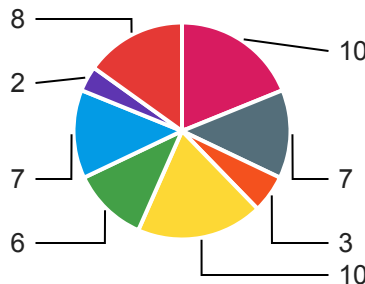
What is the outlook for your industry?



What do you feel are the main reasons for this?

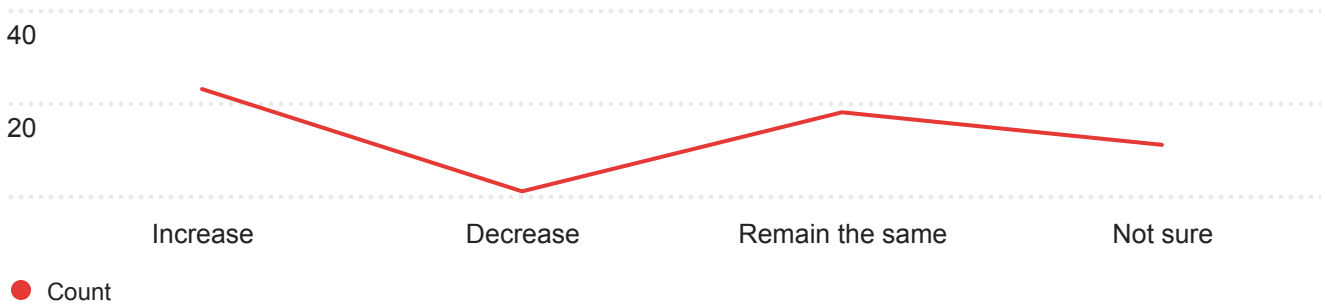


Please give an approximate annual sales range for your business:



- Prefer not to answer
- + \$10,000,000
- \$5,000,000 – \$9,999,999
- \$1,000,000 – \$4,999,999
- \$500,000 – \$999,999
- \$250,000 – \$499,999
- \$100,000 – \$249,999
- \$0 - \$99,999

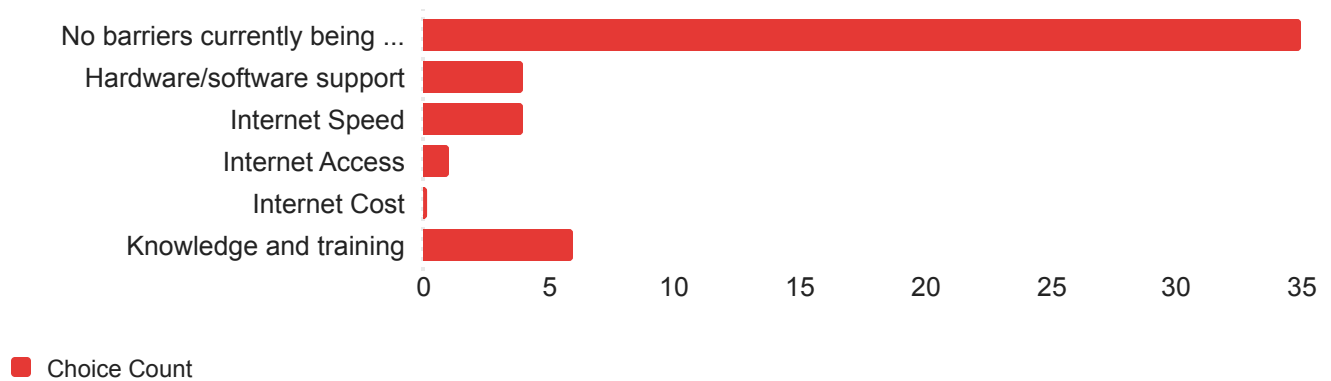
Are your projected sales in the next year expected to:



What do you feel is the main reason for this?



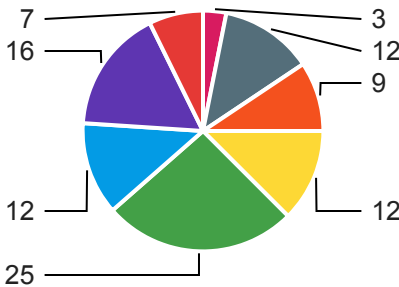
Is your business currently experiencing any barriers related to your information technology requirements?



What products or services would you like to purchase locally that are now being purchased outside of the area?



Are you interested in working co-operatively with other businesses in the community to pursue any of the following?



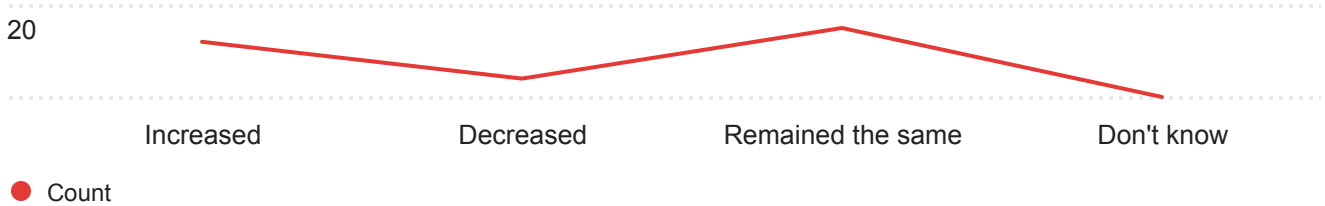
- Other (Specify):
 ■ None
 ■ DEI focused training for employers and...
 ■ Newcomer attraction and retention
- Networking/information sharing
 ■ Joint training
 ■ Joint marketing
 ■ Joint product purchasing

Does your business own or lease its facility/facilities?



WORKFORCE

During the past 3 years, has the number of people you employ in this business increased, decreased or stayed the same?

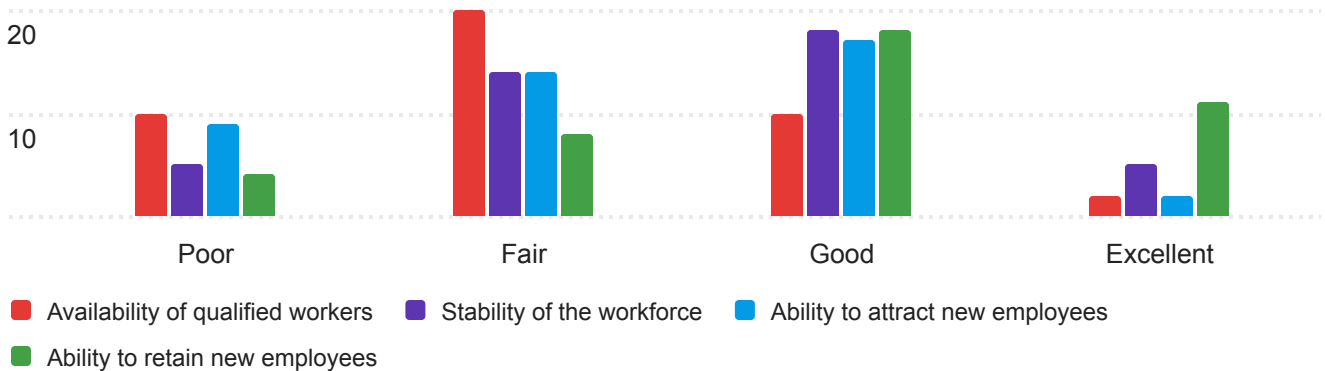


Respondents reported an increase of **92 employees** during the past 3 years and a decrease of **47 employees**, for an overall increase of **45 employees**.

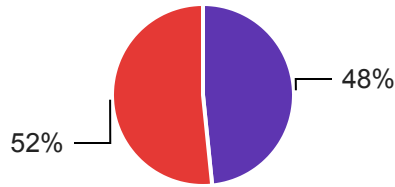
What factors are responsible for this change?



How would you rate the following factors in this community for your business needs?

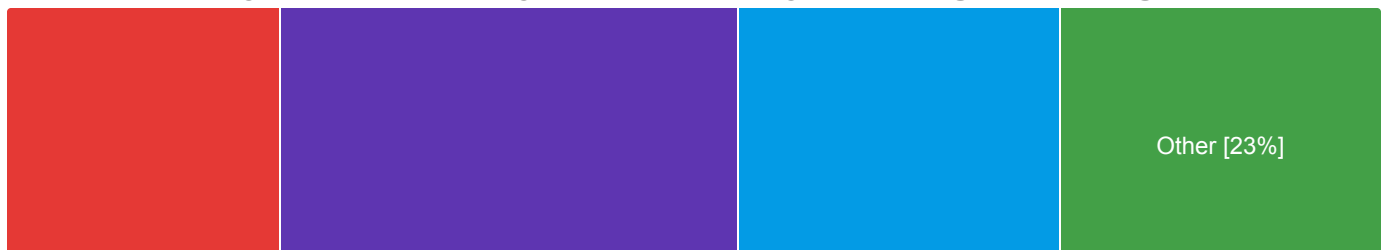


Does your business currently have difficulties hiring?



■ No ■ Yes

How would you describe your company's hiring challenges?



■ Too few applicants [20%] ■ Lack of appropriate skills or training [33%] ■ Lack of relevant experience [23%]
■ Other [23%]

Other noted items:



Are the hiring challenges specifically related to the community or industry?

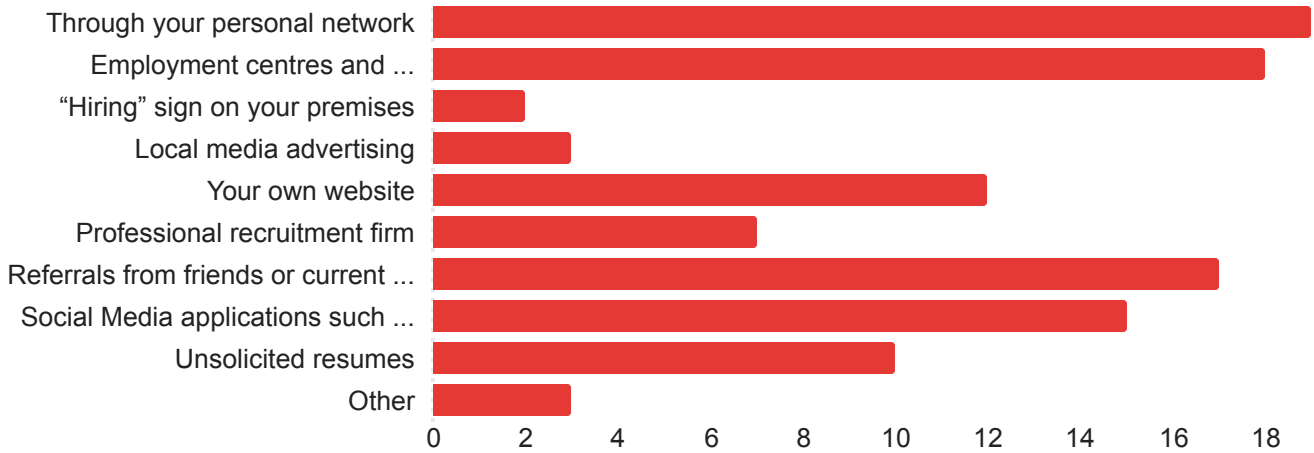


■ Industry ■ Community

Top occupations difficult to recruit for:



How do you currently recruit new employees?



Choice Count of Top 3

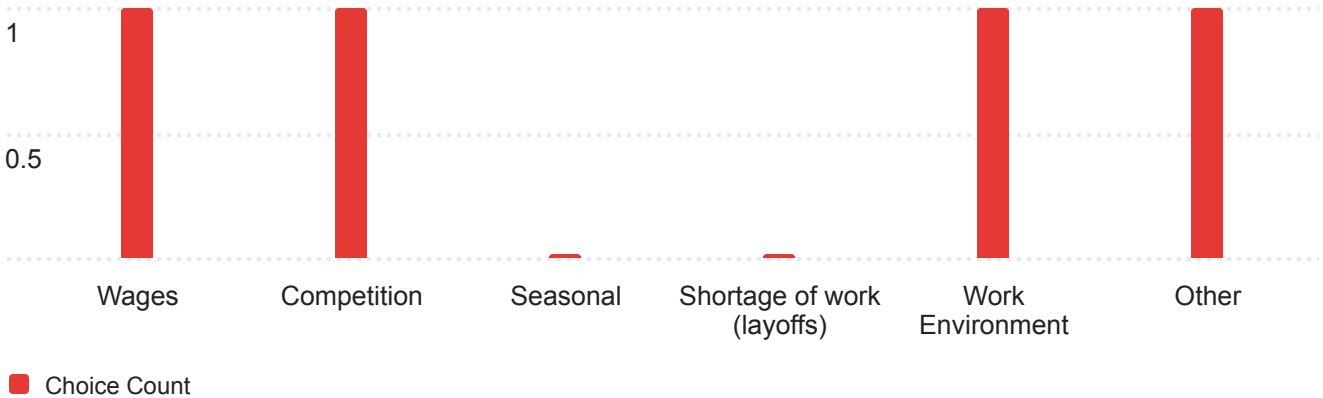
Other noted ways to recruit:



Does your business have difficulty retaining employees?



What are the reasons for these difficulties in retaining employees?

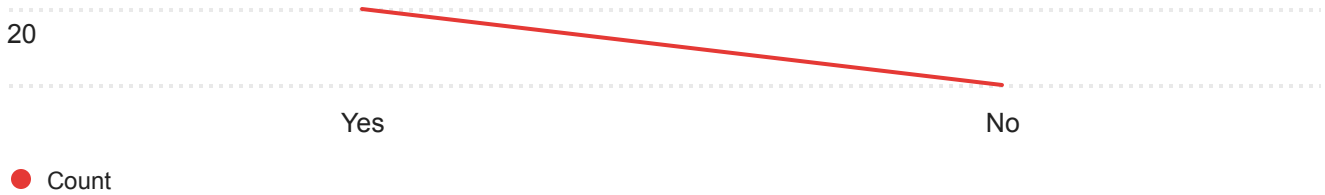


Respondents noted that their industry and travel time contribute to their difficulties in retaining employees.

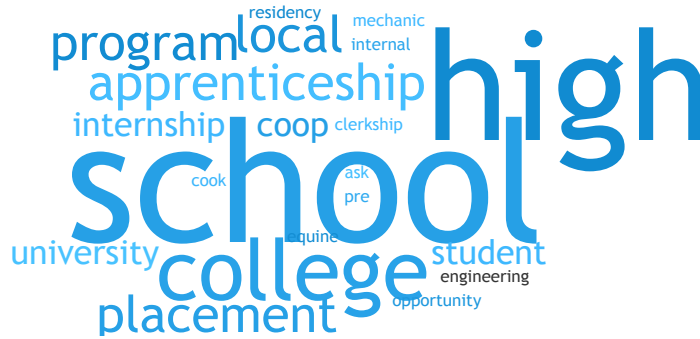
What assistance could the community provide to assist you in hiring new employees?



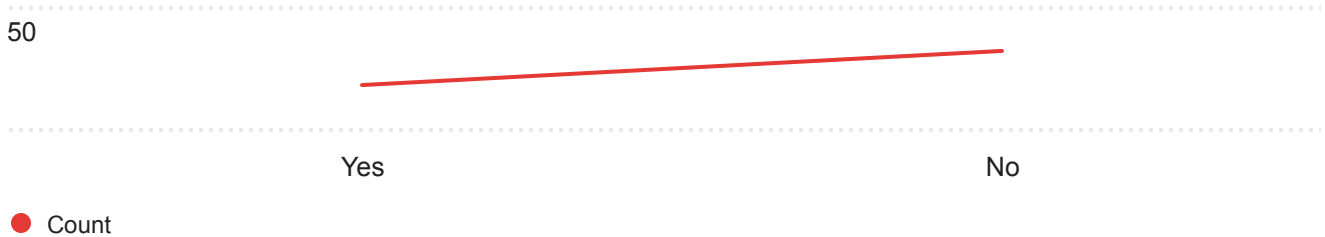
Does your business currently participate in any co-op, internship or apprenticeship programs?



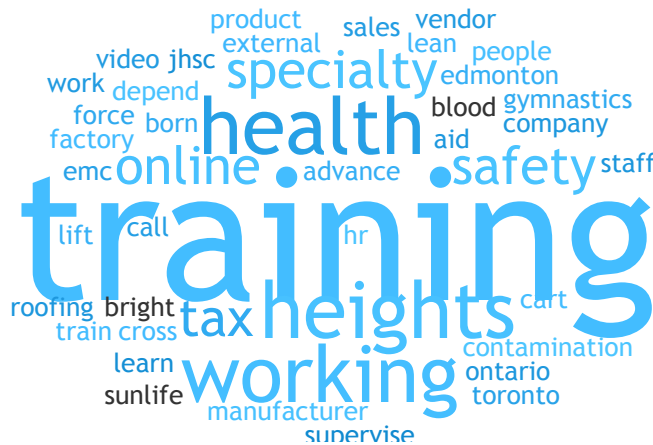
Types of programs that businesses noted participating in:



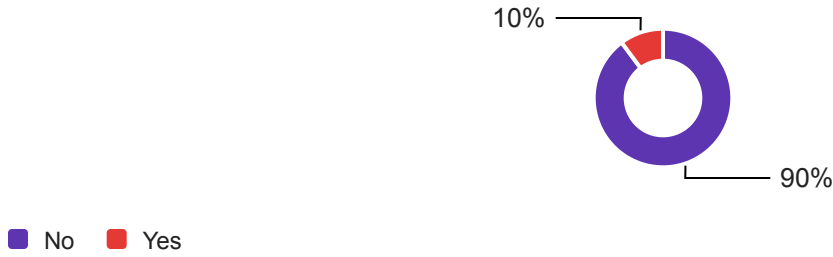
Does your business currently use any external training?



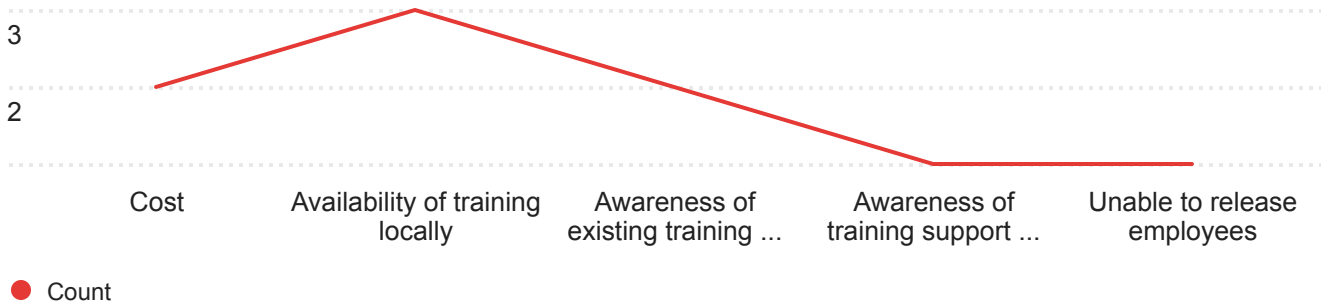
Types of external training noted:



Are there currently any barriers for you and/or your employees receiving the necessary training?



If yes, please specify:



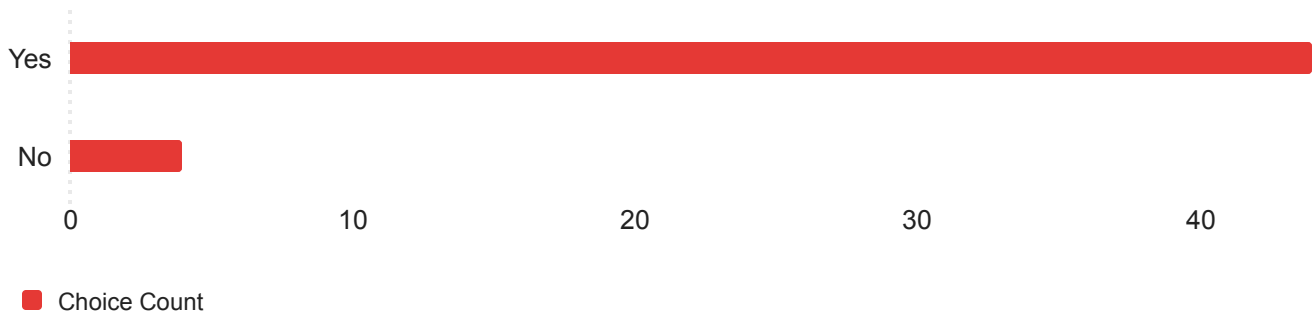
Are there any training programs/topics that would be beneficial to you and your employees?



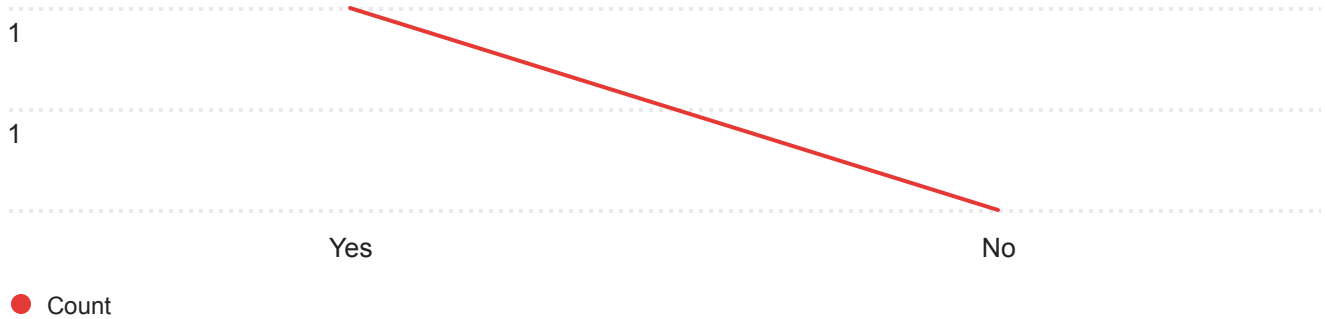
Types of training programs/topics that would be beneficial:



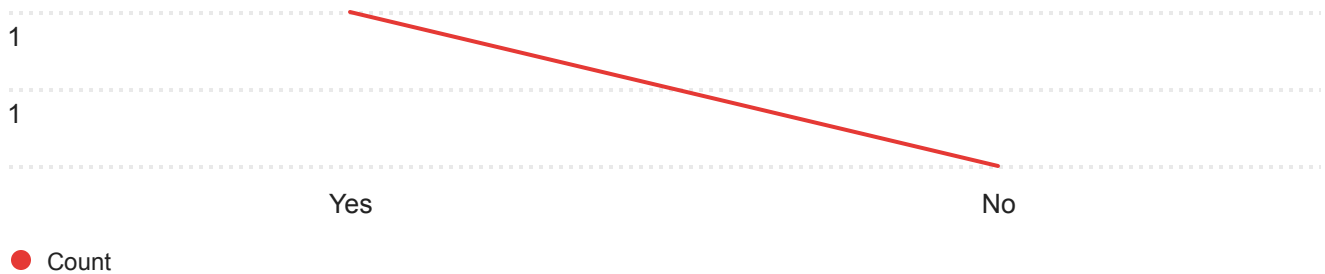
Does your business embrace diversity in its workforce?



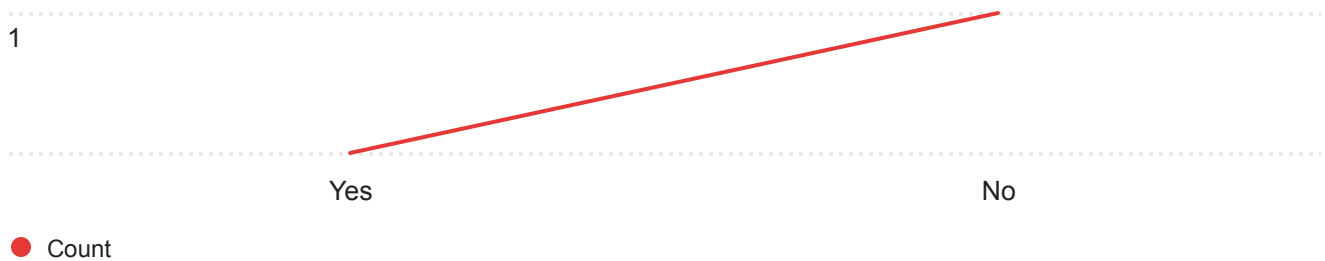
Does your business have a formal HR Policy?



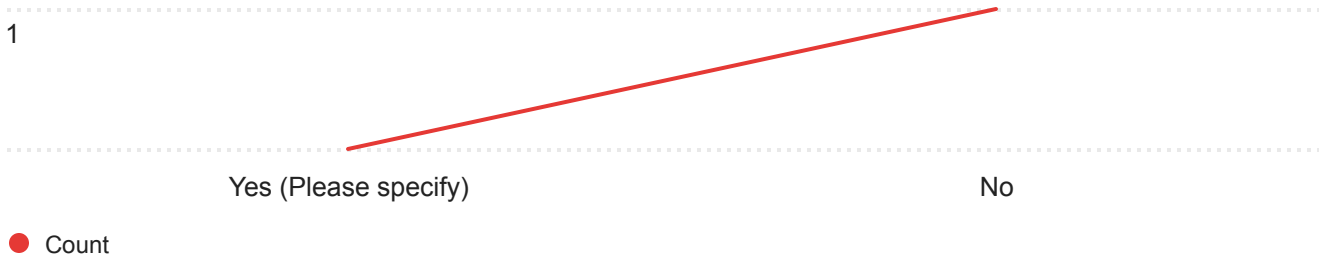
Does your HR policy support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)?



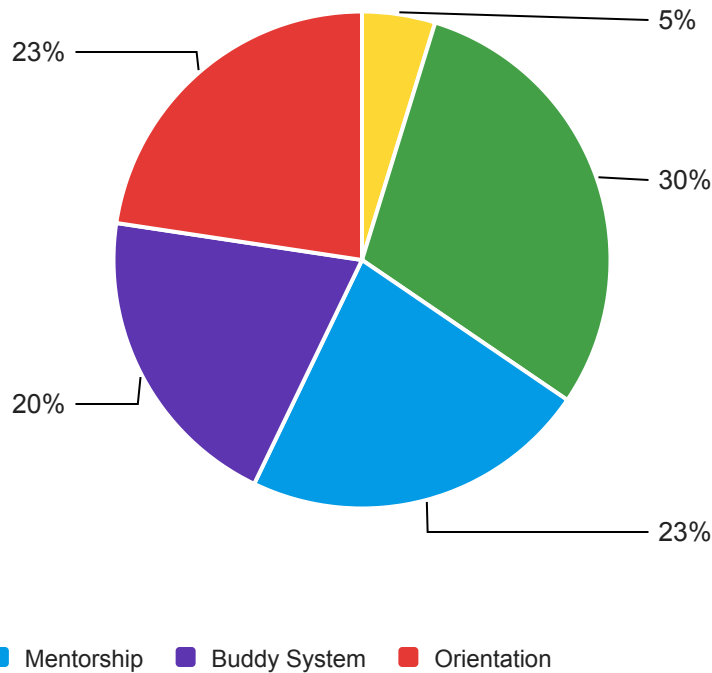
Would you like support in how to include DEI policies in your HR policies?



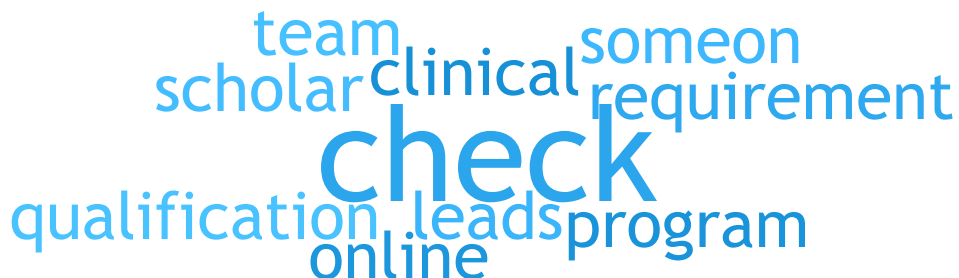
Does your business currently participate in any DEI training, co-op, internship, or apprenticeship programs?



How does your business support new hires and maintain a diverse workforce?

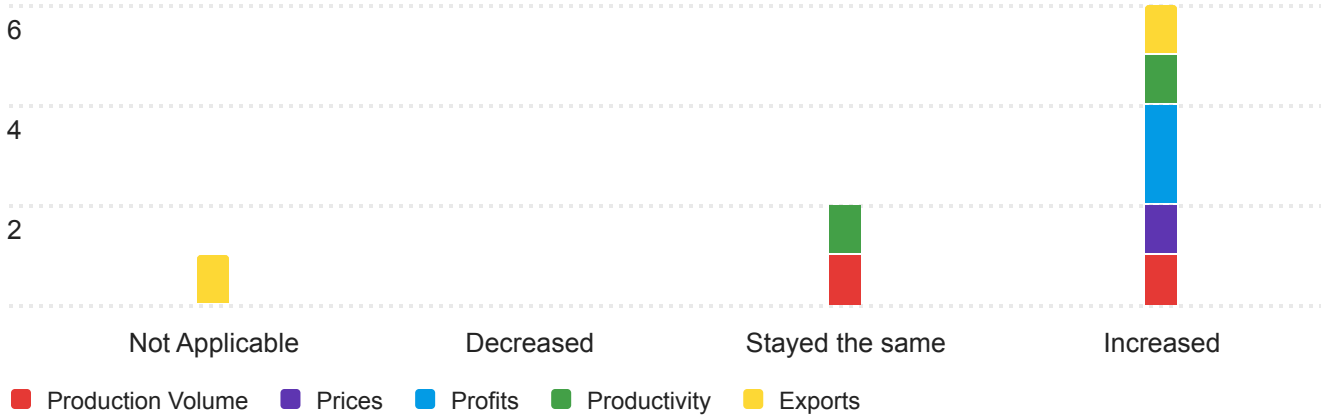


Other ways new hires are supported:

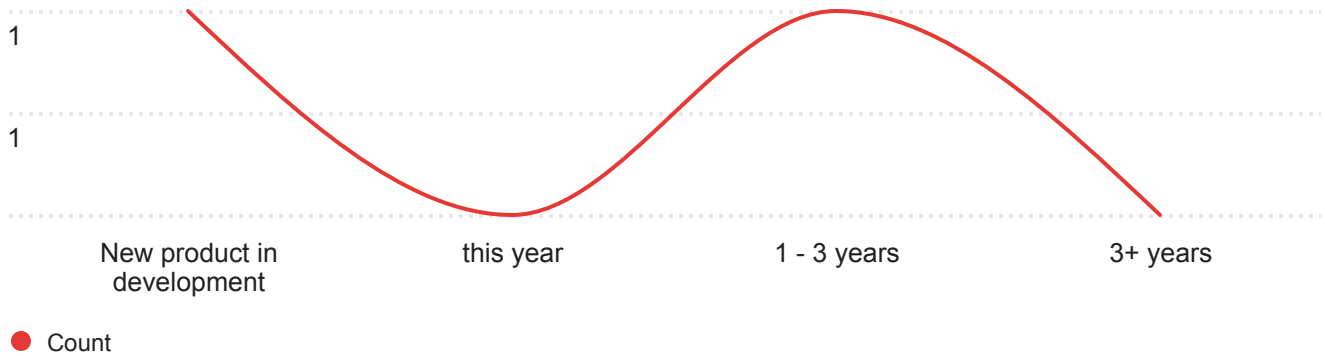


MANUFACTURING SECTOR SPECIFIC

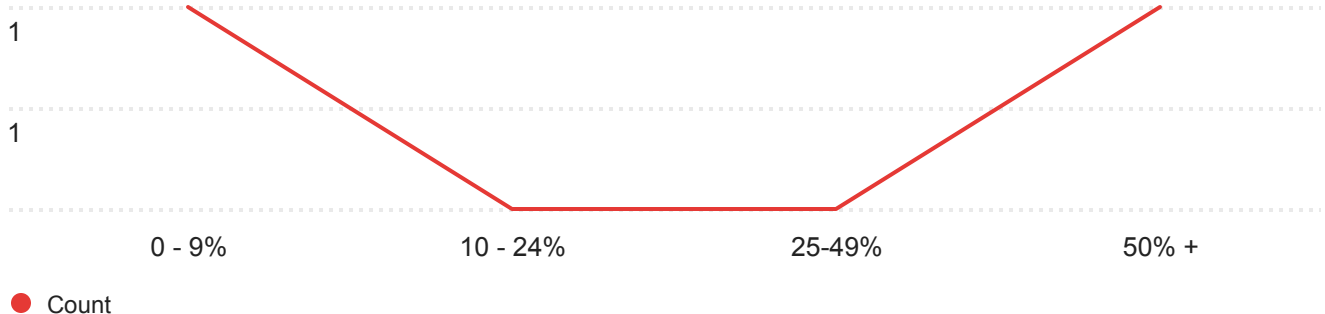
Compared to 2 years ago, have any of the following aspects changed?



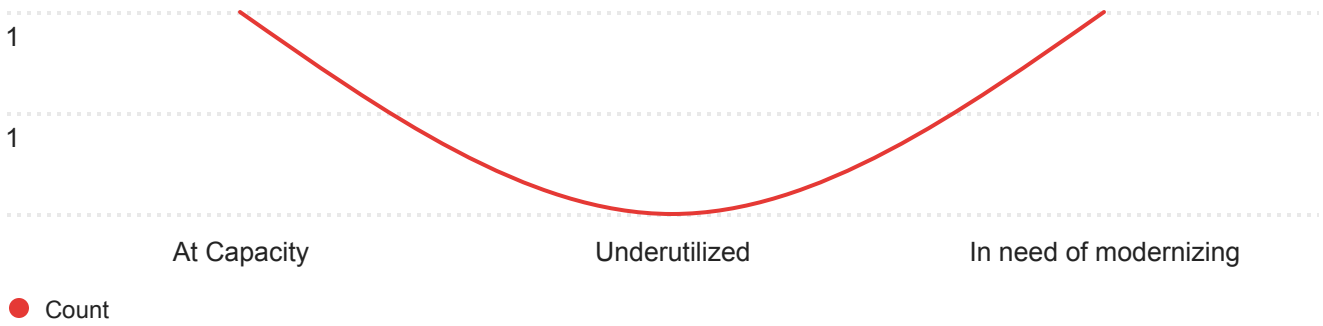
When did your company last introduce a new product to the market?



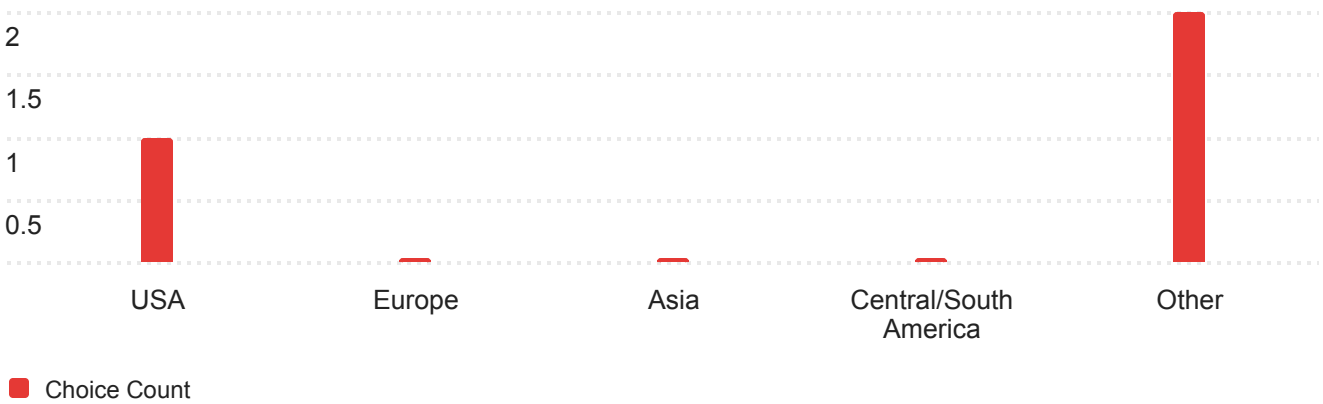
What percentage of your products' components is sourced locally?



Is your facility or equipment:

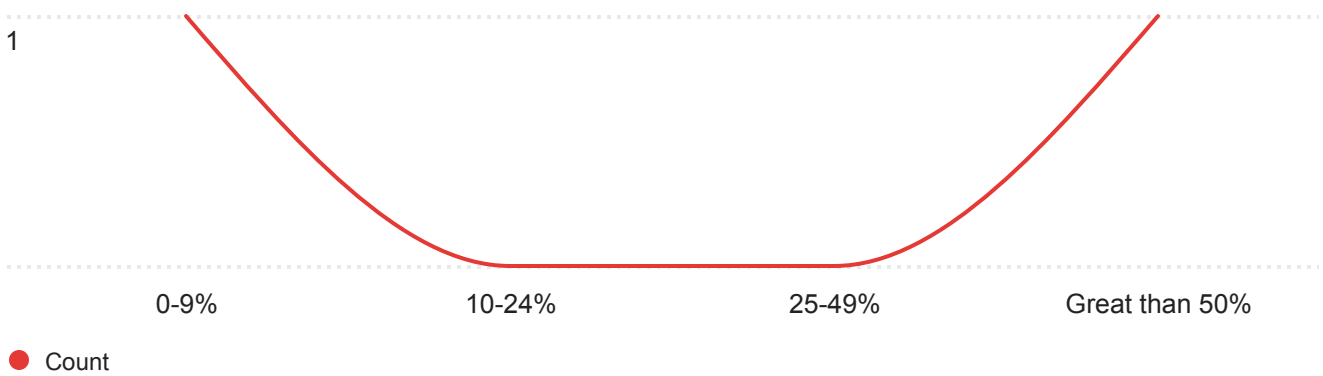


Where do you currently export to?



Other areas exported to include Nationally and North America / Mexico.

What percentage of your business sales is related to exports?



End of survey.