

LABOUR MARKET NEEDS ASSESSMENT

JUNE 2021

M|R|S|B

SOURCE: HELEN COOK, [FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/HVC/171253942/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/hvc/171253942/)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	PROFILE OF BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION RESPONDENTS	1
2.0	RECRUITMENT	5
2.1	ISSUES/FACTORS IMPACTING EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT	5
2.2	EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT METHODS	7
2.3	RECRUITING SKILLED WORKERS.....	8
3.0	JOB VACANCIES	9
3.1	QUANTIFYING JOB VACANCIES	9
3.2	TYPES OF VACANT JOBS.....	10
3.3	IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ON JOB VACANCIES.....	11
3.4	CHALLENGES CAUSED BY JOB VACANCIES.....	11
3.5	ADDRESSING JOB VACANCIES	13
4.0	SKILLS.....	16
4.1	PERCEIVED UPSKILLING NEEDS.....	16
4.2	FACTORS IMPACTING SKILL ACQUIREMENT	17
4.3	CHALLENGES CAUSED BY UNDERSKILLED EMPLOYEES	18
4.4	IN-DEMAND POSITIONS, SKILLS, AND KNOWLEDGE.....	19
5.0	TRAINING	20
5.1	EMPLOYER TRAINING EFFORTS.....	20
5.2	TRAINING ARRANGED OR FUNDED BY EMPLOYERS.....	21
5.3	TRAINING HESITANCY.....	23
5.4	TRAINING DELIVERY	25
6.0	OTHER TOPICS	28
6.1	PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM ALTERATIONS.....	28
6.2	UTILIZATION OF WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS	30
6.3	SUCCESSION PLANNING.....	31
6.4	OTHER COMMENTS.....	31
7.0	BARRIERS FACING UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS.....	32
7.1	PROFILE.....	32
7.2	BARRIERS	33
7.3	POTENTIAL ACTIONS TO REDUCE/ELIMINATE BARRIERS.....	33
8.0	RECOMMENDATIONS	34
8.1	IDENTIFY, PROMOTE, AND SUPPORT ACCESS TO EXISTING EMPLOYER SUPPORTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES	34
8.2	SEEK FUNDING FOR FOUNDATIONAL SKILL TRAINING.....	34
8.3	ORGANIZE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS.....	35
8.4	ADDRESS SECTOR-SPECIFIC TRAINING NEEDS FOR RURAL PEI'S KEY SECTORS	35
8.5	ENSURE EMPLOYER AWARENESS OF AVAILABLE SUPPORTS FOR SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE.....	36
8.6	ENSURE TRAINING INITIATIVES ARE FLEXIBLE	36
8.7	ADVOCATE FOR TRANSPORTATION SUBSIDIES	36
8.8	ADVOCATE TO EXTEND AND ENHANCE ELIGIBILITY FOR WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS.....	37
8.9	ORGANIZE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TRAINING/UNCONSCIOUS BIAS TRAINING FOR EMPLOYERS	37

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

APPENDIX B: RURAL PEI WORKFORCE SUVEY

TABLE OF FIGURES

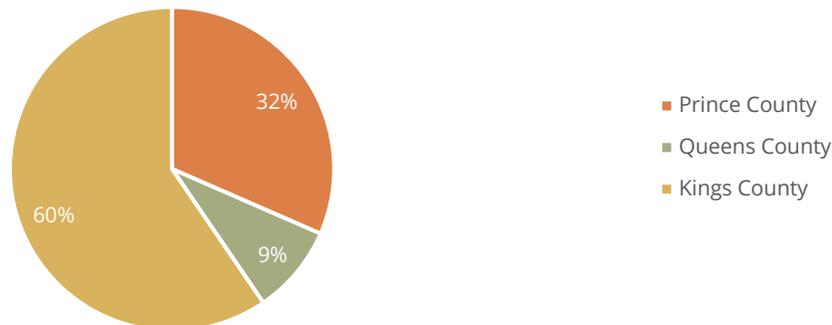
Figure 1: 60% of respondents indicated Kings County as their primary location	1
Figure 2: The majority of survey respondents described their role as owner/operator	1
Figure 3: Most respondents classified their business/organization as a for-profit entity.....	2
Figure 4: 70% of respondents have been operating for six or more years.....	2
Figure 5: Most respondents operate their business/organization on a year-round basis.....	3
Figure 6: Sectoral self-classifications of survey respondents.....	4
Figure 13: The key factors impacting the ability of respondents to recruit workers involved a lack of available applicants/workers and workers with sufficient job skills.....	5
Figure 14: Some respondents believe government wage supports impact their ability to recruit employees	6
Figure 15: The primary recruitment method utilized by respondents was employee referrals.....	7
Figure 16: A majority of the 161 respondents who answered this question faced difficulty when trying to find skilled workers to fill job vacancies.....	8
Figure 7: A majority of respondents have experienced 1 to 5 job vacancies over the past year	9
Figure 8: A majority of respondents have struggled to fill job vacancies over the past three years.....	9
Figure 10: Over half of all 168 respondents believe that government programs do not impact their ability to fill job vacancies	11
Figure 9: Job vacancies are forcing a majority of all respondents to increase the workload for other staff.....	12
Figure 11: Some survey respondents are increasing salaries or offering/increasing training to overcome the difficulties they are having with finding workings to fill job vacancies.....	13
Figure 12: Most survey respondents have not tried to fill job vacancies by recruiting international workers	15
Figure 18: Almost half of 140 survey respondents believe one to five employees will require training/retraining/skill upgrading over the next three years.....	16
Figure 17: New techniques, processes, technologies, or equipment may require existing employees to acquire new skills or knowledge of the next three years	17
Figure 19: A majority of survey respondents would provide more training for their staff, if possible.....	20
Figure 20: 65% of the 140 respondents who answered this question had taken steps to improve the skills of existing employees	20
Figure 21: 24% of training arranged or funded by all respondents was for basic training for new staff.....	21
Figure 22: The vast majority of respondents that had arranged or funded training indicated it was beneficial to their business/organization	22
Figure 23: No local training available is a barrier facing respondents that have not arranged or funded training over the past 12 months.....	24
Figure 24: Survey respondents favour employee training that would minimize the impact on operations.....	25
Figure 25: Few survey respondents feel a local training and resource centre would not be important to their business/organization	27
Figure 26: 30% of respondents who answered this question believe increasing CPP benefits would have a positive impact on their business/organization.....	28
Figure 27: 30% of respondents who answered this question believe increasing sick leave benefits offered through the EI program would have a positive impact on their business/organization.....	28
Figure 28: 23% of the 124 respondents who answered this question were not in favour of a Guaranteed Income Program.....	29
Figure 29: 15% of the 124 respondents who answered this question respondents were not in favour of a guaranteed job program.....	29
Figure 30: Employ PEI is the most commonly utilized government wage subsidy program	30
Figure 31: 28% of all respondents who answered this question have a succession plan in place.....	31
Figure 32: Primary sector of employment of underrepresented employee survey respondents.....	32

Percentages may not add exactly to 100% due to rounding.

1.0 PROFILE OF BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION RESPONDENTS

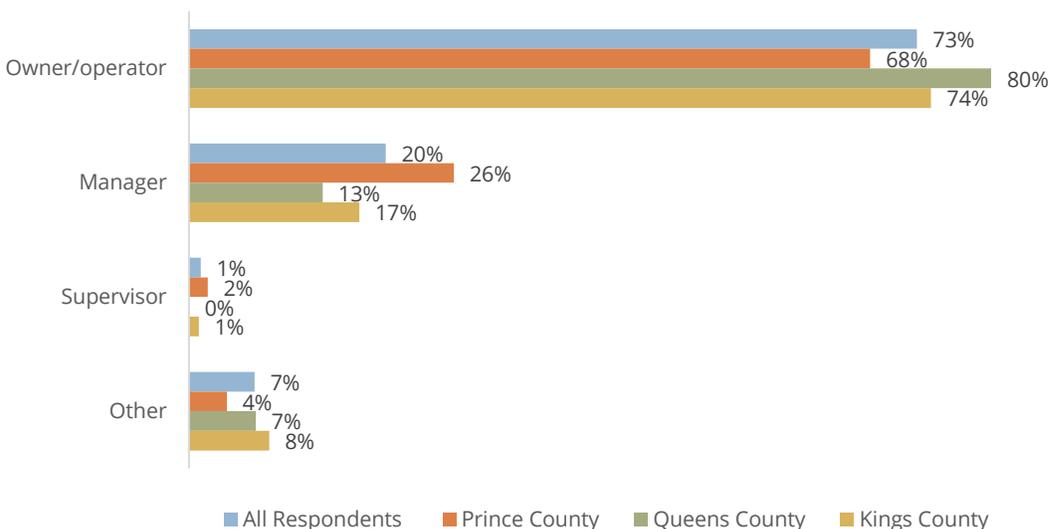
MRSB received a total of 168 responses from businesses and organizations in rural Eastern and Western PEI. Survey respondents were asked to identify the County their business or organization is primarily located. One hundred survey respondents selected Kings County as their primary location, 53 selected Prince County as their primary location, and 15 selected Queens County as their primary location. All respondents answered this question.

Figure 1: 60% of respondents indicated Kings County as their primary location



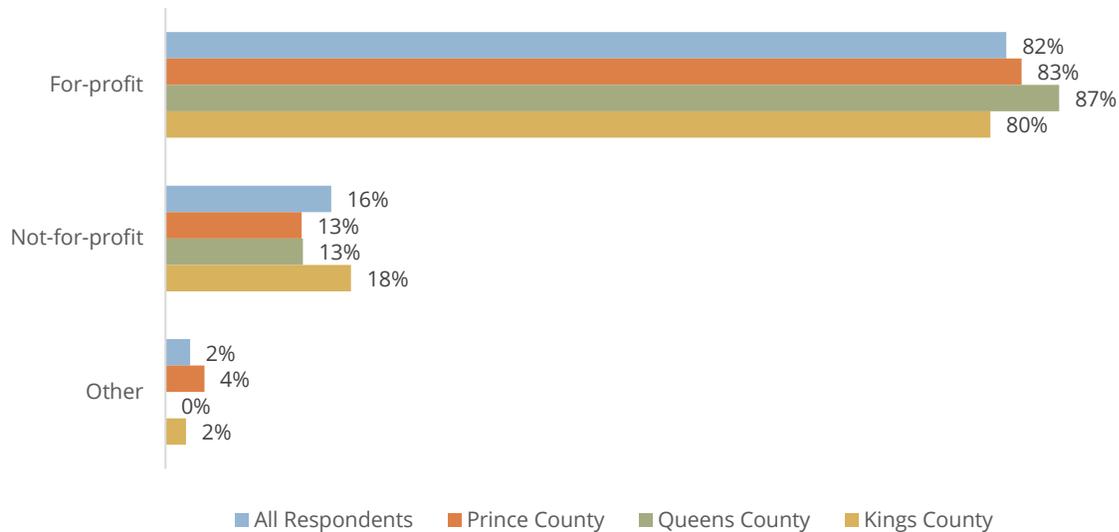
Seventy-three percent (73%, 122) of total survey respondents described their role as owner/operator, 20% (33) described their role as manager, 7% (12) described their role as other (chair, executive director, office administrator, etc.), and 1% (2) described their role as supervisor. Responses were similar across all counties. Prince County had a higher proportion of manager respondents compared to the other counties. Kings County had a higher proportion of owner/operator respondents compared to the other counties. All respondents answered this question.

Figure 2: The majority of survey respondents described their role as owner/operator



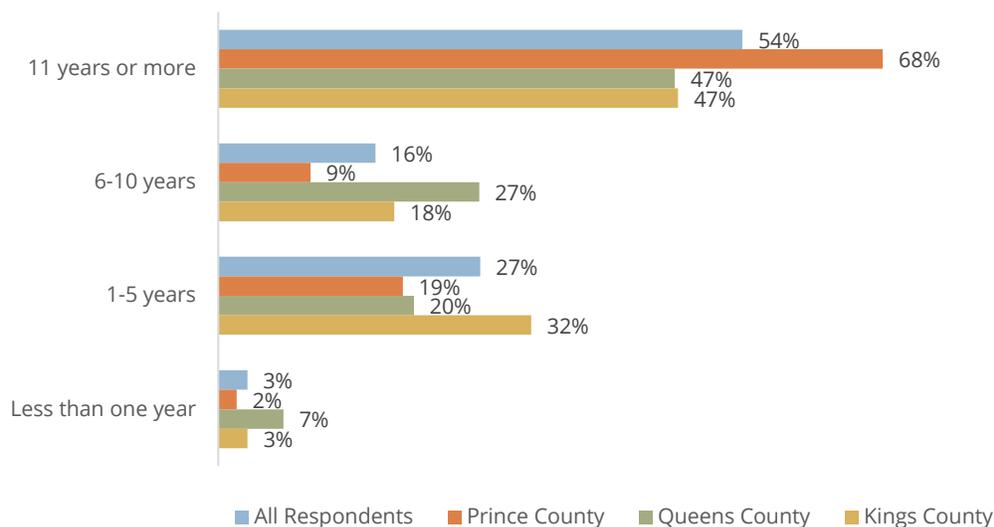
Survey respondents were asked if they classify their business/organization as a for-profit entity, not-for-profit entity, or another type of entity. Most respondents in all counties classified their business/organization as a for-profit entity. Queens County had a slightly higher percentage of for-profit respondents compared to the other counties. All respondents answered this question.

Figure 3: Most respondents classified their business/organization as a for-profit entity



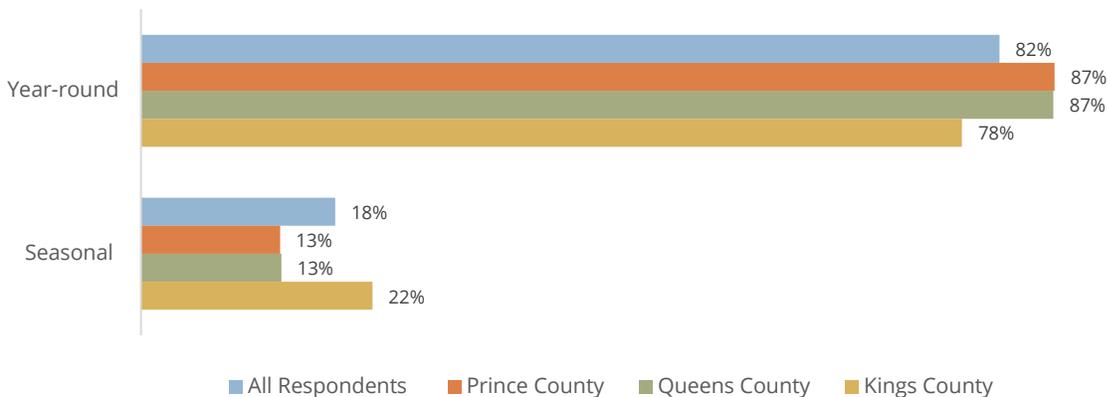
Survey respondents were asked how long their business/organization has been in operation. Over half of all respondents (54%, 90) have been operating for 11 years or more. One hundred sixty-seven (167) respondents answered this question.

Figure 4: 70% of respondents have been operating for six or more years



Respondents were asked if their business/organization operates year-round or on a seasonal basis. Kings County had a slightly higher percentage of seasonal respondents (22%, 22) compared to Prince County (13%, 7) and Queens County (13%, 2). All respondents answered this question.

Figure 5: Most respondents operate their business/organization on a year-round basis



Survey respondents were asked how many full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees their business/organization usually employs. The central tendency of the data was measured with a median average because median averages are less affected by outliers and skewed data compared to mean and mode averages. One hundred sixty-four (164) respondents answered this question.

Table 1: Most respondents have approximately four full-time employees

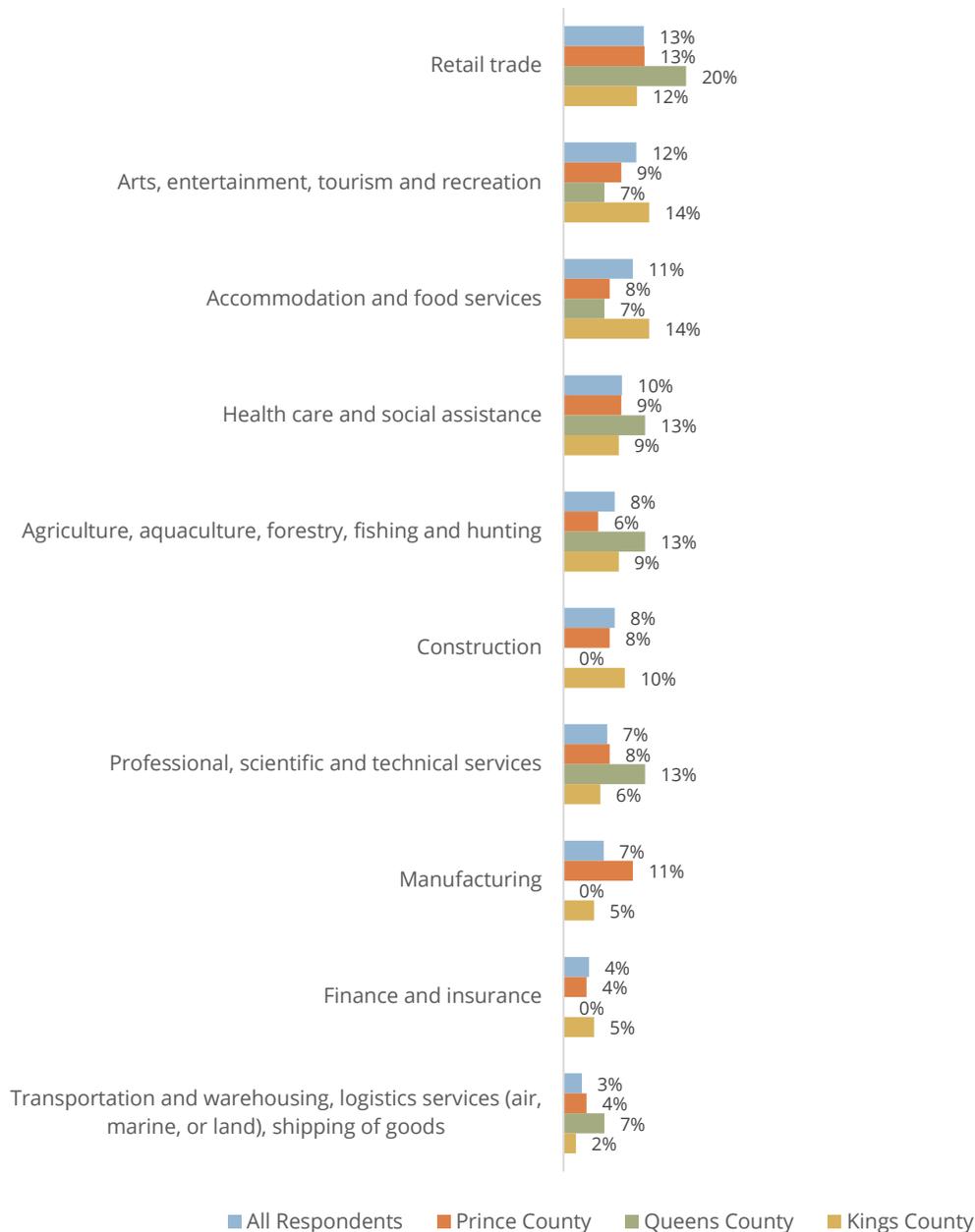
	All Respondents	Prince	Queens	Kings
Median number of full-time employees	4	5	4	4
Median number of part-time employees	2	2	2.5	1
Median number of Seasonal Employees	3	3	10	3

Survey respondents were asked what sector their business/organization primarily operates in. Answer choices were based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), with modifications made to better represent the economic landscape of rural Eastern and Western PEI. The most common sectors of survey respondents were:

1. Retail trade (13%, 22)
2. Arts, entertainment, tourism and recreation (12%, 20 respondents)
3. Accommodation and food services (11%, 18 respondents)
4. Health care and social assistance (10%, 17 respondents)
5. Agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (8%, 13 respondents)

Figure 6 displays a breakdown of sectoral self-classifications. Sectoral self-classifications that received four or less responses are not shown in Figure six. Survey respondents that answered other and chose to describe their sector were sorted into the appropriate categories. The remaining eight respondents that answered other and could not be sorted into an available answer choice are employed in the pet care/grooming industry and automotive sales and service industry. One hundred sixty-six (166) respondents answered this question.

Figure 6: Sectoral self-classifications of survey respondents



2.0 RECRUITMENT

2.1 ISSUES/FACTORS IMPACTING EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

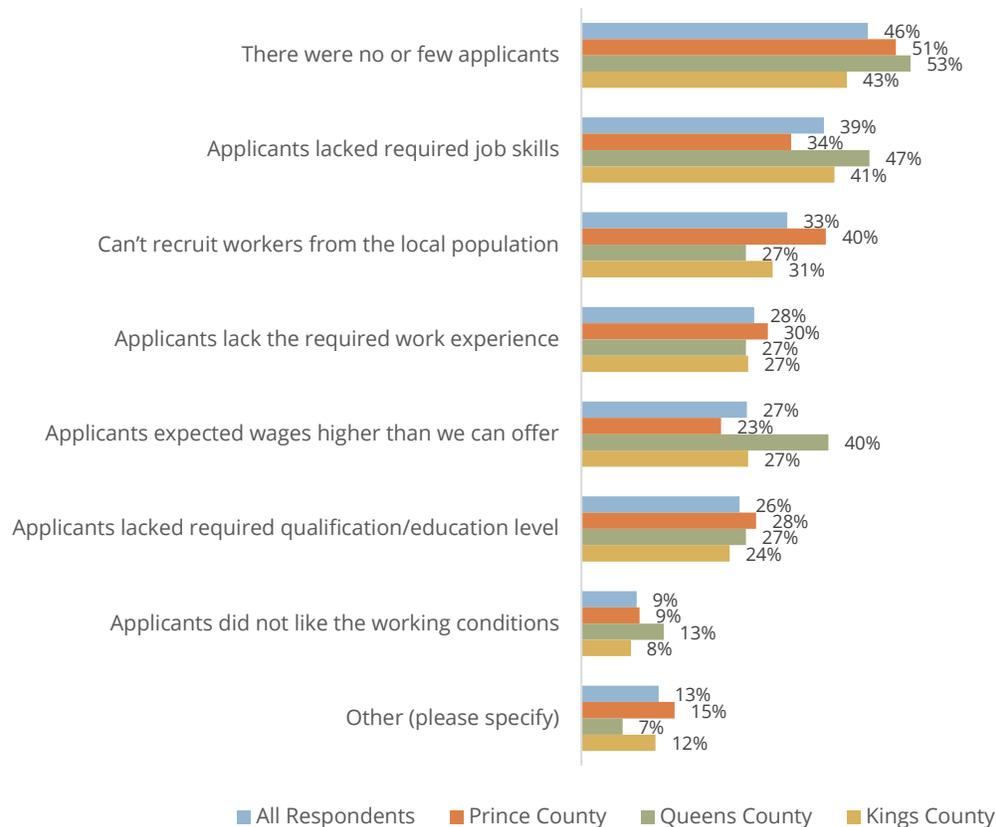
Respondents were presented with a list of **common issues impacting recruitment** and asked to select the answer choices **affecting their ability to recruit workers to fill vacant jobs**.

The most significant issues impacting the ability of all respondents to recruit workers to fill job vacancies were:

- There were no or few applicants (46%, 78)
- Applicants lacked the required job skills (39%, 66)
- Can't recruit workers from the local population (33%, 56)

The majority of respondents that answered 'other' to this question indicated that the question did not apply to their business/organization. The remaining respondents answering 'other' to this question listed the issues of people not wanting to work due to government wage supports (e.g. Employment Insurance), positive experiences with recruiting employees, and not needing to hire employees. One hundred thirty-seven (137) respondents answered this question.

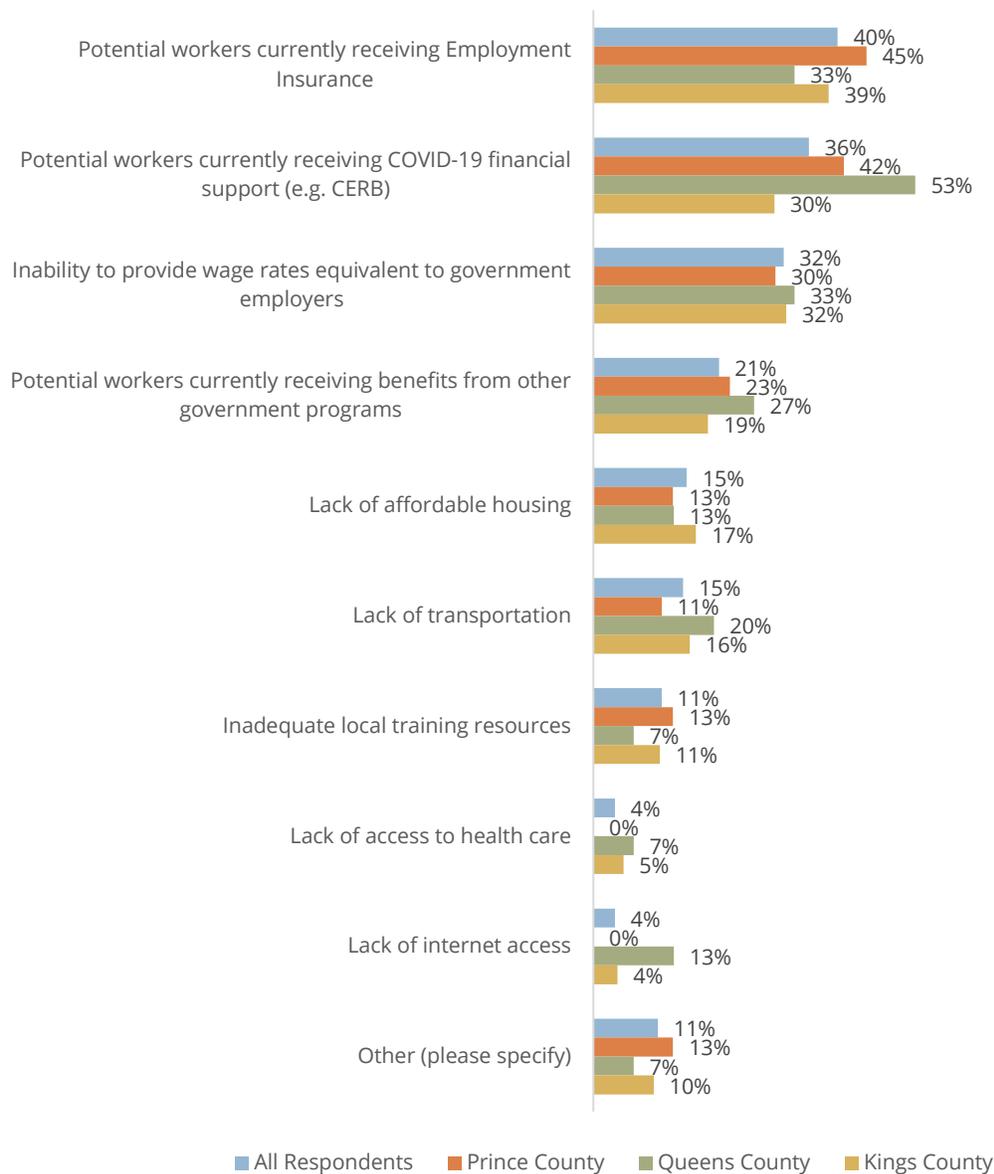
Figure 7: The key factors impacting the ability of respondents to recruit workers involved a lack of available applicants/workers and workers with sufficient job skills



Survey respondents were presented with a list of **external factors impacting their ability to recruit workers to fill vacant jobs**. The list of external factors contained answer choices that are common external issues facing businesses/organizations in rural PEI. **The first, second, and fourth most selected responses by all respondents involved government wage supports.**

The majority of respondents answering other to this question either did not apply to them, or they rephrased available answer choices. Other factors described by these respondents were external factors such as difficulty attracting employees to rural areas and competition from other employers. One hundred twenty-seven (127) respondents answered this question.

Figure 8: Some respondents believe government wage supports impact their ability to recruit employees

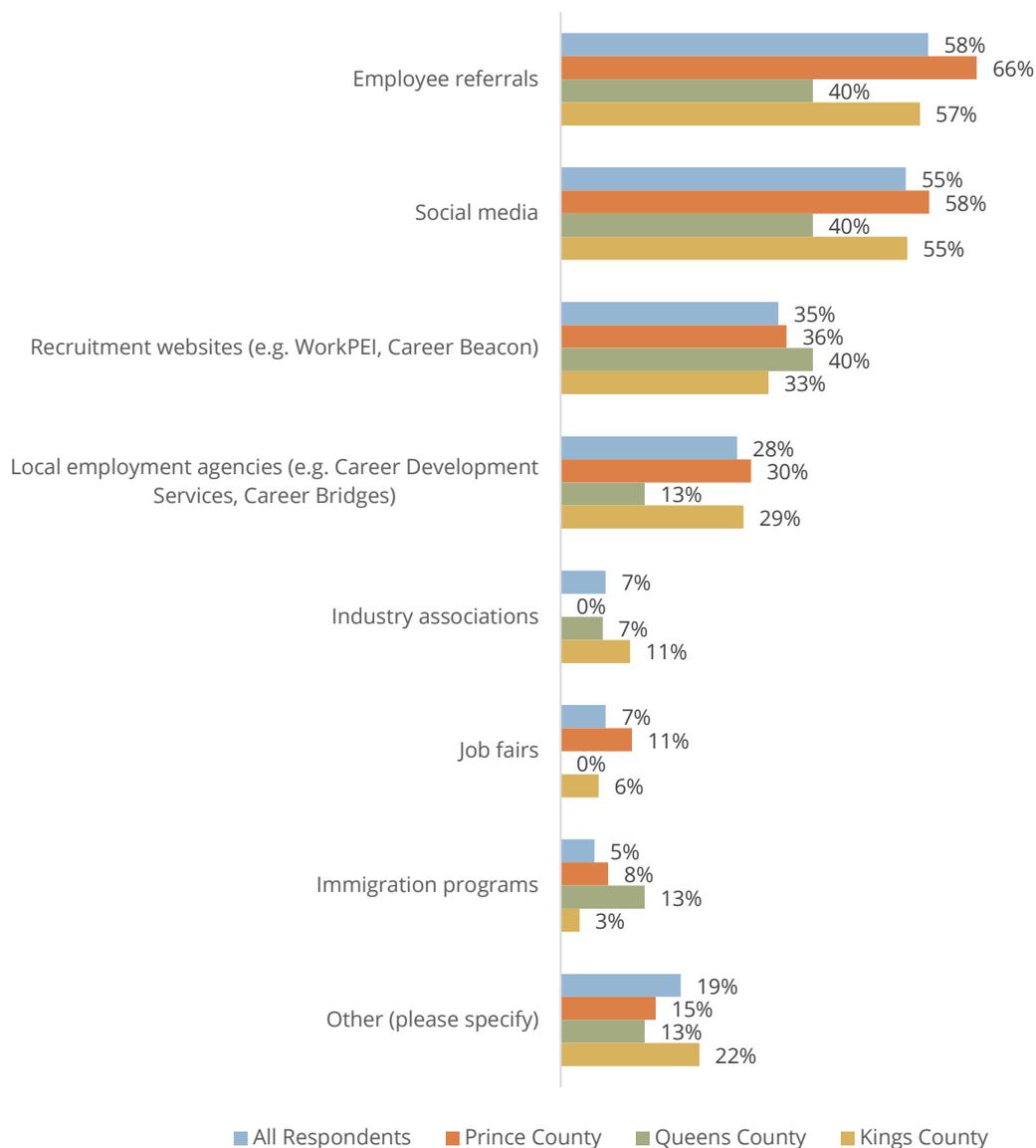


2.2 EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT METHODS

Respondents were asked how their business/organization typically finds workers to fill vacant jobs. The primary recruitment methods utilized by respondents were employee referrals (58%, 98), social media (55%, 92), and recruitment websites (35%, 58).

Respondents answering 'other' to this question listed the recruitment methods of network utilization (e.g. family, friends, past employees), word of mouth, posts on university/college job boards, community knowledge, print media, Kijiji, and internal websites. One hundred fifty-three (153) respondents answered this question.

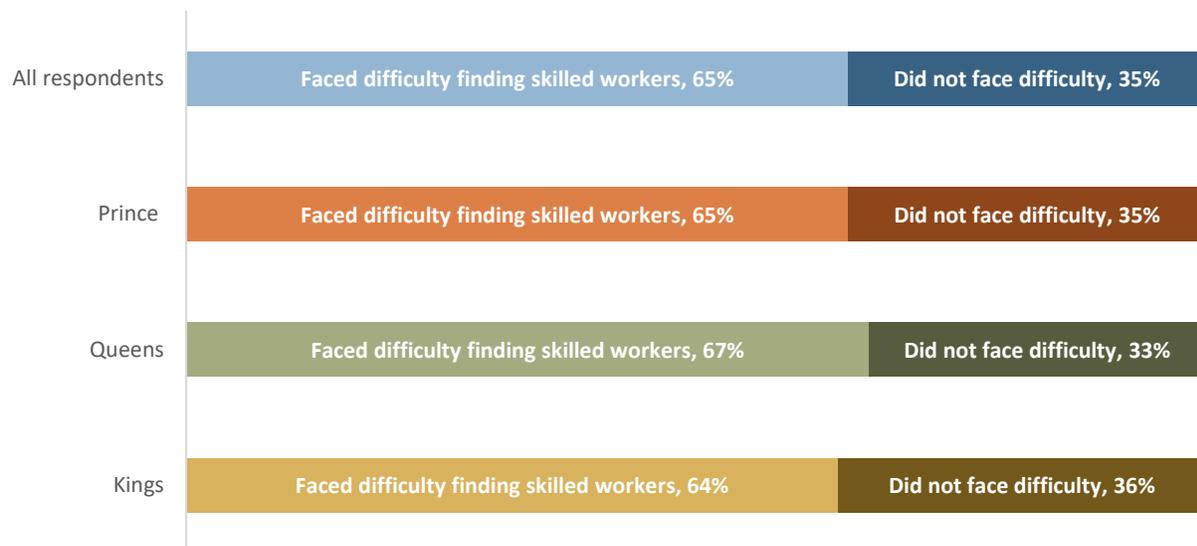
Figure 9: The primary recruitment method utilized by respondents was employee referrals



2.3 RECRUITING SKILLED WORKERS

Over the past three years, 65% of the 161 respondents who answered this question have faced difficulty finding skilled workers to fill job vacancies. One hundred sixty-one (161) respondents answered this question.

Figure 10: A majority of the 161 respondents who answered this question faced difficulty when trying to find skilled workers to fill job vacancies



Respondents were asked an open-ended question **to identify the specific skills they are having difficulty finding when hiring**. Ninety-six (96) respondents answered this question. Responses to this question were varied and non-specific. The most common themes were:

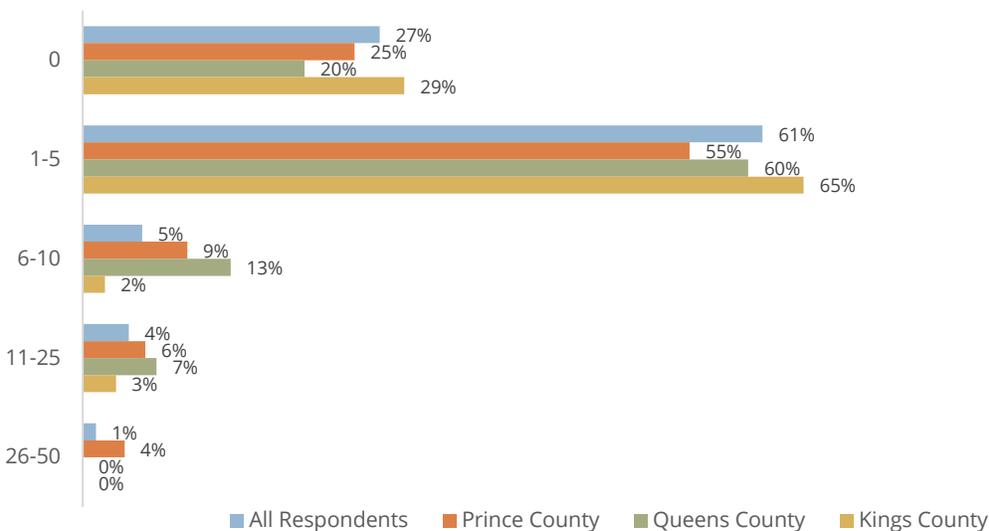
- **Computer and IT Skills:** foundational computer skills, unable to use specific computer programs such as AutoCAD, Quick Books, and Microsoft Office Suite
- **Work Ethic/Aptitude:** work ethic and foundational employment skills such as punctuality, social skills, trustworthiness, and attentiveness
- **Other Specific Skills:** welding, carpentry, graphic design, social media skills, chef/cook, bookkeeper, accounting, resident care worker, brewing, and laser machine cutting

3.0 JOB VACANCIES

3.1 QUANTIFYING JOB VACANCIES

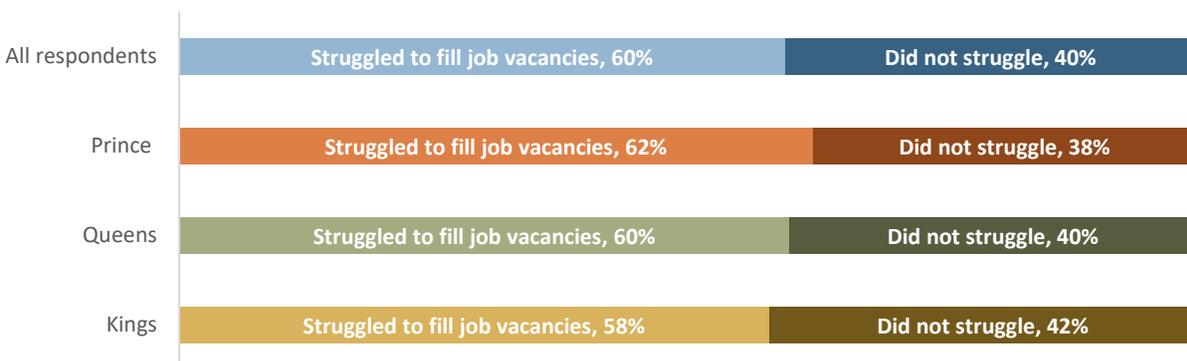
Survey respondents were asked how many job vacancies their business/organization has experienced over the past year. Twenty-seven percent (27%, 45) of respondents have not had any job vacancies over the past year. Sixty-one percent (61%, 102) of respondents have experienced one to five job vacancies over the past year. Two businesses/organizations in Prince County have experienced 26-50 job vacancies over the past year. One hundred sixty-six (166) respondents answered this question.

Figure 11: A majority of respondents have experienced 1 to 5 job vacancies over the past year



Respondents were asked if they struggled to fill job vacancies over the past three years. **Sixty percent (60%, 100) of all respondents have struggled to fill job vacancies over the past three years.** All respondents answered this question.

Figure 12: A majority of respondents have struggled to fill job vacancies over the past three years



3.2 TYPES OF VACANT JOBS

Survey respondents were asked to list the vacant jobs that are typically the most difficult to fill. This information was collected through an open-ended question. One hundred fifteen (115) respondents answered this question. According to survey respondents, the most difficult vacant positions to fill are:

- Labourer (17)
- Kitchen staff (15)
- Bookkeeper (11)
- Welder (10)
- Front-of-house restaurant staff (8)
- Administrator (7)
- Retail and sales staff (6)
- Carpenter (5)
- Equipment operator (4)
- Manager (4)
- Painter (4)

Difficult to fill vacant positions that received three comments include:

- Driver
- Engineer
- Mechanic
- Researcher
- Resident care worker
- Skilled labourer (unspecified)
- Supervisor

Difficult to fill vacant positions that received two comments include:

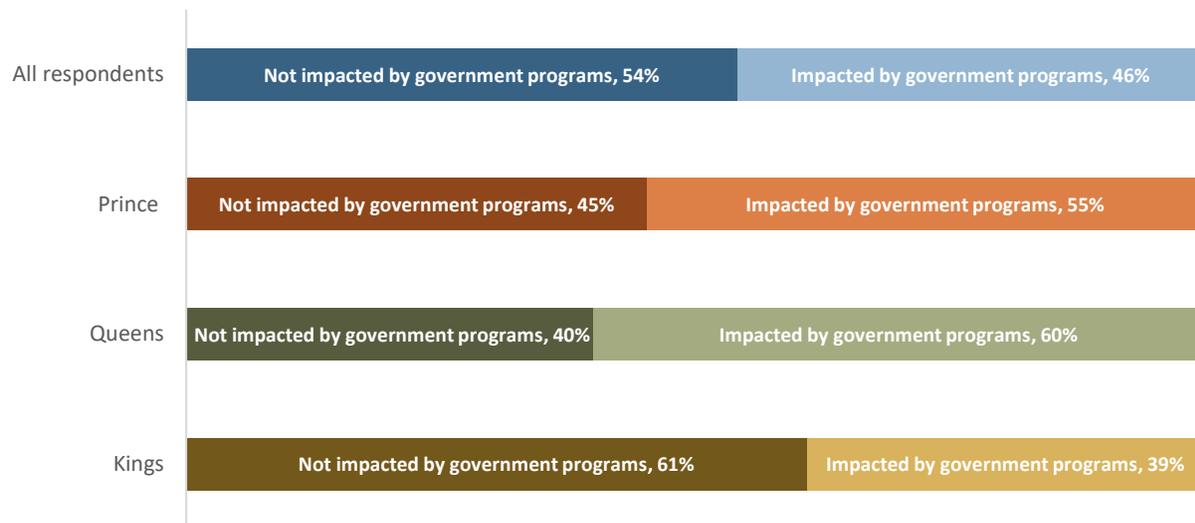
- Cleaner
- Coordinator
- Customer service
- Delivery person
- Direct support workers
- Maintenance worker
- Part-time staff
- Woodworker

Difficult-to-fill vacant positions that received one comment are not listed.

3.3 IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ON JOB VACANCIES

Survey respondents were asked **if government programs impact their ability to fill vacant jobs**. Slightly under half of all respondents indicated that government programs impact their ability to fill job vacancies. Forty-six percent (46%) of all respondents believe that government programs impact their ability to fill job vacancies. All respondents answered this question.

Figure 13: Over half of all 168 respondents believe that government programs do not impact their ability to fill job vacancies



Respondents were asked an open-ended question, asking them to **list government programs they believe impact their ability to fill vacant jobs**. Sixty-seven (67) respondents answered this question. The programs receiving five or more mentions were:

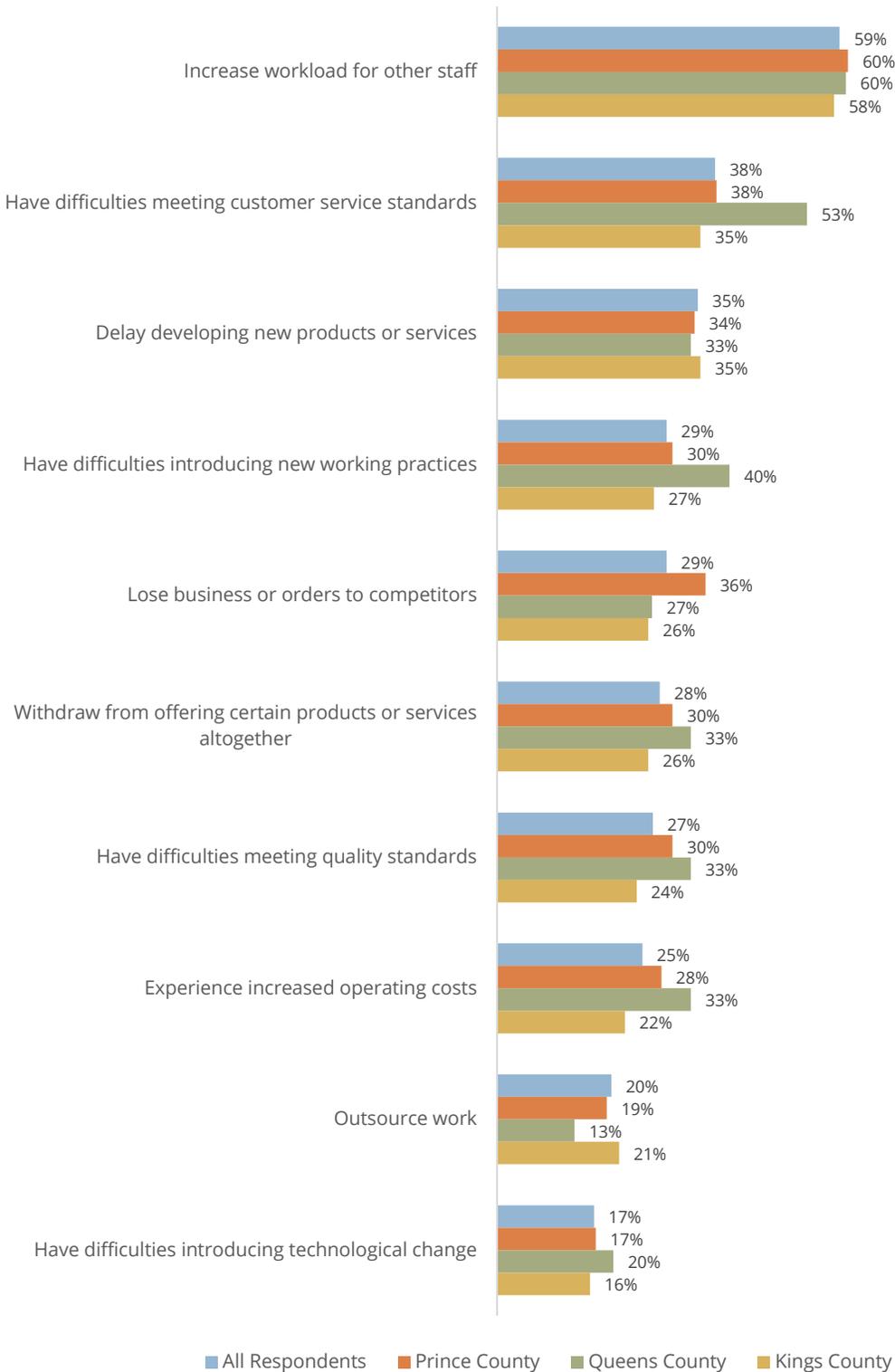
1. Canada Emergency Response Benefit (46)
2. Employment Insurance (32)
3. Social Assistance (9)

Various wage support programs received less than five mentions. The most mentioned wage support programs were the Jobs for Youth Program, the Rural Jobs Initiative, and the Canada Summer Jobs Program.

3.4 CHALLENGES CAUSED BY JOB VACANCIES

Respondents were presented with a list of **common challenges facing businesses/organizations that struggle to fill vacant jobs**. Respondents indicated that difficulties filling vacant positions cause increased workload for other staff (59%, 99), difficulty meeting customer service standards (38%, 63), and delaying the development of new products or services (35%, 58). One hundred sixty (160) respondents answered this question.

Figure 14: Job vacancies are forcing a majority of all respondents to increase the workload for other staff

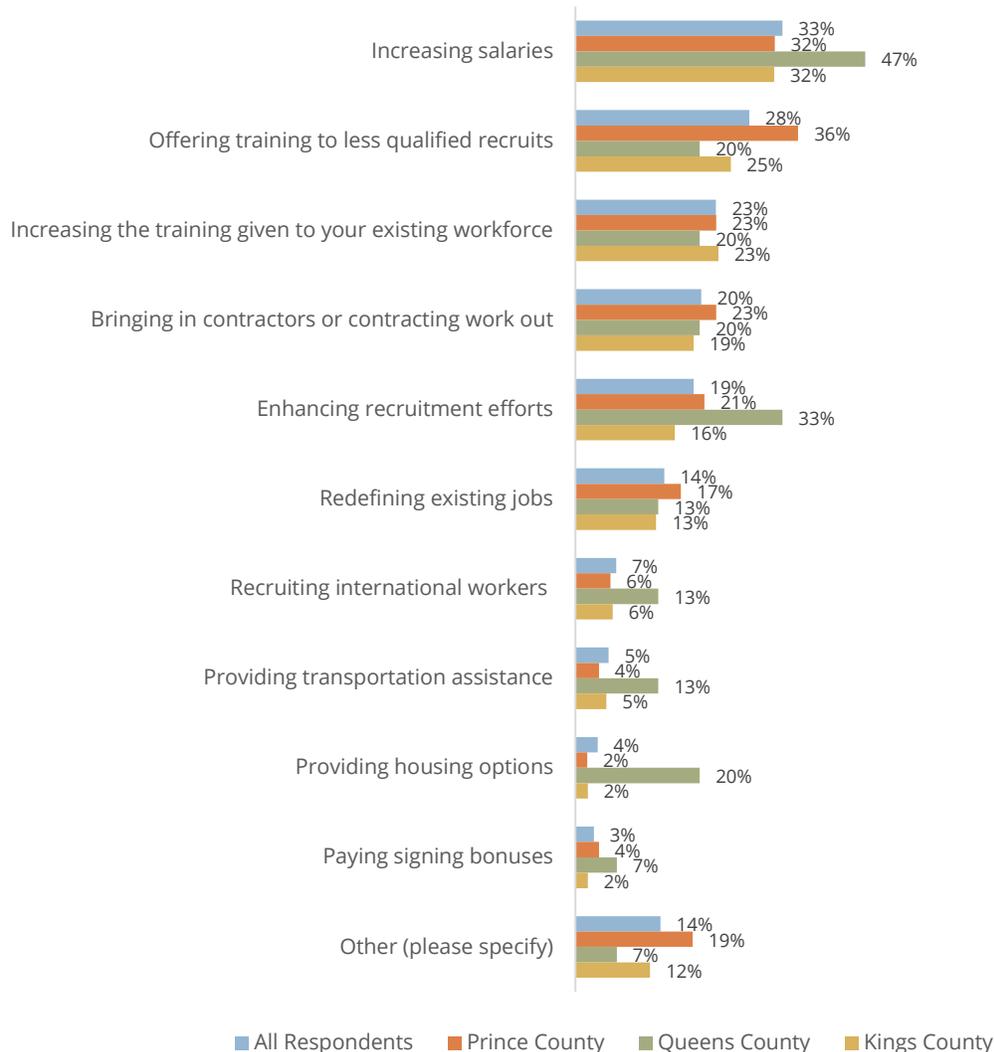


3.5 ADDRESSING JOB VACANCIES

Respondents were asked what **steps they were taking to overcome the difficulties they are having with finding workers to fill vacant jobs**. Thirty-three percent (33%, 56) of respondents indicated they have increased salaries, 28% (47) of all respondents have offered training to less qualified recruits, and 23% (38) of all respondents have increased the training given to their existing workforce.

The majority of respondents that answered 'other' to this question indicated that it did not apply to their business/organization. The remaining relevant responses were working more hours to compensate, relying on family/friends to help out, and utilizing employee referrals. One hundred nineteen (119) respondents answered this question.

Figure 15: Some survey respondents are increasing salaries or offering/increasing training to overcome the difficulties they are having with finding workings to fill job vacancies



3.5.1 JOB VACANCY ASSISTANCE IDENTIFIED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Respondents were asked an open-ended question **to identify the type of assistance that would help their business/organization address hard-to-fill job vacancies**. One hundred sixteen (116) respondents answered this question. The types of assistance, number of respondents mentioning that type of assistance, and central themes from the comments provided were:

Wage Subsidies (62)

- Wage subsidies for new employees to assist with on-the-job training costs
- Universal wages subsidies that are not tied to citizenship, age, or Employment Insurance
- Wage subsidies that enable employers to offer higher wages for hard-to-fill job vacancies
- Wage subsidies for specific industries with hard-to-fill job vacancies (e.g. restaurant industry)
- Wage subsidies allowing the employers to provide bonuses to new or returning employees

Training Opportunities and Assistance (45)

- Co-op placements for young people and students
- Subsidized training for existing and mid-career employees
- Subsidized training for new employees
- Subsidized training offered locally or online
- Industry-specific training opportunities

Alter or Eliminate Unemployment Supports (16)

- Make EI/CERB more difficult to access
- Lower the financial supports provided to unemployed people
- Eliminate CERB/EI

Availability of Affordable Housing (6)

- Enhance the supply and availability of affordable housing options

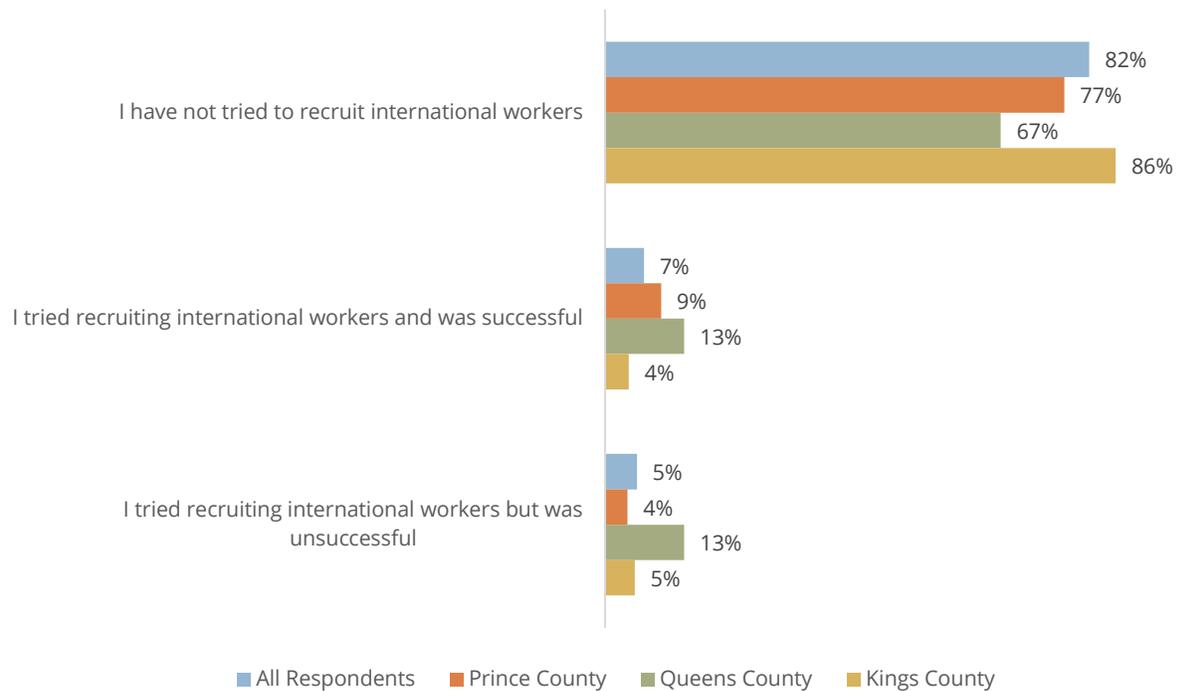
Transportation Assistance (6)

- Travel bursaries to encourage City residents to work in rural areas

3.5.2 UTILIZING INTERNATIONAL WORKERS TO ADDRESS JOB VACANCIES

Respondents were asked **if they have attempted to fill job vacancies by recruiting international workers**. Eighty-two percent (82%, 137) of respondents have not attempted to fill job vacancies by recruiting international workers. Of the 12% (20) of respondents that had tried to fill job vacancies by recruiting international workers, 11 were successful, and nine were unsuccessful. One hundred fifty-seven (157) respondents answered this question.

Figure 16: Most survey respondents have not tried to fill job vacancies by recruiting international workers



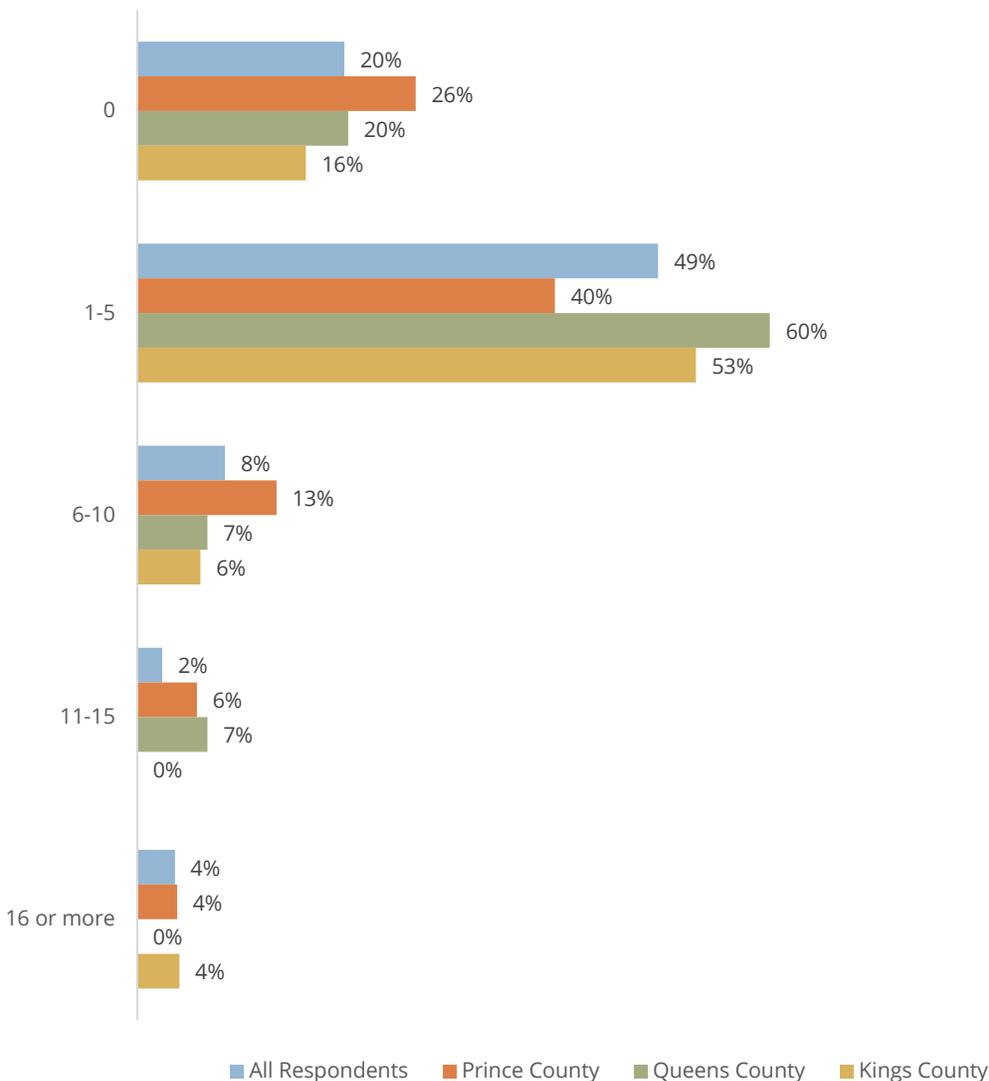
Respondents were asked if they would like to receive information on international worker/immigration programs. Thirty-two percent (32%, 48) of respondents indicated **they would like to receive information on international worker/immigration programs**. One hundred sixty-one (161) respondents answered this question.

4.0 SKILLS

4.1 PERCEIVED UPSKILLING NEEDS

Survey respondents were asked **how many employees in their business/organization will require some sort of upgrading or retraining in the next three years**. Forty-nine percent (49%, 83) of respondents indicated that 1-5 employees would require training, retraining, or skill upgrading over the next three years. Twenty percent (20%, 34) of all respondents do not think any employees will require training, retraining, or skill upgrading over the next three years. One hundred forty (140) respondents answered this question.

Figure 17: Almost half of 140 survey respondents believe one to five employees will require training/retraining/skill upgrading over the next three years

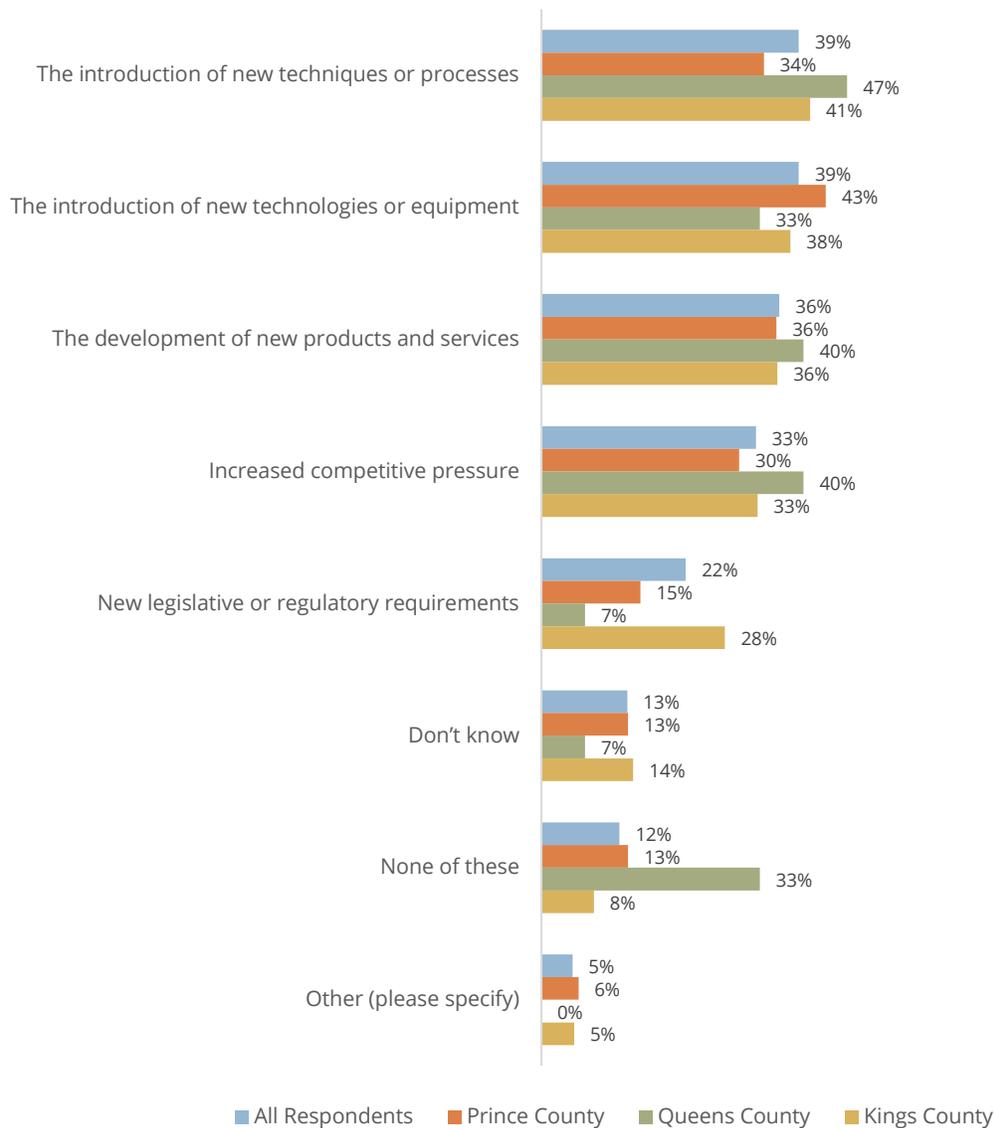


4.2 FACTORS IMPACTING SKILL ACQUIREMENT

Survey respondents were asked **which factors will require existing employees to acquire new skills or knowledge over the next three years**. Some survey respondents believe introducing new techniques or processes (39%, 66) and introducing new technologies or equipment (39%, 66) will necessitate existing employees to acquire new skills. One hundred forty-six (146) respondents answered this question.

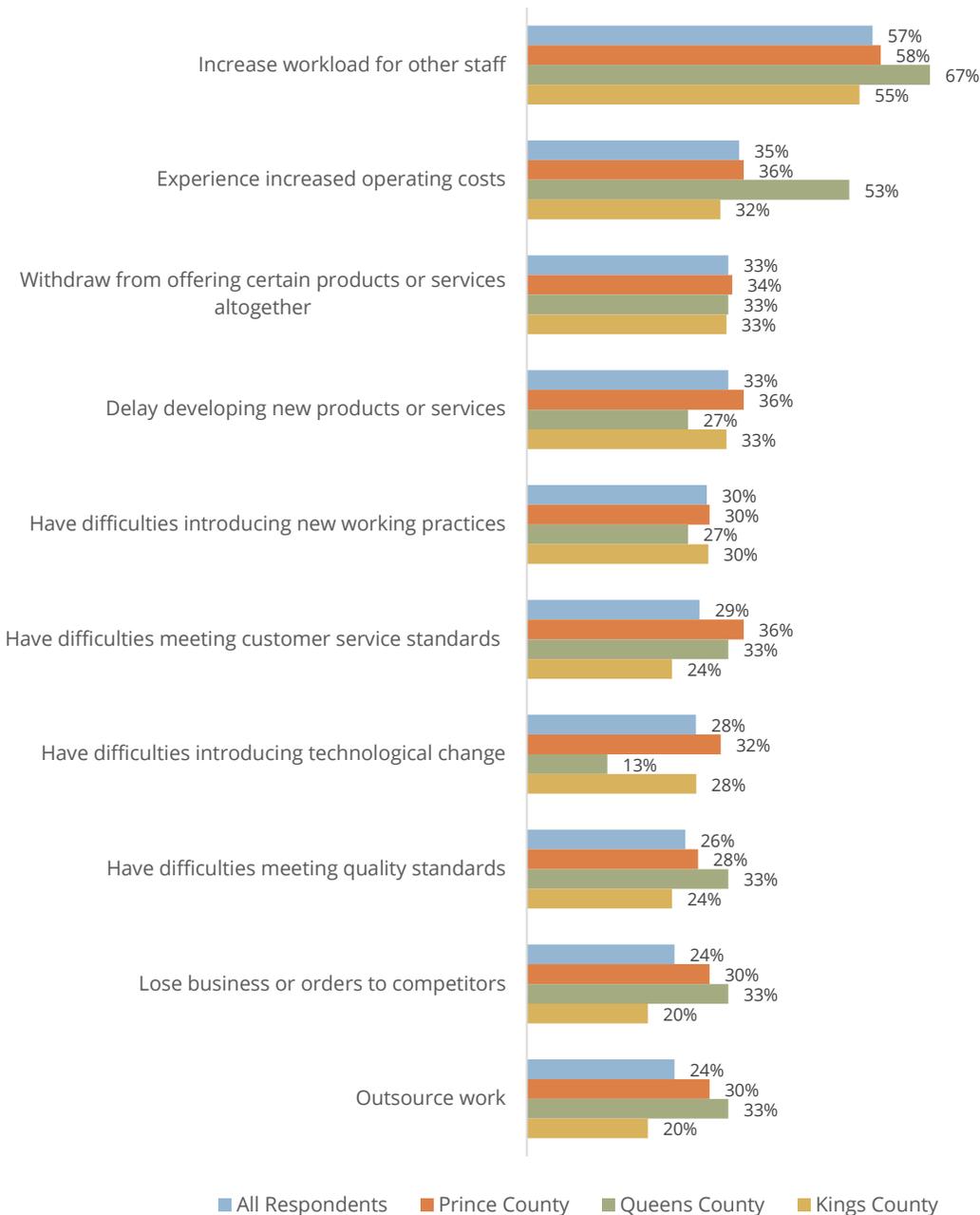
Respondents answering 'other' to this question listed factors that were not relevant to the question being asked.

Figure 18: New techniques, processes, technologies, or equipment may require existing employees to acquire new skills or knowledge of the next three years



4.3 CHALLENGES CAUSED BY UNDERSKILLED EMPLOYEES

Survey respondents were asked **if the fact that some employees are not fully skilled is causing their business/organization to face challenges** such as losing business to competitors or delaying developing new products or services. Fifty-seven percent (57%, 96) indicated that a lack of skilled employees creates an increased workload for other staff. This answer choice received 22% more responses than the next most popular answer, increased operating costs (35%, 59). One hundred forty-two (142) respondents answered this question.



4.4 IN-DEMAND POSITIONS, SKILLS, AND KNOWLEDGE

Survey respondents were asked **to identify which positions are most in need of acquiring new skills or knowledge**. Ninety-nine (99) respondents answered this question. Survey respondents indicated the positions most in need of acquiring new skills or knowledge were:

1. Bookkeepers (23)
2. Administrators (19)
3. Managers (11)
4. Labourers (11)
5. Kitchen staff/cooks (9)
6. Professional service positions (8)
7. Front-line staff/reception staff (6)
8. Care workers (6)
9. Mechanics (5)
10. Carpenters (5)
11. Equipment operators (3)
12. Welders (3)
13. Drivers (2)
14. Painters (2)
15. Technicians (2)
16. Other skilled workers (2)

Respondents were asked an open-ended question to **identify the specific skills or knowledge that will need to be acquired by the positions most in need of acquiring new skills**. Ninety-six (96) respondents answered this question. The types of skills and knowledge, number of respondents mentioning that type of skill or knowledge, and central themes from the comments provided were:

- **Software and Computer Skills (41):** foundational computer skills, the ability to adapt to changing technology and software, general software skills and job-specific software skills such as Microsoft Office Suite and Salesforce, recordkeeping software, data entry software, and automation software
- **Job-specific Skills (20):** trade-specific skills and learning in-house processes
- **Technical Skills (11):** job-specific technical skills such as operating and maintaining new equipment

Other areas requiring specific skills or knowledge were bookkeeping (7), health and safety (7), kitchen/food preparation (5), management/supervision (5), human resources (5), administration (3), marketing (3), and retail (3). These responses did not identify specific skills or knowledge that would need to be acquired by these positions.

5.0 TRAINING

5.1 EMPLOYER TRAINING EFFORTS

Survey respondents were asked if, given the opportunity, would they provide more training for their staff. **Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the 121 respondents who answered this question would provide more training for their staff, if possible.** One hundred twenty-one (121) respondents answered this question.

Figure 19: A majority of survey respondents would provide more training for their staff, if possible



Survey respondents were asked **if their business/organization has taken any steps to improve the skills of existing employees.** Sixty-five percent (65%) of the 140 respondents who answered this question have taken steps to improve the skills of existing employees. One hundred forty (140) respondents answered this question.

Figure 20: 65% of the 140 respondents who answered this question had taken steps to improve the skills of existing employees



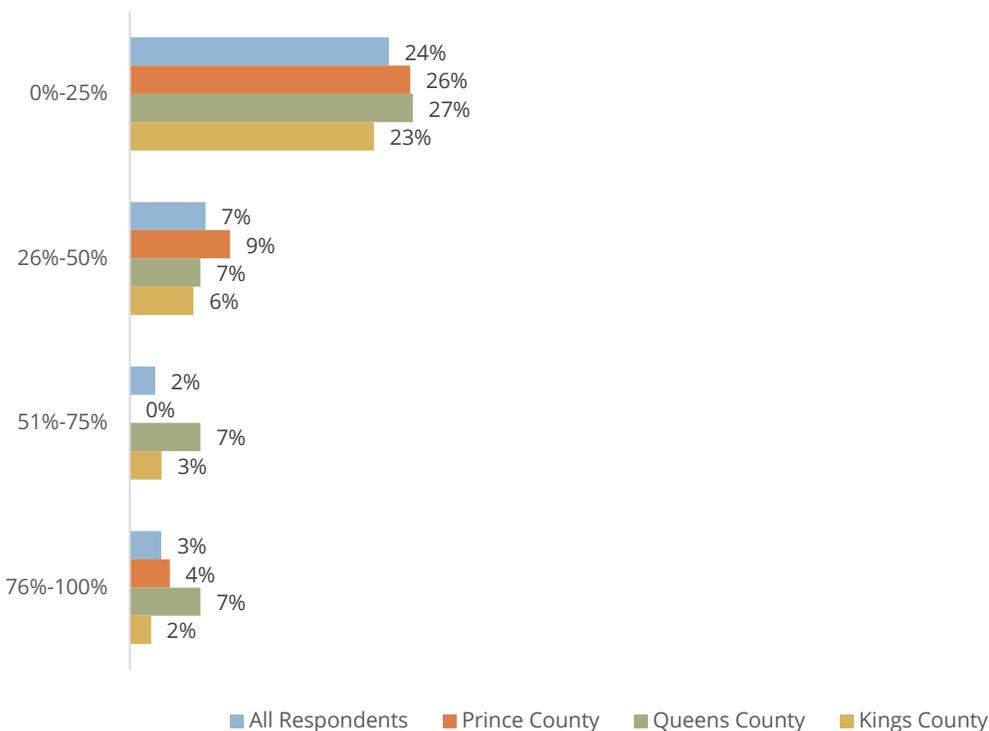
5.2 TRAINING ARRANGED OR FUNDED BY EMPLOYERS

Survey respondents were then asked if, **over the past 12 months, their business/organization has arranged or funded training for employees.** Thirty-eight percent (38%) or sixty-three (63) survey respondents had arranged or funded training for employees over the past 12 months. One hundred forty-one (141) respondents answered this question.

The 63 respondents who had arranged or funded training for employees were then asked a series of questions on the arranged or funded training. These 63 respondents were asked if the training they arranged or funded was beneficial, how much of the training was basic training for new staff, and if they had any comments related to the training they arranged or funded. *Only the 63 respondents that had arranged or funded training for employees over the past 12 months were eligible to answer these questions.*

Respondents were asked **how much of the training they arranged or funded was basic training for staff when they start a new job.** In many industries, it is common for new staff to undertake basic training such as onboarding, safety courses, or service training to ensure they are prepared for their new role. This question was asked to determine if a large percentage of training being arranged or funded was basic or routine. Thirty-one percent (31%, 52) survey respondents indicated that 0%-50% of the training they arranged or funded was basic training for staff when they start a new job. Sixty-two (61) of the 63 eligible respondents answered this question.

Figure 21: 24% of training arranged or funded by all respondents was for basic training for new staff



Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question on which positions they had arranged or funded training for over the past year. Fifty-eight (58) of the 63 eligible respondents answered this question. The positions survey respondents had arranged or funded training for over the past year were:

1. Administrators (10)
2. Managers/supervisors (8)
3. Front-line staff/customer service staff (8)
4. Bookkeeping/accounting staff (6)
5. All staff positions (6)
6. Skilled labourers – skills not specified (6)
7. Care workers (3)
8. Drivers (3)
9. Marketers/content creators (3)
10. Labourers (3)
11. Carpenters (2)
12. Researchers (2)
13. Cooks/kitchen staff (2)

Sixty (60) of the 63 eligible respondents answered a question on if the training they had arranged or funded has been beneficial to their business/organization. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the 63 eligible respondents indicated the training they arranged or funded was beneficial to their business/organization.

Figure 22: The vast majority of respondents that had arranged or funded training indicated it was beneficial to their business/organization



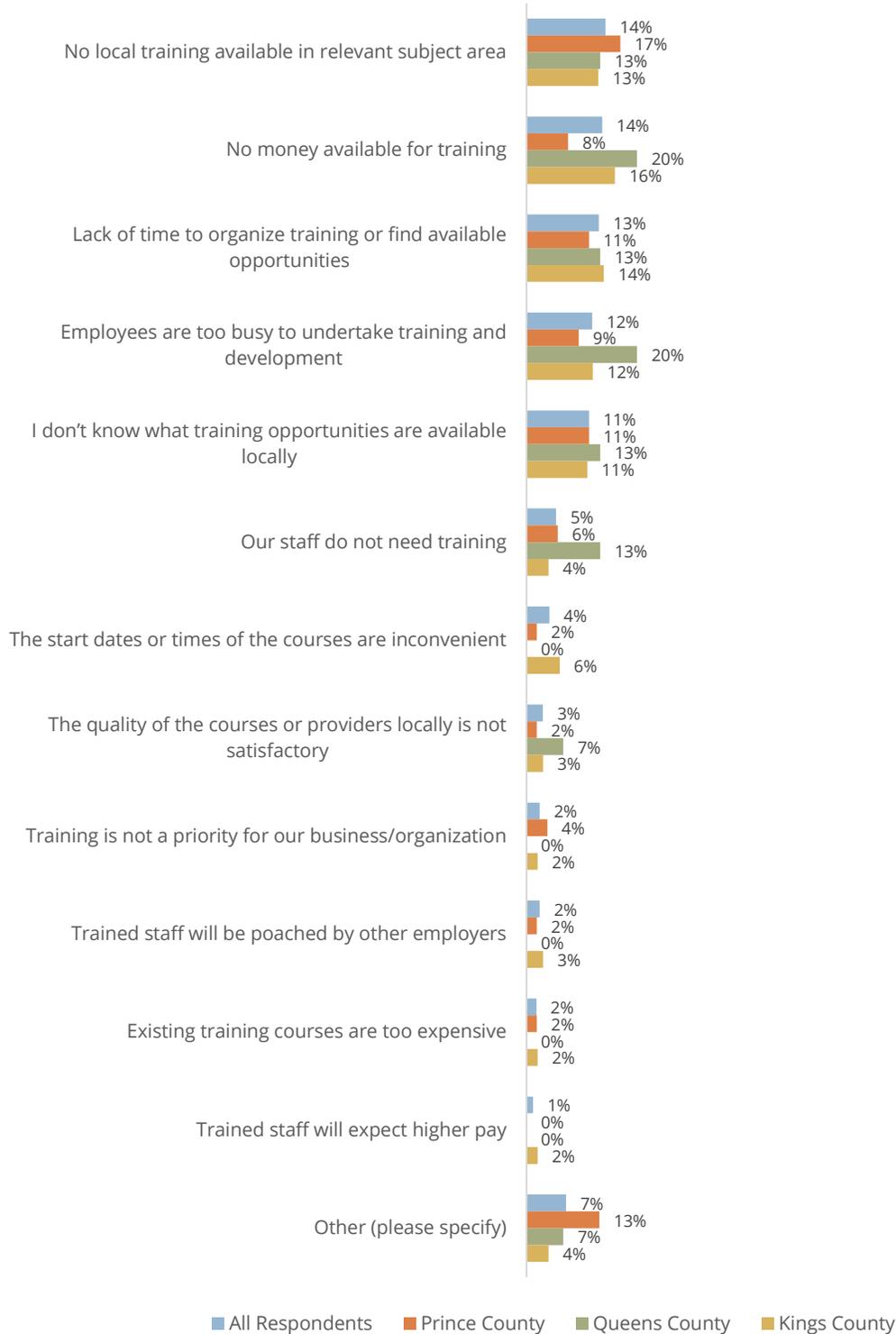
Respondents were asked if they had **any comments on the training they arranged or funded**. This question was asked to gain a better understanding of available training opportunities. One hundred thirty-three (133) respondents answered this question. The main themes indicated by survey respondents were:

- **Benefits** (increased efficiency, improved teamwork, increased confidence, and having the ability to contribute more to the business/organization)
- **Identifying gaps** (training helped survey respondents better understand skill gaps in their operation)
- **Ongoing training is necessary** (without continued support, some employees will “fall back into old patterns”)
- **Foundational training is necessary before advanced training can be considered** (some employees require foundational life and basic skill training)
- **Attrition/retention** (some employees are leaving for other opportunities after receiving training)
- **Time-consuming** (training opportunities sometimes impact the staffing ability/scheduling of survey respondents, most training opportunities were during typical work hours)
- **Difficulty** (some training was challenging for employers/employees to complete)
- **Complicated application process** (available training supports can be confusing to navigate and difficult to apply to)

5.3 TRAINING HESITANCY

Survey respondents that **had not arranged or funded training over the past 12 months were asked why they had not arranged or funded training**. Fourteen percent (14%, 24) of respondents indicated it was because no local training was available in a relevant subject area, 14% (23) indicated there was no money available for training, and 13% (22) indicated a lack of time to organize training or find available opportunities. Respondents answering ‘other’ to this question listed the internal training, not having employees, employees being fully certified and not needing training, and not having enough staff to cover shifts while other staff pursue the training. All eligible respondents answered this question.

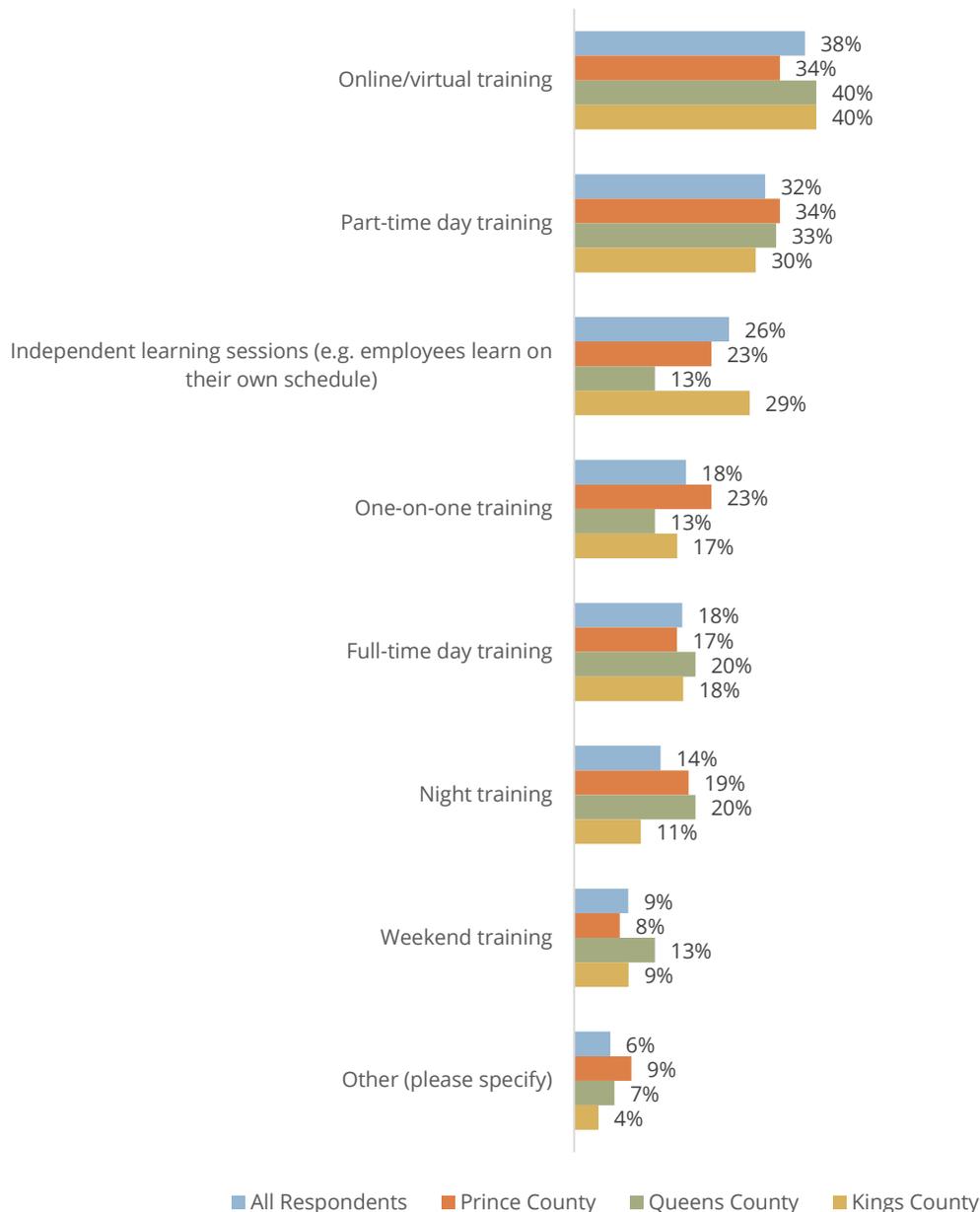
Figure 23: No local training available is a barrier facing respondents that have not arranged or funded training over the past 12 months



5.4 TRAINING DELIVERY

Survey respondents were asked to identify **the types of employee training that work best for their business/organization**. The 114 respondents who answered this question indicated the best types of training delivery for them are methods that would not interrupt their operations. These training delivery methods are online/virtual training (38%, 64), part-time day training (32%, 54), and independent learning sessions that would require employees to train on their own time (26%, 44). One hundred fourteen (114) respondents answered this question.

Figure 24: Survey respondents favour employee training that would minimize the impact on operations



The majority of respondents who answered 'other' to this question indicated the question was not applicable to their business/organization or specified types of training contained in the answer choices. One respondent that answered 'other' to this question described a European Union program where employees attend a school/training program one day per week with the intent of receiving a qualification at the end of the term.

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question on **what could or should be done in their area to assist with training needs**. Fifty-three (53) respondents answered this question. The key themes in the responses to this question were:

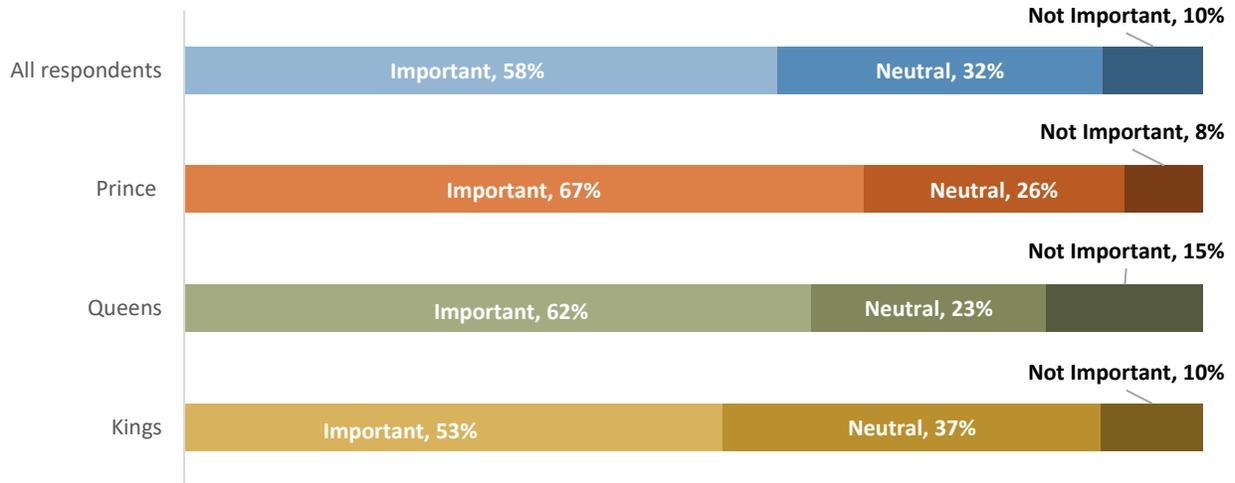
- Subsidized/paid training and enhance/ease access to subsidized/paid training (15)
- More local training opportunities (10)
- Education on what training opportunities are available (5)
- Training offered outside of regular working hours (5)
- Offer training that meets the needs of the local economy (5)
- Encourage Holland College to offer more and varied training opportunities (4)
- Bring in experienced/expert trainers from outside the region (4)
- Enhance/offer more online training opportunities (3)
- Enhance high school curriculums to include practical job-skill training (2)

Survey respondents were asked **what types of training opportunities, if offered in their rural area, would be most beneficial to their business/organization**. Seventy-two (72) respondents answered this question. The main types of potentially helpful training opportunities identified by respondents were:

- Foundational and software-specific computer training (13)
- Customer service training (12)
- Foundational life/work skills training (11)
- Bookkeeping and basic accounting training (10)
- Management/supervisory/leadership training (10)
- Social media/marketing/content creation training (9)
- Human resources training (6)
- Food handling and food safety training (5)
- Culinary/kitchen skill training (5)
- Skilled trades training opportunities (4)
- Opportunities for online/virtual training (4)
- Administration training (3)
- Driver training (3)
- Retail/cashier training (3)
- First aid training (2)
- Sales/business development training (2)

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of a local training and training resource centre to their business/organization. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the 146 respondents who answered this question think a local training and training resource centre would be important to their business/organization.

Figure 25: Few survey respondents feel a local training and resource centre would not be important to their business/organization



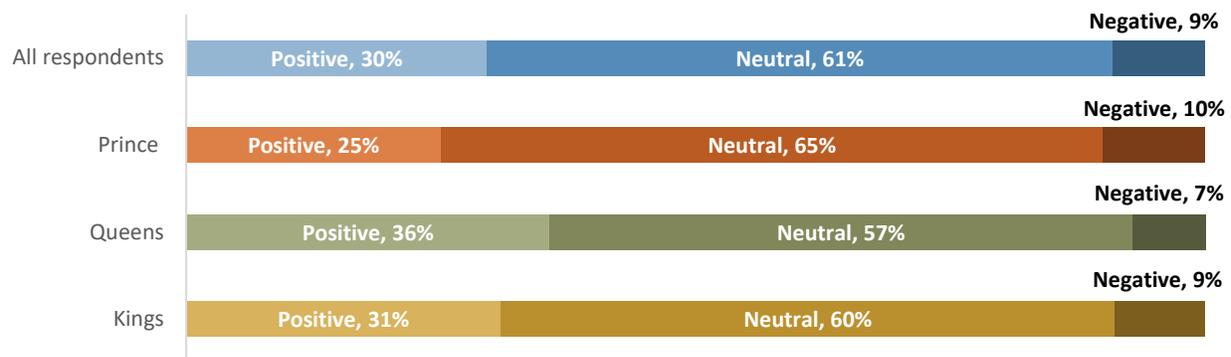
6.0 OTHER TOPICS

6.1 PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM ALTERATIONS

Respondents were asked if **increasing Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) benefits** or **increasing sick leave benefits offered through Employment Insurance (EI)** would positively, neutral, or negatively impact their business/organization.

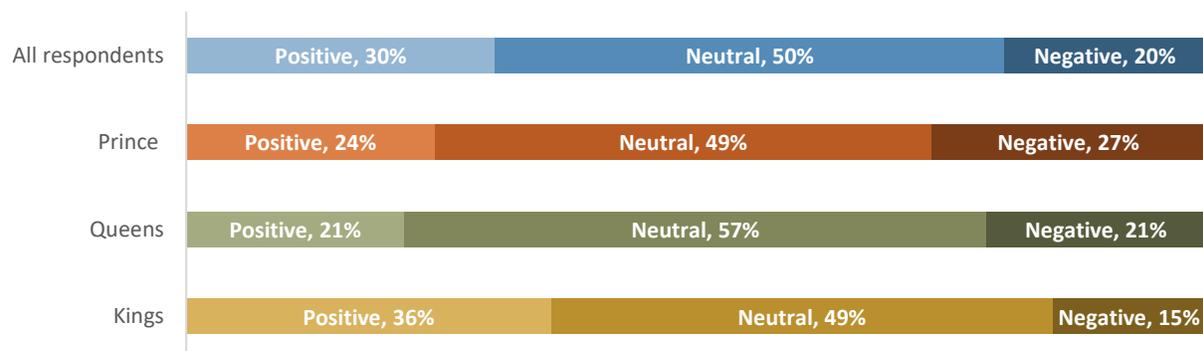
Nine percent (9%) of respondents believe increasing CPP benefits would have a negative impact on their business/organization. One hundred twenty-two (122) respondents answered this question.

Figure 26: 30% of respondents who answered this question believe increasing CPP benefits would have a positive impact on their business/organization



Twenty percent (20%) of respondents believe increasing sick leave benefits offered through the EI program would have a negative impact on their business/organization. One hundred twenty-two (122) respondents answered this question.

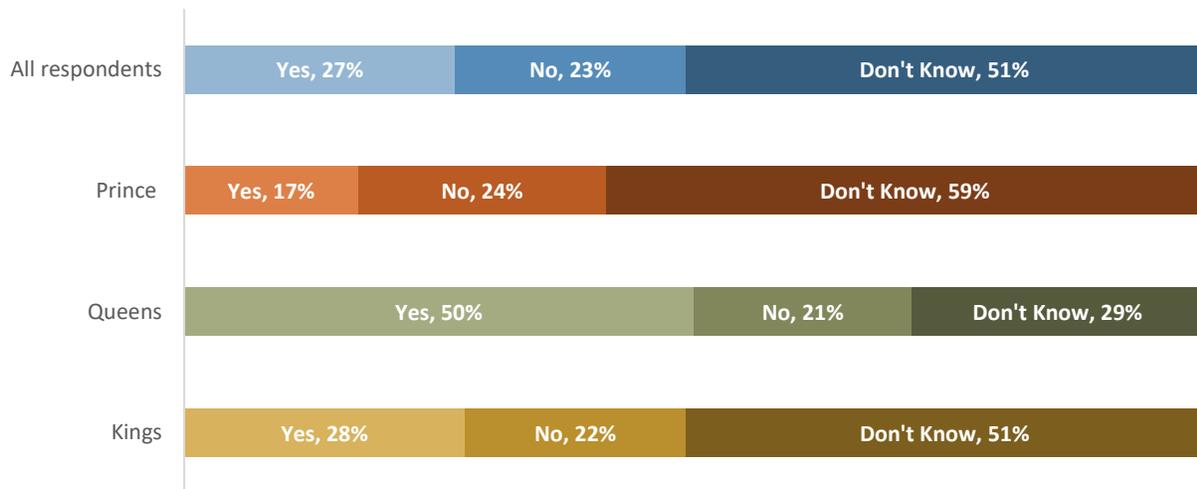
Figure 27: 30% of respondents who answered this question believe increasing sick leave benefits offered through the EI program would have a positive impact on their business/organization



Survey respondents were asked if they favoured either a Guaranteed Income Program or a Guaranteed Job Program based on current public debate and discussion.

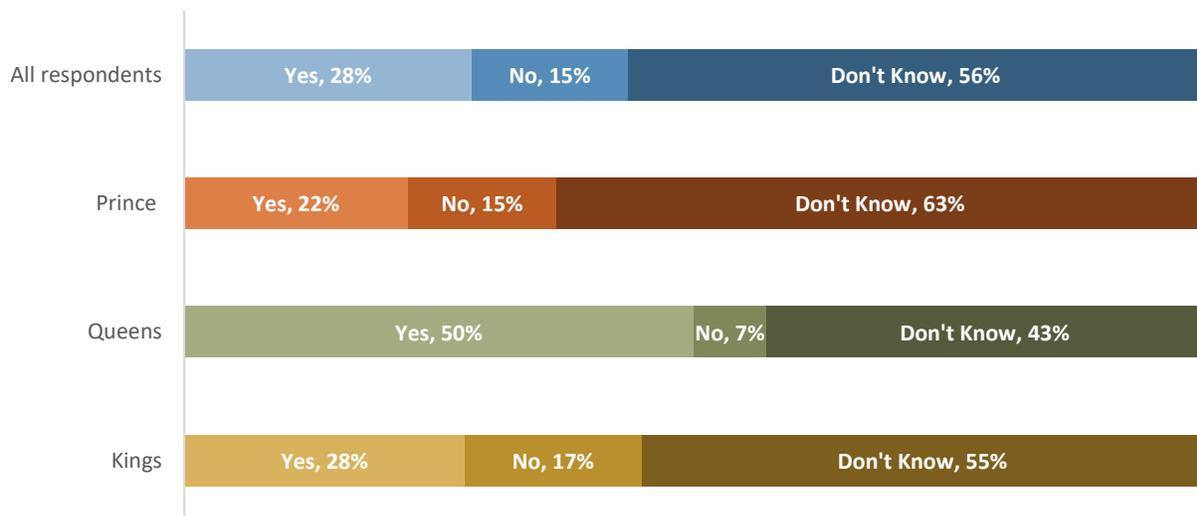
Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the 124 respondents who answered this question favoured a Guaranteed Income Program.

Figure 28: 23% of the 124 respondents who answered this question were not in favour of a Guaranteed Income Program



Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the 124 respondents who answered this question favoured a Guaranteed Job Program.

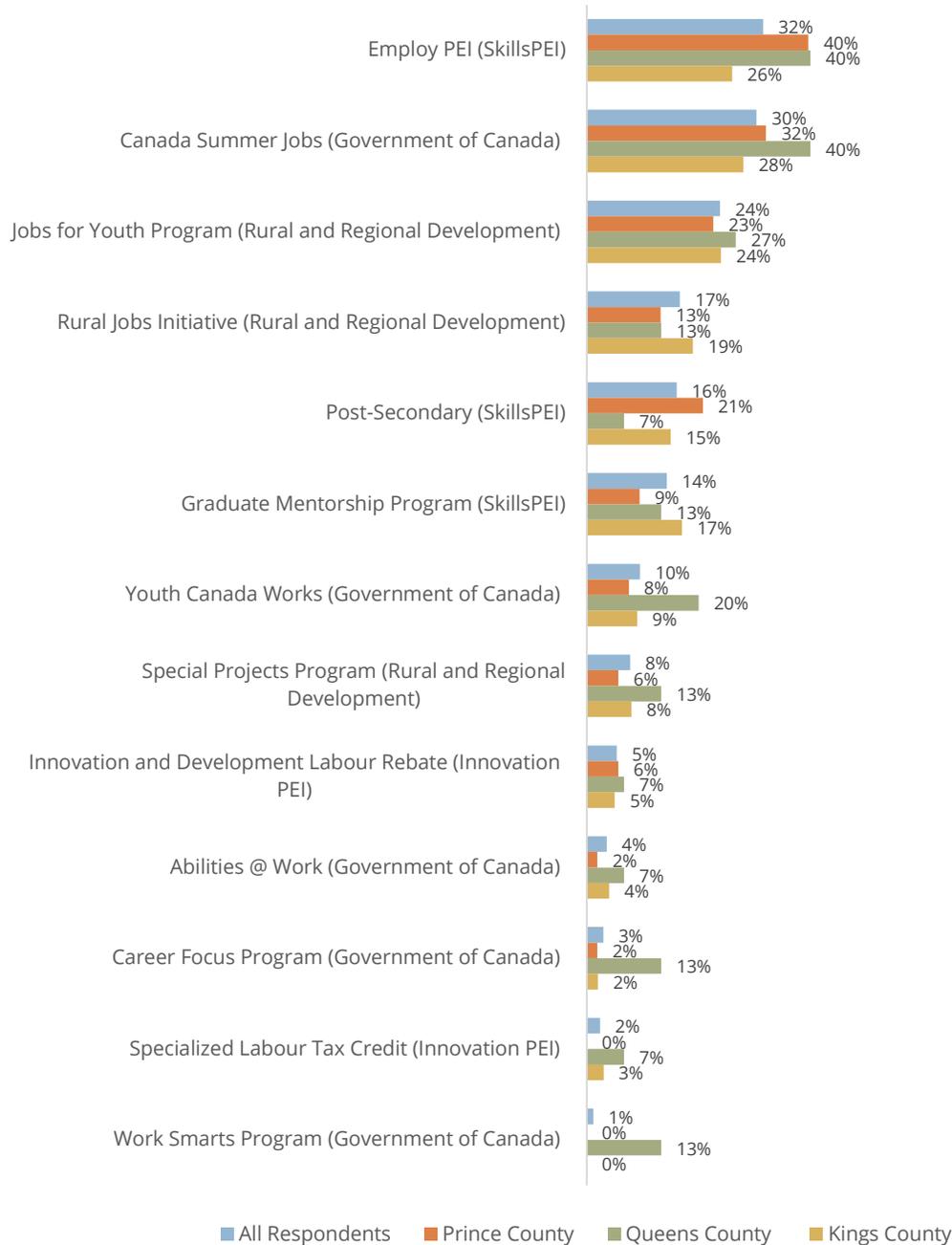
Figure 29: 15% of the 124 respondents who answered this question respondents were not in favour of a guaranteed job program



6.2 UTILIZATION OF WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

Respondents were asked which wage subsidy programs they have utilized. The most utilized wage subsidy programs were Employ PEI (32%, 54), Canada Summer Jobs program (30%, 50), and the Jobs for Youth Program (24%, 40). One hundred twenty-two (122) respondents answered this question.

Figure 30: Employ PEI is the most commonly utilized government wage subsidy program

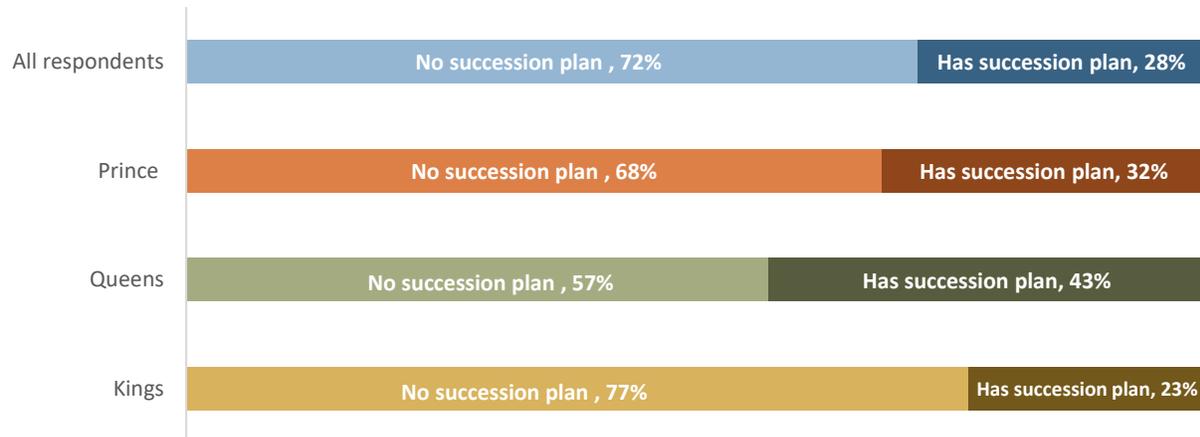


6.3 SUCCESSION PLANNING

Respondents were asked if there is a succession plan in place for their business/organization.

Seventy-two percent (72%) of the 124 respondents who answered this question do not have a succession plan in place.

Figure 31: 28% of all respondents who answered this question have a succession plan in place



6.4 OTHER COMMENTS

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question on if they had any other comments to share. Responses to this question were varied. Twenty-three (23) respondents answered this question. The main themes were:

- **Willingness to work:** many potential employees are not willing to work due to laziness or the availability of government supports
- **Attitude/Foundational Skills:** many applicants and new employees, especially young people, are unenthusiastic and unable to perform job tasks
- **Workforce Skills:** the available pool of workers does not have the necessary skills to fill vacant jobs
- **Funding:** there is not enough funding for employee training, and the available funding is difficult to access
- **Lack of Services:** lack of high-speed internet and access to technology causes many problems for rural employers

7.0 BARRIERS FACING UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

7.1 PROFILE

Thirty-seven (37) individuals responded to a short survey targeting employees self-identifying as members of underrepresented groups.

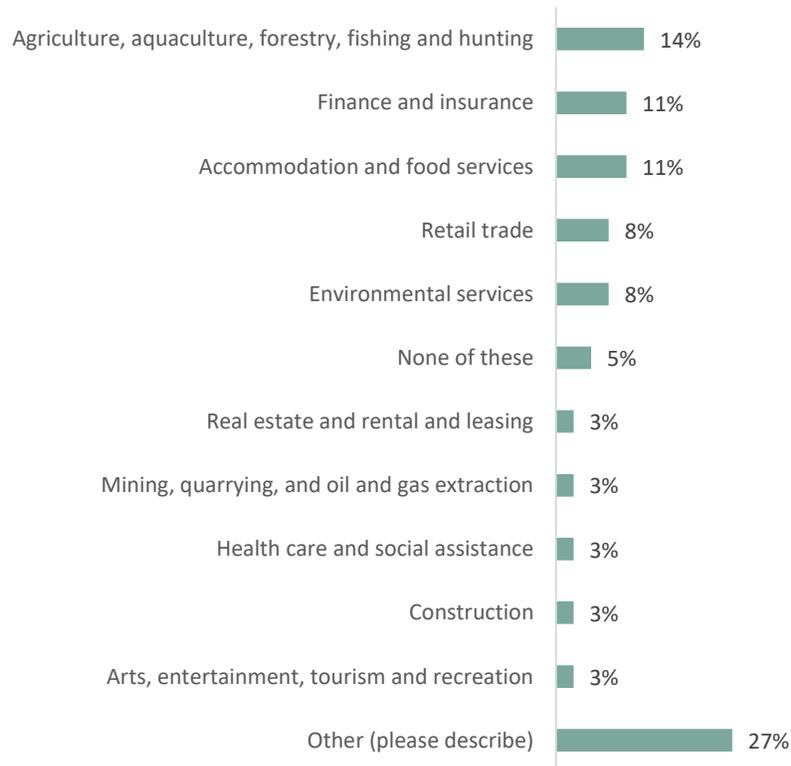
Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents self-identified as women, 14% (5) self-identified as youth, and 5% (2) identified as persons with disabilities. Respondents were able to choose more than one self-identification category.

There were no responses from individuals self-identifying as indigenous, persons from visible minorities, persons self-identifying as belonging to the LGBTQ+ community, or other.

Respondents were asked what industry they are *primarily* employed in. Agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting was the most common primary industry of survey respondents, capturing 14% (5) respondents.

Other was the most popular answer choice of respondents (27%, 10). Respondents who chose other described their industry or profession as cleaner, communications/journalism (3), senior care, cashier, non-governmental organization, bioscience, law, and community development organization.

Figure 32: Primary sector of employment of underrepresented employee survey respondents



7.2 BARRIERS

Respondents were asked if they have experienced barriers to employment or advancement because of how they self-identify. Seventy-eight percent (78%, 29) of respondents indicated they had *not* experienced barriers to employment because of how they self-identify.

Survey respondents were asked to describe the barriers they face due to how they self-identify. Six (6) respondents answered this question. The barriers listed by respondents were:

- A misconception that women are not as qualified as men (in their industry)
- Equal pay/training
- Males promoted before females
- Challenges of being a woman in business in a rural area
- Offered lower pay than men for performing the same job
- The challenges of being young in a professional field and preconceived notions that men are more capable than women to perform the same job

7.3 POTENTIAL ACTIONS TO REDUCE/ELIMINATE BARRIERS

Survey respondents were asked to **list the actions that could be taken to reduce or eliminate barriers for underrepresented groups in rural PEI workplaces.** Fifteen (15) respondents answered this question. The actions listed by survey respondents were:

- Utilize blind hiring practices
- Ensure equal pay and training for all employees
- Offer more training/education opportunities for members of underrepresented groups
- Offer diversity and inclusion/unconscious bias training – especially within male-dominated industries
- Encourage and support people from underrepresented groups to pursue and train for leadership opportunities
- Encourage people from under-represented groups to pursue non-traditional roles/jobs
- Enhance access/subsidize family care (e.g., affordable child care, ageing-parent care programs, etc.)
- Provide more flexible work opportunities (e.g., remote work, flexible hours, etc.)

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 IDENTIFY, PROMOTE, AND SUPPORT ACCESS TO EXISTING EMPLOYER SUPPORTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Many survey respondents indicated a medium-to-low awareness of existing supports and training opportunities designed to help island businesses and organizations. Some survey respondents indicated that available supports, training opportunities, and application processes could be confusing, and the network of available supports and training opportunities can be challenging to navigate. Employers are often too busy dealing with day-to-day operational issues to devote the time and attention to navigating the network of available supports and determining eligibility.

The Labour Market Development Partnership could assist rural PEI employers by identifying, promoting, and supporting employers in accessing new and existing training opportunities and employer supports such as wage subsidies and recruitment assistance. The LMDP resources will need to familiarize themselves with available supports and the eligibility requirements, application processes, and timelines/deadlines of those supports. LMDP resources will also need to stay up-to-date on Island training opportunities and communicate those opportunities to employers. The LMDP resources could promote available supports and training opportunities through social media, information sessions, or one-on-one communications. The LMDP resources can invite employers to reach out if they have questions on current supports and opportunities and help assist or facilitate assistance to supports and training opportunities.

8.2 SEEK FUNDING FOR FOUNDATIONAL SKILL TRAINING

Survey respondents identified the need for foundational skill training in literacy, numeracy, information technology, and soft skills such as teamwork, attitude, and work ethic. Providing foundational skill training opportunities to employees and potential employees in rural PEI will meet one of the most prominent needs of survey respondents. **The LMDP should develop a project in eastern and western PEI to provide group training on various foundational skills for employees from multiple employers.**

To fund foundational skill training in eastern and western PEI, the LMDP should investigate funding offered through the Skills for Success Program. The Skills for Success program was proposed in the Government of Canada's Budget 2021 and will provide \$298 million over three years to help Canadians at all skills levels improve their foundational and transferable skills. The Skills for Success program funds organizations to design and deliver training to enhance foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy and soft traditional skills. The funding also supports the creation of assessments and training resources available online to all Canadians.

General applications for funding through the Skills for Success program are currently closed. However, Skills for Success will accept solicited and unsolicited submissions for targeted projects that address a gap in a priority area. Applications for general funding will open again in the future.

8.3 ORGANIZE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Most of the in-demand skills identified by survey respondents were transferable skills that are relevant and helpful across different sectors and workplaces. The most in-demand transferable skills identified by survey respondents are basic accounting/bookkeeping, administration/human resources, management/supervision, computer skills/software skills, and customer service skills.

The LMDP should work with education and training providers to organize local training for the transferable skills identified by survey respondents. Some of the in-demand transferable skills identified by survey respondents, such as bookkeeping and business administration, may require in-depth training in the form of certificate or diploma programs. Other in-demand transferable skills identified by survey respondents, such as customer service skills, require less-intensive training that could be provided through a workshop or online course.

Every effort should be made to ensure that training opportunities are flexible and meet the needs of both employers, employees, and potential employees. Where possible, training opportunities should provide a certificate or credential. Earning a certificate or credential makes it easier for participants to communicate their skills to potential employers.

8.4 ADDRESS SECTOR-SPECIFIC TRAINING NEEDS FOR RURAL PEI'S KEY SECTORS

The Rural PEI Workforce Survey collected information from many different sectors to identify regional training needs. However, due to the limited number of responses from different sectors, it is challenging to develop a comprehensive understanding of the training needs of rural PEI's key sectors. This challenge is further compounded by the fact that many employers in key sectors are small and micro businesses with varying training needs.

It is recommended that the Labour Market Development Partnership utilize interviews or focus groups to further identify the exact training needs of employers in PEI's key sectors. If specific workforce challenges are identified, the LMDP should facilitate a pilot training opportunity that meets the needs of employers in key sectors.

The LMDP could work with local employers and sector associations to apply for funding for identified training opportunities through the Government of Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program. The Sectoral Initiatives Program funds projects that identify, forecast, and address sectoral or cross-sectoral human resources and skills development needs. The funding supports projects that focus on developing and implementing sector-based solutions to address the workforce challenges and needs of Canadian workers and employers or projects that address specific workforce needs in support of economic recovery for a specific sector or across sectors.

The LMDP could also utilize Skills PEI's Group Based Training Program to fund short-term or essential skill training projects that encourage and support organizations in developing and implementing training projects that lead to employment and help industry deal with labour force adjustments and meeting human resources requirements.

8.5 ENSURE EMPLOYER AWARENESS OF AVAILABLE SUPPORTS FOR SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE

Survey respondents identified the need for skilled tradespeople and support to train inexperienced tradespeople. However, it is challenging to meet the needs identified by survey respondents because the needs are varied and workplace-specific. The Government of Canada's Budget 2021 provides support to employers to help with the cost of salary and training for first-year apprentices. **The Labour Market Development Partnership should ensure local employers are aware of this program, other similar programs and, if necessary, help employers access these programs.**

The Apprenticeship Service program in Budget 2021 will provide \$740 million over three years to help first-year apprentices in construction and manufacturing Red Seal trades connect with opportunities at small and medium-sized businesses. Employers will be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 for all first-year apprenticeship opportunities to pay for upfront costs such as salaries and training. The incentive will be doubled to \$10,000 for employers who hire employees from underrepresented groups.

Creating awareness of the Apprenticeship Service program and other similar programs will help employers navigate the challenges associated with hiring new and under-skilled employees and help provide opportunities for recent graduates to enter the workforce. Some employers may need assistance to access these programs.

8.6 ENSURE TRAINING INITIATIVES ARE FLEXIBLE

Many survey respondents indicated that they would arrange or fund more training for employees, if possible. However, it is difficult for employers to balance training with operational demands due to rural PEI's limited labour pool. **The LMDP should, where possible, ensure that training opportunities are flexible and meet the needs of both employers and employees.**

LMDP resources and training providers may need to experiment with personalized, flexible training options that enable workers to learn at their own pace while employers balance learning needs with operational demands. Flexible training can include online training, modular learning programs, flexible entry and completion dates, the ability to scale training options up or down depending on employer needs, and hybrid online/classroom delivery models.

8.7 ADVOCATE FOR TRANSPORTATION SUBSIDIES

Survey respondents indicated that the local labour force is not always sufficient to meet the needs of employers. One cause of insufficiency of the local labour force to meet the needs of employers is the lack of working-age people living and working in rural PEI. **To enhance the local labour pool, the Labour Market Development Partnership should advocate to the Government of Prince Edward Island for a transportation subsidy for employees that travel to rural PEI for work.**

The populations of rural PEI are declining and ageing, making it difficult to recruit workers for available job vacancies. A transportation subsidy would encourage people living in PEI's cities to consider applying for and working in jobs in rural PEI.

8.8 ADVOCATE TO EXTEND AND ENHANCE ELIGIBILITY FOR WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

Survey respondents indicated that a key challenge to accessing the local labour pool is unemployment supports such as Employment Insurance and the Canadian Emergency Response Benefits/Canada Recovery Benefit. Many survey respondents believe that if available federal and provincial wage subsidy programs were extended and had a broader scope, rural employers could provide more competitive wages and face less risk when hiring inexperienced workers or workers requiring significant training and upskilling.

Survey respondents indicated that existing wage supports are helpful, but the eligibility requirements can be restrictive. The restrictive requirements noted by survey respondents were age, employment status, citizenship, location of the potential employee, and the type and duration of the employment being offered.

The LMDP should advocate for existing federal and provincial wage supports to be extended and broadened in scope.

8.9 ORGANIZE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TRAINING/UNCONSCIOUS BIAS TRAINING FOR EMPLOYERS

Respondents to the survey targeting employees self-identifying as members of underrepresented groups identified several barriers such as wages, understanding, and respect. **The LMDP should organize a flexible diversity and inclusion and/or unconscious bias training opportunity for employers. If possible, the offering could be extended to employees.**

Diversity and inclusion training provides concrete ways to engage in respectful and positive interactions in the workplace while reducing discrimination and prejudice based on gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, physical and mental ability, and socioeconomic status. Effective diversity and inclusion training should help participants better understand the business case for developing a work culture that values diversity and inclusion, how their dimensions of diversity impact their worldview, and develop workplace behaviours or policies that enhance workplace inclusivity.

Unconscious bias training helps participants become aware of their biases and mitigate them accordingly. Practical unconscious bias training helps define conscious and unconscious bias, describes how biases are acquired, recognizes workplace behaviours and the workplace decisions that may be influenced by bias, and applies strategies to manage unconscious bias in the workplace.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

The Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership engaged MRSB Consulting Services to gather information to improve understanding of the labour market, skills, and training challenges faced by rural PEI small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations, and the barriers faced by employees from underrepresented groups.

MRSB Consulting Services worked with the Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership, the Eastern Chamber of Commerce, the West Prince Chamber of Commerce, and an advisory board to design two surveys. One survey was designed to improve the understanding of the labour market, skills, and training challenges faced by rural PEI employers. The other survey was designed to enhance the understanding of barriers facing employees of underrepresented groups in rural PEI.

MRSB Groups Marketing Department worked with LMDP to develop a communications plan to promote the survey. The LMDP resources promoted the survey throughout eastern and western PEI through social media posts and direct reach-out to employers. Both surveys were available online and in a paper format available for pickup at the local chamber offices.

The surveys were available for four weeks, from April 6 to May 4, 2021. The survey was available online and in a paper format.

A total of 313 responses were received for both surveys (303 online, ten paper). Of these 313 total responses, 37 responded to the survey for employees from underrepresented groups, and 276 responded to the survey for rural employers. One hundred eight (108) substantially incomplete or duplicate responses were cleaned from the employer survey. Responses to the employer survey were deemed substantially incomplete if respondents answered less than three questions, not including the profile questions. No responses were cleaned from the employee survey.

A summary of preliminary findings was prepared and presented to the project Steering Committee. The draft report was presented to the project Steering Committee and representatives from the Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce and West Prince Chamber of Commerce.



APPENDIX B: RURAL PEI WORKFORCE SURVEY

RURAL PEI WORKFORCE SURVEY

The Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce, together with the West Prince Chamber of Commerce, have formed the Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership to gather information to improve understanding of the labour market, skills, and training challenges faced by rural PEI small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations, as well as the barriers faced by employees from underrepresented groups.

The Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership has engaged MRSB Consulting Services to survey Chamber members and other relevant parties to gain a better understanding of challenges faced by rural PEI employers. The Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce and West Prince Chamber of Commerce recognize the great and growing challenges of attracting and retaining staff. To help address these challenges, the two Chambers formed the Rural Labour Market Development Partnership to help businesses and organizations fulfill their staffing needs for operational success and growth.

This survey is also available online at www.ruralpeiworkforcesurvey.ca

We are asking you to assist us by completing either a paper-based or online survey (not both). The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your privacy is important to us. Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential. Survey results will be combined for analysis, and only combined data will be made public.

If you wish to be entered in a draw to win a blanket from MacAuslands Woolen Mills and a meat basket from the Souris Co-op Food Market, please provide your contact information at the end of this survey.

If you are completing this survey in paper format, please return your completed survey to the secure drop box at either the Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce office or West Prince Chamber of Commerce office no later than April 30, 2021. If you have any questions regarding the survey or the Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership, please contact your local Chamber of Commerce.

Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce
902-838-3131

West Prince Chamber of Commerce
902-726-5646

Should you experience any technical difficulties while completing the survey online, please contact Zachary Robson at zachary.robson@mrsbgroup.com or call (902)-368-2422.

This survey is to be completed by the owner/operator, manager, or supervisor of a rural PEI small to medium-sized businesses or not-for-profit organization.

There is a separate survey for employees from underrepresented groups such as women, youth, LGBTQ+, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. If you employ people from these groups, please provide them with the survey link (www.ruralpeiworkforcesurvey.ca) OR a paper copy of the employee survey.

PROFILE

1. Which best describes your role?

- Owner/operator
- Manager
- Supervisor
- Other (please describe): _____

2. What sector does this business/organization primarily operate in?

Choose one.

- Accommodation and food services
- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services
- Aerospace, defense, and marine
- Agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
- Alternative and renewable energy
- Arts, entertainment, tourism and recreation
- Construction
- Educational services
- Environmental services
- Finance and insurance
- Health care and social assistance
- Information and cultural industries
- Management of companies and enterprises
- Manufacturing
- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Public administration
- Real estate and rental and leasing
- Retail trade
- Transportation and warehousing, logistics services (air, marine, or land), shipping of goods
- Utilities
- Wholesale trade
- None of these
- Don't know
- Other (please describe): _____

3. Would you classify the business/organization as...?

- For-profit
- Not-for-profit
- Other (please describe): _____

4. How long has the business/organization been operating?

- Less than one year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11 years or more

5. When does the business/organization typically operate?

- Seasonally
- Year-round

6. Where is the business/organization primarily located?

- Prince County
- Queens County
- Kings County

7. Approximately how many people does this business/organization employ that are:

Full-time?	
Part-time?	
Seasonal?	

JOB VACANCIES

8. In the past three years has your business/organization struggled to fill job vacancies?

- Yes
- No

9. Do any of the following applicant recruitment issues impact your ability to recruit workers to fill job vacancies?

Check all that apply.

- Can't recruit workers from the local population
- There were no or few applicants
- Applicants lacked required qualification/education level
- Applicants lacked required job skills
- Applicants expected wages higher than we can offer
- Applicants did not like the working conditions
- Applicants lack the required work experience
- Other (please describe): _____

10. Do any of the following external factors impact your ability to recruit workers to fill job vacancies?

Check all that apply.

- Potential workers currently receiving Employment Insurance
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of access to health care
- Lack of internet access
- Inability to provide wage rates equivalent to government employers
- Potential workers currently receiving COVID-19 financial support (e.g. CERB)
- Inadequate local training resources
- Potential workers currently receiving benefits from other government programs (please describe): _____
- Other (please describe): _____

11. In the past year approximately how many job vacancies has your business/organization had?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-25
- 26-50
- 51 or more

12. What vacant jobs are typically the most difficult to fill (e.g. bookkeeper, carpenter, etc.)?

13. How does your business/organization typically find people to fill vacant jobs?

Check all that apply.

- Employee referrals
- Immigration programs
- Industry associations
- Job fairs
- Local employment agencies (e.g. Career Development Services, Career Bridges)
- Recruitment websites (e.g. WorkPEI, Career Beacon)
- Social media
- Other (please describe): _____

14. Please indicate which of the following describes your experience recruiting or trying to recruit international workers to fill vacant jobs?

- I tried recruiting international workers and was successful
- I tried recruiting international workers but was unsuccessful
- I have not tried to recruit international workers

15. Would you like to receive information on international worker/immigration programs?

- Yes
- No

16. Are job vacancies causing your business/organization to...?

	Yes	No	N/A
Delay developing new products or services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience increased operating costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties introducing new working practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties introducing technological change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties meeting customer service standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties meeting quality standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase workload for other staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lose business or orders to competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outsource work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withdraw from offering certain products or services altogether	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe):			

17. What, if anything, is your business/organization doing to overcome the difficulties that you are having finding people to fill these hard-to-fill vacancies?

Check all that apply.

- Bringing in contractors or contracting work out
- Enhancing recruitment efforts
- Increasing salaries
- Increasing the training given to your existing workforce
- Offering training to less qualified recruits
- Paying signing bonuses
- Providing housing options
- Providing transportation assistance
- Recruiting international workers
- Redefining existing jobs
- Other (please describe): _____

18. Do government programs impact your ability to fill job vacancies?

- Yes (go to question 19)
- No (go to question 20)

19. If yes, please list the government programs that impact your ability to fill job vacancies.

20. What type of assistance would help your business/organization address hard to fill job vacancies (e.g. specific types of wage supports, specific training opportunities)?

Please be as specific as possible.

SKILLS

21. In the past three years, has your business/organization faced difficulties when trying to find skilled workers for job vacancies?

- Yes (go to question 22)
- No (go to question 23)

22. What specific skills are you having difficulty finding when hiring (e.g. customer service skills, ability to use specific computer programs, etc.)?

Please be as specific as possible.

23. Over the next three years, which of these factors will require existing employees to acquire new skills or knowledge?

Check all that apply.

- The development of new products and services
- The introduction of new techniques or processes
- The introduction of new technologies or equipment
- New legislative or regulatory requirements
- Increased competitive pressure
- None of these
- Don't know
- Other (please describe): _____

24. Is the fact that some of your employees are not fully skilled causing your business/organization to...?

	Yes	No	N/A
Lose business or orders to competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withdraw from offering certain products or services altogether	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase workload for other staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outsource work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties meeting quality standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties meeting customer service standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience increased operating costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delay developing new products or services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties introducing new working practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have difficulties introducing technological change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe):			

TRAINING/UPSKILLING

25. How many employees in your business/organization do you think will require some sort of upgrading or retraining in the next three years?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16 or more

26. Which positions are most in need of acquiring new skills or knowledge (e.g. bookkeepers, administrators, line cooks, etc.)?

Please be as specific as possible.

27. What specific skills or knowledge do these positions need to acquire (e.g. training on specific software, customer service training, job-specific training)?

Please be as specific as possible.

28. Has your business/organization taken any steps to improve the skills of existing employees?

- Yes
- No – but we have plans to
- No

29. Over the past 12 months, has the business/organization arranged or funded training for employees?

- Yes (if yes, go to question 30)
- No (if no, go to question 34)

30. Over the last 12 months, which positions has your business/organization arranged or funded training for?

31. Has the training you have arranged or funded been beneficial to your business/organization?

- Yes
- No

32. Are there any comments you would like to share on the training you have arranged or funded (e.g. reasons why the training was beneficial or not beneficial)?

33. How much of this training has been basic training for new staff when they start the job?

- 0%-25%
- 26%-50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-100%

34. If the business/organization has not arranged or funded training over the past 12 months, what are the reasons for this?

Check all that apply.

- No local training available in relevant subject area
- The quality of the courses or providers locally is not satisfactory
- I don't know what training opportunities are available locally
- The start dates or times of the courses are inconvenient
- No money available for training
- Existing training courses are too expensive
- Lack of time to organize training or find available opportunities
- Employees are too busy to undertake training and development
- Training is not a priority for our business/organization
- Our staff do not need training
- Trained staff will be poached by other employers
- Trained staff will expect higher pay
- Other (please describe): _____

35. What specific types of training opportunities, if offered in your rural area, would be most beneficial for the business/organization?

36. What types of employee training work best for your business/organization?

Check all that apply.

- Full-time day training
- Part-time day training
- Night training
- Weekend training
- Independent learning sessions (e.g. employees learn on their own schedule)
- Online/virtual training
- One-on-one training
- Other (please describe): _____

37. How would you rate the importance of a local training and training resource centre to your organization/business?

- Important
- Neutral
- Not important

38. If you could, would you provide more training for your staff?

- Yes
- No

39. What could or should be done in your area to assist with your training needs?

SUCCESSION PLANNING

40. Is there a succession plan in place for this business/organization?

A succession plan is a strategy for passing on the ownership/management of the business/organization to someone else.

- Yes
- No

WAGE SUBSIDIES

41. Have you utilized any of the following Wage Subsidy Programs for PEI Employers?

Check all that apply.

	Yes	No	N/A
Graduate Mentorship Program (SkillsPEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employ PEI (SkillsPEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post-Secondary (SkillsPEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canada Summer Jobs (Government of Canada)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career Focus Program (Government of Canada)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Canada Works (Government of Canada)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Smarts Program (Government of Canada)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abilities @ Work (Government of Canada)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs for Youth Program (Rural and Regional Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Projects Program (Rural and Regional Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Jobs Initiative (Rural and Regional Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Innovation and Development Labour Rebate (Innovation PEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized Labour Tax Credit (Innovation PEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OTHER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

42. Please indicate how the following changes to specific government programs could impact your business/organization.

a) Increased Canadian Pension Plan Benefits

- Positive impact
- Neutral impact
- Negative impact

b) Increased sick leave benefits offered through the Employment Insurance Program

- Positive impact
- Neutral impact
- Negative impact

43. Based on current public debate and discussions, are you in favour of a Guaranteed Income Program?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/no answer

44. Based on current public debate and discussions, are you in favour of a Guaranteed Job Program?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/no answer

45. Are there any other comments you would like to share?

CONSENT TO FUTURE CONTACT AND/OR PRIZE DRAW

46. The Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership will be selecting a few respondents for follow-up conversations on specific training needs and other supports identified in survey responses. Would you be willing to be contacted by your area’s Labour Market Resource to discuss your specific training needs and possible supports?

- Yes
- No

47. Please submit your name and contact information into the draw for a blanket from MacAuslands Woolen Mills and a meat basket from the Souris Co-op Food Market! If you selected ‘yes’ to question 46, this information will be associated with your survey responses and you could be contacted by your area Labour Market Resource person. If you selected ‘no’ to question 46, this information will only be used to enter you in the prize draw.

NAME: _____

BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

Thank you for your time!

Please reach out to your area’s Labour Market Resource if you have immediate training or labour market questions, needs, or concerns!

EASTERN PEI

**SANDRA HODDER ACORN
LABOUR MARKET RESOURCE EAST
LMPEAST2020@GMAIL.COM
902-838-3131**

WESTERN PEI

**KESTER NURSE
LABOUR MARKET RESOURCE WEST
LABOURRESOURCEWEST@GMAIL.COM
902-726-9378**

RURAL PEI WORKFORCE SURVEY

The Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce, together with the West Prince Chamber of Commerce, have formed the Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership to gather information to improve understanding of the labour market, skills, and training challenges faced by rural PEI small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations, as well as the barriers faced by employees from underrepresented groups.

The Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership has engaged MRSB Consulting Services to survey Chamber members and other relevant parties to gain a better understanding of challenges faced by rural PEI employers. The Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce and West Prince Chamber of Commerce recognize the great and growing challenges of attracting and retaining staff. To help address these challenges, the two Chambers formed the Rural Labour Market Development Partnership to help businesses and organizations fulfill their staffing needs for operational success and growth.

This survey is also available online at: www.ruralpeiworkforcesurvey.ca

We are asking you to assist us by completing either a paper-based or an online survey (not both). The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Your privacy is important to us. Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential. Survey results will be anonymous, and only combined data will be made public.

If you wish to be entered in a draw to win a blanket from MacAuslands Woolen Mills and a meat basket from the Souris Co-op Food Market, please provide your contact information at the end of this survey.

If you are completing this survey in paper format, please return your completed survey to the secure drop box at either the Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce office or West Prince Chamber of Commerce office no later than April 30, 2021. If you have any questions regarding the survey or the Rural PEI Labour Market Development Partnership, please contact your local Chamber of Commerce.

Eastern PEI Chamber of Commerce
902-838-3131

West Prince Chamber of Commerce
902-853-3616

Should you experience any technical difficulties while completing the survey online, please contact Zachary Robson at zachary.robson@mrsbgroup.com or call (902)-368-2422.

This survey is to be completed by employees of rural PEI businesses from underrepresented groups such as women, youth, LGBTQ+, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. When answering the following questions, please consider the sector you are usually employed in.

1. What sector are you usually employed in?

Choose one.

- Accommodation and food services
- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services
- Aerospace, defense, and marine
- Agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
- Alternative and renewable energy
- Arts, entertainment, tourism and recreation
- Construction
- Educational services
- Environmental services
- Finance and insurance
- Health care and social assistance
- Information and cultural industries
- Management of companies and enterprises
- Manufacturing
- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Public administration
- Real estate and rental and leasing
- Retail trade
- Transportation and warehousing, logistics services (air, marine, or land), shipping of goods
- Utilities
- Wholesale trade
- None of these
- Don't know
- Other (please describe): _____

2. Do you self-identify as a member of any of the following groups?

Check all that apply.

- Woman
- Youth (aged 15-29)
- LGBTQ+
- Indigenous person
- Person with a disability
- Person from a visible minority
- Other (please specify): _____

3. Have you experienced barriers to employment or advancement because of how you self-identify?

- Yes (please go to question #4)
- No (please go to question #5)

4. If you have experienced barriers to employment or advancement because of how you self-identify, please describe the barriers you face.

5. What actions could be taken to reduce or eliminate barriers for underrepresented groups in rural PEI workplaces?

Thank you for your time!

Please submit your name and contact information into the draw for a blanket from MacAuslands Woolen Mills and a meat basket from the Souris Co-op Food Market!

Your name and contact information are being collected only for the purpose of the draw. Individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.

NAME: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____