

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Employer Survey 2025

Presented by the 495/MetroWest Partnership
495Partnership.org



ABOUT THE SURVEY

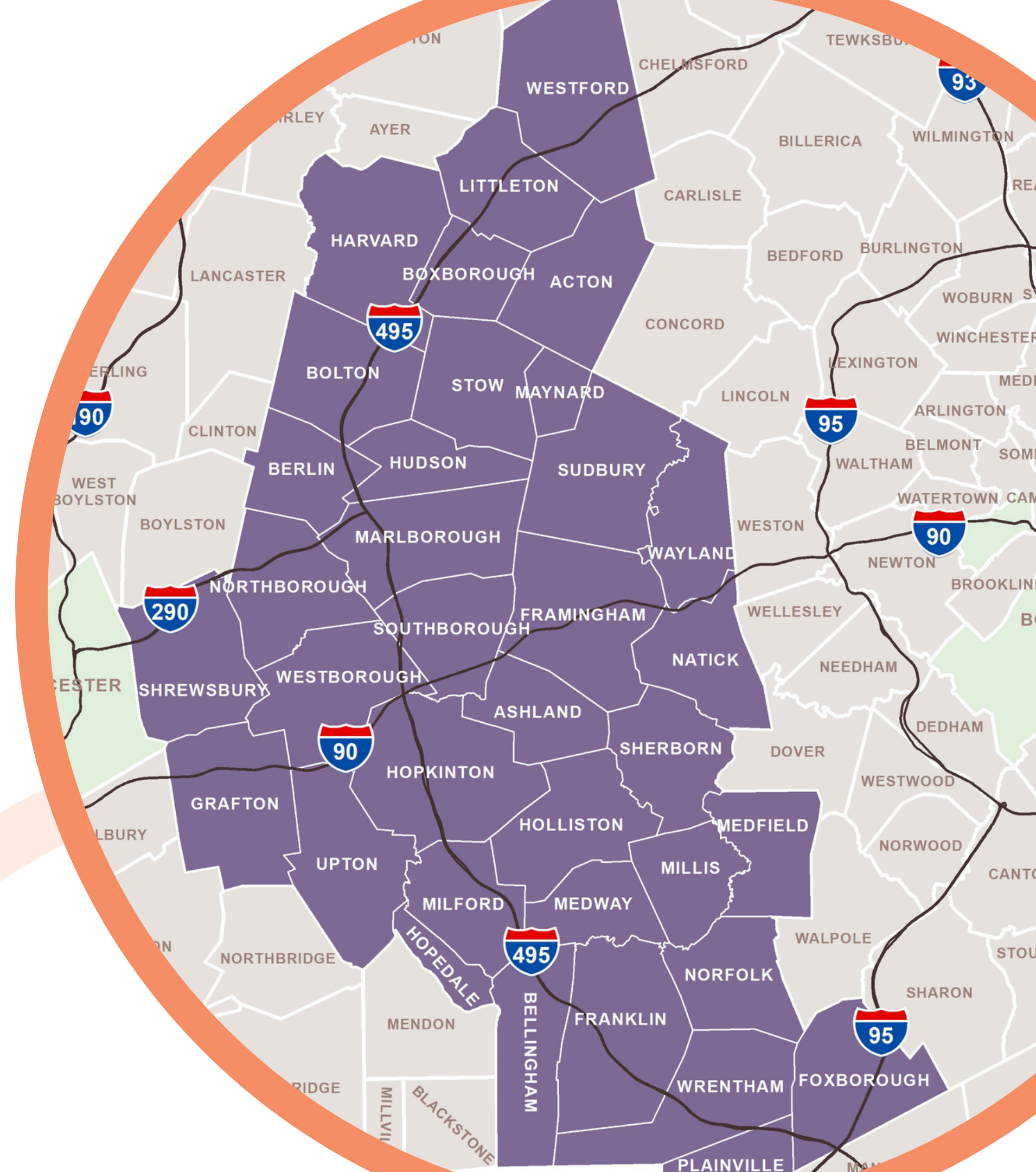
The survey represents a collaborative effort between the 495/MetroWest Partnership and Framingham State University's MetroWest Economic Research Center (MERC).

Conducted for the 12th year running in 2025, this survey has proven an important tool in gauging business confidence in the 495/MetroWest region.



ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey focuses on employers with physical plants located in the 495/MetroWest region, defined as the 36 cities and towns served by the 495/MetroWest Partnership.



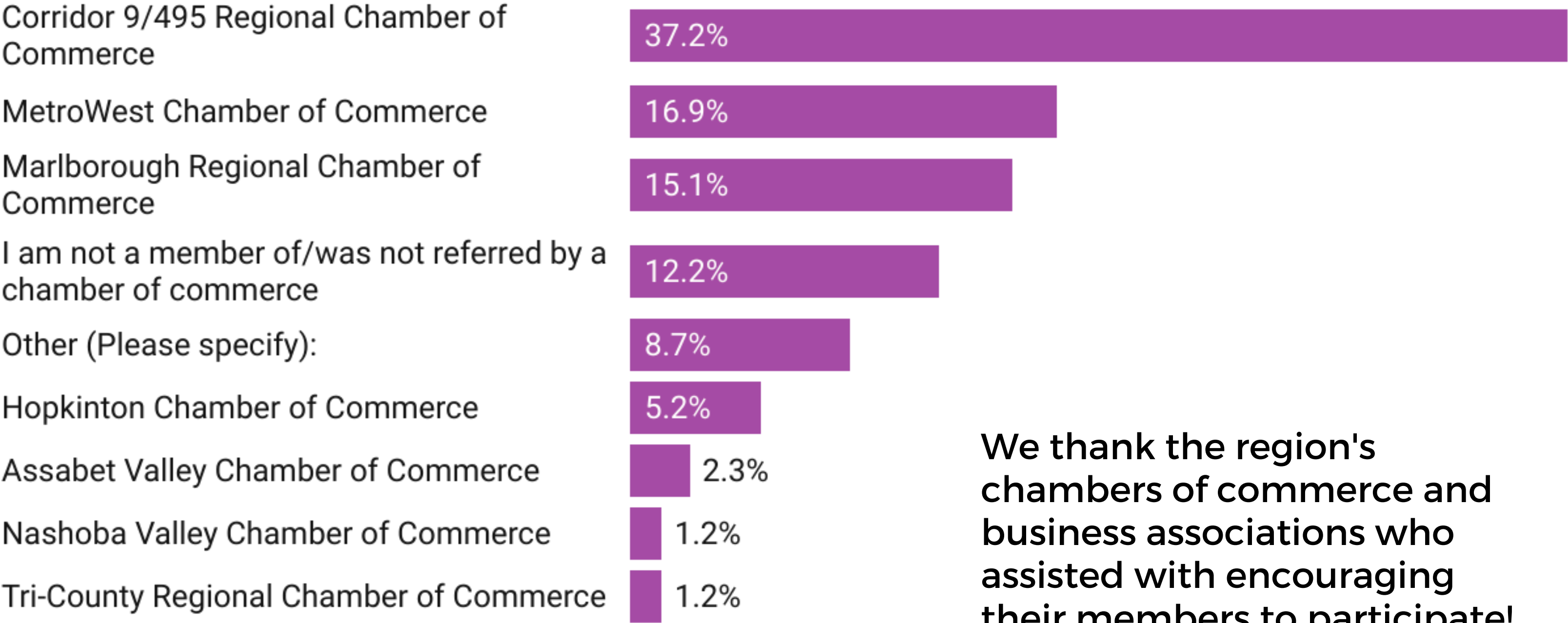
ABOUT THE RESPONSES

Owners, leaders, or individuals with regional hiring authority for private, public, or nongovernmental organizations that have a presence in the 495/MetroWest region were invited to take part.

The survey was conducted online during April and May 2025.

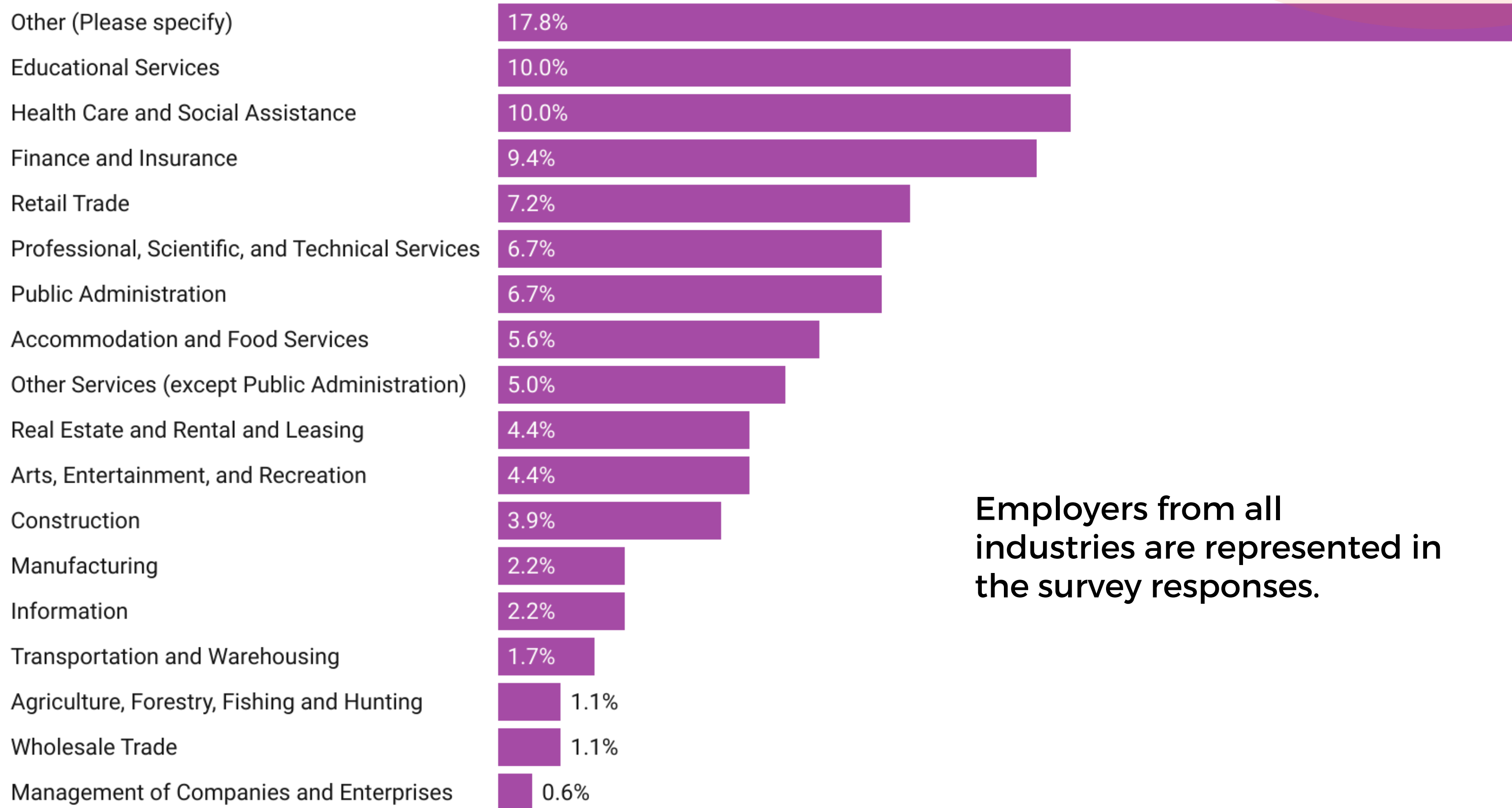
192 total respondents took part, a 9% increase in participation over the 2024 survey.

**Are you a member of or were you referred to
this survey by your area chamber of commerce?
If so, select your chamber below.**



**We thank the region's
chambers of commerce and
business associations who
assisted with encouraging
their members to participate!**

What is the industry of your business?



Employers from all industries are represented in the survey responses.

Of your total number of employees, how many are employed in your 495/MetroWest sites?

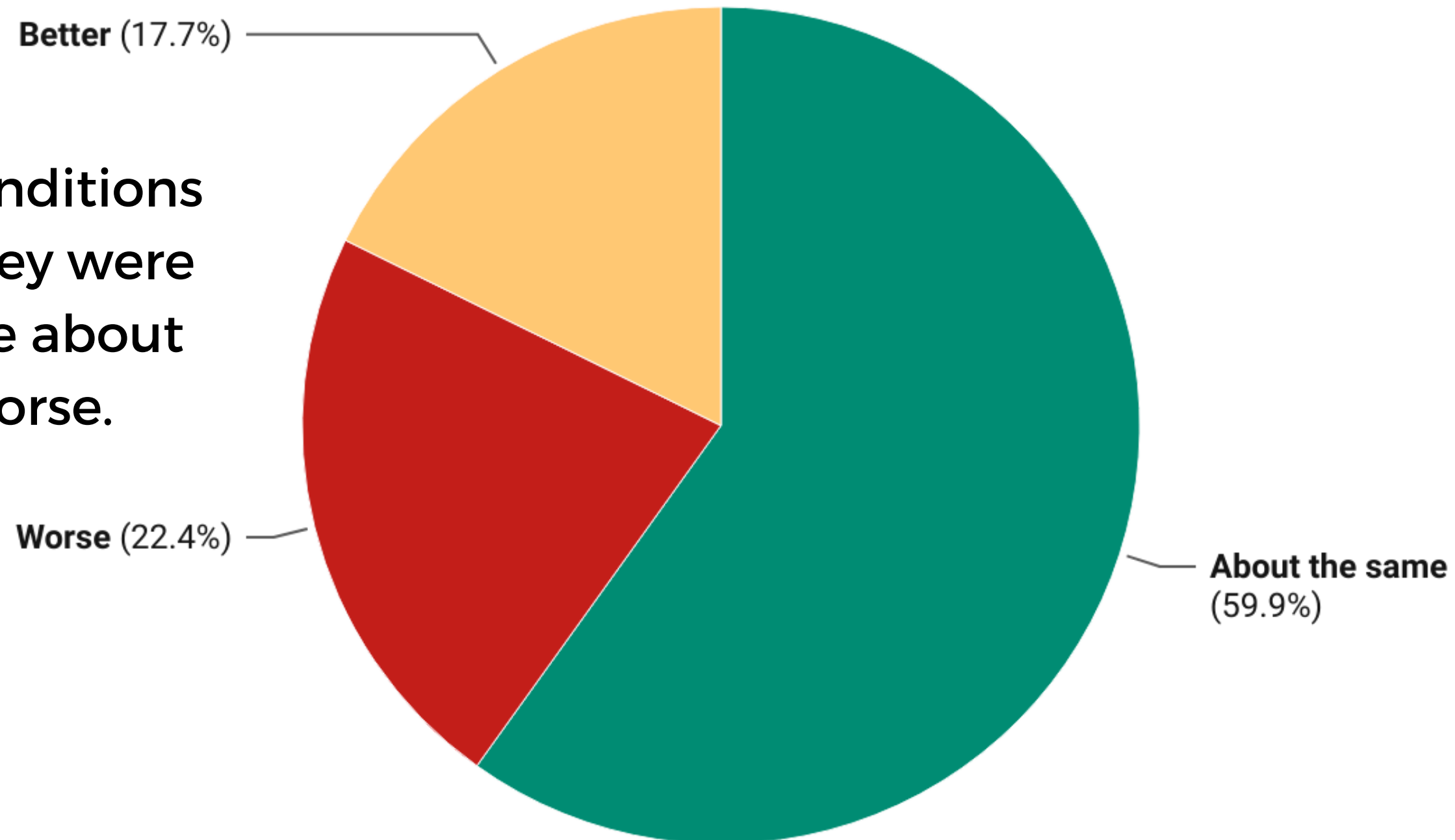


Employers of all sizes are represented in the survey responses.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Would you say business conditions in the 495/MetroWest region are better or worse than they were a year ago?

18% of respondents feel business conditions in 495/MetroWest are better than they were a year ago, with 60% feeling they are about the same. 22% feel conditions are worse.

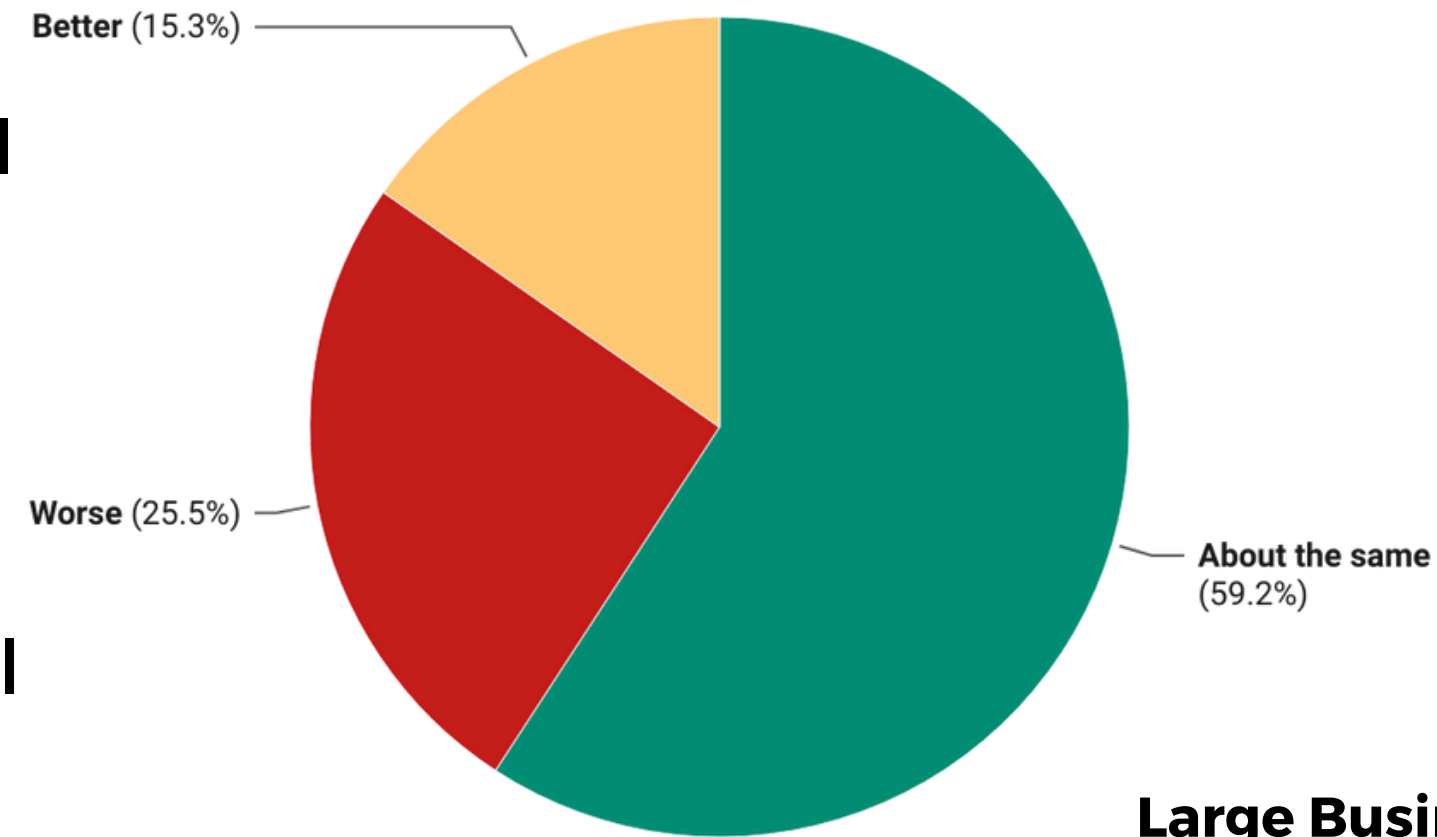


Would you say business conditions in the 495/MetroWest region are better or worse than they were a year ago?

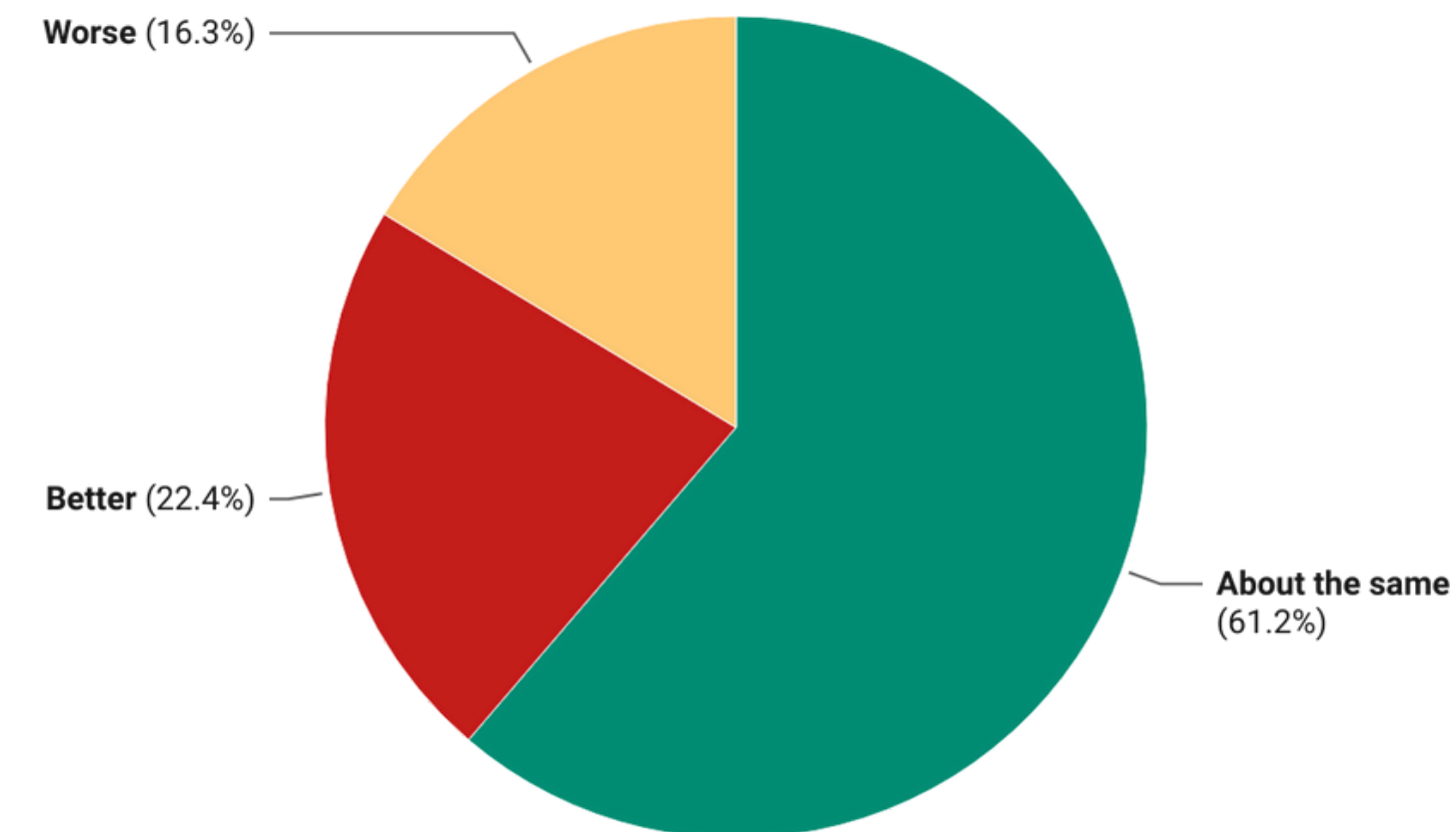
Breaking down responses between small and large employers, 15% of small business respondents feel business conditions in 495/MetroWest are better than they were a year ago, with 59% feeling they are about the same. 26% feel conditions are worse.

From larger employers, 22% consider businesses conditions in the region to be better than they were a year ago, while 61% feel they are about the same. 16% believe they are worse.

Small Businesses

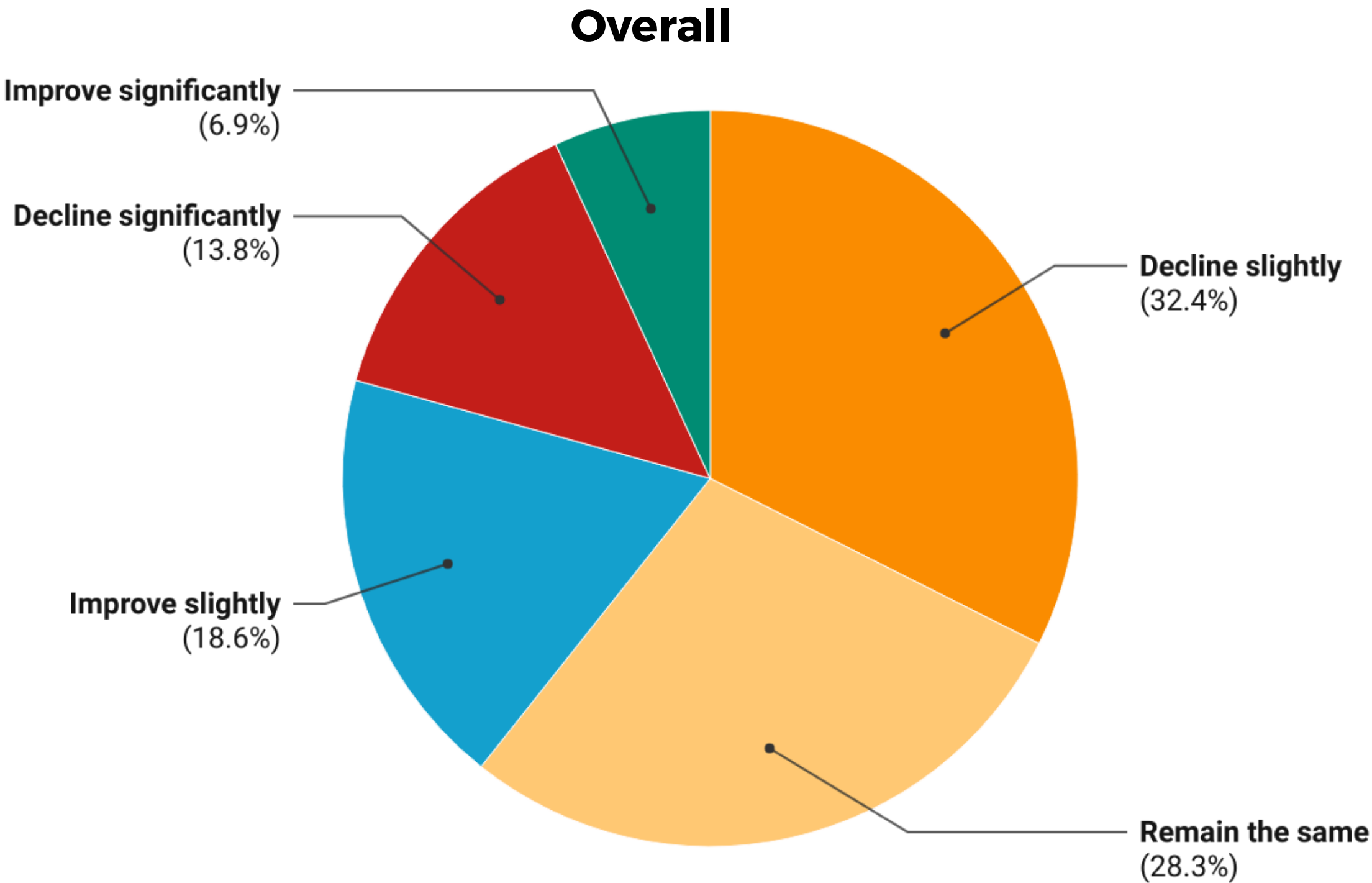


Large Businesses



In your opinion, over the course of the coming year, how will the economy in the 495/MetroWest region do?

26% of respondents feel the economy in the 495/MetroWest region will improve over the coming year, while 28% expect conditions to remain the same and 46% expect a decline.

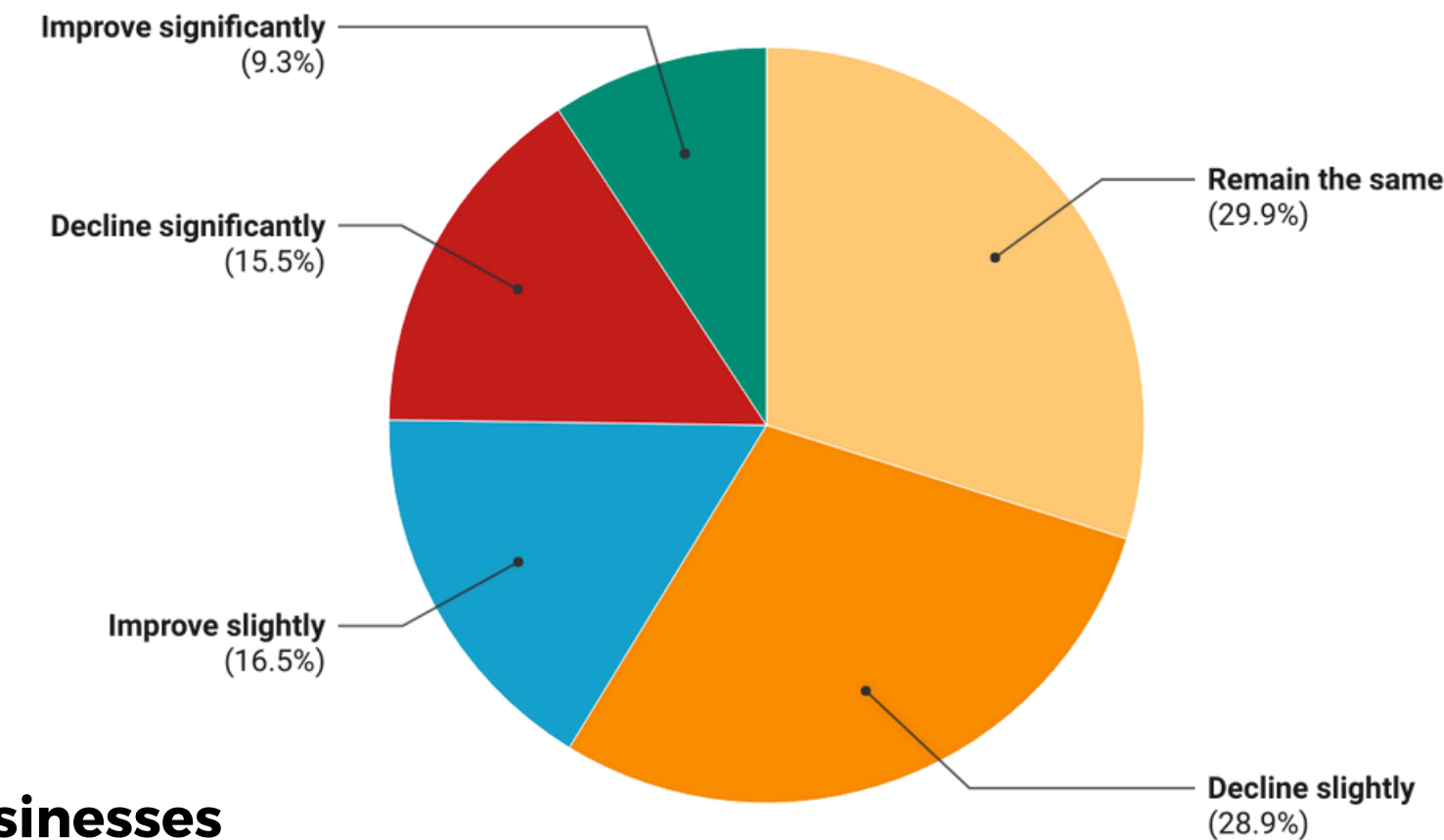


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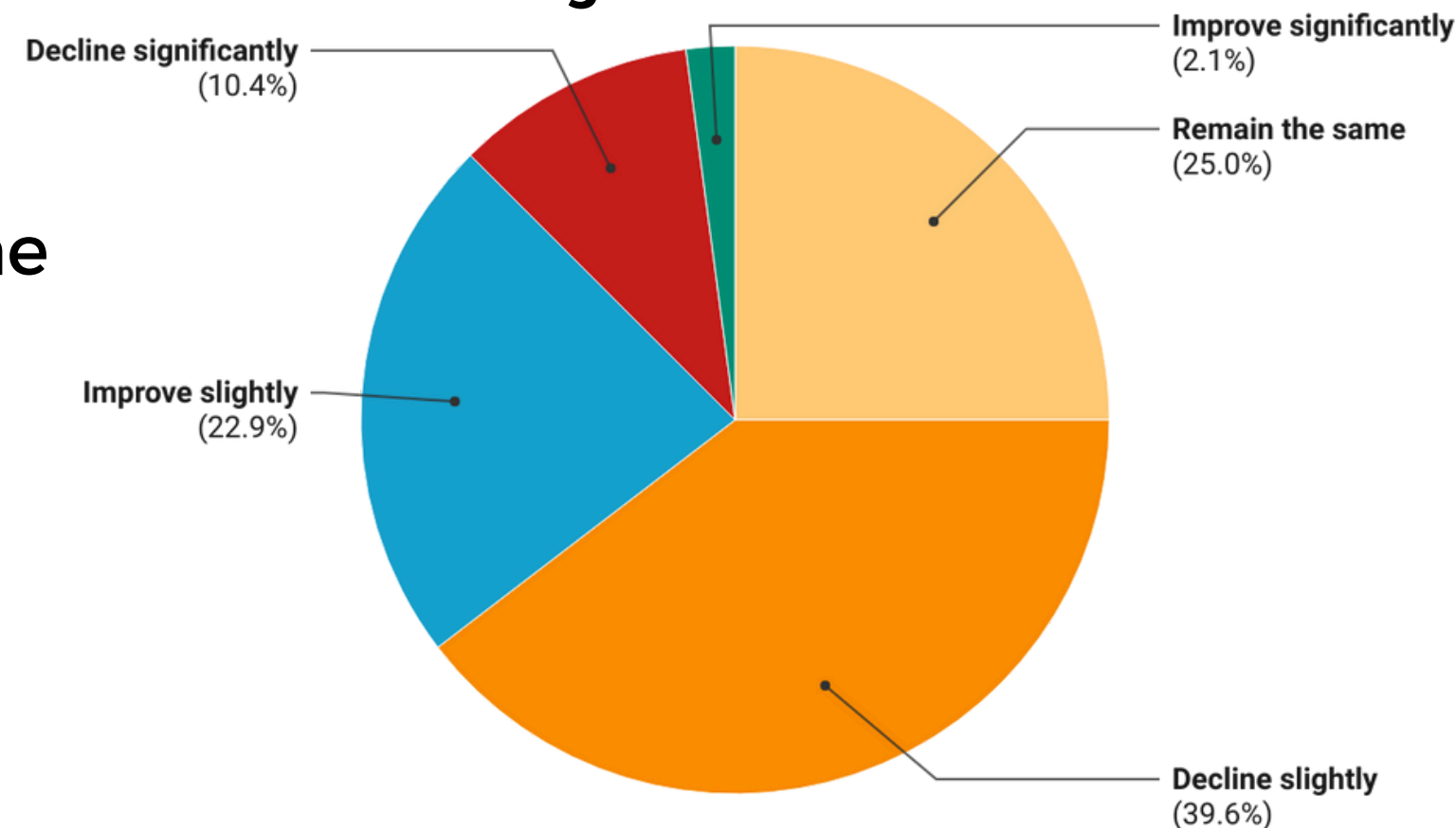
26% of small business respondents feel the economy in the 495/MetroWest region will improve over the coming year, while 30% expect conditions to remain the same and 44% expect a decline.

Meanwhile, 25% of respondents from large business believe the region's economy will improve over the coming year, while another 25% expect conditions to remain the same and 50% expect a decline.

Small Businesses

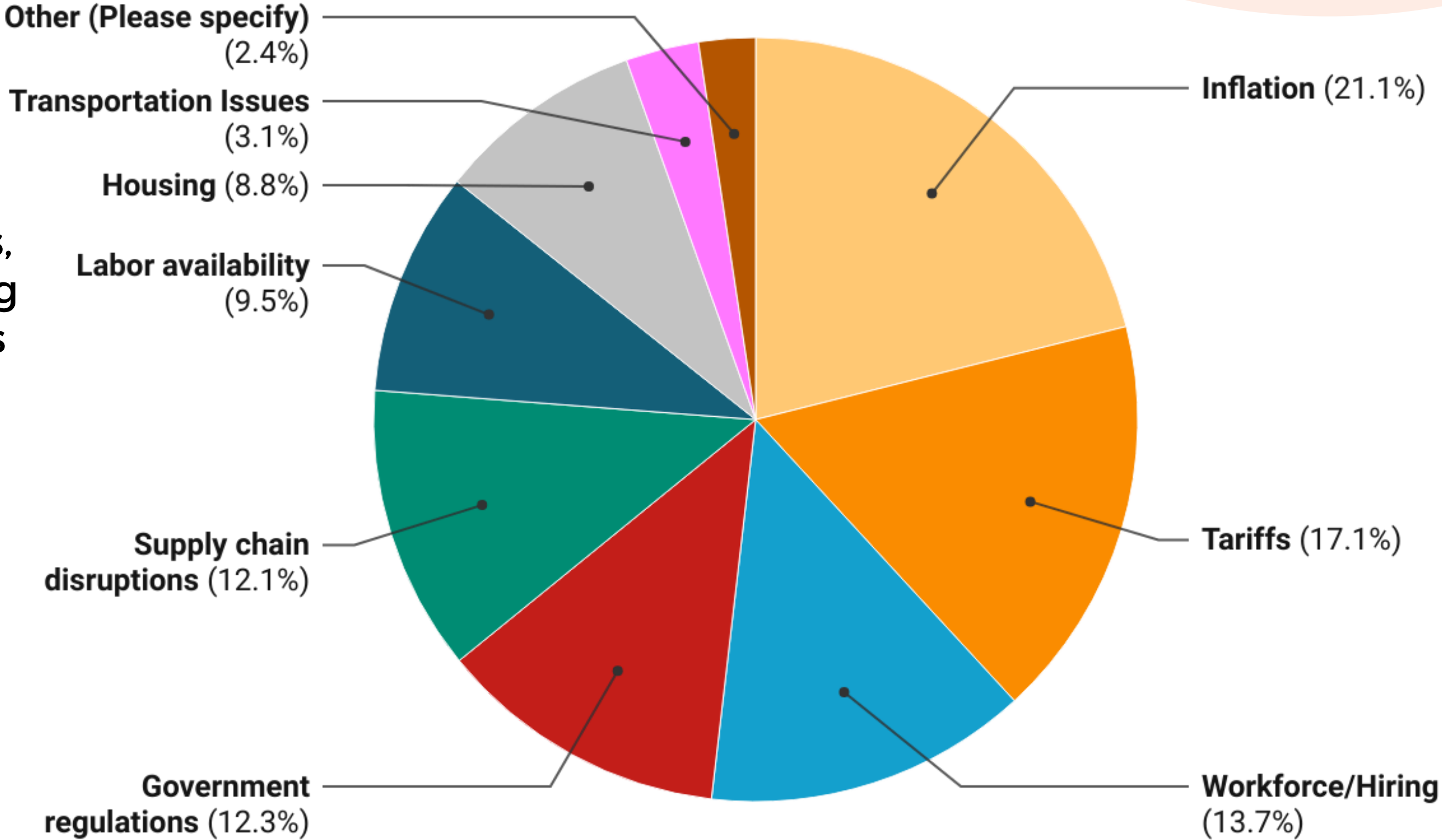


Large Businesses



What are your biggest concerns looking at the coming year?

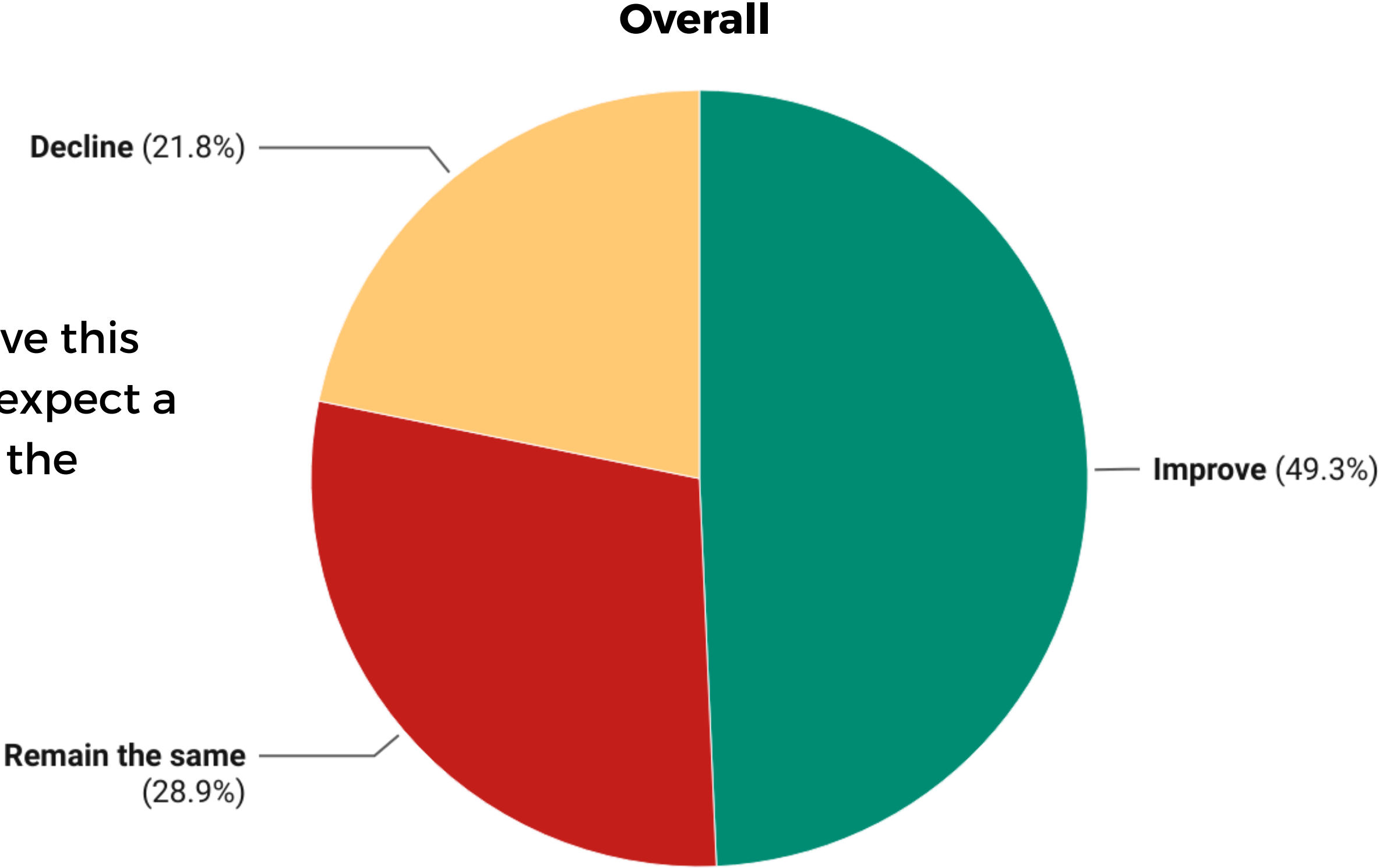
Inflation and Tariffs emerged this year as the chief concern for 495/MetroWest employers, while workforce and hiring continue to be other areas of worry. Employers also expressed concern over supply chain disruptions and government regulations.



NOTE: Respondents could select multiple options.

Compared to the previous year, what are your expectations for your organization's revenue performance this year?

49% of respondents expect their organization's revenues to improve this year over the previous year. 22% expect a decline, while 29% expect about the same revenue performance.

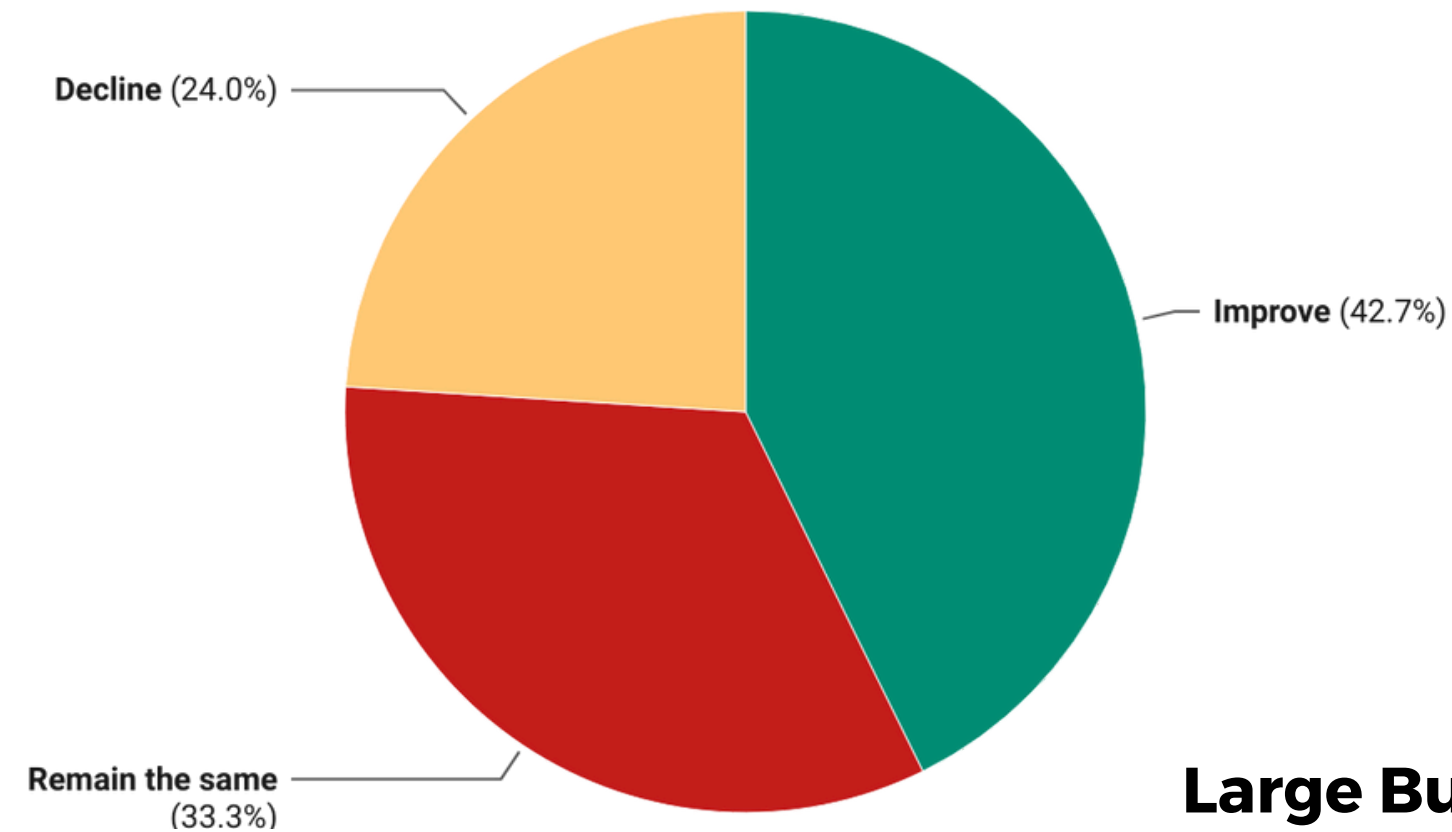


Compared to the previous year, what are your expectations for your organization's revenue performance this year?

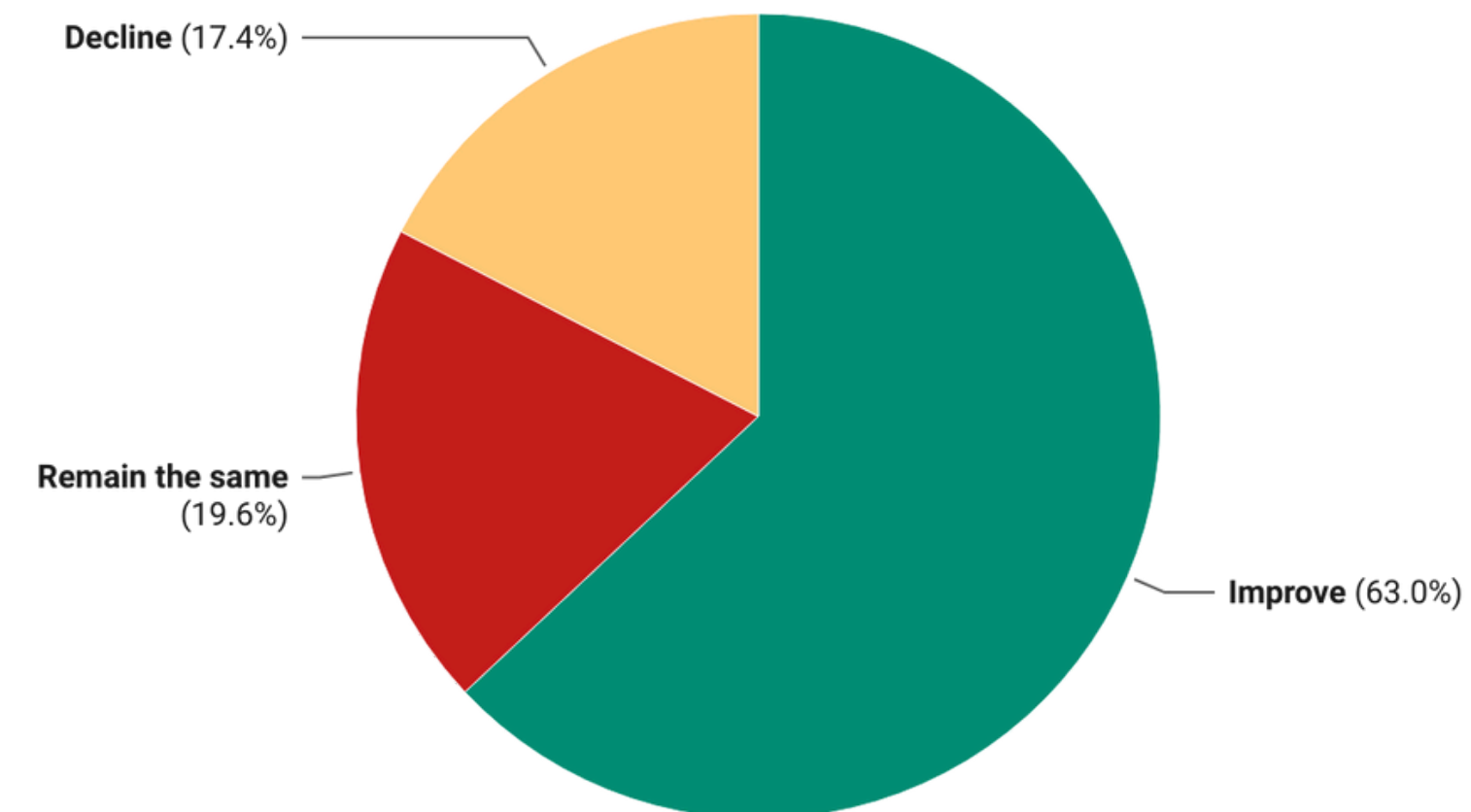
Among small businesses, 43% of respondents expect their revenues to improve over the coming year. 24% expect a decline and 33% expect about the same revenue performance.

Larger employers are more optimistic, with 63% believing their revenues to improve over the coming year. 20% expect revenues to remain the same, while 17% expect a decline.

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



Have inflationary pressures impacted the profitability of your business?

Overall

Positive Impact (7.5%)

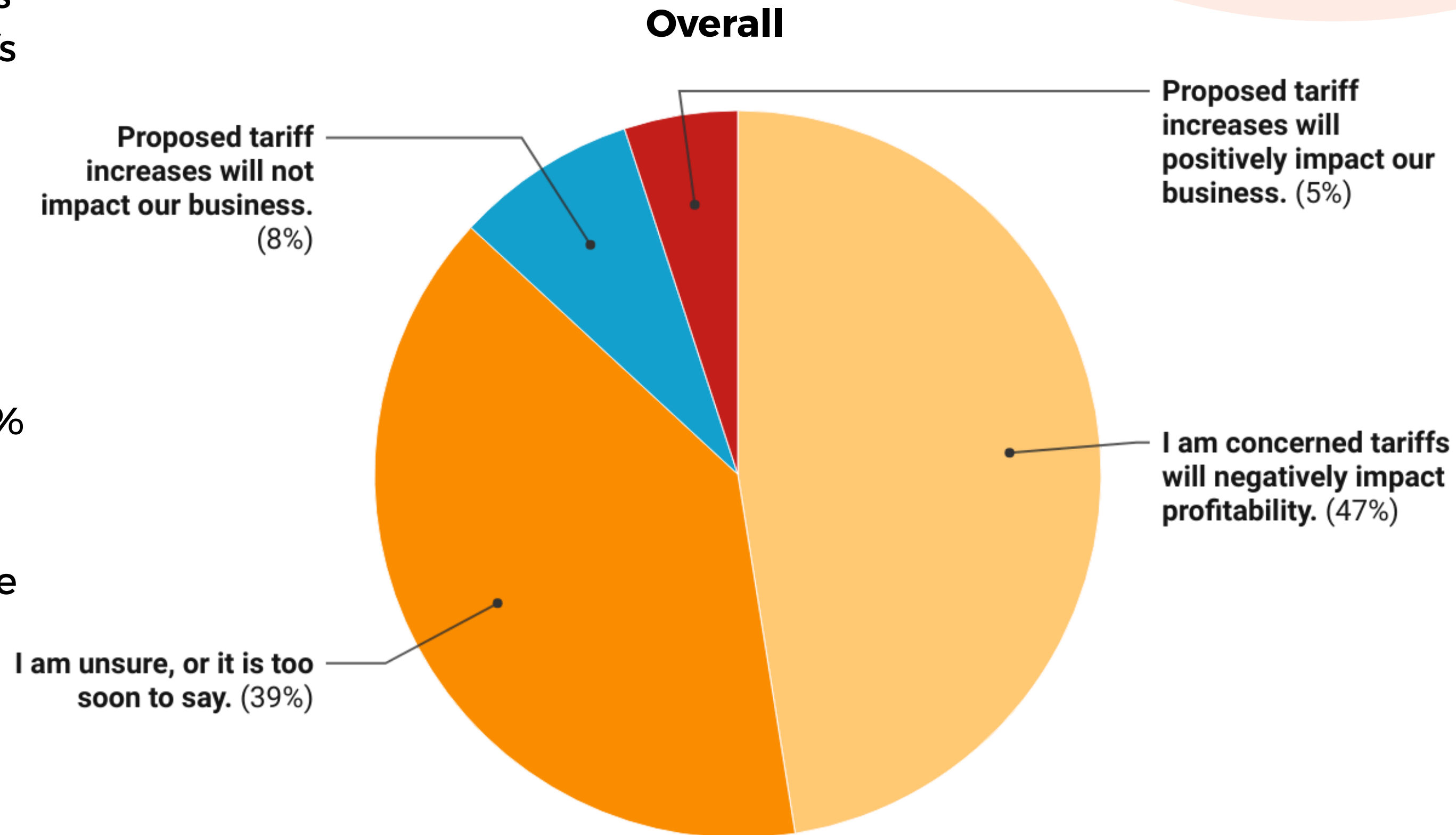
No impact (13.4%)

Negative Impact (79.1%)

Overall, 13% of respondents stated that inflationary pressures had not impacted profitability. 79% said that inflation had a negative impact on their business, while 8% said they had a positive effect

Are you concerned that new tariffs at the federal level will impact the profitability of your business?

47% of total respondents are concerned that tariffs at the federal level will negatively impact the profitability of their business, while 5% believed that tariff increases will positively impact their business. 8% stated that tariffs will have no impact on their business, while 39% were unsure.

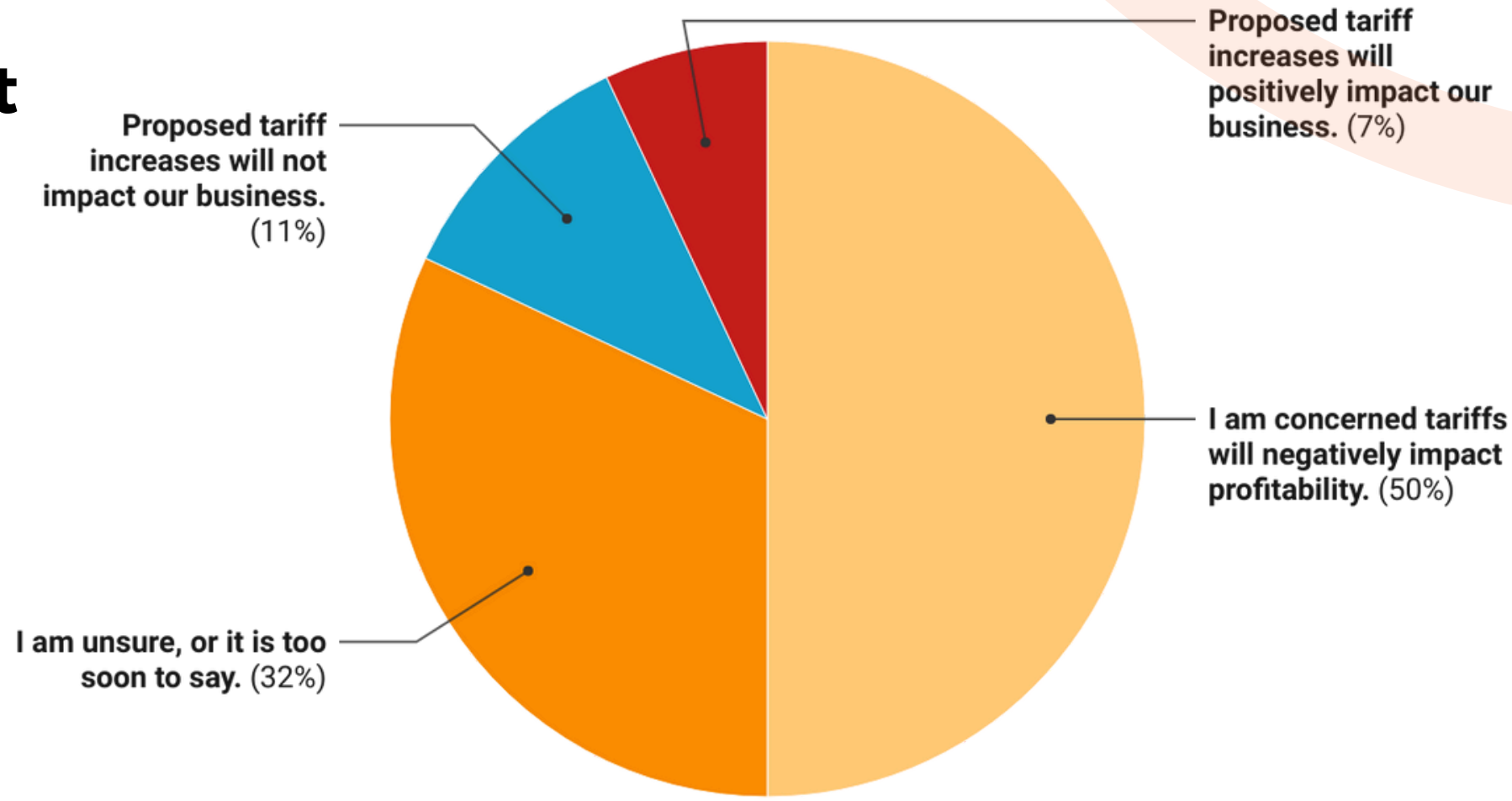


Are you concerned that new tariffs at the federal level will impact the profitability of your business?

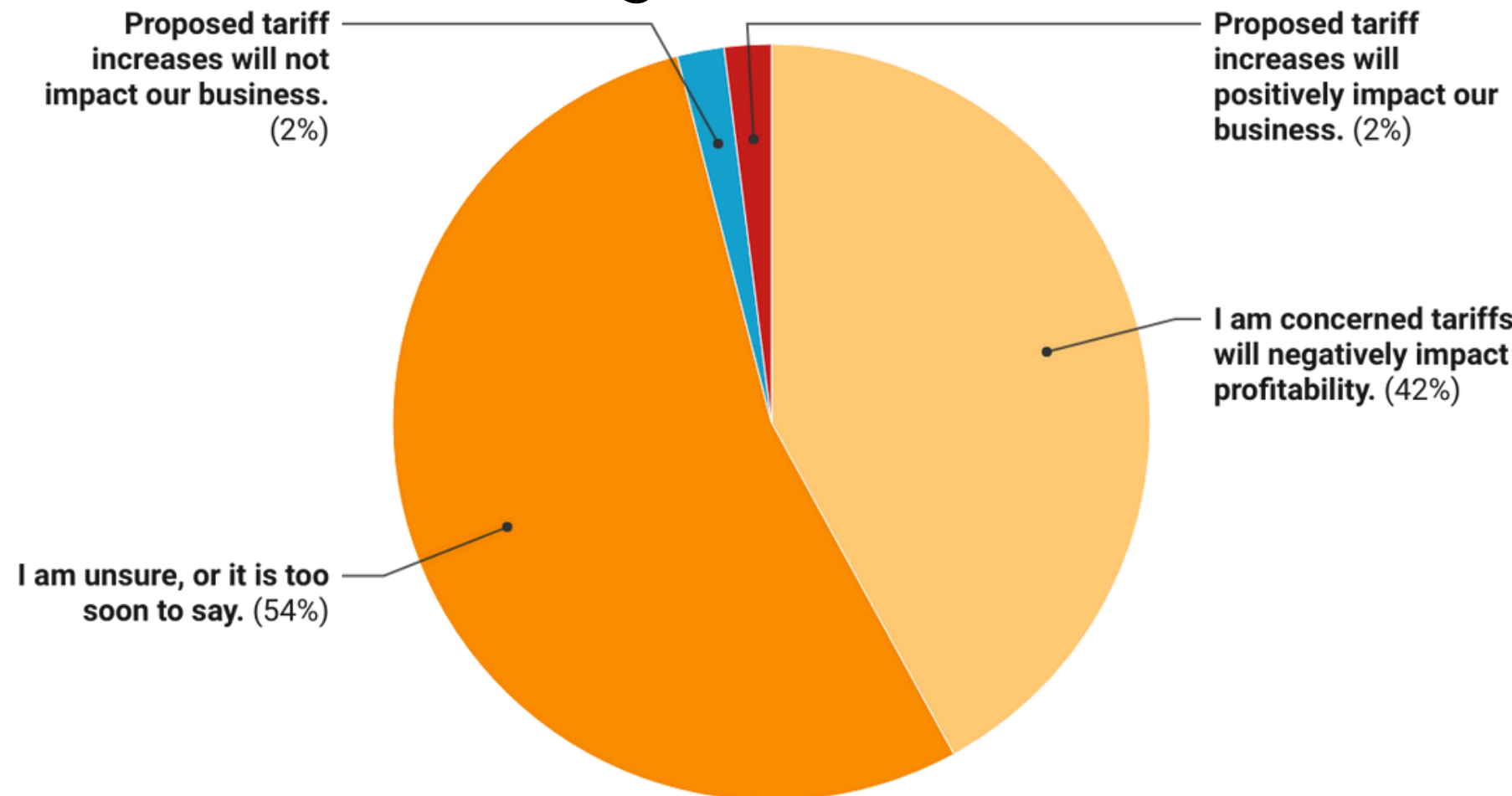
Among respondents from small businesses, 50% are concerned that tariffs will negatively impact profitability, while 7% believe that tariffs will positively impact their business. 11% believe that tariffs will have no impact, while 32% are unsure.

Large employers were more inclined to respond that it is too soon to say (54%). 42% are concerned about tariffs negatively impacting their business,

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



WORKFORCE & HIRING

Over the course of the coming year, do you expect to grow your workforce in the 495/MetroWest region?

Overall



38% of total employers taking the survey expect to grow their workforce in the 495/MetroWest region over the course of the coming year, down from 46% last year. Only 3% are contemplating a staffing reduction. 33% do not intend any changes in staffing levels, with 26% unsure.

Over the course of the coming year, do you expect to grow your workforce in the 495/MetroWest region?

31% of small employers expect to grow their workforce in the region over the course of the coming year, while 5% are likely to reduce their staff. Large Employers are indicating that they are more well positioned to hire staff (51%)

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



Have you encountered any difficulties in hiring qualified staff this year?

Responses varied between small and large employers; while 72% of respondents from small employers said they have not encountered any difficulties with hiring qualified staff this year, only 42% of respondents from large businesses said the same.

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



What workforce (hiring) need concerns you the most?

Small Businesses



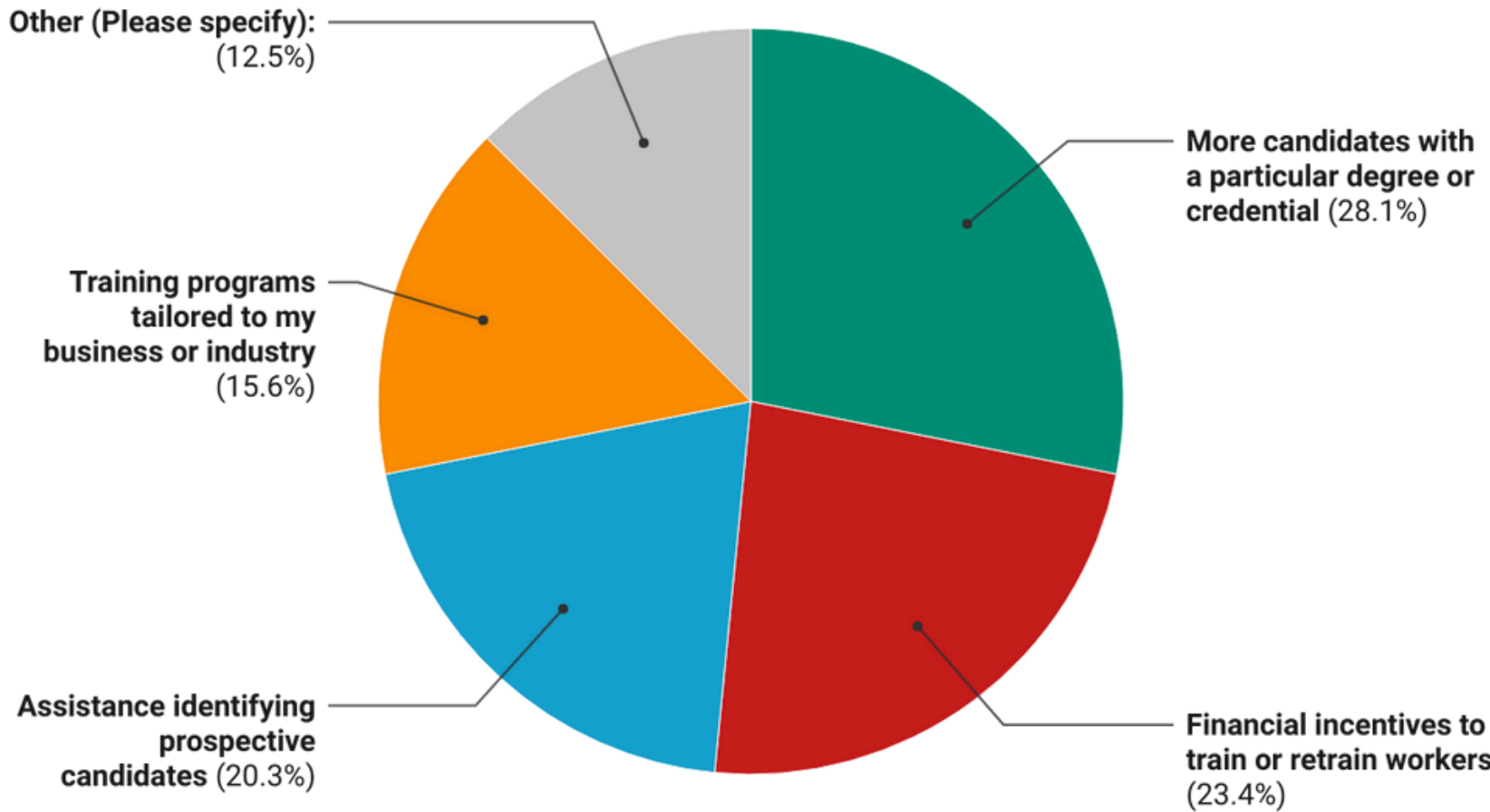
Large Businesses



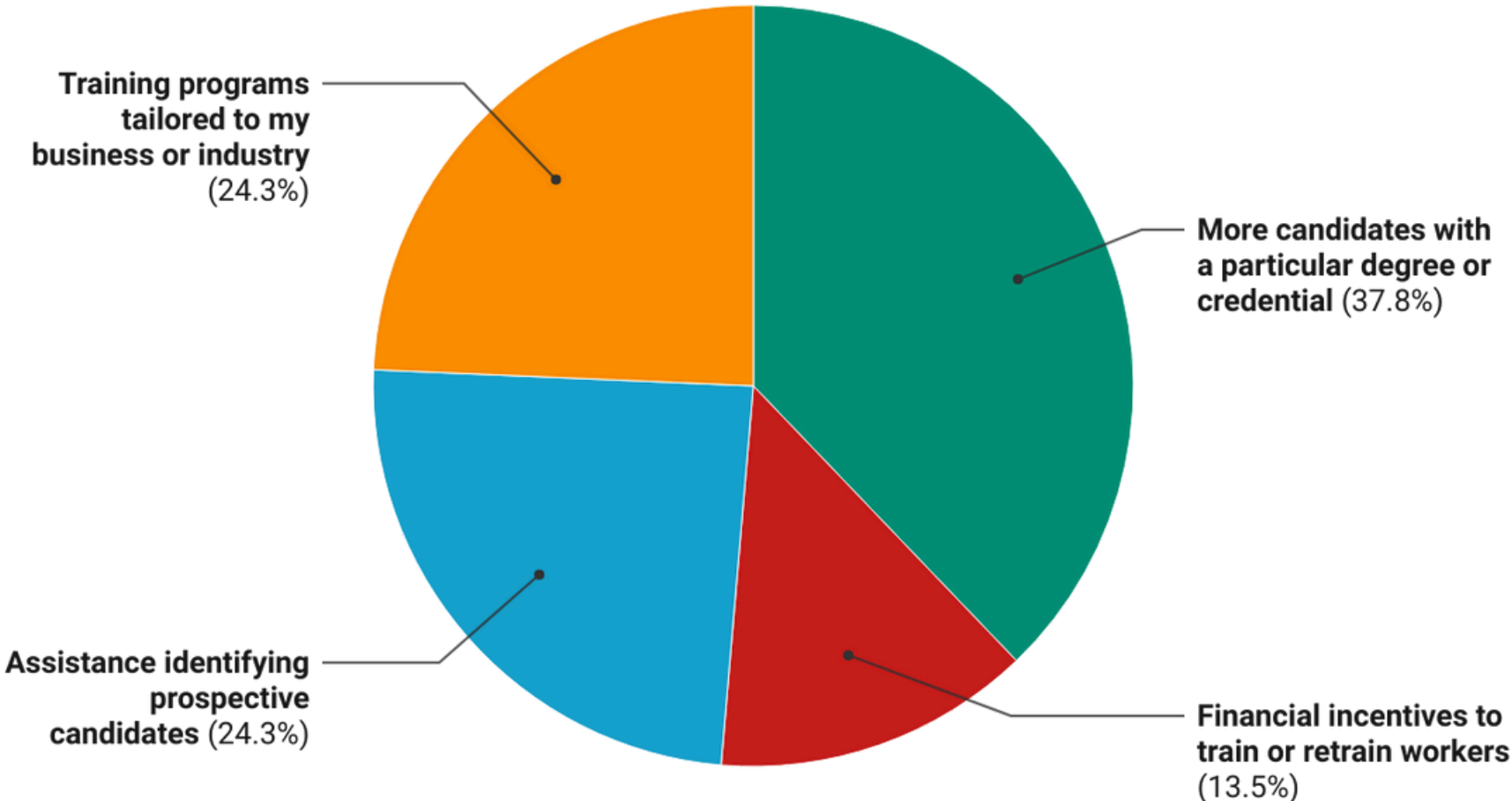
Small employers are mostly concerned with the skills gap of their applicants and the need to replace their aging workforce, while over 50% of large employers are concerned with a general lack of applicants.

Which of the following would be most helpful in hiring new staff?

Small Businesses

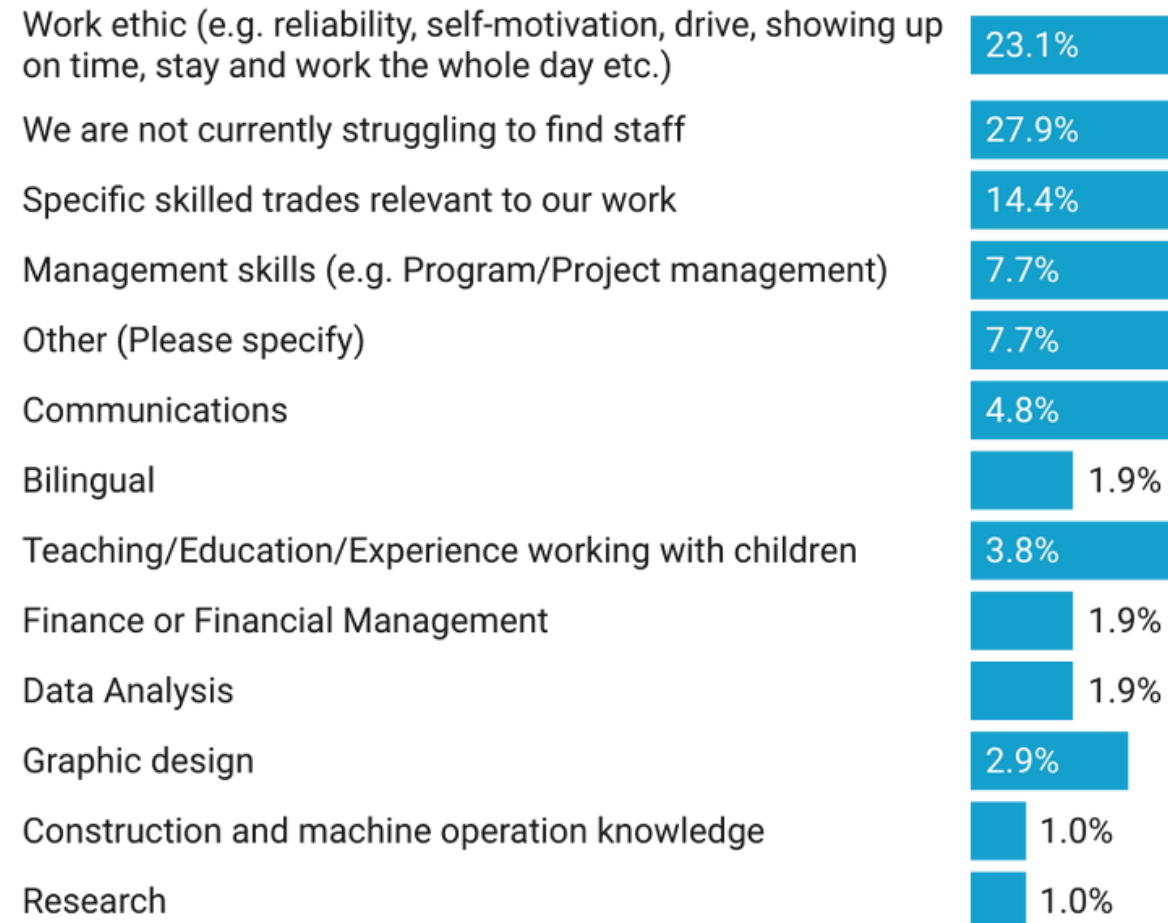


Large Businesses

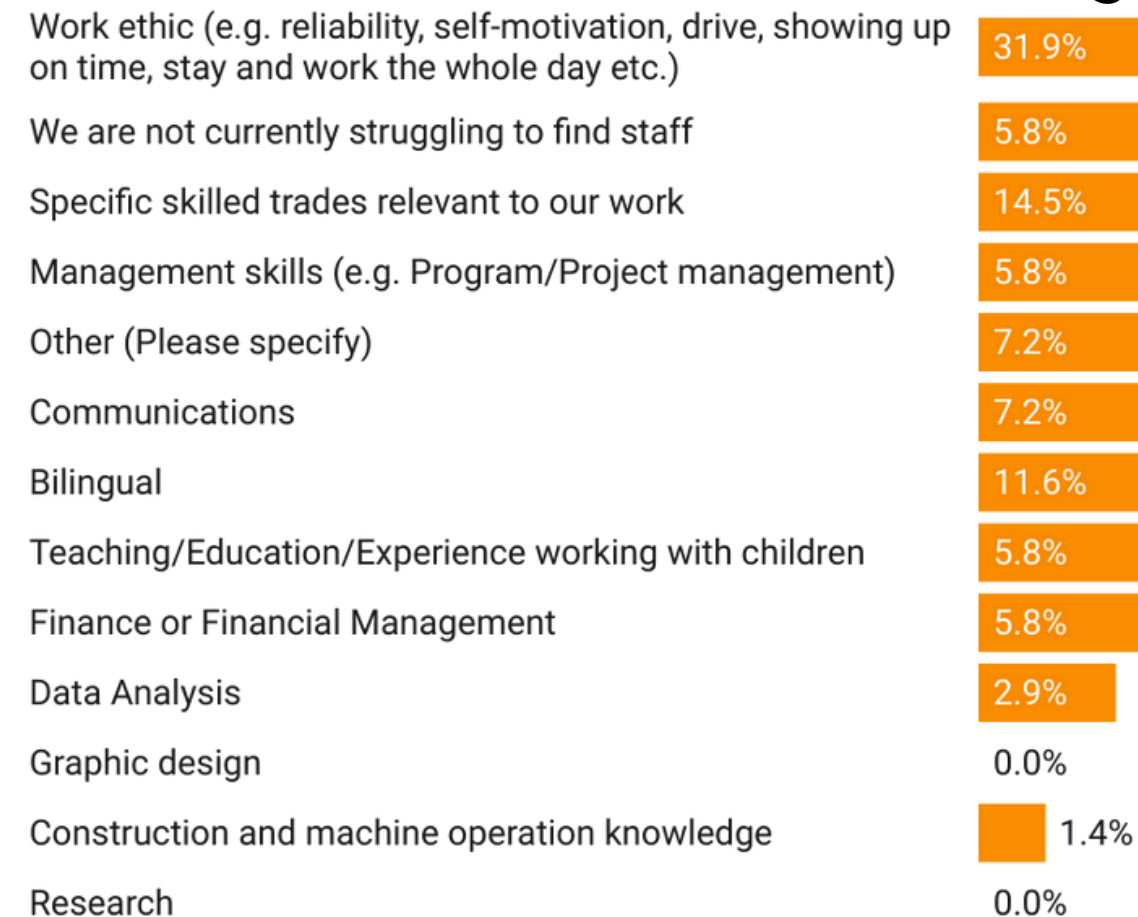


If your company is struggling to find staff with the desired skill set, which skill(s) are most commonly lacking?

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



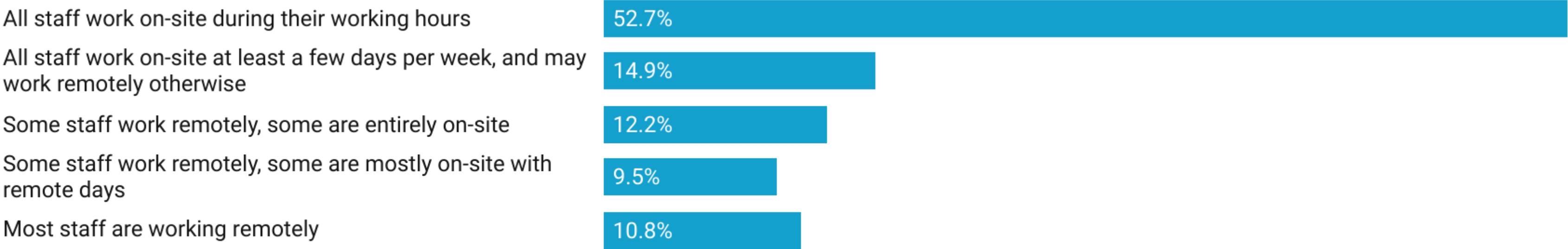
When asked to describe their current approach to on-site versus remote work:

- All staff work on-site during their working hours (49%)
- All staff work on-site at least a few days per week, and may work remotely otherwise (16%)
- Some staff work remotely, some are entirely on-site (17%)
- Some staff work remotely, some are mostly on-site with remote days (10%)
- Most staff are working remotely (8%)

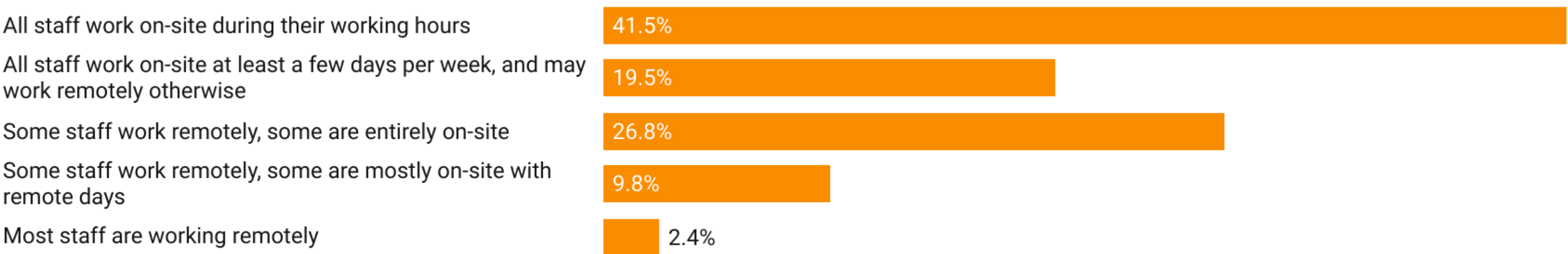
*overall responses

Which best describes your current approach to on-site versus remote work?

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



What best describes the reason for locating your business in the 495/MetroWest region?

Small Businesses



Large Businesses

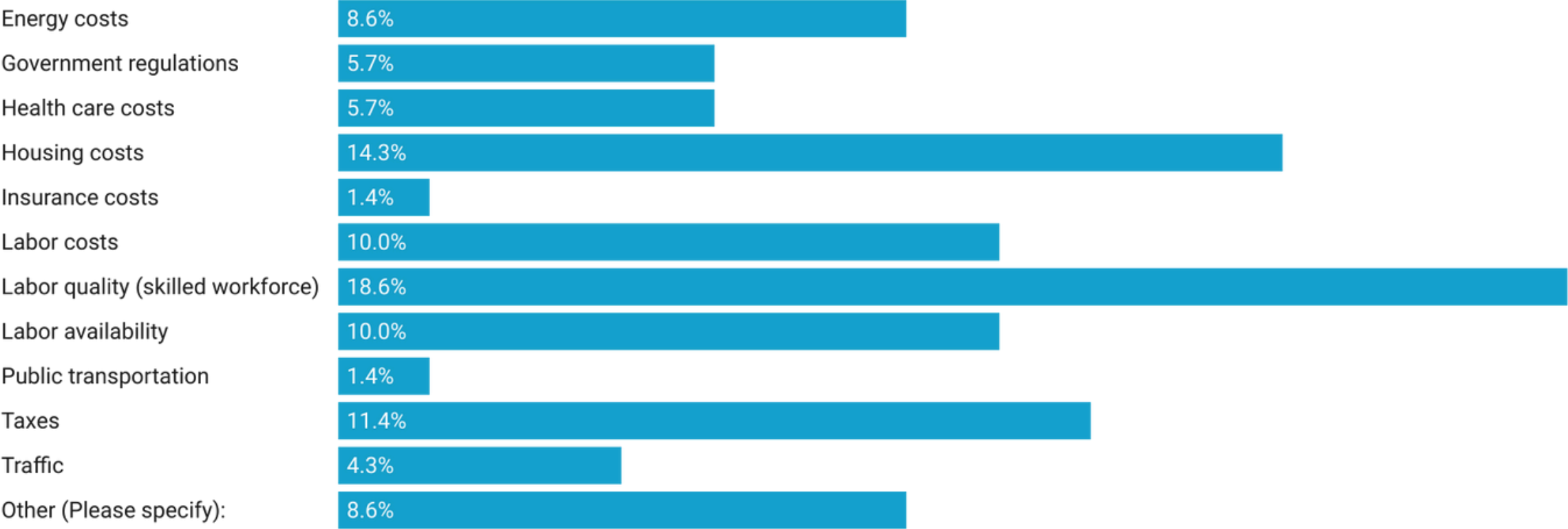


What is the single most important challenge in the 495/MetroWest region facing your organization today?

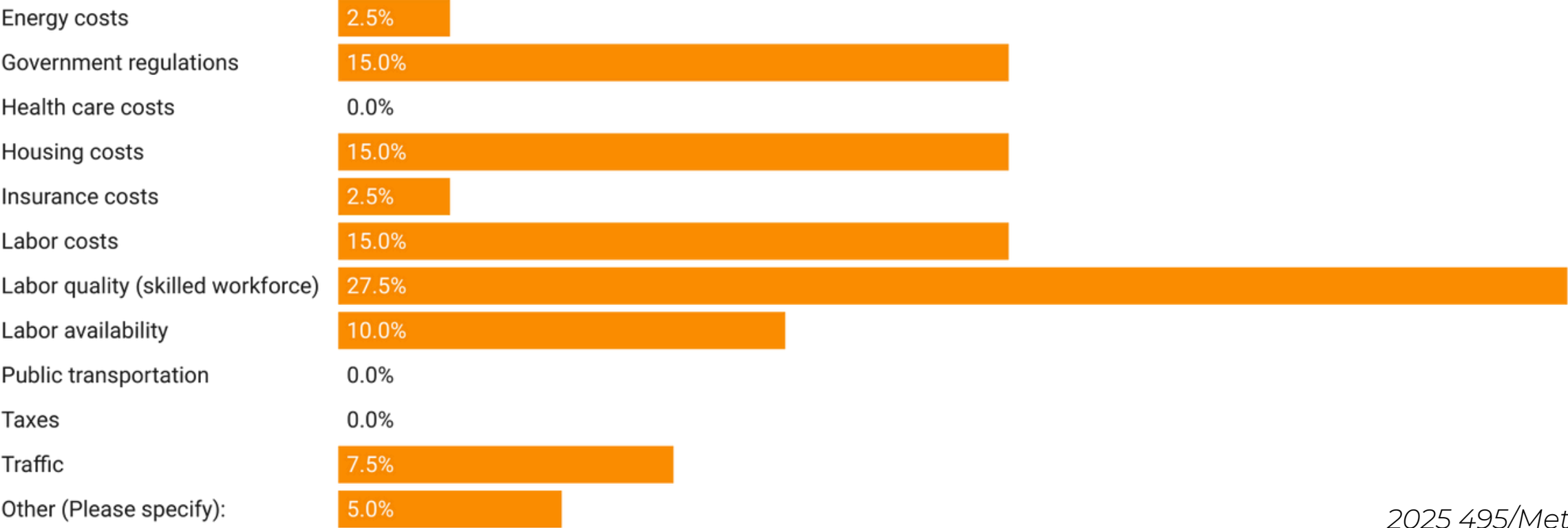


What is the single most important challenge in the 495/MetroWest region facing your organization today?

Small Businesses



Large Businesses



VIEWS OF THE REGION



CONTACT US

Jason@495Partnership.org

www.495Partnership.org

(774) 760-0495

