

# Viewpoints Research Ltd.

***National Survey of CUPE Library Workers' Employment Precarity***  
**September 2017**

**CUPE·SCFP** / Canadian Union of Public Employees  
Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique

\*In 2013, a joint university-community research project was undertaken by McMaster University and United Way Toronto entitled *Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario* (PEPSO). The study explored the characteristics of employment in the GTA-Hamilton labour market. The PEPSO study's summary report explains:

*“Social scientists have adopted the term ‘precarity’ to describe states of employment that do not have the security or benefits enjoyed in more traditional employment relationships. These precarious employment relationships are becoming the ‘new normal’ for many in our workforce...*

*...precarity has real implications for economic well-being and job security. But it also reaches out and touches family and social life. It can affect how people socialize, and how much they are able to give back to their communities. It can cause tensions at home.”<sup>1</sup>*

The PEPSO study concluded precarious employment is increasing, and crosses all social and income categories. People in precarious employment earn less and face more uncertainty. Precarious employment has harmful effects on individuals, families and community life, and makes it more difficult to raise children. It both limits and enables community connections.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1&2</sup> *It's More than Poverty: Employment Precarity and Household Well-being* (Summary Report), Wayne Lewchuk et al., PEPSO Research Group, February 2013.

# **CUPE·SCFP** / Canadian Union of Public Employees Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique

On behalf of **CUPE National**, Viewpoints Research undertook a nation-wide **employment precarity study** with CUPE members who are library workers.

Viewpoints developed a survey which included most of the questions from the 2013 *Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO)* study\* and developed a sample frame to ensure a representative sample of CUPE library workers were invited to participate in the research.

*\*see final slide*



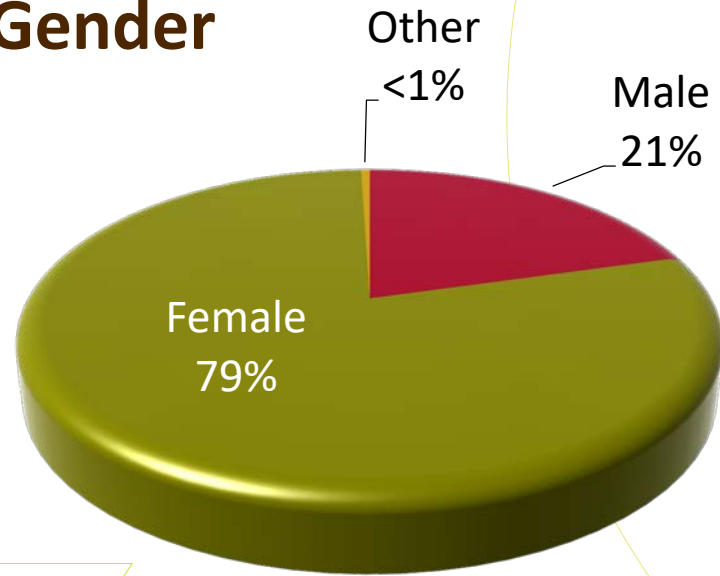
# M E T H O D O L O G Y



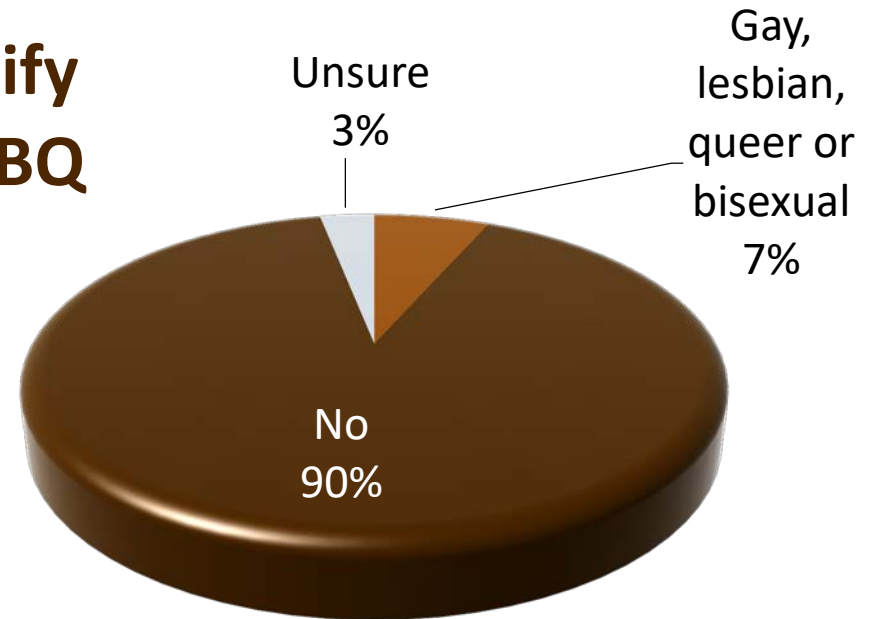
- **805 library workers** were surveyed by telephone between August 24<sup>th</sup> and September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017
- The **margin of error** is  $\pm 3.3\%$ , nineteen times out of twenty
- A **representative sample** of library workers was drawn based on the sample received from CUPE locals. Quotas were set by province and bargaining unit size. The final results do not give a complete picture of all CUPE librarians as Viewpoints did not receive any sample from locals with 500 to 999 members. The only provinces with this sized unit are Alberta, BC and Ontario. These provinces are well-represented by members in locals with a small (<100), medium (100-499) and very large membership (1000+).

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

## Gender

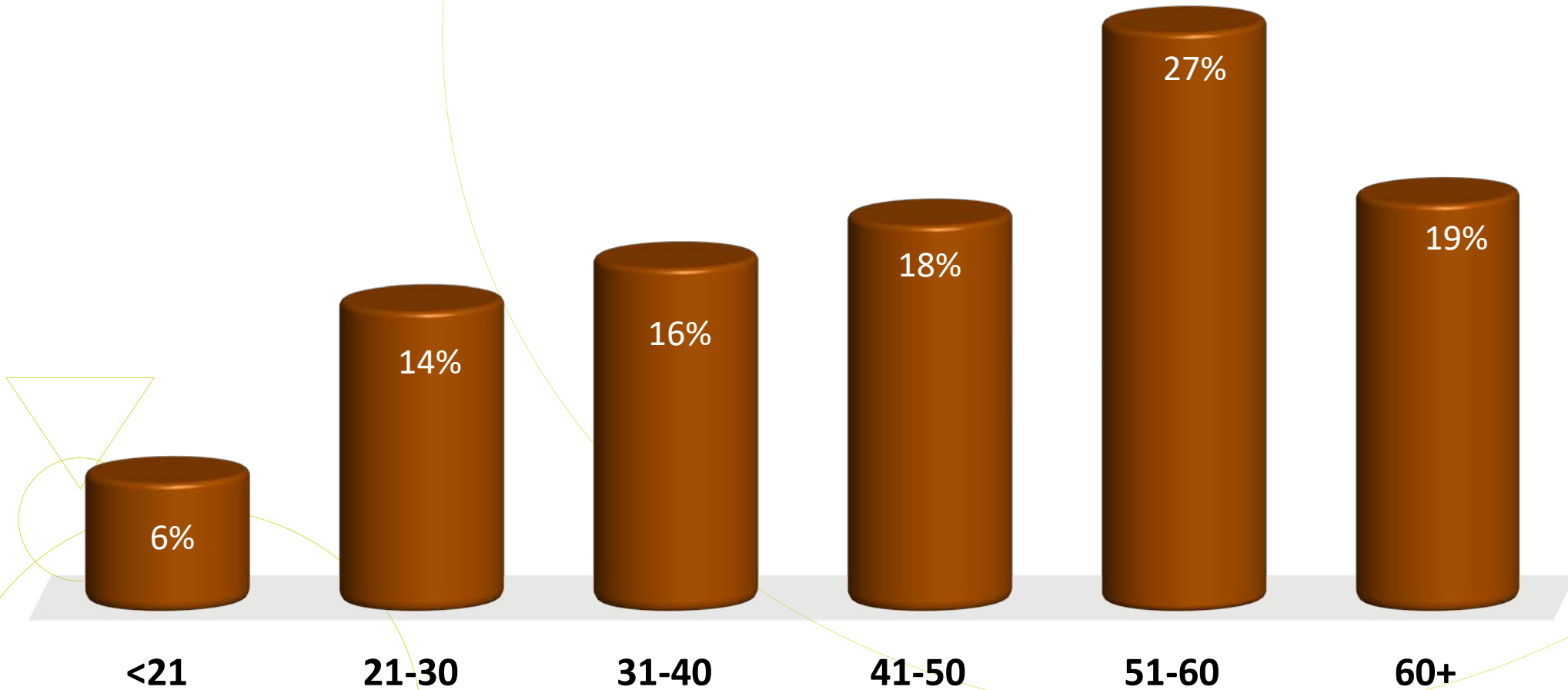


## Identify as LGBTQ



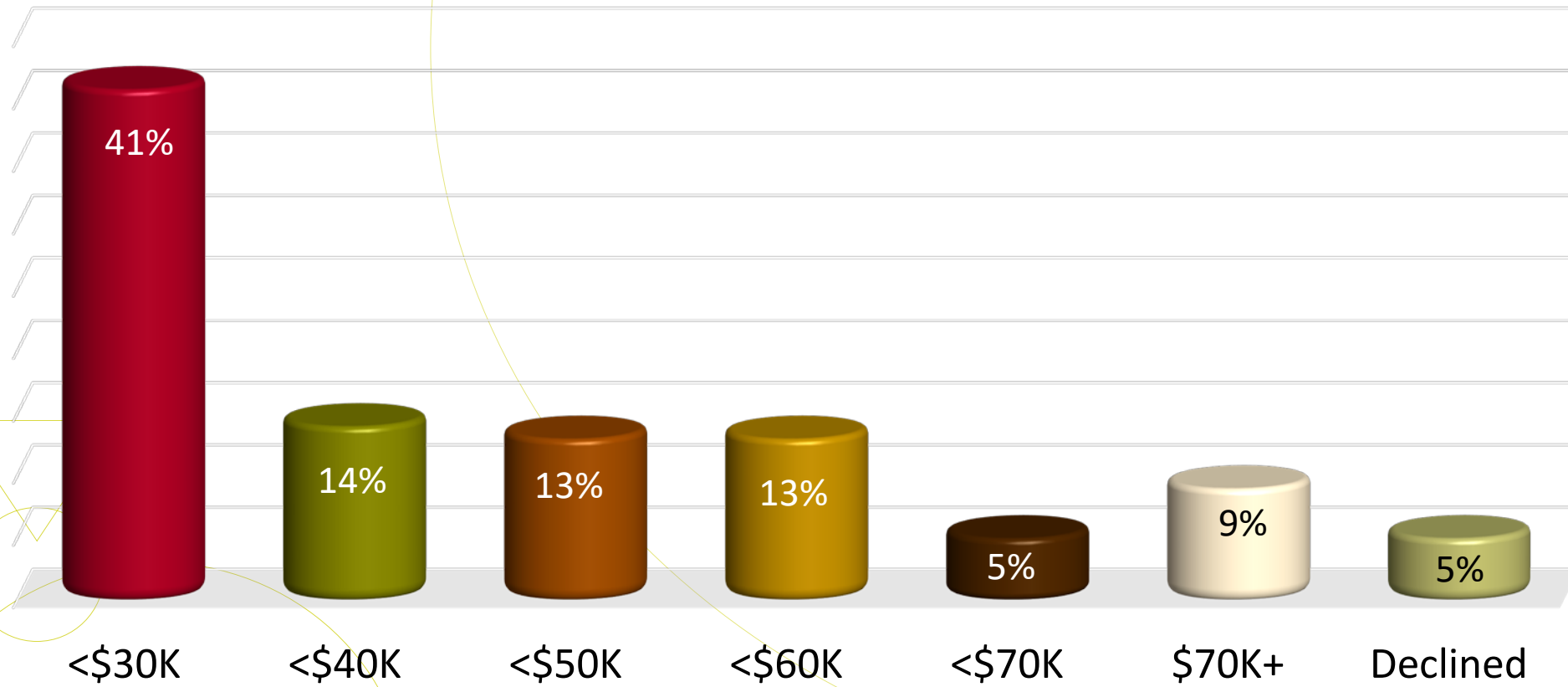
# RESPONDENT PROFILE

Age



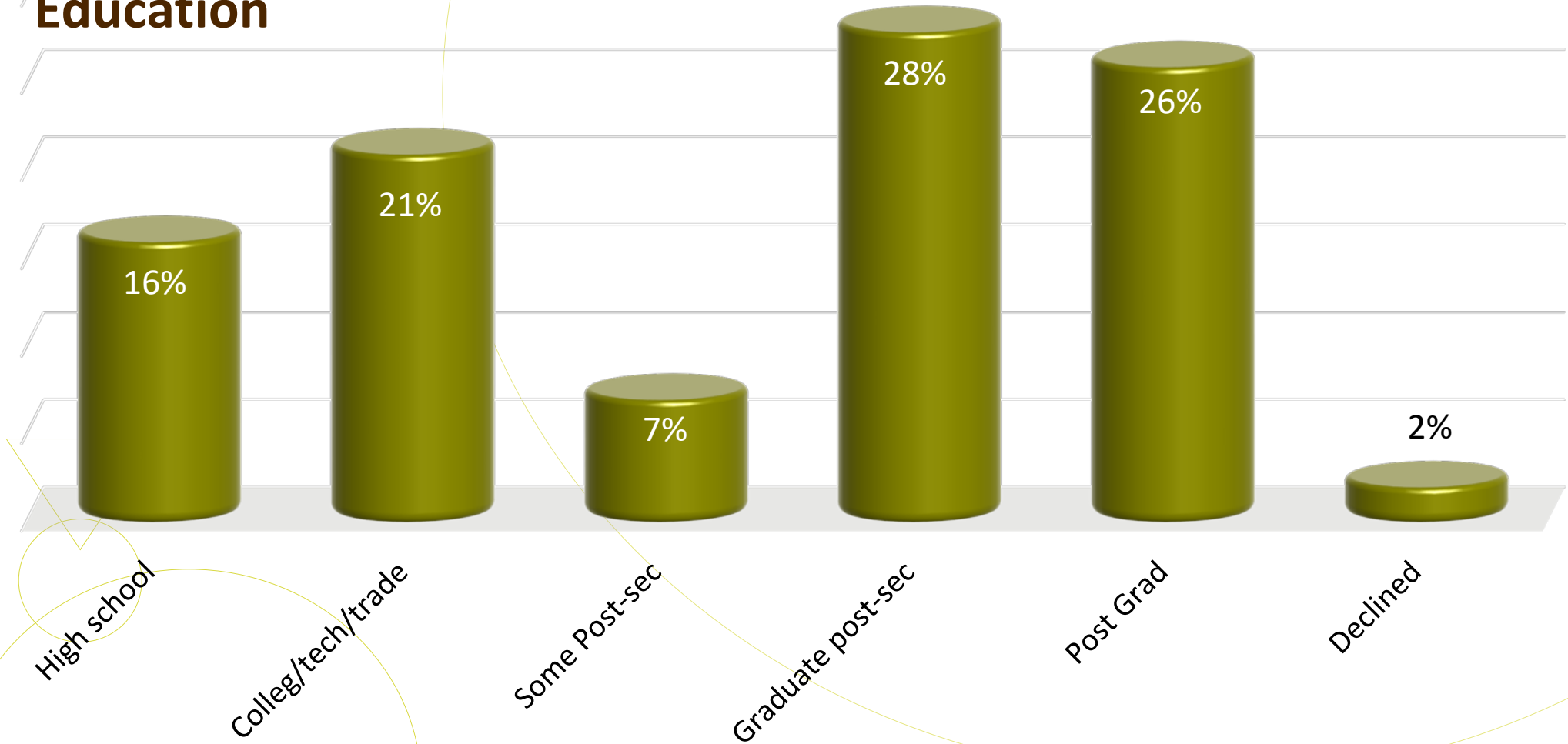
# RESPONDENT PROFILE

## Employment Income



# RESPONDENT PROFILE

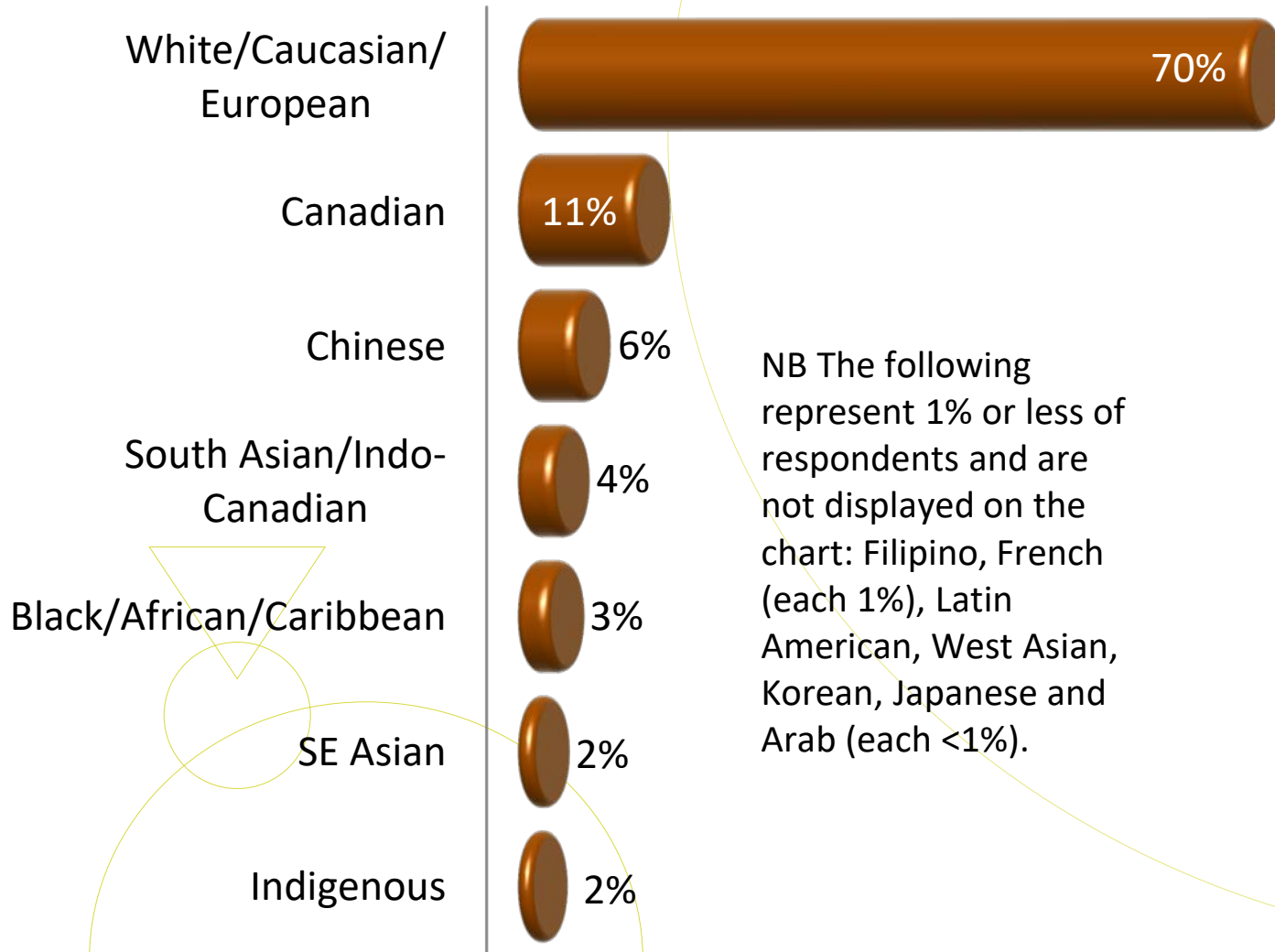
## Education





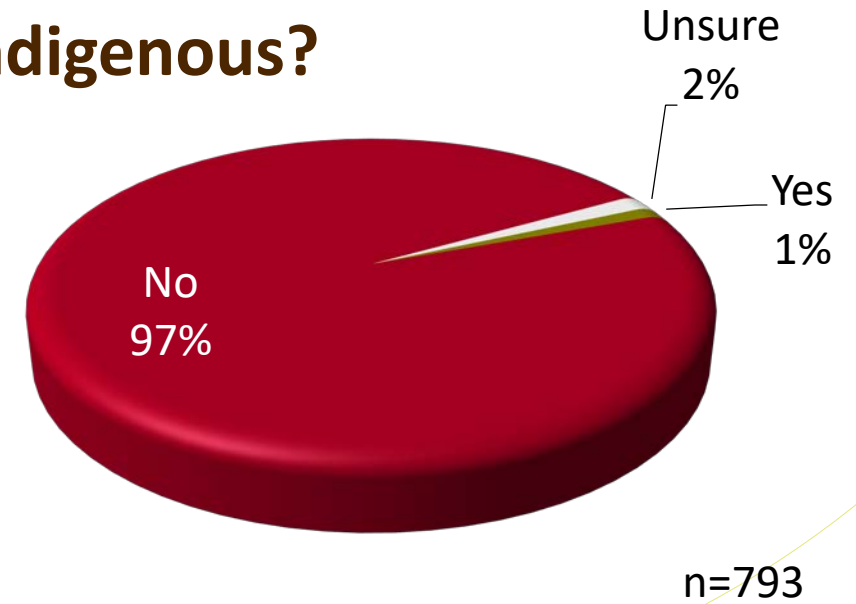
# RESPONDENT PROFILE

## Racial Background



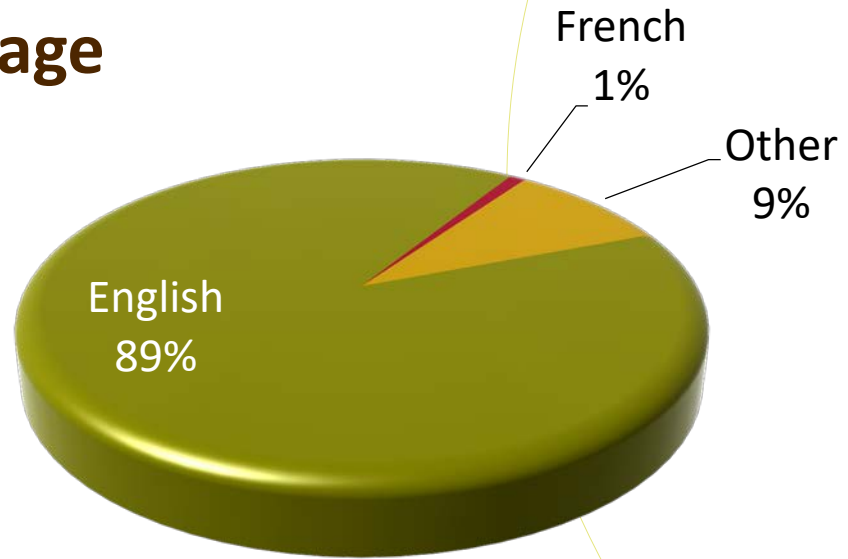
NB The following represent 1% or less of respondents and are not displayed on the chart: Filipino, French (each 1%), Latin American, West Asian, Korean, Japanese and Arab (each <1%).

## Indigenous?

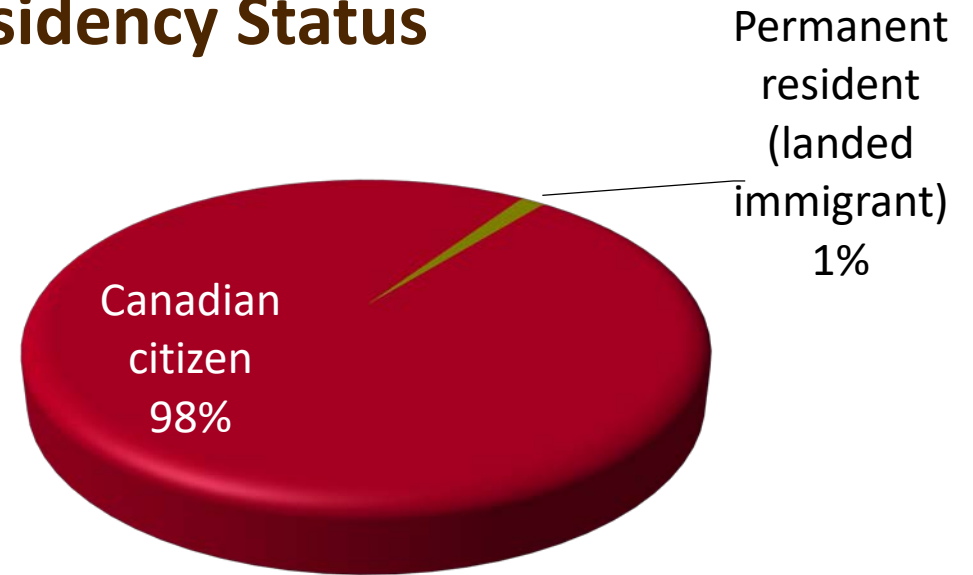


# RESPONDENT PROFILE

## Language

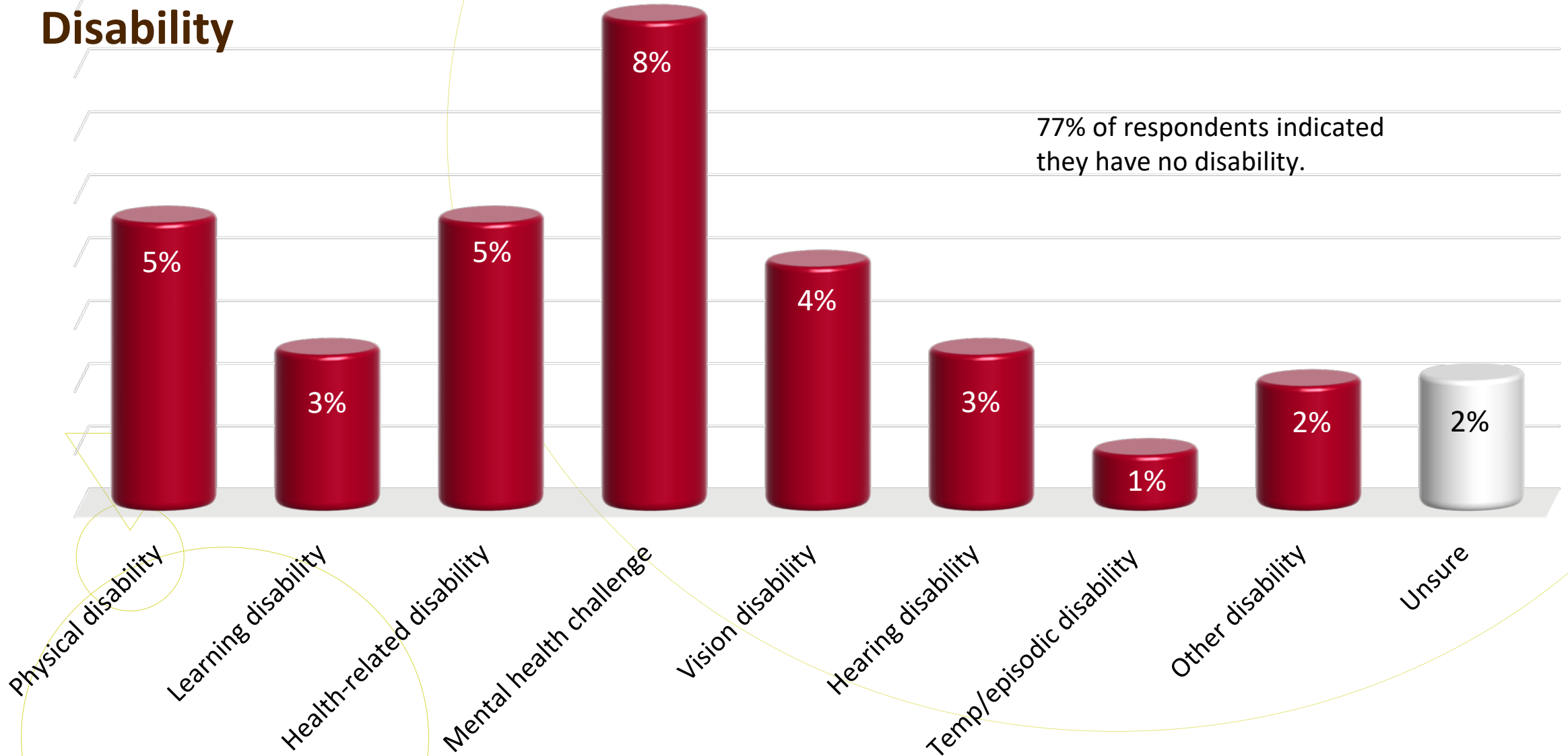


## Residency Status



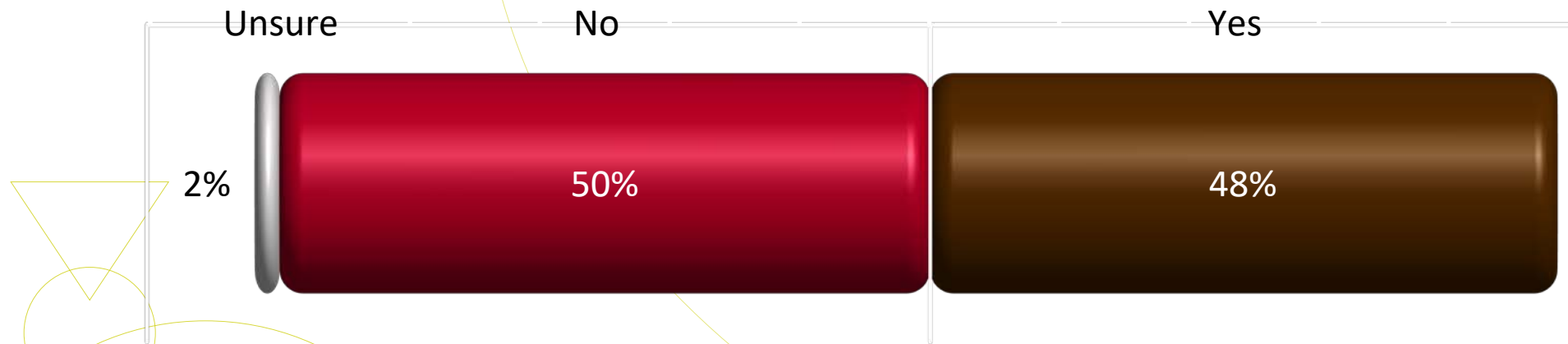
# RESPONDENT PROFILE

## Disability



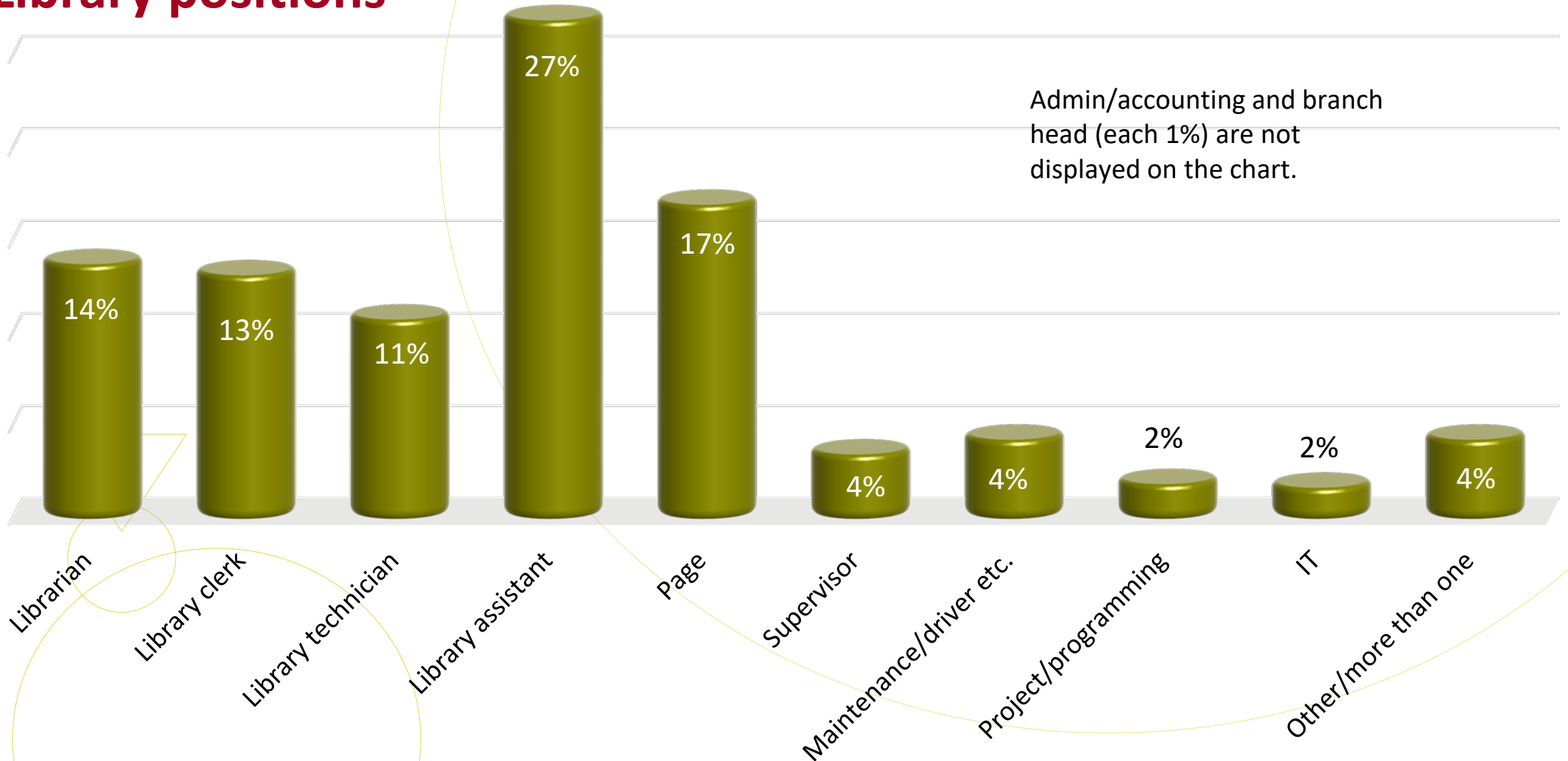
# NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

**Fewer than half of library workers have a job they expect to still have in a year, that provides 30 hours/week and benefits**



# NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

## Library positions



# NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

Permanent FT (30+ hrs/wk)

39%

Permanent FT (hours vary,  
sometimes <30 hrs/wk)

1%

Permanent PT (<30 hrs/wk)

44%

Temporary PT (<30 hrs/wk)

4%

Fixed-term contract (1+ yrs)

1%

Temp contract (<1 yr)

2%

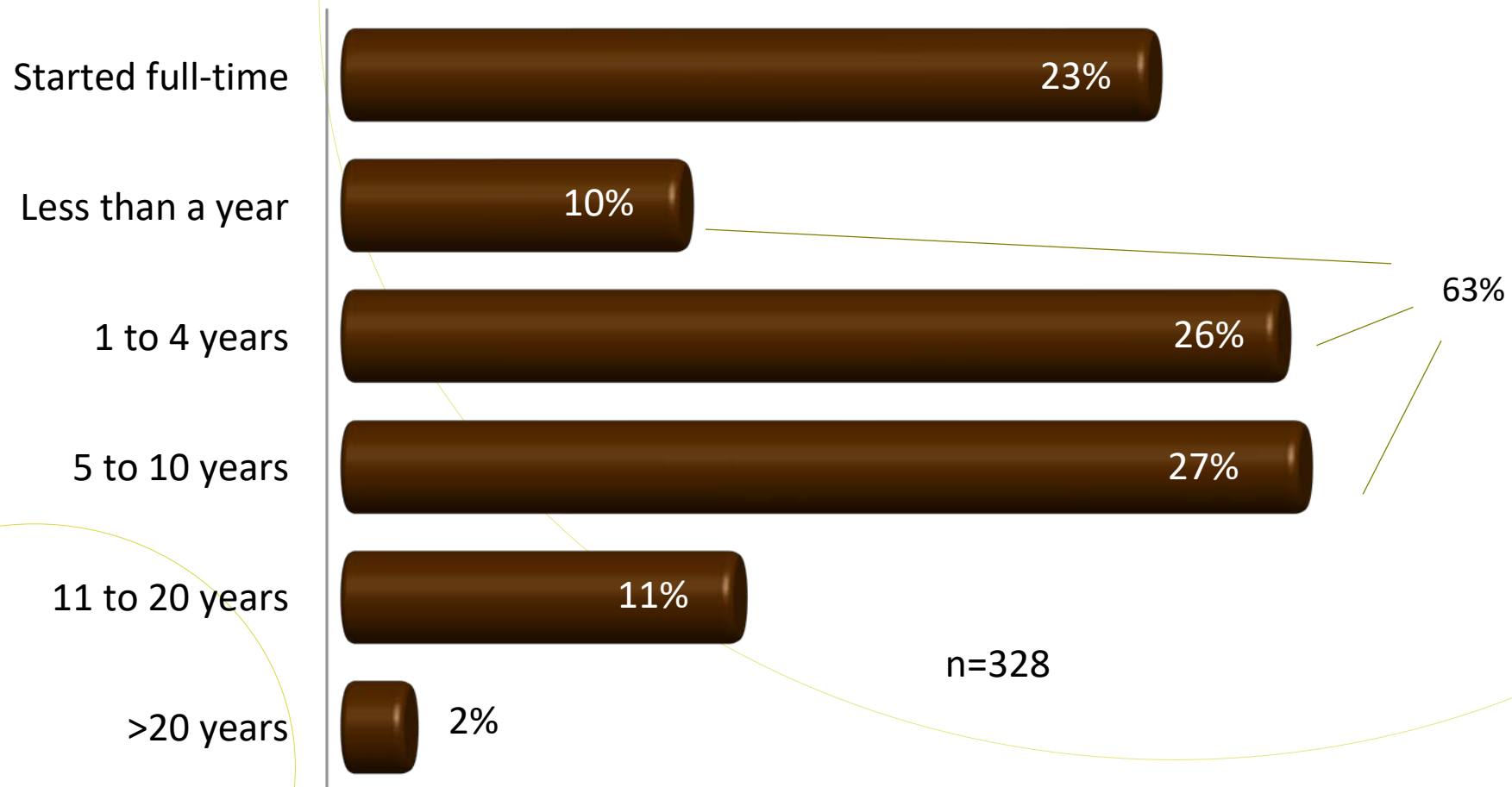
Casual/on-call/day labour

9%

**Four in ten library workers are permanent full-time, more are permanent part-time**

# NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

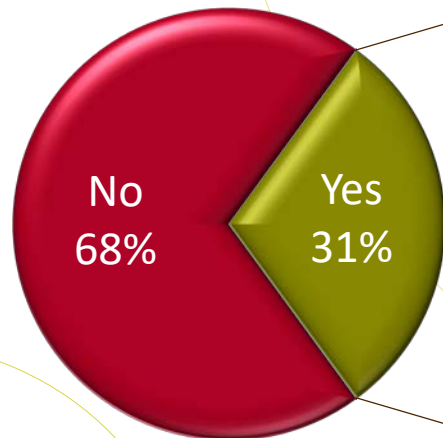
**Six in ten library workers waited up to 10 years for a full-time position, one in eight waited longer**



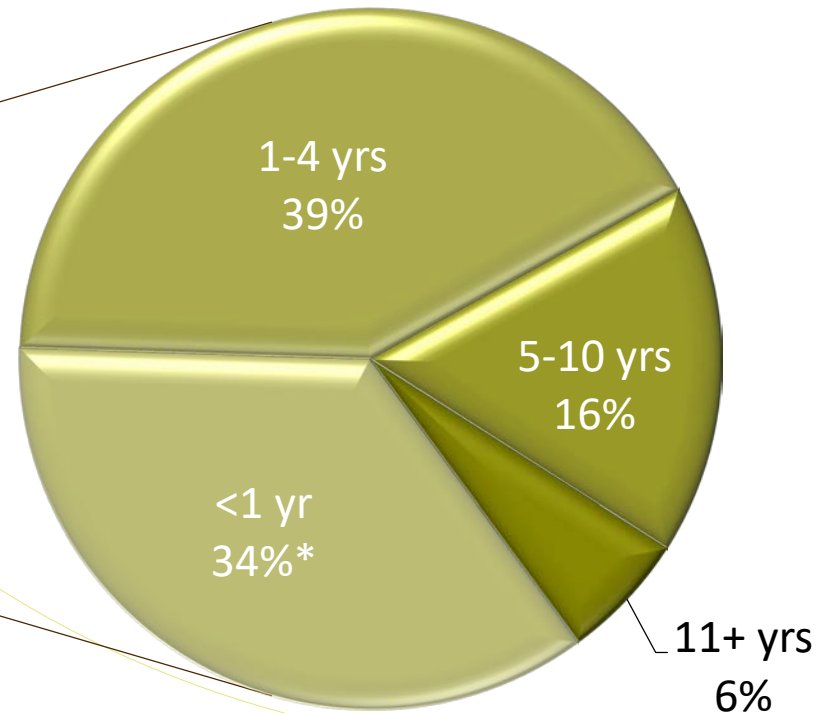
# SEEKING FULL-TIME

**Three in ten part-time library workers are actively seeking full-time library work. One in five of these has been looking for 5+ years.**

PT looking for FT (n=466)



Years looking

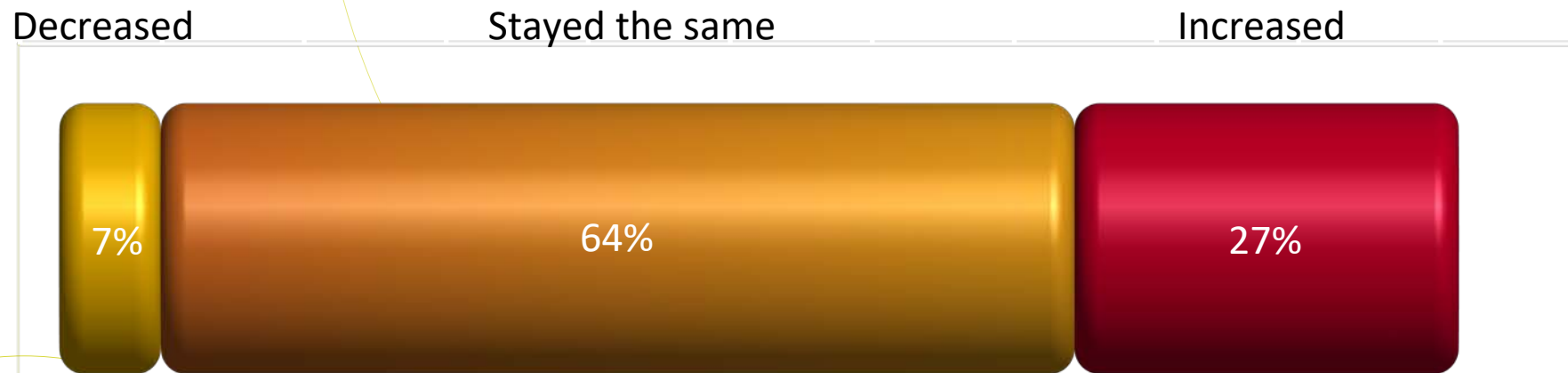


\*percentage of 142n



# HOURS OF WORK

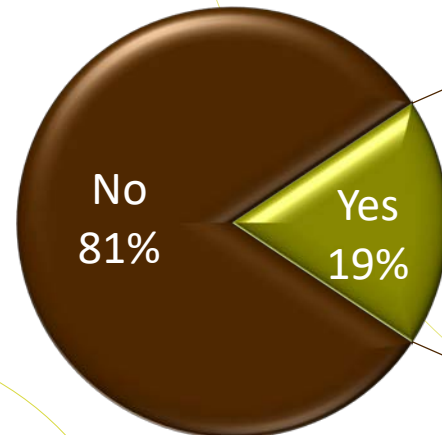
**Library workers' hours are 4 times more likely to have increased than decreased in the past five years. Most have stayed the same however.**



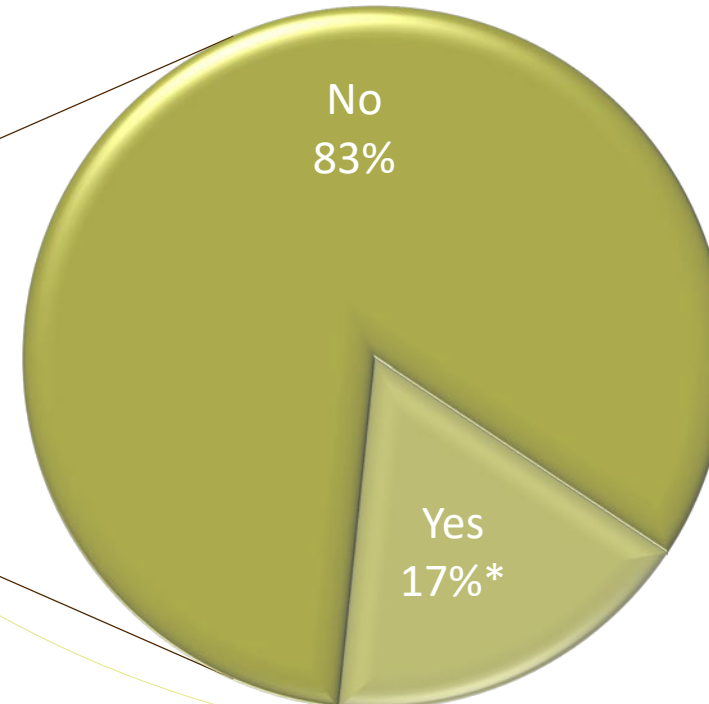
# SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT

**Almost two in ten library workers have a second job.  
Among those, about one in six has a secondary library job**

Have more than one job?



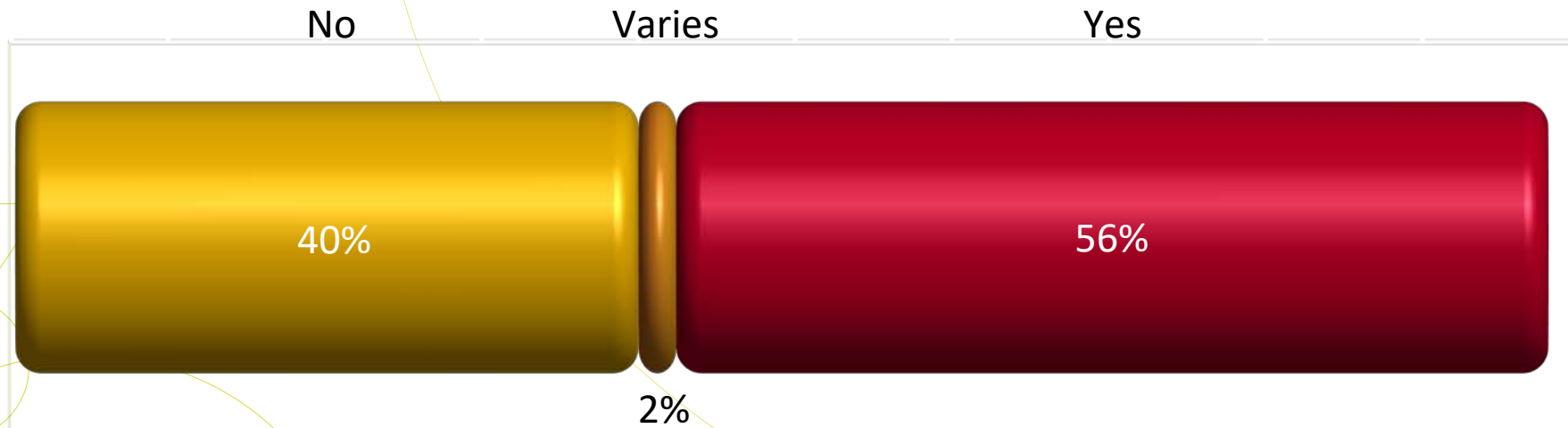
Also in a library?



\*percentage of 150n

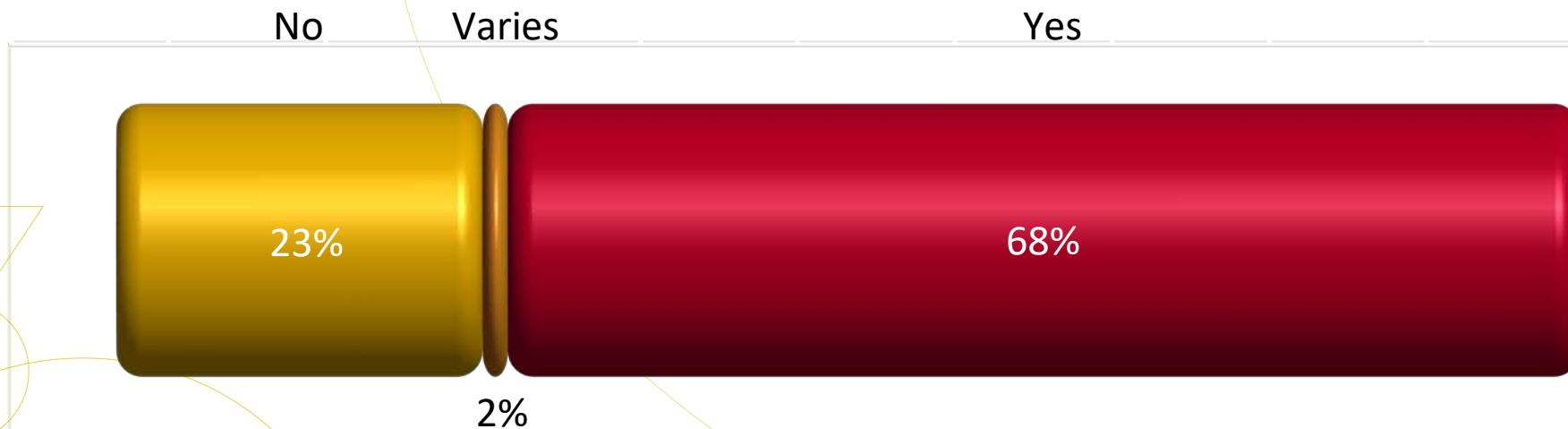
# BENEFITS

**Four in ten workers have no extended health or insurance benefits**



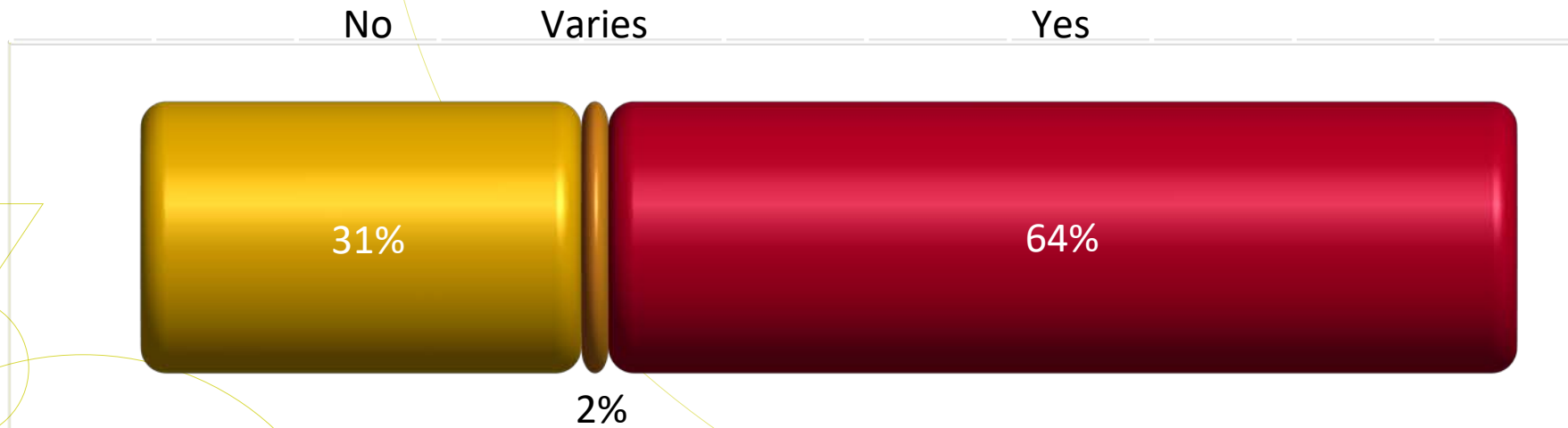
# PENSION

**Almost one in four workers have no employer-provided pension or RRSP plan**

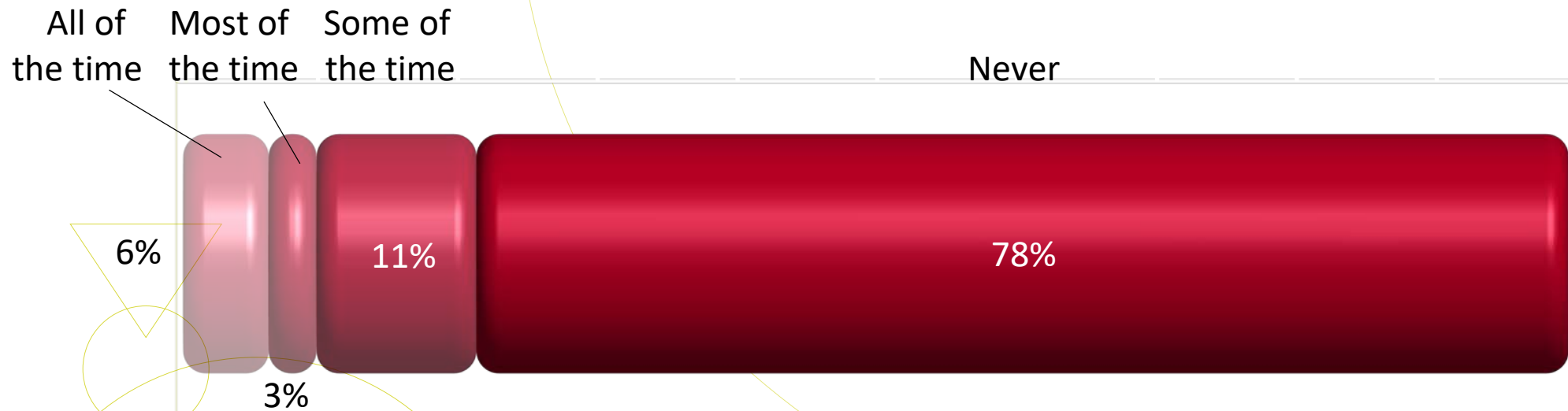


# SICK DAYS

**Three in ten library workers do not have paid sick days**

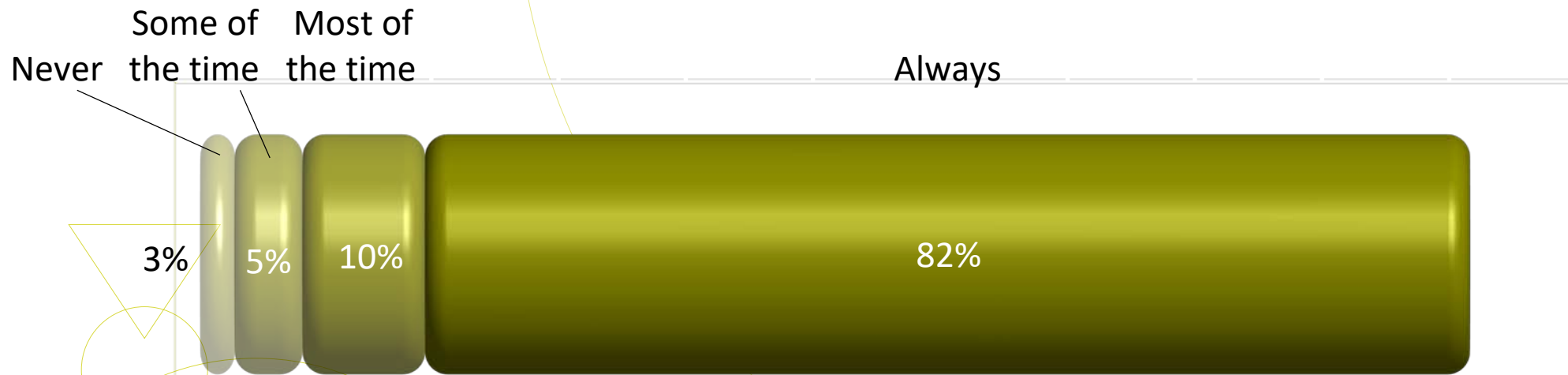


## One in five library workers works on an on-call basis some, most or all of the time



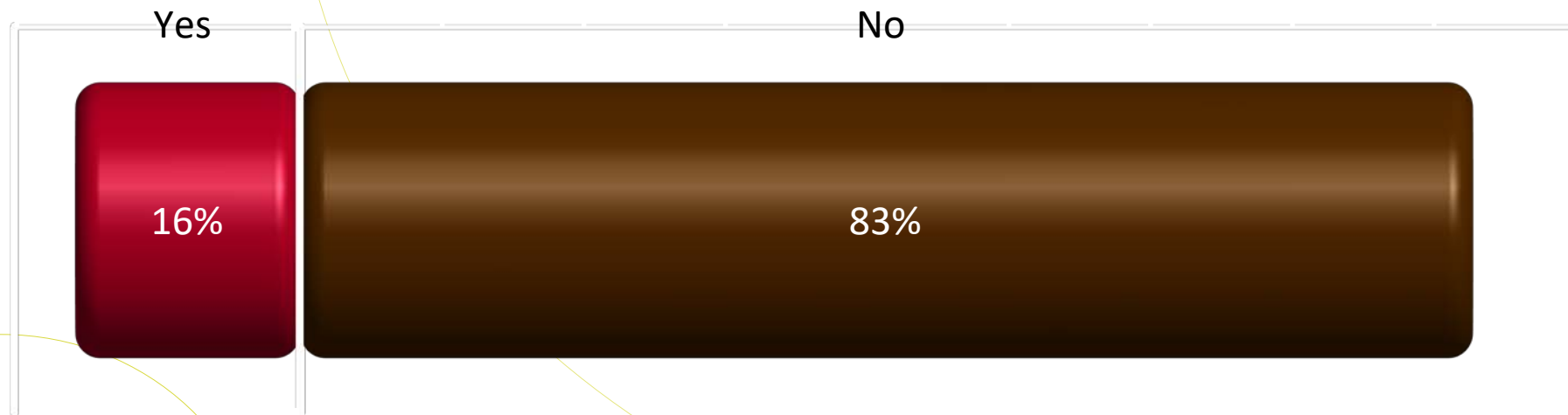
# SCHEDULING

**One in five library workers do not always know their schedule a week in advance**



# TECHNOLOGY

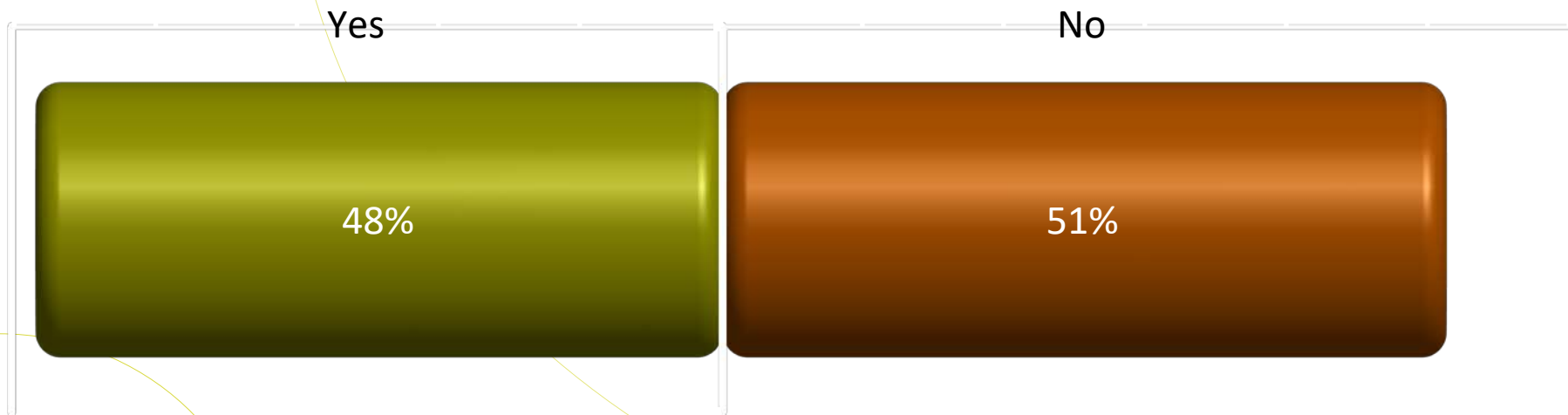
**One in six library workers feel technology/other factors have reduced the level of skill required in their job, most do not.**





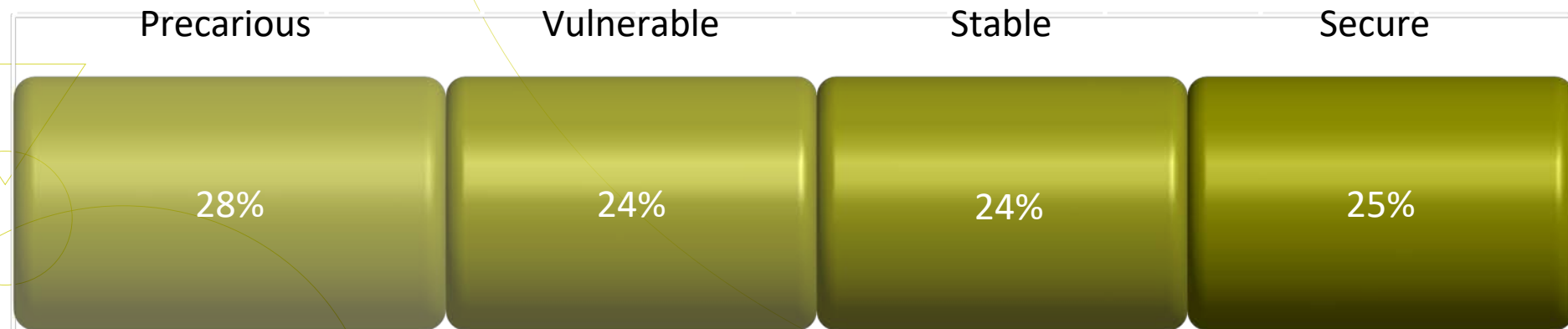
# UNION INVOLVEMENT

**Almost half of library workers have participated in CUPE union activities**



# EMPLOYMENT PRECARIETY

Based on survey responses, members were divided into one of four employment precarity classifications: *secure*, *stable*, *vulnerable* and *precarious*. Almost half of members are considered *secure* or *stable*, one in four is considered *vulnerable* and slightly more are indexed as *precarious*



\*n=770 who answered all, or all but one, precarity questions

## **Precarious members are more likely to:**

- **work less than full time, on contract or in casual, on-call or temp positions**
- **earn less than \$40,000/year**
- **work as library assistants or pages**
- **have more than one job, and**
- **have a high school education.**

## **Precarious members are more likely to:**

- **not be active in their union,**
- **be 40 years of age or younger,**
- **be women,**
- **be gay, queer or bisexual,**
- **live in BC or the west,**
- **have a physical or mental disability or condition,**
- **be racialized, or**
- **speak a language other than English at home.**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- **Viewpoints Research**
- **Shelly Gordon**
- **Joseph Courtney**
- **Brian Edgecombe**
- **Heather Farrow**
- **Genevieve Romard**
- **Suzanne Chamseddine**
- **Nicola From**
- **Kristine Dupuis**
- **Alice Audrain**
- **Monique Diotte**