



Manpower Survey 2021

October 2021

Official Future of
Work Partner



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past 12 months, the long-term impacts of Covid have become apparent in Singapore, with a shift towards post-pandemic flexible working, embracing new technologies and an increased focus on the mental wellbeing of employees. In our poll earlier this year, mental health was highlighted when 79% of companies reported an awareness at all levels of the need to support employees in this area.

In the second edition of the BritCham annual Manpower Survey, we report that 84% of companies are actively recruiting or plan to do so within the next six months. Of those recruiting during polling, this is a 27% increase from 2020, indicating the hiring freeze experienced during the height of the pandemic has been lifted and businesses are keen to continue creating jobs and skills in Singapore's employment market.

In June this year, national employment figures were released which reported there were 163 job openings for every 100 unemployed persons[LH1] . With an increased appetite for recruitment, companies are competing in a confined talent pool for Singaporean or Permanent Resident employees. This is seen particularly in senior and line management functions and as the foreign manpower process is tightened. In a direct comparison, the proportion of companies who flagged the size of the talent pool as an issue for local recruitment increased by 24% since last year to over half of all responding companies in 2021. 64% have been struggling to recruit senior management locally, and 57% for line managers.

The talent pipeline for management and supervisory roles, in particular, will be critical in the years ahead for British businesses as they continue to recover, seek growth and look to replace expatriates who have left the country.

The British business community raised concerns with the technical skills of the local workforce, with almost half of all responding companies highlighting this as an obstacle to the successful recruitment of citizens and permanent residents in the past year. The British Chamber of Commerce will support the transfer of skills from British and other foreign-owned businesses to the local workforce through our upcoming Future of Work Information Hub, part of our ongoing campaign of the same name. The Hub will provide clear navigation to recruitment channels, SkillsFuture programmes and other skills development initiatives alongside the latest news, case studies and content relevant to the entire career lifecycle.

Business leaders recognise and reward high performing employees, yet retention of these in-demand individuals is shown in the survey results as increasingly difficult both within the local and foreign workforce. Compared to last year's results, 22% fewer respondents reported effectiveness in retaining high-level performers within their local workforce, and 17% less within their foreign workforce, where applicable. In 2020, a third of the foreign workforce employed by our respondents had worked for the company for more than ten years. In 2021, this number has reduced by 18%, and the 5-10 year bracket has decreased by 6%. This reduction, a reflection of the recently announced 10.7 per cent decrease in the non-resident population as reported by The Straits Times, is a significant loss to businesses in Singapore in terms of experience, skills, and opportunities for growth. These well-established and connected employees potentially take working spouses and international students with them when they exit the country. One in four companies in the survey had made redundancies due to Covid at a global level, one in five at a regional level, and just over one in ten at a national level.

SURVEY RESULTS

ATTRACTING TALENT,
RECRUITMENT & THE
LOCAL/FOREIGN WORKFORCE
BALANCE

- RECRUITMENT PLANNING
- EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES
- ENTERING THE JOB MARKET
- APPLYING FOR WORK PASSES

LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT &
CAREER PROGRESSION

TALENT RETENTION

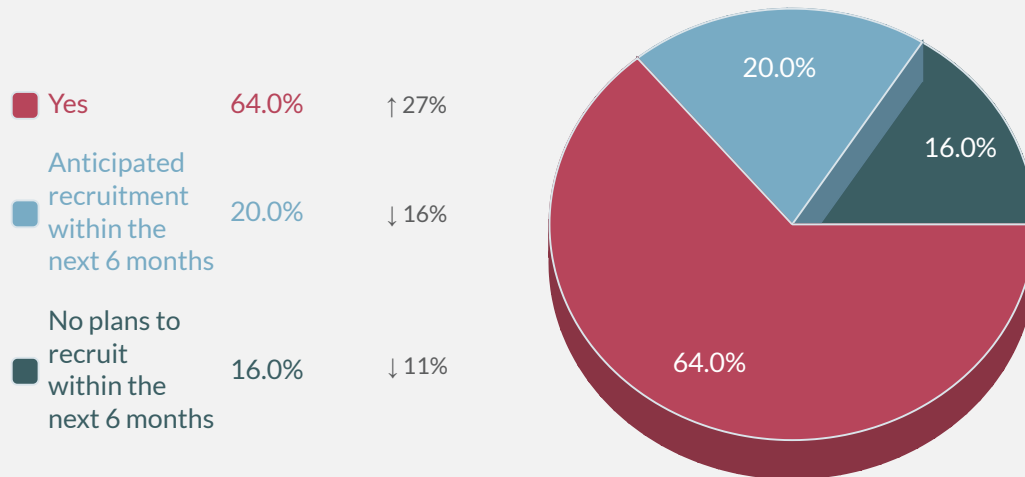
RETIREMENT POLICIES



**FUTURE
OF
WORK**

RECRUITMENT PLANNING

Q. Is your organisation actively recruiting?



Q. Do you outsource the talent sourcing & filtering process?

▼ 31%



Responded Yes ↓ 6%

Q. Do you benchmark remuneration levels within your industry?

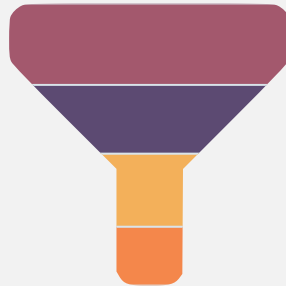
84% ▼



Responded Yes ↓ 5%

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

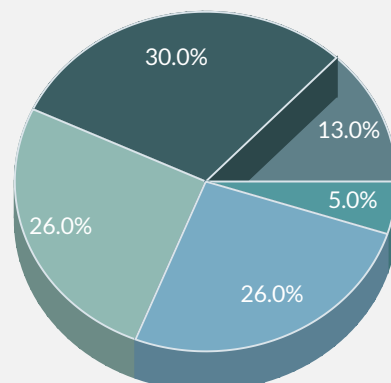
Q. Which of the following procedures do you have in place to ensure equality in recruitment?



<p>▼ Recruiting and selecting employees on the basis of merit and regardless of age, race, gender, religion, marital status and family responsibilities, or disability</p>	97%	↑ 1%
<p>▼ Undertaking a job analysis to clearly identify the duties, responsibilities and other information pertaining to the activities required of the job</p>	82%	↔
<p>▼ Use of unbiased job advertisements containing non-discriminatory language</p>	87%	↑ 1%
<p>▼ Not including fields in an application form which request demographics unless a specific reason can be given</p>	70%	↑ 8%

Q. To what extent would you agree with this statement: Goals in recruitment are used by companies as a tick-box exercise rather than appropriately embedded within company values for actionable results

<p>Strongly Agree</p>	5.0%	↑ 1%
<p>Somewhat Agree</p>	26.0%	↓ 3%
<p>Neither Agree or Disagree</p>	26.0%	↓ 5%
<p>Somewhat Disagree</p>	30.0%	↑ 7%
<p>Strongly Disagree</p>	13.0%	↔

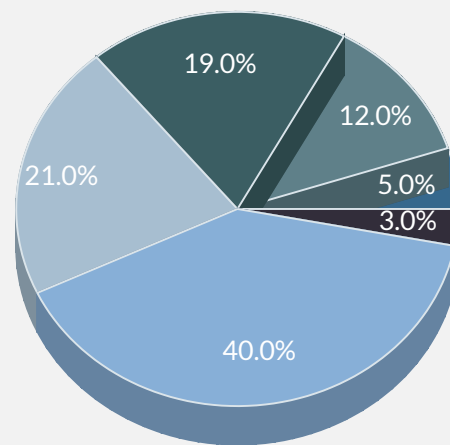


ENTERING THE JOB MARKET

Q. To what extent would you agree with this statement: Singapore universities adequately prepare fresh graduates for realistic entry-level roles within...

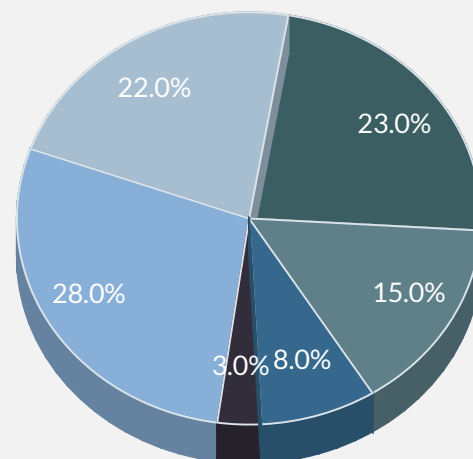
Multi-national organisations

Strongly Agree	3.0%	↔
Somewhat Agree	40.0%	↓ 3%
Neither Agree or Disagree	21.0%	↑ 2%
Somewhat Disagree	19.0%	↑ 3%
Strongly Disagree	12.0%	↑ 6%
N/A	5.0%	↓ 8%



Small & medium sized organisations

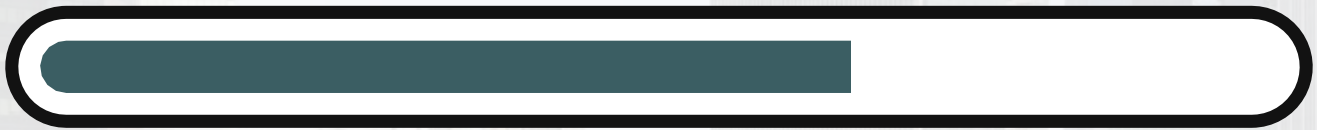
Strongly Agree	3.0%	↔
Somewhat Agree	28.0%	↓ 12%
Neither Agree or Disagree	22.0%	↑ 1%
Somewhat Disagree	23.0%	↓ 1%
Strongly Disagree	15.0%	↑ 10%
N/A	8.0%	↑ 1%



APPLYING FOR WORK PASSES

Q. What percentage of your total Singapore-based workforce comprises of Singapore citizens (including PRs)?

▼ 65%



Average percentage. ↓ 1%

Q. What percentage of your workforce has previously worked in other countries?

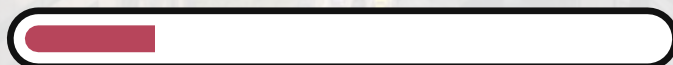
▼ 40%



Average percentage. ↓ 4%

Q. What percentage of your submitted work pass applications have initially been rejected?

▼ 20%



Average percentage. ↑ 8%

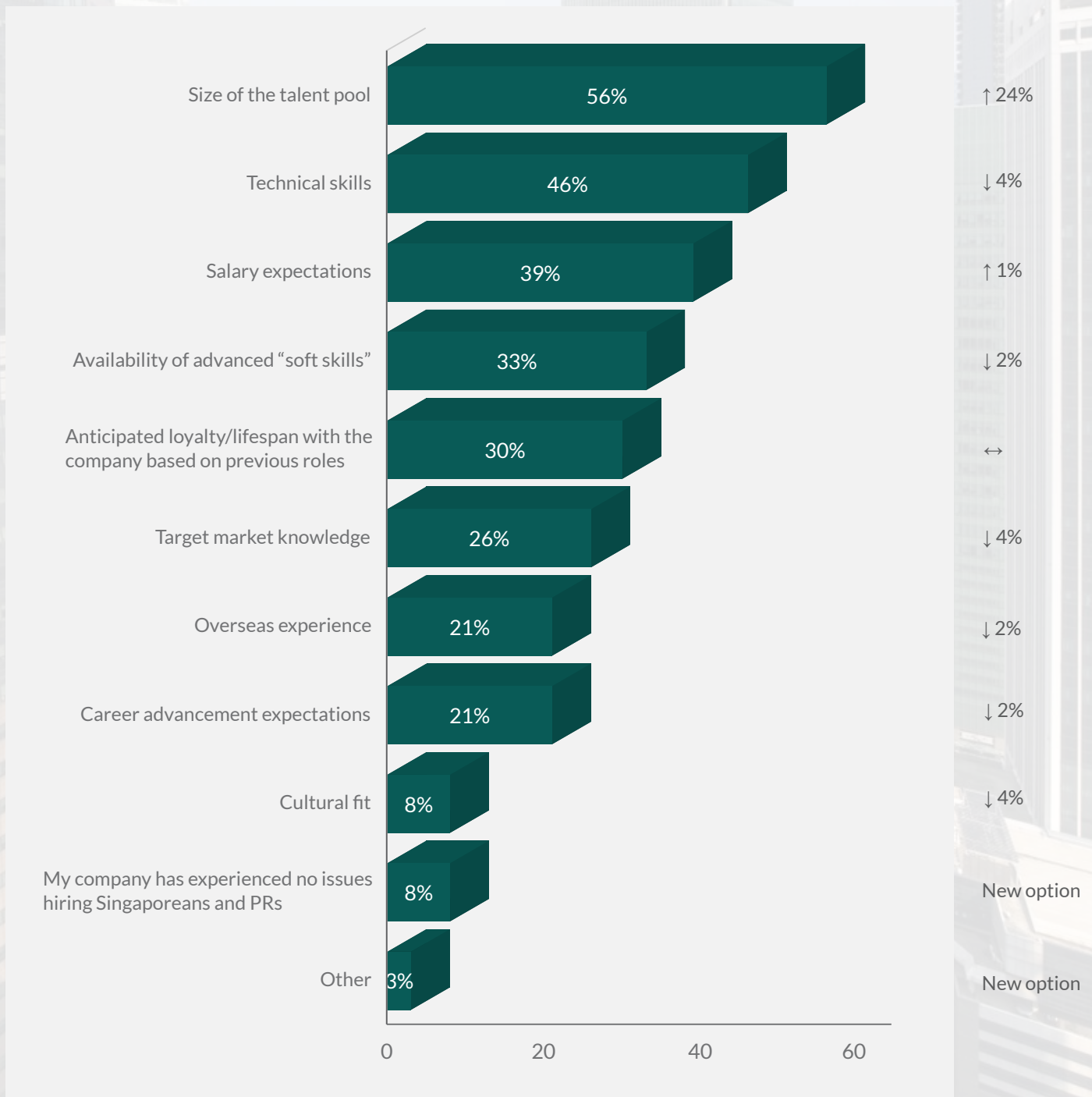
Q. If rejected, what percentage were subsequently successful on appeal?

▼ 34%

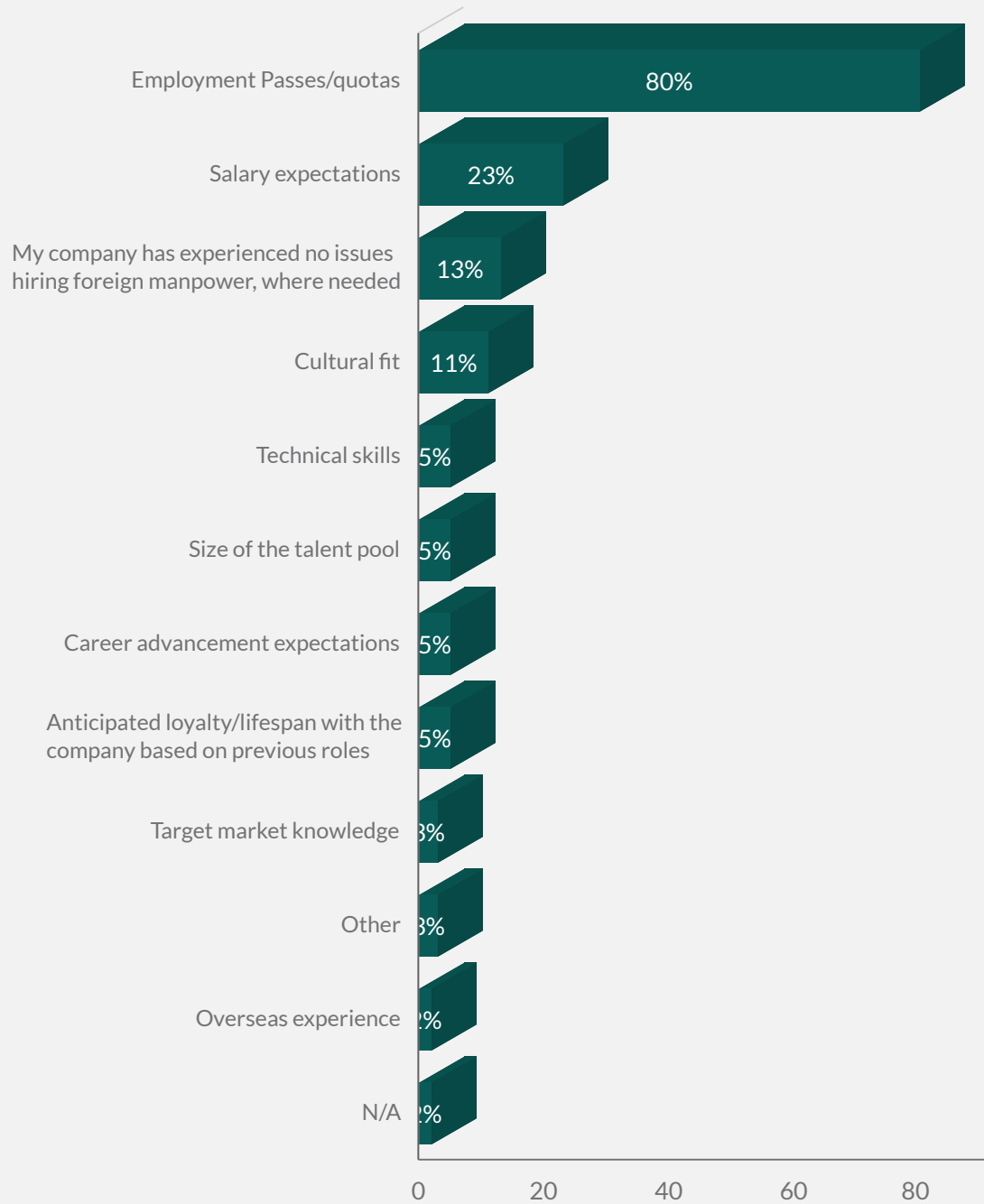


Average percentage. ↑ 3%

Q. What are the biggest obstacles to your recruitment of Singaporeans and PRs?

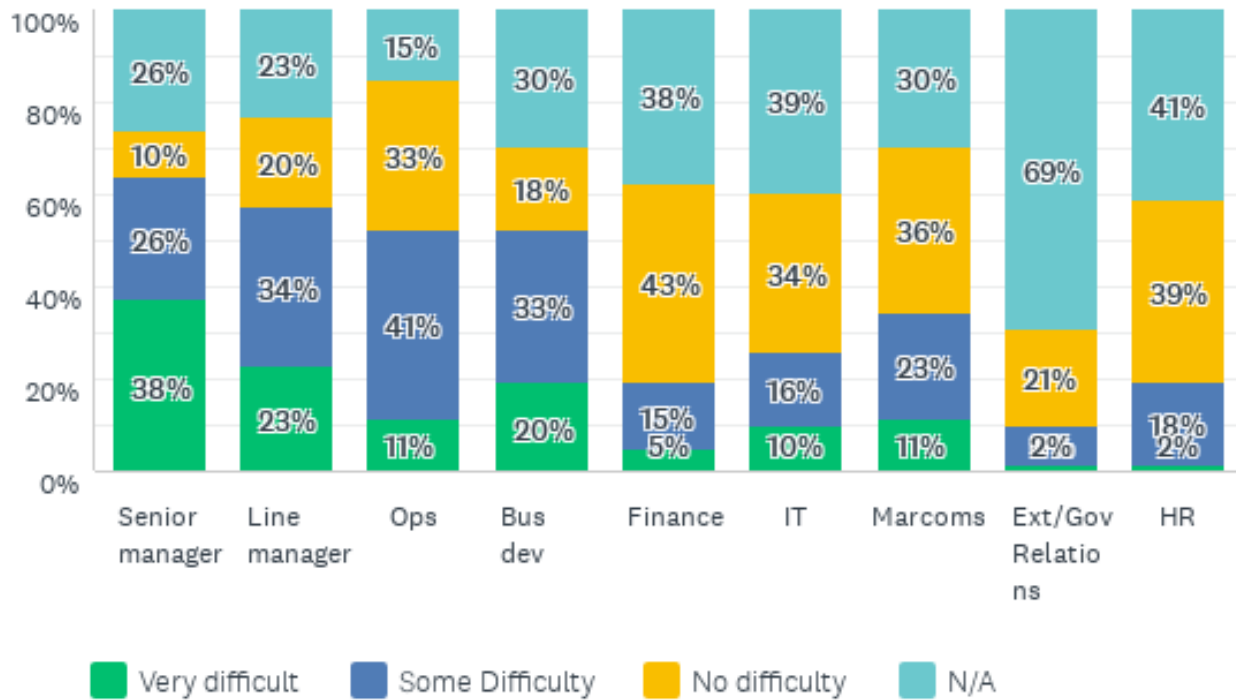


Q. What are the biggest obstacles to your recruitment of *foreign manpower, where applicable?*



New question, no comparison to 2020 (applies to all)

Q. For the following disciplines, where have you had difficulty filling roles with *local* manpower in the past 12 months?



Senior Manager:

Very Difficult: ↑ 12%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 5%
 No Difficulty: ↓ 3%
 N/A: ↓ 4%

Business Development:

Very Difficult: ↑ 3%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 5%
 No Difficulty: ↓ 1%
 N/A: ↑ 4%

Marketing & Communications

Very Difficult: ↓ 1%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 4%
 No Difficulty: ↑ 2%
 N/A: ↓ 3%

Line Manager:

Very Difficult: ↑ 15%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 6%
 No Difficulty: ↑ 1%
 N/A: ↓ 10%

Finance:

Very Difficult: ↑ 1%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 2%
 No Difficulty: ↓ 5%
 N/A: ↑ 7%

External Affairs/Government Relations:

Very Difficult: ↓ 1%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 5%
 No Difficulty: ↑ 4%
 N/A: ↑ 2%

Operations:

Very Difficult: ↑ 1%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 3%
 No Difficulty: ↓ 9%
 N/A: ↑ 6%

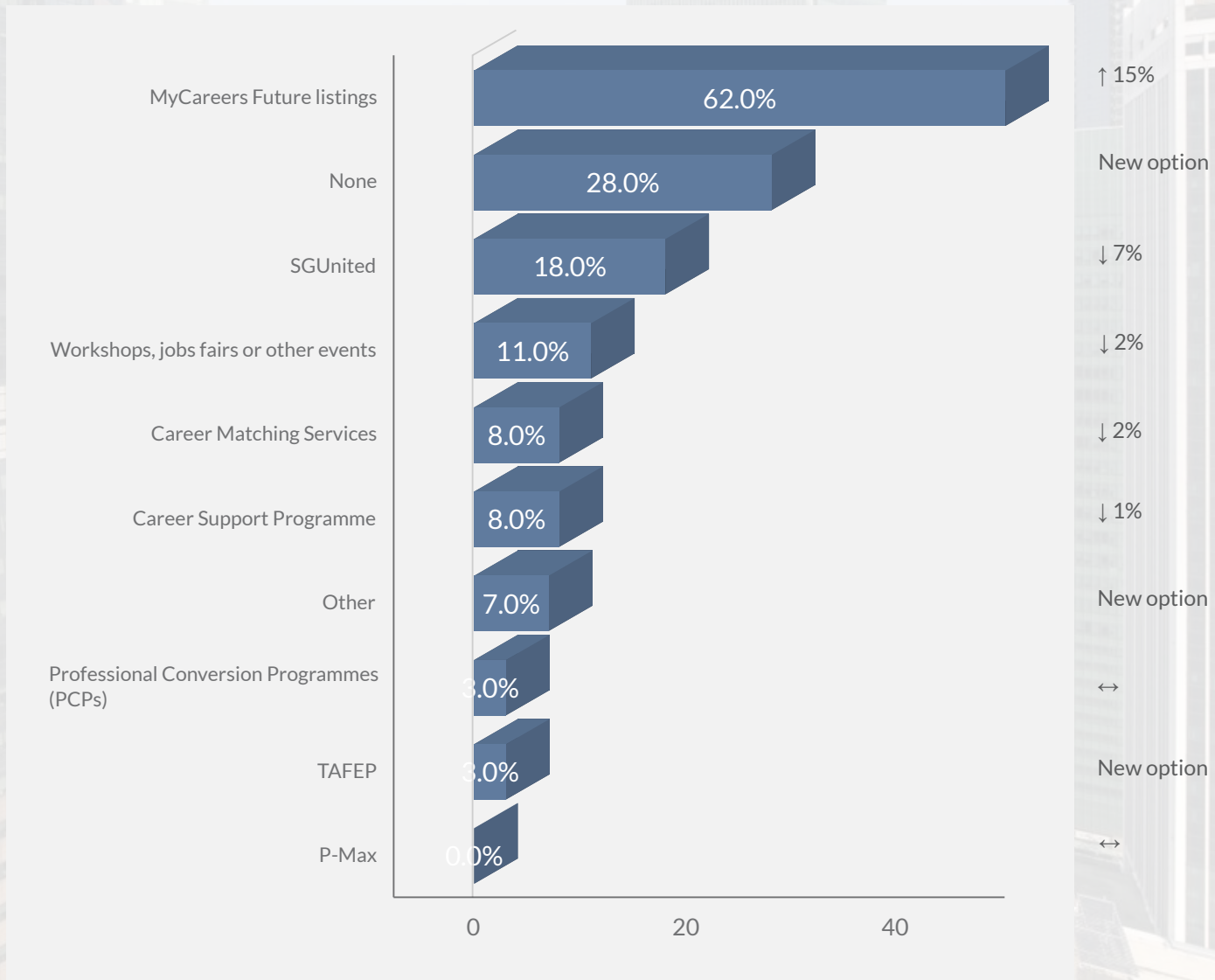
IT:

Very Difficult: ↓ 2%
 Some Difficulty: ↓ 10%
 No Difficulty: ↑ 10%
 N/A: ↑ 2%

Human Resources:

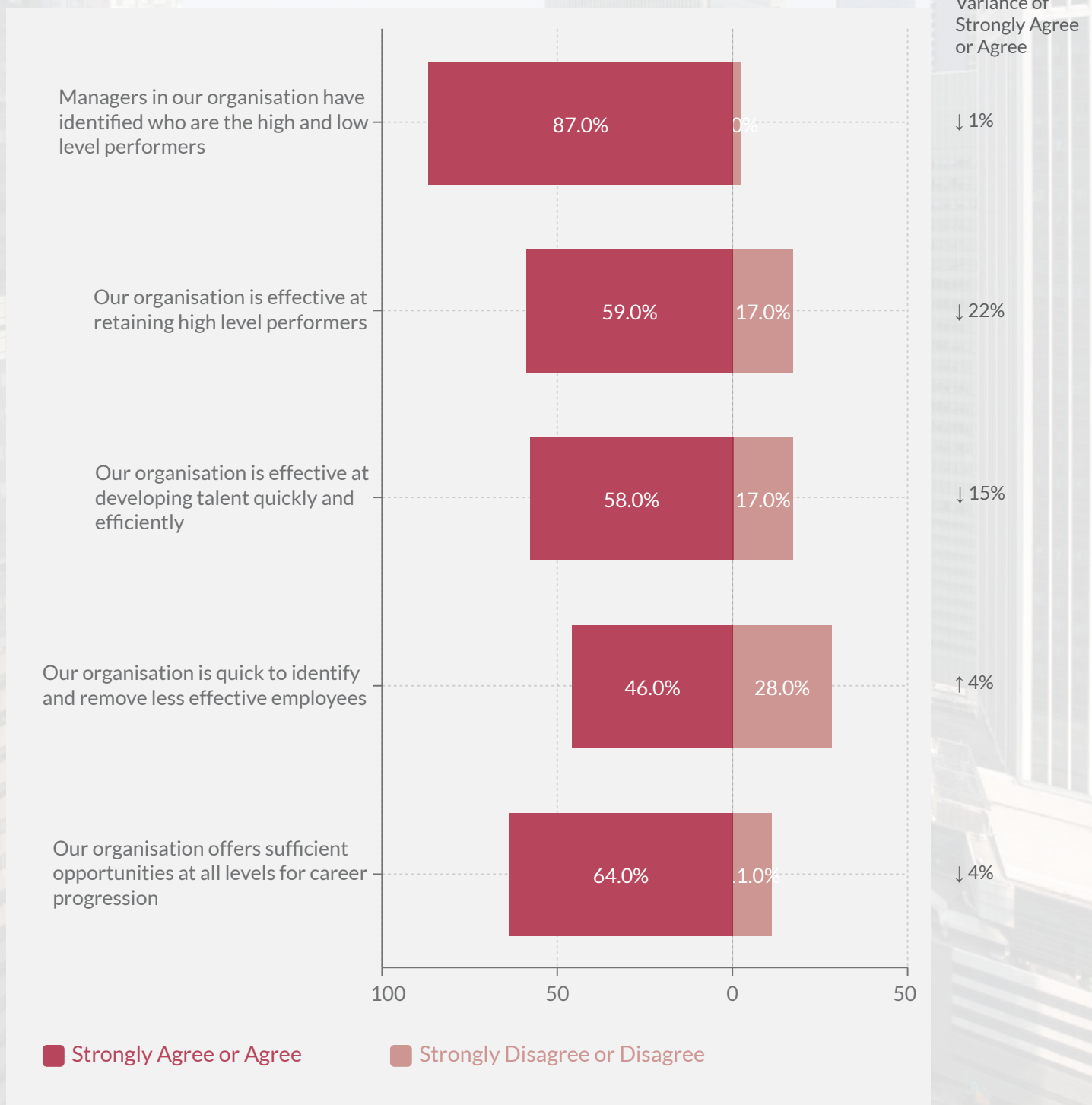
Very Difficult: ↓ 2%
 Some Difficulty: ↑ 6%
 No Difficulty: ↓ 4%
 N/A: ↔

Q. Which Government schemes have you used for recruitment within the past 12 months?



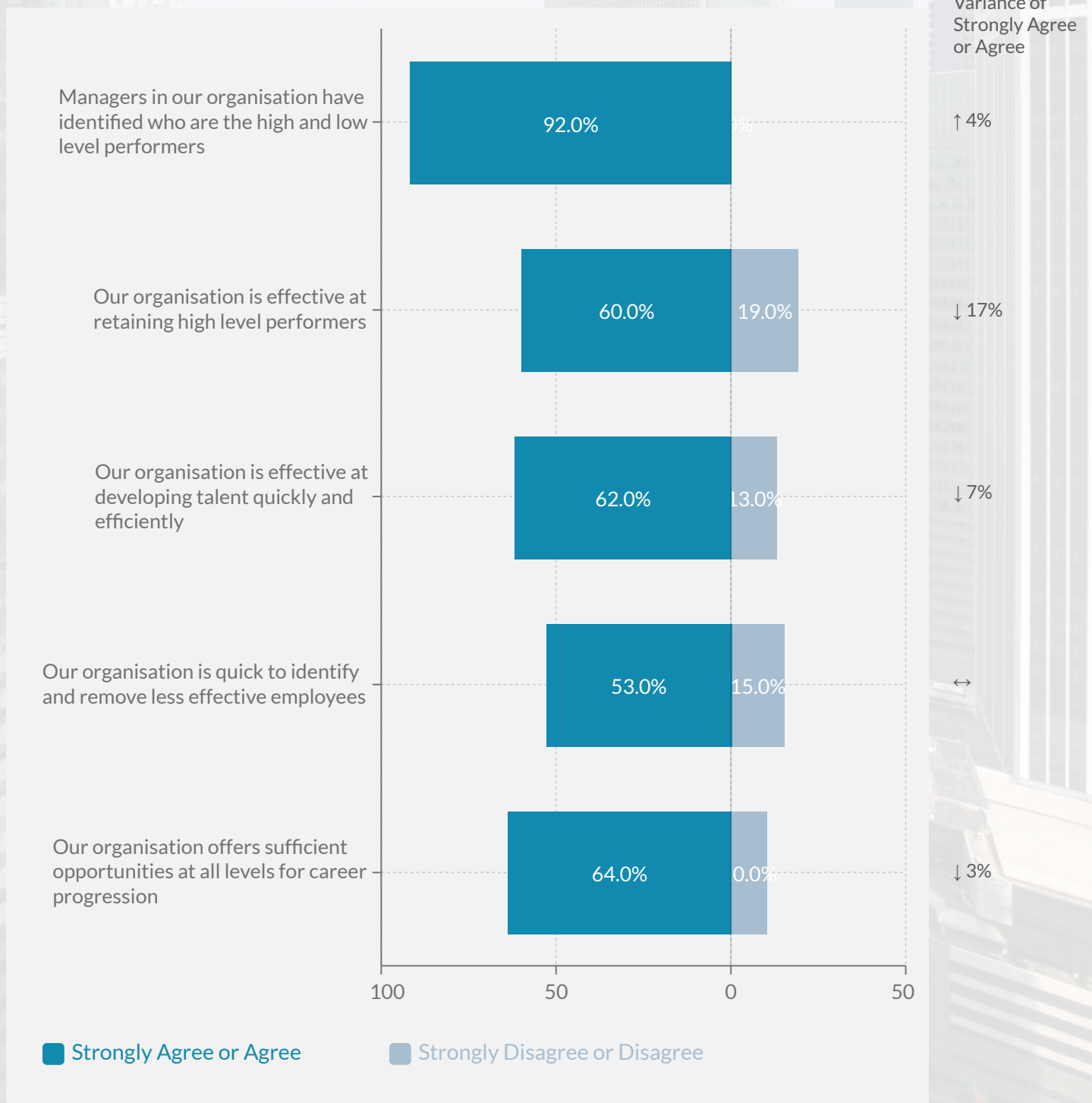
LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT & CAREER PROGRESSION

Q. To what extent do you agree with the following statements when applied to your *local* workforce?



LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT & CAREER PROGRESSION

Q. To what extent do you agree with the following statements when applied to your *foreign* workforce?



Q. What percentage of your current workforce are in their current role following at least one internal promotion?

▼ 34%



Average percentage. ↓ 3%

Q. Is there clear communication of the next steps to reach promotion for each role?

▼ 68%



Responded Yes. ↑ 2%

Q. Do you have a formal appraisal process in place?

92%▼



Responded Yes. ↓ 3%

Q. Do you have a formal manager/employee annual meeting scheduled to discuss progression and salary reviews?

87%▼



Responded Yes. New question

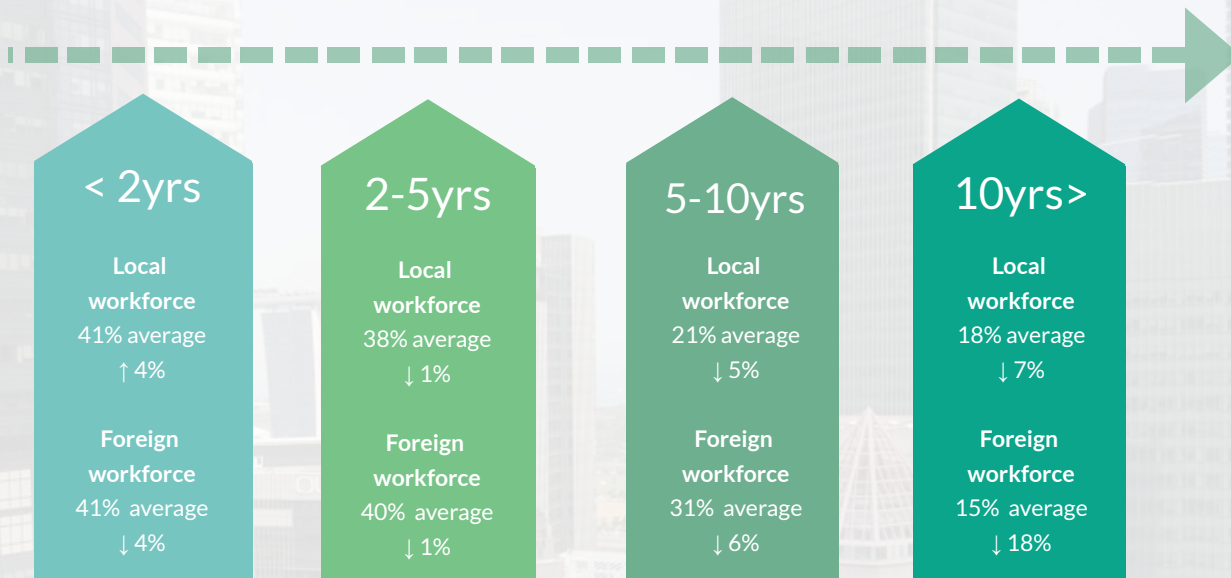
Q. Have your organisation learning and development plans changed post-Covid?

▼ 49%



Responded Yes. ↓ 7%

Q. What percentage of your current workforce have been employed with the company for:



Q. Do you have a formal exit interview process in place with learnings communicated to senior/line managers?



Q. What percentage of employees who exited the company within the past 5 years have done so for the following reasons:

External, i.e. head-hunted, relocation, personal reasons, reached retirement age, impacts of Covid

▼ 52%



Average Response. ↓ 3%

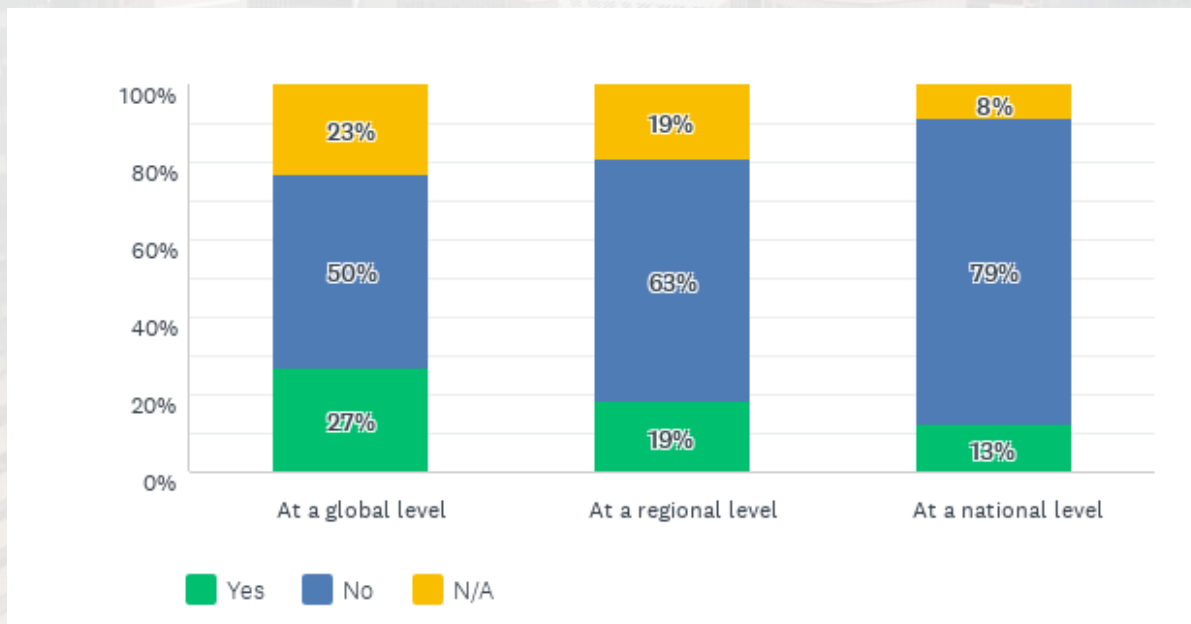
Internal, i.e. cultural fit, work-life balance, lack of progression opportunities, disciplinary action, redundancies

▼ 21%



Average Response. ↓ 14%

Q. Has your organisation made any redundancies due to Covid:



At a global level:

Yes: ↑ 5%
No: ↓ 7%
N/A: ↓ 1%

At a regional level:

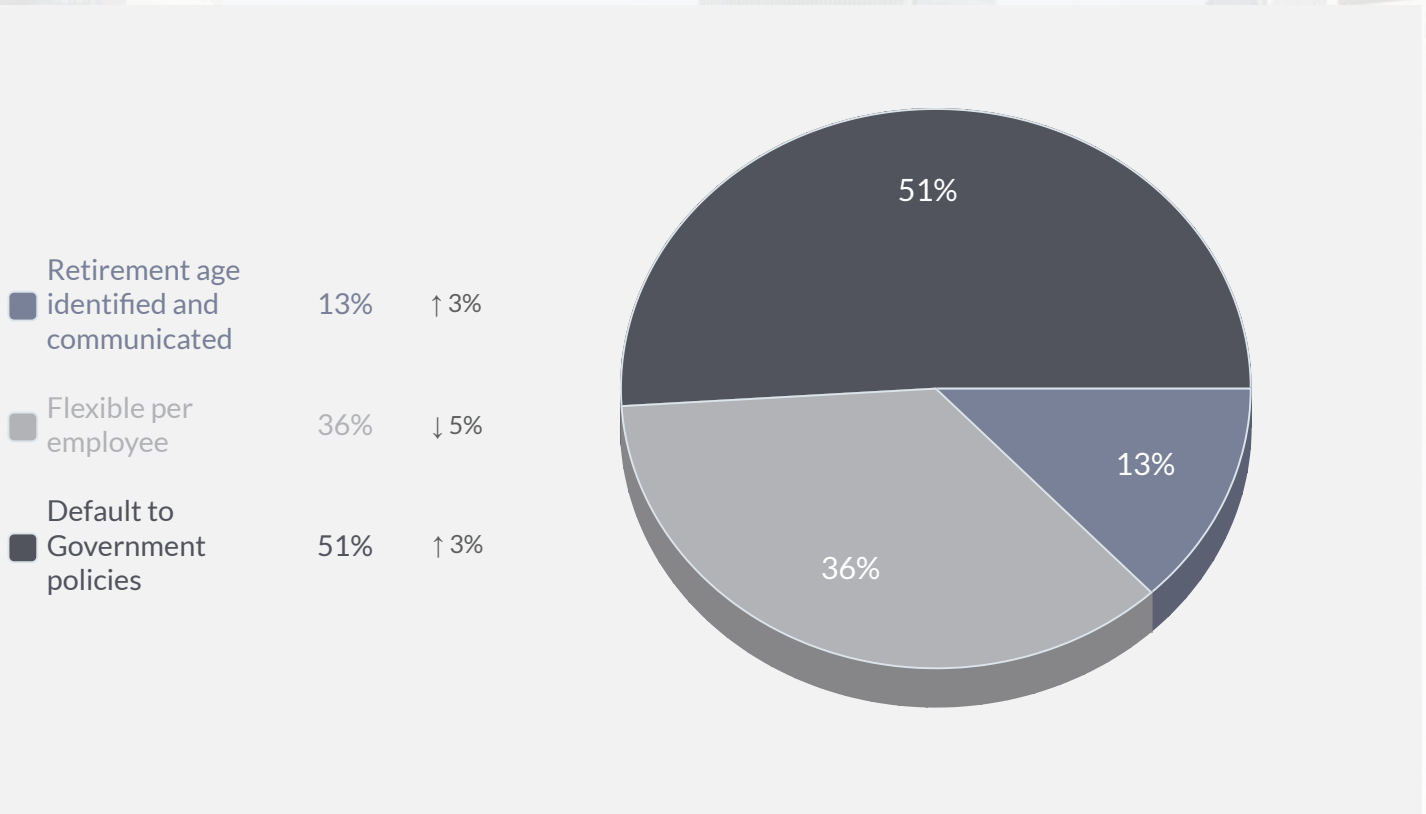
Yes: ↑ 2%
No: ↔
N/A: ↓ 1%

At a national level:

Yes: ↓ 7%
No: ↑ 4%
N/A: ↑ 3%

RETIREMENT POLICIES

Q. What form of retirement policy does your organisation have?



Q. Does your organisation have succession planning in place for employees close to retirement age, ensuring valuable experience is passed on?

▼ 55%



Responded Yes. ↓ 4%

Q. Does your organisation have a mentoring scheme in place for older workers to pass on experience and knowledge to newer recruits?

▼ 53%

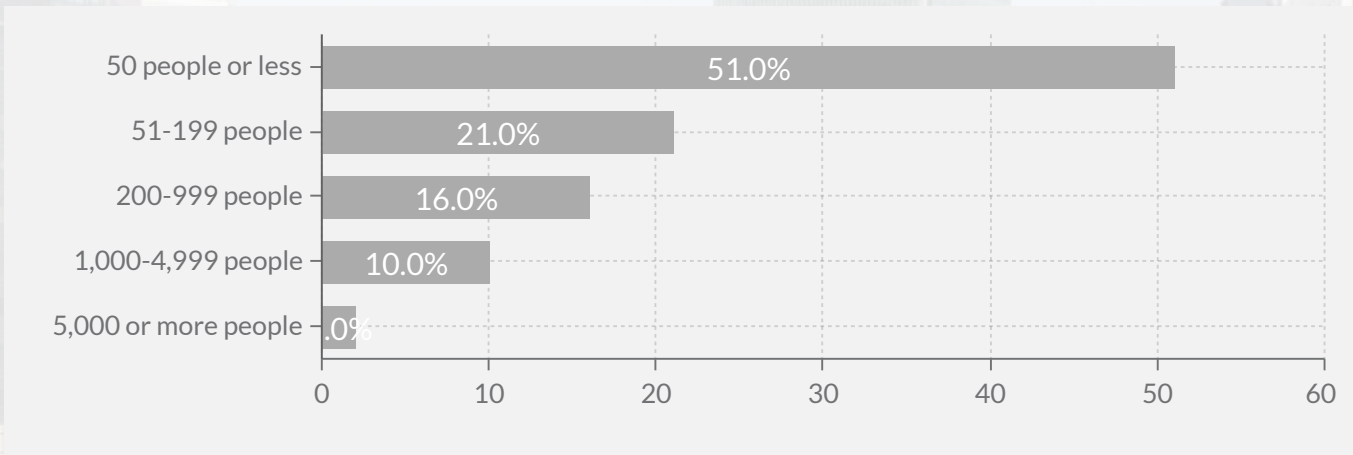


Responded Yes. ↓ 9%

DEMOGRAPHICS

Timeline: A sample representation of more than 60 member companies between 26 Aug-13 Sep 2021

% by Size



% by Industry

