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Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Quebec's English-speaking communities

Submitted by the Association for Canadian Studies
For/on behalf of
Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CEDEC)

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BACKGROUND

Since the onset of the pandemic, it has become evident that the COVID-19 crisis has had profound social and economic impacts on marginalized communities across the country. The past two years have been a challenging time for everyone, including English-speakers in Quebec and the organizations that serve them. The pandemic has forced these organizations to adapt to new realities and has transformed the way that the English-speaking community is engaged and supported in terms of economic development.

To analyze these effects and impacts, three primary surveys were conducted by the Association for Canadian Studies & Metropolis Institute on behalf of Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CEDEC), each one focusing on a specific theme or topic:

1. "Impacts of the Pandemic on Economic Development of the English-speaking Communities"
2. "Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Industry in Quebec"
3. "Adjusting to a New Reality – Best Practices"

Results from these surveys were presented on October 5th and December 7th, 2021 and February 24th, 2022 in a series of virtual conferences ("Dialogue Days") organized by Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED), in collaboration with Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CED) and several English-speaking Community organizations.

METHODOLOGY

A total of three surveys were conducted with organizations/businesses serving the English-speaking community of Quebec. Each survey had a unique questionnaire that was designed in collaboration with Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Canada Economic Development for Quebec Region and partner organizations. Data was collected using Survey Monkey and sent via e-mail.

1. Data for the first Dialog Day was collected over 10 days (from September 10th to September 20th, 2021). The questionnaire was sent to 118 unique e-mail addresses, and 54 people filled in the survey.
2. Responses for the second Dialog Day were collected over 14 days (from November 10th to November 23rd, 2021) and were sent to 190 unique e-mail addresses. In the end, 43 responses were collected.
3. The last survey was opened 20 days (from January 26th to February 14th, 2022). The questionnaire was sent to 214 unique e-mail addresses, and 55 response was collected.

It should be noted that some of the respondents were part of the same organization.

Profiles of organizations and businesses

In every survey, the majority of Quebec regions were covered. The red colour on the maps below shows the areas that were covered during each wave.

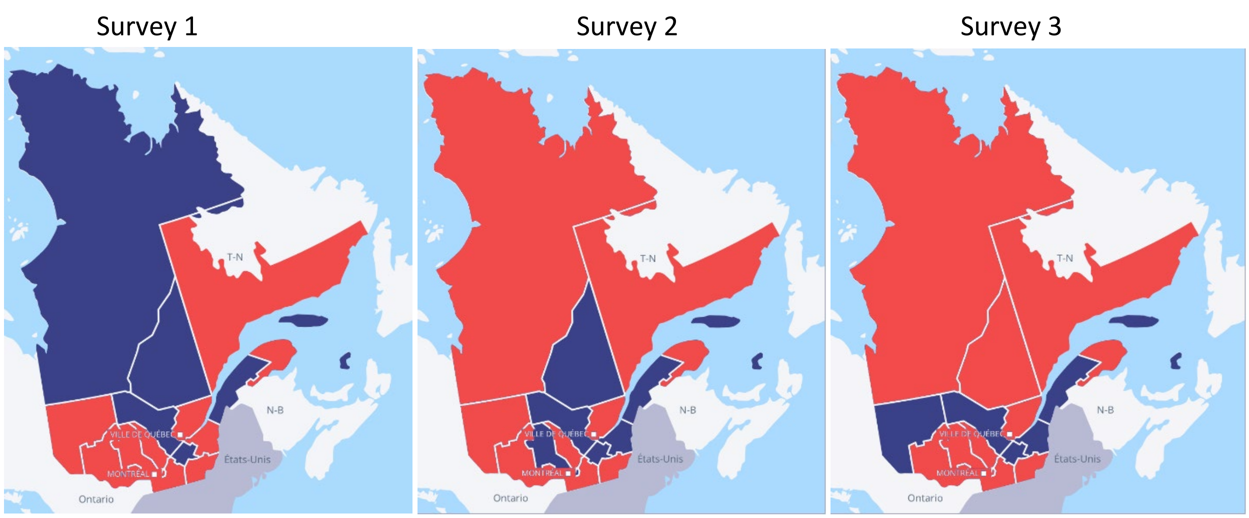


Figure 1: Maps of regions coverer by survey, red represents covered areas

Even though most Quebec regions were covered, not all of them had the same number of responses. For example, as shown in the table below, the Montréal region had the highest number of respondents in surveys 1 and 3, while in Survey 2, it had the same number of responses as Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Table 1: Number of responses in each wave by region

Region	Number of respondents Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	1	1	-
Capitale-Nationale	4	4	5
Chaudière-Appalaches	1	-	-
Côte-Nord	4	3	5
Estrie	2	5	4
Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine	3	10	6
Lanaudière	1	1	1
Laurentides	1	-	1
Montérégie	1	2	6
Montréal	31	10	16
Nord-du Québec	-	3	2
Outaouais	5	4	8
Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	-	-	1
Total	**54**	**43**	**55**

Non-profit organizations made most of the sample in Survey 1 and Survey 3 (98% and 86%, respectively). Non-profit organizations in the Social, Educational and Communities both regional and local sectors are the most numerous (54% and 45%).

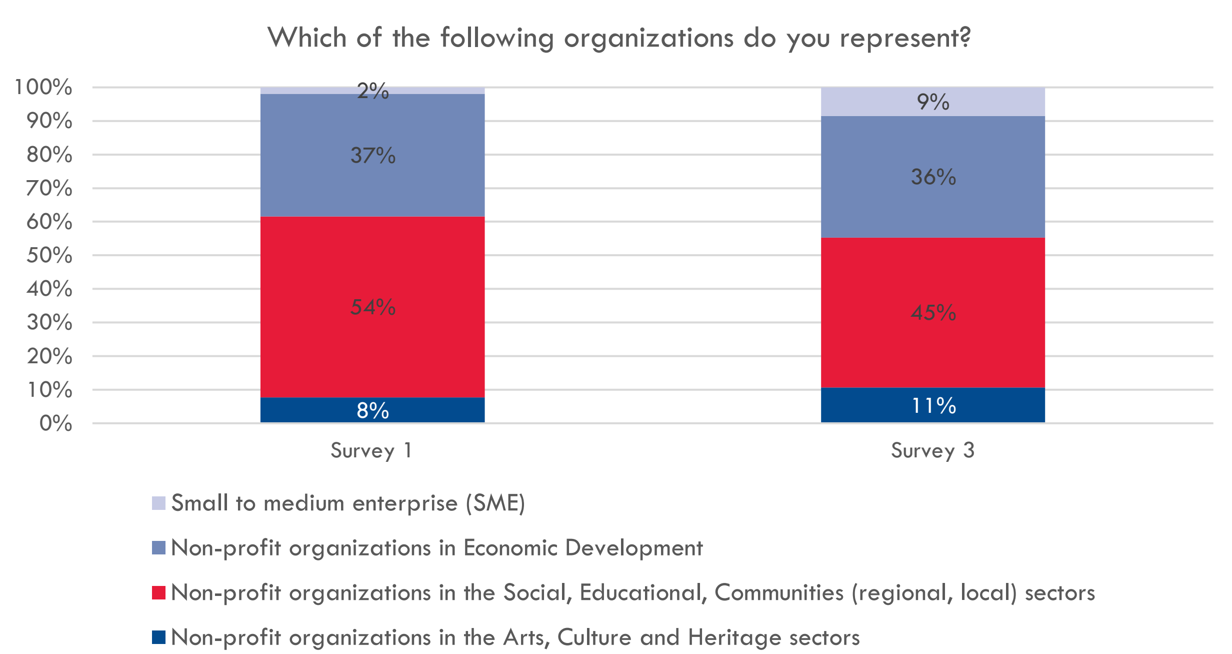


Figure 2: Type of organization/business respondent represent

Most organizations and businesses that were surveyed were either small (1-10 employees) or medium-sized (11-49), and they made almost the whole sample in all three surveys (91%, 86% and 87%, respectively).

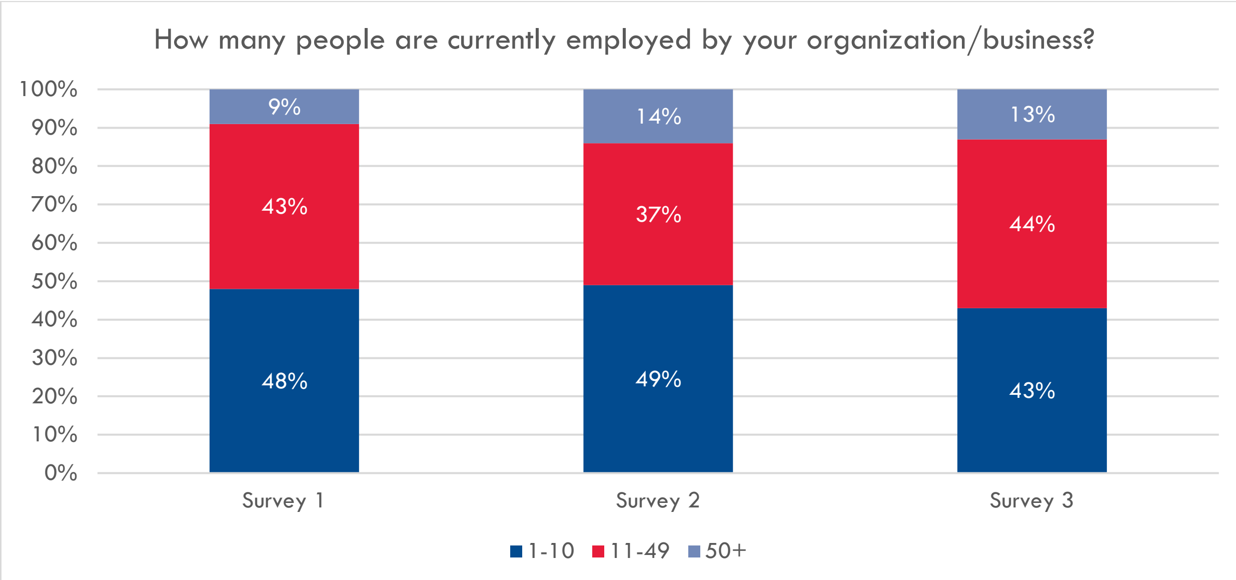


Figure 3: Number of people employed in the organization/business

SURVEY FINDINGS

Results presented below are grouped according to survey themes. Due to the small sample size, comparative analysis by different characteristics of organizations and businesses, such as size, the region where they are based, or their type, was not possible.

Survey 1 – Impacts of the Pandemic on Economic Development of the English-speaking Communities

The first survey assessed the economic impacts of the pandemic on Quebec's English-speaking communities and whether federal programs and measures helped mitigate these impacts.

At the onset of the pandemic, organizations and businesses had to adapt and learn how to use new (digital) tools. Two years into the pandemic, it would be hard to find someone who has not used Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype or Google Hangouts. The main challenge that organizations and businesses had to face due to the COVID-19 pandemic seems to be transition from in-person events to virtual ones (45 out of 54 respondents), followed by "staff needing to work remotely" and "increased demand for services/support from clients and/or other organizations". Keeping up with public health measures such as physical distancing requirements was also one of the top-ranked challenges.

Figure 4: Main challenges organization had to face due to COVID-19

Closing stores and moving from in-persons to digital services had financial impacts on almost all organizations globally. Three main financial challenges faced by English-speaking organizations and businesses in Quebec due to COVID-19, according to the respondents, were "limited access to resources", "cost increases", and "concerns for financial sustainability and operational health". Almost a third of respondents (31%) said that their organization lost income, and one in five (20%) that their organization had to close down some of their operations.

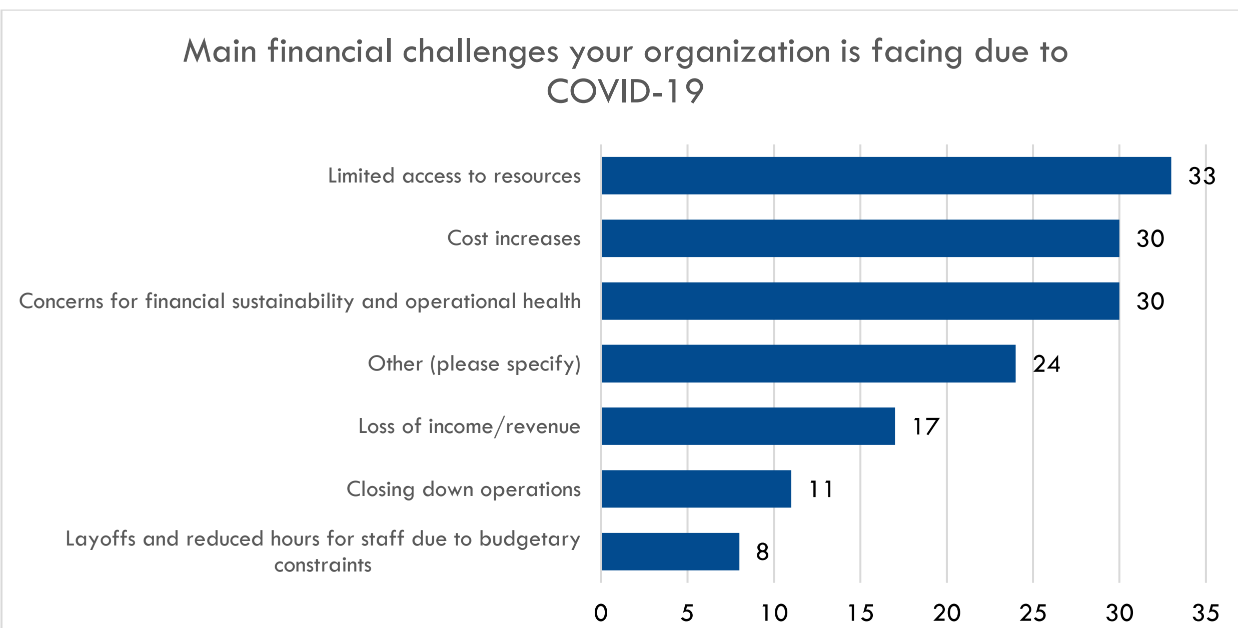


Figure 5: Main financial challenges organization faced due to COVID-19

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, federal and provincial governments started offering different types of support programs to businesses and individuals who lost their source of income. As shown in Figure 6, for almost third of respondents (29%), the primary source of information for any Federal or Provincial COVID-19 program were news outlets both local, national and international, followed by "provincial institutions" (22%), "provincial daily announcements" (14%) and "federal Institutions" (12%). Only a small percentage of respondents looked for information on social media (4%) and local institutions' websites (4%).

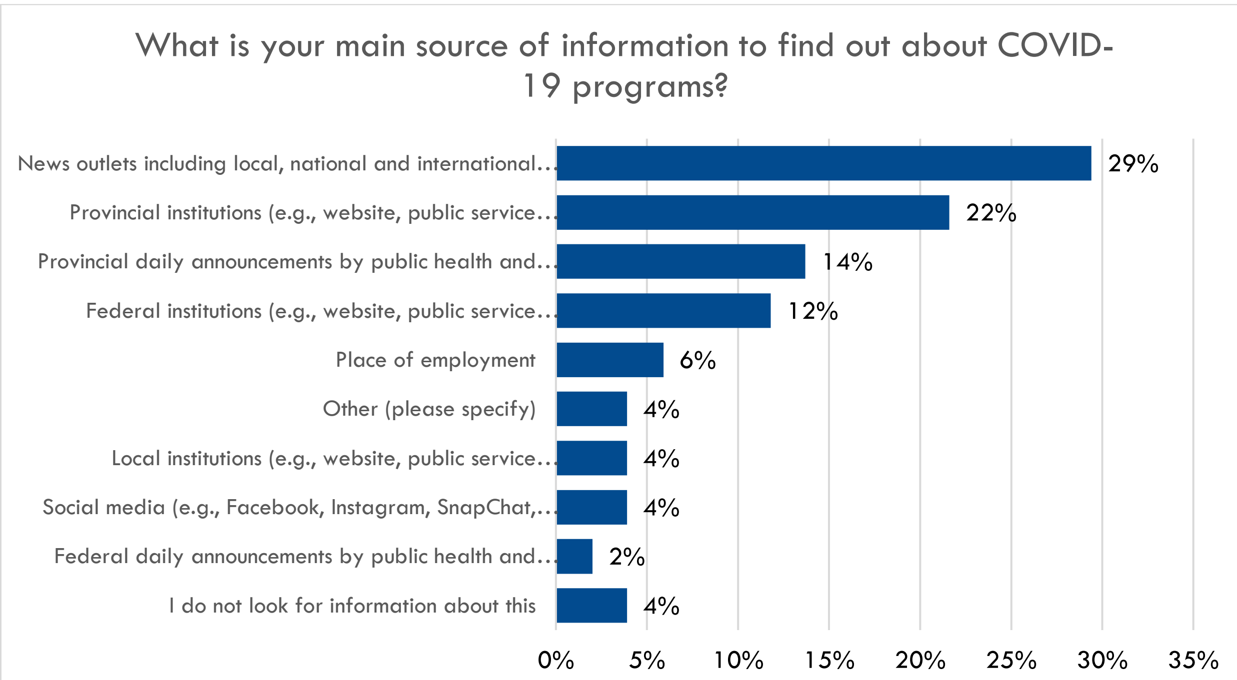


Figure 6: Main source of information for COVID-19 programs

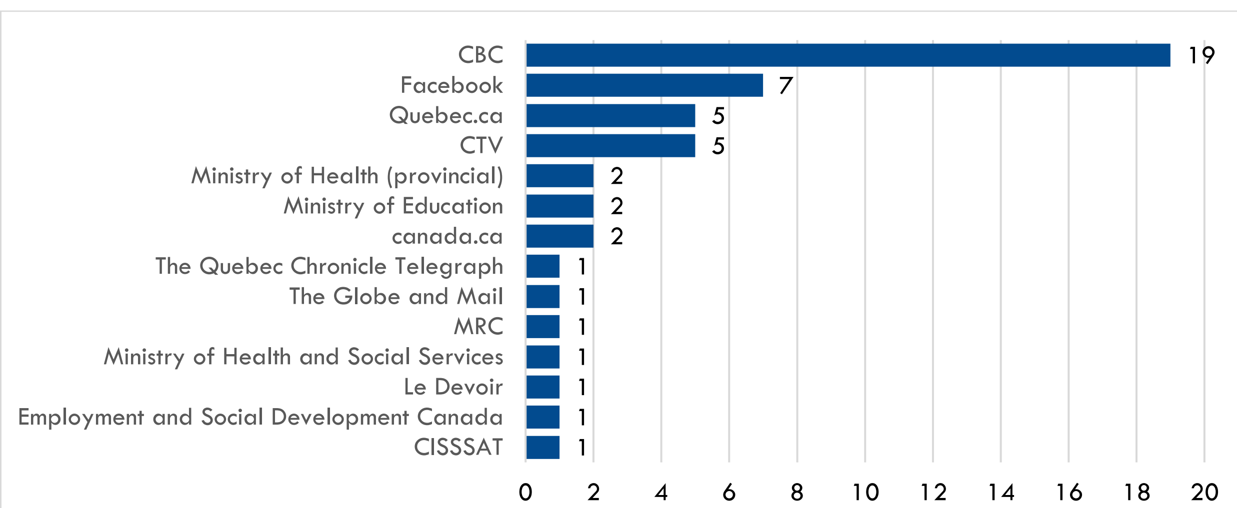


Figure 7: Name of the main source of information

When they were asked to pinpoint those sources of information, most respondents said that they used CBC, either TV, radio or website as the primary source of information about COVID-19 programs, followed by Facebook (specifically François Legault's page), Quebec's government website and CTV.

The federal government had various programs aimed to reduce the impact of the pandemic. Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CED) offered some of those programs. Almost one-quarter of respondents (24%) said their organization accessed support from COVID-19 programs offered by CED and all accept one accessed Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF). When it comes to organizations that have not accessed any of the CED COVID-19 programs (Figure 9), for those who answered "Other" (11 respondents), awareness regarding programs that are offered was one of the key issues. Half of the respondents (22) said there was no need for support. However, since the questionnaire did not have a question that asked why they had not applied or did not need help, we can only assume that organizations were stable during this time, and they did not need federal support. There were also 15 organizations that felt they needed some help, but they didn't get the support they needed because they didn't fit the program criteria or had limited resources.

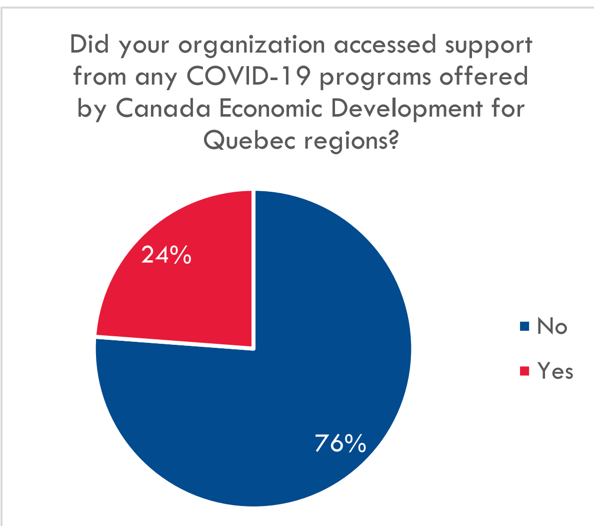


Figure 8: Access to CED COVID-19 programs

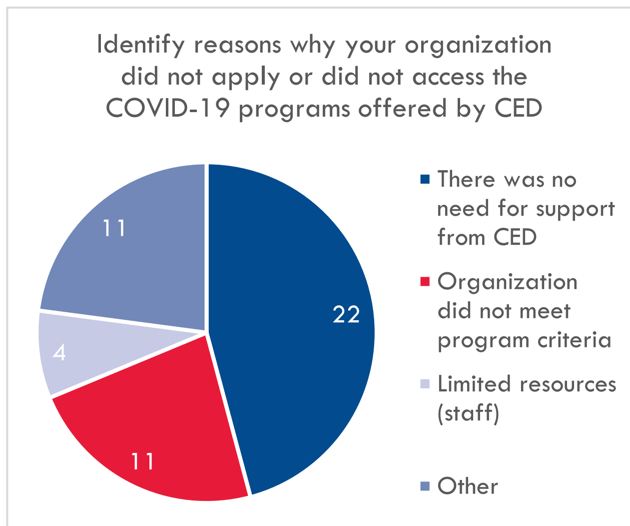
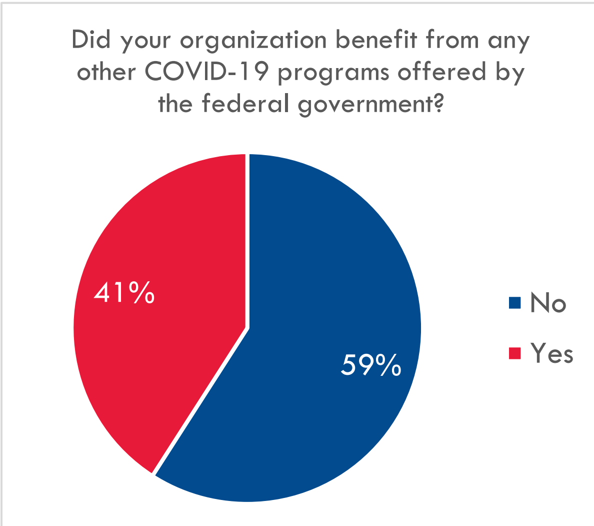


Figure 9: Reason why the organization did not access CED programs

As shown in Figure 10 below, four in ten respondents (41%) said that their organization accessed other programs offered by the federal government, compared to 24 percent that accessed programs offered by CED. Again, the reason why most of them have not accessed the COVID-19 programs was the same as in the case of CED, "there was no need for support". Nine organizations were not able to access federal programs, either because they did not meet the eligibility criteria or due to limited resources.



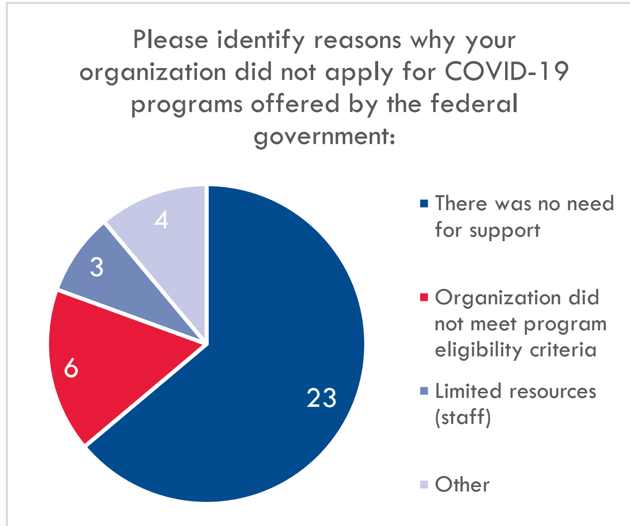


Figure 10: Access to other federal COVID-19 programs

Figure 11: Reason why organizations did not access other federal programs

As shown in Figure 10, many organizations benefited from other federal COVID-19 programs, such as Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA), Emergency Community Support Fund (ESDC), Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), etc. The variety of programs listed in Figure 12 means that each organization could find a program that best suits its needs.

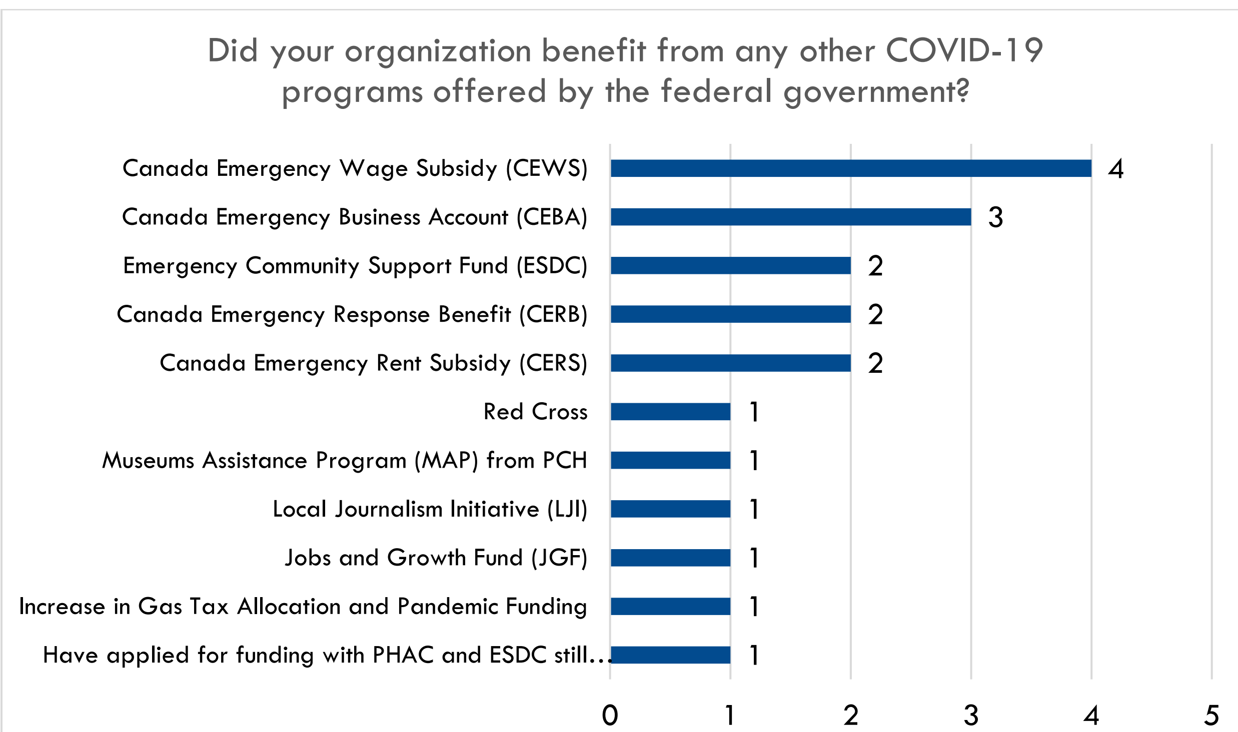


Figure 12: What other federal COVID-19 program your organization accessed

On the open-ended question *"Are there specific needs related to economic development that your organization has not been able to address through the federal government's COVID-19 response?"* the majority of the responses were focused either on financial needs, such as non-repayable funds/grants and more resources to support demand, and those focused at the (digital) infrastructure such as accessible and affordable connection, internet access and equipment.

When asked to rank the areas where their organization needed support from the federal government, the most common area identified was "flexibility to reallocate funding", followed by "support to cover payroll and other operational costs". Due to the COVID-19 organizations had to change the way they were working, they needed to adapt to lockdowns and different realities, which means that some of them could not, for example, deliver deliverables that they wrote in their project proposals, etc. In addition, some of them needed to buy equipment because of the work from home, while others had travel expenses in their budget, but there was no travelling allowed due to pandemic. That is likely why flexible funding came through as the main issue where they needed support.

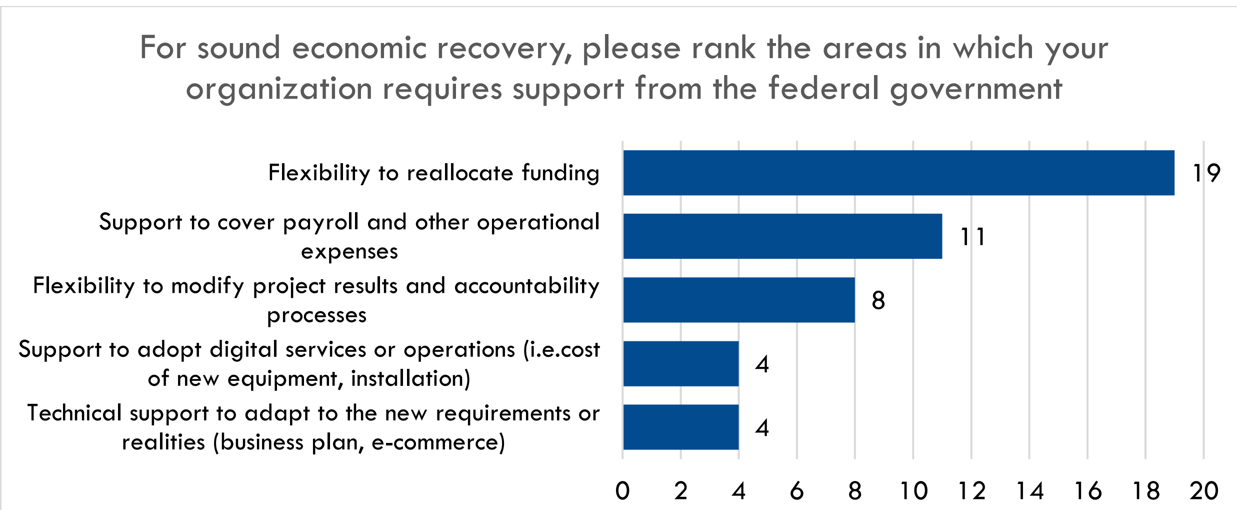


Figure 13: Ranked areas in which organization requires federal support

The recurring theme through Survey 1 was around funding and flexibility with those funds. Organizations do not want to be locked into line items. They want to be able to reallocate funds to certain areas and have flexibility, at least during this pandemic when things have to be done differently. There is also a real need for fundraising on how to raise them and have some kind of financial stability. Since there are a lot of small organizations in the sample, they are susceptible to financial challenges during various crises. That is why many issues and challenges are focused on fundraising and flexibility to allocate the resources.

Survey 2 – Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Industry in Quebec

The pandemic severely impacted the tourism industry and abroad, maybe the most compared to other sectors. While services sector such as restaurants and bars were able to transfer to take out options, those working in the tourism industry did not have similar opportunities. Therefore, the second survey aimed to summarize the impacts of the pandemic on the tourism industry in Quebec and the impact of federal programs and measures.

Even though not all of the organizations/businesses from the sample not directly affiliated with it worked specifically in the tourism industry, more than half of the respondents (61%) who filled in the survey work in organizations or businesses that provide services or products to them the tourism industry (Figure 14). The results presented below are for those organizations/businesses that work in the tourism industry.

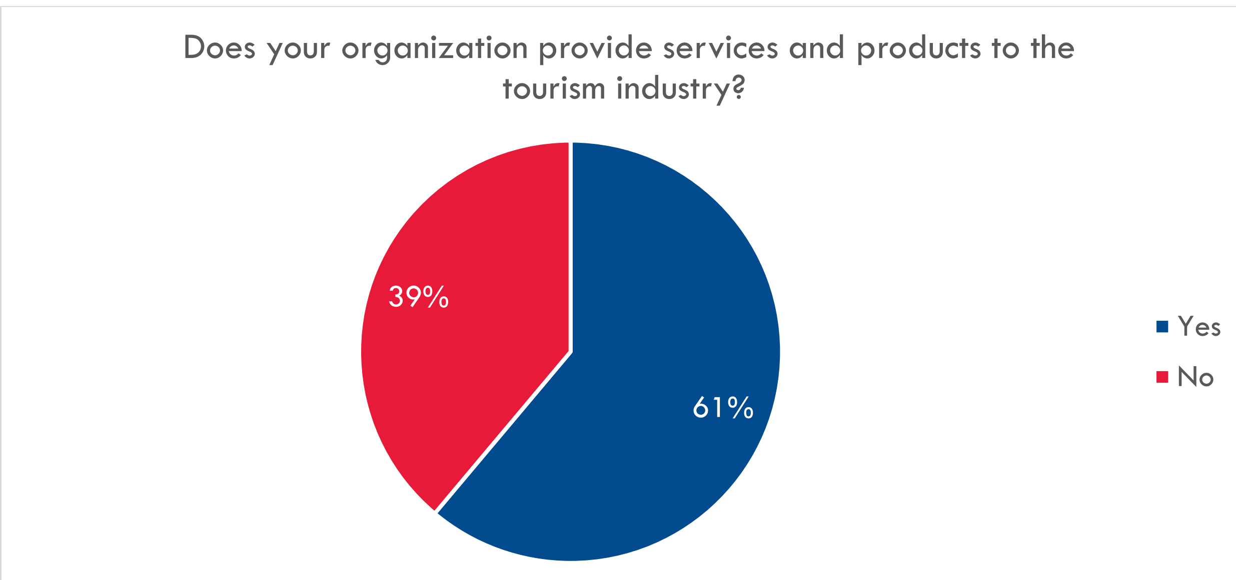


Figure 14: Providing services and products to the tourism industry

Organizations and businesses from the sample in the tourism industry offer various services, from tourist attractions and agritourism to festivals and events. In most cases, organizations provide "activities and experiences, tourist attractions" (12 respondents) and "arts and culture" (11 respondents), followed by festivals and events and "sports, outdoor activities and wellness" (Figure 15).

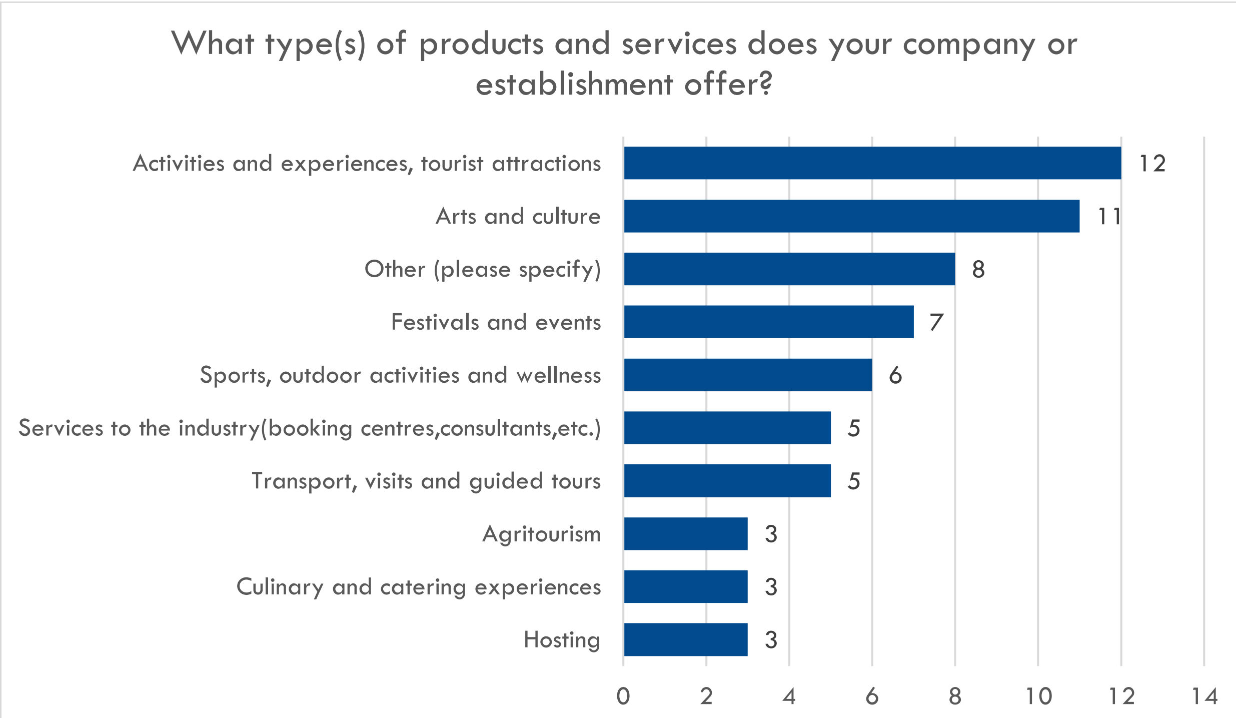


Figure 15: Types of products and services that organizations/businesses offer

Seven out of ten respondents (70%) said that the organization or business they work in operates on an annual basis, while the rest were seasonal (Figure 16). For example, they work only during the summer season.

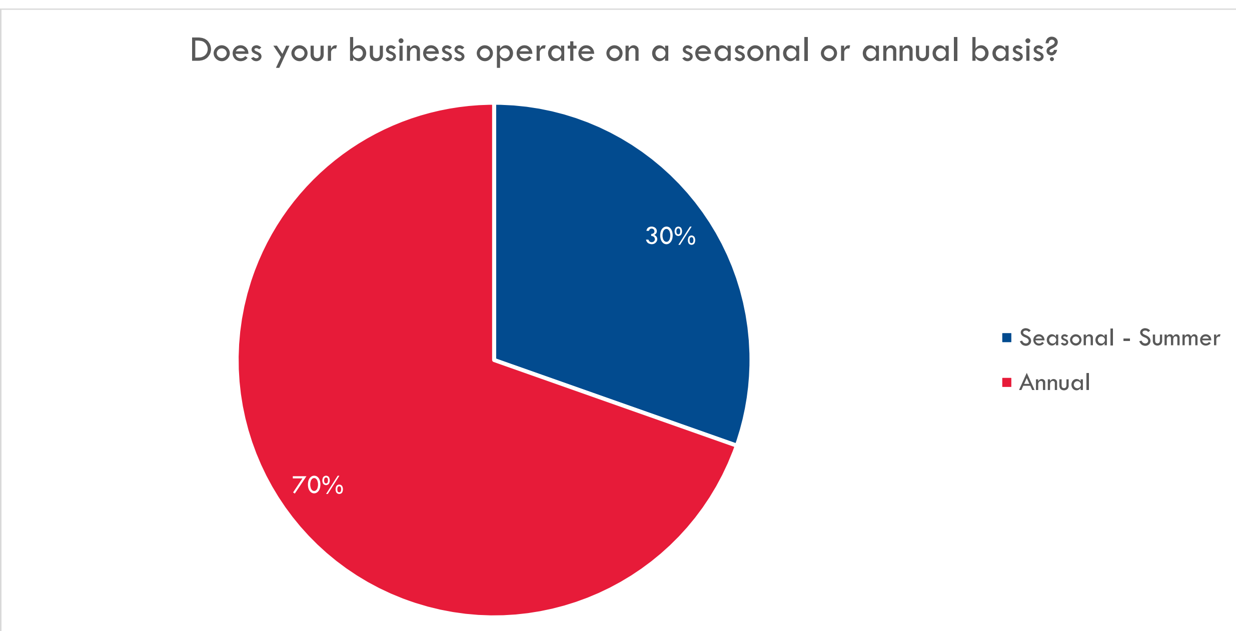


Figure 16: Operating on a seasonal or annual basis

Local residents and visitors from the province make up most of the customer base in almost all organizations/businesses. Out of 17 organizations that responded to this question, only in two cases local residents and visitors from the same province do not make up more than half of the customers. There are also some organizations that have visitors from other countries, but they make a small percentage of their customer base.

Table 2: Current percentage of organizations/businesses customer base

	Local residents	Visitors from the rest of your province/territory	Canadian visitors from outside your province/territory	Visitors from other countries
1	-	**90%**	10%	-
2	15%	**80%**	5%	-
3	10%	**80%**	5%	5%
4	5%	**80%**	10%	5%
5	20%	**60%**	-	20%
6	10%	**60%**	20%	10%
7	5%	**55%**	40%	-
8	**50%**	**50%**	-	-
9	**65%**	35%	-	-
10	-	35%	15%	15%
11	**80%**	20%	5%	-
12	**70%**	20%	5%	5%
13	40%	5%	35%	20%
14	**100%**	-	-	-
15	**90%**	-	10%	-
16	**100%**	-	-	-
17	**100%**	-	-	-

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most organizations had to shift their work and make changes in their plans, strategies, etc. Eight out of ten (83%) organizations had to provide targeted and innovative offerings, while more than a half had to rethink their business model (58%) and make a recovery plan (53%).

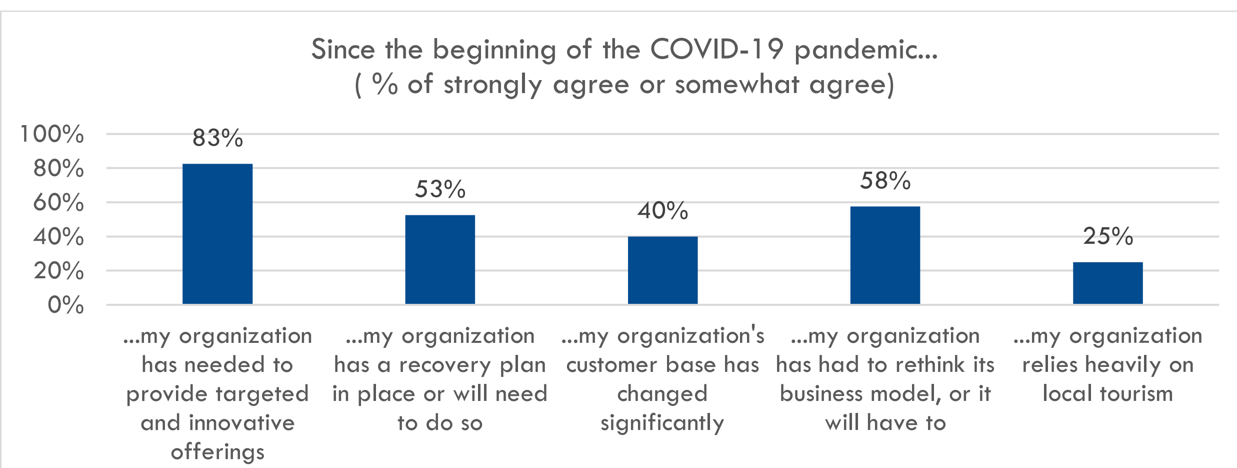


Figure 17: How much do you agree or disagree with statements, % of strongly agree or somewhat agree

Almost half of the organizations (44%) remained stable during the pandemic, meaning that their revenue stream has not changed. One out of four organizations (26%) had a decrease in revenue, with more than half of them (55%) seeing a revenue decrease of 50% or more. There were some organizations whose revenue increased. However, increases were smaller than decreases. If you lost revenue, it was almost half of it, compared to those who saw an increase, which was less than 25% in most cases.

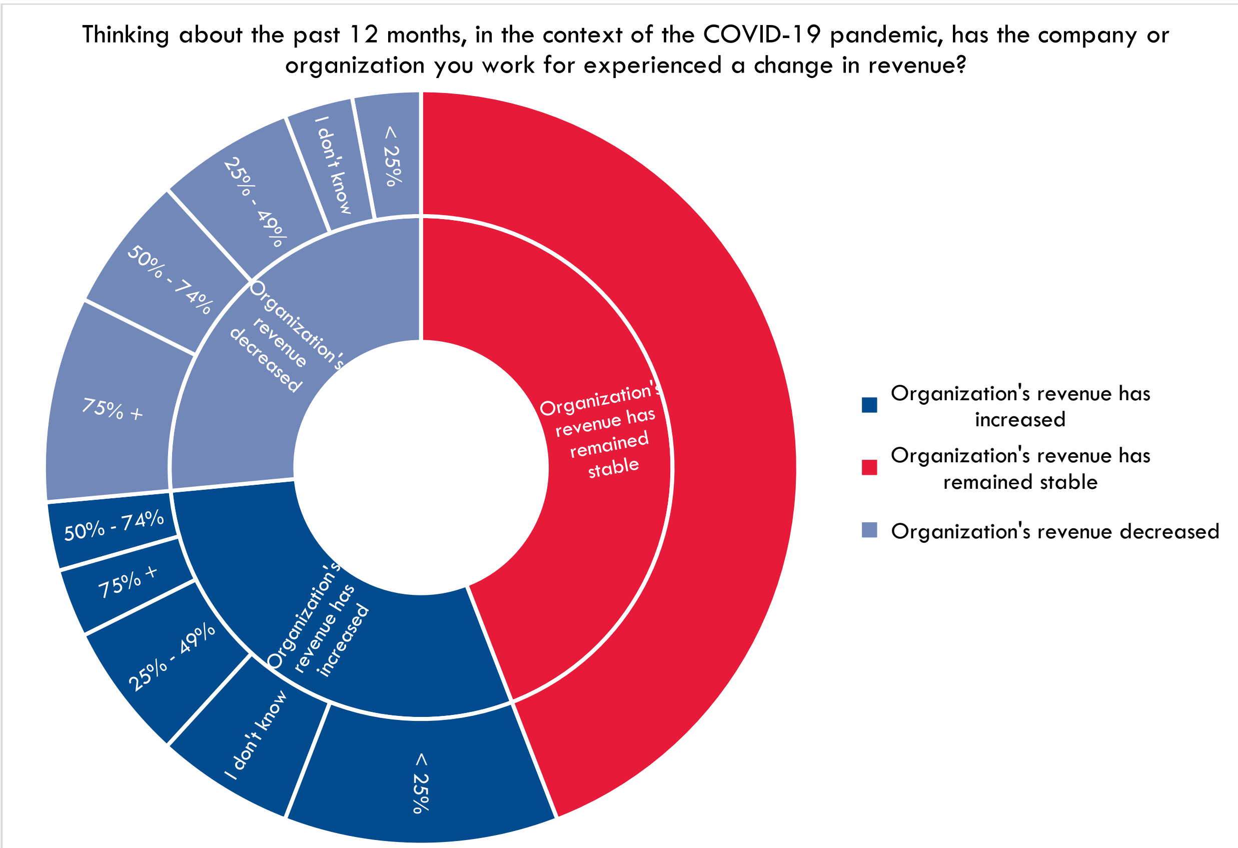


Figure 18: Organization's change in revenue in past 12 months

A similar trend can be noticed when it comes to organizational staffing. During the pandemic, the number of employees remained the same in almost half of the organizations/businesses (46%), while one in three (31%) saw an increase in the number of workers. There were, however, organizations that had to layoff some of their employees since the pandemic started. Almost one-fourth of organizations (23%) from the sample saw a decrease in the number of employees.

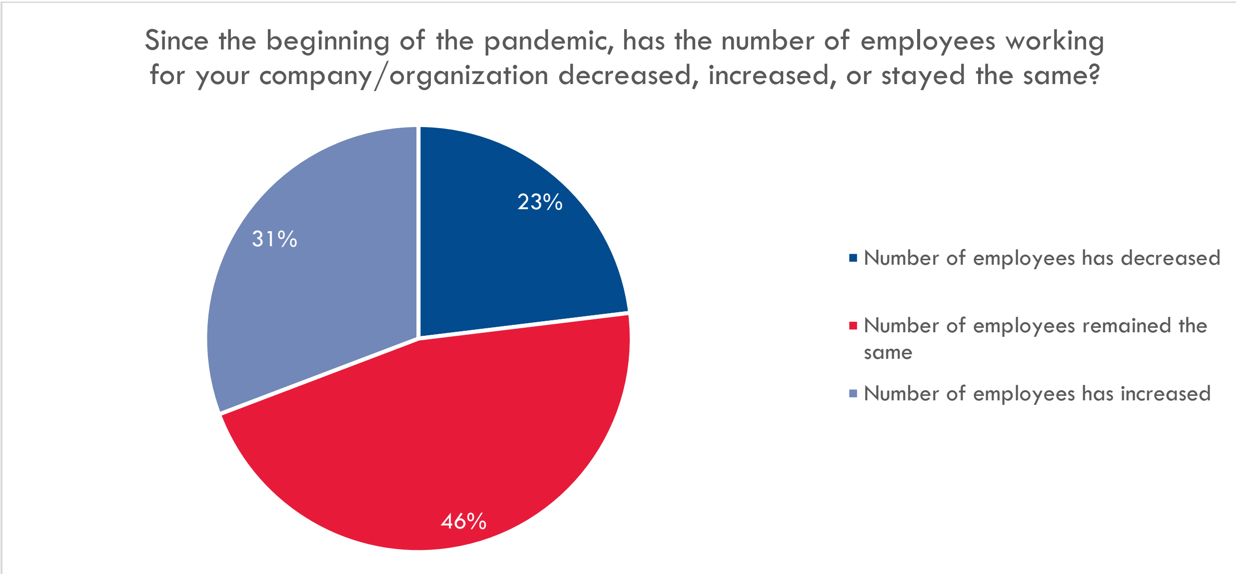


Figure 19: Change in number of employees since pandemic started

Half of the respondents (51%) said that their organization did not benefit from the federal or provincial COVID-19 programs. That was either because there was no need for support since the organization was relatively stable or because the organization did not meet the eligibility criteria. In addition, a small number of organizations could not find resources to apply or could not navigate the system (Figure 21). Organizations that accessed the COVID-19 federal or provincial support (49%) used a variety of programs such as different loans and grants for non-profits, CEBA, PACME, CEWS, SSUC, CED etc.

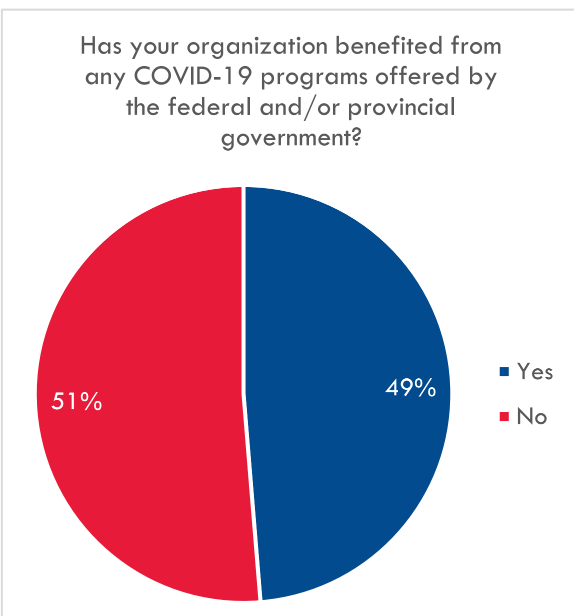


Figure 20: Federal and provincialCOVID-19 programs

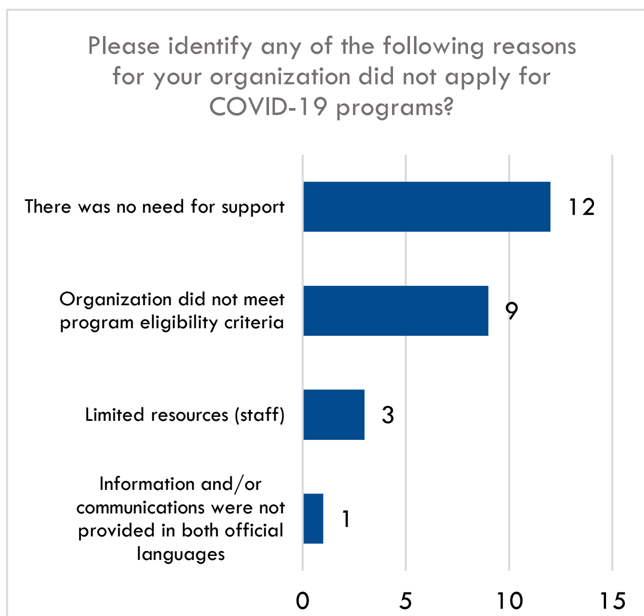


Figure 21: Reason why the organization has not applied

Many businesses had to pivot during the pandemic to maintain the same level of revenue that they had before. Almost two-thirds of respondents (63%) said that their organization changed its business approach or strategy and business plan to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 22). They had to shift their focus to generate revenue streams during this pandemic, so in most cases, they went digital by implementing different digital solutions and moving programs and services online, having more virtual meetings, etc. For others, change meant moving their activities outdoors, shorter seasons or additional sanitary measures.

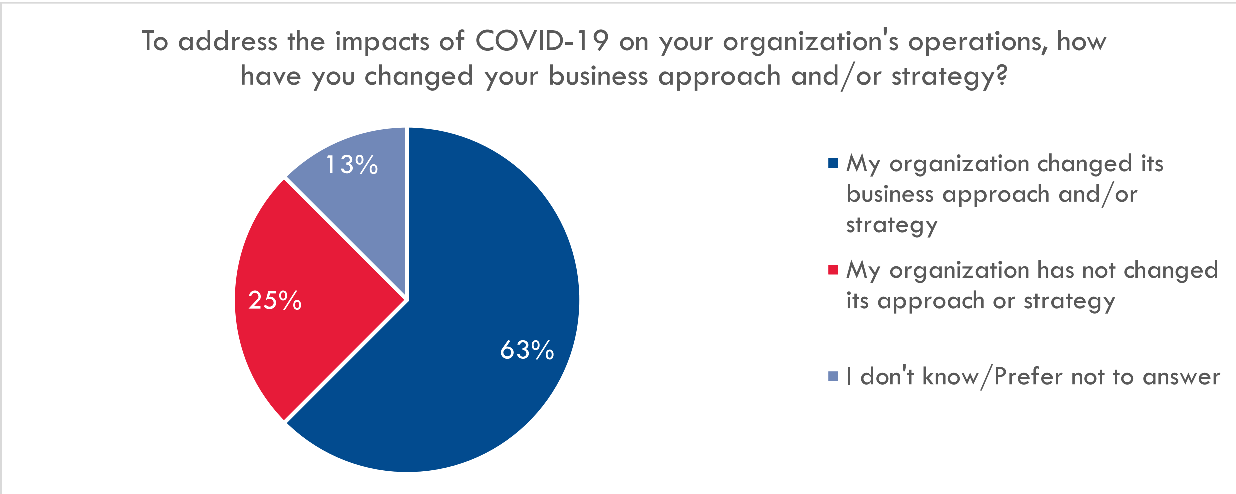


Figure 22: Change of business approach due to COVID-19

As soon as the COVID-19 pandemic started, different public health measures were implemented to stop the spread of the virus. Beyond the standard measures such as cleaning, hand sanitizers, and distance, many of them were focused on the number of visitors who can visit the establishment, etc. Data from the survey showed that installing hydroalcoholic hand sanitizers, limiting the number of visitors, regular surface disinfection and enforcing masks were the most commonly implemented health measures (Figure 23).

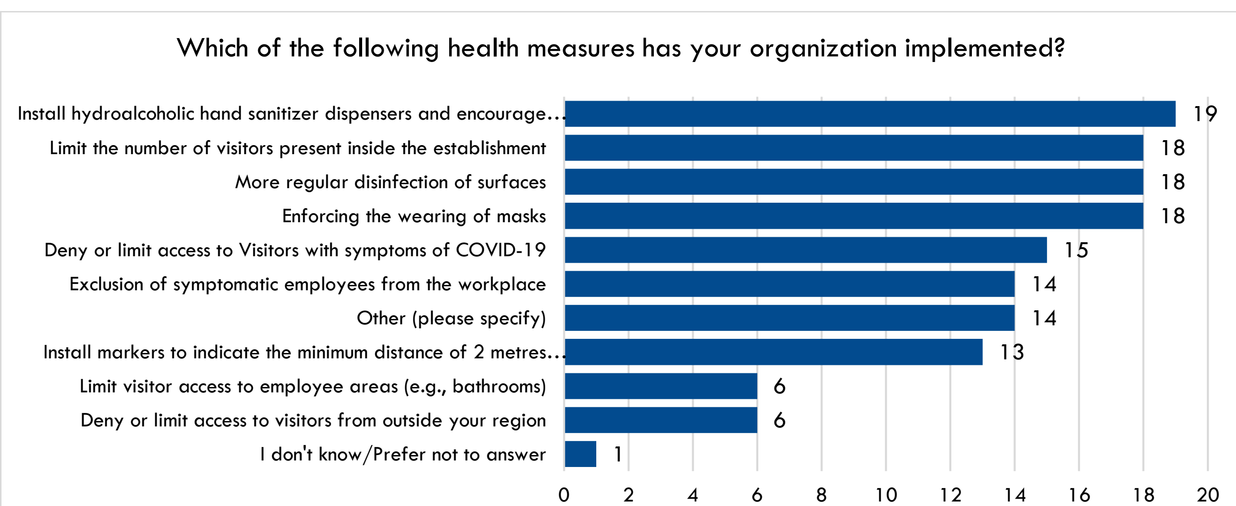


Figure 23: Health measures implemented in the organization

More than half of organizations have a completely bilingual website (58%), newsletter (57%), printed material such as guides, flyers, brochures (55%) and safety information (50%). While websites are usually bilingual social networks (28%), video content (23%) and mobile applications (23%) are not. It seems that the traditional marketing and communication tools are in most cases completely bilingual, while "new" means of communications such as social media platforms, video content and mobile applications are not.

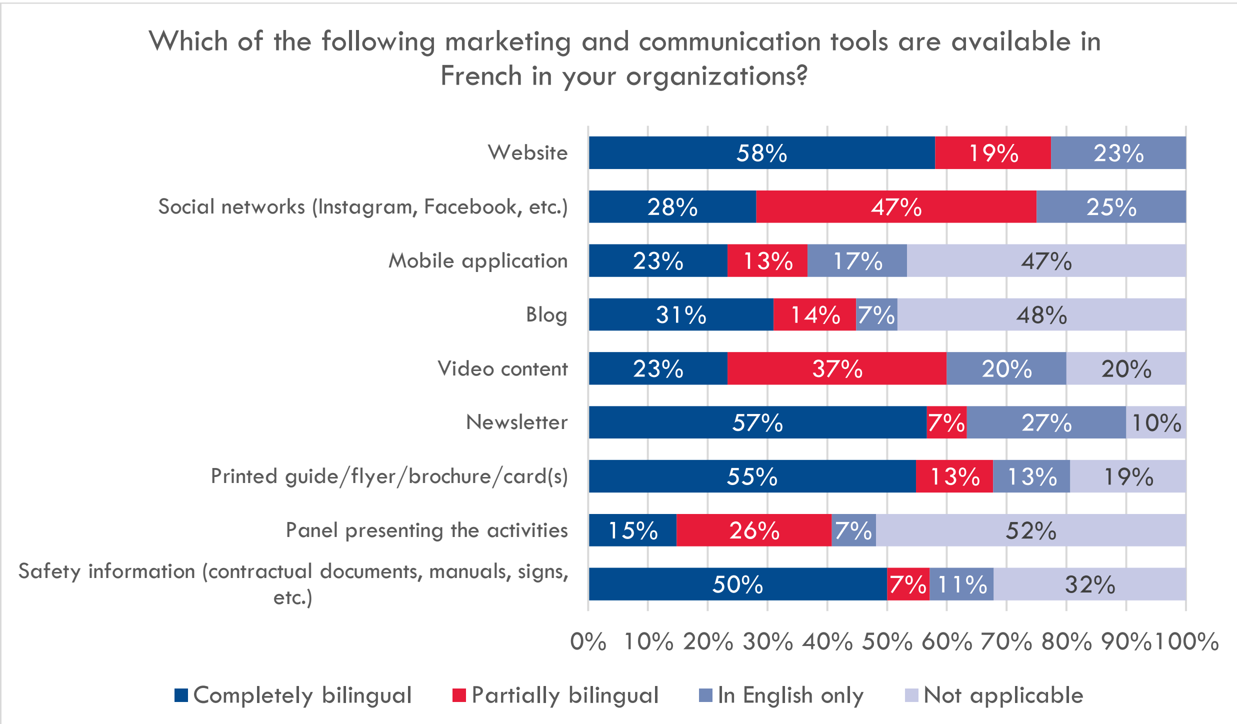


Figure 24: Marketing and communication tools available in French

Marketing and promotion of what Quebec has to offer were the main things respondents saw as the way to increase tourism in Quebec, followed by bilingualism both of people working in sector and information materials (Table 3). Promoting what Quebec has to offer to neighbourhood regions both in Canada and in the US, dispelling the myth that you cannot come to Quebec unless you speak French, and ensuring that people working within the tourism industry speak English were some of the examples.

Table 3: Best ways to increase tourism in Quebec

What do you think is the best way to increase tourism in Quebec?	
Marketing/Promotion *"Target markets close to Quebec like New England, New York, and Ontario, change the perception that visitors need to speak French in order to have a good experience."*	12
Language/bilingualism *"Ensure there are people that speak English within the Tourism industry."*	8
Partnership/Collaboration	2
Technology	2
Other	6

Promotional campaigns and financial support are the main things the Government of Canada could do support tourism in Quebec (Table 4). Promoting sustainable tourism, encouraging the protection of the environment in rural areas, and more financial support towards different tourism initiatives were some of the respondents' suggestions.

Table 4: How can the Government of Canada better support tourism in Quebec

What do you think the Government of Canada could do to better support tourism in Quebec?	
Promotional campaigns *"Keep promoting local arts, culture, agri-food, experiences across the province and support for innovative approaches…."* *"Emphasize the unique linguistic and cultural characteristics of Quebec."*	10
Financial support *"More financial support towards developing tourism initiatives, increase in Summer Canada jobs programs for English-communities."*	10
Language/Bilingualism	2
Other	6

Similarly, as in the previous question, the primary way for Innovation, Science and Economic Development to help the tourism industry is through investment and financial support and by supporting innovation and pilot projects that could expand services offered to tourists.

Table 5: How can the Government of Canada and ISED help the tourism industry

How can the Government of Canada, and maybe more particularly ISED, help the tourism industry?	
Investment/Financial support *"Dedicated funds that go to the minority organization for long-term projects to support the SMEs in the communities."*	12
Innovation/Pilot projects *"Help support sharing successful pilot projects across the province/country. Create a national tourism table made up of regional pilot projects and innovators."*	7
Language/Bilingualism	3
Other	4

Survey 3 – Adjusting to a New Reality – Best Practices

Lockdowns, curfews, restrictions on the number of people who can be inside were just some of the many challenges both individuals and organizations/businesses had to adjust to during the pandemic. Whether it was work from home or moving services online, changes had to be made to adapt to the new reality. Therefore, the third survey was conducted to understand better circumstances that organizations faced over the last two years and how they had to adjust, or not, to maintain their regular activities during COVID-19.

More than one-third of respondents (38%) said that the number of employees in their organization/business increased during the pandemic, while 20 percent said it had decreased (Figure 25). In most cases, the number of employees remained the same or increased. Having in mind the impact of the pandemic on different sectors and different businesses, we can conclude that due to their ability to adapt, think out of the box and use digital media and digital tools to provide their services and meet their client needs, the majority of organizations were able to overcome challenges successfully.

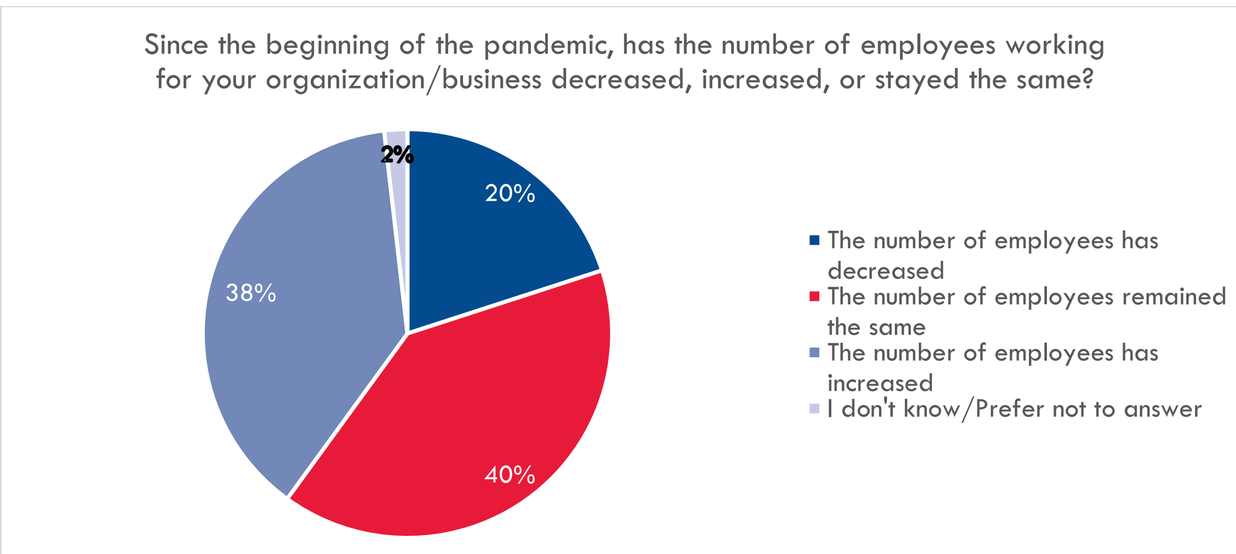


Figure 25: Change in the number of employees since the pandemic

As shown in the second survey, organizations and businesses had to adapt and change their strategies to address the impacts of the pandemic. A similar trend can be seen in the third survey. When asked if their organization or business had to change their strategy or business approach in the past two years to adjust to the new reality, eight out of ten respondents (82%) said yes. There were also some organizations (13%) that did not need to change their strategies. That was either because they have already used social media and other digital tools to provide their services or because the service they are providing could not be transferred to virtual space.

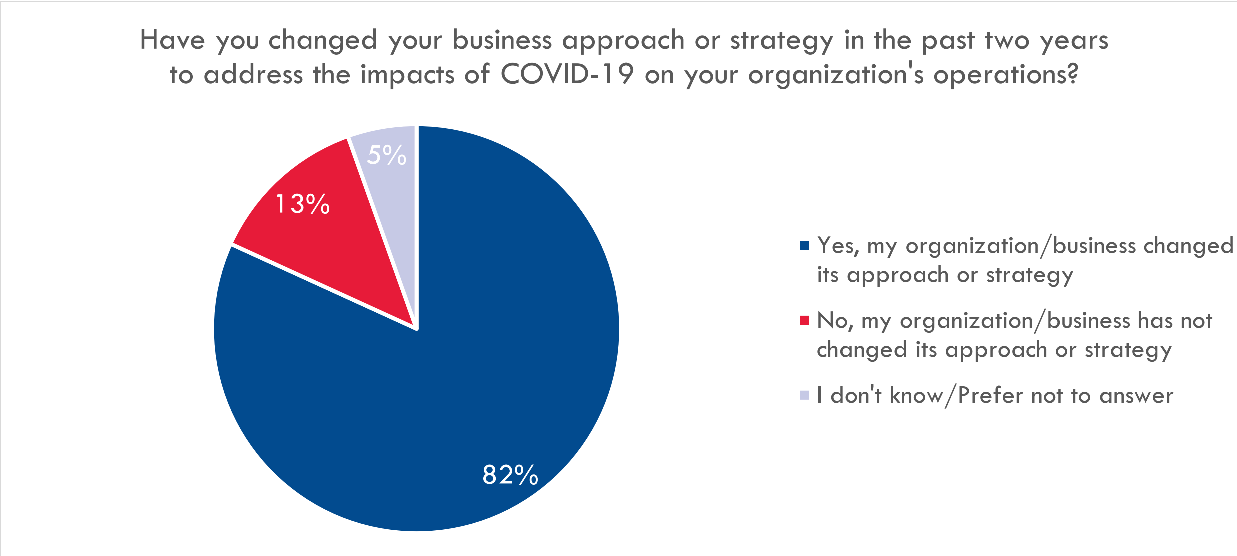


Figure 26: Business approach or strategy changes due to pandemic

Out of those organizations/businesses that changed their approach or strategy, most transferred from in-persons to virtual activities, moved their services online and transitioned to the work from the home model (Table 6).

Table 6: Changes organization/business implemented

What changes has your organization/business implemented?	
Virtual delivery of services/moving activities/services online/online events/Virtual meetings *"All of our events and consultations have gone from in-person to virtual. We have increased our communications budget to improve our online presence."*	23
Work from home/remote work *"Transitioned all employees to work from home. Engaged all stakeholders using digital technology."*	17
Social distancing measures/used PPE/helpline/adapt workspace/health protocols *"Adapted/updated workspaces to meet sanitary measures/recommendations."*	6
Work remote policies/strategies/business planning	3
Use of technology	3
Other	3

Even though in the beginning, organizations were implementing changes just to adapt to new circumstances, some of the changes they have made proved helpful. Most organizations from the sample (87%) plan to keep at least some of the new strategies they implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic after the pandemic is over (Figure 27).

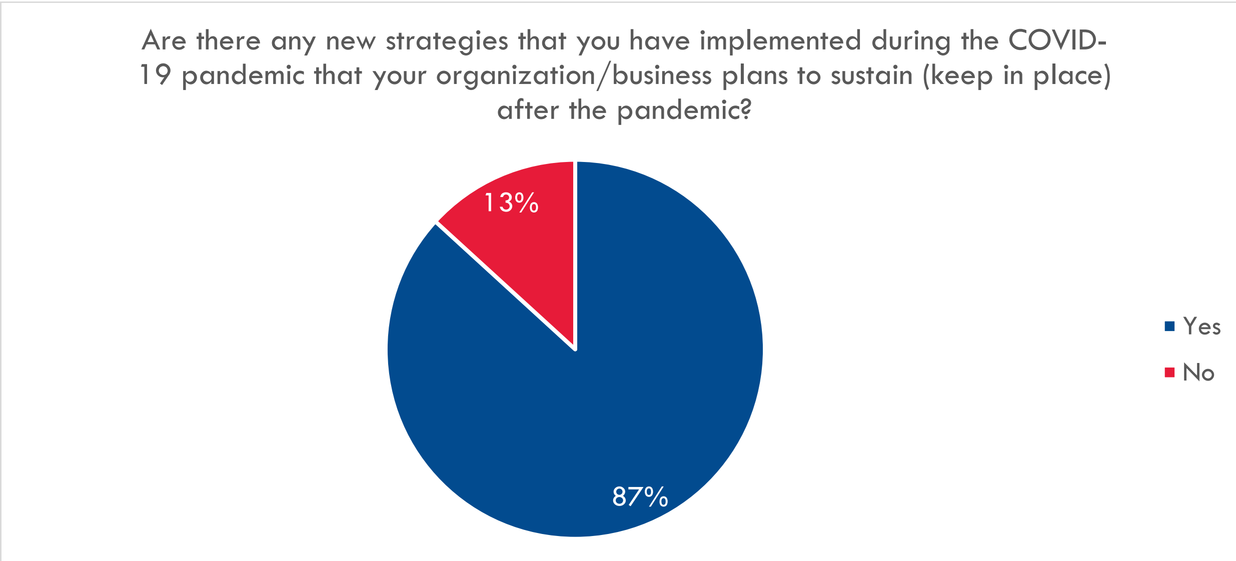


Figure 27: New strategies sustained during

Some of the significant shifts that happened in the workplace are options to work remotely and the hybrid model of services. Those things changed drastically out of necessity, but they will stay in place in most cases. According to respondents, giving employees the option to work remotely and offering online and in-person services are the main strategies that will be kept in place after the pandemic is over, according to respondents (Table 7).

Table 7: New strategies that will be kept in place after the pandemic

What are those strategies, and how have they helped your organization/ business during the pandemic?	
Work from home/flexible work arrangements/hybrid work environment *"We are going to move to a hybrid work environment. We need to reduce costs as inflation and demand for talent has made it difficult for organizations."*	16
Services both online and in-person/hybrid *"Offering clients various means of meeting with us, better suited to their schedules."*	15
Virtual meetings/zoom/video conferences *"Using more virtual meeting platforms, e.g. Zoom and Teams. We have kept being able to meet with stakeholders, and it has saved travel costs and time."*	9
Technology/virtual digital communication and online tools	7
More online content/online platforms for marketing	6
Other	5

While before the pandemic, webinars, conferences, meetings and forums used to be in-person. Now everything is online. A clear trend can be seen in the frequency of using technology before and after the pandemic, especially when it comes to live-stream video conferencing and webinars. Live-stream video conferencing went from 6 percent before the pandemic to 85 percent after it. While only 4 percent of the respondents regularly had webinars before the pandemic, almost two-thirds (65%) had them daily after the pandemic. Appointment scheduling tools, social media and mobile apps were already in place before the pandemic, so there is no significant jump. Still, even there, a shift toward using it, even more, can be seen.

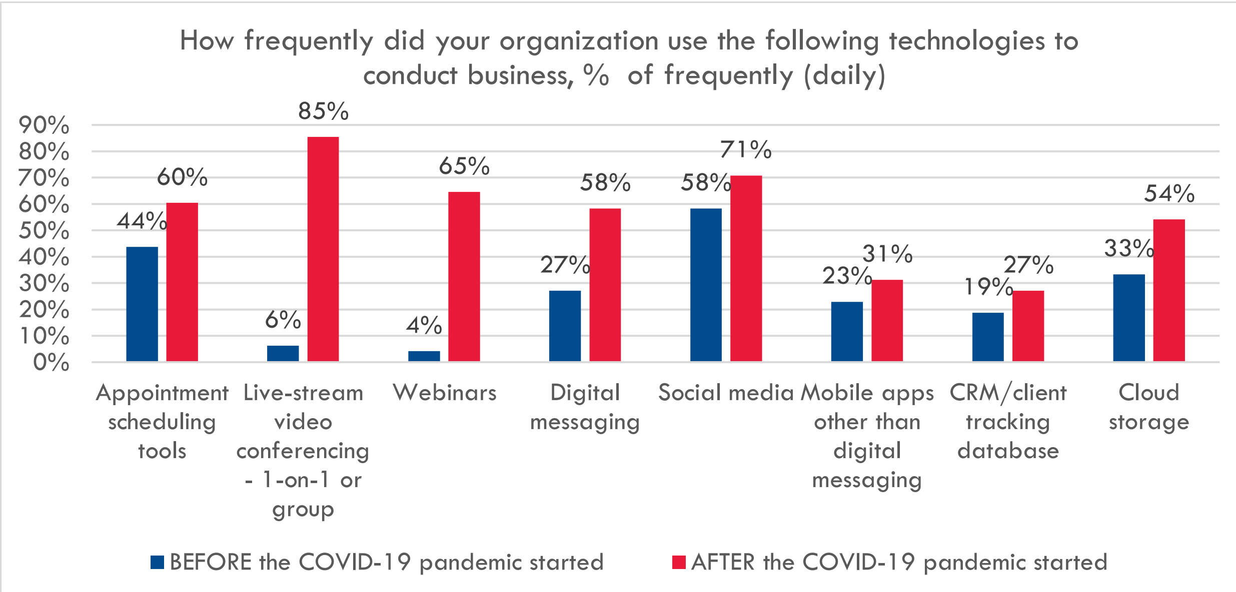


Figure 28: Frequencies of using following technologies in work, % of daily

Only 6 percent of respondents rated the capacity of their business/organization to adapt to new technologies as non-existent, while two-thirds said that their organization has strong capacity. However, a third of them (33%) either have limited ability, or they are non-existing. Those are the business that needs support, for example, mentorship by businesses with capacities or other programs that can be developed so that these business/organizations do not fall behind.

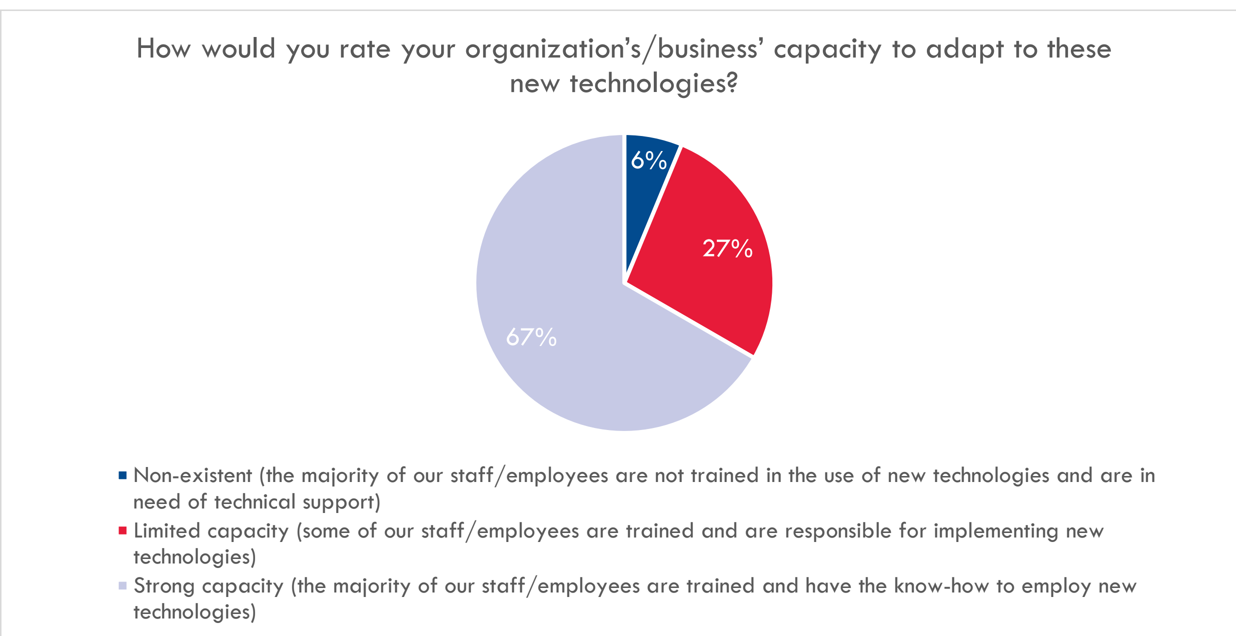


Figure 29: Capacities of organization's/business' to adopt new technologies

Due to the COVID-19, almost all organizations/businesses (96%) were at some point engaged in remote work. Those organizations that have been using remote work rarely are probably organizations/businesses that could not provide service remotely due to the nature of their business.

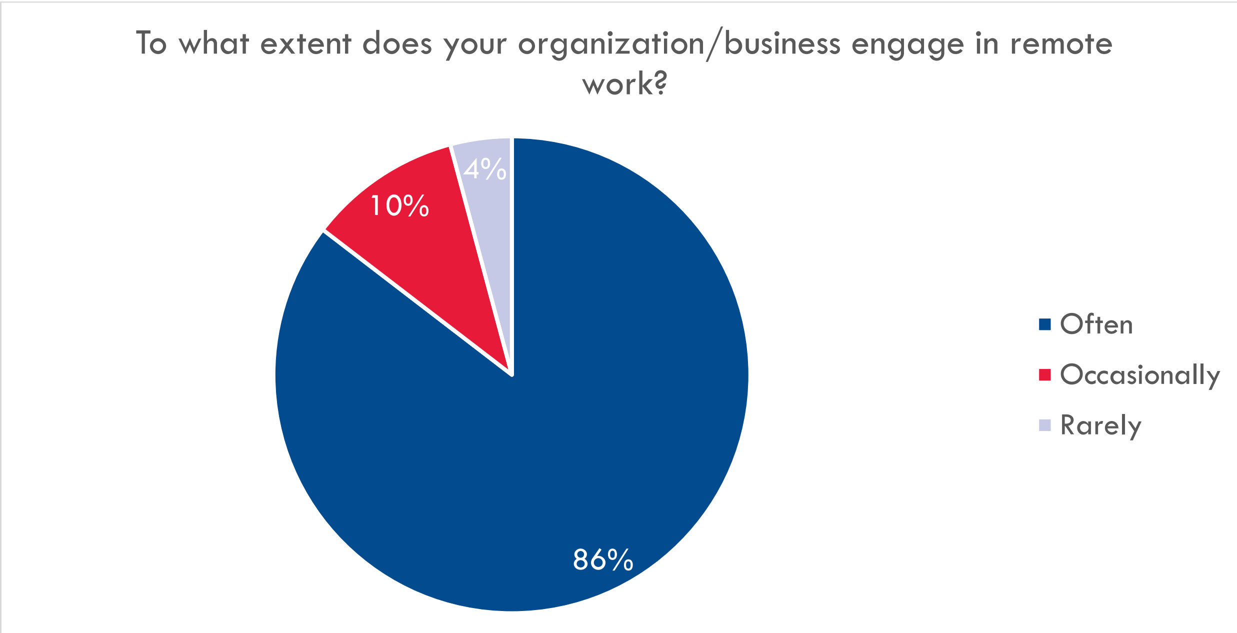


Figure 30: Remote work in organization/business

About three out of five respondents (60%) had a somewhat positive experience when they shifted to remote work, while 29 percent had a very positive experience (Figure 31). That is why these working arrangements are probably here to stay. Workers seem to appreciate the flexibility of the remote work. In addition, not only does this transition impact the way we work, but it also has an impact on the environment (e.g., fewer cars on the streets).

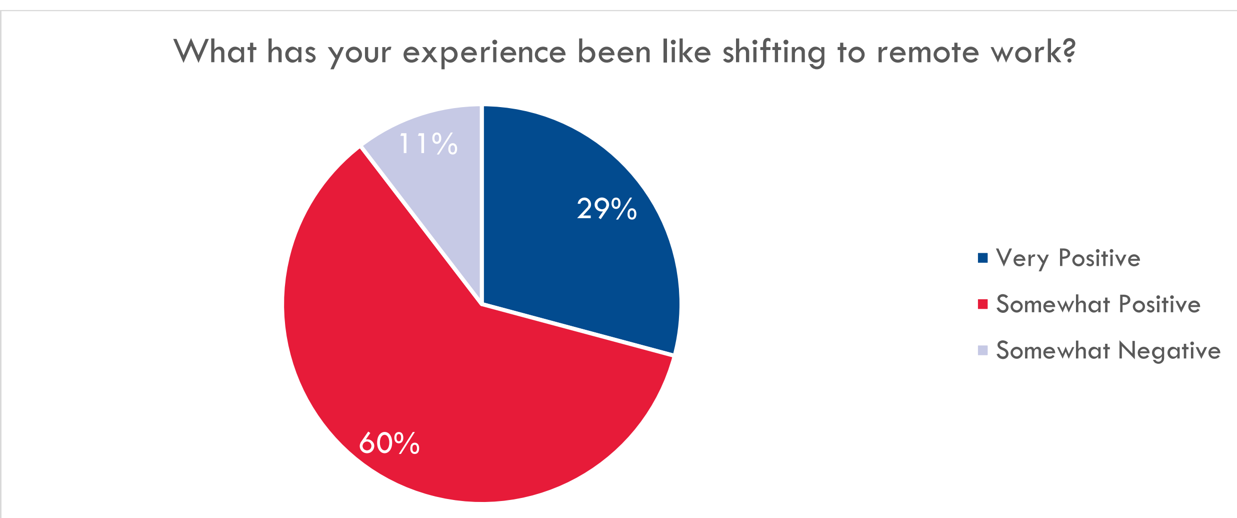


Figure 31: Experience with remote work

Even though most employees had a positive experience working from home, there were some struggles associated with remote work. Managing people becomes challenging since employers do not always know where employees are and what they are doing. Team communication can often feel fragmented, and it is hard to socialize. For service organizations or those organizations that are one-on-one with clients, it is a bit different experience when you meet through the screen as opposed to in-person contact. For respondents, remote work fatigue was the main struggle that employees were experiencing, followed by issues that come with remote work – managing people, equipment issues and team communication that feels fragmented.

Table 8: Organizations/businesses struggles with the transition to remote work

Please describe in one sentence your organization's/business's principal struggles with the transition to remote work.	
Remote work fatigue/zoom fatigue *"…maintaining human connection among team members (breaking isolation/sparking new ideas) particularly integrating new staff, doing the work with community members at a distance (harder to build trust and relationships online)."*	13
Working remotely ineffective *"We have all appreciated being able to work from home, but there are ultimately limits to being able to truly collaborate via a screen, especially when there are multiple moving parts to a project."*	8
Managing people *"Managing people in the sense that check-ins are not informal and it takes much more of a manager's time (hours in a week) to schedule virtual check-ins rather than casual in-person ones. Not as natural…."*	7
Equipment (internet speeds, equipment for everyone, etc.)/lack of proper space	7
Communication issues	7
Capacity building/new technology/policies	5
Other	3

Most respondents see providing direct and walk-in services and team integration and socialization as non-transferable. That is why a hybrid model is needed. Some aspects of the job and services cannot be done through a screen.

Table 9: Non-transferable aspects of the job to remote work

Please describe in one sentence what aspects of the job are just not transferable to remote work.	
Direct services/walk-in services/face-to-face services/front desk welcome *"Working directly with community members in -person. walk-in services at our centre."*	14
Culture/sense of belonging/integration of team members/socialization *"The personal connection is very different remotely."*	9
Networking is limited *"Human contact and networking were essential to our organization's mandate, and that is increasingly difficult."*	6
Managing team/sharing ideas	5
There is non/can't think of any	4
Other	3

As we have already seen, using digital tools has both challenges and opportunities. The main opportunities that come from rapid migration to digital technologies, according to respondents, have been the use of online communication tools, followed by hybrid work and activities. When it comes to challenges, lack of technology skills and better ways to engage with the audience, clients and stakeholders were the two main ones. Knowing when to stop working or work-life balance was also something that was mentioned (Table 10).

Table 10: Opportunities and challenges of rapid migration to digital technologies

Opportunities & challenges: rapid migration to digital technologies driven by the COVID-19 pandemic

Opportunities		Challenges	
Online communication tools	8	Lack of technology skills	9
Hybrid work/activities	3	Engagement with audience/clients/stakeholders	8
Be flexible/meet clients needs	2	No substitute for face to face, in-person interaction	5
Rethink operations and processes	2	Reduction of team spirit	4
Learning new tools and grow	2	Work from home	3
		Equipment issues	3
		Work-life balance	3

CONCLUSION

The transition to digital resources and tools is the process that started long before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pandemic has significantly accelerated this transition. As a result, there will be immense shifts in the way business is done from this point on. A hybrid work environment and a hybrid model of services are just some of the changes that will be kept in the future.

One of the overarching themes that can be seen in all three surveys is the resilience and ability of organizations and businesses to adapt to these new realities. With their own resources and government support, organizations and businesses were able to change their approaches and strategies and rapidly adopt new technologies. Nevertheless, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed and that we have to be aware of moving forward.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought significant changes, and it is safe to say that many of these changes are here to stay even after the pandemic goes away.