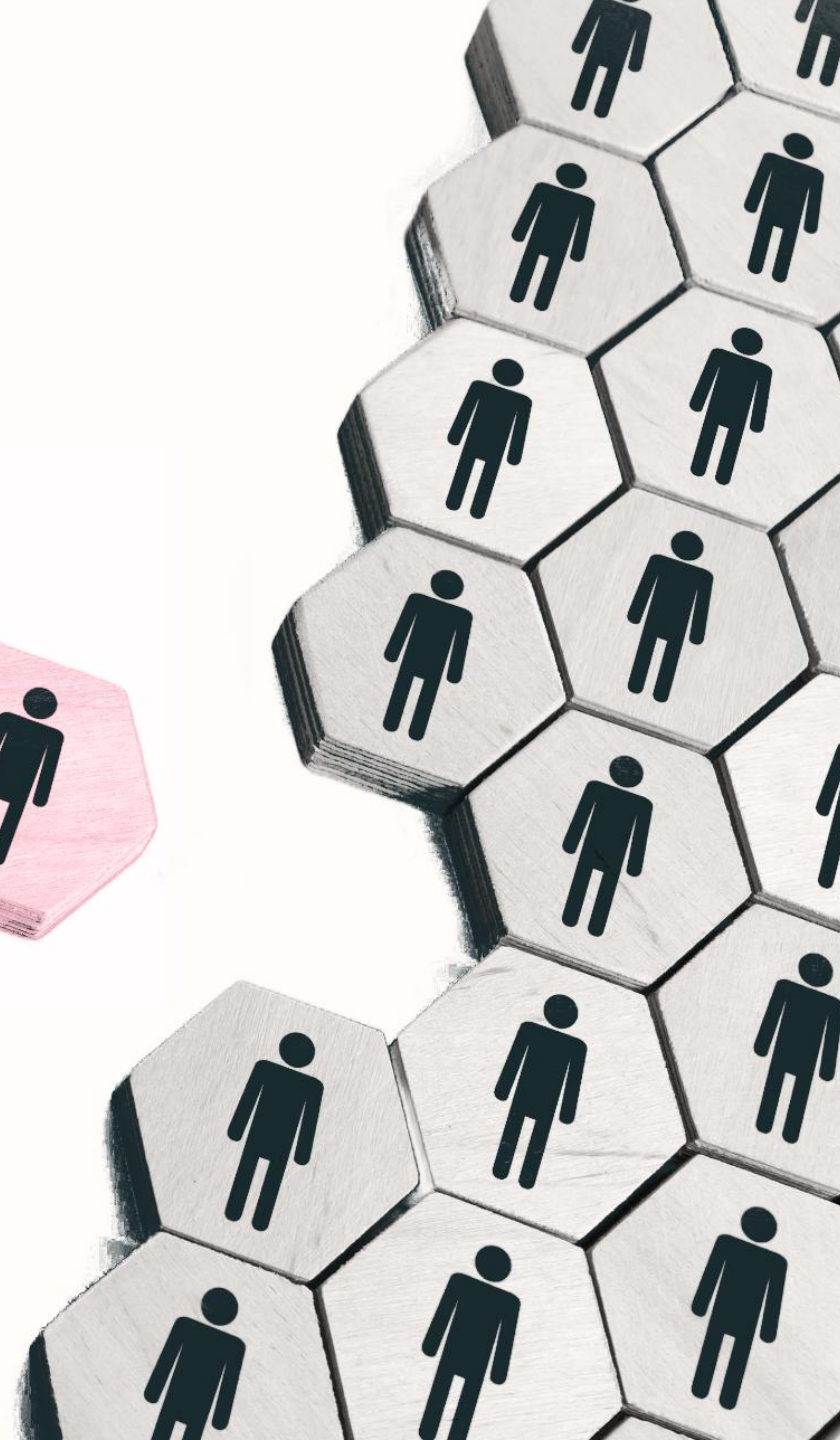




# State of the Nonprofit Workforce

Saskatchewan Nonprofit Partnership (SNP)  
Saskatchewan Nonprofit Sector Study 2025





# The Nonprofit Workforce Landscape

Many organizations are experiencing ongoing workforce challenges, with difficulty finding both staff and volunteers affecting their ability to deliver programs and services.

Volunteer capacity is under pressure, with fewer volunteers available and reduced long-term commitment, making it harder for organizations to sustain support.

Recruitment and retention challenges are influenced by broader factors such as limited compensation, fewer qualified candidates, and increasing workload pressures.

Gaps in key areas such as digital, fundraising, and communications are limiting organizations' ability to operate effectively and adapt to changing needs.

**Note:** Findings reflect both open-ended and structured responses, capturing what organizations identify as their most pressing workforce challenges as well as how strongly these challenges are experienced.

# Top-of-Mind Human Resource Challenges

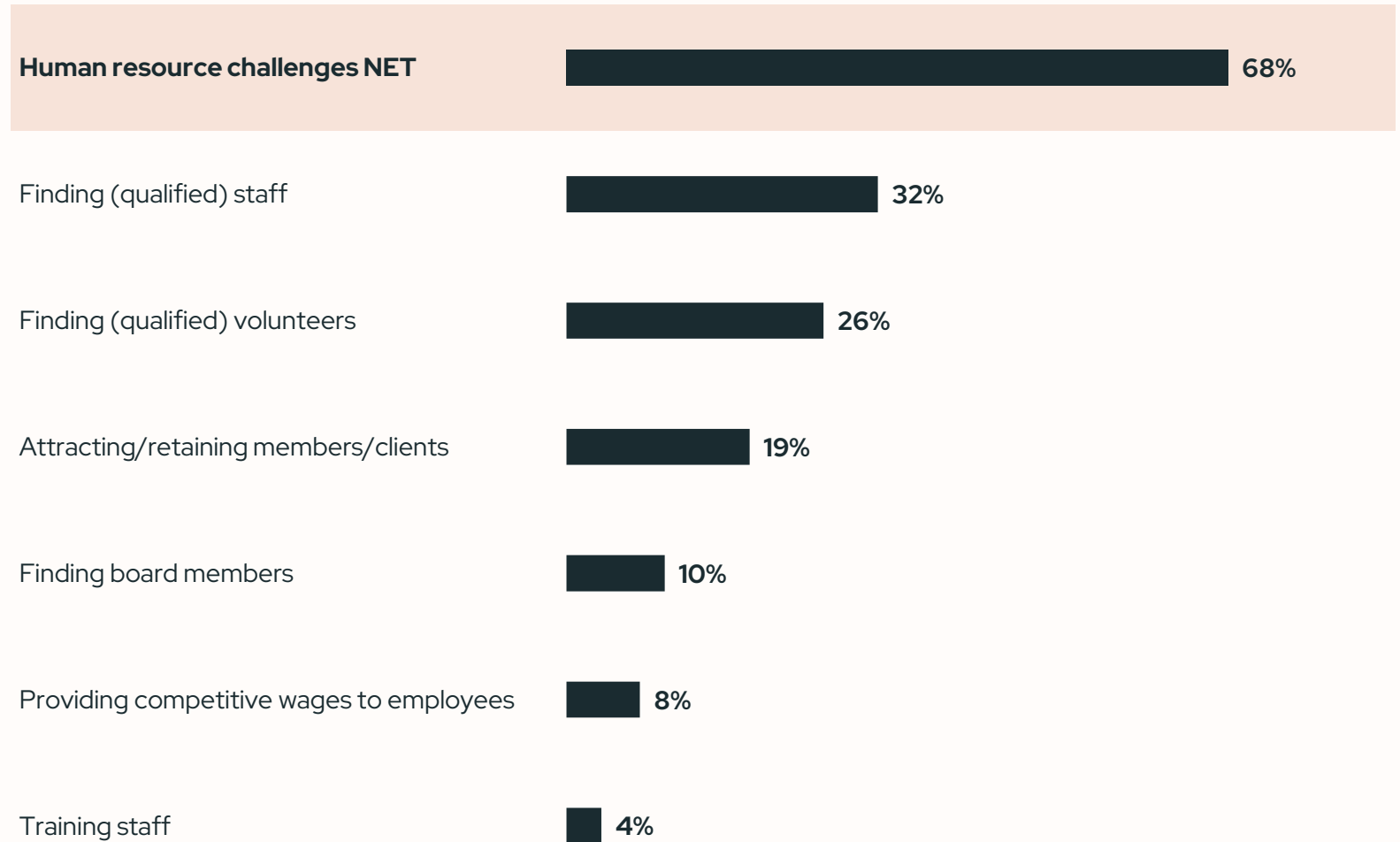
Human resource challenges are widely experienced across the nonprofit sector, reflecting ongoing pressures related to both staffing and volunteer capacity.

The most common challenges centre on **finding qualified staff** and **finding qualified volunteers**, highlighting ongoing difficulties in recruiting both. This suggests organizations are not only struggling to fill paid roles, but also to maintain the volunteer support that many rely on to deliver programs and services.

Additional challenges related to **attracting and retaining members or clients, recruiting board members** and **offering competitive wages** reflect broader pressures around engagement, talent attraction, and organizational capacity.

While these challenges are broadly shared, how they show up varies across organizations. Some face greater difficulty hiring staff, particularly where specific skills are required, while others are more impacted by changes in volunteer availability and long-term commitment.

**Overall, workforce challenges reflect a sector-wide capacity issue, where difficulty finding and keeping both staff and volunteers is limiting organizations' ability to sustain operations and meet community needs.**



11. Broadly speaking, what would you say are the greatest challenges facing your organization? Base: All respondents, n=1168.



# Top-of-Mind Human Resource Challenges by Sector

	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Housing	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
<b>Human resource challenges NET</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>68%</b>
Finding (qualified) staff	31%	23%	26%	24%	33%	13%	8%	42%	38%	56%	17%	38%
Finding (qualified) volunteers	40%	5%	36%	11%	33%	31%	47%	24%	8%	11%	40%	17%
Attracting/retaining members/clients	26%	42%	20%	24%	0%	22%	22%	5%	8%	10%	27%	16%
Finding board members	18%	14%	14%	3%	14%	2%	8%	9%	15%	7%	9%	13%
Providing competitive wages to employees	6%	5%	9%	11%	0%	1%	6%	10%	12%	16%	4%	9%
Training staff	4%	2%	4%	5%	8%	2%	0%	6%	4%	3%	3%	3%

11. Broadly speaking, what would you say are the greatest challenges facing your organization? Base: All respondents, n=1168.

\*Organizations less than 10 responses have not been reported



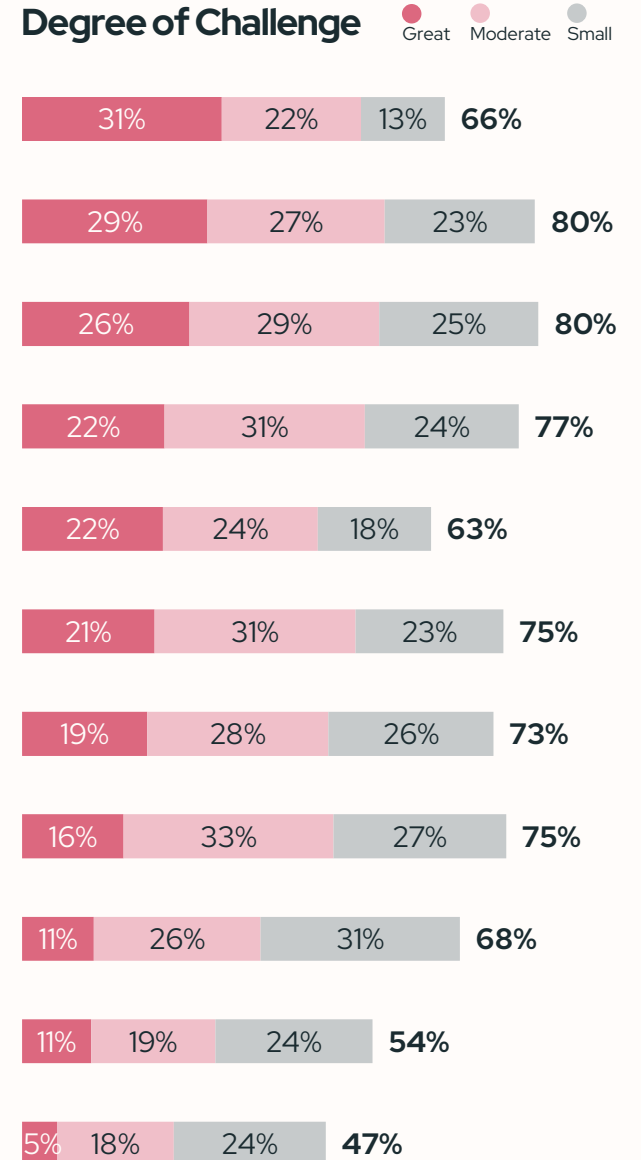
# Key Human Resource Challenges

Workforce challenges are most acute around **volunteer capacity**, with difficulties in finding volunteers and recruiting board members standing out as key pressure points.

At the same time, **providing competitive wages** emerges as a leading challenge, highlighting constraints in attracting staff. **Succession planning** and **volunteer engagement** further point to longer-term sustainability concerns.

In comparison, challenges related to **retaining employees** and **employee engagement** are less commonly identified as major challenges, indicating that pressures are more concentrated on attracting and securing people than on managing existing staff.

q12. How much of a challenge would you say each of the following are within your organization? Base: All respondents, n=1168.



# Key Human Resource Challenges by Sector

(% Large Challenge)

q12. How much of a challenge would you say each of the following are within your organization?  
Base: All respondents, n=1168. Organizations less than 10 responses have not been reported

Providing competitive wages, finding volunteers, and recruiting board members most often emerge as the primary workforce challenges across the sector. While these pressures are widespread, the main challenge varies by organization, with some more focused on **staffing constraints** and others on **volunteer and governance capacity**.

Challenges related to succession planning and finding qualified employees are also noted, while training, retention, and engagement are less commonly identified as the top issue.

**Overall, organizations tend to face different primary workforce constraints, but most are rooted in securing the people needed to operate.**

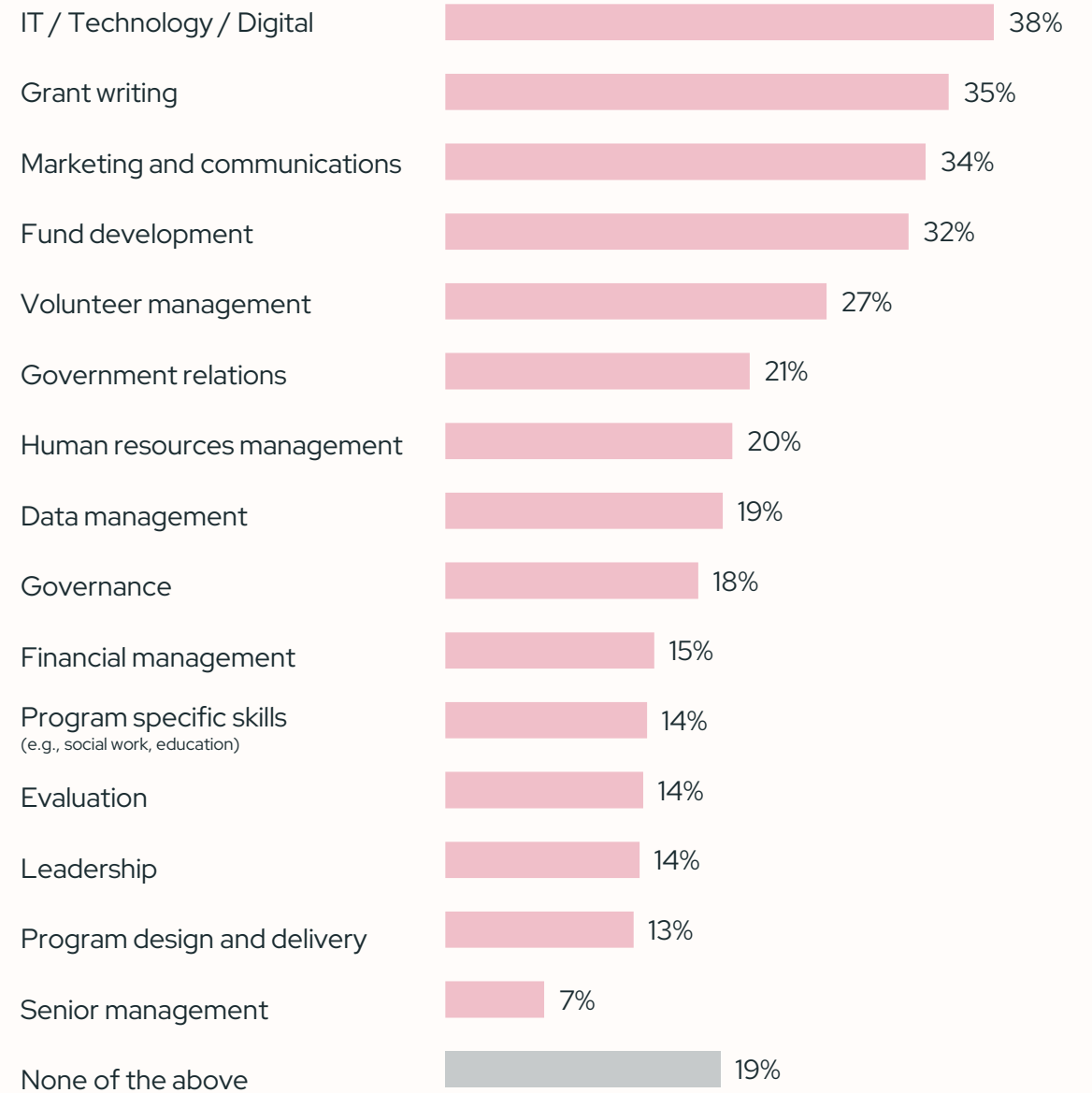
	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Housing	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
Providing competitive wages to employees	36%	19%	27%	27%	44%	22%	19%	35%	42%	48%	14%	30%
Finding volunteers	38%	21%	39%	11%	42%	29%	44%	27%	23%	20%	31%	26%
Finding board members	36%	23%	30%	3%	25%	21%	33%	23%	35%	27%	24%	24%
Succession planning	36%	19%	27%	8%	31%	18%	19%	18%	19%	20%	17%	22%
Finding qualified employees	15%	9%	19%	14%	17%	15%	19%	23%	38%	45%	13%	14%
Volunteer engagement	21%	21%	27%	8%	25%	21%	33%	19%	19%	17%	26%	16%
Retaining volunteers	23%	16%	26%	8%	31%	17%	31%	23%	19%	13%	22%	16%
Gaps in knowledge or expertise in things like IT, marketing, accounting, HR, etc.	21%	9%	19%	8%	28%	10%	19%	19%	19%	19%	9%	15%
Providing training or mentoring to employees or volunteers	12%	14%	20%	5%	17%	9%	3%	15%	12%	11%	10%	10%
Retaining employees	8%	5%	6%	0%	8%	4%	3%	15%	8%	25%	5%	9%
Employee engagement	4%	5%	1%	3%	6%	4%	6%	9%	8%	10%	2%	7%



# Skills and Expertise Gaps

Organizations most commonly report gaps in **IT and digital skills**, followed by **grant writing, marketing and communications**, and **fund development**, pointing to challenges in funding, visibility, and digital capacity.

Gaps in **volunteer management** and **government relations** further reflect pressures in coordination and external engagement.



13. In which of the following areas does your organization currently lack sufficient staff skills or expertise? Base: All respondents, n=1168.



# Skills and Expertise Gaps by Sector

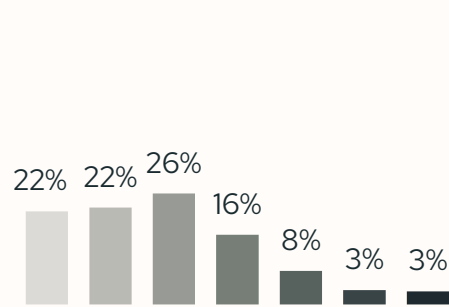
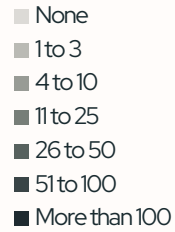
13. In which of the following areas does your organization currently lack sufficient staff skills or expertise? Base: All respondents, n=1168.  
\*Organizations less than 10 responses have not been reported

	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Housing	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
IT / Technology / Digital	47%	33%	37%	35%	47%	29%	39%	34%	35%	41%	31%	47%
Grant writing	36%	19%	40%	22%	47%	29%	42%	31%	54%	31%	41%	36%
Marketing and communications	41%	33%	40%	22%	28%	28%	28%	29%	23%	30%	37%	36%
Fund development	50%	16%	33%	19%	44%	22%	39%	30%	35%	31%	27%	33%
Volunteer management	30%	16%	36%	5%	33%	23%	42%	23%	19%	23%	34%	29%
Government relations	25%	19%	20%	30%	39%	21%	25%	28%	31%	19%	16%	17%
Human resources management	21%	12%	20%	19%	36%	18%	22%	18%	8%	30%	11%	16%
Data management	31%	21%	24%	14%	31%	11%	8%	13%	15%	22%	9%	26%
Governance	30%	21%	19%	14%	22%	15%	17%	14%	8%	16%	16%	13%
Financial management	22%	16%	13%	14%	17%	14%	14%	11%	8%	14%	11%	14%
Program specific skills (e.g., social work, education)	13%	12%	14%	8%	14%	9%	17%	17%	23%	25%	6%	11%
Evaluation	20%	16%	16%	8%	19%	16%	11%	3%	12%	19%	7%	13%
Leadership	15%	12%	16%	8%	6%	14%	8%	9%	4%	18%	14%	14%
Program design and delivery	18%	16%	19%	5%	6%	14%	14%	6%	12%	15%	12%	13%
Senior management	7%	5%	10%	8%	6%	5%	3%	5%	4%	11%	3%	9%
None of the above	13%	21%	19%	35%	11%	29%	22%	23%	19%	17%	23%	14%

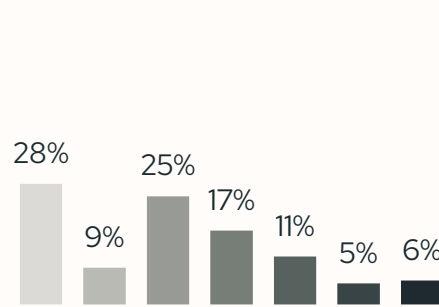


# Workforce Size and Gender Representation

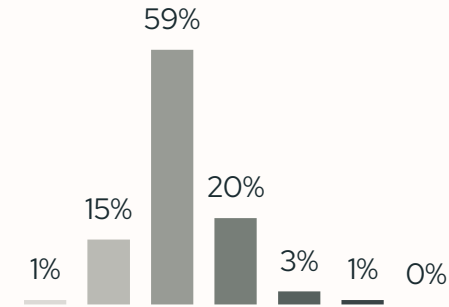
## Unique Count per Year



Employees

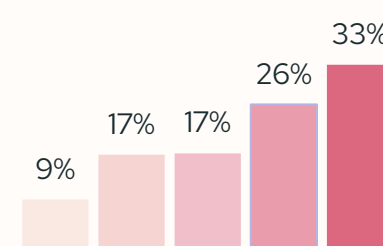
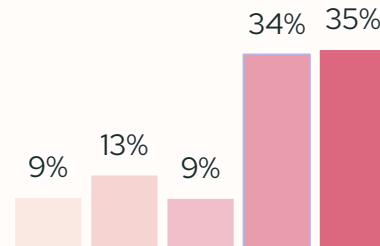
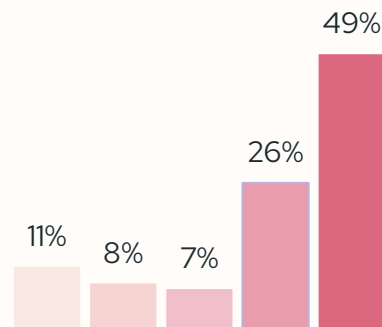
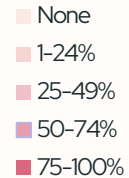


Volunteers



Board of Directors

## Female Representation



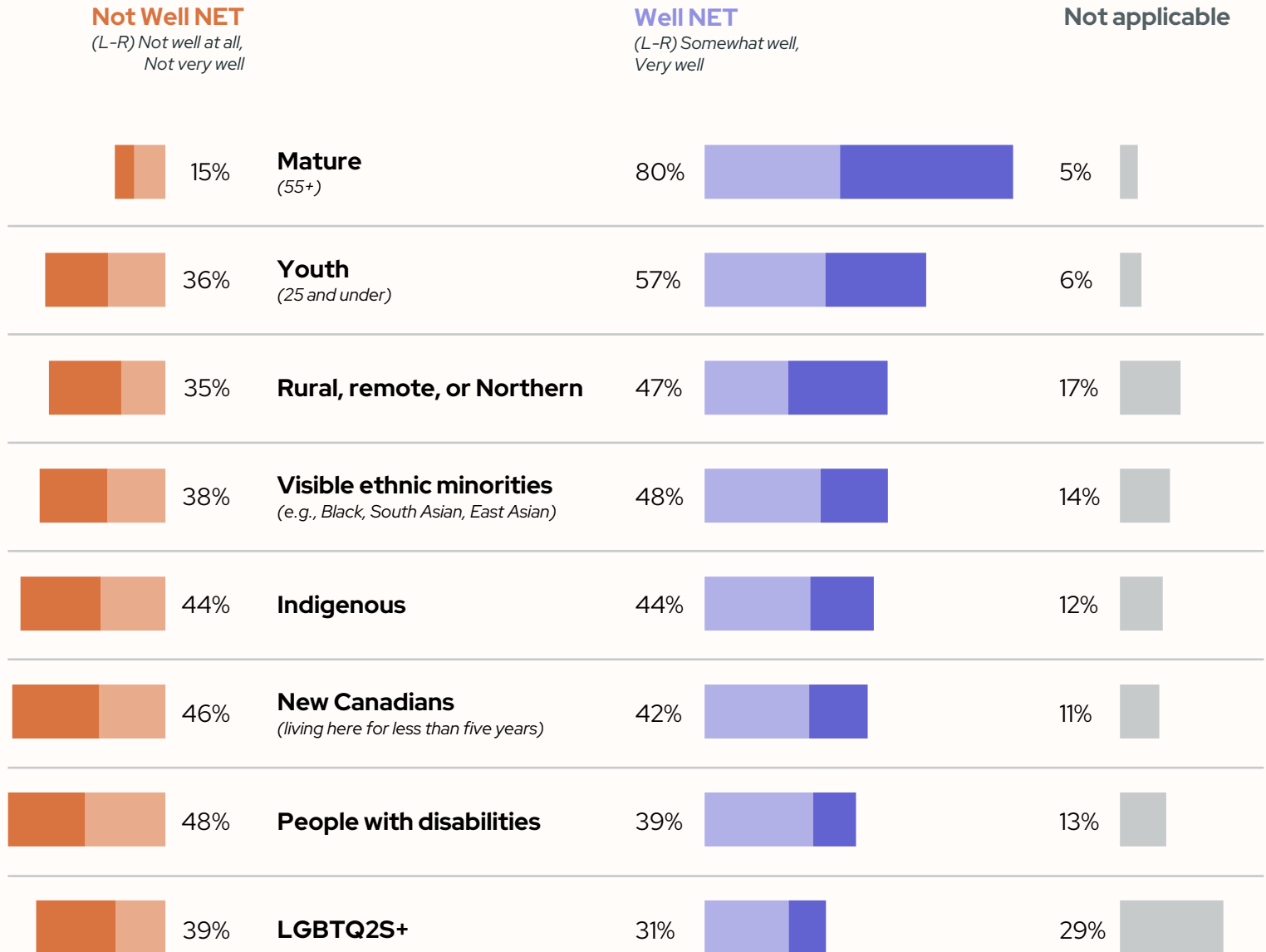
14. How many people does your organization typically have in the following categories within a one year period? Please make your best estimate and answer all questions based on your Saskatchewan operation only. Base: All respondents that provided a number (outliers removed and MUSH organizations removed), n=1,052.

14.1. About what percentage of people in each of the following groups identify as female in your organization? Base: Organizations with paid staff, n=880; volunteers, n=717; and board of directors, n=113.



# Representation of Diverse Groups

Older adults (55+) are perceived to be the most well-represented minority group within nonprofit organizations, while people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQ2S+ groups are thought to be underrepresented.



18.1. How well do you feel each of the following minority groups are represented within your organization? Base: All respondents, n=1168.



# Representation of Diverse Groups by Sector

(%WellNET)

	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Housing	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
<b>Mature (55+)</b>	88%	77%	80%	65%	86%	86%	83%	85%	96%	72%	73%	78%
<b>Rural, remote, or Northern</b>	46%	53%	51%	38%	64%	40%	42%	51%	42%	43%	49%	52%
<b>Youth (25 and under)</b>	54%	37%	54%	57%	69%	54%	39%	48%	19%	70%	71%	48%
<b>Visible ethnic minorities (e.g., Black, South Asian, East Asian)</b>	38%	37%	46%	51%	47%	61%	39%	51%	54%	63%	32%	49%
<b>People with disabilities</b>	30%	26%	44%	27%	39%	48%	42%	44%	38%	50%	32%	43%
<b>Indigenous</b>	39%	37%	47%	43%	47%	35%	25%	48%	50%	50%	43%	48%
<b>New Canadians (living here for less than five years)</b>	39%	33%	43%	46%	36%	42%	33%	45%	38%	58%	32%	40%
<b>LGBTQ2S+</b>	44%	23%	30%	32%	56%	17%	17%	32%	15%	36%	24%	30%

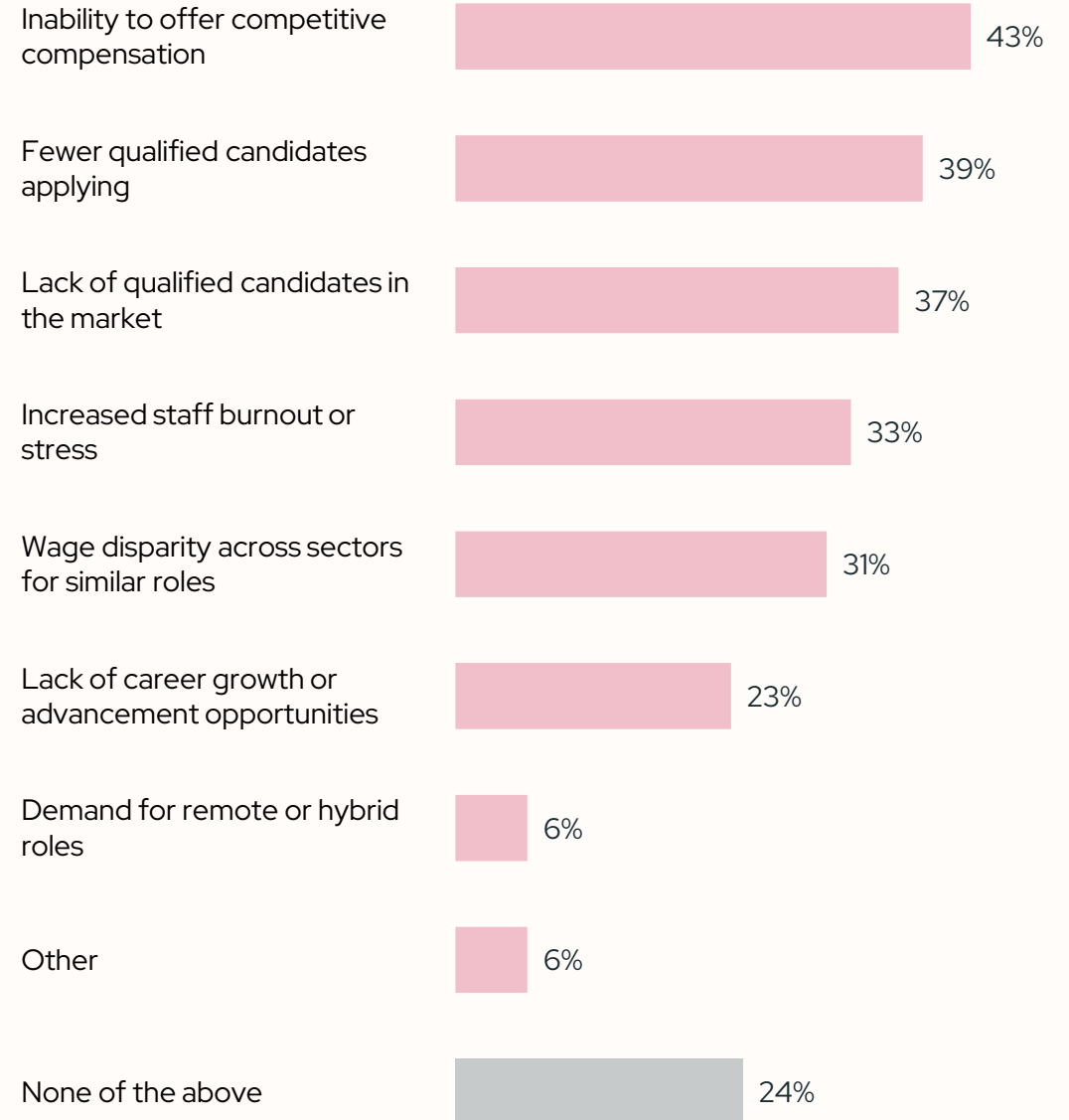
18.1. How well do you feel each of the following minority groups are represented within your organization? Base: All respondents, n=1168.

\*Organizations less than 10 responses have not been reported



# Challenges affecting the recruitment and retention of staff

Nonprofits face significant recruitment and retention challenges, particularly the inability to offer competitive compensation and a shortage of qualified candidates. Burnout, wage disparities across sectors, and limited career advancement opportunities further compound staffing difficulties across the sector.



20.1. If any, which of the following challenges are currently affecting your organization's ability to recruit or retain staff? Base: Organizations with paid staff, n=880.



# Staff Recruitment and Retention Challenges by Sector

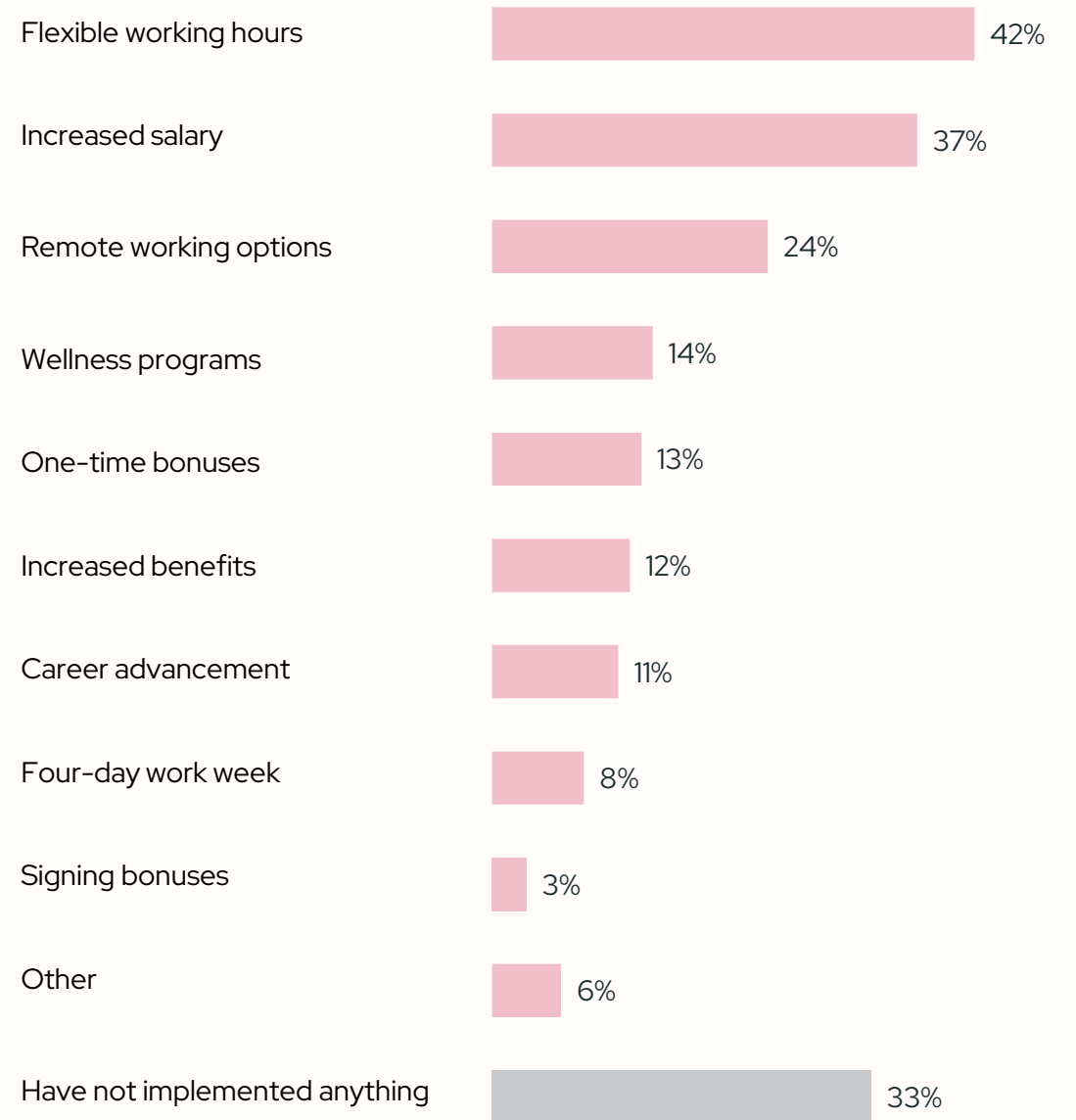
	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Housing	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
Inability to offer competitive compensation	48%	31%	44%	35%	64%	26%	45%	48%	32%	52%	34%	42%
Lack of qualified candidates in the market	28%	11%	22%	29%	28%	36%	40%	44%	52%	56%	25%	33%
Fewer qualified candidates applying	26%	11%	36%	35%	44%	33%	35%	55%	52%	61%	28%	26%
Increased staff burnout or stress	27%	25%	20%	35%	44%	15%	20%	48%	12%	54%	22%	32%
Wage disparity across sectors for similar roles	24%	17%	42%	23%	36%	15%	40%	44%	20%	46%	18%	33%
Lack of career growth or advancement opportunities	28%	25%	24%	23%	36%	9%	35%	25%	16%	27%	15%	23%
Demand for remote or hybrid roles	2%	6%	4%	13%	12%	2%	0%	11%	12%	8%	0%	10%
Other	9%	3%	4%	10%	8%	9%	5%	2%	8%	5%	3%	16%
None of the above	22%	44%	36%	26%	16%	36%	20%	17%	16%	9%	39%	30%

20.1. If any, which of the following challenges are currently affecting your organization's ability to recruit or retain staff? Base: Organizations with paid staff, n=880. \*Organizations less than 10 responses have not been reported



# Strategies implemented to recruit and retain staff

Flexible hours and salary increases are the most common retention strategies, while about one-third of organizations have not implemented any new measures.



15.1. Has your organization introduced any of the following strategies to recruit and retain staff? Base: Organizations with paid staff, n=880.



# Staff Recruitment and Retention Strategies by Sector

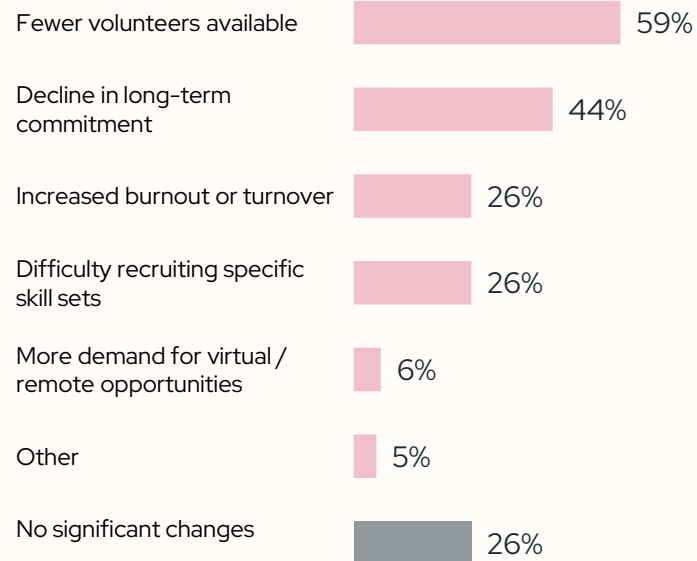
	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Housing	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
<b>Flexible working hours</b>	48%	56%	29%	29%	76%	41%	70%	41%	36%	40%	37%	45%
<b>Increased salary</b>	33%	42%	29%	45%	40%	20%	45%	41%	52%	46%	31%	35%
<b>Remote working options</b>	32%	36%	18%	32%	60%	13%	25%	19%	12%	16%	21%	35%
<b>Wellness programs</b>	10%	11%	11%	19%	12%	6%	20%	14%	16%	20%	9%	20%
<b>One-time bonuses</b>	11%	11%	9%	16%	20%	5%	10%	11%	24%	21%	11%	9%
<b>Increased benefits</b>	8%	14%	9%	23%	8%	8%	15%	22%	20%	17%	6%	9%
<b>Career advancement</b>	7%	8%	7%	13%	16%	3%	20%	13%	8%	19%	8%	10%
<b>Four-day work week</b>	9%	11%	2%	13%	12%	2%	5%	9%	4%	13%	1%	12%
<b>Signing bonuses</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	3%	0%	7%	2%	4%
<b>Others</b>	5%	8%	7%	0%	4%	8%	15%	6%	0%	6%	4%	9%
<b>Have not implemented anything</b>	35%	31%	44%	39%	16%	52%	15%	30%	20%	24%	46%	28%

15.1. Has your organization introduced any of the following strategies to recruit and retain staff? Base: Organizations with paid staff, n=880.



# Shifts in volunteer engagement over the past three years

Most nonprofits report having fewer volunteers available and a noticeable decline in long-term commitment. Increased burnout and difficulty recruiting specific skill sets have also emerged as growing challenges in volunteer engagement.



20.2. If any, which of the following shifts in volunteer engagement have you observed within the past three years? Base: Organizations who have volunteers, n=717.

# Offering Remote Volunteering Roles

## Types of tasks offered remotely

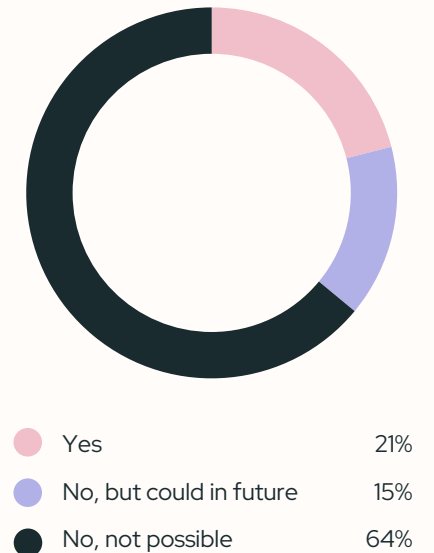


Most nonprofits are unable to offer remote volunteer opportunities due to the nature of their work, though some indicate potential to do so in the future. Among those offering virtual roles, volunteers most often support governance, communications, program delivery, and administrative functions.

20.3. Do you currently offer virtual or remote volunteer opportunities? Base: Organizations who have volunteers, n=717.

20.4. What types of tasks or duties do you offer to virtual or remote volunteers? Base: Organizations who offer virtual or remote volunteer opportunities excl. "Don't know", n=147.

## Offering remote opportunities



# Shifts in Volunteer Engagement by Sector

	Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture	Business, Professional Associations and Unions	Community Development	Education and Research	Environment	Faith Group	Grant making, Fundraising and Volunteerism	Health	Social Services	Sport and Recreation	Other
<b>Fewer volunteers available</b>	65%	36%	52%	58%	42%	59%	68%	51%	50%	70%	49%
<b>Decline in long-term commitment</b>	46%	27%	44%	50%	42%	39%	52%	42%	48%	42%	51%
<b>Increased burnout or turnover</b>	27%	18%	33%	25%	39%	30%	32%	20%	14%	35%	18%
<b>Difficulty recruiting specific skill sets</b>	25%	18%	42%	17%	35%	23%	8%	19%	31%	23%	29%
<b>More demand for virtual / remote opportunities</b>	5%	5%	13%	0%	16%	3%	4%	3%	6%	5%	2%
<b>Other</b>	3%	0%	4%	0%	16%	8%	8%	2%	4%	5%	9%
<b>No significant changes</b>	22%	50%	27%	25%	23%	27%	16%	29%	33%	23%	22%

20.2. If any, which of the following shifts in volunteer engagement have you observed within the past three years? Base: Organizations who have volunteers, n=717.

\*Organizations less than 10 responses have not been reported

