

Navigating COVID-19 Together

Emerging Needs of PEI's Immigrant Population

October 2020

Survey results from 3 and 5-months post COVID-19 lock-down

Survey June 2020
265 qualifying participants

Survey August 2020
236 qualifying participants

Focus Group and Consultations (Sept – Nov 2020)



Thank you for your help distributing surveys!



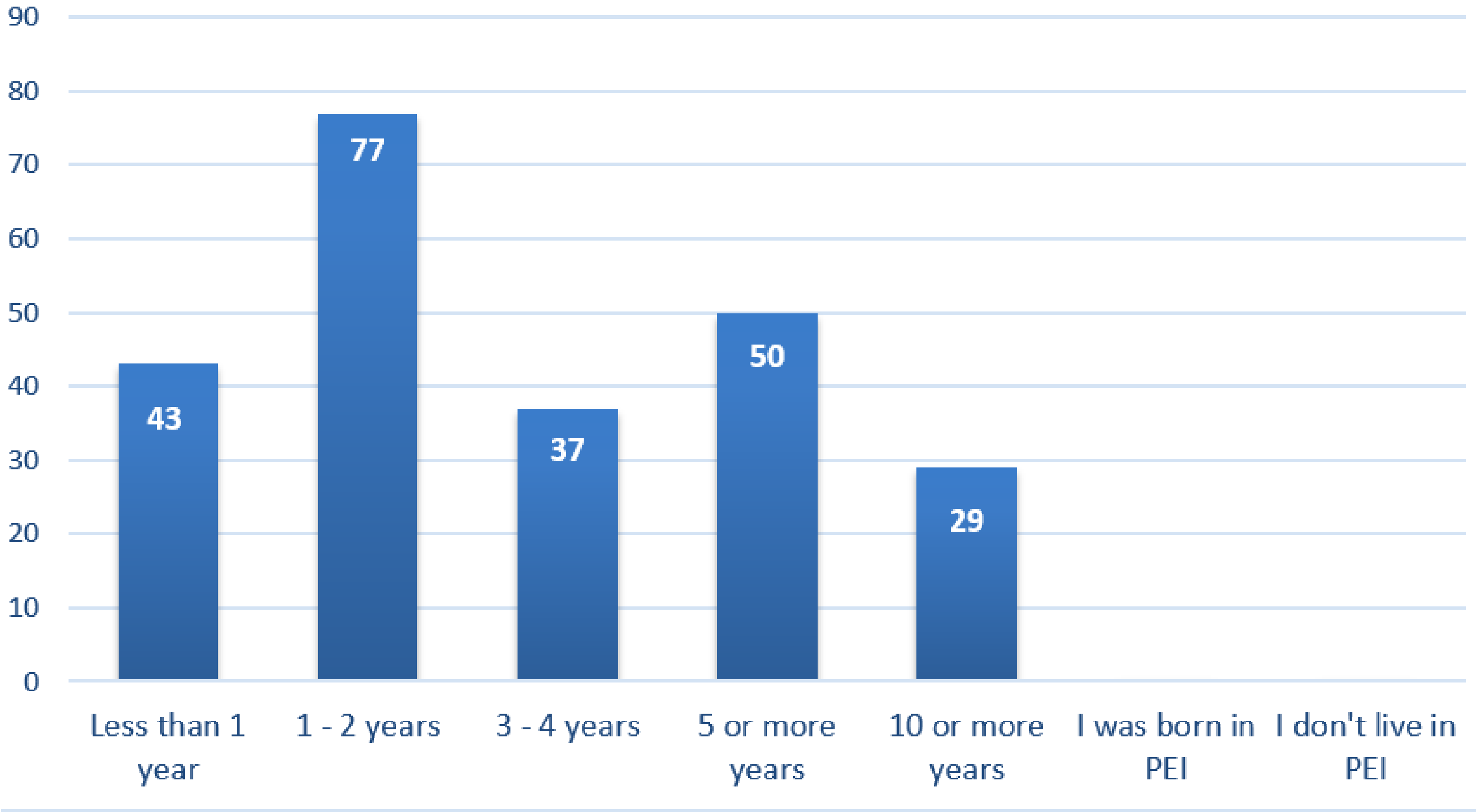
PEI's Cultural Leaders, Early COVID-19

Missing from Picture



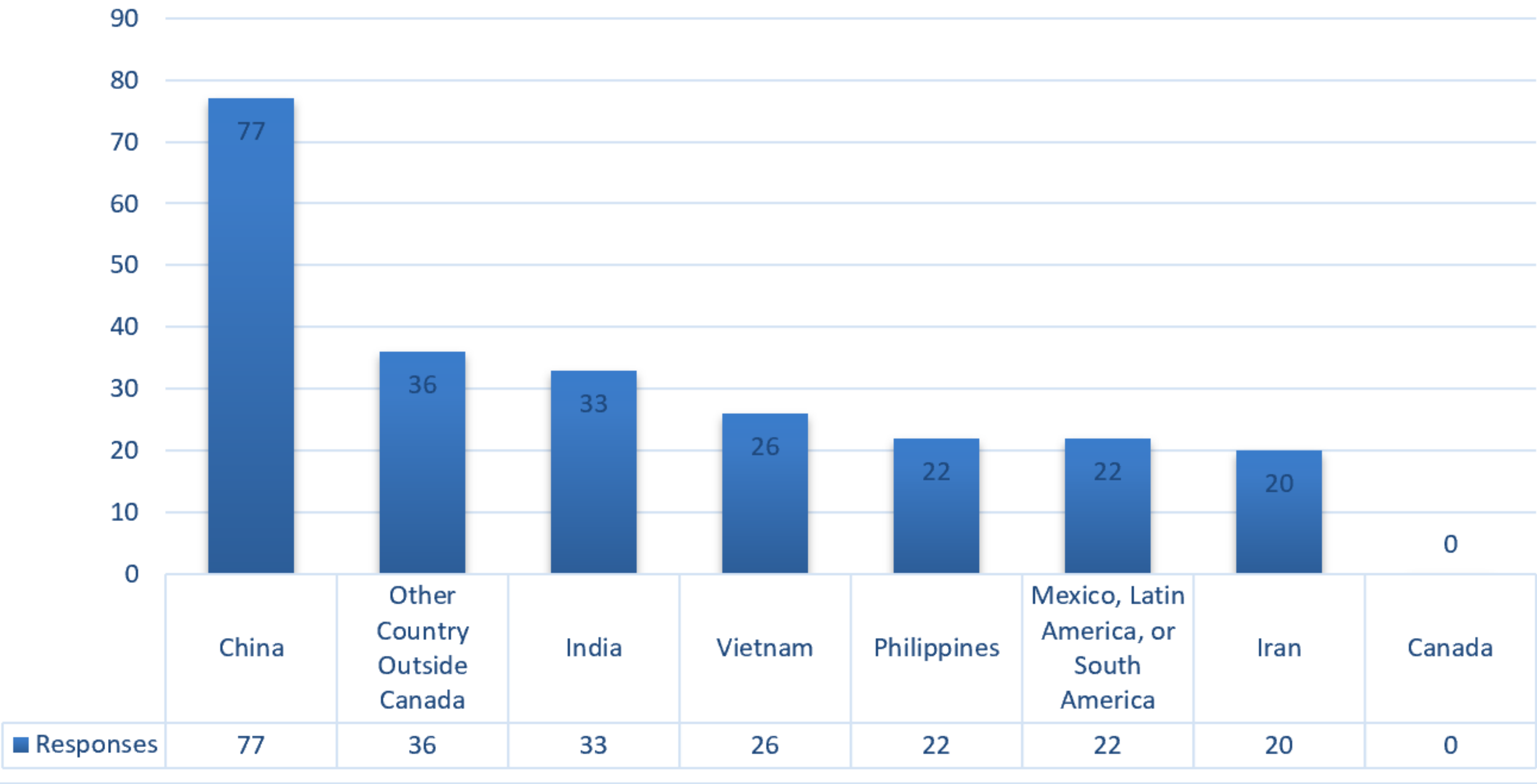
August 2020

How long have you lived in PEI?



August 2020

What is your country of birth?



Baseline Challenges: 5-months vs. 3-months post lock-down

Please select your 3 concerns or challenges		Aug 2020	June 2020	
1	Missing family and friends overseas	45.76%	40.00%	↑
2	Paying mortgage, rent, or groceries	31.36%	36.23%	↓
3	Finding or keeping a job	29.24%	33.21%	↓
4	Health or medical concerns	27.12%	36.23%	↓
5	Maintaining healthy relationships	25.00%	24.91%	↑
6	Children not doing well without social connection and structure of school (K-12)	23.73%	26.79%	↓
7	Challenges with online school (K-12)	13.98%	15.09%	↓
7	Viability of my business coming back online	13.98%	17.36%	↓
8	Learning English	13.14%	10.57%	↑
9	Mental health	11.86%	15.47%	↓
10	Concern for International Students (College or University)	9.32%	7.55%	↑
	Access to daycare (infant to preschool)	8.05%	7.55%	↑
	Finding a place to live	7.63%	6.42%	↑
	Other (please specify)*	6.78%	11.32%	↓
	Discrimination	6.36%	8.30%	↓

*Other Concerns (please specify): immigration status expiring, business, travel, hobbies/sports, job search, mental health

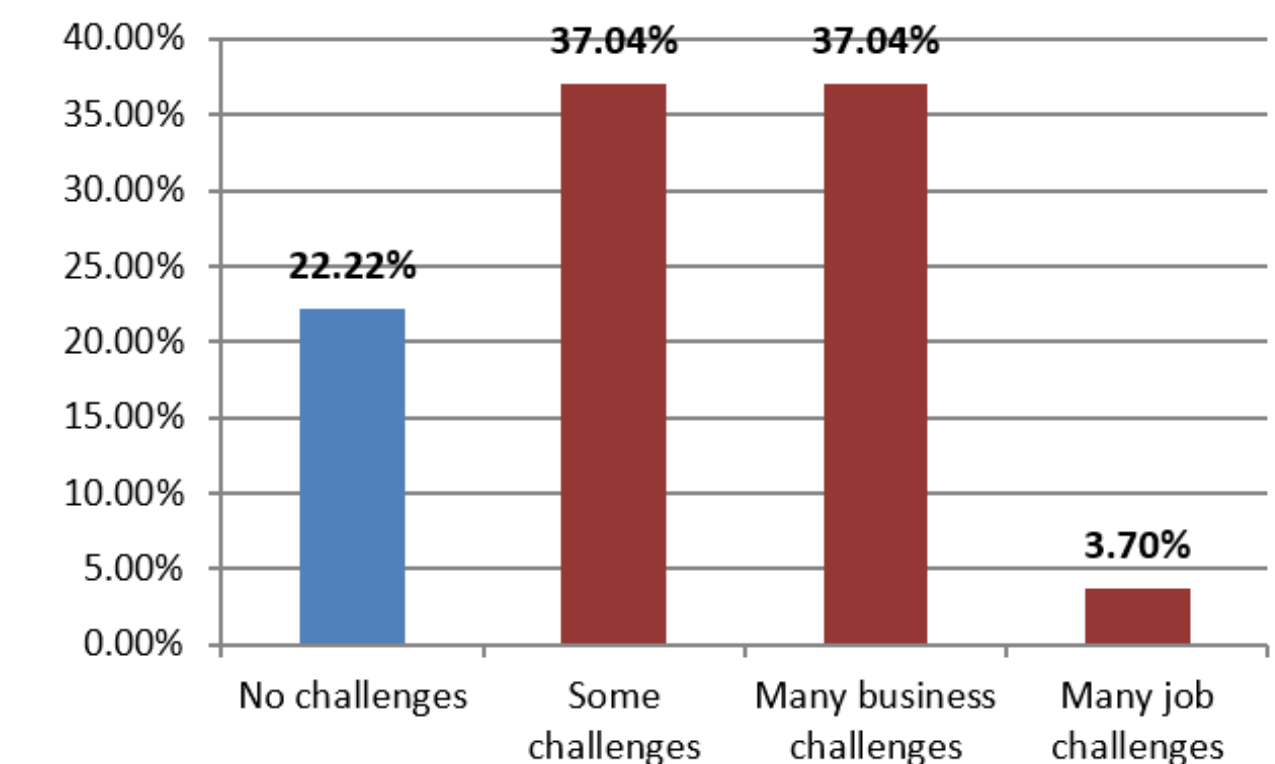
Needs Vary Between Cultural Groups and Circumstances

Country A

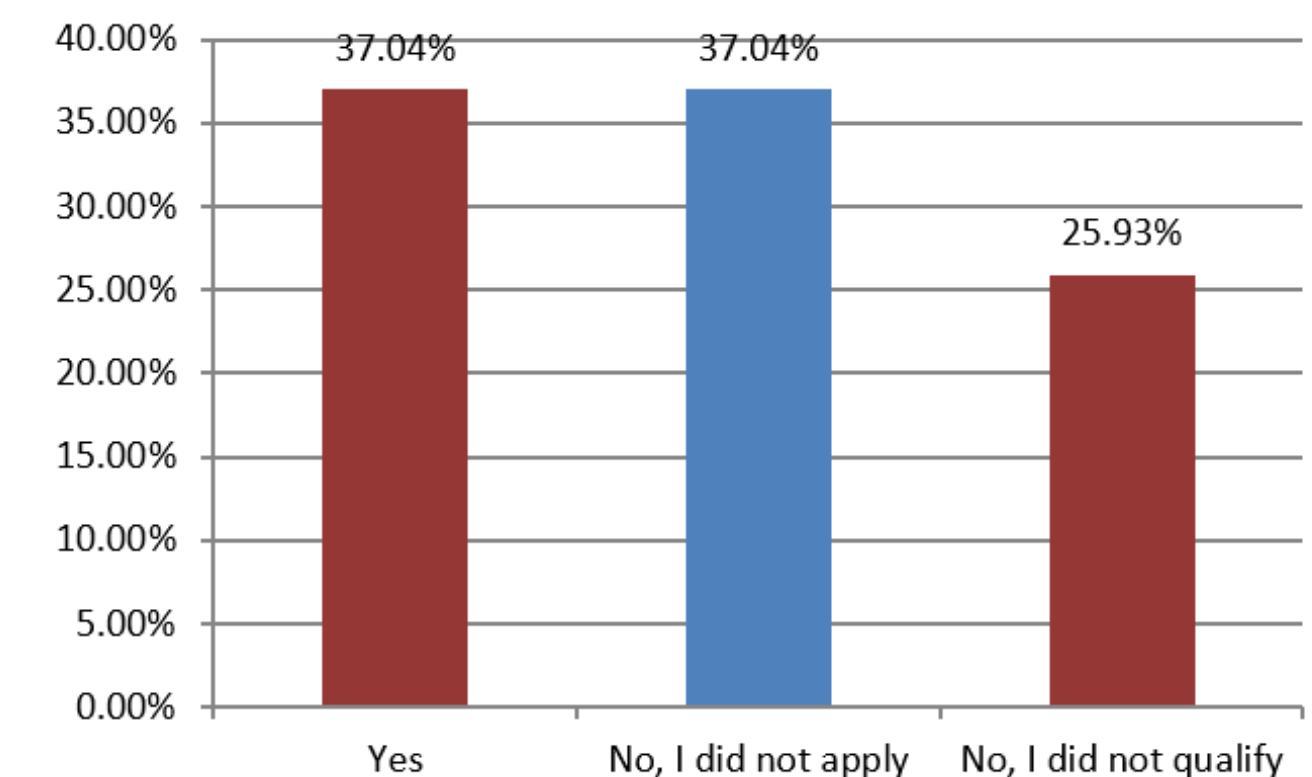
Please select your 3 concerns or challenges

Answer Choices		Aug-20	Jun-20
1 Children not doing well without social connection and structure of school (K-12)	↑	48.15%	43.24%
2 Paying mortgage, rent, or groceries	↑	37.04%	29.73%
2 Missing family and friends overseas	↑	37.04%	25.68%
3 Finding or keeping a job	↓	29.63%	36.49%
3 Maintaining healthy relationships	↑	29.63%	21.62%
3 Health or medical concerns	↓	29.63%	45.95%
4 Learning English	↑	22.22%	20.27%
Finding a place to live	↑	11.11%	2.70%
Viability of my business coming back online	↓	11.11%	22.97%
Challenges with online school (K-12)	↓	11.11%	18.92%
Concern for International Students (College or University)	↑	11.11%	2.70%
Access to daycare (infant to preschool)	↑	3.70%	1.35%
Other (please specify)	↑	3.70%	2.70%
Discrimination	↓	0.00%	5.41%
Mental health	↓	0.00%	17.57%

During Covid-19, have you experienced challenges with your business or finding a job? If yes, please describe the challenge.



Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?

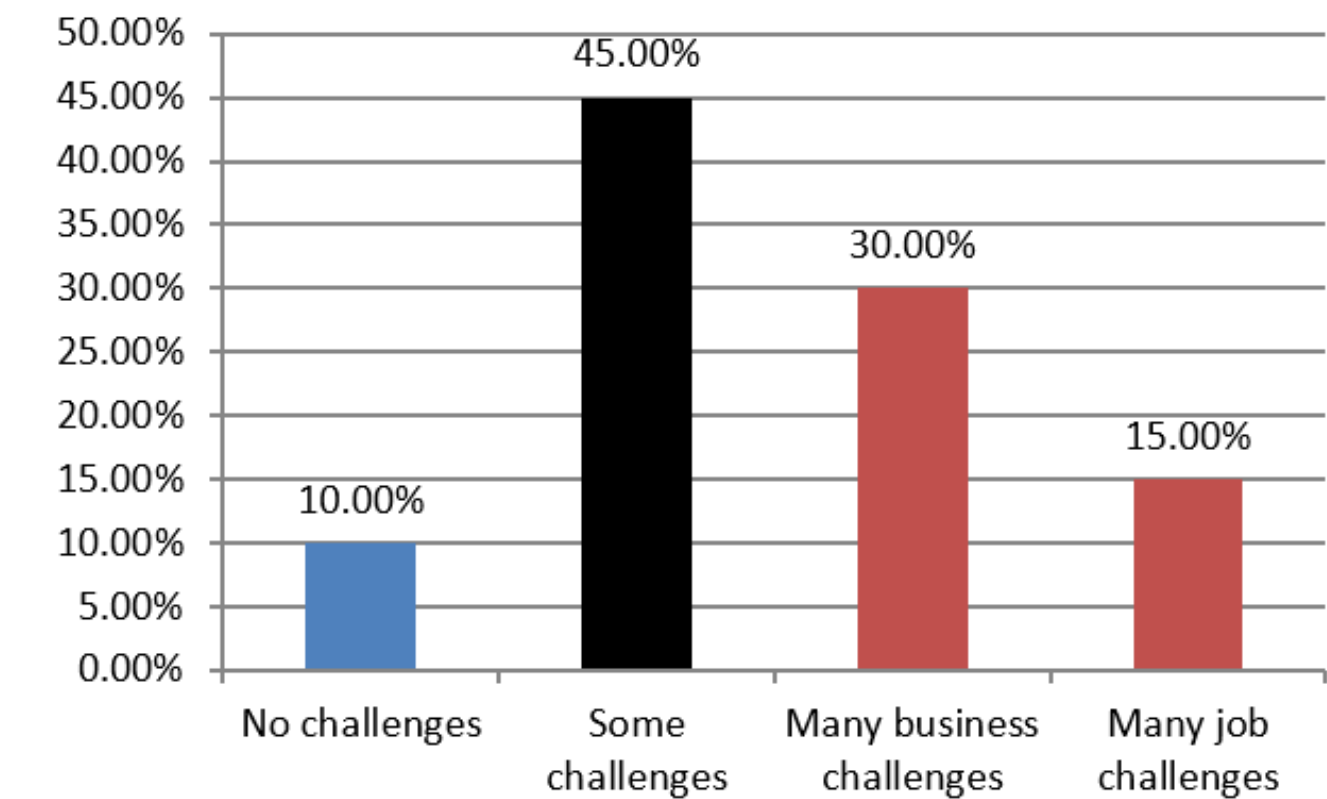


Country B

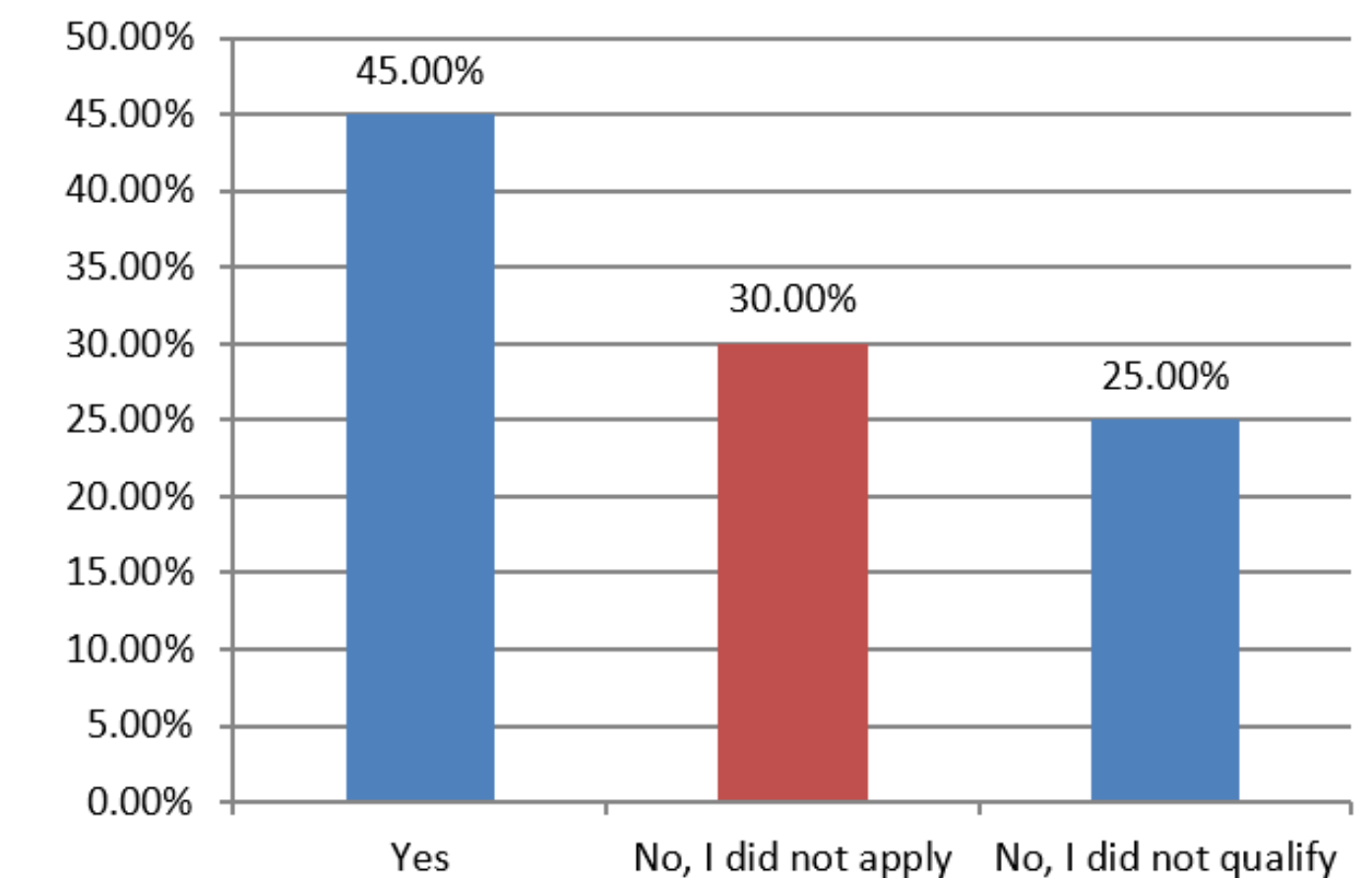
Please select your 3 concerns or challenges

	Answer Choices		Aug-20	Jun-20
1	Finding or keeping a job	↑	45.00%	38.89%
2	Paying mortgage, rent, or groceries	↑	35.00%	27.78%
3	Missing family and friends overseas	↓	30.00%	55.56%
4	Health or medical concerns	↓	25.00%	38.89%
4	Maintaining healthy relationships	↓	25.00%	27.78%
5	Children not doing well without social connection and structure of school (K-12)	↑	20.00%	16.67%
5	Concern for International Students (College or University)	↓	20.00%	38.89%
	Learning English	↓	15.00%	22.22%
	Finding a place to live	↓	10.00%	27.78%
	Mental health	↓	10.00%	11.11%
	Other (please specify)	↑	10.00%	0.00%
	Viability of my business coming back online	↑	10.00%	5.56%
	Access to daycare (infant to preschool)	↓	0.00%	5.56%
	Challenges with online school (K-12)	↓	0.00%	5.56%
	Discrimination	↓	0.00%	16.67%

During Covid-19, have you experienced challenges with your business or finding a job? If yes, please describe the challenge.



Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?



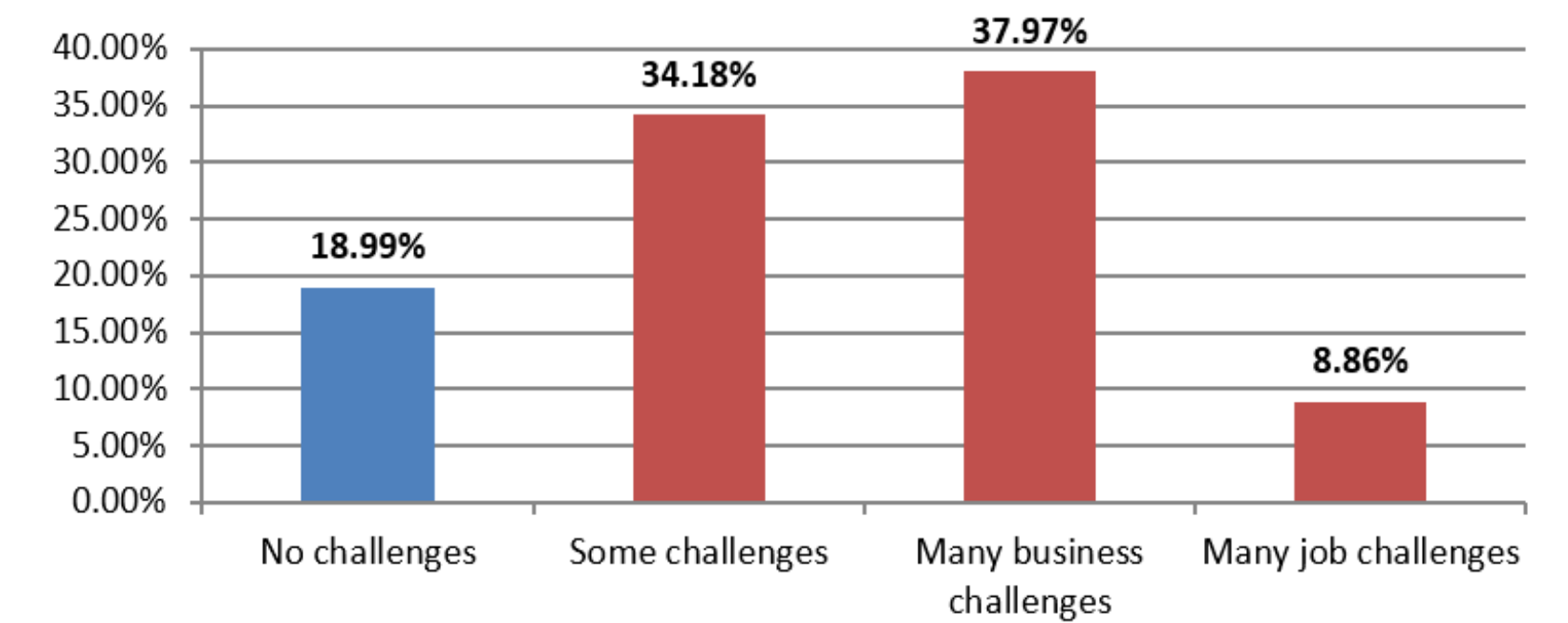
Country C

Please select your 3 concerns or challenges

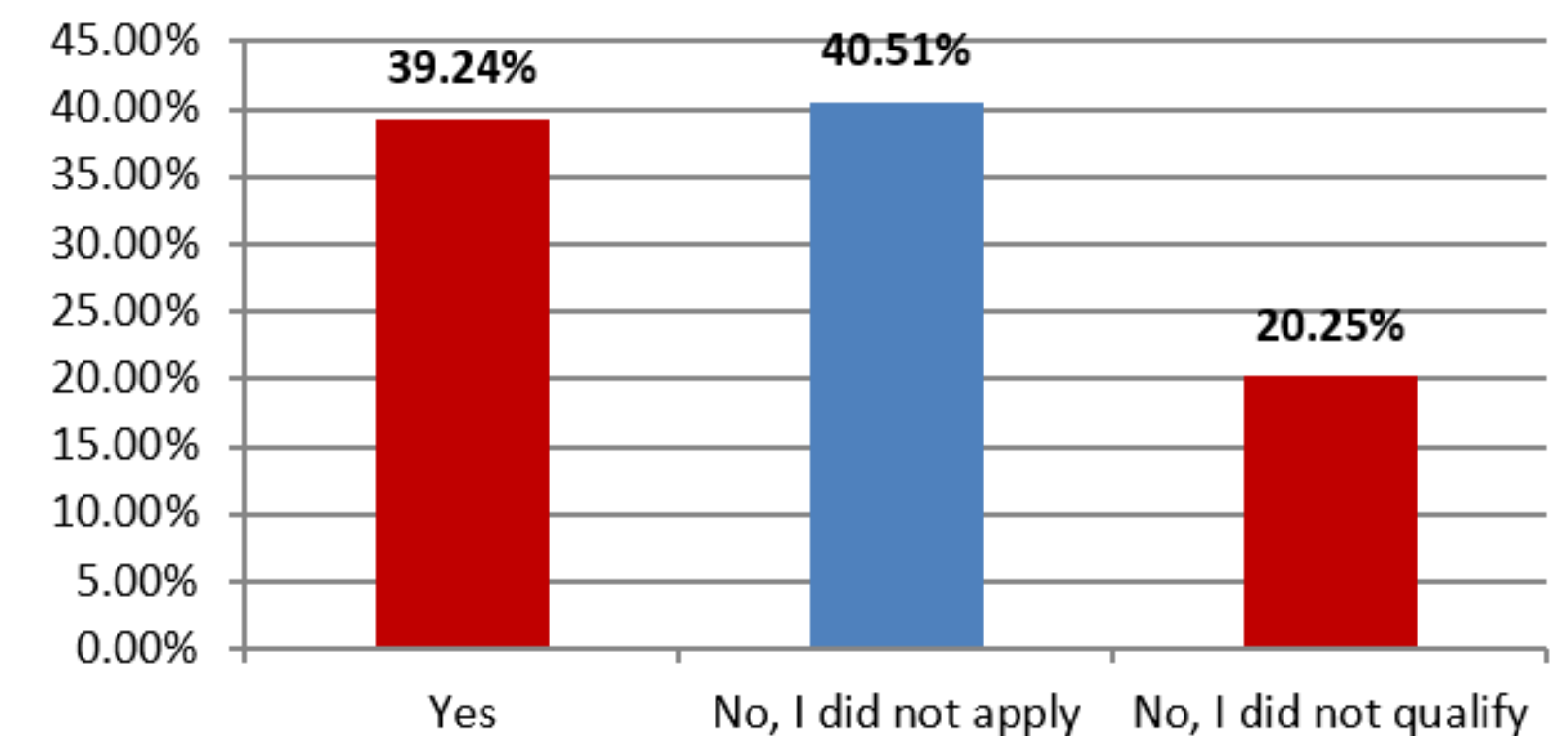
Answer Choices		20-Aug	20-Jun
1 Missing family and friends overseas	↑	45.57%	35.00%
2 Finding or keeping a job	↑	34.18%	33.33%
3 Children not doing well without social connection and structure of school (K-12)	↑	32.91%	25.00%
4 Health or medical concerns	↑	30.38%	28.33%
5 Paying mortgage, rent, or groceries	↓	26.58%	30.00%
6 Viability of my business coming back online	↑	25.32%	25.00%
7 Learning English	↑	20.25%	11.67%
8 Maintaining healthy relationships	↓	17.72%	20.00%
9 Challenges with online school (K-12)	↑	13.92%	11.67%
10 Discrimination	↓	8.86%	16.67%
Mental health	↓	7.59%	20.00%
Concern for International Students (College or University)	↑	6.33%	3.33%
*Other (please specify)	↓	3.80%	16.67%
Access to daycare (infant to preschool)	↓	2.53%	6.67%
Finding a place to live	↑	1.27%	0.00%

*Other (please specify): challenges with business; hard to hire someone

During Covid-19, have you experienced challenges with your business or finding a job? If yes, please describe the challenge.



Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?



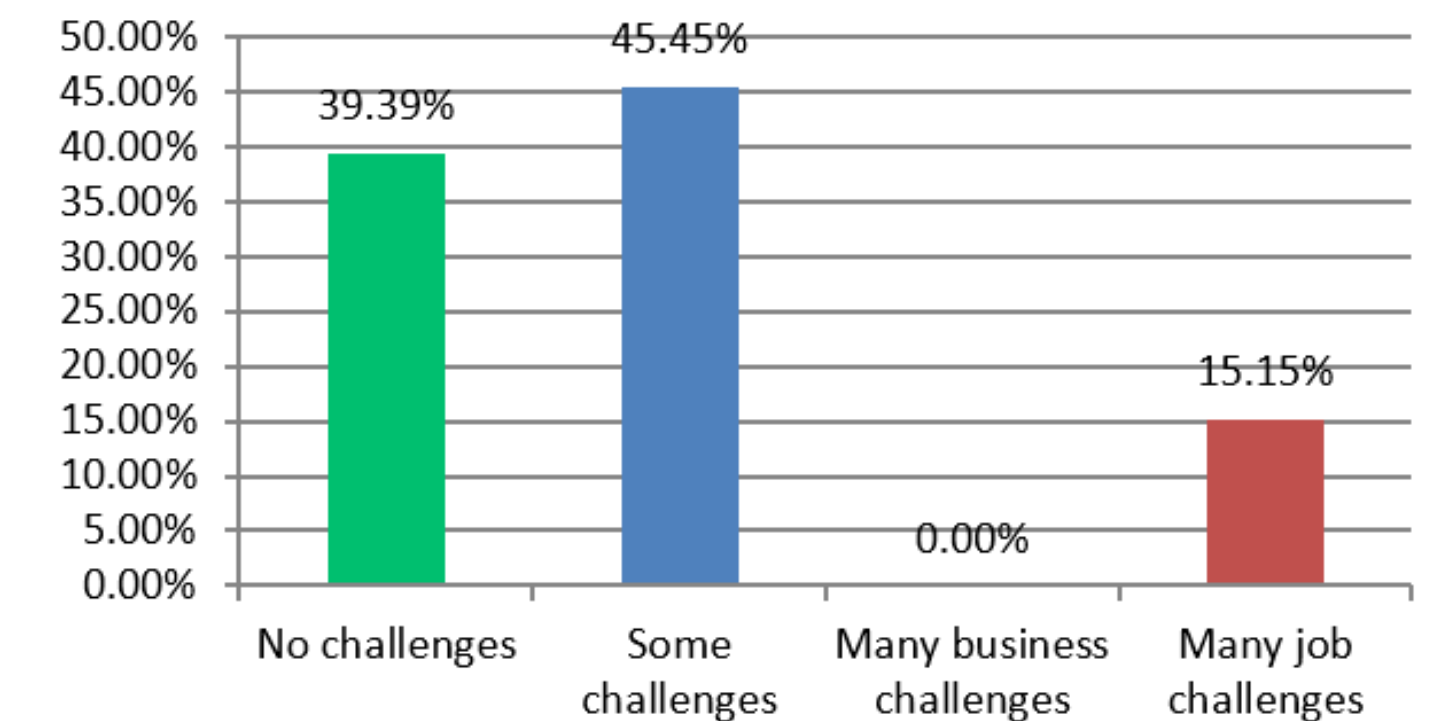
Country D

Please select your 3 concerns or challenges

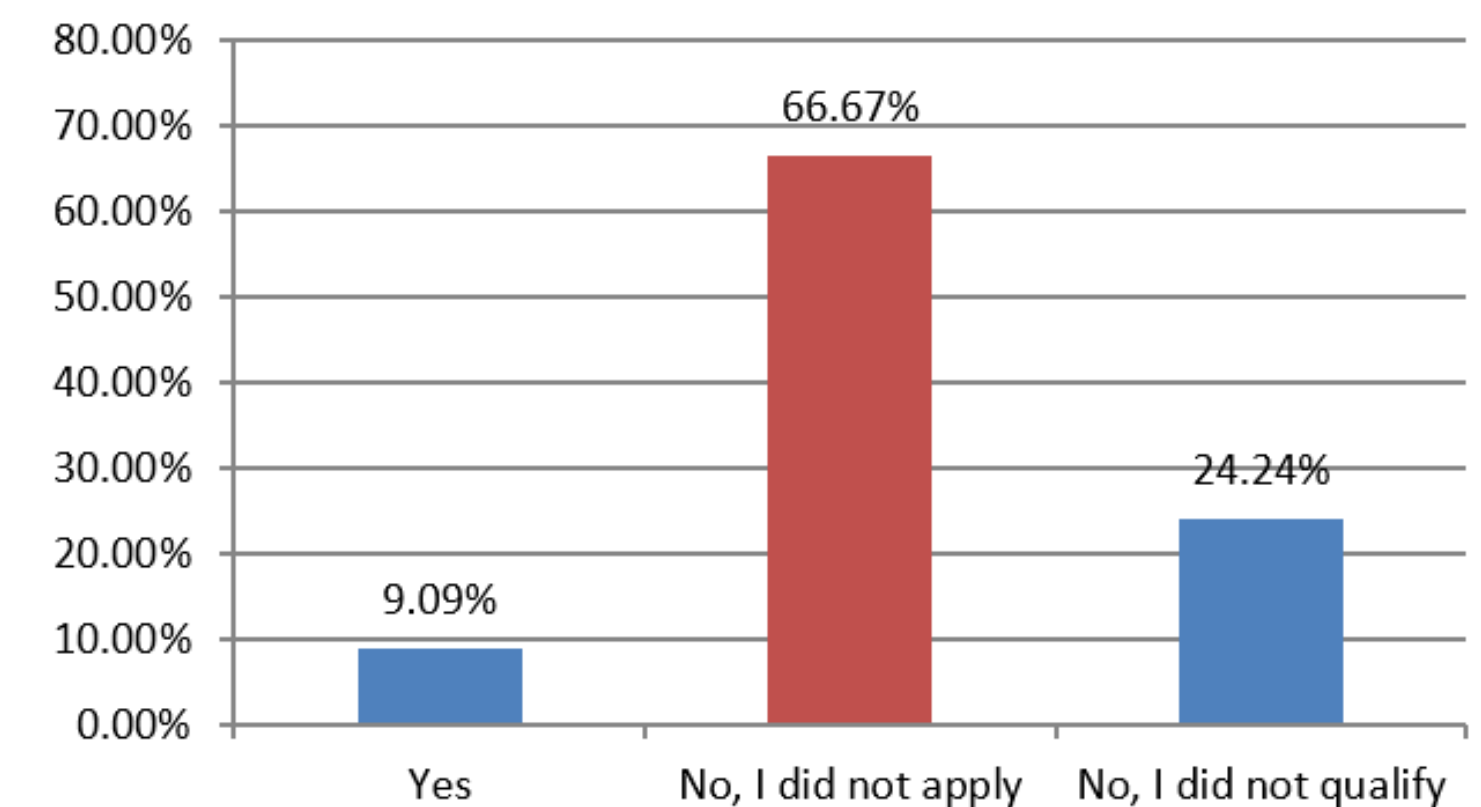
		Aug-20	Jun-20
1	Missing family and friends overseas	↑ 54.55%	50.00%
2	Maintaining healthy relationships	↓ 36.36%	37.04%
3	Paying mortgage, rent, or groceries	↓ 24.24%	37.04%
3	Access to daycare (infant to preschool)	↑ 24.24%	14.81%
4	Health or medical concerns	↓ 21.21%	27.78%
	Children not doing well without social connection and structure of school (K-12)	↑ 18.18%	16.67%
	Other (please specify)	↑ 18.18%	16.67%
	Finding a place to live	↑ 15.15%	11.11%
	Finding or keeping a job	↓ 12.12%	29.63%
	Mental health	↓ 12.12%	12.96%
	Challenges with online school (K-12)	↓ 9.09%	11.11%
	Viability of my business coming back online	↓ 6.06%	9.26%
	Discrimination	↑ 6.06%	3.70%
	Concern for International Students (College or University)	↓ 6.06%	12.96%
	Learning English	↓ 0.00%	1.85%

Other (please specify): Visa problems, travel, playing sports, slow paperwork

During Covid-19, have you experienced challenges with your business or finding a job? If yes, please describe the challenge.



Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?

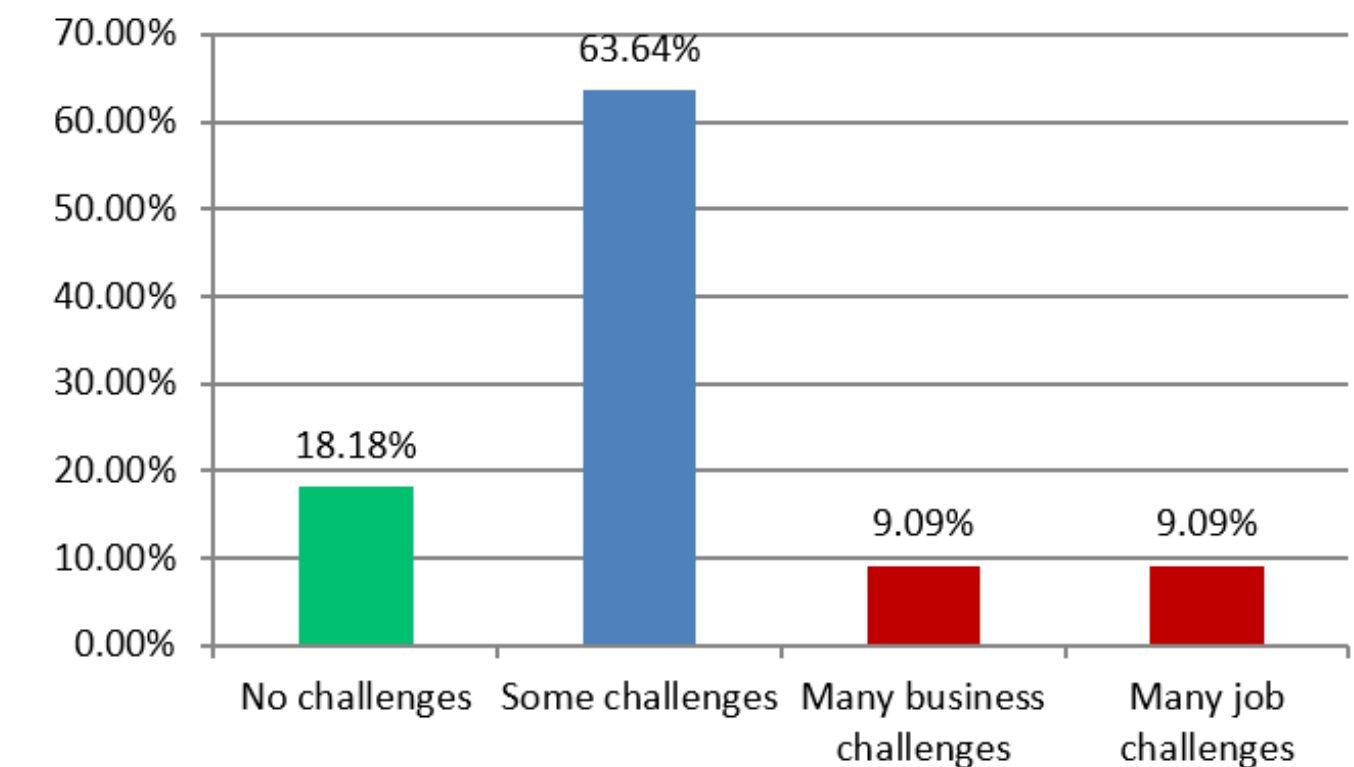


Country E

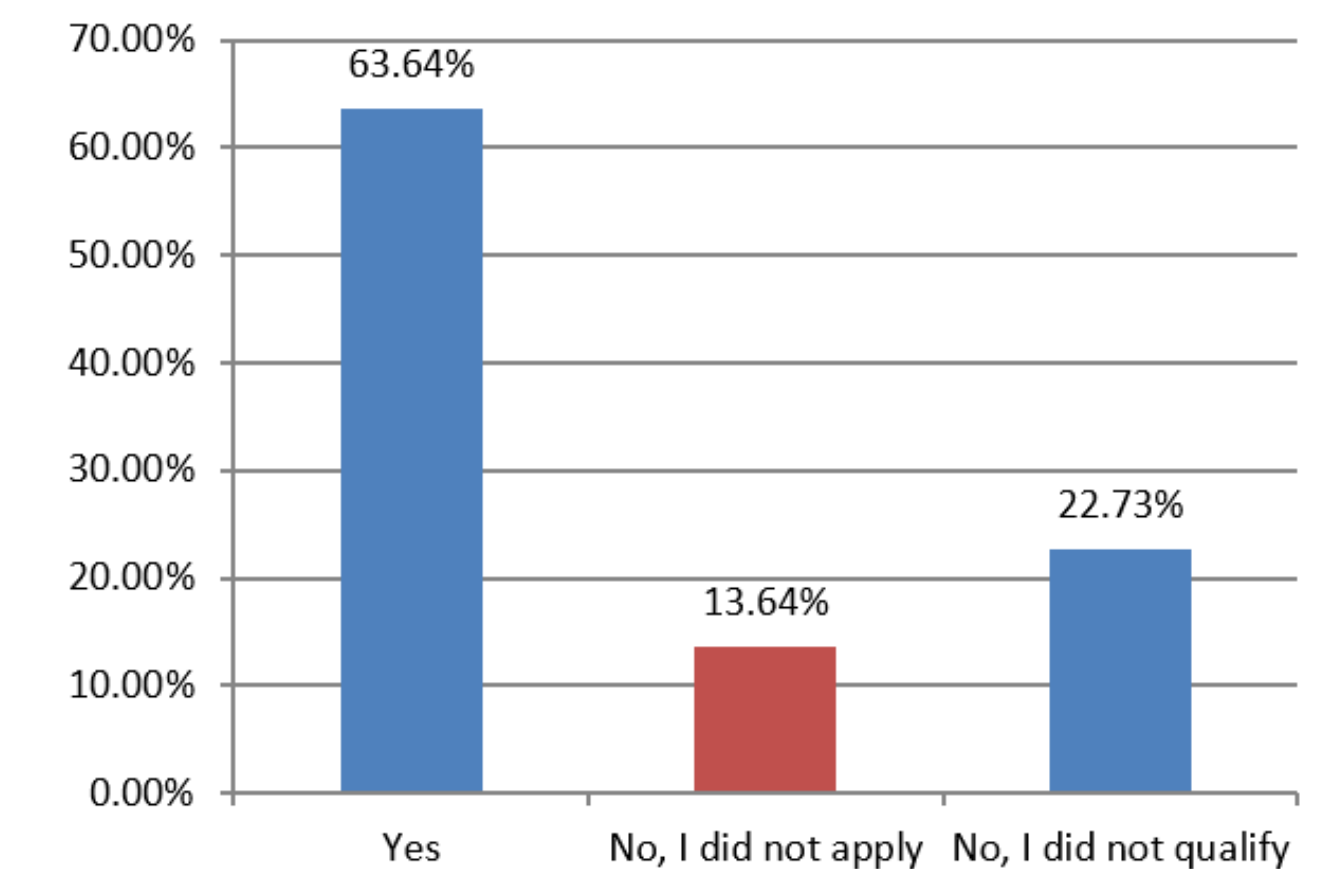
Please select your 3 concerns or challenges

Response		Aug-20	Jun-20
1 Missing family and friends overseas	↑	54.55%	48.48%
2 Health or medical concerns	↑	40.91%	33.33%
3 Paying mortgage, rent, or groceries	↓	40.91%	63.64%
4 Finding or keeping a job	↓	27.27%	36.36%
5 Challenges with online school (K-12)	↑	22.73%	15.15%
6 Maintaining healthy relationships	same	18.18%	18.18%
7 Access to daycare (infant to preschool)	↓	13.64%	18.18%
8 Finding a place to live	↑	13.64%	12.12%
9 Mental health	↑	13.64%	12.12%
10 Discrimination	↑	9.09%	6.06%
Children not doing well without social connection and structure of school (K-12)	↓	4.55%	21.21%
Concern for International Students (College or University)	↑	4.55%	0.00%
Viability of my business coming back online	↓	4.55%	9.09%
Learning English	n/a	0.00%	0.00%
Other (please specify)	↓	0.00%	18.18%

During Covid-19, have you experienced challenges with your business or finding a job? If yes, please describe the challenge.



Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?



Covid-19 Financial Support

Federal and Provincial COVID-19 Financial Support- August 2020

All Newcomer Responses

Yes- 36.9%

No, I did not apply 40.7%

No, I did not qualify 22.5%

Newcomers in PEI less than 5 years

Yes- 34.4%

No, I did not apply 44.6%

No, I did not qualify 21.0%

Newcomers in PEI less than 1 year

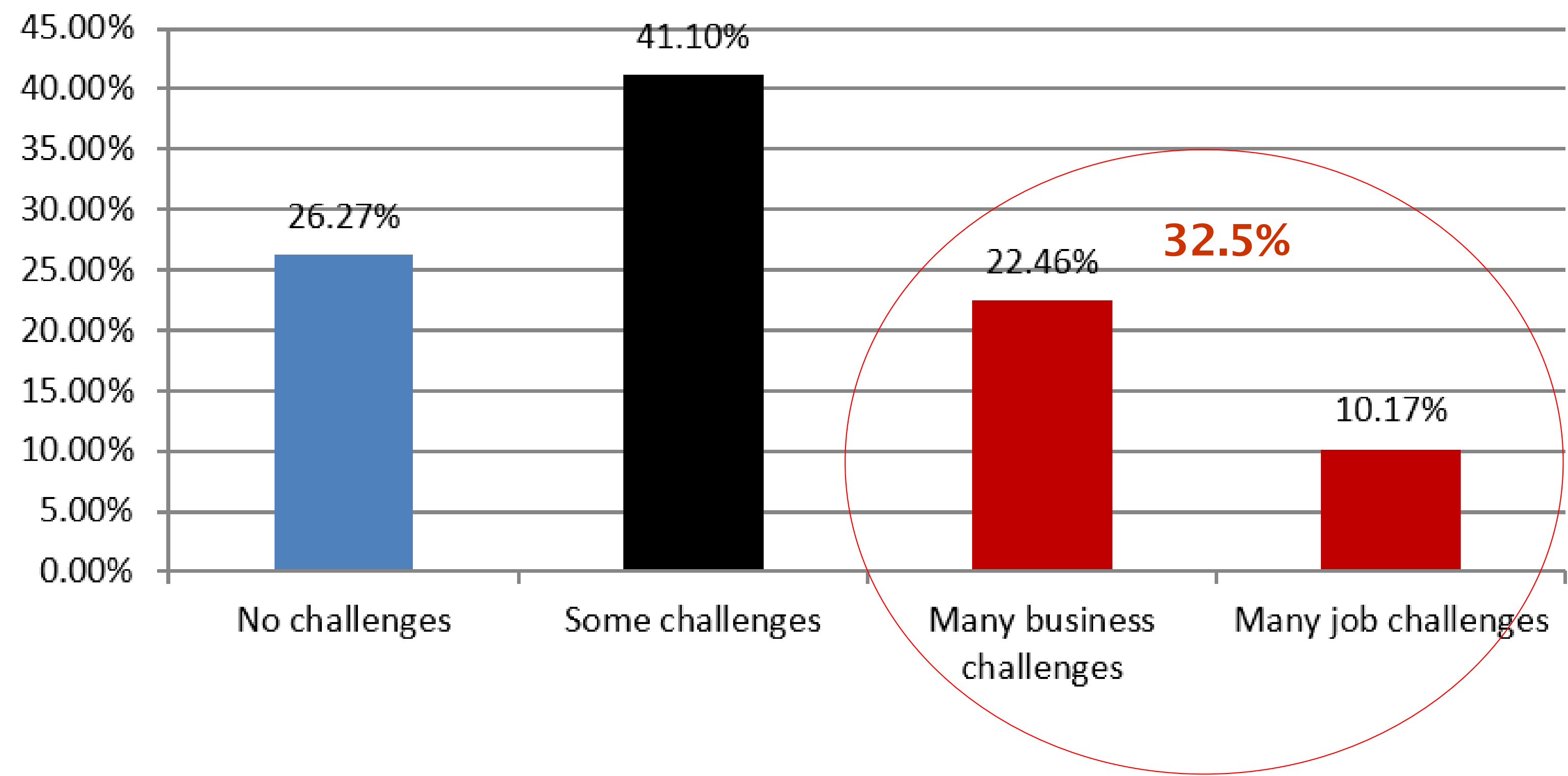
Yes- 23.3%

No, I did not apply 53.5%

No, I did not qualify 23.3%

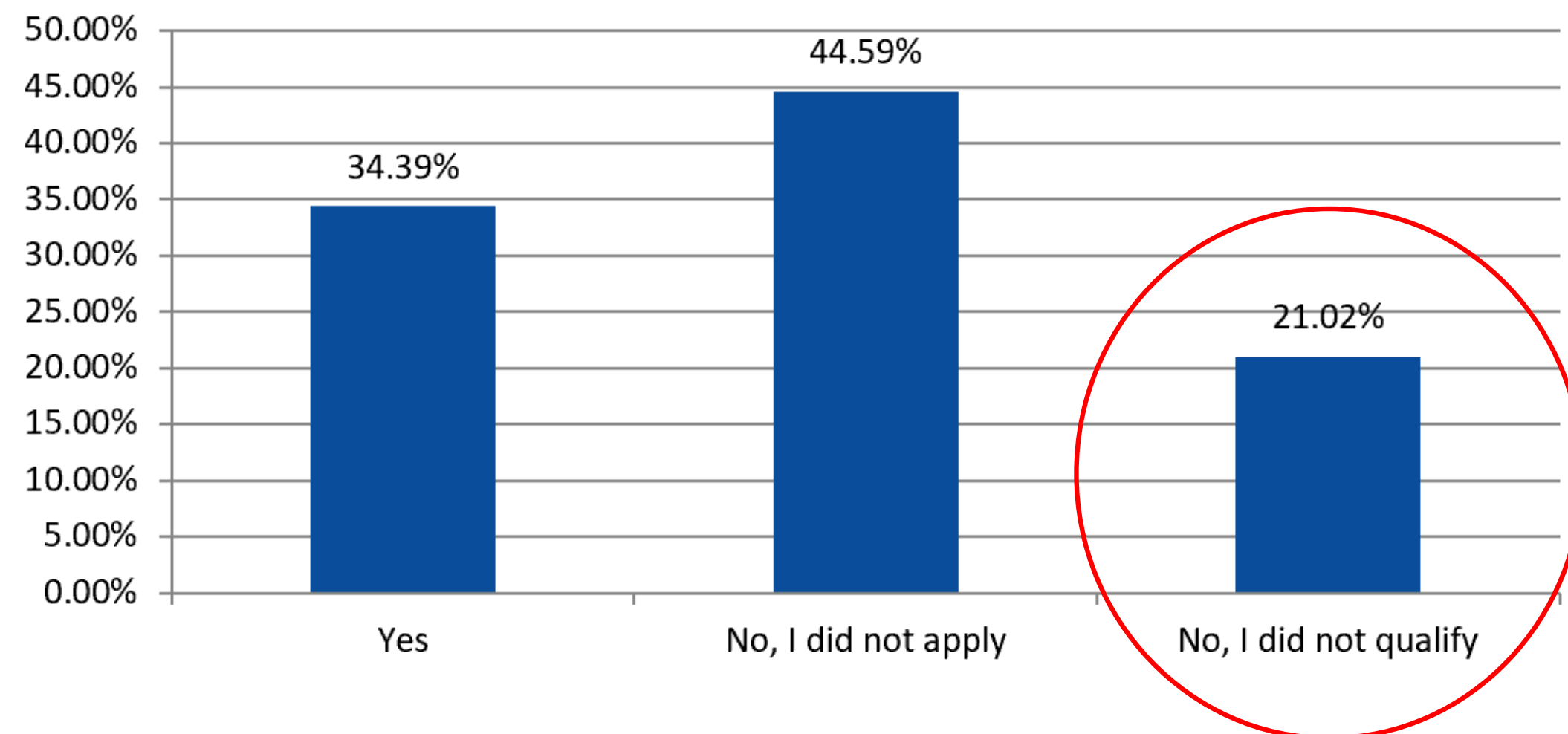
Business or Employment Risk

During Covid-19, have you experienced challenges with your business or finding a job?



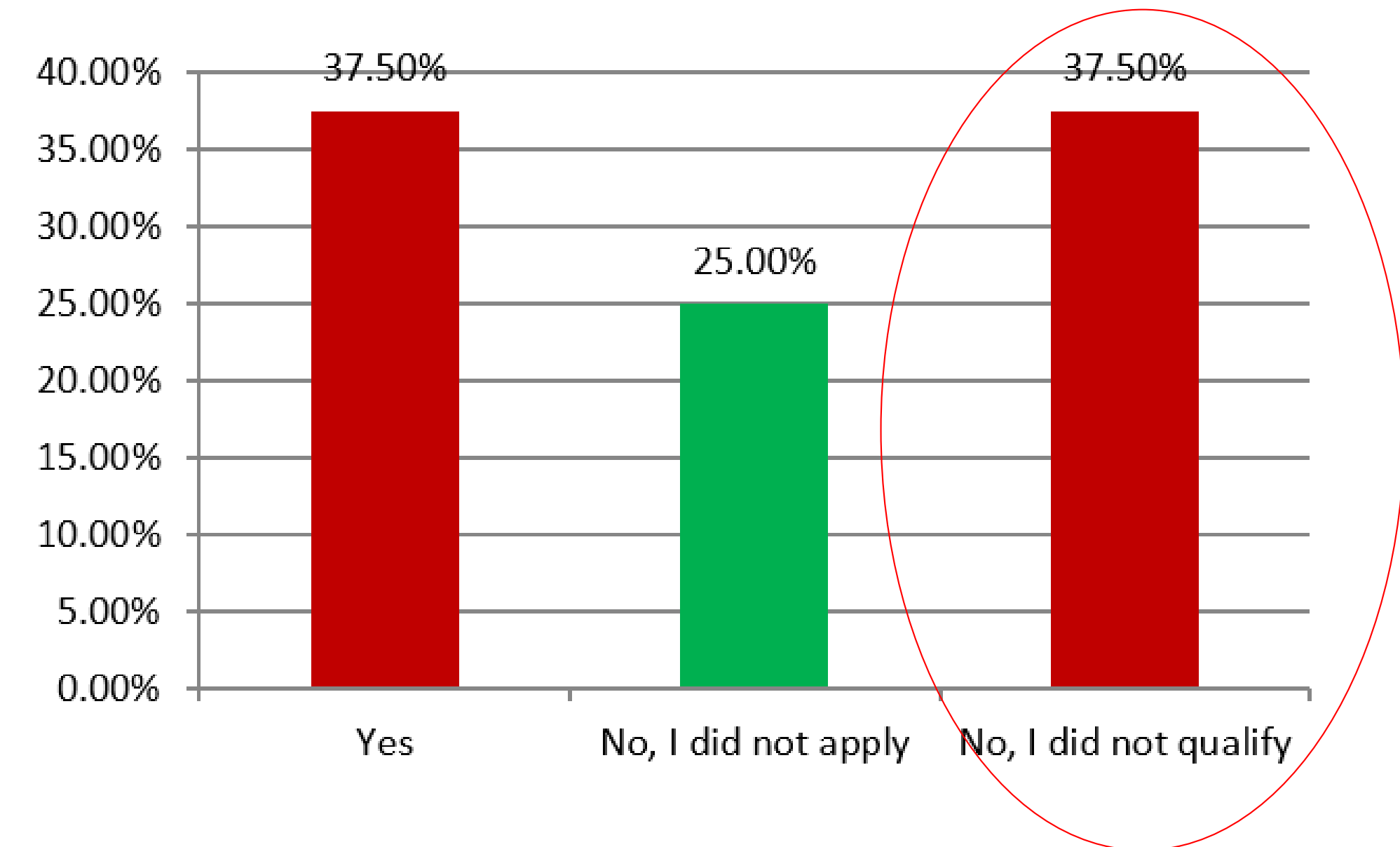
“Many Business Challenges”

Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?



“Many Job Challenges”

Did you receive any federal or provincial financial support to assist you during this time of Covid-19?

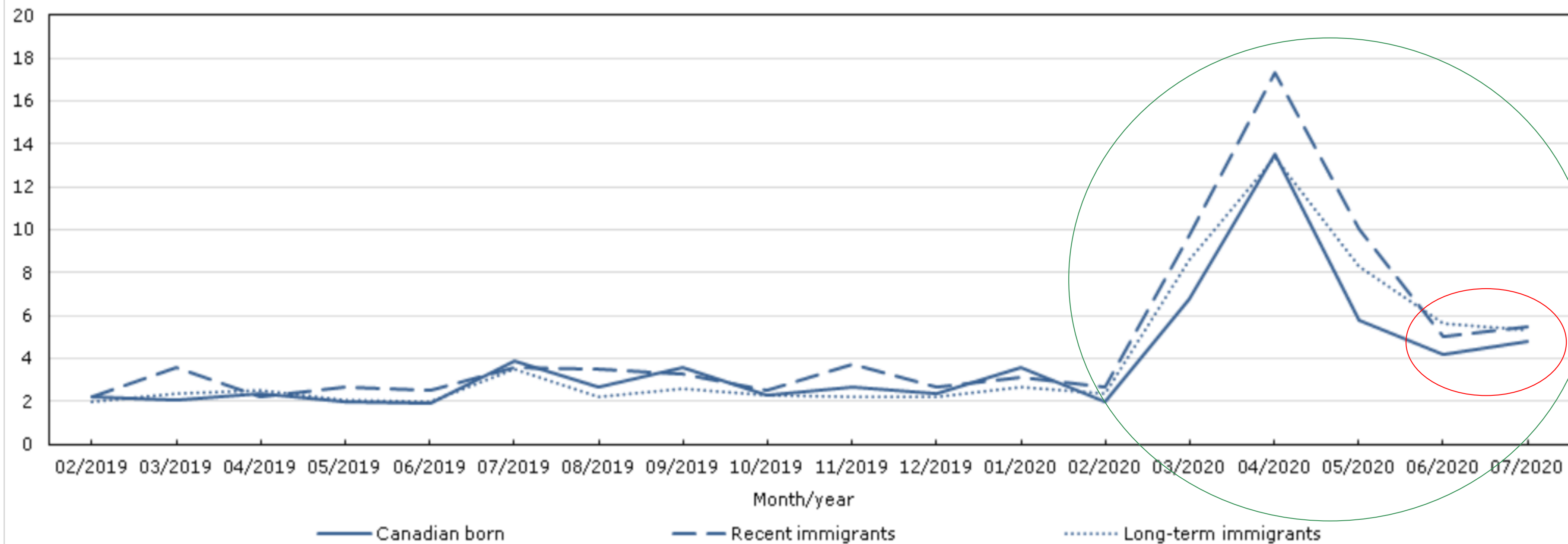


Job Availability

Chart 1

Rates of transition from employment to non-employment among individuals aged 20 to 64, 2019-2020

percent



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00070-eng.htm>

1. Recent immigrants highest % job loss following lock-down
2. Both recent and long-term immigrants equally impacted by job loss following re-opening

Spotlight on Needs and Trends

Quantitative Analysis

Special thank you to Toronto LIP Managers for showing us their approach

Well Being / Mental Health

- **Many of people go to mental health threaten due to the new situation which they never face before... in new environment far from home** (Aug/20)
- **Mental Health service is not available in mother language** (Aug/20)
- People don't know who to talk to when scared, anxious, stressed (Oct/20)
- Little knowledge of basic symptoms- self-assessment tool recommended (Oct/20)
- Deep worries, shame, language barrier.. trouble speaking about" (Oct/20)
- We all know that Covid19 make large and deep change special for mental health... they think...no ones care and no solutions for them" (Sept/20)

Housing

- **Charlottetown:** Housing prices have doubled in four years; currently, homes moving quickly with multiple offers over asking price; with conditions (including inspection)- waived (Oct /20)
- It is hard to pay 1400 for apartments with only minimum wage (June/20)
- Salaries are low even though cost of living has increased in last few years (Jun/20)
- **House costs unaffordable** (Aug/20)
- Even if multiple people sharing accommodation cost is prohibitive (Oct/20)

Families Separated

- One spouse is still overseas taking care of elderly parents or the business, other spouse alone in PEI (Sept/20)
- People can't travel for a mother or father funeral (Sept- Oct 20)
- Please help me to get my family and we can live together.... its almost 3 years I had not met them (Aug/20)

Discrimination

- Increase in Asian discrimination; two concerning incidents reported (Jun and Aug 2020)

Businesses

- Hard to find clients; hard to find vendors... do not know when will it finish and the business may be disappear but the expense is increasing debt still has to pay.... feeling unstable in anything” (Aug/20)
- **We are in tourism business... won't have any or just minimal business... we still have to pay the bills** (June/20)
- **Worrying about company that I work at to survive** (Aug/20)
- Lost customer, income, can't afford rental (Aug/ 20)
- **My business is relying on tourists** (Nov/20)
- Can't find the direction (Aug/20)

Financial

- Need wage increase for those working in nursing homes (Jun/20)
- I hope the \$1000 will be given to *all* essential workers (Jun/20)
- Covid restrictions means less hours and less pay – no pandemic pay even though we are on the front lines- now we are barely surviving with low wages, reduced working hours, hard to pay bills, getting behind, many of us are just slightly over qualified for Covid relief funds (Oct/20)
- Food security

Immigration Processing Delays

- Families, approved to immigrate before pandemic, who sold homes and belongings in preparation for the move- but now the lock-down has them stuck in expensive hotel situations, with cost growing by the month. They are anxious to know the next step and ready to move immediately- “their country is low in Covid like Canada and the airlines require Covid testing before travel” (Nov/20)
- PR Card expiring, Citizenship application more than a year in process (Aug/ 20)
- Long waiting time for work permit processing (Aug/20)

Children

- Some children going through Covid with one parent still overseas (Sept/20)
- Kids face problems being in a new country (Oct/20)
- We decided to move, not our kids, but now they have to face the difficulties of immigration (Sept/20)
- We need parenting workshops... parenting groups and form small groups together with parents and kids (Oct/20)

Employment

- It's hard finding a job during this pandemic (Aug/20)
- My job offer was canceled and now I can't find a job (Aug/20)
- Provide women more opportunities for learning skills (Aug/20)
- Finding job is a big challenge. Even after applying for job not easy to find one (Jun/20)

Healthcare

- Can't access preventative, investigative, or follow-up care without a family physician (Oct/20)
- Please keep the walk-in clinics fully open. People with other health issues are suffering. Those issues may not be urgent so they can't go to ER but waiting a long period for treatment will make things worse... clinics are important (Jun/20)
- Limited access to healthcare impacting mental health- many don't have GP and even walk-in clinics now only see 10-20 (Oct/20)

NEW virtual physician access for those without a family physician: <https://tinyurl.com/y6eep7xm>

Travel

PEI Chinese Community leading a national message board on this topic

- Some people are still travelling, because of a number of urgent situations
- COVID-19 test and results required to board plane (PEI created access- tests for travel- around Sept 1 2020)

NEW COVID-19 blood antibody test required to travel (@Nov 7 2020)

Service Providers and Cultural Groups need your help:

Social Connection

- Very isolating...less connected to each other, less community centers, less gatherings (Oct/20)
- Need to connect with people to share our difficulties and lift each other up (Oct/20)
- Just want more connections with the community (Jun/20) **Note:** People seeking more virtual opportunities here (Nov/20)

***English**

- I need learn English (Aug/20) **note:** immigration requirement related to language ability
- **Strong demand for English** being seen for virtual Conversation Circles and IELTS classes, volunteer opportunities are available

***Virtual Connection**

Virtual information & Connection Sessions (as many as possible), Webinars, Social Media to share info in different languages

1. Prepare for winter 2. Prepare for university 3. Prepare for career & job info 4. Strengthening Parenting and Family 5. Orientation to Canada's Multicultural Country & preparing yourself and family for different experiences and big changes 6. Budgeting/Finance 7. Education on business adaptation/ pivoting 8. information about mental health & symptoms in different languages 9. sessions on parenting and relationships (Triple P?)
1. webinar introducing necessary info about mental health in different languages & social media posts and educational material in different languages with instructions on identifying mental health symptoms and recommendations on where to go- we can help spread to different cultural groups 2. Parenting group could be a good idea and form small groups for activities together with parents and kids.

***Help needed**

Concerned for:

Children, seniors, business owners, loss of job, immune compromised, vulnerable groups, front-line workers, international students, new to Canada (particularly less than 5 years), cultural leaders, and others.

Urgent/ High Risk

Mental Health

“Many people go to mental health... due to facing the new situation which they never face before including in new environment far from home”
– PEI Cultural Leader, Sept 2020

“Mental health is going to be impacted this fall/winter, particularly newcomers”
– Dr. Victoria Esses, Professor of Psychology, University of Western Ontario

Our focus is on the “high percentage of immigrants reporting issues...”
– Alex LeBlanc, ED, New Brunswick, Multicultural Council

Mental Health	<p>Exacerbations on Mental Illness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased depression and anxiety• Increased MH needs due to isolation, burnout, and coping with drastic changes• Still facing issues of trauma, and PTSD• Re-traumatization due to isolation and family support• Increased isolation, anxiety, dysphoria for LGBTQIA+ young people	<p>Life Stressors Affecting Mental Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Escalated family conflicts• Online fatigue• Juggling work and life at home• Not enough family support• Feeling insecure about making enough money to support self/family, and/or having to rely on government financial support• Uncomfortable home situations (eg. overcrowded spaces, navigating pandemic with housemates, gender-based violence, challenging spousal relationships)• Unable to access COVID-19 info: barriers in language, newcomers who have disabilities• Fear of contracting COVID-19• Completing immigration applications with longer process times or unable to complete requirements (e.g. medical, police check)• Feeling isolated and lonely• Feelings of uncertainty of the future, worried about economy, health effects, etc.	<p>Challenges Accessing Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People who are feeling helpless are lacking needed in-person services• Mental health services inaccessible for deaf newcomers• Newcomers without status cannot access supports• Youth unsure how to ask for help• Lack of translation services in MH• Stigma prevents conversation to recognise need and willingness to access services• Lack of privacy at home to access virtual MH supports• Increased demand for counselling and medication• Lack of time to attend services• With TPH having been redeployed, MH supports for agencies reduced• Crisis lines lacking translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need tech equipment, internet, or a phone to access services. Some newcomers are lacking these resources• Abuse is more hidden as everyone is at home• Challenges are being faced by clients as well as colleagues in the service sector
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Toronto’s Survey,
July 2020

The pandemic is a risk factor for mental health

a. Support Service Providers:

1. Mental Health First Aid for all Service Providers- concern for vicarious trauma.
2. Training in Trauma-Informed Care & Cultural Sensitivity, to provide tools for newcomer support during a time like this

b. Support Newcomers at Risk:

3. Jean McRae, Greater Victoria, BC, recommended settlement associations flag those at risk and increase wrap-around support
 - Such as: refugees, single parents, have disabilities, complex health needs, seniors, language barriers, food insecure, and others...

4. Rodel Imbarlina-Ramos, Halton-Peel Region, Ontario, highlighted additional mental health risk factors:

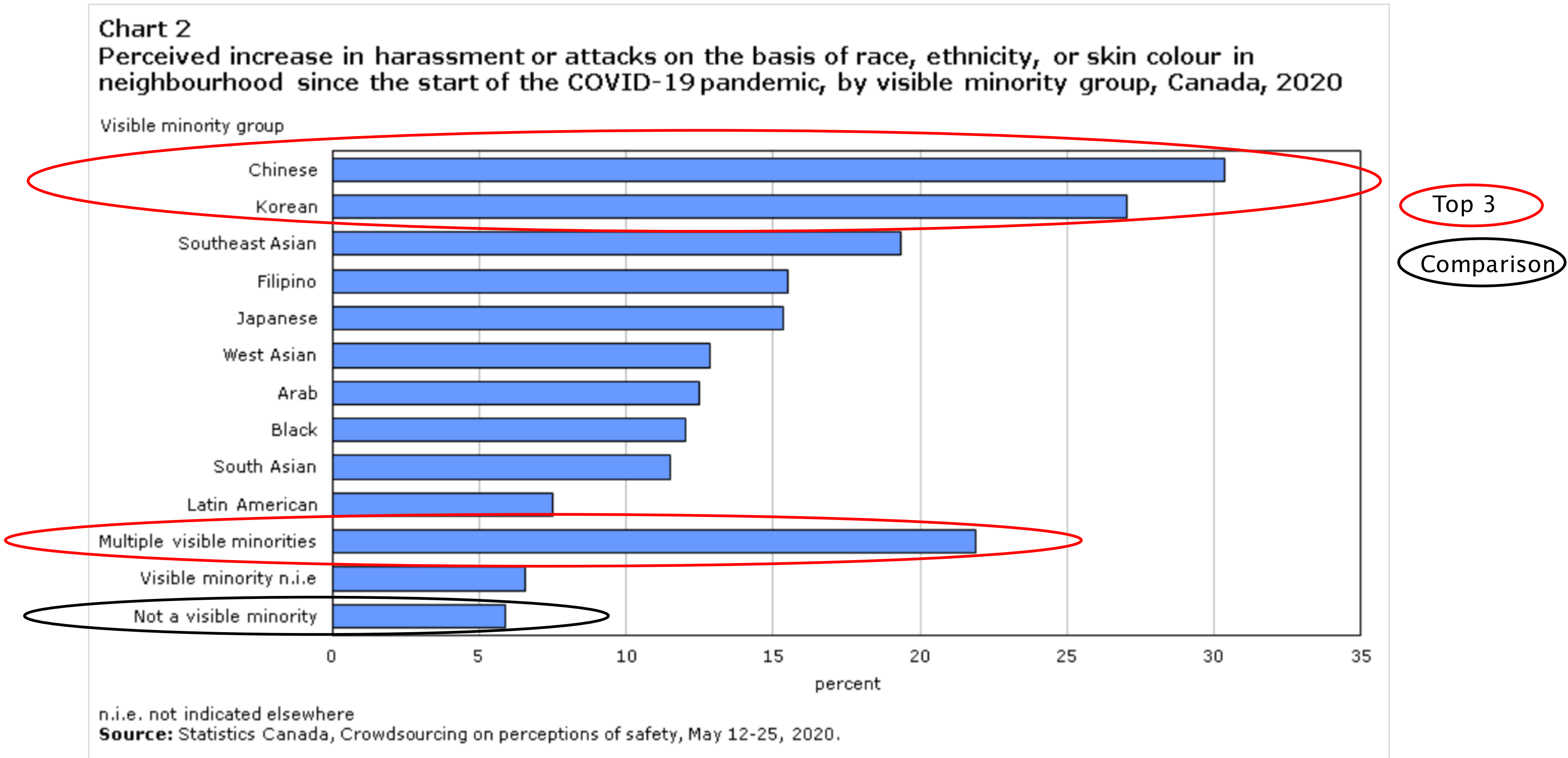
- a. Someone in the family lost their job... (**livelihood risk- job or business**)
- b. Someone in the family has to stay on site at their job and that is causing significant worry
- c. Personal relationships strained as a result of...
 - i. Isolation
 - ii. Confined at home
 - iii. Financial concerns impacting relationships
- d. Someone is in need of further healthcare support and is having trouble accessing it

c. Alert Service Providers: **Prepare for Mental Health Referrals**

5. **EXAMPLE** from Halton-Peel Region: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W_aSf9oXxPQEXWhEsT8p2Kkcmpu6cgbf/view?usp=sharing

Discrimination

Concerning increase in discrimination found in local surveys-
similarities to findings nationally (chart below)



Housing

Housing

PEI:

- **Charlottetown:** Housing prices have doubled in four years; currently, homes moving quickly with multiple offers over asking and conditions- including inspection- waived (Oct /20)
- It is hard to pay 1400 for apartments with only minimum wage (June/20)
- Salaries are low even though cost of living has increased in last few years (Jun/20)
- House costs unaffordable (Aug/20)
- Even if multiple people sharing accommodation cost is prohibitive (Oct/20)

NB:

- **Miramichi:** “Affordable housing is ... the leading issue” - Craig Silliker (Metropolis)

Comment from Outside Atlantic Canada:

Can we fix the housing shortage we have in Canada for current citizens and then to welcome people to our country! The housing shortage is a crisis!

1w Like Reply

353 

Displaced

There are a number of young families that were approved to immigrate, who sold homes and belongings just before the pandemic. They are in temporary living situations and as months go by the expenses and uncertainty is growing.

The President of one Cultural Association says “the lock-down has left these families displaced, in temporary accommodations or situations not best for children; expenses growing each month- they are anxious to know if there might be a next step in continuing on to Canada”

One cultural community advised they have contact info for impacted families (Nov 2020)

Silver Linings

Navigating COVID-19 Together Emerging Needs of PEI's Immigrant Population

Survey results from 3 and 5-months post COVID-19 lock-down



What helped you during Covid?

Family	66.42%
Friends	62.26%
Outdoor Activities (walking, hiking, gardening)	45.28%
Virtual Connection (Zoom, WebEx, etc.)	39.62%
Government Departments	28.30%
Immigrant Service Provider (PEIANC, Connectors, CIF, Navigator, etc)	26.42%
Hobbies	26.42%
Music or Arts	19.25%
Coworkers	18.11%
Employment Support	14.72%

“Thank you for supporting us during this difficult time” – Survey Response

Take-away: Finding Positives in Winter

https://getpocket.com/explore/item/dreading-a-dark-winter-lockdown-think-like-a-norwegian?utm_source=pocket-newtab

Excerpt:

“Leibowitz... asked participants to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with statements such as:

- There are many things to enjoy about the winter
- I love the cosiness of the winter months
- Winter brings many wonderful seasonal changes

... Participants' answers predicted their wellbeing over the coming months; **the more they saw the winter as an exciting opportunity... the better they fared, with high levels of life satisfaction and overall mental health”.**

For more information please contact:

Melanie Bailey
melanie@peianc.com
PEI Immigration Partnership
PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada

Thank you for your time and advice:

Craig Mackie, Nancy, Erin, Rocio, Rosalie, Yvette, and other PEIANC staff; Jamie Aiken; Jeff Young; Kal Whitnell, Sarah-Jayne, Jennifer, and Li; Nicole Bellefleur, Bev, and PEI Connectors staff; Victoria Esses; Sam Sanderson; Kaitlin Murray and Yasmeen Tian, Chris Friesen and Kathy Sherrell; the Chinese Association of PEI; VietPEI- Vietnamese Association; Indo Canadian Association (ICA) and Kerala Association (K APEI); Sandigang Pinoy, Filipino Association; Christina Macleod -Volume 1 8; Alex LeBlanc; Jean McRae; Carolyn Whiteway; Howard Ramos; Rodell Imbarlina-Ramos; Roberto Montiel; and Hani Ataan Al-ubeady.

Special recognition to Kailea Pedley, Cape Breton LIP- for inspiring this process by sharing informative early survey results. Thank you to Duyen Nguyen, NB and Dan Vandebelt, Waterloo for sharing important survey insights over the years, Thank you to Cory Bailey for making all of the work possible.

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