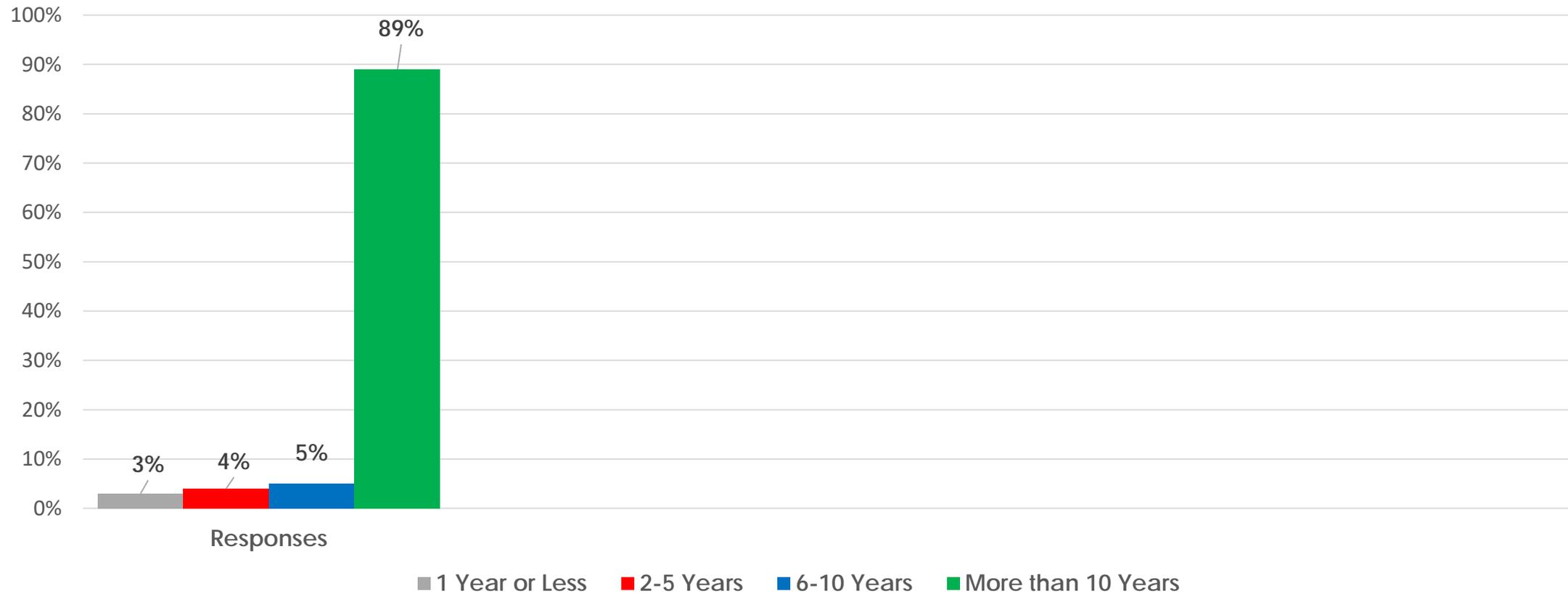


GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q1. How long have you lived in the region?



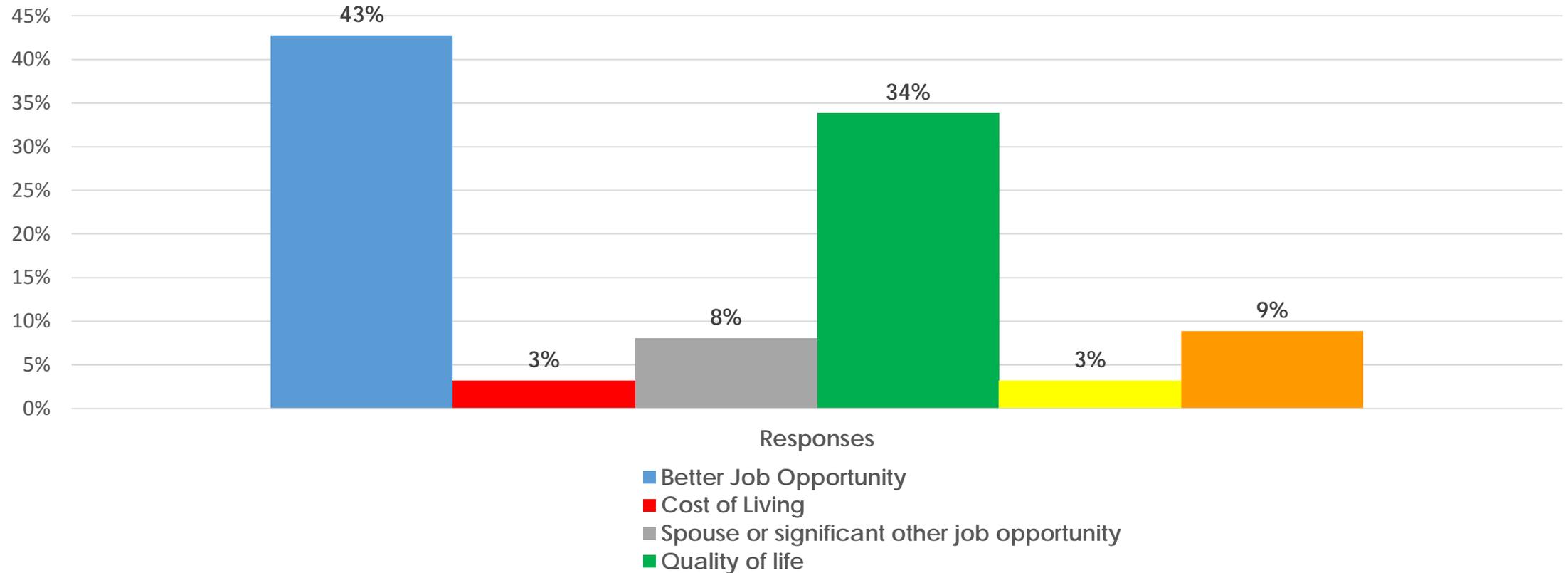
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q2. Are you currently considering re-locating out of the region?



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q3. If you answered yes, please indicate the primary reason you are considering relocation.



Go Virginia Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Respondents Comments to Question 3

- ❖ Lack of quality healthcare and other services
- ❖ My husbands job may be ending so we are looking at the NC and Central VA for opportunities.
- ❖ Retirement
- ❖ Business opportunities
- ❖ I wish I could check more than one, but I think everything relates to quality of life. I am in the 30-35 age range, and I want breweries, shopping opportunities, fresh produce and meats, art, music– This region, specifically Wise and Norton do not fulfill my needs.
- ❖ Conservative culture with limited expectations
- ❖ Negative attitude of elected officials; backward thinking leadership; voters that vote against their economic interests. This all yields the opposite of a progressive, forward-thinking community.
- ❖ Retired couple looking for a warmer climate.
- ❖ There is very little growth in Wythe Co. We are so behind in almost every aspect of a community: infrastructure, school buildings, retail, and other growth opportunities in employment for middle class citizens.
- ❖ I have a wonderful job for a global energy company and I am fortunate to have the flexibility to work from a home office. I worry about the declining quality of life in this region without a diverse commerce strategy.
- ❖ Better business opportunities. Less social suppression.
- ❖ Better jobs, better economy, more activities for children.
- ❖ We need some progress in jobs and opportunities as well as more diversity in business and job opportunities.
- ❖ All of these are significantly a primary reason.
- ❖ Lack of sufficient opportunity to grow business.

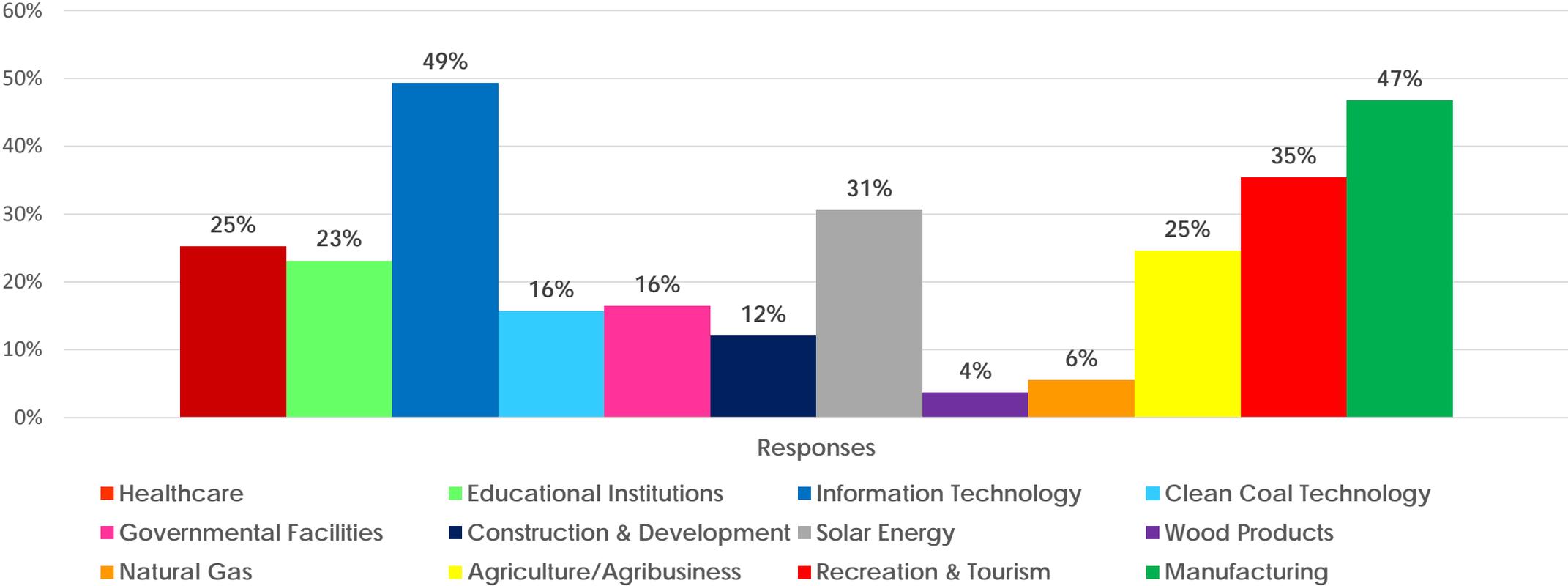
GO Virginia Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Respondents Comments to Question 3 (continued)

- ❖ Bland is so far behind in multiple areas. Their citizens mean nothing to them compared to their ancient status quo. I would rather live in a county that provides residential zoning, city water and sewer, and high speed internet to if not all the majority.
- ❖ Bland county is behind in virtually every measurable sector.
- ❖ In the Richlands region there is not only a lack of job opportunities but there is also a lack of outdoor recreation. It's a shame to live in a town in the mountains and to not have access to hiking/biking within 30 minutes.
- ❖ Currently driving to Salem to work, spouse drives to Roanoke.
- ❖ If you need to shop, etc. you have to travel to get what you need. So why not just move there.
- ❖ The lack of local effective leadership to think in the long view, express it, and follow through.
- ❖ Better job opportunities for both my husband and myself, and better educational and extracurricular opportunities for my children.
- ❖ There is no income tax in Tennessee.
- ❖ Norton VA looks like a ghost town.
- ❖ The lack of options for us and our children leave little reason for us to stay.
- ❖ More educated population, better restaurants, better schools and resources.
- ❖ Region had a hard time accepting new ideas and adapting to change.
- ❖ Considering full-time RVing. Would like to have a permanent address w/no state income tax and lower/fewer personal property.

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q4. What type of industries should economic developers attract to the region to add higher-paying jobs? (Select up to 3)



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Respondents Comments to Question 4

- ❖ Amazon, Walmart, Target and/or other online businesses
- ❖ Example.....aquaculture as well as ag
- ❖ High tech production/installation/sales; drones, autonomous vehicles, alternative energy
- ❖ Our recreational capital has hardly been tapped. I envision SWVA becoming a second Great Smokey Mountains Park.
- ❖ Cyber and private businesses within niches, smaller footprint. Those recruiting millennials love outdoors.
- ❖ Enhance entrepreneurial opportunities in the region
- ❖ Tourism seems to be what's getting funded lately.
- ❖ There is a major need among the people here for better healthcare, so why not kill 2 birds by offering new high-paying jobs in the healthcare sector while also treating local patients? I also feel IT offers good high-paying jobs, and dedicated and trained Recreation and Tourism directors would help increase the quality of life in the region for everyone.
- ❖ ...all we CAN!!!.....
- ❖ Arts and entertainment
- ❖ Cybersecurity, wind energy
- ❖ Industrial Hemp farming and manufacturing, research
- ❖ Non-timber forest grown products
- ❖ FAST internet, our area is as slow as third world countries, no company likes that.
- ❖ Data Centers, Distribution Centers, Regional Corporate Offices

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Respondents Comments to Question 4 (continued)

- ❖ Office professionals (web-based attorneys, professional consultants, architects), any firm that needs professional space but does not physical visits from customers.
- ❖ Agriculture would be 4th choice
- ❖ Agriculture not agribusiness. Agribusiness creates toxic waste. LIGHT manufacturing, again no toxic wastes.
- ❖ Transportation, local bus lines, trains, public transportation options
- ❖ Transportation; we are at the intersection of I-77 and I-81 and have the NS RR.
- ❖ Educational institutions- more specifically, trade schools. Also, we would do well to establish a market presence for low-cost energy efficient housing solutions.
- ❖ Any industry that provides good jobs.
- ❖ Materials Science/Chemical Engineering Research
- ❖ Retirement Communities – a “mountain Villages”
- ❖ Industries need to be accessible for the middle man that often has most difficult time to find employment in the area. Also, industry needs to look at present workforce and not those that will live outside our counties and commute here for our jobs.
- ❖ All of the above
- ❖ Anything, all we have currently is Walmart and McDonalds.
- ❖ Focus should be on R&D with patent portfolio, that over the long term is best for the greatest growth potential.
- ❖ There is no such thing as clean coal. The “clean coal” plant in MS was a \$3.4B loss.

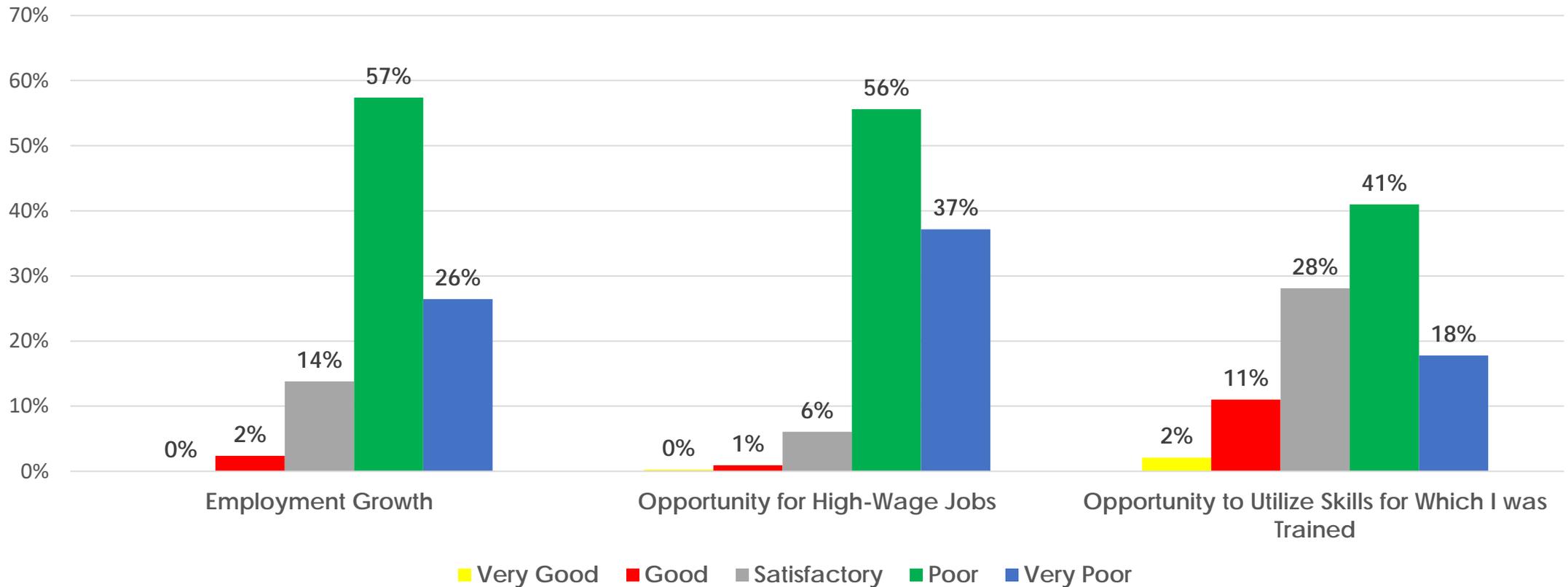
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Respondents Comments to Question 4 (continued)

- ❖ Wind Power, Hydro Power
- ❖ Much more emphasis should be placed on “economic gardening”, creating an environment conducive and supportive of our existing businesses. Too much emphasis is placed on recruiting firms to locate facilities here that we don’t have the workforce prepared for.
- ❖ Distribution facilities for on-line retail
- ❖ Tanger Outlet or similar shopping experience. Nearest shopping is one hour away in either direction.
- ❖ Anything supporting the tourism industry, (i.e. restaurants and breweries) would make life much better.
- ❖ Why would we limit ourselves?
- ❖ All the above except more education when they will leave for jobs once educated if we have none.
- ❖ Arts
- ❖ Industrial hemp/hemp manufacturing
- ❖ Coal to Graphene, Utility scale 50 MWpv, airborne and wind turbines, hydroelectric pump storage with modernization of the regional grid;, data centers so as not to concentrate on I-66; unmanned systems R&D; hemp farms; highly secure marijuana greenhouses
- ❖ Including food and beverage industry under selected items; also believe there could be a healthy/connection with agriculture and recreation and tourism.

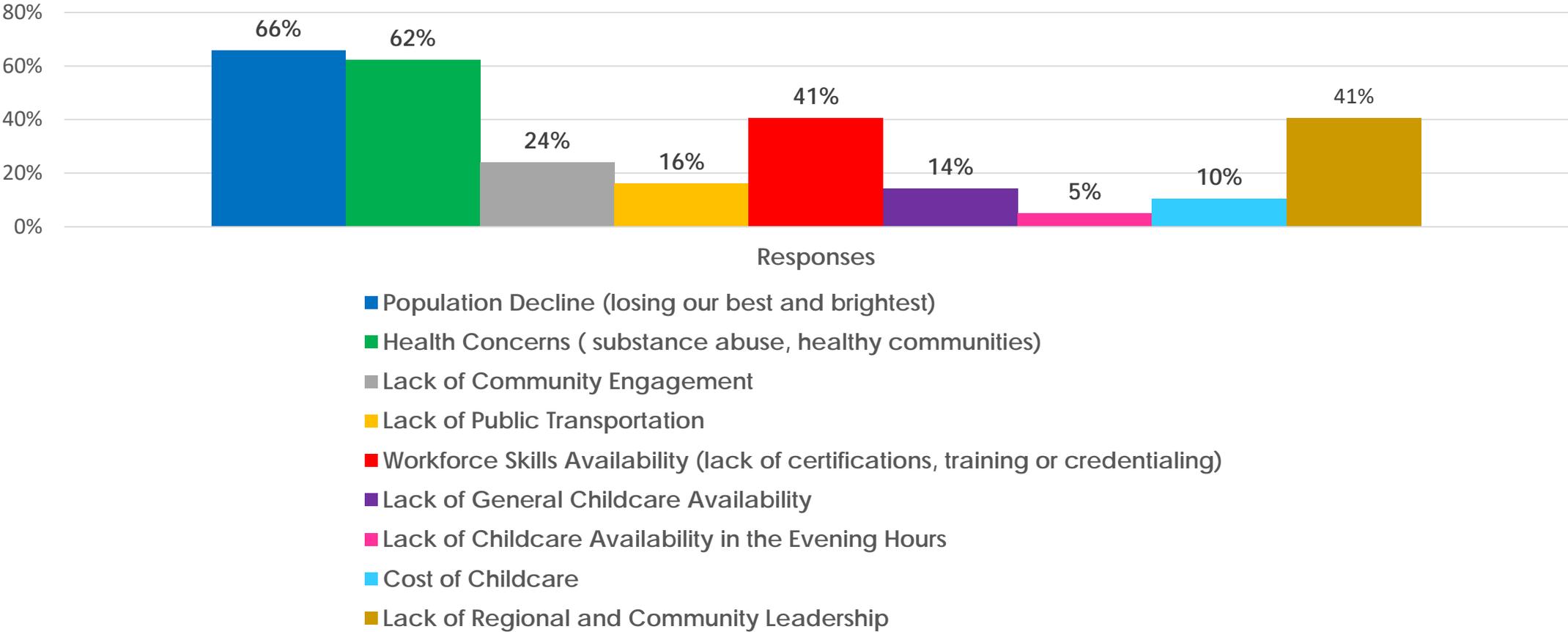
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q5. How would you rate the following current economic conditions of the region?



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q6. What key challenges do you feel your community must overcome to achieve economic advancement? (Choose 3)



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Key Challenges – Question 6

- ❖ Old and staid economic leadership that is not comfortable in dealing with 21st century world. Many just hanging on to their jobs.
- ❖ Leadership which is more and more exposed as lax and remiss in tending to the people's business and the people's welfare: ITEM, the Buchanan bequest to the county. Our forbears articulated a nice sarcasm about the real human tendency: "Don't worry, there'll be a man along riding a mule to do that for you!"
- ❖ There are no jobs for low skilled labor but fast food.
- ❖ The number one key issue here is a general lack of regional and community leadership. Too many "old white men" are responsible for a region that does not look like them, and because of that businesses are closing and people are moving. Too often, leadership does not consider the wants or needs of the residents. There is no move toward growth or change. We are stagnant. Every other issue we have is due to the leadership in this region.
- ❖ Lack of social entertainment
- ❖ ...some of all, above, likely....
- ❖ Lack of better attitude and open mindedness towards welcoming anything new and unfamiliar; Racism
- ❖ Lack of political power and lack of political support for economic development in rural areas
- ❖ Old, crumbling school. Board of Supervisors that thinks it's still in the 1950s. Artificially low taxes. Low services. Despair in population.
- ❖ Need highways desperately
- ❖ Lack of marketing as a multi-state region, not small entities
- ❖ Lack of large industrial/business sites due to mountainous terrain.

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Key Challenges – Question 6 (Continued)

- ❖ Nothing to attract millennials-entertainment, recreation such a bowling, skating, etc., very few places to shop .
- ❖ Lack of infrastructure (broadband, roads)
- ❖ Federal Government Regulation
- ❖ Local government focus on retail and food service, due to tax revenues and manufacturing, which is part of the region's past.
- ❖ Schools need to be updated. Academically they seem to be doing ok, but the school infrastructure is embarrassing. They are stuck in the 60s. There is no focus or vision defined in Wythe County for the citizens to stand behind. Everyone seems to be out for their own agenda. We need better leadership to unite us in a more progressive forward thinking goal for economic development.
- ❖ Lack of respect for tourism and the land. We have incredible opportunity for recreation and tourism, and it is not being taken advantage of!
- ❖ Public transportation is the biggest barrier to employment in Southwest VA.
- ❖ Work ethic of the lower socio-economic half of the population, preparation of most public school students.
- ❖ Workforce – soft skills
- ❖ Lack of broadband internet access outside of population centers.
- ❖ While all of these areas could use improvement, the overwhelming economic chokehold that has been repeatedly exercised by elder leadership has cost Wythe County many great opportunities.

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Key Challenges – Question 6 (Continued)

- ❖ “Band Wagoning” (putting all of our energy into collectively chasing a new “silver bullet” idea or industry as a driver of change for a few months, then dropping it as soon as another hot topic or industry comes along. As a result, we continually shift resources and effort but never get any sustained work or growth done).
- ❖ Education!! (#1)
- ❖ Education PK-12, greater integration and innovation of technology and national standards to be competitive and appealing to families looking to move to the area.
- ❖ Poor public education; limited cultural opportunities
- ❖ Better educated people to attract higher technology jobs
- ❖ Poor education, select group of people making all the decisions that have lots of money.
- ❖ I feel our community is ripe for responsible, progressive growth.
- ❖ The growing gap between urbanization and rural communities
- ❖ Funding and professional training for effective regional and community leadership when it comes to preparing youth to meet the economic challenges of the 21st century and in particular entrepreneurship for youth and bringing school districts up to speed with the needs of industry both today and tomorrow.
- ❖ Lack of adequate transportation highways
- ❖ We need leadership that has a new vision and not stuck in the same old shell building mentality.

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Key Challenges – Question 6 (Continued)

- ❖ Millennials prefer transportation and city or town type living. Need Uber like transport, coffee shops, bars, etc.
- ❖ Community engagement issue is related to cooperation among small communities.
- ❖ Education PK-12, greater integration and innovation of technology and national standards to be competitive and appealing to families looking to move to the area.
- ❖ We have so-so regional public transit but it's under utilized.
- ❖ Town and county officials need to grow up and accept that today is the future. That we don't live in the past 50+ years ago. They need to allow big business to come into their areas.
- ❖ Lack of customer service skills, soft skills—current businesses are not successful because of lack of fundamental skills.
- ❖ Negative image of SW Virginia and lack of good jobs
- ❖ Outdated technology (cell phone dead zones, unreliable broadband); the public should have free access to the newest technology and training in libraries, employment services, and adult education classes.
- ❖ Appreciation for diversity
- ❖ No opportunities
- ❖ Affordable education
- ❖ Poor education system
- ❖ Without civic leaders leading the way, nothing will get done.

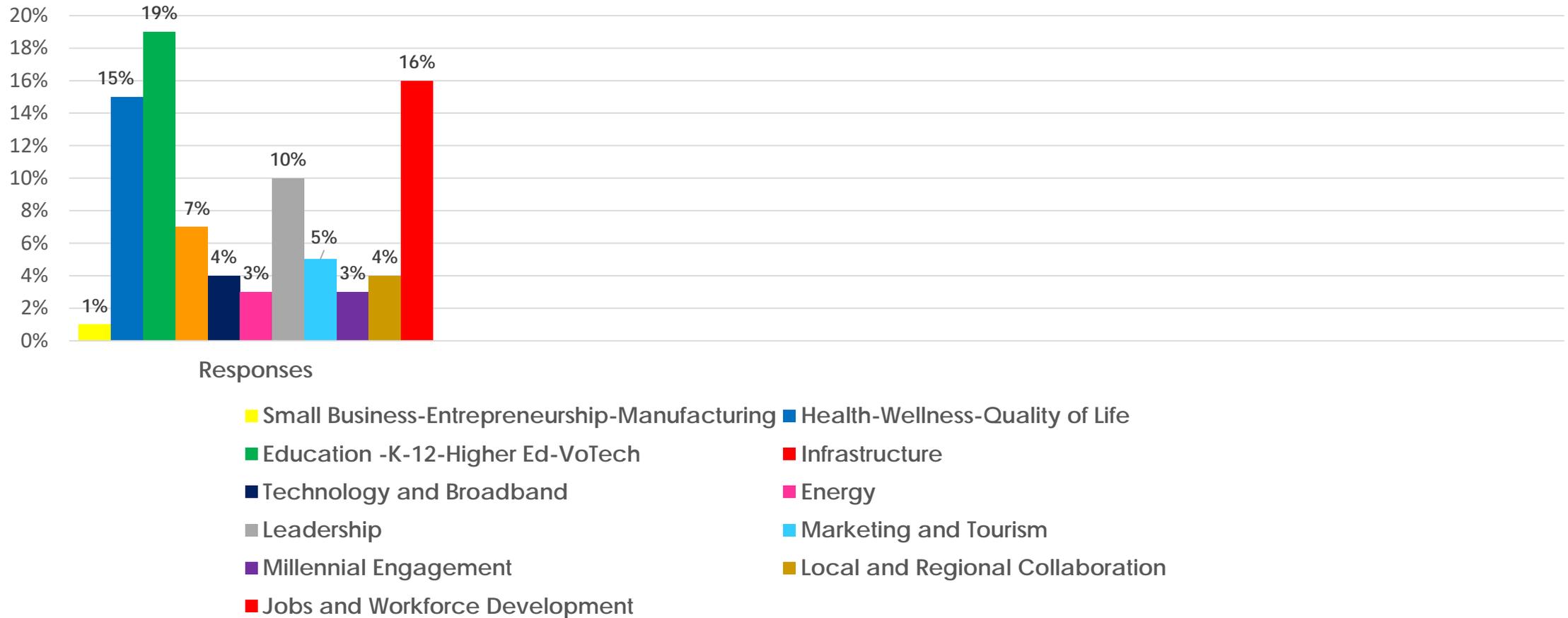
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Key Challenges – Question 6 (Continued)

- ❖ Lack of public support for local business, terrible bureaucracy for new businesses and restaurants
- ❖ An entrenched economic development system that has become its own self-sustaining and self-defeating industry
- ❖ NEED better ROADS
- ❖ Need to attract new high technology jobs not the same old thing
- ❖ Lack of high speed internet in most areas of the region (or limited to one option)
- ❖ Prescription drug problem
- ❖ I feel the area of Big Stone Gap wants to stay under to access federal help so they do not encourage more businesses. Just an opinion.
- ❖ Need progressive thinking. Our region suffers from the worst kind of favoritism and unfairness.
- ❖ Attracting companies and businesses to move into the region
- ❖ Workforce development/skills lacking
- ❖ Need a way to have optimal collaboration between multiple economic development entities.
- ❖ Lack of county wide trash pickup, water, leash law and sewer

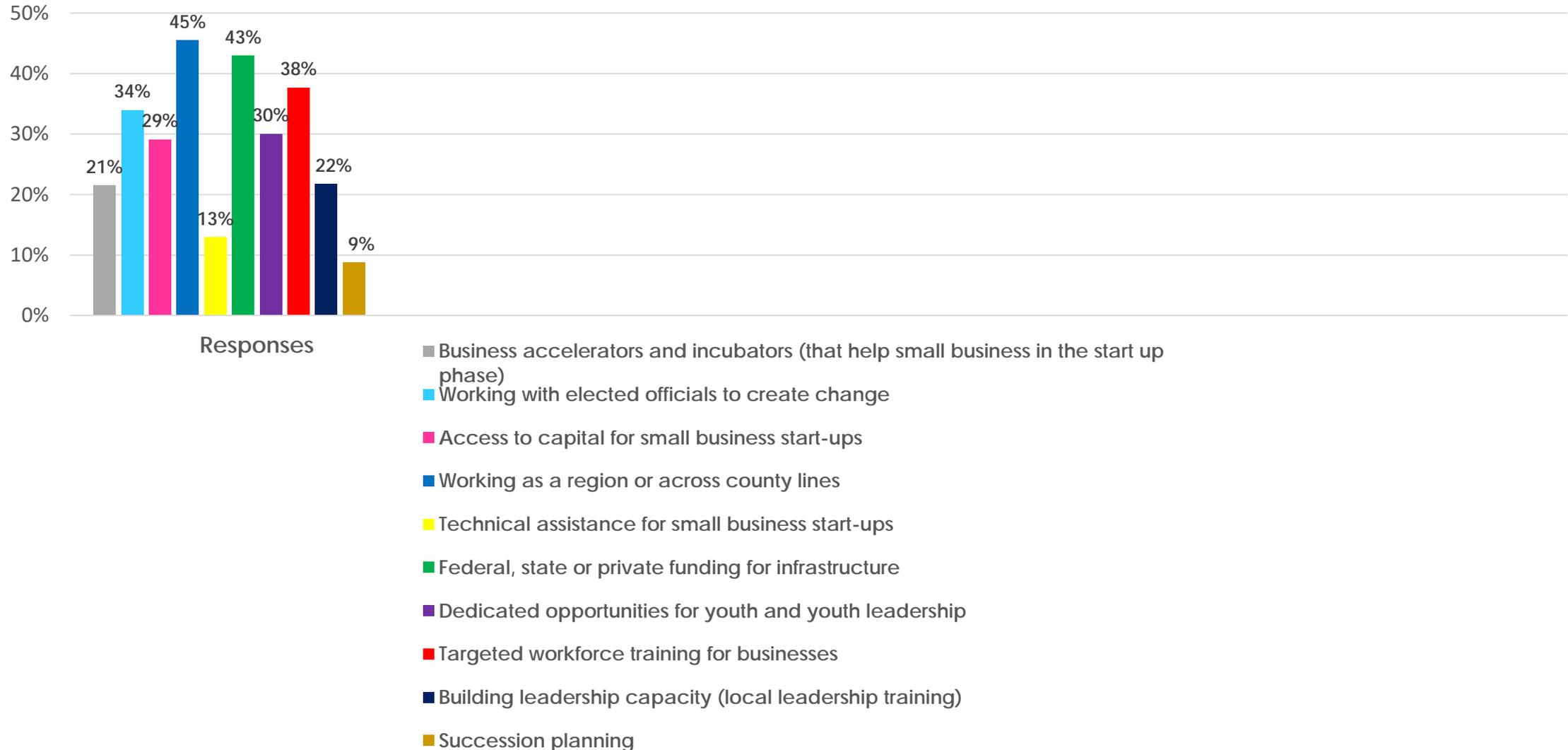
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q7. What are the most important things that the Region One Council should consider to help the region address economic challenges?



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q8. What are the most important tools and resources to build economic growth? (Select up to 3)



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Building Economic Growth - Question 8

- ❖ Identify public works projects in infrastructure that county government can support and find funds for.
- ❖ I think capital is a really important piece that needs to be discussed; Danville VA has a regional foundation they manage themselves that allows for small community grants- I would love to see something like that in this region, because it also encourages people in the community to work toward change.
- ❖ I'm not an economist but I know several of these tools have been employed before with little to no positive results. I'm not sure what the best tools are at this time.
- ❖some of ALL, above, probably...
- ❖ Availability of more skill based jobs that rely on quality education and the emphasis of knowledge.
- ❖ A shared understanding of the purpose, the work, and timelines
- ❖ New leaders in each area. The same people get elected or the same people are the ones put in leadership positions. We need people who can think differently and are visionaries. The same people think the same way and expect the same results as when we had coal.
- ❖ Communication with the public about opportunities and improvements
- ❖ Area recruitment of manufacturing
- ❖ Recruitment of established companies looking to relocate or expand
- ❖ Lack of broadband is crazy, especially in Virginia.
- ❖ The most crucial tools or resources are your people. Establish a non-subsidized program that will cultivate a more economically stable workforce. We need a new approach... one that provides more than just a temporary solution for the permanent challenge of economic growth.
- ❖ New schools; more ways to shop instead of leaving town; visitors will stop if more was available

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Building Economic Growth – Question 8 (continued)

- ❖ Support of manufacturers currently located in the region
- ❖ Opportunities for youth needs to include entrepreneurship for youth
- ❖ Consider pursuing “economic engines” throughout the region, such as colleges, medical centers, technology centers, etc.
- ❖ Local real estate owners are similar slum lords with people who move in and are new to the area. You cannot think educated people are going to move to the area and pay big sums for dated houses that have been sitting empty. You must have good schools and appropriate housing.
- ❖ Raise taxes at inter-state exits for revenue, we all pay it when we travel.
- ❖ A lot of people will tell you that child care is a problem. I recommend we DO NOT build child care infrastructure, it won't make a statistical difference on our workforce. I have studied this for over 25 years.
- ❖ We know coal is dead. But what steps will turn the economy around quickly?
- ❖ Recommend reviewing a recent study: “Access to Capital for Small and Mid-Sized Scale-Up Companies in Hampton Roads”. Could easily have been SWVA.
- ❖ Develop a shared vision for our region.
- ❖ Small business start ups are great but cannot flourish in the midst of population plagued with public health and economic crisis.
- ❖ YOU NEED LARGE EMPLOYERS!!! ATTRACT HIGH PAYING JOBS
- ❖ Investing in early education and youth

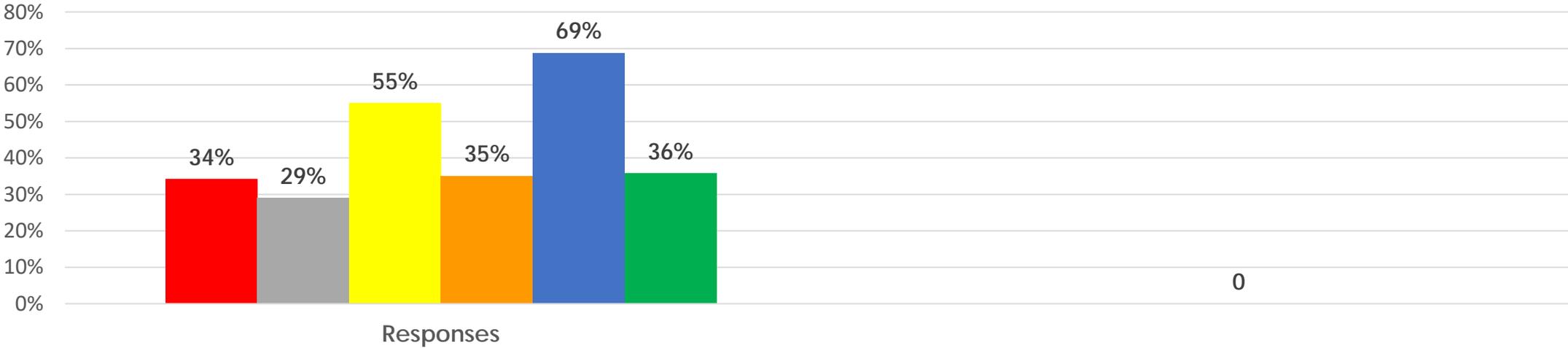
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Building Economic Growth – Question 8 (continued)

- ❖ Involve young people, we are the future! Organize focus groups with young people, allow them to serve on committees, and carefully listen to what they have to say. I would love to share my ideas, my email address is lsb2f@uvawise.edu.
- ❖ Widening I-81, expanded rail service, agri-business development, high speed internet for rural areas
- ❖ ALL the above!
- ❖ Develop conduit to NoVa capital and intellectual capital sources
- ❖ Manufacturing
- ❖ Why put resources in small (mom-pop) business along main streets. Every time one opens another closes.
- ❖ Attitude.

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

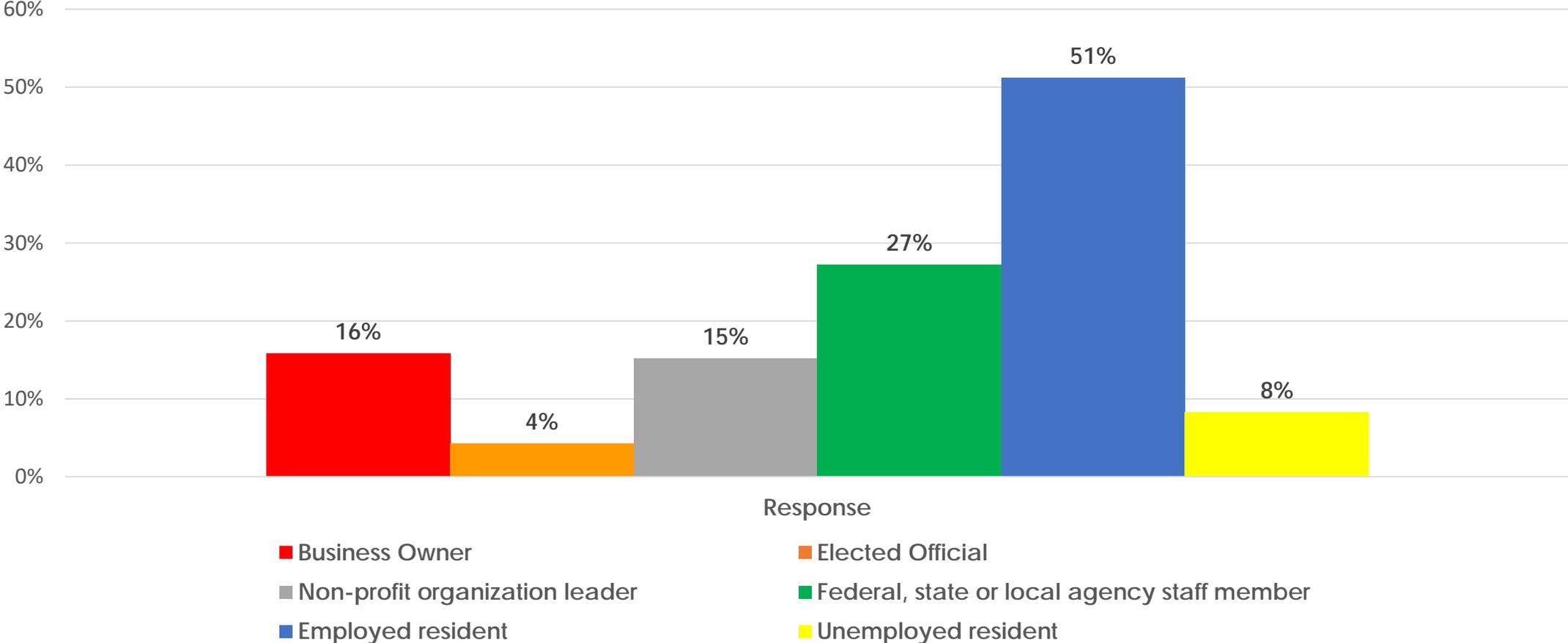
Q9. What are the most effective ways to create more jobs, raise wages, and diversify the economy in the region?



- Creating regional community workgroups to develop and implement new ideas
- Working through established regional economic development groups
- Partnering with local universities and community colleges
- Reducing regulations and tax burdens for business
- Improving quality of life (such as better quality of K-12 school system and high speed internet access)
- Improving access to capital for start-ups

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

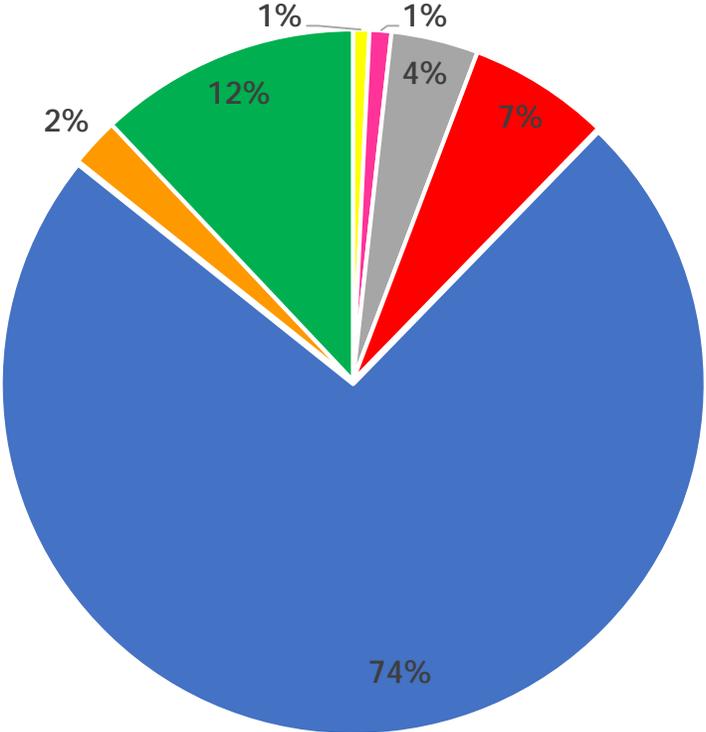
Q10. What affiliations best describe you?



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q11. Please choose what best describes your current employment status.

Responses



- Unemployed, and have not looked for work in the past year
- Unemployed, but have looked for work in the past four weeks
- Part-time employed but would prefer a full-time job
- Employed in a full-time position that does not utilize the skills I received through training or higher education
- Full-time Employed

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Current Employment Status – Question 11

- ❖ I am not in my dream job, but am also not in my dream region. I moved here for my spouse's job and am very lucky to also have found a full-time position. But I am dissatisfied more days than I am satisfied.
- ❖ 2 part-time positions without insurance
- ❖ 2 part-time jobs (60 hour/week + full-time university student)
- ❖ #9 question doesn't apply to a retiree
- ❖ Entrepreneur wanting to establish new businesses and viable economic opportunities for myself and as many others as possible in my area.
- ❖ Underemployed
- ❖ But working part-time
- ❖ Retired but working part-time
- ❖ Full-time employee but travel 100 miles per day to employer
- ❖ Retired, but run a small business
- ❖ Have also worked 3 jobs for 1 year and 2 jobs for 6 years as a single parent with child in college/grad school
- ❖ Semi-retired, work part-time, love it
- ❖ Full-time employed and full-time student
- ❖ Semi-retired business owner/developer

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Current Employment Status – Question 11 (continued)

- ❖ Self employed
- ❖ Stay at home mom
- ❖ Own and employed in my own business
- ❖ Part-time
- ❖ Self-employed
- ❖ Full-time, recently employed outside of our area
- ❖ Small business owner
- ❖ Driving 75 miles to work. Cannot sell my house to move closer to work due to lack of new professionals moving to town.
- ❖ N/A
- ❖ I have to work out of town to get paid what I should.
- ❖ Business owner
- ❖ CEO of Micronic Technologies
- ❖ Working part-time in education
- ❖ Disabled
- ❖ Employed full-time

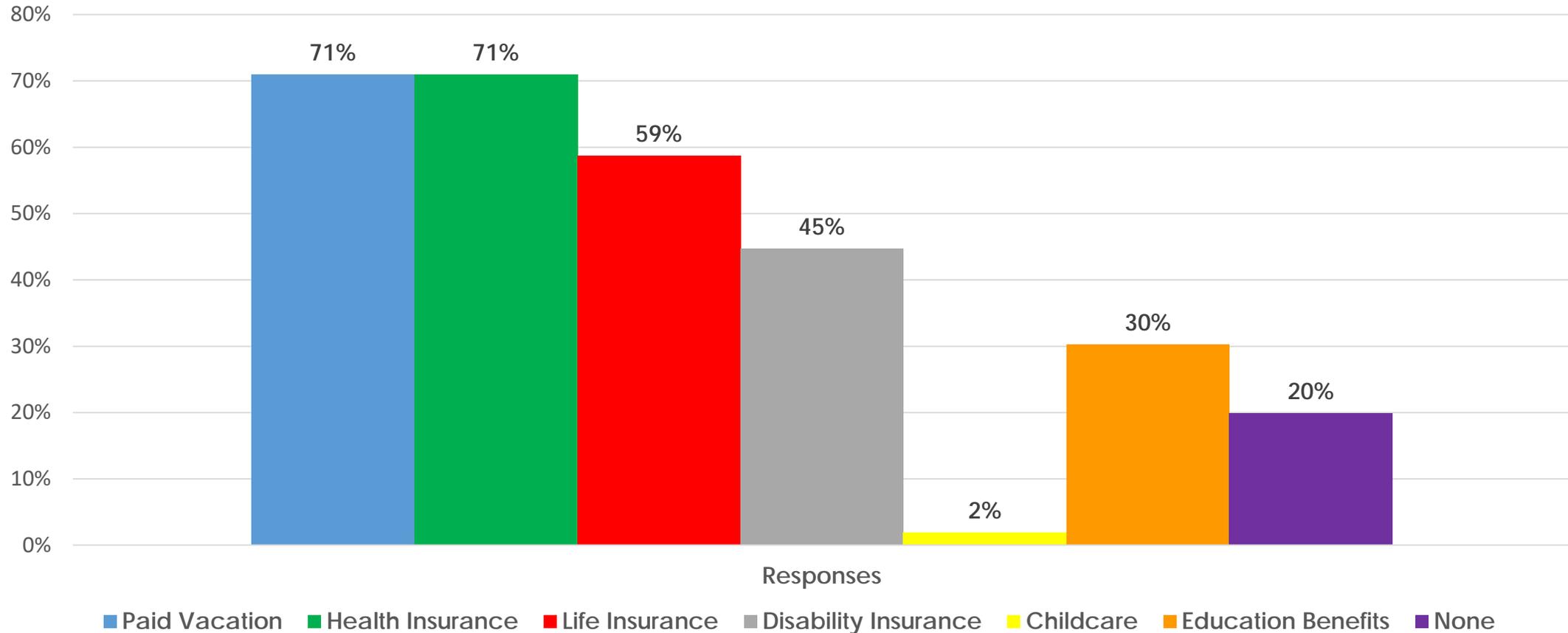
GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Other Responses to Current Employment Status – Question 11 (continued)

- ❖ Full-time student, mother, looking for part-time work to pay for education and provide for needs of children.
- ❖ Struggling business owner
- ❖ Full-time in shrinking market..
- ❖ I am a cosmetologist, with a degree for pharmacy technician.
- ❖ Full-time job but part time hours thanks to ACA
- ❖ Small business owner with part-time jobs to sustain start up capital
- ❖ Full-time employed but have to work part-time jobs to make a living wage
- ❖ Disabled Vet
- ❖ Grandmother that is providing daycare for grandchild
- ❖ Management of large manufacturing facility
- ❖ Retired, own consulting business, still working
- ❖ Retired

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q12. What benefits does your work provide your?



GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q13. What is your zip code?

ZIP CODE	TOWN	TOTAL RESPONDENTS	RESPONDENTS PERCENT OF TOTAL
24382	Wytheville	65	15%
24293	Wise	57	13%
24210, 24211, 24212	Abingdon	36	8%
24266	Lebanon	31	7%
24219	Big Stone Gap	28	7%
24201, 24202	Bristol	21	5%
24273	Norton	13	3%
24360	Max Meadows	13	3%
24228	Clintwood	12	3%
24230	Coeburn	12	3%
24354	Marion	8	2%
24279	Pound	7	2%

GO VA Region One Stakeholders Survey Results

Q14. What is your age?

