

2024 CHATHAM-KENT IMMIGRATION SURVEY



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Chatham-Kent Local Immigration Partnership

CK Immigration Survey - Executive Summary

This report outlines the findings from the 2024 Chatham-Kent Immigration Survey that was developed and released by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's Community Attraction and Promotion (CAP) division and the Chatham-Kent Local Immigration Partnership (CK LIP). The findings from the survey offer a glimpse into immigrant experiences in Chatham-Kent. They will help guide community work to welcome immigrant talent and residents and will help focus the strategic municipal and community efforts to ensure Chatham-Kent is welcoming and inclusive. The findings will also provide insight into whether immigrants intend to stay in Chatham-Kent long-term.

The Chatham-Kent Local Immigration Partnership's Theory of Change strategic plan has the ultimate aim of ensuring immigrant newcomers in Chatham-Kent feel welcomed and valued and are contributing and thriving members of the community. The survey was developed with this goal in mind, with survey results being able to offer insights into key themes such as being welcomed, valued, and contributing. The three strategic priorities identified in CK LIP's strategic plan (Employment, Social Belonging, and Community Supports and Information) are also thematically embedded into survey questions. The survey results will help to update the strategic action plan and determine next steps to be prioritized in the work of CK LIP.

The survey was open to any individual that immigrated to Canada, currently lives in Chatham-Kent and was 16 years of age or older. The survey was open from January 15 to February 19, 2024, hosted on the platform Let's Talk CK, and was available in seven languages: English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Ukrainian, Hindi and Punjabi. Paper copies of the survey were also available upon request. Promotion of the survey relied on social media, news media, and partner organizations to engage clients and networks. In total, 75 immigrants in Chatham-Kent shared their opinions through the completion of the survey. These findings represent a sample of the immigrant population living in Chatham-Kent. All percentages shown are calculated based on a total value of 75 unless indicated otherwise.

Thank you to all survey respondents for sharing your experiences and insights.

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Summary of Findings

Who We Heard From

- 75 responses were received from immigrants living in Chatham-Kent.
- Results indicate that immigrants were more recent to Chatham-Kent than respondents to the 2020 CK Immigration Survey. 29.3% of participants have been living in Chatham-Kent for 12 months or less compared to 15.5% in 2020. Moreover, only 10.7% of survey respondents immigrated to Chatham-Kent 16+ years ago, compared to 19.8% in 2020.
- Survey participants represented all immigration statuses, including immigrants and non-permanent residents. Family class immigrants (28%) was the top admission category among participants.
- Every age group 16+ was represented in the survey with a majority of participants aged 35 to 44 (38.6%).
- When it comes to racial or ethnic affiliation, 28% of participants described themselves as South Asian, with White (21.3%) and Black (13.3%) being the next largest group identities selected.
- More than 21 different languages were mentioned as being spoken at home, with English accounting for 41.3%.

Welcomed, Valued and Connected

- Results show that participants feel welcomed in Chatham-Kent, with the average response being 6.9 out of 10 (on a scale of 0 to 10 asking how welcomed do you feel in Chatham-Kent).
- When it comes to how valued survey participants feel in Chatham-Kent, the average response was 6.4 out of 10.
- Participants were also asked how connected they feel in Chatham-Kent; the average response was 6.1 out of 10.

Education and Employment

- Survey participants are highly educated, with 85.3% having completed post-secondary education.
- A majority of respondents (68%) are employed.
- Participants work in a broad range of sectors, with healthcare and social assistance (13.3%), financial and insurance (9.3%), manufacturing (9.3%), professional, scientific and technical (6.7%), and public administration (6.7%) being the top 5 sectors of employment.
- Over 75% of participants who were employed felt that they were in a job that corresponds to their education, training, or experience.

- When it comes to volunteering in the community, 41.3% of participants said that they currently volunteer. 2.7% of those who volunteer indicated it helped them access employment, and 10.7% indicated it assisted them in making social connections.

19 Characteristics of a Welcoming Community

- Findings show that Chatham-Kent is doing well in the following areas:
 - Providing access to inclusive public spaces, facilities, and programs (68.1%).
 - Positive Indigenous-Immigrant relations and understanding (61.8%).
 - Ongoing commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression (60%).
 - Positive attitudes towards immigrants of all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds (58.4%).
 - Immigrant-responsive police services and justice systems (56.6%).
- Participants noted that Chatham-Kent can improve in the following areas:
 - Access to transportation (80%).
 - Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities (69%).
 - Access to suitable healthcare, including mental health care (57.3%).
 - Access to immigrant-serving agencies that meet immigrants' needs (54.6%).
 - Access to affordable, adequate, and suitable housing (54.2%).

Community Supports

- Participants learned about services in Chatham-Kent through family and friends (62.3%), social media (34.8%), LivingCK.ca (27.5%), and community centres (20.3%).
- The 6 most accessed services are transportation (90.7%), healthcare (89.3%), housing (86.7%), recreation/sports (82.7%), library (80%), and financial services (80%).
- Services that were rated the highest (those that received the highest percentage of excellent, very good or good ratings combined) were library (88.3%), Arts/Culture ie. CK Museum, Chatham Capitol Theatre (72%), municipal services (65.5%), education (64.4%), and financial services (63.3%).

Discrimination

- Over 25.7% of participants had experienced discrimination or being treated unfairly by others in Chatham-Kent compared to 35% in 2020 and 4% said they prefer not to answer.

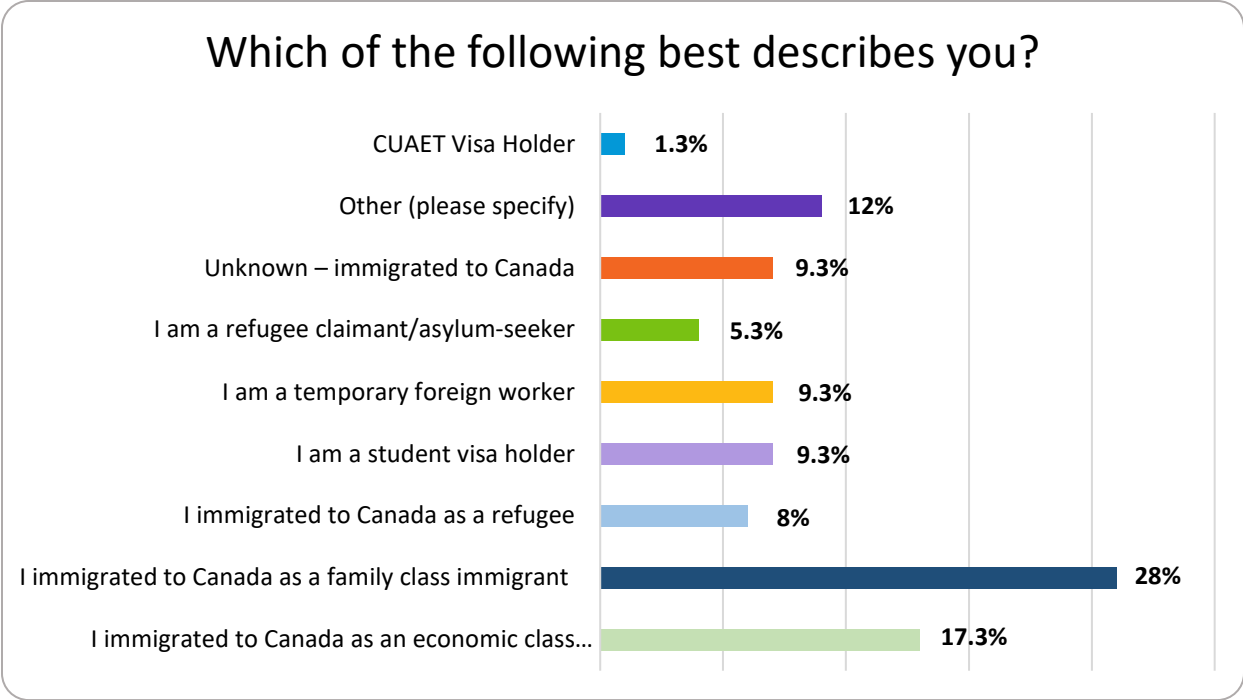
Next Steps

The findings from the survey will be shared widely, including with CK LIP Council, the CK LIP Immigrant Advisory Group, community stakeholders, community members, and all three levels of government. Findings from the survey will continue to help inform CK LIP about priority focuses in the coming years, and will provide key information to help CK LIP Council prioritize

activities around the community action plan. CK LIP will continue to build off these findings and engage the Chatham-Kent community to learn more about the immigrant newcomer experience. CK LIP will also continue to use its social media channels to share key findings, as well as information and resources to improve the immigrant newcomer settlement experience in Chatham-Kent.

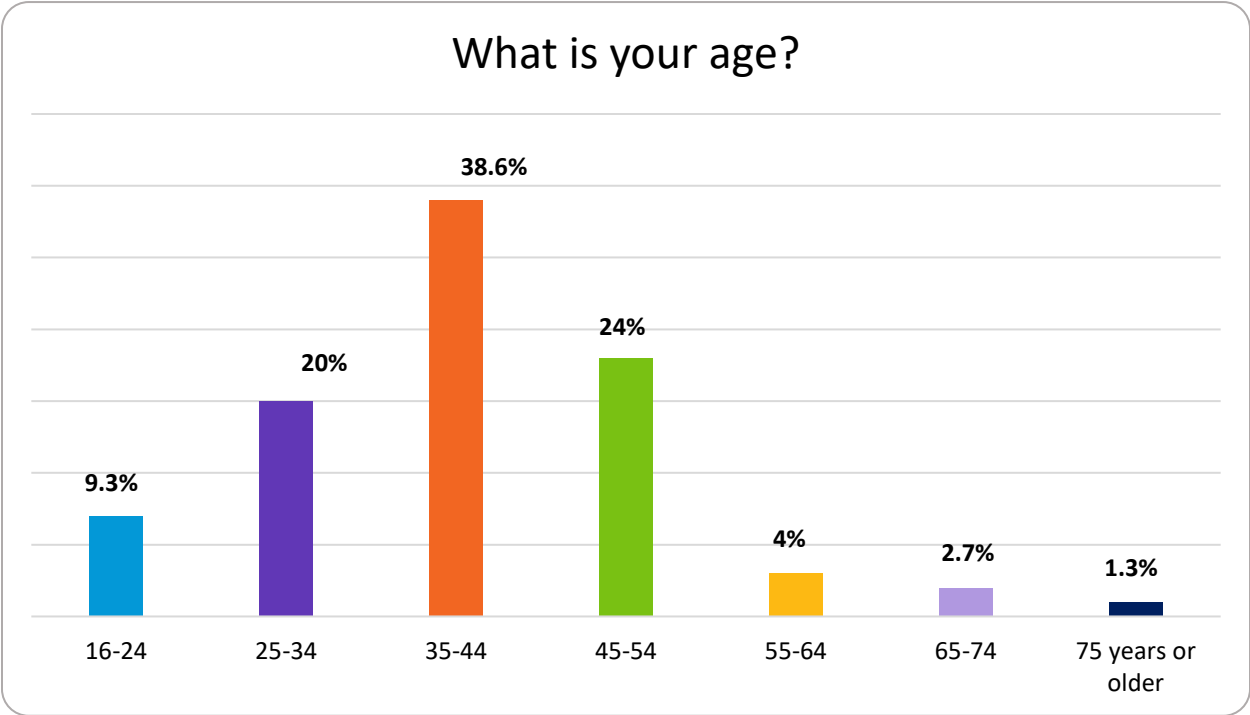
Demographics of Respondents
Immigration Admission Category

Survey participants represented all major categories of immigration, including both permanent and temporary residents. Family class immigrants (28%), economic class immigrants (17.3%), and student visa holders, temporary foreign workers, and unknown (9.3% each) were the top five categories among participants.



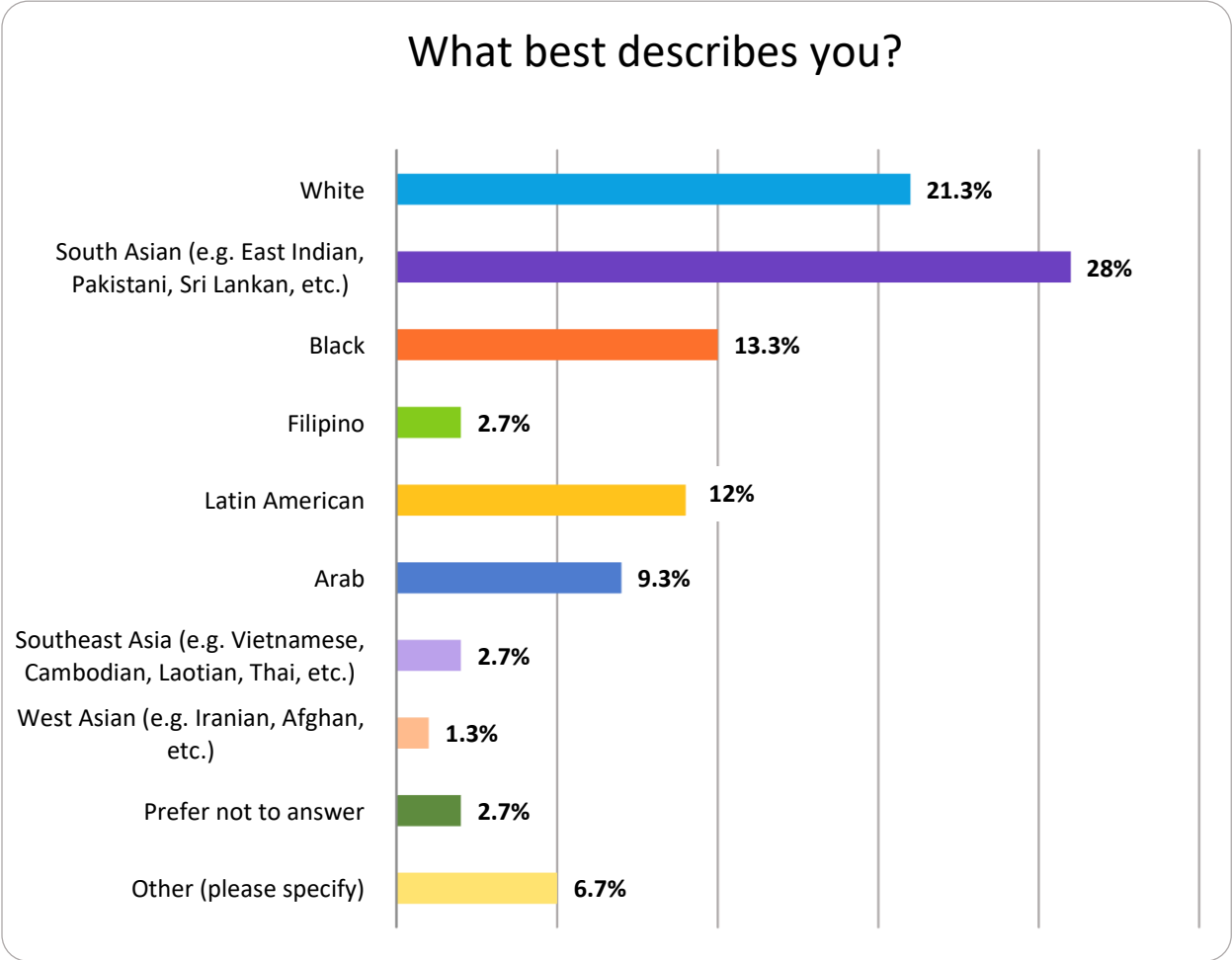
Age

Every age group 16+ was represented in the survey with a majority of participants (38.6%) aged 35 to 44.



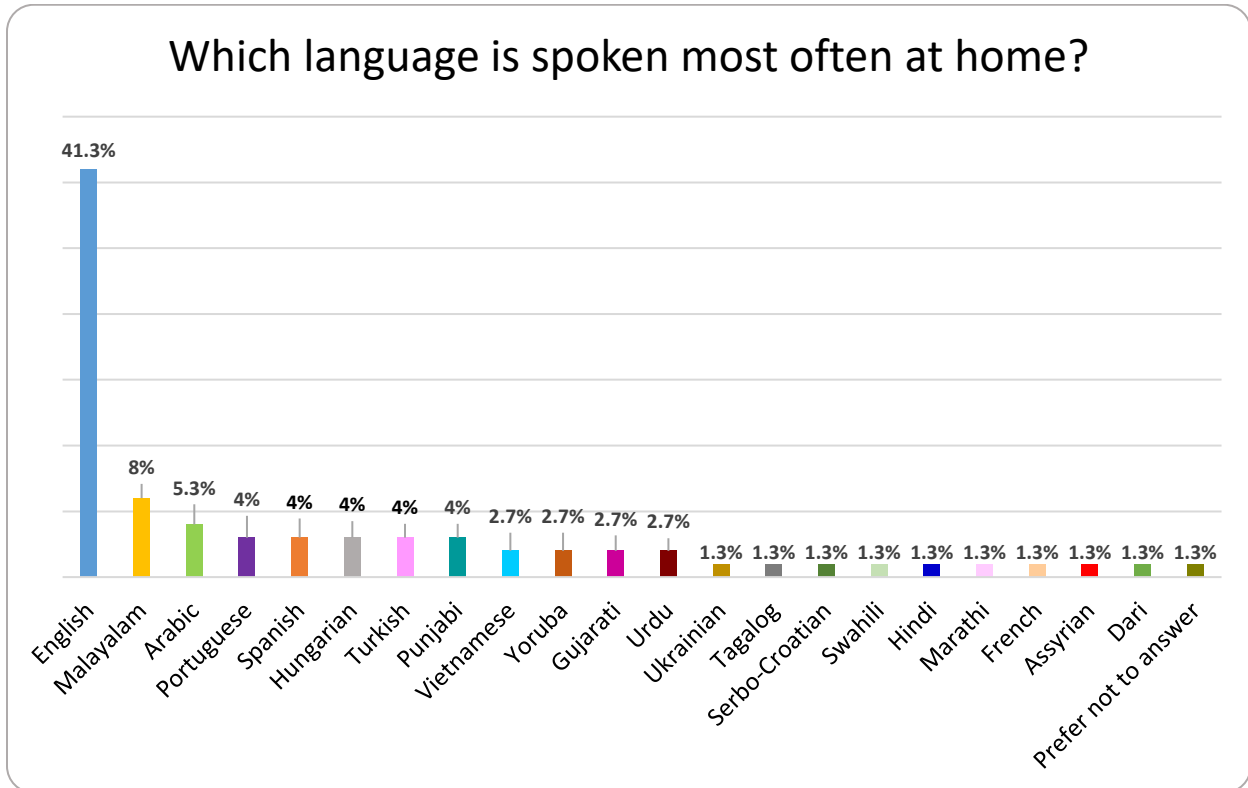
Racial or Ethnic Affiliation

Survey results showed that the three largest group identities selected were South Asian (28%), White (21.3%), and Black (13.3%).



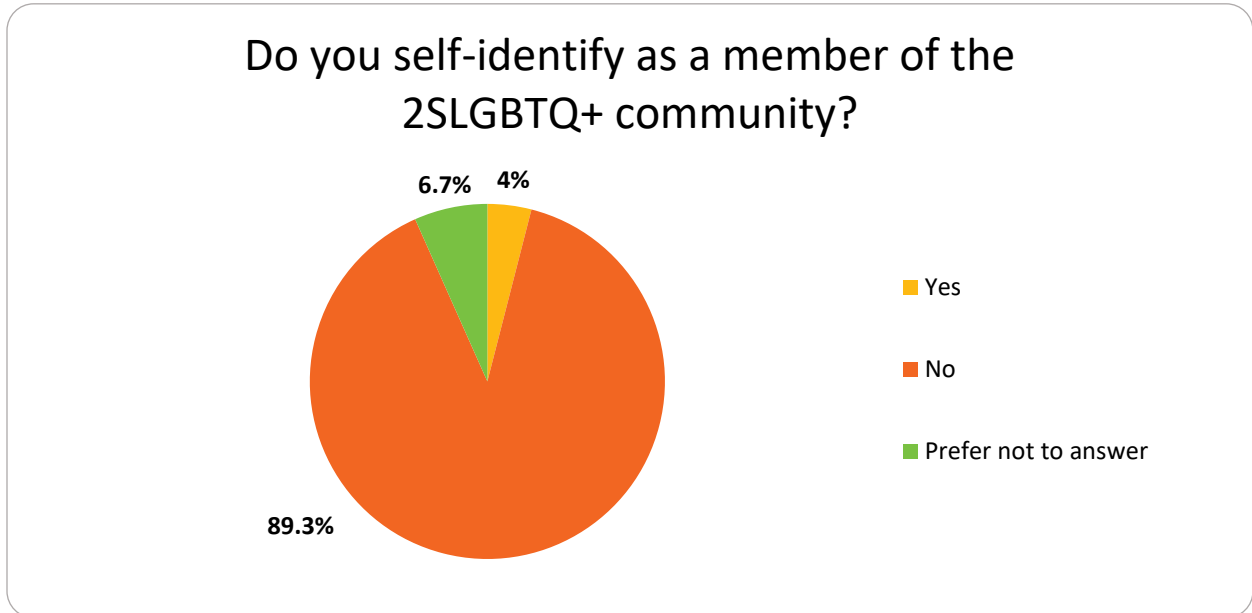
Language Spoken Most Often at Home

Participants speak one or more of the following 21 different languages at home, with English accounting for 41.3% of participants' main language spoken at home. The remaining 58.7% noted a language other than English as spoken most often at home, with Malayalam (8%), Arabic (5.3%), and Portuguese, Spanish, Hungarian, Turkish and Punjabi (4%) being the most common.



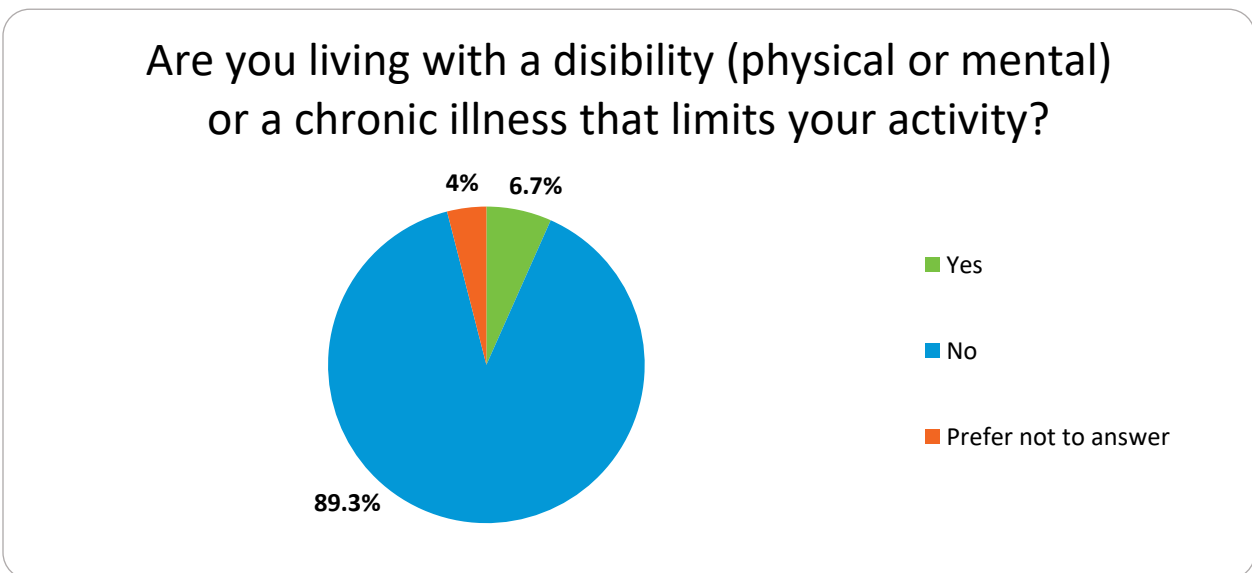
2SLGBTQ+ Community

Survey results showed that 4% of participants self-identified as a member of the 2SLGBTQ+ community (two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning), while 89.3% said they do not and 6.7% preferred not to answer.



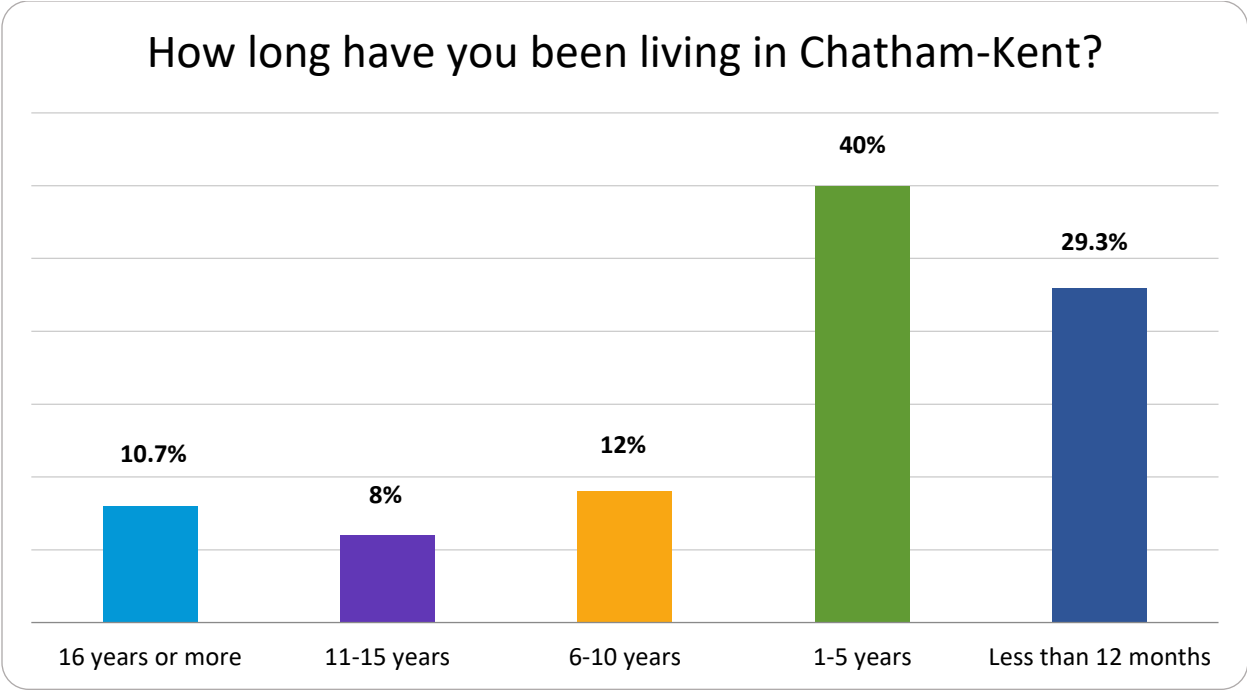
Living with a Disability or Chronic Illness

Survey results showed that 6.7% of participants said that they are living with a disability or a chronic illness (physical or mental) that limits their activity, while 89.3% said they are not and 4% preferred not to answer.



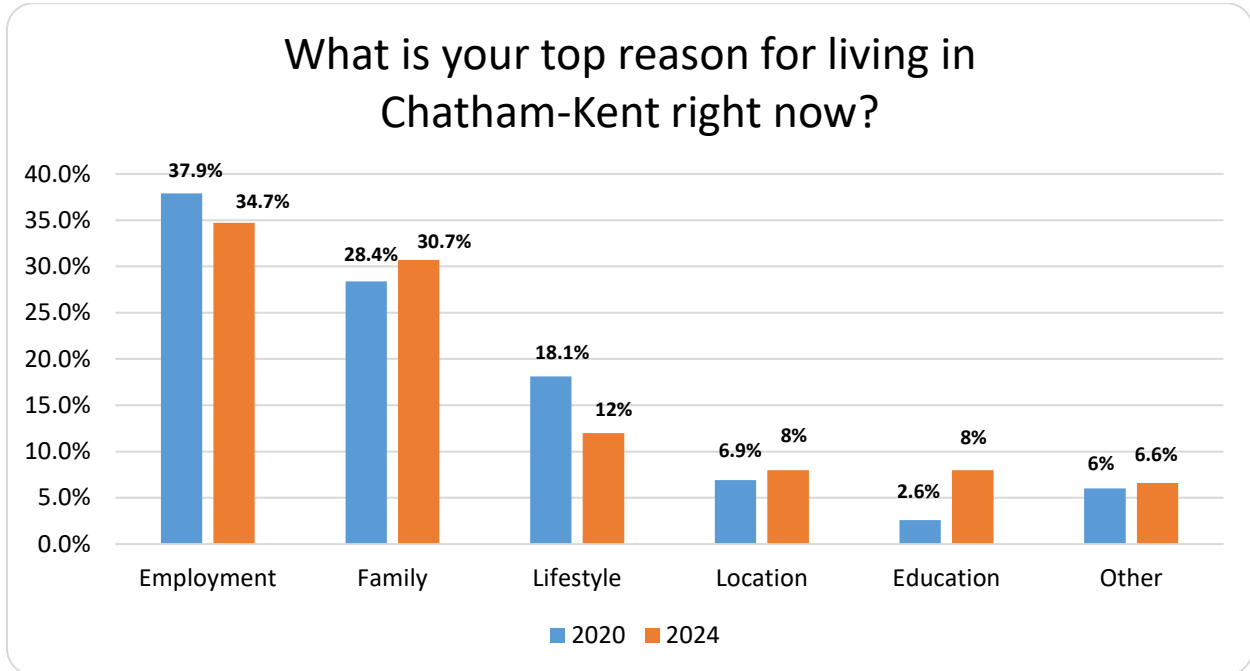
Length of Time Living in Chatham-Kent

When it comes to length of time living in Chatham-Kent, 69.3% of participants have been living in Chatham-Kent for five years or less, a considerably higher amount than in 2020. Comparably, 10.7% have been in the community for 16 years or more.



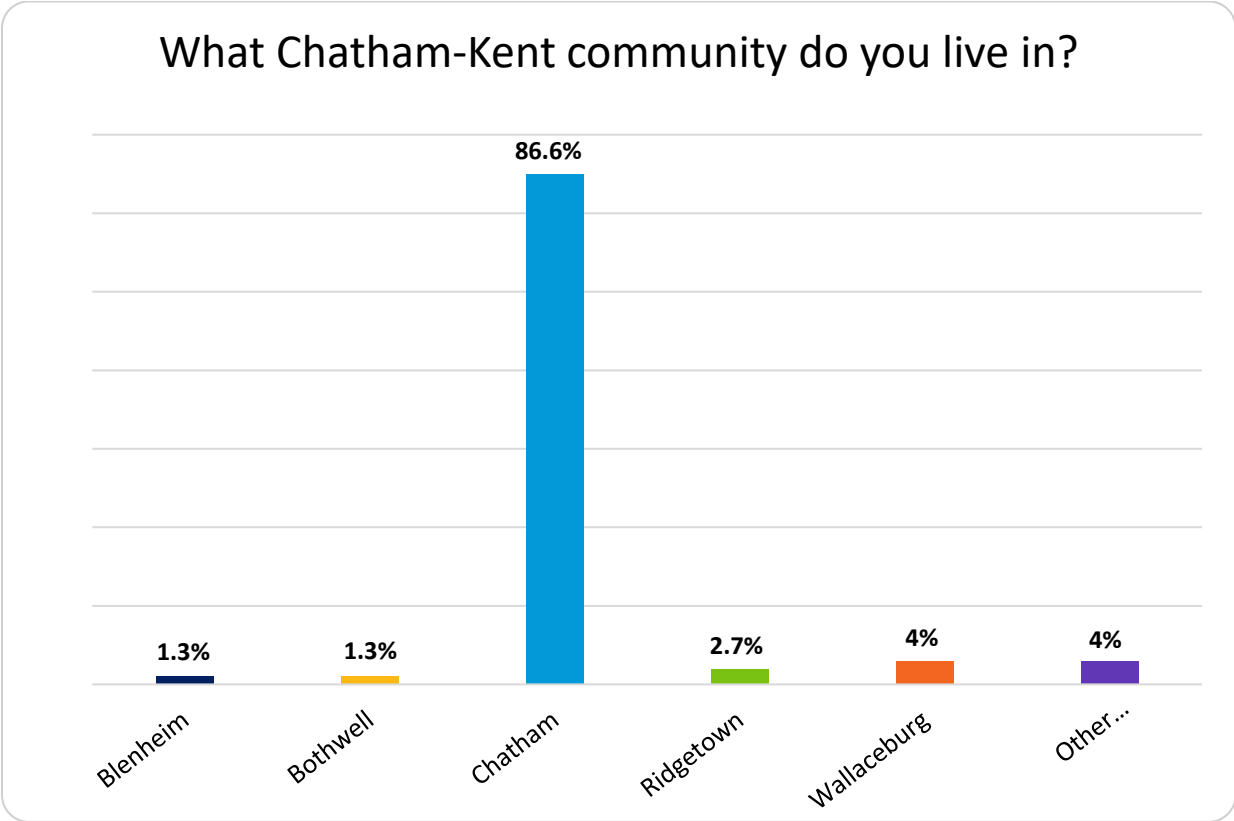
Top Reason for Living in Chatham-Kent

Participants noted that employment (34.7%), family (30.7%), and lifestyle (12%) are the top three reasons why they are choosing to live in Chatham-Kent right now compared to 37.9%, 28.4% and 18.1% respectively in 2020. Answers in the “Other” category included mentions of housing affordability. The data below displays the responses from 2020 and 2024.



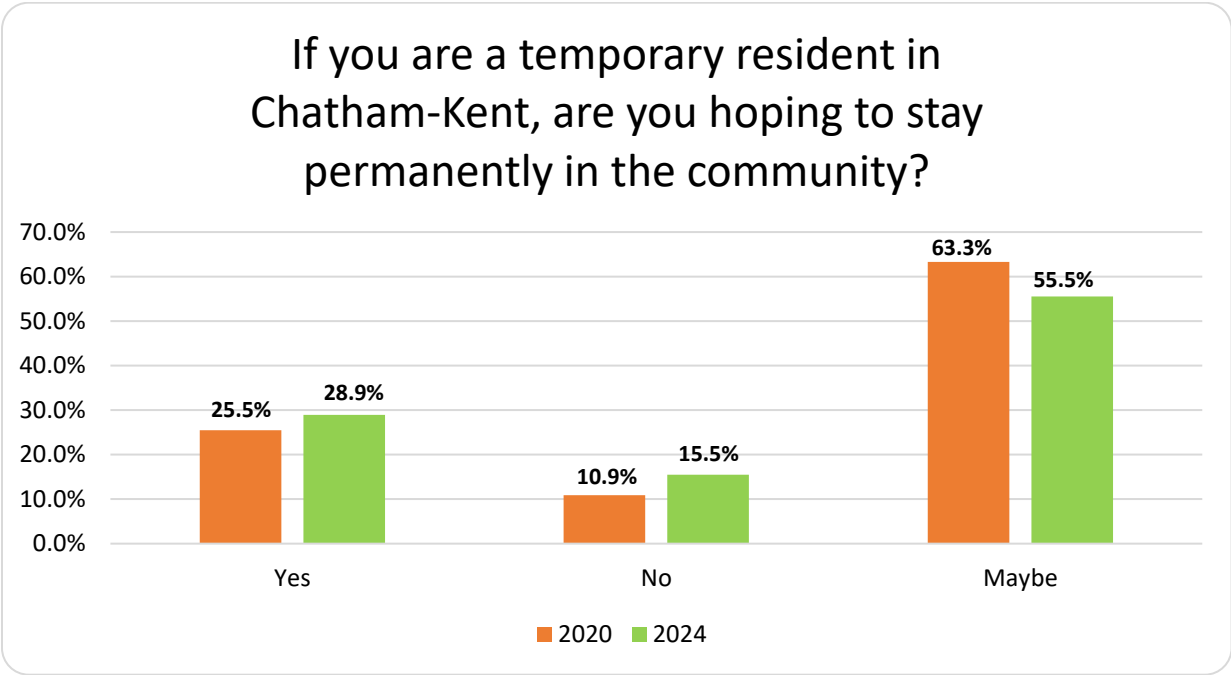
Chatham-Kent Community of Residence

Participants represent nine communities in Chatham-Kent, with 86.6% of participants living in Chatham. The remaining 13.4% live in other communities throughout the Municipality, with Wallaceburg (4%) and Ridgetown (2.7%) being the top two.



Intention to Stay in Chatham-Kent

To better understand if participants view Chatham-Kent as their permanent home, survey participants who consider themselves a temporary resident in Chatham-Kent were asked if they are hoping to stay permanently in the community. The use of the term *temporary resident* in this question is not related to an immigration status but is a personal perception of respondents. Results show that 60% of survey participants currently consider themselves temporary residents in Chatham-Kent compared to 47.4% in 2020. Of the participants who consider themselves temporary residents, 55.5% said that they are hoping to stay permanently in Chatham-Kent and 28.9% said maybe. Meanwhile, 15.5% said no, they do not hope to stay permanently in Chatham-Kent. There is an increase in respondents who hope to stay permanently in Chatham-Kent from 2020, as well as an increase in respondents who do not wish to stay permanently.



Participants who said that they were temporary residents in Chatham-Kent, were asked to share why they may wish to stay in or leave the community.

Intend to Stay Permanently

Of the 45 respondents who indicated they are temporary residents (60%), twenty-five participants (55.5%) said, yes, they are hoping to stay in the community. Those individuals mentioned several similar themes for why they wish to remain in Chatham-Kent, including:

- Welcoming community (11)
- Lifestyle (3)
- Employment (3)
- Safety (3)
- Opportunities (2)
- Climate (2)
- Family (1)
- Education (1)

The below quotes were provided by survey participants:

- “We love the CK community for different reasons. We love our neighborhood, my kids are happy going to school here, we have work here, the weather, the river, etc.”
- “Welcoming - I can get that sense of warmth and welcoming atmosphere from how everyone receives me (and other newcomers).”
- “It is a safe community, people are friendly, no traffic jams, bigger houses and most importantly the town is ripe for more investments and job opportunities.”
- “Chatham is a very similar to the small community I came from. The lifestyle here was something I could relate with so I decided to stay back after my graduation from college. Although my friends have left to pursue their permanent residencies in other cities. A lot more people will stay in Chatham if they can get their permanent residency easily after studying.”

May Stay Permanently

The thirteen participants (28.9%) that said, maybe, they were hoping to stay in Chatham-Kent also mentioned several key themes, including:

- Depends on employment (5)
- Fewer educational opportunities (1)
- Lack of diversity in the workplace (2)
- Welcoming community (1)

The below quotes were provided by survey participants:

- “Job opportunities will be a reason for staying or leaving.”
- “Better weather than other parts of Ontario. Not too big neither too small. A lovely community to raise kids.”
- “Honestly, I'm not seeing a lot of change involving diversity, equity and so forth. There's a lot of nepotism here for professional growth and there's not a lot to do for both adults and children in the surrounding communities.”
- “Because of education, I want to continue my study, but here is no university, and the college still does not have all the fields of study.”
- “Depending on job opportunities I might choose to stay for longer.”

Not Planning to Stay Permanently

Seven participants (15.5%) said, no, they are not hoping to stay in Chatham-Kent. Those participants mentioned reasons such as:

- Limited employment opportunities (1)
- Limited available housing (1)
- Limited recreational opportunities (1)
- Transportation (1)
- Local government (2)
- High cost of living (2)

The below quotes were provided by survey participants:

- “Less things to do, higher daily expenses, less available housing, poor public transportation.”
- “No job opportunities at all very limited scope.”
- “Extremely high taxes, federal and local. It’s insane the property taxes here.”

19 Characteristics of a Welcoming Community

[Pathways to Prosperity](#) (P2P) is an alliance dedicated to fostering welcoming communities that promote the economic, social, and civic integration of migrants and minorities in Canada.

Pathways to Prosperity defines a welcoming community as a location that has the capacity to meet the needs and promote inclusion of newcomers, and the machinery in place to produce and support these capacities.¹

19 Characteristics of a Welcoming Community

1. Access to Affordable, Adequate, and Suitable Housing
2. Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities
3. Access to Suitable Health Care Including Mental Health Care
4. Positive Attitudes Toward Immigrants of All Racial, Cultural and Religious Backgrounds
5. Access to Immigrant-Serving Agencies that Meet Immigrants' Needs
6. Access to Transportation
7. Educational Opportunities
8. Ongoing Commitment to Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression
9. Access to Services and Supports for French-Speaking Immigrants by French Speakers
10. Immigrant-Responsive Municipal Features and Services
11. Coordination and Collaboration Among Community Organizations and Different Levels of Government Working Toward Welcoming Communities
12. Equitable Neighbourhoods
13. Opportunities to Form and Join Social and Community Networks
14. Immigrant-Responsive Police Services and Justice System
15. Access to Inclusive Public Spaces, Facilities, and Programs
16. Positive Indigenous-Immigrant Relations and Understanding
17. Access to Diverse Religious and Ethnocultural Organizations
18. Civic and Political Participation Opportunities
19. Equitable Media Coverage, Representation, and Content

The Chatham-Kent Local Immigration Partnership is dedicated to creating a more welcoming community and continues to measure Chatham-Kent's welcome-ability using the [19 characteristics of a Welcoming Community](#). Survey participants were asked to rate how Chatham-Kent is doing when it comes to each of the 19 characteristics, by giving a rating of excellent, very good, good, acceptable, or poor.

¹ Esses, V. M., Hamilton, L. K., Aslam, A., & Ribeiro Prado Barros, P. (2023). [Measuring Welcome Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them](#). Report prepared for the Integration Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Findings show that Chatham-Kent is doing well in the following areas:

- Providing access to inclusive public spaces, facilities, and programs (68.1%)
- Positive Indigenous-Immigrant relations and understanding (61.8%)
- Ongoing commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression (60%)
- Positive attitudes towards immigrants of all racial, cultural and religious backgrounds (58.4%)
- Immigrant-responsive police services and justice systems (56.6%)

Compared to 2020 where survey respondents indicated Chatham-Kent was doing well with safety, the opportunities for the use of public space and recreation facilities, suitable health care, and accessible healthcare.

These rankings were based off the highest numbers of participants who answered excellent, very good, or good.

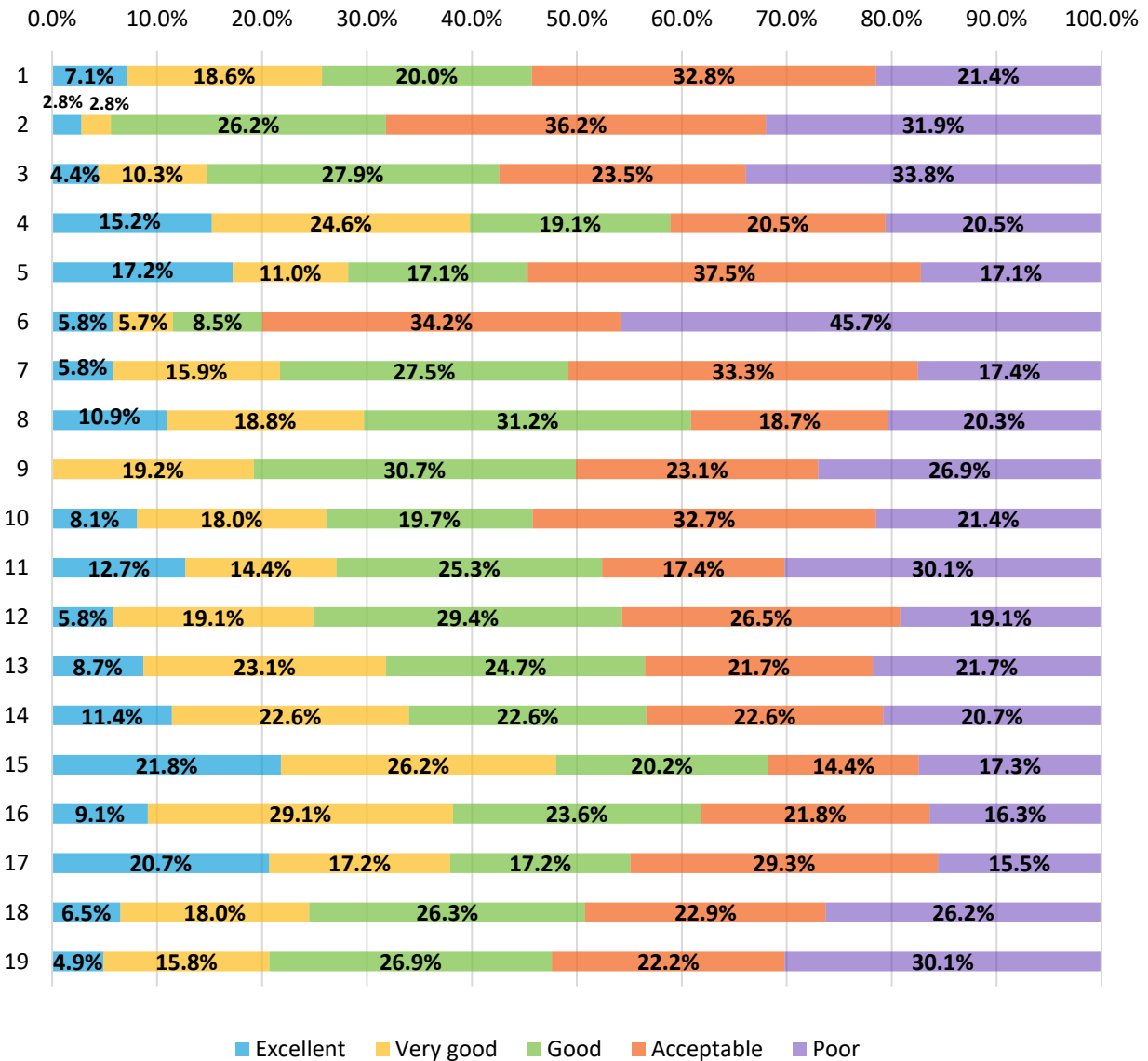
Participants noted that Chatham-Kent can improve in the following areas:

- Access to transportation (80%)
- Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities (69%)
- Access to suitable healthcare, including mental health care (57.3%)
- Access to immigrant-serving agencies that meet immigrants' needs (54.6%)
- Access to affordable, adequate and suitable housing (54.2%)

Comparably, in 2020, survey respondents indicated Chatham-Kent could improve in accessible public transit, available public transit, political participation opportunities, and employment opportunities.

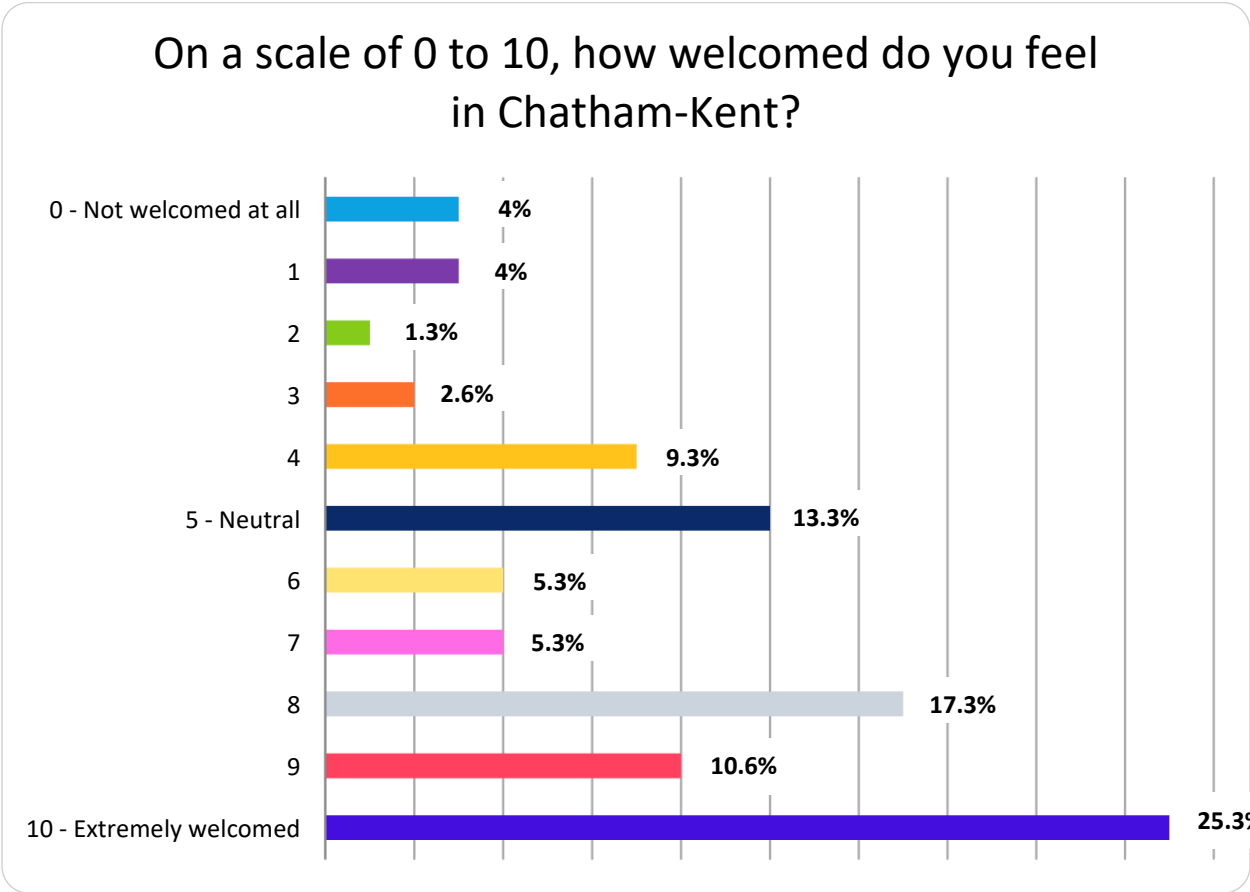
These rankings were based off the highest numbers of participants who answered acceptable or poor.

Please rate Chatham-Kent in each of the following 19 Characteristics of a Welcoming Community



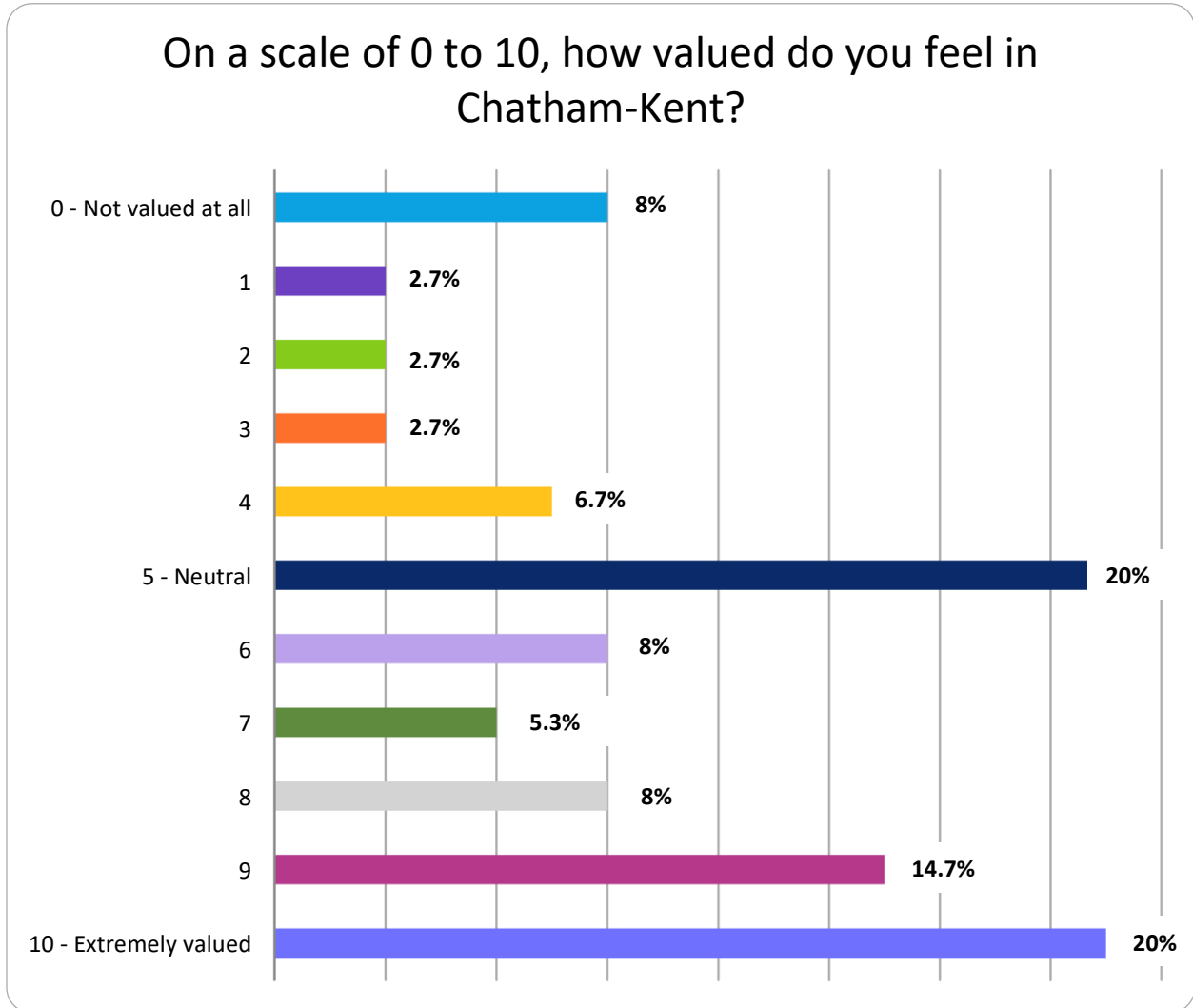
Feeling Welcomed, Valued and Connected in Chatham-Kent
Welcomed

Ensuring immigrants in Chatham-Kent feel welcomed and valued is a key goal of [CK LIP's Theory of Change strategic plan](#). To better understand how welcomed immigrants feel in the community, survey participants were asked to share how welcomed they feel in Chatham-Kent. For the purpose of this survey, welcomed is defined by feeling accepted and supported by the services and opportunities that will help you integrate and prosper in the community. This question was asked on a scale of zero to 10, with zero being not welcomed at all, five being neutral, and 10 being extremely welcomed. The results showed that overall, participants feel welcomed in Chatham-Kent, with the average response being 6.9 out of 10. This is consistent with responses from 2020, where the average response to this same question was 7.1 out of 10. Of particular note, 58.6% of participants gave a rating of 7 or higher, with 25.3% of participants responding 10 out of 10; an increase from 2020 by almost 3%.



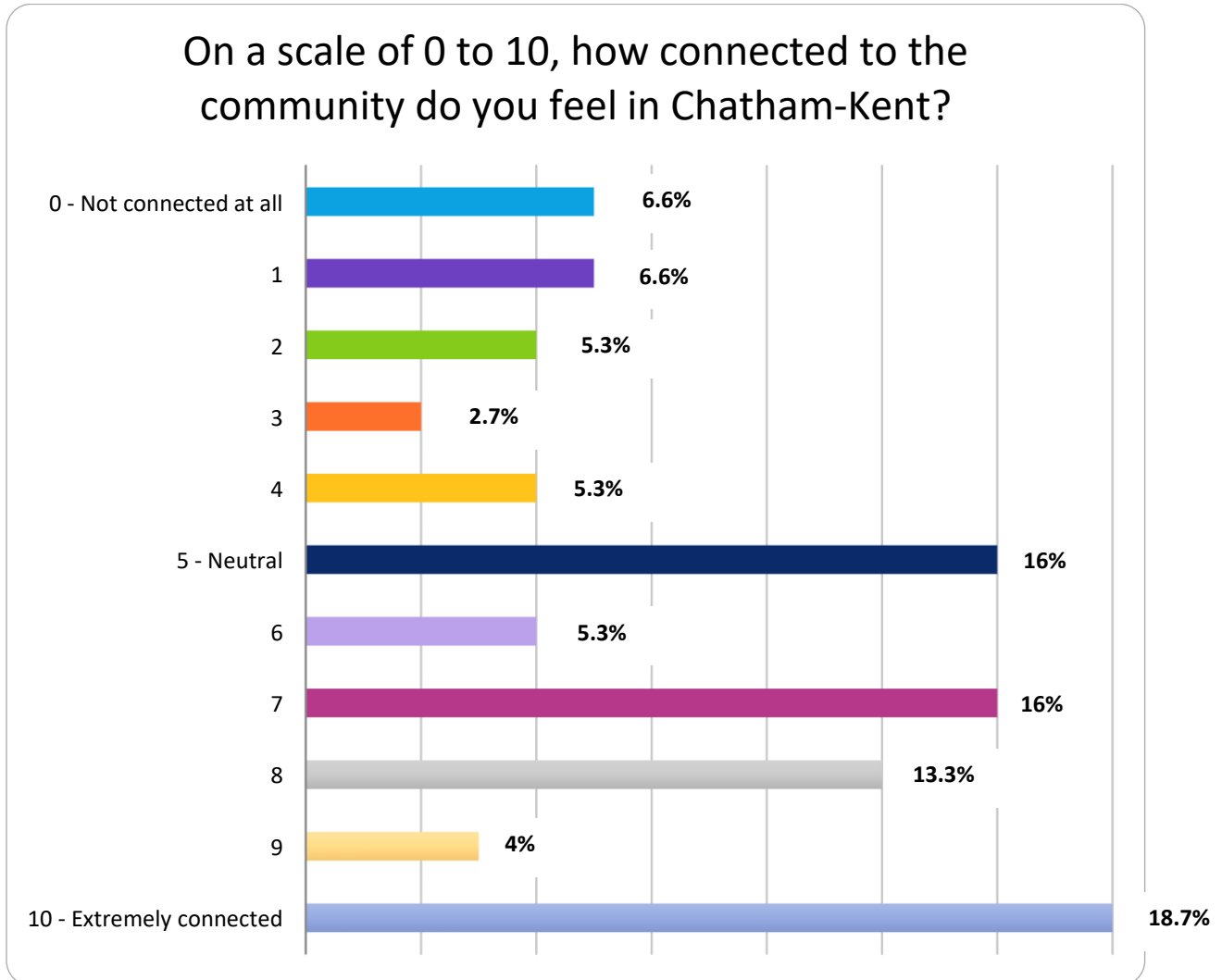
Valued

With the same scale system as the Welcomed question above, participants were asked to share how valued they feel in Chatham-Kent on a scale of zero to 10. For the purpose of this survey, valued is defined as feeling respected and appreciated in the community. The average response was 6.4 out of 10. Of particular note, 48% of participants selected a rating of 7 or higher, while 20% said 5 (neutral) and 20% responded 10 out of 10. Comparably, in 2020, the average response to the same question was 6.7 out of 10 with 56.9% selecting a rating of 7 or higher.



Connected

Participants were asked to share how connected they feel to Chatham-Kent. For the purpose of this survey, connected is defined as feeling part of the community through social connections (i.e. Community groups, volunteer positions). The average response was 6.1 out of 10, an increase from 5.8 out of 10 in 2020. 52% of participants giving a rating of seven or higher and 16% giving a five (neutral) rating. 18.7% gave a rating of 10 out of 10, a considerable increase from 11.2% in 2020.



Participants were asked to share what makes them feel welcomed, valued, and connected (respectively) in Chatham-Kent. Feedback was received from 66 participants. The common themes mentioned by participants included:

- CK as a welcoming community promoting social belonging
- Employment
- Absence of discrimination

- Community events
- Community services and settlement supports
- Local government
- Diversity
- Housing
- Cultural community groups
- Recognition of immigrant contributions
- Diversity
- Opportunities

Of note, 29 survey respondents (38.6%) indicated that the Chatham-Kent community as a whole makes them feel welcomed, valued and connected.

Below are responses provided by survey participants:

- “Affordable living, Great people, Small town advantages.”
- “Welcomed: Friendly community. Valued: Recognition for contributions. Connected: Local events.”
- “Making friends, seeing my kids integrate makes me feel welcomed; having a meaningful job (valued); getting involved in community events (connected).”
- “Todos me respetan, me escuchan y tratan sin discriminación, me hacen sentir en familia.” Translation: Everyone respects me, listens to me and treats me without discrimination; they make me feel like family.

Participants were asked what would make them feel more welcomed, valued, and connected (respectively) in Chatham-Kent. Feedback was received from 56 participants. Once again, several key themes were mentioned in the responses of participants, including:

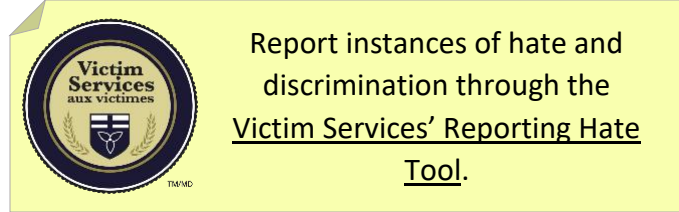
- More supports for immigrant entrepreneurs
- Temporary to permanent resident pathways and supports
- Community events
- Multicultural activities
- Diversity, equity and inclusion work
- More accessible public transportation
- Support from local government
- Newcomer supports
- Recreational activities
- Employment opportunities
- Opportunities to engage with CK residents/locals
- Eradication of discrimination
- Affordable childcare

Below are responses provided by survey participants:

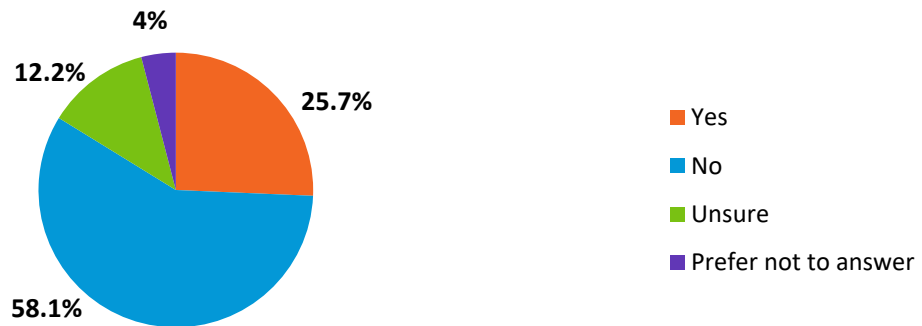
- “Work places to be more considerate and adaptive to needs of immigrants e.g. allowing for longer periods of vacation or providing places of worship.”
- “I feel welcomed but I put 5 out of 10 because sometime and some places don’t feel welcoming.”
- “Not insisting on a Canadian job experience during job interviews.”

Experiences of Discrimination

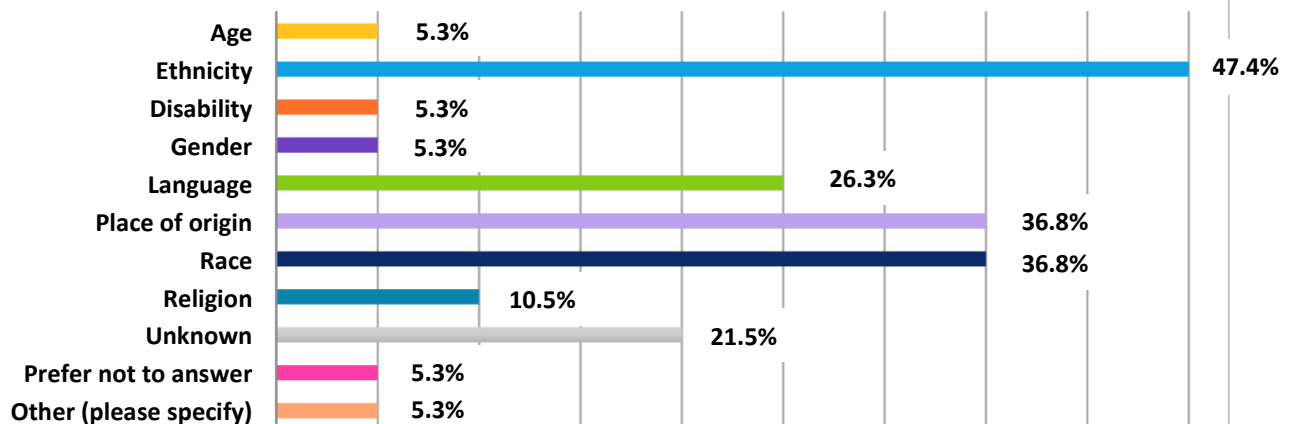
19 participants (25.7%) had experienced discrimination or being treated unfairly by others in Chatham-Kent, making the denominator of this data 19. Meanwhile, 58.1% of participants said no, they had not experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly in Chatham-Kent, 12.2% said they were unsure, and 4% said they prefer not to answer. The top reasons for the acts of discrimination or being treated unfairly were ethnicity, place of origin, and race. Participants were able to select multiple reasons for the acts of discrimination.



Have you experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others in Chatham-Kent?

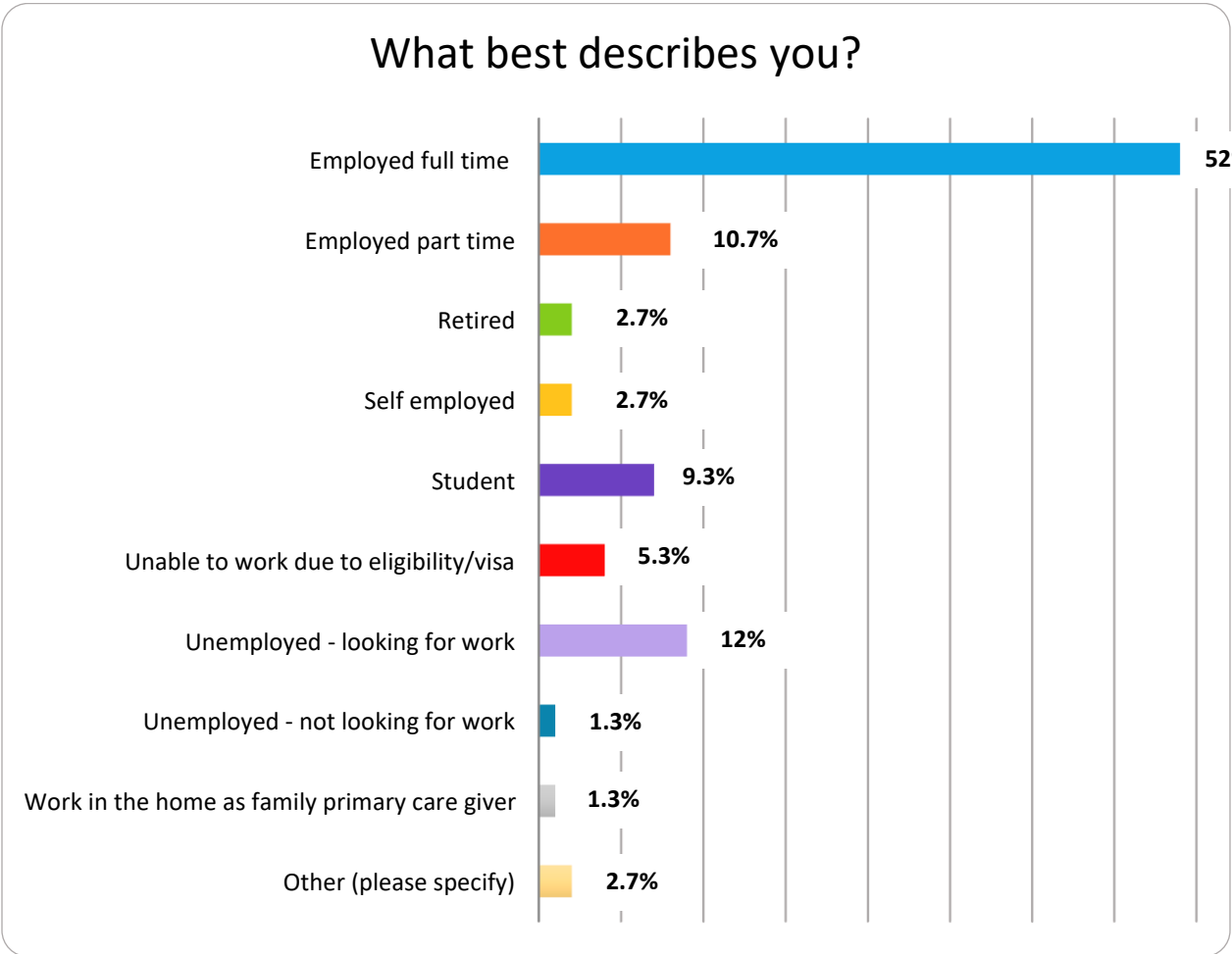


If you have experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others in Chatham-Kent, what were the reasons?



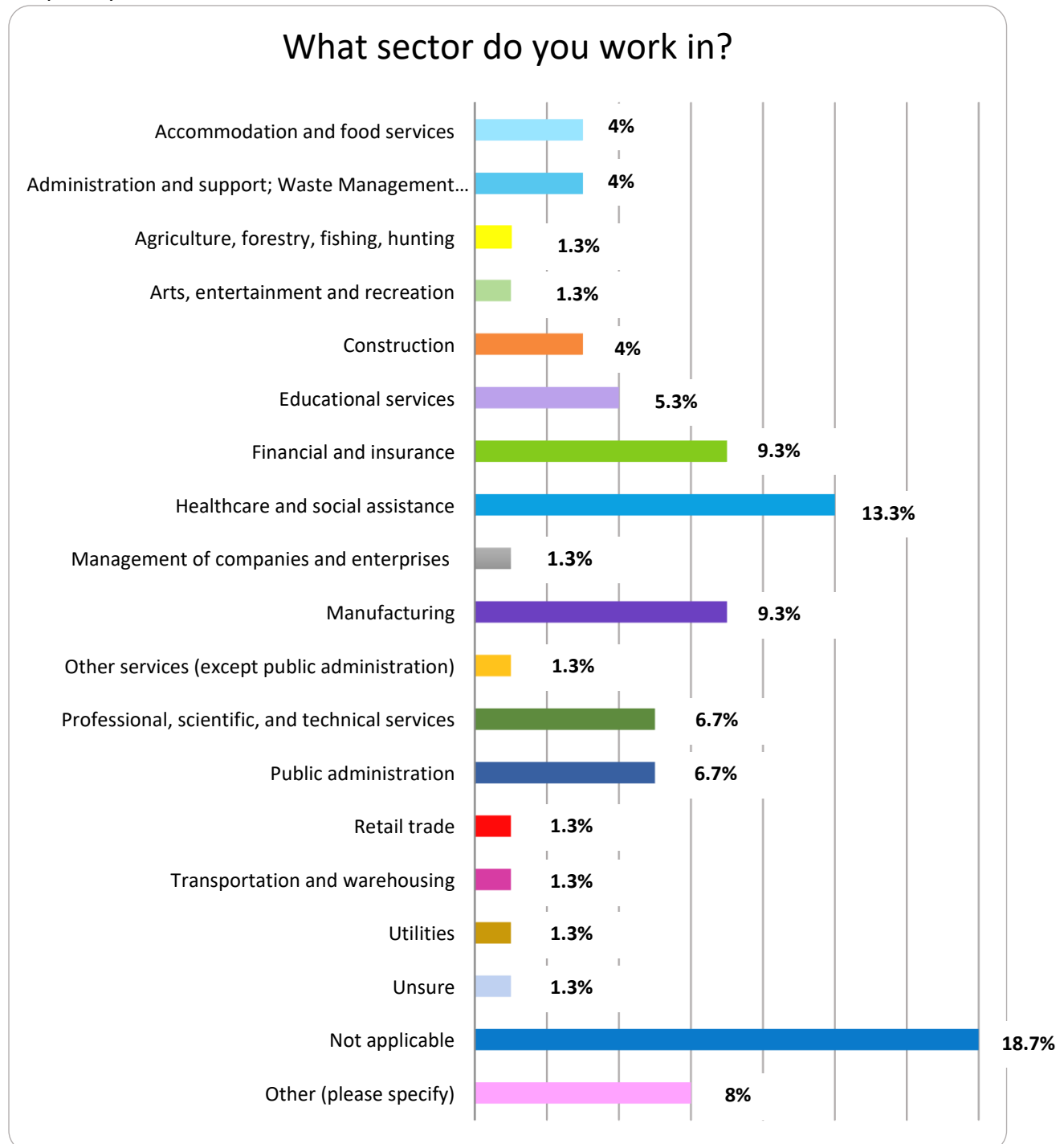
Contributing
Employment Status

A majority of respondents (68%) are employed, with 52% being employed full time, 10.7% employed part time, 2.7% self-employed, and 1.3% work in the home as a family primary caregiver. Meanwhile, 9.3% of participants are students and 12% are currently unemployed and looking for work.



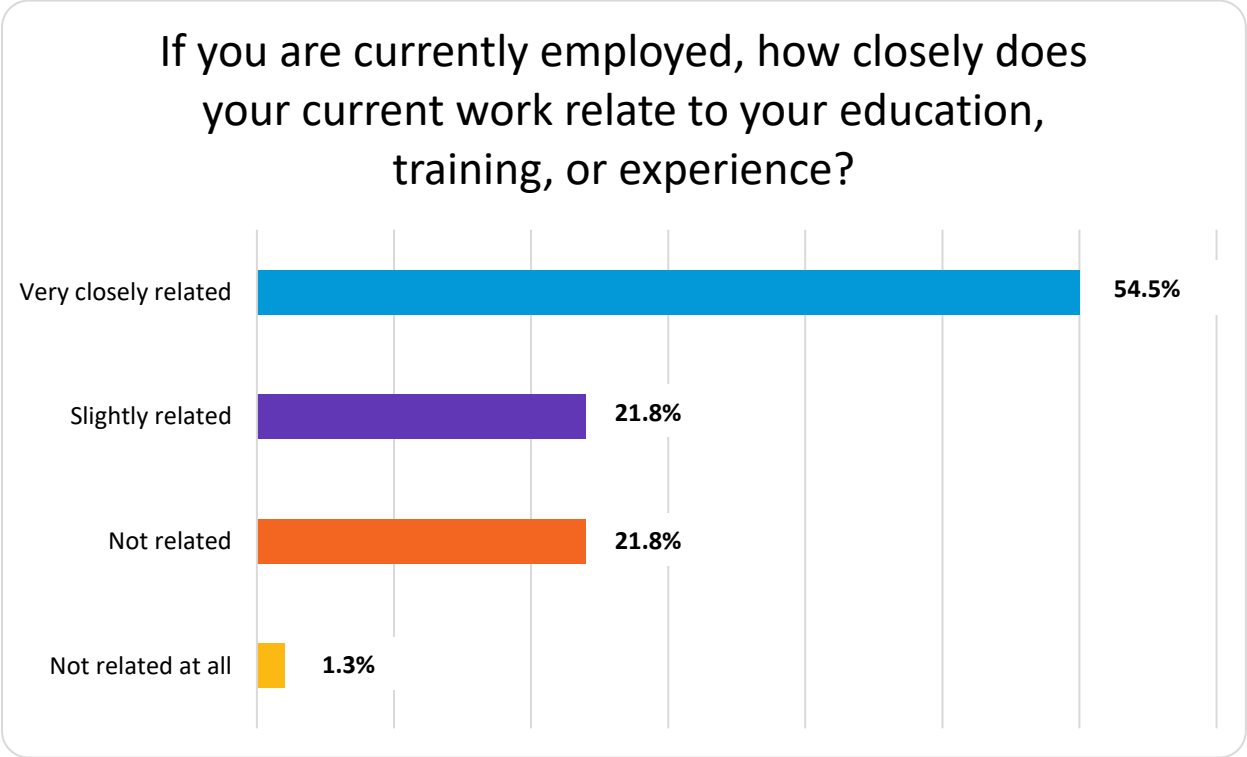
Employment Sectors

Participants work in a broad range of sectors, with healthcare and social assistance (13.3%), financial and insurance (9.3%), manufacturing (9.3%), professional, scientific and technical (6.6%), and public administration (6.6%) being the top 5 sectors of employment. Those who indicated “other” work in sectors such as law enforcement, telecommunications and travel and hospitality services.



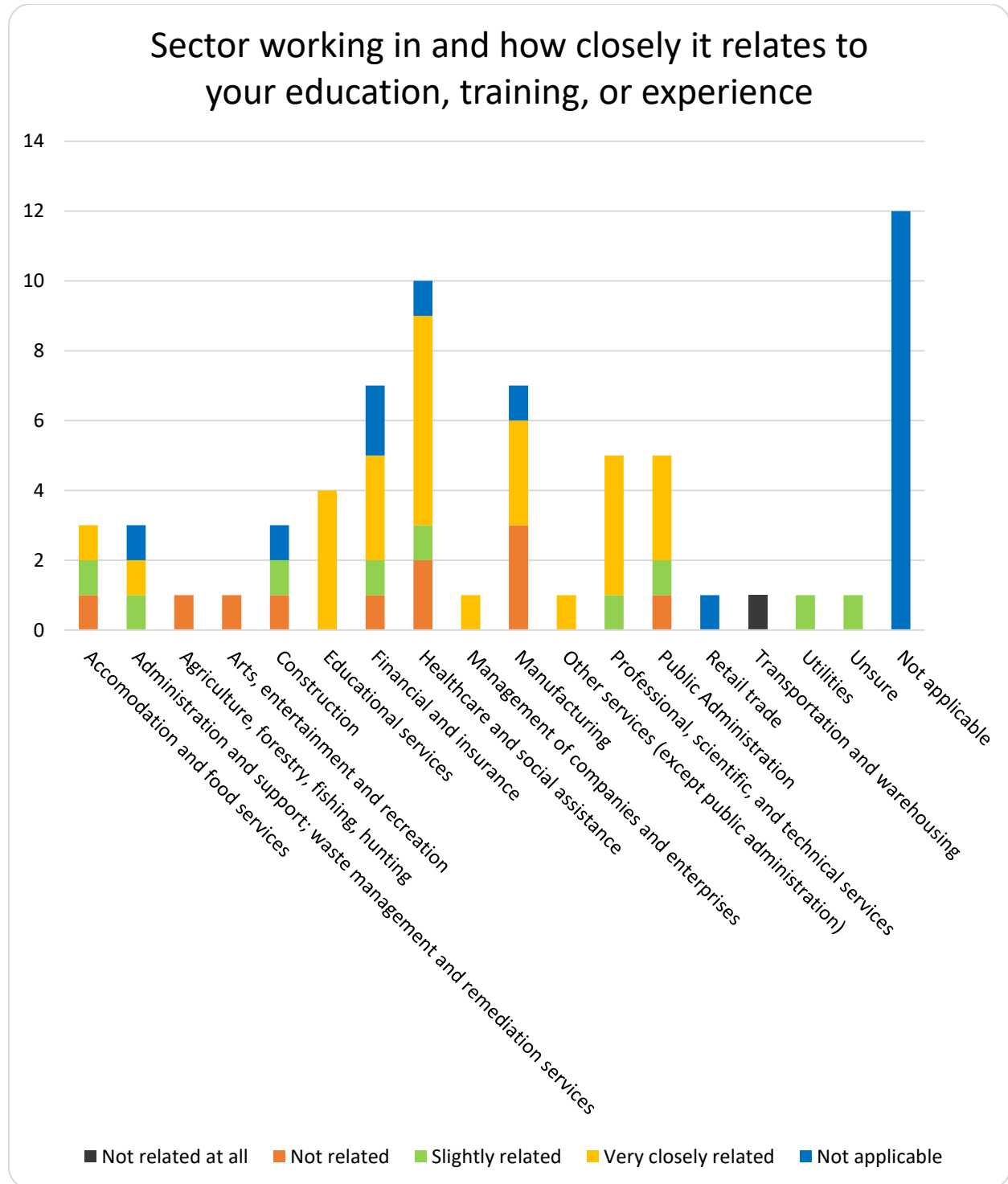
Education Related to Employment

20 survey respondents indicated this question did not apply to them, making the denominator of this data 55. Over 75% of participants who were employed felt that they were in a job that corresponds to their education, training, or experience; this response is a significant increase from 2020 (58.8%). 54.5% said their education, training, or experience is very closely related to their current work and 21.8% said slightly related. The data shows that a large percentage of immigrants in Chatham-Kent are being employed in a position that is related to their education, training, or experience.



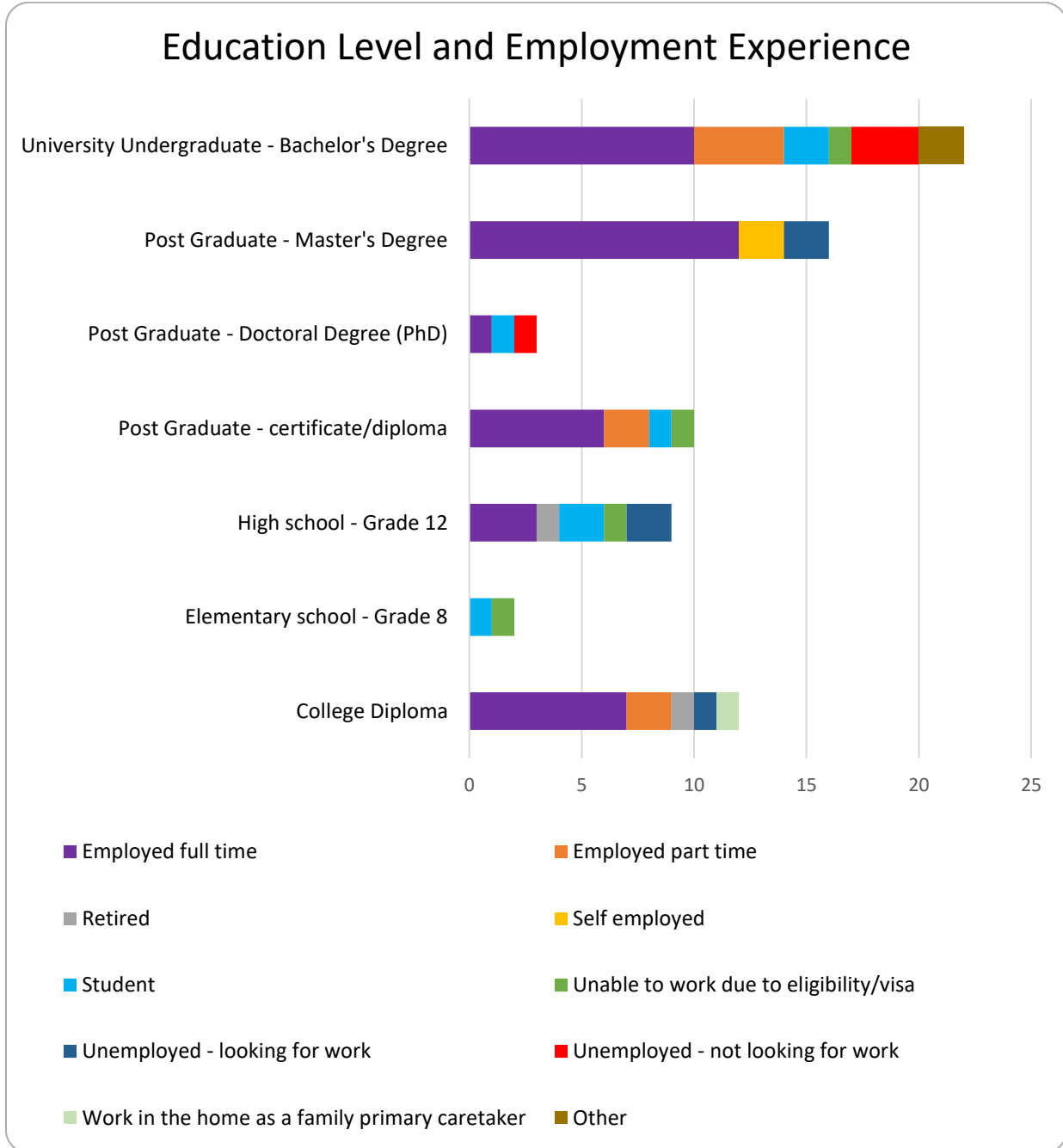
Sector of Employment in Relation to Education, Training, or Experience

The graph below highlights the sector of employment that participants work in and if that sector of work is related to their education, training, or experience. Number of survey participants, rather than percentage represents this data.



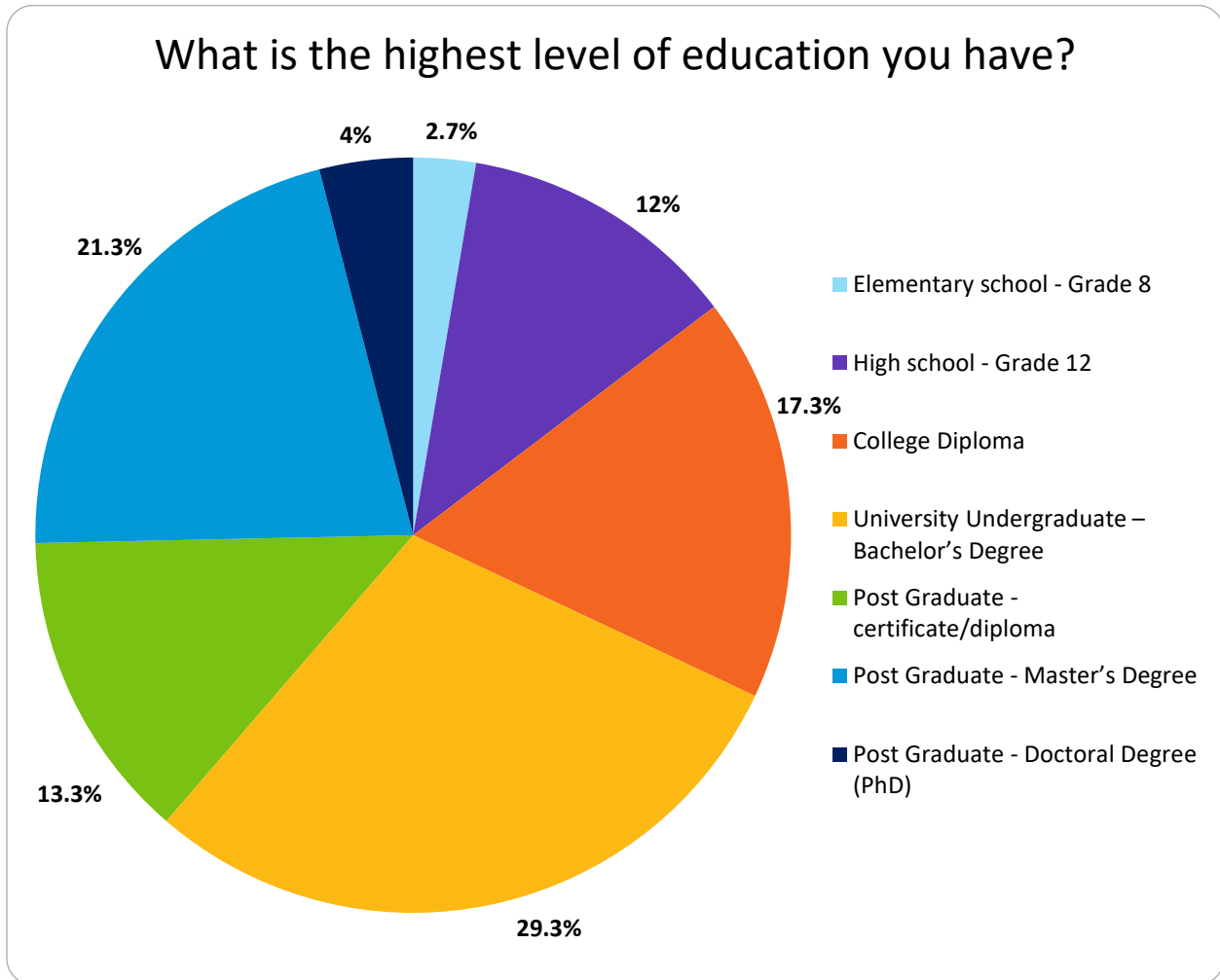
Education Level and Employment Status

The graph below highlights the employment status of participants and the education levels attained. Number of survey participants, rather than percentage represents this data.



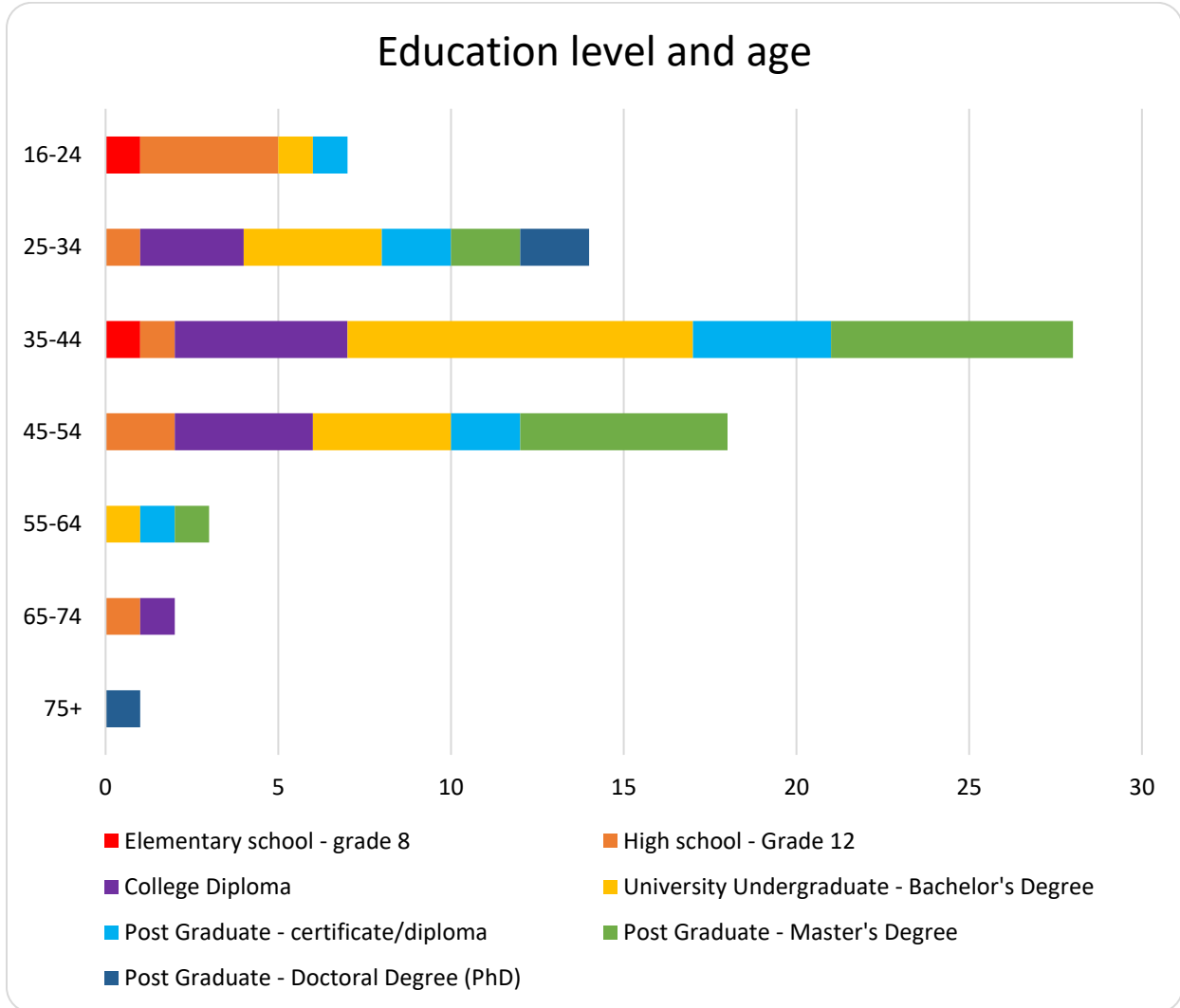
Education

Survey participants were highly educated, with 85.3% having completed post-secondary education. The survey results show that 29.3% of participants held a University Undergraduate – Bachelor’s degree, 21.3% held a Post-graduate – Master’s Degree, and 17.3% held a College Diploma.



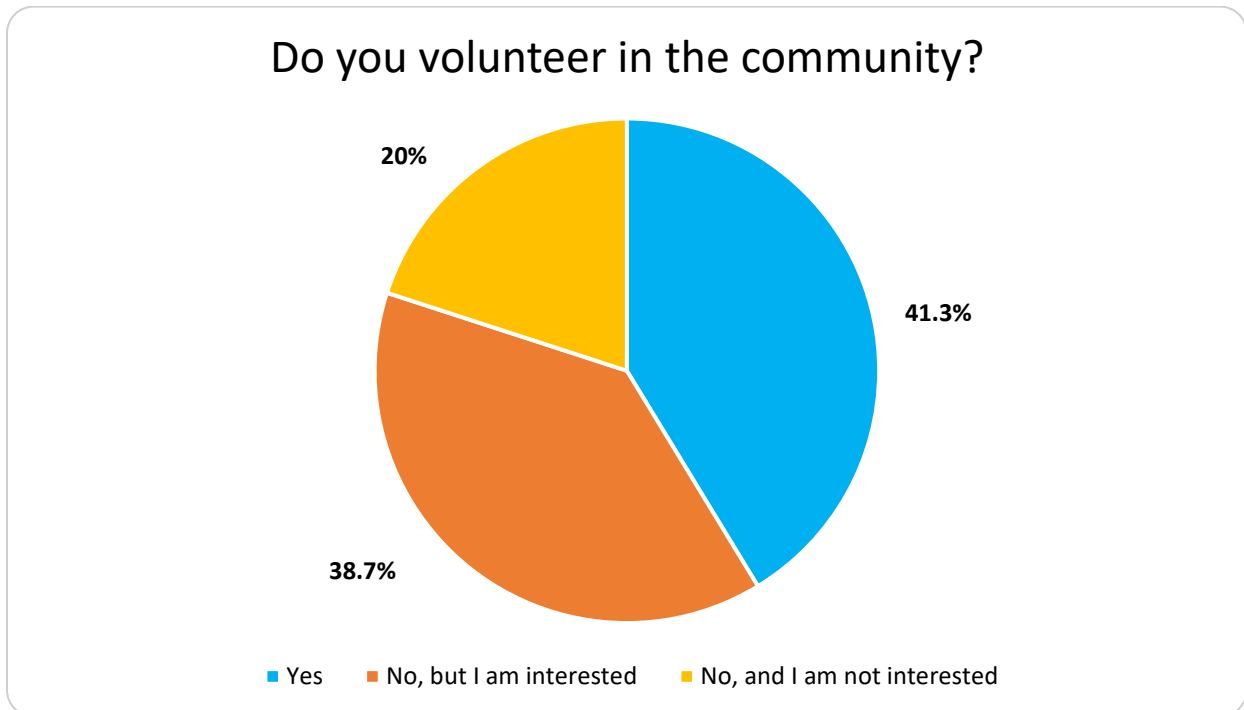
Education Level and Age

The graph below compares education level with the age of participants. Number of survey participants, rather than percentage represents this data.



Volunteering

Volunteering has been shown to have a positive impact on helping immigrants and newcomers settle and thrive in a community². The survey results showed that 41.3% of participants said that they currently volunteer in the community. Correspondingly, 2.7% of those who volunteer indicated it helped them access employment, and 10.7% indicated it assisted them in making social connections. 38.7% said that they do not volunteer in the community, but they are interested in doing so. The remaining 20% of participants said that they do not volunteer and are not interested in doing so.



Survey participants that are interested in volunteering in the community provided input on the types of volunteering opportunities they would like. Sought after opportunities included:

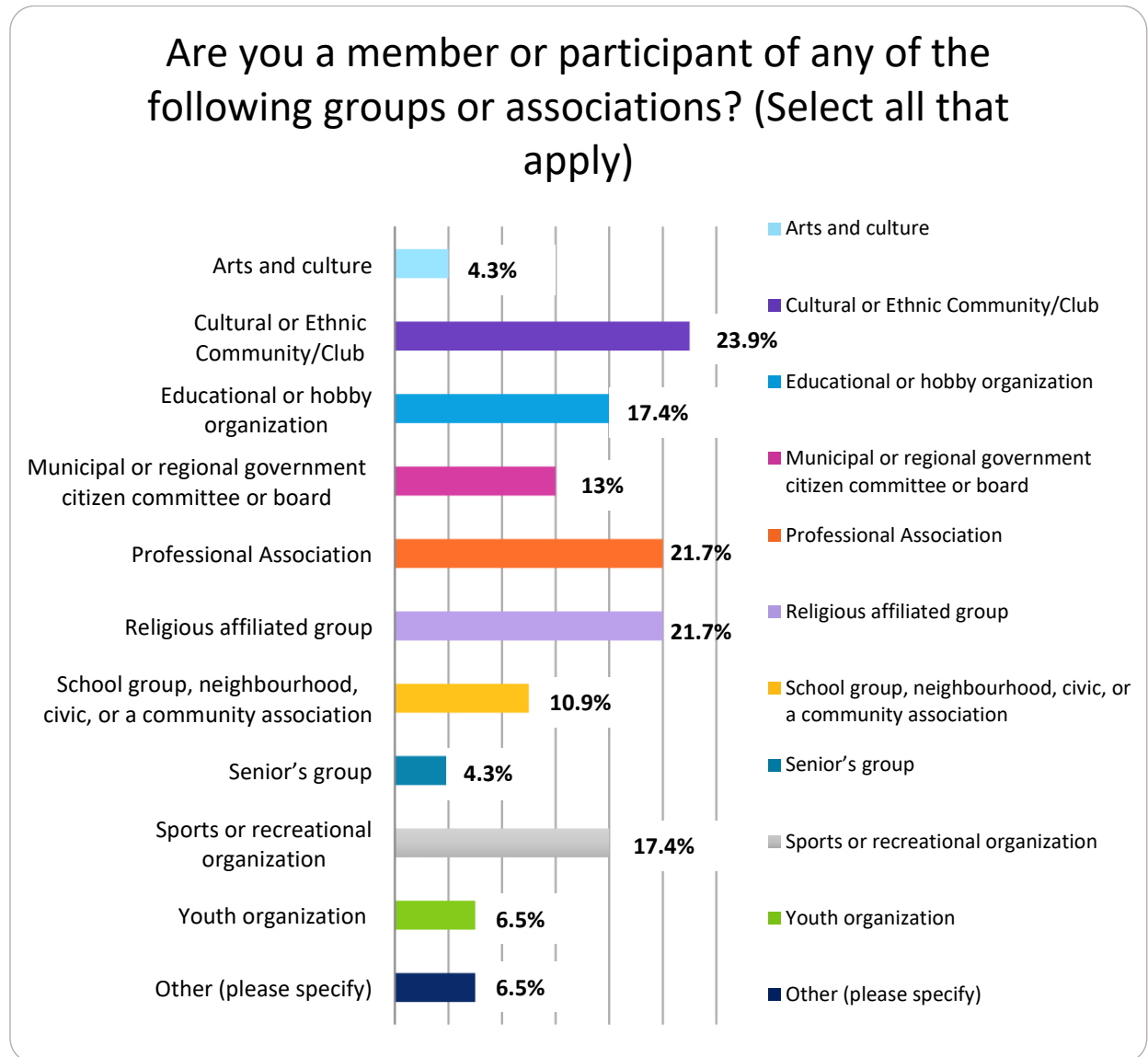
Settlement/supporting newcomers – 7
Open to anything – 6
Social impact – 5
General community volunteering – 4
Healthcare – 3
Animals – 2
Children/youth – 2

Skill development/co-op – 1
Sports/recreation – 1
Political/civic opportunities – 1
Religious group/place of worship – 1
With ethno-cultural groups – 1
Nature – 1

² Heintz, M. (2012). [Building Blocks for Newcomers Volunteering: A Newcomer's Guide to Volunteering](#). Volunteer Canada

Member or Participant in a Group or Association

The survey findings showed that 61.3% of participants were a member or participant of a group or association in Chatham-Kent. Among those who said they were part of a group or association, cultural or ethnic community/club (23.9%), professional association (21.7%), religious affiliated group (21.7%), educational or hobby organization (17.4%), and sports or recreational organization (17.4%) were the top 5 groups or associations that participants were involved in.

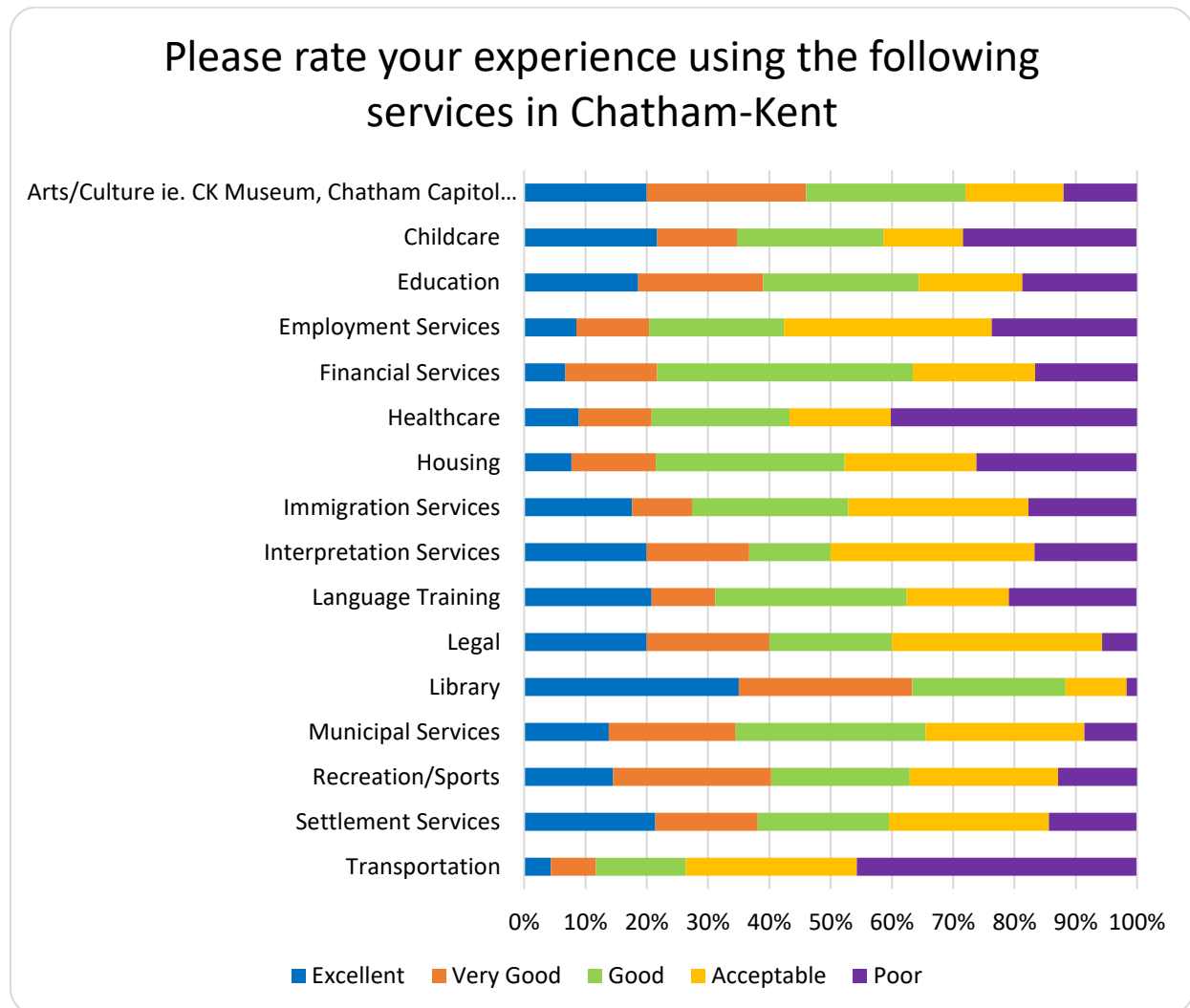


Services Accessed in Chatham-Kent
Service Ratings

To better understand where service improvements may be needed in Chatham-Kent, participants were asked to rate a variety of local services. Services that were rated the highest (those that received the highest percentage of excellent, very good or good ratings combined) were:

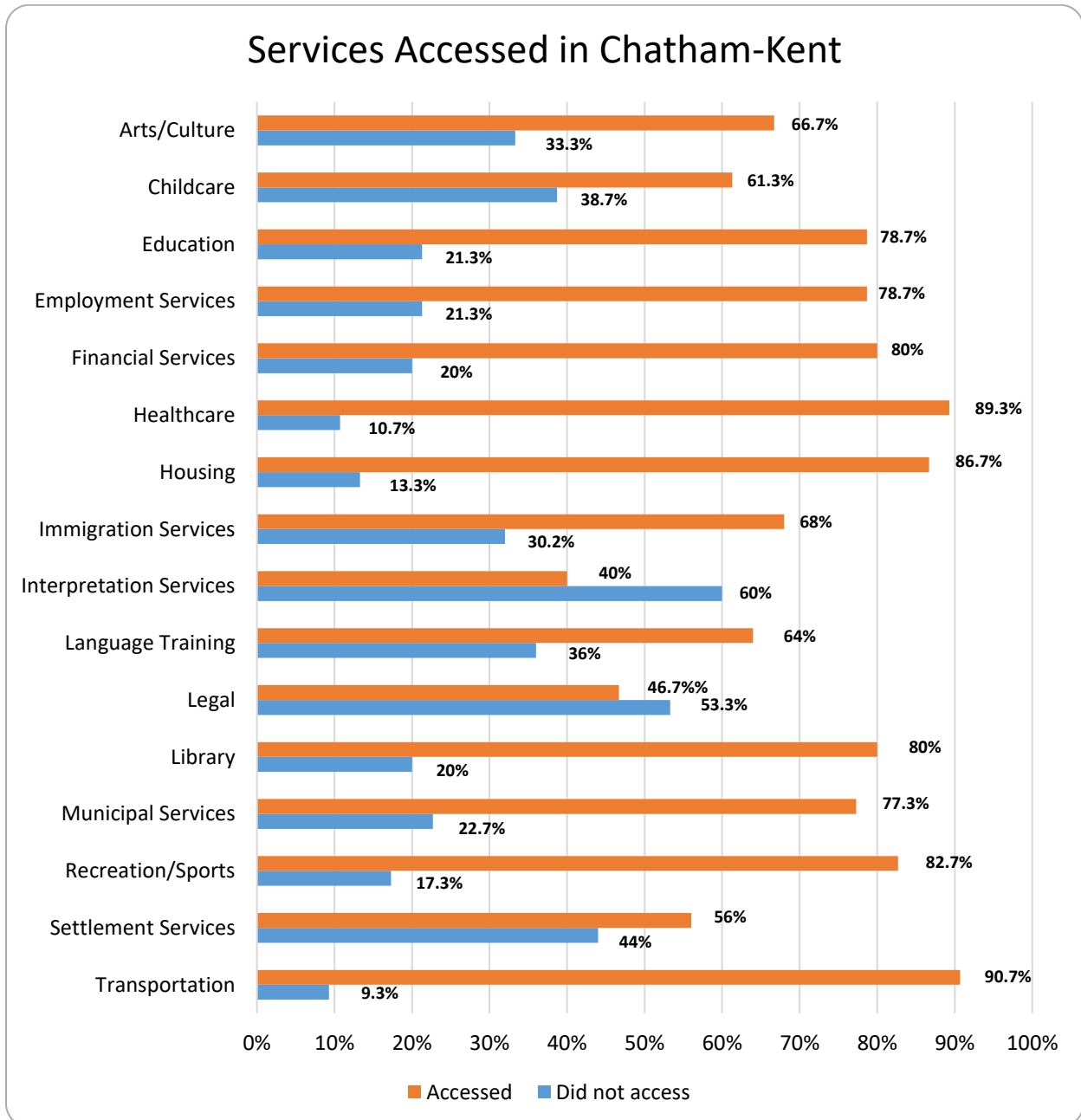
- Library (88.3%)
- Arts/Culture ie. CK Museum, Chatham Capitol Theatre (72%)
- Municipal services (65.5%)
- Education (64.4%)
- Financial services (63.3%).

Note: the rates below correspond to services that were accessed.

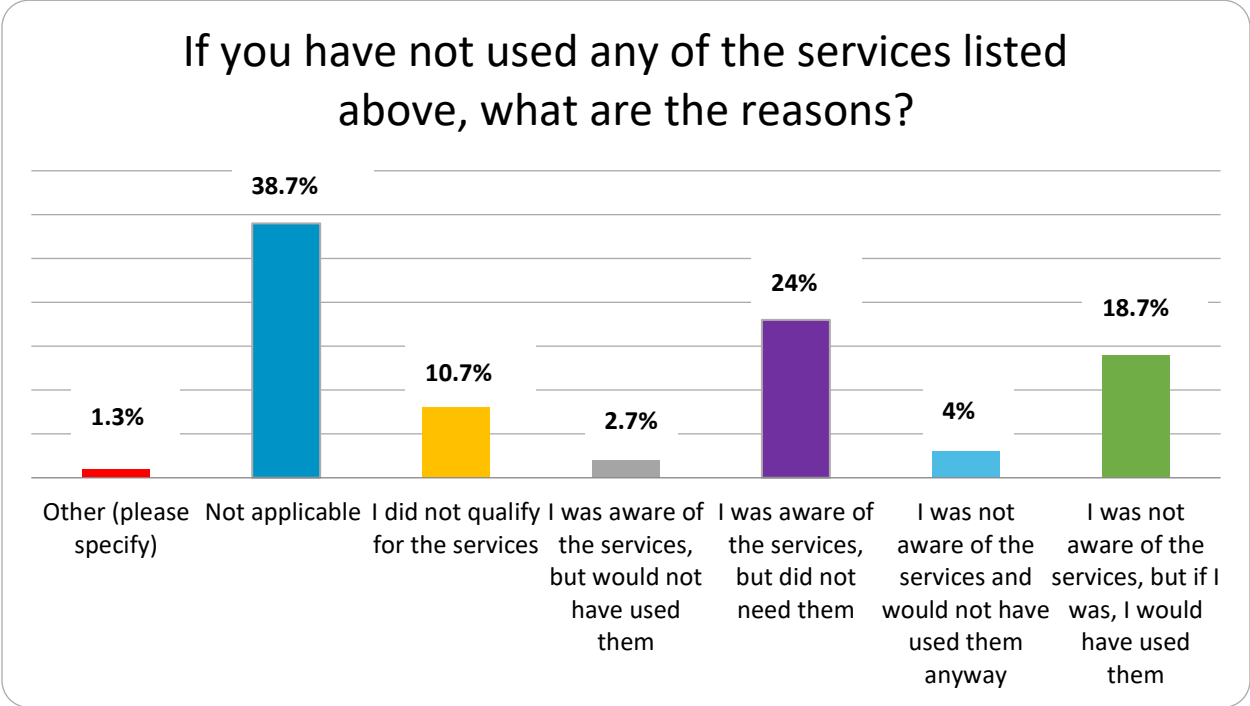


Service Access

The below information was extrapolated from the “Please rate your experience using the following services in Chatham-Kent” question. The chart below highlights what services were accessed by survey participants. Transportation (90.7%), healthcare (89.3%), housing (86.7%), recreation/sports (82.7%), library (80%), and financial services (80%) were the 6 most accessed services.

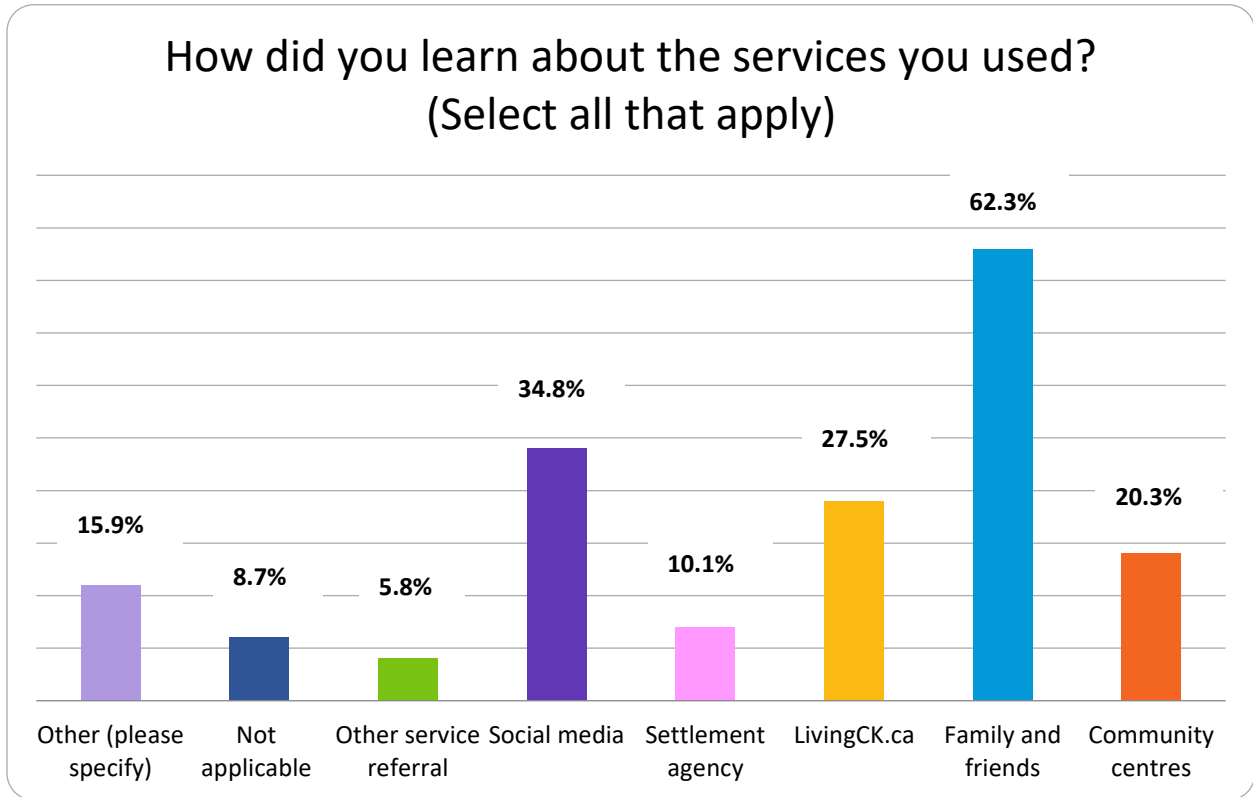


To better understand why these services were not being accessed, participants were asked to share the reason why they were not accessing them. According to the survey results, 24% of participants said they were aware of the services but did not need them, while 18.7% of participants were not aware of the services but would have used them if they were. This highlights the need to continue to promote services in the community, thus allowing immigrants to become aware of all services that exist in Chatham-Kent.



Accessing Information

Participants learned about services in Chatham-Kent through family and friends (62.3%), social media (34.8%), and LivingCK.ca (27.5%). Those who selected other specified word of mouth, Google, community involvement and church as avenues that made them aware of services used. This data is consistent with findings from 2020 that indicated family and friends, social media and LivingCK as the top 3 methods of learning about services.



One Word to Describe Chatham-Kent

Survey participants were asked what one word they would use to describe their life in Chatham-Kent. The word cloud below is a collection of the responses received.

