



EASTERN WORKFORCE
INNOVATION BOARD

Nurturing a stronger workforce

EMPLOYER ONE 2021

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the employers in the Frontenac County Census Area, Loyal Township and Leeds and Grenville United Counties for taking the time to complete the EmployerOne 2021 Survey. You provided valuable information to support government, educators and employment service providers to find local solutions to address local workforce issues.

Also, thank you to our community partners for their help to promote the survey to employers. You generously shared your resources, contacts and social media to get the word out during a time when employers were “surveyed out”. These community partners include representatives from:

- Business Improvement Areas: Downtown Brockville, Town of Gananoque, Downtown Kingston, Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce: Brockville and District, Greater Kingston, 1000 Islands Gananoque
- Community Futures Development Corporations: Frontenac CFDC, Grenville CFDC, 1000 Islands CDC
- Employment Ontario Employment Service Providers: ACFOMI, CSE Consulting, Employment and Education Centre (EEC), KEYS Job Centre Kingston and Gananoque, OnTrac Employment Resources Services, ReStart, St. Lawrence College Employment Service
- Municipal Economic Development Offices: City of Brockville, County of Frontenac, County of Lennox and Addington (for Loyalist Township), Kingston Economic Development, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
- Ontario Ministries: Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; Labour, Training and Skills Development; Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
- Tourism Sector: OTEC, RTOg Regional Tourism Organization, Tourism Kingston, Tourism 1000 Islands, Visit Kingston

For more information on this report, please contact: Frank O’Hearn, Executive Director, Eastern Workforce Innovation Board, frank@workforcedev.ca

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INTRODUCTION

- In 2020, six workforce development boards across Eastern Ontario collaborated to develop and implement a common survey across Eastern Ontario for the 2021 EmployerOne survey. This report highlights results from the Eastern Workforce Innovation Board's (EWIB) survey responses for the Frontenac County Census Area and Leeds and Grenville United Counties.
- The survey was conducted between January 4, 2021 and February 26, 2021. It reflects labour market activity during 2020. This activity appeared to be impacted by the COVID19 pandemic and the related state of emergency and stay-at-home order which commenced in Ontario in March 2020.
- 167 surveys were completed (of 213 started) which is an increase from the 94 surveys completed in 2020. The survey responses represented all sectors with the exception of Public Administration and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting in the Frontenac Census Area, and Wholesale Trade in the Leeds and Grenville United Counties Area.
- While the survey results provide a snapshot into the local labour market for further discovery, the size of the sample is too small to be a representative sample of employers or sectors in the Frontenac Census Area or Leeds and Grenville United Counties.

Frontenac Census Area

Central Frontenac
Frontenac Islands
Kingston
Loyalist Township
North Frontenac
South Frontenac

Leeds and Grenville United Counties

Athens
Augusta
Brockville
Edwardsburg Cardinal
Elizabethtown Kitley
Front of Yonge
Gananoque
Leeds and The 1000 Islands
Merrickville Wolford
North Grenville
Prescott
Rideau Lakes
Westport



SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 51% of Frontenac and 61% of Leeds Grenville employers surveyed have 1-9 employees, including themselves.
- 51% of the Frontenac and 46% of the Leeds and Grenville employers said COVID19 had a significant negative impact on business. 15% of Frontenac and 7% of Leeds and Grenville employers said COVID19 had a significant positive impact on business.
- 57% of Frontenac County and 61% of Leeds and Grenville employers had employee separations over the past 12 months. The top reason for the separation was 'quit.' Some employers noted COVID19-related separations, such as layoffs and employees' family responsibilities and/or concerns about their health. The occupations with the highest separations: Sales and Service, Trades; Transport and Equipment Operators; and Business, Finance and Administration.
- 24% of Frontenac County and 22% of Leeds and Grenville employers increased their workforce in 2020. Of them, 68% in Frontenac County and 38% in Leeds and Grenville had difficulty filling open positions. The occupations with the highest increases were similar to those with the highest separations. In addition, Occupations in Manufacturing and Utilities was an area of workforce increase for the Frontenac (21%) and Leeds and Grenville (20%) employers who increased their workforce.
- 18% of Frontenac and 5% of Leeds and Grenville employers anticipate downsizing their workforce in 2021. 20% of Frontenac and 22% of Leeds and Grenville employers are unsure if there would be downsizing.
- 51% Frontenac and 46% Leeds and Grenville employers anticipate hiring in 2021. The top 3 occupations are the same for both areas: Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators; Natural Resources, Agriculture and related; and Occupations in Manufacturing and Utilities.



SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 69% of Frontenac and 65% of Leeds and Grenville employers said the availability of qualified workers in their area is fair to poor.
- The local labour market is the top geographic area targeted for employee recruitment (55% Frontenac, 48% Leeds and Grenville). Word of mouth was the top recruitment method for Frontenac and Leeds and Grenville employers. The use of free employment services, presumably Employment Ontario, appeared low at 26% and 15% respectively.
- Since January 2020, 85% of the Frontenac County and 85% of the Leeds and Grenville employers have had **no** changes to skill requirements.
- The general minimum level of education required upon hiring is a secondary school diploma or work experience only (67% Frontenac, 61% Leeds and Grenville).
- 88% of Frontenac and 82% of Leeds and Grenville employers are able to access the training staff require (n=163). The types of training they will focus on in 2021 are: Health and Safety; Job Specific Technical Skills; and Orientation of New Employees.
- 47% of Frontenac and 41% of Leeds Grenville employers took advantage of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, a COVID19-related business support. 27% of Frontenac and 34% of Leeds and Grenville employers have **not used** any government-funded workforce development programs. Some survey respondents noted that there are few, if any, programs for owner operated companies with 0-1 employees.
- Several employers noted that the EmployerOne survey format was not suitable for small businesses.

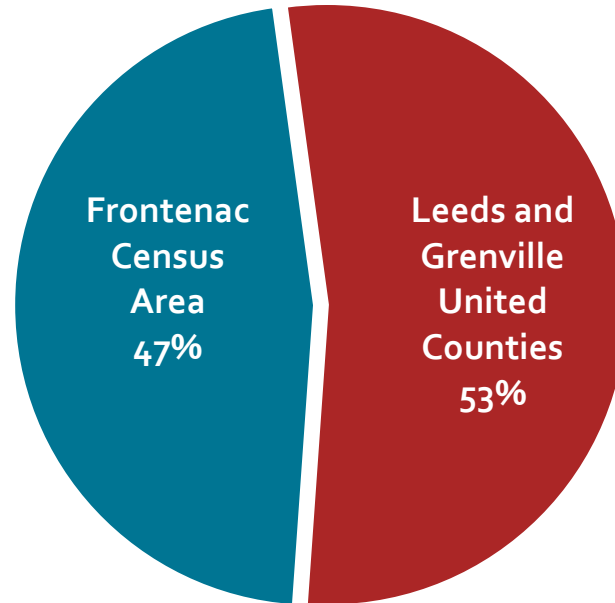


CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



RESPONDENTS BY LOCATION

	Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
Complete	167	78	89
Partial	46	18	28



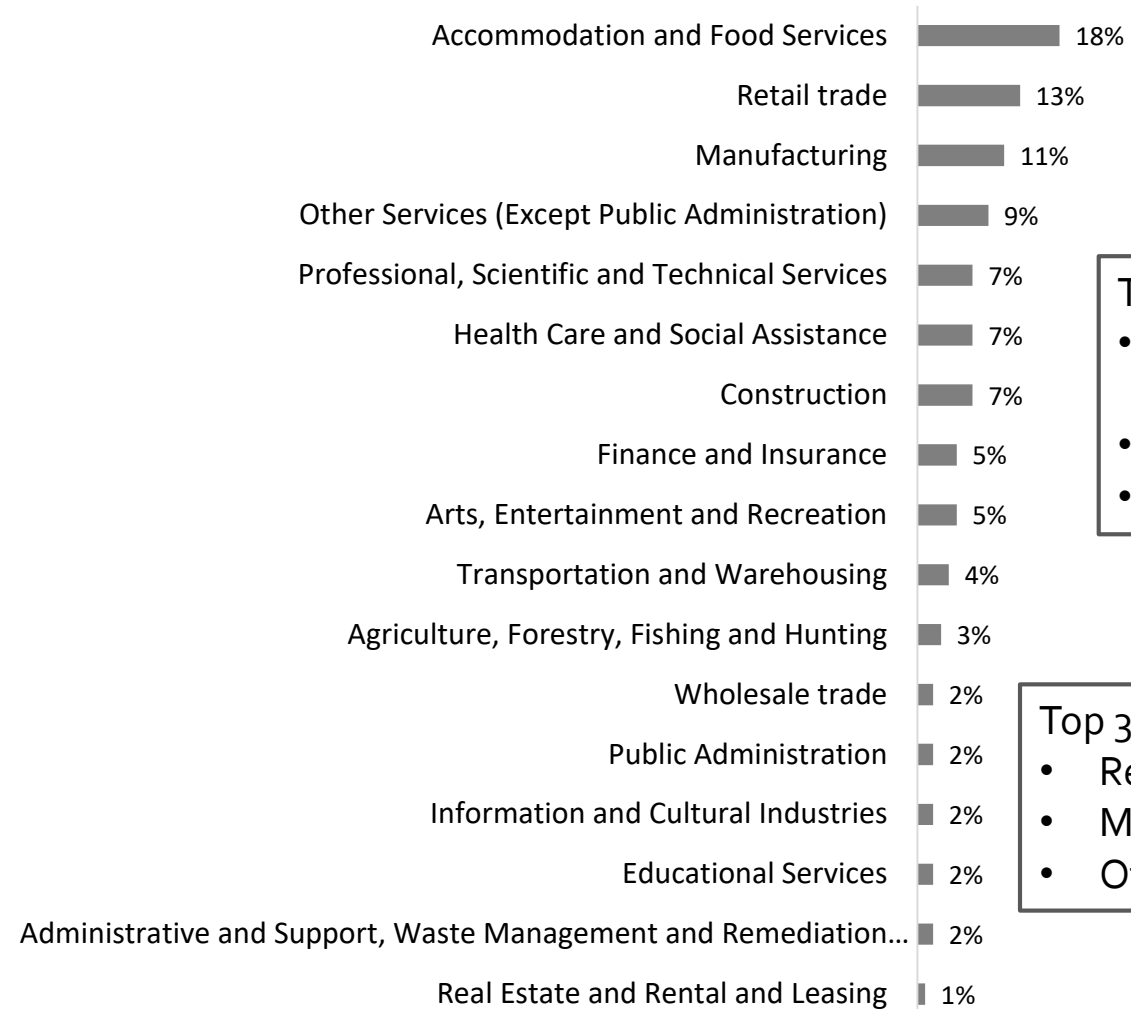
EMPLOYER SECTORS

All sectors were represented with the exception of Public Administration and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting in the Frontenac Census Area, and Wholesale Trade in the Leeds and Grenville United Counties Area.

The numbers in the table (and n=) indicate the number of responses for the survey question.

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89

Sectors for Frontenac and Leeds and Grenville combined



- Top 3 in Frontenac**
- Accommodation and Food (27%)
 - Manufacturing (12%)
 - Construction (9%)

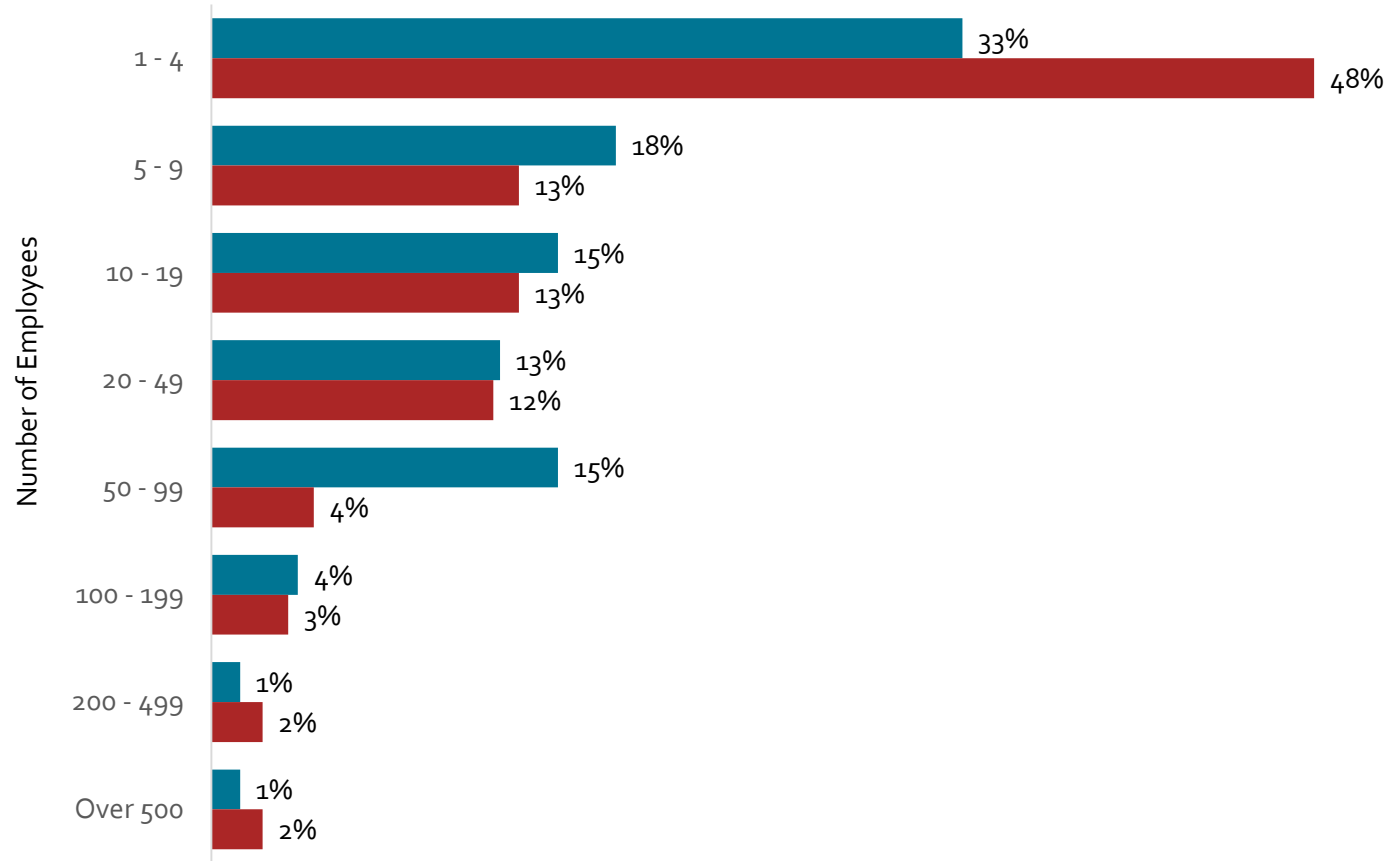
- Top 3 in Leeds and Grenville**
- Retail Trade (19%)
 - Manufacturing (11%)
 - Other Services (11%)



EMPLOYER SIZE

51% of Frontenac and 61% of Leeds Grenville employers surveyed have 1-9 employees, including themselves.

Respondents by Number of Employees



■ Frontenac ■ Leeds and Grenville

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89



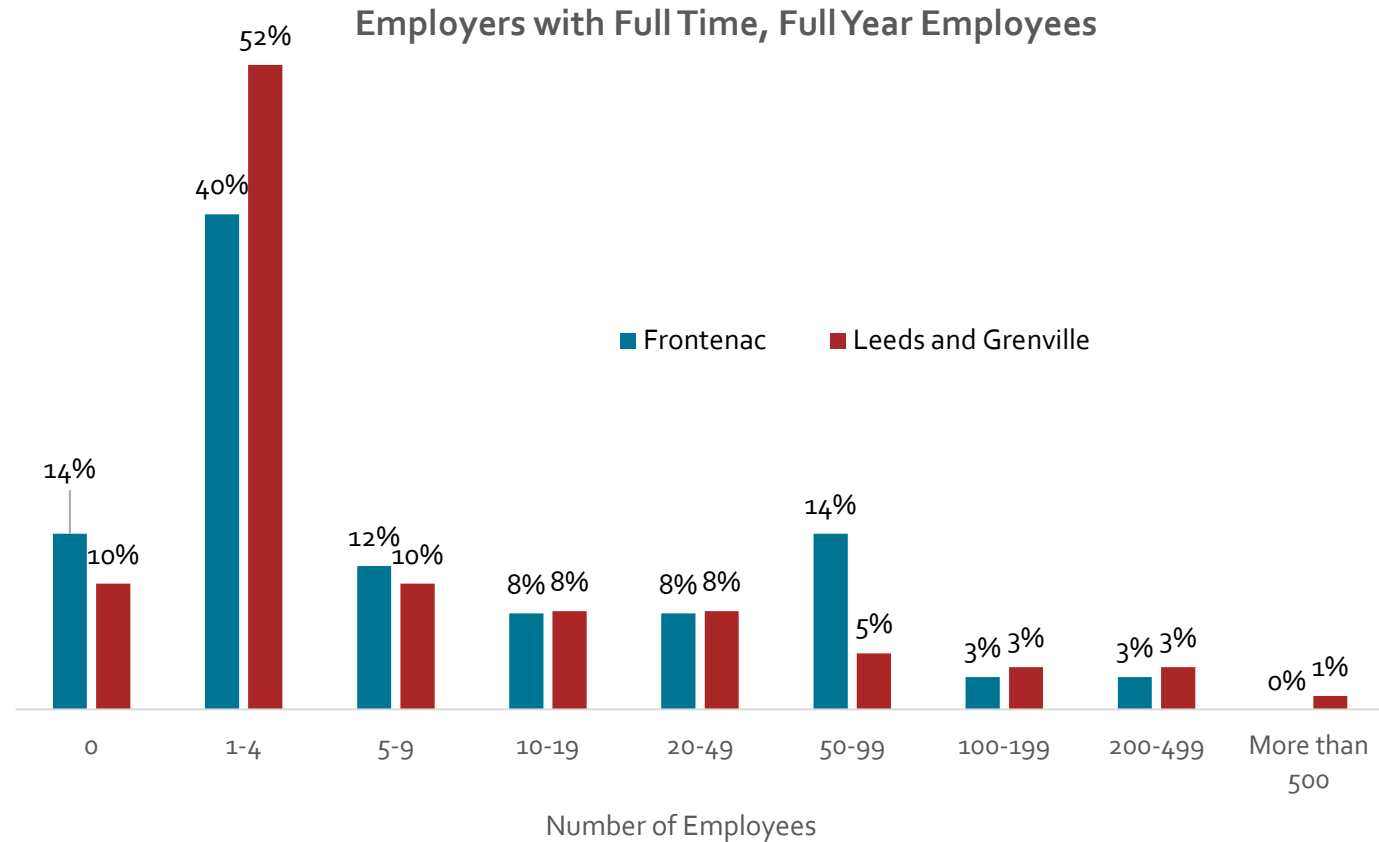
ORGANIZATION AND WORKFORCE CHARACTERISTICS



WORKFORCE STATUS

52% of Frontenac, and 40% of Leeds and Grenville of the employers surveyed have 1-4, full-time, full year employees.

- 32% of Frontenac and 33% of Leeds and Grenville employers have 1-4, **part-time, full year** employees
- 10% of Frontenac and 14% of Leeds and Grenville employers have 1-4 **full-time, seasonal employees**
- 14% of Frontenac and 10% of Leeds and Grenville employers have 1-4 **part-time, seasonal employees**

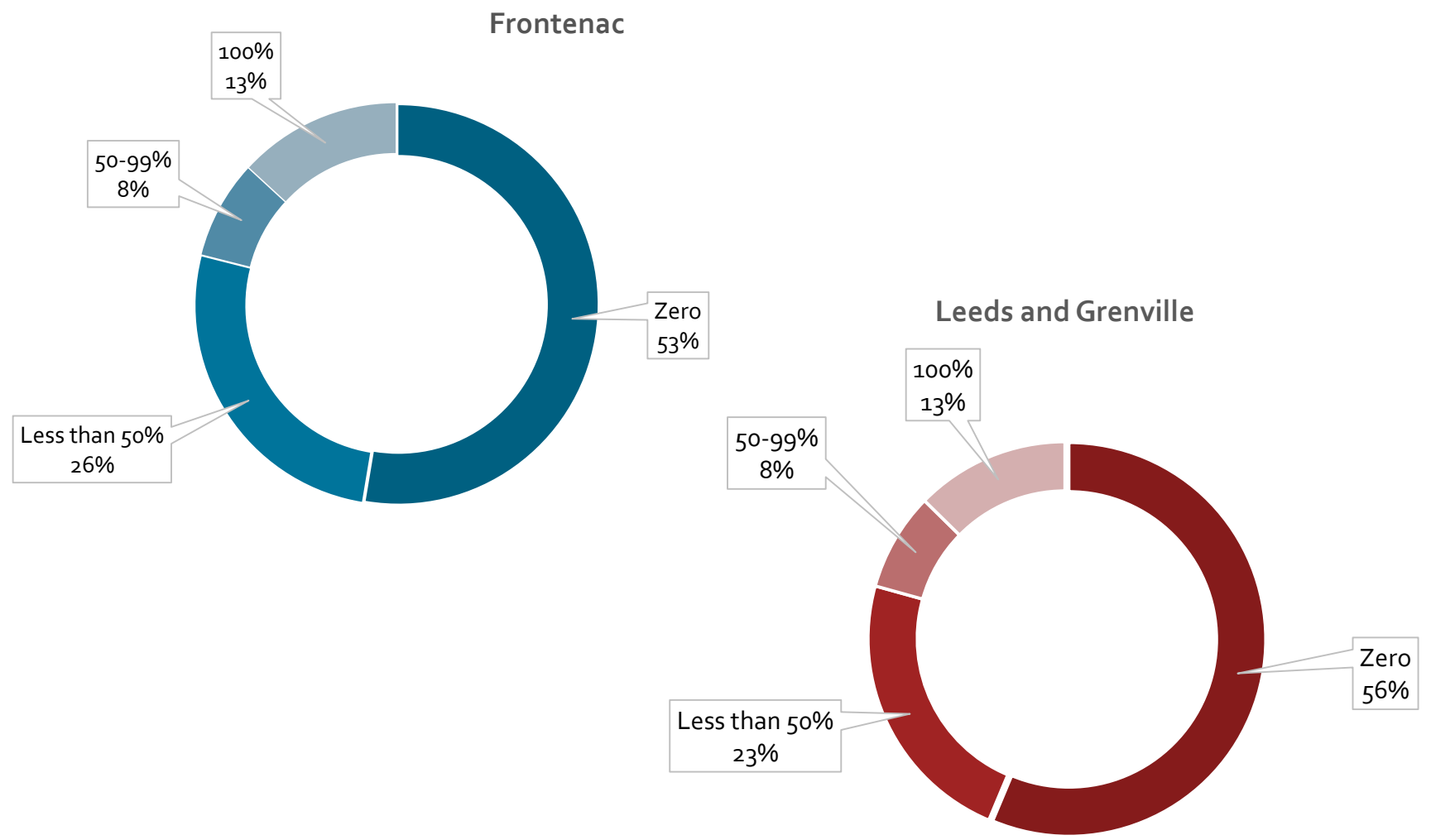


Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89



CURRENT REMOTE WORKFORCE

53% of the Frontenac and 56% of the Leeds and Grenville employers surveyed do not have a remote workforce.



Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
163	76	87

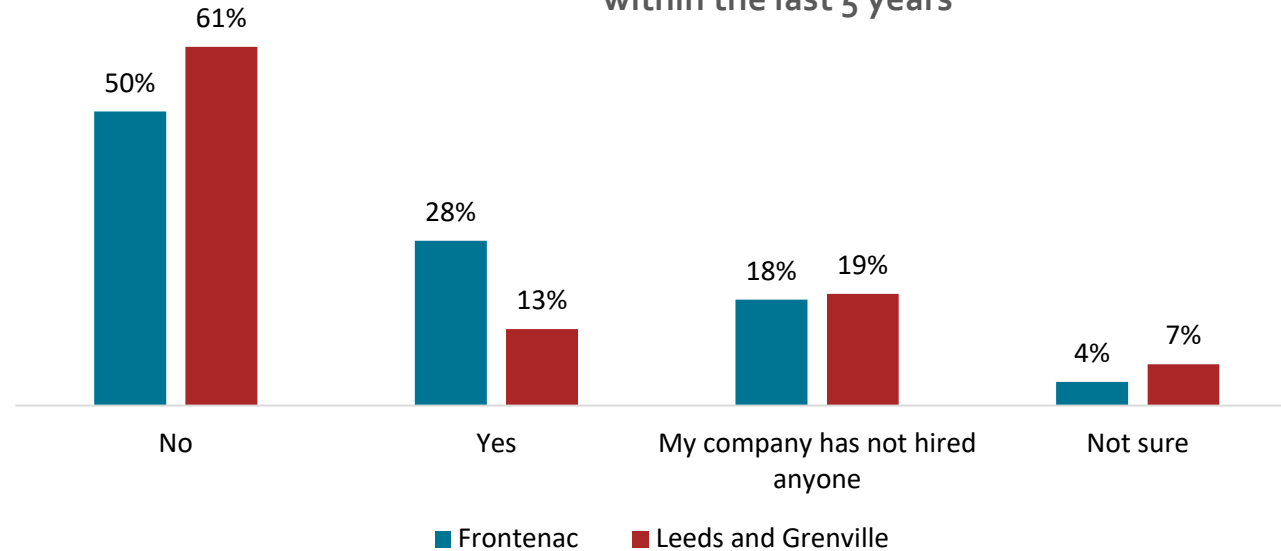


DIVERSITY OF THE WORKFORCE

63% of the Frontenac and 53% of the Leeds and Grenville employers said they have a diverse workforce defined in the survey question as: similarities and differences among workers in terms of age, cultural background, physical abilities and disabilities, race, religion, gender sexual orientation and indigeneity) n=167

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89

Companies with employees that moved to Canada within the last 5 years



Average number of employees	Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
Under 25	17%	21%	11%
Over 55	36%	32%	41%

*High percentages may be due to large number of solopreneurs



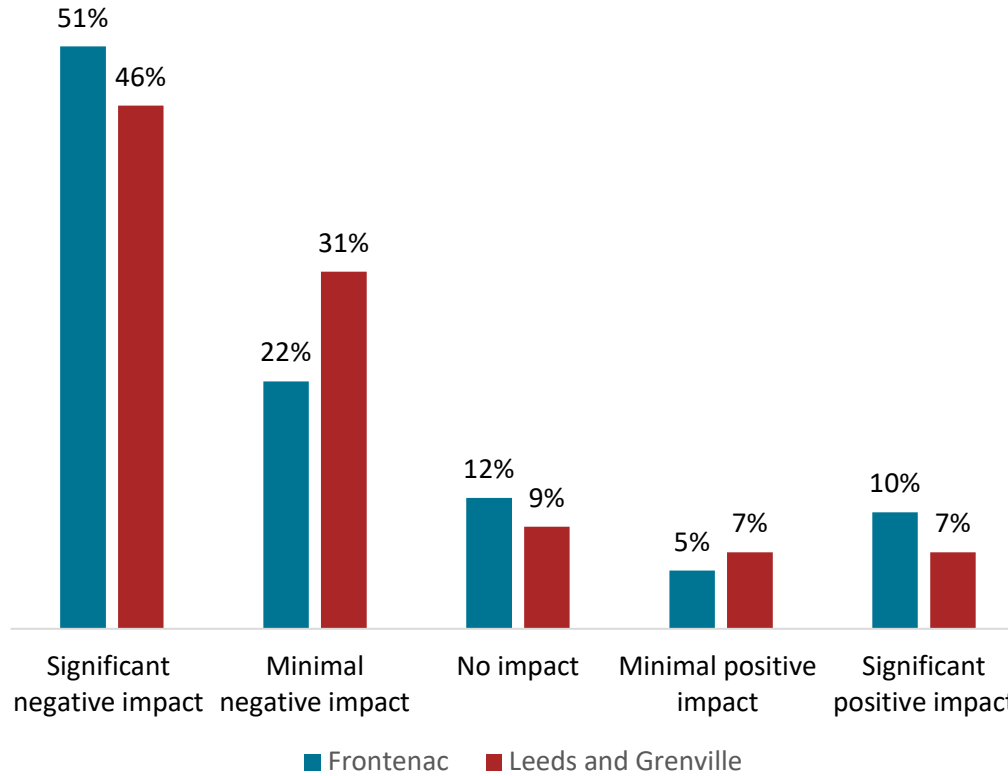
WORKFORCE CHANGES



IMPACT OF COVID19

51% of the Frontenac and 46% of the Leeds and Grenville employers said that COVID19 has had a significant negative impact on business.

Extent of Impact of COVID19 on Workforce



In addition, 37% (n=61) of employers noted how COVID19 impacted their business.

Themes of comments include*

- Increase in business (7)
- Decrease in revenue (6)
- Layoffs (6)
- Shut down (5)
- Employees reluctant to work and/or or travel (4)

*(number of responses)

"As a result of having to suspend operations for a period, we have had a challenge with cash flow. It will take a number of months to recover, but hopeful that business will survive for the sake of our employees" - Employer

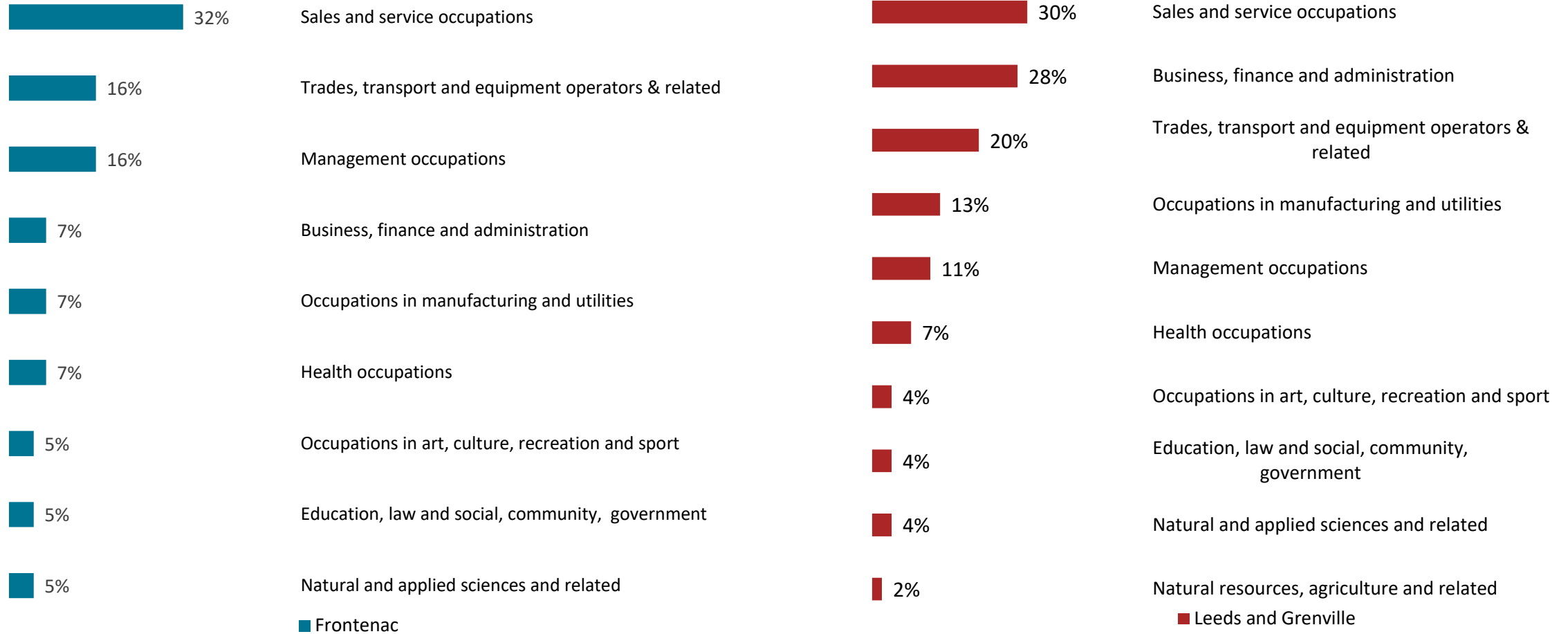
Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89



EMPLOYEE SEPARATIONS

57% of Frontenac County and 61% of Leeds and Grenville employers had employee separations over the past 12 months.

Occupations of Separations



Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89

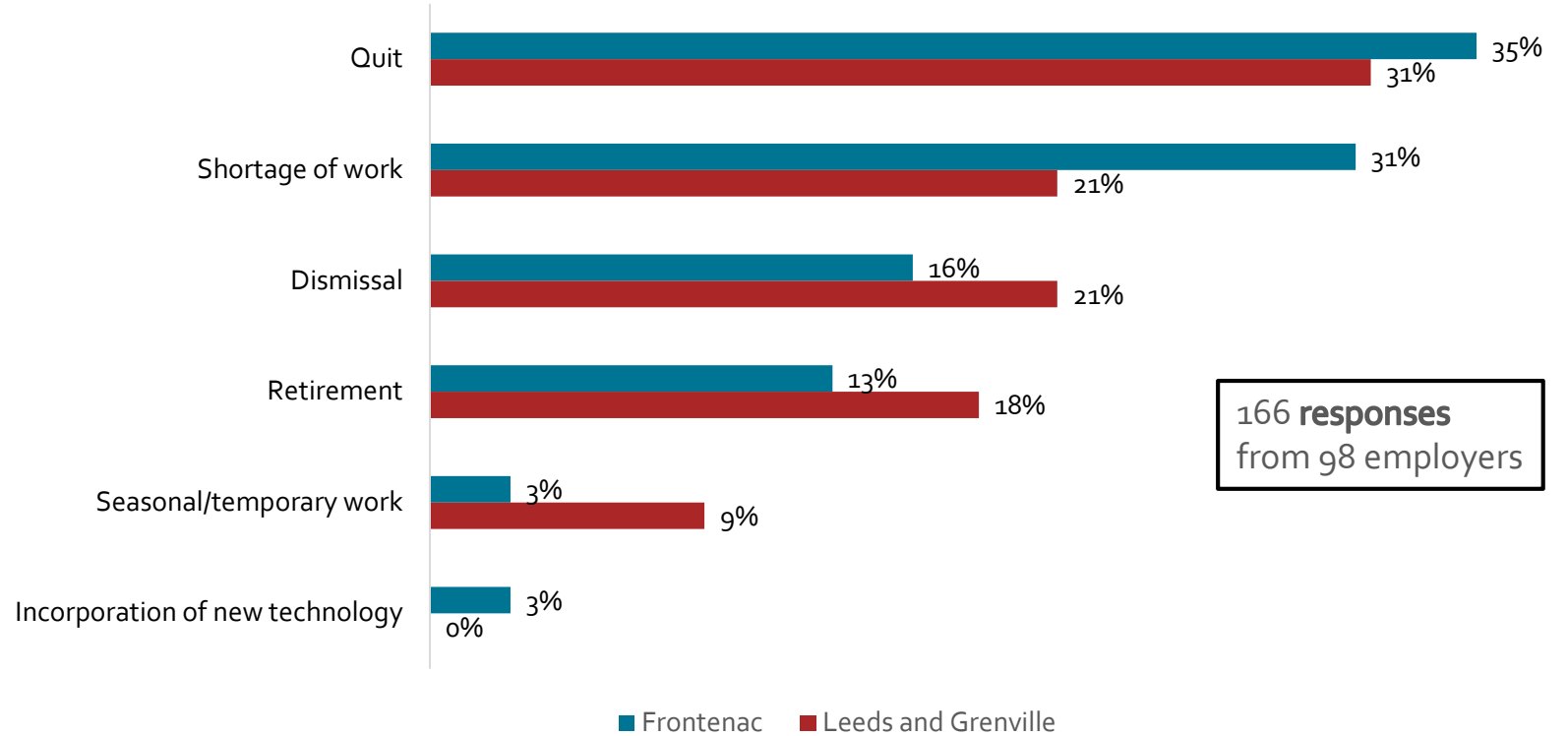


EMPLOYEE SEPARATIONS

In both areas, the top reason for employee separation was 'quit' (35% Frontenac, 31% Leeds and Grenville)

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
98	44	54

Reasons for Employee Separations



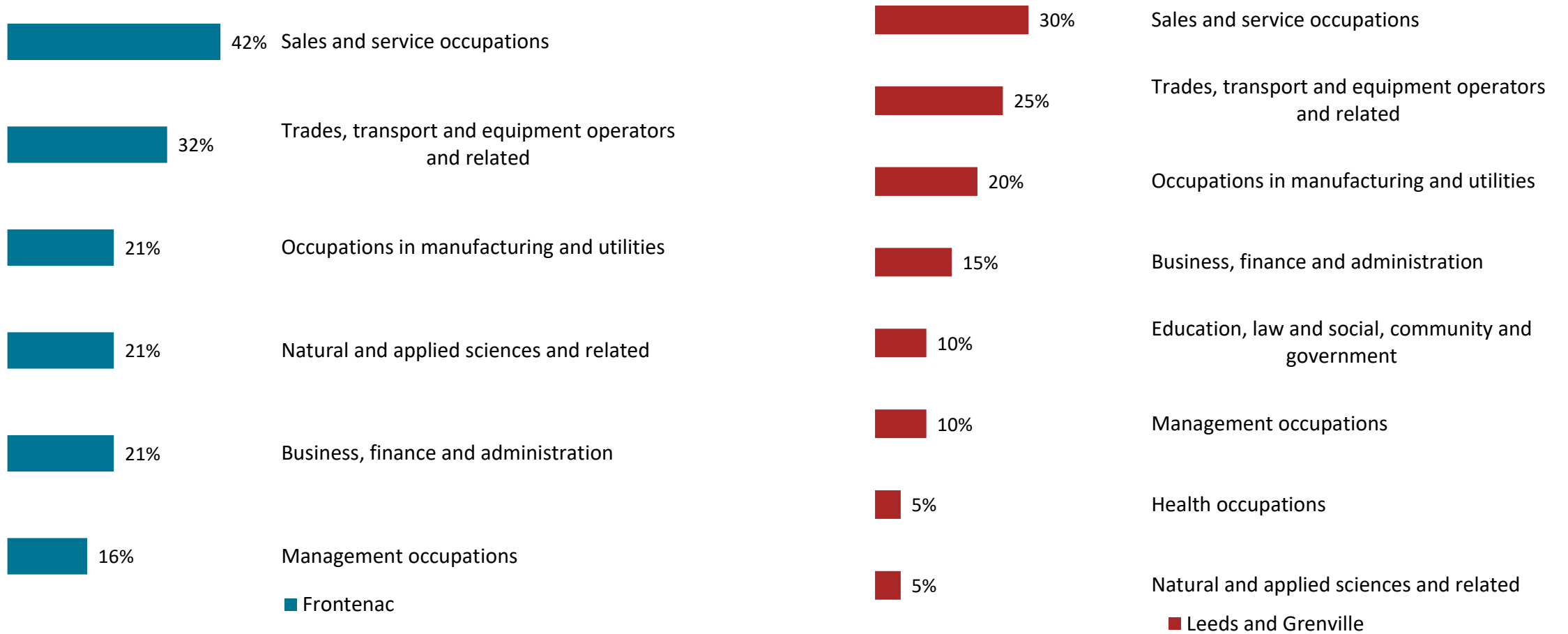
11 of the 15 "other" separation reasons noted were related to COVID19, such as layoffs and employees' family responsibilities and/or concerns about their health.



INCREASES TO WORKFORCE

24% of Frontenac County and 22% of Leeds and Grenville employers increased their workforce in 2020.

Occupations of Increases to Workforce



Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
39	19	20



CHANGES IN SKILL REQUIREMENTS

Since January 2020, 85% of the Frontenac County and 85% of the Leeds and Grenville employers had NO changes to skill requirements.

The top 5 changes in skill requirements (n=25 employers)

- 16% Computer literacy including working remotely
- 15% Self-management (independence, managing time, problem solving)
- 13% Occupational health and safety
- 13% Interpersonal communication (team work, conflict resolution)
- 10% Technical occupational-related skills

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
140	66	74



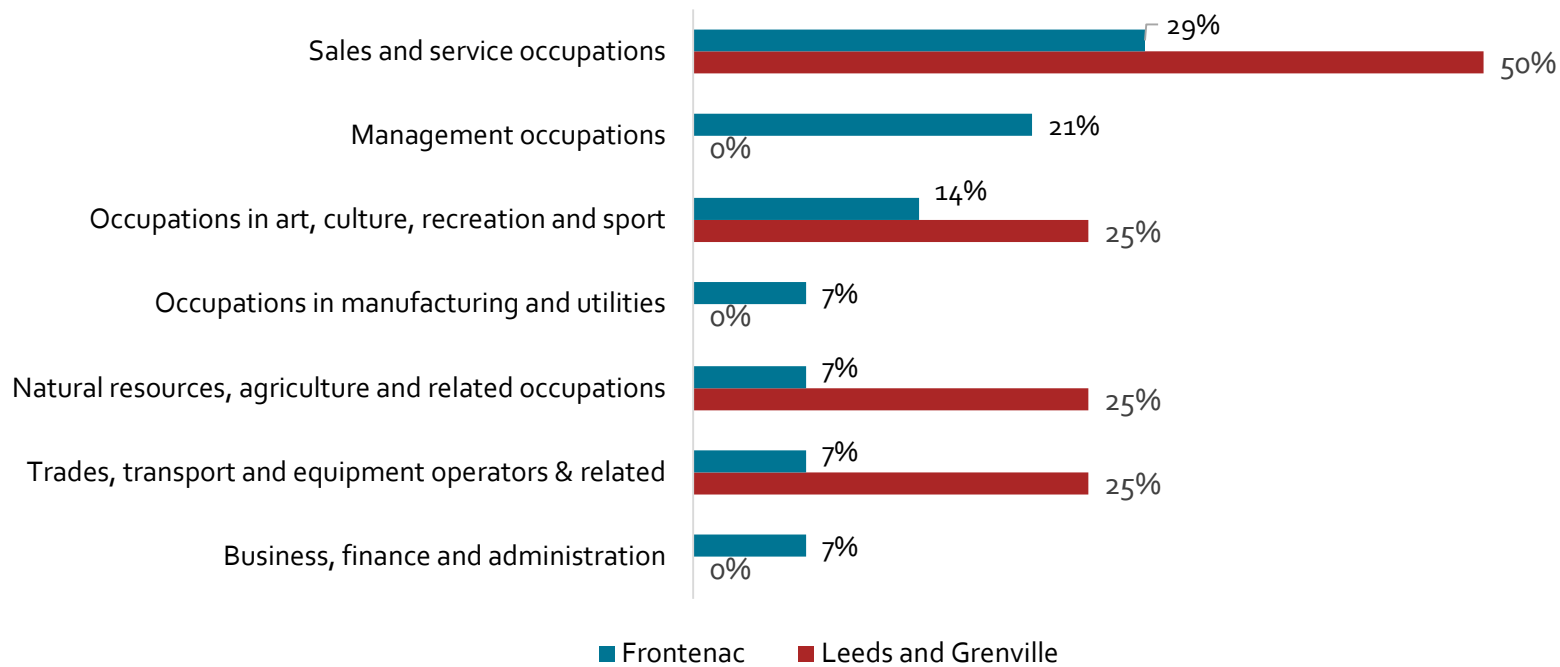
PROJECTED WORKFORCE DEMAND AND RECRUITMENT



ANTICIPATED DECREASES

11% of employers anticipate downsizing their workforce in 2021 (18% of Frontenac, 5% of Leeds and Grenville). 21% are unsure (20% of Frontenac, 22% of Leeds and Grenville).

Occupations Expected to Downsize in 2021



Reasons employers* plan on downsizing:

- Shortage of work (72%)
- Seasonal/temporary work (17%)
- Retirement (11%)
- Incorporating new technology (11%)
- Historical rates of employee turnover e.g. dismissal, quit (11%)

*n=18

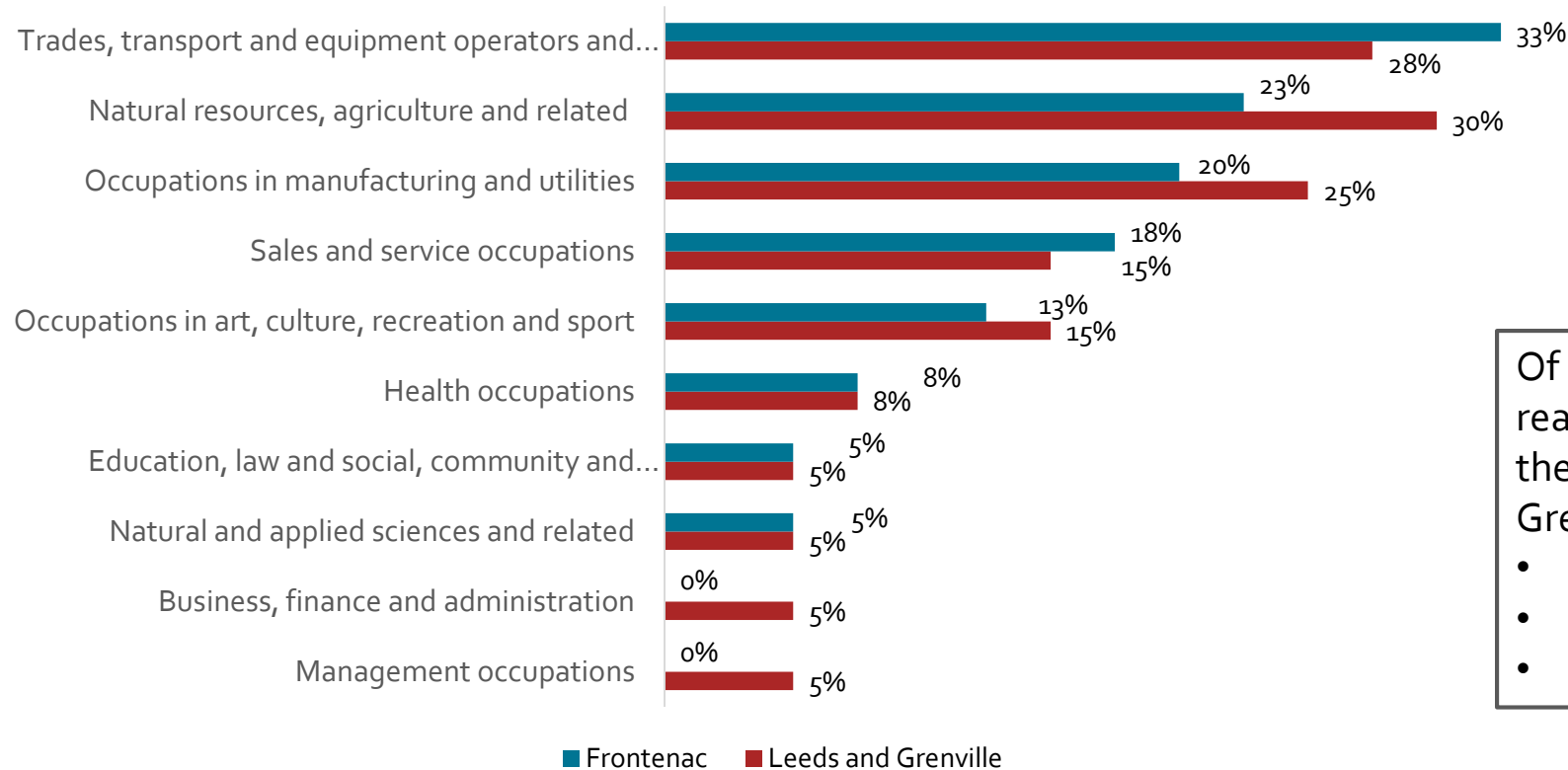
Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
18	14	4



ANTICIPATED INCREASES

49% of employers anticipate hiring in 2021 (51% Frontenac, 46% Leeds and Grenville). 26% are unsure (18% Frontenac, 32% of Leeds and Grenville).

Anticipated Occupations for Staff Changes in 2021



Of the reasons provided, the top 3 reasons for anticipated hiring were the same for Frontenac and Leeds and Grenville:

- Increase in sales
- Reorganization of workforce
- Turnover/replacement

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
80	40	40



AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS

69% of Frontenac and 65% of Leeds and Grenville employers said the availability of qualified workers in their area is fair to poor.



Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
162	76	86

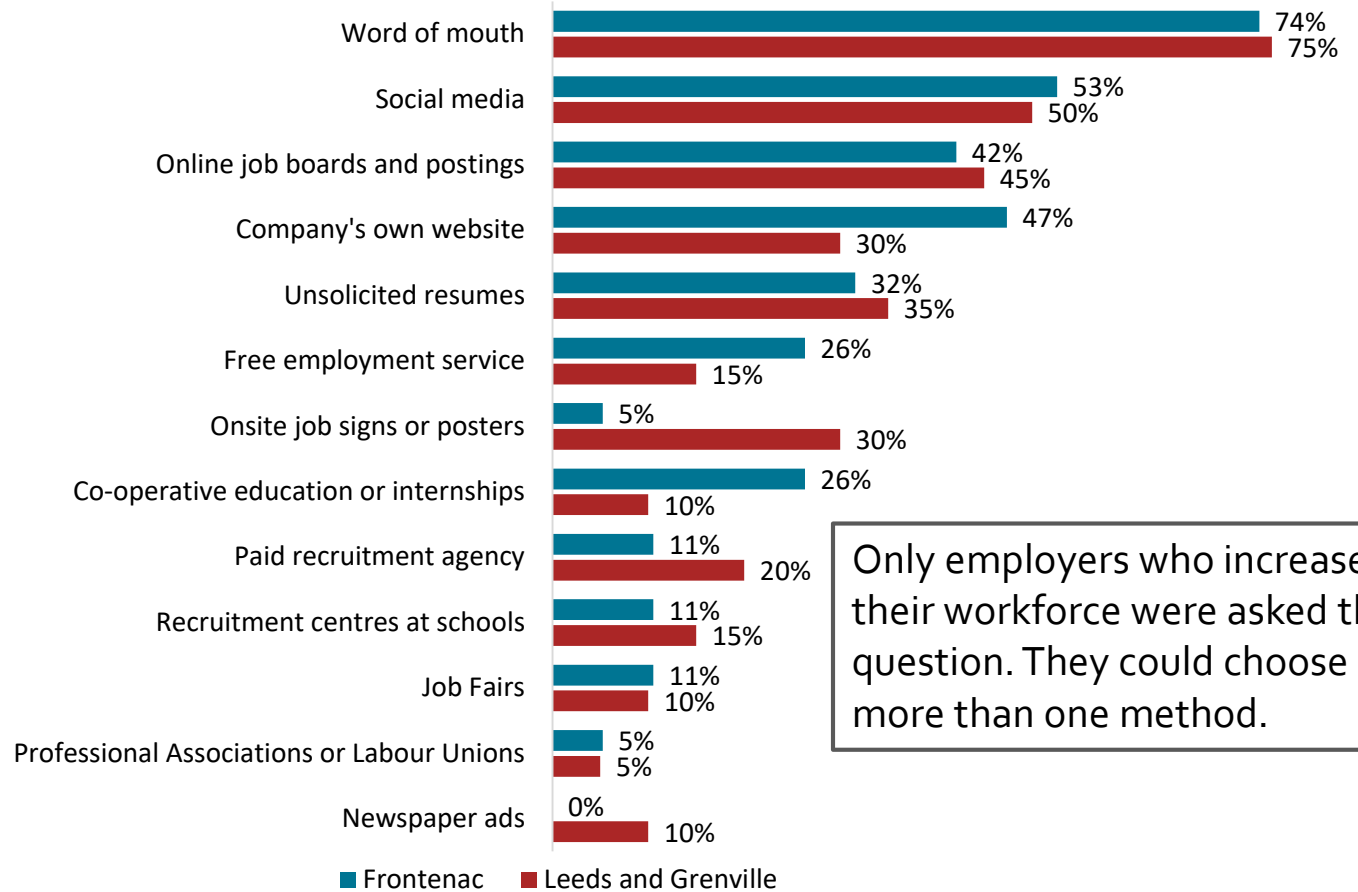


METHODS USED TO RECRUIT NEW EMPLOYEES

Word of mouth was the top recruitment method for Frontenac and Leeds and Grenville. The use of free employment services, presumably Employment Ontario, appeared low at 26% and 15% respectively.

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
39	19	20

Methods to Recruit New Employees



Only employers who increased their workforce were asked this question. They could choose more than one method.

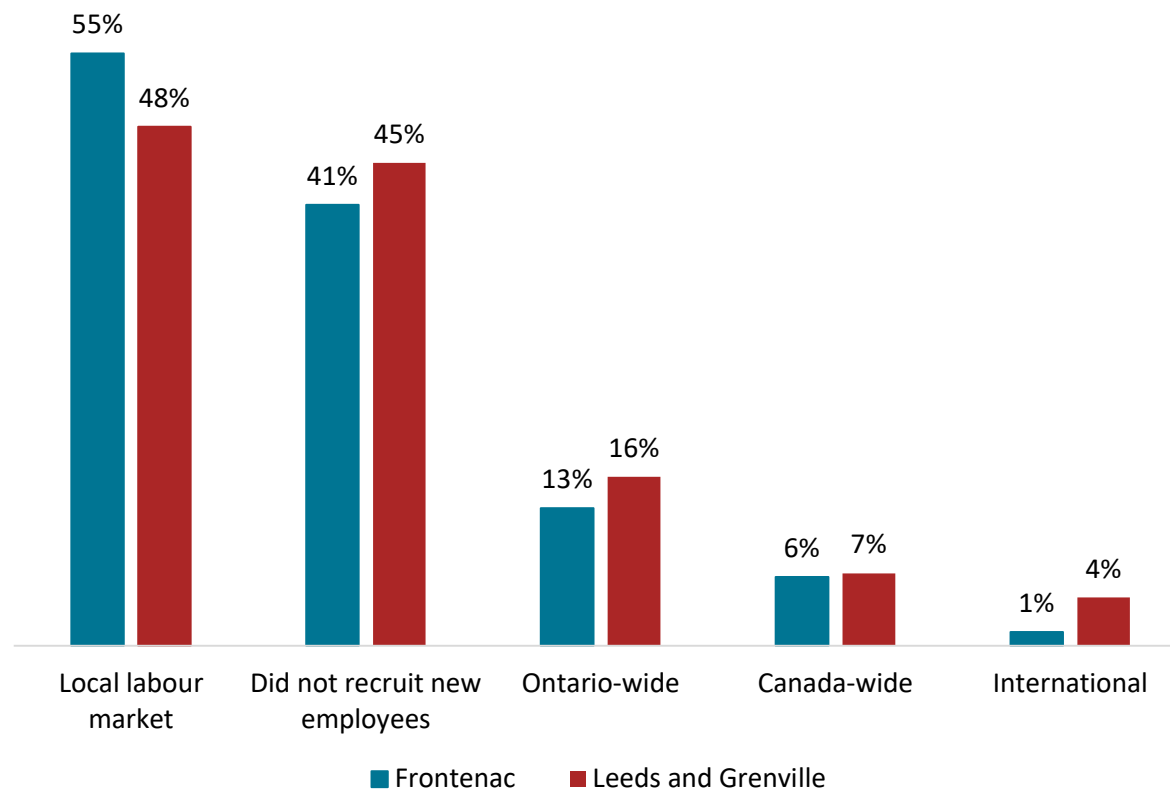


GEOGRAPHIC AREAS TARGETED FOR EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

The local labour market is the top geographic area targeted for employee recruitment (55% Frontenac, 48% Leeds and Grenville)

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89

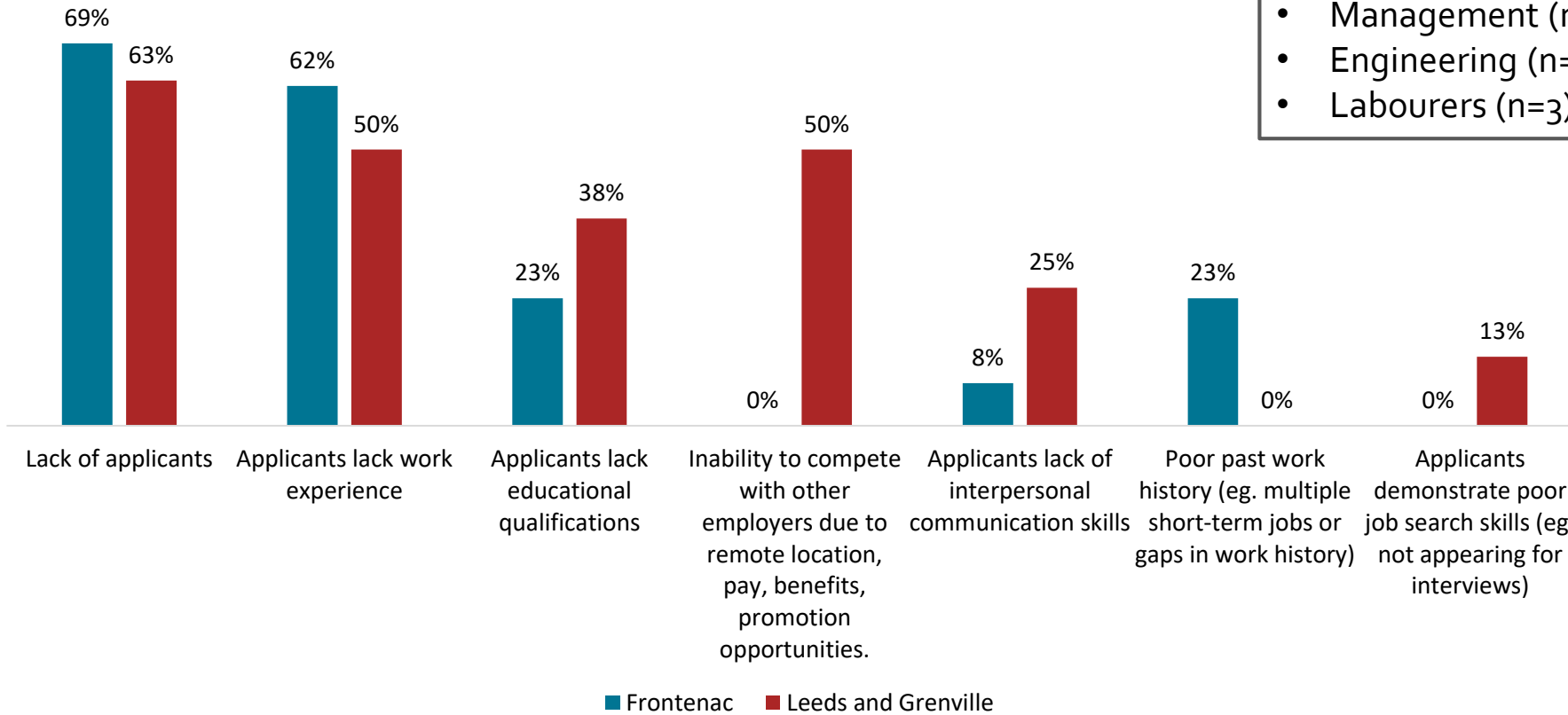
Geographic Areas Targeted for Recruitment



DIFFICULT TO FILL POSITIONS

For the employers that increased their workforce, 68% in Frontenac County and 38% in Leeds and Grenville had difficulty filling positions in 2020.

Reasons it was Difficult to Fill Positions



The Top 3 occupations that were most difficult to fill:

- Management (n=5)
- Engineering (n=4)
- Labourers (n=3)

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
21	13	8



COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS, TRAINING AND EDUCATION

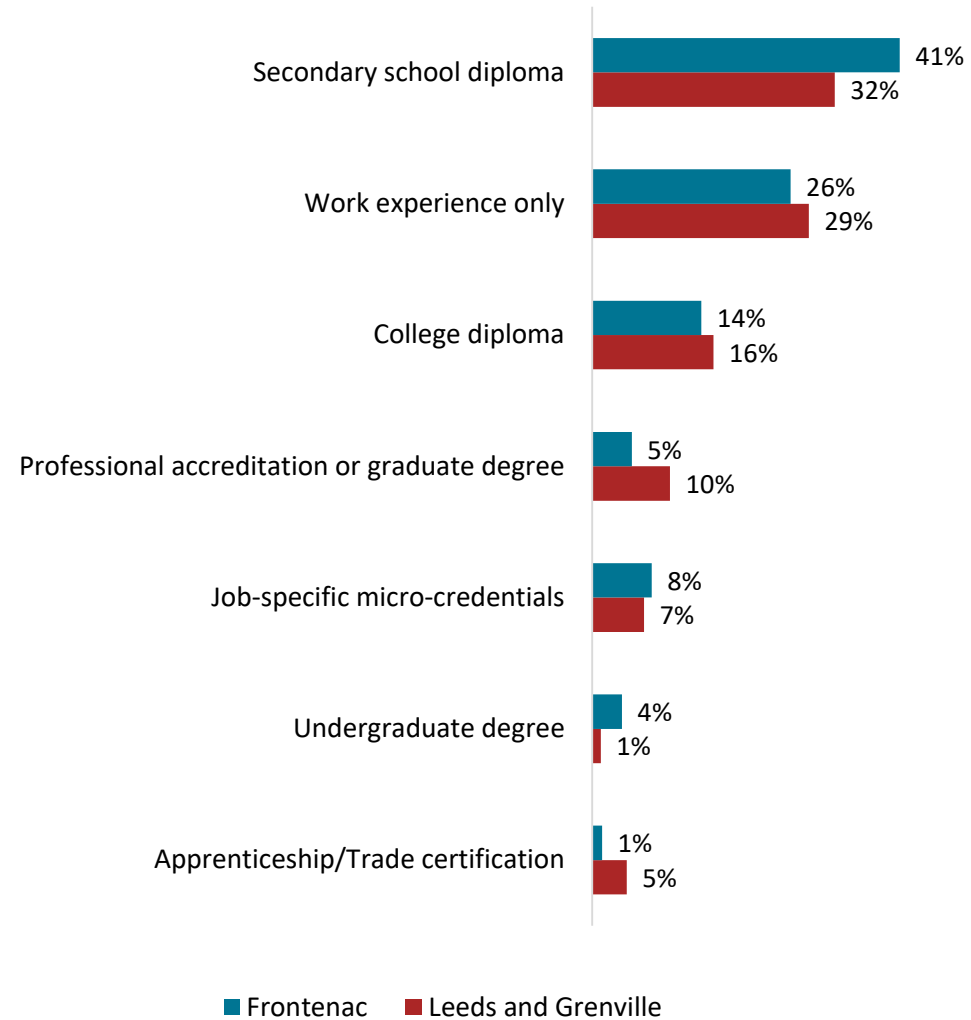


GENERAL MINIMUM LEVEL OF EDUCATION REQUIRED UPON HIRE

The general minimum level of education required upon hiring is a secondary school diploma or work experience only (67% Frontenac, 61% Leeds and Grenville).

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
163	76	87

General Minimum Level of Education Upon Hire

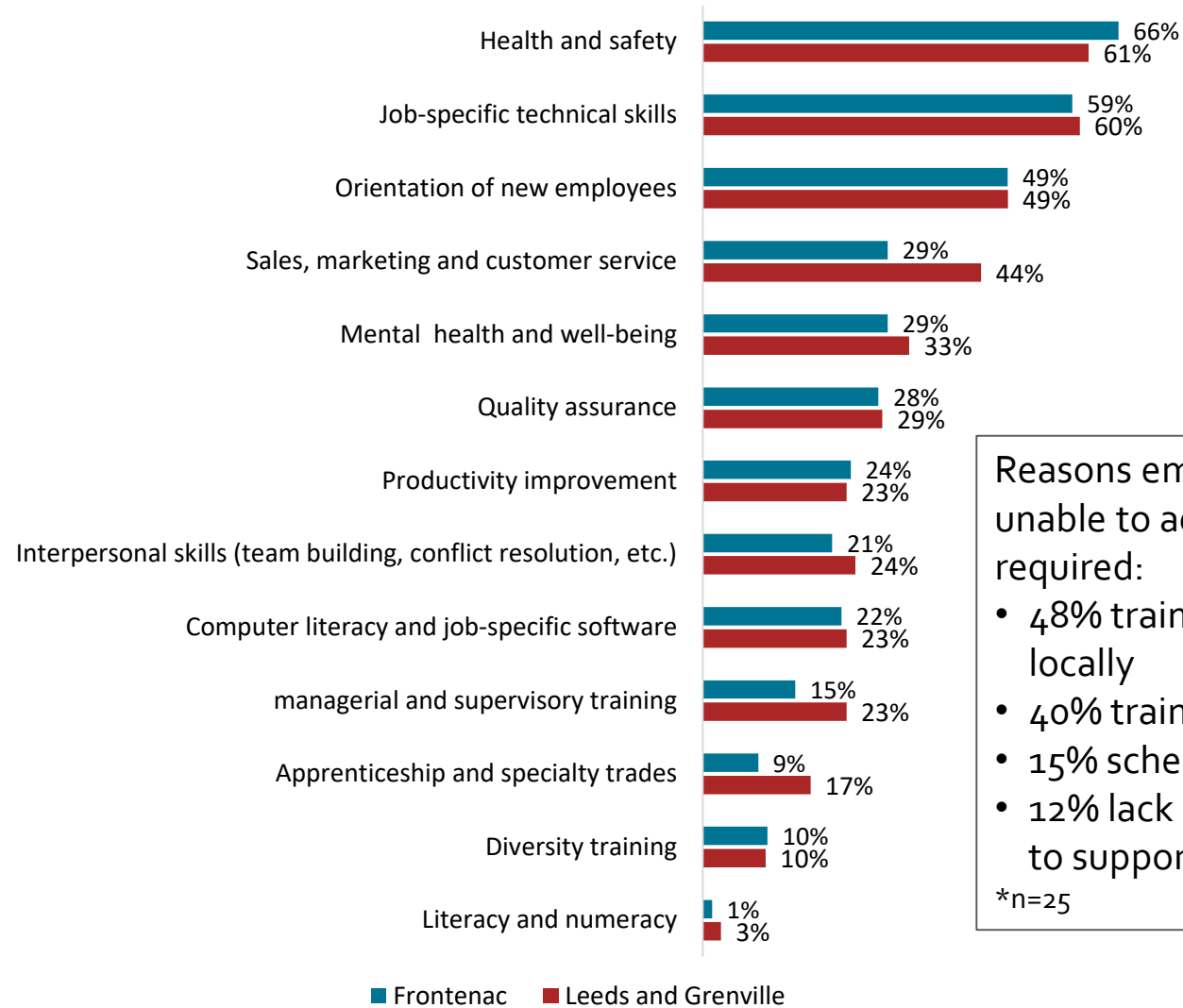


STAFF TRAINING

88% of Frontenac and 82% of Leeds and Grenville employers are able to access the training staff require (n=163).

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
138	68	70

Types of Training Employers will Focus on in 2021



Reasons employers* are unable to access the training required:

- 48% training not available locally
- 40% training too costly
- 15% schedule of training
- 12% lack of internet capacity to support online training

*n=25

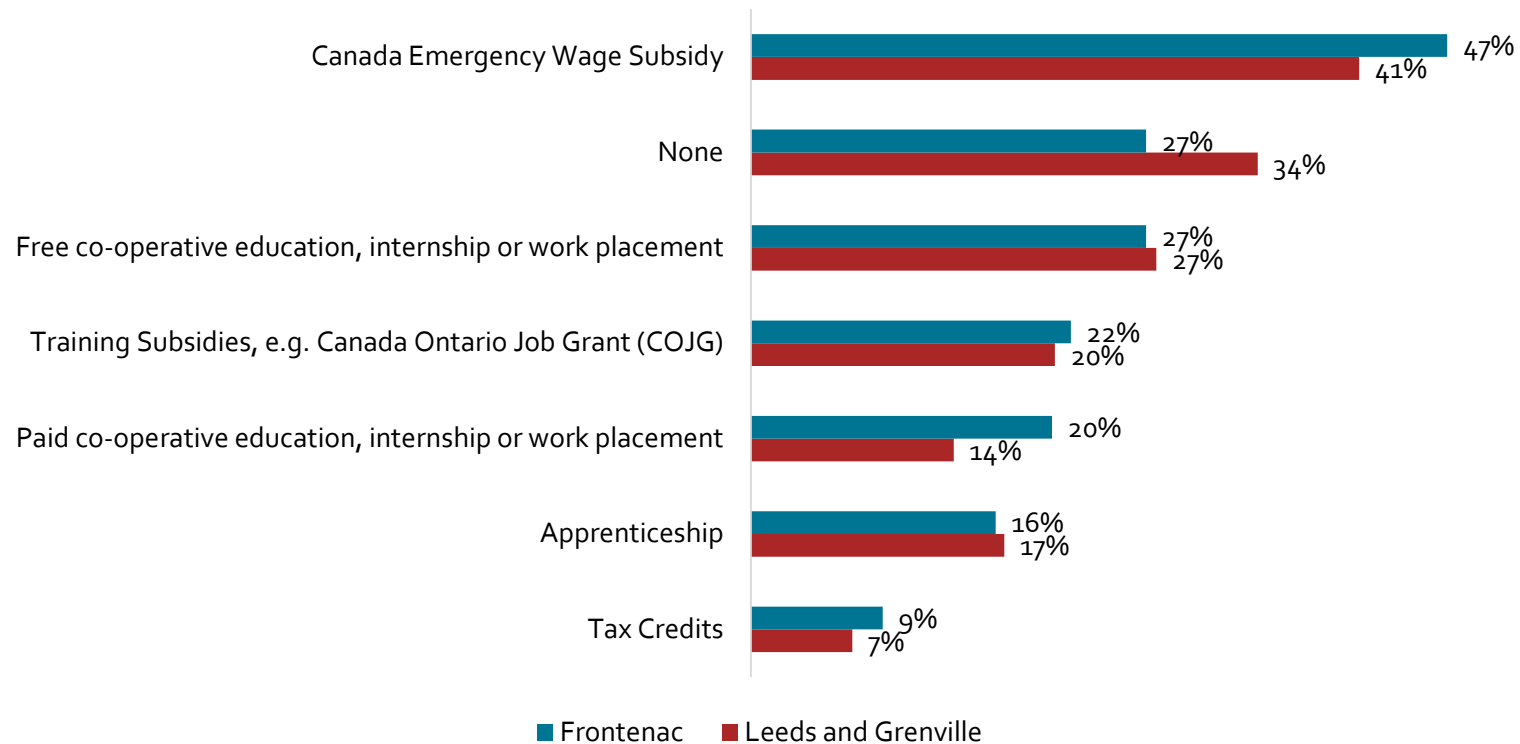


WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ACCESSED

27% of Frontenac and 34% of Leeds and Grenville employers have **not used** any government-funded workforce development programs.

Overall	Frontenac	Leeds and Grenville
167	78	89

Workforce Development Programs Employers Have Used



EMPLOYER COMMENTS

33 of the 167 employers answered the question, “Is there anything else you would like us to know?” Below are the top common themes (italics are quotes from employers).

- COVID19 (5)
 - *The government could provide clarity on lockdown protocols and also possibly look at opening up in areas with little to no COVID infections*
 - *Recovery is going to be a challenge. Building back customer confidence to shop and also stability with childcare for workers.*
- Hiring and retention challenges (9)
 - *We have experienced a shortage of new workers in Eastern Ontario in 2020 and 2021. Our challenges in attracting and hiring new employees has cost us contracts.*
 - *We need more empathetic and emotional intelligent leaders for the future. The way and how we think of work is changing and younger generations have a better work/life balance. For those 25 of younger, they need better coping and time management skills.*
- Solopreneurs (8)
 - *Sole proprietors like yoga teachers, personal trainers, coaches, artists, etc. have lost their clients and there are no grants or support for them to launch online programming and marketing.*
 - *I am a new start-up...and have seen exponential growth. There is huge opportunity here in Eastern Ontario, and I am just beginning the hiring phase. I am pleased with the valuable guidance from our local employment center, and from the Leeds Grenville Small Business Center.*



CONTACT US

21A Mill Street, Gananoque, Ontario
(613) 382-7462
www.workforcedev.ca



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