



HRi 2021

SUCCESS TOGETHER

BIG HR INDEPENDENTS FEE SURVEY REPORT



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FOREWORD

Welcome to HRI's first Big HR Independents Fee Survey Report. Having done some research before we undertook this project, we believe it is a first of its kind specifically for independent HR consultants, and we're happy to say it will be the first of many to come.

As you will see over the next page the most popular questions on the HRI Facebook group are around how we charge for our services. All of us can relate to the struggles of creating a fee menu for the first time and wondering if we're being commercially realistic whilst still recognising the true value of our time, experience and our services. Many of us then learn through experience what happens if we get the pricing wrong, usually in the early days underselling our worth or not quite getting the structure right.

Our hope with the fee survey is it helps all of us start with reference points that can create a baseline of confidence in the way that we charge and the way that we value ourselves. We also hope it promotes to the market, particularly those that haven't engaged HR consultants before, a minimum expectation of what a quality independent HR service will cost, and that this framing will benefit all of us.

We also used the survey to explore a few more ideas particularly the business aims and expectations of independent HR consultants. Some of us will have started this journey to improve our work life balance, some of us will have ambitious plans to build a fortune, and we hope the results will help align your own expectations of what is possible and probable.

It has been a tough year for all of us both business wise and personally with the impacts of Covid and lockdown, so we wanted to check in and understand how everyone in our community was doing. The good news is things are generally positive for most, but we will be looking to see how we can support those who are struggling. We also asked respondents to give us an idea of the key themes that clients were asking for help with.

Few in our community will be surprised that recruitment, retention, and flexible / hybrid working appeared in most responses. There may be some challenges ahead, but this is where independent HR consultants know we can really add value from their wide experience in different environments.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in the various HRI focus groups before the survey, the 161 of you who completed the survey, those of you that shared it far and wide, and those who joined us as we reviewed the results. We will take onboard your feedback and also the lessons we learned in its creation, and hopefully this will be an annual resource to assist you and those joining our community for many years to come.

MEET THE TEAM



Katy McMinn
Co-founder
and Director



Ruth Cornish
Co-founder
and Director



Mary Asante
Director



Charlie Goodman
Employee Benefits

Here at HRI, we are passionate about promoting and supporting independent HR and People professionals, and with this survey we'd like to make what we want to achieve clear:

**- INCREASE INDIES CONFIDENCE
IN THESE CONVERSATIONS.**

**- GIVE CONSULTANTS A STARTING
POINT AND GUIDE.**

**- MAKE SURE OUR VALUE IS
RECOGNISED.**

Upon putting this survey together we had conducted several focus groups and would like to express our gratitude. And especially to give our thanks to all

161 respondents.

“

Hi everyone, having just started out I am still figuring out my pricing (why is this the hardest part?!?) I saw the chat about average policy prices which was really helpful and just wondered what everyone thought about what to charge for job evaluation and benchmarking? Per job? Per day? Any ideas much appreciated. Thank you.

Hi just wanting to do a price check, is £300 per month for 5 hours retainer services a lot to charge?

Good morning Indies. Can I ask, for those of you who have retained clients, how do you charge for documents? A new client wants a few things that either won't take me long to whip up or I already have. As I charge them using units of time, I need a way of somehow converting that to products rather than services.

Potential client has 70 staff and wants 8 hours of support per week (one day a week). So my question is would you charge your daily rate x 4 to give a monthly cost or would you set it at a fixed price by reducing it a bit? I have quoted my daily rate x 4 and she is saying this is way out of her budget and to try to adapt the cost... which is why I question myself should I have done it as a fixed rate and reduced my prices a bit?

Wanted to understand what rates people charge for half day and full day training? Would your rate differ if it was a train the trainer session?

Hi, I'm looking for some guidance please. I potentially have my first client, and they would like their employee handbook updated and induction pack updated as well as combined and the company policies updated, ordered and better presented. How would you charge for this? Hourly? What would you charge per hour? Also how long do you think this could take as an estimate? Any other advice you could give me as an inexperienced freelancer? Thank you so much in advance for your help.

Hi, does anyone have any advice about retainers? How do you structure it? What do you charge? (Don't have to give me actual figures). I have done a few with smaller clients where I bill a day rate for 8 hours support and once they have used the 8 hours I bill again but conscious for bigger, more demanding clients this is not going to benefit me. Just wondering different ways of doing it? Thanks.

”

Having conducted our survey, we were able to find that:

26%

of respondents were based in South East England.

22%

of respondents were then based in the Midlands.

15%

of respondents were also based in South West England.

8%

of respondents were situated in London.

7%

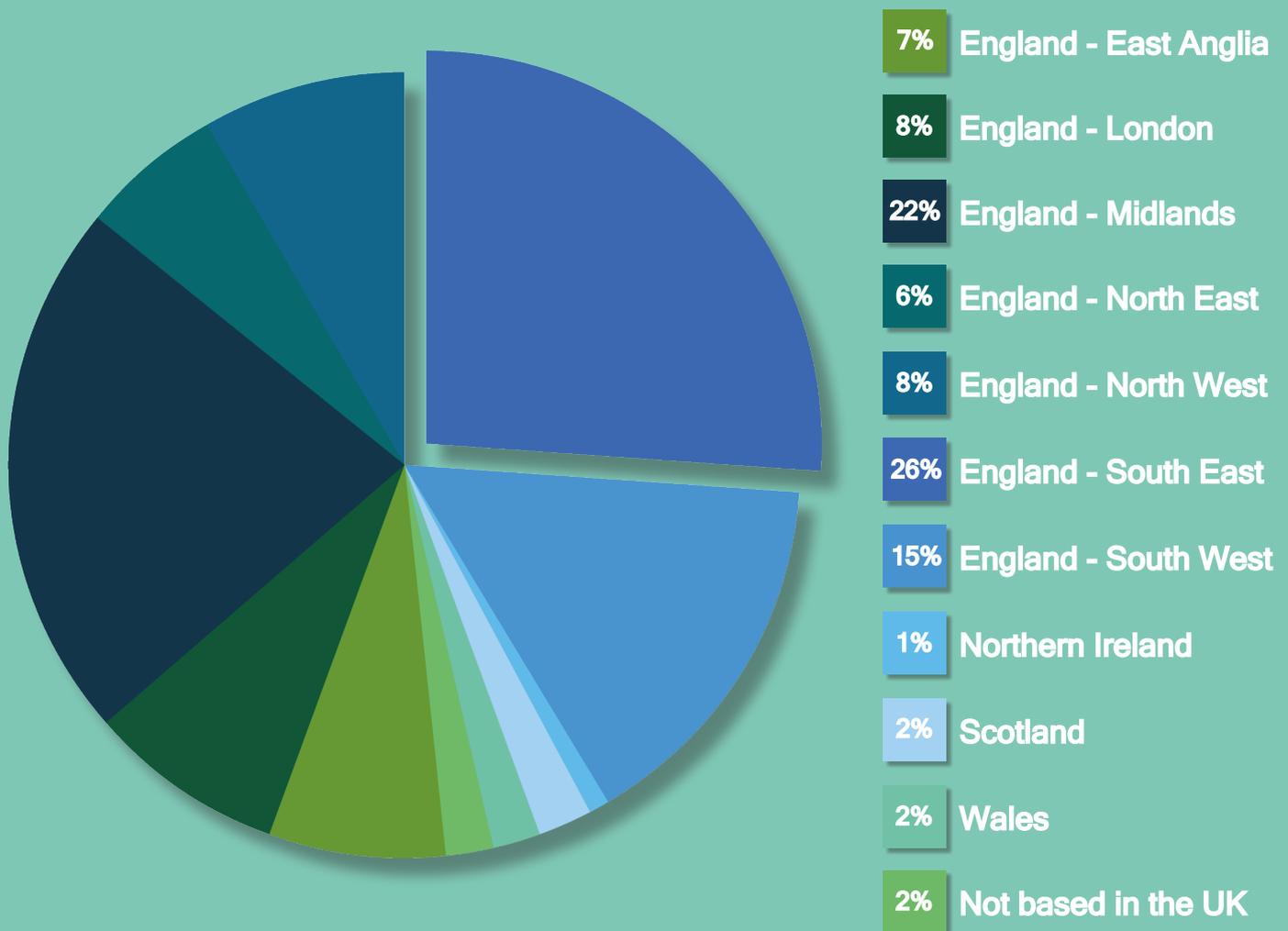
of respondents were also situated in East Anglia.

Additionally:

- There were only a few responses from the other UK countries.
- Interestingly, there were 4 respondents who currently are not based in the UK but still operate here.

External HR Consultants are based geographically across the UK.

Most HR consultants operate remotely and as such, may have clients across the UK and internationally.



This was supported by the survey showing a spread of respondents across the UK, with the largest segment being those based in the South East (26%) with the smallest being in Northern Ireland (1%) followed by Scotland (2%) and Wales (2%).

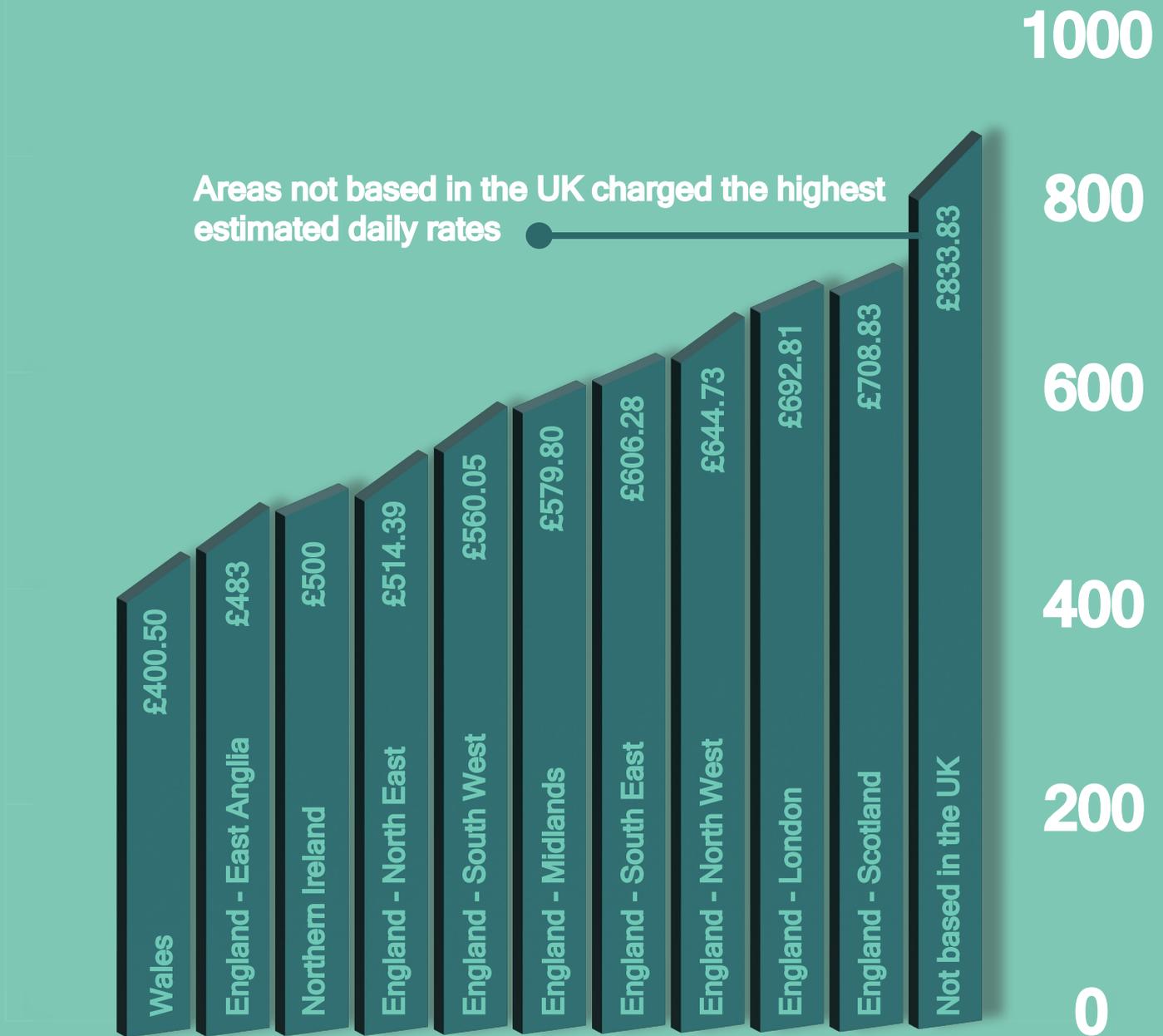
We then compiled the data into the average hourly fee between each region:



Estimated hourly rate ranged from £74 to £112.95. The average hourly rate for an HR Consultant across the UK is £88.15. Hourly rate in the South East of England (£84) was significantly lower than South West of England (£93) and London. This may be due to the nature of services that the respondents provide to their clients.

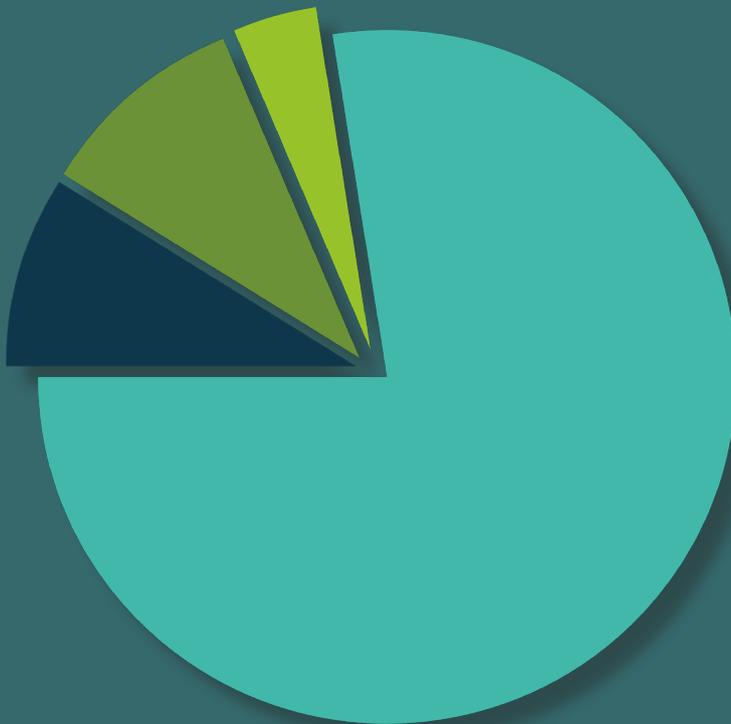
- Factors affecting how much consultants charge:**
- Level of experience
 - Qualifications
 - Nature of work being carried out
 - Nature of the relationship with the client

And then compiled it into their average daily rates between each region:



The average day rate for an HR Consultant is £593.20. The survey showed that a number of HR Consultants operate as Associates for other HR Consultancies. This may account for the wide difference in daily rates, from £400.50 to £833.83. The Consultant will get paid a lower rate than they would normally charge their client for direct work. Again, the nature of work carried out by the consultant, their level of experience and qualifications.

For this section, we wanted to learn what types of organisations our respondents typically engaged with:

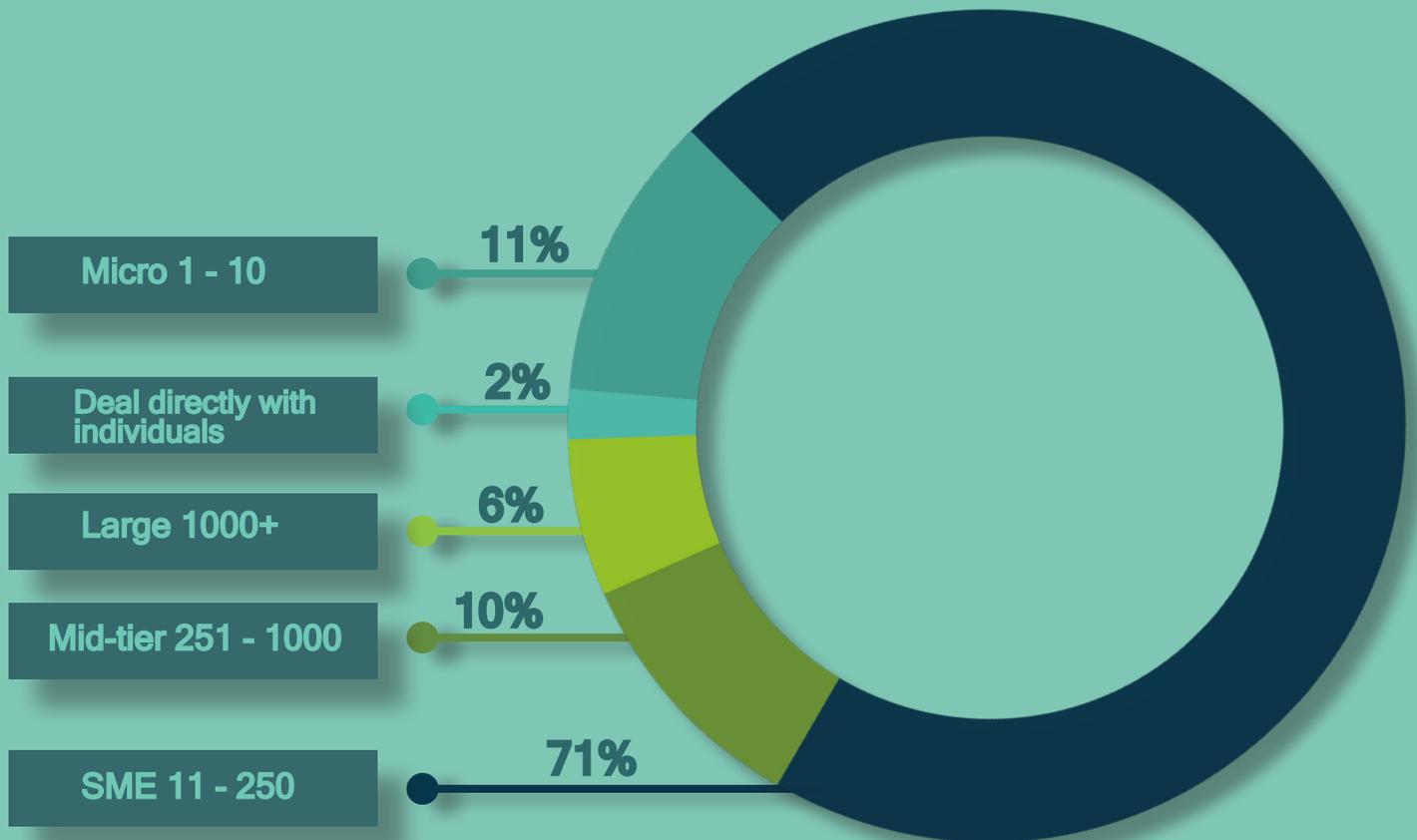


- The representation of the sector that consultants engage with is in line with what is expected

- The private sector is more likely to engage with HR consultants at all levels

Depending on the size of the organisation, the level of engagement may range from completely outsourcing the HR function to the consultant to project specific assignments. It is not all surprising that only a small minority work directly with individuals. Currently, HR consultants giving employment rights advice to individuals need to be registered and regulated by the FCA. However, they do not need to advise businesses. HRI is campaigning to get this change so that HR Consultants with a wealth of experience and knowledge will be able to advise individuals on their employment rights.

And to follow on from that, we then wanted to see the sizes of these organisation our respondents typically target:



HR consultants predominantly support the SME market. This is because most small to medium size enterprises may not have their own in-house HR expertise or have very small HR in-house HR teams, who may not have the bandwidth or expertise to deal with all HR and people issues.

- It is therefore not surprising that 71% of the respondents target SMEs.

71%

- It is interesting to note that 11% target micro businesses.

11%

These businesses often get by without HR support until something goes horribly wrong in the employment relationship. It is better and cheaper in the long run to engage the services of an HR consultant right from the onset as they can add value to your organisation right from the onset.



10%

Only 10% of the respondents target mid-tier (251 - 1,000 employees)

This may be due to the fact that such organisations are likely to have good size in-house HR teams to support them. Nonetheless, they may still have requirements for bringing in external expertise. An even smaller proportion targets larger organisations.

This may also be due to the fact that in addition to having their own internal resources, larger organisations may have more complex procurement processes, which may not favour small HR consultancy businesses. Thus, making it more difficult for them to win tenders.

We then had a look at the hourly rate that is charged based on the organisation:



Interestingly, the highest hourly rate by the size of organisations, £136 per hour is aimed at mid-tier organisations.

The survey found that micro-organisations are charged an average of £74 per hour, same for larger organisations. SMEs are charged an average of £86 per hour and individuals are charged £82 per hour.

Then we looked at the averages of their daily rate would be, based on the organisation's size:

1000

800

600

400

200

0



A close analysis of the average daily rate by the size of the organisation reveals that the rate for most HR consultants is around the £560 mark. This is the rate that most SMEs are charged.

Micro businesses are charged around £480, larger organisations £640 and mid-tier businesses, £820. However, analysis of the daily rate by industry showed a range of £580 - £750. With £580 in IT and Telecoms and £700 in Healthcare and Pharma. Day rate may vary depending on the nature of the project being carried out, the complexity, as well as the level of expertise of the consultant.

Moving on, we then looked at which industry sectors that our respondents engaged with the most:

The top result was 'Other' (79 responses) which suggests that more options should have been given and they will be next time



- 33 Public Sector
- 43 Retail
- 28 Transport & Logistics
- 44 Automotive & Aerospace
- 25 Care Services
- 28 Education
- 22 Energy & Utilities
- 55 Financial Services
- 30 Healthcare & Pharma
- 39 Hospitality
- 45 IT & Telecoms
- 46 Manufacturing
- 47 Media, Advertising & Entertainment
- 73 Other

We suspect offering options such as Specialist Services would have given us a clearer picture, and it would be good to know more about anything you thought was missing

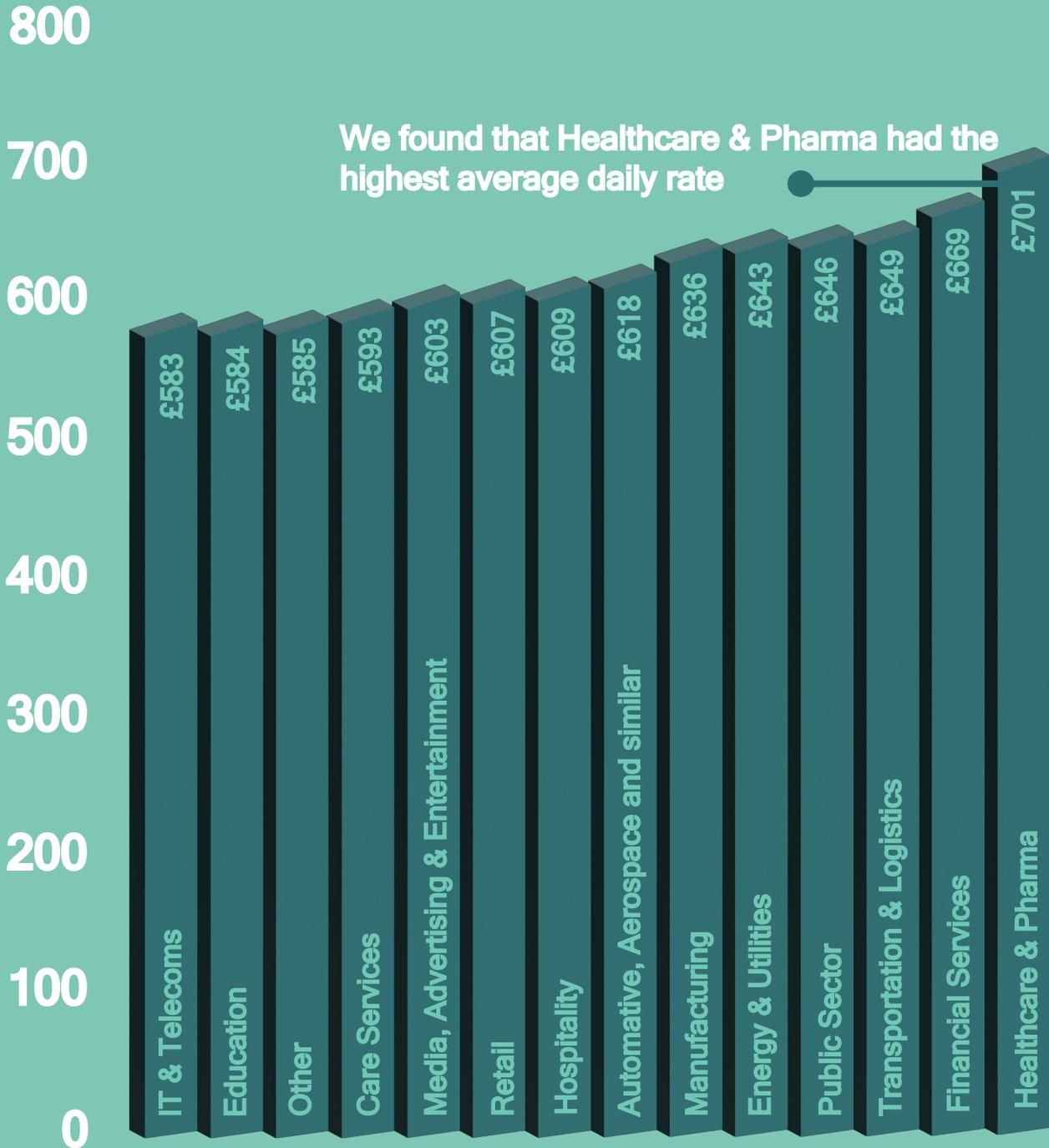
The respondents worked across different sectors including financial services, media, advertising and entertainment, manufacturing, energy and utilities and the care sector. It is worth noting that nearly 50% of the respondents work in 'other' industry. The beauty of running an HR consultancy is that the consultants have the skills, knowledge, expertise and the versatility to work across different sectors and industries and to support a diverse range of clients.

From here, we began to look at what the hourly rate is based on each industry sector:



Energy and Utilities was found to have the highest estimated hourly rate.

Then we looked at the averages of what their daily rate would be, based on the industry sector:



For this next section we looked into which areas of specialism our respondents were

Important to note: respondents could choose multiple options



- 127 HR Generalist Services
- 47 Learning and Development
- 13 Employee Benefits
- 32 Resourcing
- 17 Diversity and Inclusion
- 17 People Analytics
- 50 Employee Experience
- 35 Wellbeing
- 17 Reward
- 64 Organisation Development and Design
- 81 Employee Relations

Most HR consultants start off as HR generalists and then branch off into special niches.

This was reflected in the survey results which showed that 25% of the respondents are HR generalists.

25%

16%

of respondents were specialised in Employee Relations

13%

of respondents were specialised in Organisational Development and Design

10%

of respondents were specialised in Employee Experience

9%

of respondents were specialised in Learning and Development

Other areas of specialism included People Analytics, Reward, Resourcing, Wellbeing and Employee benefits. HR consultants often provide a wraparound service encompassing the employee lifecycle. It is common to find HR consultants offering a variety of services covering various specialisms.

However, not all HR consultants provide HR generalists services. 21% of the respondents did not consider themselves as HR generalists.

21%

SPECIALISM DATA

HOURLY AND DAILY RATES

HOURLY RATES

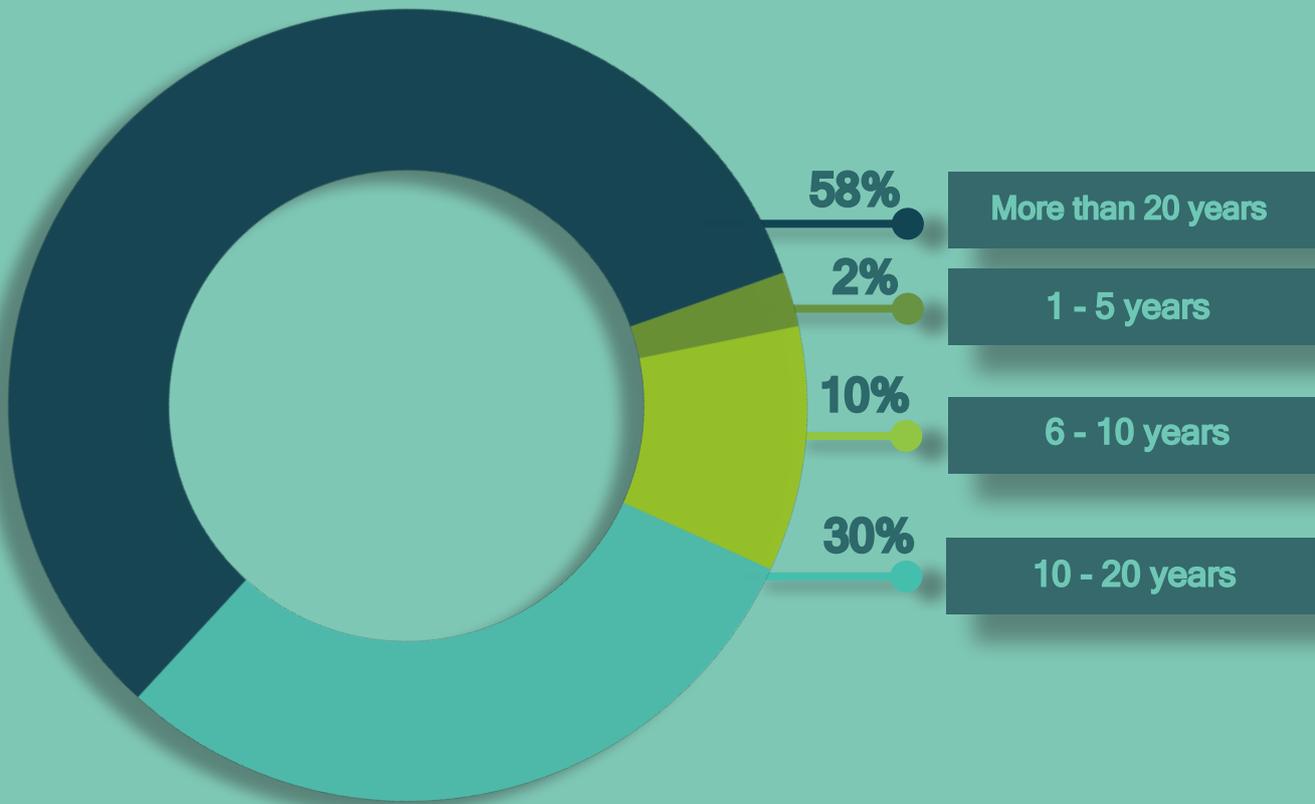
(Based on specialism)



DAILY RATES

(Based on specialism)

This graph shows about how long our respondents had been working in HR:

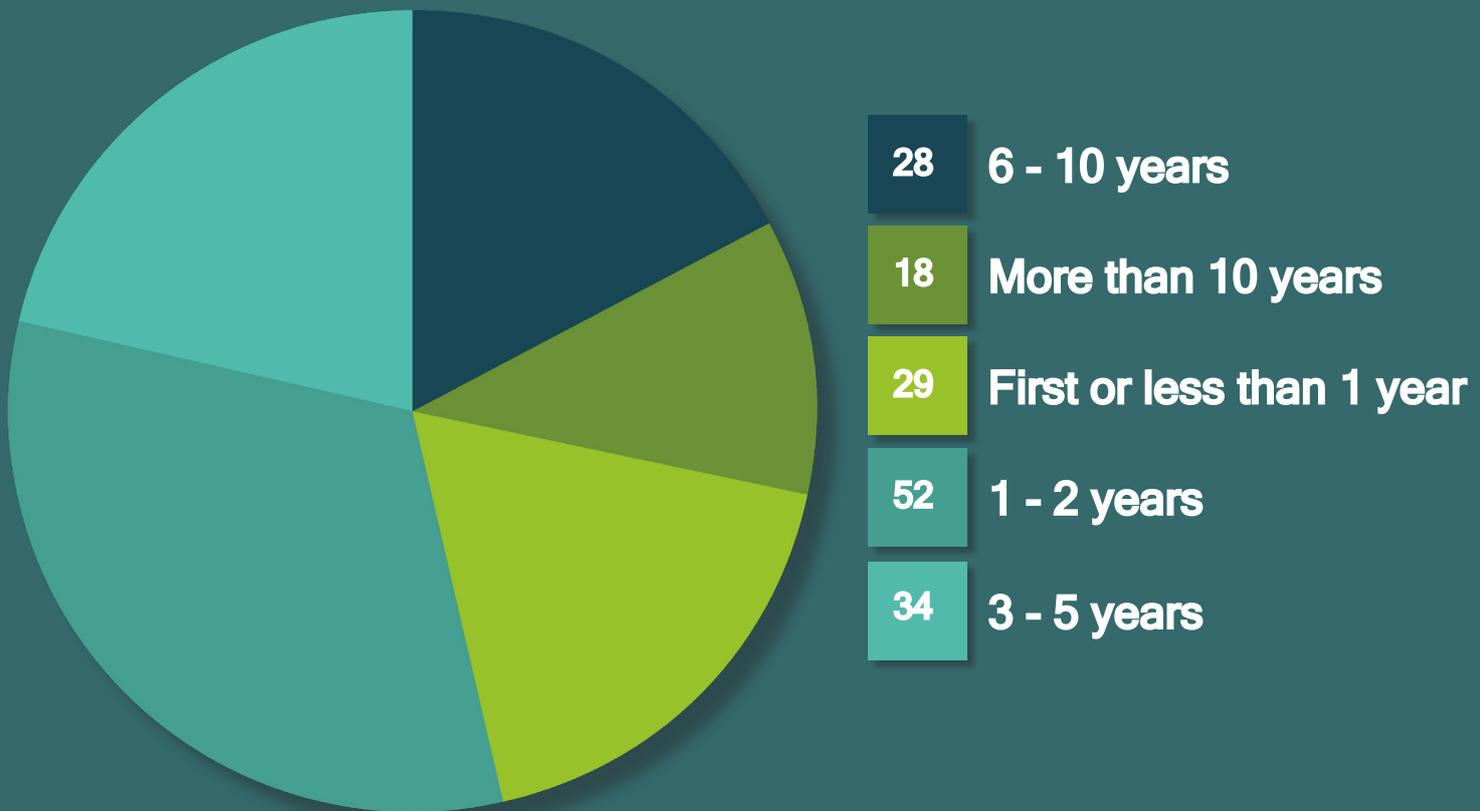


The majority of respondents (95) have been working in HR for more than 20 years

58% of the respondents had worked in HR for more than 20 years. 30% had 10 - 20 years of HR experience. 10% had 6 - 10 years' HR experience and a small proportion, 2%, had 1 - 5 years' HR experience. Most HR consultants would have worked in-house for many years and worked at a senior level before branching out to become a consultant. They would have led teams, worked as part of organisational leadership and potentially been responsible for other functions too.

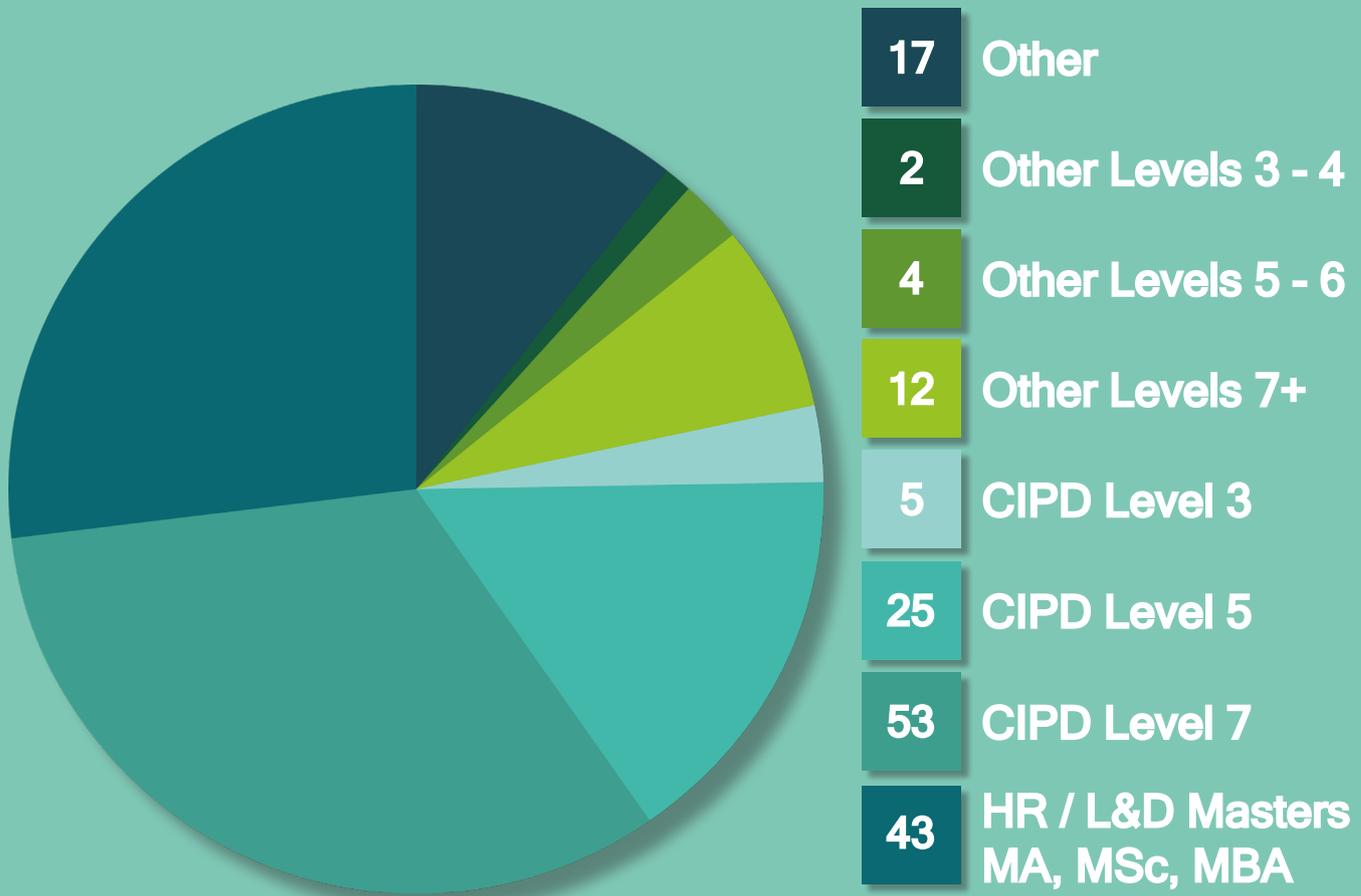
And here is how much averages of time they've spent as an independent consultant:

The respondents were fairly evenly distributed amongst the rest



Just over 50% of the respondents are new to the HR consulting world. They have been running their consultancy for less than two years. This means that they started their business during the pandemic/lock-down. 21% have been consultants for 3 - 5 years and 29% have more than 6 years of consulting experience.

As well as the results when asked what HR qualifications the respondents possessed:



Majority of the respondents, 60%, have a Level 7 or a Masters degree level qualification.

16% have Level 5 qualification. The rest of the respondents have other qualifications, ranging from Levels 3 - 6.

Additionally, HR consultants may hold some other professional certifications such as psychometric assessments and coaching qualifications.

Here, the respondents were asked of their typical fee methods



34%

HOURLY RATES

27%

DAY RATES

17%

ONGOING RETAINER

16%

PROJECT

3%

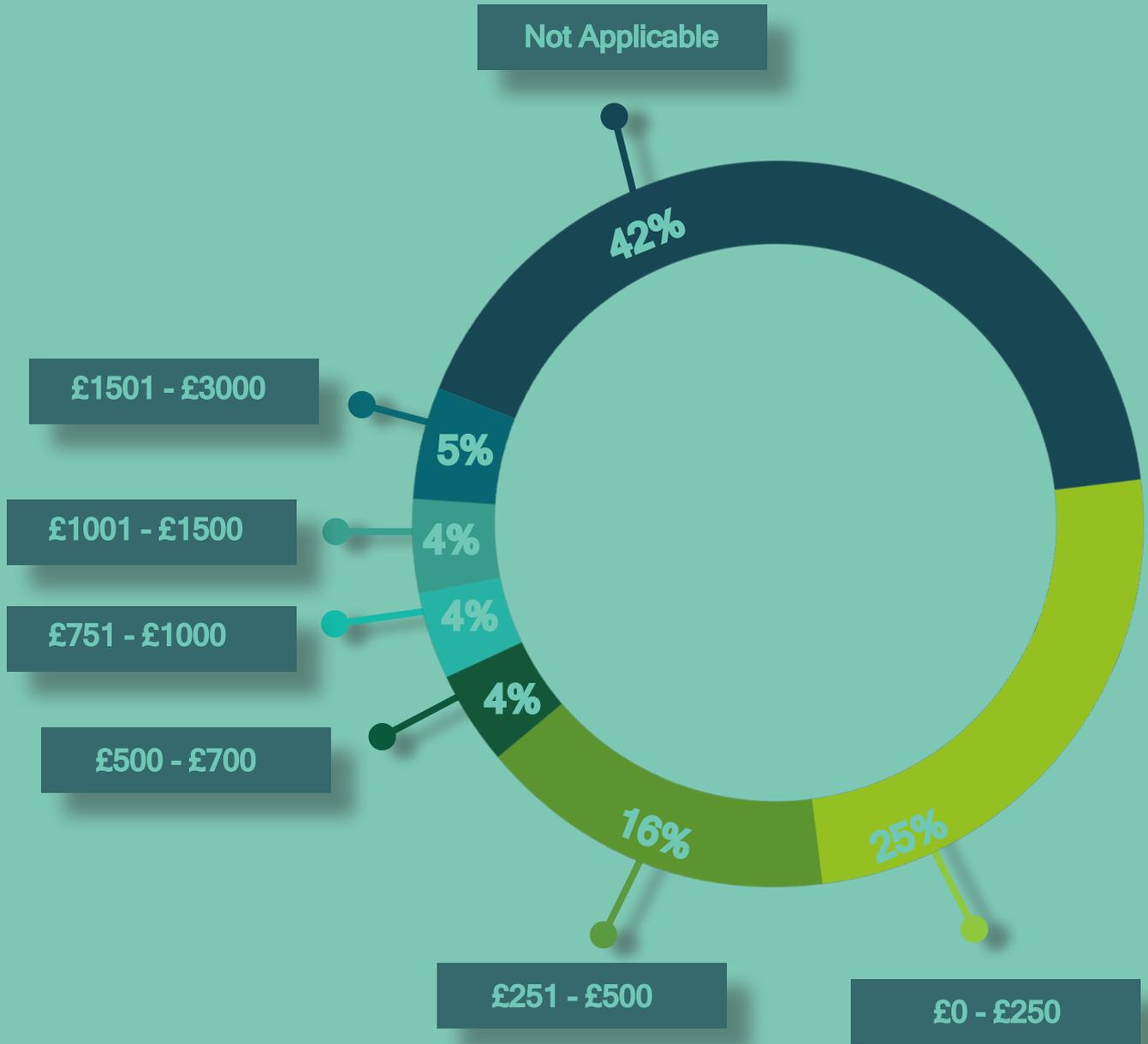
ANNUAL

3%

MONTHLY

Fixed, annual and monthly were the least popular. Charging for time comes with its own challenges. It limits the Consultants availability to take on other projects, and as such, can be barriers to scaling your business. There is scope for HR Consultants to review their pricing methods to allow them to add value to their clients and to scale their businesses.

Going from there, we asked respondents to tell us the cost of their monthly retainer fees:

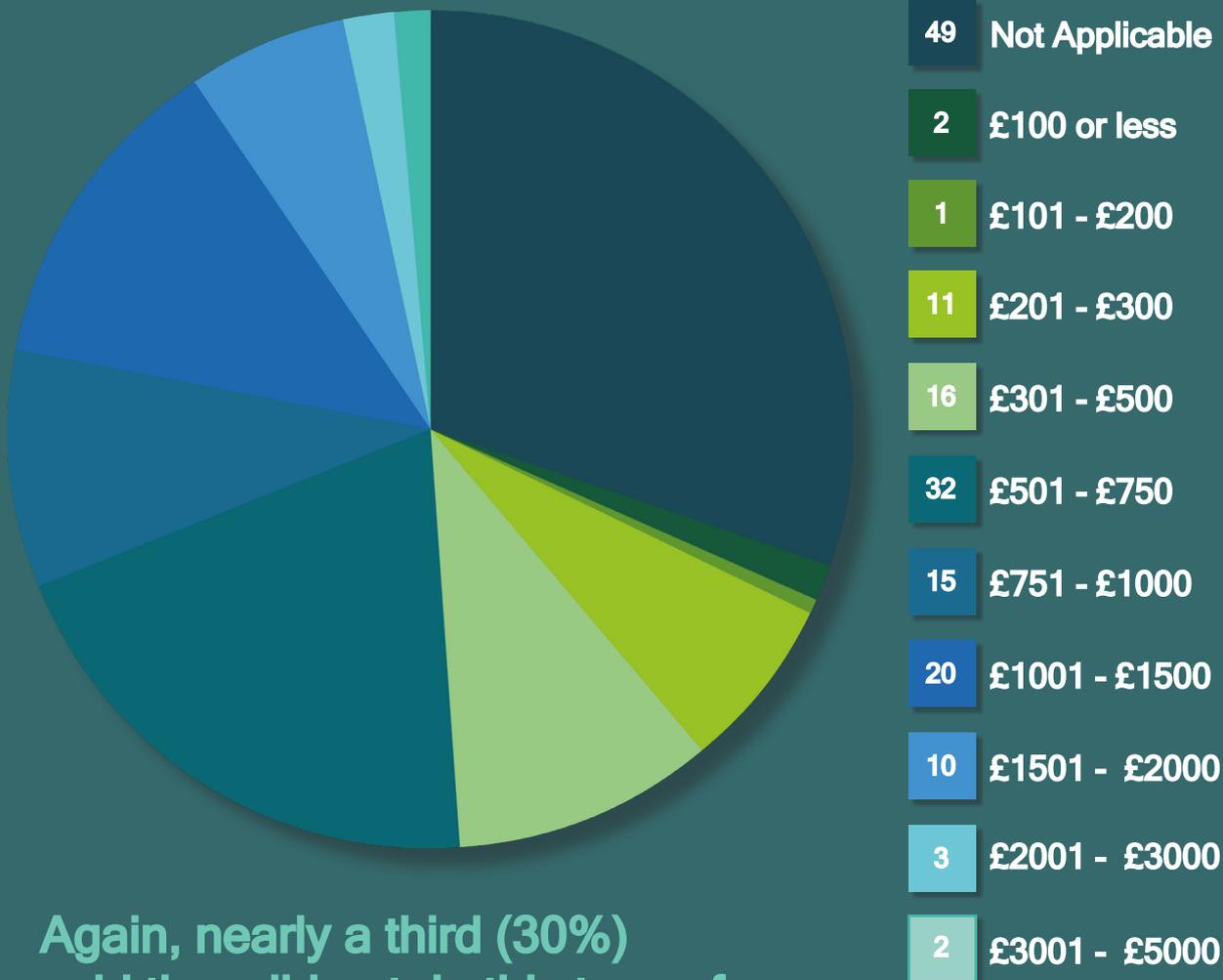


Charges for monthly retainers vary. This may be dependent on the size of the organisation, number of employees and what is covered under the retainer agreement. 25% charge up to £250 as a retainer, whilst 16% charge up to £500.

When entering into retainer agreements, HR Consultants must be mindful of what they are promising their clients. Whether the arrangements end up being profitable or not will depend on what is delivered.

As project work is, by its nature, very varied we chose just to use one example for this data.

What would you charge for a standard employee handbook for an employer with 250 employees?



Again, nearly a third (30%) said they did not do this type of work.

One of the most common projects undertaken by HR Consultants is the development and review of employee handbook. 20% of the respondents charge between £501 to £750. 12% charge £1,001 - £1,500. Whilst 10% charge £301 - £500. Employee handbooks vary according to organisations, industries and sectors.

Here we wanted to see the comparison of work types, such as:

- 7 100% Strategic Work
- 5 100% Transactional Work
- 10 Unsure / Not Applicable
- 55 1% - 25% Strategic / 75% - 99% Transactional
- 35 26% - 50% Strategic / 50% - 74% Transactional
- 32 50% - 74% Strategic / 26% - 50% Transactional
- 17 75% - 99% Strategic / 1% - 25% Transactional



Strategic VS. Transactional

The range of work carried out by HR Consultants range from strategic and transactional work. Only 4% do pure strategic work.

Similarly, only 3% do pure transactional work. Most respondents do a mixture of strategic and transactional work. The split between the two types of work carried out may depend on client needs. In the early part of the consultancy career, a lot of consultants are likely to do transactional work. Over time, HR Consultants may specialise, thus becoming more strategic.

Project VS. Retainer

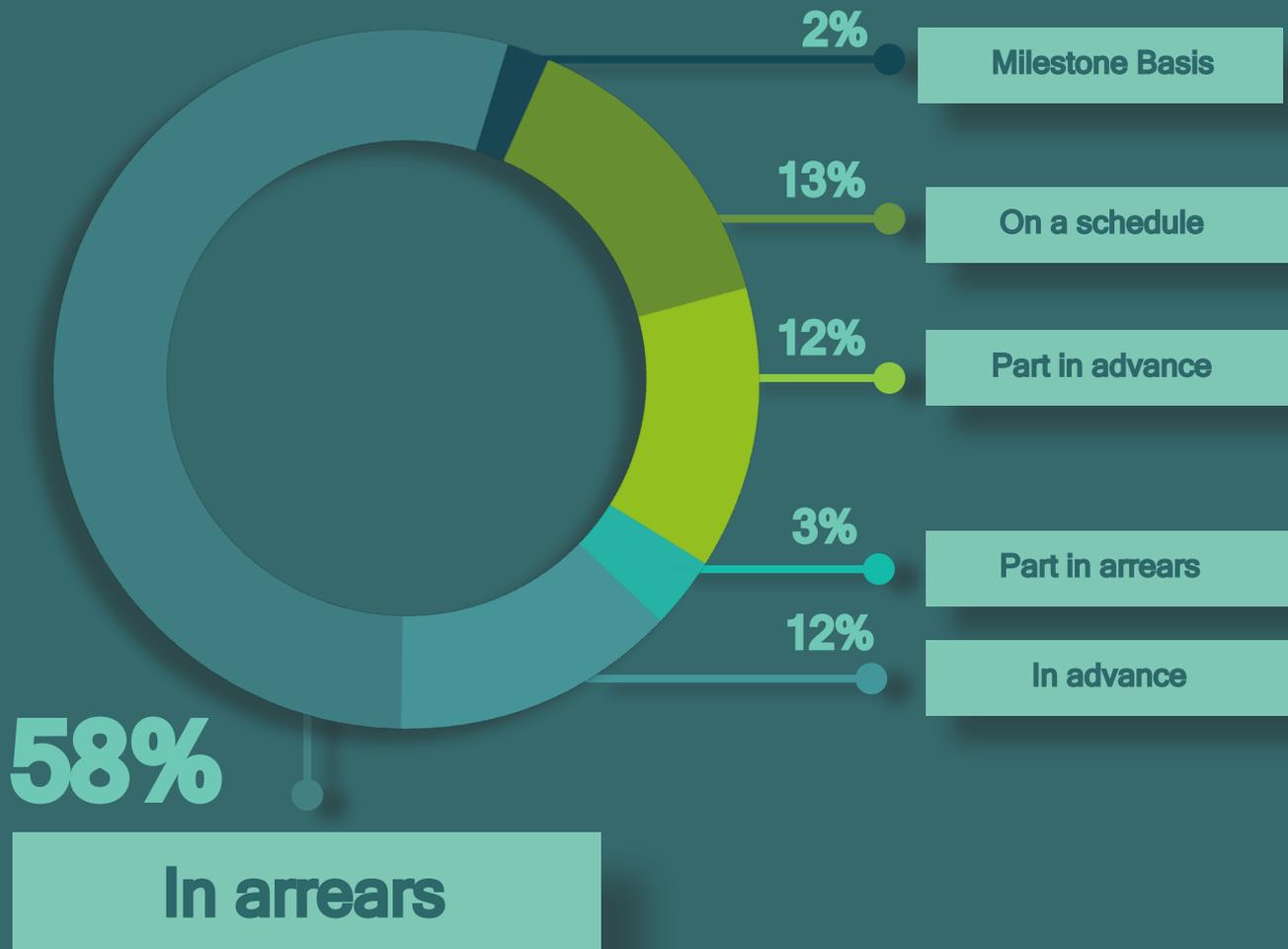


- 50 100% Project Work
- 3 100% Retainer Work
- 15 Unsure / Not Applicable
- 15 1% - 25% Project / 75% - 99% Retainer
- 23 26% - 50% Project / 50% - 74% Retainer
- 22 50% - 74% Project / 26% - 50% Retainer
- 33 75% - 99% Project / 1% - 25% Retainer

Interestingly, 31% of respondents undertake project work only, whilst 2% operate strictly within the retainer model only. Of those who do a mixture of project and retainer, again there was a higher percentage of split towards projects.

Operating within the project model offers consultants more scope to service more clients. It also offers a variety of interesting work and contributes towards the consultants growth and professional development. The key benefit to the retainer model is that it helps with cash flow and forecasting as you will know the amount of money coming into your business on a regular basis.

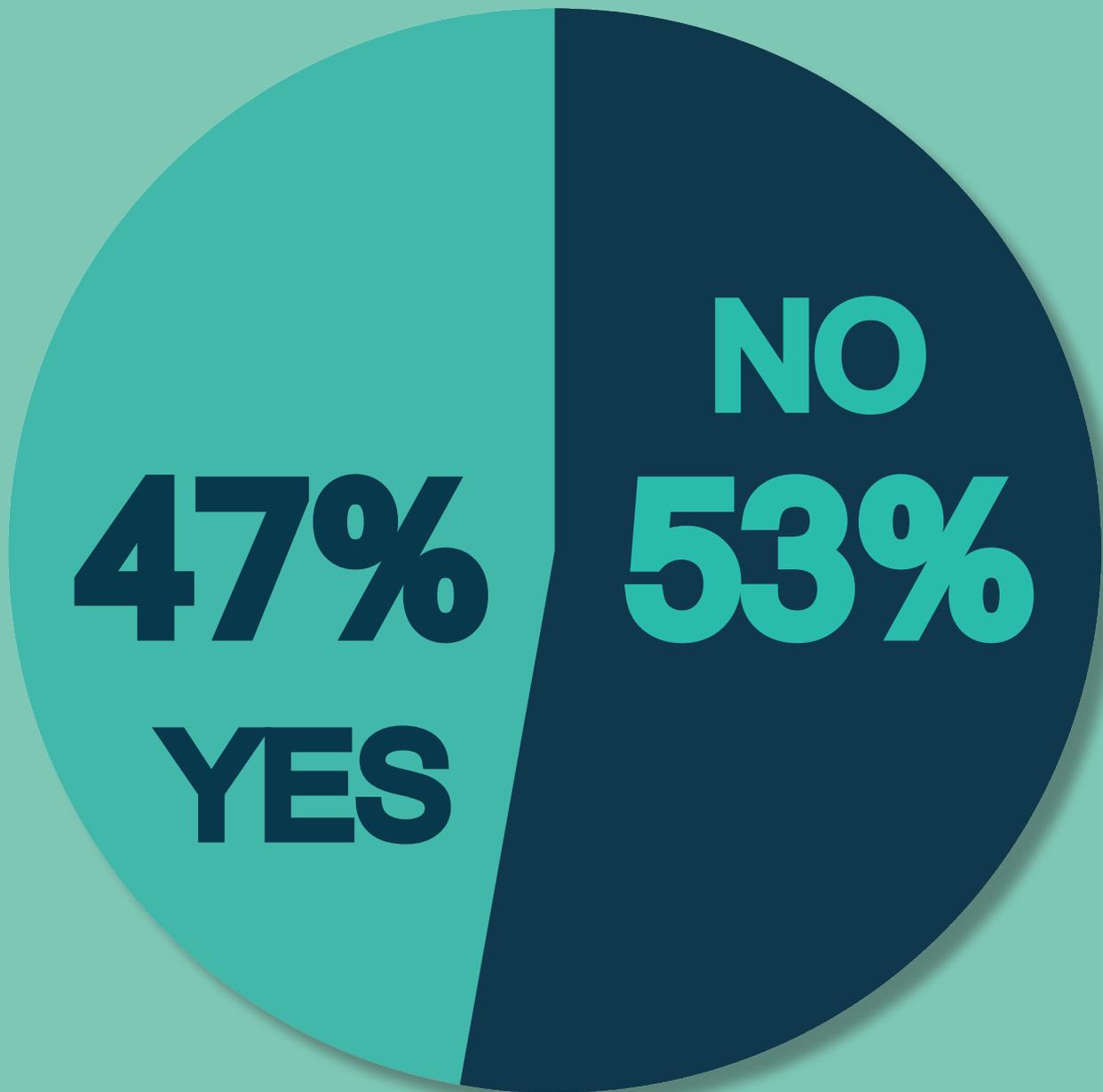
The respondents were then asked how they would typically invoice with their clients:



Over half of respondents (93) invoice in arrears

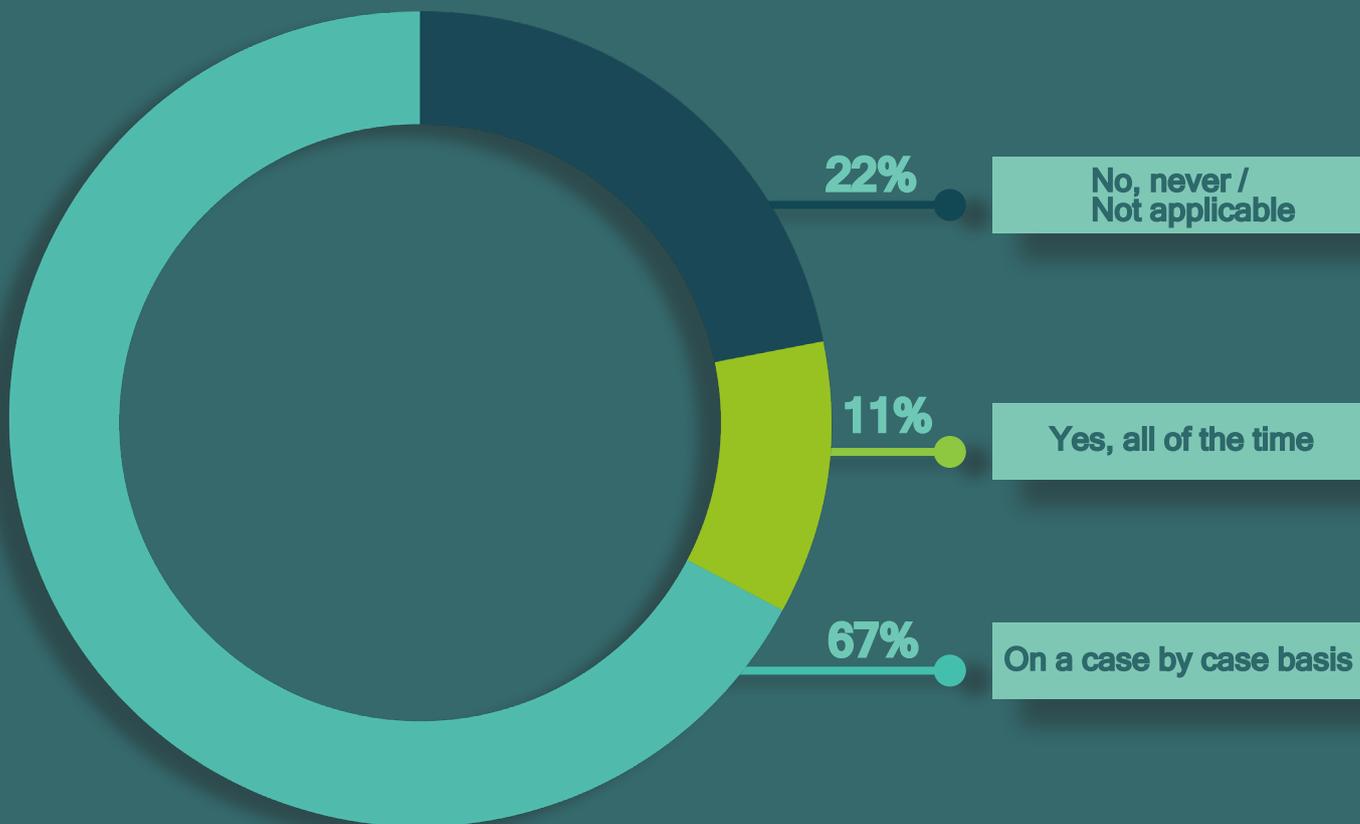
A lot of our additional results were fairly matched however, 13% invoice on a schedule. 12% invoice in advance and a further 12% invoice part in advance.

As well as that, they were also asked if they charge their clients VAT:



47% of the respondents charge VAT whilst 53% don't. Charging clients VAT is not mandatory until you reach a taxable turnover of £85,000. However, some consultants register voluntarily.

They were then asked if they charge their clients for the travel costs:

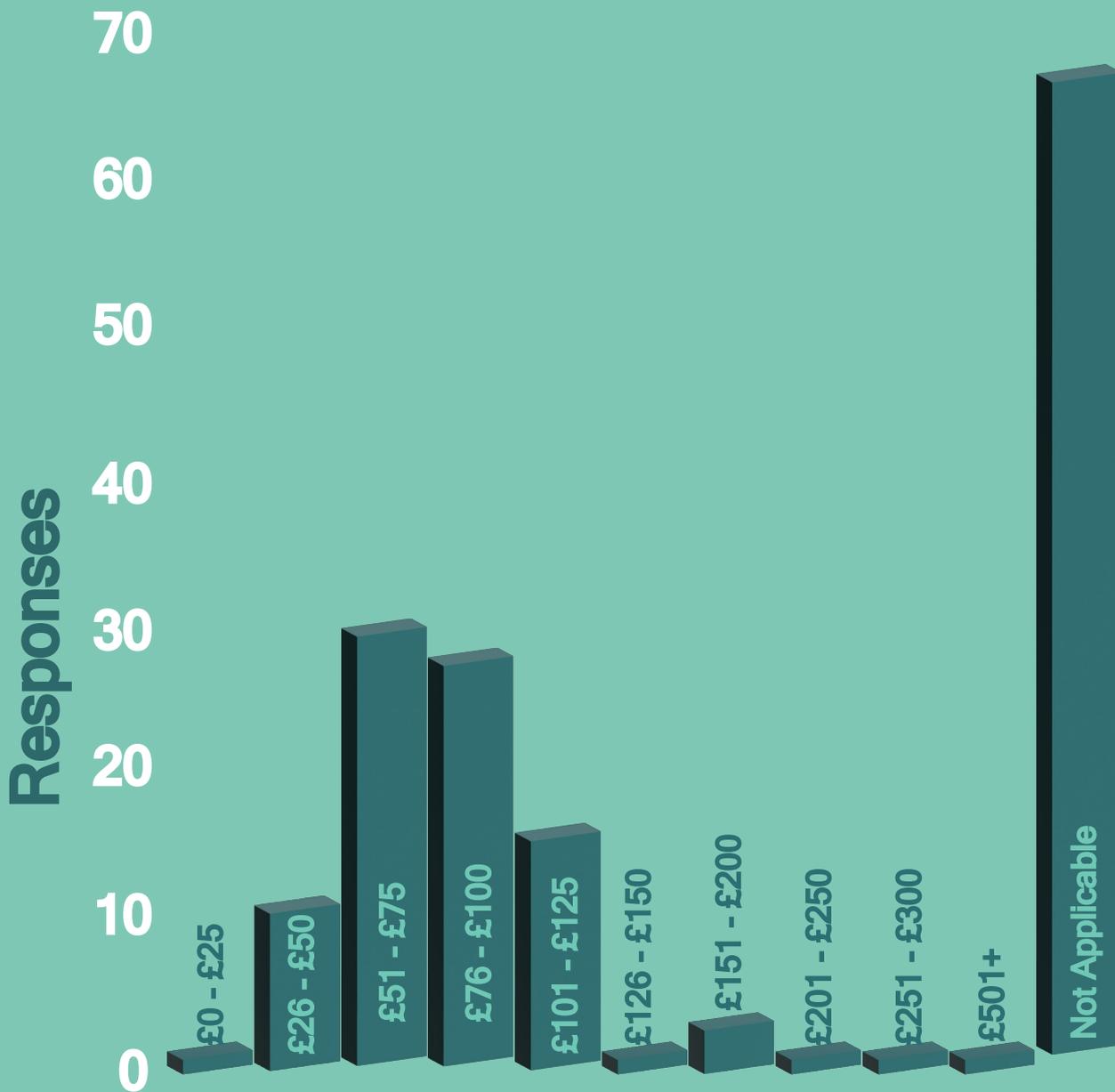


This was a question that frequently popped up on social media

78% of the respondents charge for travel time. Out of that, 67% charge on a case by case basis. 11% charge for travel time all the time. 22% do not charge for travel time or stated that it is not applicable. This may be due to the fact that they operate remotely.

It should be interesting to see how this trends further overtime.

The majority of respondents who account for their time was 19% between £51 - £75 an hour:

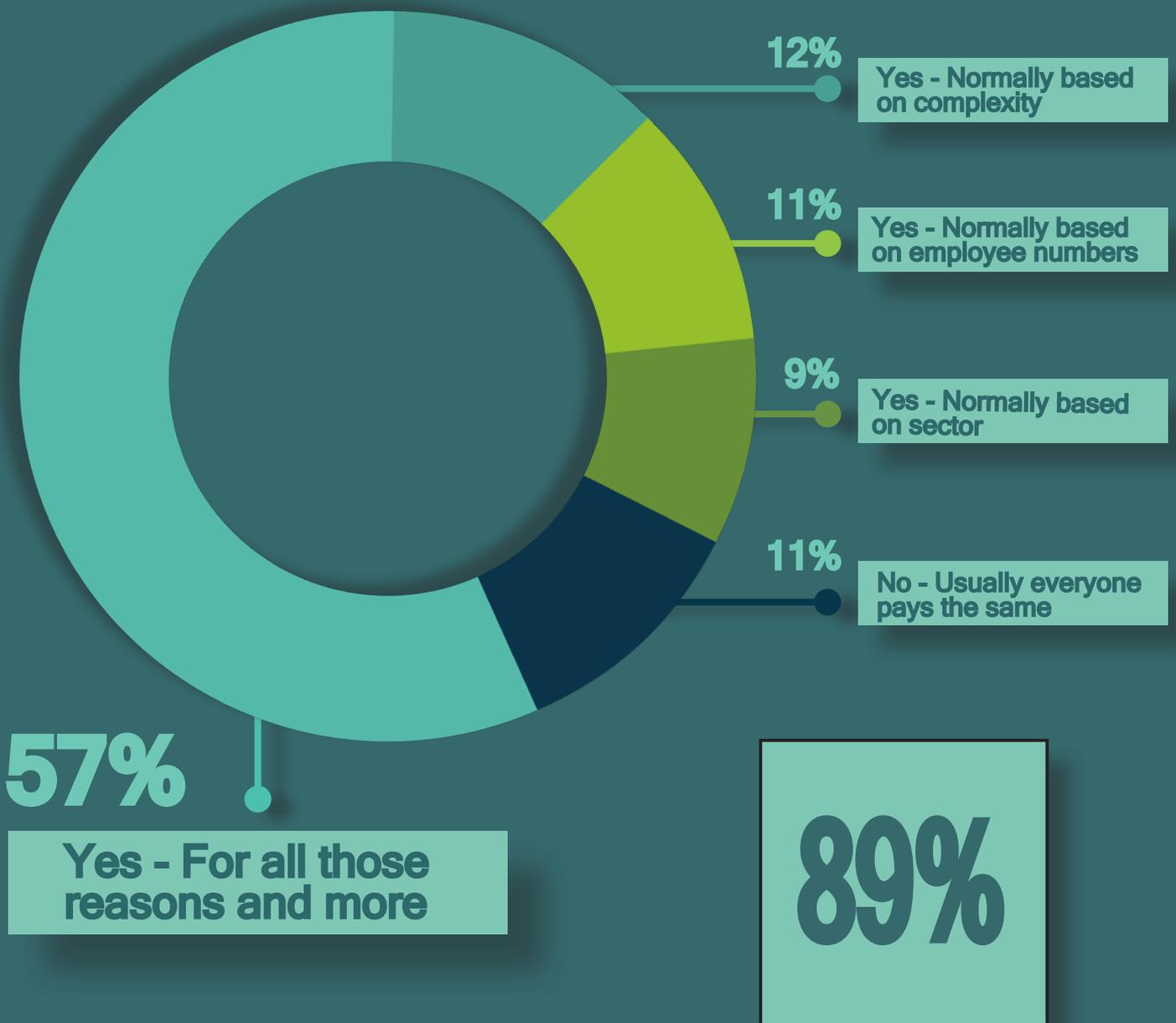


Valuation of internal time is a good measure of the cost of sale. To be able to work out whether a project you just delivered was profitable, you need to be able to account for how much time you are spending on it and how much it cost you to deliver it.

This will help you in setting and getting your pricing right when you are quoting for a similar project. The survey found that 42% of the respondents did not internally value their time.

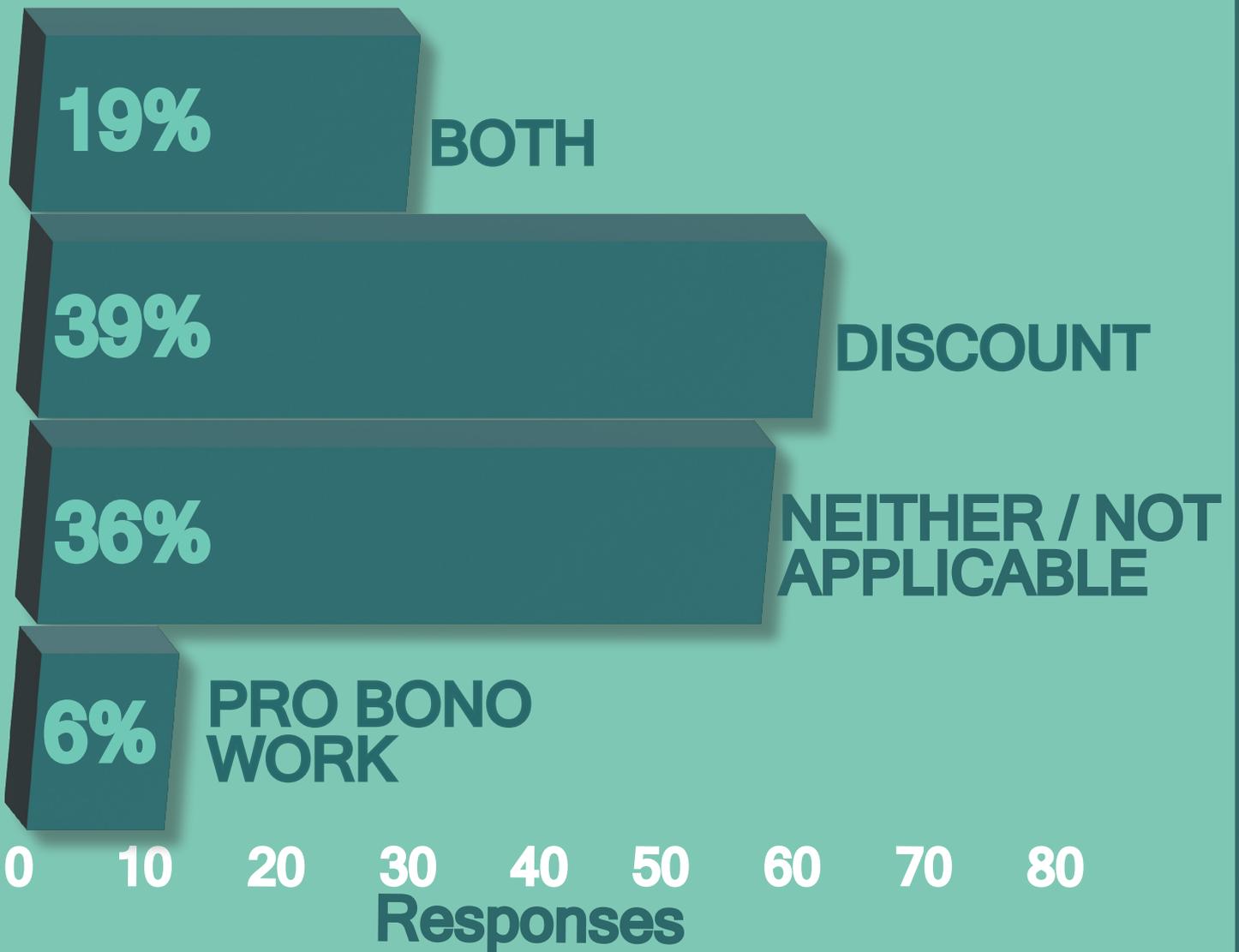
A good majority of respondents, 89% charges different clients different rates.

Only 11% charge all their clients the same rates. The reasons for different rates may be based on the sector, complexity of the project and/or number of employees the clients have.



Charge clients different rates

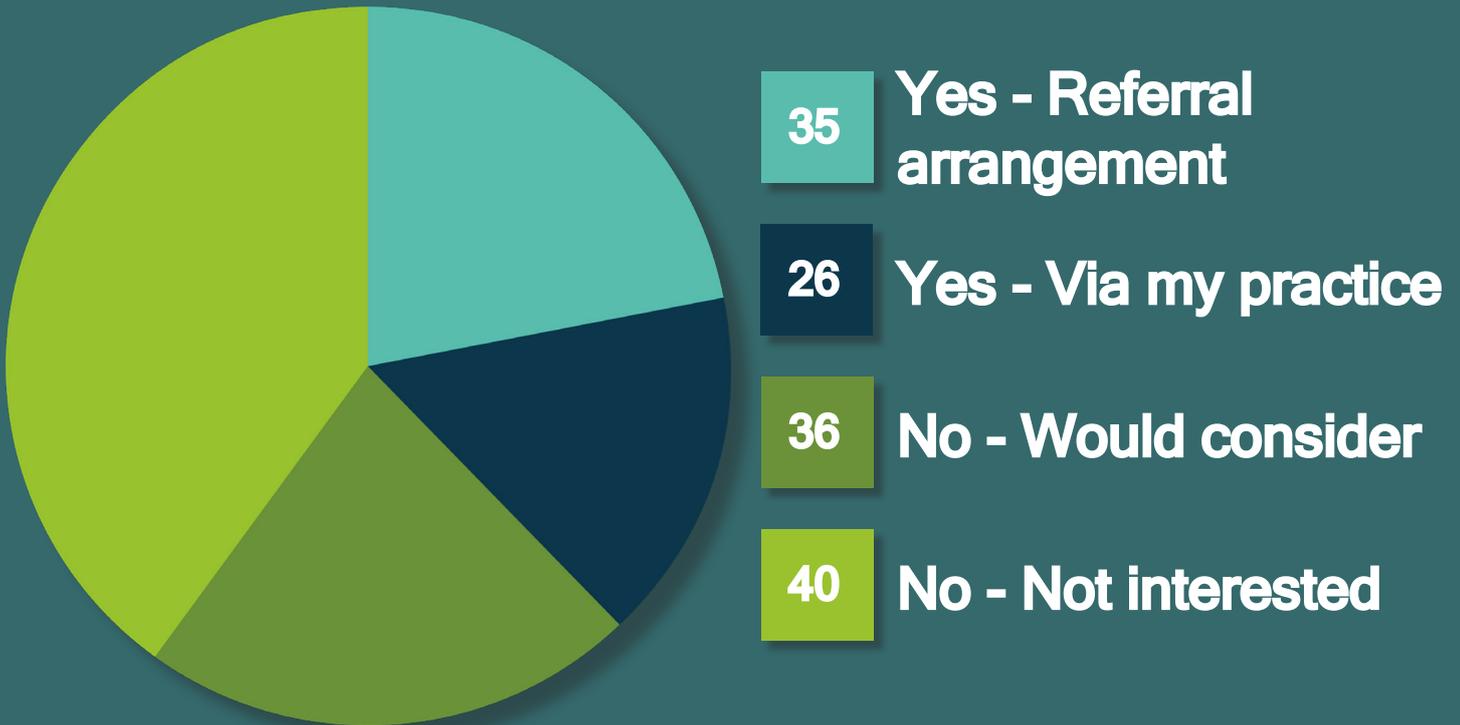
The main results were rather split between offering a discount or it being non-applicable.



In total, about two-thirds of the respondents work with charities. 39% of the respondents offer discount rates to charities. 19% of the respondents offer discounts as well as do pro-bono work for charities. 7% do pro-bono work for charities. 36% of the respondents however do not have charity clients or offer discounts or do pro-bono work for charities.

A large majority of respondents currently do not offer HR software as part of their fee:

64%



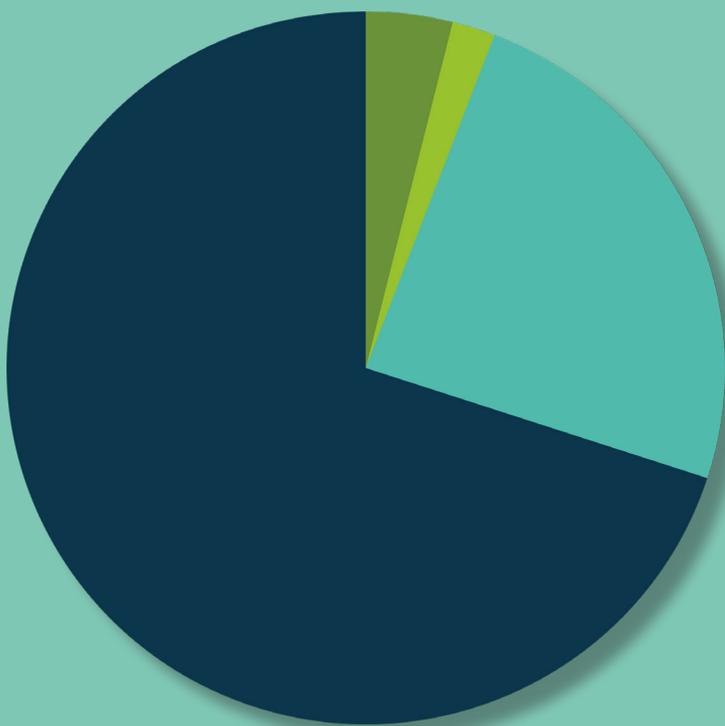
Offering HR software as part of your consultancy services can be a good way to offer your clients a good customer experience. It can also be a good source of additional income for your practice. A way to grow your consultancy. HR software include HR Information System (HRIS), and Performance Management. 38% of the respondents offer HR software to their clients.

Of these, 22% do so through referral arrangements whilst 16% do it through their practice.

Surprisingly, 40% of the respondents are not interested in providing any HR software as part of their service to their clients. A further 22% do not currently provide HR software but would consider doing so.

Like the last question, a large majority do not offer payroll as part of their fee at this time:

94%

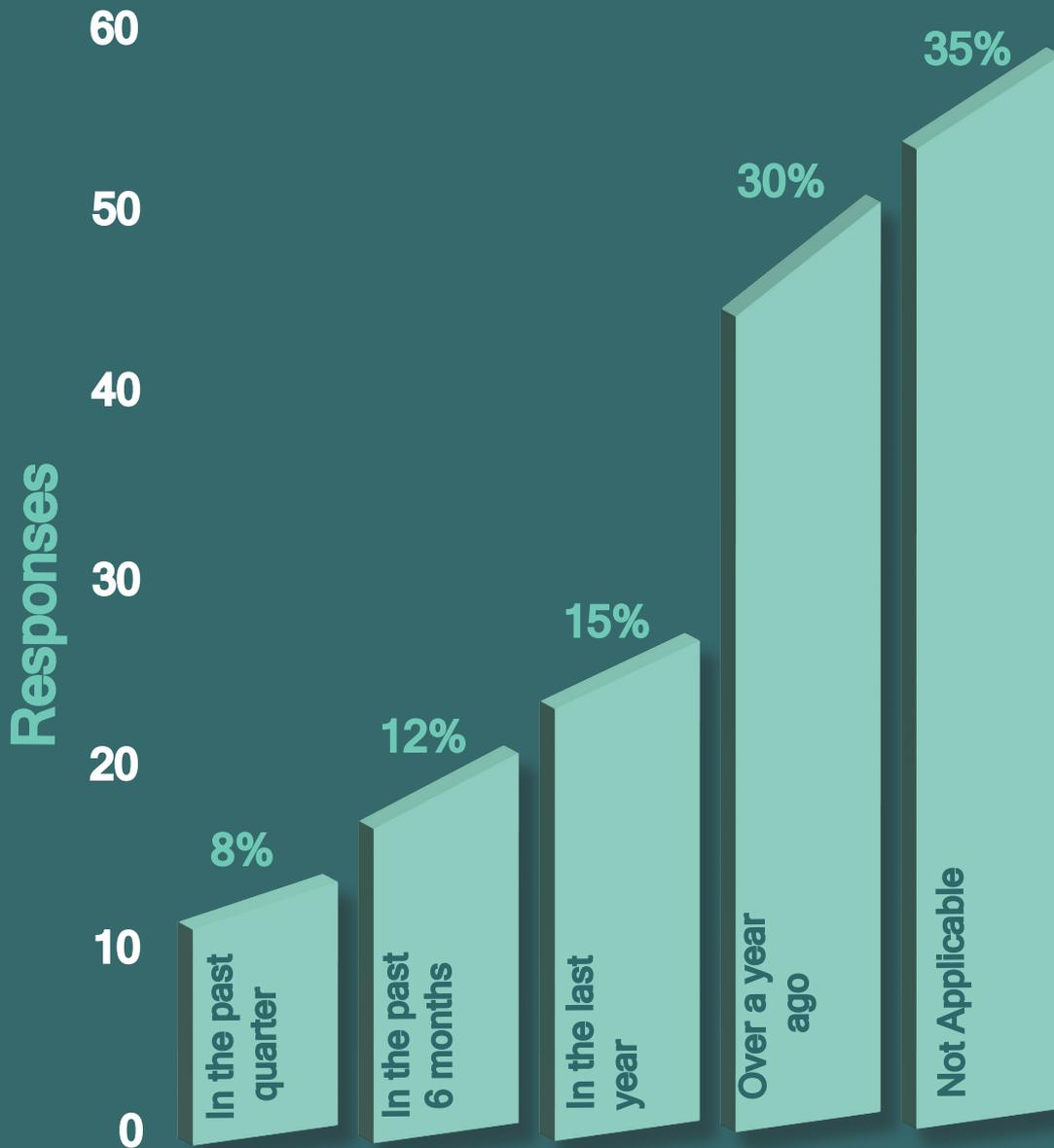


- 6 Yes - Referral arrangement
- 4 Yes - Via my practice
- 39 No - Would consider
- 112 No - Not interested

A great majority are not interested in offering payroll as part of their fee. 24% would consider providing payroll as part of their service.

Only 6% of the respondents currently provide payroll as part of their service. Of these, 4% do so through referral arrangements.

At least 65% of respondents had put up their prices at some point in time:



It is good business practice to review your prices and to increase your prices from time to time.

Fee review and price increments can be worded into your contracts with your clients to make it easy for you to have the discussion.

35%

of respondents had put up their fees in the last 12 months

35%

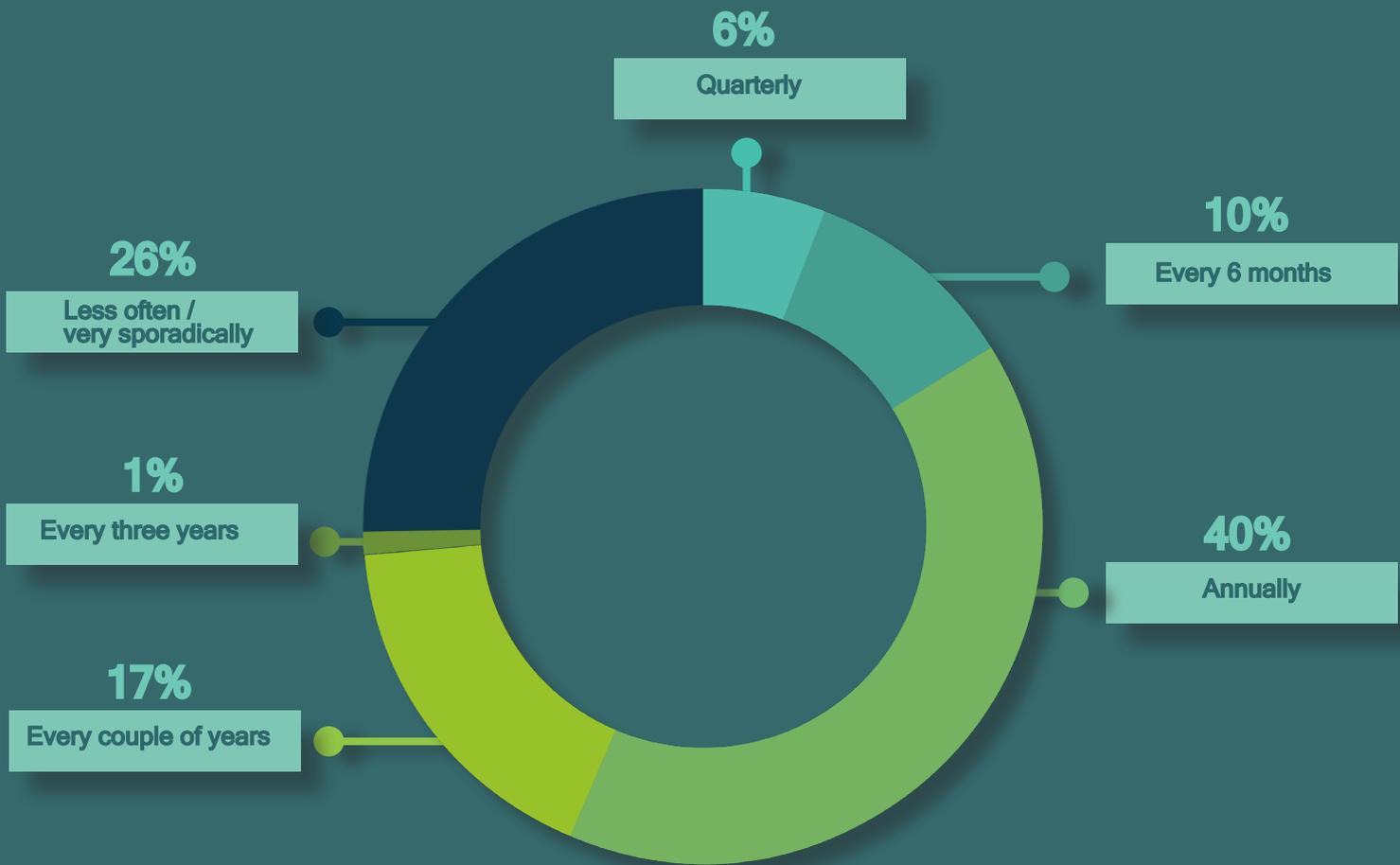
of respondents stated this was not applicable to them

30%

of respondents had not put them up in over 12 months

Overall, 65% of the respondents have put their prices up at some point. However, 30% had not put up their prices in over 12 months.

This may be due to the pandemic and the challenges that it posed for their clients. It may also be due to the fact that 50% of the respondents had been in business for less than 2 years. About 35% had put their fees up in the 12 months. 35% stated that this was not applicable to them. It may be due to the fact that they mainly undertake projects and charge per project. They may not have on-going contracts or retainer arrangements with their clients.



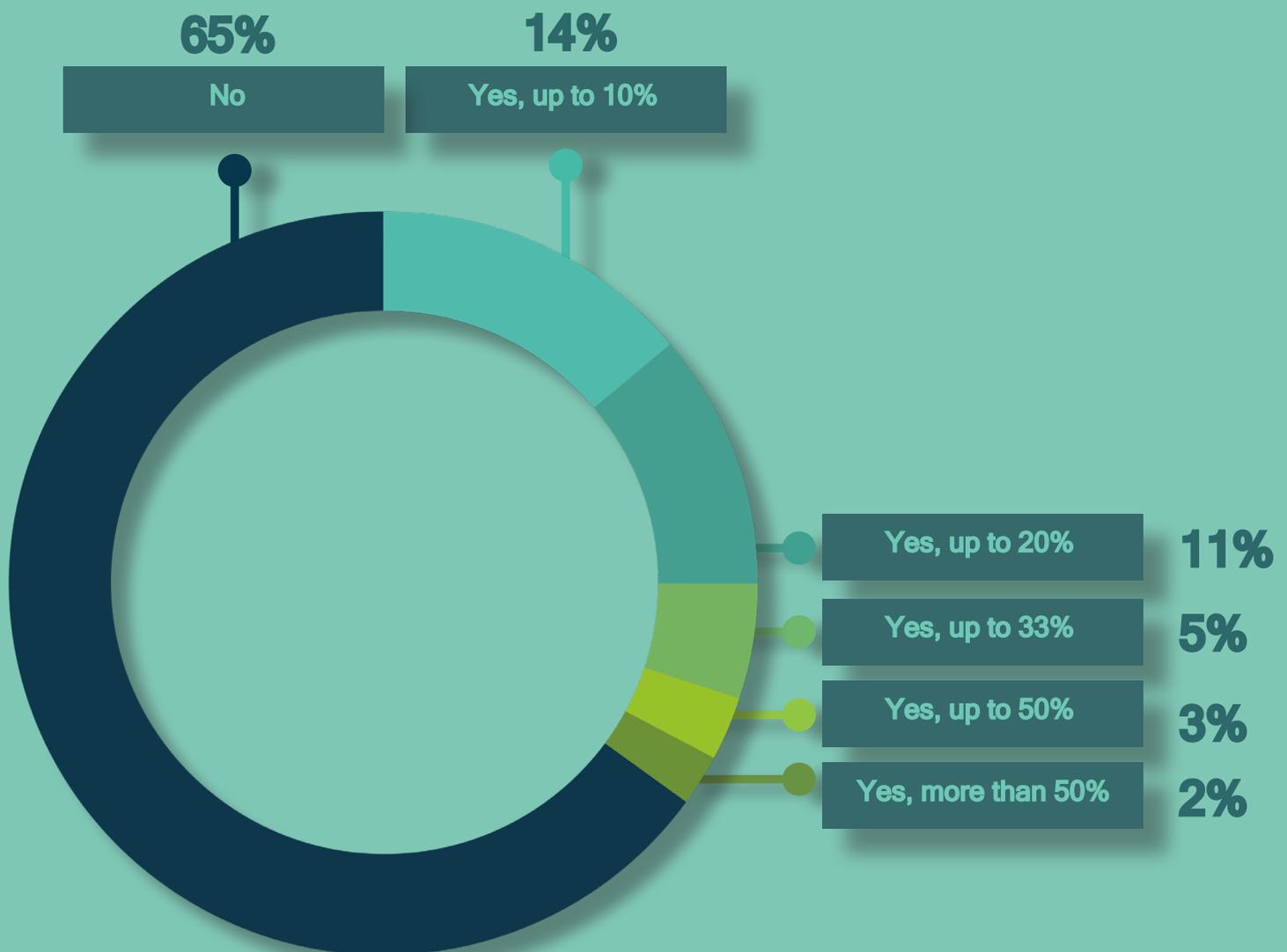
75% of the respondents regularly review their pricing, with 40% doing so annually.

Whilst 17% do so every couple of years. 26% review their pricing less often or very sporadically.

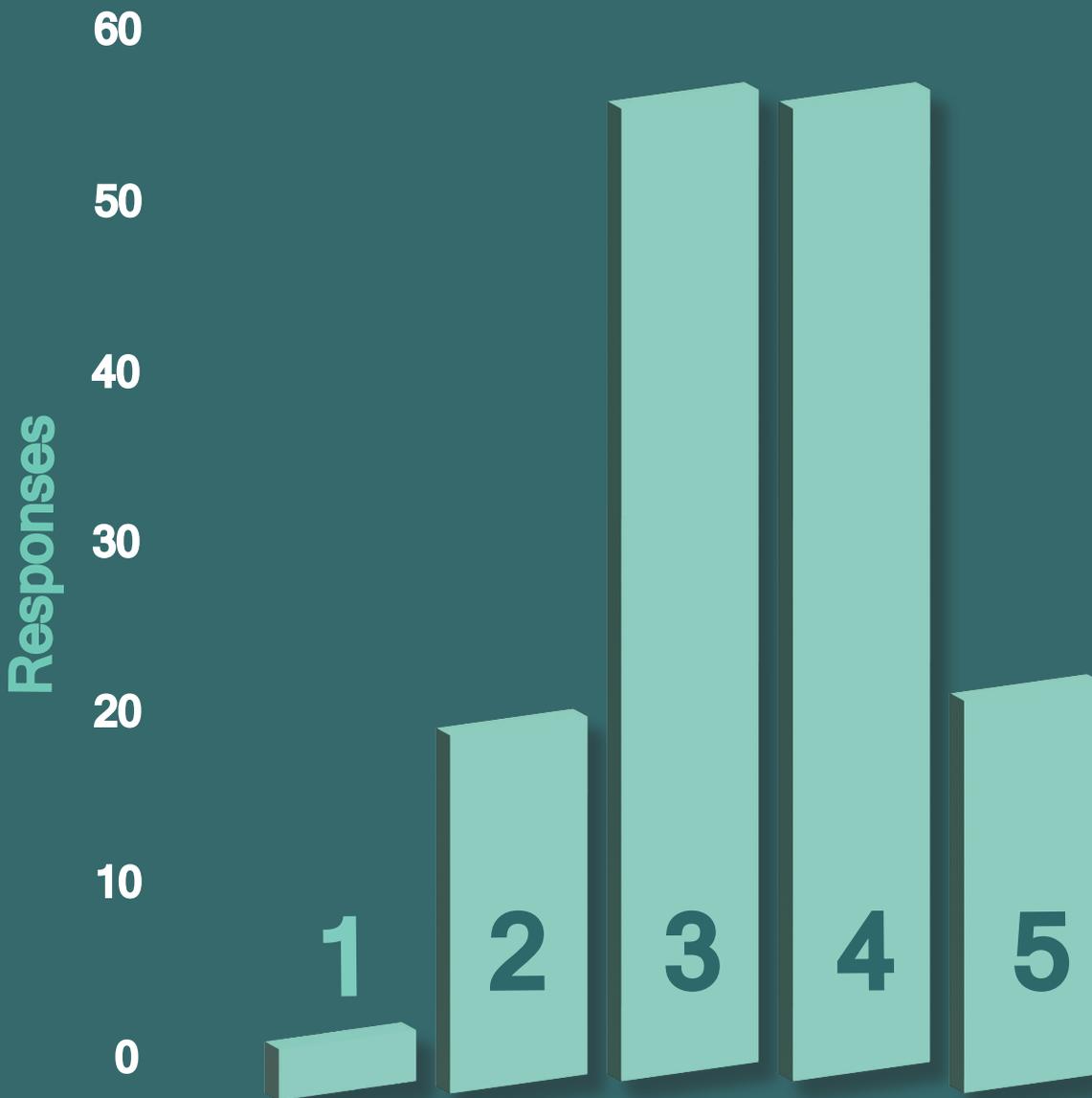
Others review their pricing on a quarterly, bi-annually, or in every three years.

For majority of the respondents, 65%, their clients are happy with their prices and do not attempt to barter them down.

However, for 35% of the respondents, their clients barter their prices down. The request for reduction ranges from 10% to 50%.

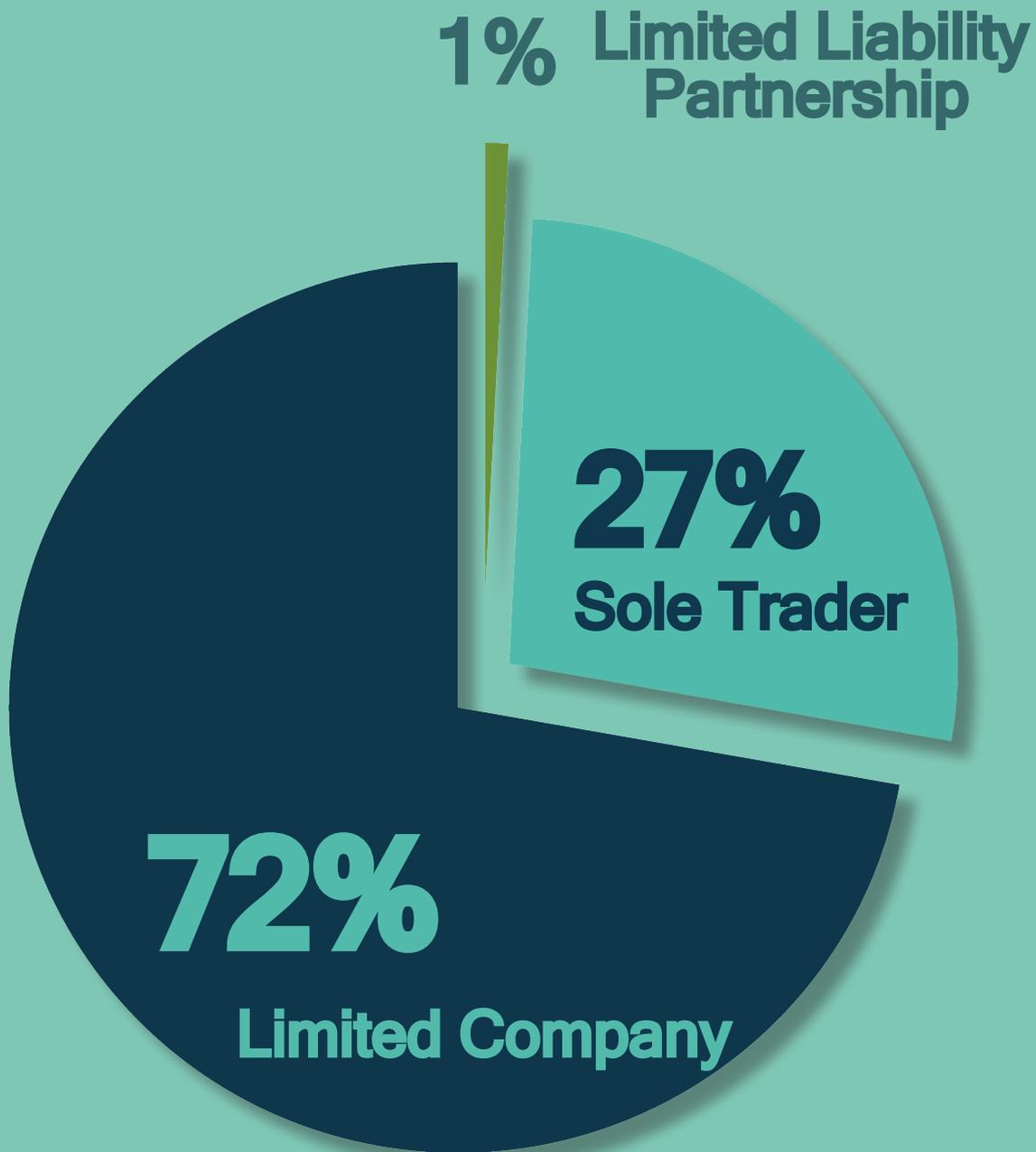


The respondents were asked to answer this on a scale from 1 - 5:



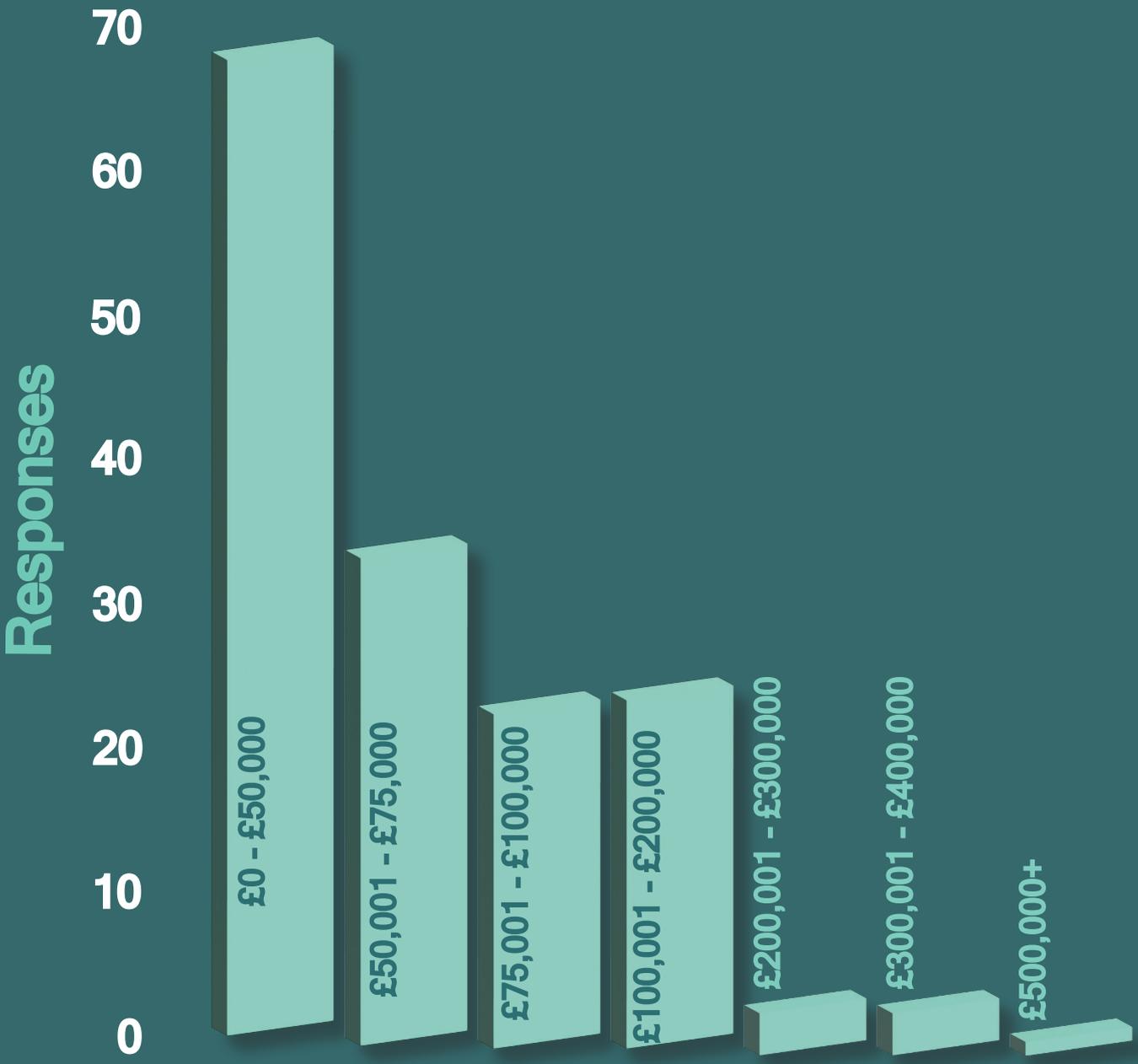
Confidence in pricing comes with experience. The more you undertake a specific task or project, the better you get at estimating how long it will take you to complete the task and to work out the resources you may need for it.

About 14% felt absolutely confident about their pricing. A further 70% gave themselves 3 or 4 out of 5, somewhat confident about their pricing. The remaining 16% did not feel as confident about their pricing.



72% of the respondents are set up as limited companies. 27% operate as sole traders.

The remaining 1% are a limited liability partnership. It is important to understand the different structures of businesses to help you determine what the best option for you is.

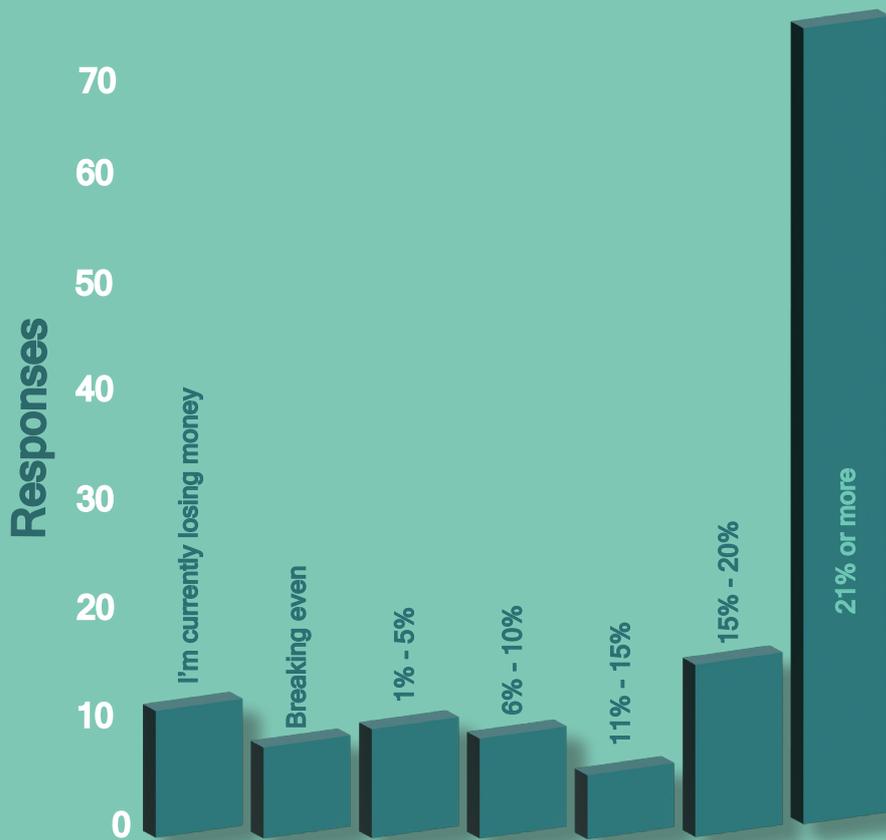


42% of the respondents stated that their turnover was up to £50,000.

22% have a turnover over of between £50,001 to £75,001.

16% have a turnover of £100,001 to 200,000, and a further 15% have a £75,001 to £100,000.

A small percentage, about 5% have a turnover of over £200,001.



WHAT YOU ARE MAKING:

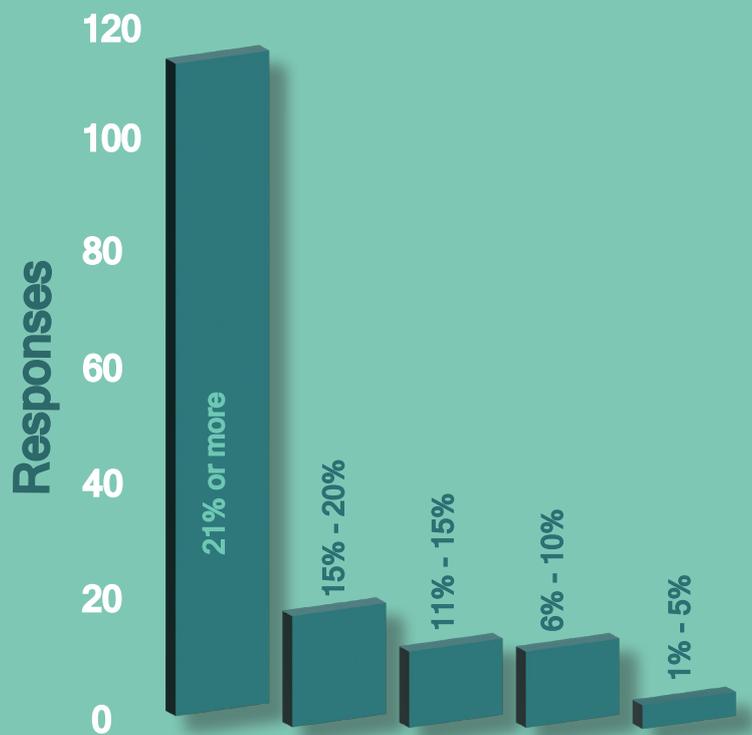
As expected, a great majority of respondents, 55% are making more than 20% profit. The operational costs for most HR consultancy businesses are low.

Hence, if you set your pricing right, you have a potential to make a healthy margin. It is worth noting that 9% of the respondents stated that they are currently losing money and 6% are at the break even point.

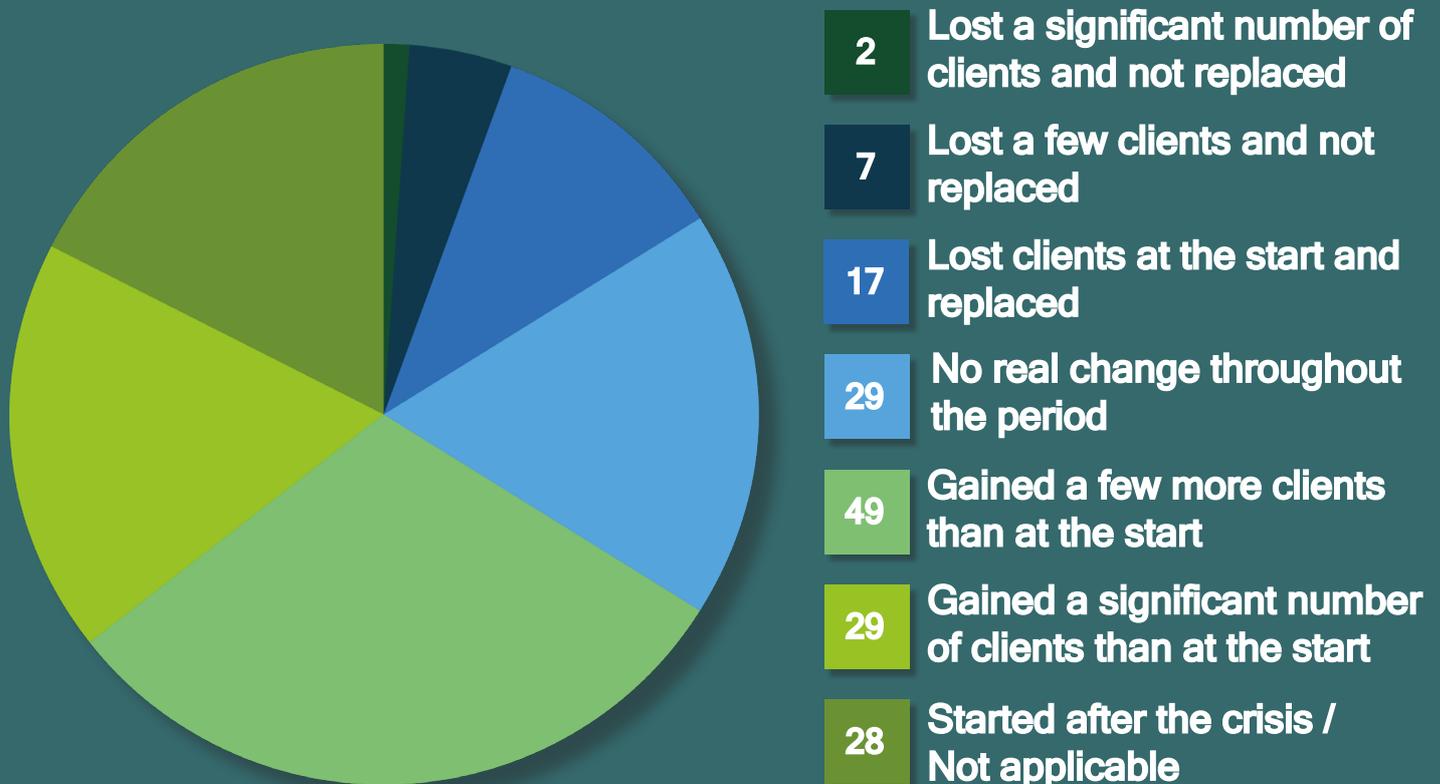
WHAT YOU HOPE TO MAKE:

70% of the respondents aspire to make more than 20% profit.

All the respondents are aiming to make profit.



There were more clients gained during the past 18 months than lost:



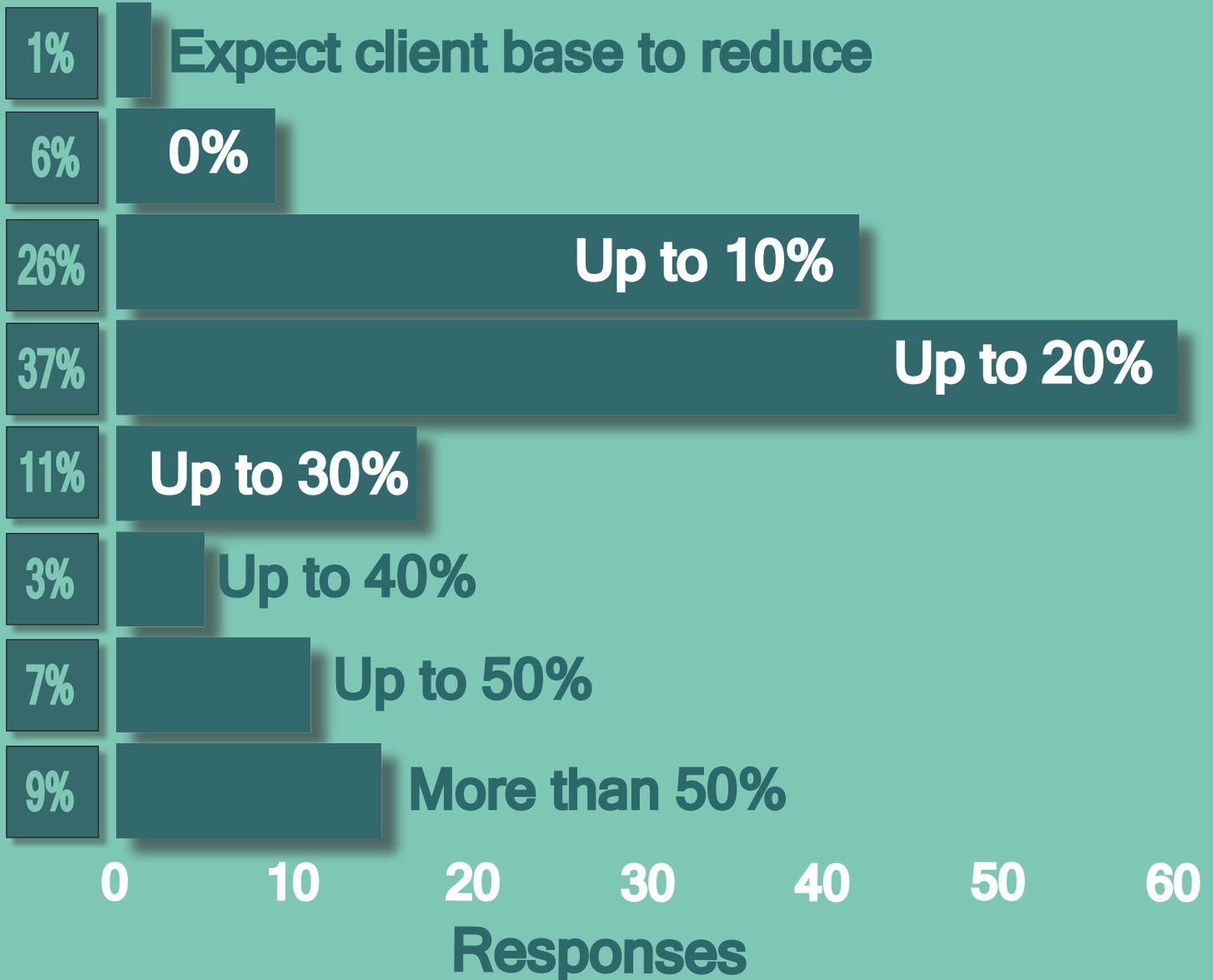
The pandemic highlighted the importance of HR to many businesses. Organisations needed to connect with their employees on a level which was unprecedented.

The wellbeing of employees working remotely, furloughing of employees due to economic downturn and managing remotely are a few of the challenges which nearly every organisation was faced with in the UK and elsewhere in the world.

Both External and Internal HR have been crucial to supporting organisational leaders and their employees.

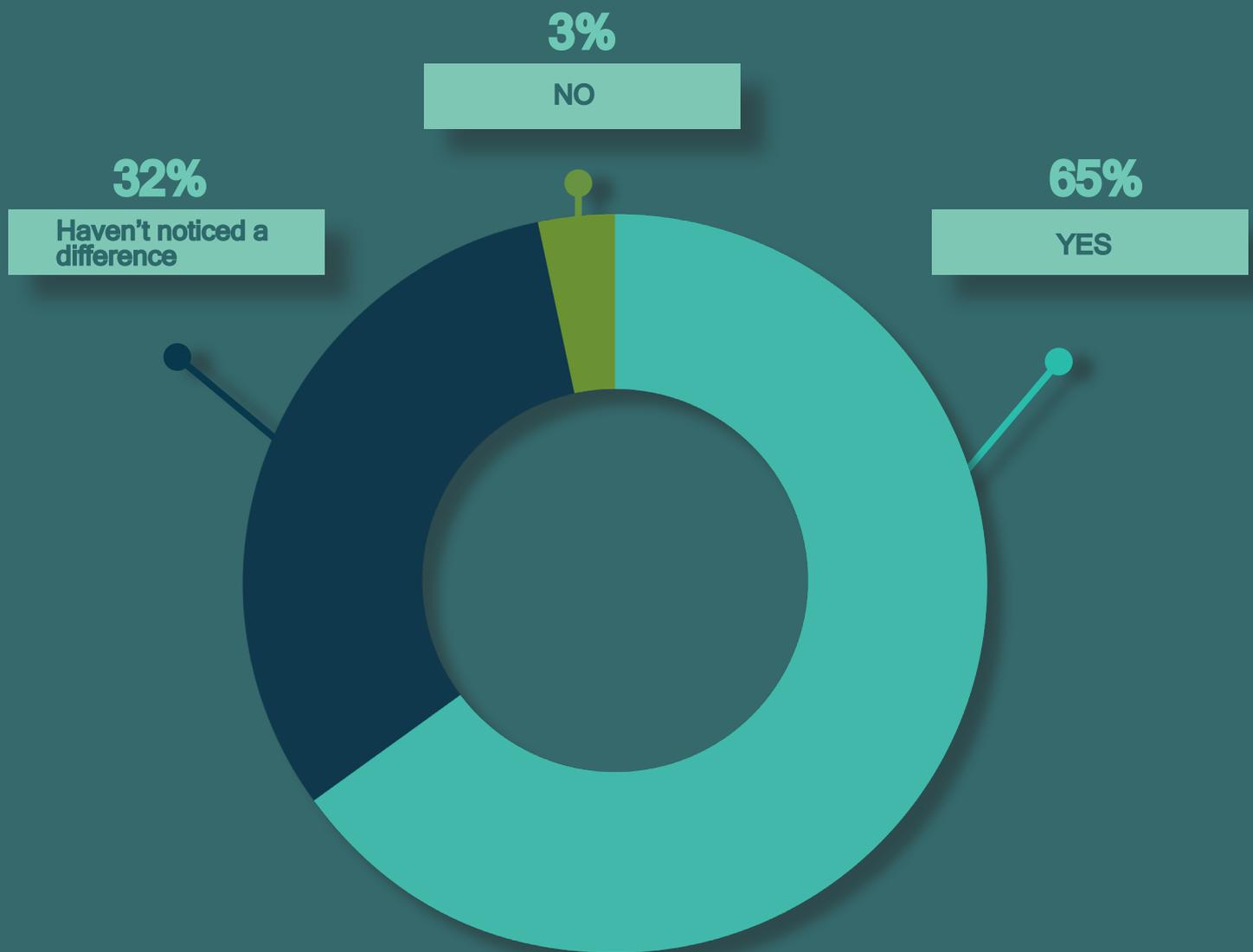
HR rose to the challenge and added real value to organisations. It is therefore encouraging to see that 48% of the respondents gained more clients during the pandemic. 11% reported that they lost clients but have replaced them.

Most respondents expected their client base to grow a minimal amount within the next 12 months:



About 93% of the respondents expected to grow their business within the next 12 months. The rate of growth ranged from 10% to more than 50%.

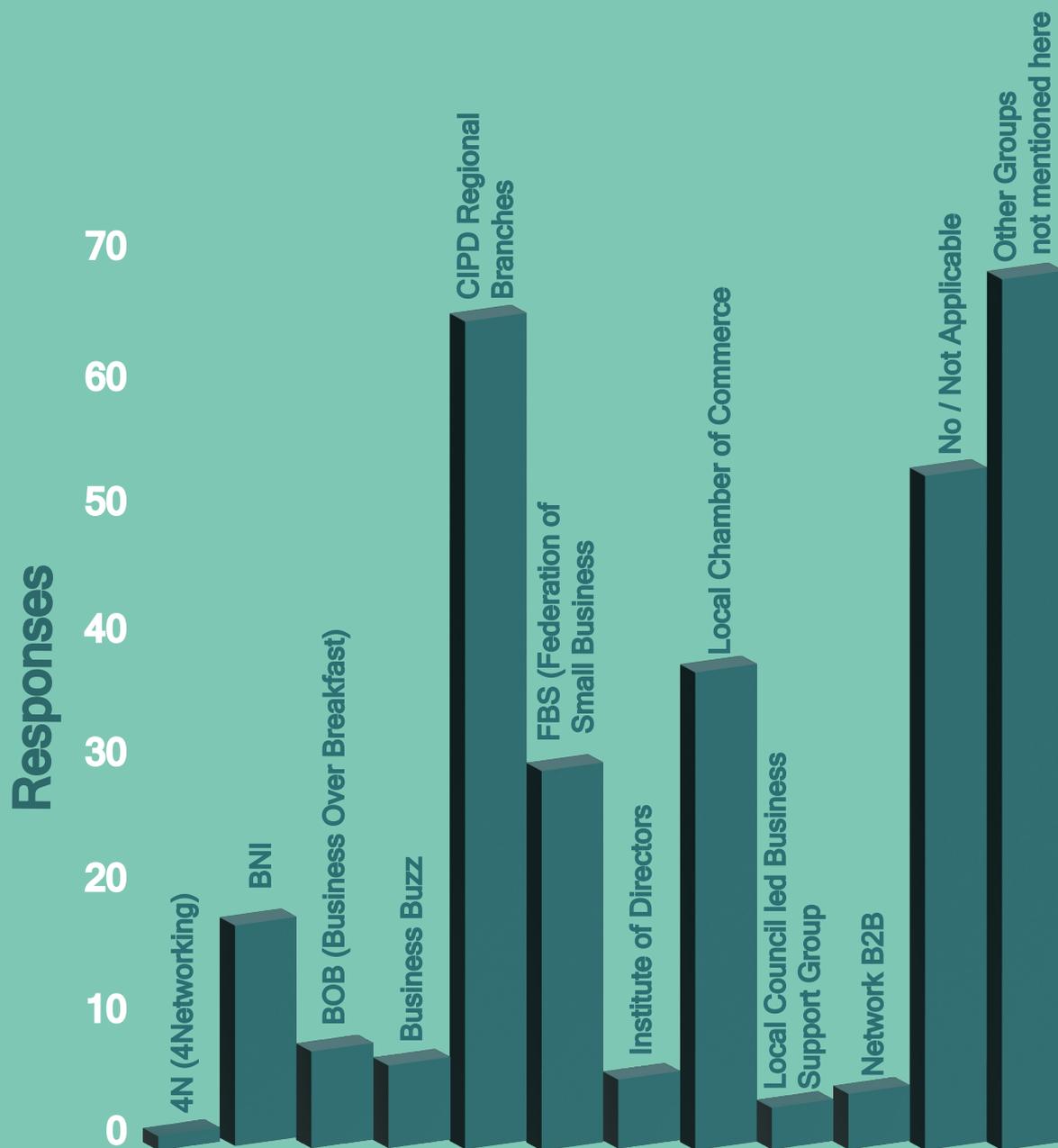
One of the biggest challenges the UK economy is facing now is staff shortages. Organisations are struggling to fill vacancies they have. Holding onto the best talent the organisation has will require the support of HR professionals, who are key to attracting, retaining and developing talent.



65% of respondents believe that HR has become more credible in the light of Covid.

HR along with business leaders have had to adapt very quickly to changes in legislation, working culture and working environment. HR led the communication around Covid in most organisations, reminding leaders of how important to keep in touch with employees and to keep them informed.

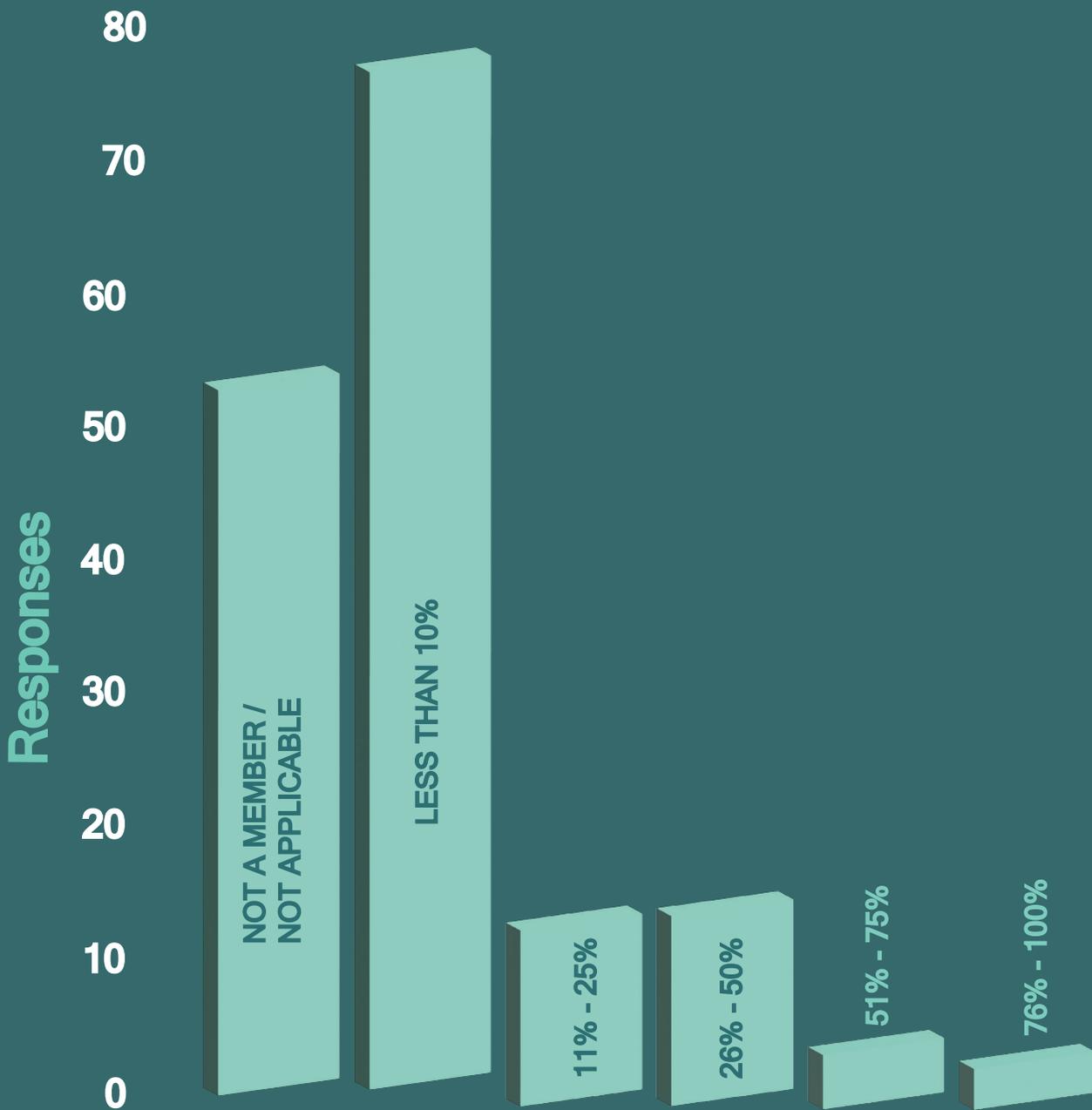
HR supported managers through the 'work from home', 'go to the office', 'work from home if you can' and then 'go to the office'. HR ensures that the wellbeing of the entire workforce remains on Boards agenda; through the roller coaster of survival to sustainability and success.



There are different networking groups for businesses. HR consultants may network for a number of reasons. A typical HR consultant will network with potential clients, referral networks and other HR professionals.

70% of the respondents attend at least one networking group. Whilst 39% stated that they attend other networking groups, 37% stated that they use their CIPD Regional Branches.

The local Chamber of Commerce is used by 21% followed by the FSB (Federation of Small Businesses) at 17%. 10% use BNI and 9%, Women in Business Network. The remaining 30% however do not use any business networking groups.

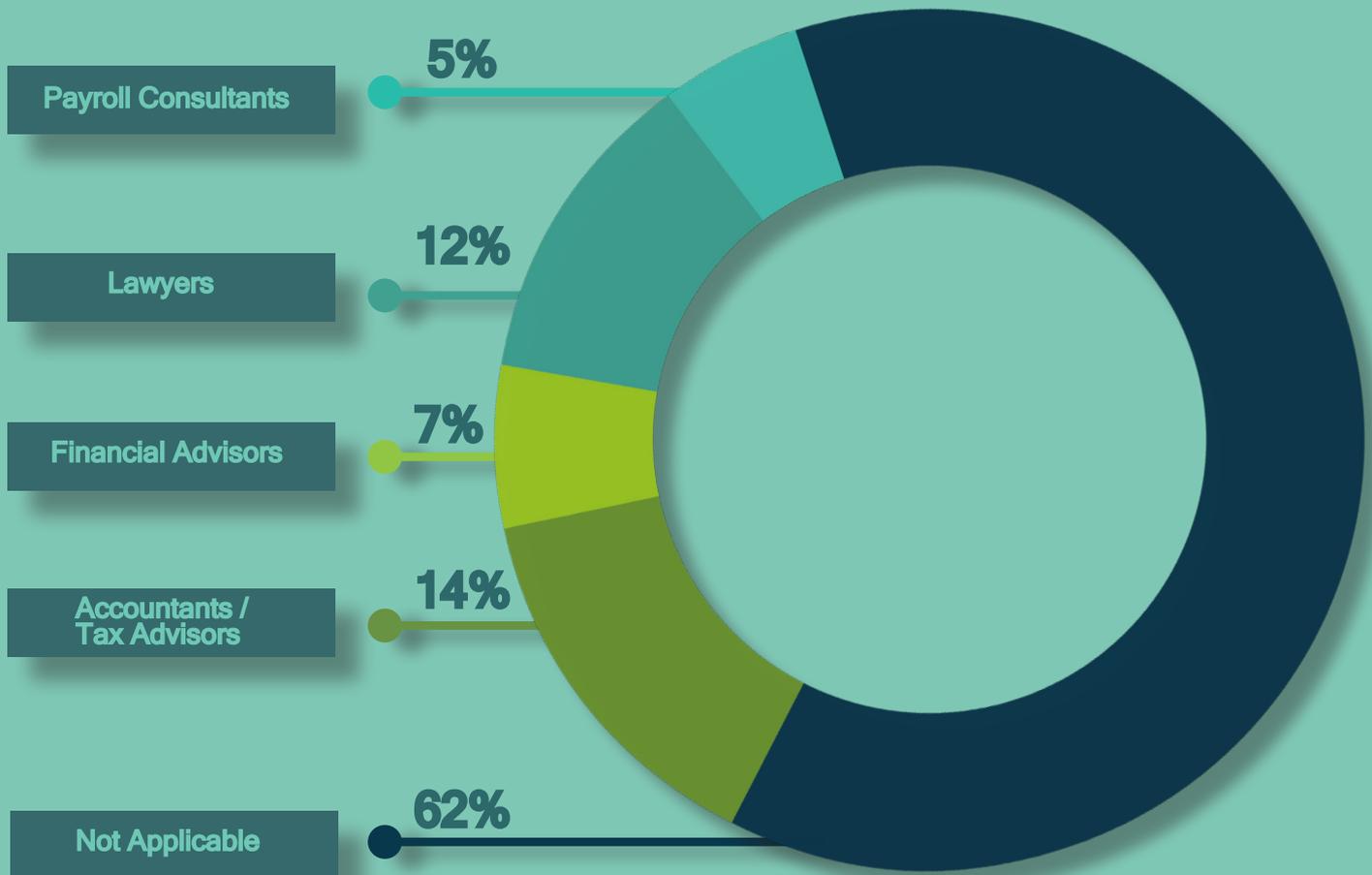


In response to how much new business comes from networking groups, less than 5% are getting more than 50% of their business from networking groups.

17% of the respondents stated that they get between 11% and 50% of their business from networking groups.

However, a great proportion of respondents, 47% get less than 10% of their business through networking groups.

A great majority of the respondents, 62% do not have any formal working relationships with other professionals:



Referrals from other professionals can be a good way of growing your HR consultancy business.

Professionals such as Accountants and Lawyers may get approached by their clients or may become aware of HR needs of their clients.

Accountants are the most popular professionals that the respondents have a professional relationship with (14%), followed closely by lawyers at 12%. 6% have professional relationships with Financial Advisers and 5% with Payroll Consultants.

Majority of the respondents stated that their existing clients refer new business to them:



17%

gained new business from other HR consultants

12%

gained new business from non-HR professionals

11%

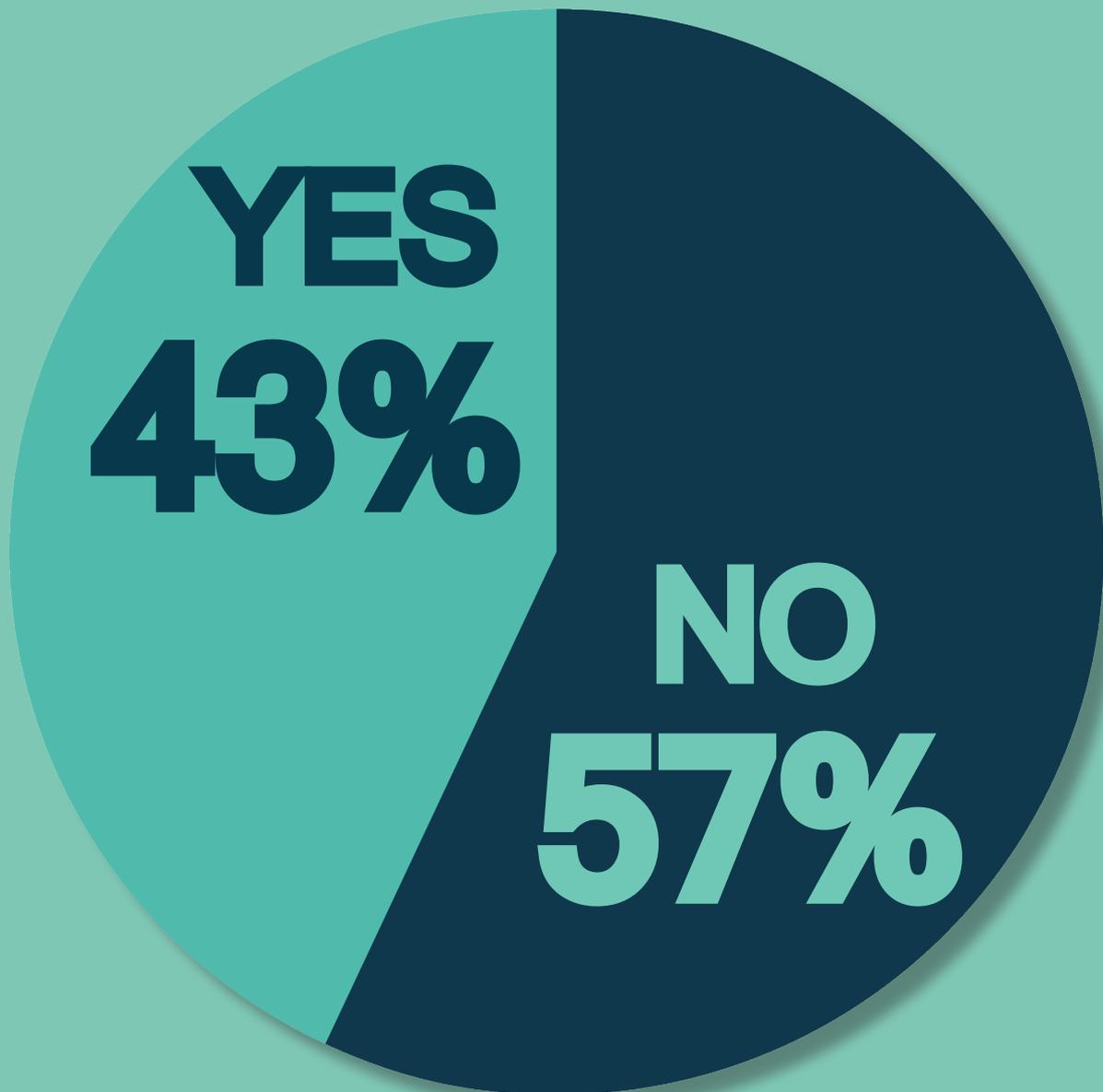
gained new business from business working groups

9%

gained new business from social media marketing

3%

gained new business from cold calling or contacting directly

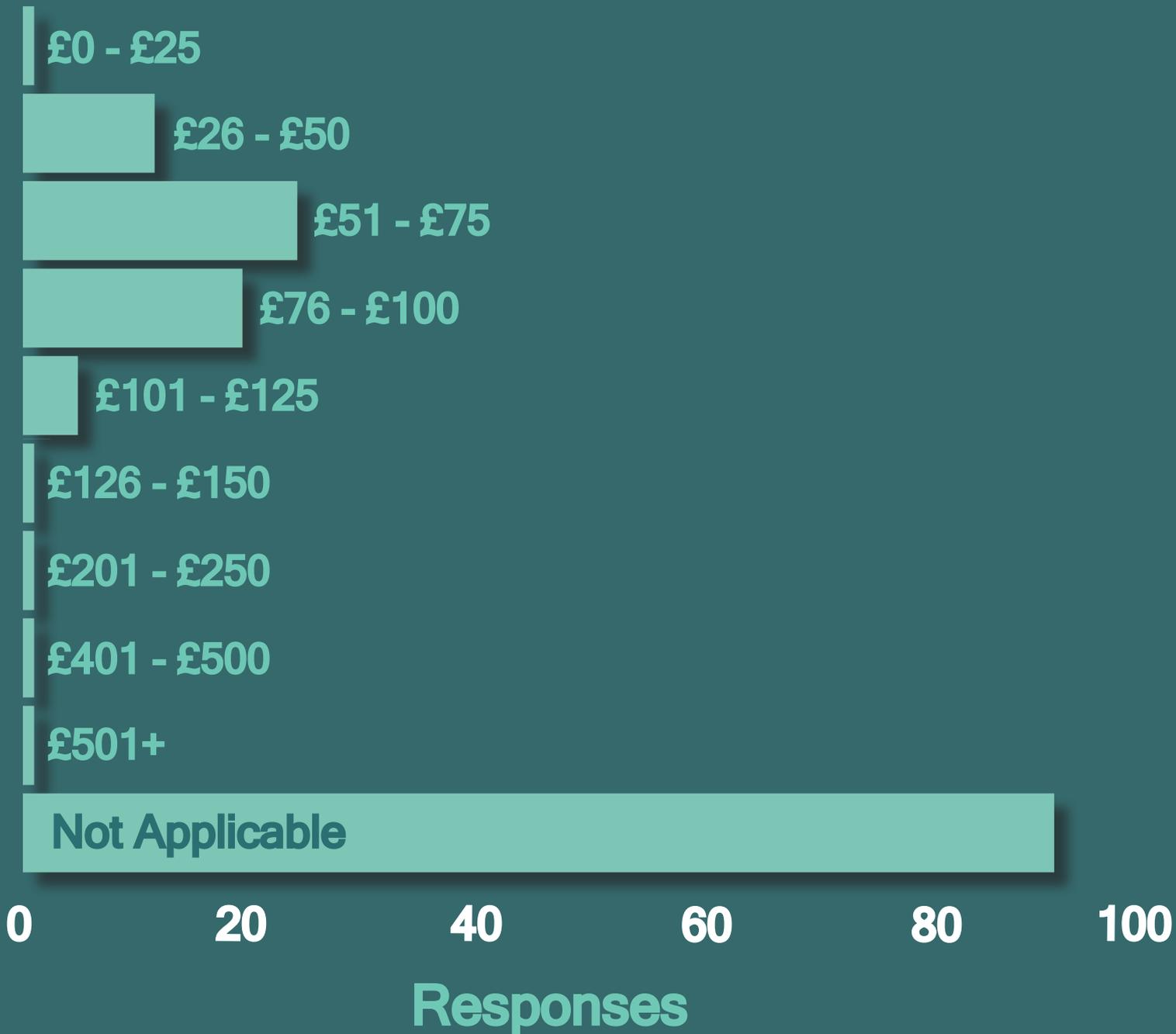


43% of the respondents act as associates for other HR businesses. It is common practice for HR consultants to become associates for other HR professionals, especially when they first set up.

This is a great way of earning whilst building up your own business. Equally, taking on associates is a fantastic way to grow your consultancy business.

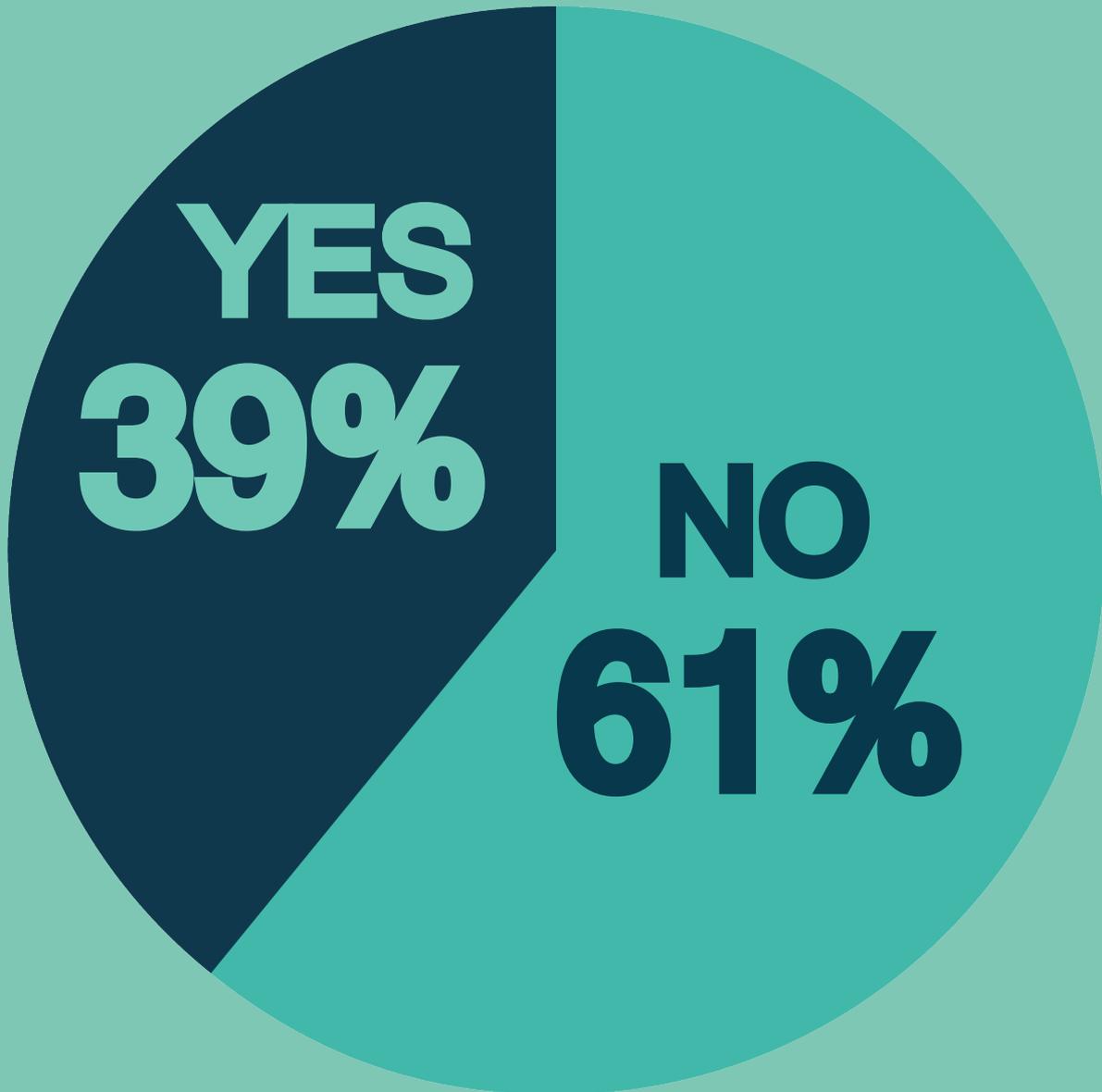
You can bring in associates when you are busy and there is no expectation to provide them with work all the time. This works best if you are not quite ready to take on employees but you have more work than you can cope with.

This question was not applicable to the majority of our respondents:



An associate will typically earn less than the HR consultancy business is charging their clients.

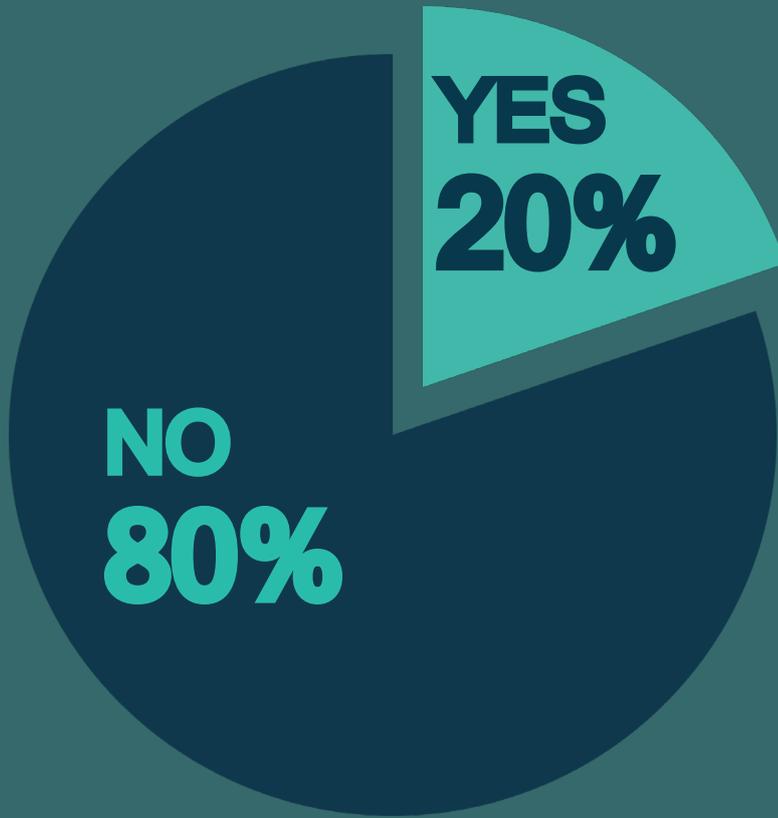
A little more than half of our respondents were using associates:



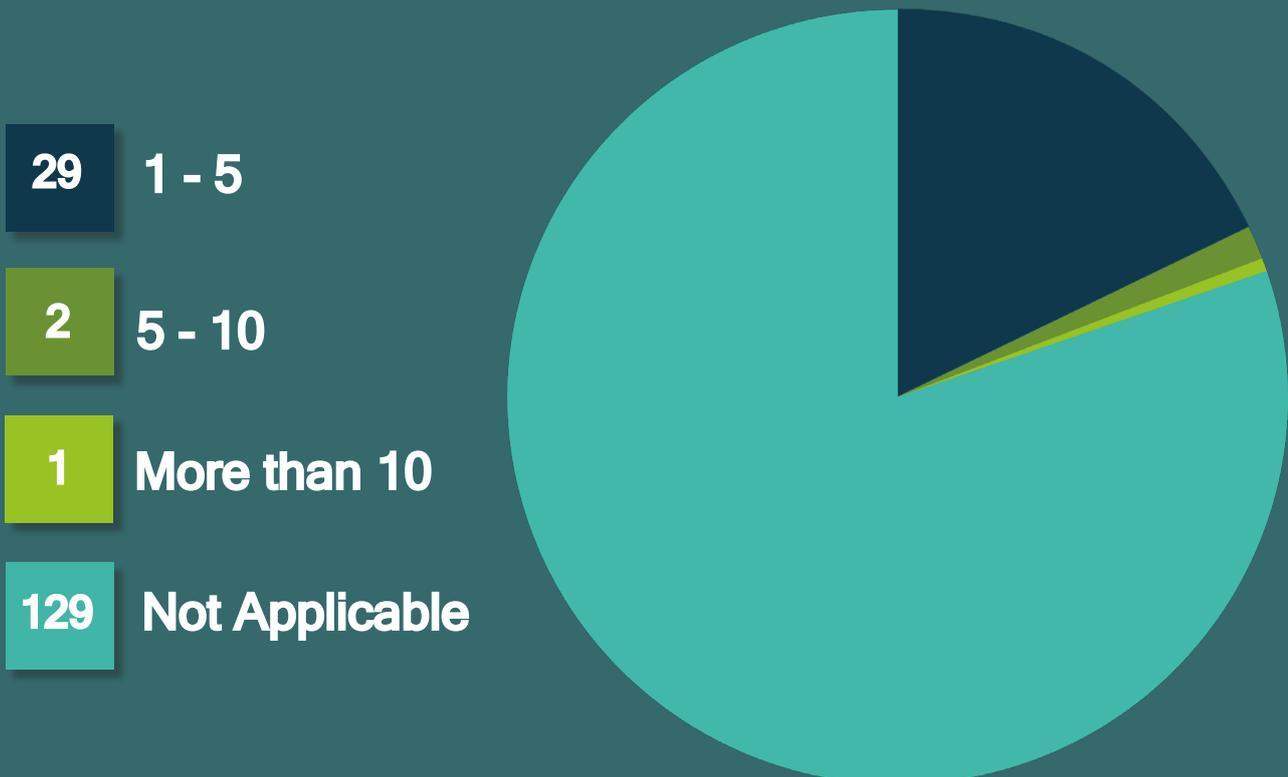
39% of the respondents stated that they use associates in their business, compared to 20% who employ people.

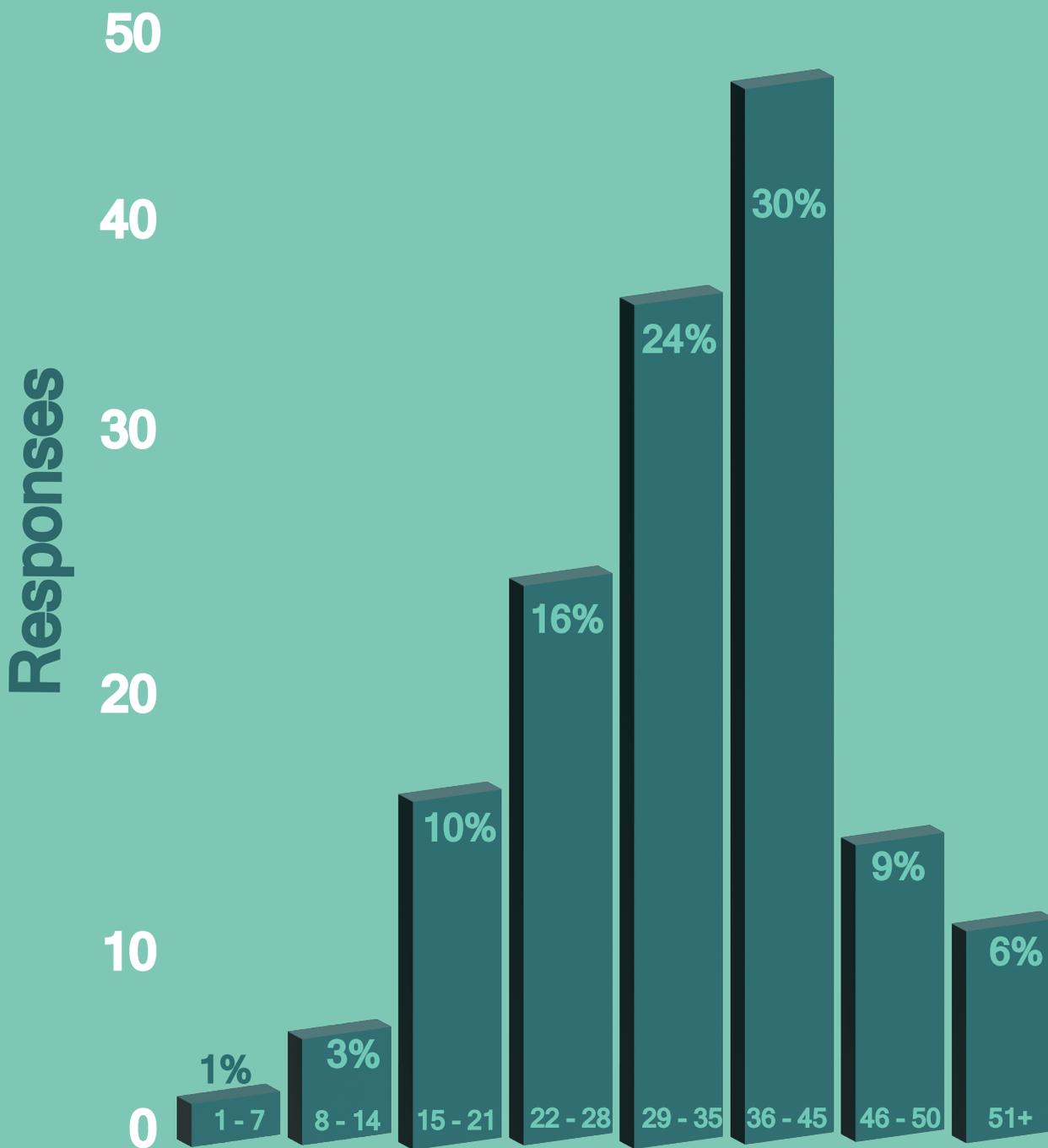
Of those who have employees, they typically employ between 1 - 5 people.

Do you employ people on PAYE?



How many people do you employ on PAYE?





Most people are attracted to running their own consultancies to achieve a better work-life balance.

A lot of HR consultants have caring responsibilities. 30% of the respondents work between 35 - 45 hours. 24% work 29 - 35 hours whilst 16% work 22 to 28 hours. Achieving a good work-life balance can be a challenge for most consultants.

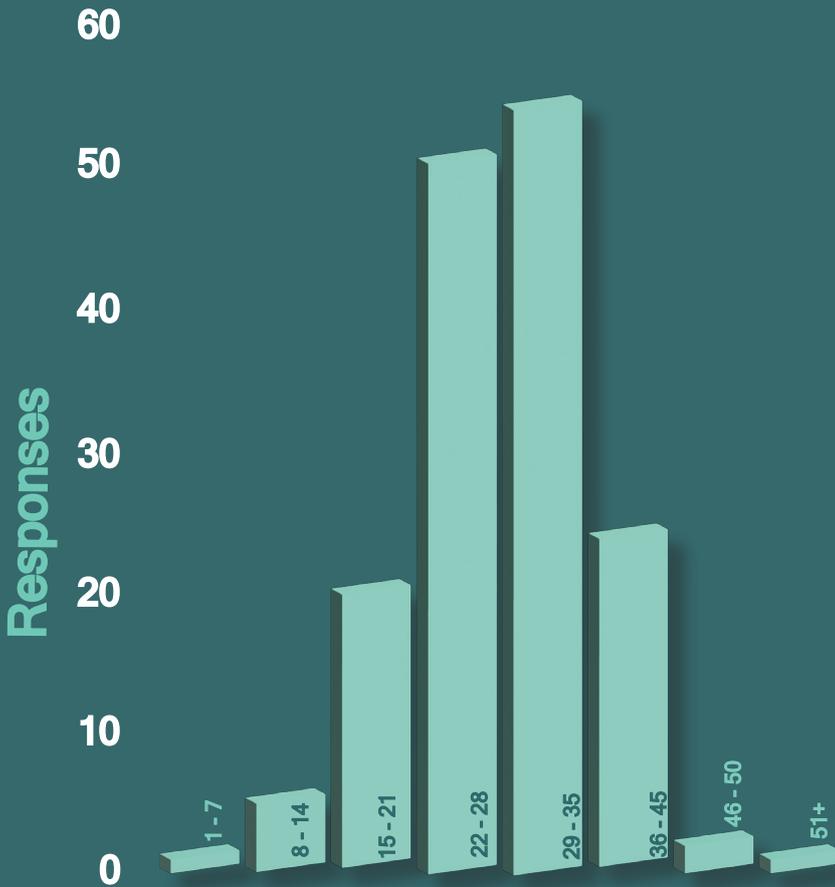
Consultants have to juggle business development, marketing, finance, IT, administration and delivery of the service. With limited resources and time, a lot of consultants end up spreading quite thinly and risk burnout.



INDIVIDUAL DATA

HOURS YOU WANT TO WORK?

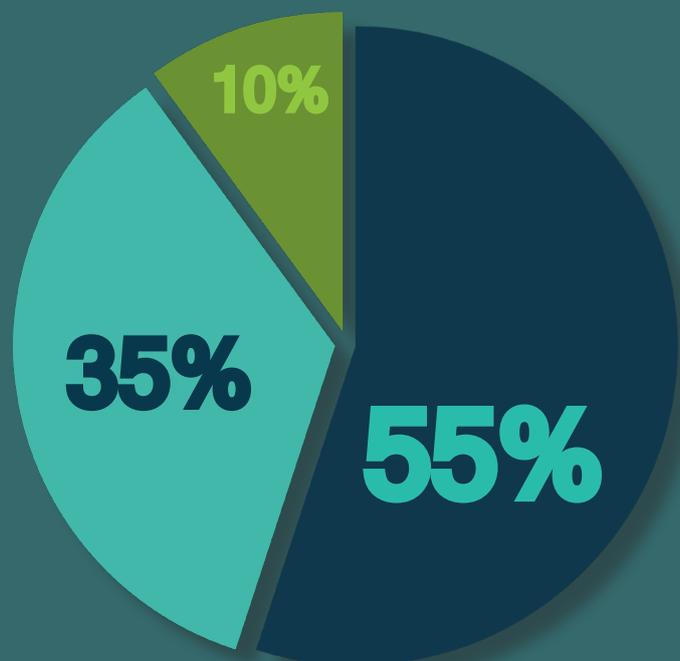
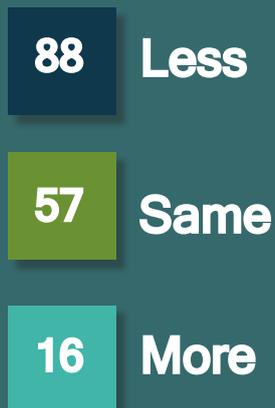
HOW LONG YOU HOPE TO WORK:



68% of the respondents would like to work between 22 to 35 hours a week.

This is in line with full time or part time contractual hours people may have been used to before becoming independent. Interestingly, only 6% wanting to work less than 15 hours a week.

IN COMPARISON:



This was confirmed in 55% of respondents wanting to work less than they currently do.

35% were happy with the amount of hours that they were currently doing.

Unsurprisingly, 10% wanted to do more hours. This may be due to the fact they currently have more bandwidth to do more work.

How many holidays have you taken in the past 12 months?



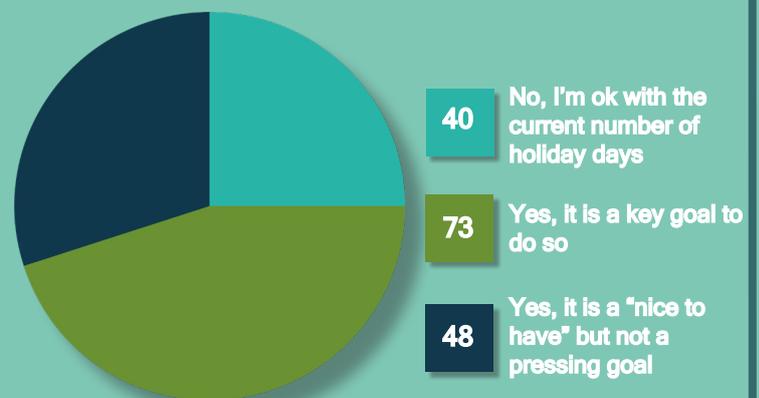
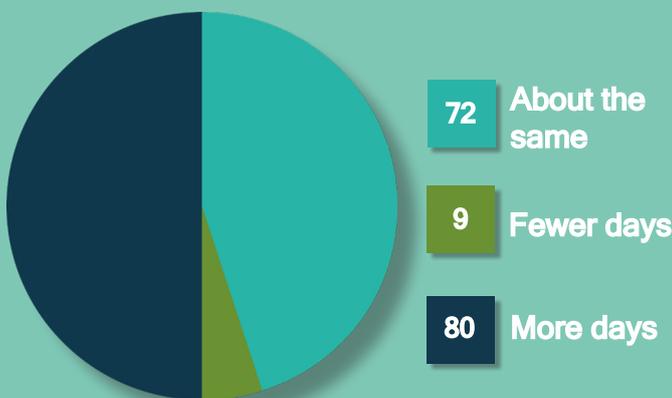
The number of days taken off during the past 12 months may have been influenced by the pandemic and lockdown rules

This was supported by the fact that 50% of the respondents expect to take more holiday during the next 12 months. However, it is not uncommon for External HR Consultants to take fewer holidays than their in-house counterparts. 66% of respondents took less than 15 days holidays (without working) in the past 12 months.

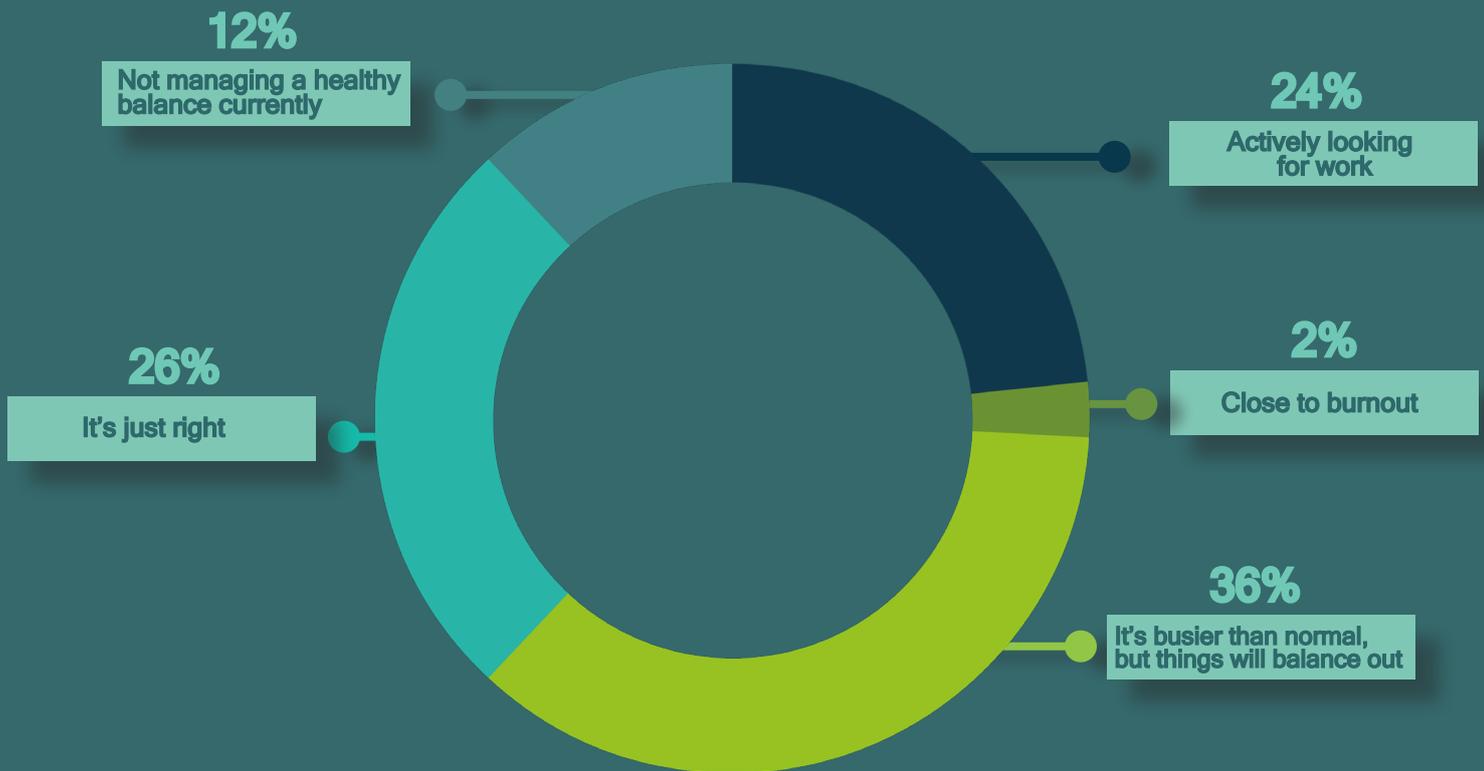
This may be the normal pattern for many as 45% of the respondents stated that they expect to take the same number of days off in the next 12 months. It is worth noting that the statutory minimum holiday entitlement is 28 days per year.

Do you expect to take more or fewer holidays in the next 12 months?

Would you like to take more holidays off than you can currently?



Although 75% would like to take more holidays than they currently do, 25% are happy with their current number of days off as holidays.



The nature of consultancy means that there are peaks and troughs. This is reflected in 36% of the respondents stating that things are busier than normal but will even out.

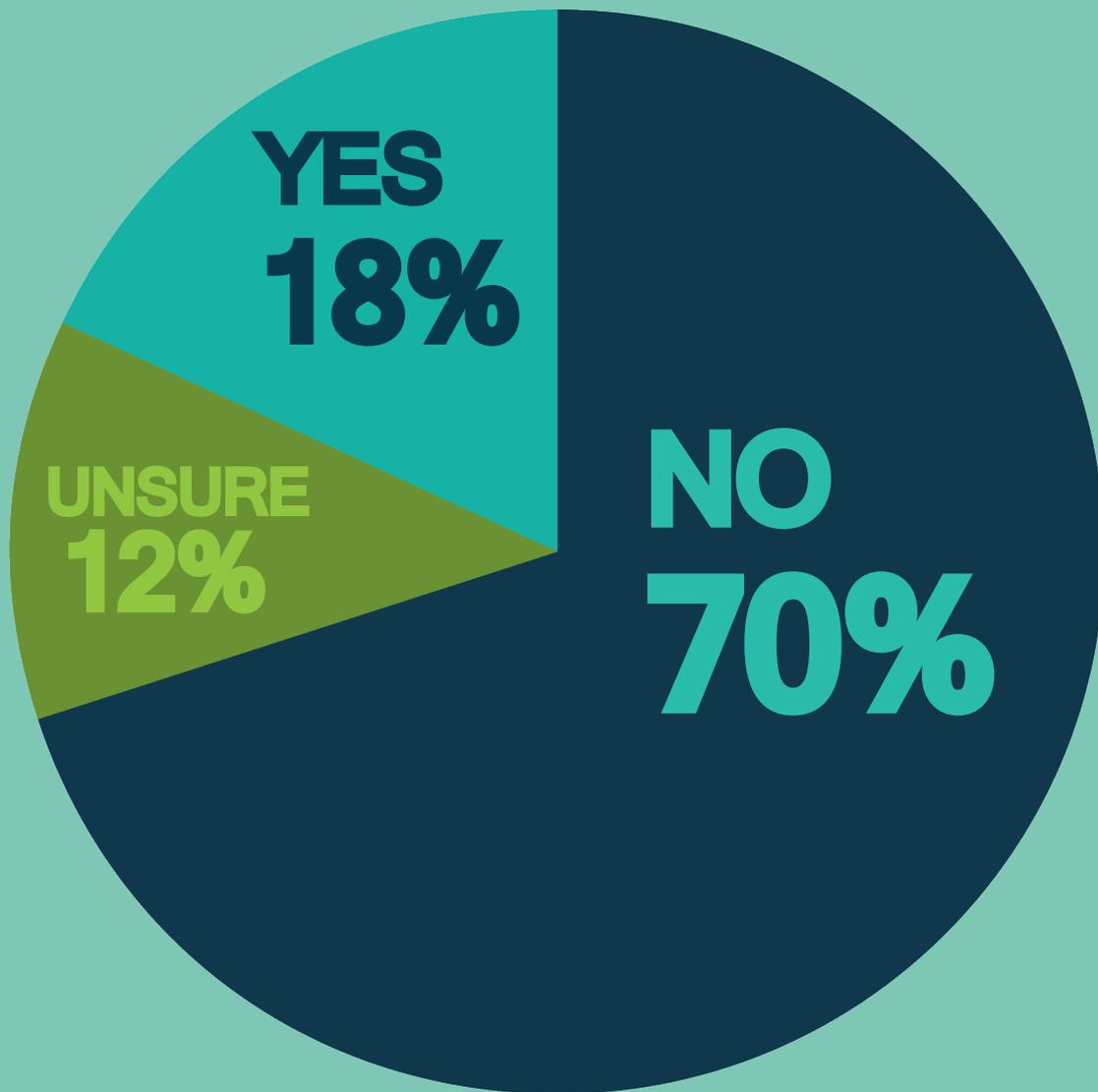
26% believe that they have got the balance right.

24% have the capacity to do more work.

However, 15% are not managing a healthy balance or are close to a burnout.

One of these key challenges for HR professionals is the expectation that HR looks after everyone else.

This means that in most cases, no one takes care of HR, making it quite lonely. When you are working independently, this can be even more critical. Hence being part of an HR community for External HR professionals, HRI, is invaluable.



The good news is that 70% of the respondents don't believe that they are at risk of burnout.

However, the remaining 30% are either unsure or are at the risk of burnout. Working smart as an HR Consultant can make a difference to your work-life balance, wellbeing and mental health.

Employing strategies such as using Associates, outsourcing various aspects of your business such as finance and IT and having a strong network, both professional and personal can help you cope. Financial planning will also help as financial worries can be a cause of anxiety for many.

It is important to allow yourself time to rest and recharge your battery.

What is the biggest issue facing your clients this coming year as we move into the new normal?

“

Uncertainty Finances
Return to work Change Sales
IR35
Employee Relations
Recruitment Covid
Benefits Growth
Hybrid Working
Wellbeing Brexit
EDI Retention
Flexible Working
Business Planning”

These were all of the main themes and keywords repeated through out each respondent's answer

We'd like to issue a big thanks to everyone involved with the HRI Big Independent Fee Survey.

We could not have done it without the help of our

161 respondents.

We hope you consider taking part in the next one.

For further information about how HRI can help you, visit www.hrindependents.co.uk

Alternatively, you can keep up to date with us through our socials:



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