

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: WHAT STUDENTS THINK

A study of the perceptions and attitudes of students about work-integrated learning.

ABACUS DATA


RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Do students and recent graduates feel prepared for the workforce? What skills do they think employers are looking for? Do students and recent graduates feel that their PSE institution provided these skills during their training?
2. How many students have benefited from WIL and how has that experience impacted their experience and perceptions about being prepared?
3. Does WIL appeal to students and recent graduates?
4. Do recent graduates feel they would have benefited from WIL?

METHODOLOGY

Online survey	Survey was conducted online with a representative sample of adult Canadians from Research Now's online panel.
Sample Size	1,000 current PSE students and recent graduates
Field dates	September 12 th to 18 th , 2016
Statistical Weighting	Data was weighted by gender, region, institution type, and field.

THE PSE DECISION

WHAT FACTORS IMPACT THE DECISION?

KEY FINDINGS

Through the Business/Higher Education Roundtable, some of Canada's leading employers are partnering up with universities, colleges and polytechnics across the country to promote a wide range of work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities that prepare students and graduates for meaningful and rewarding careers.

This survey of 1,000 Canadian post-secondary undergraduate students and recent graduates measures the perceptions and attitudes students have on WIL programs and post-secondary education. It concludes that students overwhelmingly favour post-secondary programs that provide meaningful practice-based learning opportunities. Eighty nine per cent of current students and recent graduates support more work-integrated learning in their programs and 88 % think that students who graduate with degrees that offer WIL have an advantage when it comes to finding a job.

For institutions, there is a strong link between student satisfaction of their program and the availability of WIL opportunities. The more opportunities a student has to participate in a practice based learning setting, the more likely they are to feel content with their post-secondary experience. In fact, 97% of recent graduates with a lot of WIL experience were satisfied with their post-secondary experience, versus 75 % of those with no WIL experience.

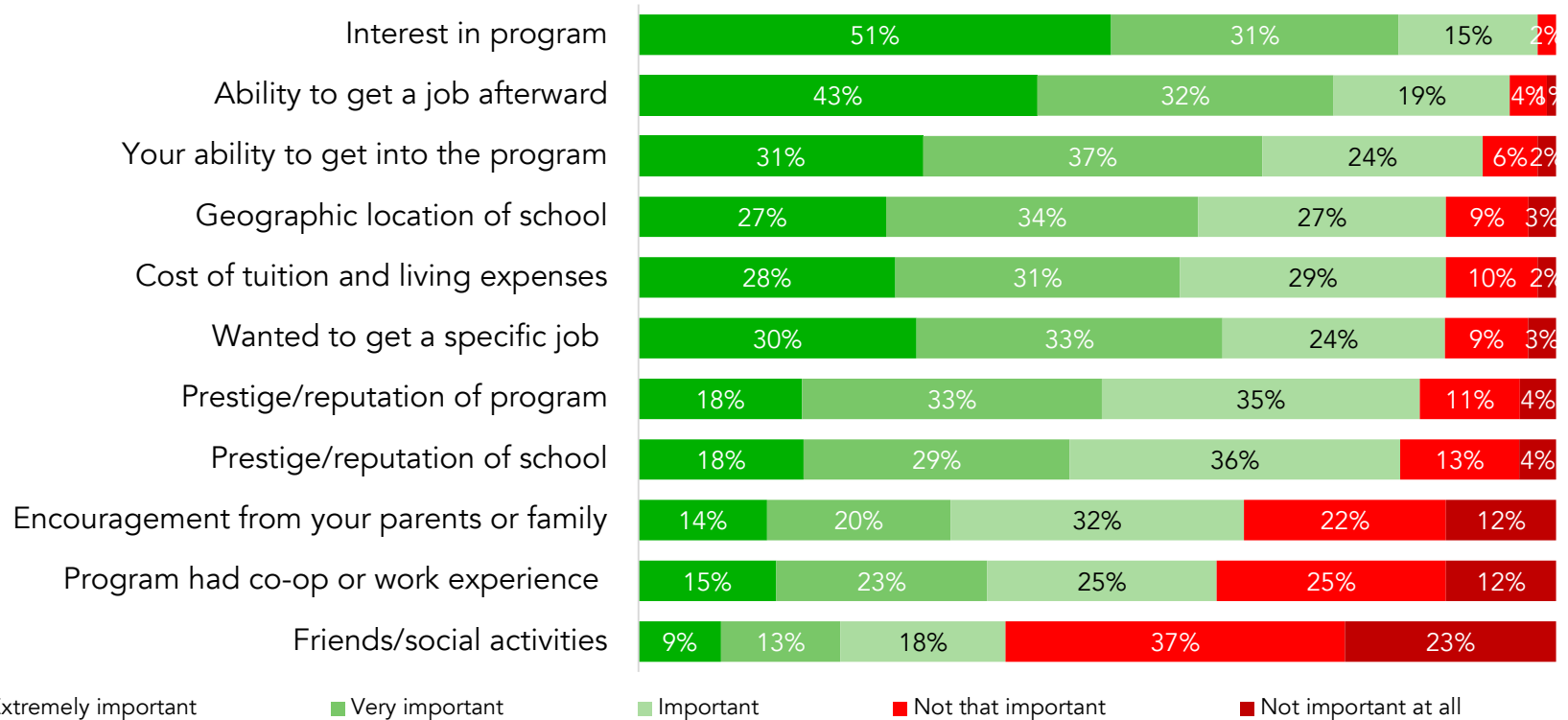
College and university students with WIL experiences feel that they are better prepared to enter the workplace and are more confident in their ability to succeed. Specifically, students with a lot of WIL experience rate themselves more prepared in having the following skills compared to those with no WIL experience:

- Having good people skills: 79% vs. 46%
- Making presentations and speaking in public: 77% vs. 45%
- Being able to lead a team: 72% vs 33%
- Being creative: 72% vs 43%

In today's ever evolving job market, it is clear that work-integrated learning creates a more confident workplace. Graduates with WIL are more likely to transition into the workforce with ease while rating their post-secondary experience as positive and fulfilling.

Millennials are now the biggest generation in the Canadian workforce yet they do not feel sufficiently prepared for today's workforce. They see practice-based learning opportunities as an important capstone in bridging the gap between theoretical learning and employer demands.

FACTORS EFFECTING PSE DECISION

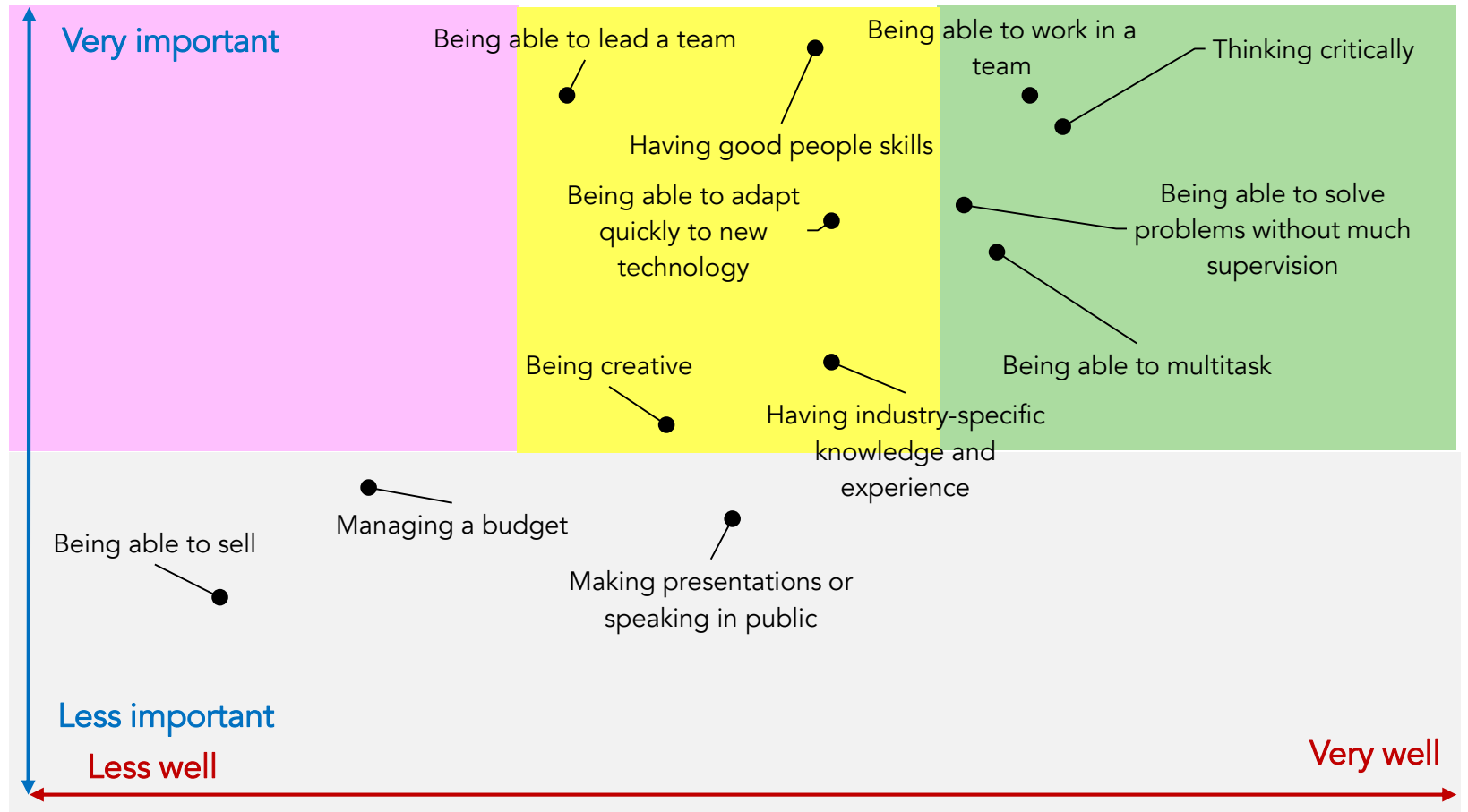


Think back to your decision of choosing a post-secondary program. How important were each of the following in deciding which school you attended?

PREPARATION FOR THE JOB MARKET

HOW WELL ARE PSE INSTITUTIONS PREPARING
STUDENTS FOR THE SKILLS THEY THINK ARE
NEEDED?

IMPORTANCE



HOW WELL PREPARED YOU ARE

DOES WIL HAVE AN IMPACT?

**DO GRADUATES WHO PARTICIPATE IN WIL FEEL
MORE PREPARED AND SATISFIED?**

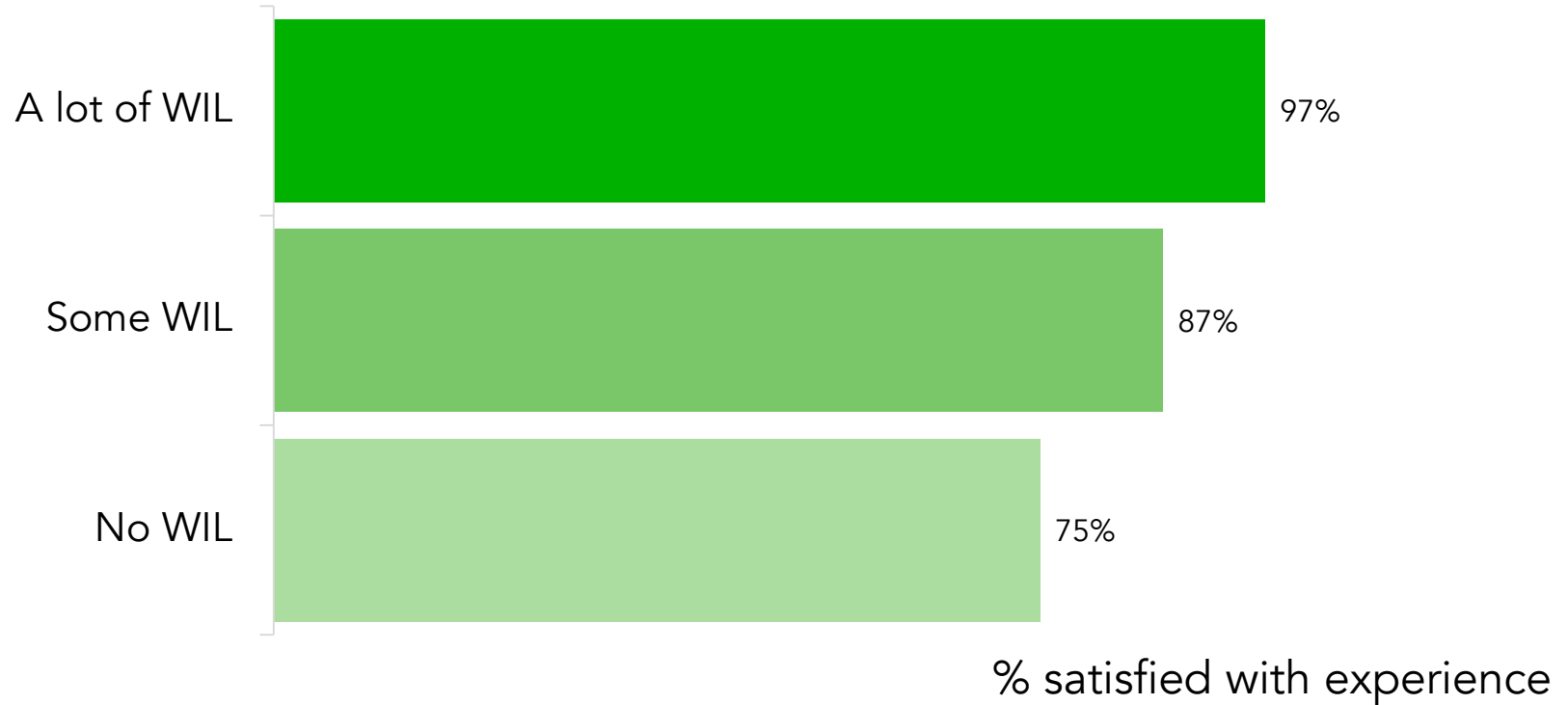
HOW WELL HAS YOUR PSE EDUCATION PREPARED YOU?

Graduates by Amount of WIL Experience – “Very well/Well”

	A lot of WIL	Some WIL	No WIL
Being able to work in a team	90%	80%	61%
Having industry-specific knowledge and experience	86%	63%	49%
Having good people skills	79%	66%	46%
Making presentations and speaking in public	77%	57%	45%
Being creative	72%	53%	43%
Being able to lead a time	72%	48%	33%
Working with older generations	64%	39%	28%
Being able to sell	50%	22%	17%

And looking at these same skills, to what extent has your post-secondary education helped prepare you to have these skills? Do you feel your education prepared you very well, well, not much, or not at all for each skill below?

RECENT GRADS: SATISFACTION WITH PSE BY WIL EXPERIENCE

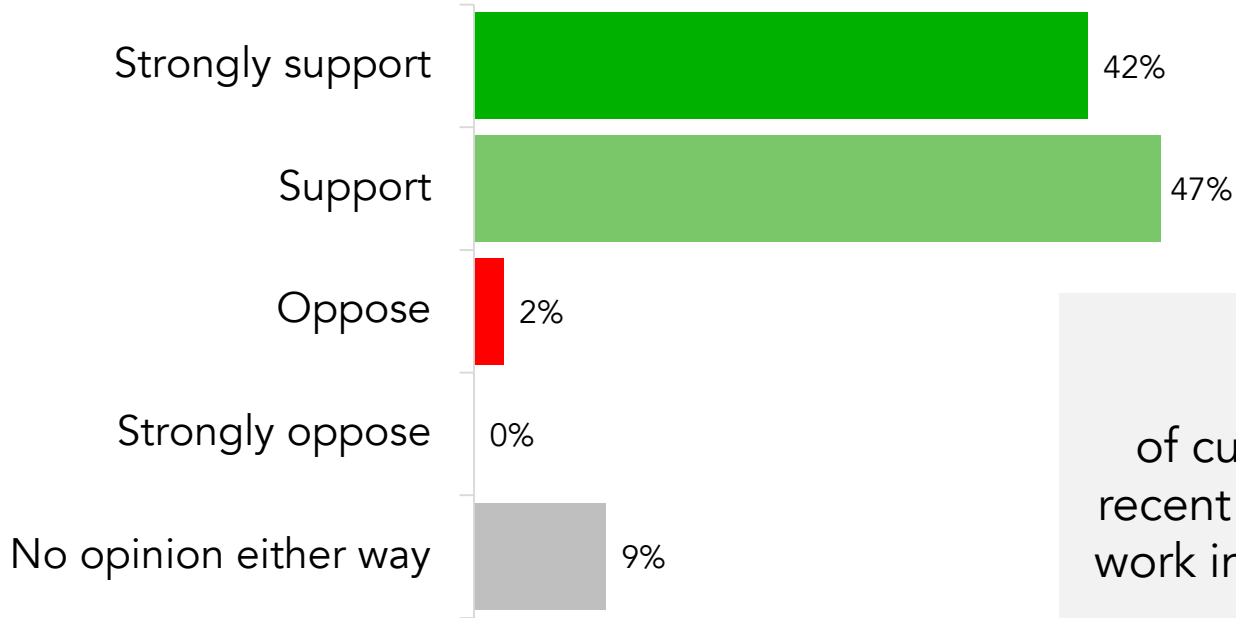


[If Recent Graduate] Overall, to what extent are you satisfied with the education you received in your post-secondary program?

THE APPEAL OF WIL

DO STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES WANT
MORE WIL EXPERIENCES?

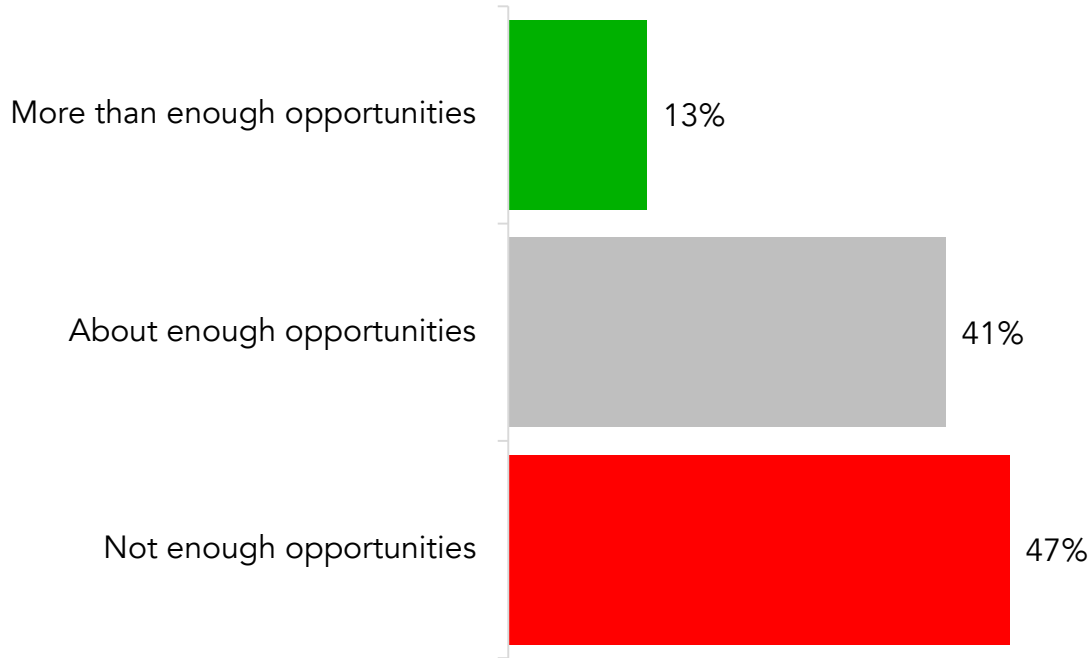
REACTION TO WIL PROGRAMMING IN SCHOOLS



89%
of current students and
recent grads support more
work integrated learning in
programs.

Based on this description, if post-secondary schools in Canada moved to implement work-integrated learning into more programs, would you support or oppose them doing so, or do you have no real opinion either way?

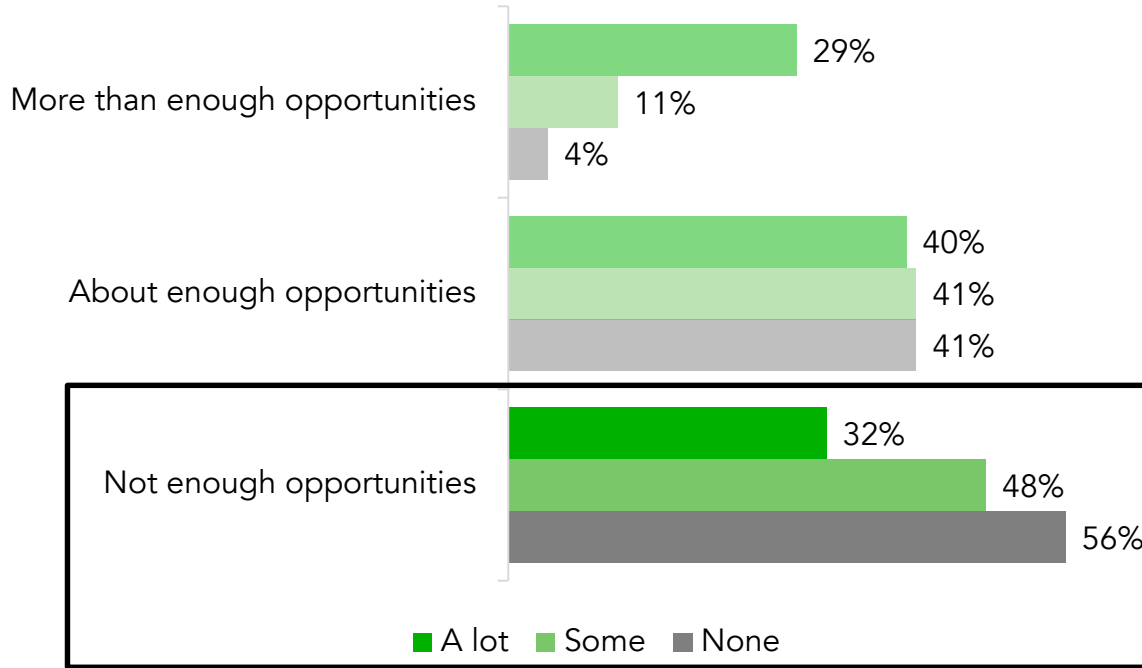
AVAILABILITY OF WIL OPPORTUNITIES NOW?



47%
DO NOT think there are enough work-integrated learning opportunities.

Do you think students in post-secondary programs currently have more than enough opportunities to take part in work-integrated learning, about enough opportunities, or not enough opportunities?

AVAILABILITY OF WIL OPPORTUNITIES NOW?

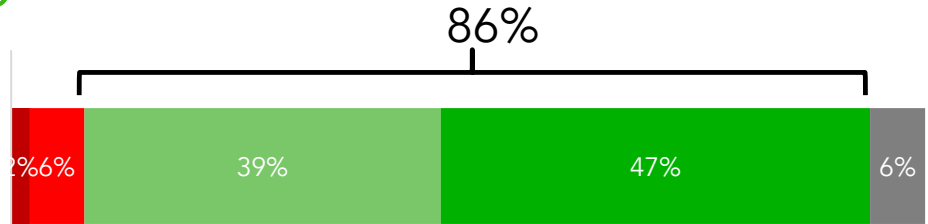


There is a strong relationship between having WIL experience and perceptions about their availability.

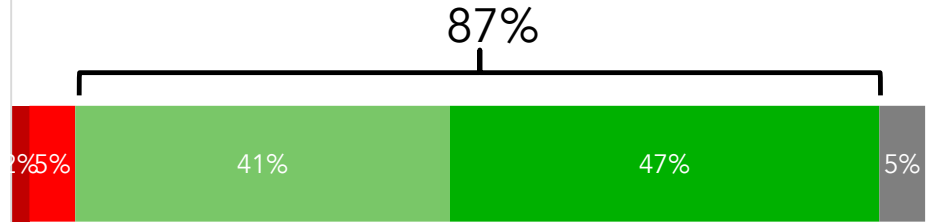
Do you think students in post-secondary programs currently have more than enough opportunities to take part in work-integrated learning, about enough opportunities, or not enough opportunities?

APPEAL OF WIL PROGRAMS

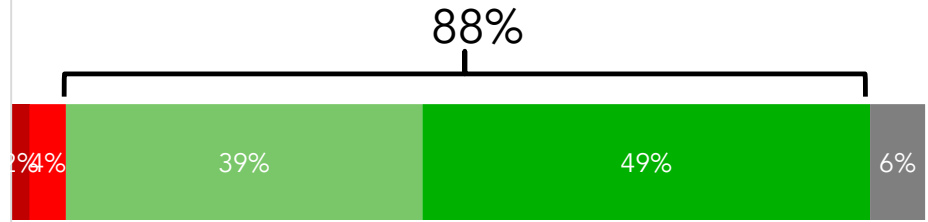
I think that students who participated in some form of work-integrated learning prior to graduation will have an easier transition from school to a successful career.



Every student, regardless of their program or field of study, should have the ability to gain work experience as part of their program.



I think that students who graduate with degrees that offer work-integrated learning have an advantage when it comes to finding a job.



■ Strongly disagree

■ Disagree

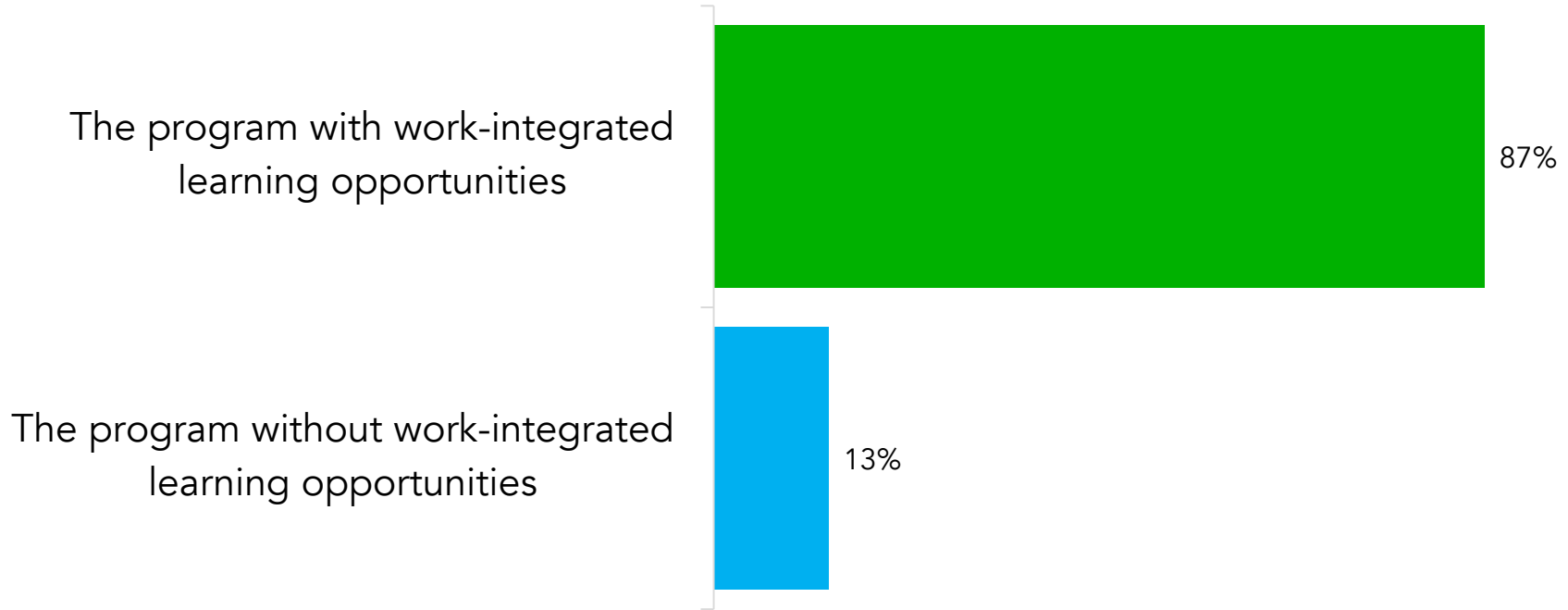
■ Agree

■ Strongly agree

■ Unsure

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

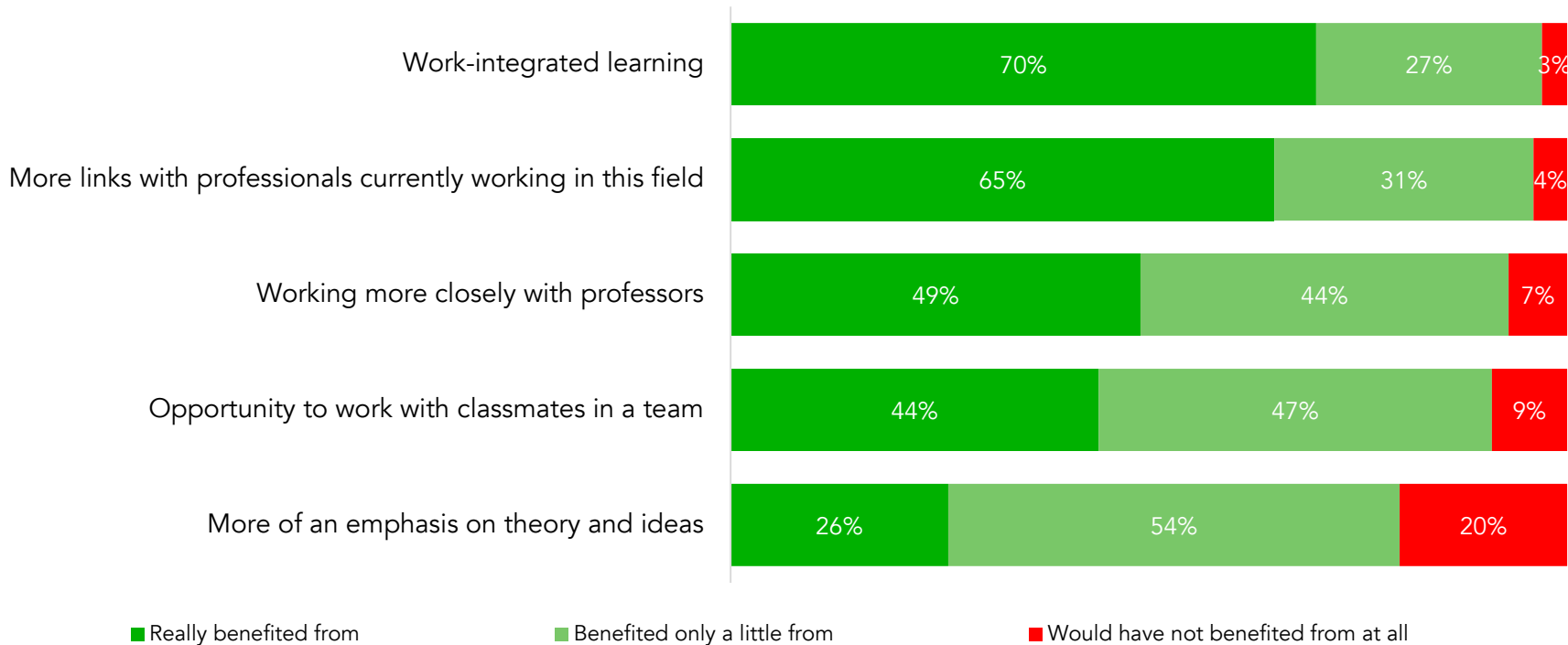
WORK-INTEGRATED VS. NOT



Imagine that you were offered the choice between two post-secondary programs at the same school, at the same cost, and would allow you to complete the program in the same amount of time. One offered you a work-integrated learning experience and the other one did not. Which would you choose?

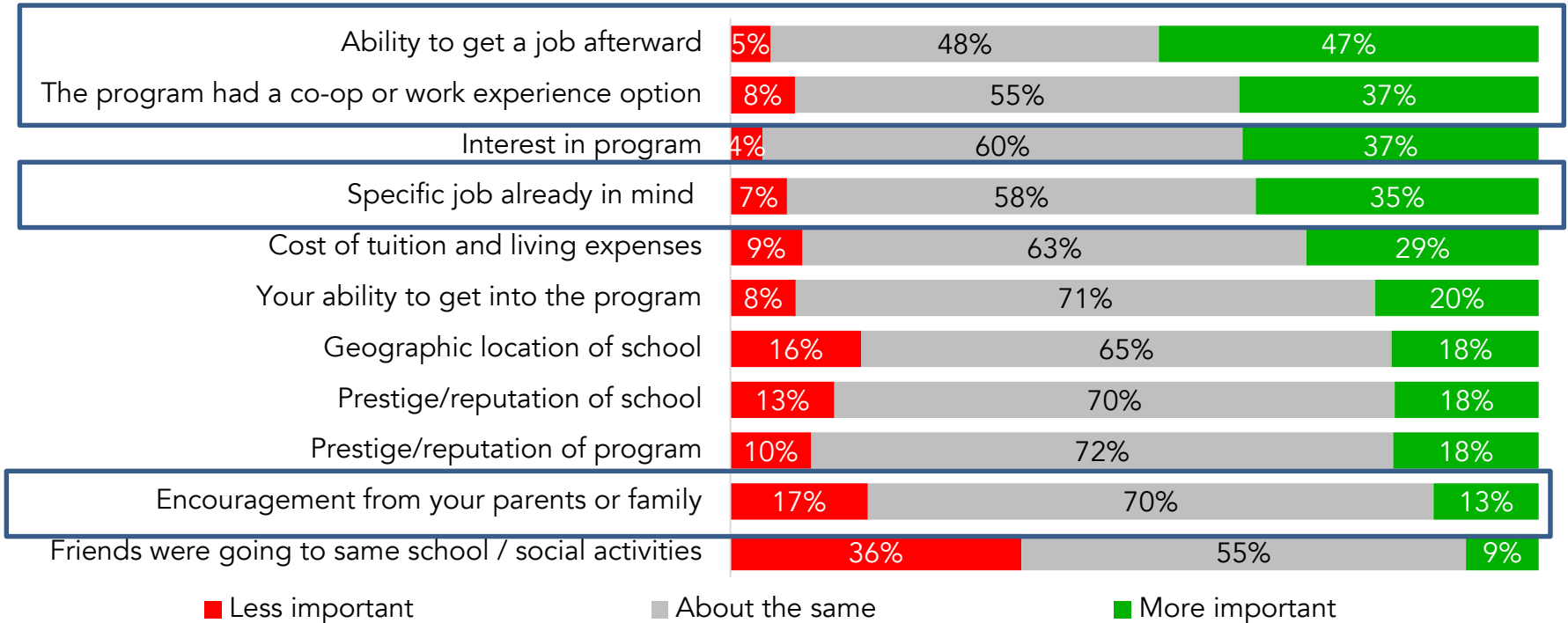
**IF THEY COULD DO IT AGAIN...
WOULD GRADUATES HAVE BENEFITED FROM WIL?**

WOULD YOU HAVE BENEFITED FROM...



[If Recent Graduate] Thinking back to when you were a student. Below are a number of experiences you could have had while in school. For each, tell us whether it is something you would have really benefited from, something you would have benefited only a little from, or something you would have not benefited from at all.

IF YOU COULD MAKE THE DECISION AGAIN?



Now, imagine you could go back to the decision of your post-secondary program. Do you think each of the following should have been more important in your decision, less important, or about the same as it was?

CONTACT INFO

David Coletto, CEO

Abacus Data

david@abacusdata.ca

613-232-2806

APPENDIX

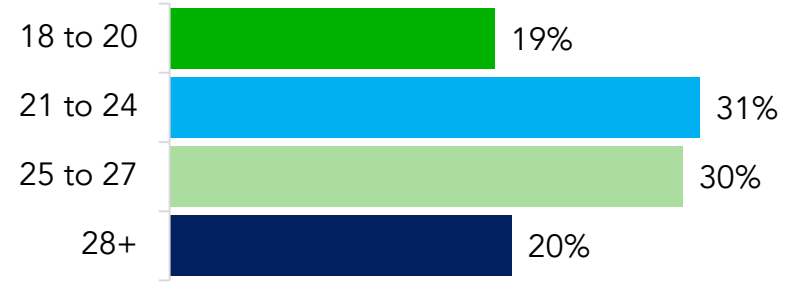
ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

RESPONDENT PROFILE

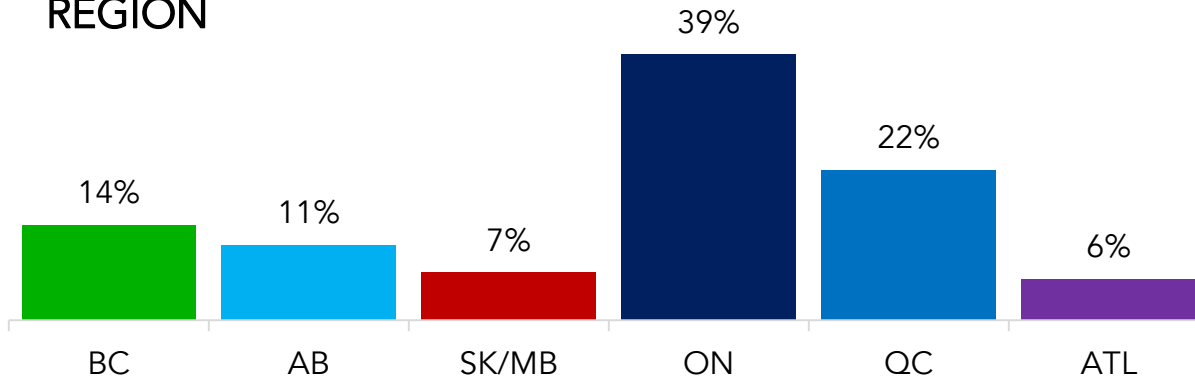
SEX



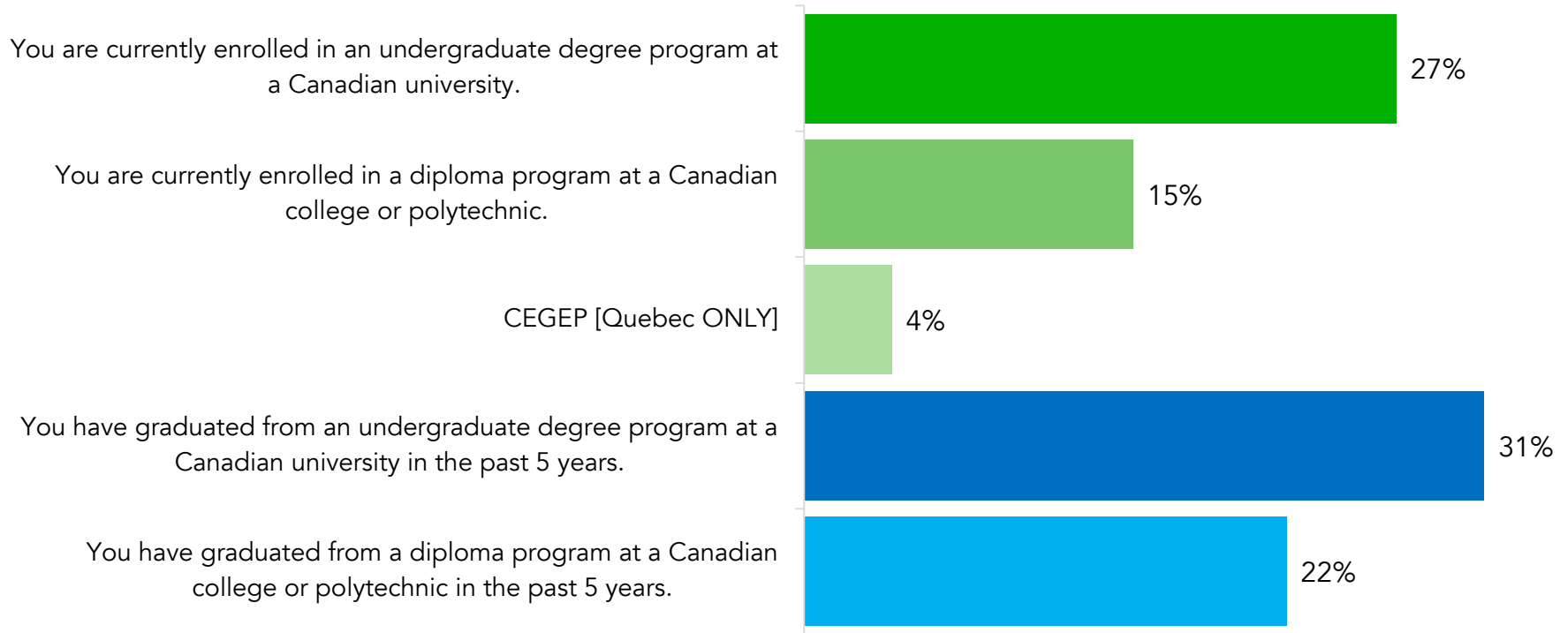
AGE



REGION

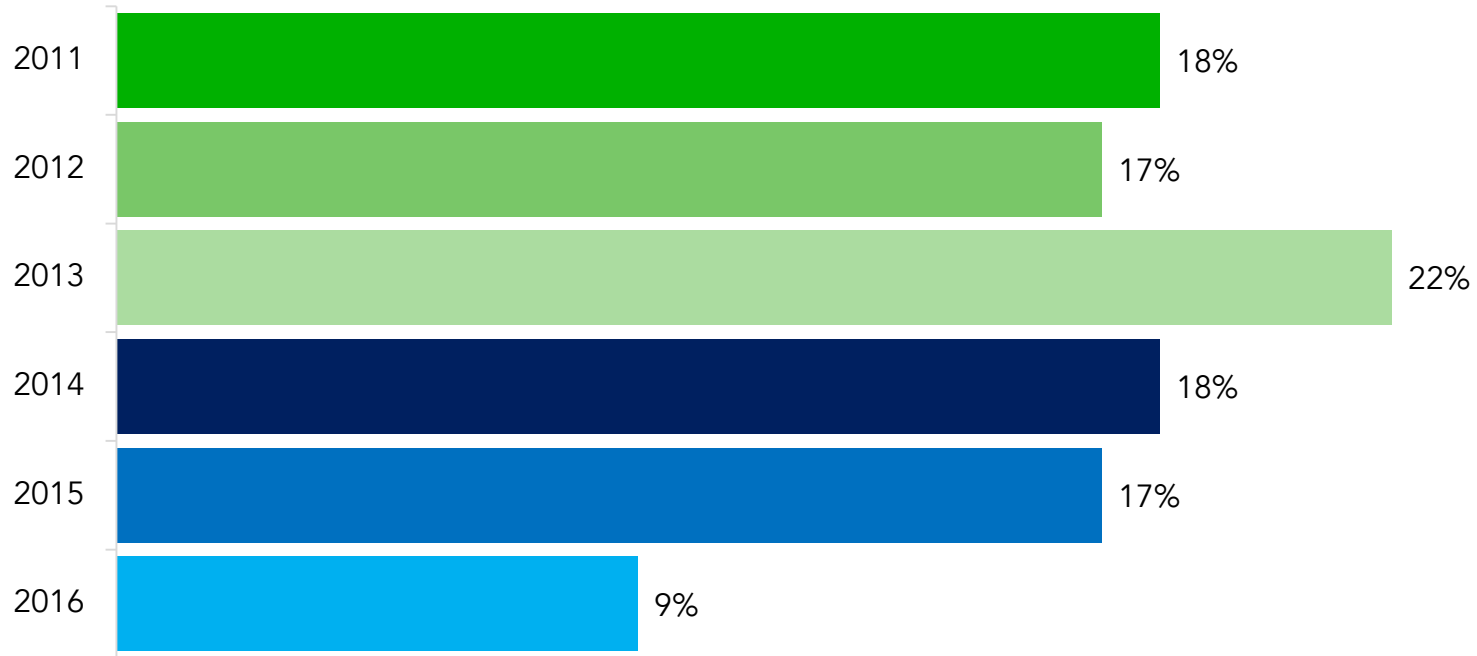


CURRENT STATUS OF RESPONDENTS



Which of the following best describes you?

WHEN DID YOU FINISH YOUR DEGREE/DIPLOMA



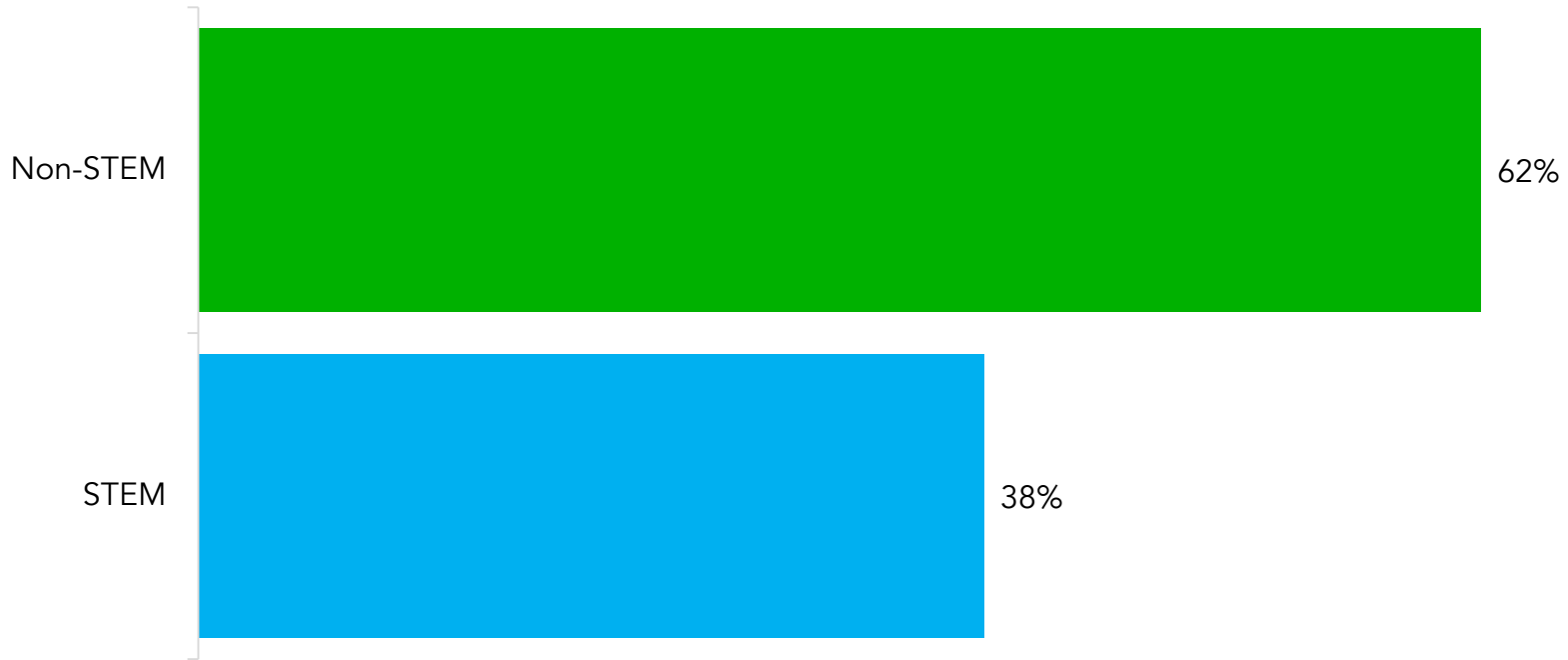
[If Recent Graduate] When did you finish your degree/ diploma?

WHAT FIELD ARE YOU CURRENTLY STUDYING



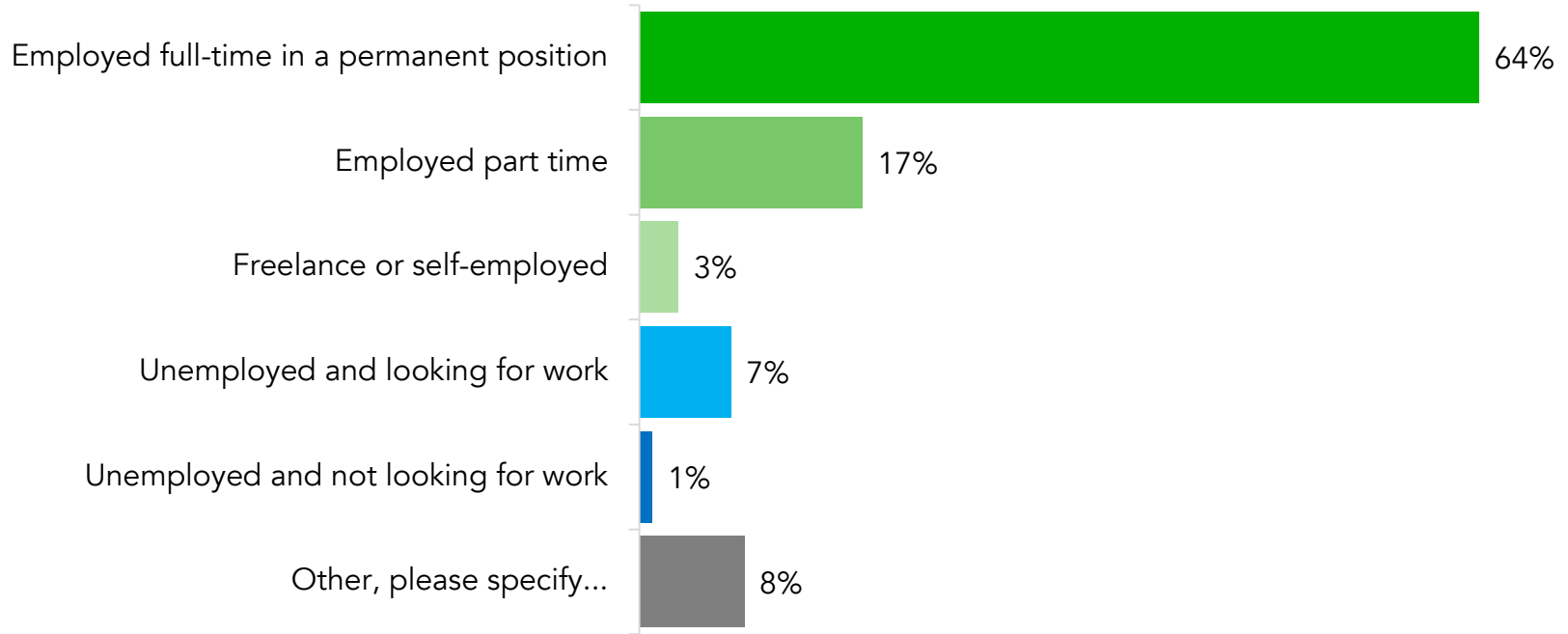
[If Current Student] In what field are you currently studying?

WHAT DID YOU STUDY



[If Recent Graduate] What did you study?

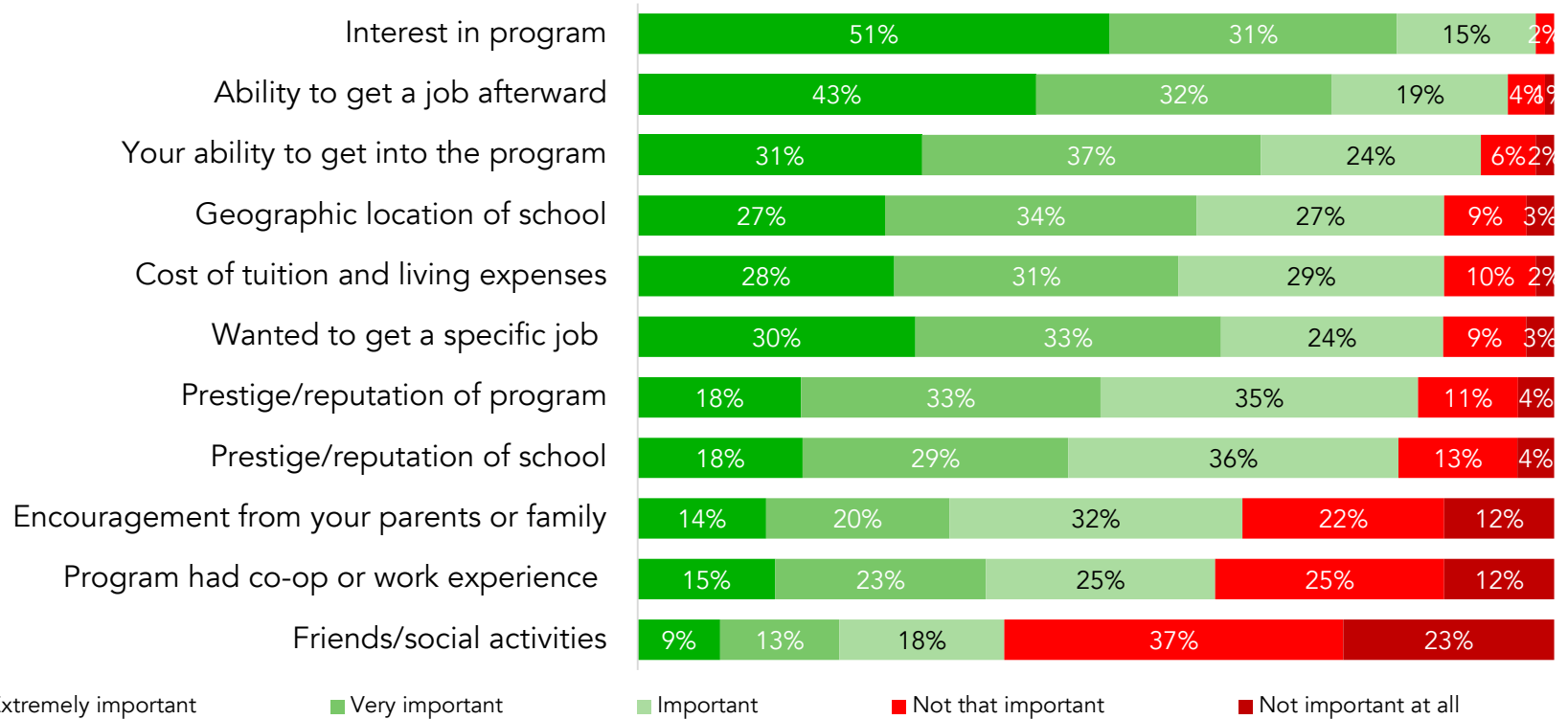
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS



[If Recent Graduate] What is your current employment status?

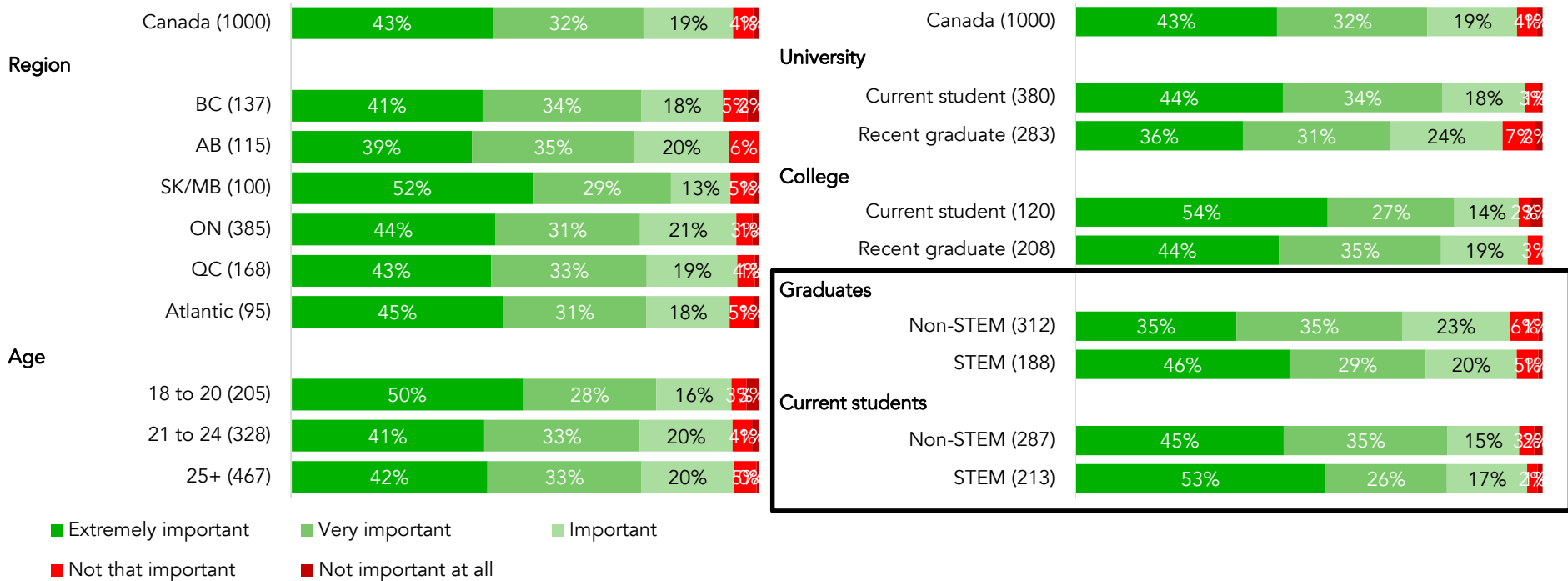
CHOOSING A PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION

FACTORS EFFECTING PSE DECISION



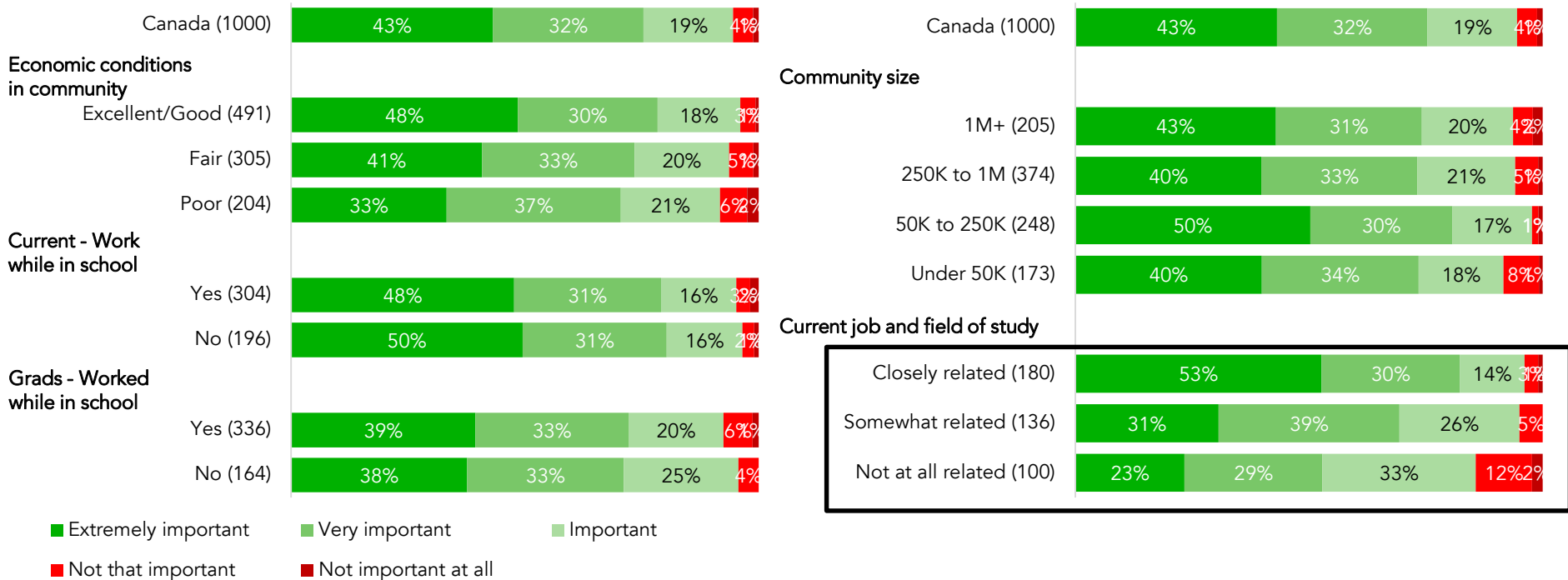
Think back to your decision of choosing a post-secondary program. How important were each of the following in deciding which school you attended?

DECIDING - ABILITY TO GET A JOB AFTERWARD



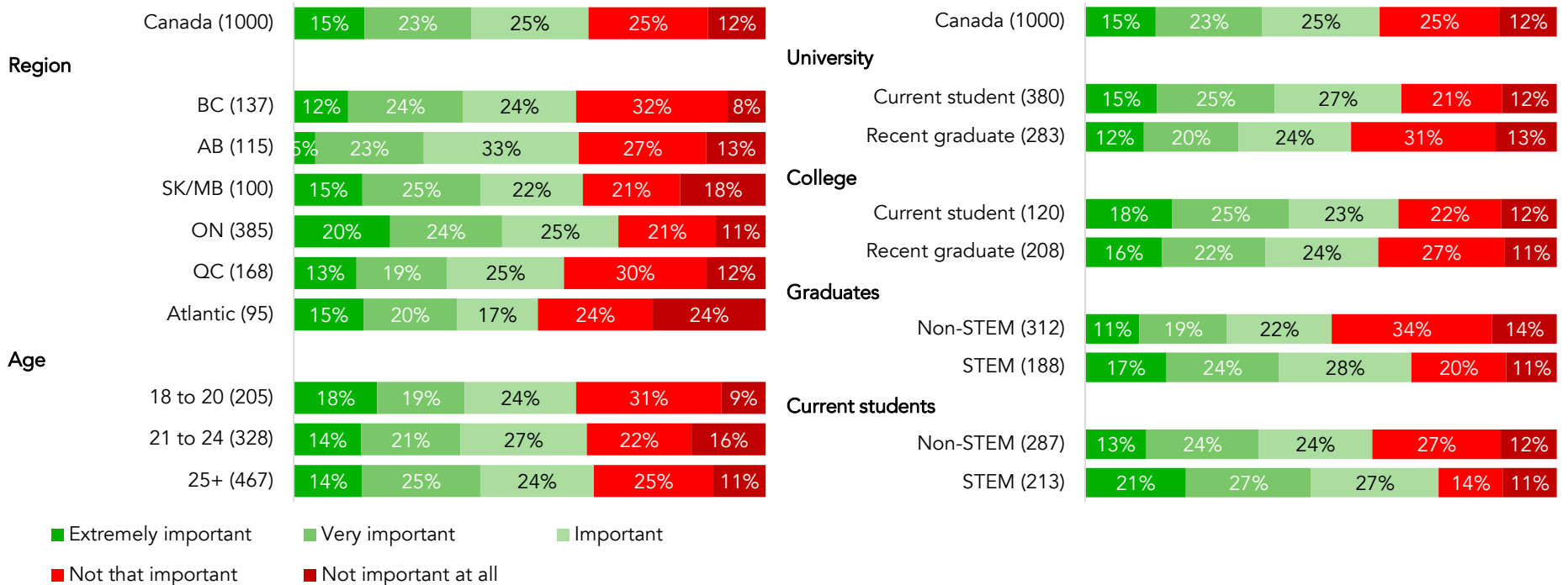
Think back to your decision of choosing a post-secondary program. How important were each of the following in deciding which school you attended?

DECIDING - ABILITY TO GET A JOB AFTERWARD



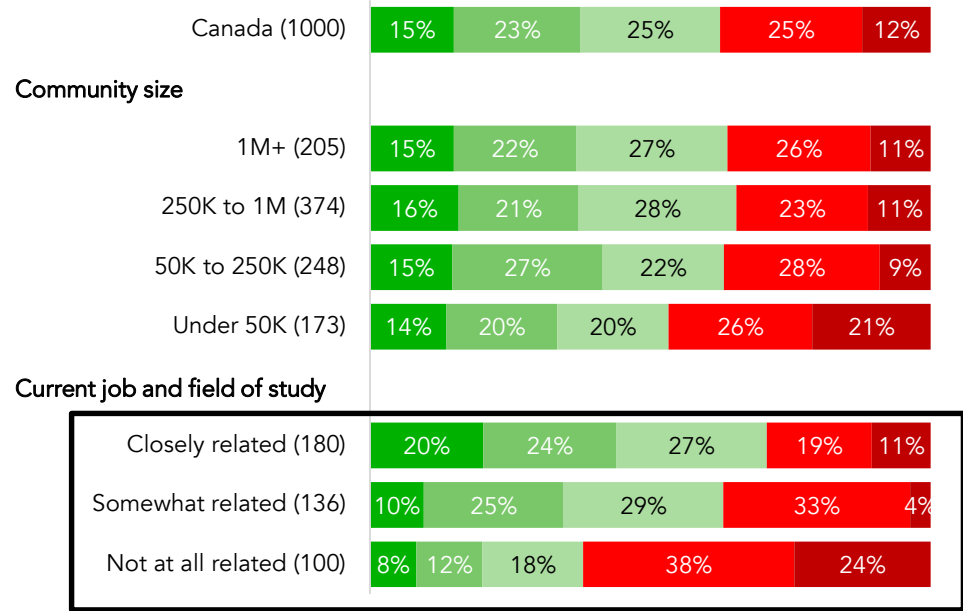
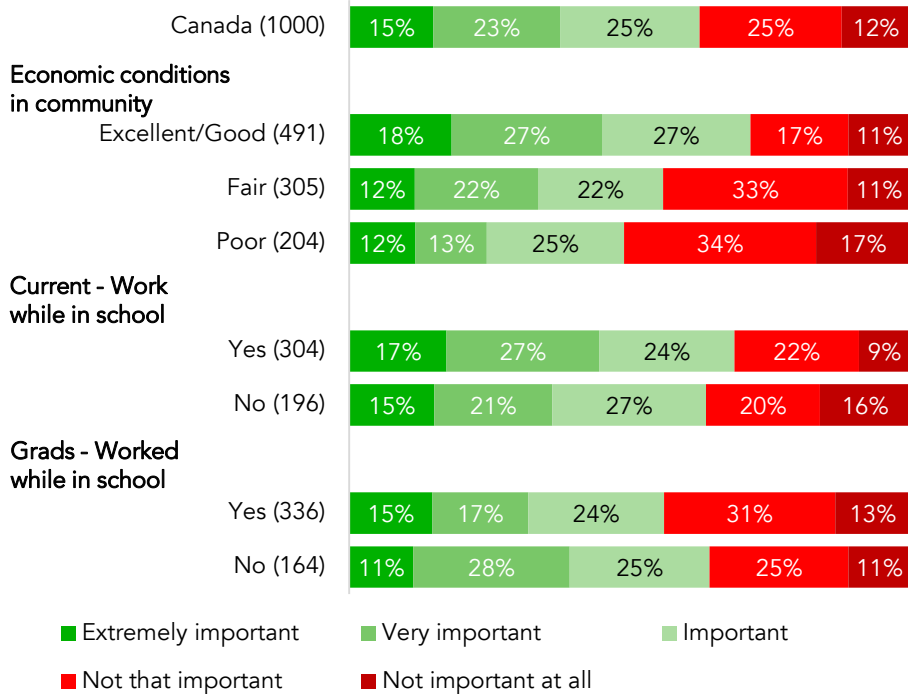
Think back to your decision of choosing a post-secondary program. How important were each of the following in deciding which school you attended?

DECIDING - THE PROGRAM HAD A CO-OP OR WORK EXPERIENCE OPTION



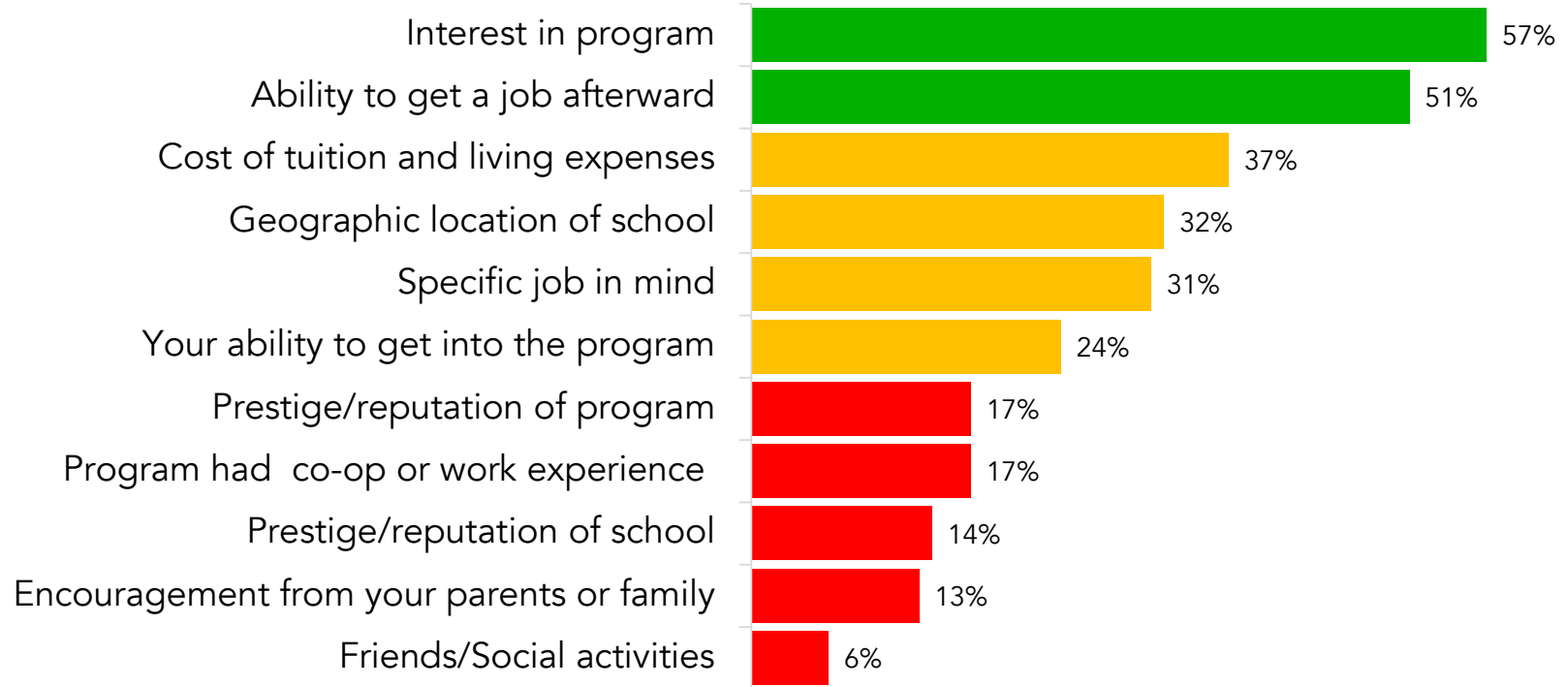
Think back to your decision of choosing a post-secondary program. How important were each of the following in deciding which school you attended?

DECIDING - THE PROGRAM HAD A CO-OP OR WORK EXPERIENCE OPTION



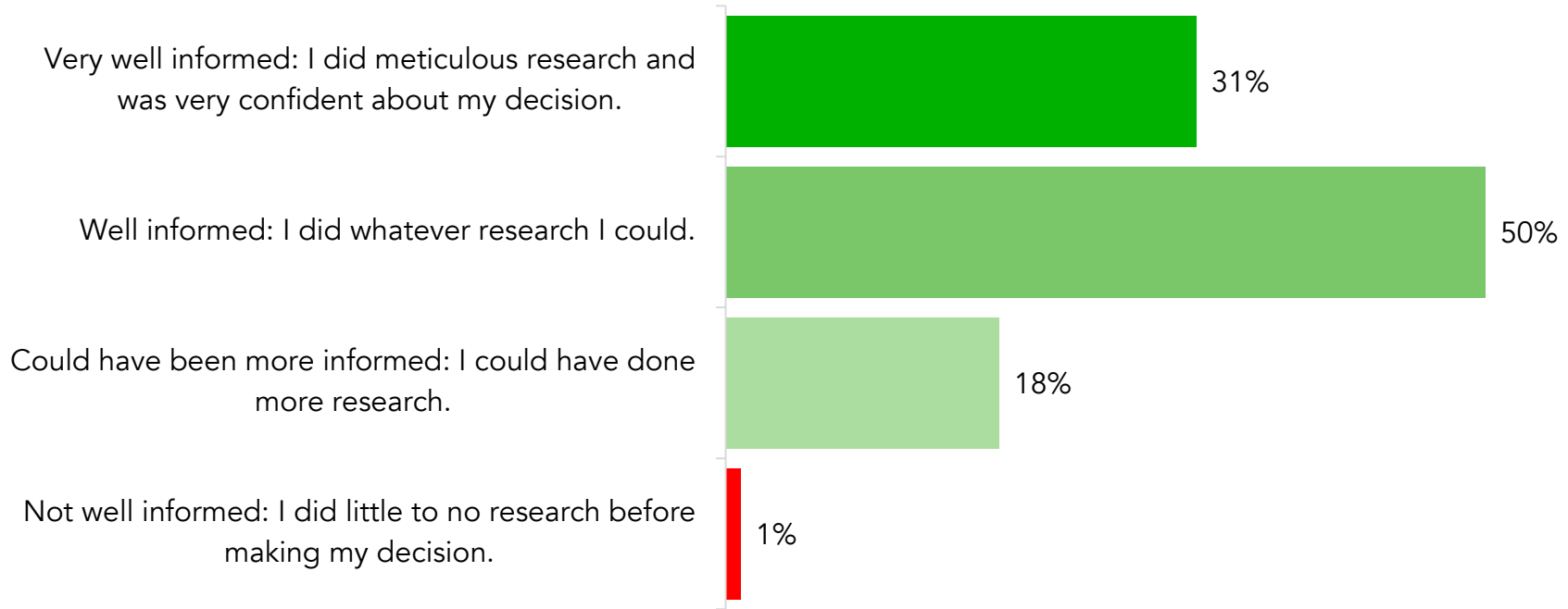
Think back to your decision of choosing a post-secondary program. How important were each of the following in deciding which school you attended?

MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DECIDING WHICH SCHOOL/PROGRAM TO ATTEND



Of these same factors, which THREE would you say were MOST important?

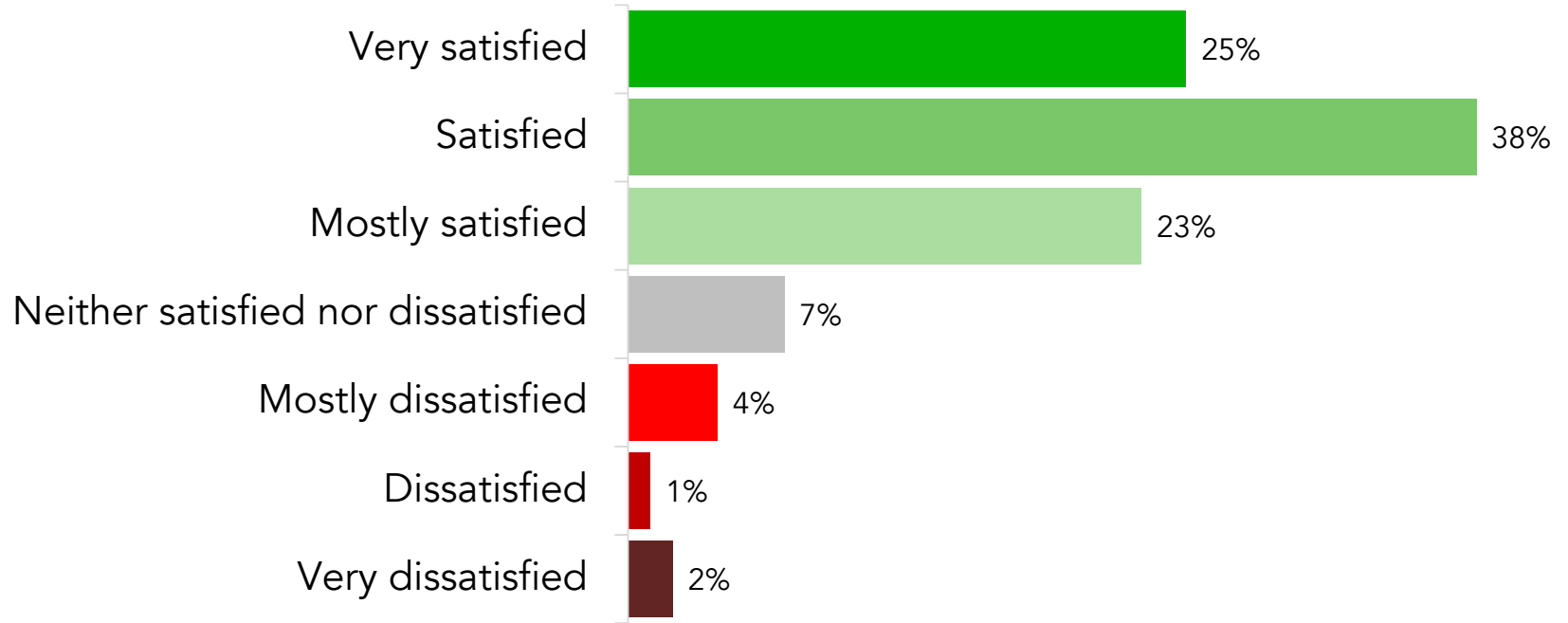
INFORMED ABOUT YOUR CHOICE OF SCHOOL



Still thinking about your decision about which post-secondary school and program to attend, which of the following best describes the extent to which you were informed about your choices?

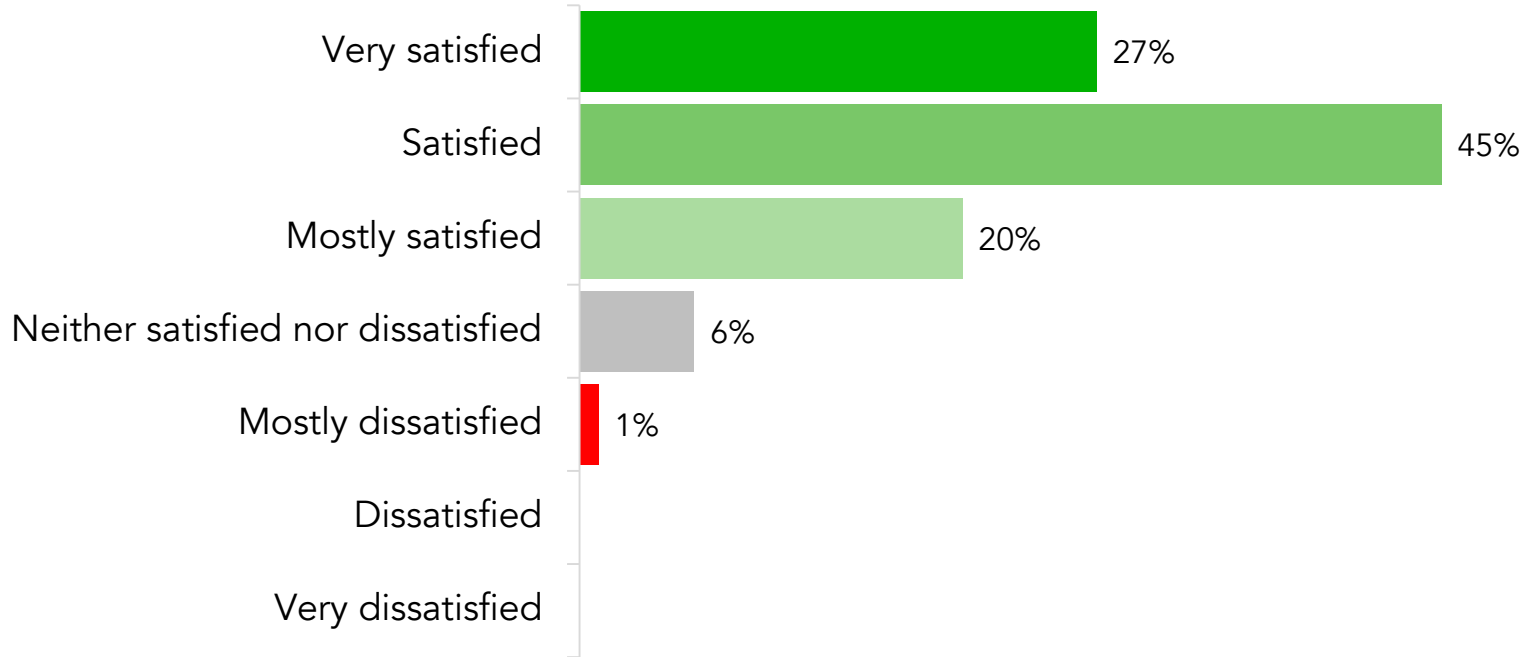
SATISFACTION WITH EDUCATION

RECENT GRADS: SATISFACTION WITH EDUCATION RECEIVED



[If Recent Graduate] Overall, to what extent are you satisfied with the education you received in your post-secondary program?

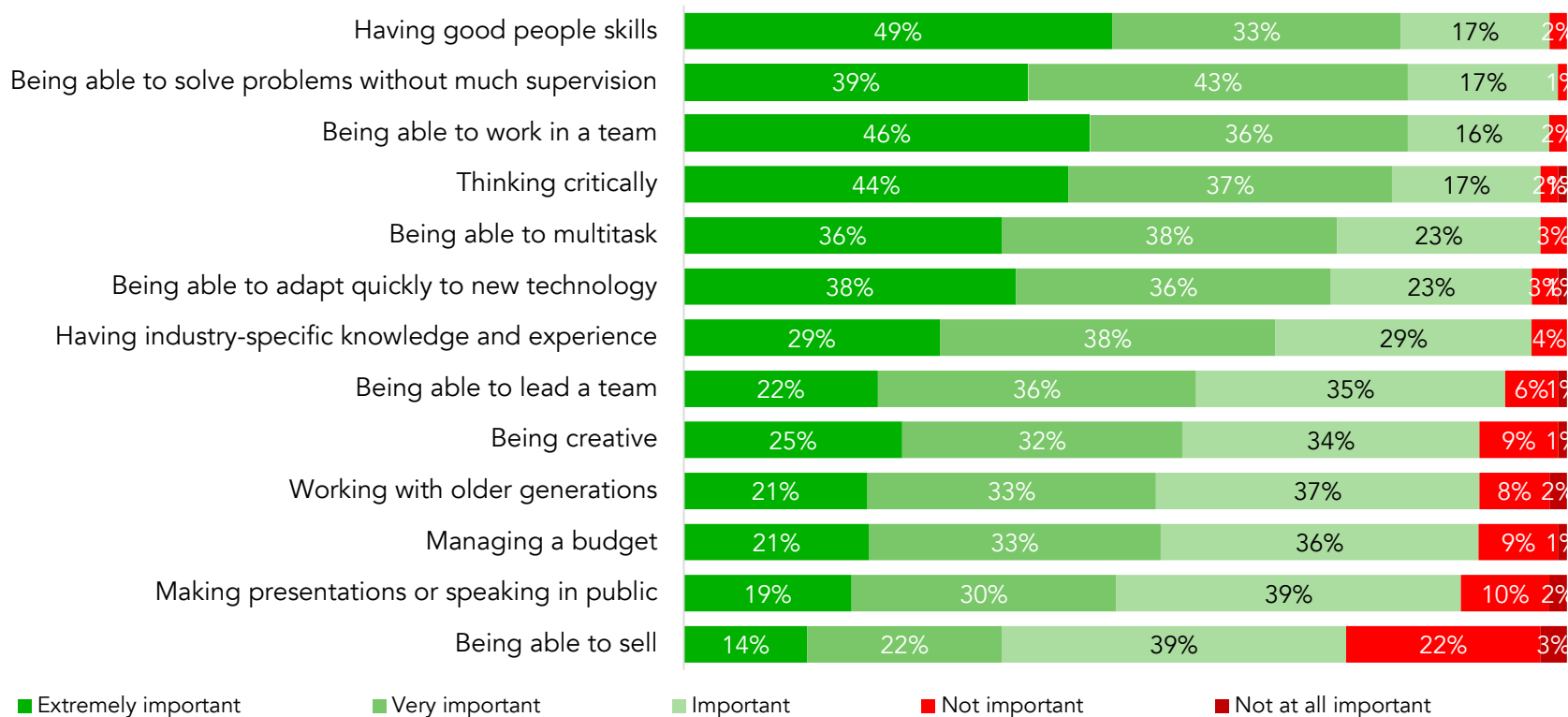
CURRENT STUDENTS: SATISFACTION WITH EDUCATION RECEIVED THUS FAR



[If Current Student] Overall, to what extent are you satisfied with the education you have received thus far in your post-secondary program?

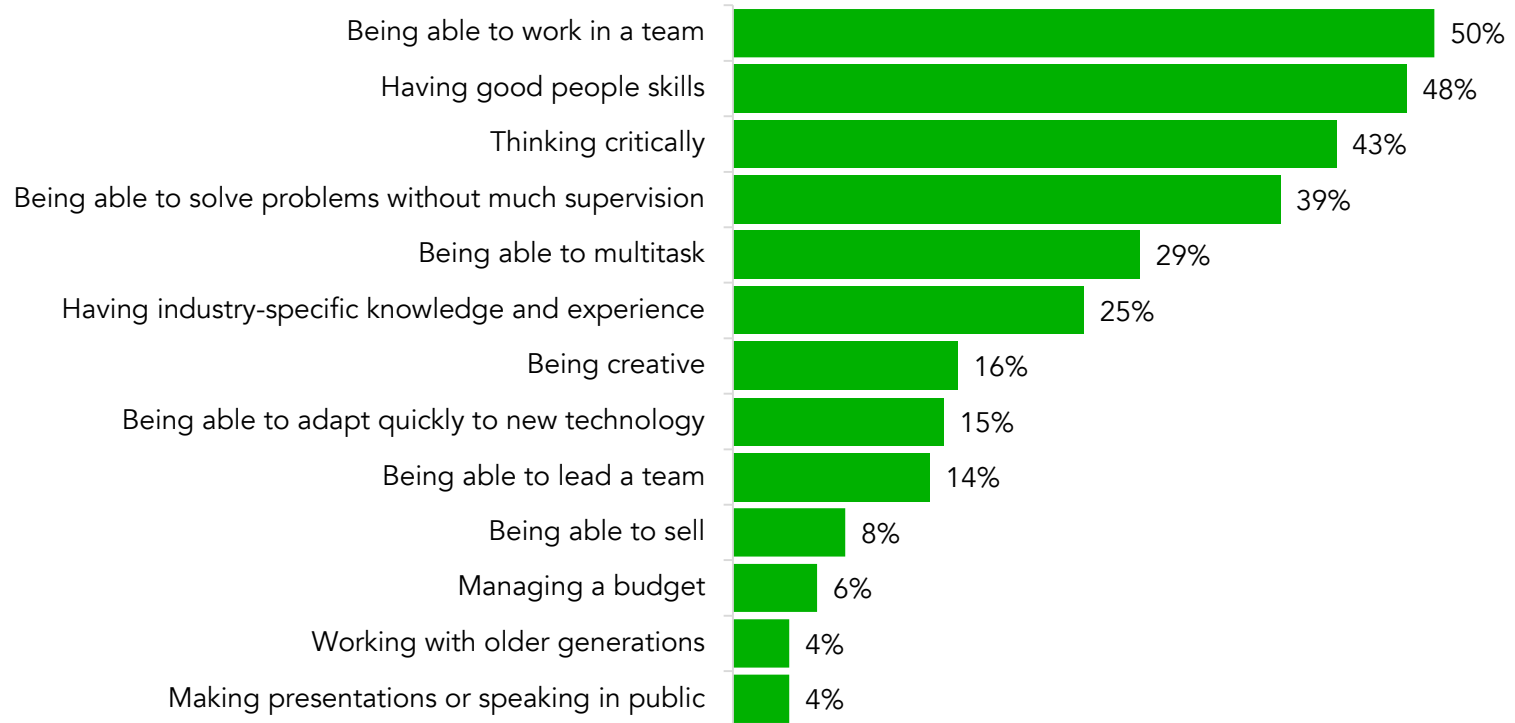
WHAT SKILLS ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR?

WHAT SKILLS ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR?



The following are general skills considered to be useful in most workplaces. When it comes to recruiting new employees, how important do you think each of the following skills are to have?

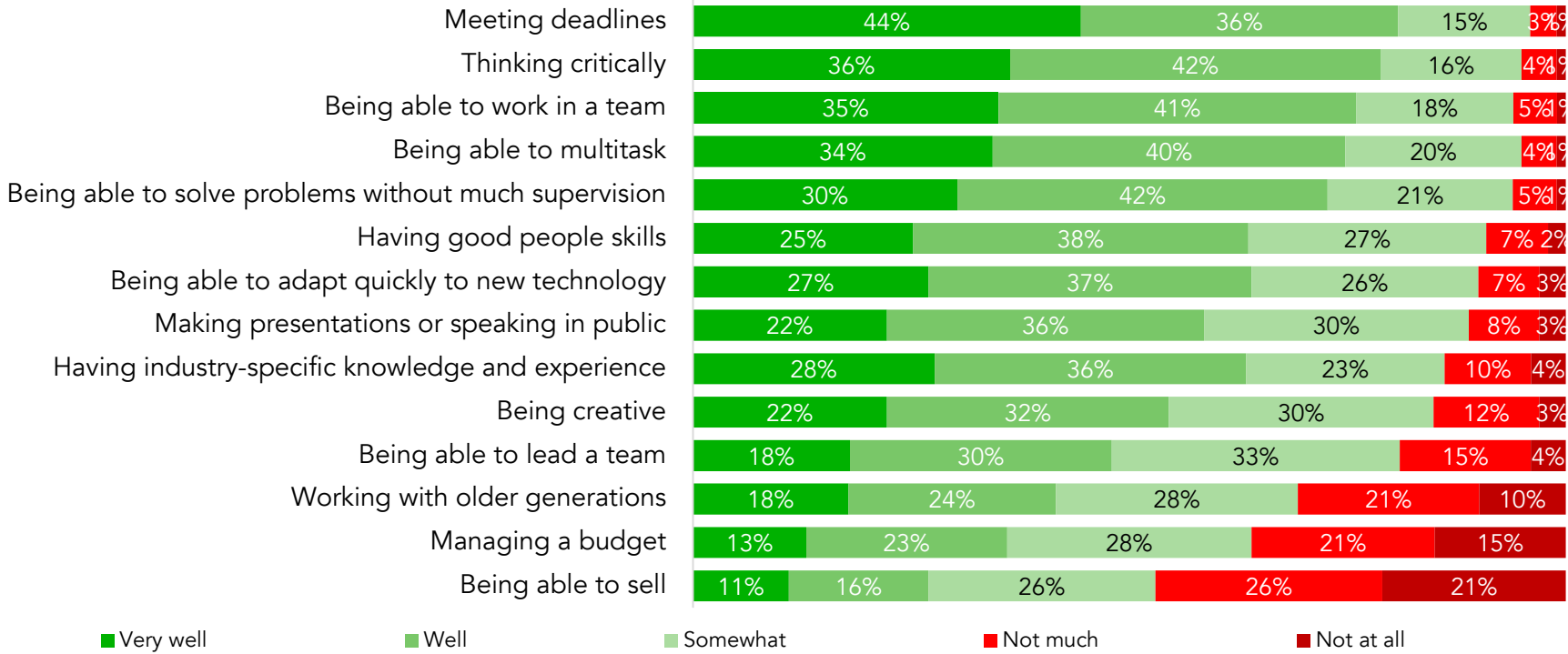
MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS IN NEW RECRUITS



Which THREE do you think are the MOST important skills most employers are looking for in new recruits?

**HOW WELL HAS YOUR
PSE EXPERIENCE
PREPARED YOU?**

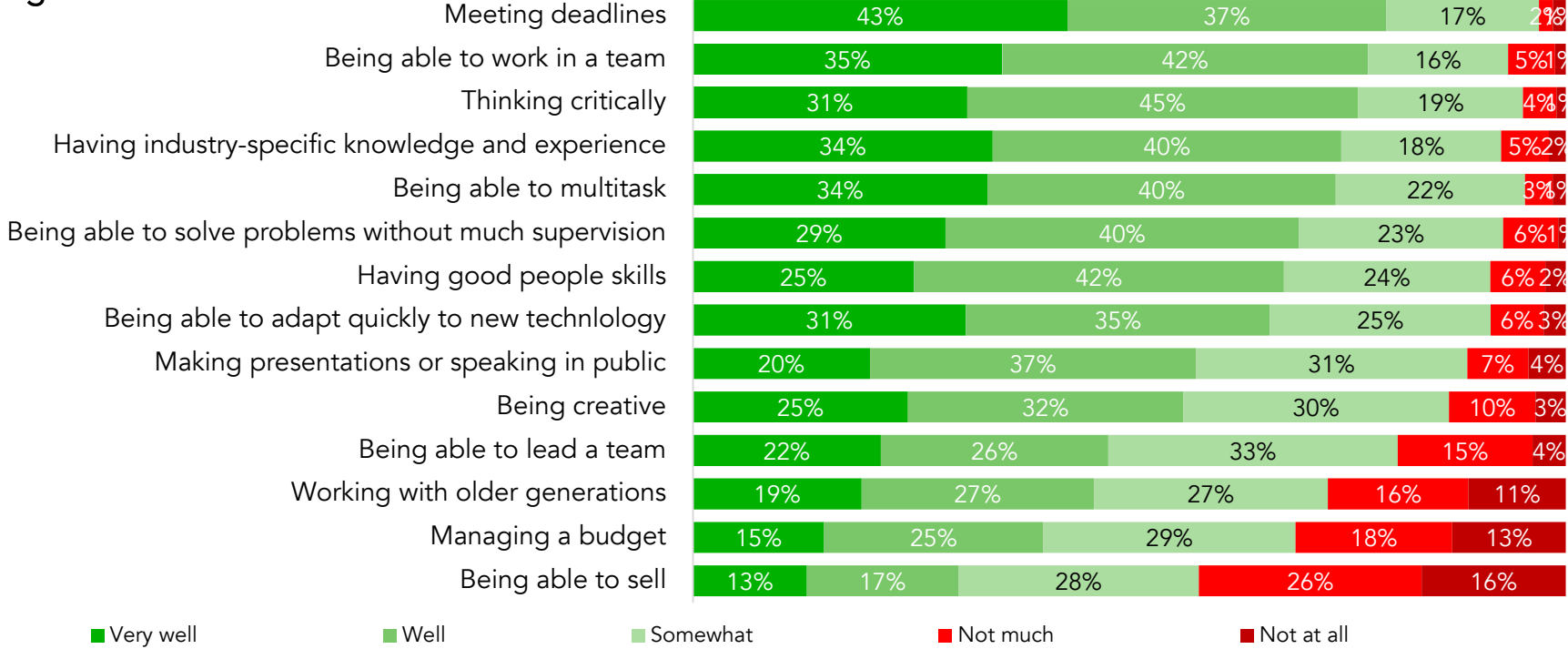
HOW WELL HAS YOUR PSE EDUCATION PREPARED YOU?



And looking at these same skills, to what extent has your post-secondary education helped prepare you to have these skills? Do you feel your education prepared you very well, well, not much, or not at all for each skill below?

HOW WELL HAS YOUR PSE EDUCATION PREPARED YOU?

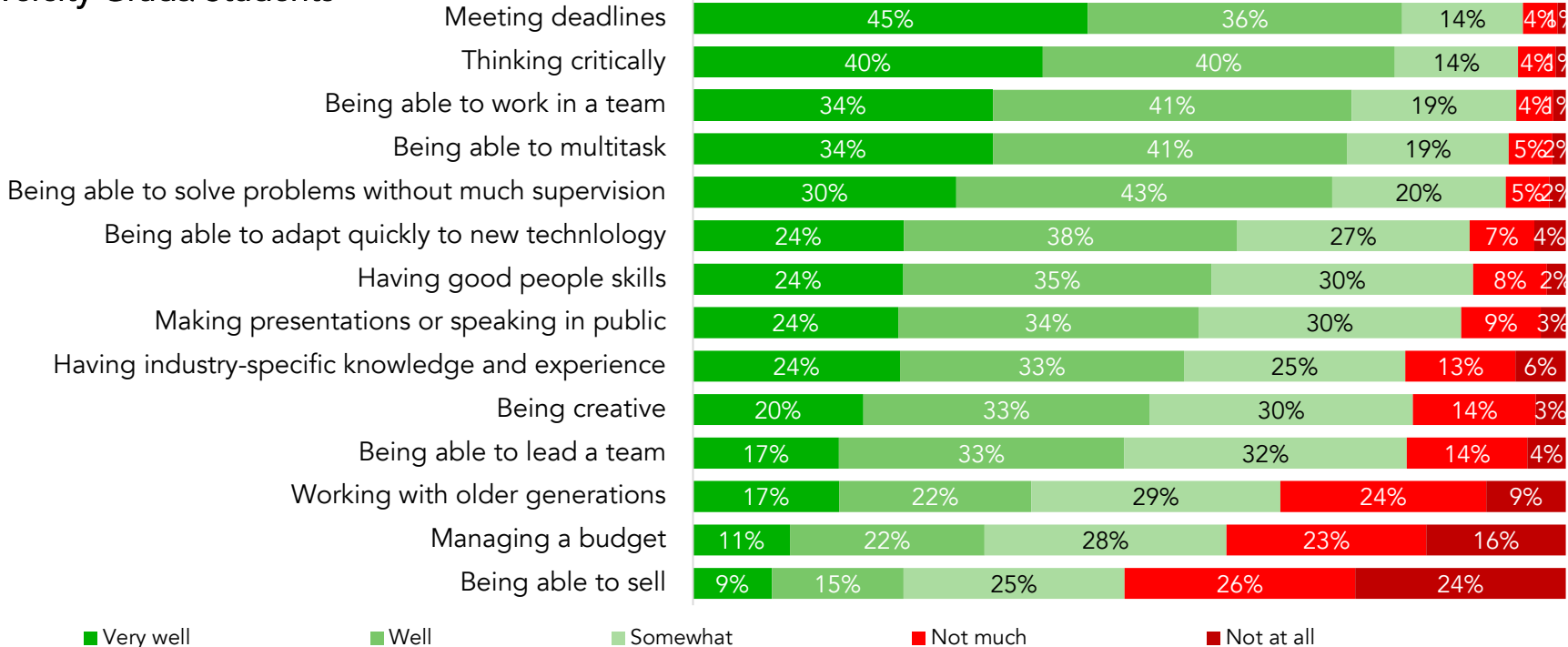
College Grads/Students



And looking at these same skills, to what extent has your post-secondary education helped prepare you to have these skills? Do you feel your education prepared you very well, well, not much, or not at all for each skill below?

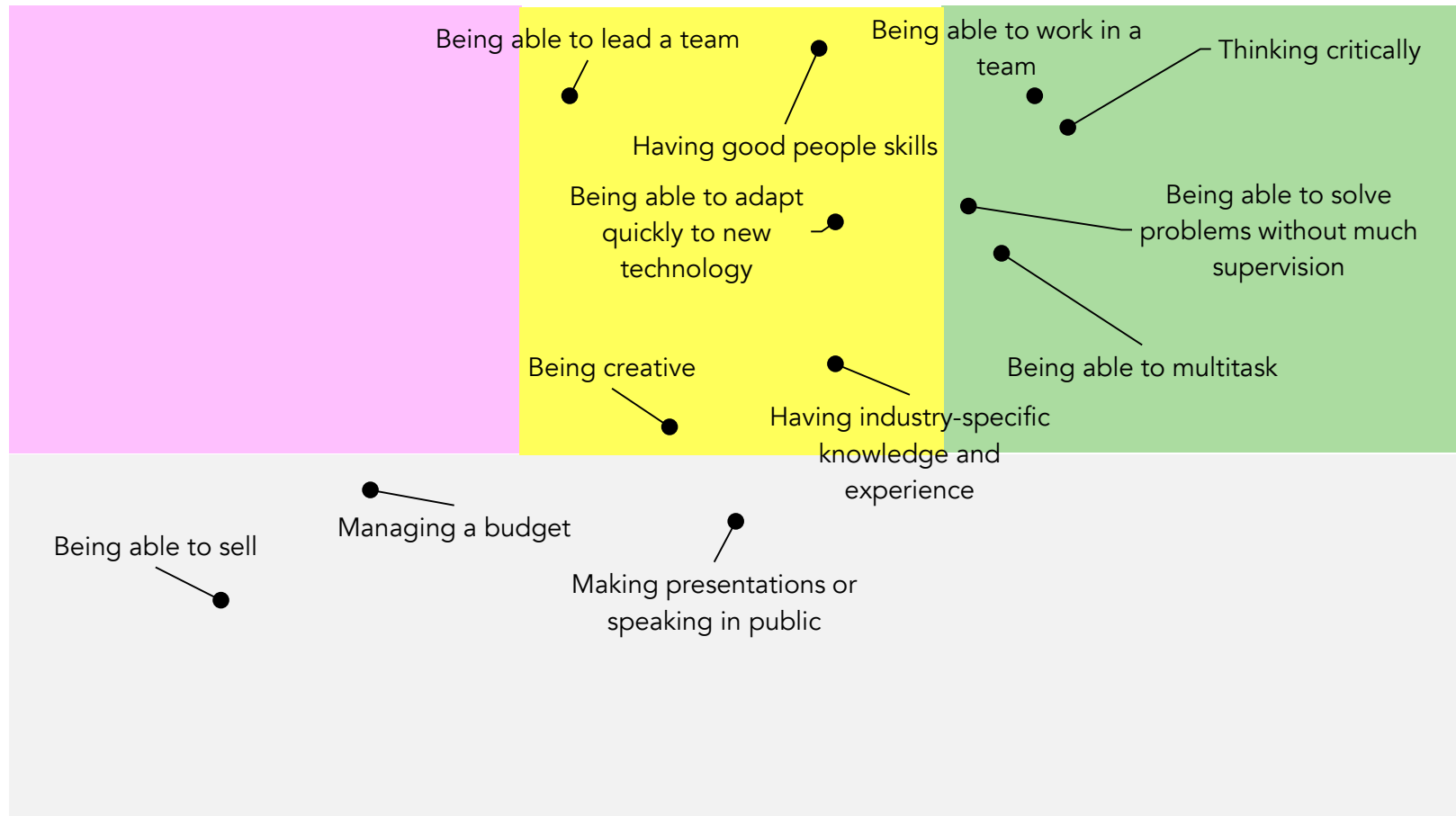
HOW WELL HAS YOUR PSE EDUCATION PREPARED YOU?

University Grads/Students



And looking at these same skills, to what extent has your post-secondary education helped prepare you to have these skills? Do you feel your education prepared you very well, well, not much, or not at all for each skill below?

IMPORTANCE



PERFORMANCE

HOW WELL HAS YOUR PSE EDUCATION PREPARED YOU?

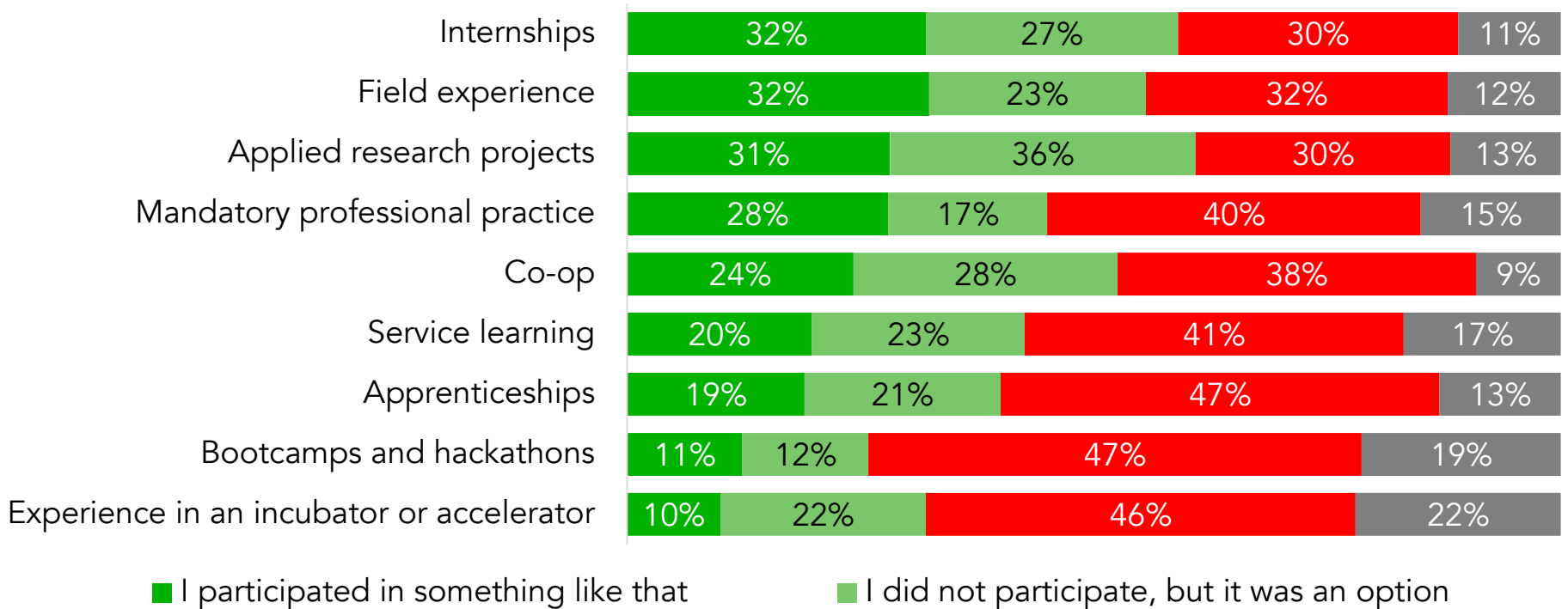
University vs. College Grads/Students

	University	College	Difference
Having industry-specific knowledge and experience	56%	74%	18
Having good people skills	59%	68%	8
Working with older generations	39%	46%	7
Managing a budget	33%	40%	7
Being able to sell	24%	30%	6
Being able to solve problems without much supervision	73%	69%	4
Thinking critically	80%	76%	4

And looking at these same skills, to what extent has your post-secondary education helped prepare you to have these skills? Do you feel your education prepared you very well, well, not much, or not at all for each skill below?

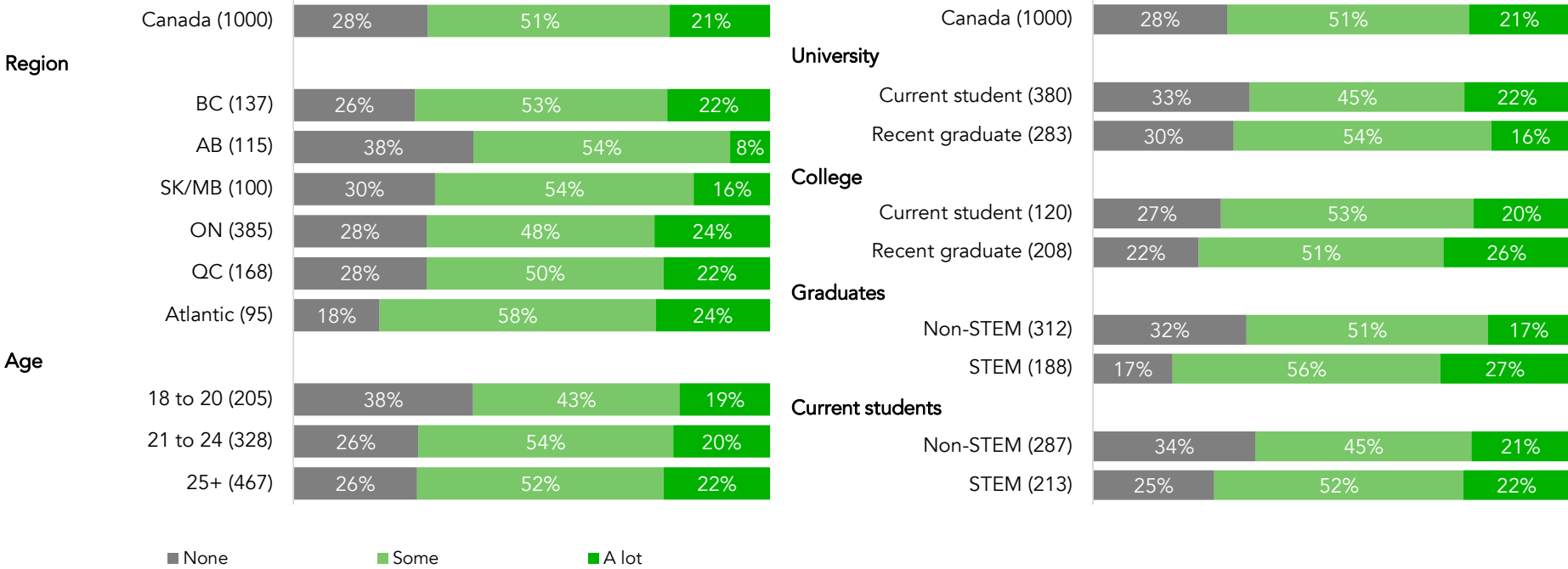
**WHAT KINDS OF
WORK-INTEGRATED
LEARNING DID YOU
EXPERIENCE?**

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING EXPERIENCE/OPPORTUNITY



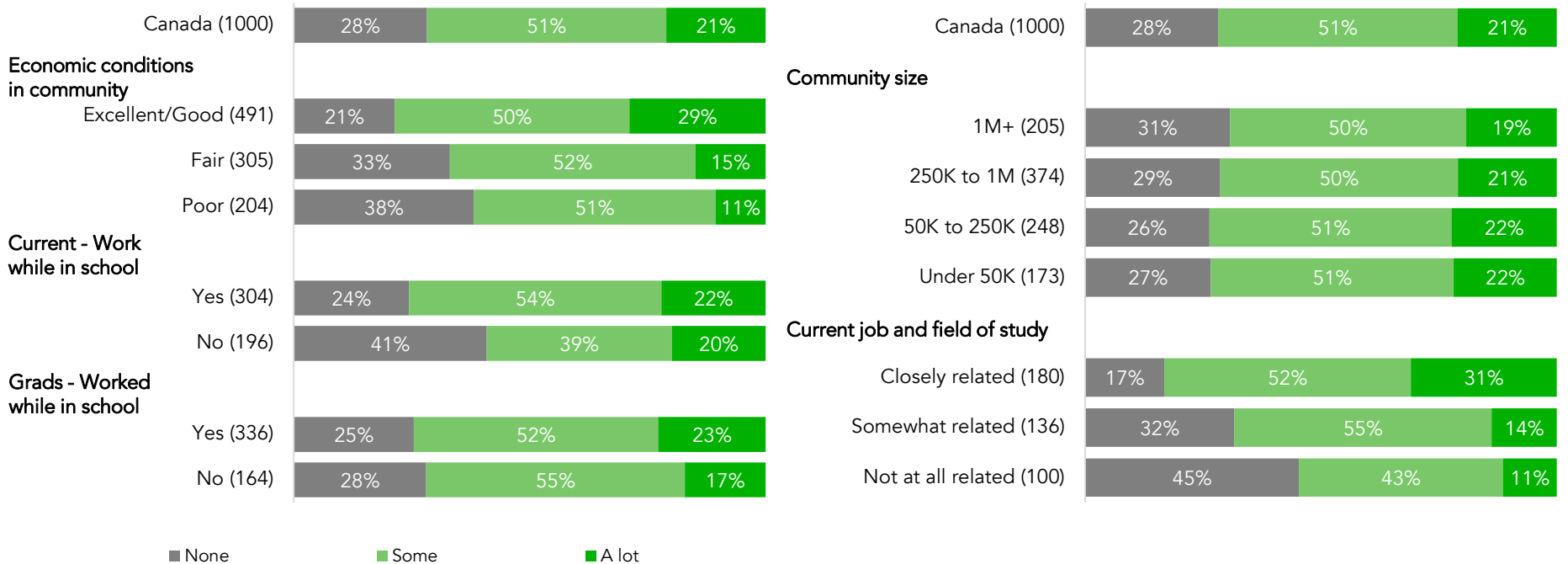
Some programs and schools provide students with the opportunity to integrate work experience into their education. Please tell us whether something like this was offered in your program or school.

WIL EXPERIENCE BY GROUP



Some programs and schools provide students with the opportunity to integrate work experience into their education. Please tell us whether something like this was offered in your program or school.

WIL EXPERIENCE BY GROUP



Some programs and schools provide students with the opportunity to integrate work experience into their education. Please tell us whether something like this was offered in your program or school.

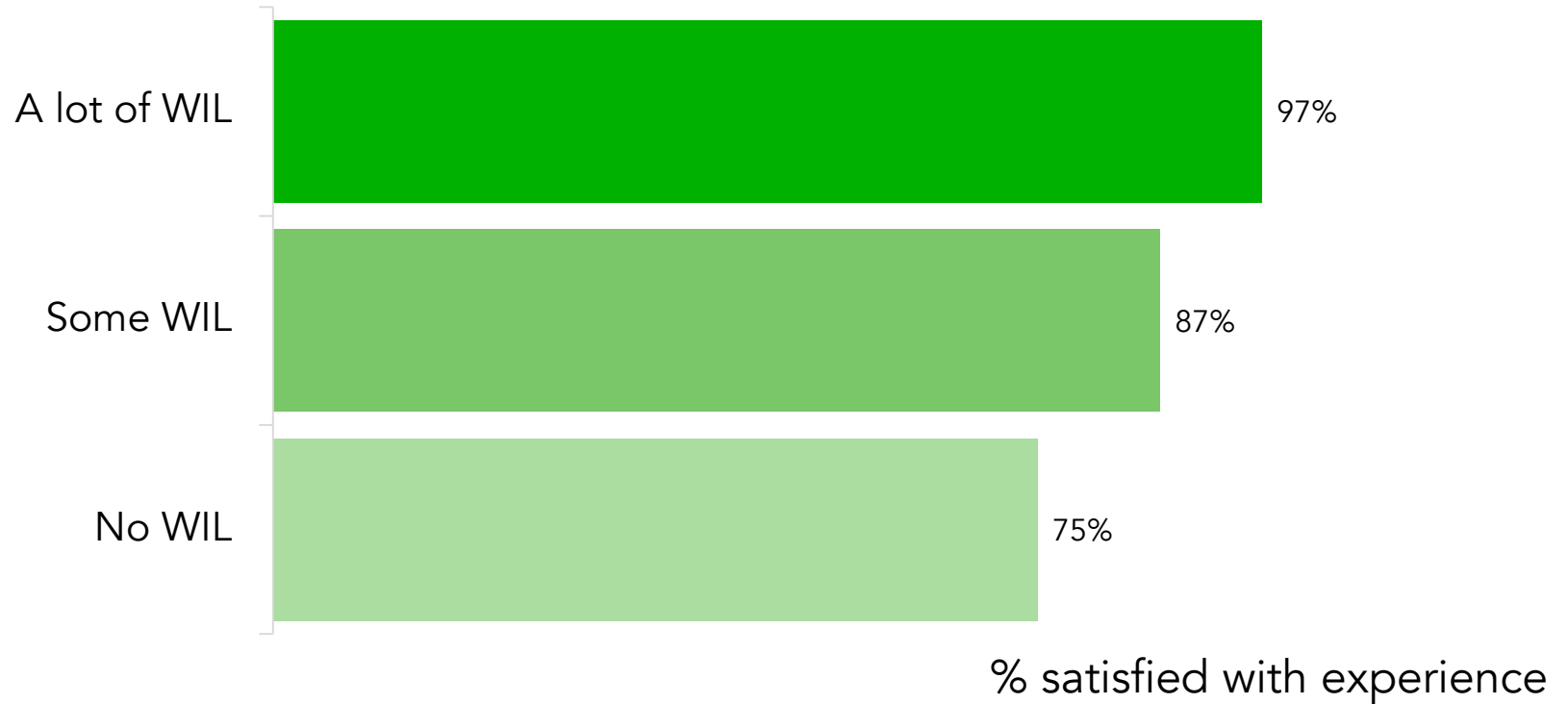
HOW WELL HAS YOUR PSE EDUCATION PREPARED YOU?

Graduates by Amount of WIL Experience – “Very well/Well”

	A lot of WIL	Some WIL	No WIL
Being able to work in a team	90%	80%	61%
Having industry-specific knowledge and experience	86%	63%	49%
Having good people skills	79%	66%	46%
Making presentations and speaking in public	77%	57%	45%
Being creative	72%	53%	43%
Being able to lead a time	72%	48%	33%
Working with older generations	64%	39%	28%
Being able to sell	50%	22%	17%

And looking at these same skills, to what extent has your post-secondary education helped prepare you to have these skills? Do you feel your education prepared you very well, well, not much, or not at all for each skill below?

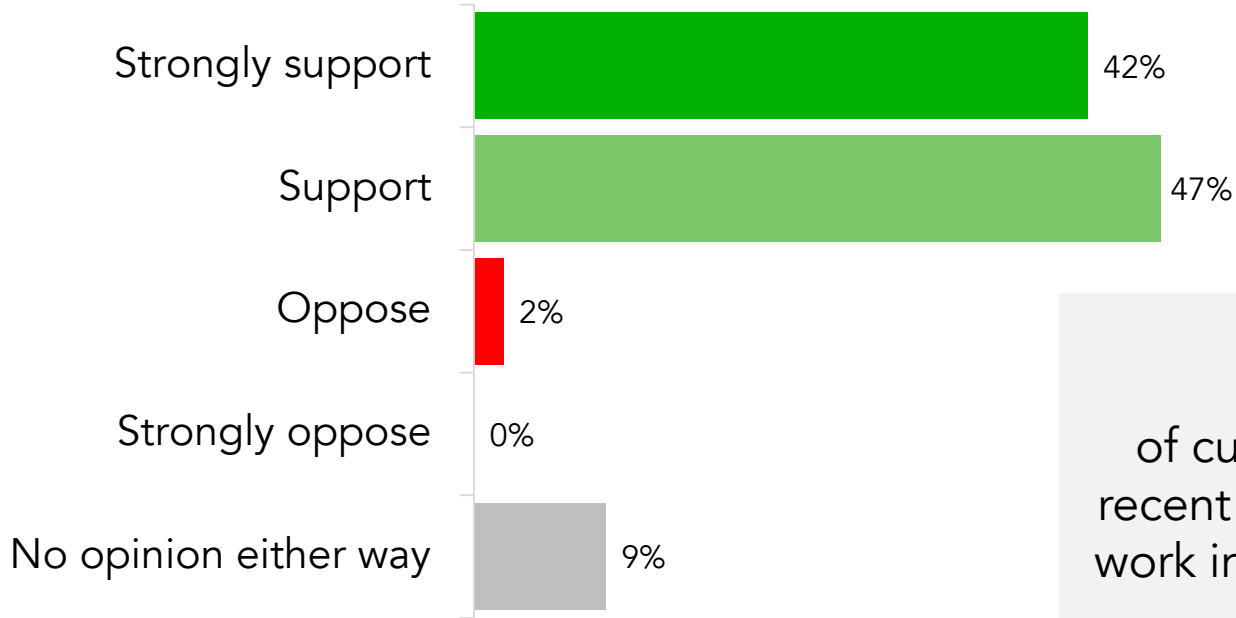
RECENT GRADS: SATISFACTION WITH PSE BY WIL EXPERIENCE



[If Recent Graduate] Overall, to what extent are you satisfied with the education you received in your post-secondary program?

THE APPEAL OF WIL

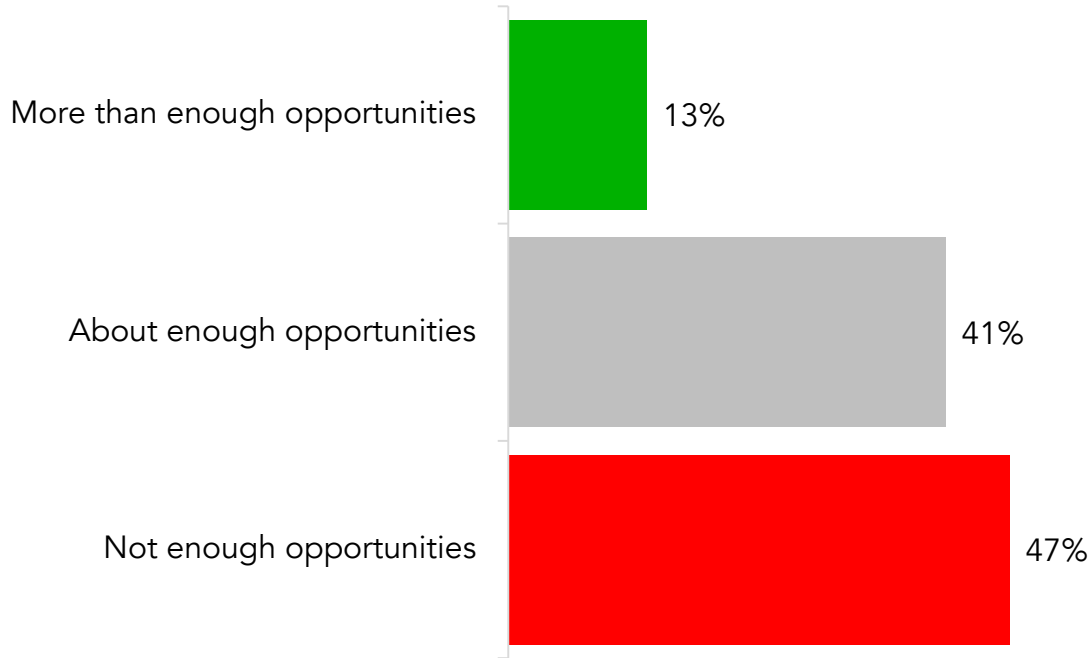
REACTION TO WIL PROGRAMMING IN SCHOOLS



89%
of current students and
recent grads support more
work integrated learning in
programs.

Based on this description, if post-secondary schools in Canada moved to implement work-integrated learning into more programs, would you support or oppose them doing so, or do you have no real opinion either way?

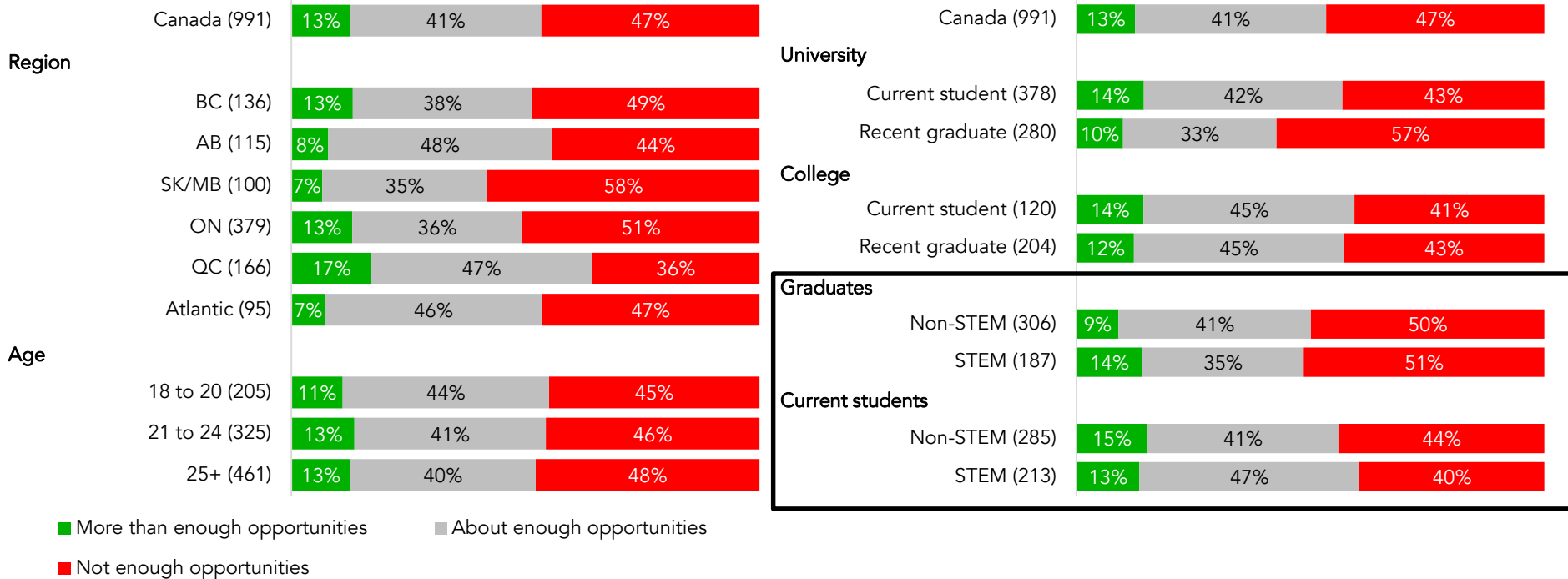
AVAILABILITY OF WIL OPPORTUNITIES NOW?



47%
DO NOT think there are enough work-integrated learning opportunities.

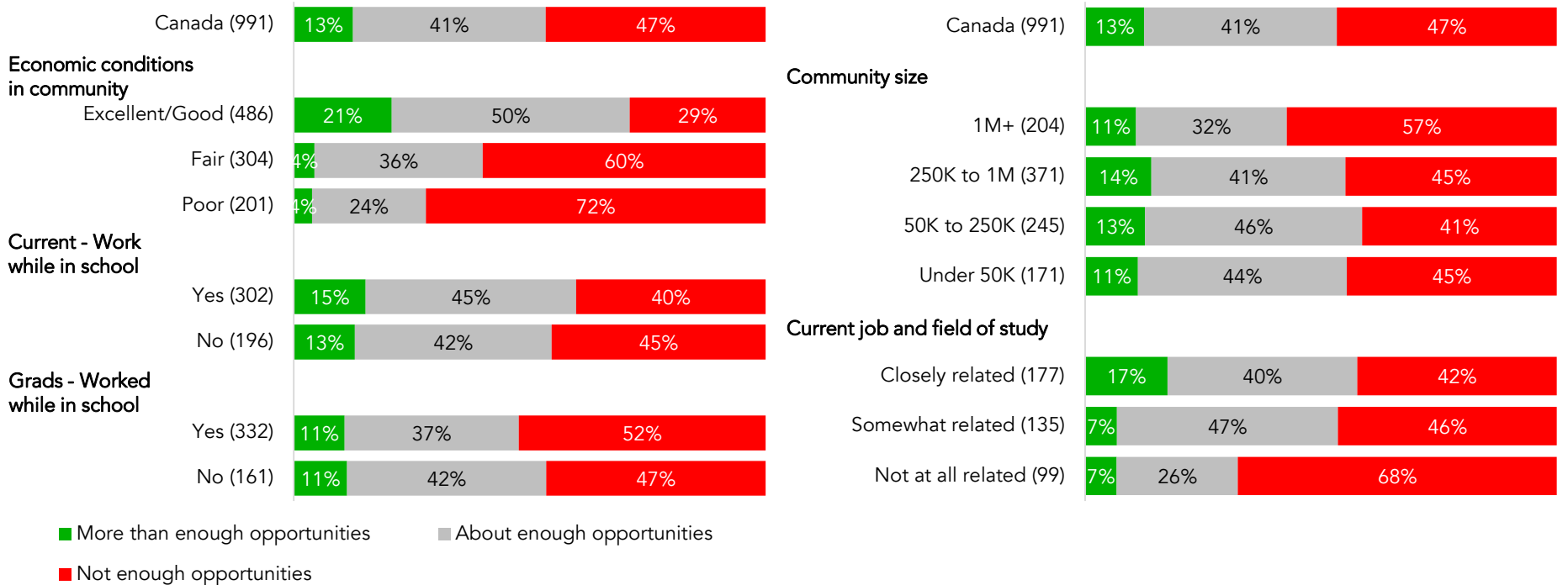
Do you think students in post-secondary programs currently have more than enough opportunities to take part in work-integrated learning, about enough opportunities, or not enough opportunities?

OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE PART IN WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING



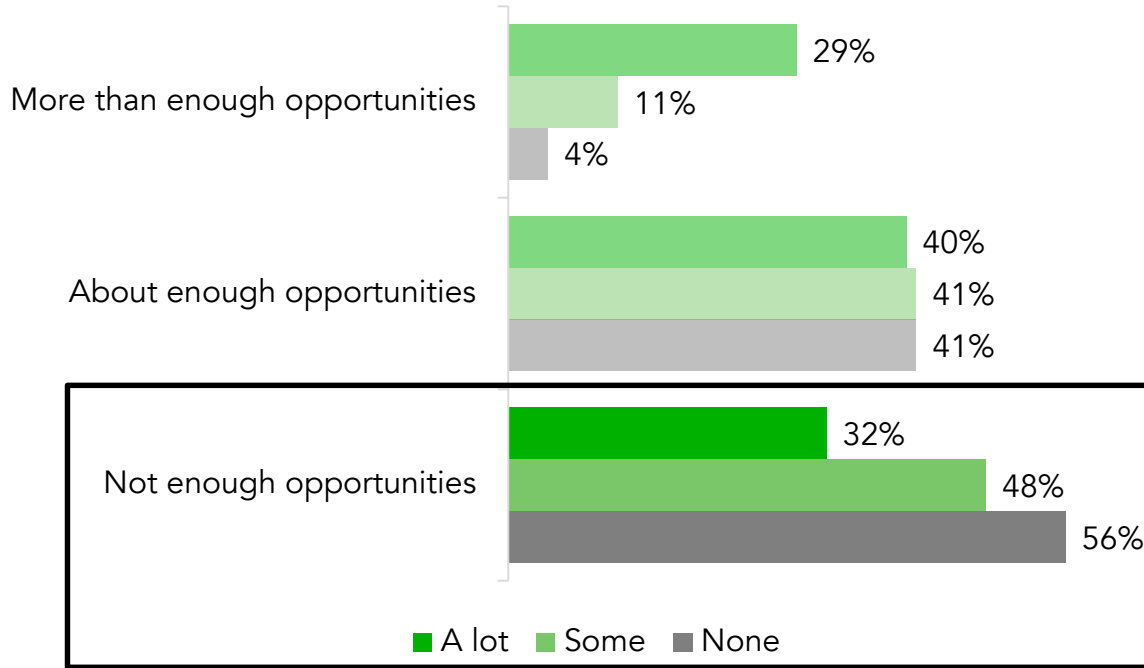
Do you think students in post-secondary programs currently have more than enough opportunities to take part in work-integrated learning, about enough opportunities, or not enough opportunities?

OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE PART IN WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING



Do you think students in post-secondary programs currently have more than enough opportunities to take part in work-integrated learning, about enough opportunities, or not enough opportunities?

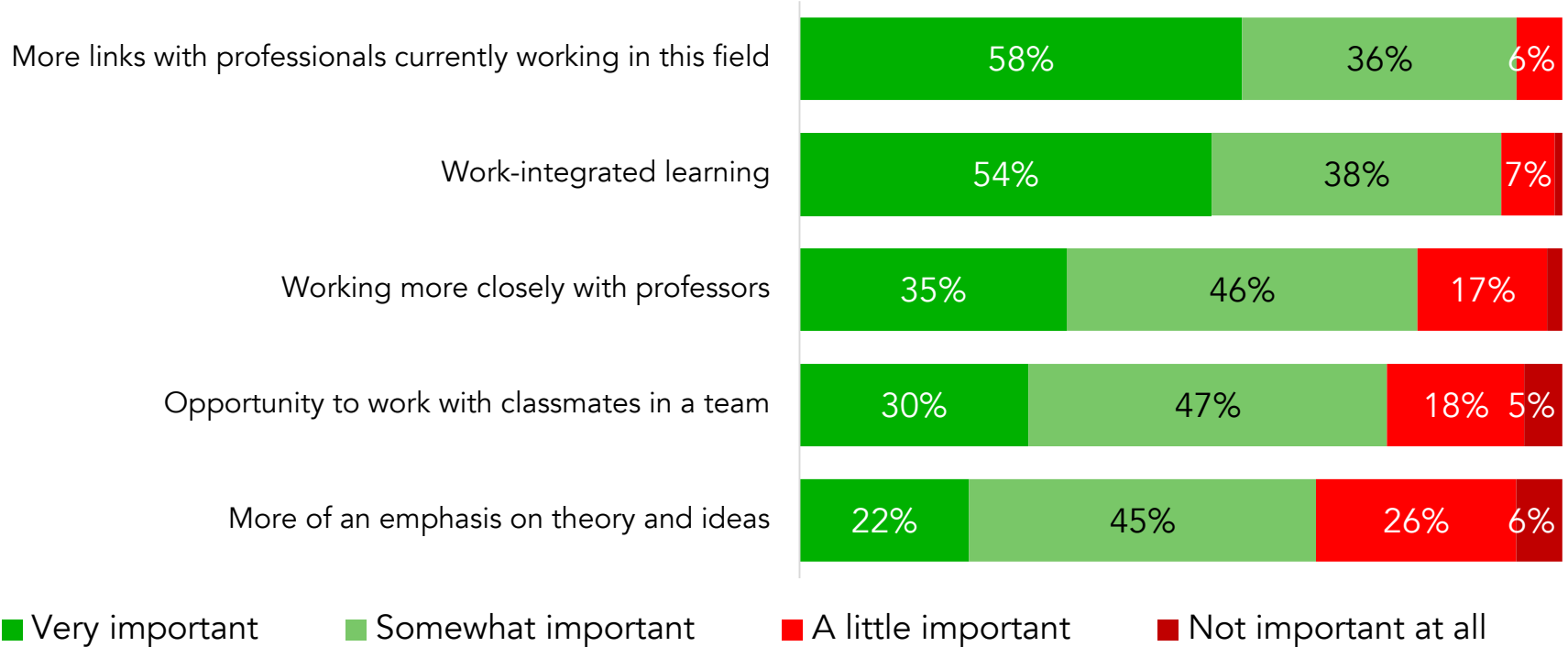
AVAILABILITY OF WIL OPPORTUNITIES NOW?



There is a strong relationship between having WIL experience and perceptions about their availability.

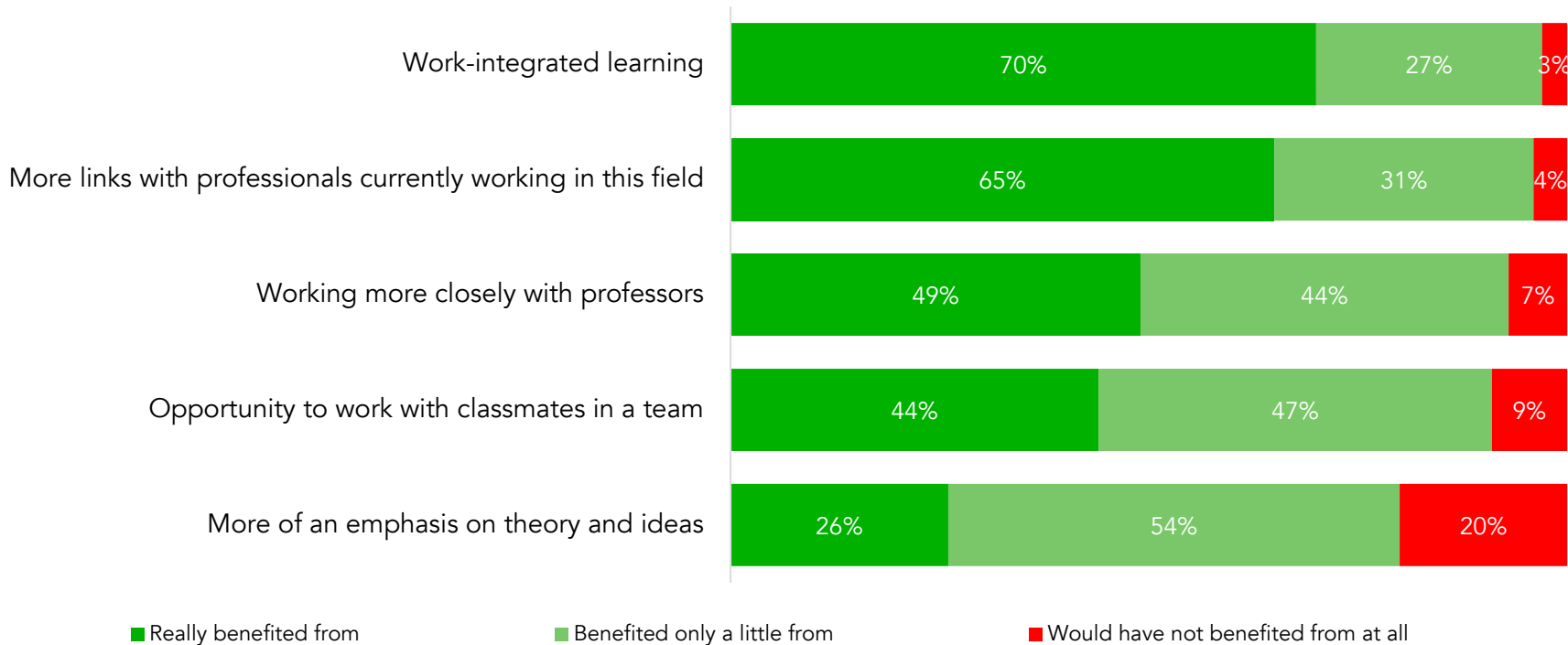
Do you think students in post-secondary programs currently have more than enough opportunities to take part in work-integrated learning, about enough opportunities, or not enough opportunities?

CUSTOMIZING A PROGRAM – WHAT IS IMPORTANT



[If Current Student] If you were able to create a program for the field in which you are currently studying, which of the following experiences would you say are most important to yourself personally?

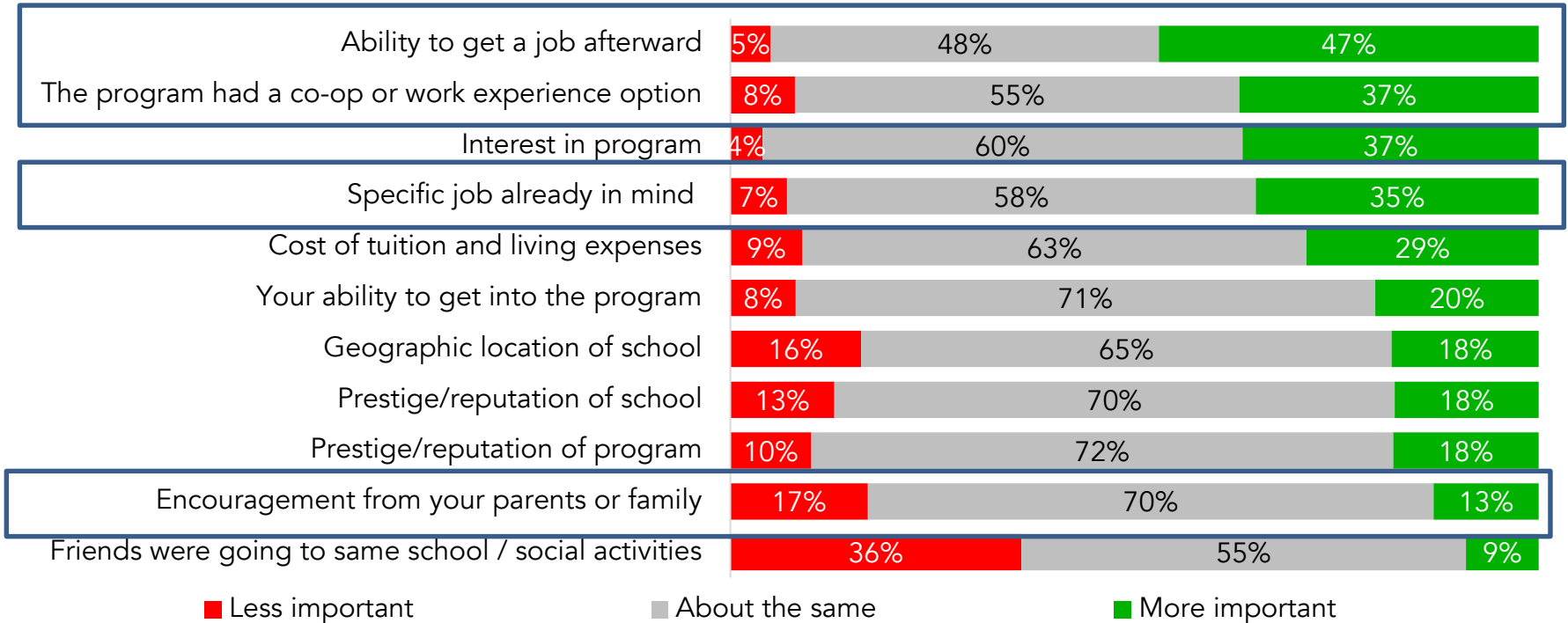
WOULD YOU HAVE BENEFITED FROM...



[If Recent Graduate] Thinking back to when you were a student. Below are a number of experiences you could have had while in school. For each, tell us whether it is something you would have really benefited from, something you would have benefited only a little from, or something you would have not benefited from at all.

**IF YOU HAD TO MAKE
YOUR PSE DECISION
AGAIN...**

IF YOU COULD MAKE THE DECISION AGAIN?

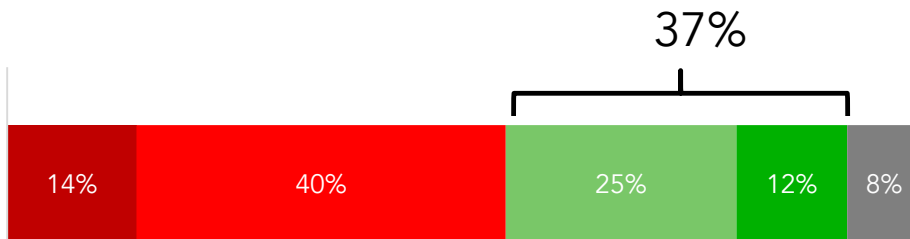


Now, imagine you could go back to the decision of your post-secondary program. Do you think each of the following should have been more important in your decision, less important, or about the same as it was?

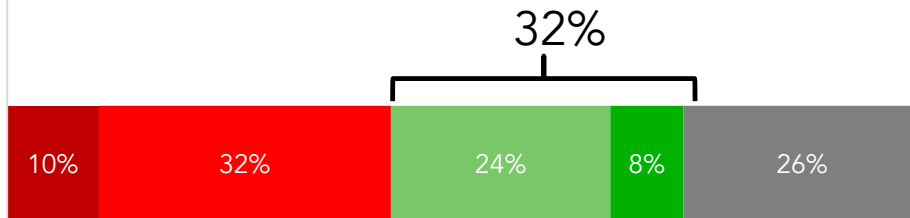
PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO WIL PROGRAMMING

BARRIERS TO WIL

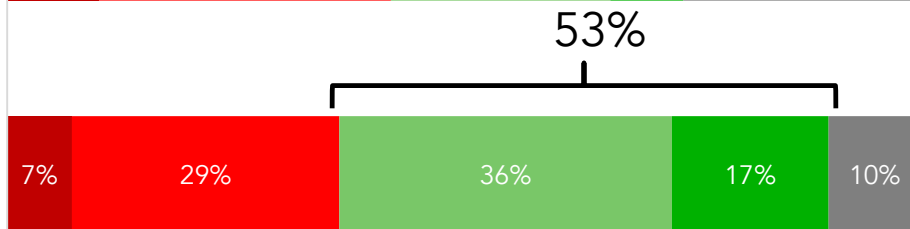
I would not be willing to extend the length of my program to get work experience.



Most professors and instructors are opposed to integrating work experiences into their classes.



I would not be willing to pay more in tuition to get more work experiences while studying.

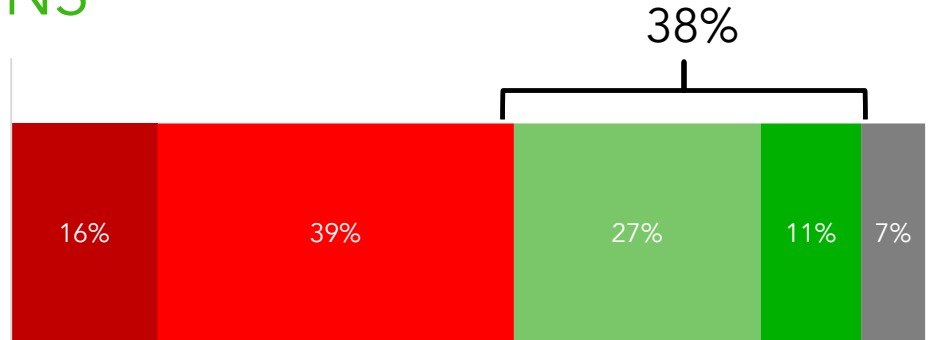


■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree ■ Unsure

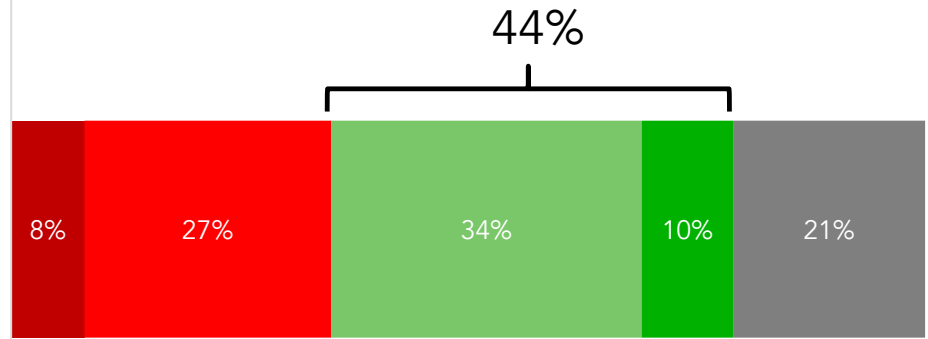
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

SURROUNDING IMPRESSIONS

Students can get their own work experience outside of the classroom and don't need their programs to offer the opportunities.



Programs with work-integrated learning opportunities are more difficult to run and create administrative problems for schools.



■ Strongly disagree

■ Disagree

■ Agree

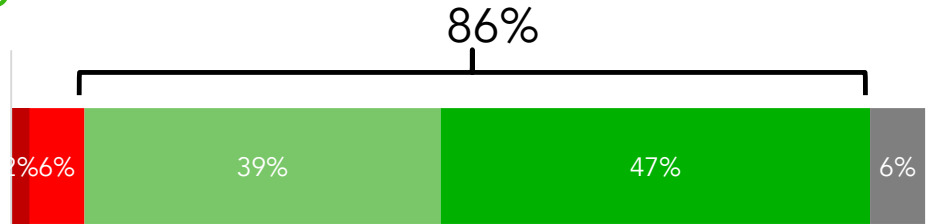
■ Strongly agree

■ Unsure

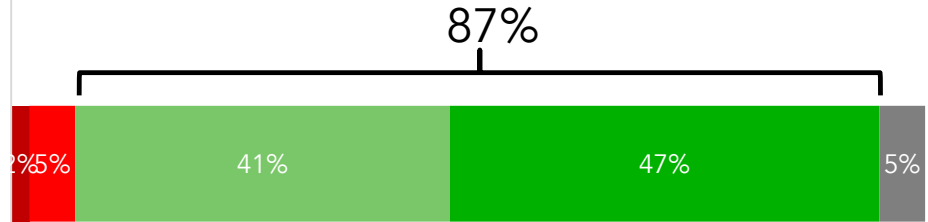
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

APPEAL OF WIL PROGRAMS

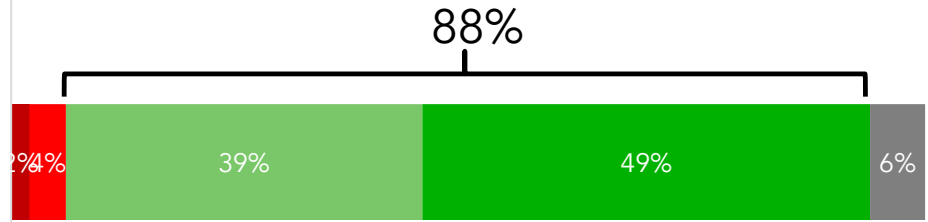
I think that students who participated in some form of work-integrated learning prior to graduation will have an easier transition from school to a successful career.



Every student, regardless of their program or field of study, should have the ability to gain work experience as part of their program.



I think that students who graduate with degrees that offer work-integrated learning have an advantage when it comes to finding a job.



■ Strongly disagree

■ Disagree

■ Agree

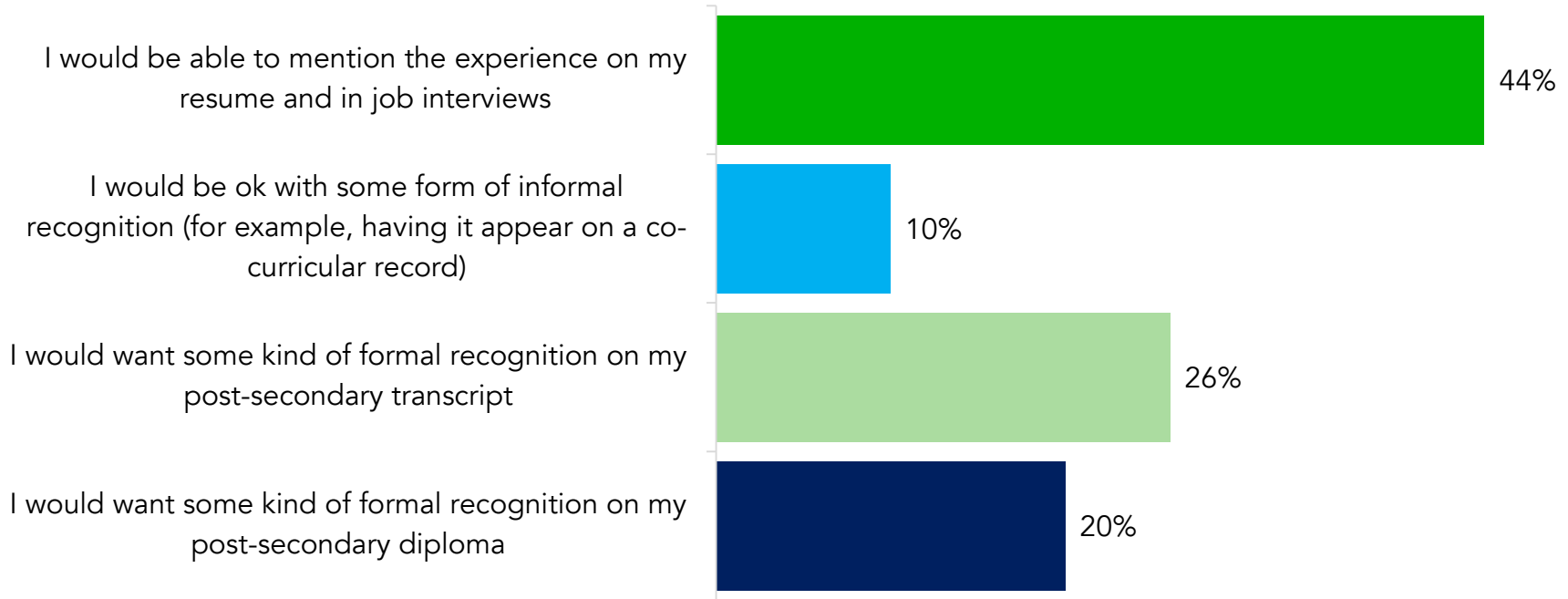
■ Strongly agree

■ Unsure

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

**HOW DO STUDENTS
WANT TO BE
RECOGNIZED FOR WIL
EXPERIENCE?**

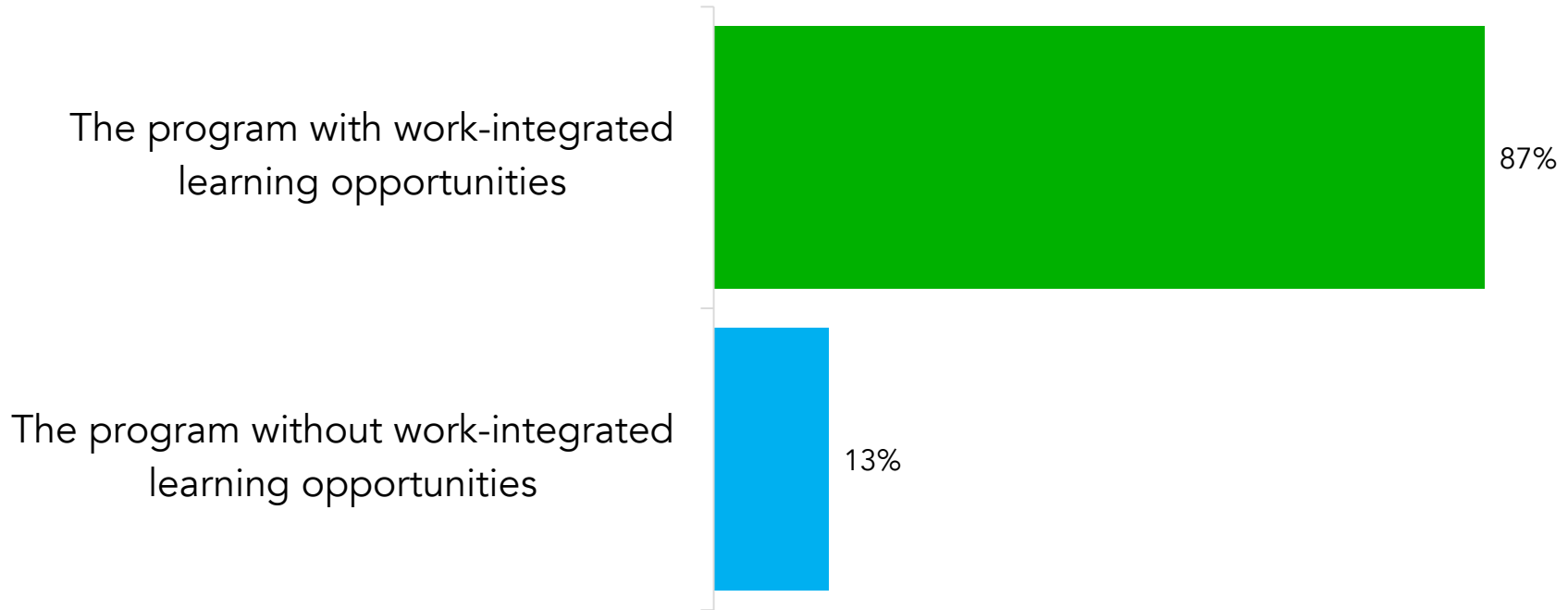
RECOGNITION FOR WORK-INTEGRATED EXPERIENCE



If you were to consider completing a program that included a work-integrated experience, how, at a minimum, would you want to be recognized for participating in such a program?

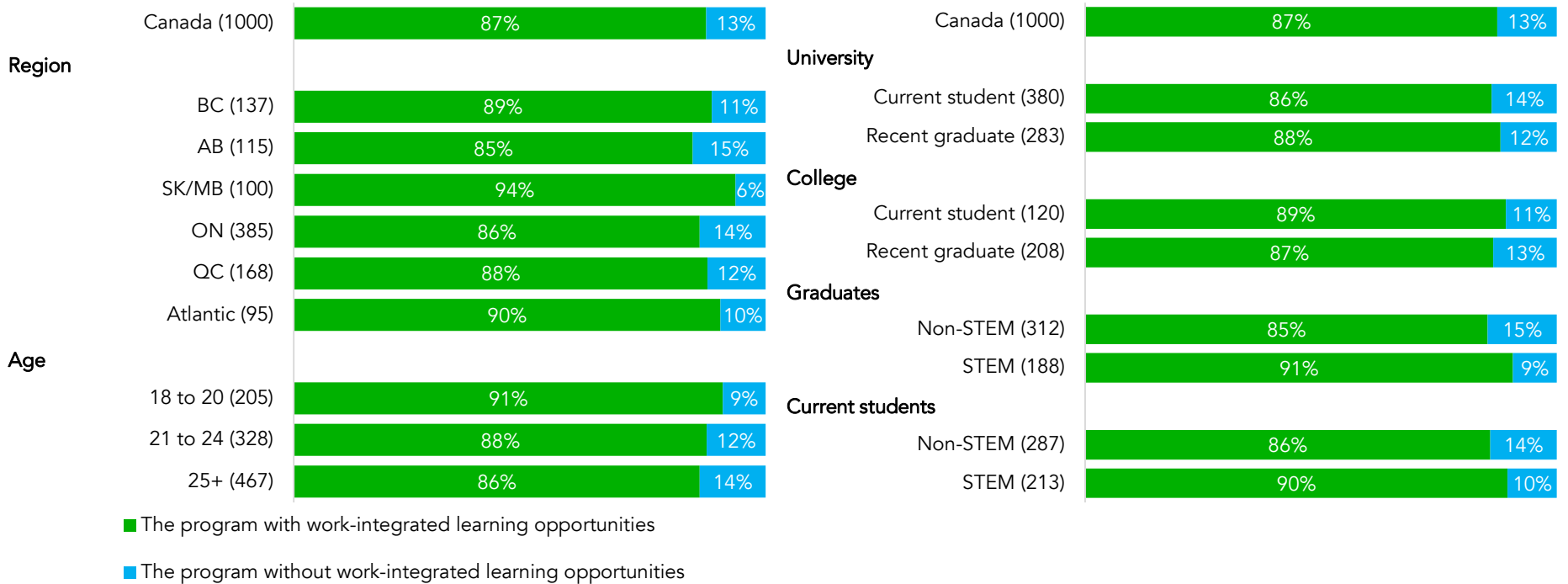
THE BALLOT QUESTION!

WORK-INTEGRATED VS. NOT



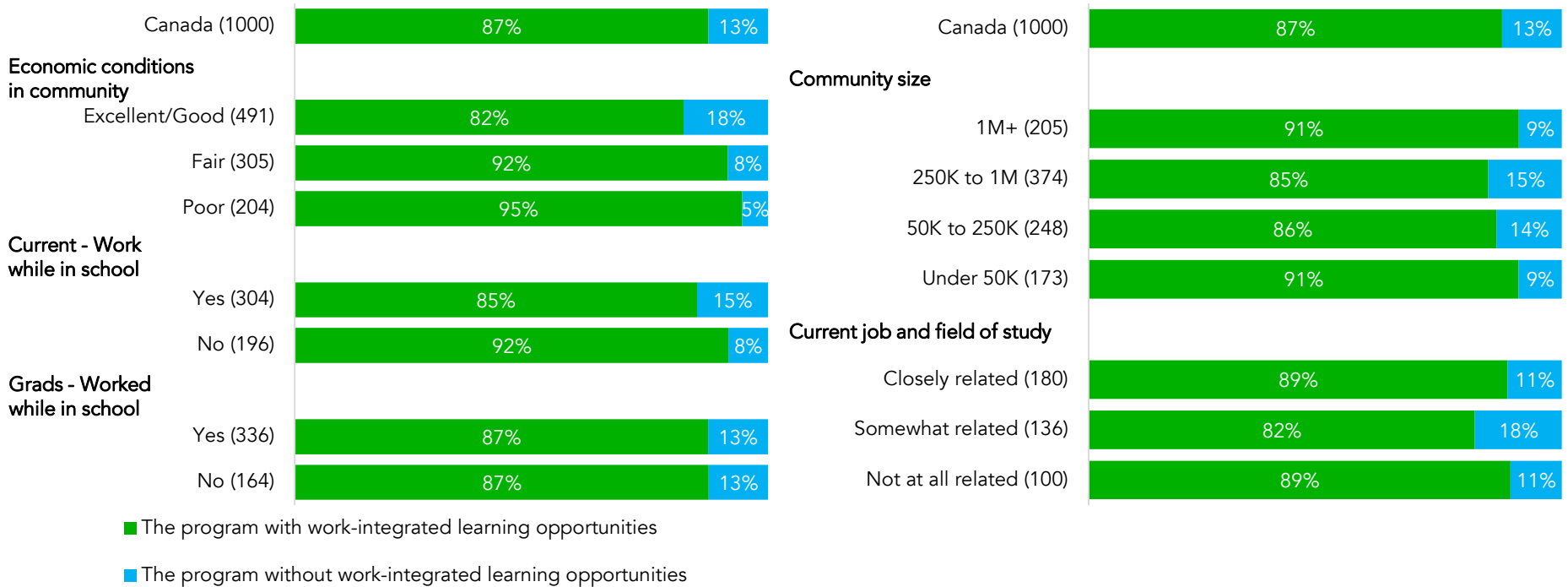
Imagine that you were offered the choice between two post-secondary programs at the same school, at the same cost, and would allow you to complete the program in the same amount of time. One offered you a work-integrated learning experience and the other one did not. Which would you choose?

WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE: WIL OR NO WIL?



Imagine that you were offered the choice between two post-secondary programs at the same school, at the same cost, and would allow you to complete the program in the same amount of time. One offered you a work-integrated learning experience and the other one did not. Which would you choose?

WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE: WIL OR NO WIL?



Imagine that you were offered the choice between two post-secondary programs at the same school, at the same cost, and would allow you to complete the program in the same amount of time. One offered you a work-integrated learning experience and the other one did not. Which would you choose?