

A woman with long, dark, curly hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans, stands and presents to a group of people seated around a table. She is holding a blue pen. The group includes a man with glasses and a woman with long dark hair. In the background, there is a whiteboard with some diagrams and charts. The scene is set in a modern office environment with a large window and a hanging light fixture.

Best Companies for Women to Advance List 2021

KEY FINDINGS

Why Recognize the Best Companies for Women to Advance?



Last year, Parity.org published its inaugural list of Best Companies for Women to Advance. As we were about to publish the list, the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped the world, and the workforce along with it.

As with last year, this list highlights companies that are continuing to prioritize gender equality and support the career advancement of women despite the additional challenges the pandemic brought.

At the start of 2020, women made up just over half of the workforce (across all sectors except agriculture). As the pandemic dragged on, closing childcare facilities and forcing many parents to figure out full-time online learning for their children, women's workforce participation dropped to the lowest it has been since the 1970's, meaning decades of progress were undone in just one year. The companies on this year's list have implemented practices and policies that benefit women and help keep them in the workforce, creating more economic opportunity and equality. In some cases, the specific benefits they offer may help women get back into the workforce at the same rate as before.

"This year, possibly in response to the pandemic, we found that more companies had adopted and expanded best practices for gender equality."

What else changed? This year, possibly in response to the pandemic, we found that more companies had adopted and expanded best practices for gender equality. Further, the companies on this list demonstrate results—like the fact that 36% of companies included on this list have a female CEO, standing head and shoulders above the 5.5% of companies on the S&P 500 with a female CEO.

We also saw a notable increase in companies offering certain benefits compared to last year's list. Specifically:



Equal parental leave

for women and men increased from 77% to 88%



Flex working hours

increased from 85% to 94%



Jobsharing

increased from 17% to 26%



Finally, we were pleased to see a few areas where every single company had unanimous policies.

Every company on the 2021 list:

- Has a zero-tolerance policy for harassment
- Has a safe complaint system for employees
- Regularly communicates its gender-equality values to employees
- Encourages men to take their full family leave

We hope these companies and practices inspire you to create a workplace that truly works for women. While some of these best practices, like achieving pay parity, may be time- and labor-intensive, many of these practices are easy to implement and—as you'll see in the full report—can be used by companies of all sizes.



How companies were rated

The findings have been broken out into four categories: an aggregate of all companies, large companies (>5000 employees), medium companies (500-4999 employees), and small companies (<500 employees).

34 companies made the 2021 list:

Large

Adobe
Airbnb
Atos
Best Buy
Blue Shield of California
The Clorox Company
Deutsche Bank
Fortescue Metals Group
PegaSystems
PepsiCo
Ralph Lauren Corporation

Medium

Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)
Domo
Evolut Health
Guild Education
KeepTruckin
Lucid
Momentive (formerly SurveyMonkey)
Nasdaq
Overstock
PagerDuty
Recorded Future, Inc
Satellite Healthcare

Small

Aetion
b.well Connected Health
BehaVR
CloudInsyte
DaVinci Virtual
Employmetrics
Quil
Real-Time Innovations
Skillz
United Way of Salt Lake
Very

Companies were rated in these four areas:



Equality



Inclusion



Representation



Enablers

01

Equality

Everyone deserves equal treatment and equal opportunities for success in the workplace. Here, we asked companies about equal policies for women and men, equal pay, equal advancement opportunities (including mentorship and sponsorship), and hiring practices that create more equal outcomes (for instance, including at least one woman on each hiring panel).



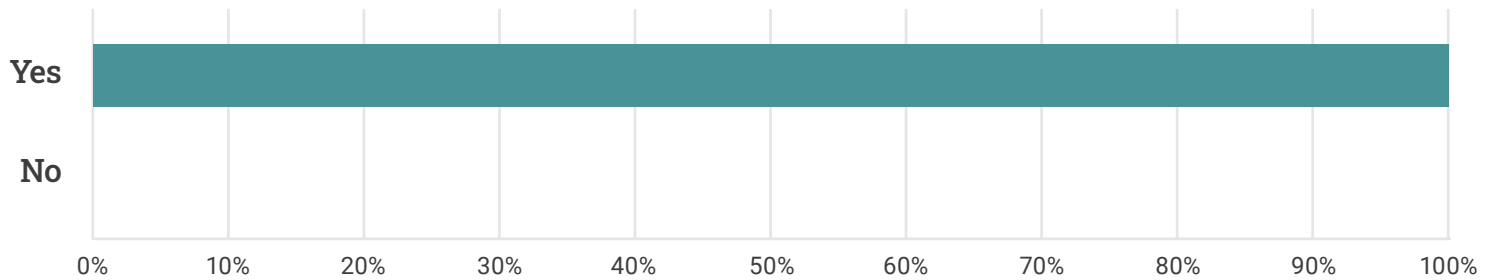
“This year, we saw an improvement in the percent of companies offering sponsorship for women, which increased from 15% in 2020 to 32% in 2021.”

Equality

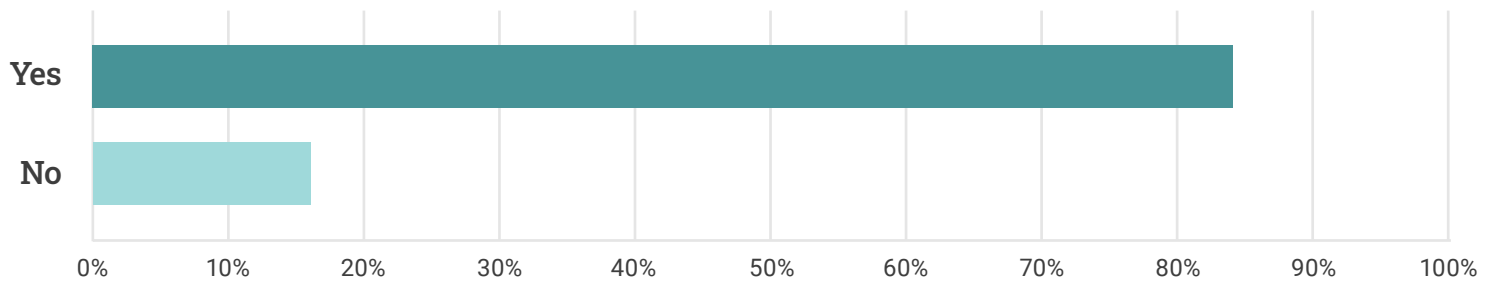
Question

Your company conducts an annual assessment for managerial women's career progression?

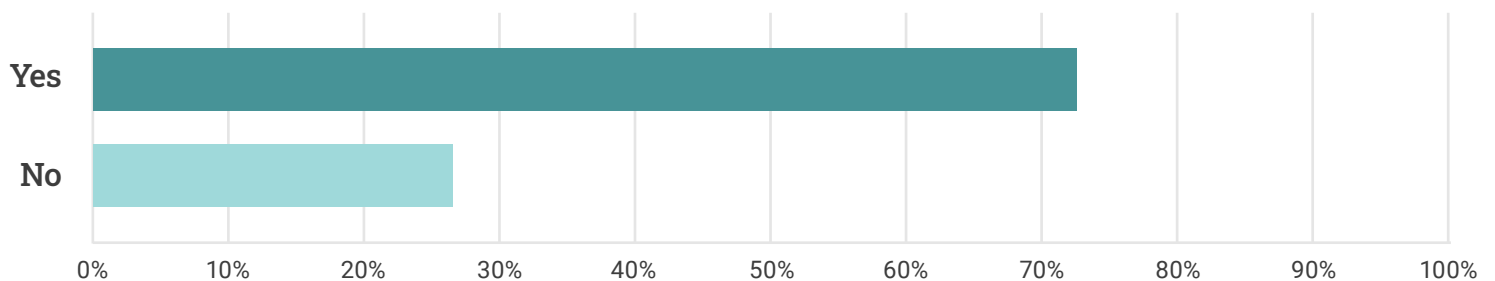
Large Companies



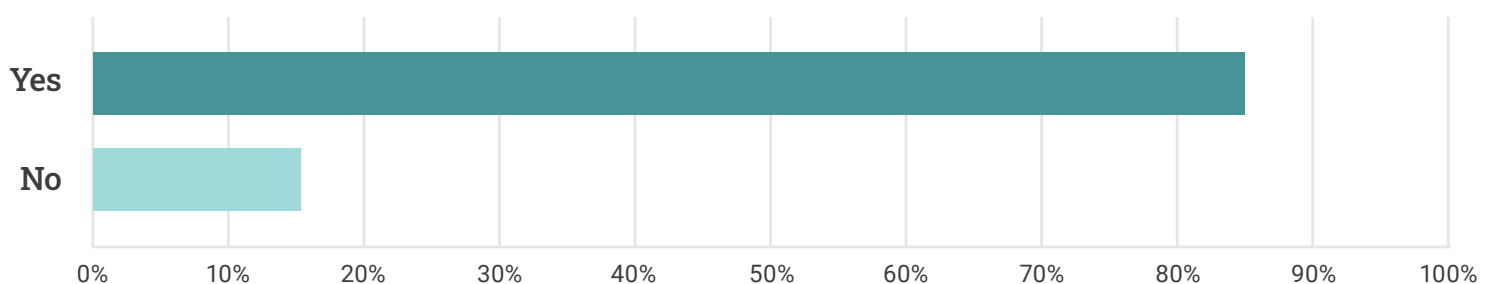
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

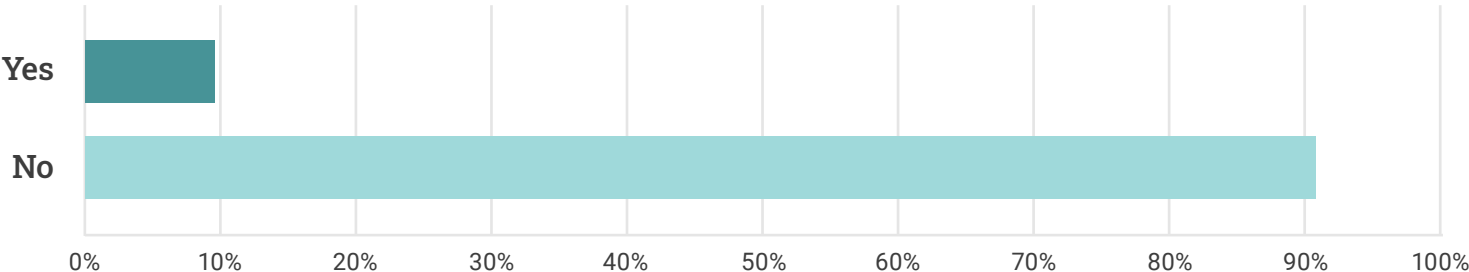


Equality

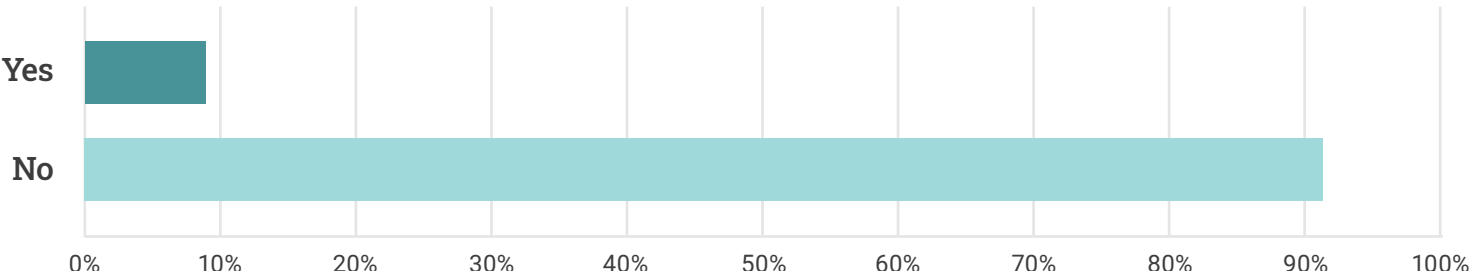
Question

Your company uses blinded resume screening (names hidden)?

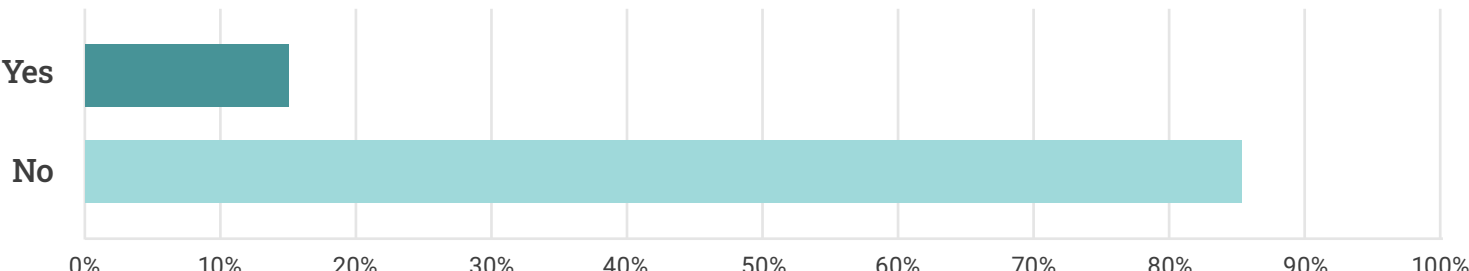
Large Companies



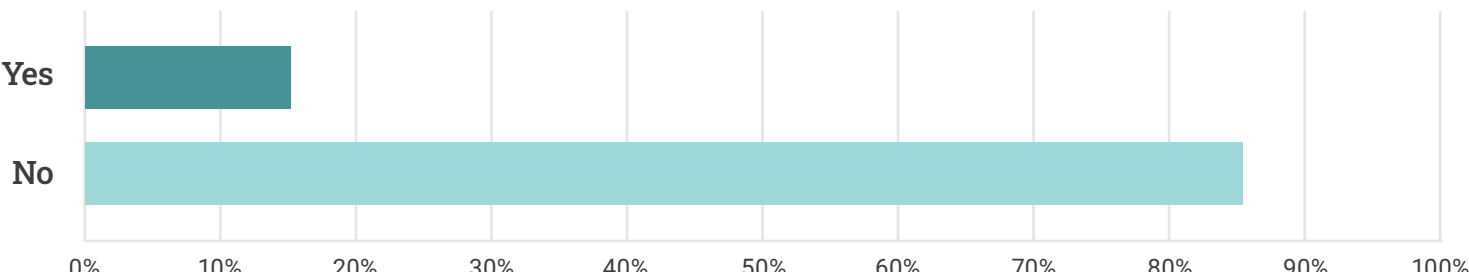
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

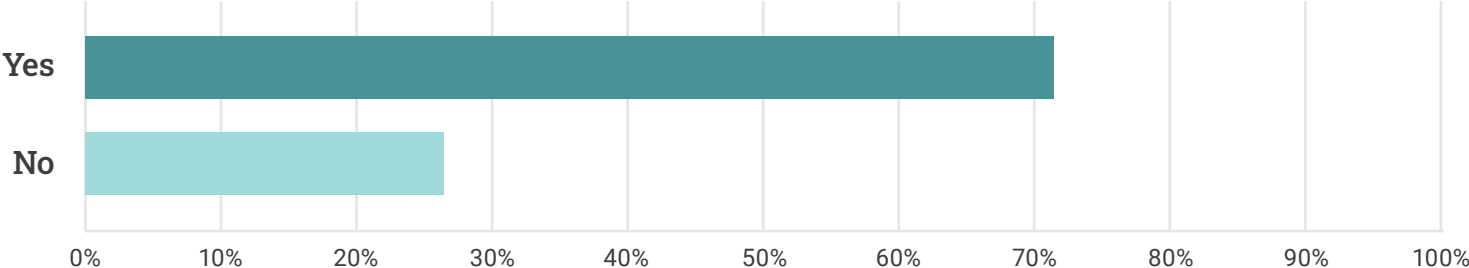


Equality

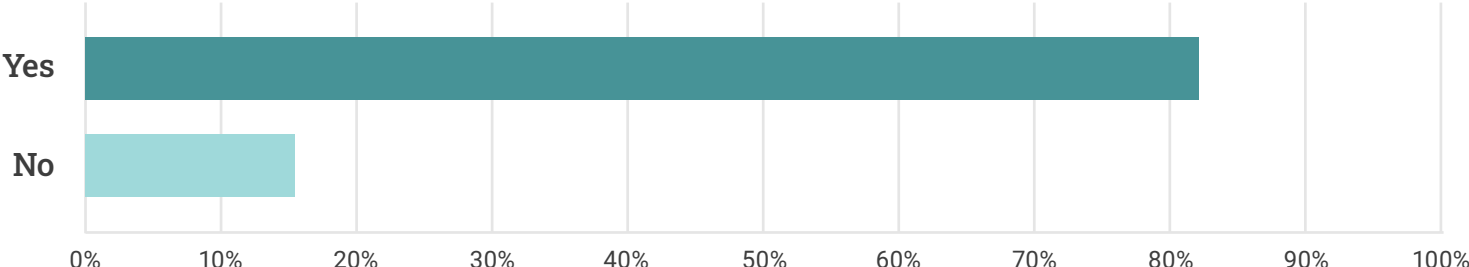
Question

Your company requires recruiters to include at least one qualified woman on candidate slates for Board and executive positions?

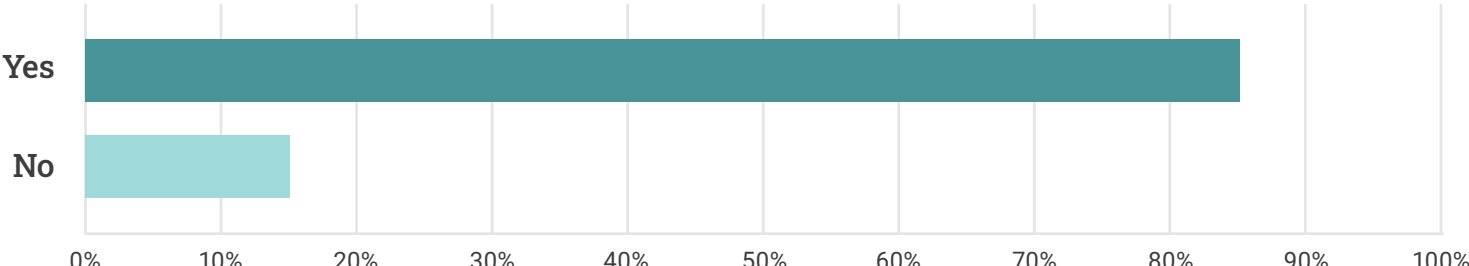
Large Companies



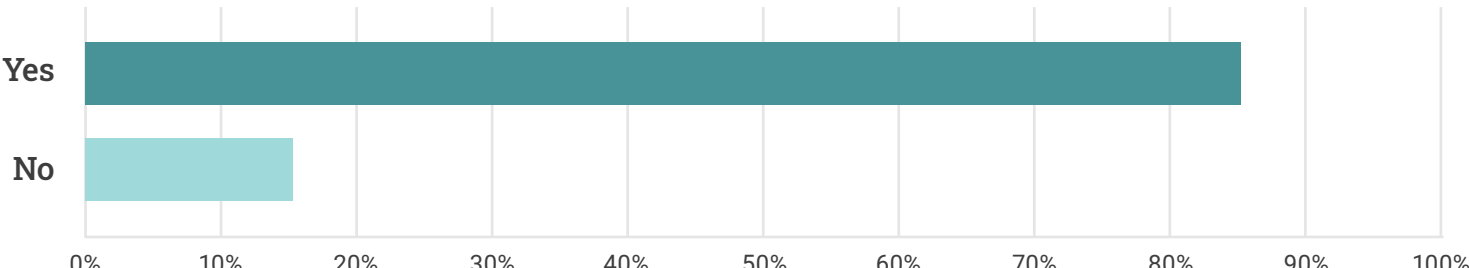
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

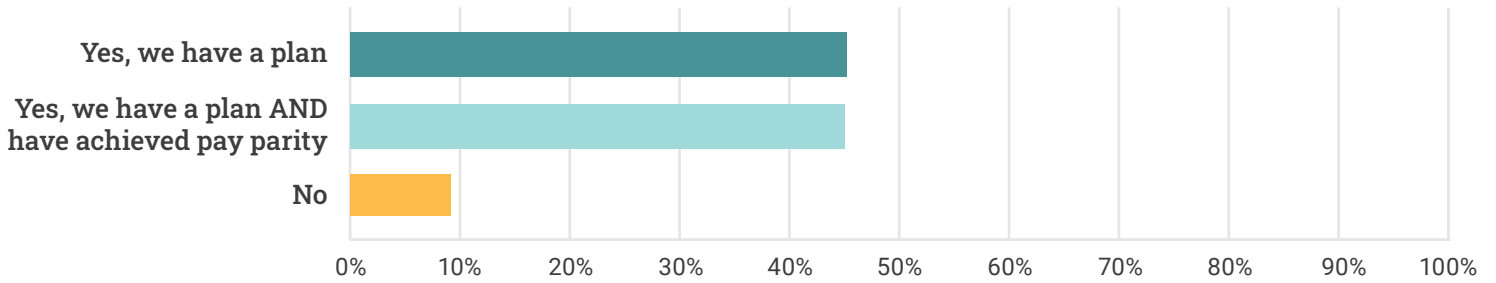


Equality

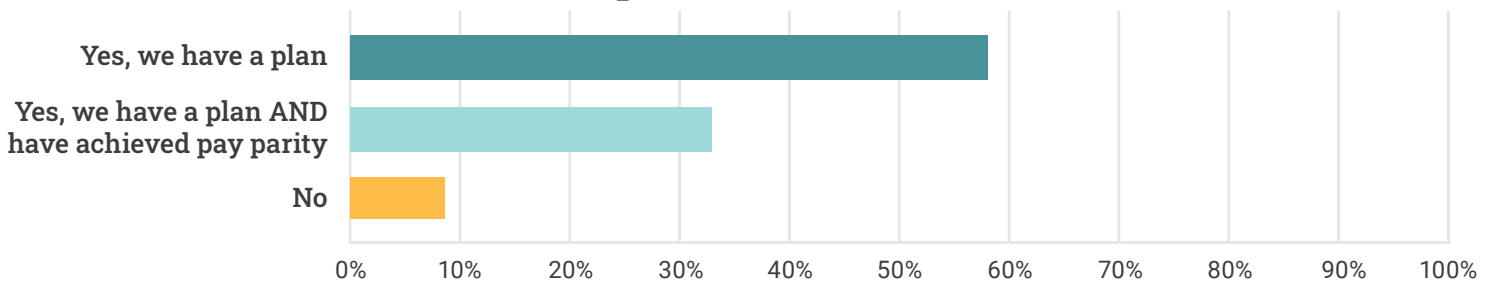
Question

Your company has an equal-pay plan to analyze and correct pay gaps?

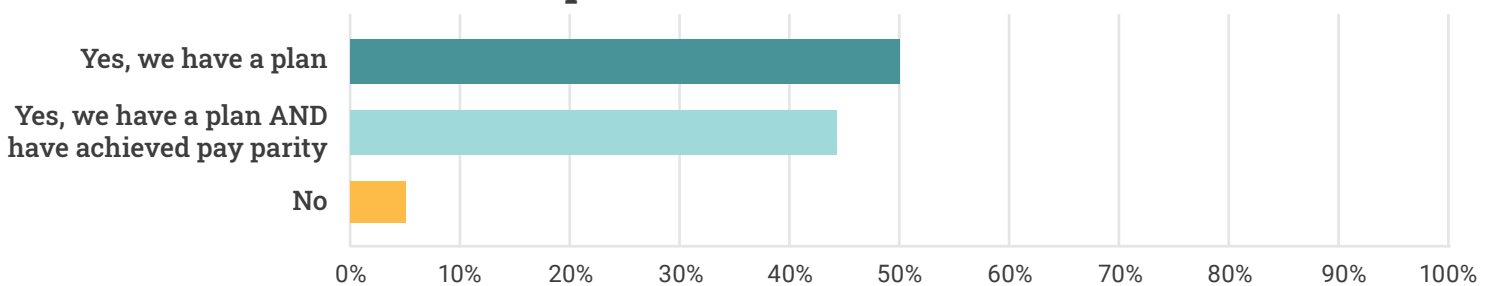
Large Companies



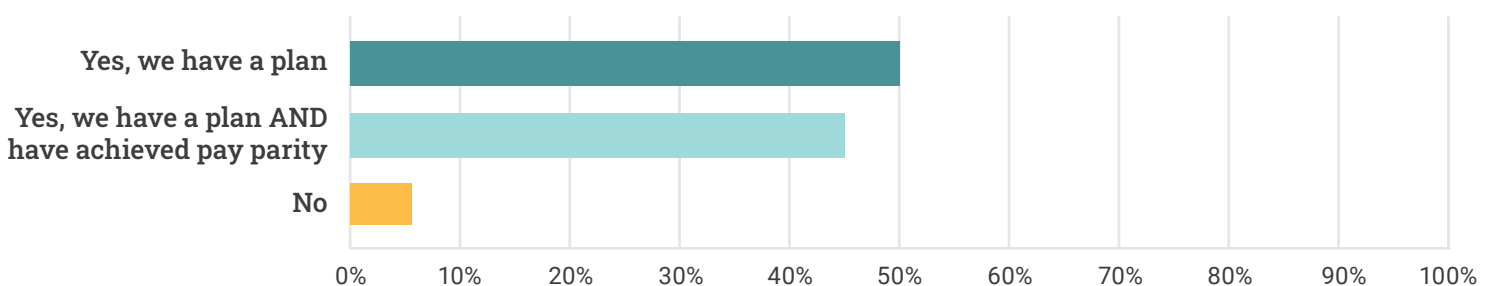
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

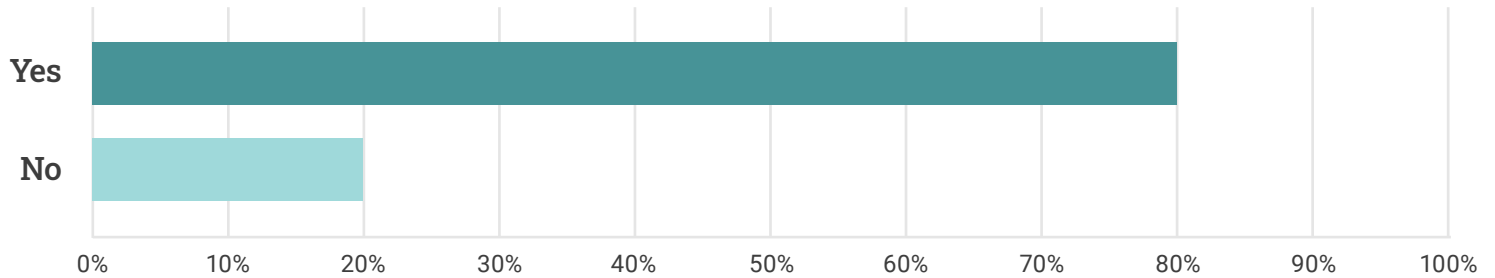


Equality

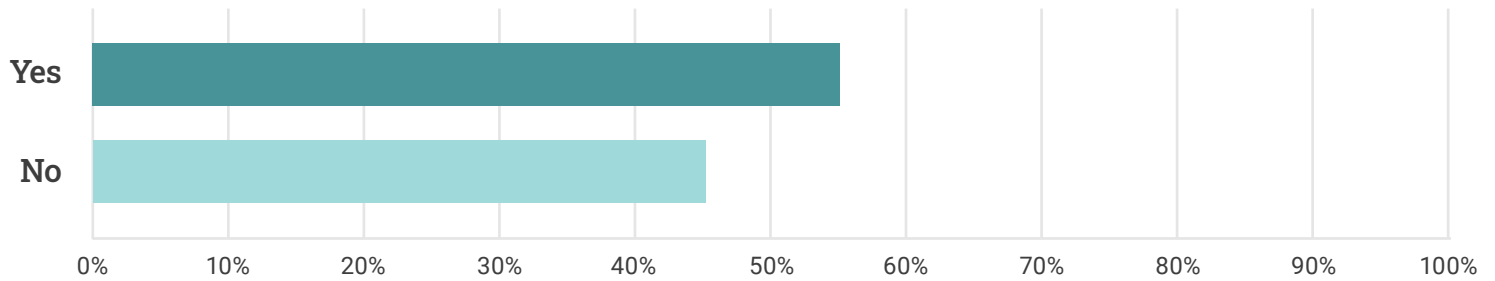
Question

Your company has a near-equal number of high-potential women and men in executive preparation programs?

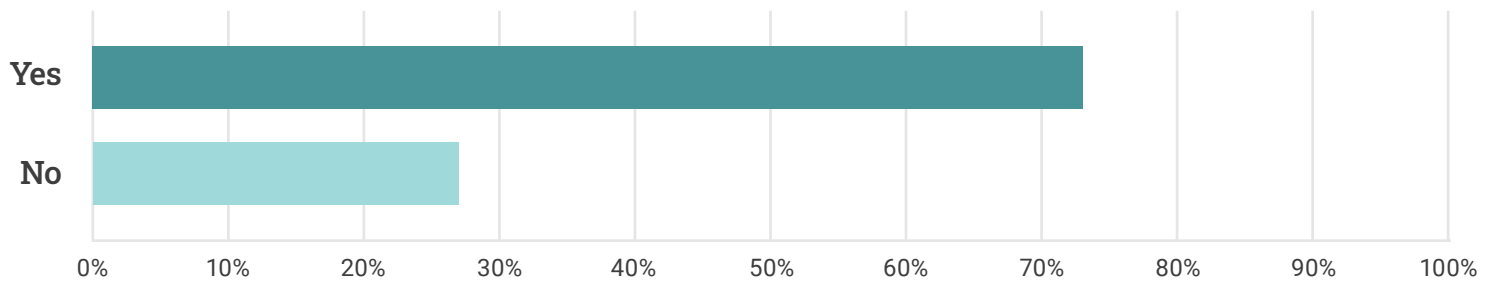
Large Companies



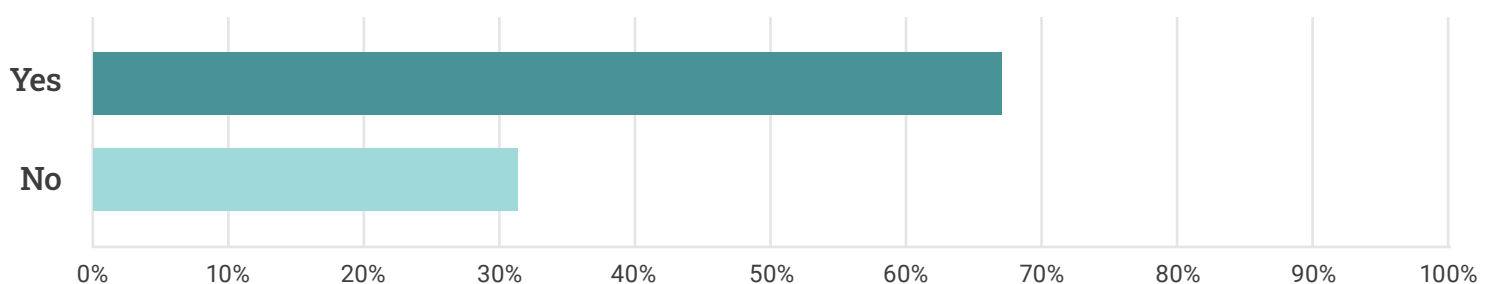
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

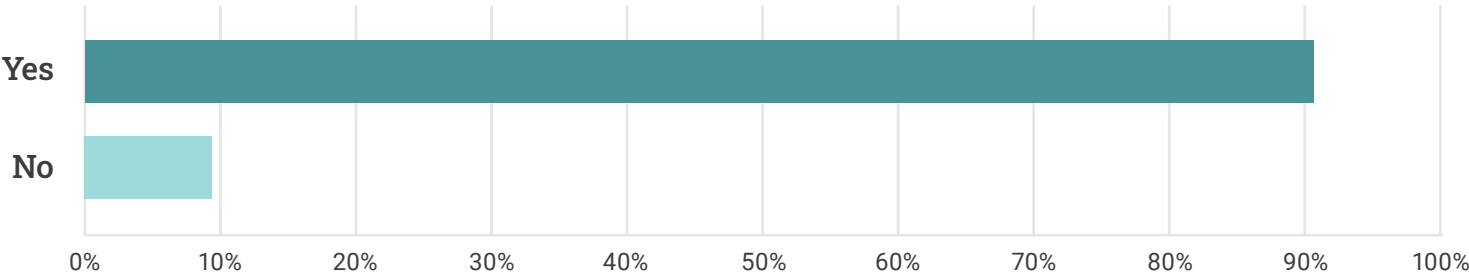


Equality

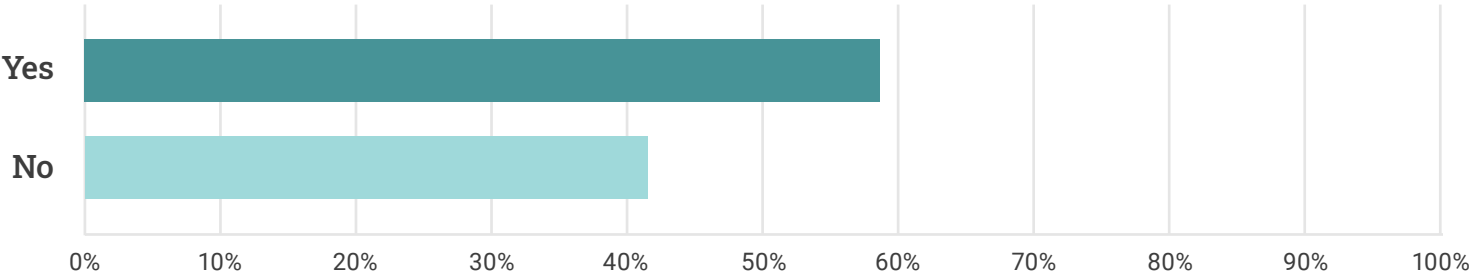
Question

Your company has a formal mentor program that women participate in?

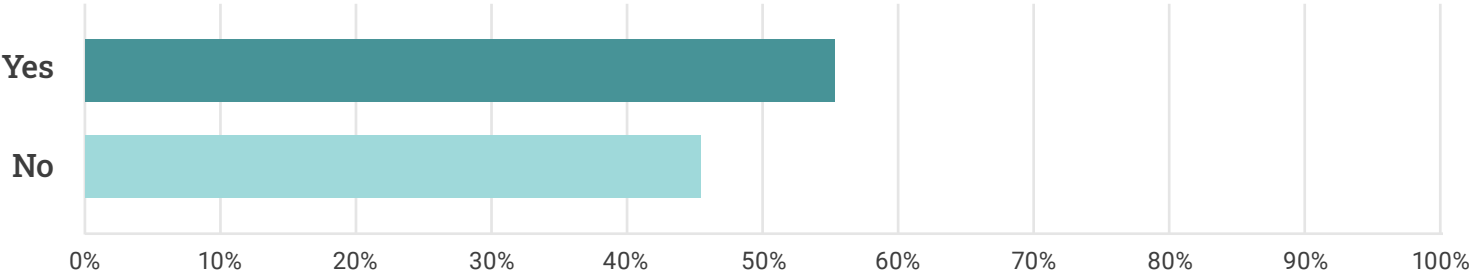
Large Companies



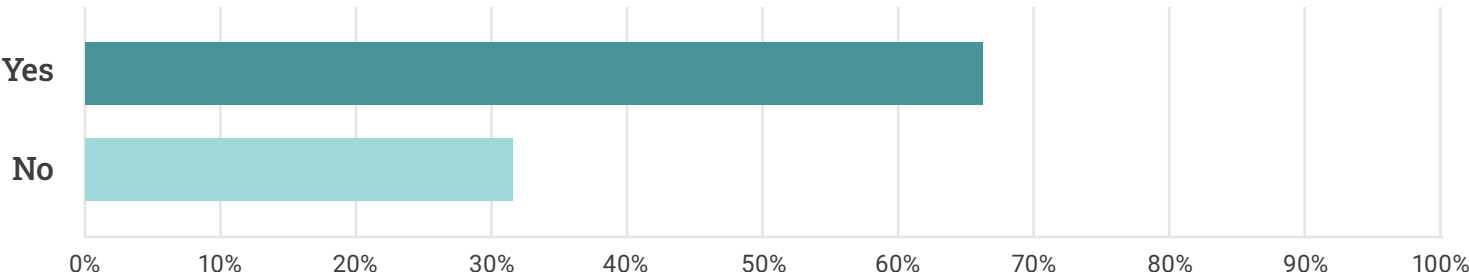
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

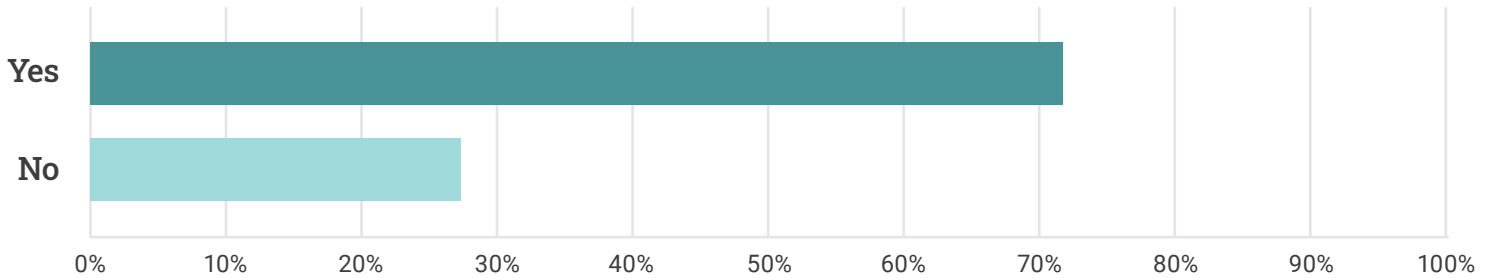


Equality

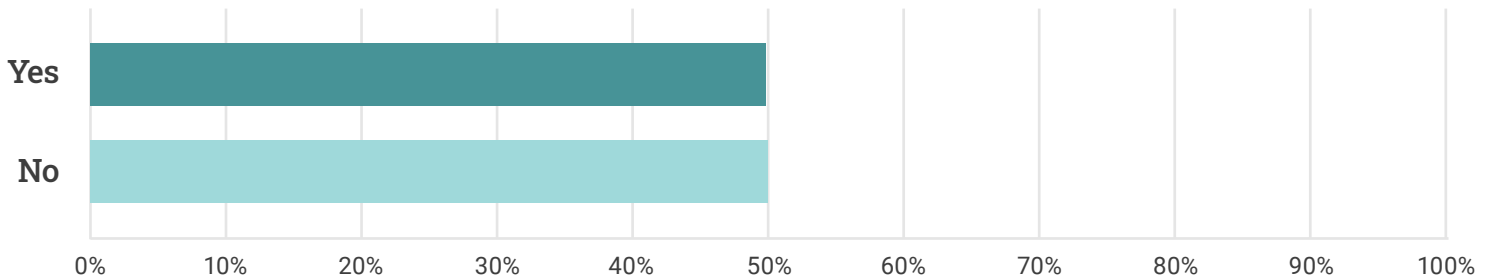
Question

All job interview panels include at least one woman on the panel?

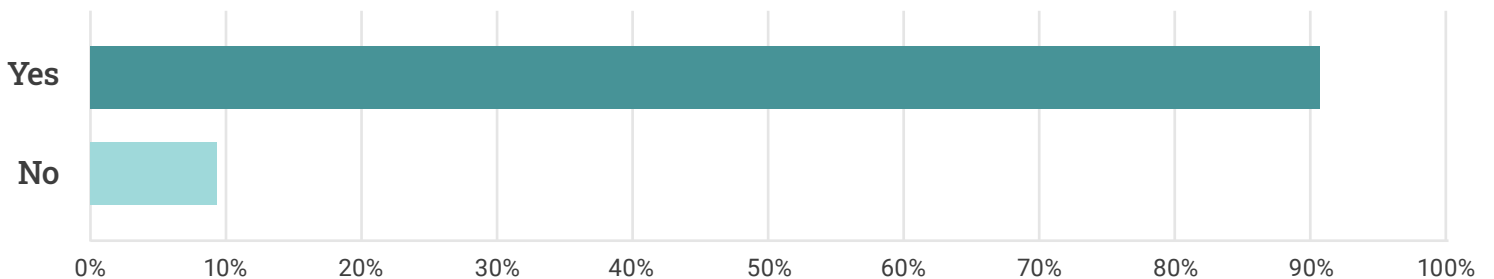
Large Companies



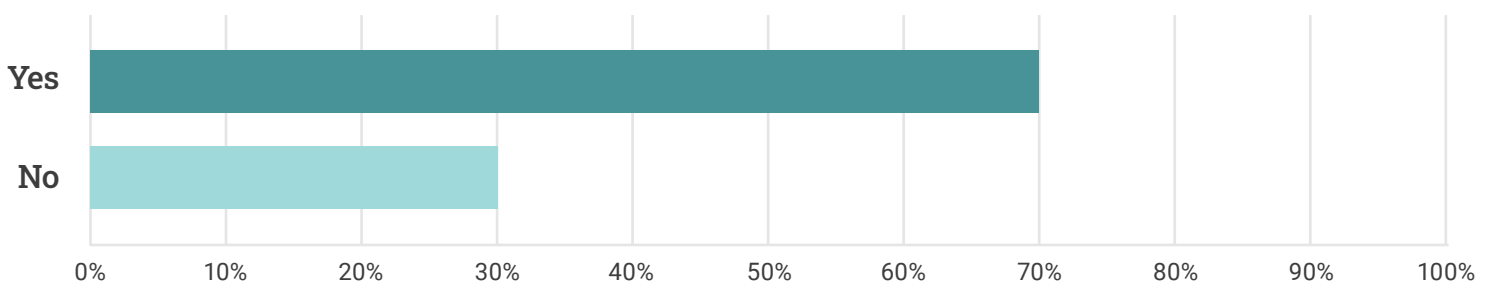
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

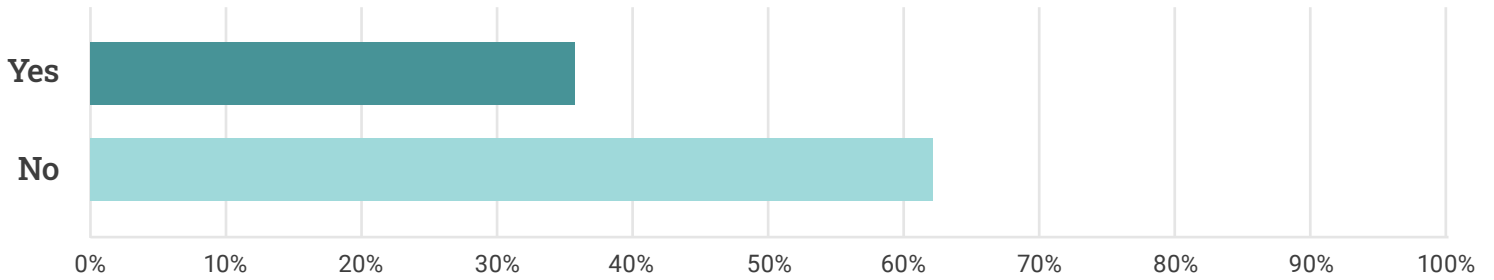


Equality

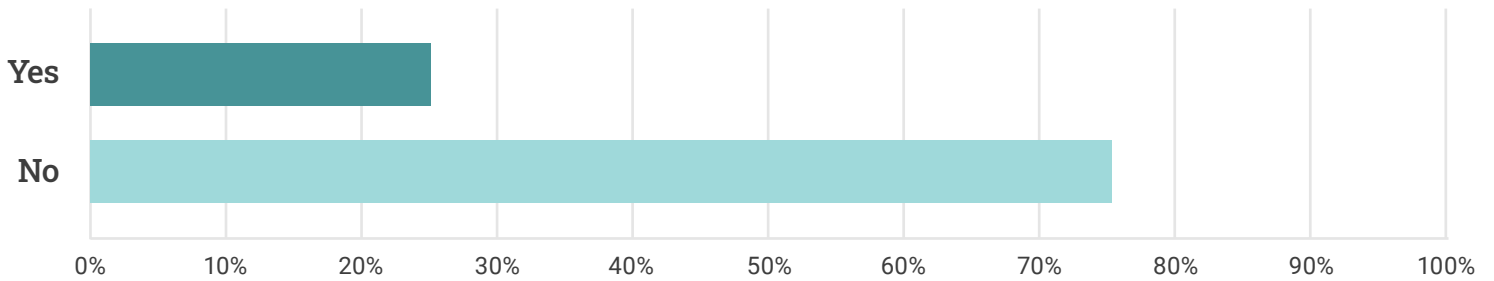
Question

Your company has a formal sponsorship program that women participate in?

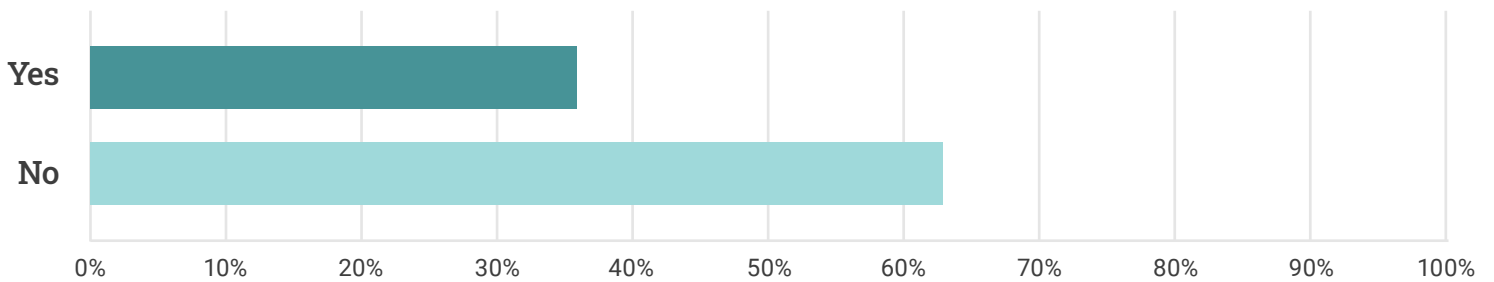
Large Companies



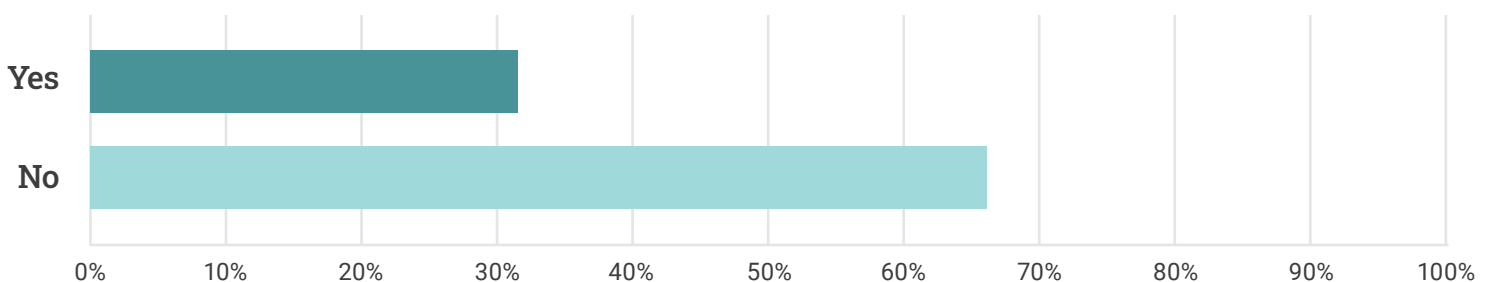
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total



02

Inclusion

Inclusion is an integral part of creating a positive work environment for women and people of color. Every single company on the list has a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, as well as a safe place for employees to share grievances. We then asked companies about their stated values, finding that many emphasize the importance of inclusive behavior and gender parity.

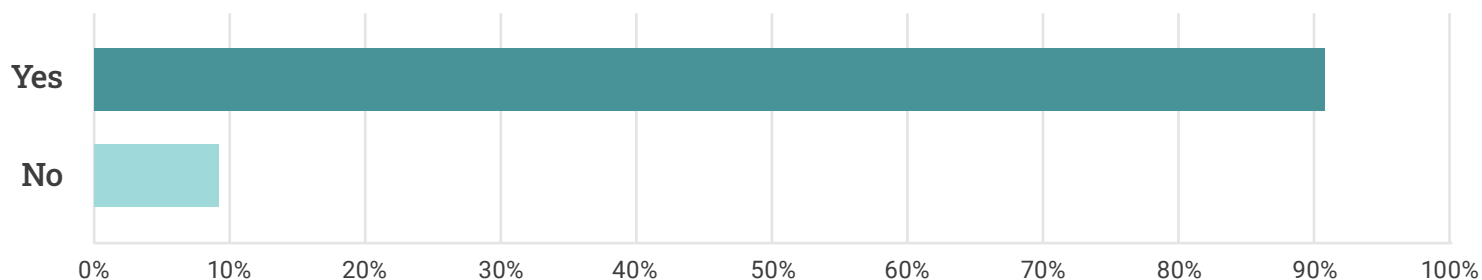


Inclusion

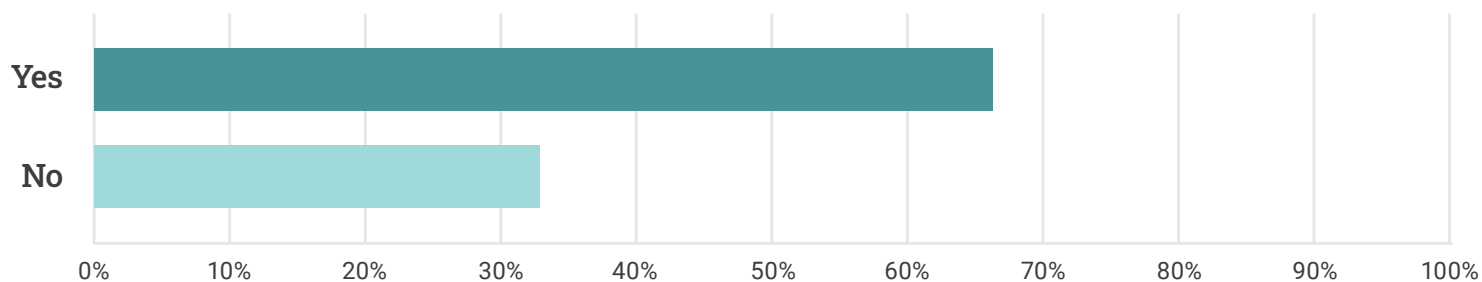
Question

Gender equality is one of your stated company values?

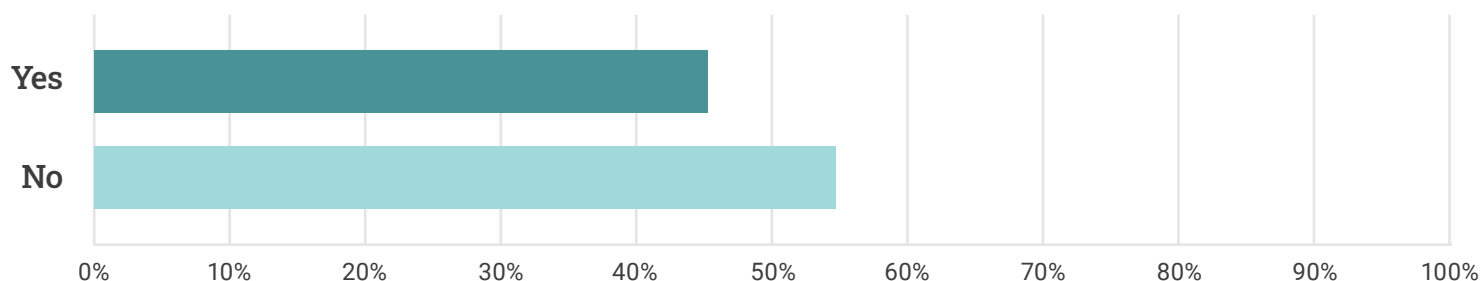
Large Companies



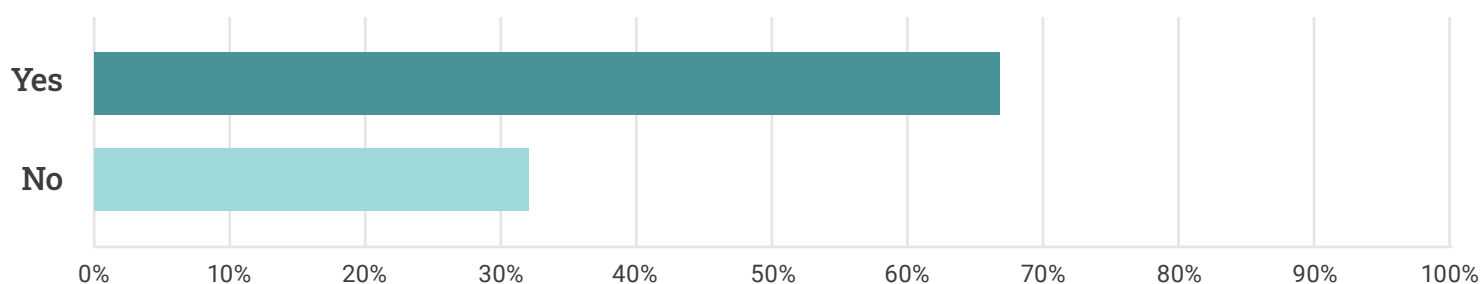
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total



03

Representation

Representation measures the actual proportion of women in leadership roles – the current composition of the Board and C-suite, as well as VP hires in the last year. We want to know that companies are regularly making an effort to include women in leadership roles, widening the pipeline for women to shatter the glass ceiling.



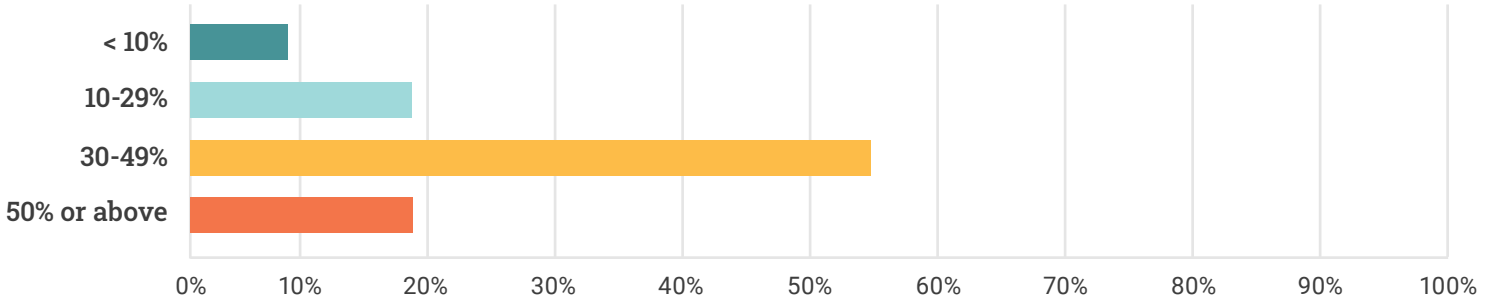
“As with 2020, nearly all (97%) of companies regularly report on gender parity to their C-suite and Board of Directors, making this a best practice every company should aim for.”

Representation

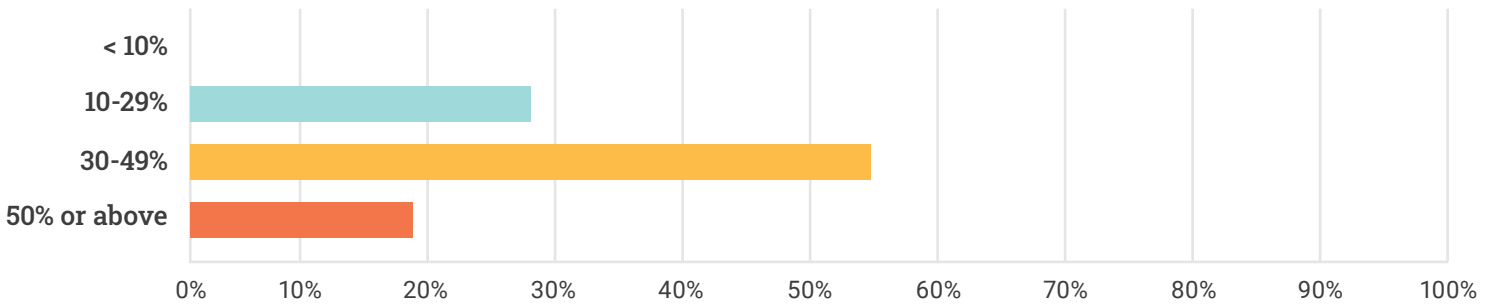
Question

What percent of women are currently on your company's Board of Directors?

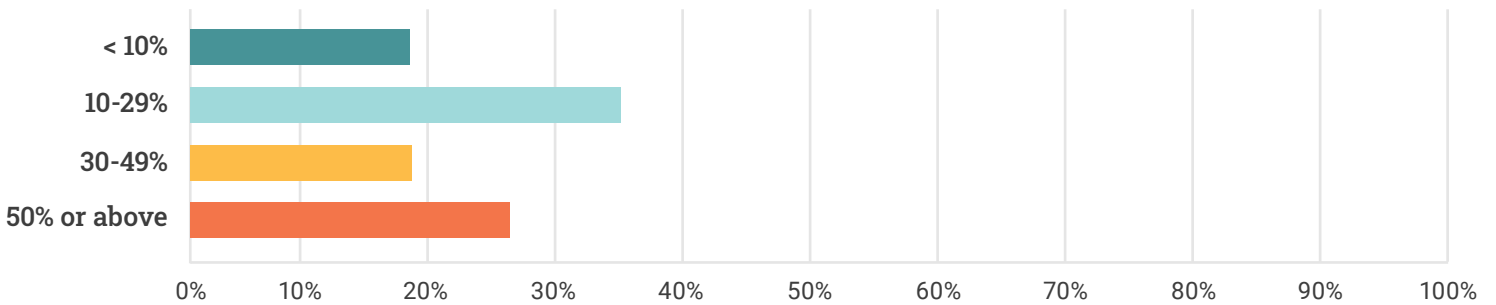
Large Companies



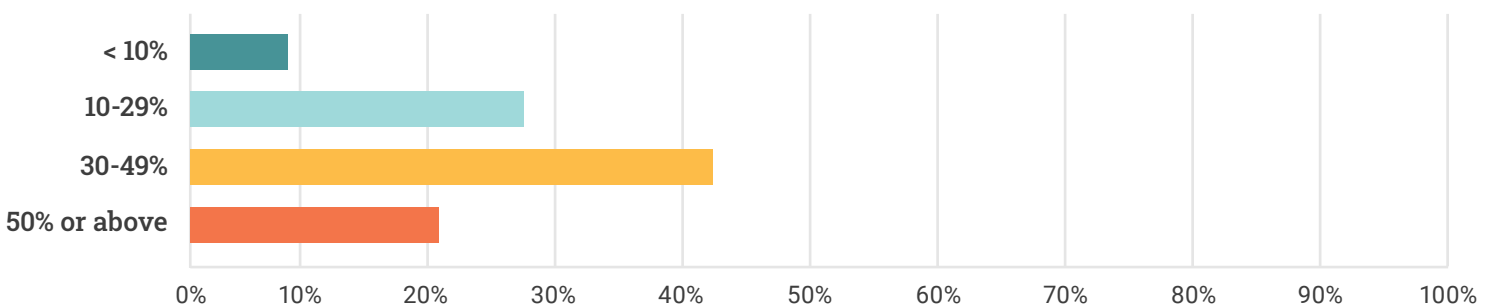
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

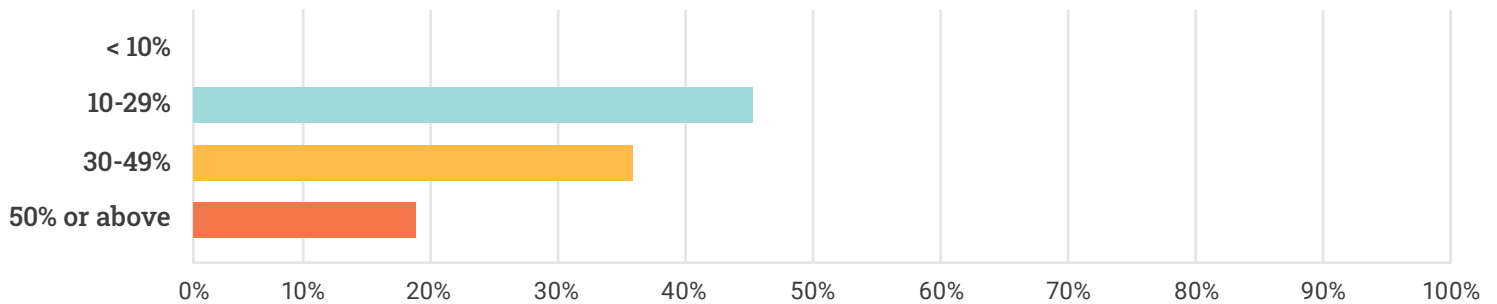


Representation

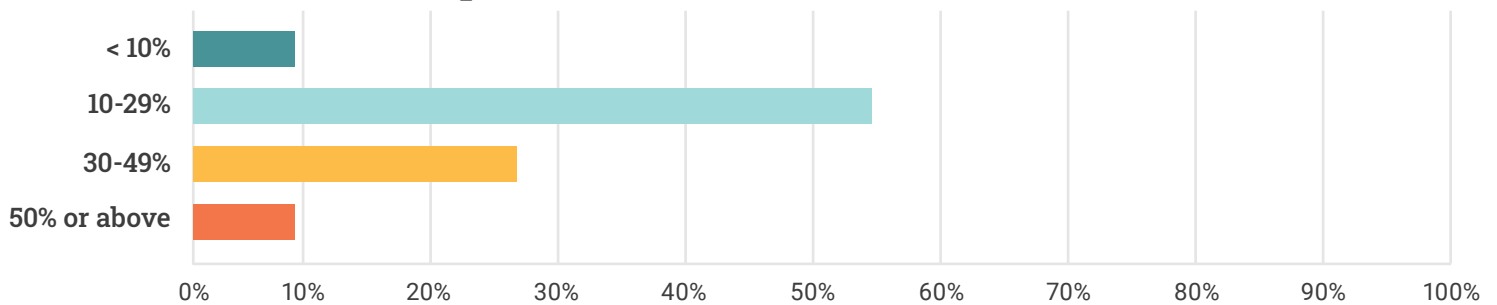
Question

What percent of women are currently on your company's executive team reporting to the CEO?

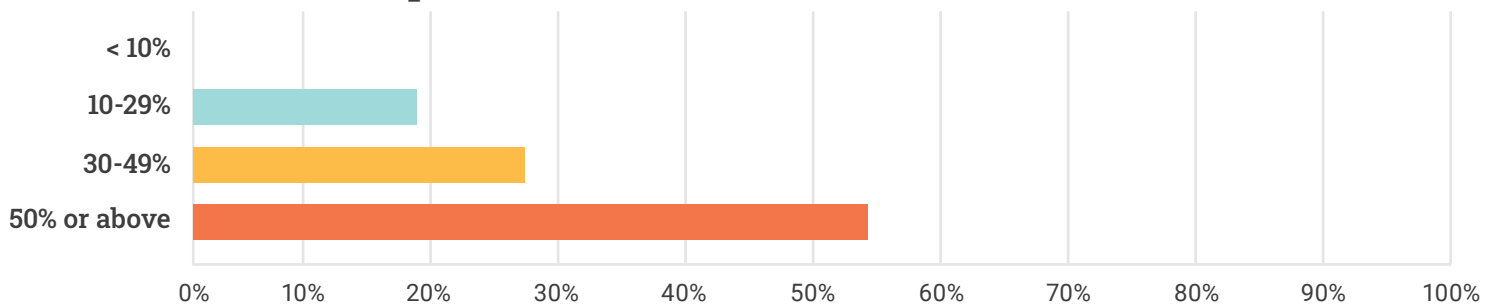
Large Companies



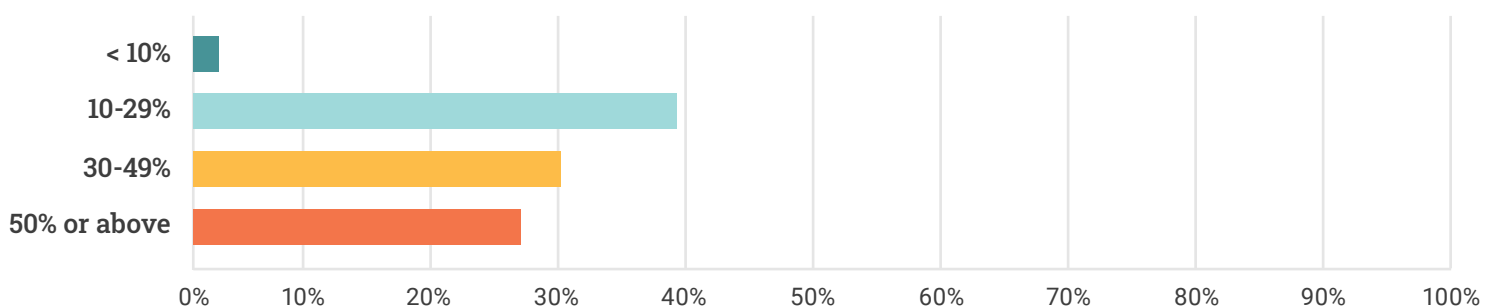
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

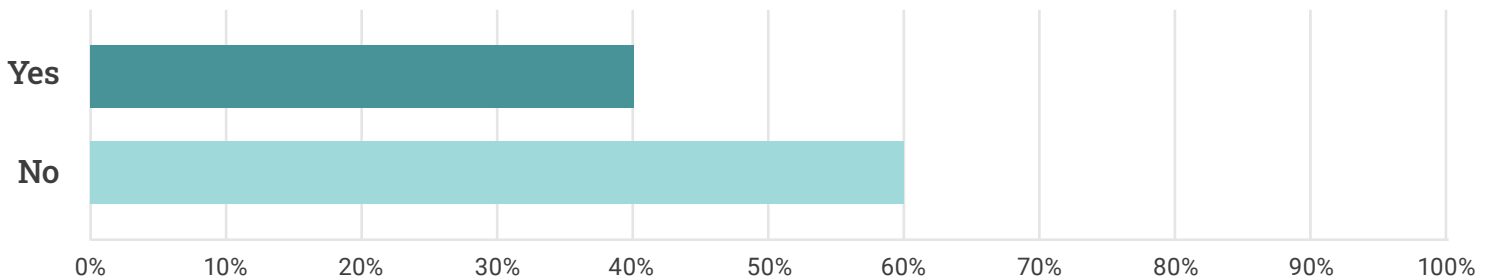


Representation

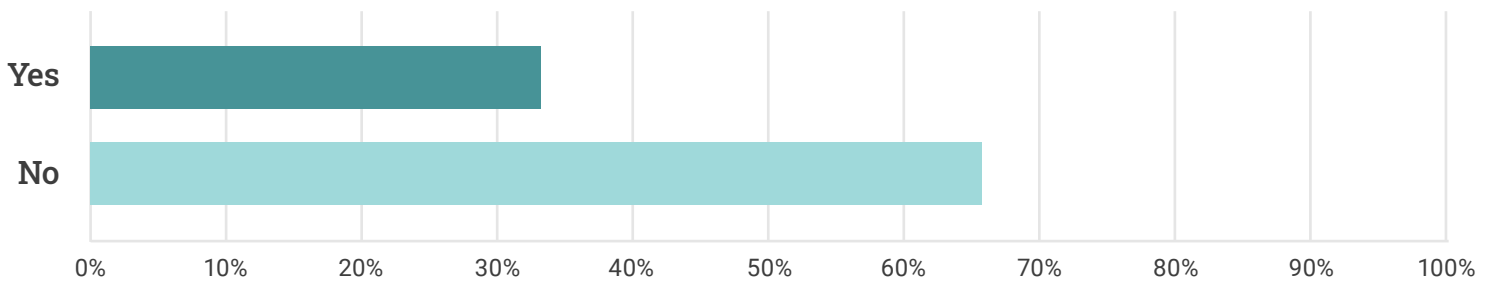
Question

Is your CEO a woman?

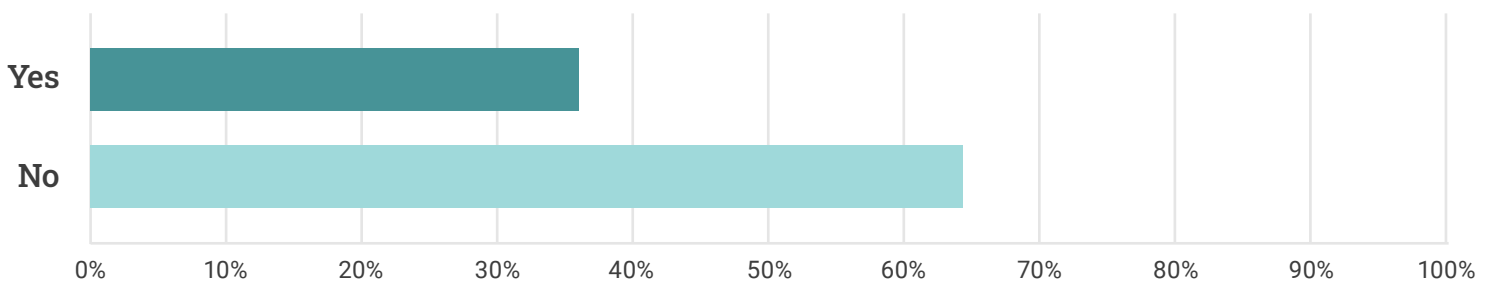
Large Companies



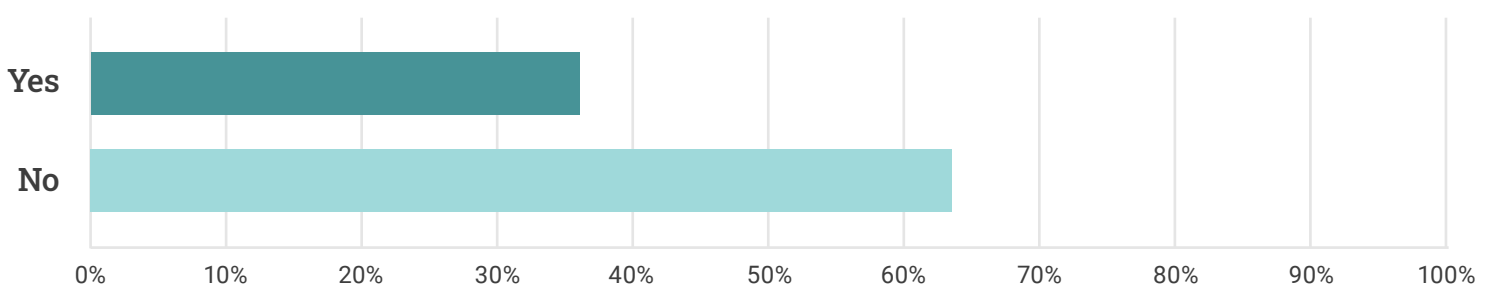
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

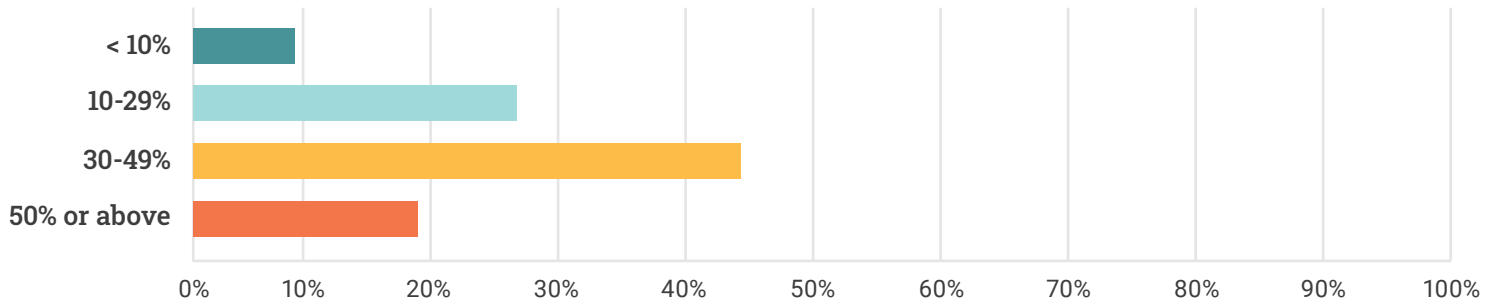


Representation

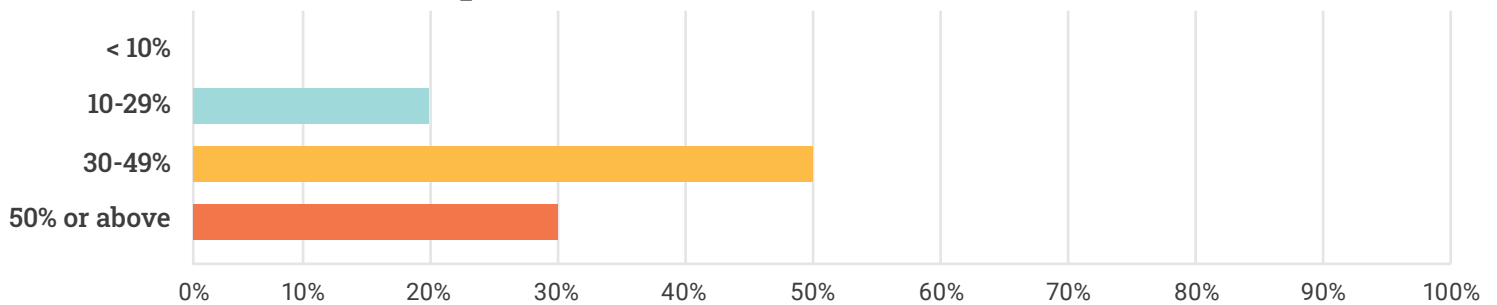
Question

Within the last 12 months, what percentage of hires or promotions at the VP or above level were women?

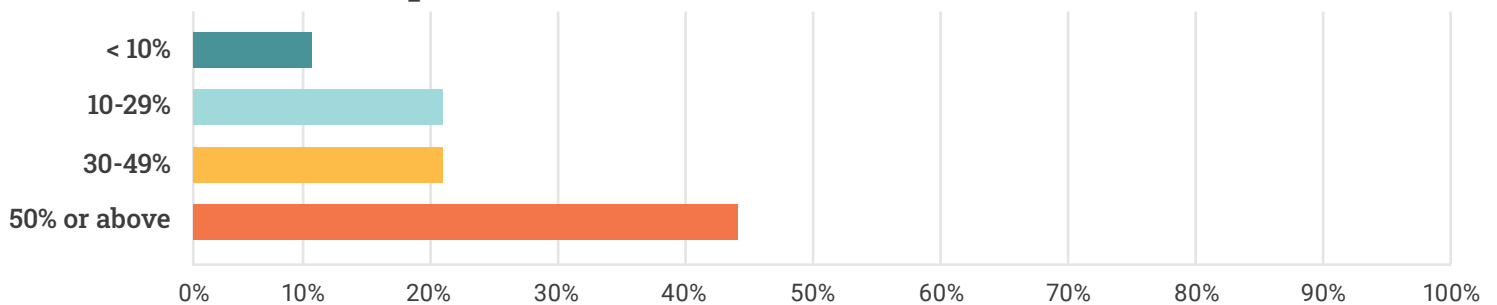
Large Companies



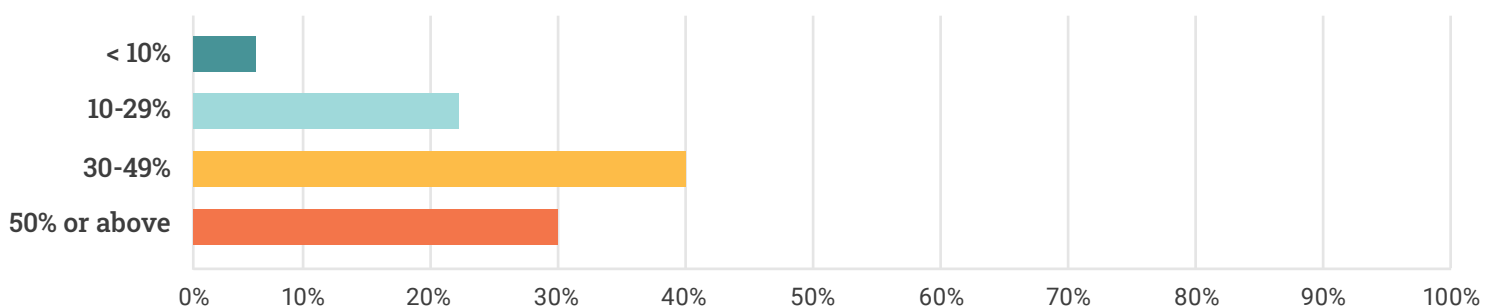
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

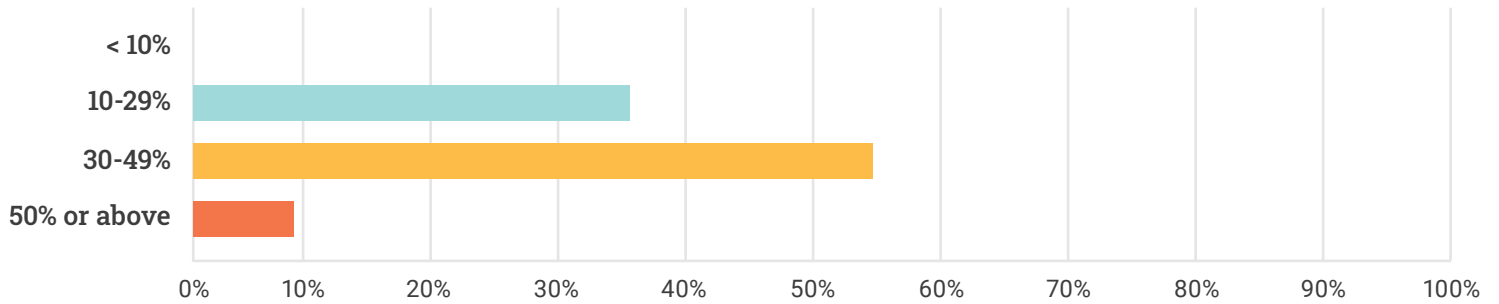


Representation

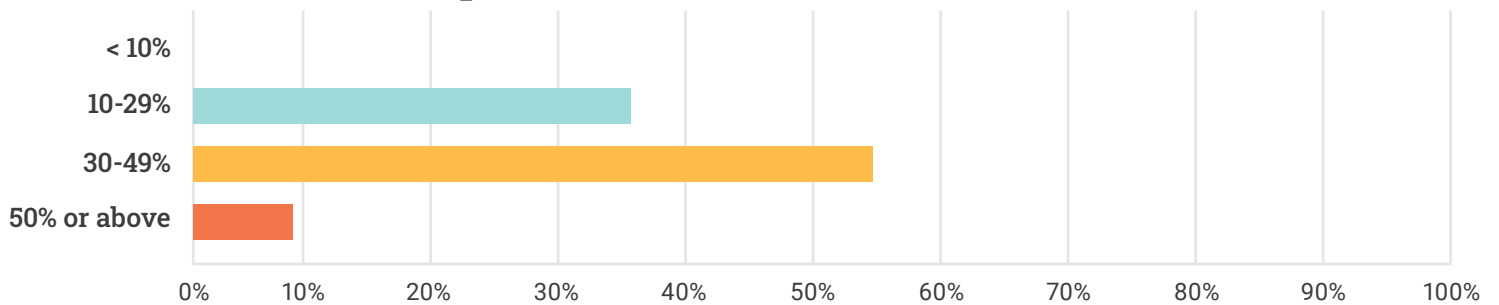
Question

What percent of women are currently at your company's VP/Partner level or above?

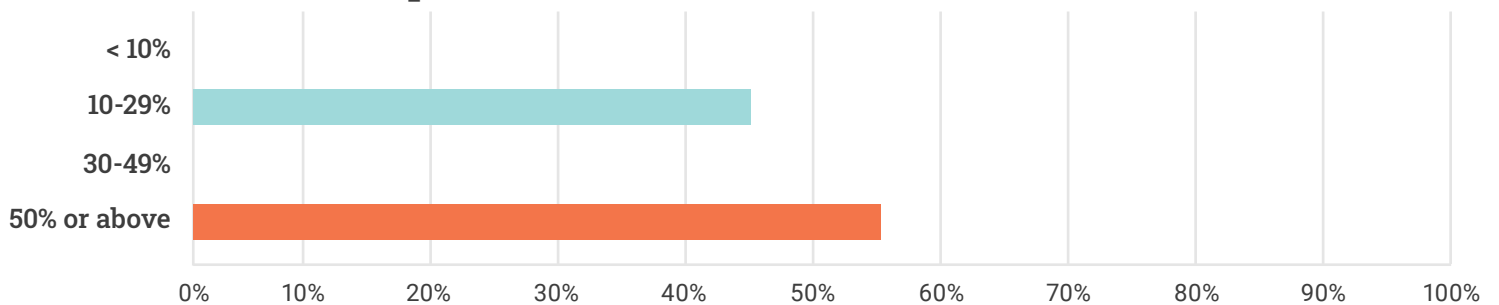
Large Companies



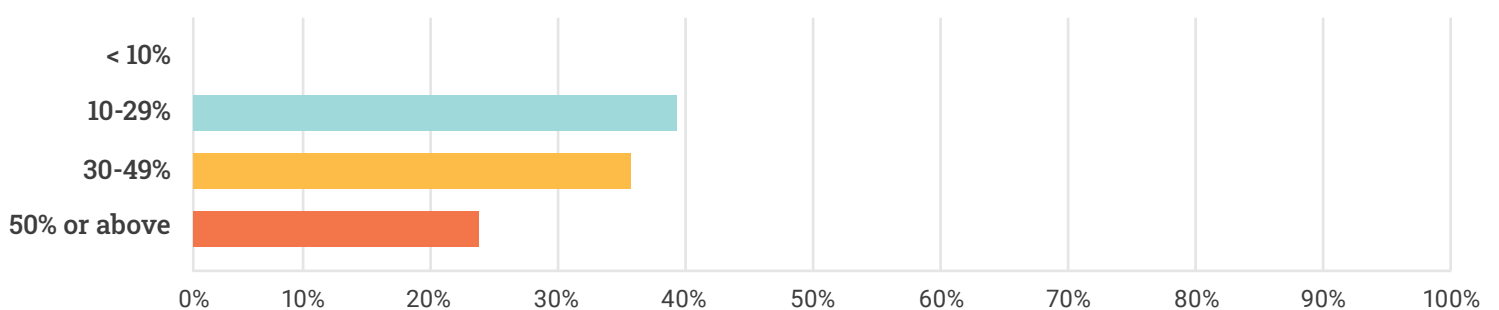
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total



04

Enablers

“Enablers” are any practice or policy that helps support all of the prior areas of equality, inclusion, and representation. Enablers include things like anti-bias training, which helps create a more inclusive environment, the use of ERGs (Employee Resource Groups) for feedback, making a public commitment to gender parity and pay parity, and measurement—after all, if you don’t measure it, you can’t improve it.

A public commitment to gender parity helps companies hold themselves accountable. This year, we saw more companies make a public commitment like the ParityPledge®, and more companies extending that commitment not just in executive leadership but across director levels.



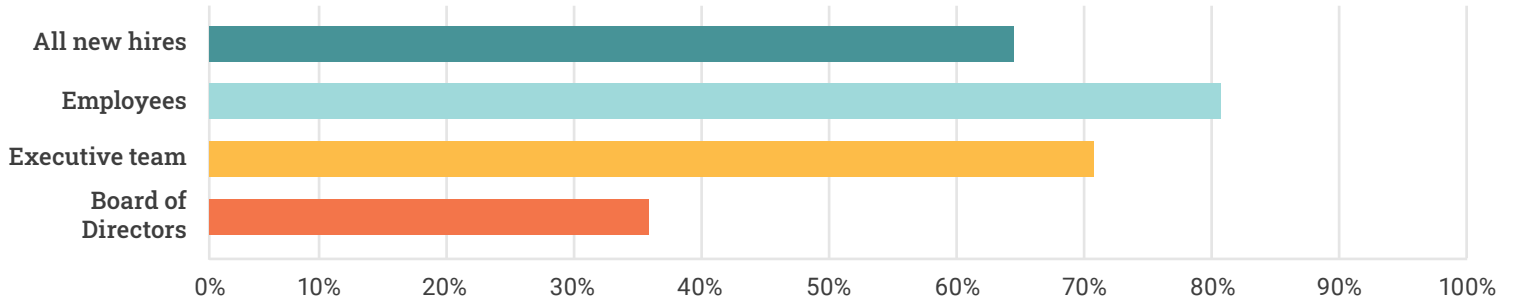
“In 2020, 77% of companies made a public commitment to gender parity at the executive level, and in 2021 that number rose to 85%. Even better, in 2020, 26% of companies had made this commitment at the director level. In 2021, 44% of companies made a commitment at the director level, helping ensure women have the same opportunities as men to rise through management.”

Enablers

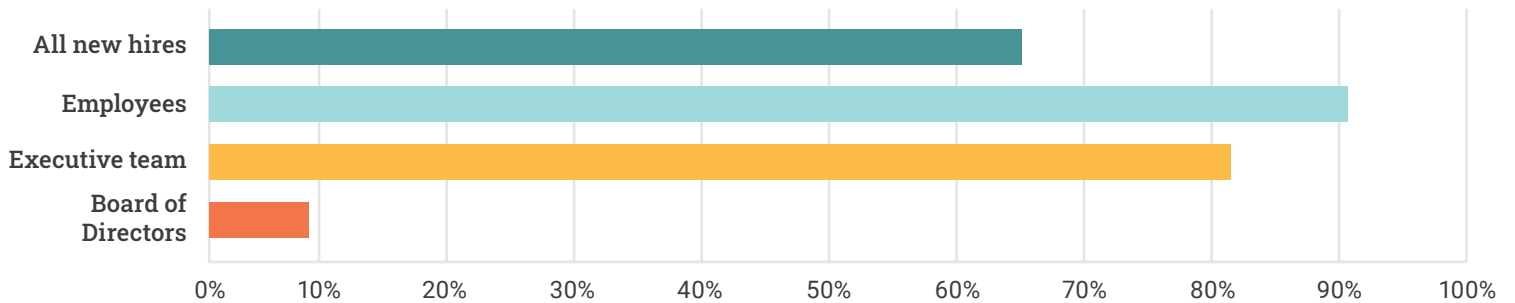
Question

Your company conducts regular anti-bias training that encourages tolerance and acceptance in the workplace for:

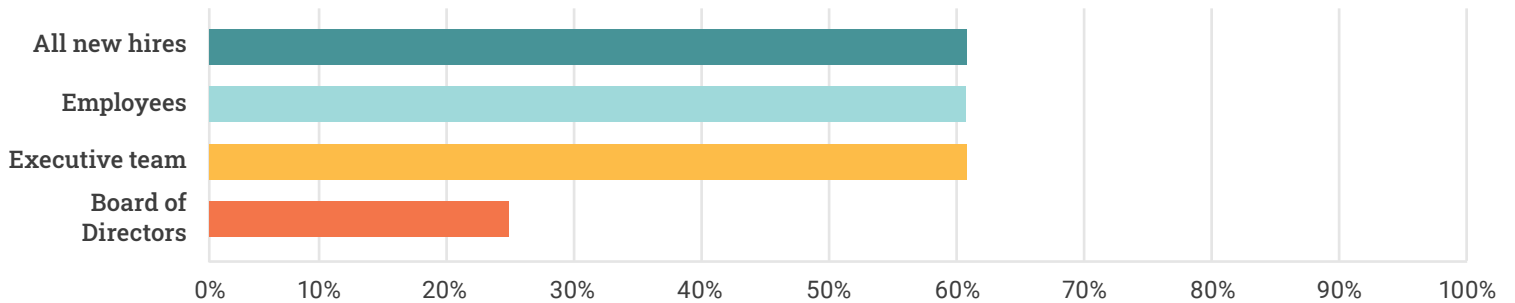
Large Companies



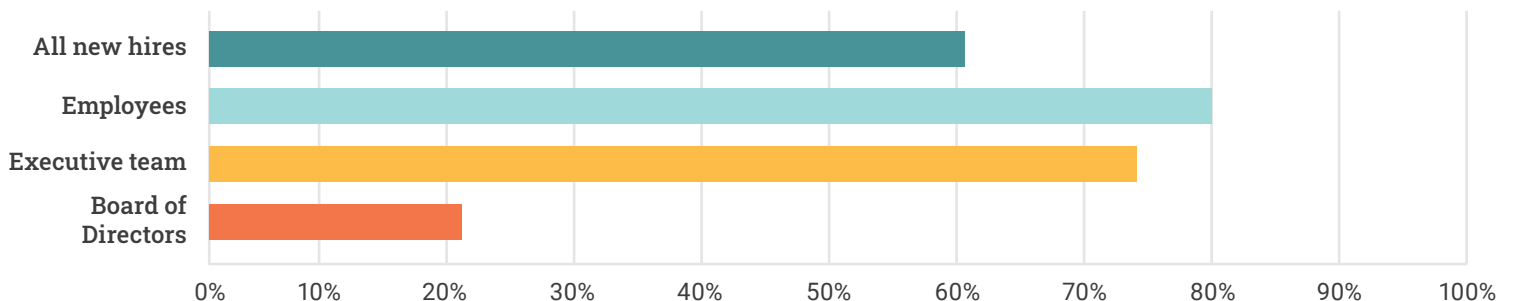
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

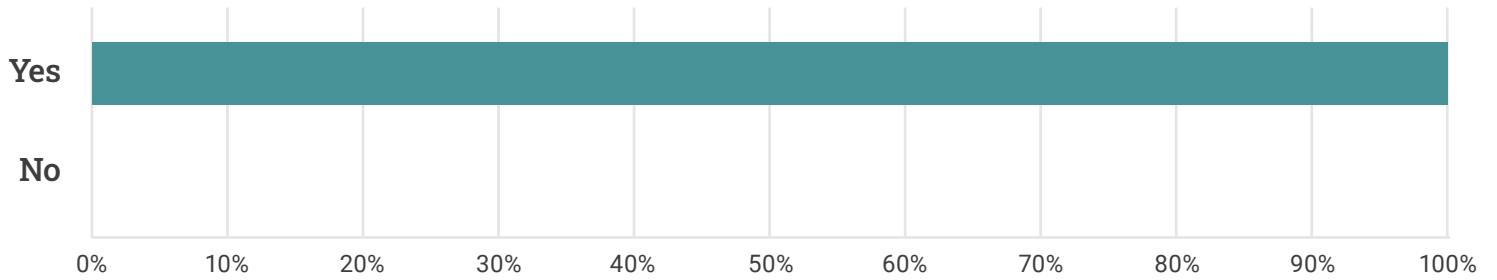


Enablers

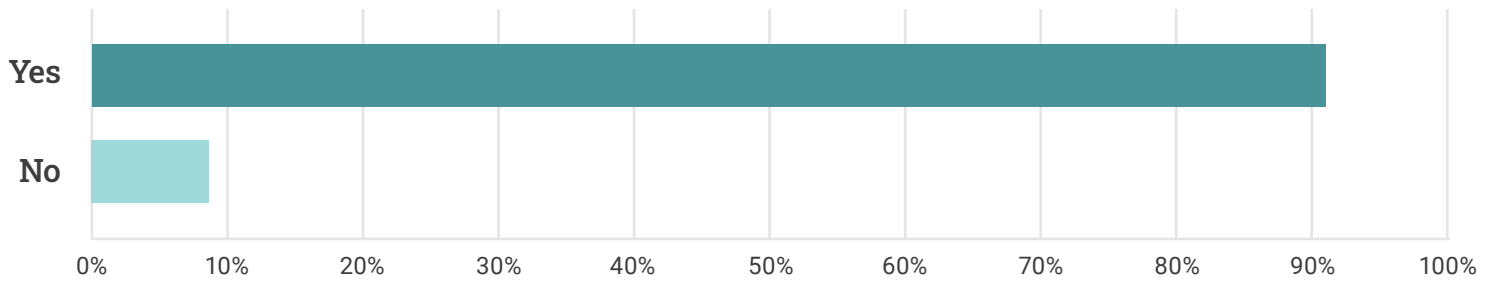
Question

Your company internally shares the results of gender diversity initiatives?

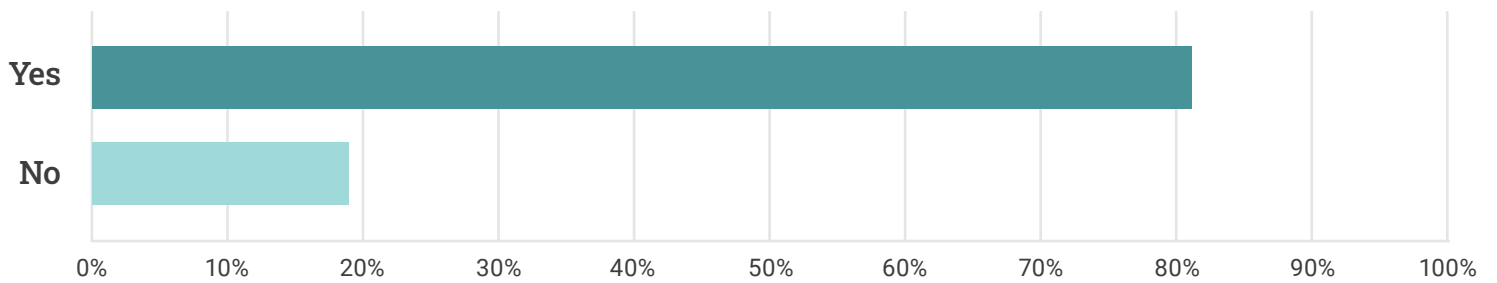
Large Companies



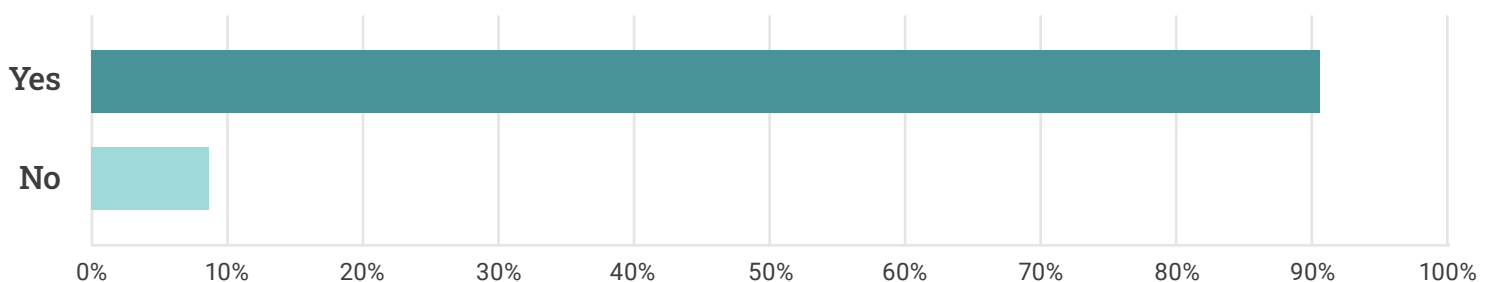
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

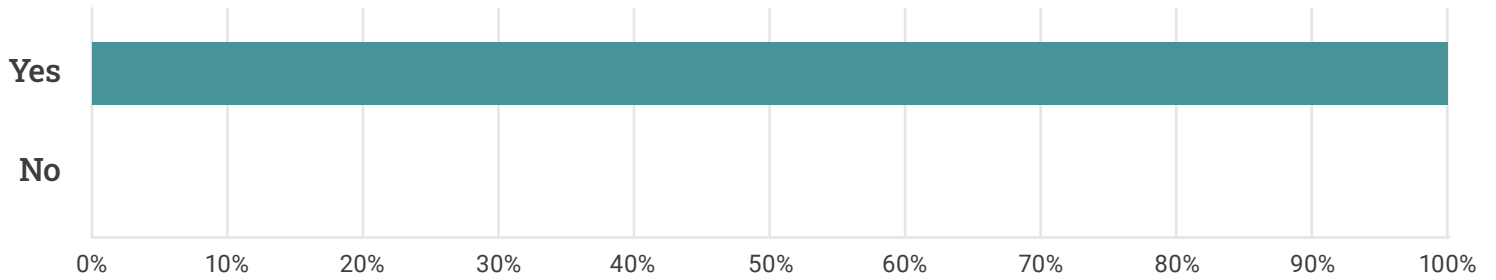


Enablers

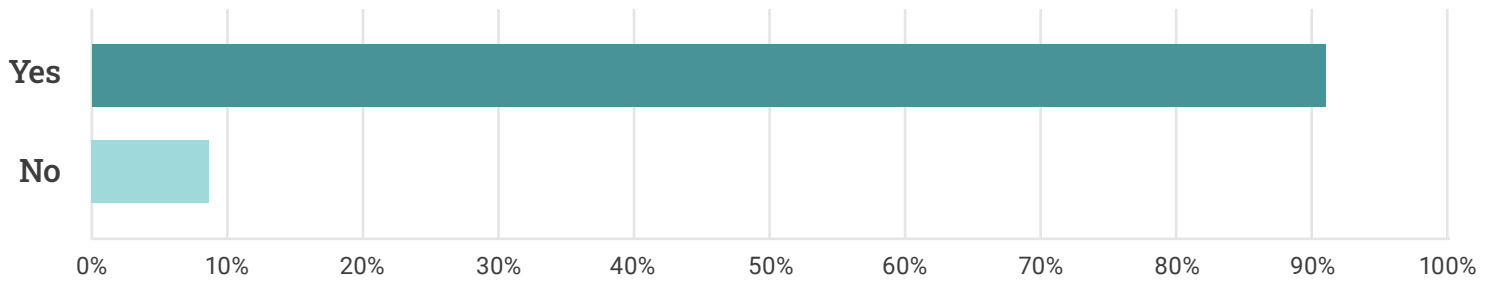
Question

Your company has an Employee Resource Group (ERG) for women?

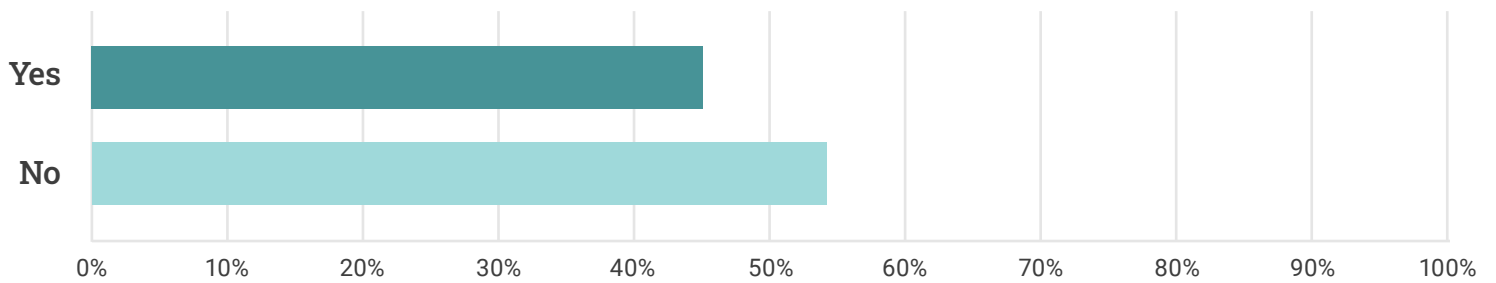
Large Companies



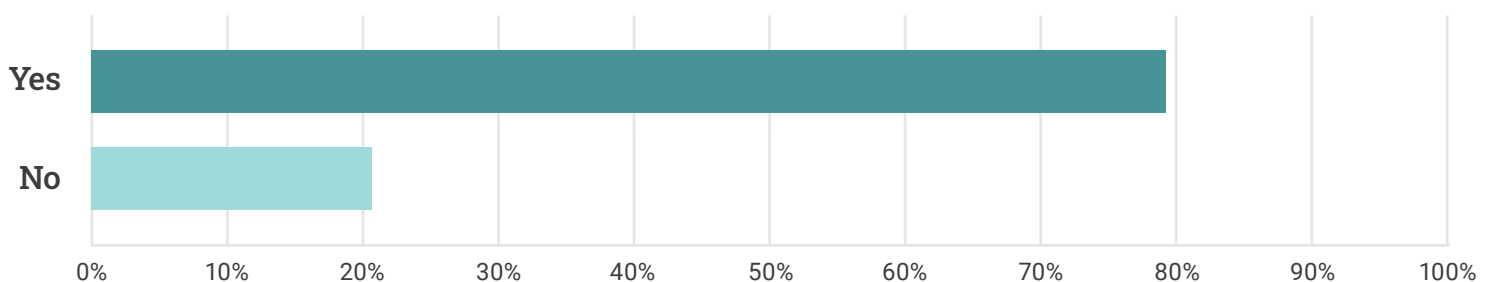
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

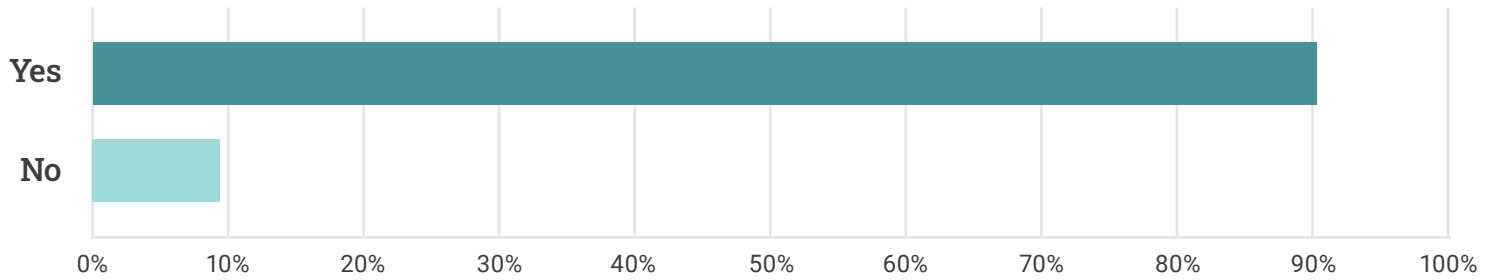


Enablers

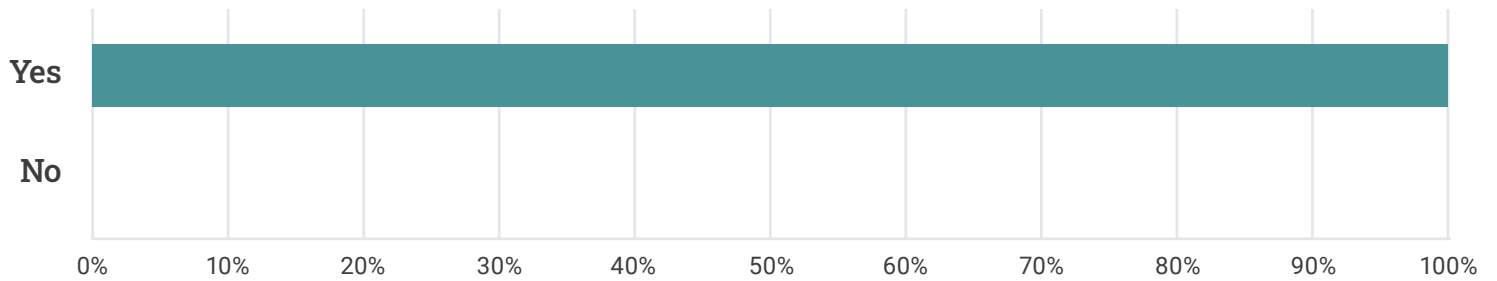
Question

Your company uses feedback from ERGs to inform policies and benefits?

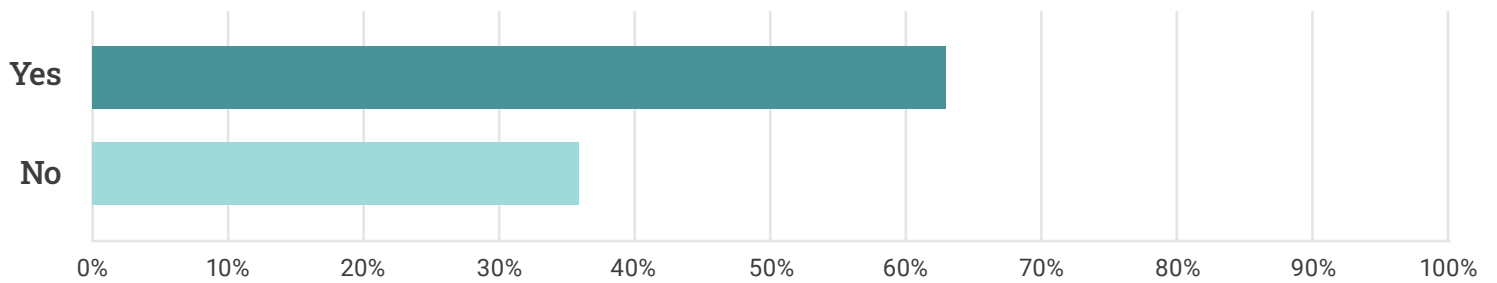
Large Companies



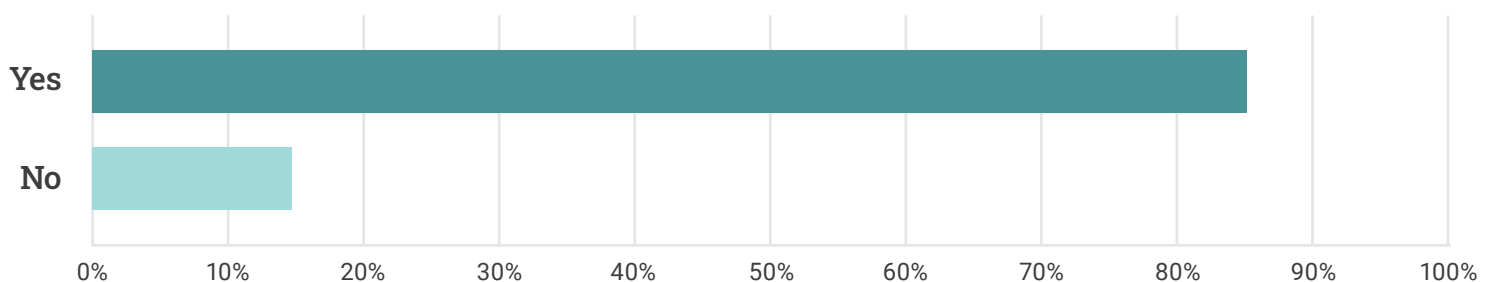
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

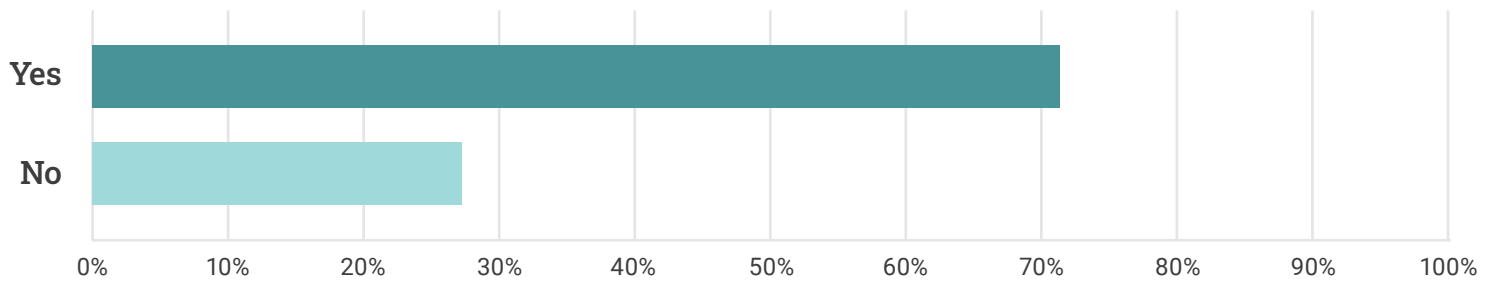


Enablers

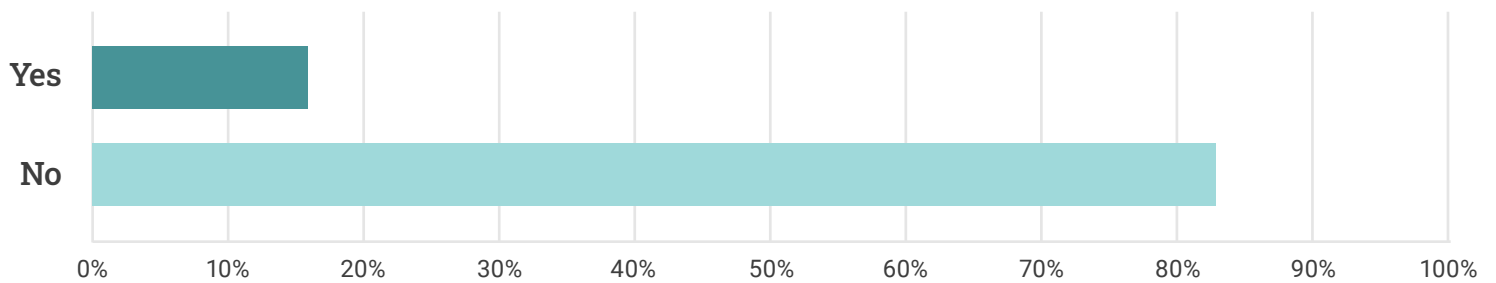
Question

Executive compensation is tied to progress in gender representation (for example, executives sponsoring or mentoring women, increasing the number of women in leadership positions or stretch assignments, or closing the gender pay gap).

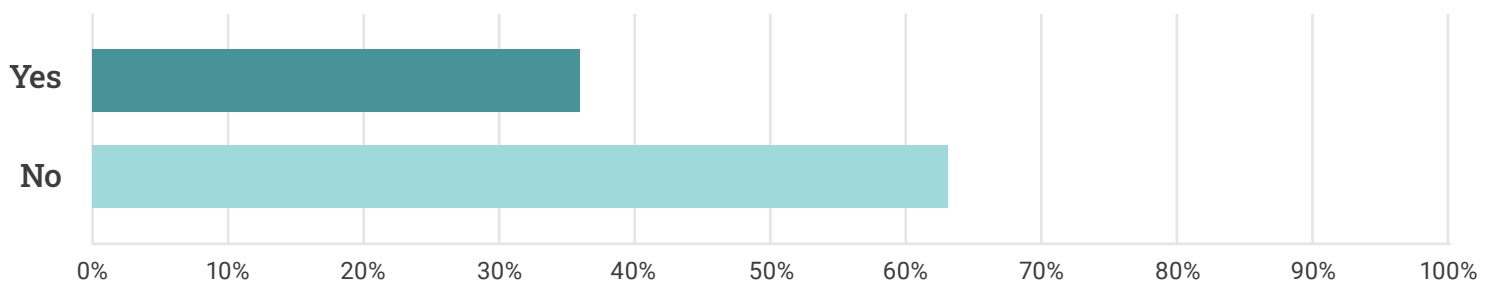
Large Companies



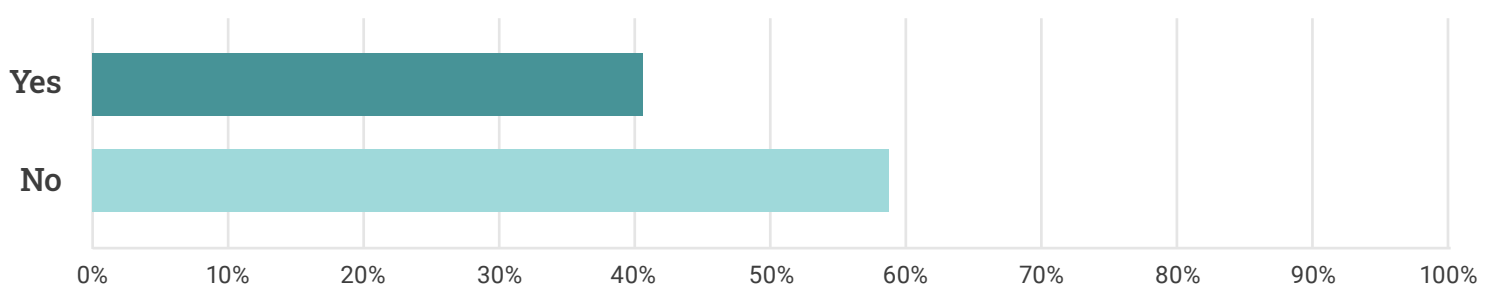
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

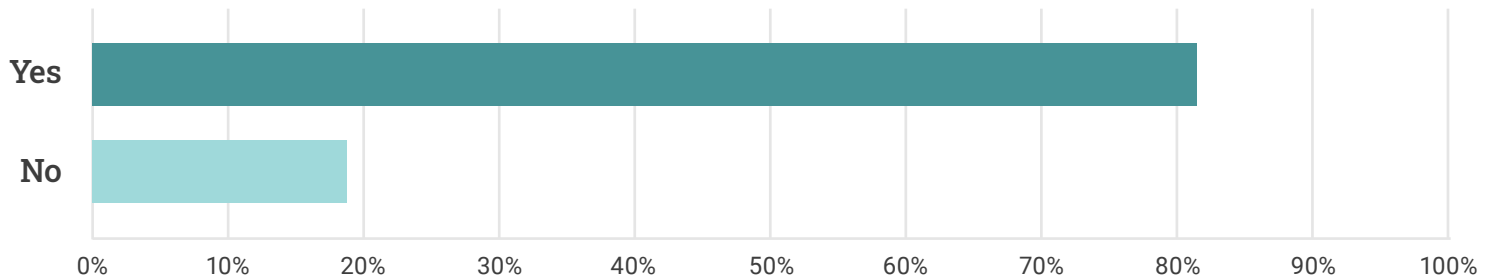


Enablers

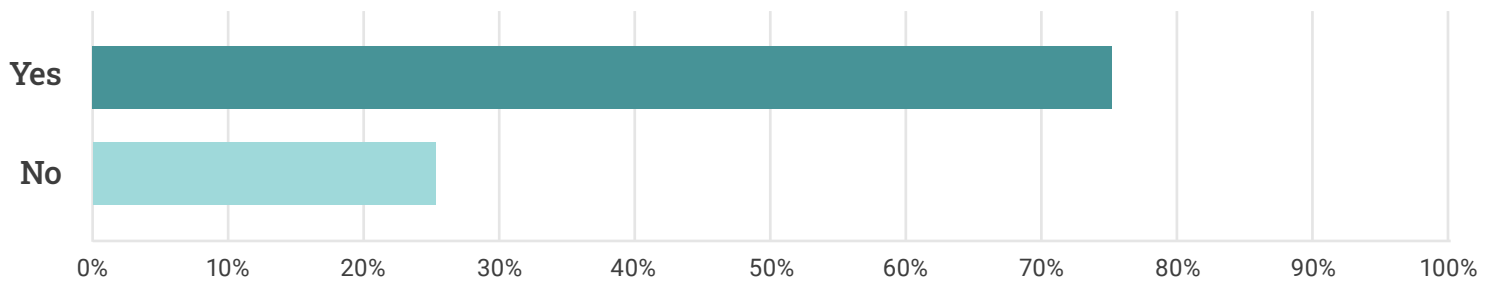
Question

Your company has made a commitment to measuring gender balance across the company. This includes registering for Parity.org's ParityINDEX® or a similar reporting mechanism?

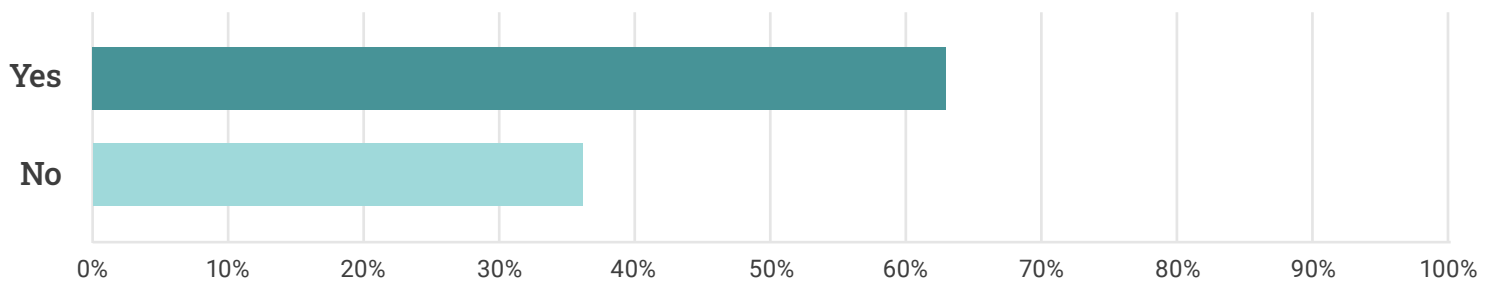
Large Companies



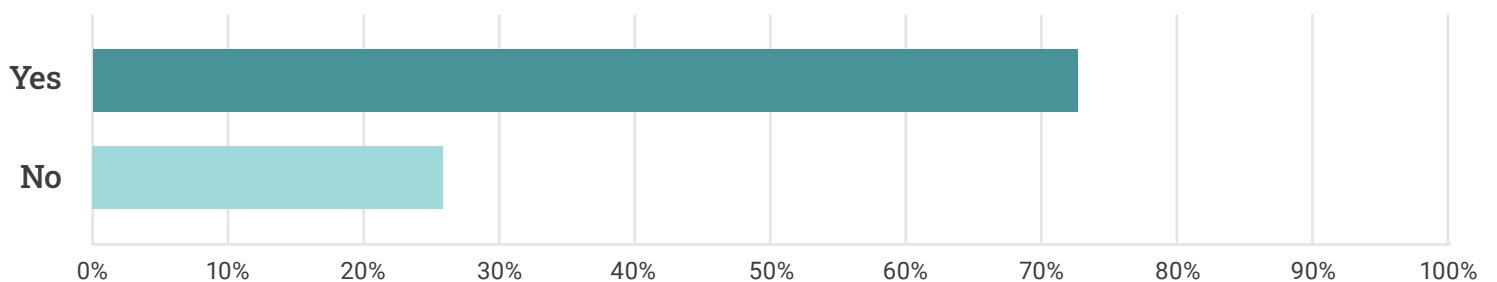
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

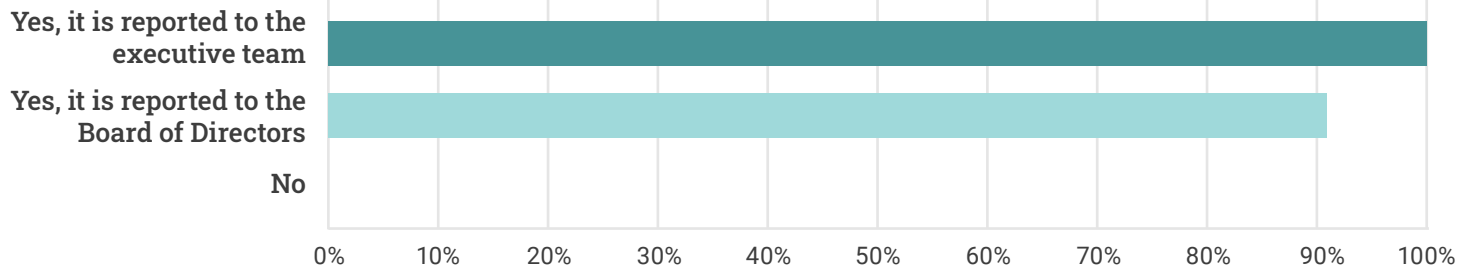


Enablers

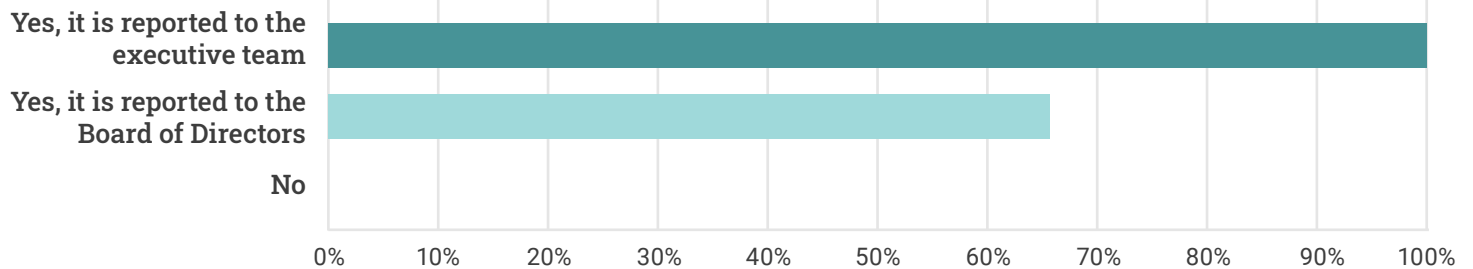
Question

Gender equality is regularly measured and reported to the executive team and board?

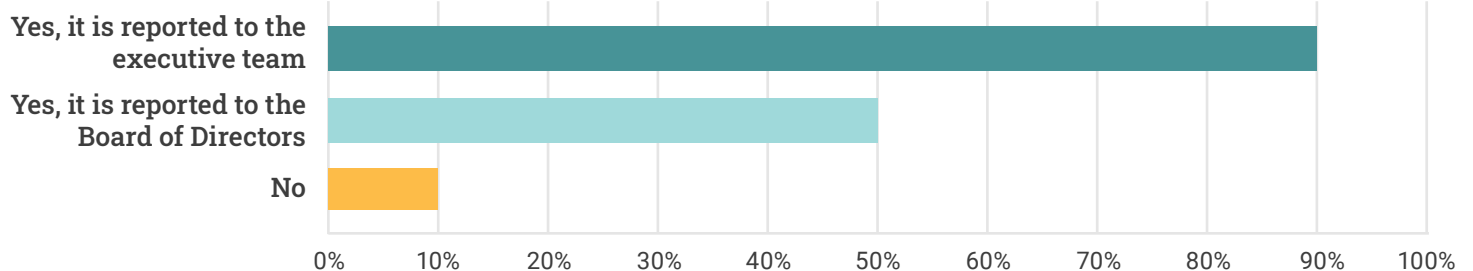
Large Companies



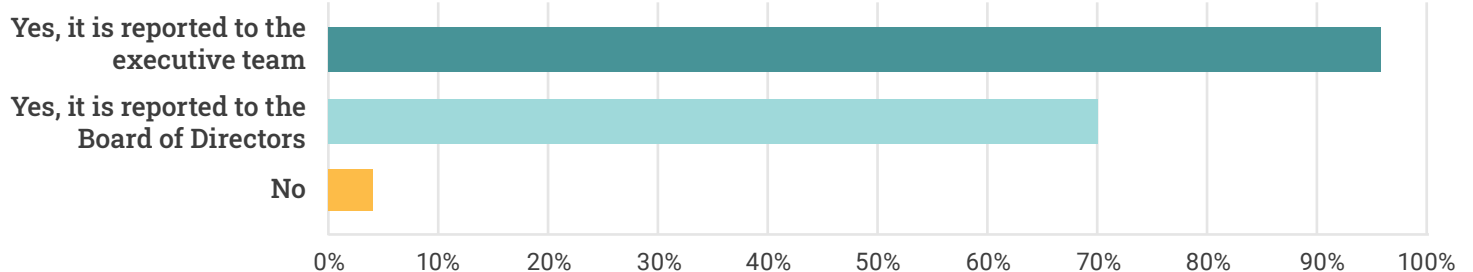
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

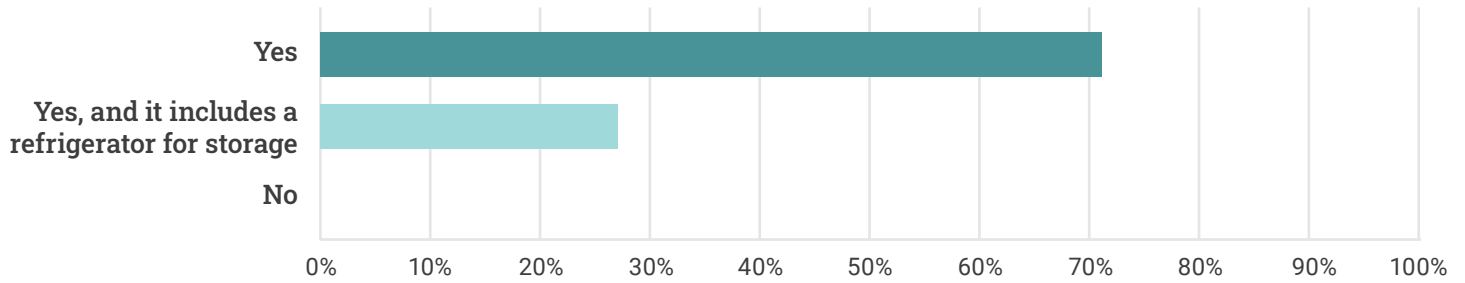


Enablers

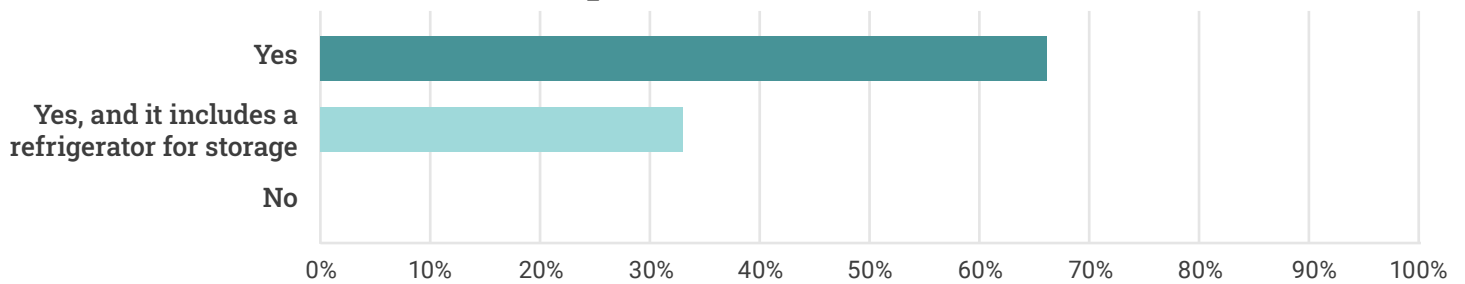
Question

Your company has dedicated, convenient, and private rooms for nursing mothers?

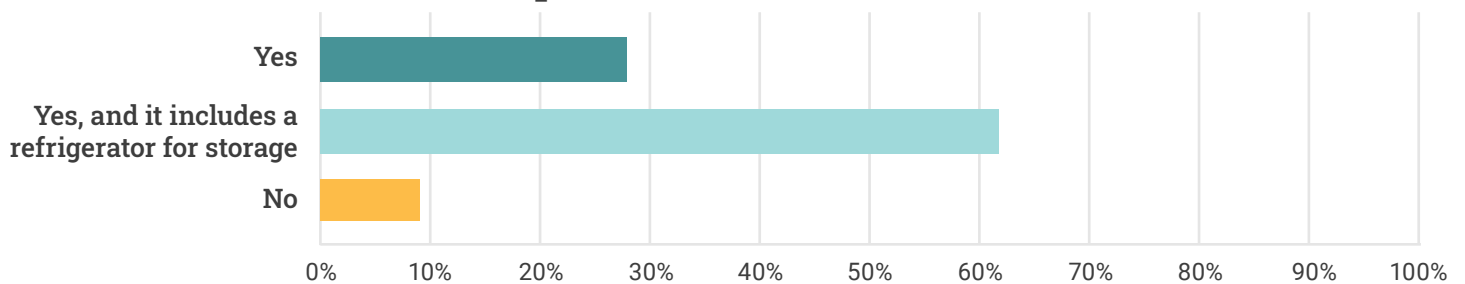
Large Companies



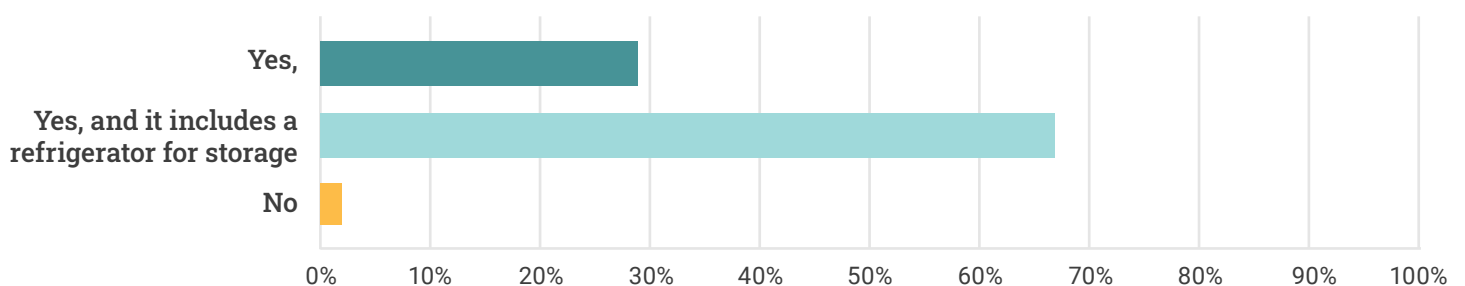
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

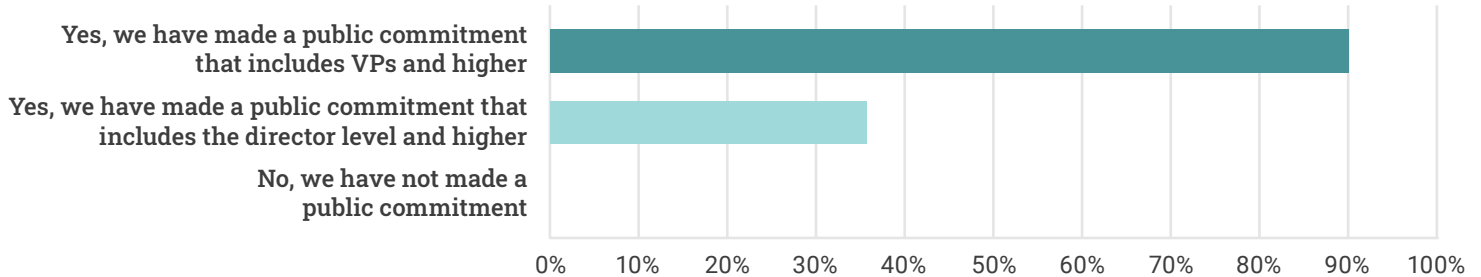


Enablers

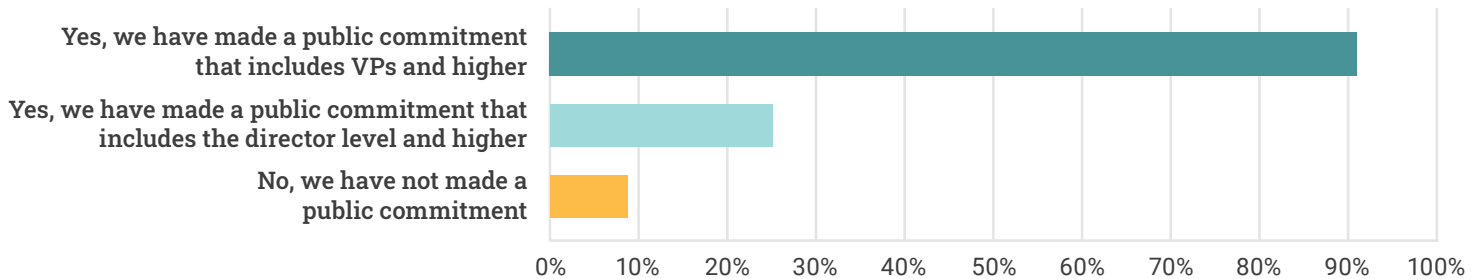
Question

Your company has made a public commitment to gender parity in leadership. This includes signing Parity.org's ParityPledge or an equivalent pledge to recruit women for the board and/or executive team?

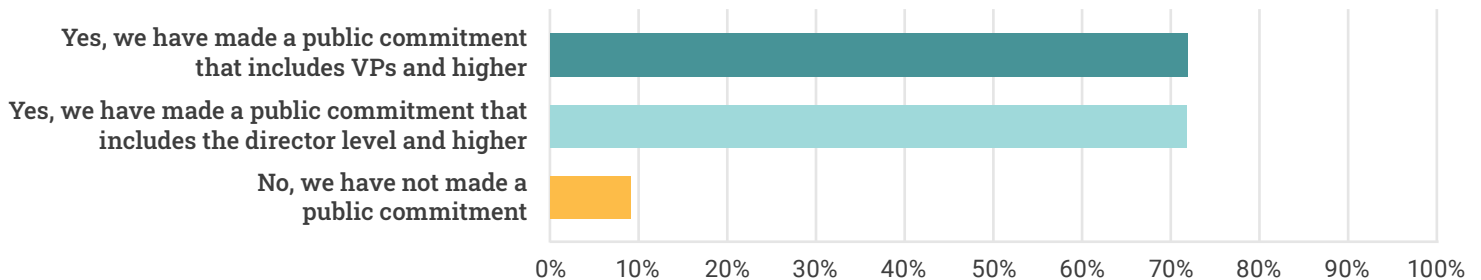
Large Companies



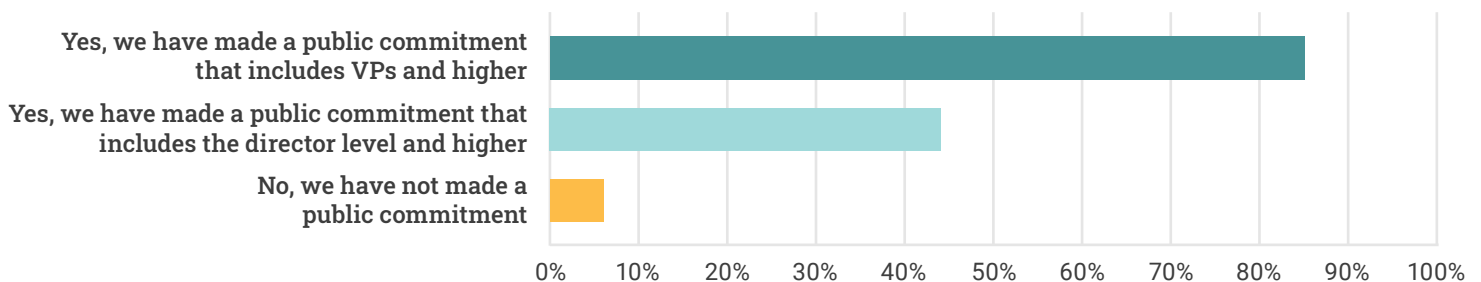
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

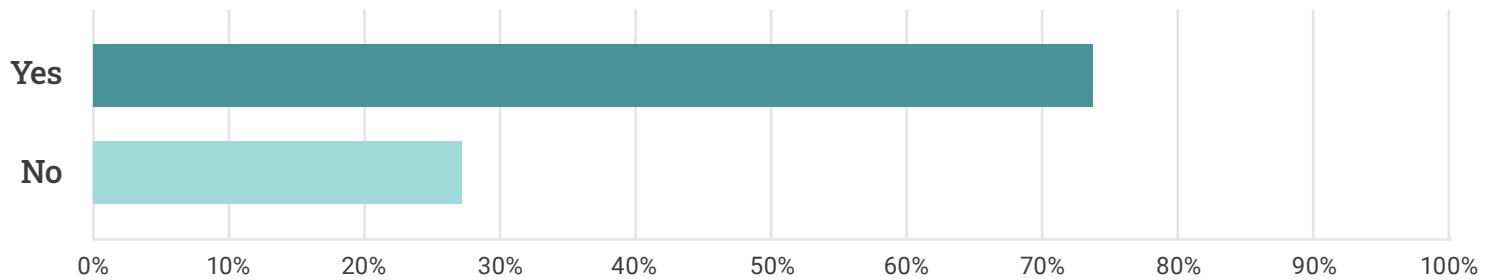


Enablers

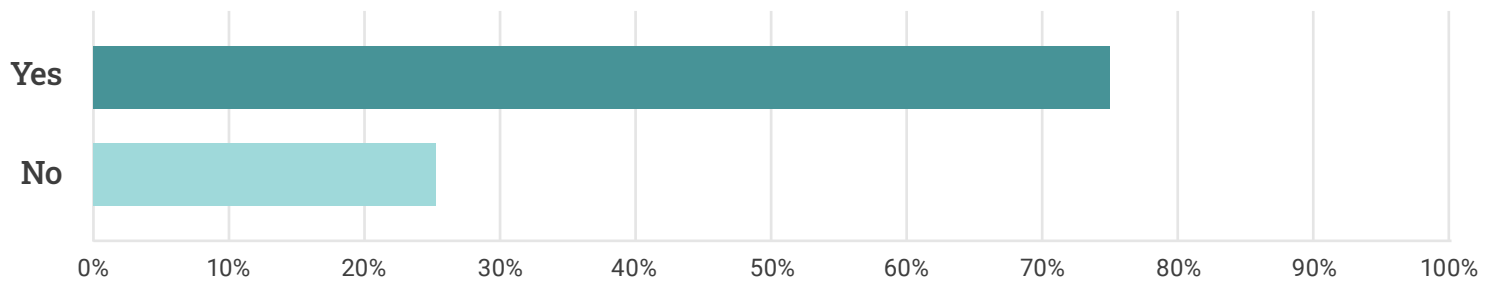
Question

Your company shares with employees its plan for gender pay parity?

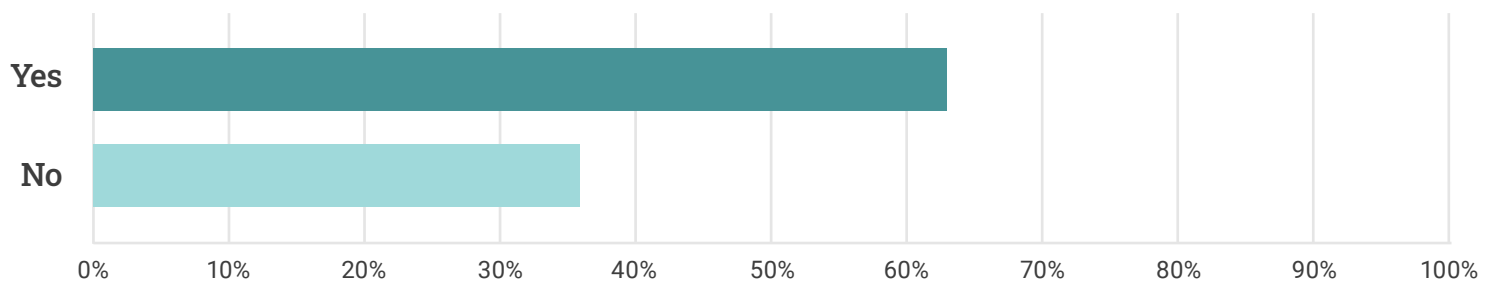
Large Companies



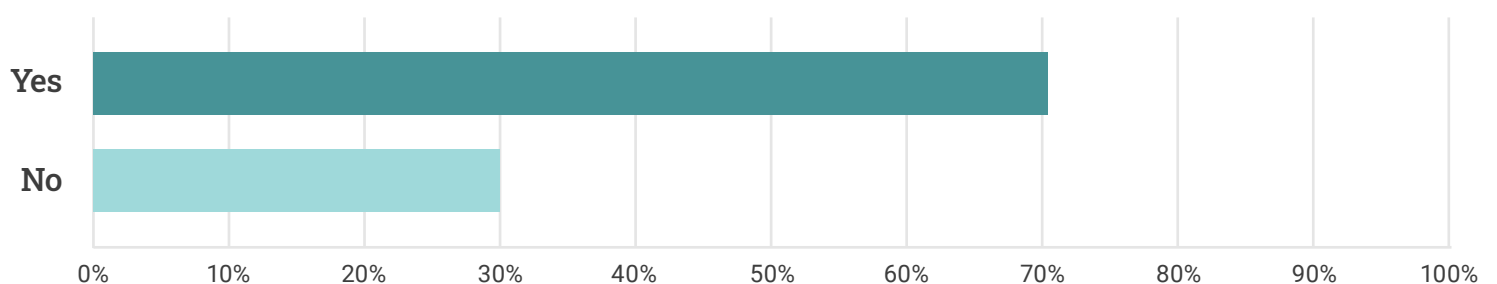
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

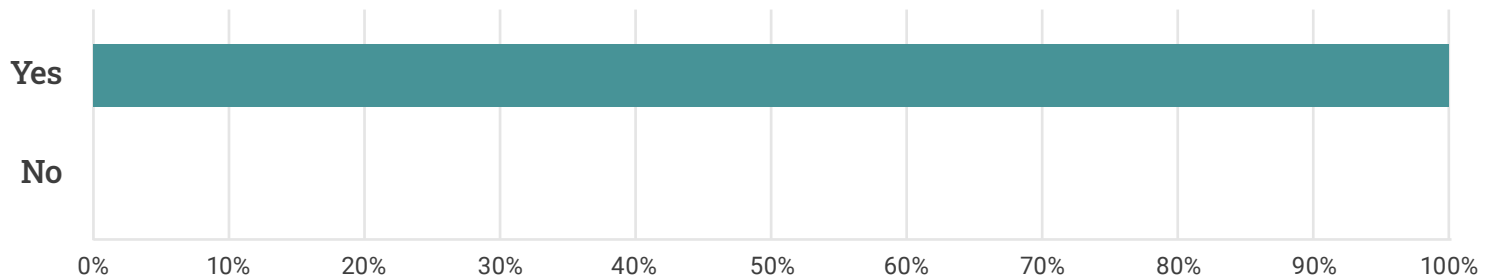


Enablers

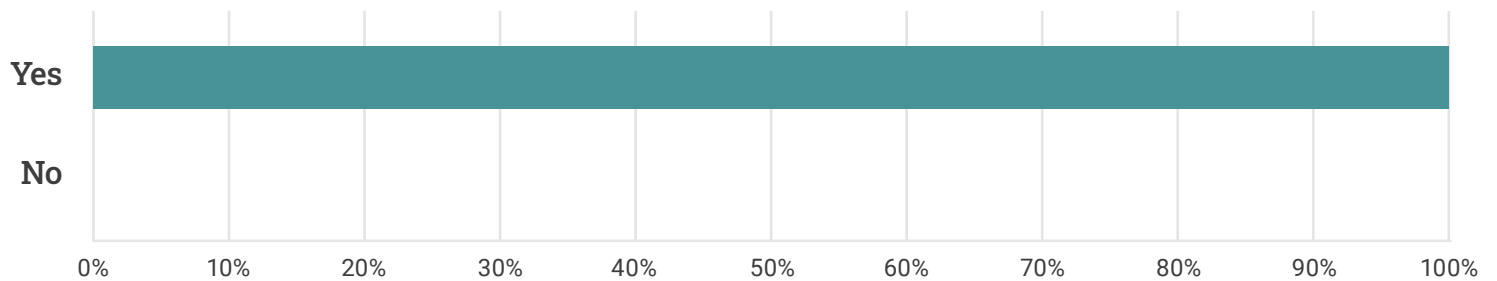
Question

Your company offers paid sick leave to all full-time employees?

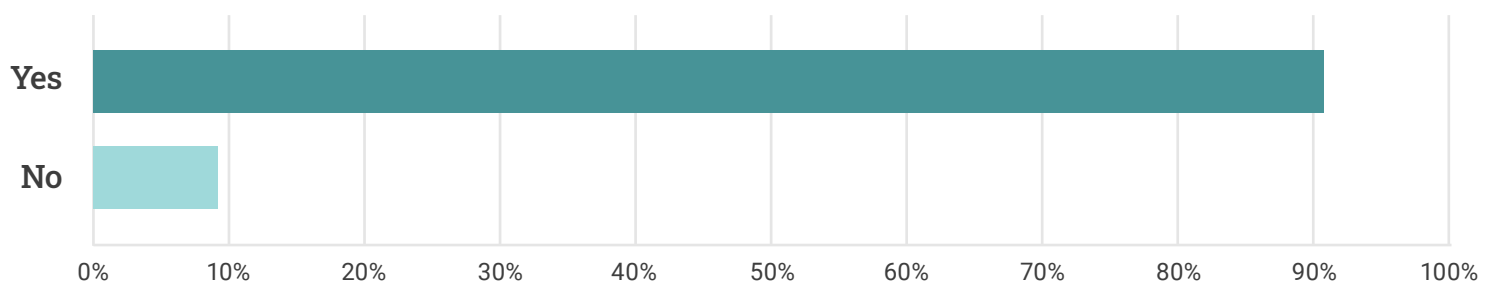
Large Companies



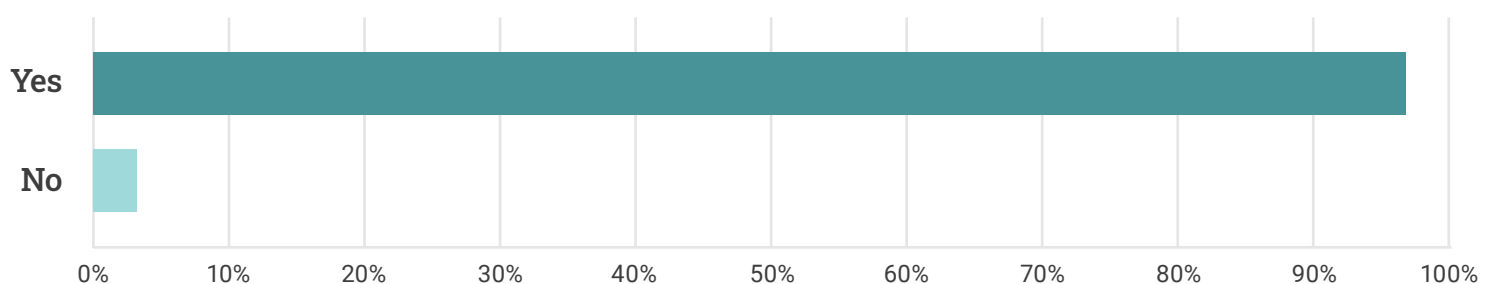
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total



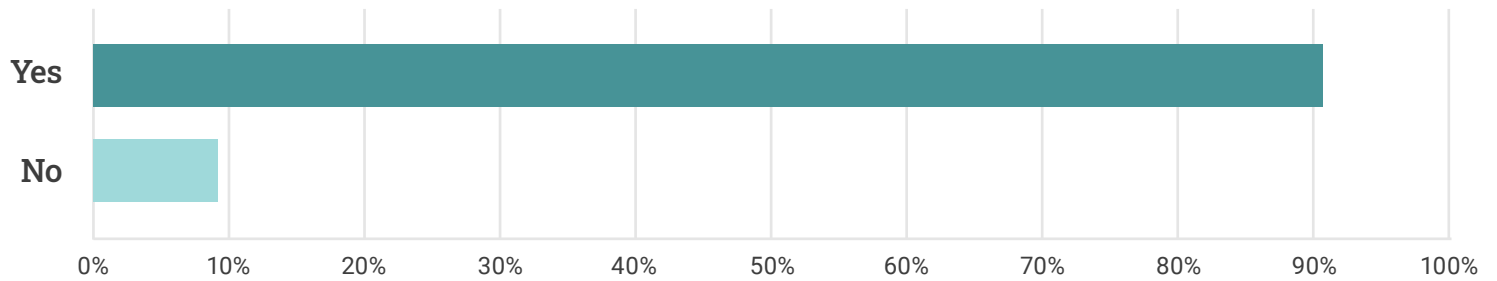
Enablers

Question

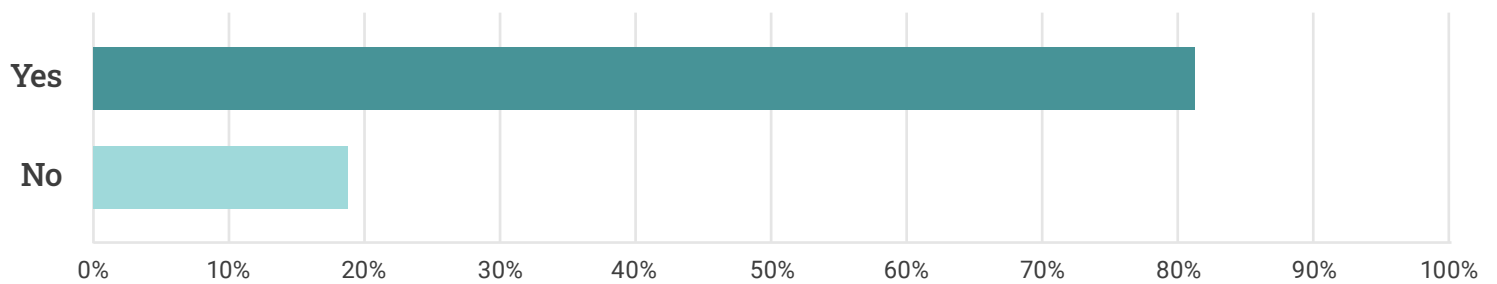
Your company offers paid sick leave to all part-time employees?

Sick leave is a particularly important enabler for two reasons: part-time employees are more often women and people of color, and women often have disproportionate caregiving responsibilities that may require them to use sick leave.

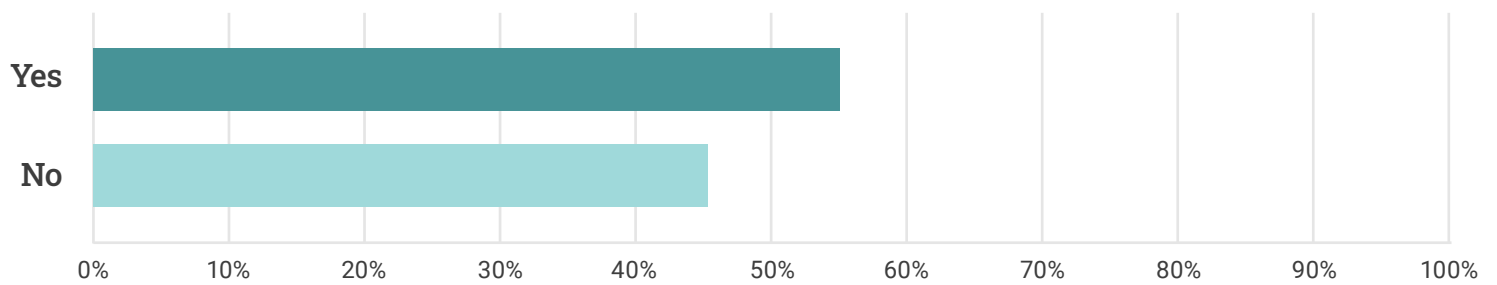
Large Companies



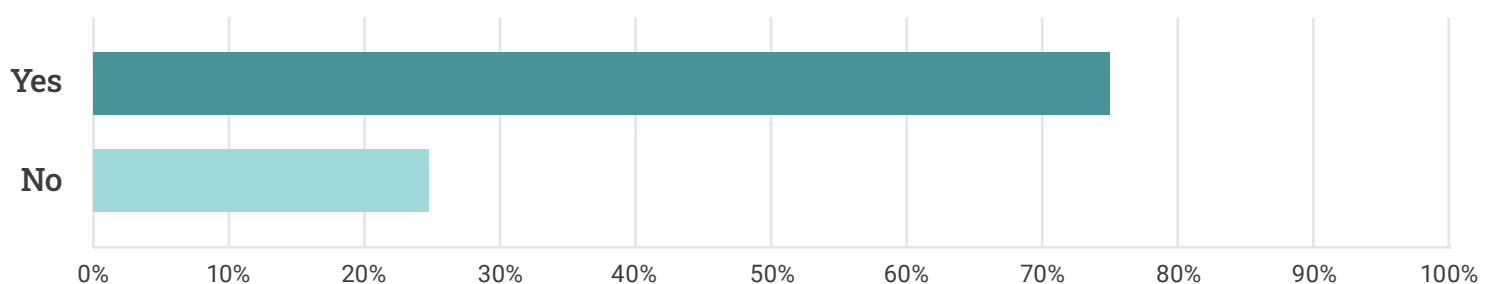
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

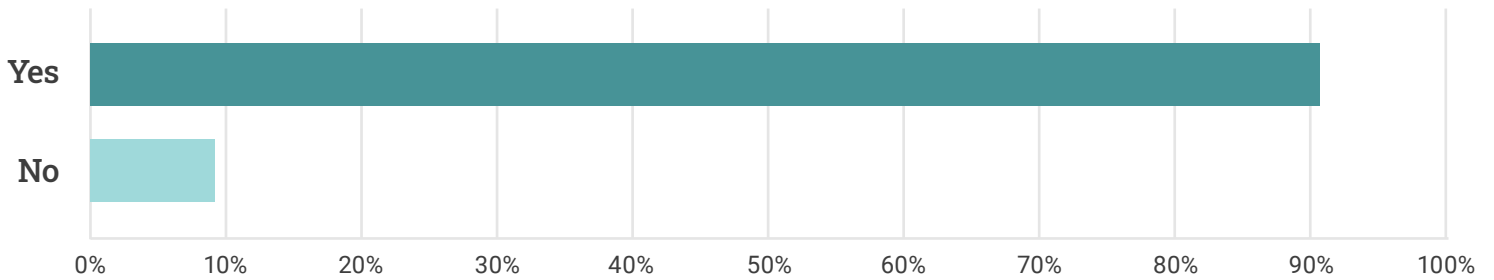


Enablers

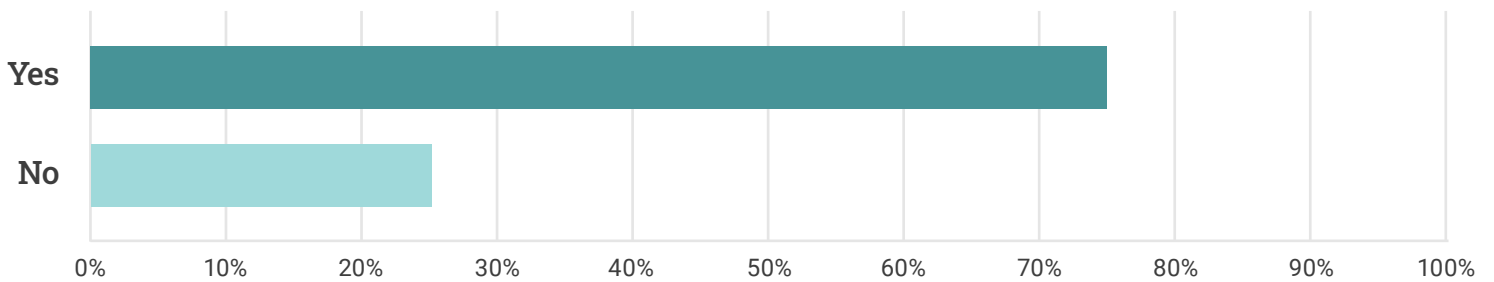
Question

Your company regularly communicates its gender-equality values externally (to customers, suppliers, or partners)?

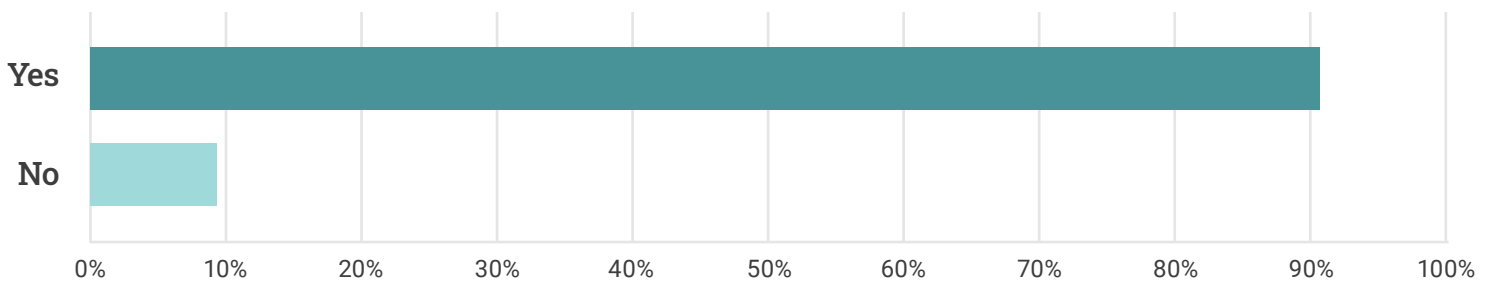
Large Companies



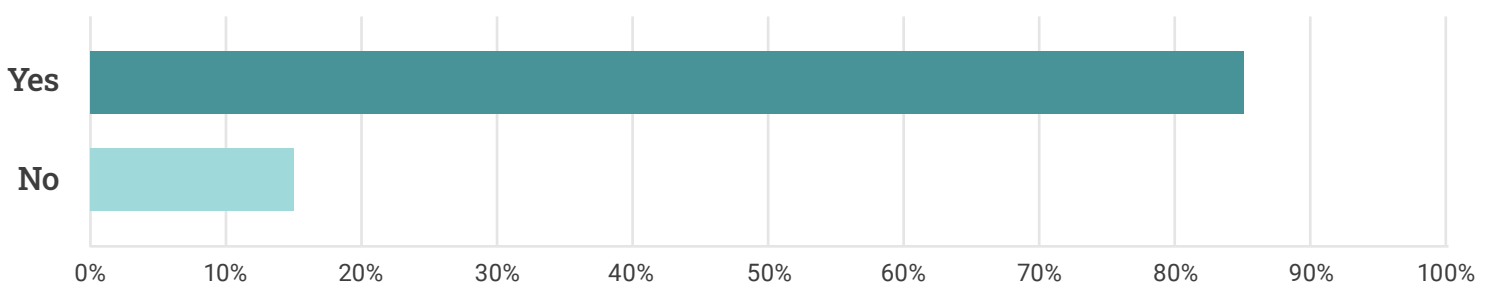
Medium Companies



Small Companies



Total

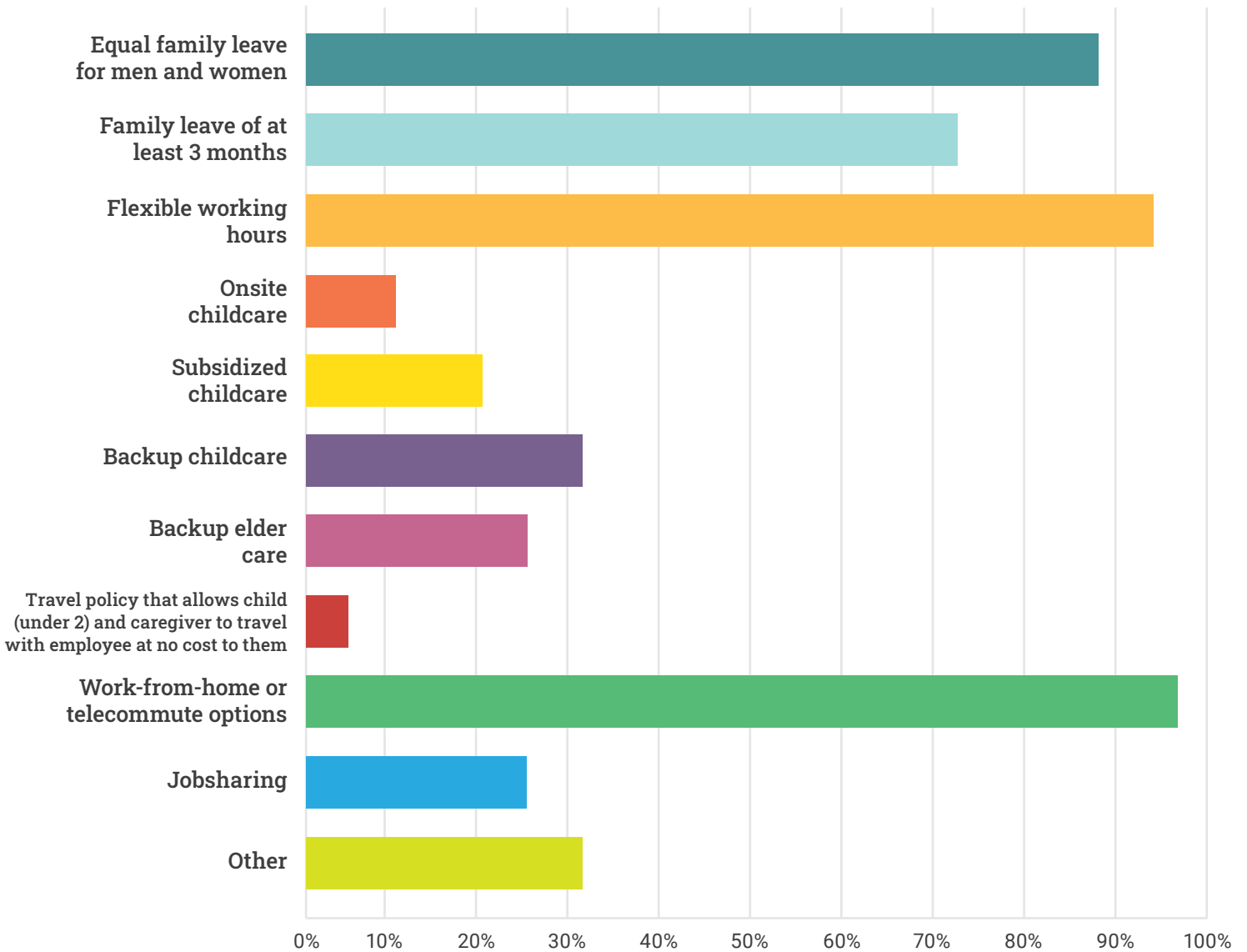


Enablers

Question

Your company has family-friendly benefits for both parents that include:

All Companies

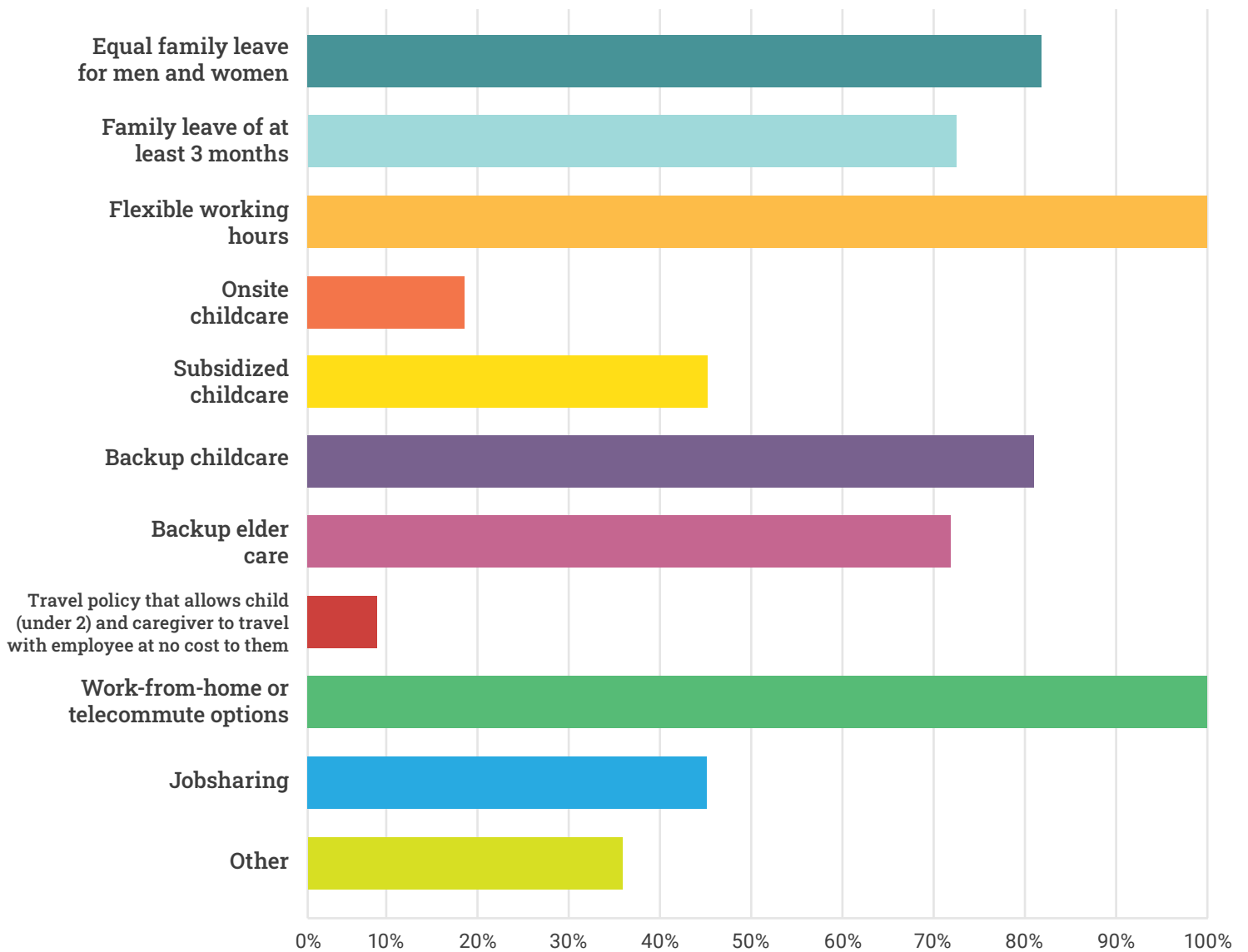


Enablers

Question

Your company has family-friendly benefits for both parents that include:

Large Companies

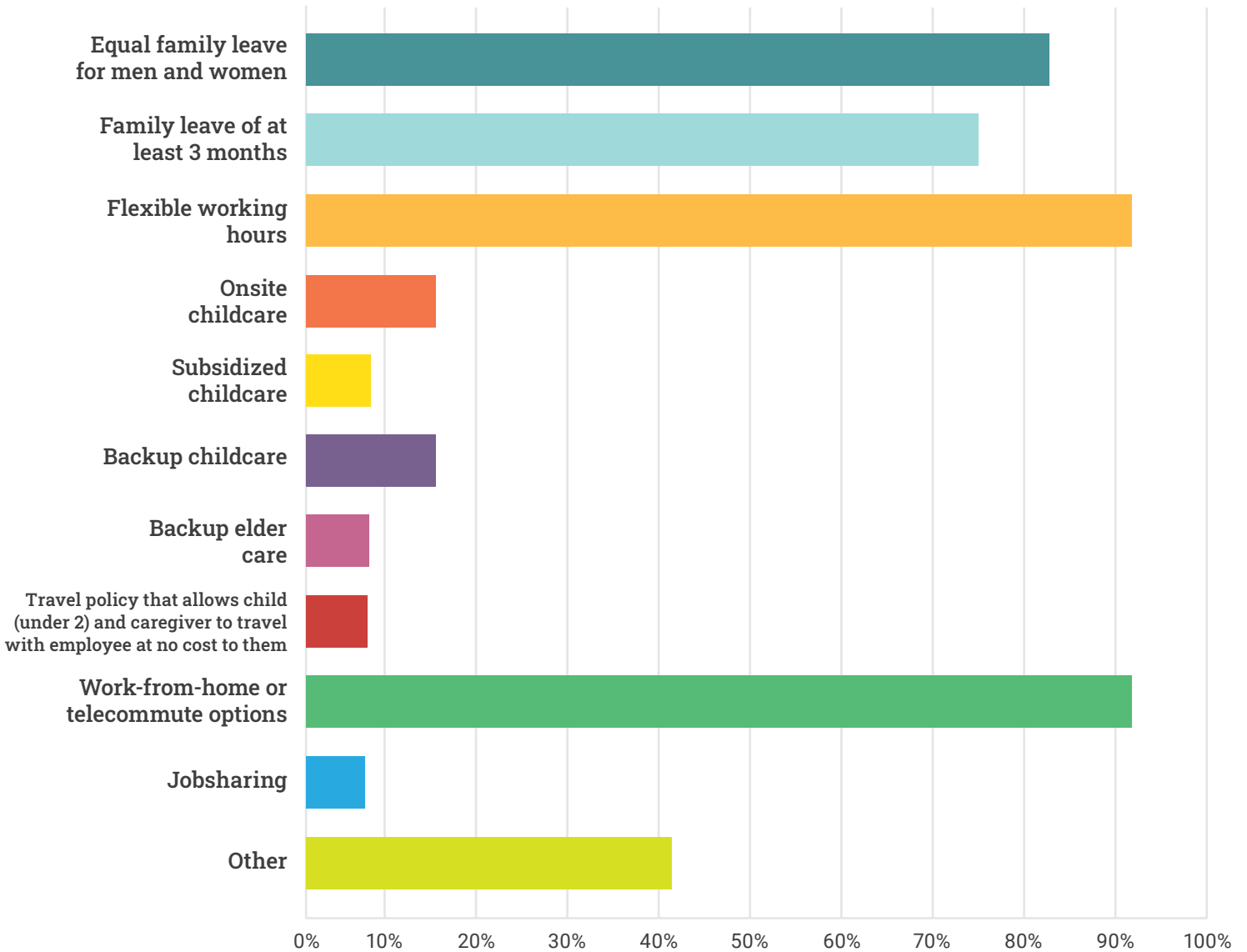


Enablers

Question

Your company has family-friendly benefits for both parents that include:

Medium Companies

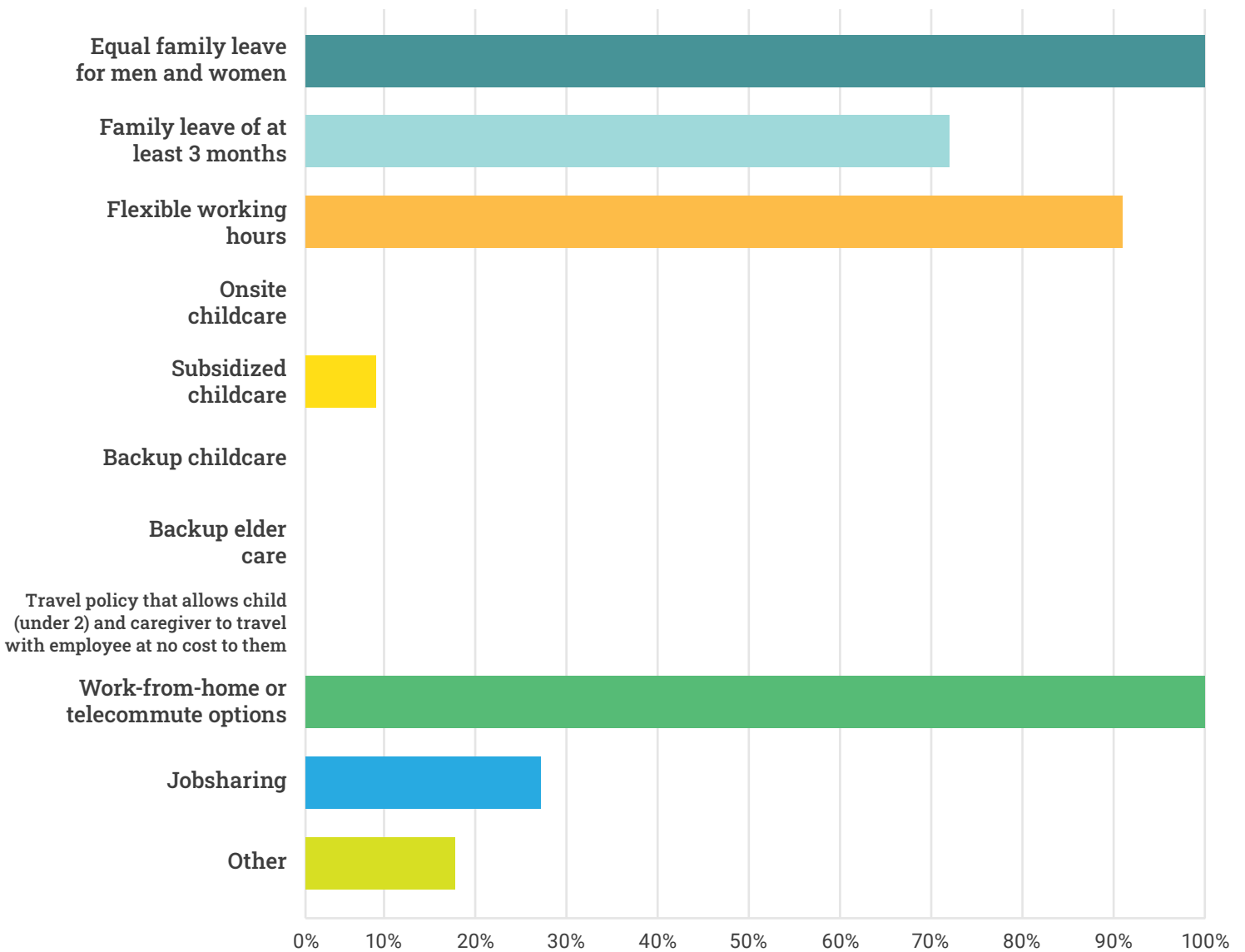


Enablers

Question

Your company has family-friendly benefits for both parents that include:

Small Companies





This report was produced by Parity.org. For questions or more information,
please contact info@parity.org.