

Understanding the Digital Capacity of Newcomer Settlement Organizations

Open North

Research Findings

Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada (IRCC)



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Technical Support

Please contact Lucy Buchanan-Parker, at
projects@amssa.org or **604-718-2784**



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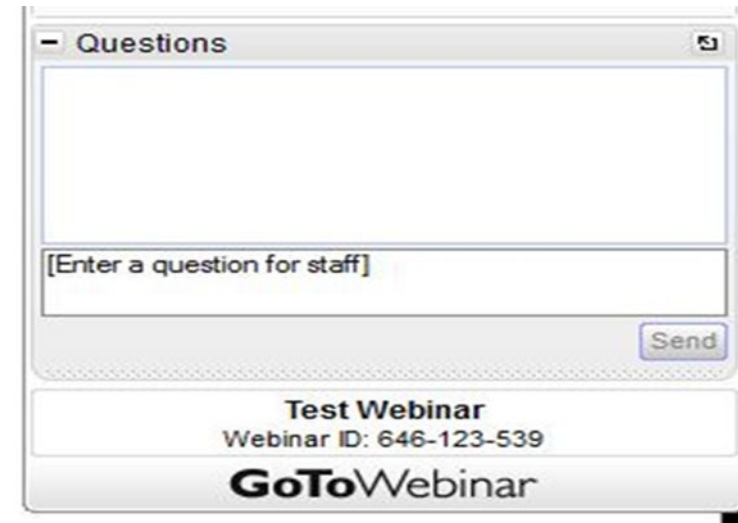
Housekeeping

'Hide Control Panel'



Housekeeping

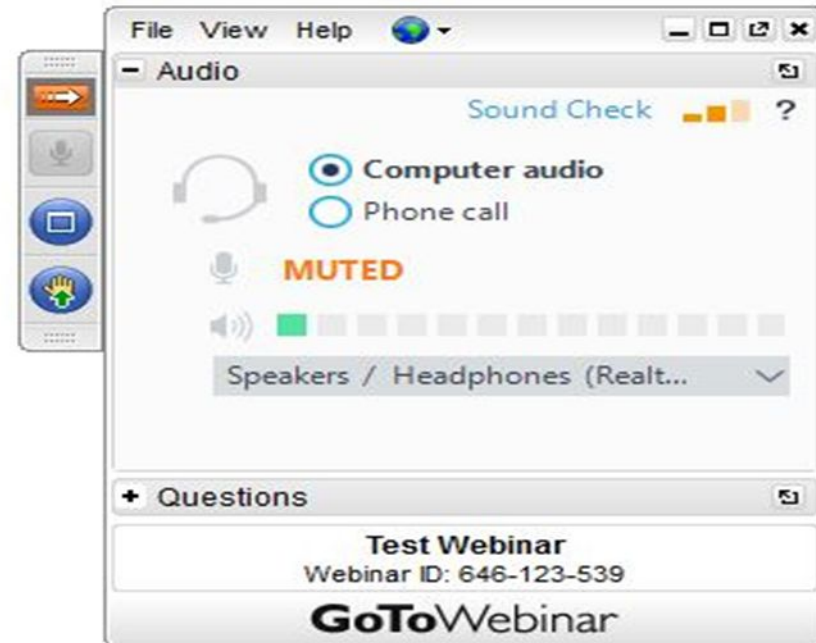
Expand Control Panel Features



Housekeeping

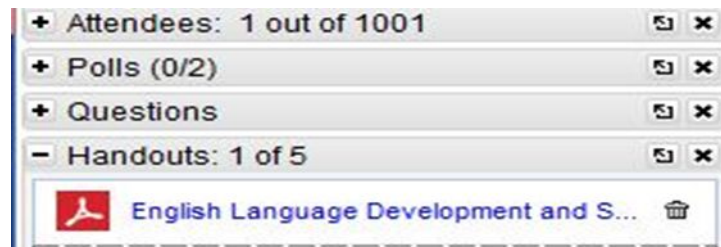
Sound & Audio

- Telephone
- Mic & Speakers



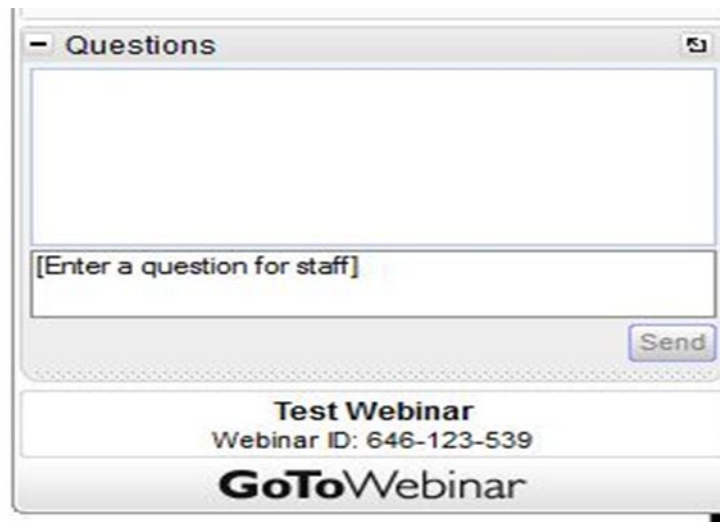
Housekeeping

Downloading PowerPoint and Handout Documents



Submitting Questions

Type your questions in the Question Box
Email to events@amssa.org



The image shows a screenshot of a web browser window titled "Questions". The window contains a large empty text area for entering a question. Below the text area is a smaller input field with the placeholder text "[Enter a question for staff]". To the right of this input field is a "Send" button. At the bottom of the window, there is a footer area that reads "Test Webinar" and "Webinar ID: 646-123-539". The GoTo Webinar logo is visible at the very bottom of the window.

Introduction

Research Objectives

1. Gain a deeper understanding of the digital capacity and needs of service provider organizations (SPOs) that serve newcomers in Canada
2. Help to inform and recommend options for future consideration to support the digital capacity of the settlement sector
3. Help to fill a gap in evidence significant to policy development in the digital capacity area
4. Support improvements to digital capacity among SPOs

About Open North

- Canada's leading non-profit specialized in open data and civic technology based in Montreal, QC
- Multi-sectorial approach in building sustainable, innovative, and inclusive data ecosystems
- Global/local systems change and movement building approach
- Works with +75 cities, provinces, and the Federal Government
- Applied research, tactical engagement, capacity building, advocacy
- 2017 research builds on IRCC funded 2016 qualitative study
 - [*Understanding the Data Needs of Settlement Stakeholders to Better Support Newcomers and Refugees*](#)



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Methodology

- Settlement service provides funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada through the Settlement Program
- Primary data collection tool developed by OpenNorth
 - Combination of quantitative and qualitative data
- Contact list of 657 SPOs provided by IRCC
 - 261 responses collected between
- Responses received between February 24th and March 10th
 - Email reminders were sent on March 3rd and March 8th
- Scheduled webinars in English (April 13th) and French (April 11th)
- Preliminary report submitted on March 31st
- Final report submitted on April 15th



Digital Capacity: IRCC's Definition

*“The ability to use digital tools within an organization to enhance **service delivery, communication, and coordination**. The digital capacity of an organization may be the function of **skills and training** (e.g. staff digital literacy), **infrastructure** (e.g. accessible internet, mobile hardware), **applications** (e.g. software, cloud computing) and **processes** (e.g. data analytics, data management, social media use).”*

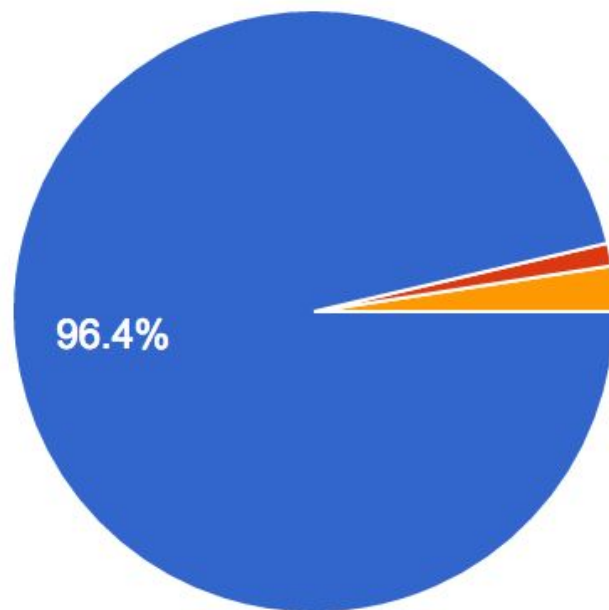


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About You

23. Is your organization currently a recipient of IRCC Settlement Program funding?

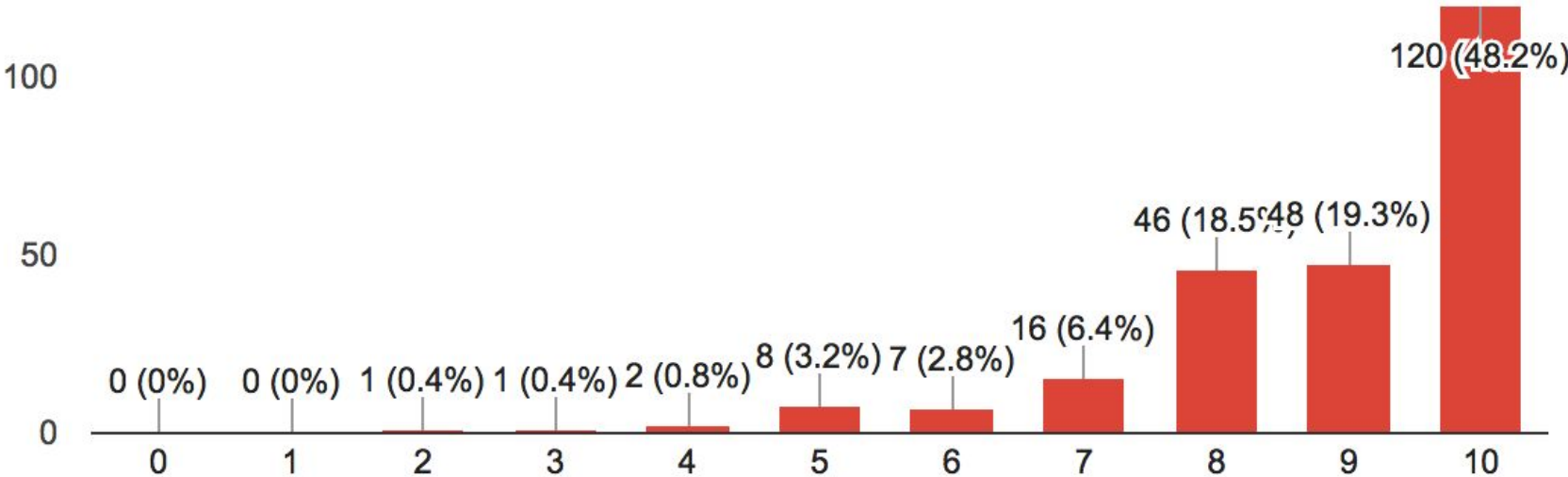
(246 responses)



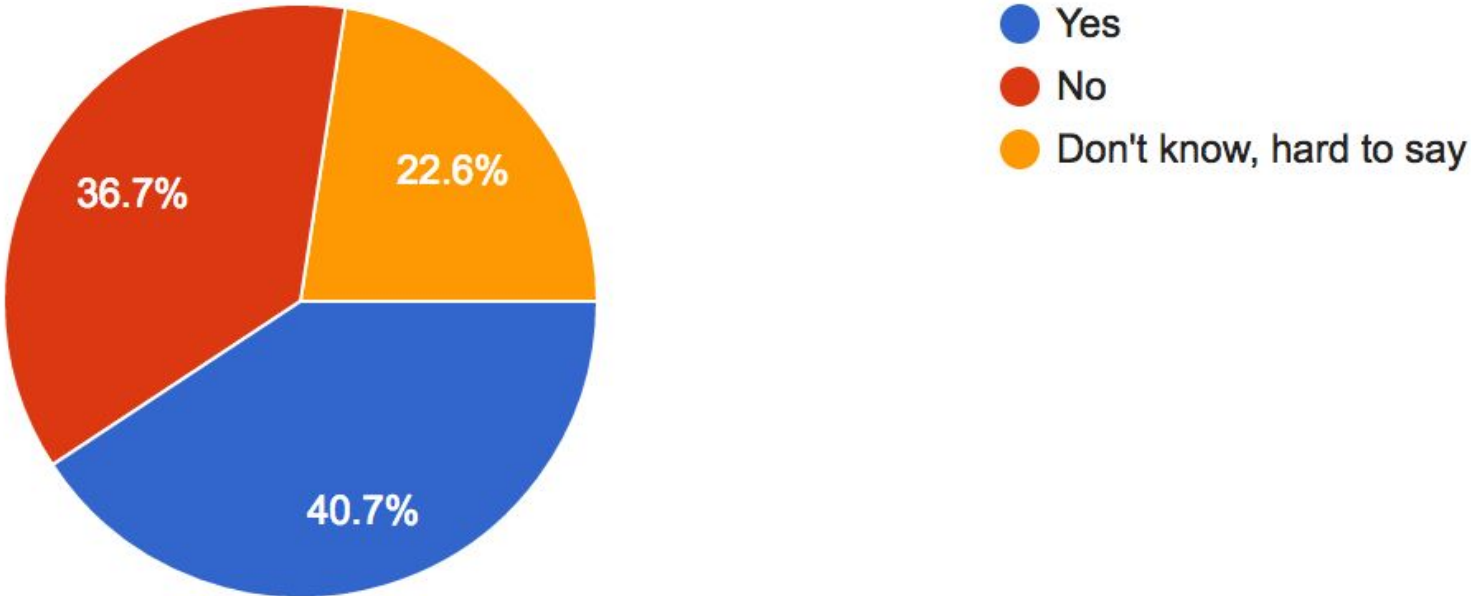
- Yes, we currently receive IRCC funding
- No, we don't currently receive IRCC funding, but we have in the past
- No, we have never received IRCC funding whatsoever

1. Overall, on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 being not important at all and 10 being extremely important, how important is digital capacity (e.g. tools, skills and training, infrastructure, applications, processes) in accomplishing your organization's mission and work?

(249 responses)

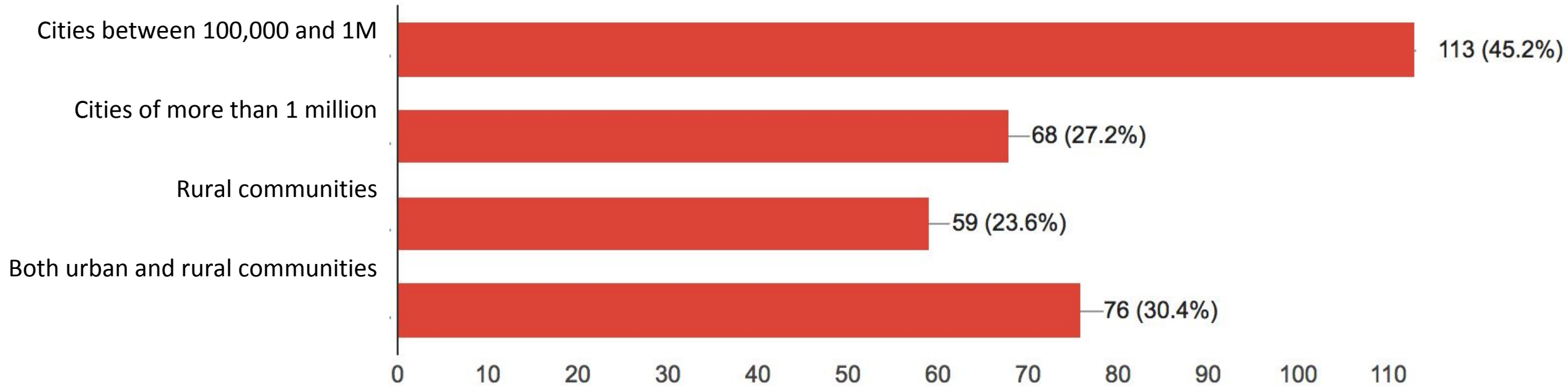


6. Does your organization have a digital strategy? (248 responses)



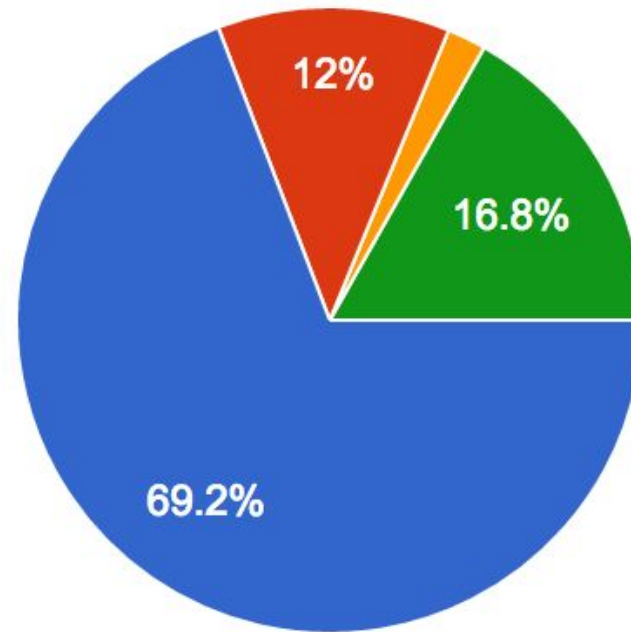
26. Where are your activities mainly focused? Check all that apply.

(250 responses)

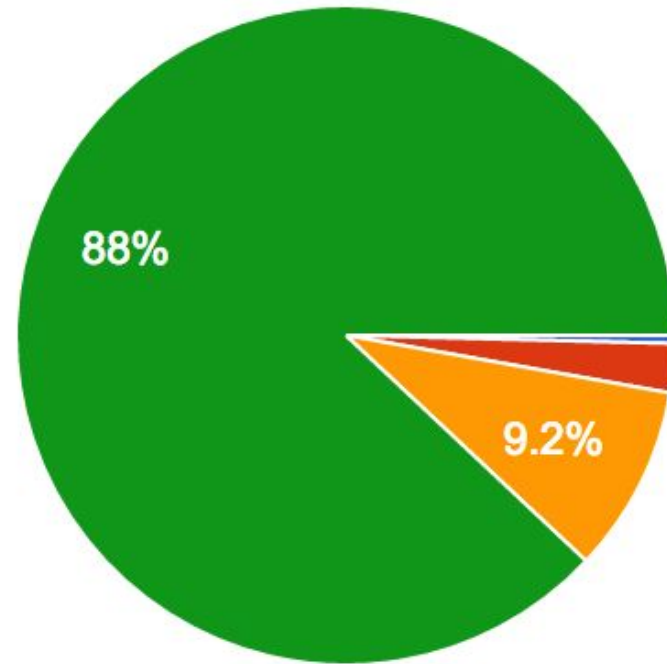


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22. What is your position? (250 responses)

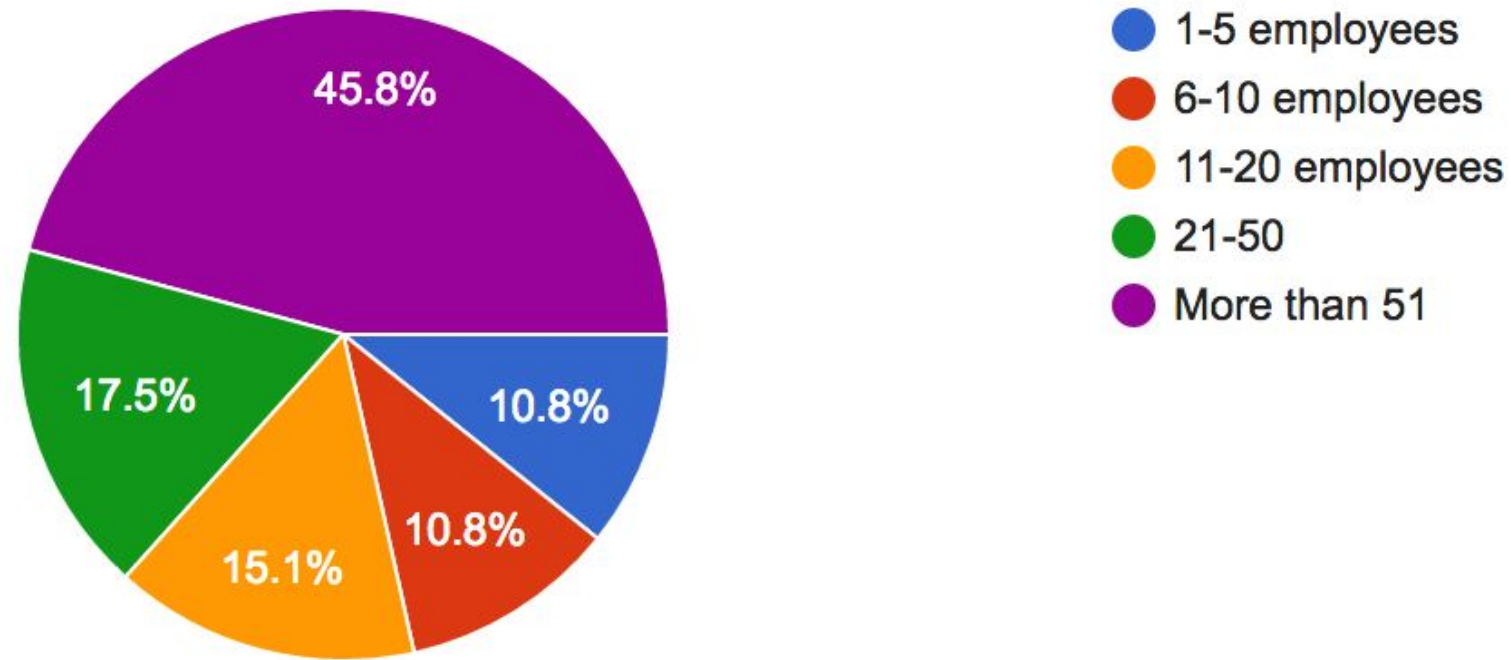


24. How old is your organization? (250 responses)



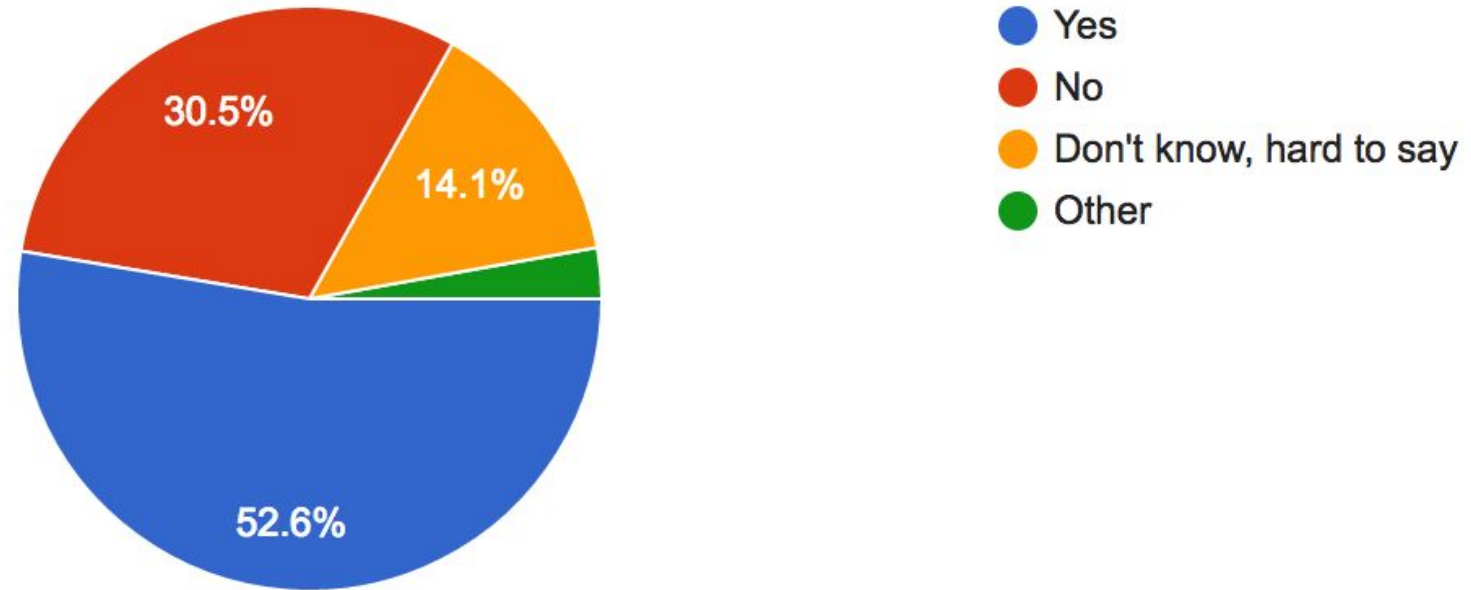
- Less than a year old
- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10 years

25. Describe the size of your organization (full and part-time) (251 responses)



7. Does your organization use a content management system (e.g. WordPress, Drupal, Joomla, etc.)?

(249 responses)



Questions?
Comments?

Internal Tasks

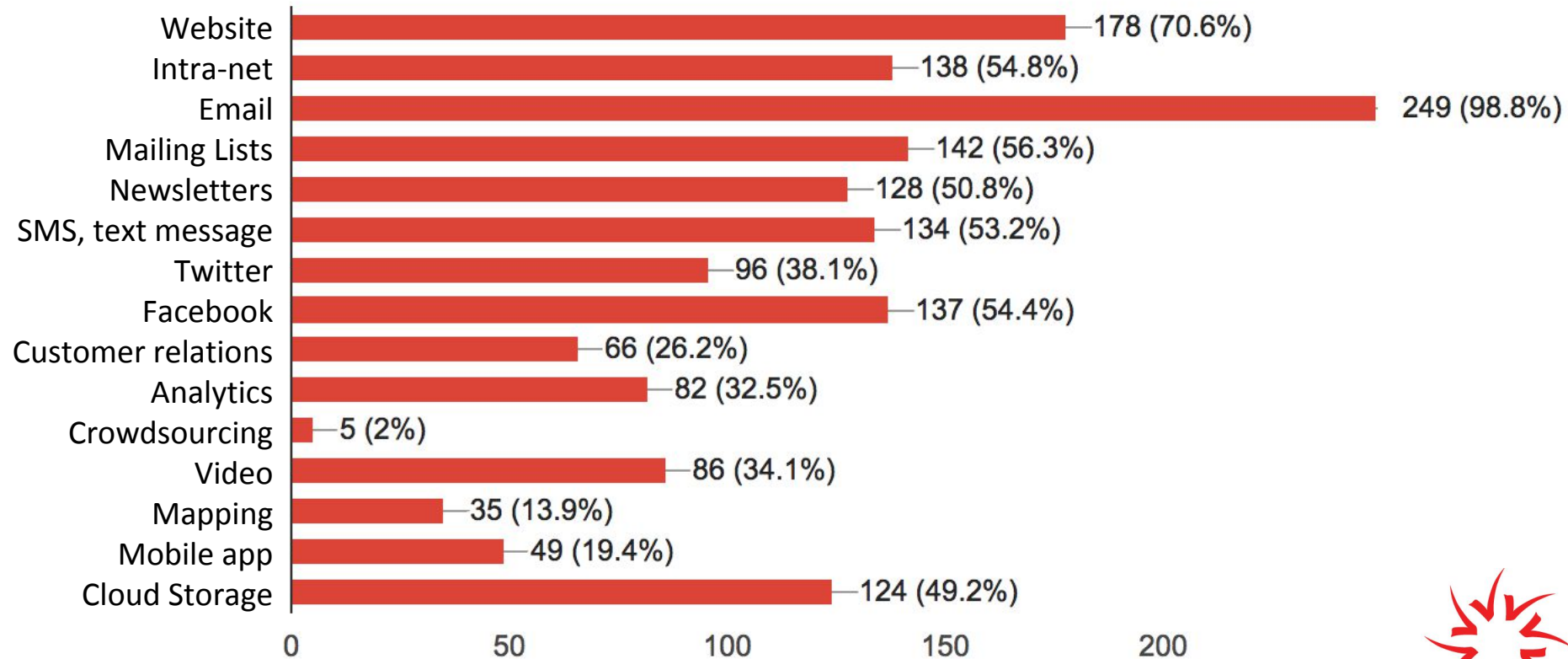
Key Takeaways: Internal Tasks

- Email remains the predominant method that SPOs communicate internally, although there is significant use of cloud storage tools to manage most internal tasks;
- Social media, mainly Facebook, and communication tools usually applied for external communication purposes, like newsletters, also serve to manage staff (e.g. staff and volunteers) and build awareness of services;
- Notable use of video (41.8%) for organizational learning and development;
- While the great majority of SPOs rely on their website to conduct internal tasks, few have the capacity (or need) to use analytics;
- Easy to use SMS and text messaging tools are used frequently by SPOs, but the limited use of mobile apps is indicative of limited digital capacity.



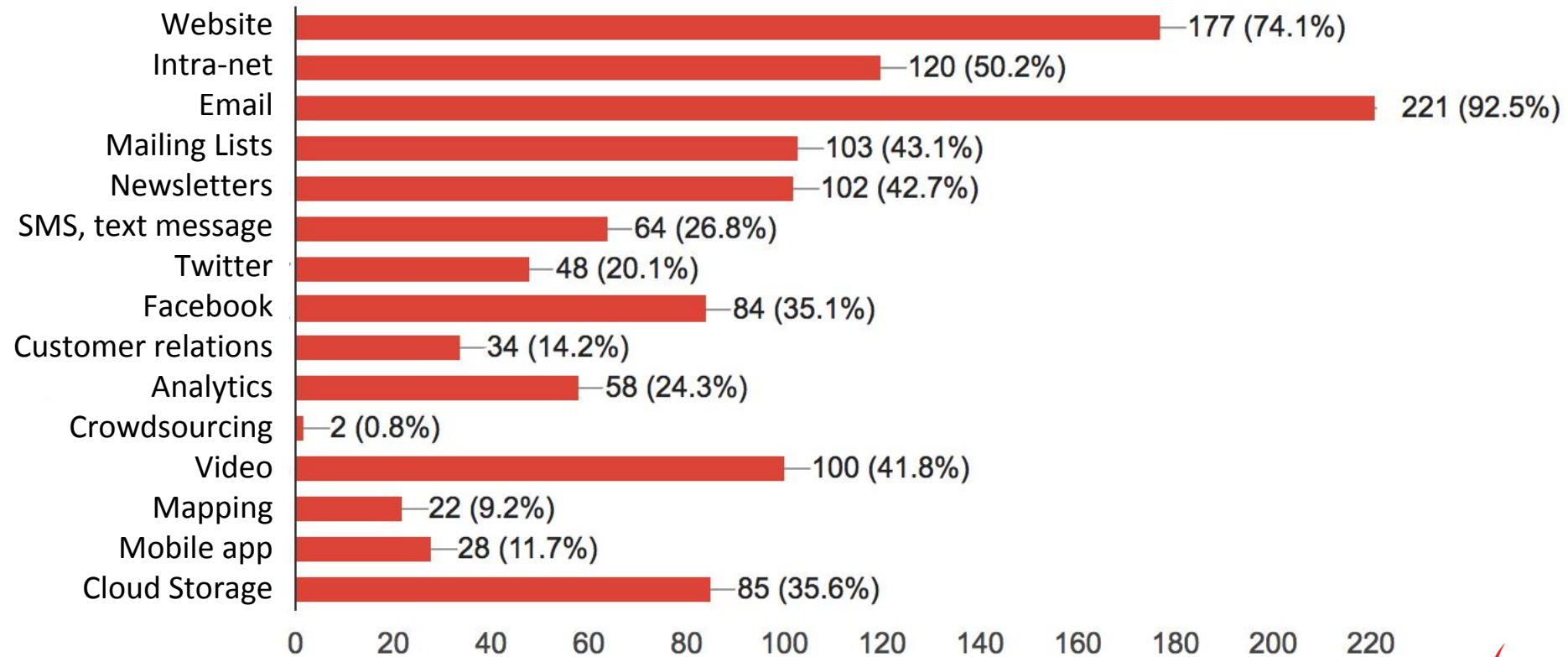
2.1. Digital capacity can be applied in a number of ways to accomplish an organization's mission and work. The following series of questions focus on 5 INTERNAL tasks and lists a number of tools. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct each task. Task #1: PEOPLE MANAGEMENT (e.g. staff, volunteers)

(252 responses)



2.2. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following INTERNAL task: ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

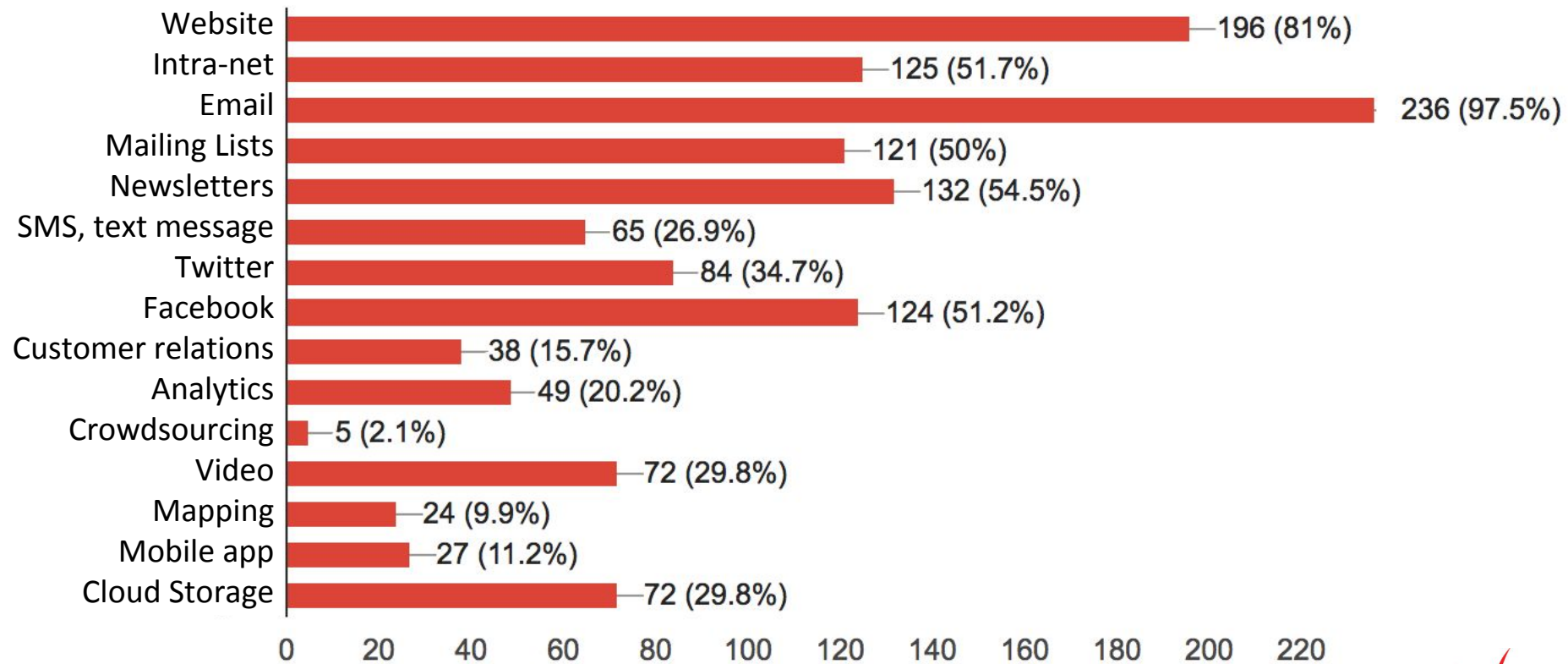
(239 responses)



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2.3. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following INTERNAL task: BUILD AWARENESS OF SERVICES AMONG STAFF AND INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

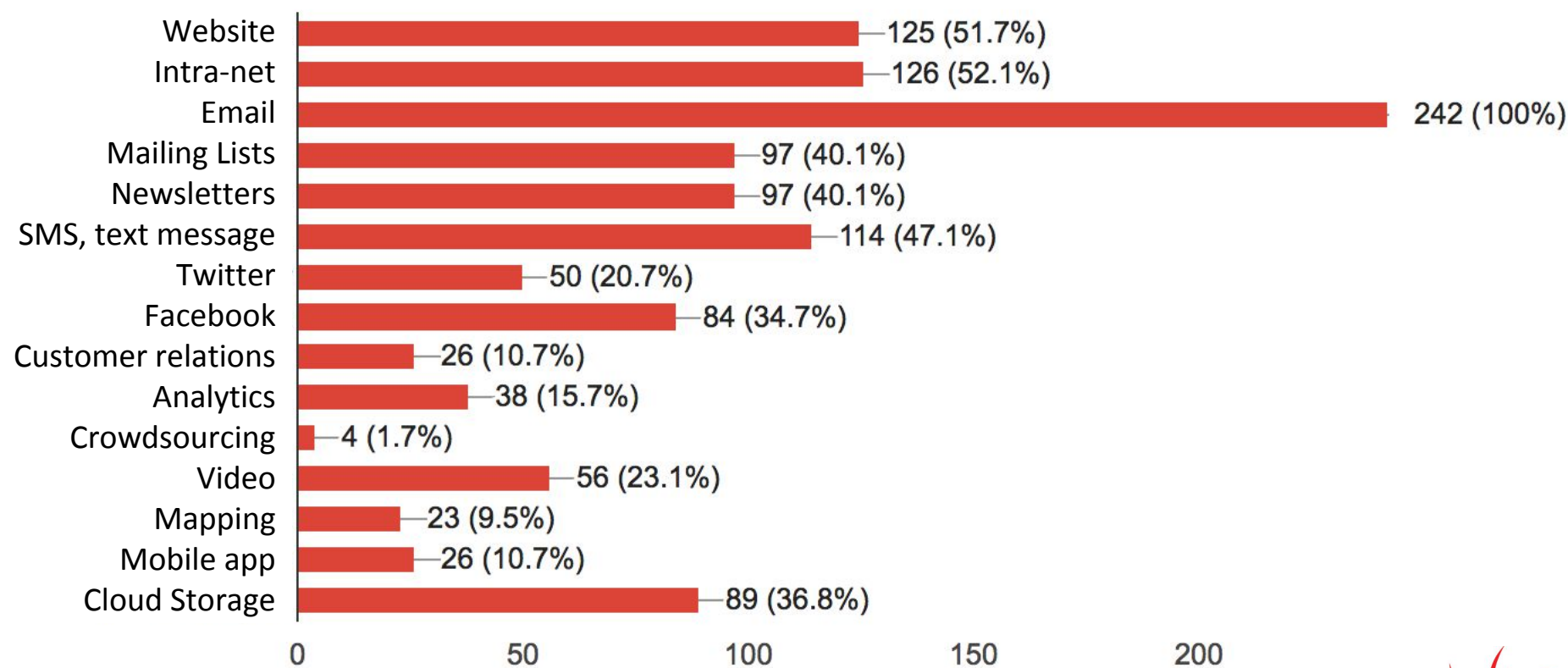
(242 responses)



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2.4. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following INTERNAL task: INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

(242 responses)



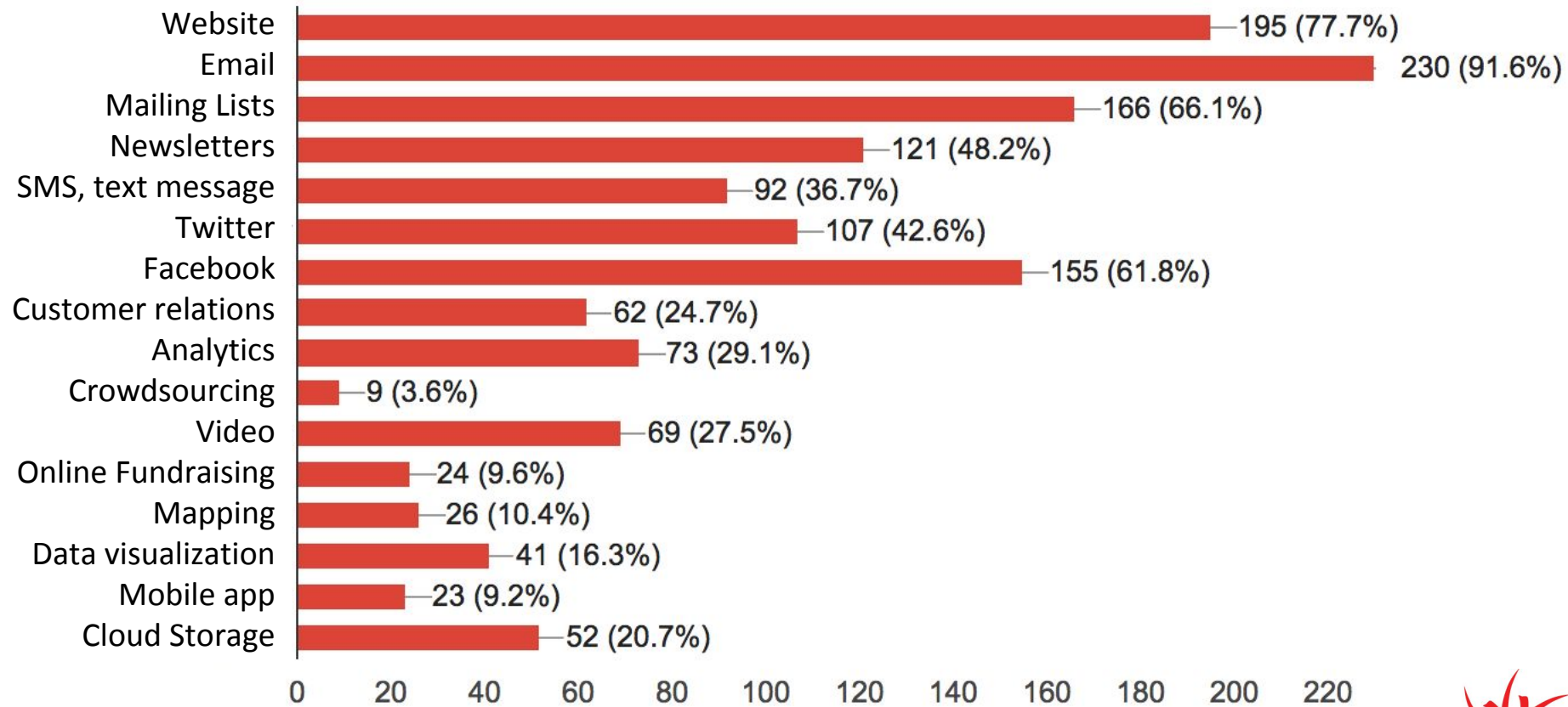
Questions?
Comments?

External Tasks

Key Takeaways: External Tasks

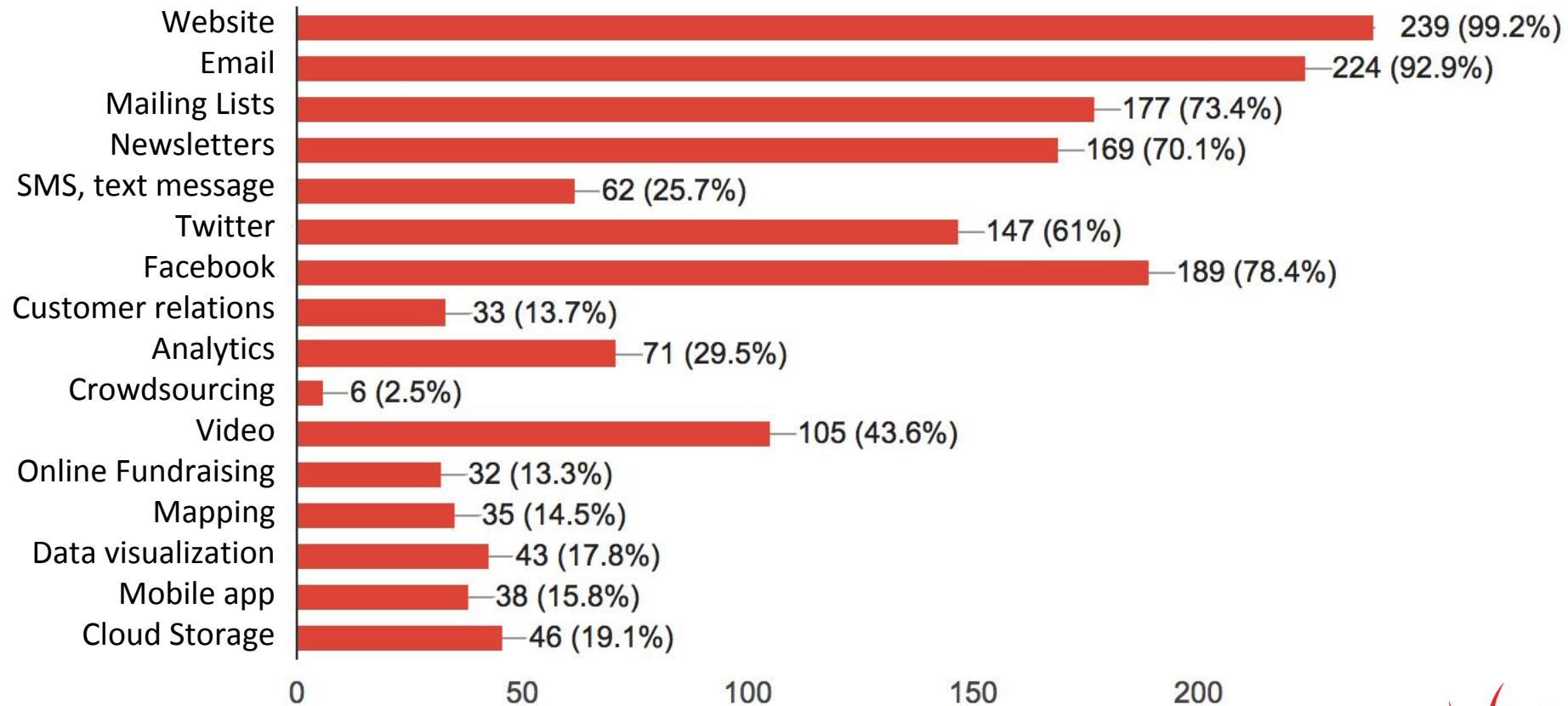
- The majority of SPOs use their digital capacity to communicate externally to advertise events (90.7%), educate the public (89.5%), and recruit volunteers (71.4%);
- Opportunity for skills and training on fundraising (47.2%), although not all SPOs may share this need;
- Digital roles and responsibilities are shared (52.8%) within SPOs, reflecting a general use of digital tools, infrastructure, and processes
- Unclear which type/size of SPO have access to permanent internal capacity (46.4%);
- SPOs have an established web presence and widespread use of social media (Facebook, Twitter), and mailing lists and newsletters are standard external communication practices;
- While video is frequently used to communicate externally, there is a limited use of more technical applications of digital capacity, such as crowdsourcing, data visualization, mapping, or mobile apps.

3.1 The following series of questions focus on 5 EXTERNAL tasks and lists a number of tools. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct each task. Task #1 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT (e.g. clients, volunteers)
(251 responses)



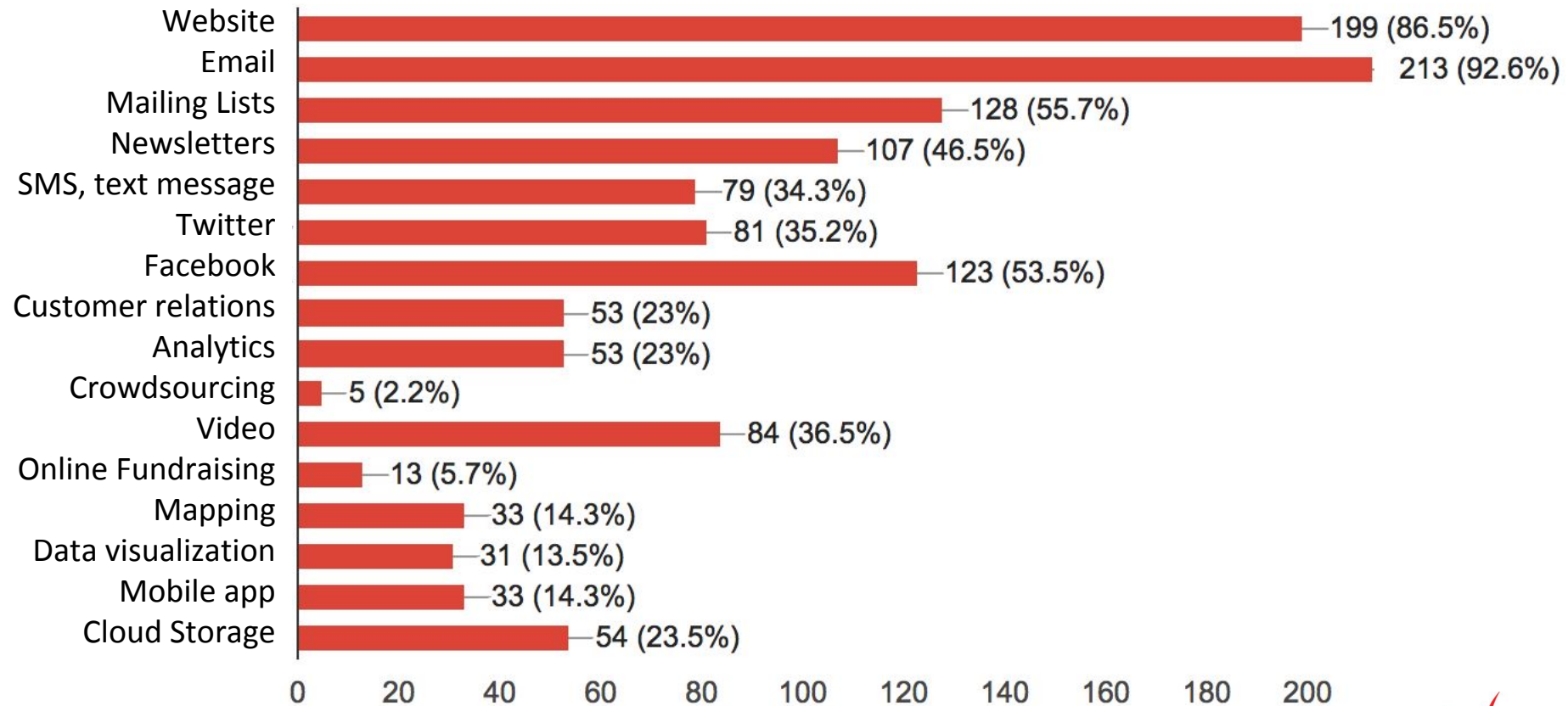
3.2. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following EXTERNAL task: PROMOTE AND BUILD AWARENESS OF SERVICES

(241 responses)



3.3. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following EXTERNAL task: SERVICE DELIVERY

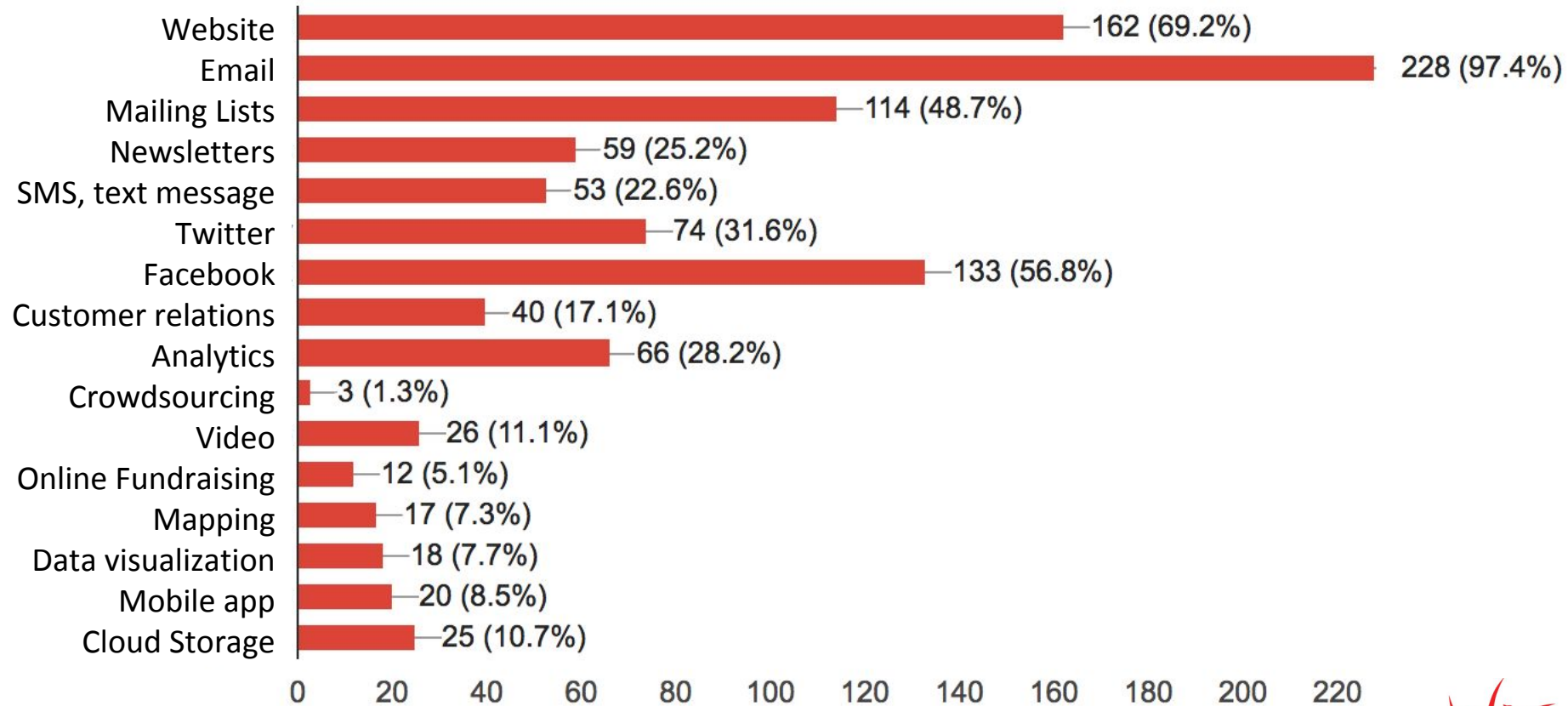
(230 responses)



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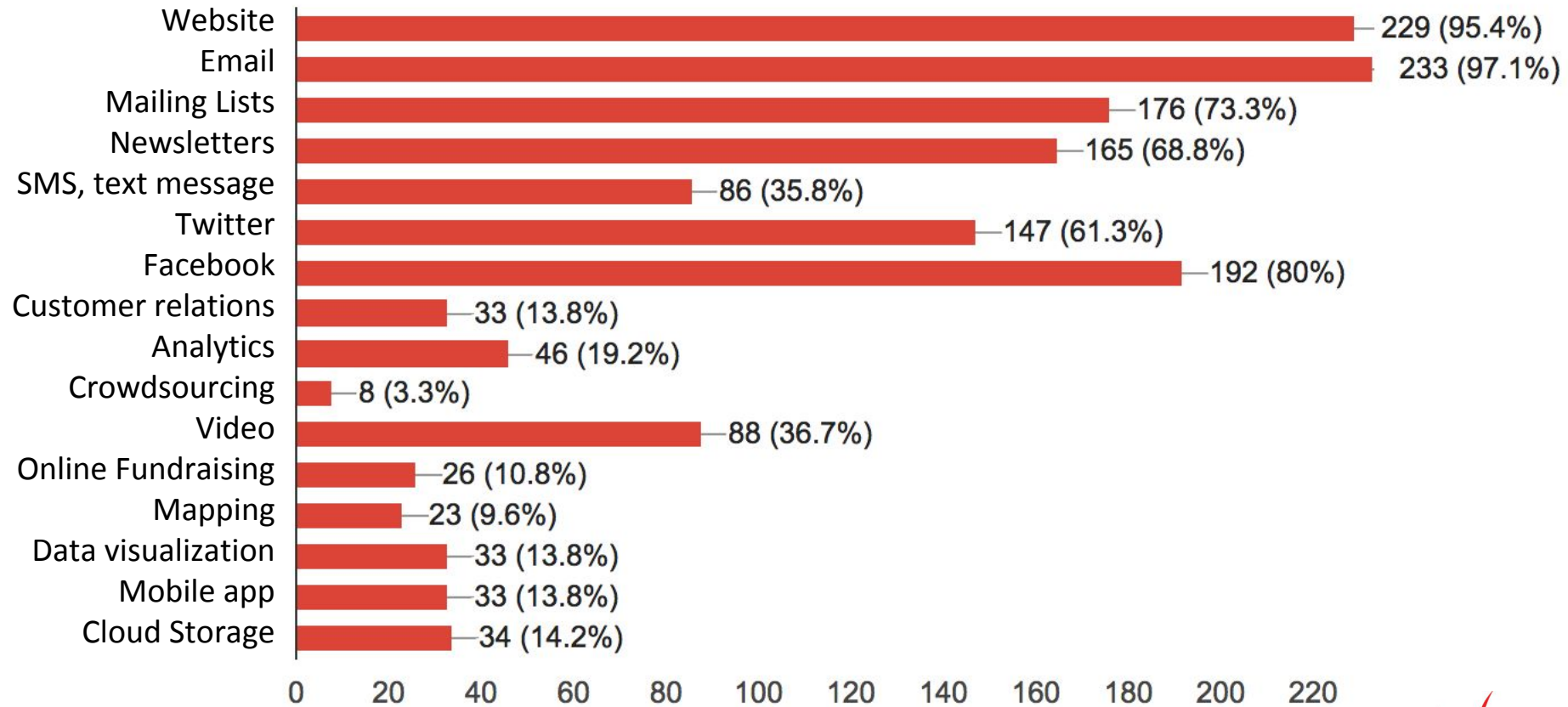
3.4. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following EXTERNAL task: GETTING FEEDBACK FROM SERVICE USERS, CLIENTS, and STAKEHOLDERS

(234 responses)



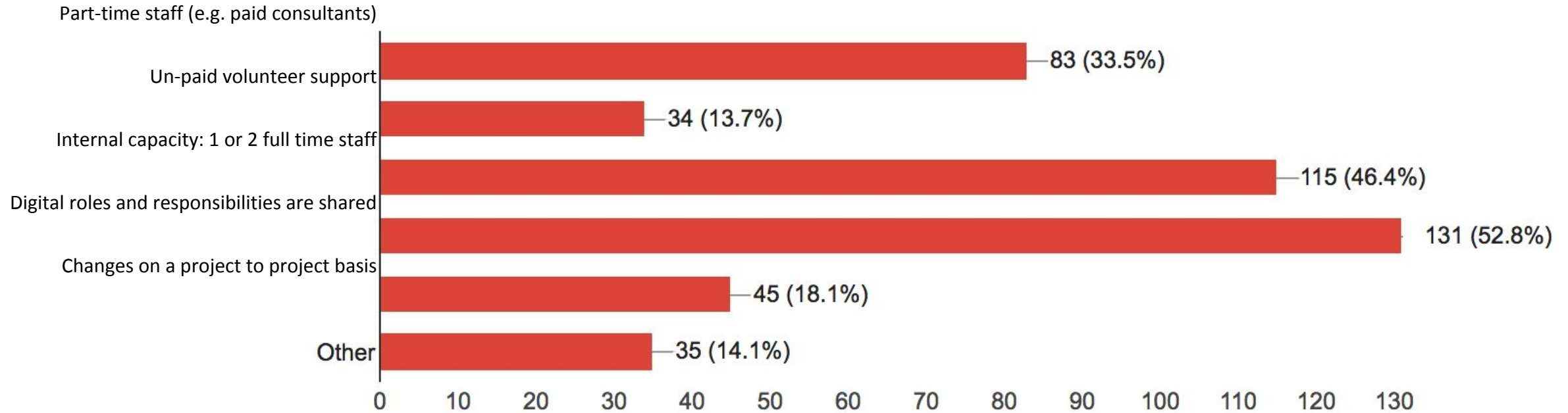
3.5. Please select all of the tools that your organization uses to conduct the following EXTERNAL task: EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

(240 responses)



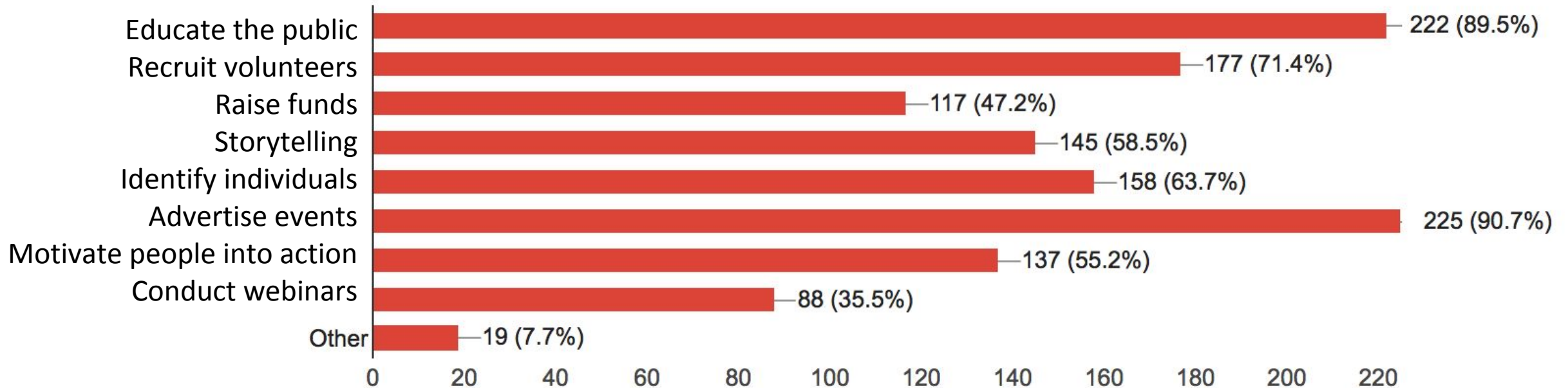
4. Let's focus on your organization's current capacity to manage digital tools, practices, and infrastructure. How is your organization's digital capacity managed internally from a human resources perspective?

(248 responses)



5. Please tell us more about your digital communication. How do you use your digital capacity to communicate externally? Check all that apply.

(248 responses)



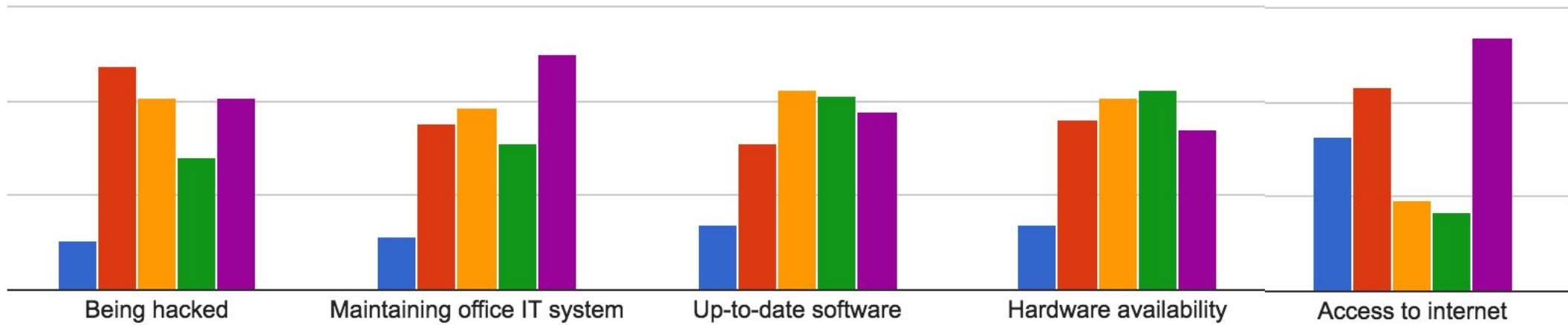
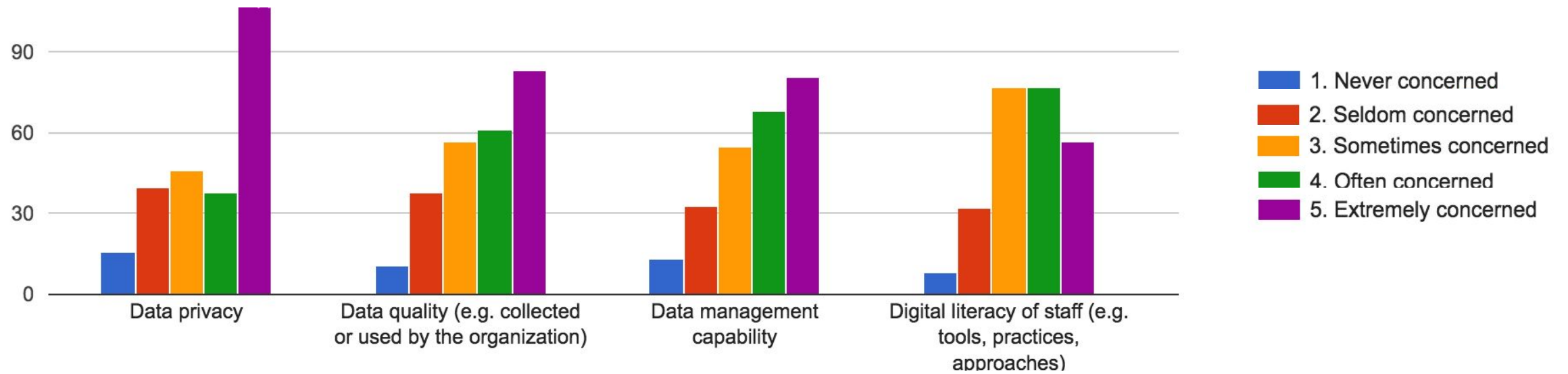
Questions?
Comments?

Attitudes Towards Digital Capacity

Key Takeaways

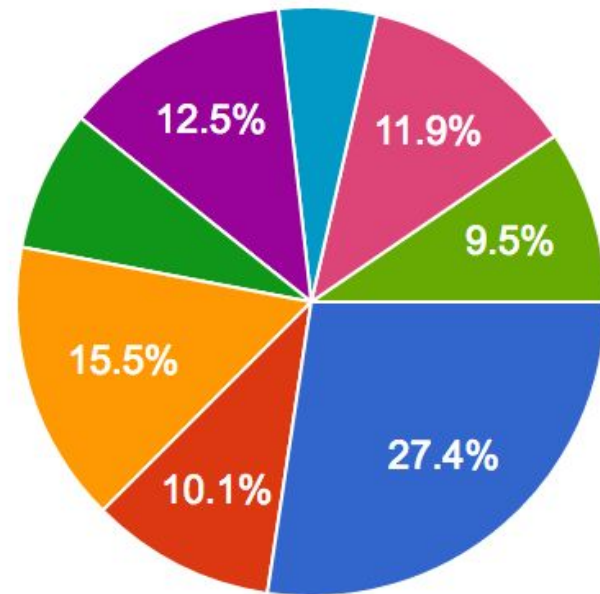
- Top of mind concerns with data privacy issues by SPOs may be tied to current gaps in digital capacity, especially in managing data;
- Access to the internet remains a significant preoccupation for SPOs and may represent a precondition for addressing digital capacity needs;
- Although SPOs are extremely concerned with data quality, they are interestingly not as concerned with digital literacy of staff. This may be attributed to strength of contextual knowledge;
- SPOs understand their digital capacity needs but find it challenging to evaluate the impact of digital capacity;
- The availability of hardware is a relatively low concern, however, maintaining office IT systems are a preoccupation;
- Sharing data collected by SPOs ranks highest in shared digital capacity experience;
- Opportunity to build on experience of SPOs supporting each other in sharing internet content, IT technical skills, infrastructure.

8. In the context of your organization, how concerned are you about the following?



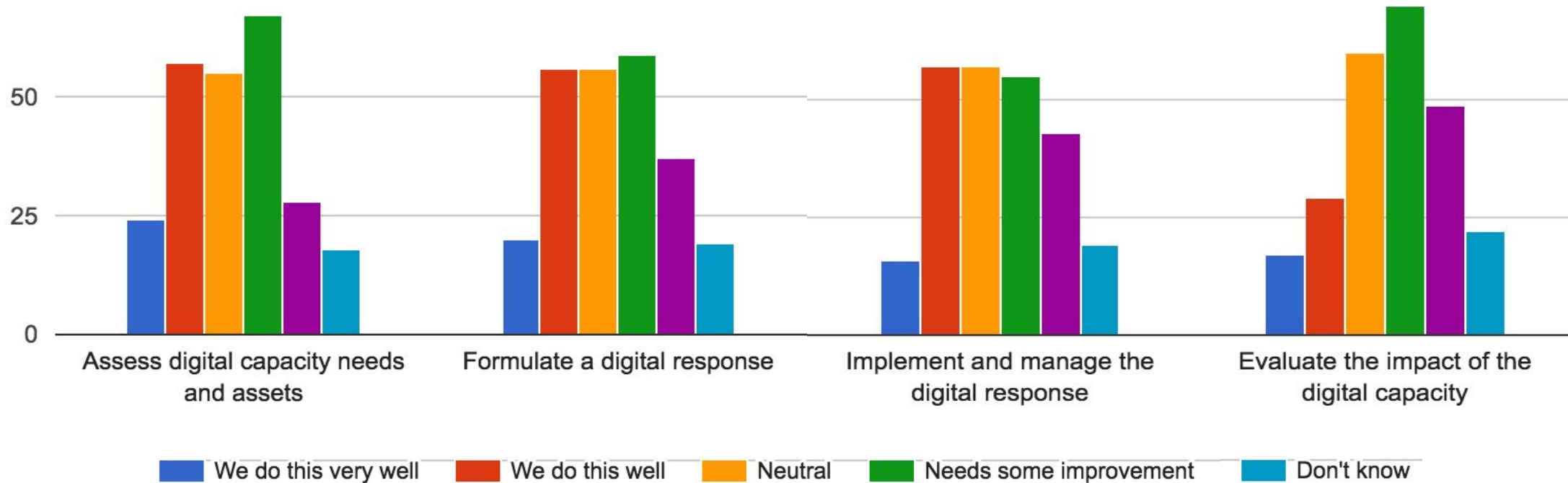
9. Organizations that have similar missions and work sometimes SHARE their digital capacity. If you have shared your digital capacity with other organizations, please check the SHARED digital capacity method that proved most useful for your organization.

(168 responses)



- Data collected by other newcomer settlement organizations
- Data management expertise
- Internet content (e.g. cross-positing)
- Equipment and hardware (e.g. computers, printers)
- IT technical skills and know-how (e.g. training)
- Digital infrastructure (e.g. software)
- Platforms, websites (e.g. building websites)
- Other

10. Digital capacity is often developed in response to a specific organizational need. Let's focus on how you develop your response when confronted with a specific organizational need (e.g. addressing gaps in existing programs or services). What's your top priority for improvement?



11. If you've answered "needs a lot of improvement" or "needs some improvement" in the previous question, please tell us why.

“We lack sufficient human and financial resources to implement the necessary improvements in order to keep pace with the current expectation, for example we have 4 servers and one is about 7 years old that need to be replaced.”

“Shortage of funds results in ad-hoc approaches to formulating, implementing and managing the digital responses”

“With no one on staff identified as our digital management specialist and no funding for such a position, it means that we rely on whoever has the capacity and knowledge. It also means that we do not assess up front or evaluate impact. The tendency is to be reactive, not proactive.”

“Need training!”

“It all comes down to having the resources (financial, human) to do what needs to be done. Digital solutions will be key to our organization's growth in the coming years, but all dependent on having the ability to advance digital.”

“This is an area that is often left to "When we have time." Our capacity and workload means that time is at a premium.”

“We are not really knowledgeable enough with the technologies available to have them work for us. Often we are unaware of how we can utilize existing in house technologies to serve our work. We do not have the resources (time or human) to get up to speed, learn develop and implement many would-be strategies.”

Questions?
Comments?

Your Experience

12. Please tell us about your organization's current innovative practices and approaches involving your digital capacity. We'd like to capture your experience for the benefit of the newcomer settlement sector. This can entail a project, a practice, or a tool.

“We have recently used Skype conferencing to deliver English lessons to outlying areas. In doing so we have been able to engage several clients that would have otherwise had no access to ESL.”

“As a practice, we use all social media tools (Facebook, Twitter, MailChimp, YouTube) to promote our programs and services among our clients, partners and stakeholders. We also connect with them through a weekly digital newsletter. For internal communication and planning, we use Google calendar, google docs which work well and is a free tool to be used for this purpose.”

“We are developing online learning platforms for training, a online recruiting platform for our region (i.e. like indeed.com), digitizing client surveys and assessments”

“Creating a system to support efficiency for students/families. We developed an electronic data collection system that allows us to track ISW (Intercultural Support Worker) staff interventions for all EAL students - this was part in response to having to report UCI numbers to IRCC. This e-system has cut down our reporting time significantly and allows us to now analyze data more effectively and efficiently and helps us inform our practices or allocate appropriate resources.”

“We recently developed and launched an online talent portal that connects refugee job seekers with BC employers. BC Refugees JobConnect is an easy to use web-based platform that allows job seekers to create profiles showcasing their skills and experience. Employers registered for the program can login and do a keyword search for candidates based on their skills requirements.”

“Our agency JUST provided us, in Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, with Blackberries that can download the app for Video Relay Services. This is HUGE! :)”

Innovative Practices

Every Body Has the Right - Honouring Indigenous Storytelling through Human Books: <https://vimeo.com/204592909>

Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA) <http://www.arriveprepared.ca/>

Made in... <http://www.madeinygk.com/>

Manitoba Trauma Information and Education Centre <http://trauma-informed.ca/on-line-trauma-training/>

The Canadian Centre for the Victims of Torture <http://ccvt.org/index.html>

Action for Healthy Communities <http://a4hc.ca/>

Woodgreen Housing Opportunities & Marketing Exchange (HOME) <http://mycanadianhome.org/>

The Multicultural Association of Fredericton presents: Step by Step <https://mcaf.nb.ca/en/step-by-step/>

Learn IT 2 Teach <http://learnit2teach.ca/wpnew/>

Live & Learn, online community for new Manitobans <https://livelearn.ca/category/learner-stories/>

Prosper Canada – Centre for Financial Literacy <http://www.newcomerscanprosper.org/>

14. If you have an example to share, could you also tell us about how you SHARED your digital capacity with other newcomer settlement organizations?

“C'est à travers OCMS-OCASI pour la base de données de notre clientèle. OCMS est conçu à l'image de iEDEC ce qui facilite nos rapports car les données rentrées dans OCMS sont par la suite téléversées dans iEDEC”

“One of our programs is at 1000 Voices, a community space that supports over 50 agencies to support the community. we share computers, laptops, printers, fax, and general IT support when needed”

“[...] we have a collective of about five agencies that provide support services in schools. These agencies meet once a month to discuss collaboration with Edmonton School Districts as well as coordination of service delivery in schools. We have been sharing our capacities electronically (through emails).”

“Allowing settlement agencies to use library facilities to meet clients, train program participants and give presentations using library wifi, computers and printers”

“We collaborate with local settlement agency, Adult Language and Learning by mutually promoting each other's resources for newcomer settlement. The Chatham-Kent Welcome Network is a branding program to promote access to both the LivingCK.ca and www.adultlanguageandlearning.ca as settlement support services. Promotional materials include the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's LivingCK logo, CK Local Immigration Partnership logo, and the Adult Language and Learning logo for cross promotion.”

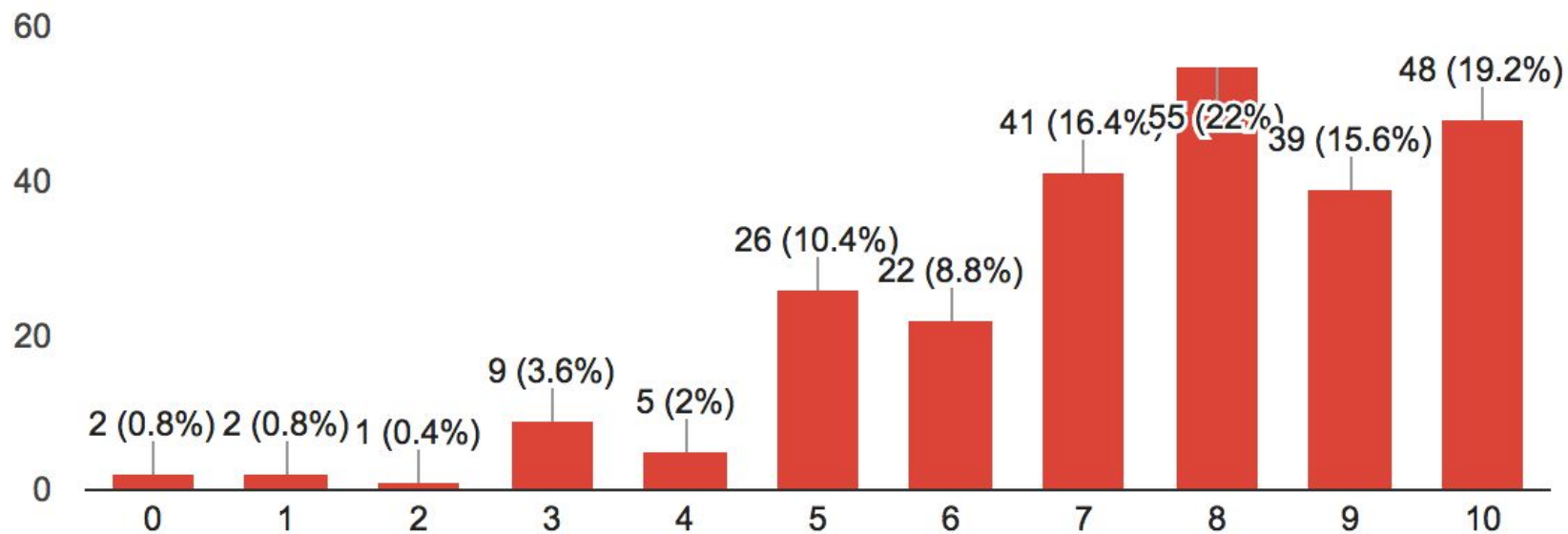
“We have developed a client management system that helps us keep track of our statistical and service data, fulfil reporting requirements to our funders, and analyze trends/gaps. We are actually now in the process of sharing this with another settlement organization of similar size.”

Questions?
Comments?

Future IRCC Support

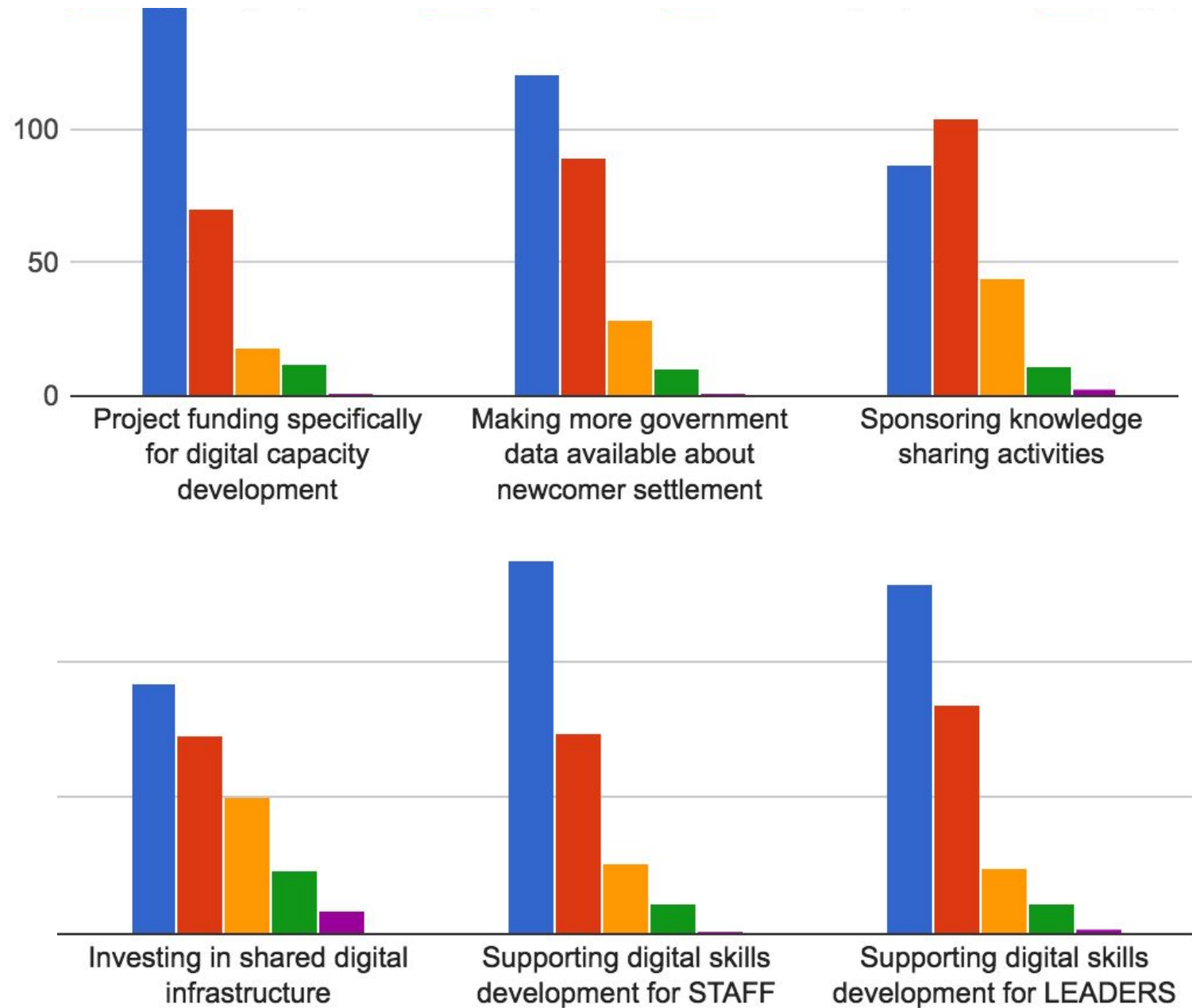
16. Overall, on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 being not important at all and 10 being extremely important, how important is the development of newcomer settlement organization's digital capacity compared to other type of support currently offered by the IRCC, including labour market participation, language development, building inclusive communities.

(250 responses)



15. How important are the following ways that IRCC could support the development of newcomer settlement organization's digital capacity?

- Extremely important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important at all



17. Do you have any other feedback that you would like to share with us?

“Recently it was indicated by IRCC that IT services, computers and phones are all part of "Admin" costs which suggests those items are not needed for service delivery. That idea needs to be reviewed and redressed as IT costs are intended to make services deliverable not just an accessory of administration. Fund the supports so that the delivery of programs is allowed to progress.”

“Without having an organization and all staff from front line to leadership being at minimal competent in their digital capacity, we are doing a disservice to our clients who need to be exposed to this and learn it (if they don't already) as part of their full settlement and integration. E.g., teachers communicate with parents of their students through mobile apps - in Calgary all parents should be savvy in d2L software - Desire to Learn and how to access this online.”

“The one thing all newcomers have in common whether they are refugees with no money and few possessions or economic immigrants who are well-off and well-educated is a cell phone. It's the way we can reach all of them. We should be developing services and technology that leverages that commonality.”

“There has always been a challenge for us to meet the needs of students who are privately sponsored because we do not necessarily know who they are. If our federal government could somehow share this info with us, we can respond to helping support their settlement needs in schools. Our division is now just starting to track this data in response to the province's direction. The settlement sector agencies can benefit from this info as well.”

Q & A

**Thank you for your
participation!**



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If you would like to receive more analysis,
email us at info@opennorth.ca indicating
the appropriate name and email address.

Please use the following subject line:
Sign me up for more analysis.