

Single-Use Item Reduction

What We Heard Report

October 2022



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*This report was prepared by Marcomm Works Inc,
an Alberta marketing communications and public engagement firm.*

Executive Summary



A comprehensive online and in-person public engagement process recorded strong support for the Town's single-use item reduction strategy, with a gradual and straightforward implementation and a priority on education over enforcement.

More than 500 people provided feedback in an online survey, and a new Environmental Business Leadership Working Group was formed with single-use items as the first topic for a series of sessions.

An Online Information Webinar drew a smaller audience (13 participants). A planned In-Person Workshop was cancelled due to a low registration response (five registrants). The lower participation in these two processes may mean that the typical Town of Banff stakeholder is interested in a level of engagement on this topic equivalent to participating in a short survey (10 minutes) but not through a longer Online Information Webinar (60 minutes) or In-Person Workshop.

Support for a single-use item bylaw if implemented through a staged and methodical process

A majority of engagement participants support the single-use reduction strategy and want to participate as they care about sustaining the environment they live in. This positive support comes with a general theme that participants want the implementation of reductions and bans to be staged and gradual. Participants shared many risks and concerns accompanying single-use item reductions and bans, focusing mainly on minimizing harm to businesses and residents, including costs.

A clear and simple bylaw enforced consistently

Several participants emphasized the necessity for a simple bylaw, if there is to be one, implemented through a staged process with standard and consistent enforcement. Participants said they want the bylaw to be understandable, followed, and enforced consistently.

Education and promotion should be comprehensive and happen first

As part of the staged and methodical process, many participants said that promoting and educating people through a comprehensive communications strategy before the bylaw is enacted will be required for a successful implementation. Participants said they believed that people need to connect the pristine environment maintained in Banff with the requirement to eliminate single-use items and understand the behaviour changes required to eliminate single-use item use.

Reusable alternatives are in place

In different parts of the engagement process, participants stressed the importance of appropriate reusable alternatives before any bylaw enforcement is in place.

Reward and incentivize reuse rather than implementing fees and penalties

Engagement participants generally favour strategies and processes that reward rather than penalize while implementing single-use item reductions and bans. The results do not necessarily indicate that people requesting or requiring single-use items should not be charged a fee, especially if alternative items are available. The spirit of the dialogue was that the Town and businesses should investigate creative ways for businesses and citizens to be rewarded for compliance rather than penalized for non-compliance.

Banning plastic bags, reducing and banning single-use items for dine-in services, and reducing accessory items supported

Participants consistently supported the draft bylaw in three areas: banning plastic bags, ensuring reusable products are offered for dine-in services, and reducing accessory items. Participants said plastic bag elimination is already well underway, but requiring reusable products for dine-in will take some adjustments for some service providers. Lastly, participants supported reducing accessory items through request by the customer only.

Implementing single-use item reduction and bans for takeout more challenging

The proposed draft bylaw for takeout in this engagement process stated that businesses accept reusable cups and containers and institute a mandatory fee for disposables. Survey participants only somewhat supported a mandatory fee for disposables, and working group members generally favour mandatory fees. The takeaway portion of the proposed bylaw elicited a lot of feedback on how implementing reusable products requires solving multiple perceived process and infrastructure issues.

In summary, engagement participants support the Town of Banff in reducing and eliminating single-use items. Participants were adamant that single-use item reduction and elimination be implemented strategically and methodically. The support also extends to ensuring that the Town, businesses, and citizens work together to move gradually along the single-use item elimination and ban spectrum, so potential or perceived harm to businesses, and any other stakeholder group, is minimized while the passion for the environment is upheld.

Project Background

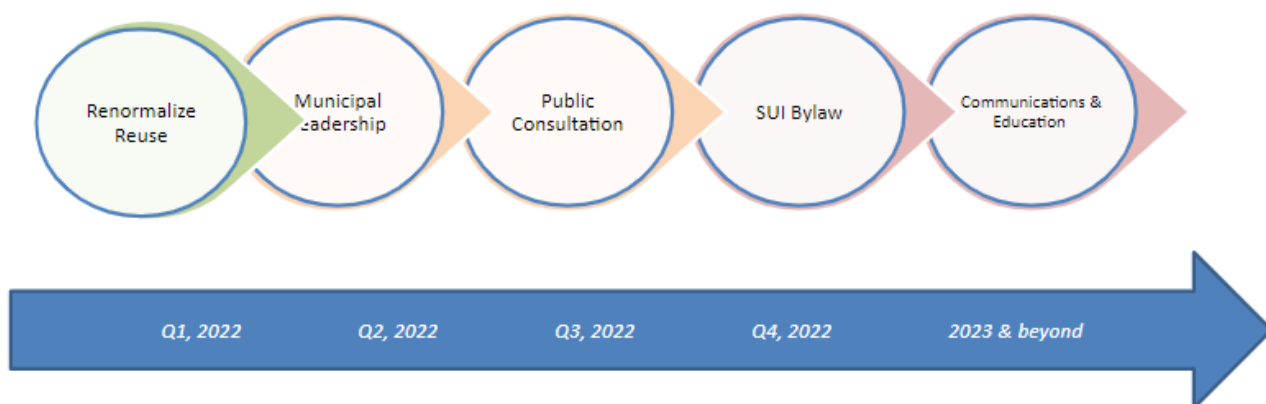
In late 2021, the Town of Banff adopted a Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy to reduce items that go directly to landfills after brief use by residents, visitors, or businesses. The goal is to stop using these items rather than shift to other types of disposable products, which may still end up in the landfill.

Banff has a strategy to eliminate all waste going to the landfill by 2050 as part of its goal to be a model environmental community.

The strategy tackles more than just plastic items. It includes a range of single-use items such as grocery bags, straws, containers, cups, and cutlery.

The strategy involves six actions:

1. Invest in opportunities that re-normalize reuse practices
2. Demonstrate municipal leadership
3. Communications and education
4. Public consultation with key stakeholders
5. Develop a bylaw that addresses Single-Use Items
6. Investigate the option to add conditions around takeaway food ware on business licenses



In April 2022, the Town of Banff contracted Marcomm Works, an Alberta marketing communications and public engagement firm, to provide third-party public engagement planning, implementation, and reporting back for the single-use items Public Consultation phase.

How We Engaged

From August to September 2022, the Town of Banff engaged various Banff stakeholders on the path forward with the Draft Single-Use Item Bylaw and Strategy.

The engagement process asked Banff residents, business leaders, and front-line workers to provide their input and feedback using the following engagement techniques:

Environmental Business Leadership Working Group

The Town of Banff formed a working group of 16 diverse business leadership representing retail, grocery, and hospitality. This group was initially established to dig deeper into single-use item reduction and elimination. The group will provide feedback, guidance, and communications support in future meetings on various environmental issues. Facilitated by Marcomm Works, the Town hosted two meetings on single-use item reduction and elimination, the first being highly informational and the second highly interactive.

Online Survey

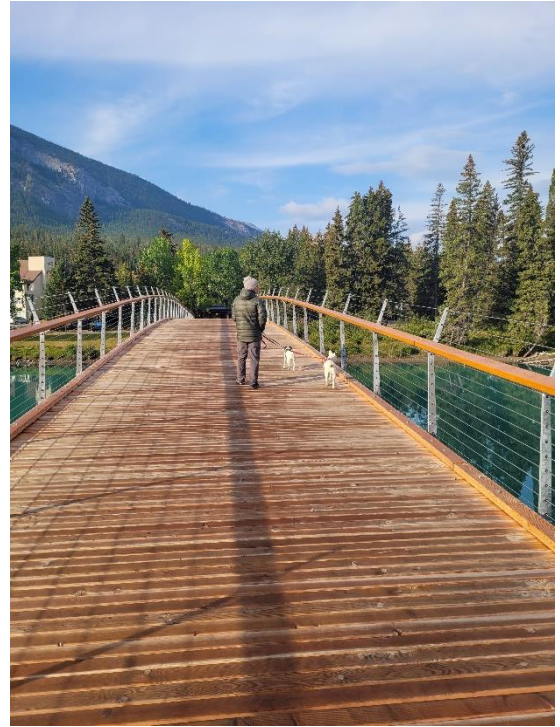
- An online survey was available from September 1st to September 14th, 2022.
- 503 participants completed the survey.
- Participants were relatively evenly distributed from 25 years to 65 years and older.
- 80% of the participants live in the Town of Banff and just over 12% live in the Town of Canmore.
- Of the participants who live in Banff, the largest group to respond were participants who have lived in Banff for more than 20 years (36%). The second-largest group was the 11- 20 years group (18.3%).
- The largest response for the 'Primary Industry you Work For' was the Government /Public Sector (21%). The next largest group was the Tourism Attraction/Rental/Tourism/Service Sector (12.1%).
- When asked if the participant leads or manages a business in Banff, 16.9% said "Yes."

Online Information Webinar

Thirteen participants attended the Online Information Webinar to learn about the Single-Use Item Reduction Strategy and learn how they could provide feedback through the Survey and In-Person Workshop. A question-and-answer session was offered during the session.

In-Person Workshop

Banff residents, especially front-line workers, were invited to participate in an in-person workshop discussing single-use item reduction in the Town of Banff. Despite using numerous communications techniques, a low number of people registered for this session leading to the cancellation of this step of the engagement process.



How We Communicated

Environmental Business Leadership Working Group

- Invitations to apply for the group on Banff.ca, social media, Town e-newsletters, and the BanffViewpoints.ca project page
- Direct invitations to several key stakeholders, including Banff and Lake Louise Tourism and other key business leaders
- Email correspondence with Working Group members
- In-person meetings

Survey, Information Webinar, and In-Person Workshop

- Direct invitations to participants in phase 1
- Open invitations to residents in Town e-newsletters
- Social media paid promotions
- Signage at key Banff locations with high resident pedestrian traffic Advertisements in the Rocky Mountain Outlook
- Radio advertisements on Mountain FM
- In-person outreach to businesses most likely to be impacted



The Single-Use Items Reduction project on the Banff Viewpoints public engagement site had more than 695 unique visitors and 505 unique responses to online surveys.

What We Asked

The public engagement process was designed first to assess the stakeholder's current practices and second to gauge willingness to support a single-use item bylaw.

We followed with a series of questions and discussion topics on how best to move forward with the single-use item bylaw, including understanding the opportunities and obstacles to tackle along the way.

The dialogue for this engagement process ended with gaining input on the specifics of the Town's draft single-use item bylaw.

Item	Proposed Regulatory Measure
Checkout Bags	Ban (with minimum fee on paper bags and reusable bags)
Dine-in services	Require reusables products
Takeaway services	Require businesses to accept reusable cups and containers Mandatory fee for disposables
Accessory items (single-use spoons, forks, knives, chopsticks, utensils, straws, stir sticks, splash sticks, cocktail sticks, toothpicks, pre-packaged condiments and napkins)	By request-only mandate

Key Findings and Themes

Support for the reduction of single-use items

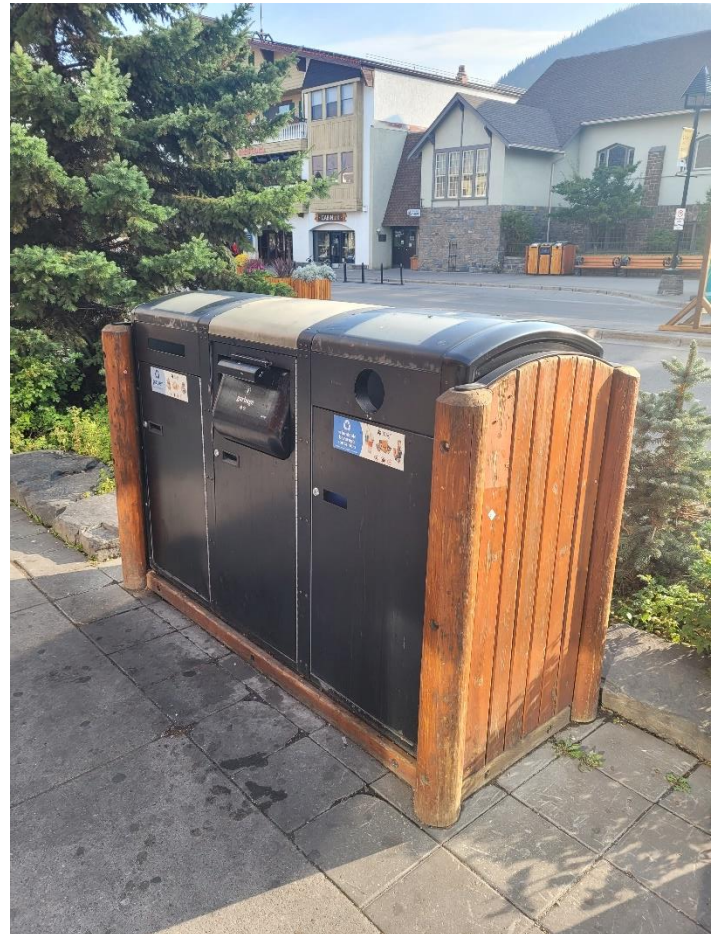
- Survey participants: Almost 80% of participants support the Town's plan to reduce single-use items used in cafes, restaurants, grocery stores, etc.
- Environmental Business Leaders Working Group: Members were enthusiastically supportive yet were adamant that the single-use items reduction and elimination process be methodical and staged so businesses could gradually introduce different practices and procedures.

Assessment and willingness to participate in the reduction and elimination of single-use items

- Survey participants: Almost half (48.3%) said they try to avoid single-use items but find it challenging at times when they have no choice, while 42.2% try not to accept single-use items as much as possible and bring their own or request reusable items.
- Survey participants: Just over half (51.1%) are very willing to refuse single-use items where they eat/take out, while 36% say they are somewhat willing.
- Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: Members were enthusiastic and willing to support the bylaw, and many had already introduced practices to eliminate single-use items. Again, the willingness to support came with a methodical and staged approach.

Consistent policies and clear communications required

- Survey participants: When asked what they need to help move the community away from single-use item use, most respondents said 'consistent policies and practices' (338). The second largest response was 'clear communication and information by the Town' (220), followed by 'strict enforcement' of the single-use item bylaw (189), and 'I do not need anything as I already do my best' (158).
- Survey participants: It was quite evenly split when participants were asked if they thought a bylaw regulating single-use items would help them avoid using them. 36.4% said yes, 29.1% said no, and 20.8% said it depends on how strict the bylaw is.



Critical factors for a successful single-use item bylaw

- Survey participants: Top themes in open-ended responses to: "What else would you need to help the community move away from single-use items?"
 - Just Ban Single-Use Items
 - Put Convenient Alternatives in Place
 - Use Compostable Packaging (Instead of Focusing on Single-Use)
 - Better Disposal for Recycling or Compostable Packaging
 - Education
 - Incentives/Tax Breaks/Subsidies (Instead of Raising Costs)
 - Collaboration with All Levels of Government/Community/Business
- Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: While support for reducing and eliminating single-use items was strong, the requirement for a staged and methodical implementation of reductions and bans was equally strong. Members offered input on perceived changes in their businesses that they thought would be required before they could comply with reduction and elimination requirements. Examples of perceived changes required included human resource requirements, infrastructure changes, supply and inventory issues, training concerns, and customer communication.
- Some businesses already have extensive processes for reduction and elimination; however other businesses are wary of what it will take to comply.

Top tactics suggested for eliminating single-use items

- Survey participants: When asked what some of the steps businesses can take to help eliminate single-use items, the top tactics identified were:
 - prioritize providing reusable food ware like plates and cups (352),
 - provide signage to educate customers on measures the business has taken to reduce single-use items (306)
 - require the customer to request single-use items if they need them for specific reasons (265), and
 - participate in a reuse program, like a cup or container share initiative (247).
- Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: Business leaders generally provided feedback that eliminating plastic bags, reducing single-use items for dine-in services, and reducing accessory items seem decently manageable through a staged approach. The discussion on eliminating and reducing single-use items for takeout proved to be an extensive topic for business owners. Participants suggested that the Town focus on collaborating with businesses on takeout single-use reduction and elimination as a priority as the other areas seemed less onerous to implement.
- Survey participants: Top themes in open-ended responses to the question "Are there any other steps businesses can take to help eliminate single-use items?" were:
 - Educate/Be The Messenger (Town and businesses)
 - Implement Reward Programs/Discounts
 - Provide Reusable Alternatives
 - Use Compostable Packaging for Single-Use
 - Stop Offering Single-Use Items

Issues and concerns with the proposed single-use item bylaw

- Survey participants: When asked what would concern them about having a ban on single-use items, 5 of the 6 response options all received more than 200 responses. The top issues selected were:
 - Concern about enforcement of the bylaw (279),
 - unintended consequences, such as continually buying reusable bags if you don't bring one to the store (265),
 - increasing prices on items in restaurants, grocery stores, etc. (259),
 - businesses not following the bylaw (235), and
 - limiting access to people who need these items for various reasons (207).
- Survey participants: Top themes in open-ended responses to the question "Do you have any other concerns about having a bylaw on single-use items?" were:
 - Reusable Bags More Wasteful?
 - Lack of Viable Alternatives to Single-Use
 - Too Many Bylaws, Bylaws As Inadequate Solutions
 - Lack of Effectiveness of Enforcement vs. Social Incentives/Education
 - Cost/Inflation
 - Different Solutions Needed for Residents vs. Tourists
- Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: Business Leaders initially brought forward the risk of "doing nothing at all" as this would not fit the vision for what all participants see for the sustainability of the Town of Banff. One of the dominant themes from the feedback was concerns shared about the Town not being ready with the resources required to help implement a bylaw or enforce a bylaw.

Feedback on specific items restricted in the proposed bylaw

- **BAN ON PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS**
 - Ban on single-use plastic shopping bags.
 - Survey participants: A large majority of respondents (70%) agree with a ban on single-use plastic shopping bags.
 - A fee for paper and reusable bags is to be paid by the customer.
 - Survey participants: A large majority (75%) of participants agree or somewhat agree with a fee for paper and reusable bags to be paid by the customer.
 - Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: This issue was not brought up directly with the group; indirect support was achieved through anecdotal conversations.
- **REUSABLE PRODUCTS FOR DINE-IN SERVICES**
 - Businesses should use only reusable products for dine-in services.
 - Survey participants: A large majority (75%) of participants agree that businesses should use only reusable products for dine-in services.
 - Mandatory fee for single-use cups and containers be paid for by the customer.
 - Survey participants: Most respondents agreed with the concept. Almost 37% agreed, 27% somewhat agreed, and 36% disagreed.
 - Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: Business leaders provided input that, given time and collaboration, the move to reusables for dine-in services seems manageable.
- **PROCESS FOR TAKEOUT SERVICE PRODUCTS NEEDS MORE TIME AND DISCUSSION**
 - Mandatory fee for single-use cups and containers be paid for by the customer.
 - Survey participants: The results showed more people agreed with the concept than opposed it. Almost 37% agreed, while 36% disagreed and 27% somewhat agreed.
 - Environmental Business Leadership Working Group: Business leaders were significantly

adamant that the reduction and elimination of single-use items for takeout is a much more complex and challenging undertaking. The feedback went well beyond the discussion of mandatory fees. Their concerns focused on how food is provided for takeout in their own, customers', shared, or other reusable products and how that might work to remain profitable. The use of reusable customer products or sharing for beverages seems less of a challenge.

- **ACCESSORY ITEMS**

- Accessory items should only be available if asked for by the customer.
 - Survey participants: A large majority agreed (70%).
- Environmental Business Leaders Working Group: Many business leaders said that they felt the reduction of accessory items is manageable through a staged and methodical approach. There are several logistics to work out, but the sentiment was that it would be manageable.

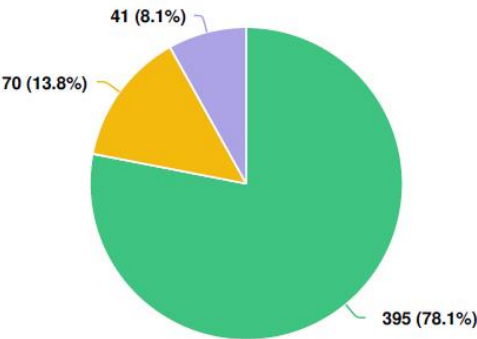
Open Forum

- Survey participants: Top themes in open-ended responses when asked: "Do you have any further comments or suggestions on what would help us better plan for the elimination of single-use items in the Town of Banff?"
 - Balance Use of Resource Intensive Reusable Bags or Cups, Etc.
 - Is Single-Use the Real Problem or Is it Plastic?
 - Phased-In Approach and/or Education to Ensure Success
 - Instead of Fees for Single-Use, Implement Rewards for Reuse
 - Improve Disposal/Bins
 - Don't Be Too Hard on Local Businesses
 - Don't Be Too Hard on Residents and/or Consumers (costs)
 - Propose Viable Alternatives for Takeout Containers (that balance other concerns such as sanitation, cost, etc.)
 - Review or Work With Other Jurisdictions and Partners

Engagement Details

SURVEY

Q1 Do you support the Town’s plan to reduce the amount of single-use items used in cafes, restaurants, grocery stores, etc. (e...



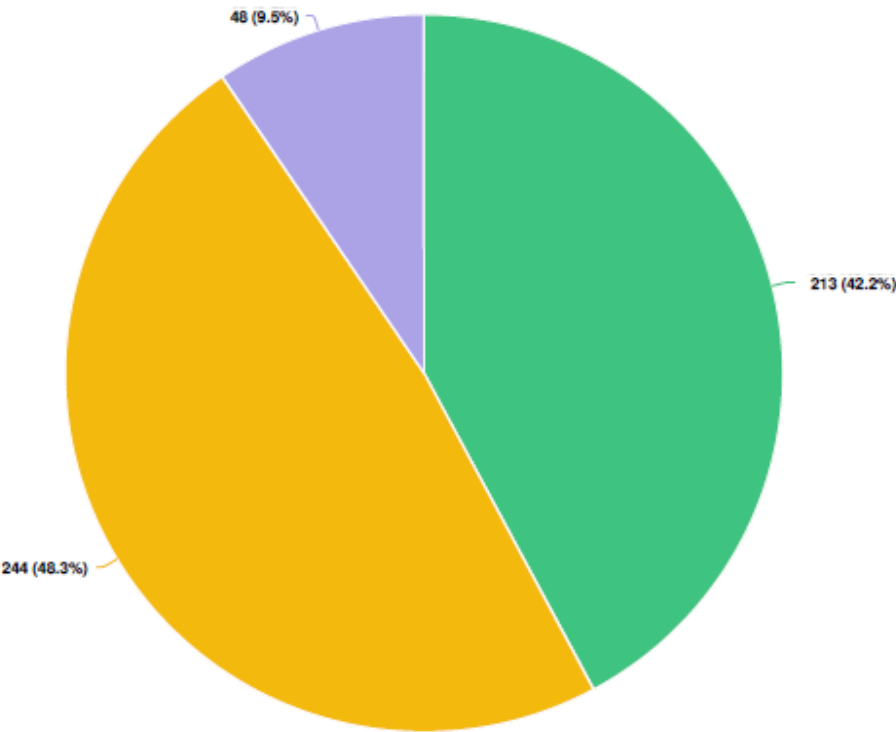
Question options

Yes No Unsure

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- Almost 80% of participants support the Town's plan to reduce single-use items used in cafes, restaurants, grocery stores, etc.

Q2 Considering your daily routine today, do you try to avoid single-use items like plastic bags, disposable cups and straws, take-out containers, etc. when purchasing items at restaurants, grocery stores, etc.?



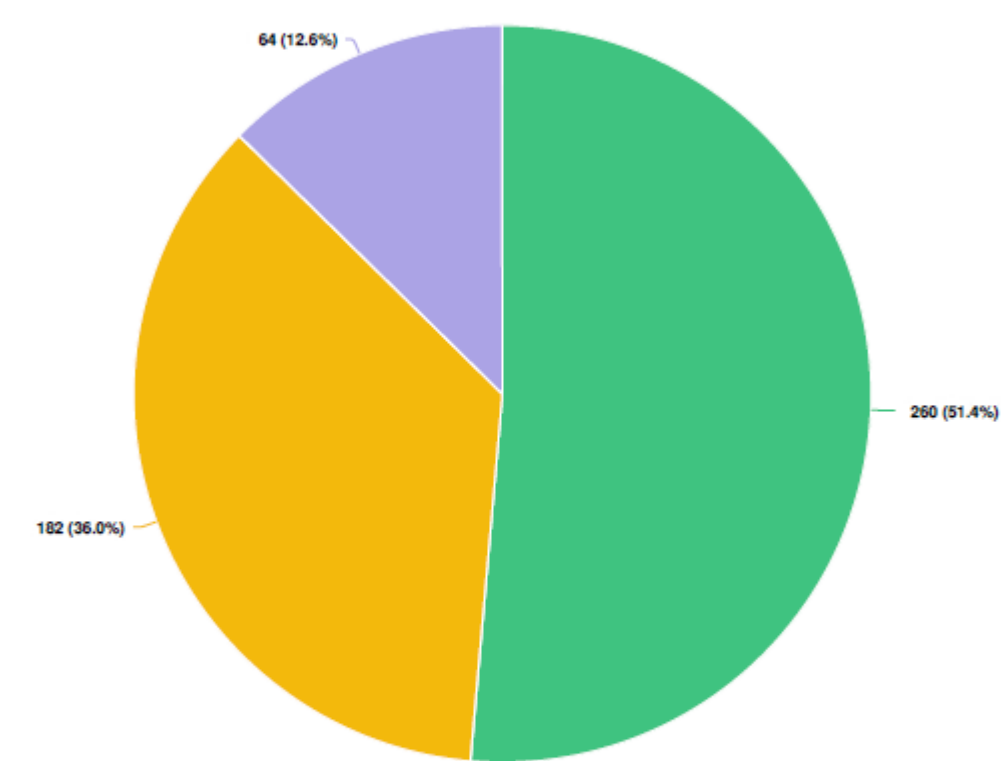
Question options

- ☒ I try not to accept single-use items as much as possible and bring my own or request reusable items
- ☒ I try to avoid these items but find it challenging at times as I have no choice
- ☐ I don't pay attention to what type of single-use items I receive

Optional question (505 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- Almost half (48.3%) try to avoid single-use items but find it challenging at times as they have no choice, while 42.2% try not to accept single-use items as much as possible and bring their own or request reusable items.

Q3 How willing are you to refuse single-use items at places where you eat/take out? Things like plastic bags, straws, stirrers, utensils and condiments.

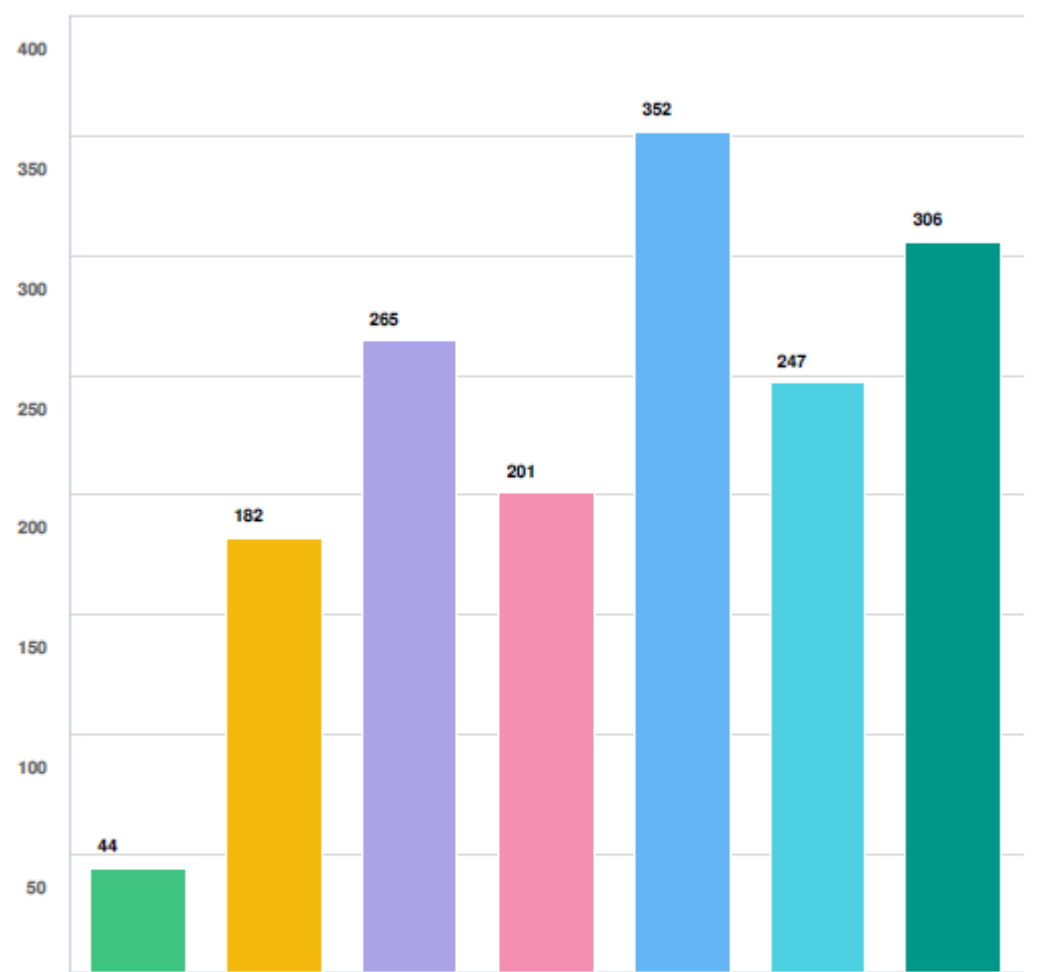


Question options
Very willing Somewhat willing Not willing at all

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- Just over half (51.1%) are very willing to refuse single-use items where they eat/takeout, while 36% say they are somewhat willing.

Q4 What are some of the steps businesses can take to help eliminate single-use items?
(check all that apply)

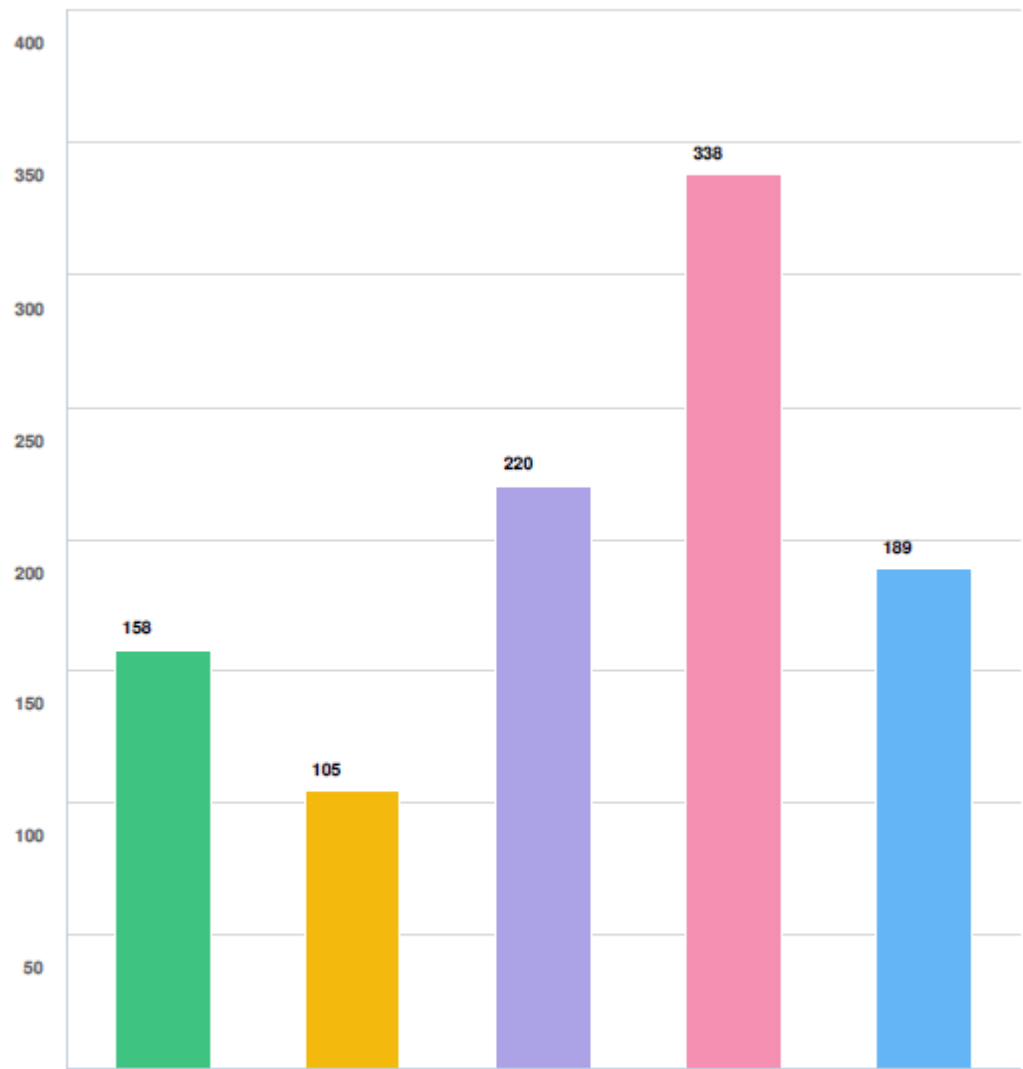


- Question options**
- Businesses shouldn't have to do anything
 - Make all single-use items unavailable with exemptions for people who require them
 - Require the customer request a single-use item if they need it for specific reasons
 - Charge the customer an extra fee for any single-use item
 - Prioritize providing reusable foodware like plates and cups, especially for dine-in services
 - Participate in a reuse program, like a cup or container share initiative
 - Provide signage to educate customers on measures the business has taken to reduce single-use items

Optional question (508 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

- When asked what some of the steps are that businesses can take to help eliminate single-use items, prioritize providing reusable food ware like plates and cups received the most responses (352), followed by providing signage to educate customers on measures the business has taken to reduce single-use items (306), require the customer request single-use item if they need it for specific reasons (265), and participate in a reuse program, like a cup or container share initiative (247).

Q6 What would you need to help the community move away from single-item use? (check all that apply)



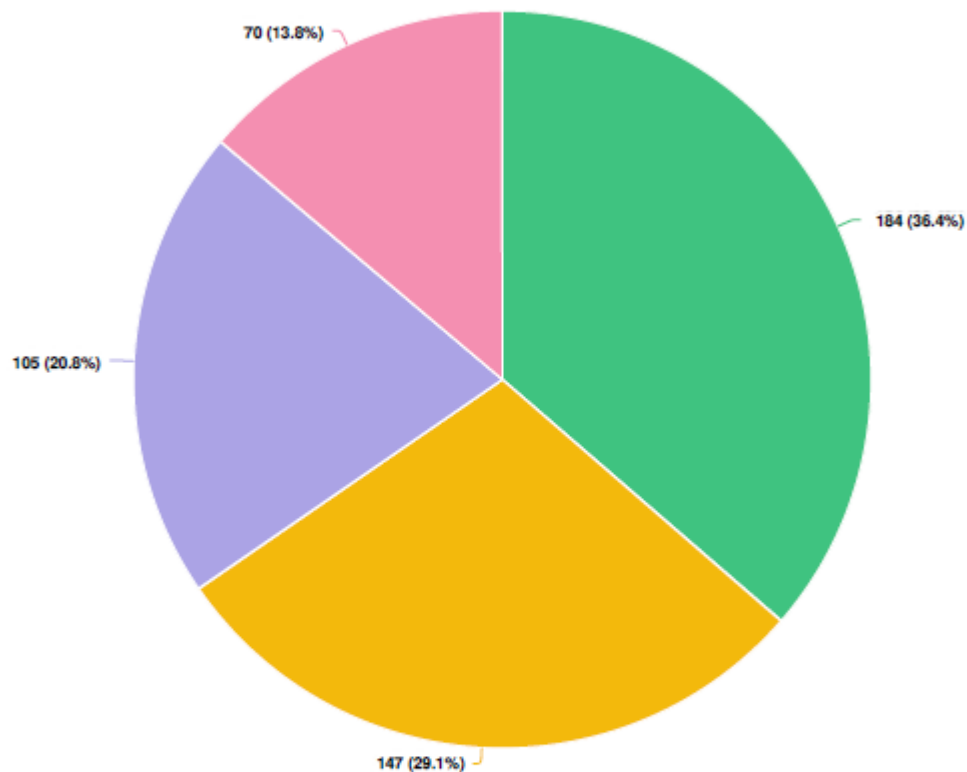
Question options

- I do not need anything as I already do my best
- Training and resources at my workplace
- Clear communication and information from the Town
- Consistent policies and practices at all businesses
- Strict enforcement of the single-use item bylaw

Optional question (499 response(s), 13 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

- When asked what you need to help move the community away from single-use item use, consistent policies and practices was the dominant answer by quite a wide margin (338 items to the next response at 220). The second largest response was clear communication and information by the Town (220), followed by strict enforcement of the single-use item bylaw (189), and I do not need anything as I already do my best (158).

Q8 Do you think a bylaw regulating single-use items would help you avoid using them?

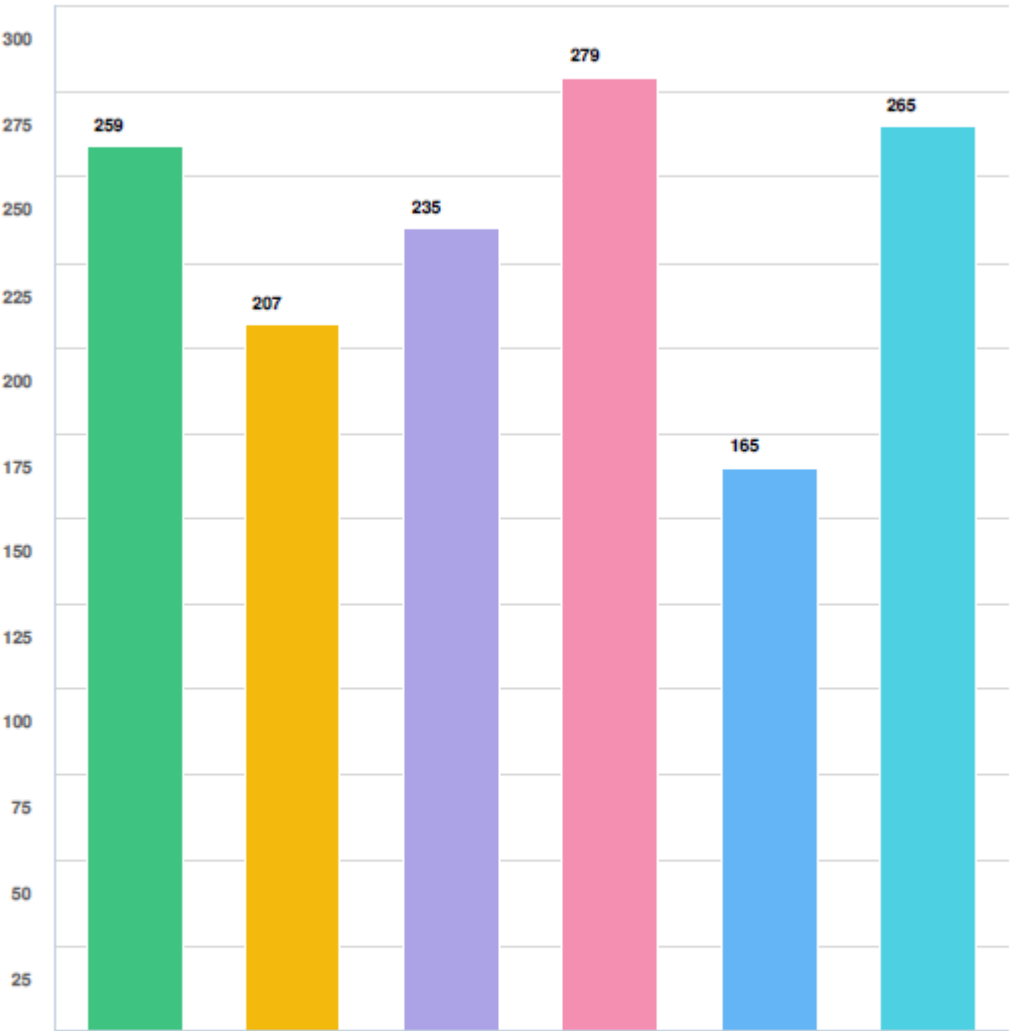


Question options
Yes No Depends on how strict the bylaw is Unsure

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- It was quite evenly split when participants were asked if they thought a bylaw regulating single-use items would help them avoid using them. 36.4% said yes, while 29.1 % said no, and 20.8% said it depends on how strict the bylaw is.

Q9 What would concern you about having a bylaw on single-use items? (select all that apply)



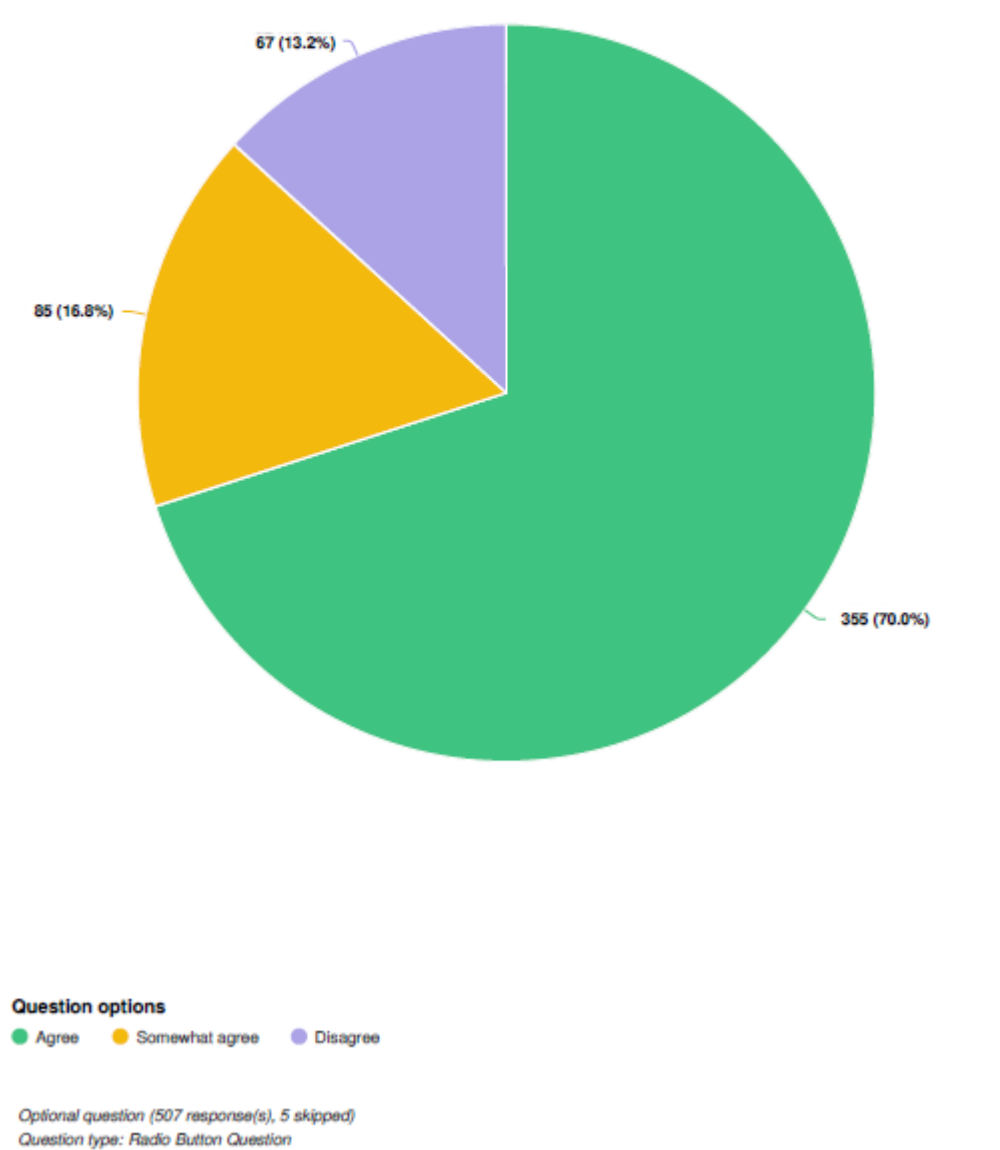
Question options

- Increasing prices on items in restaurants, grocery stores, etc.
- Limiting access to people who need these items for various reasons
- Businesses not following the bylaw
- Concern about enforcement of the bylaw
- Lack of convenience in eating out, grocery shopping, etc.
- Unintended consequences such as continually buying reusable bags if you don't bring one to the store

Optional question (491 response(s), 21 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

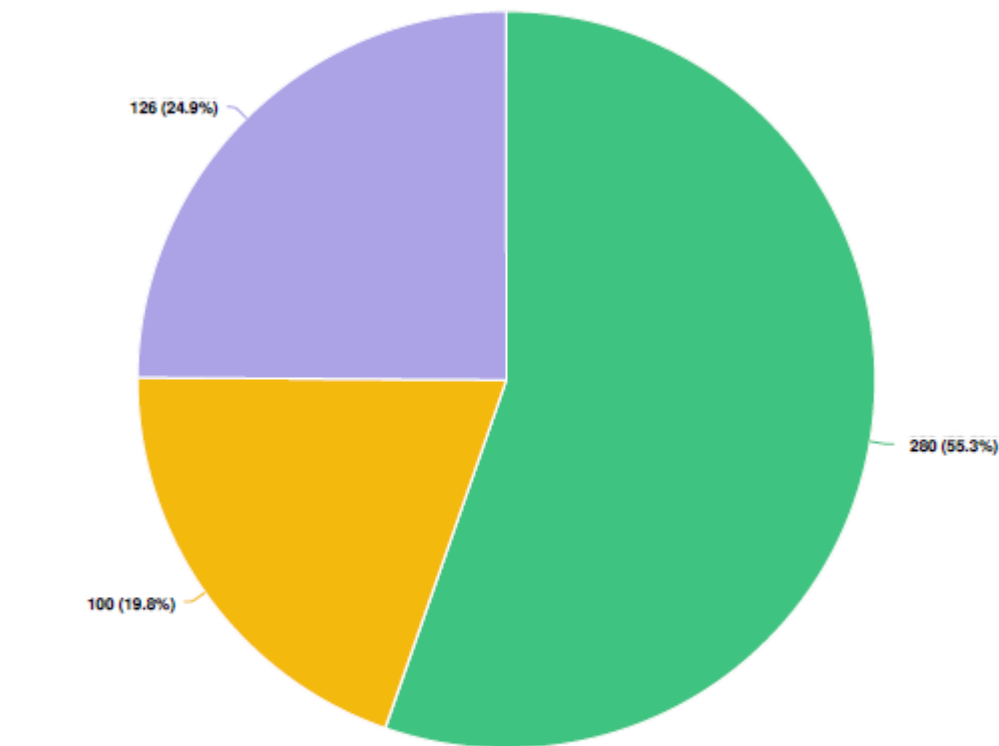
- When asked what would concern you about having a ban on single-use items, 5 of the 6 proposed responses all received more than 200 responses. Concern about enforcement of the bylaw received the highest number of responses (279), followed by unintended consequences such as continually buying reusable bags if you don't bring one to the store (265), increasing prices on items in restaurants, grocery stores, etc. (259), businesses not following the bylaw (235), and limiting access to people who need these items for various reasons (207).

Q11 Shopping bags (plastic, paper, and reusable bags) Proposal: Ban on single-use plastic shopping bags



- A large majority of respondents (70%) agree with a ban on single-use plastic shopping bags.

Q12 Shopping bags (plastic, paper, and reusable bags) Proposal: Fee for paper and reusable bags paid by the customer

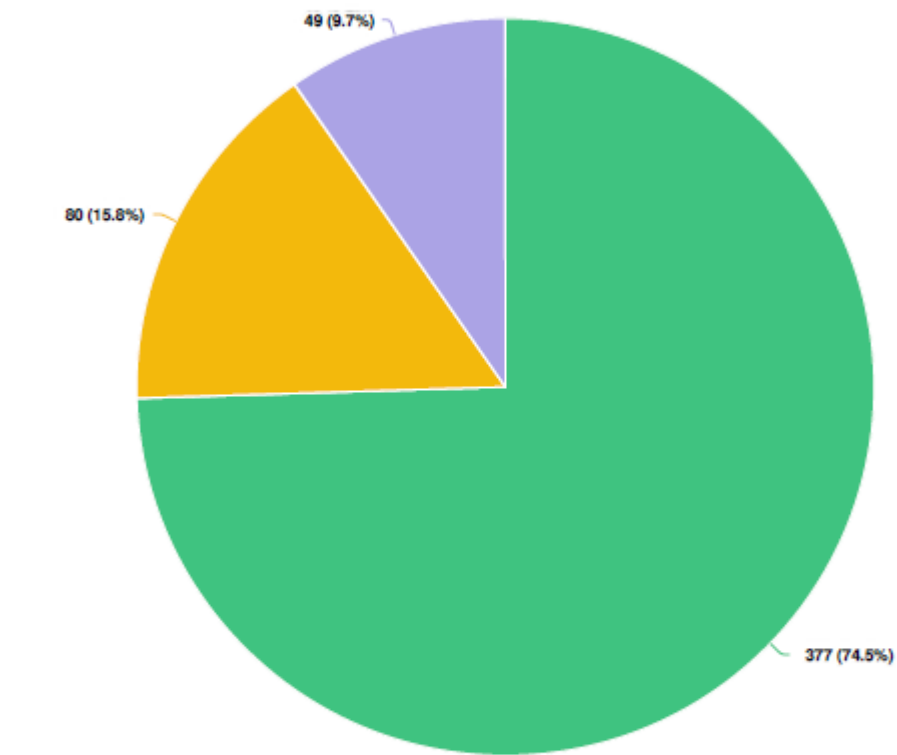


Question options
● Agree ● Somewhat agree ● Disagree

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- A large majority (75%) of participants agree or somewhat agree with a fee for paper and reusable bags to be paid by the customer.

Q13 All restaurants who offer dine-in services: (Cups, plates, dishes, containers, etc.) Proposal: Require businesses use only reusable products for dine-in services

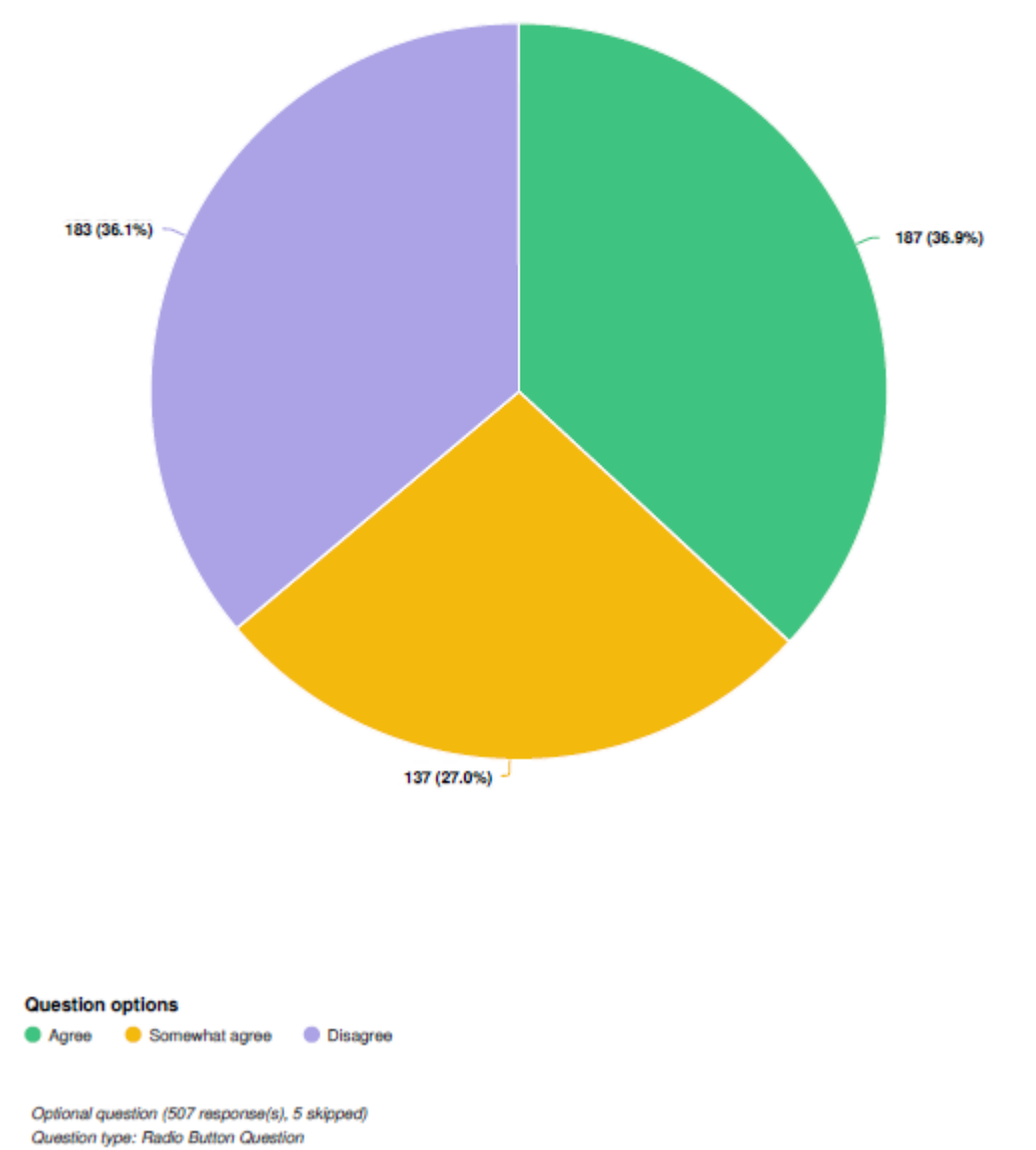


Question options
● Agree ● Somewhat agree ● Disagree

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

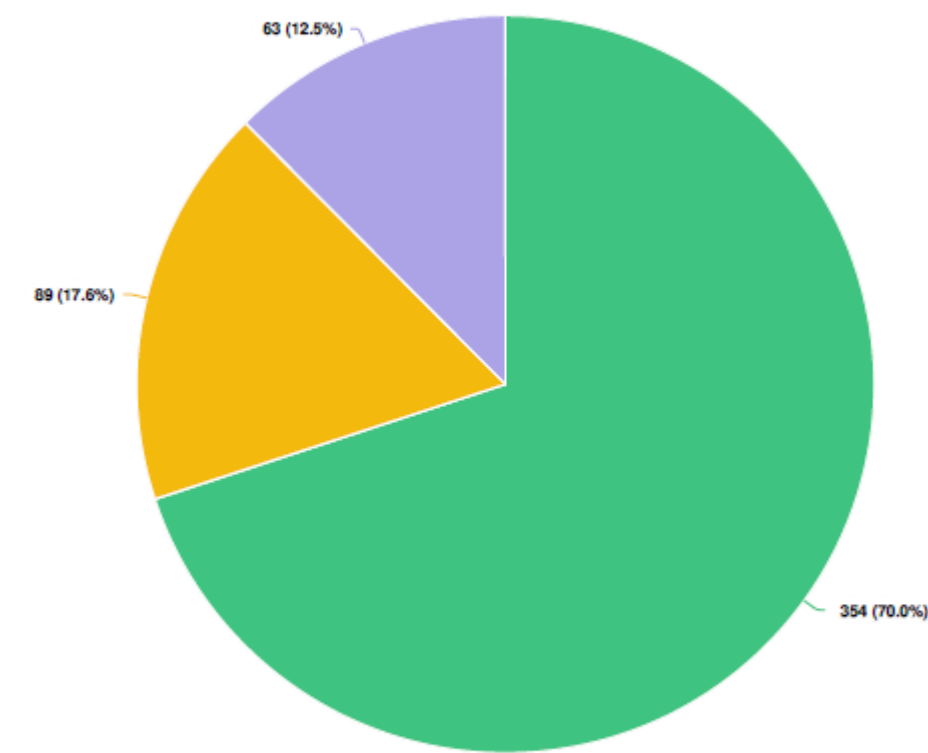
- A large majority (75%) of participants agree that businesses should use only reusable products for dine-in services.

Q14 | Take-out services Proposal: Mandatory fee on single-use cups and containers paid by the customer



- The results were split regarding whether there should be a mandatory fee for single-use cups and containers to be paid for by the customer. Almost 37% agreed, while 36% disagreed and 27% somewhat agreed.

Q15 Single-Use Accessory Items (straws, spoons, forks, knives, chopsticks, utensils, straws, stir sticks, splash sticks, cocktail sticks, toothpicks, pre-packaged condiments and napkins, etc.) Proposal: Accessory items are available only by request of ...



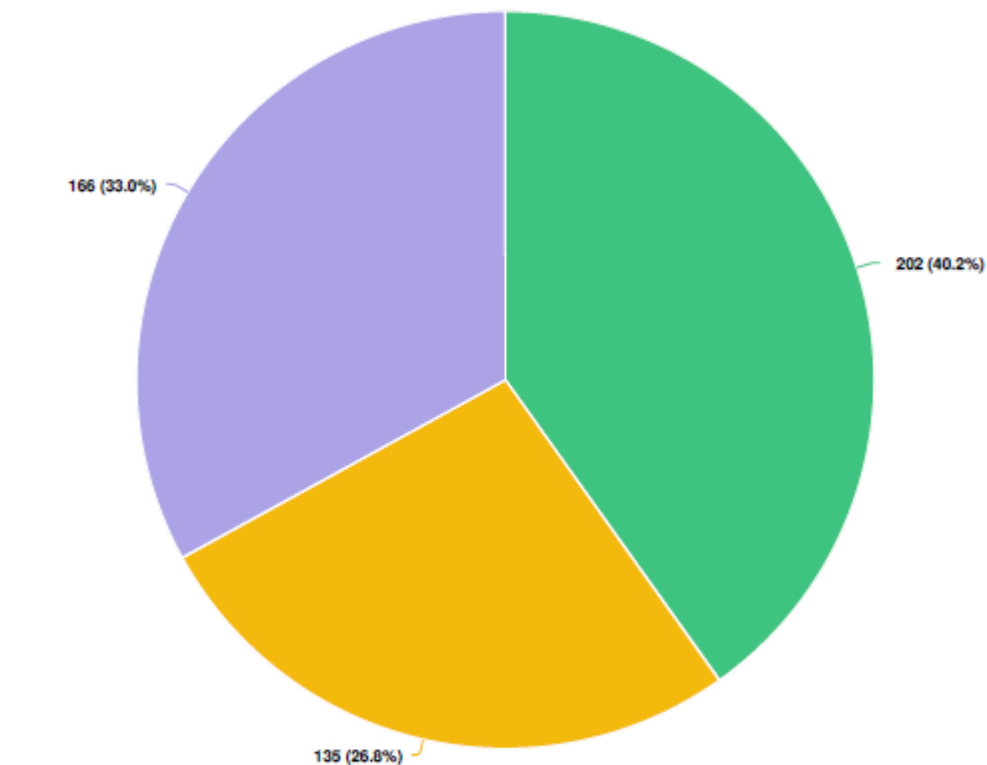
Question options

Agree Somewhat agree Disagree

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- When asked if accessory items should only be available if requested by the customer, a large majority agreed (70%).

Q16 Should a business be allowed to have a license in Banff if it does not offer dine-in services and/or cannot provide reusable food ware?



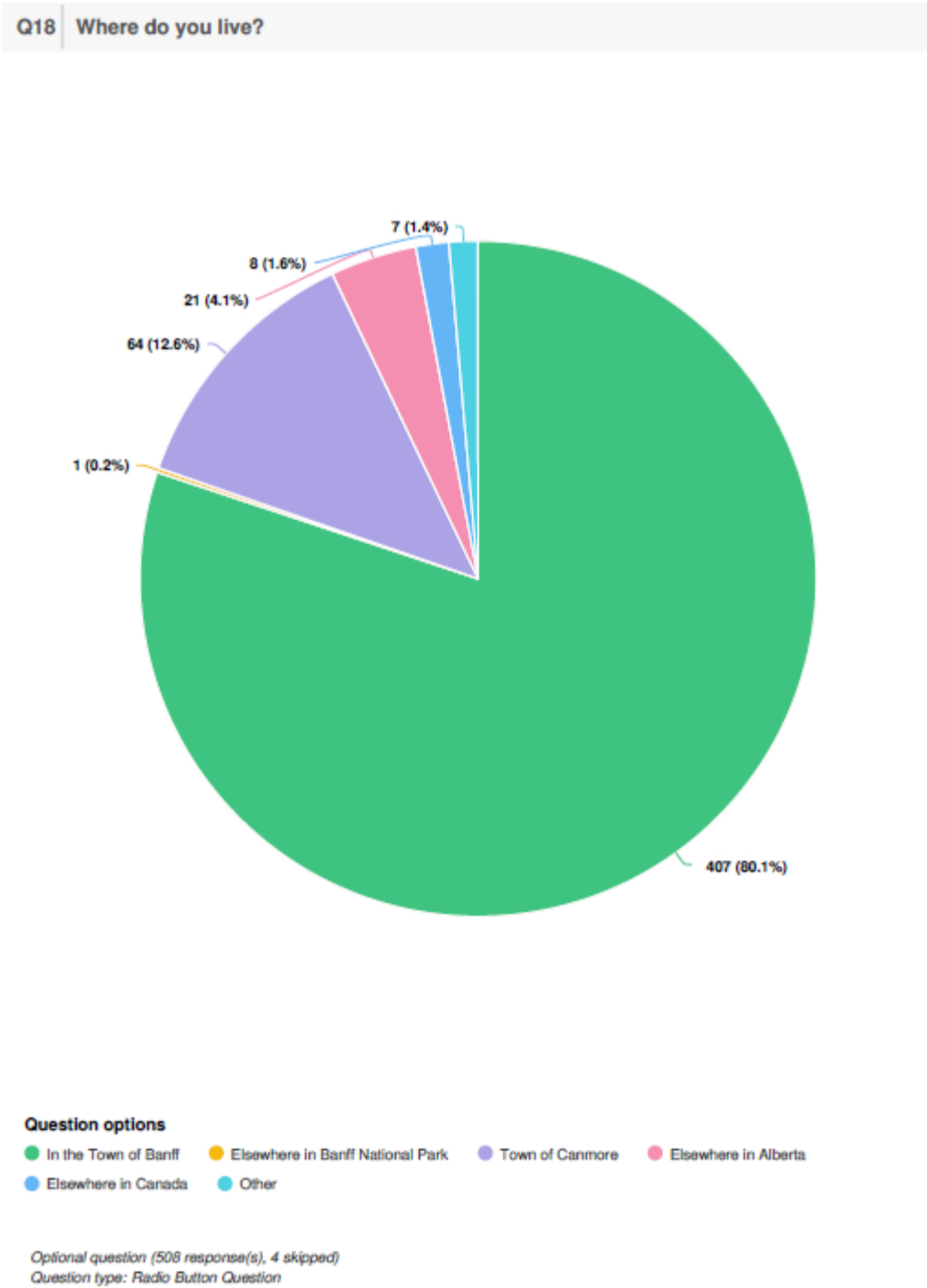
Question options

Yes No Unsure

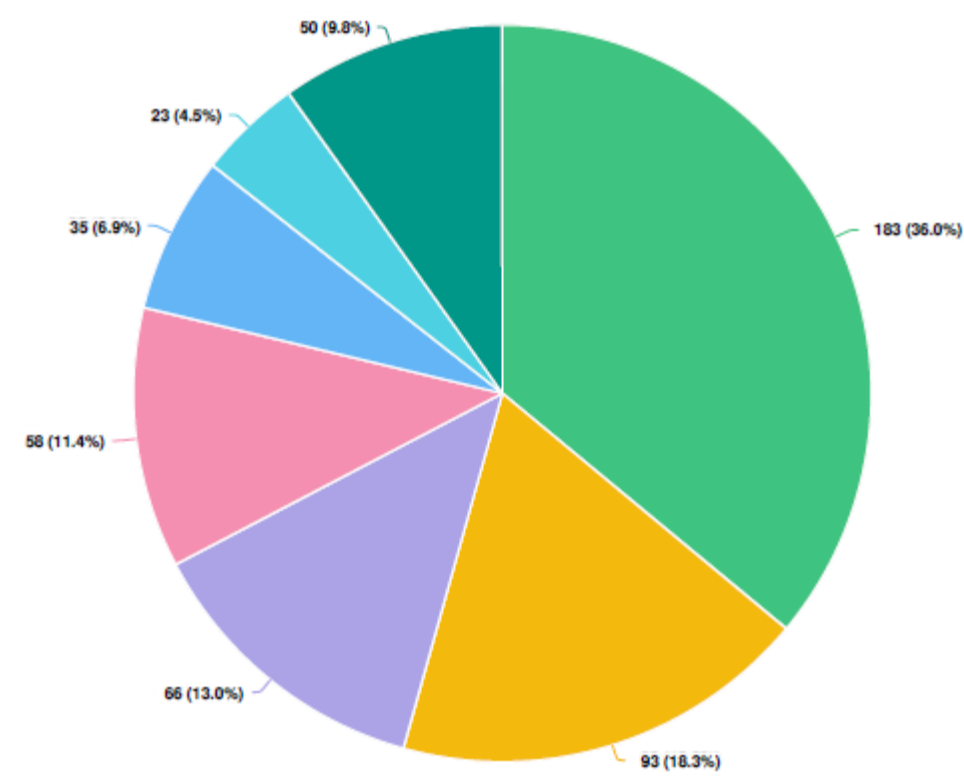
Optional question (503 response(s), 9 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

- When asked, "Should a business be allowed to have a license in Banff if it does not offer dine-in services and/or cannot provide reusable food ware?", 40% of participants said yes, 33% were unsure, and almost 27% said no.

Survey Demographics



Q19 | How many years have you lived in Banff?

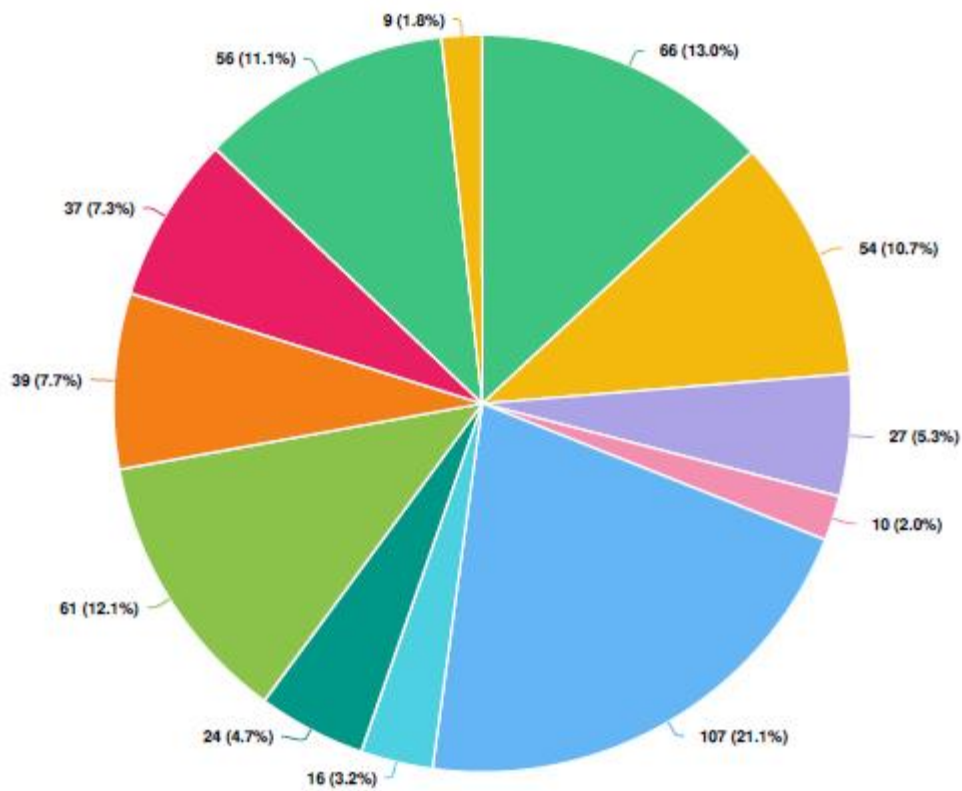


Question options

More than 20 years 11-20 years 6-10 years 3-5 years 1-2 years less than 1 year Not applicable

Optional question (508 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q20 What is the primary industry of your main employer?

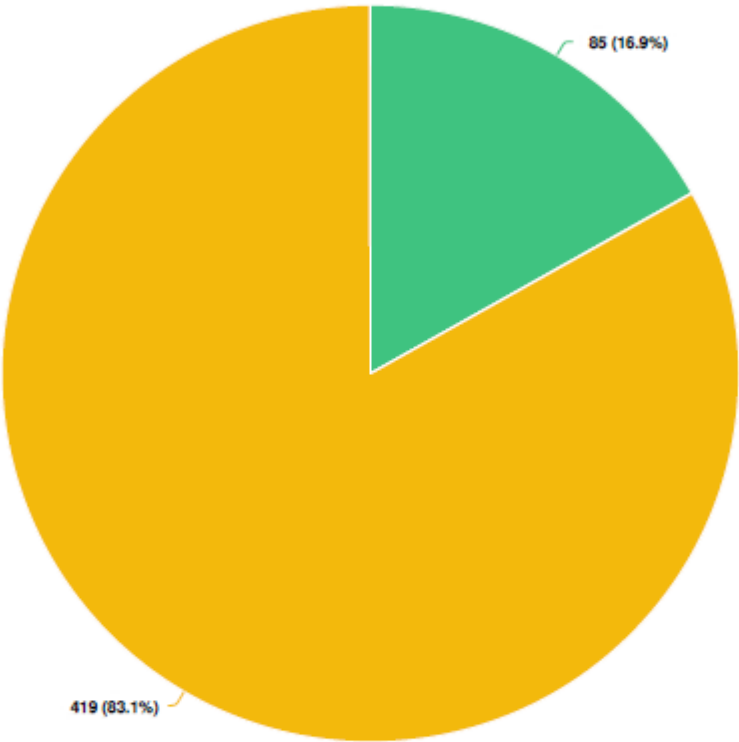


Question options

- Food-service
- Hotels/lodging
- Retail
- Other service (gas stations, grocery stores, etc.)
- Government/Public Sector/Non-Profit
- Trades
- Arts/Culture
- Tourism attraction/rental/tour/service
- Professional Services (health, legal, financial, etc.)
- Other
- Retired
- Not employed

Optional question (506 response(s), 6 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q21 | Do you own a business or manage a business in the Town of Banff?

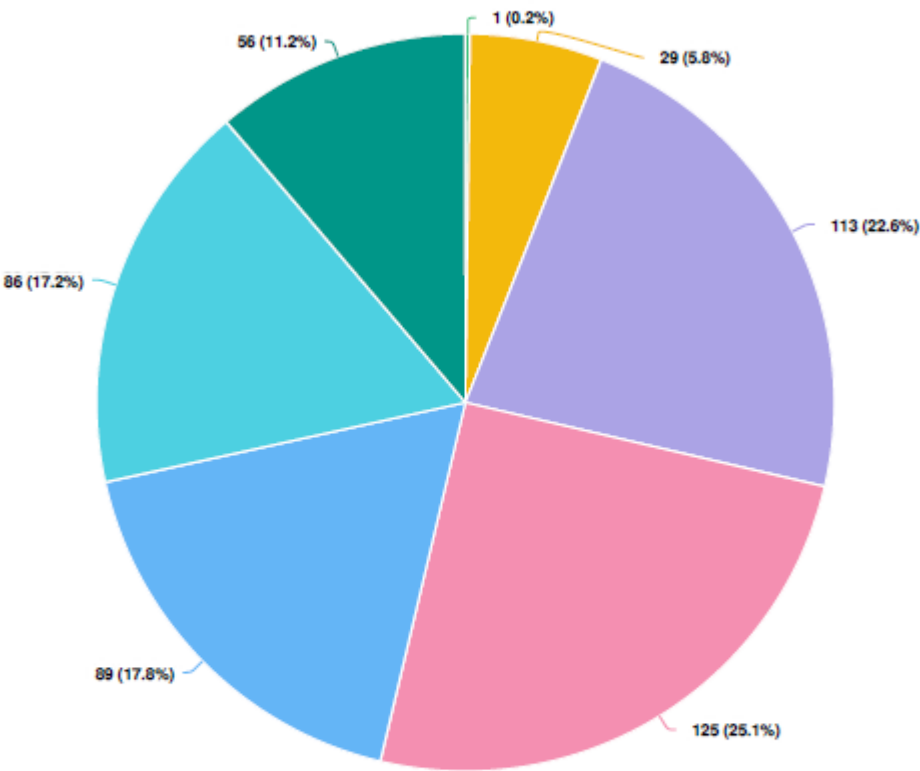


Question options

- Yes
- No

Optional question (504 response(s), 8 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q22 How old are you?



Question options

0-14 years 15-24 years 25-34 years 35-44 years 45-54 years 55-64 years 65 and over

Optional question (499 response(s), 13 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question