

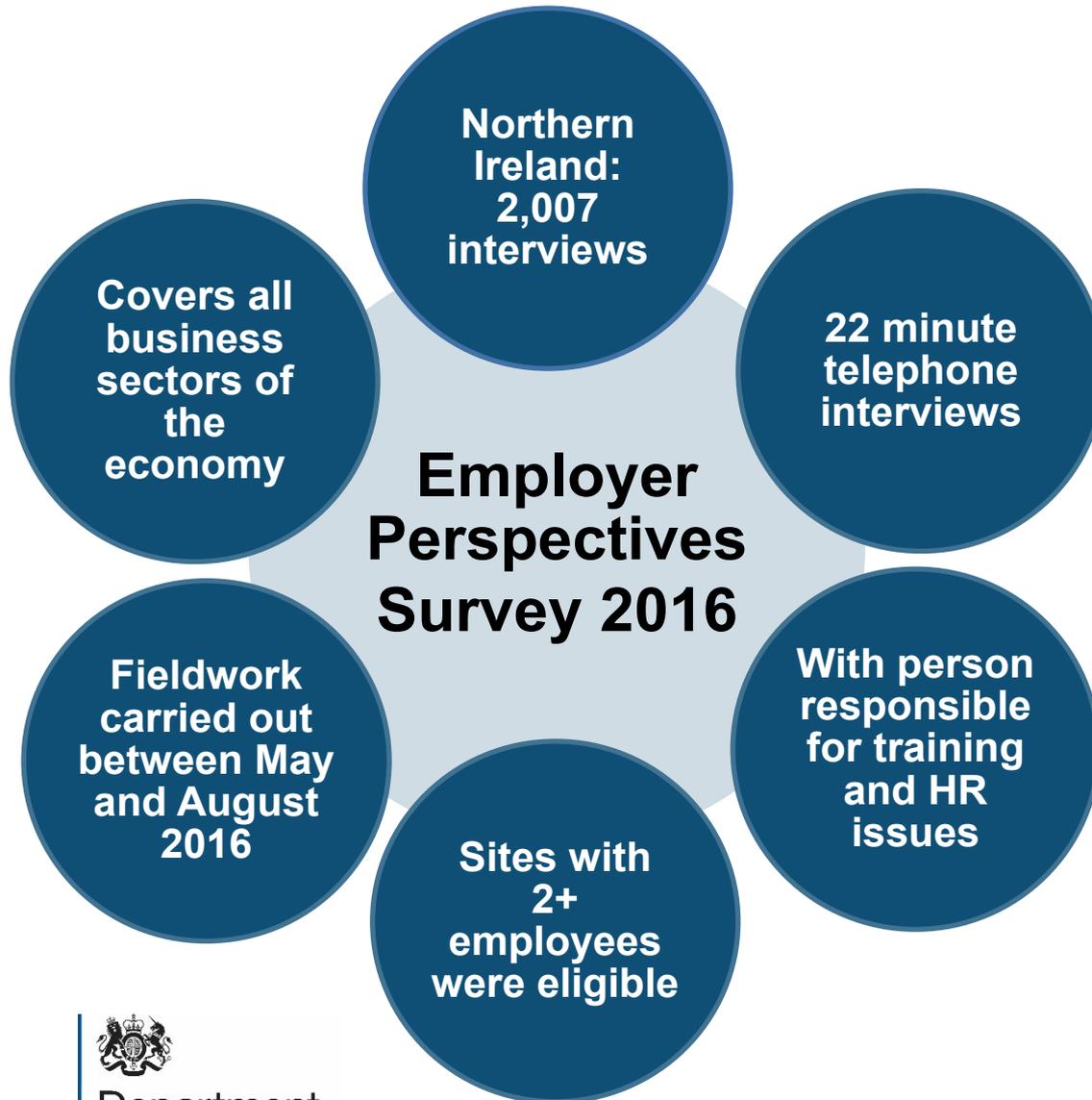
# Employer Perspectives Survey 2016

## Northern Ireland Slide Pack



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# Introduction



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## Questionnaire Coverage

- This is the fourth survey in this biennial series
- A number of changes were made to the questionnaire to reflect changing policy requirements.
- The study focused on the following areas:
  - How to support the pipeline of talent into business
  - Employers' approaches to recruitment
  - What employers look for in applicants and recruitment of education leavers
  - Employer engagement with work experience
  - Staff development and employers' decisions on this
  - Skills initiatives and vocational qualifications
  - Employer engagement with and attitudes towards apprenticeships

# Achieved interviews and confidence intervals

	Population	Number of interviews
Northern Ireland	55,104	2,007
<b>By region</b>		
Belfast	10,684	440
Northern	12,570	486
North West	4,822	176
Southern	9,585	312
South Eastern	8,416	299
South West	9,027	294

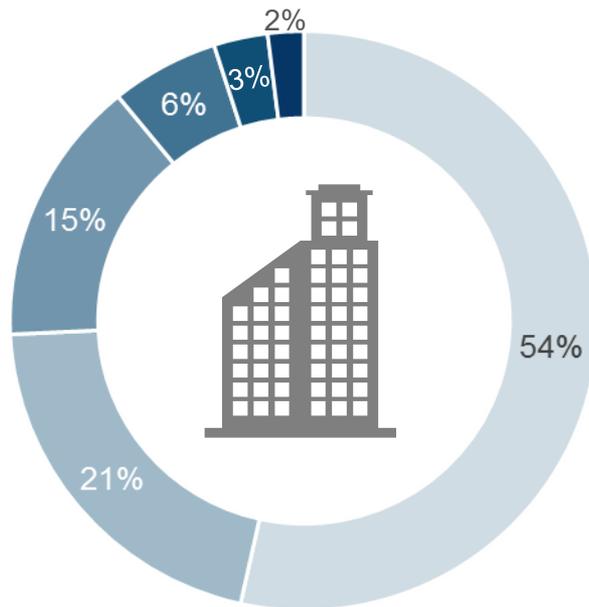
By sector	Population	Number of interviews
Primary Sector & Utilities	7,714	120
Manufacturing	3,057	124
Construction	5,397	161
Wholesale & Retail	11,806	531
Hotels & Restaurants	4,070	131
Transport & Comms	2,616	96
Financial Services	1,093	46
Business Services	6,611	246
Public Admin.	798	34
Education	3,096	139
Health & Social Work	4,474	252
Arts & Other	4,372	127

All the figures presented in this slide pack are subject to a margin of error: 2 percentage points (p.p.) at the overall level; around 6 p.p. across most regions; and typically around 8 or 9 p.p. across most sectors.

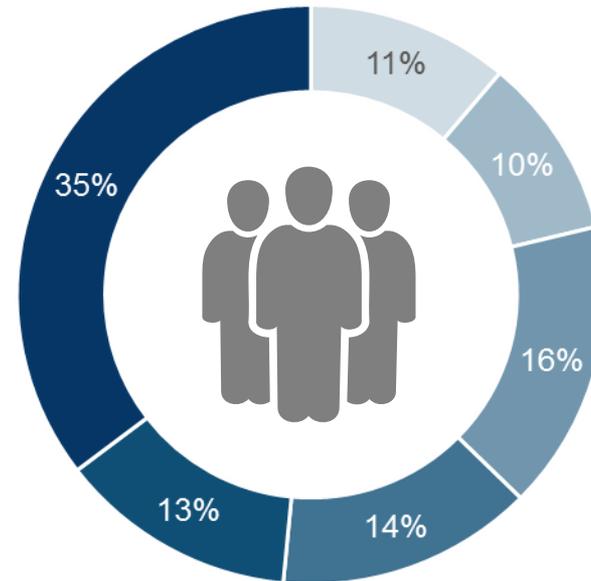


# Survey population: size

% of all establishments



% of all employment

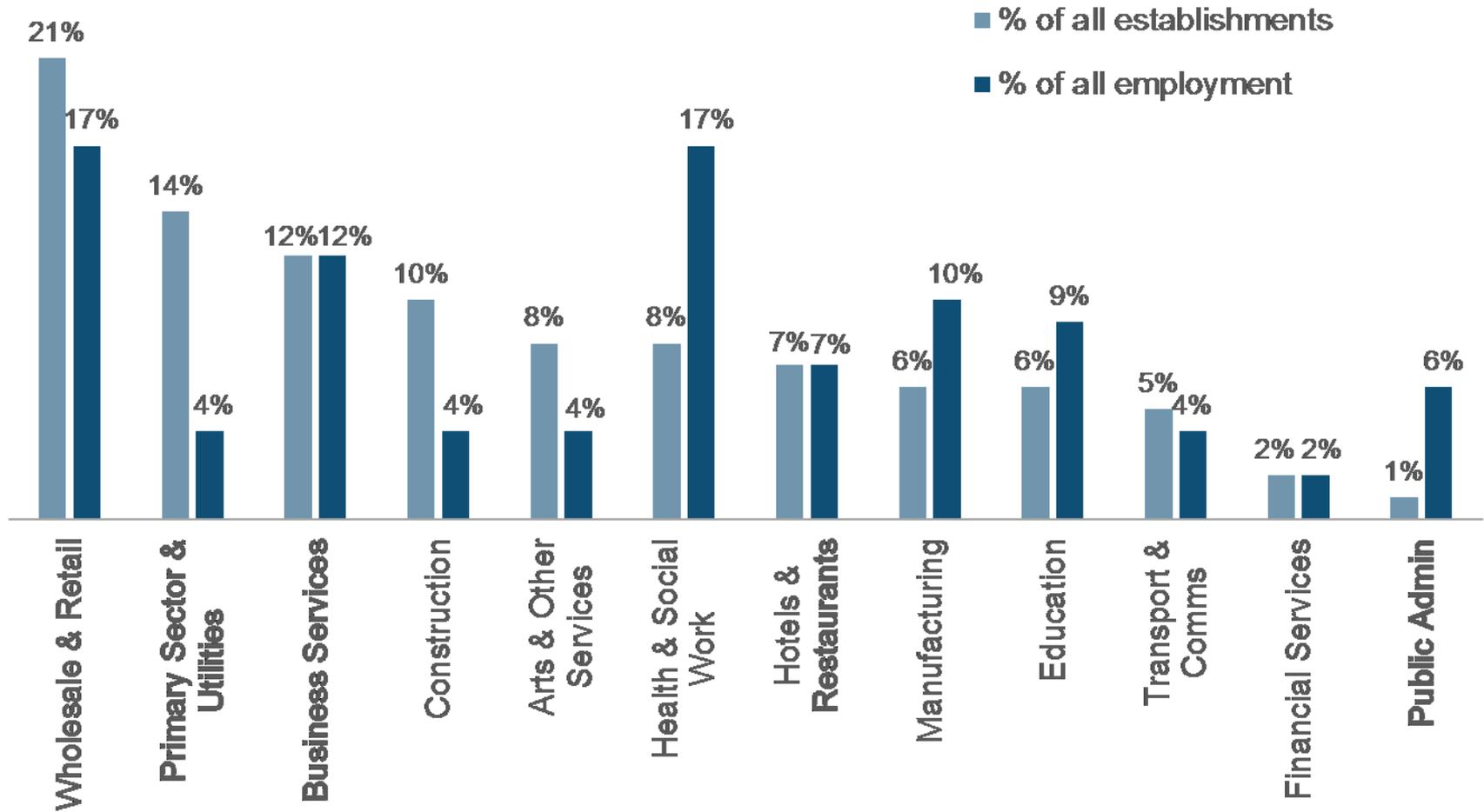


■ 2 to 4 employees ■ 5 to 9 ■ 10 to 24 ■ 25 to 49 ■ 50 to 99 ■ 100+

Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), March 2015



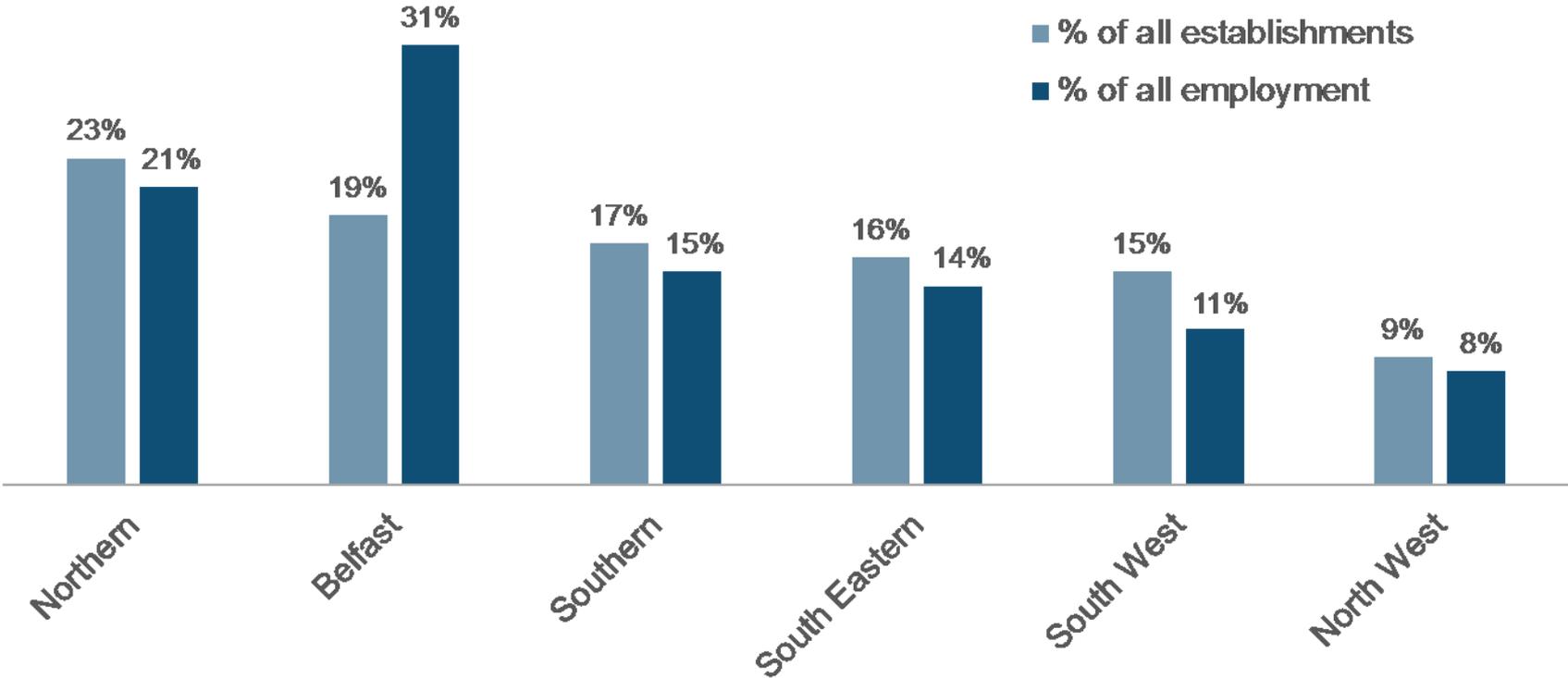
# Survey population: sector



Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), March 2015



# Survey population: region



Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), March 2015



# Employer attitudes

AGREE

Staff happiness is as important as organisational performance



83%

Staff ability to do job is more important than formal qualifications



82%

Happy to pay towards training and development



61%

Always looking for new opportunities



56%

Investing in management skills is a top priority



54%

Disagree strongly Disagree slightly Neither agree nor disagree Agree slightly Agree strongly

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)

# Entry to work

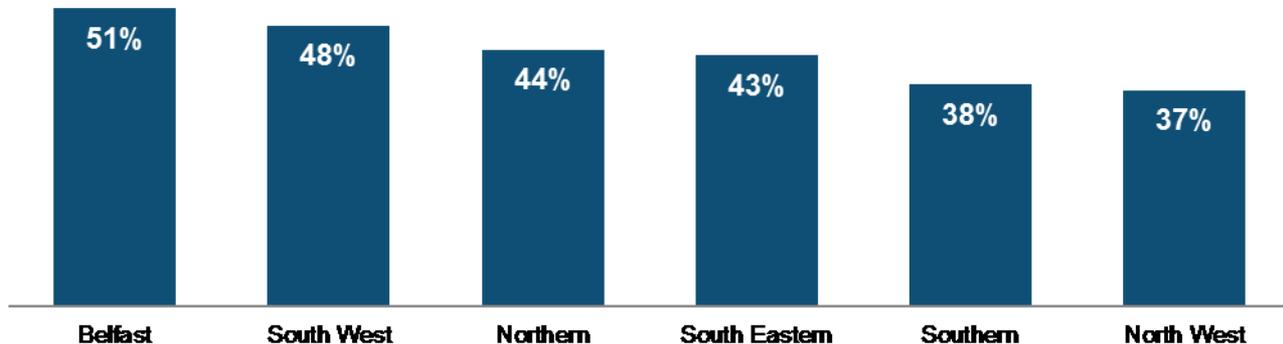


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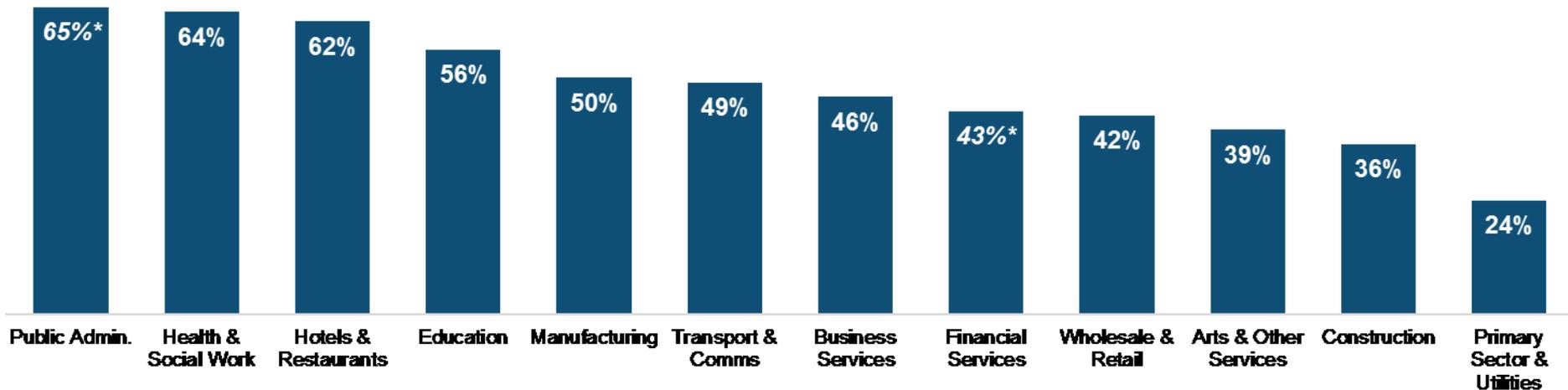
# Employers with vacancies in the past 12 months

**Northern Ireland: 44%**  
of employers had vacancies in the last 12 months

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



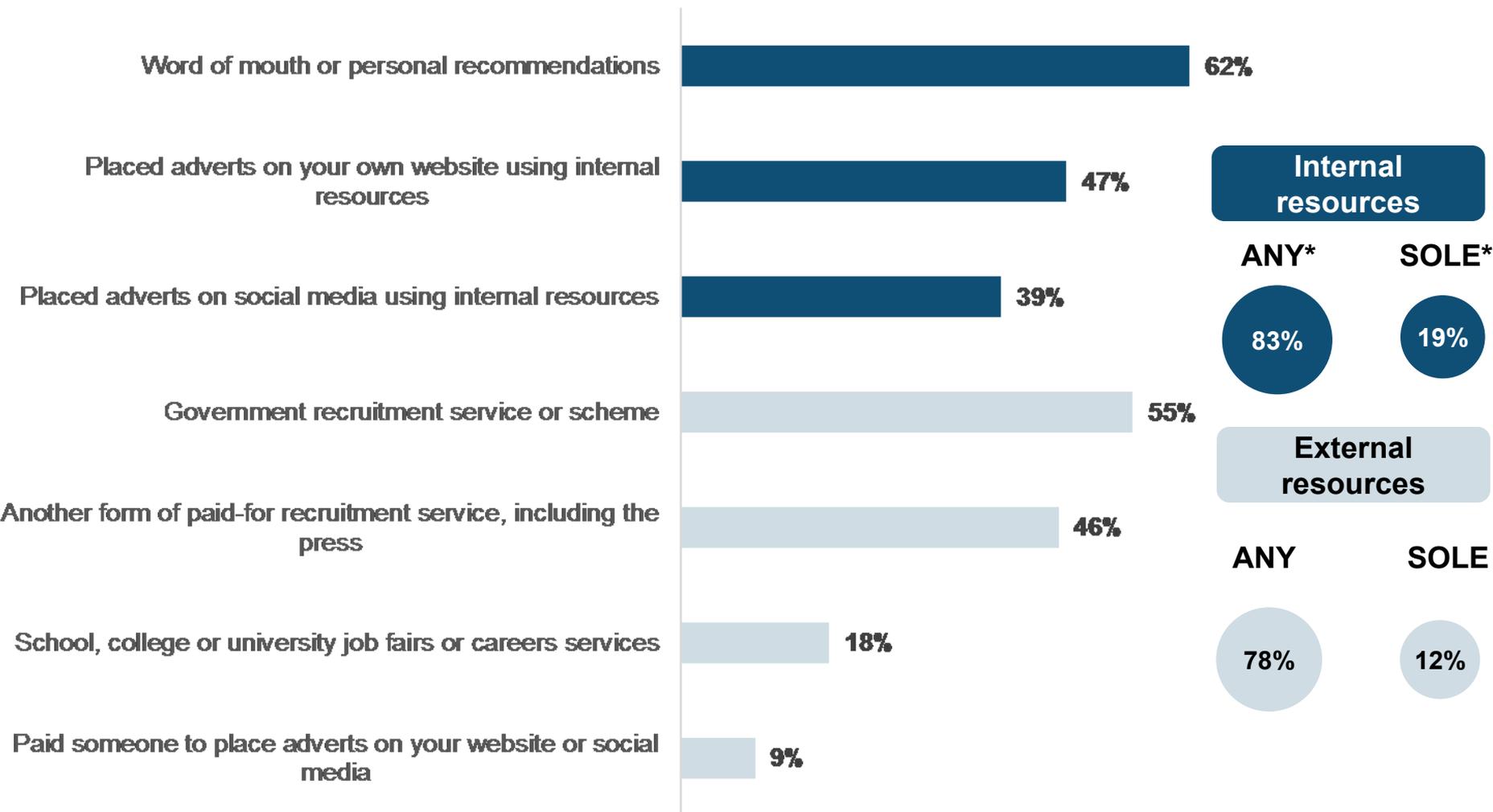
Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), South West (294), Northern (400), South Eastern (299), Southern (312), North West (176)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Public Admin. (34), Health & Social Work (252), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Education (139), Manufacturing (124), Transport & Comms (96), Business Services (246), Financial Services (46), Wholesale & Retail (531), Arts & Other (127), Construction (161), Primary Sector & Utilities (120)

\*\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

# Recruitment channels used

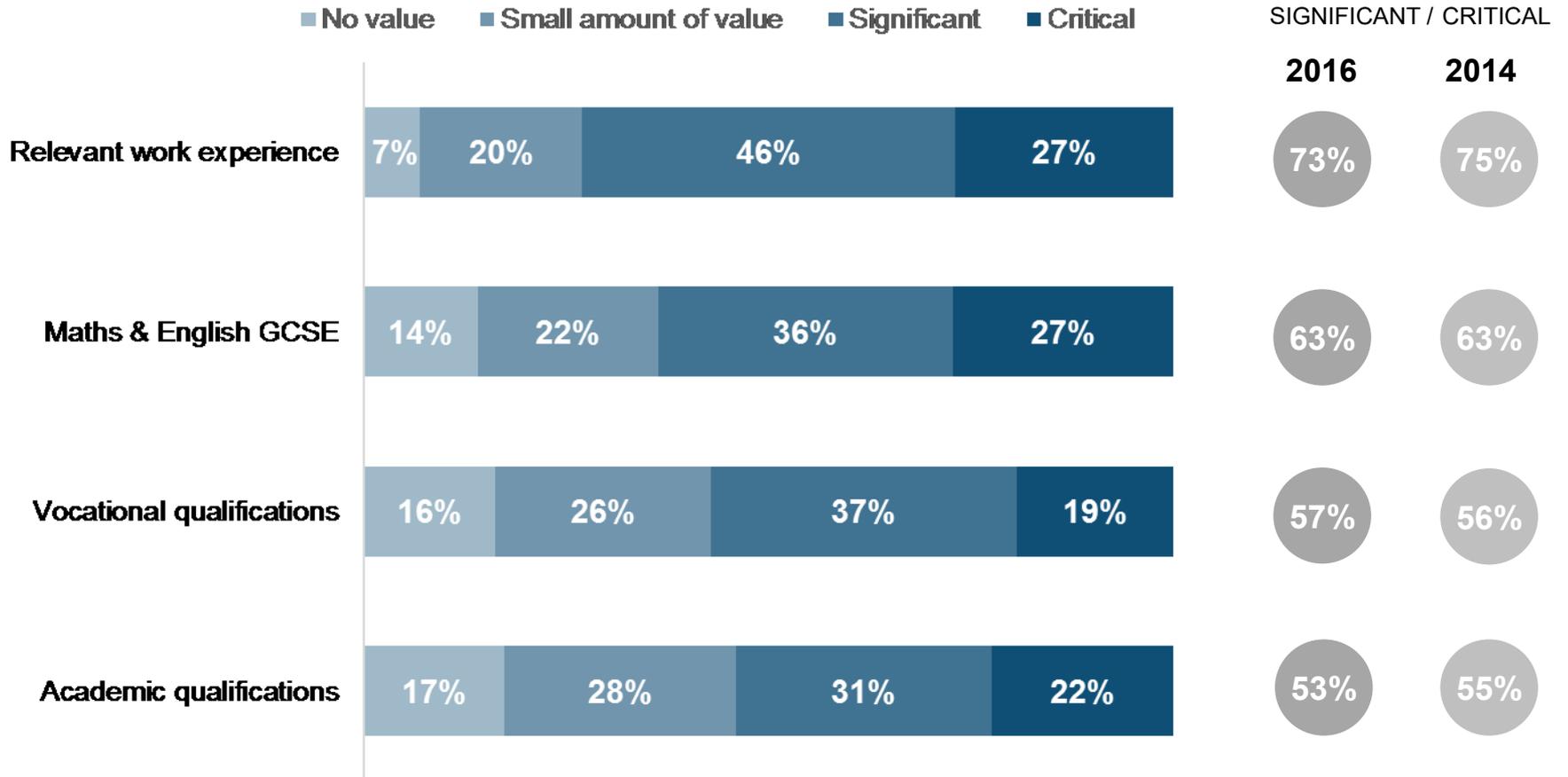


Base: All Northern Ireland recruiting employers (1,204)  
 Note: multiple responses were allowed

“Any recruitment channel” refers to employers who used an internal or external recruitment channel, in conjunction with others. “Sole recruitment channel” refers to those employers who used either internal or external resources as their only method of recruitment



# What employers look for when recruiting



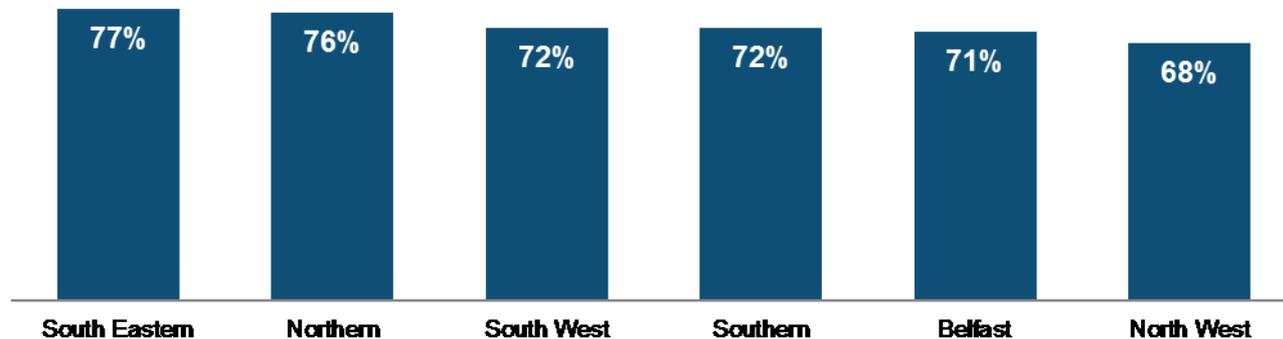
Base: All Northern Ireland employers (2016: 2,007, 2014: 2,005)



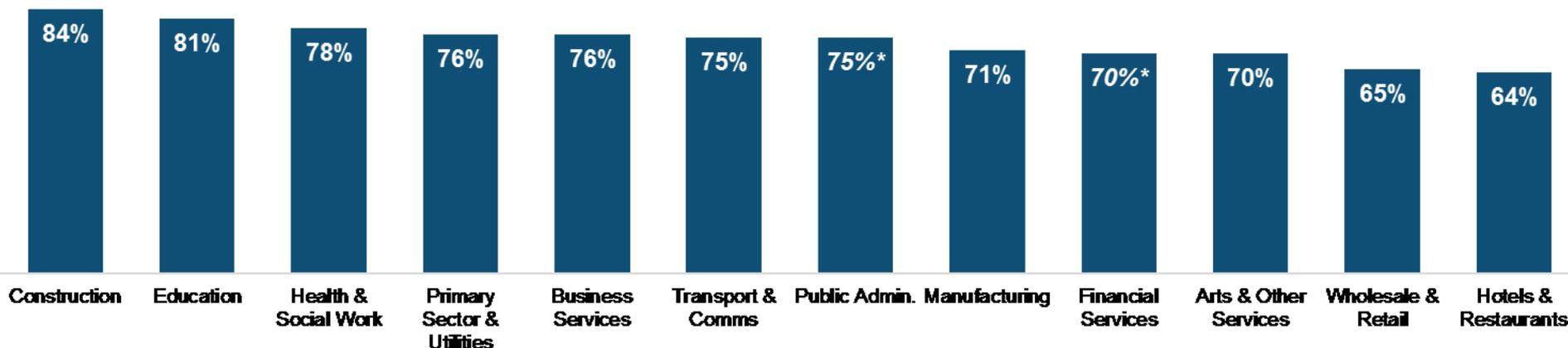
# What employers look for: relevant work experience

**Northern Ireland: 73%**  
of employers look for relevant work experience

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: South Eastern (299), Northern (486), South West (294), Southern (312), Belfast (440), North West (176)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Construction (161), Education (139), Health & Social Work (252), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Business Services (246), Transport & Comms (96), Public Admin. (34), Manufacturing (124), Financial Services (46), Arts & Other (127), Wholesale & Retail (531), Hotels & Restaurants (131)



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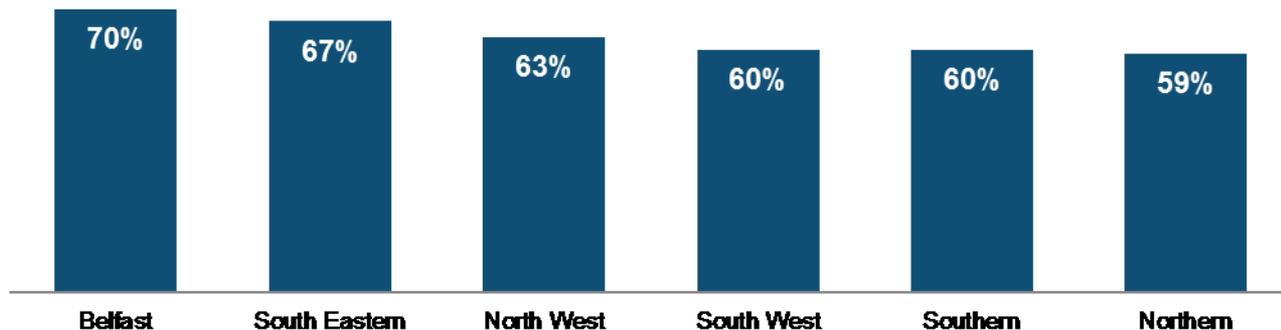
\*\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

Produced by IFF Research

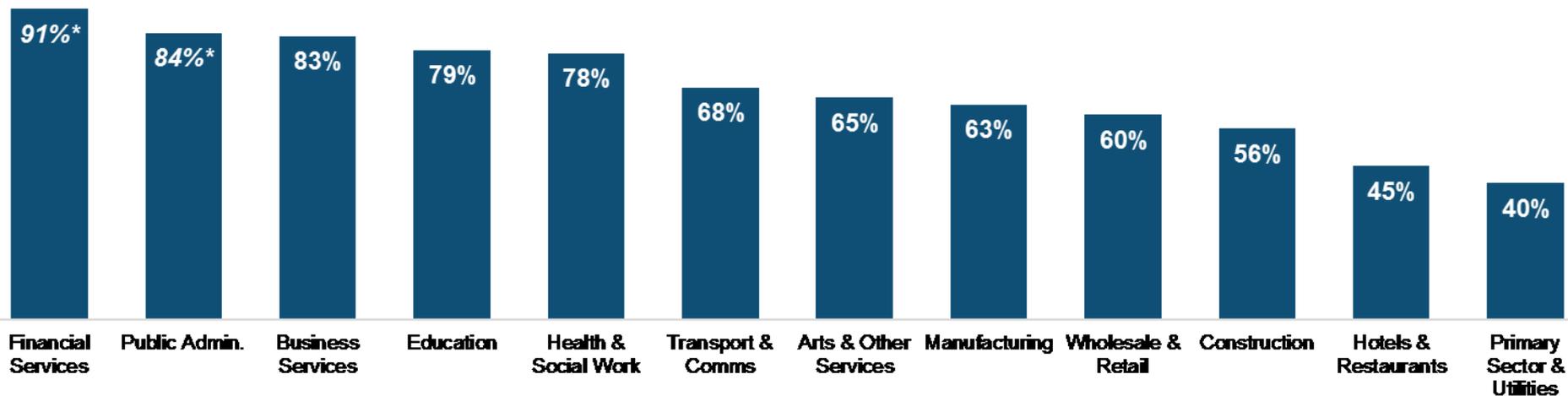
# What employ English

**Northern Ireland: 63%**  
of employers look for maths and English

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), South Eastern (299), North West (176), South West (294), Southern (312), Northern (486)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Financial Services (46), Public Admin. (34), Business Services (246), Education (139), Health & Social Work (252), Transport & Comms (96), Arts & Other (127), Manufacturing (124), Wholesale & Retail (531), Construction (161), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Primary Sector & Utilities (120)

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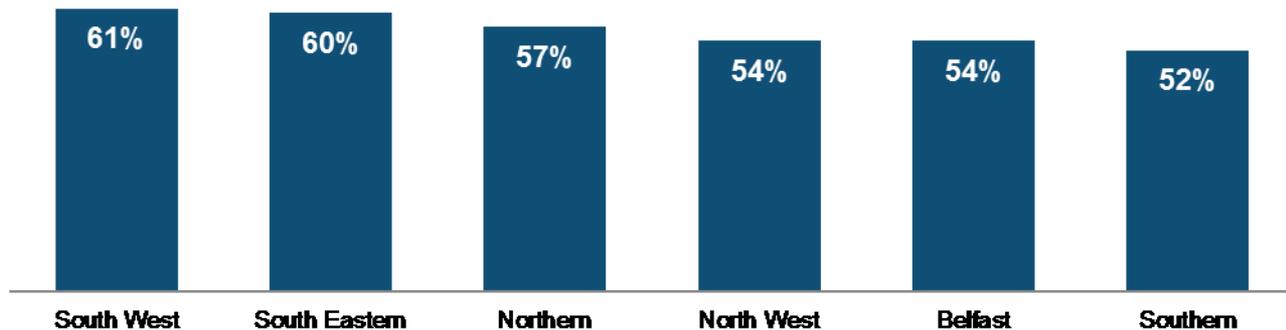


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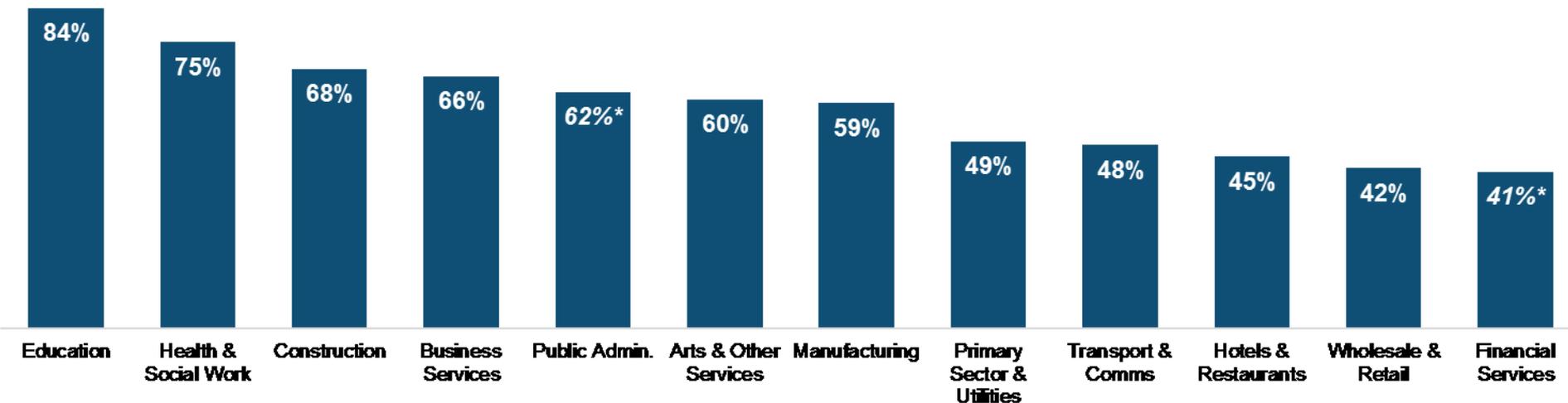
# What employ qualifications

**Northern Ireland: 57%**  
of employers look for vocational qualifications

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: South West (294), South Eastern (299), Northern (486), North West (176), Belfast (440), Southern (312)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Education (139), Health & Social Work (252), Construction (161), Business Services (246), Public Admin. (34), Arts & Other (127), Manufacturing (124), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Transport & Comms (96), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Wholesale & Retail (531), Financial Services (46)

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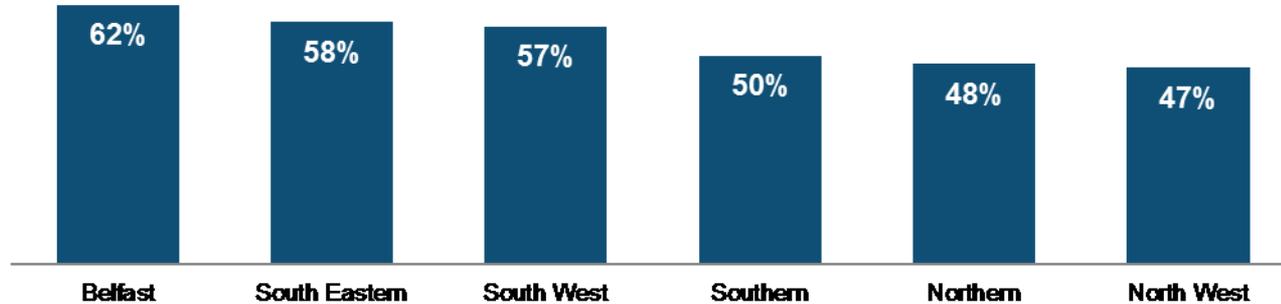


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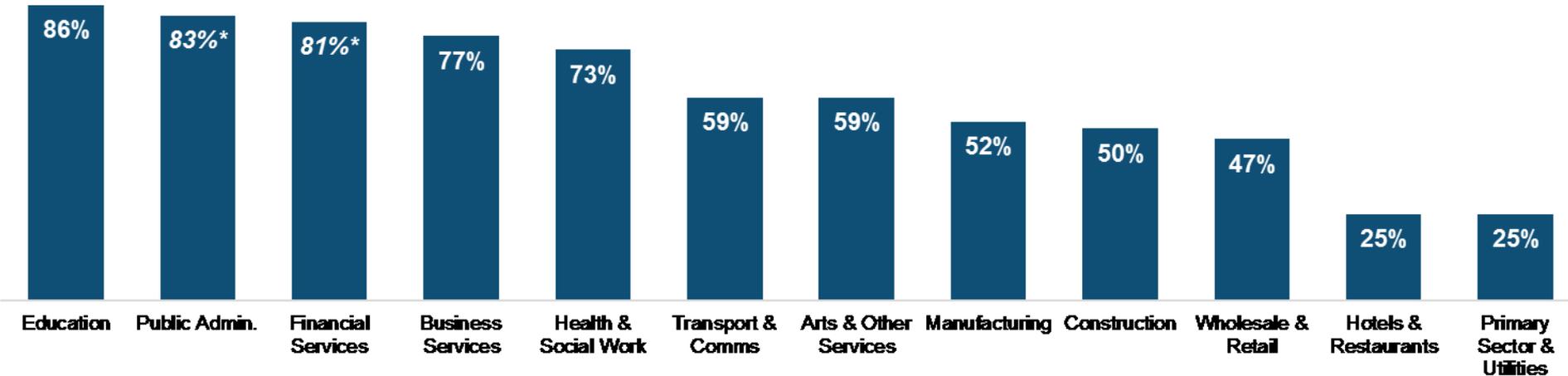
# What employers look for: academic qualifications

**Northern Ireland: 53%**  
of employers look for academic qualifications

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), South Eastern (299), South West (294), Southern (312), Northern (486), North West (176)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Education (139), Public Admin. (34), Financial Services (46), Business Services (246), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Health & Social Work (252), Transport & Comms (96), Arts & Other (127), Manufacturing (124), Construction (161), Wholesale & Retail (531) Primary Sector & Utilities (120)

\*\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

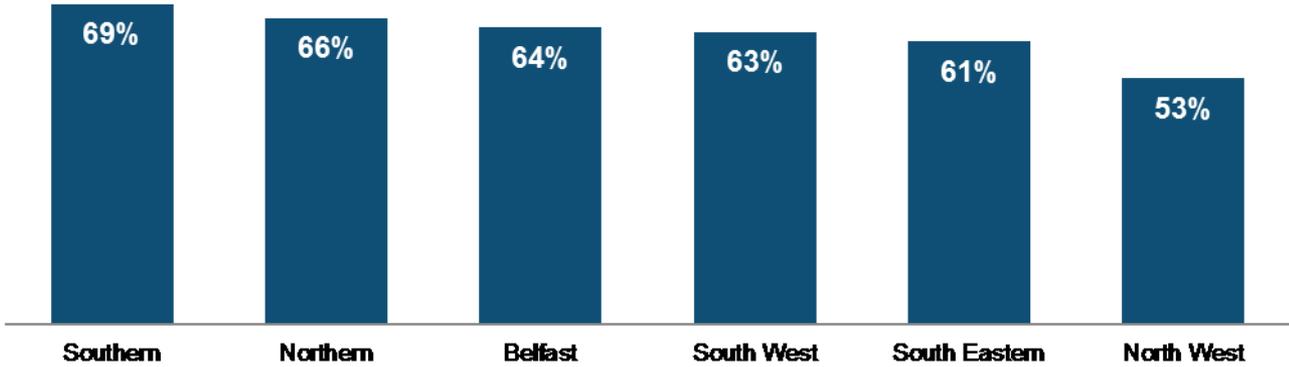


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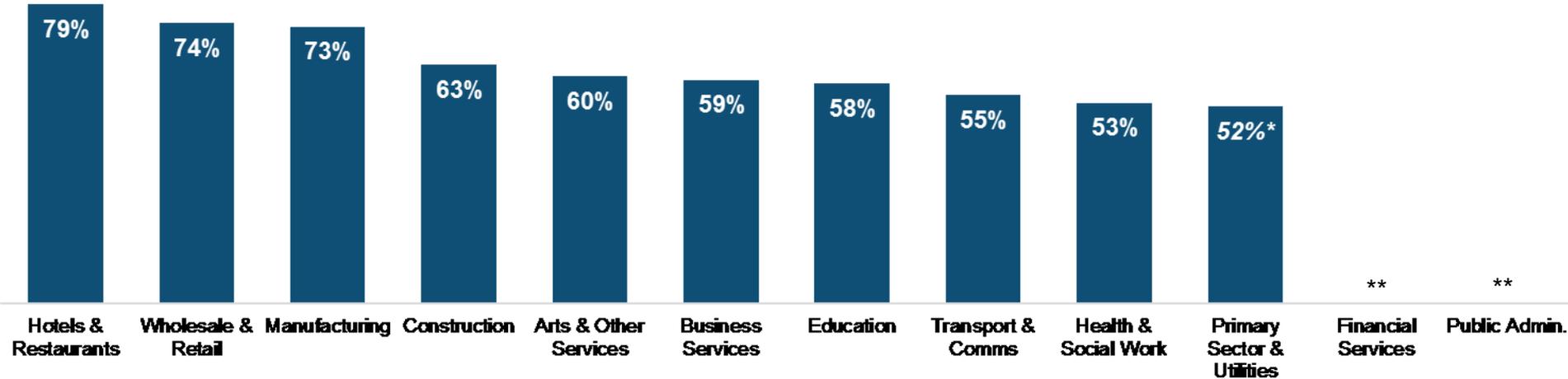
# Recruitment

**Northern Ireland: 63%**  
of recruiting employers had taken on a young person in the last 12 months

Base: All Northern Ireland employers who had recruited (1,131)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who had recruited: Southern (162), Northern (269), Belfast (275), South West (173), South Eastern (165), North West (87)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who had recruited: Hotels & Restaurants (98), Wholesale & Retail (281), Manufacturing (85), Construction (70), Arts & Other (56), Business services (137), Education (83), Transport & Comms (61), Health & Social Work (180), Primary Sector & Utilities (283)

\*\*\* denotes a figure not shown due to a base size of fewer than 25 employers

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# Channels used to recruit young people

## Internal resources

ANY

SOLE

73%

41%

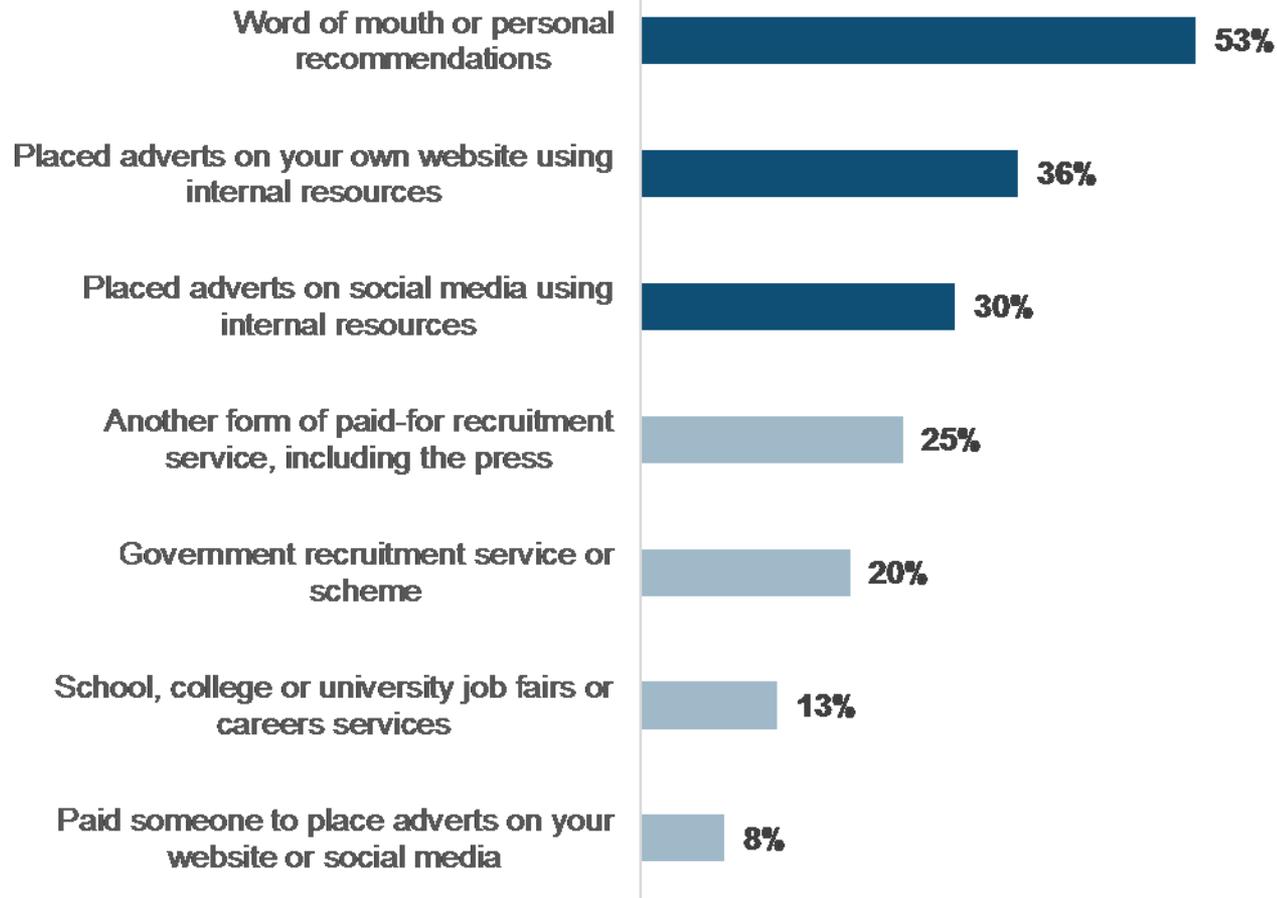
## External resources

ANY

SOLE

52%

22%



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that have taken on a young person in the last year (788)

Note: multiple responses were allowed

“Any recruitment channel” refers to employers who used an internal or external recruitment channel, in conjunction with others. “Sole recruitment channel” refers to those employers who used either internal or external resources as their only method of recruitment

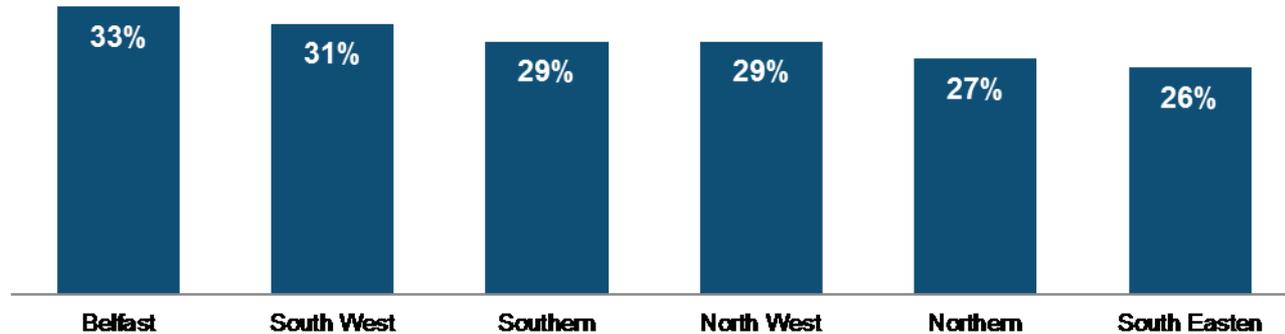


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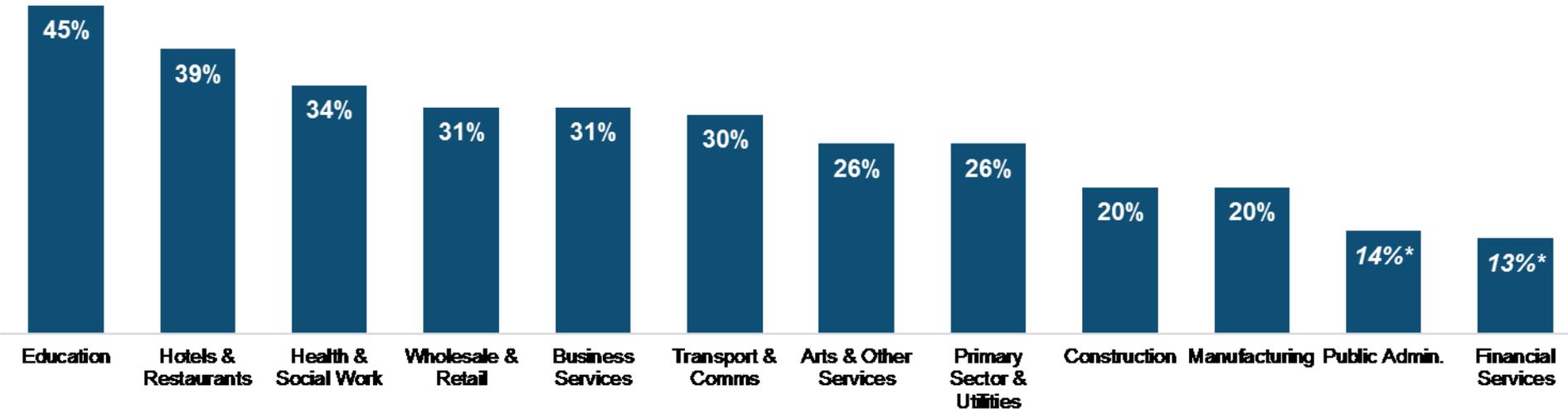
# Recruitment of education leavers

**Northern Ireland: 29%**  
had recruited an education leaver in the last 12 months

Base: All Northern Ireland employers (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), South West (294), Southern (312), North West (176), Northern (486), South Eastern (299)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Education (139), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Health & Social Work (252), Wholesale & Retail (531), Business Services (246), Transport & Comms (96), Arts & Other (127), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Construction (161), Manufacturing (124), Public Admin. (34), Financial Services (46)

\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution



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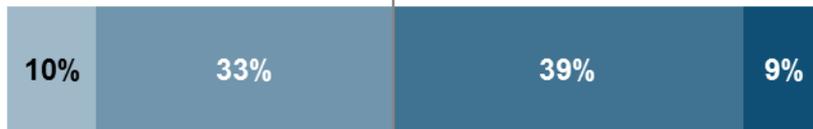
# Preparedness of education leavers for work

■ Very poorly prepared   
 ■ Poorly prepared   
 ■ Well prepared   
 ■ Very well prepared

**PREPARED**

2016    2014

16 year-old school leavers



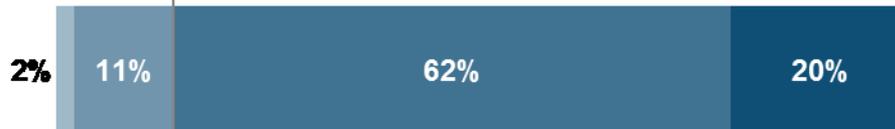
17-18 year-old school leavers



17-18 year-old FE leavers



University/HE leavers



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that have recruited each type of education leaver in the previous 2-3 years: 16 year-old school leavers (235), 17-18 year old school leavers (337), 17-18 year old FE leavers (296), University/HE leavers (456)



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# Work experience offered in last 12 months

**48% of employers in Northern Ireland offered work placements**

## Education placements: 41%

Students at school: 31%

Students at FE or 6<sup>th</sup> Form College: 20%

Students at University: 15%

## Broad Adult Placements: 16%

Work trials: 7%

Placements for unemployed: 9%

Voluntary work (unprompted\*): 1%

Special needs/Disability programme: 1%

## Internships: 7%

Internships, either paid or unpaid: 7%

Graduate programme (unprompted): <1%

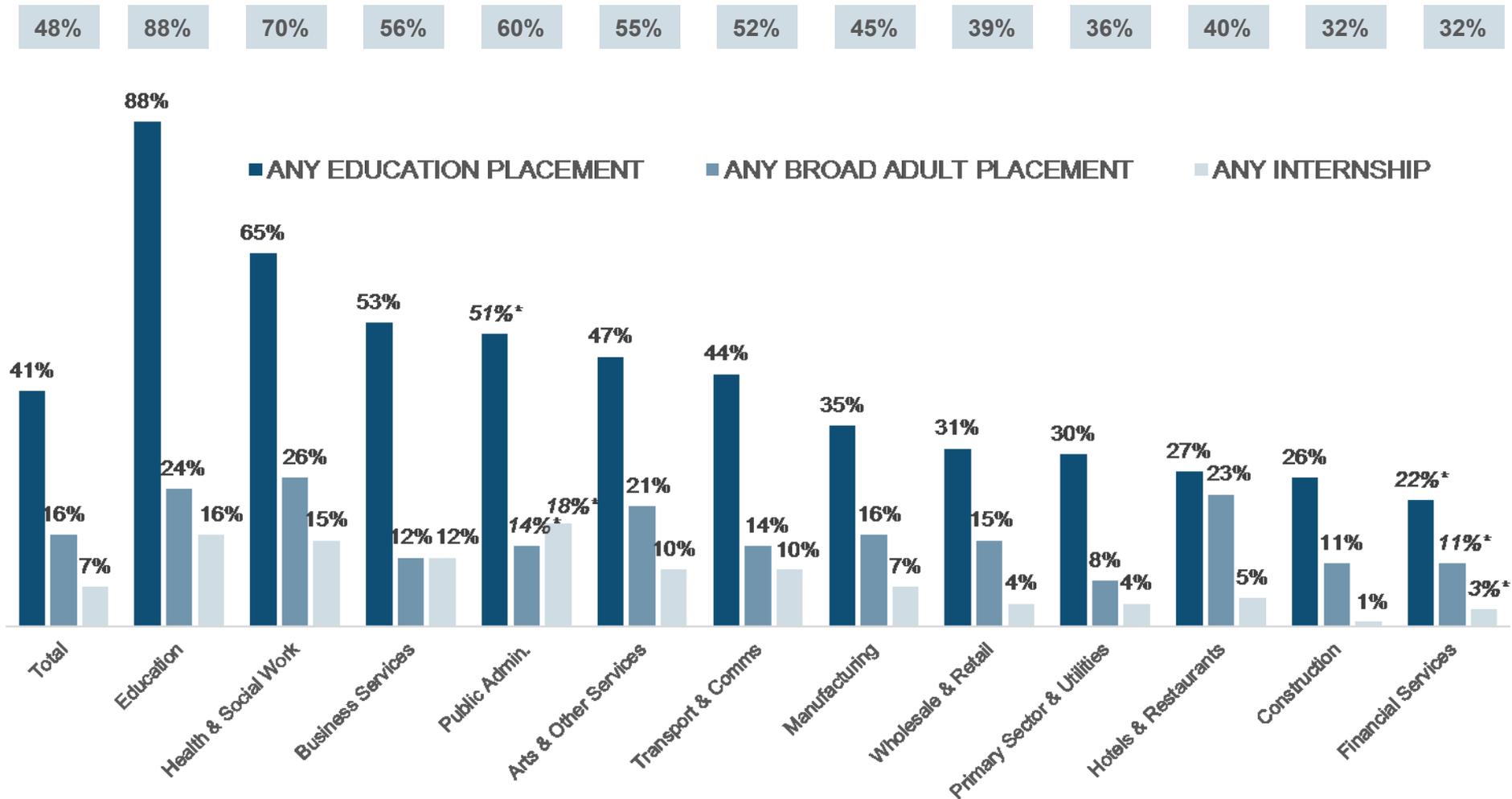
## Work Inspiration

13% of employers engaged with schools, colleges or universities to offer 'work inspiration' activities, such as mentoring, holding site visits and visiting educational institutions to talk with students about careers



# Work placement offering, by sector

ANY PLACEMENT

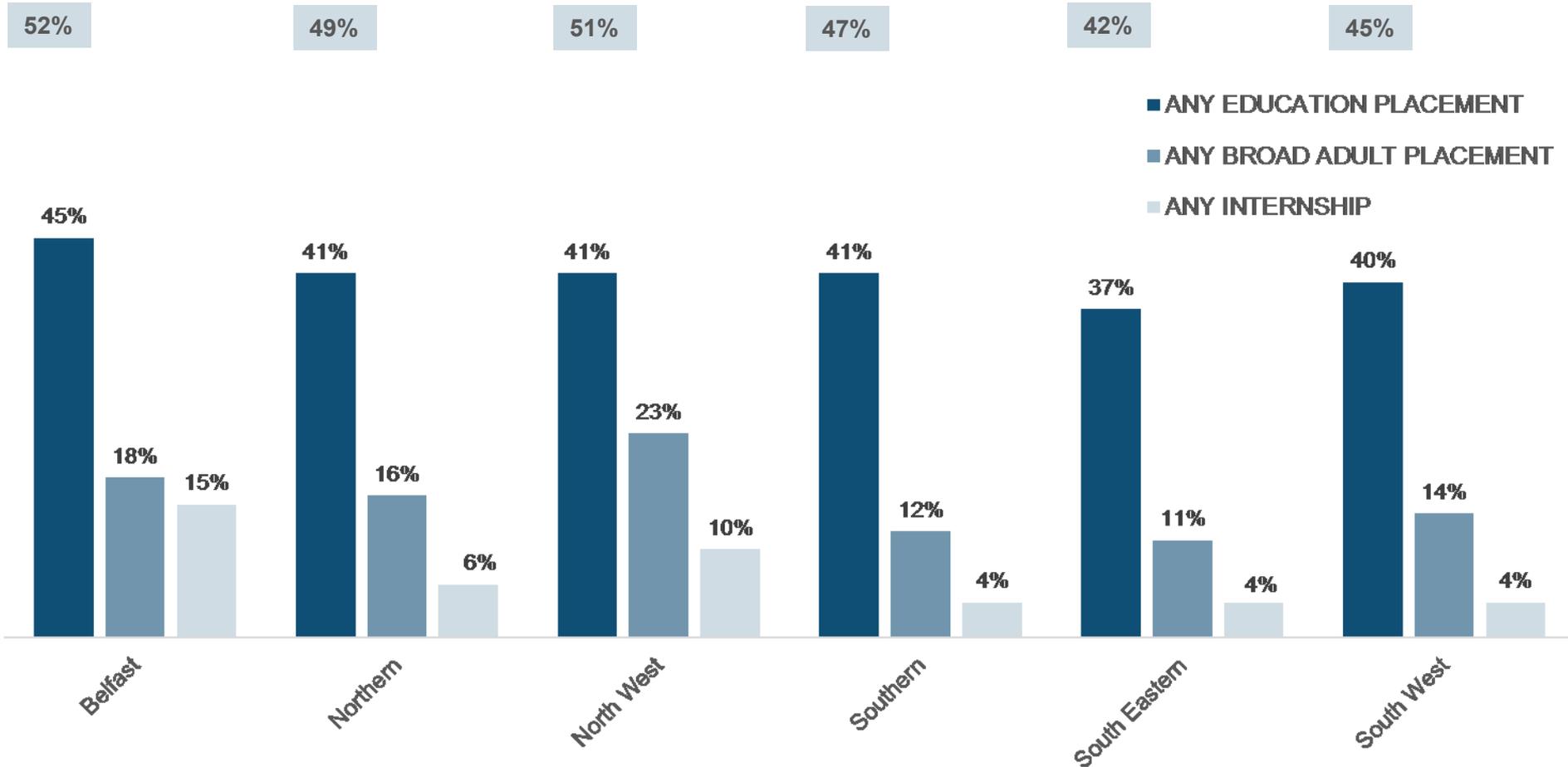


Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Education (139), Health & Social Work (252), Business Services (246), Public Admin. (34), Arts & Other (127), Transport & Comms (96), Manufacturing (124), Wholesale & Retail (531), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Construction (161), Financial Services (46)

\*\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

# Work placement offering, by region

ANY PLACEMENT

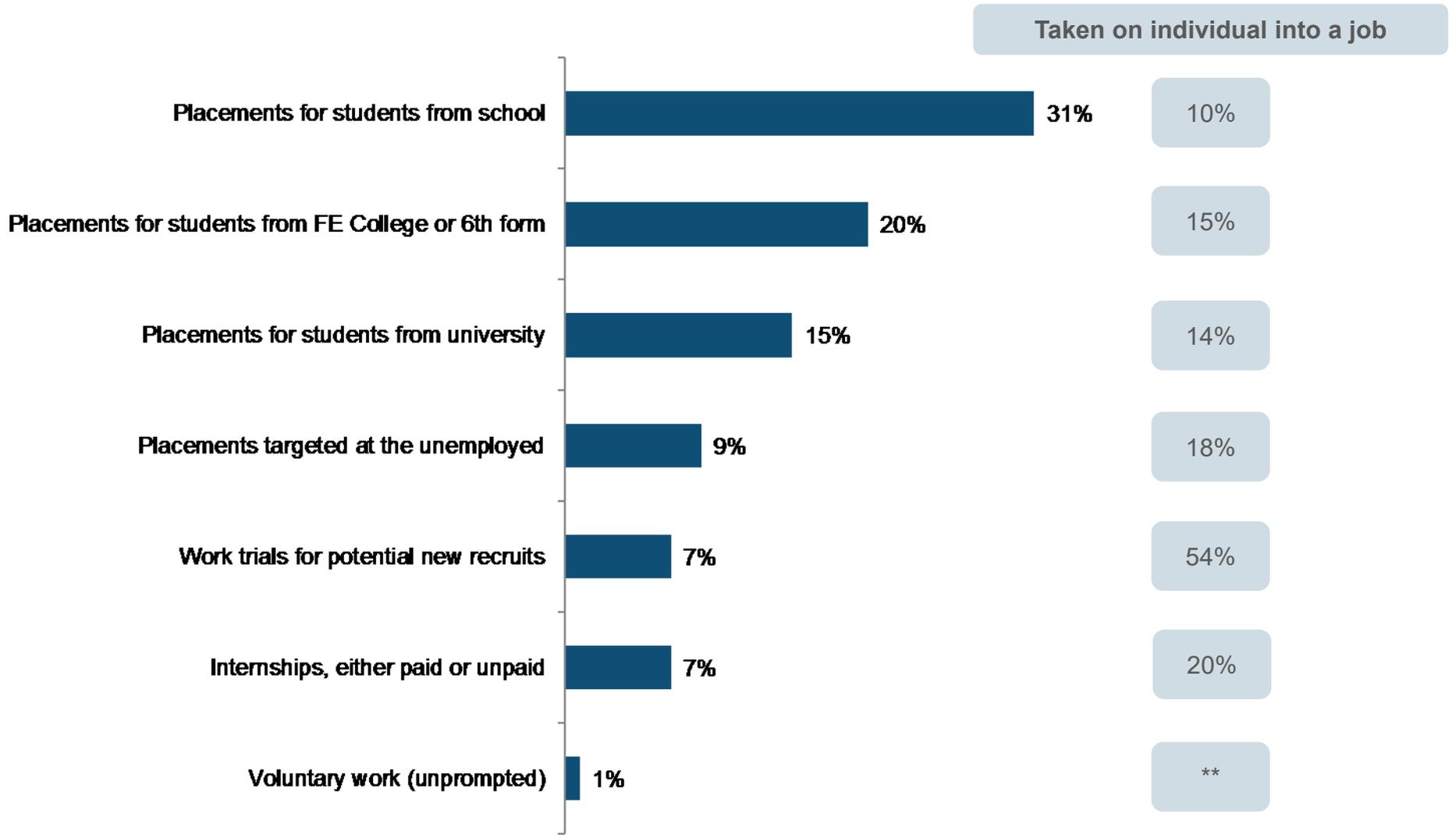


Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), Northern (486), North West (176), Southern (312), South Eastern (299), South West (294)



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# Types of work placement offered

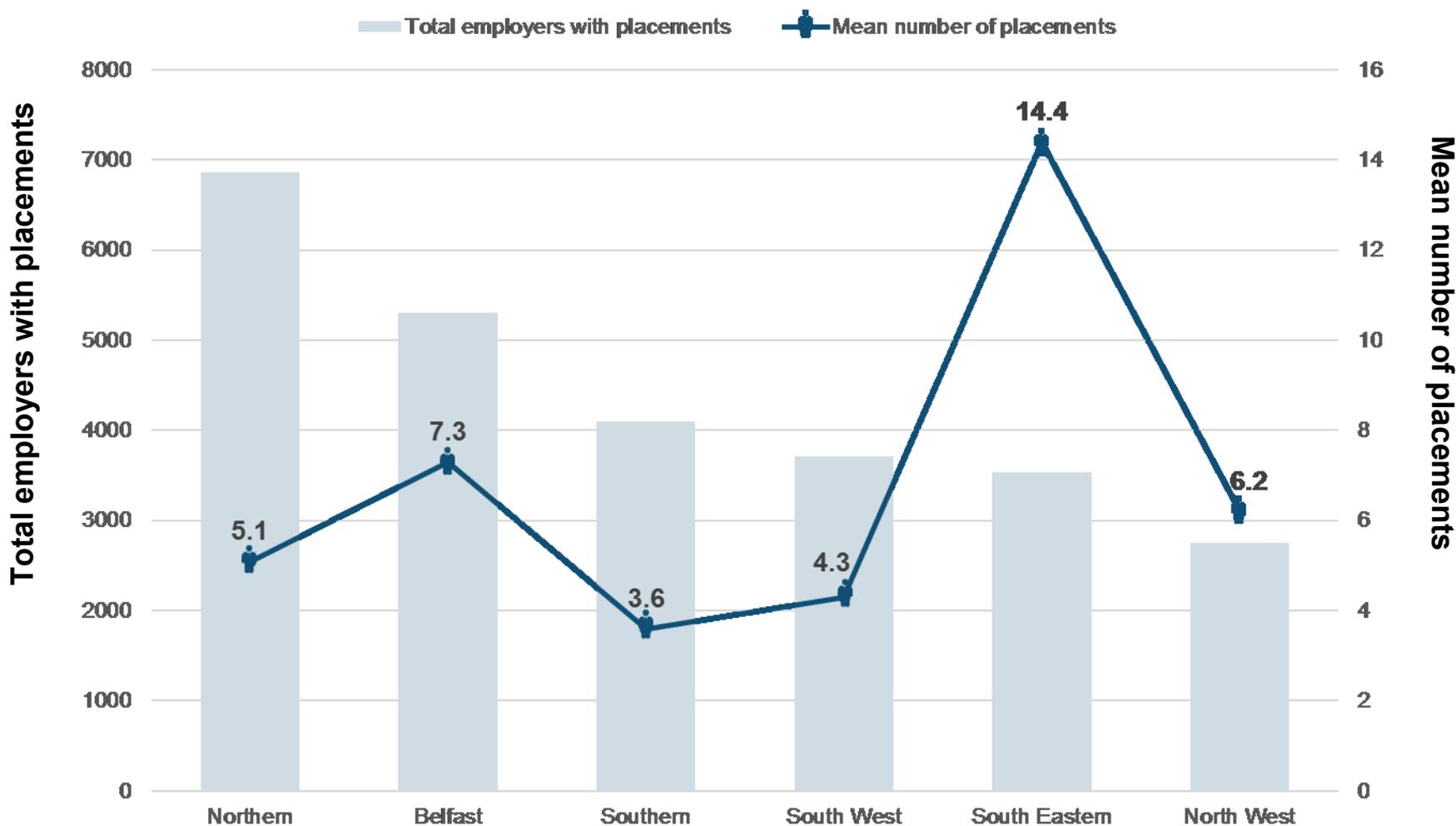


Base: All Northern Ireland employers (2,007)

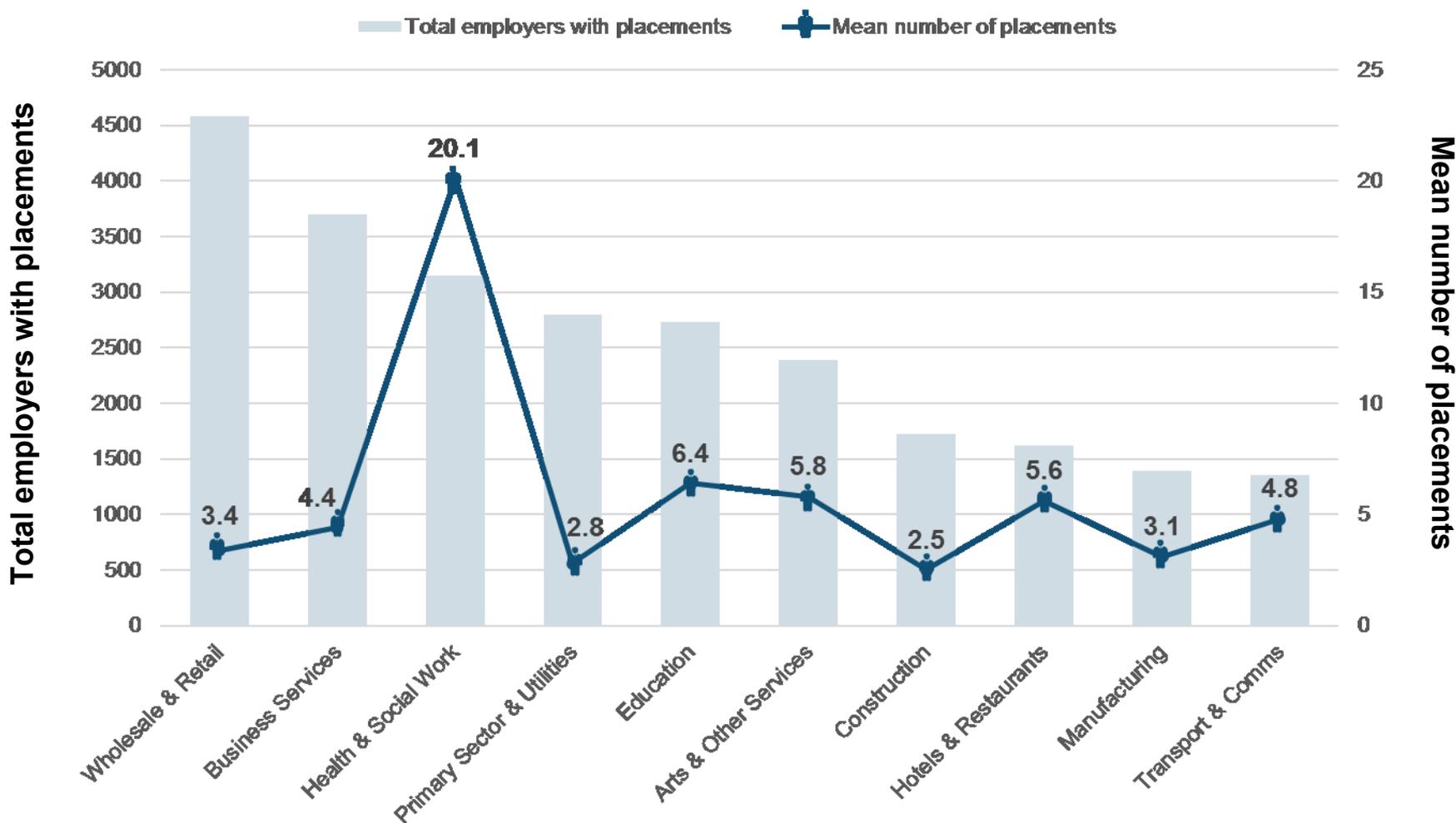
Base: Establishments who had placements in last 12 months for: students from school (769), students from FE college/6<sup>th</sup> form (541), students from university (432), the unemployed (211), potential new recruits (168), internships (217)

\*\*\* denotes a figure not shown due to a base size of fewer than 25 employers

# Mean number of work placements offered in the last 12 months, by region



# Mean number of work placements offered in the last 12 months, by sector



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who have had placements in the last 12 months: Wholesale & Retail (236), Business Services (154), Health & Social Work (193), Primary Sector & Utilities (49), Education (129), Arts & Other (74), Construction (66), Hotels & Restaurants (65), Manufacturing (75), Transport & Comms (55)

Note: Public Admin. and Financial Services are not shown due low base sizes of fewer than 25 employers



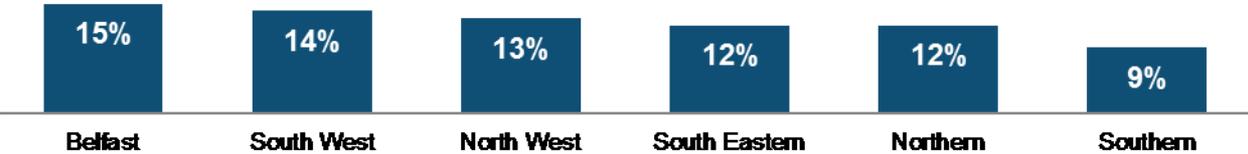
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# Employers offering work inspiration activities to students

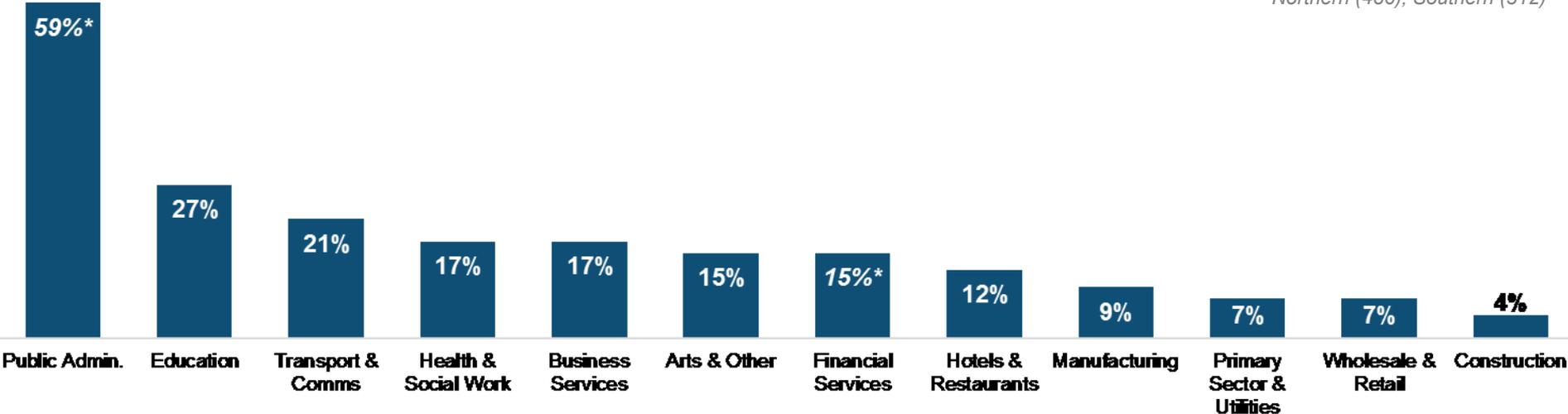
Work Inspiration activities include mentoring, holding site visits and visiting educational institutions to talk with students about careers

**Northern Ireland:**  
**13%**  
of employers offered work inspiration activities to students

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), South West (294), North West (176), South Eastern (299), Northern (486), Southern (312)



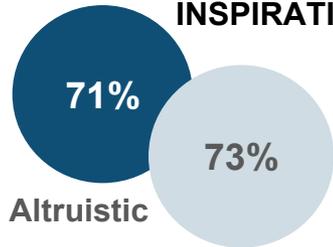
Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Public Admin. (34), Education (139), Transport & Comms (96), Health & Social Work (252), Business Services (246), Arts & Other (127), Financial Services (46), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Manufacturing (124), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Wholesale & Retail (531), Construction (161)

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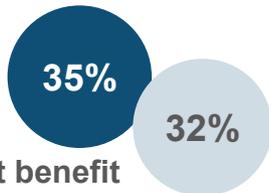
# Reasons for offering work experience opportunities

## PLACEMENTS

### INSPIRATION



### Direct benefit

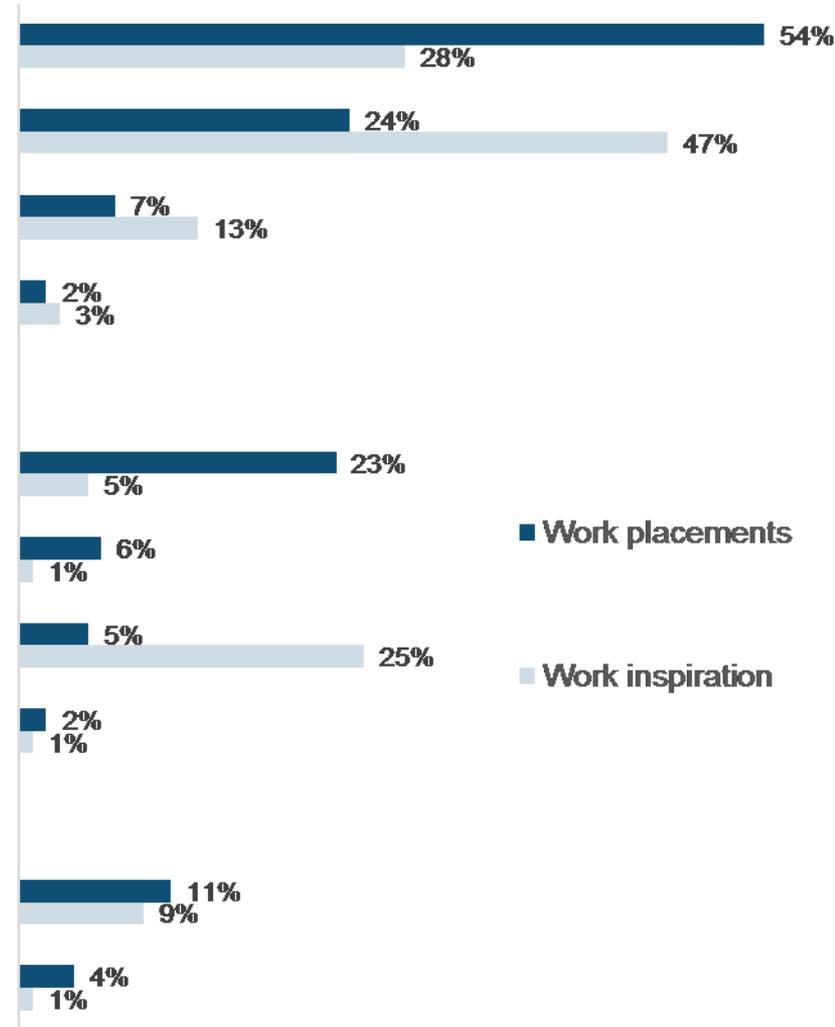


### Circumstantial



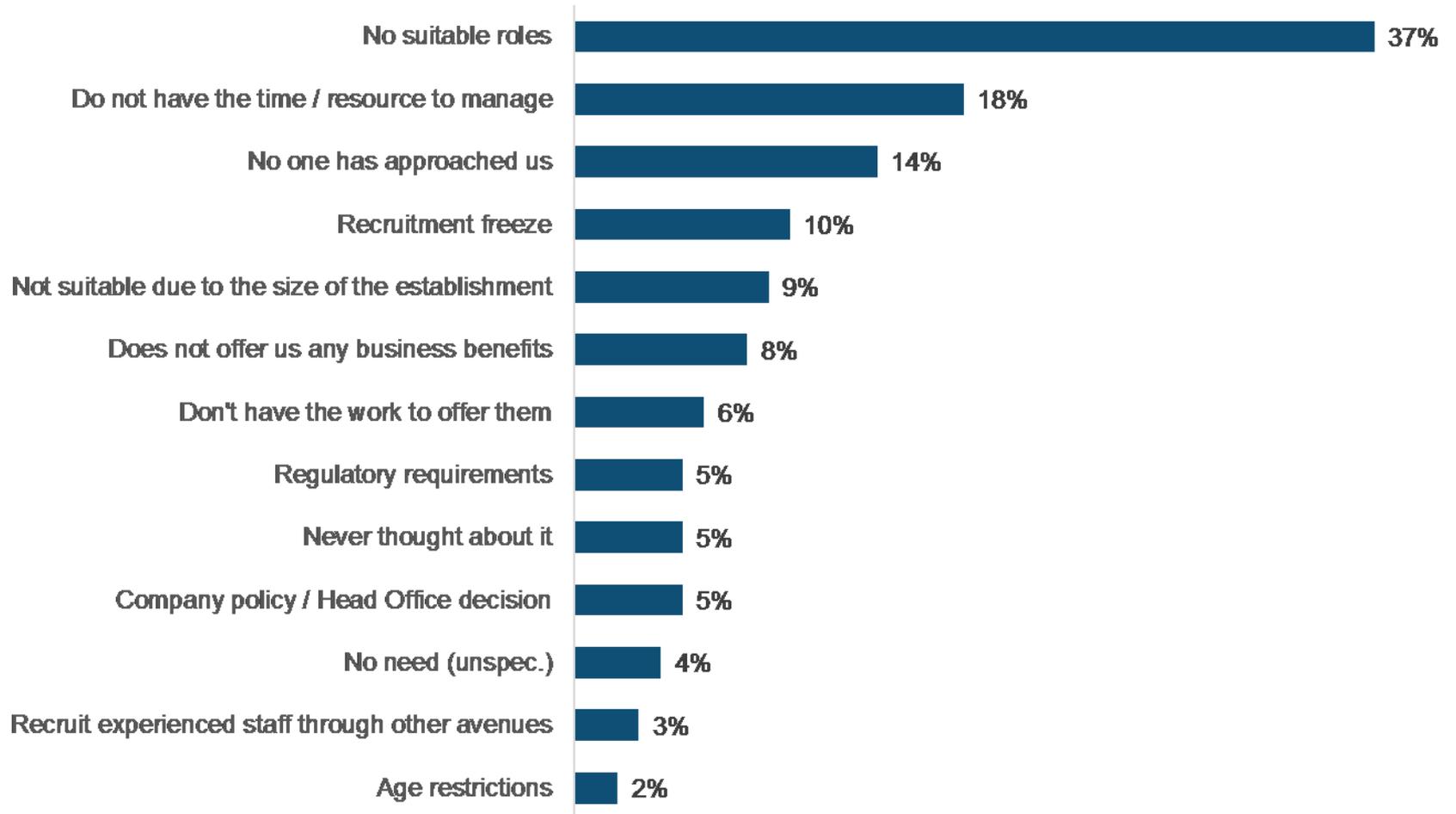
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- Gives them experience
- Doing our 'bit' / uphold relations with the local community
- Part of formal corporate social responsibility policy
- Existing links with educational institutions
- Helps with recruitment / as a trial
- Helps with the workload
- Raises our profile in the recruitment market
- Beneficial to the company (e.g. fresh ideas/up to date skills etc.)
- Approached by student or educational institution
- Favour for family member or friend



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who have had work placements / offered work inspiration in the last 12 months (1,131/371)  
Note: multiple responses were allowed

# Reason for not offering work experience



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments offering no work experience opportunities in the last 12 months (808)

Note: multiple responses were allowed

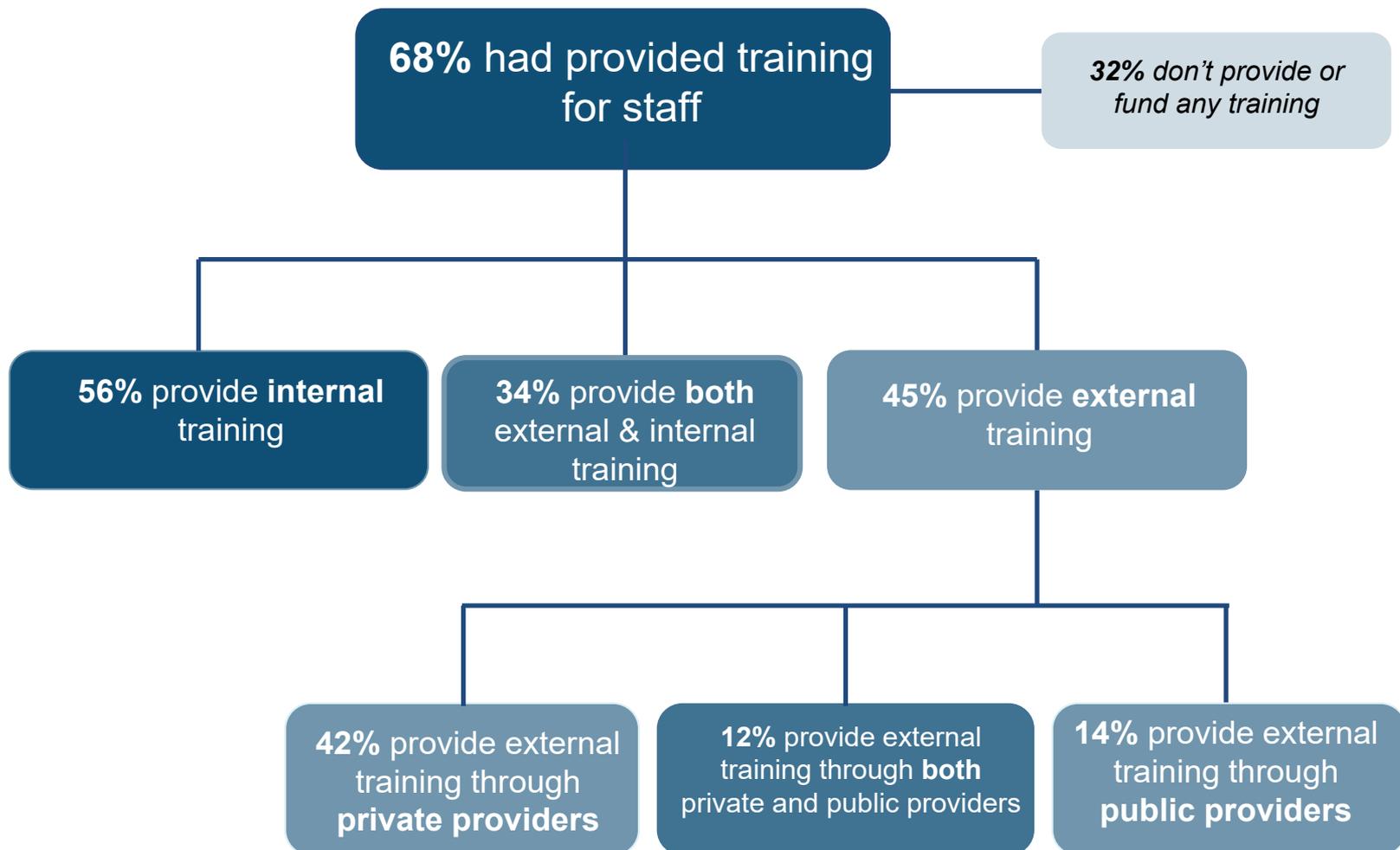


# People development



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# Summary of approach to training



*Base: All Northern Ireland employers (2,007)*



# FE Colleges as a source of training

## Northern Ireland:

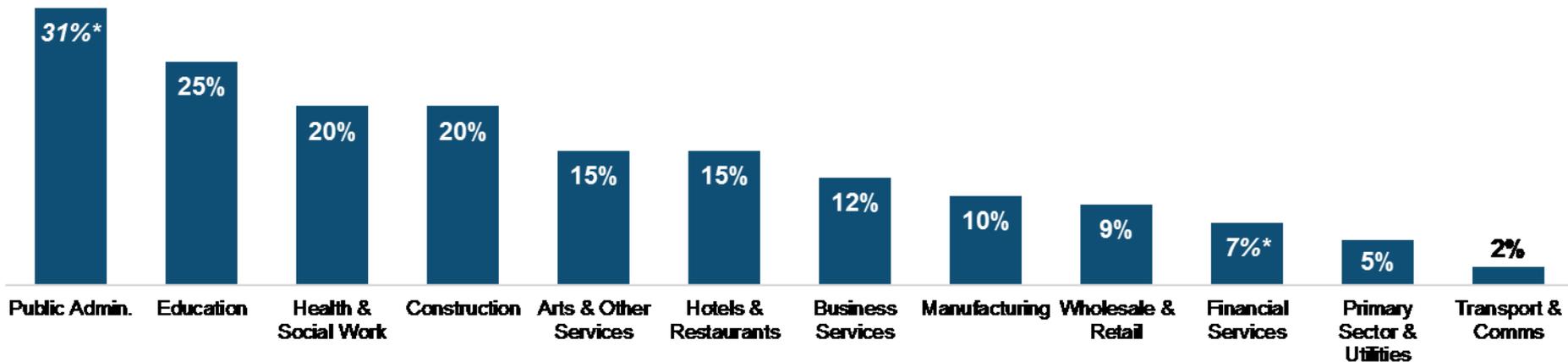
**14%**

Of employers who train used FE colleges as a source of training

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train (1,581)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train: North West (136), South West (230), Belfast (370), Southern (235), South Eastern (233), Northern (377)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train: Public admin (31), Education (134), Health & Social Work (235), Construction (126), Arts & Other (97), Hotels & Restaurants (101), Business Services (194), Manufacturing (100), Wholesale & Retail (374), Financial Services (41), Primary Sector & Utilities (72), Transport & Comms (76)



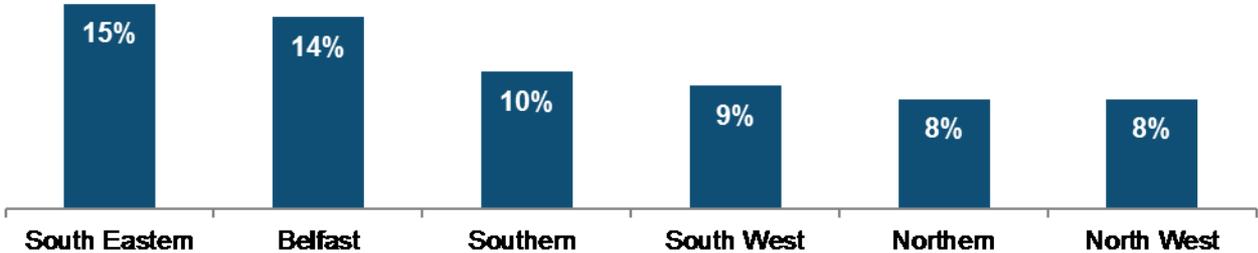
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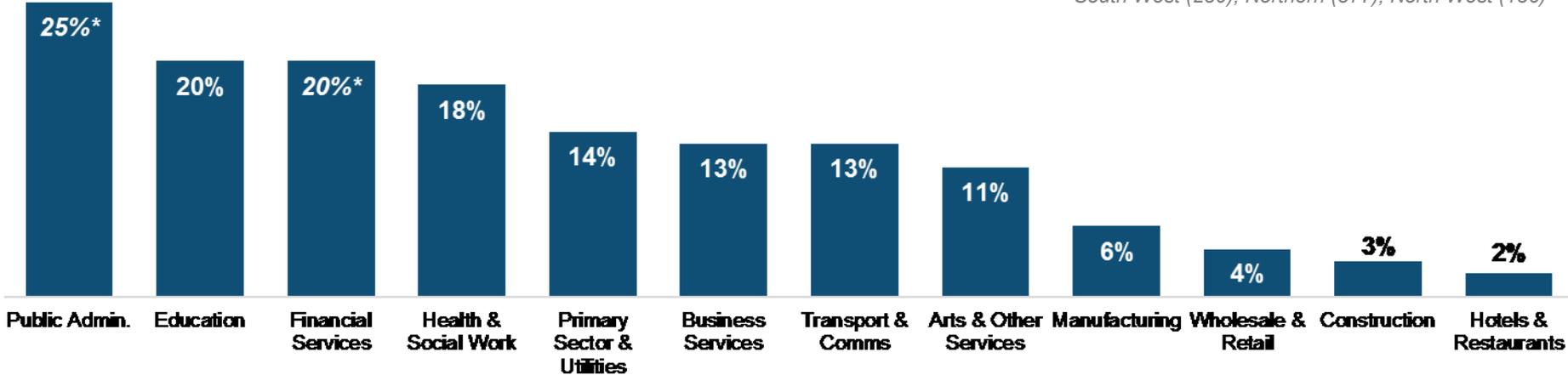
# Higher Education Institutions as a source of training

**Northern Ireland:**  
**11%**  
 Of employers who train used Higher Education Institutions as a source of training

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train (1,581)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train: South Eastern (233), Belfast (370), Southern (235), South West (230), Northern (377), North West (136)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train: Public admin (31), Education (134), Financial Services (41), Health & Social Work (235), Primary Sector & Utilities (72), Business Services (194), Transport & Comms (76), Arts & Other (97), Manufacturing (100), Wholesale & Retail (374), Construction (126), Hotels & Restaurants (101)



\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

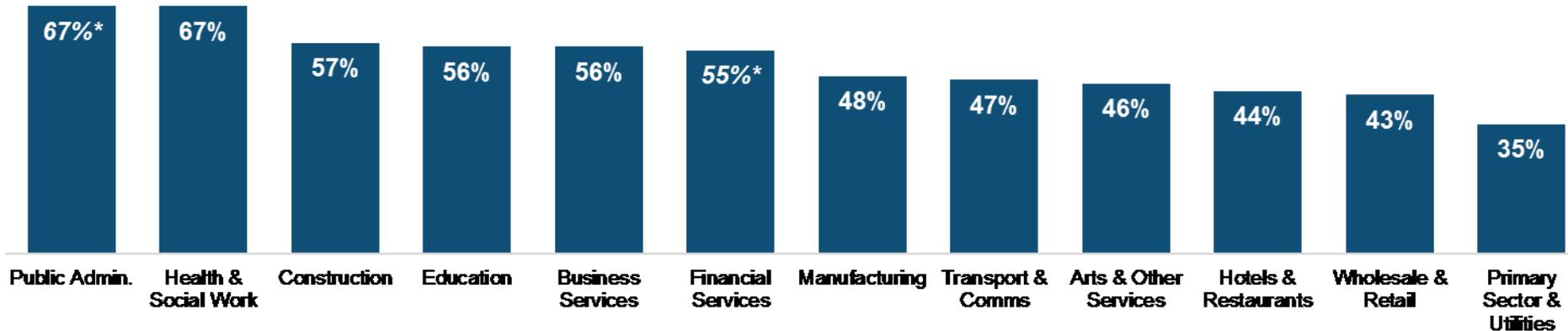
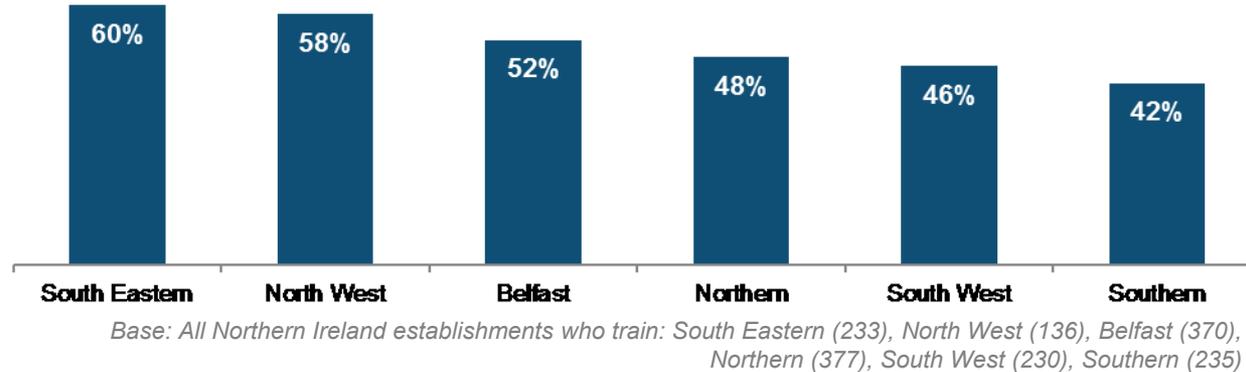
# Commercial organisations as a source of training

## Northern Ireland:

**50%**

Of employers who train used commercial organisations as a source of training

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train (1,581)

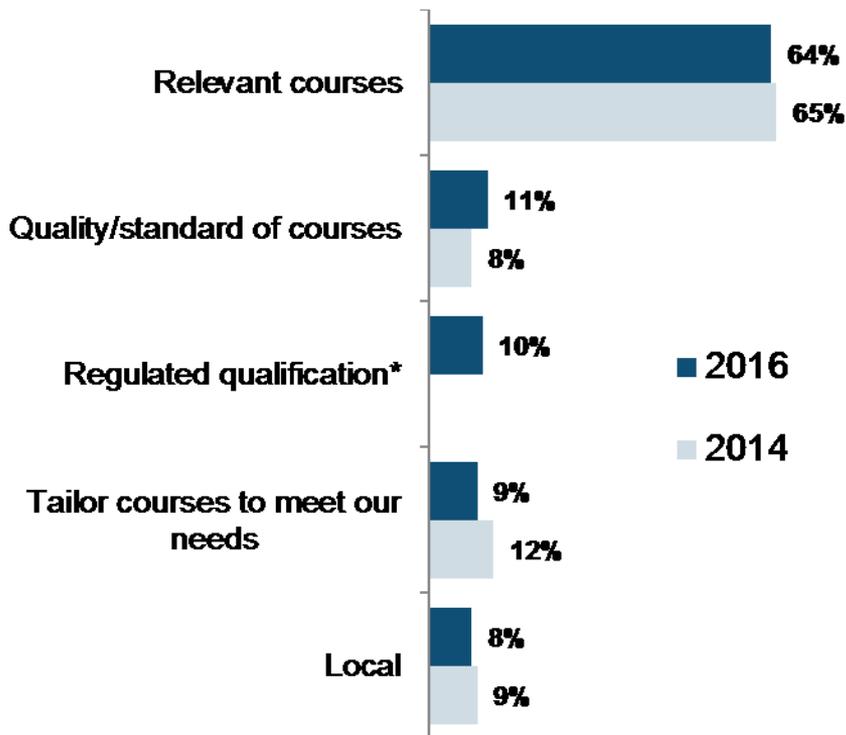


Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who train: Public admin (31), Health & Social Work (235), Construction (126), Education (134), Business Services (194), Financial Services (41), Manufacturing (100), Transport & Comms (76), Arts & Other (97), Hotels & Restaurants (101), Wholesale & Retail (374), Primary Sector & Utilities (72)



# Reasons for choosing to invest resource in public training providers

## Reasons for using



\*Added as a pre-code in 2016

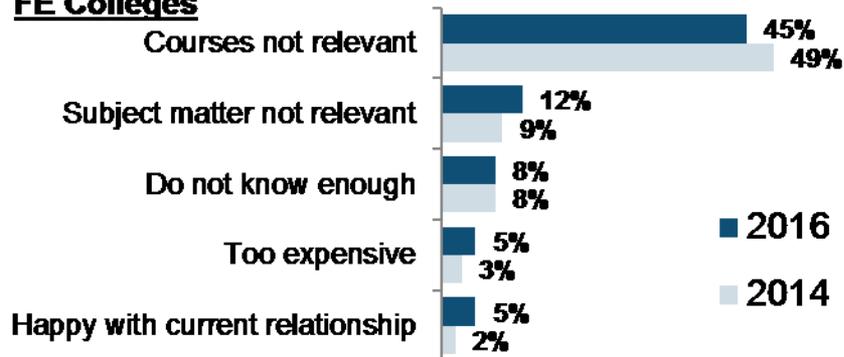
Base (2016/2014): All Northern Ireland employers who use FE Colleges or HEIs to deliver training (368/358)  
Note: multiple responses were allowed



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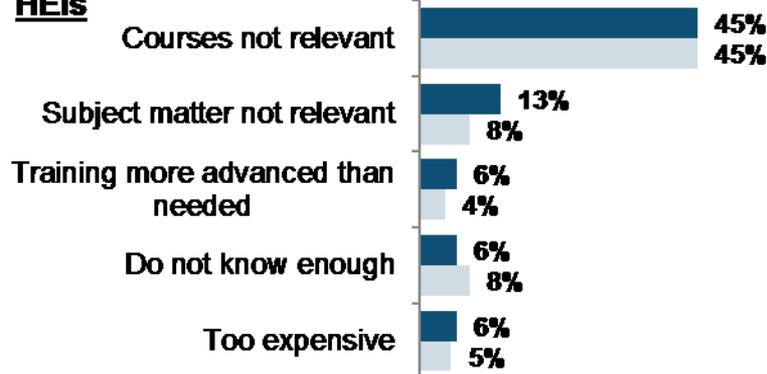
## Barriers to using

### FE Colleges



Base (2016/2014): All Northern Ireland employers who have not used FE colleges for external training and were asked why (501/459)  
Note: multiple responses were allowed

### HEIs



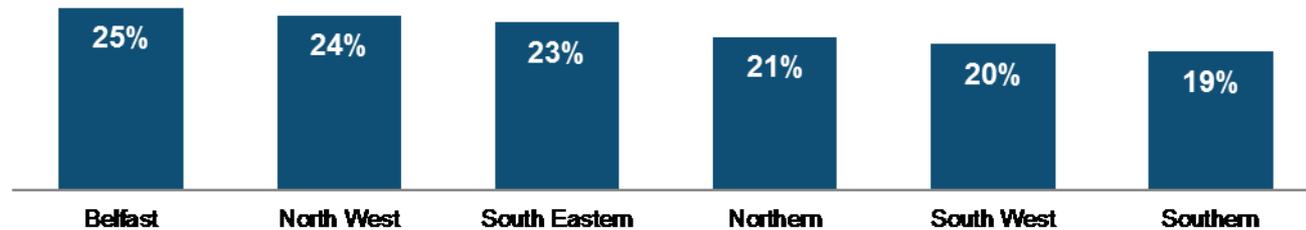
Base (2016/2014): All Northern Ireland employers who have not used HEIs for external training and were asked why (459/556)  
Note: multiple responses were allowed

# Take-up of vocational qualifications

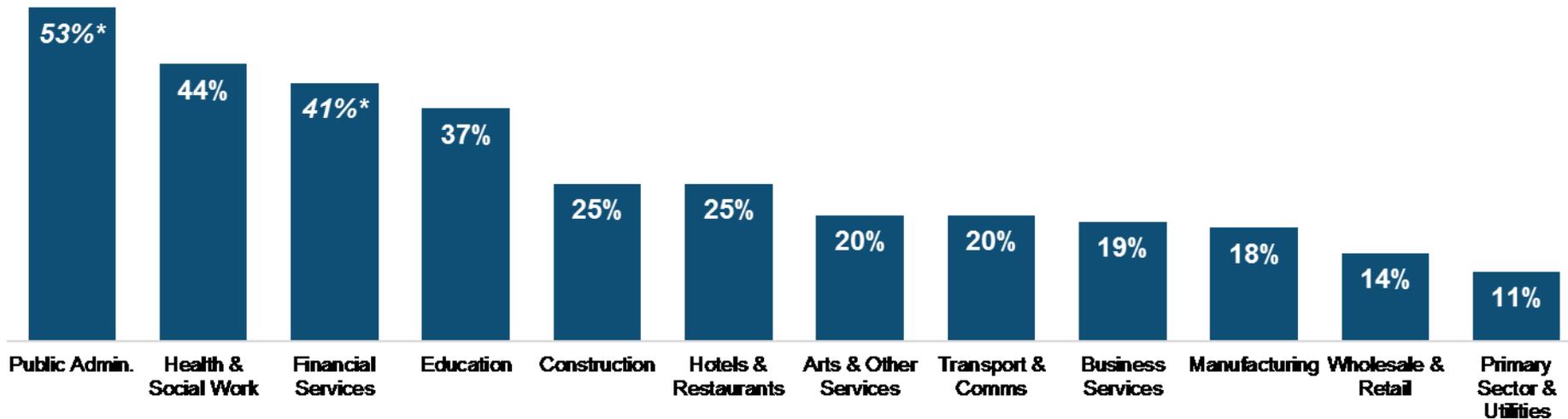
## Northern Ireland: 22%

Of employers had arranged or funded training designed to lead to a recognised vocational qualification in the last 12 months

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), North West (176), South Eastern (299), Northern (486), South West (294), Southern (312)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Public Admin. (34), Health & Social Work (252), Financial Services (46), Education (139), Construction (161), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Arts & Other (127), Transport & Comms (96), Business Services (246), Manufacturing (124), Wholesale & Retail (531), Primary Sector & Utilities (120)

\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution



# Business benefits and impacts of vocational qualifications

## Business benefits of vocational qualifications

AGREE  
2016

AGREE  
2014

Can be adapted to business needs



87%

86%



76%

80%

Offers good value for money



83%

81%

## Impact of vocational qualifications

Better business performance



90%

90%

Improved staff retention



81%

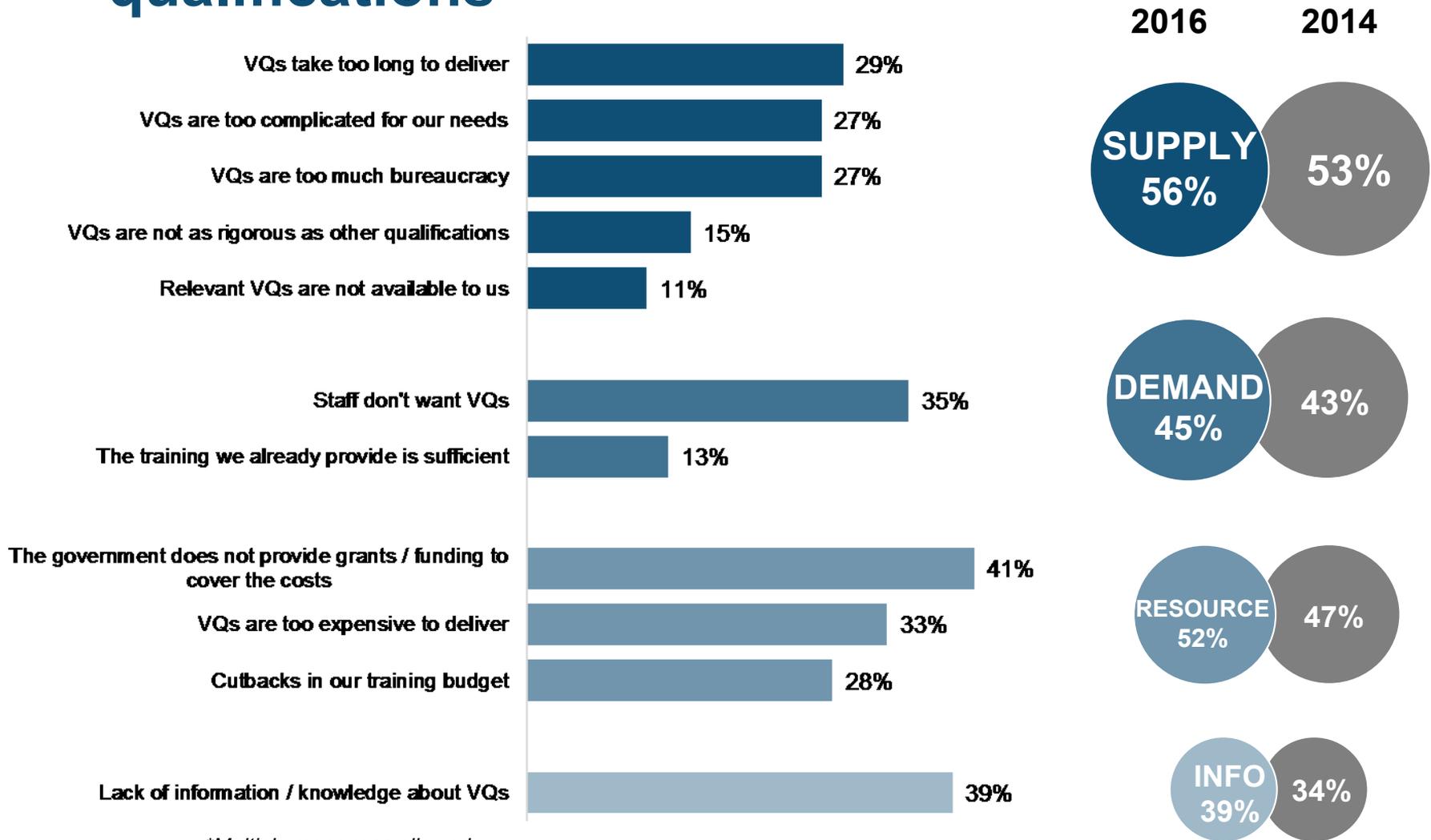
84%

Disagree strongly
  Disagree slightly
  Neither agree nor disagree
  Agree slightly
  Agree strongly

Base: All Northern Ireland employers who had arranged/funded training towards vocational qualifications in the previous 12 months (2014/2016): 640/620

Figures will not add up to 100% as "don't know" answers are not displayed

# Barriers of training staff to vocational qualifications



\*Multiple responses allowed



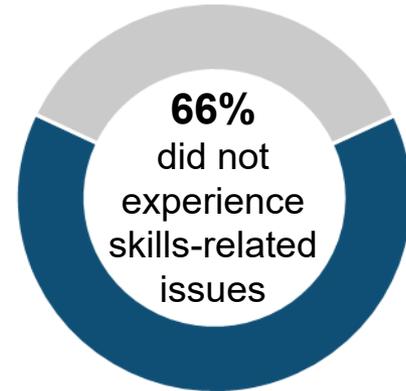
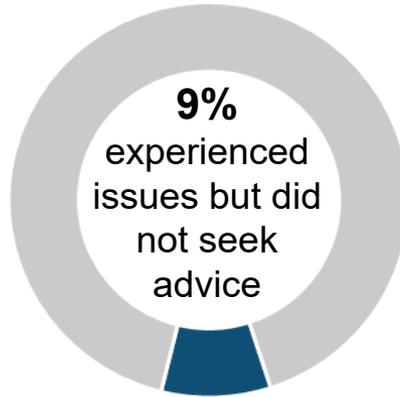
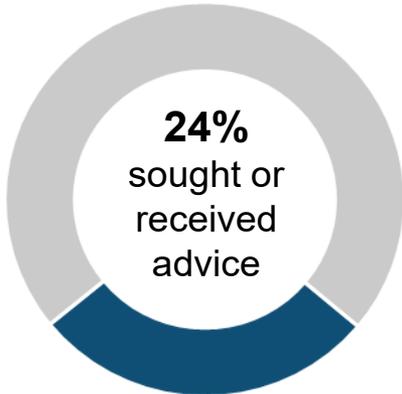
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Base: All Northern Ireland employers who have not arranged training in the last 12 months that has led to a Vocational Qualification (2014/2016): 895/961

Note: multiple responses were allowed

Produced by IFF Research

# External help sought on skills and training



**16%**

**TRAINING PROVIDERS**

Commercial or not for profit training provider	<b>16%</b>
College	<b>9%</b>
University	<b>4%</b>

**15%**

**COLLECTIVES & REPRESENTATIVES**

Professional body	<b>11%</b>
Other employers	<b>6%</b>
Chamber of Commerce	<b>2%</b>
Trade Union	<b>2%</b>

**13%**

**PUBLIC SECTOR**

Local Authority	<b>7%</b>
Sector Skills Council	<b>6%</b>
Government	<b>1%</b>

**6%**

**OTHER PRIVATE**

Consultancy	<b>5%</b>
Suppliers	<b>&lt;1%</b>



Department for Education

Base: All Northern Ireland employers (2,007)

Produced by IFF Research

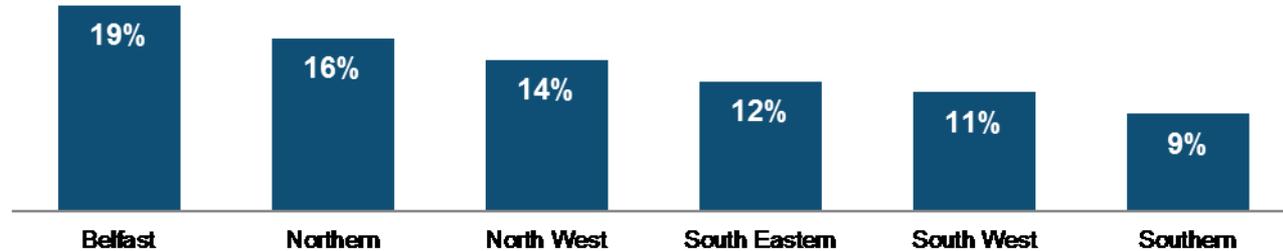
# Employer collaboration on skills and training practices

## Northern Ireland:

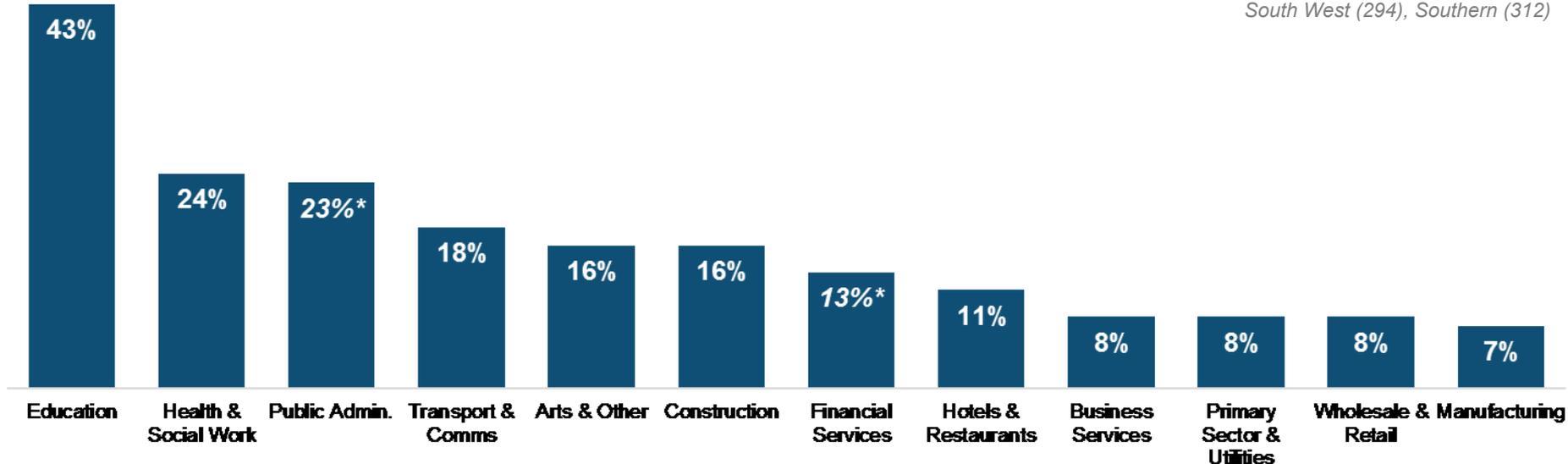
**14%**

Of employers have worked with others to develop skills or expertise in the workforce

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Belfast (440), Northern (486), North West (176), South Eastern (299), South West (294), Southern (312)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Education (139), Health & Social Work (252), Public Admin. (34), Transport & Comms (96), Arts & Other (127), Construction (161), Financial Services (46), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Business Services (246), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Wholesale & Retail (531), Manufacturing (124)

\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution



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for Education

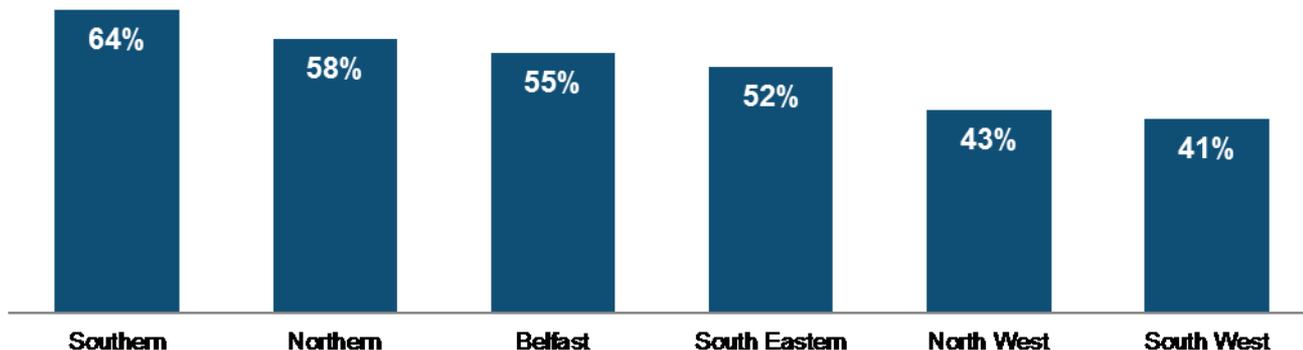
# Employer involvement in designing content of vocational qualifications

## Northern Ireland:

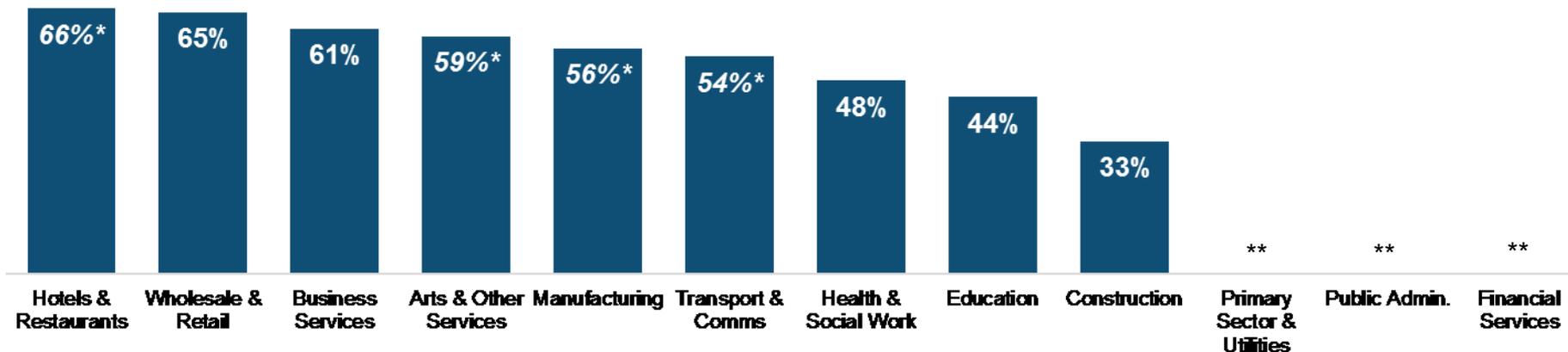
**53%**

Of employers who have arranged or funded external training in the past 12 months that was designed to lead to a Vocational Qualification have had some involvement in the design of its content

Base: All Northern Ireland employers who have trained staff using vocational qualifications in last 12 months (620)



Base: All Northern Ireland employers who have trained staff using vocational qualifications in last 12 months: Southern (79), Northern (144), Belfast (156), South Eastern (85), North West (58), South West (98)



Base: All Northern Ireland employers who have trained staff using vocational qualifications in last 12 months: Hotels & Restaurants (44), Wholesale and Retail (109), Business Services (68), Arts & Other (33), Manufacturing (36), Transport & Comms (29), Health & Social Work (137), Education (56), Construction (51)

\*\*\* denotes a figure not shown due to a base size of fewer than 25 employers

\*\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution



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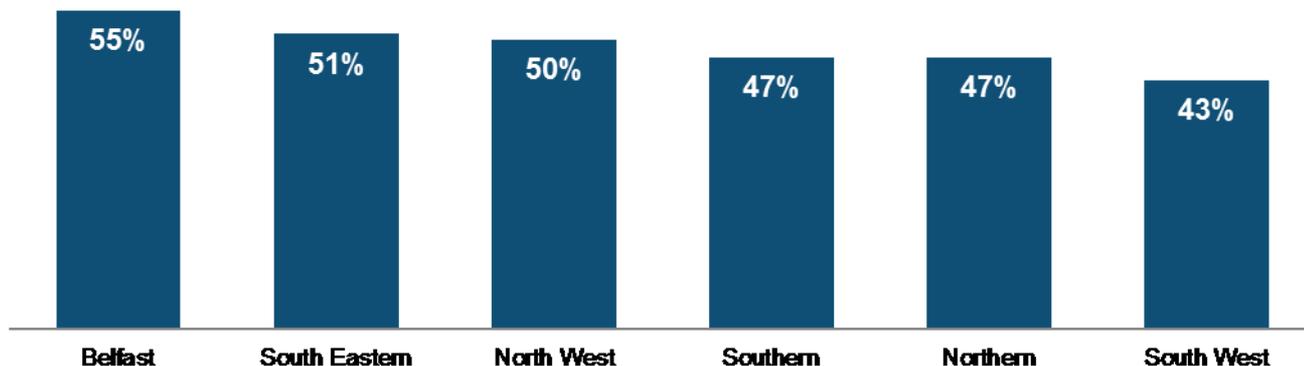
# Employer involvement in designing content of external training

## Northern Ireland:

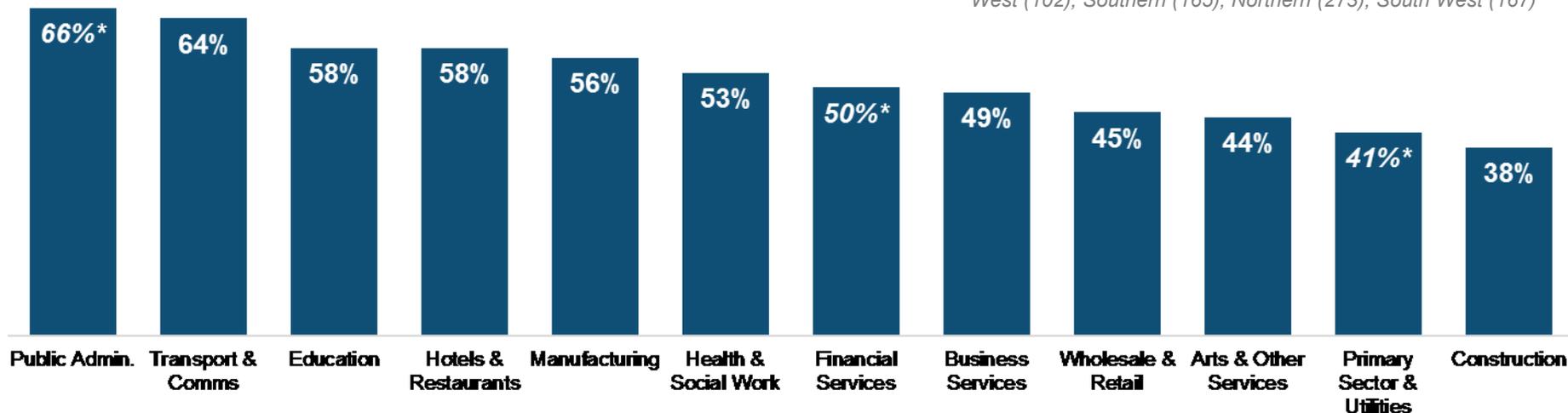
**49%**

Of employers who have arranged external training in the past 12 months have had some involvement in the design of its content

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that provide external training (1,161)



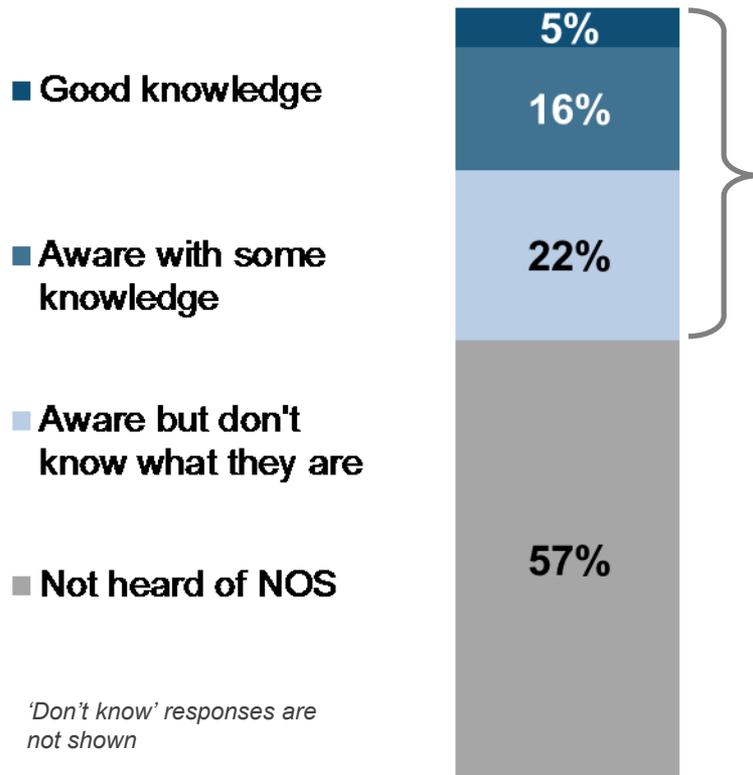
Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that provide external training: Belfast (278), South Eastern (176), North West (102), Southern (165), Northern (273), South West (167)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that provide external training: Public admin (25), Transport & Comms (51), Education (113), Hotels & Restaurants (62), Manufacturing (75), Health & Social Work (203), Financial Services (32), Business Services (150), Wholesale & Retail (227), Arts & Other (69), Primary Sector & Utilities (46), Construction (108)

\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

# of the National irms in Northern Ireland



**Northern Ireland: 43% any awareness of NOS**  
(2014: 42%)

**10% of all Northern Ireland employers used NOS...**  
(2014: 11%)

- To develop training plans to meet the establishment's training needs: **7%** (2014: 8%)
- For staff appraisals or performance management: **6%** (2014: 6%)
- To develop job descriptions or guide recruitment criteria: **7%** (2014: 7%)
- For succession planning or competency frameworks: **6%** (2014: 6%)

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2016/2014): (2,007/2,005)

*'Don't know' responses are not shown*

# Apprenticeships

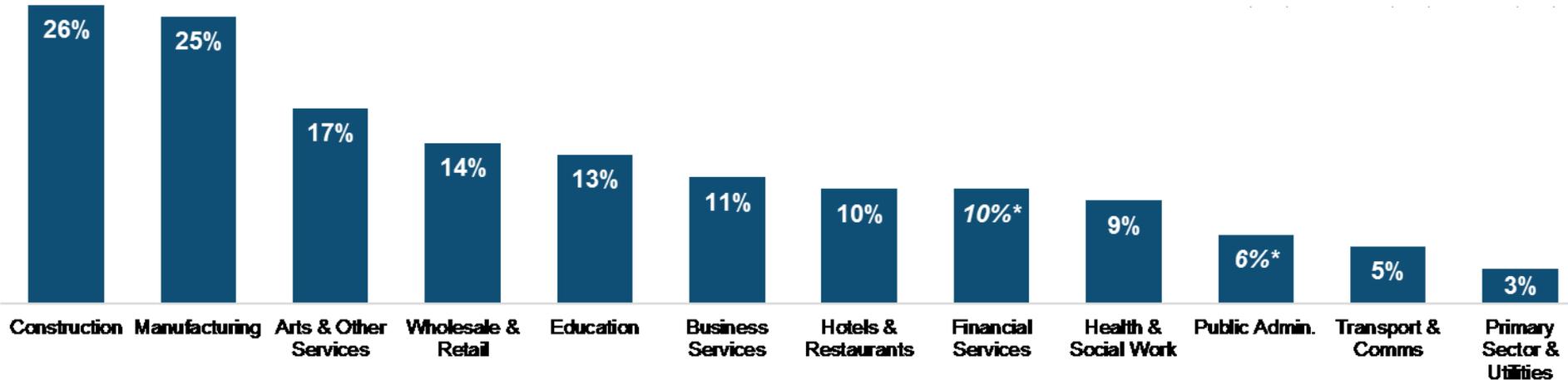
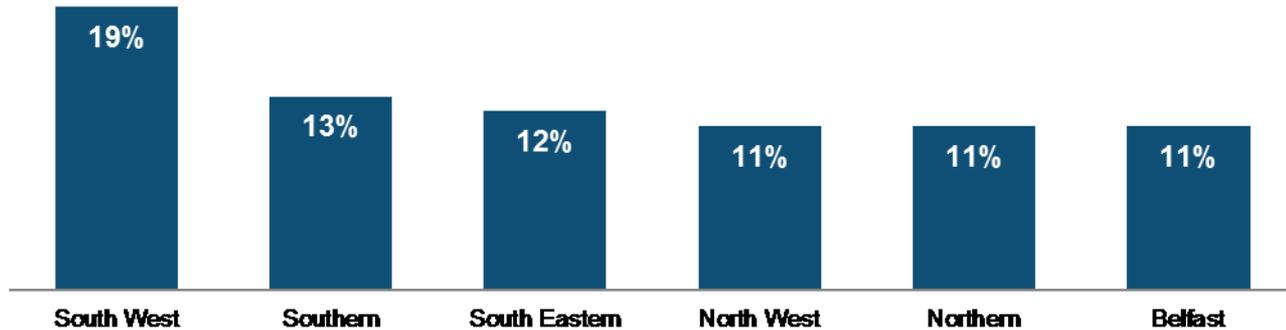


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# An overview of apprenticeships

**Northern Ireland: 13%**  
of establishments offered apprenticeships

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments (2,007)



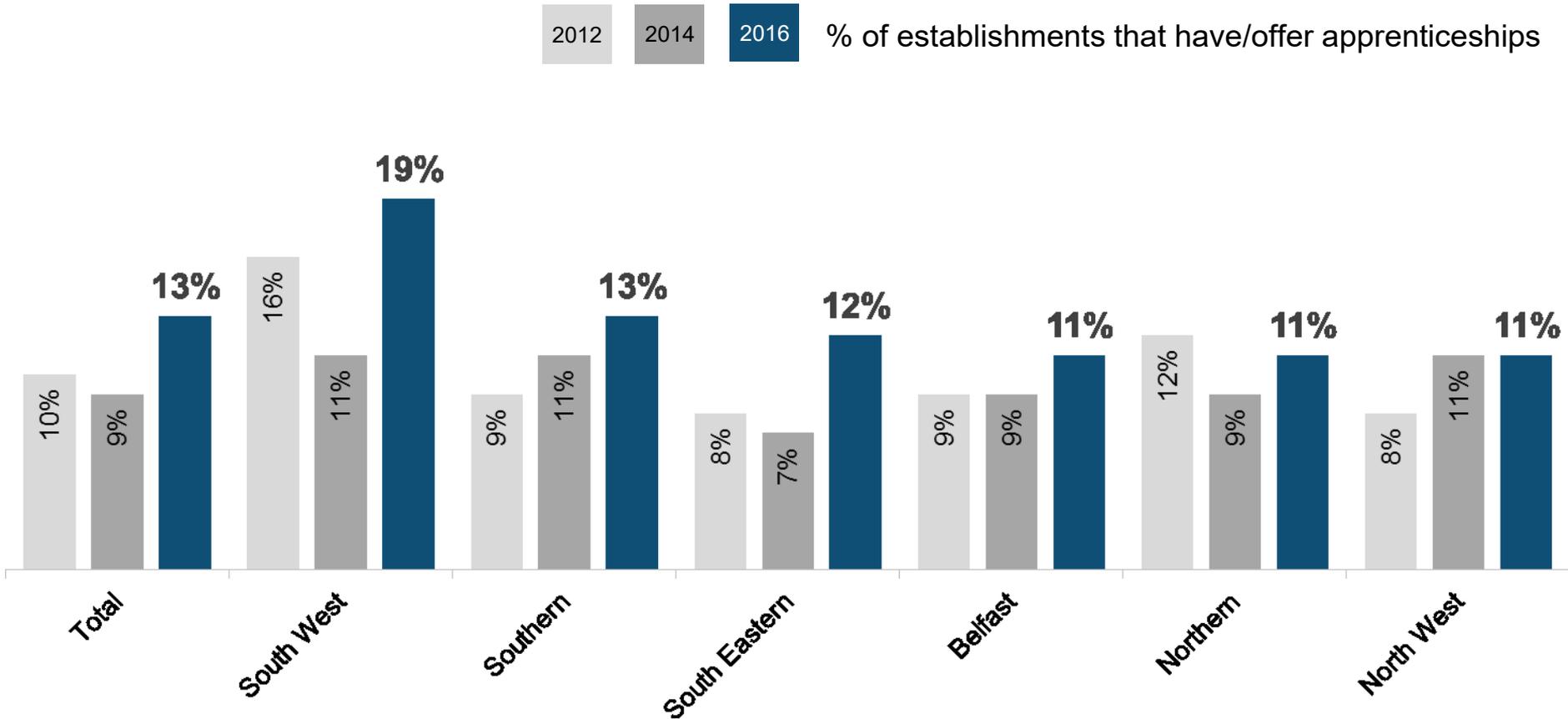
Base: All Northern Ireland establishments: Construction (161), Manufacturing (124), Arts & Other (127), Wholesale & Retail (531), Education (139), Business Services (246), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Financial Services (46), Health & Social Work (252), Public Admin. (34), Transport & Comms (96), Primary Sector & Utilities (120)

\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution



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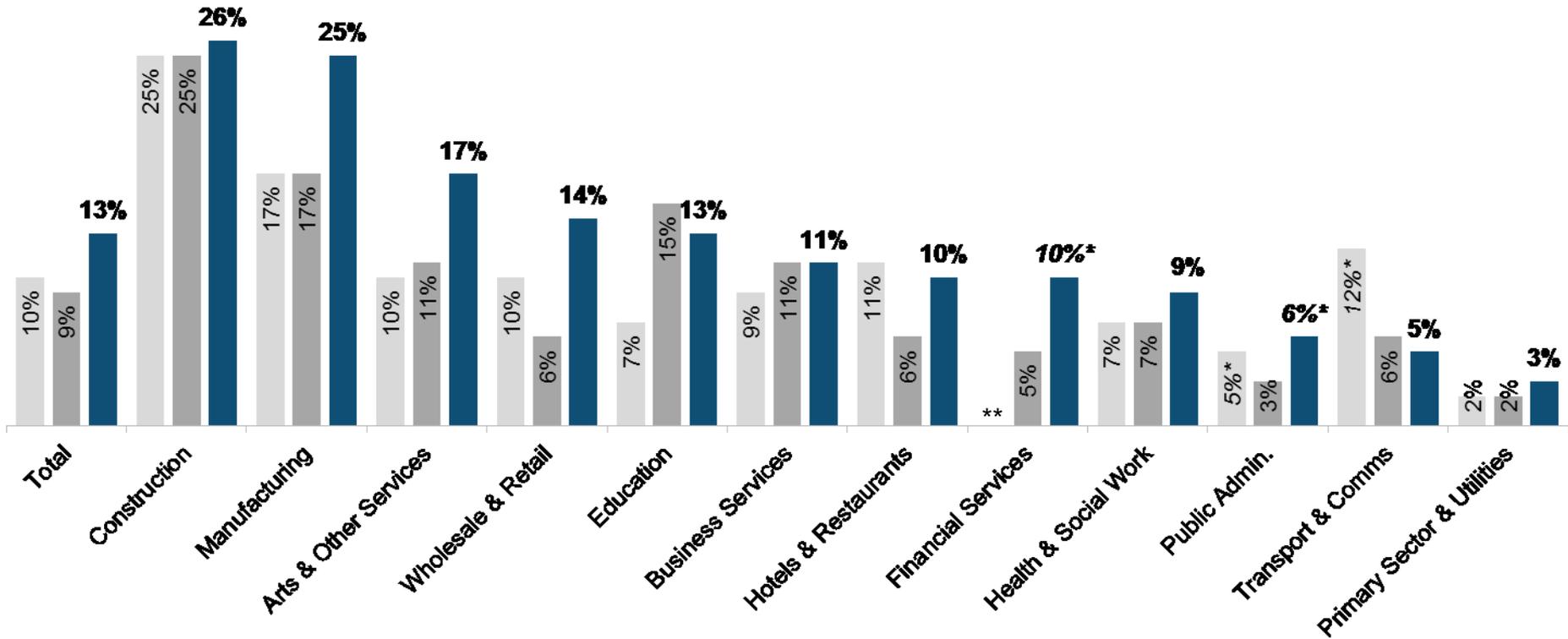
# Apprenticeships by region



Base for 2016: All Northern Ireland establishments: Total (2,007), Belfast (440) Northern (486), North West (176), Southern (312), South West (294)

# Apprenticeships by sector

2012 2014 2016 % of establishments that have/offer apprenticeships



Base for 2016: All Northern Ireland establishments: Total (2,007), Education (139), Public Admin. (34), Health & Social Work (252), Arts & Other (127), Construction (161), Manufacturing (124), Wholesale & Retail (531), Hotels & Restaurants (131), Business Services (246), Financial Services (46), Primary Sector & Utilities (120), Transport & Comms (96)



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\*\*\* denotes a figure not shown due to a base size of fewer than 25 employers

\*' denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution

# Reasons for offering apprenticeships, amongst employers who have recently started to offer them



Acquiring talent



Nurturing talent



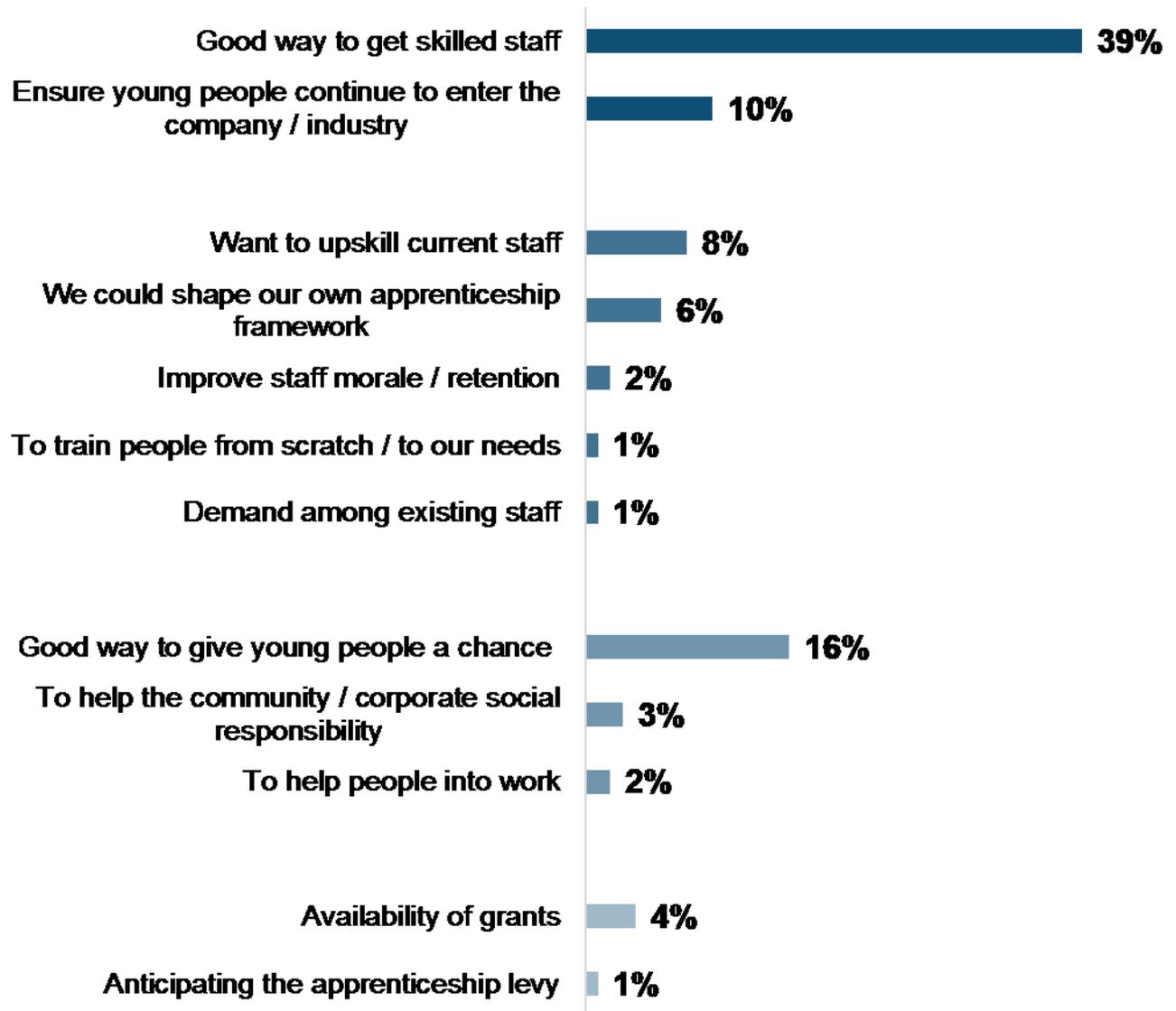
Altruistic



Financial



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Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that started offering apprenticeships in the last three years (83)

Note: multiple responses were allowed

# Reasons for not offering apprenticeships

58%

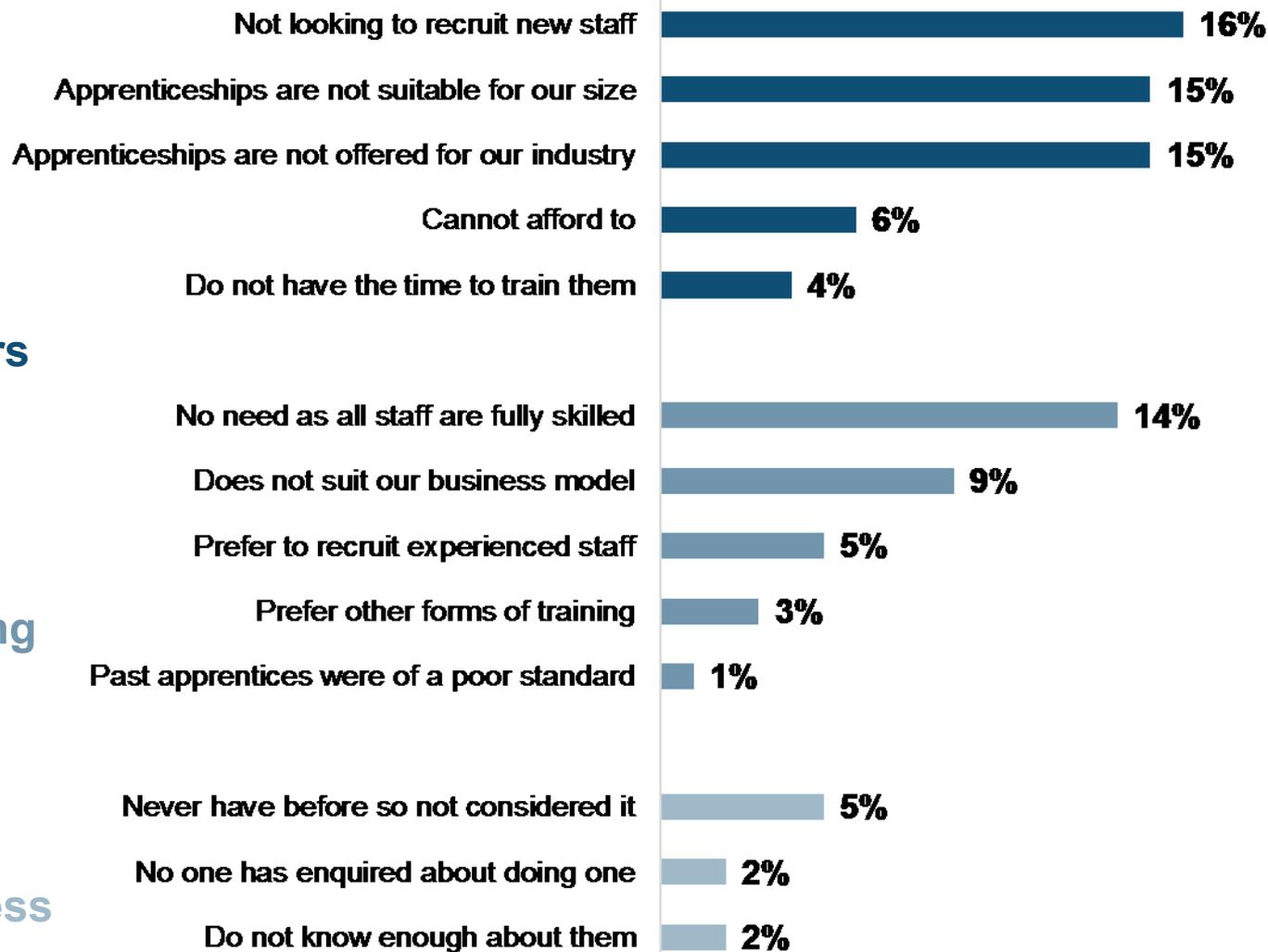
Perceived structural barriers

32%

Actively choosing not to

12%

Lack of awareness



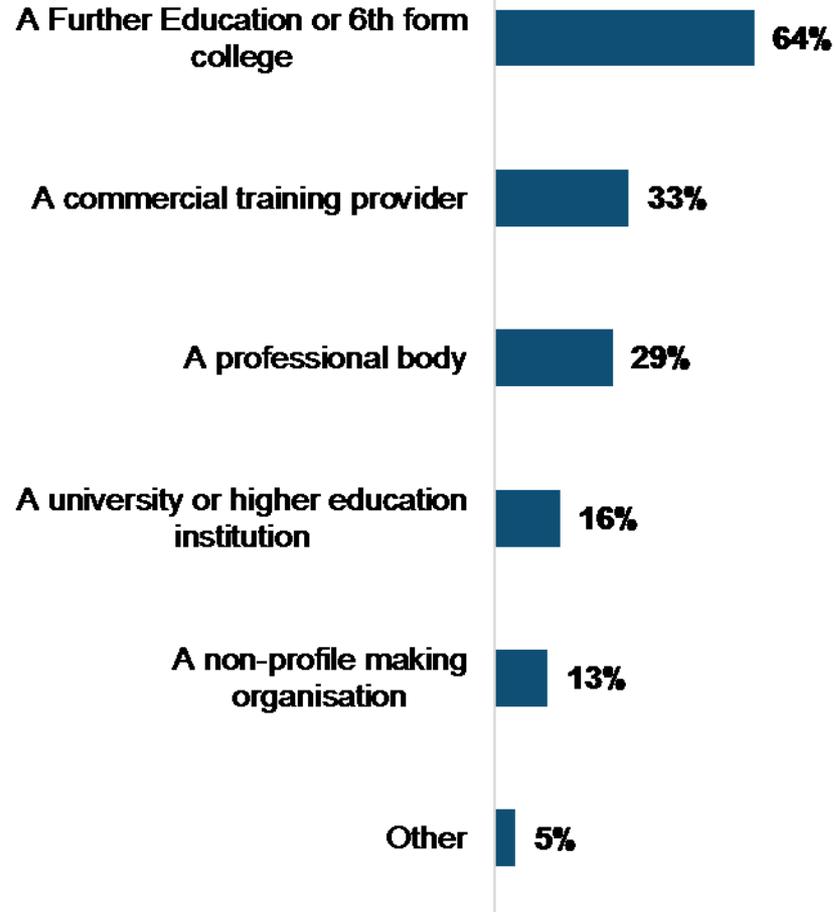
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Base: All Northern Ireland establishments not offering apprenticeships (1,681)  
Note: multiple responses allowed.

# Types of external training providers used for apprenticeships

**60%**  
of establishments offering apprenticeships had used an external provider to deliver at least some of the training for their apprentices

*Base: All Northern Ireland establishments who have or offer formal apprenticeships (326)*



*Base: All establishments whose apprentices receive external training (251)  
Note: multiple responses were allowed*



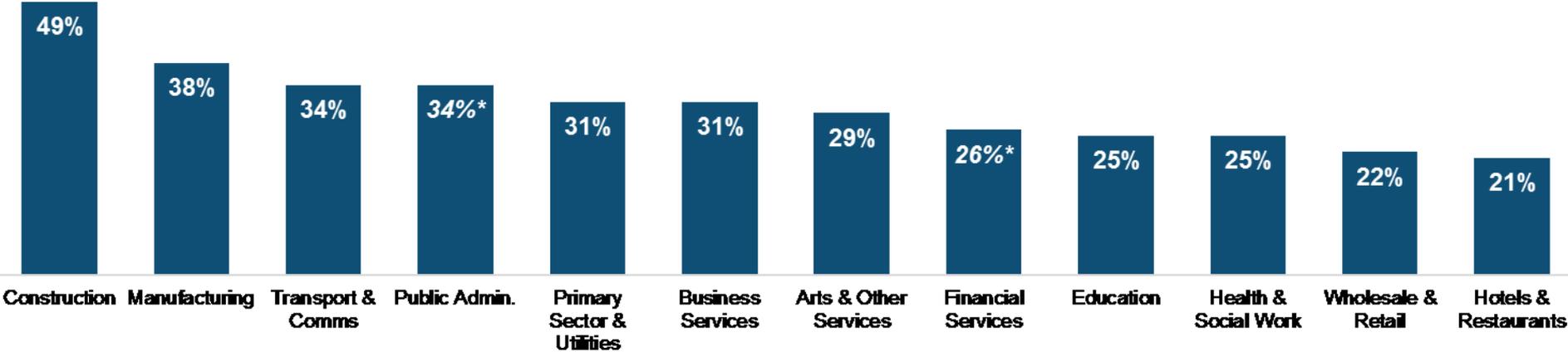
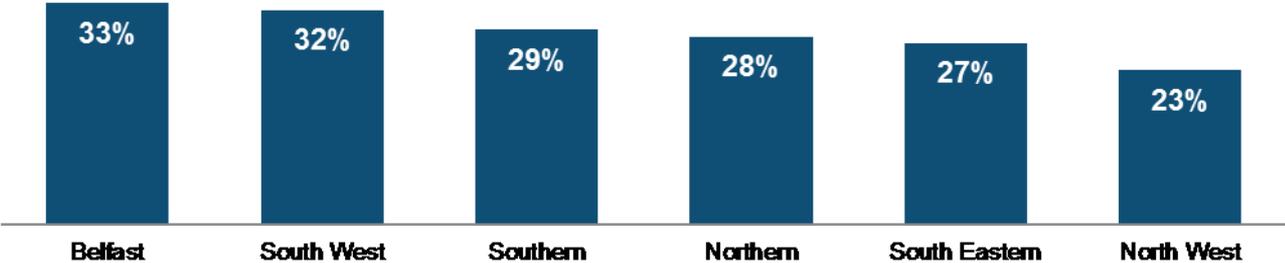
# Awareness and knowledge of apprenticeships

## Northern Ireland:

**29%**

of employers not currently offering apprenticeships were aware of apprenticeships and had at least a (self described) good knowledge of what they involve

Base: All Northern Ireland establishments not offering apprenticeships (1,681)

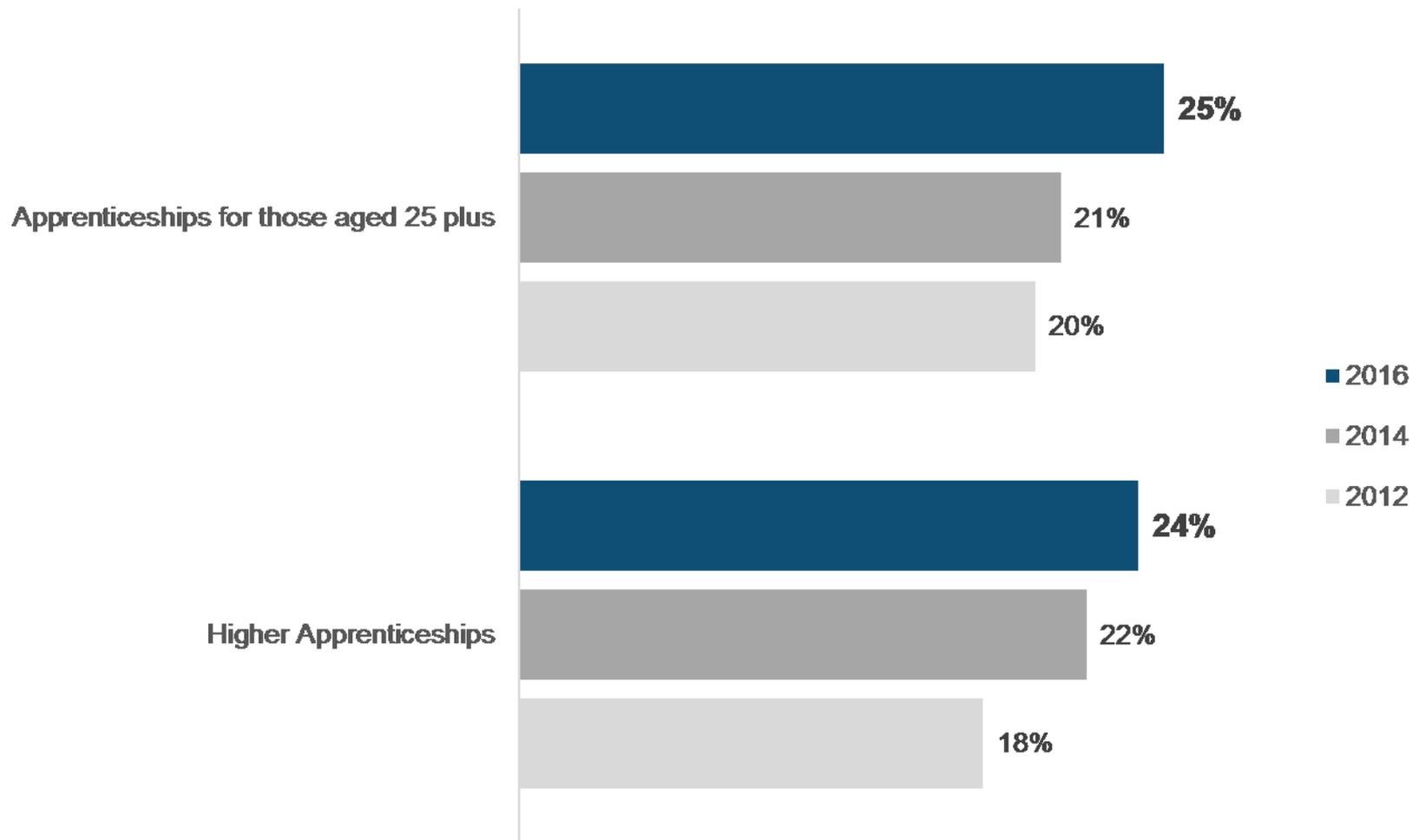


Base: All Northern Ireland establishments not offering apprenticeships: Construction (103), Manufacturing (77), Transport & Comms (86), Public Admin. (32) Primary Sector & Utilities (113), Business Services (210), Arts & Other (108), Financial Services (42), Education (122), Health & Social Work (225), Wholesale & Retail (453), Hotels & Restaurants (110)

\*\* denotes a base size of between 25-49 employers and should be treated with caution



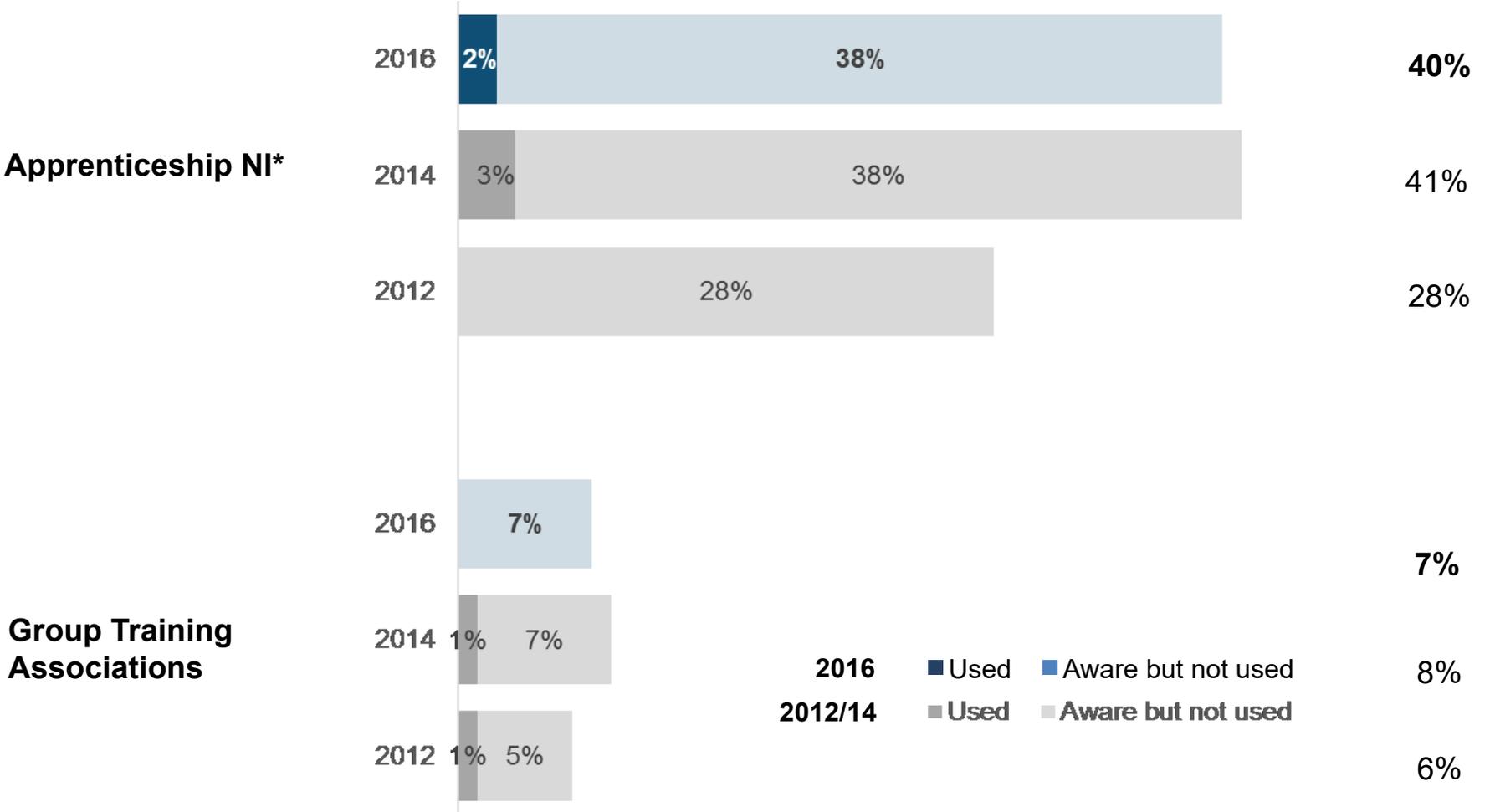
# Awareness of specific government-recognised apprenticeship schemes



Base (2012/2014/2016): All Northern Ireland establishments (1,000 / 2,005 / 2,007)

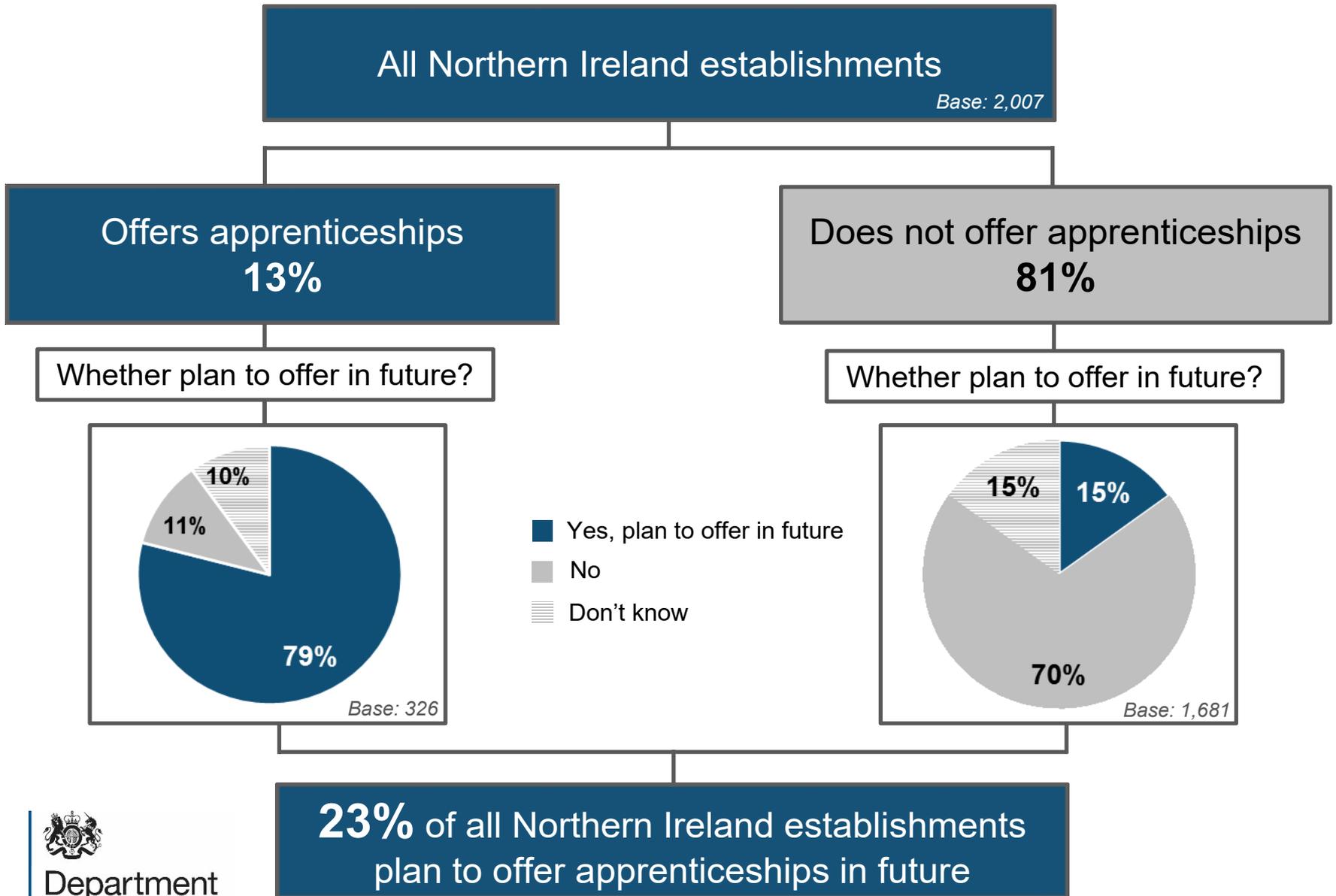
# Awareness and use of apprenticeship services

**AWARE**



Base (2012/2014/2016): All Northern Ireland establishments (1,000 / 2,005 / 2,007)  
 \*Use of Apprenticeship NI was not captured in 2012

# Future demand for apprenticeships



# Reasons for planning to start offering apprenticeships

69%

Acquiring talent

21%

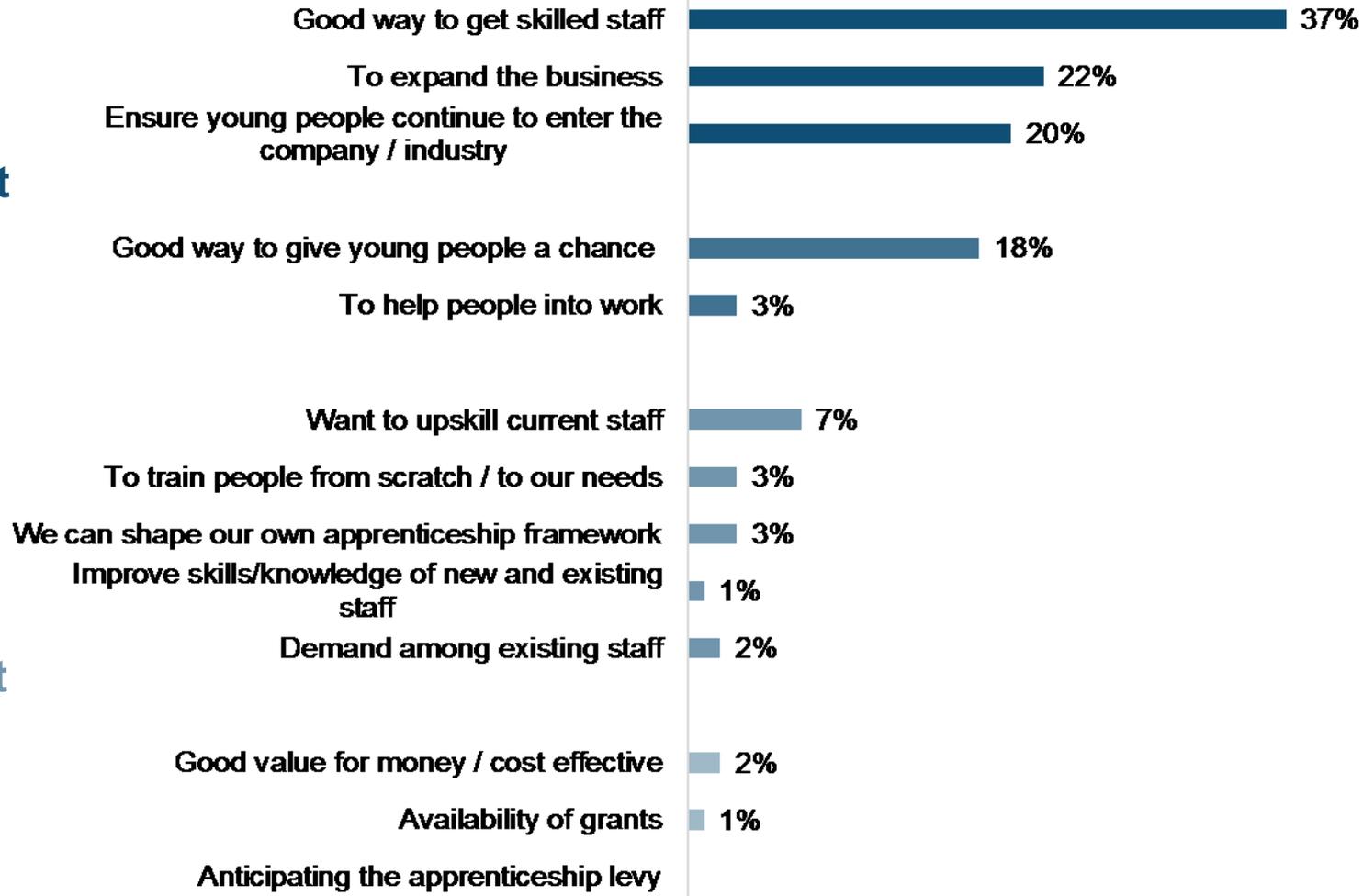
Altruistic

17%

Nurturing talent

3%

Financial

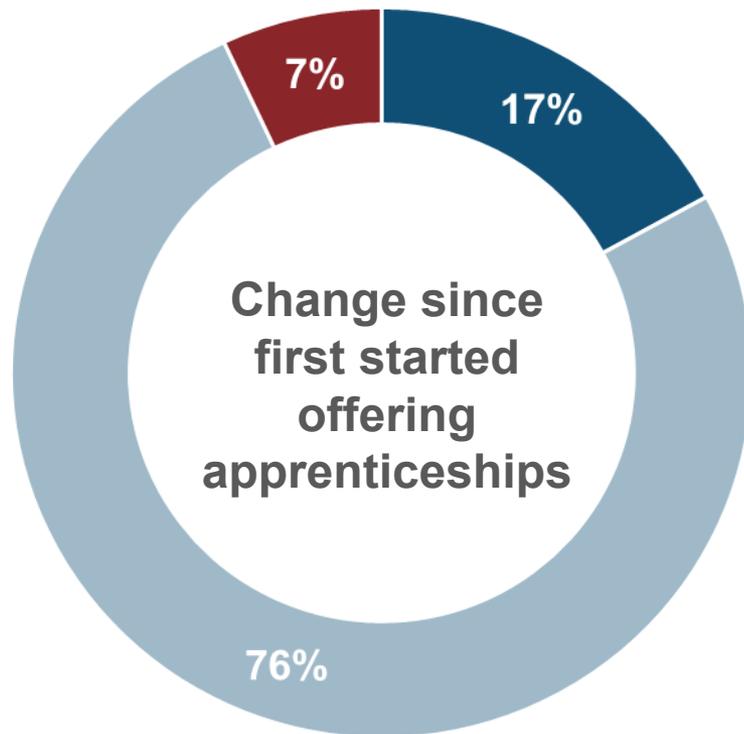


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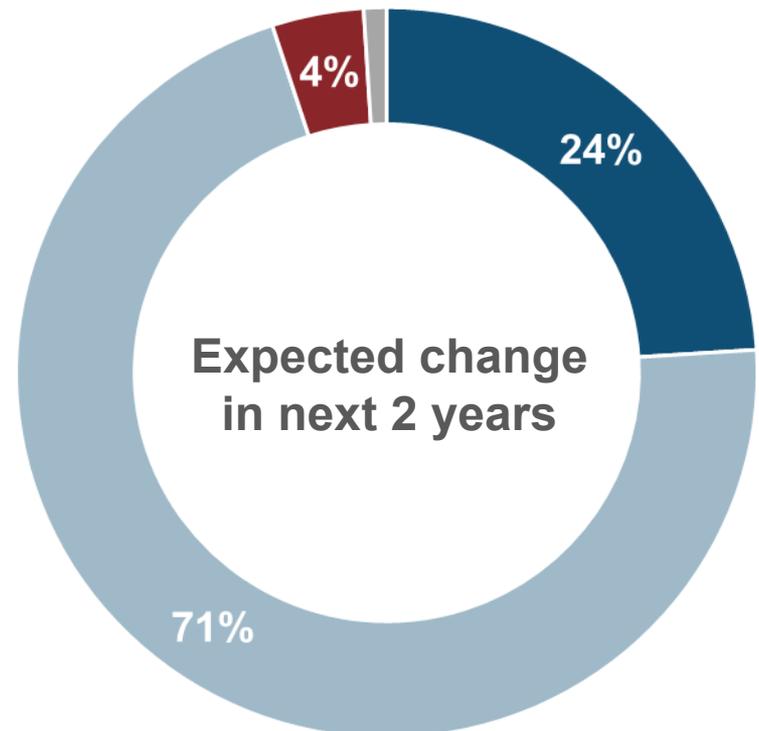
Base: All Northern Ireland establishments that plan to start offering apprenticeships in future (251).  
Note: multiple responses were allowed.  
Note: multiple responses were allowed

# Change in apprentice numbers (past and future)

■ Increase   ■ Stay about the same   ■ Decrease   ■ Don't know



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments with current apprentices (292)



Base: All Northern Ireland establishments with current apprentices and plan to continue offering apprenticeships in future (184)

Note: breakdowns by region and sector are not show due to low base sizes.

# Conclusions



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# How establishments support the pipeline of talent into businesses and entry routes into employment

- Despite persistent issues relating to hard-to-fill and skill-shortage vacancies (as reported in ESS 2015), employers use a fairly limited number and range of recruitment channels to bring talent into their business.
  - The majority of employers who recruited someone (62%) used word of mouth / personal recommendations to access the potential labour market. (11% used this as their sole method of recruitment).
  - As well as limiting the range of potential applicants that employers have access to, this has the impact of restricting jobseekers' routes to employment.
- Employers value work experience above qualifications (whether academic or vocational) as a means of gauging the quality and potential of new recruits.
- Developing forms of work experience and work inspiration that genuinely respond to employers' needs to develop and access experienced new recruits offers potential to improve individuals' entry to the labour market.



# How to increase the provision of apprenticeships

- EPS 2016 presents a positive picture in terms of increases in the proportion of establishments offering apprenticeships and the number of apprentices taken on.
- Among employers that had started offering apprenticeships in the last three years, the most common reasons for having done so related to them being viewed as a means to acquire new talent. Among employers not offering apprenticeships, perceived structural barriers were common (e.g. perceiving apprenticeships to be unsuitable for their size or sector).
  - The findings on reasons why employers engage or not engage with apprenticeships may serve as useful tools to inform communications with employers to support increased engagement with apprenticeships.
- Approaching a quarter (23%) of Northern Ireland establishments were planning to offer apprenticeships in future.
- Potential to increase apprenticeship numbers also exists among establishments already offering them. Around a quarter (24%) of these employers expected to increase the number of apprentices they employ over the next two years.



# Subgroup differences

- Construction employers placed most value on candidates having relevant work experience when recruiting (84%), yet very few employers in this sector offer work placements (32%). Instead, Construction employers lead the way in offering apprenticeships (26% were offering apprenticeships at the time of the survey).
- The proportion of employers offering apprenticeships was highest in the South West region (19%), compared with a range of between 11% and 13% across the other regions.
- Take up of vocational qualifications was similar across regions (ranging from 19% of employers in the Southern region to 25% in Belfast). However, by sector, take up of vocational qualifications was highest in the Public Administration, Health and Social Work, Financial Services and Education sectors.
- Employers across all sectors and region were more likely to have used commercial organisations as a source of training for their staff over the past 12 months, compared with using further education colleges or higher education institutions.

