



STATE OF  
WYOMING

# Employee Survey

RESULTS



Wyoming Department of  
Administration & Information

## Introduction

Over the course of the last few years, the State of Wyoming has seen its turnover rate increase. When the pandemic hit in 2020, many issues causing turnover were exacerbated. The Executive Branch experienced severe budget cuts so agencies had to get creative with workforce planning to ensure they could continue to carry out their statutory obligations.

As retention issues grew more concerning, the State also struggled to refill these positions. The quality and quantity of applications has also steadily declined. In fact, the gap between turnover and the corresponding number of applications has worsened significantly. In total, applications received over the past year have declined by nearly 28% or 16,000 applicants from the previous year.

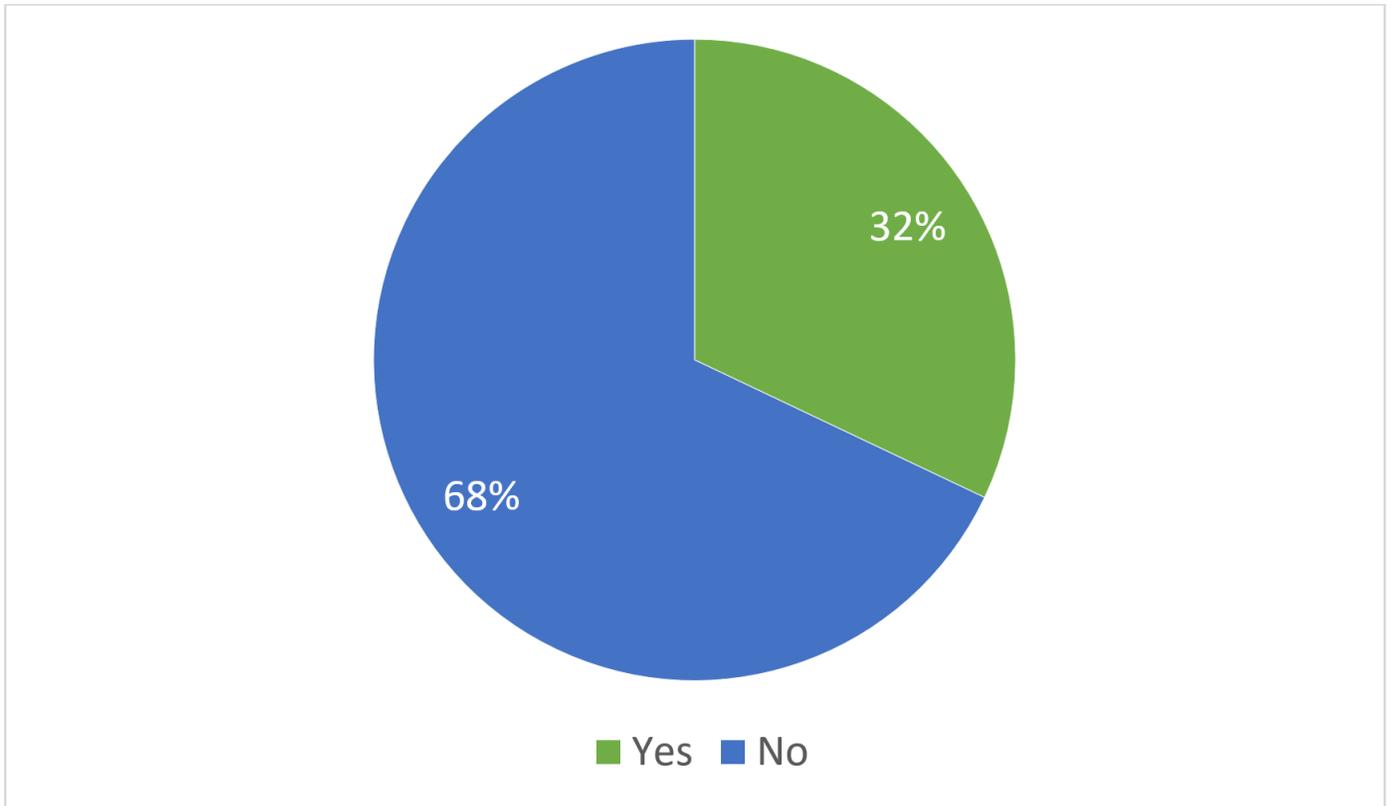
Many agencies have attributed the recruitment and retention issues to a variety of component units. Governor Mark Gordon prioritized this concern as the State began planning for the recovery from the pandemic. A goal was created to assist state agencies with recruitment and retention of employees, as part of phase 2 in Wyoming's Strategy to Survive, Drive, and Thrive initiative. To support this initiative, the Department of Administration & Information (A&I) in collaboration with the Jobs/Workforce Committee assembled by the Governor released an employee satisfaction survey in August 2021. This survey was aimed to solicit feedback from employees who have stood by the State of Wyoming during tough times. What keeps employees here? What benefits most appeal to applicants? These are just a few questions that the survey attempts to address. There are many great things about working for and living in the State of Wyoming, even during a pandemic. This survey will help direct efforts as they relate to reshaping retention strategies and modernizing recruitment efforts.

Questions asked covered a variety of topics, none of which were required to be answered. Responses were completely anonymous. In the report to follow, we highlight the results of this survey, which had 4,344 respondents or around 52% of the eligible workforce. The survey yielded 4,344 respondents (52% of the eligible workforce). Respondents included supervisors and non-supervisors, employees spanning from 1 year of service to over 20 years of service, a variety of civil service statuses, and employees located from all over the state.

## Survey Questions

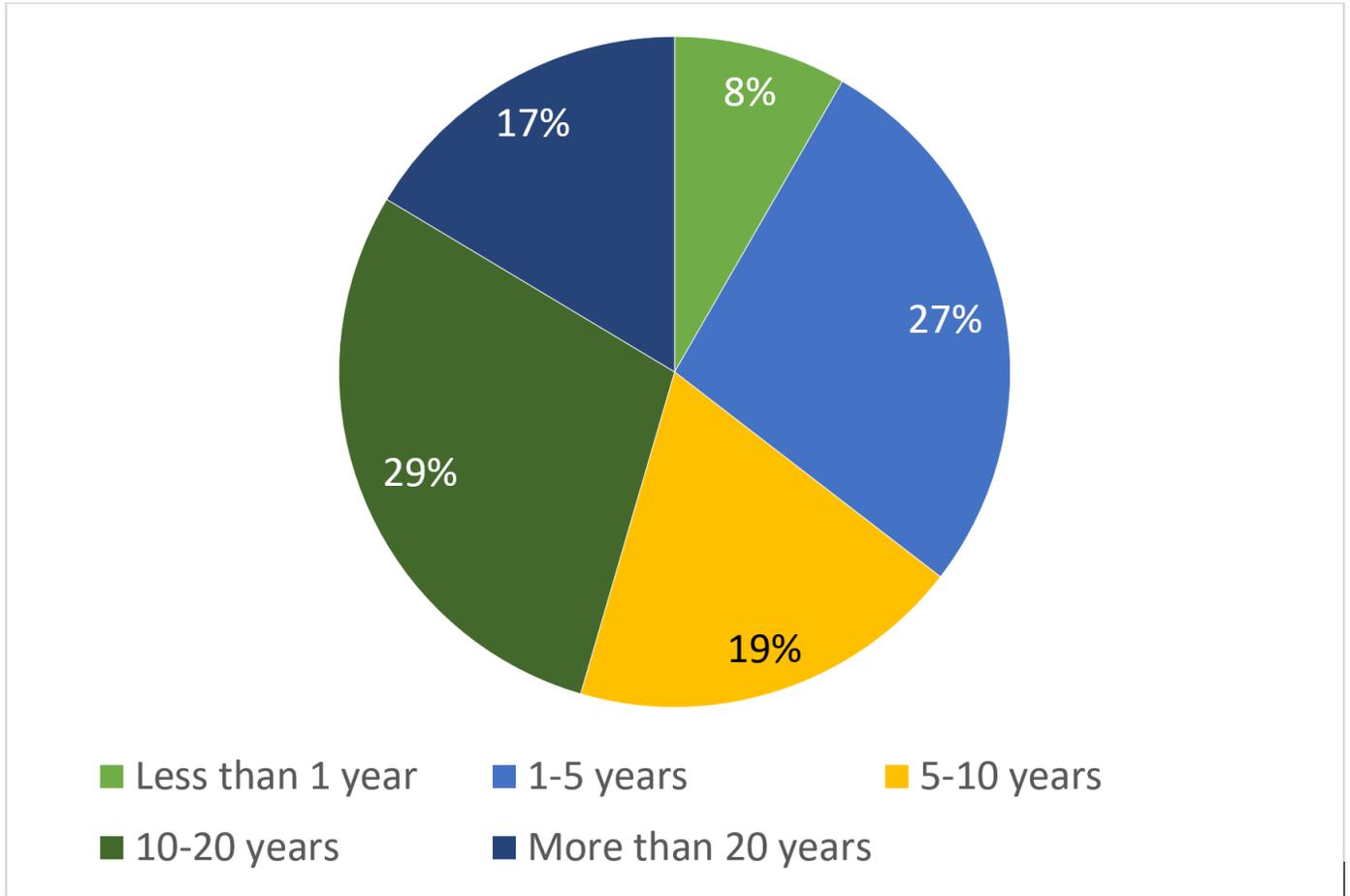
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## Do you supervise other employees?



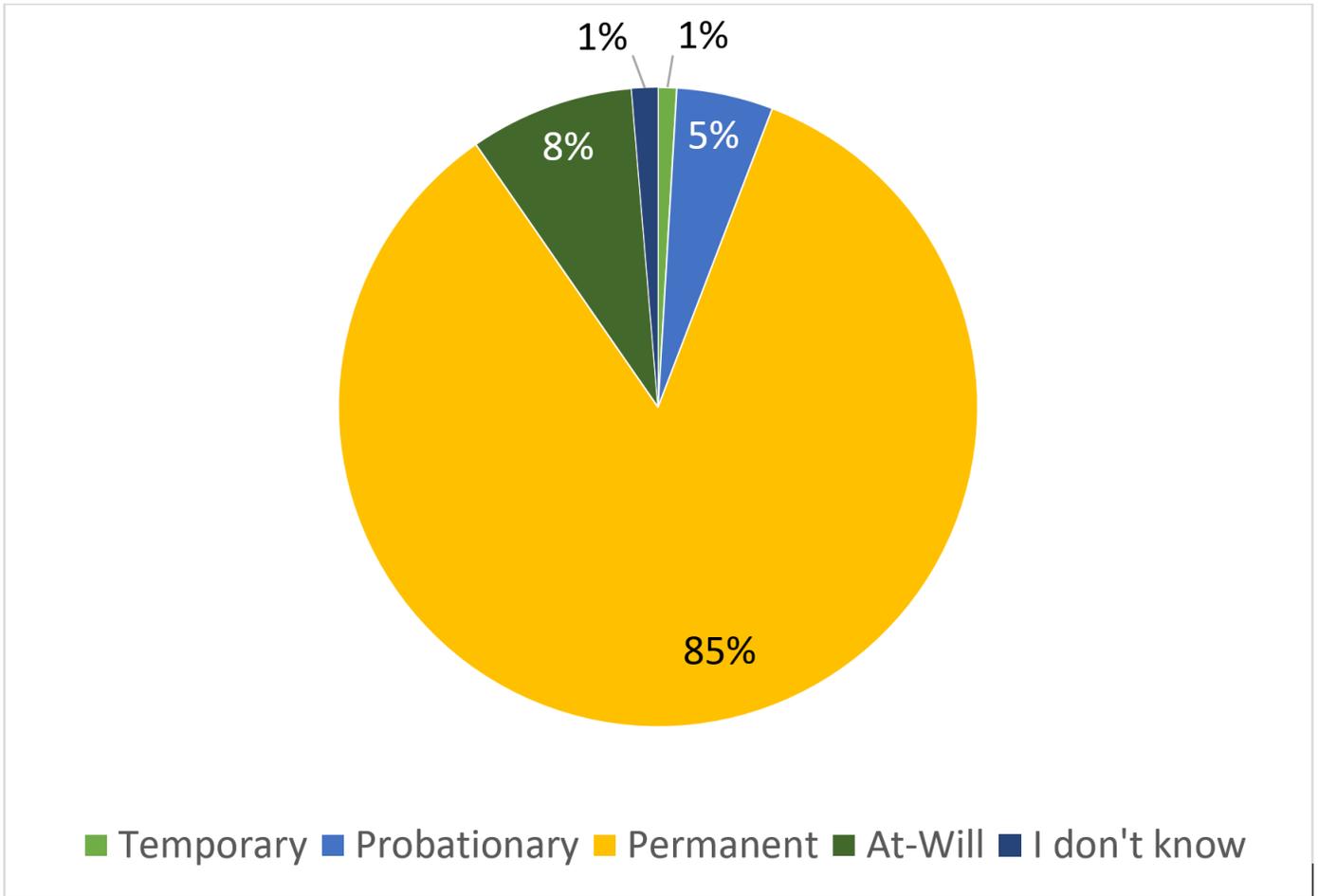
Option	Count
Yes	1,387
No	2,940

## How long have you been employed with the State of Wyoming?



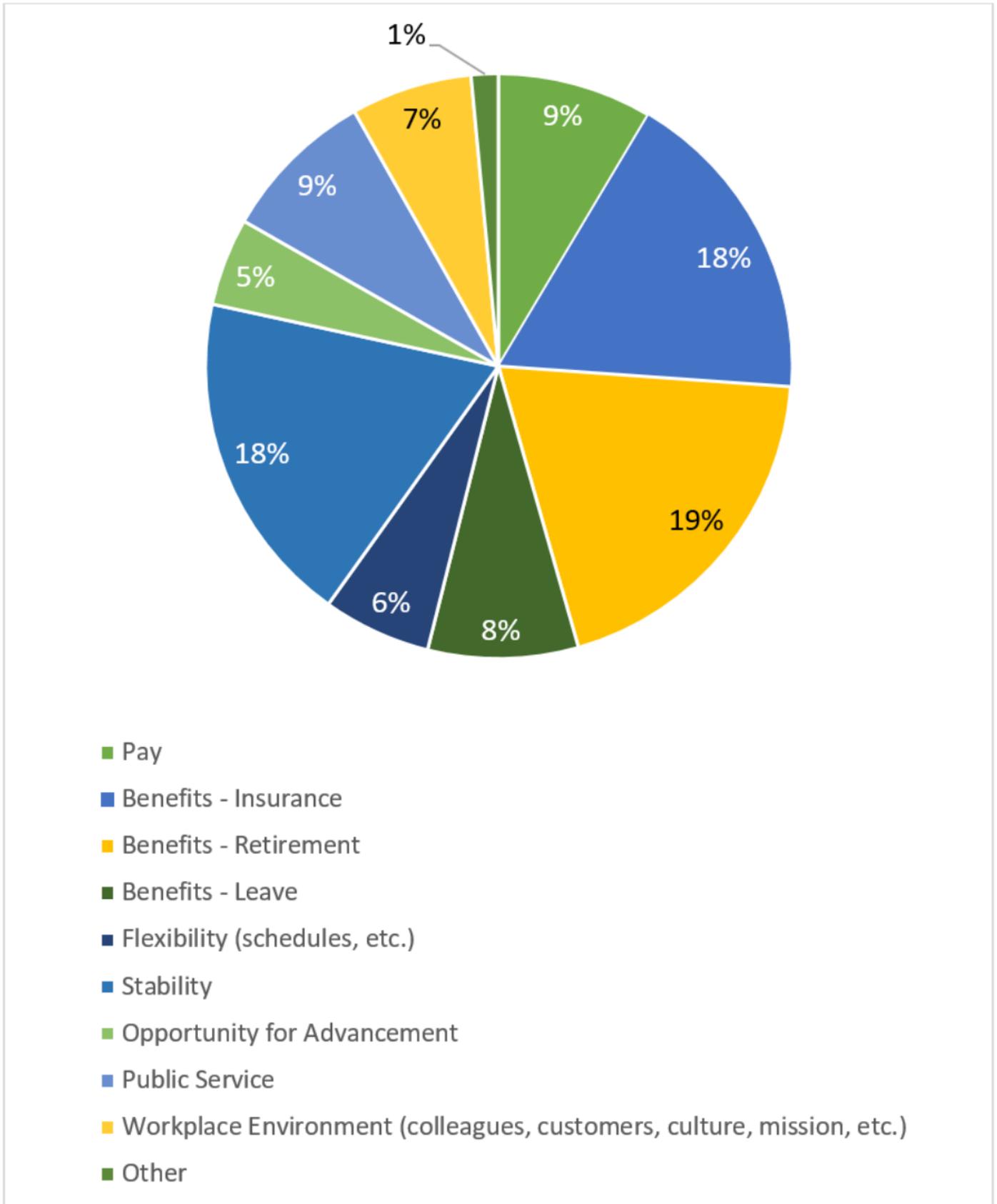
Option	Count
Less than 1 year	361
1-5 years	1,174
5-10 years	823
10-20 years	1,260
More than 20 years	711

## What is your current employee status?



Option	Count
Temporary	43
Probationary	212
Permanent	3,657
At-Will	363
I don't know	58

## Why did you choose to work for the State of Wyoming? (Please select up to 3)



Percentages are shown here as a percent of the total number of responses.

## Why did you choose to work for the State of Wyoming? (Please select up to 3) - Ranked Responses

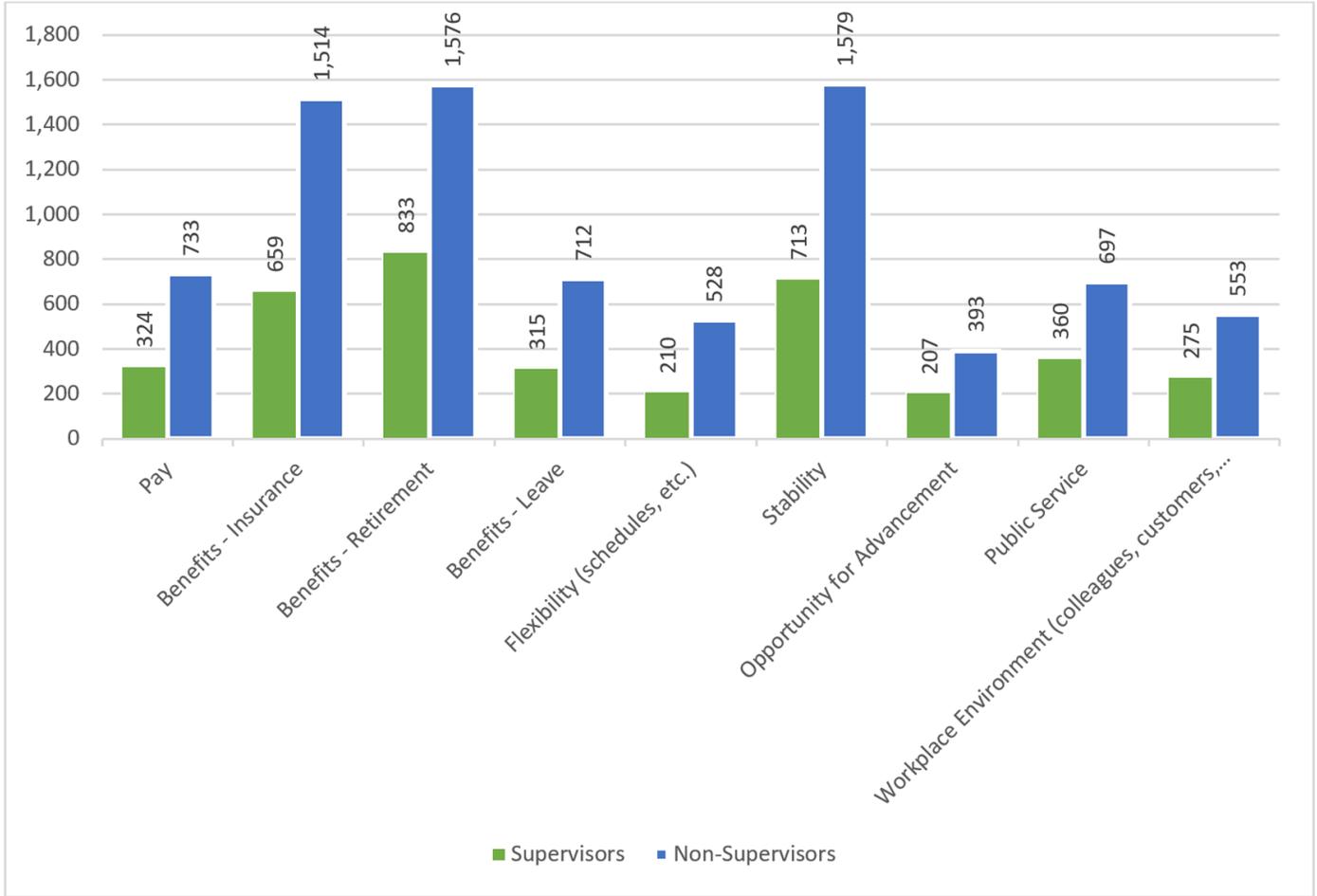
Option	Count
Benefits - Retirement	2,415 (56%)
Stability	2,299 (53%)
Benefits - Insurance	2,178 (50%)
Public Service	1,062 (24%)
Pay	1,060 (24%)
Benefits - Leave	1,029 (24%)
Workplace Environment (colleagues, customers, culture, mission, etc.)	829 (19%)
Flexibility (schedules, etc.)	740 (17%)
Opportunity for Advancement	602 (14%)
Other	185 (4%)

*Percentages are shown here as a percent of the total number of respondents.*

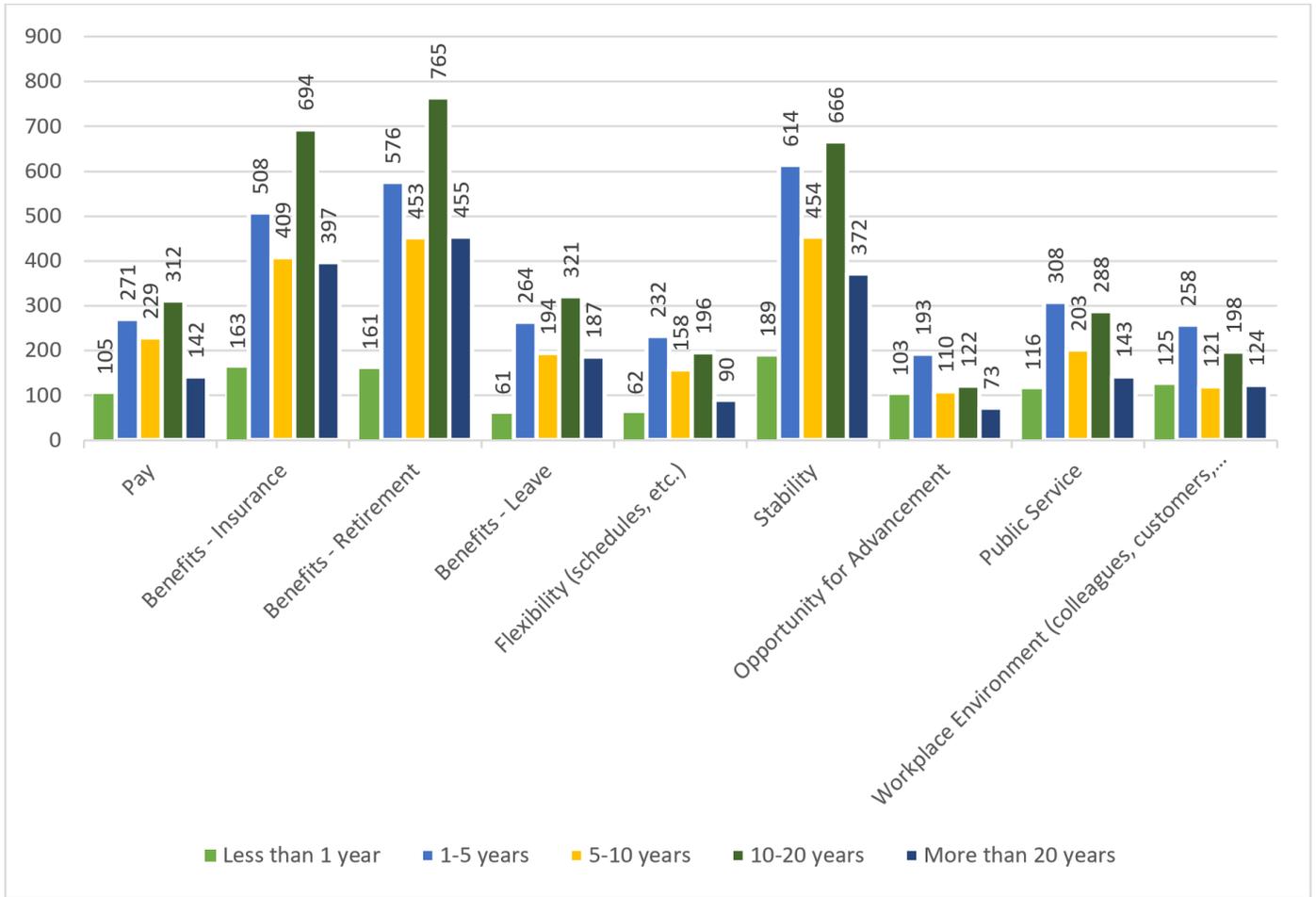
### Common themes from respondents who selected "Other":

- Location
- Interest in position
- Other benefits such as comp time, overtime, or permanent status
- Meaningful job out of college in relevant field of study

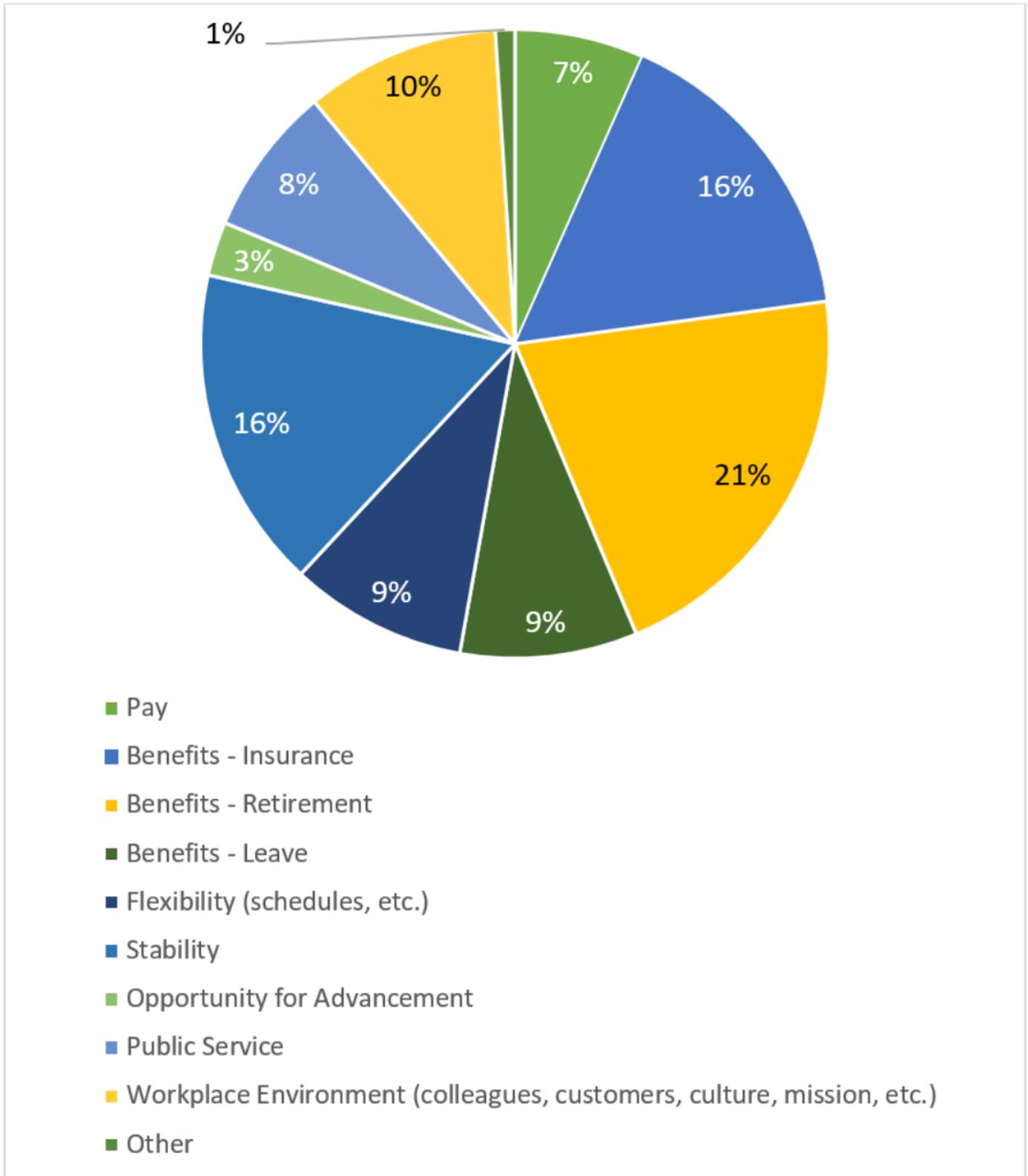
## Why did you choose to work for the State of Wyoming? - Supervisors & Non-Supervisors



## Why did you choose to work for the State of Wyoming? - Longevity



**What keeps you working for the State of Wyoming? (Please select up to 3)**



Percentages are shown here as a percent of the total number of responses.

## What keeps you working for the State of Wyoming? (Please select up to 3) - Ranked Responses

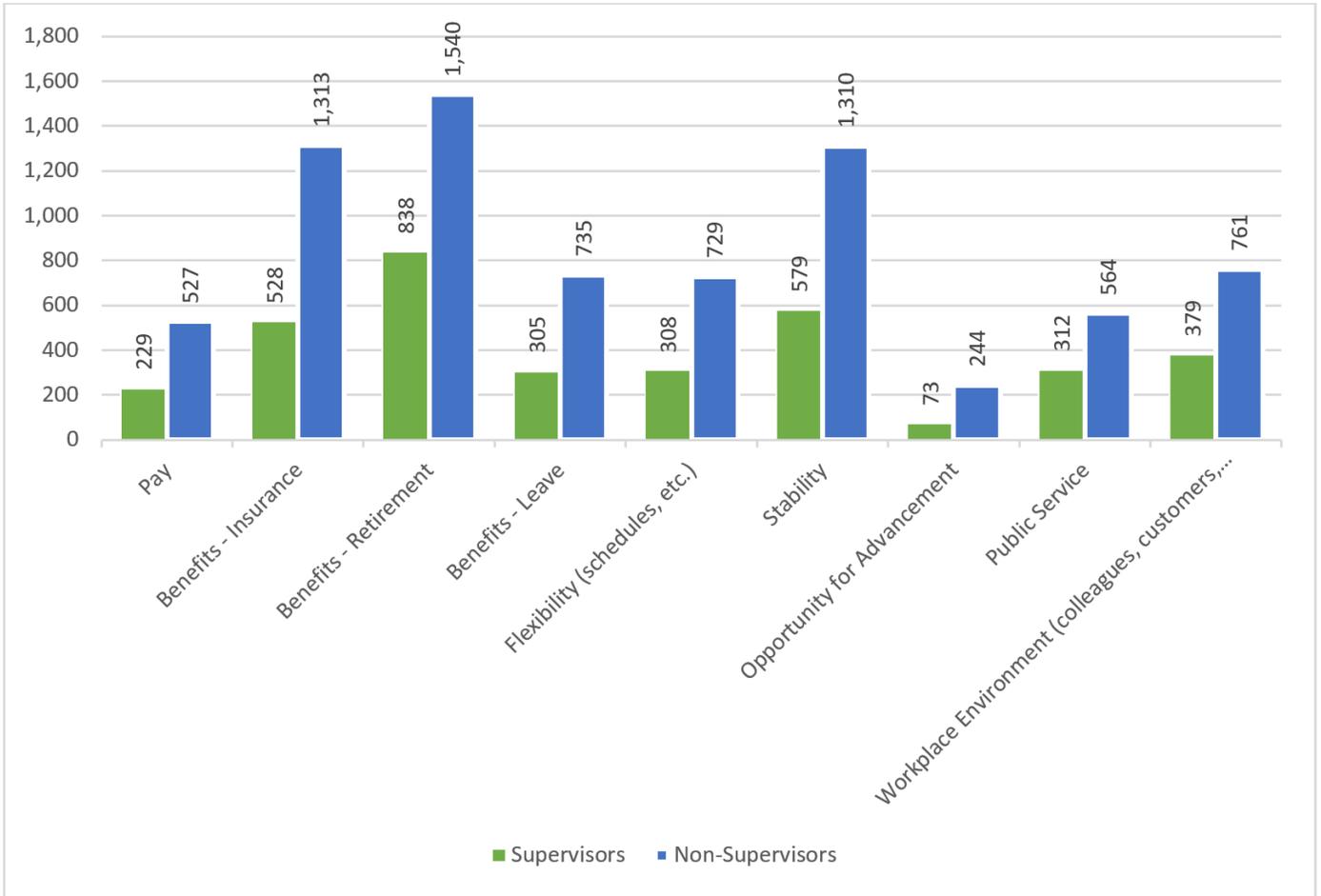
Option	Count
Benefits - Retirement	2,382 (55%)
Stability	1,894 (44%)
Benefits - Insurance	1,847 (43%)
Workplace Environment (colleagues, customers, culture, mission, etc.)	1,143 (26%)
Benefits - Leave	1,041 (24%)
Flexibility (schedules, etc.)	1,040 (24%)
Public Service	878 (20%)
Pay	759 (17%)
Opportunity for Advancement	317 (7%)
Other	114 (3%)

*Percentages are shown here as a percent of the total number of respondents.*

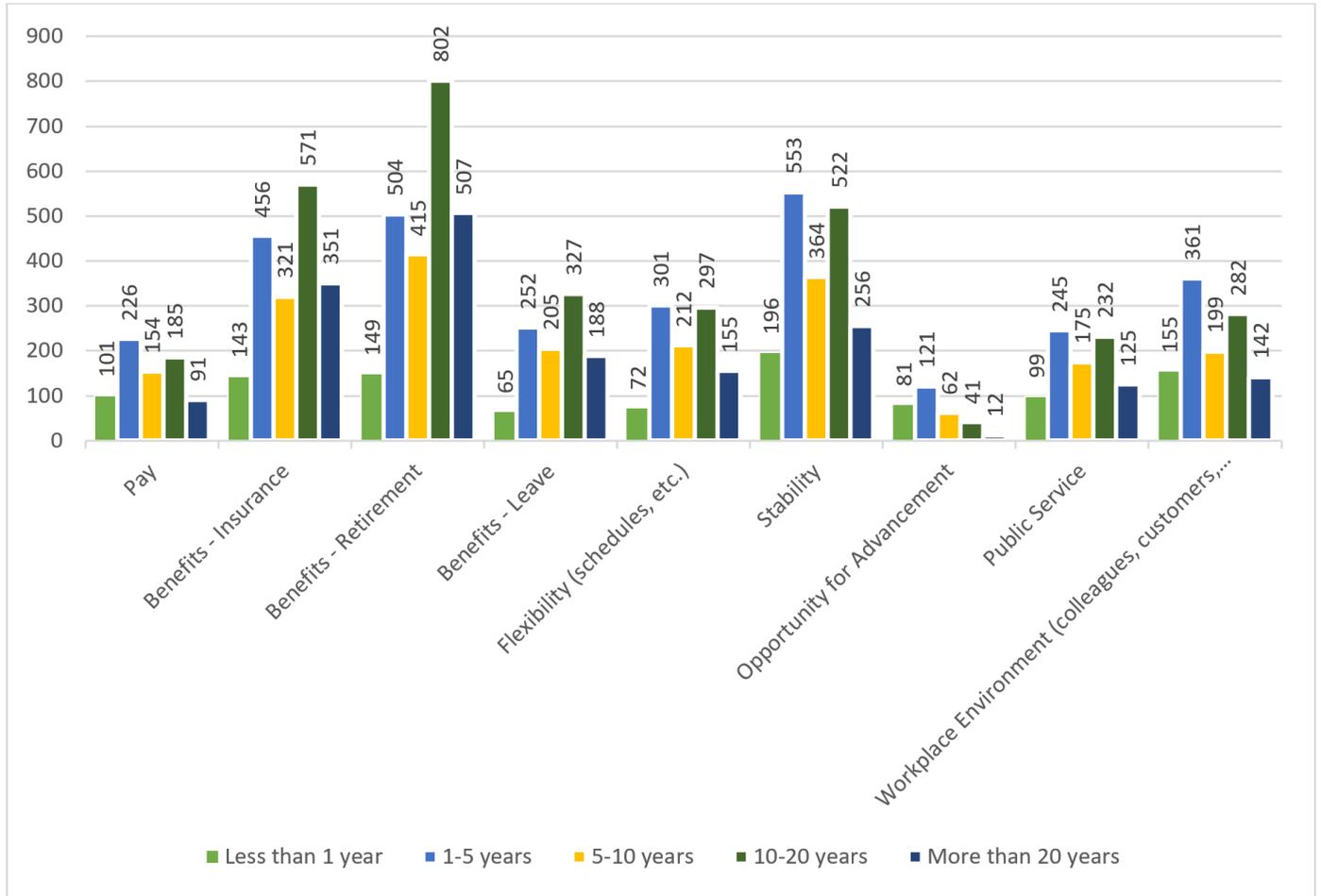
### Common themes from respondents who selected "Other":

- Love the job
- Location
- Other benefits such as comp time, overtime, or permanent status
- Availability of housing
- Lack of travel

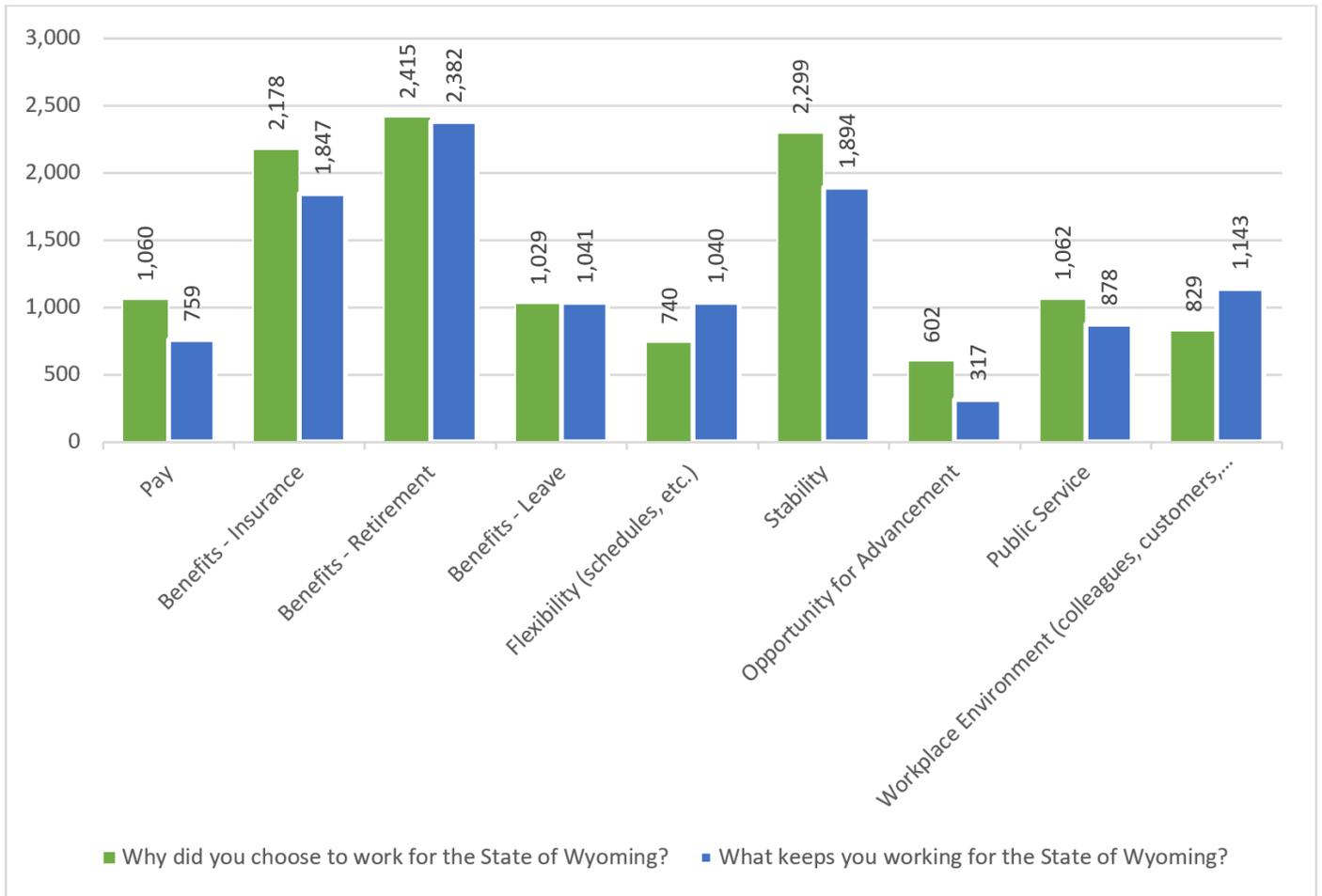
# What keeps you working for the State of Wyoming? - Supervisors & Non-Supervisors



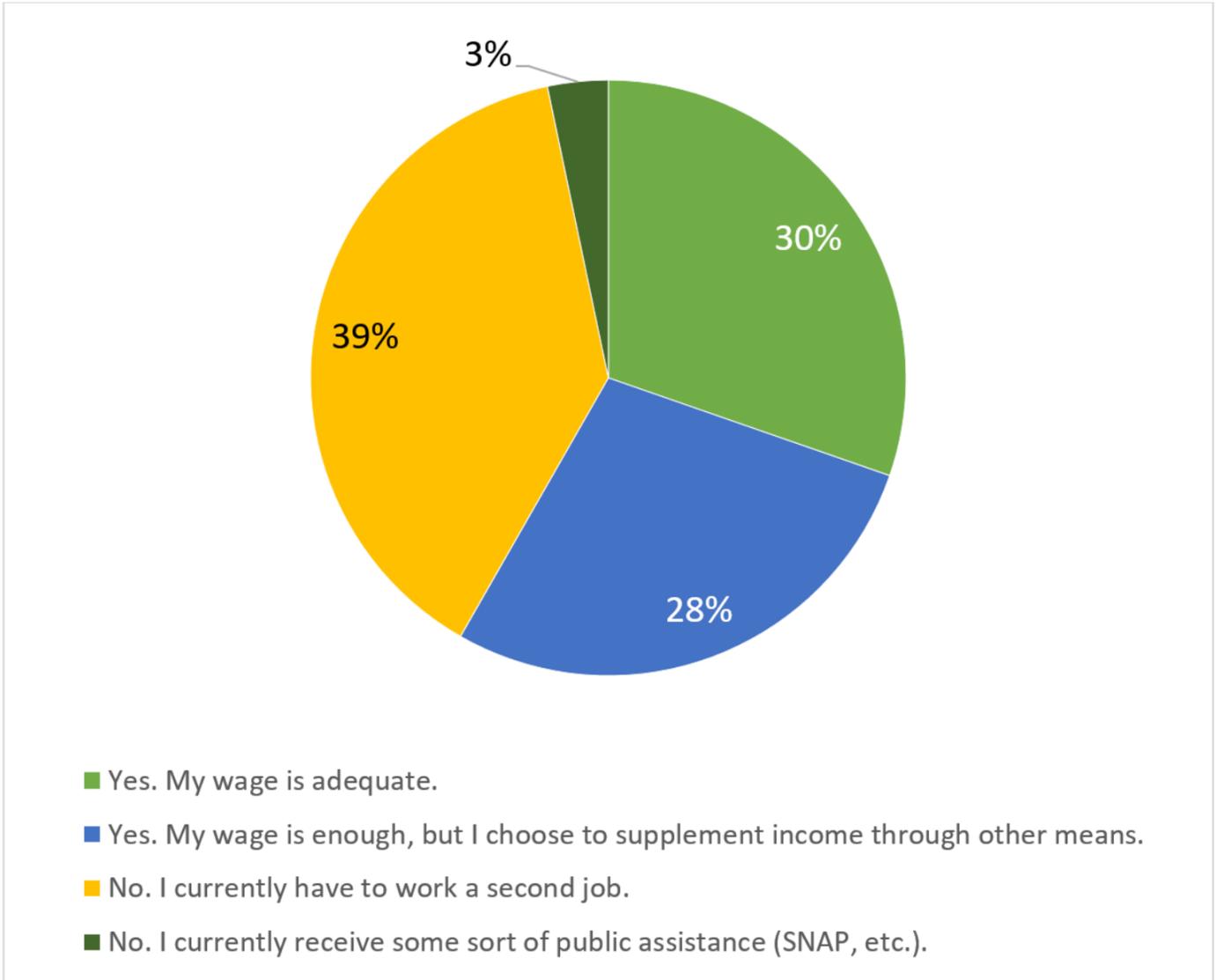
## What keeps you working for the State of Wyoming? - Longevity



## Why did you choose to work for the State of Wyoming? vs What keeps you working for the State of Wyoming?

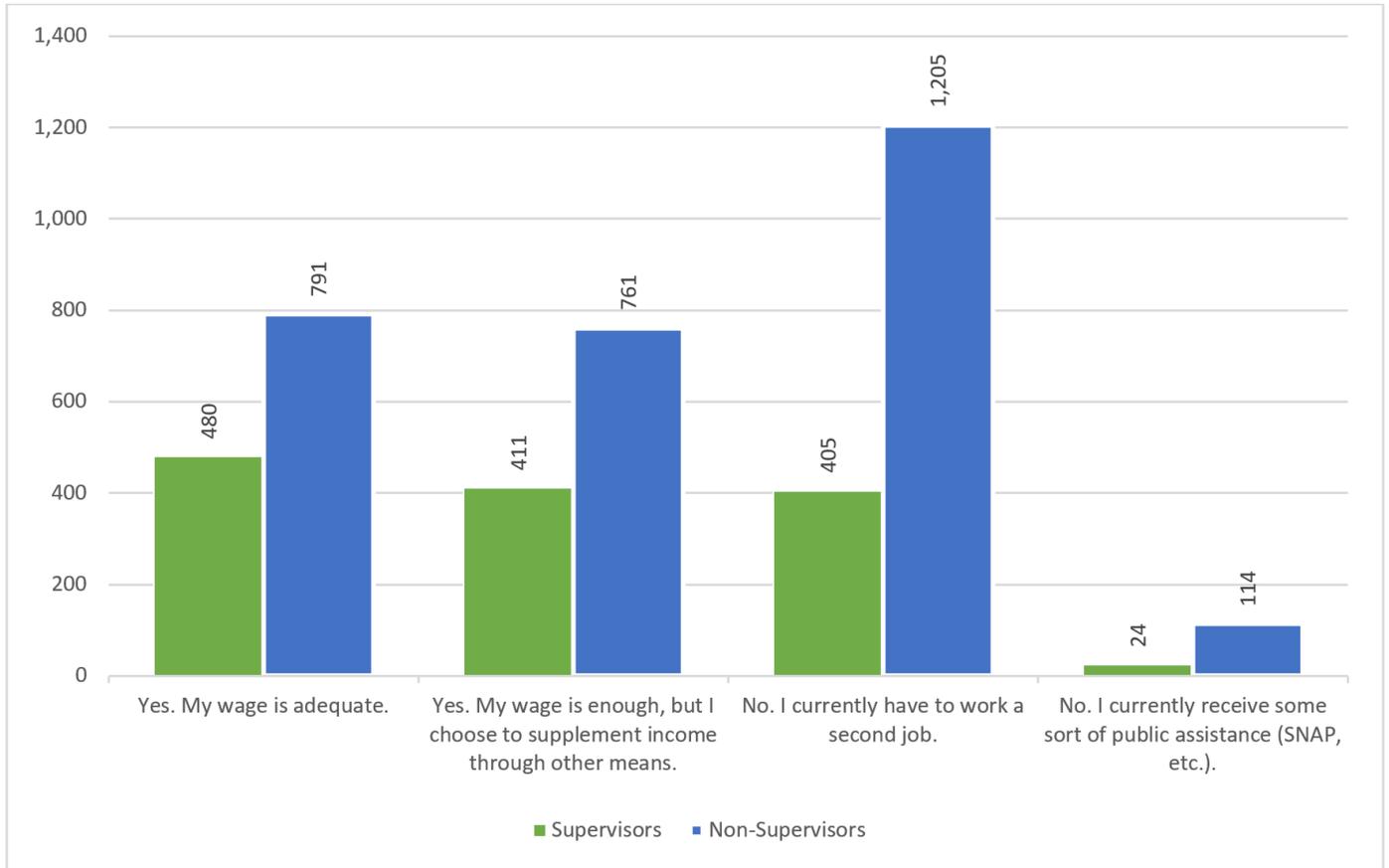


**Does your current compensation plan support you and/or your family? (Please select all that apply)**

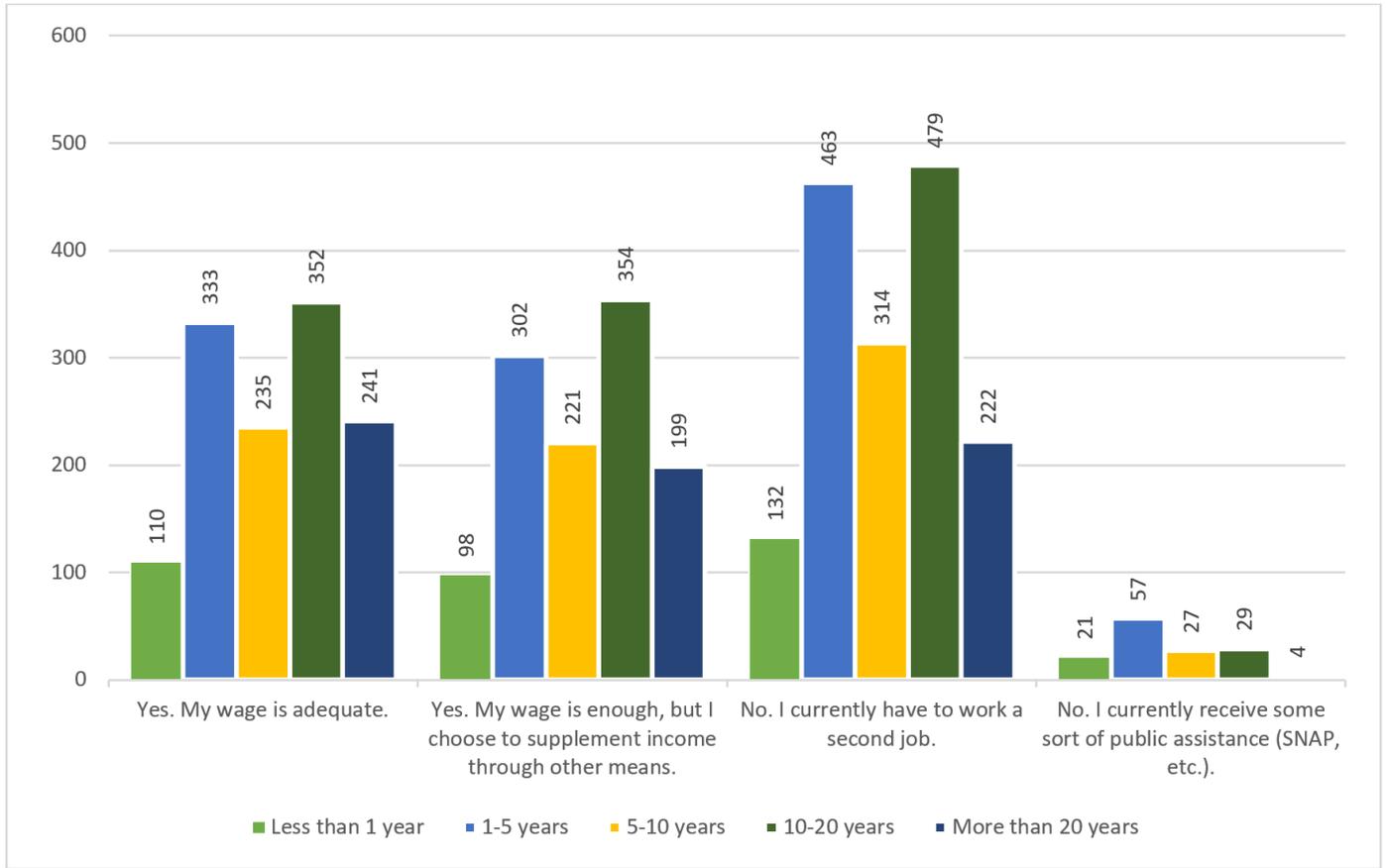


Option	Count
Yes. My wage is adequate.	1,274
Yes. My wage is enough, but I choose to supplement income through other means.	1,174
No. I currently have to work a second job.	1,615
No. I currently receive some sort of public assistance (SNAP, etc.).	138

## Does your current compensation plan support you and/or your family? - Supervisors & Non-Supervisors



## Does your current compensation plan support you and/or your family? - Longevity



## **If you could change one thing about the current compensation plan, what would it be?**

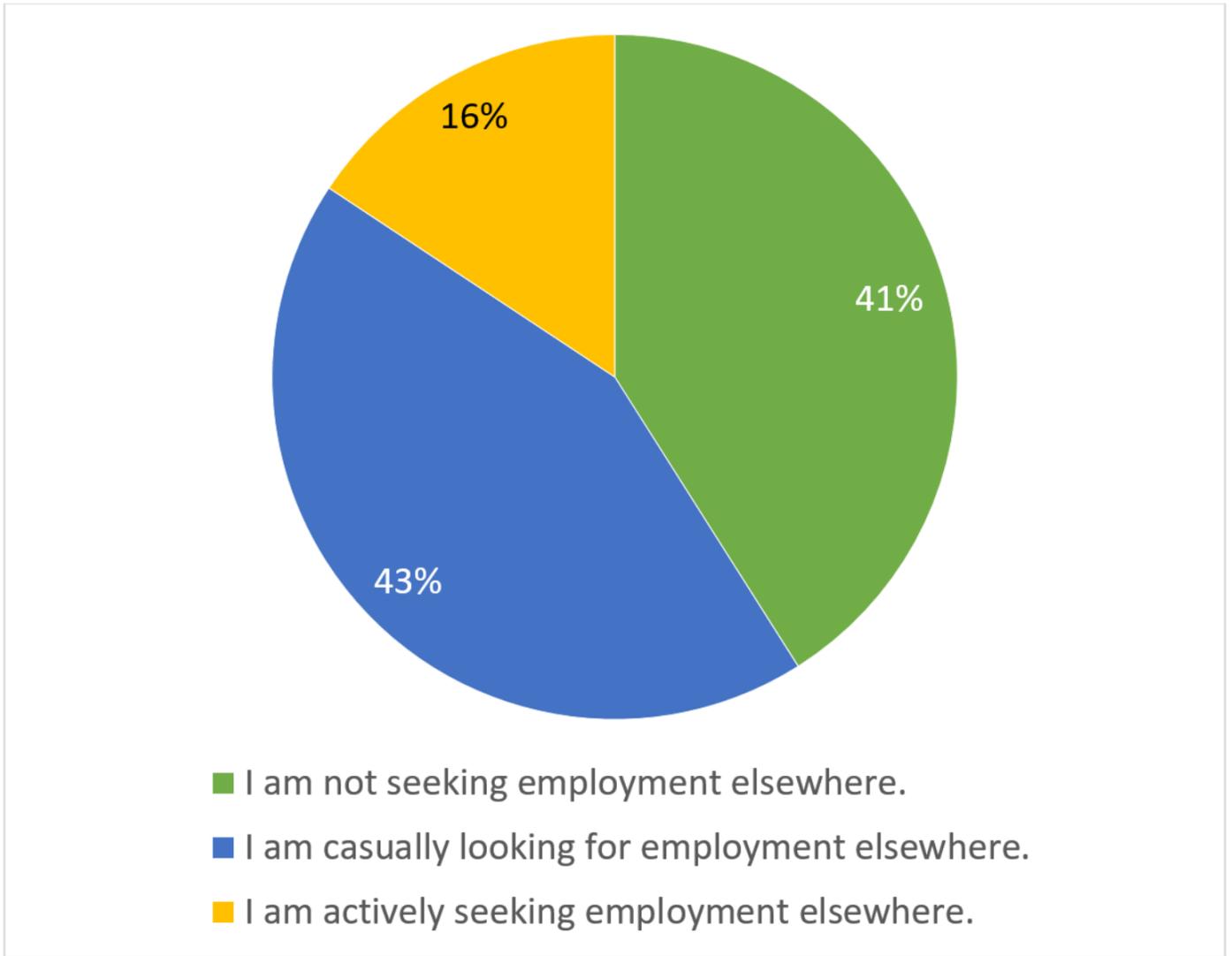
### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 3500 responses. An overwhelming majority of respondents in some form made suggestions that increase pay rates now and more regularly thereafter. Justification for this stemmed from the concern that wages were not keeping up with inflation, nor have they been able to offset increasing state costs (insurance and retirement contributions).

Suggestions included:

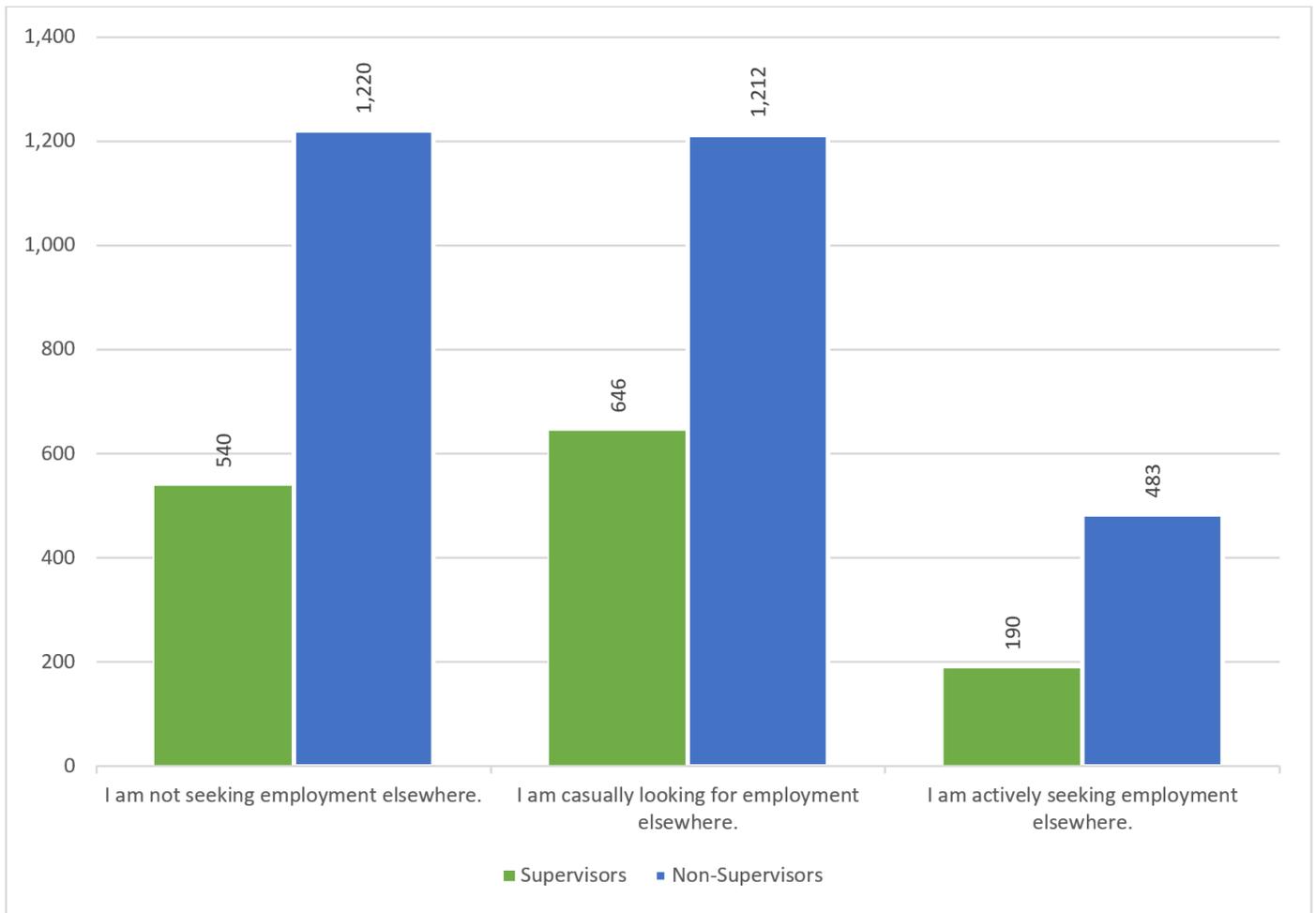
- Consistent hiring rates
- Step program that increases with years of experience
- Increase longevity payments
- Annual cost of living adjustments
- Annual base pay adjustments consistent with market
- Annual base pay adjustments based on merit
- Bi-monthly or Bi-weekly paychecks
- Lower deductibles and other insurance costs
- Annual bonus linked to performance
- More flexibility for agency management to move employees within a pay range
- Pay out all sick leave upon retirement
- Allow employees to cash out leave at any point
- Increase employer match associated with 457 deferred compensation plan
- Cafeteria-style benefit plan
- Equity between agencies
- Increase shift differential rate
- Geographic differentials
- Regular reviews of wage disparities
- Pay for more skills, such as speaking a different language

## How often do you seek employment elsewhere?

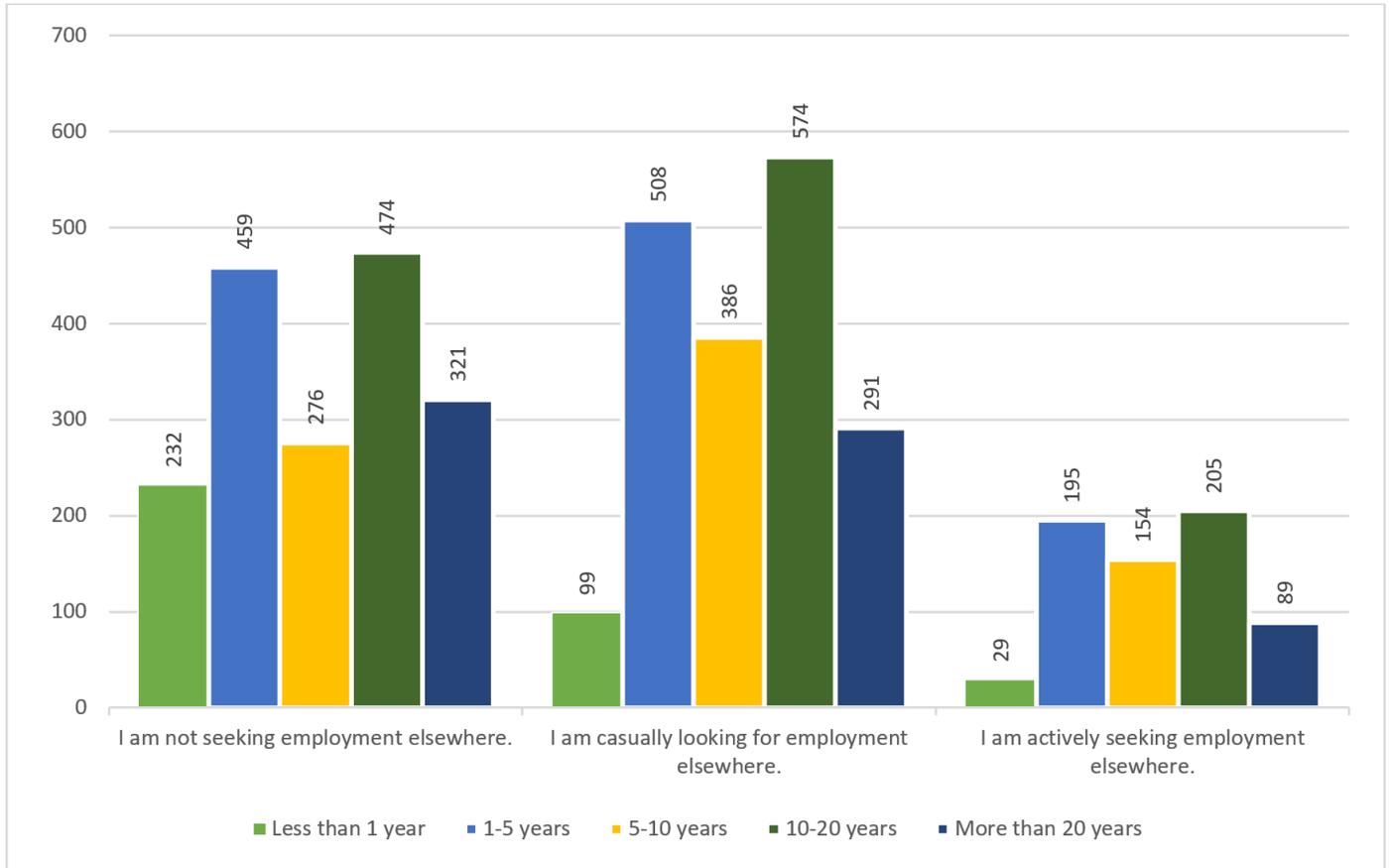


Option	Count
I am not seeking employment elsewhere.	1,764
I am casually looking for employment elsewhere.	1,862
I am actively seeking employment elsewhere.	675

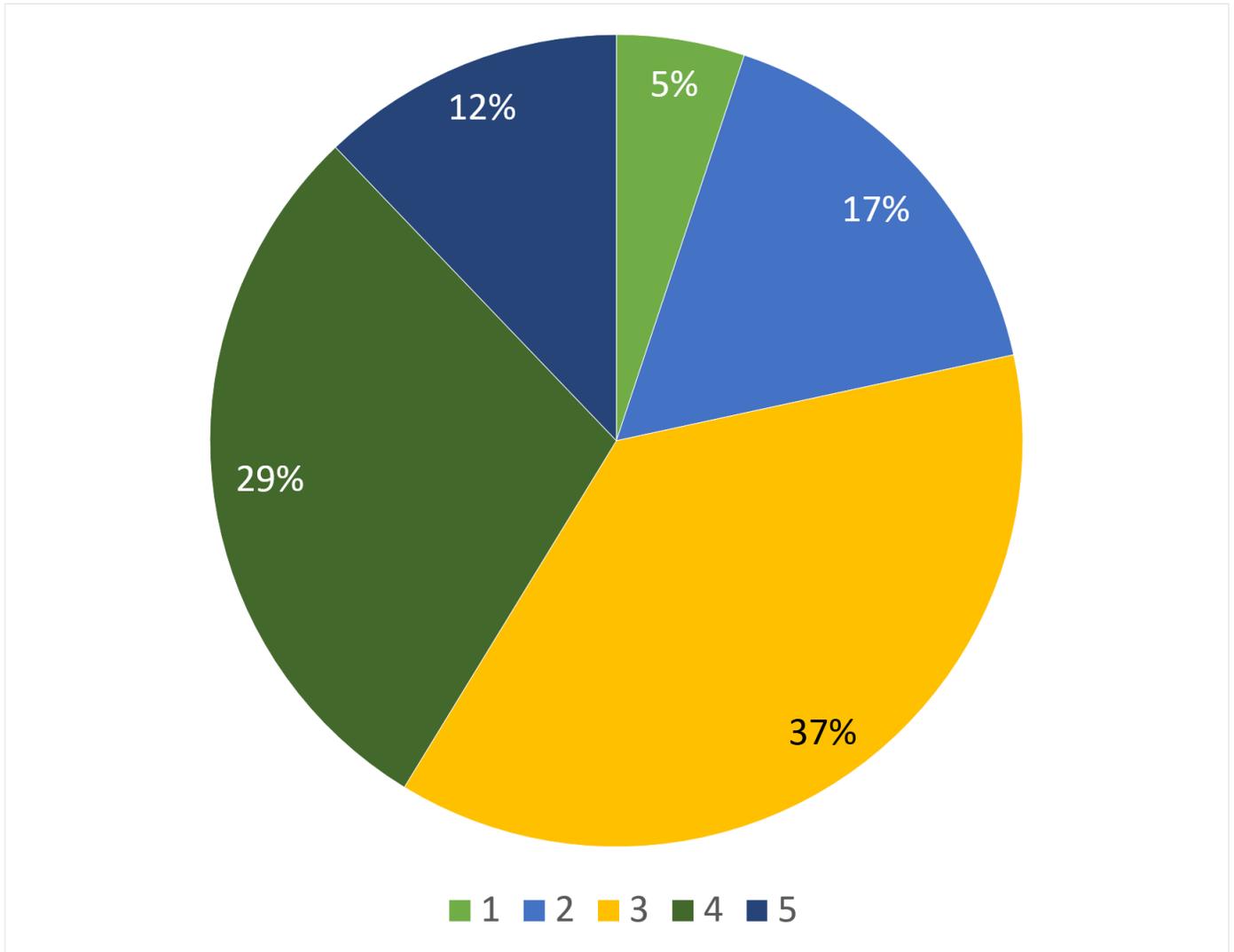
## How often do you seek employment elsewhere? - Supervisors & Non-Supervisors



## How often do you seek employment elsewhere? - Longevity

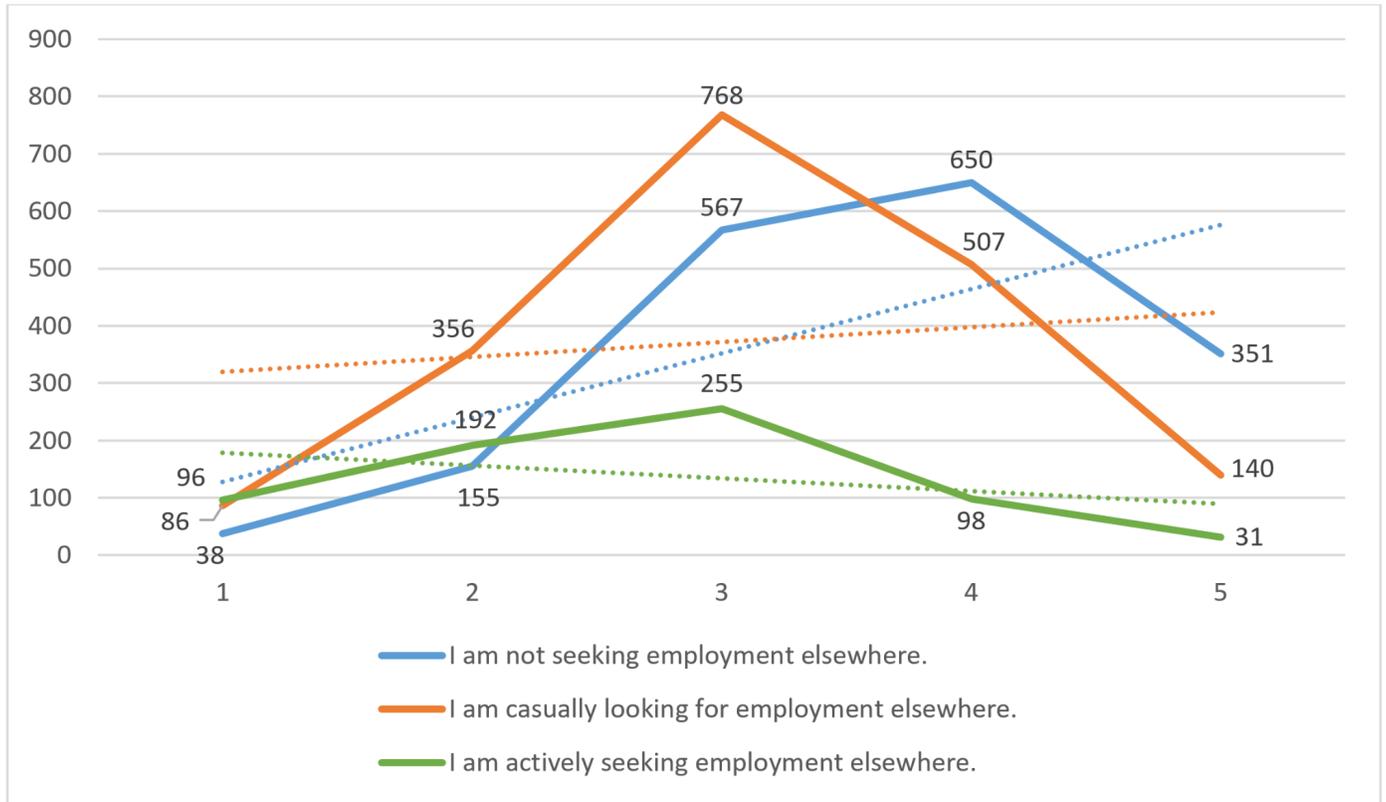


**How would you rate your work-life balance on a scale from 1-5 with 5 representing the most ideal balance?**



Option	Count
1	222
2	710
3	1,603
4	1,263
5	526

**How would you rate your work-life balance on a scale from 1-5 with 5 representing the most ideal balance? vs  
How often do you seek employment elsewhere?**



## **In what ways might your work-life balance be improved?**

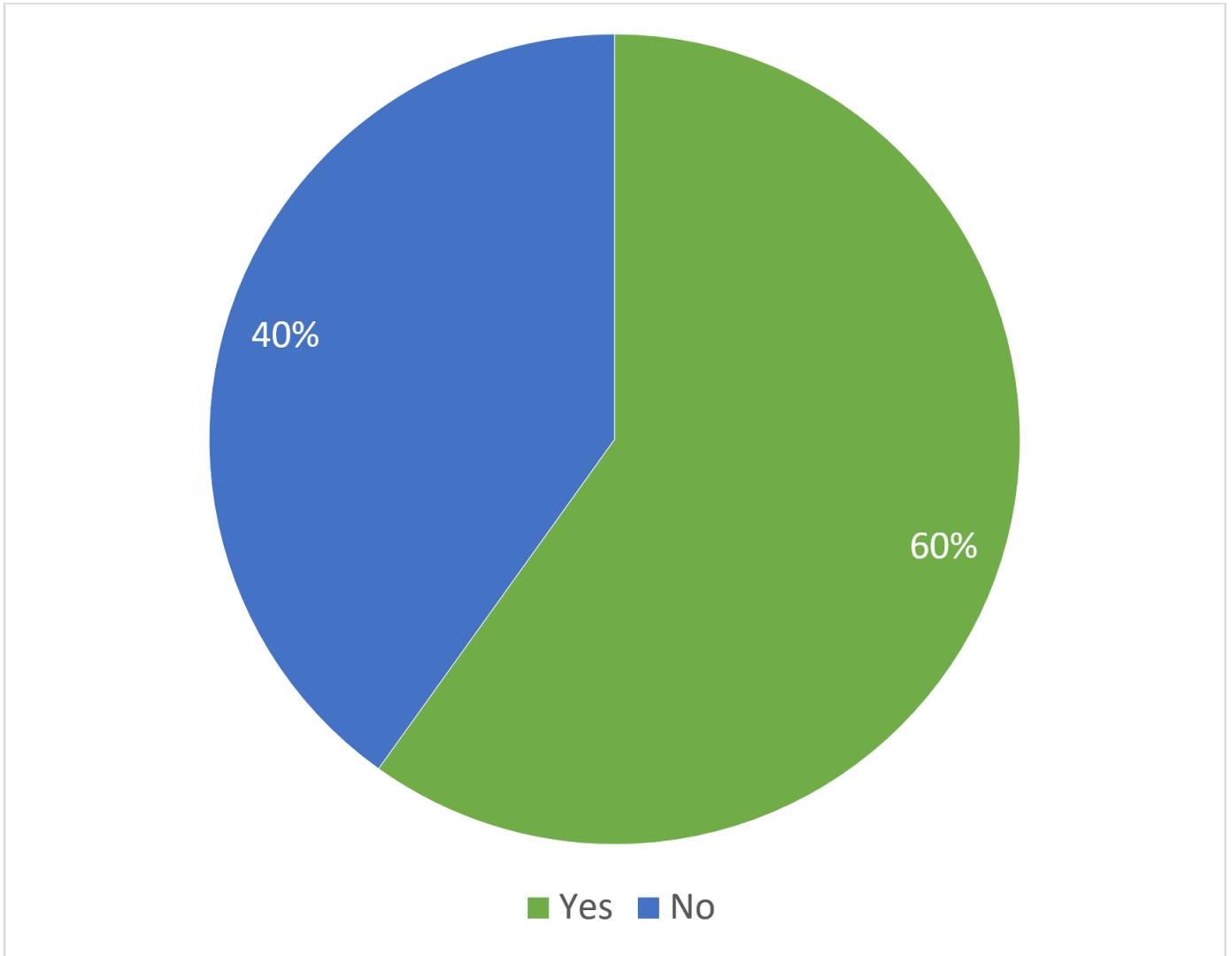
### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 3200 responses. Many of the responses cited that an increase in wage or more regular pay adjustments would help work-life balance. As an example, some attributed this to the amount of overtime needed to work to make means meet. Others attributed this to the anxiety of not being able to pay bills on time or the increasing health insurance costs. Most of the other responses targeted two areas: the working environment or other fringe benefits offered.

Suggestions included:

- Higher wages
- Telework or work from home opportunities
- Flexible schedules
- Four day work weeks
- More staff
- The ability to earn and carry-over more paid time off
- Less travel
- More resources to hire temporary help
- Longer maternity leave
- Better relationships with management
- Dress code policy that allows for casual dress
- Child care
- Limit on-call
- Pets in the workplace

**Do you feel like you have a voice at work and your input is valued?**



Option	Count
Yes	2,579
No	1,718

## **In what ways might we improve your relationship with management?**

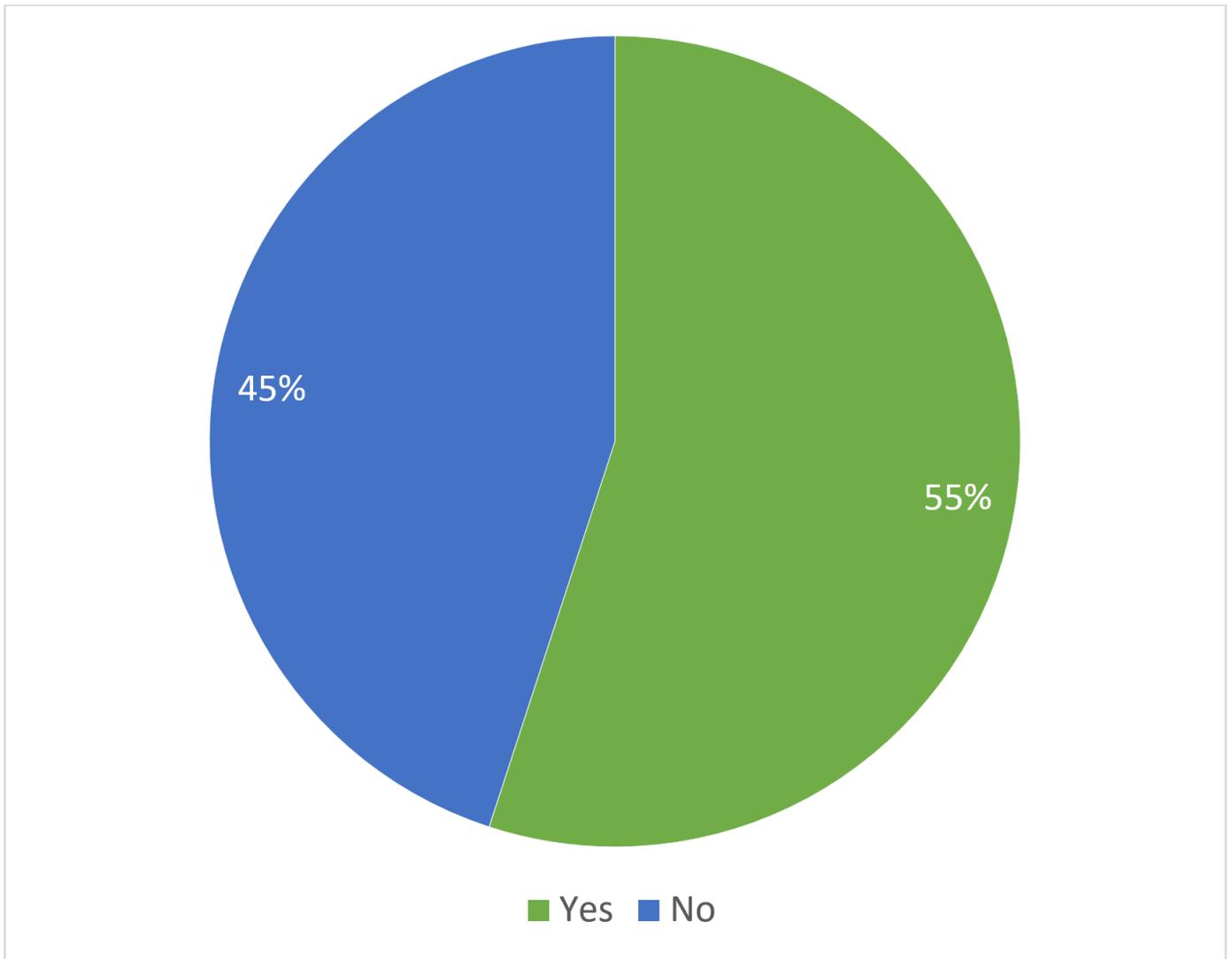
### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 2900 responses. Most responses indicated that their relationship with management was good. Many comments complemented supervisors. Some comments noted otherwise. Out of the constructive feedback provided, most focused on culture or management style.

Suggestions included:

- Improve communication
- More opportunities to get together as a group
- Increase autonomy
- Improve collaboration and honesty
- More frequent visits to worksite
- Increase accountability
- Increase presence of human resources
- Better availability
- Supervisor training

**Do you feel like you are recognized appropriately for your contributions?**



Option	Count
Yes	2,352
No	1,918

## **In what ways might we better recognize employees for their contributions?**

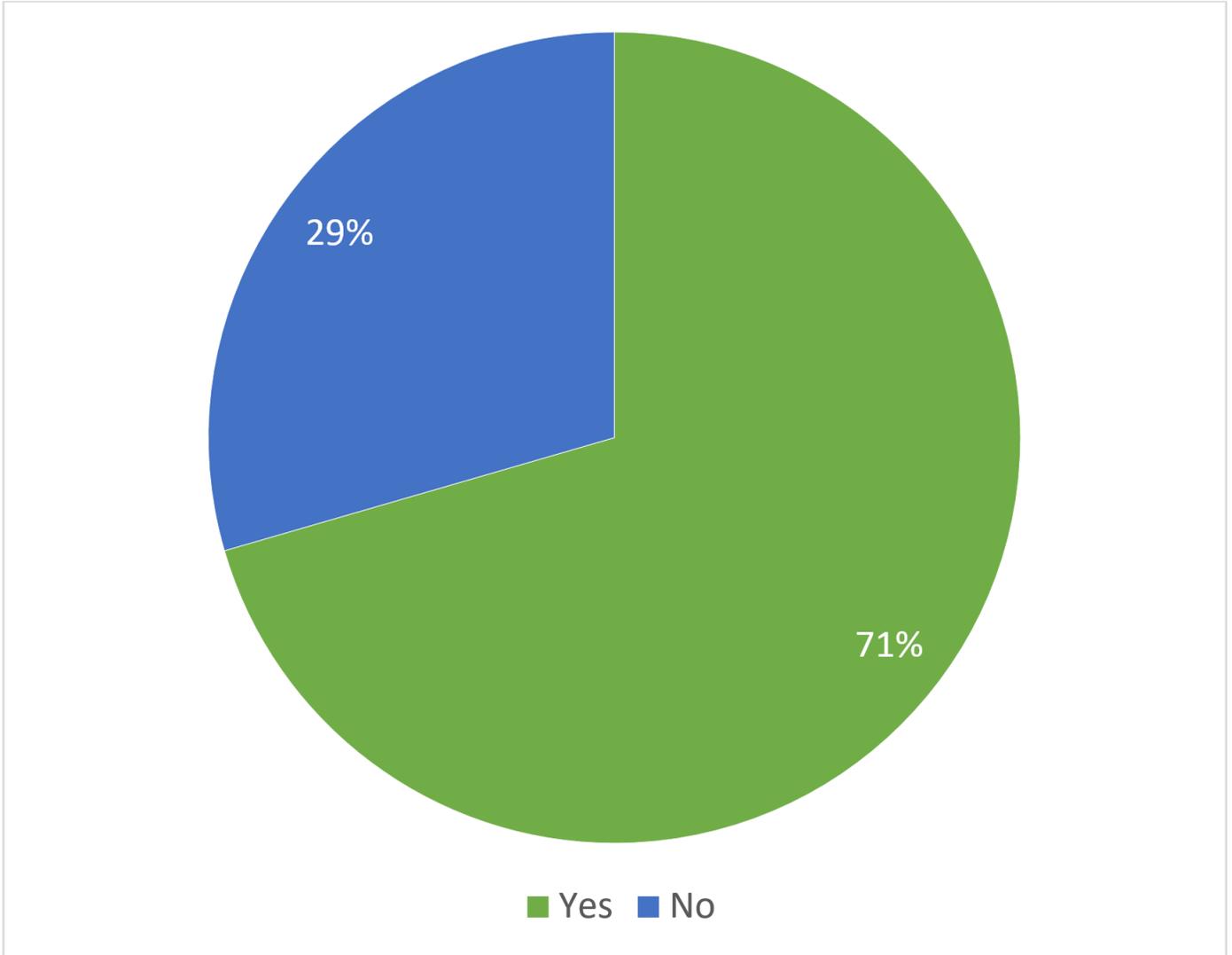
### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 2800 responses. A majority of the responses stated that they would prefer to be recognized in some form of pay. More specifically, it was split just about evenly between those responses that mentioned a base pay adjustment versus those responses that mentioned a non-base pay adjustment, such as a bonus. Some suggested other non-monetary incentives and a few stated, very simply, that they would just like for others to listen or they would just like to receive more thank you's.

Suggestions included:

- Higher wages
- Merit based pay increases
- Merit based bonuses
- Employee of the Month or other rewards
- More frequent feedback - verbal and other
- Employee recognition program that provides tangible rewards
- Highlight work through other mediums - newsletter article, website portfolio, etc.
- Fair performance evaluation
- Attach an incentive to PMI
- More career development opportunities
- Recognition from management further up the chain of command
- More positive feedback
- Timely service awards
- Clothing with State of Wyoming or agency logos
- More timely service awards

**Do you feel like you have adequate training and professional development opportunities available?**



Option	Count
Yes	3,038
No	1,267

## **In what ways would you like to see training and development opportunities expanded?**

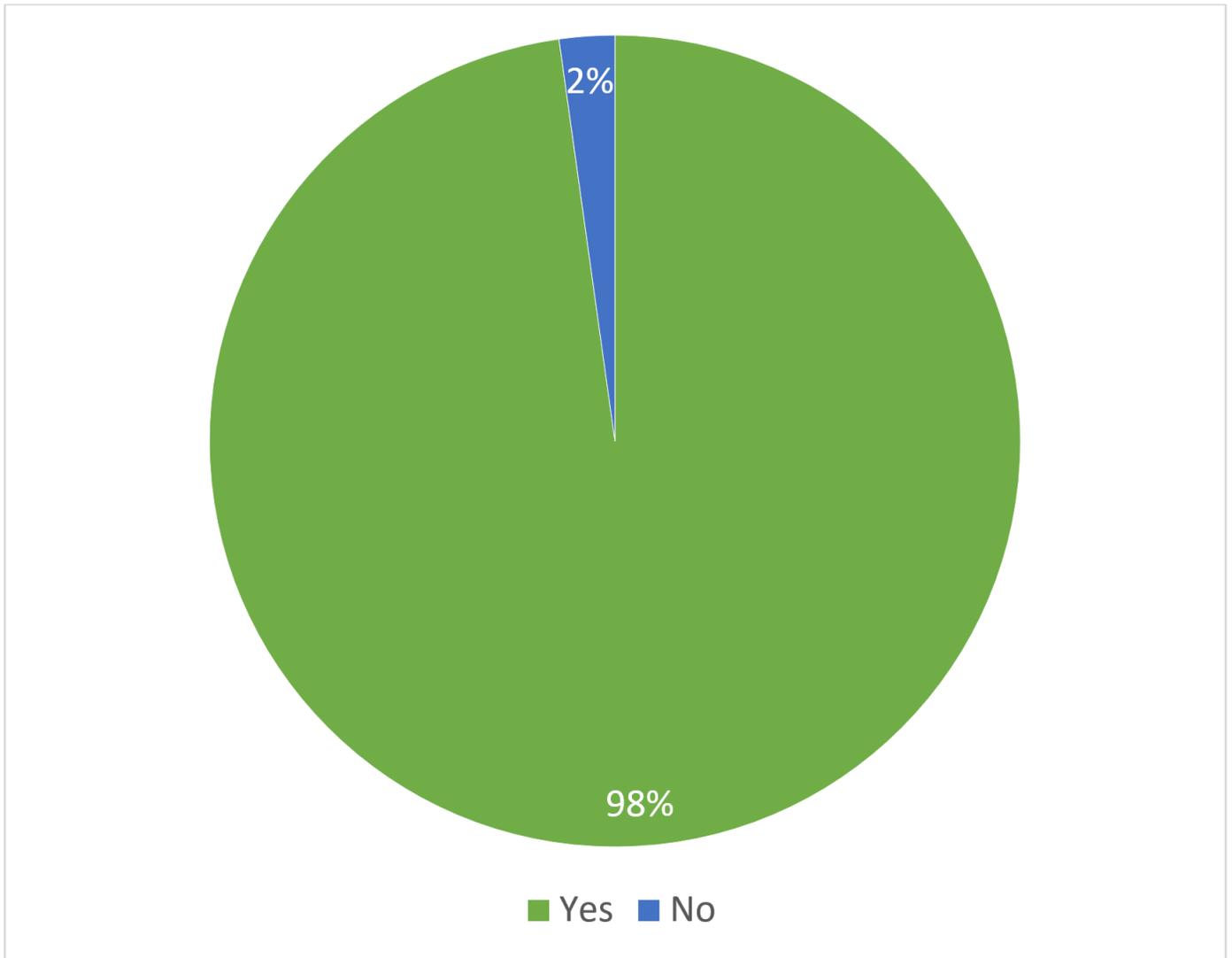
### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 2400 responses. Most suggestions focused on the quantity or quality of training offered. Some responses indicated that budget cuts have negatively affected training and development. Many responses indicated that they enjoy both online and in person training. Some responses indicated that they don't have time to train, citing staffing issues as the main culprit leading to this.

Suggestions included:

- More training opportunities, both technical and soft skill
- Expanded tuition support
- Offer a variety of training options (in person or online)
- Expanded training topics such as self-defense or generational differences
- Utilize outside training groups, including colleges or universities
- Cross-train
- Hire more trainers
- More concrete individual development plans
- Offer training opportunities across agencies
- Implement a mentor program
- Leadership development training
- Self-paced training opportunities
- Expanded travel budgets
- More training on HR topics
- More safety training
- Document and create standard operating procedures

### Do you know why your position exists?



Option	Count
Yes	4,231
No	94

## **In what ways might we improve communication?**

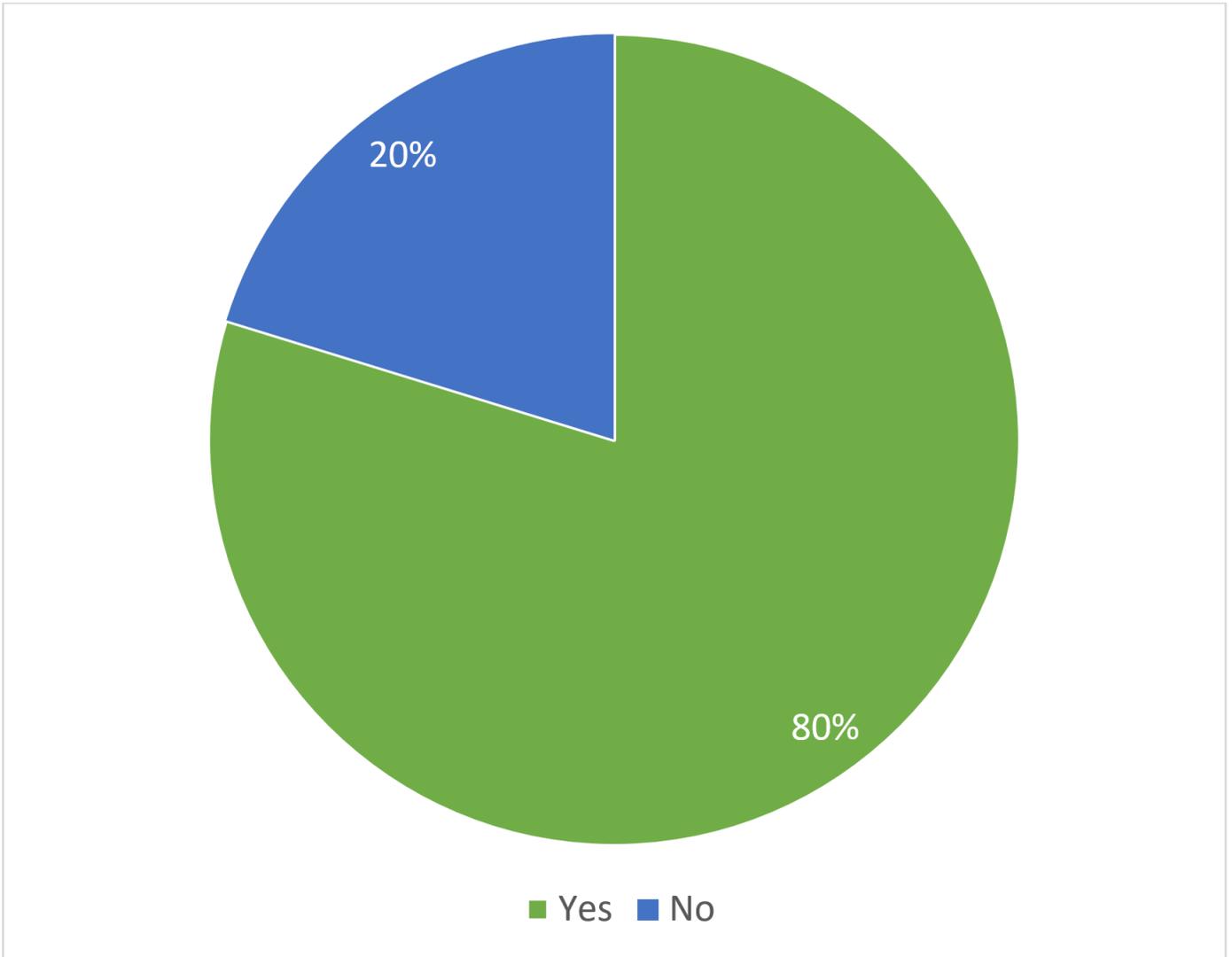
### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 2200 responses. Many of the responses indicated that they felt communication was sufficient already. Some of the responses indicated that the communication is tolerable, but could be improved. A few suggested that the communication is unacceptable. Out of those who offered suggestions, much of the focus was placed on leadership and one's aptitude to communicate effectively. It was noted consistently that trust, work ethic, efficiency, and morale all suffer when communication is lacking.

Suggestions included:

- Conduct more surveys like this one and share the results
- Communicate with more transparency
- More meetings, staff meetings, regular updates, team-building, etc.
- Utilize additional channels of communication such as a newsletter
- Utilize a case management system
- Bridge gap between Cheyenne offices and field offices
- Offer more robust supervisor training
- Set clear expectations
- More visits from management in the field
- Solicit more feedback from front-line workers

**Do you feel like you have the resources (equipment, technology, etc.) needed to perform your basic job duties?**



Option	Count
Yes	3,446
No	869

## **In what ways would you like to see resources expanded?**

### ***Summary of Comments***

This question yielded over 2300 responses. Many of the responses focused on technology or staffing issues. Some of the responses reference specific equipment that either doesn't work or employees do not have. Budget seems to be a key player in terms of what an agency can and cannot do to get the concerns addressed. Resources are adequate in most circumstances to perform basic functions. However, a majority of responses also indicated that resources are outdated or don't work. This causes unnecessary frustration and morale issues. A big challenge right now is finding time and resources to make process improvements. This may start to hinder interactions with the public.

Suggestions included:

- Pay for more supplies when teleworking
- Use cell phones instead of desk phones
- Up-to-date equipment, including computers
- Transition away from desktops
- Hire more staff
- Wifi enabled vehicles
- Better standard office equipment such desks, standing desks, chairs, etc.
- Cameras in high-risk areas
- Child care availability
- More Google training
- More accessible printers
- Funding
- Remote access and equipment
- Convenient resources such as hands-free headsets, radios, etc.
- Transition temporary staff to permanent staff
- Four wheel drive vehicles

**Which city do you reside in or are closest to?**

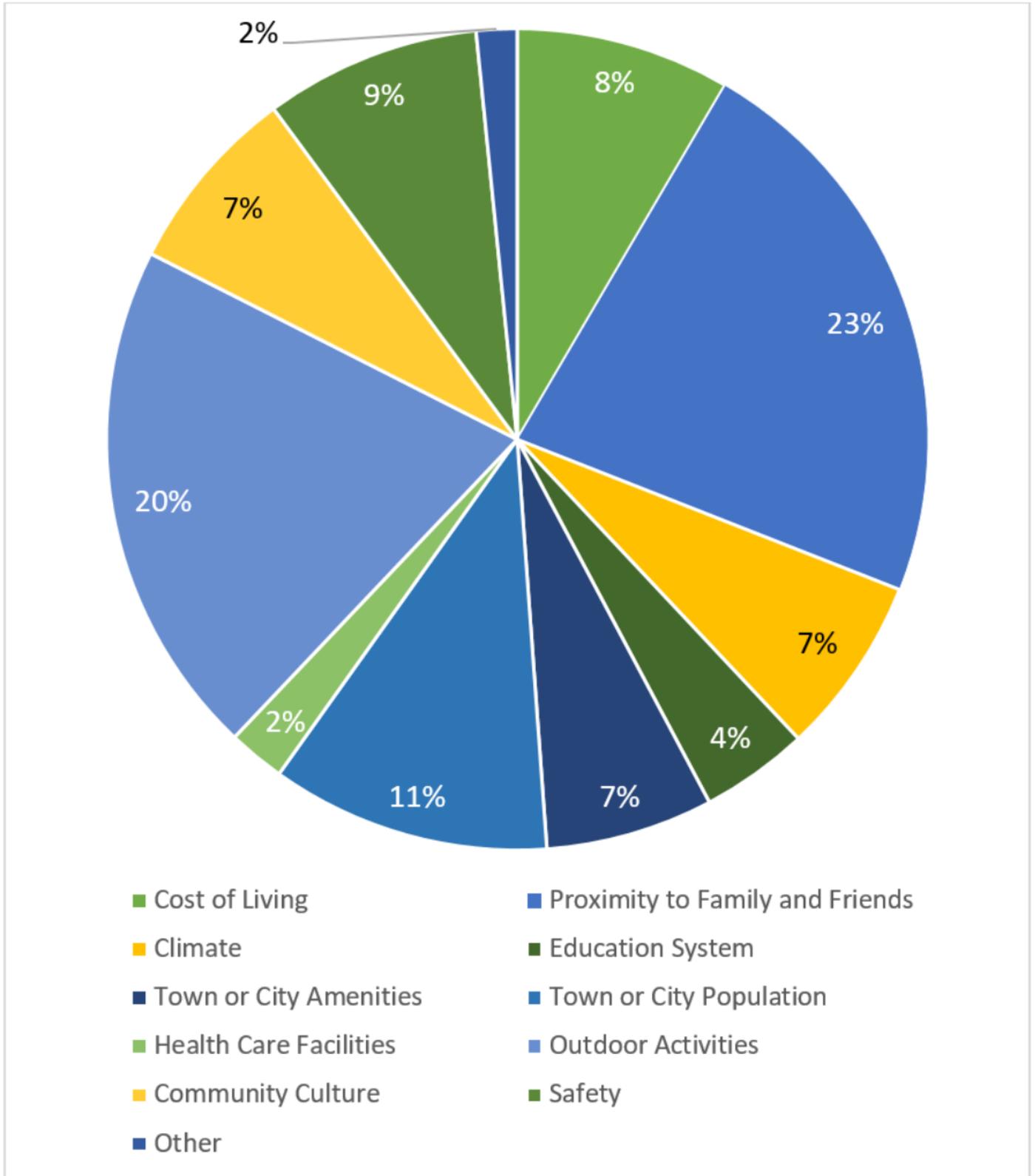
Option	Count
Afton	18
Alpine	5
Atlantic City	1
Baggs	4
Bar Nunn	1
Basin	37
Bear River	1
Bedford	1
Big Horn	1
Big Piney	1
Buffalo	42
Burns	7
Carpenter	1
Casper	306
Cheyenne	1,779
Chugwater	5
Clearmont	1
Cody	55
Cokeville	3
Cowley	1
Daniel	3
Dayton	2
Douglas	43
Dubois	2
Elk Mountain	4

Emblem	1
Encampment	4
Etna	1
Evanston	157
Farson	1
Fort Bridger	1
Fort Washakie	1
Gillette	73
Glendo	3
Glenrock	5
Granger	1
Green River	13
Greybull	13
Guernsey	8
Hanna	6
Hillsdale	2
Hudson	1
Hulett	1
Jackson	28
Kaycee	2
Kemmerer	18
La Grange	1
LaBarge	2
Lander	129
Laramie	152
Lingle	5
Lovell	5

Lusk	31
Lyman	4
McGrew	1
Medicine Bow	2
Meeteetse	1
Midwest	3
Mills	1
Mountain View	3
Newcastle	55
Osage	1
Pavillion	1
Pine Bluffs	9
Pine Haven	1
Pinedale	22
Powell	24
Ranchester	1
Rawlins	163
Riverton	99
Rock River	1
Rock Springs	74
Rozet	1
Saratoga	5
Shell	2
Sheridan	133
Shirley Rim	1
Shoshoni	6
Sinclair	1

South Pass	1
Star Valley	1
Story	1
Sundance	13
Ten Sleep	5
Thayne	1
Thermopolis	34
Torrington	148
Upton	1
Wheatland	28
Wilson	1
Worland	37
Wright	3
Yoder	1
Colorado	40
Nebraska	19
Utah	3
Idaho	1

**What do you enjoy most about the area that you live in? (Please select up to 3)**



Percentages are shown here as a percent of the total number of responses.

**What do you enjoy most about the area that you live in? (Please select up to 3) -  
Ranked Responses**

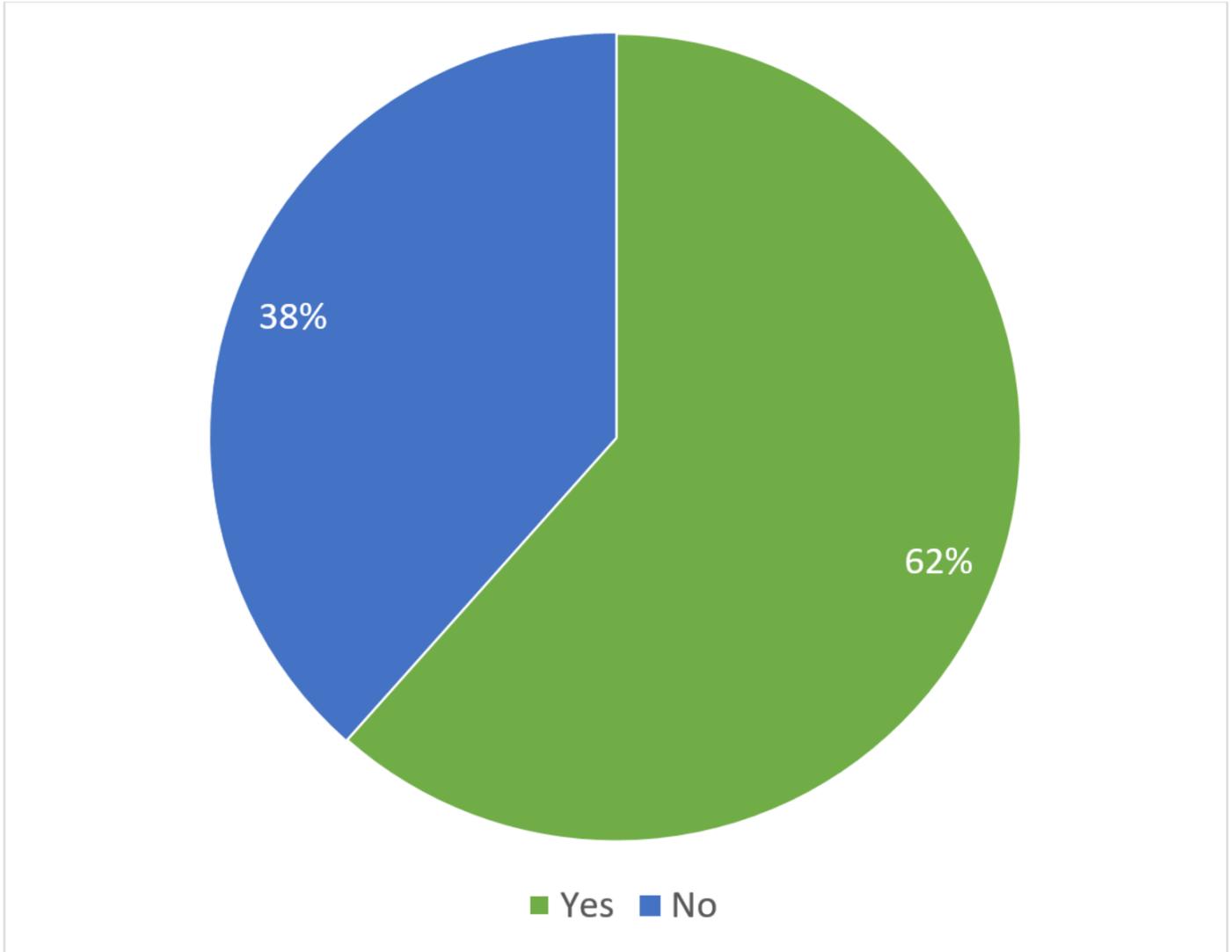
Option	Count
Proximity to Family and Friends	2,265 (52%)
Outdoor Activities	2,051(47%)
Town or City Population	1,107 (25%)
Safety	856 (20%)
Cost of Living	850 (20%)
Community Culture	747 (17%)
Climate	708 (16%)
Town or City Amenities	664 (15%)
Education System	428 (10%)
Health Care Facilities	225 (5%)
Other	161(4%)

*Percentages are shown here as a percent of the total number of respondents.*

**Common themes from respondents who selected “Other”:**

- Proximity to other towns
- This is “home”
- Opportunity to own land
- No income tax
- Low traffic
- Access to public lands

**Would you encourage family members or friends to apply for a State of Wyoming job?**



Option	Count
Yes	2,604
No	1,626

## Summary

Even though there is no telling what the frame of mind was when the employee responded to this survey, the State has to consider the impact it's rules, policies, procedures, and practices have on employees. Many of these have not evolved a great deal over the years, yet staffing numbers with many programs have reached critical levels. In 2011, the state of Wyoming Workforce Report shows that turnover (including transfers) was at 12.6%. Today that figure is 18.1%.

For the longest time, the State of Wyoming considered itself an employer of choice. This occurred naturally as many saw the benefits of working in the public sector compared to the private sector. The State could rely on it's stability and benefits to attract and keep top talent. While this still holds true for some as seen in the results of this survey, these competitive advantages do not carry as much weight today. This can be attributed to generational differences to some degree, but it could also be attributed to other areas falling further behind, such as the compensation package. Today, actual employee pay, on average, has fallen to 19.4% behind market.

Pay, undoubtedly, was the most common theme throughout the survey results. This topic even surfaced with questions that were not aimed at discussing pay issues. Nearly half (42%) of the respondents indicated that they feel like they have to work a second job or participate in some public assistance program to make ends meet. In fact, out of those who said they would encourage family members or friends to apply for a state job, 67% also indicated that they felt that the current compensation plan supported themselves and/or their families. On the contrary, out of those who said they would not encourage family members or friends to apply for a state job, 56% indicated that they had to work a second job or participate in some sort of public assistance. This suggests that pay is one of the primary catalysts behind the turnover and retention issues.

Retention issues do not appear to be going away any time soon either. Not only is the State struggling to retain employees (over 59% indicated that they are looking for employment elsewhere), but the State has to start planning for succession as the retirement cliff draws near. In fact those expected to fill these upcoming vacancies are those that the State is struggling to retain. Over 60% of employees with 1-5 years of experience are looking for employment elsewhere, over 66% of employees with 5-10 years of experience are looking for employment elsewhere, and over 62% of employees with 10-20 years of experience are looking for employment elsewhere.

While this survey helps identify opportunities, this survey also highlighted positive trends as well. For example, the positive correlation between an ideal work-life balance and those seeking employment elsewhere. This is one area that the State has already started to evolve in. The State of Wyoming Telework Policy was released in February 2021. In addition, the positive relationship that exists between those who recommend state employment and those who feel that they are recognized appropriately. The same can be said for those who recommend state employment and those who feel like their input is valued.

Lastly, employees were asked if there was any one thing an employee would change about their job or employer. Most respondents referenced pay in some form. However, other common themes included more flexibility, additional staffing, more opportunities for advancement, more meaningful recognition, and an improved relationship with management.