



*Survey on Agent Management within Schools and  
Institutions*

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# Background to the Research

Originally created with Universities in mind, the research was expanded to include all Languages Canada members.

The survey was released to members on November 14<sup>th</sup>, with reminders on November 21<sup>st</sup> and November 27<sup>th</sup>. The survey was closed to new responses on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

## Total responses:

<b>Public University</b>	<b>Public College</b>	<b>Private/Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
24 (23%)	12 (11%)	69 (66%)	105

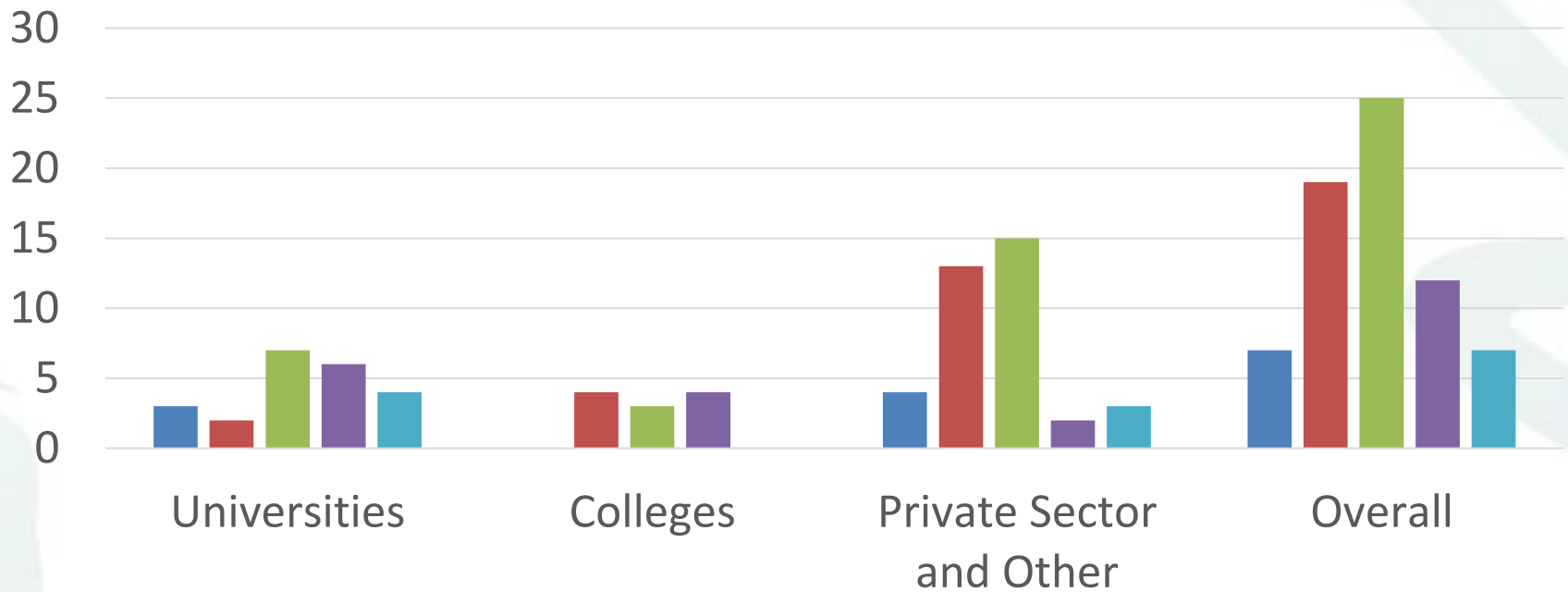
## Comparison to Languages Canada membership:

<b>Public University</b>	<b>Public College</b>	<b>Private/Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
37 (17%)	26 (12%)	153 (71%)	216

# Limitations

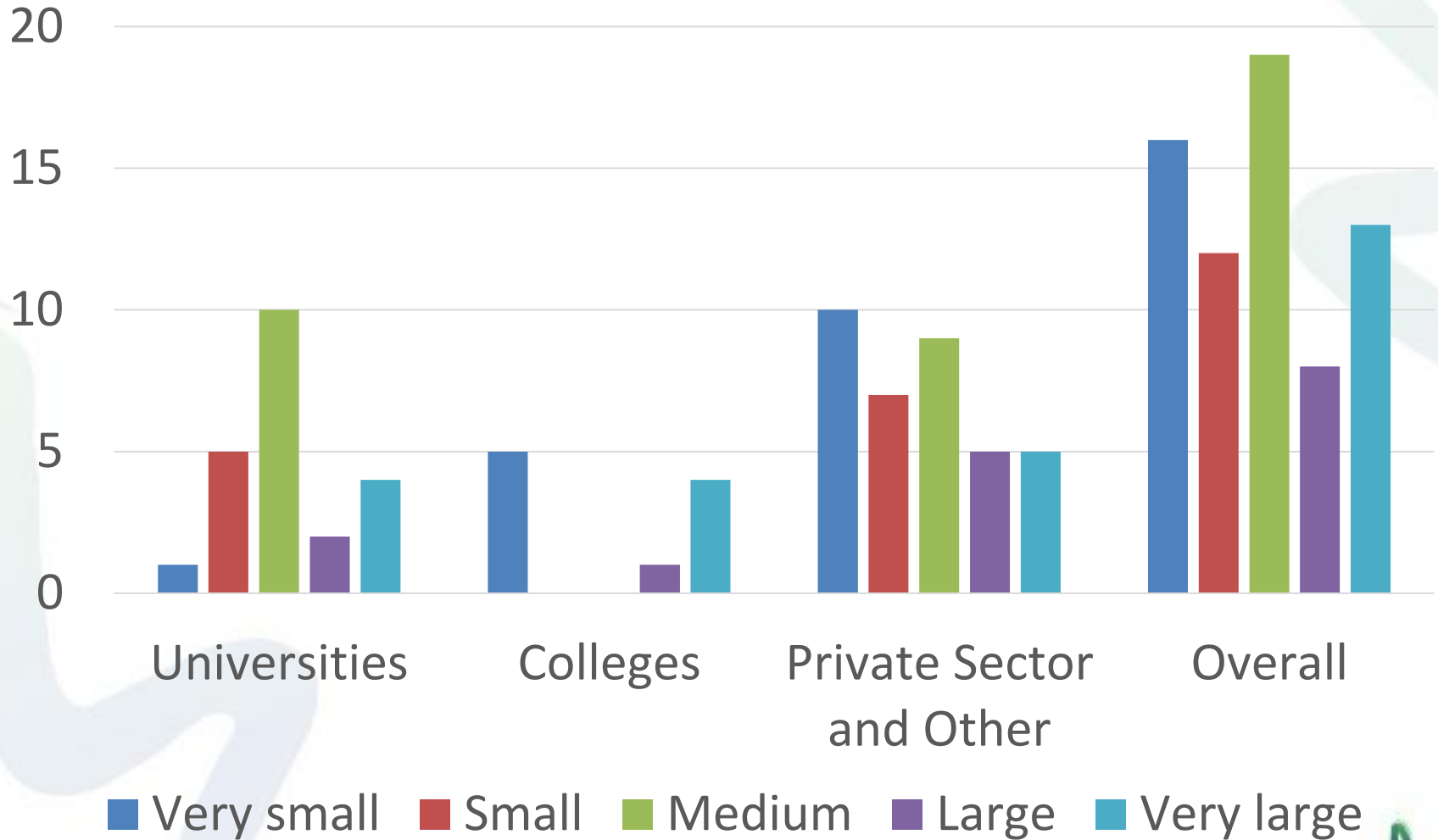
- Identifying information was sacrificed in favour of honest responses. We have no idea of knowing if multiple responses were received from the same institution(s), and were unable to follow-up for clarification.
- Survey results should not be extrapolated beyond the Languages Canada members who responded. They are not applicable to other markets, sectors, or non-LC members.
- Membership bias: more active members were more likely to respond to the survey.
- Because members were able to respond in either English or French, it is not possible to identify how many French members responded.

# Province of respondents

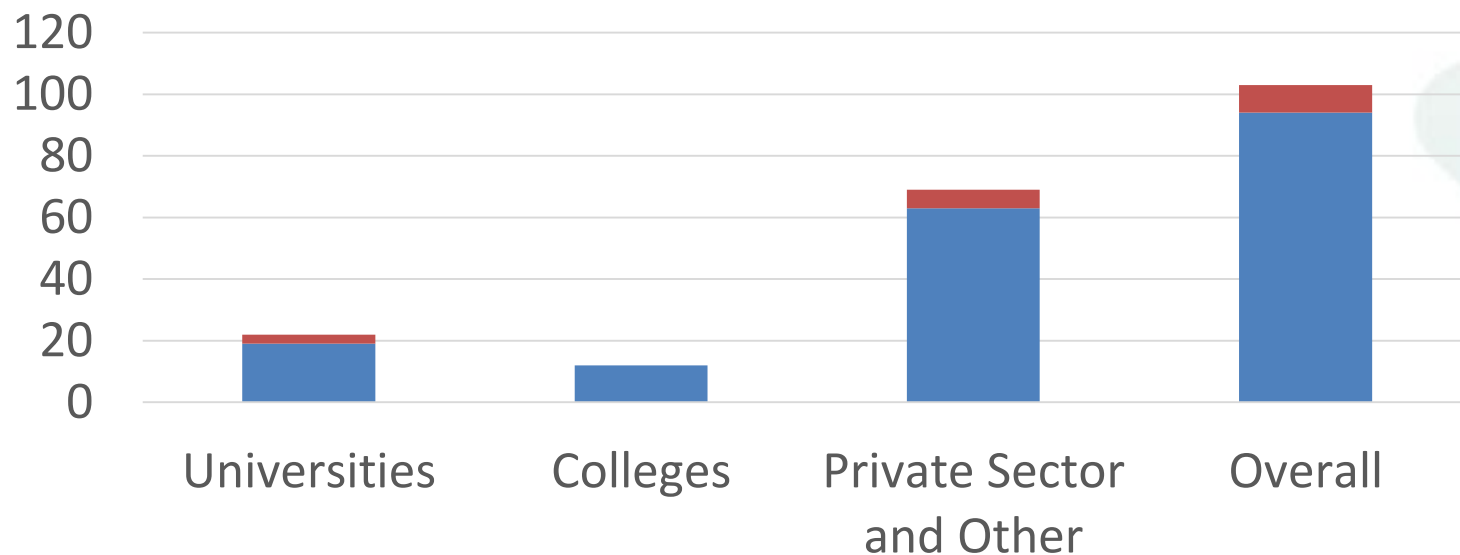


- Atlantic region (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Newfoundland)
- British Columbia
- Ontario
- Prairie region (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)
- Québec

# Size of institution



## Use of recruitment agents: Number of programs

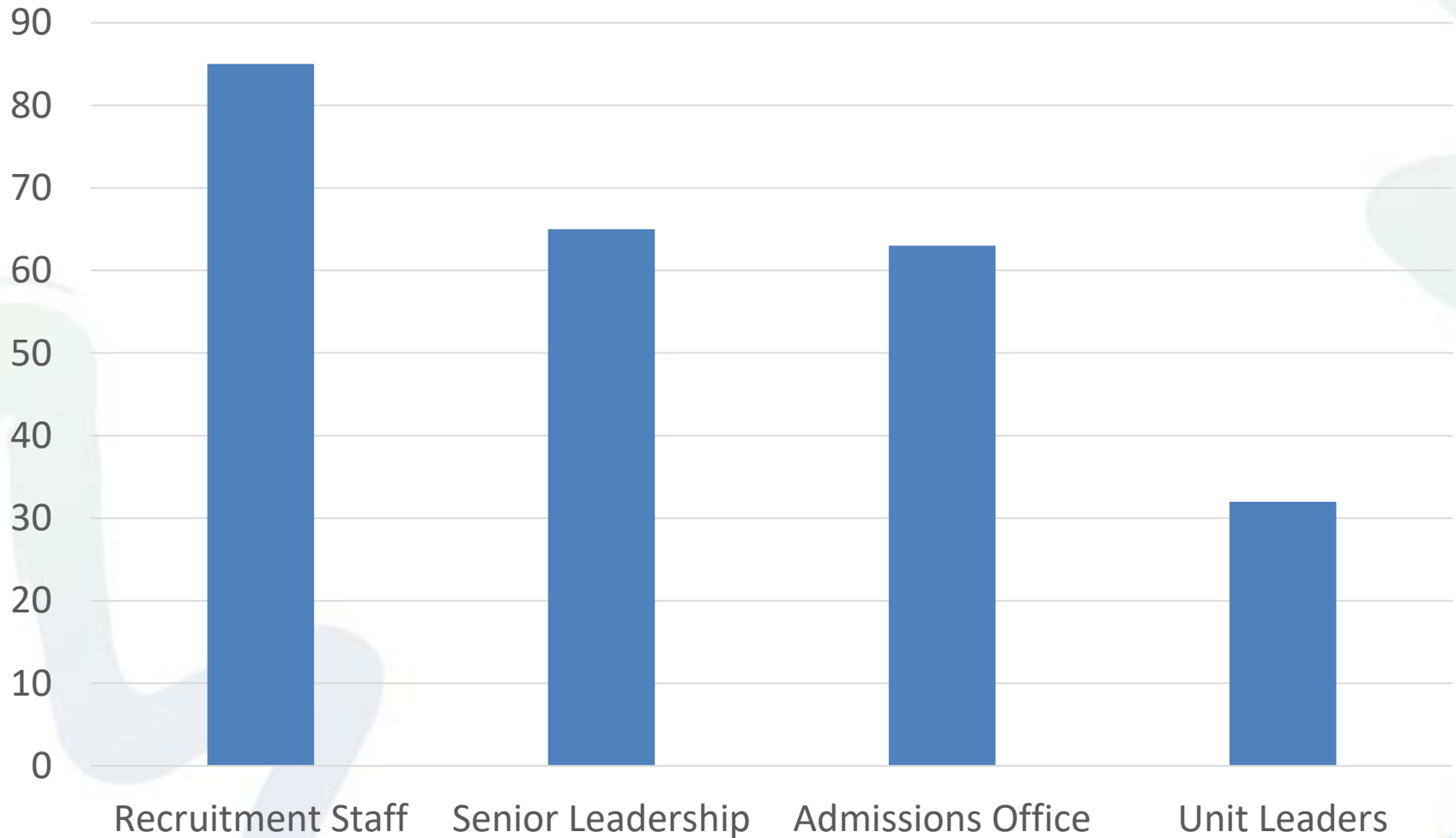


- "My agency does not use recruitment agents"
- "My agency uses recruitment agents"

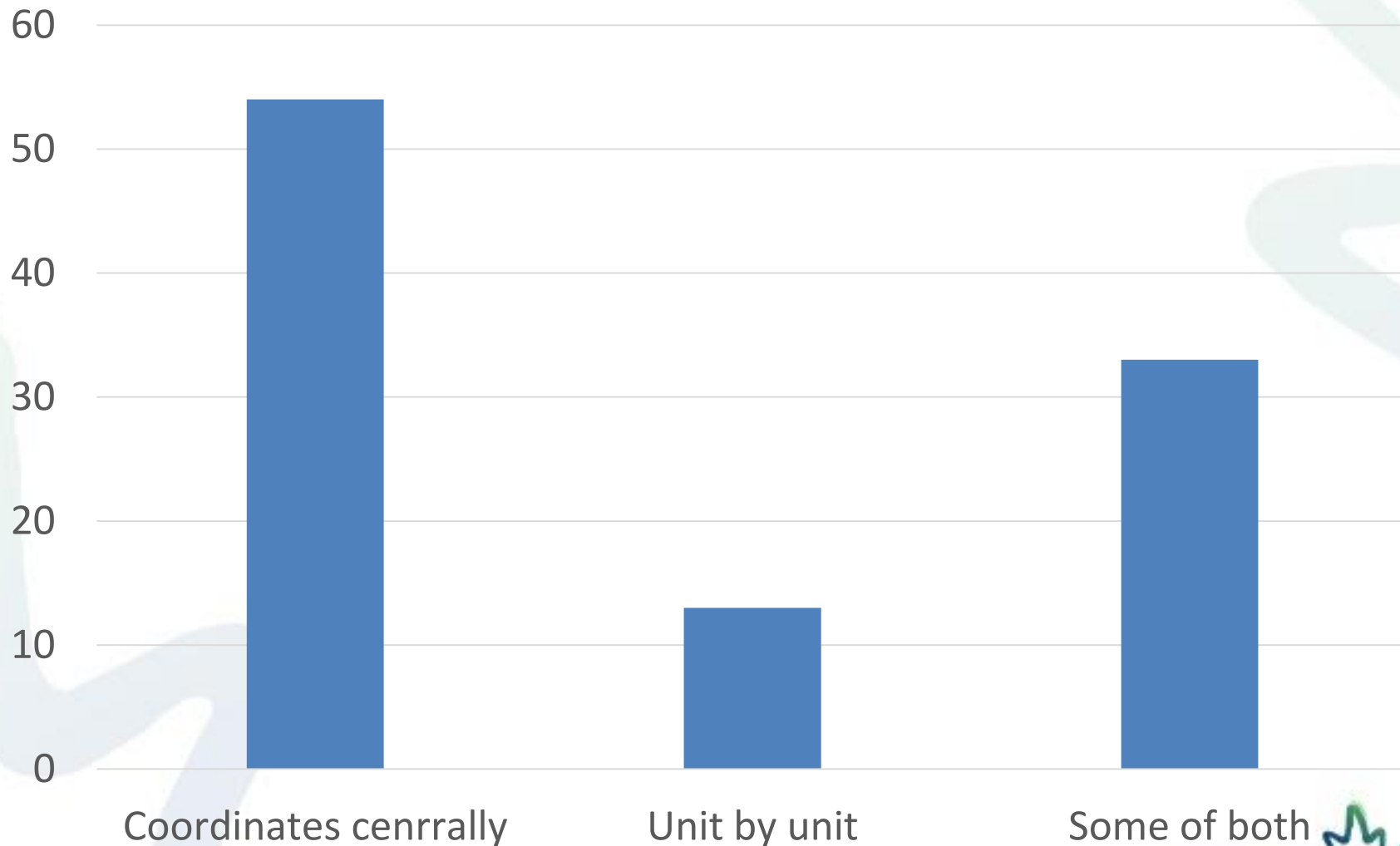
# UNIVERSITY RESPONSES



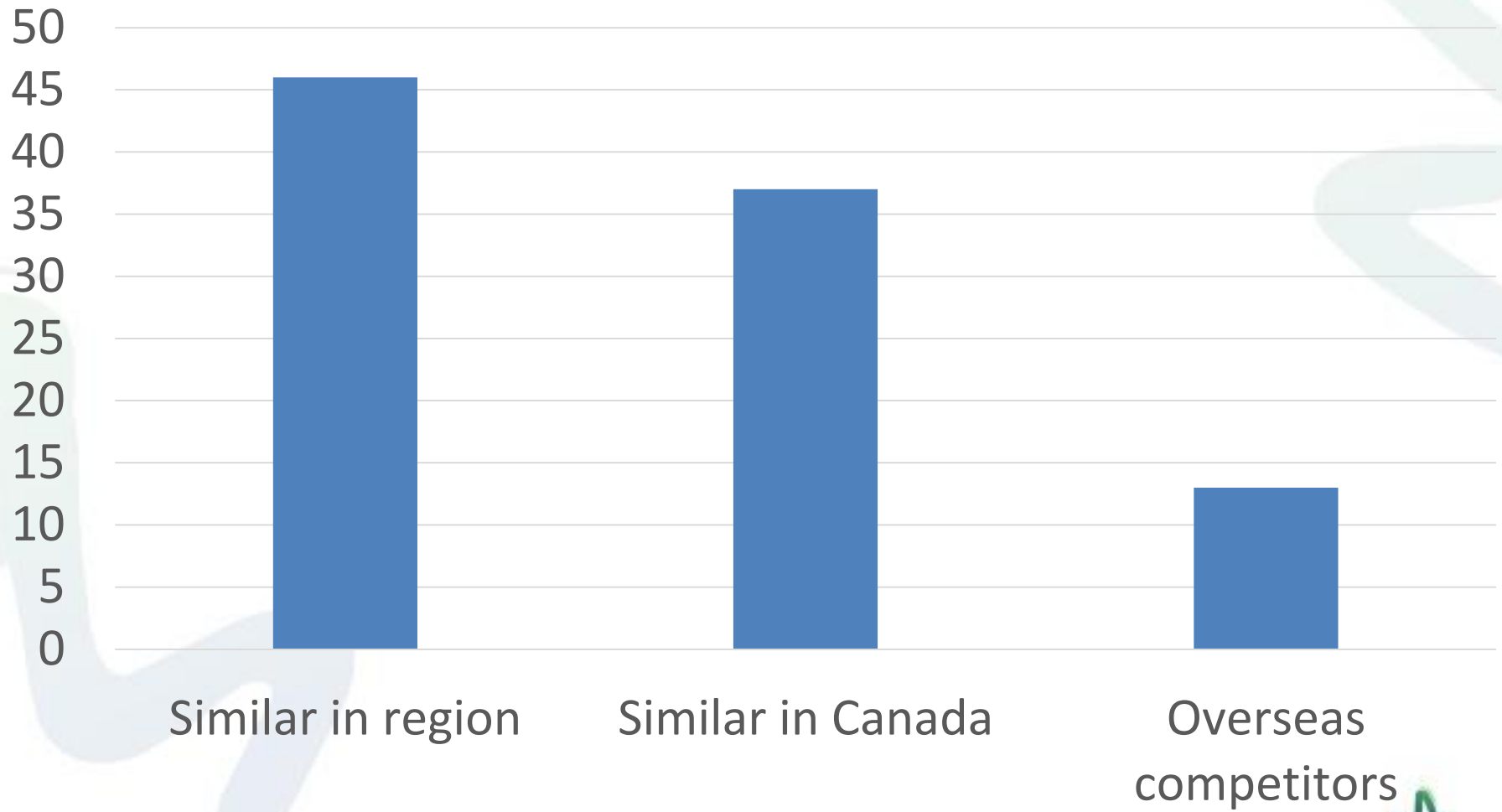
"My institution is sufficiently aware of the competitive nature of international recruitment."



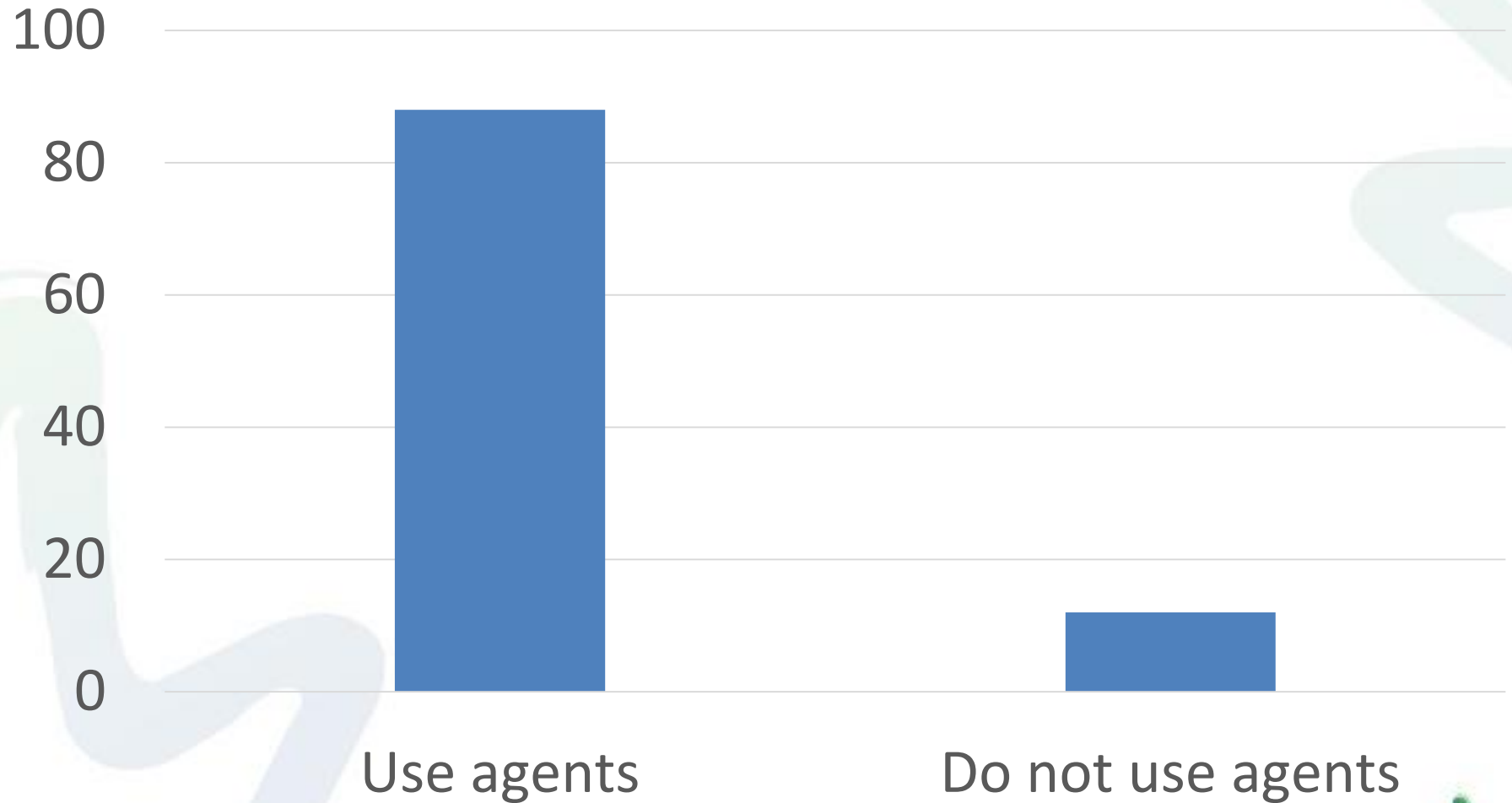
# "How does your instution coordinate agency partnerships?"



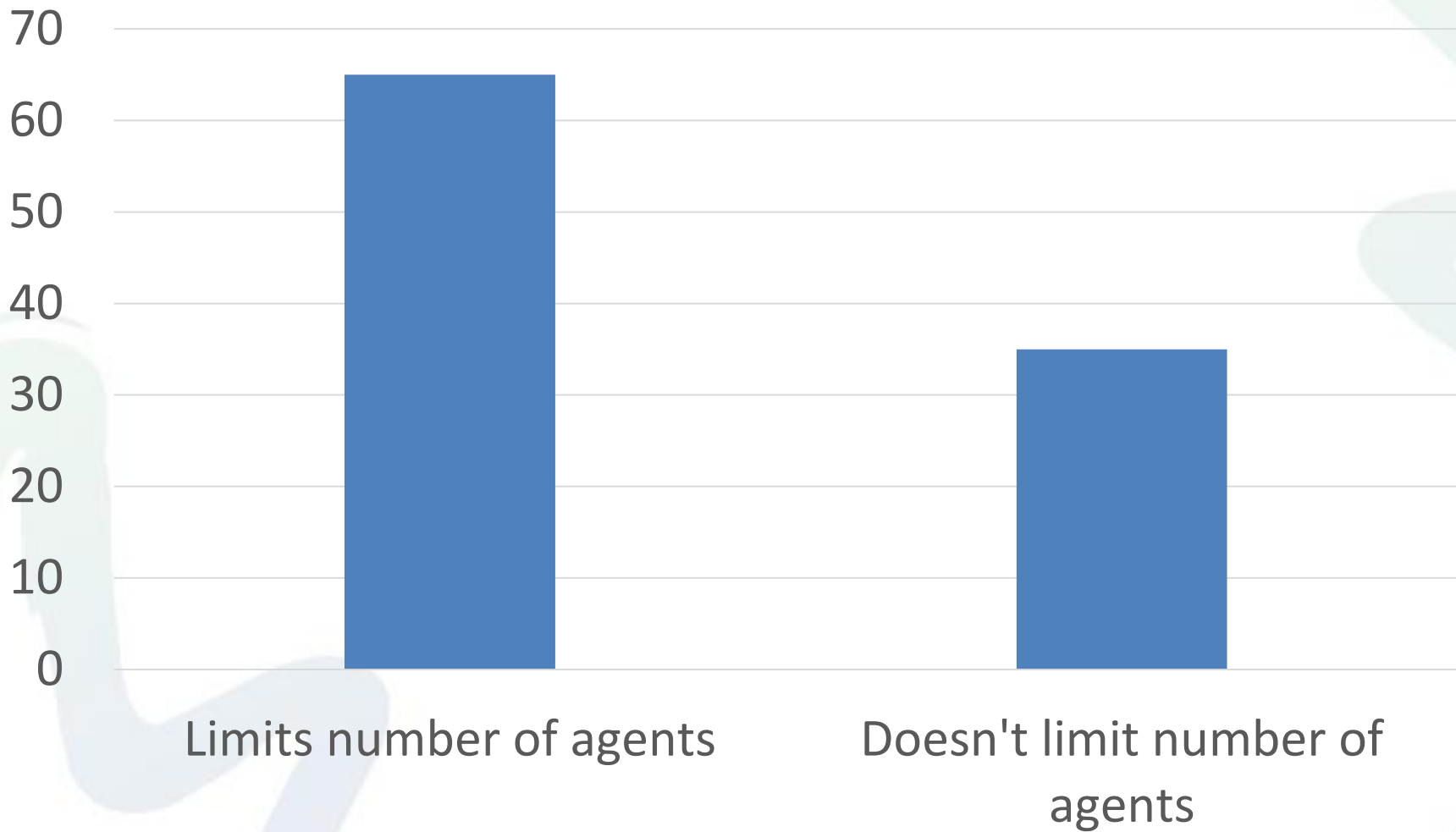
"Within my institution, we are comparatively effective at recruiting international students."



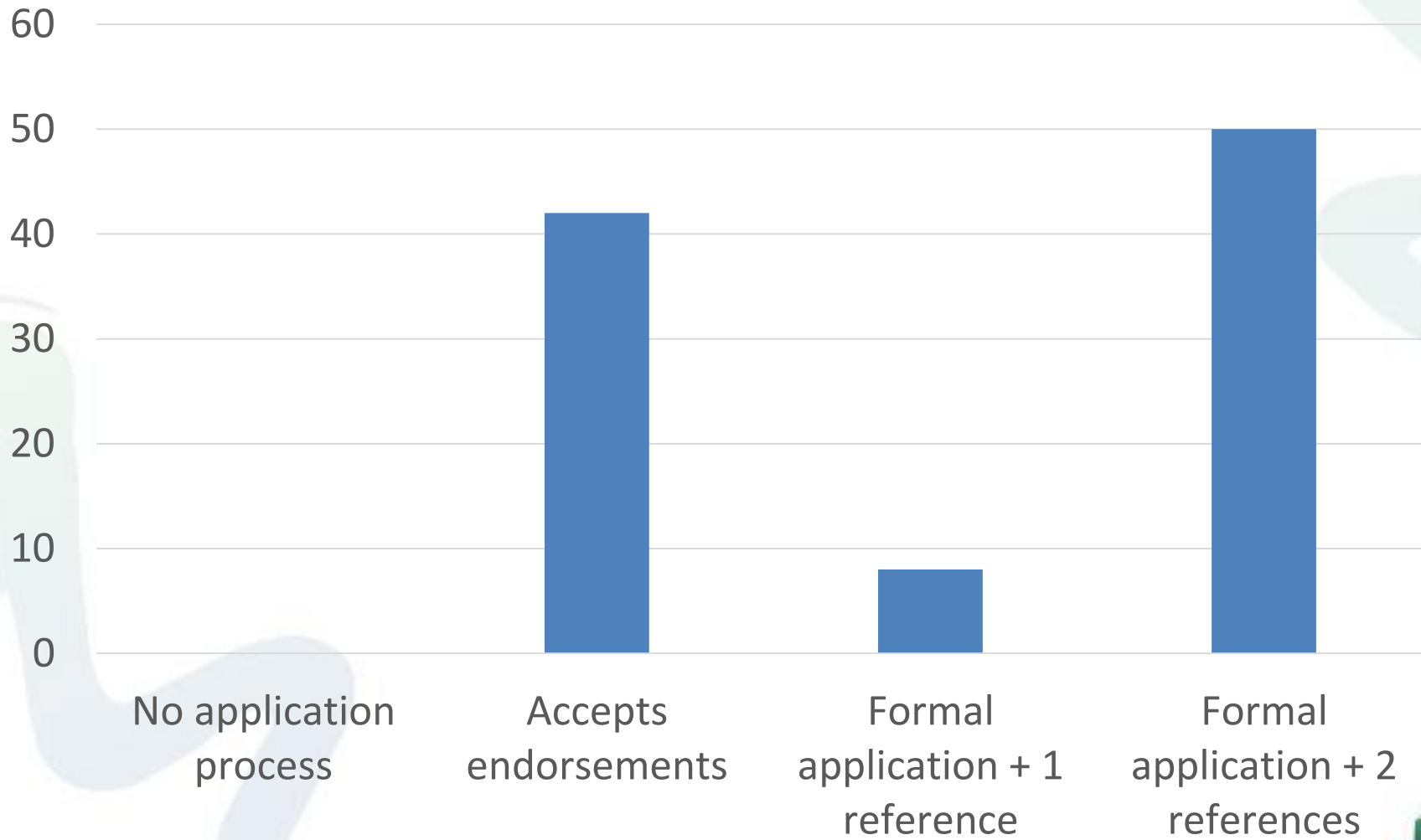
# 'My institutions uses/does not use agents.'



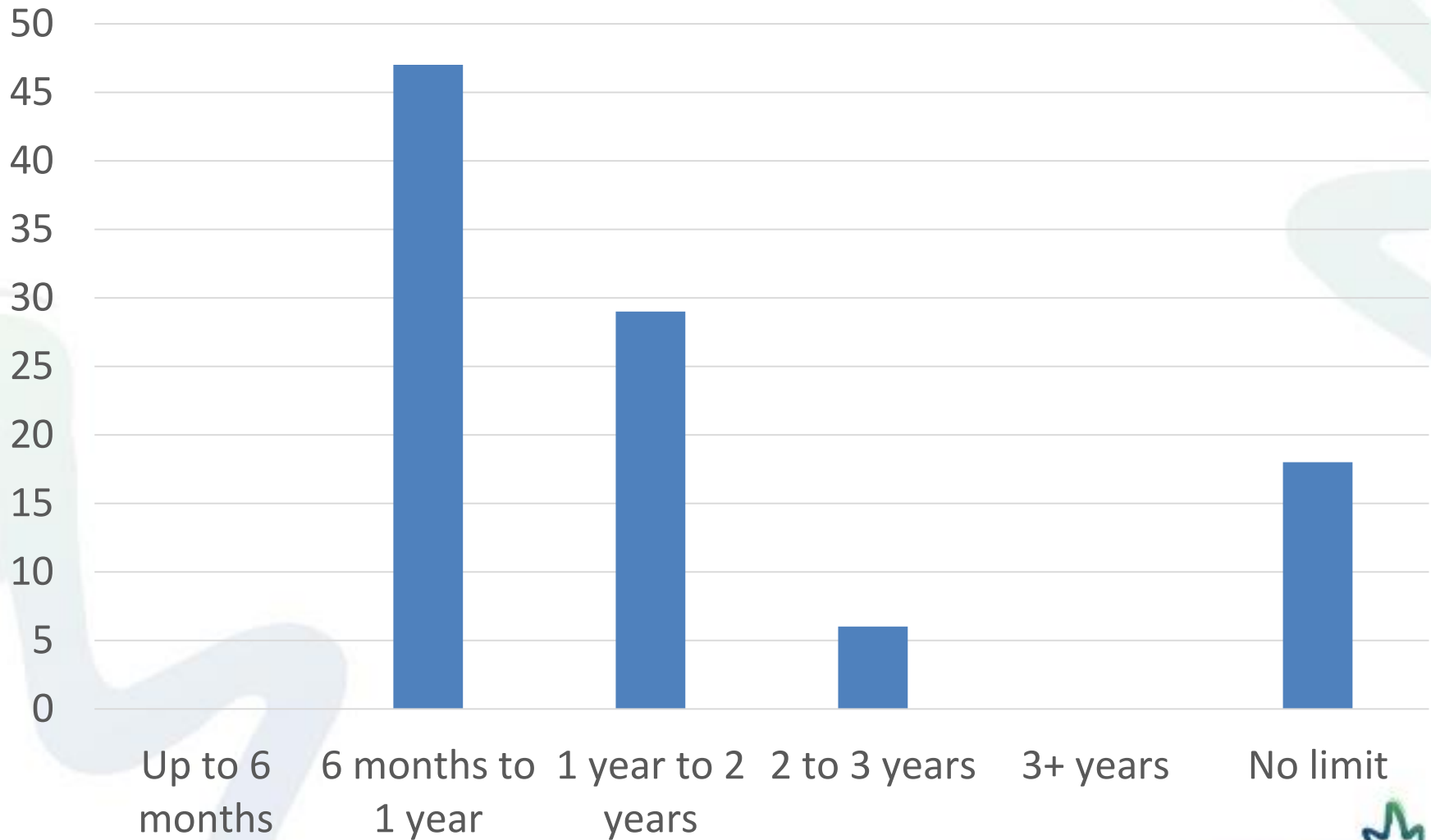
# "Does your institution limit the number of agents?"



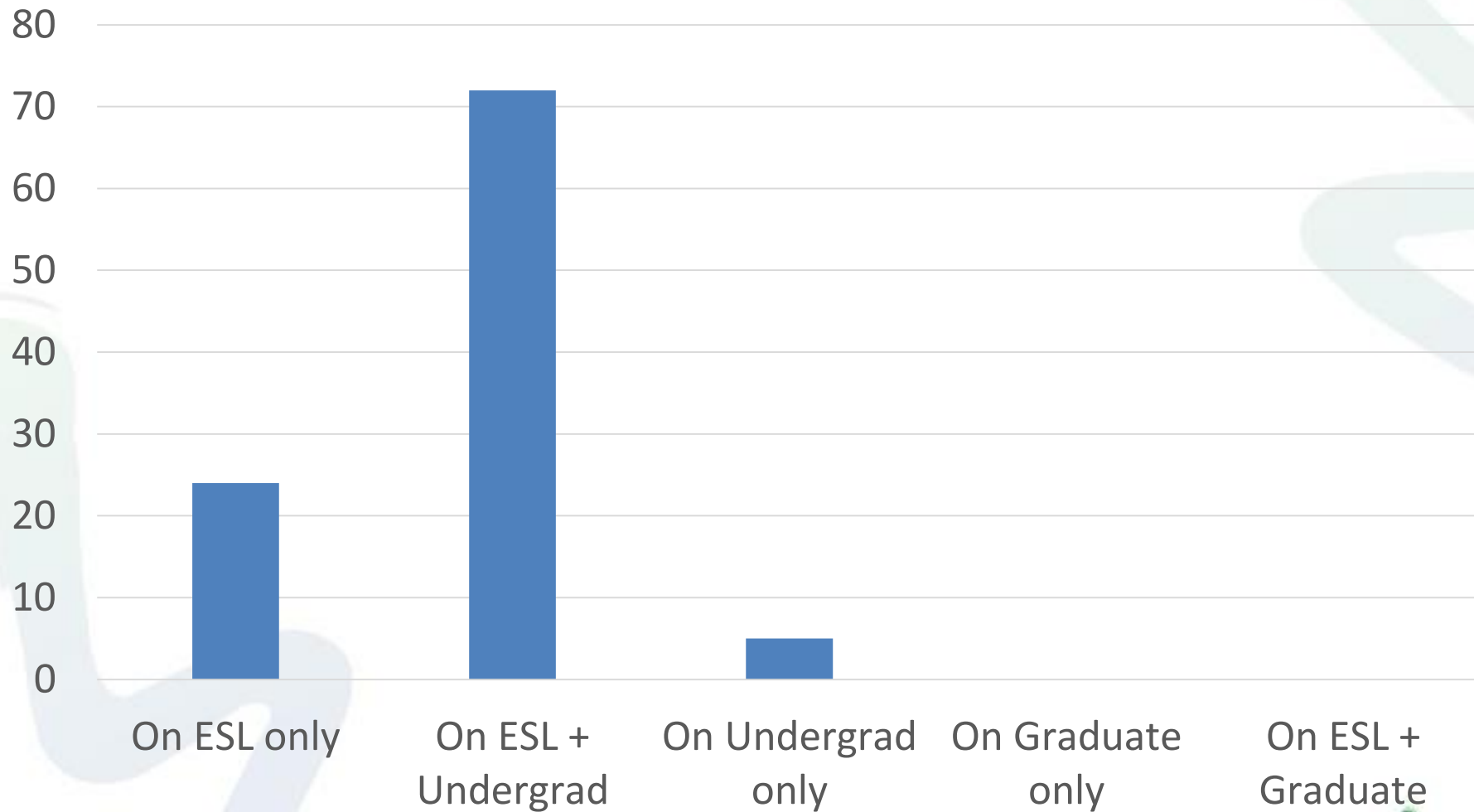
# What is your process for entering into commission-paying agreements?"



# "What is the maximum length of study you will pay commission on?"

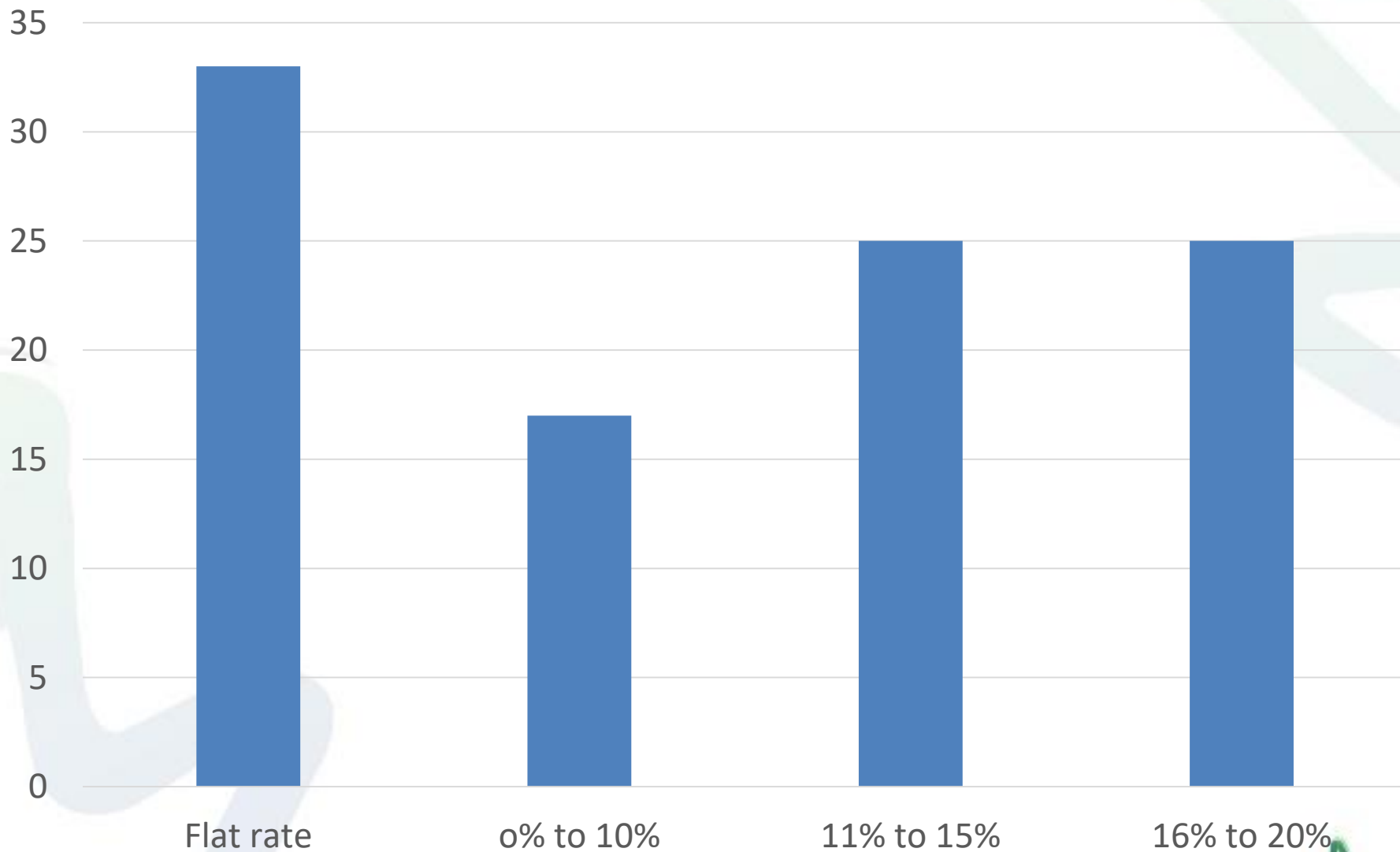


# "What is the commission payment pattern at your institution?"

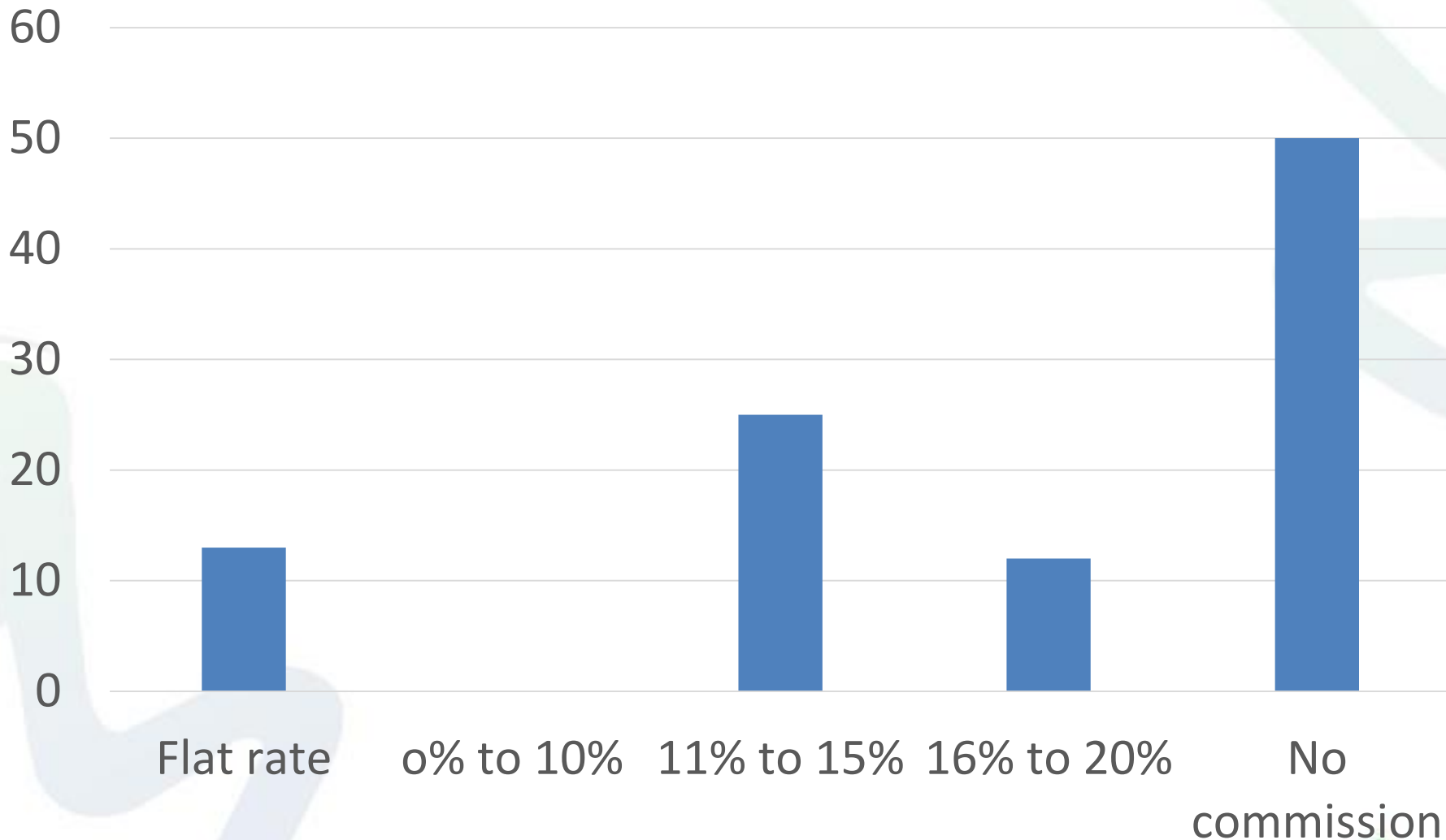




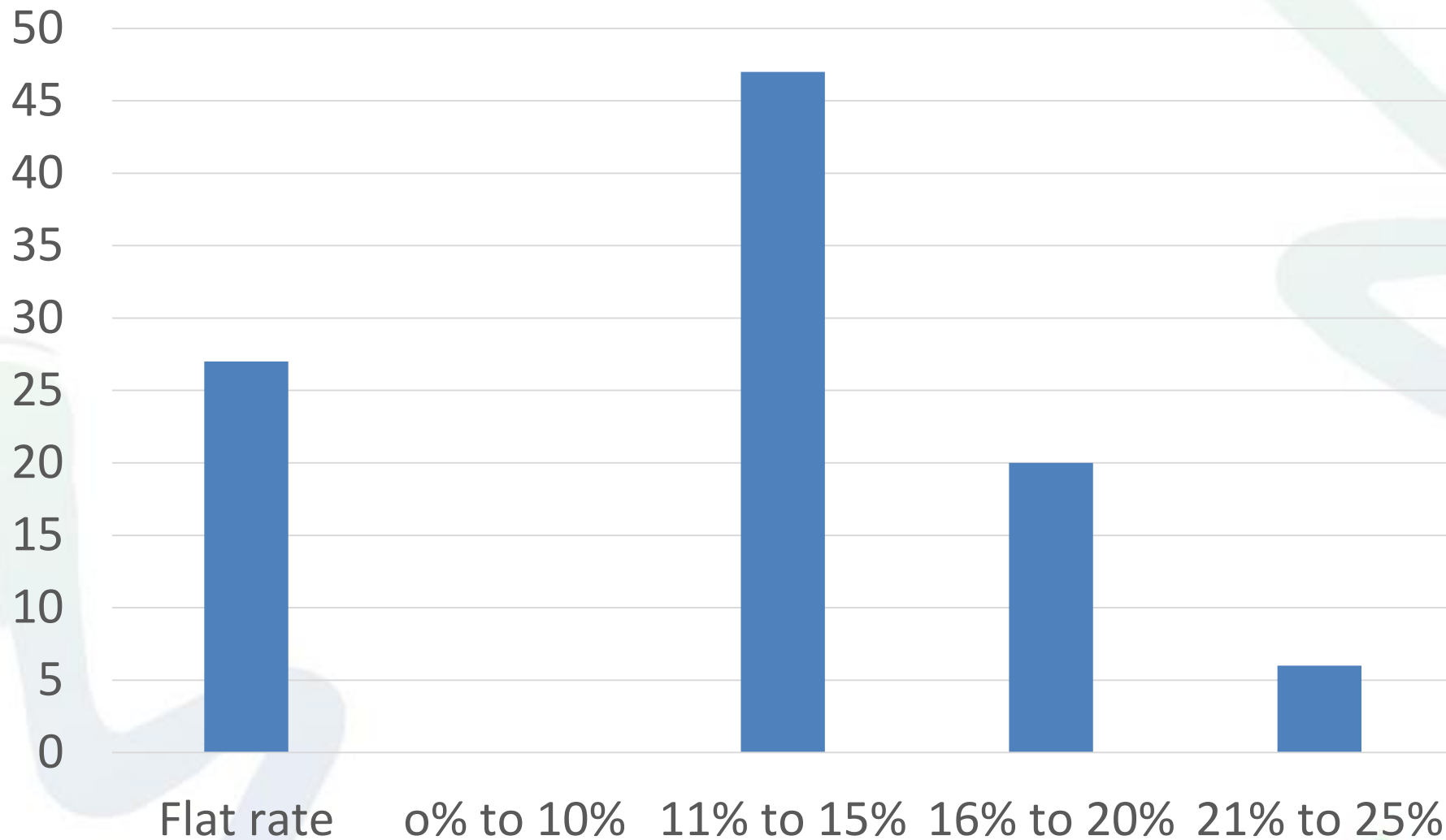
# "Percentage commission paid for UNDERGRADUATE"



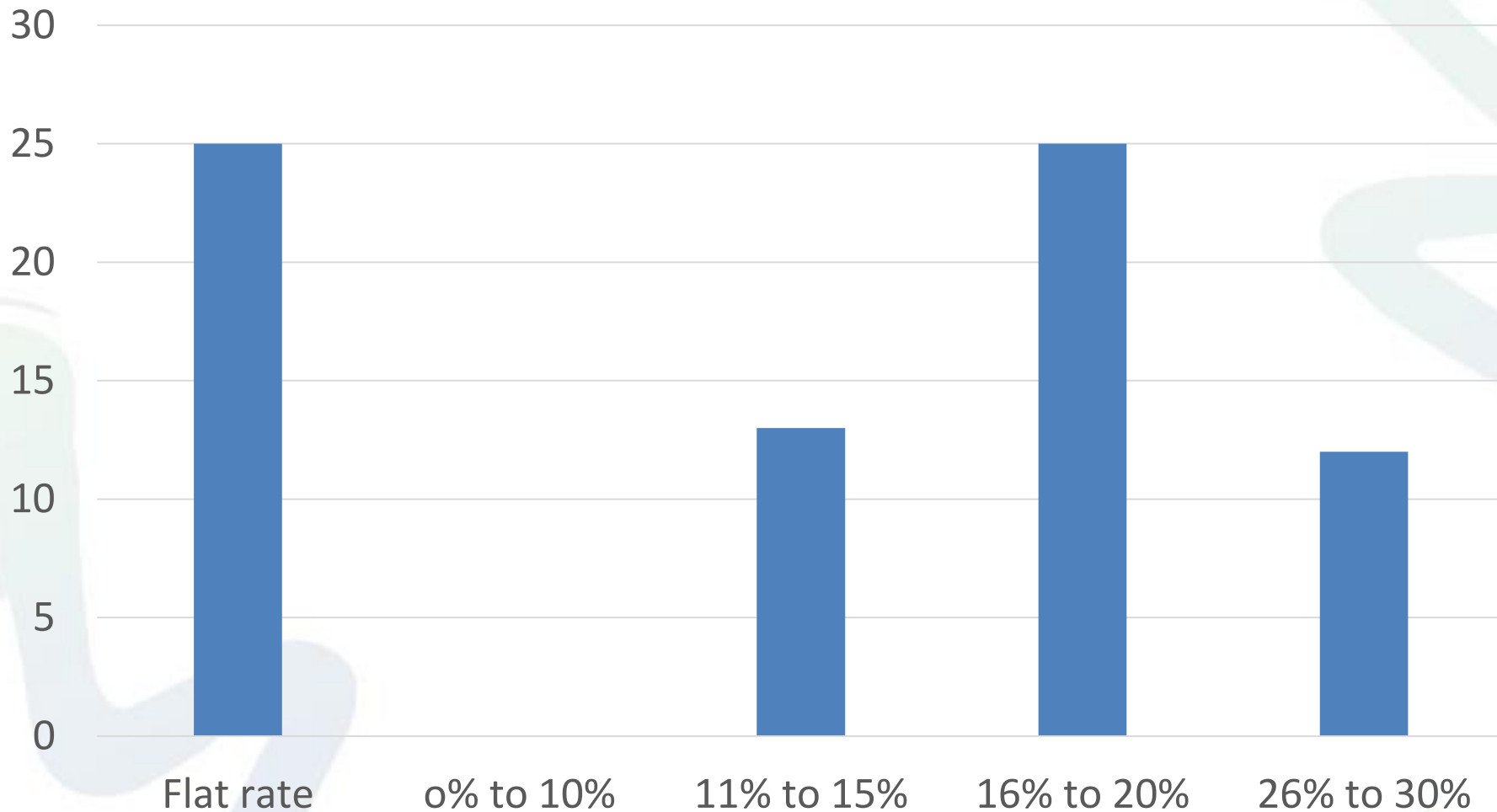
# "Commission percentage paid for GRADUATE"



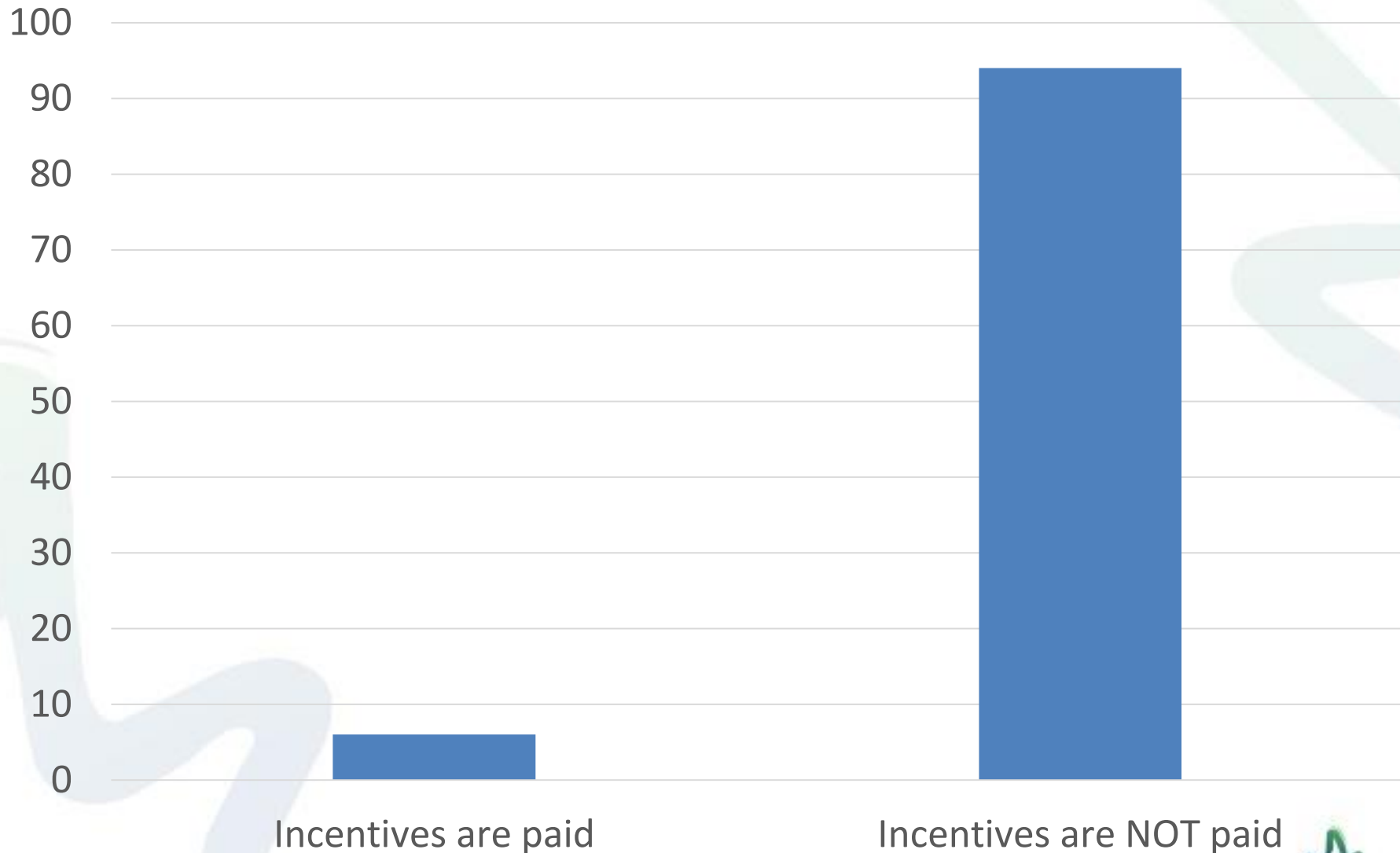
# "Commission percentage paid for ESL"



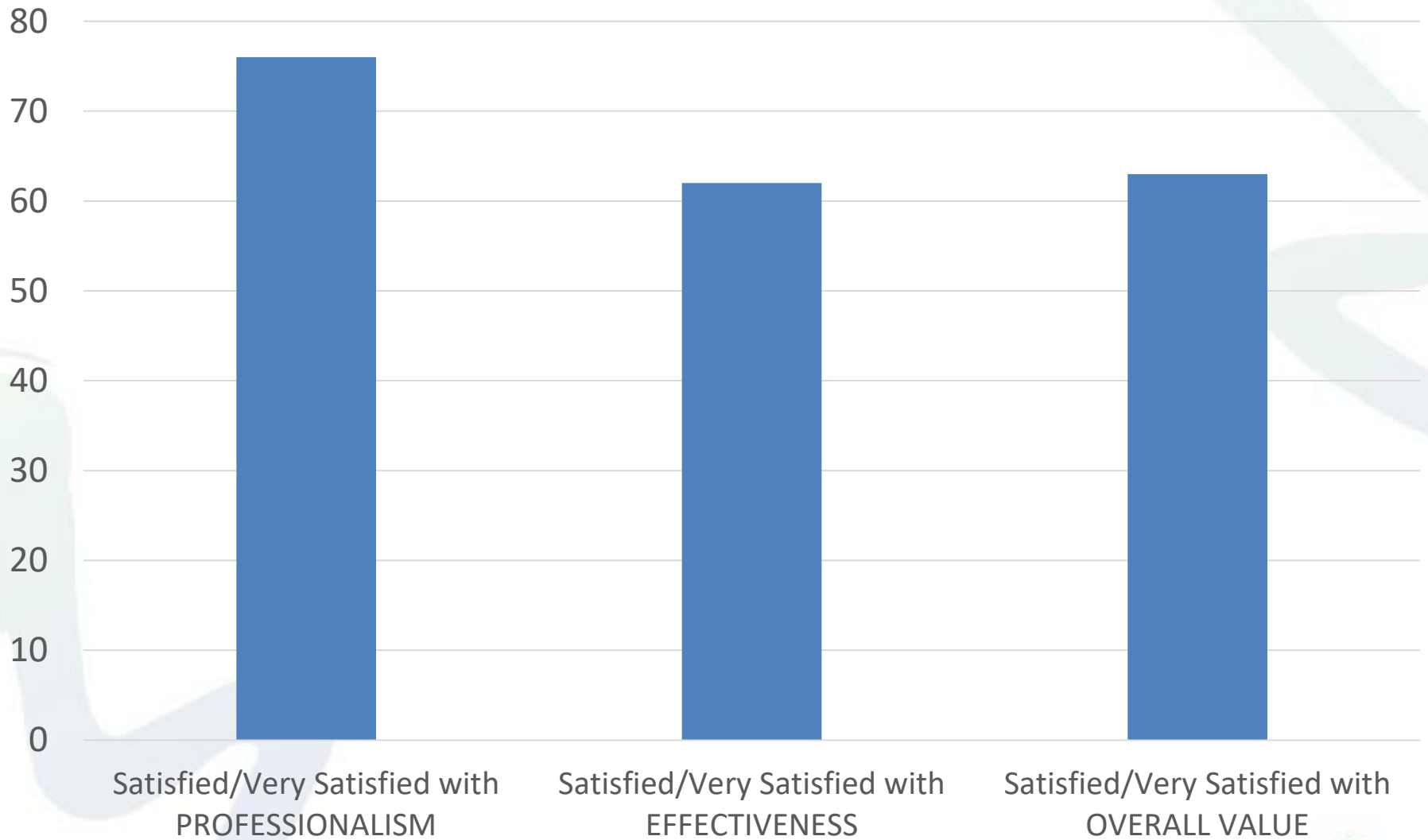
# "Commission percentage paid for SPECIAL and CUSTOM PROGRAMS"



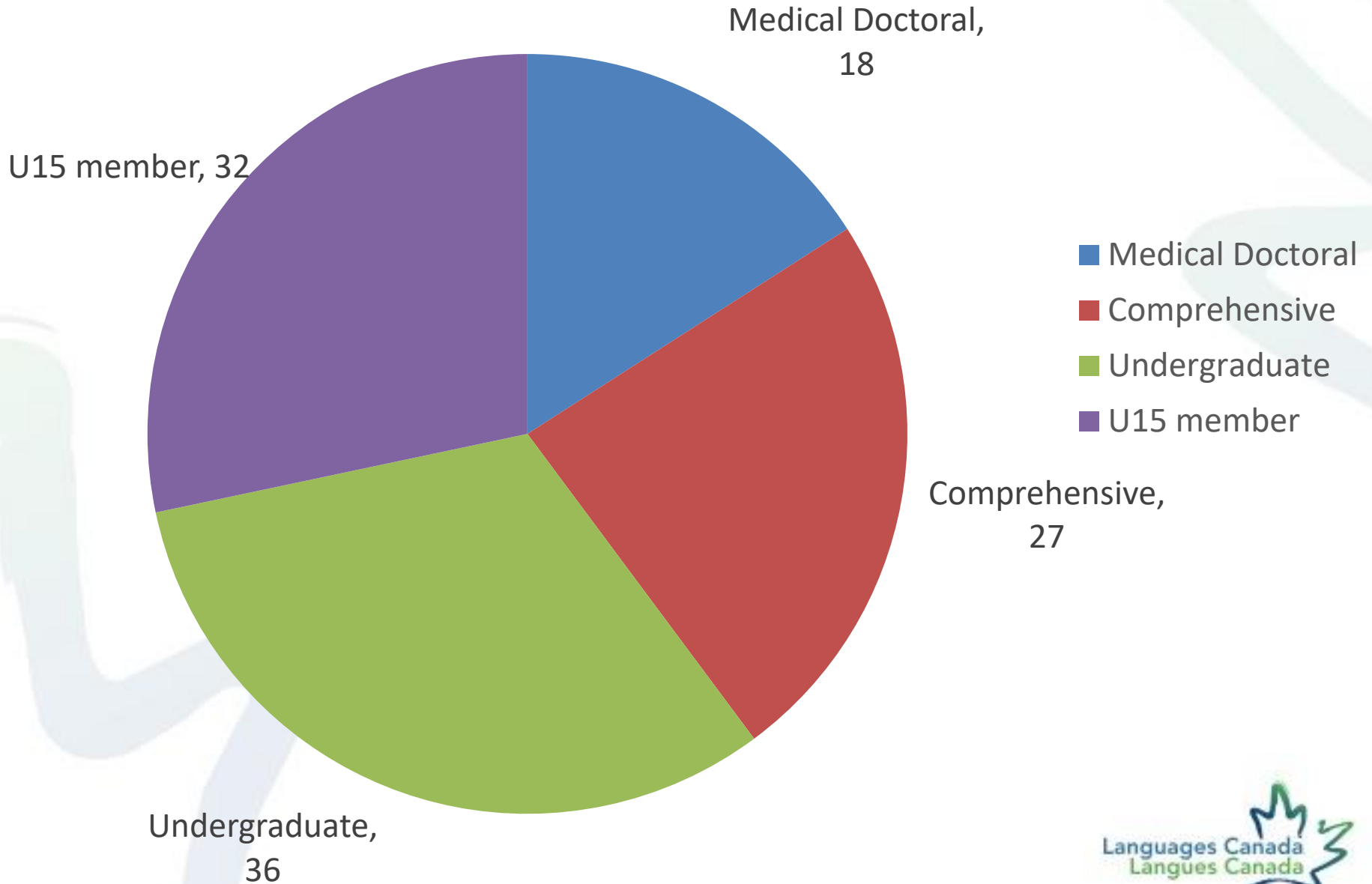
# "Does your institutions pay incentives to agents?"



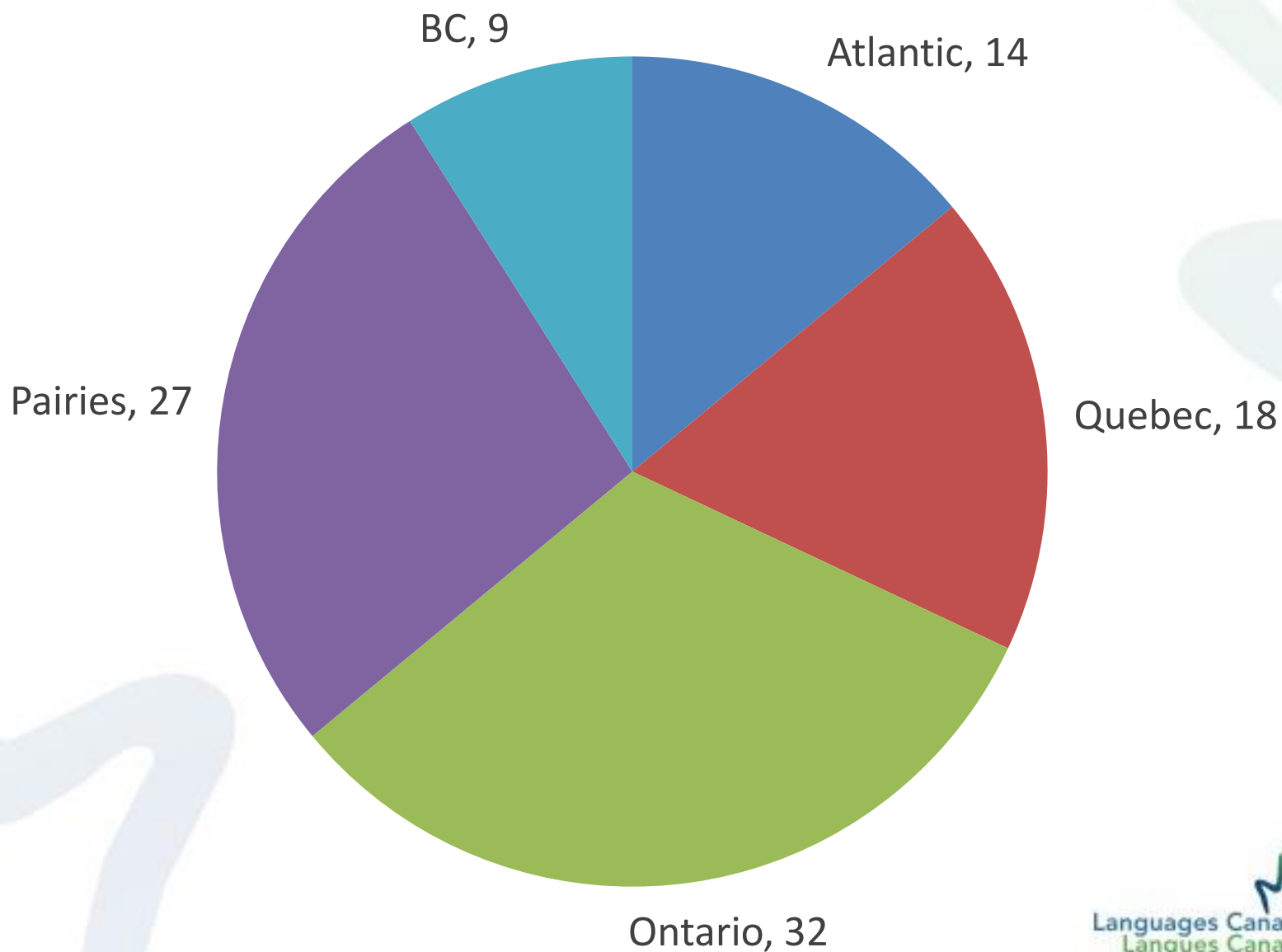
# 'How would you rate agent performance?'



# 'What type of institution are you?'



# "What province or region is your institution in?"





# COLLEGE RESPONSES

# "My institution is sufficiently aware of the competitive nature of international recruitment:"



# Use of agents: Colleges

How does your institution coordinate agency partnerships?

Centrally	11
Unit by unit	2
Some aspects centrally, some aspects decentralized	1

# Use of agents: Colleges

Does your institution enter into formal, commission-paying partnerships with overseas recruitment agencies?

Endorsement by a trusted colleague or a well-known institution	5
Formal application consisting of a company profile and provision of one reference	0
Formal application consisting of a company profile and provision of several references	10
Other (please specify)	2

How are agent partnerships assessed?

Number of students (over time)	9
Qualitative factors relating to the student (preparation, suitability, academic results)	3
Student testimonials of agents	2
Diversity of students	1
Qualitative factors relating to the agent	1

# Use of agents: Colleges

Does your institution limit the number of agency partnerships according to country or region?

- 10 responded “YES”.
- Responses range from working only with agencies within partnership agreements, to probation periods, to limiting the number of agencies for some popular regions (India, China, South Asia)

What is the maximum limit on the length of study for which your institution pays commission?

Up to 6 months	6 months - 1 year	1 year - 2 years	2-3 years	No limit
0	5	5	0	1

# Agent commissions: Colleges

Please indicate the amount of commission paid by program type:

	Flat rate	0	0-10%	11-15%	16-20%	21-25%	26-30%
<b>Undergraduate programs</b>	1			5	3	1	
<b>Postgraduate programs</b>	1			2	3		
<b>ESL/FSL or foundations studies</b>	1			2	5	2	1
<b>Junior English or French programs (i.e. summer camps)</b>		1	1		1		
<b>Non-mainstream programming or custom-designed programs</b>		2	1		1		

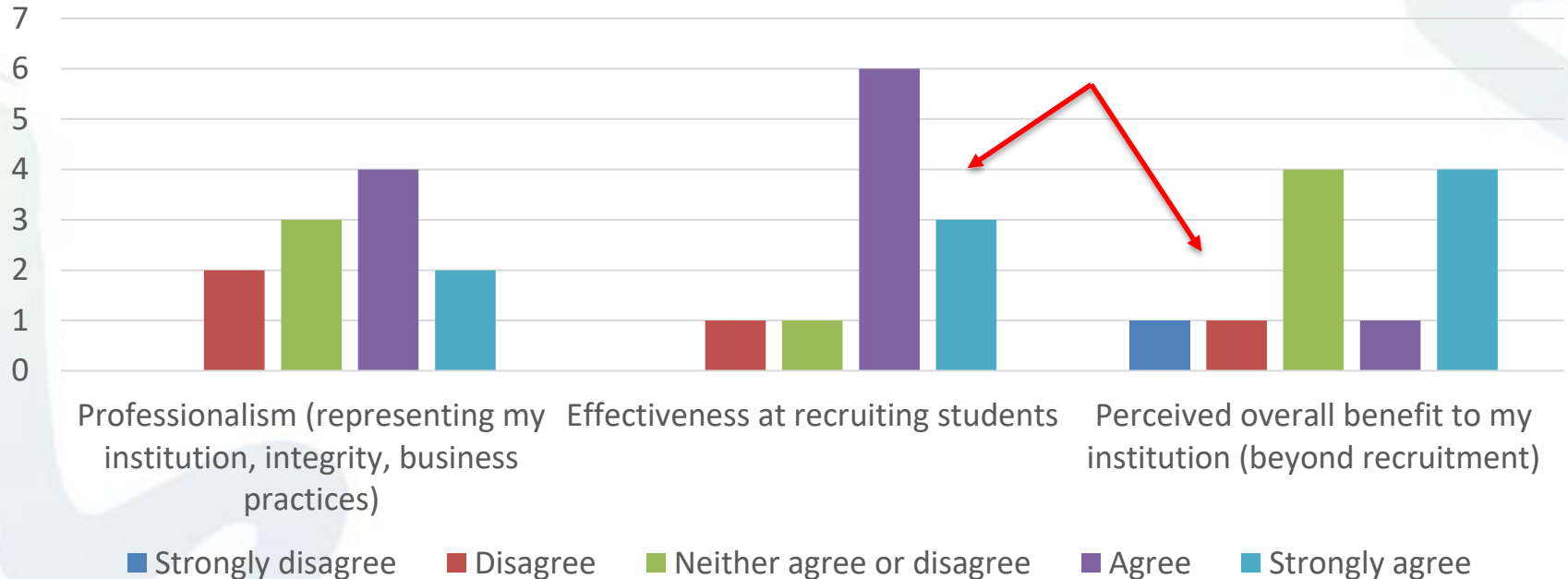
# Agent commissions: Colleges

Does your institution pay incentives such as target-based bonuses (in addition to standard commission)?

- 36% of members responded “YES”
- Examples focused on top recruiters after having met an agreed threshold

# Experience with Agents: Colleges

Based on your experience with agents, please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the following aspects of agent performance:





# PRIVATE SECTOR RESPONSES

# Use of agents: Private sector

- 91% of Private sector members report using agencies.
- Of those that don't, most are small (under 500 students per year), and two reported that they do not presently accept international students to their language programs, instead focusing on local recruitment.
- One member noted that they need their DLI to be able to work with agents. Unknown whether this is an institutional decision or agencies being unwilling to work with programs without a DLI.

# Use of agents: Private sector

Does your institution enter into formal, commission-paying partnerships with overseas recruitment agencies?

No formal application	2
Endorsement by a trusted colleague or a well-known institution	10
Formal application consisting of a company profile and provision of one reference	13
Formal application consisting of a company profile and provision of several references	22
Other (please specify)	4

How are agent partnerships assessed?

Number of students or weeks (over time)	30
Diversity of students	1
Qualitative factors relating to the student (preparation, suitability, academic results)	4
Qualitative factors relating to the agent (ease to work with, communication, compliance with procedures)	9
Student testimonials of agents	2
Return on investment	2

# Use of agents: Private sector

Does your institution limit the number of agency partnerships according to country or region?

- 32 responded “NO”
- 14 responded “YES”

Exclusive contracts in some markets	<b>1</b>
Regionally (down to city level)	<b>3</b>
Nationality caps	<b>1</b>
Only work with those who produce students	<b>1</b>

What is the maximum limit on the length of study for which your institution pays commission?

Up to 6 months	6 months - 1 year	1 year - 2 years	2-3 years	No limit
4	5	4	1	39

# Agent commissions: Private sector

	Flat rate	0	0-10%	11-15%	16-20%	21-25%	26-30%	31-35%	36-40%	Over 50%
Pathway or English/French for Academic Purposes programs - Please select	4	1	1	3	5	6	17	8	3	
Adult English or French programs (non-pathway) - Please select	2			1	4	6	19	11	2	1
Junior English or French programs (i.e. summer camps) - Please select	5	1		2	13	5	4	7	1	
Non-mainstream programming or custom-designed programs - Please select	4	1	2	2	6	6	7	8	1	

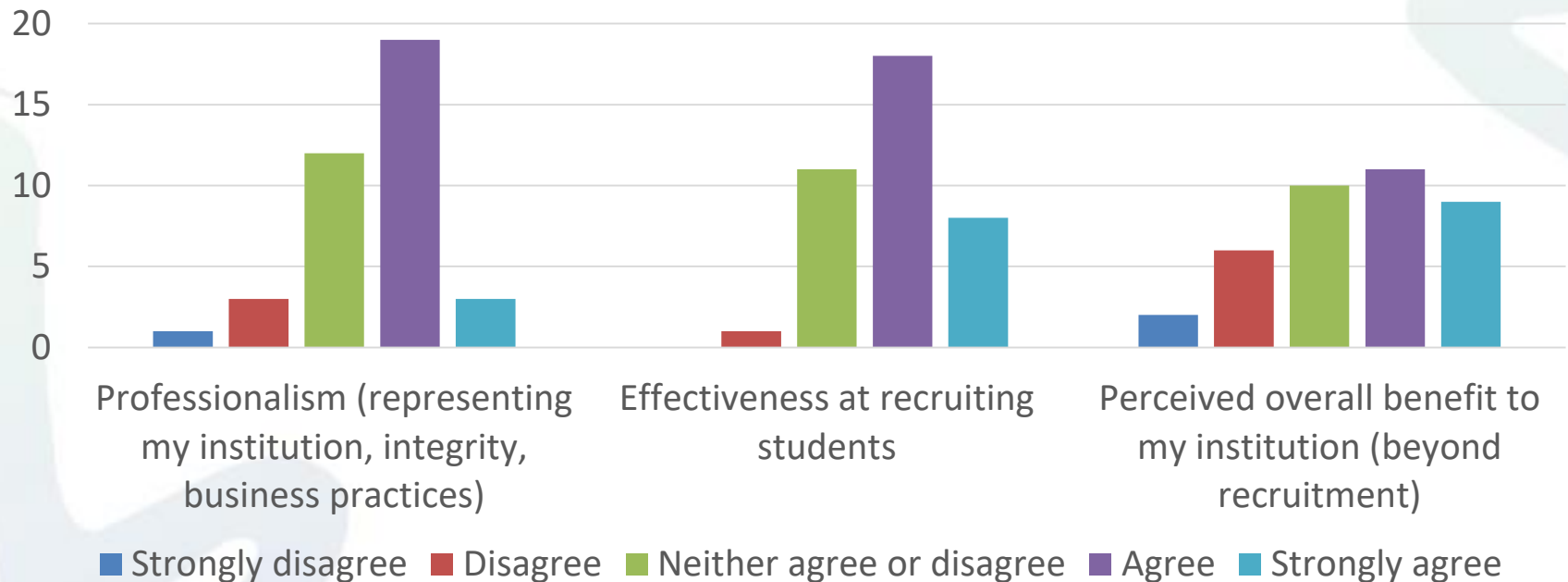
# Agent commissions: Private sector

Does your institution pay incentives such as target-based bonuses (in addition to standard commission)?

- 70% responded “YES”
- Predominantly bonuses are available based on reaching set thresholds.
- Incentives may be available as extra percentage of commissions, or free “scholarship” weeks of study

# Use of agents: Private sector

Based on your experience with agents, please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with the following aspects of agent performance:

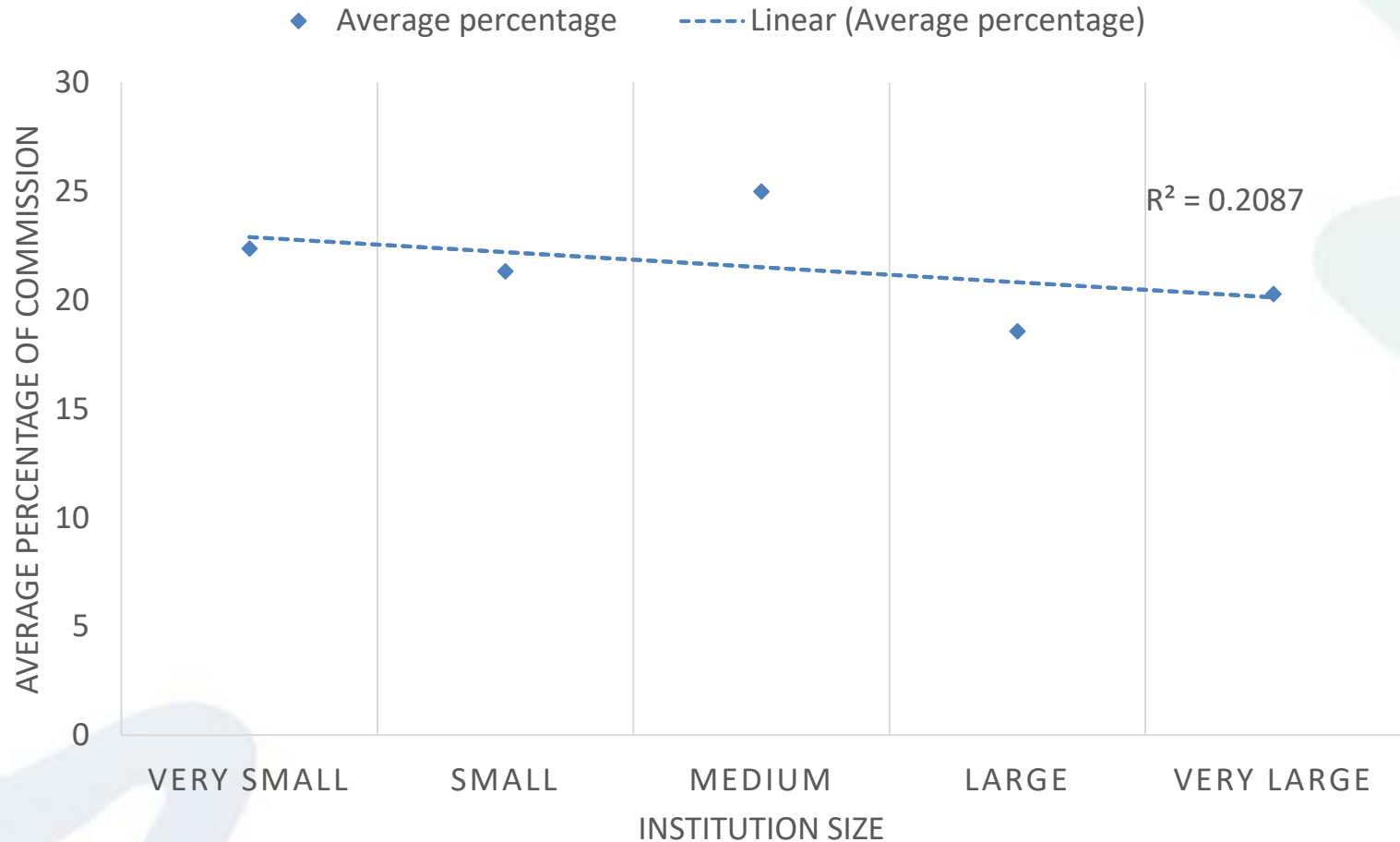


# Commissions paid for foundations and pathway programs, by sector

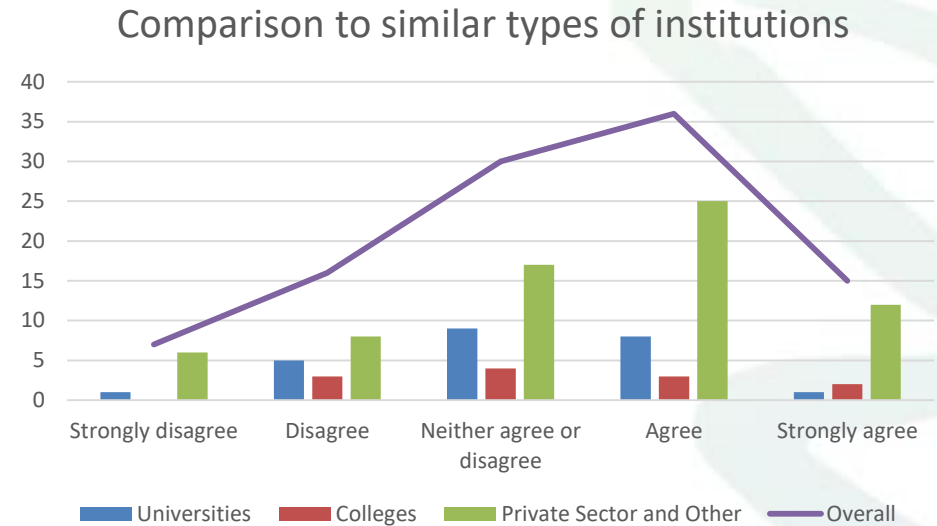




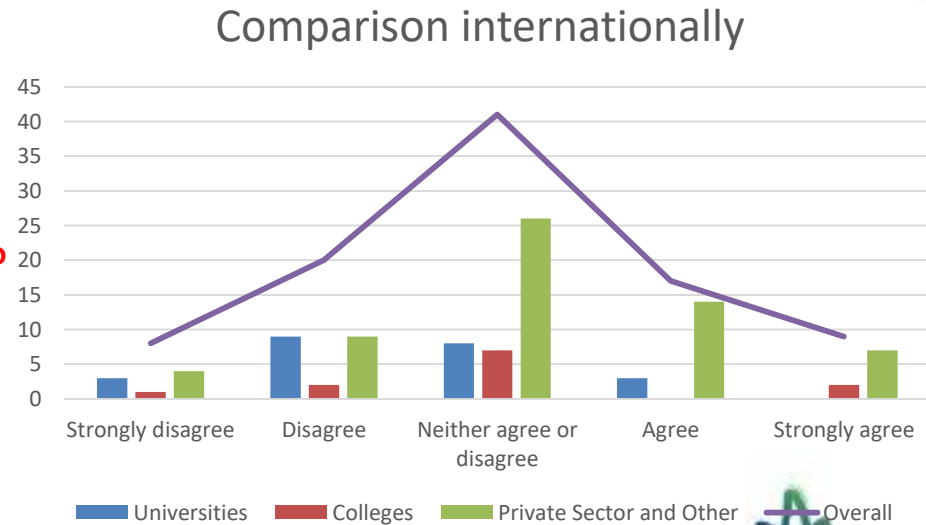
# AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COMMISSION BY SIZE OF INSTITUTION



“I believe we are effective at recruiting international students compared to:”



Is this a “the grass is always greener” effect?



# Future Research?

- Commissions by country – do certain markets demand higher commissions? Is there a difference between overseas and local agents?
- How does the use of agents fit within other marketing techniques?
- What factors contribute to the decision to use agents (generally) or a particular agent (specifically)?
- Further research into the actual cost of agency commissions, as opposed to percentage rates.
- Commissions paid for French vs. English programs, and closer look at commissions for different types of program.
- Other? Do you have any suggestions?

# Thank you!

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Gabriela Facchini – Sheridan College

Anthony Stille – English School of Canada

For questions related to this research, please contact:

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