2023 NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING CONFERENCE
THE FUTURE IS NOW

A3: The Volunteering in Australia research – what's next?

Volunteering in Australia Research What's Next from the Organisation Perspective?

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Volunteering AUSTRALIA

Volunteering in Australia Research

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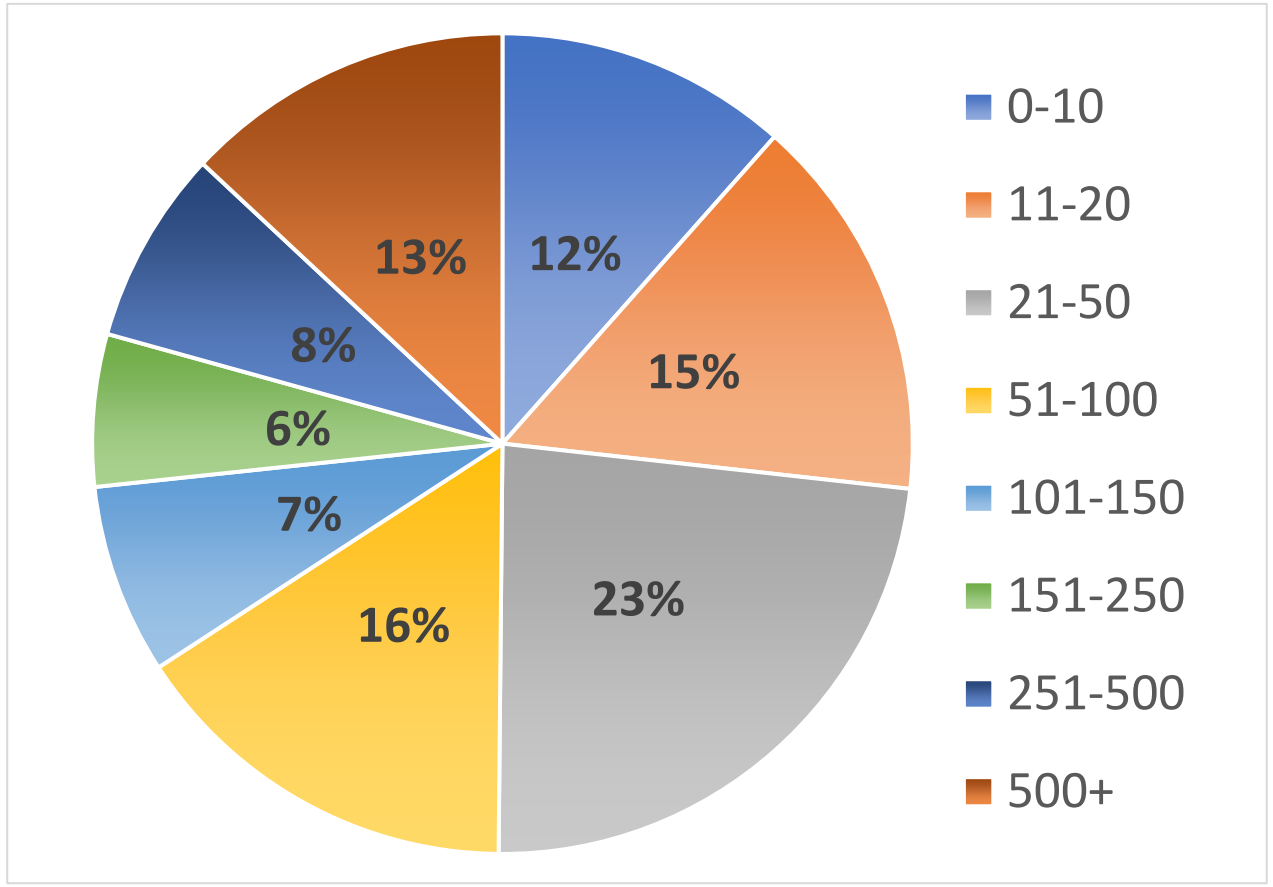
Methodology

- Online survey open 13 May to 22 June 2022
- Target population: representatives of Australian volunteer involving organisations
- Newsletters, social media, direct emails, VIKTOR/VIRA Mailing List
- 1,345 usable responses
- Focus groups to probe on follow up issues

Organisational Size - Volunteers

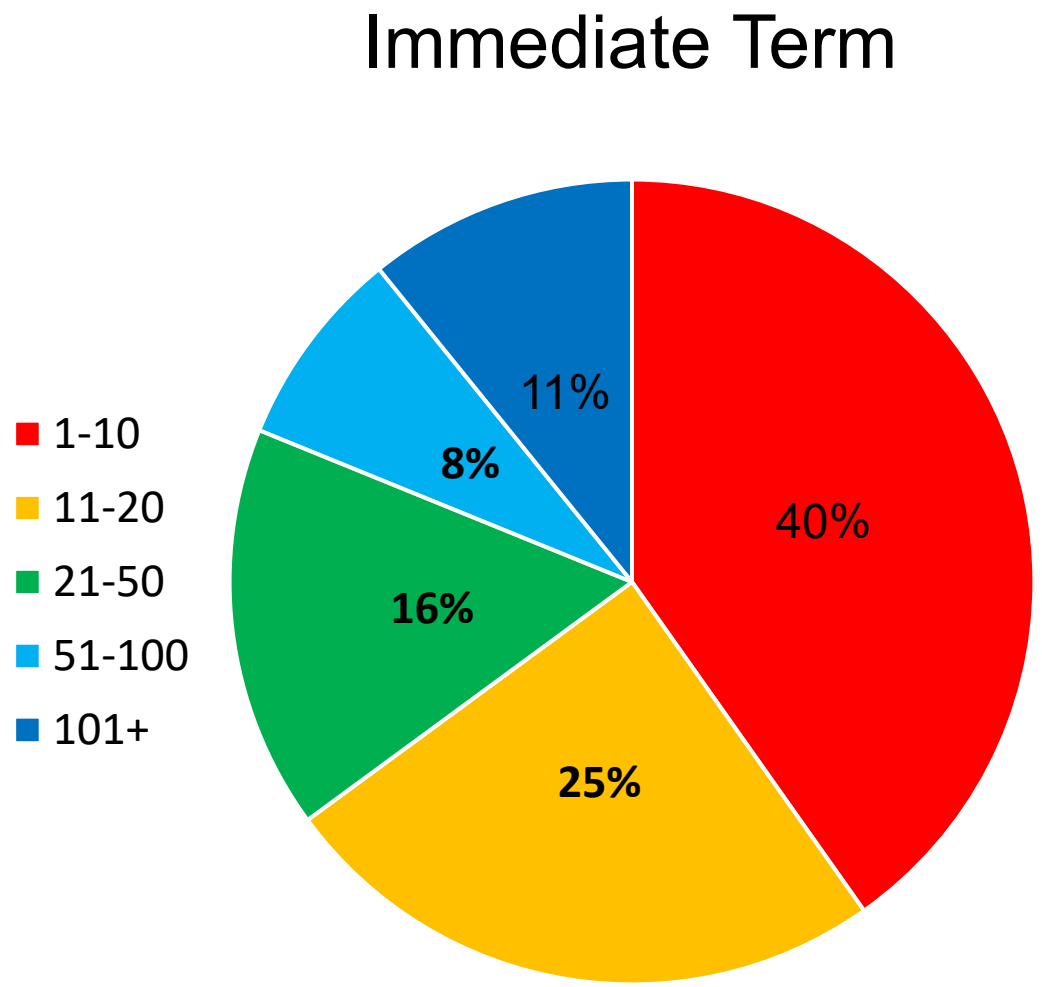


50% of organisations involved 50 volunteers or fewer

How Organisations Currently Involve Volunteers?

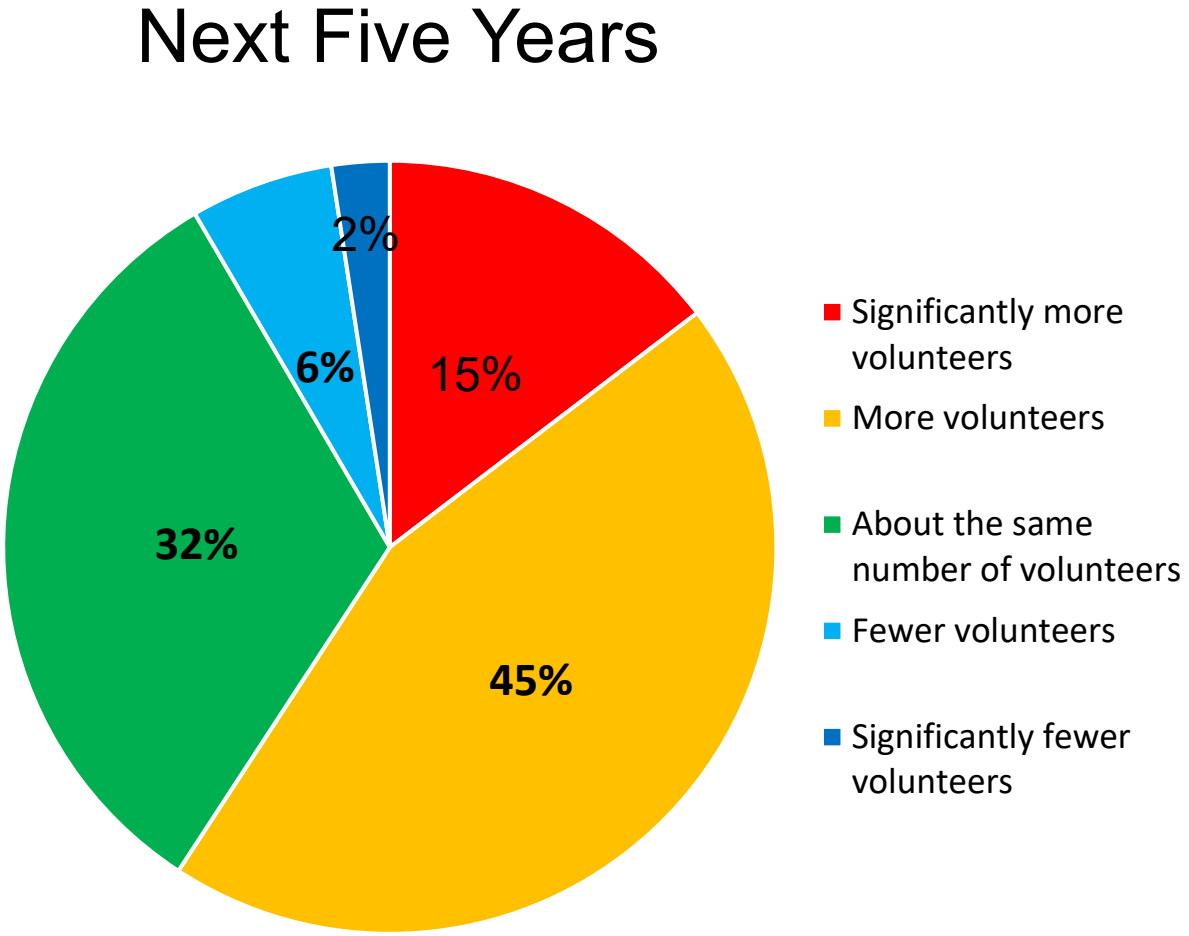
- 92% of organisations involved volunteers in **ongoing roles** performed regularly (e.g., weekly, fortnightly)
- 63% engaged volunteers **episodically**
- 28% of organisations provided **micro-volunteering** opportunities
- 80% indicated their volunteers volunteered **in person** for the organisation
- 68% also had volunteers representing them out in the **field/community**
- 39% of organisations involved their volunteers **remotely over the Internet**

Demand for Volunteers - Now



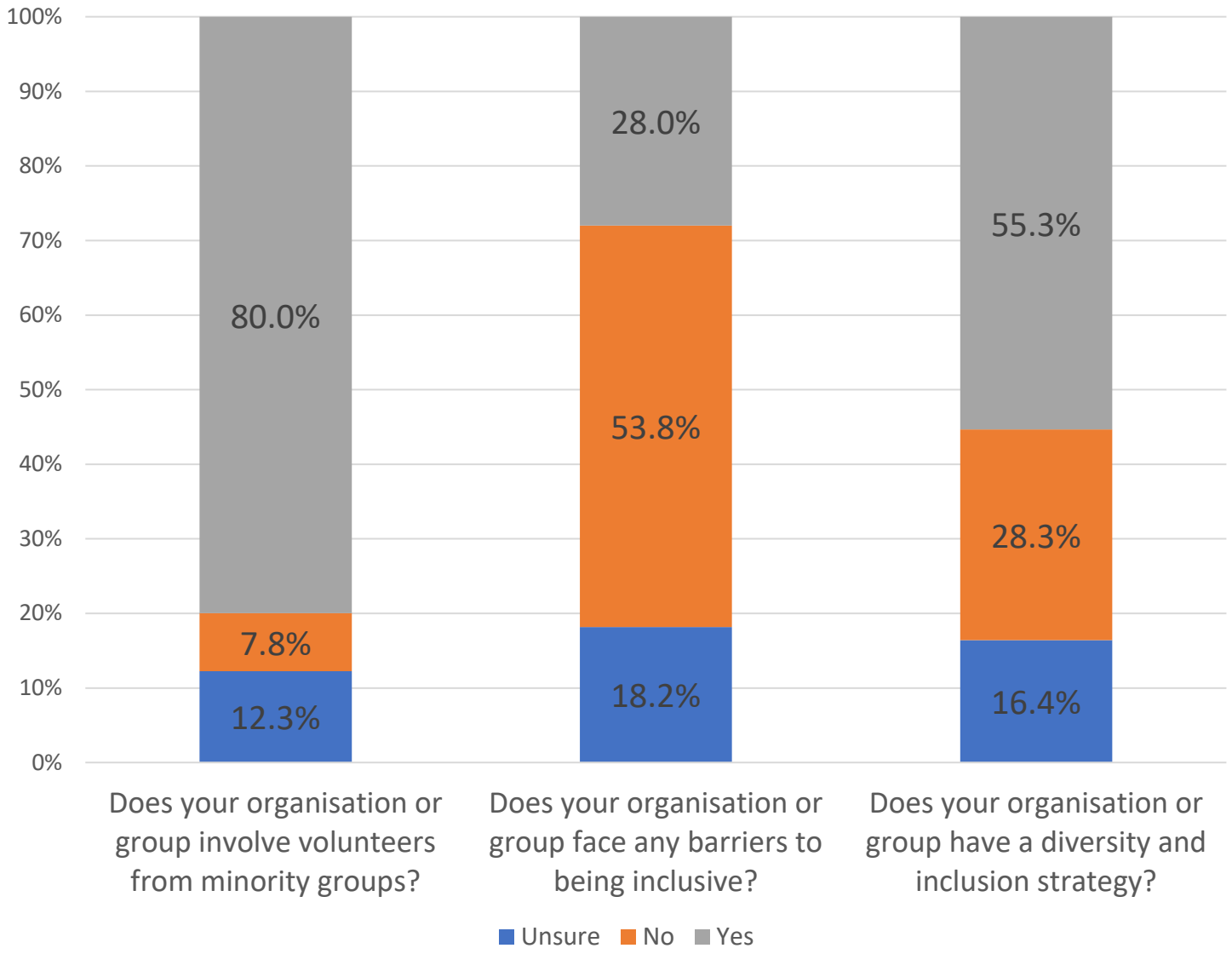
83% of organisations surveyed need more volunteers in the immediate term

Future Demand for Volunteers



5 years into the future, 60% said their organisation would need more volunteers

Diversity and Inclusion



I think we're past the awareness stage, particularly in community sport. It's now at a stage where we need to provide more educational opportunities and resources to help our volunteers become comfortable and safe with promoted diversity

Employee Volunteers

- 30% organisations involved employee/corporate volunteers
- Employee volunteering appears more common among Animal Welfare, Environment, Disability, and Community Services / Welfare / Homelessness organisations
- 53% indicated that they did not have appropriate volunteering opportunities for this cohort

I mean our biggest partner is (corporate de-identified) so we have a lot of vollies that come through from there, highly professional, organised people, beautiful to work with. But yeah, they just have a set of expectations…

Circumstances, Challenges and Changes

Top 3 - Going Well

1 = Strongly disagree 3 = Neither 5 = Strongly agree

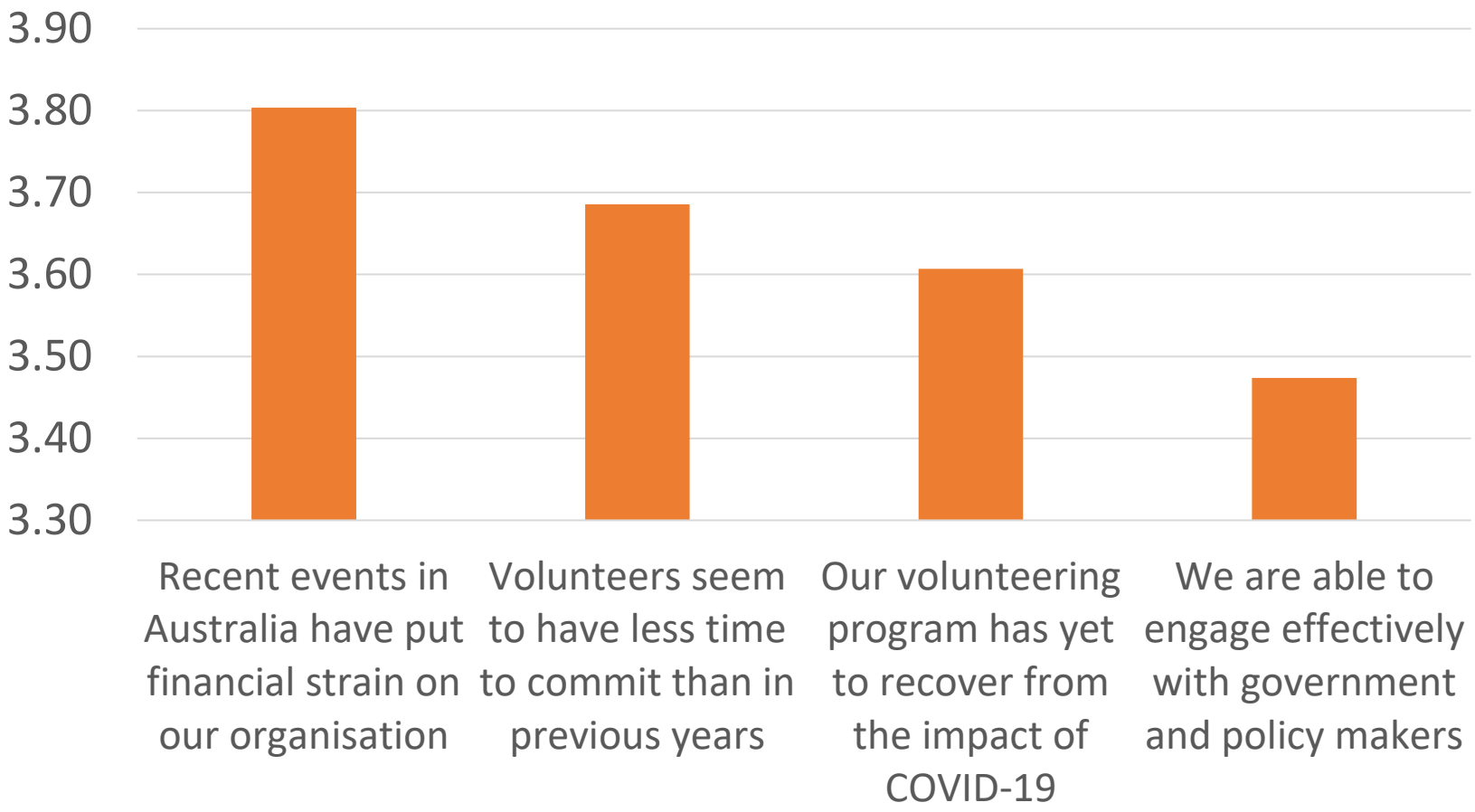
I'm really pushing for the whole organisation to understand what, how important the volunteers are. And that's like me getting anecdotal evidence from each of the staff members to actually take a moment, think of a situation where a volunteer was super helpful

Could Be Better

I think we're noticing people being a lot more selective with the volunteer roles they're looking for and wanting to use specific skills if they are volunteering…I think we're now starting to look a lot more at skilled volunteering opportunities, corporate workplace opportunities or matching people better to different skills

1 = Strongly disagree 3 = Neither 5 = Strongly agree

Could Be Better cont.



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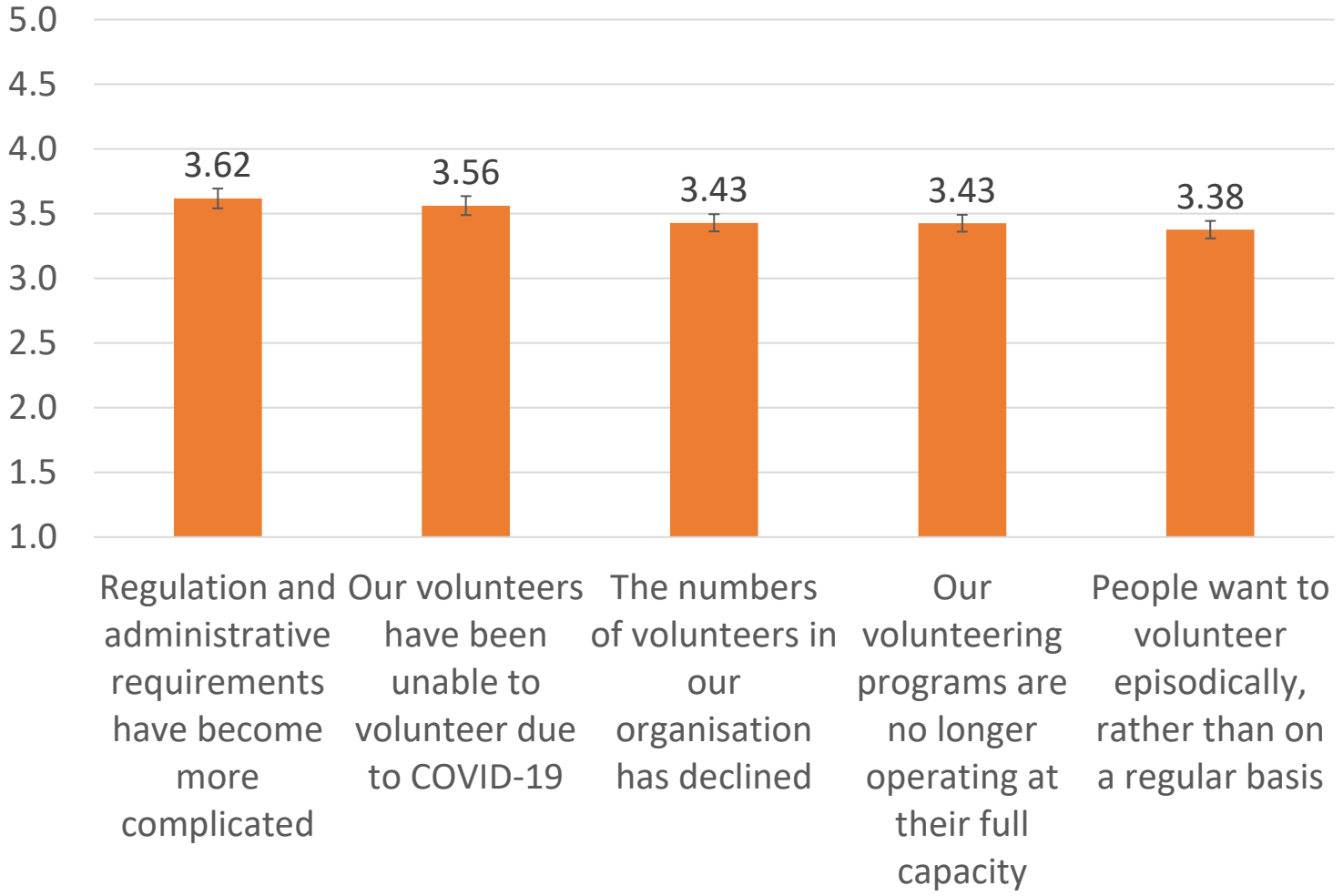
Top 5 Changes in the Last 3 Years



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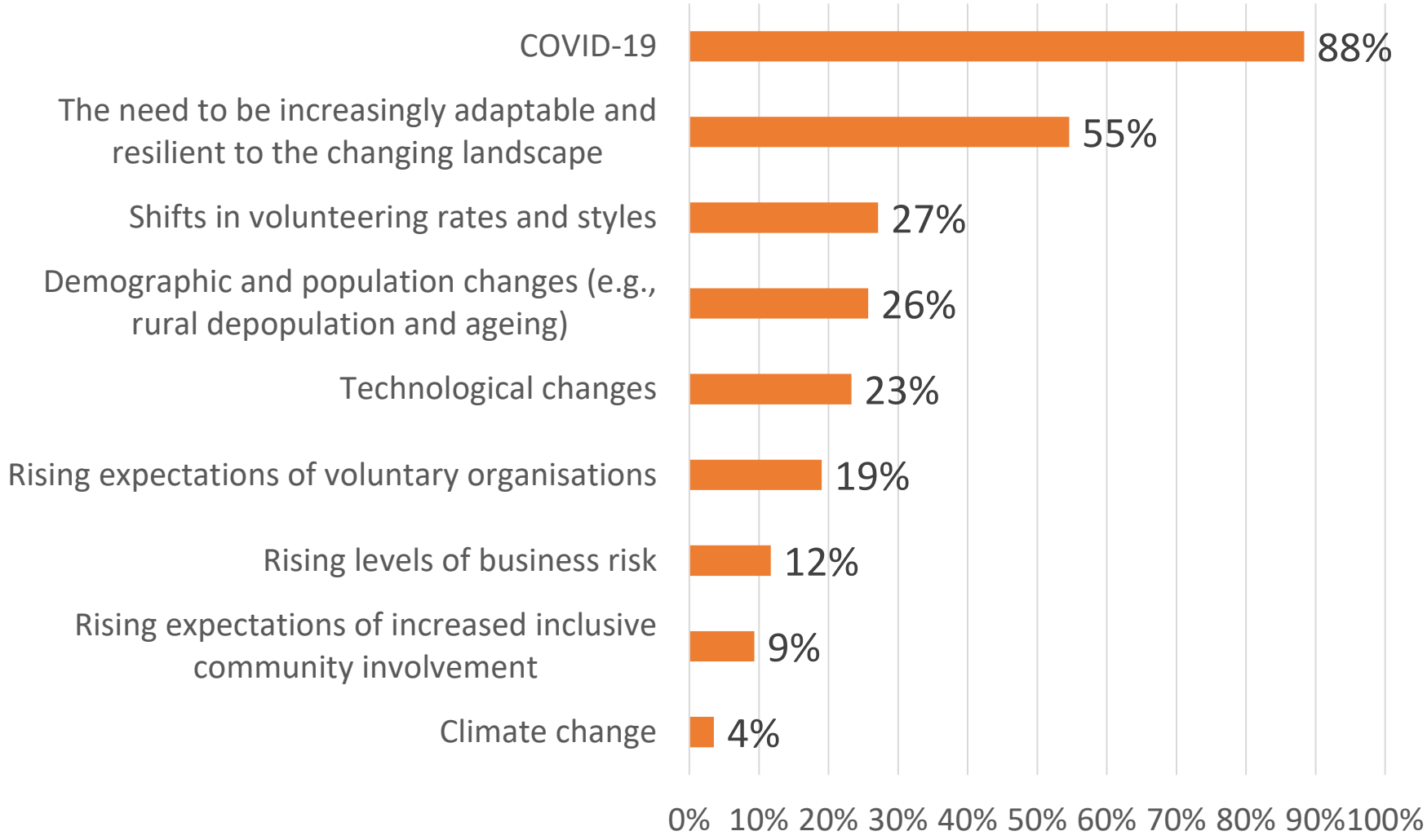
One of the impacts from COVID is moved to offer more virtual opportunities. So definitely we've invested in some new initiatives there. I think COVID will be an issue for some time, but it has really opened up the doors with hybrid working and technology

Drivers of Change



Organisational Perspective: Key Takeaways

- Organisations are still in COVID-recovery mode
- There is a disconnect with the level of commitment that volunteers prefer as compared to the commitment that organisations require
- Organisations are diversifying their volunteering cohorts (minority groups, employee volunteers) but there are barriers to involvement
- Recruitment and retention remain significant concerns for organisations **for now and into the future**, irrespective of organisational size and geographical location (some sectoral differences noted)

Implications

Government

- Sector funding and red-tape reduction are priorities
- Meaningful engagement with the sector needed

Practitioners

- Push to tailored, flexible volunteering will continue
- Strong reliance on “traditional” volunteering model – opportunities to diversify via virtual, episodic and employee volunteering and diversity and inclusion strategies

Researchers

- Opportunities to analyse the dataset lodged with the Australian Data Archive
- Need a sampling frame for volunteer-involving organisations

For the full report:
Volunteering in Australia Research

For access to the dataset:
Organisational dataset

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