



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
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Mr Johnathan Davis MLA

Inquiry into the future of the working week

Exhibit 1: Summary of survey responses

Executive Summary

The Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Wellbeing conducted a survey on opinions towards alternative options to the standard five-day work week.

The Survey was open from July to December 2022 and received just over a thousand (1,155) responses.

The survey questioned respondent's attitudes towards a four-day work week, associated changes to pay and conditions, and other flexible work arrangements. It also collected demographic data such as age and income bracket. It consisted of a mix of multiple choice and free text answers.

The key findings of the survey were:

- The vast majority of respondents rated themselves as very supportive of a four-day work week (86%).
- The majority of respondents supported no change to take home pay and conditions if a Four-Day work week was adopted (78%).
- Just over a third of respondents (39.91%) indicated they preferred a model of a four-day work week which involved less hours worked during the week, as opposed to a compressed 4 day work week (22.86%). Just under a third of respondents (37.23%) stated they would be happy with either option.
- A majority of respondents (93.42%) preferred flexible working arrangements being offered in conjunction with a four-day working week.

Support for a Four-Day Work Week

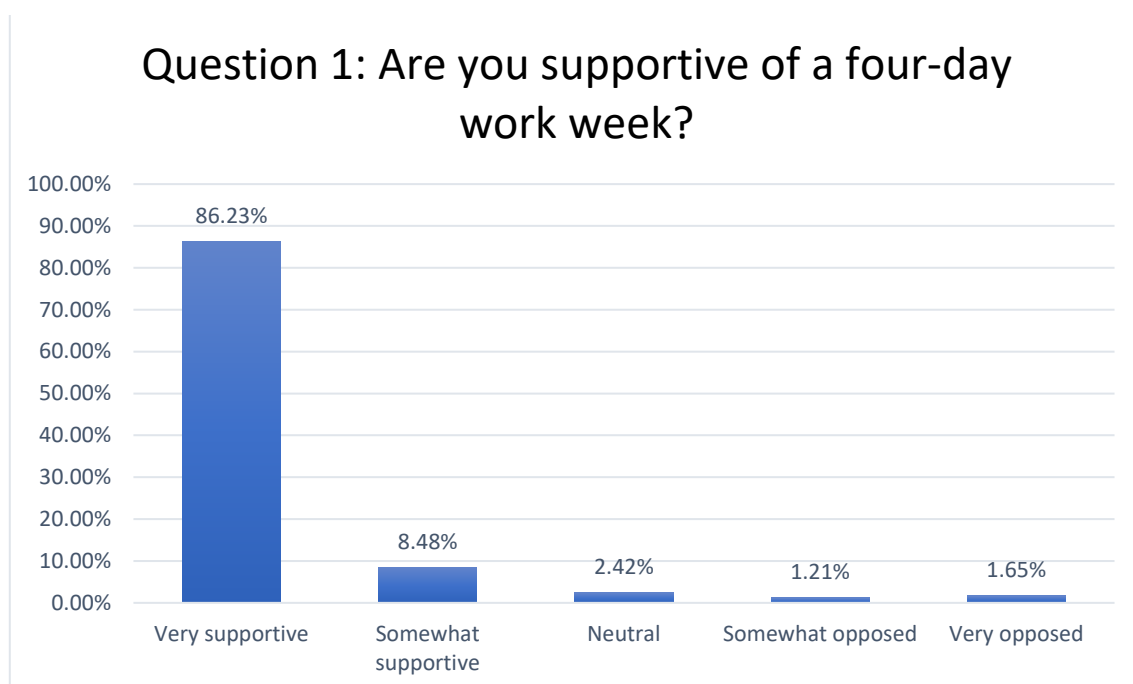


Figure 1: Question 1 responses

As shown in Figure 1 over 90% of respondents to the survey indicated support for the four-day work week. Of those who indicated support 86% were very supportive and 8% were somewhat supportive. Only 3% of respondents indicated they were either opposed or very opposed to the four-day work week and 2% of respondents indicated they were neutral and neither supportive nor opposed.

When prompted to explain the reason for their response (see Figure 2 word-cloud), most respondents cited time-related aspects, such as work-life balance, time with family, or time to complete 'life administration'.

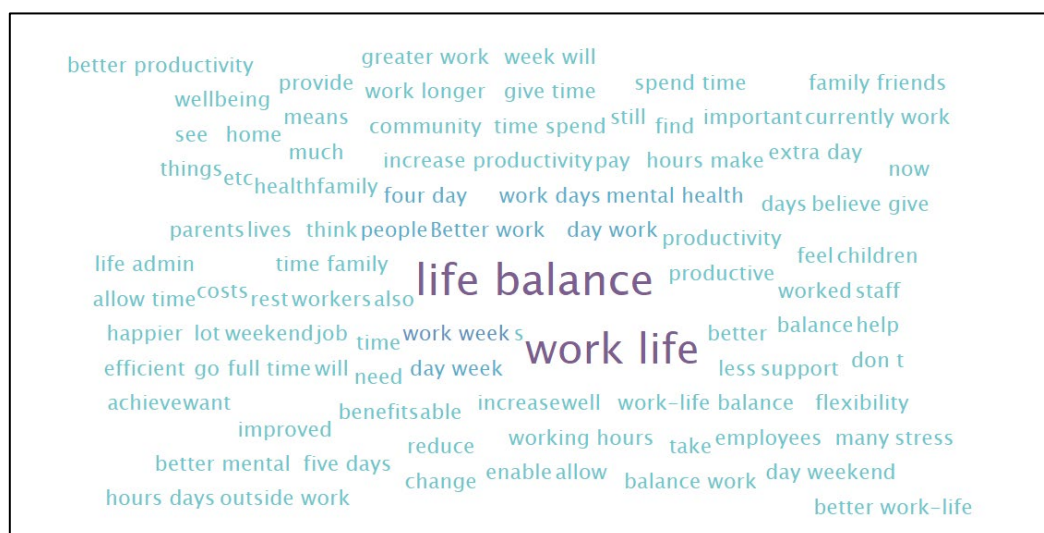


Figure 2: Question 2 free-text responses wordcloud

Pay and Conditions in a Change to the Four-Day Work Week

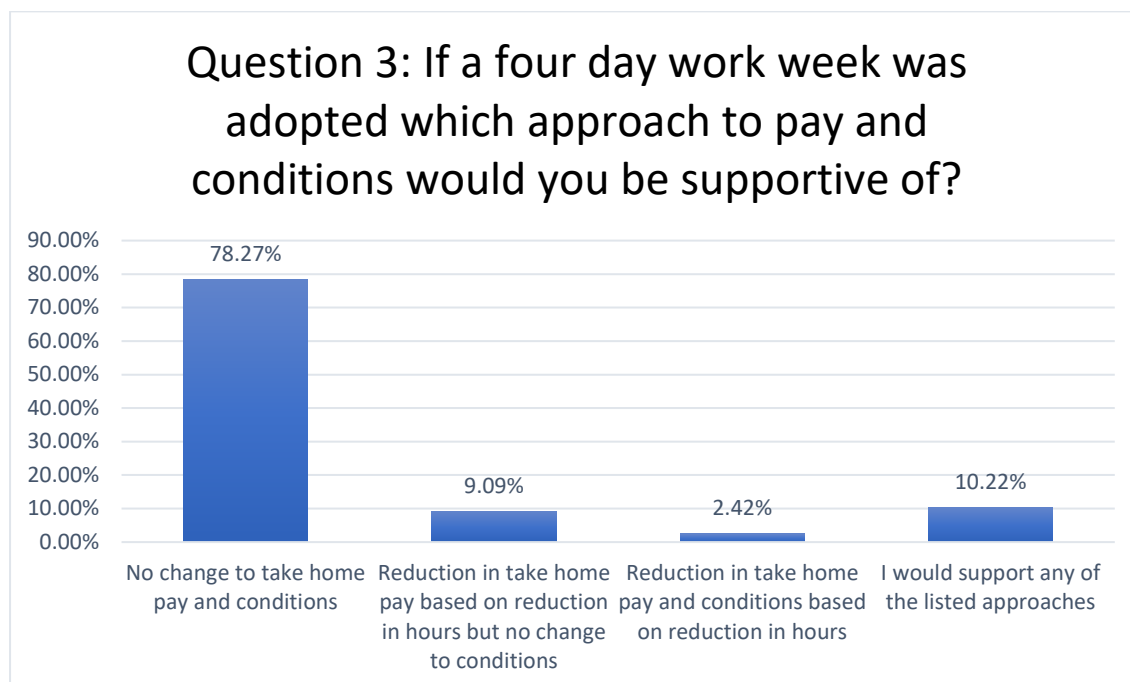


Figure 3: Question 3 responses

When asked about potential changes to pay and conditions under a four-day week model, respondents were clear that they preferred no change to take-home pay and conditions. As shown in Figure 3, 78% of respondents indicated they would support a four-day work week model that had no change to take home pay and conditions. Another 9% of respondents indicated they would support some change in pay based on the reduction of hours but no change to conditions. Only 2% of respondents indicated they would support reductions in pay and conditions. While 10% of respondents indicated they would support each of the models proposed.

Preferred Model of a Four-Day Work Week

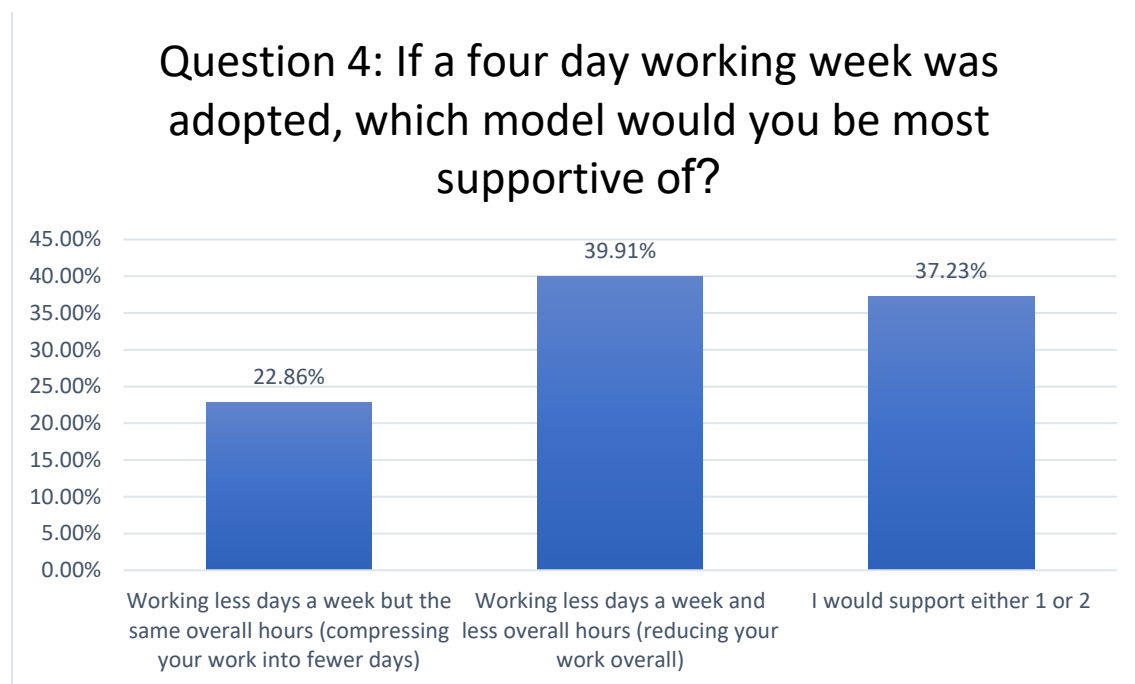


Figure 4: Question 4 responses

Many respondents pointed out that these benefits would not occur with a five-day week compressed into a four-day work week, rather, the total number of hours worked over a week should be reduced.

Also, more respondents preferred a four-day week model in which the total number of working hours were reduced (40%) rather than one in which the same number of working hours were compressed into four days (23%). 37% of respondents indicated that they wouldn't mind either way.

Advantages of a Four-Day Work Week

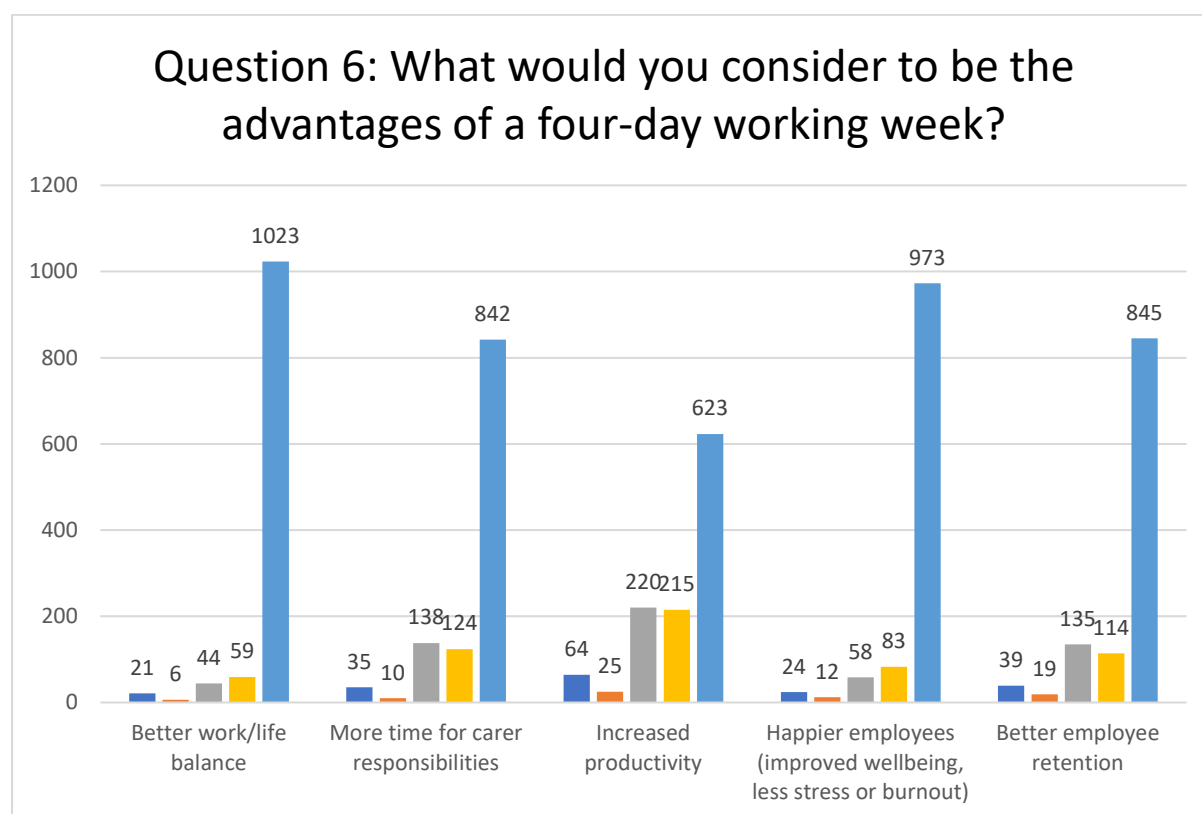


Figure 5: Question 6 responses

In addition to showing support for the benefits outlined in the survey, respondents also indicated the following reasons for they supported a four-day work week:

- benefits for work-life balance;
- increased time for rest, leisure, and life administration;
- better mental and physical health;
- increased productivity of workers;
- more family time;
- reduced childcare costs;
- increased staff attraction and retention; and
- more time to spend in the community.

When asked to explain their decision (see figure 6), many respondents noted they would be happy to work longer days in a compressed working week for the same pay as a 5 day week, given they feel like they work longer hours anyway. However, some respondents noted the potential impact to delivery and access of government services if a four-day working week was adopted, with one writing:

“It is not about the individual - public servants exist to driver programs and services to the community. Any reduction in hours generally, and contact hours specifically, will adversely affect service provision”.

Other respondents noted that they did not wish to see a reduction in their pay, with some citing the rising cost of living as a factor behind their decision.

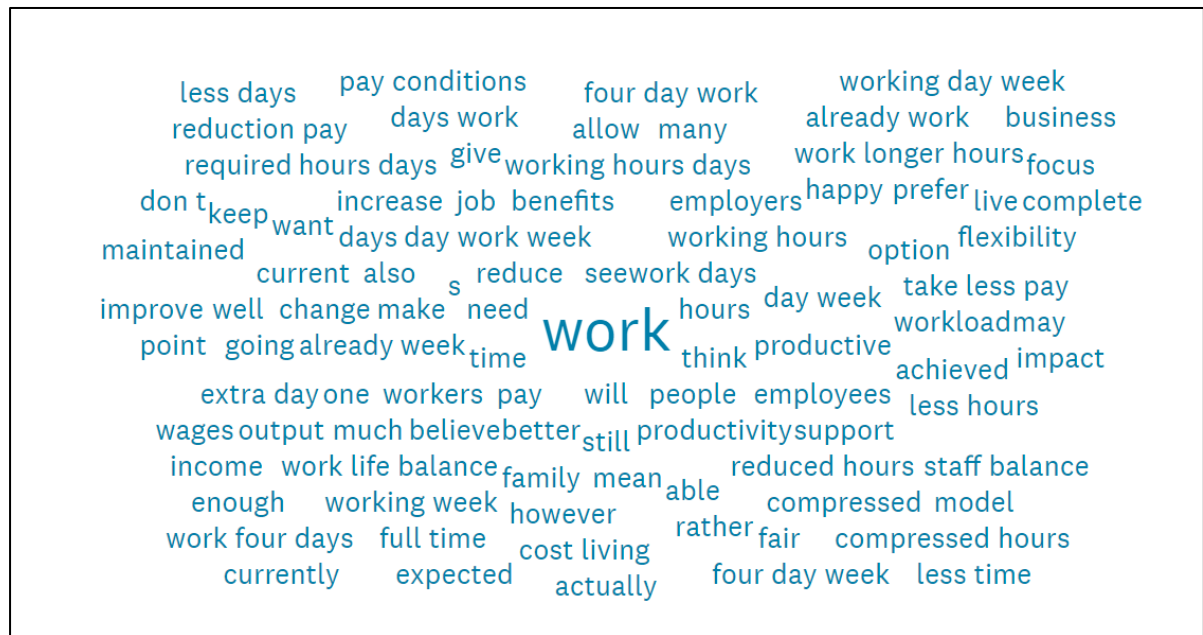


Figure 6: Question 5 free text responses wordcloud.

Disadvantages of a Four-Day Work Week

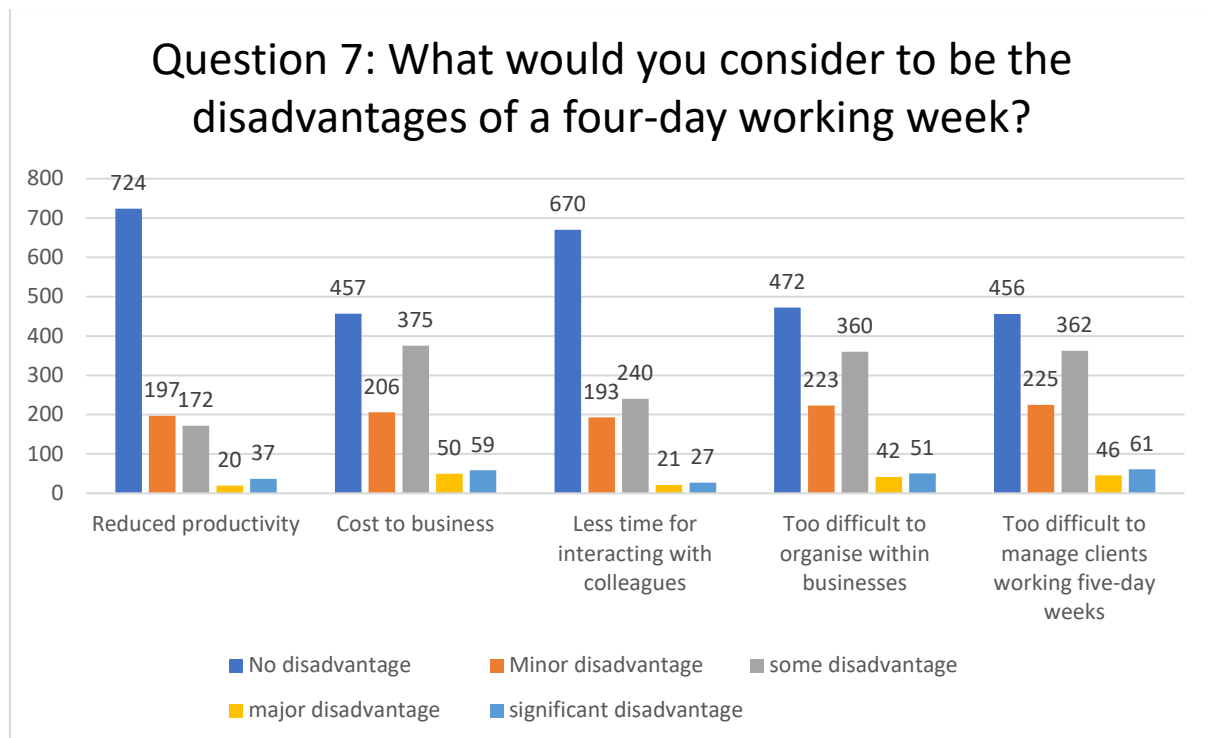


Figure 7: Question 7 Responses

For those who indicated they did not support the four-day work week the reasons included:

- cost to business;
- difficulty managing clients who work five-day weeks;
- too difficult to organise within a business;
- less time for interacting with colleagues;
- reduced productivity.

A minority of respondents were not supportive of a four-day work week. The most common concern cited by these respondents was the negative economic impact on businesses.

Other Flexible Work Arrangements

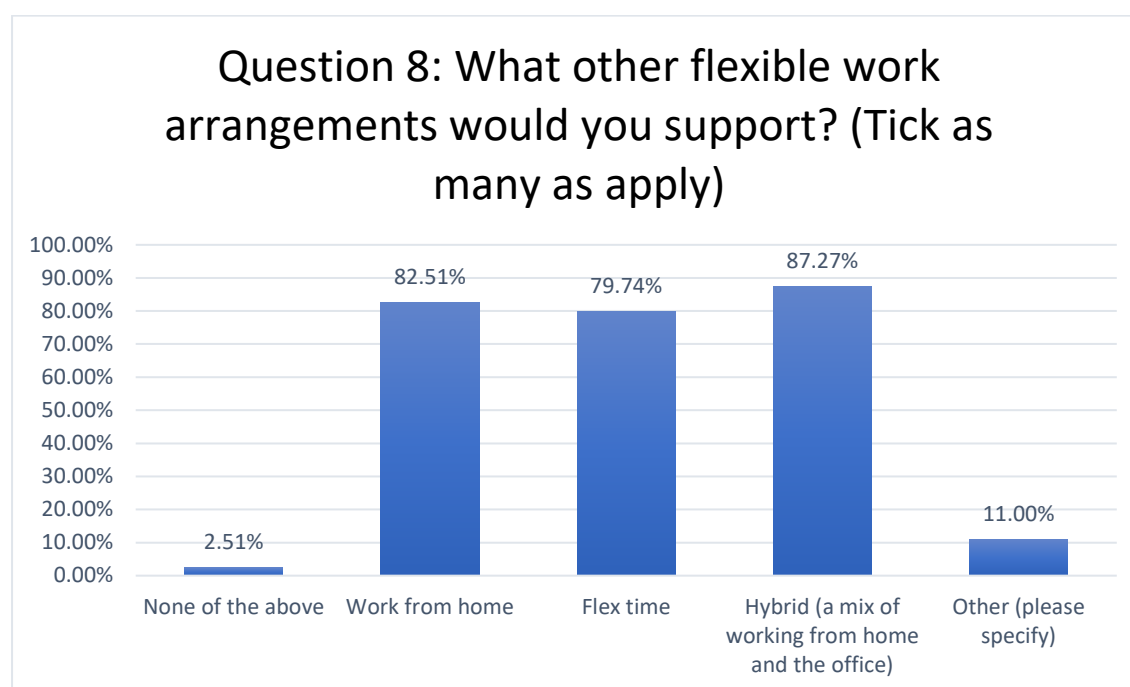


Figure 8: Question 8 responses

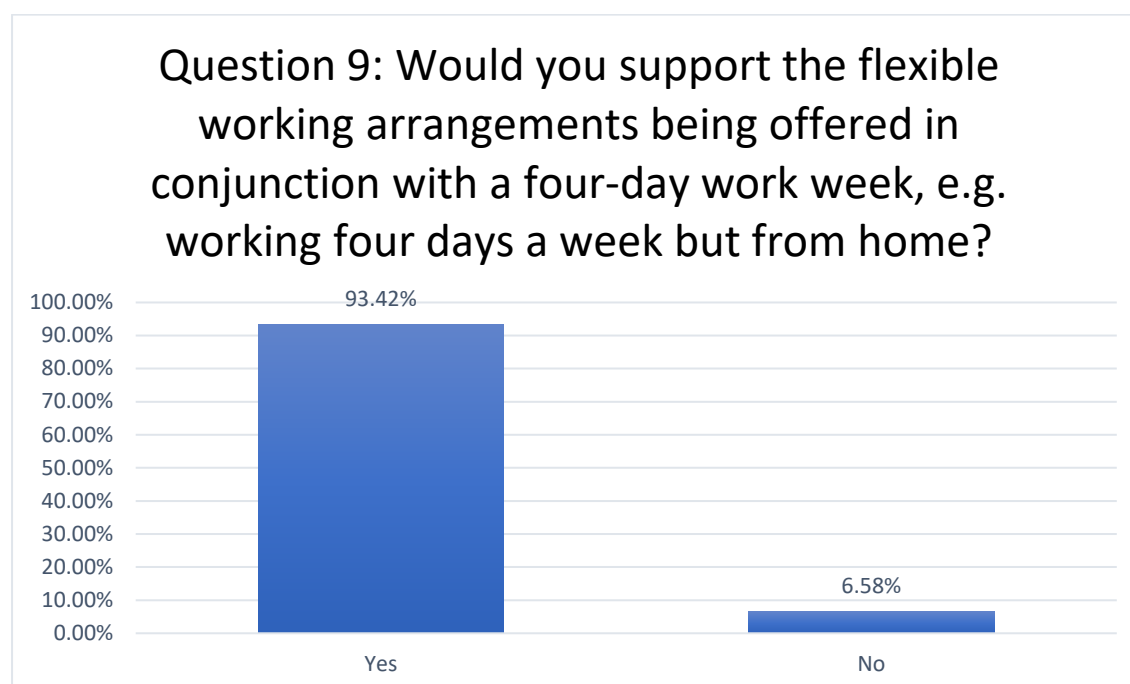


Figure 9: Question 9 responses

Respondents overwhelmingly supported other flexible work arrangements, such as working from home and flex time, and supported these arrangements being offered in conjunction with a four-day week (93%).

About the Respondents

Most respondents who answered the survey:

- were female (64%) (see Figure 16).
- were aged 25-34 (36%) or 35-44 (28%) (see Figure 15).
- had no caring responsibilities (54%) (see Figure 14).
- worked full-time (78%) (see Figure 11).
- worked Monday-Friday office hours (80%) (see Figure 12).
- had access to flexible working arrangements (77%) (see Figure 13).
- worked in public administration and safety (26%) (see Figure 10).
- made \$2,00-\$2,999 per week (20%) (see Figure 17).

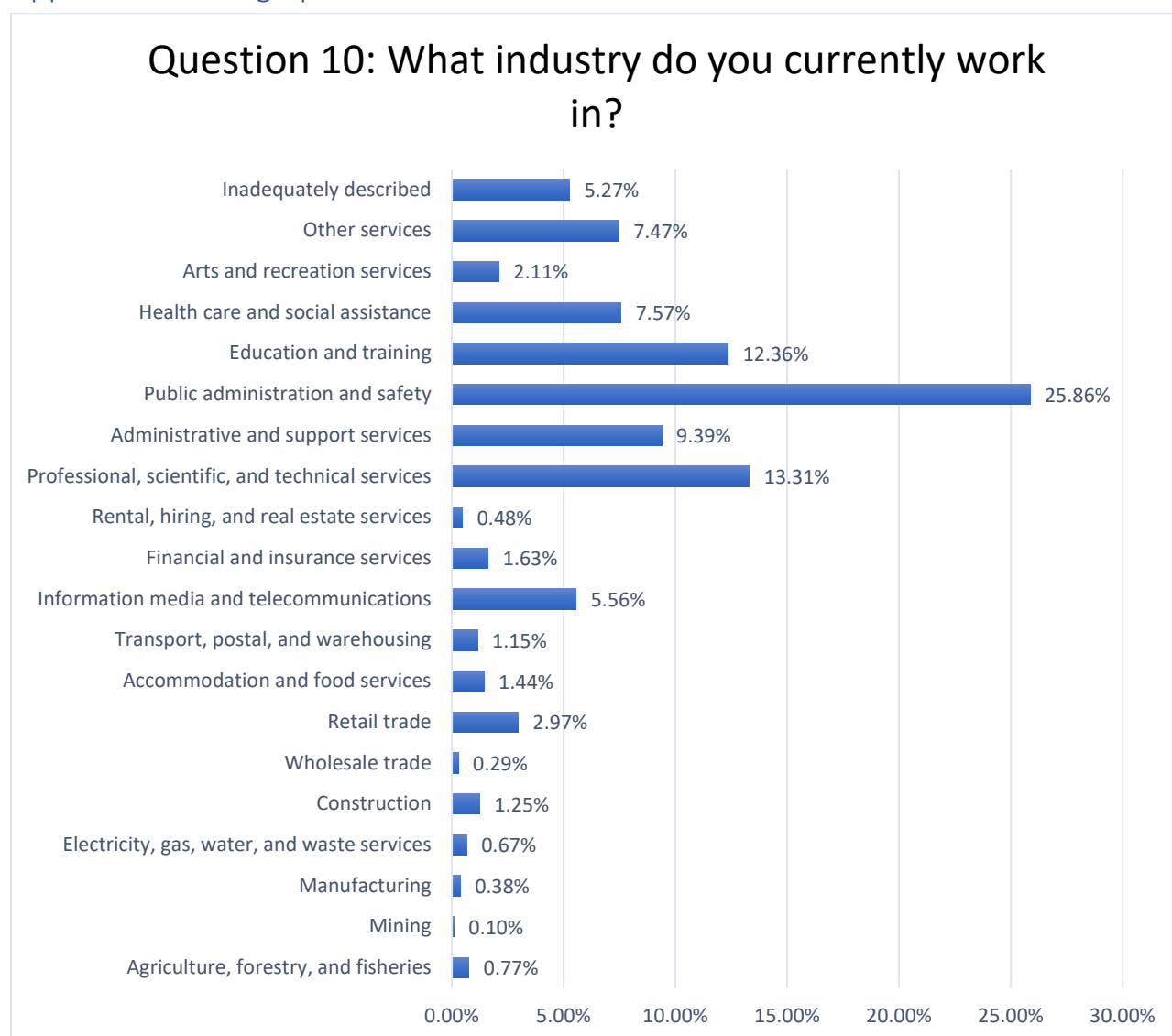


Figure 10: Question 10 responses

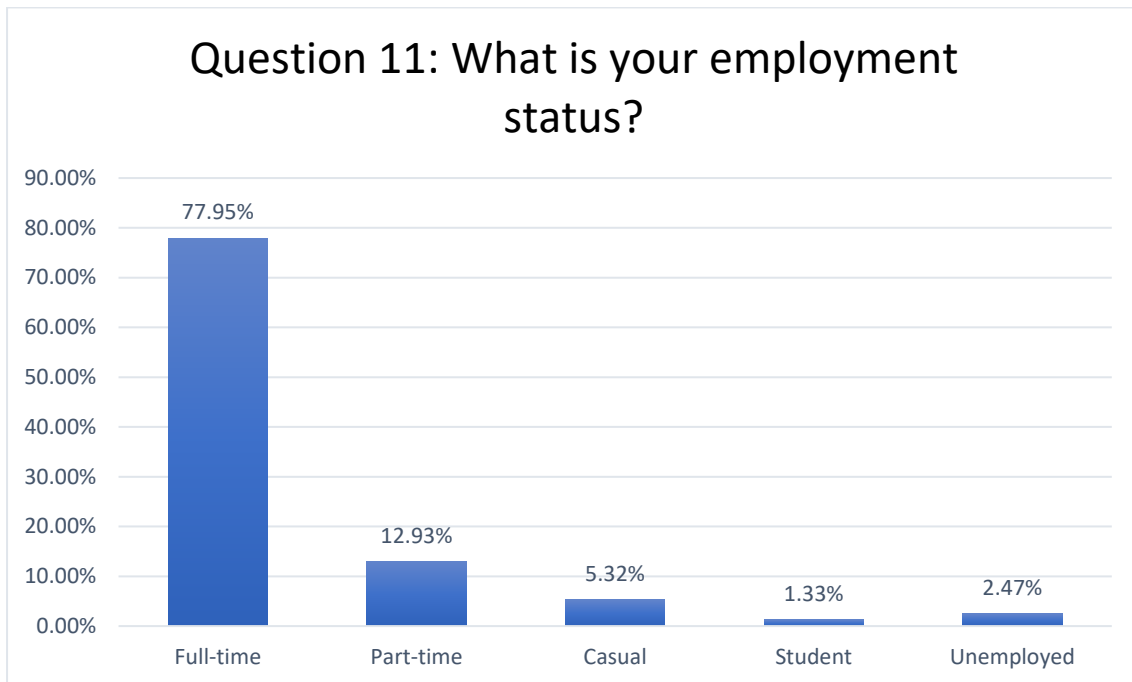


Figure 11: Question 11 Responses

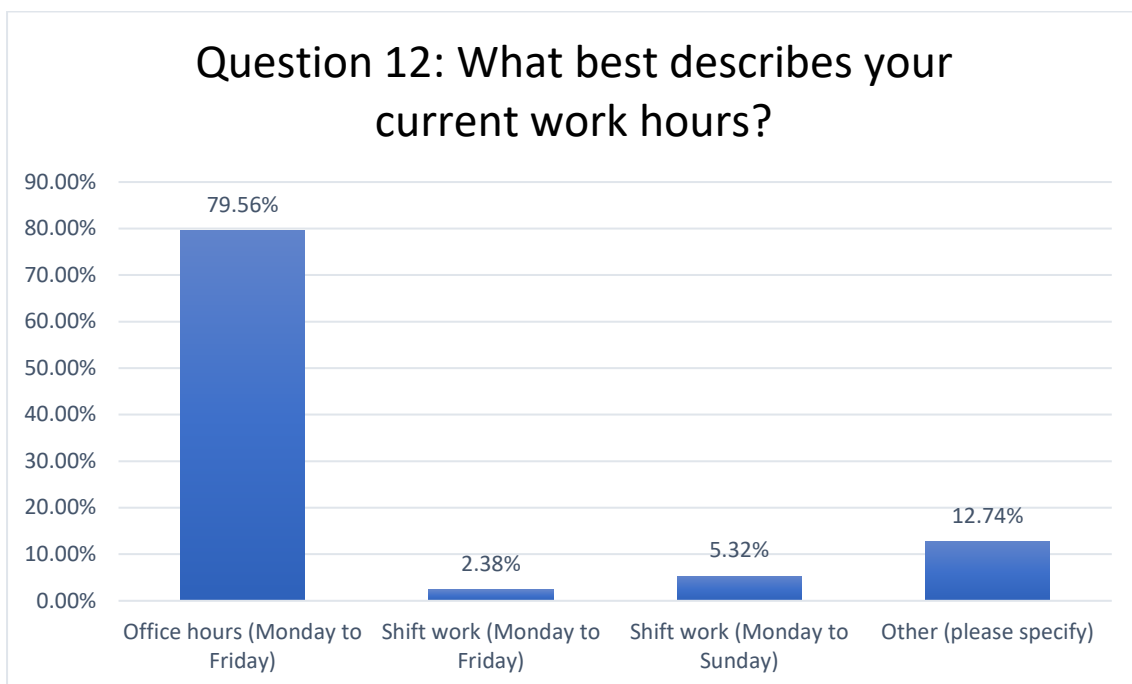


Figure 12: Question 12 responses

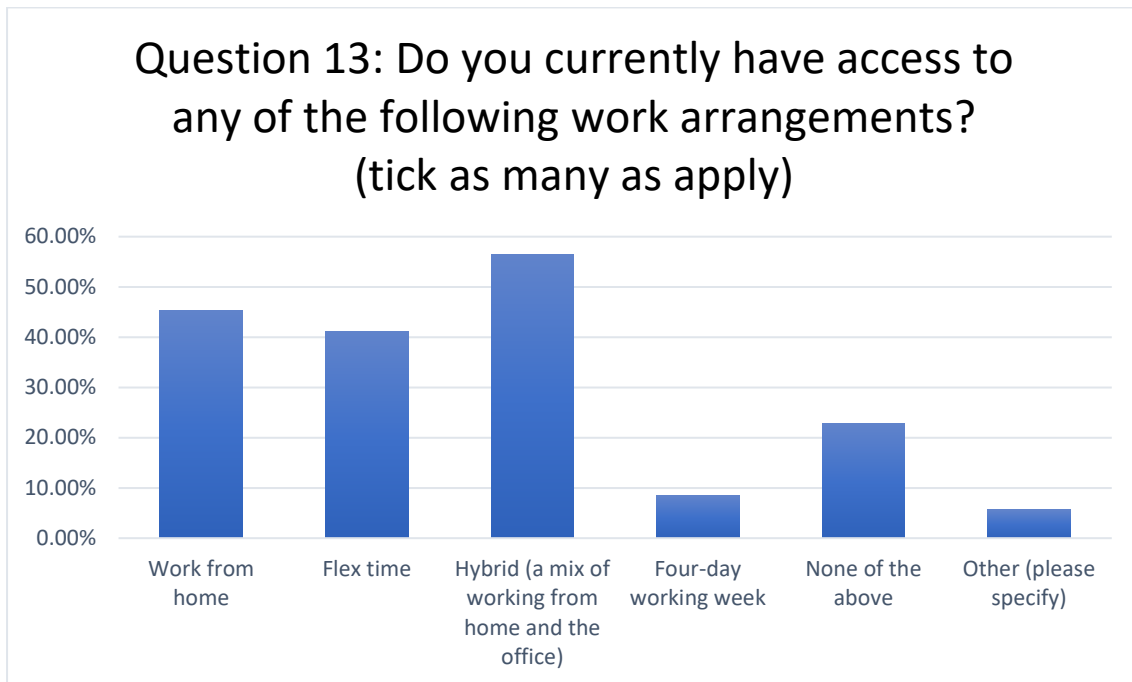


Figure 13: Question 13 responses

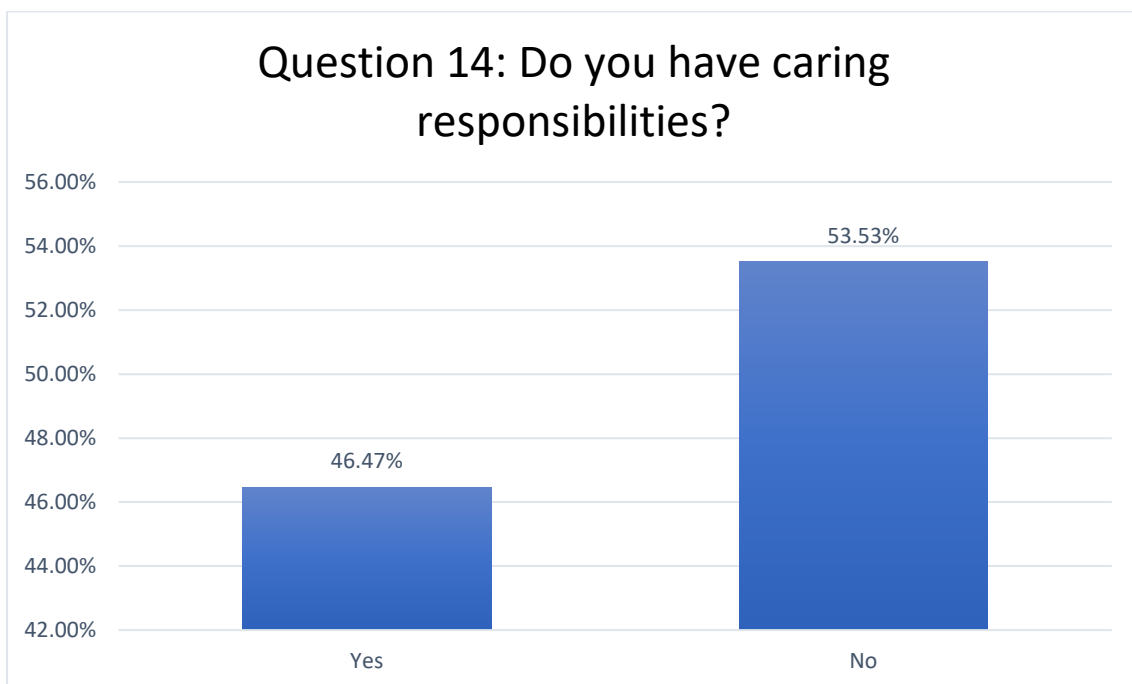


Figure 14: Question 14 responses

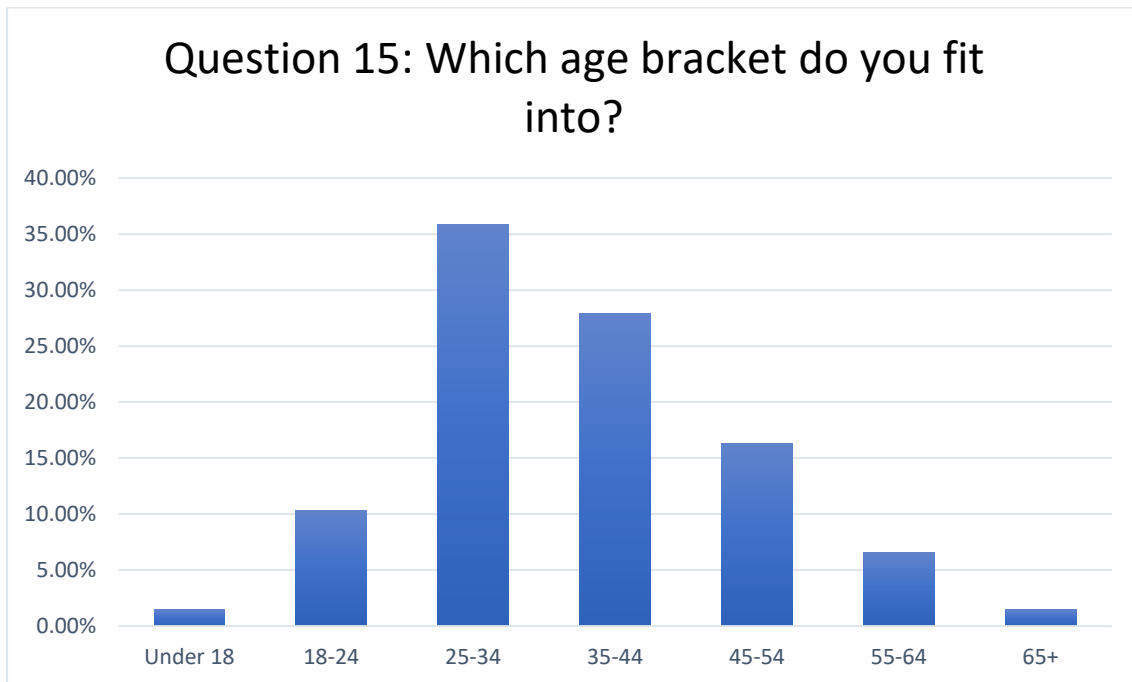


Figure 15: Question 15 responses

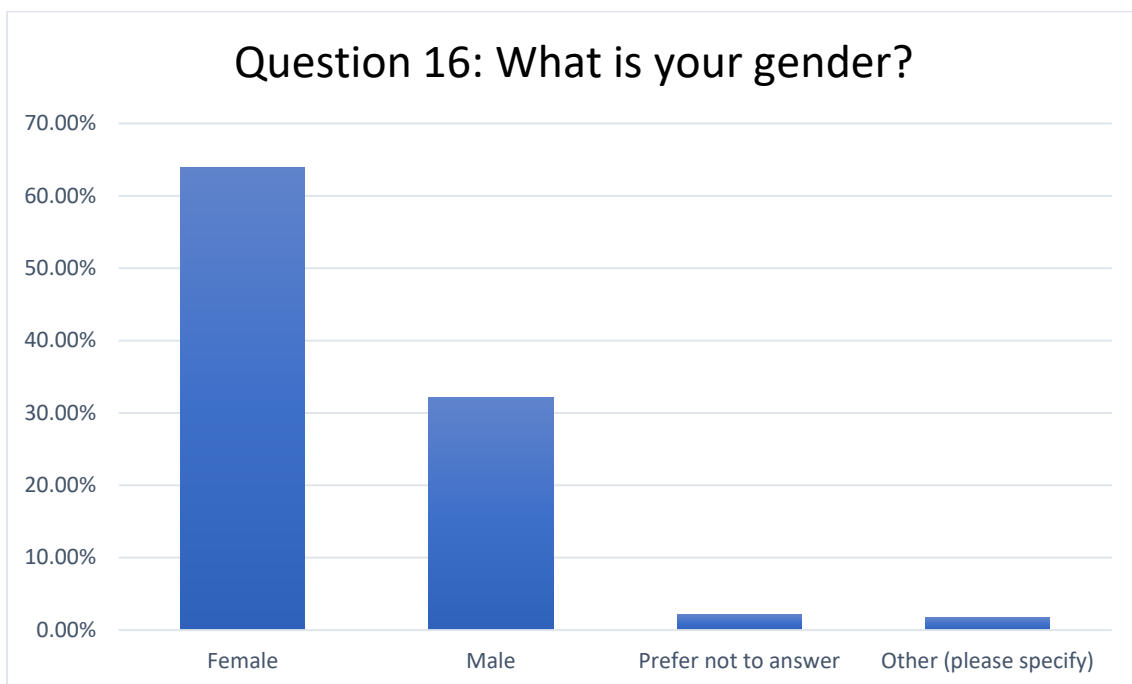


Figure 16: Question 16 responses

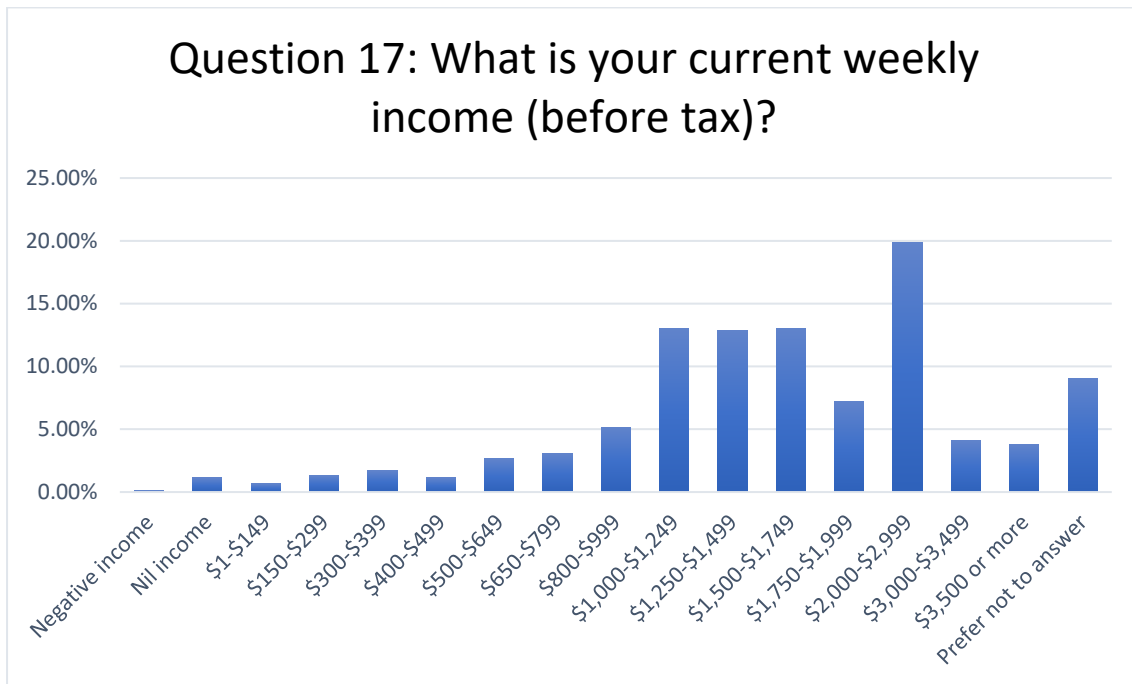


Figure 17: Question 17 responses