Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi
YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH
GSR
GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH
Analysis for Policy

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Employer Skills Survey 2024

Core results: Mid and South West Wales slide pack

Department for Education

IFF Research

Introduction

Slide Pack Information

- The seventh survey in this biennial series
- Includes content which was previously covered in the Employer Perspectives Survey
- This slide pack focuses on the following core areas of the survey:
  - Recruitment and skill-shortage vacancies
  - Skills gaps in the existing workforce
  - Training and workforce development
  - Employer practices: High Performance Working Practices, use of Artificial Intelligence and Net Zero strategies

Further detail – including on other survey areas – is available in the Wales reports and data tables

Methodology

- The population covered by the survey comprised UK employers at the site level (rather than at an organisational level) with at least 2 employees on the payroll. Sole traders with a single person on the payroll were excluded.
- The survey encompassed sites across the whole of the UK, covering all sectors of the economy (the commercial, public and charitable spheres).
- ESS 2024 was the second in the series to use a Random Probability Sampling (RPS) approach, where the sample is processed according to agreed protocols, meaning that sites have an equal and known probability of being sampled.
- Data was collected via Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Employers were offered the option to be interviewed in Welsh or English.
- The overall response rate for sites in Wales was 71%, calculated as ‘achieved interviews’ as a proportion of all respondents who were successfully contacted and reached a final outcome (including those who refused, or who quit during the interview). The response rate for Wales was higher than those for the other UK nations, which ranged from 63% to 66%.
- As Mid Wales and South West Wales have relatively small populations, base sizes for these regions are often small. To allow for more robust comparisons, findings for these two regions have been combined and are presented in this pack.
- Further detailed technical information is available in the accompanying Technical Report, published on the DfE website.

Reporting conventions

- The terms ‘site’ and ‘employer’ are used interchangeably throughout this report to avoid excessive repetition.
- All comparisons referred to in the slide pack are statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence. This applies to differences between survey subgroups, such as region, size and sector, and also to differences over time. In some places, the highest or lowest subgroups are reported to give an indication of range, however this does not suggest statistical significance.
- Throughout the report unweighted base figures are shown on tables and charts to give an indication of the statistical reliability of the figures. These figures are always based on the number of sites answering a question, as this is the information required to determine statistical reliability.
- In tables, ‘zero’ is denoted as a dash (‘-’); and an asterisk is used (‘*’) if the figure is larger than zero but less than 0.5%. All volume measures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
- Throughout the slide pack, figures with a base size of fewer than 30 sites are not reported (a double asterisk (**) is displayed instead), and figures with a base size of 30 to 49 are denoted by a single asterisk (*) next to the data value and should be treated with caution as the margin of error for these results is larger and therefore the results are less statistically reliable.
- Please note that, unless otherwise stated, all figures presented in this slide pack are taken from responses by employers to the ESS 2024 survey and therefore represent their views.

Questionnaire coverage

Large sections of the ESS survey were modularised to ensure that ESS and EPS legacy questions could be covered without adding significantly to interview length. All employers were asked a set of core questions and one modularised set of questions, after being randomly allocated to a module. The survey structure (in order of how questions were asked to employers) is shown below:

- **Vacancies and skill shortage vacancies**
- Recruitment channels (Module C)
- Recruitment of education leavers (Module C)
- Work placements and work inspiration activities (Module B)
- **Workforce composition and skills gaps**
- **Underutilisation (Module A)**
- Upskilling (Module A)
- **Training and workforce development**
- Investment in Training
- Vocational qualifications (Module B)
- **Apprenticeships (Module A)**
- National Occupational Standards (Module D)
- **High Performance Working Practices (Module D)**
- **Current and future use of AI**
- **Net Zero**

Only the topics in **bold** are covered in this slide pack

Achieved interviews

By nation and region	Population	Number of interviews
Wales	86,800	5,605
Mid and South West	29,200	1,945
By size (number of employees): (Mid and South West Wales)	Population	Number of interviews
2-4	17,000	578
5-24	9,900	960
25-49	1,300	247
50-99	600	116
100+	400	44

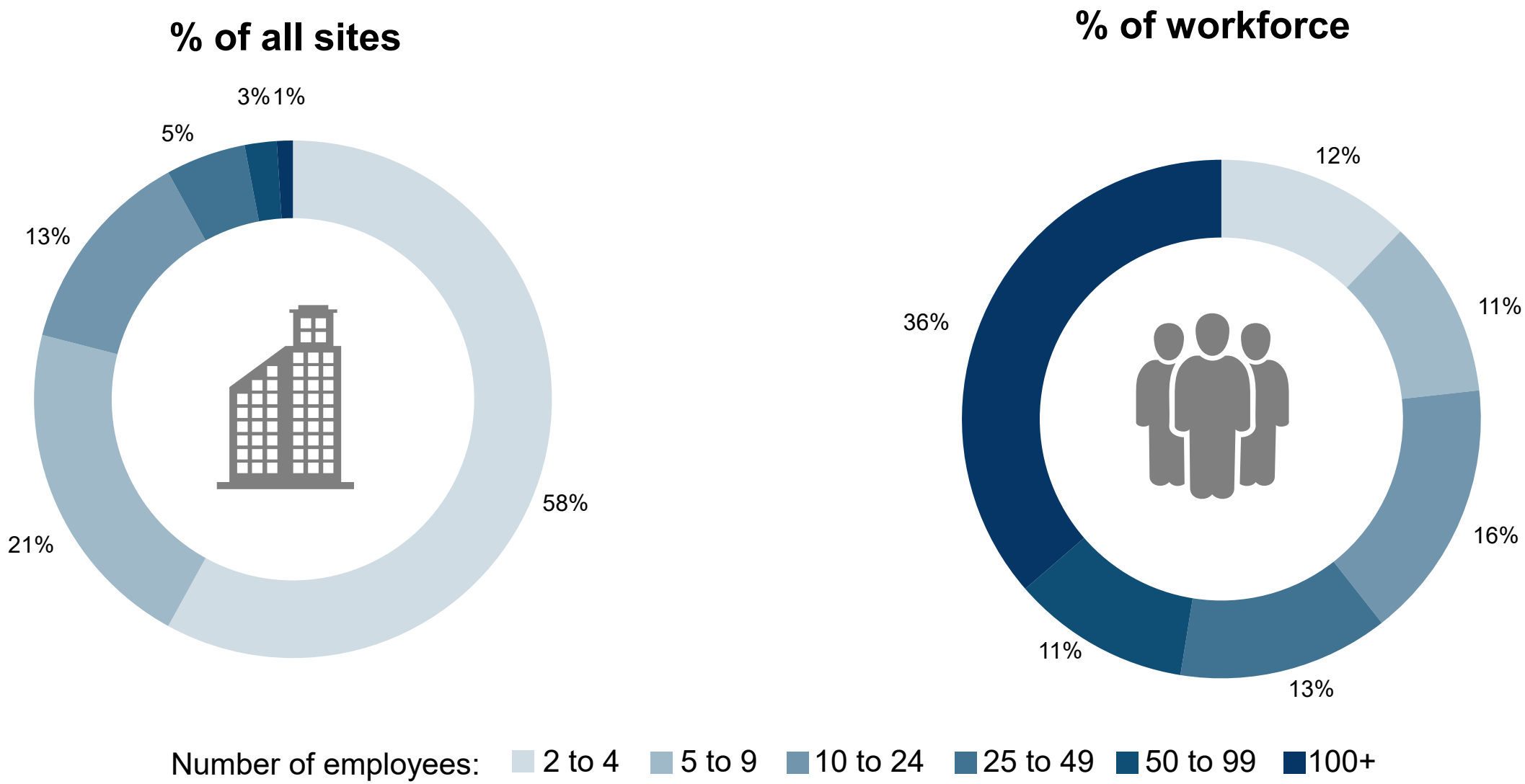
By sector (Mid and South West Wales)	Population	Number of interviews
Primary Sector & Utilities	5,800	209
Manufacturing	1,300	130
Construction	2,800	105
Wholesale & Retail	5,000	389
Hotels & Restaurants	3,200	242
Transport & Storage	800	62
Information & Communications	500	30
Financial Services	400	29
Business Services	4,200	244
Public Administration	400	24
Education	800	144
Health & Social Work	2,000	232
Arts & Other Services	2,000	105

All the figures presented in this slide pack are subject to a margin of error. At a 95% confidence level, the maximum margin of error is 2 percentage points (p.p.) for Mid and South West Wales. Within Mid and South West Wales, for sectors which are in scope for reporting (with a base size of 30 or more), at the 95% confidence level, the margin of error for results based on 'all sites' ranges from 5 p.p. for Wholesale & Retail to 19 p.p. for Public Administration.

Due to small base sizes for sub-groups and higher margin of error, care should be taken when comparing sub-group differences over time

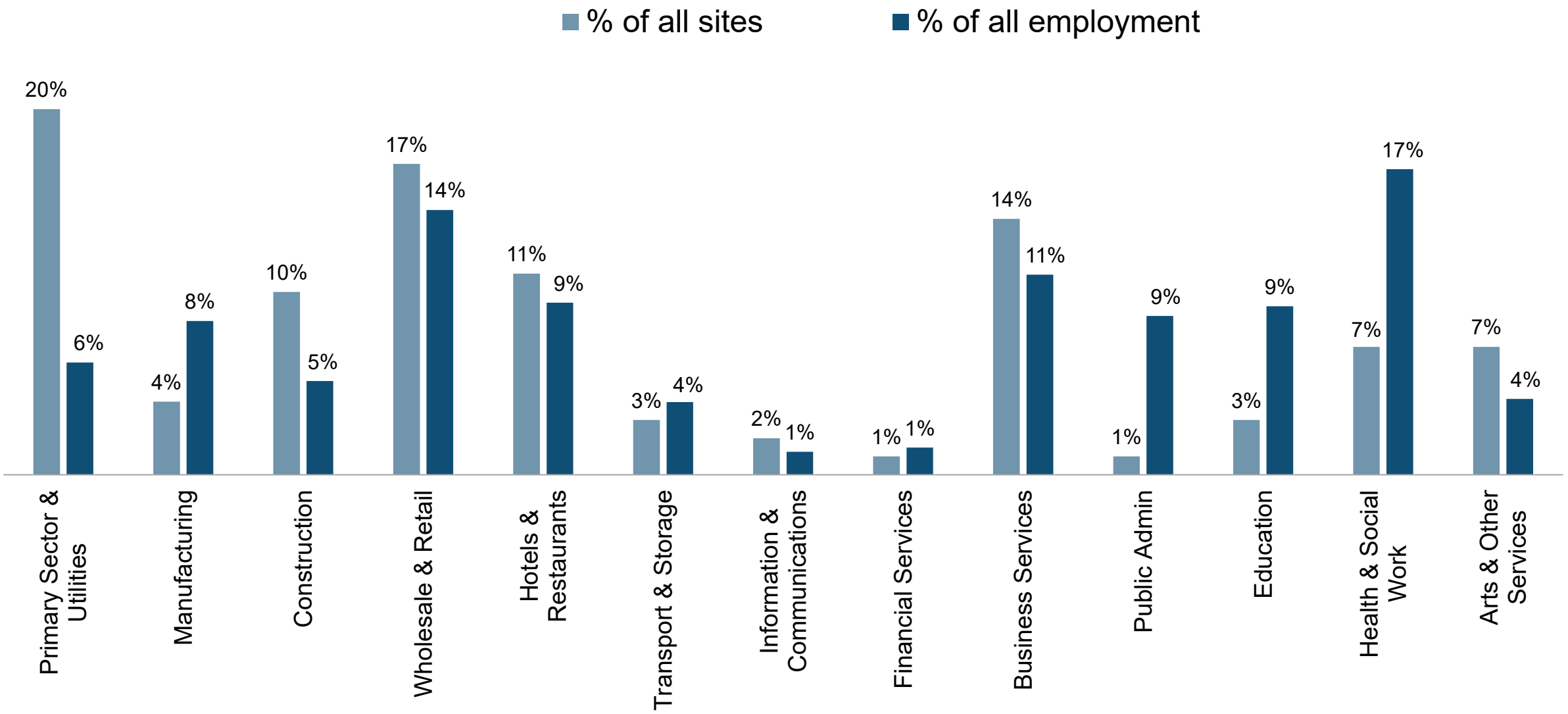
Population counts taken from the ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), and have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

Survey population Mid and South West Wales: employer size profile by number of employees



Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR).

Survey population Mid and South West Wales: sector



Source: ONS Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR)

Key definitions

Site base	Proportions are based on the number of sites, defined here as a single location of an organisation, where at least two people work.
Employment base	Proportions are based on the total number of employees and working proprietors across sites.

	Vacancies	**Skill-shortage vacancies**	**Skills gaps**
Incidence	Proportion of sites reporting at least one vacancy	Proportion of sites reporting at least one skill-shortage vacancy (i.e. vacancies which are reported to be hard-to-fill because applicants lack relevant skills, qualifications or experience)	Proportion of sites with at least one employee deemed by their employer to be not fully proficient in their role
Density	Vacancies as a proportion of all employment	Skill-shortage vacancies as a proportion of all vacancies	The number of staff reported as not fully proficient as a proportion of all employment

Overview

- The proportion of employers with vacancies decreased in Mid and South West Wales compared with 2022. The proportion of vacancies in Mid and South West Wales that were classed as skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs) – SSV density – was lower when compared with the average across Wales as a whole; within Mid and South West Wales this had also decreased when compared with 2022.
- Both the proportion of employers with skills gaps and the density of skills gaps among the workforce was similar to 2022 levels. The proportion of employers with at least one employee with qualifications or skills more advanced that required for their role was in line with the Wales average, while the proportion of the workforce with both under-utilised skills and qualifications was also consistent with the proportion across Wales as a whole.
- The proportion of employers in Mid and South West Wales that had arranged or funded training for their staff in the previous 12 months remained consistent with 2022, but was lower than the average across Wales as a whole. The proportion of employees receiving training in the past 12 months was also consistent with 2022.
- Looking at employer practices, a minority in Mid and South West Wales were considered to be High Performance Working (HPW) employers. Similarly, small proportions of employers reported using Artificial Intelligence (AI) or said they had a Net Zero strategy in place.

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi

YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH

GSR

GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH

Analysis for Policy

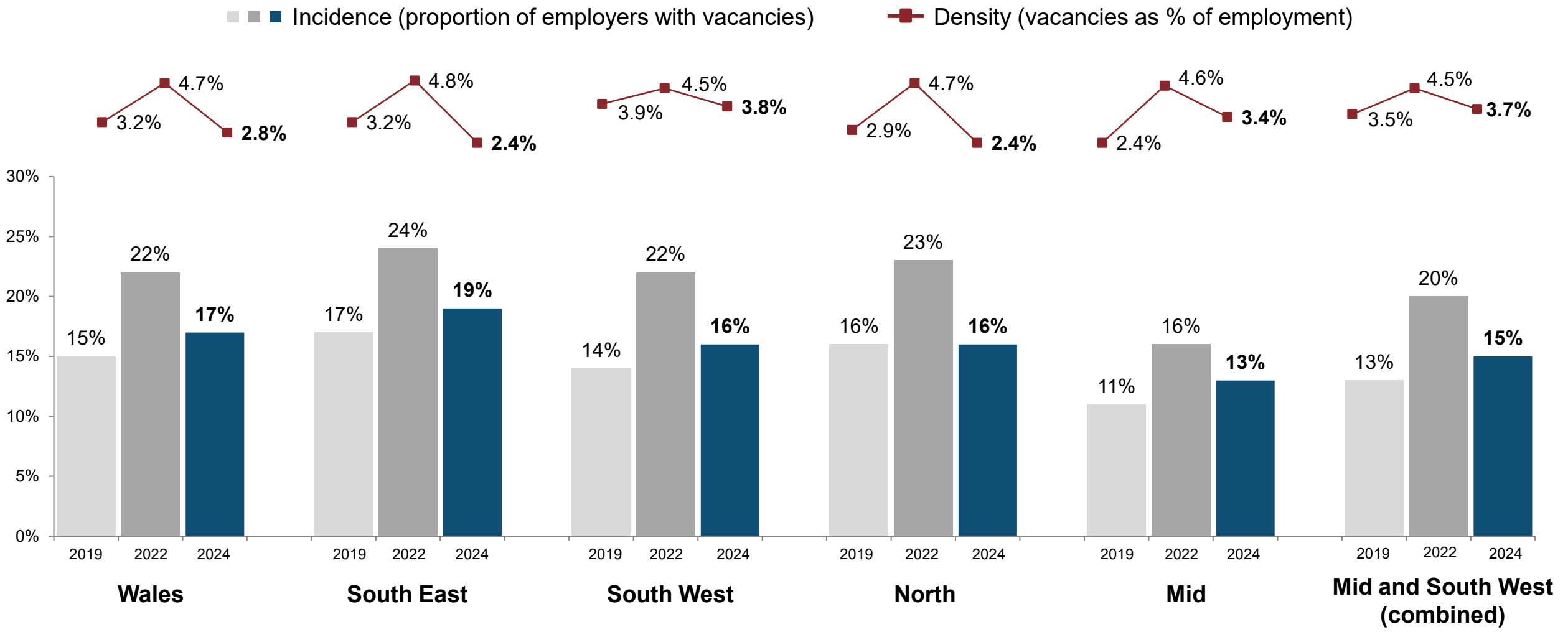
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Recruitment and skill-shortage vacancies

Department for Education

IFF Research

Vacancy incidence decreased across each Welsh region, except in Mid Wales, returning to 2019 levels. Vacancy density decreased in South East Wales and North Wales

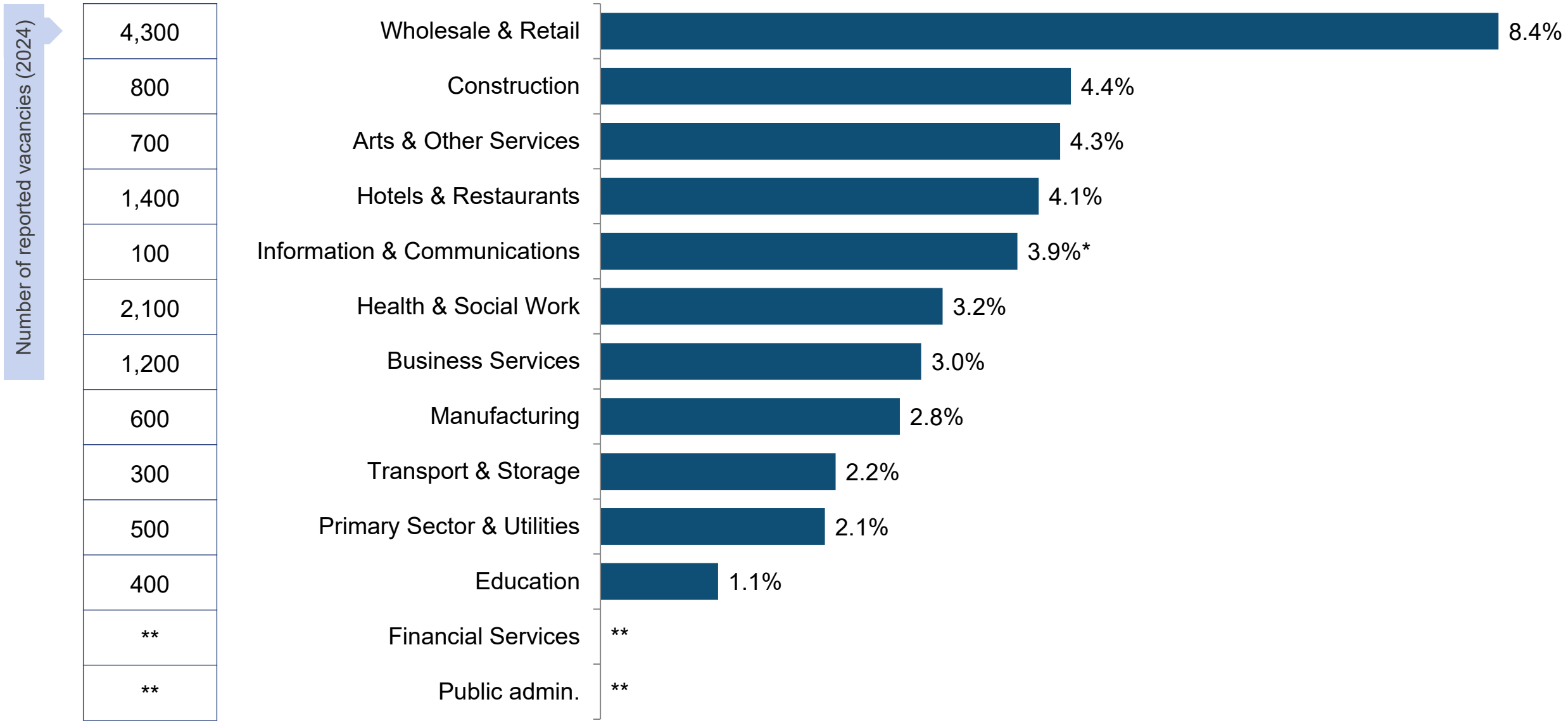


Wales	South East	South West	North	Mid	Mid and South West (combined)
35,700	15,500	10,400	7,000	2,700	13,100

Number of reported vacancies (2024)

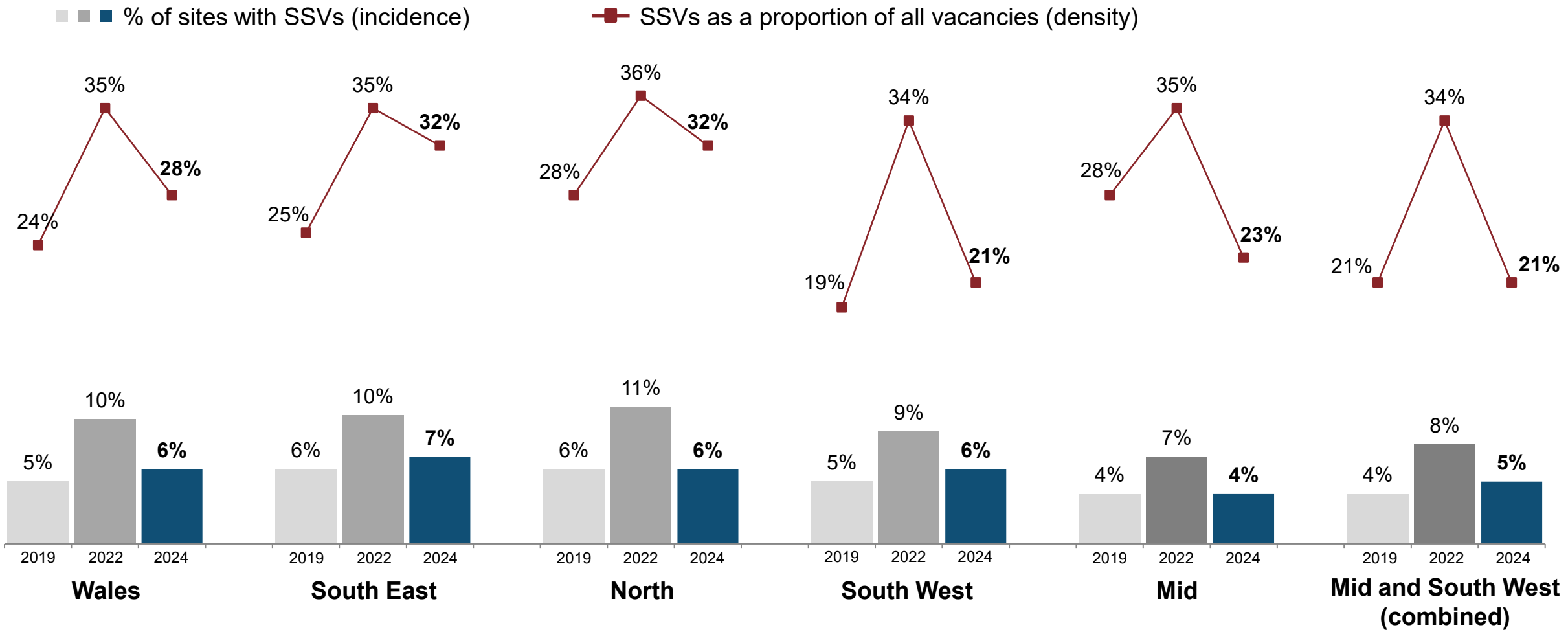
Base: All sites in Wales (2024: 5,605; 2022: 4,825; 2019: 6,773). 2024 regional base sizes range from 717 in Mid Wales to 2,310 in South East Wales.

By sector, vacancy density was highest in the Wholesale & Retail sector



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales (base sizes range from 30 in Information & Communications to 389 in Wholesale & Retail). ***Where base sizes are under 30 within a sector, data has been removed (denoted by a double asterisk); where base sizes are between 30 and 49, an asterisk has been included next to the data value. When base sizes are small, volume and density measures at subgroup level can be heavily influenced by a small number of cases. Results should be interpreted with caution.***

SSV incidence decreased across all regions to levels similar to 2019, and was highest in South East Wales and lowest in Mid Wales



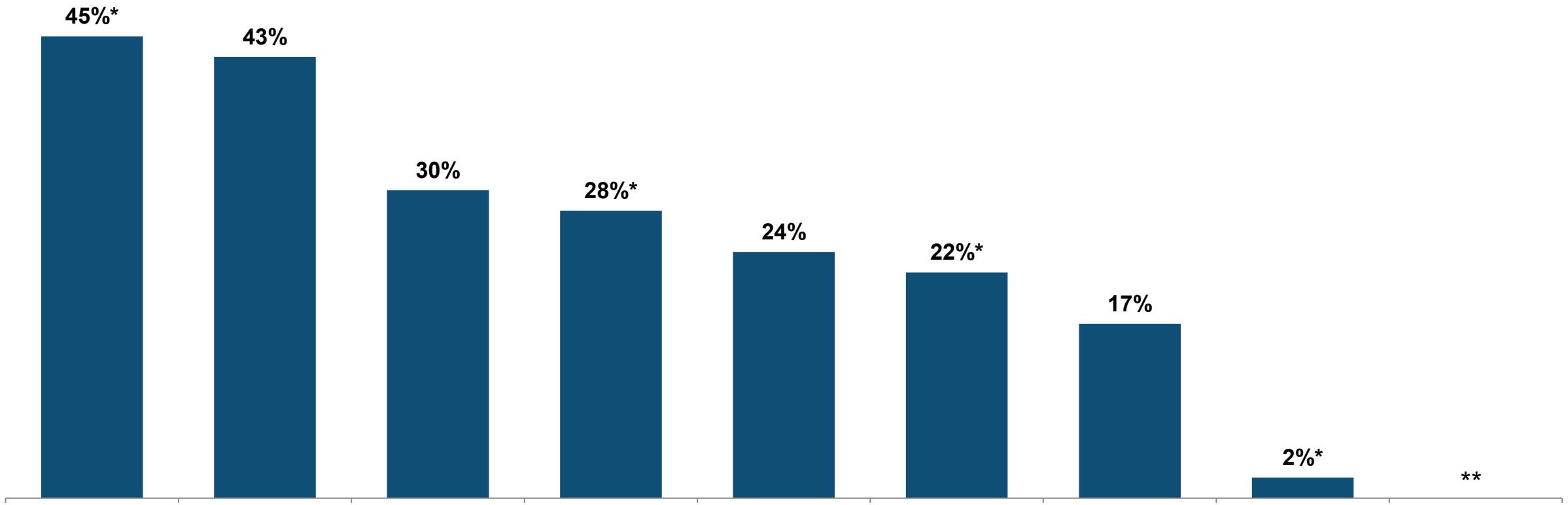
Wales	South East	North	South West	Mid	Mid and South West (combined)
10,100	5,000	2,200	2,200	600	2,800

Number of skill-shortage vacancies (2024)

Base for incidence of skill-shortage vacancies: All sites in Wales: (2024: 5,605; 2022: 4,825; 2019: 6,773). 2024 regional base sizes range from 454 in Mid Wales to 1,321 in South East Wales.

Base for density: All sites in Wales with vacancies: (2024: 1,300; 2019: 1,503; 2022; 1,560). 2024 regional base sizes range from 160 in Mid Wales to 552 in South East Wales.

At the occupational level, the density of skill-shortage vacancies was highest among Associate Professionals roles

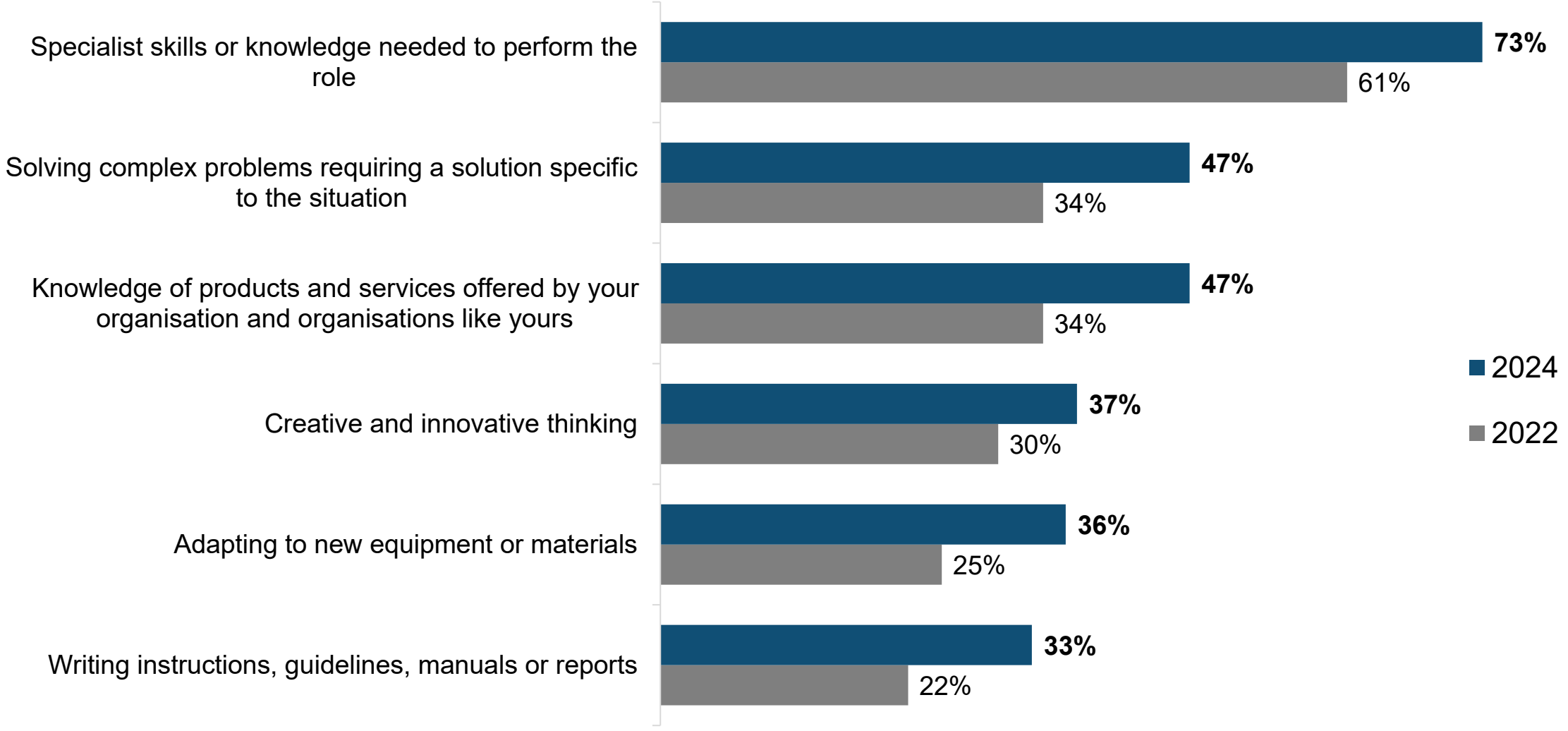


Associate Professionals	Skilled Trades	Professionals	Machine Operatives	Admin. and Secretarial	Caring, Leisure, Other Services	Elementary	Sales and Customer Service	Managers
500	700	300	300	100	400	100	300	**

Number of skill-shortage vacancies (2024)

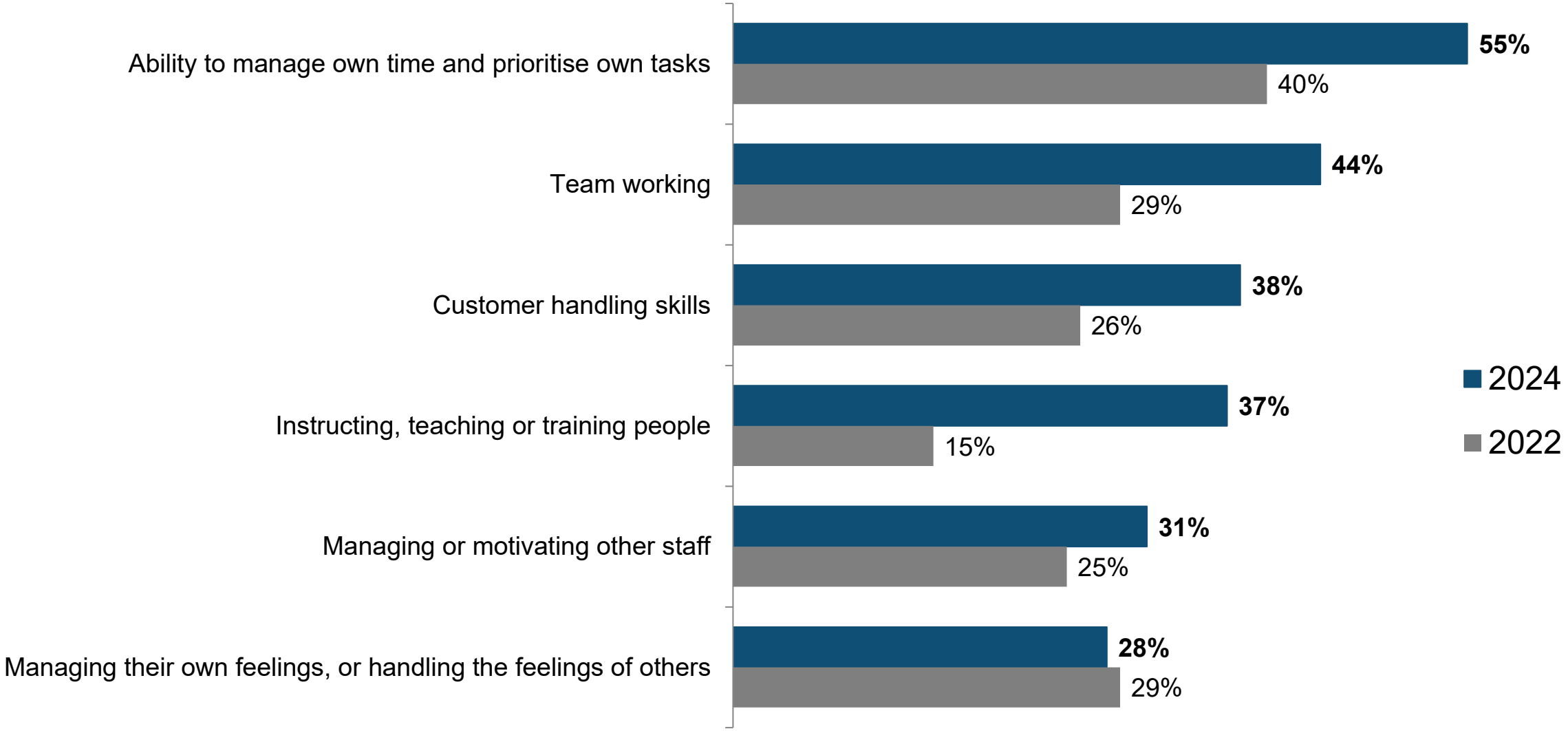
Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales with vacancies in the given occupations: (2024 base sizes range from 36 for Sales and Customer Services to 105 for Elementary). ***Where base sizes are between 30 and 49, an asterisk has been included next to the data value. When base sizes are small, volume and density measures at subgroup level can be heavily influenced by a small number of cases. Results should be interpreted with caution.***

Specialist skills or knowledge remains the most common technical and practical skill reported as lacking among SSV applicants



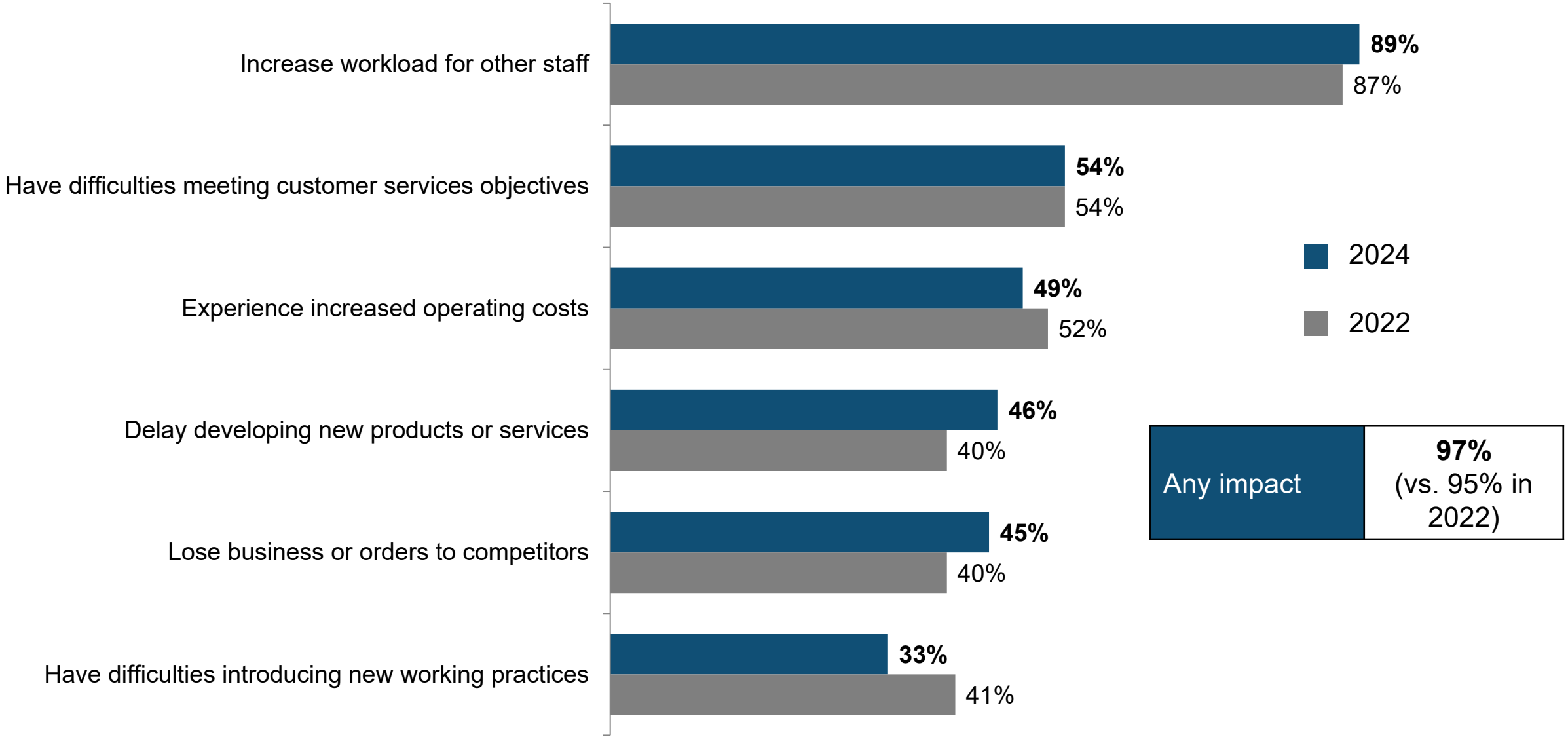
Base: All sites with skill-shortage vacancies in Mid and South West Wales (2024: 142; 2022: 207)
Figures are shown as a percentage of all skill-shortage vacancies followed up (not a percentage of all sites).

There was a notable increase in ability to manage own time and team working as the most common people and personal skills reported to be lacking among SSV applicants



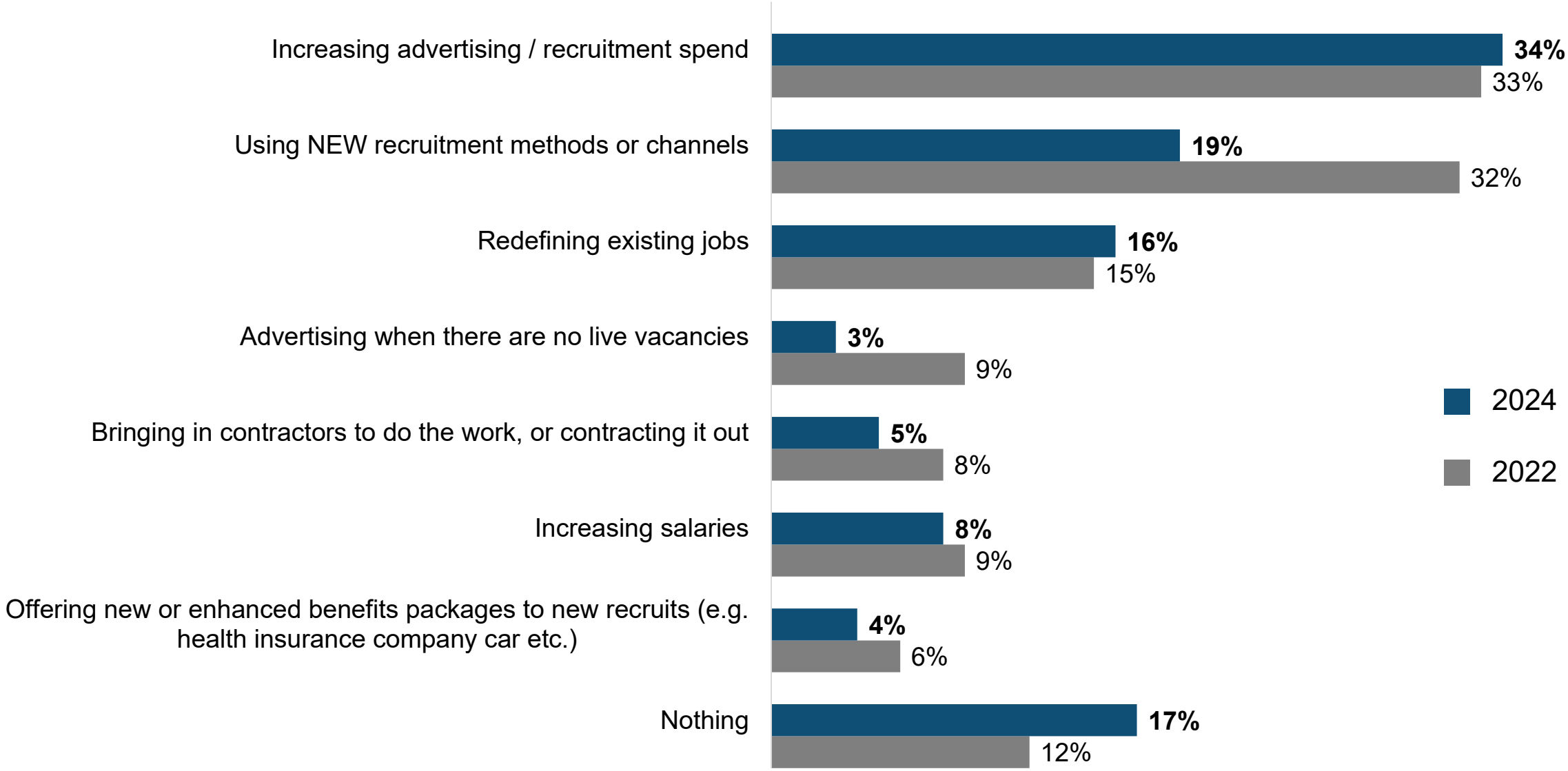
Base: All sites with skill-shortage vacancies in Mid and South West Wales (2024: 142; 2022: 207)
Figures are shown as a percentage of all skill-shortage vacancies followed up (not a percentage of all sites).

The most commonly reported impact of SSVs was an increased workload for other staff, as was the case in 2022



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales with hard-to-fill vacancies that are all as a result of skill shortages (2024: 127; 2022: 167).

There was a notable decrease in employers using new recruitment channels as a means of overcoming hard-to-fill vacancies that are all a result of skills shortages



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales with hard-to-fill vacancies that are all as a result of skill shortages (2024: 127; 2022: 167)

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi
YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH
GSR
GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH
Analysis for Policy

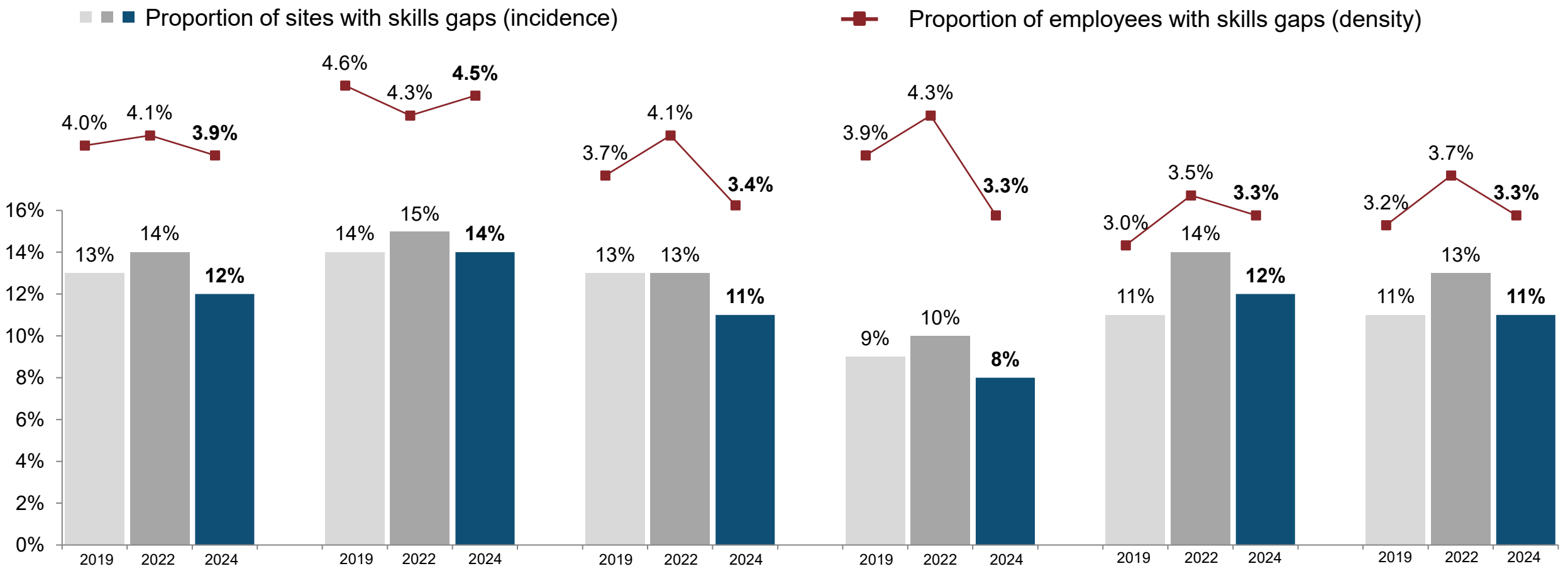
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Skills gaps in the existing workforce

Department for Education

IFF Research

Skills gap incidence and density remained in line with 2022 and 2019 levels across all Welsh regions

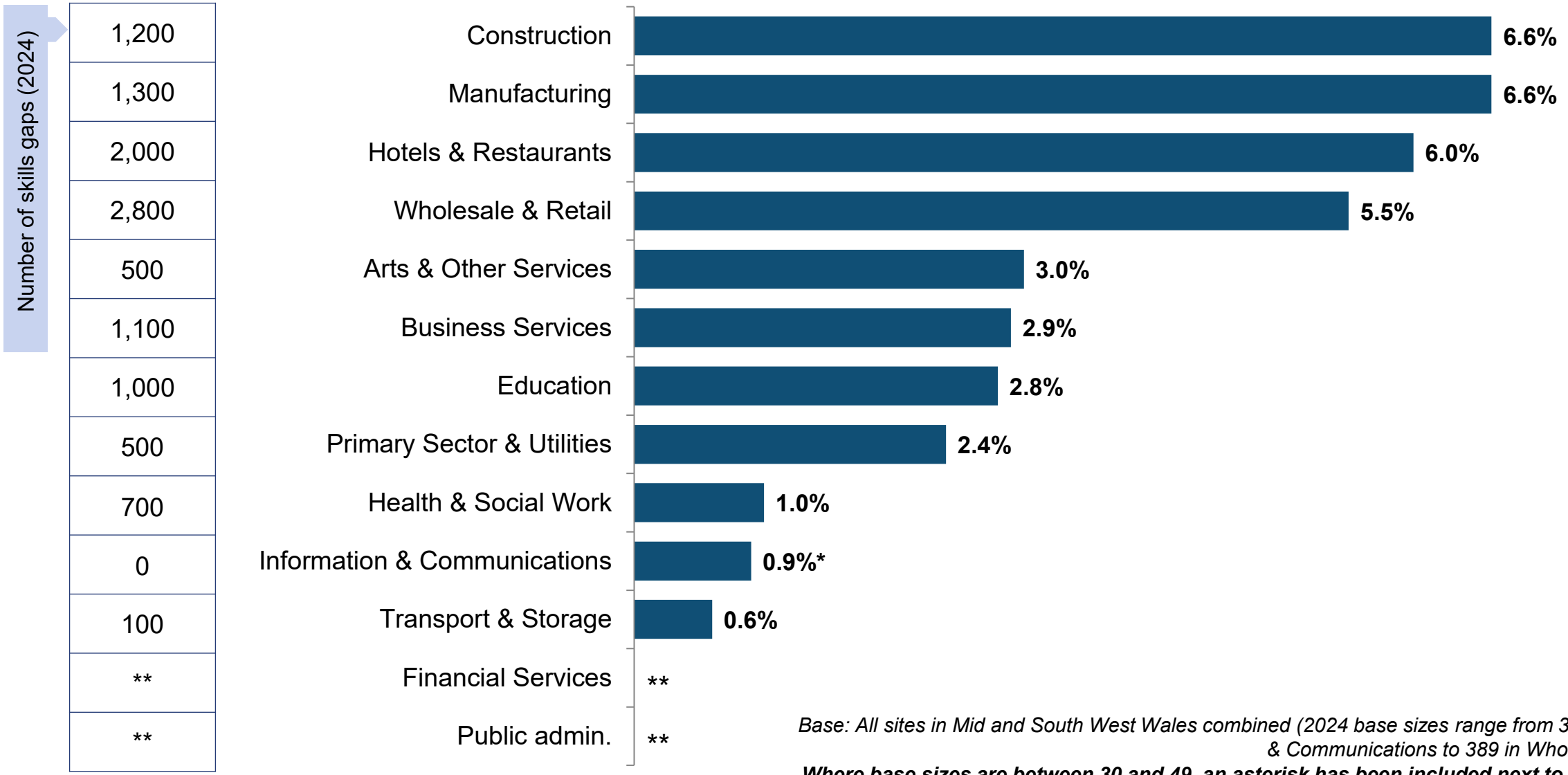


Wales	South East	North	Mid	South West	Mid and South West (combined)
50,400	28,900	9,900	2,700	8,900	11,600

Number of skills gaps (2024)

Base: All sites in Wales (2024: 5,605; 2022: 4,825; 2019: 6,773). 2024 regional base sizes range from 717 in Mid Wales to 2,310 in South East Wales.

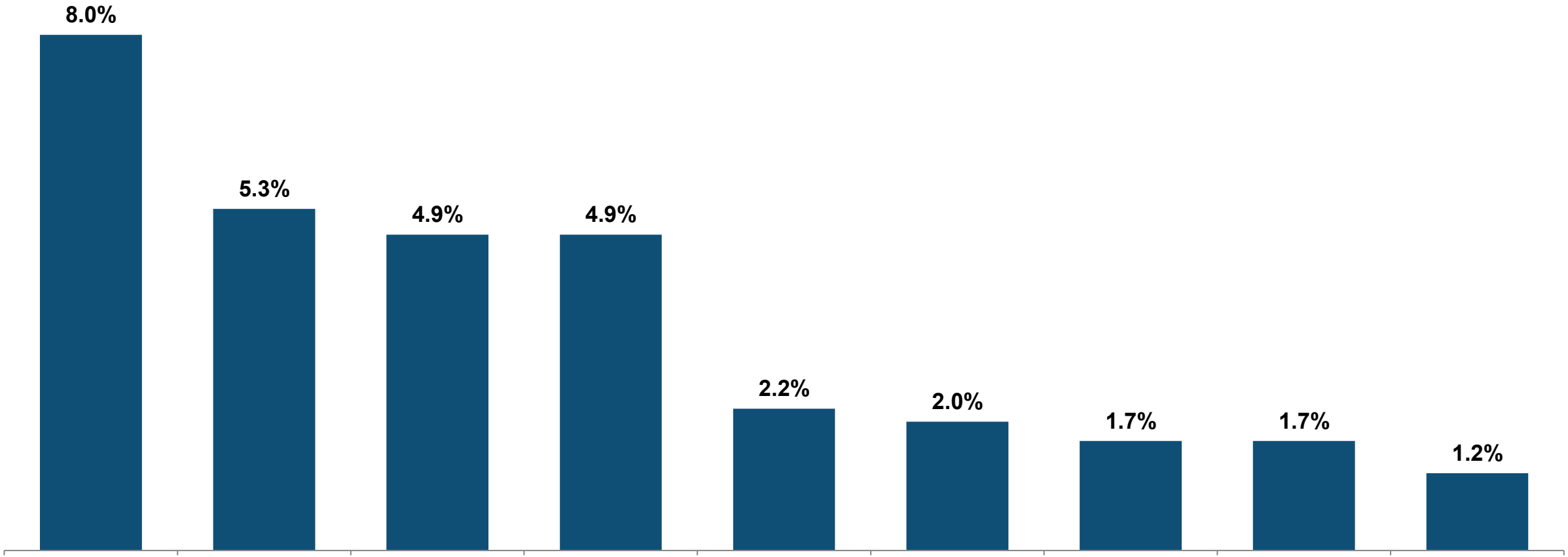
The density of skills gaps was highest in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales combined (2024 base sizes range from 30 in Information & Communications to 389 in Wholesale & Retail).

Where base sizes are between 30 and 49, an asterisk has been included next to the data value. When base sizes are small, volume and density measures at subgroup level can be heavily influenced by a small number of cases. Results should be interpreted with caution.

By occupation, density of skills gaps was highest among Skilled Trades roles

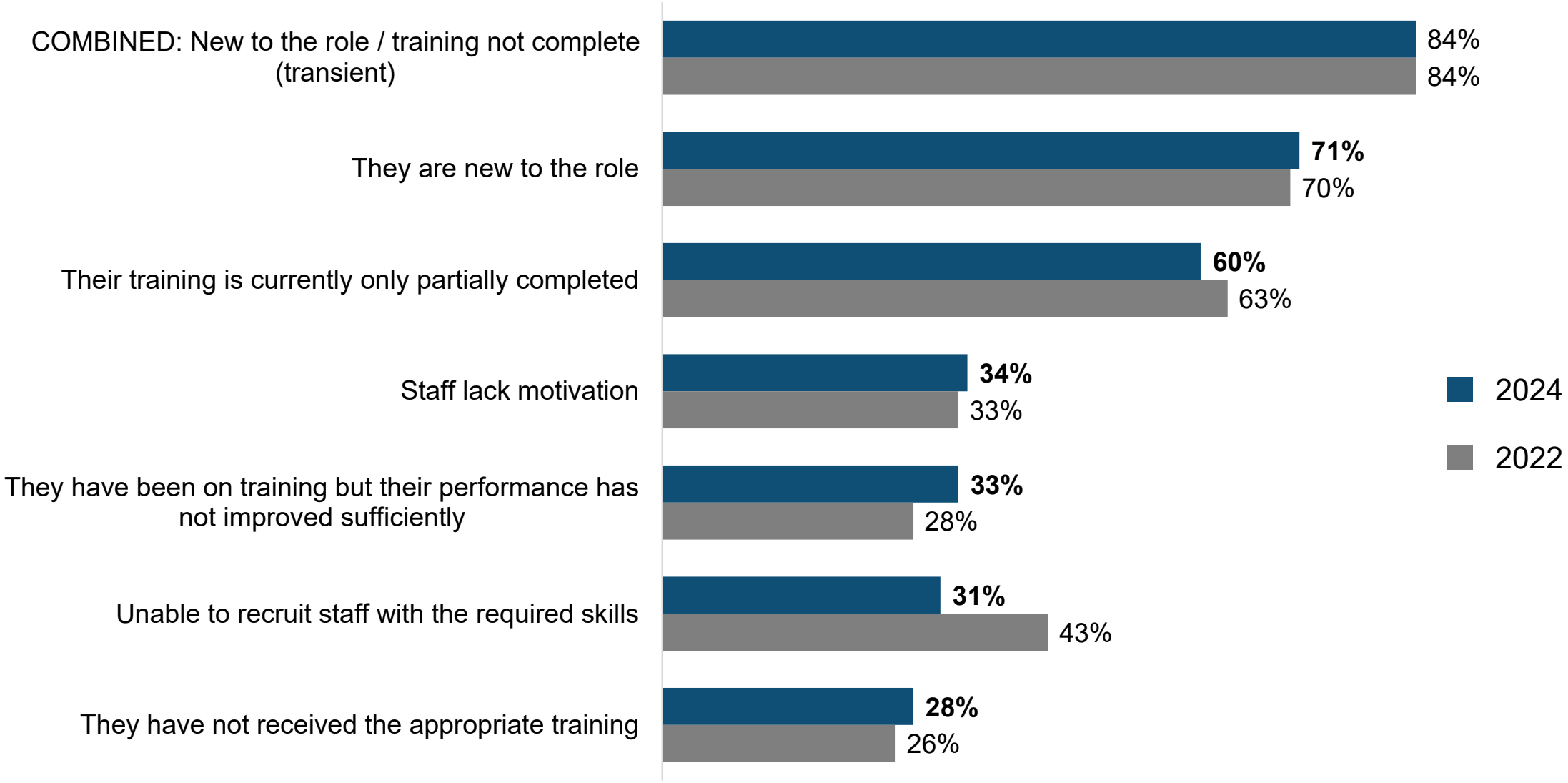


2,300	2,600	2,100	1,100	700	780	890	400	700

Number of skills gaps (2024)

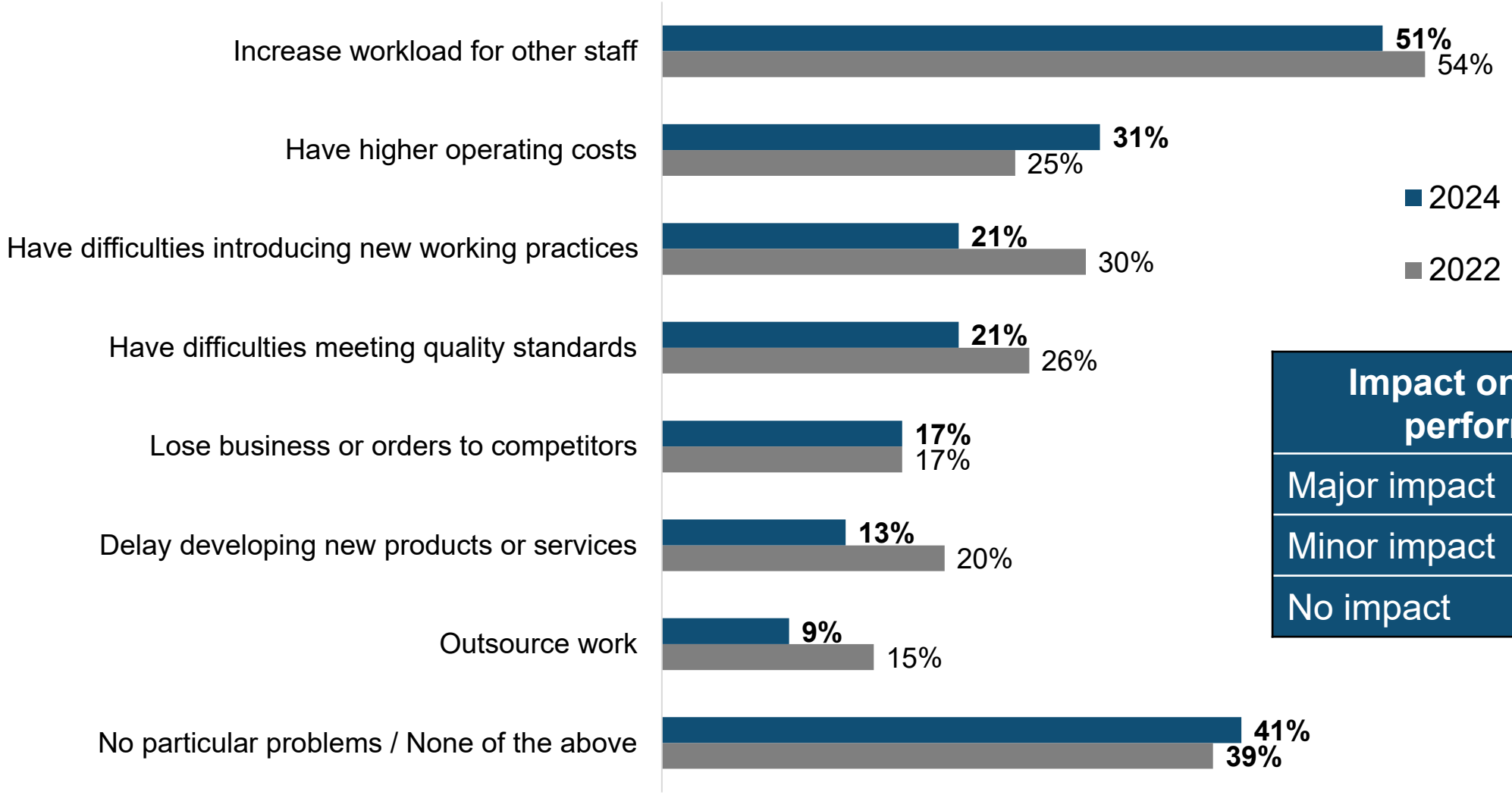
Base: All sites in South East Wales with staff in the given occupations (2024 base sizes range from 253 for Associate Professionals to 1,854 for Managers).

Being new to the role and having an incomplete training continued to be the leading causes of skills gaps



Base: All sites with skills gaps - up to 2 occupations followed up (2024: 332; 2022: 319)
Figures are shown as a percentage of all skills gaps (not a percentage of all sites)

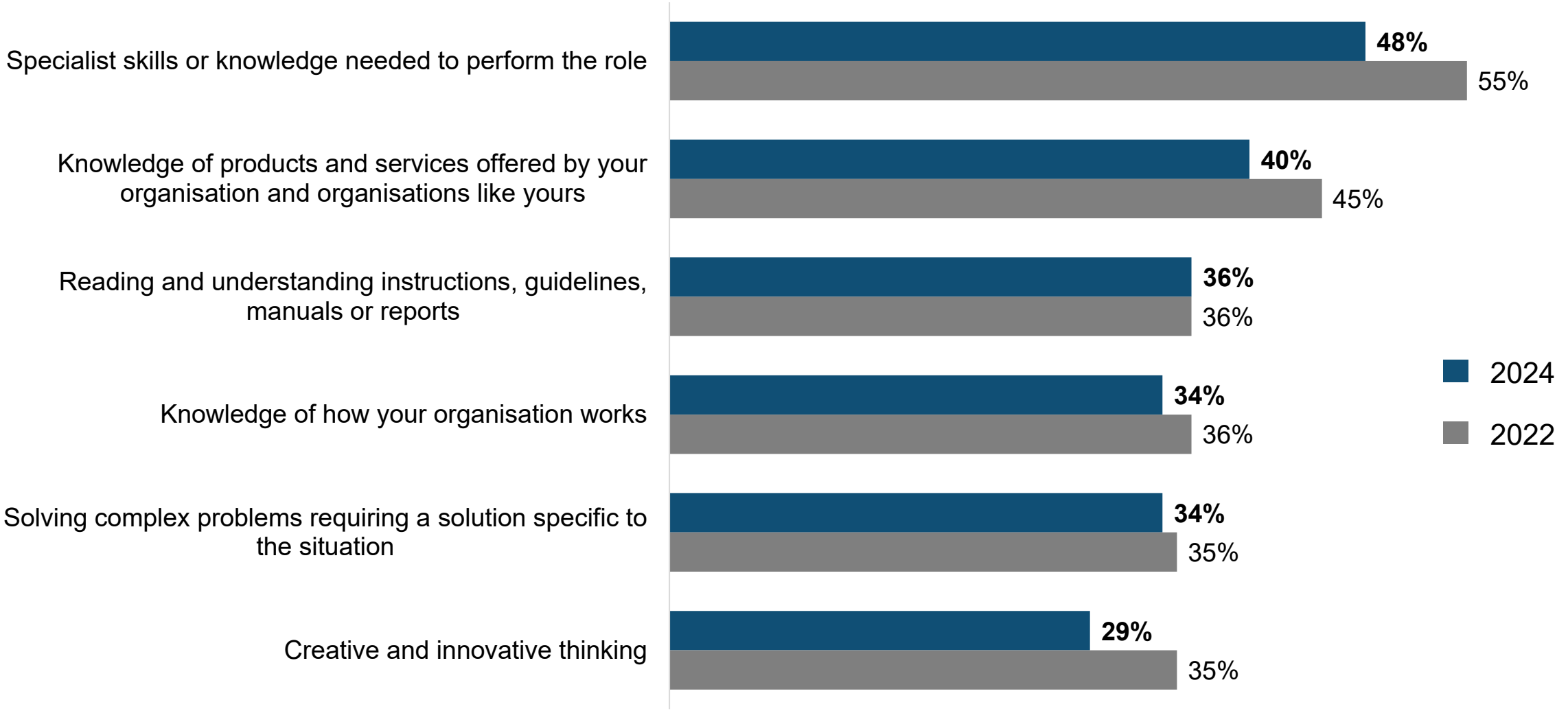
There was a notable decrease in employers reporting having difficulties introducing new working practices as an impact of skills gaps



Impact on employer performance:	
Major impact	11%
Minor impact	53%
No impact	36%

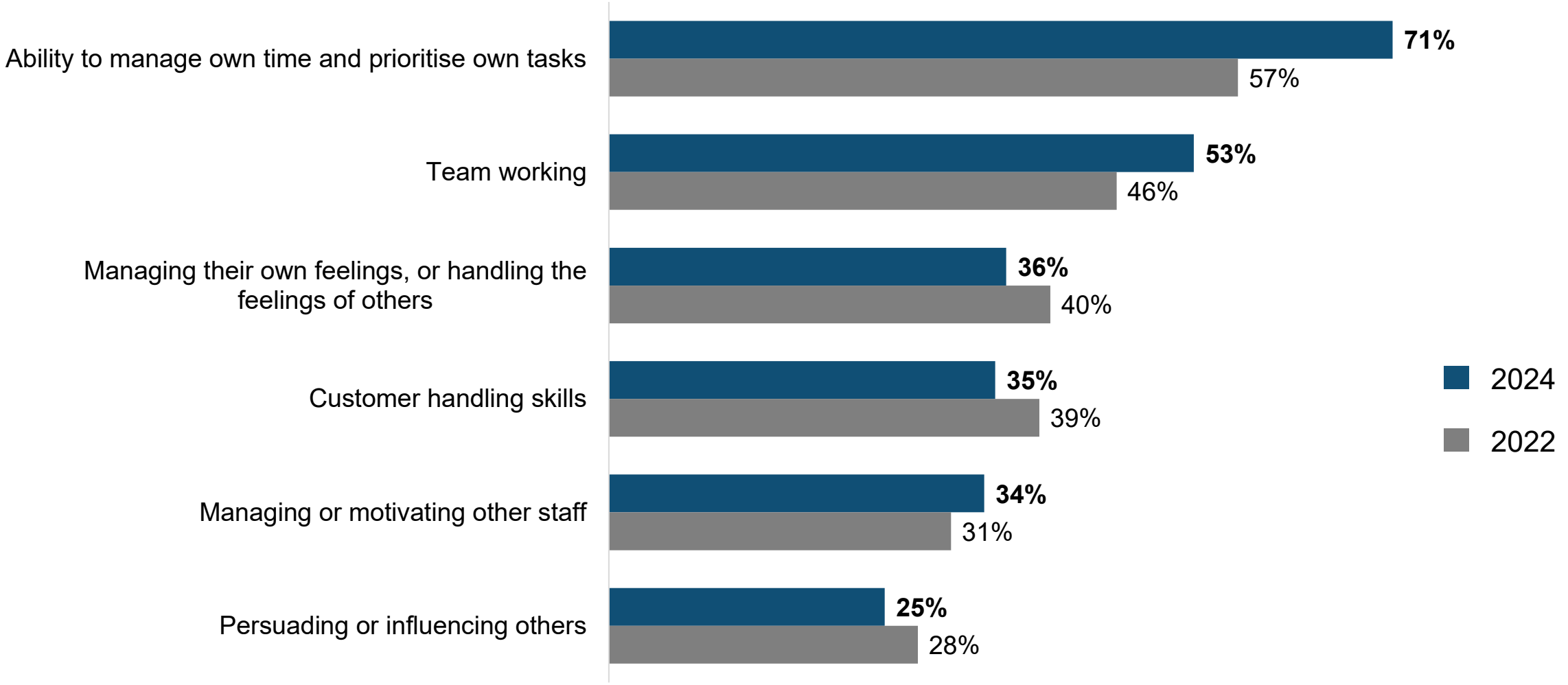
Base: All sites with skills gaps (2024: 332; 2022: 319)

Specialist skills or knowledge remained the most common technical and practical skill reported as lacking among the existing workforce



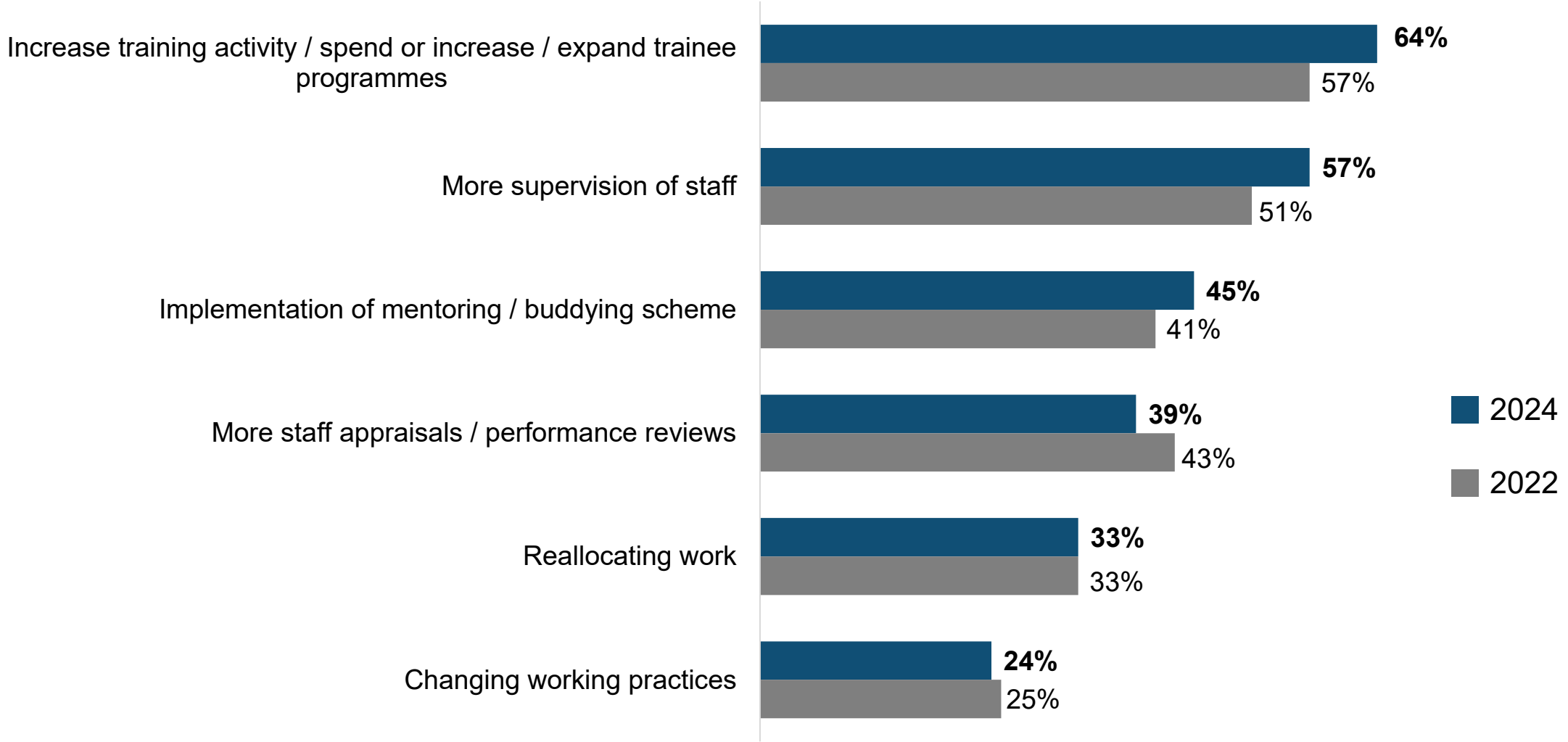
Base: All sites with skills gaps - up to 2 occupations followed up (2024: 332; 2022: 319)
Figures are shown as a percentage of all skills gaps (not a percentage of all sites).

There was a notable increase in the proportion of the workforce reported to be lacking the ability to manage their own time and prioritise tasks



Base: All sites with skills gaps - up to 2 occupations followed up (2024: 332; 2022: 319)
Figures are shown as a percentage of all skills gaps (not a percentage of all sites).

The most common action taken to overcome skills gaps continues to be increase training activity / spend or to increase / expand trainee programmes



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales combined with skills gaps (2024: 332; 2022: 319).

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi

YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH

GSR

GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH

Analysis for Policy

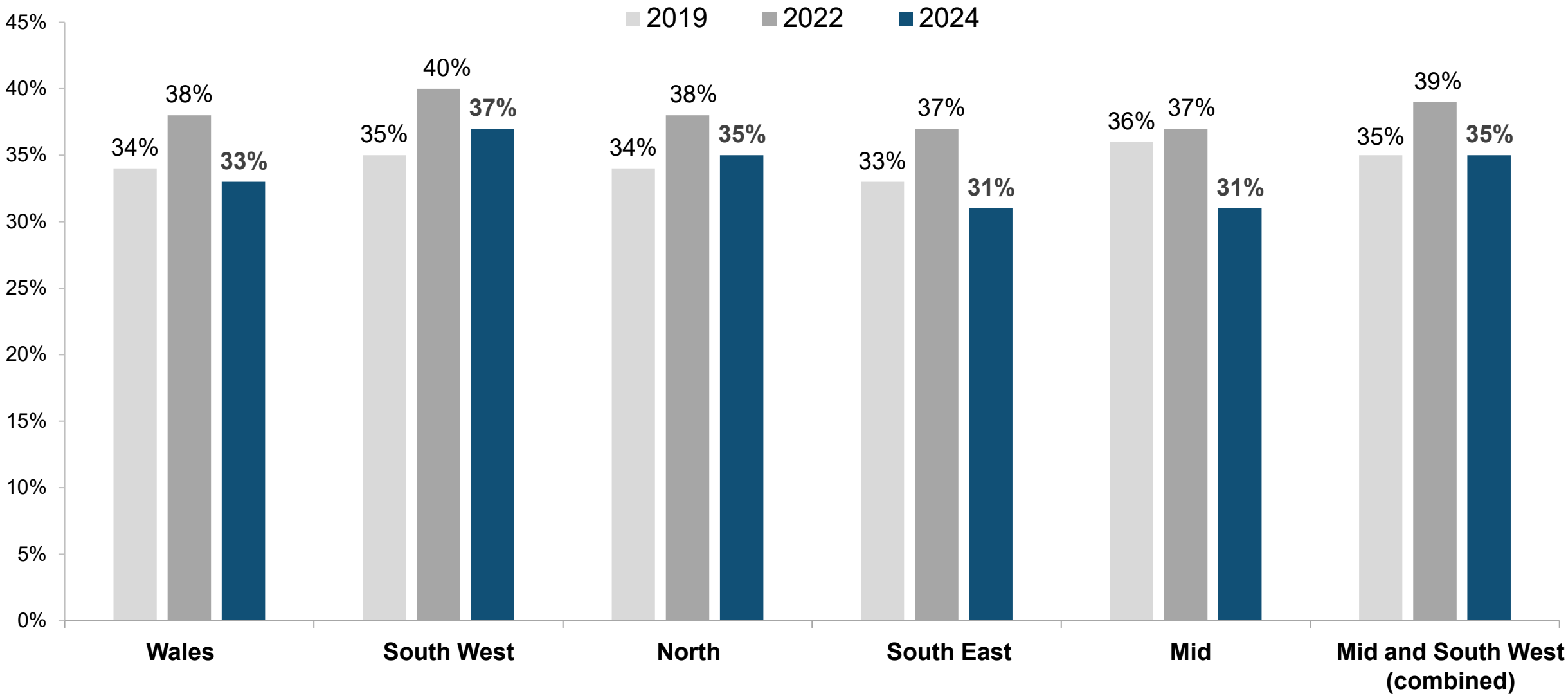
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Under-use of skills and qualifications

Department for Education

IFF Research

South East Wales was the only Welsh region which saw a notable decrease in the proportion of sites with underutilised staff when compared with 2022



Base: All sites 2024 (Module A): Wales: 1,379; regional base sizes range from 181 in Mid Wales to 568 in South East Wales.

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi
YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH
GSR
GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH
Analysis for Policy

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Training and workforce development

Department for Education

IFF Research

Training and workforce development – Mid and South West Wales summary

Measure	2015	2017	2019	2022	2024
% of employers that train	59%	62%	60%	55%	**55%**
% of employers that train off-the-job	45%	48%	43%	33%	**36%**
% that *only* train on-the-job	13%	14%	17%	22%	**19%**
% of staff trained over the last 12 months	65%	59%	62%	63%	**63%**
Days training per person trained	7.3	8.5	5.6	5.6	**5.4**
Total training days provided	1.6m	1.7m	1.2m	1.2m	**1.2m**

The number of training days per person trained in Mid and South West Wales has remained broadly consistent since 2019

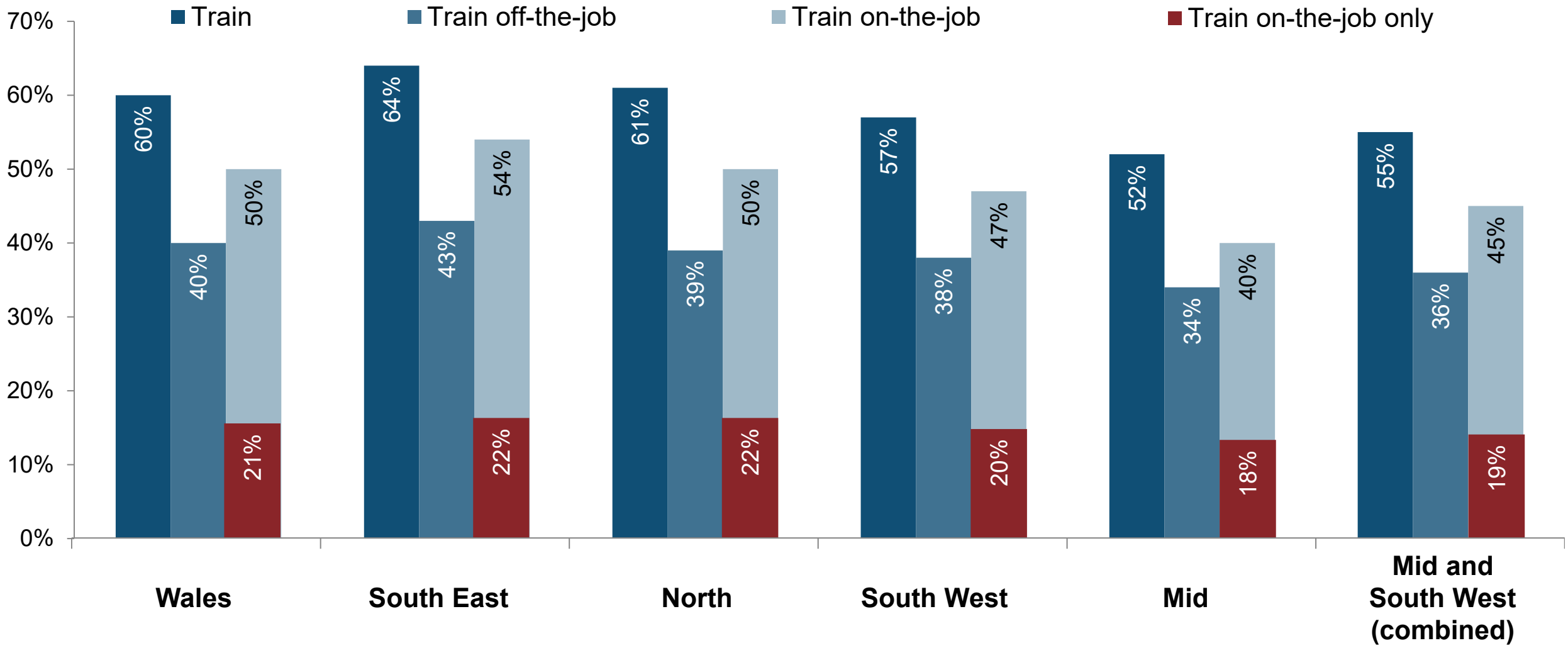
By nation and region	Days per person trained			Total training days		
	2019	2022	**2024**	2019	2022	**2024**
Wales	5.1	6.8	**6.6**	4.2m	5.3m	**5.4m**
North	5.5	6.9	**4.9**	1.1m	1.3m	**0.9m**
Mid	6.4	5.2	**5.8**	0.3m	0.3m	**0.3m**
South East	4.7	7.4	**8.0**	1.9m	2.8m	**3.3m**
South West	5.4	5.7	**5.3**	0.9m	1.0m	**0.9m**
Mid and South West (combined)	5.6	5.6	**5.4**	1.2m	1.2m	**1.2m**

Arts and Other Services employers provided the most training days per trainee in 2024

By sector	Days per person trained	Total training days
Primary Sector & Utilities	**5.5**	**49,000**
Manufacturing	**7.8**	**84,000**
Construction	**6.7**	**66,000**
Wholesale & Retail	**4.7**	**147,000**
Hotels & Restaurants	**4.5**	**88,000**
Transport & Storage	**5.9**	**38,600**
Information & Communications	**	**
Financial Services	**	**
Business Services	**4.7**	**132,000**
Public Administration	**	**
Education	**4.6**	**128,000**
Health & Social Work	**5.0**	**294,000**
Arts & Other Services	**11.2**	**104,000**

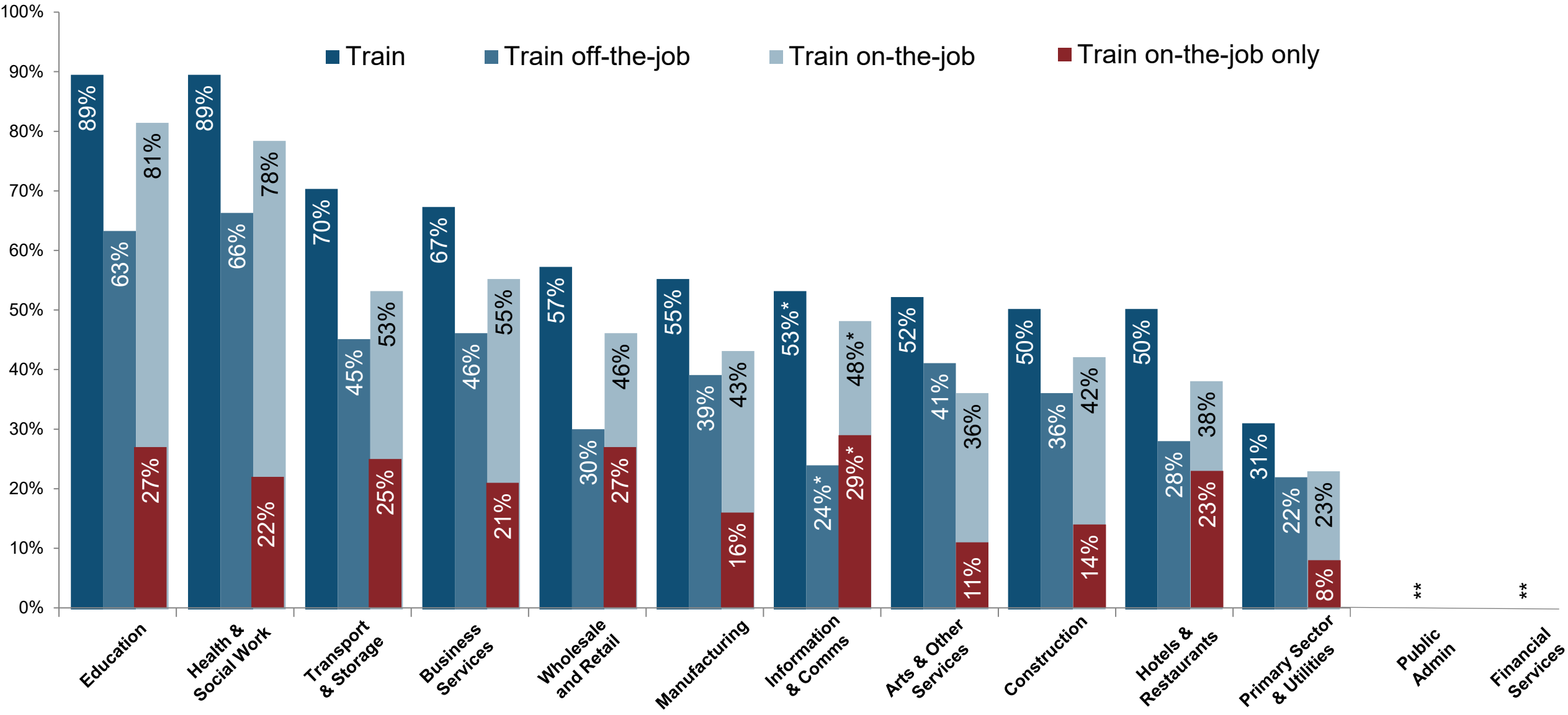
Where base sizes are between 30 and 49, an asterisk has been included next to the data value. Where base sizes are under 30 within a sector, data has been removed (denoted by a double asterisk); when base sizes are small, volume and density measures at subgroup level can be heavily influenced by a small number of cases. Results should be interpreted with caution.

Employers in South East Wales were most likely to have funded or arranged training for their staff. Mid & SW Wales employers were less likely to have done so than Wales overall



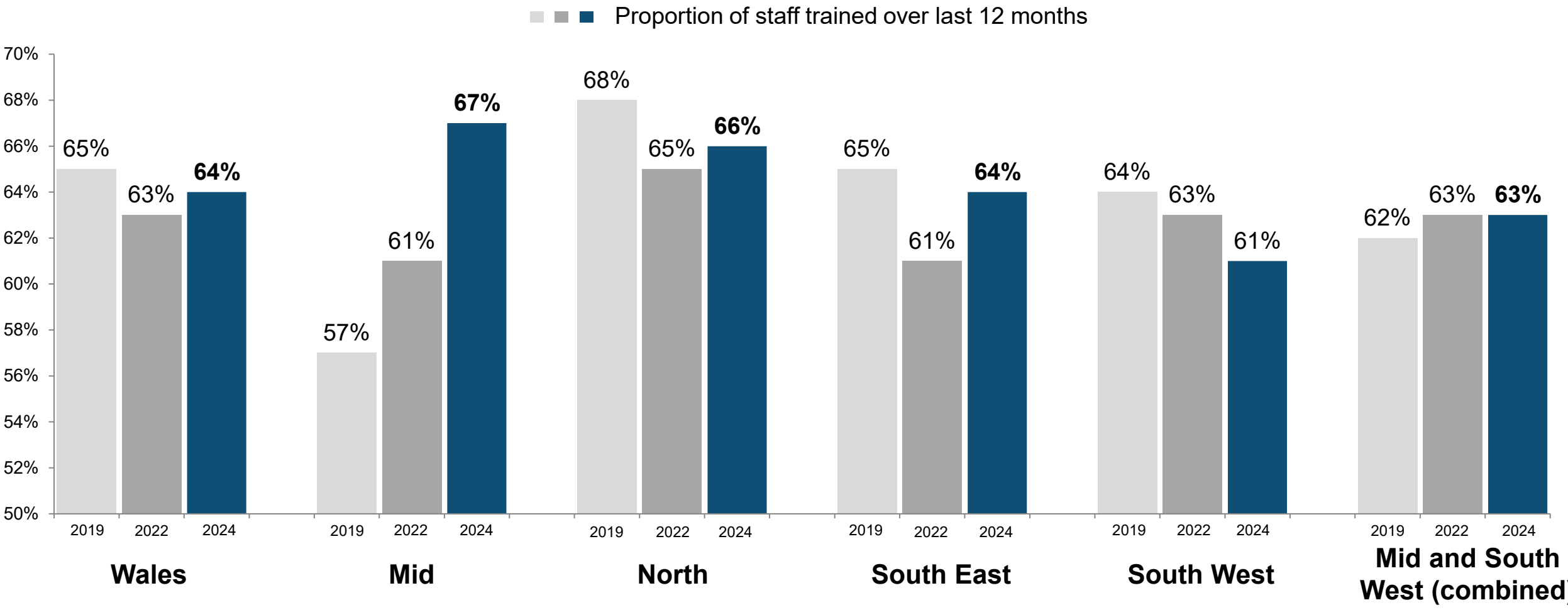
Base: All sites 2024: Wales: 5,605; regional base sizes range from 717 in Mid Wales to 2,310 in South East Wales.

Employers in Education and Health and Social Work were most likely to have provided any training



Base: All sites Mid and South West Wales 2024 (base sizes range from 30 in Information and Communications to 389 in Wholesale and Retail). ***Where base sizes are under 30 within a sector for 2024, data has been removed (denoted by a double asterisk); where base sizes are between 30 and 49, an asterisk has been included next to the data value.***

The proportion of staff trained in Mid and South West Wales did not significantly change when compared with previous years and was in line with Wales overall

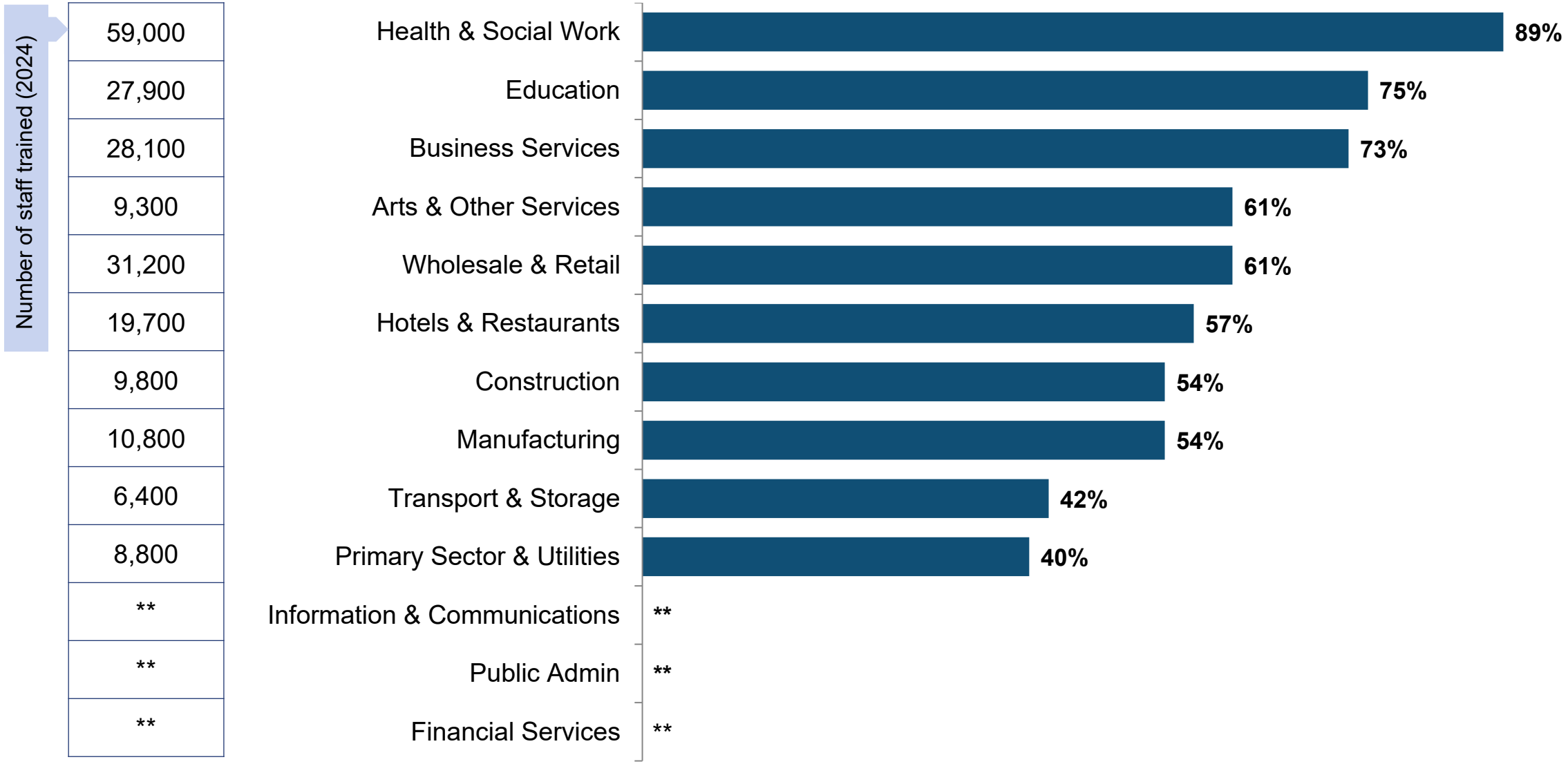


823,400	54,000	192,000	410,700	166,700	220,700

Number of staff trained (2024)

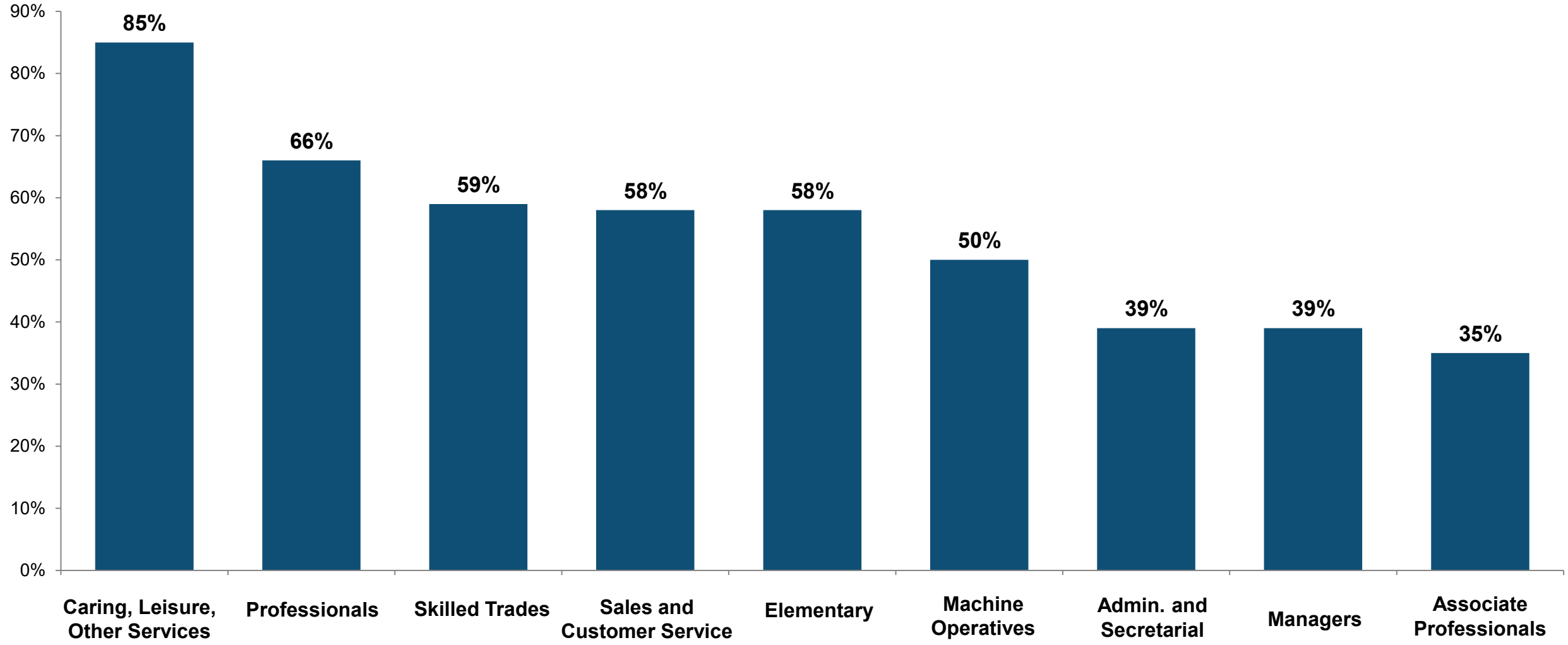
Base: All sites in Wales: (2024: 5,605; 2022: 4,825; 2019: 6,773). 2024 regional base sizes range from 717 in Mid Wales to 2,310 in South East Wales.

The Health and Social Work sector saw the largest proportion of staff trained in 2024



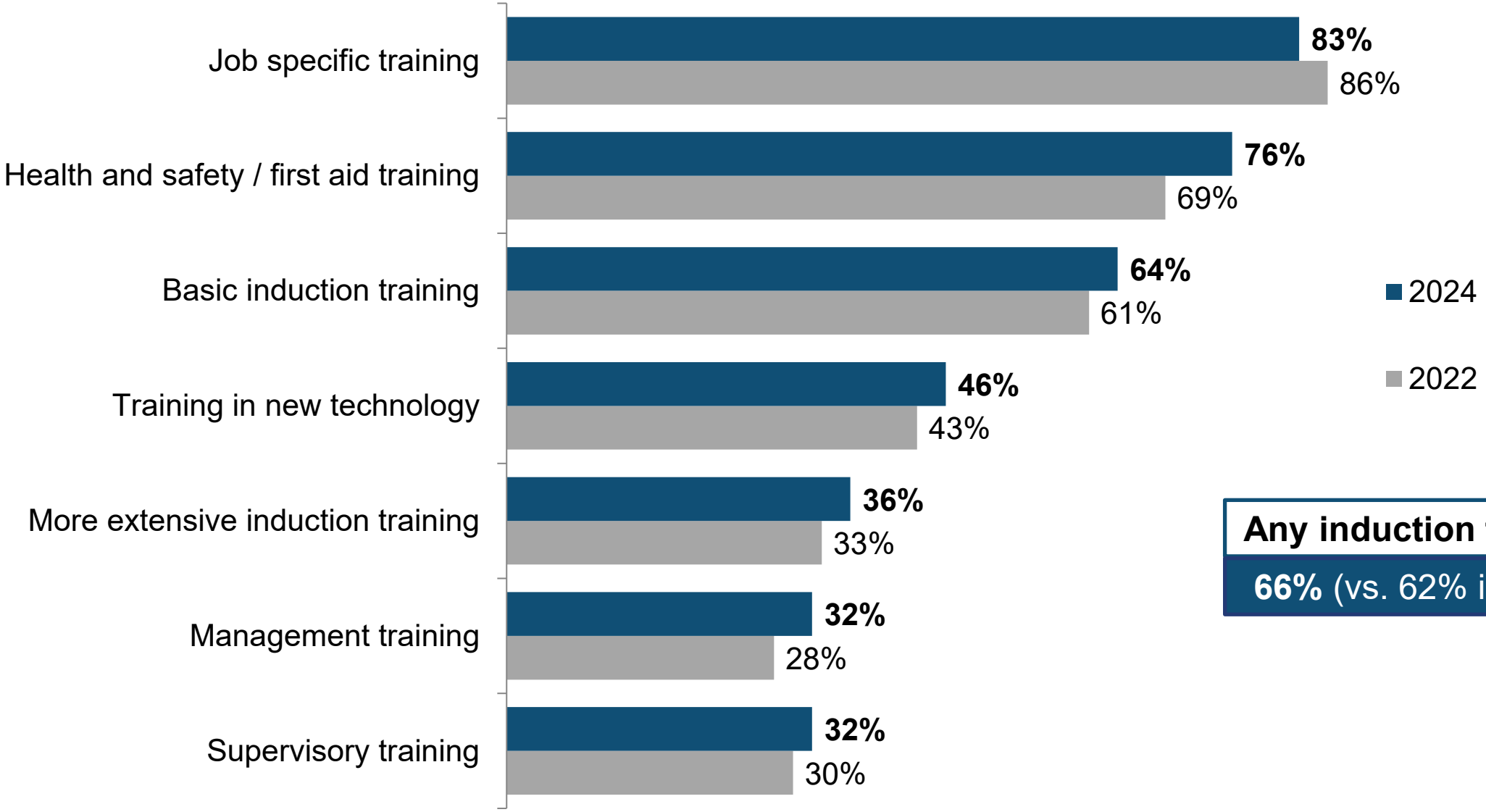
Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales 2024 (base sizes range from 50 in Transport and Storage to 247 in Wholesale and Retail).
Where base sizes are under 30 within a sector for 2024, data has been removed (denoted by a double asterisk)

Those in Caring, Leisure & Other Services roles were most likely to have received training in the past 12 months



Base: All that employ each occupation in Mid and South West Wales (excluding modelled data) (2024 base sizes range from 178 Associate Professionals 885 for Managers).

The most common type of training, as in 2022, was job specific training, followed by health and safety / first aid training

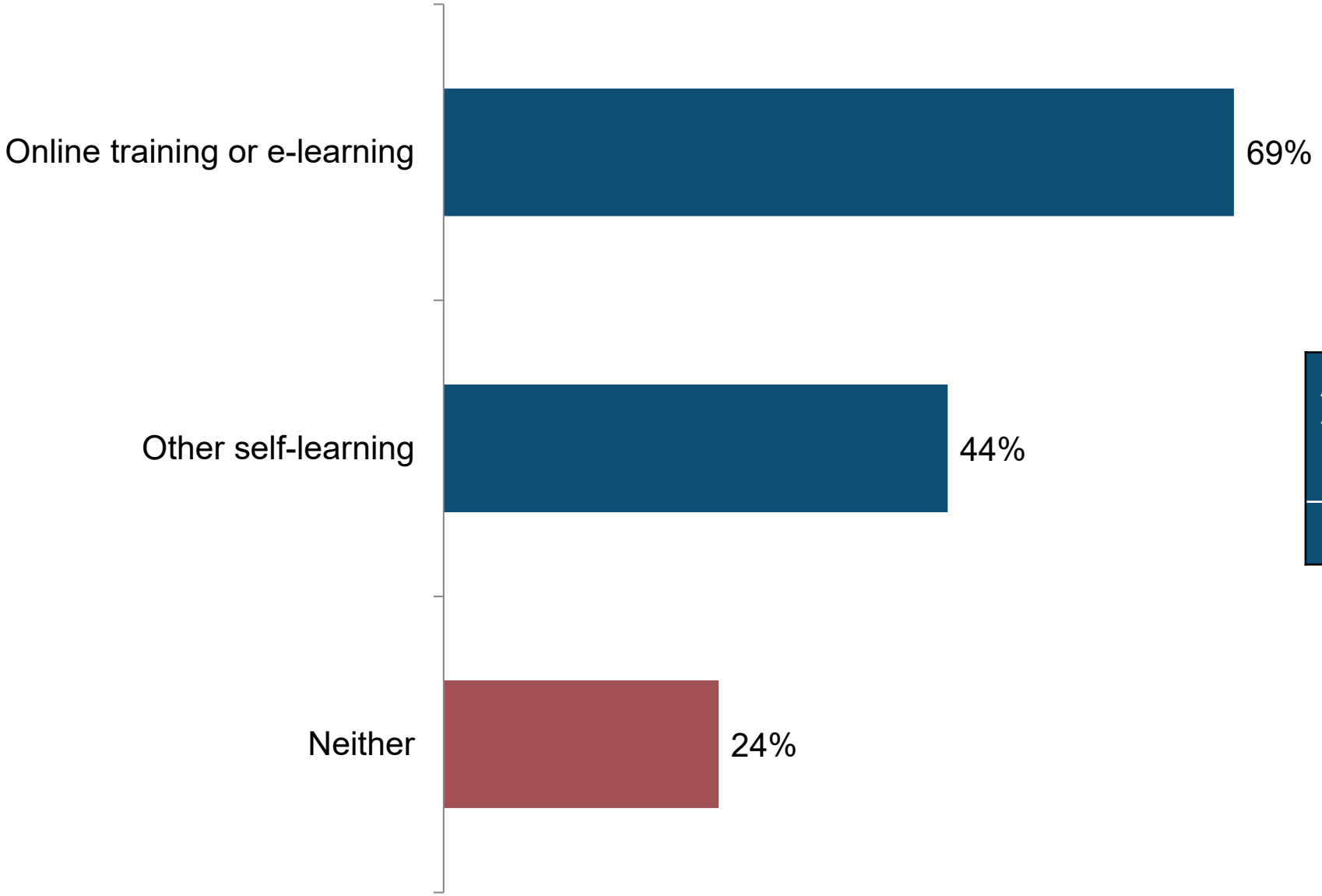


Any induction training

66% (vs. 62% in 2022)

Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales that train (2024: 1,345; 2022: 1,177)

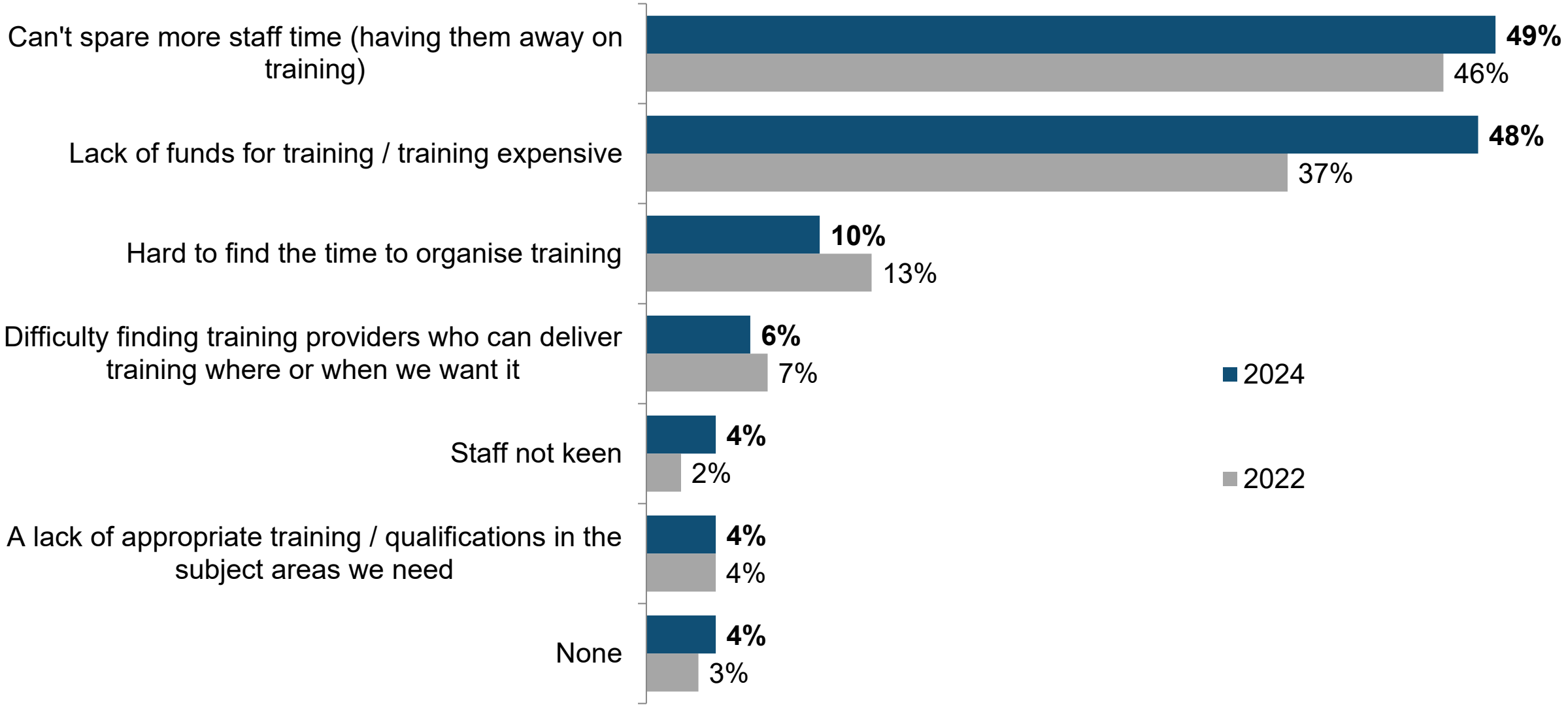
Around 7 in 10 employers that trained their staff offered online or e-learning training



Any online training or self-learning	75%
Both	38%

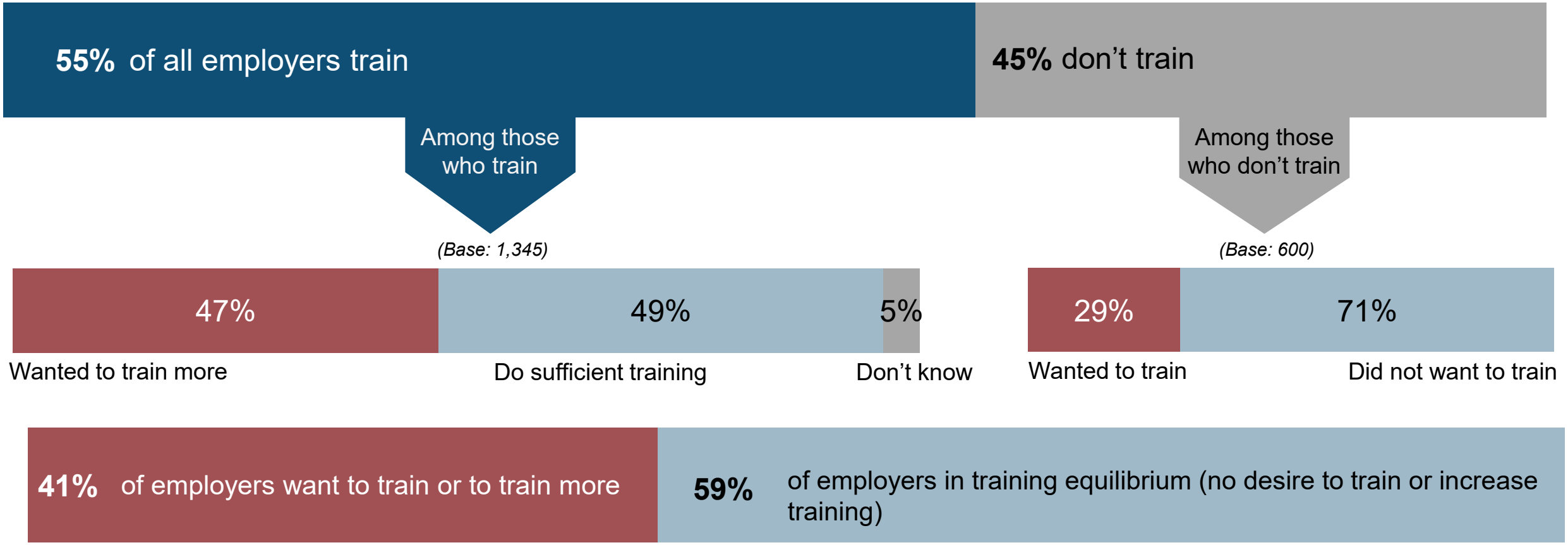
Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales that train (2024: 1,345)

The inability to spare more staff time and a lack of funds for training were the most cited barriers to employers providing more training



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales who would have provided more training in the past 12 months if they could (2024: 672; 2022: 602).

Around 3 in 5 employers in Mid and South West Wales wanted to provide more training



41% of employers want to train or to train more

59% of employers in training equilibrium (no desire to train or increase training)

*Note training employers responding 'Don't know' (5%) have been included in the group 'Want to train more' on the final measure

Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales (1,945). Note, the percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi

YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH

GSR

GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH

Analysis for Policy

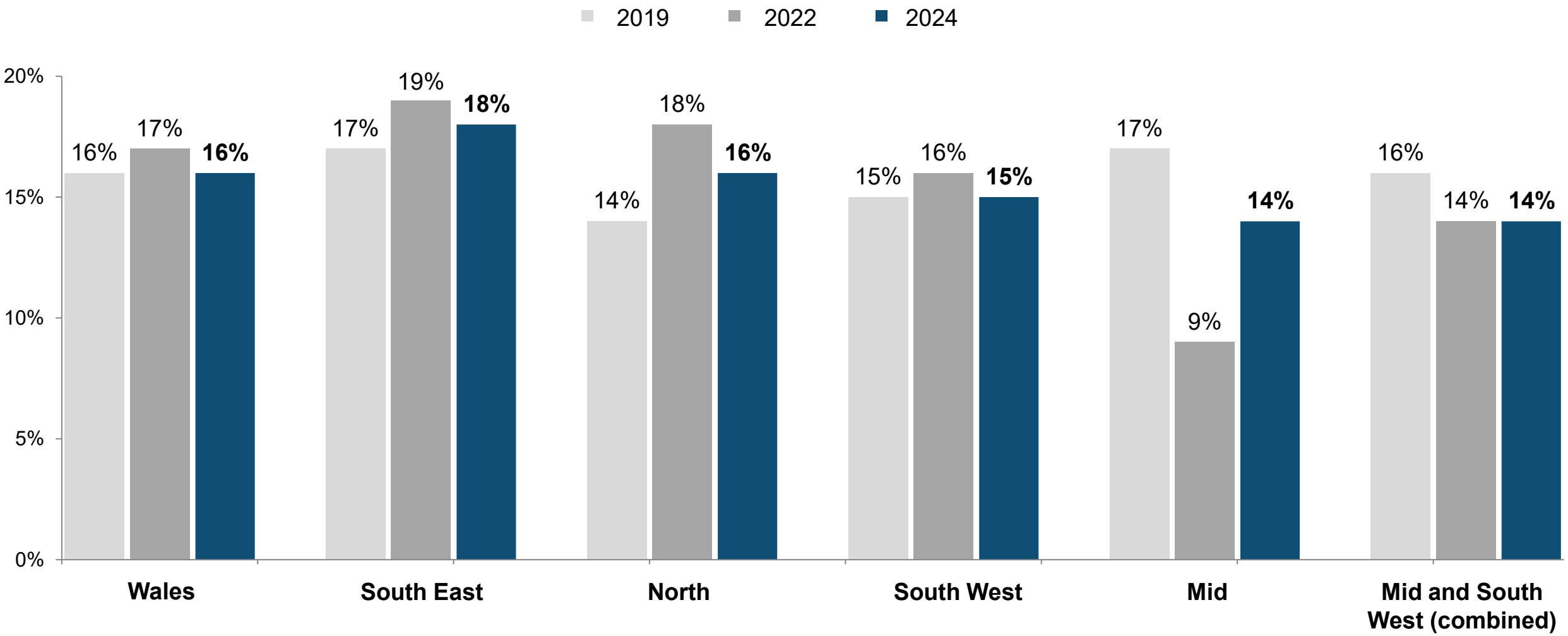
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Apprenticeships

Department for Education

IFF Research

The proportion of employers who offered apprenticeships was similar to previous years across the Welsh regions



Base: All sites in Wales (Module A) 2024: 1,379; 2022: 1,239; 2019: 1,704. 2024 regional base size ranges from 181 in Mid Wales to 568 in South East Wales.

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi
YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH
GSR
GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH
Analysis for Policy

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

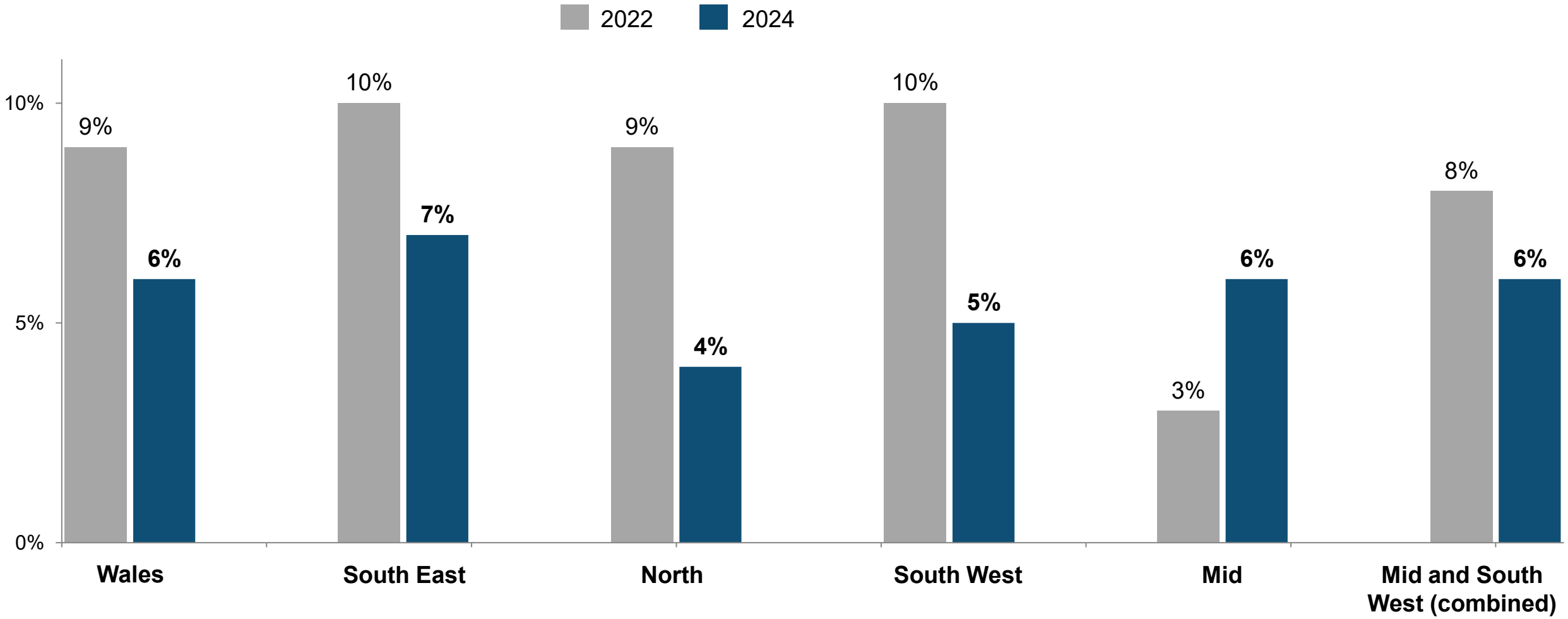
High Performance Working Practices

High Performance Working (HPW) practices are practices recognised to ensure employee skills are harnessed, nurtured and used to their best effect

Department for Education

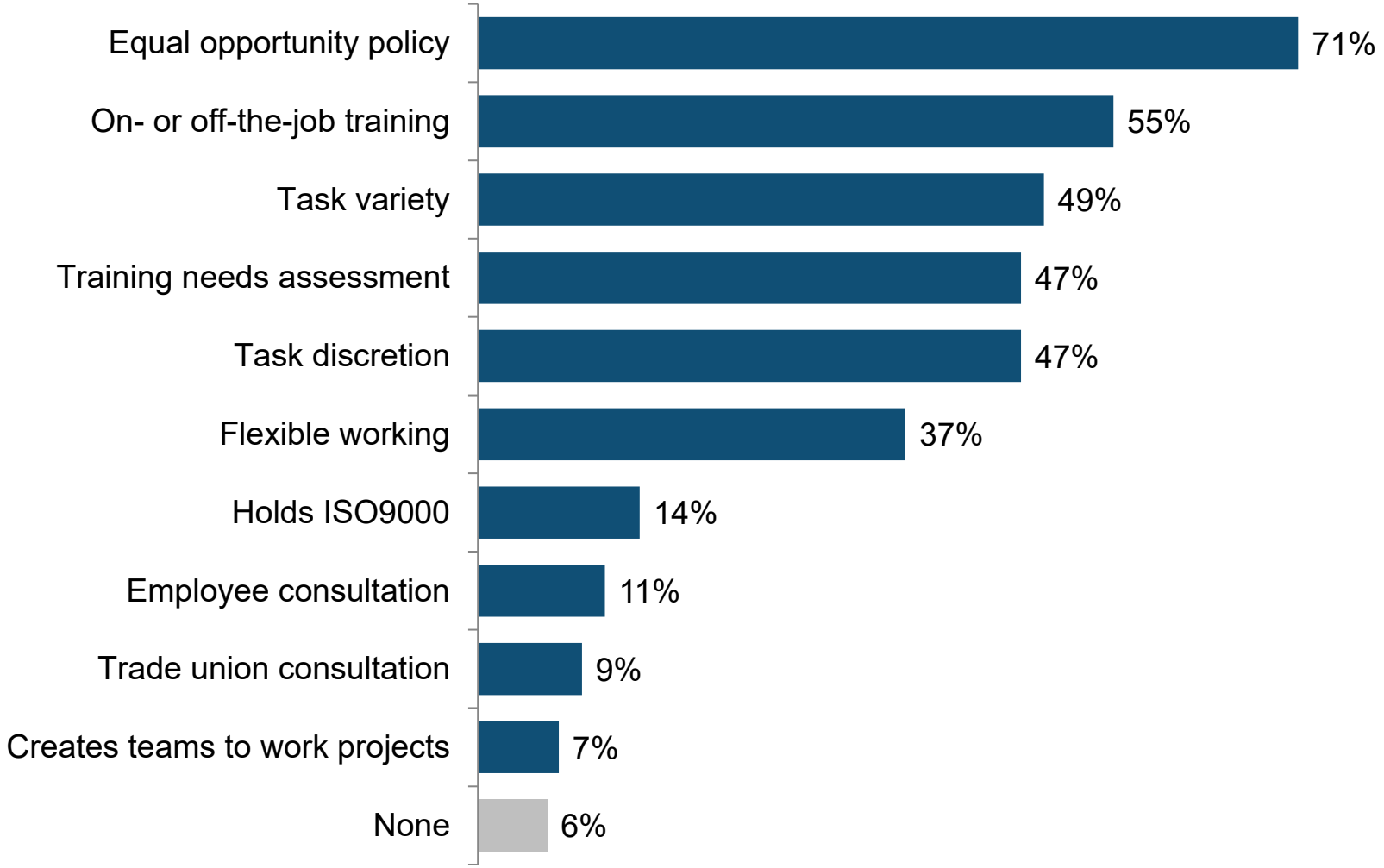
IFF Research

The proportion of employers in Mid and South West Wales that were HPW employers was in line with the average across Wales as a whole



Base: All sites in Wales 2024: 1,396; 2022 (Module D): 1,153. 2024 regional base size ranges from 190 in Mid Wales to 595 in South East Wales.

The most common HPW practice implemented by employers was having an equal opportunity policy



6%

were HPW employers (defined as having 7 of 10 HPW measures in place)

Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales (473).

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi
YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH
GSR
GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH
Analysis for Policy

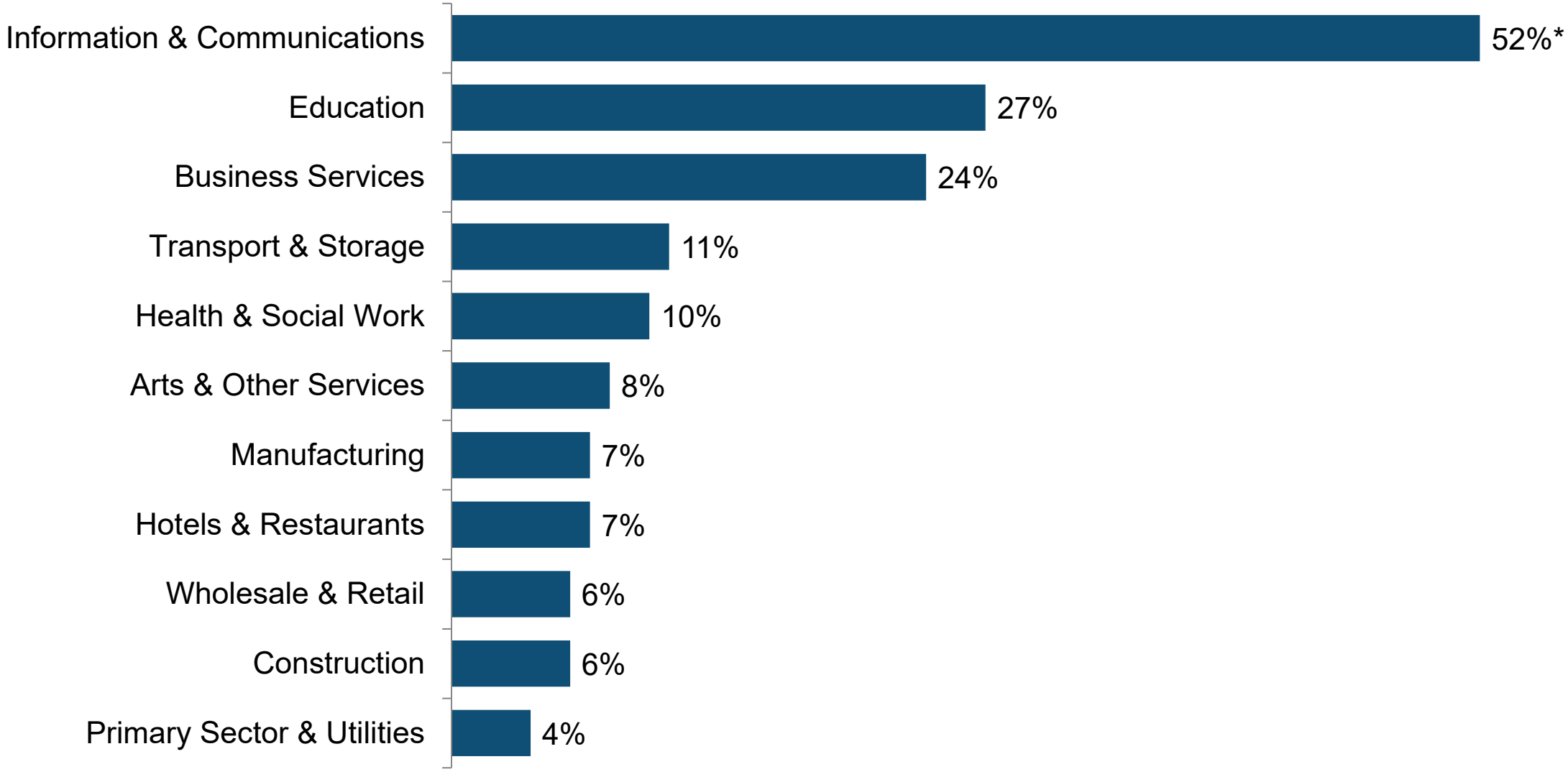
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Current and planned use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Department for Education

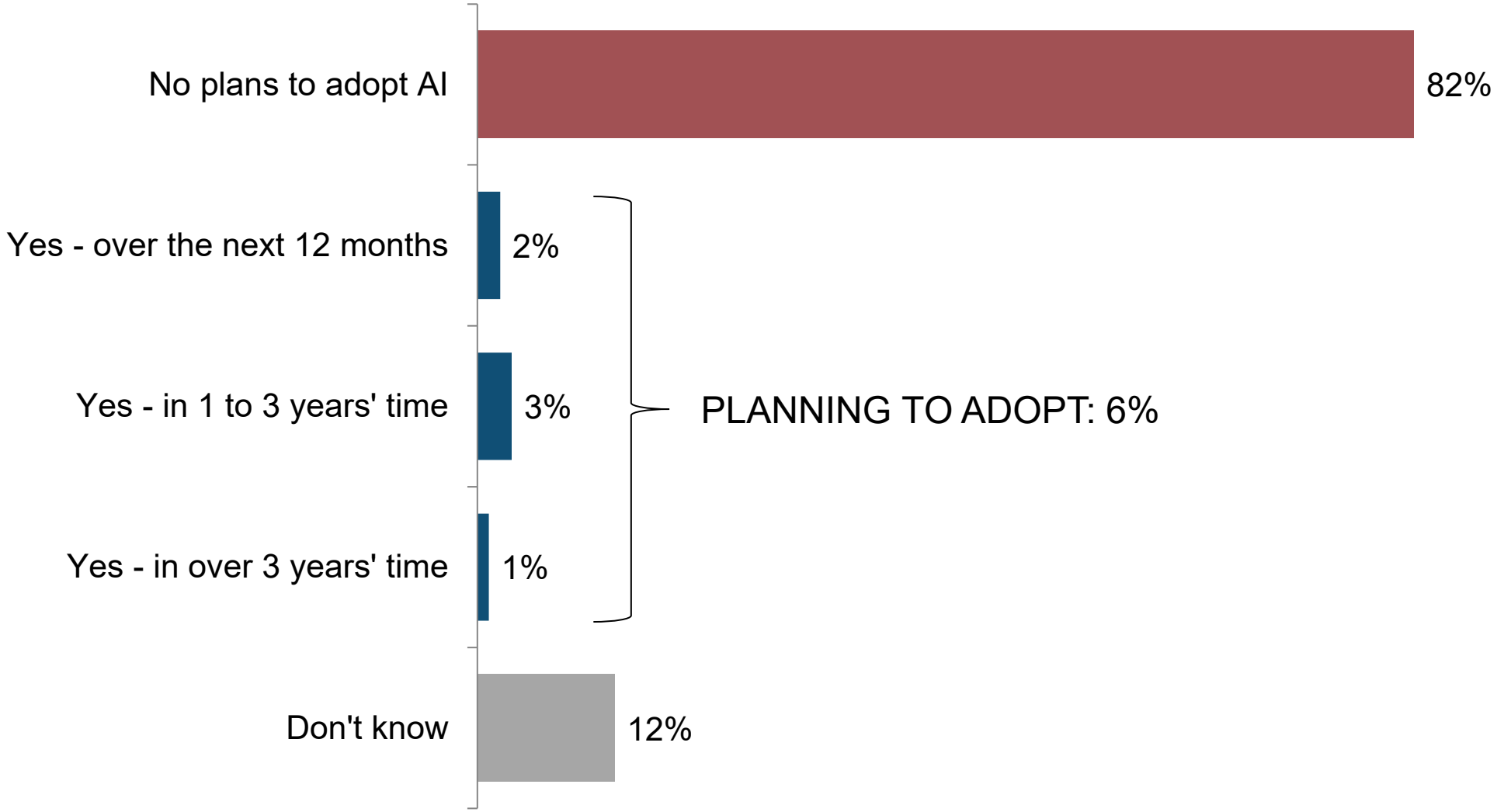
IFF Research

Over half of employers in the Information & Communications sector were using AI, more than twice as many as any other sector



Base: All sites (base sizes range from 30 in Information and Communications to 389 in Wholesale and Retail)

Most employers not using AI had no plans to adopt it



Base: All sites that do not use Artificial Intelligence (AI) (1,633)

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi

YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH

GSR

GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH

Analysis for Policy

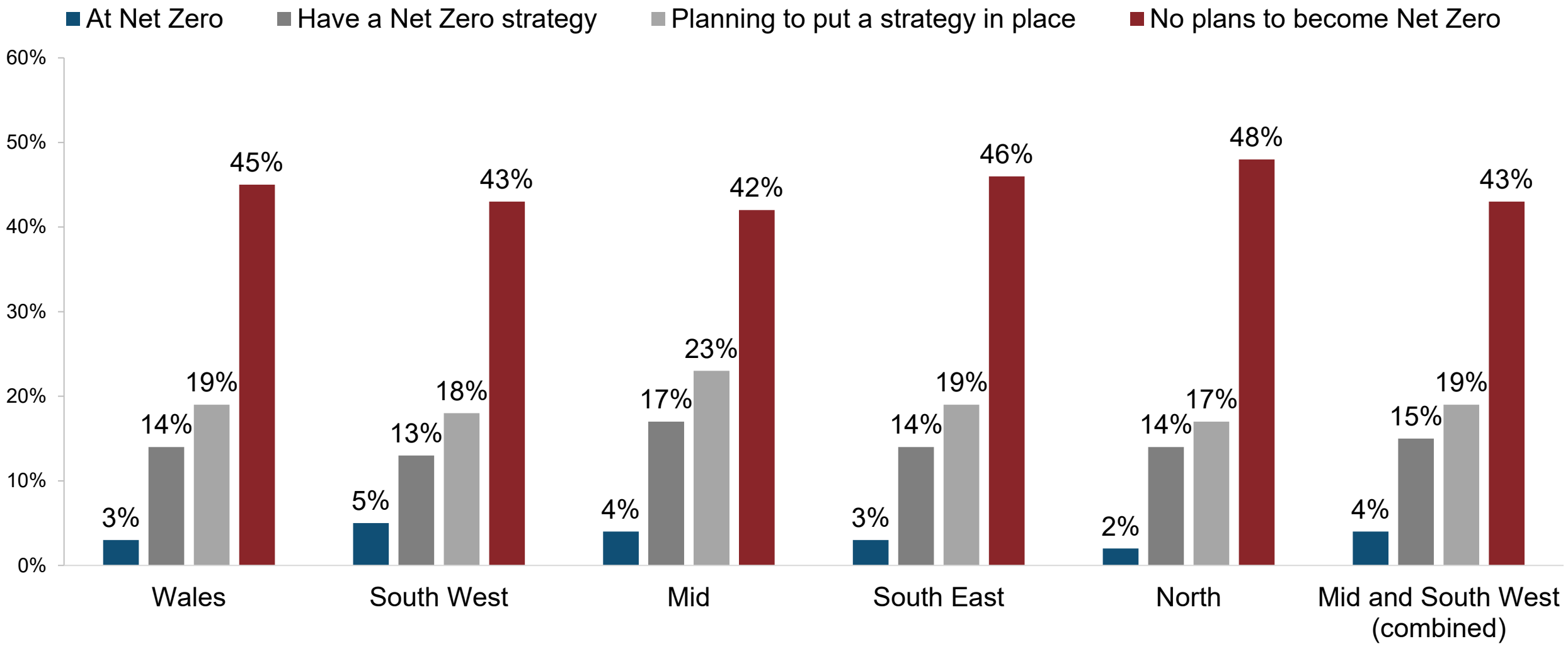
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Net Zero

Department for Education

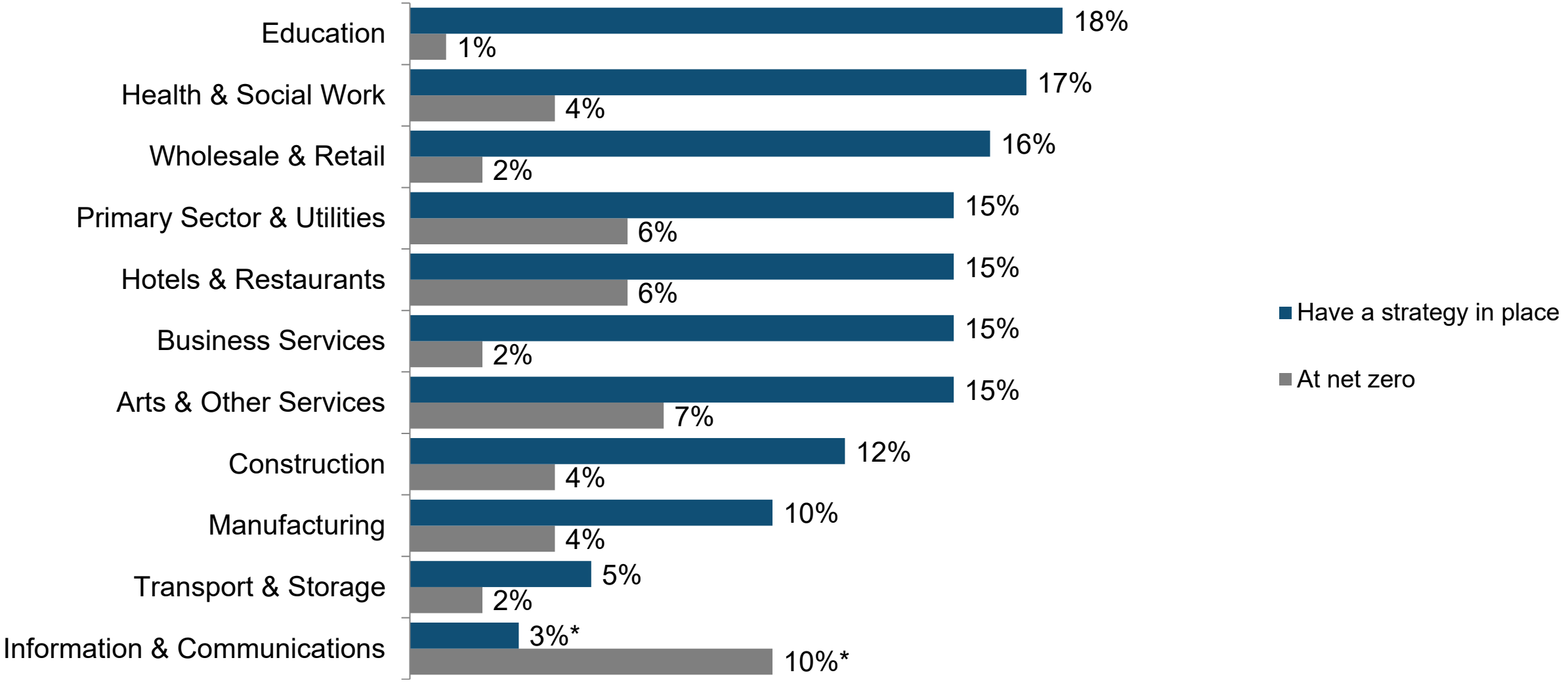
IFF Research

The proportion of employers in Mid and South West Wales with a Net Zero strategy in place was consistent with Wales overall



Base: All sites in Wales (5,605). Regional base size ranges from 717 in Mid Wales to 2,310 in South East Wales.

Transport and Storage employers were less likely to have a Net Zero Strategy in place when compared with the average across all sectors



Base: All sites in Mid and South West Wales (1,945). Sector base sizes range from 30 in Information and Communications to 389 in Wholesale and Retail).
Where base sizes are between 30 and 49, an asterisk has been included next to the data value.

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi
YMCHWIL GYMDEITHASOL Y LLYWODRAETH
GSR
GOVERNMENT SOCIAL RESEARCH
Analysis for Policy

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Summary and conclusions

Department for Education

IFF Research

Summary of findings – 1

- **ESS 2024 found a lower proportion of employers in Mid and South West Wales with vacancies (15%) than in 2022 (20%)**. **Skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs) affected a smaller proportion of employers than in 2022** (5% vs. 8% in 2022), making up one in five vacancies (21%), a notable decline from 2022 (34%).

- Among those whose hard-to-fill vacancies were all SSVs, **almost all (97%) reported that these had an impact on their organisation**, similar to the proportion in 2022 (95%). As in previous years, the most commonly reported impact was **increased workloads for other staff** (89%).

- The proportion of employers reporting skills gaps (11%) and the density of skills gaps (3.3%) **remained consistent with previous years**. The proportion of the workforce in Mid and South West Wales not considered fully proficient (3.3%) was broadly in line with other regions in Wales, with the exception of South East Wales (4.5%).

- **The density of skills gaps was highest in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors** (both 6.6%). The **occupational group with the largest skills gap density was Skilled Trades** (8.0%)**.**

- **As in 2022, a large proportion of skills gaps were caused, at least partly, by transient causes,** such as being new to the role (71%) or training only being partially completed (60%). For **11% of employers, skills gaps were reported to have a major impact on the organisation**, with a further 53% reporting a minor impact. The most commonly reported impact was increased workloads for other staff (51%).

Summary of findings – 2

- **The proportion of employers that had provided training in Mid and South West Wales in the last 12 months was lower than Wales as a whole (55% vs. 60%).** This proportion in Mid and South West Wales was consistent with 2022 (also 55%). The proportion of staff that received training in the last 12 months in Mid and South West Wales was 63%. Employers in Mid and South West Wales provided 5.4 training days per person trained per year, and 3.4 days per employee (compared to 6.6 days per trainee and 4.2 days per employee across Wales overall).

- Employers in the Education (89%) and Health and Social Work (89%) sectors were most likely to have provided training for their staff in the past 12 months. The Health and Social Work sector also saw the highest proportion of staff trained (89%). By occupation, **Caring, Leisure & Other Services staff** (85%) were most likely to have received training while **Associate Professionals were least likely** (35%).

- **Around 1 in 7 employers (14%) in Mid and South West Wales had apprentices or offered apprenticeships at the time of survey,** in line with the Wales average (16%).

- One in 9 employers (11%) used AI, with **employers in the Information and Communications sector (52%) by far the most likely to do so**. Among those who did not use AI, over 4 in 5 (82%) had no plans to do so.

- A small minority of employers in Mid and South West Wales (6%) were classed as High Performance Working (HPW) employers, in line with the figure across Wales overall.

Conclusions

- ESS 2024 shows that vacancies had decreased among employers in Mid and South West Wales compared to previous years. Around 1 in 5 vacancies (21%) in Mid and South West Wales were skill-shortage vacancies (SSVs), down from roughly a third (34%) in 2022. The most common skills reported as lacking among applicants were the specialist skills or knowledge required to perform job roles, time management and task prioritisation skills, and complex problem-solving abilities. Increased workloads for existing staff remain the most frequently reported impact of SSVs.

- Skills gaps within the workforce remain at similar levels to previous years. Around 1 in 9 employers (11%) reported having skills gaps within their workforce. Most skills gaps were caused by transient factors such as new hires or incomplete training, but weaknesses in time management and task prioritisation, teamwork, and technical expertise were commonly reported. Broad people and personal skills, including time management and task prioritisation and team working, were more likely to be reported as lacking compared with 2022.

- Training activity was consistent with 2022. Just over half (55%) of employers in Mid and South West Wales reported providing training in the past year, with this mainly being job-specific and health and safety or first aid training.

- Around 1 in 7 employers (14%) in Mid and South West Wales currently had apprentices or offered apprenticeships at the time of survey, while just over a fifth (22%) planned to offer them in the future, down from 34% in 2022.

- A small minority of employers in Mid and South West Wales (6%) were classed as High Performance Working (HPW) employers. Around 1 in 9 employers (11%) reported that they currently use Artificial Intelligence, while around 1 in 6 employers (15%) had a formal Net Zero plan in place and 4% were already at Net Zero.