Institute for
Public Sector
Employee Engagement™

BY CPS HR CONSULTING

2024 Engagement Survey Results

County of Sonoma

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Sonoma County Strategic Plan (2021-26)

~Organizational Excellence 3.2

Racial Equity Action Plan (May 2024)

County of Sonoma Strategic Plan

Racial Equity and Social Justice

Achieve racial equity in County service provision and ensure a workforce reflective of the community we serve.

+

Organizational Excellence

Be an innovative, effective, engaged, and transparent organization focused on quality programs and services.

→

Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP)

- Roadmap towards achieving better outcomes for all staff members, especially staff of color.

- Starts by recognizing that County staff are part of the larger community and represent the experiences of County clients.

- Provides solutions to workforce operational challenges.

Understanding Employee Engagement

"A heightened connection between the employee and their organization"

U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board
The Power of Federal Employee Engagement

Beyond Job Satisfaction

Discretionary Effort

Personal Meaning

Pride

Institute's Model

1. Plan & Set Goals
2. Survey Employees
3. Analyze & Share Results
4. Take Action
5. Evaluate Actions & Sustain Engagement

Institute for Public Sector Employee Engagement™

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Preview – Taking Action

Phase 1 Feb – May 2025	Phase 2 June-Aug 2025	Phase 3 Sept – Dec 2025	Phase 4 Jan –Dec 2026
• Review County-wide results with departments, employees, and the Board of Supervisors • DH's review department level results • Conduct initial employee focus groups in May 2025	• Complete additional analysis – disaggregate data and explore additional focus groups to identify areas for improvement • Work with Departments to develop and finalize a Survey Response Plan and collaborate with Core Team 2 to ensure alignment with the Racial Equity Action Plan	• Communicate Response Plan • Begin Implementing actions	• Continue implementation and monitoring • Conduct next survey (FY 2026-27) • Review and evaluate implementation actions • Report on successes and areas of improvement

Sonoma County's Survey

- The survey was conducted by the Institute for Public Sector Employee Engagement, a division of CPS HR Consulting, an independent government agency.

- The survey included multiple question formats:

  - Questions utilizing a 1-5 answer scale ("strongly disagree" to "strongly agree;" "don't know or no basis to judge")
  - Work experience questions (yes/no)
  - "About You" questions
  - Open-ended/free response question

- Department, division, and employment type were tracked for accurate reports. Reports contain aggregated data *only*.

- CPS HR administered the survey from November 4th through November 25th, 2024.

- 56% (2318) of employees responded to the survey.

Analytical Model

Analytical Model

	Understand Engagement Levels	Levels by Group Benchmarks and Trends
	Understand What Drives Engagement and Retention	Key Driver Analysis Stay/Leave Reasons
	Identify Priorities for Action	Ask "Why" Develop Action Plans

Levels of Engagement

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Calculating Engagement Scores

Engagement Index Questions

1) I would recommend County of Sonoma as a good place to work
2) I am proud when I tell others I am part of the County of Sonoma
3) I feel a strong personal attachment to the County of Sonoma
4) The County of Sonoma inspires me to do the best in my job
5) I feel comfortable being myself at work
6) The County of Sonoma motivates me to help achieve its strategic goals

Survey respondents rated their level of agreement with 6 engagement questions, using the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree

2 = disagree

3 = neither agree or disagree

4 = agree

5 = strongly agree

X = don't know or no basis to judge

We then calculated a mean engagement score for each employee.

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Calculating Engagement Levels

Fully Engaged

Mean score 4 or above

Somewhat Engaged

Mean score between 3 and 4

Not Engaged

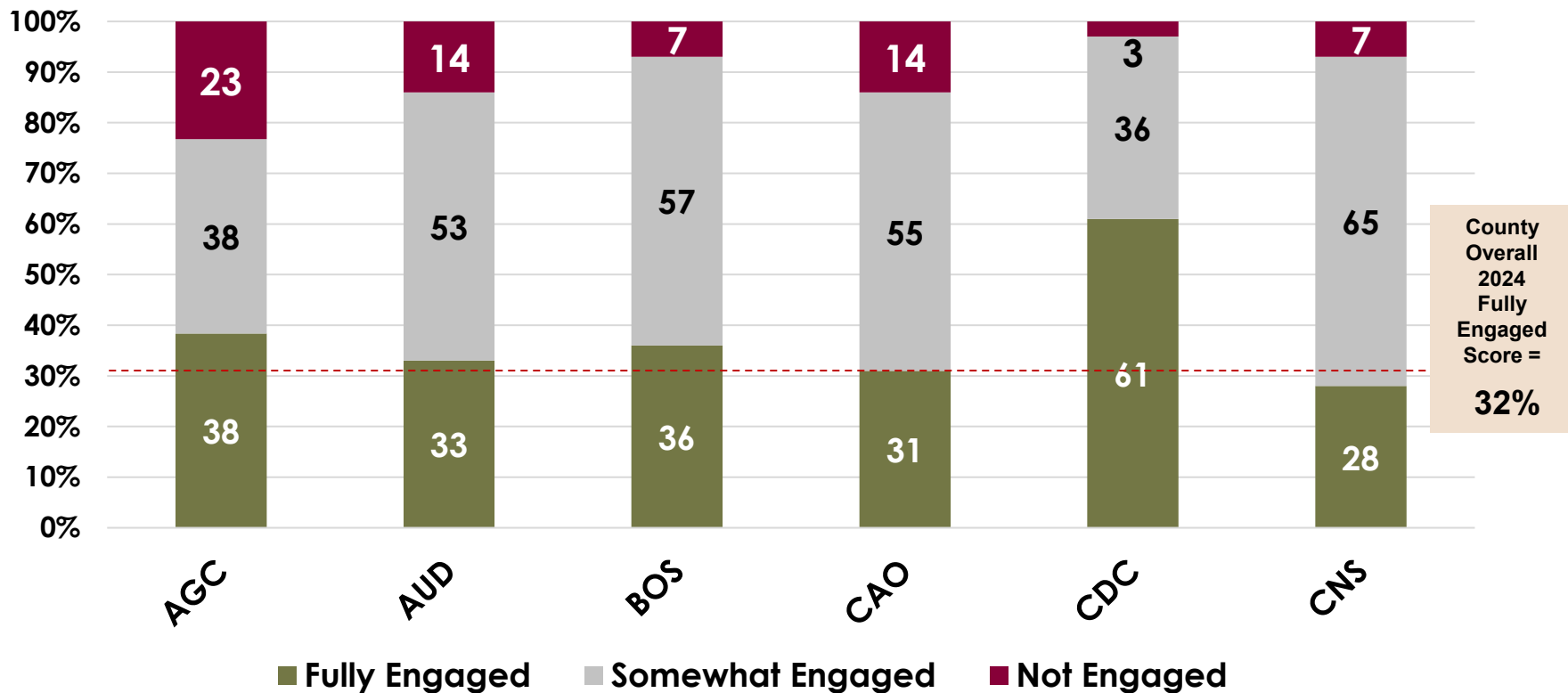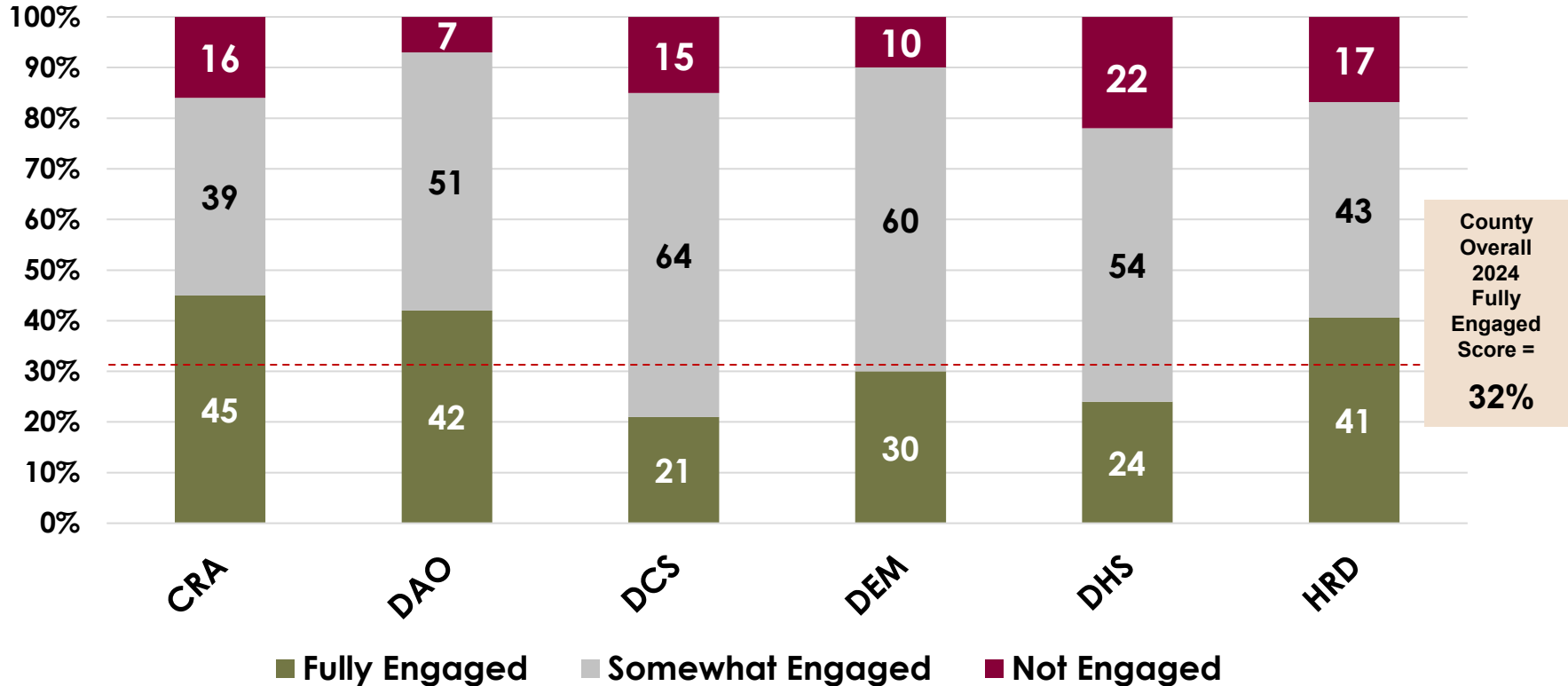Mean score 3 or below

Overall Engagement Levels

	Private Sector Benchmark	Government Benchmark	Local Government Benchmark	Sonoma County 2024
Not Engaged	20	20	27	17
Somewhat Engaged	34	40	38	51
Fully Engaged	46	40	35	32

■ Fully Engaged   ■ Somewhat Engaged   ■ Not Engaged
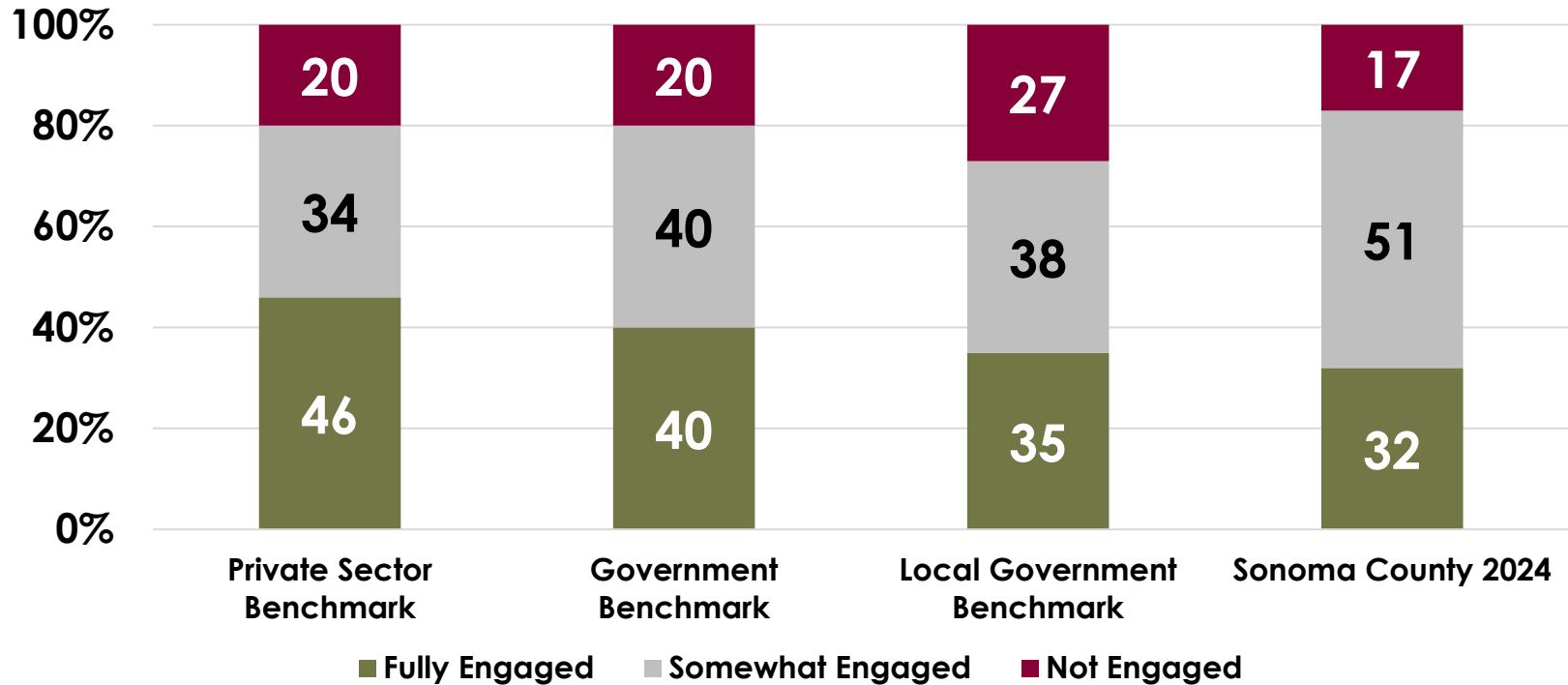
CPS HR's benchmarks are from a national poll designed to represent employees in the private sector, government sector, and each level of government (federal, state, and local) in a wide variety of industries. The most recent biennial poll was conducted in November 2023.

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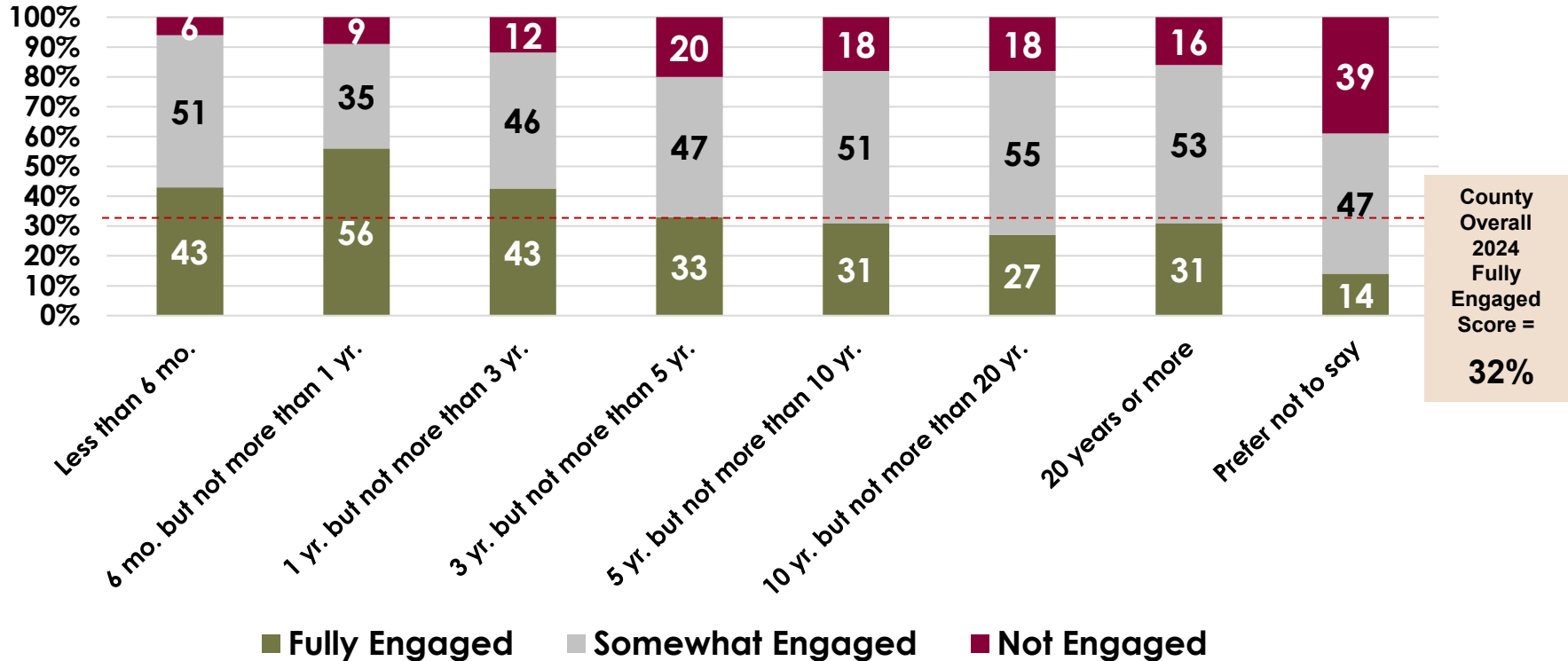Engagement Levels by Department

Engagement Levels by Department

County Overall 2024 Fully Engaged Score = **32%**

Fully Engaged (green): CRA 45, DAO 42, DCS 21, DEM 30, DHS 24, HRD 41
Somewhat Engaged (gray): CRA 39, DAO 51, DCS 64, DEM 60, DHS 54, HRD 43
Not Engaged (maroon): CRA 16, DAO 7, DCS 15, DEM 10, DHS 22, HRD 17

■ Fully Engaged ■ Somewhat Engaged ■ Not Engaged

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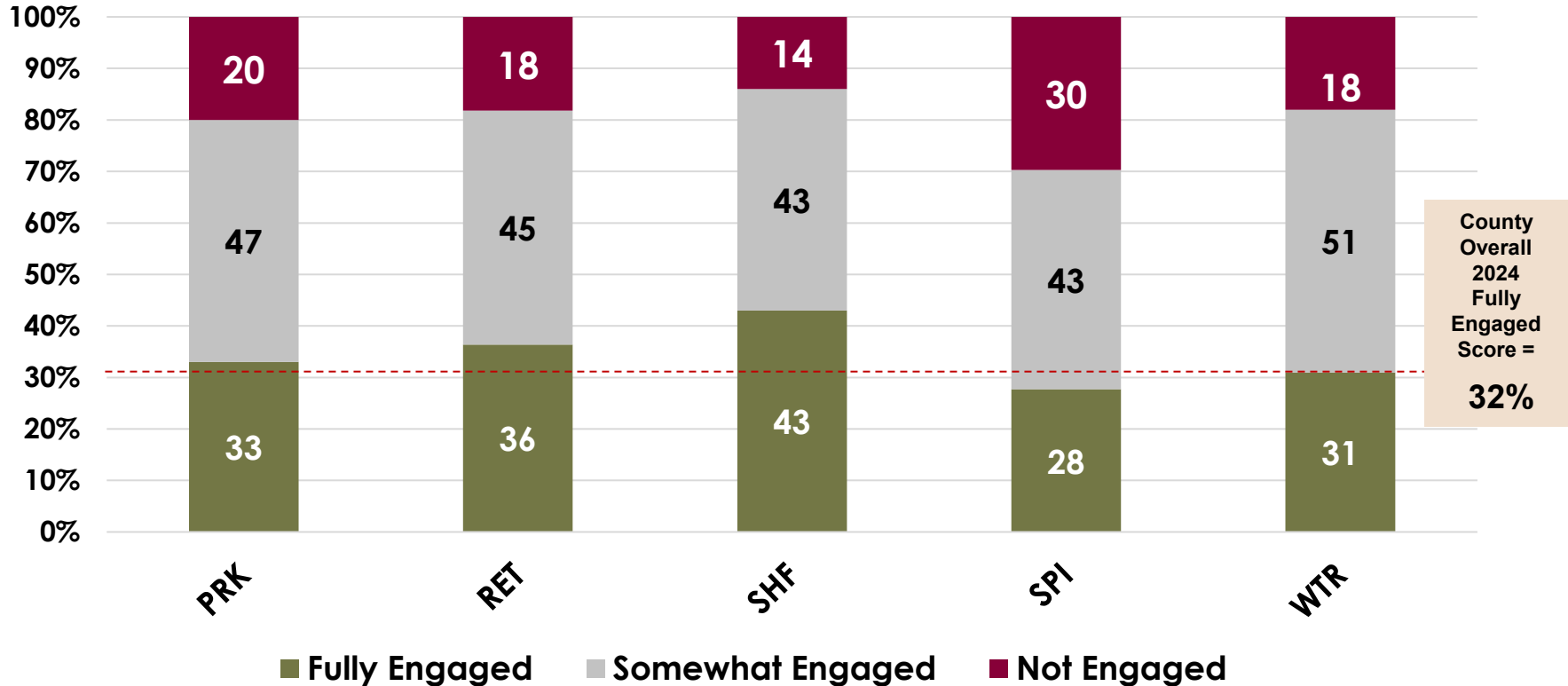
Engagement Levels by Tenure
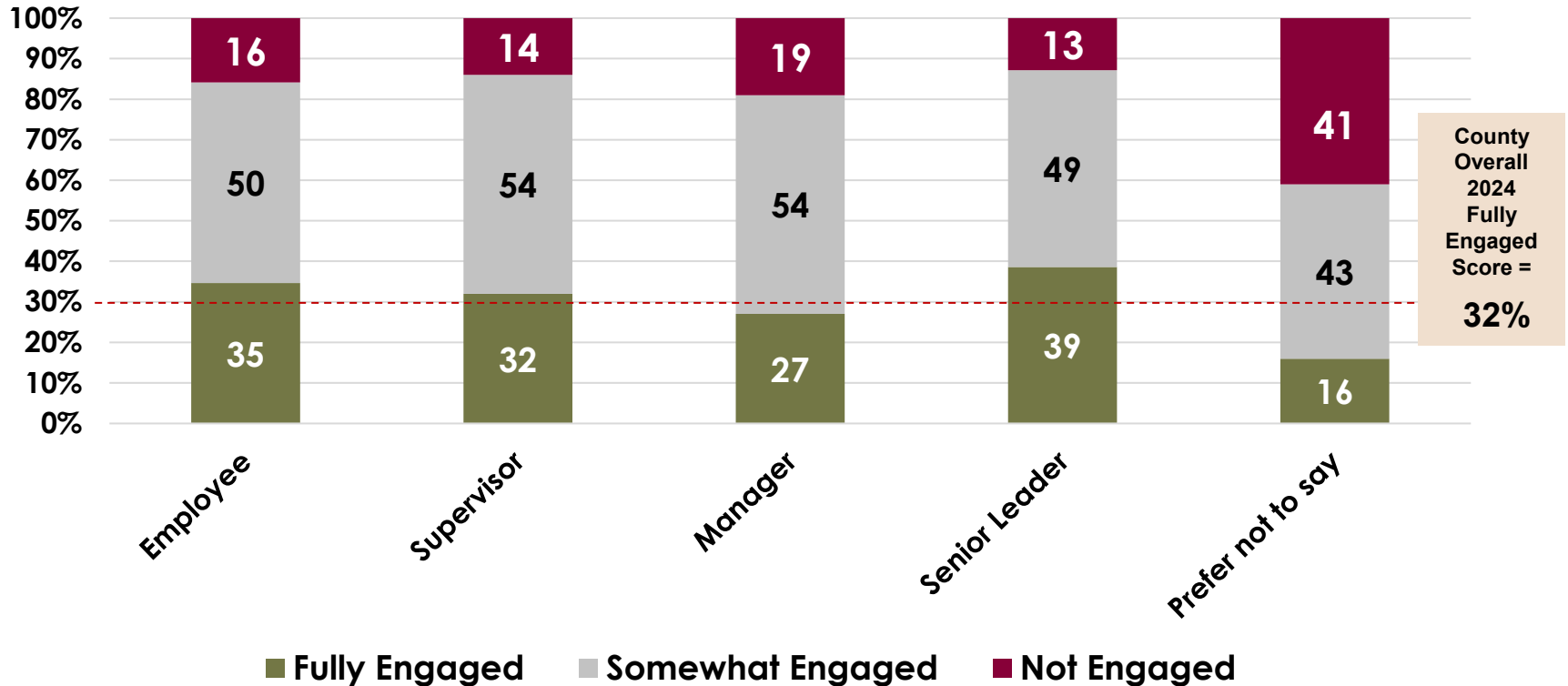
Engagement Levels by Work Situation

County Overall 2024 Fully Engaged Score = 32%

Work Situation	Fully Engaged	Somewhat Engaged	Not Engaged
On-site	37	46	17
Remote option, but prefer on-site	36	50	14
Hybrid schedule	30	54	16
Fully Remote	27	27	47
Prefer not to say	17	44	38

Fully Engaged **Somewhat Engaged** **Not Engaged**

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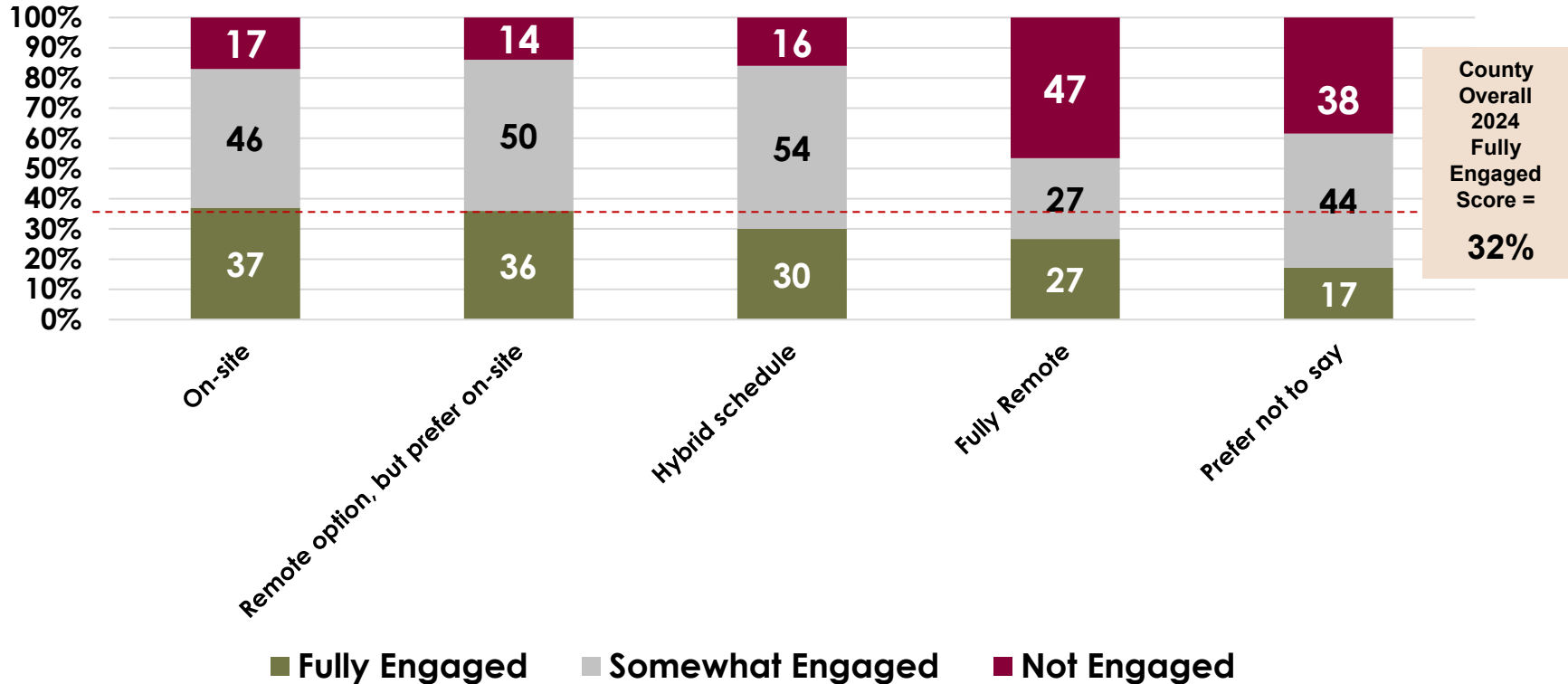
Drivers of Engagement

Drivers of Engagement

Categories

Previous research has found that these categories, or drivers, are related to employee engagement.

- My Work
- My Department's Mission
- My Team
- My Supervisor
- Department Leadership and Managing Change
- Training and Development
- Resources and Workload
- Inclusion and Belonging
- Organizational Culture

Calculating Scores

The following charts combine influence (relative weight from key driver analysis) and score (average % positive) to reveal the overall categories and questions that – if maintained or improved – that are likely to have the biggest impact on the engagement score.

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Quadrant Chart - Definition

Below are the definitions of the four quadrants in the following charts. We suggest that you pay attention to the questions in the "Improve" and "Maintain" quadrants.

Improve
High Influence / Low Score

Focus on these low-scoring but high-influence questions because they have the greatest potential to improve the overall engagement score.

Maintain
High Influence / High Score

Scores on these high-influence questions are already high. Therefore, continue to focus on these areas to maintain the engagement score.

Consider
Low Influence / Low Score

Although these are low-influence questions, the relatively low scores suggest that they may be considered, but as lower priorities than the high-influence questions.

Monitor
Low Influence / High Score

These are already high-scoring questions but are relatively lower in influence. Therefore, monitor these factors to assure the scores for these questions do not decline.

Overall Categories

Summary – Categories

- **Inclusion and Belonging – *73% positive***
  - Maintain

- **Department Culture – *67% positive***
  - Maintain/Improve

- **Department Leadership and Managing Change – *58% positive***
  - Improve

- **My Department's Mission – *82% positive***
  - Maintain

Question-level Data
Areas to Maintain

- **I feel like I belong in my department** –
  76% agree or strongly agree
  - Inclusion and Belonging

- **I feel valued for the work I do** –
  69% agree or strongly agree
  - Department Culture

- **My department is successful at accomplishing its mission** –
  68% agree or strongly agree
  - My Department's Mission

Question-level Data
Areas to Improve

- **All employees have an opportunity to succeed here –**
  64% agree or strongly agree
  - Inclusion and Belonging

- **My department keeps me informed about matters that affect me –**
  60% agree or strongly agree
  - Department Leadership and Managing Change

- **Senior leaders create a positive culture in my department –**
  56% agree or strongly agree
  - Department Leadership and Managing Change

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Additional Question-Level Analysis

Highest-Scoring Questions (% Positive)

Employees were MOST positive (above 87%) on the following questions:

QUESTION	NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE ▼
I like the kind of work I do	2.8%	5.2%	92%
I am aware of my employment conditions (e.g., vacation or leave options, flexible work arrangements)	4.8%	6.7%	88.5%
I feel that I personally contribute to my department's successes	3.1%	9.7%	87.2%

Lowest-Scoring Questions (% Positive)

Employees were LEAST positive (below 47%) on the following questions:

QUESTION	NEGATIVE	NEUTRAL	POSITIVE ▲
There are enough staff in my unit to get the work done	43%	15.4%	41.6%
I feel that change is managed well in my department	30%	24.5%	45.5%
I believe that senior leaders in my department will take action on the results from this survey	27.2%	26.2%	46.6%

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Biggest Spread – Tenure

Questions with the greatest spread in percent positive.

	Less than 6 mo.	6 mo. but not more than 1 yr.	1 yr. but not more than 3 yr.	3 yr. but not more than 5 yr.	5 yr. but not more than 10 yr.	10 yr. but not more than 20 yr.	20 years or more
	n=51	n=118	n=330	n=247	n=466	n=553	n=423
The County of Sonoma motivates me to help achieve its strategic goals	79	68	60	48	48	45	48
My workload is reasonable	84	80	65	63	56	55	62
There are resources available in my department to help me resolve any conflict with my supervisor	82	69	62	57	54	56	54

Biggest Spread – Role

Questions with the greatest spread in percent positive.

	Employee	Supervisor	Manager	Senior Leader
	n=1551	n=300	n=227	n=89
Senior leaders value ideas from employees	53	55	54	88
Senior leaders in my department are sufficiently visible (e.g., can be seen in action)	62	63	58	91
I believe the actions of senior leaders are consistent with my department's values	64	68	58	89

Biggest Spread – Work Situation

Questions with the greatest spread in percent positive.

	On-site	Remote option, but prefer on-site	Hybrid schedule	Fully Remote
	n=761	n=246	n-1192	n=15
All employees have an opportunity to succeed here	67	72	62	33
The County of Sonoma motivates me to help achieve its strategic goals	53	55	49	21
I believe the actions of senior leaders are consistent with my department's values	66	69	63	36

Intent to Stay or Leave

Prefer not to say (n=295), 13%

Leave (n=709), 31%
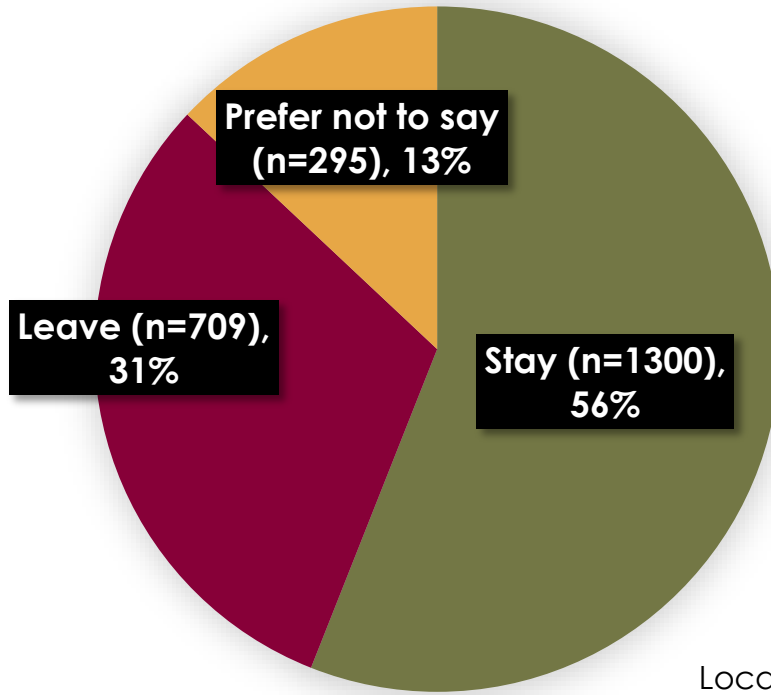
Stay (n=1300), 56%

Are you considering leaving your current position within the next year, and if so, why?

- Stay (n=1300)
- Leave (n=709)
- Prefer not to say (n=295)

Local Government Benchmark – 73% plan to stay

Follow Up Question: Decision to Leave

Which option best describes your decision to leave:

(n=608, 26% of responses)

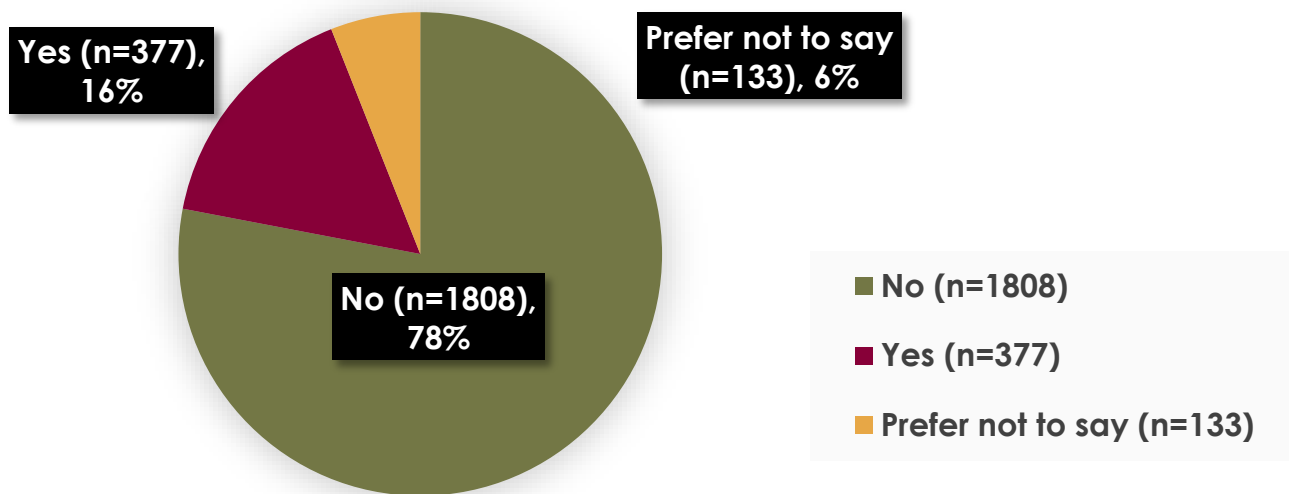CPS HR CONSULTING
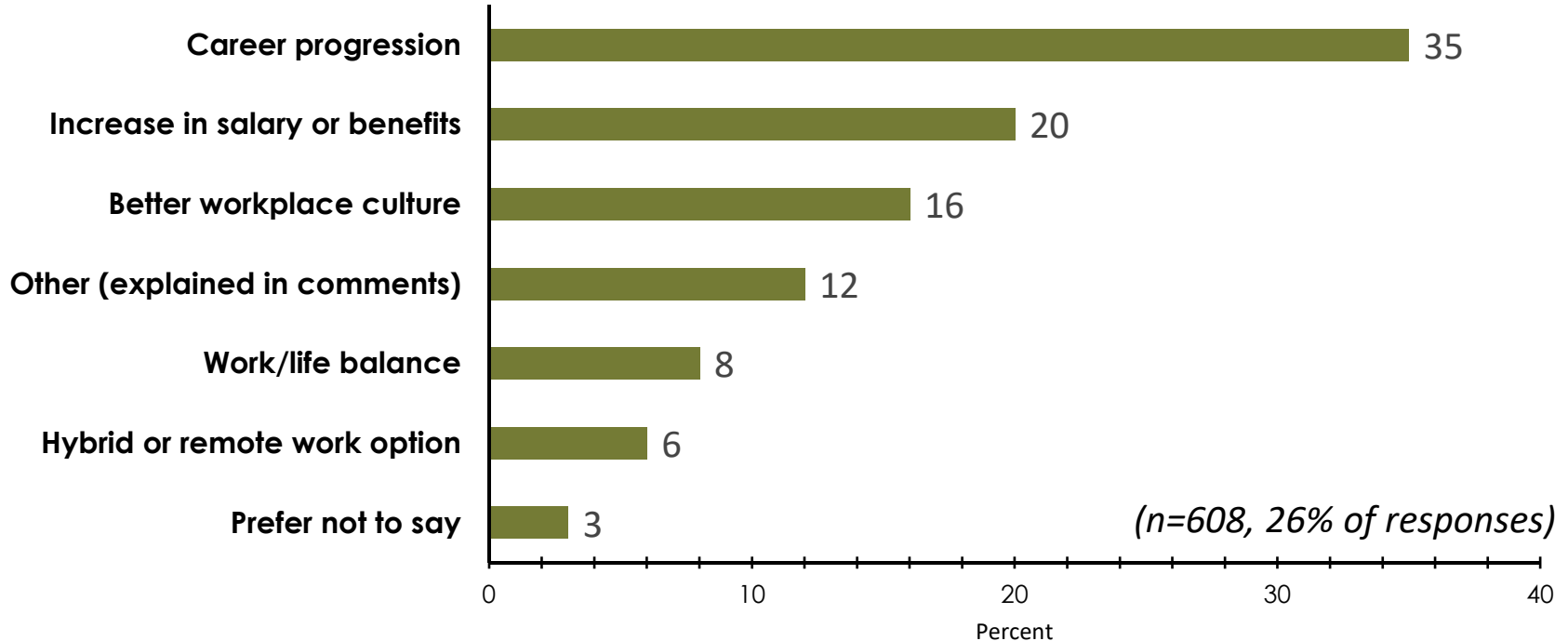
Adverse Work Experience Analysis

Bullying/Harassment Overall

Have you personally experienced bullying or harassment at work in the past year?

Bullying or harassment is hostile or intimidating behavior where a person (or group) may be singled out and subjected to unwanted experiences and is so severe and/or frequent that it negatively impacts the ability to work. It may include physical aggression (e.g., hitting or throwing an object), intimidating gestures, abusive language (e.g., name-calling), social exclusion or isolation, sabotage (intentional destruction) of work, or cyberbullying (using email or social media to threaten, embarrass, or cause damage to reputation).
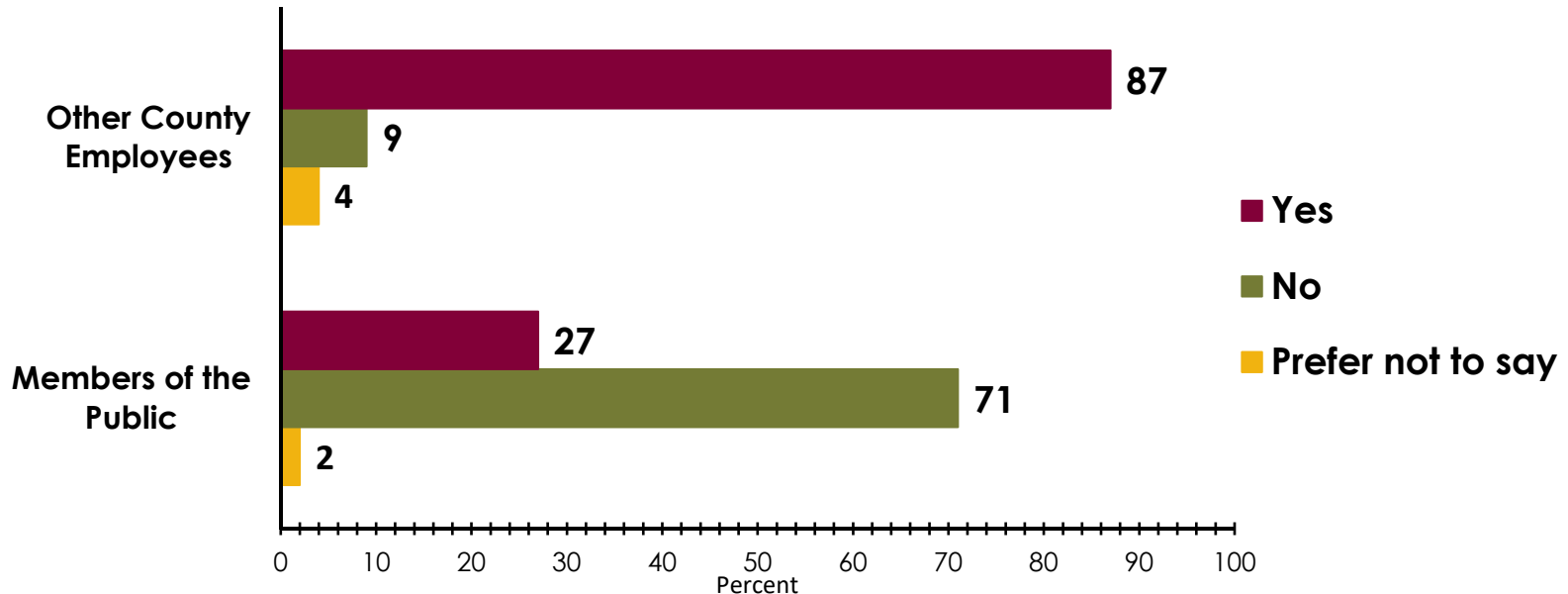
Local Government Benchmark – 15%

Yes (n=377), 16%

Prefer not to say (n=133), 6%

No (n=1808), 78%

- No (n=1808)
- Yes (n=377)
- Prefer not to say (n=133)

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Who bullied or harassed you?

n=377, 16% of total responses

72 out of 377 employees (19%) reported being bullied or harassed by both other County employees and members of the public

Other County Employees:
- Yes: 87
- No: 9
- Prefer not to say: 4

Members of the Public:
- Yes: 27
- No: 71
- Prefer not to say: 2

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say
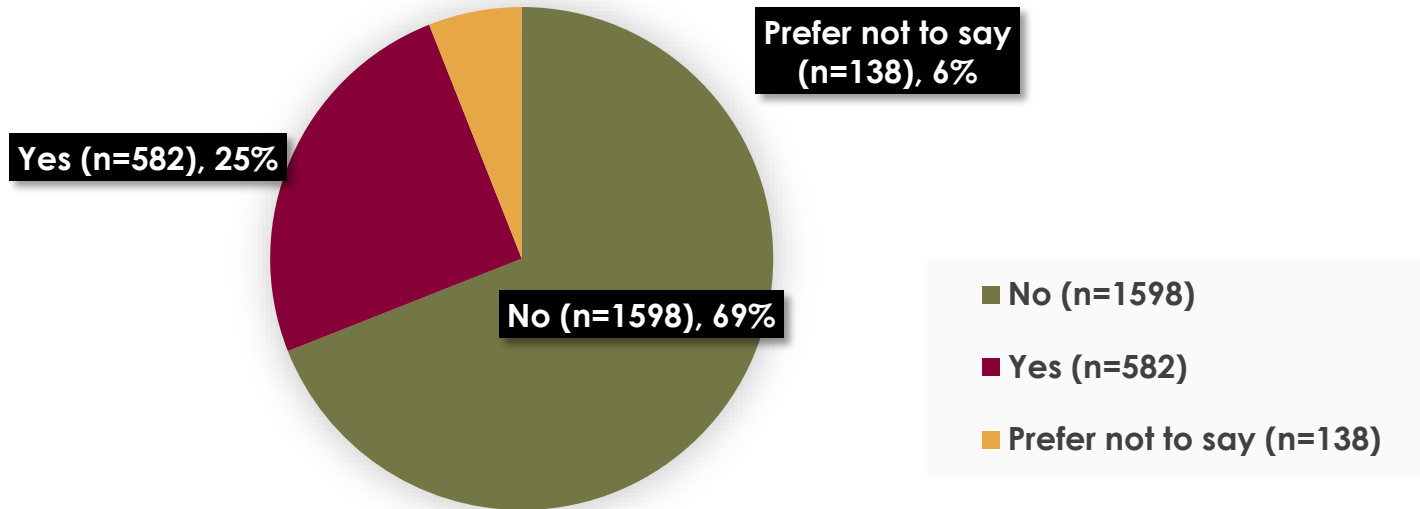
X-axis: Percent (0 to 100)

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Microaggressions Overall

Have you personally experienced any microaggression(s) at work in the past year?

Microaggressions are subtle or indirect statements or behaviors that may be offensive or reinforce a negative stereotype of a certain group, class, or other category. They may be unintentional, accidental, or unconscious, but still have a hurtful or harmful effect on the person. They may include a comment, question, or joke that makes someone feel scrutinized, uncomfortable, or not fully accepted for who they are at work.
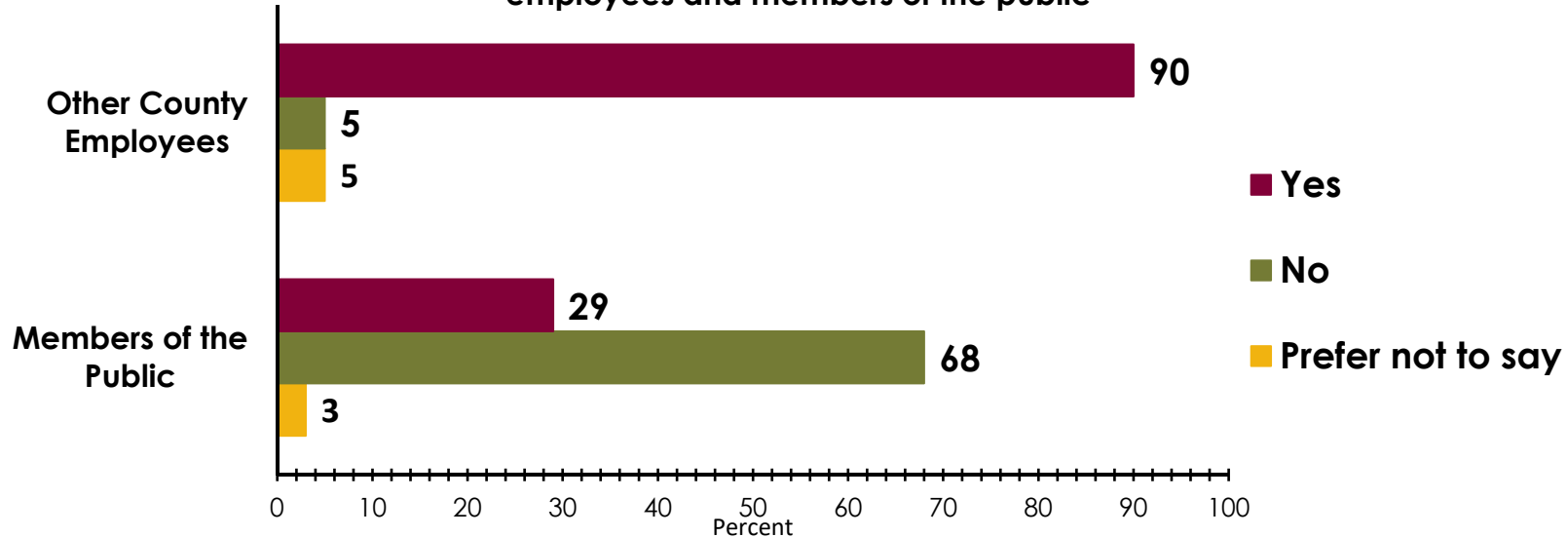
Local Government Benchmark – 21%

Prefer not to say (n=138), 6%

Yes (n=582), 25%

No (n=1598), 69%

No (n=1598)

Yes (n=582)

Prefer not to say (n=138)

Recap –
Next Steps / Taking Action

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Suggested Focus Areas

- **Inclusion and Belonging (Improve)**
  - All employees have an opportunity to succeed here

- **Department Culture (Maintain/Improve)**
  - I feel valued for the work I do

- **Department Leadership and Managing Change (Improve)**
  - My department keeps me informed about matters that affect me

- **My Department's Mission (Maintain)**
  - My department is successful at accomplishing its mission

Contact Information

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