

# Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes 2021 Business Survey: COVID-19 Report

May 28, 2021



Survey Timeframe: May 4 – May 18, 2021

## Communities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge  
Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott  
Rideau Lakes | Westport

## Prepared by:

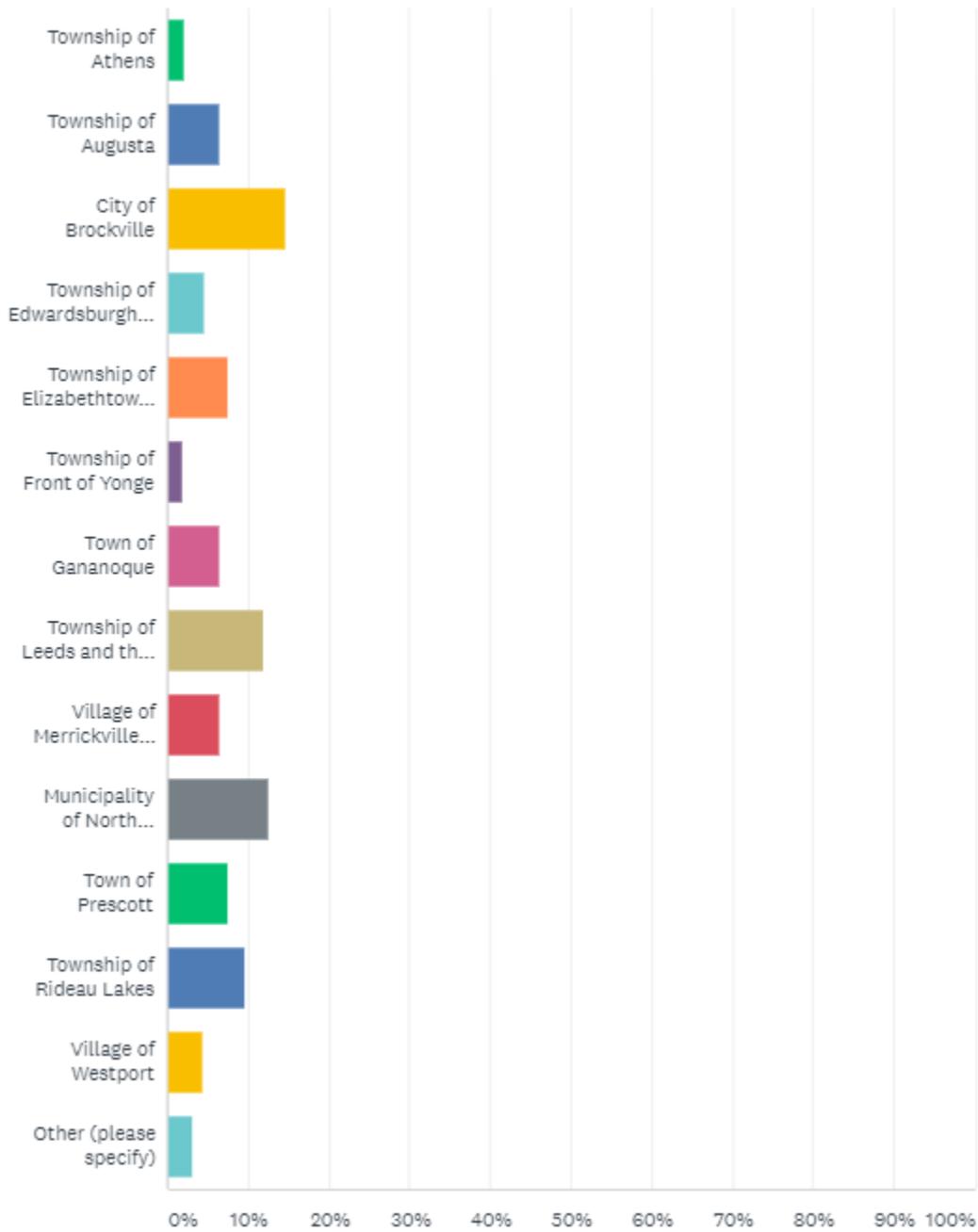
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville  
Economic Development Office  
32 Wall Street, Suite 300, Brockville, ON

[www.investleedsgrenville.com/covid19](http://www.investleedsgrenville.com/covid19)

# #1 Where is your business located?

Answered: 319

Skipped: 0



## #1 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Township of Athens	2.19%	7
Township of Augusta	6.58%	21
City of Brockville	14.73%	47
Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal	4.70%	15
Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley	7.52%	24
Township of Front of Yonge	1.88%	6
Town of Gananoque	6.58%	21
Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands	11.91%	38
Village of Merrickville-Wolford	6.58%	21
Municipality of North Grenville	12.54%	40
Town of Prescott	7.52%	24
Township of Rideau Lakes	9.72%	31
Village of Westport	4.39%	14
Other (please specify)	3.13%	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>319</b>

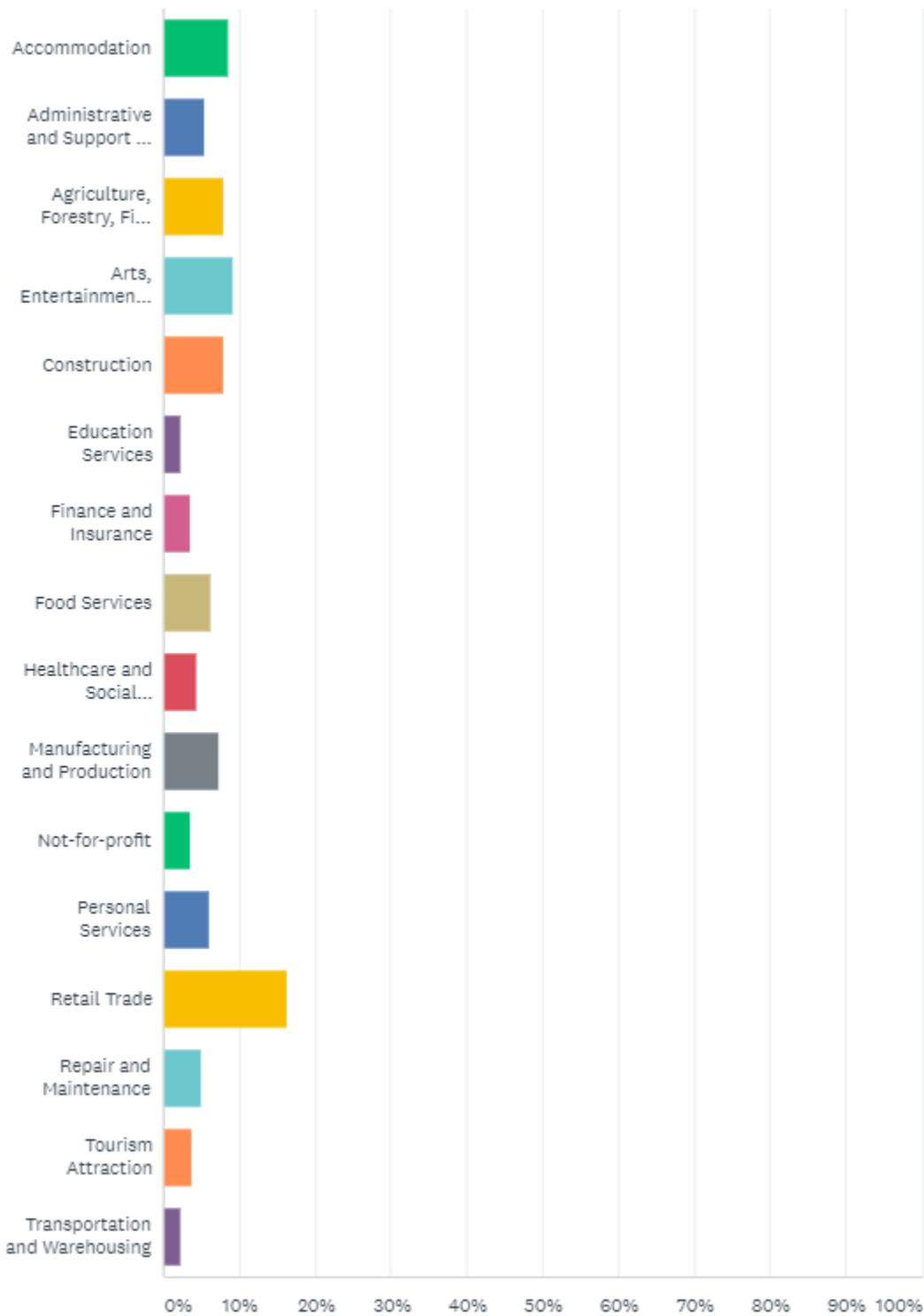
### Other (please specify)

- Brockville (City of Perth - when able to meet face to face)
- 3 locations in South Grenville
- Westport and we just opened a store in Brockville
- City of Brockville, Town of Prescott, Municipality of North Grenville
- Multiple Locations
- Prescott, Brockville, Iroquois
- Brockville
- Outside the area
- Lyn (Elizabethtown-Kitley) and out of a rented room in downtown Prescott
- Augusta, Town of Prescott, and North Grenville

## #2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 314

Skipped: 5



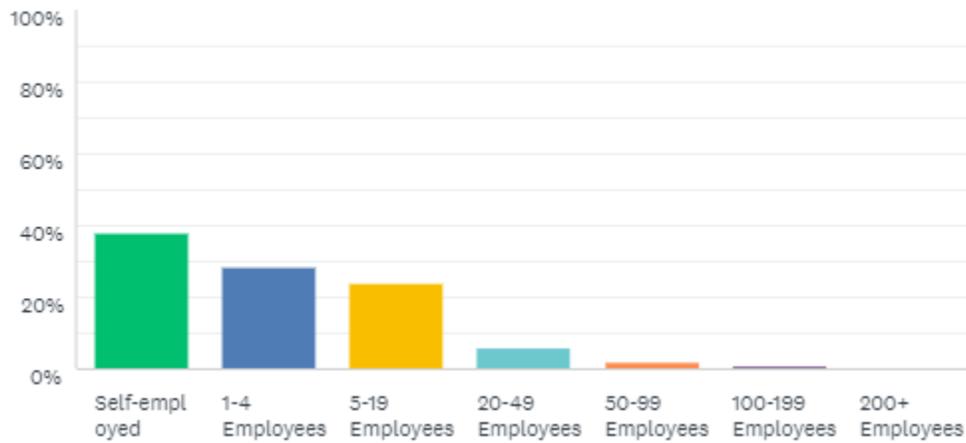
## #2 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accommodation	8.60%	27
Administrative and Support - Business Services	5.41%	17
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	7.96%	25
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	9.24%	29
Construction	7.96%	25
Education Services	2.23%	7
Finance and Insurance	3.50%	11
Food Services	6.37%	20
Healthcare and Social Assistance	4.46%	14
Manufacturing and Production	7.32%	23
Not-for-profit	3.50%	11
Personal Services	6.05%	19
Retail Trade	16.24%	51
Repair and Maintenance	5.10%	16
Tourism Attraction	3.82%	12
Transportation and Warehousing	2.23%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>314</b>

### #3 Typically, how many employees does your company have?

Answered: 318

Skipped: 1

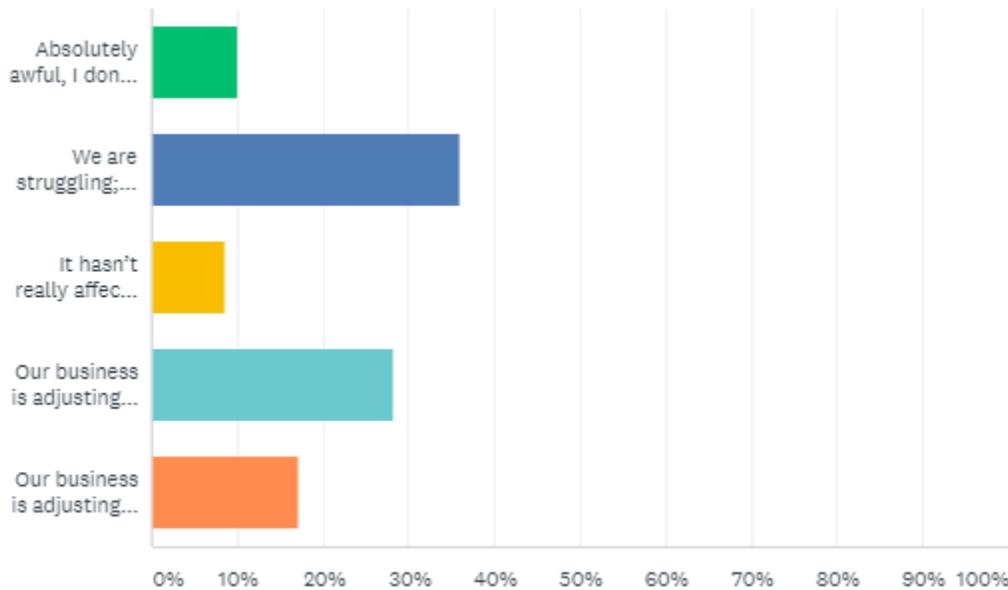


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Self-employed	38.05%	121
1-4 Employees	28.62%	91
5-19 Employees	23.90%	76
20-49 Employees	5.97%	19
50-99 Employees	1.89%	6
100-199 Employees	0.94%	3
200+ Employees	0.63%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>318</b>

## #4 How would you describe the impacts of COVID-19 on your business?

Answered: 316

Skipped: 3

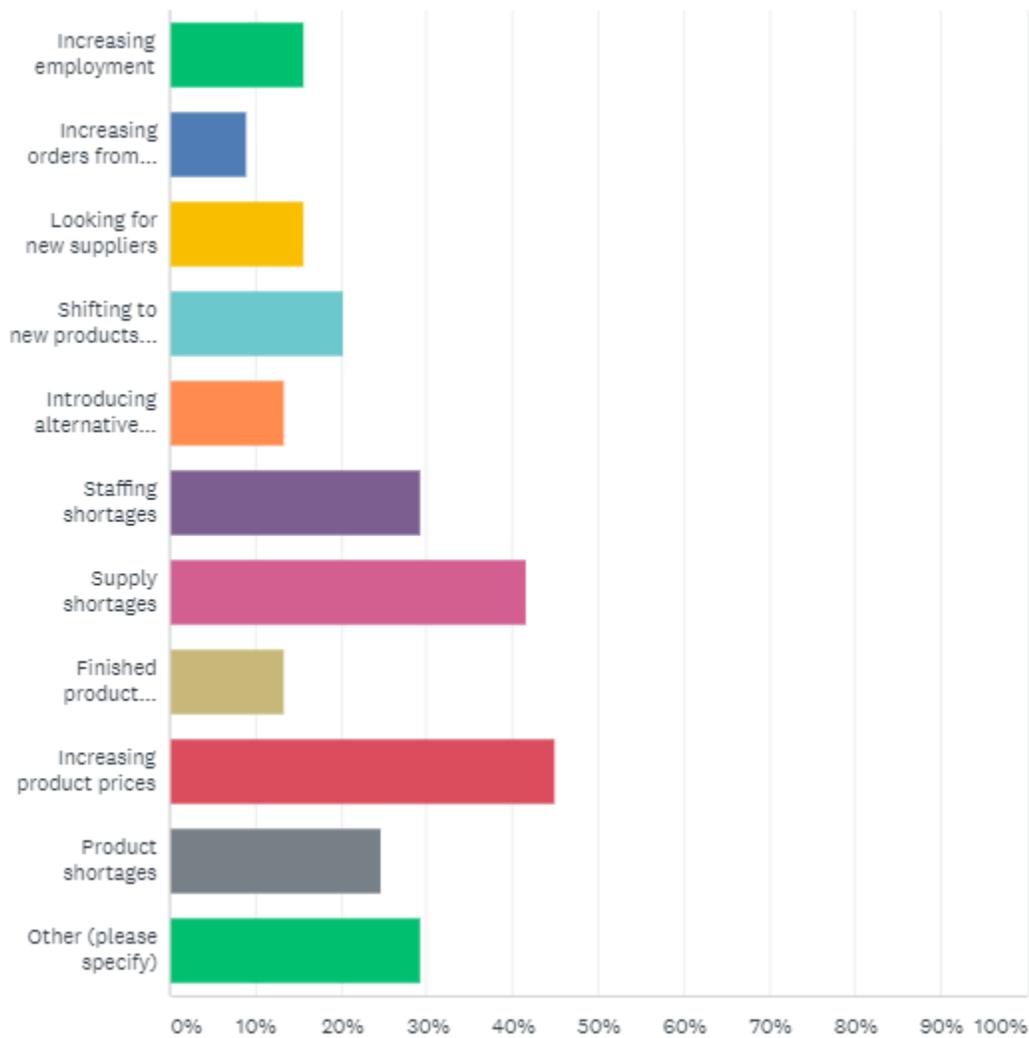


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Absolutely awful, I don't think our business will make it through (proceed to question 6)	10.13%	32
We are struggling; recovering from this could take some time (proceed to question 6)	36.08%	114
It hasn't really affected us yet (proceed to question 7)	8.54%	27
Our business is adjusting and maintaining status quo (proceed to question 7)	28.16%	89
Our business is adjusting and growing (proceed to question 5)	17.09%	54
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>316</b>

## #5 If your business is growing, what are your biggest challenges?

(Choose all that apply, then proceed to question 7.)

Answered: 89 Skipped: 230



## #5 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increasing employment	15.73%	14
Increasing orders from suppliers	8.99%	8
Looking for new suppliers	15.73%	14
Shifting to new products or services	20.22%	18
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	13.48%	12
Staffing shortages	29.21%	26
Supply shortages	41.57%	37
Finished product shortages/delays	13.48%	12
Increasing product prices	44.94%	40
Product shortages	24.72%	22
Other (please specify)	29.21%	26
Total Respondents: 89		

### Other (please specify)

- Poor internet service. (x3)
- Supply chain issues. (x3)
- Increased Insurance costs. (x2)
- Need to have a better website for e-commerce. (x2)
- Filling staff positions. (x2)
- Increased shipping costs.
- As a food producer, finding distributors when everything is closed is a challenge.
- Launching our client focused business during COVID. We have been delayed by 12-16 months.
- Attempting to complete new office space for occupancy.
- Restriction on number of people in the shop. Curb side pickup and delivery.
- Creating relational connection for the mental and spiritual well-being of people during oscillating health restrictions.
- There really are no current challenges. Just opportunities. We have transformed our in-class programs to 100% virtual with overwhelming success. We are seeing greater customer satisfaction and demand and profits are much stronger.
- Increasing production of our products due to demand and uncertainty of clientele. The shift of changes in the restaurant closures has made it difficult to predict how much and which products to produce. Because the restaurants are scaled back we pivoted to serve walk-in traffic and orders for our products. Sometimes crowd control is a challenge, because we are part tourism based, people want to see how we function, so they want to come in as families. We have increased our business tremendously, as we have more locals staying and working from home. Because we are small, customers feel safe coming to our business.

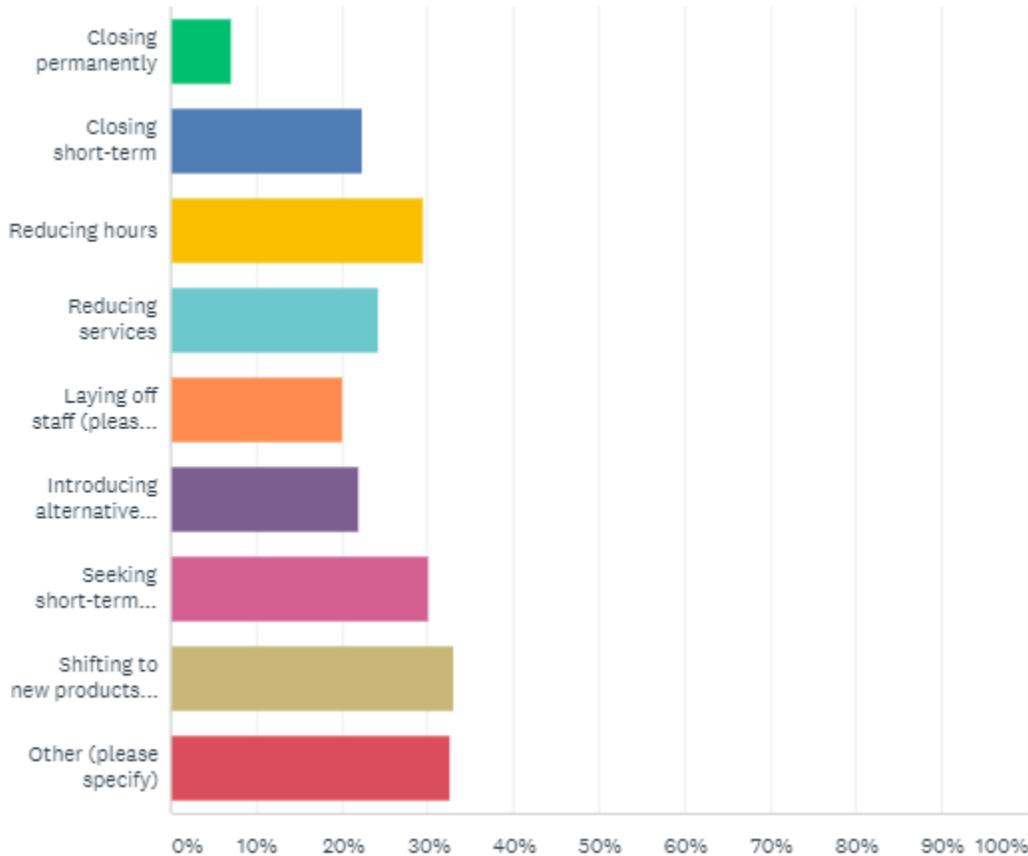
## #5 continued...

- No customers, Johnstown Border closed.
- I've been trying to expand through renting a room in a spa in Prescott, while also employing others part-time through contract (freelancing) work - which includes helping me with social media, marketing, etc. The lack of income is the bottom line issue.

## #6 If your business has been negatively impacted by the pandemic, what will you or are you doing to address this? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 169

Skipped: 150



## #6 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Closing permanently	7.10%	12
Closing short-term	22.49%	38
Reducing hours	29.59%	50
Reducing services	24.26%	41
Laying off staff (please specify number in comments section for 'Other')	20.12%	34
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	21.89%	37
Seeking short-term financing	30.18%	51
Shifting to new products or services	33.14%	56
Other (please specify)	32.54%	55
Total Respondents: 169		

### Other (please specify)

- Online sales. (x9)
- 8 staff laid off.
- 6 staff Laid off.
- 2 staff laid off.
- 4 staff not re-hired for season.
- We are mandated closed right now, trying to sell products curbside. (2)
- We have less the 1/2 the staff we had prior to COVID. Animals are being cared for but getting the essentials only.
- Had to lay off everyone except myself.
- Will be looking into options for increasing referral resources when time permits.
- Our office has been closed for over 1 year. We are a travel agency/tour operator. We have so far not been able to access the Provincial small business program as the government says we could have been open. This is ludicrous, travel programs, flights, etc., etc., are not operating so why would we be open when the government tells people not to travel.
- Shifting advertising strategies.
- Small businesses have been hardest hit. Every lock down we are CLOSED, yet WalMart / Costco got to stay open by restricting the number of customers and by dedicating a small area to food sales, why couldn't small businesses do the same, restrict shopper to 2 or 3. Grey Hound Bus Lines just closed their doors, why didn't our Government help them? Small communities depended on bus transportation, now they have none.
- Simply waiting it out. Wedding officiant and I am fortunate that it is a part-time business that I am not totally dependent upon.
- We need to increase hours, have dine-in allowances with health and safety measures, allow for entertainment events to return which directly affects our food and beverage and accommodation.
- Delaying our opening.
- Looking for new clients.

## #6 continued...

- We laid off some cleaning staff for our facility during the initial first wave of the pandemic. We have since been able to re-deploy these staff and roles and have not had to lay anyone off since then.
- Utilizing what I have and working at turning my farm into an Agri-Tourism Centre.
- Looking for additional short-term work projects.
- Being creative to flex with the times and resources.
- Due to Health Canada's recommendations, I cannot work in different places. I have not been allowed to see some clients since last March who reside in Long Term Care. I am only caring for clients in one retirement home.
- Closed for more than a year.
- Need marketing support, in terms of signage on the HWY 401 corridor; busiest highway in Canada and no one is allowed to know they are passing a true factory outlet.
- Waiting patiently for lockdowns to end - reaching for every government assistance available.
- Looking for a part time job.
- We are constantly renewing ourselves as a restaurant in the best of times; in these, the worst of times, economically and socially, we are doing our very best to flex in our service to the community we serve.
- Minimally maintaining the golf course as mandated - maintenance, wages, mortgage, lease payments due with no payment relief and was not eligible for Ontario Small Business Grant - told to wait 3-4 weeks for an email to say why not eligible - start-up costs \$12,000 to get open, wages \$3,500 every two weeks, lease payments \$2,100 per month, mortgage payment \$5,300, pesticide - \$2,500 to date, fuel \$2,000 monthly, equipment and irrigation repairs \$800 monthly/average, government imposed fees \$1,500 to date - with no revenue to offset, 86% revenue green fee based, only place in North America where golf is not allowed - will not go substantially in debt to operate with revenue of shortened weather-dependent season dwindles with mandated closure.
- I used to live in Rideau Lakes and rent an office full time. Now I commute from an hour away and rent space by the hour as needed. Outdoor meetings. Outdoor house calls. Working with a mobile hotspot that doesn't exist without signal in Rideau Lakes.
- We are a fishing lodge with a 94% US clientele. It has been extremely difficult to survive, or adapt in this climate.
- Changing our open times, menu size and flexibility for to-go or eat-in.
- We are unable to do virtual consultations due to the lack of bandwidth strength at our location. We are doing some sales, but just enough to pay some bills, but not all.
- We sold our business but we would have struggled to get through to 2022 opening if the numbers were the same as in 2020.
- Shifted to longer termed rentals for some units.
- The only negativity that we have encountered is how we can't produce enough products as the customer base is unpredictable. We have lost tourism business but gained local customer support. We have never had to close (thankfully).
- Americans are 40+ of our business. Two summers without their revenue is a big hit for a seasonal business. We are essentially doing less than we had planned in terms of enhancements and renovations.
- I am trying to think of new ways to sell our products and keep inventory at a manageable level.
- We don't qualify for a lot of the grants. I wanted an air purifier but I couldn't get any funding for it.

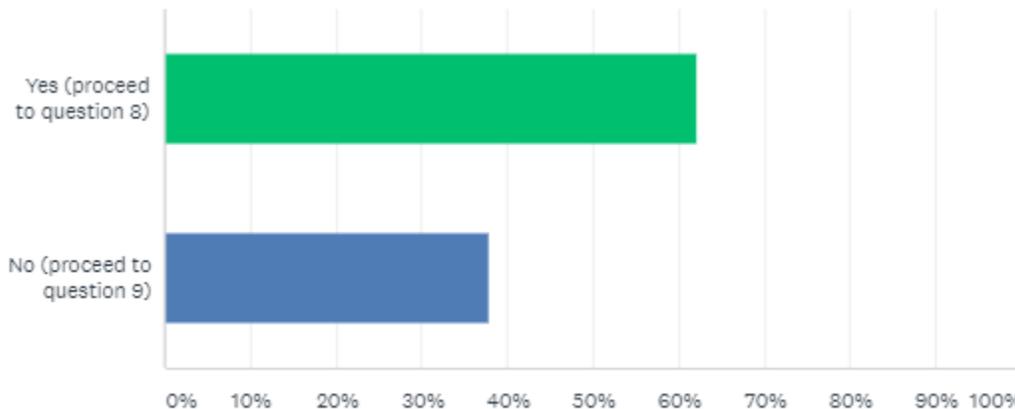
## #6 continued...

- I am literally re-training in a new field as I feel our government has shown they don't value small business and so I feel there is no future even though I have no debt and have been profitable through this situation. I feel our government doesn't care if we close, and as a result I don't want to work for myself anymore.
- Planning outdoor concerts, workshops, drive-in or distanced for later in summer.
- Main problem was loss of major client. Still trying to acquire new clients, but haven't come close to replacing prior income.
- Collecting the Canada Recovery Benefit.
- Have sought other employment until my services are required. I monitor homes and boats, care for pets while people are away from their home for work or pleasure. No one is travelling, therefore no need for my service.
- Minimal expenditures on supplies and inventory.
- Retiring.
- I am in the process of interviewing for a new F/T job so that I can keep my business going (as I don't qualify for any government support or bank loans). This will cause a reduction in my availability, and this is my plan to try to make it through until things improve.
- We are relying on our savings and CEWS to get us through, hoping our enrollment will increase in time.

## #7 Have you accessed any government support programs?

Answered: 317

Skipped: 2

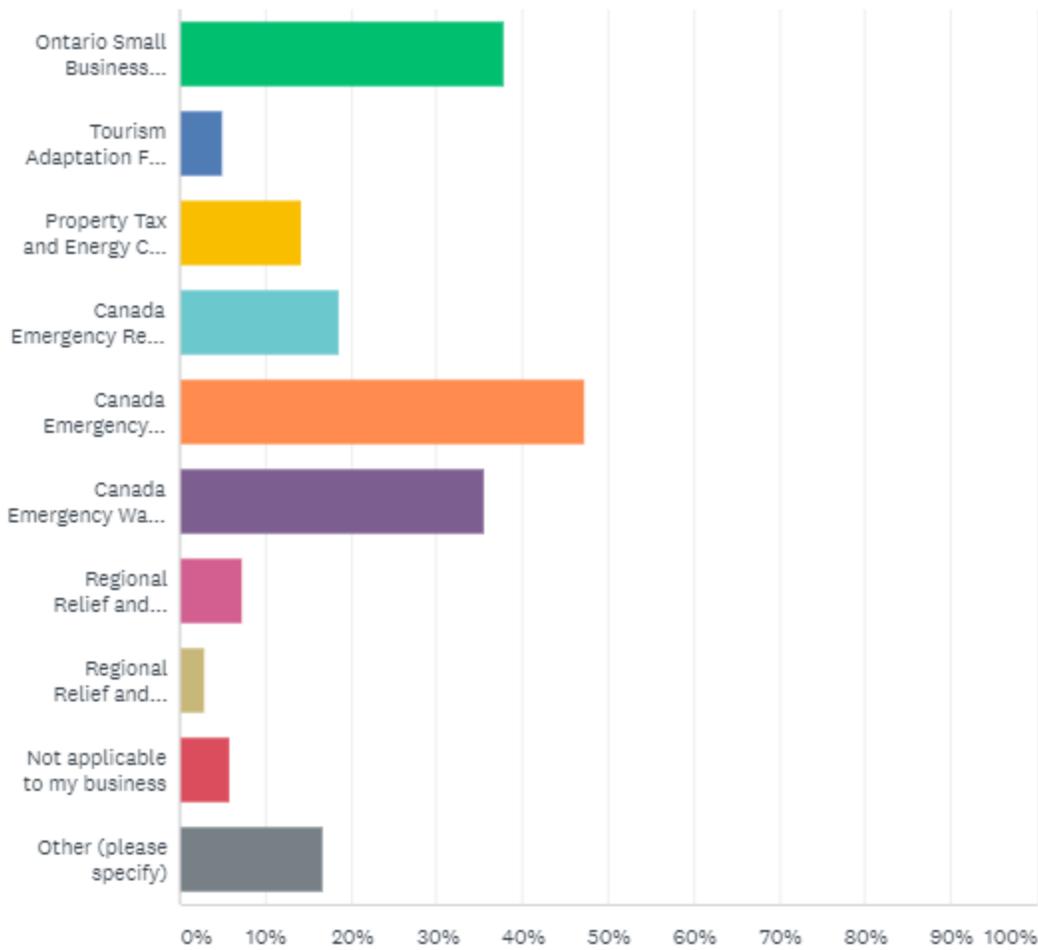


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (proceed to question 8)	62.15%	197
No (proceed to question 9)	37.85%	120
TOTAL		317

## #8 If you answered yes to question #7, what government support programs did you access? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 203

Skipped: 116



## #8 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ontario Small Business Support Grant	37.93%	77
Tourism Adaptation Fund (Regional Tourism Organization 9)	4.93%	10
Property Tax and Energy Cost Rebate	14.29%	29
Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)	18.72%	38
Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)	47.29%	96
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy – 75% (CEWS)	35.47%	72
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) from local CFDC	7.39%	15
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) from Fed Dev Ontario	2.96%	6
Not applicable to my business	5.91%	12
Other (please specify)	16.75%	34
Total Respondents: 203		

### Other (please specify)

- Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). (x12)
- Digital Main Street Digital Service Squad. (x4)
- Digital Main Street Grant. (x2)
- Digital Main Street ShopHere. (x2)
- Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB). (x2)
- Digital Main Street Future Proof.
- Grants through United Counties, Feed Ontario and Food Banks Canada.
- RE3 fund.
- Modernization Funding COVID-19 Funding Healthy Communities Funding.
- All but they need to offer more, it's not enough (e.g. PPE one time).
- We accessed the programs early as it took us three months to transform our business. Truly grateful for the support we needed while we transitioned the business model.
- I have not been able to figure out the rent subsidy nor the wage subsidy and wish I had help.
- Municipal small business grant for COVID adaptation and modifications - \$1000 for pre-approved items or services.
- WE-Can, Leeds Grenville Small Business Centre - Ask an Expert.
- Because we are seasonal, we do not qualify for much of the support/funding available. We have also received a COVID relief loan through Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC). We have applied for the RTO9 Tourism Adaptation Fund and are waiting to hear if the grant is accepted.
- Support from United Counties of Leeds and Grenville- Childcare Division.
- We received a small grant for some PPE through Town of Gananoque but I can't remember if the funds came from Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF).
- I looked into RTO9 Tourism Adaptation Fund, but we don't have money to match for the grants. We keep money ahead for repairs on machinery; if it goes down, we don't function as a business.
- Local small business funding.

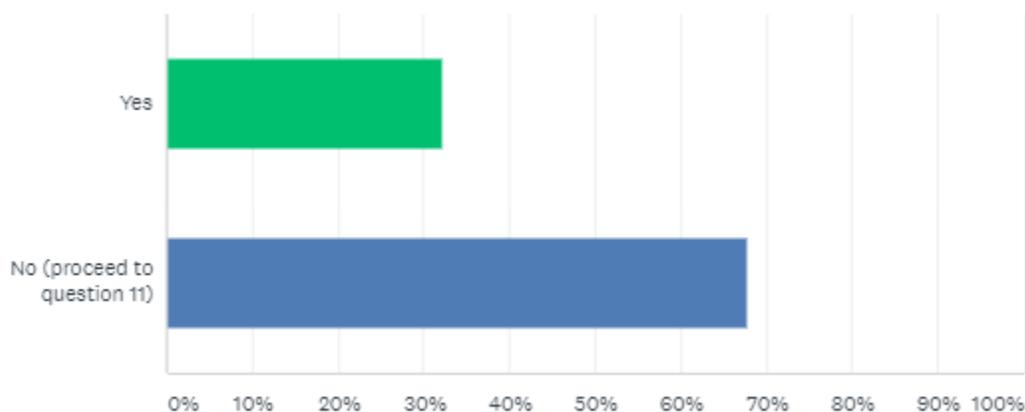
## #8 continued...

- I had applied for CERB but it made no difference. My business closed at the end of March 2020. I could not afford to pay rent & utilities and not have any students coming thru the door.
- Funding specific to the Ag Sector.
- Funding from UCLG - restart funding, reinvestment funding.

## #9 Have you had any problems accessing government support?

Answered: 310

Skipped: 9

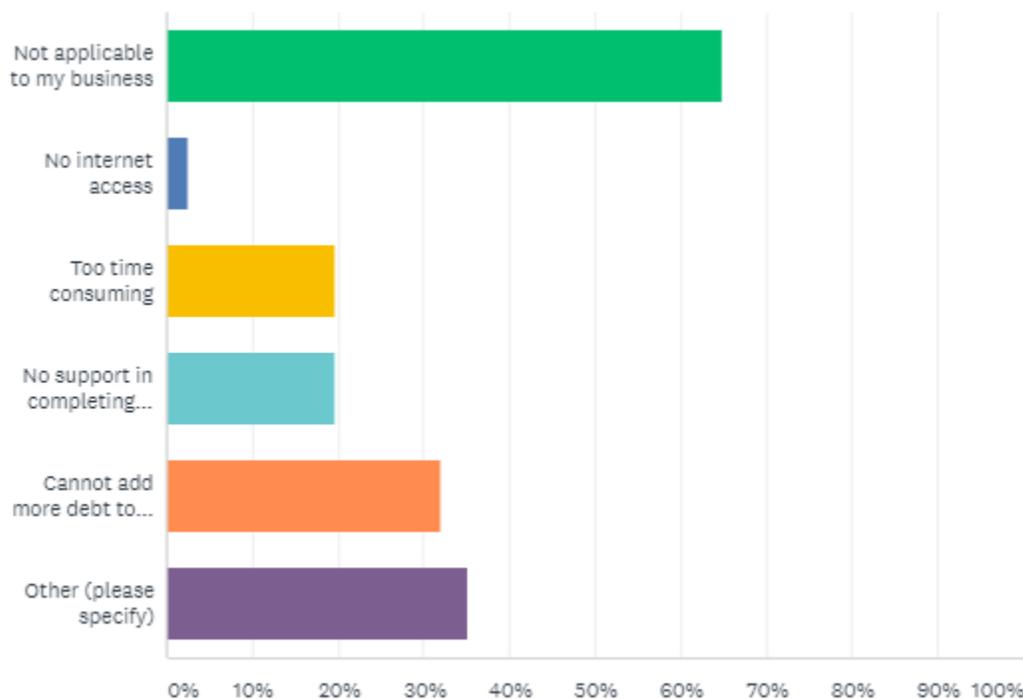


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	32.26%	100
No (proceed to question 11)	67.74%	210
TOTAL		310

## #10 What type of problems have you had accessing government support? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 122

Skipped: 197



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not applicable to my business	64.75%	79
No internet access	2.46%	3
Too time consuming	19.67%	24
No support in completing application	19.67%	24
Cannot add more debt to business	31.97%	39
Other (please specify)	35.25%	43
Total Respondents: 122		

### Other (please specify)

- None. (x3)
- My Digital Main Street would not recognize my business demographic area at the Kemptville Campus.
- OMAFRA gave funding to an un-qualified NFP OFA (who hired Farms.com) to create job post/job search "concierge" service that directly competes with all agricultural recruitment and search firms, mine included. Agri-business now gets services for free that my company has provided for over 30 years. I cannot survive for over 2 years until funding is gone.
- Submitting "proper" documents to start Canadian Recovery Benefit (CRB).
- The software always crashes, no one returns calls and no idea what is going on as there is no one to ask on status or how and why they gave what they did. It's all too secretive and non-transparent.

## #10 continued...

- Either no incorporation or no employees/payroll.
- Need receipts for PPE supplies. Small businesses don't have PPE suppliers. Most small Businesses buy PPE supplies at the grocery store with their household groceries. So not eligible for those grants.
- We are federally regulated and as such have been essentially shut out of Provincial support programs despite sales being down >90%.
- Had to wait for regulations to change on payroll for contract workers. Also a lot of grants refer to year over year April 2020 to April 2021. I did not notice the hardship until summer of 2020.
- Waiting for hours on the helpline for a 'live person'.
- We were too small and not in debt enough.
- Early days the landlord wasn't agreeable to participating in rent relief.
- From what I can I see there is nothing available to me.
- Straight up denied a start-up grant because I don't make profit.
- Haven't received funding I've been approved for.
- The rent assistance was way too complicated.
- Missed deadline for Tourism grant. I hope it comes available again.
- When applying for the Small Business Support Grant, the application was poorly designed causing my business to be denied, even though I am actually eligible. There was only one month option for pre/post COVID comparison, which was April. My business is summer seasonal, so April makes absolutely no difference. There was a "winter seasonal" option, but nothing for summer. I have followed up by phone and email, and received no confirmation that an appeal is being considered.
- Relatively new businesses which started a year or two prior to the spring of 2020 can have low numbers starting out (trying to build the business), so the criteria for meeting the screening requirements for all government programs for companies such as ours has been impossible to meet as the business loss does not correlate the same way for us. Our business was steadily building but then went flat so the losses required to meet the requirement for government programs was impossible to meet, thus leaving us out in the cold. It is as though new businesses were not considered and were left to fend for themselves. We still have the same operating expenses (high insurance premiums, overhead, etc.) and as of now, all income goes towards paying these costs. We are to the point of deciding to shut the business down once it breaks even sometime next year if things stay the same.
- Did not qualify for rent relief, as I did not have a CRA number prior to September 2020 even though I've had an Ontario business license since 2019.
- Ontario Small Business Grant application status - "Not Eligible" - no reason received. Not-for-Profit corporate owned golf courses access funding with more ease and availability. Many grants/programs exclude CCPC owned business/golf course. No support in completing/gaining information to complete.
- Tried to apply for the \$20,000 CEBA expansion but was denied.
- Can't add more debt to personal debt. Landlord didn't apply for rent relief.
- Did not qualify for any help - we opened Dec. 4, 2020.
- Biggest issue is the internet - living on a rural road and having been told that you will not get fibre down your road is unacceptable. The federal government's help of expansion into the rural areas with fibre seems to be going directly into the villages and hamlets. Real rural internet has to be addressed.
- Was not aware of the funding I was qualified for until after deadline.
- We were ordered to be shut down by the Health Unit but Small Business Support Grant said we were not eligible. Help.
- Essentially, we did not qualify for most since we were a 'new' business.

## #10 continued...

- Ontario government promised grants for tourism business and then nothing. Eastern Ontario group has complicated application and also expects you to take on a project to get funding towards it. The only support we were able to get was in 2020 the CEBA loan/grant, not fair with lockdowns and border closure unable to operate business, property tax and utility rebates only apply if you have business accounts, my hydro/internet/phone accounts are labelled residential, so not eligible for Ontario government rebates, way too much red tape for Ontario and eastern tourism regional grants.
- Applied to Small Businesses Support Grant and got numerous messages to say there was incomplete / incorrect information but despite numerous phone calls I could not re-access form to adjust it so I gave up.
- Since my business is a healthcare based business I do not qualify for many other government relief programs. Despite not having to shut down, we've still struggled to continue bringing in revenue because the public do not want to keep their appointments when there is a stay-at-home order in effect. We are open but there are no clients. Another struggle we've had has been the dramatic increase in PPE costs yet we are not able to access funding for this either. It seems our business has fallen through the cracks when it comes to government support.
- There was nothing really in place when my business went under and if there was I never heard about it. Too late now.
- We are a restaurant and denied the \$20,000, now additional \$20,000. Unable to contact anyone to find out why; called the 1-800 number and emailed. Also contacted local MPP, no response.
- We opened during the pandemic so no 'proof' we have increased costs due to COVID as no baseline.
- Don't need to put my country into debt just because of a little decrease in income.
- I received some technical support from Digital Main Street, but what I really needed was funding for apps and marketing services to be able to compete online. I have the website, social media etc. and they are top notch but no one sees them because I cannot afford to advertise. I spoke to local agencies administering programs and there was nothing available to help me.
- We have done too good a job of managing the issues, so have not had the bottom line impact. But it comes at the expense of the business and after much work by the employees to mitigate.
- They helped me set up a storefront website but I am so busy that I really do not have the time to take advantage of the tons of information that they have sent me.

## #11 What type of support are you looking for from government right now? (Please specify.)

Answered: 234

Skipped: 85

- None. (x50)
- Financial grants. (x41)
- Lockdowns to end. (x18)
- Financial loans. (15)
- Less government and red tape. (x6)
- Assistance with operating costs (rent, utilities, property taxes, loans, leases). (x6)
- Continue and increase funding to support all aspects of online commerce and marketing throughout Leeds Grenville. (x6)
- Continuation of Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA). (x5)
- Continuation of Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). (x5)
- Ontario Small Business Support Grant. (x3)

## #11 continued...

- Tax breaks, keep taxes low. (3)
- Continuation of Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB). (x3)
- Canada/US border to open. (x2)
- Hold media accountable, stop fear mongering, news needs to be concise, to the point and accurate. (x2)
- Reliable, affordable rural internet. (x2)
- Allow the opening of outdoor dining/patios. (x2)
- Clear messaging from government would be helpful. Don't announce that sectors such as retail are open for business and in the same breath state that everyone should stay home unless it's essential (x2).
- Return to in-store shopping with reasonable limits. (x2)
- Getting essential workers, hot spots and other vaccinated so we can get back to business. (x2)
- Require workers. (x2)
- Continuation of Canada Emergency Response Benefit. (CERB)
- Direction on safe COVID 19 operating protocols.
- Security to help my business through into 2022.
- Job posts/fairs are not the problem in employment in agriculture, locality matched with candidate skills is. Local economic development agencies are more than capable of doing the same thing much better in their own regions.
- Support for landlords owning residential rental properties. It is not the responsibility of landlords to support tenants.
- Funding for changes we need to make to our air purification system.
- Funding for capital expenditures to allow us to grow.
- Extra help starting new business.
- Stop paying employees to stay home.
- Rules and regulations specific to our business.
- Self-employed subsidy.
- Funding for home-based business.
- Covering PPE cost and losses due to slowdown of clientele.
- Grant to defray the extraordinary increase in the cost of building supplies.
- Funding for new product development related to media.
- I am a boat manufacturer and this is effecting me greatly. Repairs have fallen by 90%. Business was good in May of 2020 but fell off after that. Nothing available for funding for me as my April 2020 was a good month.
- Having kids return to school safely.
- Vigilance on COVID.
- My hairstyling business is closed and online presence not possible.
- Income, business publicity/advertising.
- Review of insurance rates for the tourism and hospitality sector.
- Support for sole proprietorships - many programs require a minimum number of employees or income.
- Keep working at what they presently are trying to do - make the hard decisions and moves in effort to keep us safe - roll out vaccines - strengthen the economy.
- With the CRB, I am able to pay for my liability insurance, my website, etc.
- Communication with regards to the reopening plan.
- Make smart decisions and logical decisions when reopening.
- Start-up grant.

## #11 continued...

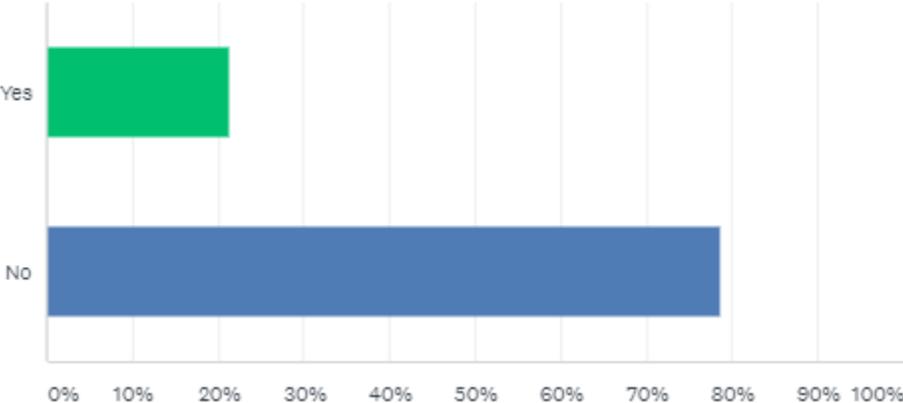
- I would like funding to build an outdoor office so I can resume in-person sessions for clients who need them (this is a clinical issue because remote therapy is not appropriate for all clients, not everyone has access to internet or privacy to conduct remote sessions, and although research demonstrates the general effectiveness of tele therapy as equivalent to in person, this is not the case for all individuals).
- More flexibility on what is defined as a business.
- Assistance with marketing, we need the government to allow more signage on the 401 corridor to draw customers into our outlet store.
- Open outdoor EEC facilities.
- I have lost approximately 60% of my business for more than a year (with no end in sight) with not a penny of government financial support. I would also like to point out that my insurance company continues to legally charge me for liability insurance on a business I cannot operate (therefore, they would not cover me if there was an incident resulting in a claim anyway). Why, is this unethical business practice legal?
- A grant for solopreneurs in alternative health and wellness to cover costs of offering services online and marketing.
- Opening of outdoor businesses.
- Minimizing unnecessary disruptions to supply chains (port, rail).
- In the construction / renovation industry, we have no choice but to have vehicles on the road travelling to job sites. One of our biggest challenges and expenses is in fuel costs. I have not increased our labour costs since the start of COVID-19, in an attempt to help out clients that are struggling. We need to place a hold on any additional fuel tax, our number one challenge, fuel costs. I realize the taxes on fuel are beyond the responsibility of Leeds and Grenville, but the message needs to be delivered that if small business is the backbone of the Canadian economy, as each level of government continues to state, then let's stop hand cuffing small business at every turn. I do understand that we must protect our environment, but let us do that with affordable options.
- Our competitor's business has also dropped off yet they have access to the available grants, etc. so they are buying new vehicles and are preparing to expand. The current system is lopsided.
- Mainly keeping industry open to reduce the potential for even further supply chain issues.
- We need them to provide more a la carte options in the re-opening of certain sectors (in live performance, there is a vast array of sizes, shapes, and spaces).
- Get people vaccinated so people can go back to normal.
- Increase Regional Relief and Recovery funding.
- With the extended closure during three of the spring holiday weekends and looking like Ontario will close during all upcoming holiday weekends paying 40,000 back is getting worrisome.
- Faster vaccine appointments for essential workers. Sufficient notice regarding closures and reopening dates.
- Training programs for licensing industrial exterminators - all other exterminations can do exam on line.
- We have had 0 cases, or transmissions in our business, and from June through December of 2020, we had over 5000 clients at our location. We were operating under the PPE restrictions rigorously, and doing our part. A roll back would be requested, but if that is not allowed, then vaccines would solve this. We had a viable business model, until the government changed the rules, and under these circumstances, our business model is no longer viable - we should be compensated for this as it was through no fault of our own.
- Training incentives for hiring new employees.

## #11 continued...

- We saw growth in 2020 but I feel that we will see tougher times due to delays, unavailability and price of goods/services this year coupled with the overspending and amount of debt the country is going to be that the government should be looking ahead to prepare for this inevitable downturn as it will affect the businesses that contribute the larger part to the economy in respect to jobs and taxes.
- Less restrictions on government support for healthcare businesses.
- Any funding. My business doesn't qualify for any of the programs because we opened in 2020 and have no history of sales or we don't fall under the 20% loss of income, which doesn't make sense because our sales are down 50%.
- Looking for support on retrofitting our production facility to be safer for employees and allow for social distancing.
- Debt forgiveness. It will take 7 years for us to repay debt we borrowed from the government to stay alive during the pandemic. Our family of 5 all work the business full time. Closing was not an option as our family depends on our business for their livelihood.
- Lowering qualifying threshold for the Ontario Small Business Support Grant from current 20% revenue drop. Funding could be scaled for businesses that saw sizable revenue losses, even if it wasn't exactly 20%. The hard threshold in this calculation is too blunt.
- Support for upgrades for social distancing.
- We are a seasonal tourism business, that could not access any help for property taxes and insurance, another grant does not help, the only thing that makes sense is to cover these costs.
- Promotion for local/domestic products and producers.
- Grant for artists because we have barely made any money this year but expenses stayed the same. Also, tried to have an online business but Internet service is poor and no money for marketing.
- I'd like the hundreds of thousands of dollars lost back.
- Sales increased in 2020 due to COVID, but now have significantly decreased in 2021 due to COVID. All of the restrictions in place to prevent the spread of COVID are also reducing the incidents of cough/colds, which has hurt our sales this year.
- Reopen safely.
- As long as we have to meet the staffing requirements per the public health unit, we will need wage subsidy as we must cohort and have staff available to screen and deliver children to their programs. Our staffing has increased and our enrollment has dropped to 50%.
- Funding for marketing.
- Keep the Border open to commercial traffic only, help clients adapt to buying local and selling global. Government should be helping simplify import and export, not implementing new initiatives that will bury most small businesses; I am speaking about the new Customs initiatives due to be implemented in May of next year.
- Assistance getting businesses (our suppliers) reopened.

**#12 Would you like to receive assistance with your online presence (website presence, online shopping/e-Commerce, digital marketing, social media)? Check yes or no and if yes, please provide your contact information in #14.**

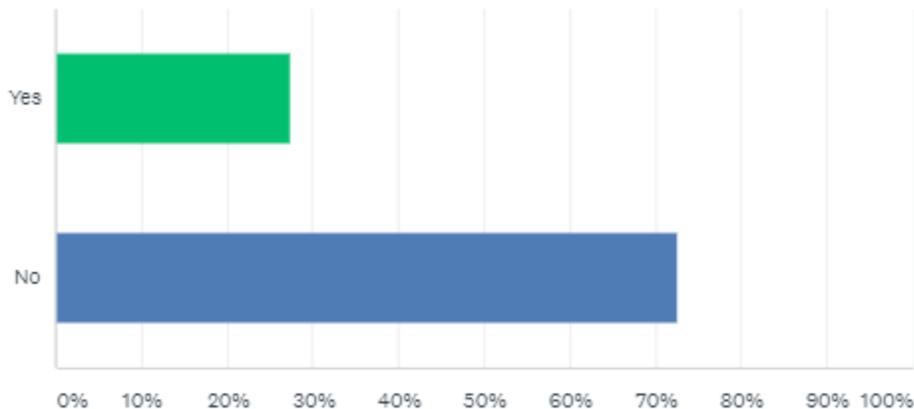
Answered: 308      Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	21.43%	66
No	78.57%	242
TOTAL		308

**#13 If you would like to speak to someone regarding available support, please specify. Check yes or no and if yes, please provide your contact information in #14.**

Answered: 280      Skipped: 39



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.50%	77
No	72.50%	203
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>280</b>

**#14 If you answered yes to question #12 or #13, please provide your contact information.**

Answered: 89      Skipped: 230

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	100.00%	89
Business Name	Responses	96.63%	86
Contact Number	Responses	95.51%	85
Email	Responses	96.63%	86

## Additional Notes:

- Survey Timeframe: May 4 – May 18, 2021
- Survey Distribution: Businesses that were part the Counties Economic Development business directory, with active email addresses, received the Covid-19 survey directly. In addition, some members of Business Support Working Group distributed the survey through their membership lists and social media channels.
- Government of Ontario implemented a Province-wide Emergency Brake on April 3<sup>rd</sup> for a minimum of 4-weeks. On April 8<sup>th</sup> a Stay-at-Home order was issued and on May 13<sup>th</sup> it was further extended until June 2<sup>nd</sup>

## Business Support Working Group:

### Municipalities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge | Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott | Rideau Lakes | Westport

### MP / MPP

MP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes  
MPP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

### Community Futures Development Corporations

1000 Islands CDC | Grenville CFDC | Valley Heartland CFDC

### Small Business Enterprise Centres

Leeds & Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre  
Small Business Advisory Centre – Smiths Falls | Lanark

### Chambers of Commerce

1000 Islands Gananoque | Brockville and District | Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay & District | Merrickville and District | North Grenville | South Grenville

### BIAs

Downtown Brockville | Downtown Gananoque | Old Town Kemptville

### Employment Services

CSE Consulting | Employment and Education Centre | KEYS Job Centre

### Other Business & Education Agencies

Regional Tourism Organization 9 | St. Lawrence Corridor Economic Development Commission | Eastern Ontario Workforce Innovation Board | Rideau Lakes Business Network | St. Lawrence College | Kemptville Campus Education and Community Hub

## THANK-YOU!

On behalf of the Business Support Working Group, I would like to thank each business who took the time to complete the survey. Members of the Working Group will be reaching out to assist businesses who indicated they would like assistance. The Working Group contact list is available on the webpage, along with any new programs and resources as they become available.

Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager  
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

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