

Municipality of North Grenville

Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

2021 Business Survey: COVID-19 Report



May 28, 2021

Survey Timeframe: May 4 – May 18, 2021

Prepared by:

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

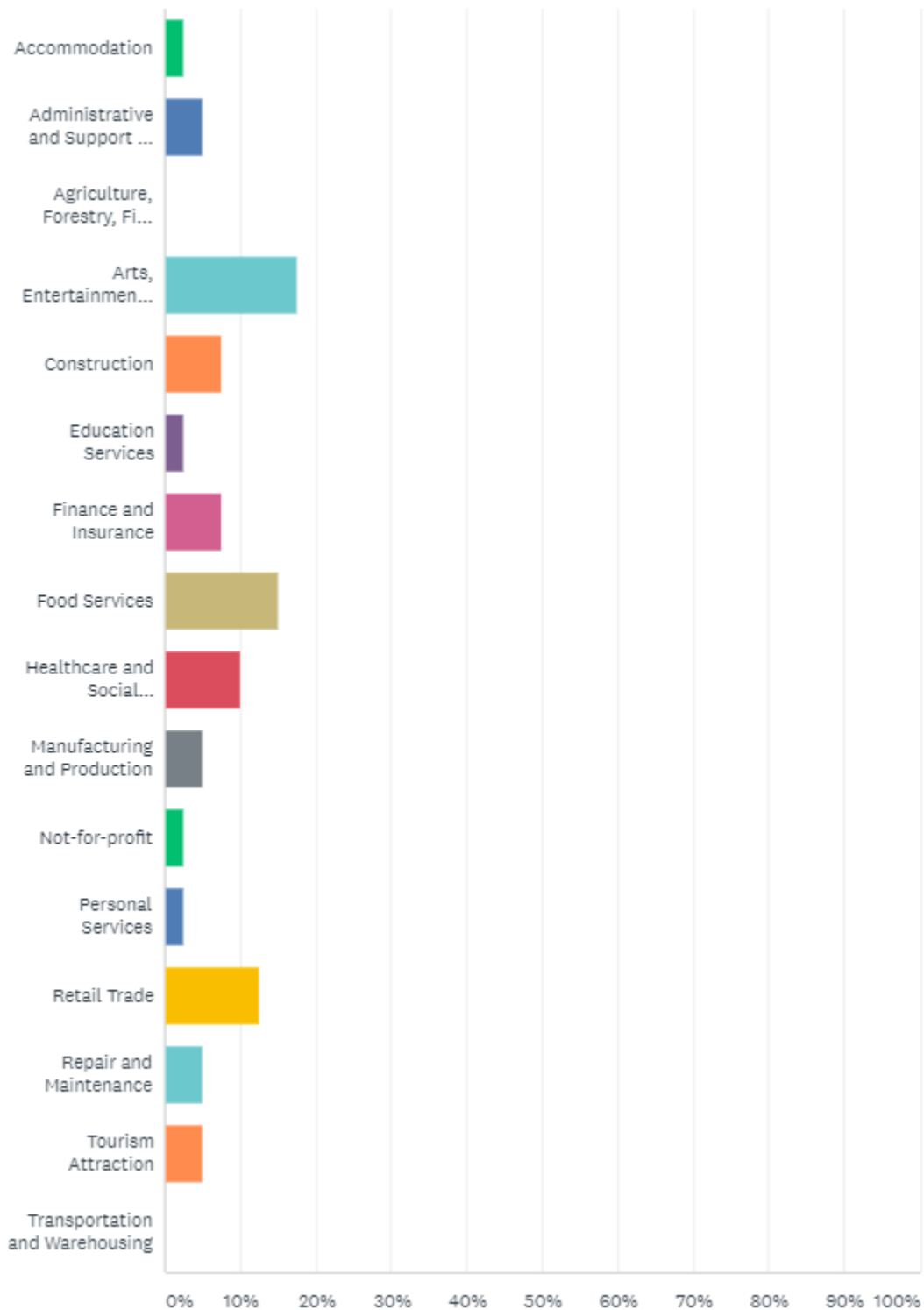


www.investleedsgrenville.com/covid19

#2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 40

Skipped: 0



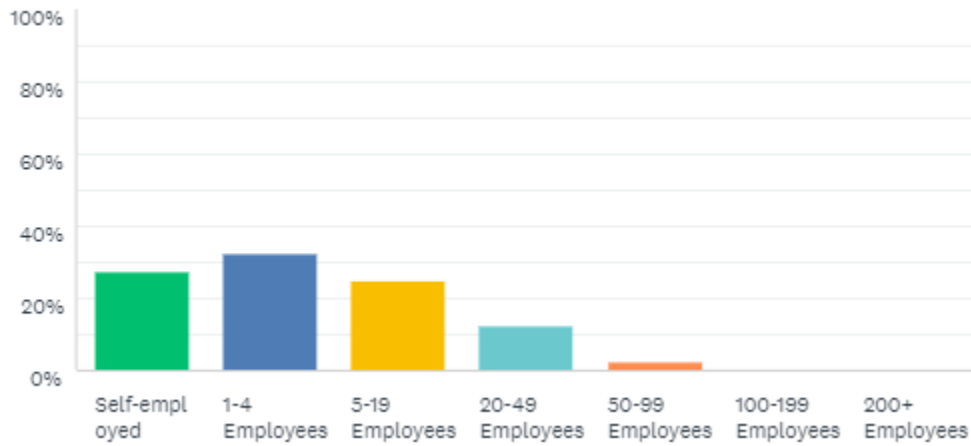
#2 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accommodation	2.50%	1
Administrative and Support - Business Services	5.00%	2
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	0.00%	0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	17.50%	7
Construction	7.50%	3
Education Services	2.50%	1
Finance and Insurance	7.50%	3
Food Services	15.00%	6
Healthcare and Social Assistance	10.00%	4
Manufacturing and Production	5.00%	2
Not-for-profit	2.50%	1
Personal Services	2.50%	1
Retail Trade	12.50%	5
Repair and Maintenance	5.00%	2
Tourism Attraction	5.00%	2
Transportation and Warehousing	0.00%	0
TOTAL		40

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

Answered: 40

Skipped: 0

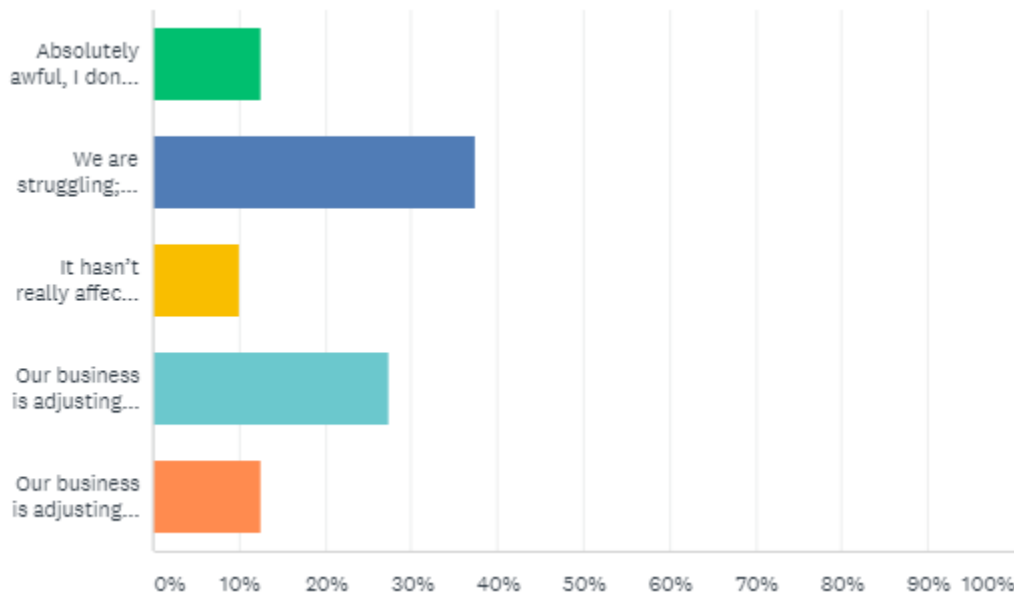


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Self-employed	27.50%	11
1-4 Employees	32.50%	13
5-19 Employees	25.00%	10
20-49 Employees	12.50%	5
50-99 Employees	2.50%	1
100-199 Employees	0.00%	0
200+ Employees	0.00%	0
TOTAL		40

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

Answered: 40

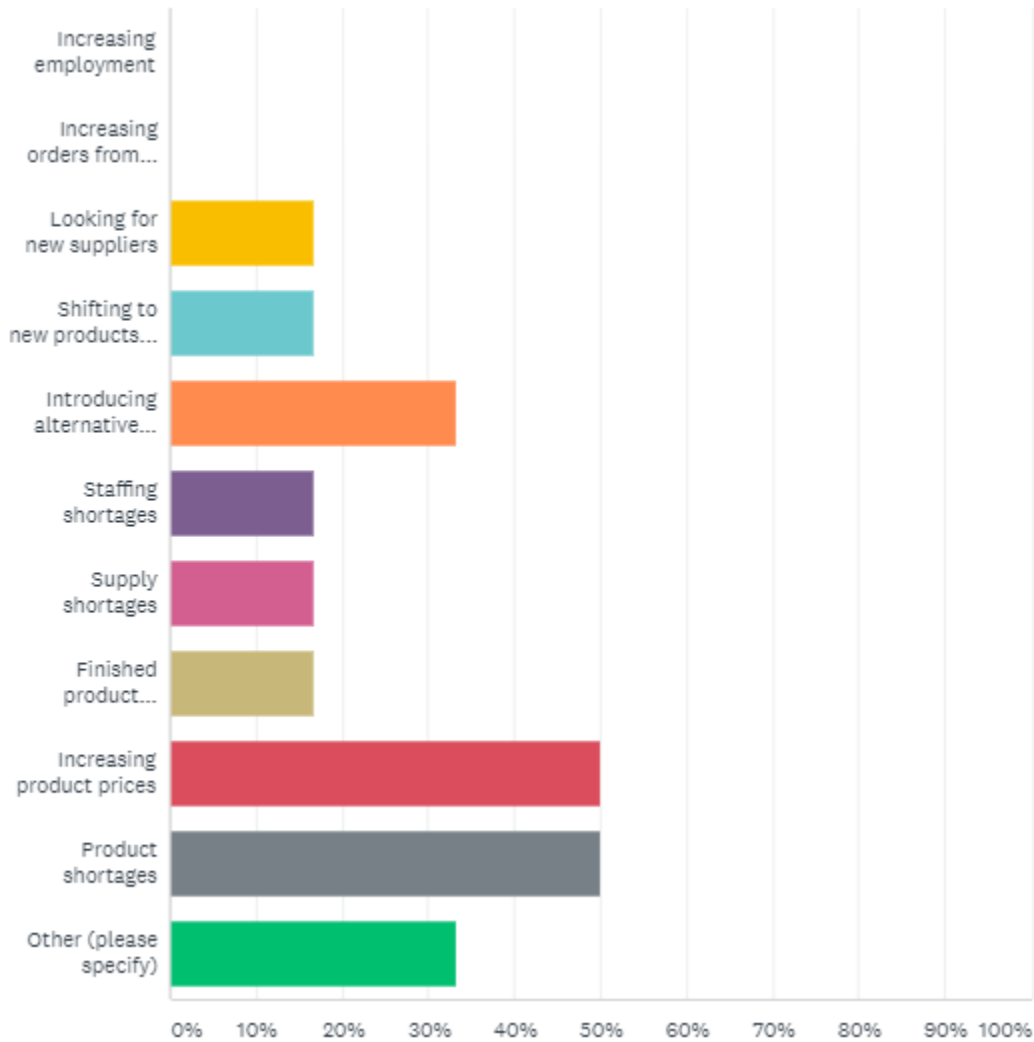
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Absolutely awful, I don't think our business will make it through (proceed to question 6)	12.50%	5
We are struggling; recovering from this could take some time (proceed to question 6)	37.50%	15
It hasn't really affected us yet (proceed to question 7)	10.00%	4
Our business is adjusting and maintaining status quo (proceed to question 7)	27.50%	11
Our business is adjusting and growing (proceed to question 5)	12.50%	5
TOTAL		40

#5 If your business is growing, what are your biggest challenges? (Choose all that apply, then proceed to question 7.)

Answered: 6 Skipped: 34



#5 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increasing employment	0.00%	0
Increasing orders from suppliers	0.00%	0
Looking for new suppliers	16.67%	1
Shifting to new products or services	16.67%	1
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	33.33%	2
Staffing shortages	16.67%	1
Supply shortages	16.67%	1
Finished product shortages/delays	16.67%	1
Increasing product prices	50.00%	3
Product shortages	50.00%	3
Other (please specify)	33.33%	2
Total Respondents: 6		

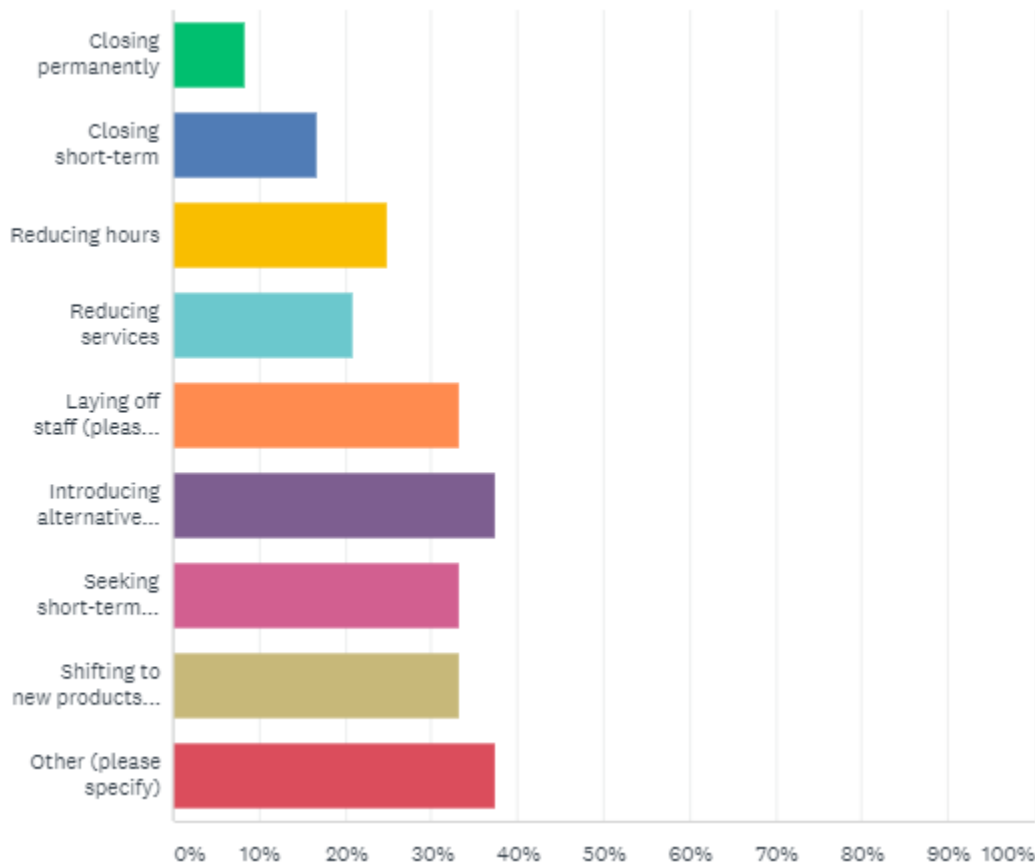
Other (please specify)

- I do picture framing, and glass is short because it comes from Germany, and I hear there are a lack of containers for shipment.
- 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 pivot 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.

#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: 24

Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Closing permanently	8.33% 2
Closing short-term	16.67% 4
Reducing hours	25.00% 6
Reducing services	20.83% 5
Laying off staff (please specify number in comments section for 'Other')	33.33% 8
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	37.50% 9
Seeking short-term financing	33.33% 8
Shifting to new products or services	33.33% 8
Other (please specify)	37.50% 9
Total Respondents: 24	

#6 continued...

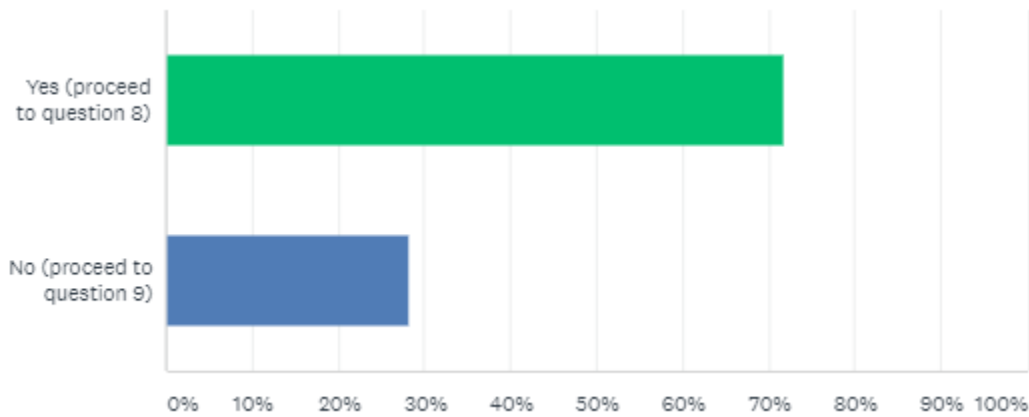
Other (please specify)

- 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.
- 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.
- Our staff is off, and we are trying to sell products, which is about 20% of our normal revenue through online postings. 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.
- The only negativity that we have encountered is how we cannot 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.
- I have a retail store so I am trying to sell online but it is nothing like having our store open. I am trying to think of new ways to sell our products and keep inventory at a manageable level.
- Online shopping through Digital Main Street program.
- Planning outdoor concerts, workshops, drive in or distanced for later in summer.
- We have less than ½ the staff we had prior to COVID. Animals are being cared for but getting the essentials only.

#7 Have you accessed any government support programs?

Answered: 39

Skipped: 1

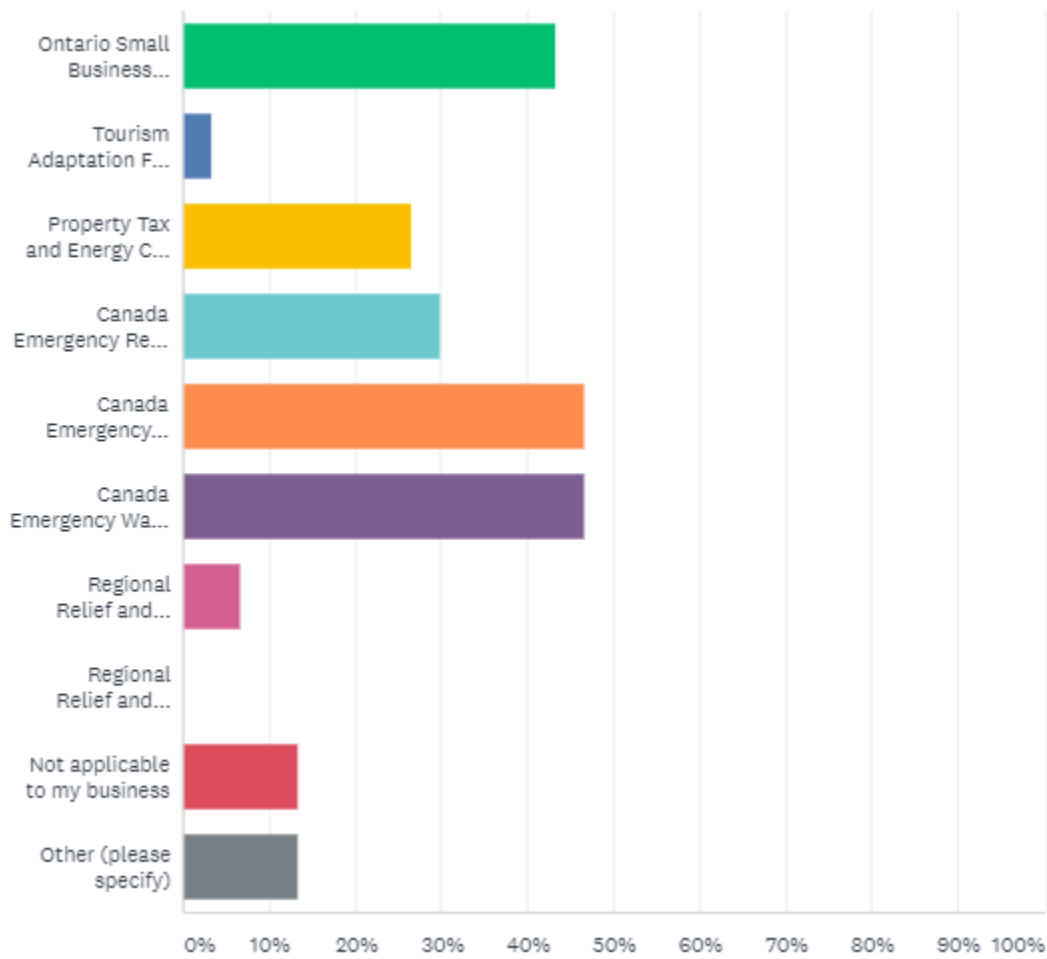


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (proceed to question 8)	71.79%	28
No (proceed to question 9)	28.21%	11
TOTAL		39

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

Answered: 30

Skipped: 10



#8 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ontario Small Business Support Grant	43.33%	13
Tourism Adaptation Fund (Regional Tourism Organization 9)	3.33%	1
Property Tax and Energy Cost Rebate	26.67%	8
Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)	30.00%	9
Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)	46.67%	14
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy – 75% (CEWS)	46.67%	14
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) from local CFDC	6.67%	2
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) from Fed Dev Ontario	0.00%	0
Not applicable to my business	13.33%	4
Other (please specify)	13.33%	4
Total Respondents: 30		

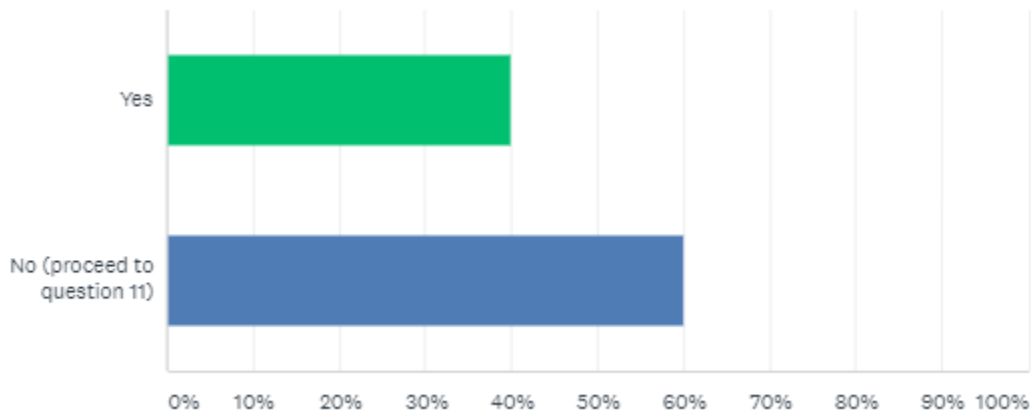
Other (please specify)

- I require help with wage subsidy and rent subsidy.
- Municipal small business grant for COVID adaptation and modifications - \$1000 for pre-approved items or services.
- Federal Heritage Grant in 2018. There were obstacles in applying for this. So we did not pursue. I looked into RTO9 adaptation fund, but we do not 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. None of the money needed for our upgrades relates to COVID, PPE or others in any of the subsidies offered. The program applied for was not a current COVID related program. This is just an example of what we tried in the past.
- Digital Main Street program and services.

#9 Have you had any problems accessing government support?

Answered: 40

Skipped: 0

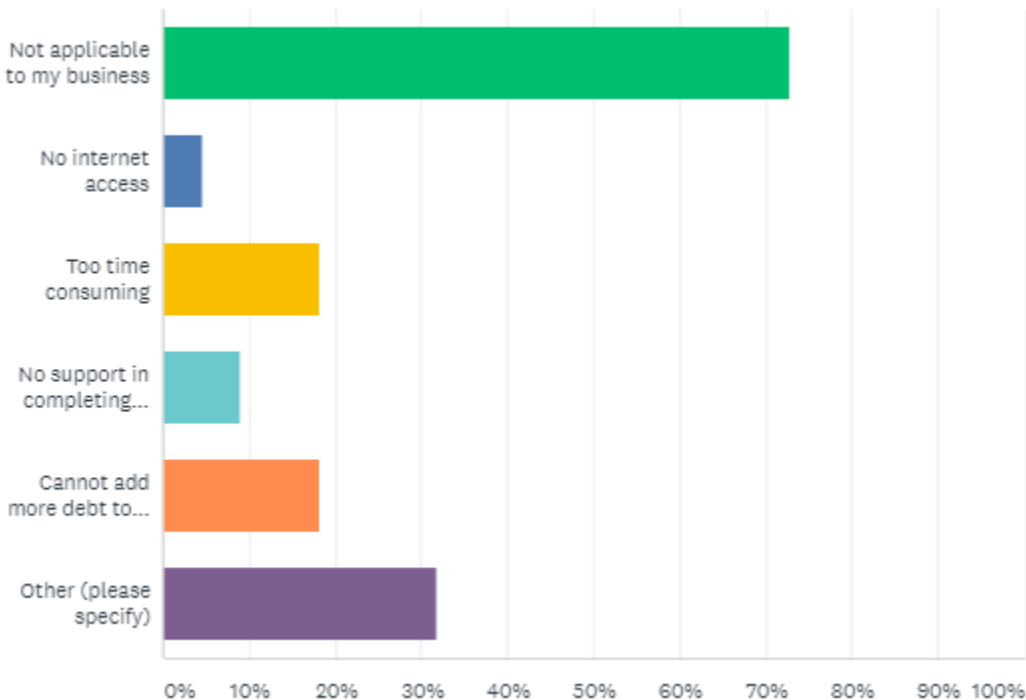


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	40.00% 16
No (proceed to question 11)	60.00% 24
TOTAL	40

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

Answered: 22

Skipped: 18



#10 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not applicable to my business	72.73%	16
No internet access	4.55%	1
Too time consuming	18.18%	4
No support in completing application	9.09%	2
Cannot add more debt to business	18.18%	4
Other (please specify)	31.82%	7
Total Respondents: 22		

Other (please specify)

- My digital main street would not recognize my business demographic area at the Kemptville Campus.
- Missed deadline.
- 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.
- Not currently, but we wanted to apply for a heritage grant that was offered from the Federal government. We are a government registered business, but when we went to apply, we were told we needed to be incorporated. So we didn't apply. It would have helped to do upgrades to our facade and repair some much needed things that we can't afford, and to help attract more tourism to the community. It's the obstacles that block us small businesses (besides closures) that discourage us from applying. We pay taxes, attract tourism and feed people.
- We are a restaurant and denied the \$20K now additional \$20, unable to contact anyone to find out why. Called the 1-800 number, emailed also contacted local MPP, but no responses.
- We opened during the pandemic so no 'proof' we have increased costs due to COVID as no baseline.

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

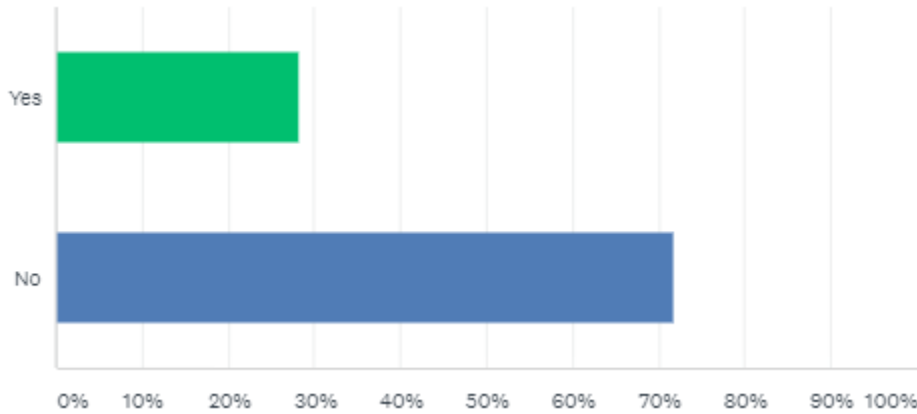
Answered: 27

Skipped: 13

- Grants. (8)
- Allow retail stores to open. (2)
- None.
- Low interest loan.
- Ontario small business grant of \$20,000.
- Security to help my business through into 2022.
- Covering PPE cost and losses due to slowdown of clientele.
- Income support for business owner.
- None, the current level of government debt concerns me.
- Grant for growing business.
- Financial. 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?
- Part 2 of the CEBA loan.
- Mainly keeping industry open to reduce the potential for even further supply chain issues.
- Some financial assistance in upgrading website presence, etc.
- 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.
- Lift the lockdown.
- What we would need would be for something to help us with preserving the heritage of our business. We don't have the funds to do any repairs, or time to close down to do repairs. There are a lot of cosmetic repairs necessary for optics, which we don't have the time, energy or extra cash on hand.
- 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.
- Grant for a non-profit.

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

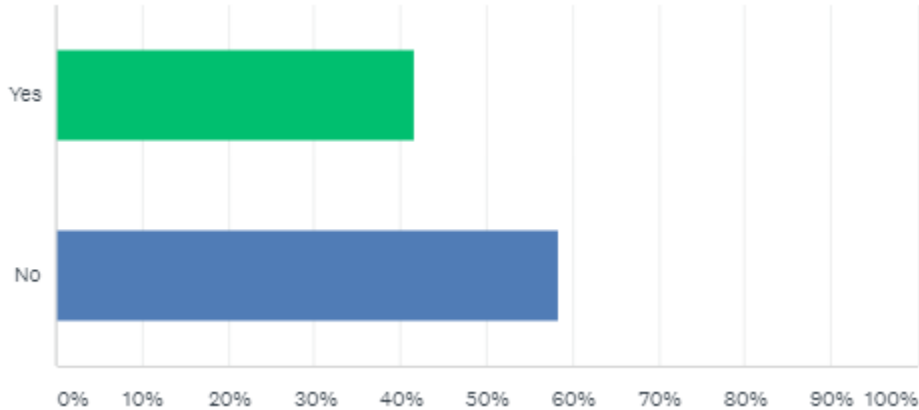
Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	28.21%	11
No	71.79%	28
TOTAL		39

#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: 36 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	41.67%	15
No	58.33%	21
TOTAL		36

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

Answered: 16 Skipped: 24

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	100.00% 16
Business Name	Responses	100.00% 16
Contact Number	Responses	100.00% 16
Email	Responses	100.00% 16

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 3rd for a minimum of 4-weeks. On April 8th a Stay-at-Home order was issued and on May 13th it was further extended until June 2nd

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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