



# Canadian Nursing Student Survey Results

Developed by Viewpoints Research on behalf of CFNU and CNSA.  
December 2024



CANADIAN FEDERATION  
OF NURSES UNIONS  
LA FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE  
DES SYNDICATS D'INFIRMIÈRES  
ET INFIRMIERS



# **Student finances**



# Nursing students primarily use scholarships, grants, or bursaries, student loans, and personal savings to finance their education.

*Students are more likely to use certain methods based on their age or year of study:*

Scholarships, grants, or bursaries

60%

Final year students (64%)

Student loans

58%

Final year students (63%)

Older students (81% of 25-29, 73% of 30+)

Personal savings

54%

Family support

43%

Younger students (52% of under 24)

Employment income

38%

Final year students (46%)

Older students (42% of 25-29, 46% of 30+)

Other (please specify)

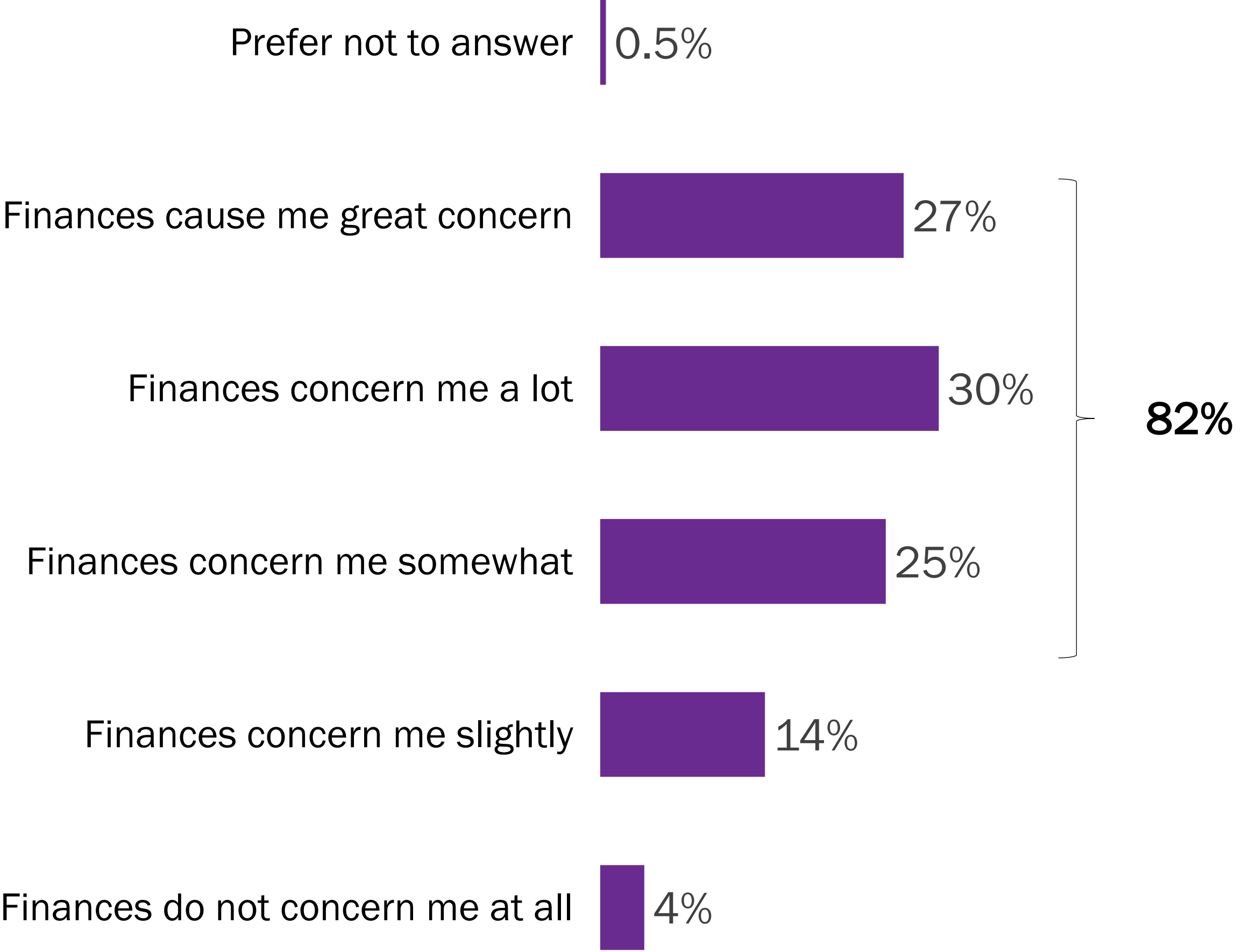
3%

Prefer not to answer

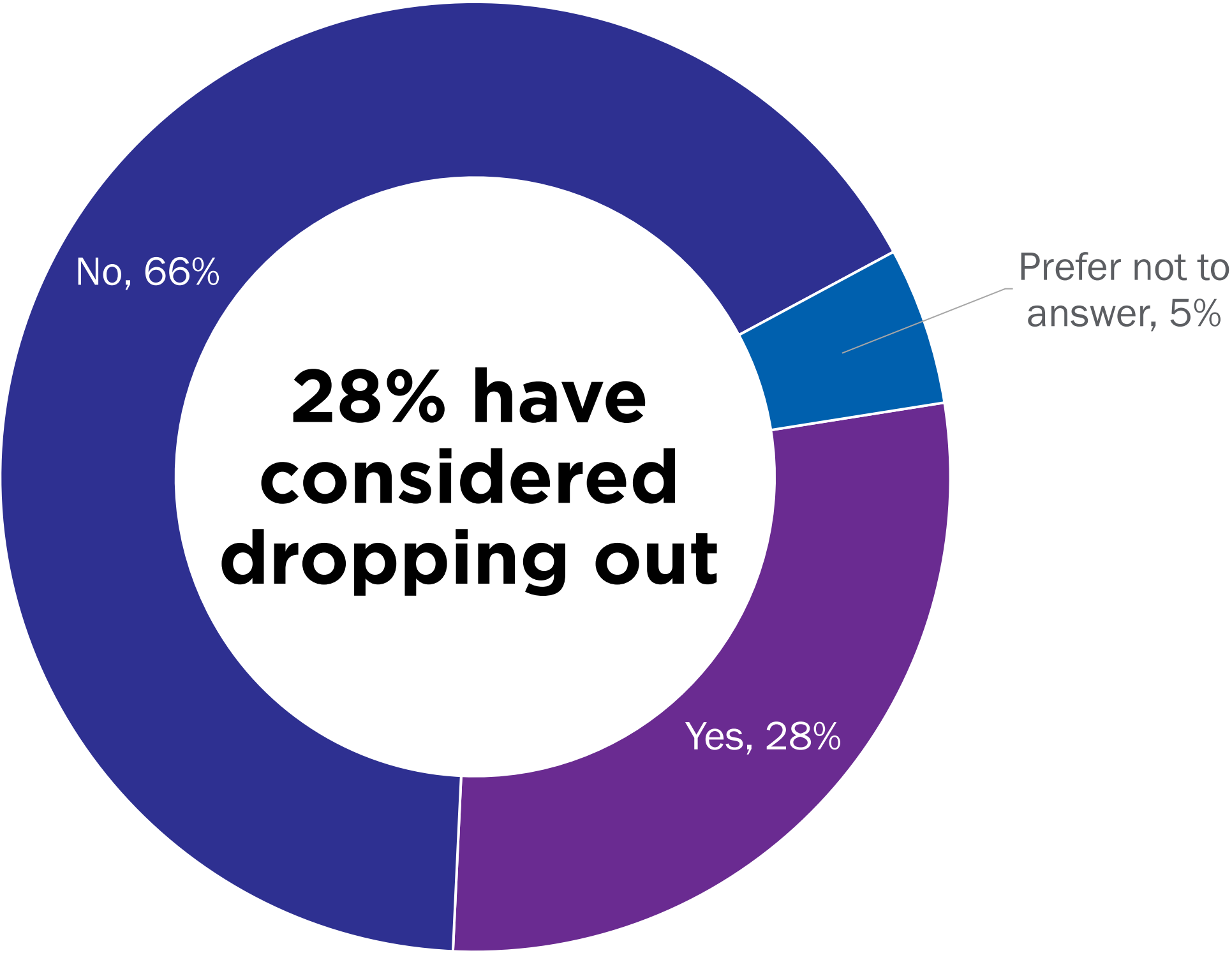
1%

**Q5: Which of the following are methods you use to finance your nursing education?**

# Most students are concerned about their finances; over a quarter have considered dropping out because of financial difficulties.

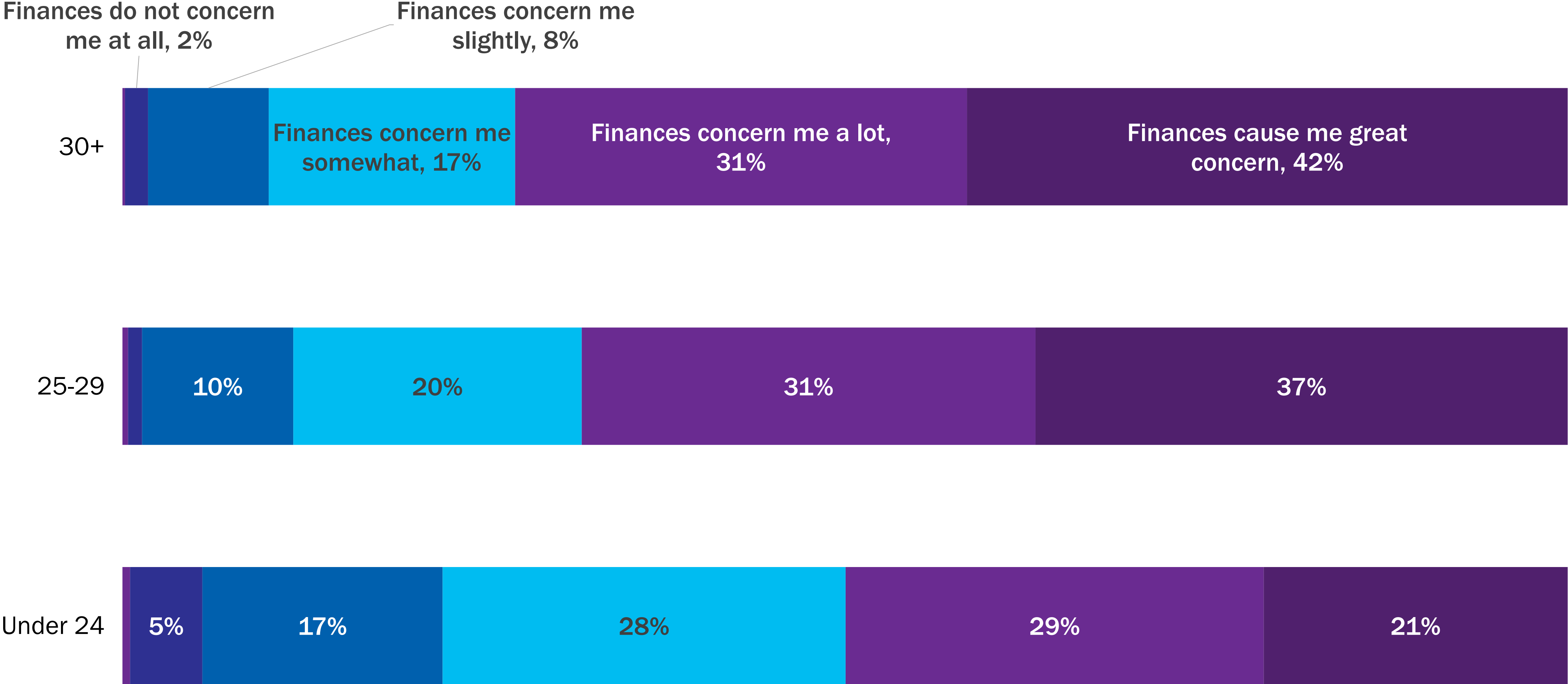


**Q7: Overall, to what extent are financial difficulties a concern for you during your studies?**



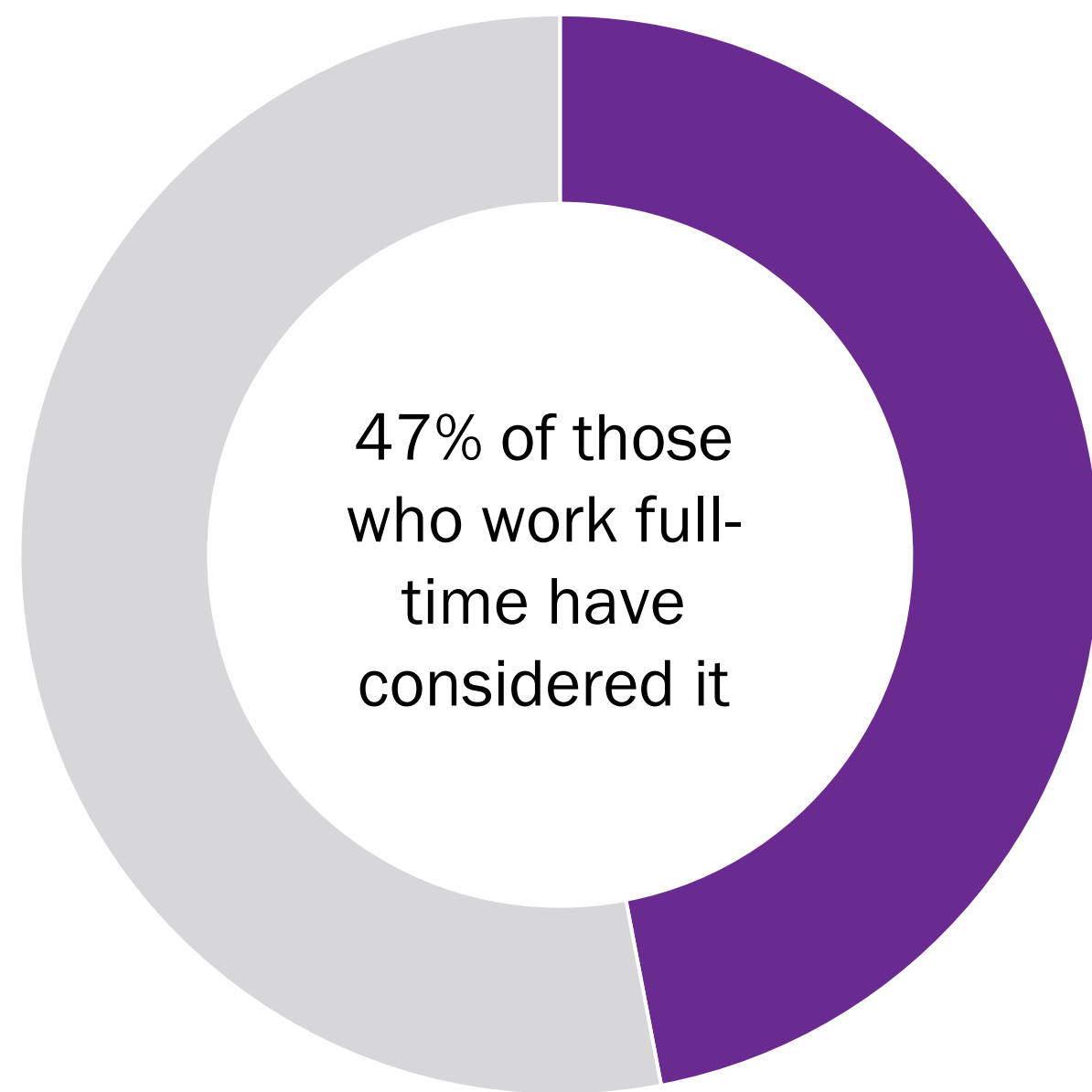
**Q10: Have you ever considered dropping out or transferring out of your nursing program due to financial difficulties?**

# Concern about finances increases with age.

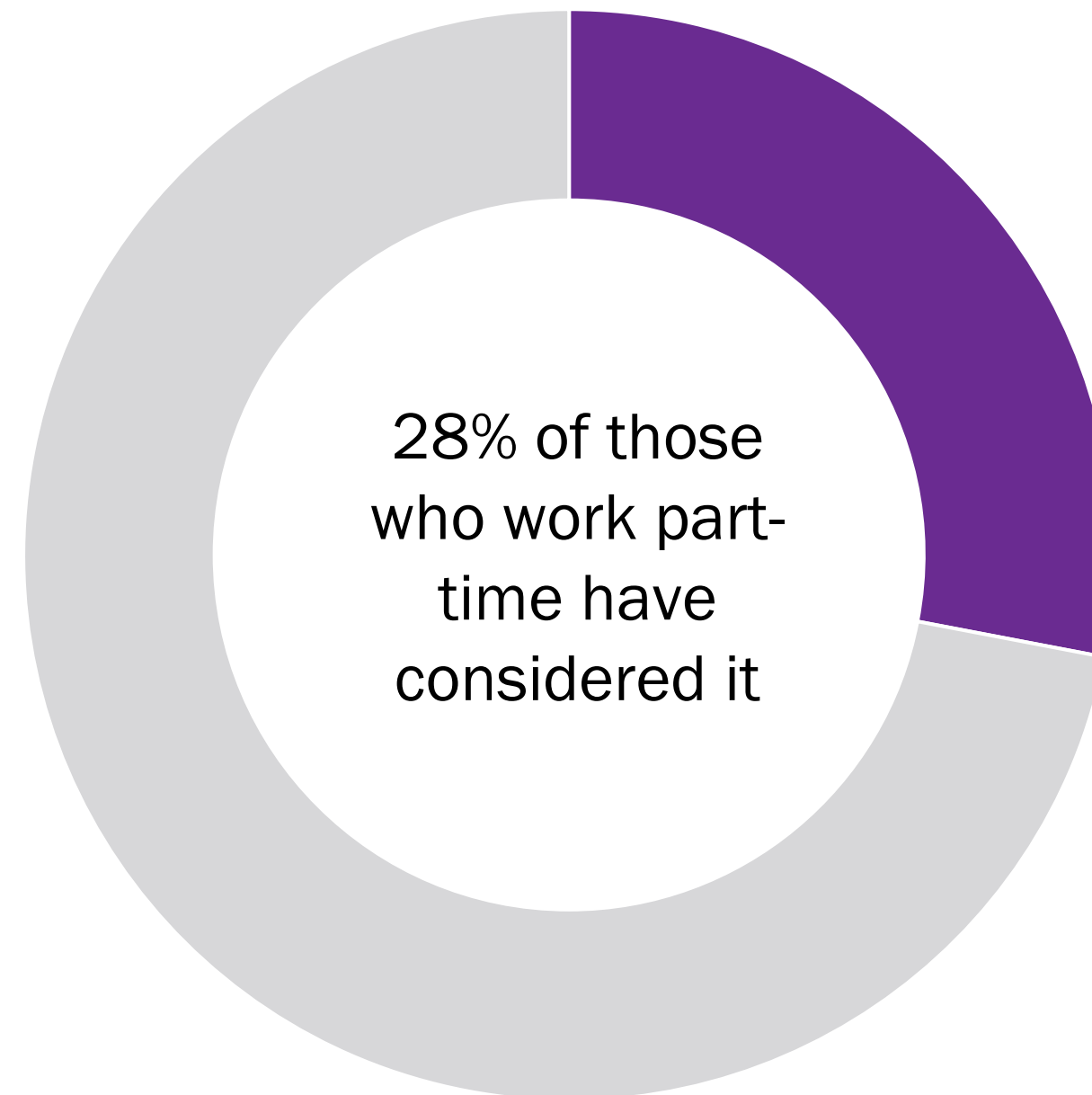


Q7: Overall, to what extent are financial difficulties a concern for you during your studies?

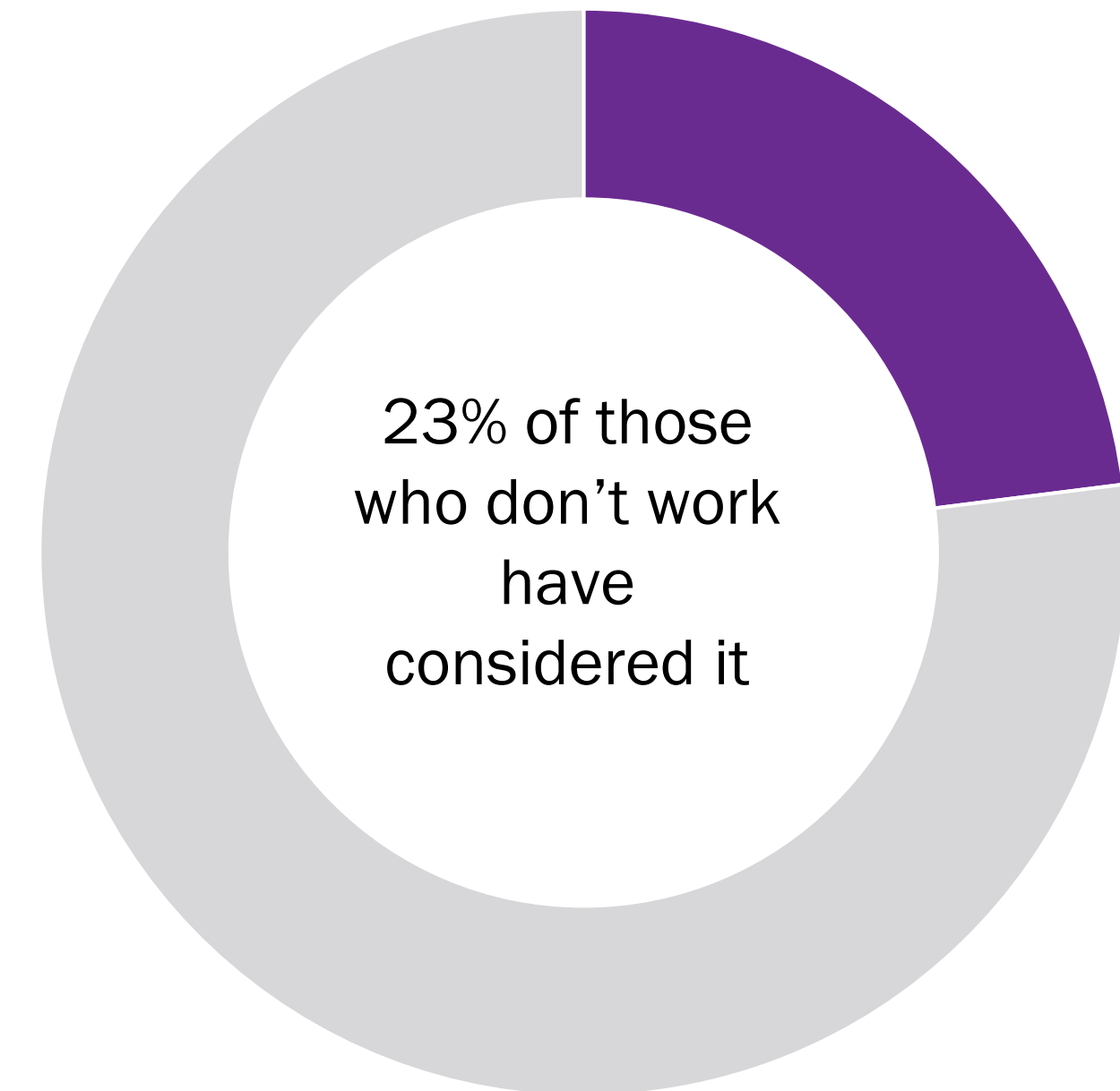
**Students who are working full-time are especially like to say that they've considered dropping out or transferring out of their nursing program due to financial difficulties.**



**Base: 322**



**Base: 2,019**



**Base: 1,010**

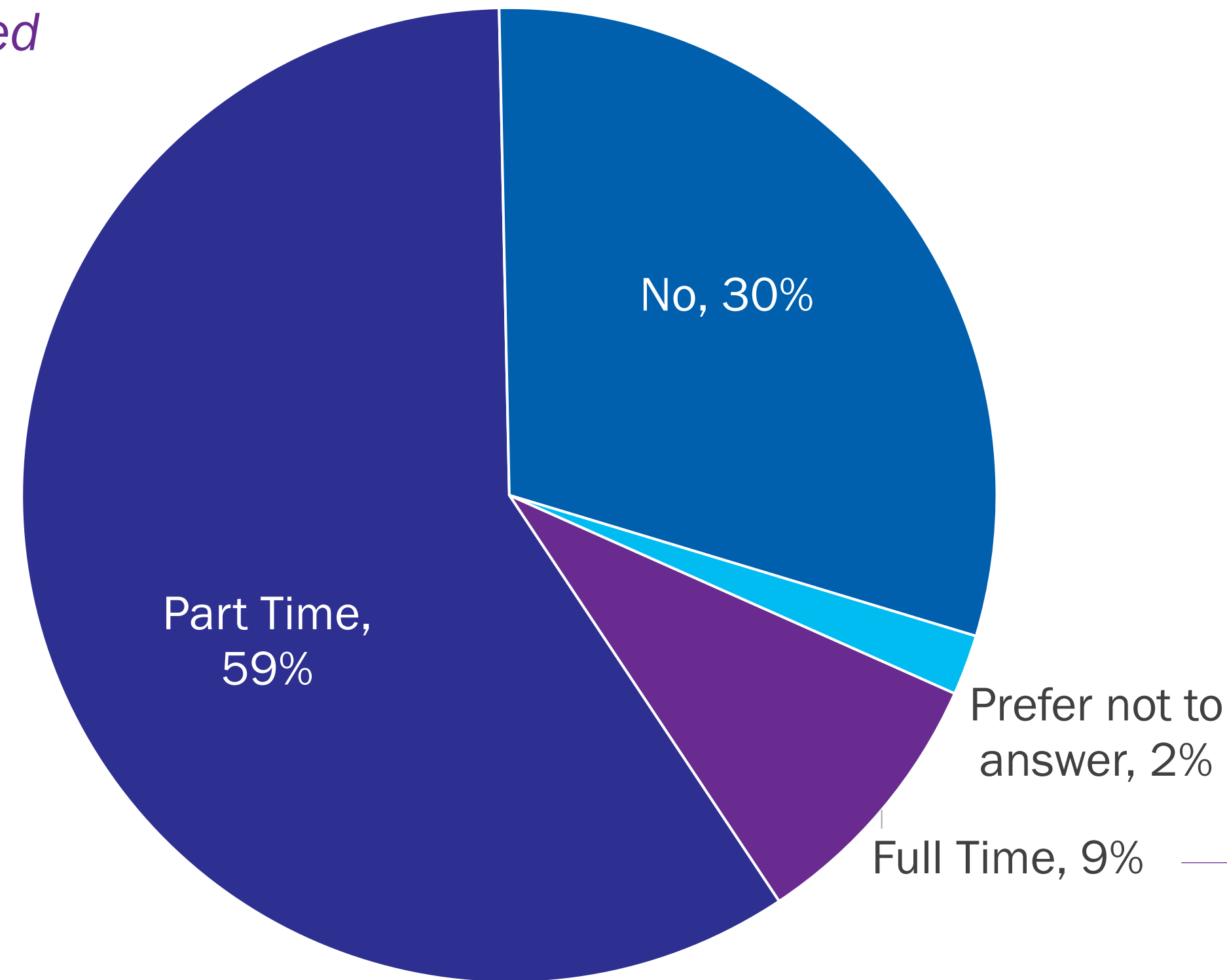
**Q10: Have you ever considered dropping out or transferring out of your nursing program due to financial difficulties?**

**Q6: Are you working to support yourself while attending nursing school?**

# Most nursing students are working part-time to support themselves during their studies.

*Students are more likely to be working based on their age and year of study.*

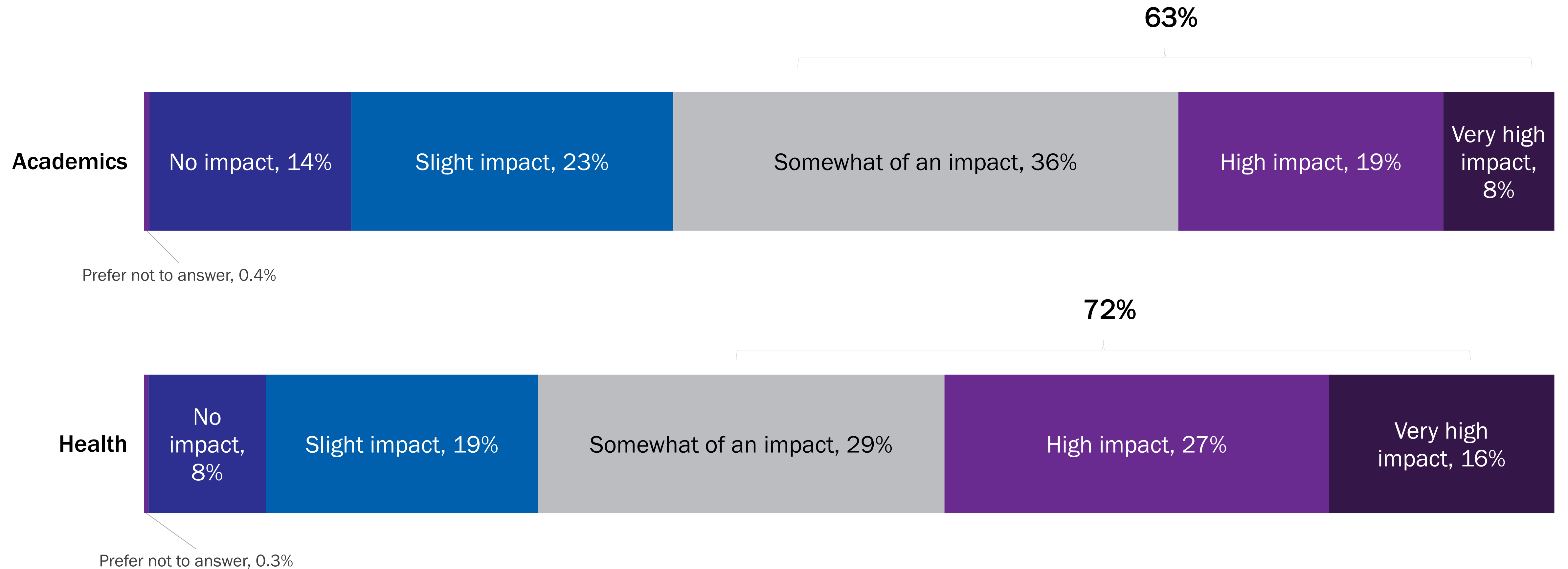
Final year students (67%)



Older students, 30+ (22%)  
Men (15%)

**Q6: Are you working to support yourself while attending nursing school?**

# Over half of students say they have experienced a negative impact due to financial difficulties; but they're more likely to say finances negatively impact their health.



**Q8: To what extent have financial difficulties negatively impacted your academic performance?**

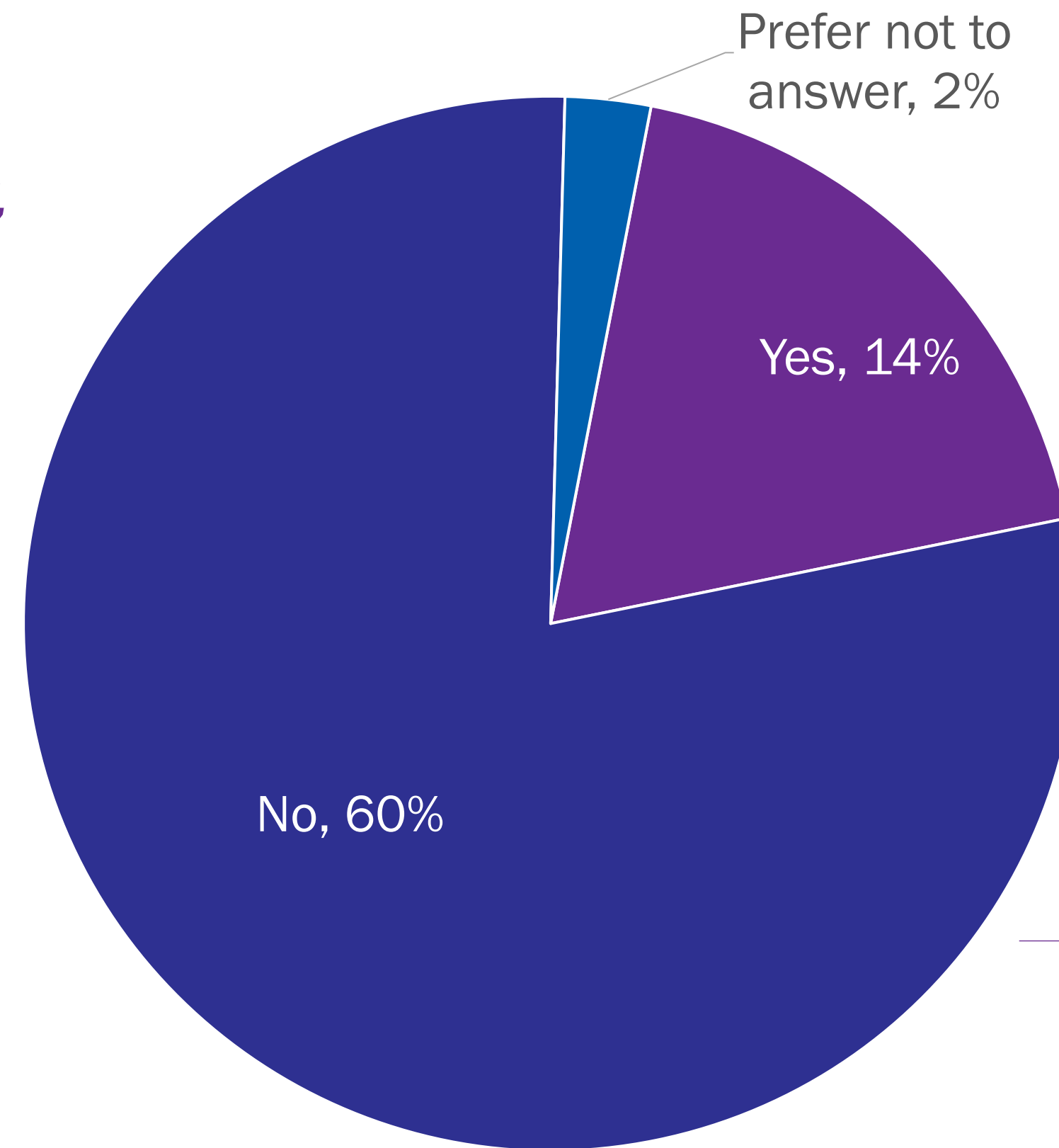
**Q9: To what extent have financial difficulties negatively impacted your physical or mental health?**



# Most nursing students feel the current financial support measures that are available are not sufficient in meeting their needs.

*Students are more likely to think support measures are insufficient if they are older, further in their studies, or work full-time.*

Work full-time (76%)  
Final-year students (67%)  
Aged 25-29 (67%)  
Aged 30+ (71%)

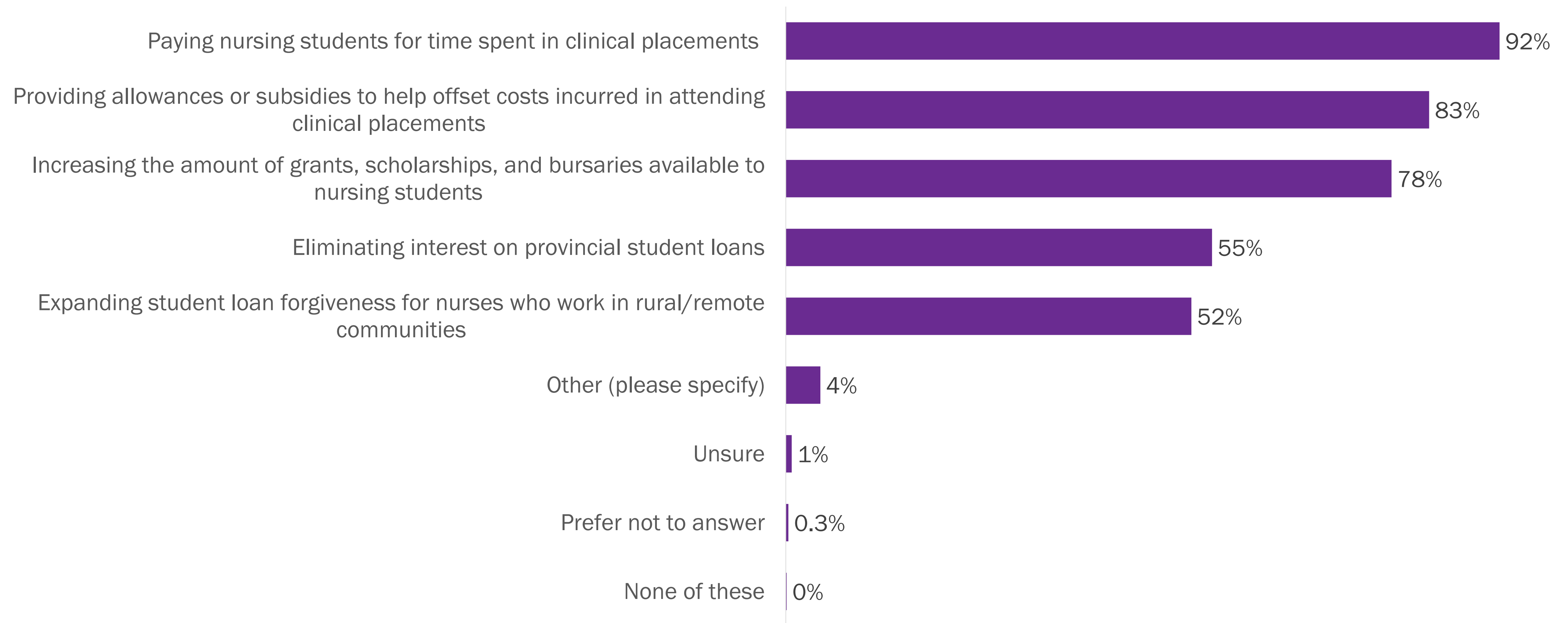


*Students from certain regions are more likely to think support measures are insufficient.*

Newfoundland and Labrador (72%)  
New Brunswick (70%)  
Manitoba (67%)  
Nova Scotia (66%)

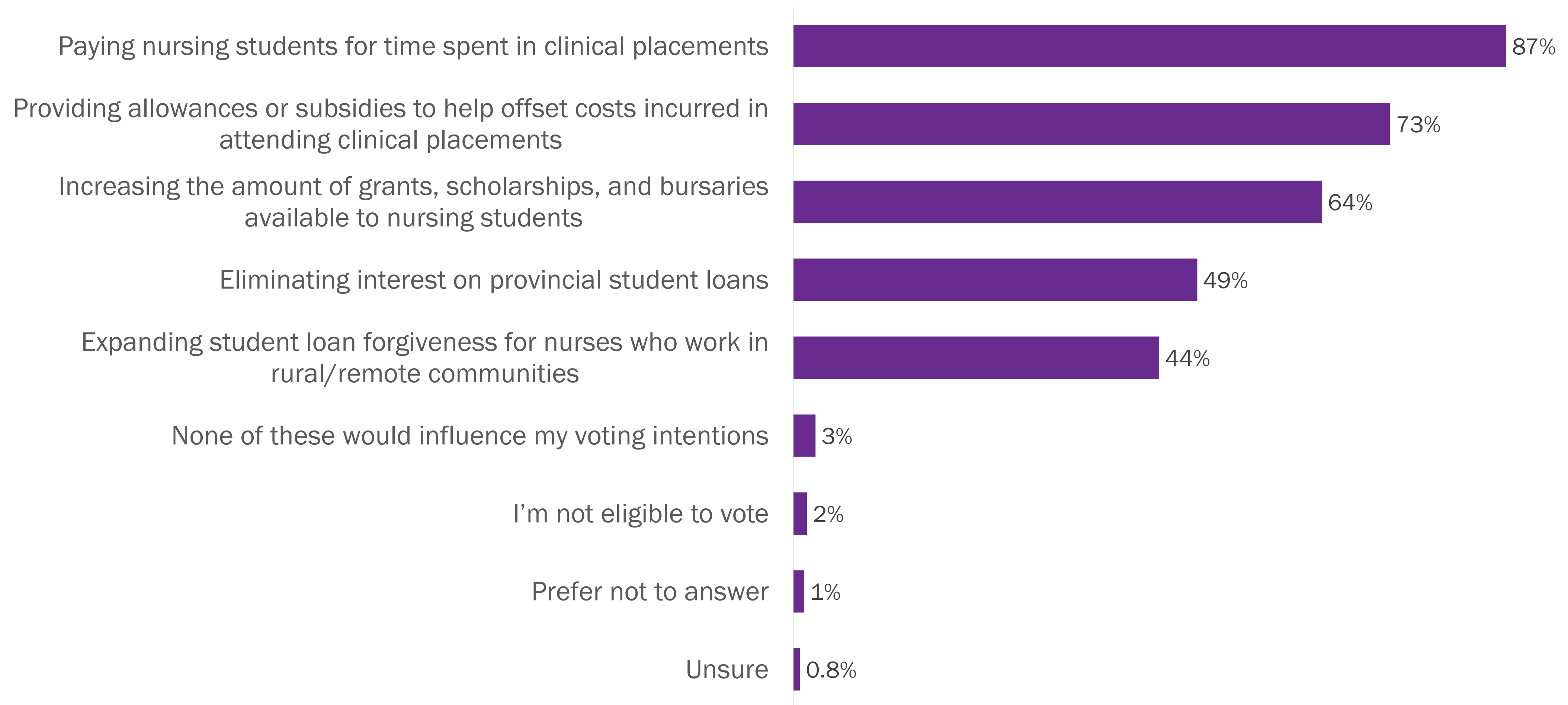
**Q11: Do you feel the current financial support measures that are available are sufficient in meeting the needs of nursing students?**

# Almost all nursing students support pay for time in clinical placements, and allowances or subsidies to offset costs incurred in attending clinical placements.



**Q12: Which of the following financial support policies do you support implementation of?**

# Almost all nursing students say they would be more likely to vote for a political party committed to paying nursing students for time spent in placements and providing subsidies to offset costs during placements.



**Q13: Which of the following policies would make you more likely to vote for a political party committed to implementing them?**

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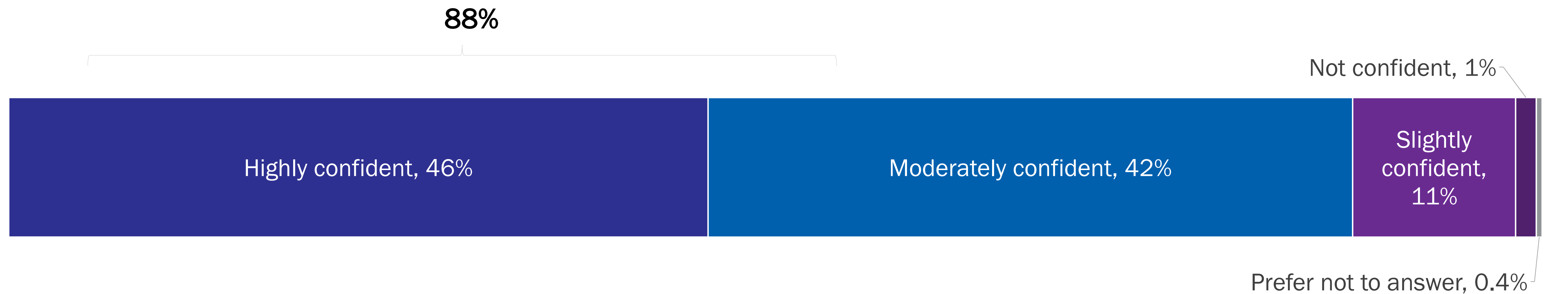
# **Nursing program experiences and expectations**



# Most students are satisfied with their nursing education, and nearly all are confident in their ability to complete their studies.

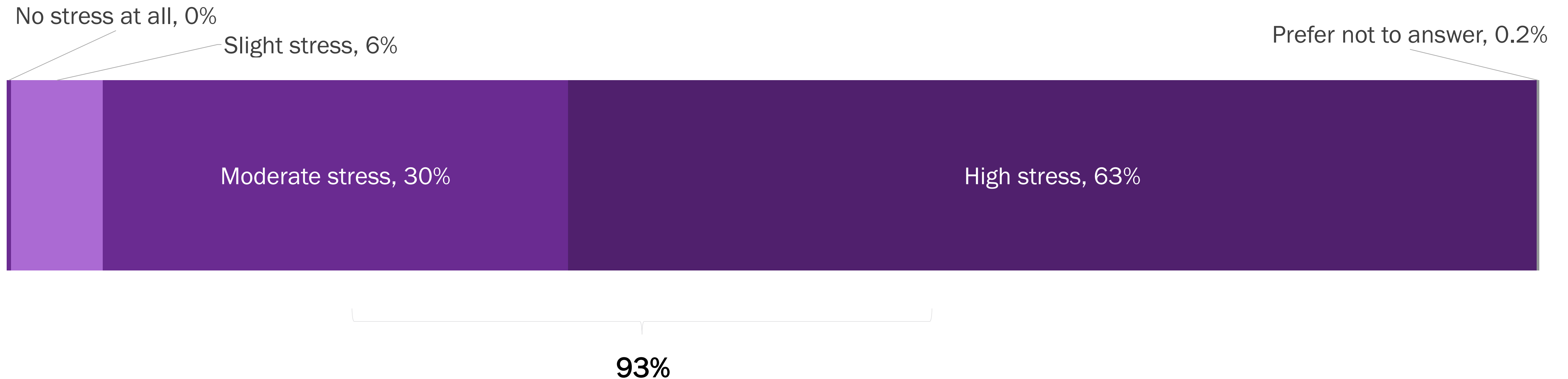


**Q14: At this stage in your nursing studies, how would you describe your overall satisfaction with your nursing education?**



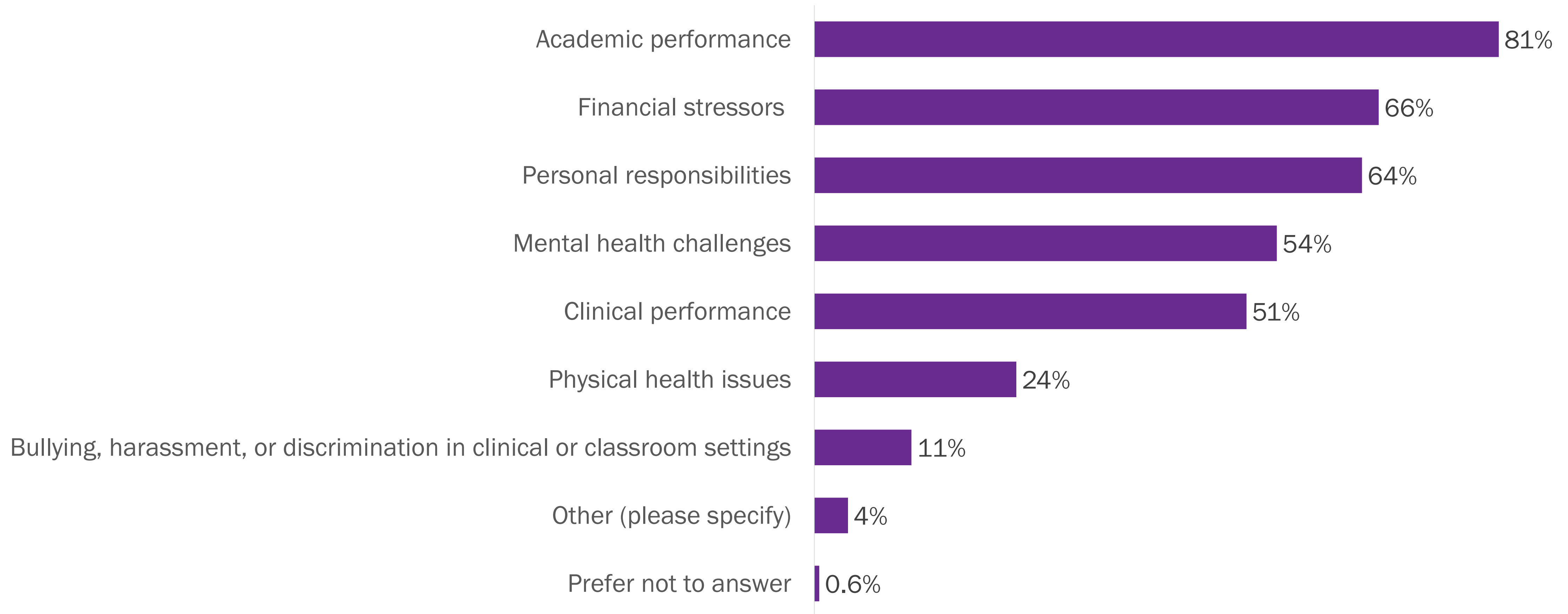
**Q15: At this stage in your studies, how confident are you in your ability to complete your studies?**

# Nearly all nursing students report moderate or high stress during their program.



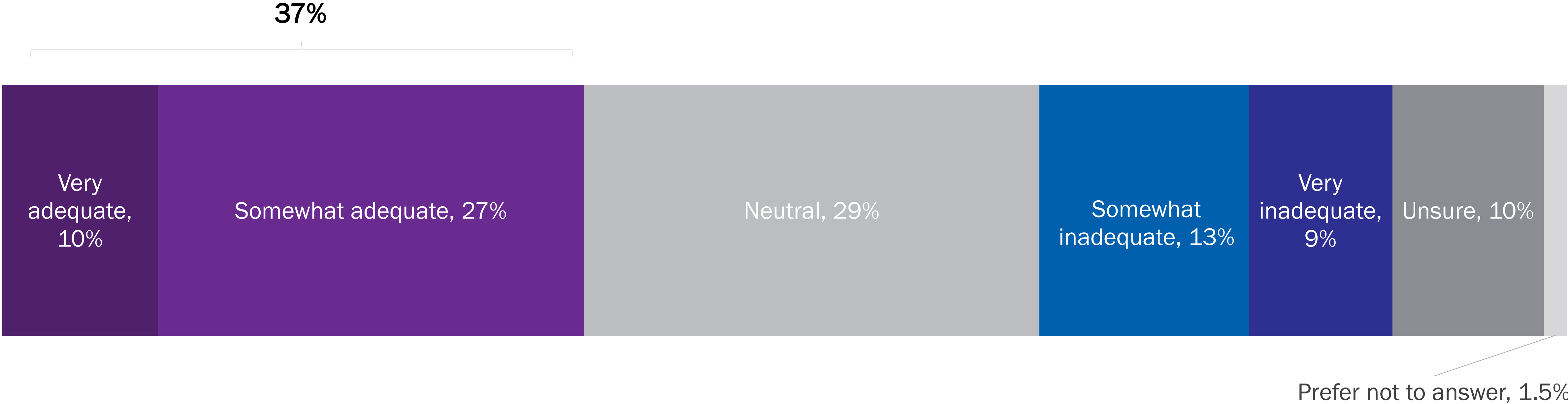
**Q23: How would you describe your level of stress during your nursing program?**

# The main source of stress for nursing students is academic performance, followed by financial stressors and personal responsibilities.



**Q24: What are the main sources of stress you experience while completing your nursing program?**

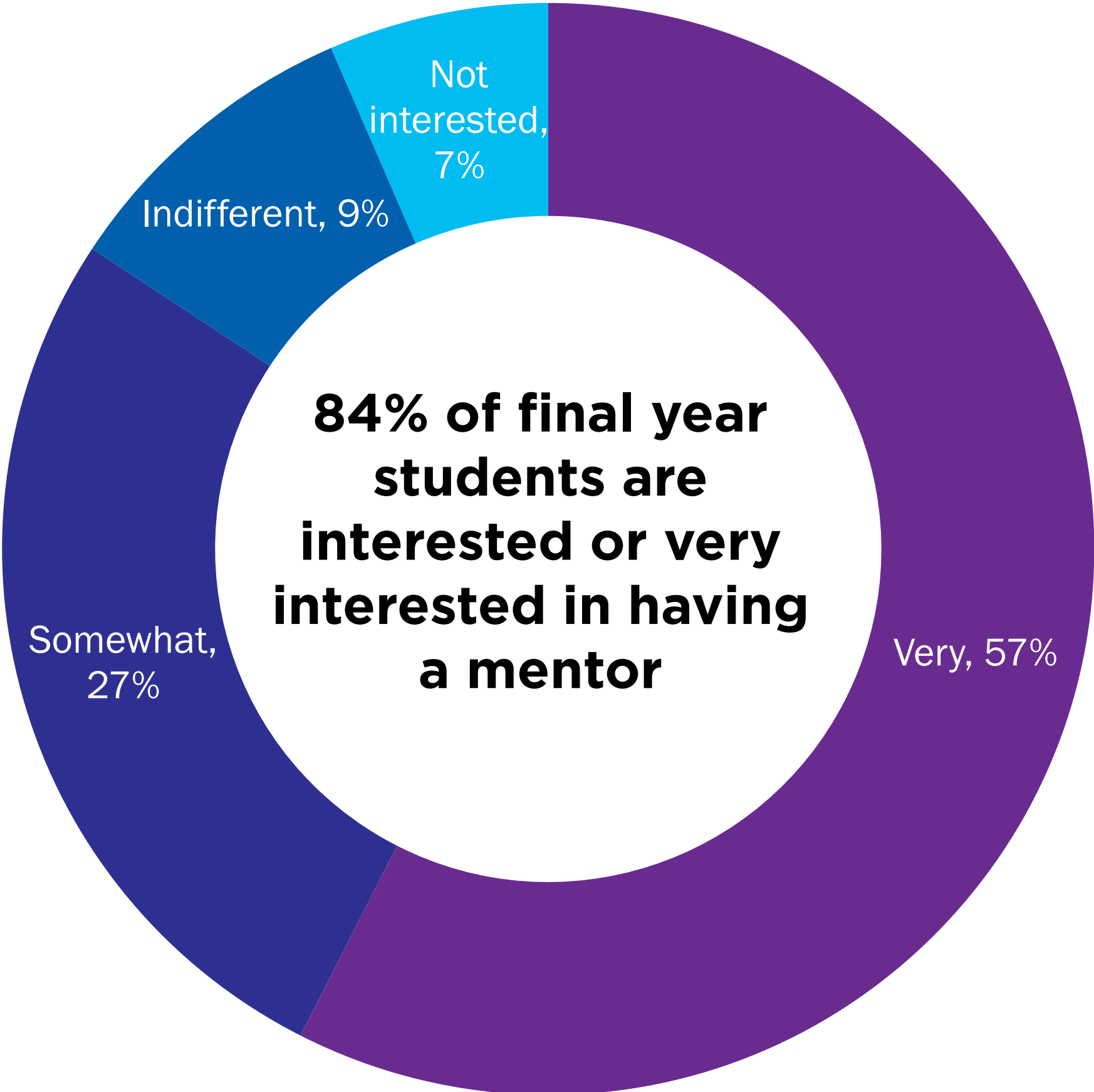
# Students have mixed responses about the adequacy of mental health support services available to them.



**Q25: How would you rate the adequacy of the mental health support services available to you through your post-secondary institution?**



# Most final year students are interested in having a mentor to assist with their transition to the profession.



**Q21: If you are in your final year, are you interested in having a mentor to assist with your transition from your final practicum to working in the profession after graduation?**

*Base: 1,214*



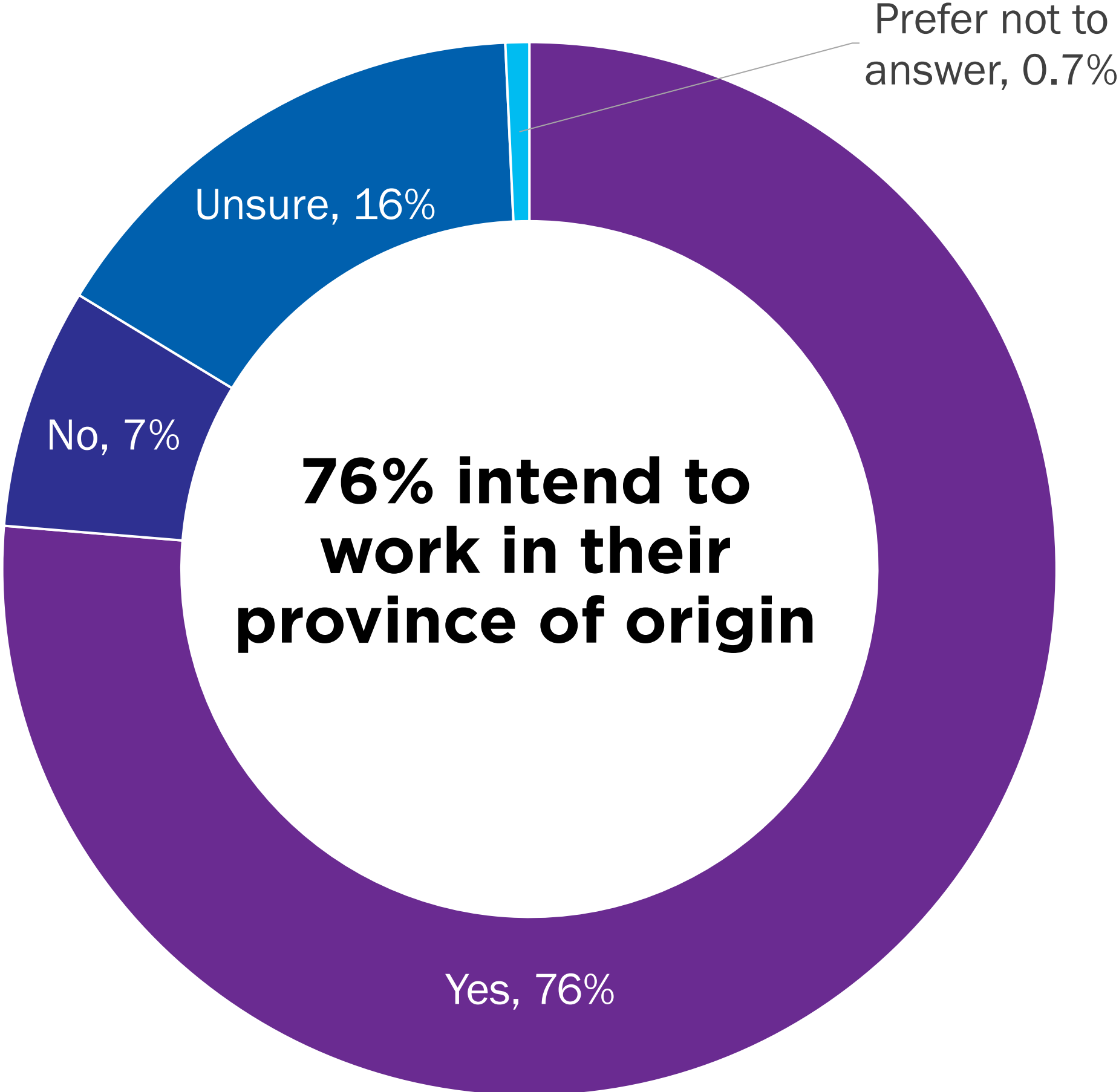
**Q22: What makes you interested in having a mentor to offer peer support during this transitional period?**

*Base: 1,023*

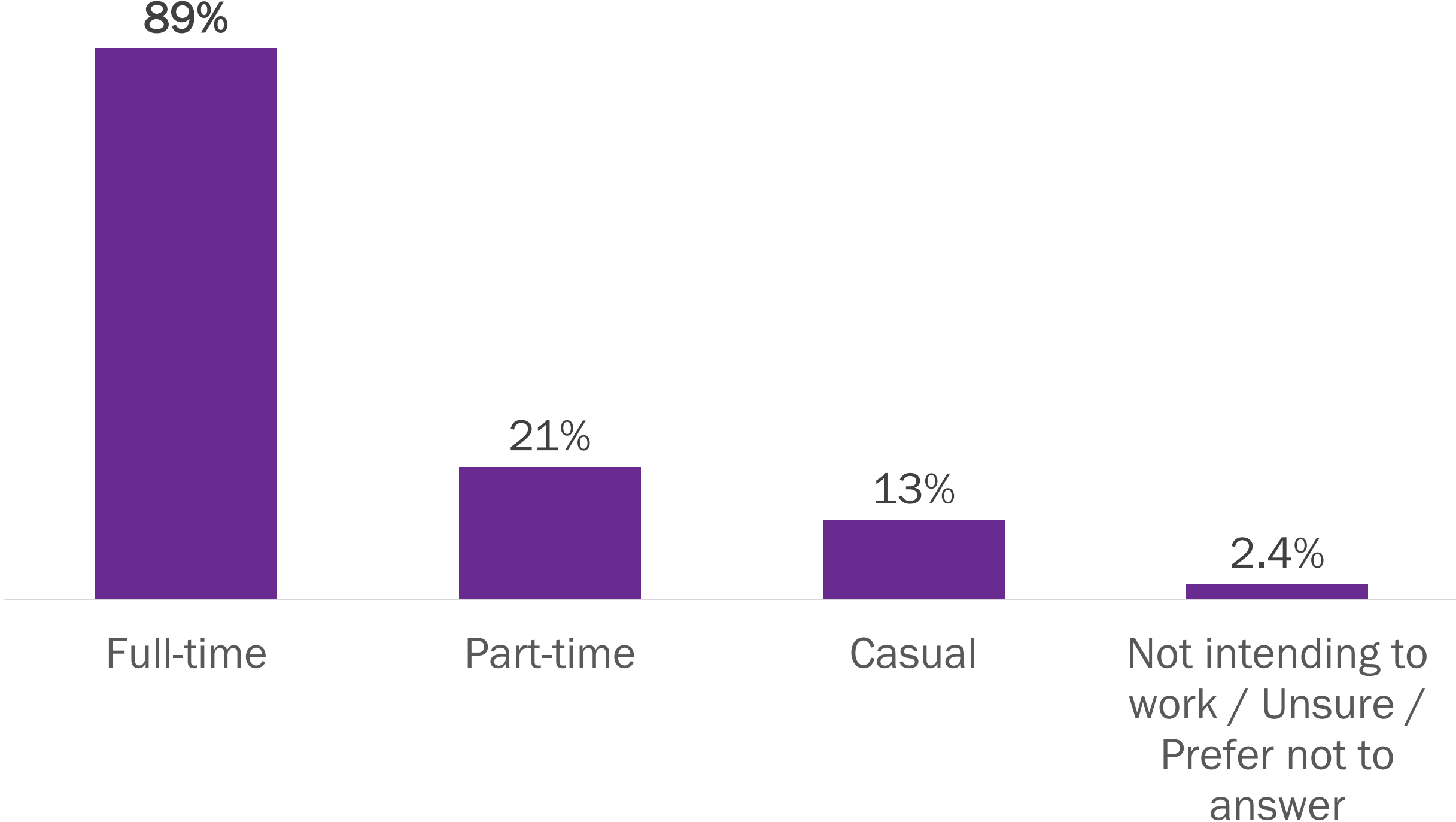
# Expectations for work



# Most students intend to work in their province of origin after graduation and are interested in pursuing full-time work.

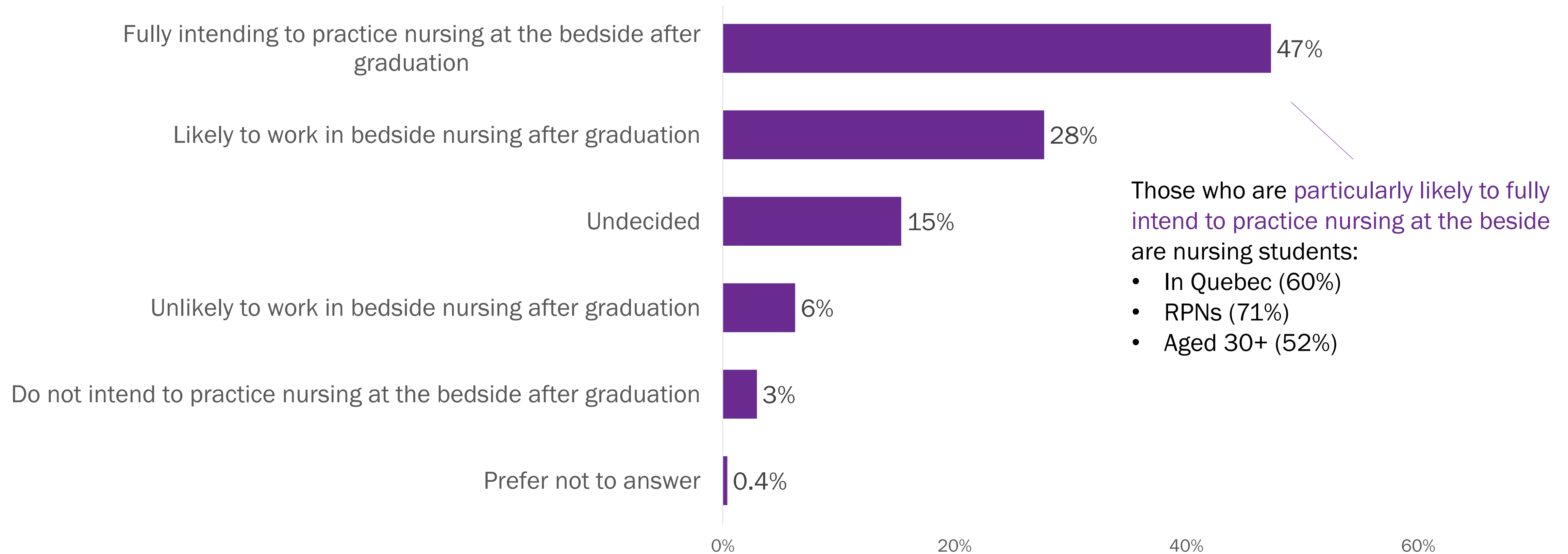


**Q18: At this stage in your nursing program, do you intend to work in your province of origin upon graduation?**



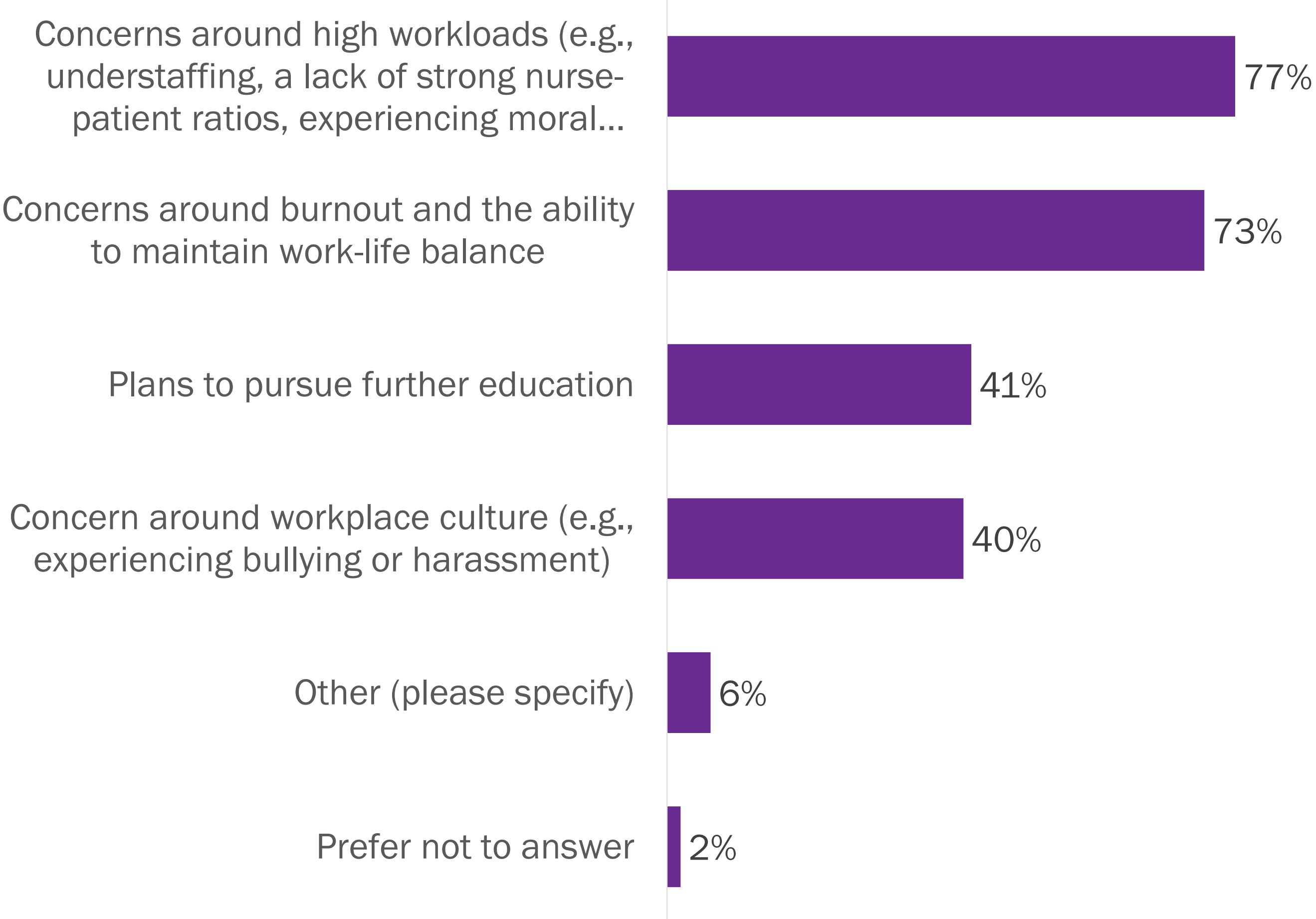
**Q19: Upon completion of your nursing program, what kind of work are you interested in pursuing? (Select all that apply)**

# Most students intend to practice nursing at the bedside.



**Q16: At this stage in your nursing program, what are your intentions regarding working at the bedside after graduation?**

# Those who are not fully intending to practice nursing at the bedside are concerned about workload and burnout.



As students get further in their studies, they're more likely to be concerned about these issues.

- Final-year students are especially concerned about:
- Workload (87%, compared to 77%)
  - Burnout (82%, compared to 73%)
  - Workplace culture (51%, compared to 40%)

**Q17: What factors might affect your decision not to pursue nursing work at the bedside after graduation?**

**Base: 1,868**



# Methodology

This survey was conducted online and was fielded over multiple weeks between late October and the end of November 2024. CNSA conducted extensive outreach to connect the survey with nursing students through social media and through emails from CNSA representatives and post-secondary institution deans. A prize draw was included as an incentive for participation.

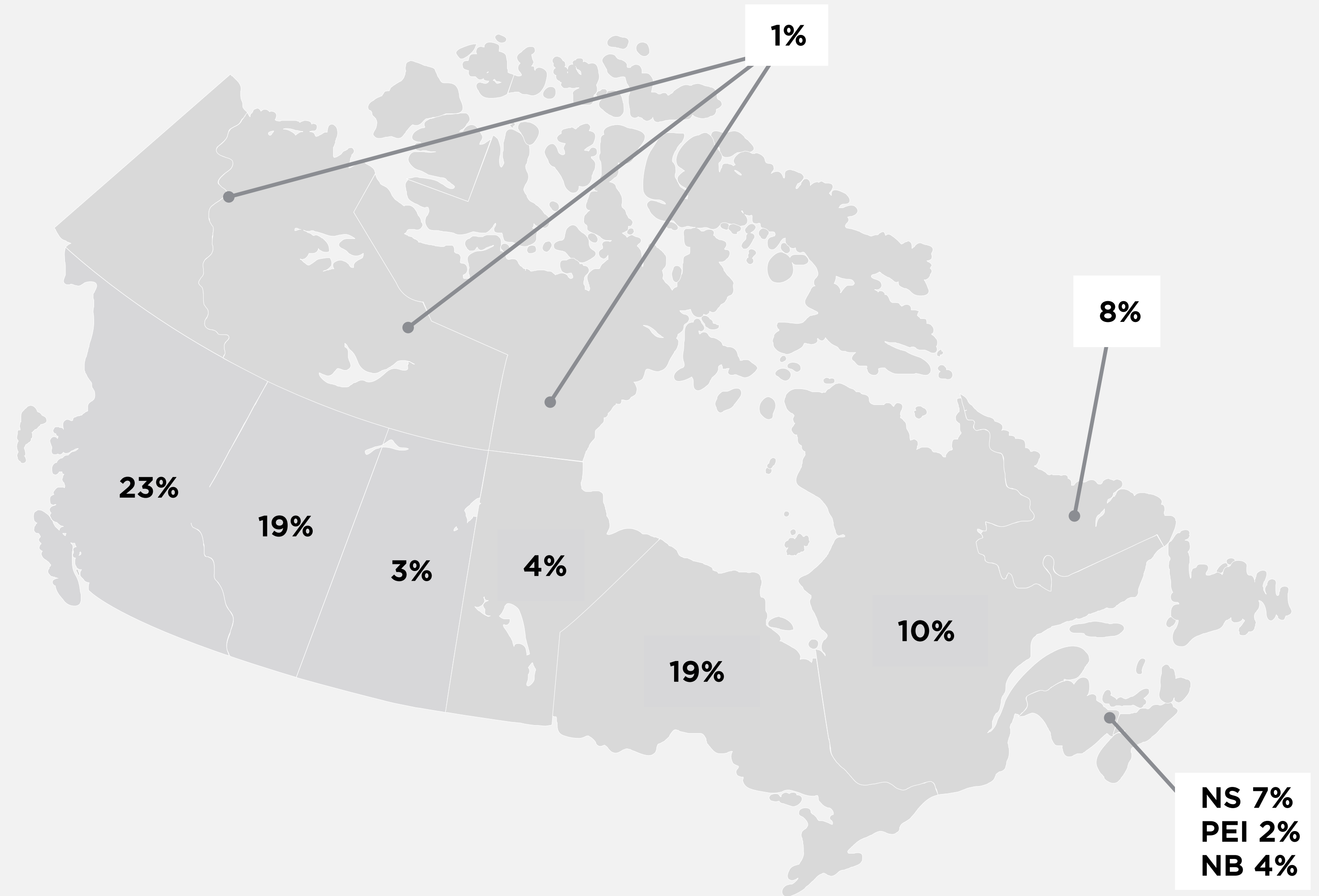
Respondents to this survey are self-selecting, so the sample is not a random sample. An equivalent random sample of the same size would have a margin of error of +/- 1.66%.

Significant differences found between variables are included in this presentation both stand-alone graphs and as call-outs within graphs. Bases for all reported percentages are 3,571 unless otherwise specified.

# Responses were collected from across the country.

3,571 students completed the survey.

Most of the responses came from Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario. Combined, these regions make up over half (61%) of the sample; which is on par with how much the population of these provinces make up the total population of Canada (64%) according to Statistics Canada's 2021 census.



# Thank you

This report was developed by Viewpoints Research on behalf of CFNU and CNSA.  
December 2024

Questions about this report can be directed to [cfnu@nursesunions.ca](mailto:cfnu@nursesunions.ca)

viewpoints



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