

Covid-19: Transformations in Settlement and Integration Services

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Purpose

Health

Communities with low incomes, immigrants, essential workers hardest hit by COVID-19: study



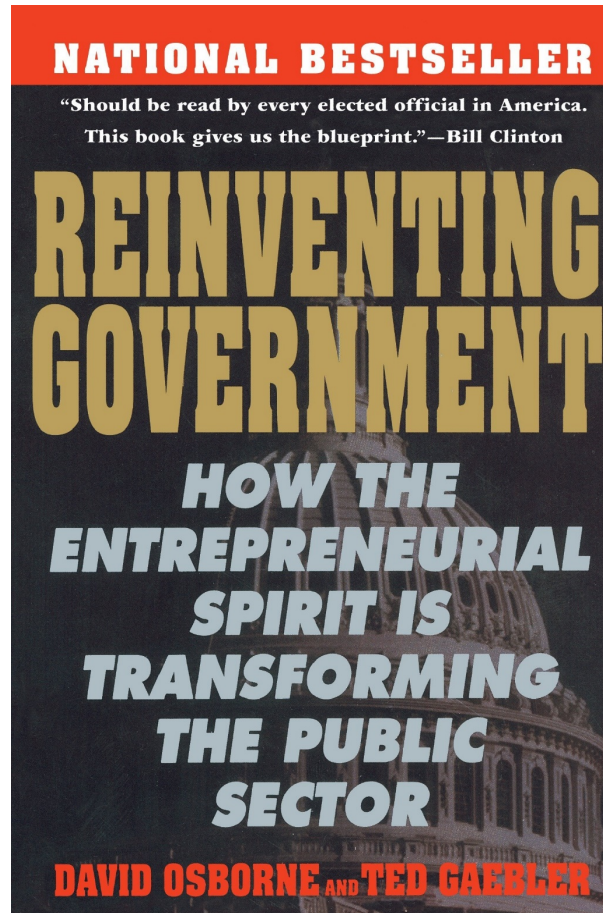
'Striking' trend seen in multiple provinces, says lead author of peer-reviewed paper



[Lauren Pelley](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 15, 2022 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: February 15

- How did settlement and integration services adapt to pandemic?
- How did funding and contracting relationships influence service providers' adaptation?
- What lessons can we learn to enhance the future success of settlement and integration services?
- Expand on Slootje (Migration Policy Institute Europe, *The COVID-19 Catalyst*, 2022)

Canadian integration services and new public management (NPM)



- “Canadian” model relies on non-profit organizations to deliver government-funded integration services
- Subject to New Public Management (NPM) principles:
 - State funds projects, not organizations
 - State sets accountability/reporting rules – strict targets and eligibility criteria
 - Adverse impacts on capacities, autonomy, and advocacy of non-profit organizations
 - Reforms but NPM still embedded in approach
 - IRCC shifts during pandemic

Surveys and focus groups

Surveys

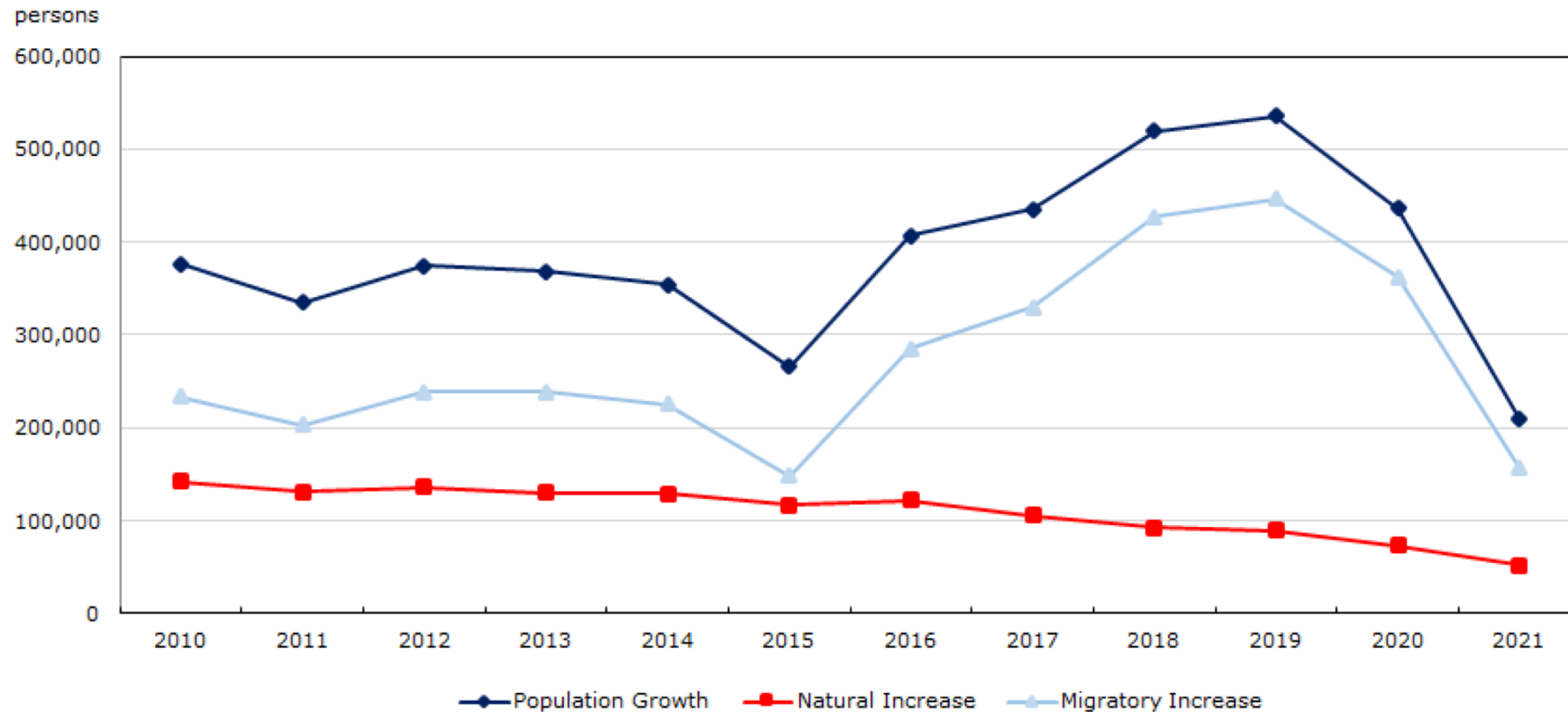
- Managers and workers at immigrant-serving agencies
- In English and French
- On-line surveys
- Manager survey
 - About 20 minutes
 - Demographics, impacts of pandemic on agency operations & concerns for future
 - 50 agencies
- Worker survey
 - About 15 minutes
 - Demographics, impacts of pandemic on working conditions & views about return to the office
 - 173 workers

Focus Groups

- Managers at:
 - immigrant-serving agencies
 - Local Immigration Partnerships (local planning tables that bring together agencies, other public institutions, and private sector representatives interested in immigration)
- Very preliminary but strongly indicative

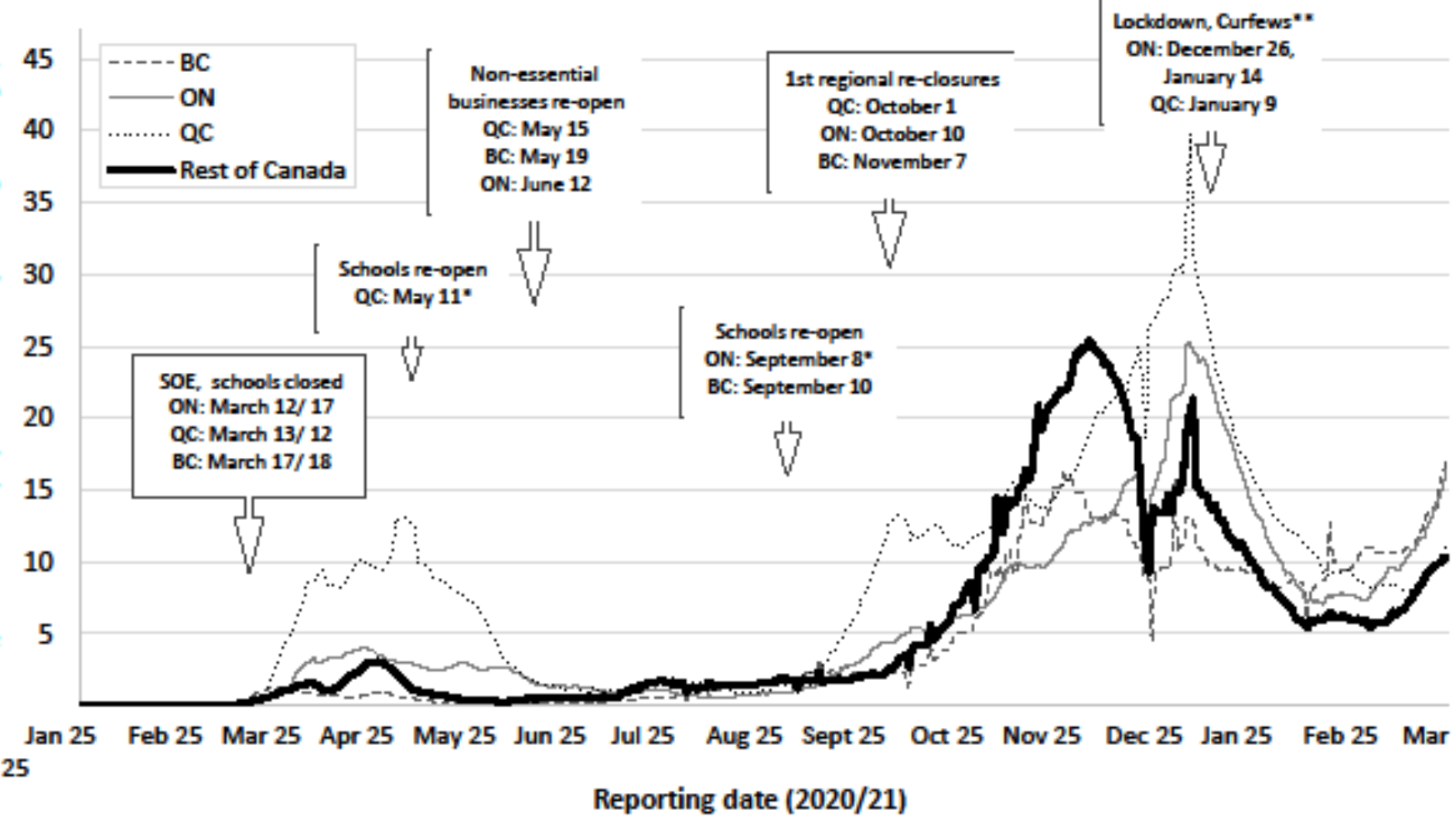
Migration and Demography: Canada

Factors of annual population growth, Canada, 2010 to 2021



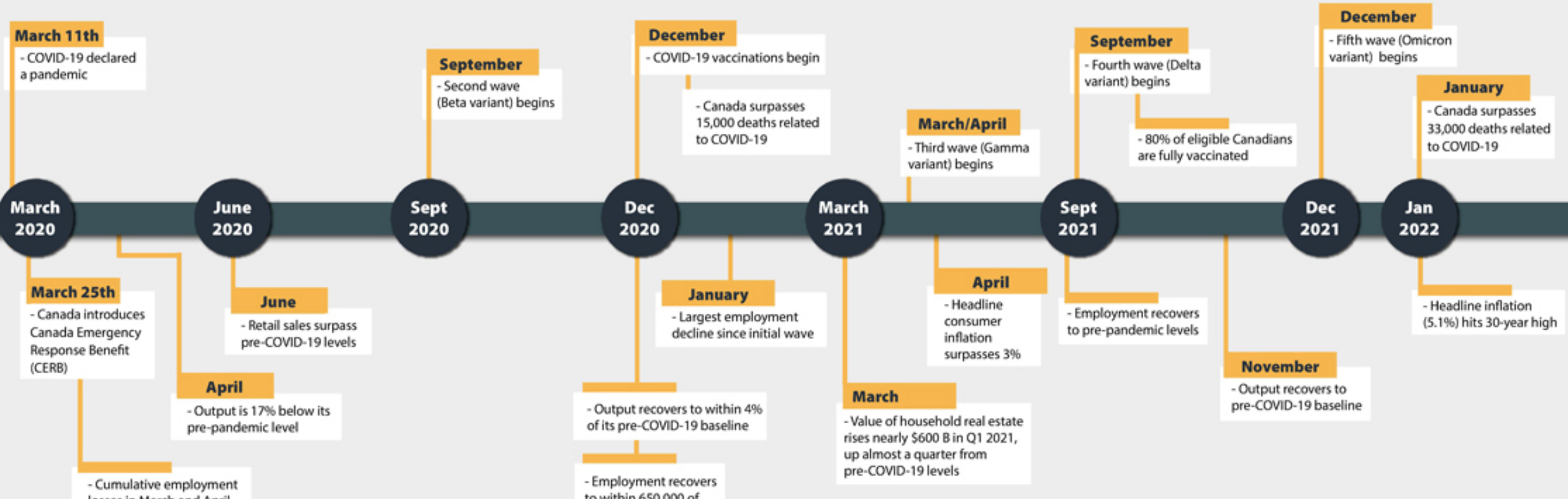
Source: Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

Reported Number of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
(per 100,000 population, 7-day Rolling Average)



StatsCan (March 10/22): <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2022001-eng.htm>

Social and economic impacts of COVID-19: Timeline



REPORTS AVAILABLE

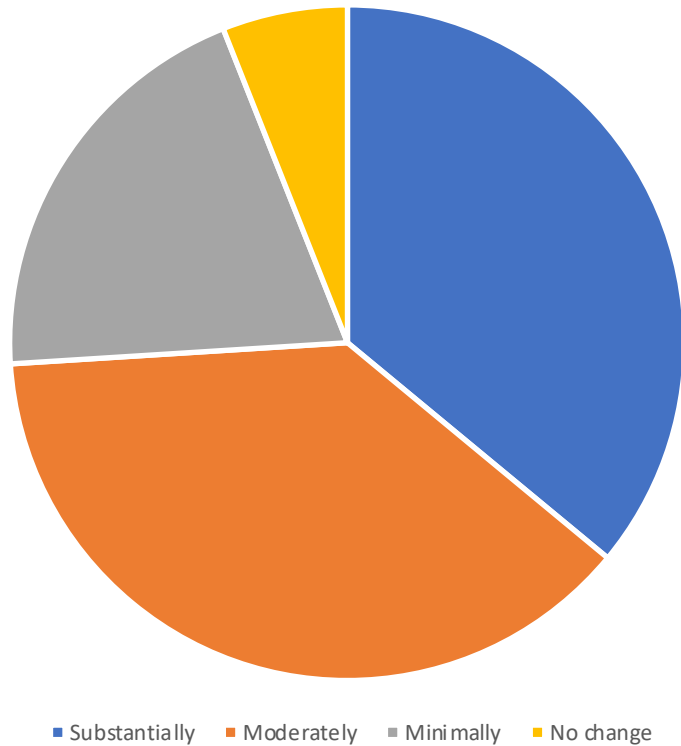
- Pandemic Response Survey Results OCASI Agency Management
- Pandemic Response Survey Results OCASI Agency Frontline Workers
- Résultats du sondage sur les réponses à la pandémie mené auprès des gestionnaires d'organismes membres d'OCASI
- Résultats du sondage sur les réponses à la pandémie mené auprès de travailleurs de première ligne d'organismes membres d'OCASI

All reports are available at <https://bmrc-irmu.info.yorku.ca/conferences-2/>

Tumultuous Times

Service changes Sept. 2020-Sept. 2021

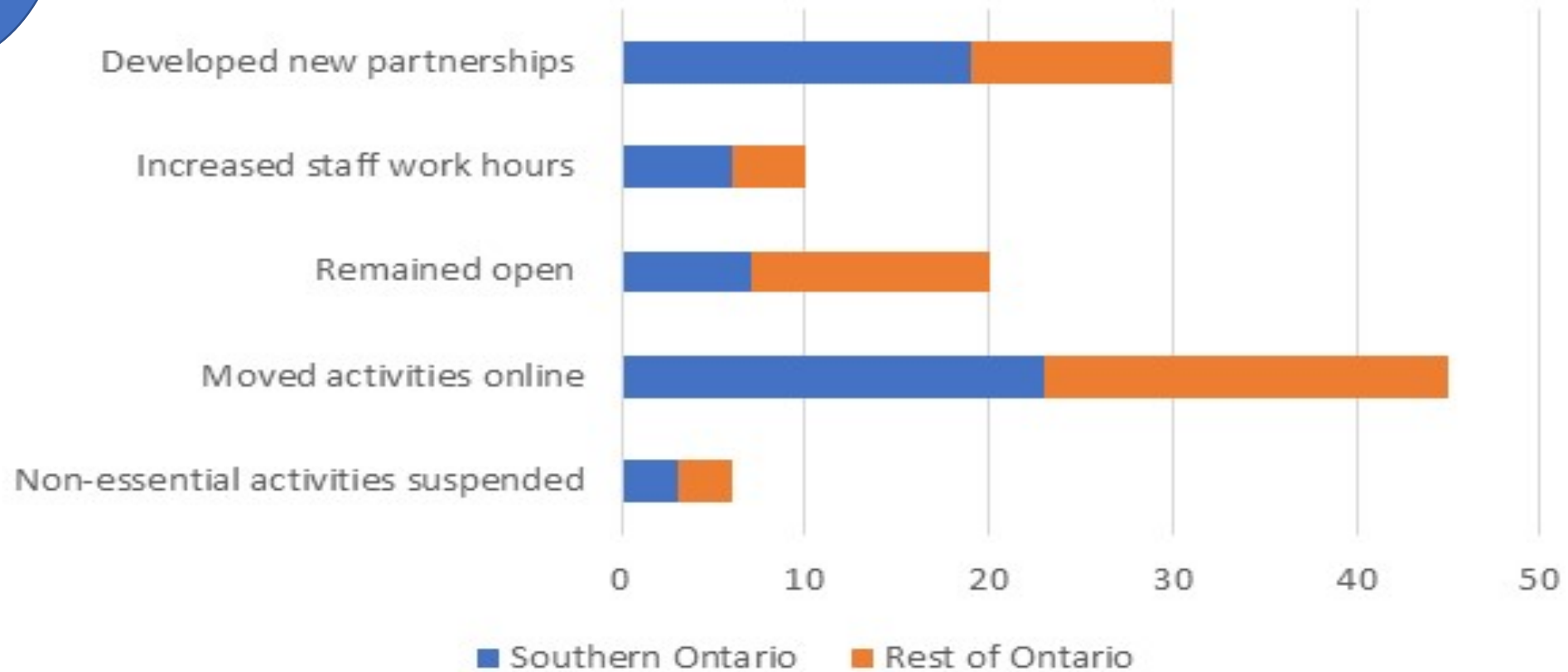
Changes in Service: Ontario Agencies

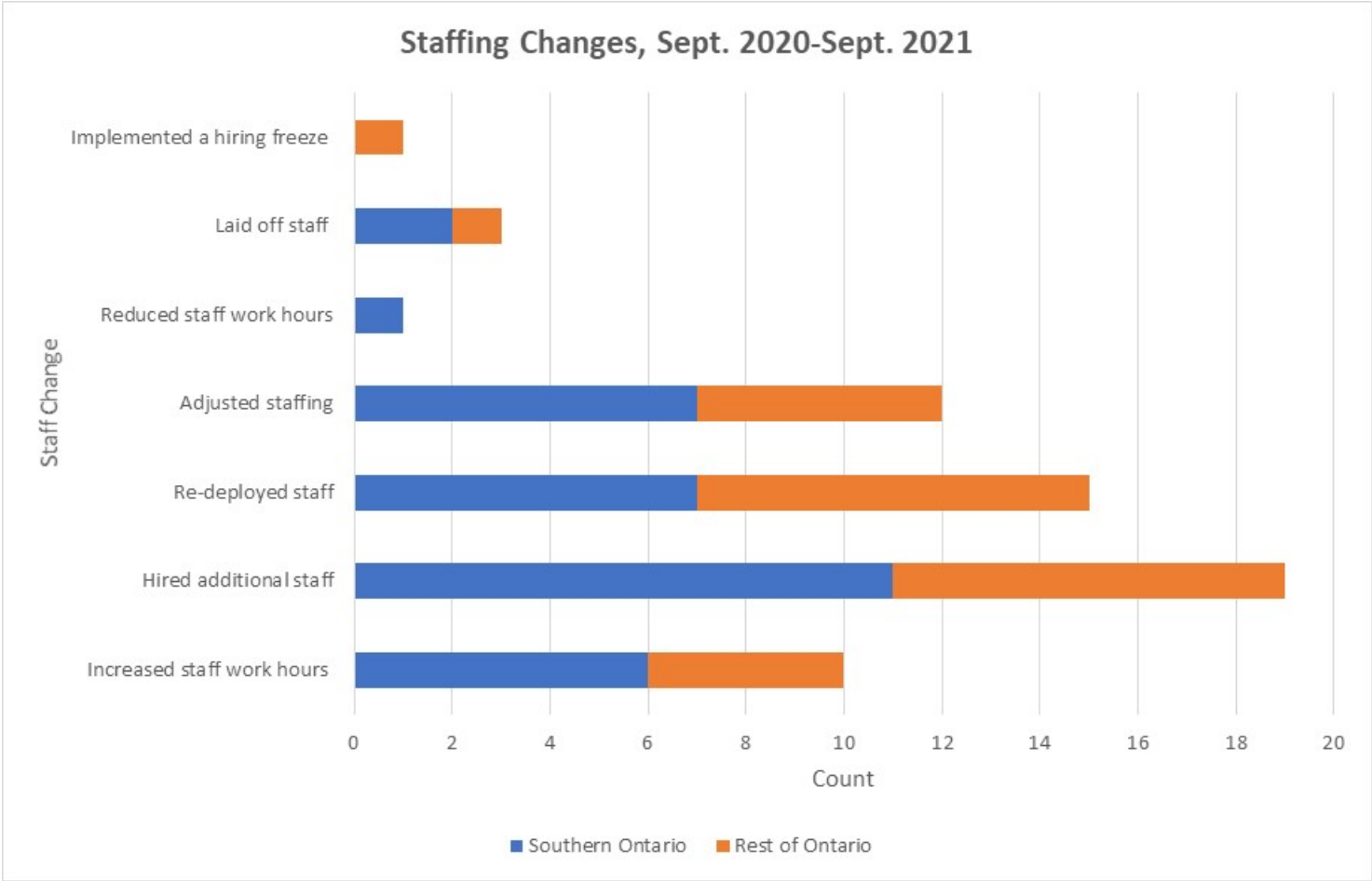


- Approximately three quarters of managers/agencies experienced substantial and moderate change
- Similar in all parts of the province:
 - Southern Ontario
 - Toronto to Kitchener-Waterloo and east to Niagara (including Hamilton)
 - Rest of Ontario

Change continued between Sept. 2020 and Sept. 2021

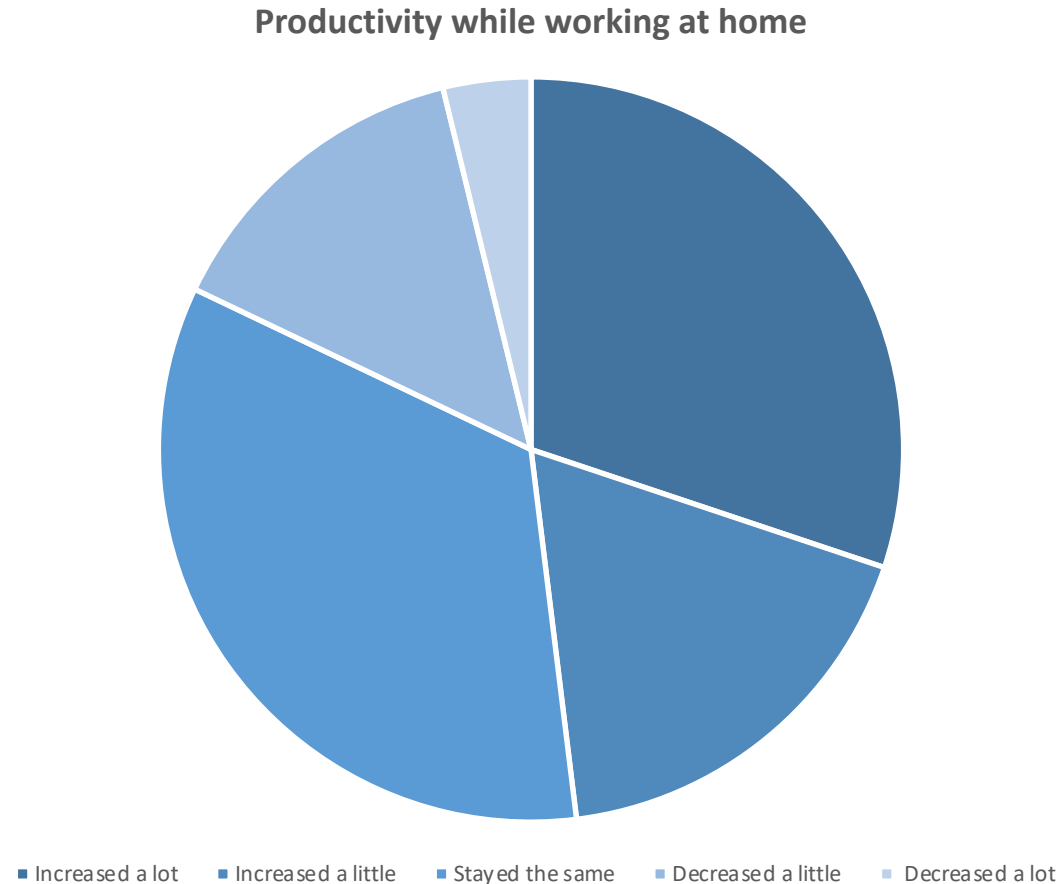
Types of Service Changes





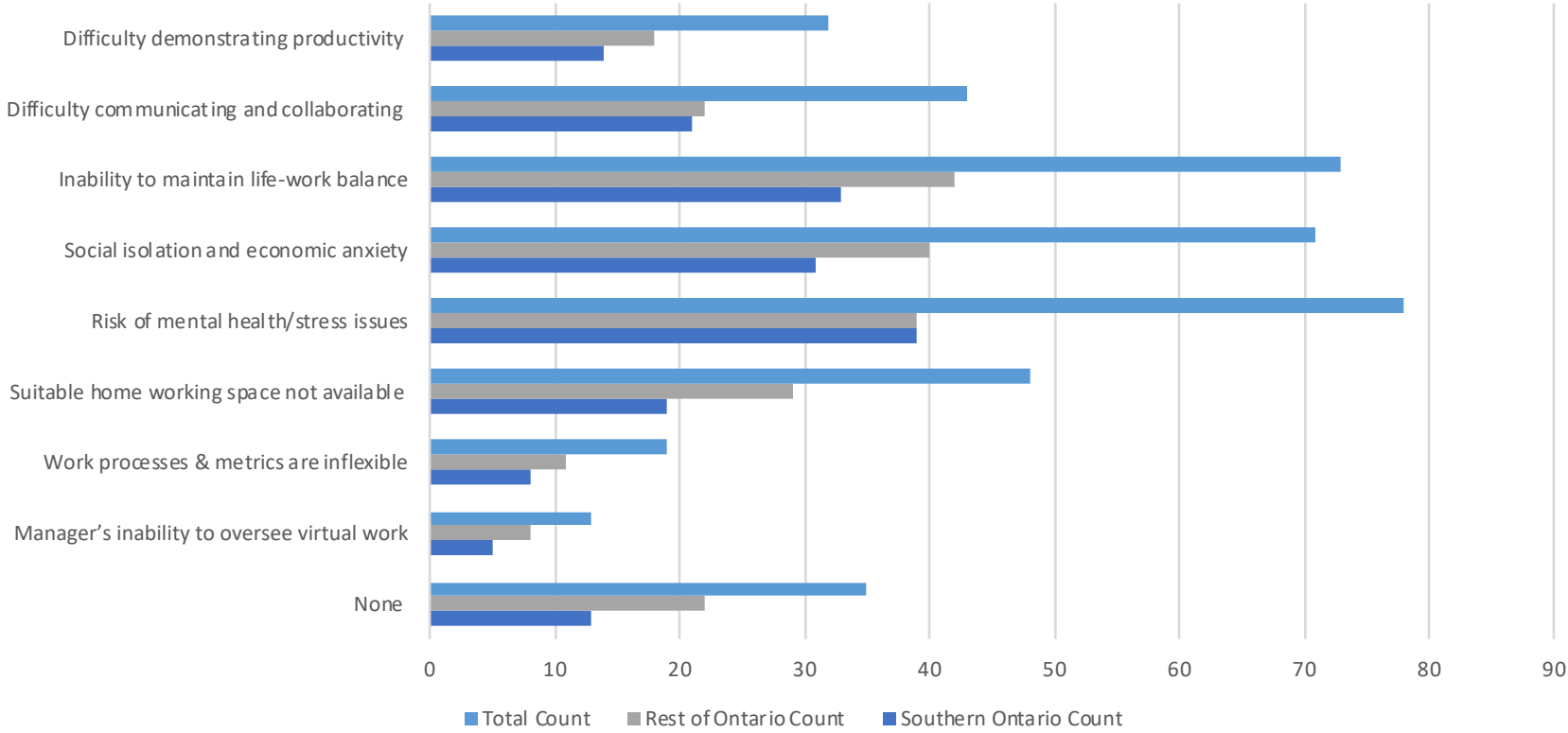
Period of continued adjustment and GROWTH

Workers' Views



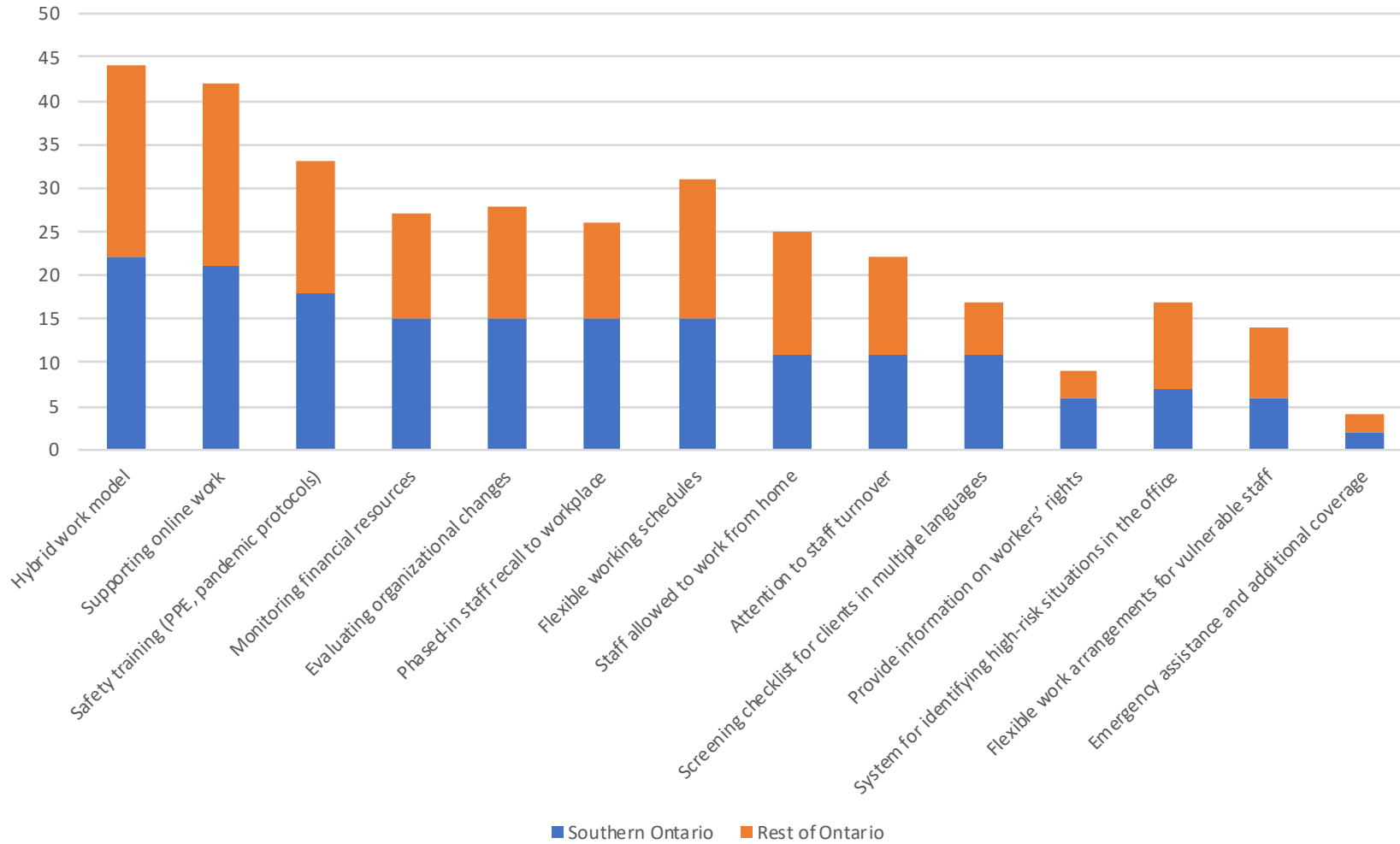
- Almost half, 49% feel productivity has increased
- Approximately one third, 34%, feel it has stayed the same
- For a minority, 17%, productivity has declined

Workers' Views: Challenges of Working Remotely



Many of these concerns are being addressed in management actions to support staff

Actions to Support Staff (Counts)



Most frequent actions concerned with working remotely and employee wellbeing

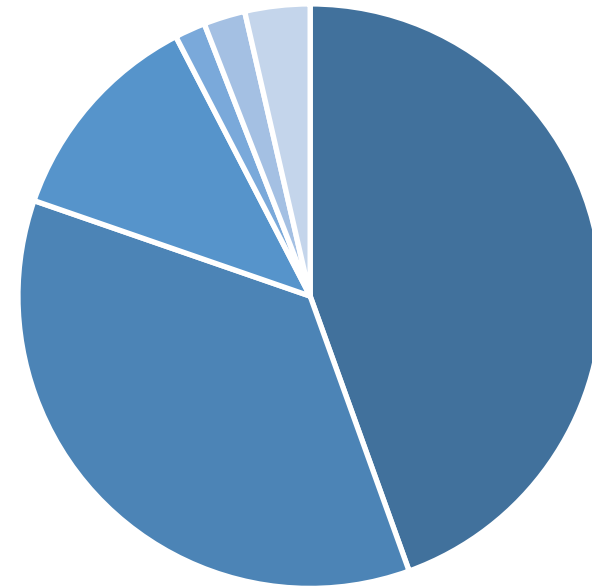
Satisfaction with Pandemic Responses

Managers

- Between Sept. 2020 and Sept. 2021, staff-management relations:
 - Improved – 36.6%
 - Stayed the same – 55.7%
 - Deteriorated – 7.7%

Workers

Organization has taken appropriate actions



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Missing

Funding Stability

TABLE 1
Funding Changes and Responses, 2020-2021

	Southern Ontario		Rest of Ontario		Total	
	Count	% Responses	Count	% Responses	Count	Percent
Changes in funding						
Lost continuing funding	4	66.7%	2	33.3%	6	11.5%
Lost user fees/ donations	15	65.2%	8	34.8%	23	44.2%
Applied for wage subsidy	7	63.6%	4	36.4%	11	21.1%
Ineligible for govt. supports	2	28.6%	5	71.4%	7	13.5%
Response to funding changes						
External financial aid	9	50.0%	9	50.0%	18	34.6%
Used in-house expertise	10	47.6%	11	52.4%	21	40.4%
Information webinars	14	46.7%	16	53.3%	30	57.7%
Researched financial advice	4	40.0%	6	60.0%	10	19.2%
Shared information	9	42.9%	12	57.1%	21	40.4%
Initiative to diversify revenue						
None	9	45.0%	11	55.0%	20	38.5%
Sales/fundraising	10	62.5%	6	37.5%	16	30.8%
Lottery/raffle etc.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Running events	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.8%
Extending social enterprise	6	60.0%	4	40.0%	10	19.2%

Agencies maintained continuing funding, lost independent sources

Agencies sought information, few took other actions

Respondents could choose as many responses as applicable so percentages do not sum to 100.0%. Percent is calculated as percentage of total number of agencies.

Significance of Funding

‘Recovering from the pandemic while also confronting new challenges is stretching the sector thin and antiquated funding models are failing. Over and over again, the sector has critiqued short-term and program-specific funding as they do not cover general operating costs necessary for nonprofits to deliver their programs and services. ... Flexible and targeted funding is crucial to organizations’ ability to respond quickly to a changing environment and deploy resources accordingly. The need for flexibility is especially important now during periods of rapid change’ (ONN and AFO, *State of the Sector During Uncertain Times*, 2022, p. 11).

Collaboration not Competition

TABLE 2

Competition for Clients

Clients who live outside your local area	Increased	32	61.5%
	Stayed the same	15	28.8%
	Decreased	5	9.7%
Competition for clients with other organizations	Increased	13	25.0%
	Stayed the same	35	67.3%
	Decreased	4	7.7%

Conclusions

- Adaptation to pandemic conditions continued after Wave 1 :
 - Additional services moved online, some in-person services restored and mix of services changed
 - Managers/agencies tried to respond to worker concerns, often with some success
- Challenge to NPM since success of ISAs is associated with suspension of NPM principles :
 - Sustained federal government funding despite decline in immigration
 - Some flexibility in use of funds, especially for technology
 - Suspension of service targets
 - Responsive, regular and respectful communication between funders and ISAs
 - Less competition among ISAs
- What happens next (build-back-better or return to past practices)?
- What about diversity of agencies and workers?

Many, many thanks

- Frontline workers and managers throughout Ontario ISAs
- OCASI staff
- BMRC Advisory Group for this project



Thank you

Questions/Comments

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