

Findings from an Employment Survey of New York City SNAP Households

Kevin Fellner

New York City Human Resources Administration

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**Human Resources
Administration**
Department of
Social Services

Survey Goals

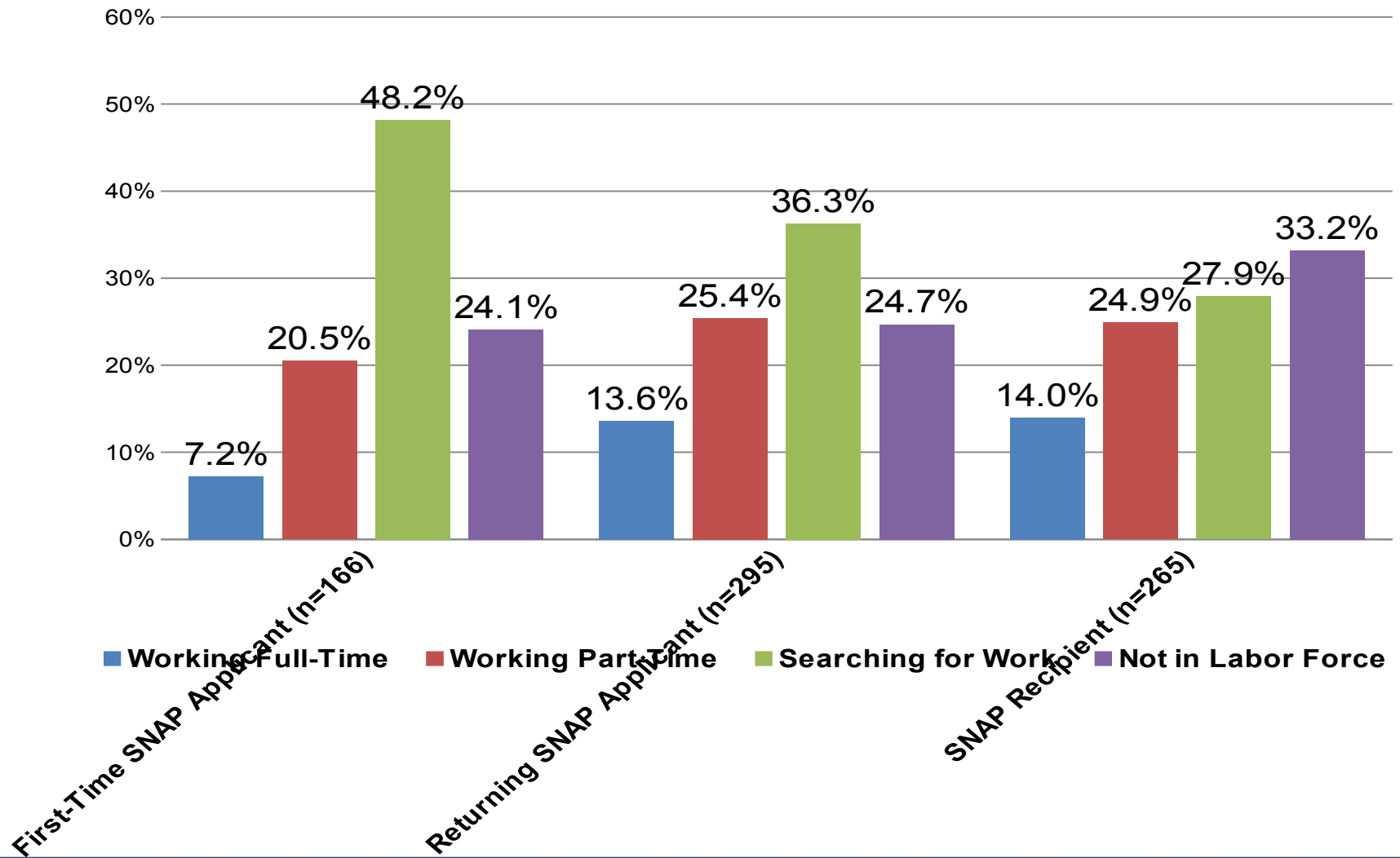
- Describe employment status of SNAP households at a level of detail that would not be available from analyzing administrative data alone.
- Provide comparisons of labor market attachment across varying household compositions and SNAP participation status (applicant or recipient).
- Evaluate individual employment perceptions and future expectations to better understand the relationship between work and SNAP participation.

Survey Sample

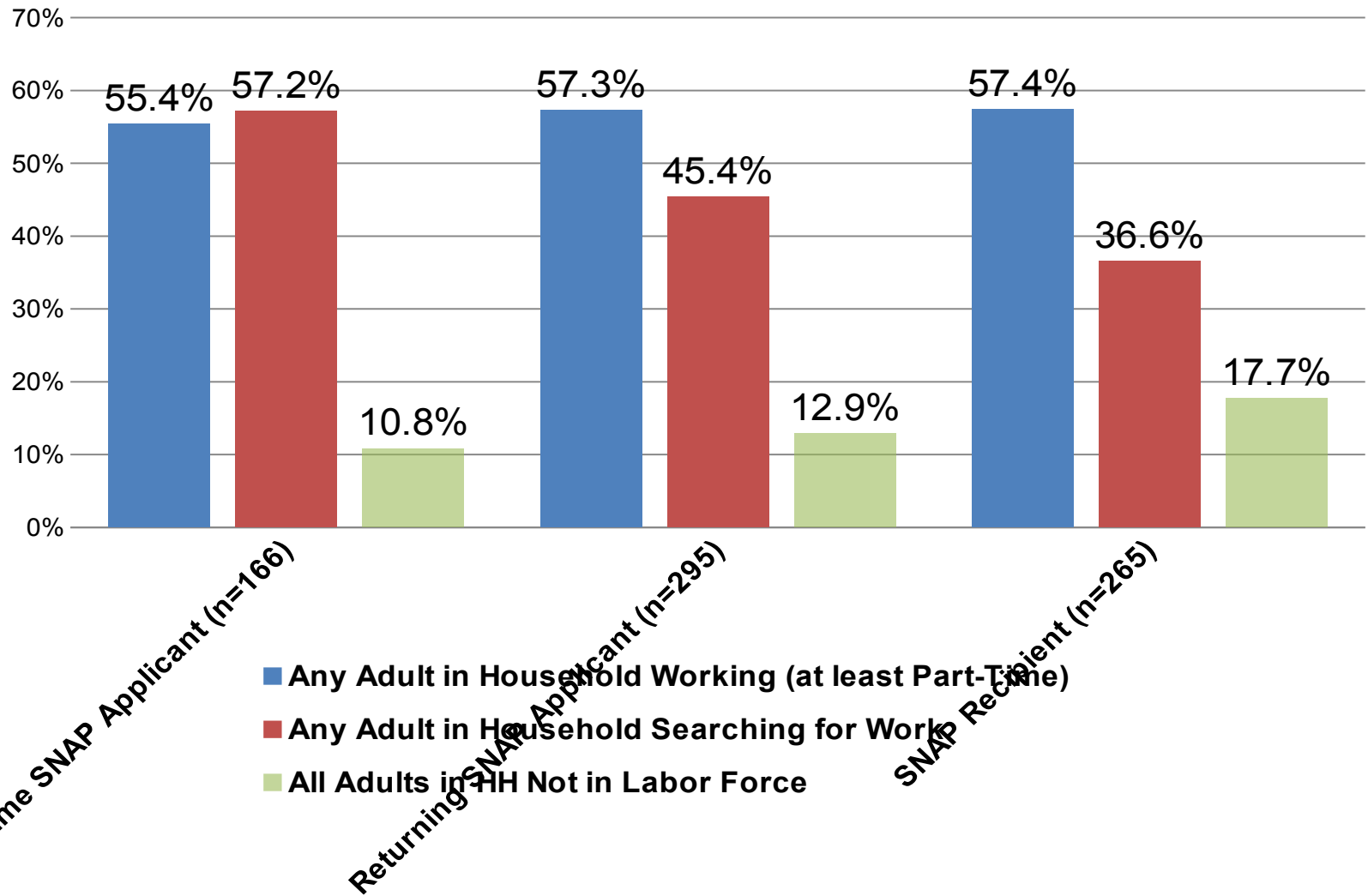
- 726 in-person surveys collected in July 2012
- Respondents included SNAP applicants and recipients
- Potential respondents were asked to anonymously participate in the survey while visiting HRA centers – applicants were in the process of filing SNAP application; recipients were recertifying or conducting other case business with HRA at the center
- Surveys were conducted throughout the five boroughs in English, Spanish, and Chinese
- Adult individuals were approached and asked to participate in the survey regardless of age (i.e., individuals who considered themselves to be retired were also asked questions about labor force status)

Summary of Labor Force Status

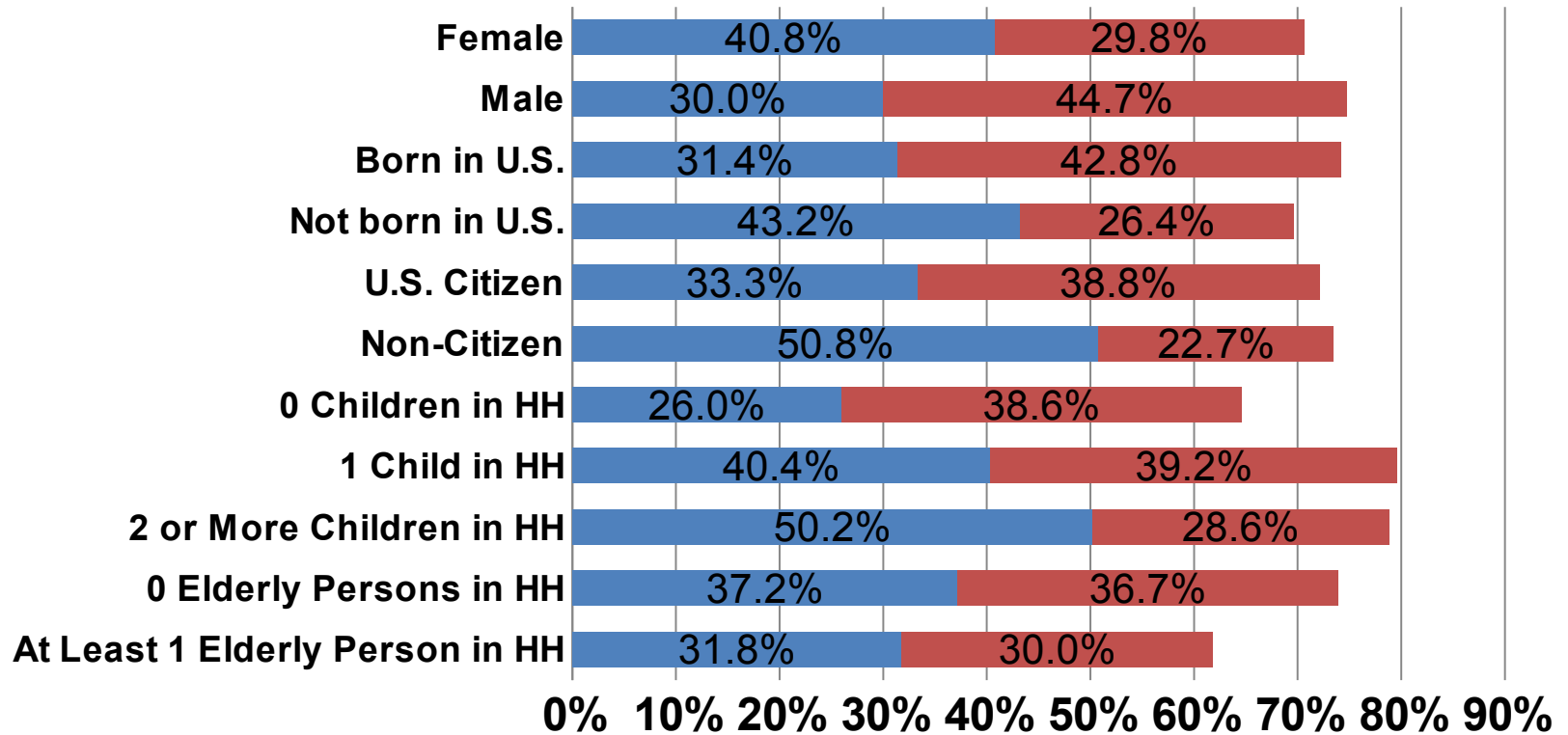
Employment Status of Survey Respondent



Key Employment Statistics of Household Level



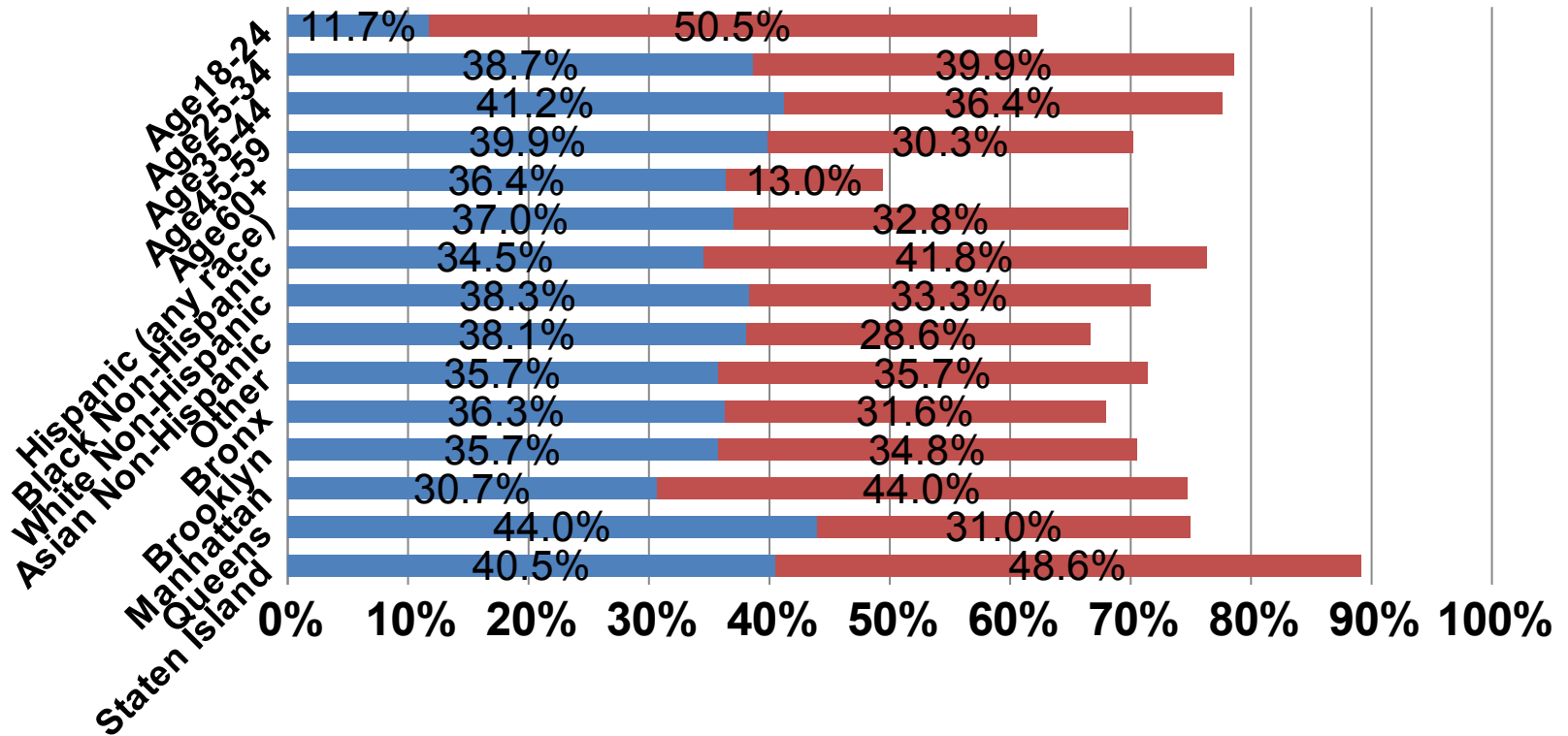
Labor Force Participation Levels by Selected Respondent Characteristics



■ Working at Least Part-Time (n=264) ■ Searching for Work (n=261)

Remainder of respondents were not actively searching for work or Not in the Labor Force.

Labor Force Participation Levels by Selected Respondent Characteristics

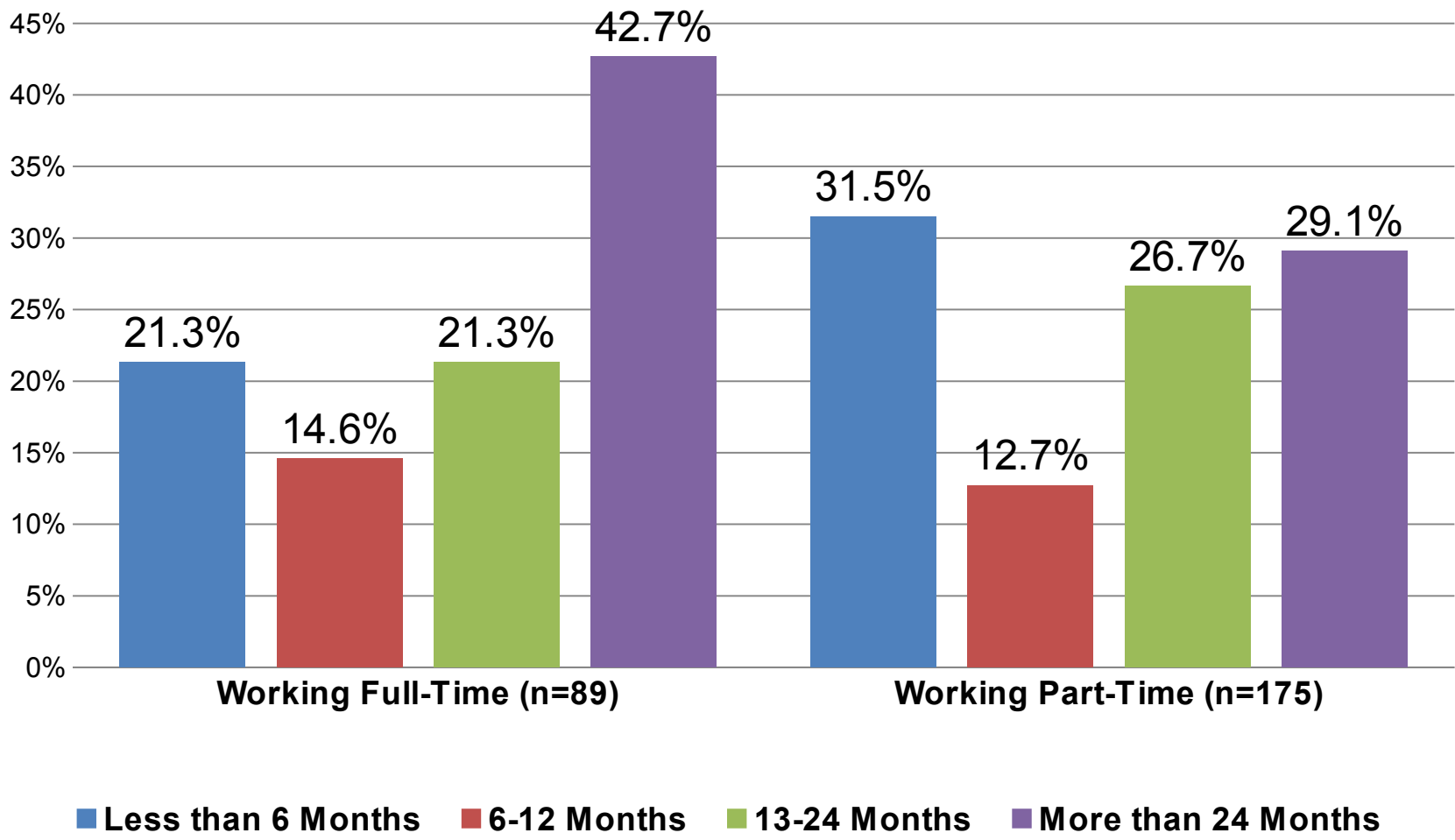


■ Working at Least Part-Time (n=264) ■ Searching for Work (n=261)

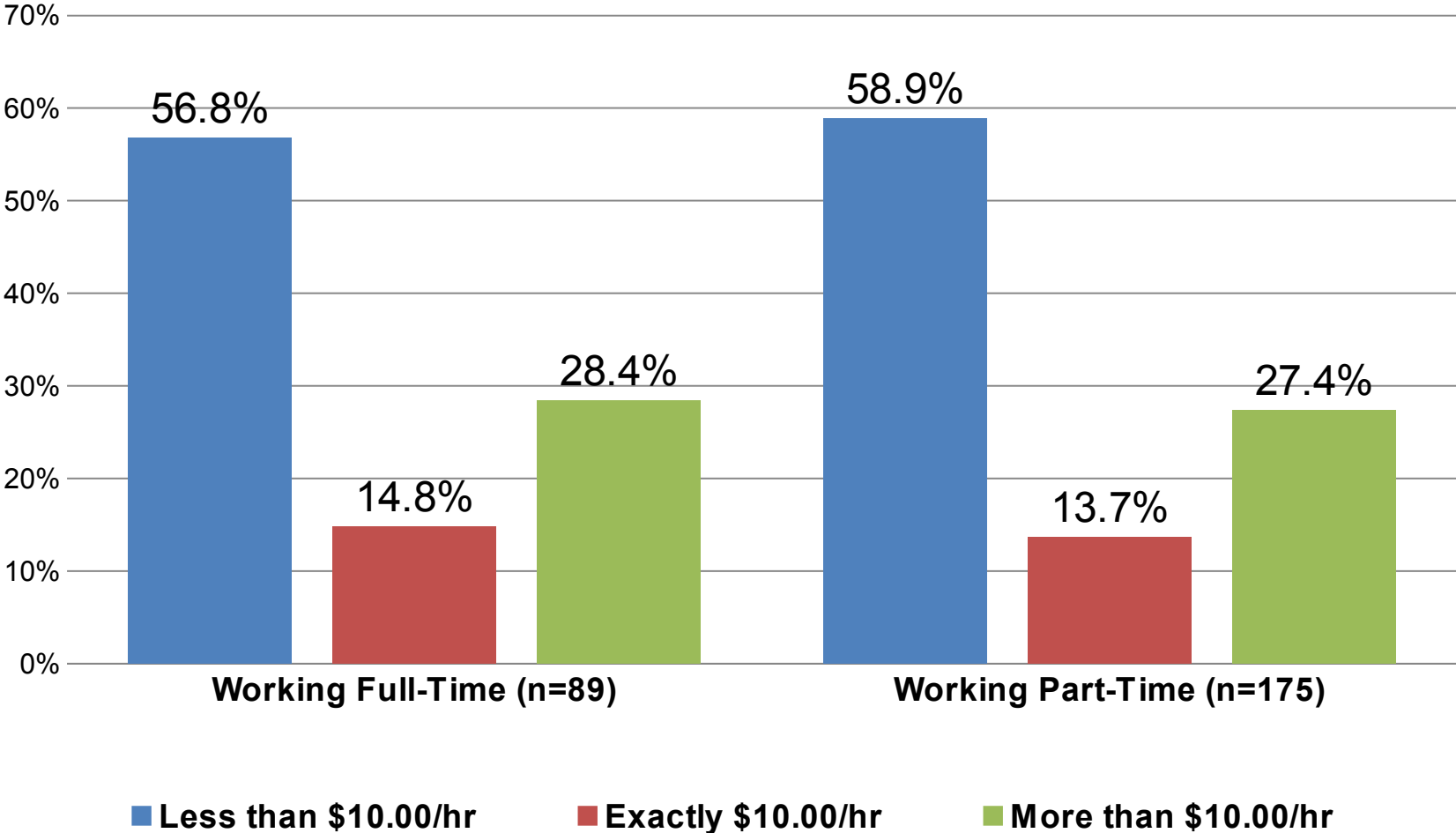
Remainder of respondents were not actively searching for work or Not in the Labor Force.

Respondents Working Full-Time or Part-Time

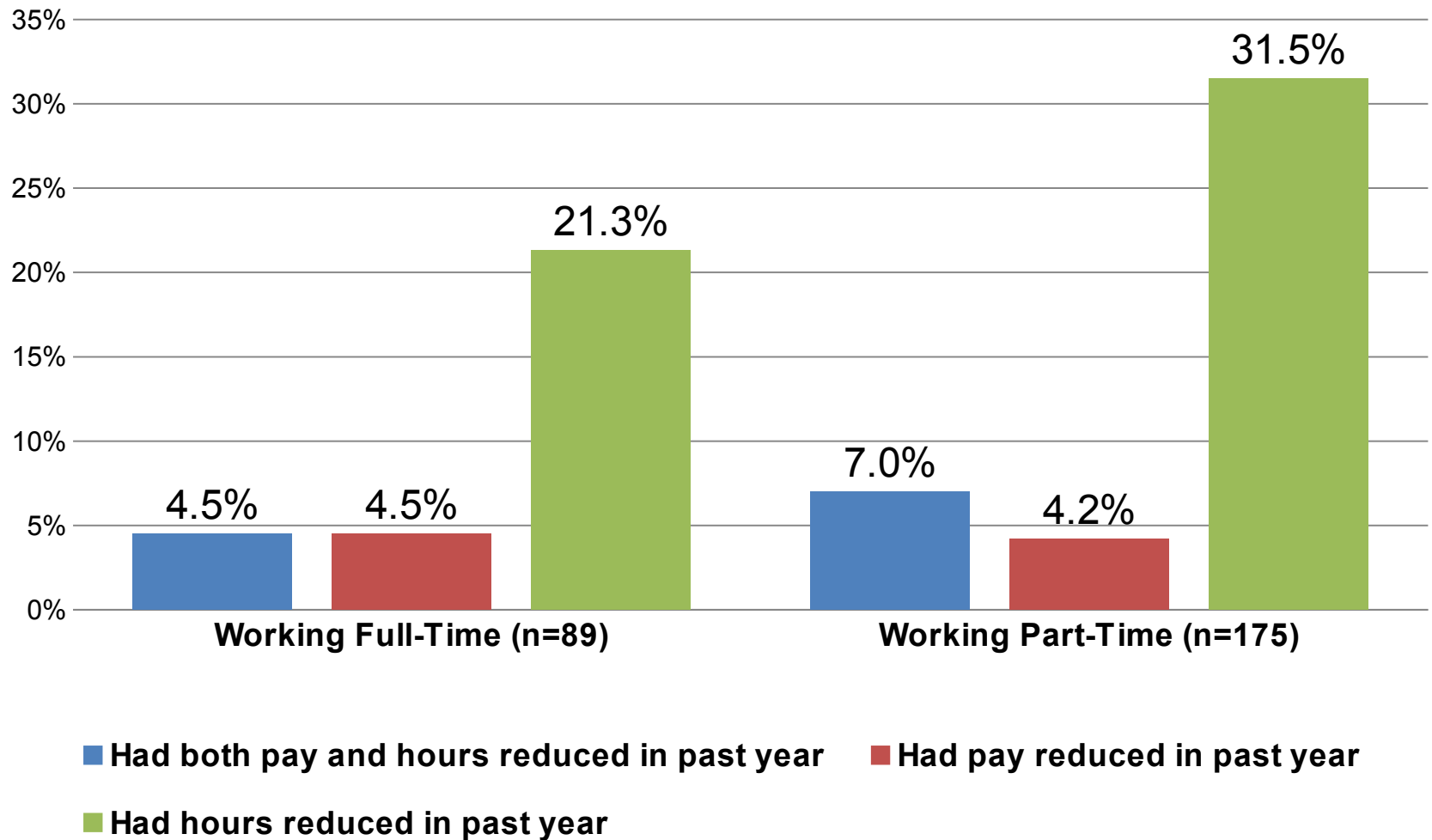
How Long Have You Worked in Current Job?



Self-Reported Wage Rate

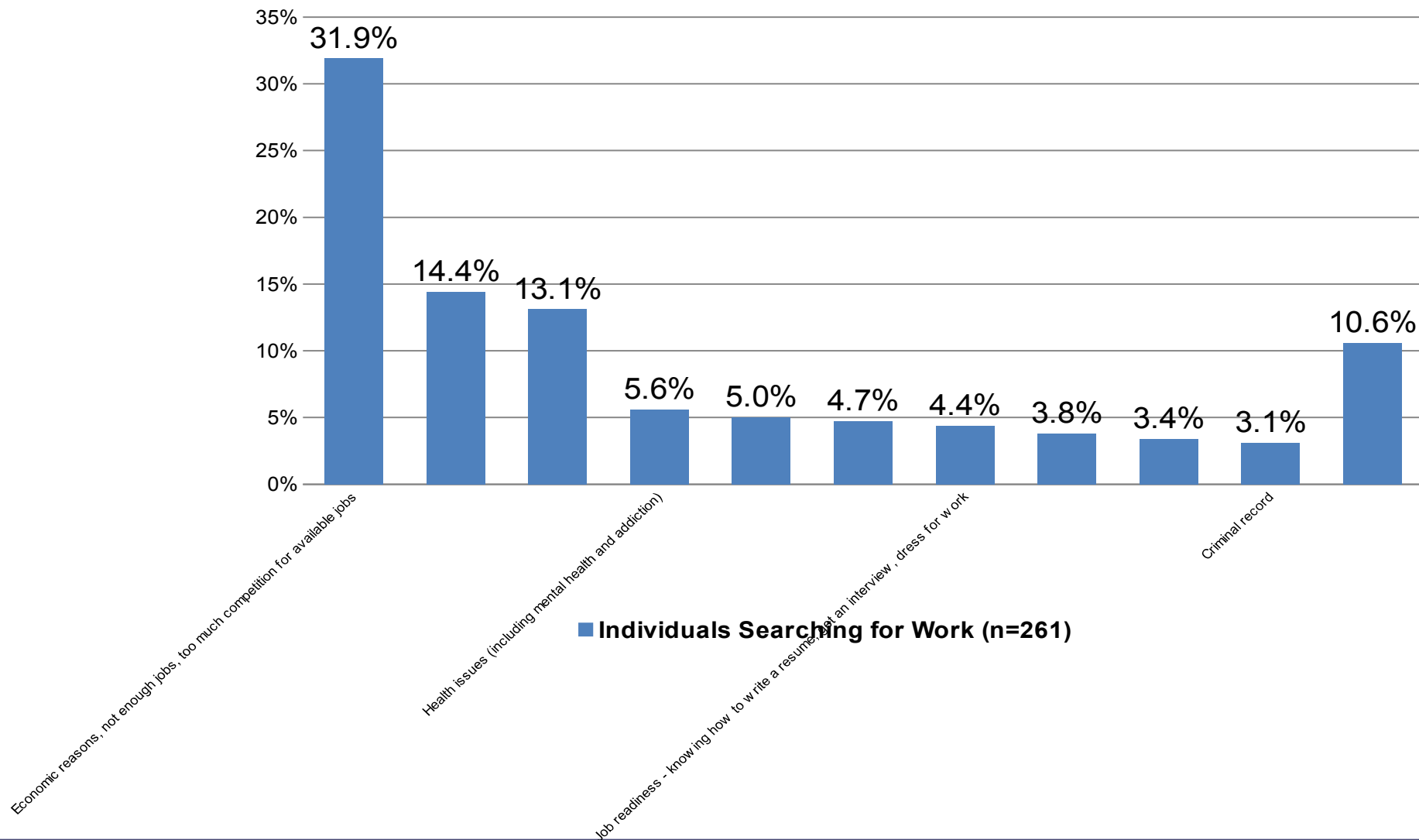


Self-Reported Employment Changes in Past Year

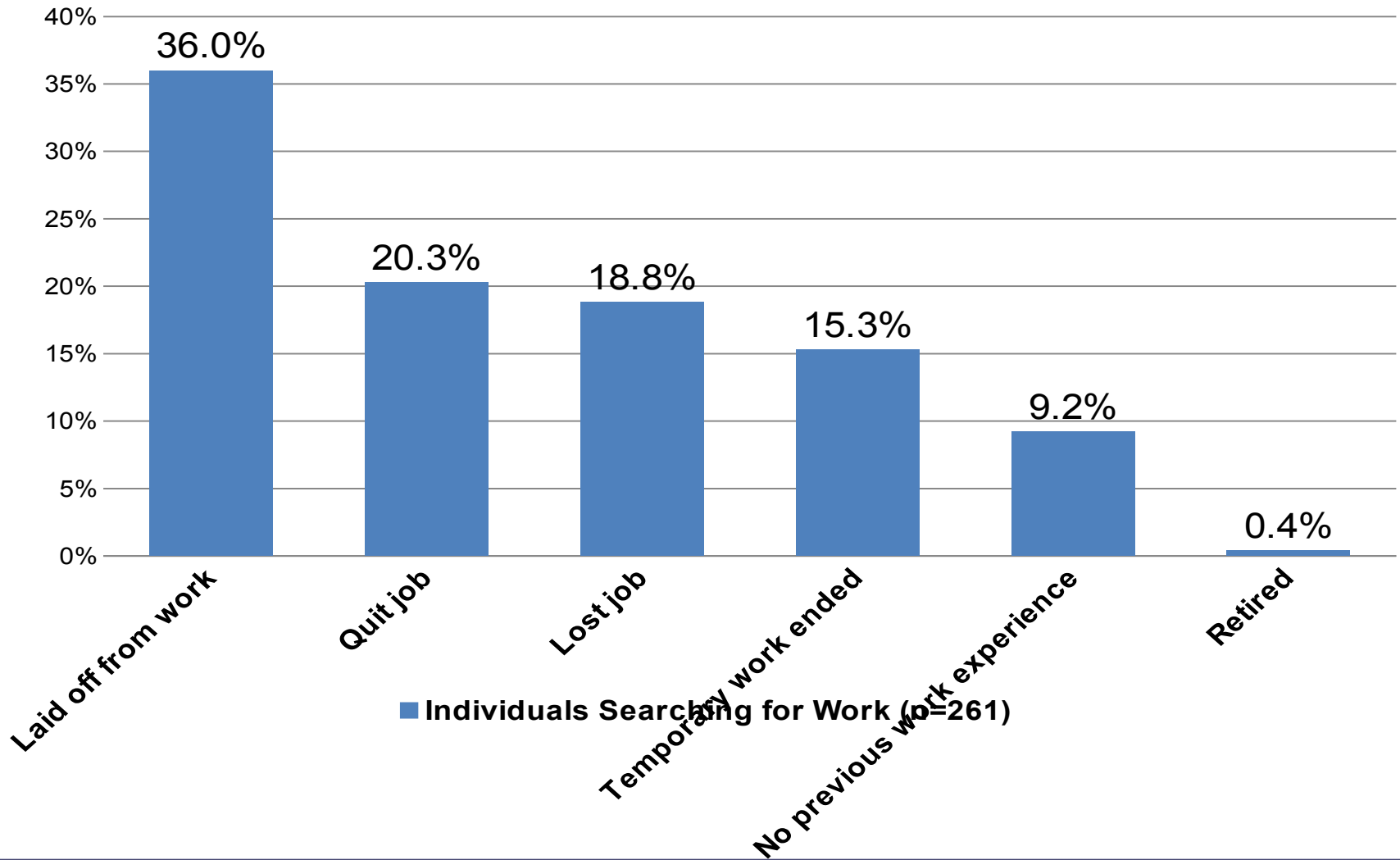


Respondents Searching for Work

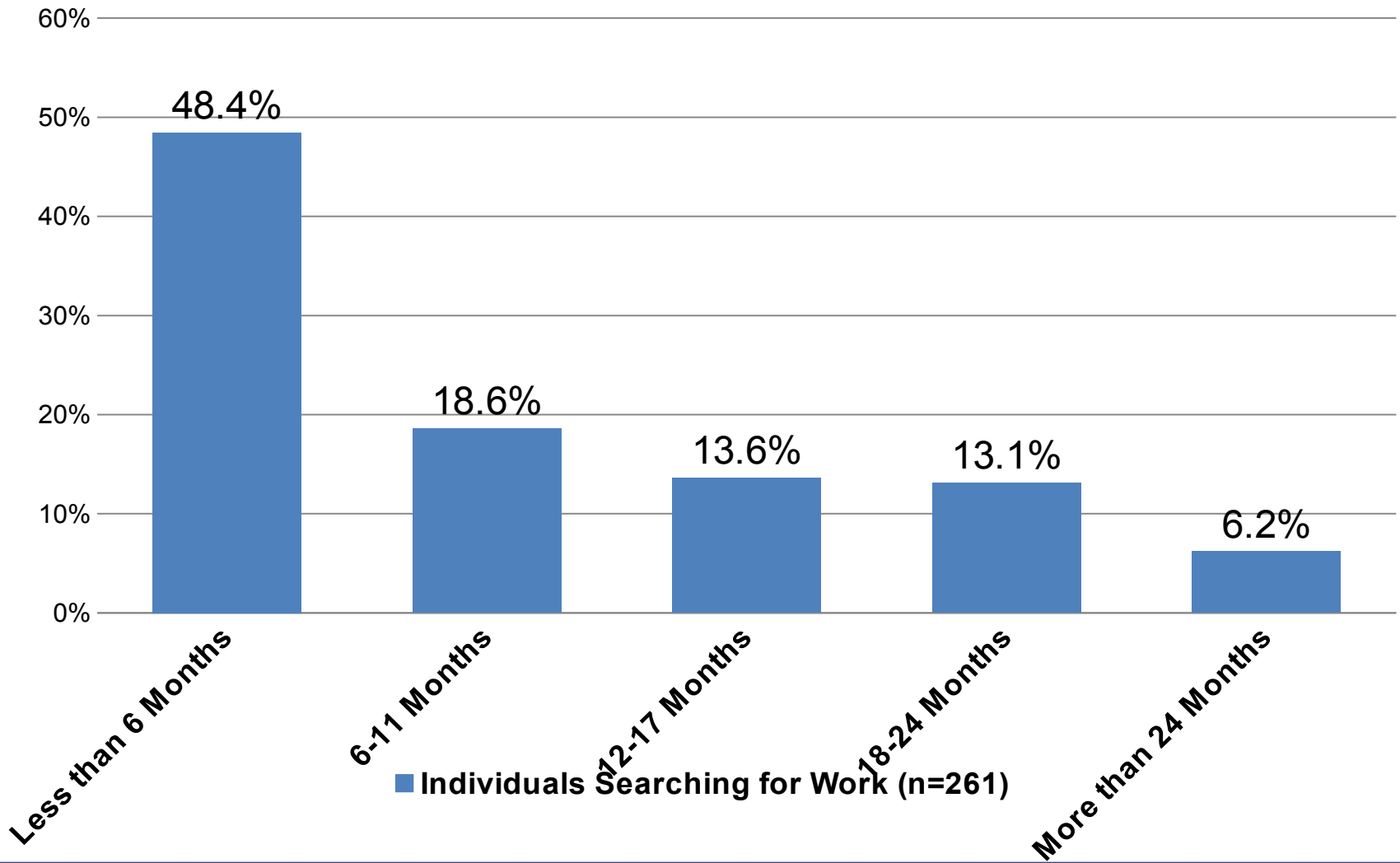
Self-reported Biggest Challenge to Getting a Job



Reason Last Job Ended

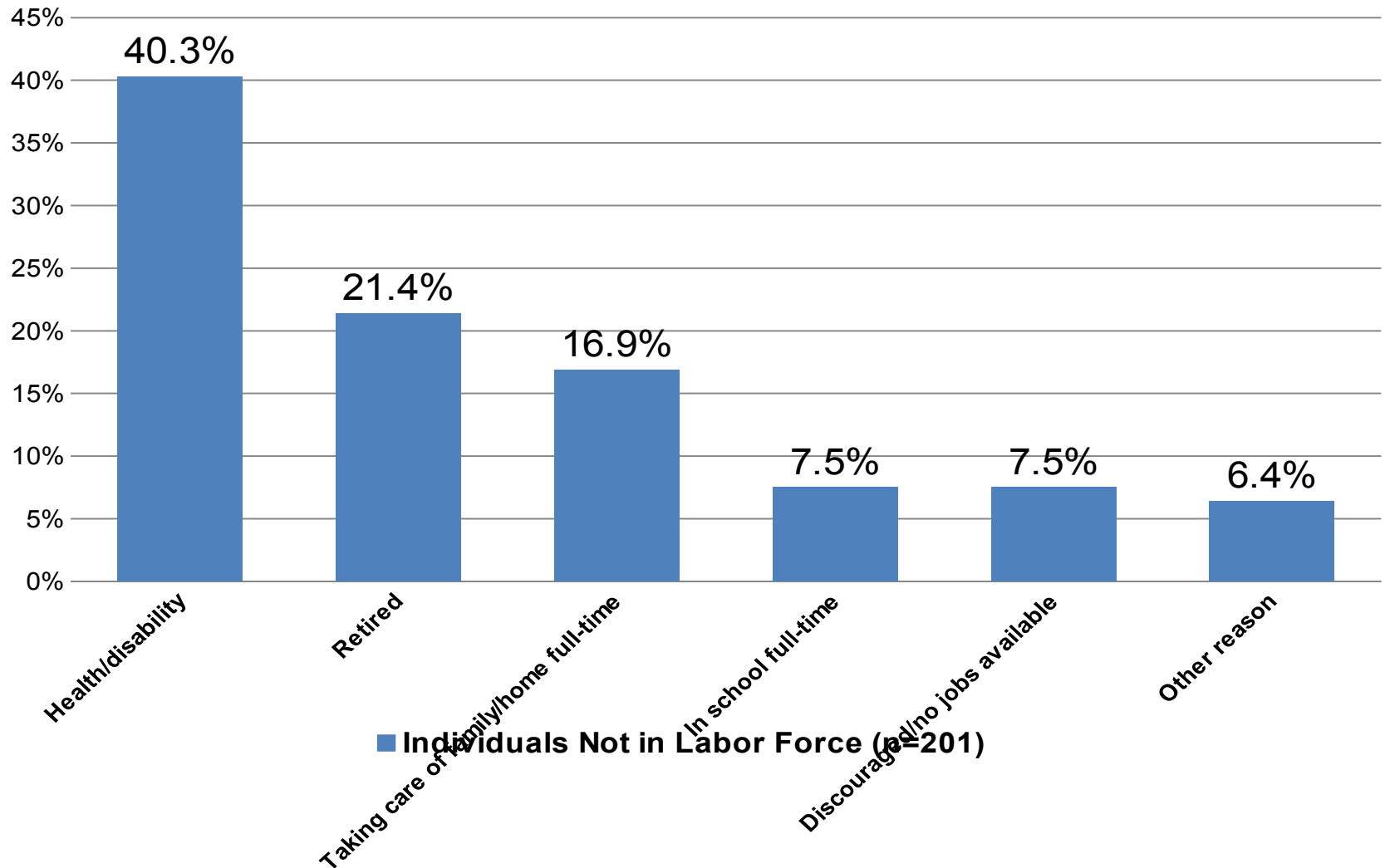


Length of Time in Current Job Search

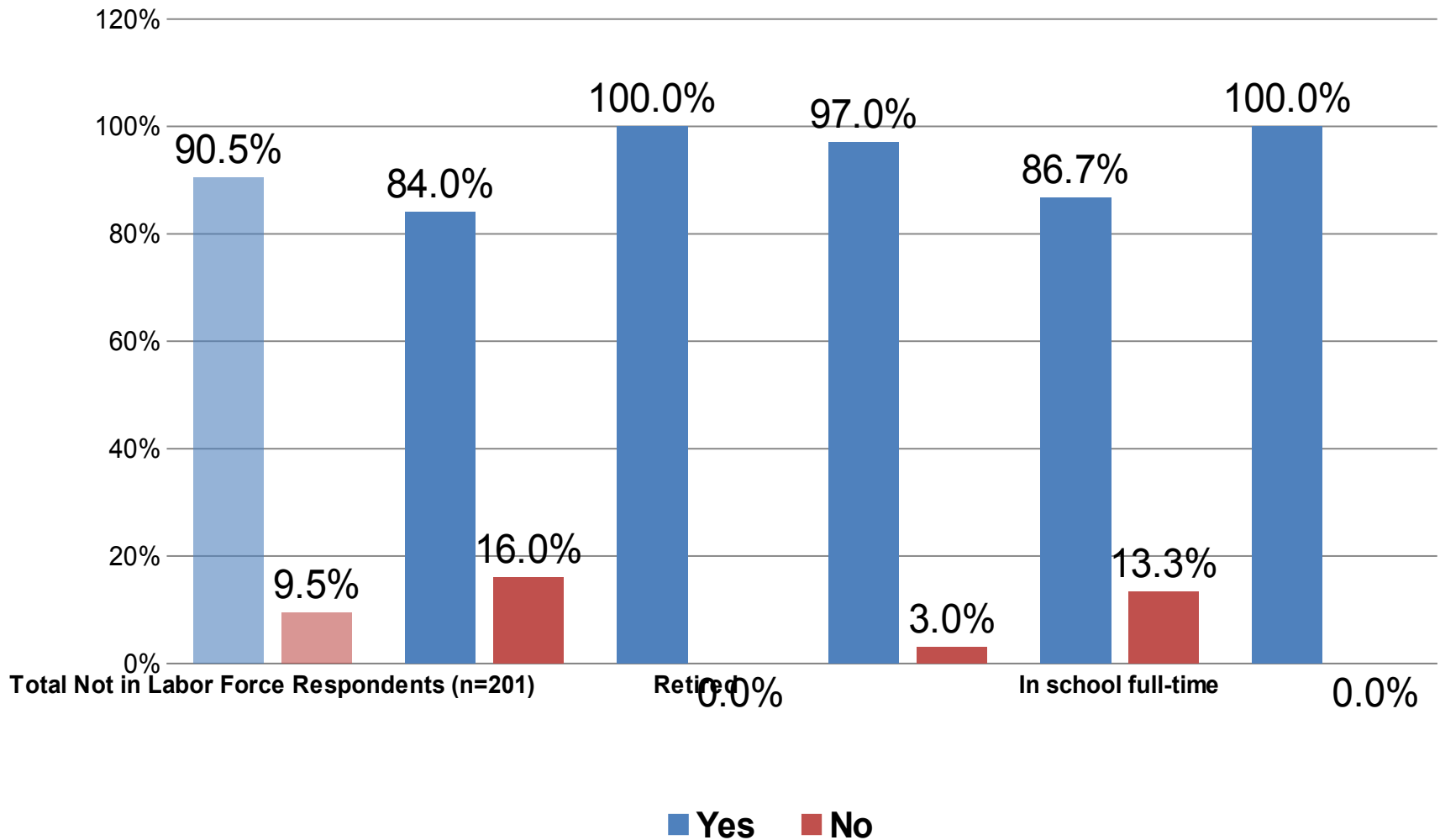


Respondents Not in Labor Force

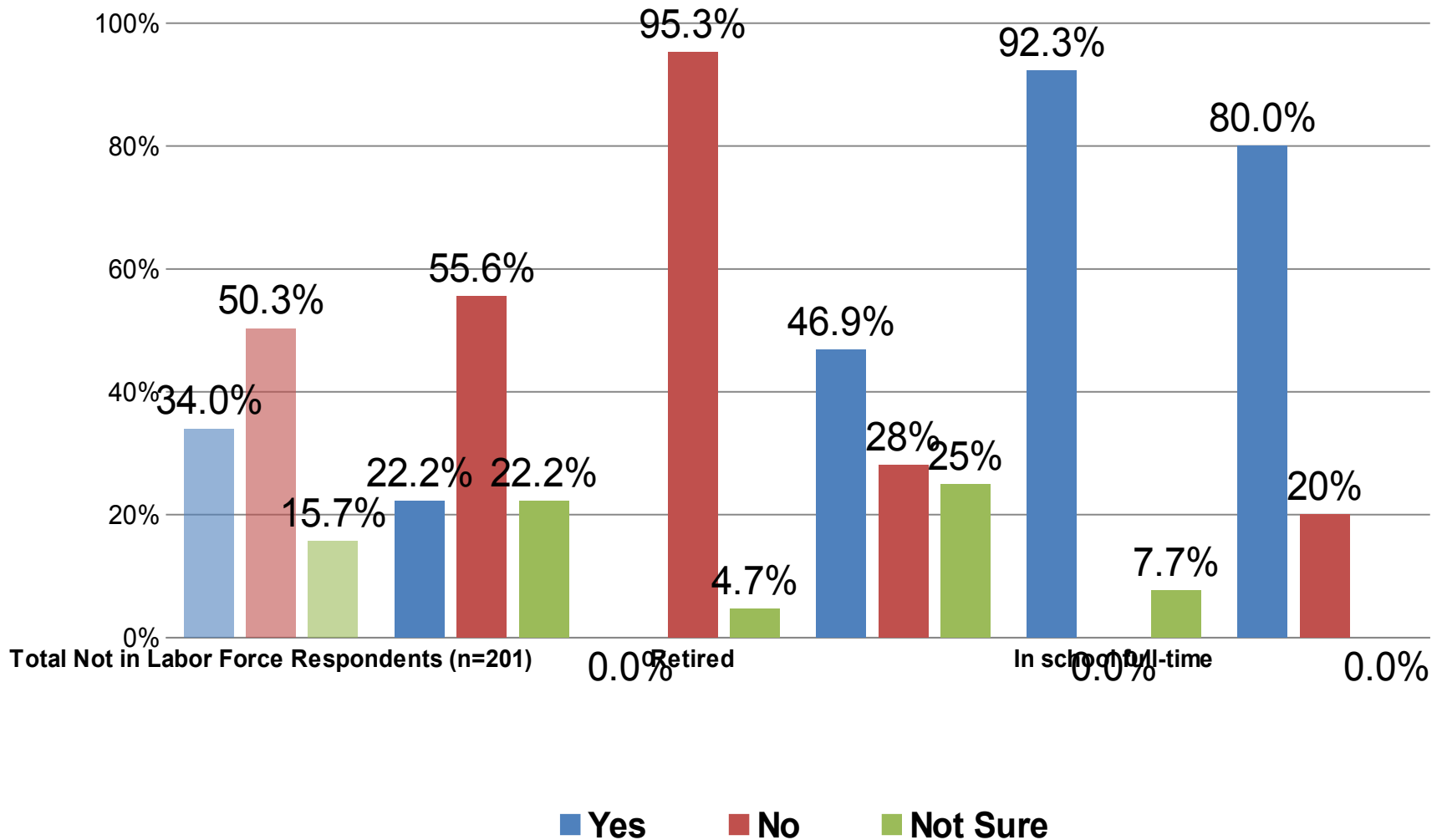
Reason Not Currently in Labor Force



Have you worked regularly in the past? (by reason not currently in labor force)



Do you expect to look for work in the next 12 months? (by reason not currently in labor force)



Conclusions

- Household-level employment rates combined with high employment search rates suggest strong labor force attachment among SNAP population and efforts by multiple family members in finding and keeping work.
- SNAP recipients were more likely to be working or outside of the labor force than applicants, suggesting that job loss and job search could be trigger events for applying for SNAP benefits, especially among first-time households.
- Higher work rates were reported by female respondents, individuals with children in the household, non-citizen and foreign-born individuals, non-elderly adults, and individuals living outside of Manhattan. Earned income for larger family sizes is more plausible given the allowable deductions, whereas single-person cases with income would have to meet a modest income threshold to keep their case active. In NYC, unemployment has remained in recent years lower for non-citizens and foreign-born than native citizens.

Conclusions

- Working full-time, while less common, appeared to be more likely to have the person in the job for a longer period of time. However, full-time work was not correlated with being more likely to receive a greater than \$10/hr wage than part-time work. Part-time workers were more likely to report recent instability in their wages and work hours.
- Individuals actively searching for work were most likely to attribute their challenges to the current economy, though they also listed skill deficits and said that the jobs available would not meet their household needs. They were also most likely to say that they had been laid off at their last job, rather than quit, termination, or other reason.
- Those outside of the labor force were most likely to say that they had a health or disability issue that prevented them from working. Elderly individuals were likely to say they were retired and not planning to reenter the workforce, whereas full-time students thought they would be looking for work within a year. Not in the labor force individuals also had strong work histories, though less so among the health/disability group and the full-time students.