



Demand for Skilled Workforce in Construction

**Results of a Survey of
Construction Businesses**

April–May 2026

Research conducted by CBR



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Study Design

In-depth interviews and a survey conducted among a representative sample of businesses



STUDY OBJECTIVES

- Analyze employment patterns in the construction industry and companies' approaches to recruiting and hiring skilled trades workers
- Analyze construction companies' practices regarding employee training
- Analyze construction companies' practices regarding cooperation with vocational education institutions
- Identify the most in-demand skilled trades in the construction industry
- Analyze the factors driving demand for these skilled trades

EXPERT INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Expert assessments were collected from representatives of key stakeholder groups
- Total: 20 expert interviews with representatives of the following groups:
 - Construction companies and building materials manufacturers, industry associations: 12 interviews
 - Trade unions: 1 interview
 - Vocational education institutions: 3 interviews
 - Government experts: 4 interviews

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY OF A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF CONSTRUCTION BUSINESSES

The target population of the study consisted of legal entities registered under NACE codes 41 Construction of Buildings, 42 Civil Engineering, and 43 Specialized Construction Activities, with more than 5 employees

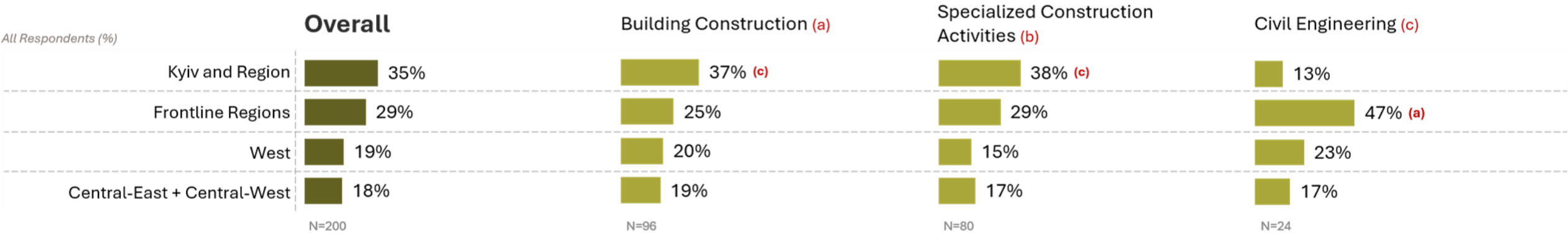
- Total sample size: 200 construction companies
- Survey method: computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) with company owners and executives
- The survey was conducted using a database of registered construction companies obtained through the YouControl.Market platform
- Companies were contacted in a random order. The resulting sample distribution by macro-region corresponds to the distribution of the population of registered construction companies with annual revenue exceeding UAH 100,000. The sample distribution by economic activity differs from the population distribution by no more than 20%. The dataset was weighted to ensure that the sample distribution by economic sector reflects the distribution of the target population
- Fieldwork period: April 27 to June 1, 2026

Sample for a Quantitative Survey

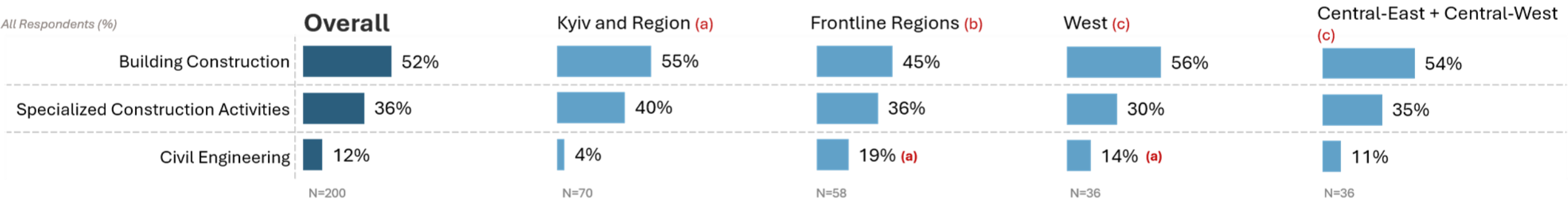
The sample structure by economic sector (type of activity) and region reflects the structure of the overall population of registered construction enterprises. Construction businesses are concentrated in Kyiv and the surrounding region, as well as in frontline regions. In particular, civil engineering companies are concentrated in frontline regions



Regions (by Economic Sector)



Economic Sector (by Region)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

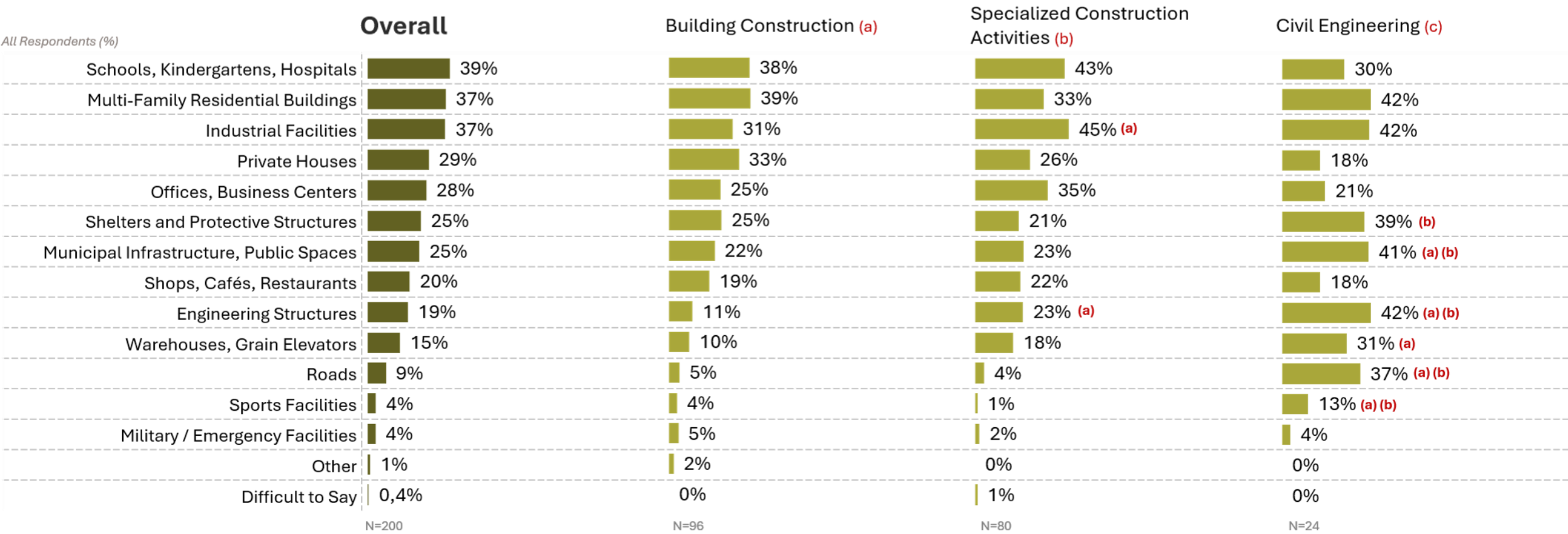
S3. Economic sector. S8. Region.

Types of Construction Projects Completed

Construction companies most frequently worked on the following types of projects: social infrastructure, multi-family residential buildings, and industrial facilities. One-quarter of respondents reported working on shelters and protective structures



Projects Worked on in 2025 (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

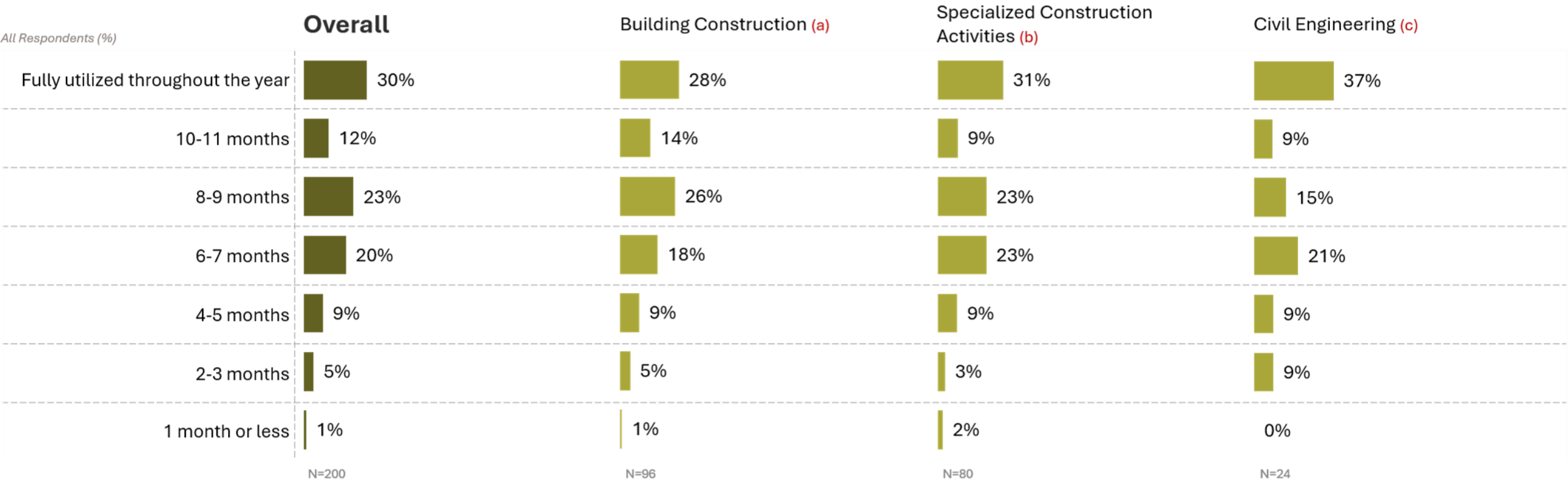
A8. What types of projects did your company work on in 2025?

Workload Utilization

Forty-two percent of construction companies reported being fully utilized for 10-12 months, while 43% were fully utilized for 6-9 months. Low utilization, defined as having less than six months of work, was reported by 15% of companies



Company Workload Utilization in 2025 (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

A4. In 2025, for how many months was your company operating at full capacity?

Employment Model in Construction

At the median construction company, the number of permanent employees is 10. During peak season or when additional contracts are secured, companies hire an additional 16 workers. During periods of full workload, the median number of skilled trades workers is 10, while the number of laborers and unskilled workers is also 10



Number of Employees (by Economic Sector)

	Overall	Building Construction (a)	Specialized Construction Activities (b)	Civil Engineering (c)
Number of employees permanently employed by the company Mean / Median:	16 employees / 10 employees N=199	15 employees / 10 employees N=96	16 employees / 8 employees N=79	19 employees / 10 employees N=24
Number of employees hired during peak seasons or when workloads increase Mean / Median:	32 employees / 16 employees N=171	36 employees / 17 employees N=92	26 employees / 15 employees N=59	24 employees / 17 employees N=20
Total number of skilled trades workers employed during periods of full workload in 2025 Mean / Median:	19 employees / 10 employees N=196	22 employees / 12 employees (b) N=94	16 employees / 10 employees N=78	16 employees / 10 employees N=24
Total number of laborers and unskilled workers employed in 2025 Mean / Median:	15 employees / 10 employees N=151	15 employees / 10 employees N=80	14 employees / 10 employees N=52	13 employees / 9 employees N=19

(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

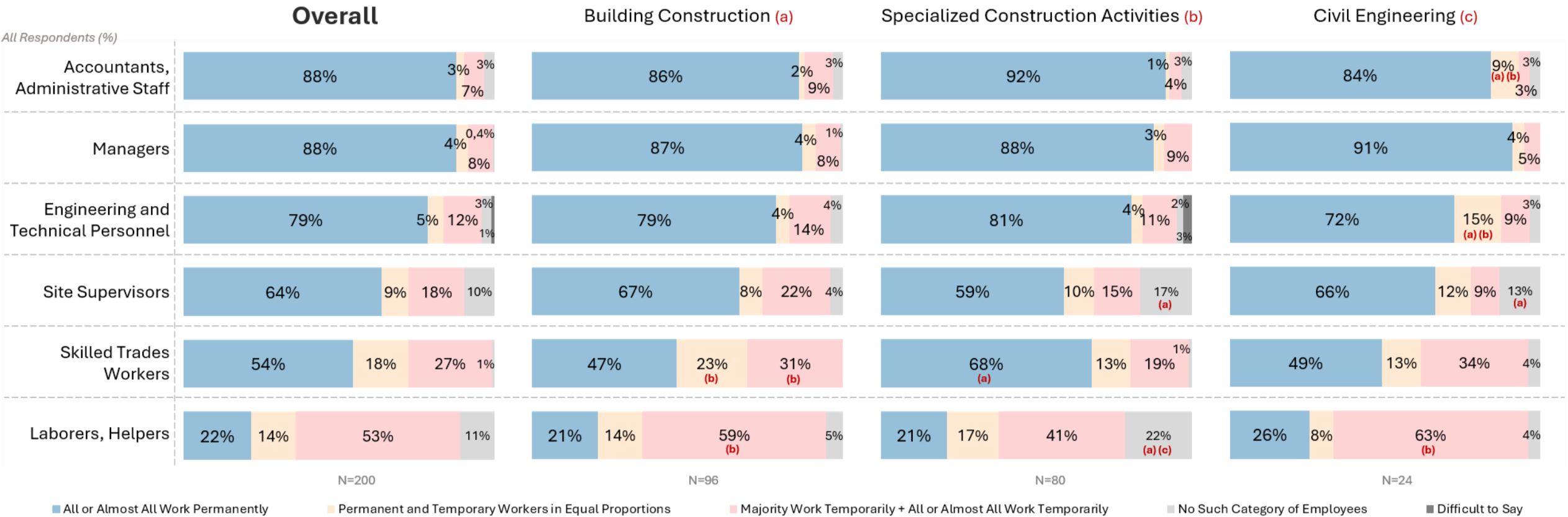
A1. How many employees work permanently at your company, excluding seasonal, temporary workers, and external contractors?
A2. How many employees do you hire during peak seasons or when workloads increase?
A5. During periods of full workload in 2025, what was the total number of skilled trades workers involved in construction or production activities?
A6. What was the total number of laborers and unskilled workers involved?

Employment Model in Construction

Permanent staff in construction companies primarily consist of managers, administrative employees, and engineering and technical personnel. Approximately two-thirds of surveyed companies provide permanent employment for site supervisors. Permanent employment for skilled trades workers is provided by 54% of companies. Laborers are generally hired on a temporary basis



Employment Structure in 2025 (by Economic Sector)



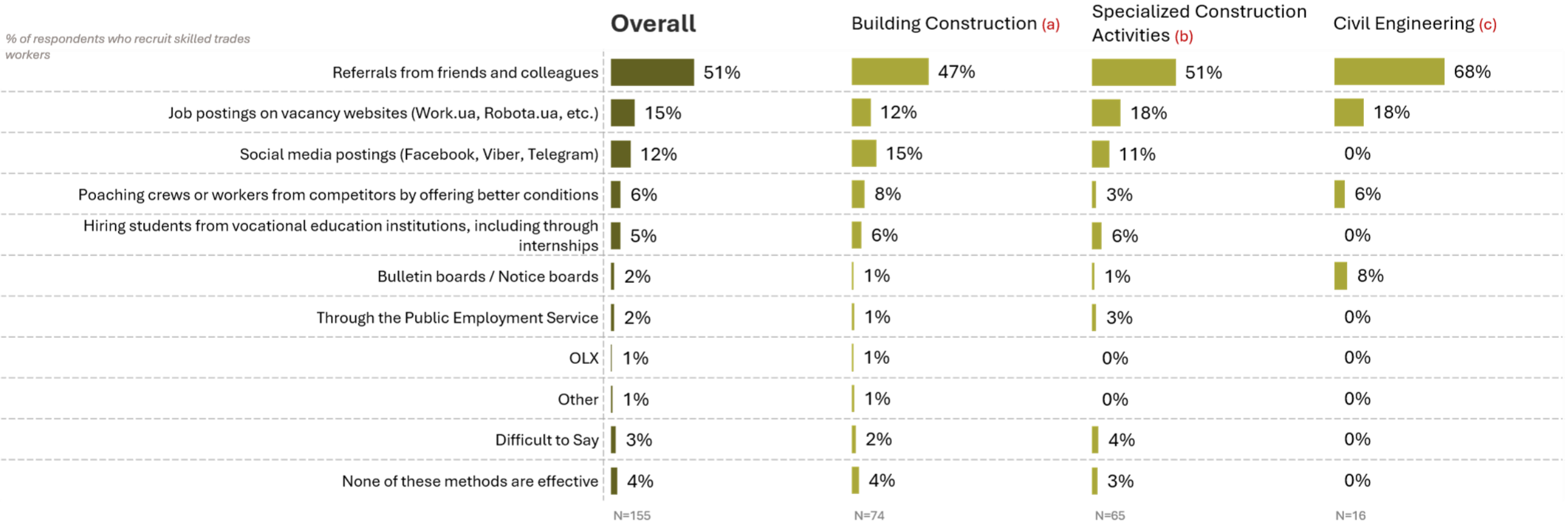
(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

Methods of Recruiting Skilled Trades Workers

When recruiting skilled trades workers, companies rely primarily on referrals from acquaintances and colleagues. They also use job websites and social media postings



Most Effective Method of Recruiting Skilled Trades Workers (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

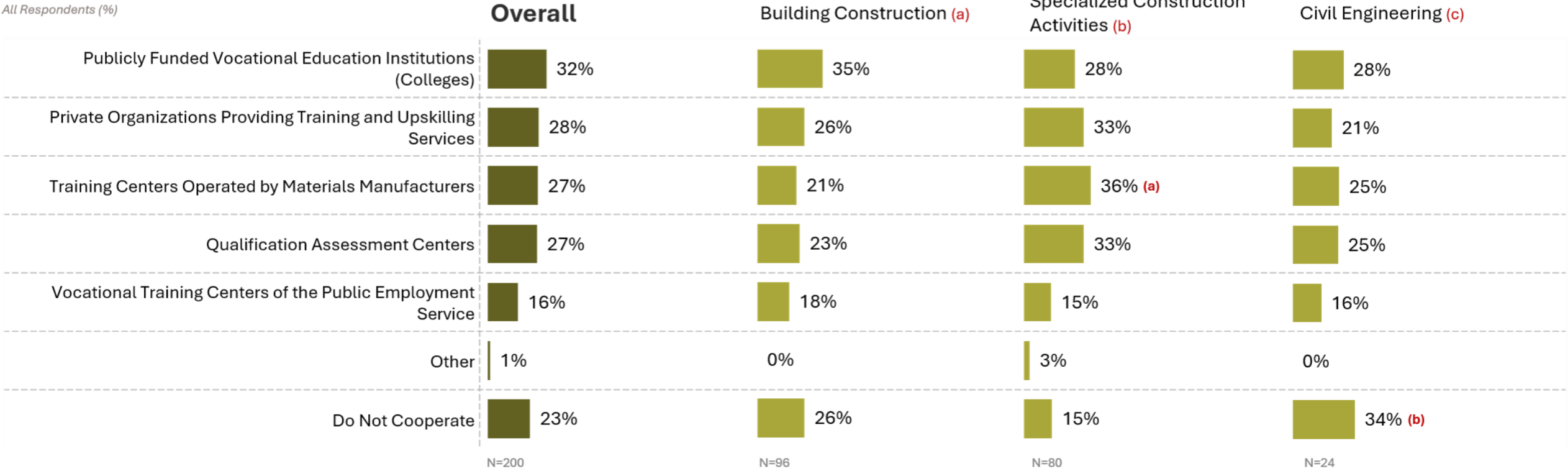
A16. Which of the following methods of recruiting skilled trades workers has proven to be the most effective?

Cooperation with Educational Institutions

The vast majority of surveyed companies (**77%**) cooperate with educational institutions. Construction companies work with different types of educational institutions to a similar extent. Companies in the building construction sector are somewhat more likely to cooperate with public vocational education institutions. Companies engaged in specialized construction activities more actively use private training providers, including training centers operated by materials manufacturers



Types of Educational Institutions Companies Cooperate With (by Economic Sector)



Cooperation with Educational Institutions

The most common forms of cooperation are providing internships for students and hiring graduates.

Ten percent of surveyed businesses purchase employee upskilling services, while 6% have dual education agreements with vocational education institutions.



Forms of Cooperation with Vocational Education Institutions (Colleges) (by Economic Sector)

All Respondents (%)	Overall	Building Construction (a)	Specialized Construction Activities (b)	Civil Engineering (c)
Provide internships for students	23%	28% (b)	15%	24%
Hire graduates of vocational education institutions	22%	25%	19%	11%
Employees receive training or upskilling through these institutions	10%	13%	7%	8%
Have dual education agreements with vocational education institutions	6%	7%	2%	13% (b)
Provide materials and equipment to vocational education institutions	3%	4%	3%	0%
Participate in the development of training curricula	2%	2%	3%	0%
Other	0,4%	1%	0%	0%
Difficult to Say	0,4%	0%	1%	0%
	N=200	N=96	N=80	N=24

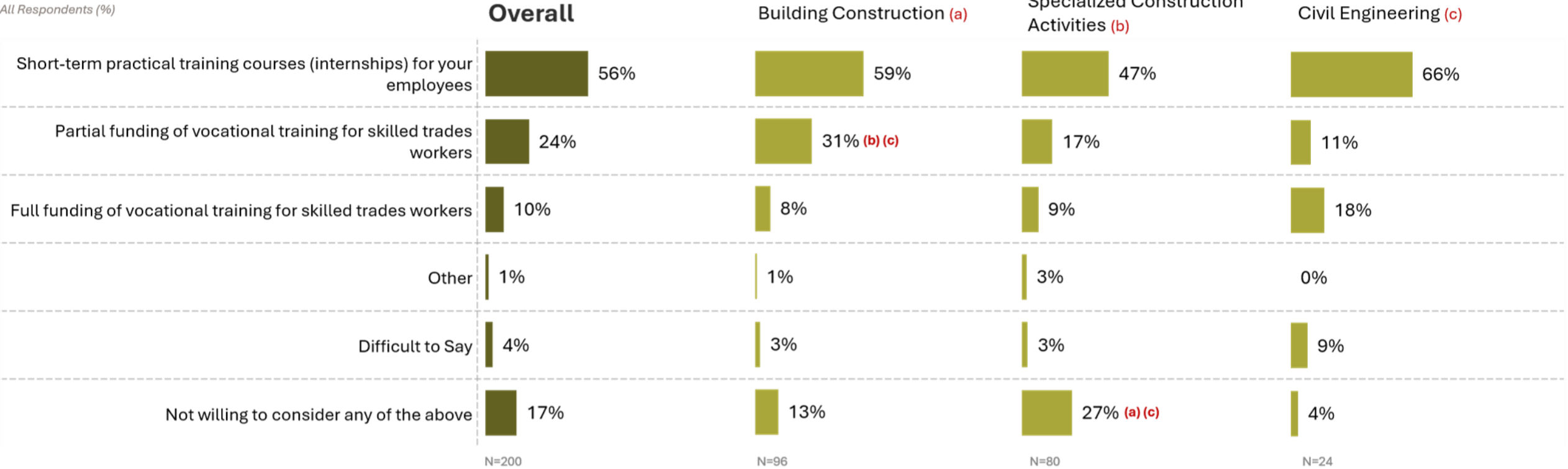
(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

Cooperation with Educational Institutions

Among the proposed formats for cooperation with vocational education institutions, short-term practical training courses for employees received the strongest support. One-third of respondents (34%) are willing to partially or fully finance employee training at vocational education institutions.



Potential Formats of Cooperation with Vocational Education Institutions (by Economic Sector)

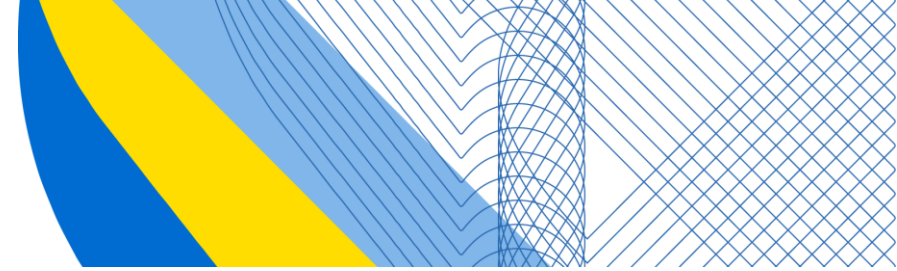


(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

A35. Which forms of cooperation with vocational education institutions would you be willing to consider and implement in your business in the near future?

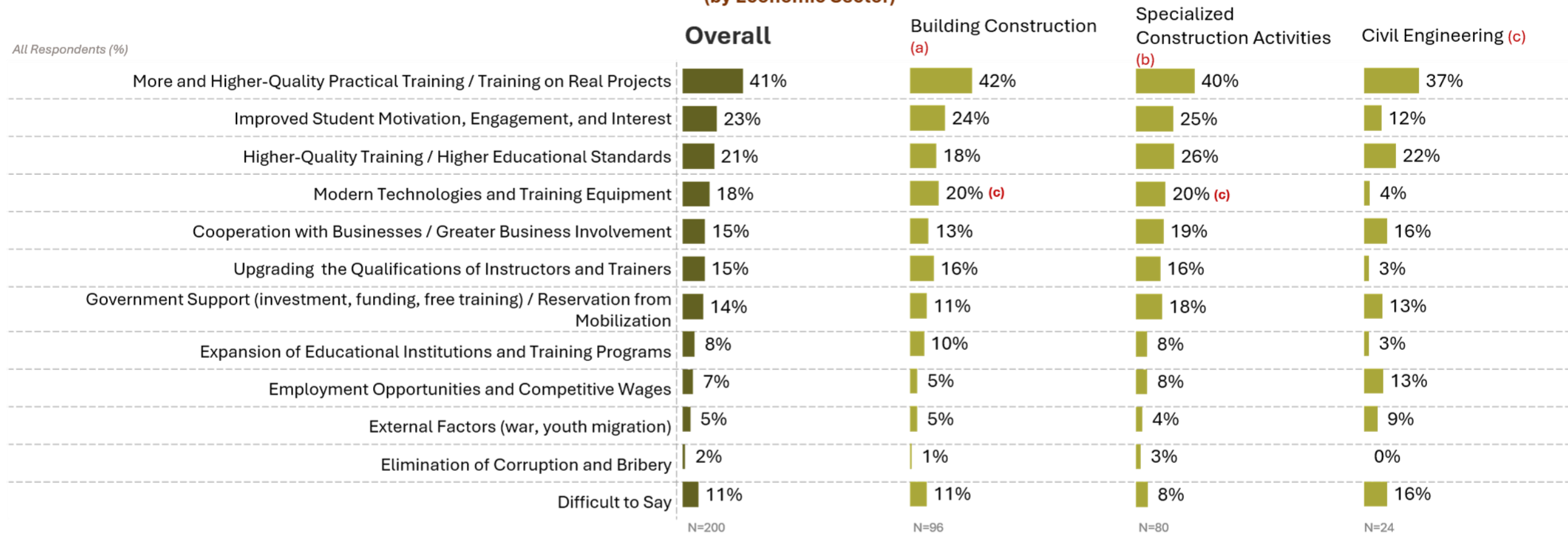
Business Expectations for Vocational Education

The primary recommendation businesses make for improving vocational education is increasing the amount of practical training. Other frequently mentioned recommendations include improving student motivation, providing higher-quality training using modern technologies and equipment, involving businesses in the educational process, and improving instructors' qualifications.



Changes in Vocational Education That Would Improve the Availability of Skilled Trades Workers in Construction

(by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

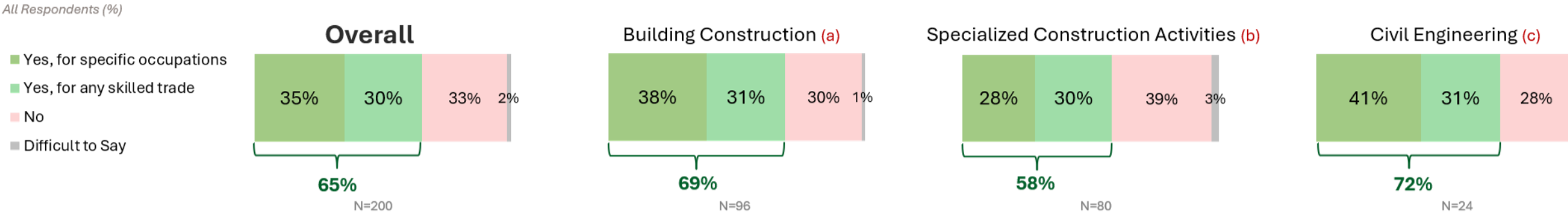
A44. What changes in vocational education would improve the availability of skilled trades workers in construction?

Business Willingness to Invest in Training

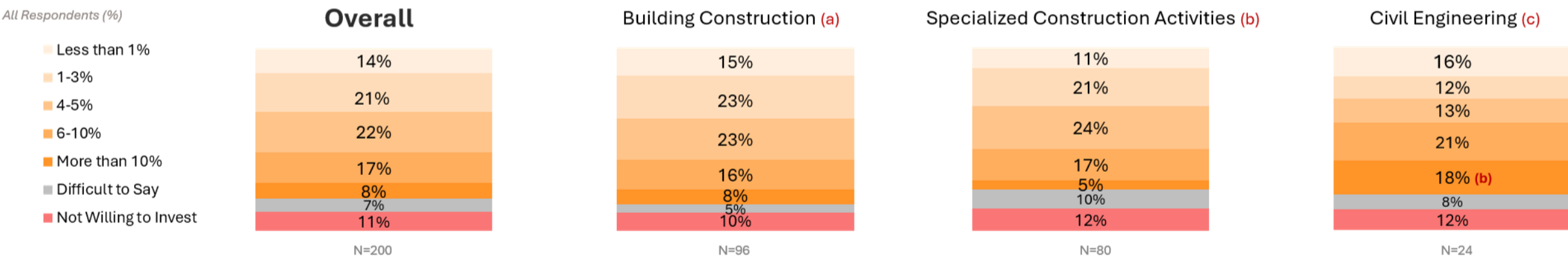
Overall, two-thirds of respondents (65%) are willing to hire and finance training for candidates without prior experience. Among them, 35% are willing to fund training for specific occupations, while 30% are willing to train candidates for any skilled trade occupation. Most companies are prepared to allocate up to 5% of payroll costs to workforce training.



Willingness to Hire and Finance Training for Candidates Without Prior Experience (by Economic Sector)



Share of Payroll Companies Are Willing to Invest in Workforce Training (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

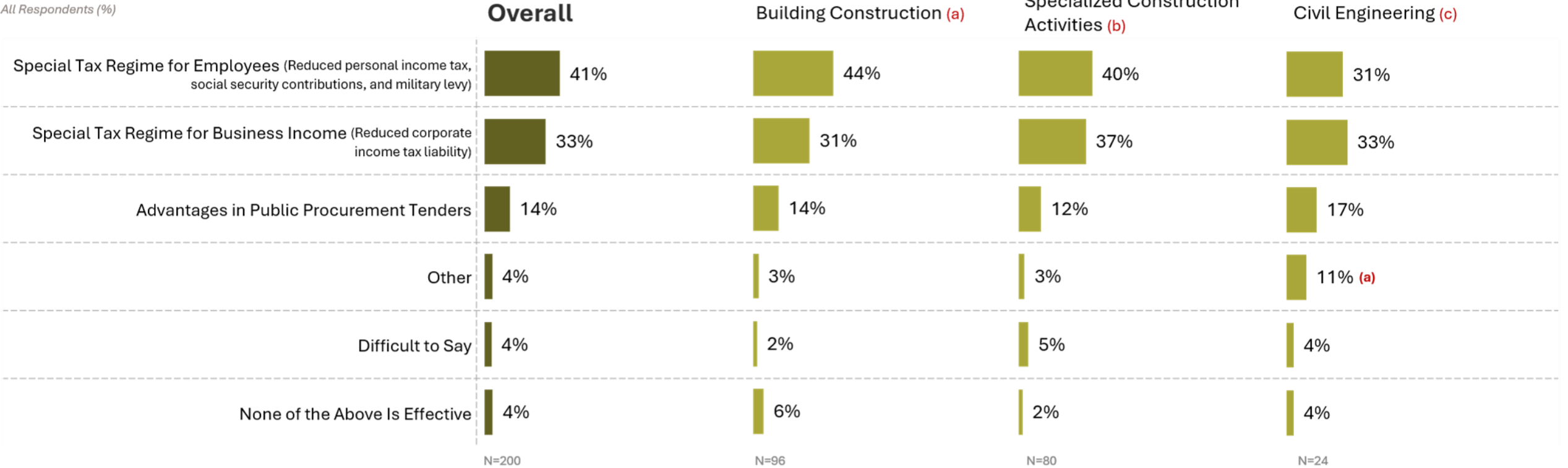
A36. Would you be willing to hire workers without prior experience and pay for their training through short-term vocational training programs (up to 3 months) offered by specialized training centers? A37. What percentage of your payroll would your company be willing to invest in training skilled trades workers?

Incentives for Businesses to Invest in Education

According to businesses, the most effective measures for encouraging investment in cooperation with vocational education institutions are special tax treatment arrangements for employees or company income



Most Effective Incentive for Encouraging Businesses to Invest in Cooperation with Vocational Education Institutions (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

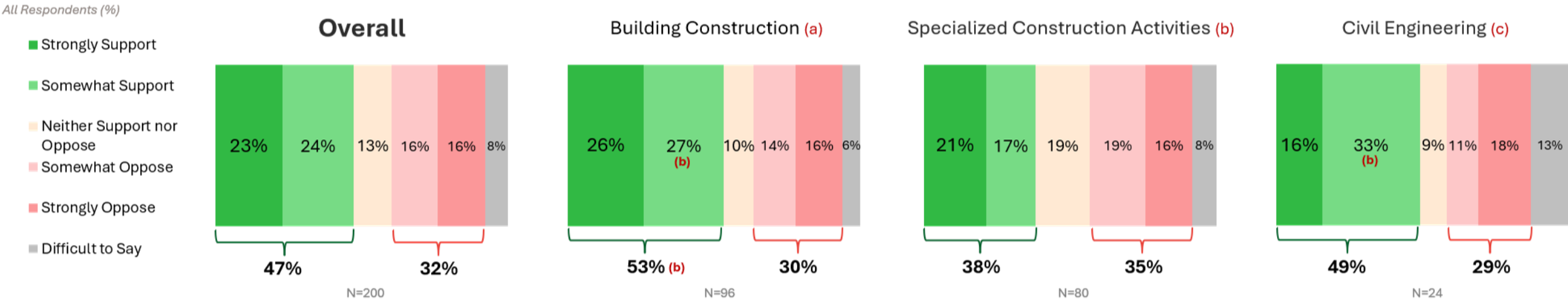
A39. Which of the following incentives would be the most effective in encouraging businesses to invest in cooperation with vocational education institutions?

Support for Proposed Initiatives

The proposal to introduce a unified Construction Worker ID Card is supported by 47% of respondents, while 32% oppose it



Support for a Unified Construction Worker ID Card (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

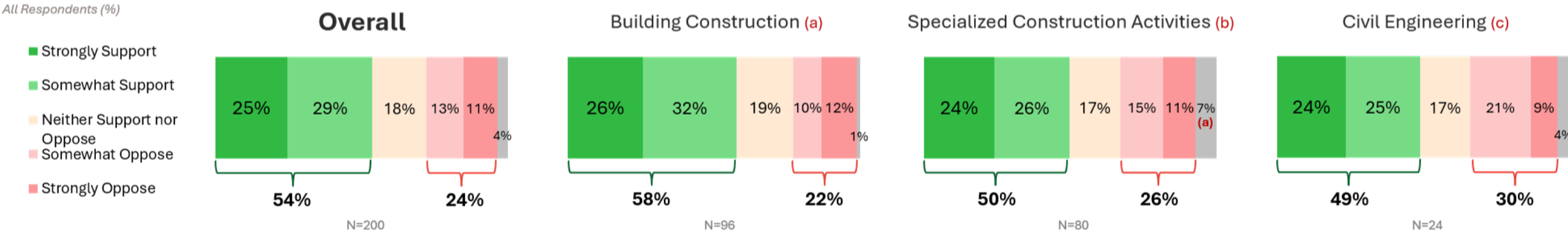
A40. Do you support the introduction of a unified Construction Worker ID Card to record workers' qualifications, experience, training, and certifications?

Support for Proposed Initiatives

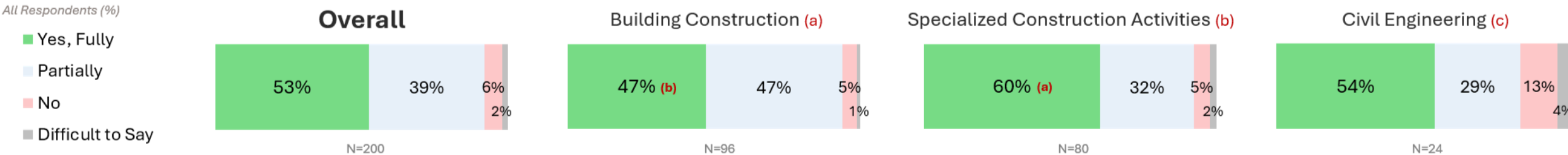
The proposal for self-regulation in vocational education with business participation is supported by 54% of respondents, while 24% oppose it. More than half of respondents (53%) believe that publicly funded vocational training programs should be entirely based on business demand, while 39% believe they should be partially based on business demand



Support for Self-Regulation in Vocational Education (by Economic Sector)



Publicly Funded Vocational Training Based on Business Demand (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

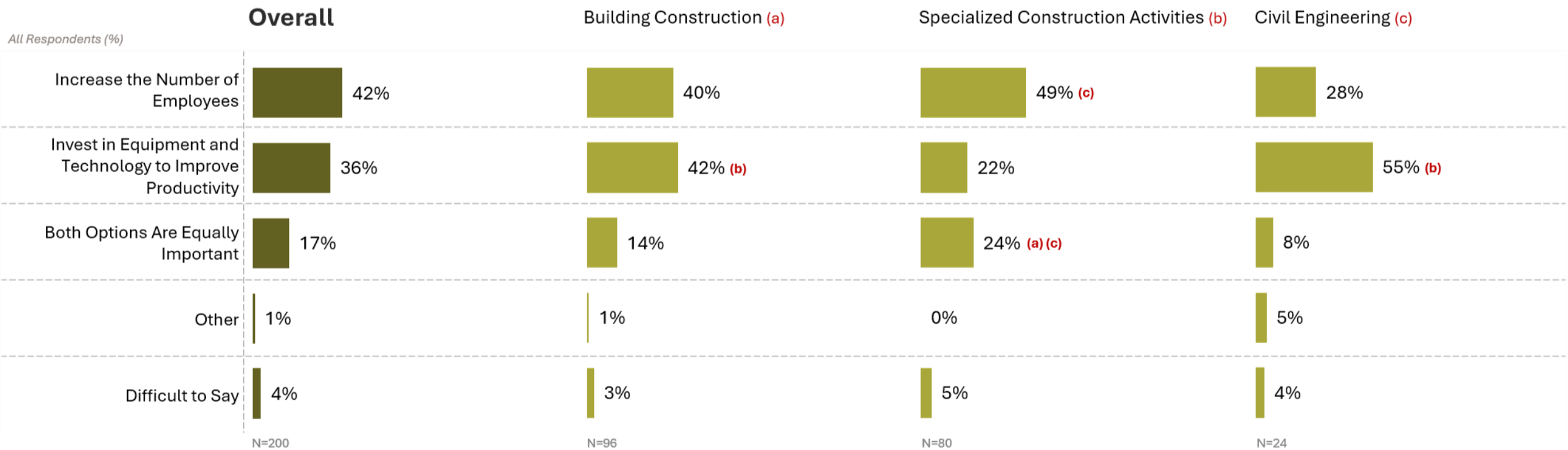
A41. Do you support self-regulation in vocational education, whereby the government delegates certain functions related to workforce training requirements and educational governance to businesses?
A42. Should publicly funded vocational training programs be based on business demand?

Business Development Strategies

Looking ahead five years, businesses are evenly split between those planning to expand their workforce and those planning to invest in productivity improvements



Priority Development Strategy for the Next Five Years (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

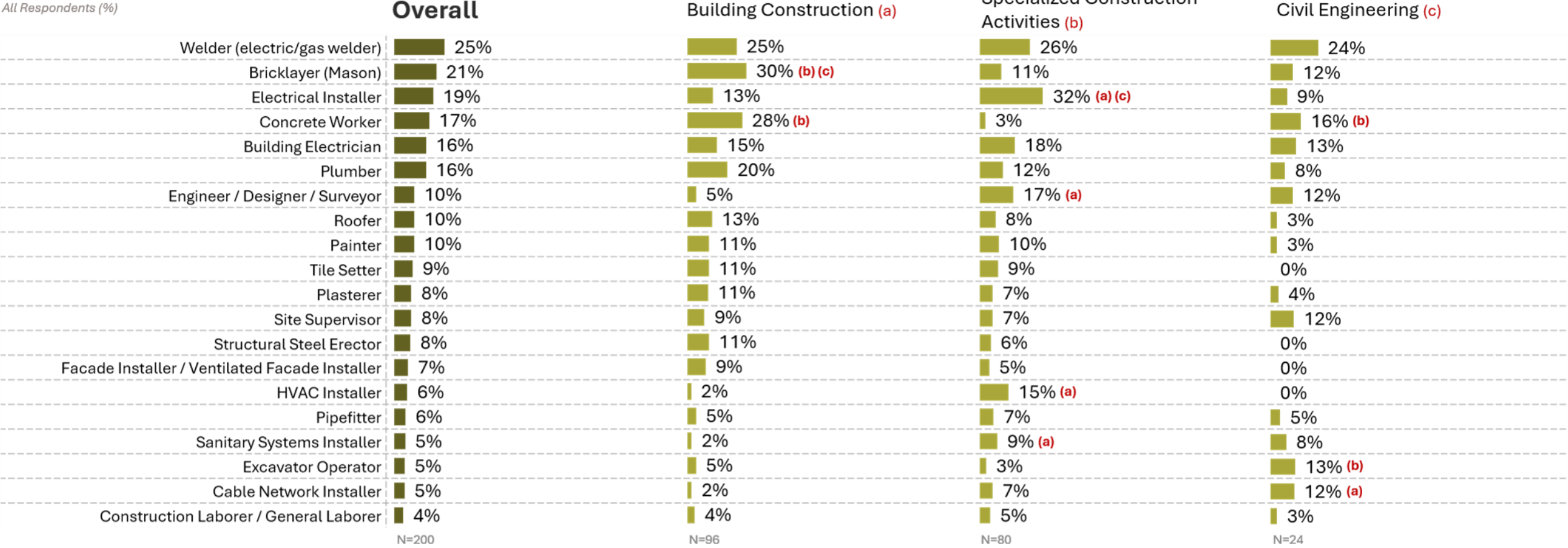
A43. Assuming a positive business outlook and stable growth in workload over the next five years, what would be your company's primary strategy?

In-Demand Occupations

The most in-demand occupations are welders, bricklayers, electrical installers, concrete workers, electricians, and plumbers



Top 20 Most Critical Skilled Trades Occupations for Construction Companies (by Economic Sector)



(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

A19. Please name up to three skilled trades occupations that are most critical for your company's ability to fulfill contracts and customer orders.

In-Demand Occupations

The main challenges in recruiting workers for in-demand occupations are a complete lack of candidates, a shortage of candidates with the required skills, and high salary expectations



Challenges in Recruiting Skilled Trades Workers (by Economic Sector)

% of respondents who identified the occupation as critical, and who rated recruitment as “rather difficult” or “very difficult”

	Overall	Welder (Electric/Gas Welder)	Bricklayer (Mason)	Electrical Installer	Concrete Worker	Building Electrician	Plumber	Roofer	Painter
No candidates available	35%	27%	43%	33%	34%	30%	39%	25%	22%
Specialized skills are rare; few candidates can perform the work	33%	36%	24%	50%	25%	21%	26%	32%	39%
Candidates are available but lack the required qualifications	29%	35%	33%	39%	33%	24%	38%	26%	27%
Candidates have salary expectations that are difficult to meet	26%	30%	22%	12%	32%	29%	49%	20%	33%
The hiring process takes a long time due to a shortage of candidates	11%	9%	11%	9%	9%	14%	7%	11%	12%
Competitors are attracting skilled workers away	9%	14%	16%	11%	18%	3%	11%	0%	6%
Lack of reservation from mobilization	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	6%	6%	7%	0%
Other	3%	2%	3%	7%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Difficult to Say	0,5%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
No significant recruitment challenges	1%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	N=405	N=45	N=36	N=31	N=24	N=28	N=25	N=16	N=15

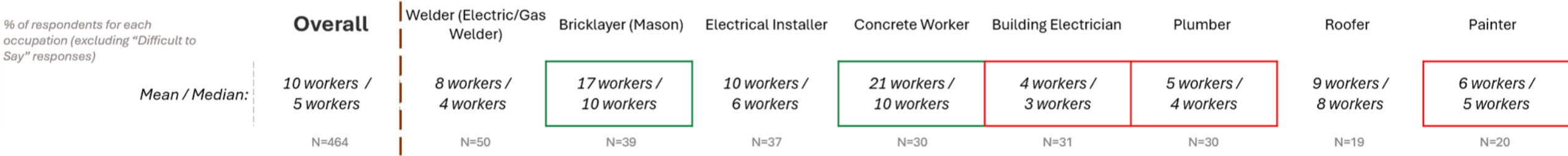
(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

In-Demand Occupations

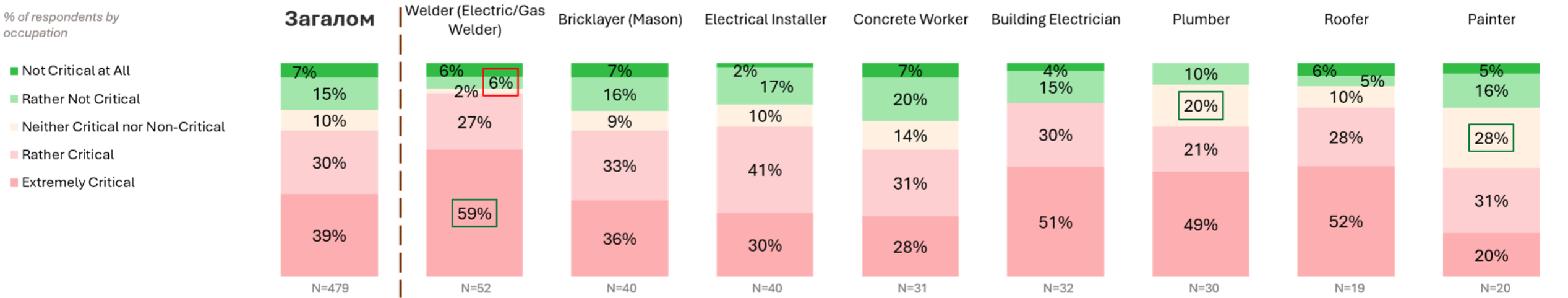
In quantitative terms, demand is greatest for bricklayers and concrete workers.
Requirements for prior experience and qualifications are most critical when hiring welders



Required Number of Workers Under Normal Workload Conditions (by Economic Sector)



Importance of Prior Experience and Technical Skills When Hiring Candidates (by Economic Sector)

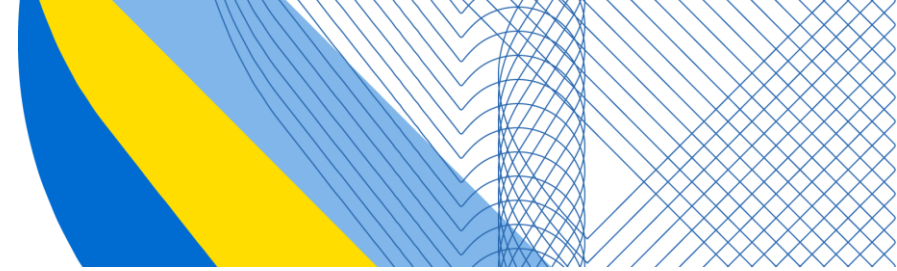


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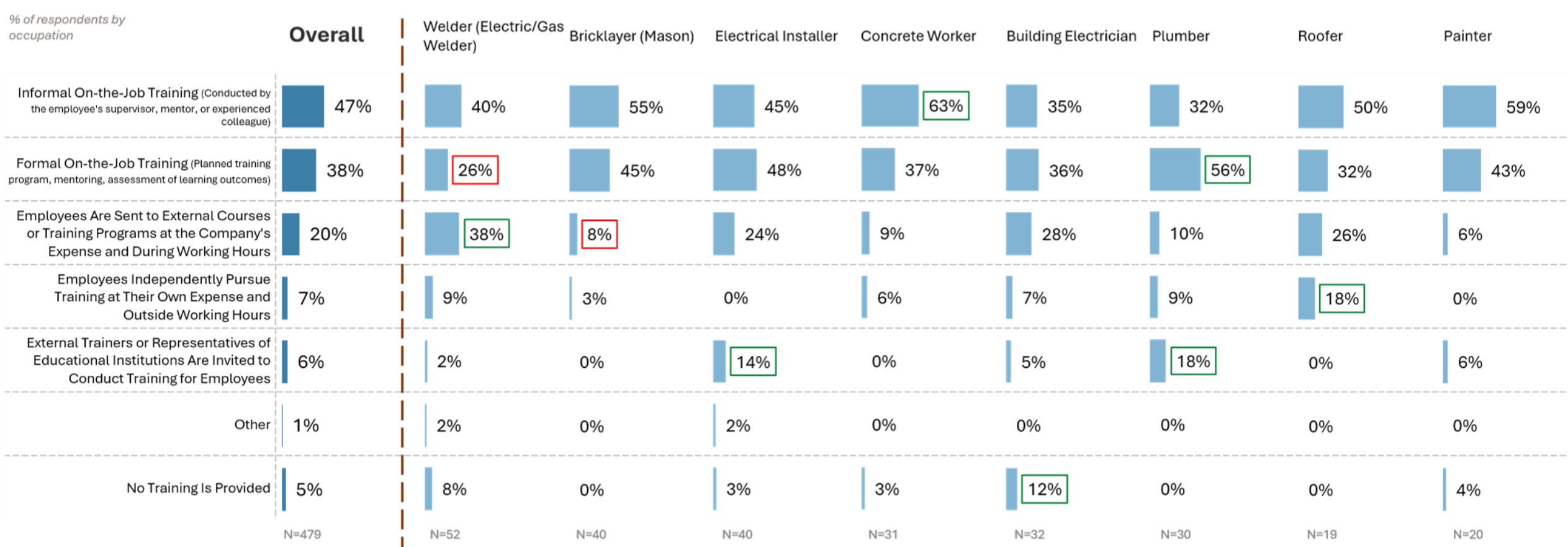
A22. Thinking about your company's typical workload, how many workers in these occupations are required to complete projects on time? A23. When hiring workers in these occupations, how critical is prior experience and appropriate technical skills?

In-Demand Occupations

Welders are most frequently sent to external training programs. For other occupations, companies typically provide formal or informal on-the-job training. External training providers are most commonly used for electrical installers and plumbers



Types of Training Received After Hiring or for Skills Upgrading (by Economic Sector)

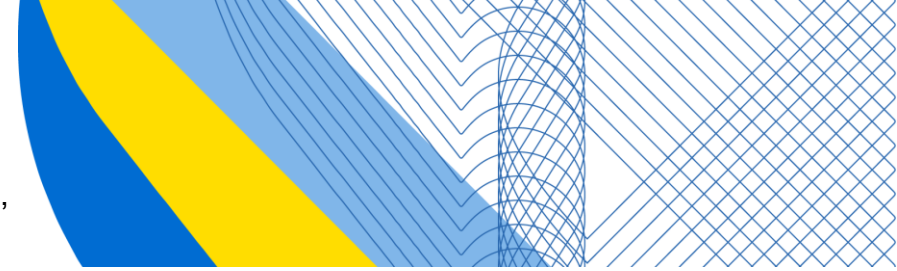


(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

A29. What types of training do workers in these occupations receive after being hired or when upgrading their qualifications?

In-Demand Occupations

Future requirements for these occupations are primarily associated with skills related to modern technologies, equipment, and materials, as well as a willingness to learn and continuously upgrade qualifications



Emerging Skill Requirements for Candidates (by Economic Sector)

<i>% of respondents by occupation</i>	Overall	Welder (Electric/Gas Welder)	Bricklayer (Mason)	Electrical Installer	Concrete Worker	Building Electrician	Plumber	Roofer	Painter
Knowledge and ability to use new technologies	21%	23%	27%	23%	6%	20%	31%	26%	26%
Ability to use new equipment and tools	13%	24%	5%	15%	10%	10%	14%	4%	23%
Ability to perform work to a high standard / Qualifications / Self-learning	13%	13%	8%	8%	22%	21%	7%	12%	0%
Automation of processes and work	6%	3%	8%	0%	3%	16%	10%	0%	6%
Ability to work with modern equipment and tools	4%	5%	4%	7%	0%	5%	0%	11%	6%
Ability to use new construction materials	4%	0%	7%	0%	3%	4%	6%	20%	4%
Ability to use computer software / applications	3%	5%	0%	10%	0%	3%	8%	0%	0%
Ability to read and use technical drawings, plans, and project documentation	3%	0%	2%	8%	0%	3%	0%	11%	0%
Ability to read and use technical drawings, plans, and project documentation	3%	2%	5%	0%	3%	4%	0%	5%	6%
Ability to use AI tools	1%	0%	0%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Other	4%	0%	5%	7%	3%	6%	0%	0%	4%
Difficult to Say	29%	33%	42%	25%	39%	26%	29%	32%	26%
Nothing Will Change	10%	5%	0%	9%	13%	4%	4%	6%	4%
	N=479	N=52	N=40	N=40	N=31	N=32	N=30	N=19	N=20

(a) (b) (c) (d) - Significantly higher vs. other groups at the 90% confidence level

A31. What new requirements do you expect to emerge for these occupations in the future?

Conclusions

Description of the Current Situation

- The construction industry is characterized by **unstable employment for workers** due to fluctuations in workload and periods of low capacity utilization. Workers tend to have limited loyalty to employers, while employers face difficulties retaining workers and investing in their training. As a result of this unstable employment model, teams of self-employed skilled workers have emerged in the market. These workers are hired as subcontractors and independently manage their professional development and skills upgrading.
- **Training programs within the education system lag behind technological advances.** According to businesses, the gap amounts to 20-30 years. Knowledge of modern technologies is the primary requirement for candidates applying for the most in-demand occupations.
- When recruiting skilled trades workers, businesses rely primarily on informal channels, including referrals from acquaintances and colleagues, as well as job postings on recruitment websites and social media.
- **The level of cooperation with educational institutions is high**, with 77% of companies cooperating with various educational providers, both public and private.
- **However, the forms of cooperation remain underdeveloped** and are largely limited to internships and the hiring of graduates. In particular, there is a shortage of short-term practical training courses to upgrade workers' skills. Dual education agreements are not widely used.
- The main recommendation businesses have for the workforce training system is **to make it more practical and hands-on.**

Conclusions

Opportunities for Business Engagement in Workforce Development

- **There is a growing recognition among businesses that they need to play a more active role in addressing the skilled labor shortage.** This is evidenced by the survey finding that **54% of businesses support a self-regulatory model in vocational education with active business participation.**
- **Two-thirds of respondents (65%) are willing to hire candidates without prior experience and finance their training.** Most companies are prepared to allocate up to 5% of their payroll to training expenses. Factors discouraging such investments include uncertainty, instability in the order pipeline, and concerns about the effectiveness of training investments. To offset these barriers, businesses view special tax treatment for employees or corporate income as a potentially effective incentive.
- The proposal **to introduce a unified Construction Worker ID Card** is supported by 47% of respondents.
- **The development and implementation of new occupational standards** represent an example of a systemic approach to addressing the mismatch between educational programs and modern technologies. This approach requires businesses to coordinate through associations and industry councils to identify occupational standards that need to be introduced or updated. The next step is to integrate these standards into training curricula, which requires close cooperation between businesses and educational institutions at the local level.
- A promising avenue for strengthening cooperation between businesses and vocational education institutions is **dual education**. At present, this form of cooperation remains relatively uncommon in the construction sector. Businesses often equate dual education with workplace internships, which are generally viewed as insufficiently effective for attracting and developing talent. Key barriers to adopting the dual education model include: (1) a limited understanding of dual education as a system with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for employers, learners, and the government; and (2) uncertainty and instability that constrain long-term planning and investment, particularly in mentoring and apprenticeship systems.