

# Mapping Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Movement

Growth, Capacity, and Futures

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THE  
**Enchanté**  
NETWORK

LE  
RÉSEAU  
**Enchanté**



**Social Innovation Lab**  
On Gender & Sexuality



# About

**The Enchanté Network (TEN)** is a national network that supports 2SLGBTQI+ service providers across Canada by growing organizational capacity, increasing inter-agency connections, and advocating to funders on behalf of members.

**Social Innovation Lab (SIL)** is a community-based participatory research “laboratory” that brings communities and individuals together to collaborate on intersectional social justice projects.

**Psystem** is a social enterprise focused on supporting positive change in the world through evaluation, innovation, and virtual wellness service delivery.

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## Disclaimer & Ethics

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# Land Acknowledgement

The researchers conducted this work from Treaty 6 territory, the homeland of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dene, Dakota, Lakota, Nokota, Blackfoot, and Métis people; the participants, collaborators, and advisors hail from across the eleven treaties and unceded territories of northern Turtle Island. The 2SLGBTQI+ community is made up of Indigenous people, Black people, and other people of colour, as well as refugees, immigrants, and settlers. We recognize the value in these collectives coming together to engage in truth telling, the work of reconciliation, and the work of cultural humility, as well as the need to engage in the ongoing work of both Indigenizing and decolonizing our community-based and institutional systems at all levels.

## Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

The *Mapping Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Movement: Growth, Capacity, and Futures* project was led by The Enchanté Network | Le Réseau Enchanté (TEN) in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan's Social Innovation Lab and Psystem. This project provides insight into the work of 2SLGBTQI+ community, education, and resource centres across Canada. It specifically focuses on their capacity, operations, governance, programming, and finances, and the impact of COVID-19 throughout the past few years.

## Participating Centres & Capacity

We invited 186 2SLGBTQI+ centres, programs, and related initiatives from across the country to take part in an online survey. Fifty-two organizations completed the survey, resulting in a completion rate of twenty-eight percent. While these rates are lower than we had hoped, they still provide an overview of the important work happening across the country.

The majority of the participating organizations focus exclusively on 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, groups, or communities (73%). The remaining participants focus mostly on 2SLGBTQI+ communities (15%) or are broad community organizations with targeted 2SLGBTQI+ programming (11%). Nearly sixty percent of the participating organizations primarily serve as grassroots organizations (25%), resource centres (19%), and advocacy organizations (15%). The remaining organizations have primary functions related to health and wellness (13%), community centres (6%), Two Spirit communities (4%), the arts (4%), and other purposes (14%).

## Service Delivery & Programming

Out of the fifty-two initiatives participating in this project, forty-one conducted an average of 131 calls and 141 service units per week, totalling 5371 calls and 5781 services units per week. These numbers pro-

vide only a snapshot of the full reach of 2SLGBTQI+ organizations across the country and the actual service units are estimated to be more than four times these figures.

We looked at the prevalence of programming across nine categories: advocacy & civic engagement (80%), Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) training such as 2SLGBTQI+ education and workshops (74%), arts and culture (67%), social and recreational activities (59%), meeting basic needs (45%), legal support (39%), information and education (39%), mental health services (37%), anti-violence programs (28%), and health services (26%). While only a quarter of agencies provided direct health-related programs, nearly double that expressed interest in providing health and wellness services (58%). Of the thirty-seven percent offering mental health services, only half provide counselling services, with the remaining services related to group-based programming.

## Centre Capacity

Just over half of respondents represented centres or initiatives that rely entirely on volunteers, while the rest have full-time staff, part-time staff, or a combination of both. Volunteers play critical roles in all organizations, participating in various aspects, including programming, peer support, governance, and planning. On average, organizations have twenty-six volunteers each, totalling 1,109 volunteers across all participating organizations (n=42). This amounts to an average of 2,528 hours per year and a cumulative total of 78,385 volunteer hours reported nationwide (n=31).<sup>1</sup>

The average board size is eight members, ranging from two to thirteen. Organizations with paid staff have an average of nine full-

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<sup>1</sup> Note that only 62.7% of participants tracked and reported volunteer hours. Thus, using the average number of volunteer hours (2528.6) extrapolated across all 51 participants the total number of volunteer hours is likely closer to 128,958.6 hours.



time and four part-time staff members. Two-thirds of board members are white (67%), half are lesbian or gay, and forty-two percent are women. About a quarter of board members are trans (28%) and eight percent are Two Spirit/Indigiqueer.

## Financing & Grants

Out of the thirty respondents that provided financial data, eleven organizations increased their operating budget from less than \$150,000 before COVID-19 to over \$150,000 after COVID-19. These organizations were generally founded more recently (between 2012 and 2019). Agencies with revenue greater over \$150,000 received more federal funding (31% vs. 11%) and more provincial funding (30% vs 21%) compared to agencies with revenue under \$150,000. Additionally, agencies with revenue under \$150,000 relied more on donations (24% vs. 5%) and corporate funding (18% vs. 5%).

Limited responses were available for yearly expenses for the 2019/2020, 2020/2021, and 2021/2022 years, so only expenses for organizations with expenses over \$150,000 were reported (n=14). Overall, agency expenses increased annually from 2019/2020 to 2021/2022. On average, agencies spend slightly less than two-thirds of their budgets on programming related costs. These findings are not able to predict the future funding retention as COVID-19 funding diminishes.

Seventy-one percent of respondents indicated holding at least one grant exceeding \$10,000, and those with paid staff were forty-three percent more likely to receive grants of \$10,000 or more compared to volunteer-run agencies. On average, the grant amounts received by volunteer-run organizations were higher than those with paid part-time staff. However, those with paid full-time staff received the most grant funds. It is important to note that half of the respondents are volunteer run agencies (n=13) and the remaining are paid part-time (n=4), paid full-time (n=3), or a

combination of paid part-time and paid full-time (n=5).

## Impacts of COVID-19

All respondents reported significant impacts of COVID-19 on the health and well-being of the 2SLGBTQI+ communities that they serve, particularly in terms of basic needs, mental health/addictions, systems navigation, and increased experiences of violence. When asked about the impact of COVID-19 on programs and services, many respondents mentioned an increased demand for programming. Despite staffing capacity being a barrier to meeting this increased demand, respondents reported minimal impact on staffing, such as layoffs or reduced benefits/compensation.

COVID-19 also significantly affected program delivery. During the pandemic, ninety-one percent of respondents reported delivering online programming, a sixty-five percent increase from pre-pandemic period. Seventy-two percent of respondents plan to continue delivering online programming. Online programming had both benefits and challenges, including the benefits of providing services during physical distancing and lockdown, increased accessibility to rural communities, and greater anonymity in accessing services. Challenges included issues related to technology, technological literacy, and privacy concerns.

## Organizational Needs

The most commonly identified need was increased funding, particularly for mission-driven initiatives such as core services and direct support services. Organizations also expressed the need for longer-term grant contracts to enhance organizational stability, support growth, and improve staff retention. Additionally, participants indicated that they continue to address the impacts of COVID-19, particularly in terms of mental health outcomes, and thus

require additional staff for counselling, systems navigation, and support groups. Finally, respondents also highlighted the value of programs that facilitate connections with groups in other regions or across the country as a way to increase organizational capacity and reduce workloads.

## Overall Recommendations

### Funding Advocacy

- ▶ Expand funding priorities and longer grant durations
- ▶ Align funding requirements with the needs of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, including counselling, systems navigation, outreach, administration.
- ▶ Promote equitable distribution of funding
- ▶ Targeted funding for Black, POC, Two Spirit-Indigiqueer, and Trans initiatives led by relevant community members
- ▶ Increase funding allocation for core operational expenses
- ▶ Create a comprehensive grant database with examples and application tips

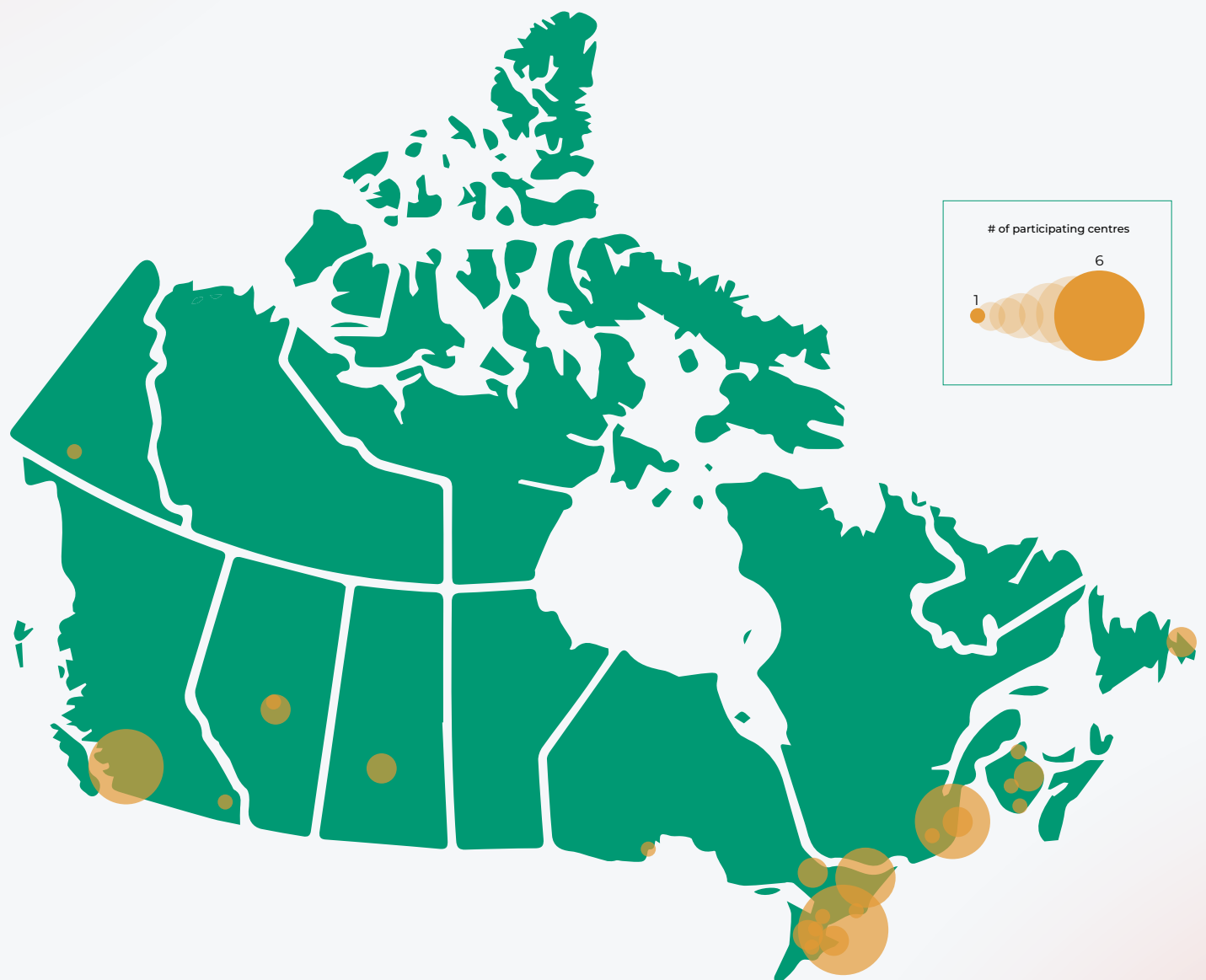
### Training and Resources

- ▶ Offer training to 2SLGBTQI+ organizations through a combination of in-person and online modules
- ▶ Develop training and resources related to governance, operations, program development, equity initiatives, and securing funding

### Inter-organizational Connections

- ▶ Connect 2SLGBTQI+ centres with similar program priorities and funding needs.
- ▶ Establish a nationwide database of initiatives to streamline connections and enhance cross-organizational learning
- ▶ Connect experienced grant writers with less experienced centres seeking review and feedback on grant applications.

# Map of Participating Centres





# Introduction

Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ centre movement has experienced exponential growth within the last five years. We have witnessed a substantial increase in new organizations, significant growth in existing community centres, and a diversification of communities and areas of focus, such as Two Spirit, trans and nonbinary, and black queer organizations. At the same time, we acknowledge that Canada's centre movement has a long history, as Winnipeg's Rainbow Resource Centre celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, Toronto's The 519 follows close behind with forty-eight years of operation, and Saskatoon's OUTSaskatoon is celebrating its thirty-second year of operation this year.

The *Mapping Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Movement: Growth, Capacity, and Futures* project was spearheaded by The Enchanté Network | Le Réseau Enchanté (TEN) in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan's Social Innovation Lab, and Psystem. The project aims to provide a better understanding of Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ centre movement, as well as to demonstrate the far-reaching partnerships and collaborations that support 2SLGBTQI+ people countrywide. As the first report of its kind in Canada, this study tells a story about Two Spirit, trans, and queer capacity, support work, programming, and advocacy, with additional attention to the impacts of COVID-19 on 2SLGBTQI+ initiatives and communities.

## Sample & Survey Methodology

We identified participating organizations through TEN's membership list, Google searches of Canadian 2SLGBTQI+ centres, and referrals from other organizations. Between September 2022 and April 2023, TEN and the research partners sent email invitations to 186 organizations and key individuals connected to grassroots initiatives, asking them to take an online survey. Out of those invitations, 52 completed the survey, resulting in a twenty-eight percent participation rate. While we acknowledge that this survey represents only a portion of the broader community, it provides an overview of nationwide efforts to support 2SLGBTQI+ communities. We hope for increased participation and representation in future years.

# Exploring Centres

## Organization Scope

Participating organizations have been categorized into three focus areas:

- 1) **Exclusive focus** on 2SLGBTQI+ individuals/groups/ communities
- 2) **Mostly focused** on 2SLGBTQI+ individuals/groups/communities
- 3) **Broad community organizations** with targeted 2SLGBTQI+services.

The majority of participating organizations focus exclusively on 2SLGBTQI+ communities (73%). In comparison, 15% of participants represented organizations and initiatives mostly focused on 2SLGBTQI+ individuals/groups/communities, while the remaining 11% of participants were from broad community organizations offering targeted 2SLGBTQI+ programming.

## Types of Organizations

We provided a list of categories that participating organization self-identified within: grassroots organizations (25%), resource centres (19%), advocacy organizations (15%), health and wellness (13%), community centre (6%), Two Spirit organizations (4%), and arts organizations (4%).<sup>2</sup> Additionally, fourteen percent of participants identified themselves as ‘other,’ falling outside of the above pre-selected categories listed above. These ‘other’ organizations served various functions, such as supporting Two Spirit and trans people, creating community connections for 2SLGBTQI+ community members, building capacity for educators, offering emergency and transitional housing, preserving queer archives, and providing youth and family programs.

<sup>2</sup> We acknowledge these types may be overlapping.

**Figure 1 - Organization Focus**

Most of the participating organizations have an exclusive focus on 2SLGBTQI+ people.



**Figure 2 - Organization Function**

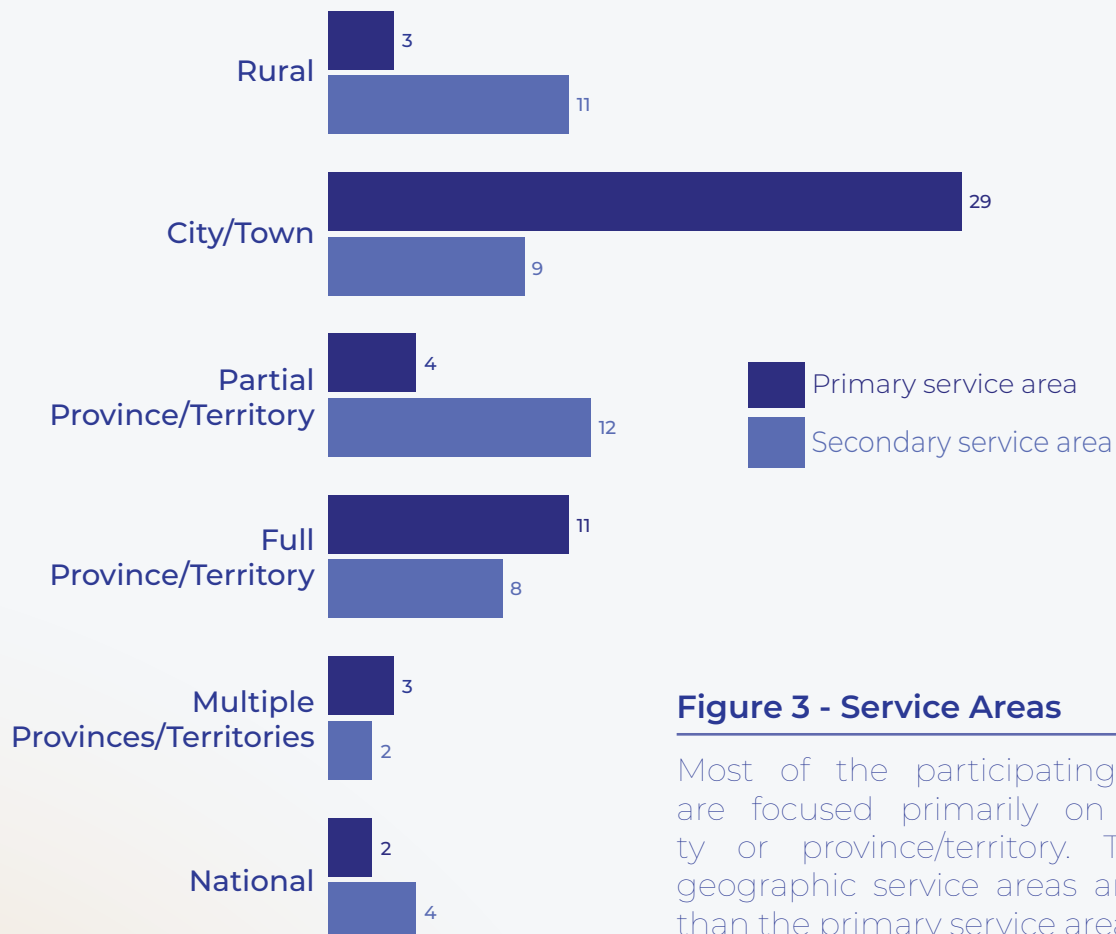
Half of the participating organizations identify as a grassroots organization or a resource centre.



## Service Regions

**Primary services region** Most commonly, organizations served a specific town or city (56%), while just over twenty percent focused on an entire province or territory (21%). Other organizations concentrated on specific parts of provinces or territories (8%), multiple regions (6%), rural areas (6%), or had a national reach (4%).

**Secondary service region** Secondary service regions typically included extending services beyond a single city or town to cover parts of a province or territory (23%) or included rural areas (21%).

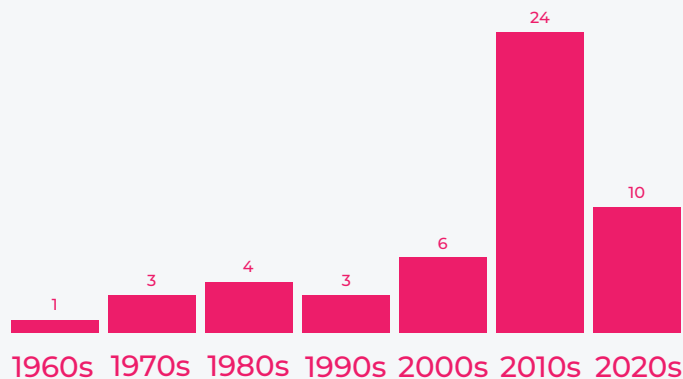


**Figure 3 - Service Areas**

Most of the participating organizations are focused primarily on a municipality or province/territory. The secondary geographic service areas are more varied than the primary service areas.

## Figure 4 - Incorporation by Decade

Most participating organizations incorporated in the 2010s.



## History

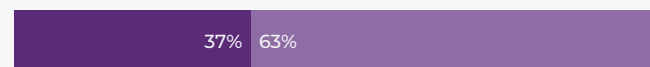
All participating organizations were founded over the last fifty years, with two-thirds established within the last twenty-five years, therefore highlighting the young age of Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ movement (see Figure 4). The oldest organizations trace their origins back to the 1960s, with a notable influx of organizations emerging between 2010 and 2019.

*\*Note that among participants, the first 2SLGBTQI+ exclusive organization was founded in the 1970s. The organization founded in the 1960s is an organization that serves other groups but has targeted 2SLGBTQI+ programming.*

## Figure 5 - Physical Space

Organizations with an exclusively 2SLGBTQI+ focus were least likely to report having a dedicated physical space.

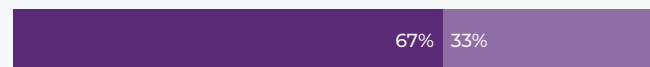
### Orgs with exclusive 2SLGBTQI+ focus (n=6)



### Orgs with mainly 2SLGBTQI+ focus (n=38)



### Orgs with 2SLGBTQI+ services (n=8)



- Has dedicated physical space
- Does not have dedicated physical space

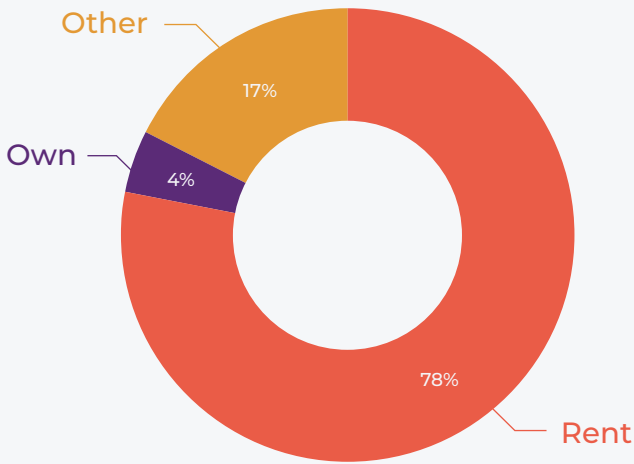
## Physical Space

Slightly more than half of the organizations operate without a dedicated physical space. When broken down by organizational focus, organizations mostly focused on 2SLGBTQI+ programming and broad community organizations with targeted 2SLGBTQI+ programs are more likely to report having a dedicated physical space (Figure 5). In contrast, sixty-three percent of 2SLGBTQI+ exclusive organizations operate without dedicated physical space.

Most organizations rent their space (78%; see Figure 6 on facing page), but of those that own their space or building, all are organizations with broader community mandates and targeted 2SLGBTQI+ services (Figure 7 on facing page). This shows that organizations exclusively dedicated to 2SLGBTQI+ initiatives are less likely to own their own buildings. We attribute this both to the young age of 2SLGBTQI+ exclusive organizations and to the historical lack of core funding provided to these organizations.

## Figure 6 - Rent vs Own

Most of the organizations rented their space.



## Figure 7 - Rent vs Own by Organization

Organizations that were exclusively or mainly focused on 2SLGBTQI+ people had similar renting patterns.

### Orgs with exclusive 2SLGBTQI+ focus (n=6)



### Orgs with mainly 2SLGBTQI+ focus (n=38)



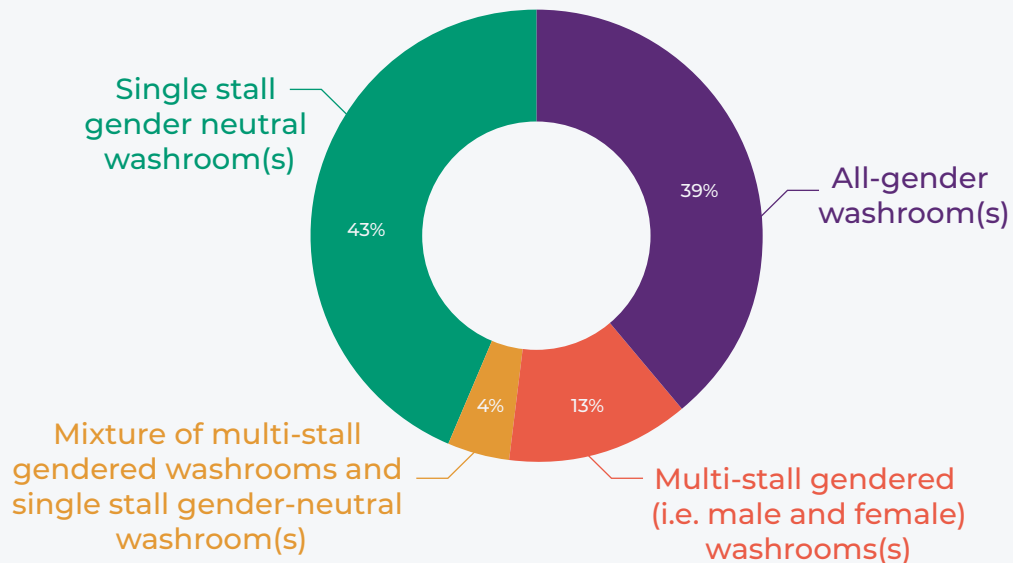
### Orgs with 2SLGBTQI+ services (n=8)



Legend: Rent (Red), Own (Purple), Other (Yellow)

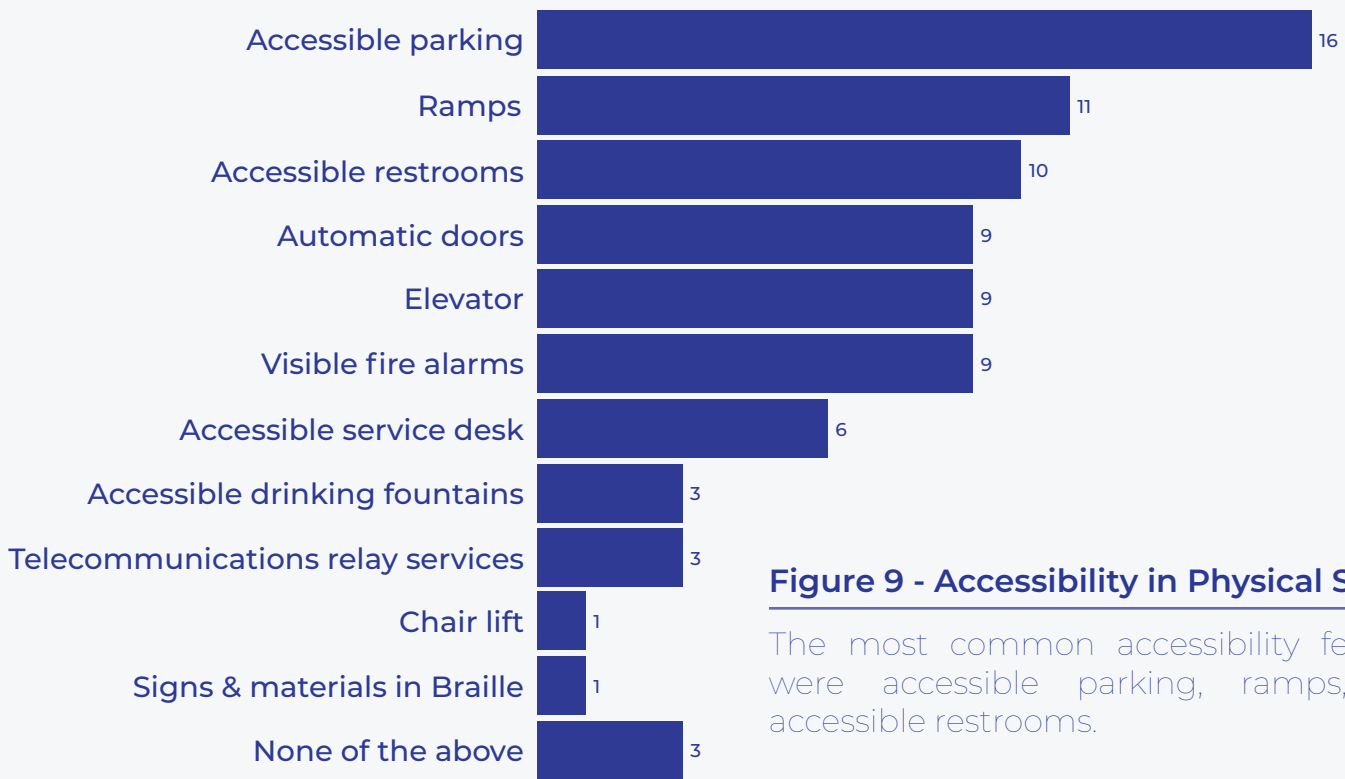
## Figure 8 - Washrooms

Most organizations have an all-gender washroom(s) or a single stall gender neutral washroom(s).



**Washrooms** Almost half of all participating organizations provide have single-stall, gender neutral washrooms (44%; see [Figure 8](#) on facing page), while thirty-nine percent of respondents have multi-stall all-gender

washrooms. Less common are gendered multi-stall washrooms (e.g., male and female bathrooms; 13%) and a mixture of single stall gender-neutral washrooms and gendered multi-stall washrooms (4%).



**Figure 9 - Accessibility in Physical Space**

The most common accessibility features were accessible parking, ramps, and accessible restrooms.

**Accessibility** The most common accessibility features offered in physical 2SLGBTQI+ spaces include accessible washrooms (70%), accessible parking (43%), and access ramps (48%). Comparatively, the least common forms of accessibility available across physical spaces are chair lifts (4%) and the provision of signs and materials in Braille (4%). Thirteen percent of participating centres and initiatives report having none of the surveyed forms of accessibility.

## Centre Operations

### Centre Hours

2SLGBTQI+ organizations with physical locations had similar hours of operation (i.e., 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) throughout 2019 and 2022. However, they reduced their evening and weekend operations throughout the time period of COVID-19 and less than a quarter of these centres still provided evening and weekend services as of 2022.

### Phonecalls & Service Delivery

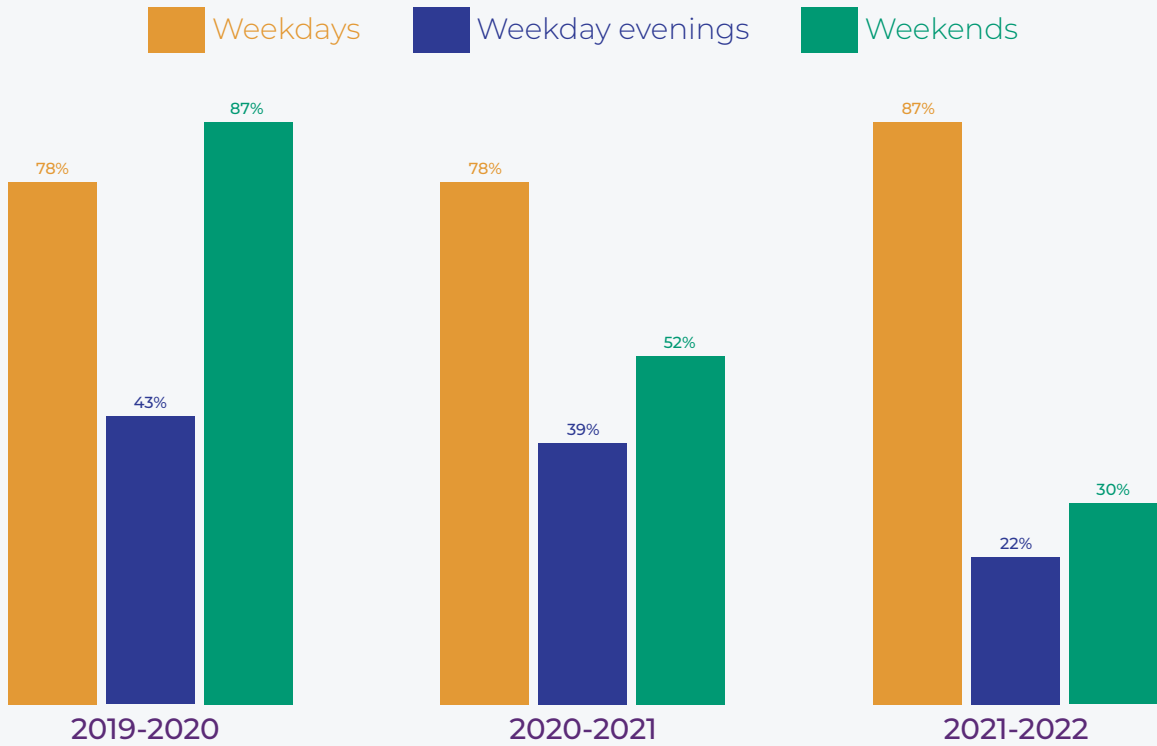
In the last three years, the number of incoming phone calls has steadily decreased. Service delivery rates decreased slightly in 2020/2021, but then increased in 2021/2022. We are unable to determine from this data whether 2SLGBTQI+ people are contacting centres less or if they are using other methods such as sending messages through social media rather than making phone calls.

On average, participating 2SLGBTQI+ organizations received about 131 calls and provided 141 units of service per week over the past three years. This adds up to 5,371 calls and 5,781 service units across the country every week. This data is based on a participation rate of twenty-eight percent of 2SLGBTQI+ initiatives across Canada, so it is just a small snapshot of the much more expansive services being provided across the country.



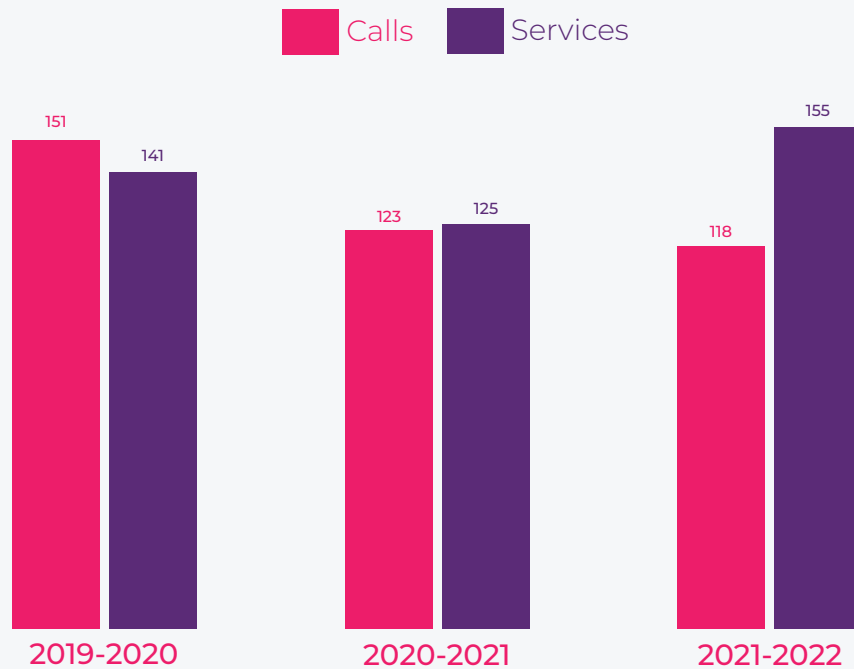
## Figure 10 - Hours of Operation

The number of organizations open weekday evenings and weekends decreased from 2019 to 2022.



## Figure 11 - Average Weekly Phone Calls and Service Units

On average, organizations conducted over 100 calls and services per week.



Despite a slight decrease in the number of calls and service needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, reports from 2SLGBTQ+ organizations tell us that there was an increased demand for services during the pandemic, even though many of these organizations were dealing with limited capacity and funding during this time.

**Targeted Initiatives** Participating organizations provided a range of targeted services and outreach activities towards the general 2SLGBTQ+ population as well as specific sub-groups (Figure 12). The most likely groups to receive targeted services and outreach were transgender individuals (45% of participating centres provided targeted services while 35% provided outreach) and the general 2SLGBTQ+ population (43% of centres provided targeted services and 35% provided outreach). Least common to receive target services were women (20% of centres provided targeted services and 12% provided outreach), men (16% of centres provided targeted services and 10% provided outreach), and bisexual individuals (16% of centres provided targeted services and 13% provided outreach).

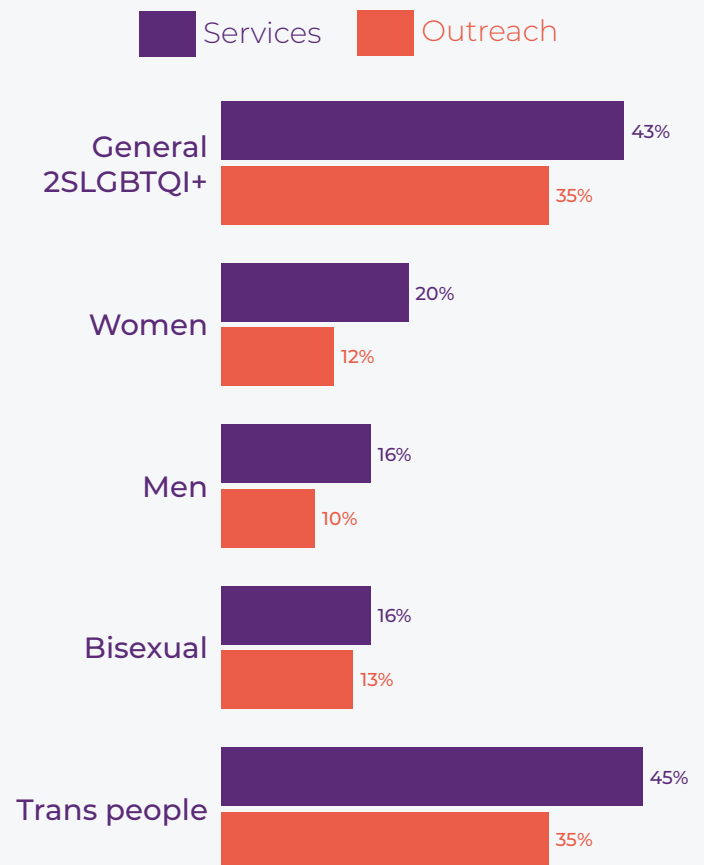
Furthermore, types of targeted services across 2SLGBTQ+ groups varied (see Figure 13 on facing page). The most commonly reported groups receiving targeted services were 2SLGBTQ+ youth (39% of participating centres), parents of 2SLGBTQ+ youth (28%), 2SLGBTQ+ older adults (24%), and 2SLGBTQ+ immigrants (22%). In contrast, the least common to receive target services were 2SLGBTQ+ people with disabilities (12%), 2SLGBTQ+ people of faith (10%), and 2SLGBTQ+ war veterans (2%). When looking at outreach activities across 2SLGBTQ+ groups the results showed that the prevalence of targeted outreach activities was similar to targeted services, with 2SLGBTQ+ youth (26%) and 2SLGBTQ+ immigrants (22%) topping the list; the least common to receive targeted outreach were children of 2SLGBTQ+ par-

ents (10%), 2SLGBTQ+ people of faith (10%), 2SLGBTQ+ people with disabilities (4%) and 2SLGBTQ+ veterans (2%).

Services and outreach activities towards equity deserving 2SLGBTQ+ groups were less prevalent (see Figure 14 on facing page). These results may indicate that services and outreach activities tend to be more directed towards the larger 2SLGBTQ+ community as opposed to addressing social disparities within specific marginalised 2SLGBTQ+ sub-populations (i.e., sex workers, individuals who are homeless, individuals living with addictions). Lastly, nearly a quarter of participants reported not offering any of the targeted services (22%) or outreach activities (28%) listed.

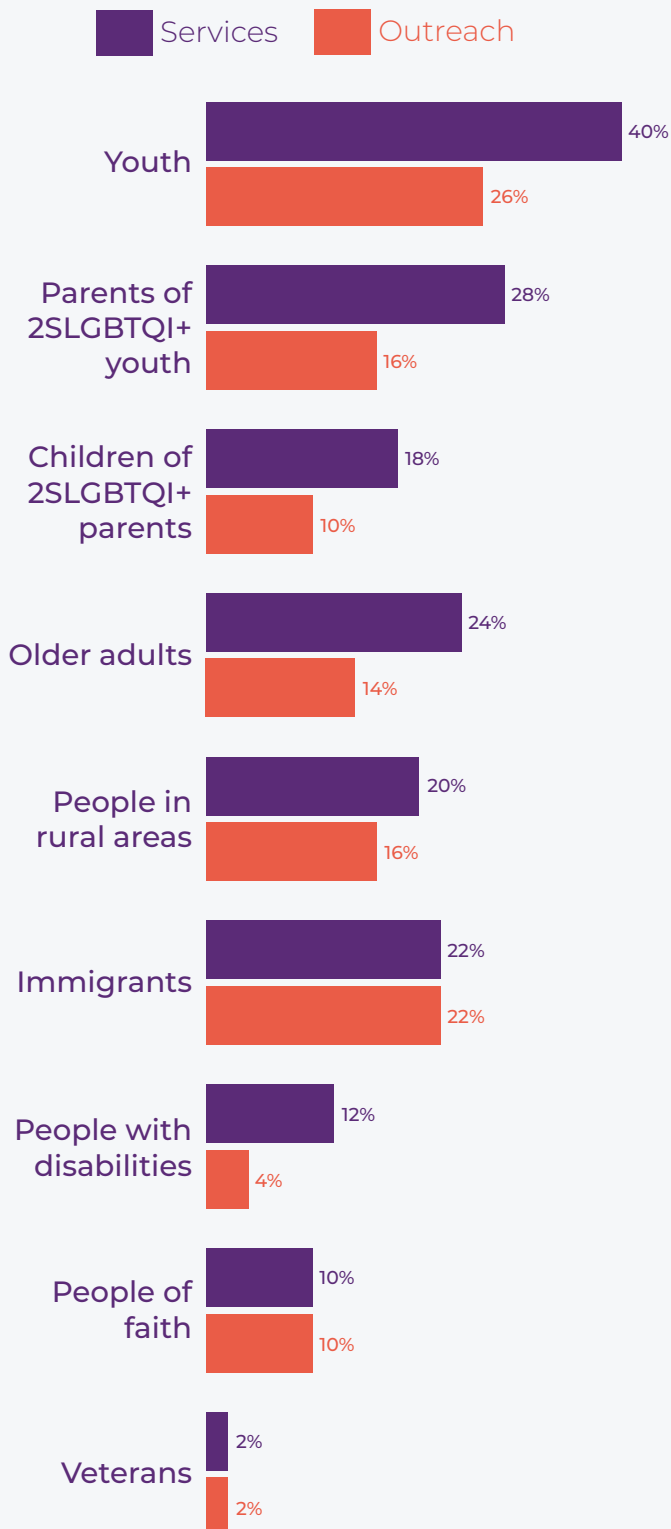
**Figure 12 - Targeted Services**

Almost half of participating centres offer targeted services to trans people.



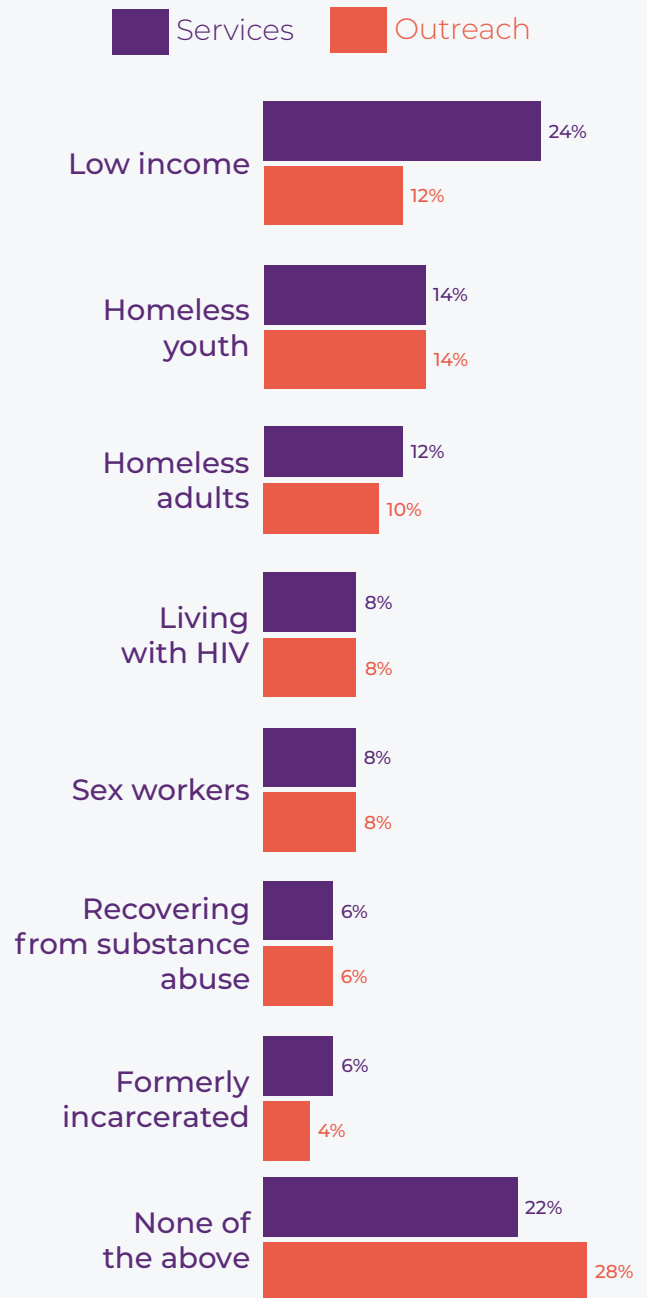
**Figure 13 - Targeted Service For Specific 2SLGBTQI+ Groups**

40% of participating centres provide targeted services for youth but only 2% of participating centres provide services or outreach for veterans.



**Figure 14 - Targeted Service For Equity-Deserving 2SLGBTQI+ Groups**

A quarter of participating centres provided services for low-income 2SLGBTQI+ people. Roughly a quarter of centres did not provide targeted services or outreach for the specified equity groups.



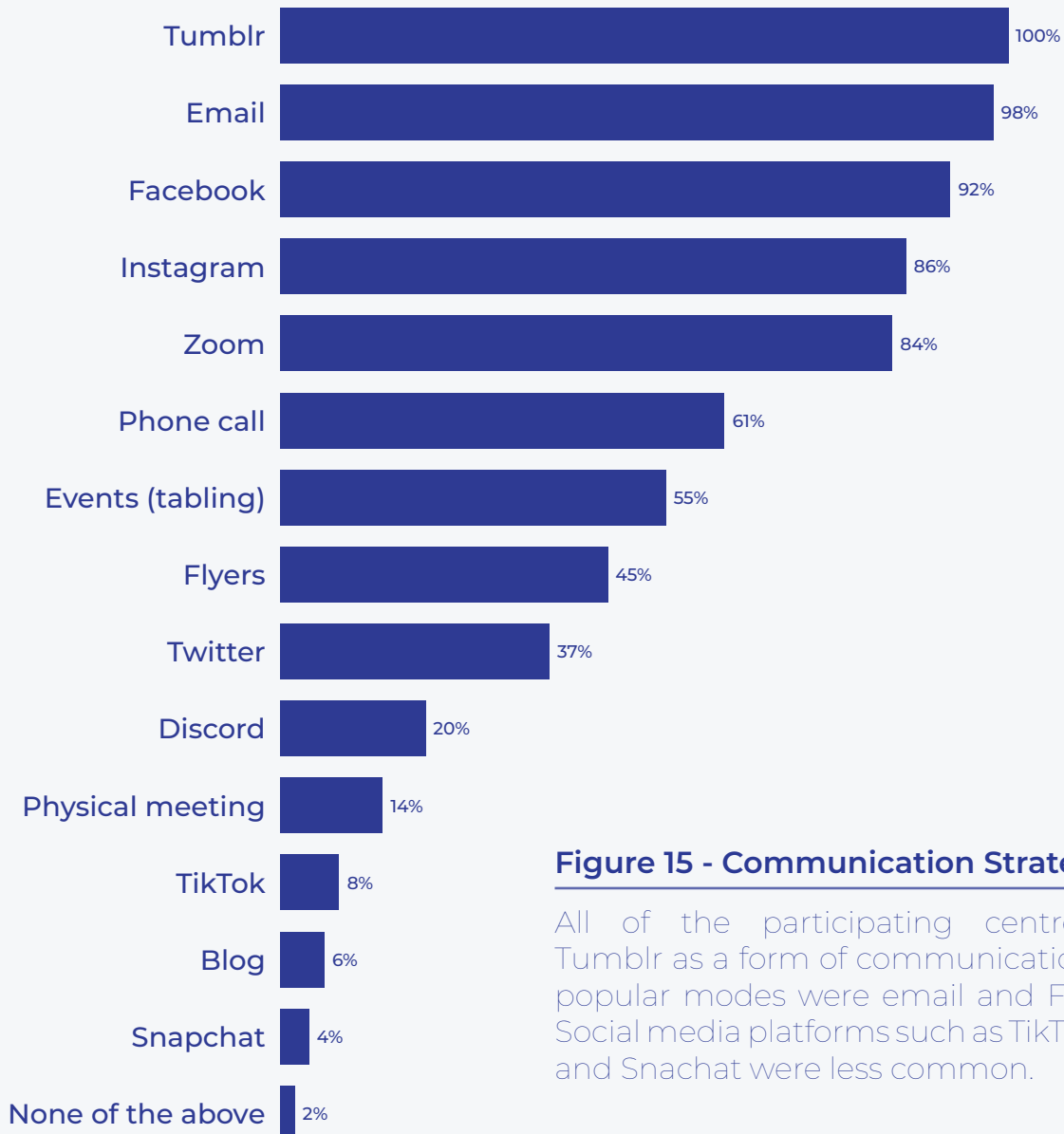
## How Centres Connect With Community

Participating agencies used a variety of communication strategies as noted in Figure 15. The most commonly used forms of communication outside of phone calls were Tumblr (100%), email (98%), Facebook (92%), and Instagram (86%). Less commonly used platforms included Discord (20%), TikTok (8%), Snapchat (4%), and blogs (6%). It is not surprising that these organizations use various social media platforms,

especially since more than a quarter of them have targeted services (39%) and outreach programs (26%) programs aimed at 2SLGBTQI+ youth.

## Programming

When it comes to community programs, they can be ongoing, such as weekly support groups, or happen during specific periods, such as voter registration events.

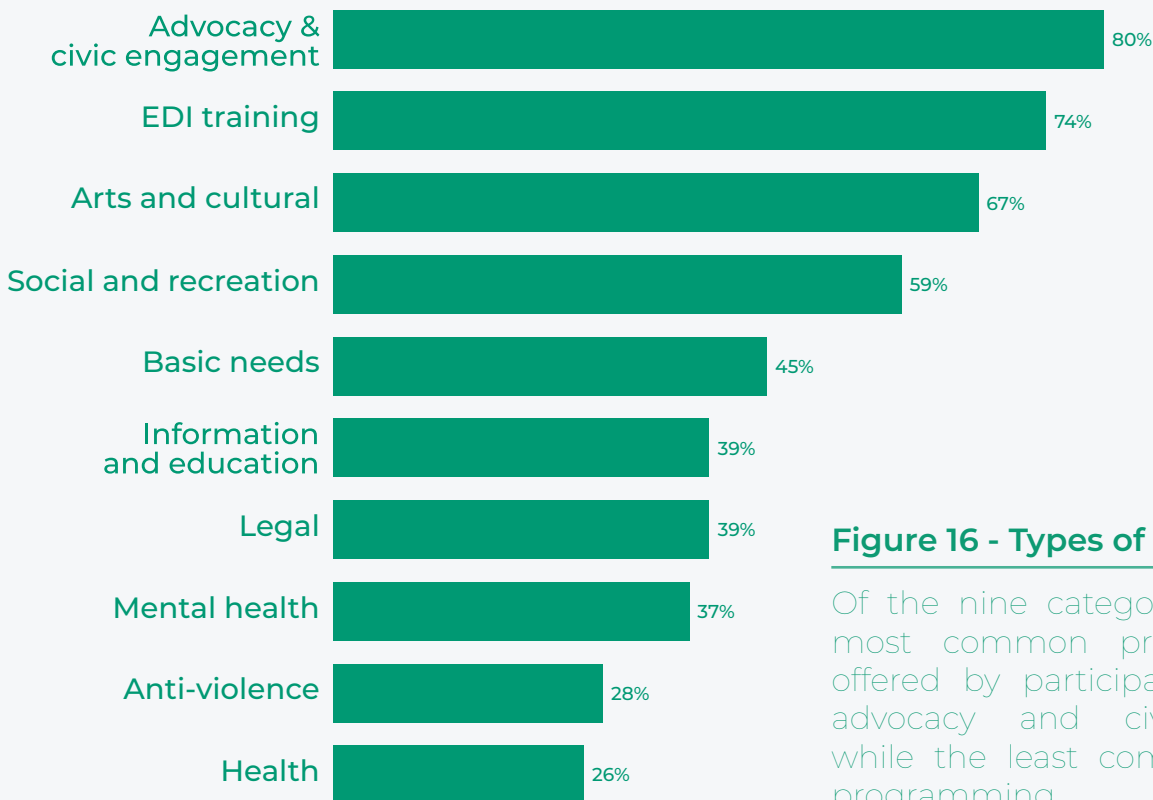


**Figure 15 - Communication Strategies**

All of the participating centres used Tumblr as a form of communication. Other popular modes were email and Facebook. Social media platforms such as TikTok, blogs, and Snapchat were less common.

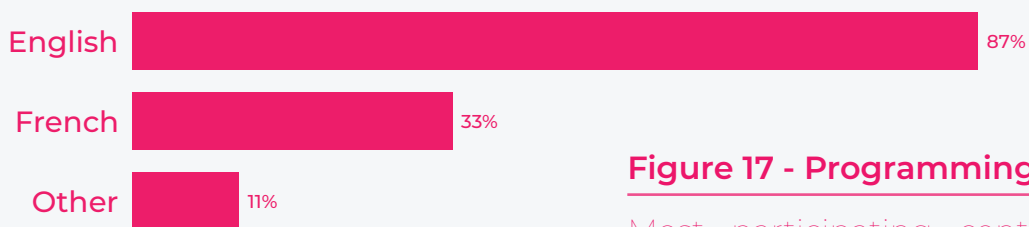
We looked at programming across nine categories (Figure 16): basic needs, info & education, social & recreational activities, arts & culture, advocacy & civic engagement, legal services, EDI training (which included 2SLGBTQ+ education and workshops), anti-violence programs, and health & wellness. The most commonly offered programming included advocacy & civic engagement (80%), followed by training (74%), arts & culture (67%), and social and recreational programming (59%).

Most of the offered programming is in English, while about a third is delivered in French, and eleven percent is delivered in other languages (see Figure 17). Other languages listed by participants were ancestral Indigenous languages, Spanish, and Chinese, as well as the following through translation service companies: Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Jamaican Patois, Japanese, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Yoruba.



**Figure 16 - Types of Programming**

Of the nine categories surveyed, the most common programming type offered by participating centres was advocacy and civic engagement while the least common was health programming.

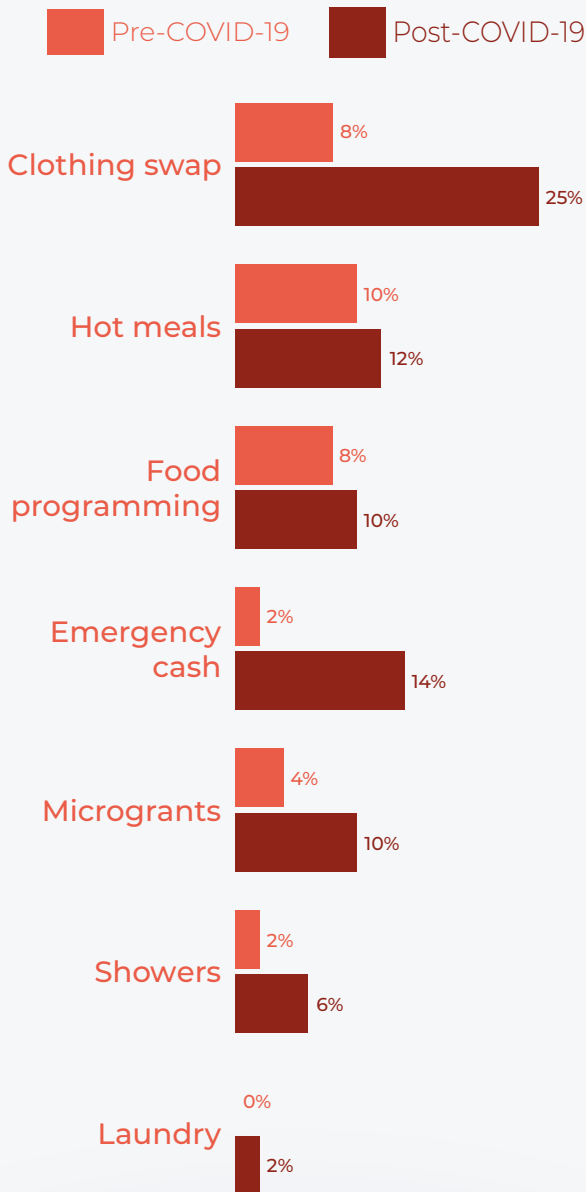


**Figure 17 - Programming Languages**

Most participating centres provided programming in English while one-third provided programming in French.

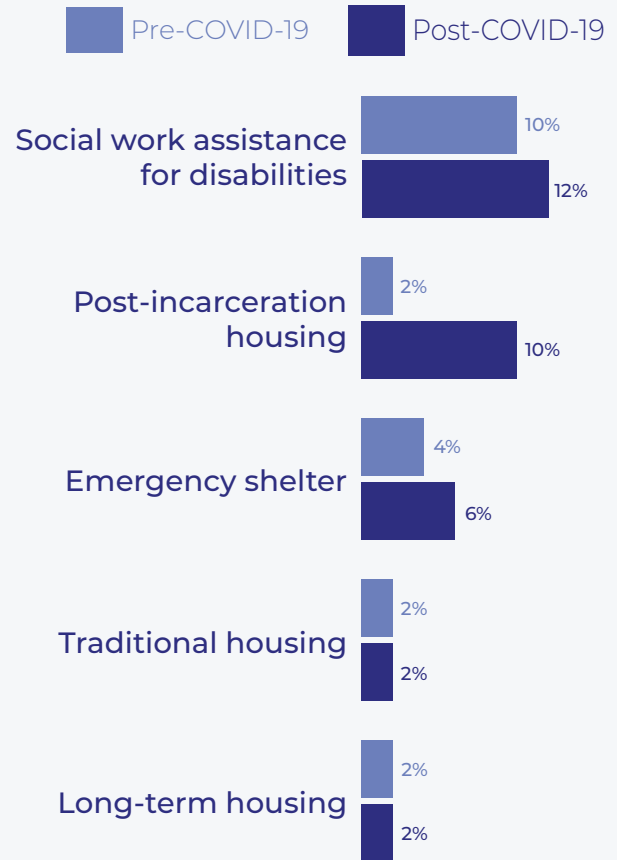
## Figure 18 - Basic Needs Programming

The basic needs programming offered by participating centres expanded in response to COVID-19.



## Figure 19 - Housing Programming

Housing-related programming was only offered by a small portion of participating centres. The most common type was disability-related assistance, which was provided by about ten percent of centres.





## Basic Needs Programming

Of those organizations that provide basic needs programming, activities include clothing swaps (25%), providing emergency cash (14%), and providing hot meals (12%; see [Figure 18](#) on facing page). Less commonly, organizations provide microgrants (10%), long-term food programs (10%), showers, (6%), and laundry access (2%). Notably, organizations demonstrate increased offerings of clothing swaps, microgrants, and the provision of emergency in the years since COVID-19.

## Housing and Transition Supports

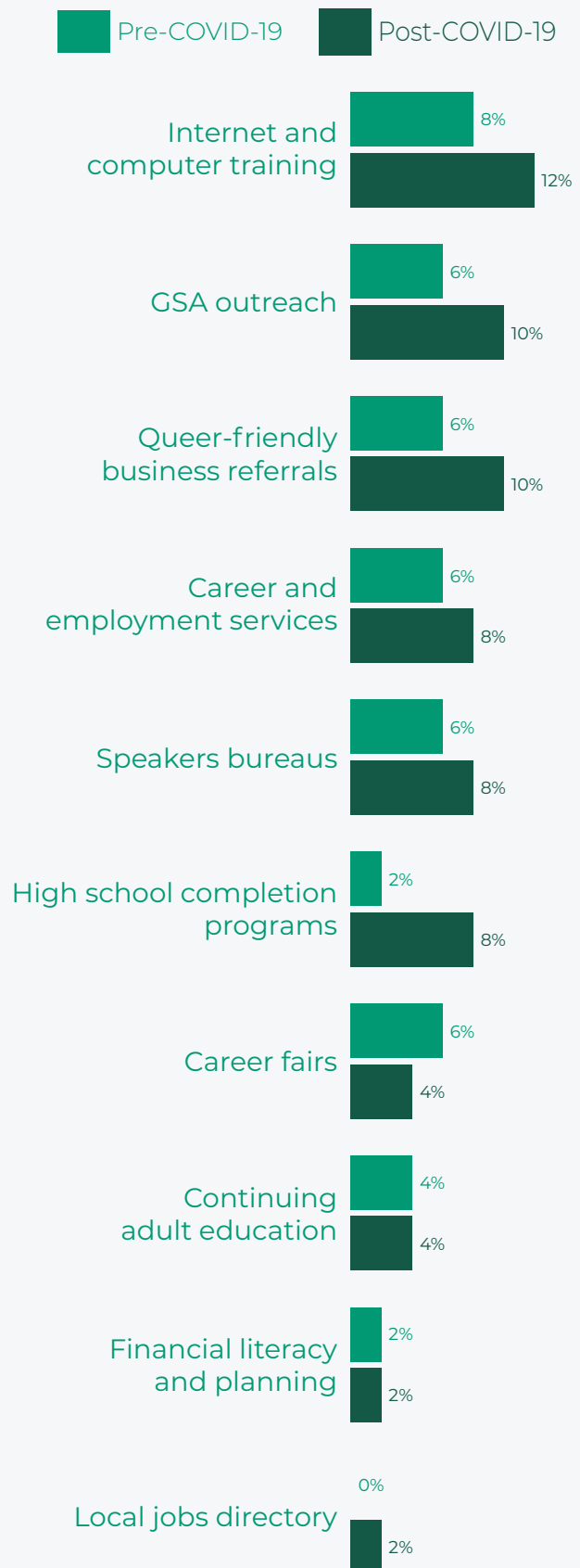
Housing initiatives are not commonly provided by 2SLGBTQ+ organizations in Canada, but amongst those that do provide housing or housing-related support services, the most common included assistance with disability funding applications (12%; see [Figure 19](#) on facing page). Re-entry initiatives for incarcerated 2SLGBTQI+ people increased the most from pre- to post-COVID-19 (2% of organizations to 10%). Otherwise, housing initiatives and navigational supports remained largely unchanged before and after COVID-19.

## Information and Educational Services

Thirty-nine percent of organizations offered at least one type of information and educational programming (see [Figure 20](#)). Twelve percent of organizations offer computer/internet training, while ten percent provide outreach to gay/straight alliances or gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs) in schools, and ten percent provide queer friendly business referrals. There was a slight increase in information and educational programs after COVID-19.

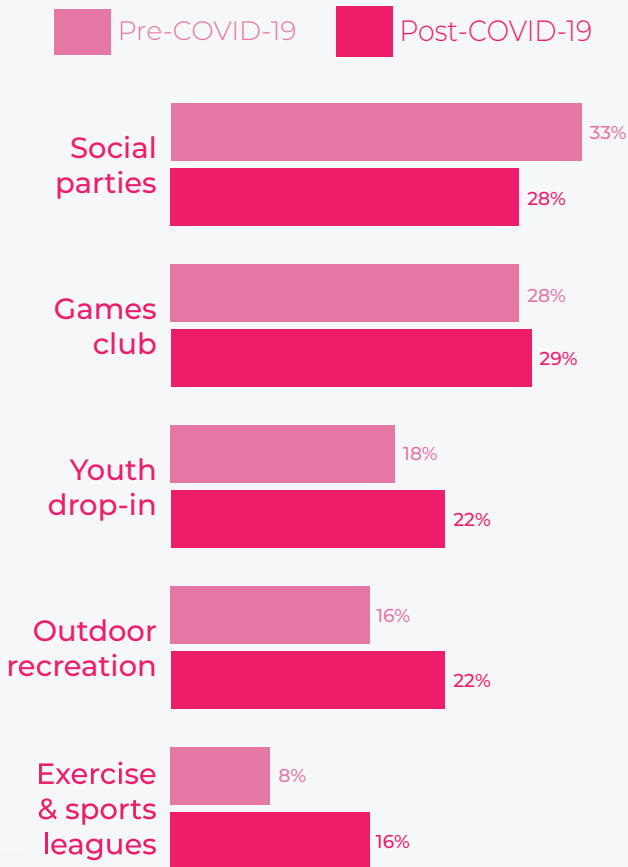
## Figure 20 - Information and Education

The most common type of InfoEd programming was computer training, which was provided by only 10% of centres.



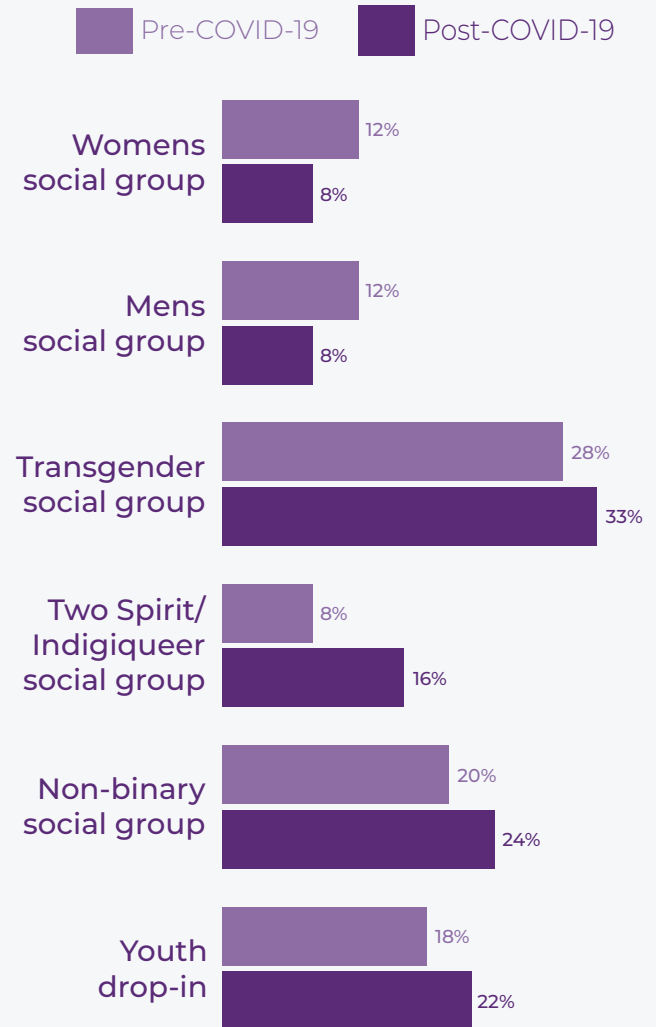
## Figure 21 - Recreational Programming

Most recreation programming such as exercise and sports leagues increased after the COVID-19 pandemic, but social parties decreased by 5%.



## Figure 22 - Social and Support Groups

About one-third of participating centres offer a transgender social group. Two Spirit/Indigiqueer groups saw the largest increase post-COVID-19.



## Social and Recreational Programs

2SLGBTQI+ organizations and programs offer various social and recreational activities, such as games clubs (29%), social parties (27%), outdoor recreation (21%), youth drop-in (21%), and exercise/sports leagues (15%; see [Figure 21](#) on facing page). We note that sports league programming nearly doubled after COVID-19, while social party programming was the only type of social and recreational programming that decreased after the pandemic.

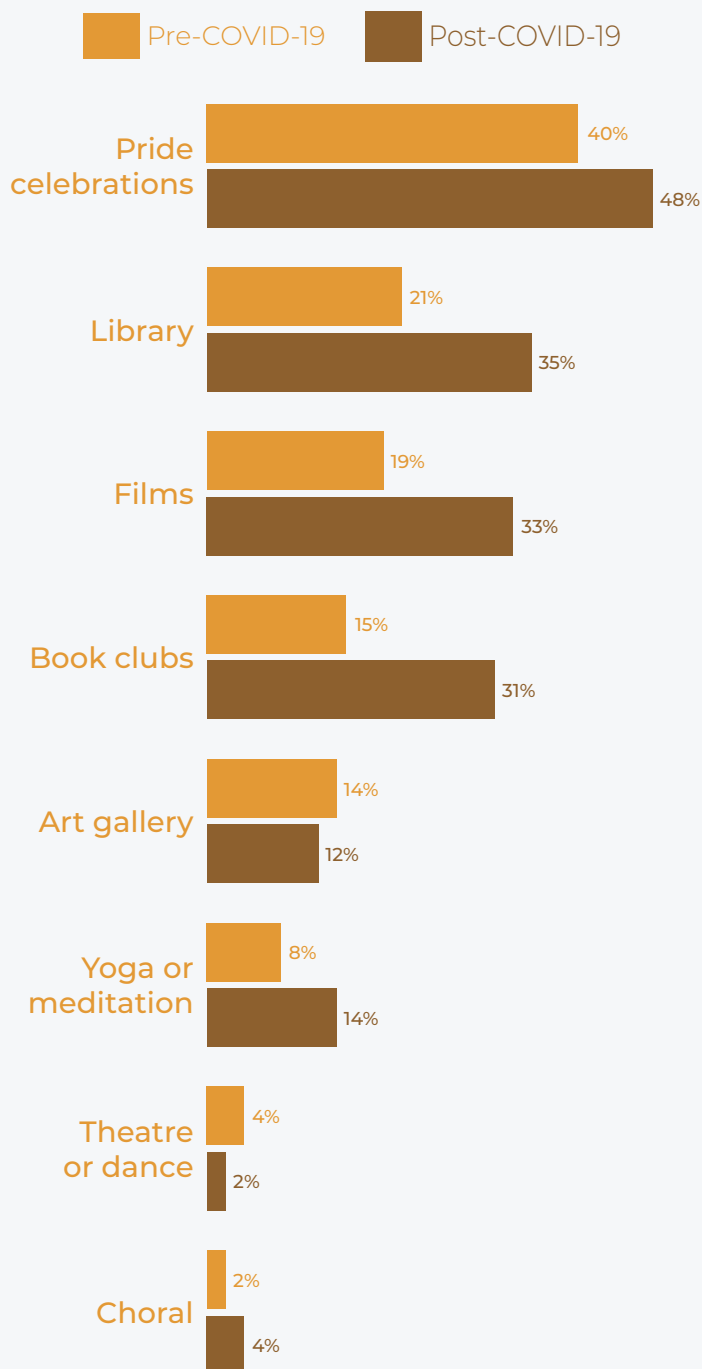
Most participating organizations also offer social and peer-support groups including transgender support groups (33%), non-binary support groups (23%), youth drop-ins (21%), Two Spirit/Indigiqueer social groups (16%), and men's and women's social groups (8%; see [Figure 22](#) on facing page). Two Spirit/Indigiqueer social groups saw the greatest increase after COVID-19, while men's and women's social groups showed slight decreases after the pandemic.

## Arts and Culture Programs

Almost half of the participating organizations organized pride celebrations (48%; see [Figure 23](#)). Toward the end of the pandemic, nearly one-third of participants reported offering libraries (35%), films (33%), and book clubs (31%). These types of programming also saw the most significant increase before and after COVID-19. Other arts and cultural programming includes yoga and meditation classes, access to art galleries, theatre dance groups, and chorus groups.

## Figure 23 - Arts and Culture Programming

Most programming related to arts and culture increased after the pandemic. Most notably, book clubs increased by 16%.



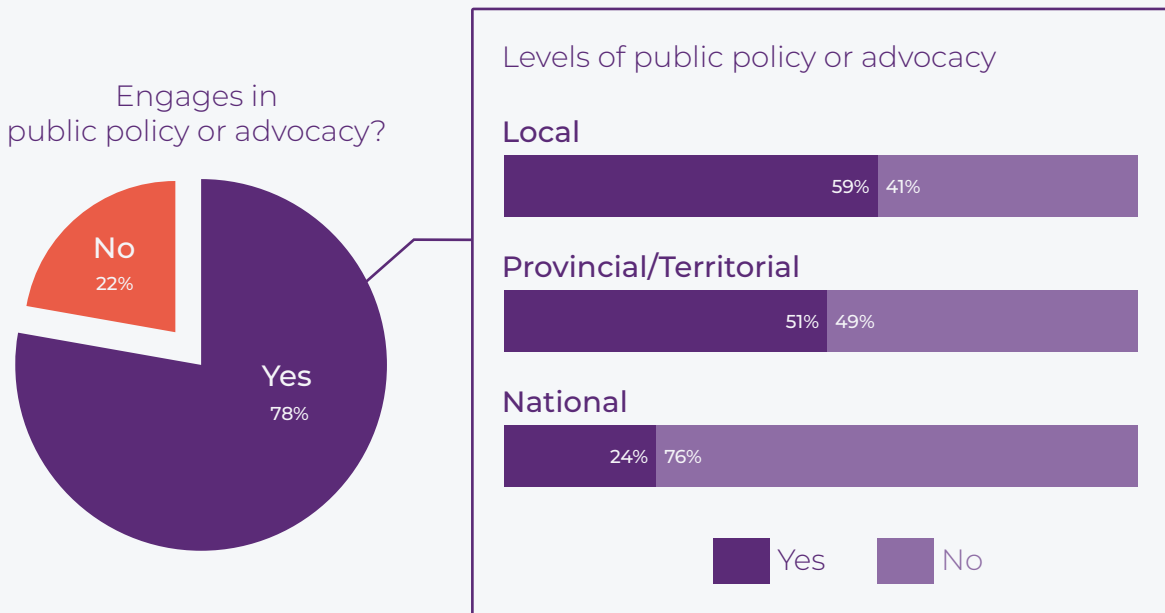
## Advocacy and Civic Engagement

Organizations engaged in public policy at different levels including local (59%), provincial (51%), and national (24%), with many involved in all three. Only twenty-two percent of respondents did not participate in public policy engagement. For these organizations, the biggest barrier to public policy engagement was lack of staff or capacity, follow by a lack of time (64%)

and funding (56%; see Figure 25). For the many centres who are actively advocating for 2SLGBTQI+ rights, the most common forms of civic engagement include public education on 2SLGBTQI+ issues (59%) and collaborating on public policy (45%). There are also high levels of participation in activities such as supporting voting drives, lobbying, and writing opinion editorials.

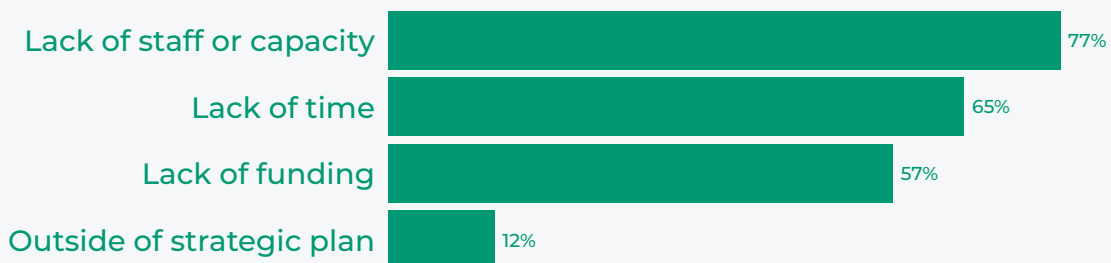
**Figure 24 - Public Policy Engagement and Advocacy**

Over three-quarters of centres are engaged in advocacy efforts, mostly at the local or provincial level.



**Figure 25 - Barriers to Advocacy**

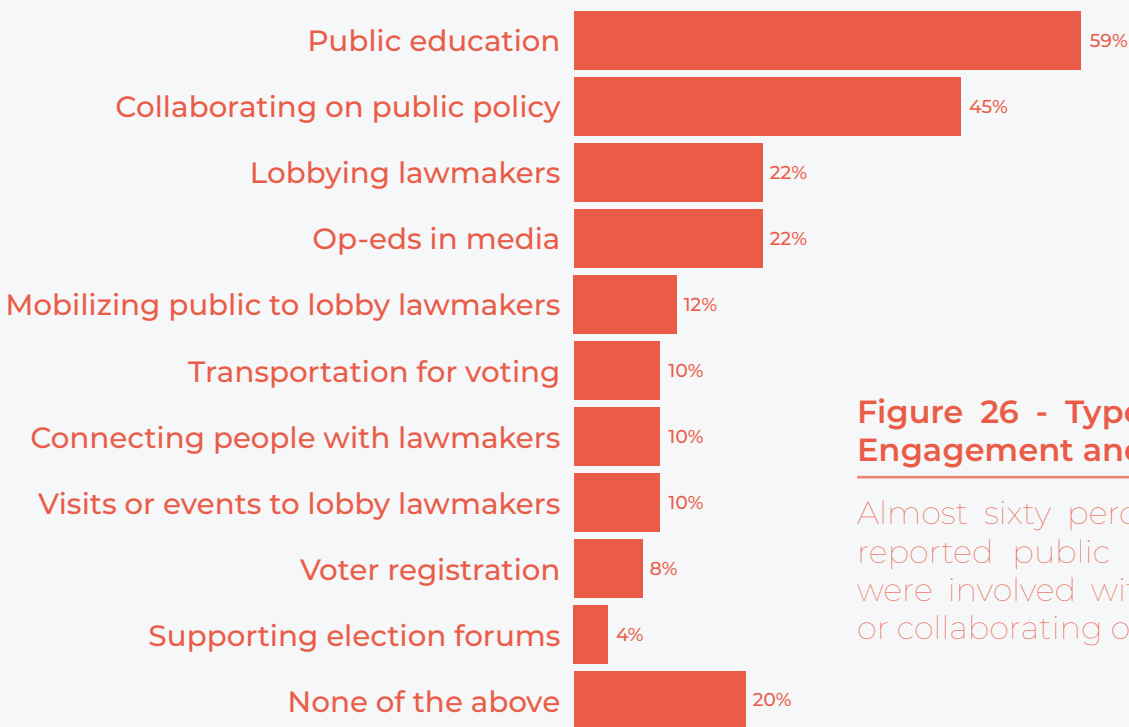
The most commonly reported barrier to engaging in advocacy was lack of staff or capacity.



## Identified Public Policy Issues

Organizations identified a range of unique and overlapping public policy issues:

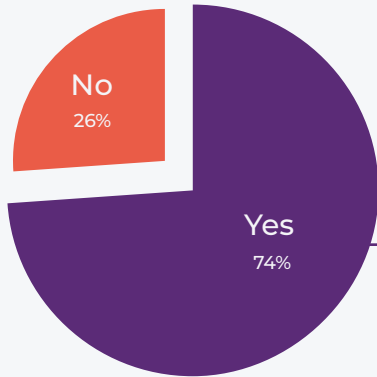
- ▶ **Human rights**, including rights for Two Spirit, Indigiqueer, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQI+ elderly rights, posthumous trans rights, and reproductive justice.
- ▶ **Housing**, including affordable housing, housing access and displacement, and affirming residential care.
- ▶ **Healthcare**, including access to gender affirming care, trans healthcare, access to medical transition, youth sexual health, intersectional mental health services, immigration health, deathcare, harm reduction services, depathologization of trans identities, and other 2SLGBTQI+ health needs.
- ▶ **Legal issues**, including transgender people’s rights in detention centres, legal name/gender change process, factors related to criminal law, social and legal equality for 2SLGBTQI+ people, family law matters, and access to justice issues.
- ▶ **Education**, including public education on 2SLGBTQI+ history, inclusive sexual and gender education, and supports for youth in schools.
- ▶ **History**, including collecting archival materials related to the 2SLGBTQI+ community.
- ▶ **Equity initiatives**, including 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion, anti-racism, decolonization, inclusive policy development, employment equity, providing resources in diverse languages, intersections of fat and 2SLGBTQI+ issues, the integration of 2SLGBTQI+ newcomers, and Two Spirit/trans-spectrum self-ideation.
- ▶ **Systemic issues**, including providing directories of 2SLGBTQI+ services, reducing service barriers, 2SLGBTQIA+ safety and inclusion in accessing public services, increasing provincial 2SLGBTQI+ action plans, increasing provincial funding for 2SLGBTQI+ organizations, and increasing access to queer, trans and Two Spirit services more generally.



**Figure 26 - Types of Public Policy Engagement and Advocacy**

Almost sixty percent of centres that reported public policy engagement were involved with public education or collaborating on public policy.

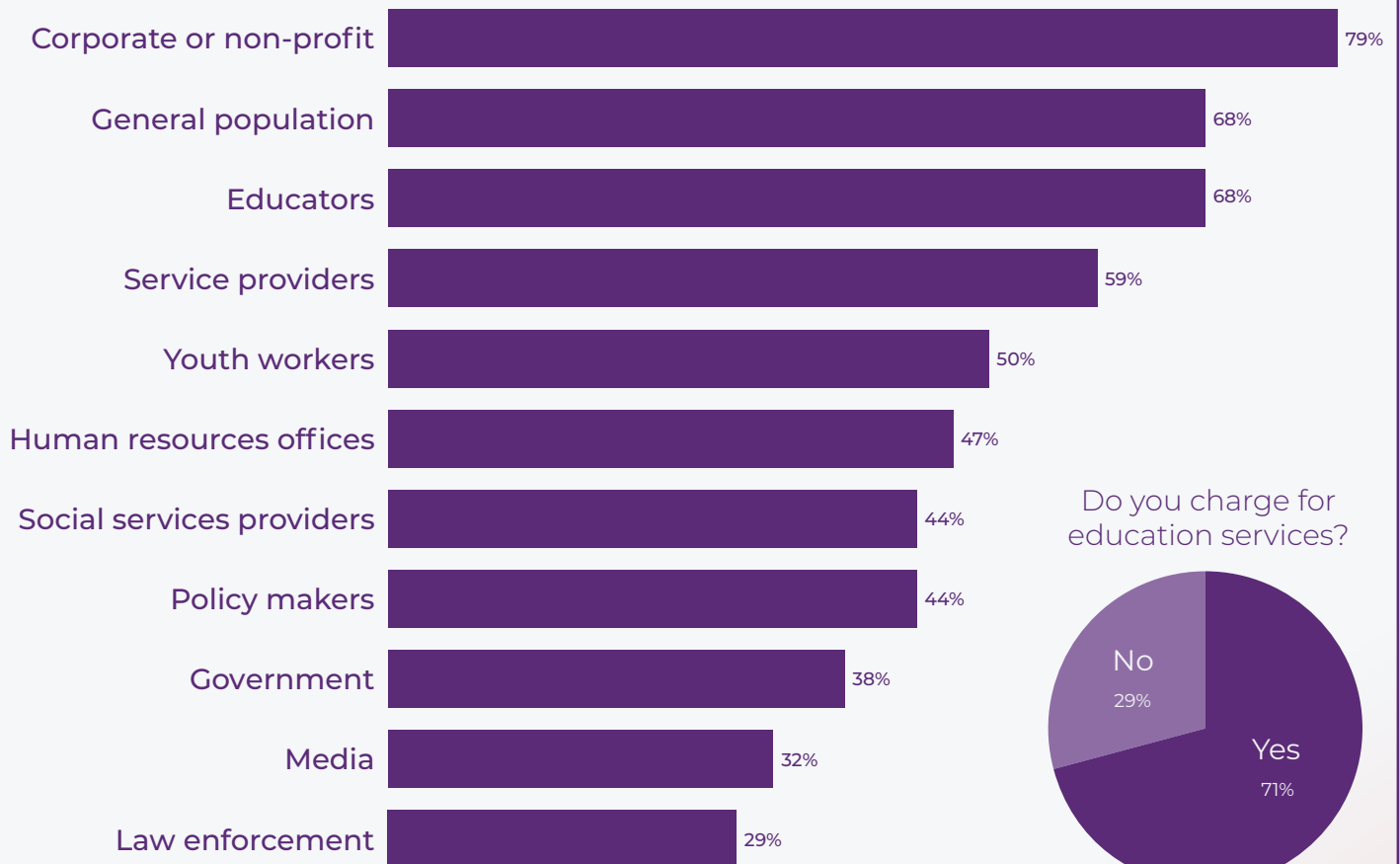
Offers education programming?



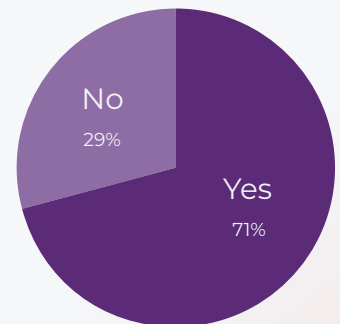
### Figure 27 - Educational Services

About three-quarters of participating centres provide educational services, most commonly to corporate or non-profit organizations.

#### Audiences for educational programming



Do you charge for education services?





## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Education

2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives play a vital role in educating schools, service providers, government officials, and other businesses and organizations. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents reported offering educational programming (74%; see [Figure 27](#)). The most common audiences included non-profit/corporate (80%), educators (68%), and the general population (68%). Though to a lesser extent, organizations also engage in education initiatives with law enforcement (29%), media (32%), and local/provincial governments (38%).

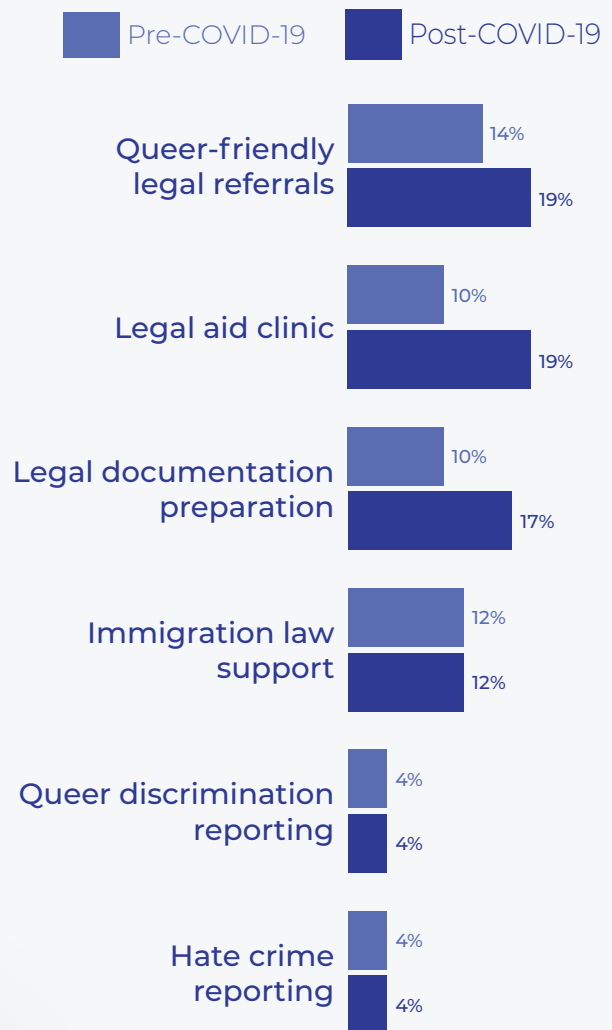
Almost two-thirds of the respondents charge for education services (71%) with prices ranging between \$25 for a one hour session to \$1,250 for a full day workshop. Many organizations offer services on a sliding scale. The most frequently reported rate for education was \$250 per session for most audiences, and \$500 per session for government and corporate audiences.

## Legal

The most common types of legal programming offered by participating organizations after COVID-19 are legal aid clinics (19%), queer-friendly legal referrals (19%), and legal document preparation (17%). These programs also saw the most significant increase in offerings after the pandemic.

**Figure 28 - Legal Services**

Participating centres reported an increase in legal aid clinics and documentation preparation assistance.



## Anti Violence

Direct offerings of anti-violence programming and education were rarely reported by participating centres (see **Figure 29**). However, a fifth of organizations refer individuals to partner organizations (20%). The most commonly offered anti-violence programming was related to gender-based violence (12%).

## Health and Wellness Services

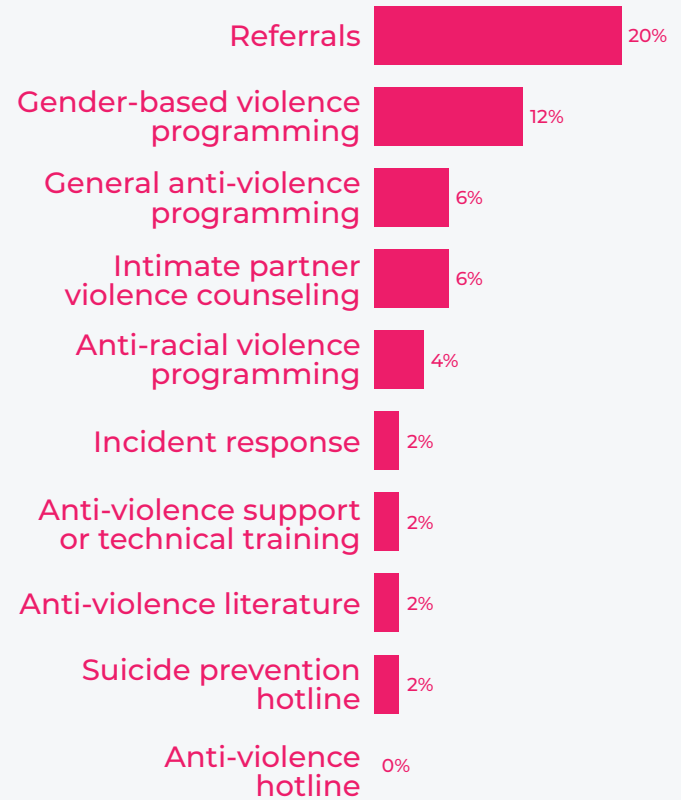
Physical and mental health services were quite common across participating agencies. A quarter of organizations reported offering physical health services (28%), and thirty-seven percent reported offering mental health services (**Figure 30**). However, half of the respondents who indicated providing mental health services offered counselling services (18%), while the rest provided group programming.

**Physical Health Services** A quarter of organizations indicated offering at least one type of health and wellness services. Health and wellness offerings were categorized as being offered to the general 2SLGBTQI+ population or targeted 2SLGBTQI+ subpopulations (i.e, youth, Two-Spirit, BIPOC). Many responses showed similar offerings between these two groups, except for prep, trans medical services, and STI/HIV outreach which had more reports for specific 2SLGBTQI+ subpopulations. Tobacco prevention and tobacco cessation health programming were more often offered to the general 2SLGBTQI+ population, rather than to specific subpopulations.

The data revealed that most physical health support offered by organizations primarily took the form of referrals to relevant service providers (**Figure 32**). The survey did not allow respondents to specify if referrals were made to organizations with which they had partnerships, organizations that were vetted for being 2SLGBTQI+ affirming, or simply an organization providing the needed service.

**Figure 29 - Anti-Violence Programming**

Only a few of the participating centres reported offering anti-violence programming, although 20% make referrals to other organizations.



**Figure 30 - Health Services**

Just over a quarter of participating centres provide physical health services while almost two-fifths of centres provide mental health services.



### Provides physical health services



### Provides mental health services



Yes No

-  General 2SLGBTQI+ population
-  Specific 2SLGBTQI+ population (e.g. youth)

Medical services



Pharmacy



PrEP



Transition medical services



STI/HIV testing



STI/HIV outreach



STI/HIV treatment hotline



Tabacco prevention



Tabacco cessation



Cancer prevention education



Cancer screening



Cancer vaccination

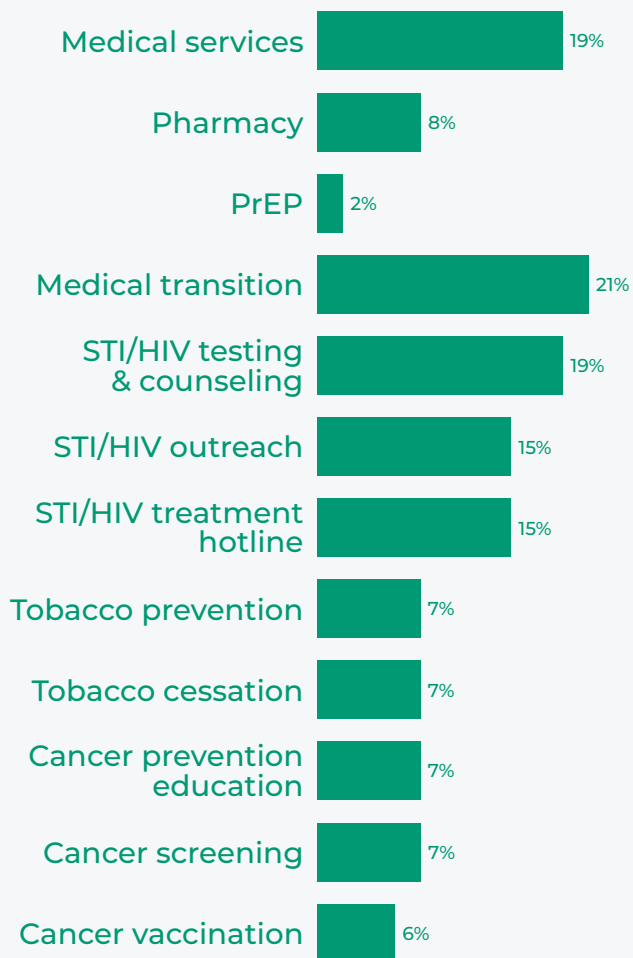


### Figure 31 - Centres Offering Physical Health Services

Out of the few of the participating centres offering physical health services, the most common are PrEP (two centres providing for general population and three for specific populations) and STI/HIV testing (three for general population and two for specific populations).

### Figure 30 - Physical Health Referrals

The most common referrals made for physical health services were for medical transition, medical services, and STI/HIV testing and counseling.



## Figure 34 - Mental Health Services

In-person support groups and online support groups are the most commonly offered services. Only one centre offers recovery programs.

### Recovery programs



### Peer-led programs



### In-person support groups



### Online support groups



### Individual counseling



### Couples counseling



### Family counseling



### Group counseling

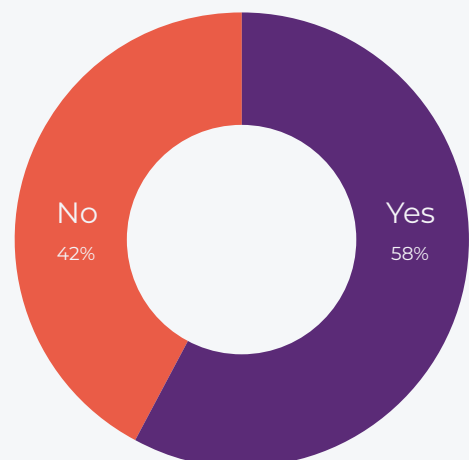


**Mental Health Services** Slightly over a third of participating agencies offered some type of mental health services (37%; see [Figure 30](#)), including both counselling services and peer support groups. The most common type of mental health programming offered by agencies were group-style programs ([Figure 33](#)). Approximately twenty-three percent of respondents reported offering in-person and online support groups, and twenty-one percent delivered peer-led programs. Less common offerings included family counselling (6%) and recovery programs (2%). No participating agencies reported offering psychiatric services.

While the the majority of health services offered by participating agencies involved making referrals, over half of the respondents expressed a desire to offer health and wellness services (58%; see [Figure 34](#)). These findings demonstrate that there is significant interest among agencies in expanding their offerings to include health and wellness services, nearly double the number that currently provide these services.

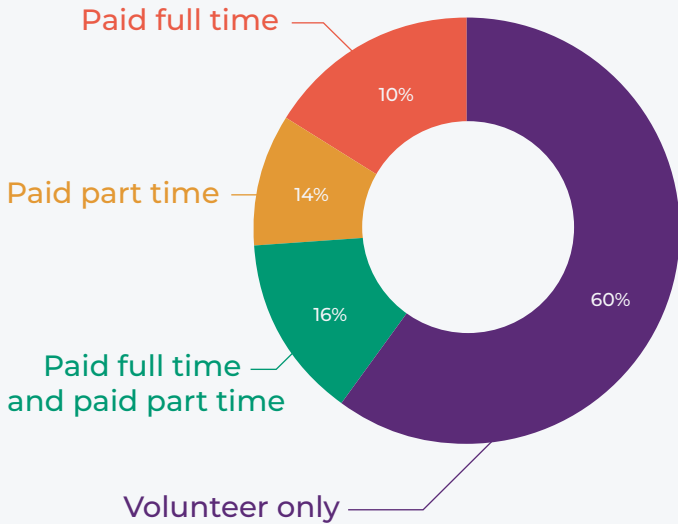
## Figure 34 - Interest in Expanding Health Services

Over half of participating centres expressed interest in expanding their health and wellness services.



**Figure 35 - Human Resources**

A majority of participating centres rely on volunteers.



**Figure 36 - Executive Director Tenure**

The executive director of most of the participating centres has been in the position for one or two years.



## Centre Capacity

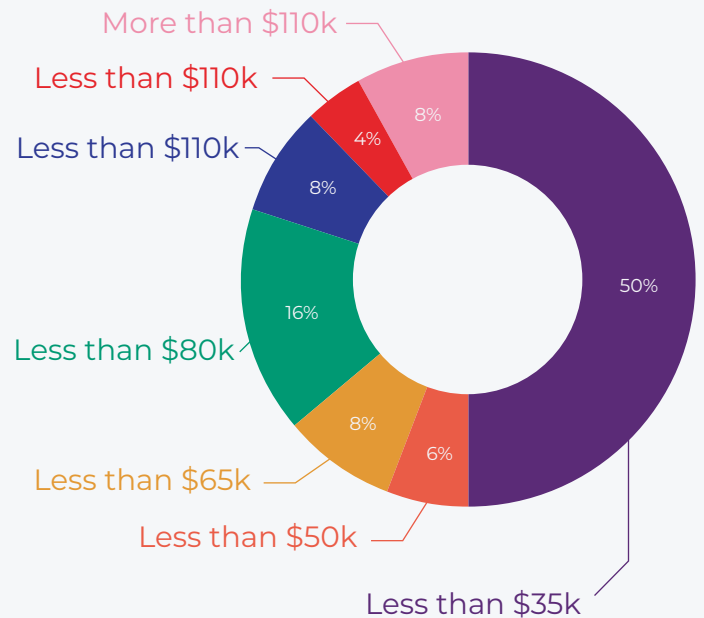
### Centre Staff

2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives are typically run by a combination of paid staff and volunteers (Figure 35). The majority of participants (60%) rely on volunteers for leadership roles, while the remaining forty percent are led by paid staff, which may include full-time, part-time, or a combination of both.

Leaders of these organizations have held their positions for varying lengths, ranging from 0 to 15 years as an Executive Director or an equivalent role. However, the average tenure of these leaders is around two years (Figure 36). This is understandable given the significant growth of new centres in recent years. In terms of compensation, nearly half of organizational leaders made \$34,999 or less (Figure 37). It is important to note that this includes a substantial number of leaders who serve in volunteer roles. Only a small number of participants reported salaries that align with the typical standards for executive directors and chief executive officers in nonprofit organiza-

**Figure 37 - Executive Director Salary**

While the majority of executive director salaries were under \$35,000, salaries ranged to more than \$110,000.



tions at the provincial or national levels. Remember also that these figures include leaders of organizations that are not 2SLGBTQI+-specific and instead meet other mandates, while providing targeted 2SLGBTQI+ programming.

## Centre Volunteers

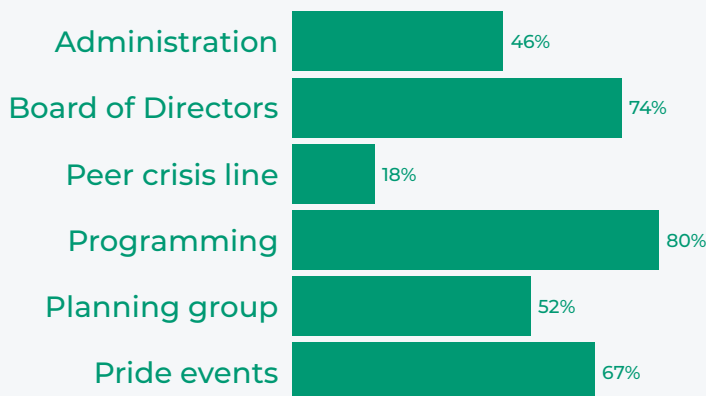
Eighty percent of organizations have volunteers assisting with programming activities, seventy-five percent have volunteers serving on boards of directors and two-thirds have volunteers who support pride events (Figure 38). Volunteers also provide support for administrative tasks, program planning, and peer crisis lines. Other volunteer activities included committee membership, working groups, fundraising, grant writing, partnership building, research, and offering voluntary community services like counselling and legal assistance.

The survey reported a total of 78,385 volunteer hours contributed by 31 organizations, with an average of 2,529 hours per organization. Furthermore, there were a total of 1,109 volunteers involved across 42 organizations, with an average of 26 volunteers per organization.

Over half of the respondents indicated that their agencies offer general training and diversity training to their volunteers (see Figure 39). However, it's important to note that many agencies do not monetize volunteer hours, as only twelve percent of respondents reported that their agency does so.

### Figure 38 - Volunteer Areas of Support

Volunteers are most often utilized for programming.



## Board of Directors

The direction and growth of 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives are guided and overseen by dedicated Boards of Directors. These boards play a crucial role, helping to shape strategic growth, aligning work with an organization's mission, ensuring sound financial management, upholding legal integrity, and fostering accountability. They also monitor the delivery of programs and services, all while managing relationships with relevant stakeholders and community members.

The size of board membership ranged from as few as two members to thirteen members, with an average of seven members. Although we could not gather enough participation to provide statistically significant demographic data on board composition, we are able to share what insights we have received from participating organizations.

**Board Demographics** Half of board members are lesbian or gay (50%; see Figure 40), with others identifying as queer (22%), bisexual (16%), heterosexual (9%), and asexual (4%). Almost half of board members are women (42%), while thirty-two per-

### Figure 39 - Volunteer Training and Compensation

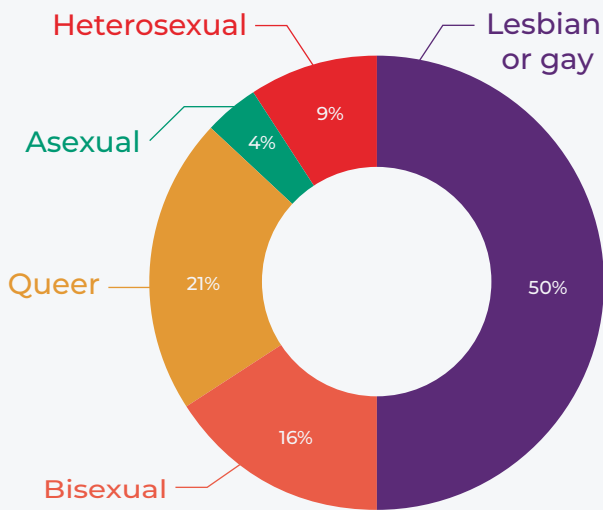
Over half of participating centres give their volunteers training.



cent are men, and twenty-one percent are nonbinary (Figure 45). More than a quarter of board members are trans (28%) and a small portion (8%) of board members are Two Spirit/Indigiqueer. As sexuality, gender, and gender expansive board representation were each separate questions, we note that there are likely duplications between these figures. For instance,

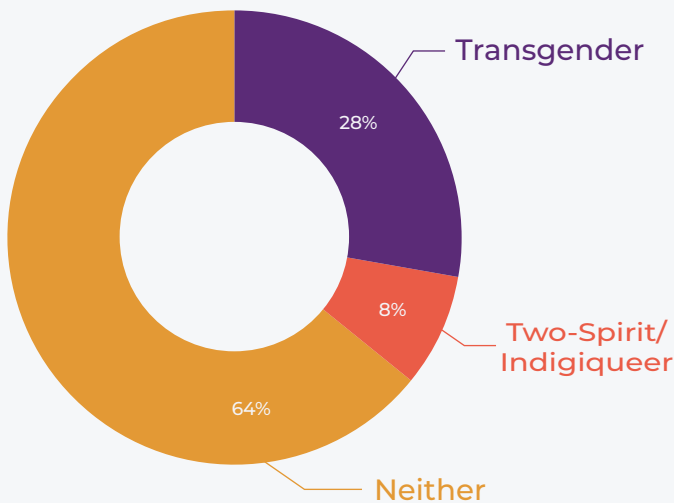
**Figure 40 - Sexuality of Board Members**

The majority of board members (87%) identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer.



**Figure 42 - Gender Expansive Board Members**

About one-third of board members identified as trans or Two-Spirit.

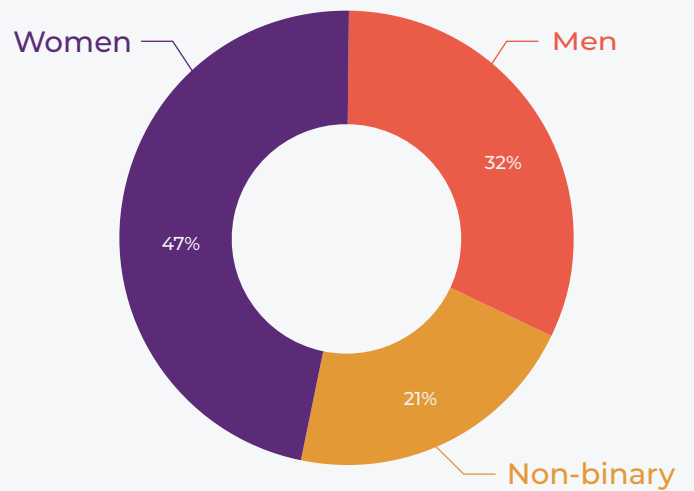


women includes trans women, and non-binary includes Two Spirit people, among other intersections.

Two-thirds of board members are white (67%) while the other third of boards are made up of people who are Indigenous (11%), Black (8%), Asian (5%), Arab/Middle Eastern/North African (3%), Latinx (3%), and multicultural (4%).

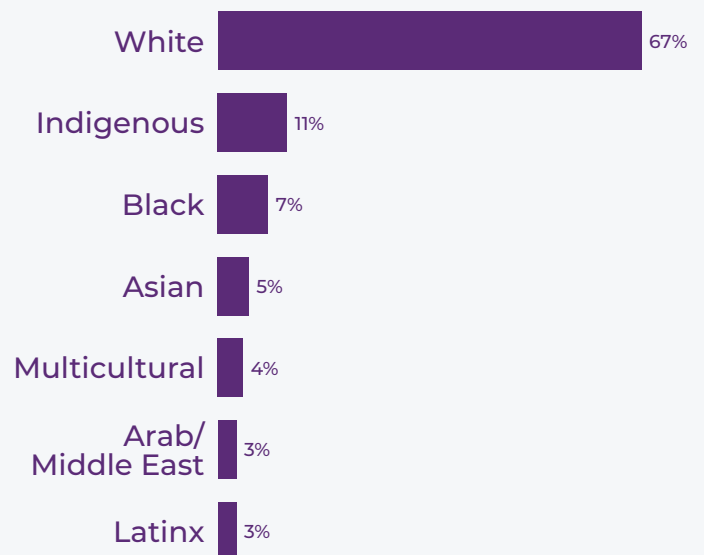
**Figure 41 - Gender of Board Members**

Almost half of board members are women.



**Figure 42 - Racial Diversity of Board Members**

Two-thirds of board members are white while one-third are not white.





**Policies and Governance** Participants identified the value of organizational and board policies, indicating that they have a significant influence on the day-to-day operations of their organizations and programs. When asked about which policies assisted with organizational operation, respondents identified the following:

- ▶ **Operational Policies** These policies delve into various aspects of how the organization operates. They encompass membership, human resources and personnel management, decision-making procedures for the board, executive authority, policies governing travel, honoraria, procurement, contracting, informed consent, and policies regarding the utilization of space.
- ▶ **Codes of Conduct** These policies are essential for ensuring ethical and responsible behaviour within the organization and often apply to boards, staff, and volunteers. They include guidelines for maintaining confidentiality, respecting privacy, increasing diversity and inclusion within the organization, securing informed consent, conducting background checks, ethics, fraud prevention, anti-corruption measures, digital security, and social media conduct.
- ▶ **Financial Policies** These policies address issues related to reporting and financial controls. They are designed to ensure financial accountability and transparency.
- ▶ **Diversity and Inclusion Policies** These policies promote diversity and inclusion within the organization. They span across various domains such as hiring, strategic planning, and programming, while focusing on accessibility, language inclusion, community standards, gender equity, anti-oppression, anti-agism, anti-ableism, colonialism, and community accountability.

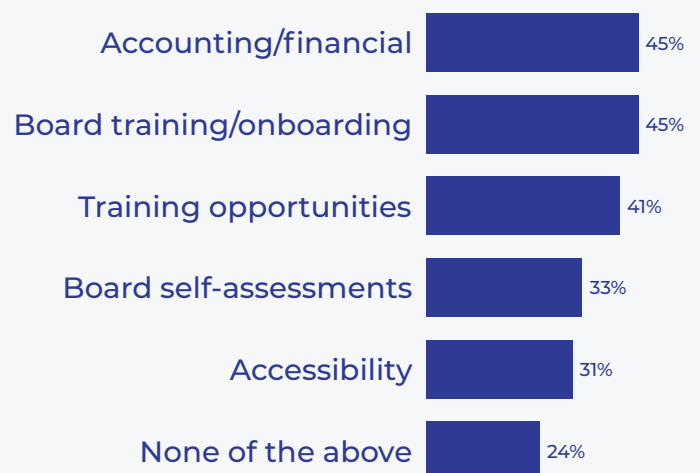
▶ **Health & safety Policies** Health and safety policies address the well-being of individuals within an organization. This includes policies related to COVID-19, workplace injuries and incidents, reporting policies, and safety plans.

▶ **Conflict Management Policies** These policies are vital for addressing conflicts and grievances within the organization. They include policies to tackle discrimination, harassment, workplace violence, complaint resolution, service restrictions, and appeals processes.

For the most part, the board of directors is responsible for these and other policies. Just under half of participants identified that their boards have policies around independent accounting reviews, audits to their financial statements, and regarding board training for new members (45%). As well, forty percent of boards had policies around leadership and professional development, and around thirty percent had policies around accessibility and board self-assessment processes. Nearly a quar-

**Figure 44 - Types of Board Policies**

About half of participating centres had policies regarding independent accounting reviews and training for new board members.



ter of respondents indicated that they do not have any of the policies indicated in [Figure 44](#) (see facing page).

**Strategy Documents.** Around half of participating organizations indicated that they employ strategic plans and documents to guide organizational operations. These documents include annual reports, strategic plans, fundraising plans, or evaluation plans (see [Figure 45](#)). Most prominent are fundraising plans (56%), while at least half of all organizations also indicate having strategic and evaluation plans.

When organizations were questioned about the challenges they face in conducting evaluations, several key issues emerged. The most commonly cited barriers included:

- ▶ **Time and Organizational Capacity** Many organizations expressed that time constraints and limitations in their organizational capacity hindered their evaluation activities. These constraints made it difficult for them to allocate sufficient resources to the evaluation process.
- ▶ **Financial Constraints** Cost implications and limited financial resources were significant barriers. These constraints made it challenging for organizations to invest in the necessary evaluation tools and expertise.
- ▶ **Staffing Expertise** Organizations found it difficult to conduct effective evaluations without the necessary evaluation expertise.
- ▶ **Preference for Service Delivery** Some organizations indicated a preference for dedicating their time to delivering services rather than conducting research and evaluations. They considered their primary role to be service provision and support for their communities.
- ▶ **Concerns About Over-Research** Some participants voiced concerns that their target populations, especial-

ly 2SLGBTQI+ communities, were already subjected to extensive research. This perspective highlighted the need to balance the pursuit of research and evaluation with respecting the rights and privacy of 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

### Figure 45 - Types of Strategy Documents

About half of the participating centres reported using each type of strategy document surveyed.



## Finances and Revenue

Our sample size decreased significantly when it came to answering questions about finances and revenues as only fourteen organizations fully completed this section of the survey. This aligns with feedback regarding the need for increased training regarding financial processes and procedures, and further reminds us that financial reporting takes a lot of time and resources within 2SLGBTQI+ organizations.

Our findings demonstrate that budgets vary greatly across the country, with a few of the longer standing organizations having significantly higher annual revenue than most of the smaller, newer organizations. As a result, it was difficult to compare revenue and so we choose to look at organizations by comparing those that had overall revenue under \$150k to those with greater than \$150k revenue (see [Figure 46](#), next page). The former relied more on donations (24% versus 5%) and

corporate funding (18% versus 5%), while the latter received a larger proportion of their revenue from federal (31% versus 11%) and provincial funding (30% versus 21%).

An analysis of yearly expenses for the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 years, including projected expenses for 2021/2022, showed variations in minimum, average, and maximum expenses across these periods, although were limited by our small sample size.

The predominant expense categories included programming (62% for 2019/2020 and 59% for 2020/2021) and management & administration (20% for 2019/2020 and 23% for 2020/2021; see **Figure 48**). On average, there were no substantial differences in expense allocation between these two fiscal years.

*Note: two responses were not included as the total of the expense percentage was over 100%. The removal of these responses did not have a significant impact on averages.*

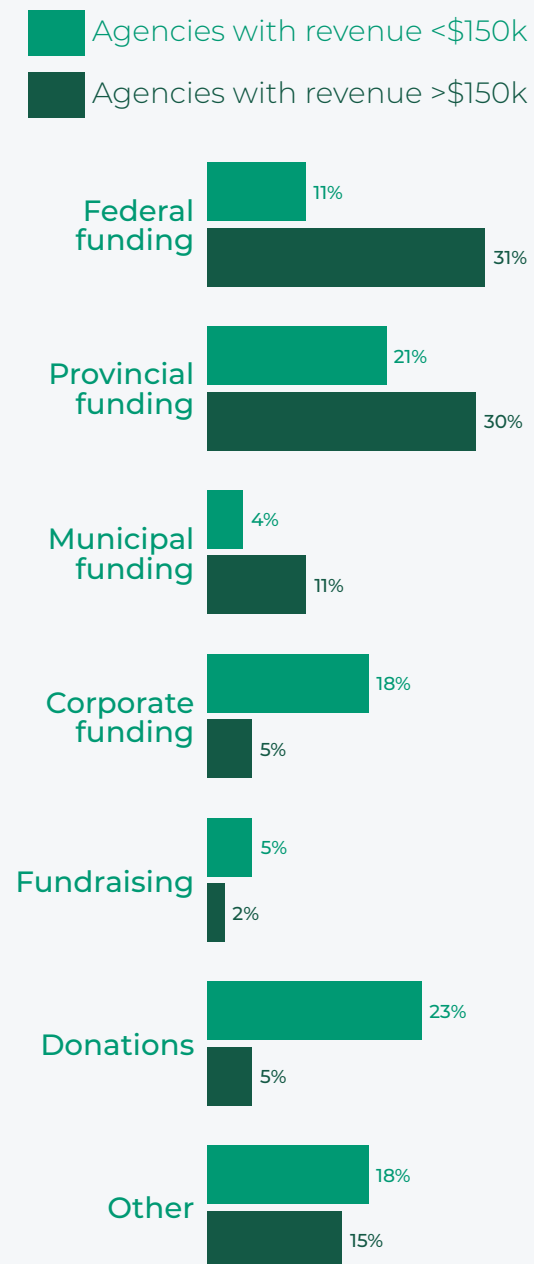
There were significant shifts in operating budgets for several organizations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, 11 out of the 51 respondents reported an increase in their operating budget from less than \$150K before COVID-19 to greater than \$150K after COVID-19. These were largely new organizations, with most having originated between 2012 and 2019.

## Funding and Grants

In terms of grant funding, when asked whether their organizations received grants exceeding \$10,000, seventy-one percent of participants stated 'Yes (**Figure 49**). An interesting trend emerged when comparing this data with staffing models as a contrast was observed between organizations with paid staff and those run by volunteers. A higher proportion of organizations with paid staff (95%) received grants exceeding \$10,000 compared to volunteer-run organizations (52%).

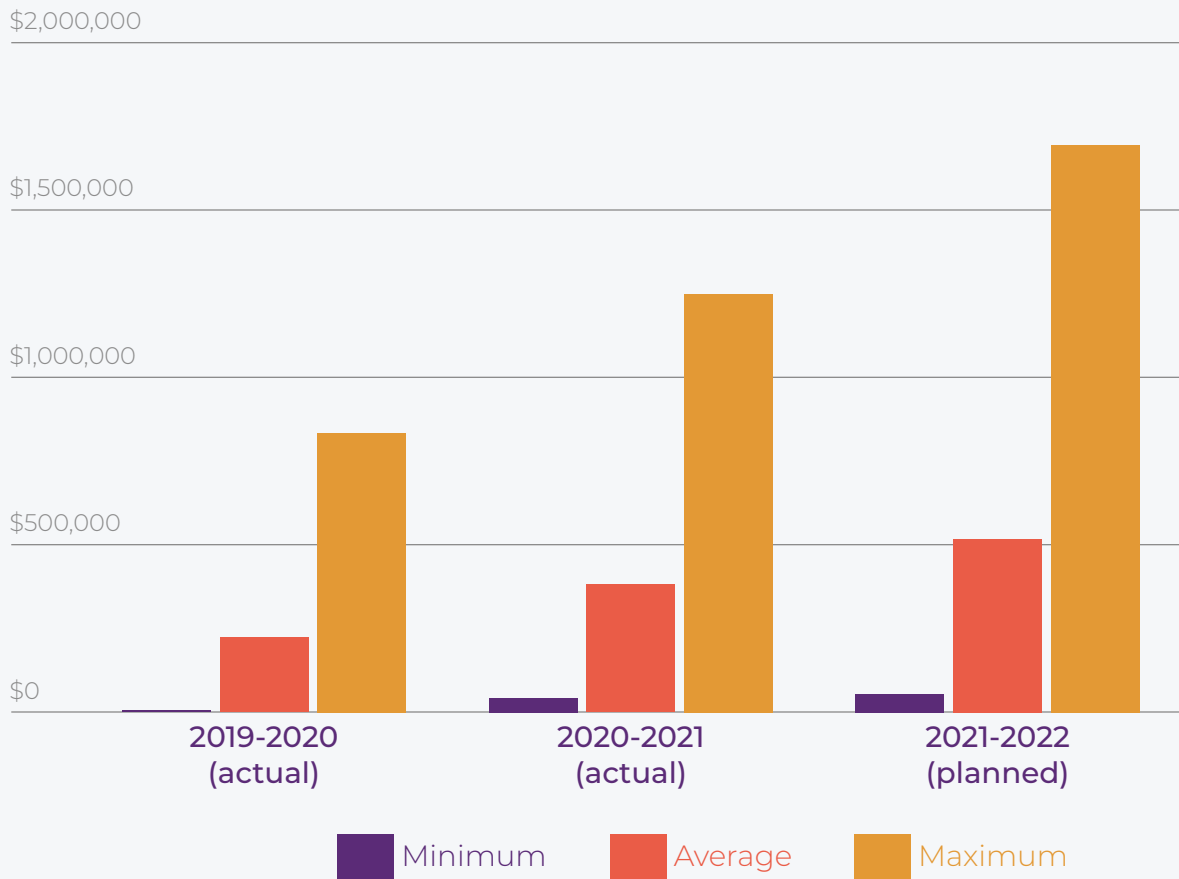
**Figure 46 - Average Revenue Source for Agencies**

The main sources of revenue differ significantly when comparing agencies with less than \$150k in revenue to agencies with more than \$150k revenue.



### Figure 47 - Expenses for Centres with Revenue Greater than \$150k

Average expenses for participating centres increased over the surveyed years.



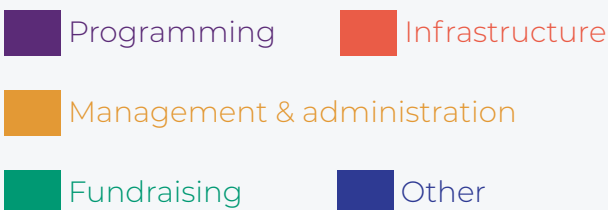
### Figure 48 - Distribution of Expenses

There were no significant changes between the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 financial years.

#### 2019-2020



#### 2020-2021



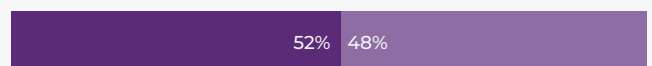
### Figure 49 - Centres with Large Grants

A larger proportion of staffed centres hold a large grant compared to volunteer centres.

#### Overall



#### Volunteer centres or initiatives



#### Staffed centres or initiatives



The total sum of received grants amounted to \$6,811,541.00 (Table 1). This figure can be further broken down by the type of organization and staff composition. On average, organizations with both paid part-time and full-time staff received the highest amount of grant funding, while volunteer-run organizations received the least. Notably, organizations with only paid part-time staff received the lowest average grant funding.

It is important to note that the data segmentation is influenced by the limited number of participants, with nearly a third of the organizations that completed the survey (29%) reporting that they did not receive any grants exceeding \$10,000.

**Funding barriers** Participants in the survey identified several key barriers to securing grants and funding, including:

- ▶ **Limited Grant Writing Experience** Many organizations cited a lack of experience and expertise in grant writing as a significant barrier. This limited their ability to access available funding opportunities.
- ▶ **Competition** Participants noted that often there is much greater need for resources than available funds, making it challenging to secure funding for their programs and services and setting up a false sense of competition between organizations.

**Table 1 - Descriptive Statistics of Grants Received, by Centre Staffing**

Centres with both paid part-time and full-time staff had the highest average grants. Volunteer centres had the lowest minimum total grant funding.

Centre staffing	Grant Mean	Minimum total grant funding	Maximum total grant Funding	Total grant amount	Number of centres/ initiatives
Volunteers	\$214,698.62	\$15,000.00	\$1,140,406.00	\$2,791,082.00	13
Paid part-time	\$131,337.00	\$27,000.00	\$426,201.00	\$715,875.00	4
Paid full-time	\$362,880.67	\$67,700.00	\$573,145.00	\$1,088,642.00	3
Both paid part-time and full-time	\$443,188.40	\$106,000.00	\$971,323.00	\$2,215,942.00	5
Total	\$272,461.64	\$215,700.00	\$3,111,075.00	\$6,811,541.00	25

*Note: These grant amounts are only representative of grants that were over \$5,000. Two grant amounts were excluded as they were both over four million and represented outliers in relation to the other participating organizations.*

- ▶ **Funding Priorities** Some organizations found it difficult to align their priority areas with those of funders. For example, areas like mental health services and intersectional wellness, which were identified as crucial, were not always recognized as funding priorities by grant providers.
- ▶ **Specific Focus and Eligibility** Organizations with a specific focus, such as trans or gender-diverse programs, sometimes faced challenges. They are sometimes disqualified for their specific focus areas or labelled as ineligible if their programs don't serve the entire community.
- ▶ **Grassroots Organizations** Grassroots and community-run organizations face obstacles in accessing resources. In some cases, these organizations need to partner with larger organizations to access funding, creating a dynamic where non-2SLGBTQI+ entities retain ownership over funds.
- ▶ **Required Non-Profit Status** New and grassroots organizations often encounter difficulties when grants required non-profit or registered charitable status. Obtaining these statuses, particularly charitable status, is resource-intensive and time-consuming.
- ▶ **Rigid Funding Requirements and Timelines** Many organizations expressed difficulties related to stringent funding requirements, reporting, data collection, and project management expectations. Some government programs prevented organizations from applying for other funds for the same project, leading to delays in project implementation and community services.
- ▶ **Lack of Core Funding Grants** A general lack of support for core funding and operating expenses presents significant challenges for organizations. This limits their ability to allocate resources to essential services like accounting, human resources, fundraising, and marketing.

## Supports Needed for Grant Applications

When asked about the support needed for grant applications, respondents expressed a desire for the following:

- ▶ **Workshops and Training** Many participants highlighted the need for workshops and training on various aspects of grant applications. These included locating grants, understanding types of funding sources, grant writing, program management, building and maintaining funder relationships, and navigating the application process;
- ▶ **Access to a Grant Database** Several organizations expressed a need for a centralized database that lists available grants, funders, eligibility criteria, and examples of previously funded projects.
- ▶ **Peer Review** Organizations wished for a way by which to reach out reach out to other organizations who would be willing to look at prospective grant applications and provide feedback on applications.
- ▶ **Advocating for Equity** Participants emphasized the importance of advocating for equitable distribution of funding, especially for grassroots groups led by historically marginalized communities.



# COVID-19

## Community Well-Being

As can be expected, COVID-19 had a significant impact on the wellbeing of 2SLGBTQI+ communities. A qualitative analysis of the responses resulted in four areas of impact on 2SLGBTQI+ communities:

- ▶ **Basic Needs** Community members faced increased housing and shelter insecurity, food insecurity, and rising unemployment rates.
- ▶ **Mental Health and Addictions** Respondents described that the overall health and well-being of the 2SLGBTQI+ community has deteriorated, with increased emotional distress, anxiety, depression, isolation, and a lack of community support. Respondents also noted higher rates of addiction, drug poisoning/overdose, and suicides among transgender youth. Virtual programming was noted as helping mitigate some of the isolation being experienced by community members and in providing anonymity for attendees. However, there were difficulties with scheduling issues, participant privacy in homes, and access to technology.
- ▶ **Systems Navigation** There has been a surge in demand for services related to counselling, advocacy, and support with legal issues. Reduced access to medical care and extended wait times for health services were also reported.
- ▶ **Violence** Reports of violence targeting trans people increased, and youth have reported experiences of emotional, mental, and physical violence. Notably, respondents discussed that many non-2SLGBTQI+ centers are ill-equipped to provide support to the unique needs of trans and non-binary people and are increasingly reaching out for support.

## Service Needs

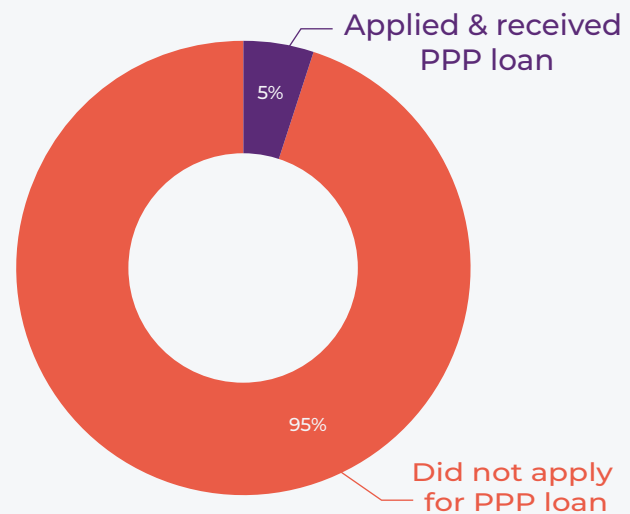
Service needs increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of organizations reported a significant rise in demand for their services. However, many struggled to meet this increased demand due to limitations in staffing capacity and available funding.

## Impact on Staffing

COVID-19 had minimal impact on the staffing of 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives. Very few organizations reported layoffs, reductions in staff pay and benefits, or applying for PPP loans. However, qualitative reports highlight the challenges that organizations faced in meeting the increased demands and needs of their community members during the pandemic.

**Figure 50 - COVID-19 Staffing**

Only 5% of participating centres applied for and received a paycheque protection program loan.



## Impact on Programming

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the programming offered by 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives, with more than two-thirds of respondents reporting this impact (see [Figure 51](#)).

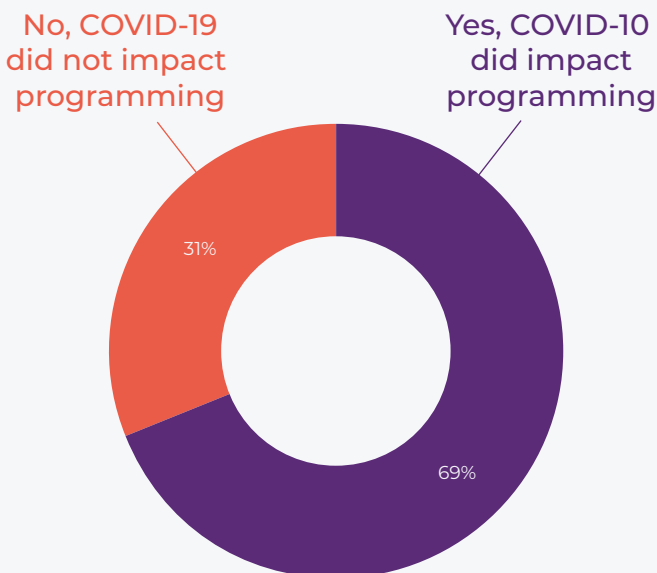
**Online Programming** Before the pandemic, most programs were delivered in-person, with only a quarter offering online programming online (26%; see [Figure 52](#)). However, during the pandemic, ninety-one percent of participants adapted their programs to an online format, including peer support services, health services, educational programs, workshops, virtual events, group meetings, outreach, and

community feedback sessions. Some continued to offer a mix of online and in-person programming. The shift to online programming allowed for improved outreach to rural and international participants. However, it also presented challenges for individuals with limited access to technology and privacy concerns. This was particularly problematic for youth living at home, older adults and seniors in residential facilities and those living with caregivers or roommates.

Eighty-five percent of respondents indicated that they plan to continue offering online services after the pandemic.

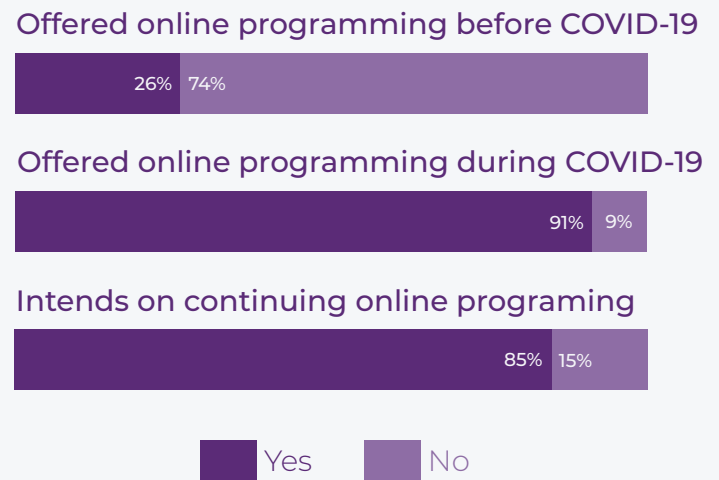
**Figure 51 - COVID-19 Programming**

Almost 70% of participants said that COVID-19 impacted programming.



**Figure 52 - Online Programming**

Only one-quarter of centres offered online programming before COVID-19. During the pandemic, a majority of centres began to offer and intend on continuing to offer online programming.





# Supporting Responsiveness to Community Needs

Respondents consistently expressed the need for more funding to enhance their capacity to meet community needs. They emphasized the importance of mission-driven funding that can directly support services for 2SLGBTQI+ people. Further, funding should be longer term to help organizations achieve stability, growth, and staff retention. Respondents highlighted the ongoing need for funding to address post-COVID-19 challenges, such as hiring more staff for counselling, expanding systems navigation, increasing outreach efforts, facilitating support groups, and administration.

Participants also requested training, workshops, and other resources including:

- ▶ **Governance** Offering board bootcamps, onboarding for new board members, and assistance with fundraising and policy development, particularly in response to the pandemic-related safety concerns
- ▶ **Operations** Providing training for phonenumber services, volunteer and staff onboarding, effective meetings management
- ▶ **Media Engagement** Assistance with tasks such as writing press releases, op-eds, and in conducting interviews
- ▶ **Organizational Learning** Offering training related to program and service evaluation, community engagement, addressing emerging community needs, and conducting relevant community-based research
- ▶ **Programming** Providing support and guidance on running effective online programming and operating safe drop-in spaces, covering topics like de-escalation and naloxone facilitation
- ▶ **Equity initiatives** Offering training on anti-racism, Indigenous law and customs, and sexual assault awareness.

Lastly, respondents requested opportunities to connect with other groups across the country working on similar initiatives. This networking was seen as a way to enhance organizational capacity by reducing the time required to research, identify, and collaborate with suitable partners.

# Conclusion

*Mapping Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Movement* is the first-ever comprehensive scan of 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives across Canada. The project was inspired by Centerlink's bi-annual Community Center Survey Report on LGBT Centers in the United States, and championed by the Enchanté Network, as it works to build capacity for 2SLGBTQI+ centres from coast to coast to coast. Through this study, we have gained a deeper understanding of 2SLGBTQI+ organizations, initiatives, and partners across Canada. We focused on organizational capacity, funding landscapes, programming, and the impacts of COVID-19. Importantly, we found that respondents deliver a wide range of programs that directly support 2SLGBTQI+ people, including areas such as arts and culture programs, social group supports, educational services, and referrals. The primary area of support was identified as policy engagement and advocacy, a critical area of focus given the increasing rates of discrimination and exclusion at personal, political, and institutional levels.

Canada has seen a rapid growth of organizations and initiatives for 2SLGBTQI+ communities over the last decade. To support this growth and the vital services these organizations provide, we need to increase staffing capacity, particularly focusing on administrative and operational training and expertise. Additionally, there is a need for better alignment of priorities between grantors and communities, as well as increased partnerships between organizations and across regions. We provide more details about these recommendations below.

TEN is well-positioned to address these areas by providing training and resources that address operational and governance needs across the sector, advocating on behalf of Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ centre movement, and providing opportunities for collaboration and networking.

# Recommendations

## Supporting 2SLGBTQI+ Centres, Organizations, and Initiatives

**Training and resources** Provide comprehensive training to 2SLGBTQI+ centres, organizations, and partners through both in-person and online modules. Training areas should include governance, operations, organizational learning, programming, equity initiatives, and grants and funding.

### Inter-organizational connections

Respondents want to connect with other 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives that are focusing on similar priorities, both in terms of sharing knowledge and in building collaborative models. Respondents requested that TEN facilitate a database of 2SLGBTQI+ initiatives across the country in order to increase capacity for connection and to improve cross-organizational learning. Respondents are also interested in mentorship opportunities where experienced community leaders with grant writing expertise can provide feedback on grant applications for newer organizations and leaders.

**Resources and Financial Support** Across the board, it was identified that organizations could better respond to community needs with increased resources and funding. We recommend ongoing advocacy to various levels of granting and funding support, with a focus on areas that represent heightened need for 2SLGBTQI+ communities, such as counselling, systems navigation, outreach, support groups, and administration. More specifically, this includes the following improvements:

- ▶ **Longer Timelines** There is a clear need for increased timelines for contracts and grants. For example, extending common one-year timelines to three or five-year agreements in order to better support organizational stability, growth, and staff retention. Further,

we recommend revisiting funding requirements that prohibit organizations from applying to other funds for the same project, as these requirements result in project and community service delay.

- ▶ **Core and Operational Contracts** 2SLGBTQI+ organizations need operational funding. This includes eligibility for costs related to project management, accounting, rent, human resources, and evaluation, as each of these are directly tied to frontline programming, support services, and other community initiatives. Without recognition of the administrative and operational needs of these organizations, 2SLGBTQI+ centres and programs will continue to face high rates of turnover, decreased capacity, and interrupted programming.
- ▶ **Equitable Grants and Programs** Prioritized support for Two Spirit /Indigiqueer, QTBIPOC, and trans and nonbinary-focused initiatives, particularly those that are led by and delivered by these groups.
- ▶ **National and Regional Grant Tracking** We recommend continued updates and expansion to TEN's grant database to include information on grantors, grant amounts, levels of government, eligibility requirements, examples of successfully funded projects, and application tips. There is also a need for resources to help grassroots and emerging initiatives transition to more formalized structures such as attaining non-profit or charity status in order to meet funding eligibility requirements.

## Future Surveys

**Demographic data on 2SLGBTQI+ leaders, staff, volunteers, and people who access services** Given the limited number of respondents providing information on staff and board demographics, further research is needed to understand if 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives are being led and operated by 2SLGBTQI+ people. It's important to gain greater awareness of the representation of BIPOC, trans, nonbinary, and other underrepresented groups within leadership and decision-making positions. Additionally, it is clear from our findings that organizations need support in tracking internal metrics and demographics to better understand the needs of those accessing their services.

**Survey length and participation** Participants who completed the survey commented that it was too long, and we acknowledge this feedback. The survey spanned multiple years due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring extensive data input. Future surveys will not require additional questions related to COVID-19 and should aim to be shorter while still including essential questions and information.

However, of those that did complete the full survey, interest and investment was high and we really appreciate all of the time spent supporting these efforts

**Increasing participation** We recommend that future iterations of the survey follow Centerlink's practice that includes completion of the survey as a requirement for membership in the network. If TEN employs this practice going forward, this will help gain a more comprehensive understanding of growth and barriers faced by 2SLGBTQI+ centres and initiatives. It will also provide valuable insights to support TEN in its future efforts.

**Survey language administration** Due to resource limitations, the survey was only available in English, which does not align with TEN's mission as a bilingual organization. Future iterations of the survey should be developed in both English and French to ensure accessibility to a wider range of participants.



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