



HSEQ Career Survey Results

HSEQ Recruitment.
Done Differently.



Key takeaways



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At Sundstrom Recruitment, we wanted to understand how HSEQ professionals themselves view their careers, challenges, and aspirations within the current Australian landscape. To do this, we surveyed individuals working across sectors such as mining, construction, logistics, and environmental services.

The results paint a picture of a workforce that is both committed and cautious. While confidence in the future of the profession remains strong, many HSEQ professionals are re-evaluating their roles, with a significant proportion considering a move in the next 12 months. The reasons are varied – from a desire for new challenges and better work-life balance to concerns around pay, recognition, and long-term stability.

Many respondents feel their current roles lack development opportunities, leadership support, or flexibility, and most expressed a strong appetite for professional growth, particularly in technical upskilling, ESG and sustainability knowledge, and digital systems. These insights suggest that employers who invest in career development and create clearer progression paths are more likely to retain top talent.

Looking ahead, HSEQ professionals see skills shortages, compliance demands, and resourcing pressures as the biggest risks to the profession's future. While optimism remains, there is a clear call for better support, smarter systems, and more investment in the people who keep workplaces safe.



Professionals want
growth and development



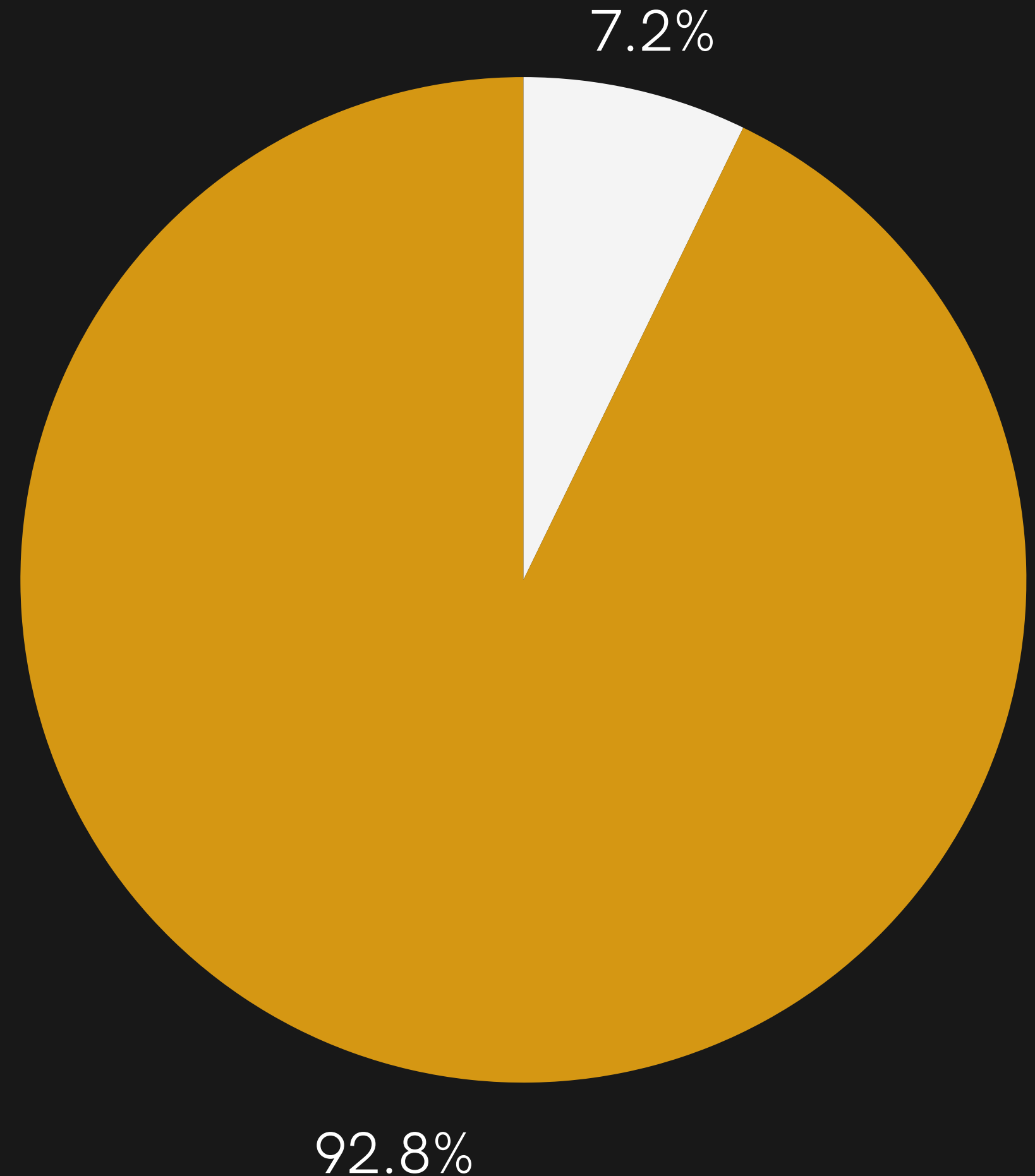
Retention risks
are rising fast



Optimism tempered
by ongoing challenges

Are you currently working as an HSEQ professional?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No, but I have previous experience in HSEQ



All respondents to the survey confirmed that they are currently working within the HSEQ profession, ensuring the insights reflect genuine, first-hand perspectives from active industry practitioners.

This full participation from working professionals gives strong credibility to the data, as it captures real experiences from those embedded in day-to-day safety, environmental, and quality management roles.

It also reinforces the breadth of HSEQ as a discipline - spanning positions from Advisors and Coordinators to Leads and Managers - providing a well-rounded view of how professionals at different career stages see the current state of the industry.

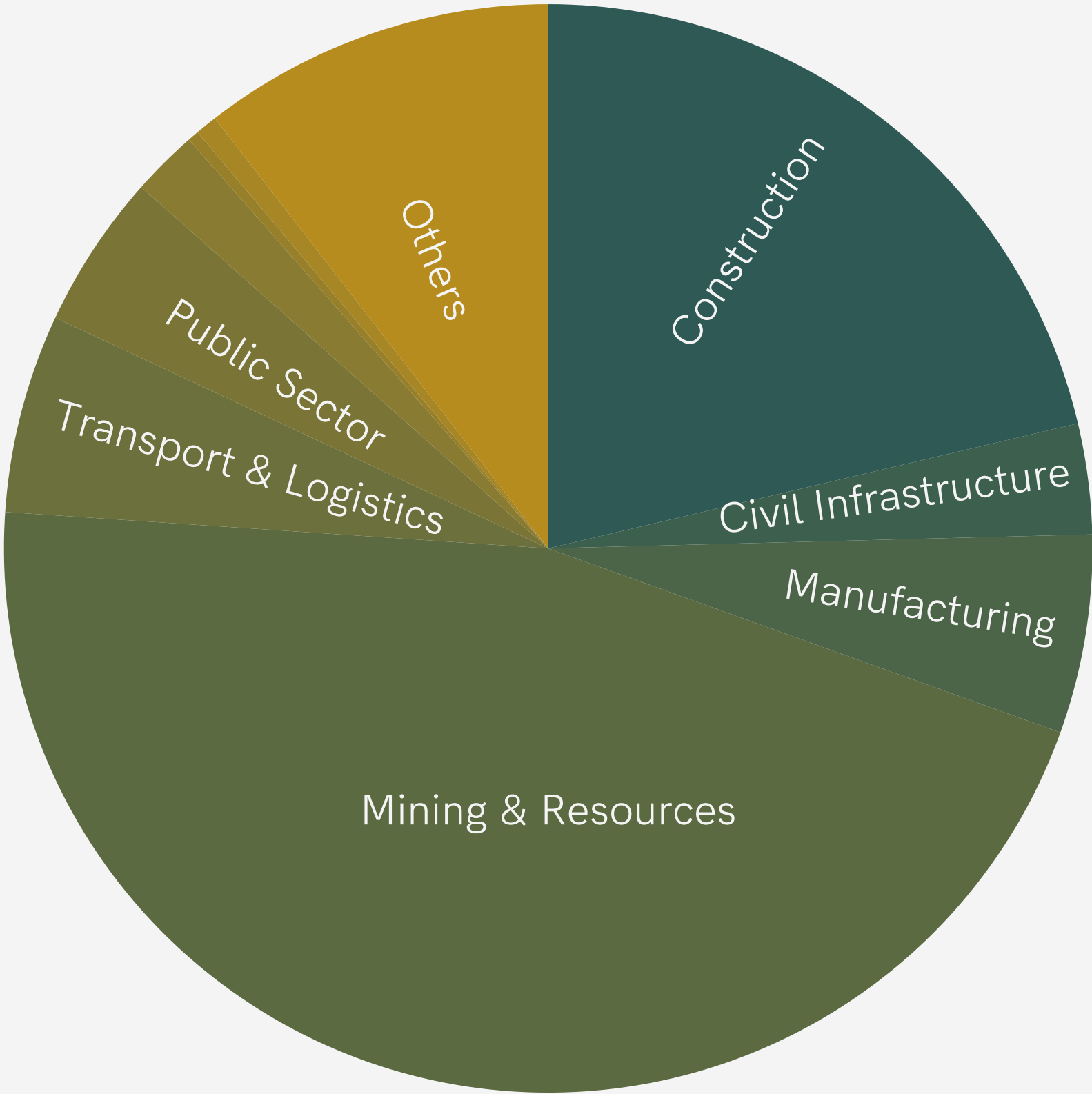
Which sector do you currently work in?

The majority of respondents to the HSEQ Career Survey work in Mining & Resources, followed by Construction, reflecting the strong concentration of HSEQ activity in Australia’s high-risk, resource-driven industries.

Smaller but significant groups also came from Transport & Logistics, Manufacturing, and the Government and Public Sector, illustrating the breadth of HSEQ roles beyond traditional heavy industry.

A diverse range of niche areas - from Energy and Renewables to Defence, Aviation, and Environmental Services - were also represented, showing that the reach of HSEQ continues to expand across both established and emerging sectors.

This spread demonstrates the increasing integration of safety, environment, and quality functions across the full spectrum of Australian industry.



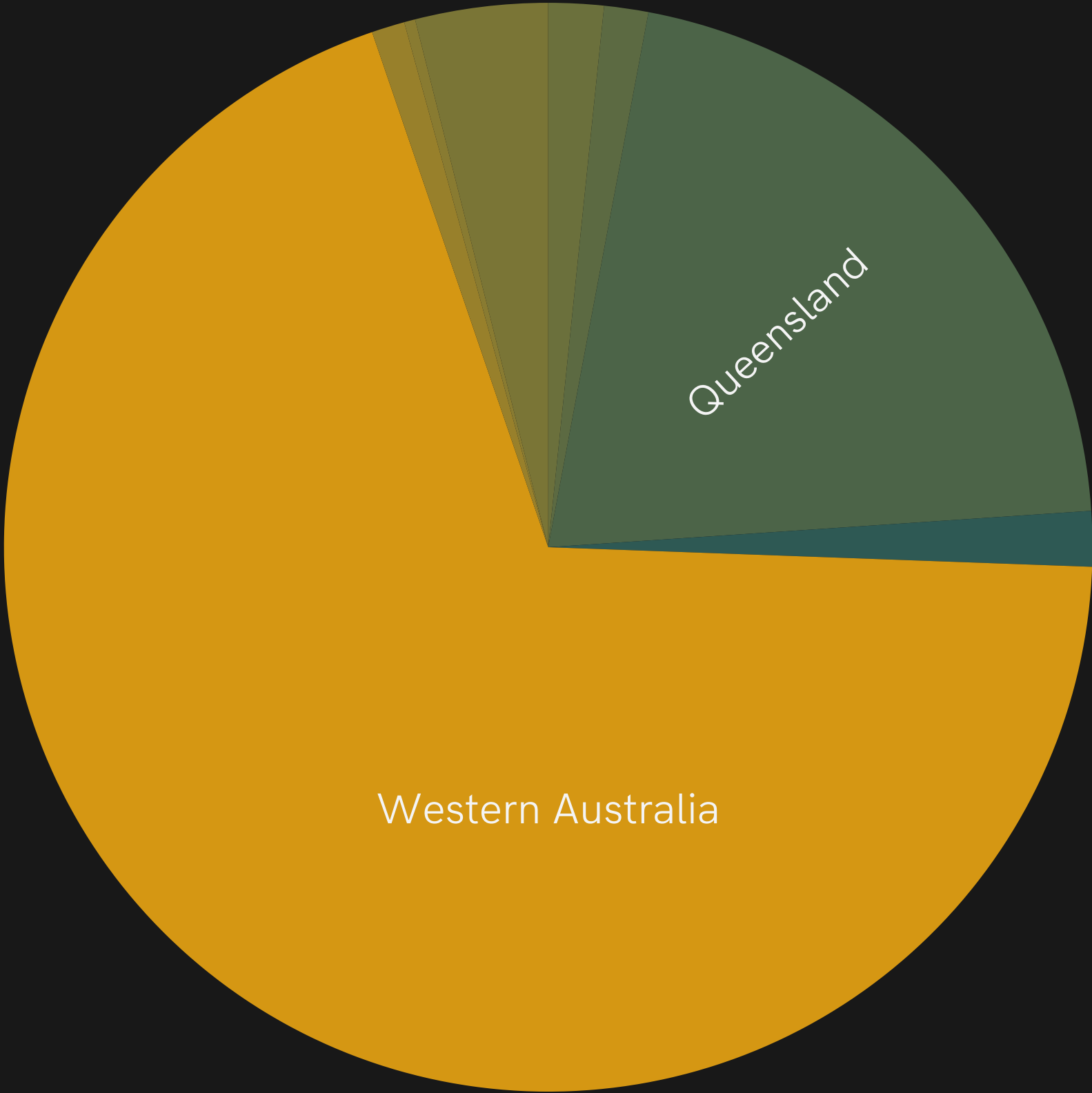
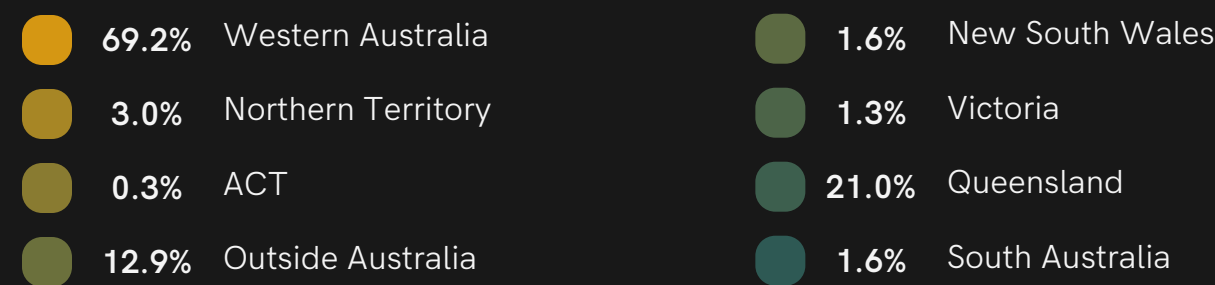
Which state or territory are you based in?

The majority of HSEQ professionals surveyed are based in Western Australia, reflecting the state’s dominant role in mining, resources, and heavy industry.

Queensland also featured strongly, consistent with its significant energy, construction, and infrastructure sectors.

Smaller representation came from New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, and the Northern Territory, while a handful of respondents reported working outside Australia, underlining the global mobility of HSEQ professionals.

This geographic spread highlights that while HSEQ expertise is national, its epicentre remains firmly rooted in Western Australia’s industrial heartland.

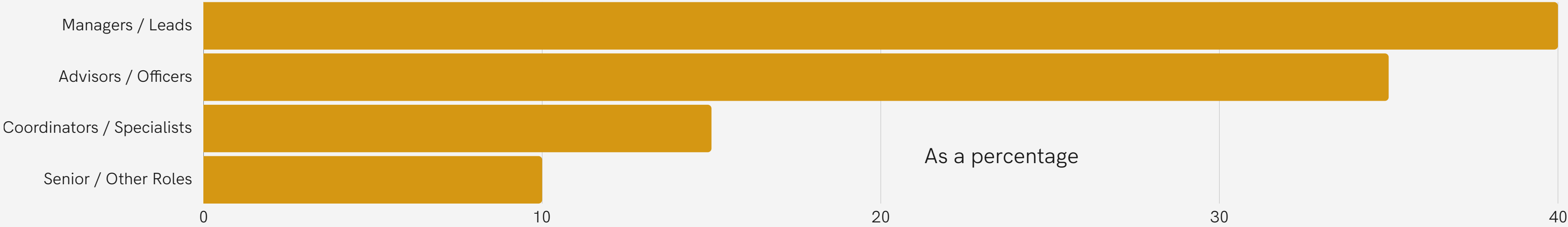


What is your current position or job title?

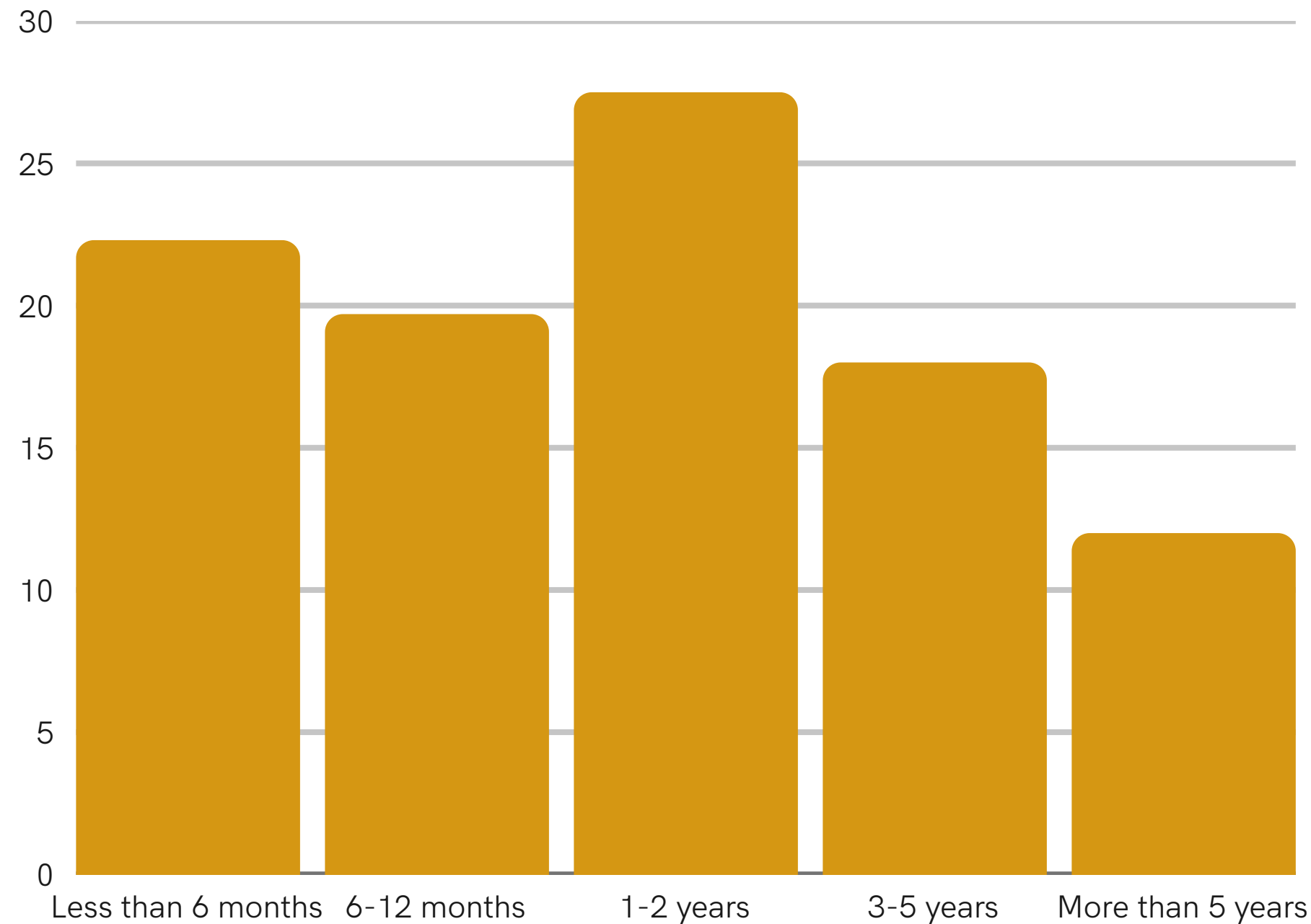
When asked about their current role, the majority of respondents identified as Advisors or Managers, reflecting the profession’s strong mid-career profile.

Around 40% hold managerial or lead positions, while a further 35% work in advisory roles, suggesting most HSEQ professionals operate at the heart of operational delivery and team leadership. Smaller groups of Coordinators and Specialists (15%) and Senior or niche roles (10%) add further depth to the field.

Overall, the results show a profession that is experienced, established, and highly operational, with most respondents occupying key roles that drive day-to-day safety, environmental, and quality outcomes on the ground.



How long have you been in your current role?



Nearly half of respondents (~45%) have been in their role for less than a year, showing job movement in the market.



The largest group (28% of respondents) have held their current position for 1–2 years, reflecting a still-settling workforce.



Around 30% of respondents have been in their role for 3 years and above, suggesting a solid core of experienced staff.



Only 12% respondents have stayed more than five years, indicating retention beyond mid-term remains a challenge in HSEQ.

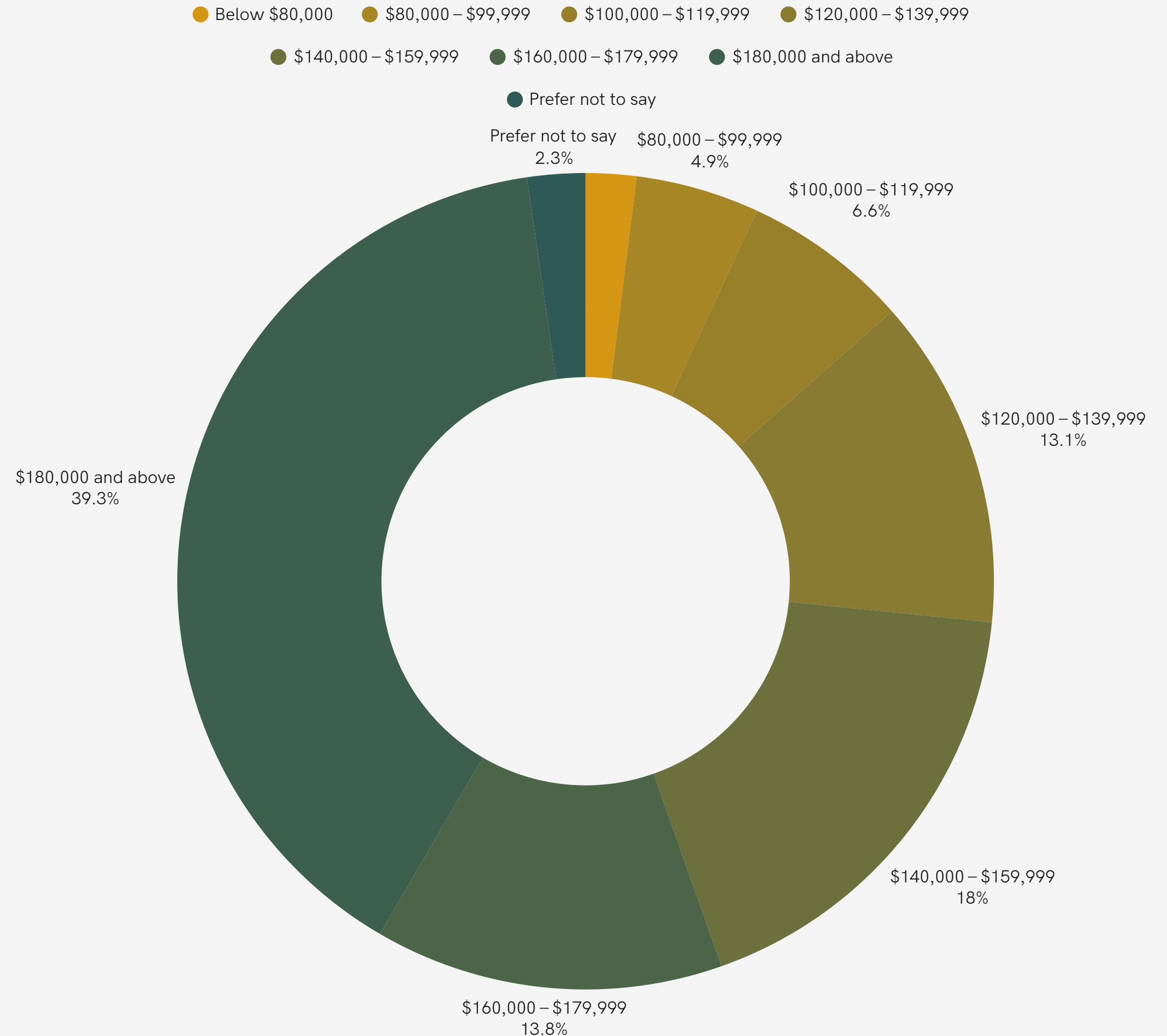
What is your current annual salary (excluding bonuses and superannuation)

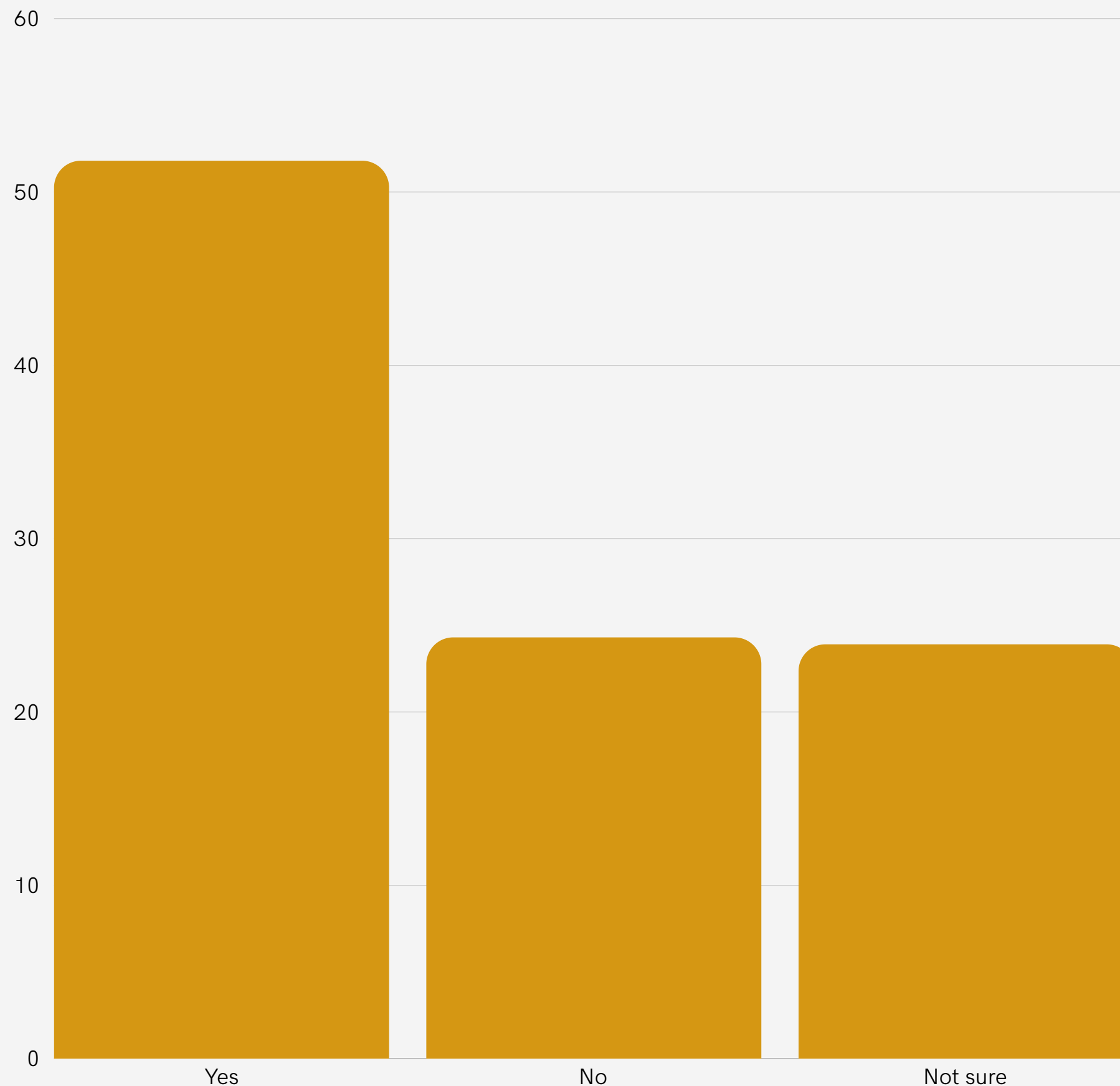
The survey results show that HSEQ professionals are among Australia's higher-earning workforces, with the majority reporting salaries well above the national average.

Around 40% of respondents earn \$180,000 and above, while a further 30% fall between \$140,000 and \$179,999, highlighting the strong market value placed on experienced HSEQ talent.

Mid-level salaries between \$100,000 and \$139,999 account for roughly 20% of professionals, and only a small proportion - about 7% - earn below \$100,000.

Overall, the findings reflect a mature, well-compensated profession, where earnings scale predictably with seniority and technical expertise - particularly across mining, construction, and other resource-intensive industries.



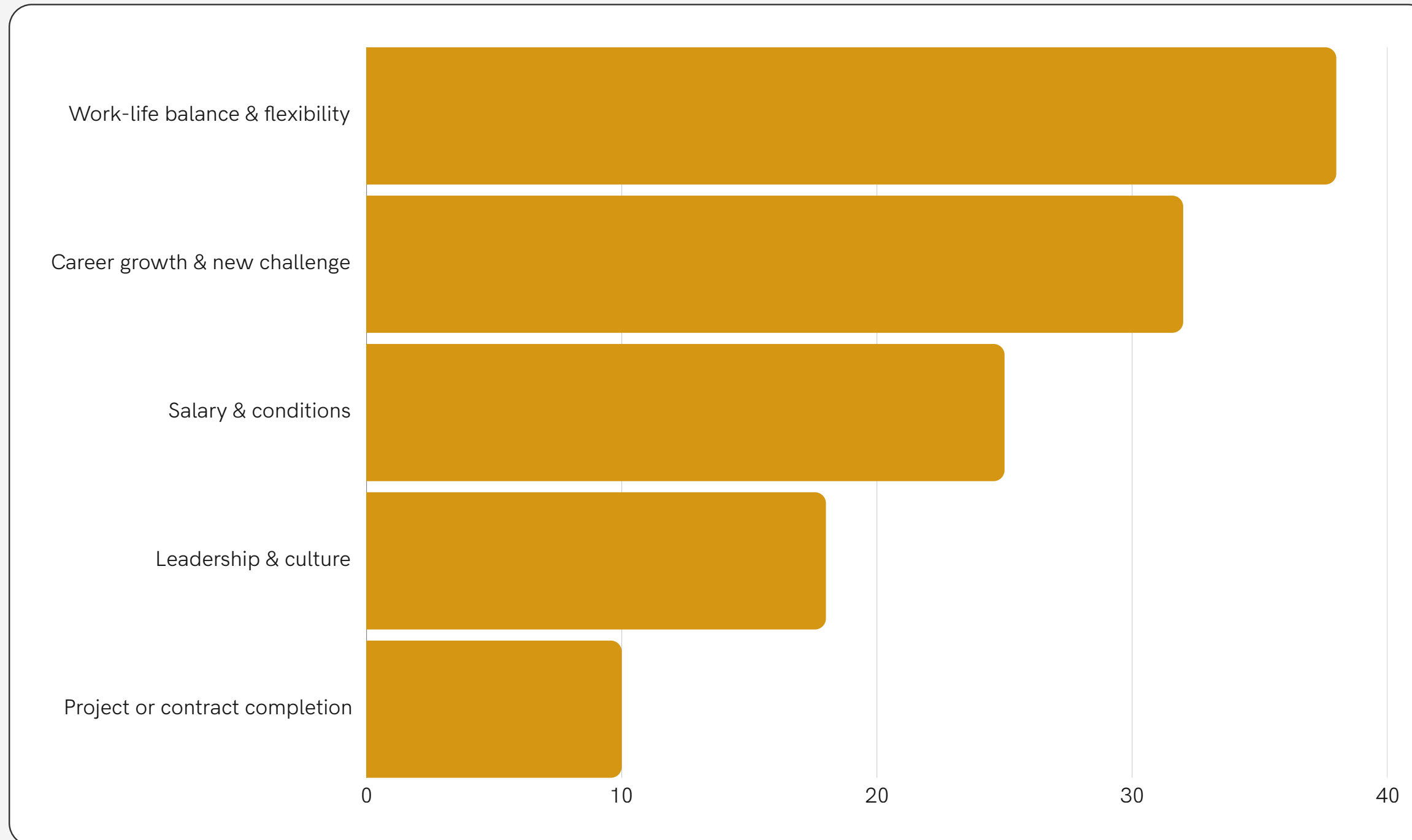


Are you considering changing jobs in the next 12 months?

The results reveal a workforce that is mobile and open to change. Almost half of respondents (52%) said they are considering changing jobs within the next year, reflecting strong movement and demand dynamics across the HSEQ profession. A further 24% are undecided, suggesting a degree of uncertainty that may be influenced by market conditions or personal circumstances. Only 24% said they are not planning to move, indicating that retention could become a growing challenge for employers.

Overall, the findings point to a highly active job market, where even satisfied professionals are keeping their options open — emphasising the need for employers to focus on engagement, development, and long-term career pathways to retain top talent.

What are the main reasons you're considering a move?



Among those considering a job change, the leading motivators are salary, work-life balance, and company culture.

Almost half of respondents cited salary expectations (46%) as a key driver, followed closely by work-life balance (43%) and cultural factors (40%), highlighting a blend of financial and lifestyle priorities.

Career progression and new challenges were also strong themes, chosen by around a third of respondents, showing that ambition and professional growth remain powerful motivators.

Meanwhile, issues such as leadership, job security, and travel demands were mentioned less frequently but still contribute to turnover risk. Overall, the findings reveal a workforce that isn't simply dissatisfied - it's seeking better alignment between pay, purpose, and personal wellbeing.

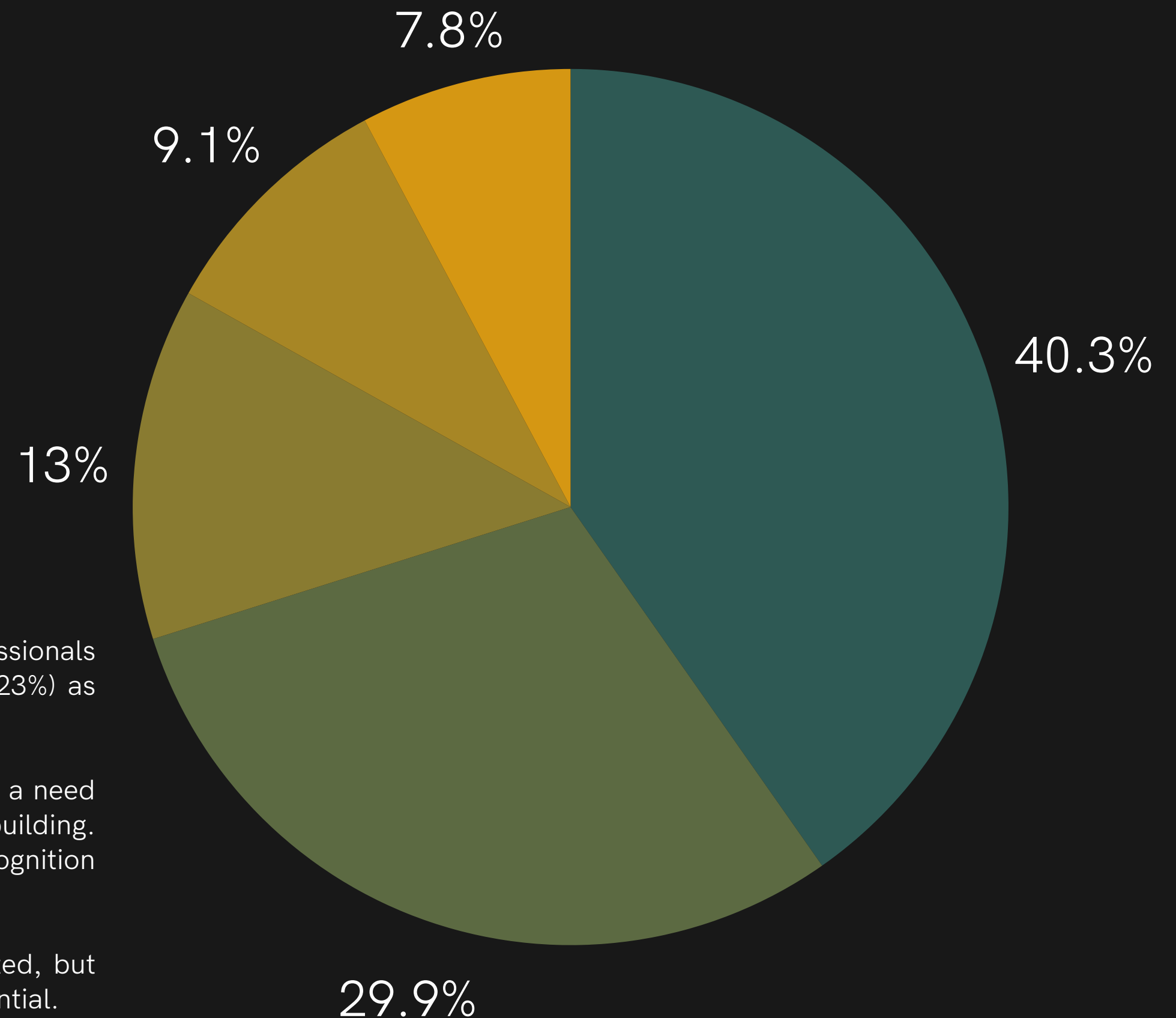
What do you feel is currently missing or lacking in your role?



When asked what's missing in their current role, most HSEQ professionals identified leadership and support (31%) and development opportunities (23%) as the main gaps.

Many feel they lack guidance, feedback, and pathways to grow, signalling a need for stronger management engagement and investment in capability-building. Smaller but meaningful proportions cited tools and systems (10%), recognition (7%), and flexibility (6%) as areas needing improvement.

Together, the results point to a profession that is motivated and committed, but looking for better support, structure, and development to reach its full potential.

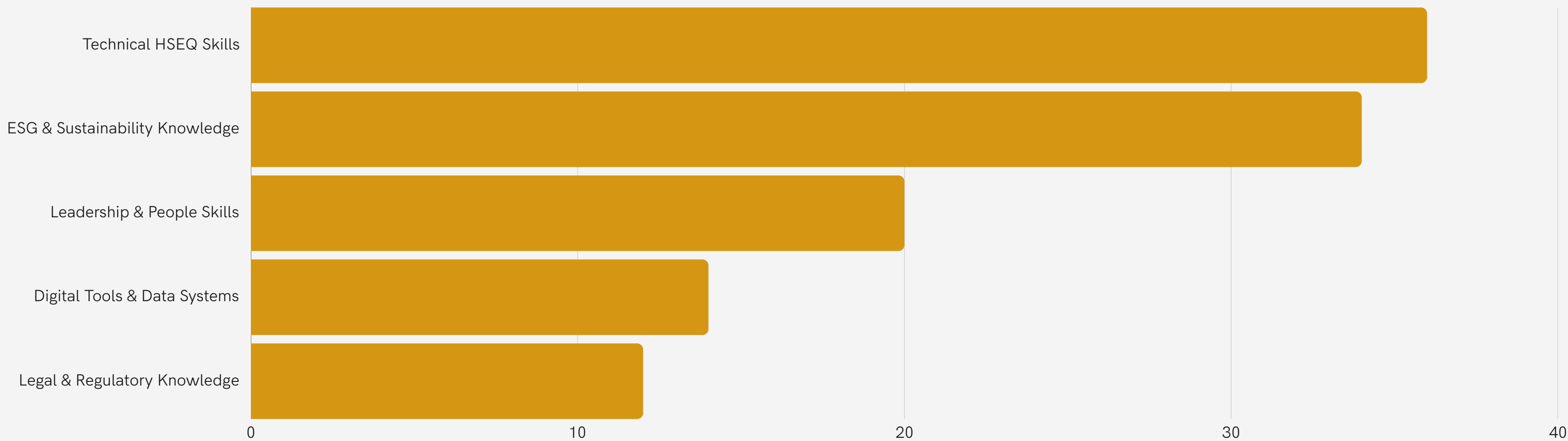


What areas would you most like to develop in professionally over the next 12 months?

When asked which areas they most want to develop in over the next 12 months, HSEQ professionals placed leadership and people skills (36%) and technical expertise (34%) at the top of their priorities.

This reflects a desire to strengthen both strategic influence and on-the-ground capability as the profession continues to evolve. Interest in digital tools and data systems (20%) is also rising, highlighting the growing role of technology in safety and compliance.

Meanwhile, ESG and sustainability (14%) and legal and regulatory knowledge (12%) round out the list, showing that professionals are increasingly focused on broadening their understanding beyond traditional safety functions. Overall, the findings reveal a profession that's ambitious, adaptable, and eager to grow in scope and sophistication.

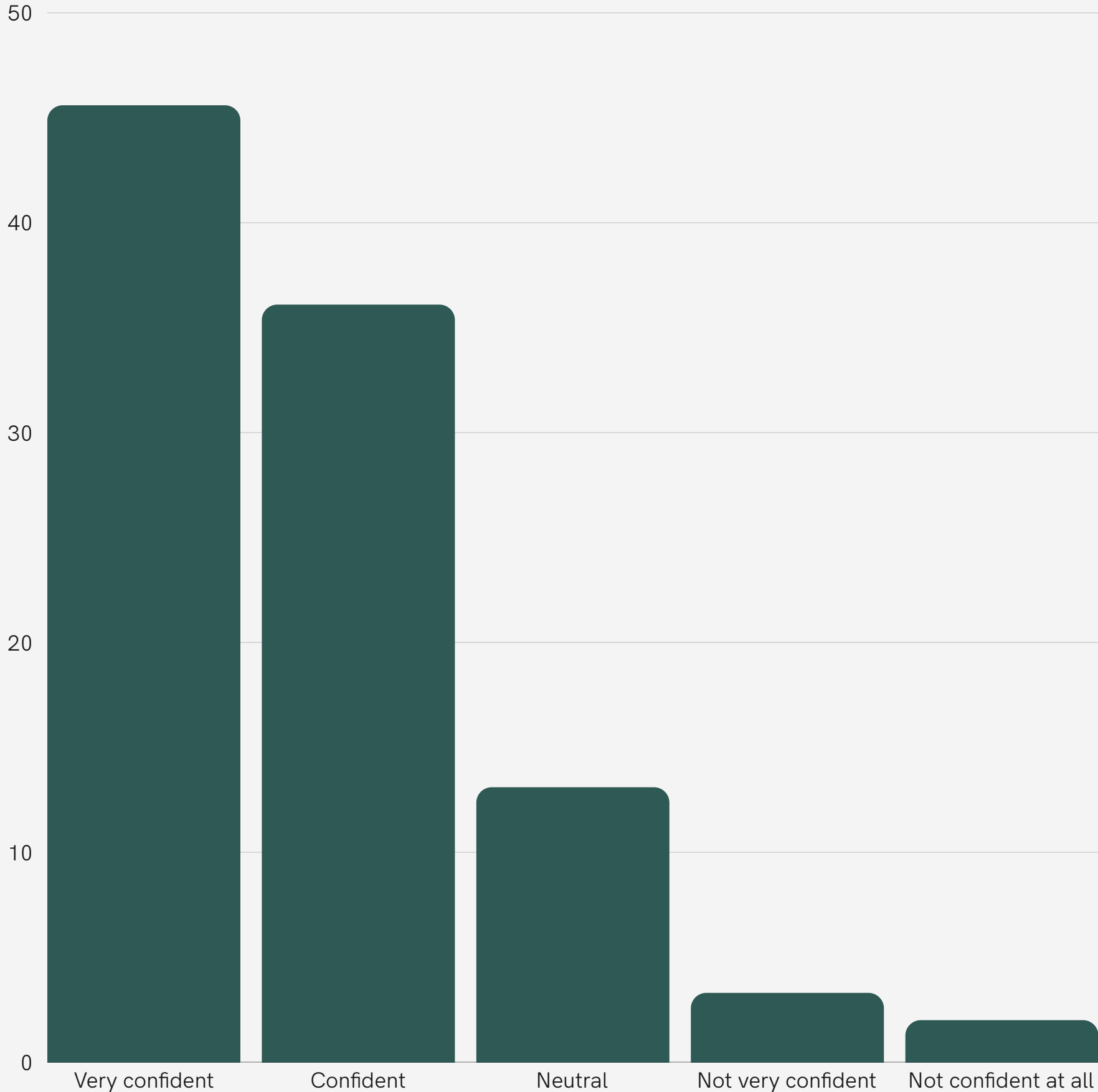


How confident do you feel about the future of the HSEQ profession?

The survey results reveal a clear sense of optimism within the HSEQ community about the direction of the profession. Nearly half of respondents (45.6%) said they feel very confident about its future, with another 36.1% describing themselves as confident. This overwhelming majority - more than four in five professionals - suggests strong belief in the relevance, stability, and growing strategic importance of HSEQ across Australian industry.

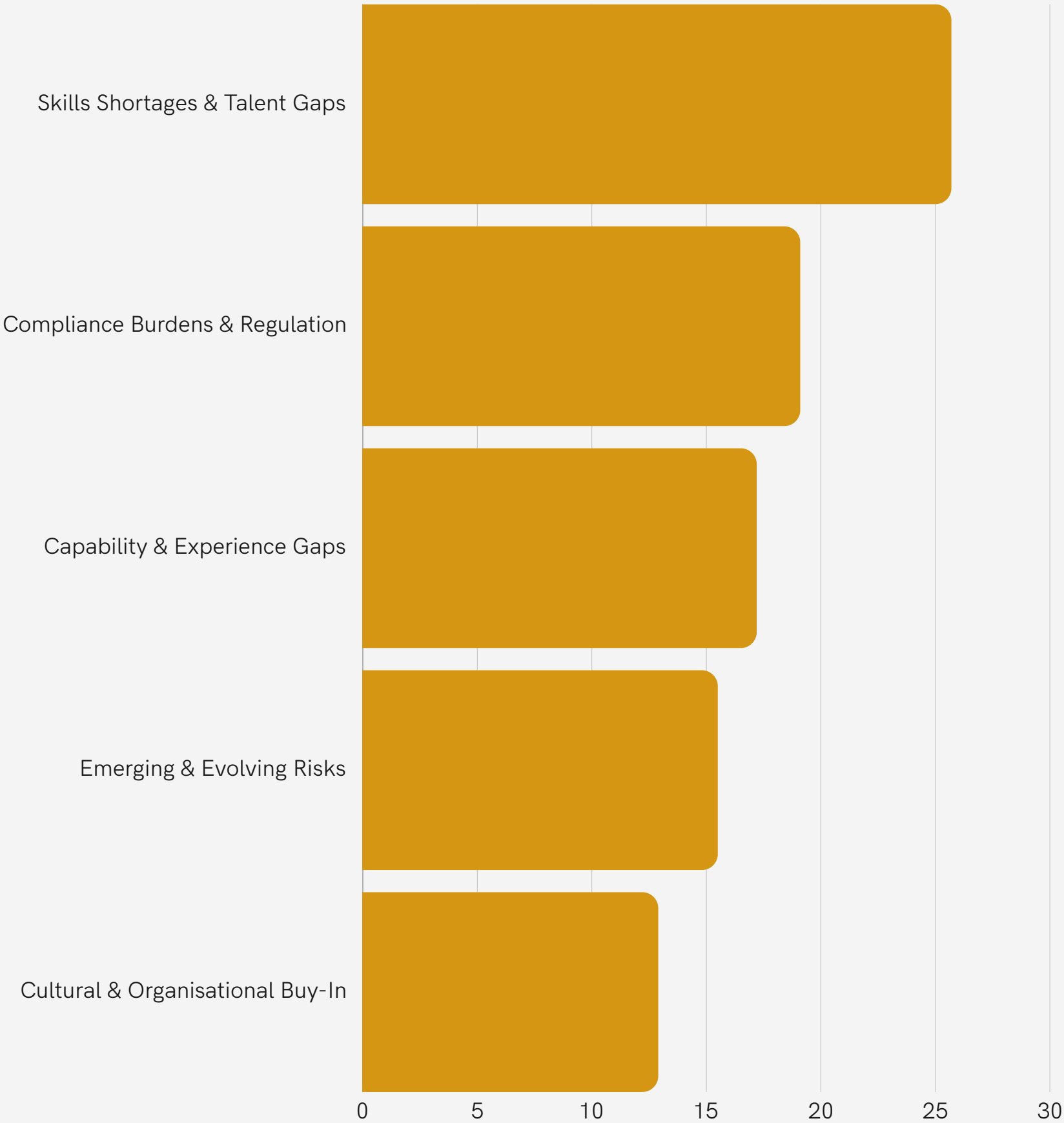
A smaller share (13.1%) expressed neutral views, while only 5.3% felt unsure or pessimistic. Comments from respondents indicate that this cautious minority are concerned about skills shortages, resourcing pressures, and leadership engagement, rather than the value of the profession itself.

Overall, these results point to a mature and self-assured workforce, one that recognises both the challenges and opportunities ahead but remains united in its confidence that HSEQ will continue to evolve as a critical function in business performance and workplace culture.



What do you see as the major areas of concern within the HSEQ landscape currently?

“Shortage of skilled HSEQ professionals”	“Limited practical experience across the workforce”
“Overly complex compliance requirements”	“Excessive admin burden on practitioners”
“Lack of leadership engagement”	“Inconsistent safety culture across organisations”
“Limited accountability for HSEQ outcomes”	“Growing focus on psychosocial risk”
“New challenges from technology and automation”	“Evolving legislation and ESG expectations”
“Unqualified personnel in senior roles”	“Regulation driving process, not performance”



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