



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Memorandum

To: Board of Trustees
From: Tracy Barill, Director of Education
Date: January 23, 2023
Subject: **Student Census (2021-2022) Report**
Origin: Kayode Akomolafe, Human Rights and Equity Advisor

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to share the outcome of the student demographic data collection process which was conducted in the spring of 2022

Background

Data collection is an important tool for school boards as they work towards identifying and addressing systemic barriers that are related to the Ontario Human Rights Code. Subsequent data analysis can help to ensure programs, services and educational opportunities are equitable for all students.

The Ministry of Education has provided funding and direction to school boards to build capacity to collect, analyze and use voluntary student demographic data for the following purposes, as outlined in the Transfer Payment Agreement:

- promoting inclusive and equitable learning environments in Ontario's publicly funded education system through evidence-informed decision making on policies, improvement planning, training and targeted programs and supports;
- meeting their responsibilities to protect and advance human rights under the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code); and
- meeting their obligations under the Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism (the Data Standards), and in particular to identify, monitor and address inequities with respect to student course enrollment (i.e., academic, applied, locally developed courses), suspensions, expulsions, exclusions and students receiving special education.

In April 2022, the Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) conducted the voluntary “Stand Up, Be Counted, Be Heard” Student Census for students from Grades 4-12. Students from grades 9-12 were invited to complete the survey independently, whereas, for students from Grades 4-8, the student census was sent directly to parents /guardians for completion at home.

Census Mandate

The government of Ontario set the following mandates to guide the survey process:

- i. Promote the DCDSB’s understanding and support of the diversity of students and their families,
- ii. Eliminate barriers to student success,
- iii. Enrich students’ learning by providing the right supports at the right time, while making schools a safer, more welcoming space to belong to, and
- iv. Deepen the DCDSB’s understanding of how to gauge the impact of systemic barriers on the student’s desk.

Outcomes

Key Demographic Indicators

6,239 students completed the Student Census, approximating a 39% participation rate of the entire DCDSB student population (out of approximately 15,900 eligible students in Grades 4-12 in the 2021-2022 school year). Participating students ranged from Grades 4-12, with Grade 7 students accounting for the highest rate of participation (13.5% or 838 students), and the lowest rate of participation coming from Grade 12 students (7.5% or 466 students)

Census Participation and Mode of Analysis

Out of the 6,239 DCDSB students who completed the Census, Grades 4-8 made up 63.3% (3,947) while Grades 9-12 made up 36.7% (2,292) of those who completed the survey. Quantitative measures of analysis were used to summarize responses for each identity question. Several of the questions provided open-ended options. Generalizations, analysis and conclusions must be mindful that there was a 39% response rate overall. The census participation rates across the region were as follows:

- 1. Whitby FOS - (30%)
- 2. Ajax FOS (25%)
- 3. Oshawa FOS (20%)
- 4. Pickering FOS (18%)
- 5. Brooklin FOS (4%)
- 6. Uxbridge FOS (2%)
- 7. Port Perry FOS & Beaverton FOS (1%)

Reporting Measures and Caveats

The data in this report represents participating students only (i.e. students who completed the Census questions) and does not include missing or inadmissible data, students who opted out, etc. Multiple data cleaning processes took place with careful considerations made to ensure data is presented as it was initially reported, to honour the voice of DCDSB students and how they choose to self-identify. This data is presented in graphical and, where possible, tabular format for all Census questions. For multi-response questions, both single and multiple responses are accounted for via data cleaning.

Census Design – Themed Questions

The DCDSB Student Census consisted of twelve (12) questions (plus two additional questions), thematically designed in accordance with identity categories, provided and informed by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Data Standards (ARDS):

- First Language
- Indigenous Status
- Canadian Status
- Ethnic/Cultural Origins
- Race
- Religious or Spiritual Affiliation
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability Status & Type
- Born in Canada Status
- Students' Living Situation
- P1 and P2 Education Level and Employment Status
- Students' Reflection and Affirmation in Curriculum, Resources, Classroom and School Environment

Key Findings

- **First Language** – 75% of DCDSB Census students are English-speaking only; 12% speak more than one language; proportion of Spanish-speaking students exceeds French-speaking students (2% to 0.4%)
- **Indigenous Status** – 1.5% of DCDSB Census students' self-identity as Indigenous
- **Canadian Status** – 90% of DCDSB Census students identify as being Canadian; 6% do not
- **Ethnic/Cultural Origins (Top 3)** – Multiple Ethnicities (25%); South Asian, East Asian or South-East Asian (20%), and European (15%)

- **Racial Group (Top 3)** – White/Caucasian (39%); Black (18%); and South-East Asian (16%)
- **Religious or Spiritual Affiliation (Top 3)** – Christian + Catholic (71%); Christian (12%); and Questioning/Not Sure (7%)
- **Gender Identity** – Female (Woman/Girl) (52%); Male (Man/Boy) (43%); and Gender Diverse (1%)
- **Sexual Orientation** – Straight/Heterosexual (77%); 2SLGBTQ+ (6%)
- **Disability Status** – 8% identify as having a disability; Learning Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Mental Health Disabilities round out Top 3
- **Born in Canada Status** – 84% born in Canada
- **Students' Living Situation** – 98% of DCDSB Census students live with mother and/or father

Limitations and Unlocking Future Potential

A notable limitation of the Student Census was the low participation rate across the entire Board, accounting for approximately a 39% completion rate. As a result, there are obvious gaps in the data which may not provide a complete picture of DCDSB's student population.

Although the response rate of participating students was high for most of the questions (>90%), some questions had lower response rates than others, accounting for more blanks or non-responses.

Beyond formatting issues, other factors that may have accounted for the Census completion rate overall include the clarity of the questions asked, the lack of students' knowledge of particular subject areas, and the sensitive nature of some of questions.

Next Steps

Effect of 39% participation and augmenting with School Climate Survey

The DCDSB Student Census completion rate of 39% falls below the acceptable census participation/completion rate of 80%, for which reliance can be placed on a census data. To help address this, DCDSB plans to augment the Student Census result with data from the School Climate Survey recently conducted in all DCDSB schools.

The DCDSB will collaborate with students, staff, families, and other stakeholders to identify the cause(es) of the low census participation rate and take steps to effectively increase completion rates of future censuses. This is essential in ensuring that the data gap resulting from low student participation rate is closed.

Future censuses will be reformatted to be more accommodating of the diverse ways that censuses may be accessed and completed. Questions will also be restructured to afford easier understanding and better completion rates.

Frequency of conducting the Student Census

The DCDSB has developed a continuous data collection system through voluntary identity-based questions that are embedded in the admission process during student enrollment. This will help in gathering relevant data in the non-census years. A future data collection process may be contemplated but is not planned at this time.

Looking Forward

The Ministry of Education identified inequities which the Student Census is intended to address to include “student course enrollment (i.e., academic, applied, locally developed courses), suspensions, expulsions, exclusions and students receiving special education.” Future surveys will focus on these specific areas through questions that will aid in gathering data that would help in developing policies that effectively address systemic discrimination and barriers that limit student success.

TB/KA/rd
Appendix 1 – DCDSB Student Census 2021-2022

DCDSB Student Census: 2021-2022

An Equity Lens-Based Analysis

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Background Info

In April 2022, the DCDSB “Stand Up, Be Counted, Be Heard” Student Census was administered to students, parents/guardians in Grades 4-8, and to students in Grades 9-12

The Student Census is a government-mandated policy requiring all Ontario school boards to gather identity-based data and complete by 2023. Participation by students and parents/guardians was voluntary, providing capacity and space for participants to skip questions they chose not to answer for any reason

Census Mandate: To help the DCDSB understand and support the diversity of students and their families, eliminate barriers to student success, enrich students’ learning by providing the right supports at the right time, while making schools a safer, more welcoming space to belong to; to deepen our understanding of how to gauge the impact on the student’s desk.

Key Demographic Indicators



6,239 students completed the Student Census, approximating a 39% participation rate of the entire DCDSB student population (out of approximately 15,900 eligible students in Grades 4-12 in the 2021-2022 school year)



Participating students ranged from Grades 4-12, with the highest rate of participation coming from Grade 7 students (13.5% or 838 students), and the lowest rate of participation coming from Grade 12 students (7.5% or 466 students)



Across our Family of Schools, the Whitby Family of Schools had the highest overall level of participation in the DCDSB Census

Census Participation and Mode of Analysis



Out of the 6,239 DCDSB students who completed the Census, 63.3% (3,947) of those who completed were Grades 4-8, while 36.7% (2,292) of those who completed were Grades 9-12



Quantitative measures of analysis are used to summarize responses for each identity question. Several of these questions provided open-ended options. With a 39% response rate overall, generalizations should be made with that in mind



Across our Family of Schools, the rates of participation break down as follows:

1. **Whitby FOS** - (30%)
2. **Ajax FOS** (25%)
3. **Oshawa FOS** (20%)
4. **Pickering FOS** (18%)
5. **Brooklin FOS** (4%)
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Reporting Measures and Caveats



For frame of reference, the data is presented for participating students only (i.e. students who completed the Census questions) and do not include missing or inadmissible data, students who opted out, etc.



Multiple data cleaning processes took place with careful considerations made to ensure data is presented as it was initially reported, to help honour the voice of DCDSB students and how they choose to self-identify



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 - P1 and P2 Education Level and Employment Status
 - Students' Reflection and Affirmation in Curriculum, Resources, Classroom and School Environment

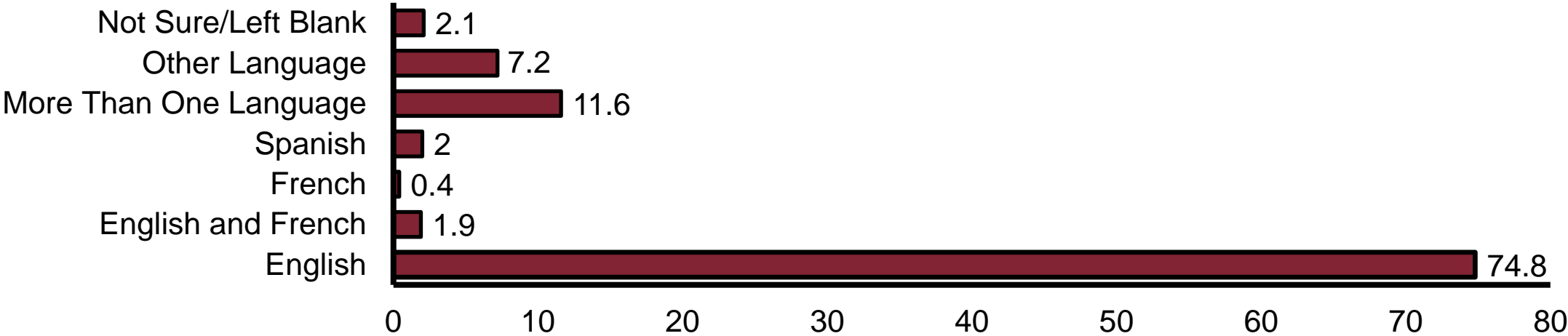
Summary of Results – Census Completion Rates

- **First Language** – 75% of DCDSB Census students are English-speaking only; 12% speak more than one language; proportion of Spanish-speaking students exceeds French-speaking students (2% to 0.4%)
- **Indigenous Status** – 1.5% of DCDSB Census students self-identity as Indigenous
- **Canadian Status** – 90% of DCDSB Census students identify as being Canadian; 6% do not
- **Ethnic/Cultural Origins (Top 3)** – Multiple Ethnicities (25%); South Asian, East Asian or South-East Asian (20%), and European (15%)
- **Racial Group (Top 3)** – White/Caucasian (39%); Black (18%); and South-East Asian (16%)
- **Religious or Spiritual Affiliation (Top 3)** – Christian + Catholic (71%); Christian (12%); and Questioning/Not Sure (7%)
- **Gender Identity** – Female (Woman/Girl) (52%); Male (Man/Boy) (43%); and Gender Diverse (1%)
- **Sexual Orientation** – Straight/Heterosexual (77%); 2SLGBTQ+ (6%)
- **Disability Status** – 8% identify as having a disability; Learning Disabilities (30.8%), Autism Spectrum Disorder (23.1%) and Mental Health Disabilities (20.1%) round out Top 3
- **Born in Canada Status** – 84% born in Canada
- **Students' Living Situation** – 98% of DCDSB Census students live with mother and/or father

Census Q1: Students' First Language - Results

Question from Census:
What is the first language(s) you learned to speak as a child? Select all that apply.

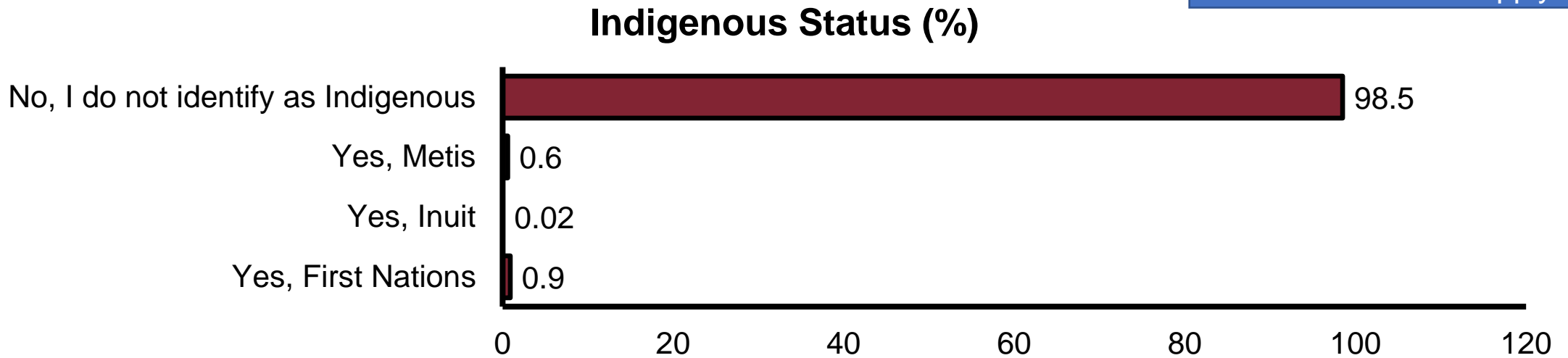
First Language (%)



	English	English and French	French	Spanish	More Than One Language	Other Language	Not Sure/Left Blank
First Language (%)	74.8	1.9	0.4	2	11.6	7.2	2.1

Census Q2: Students' Indigenous Status - Results

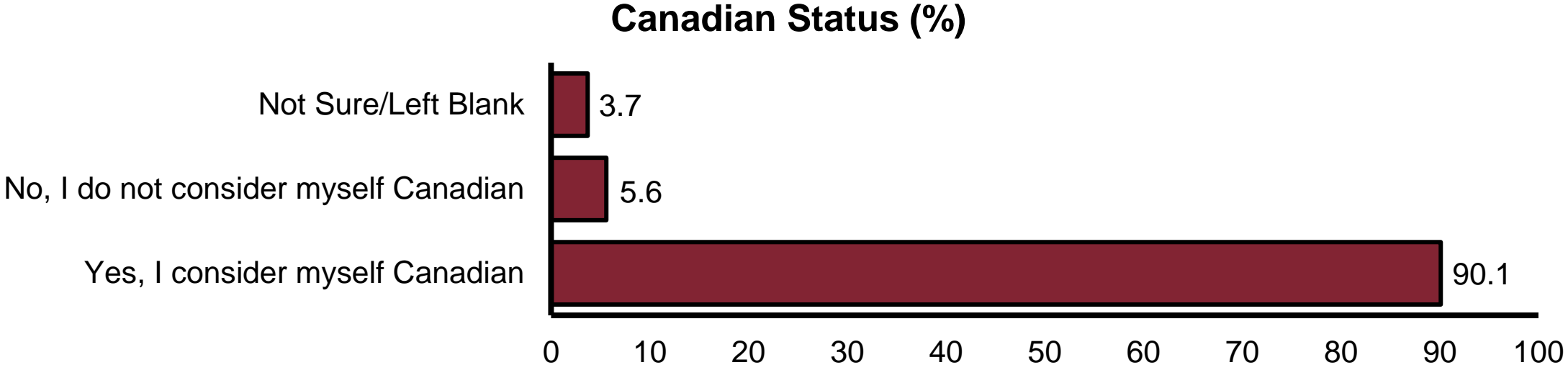
Question from Census:
Do you identify as First Nations, Metis, and/or Inuit? If yes, select all that apply.



	Yes, First Nations	Yes, Inuit	Yes, Metis	No, I do not identify as Indigenous
Indigenous Status (%)	0.9	0.02	0.6	98.5

Census Q3: Students' Canadian Status - Results

Question from Census:
Do you consider yourself a Canadian?

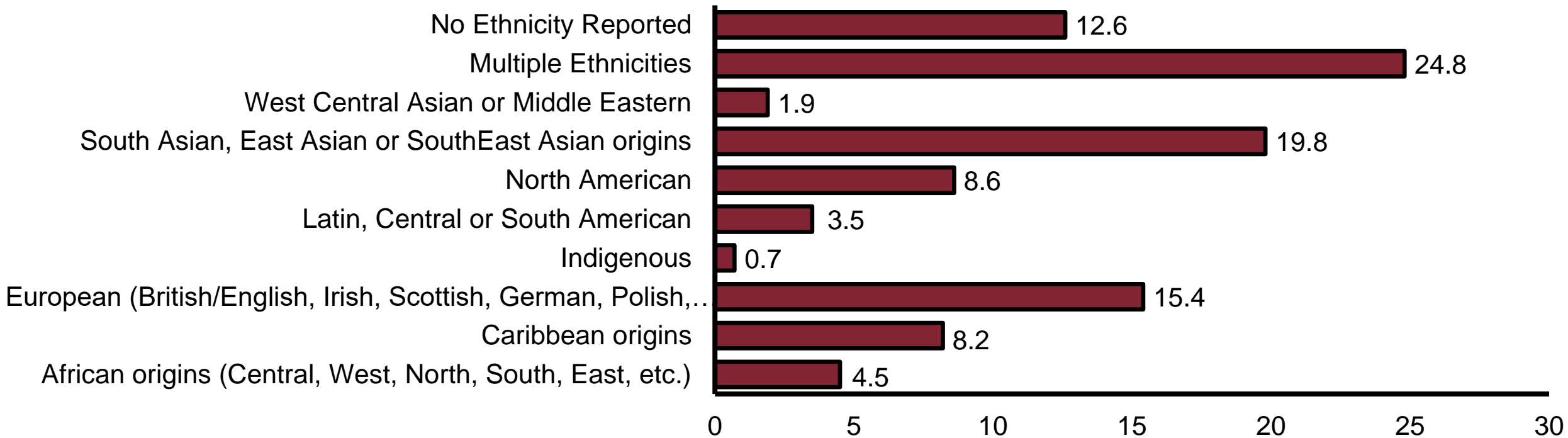


	Yes, I consider myself Canadian	No, I do not consider myself Canadian	Not Sure/Left Blank
Canadian Status (%)	90.1	5.6	3.7

Census Q4: Students' Ethnic/Cultural Origins - Results

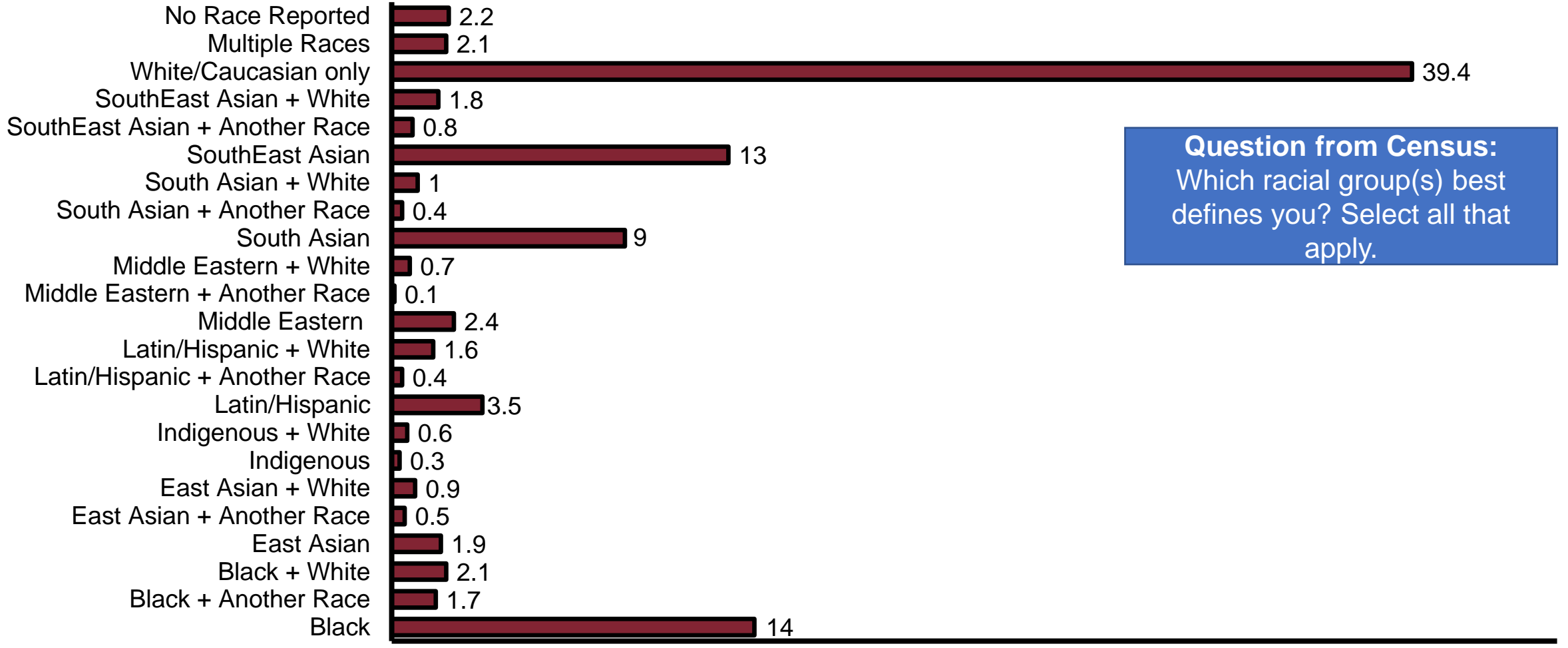
Question from Census:
What is your ethnic/cultural origin(s)? Specify as many ethnic or cultural origins as applicable.

Ethnic or Cultural Origins (%)



Census Q5: Students' Self-Identified Race - Results

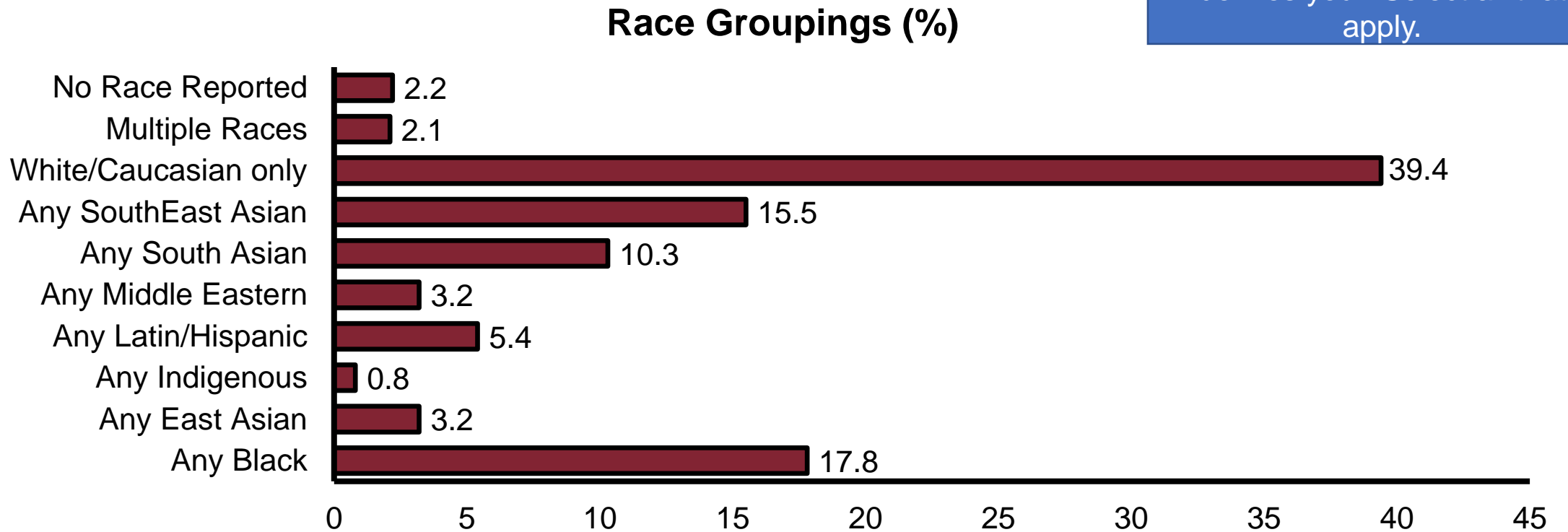
Racial Group (%)



Question from Census:
Which racial group(s) best defines you? Select all that apply.

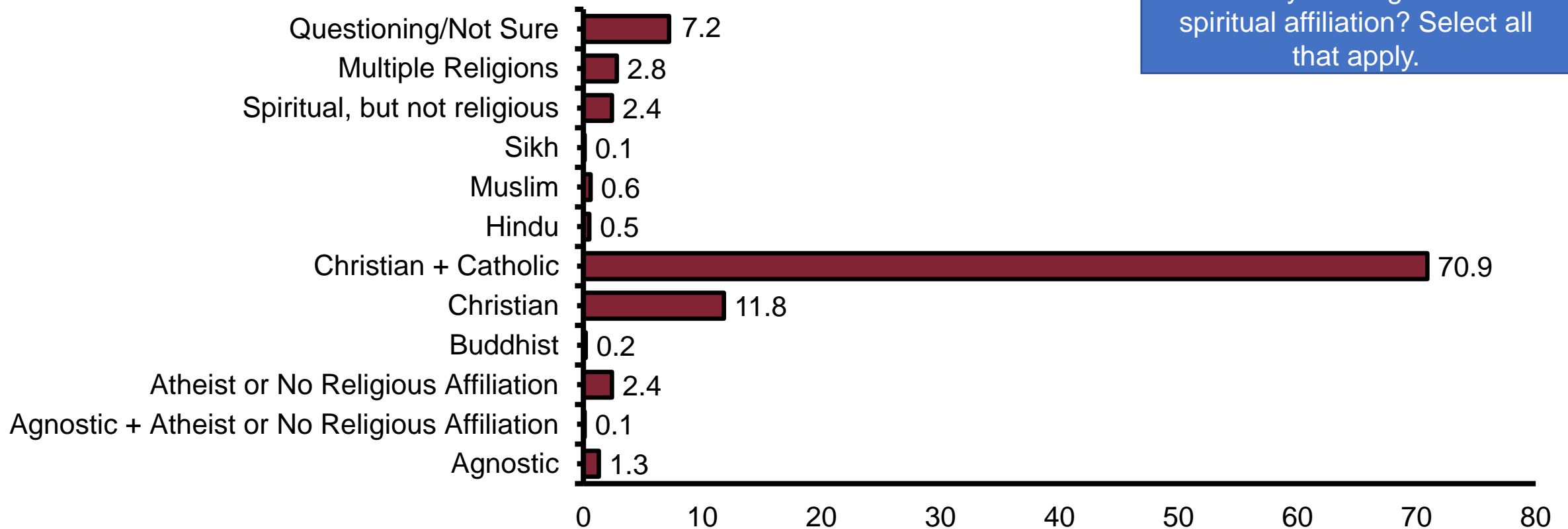
Census Q5 (Aggregated): Students' Self-Identified Race - Results

Question from Census:
Which racial group(s) best
defines you? Select all that
apply.



Census Q6: Students' Religious and Spiritual Affiliation - Results

Religious or Spiritual Affiliation (%)

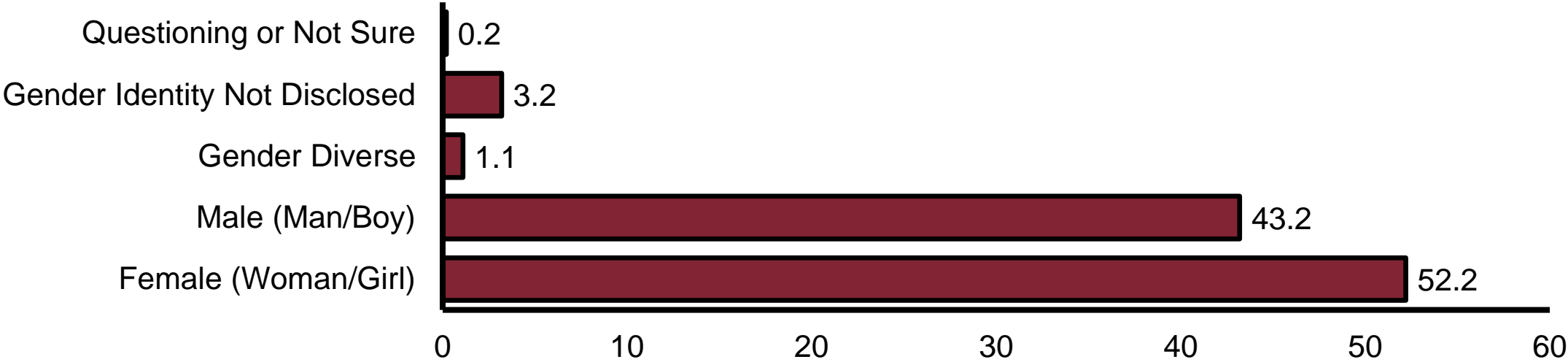


Question from Census:
What is your religion and/or spiritual affiliation? Select all that apply.

Census Q7: Students' Gender Identity - Results

Question from Census:
What is your gender identity?

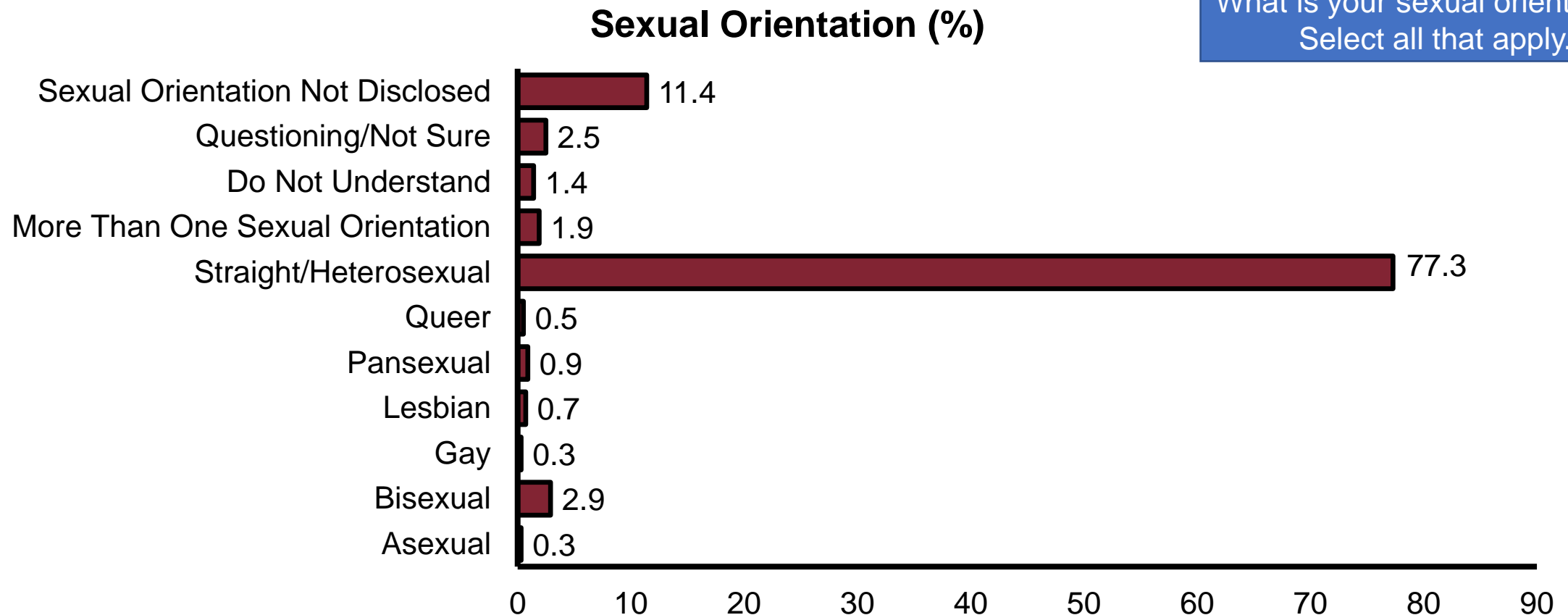
Gender Identity (%)



	Female (Woman/Girl)	Male (Man/Boy)	Gender Diverse	Gender Identity Not Disclosed	Questioning or Not Sure
Gender Identity (%)	52.2	43.2	1.1	3.2	0.2

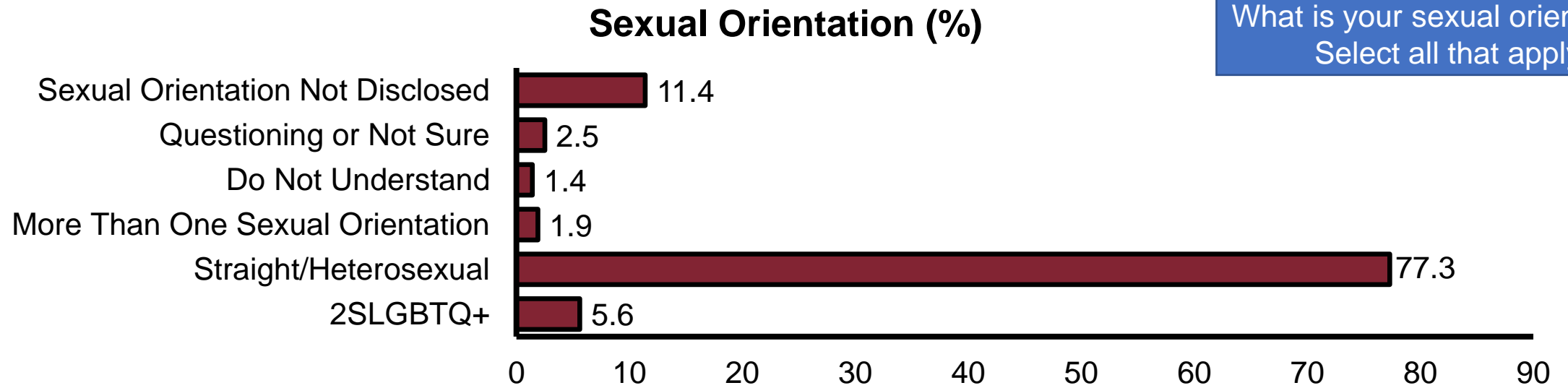
Census Q8: Students' Sexual Orientation - Results

Question from Census:
What is your sexual orientation?
Select all that apply.



Census Q8 (Aggregated): Students' Sexual Orientation - Results

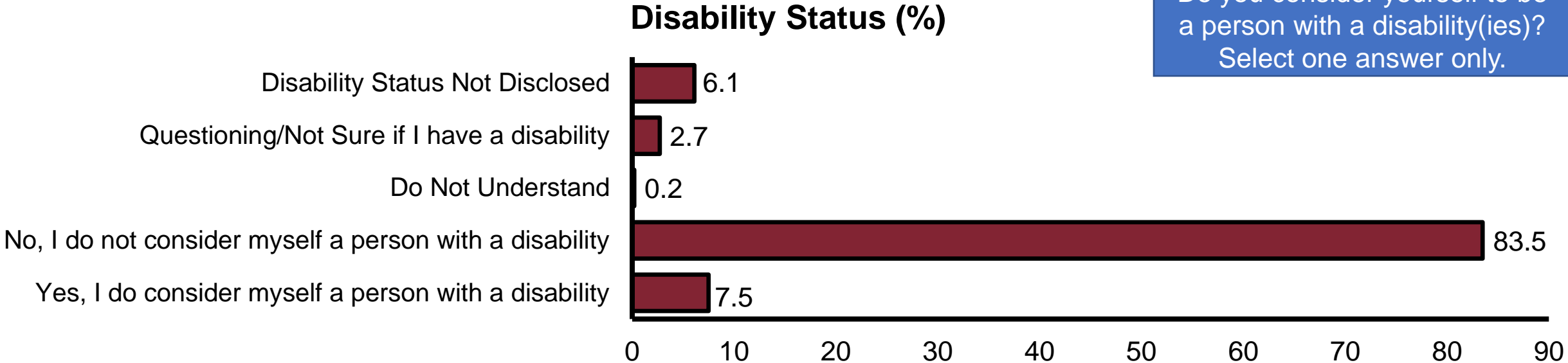
Question from Census:
What is your sexual orientation?
Select all that apply.



	2SLGBTQ+	Straight/Heterosexual	More Than One Sexual Orientation	Do Not Understand	Questioning or Not Sure	Sexual Orientation Not Disclosed
Sexual Orientation (%)	5.6	77.3	1.9	1.4	2.5	11.4

Census Q9: Students' Disability Status - Results

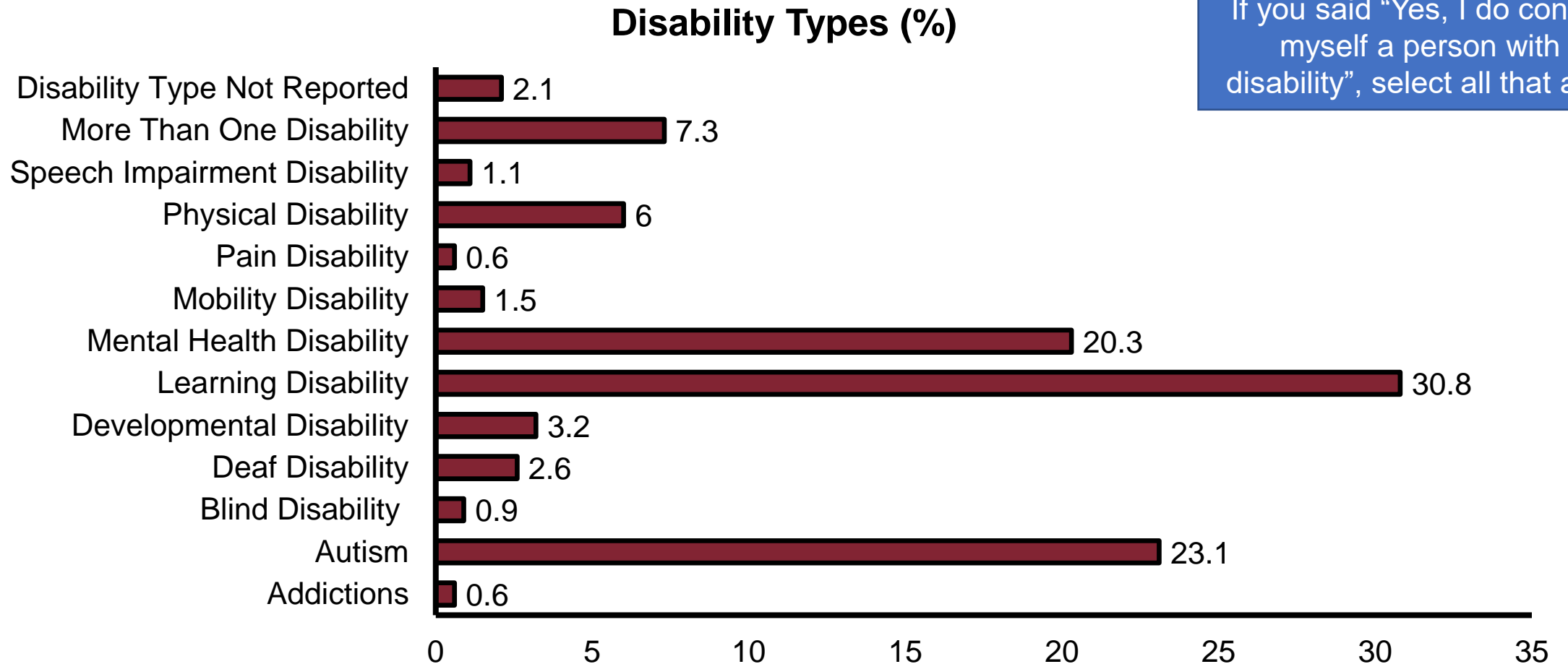
Question from Census:
Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability(ies)?
Select one answer only.



Disability Status (%)	Yes, I do consider myself a person with a disability	No, I do not consider myself a person with a disability	Do Not Understand	Questioning/Not Sure if I have a disability	Disability Status Not Disclosed
	7.5	83.5	0.2	2.7	6.1

Census Q9: Students' Disability Types - Results

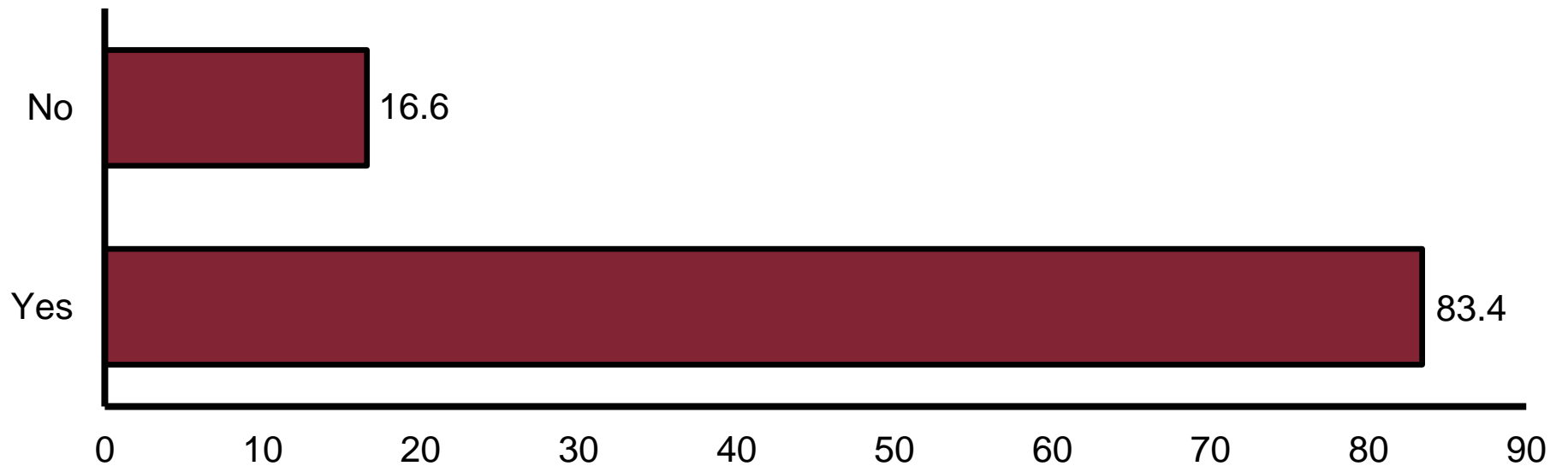
Question from Census:
If you said "Yes, I do consider myself a person with a disability", select all that apply.



Census Q10: Students' Born in Canada Status – Results

Question from Census:
Were you born in Canada?

Born in Canada Status (%)

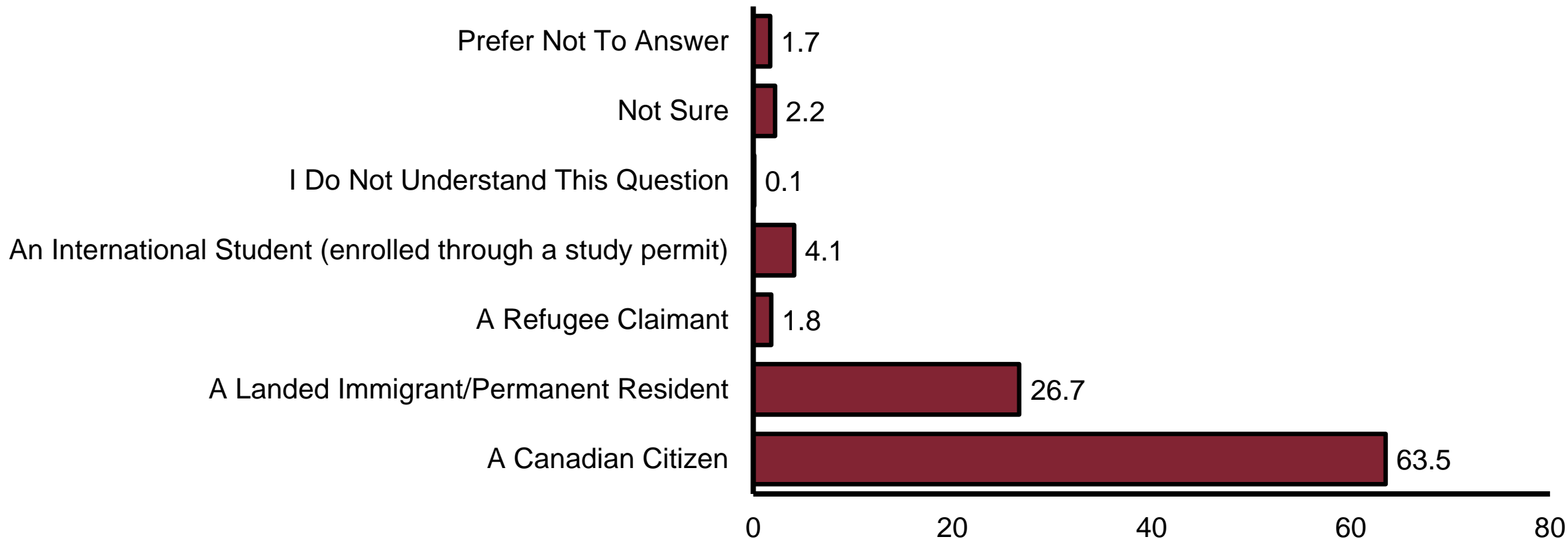


	Yes	No
Born in Canada Status (%)	83.4	16.6

Census Q10: Students' Canadian Status – Results

Question from Census:
If you were not born in Canada,
what is your status in Canada?

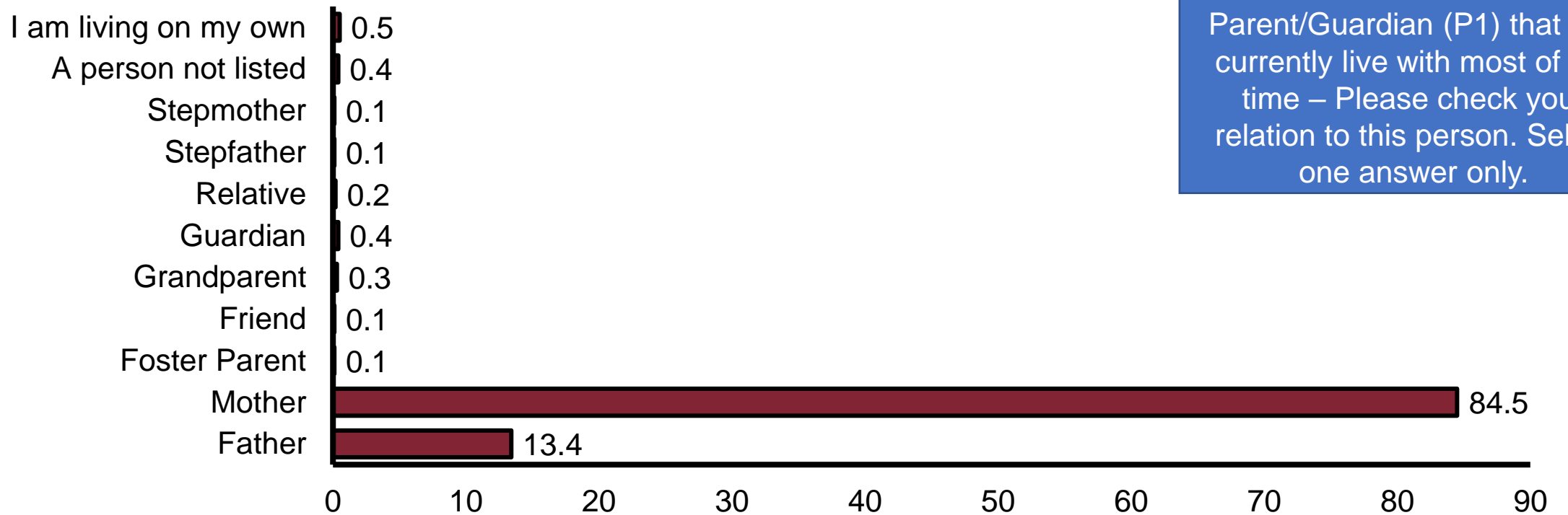
Canadian Status (%)



Census Q11A): Students' Living Situation – Results

Parent/Guardian (P1) that you live with most of the time - what is your relation? (%)

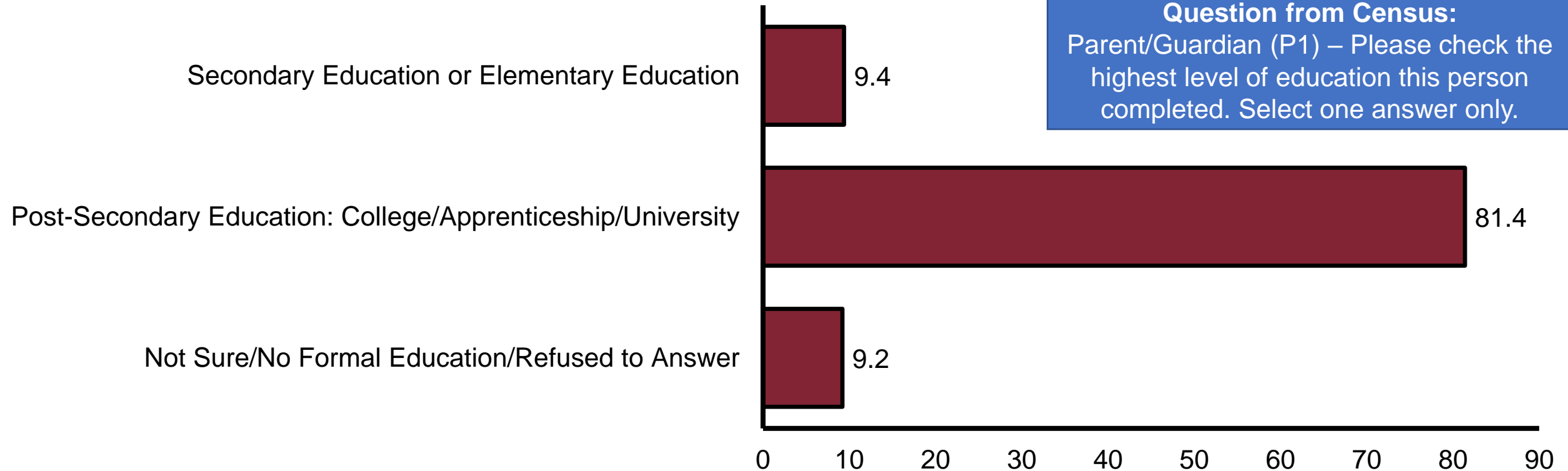
Question from Census:
Parent/Guardian (P1) that you currently live with most of the time – Please check your relation to this person. Select one answer only.



Census Q11B): Students' Parent/Guardian (P1) Highest Education Level – Results

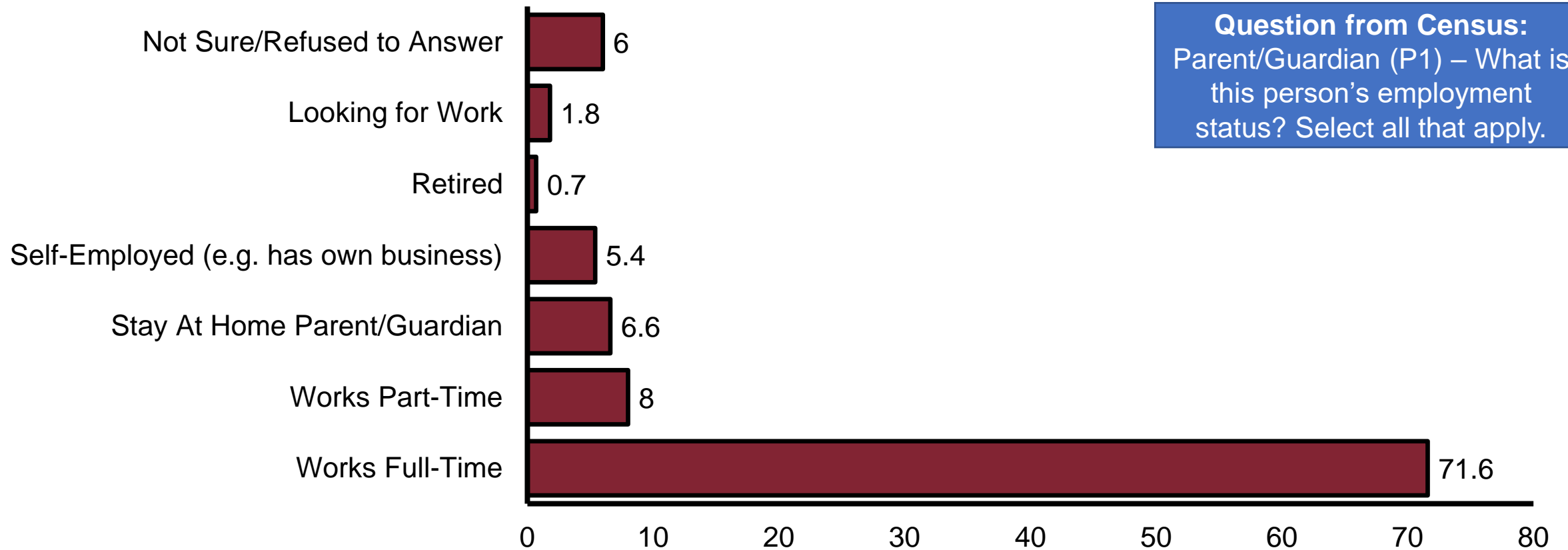
Parent/Guardian (P1) –
Highest Level of Education (%)

Question from Census:
Parent/Guardian (P1) – Please check the
highest level of education this person
completed. Select one answer only.



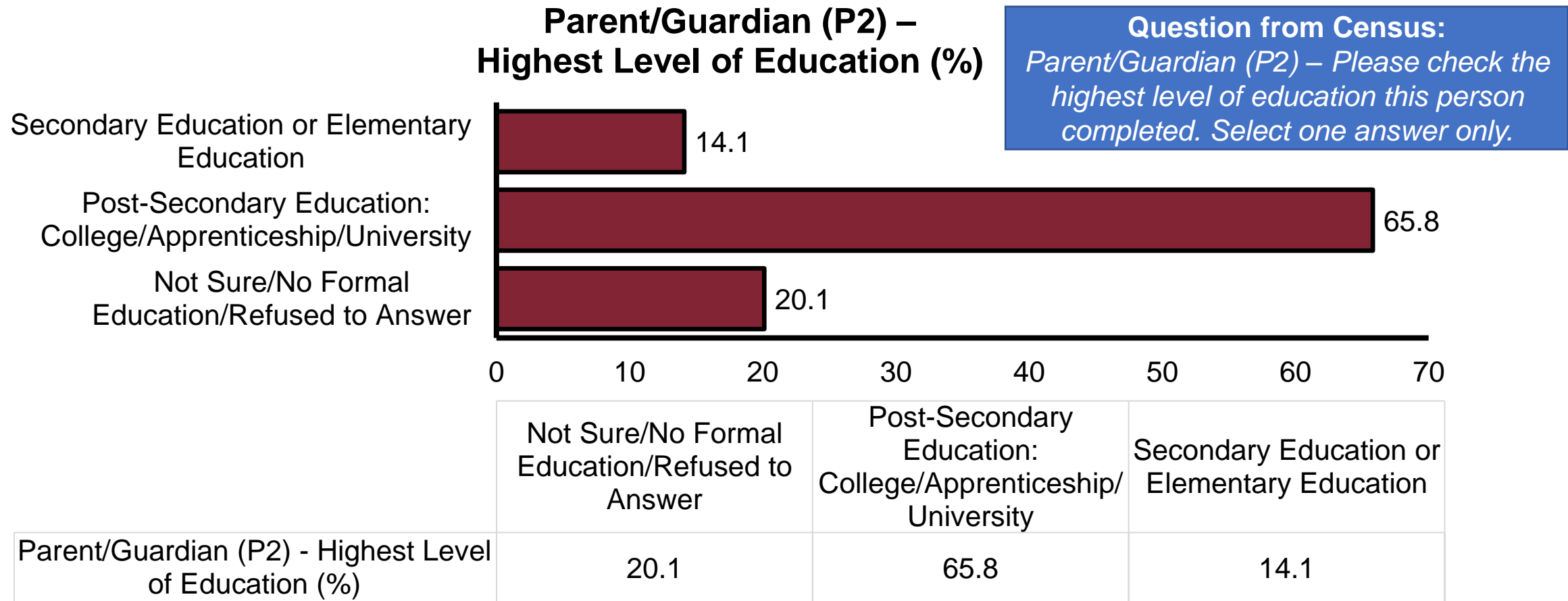
Census Q11C): Students' Parent/Guardian (P1) Employment Status – Results

Parent/Guardian (P1) - Employment Status (%)



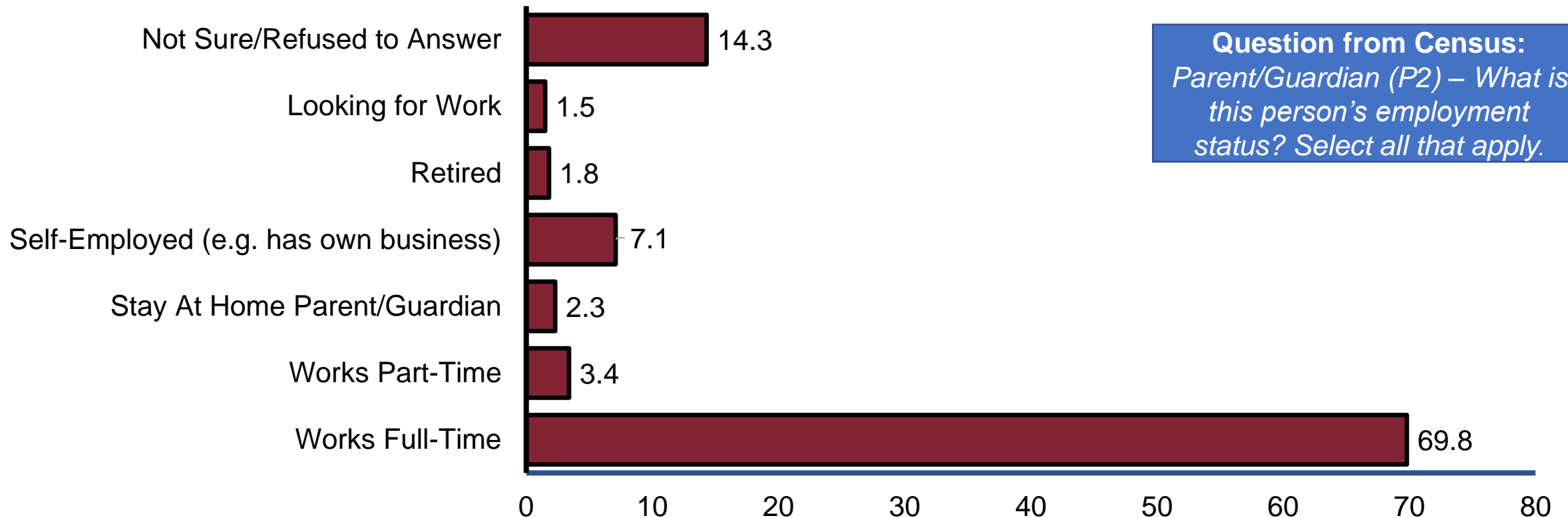
Question from Census:
Parent/Guardian (P1) – What is this person's employment status? Select all that apply.

Census Q12A): Students' Parent/Guardian (P2) Highest Education Level– Results



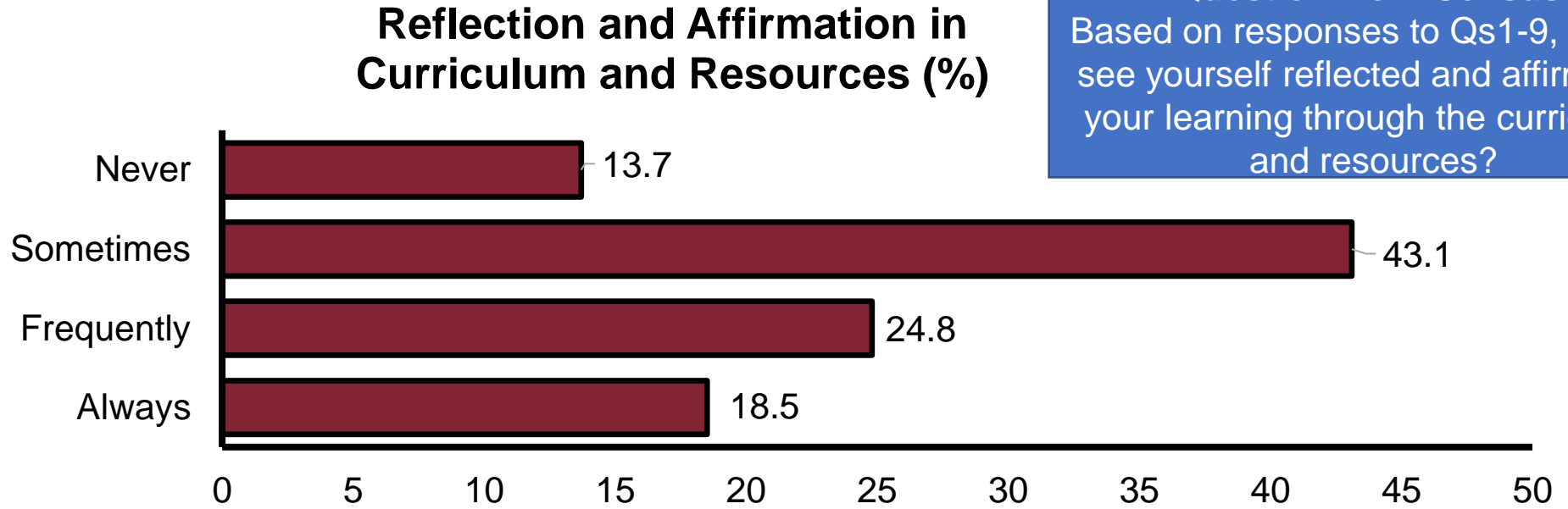
Census Q12B): Students' Parent/Guardian (P2) Employment Status – Results

Parent/Guardian (P2) - Employment Status (%)



Additional Q1A): Students' Reflection and Affirmation – Results

Question from Census:
Based on responses to Qs1-9, do you see yourself reflected and affirmed in your learning through the curriculum and resources?

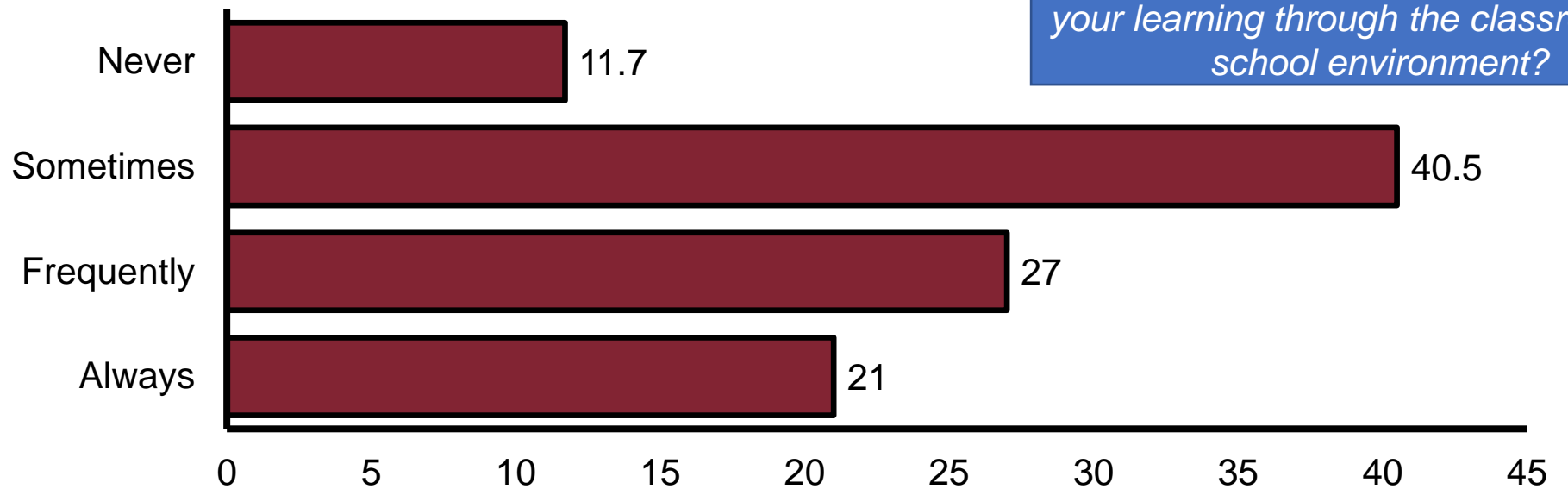


	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Reflection and Affirmation in Curriculum and Resources (%)	18.5	24.8	43.1	13.7

Additional Q1B): Students' Reflection and Affirmation – Results

Reflection and Affirmation in the Classroom and School Environment (%)

Question from Census:
Based on responses to Qs1-9, do you see yourself reflected and affirmed in your learning through the classroom and school environment?



	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
Reflection and Affirmation in the Classroom and School Environment (%)	21	27	40.5	11.7

Limitations and Unlocking Future Potential Part 1

One notable limitation of this DCDSB Student Census was the low completion rate across the entire Board, accounting for approximately a 39% completion rate. As a result, there are obvious gaps in the data which may not provide a complete picture of Durham Catholic District School Board's student population

At the Board level, what can we do to increase completion rates of future Censuses? How do we best reach out to and tap into our best resource, our students, to identify their needs, and close the data gaps related to our student population?

Limitations and Unlocking Future Potential Part 2

Although the response rate was high for the majority of the questions (>90%), there were some questions that had lower response rates than others (accounting for more blanks or non-responses)

How can we look to restructure and format Censuses differently in the future? Can we be more accommodating and diversify the ways in which the Student Census can be accessed and completed?

Limitations and Unlocking Future Potential

Part 3

Beyond formatting issues, other factors that may have accounted for the Census completion rate overall include: the clarity of the questions asked, the lack of students' knowledge of a particular subject area, and the sensitive nature of some of the questions asked

The combination of these factors, as well as others not mentioned here would have likely resulted in some students' (and parents'/guardians') unwillingness to answer the question with a usable response. What are the best ways to address this?