

Building Strong Locals

CUPE NATIONAL
LEADERSHIP SURVEY

April 3, 2017



2015 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



“

We will continue building strong locals by conducting our second national membership survey to inform and guide our union on building a more inclusive union, meeting our members' needs, and engaging our members. We will consult our equity-seeking members in the development of this survey.”

WHAT WE DID



1. National CUPE Leadership Survey – Sept. to Dec. 2016

Online survey: What are CUPE locals' best practices for building a more inclusive union, meeting our members' needs, and engaging our members

2. Focus groups with CUPE National committees: Sept. to Nov. 2016

Aboriginal Council, Rainbow Committee, Pink Triangle Committee, Workers with Disabilities Committee, Women's Committee, Young Workers' Committee

3. Focus groups with precariously employed CUPE members – Nov. 2016 to Jan. 2017

Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal & Halifax

4. National CUPE Servicing Rep Survey – Feb. 2017

THE BIG QUESTIONS



How do we get more members involved in the union?

How do we ensure our union is inclusive and representative?

THE BIG ANSWERS



Take the union to the members.

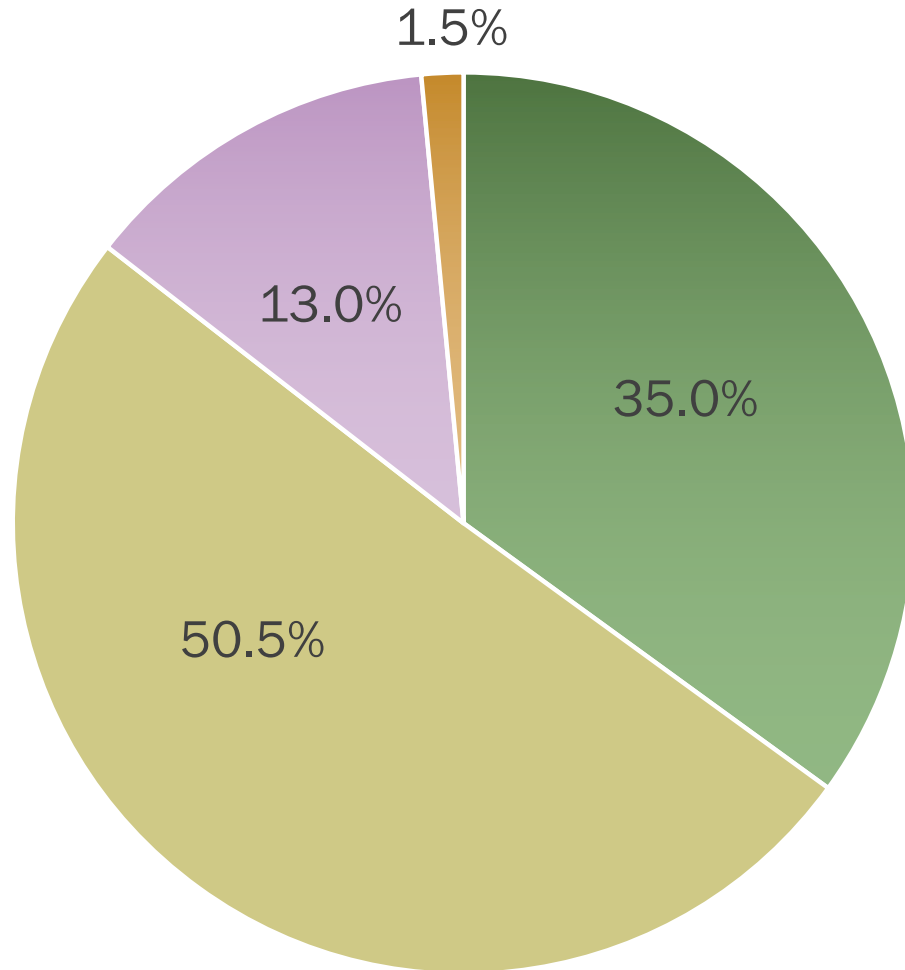
Talk to members in person, one-on-one.



**Why aren't more CUPE
members involved with
their local?**



LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH MEMBER ENGAGEMENT



Question: "Please rate your satisfaction with the level of member engagement in your local union's activities."

- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither
- No answer

MAIN REASONS GIVEN



- **Time – family responsibilities**
- **Time – work commitments; shift work; more than one job.**
- **Lack of information and interest**

THOUGHTS ON ENGAGEMENT



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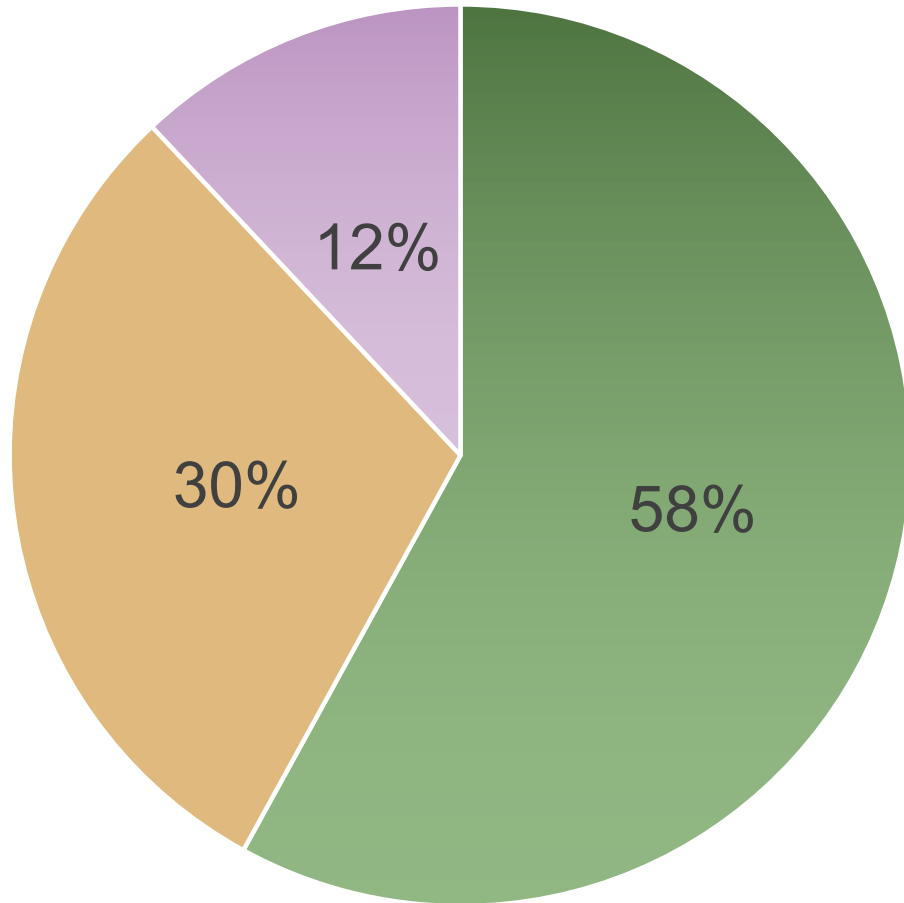
Our local focuses on member engagement, and it is a constant struggle. BUT this year we went on strike, and all our member engagement efforts paid off big time. It was happening all along -- but we didn't know it.”



Welcoming new members



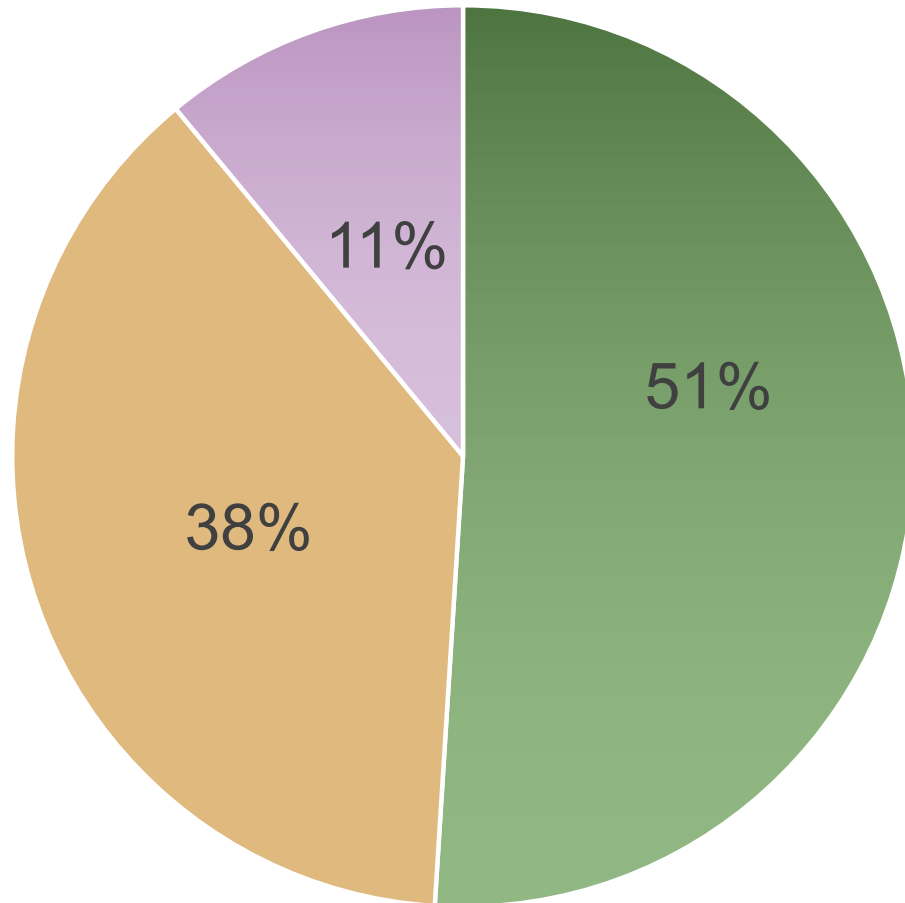
NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION



Question: "Does your collective agreement have a provision for new member orientation?"



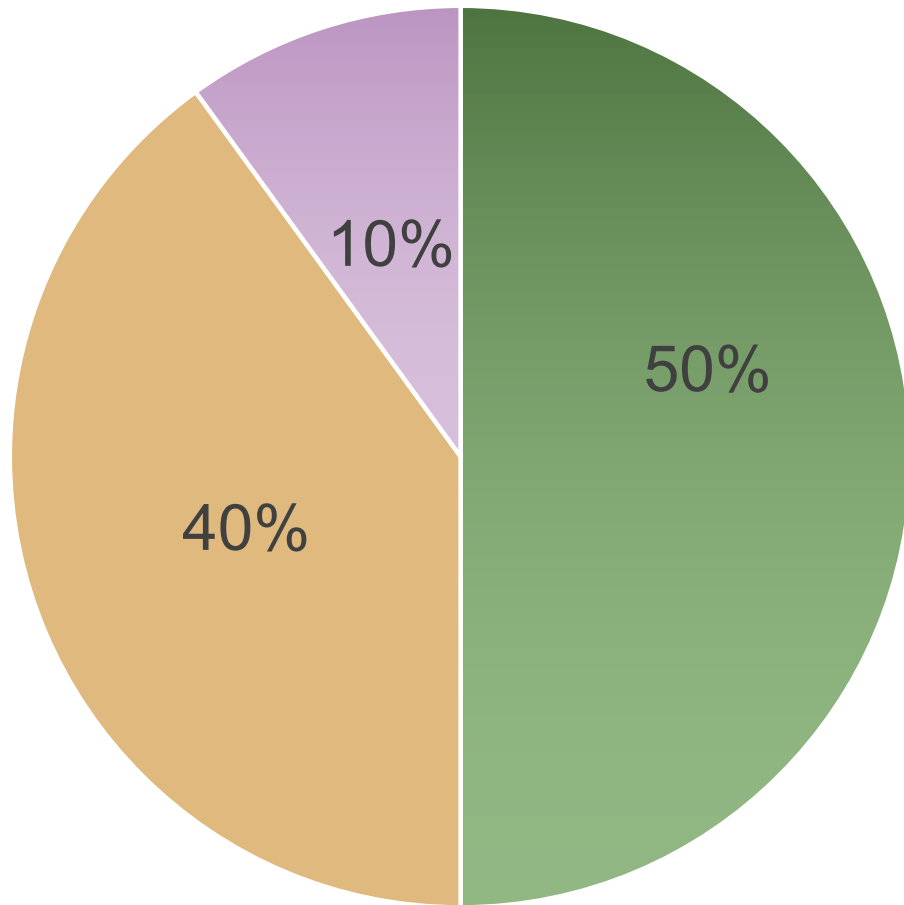
EMPLOYER'S ORIENTATION



Question: “Does your local participate in the employer’s orientation sessions for new members?”

■ Yes ■ No ■ Other

SIGNING OF CARDS WITH NEW MEMBERS



Question: "Does your local meet with new members and have them sign membership cards?"

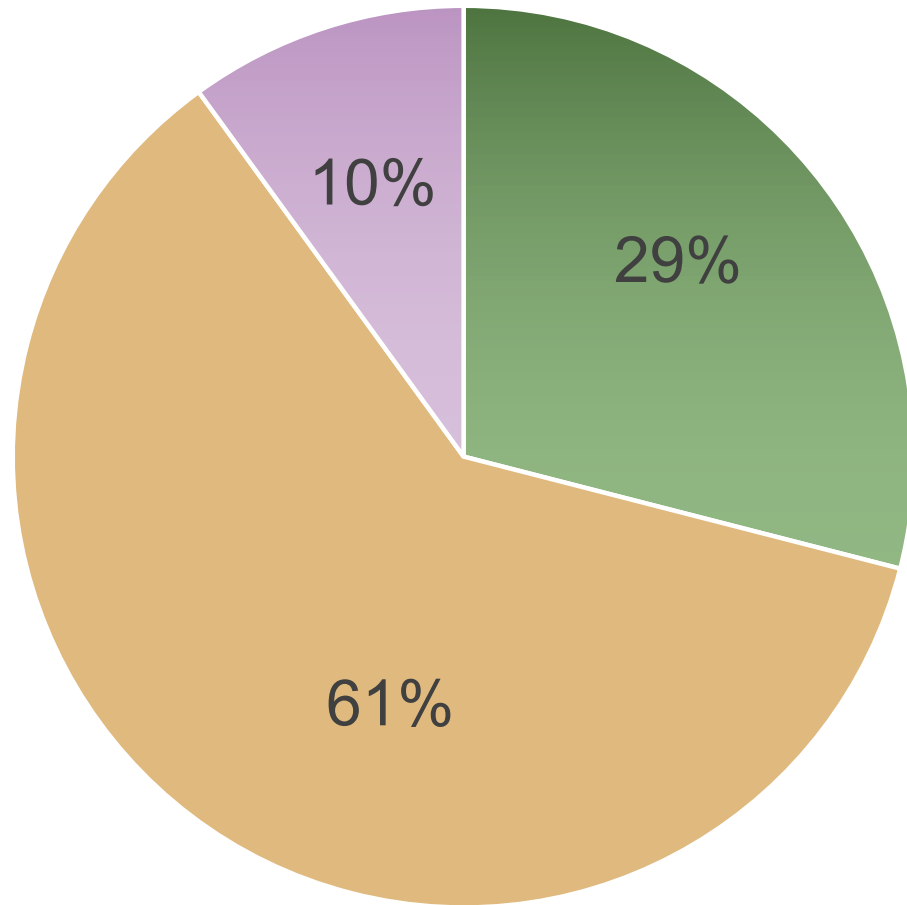
■ Yes ■ No ■ Other



Getting members out to
union meetings:
What do CUPE locals do?



ADDRESSING MEMBER ENGAGEMENT



Question: “Over the past 24 months, have your local undertaken any activities or made any bylaw/policy changes to increase member engagement?”

■ Yes ■ No ■ No answer

GETTING MEMBERS INVOLVED



Locals used a number of strategies to attract more members to meetings. The five most common are:

1. Food
2. Incentives for attending, like door prizes
3. Changed the time of the meeting
4. Changed the location of the meeting
5. Invited a guest speaker

GETTING MEMBERS INVOLVED



- **Invite people to attend in person**
- **Add an educational component –about the union, the collective agreement or a workplace issue**
- **Have meetings in particular workplaces about their particular issues**
- **Allow members to join in by phone or electronically**
- **Encourage people to speak, don't let formal rules get in the way**
- **Conflict and rough behaviour like shouting are very discouraging**



Overcoming barriers to participation for equity seeking groups, precariously employed and young workers



GETTING MEMBERS OUT TO MEETINGS: WHAT WORKS?



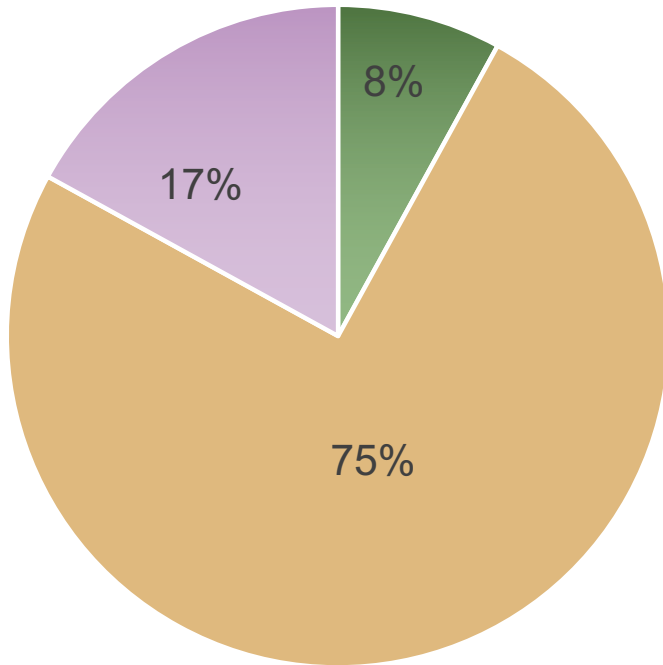
Equity-seekers, youth and precariously employed members don't see themselves reflected in union structures and activities/events.

Recommendations from the National Committee Focus Groups:

- Adopt an equity lens to ensure that the composition of the membership is reflected in the composition of local union structures, activities and events.
- Have designated seats in union structures.
- Open union delegations to workshops, conferences and convention to rank and file members including equity-seekers, precariously employed workers and youth.
- Create committees for equity seeking groups, precariously employed workers and youth.

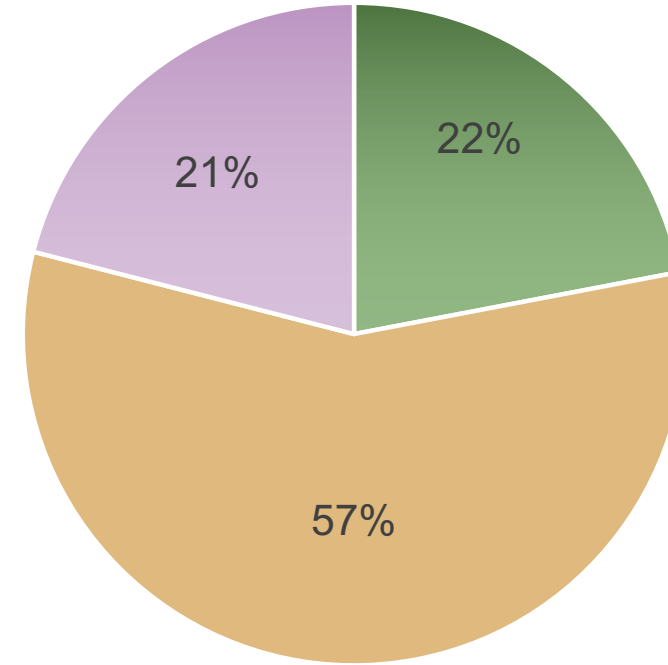
DESIGNATED POSITIONS

Designated seats on local union executive for members from equity-seeking groups, precariously employed members, and/or young workers



■ Yes ■ No ■ Other

Designated seats for members of equity-seeking groups, young workers, and/or precariously employed members on delegations to union conferences, workshops and conventions

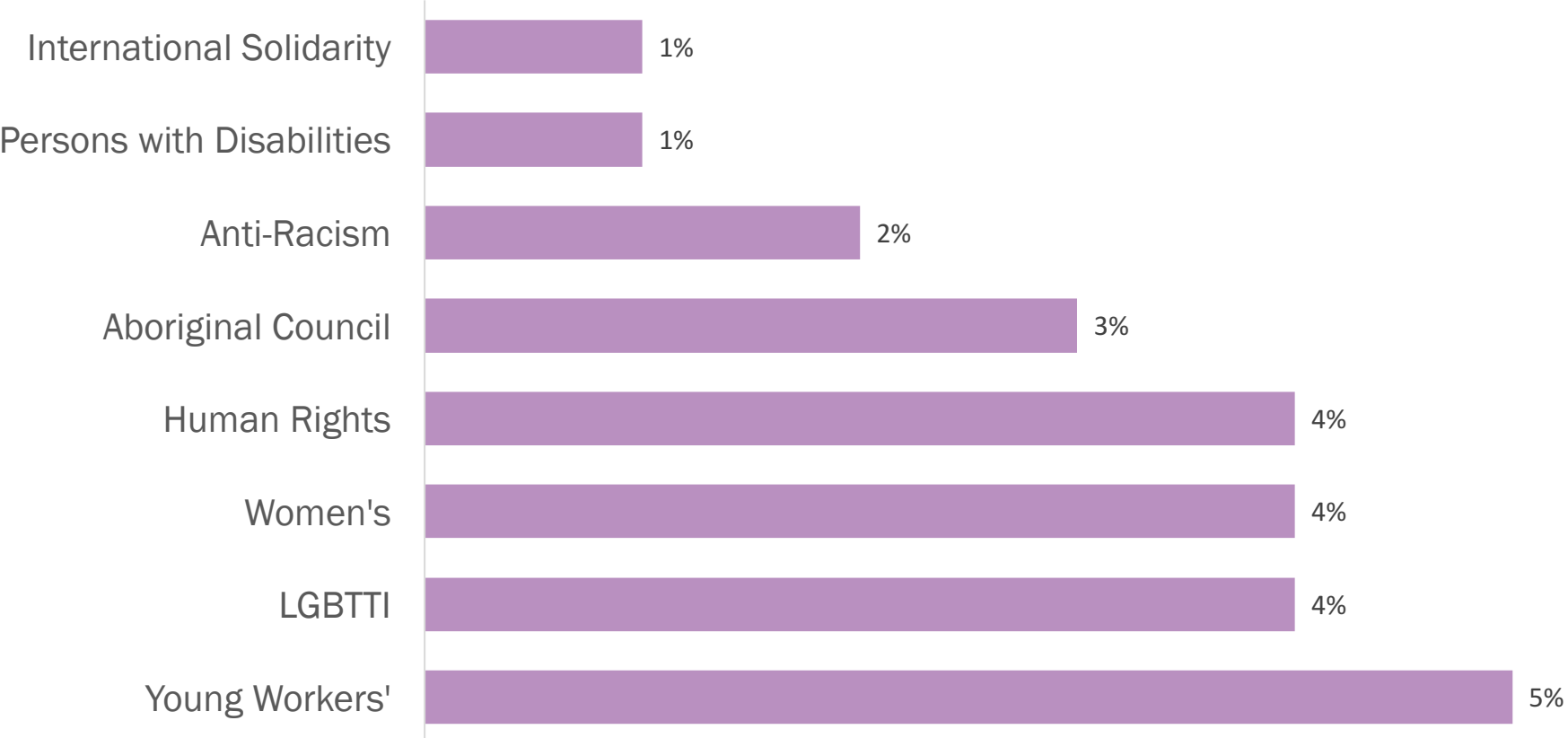


■ Yes ■ No ■ Other

COMMITTEES FOR EQUITY SEEKING GROUPS, PRECARIOUSLY EMPLOYED WORKERS OR YOUTH



Question: “Does your local have any of these active committees?”



EDUCATION IS KEY TO ENGAGEMENT



“

A lot of members feel overwhelmed and do not understand their contract language or CUPE’s policies. We need to take time to educate our members.”

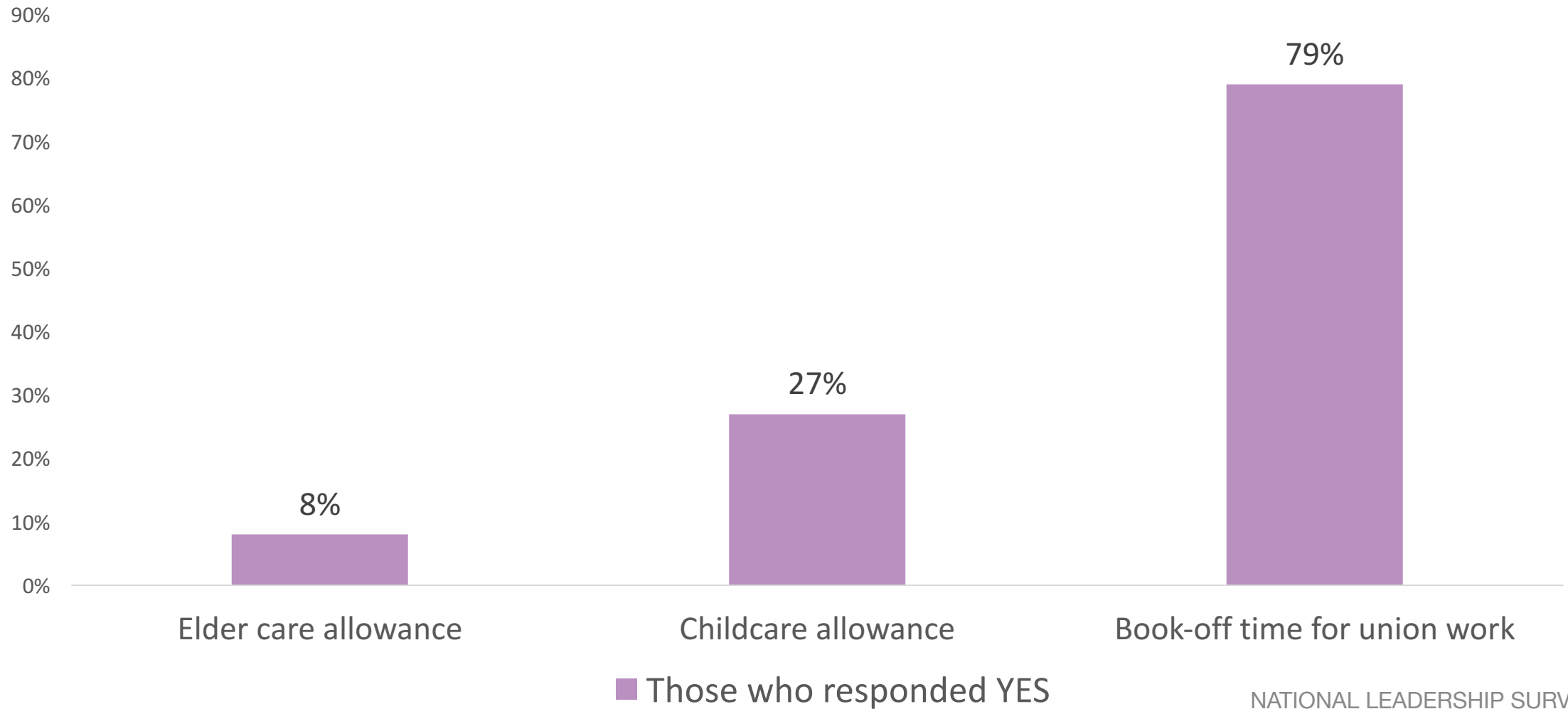
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Encourage members to sign up for union education even if they don’t hold a position in the executive. It will increase their confidence if they decide to run for a position.”

“

Too many new members come into the Local without any introduction to the Union. In my view this is the best time to engage members.”

SUPPORT FOR UNION WORK



IDEAS FOR MENTORING & SUCCESSION PLANNING

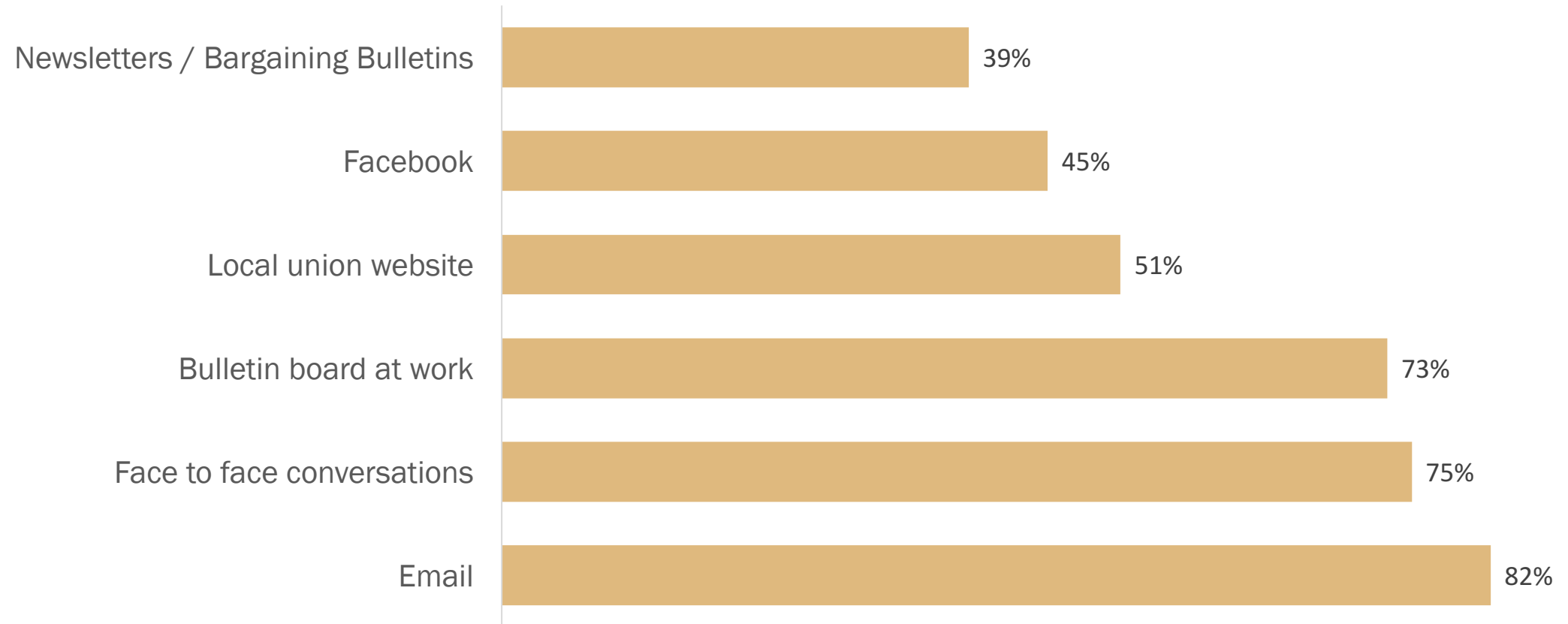


- “ Role sharing: “We share responsibilities for all executive positions except for president, treasurer and recording-secretary.”
- “ Mentoring: “We pair novice executive members and stewards with more seasoned leaders in the business of the union and in meetings with the employer.”
- “ Starting small: “We encourage and support members to start working with the local in a small capacity as a first step.”
- “ Identifying potential leaders: “We provide opportunities for experience and development.”
- “ Create opportunities: “We designated an executive table position to rotate through our provincial local to attract people to come and sit in on our conversation.”

COMMUNICATION IS KEY



Question: “How does your local union communicate with members?”



COMMUNICATION



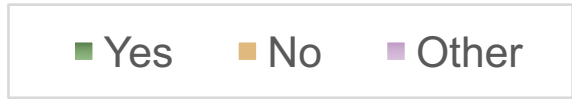
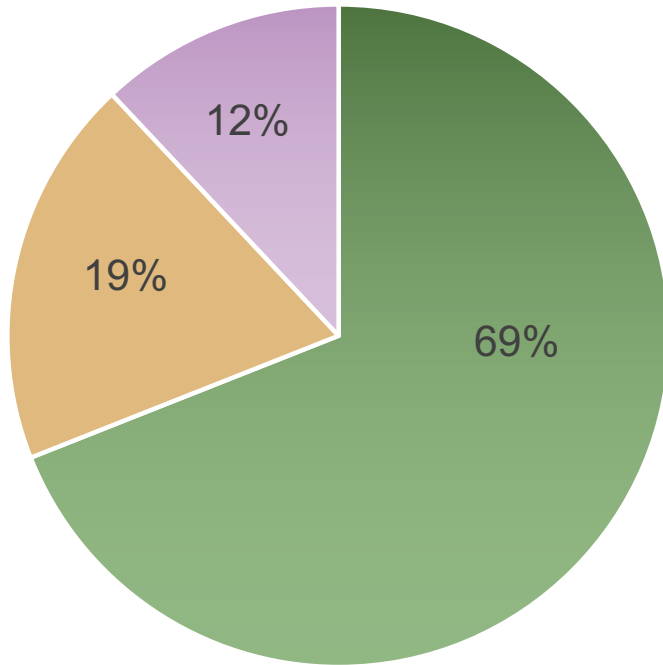
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Communication is the biggest issue in our union. To get them motivated, face to face talking seems to be the only thing that really works.”

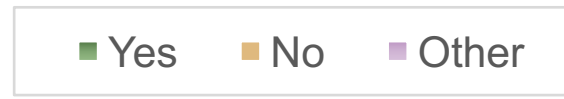
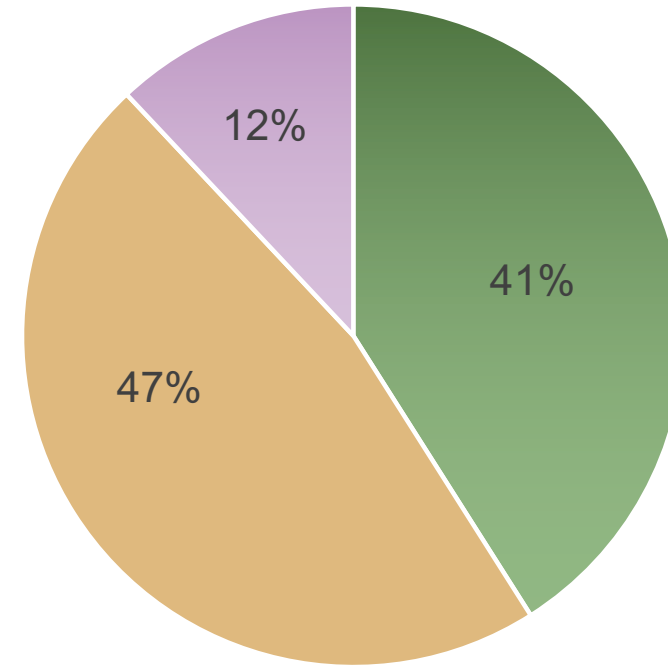
- Twice a year we go and provide lunch to all the three shifts on the work sites.
- We use Skype to engage members living in rural communities in membership meetings.
- We formed a Member Action Committee to contact every member in the local to see if they have concerns
- We conducted own survey on membership engagement and instituted changes based on members' responses.
- Showcase successes!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Participation in solidarity events with other CUPE locals and/or other unions



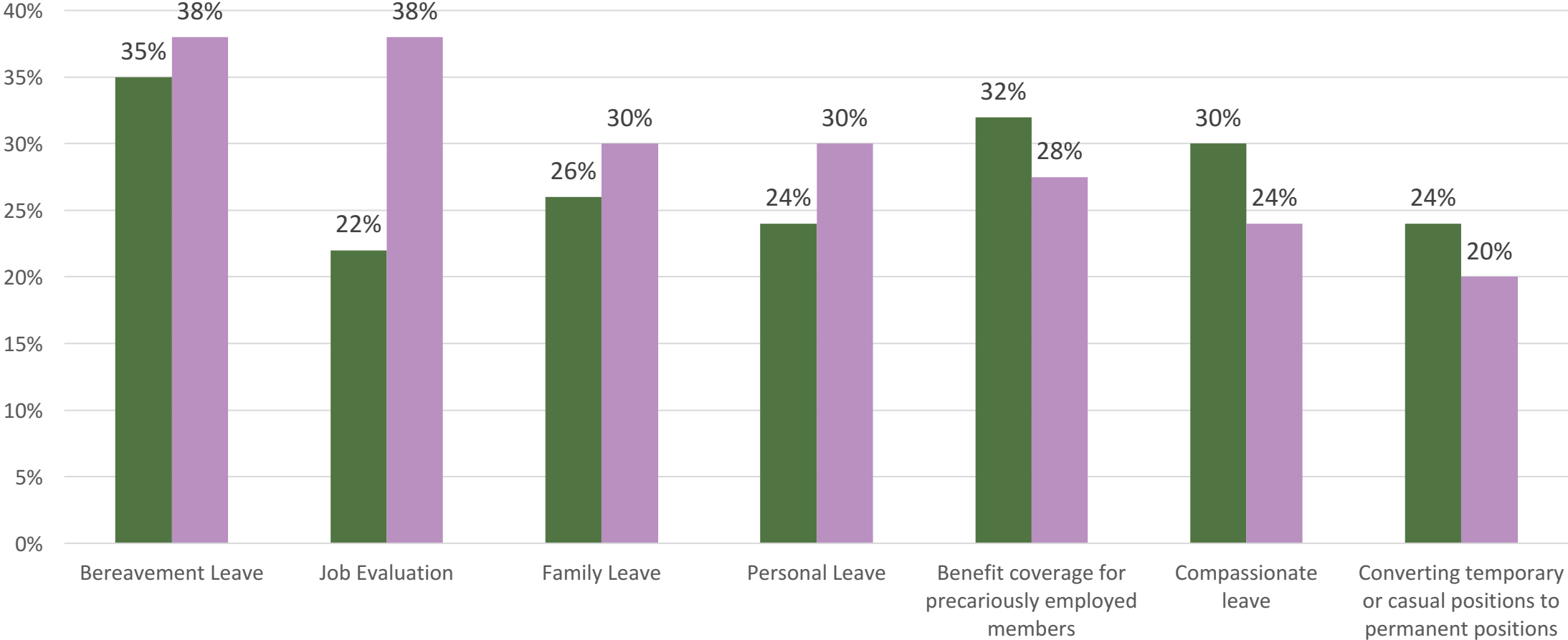
Participation in community equity events (e.g. Pride events, National Aboriginal Day, International Women's Day, etc.)



COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



Submitted proposals where there was a gain made - Top 7



■ Submitted proposal

■ Made a gain

* % of those that submitted a proposal report they made a gain

ORGANIZING FOR SUCCESS



“

Organizing the unorganized within the workplace creates member engagement, since our existing members get involved in increasing their membership numbers by promoting CUPE.”

“

We look at our precarious unorganized co-workers and realize it is important to ensure that they become unionized as well with job protection, better wages and benefits, etc.”

WHAT DID CUPE MEMBERS TELL US?



Take the union to the members.

“

Meet the members where they are at work and talk to them about the issues they care about; involve the members in a plan of action; i.e. not just listening and then telling members that the “union” will take care of it – this sends the message the members aren’t really necessary after all.”

NEXT STEPS



There are lots more numbers from the survey. Much of the treasure can be found in the stories.

- **Building Strong Locals conference in Halifax, April 3 – 6 2017**
- **Tools for locals**
- **Web series**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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