

2020 SG Pulse Survey Results

# Manage COVID-19

**Survey of business responses to the Coronavirus outbreak in Singapore**

February 2020

# #SingaporeTogether: Caring for our Client Community

“As a proud contributor to the Singapore Community, Mercer is truly striving to live our purpose of making a difference, to our colleagues, clients and community.

The health and safety of our clients and your employees during this challenging time remains a prime concern, and we have put our best teams forward to support you address key questions on managing and limiting the impact on your people and businesses.

Since COVID-19 risk alert levels in Singapore have been raised to DORSCON orange, you have asked for practical advice around managing employee queries including:

- Working from home arrangements and other flexible working alternatives

- Medical coverage whilst working from home, and personal travel
- Pay and rewards during quarantine
- Considerations for adjustments related to business impact
- Application of annual and sick leave policies in view of quarantine periods

Our pulse survey covers practices that businesses in Singapore are applying to the listed topics and more.

Across nearly 30 industries, over 250 survey participants have shared your plans and policies to enable learning across industry peers.

We thank you for your responses which provides a view of business readiness in Singapore.”



Peta Latimer  
CEO, Mercer Singapore

## About the Survey:

- 17 questions
- 260 complete responses
- Conducted February 12 to 18, 2020.

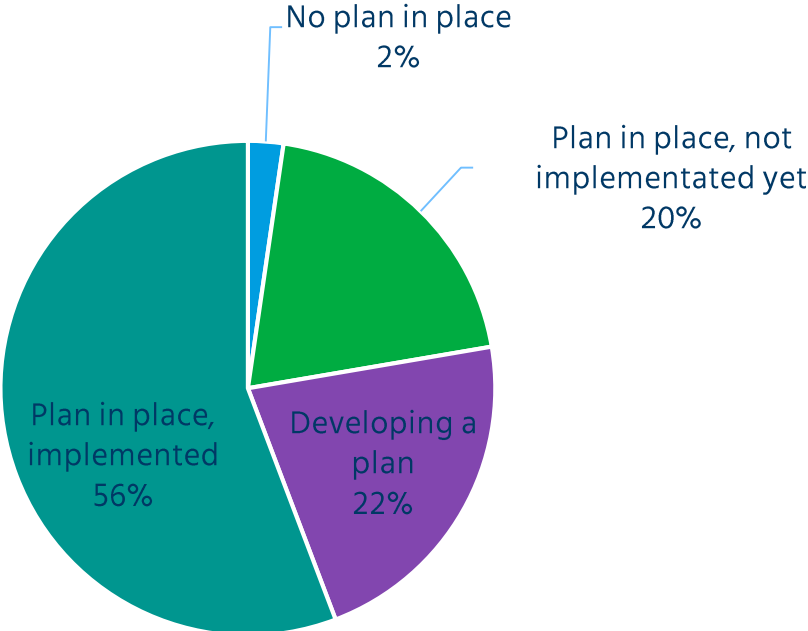
Please contact us with your queries about this survey, or for results collected from similar surveys conducted in China and Hong Kong.

Shireen Kwan, Growth Leader  
Mercer Singapore  
Shireen.kwan@mercer.com

# Over half of the respondents have a business continuity / pandemic readiness plan, and have started to implement it

- It is never too late to prepare and implement a business continuity / pandemic preparedness plan.
- Adaptive working (split teams, work from home or alternative sites) is key to ensure the entire workforce will not be unavailable at any point in time during a pandemic.
- Focus should be on health and safety of employees, hence a thorough review of medical and travel coverage is required.
- Where possible pay and jobs of employees should be protected, support of employers is available through several government grants and initiatives.

Status of business continuity planning



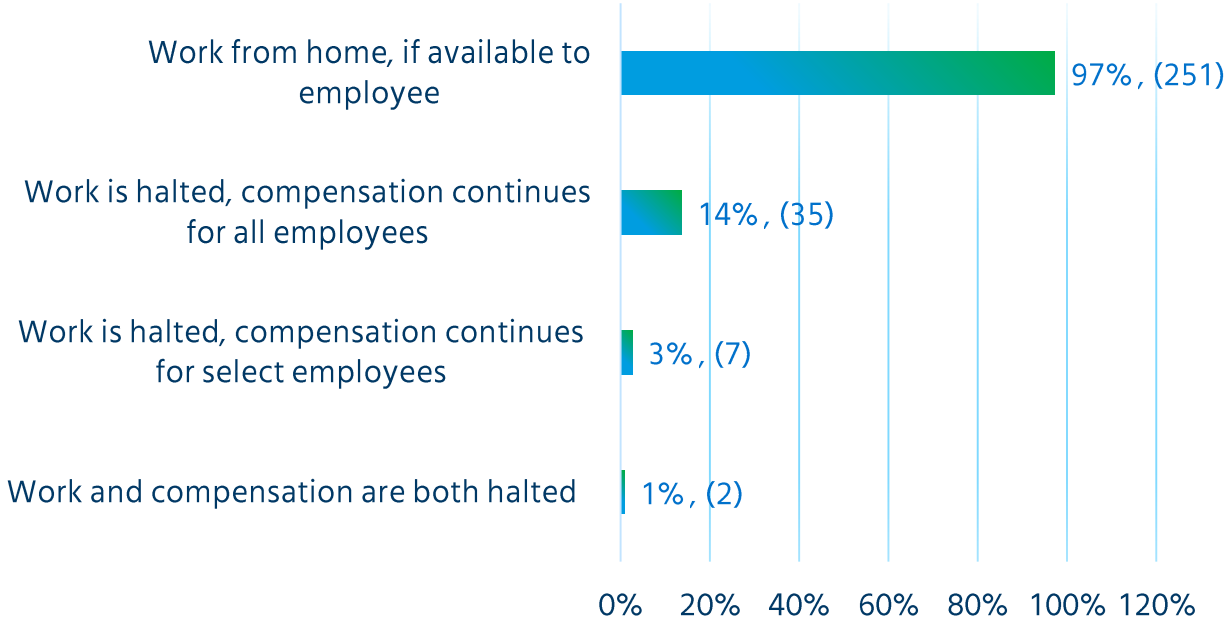
Total number of respondents = 260

# Only a few offices or plants in Singapore have been closed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak

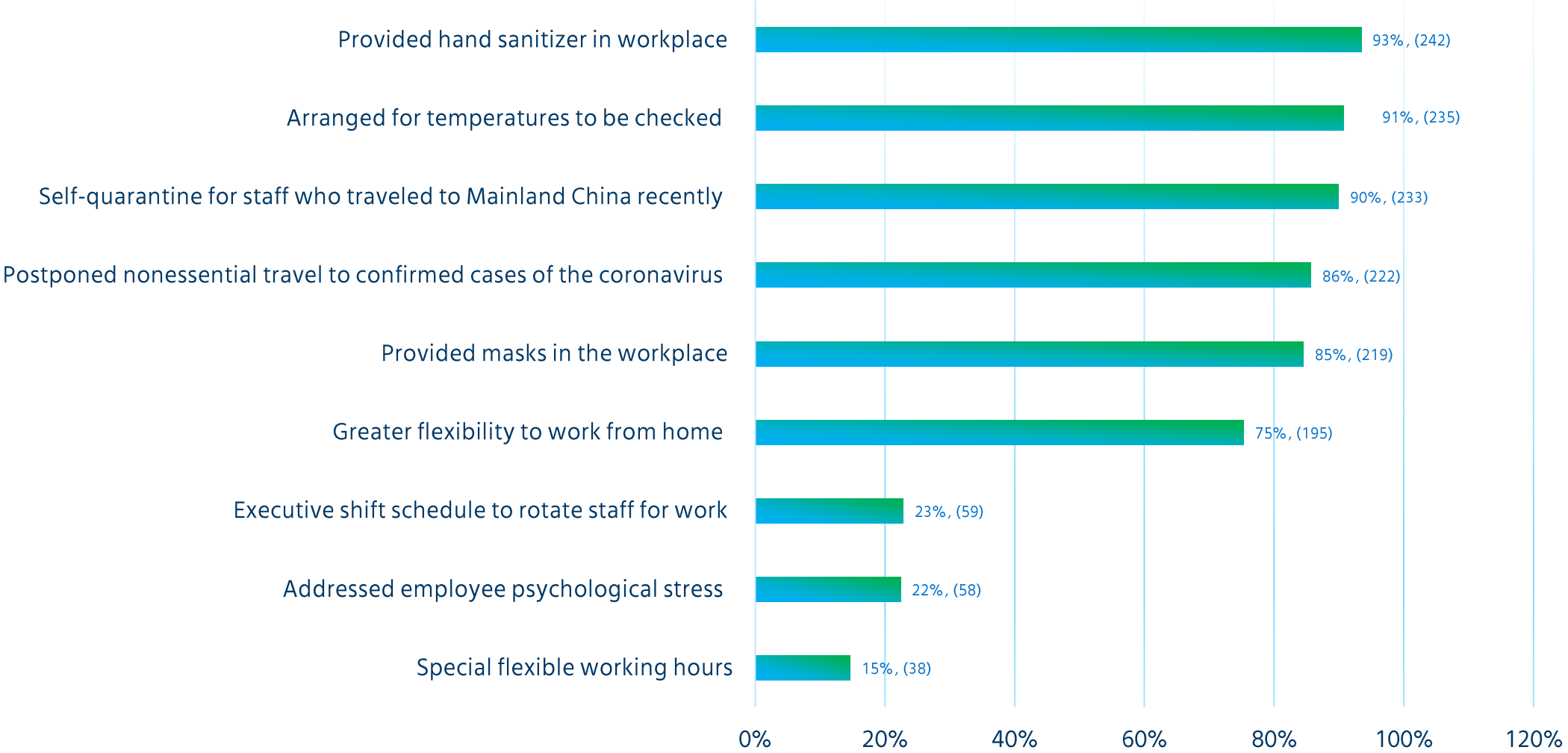


- We do not have plans to close
- No closures, but monitoring closely
- Closed with no specific end date
- Closed until a specific date

## In the event of an office closure, how does your company handle employee working arrangements?



# Typical arrangements companies have taken in response to the COVID-19 outbreak focus on health and safety in the workplace



# Some other arrangements reported by companies in response to the COVID-19 outbreak

Health & Travel declaration form is required

Split work arrangement, staggered lunch break, work from home options

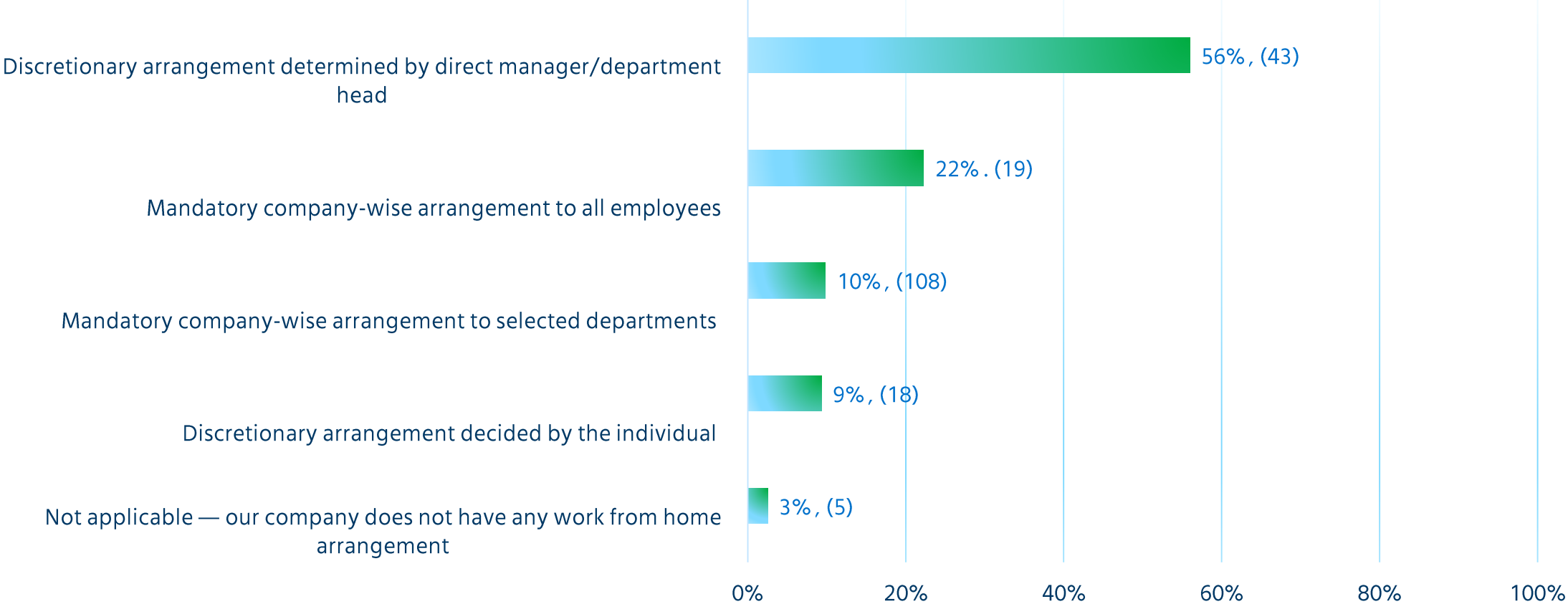
Cover GP screening cost before staff returns to work from LOA

Provided masks to customer facing employees

Paid Admin leave for new joiners / current staff who are stuck in China due to travel restrictions

Compressed work hours to avoid peak time public transport commuting

# Work from home arrangements have been implemented widely, and are usually applied on a discretionary basis

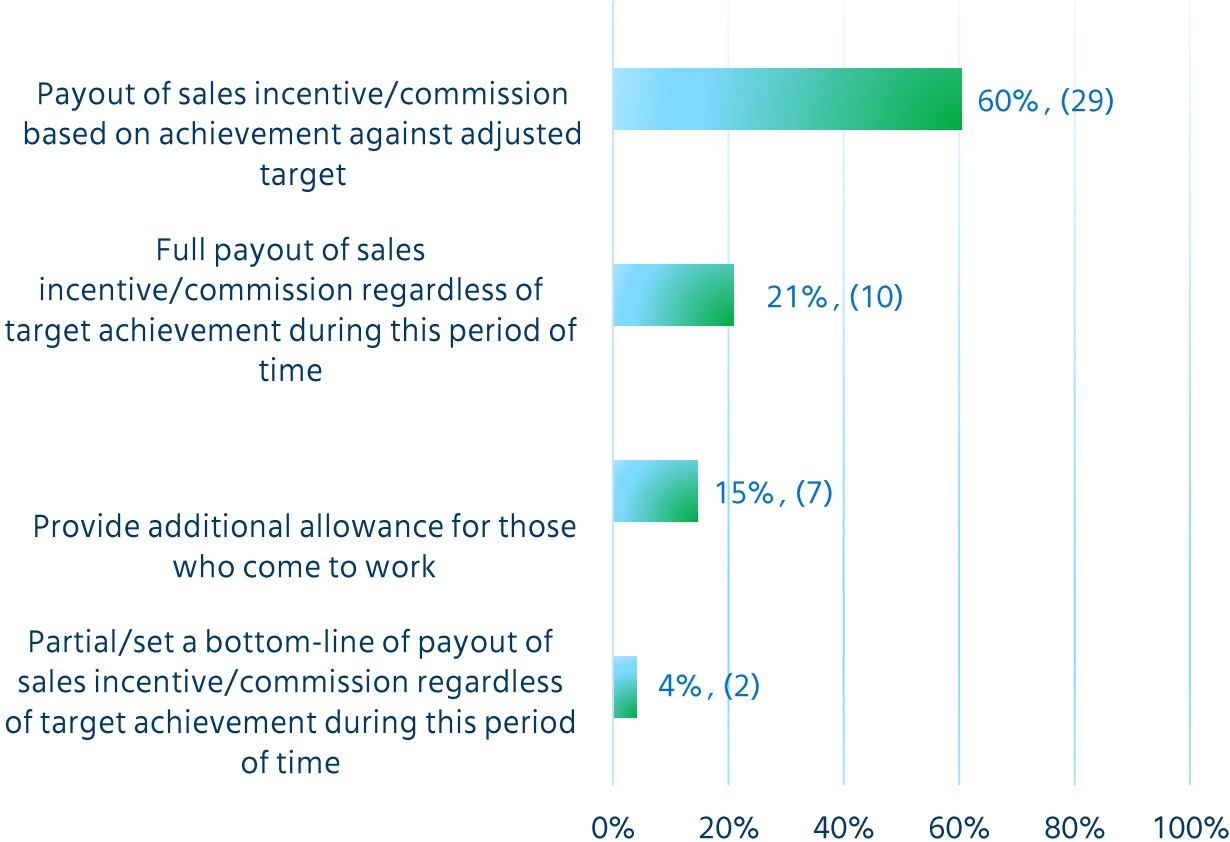


# There is little impact on reward budgets, with the exception of frontline staff – where employers plan to protect employees’ pay

# 96%

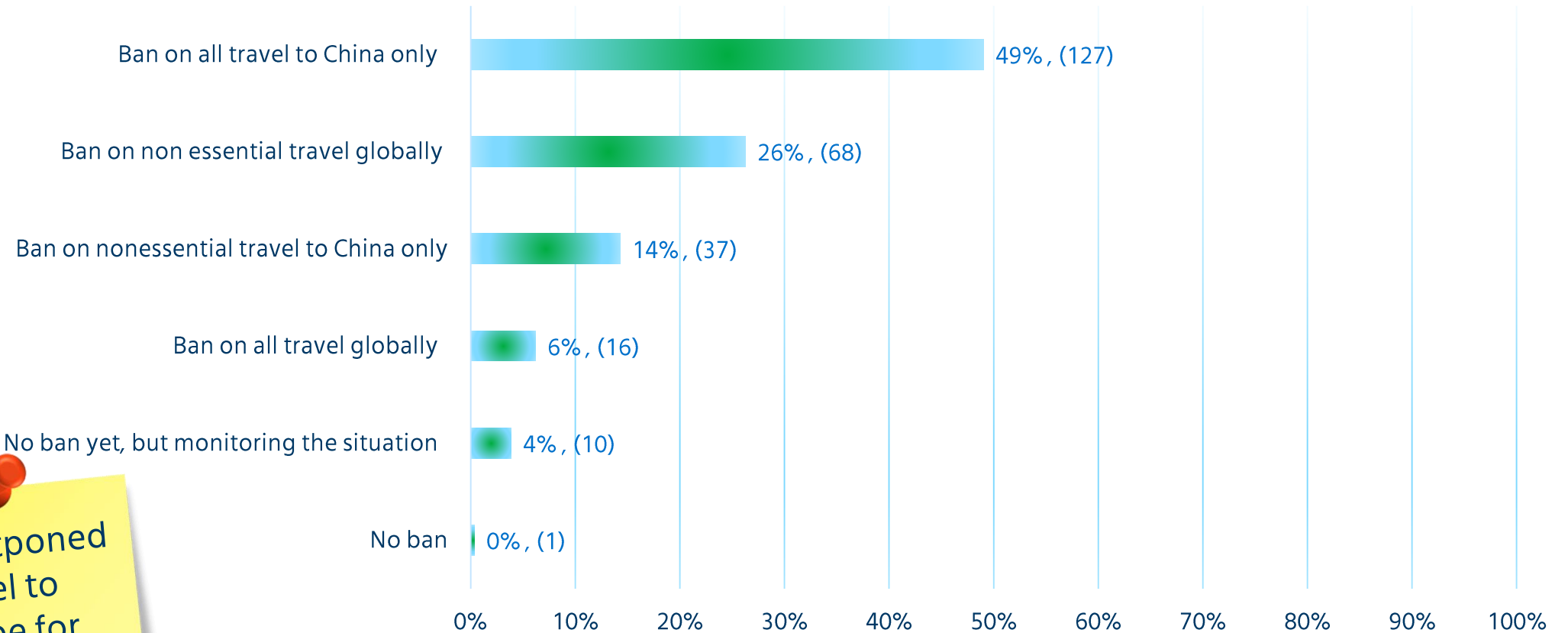
of responding organizations are **not** considering adjusting their rewards budgets

## Specific measures for frontline staff





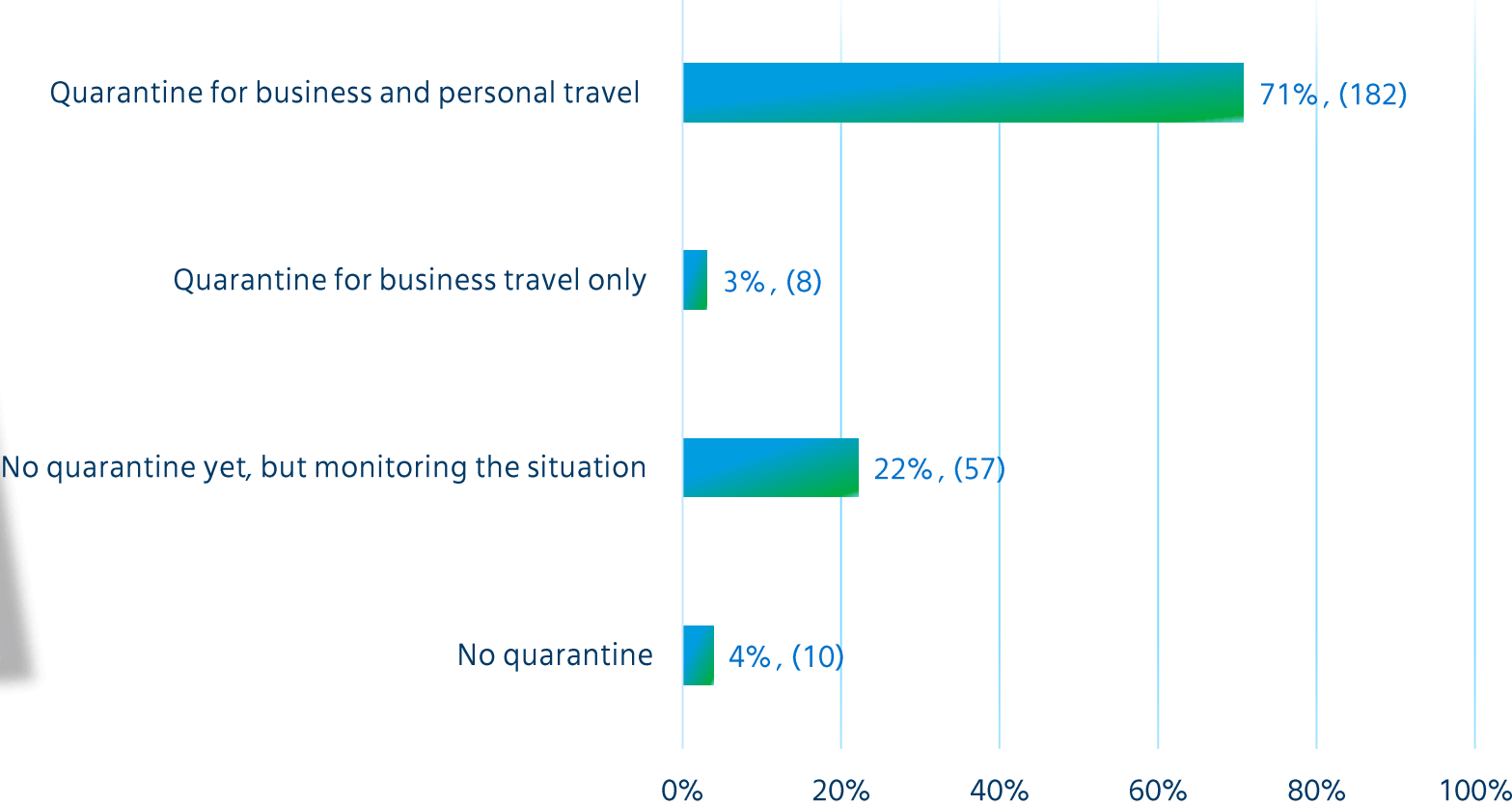
# Companies are restricting travel to minimize exposure to COVID-19



We postponed travel to Europe for Singapore & North Asia Employees

# Quarantine or self-imposed isolation following travel to locations with confirmed cases of the COVID-19 is common, even if no sign of symptoms

We provide LOA (Leave of Absence) for staff whose family members are on quarantine orders. Markets covered for LOA include Hong Kong & Macau (in addition to Mainland China)

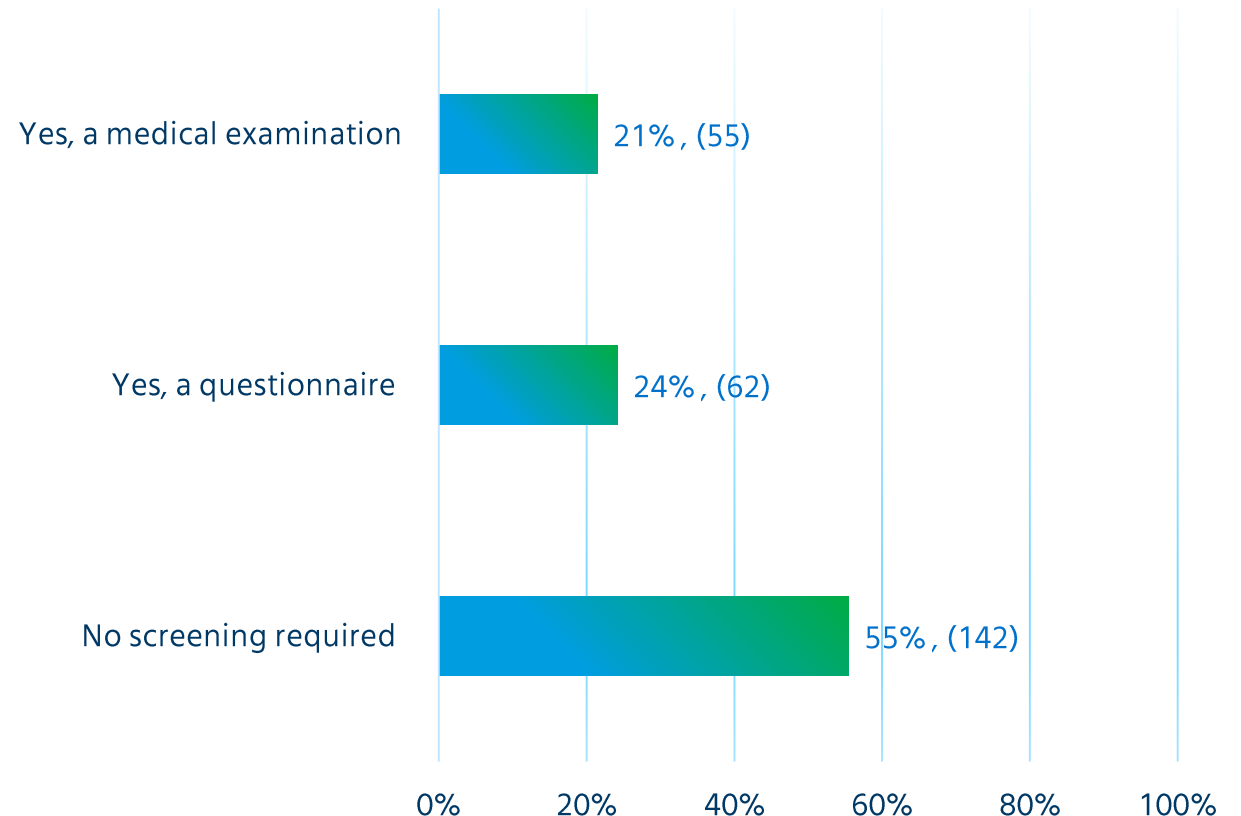


# Employers closely follow the government quarantine standards. Medical screening upon return to work is not required by half of the respondents

# 98%

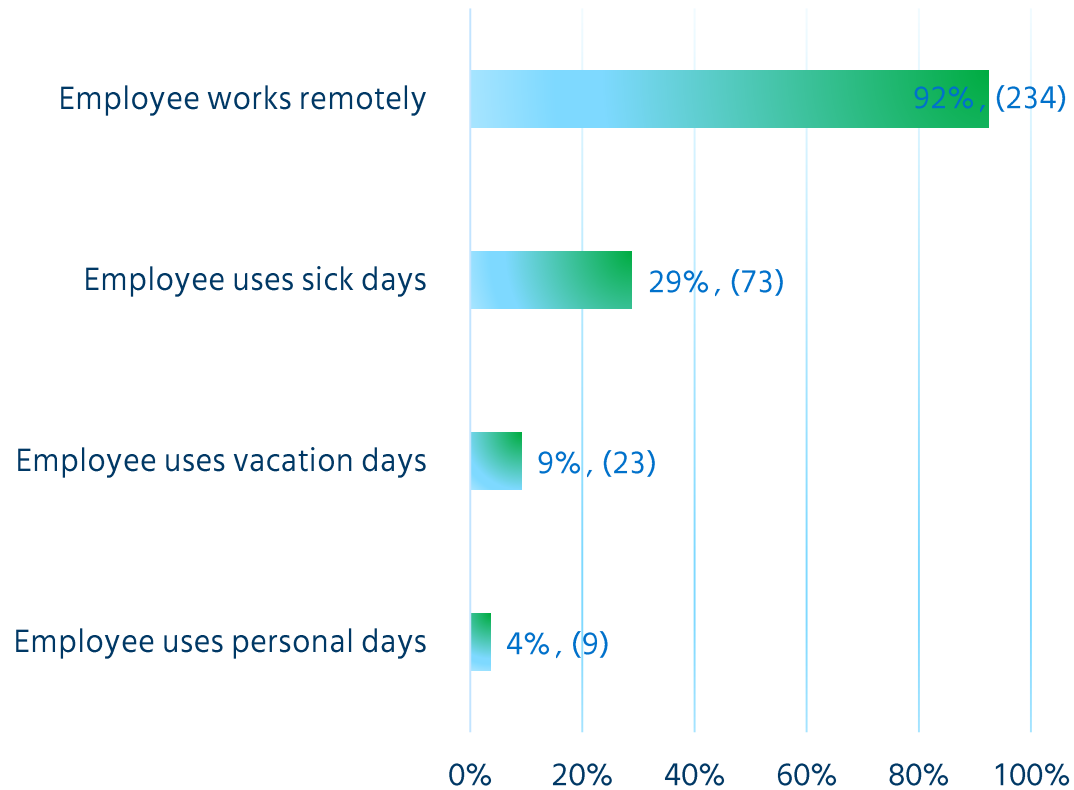
of the responding organizations follow the MOH directive of **14 days** quarantine

## If an employee is quarantined or in self-imposed isolation, do they have to undergo a screening before returning to work?

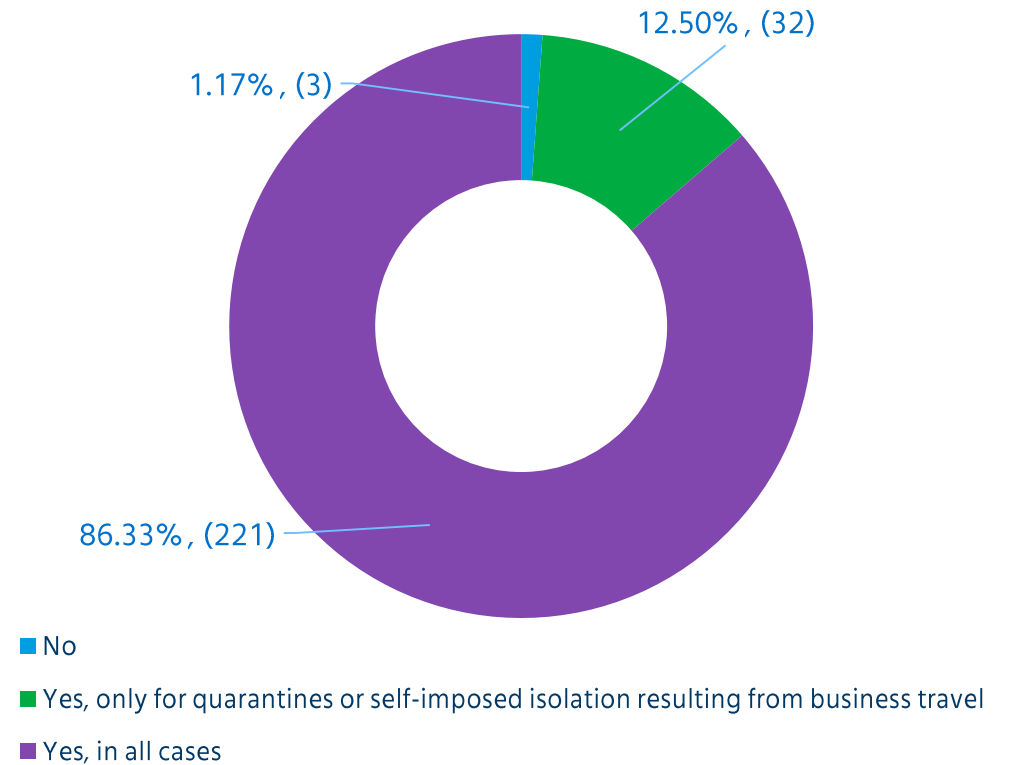


# During quarantine and self-imposed isolation, employees tend to continue to work remotely for full pay

## How is work handled when the employee is quarantined or in self-imposed isolation?

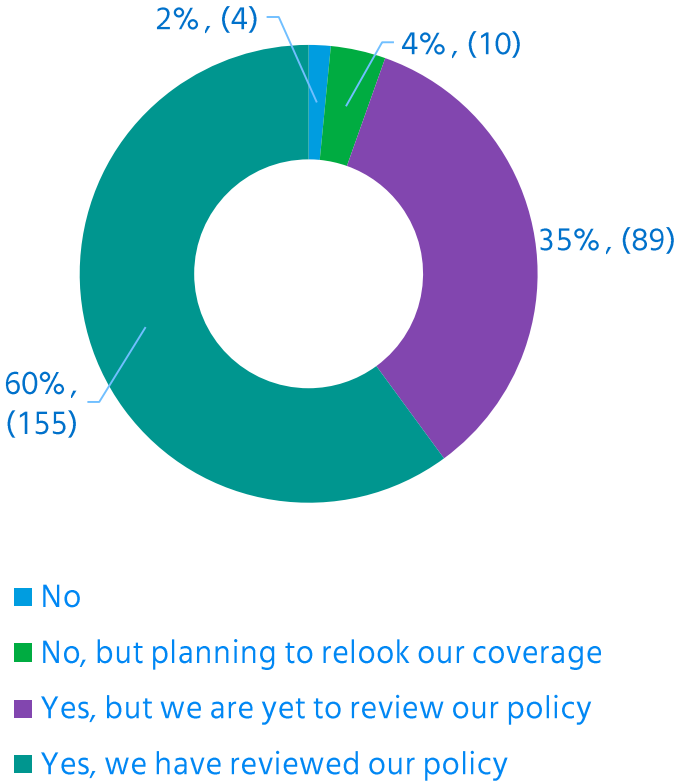


## Is the employee paid for the quarantine or self-imposed isolation period?

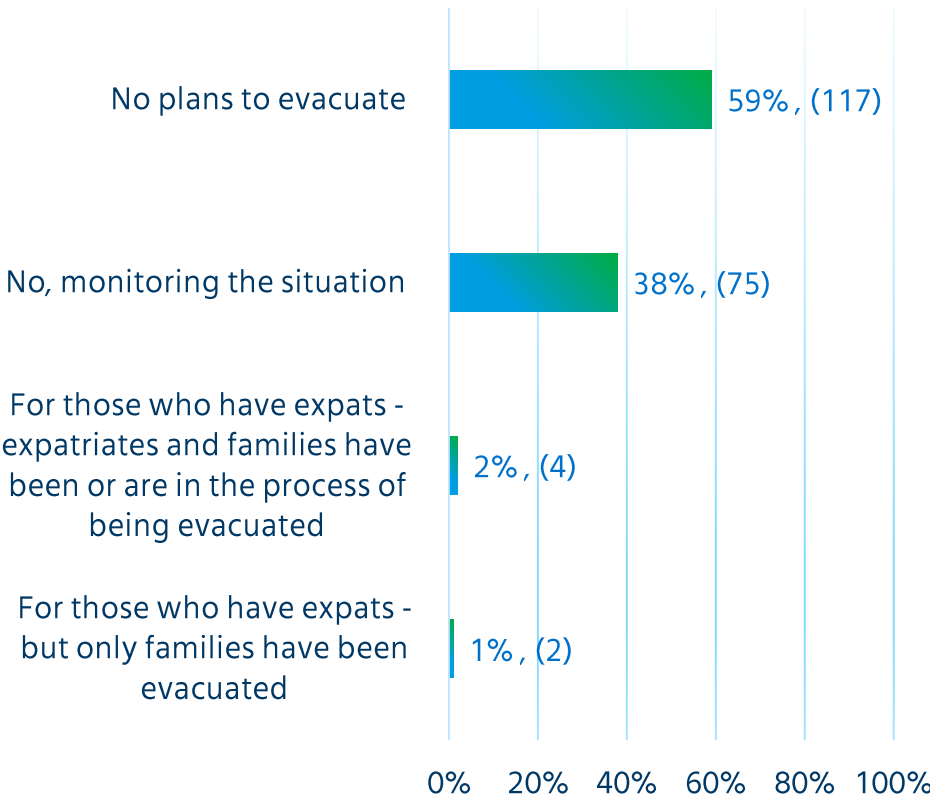


# Medical and travel insurance policies are being reviewed widely, very few companies evacuated expatriate employees

Do you feel that your existing medical and travel coverage is sufficient?

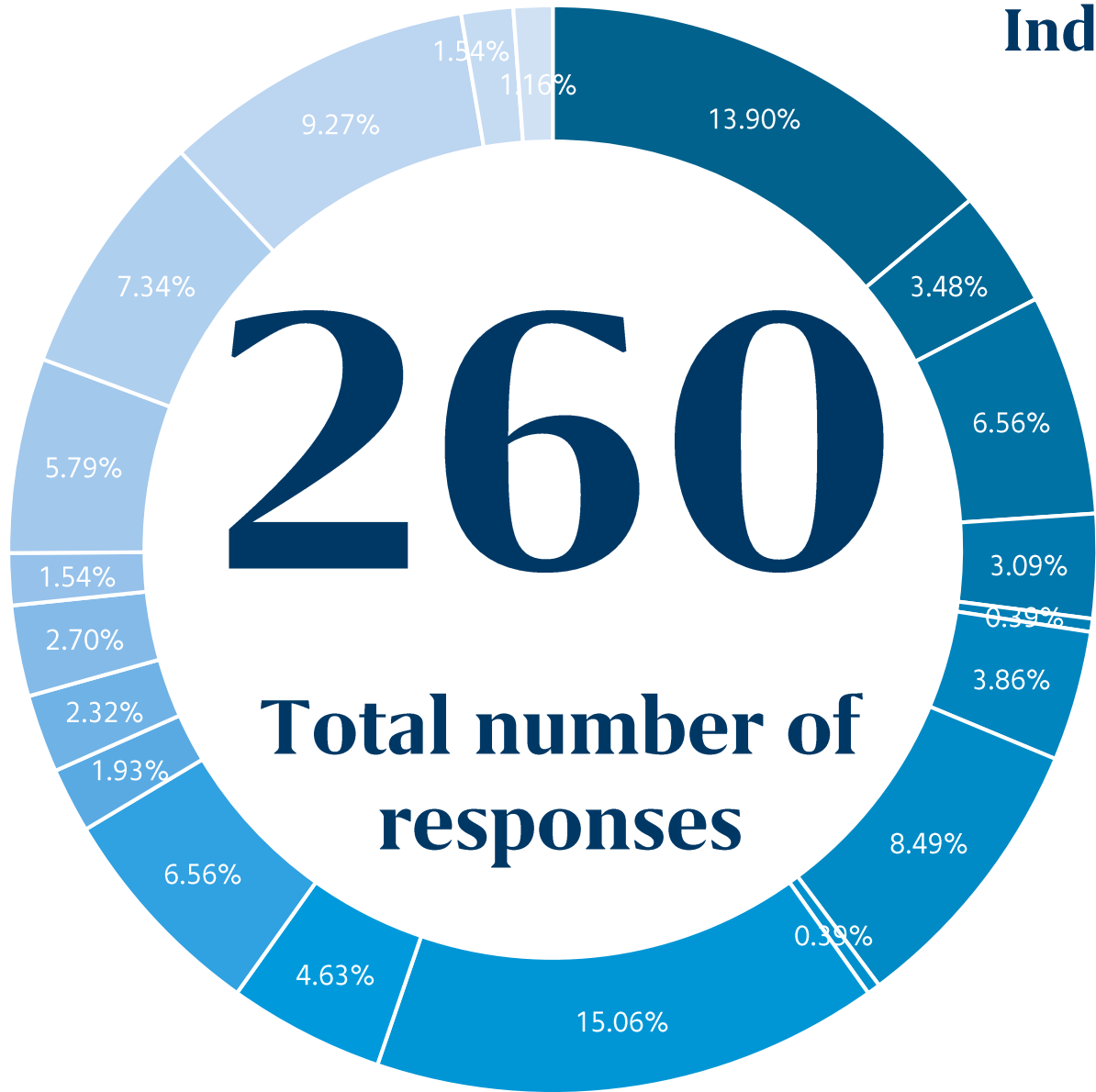


Has your company evacuated expatriates and their families from Singapore?



# Appendix

# Industry of participating companies



- Other, please specify
- Telecommunications
- Retail & wholesale
- Real estate
- Public sector
- Professional services/consulting
- Logistics/supply chain/shipping/transportation
- Hospitality
- High tech
- Healthcare
- Engineering
- Energy/mining
- Education
- Consumer goods
- Construction
- Chemicals
- Biotechnology/life sciences/pharmaceutical
- Banking/financial services/insurance/reinsurance
- Aerospace & aviation
- Advertising & public relations/media & entertainment



welcome to brighter

**By infusing economics with empathy, we see a bright future ahead**  
**#SingaporeTogether**