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OCTOBER 2020

# JOB OUTLOOK 2021

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS**

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# ABOUT THE *JOB OUTLOOK 2021* SURVEY

The *Job Outlook* survey is a forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates. Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveys its employer members about their hiring plans and other employment-related issues to project the market for the current class of new college graduates and to assess a variety of conditions that may influence that market.

Data for the *Job Outlook 2021* survey were collected from July 27, 2020, through September 11, 2020. This year, NACE not only surveyed 931 of its employer members, but it also surveyed 2,368 nonmember employer organizations. A total of 227 surveys were returned; 158 were NACE members and the remaining 69 were nonmembers.

Of the total that responded, 8% are from New England, 14.2% are from the Southwest, 17.8% are from the Southeast, 12.4% are from the Rocky Mountain/Far West, 8.4% are from the Plains, 17.3% are from the Mideast, and 21.8% are from the Great Lakes. For additional information about the respondents, see the Appendix.

Totals throughout this report may not equal 100% due to rounding.

NACE expects to provide a formal job market update during the 2020-21 academic year. Based on data collected in February and March, the *Job Outlook 2021 Spring Update* survey will give NACE members a final update on hiring for Class of 2021 graduates. Results will be available in early April.

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# JOB OUTLOOK 2021

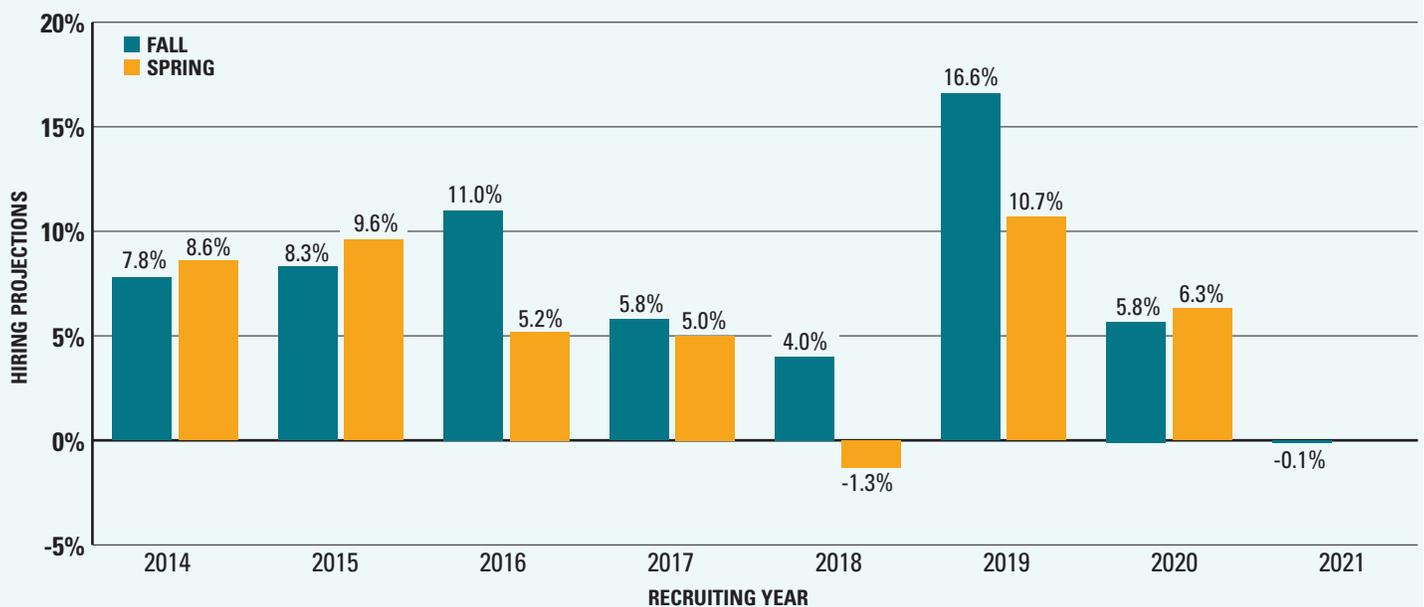
## COLLEGE HIRING FALLS FLAT

Although college hiring has indeed been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, steps employers have taken have allowed them, at least to this point, to blunt its potential full impact.

In terms of the Class of 2021, employers expect to essentially maintain hiring at 2020 levels, with a drop of just 0.1%. **[See Figure 1.]**

There are a couple of considerations to weigh. First, the outlook for Class of 2021 graduates is more positive than expected given that the pandemic shut down the economy, plummeted the stock market, and raised the unemployment rate. Second, in several employment sectors, organizations are increasing their college hiring, which is helping to drive the overall hiring outlook.

**FIGURE 1: Job Outlook Hiring Projections, 2014 – 2021**



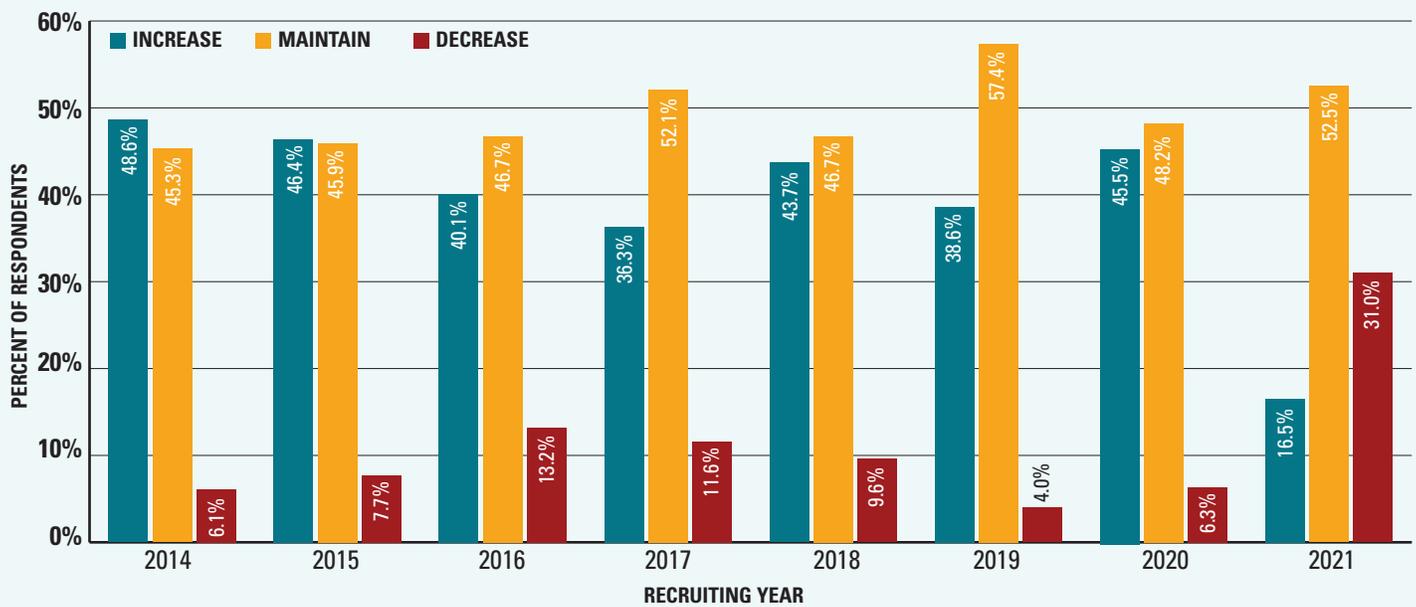
While more than half of respondents will maintain their individual hiring numbers for the sixth consecutive year, the groups of respondents that are increasing and decreasing hires have dramatically changed. More than 45% of last year’s respondents [45.5%] planned increases to their hiring numbers compared to just 16.5% this year. On the other hand, the percentage of respondents that were decreasing hiring numbers has risen from 6.3% last year to 31.0% this year. [See Figure 2.]

The common theme among respondents that provided an explanation as to why their college hiring numbers were decreasing was the pandemic and its collateral damage. Many cited the loss and/or reduction in business and projects, cuts in budget, and the overall uncertainty of the economy. Other respondents mentioned that they would decrease college hires to avoid layoffs of their current staff.

Respondents that are maintaining their college hiring numbers indicated many of the same reasons cited by those decreasing hires—all having to do with the negative effects of the pandemic on their companies. However, some respondents mentioned that their businesses are actually growing and their hiring has remained steady. Other organizations indicated the importance of and their commitment to hiring new college graduates. In other words, they do not want to “miss out on great hires.”

Of the respondents that are increasing their number of college hires, many reported that they are essential businesses that need to add more resources as their companies see increased demand for their products and services. Others echoed the need to continue and increase their number of college hires as they have a vested interest in succession planning.

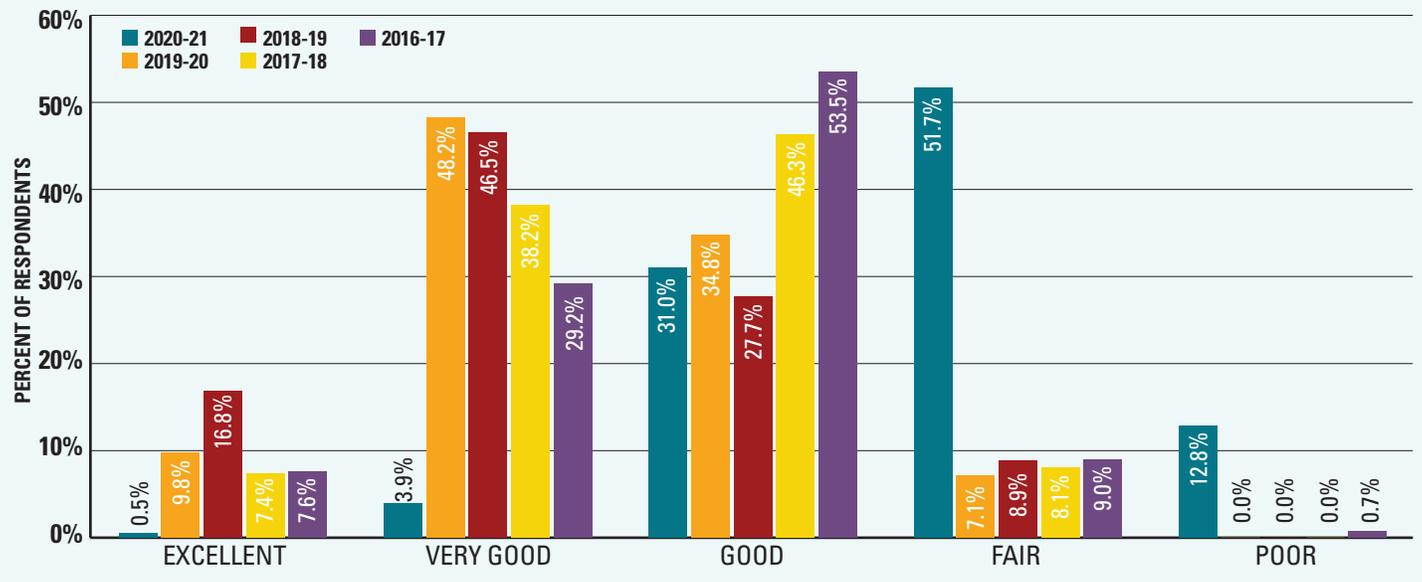
**FIGURE 2: Employers’ hiring expectations, by percent of respondents**



## JOB MARKET RATINGS

It comes as no surprise that the employer ratings of the job market for the Class of 2021 have taken a turn for the worse in comparison to the last several years. This year’s survey respondents rated the overall market as “fair,” a downward shift from last year, when most respondents rated the job market as “very good” for Class of 2020 graduates. This year, than half of this year’s respondents—51.7%—rated the job market as “fair,” which is up from less than 10% of respondents over the past four years. An additional 31.0% of respondents rated the overall market as “good,” and just 3.9% rated it as “very good.” Furthermore, the group of respondents rating the market as “poor” has risen from less than 1% over the past four years to nearly 13% this year. [See Figure 3.]

**FIGURE 3: Employers rate the job market for 2020-21 graduates**



## FALL VS. SPRING RECRUITING

One area of recruiting less affected by the pandemic is fall versus spring recruiting. Respondents report that 64% of their recruiting for full-time hires will be conducted in fall 2020, with the remaining 36% in spring 2021. This is only a slight change from last year, when respondents planned to conduct 68% of their college recruiting in fall 2019 and the remaining 32% in spring 2020. This year, employers also report they will conduct the same percentages of fall and spring recruiting (64% in fall and 36% in spring) for intern hires. [See Figure 4.]

Examining the individual fall and spring recruiting responses further indicates employers’ preference for fall recruiting. Slightly more than 14% of respondents reported that they will conduct 100% of their Class of 2021 recruiting in the fall.

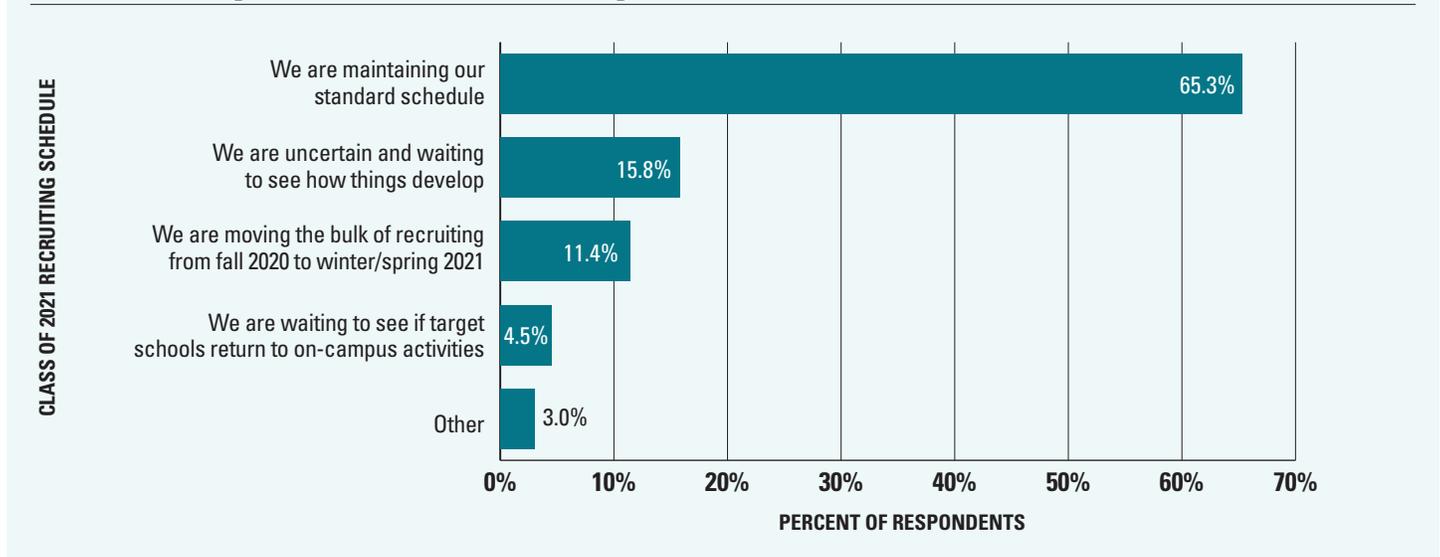
**FIGURE 4: Percentage of college recruiting conducted in fall vs. spring, 2014 – 2021**

JOB OUTLOOK SURVEY YEAR	FALL FULL-TIME HIRES	SPRING FULL-TIME HIRES	FALL INTERN HIRES	SPRING INTERN HIRES
2021	64%	36%	64%	36%
2020	68%	32%	—	—
2019	71%	29%	—	—
2018	70%	30%	—	—
2017	72%	28%	—	—
2016	71%	29%	—	—
2015	66%	34%	—	—
2014	62%	38%	—	—

## CHANGES TO CLASS OF 2021 RECRUITING SCHEDULES

Additional evidence of how employers' recruiting schedules have not been severely impacted by the pandemic is seen in Figure 5. When asked if they would make changes to their Class of 2021 recruiting schedule, almost two-thirds of respondents stated that they would maintain their standard schedule, with only 11.4% planning to move the bulk of their fall 2020 recruiting to winter/spring 2021. Approximately 20% were uncertain and are either waiting to see how things develop or specifically waiting to see if their target schools return to on-campus activities. For the most part, respondents that indicated other changes were either not hiring or expected to conduct slightly less recruiting in the fall and more in the spring.

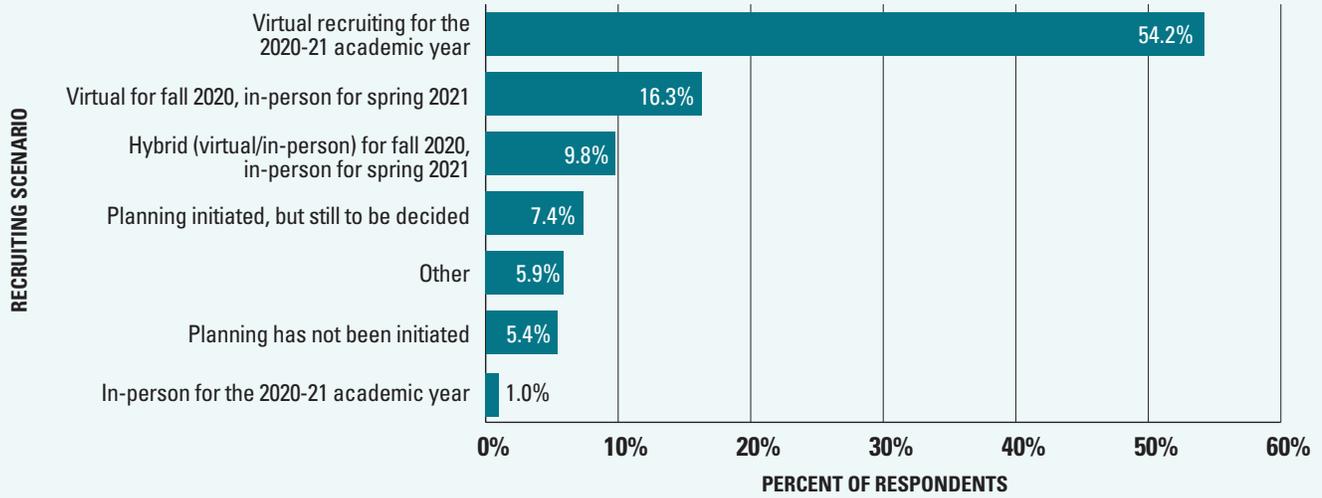
**FIGURE 5:** Changes to Class of 2021 recruiting schedules



## PLANS FOR THE 2020-21 RECRUITING SEASON

In terms of the manner in which employers will recruit during the 2020-21 academic year, more than half of respondents report that they will recruit virtually for the entire academic year. **[See Figure 6.]** Slightly more than 16% of respondents will recruit virtually in the fall and in person for spring 2021, with an additional 9.8% using a combination of virtual/in person for the fall, and in person for spring 2021. Less than 13% of respondents are uncertain and either had started planning, but are undecided or had not started planning at all. Most of the nearly 6% of "other" respondents indicated that they will recruit virtually in the fall, but are undecided on their recruiting method for the spring, taking a wait-and-see approach.

**FIGURE 6: Plans for the 2020-21 recruiting season**



# HIRING BY INDUSTRY

Of the 16 industries with at least five respondents that reported their hiring numbers for the classes of 2020 and 2021, just seven are reporting overall increases, with the remaining nine reporting decreases. It is important to note that data are limited, so these figures should be read with caution. [See Figure 7.]

**FIGURE 7: Total change in hiring, by industry**

INDUSTRY	NUMBER OF 2021 PROJECTED HIRES	NUMBER OF 2020 ACTUAL HIRES	% CHANGE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Chemical (pharmaceutical) mfg.	752	344	118.6%	8
Misc. support services	294	182	61.3%	5
Information	4,561	3,350	36.1%	8
Wholesale trade	221	182	21.4%	5
Motor vehicle mfg.	1,320	1,241	6.4%	5
Accounting services	4,055	3,960	2.4%	7
Food & beverage mfg.	1,382	1,376	0.4%	8
Computer & electronics mfg.	2,862	2,911	-1.7%	16
Management consulting	403	426	-5.4%	7
Misc. prof. services	839	890	-5.7%	10
Finance, insurance, & real estate	2,819	3,078	-8.4%	25
Retail trade	1,386	1,576	-12.1%	8
Construction	201	306	-34.3%	6
Government	264	528	-50.0%	5
Misc. mfg.	419	895	-53.2%	18
Engineering services	322	737	-56.3%	9

Chemical (pharmaceutical) manufacturers appear to have the highest projected increase among all reported industries, nearly doubling their number of hires. However, one respondent in this sector is increasing its hiring numbers by 400%, causing the overall increase to be inflated. When this respondent is excluded, the overall projection for the industry remains an increase, but by just 3.3%. In addition, among the remaining seven industry respondents, there are two that are decreasing their hires, with the remaining five maintaining their hires. This sector's respondents also provided one of the lowest job market ratings within their specific industry. [See Figures 7 through 11.]

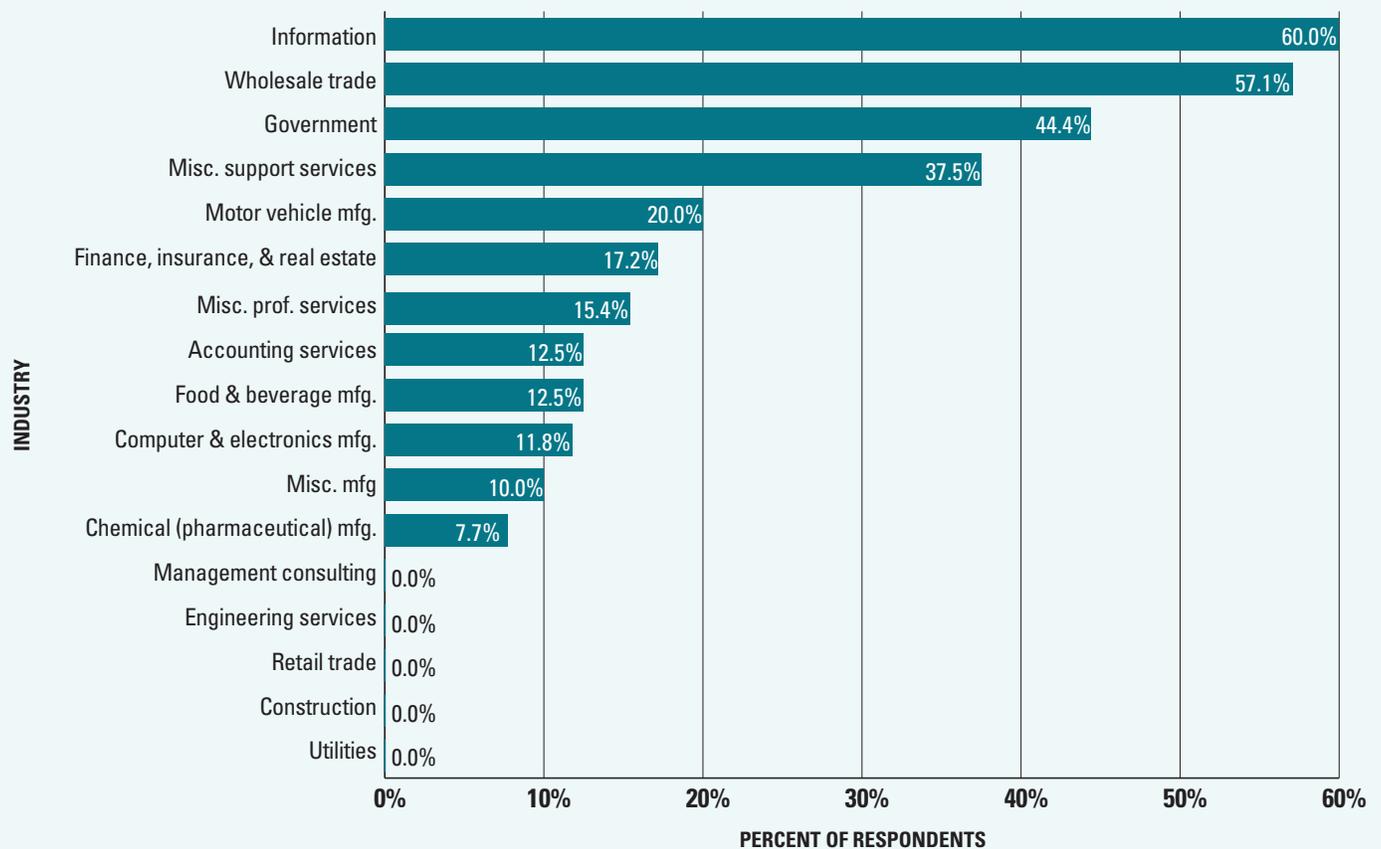
For miscellaneous support services, the same type of promising picture appears. However, of five total respondents, just two are increasing hires, while two are decreasing hires and the remaining respondent is maintaining its hires. Since the planned increases are large, they are driving the overall increase upward, not necessarily providing a true outlook for this industry. The industry job market rating from miscellaneous support services employers also falls on the lower side.

While food and beverage manufacturers report an increase of less than 1% in overall college hiring, they give the highest rating to their industry's job market, although one of the eight respondents in this sector rated the industry job market as "excellent." Furthermore, even though the increased demand for food and beverage products throughout the pandemic has contributed to the success of this sector, most respondents [62.5%] are maintaining their college hiring numbers, with 25% decreasing hires and just 12.5% increasing them.

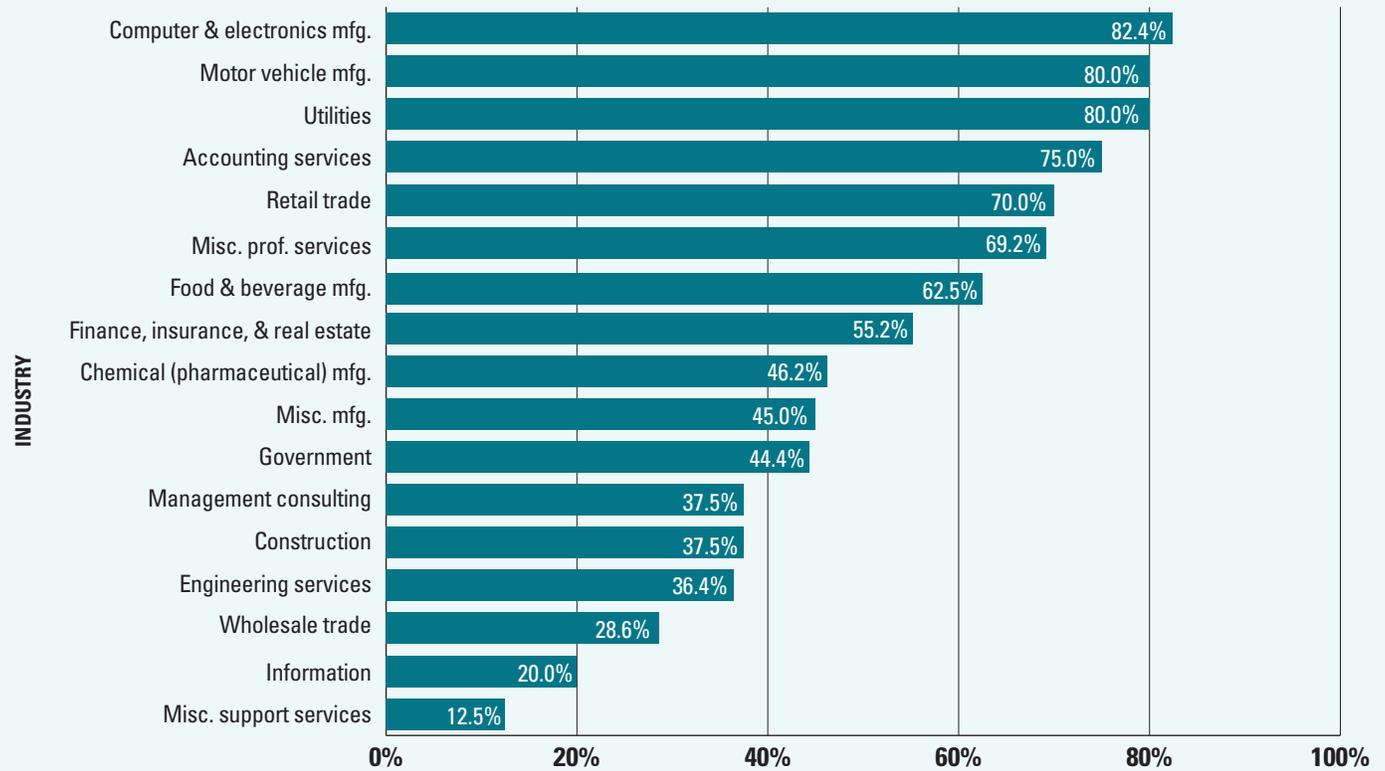
A more uniform representation is seen in the information industry, where the overall projected increase is 36.1%. While a few of the hiring projections are on the larger side due to increased business needs, there is more consistency within the sector. Additionally, 60% of information respondents are planning to increase hires and their industry job market rating is just above “good” on the Likert scale. [See Figure 8 and Figure 11.]

In contrast to the positive sectors, engineering services firms are projecting the largest decrease by cutting their hiring numbers by more than half. Delays and holds on funding of construction projects as a result of the pandemic have clearly hurt this particular sector. No respondents in this sector are increasing college hires, but it has the largest percentage of respondents [63.6%] that plan to decrease their college hires. [See Figure 8 and Figure 10.] It also has one of the lowest industry job market ratings. [See Figure 11.]

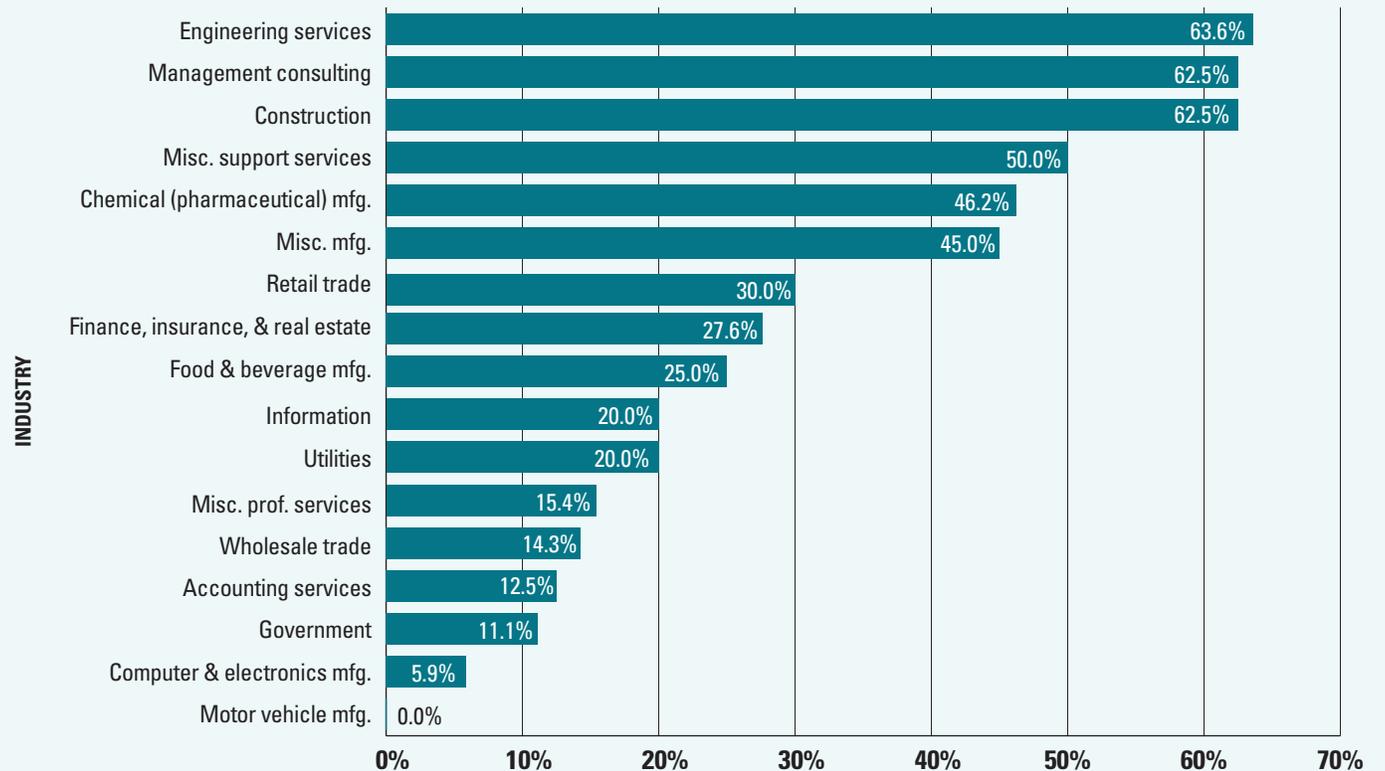
**FIGURE 8: Employers planning to increase hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by Industry**



**FIGURE 9: Employers planning to maintain hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by industry**



**FIGURE 10: Employers planning to decrease hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by industry**



**FIGURE 11: Job market ratings, by industry\***

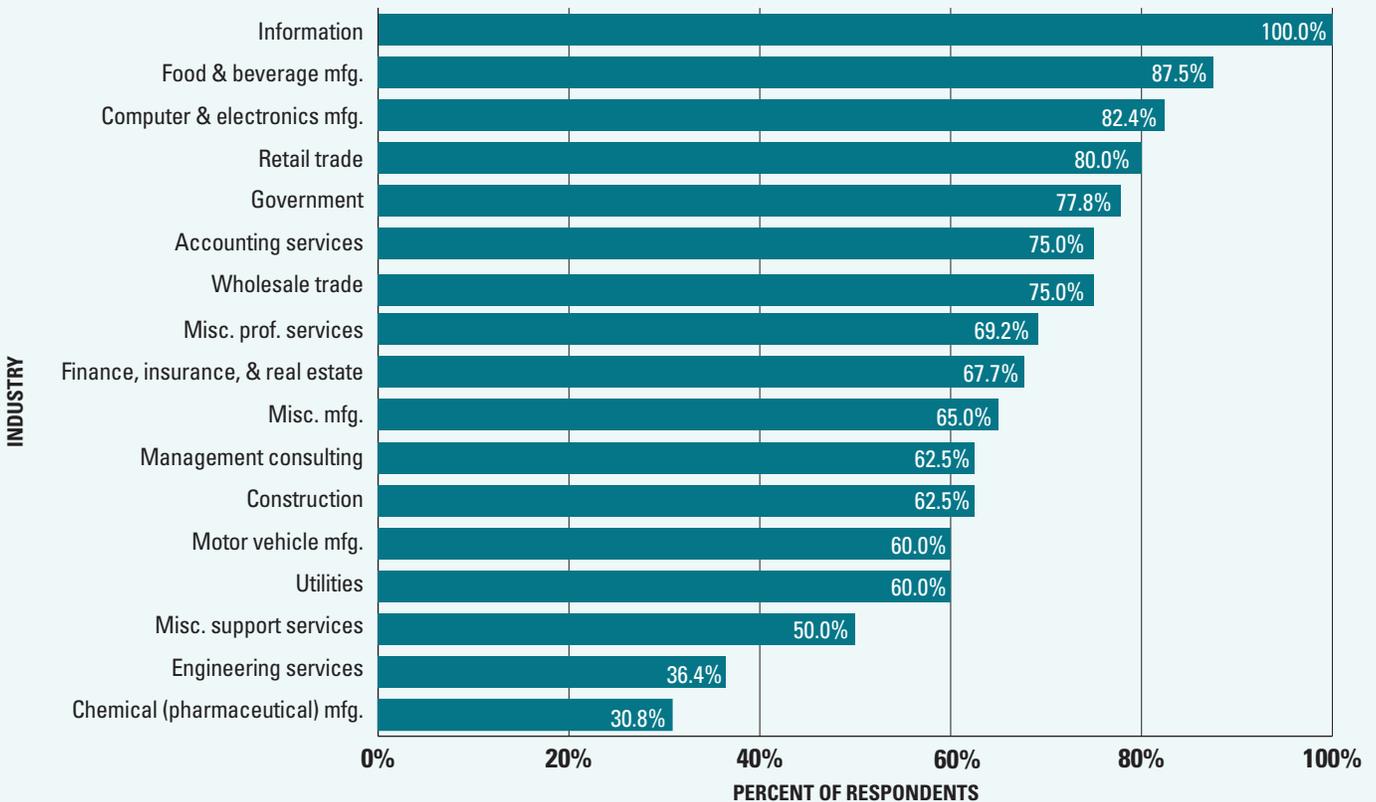
INDUSTRY	AVERAGE RATING	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Food & beverage mfg.	3.38	8
Government	3.11	9
Information	3.10	10
Motor vehicle mfg.	3.00	5
Wholesale trade	3.00	8
Management consulting	3.00	8
Finance, insurance, & real estate	2.81	31
Accounting services	2.75	8
Misc. prof. services	2.69	13
Misc. mfg.	2.65	20
Utilities	2.60	5
Computer & electronics mfg.	2.59	17
Construction	2.25	8
Misc. support services	2.25	8
Chemical (pharmaceutical) mfg.	2.23	13
Engineering services	2.18	11
Retail trade	2.10	10

\*5-point scale, where 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Very Good, and 5=Excellent.

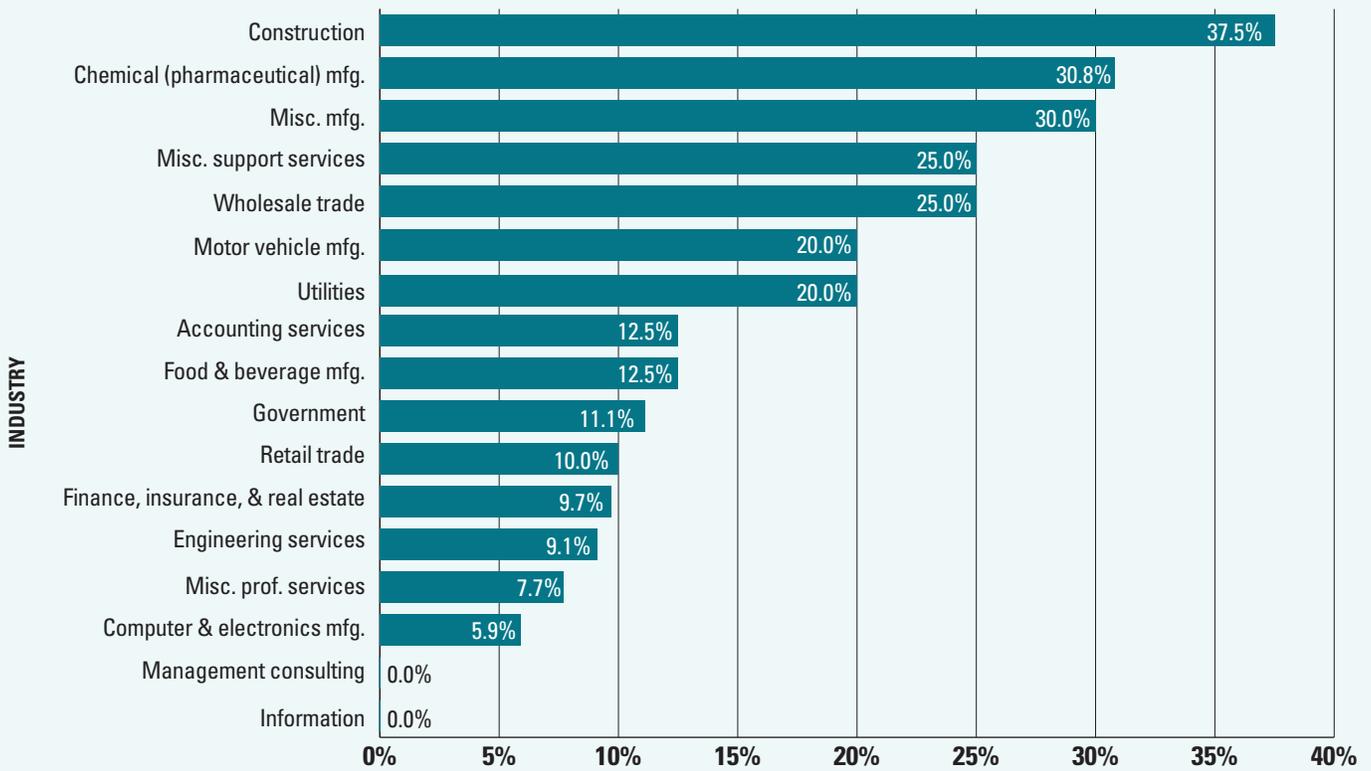
Figures 12 through 15 show the changes in Class of 2021 recruiting schedules by industry. The findings include that:

- All responding employers within the information sector and nearly 90% of food and beverage manufacturers plan to maintain their standard recruiting schedule. On the other hand, just 36.4% of engineering services firms will maintain their original recruiting schedules. **[See Figure 12.]**
- More than 30% of both construction firms and chemical [pharmaceutical] manufacturers are uncertain of their recruiting schedules and plan to wait and see how things develop. There are no information respondents reporting this same uncertainty. **[See Figure 13.]**
- Among respondents that are moving the bulk of recruiting from fall 2020 to winter/spring 2021, the largest percentages are in the engineering services [27.3%], miscellaneous support services [25%], and management consulting [25%] sectors. **[See Figure 14.]**
- Nearly 20% of respondents in the engineering services sector are waiting to see if target schools return to on-campus activities. **[See Figure 15.]**

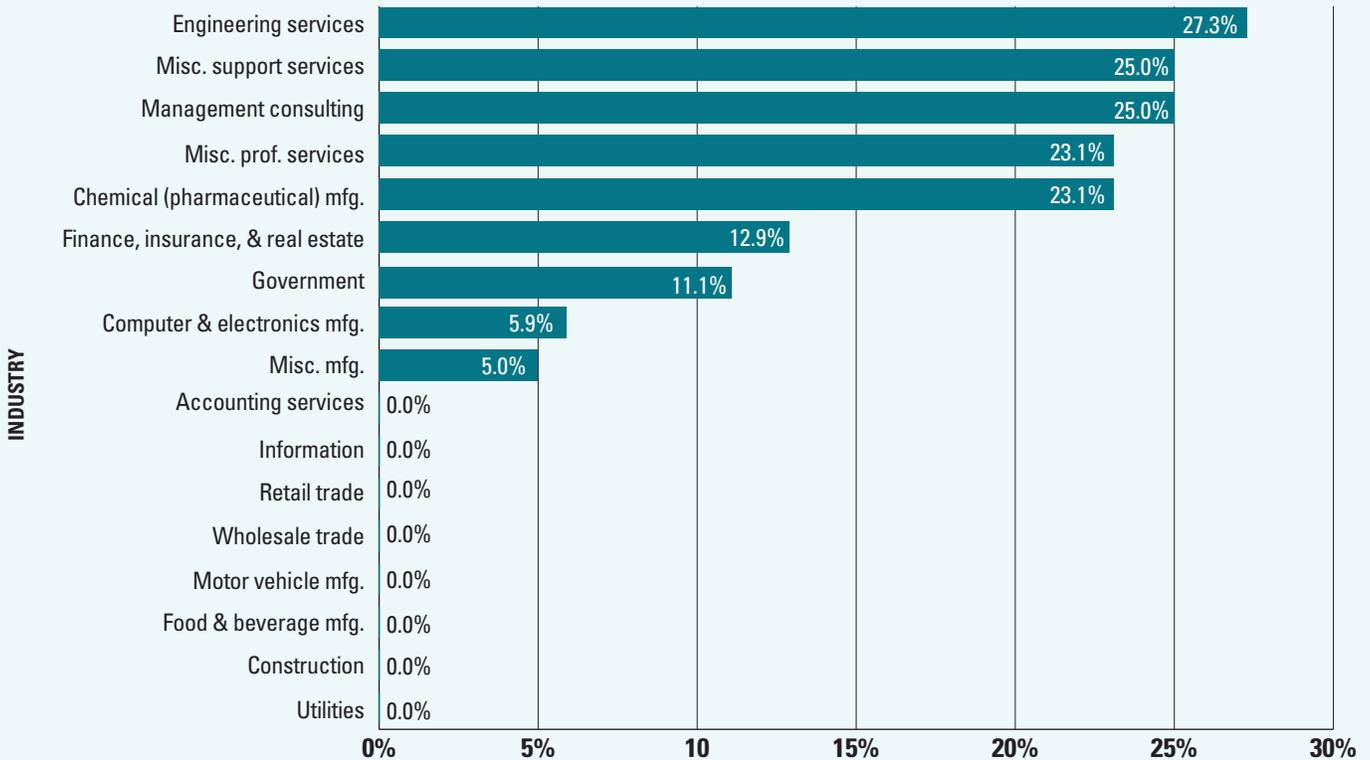
**FIGURE 12: Respondents that are maintaining their standard recruiting schedule, by industry**



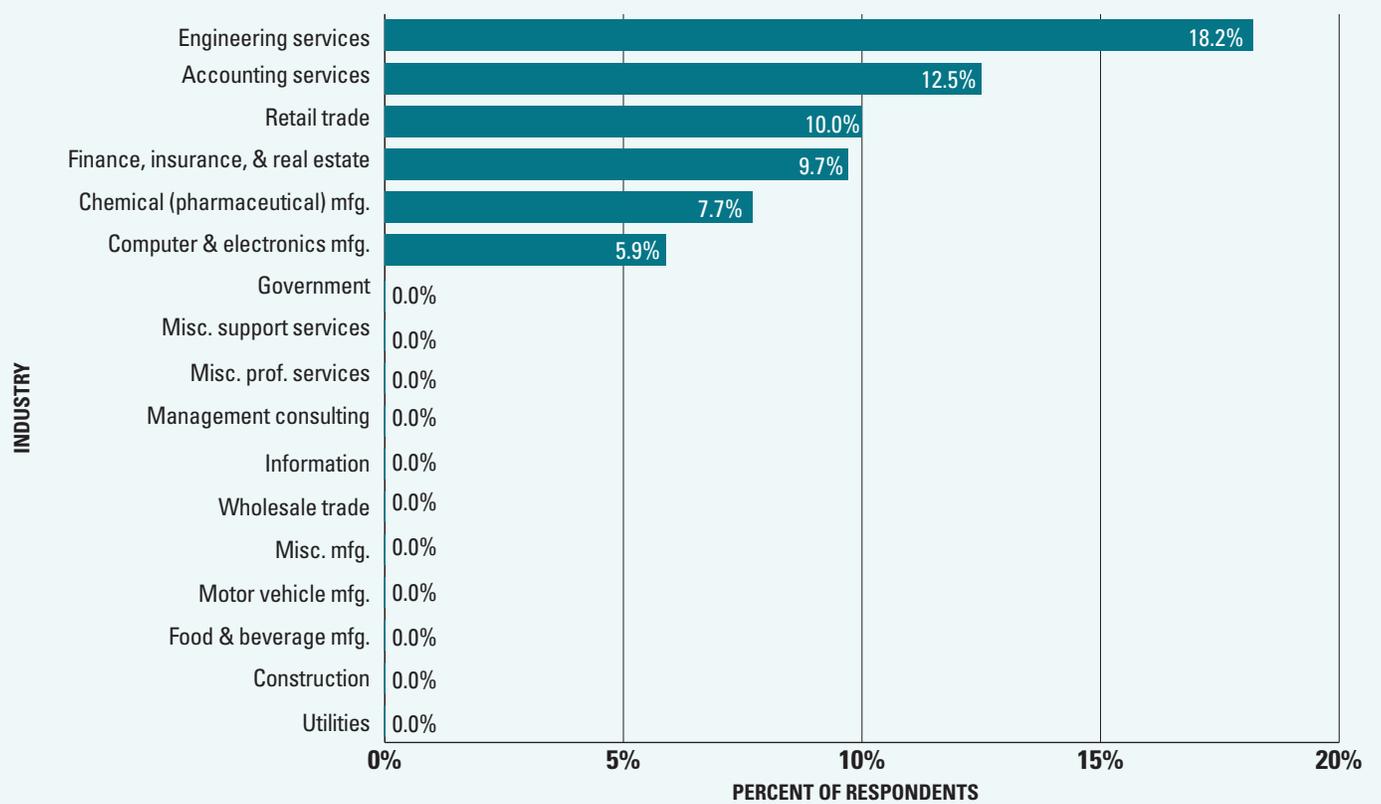
**FIGURE 13: Respondents that are uncertain and waiting to see how things develop, by industry**



**FIGURE 14: Respondents that are moving the bulk of recruiting from fall 2020 to winter/spring 2021, by industry**



**FIGURE 15:** Respondents that are waiting to see if target schools return to on-campus activities, by industry

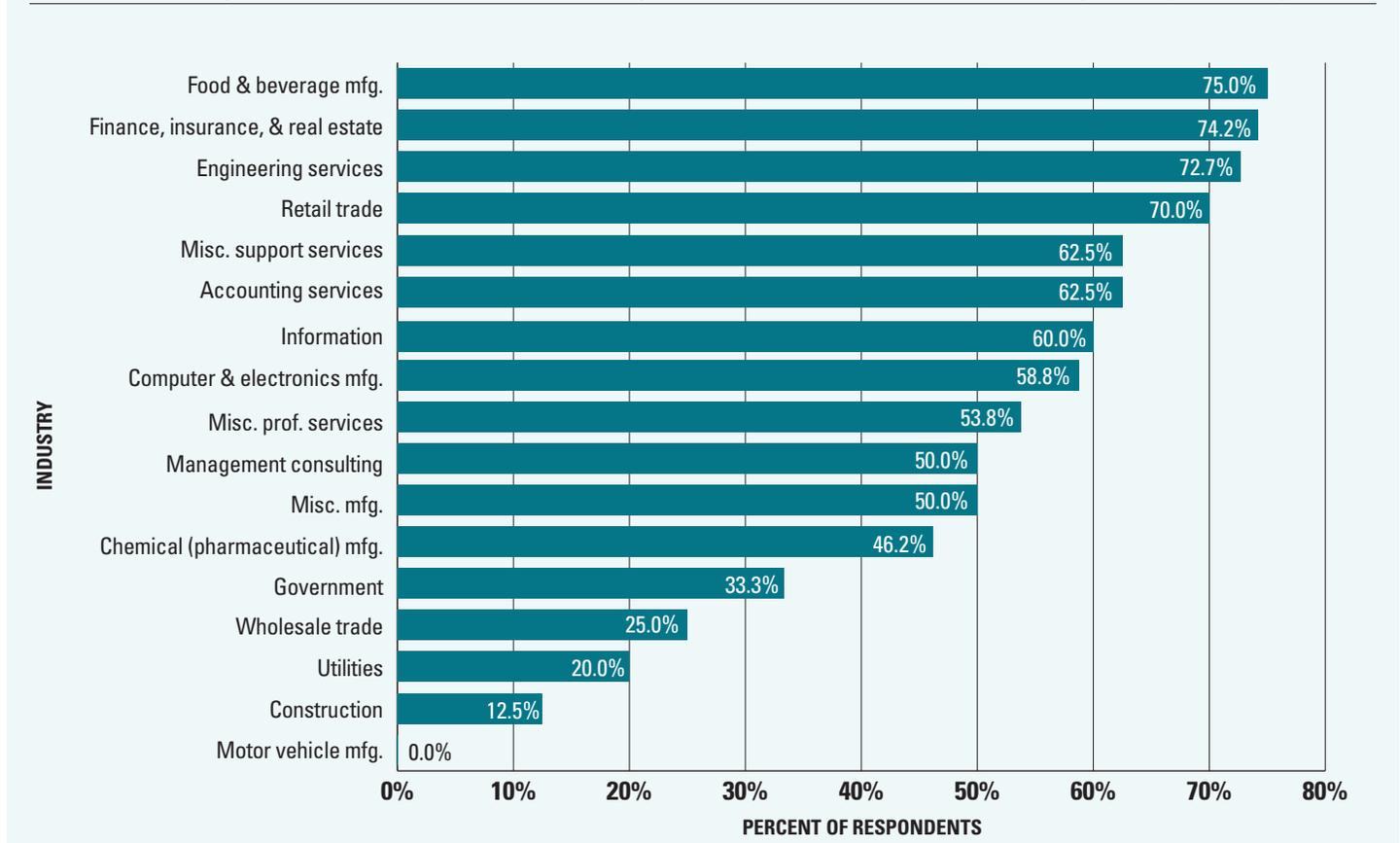


## PLANS FOR THE 2020-21 RECRUITING SEASON, BY INDUSTRY

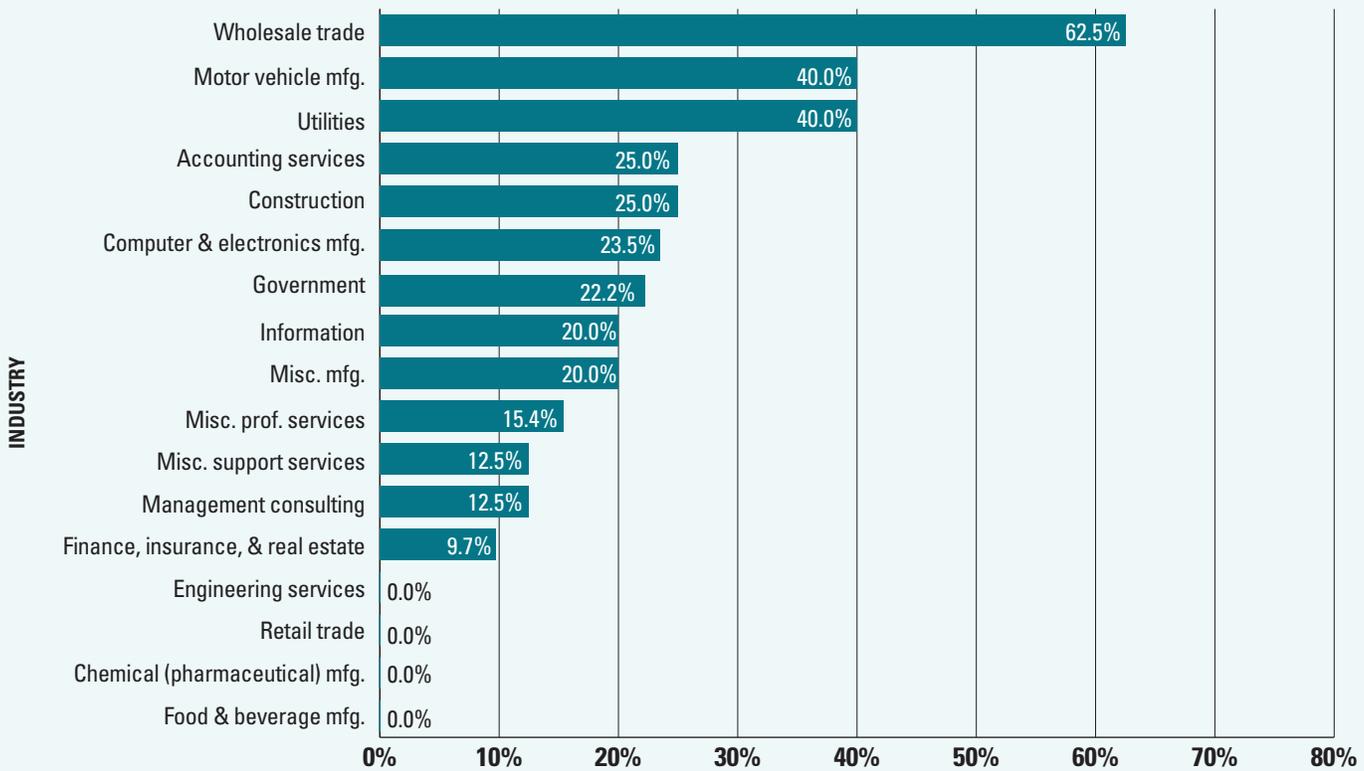
Figures 16 through 20 provide the breakouts by industry of the planned recruiting methods for the Class of 2021. Results show that:

- Eleven of the 17 reporting industries have half or more of their respondents with plans to recruit virtually for the entire 2020-21 academic year. Finance, insurance, and real estate firms and food and beverage manufacturers are most likely to do so, as both sectors report three-quarters of respondents with virtual recruiting plans for the entire 2020-21 academic year. **[See Figure 16.]**
- Nearly two-thirds of wholesale trade employers plan to recruit virtually in fall 2020 and in person for spring 2021. No respondents in the engineering services, retail, chemical [pharmaceutical] manufacturing, and food and beverage manufacturing industries have plans to do so. **[See Figure 17.]**
- Less than half of respondents in all reported sectors plan to recruit both virtually and in person this fall and in person during spring 2021. **[See Figure 18.]**
- Chemical [pharmaceutical] manufacturers are most uncertain of their Class of 2021 recruiting methods. Slightly less than one-quarter of chemical [pharmaceutical] manufacturers report that they have begun planning, but they are still undecided. In addition, another 15.4% of chemical [pharmaceutical] manufacturers have not yet initiated any Class of 2021 recruiting planning. **[See Figure 19 and Figure 20.]**

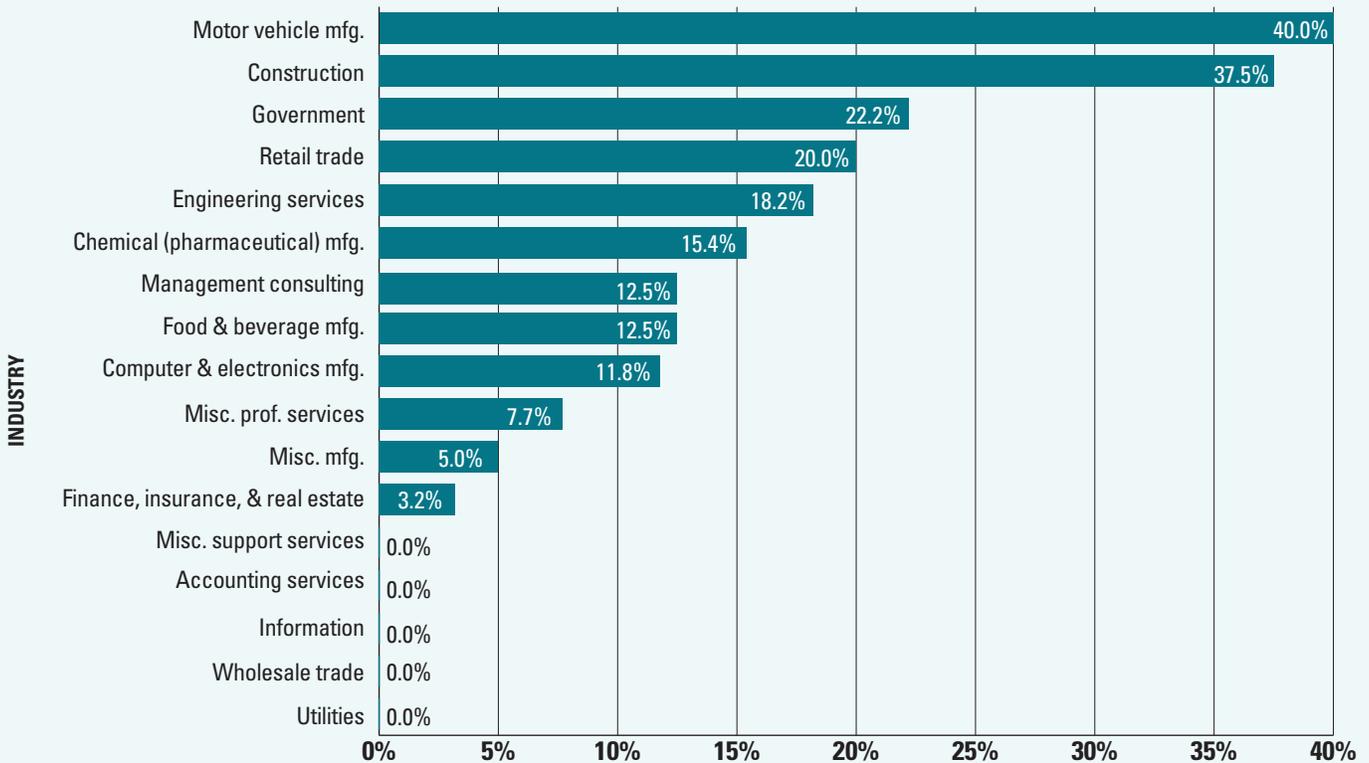
**FIGURE 16: Respondents that will recruit virtually for the entire 2020-21 academic year, by industry**



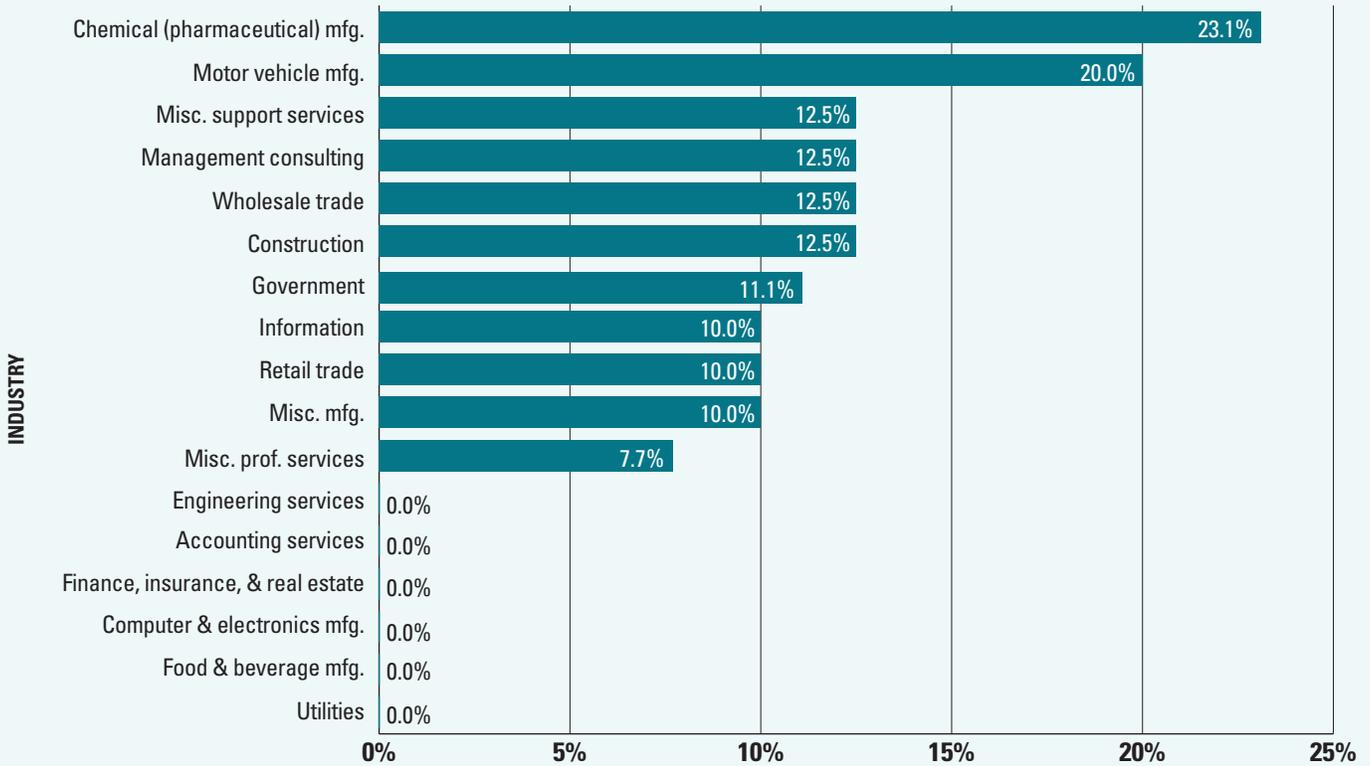
**FIGURE 17: Respondents that will recruit virtually in fall 2020 and in person for spring 2021, by industry**



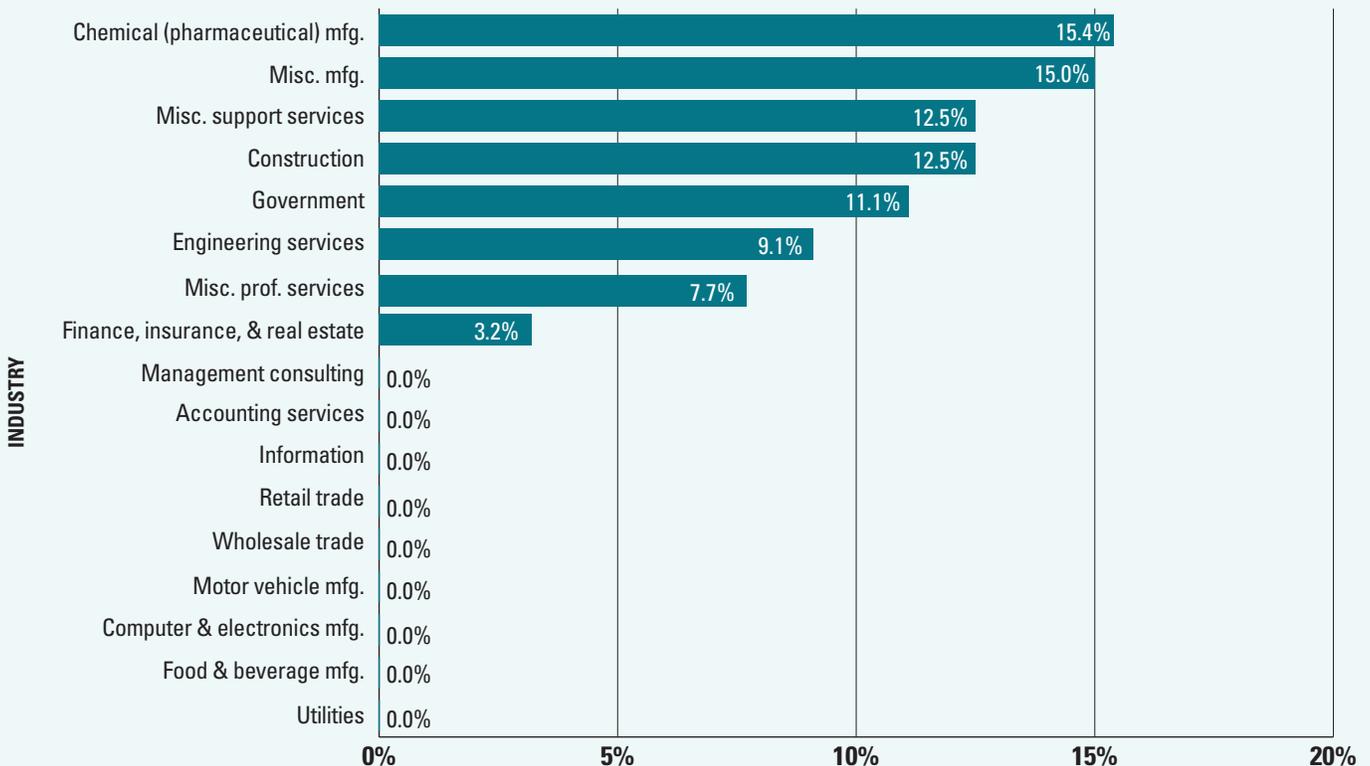
**FIGURE 18: Respondents that will use hybrid recruiting (virtually and in person) for fall 2020 and in person for spring 2021, by industry**



**FIGURE 19: Respondents whose planning has been initiated, but are still undecided, by industry**



**FIGURE 20: Respondents whose planning has not yet been initiated, by industry**



# HIRING BY REGION

Of the seven reported geographic regions, just three report overall increases in college hiring numbers for the Class of 2021. [See Figure 21.] In comparison, six of the seven regions reported increases for the Class of 2020 last year.

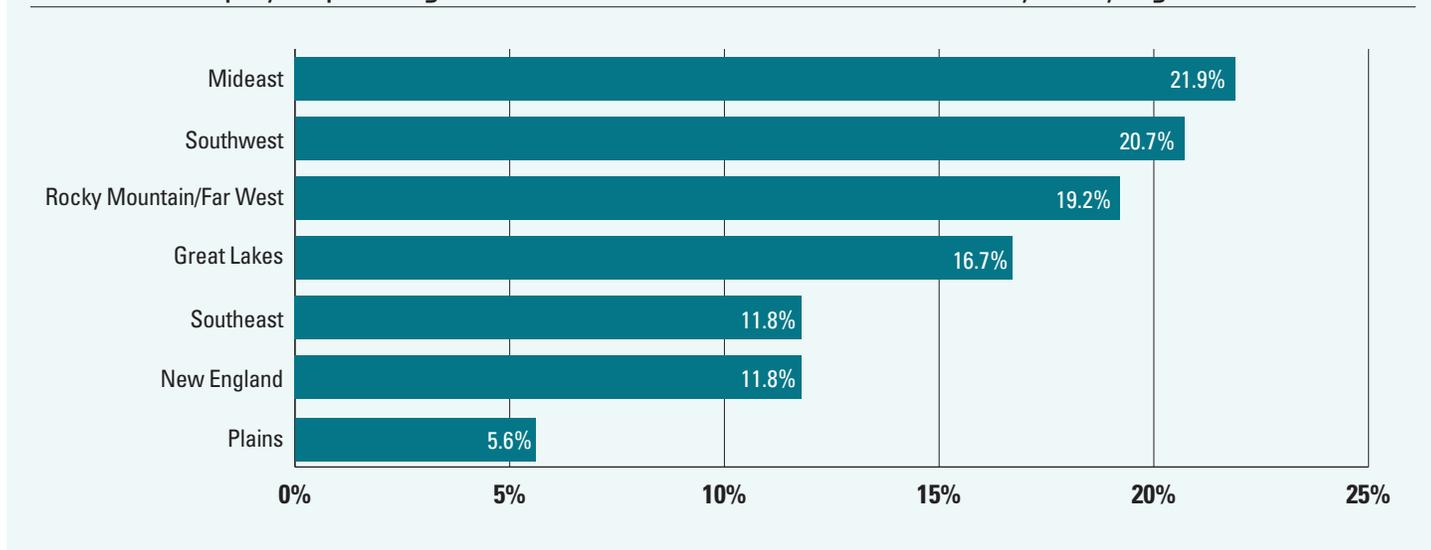
The findings within the regional breakouts are greatly influenced by the location of specific industries. For example, employers in the Southwest and Rocky Mountain/Far West had greater representation by the industry types that reported overall hiring increases, such as information and miscellaneous support services.

In fact, the three regions reporting increases—Midwest, Southwest, and Rocky Mountain/Far West—show the largest percentage of respondents that plan to increase hires during the 2020-21 academic year. Conversely, half of the respondents in the Plains region—which are collectively planning to decrease their college hiring by nearly 10%—are planning to cut their college hires. Respondents from the Great Lakes region have the smallest of the reported decreases in college hiring (5.9%), yet 64.3% will maintain hires and less than 20% will decrease hires. [See figures 22 through 24.]

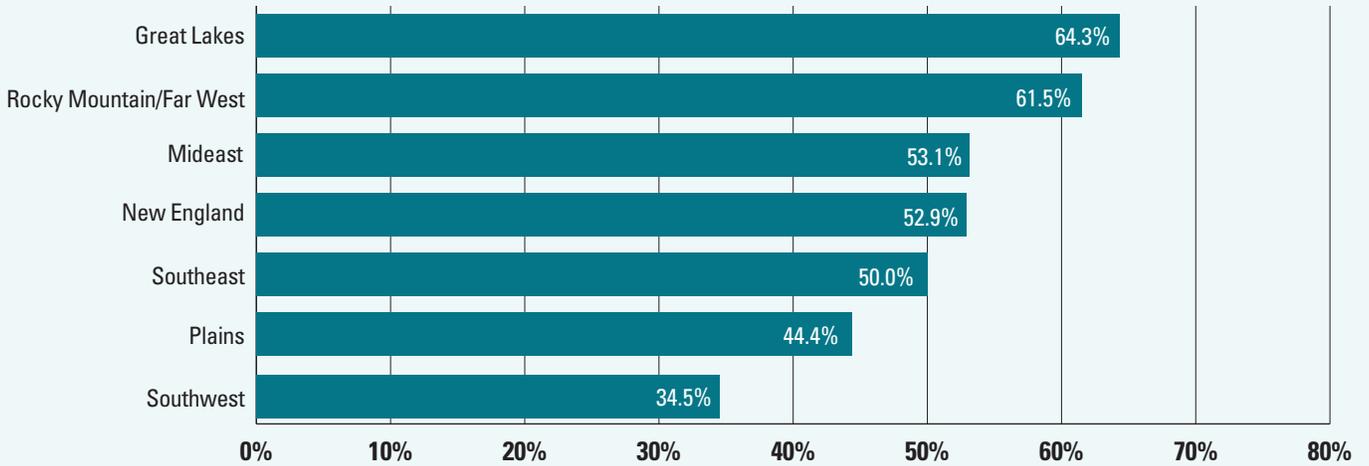
**FIGURE 21: Total change in hiring, by region**

REGION	NUMBER OF 2021 PROJECTED HIRES	NUMBER OF 2020 ACTUAL HIRES	% CHANGE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
New England	2,687	3,009	-10.7%	14
Midwest	6,121	5,872	4.2%	25
Great Lakes	1,914	2,035	-5.9%	34
Plains	2,174	2,413	-9.9%	16
Southeast	3,471	3,784	-8.3%	28
Southwest	1,467	1,274	15.1%	21
Rocky Mountain/Far West	4,045	3,555	13.8%	20

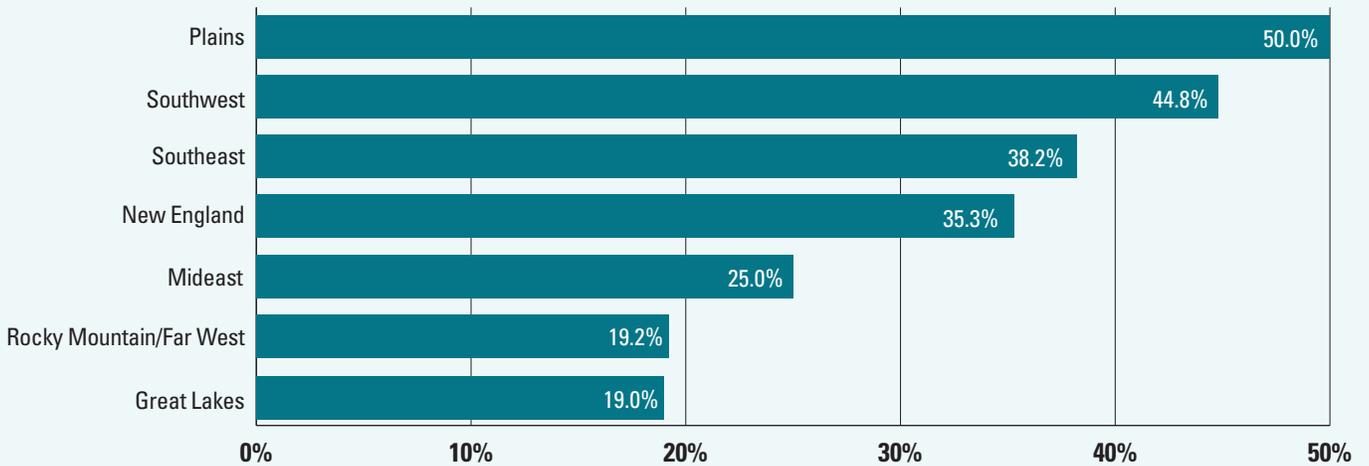
**FIGURE 22: Employers planning to increase hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by region**



**FIGURE 23:** Employers planning to maintain hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by region



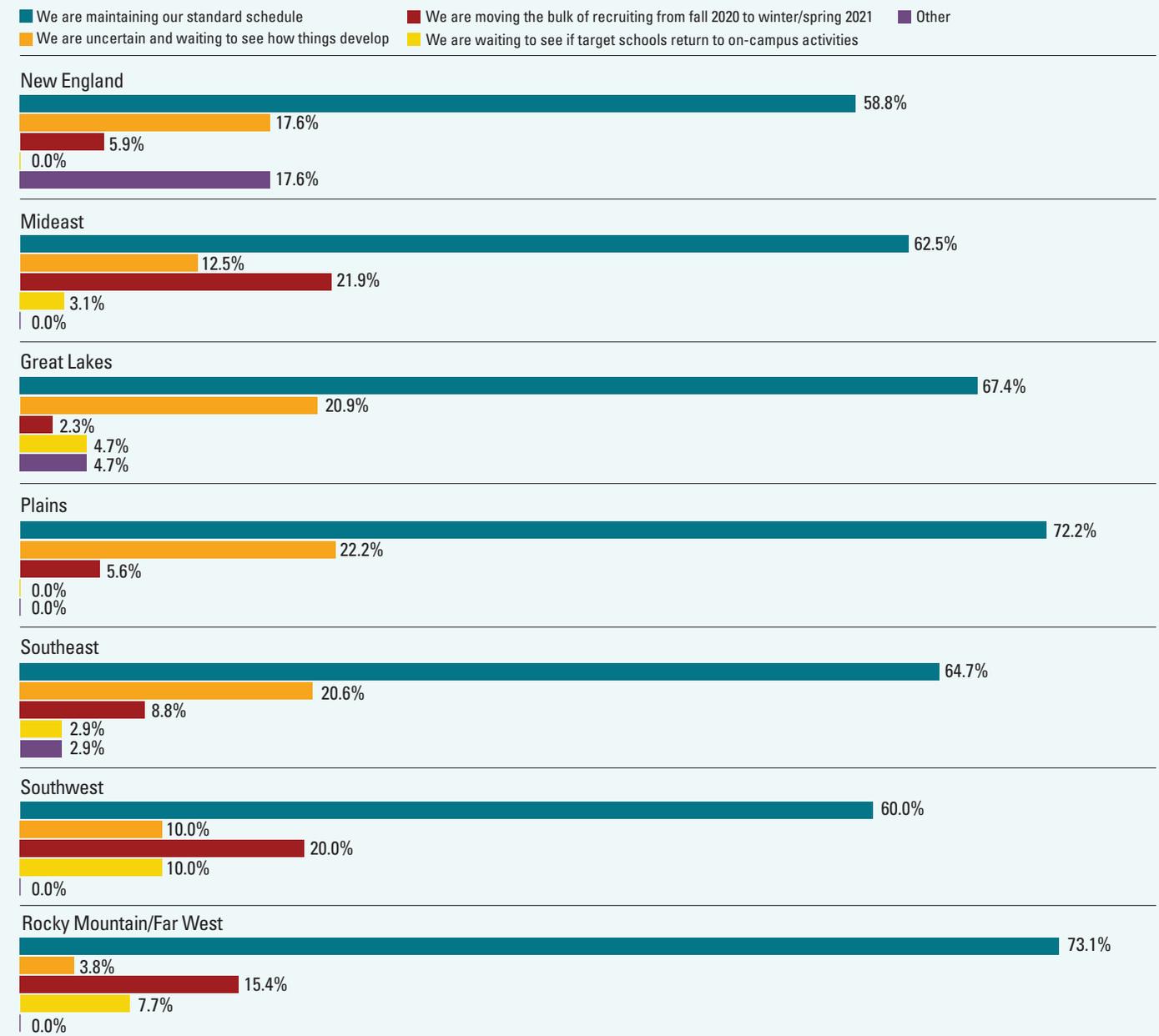
**FIGURE 24:** Employers planning to decrease hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by region



Although more than half of respondents in all regions are maintaining their standard recruiting schedules for the Class of 2021, the regions reporting decreases show the most uncertainty. Respondents in the New England [17.6%], Southeast [20.6%], Great Lakes [20.9%], and Plains [22.2%] regions have the greatest percentages of respondents that are uncertain of their recruiting schedules and are waiting to see how things develop.

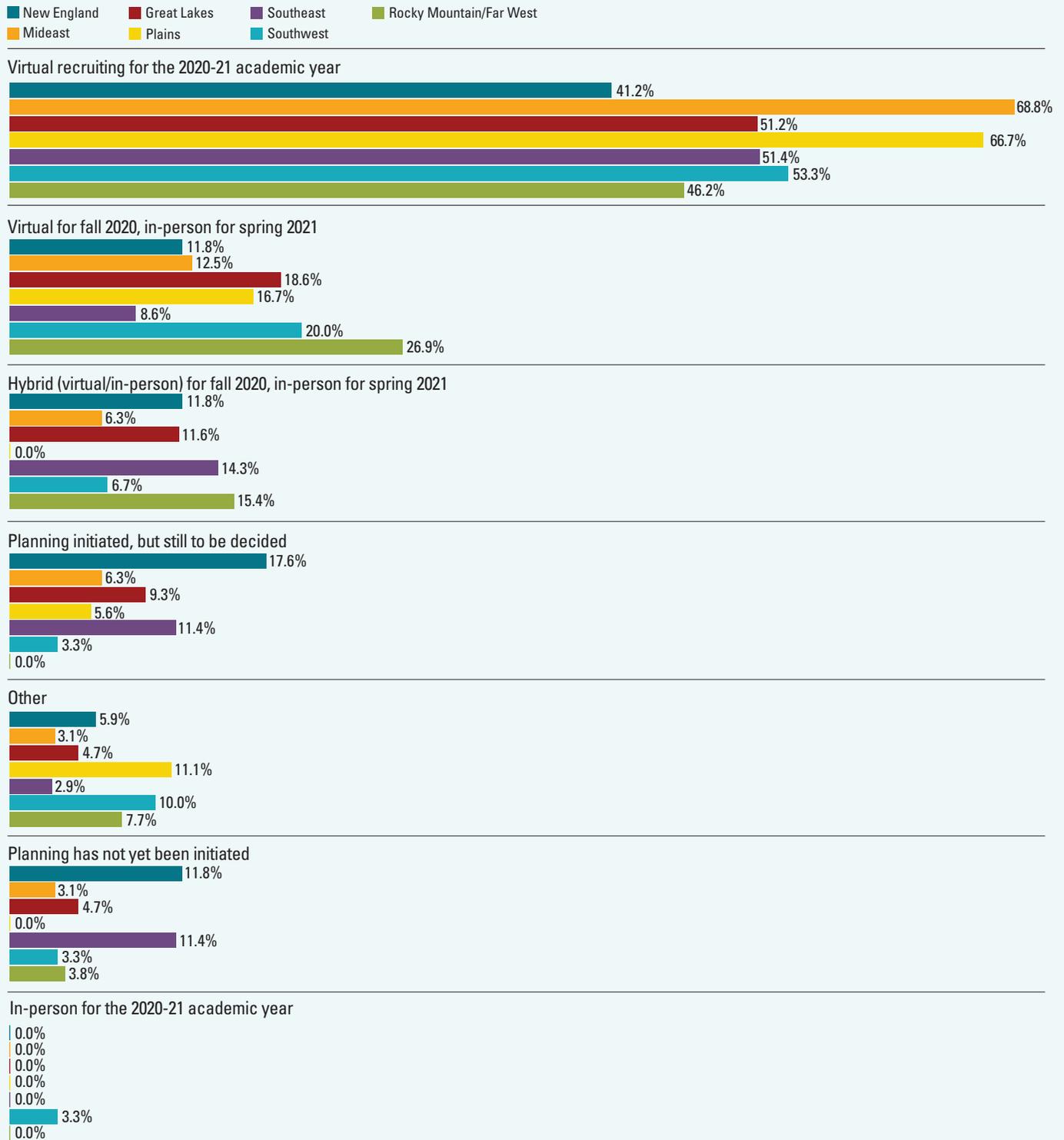
Among the regions reporting overall hiring increases, the Midwest [21.9%], Southwest [20%], and Rocky Mountain/Far West [15.4%] have the highest percentages of respondents that are moving their recruiting from fall 2020 to winter/spring 2021. [See Figure 25.]

**FIGURE 25: Changes to Class of 2021 recruiting schedule, by region**



Regardless of region, more than 40% of respondents plan to recruit virtually for the 2020-21 academic year. [See Figure 26.]

**FIGURE 26: Plans for the 2020-21 recruiting season, by region**



# HIRING BY COMPANY SIZE

Only employers with more than 10,000 employees are reporting overall increases in new college graduate hiring for the Class of 2021. Furthermore, the largest increase [6.3%] is specific to employers with more than 20,000 employees. [See Figure 27.]

**FIGURE 27: Total change in hiring, by company size**

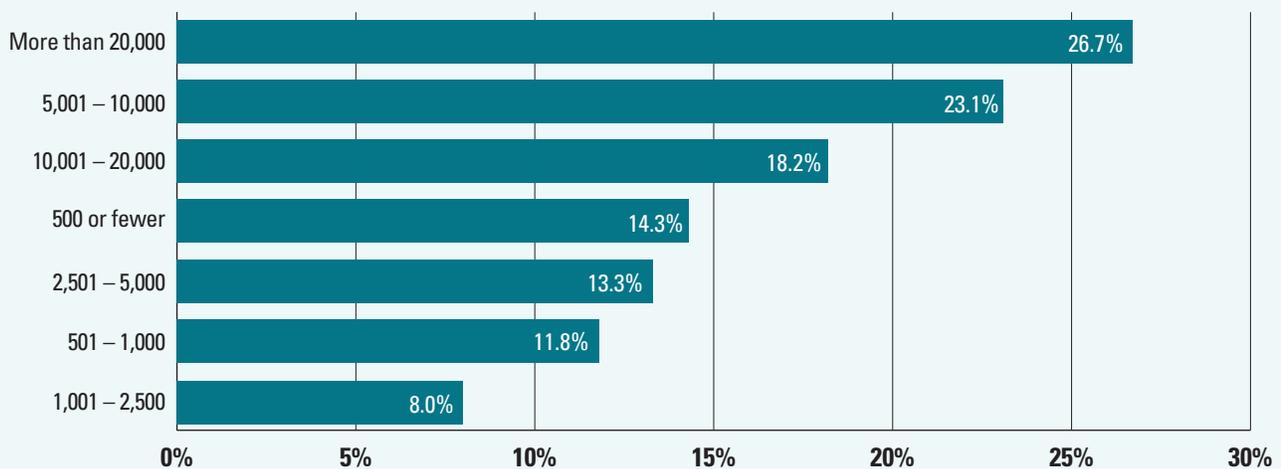
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	NUMBER OF 2021 PROJECTED HIRES	NUMBER OF 2020 ACTUAL HIRES	% CHANGE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
500 or fewer	356	394	-9.8%	32
501 – 1,000	181	225	-19.6%	12
1,001 – 2,500	1,180	1,207	-2.2%	20
2,501 – 5,000	3,147	3,446	-8.7%	37
5,001 – 10,000	1,208	1,677	-28.0%	20
10,001 – 20,000	2,858	2,817	1.4%	17
More than 20,000	13,898	13,075	6.3%	22

The three largest company size categories—employers with more than 5,000 employees—also show the largest percentages of employers with plans to increase college hires. [See Figure 28.]

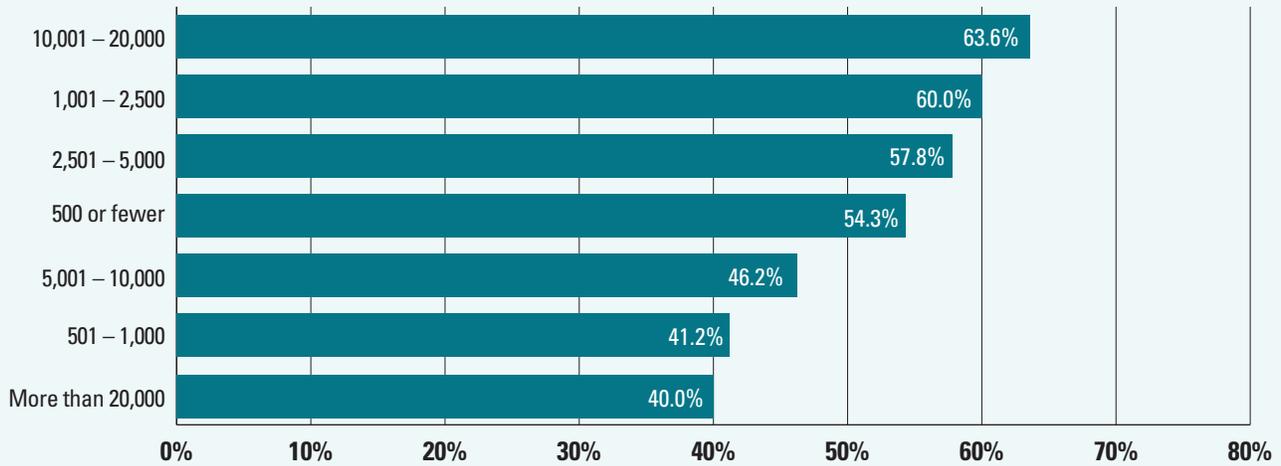
Respondents with more than 20,000 employees have the smallest percentage of employers [40%] that will maintain college hiring numbers. [See Figure 29.]

Almost half of respondents with 501 to 1,000 employees indicate plans to decrease college hiring numbers. This is in contrast to the 18.2% of respondents with 10,001 to 20,000 employees that are planning to decrease their college hires. [See Figure 30.]

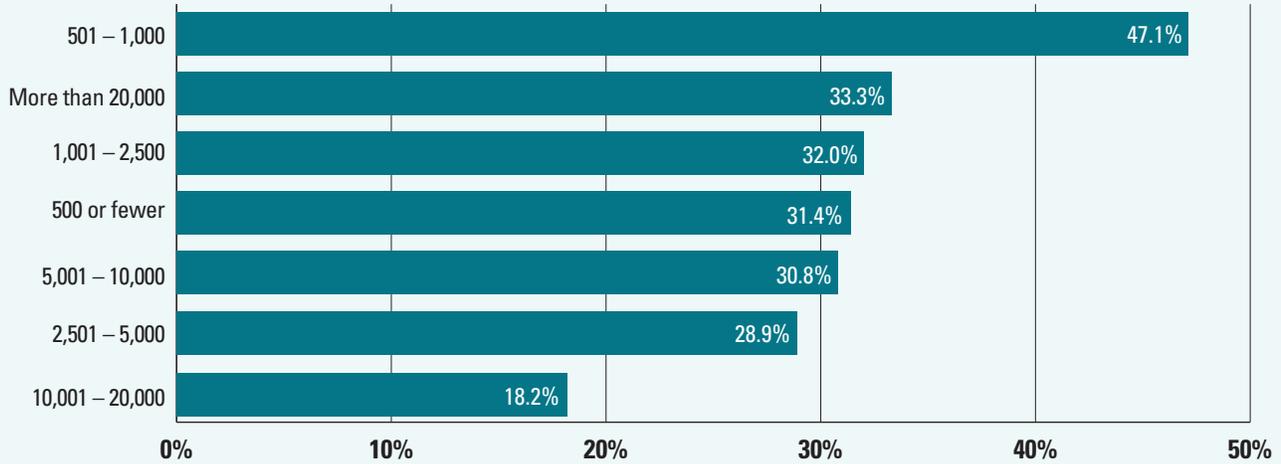
**FIGURE 28: Employers planning to increase hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by company size**



**FIGURE 29:** Employers planning to maintain hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by company size

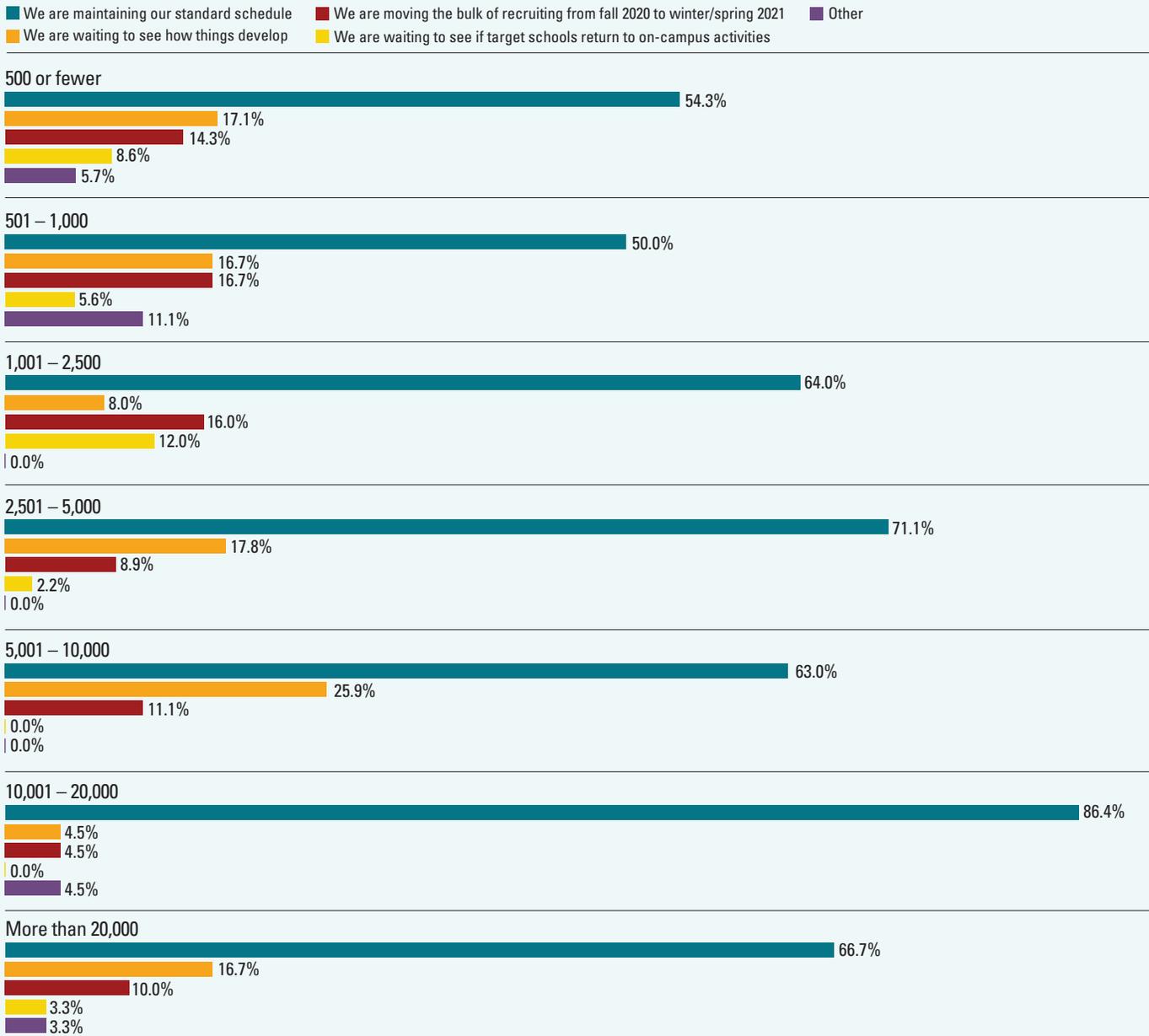


**FIGURE 30:** Employers planning to decrease hires for the 2020-21 academic year, by company size



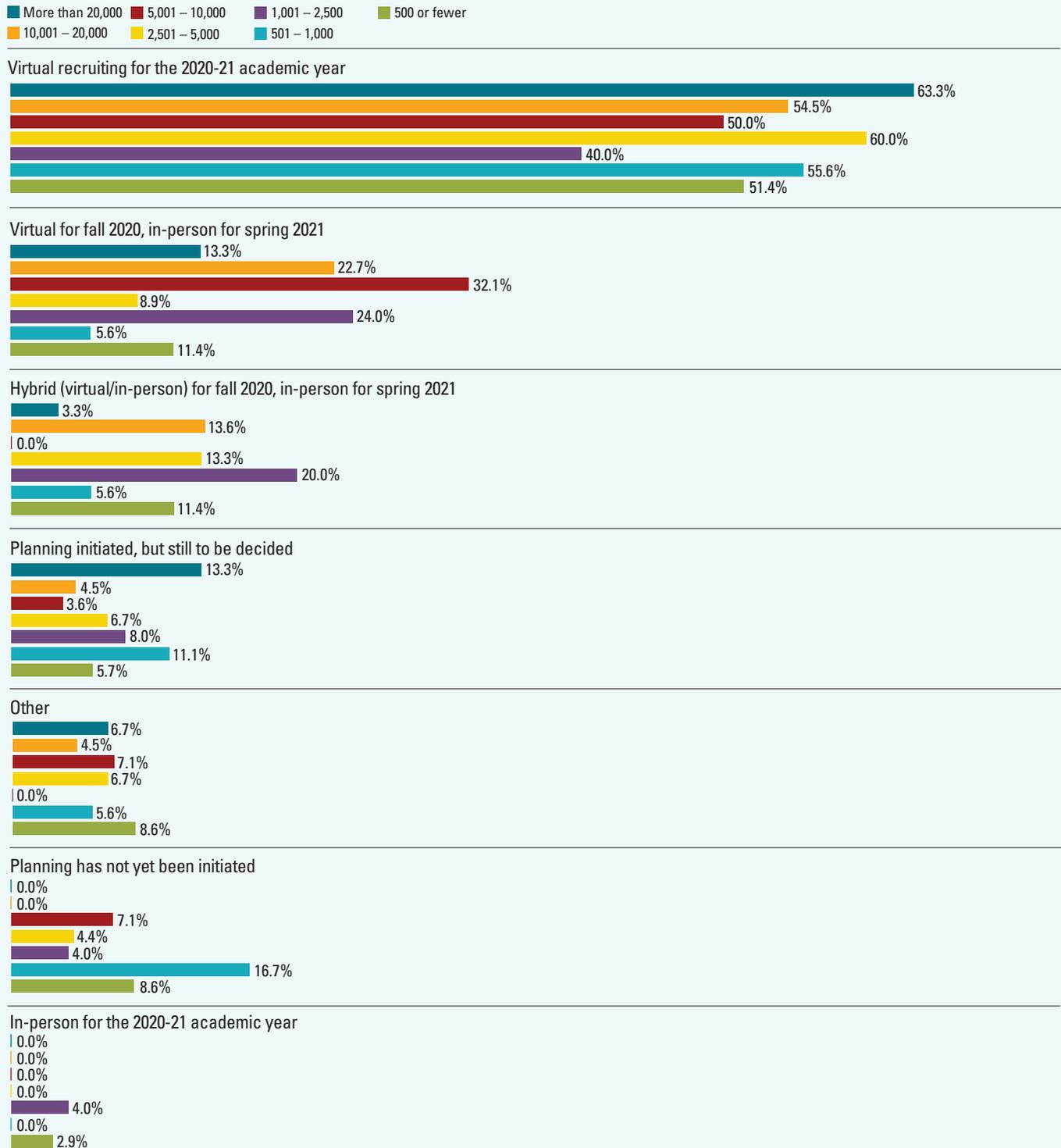
Employers with between 10,001 and 20,000 employees also plan to adhere to their standard recruiting schedules. Almost 90% of these respondents are maintaining their standard recruiting schedules, while less than 5% are either waiting to see how things develop or moving the bulk of recruiting from fall 2020 to winter/spring 2021. This size category also has no respondents that are waiting to see if their target schools return to on-campus activities. [See Figure 31.]

**FIGURE 31: Changes to Class of 2021 recruiting schedule, by company size**



As far as the difference in recruiting methods for Class of 2021 graduates by company size, the preference for virtual recruiting the entire 2020-21 academic year is ubiquitous. Plans for in-person recruiting in spring 2021 mainly appear to be held by companies with 5,001 to 10,000 employees, as nearly one-third of these respondents will recruit virtually in fall 2020 and in person in spring 2021. [See Figure 32.]

**FIGURE 32: Plans for the 2020-21 recruiting season, by company size**



# DIVERSITY HIRING

Slightly more than 87% of responding organizations report that they have a diversity recruiting strategy for the Class of 2021—the second highest level in the past seven years. Only results of NACE’s 2018 *Recruiting Benchmarks Survey* show a slightly higher level, as 88% of respondents to that survey reported having a diversity recruiting strategy. [See Figure 33.]

**FIGURE 33: Percent of employers with a diversity recruiting strategy: 2014 – 2021\***



\*Data for the Classes of 2014 through 2019 were provided by NACE’s *Recruiting Benchmarks Surveys*. Since the survey was not conducted in 2020, diversity hiring strategies for the Class of 2020 are unavailable.

With such a high percentage of overall respondents reporting diversity efforts, it stands to reason that within company size, industry, and region, the individual classifications have high percentages across the board. [See Figure 34.]

All responding employers with more than 20,000 employees, along with all employers in six of the 16 reported industries, indicate that they have a diversity recruiting strategy for the Class of 2021.

**FIGURE 34: Employers with a diversity recruiting strategy, by company size, industry and region**

	PERCENT OF RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
<b>Overall</b>	87.2%	163
<b>COMPANY SIZE</b>		
500 or fewer employees	74.2%	23
501 - 1,000 employees	93.3%	14
1,001 - 2,500 employees	79.2%	19
2,501 - 5,000 employees	85.4%	35
5,001 - 10,000 employees	92.9%	26
10,001 - 20,000 employees	90.5%	19
More than 20,000 employees	100.0%	27
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
Utilities	100.0%	5
Construction	100.0%	8
Food & beverage	100.0%	8
Wholesale trade	100.0%	8
Retail trade	100.0%	9
Misc. Support svcs.	100.0%	7
Finance, insurance, & real estate	96.2%	25
Misc. Professional svcs.	91.7%	11
Information	90.0%	9
Computer & electronics mfg.	82.4%	14
Engineering services	80.0%	8
Misc. mfg.	77.8%	14
Management consulting	75.0%	6
Accounting services	71.4%	5
Government	71.4%	5
Chemical (pharmaceutical) mfg.	63.6%	7
<b>REGION</b>		
New England	81.3%	13
Mideast	92.6%	25
Great Lakes	82.9%	34
Plains	81.3%	13
Southeast	91.2%	31
Southwest	92.0%	23
Rocky Mountain/Far West	84.6%	22

For the Class of 2021, almost 95% of respondents with diversity strategies will focus on hiring African-Americans. Women [89%] and Hispanic-Americans [87.2%] will also be highly pursued, with nearly nine in 10 respondents directing their diversity strategies toward them. [See Figure 35.]

**FIGURE 35: PRIORITIZED GROUPS WITHIN DIVERSITY RECRUITING STRATEGIES: 2015 – 2021**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021
African-Americans	90.1%	93.3%	94.4%	93.9%	93.6%	---	94.8%
Women	90.1%	95.6%	90.1%	89.9%	94.3%	---	89.0%
Hispanic-Americans	83.3%	90.0%	84.0%	88.5%	86.4%	---	87.2%
Military veterans	77.2%	82.2%	75.3%	70.9%	71.4%	---	62.2%
Multiracial	---	---	---	---	56.4%	---	61.0%
Asian-Americans	56.8%	62.2%	51.9%	52.7%	56.4%	---	54.7%
Native Americans	51.9%	60.0%	45.1%	44.6%	49.3%	---	51.7%
LGBTQIA	---	---	46.9%	54.7%	48.6%	---	51.7%
Students with disabilities	51.2%	64.4%	50.6%	52.0%	50.7%	---	46.5%

\*Data for the Classes of 2015 through 2019 were provided by NACE's *Recruiting Benchmarks Surveys*. Since the survey was not conducted in 2020, the prioritized groups for the Class of 2020 are unavailable.

More than three-quarters of respondents plan to focus on specific schools and organizations to aid in their diversity recruiting efforts. Among the employers that will use specific schools and organizations, the largest percentage [82.3%] will work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities [HBCUs]. [See Figure 36.]

While it appears that fewer respondents favor HBCUs for the Class of 2021, there was a change in the survey questionnaire this year. In NACE's *2019 Recruiting Benchmarks Survey*, the list of schools/organizations from which participants could choose was limited to HBCUs, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Women-Only Colleges, INROADS, Tribal Colleges, and a write-in "Other" field. Nearly 30% of respondents in the "Other" category that year indicated the National Society of Black Engineers [NSBE]; the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers [SHPE]; and organizations for women engineers, including the Society for Women Engineers. In this year's survey, participants were given more specific choices reflected in the 13 listed below, thus, the shift in overall percentages of preferred schools/organizations. More than half of this year's survey respondents will use the NSBE and/or the SHPE to assist in their diversity recruiting efforts.

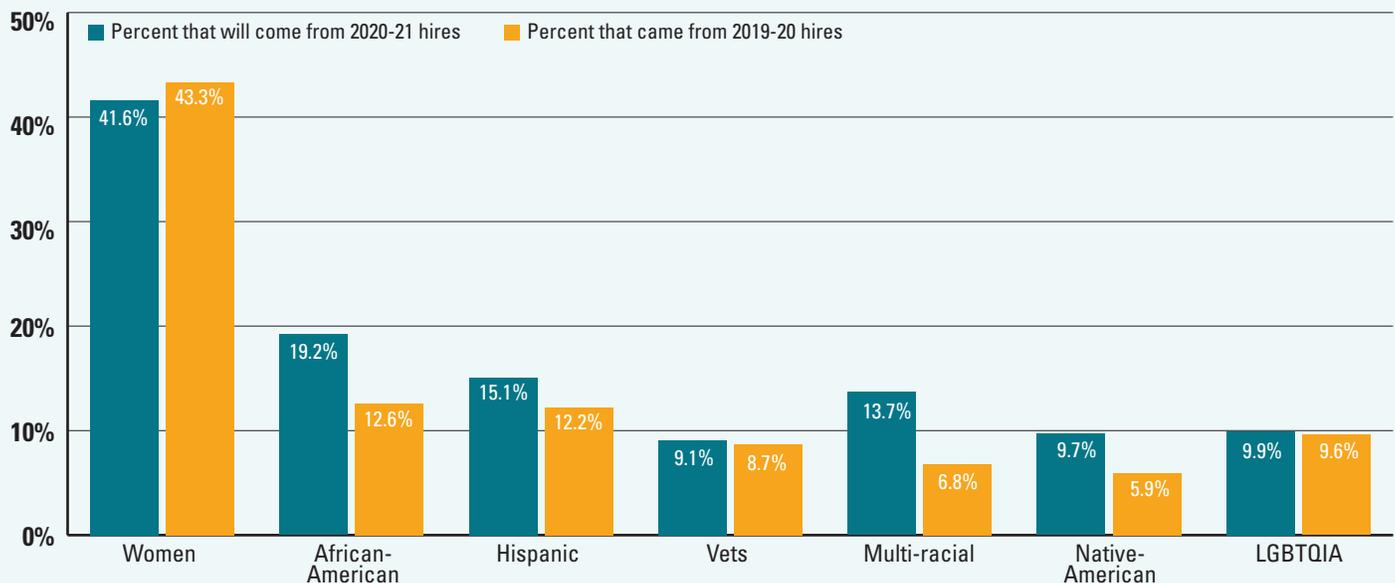
**FIGURE 36: SCHOOLS/ORGANIZATIONS USED IN DIVERSITY RECRUITING: 2015 – 2021**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021
Historically Black Colleges and Universities	90.1%	82.1%	83.5%	96.5%	97.8%	---	82.3%
National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)	---	---	---	---	---	---	71.4%
Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)	---	---	---	---	---	---	50.3%
Hispanic-Serving Institutions	90.1%	37.5%	33.0%	41.2%	37.6%	---	38.8%
Other	---	33.9%	24.3%	19.2%	29.9%	---	31.3%
National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME)	---	---	---	---	---	---	18.4%
Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers (SASE)	---	---	---	---	---	---	16.3%
Women-Only Colleges	56.8%	7.1%	18.3%	22.4%	19.4%	---	15.0%
INROADS	51.9%	23.2%	17.4%	28.2%	16.1%	---	14.3%
American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)	---	---	---	---	---	---	12.9%
Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists (Latinos in Science and Engineering)	---	---	---	---	---	---	8.8%
Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)	---	---	---	---	---	---	6.8%
National Association of Mathematicians (NAM)	---	---	---	---	---	---	4.8%
Tribal Colleges	---	0.0%	6.1%	4.7%	2.2%	---	4.1%

\*Data for the Classes of 2015 through 2019 were provided by NACE's *Recruiting Benchmarks Surveys*. Since the survey was not conducted in 2020, the schools/organizations used in diversity recruiting for the Class of 2020 are unavailable.

Among the groups that will take priority in Class of 2021 recruiting, only women had 2019-20 hiring outcomes that exceed those planned for 2020-21 hires. [See Figure 37.] In the cases of African-American and multi-racial groups, the percentage of projected hires for 2020-21 far exceed the actual 2019-20 hiring outcomes with differences of 6.6 and 6.9 percentage points, respectively.

**FIGURE 37: Prioritized hiring groups for 2020-21 vs. actual 2019-20 hiring outcomes**



# ASSOCIATE DEGREE HIRING

More than one-third of responding employers reported that they will hire associate degree graduates from the Class of 2021. This is by far the highest level of employer interest shown in these graduates in the past seven years. **[See Figure 38.]** Prior to 2014, only associate degree graduates from the Class of 2007 garnered more attention, as 39.2% of responding employers had plans to hire them.

**FIGURE 38:** Associate degree hiring, 2014 – 2021



Employers in the construction, retail trade, information, and miscellaneous support services sectors have the most interest in hiring associate degree graduates, with half of their respective respondents planning to hire them. **[See Figure 39.]**

By region, nearly 60% of respondents in the Rocky Mountain/Far West region plan to hire associate degree graduates. While employers in the Great Lakes and Southwest regions have the lowest percentages of respondents planning to hire Class of 2021 associate degree graduates, nearly one-quarter of respondents in these two regions have plans to include them in their new college hires. **[See Figure 40.]**

Employers with more than 10,000 employees plan to be the most active in hiring graduates earning associate degrees. In particular, almost 57% of employers with more than 20,000 employees indicate plans to hire Class of 2021 associate degree graduates. **[See Figure 41.]**

**FIGURE 39:** Associate degree hiring, by industry

INDUSTRY	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Construction	50.0%	8
Retail trade	50.0%	10
Information	50.0%	10
Misc. Support services	50.0%	8
Computer & electronics mfg.	43.8%	16
Utilities	40.0%	5
Finance, insurance, & real estate	38.7%	31
Engineering services	36.4%	11
Misc. mfg.	35.0%	20
Government	33.3%	9
Chemical (pharmaceutical) mfg.	30.8%	13
Food & beverage mfg.	25.0%	8
Wholesale trade	25.0%	8
Misc. Prof. Services	15.4%	13
Accounting services	12.5%	8
Management consulting	12.5%	8

**FIGURE 40:** Associate degree hiring, by region

REGION	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Rocky Mountain/Far West	58.3%	24
Plains	50.0%	18
Mideast	37.5%	32
New England	35.3%	17
Southeast	28.6%	35
Great Lakes	23.3%	43
Southwest	23.3%	30

**FIGURE 41:** Associate degree hiring, by company size

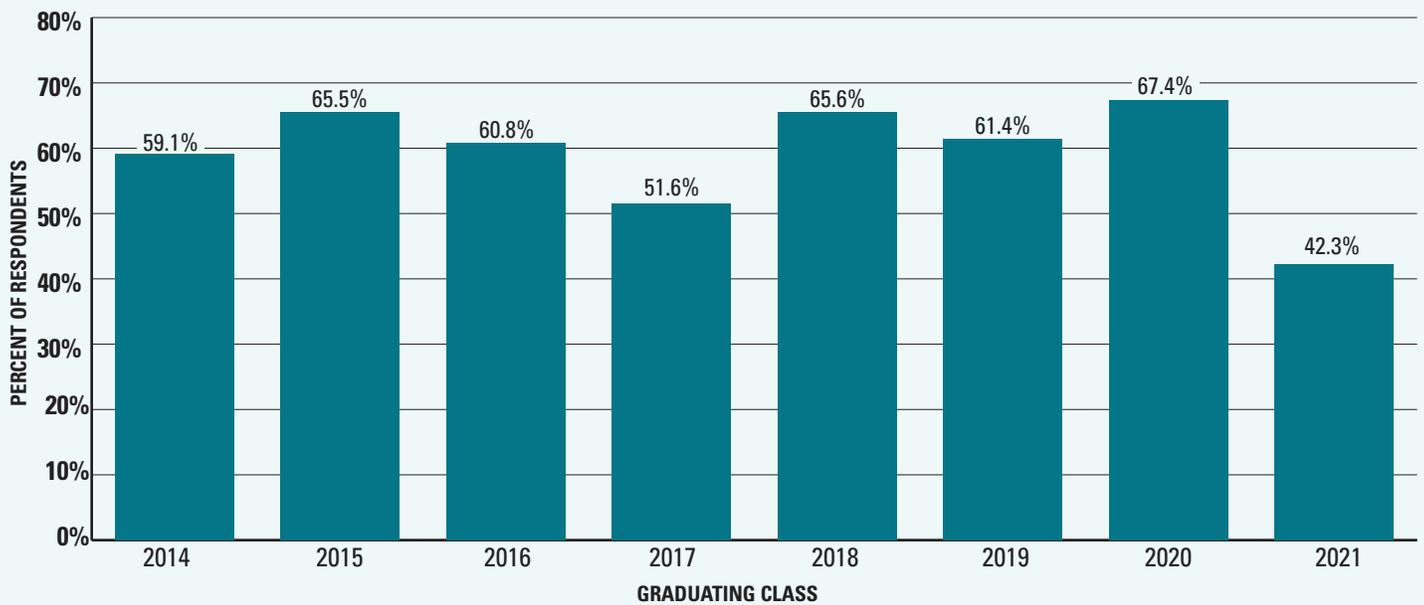
COMPANY SIZE	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
More than 20,000 employees	56.7%	30
10,001 – 20,000 employees	40.9%	22
2,501 – 5,000 employees	37.2%	43
5,001 – 10,000 employees	32.1%	28
1,001 – 2,500 employees	32.0%	25
501 – 1,000 employees	22.2%	18
500 or fewer employees	20.0%	35

# SALARY INCREASES

In last year's *Job Outlook 2020* survey, nearly 68% of respondents reported that they would boost average starting salaries for Class of 2020 bachelor's degree graduates, which was a seven-year high. Unfortunately, the same does not hold true for the Class of 2021, as just 42.3% of respondents plan to increase bachelor's degree starting salaries. [See Figure 42.]

The average expected increase is 3.3%. While the 3% median increase is the same as last year's, the average is down from 3.95%. Oddly, an equal percentage—27.3%—will increase starting salaries by 3% and by 5% to Class of 2021 graduates. However, 38.2% are planning increases of less than 3%, and 34.5% are expecting to raise salaries by more than 3%.

**FIGURE 42: Employers with plans to increase starting salaries to bachelor's degree graduates**



**FIGURE 43:** Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by industry

INDUSTRY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WITH PLANS TO INCREASE BACHELOR'S SALARIES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY
Government	3	5	60.0%
Misc. Professional services	4	7	57.1%
Engineering services	5	9	55.6%
Computer & electronics mfg.	8	15	53.3%
Construction	3	6	50.0%
Information	4	8	50.0%
Retail trade	3	6	50.0%
Chemical (pharmaceutical) mfg.	3	7	42.9%
Wholesale trade	2	5	40.0%
Finance, insurance, & real estate	6	16	37.5%
Management consulting	3	8	37.5%
Misc. mfg.	4	13	30.8%

In the regional college hiring breakouts, the Rocky Mountain/Far West region had one of the higher increases planned, so it is not surprising that nearly 87% of respondents from this region plan to increase bachelor's degree starting salaries. **[See Figure 44.]** Their planned average starting salary increase of 4.7% is also much higher than the overall average salary increase planned [3.3%].

**FIGURE 44:** Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by region

REGION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WITH PLANS TO INCREASE BACHELOR'S SALARIES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION
Rocky Mountain/Far West	13	15	86.7%
Great Lakes	15	32	46.9%
Southwest	8	18	44.4%
Southeast	9	23	39.1%
Plains	4	12	33.3%
Mideast	4	18	22.2%
New England	1	10	10.0%

By company size, the percentages of respondents planning to increase bachelor’s degree starting salaries do not vary as greatly as they did within both the industry and regional breakouts. Thirty percent of employers with 10,001 to 20,000 employees will provide larger salaries to bachelor’s degree hires. On the other hand, nearly half (47.1%) of employers with between 1,001 and 2,500 employees report that they will increase bachelor’s degree starting salaries. Both the lower and upper groups here hover closer to the overall percentage of total respondents increasing salaries—42.3%. [See Figure 45.]

**FIGURE 45: Employers with plans to increase starting salaries, by company size**

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WITH PLANS TO INCREASE BACHELOR’S SALARIES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY COMPANY SIZE	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY COMPANY SIZE
500 or fewer	11	28	39.3%
501 – 1,000	5	11	45.5%
1,001 – 2,500	8	17	47.1%
2,501 – 5,000	12	26	46.2%
5,001 – 10,000	8	19	42.1%
10,001 – 20,000	3	10	30.0%
More than 20,000	8	19	42.1%

# APPENDIX

**FIGURE 46: Respondents by size of department/business unit**



**FIGURE 47: Respondents by Industry**

INDUSTRY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
Oil & gas extraction	5	2.2%
Utilities	6	2.7%
Construction	10	4.4%
Food & beverage mfg.	9	4.0%
Chemical (pharmaceutical) mfg.	14	6.2%
Computer & electronics mfg.	19	8.4%
Motor vehicle mfg.	5	2.2%
Misc. mfg.	21	9.3%
Wholesale trade	8	3.5%
Retail trade	13	5.8%
Transportation	3	1.3%
Information	11	4.9%
Finance, insurance & real estate	36	15.9%
Accounting services	9	4.0%
Engineering services	11	4.9%
Management consulting	9	4.0%
Misc. prof. services	14	6.2%
Social services	2	0.9%
Recreation & hospitality	2	0.9%
Misc. Support services	8	3.5%
Government	11	4.9%

**FIGURE 48: Respondents by Organization Type**

ORGANIZATION TYPE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS
For profit – private	98	43.6%
For profit – publicly held	105	46.7%
Nonprofit	9	4.0%
Government agency	13	5.8%

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Below is a list of the organizations that responded to the *Job Outlook 2021* survey. Although 227 organizations responded, the list below includes 120, as 107 organizations preferred not to be listed.

A-LIGN  
Aetna & CVS Health  
AK Steel Corporation  
Allscripts  
Amkor Technology  
Ankura  
Apex Tool Group  
Applied Industrial Technologies  
ArcelorMittal USA  
Arizona Public Service  
Ascend Performance Materials  
Ascensus  
Association Member Benefits Advisors  
ATA Engineering, Inc.  
Badger Meter  
Baird  
Ball Aerospace  
Barrett Industries  
Belden, Inc.  
Blue Origin  
BOK Financial Corporation  
Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co. Inc.  
Cambridge Associates LLC  
Camden Property Trust  
Campbell Soup Company  
Chevron Corporation  
Clean Harbors  
Cognosante  
Colony Brands  
ConocoPhillips Company  
Crown Cork & Seal Company USA, Inc.  
Cushman & Wakefield Inc.  
CVP  
DCS Corporation  
Dell Technologies  
Dick's Sporting Goods  
Discover Financial Services  
Ecolab Inc.  
Edward Jones  
Expedia Group  
Farmers Insurance Group  
Fresenius Kabi USA  
Gartner, Inc.  
GE Appliances, a Haier company  
General Dynamics Electric Boat  
Gilbarco/Veeder Root  
Gresham, Smith and Partners  
Heidrick & Struggles  
Hormel Foods Corporation  
Hubbell Incorporated  
Hughes Network Systems  
Illumina, Inc.  
INEOS  
Ingredion  
INROADS, Inc.  
Insight2Profit  
Intelligent Automation, Inc.  
Intuitive Surgical  
ITW  
JELD-WEN, Inc.  
Kellogg Company  
Kiewit Corporation  
KPMG LLP  
Kraus-Anderson  
Kreischer Miller  
L3Harris  
Lexmark International, Inc.  
Liberty Mutual Insurance Company  
Lincoln Electric  
LPL Financial  
Lumentum Operations  
Macy's, Inc.  
Marsh & McLennan Agency  
Meijer, Inc.  
Mohawk Industries  
Morningstar, Inc.  
MPR Associates, Inc.  
National Instruments  
NETGEAR Inc.  
Nokia  
North Carolina Office of State Human Resources  
NTT DATA Services  
OSIsoft, LLC  
Pariveda Solutions Inc.  
Paychex  
Paylocity  
Pfizer Inc.  
PlanMember Financial Corporation  
PlanSource  
Polaris Industries, Inc.  
PPL Corporation  
ProAssurance

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Protiviti Inc.  
Rivian  
Ryan, LLC  
Seagate Technology  
Shawmut Design and Construction  
Sierra Nevada Corporation  
Smith & Nephew Inc.  
Southern Company  
Southwest Airlines Co.  
Spectrum  
Speedway LLC  
Summit Materials  
Sun Life Financial  
T-Mobile USA, Inc.

TC Energy  
Teledyne Scientific & Imaging  
Textron Inc.  
The Aerospace Corporation  
The Kraft Heinz Company  
The MITRE Corporation  
The Vanguard Group  
Topco Associates  
Uline  
UnitedHealth Group  
Verisk  
White Lodging  
Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Workday



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