

# On Track 2024

## Destinations of Victorian School Leavers

May 2025





## About the study

Since 2003, the annual On Track survey has followed the outcomes of Victorian students who finish Year 12 and those who leave school before completion. Between July to September 2024, the Department of Education surveyed 18,062 students who completed Year 12 in 2023 and 1,263 students who left school in Years 10, 11 or 12 in 2023 (non-completers). The sample included 10,744 female, 8,419 male, and 162 respondents who did not identify as either male or female.

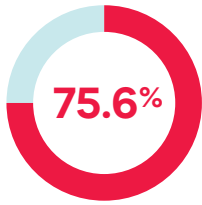
In 2024, 30.8% of Year 12 completers participated in the survey but only 7.6% of non-completers participated. This was a slight increase from 2023 response rates (28.0% and 6.9% respectively) but lower than all other previous years of the survey.

This trend aligns with cultural changes among young people, such as the increasing preference for online communication and reluctance to answer calls from unknown numbers or have a telephone conversation with a stranger. All these changes have negatively affected the strength of phone surveys as a research methodology.

*We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal people living throughout Victoria. While the terms 'Koorie' or 'Koori' are commonly used to describe Aboriginal people of southeast Australia, we have used the term 'Aboriginal' to include all people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who are living in Victoria.*



## Key findings 2024



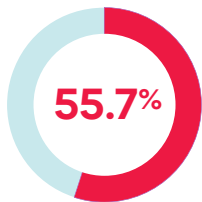
**The majority of Year 12 completers (75.6%) continue their education and training after school**, with a bachelor's degree (56.5%) remaining the most popular destination.

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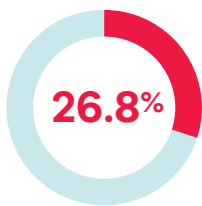
**The proportion of Year 12 completers transitioning directly to employment after school has decreased slightly from 22.6% in 2023 to 20.1% in 2024.** This follows a historic peak of 24.3% in 2022, after a decade of results ranging from 16.7% to 19.8%.

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**Over half of all non-completers were enrolled in further education or training (55.7%),** with apprenticeships/traineeships being the most popular destination (36.6%), a notable increase from 2015 (28.2%).

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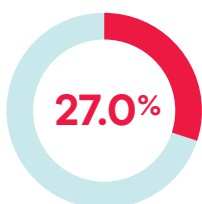
In 2024, **the proportion of non-completers entering employment in the year after leaving school (26.8%) returned to similar levels as over the previous decade** (22.4% to 27.5%), shifting away from the elevated levels of employment seen in 2022 (37.8%) and 2023 (33.1%).

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In 2024, **the most popular field of study for those in education and training was Health** for both Year 12 completers (25.7%) and non-completers (19.7%). This represents a sharp decline for non-completers, from 33.8% in 2023, with a corresponding increase in the Food, Hospitality and Personal services area from 7.7% in 2023 to 18.4% in 2024.

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Consistent with previous years, **those who completed Year 12 were most likely to be employed in Food, Hospitality and Tourism (27.0%) or as a Sales Assistants or Storeperson (25.3%),** while non-completers were most likely to be employed in Building and Construction (18.6%) or in Food, Hospitality and Tourism (14.7%).

## Year 12 completers and non-completers have different post-schooling destinations

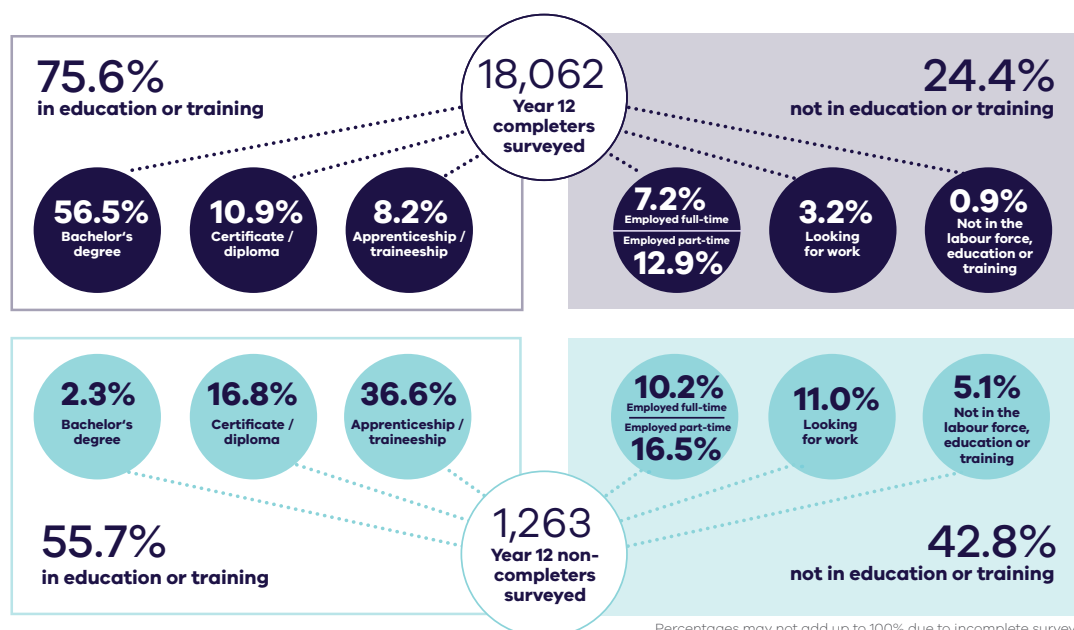
The post-school destinations of Year 12 completers and non-completers follow different but well-established patterns, with broad trends from previous years continuing into 2024.

In 2024, three-quarters of Year 12 completers remained in education and training after leaving school (75.6%). Year 12 completers not in education or training were more likely to be in part-time employment (12.9% of all Year 12 completers) than full-time employment (7.2%). The proportion of Year 12 completers in full-time employment briefly peaked in 2022 and 2023 (10.6% and 9.1%) but has begun to return to similar rates as in the decade prior (4.9% to 6.8%).

Over half of all non-completers continue to engage in education and training (55.7%), with apprenticeships/traineeships being the most popular destination (36.6% of all non-completers). Non-completers not in education or training were more likely to be in part-time employment (16.5% of all non-completers) than full-time employment (10.2%).

The proportion of completers and non-completers looking for work increased in 2024 following a historic low of 2.5% for completers and 9.5% for non-completers in 2023. The proportions looking for work in 2024 still remain lower than the levels seen prior to 2019 (average of 4.6% for completers and 16.1% for non-completers over 2009 to 2019).

### Destinations of Year 12 completers and non-completers, 2024



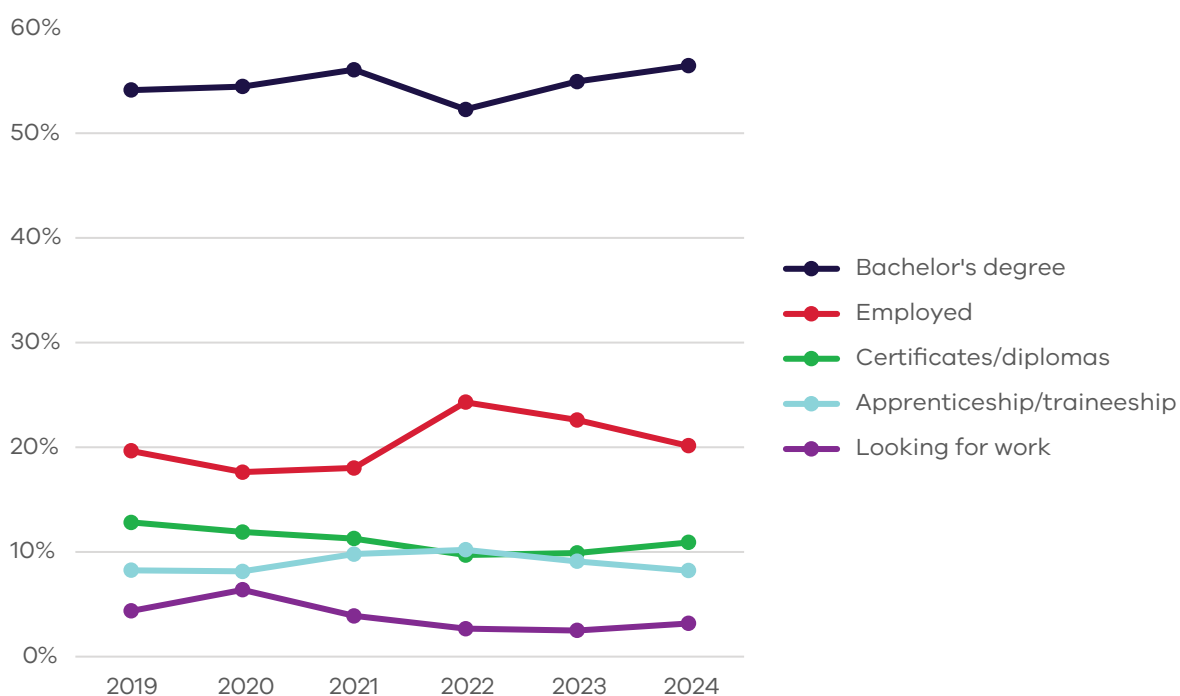
Destination	Year 12 completers	Non-completers
<b>In Education or Training</b>	75.6%	55.7%
Bachelor's degree	56.5%	2.3%
Apprenticeship/traineeship	8.2%	36.6%
Certificates/diplomas	10.9%	16.8%
<b>Not in Education or Training</b>	24.4%	42.8%
Employed	20.1%	26.8%
Employed full-time	7.2%	10.2%
Employed part-time	12.9%	16.5%
Looking for work	3.2%	11.0%
Not in the labour force, education or training	0.9%	5.1%

## A bachelor's degree is still the most popular pathway for Year 12 completers

Over half of all Year 12 completers (56.5%) were pursuing a bachelor's degree in 2024, up slightly from 2023 (54.9%). The proportion of school completers enrolled in a certificate or diploma has also increased slightly since the previous survey (9.9% to 10.9%), while those undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship has declined slightly (9.1% to 8.2%).

The proportion of Year 12 completers in employment has decreased in the last few years, from 24.3% in 2022 to 20.1% in 2024, but remains higher than results from the previous decade (between 17.0% and 19.8%).

Figure 1: Proportion of Year 12 completers by destination, 2019 to 2024



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bachelor's degree	54.1%	54.5%	56.1%	52.3%	54.9%	56.5%
Employed	19.7%	17.6%	18.0%	24.3%	22.6%	20.1%
Certificates/diplomas	12.8%	11.9%	11.3%	9.7%	9.9%	10.9%
Apprenticeship/traineeship	8.2%	8.2%	9.8%	10.2%	9.1%	8.2%
Looking for work	4.4%	6.4%	3.9%	2.7%	2.5%	3.2%

## More non-completers transitioned into further education or training than in 2023

The proportion of non-completers in apprenticeships/traineeships remained strong from 2023 to 2024 (35.9% to 36.6%). There was a slight uptick in non-completers enrolled in a certificate/diploma from 14.6% in 2023 to 16.8% in 2024, however this proportion remains lower than the previous decade (18.9% to 25.8%). As with recent years, a small but consistent proportion of non-completers undertook a bachelor's degree in 2024 (2.3%).

The proportion of non-completers in employment in the year after leaving school was lower in 2024 (26.8%) than in 2022 or 2023 (37.8% and 33.1%) and is now similar to the decade prior (from 22.4% to 27.5%). The proportion of young people looking for work increased slightly in 2024 (11.0%) compared to 2023 (9.5%) but remains lower than the decade prior to 2020 (14.6% to 18.8%).

Figure 2: Proportion of non-completers by destination, 2019 to 2024

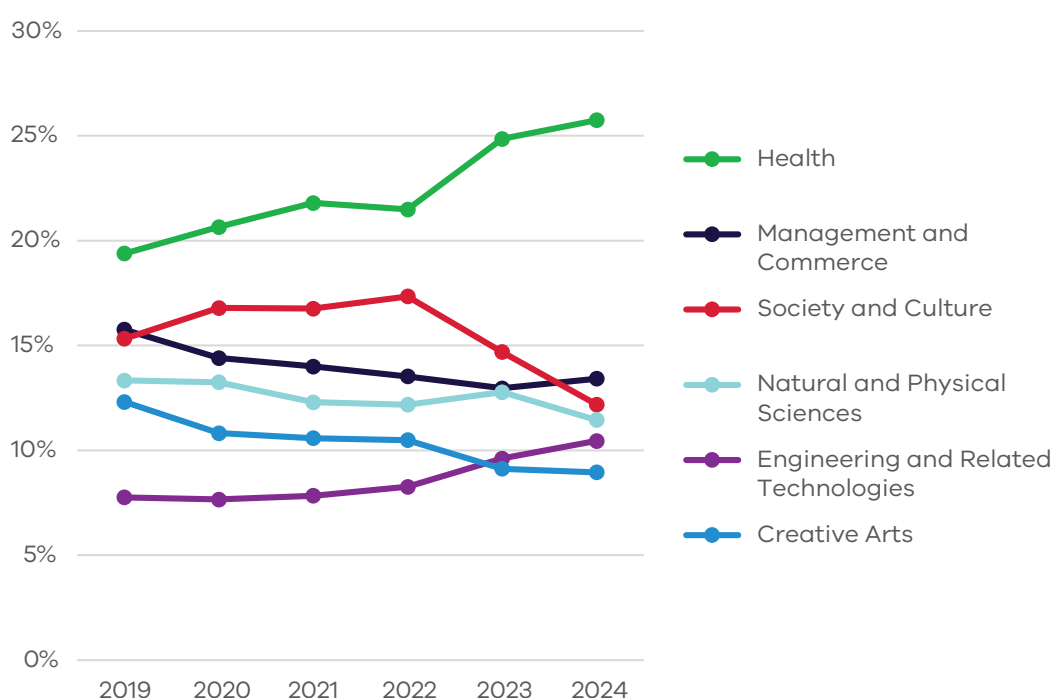


	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Apprenticeship/traineeship	32.7%	30.1%	35.9%	35.4%	35.9%	36.6%
Employed	26.8%	22.4%	27.2%	37.8%	33.1%	26.8%
Certificates/diplomas	19.7%	19.4%	15.6%	12.0%	14.6%	16.8%
Looking for work	14.8%	18.8%	14.6%	9.7%	9.5%	11.0%
Bachelor's degree	1.3%	2.3%	1.8%	1.6%	2.2%	2.3%

## Health is the most popular field of study for both Year 12 completers and non-completers

In 2024, the most popular field of study for Year 12 completers was Health (25.7%), followed by Management and Commerce (13.4%), and Society and Culture (12.2%). These have been the 3 most popular fields since 2017 although the proportion of completers studying Health has grown over time while interest in Management and Commerce, and Society and Culture, has declined in recent years. The study of Creative Arts has steadily declined from being the most popular field of study in 2014 at 16.9%, down to sixth place in 2024 at 9.0%.

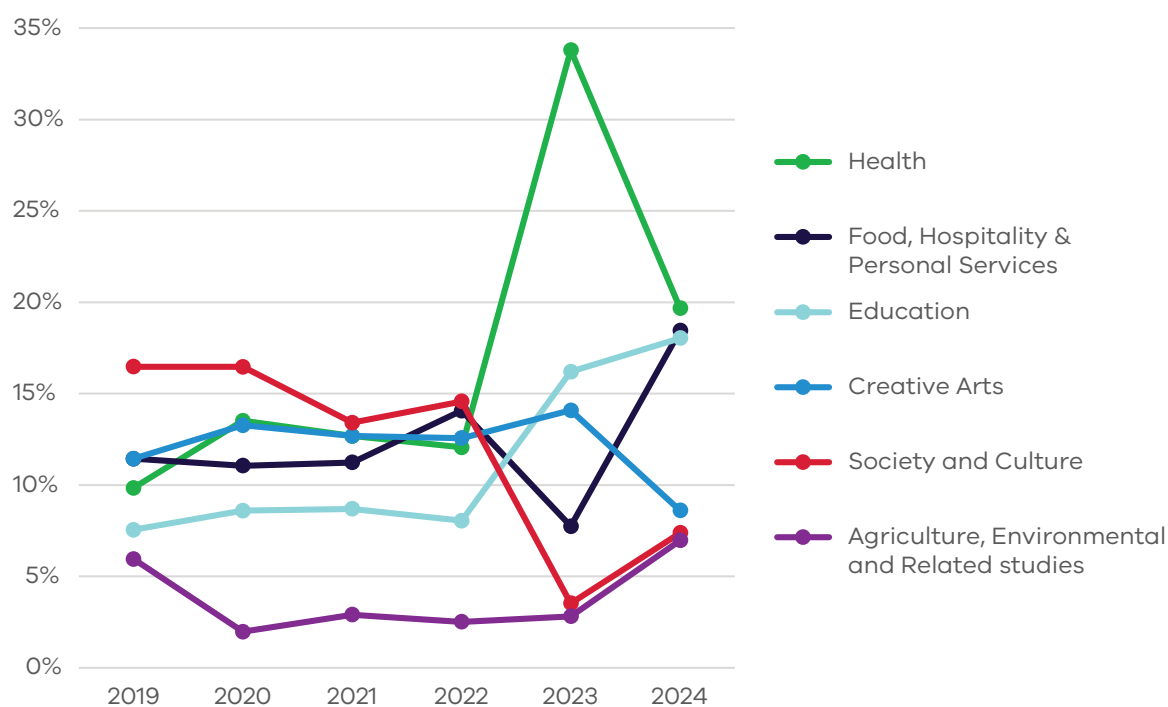
**Figure 3: Proportion of Year 12 completers in education or training across the 6 most popular fields of study, 2019 to 2024**



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Health	19.4%	20.7%	21.8%	21.5%	24.9%	25.7%
Management and Commerce	15.8%	14.4%	14.0%	13.5%	13.0%	13.4%
Society and Culture	15.3%	16.8%	16.8%	17.3%	14.7%	12.2%
Natural and Physical Sciences	13.3%	13.3%	12.3%	12.2%	12.8%	11.5%
Engineering and Related Technologies	7.8%	7.7%	7.8%	8.3%	9.6%	10.5%
Creative Arts	12.3%	10.8%	10.6%	10.5%	9.1%	9.0%

In 2024, non-completers were also most likely to study Health (19.7%), followed by Food, Hospitality and Personal Services (18.4%), and Education (18.0%). While remaining the most popular study area, Health experienced a sharp decline from 2023 when 33.8% of non-completers were studying in this field. Interest in the Food, Hospitality and Personal Services field has fluctuated over the last decade, with study in this field ranging from 16.1% in 2017 to a low of 7.7% in 2023, bouncing back to 18.4% in 2024.

**Figure 4: Proportion of non-completers in education or training across the 6 most popular fields of study\*, 2019 to 2023**



\*Note: the smaller sample size of the non-completer cohort means that results are subject to greater fluctuation from year to year.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Health	9.8%	13.5%	12.7%	12.1%	33.8%	19.7%
Food, Hospitality & Personal Services	11.4%	11.1%	11.2%	14.1%	7.7%	18.4%
Education	7.6%	8.6%	8.7%	8.0%	16.2%	18.0%
Creative Arts	11.4%	13.3%	12.7%	12.6%	14.1%	8.6%
Society and Culture	16.5%	16.5%	13.4%	14.6%	3.5%	7.4%
Agriculture, Environmental and Related studies	5.9%	2.0%	2.9%	2.5%	2.8%	7.0%



## Favoured industries of employment have remained relatively stable over time

Leading industries of employment for Year 12 completers and non-completers have remained largely unchanged since 2017. Respondents who completed Year 12 are most likely to be employed in the Food, Hospitality and Tourism industry (27.0%), or as Sales Assistants and Storepersons (25.3%). These 2 industries have alternated as the top industry of employment over previous years of the On Track survey.

Like previous years, Building and Construction (18.6%) and Food, Hospitality and Tourism (14.7%) and Sales Assistants and Storepersons (12.3%) were the top 3 industries of employment for non-completers.

### Top 5 employment destinations for Year 12 completers and non-completers, 2024

Rank	Year 12 completers	Non-completers
1	Food, Hospitality & Tourism (27.0%)	Building & Construction (18.6%)
2	Sales Assistants & Storepersons (25.3%)	Food, Hospitality & Tourism (14.7%)
3	Teaching, Childcare & Library (11.0%)	Sales Assistants & Storepersons (12.3%)
4	Health, Fitness, Hair & Beauty (7.4%)	Motor Vehicle Service & Repair (8.6%)
5	Labourers, Factory & Machine Workers (3.8%)	Electrical & Electronics Trades (7.1%)

## Most students attend career activities at school

Most students participate in the career activities provided by their school. The 3 most attended career activities were different for Year 12 completers and non-completers, with Year 12 completers more likely to have had a one-on-one talk with the school's career advisor (83.8%) than non-completers (66.6%).

### Proportion of Year 12 completers and non-completers attending the 3 most popular career activities, 2024

Year 12 completers		Non-completers	
Career Activity	Attendance	Career Activity	Attendance
Have a one-on-one talk with the school's career advisor	83.8%	Have a one-on-one talk with the school's career advisor	66.6%
Search on-line for career options at school	75.1%	Identify careers that match your interests and abilities	54.8%
Identify careers that match your interests and abilities	71.6%	Receive written material about career and study options	53.6%

## Demographic differences are associated with different post-school destinations

The On Track survey provides information on post-school destinations by selected student characteristics, including gender\*, location, and language background.

For both those who complete Year 12 and those who do not the following trends can be seen:



**Males are more likely to commence an apprenticeship or traineeship**, while females are more likely to pursue a bachelor's degree or certificate/diploma.



**Young people with a language background other than English are more likely to enrol in a bachelor's degree**, and less likely to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship, than those from English-speaking backgrounds.



**Young people in non-metropolitan areas are less likely to enrol in a bachelor's degree and more likely to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship** than their metropolitan peers.

These trends have remained relatively consistent over the last decade of the survey for year 12 completers, with the gaps between certain non-completer cohorts widening in the last decade. The gap between male and female non-completers enrolling in apprenticeships widened the most, by 12.8 percentage points from 2014 (22.8 percentage point difference, in favour of males) to 2024 (35.6 percentage point difference).

\*Note: Data represented by gender is described as male and female. This analysis does not include respondents who either did not identify as either male or female or for whom such identifying information has been suppressed due to the small number of respondents in this category.

## Post-school pathways for Aboriginal young people

In 2024, there were 351 Aboriginal respondents (293 Year 12 completers and 58 non-completers) to the On Track survey.

The proportion of Aboriginal Year 12 completers undertaking an apprenticeship/traineeship has grown from 14.4% in 2023 to 20.8% in 2024, while those employed has decreased from 37.3% to 25.9%.

Over the last decade, the proportion of Aboriginal non-completers enrolled in apprenticeships/traineeships has doubled from 17.5% in 2014 to 37.9% in 2024. However, there remains a large portion of Aboriginal non-completers who are not engaged in education, training or work in 2024 (24.1%).

The smaller sample size of the Aboriginal cohort means that results are subject to greater fluctuation from year to year.

### Destinations of Aboriginal Year 12 completers and non-completers, 2024

	In Education or Training			Not in Education or Training		
	Apprenticeship/ traineeship	Bachelor's degree	Certificates/ diplomas	Employed	Looking for work	Not in labour force, education or training
<b>Year 12 completers</b>	20.8%	29.7%	12.3%	25.9%	8.9%	2.4%
<b>Non-completers</b>	37.9%	0.0%	10.3%	25.9%	15.5%	8.6%

## Post-school destinations vary between school sectors

In 2024, the proportion of Year 12 completers enrolled in a bachelor's degrees was greater for the non-government school sector (63.8%) than for the government school sector (50.1%).

Year 12 completers and non-completers from the government sector are more likely to transition into employment than those from the non-government sector. This trend has been consistent over time.

### Destinations for Year 12 completers by school sector, 2024

School sector	In Education or Training			Not in Education or Training		
	Apprenticeship/ traineeship	Bachelor's degree	Certificates/ diplomas	Employed	Looking for work	Not in labour force, education or training
<b>Government</b>	9.2%	50.1%	12.6%	22.5%	4.4%	1.0%
<b>Non-government</b>	7.1%	63.8%	8.9%	17.5%	1.8%	0.8%



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