



DadeSchools.net
Giving our students the world

A New Research Partnership: Career Pathways and Adult Basic Education in High-Need Cities



Funded by the U.S. Department of Education
(Institute of Education Sciences Grant #R305H150047)

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy (ISAL) at Penn State
Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition
Houston Center for Literacy
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Who We Are

- Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State
 - Dr. Esther Prins (Principal Investigator; Co-Director, ISAL)
 - Dr. Carol Clymer (Co-Director)
 - Dr. Blaire Willson Toso (Associate Director)
- Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition
 - Becky Raymond (Executive Director)
 - Alex Ziskind (Program Associate)
- Houston Center for Literacy
 - Sheri Foreman Elder (President and CEO)
 - Martin Loa (Vice President of Program Services)
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
 - Mark Needle (Educational Specialist)

Aims, Rationale, & Methods

- What:
 - 2-year U.S. Department of Education researcher-practitioner partnership grant
- Aims
 - Understand how adult basic education & literacy (ABEL) providers in high-need cities are integrating career pathways (CP) components into their services – especially for low-skilled & immigrant adults.
 - Identify which student outcome measures are most extensively used & any metrics that are used within & across the cities.
 - Understand how successful programs design & implement CP.
- First study to map the landscape of adult education career pathways in Chicago, Houston, Miami.

Aims, Rationale, & Methods

- What do we mean by career pathways?
 - This approach “connects progressive levels of basic skills & postsecondary education, training, & supportive services
 - in specific sectors or cross-sector occupations
 - in a way that optimizes the progress & success of individuals—including those with limited education, English, skills, and/or work experience—
 - in securing marketable credentials, family-supporting employment, & further education & employment opportunities.” (CLASP, 2012)

Aims, Rationale, & Methods

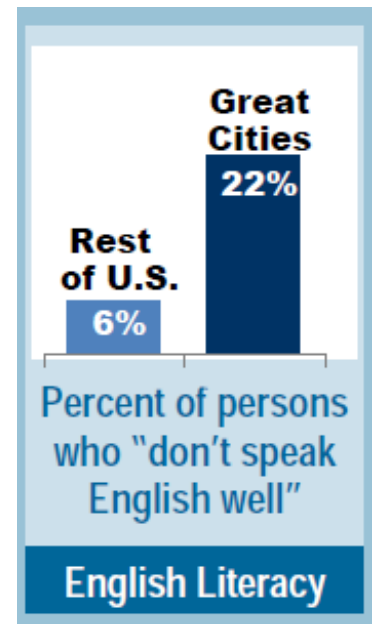
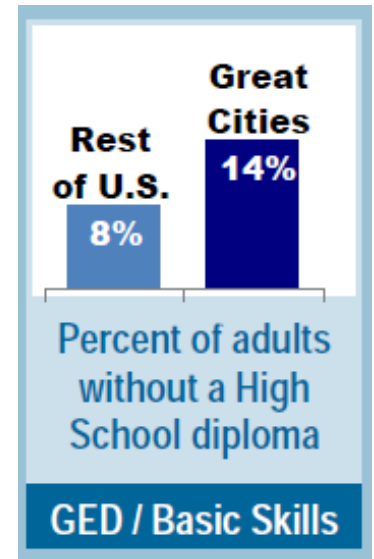
- Why:

- Rationale for the project

- Federal & state policies are requiring more integration between adult education & workforce development.
 - Career pathways is a popular buzzword, but how are programs implementing it?
 - ABE system can be fragmented → programs need to learn from & collaborate with each other.
 - Need to know who programs are serving, services offered, outcomes achieved, how outcomes are measured.

Aims, Rationale, & Methods

- Why focus on urban areas?
 - History: outcome of the Adult Education Great Cities Summits (US DOE, 2010-11)
 - Urban needs
 - Large concentrations of under-skilled, immigrant, & low-literacy adults
 - Chicago, Houston, & Miami
 - 5% of US adults without HS degree (1.5 million)
 - nearly 10% of US limited-English proficient adults (2.4 million)
 - Other US cities share a larger scale & intensity of adult literacy needs, whatever the size of the state.



Aims, Rationale, & Methods

- Educator needs
 - National Research Council (2012)
 - “striking” absence of adult education research
 - Recommended “strategic and sustained investments in a coordinated and systemic approach to program improvement, evaluation, and research about adult literacy learners.”
- Vision
 - Great Cities teams wished to learn systematically from peers in other cities, & jointly developed a shared goal:
 - A forum for collective impact, across systems & states, to advance exemplary & emerging practices & policies.
- IES researcher-practitioner partnership: first step in a systematic approach to identify and exchange practices (and common barriers) across peer cities.

Aims, Rationale, & Methods

■ How:

- Survey of all ABEL providers in Chicago, Houston, & Miami (Nov. 2015 – Mar. 2016)
 - Administered by the Social and Economic Survey Research Center (WSU)
- Focus groups (6-9 providers per city)
 - Nominated by survey respondents & city partners; reported CP services & successful outcomes
 - Chicago & Houston (Mar. 2016)
 - Miami (May 2016)
- Case studies of exemplary programs (2 per city): fall 2016
- Disseminate findings: 2017 & beyond

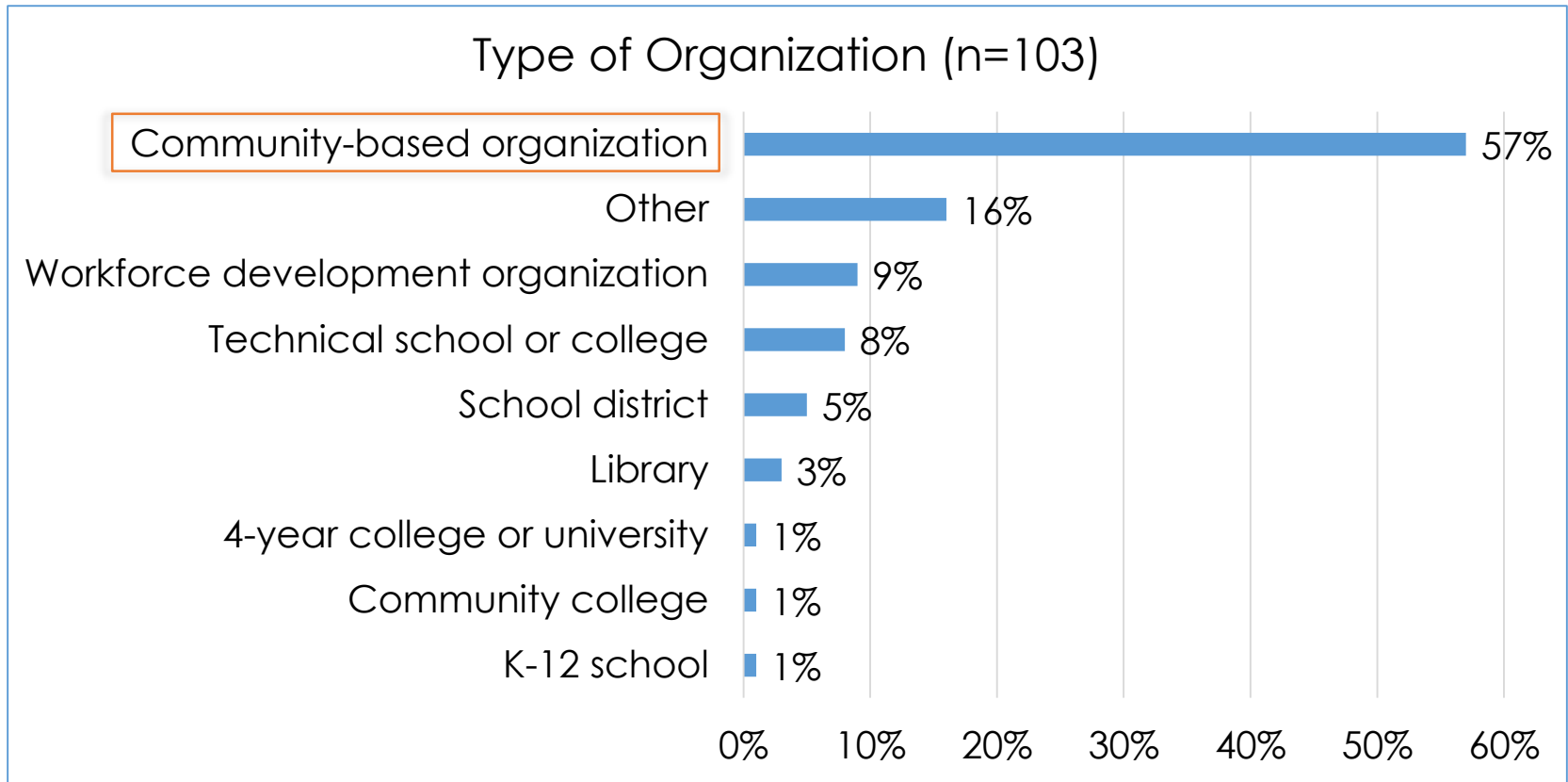
Survey Methods

- Purpose: understand the landscape of adult education career pathways within & across cities
- Sample: all adult education providers in 3 cities (n=184)
 - Final sample = 147 (removed “ineligible” & “other”)
 - 102 completed surveys = 72% response rate
- Web-based survey
- Sections
 - Background information on organization & CP services
 - Including services “in development”
 - Student characteristics
 - Program design & delivery
 - Data collection systems & outcomes tracked
 - Aggregate student outcomes



Survey Findings: Institutional & Program Characteristics

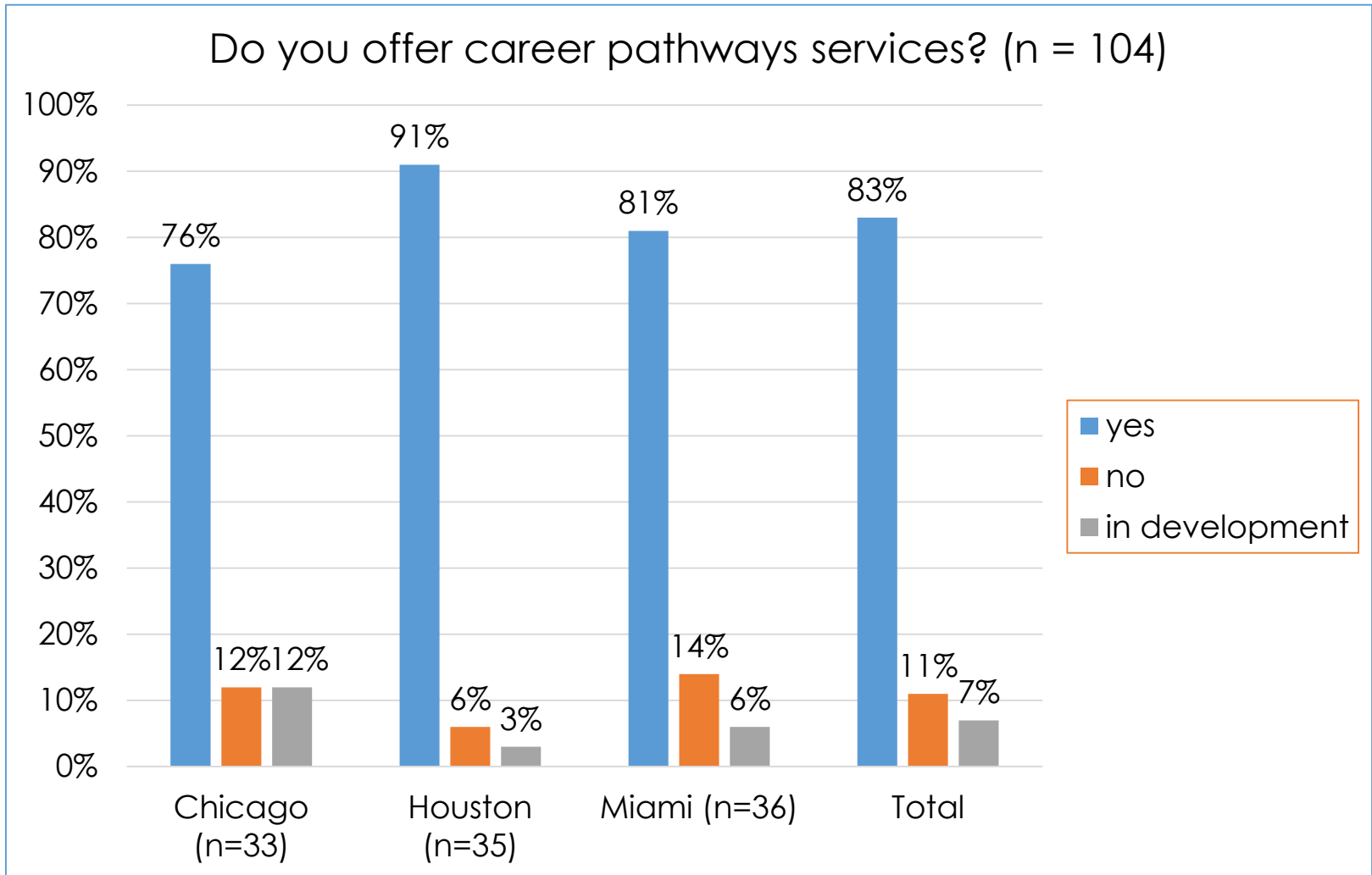
- Most common agency type*: CBO



*In some cases 1 community college or school district answered the survey for all the others in the city

- Other: adult education center operated by school district, homeless shelter, correctional facility, etc.
- CBOs disproportionately located in Chicago (47% of CBOs in survey)
- 100% of technical colleges & school districts in survey located in Miami

- 83% said they provided CP services, per CLASP definition
- No significant differences by city



■ Examples of CP

■ Chicago

■ Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC)

- Primary CP components: Careers in manufacturing programs (computer numerical control [CNC] & welding)
- Support services: bridge & wrap-around services (transportation, financial literacy)
- Outcomes: Industry-recognized credentials (NIMS- National Institute for Metalworking Skills), manufacturing jobs (CNC machine operator, welder, etc.)

■ Instituto del Progreso Latino

- Primary CP components: Bridge programs in healthcare, manufacturing, computer information technology
- Support services: wrap-around services (social & emotional supports & financial literacy)
- Outcomes: industry-recognized credentials & job placements in healthcare, manufacturing, & IT.

■ Examples of CP

■ Houston

■ Alliance for Multicultural Services

■ Primary CP components

- ESL, distance education, & contextualized support classes:

- computer support specialist, machinist, commercial truck driving (CDL), AutoCAD, & child development associate

- Financial literacy, resume writing, job readiness, & job search skills

- Support services: childcare, case management, income support, & discounted metro cards

- Outcomes: industry-recognized credential CDA, jobs in childcare centers, 6 semester credit hours toward AA in Child Development, AutoCAD professional user certification, careers designing plans for engineers

- Examples of CP

- Houston

- Harris County Department of Education

- Primary CP components

- Integrated education & training program:

- Instrumentation fitter, CNA certificate program construction pathway, NCCER (construction certification training), work-based math for pipefitting (women in construction), work-based ESL for safety for construction sites

- Integrated reading, language & math support for retail management certification with Goodwill Industries

- Integrated GED & NCCER core curriculum training (with SER) for jobs

- Career counselors & transition specialists available to assist with post-secondary transitions & job search

- Outcomes: certified nursing assistant, NCCER & retail management certifications

■ Examples of CP

■ Miami

■ Miami Dade College, Adult Education

- Primary CP components: Florida Integrated Career & Academic Preparation System (FICAPS)
 - Integrated GED course: combines academic & occupational instruction with career guidance & support services
 - GED preparation and/or (1) TRAMCON (manufactured construction); (2) college credit certificates (accounting, management, finance-banking); (3) health certificate (behavioral health technician, community health worker)
 - Career readiness advisors: liaisons between adult & postsecondary education
- Outcomes: Employability skills, career portfolio, industry-recognized credentials, & job placement in TRAMCON

■ Examples of CP

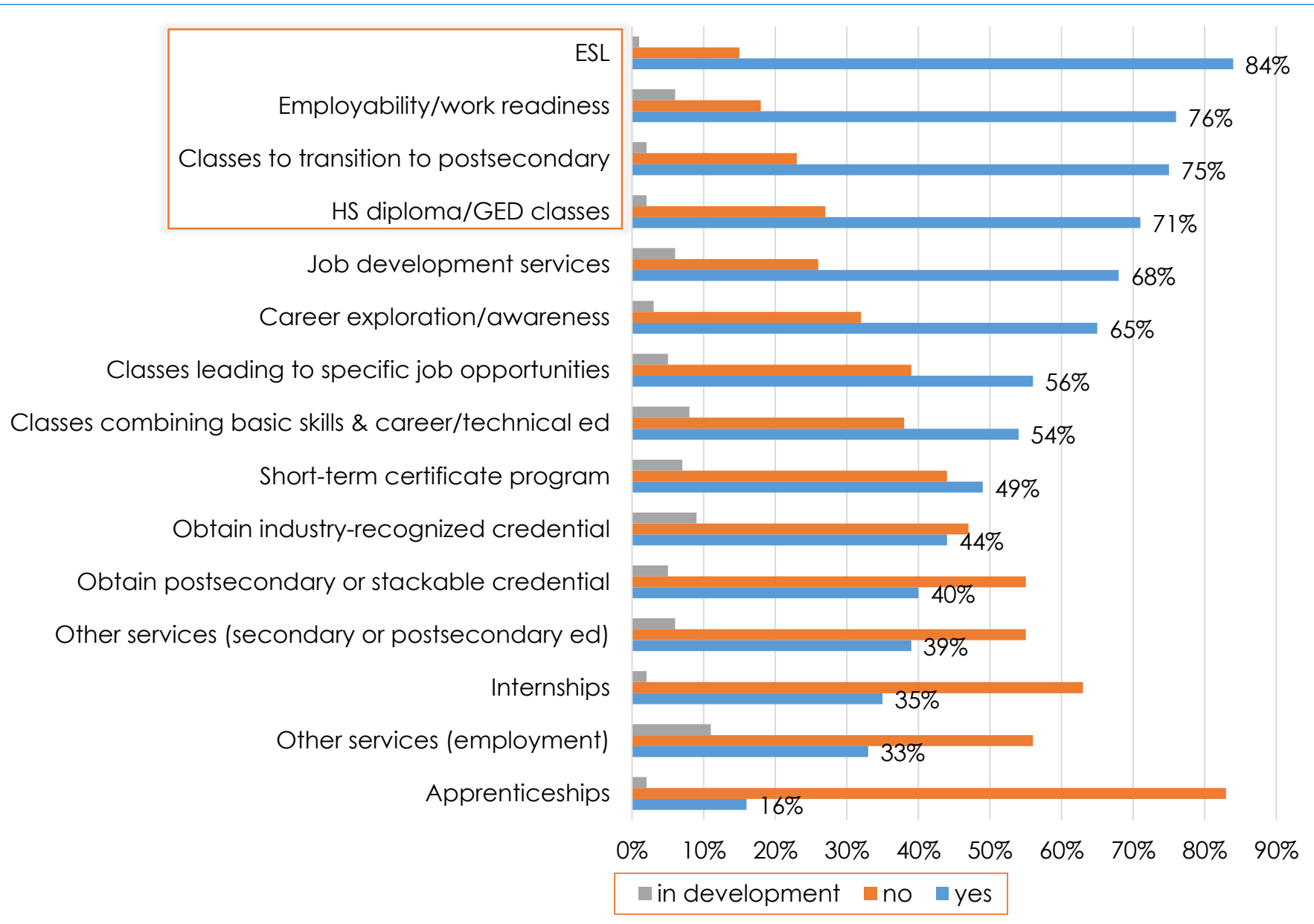
■ Miami

■ South Dade Technical College, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

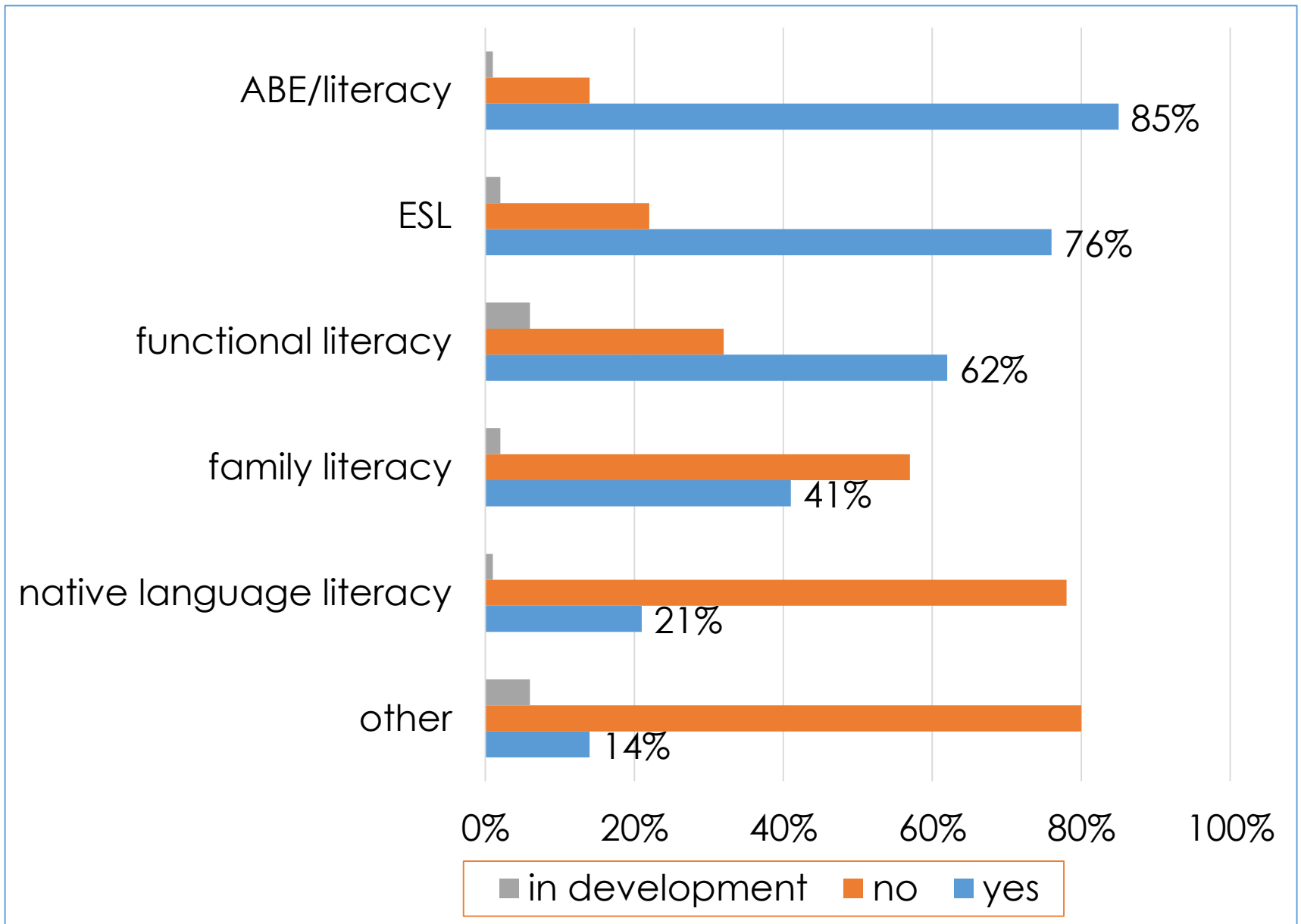
■ Primary CP components

- Bridge courses from ESOL to advanced ABE & employability; & from ABE to adult HS; concurrent enrollment with Career Technical Education (incl. automotive, health sciences, heating/refrigeration, construction).
- Support services: 4-day orientation class, case managers & academic counselors, employability skills workshops, SAVES scholarships for eligible refugees
- Outcomes: employability skills, career portfolio, industry-recognized credentials & job placement for career technical education programs

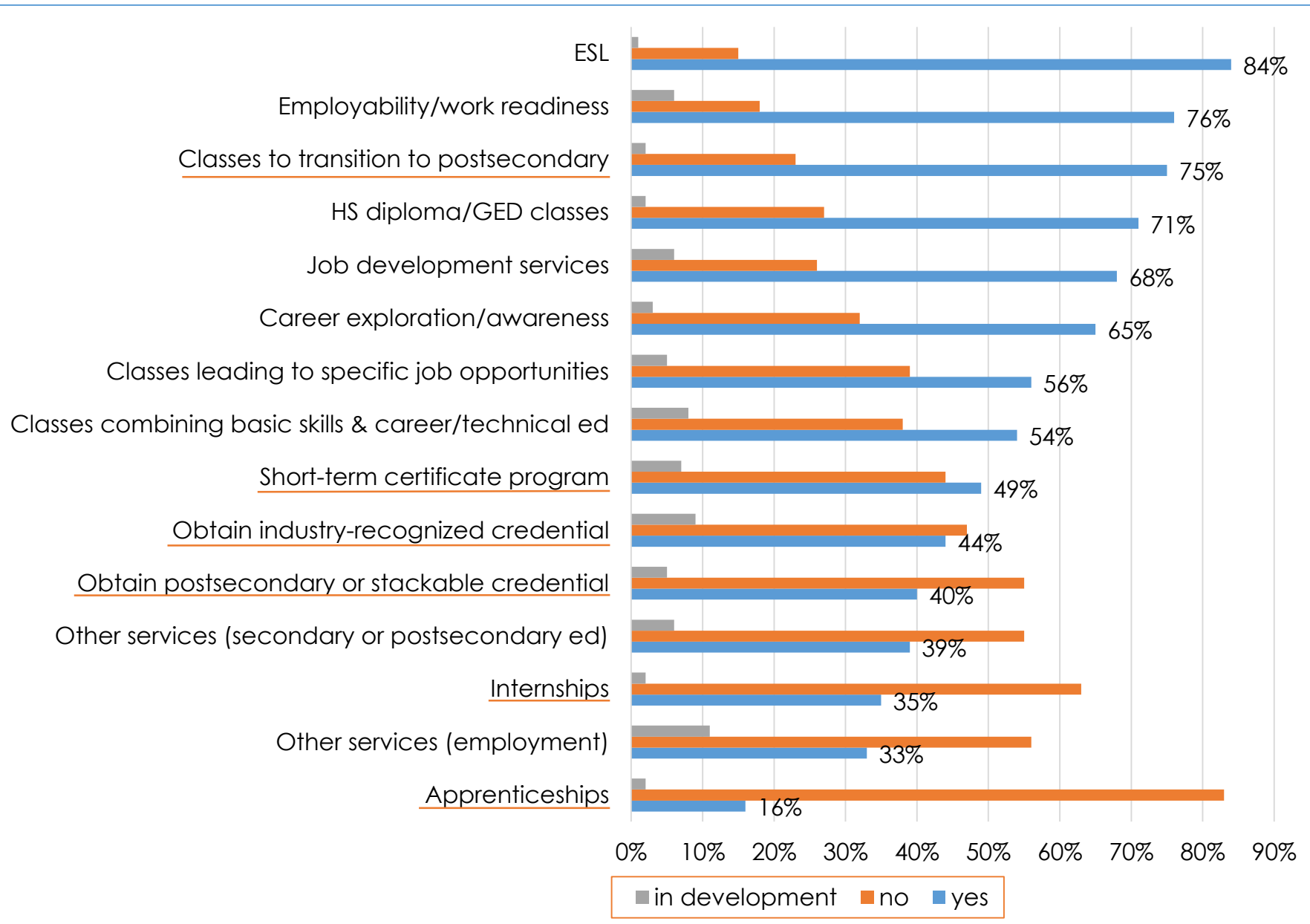
■ Types of CP classes, services, & activities (n = 80 to 103)



■ Types of classes (n = 35 to 102)

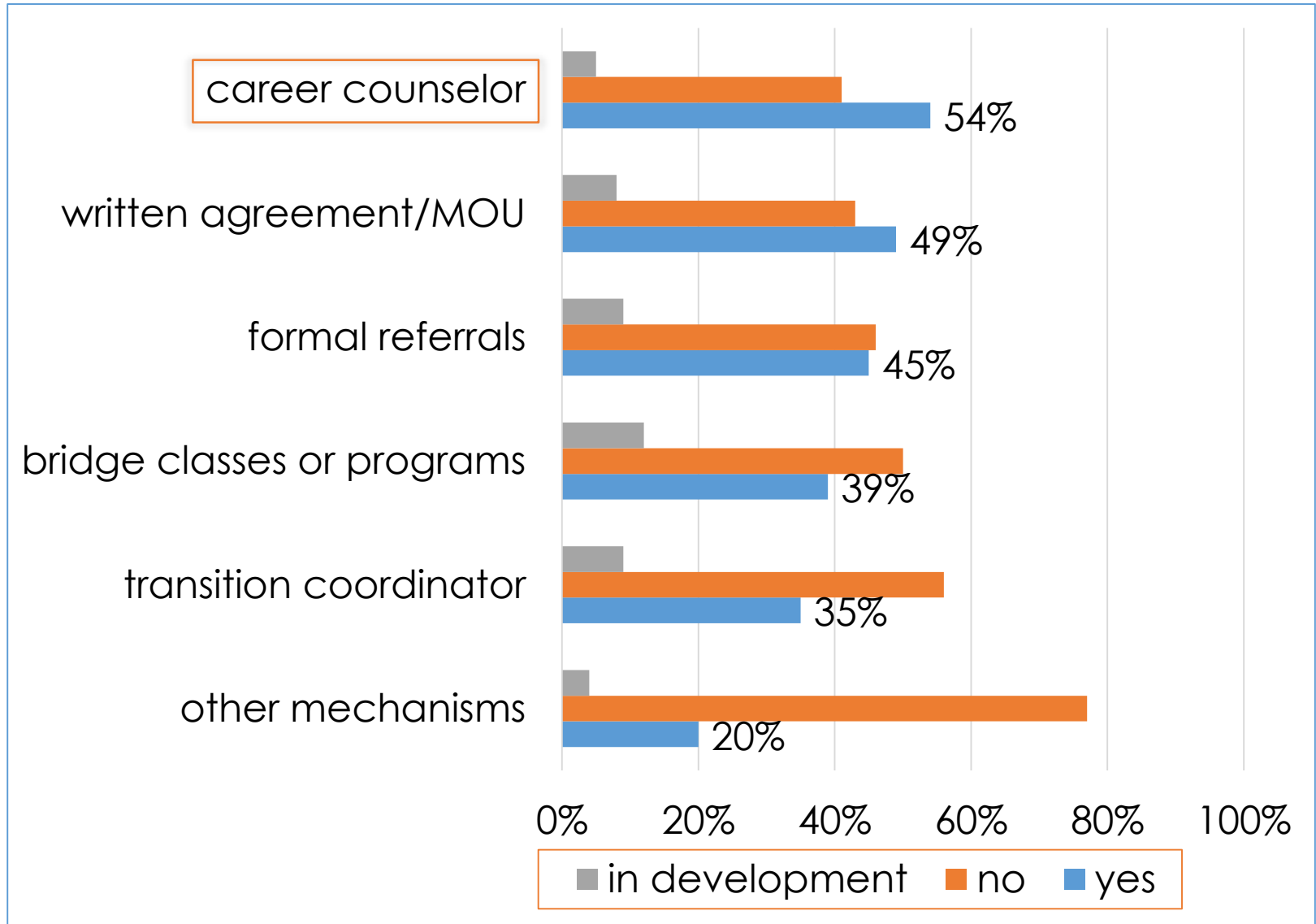


- Overall, “core” CP services were much less common

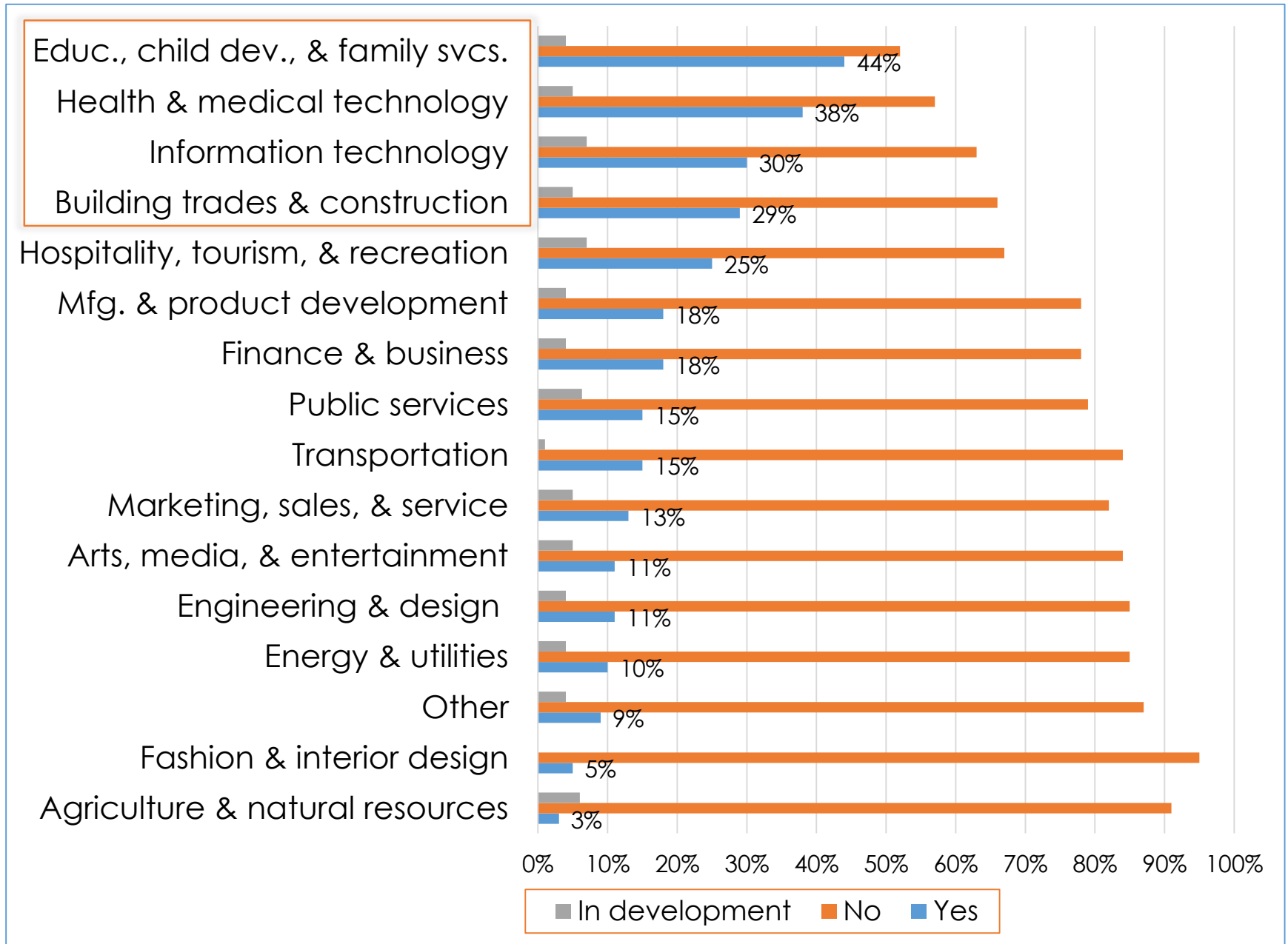


- Significant differences in services by city
 - More common in Chicago:
 - Career exploration/awareness ($p < .05$)
 - More common in Miami
 - GED/HS diploma ($p \leq .001$)
 - Postsecondary or stackable credential ($p < .05$)
 - Short-term certificate needed for advancement ($p < .05$)
 - Industry-recognized credential ($p < .05$)

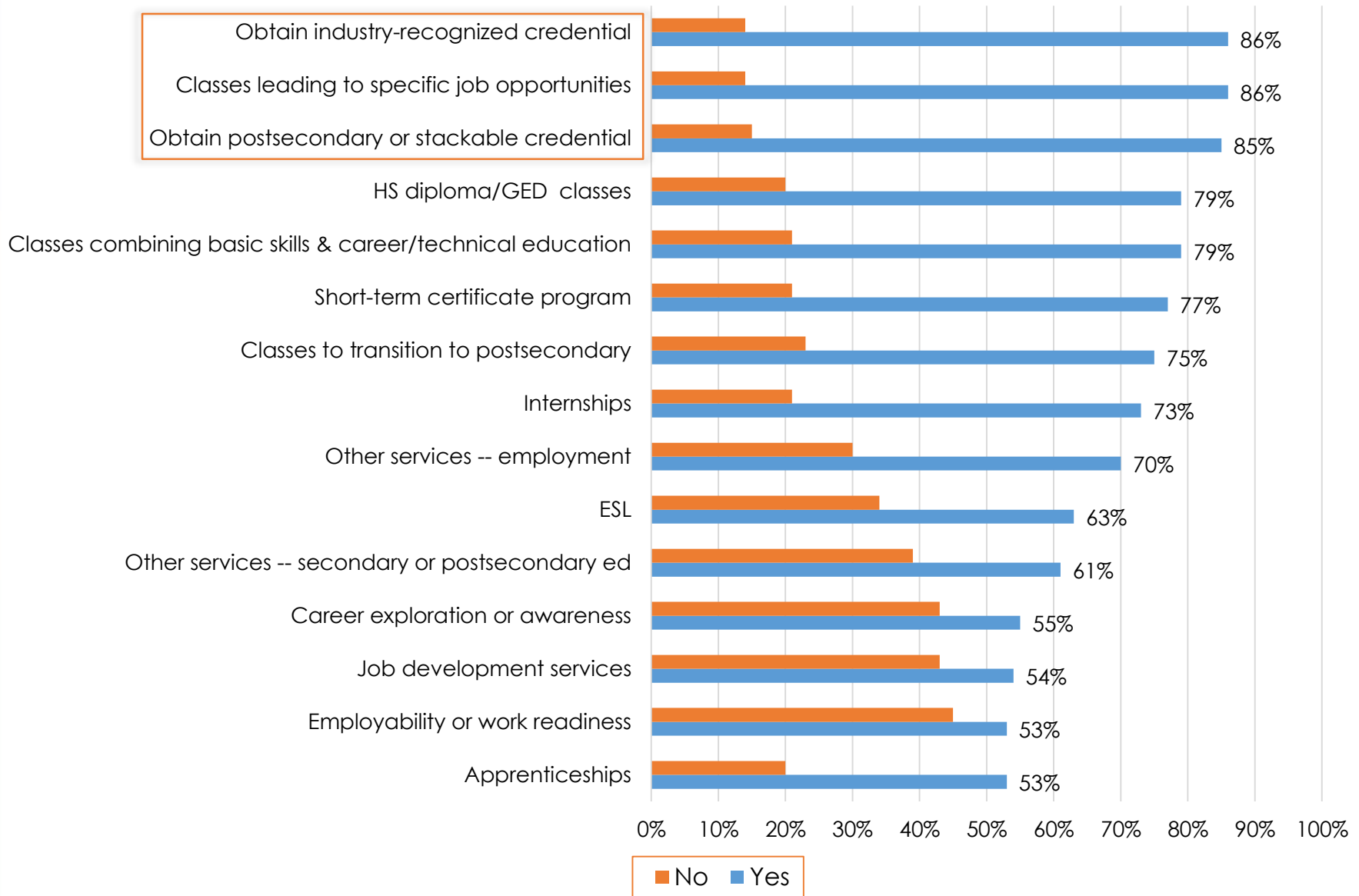
- Mechanisms for transitioning students to next step in their career pathway (n = 51 to 99)



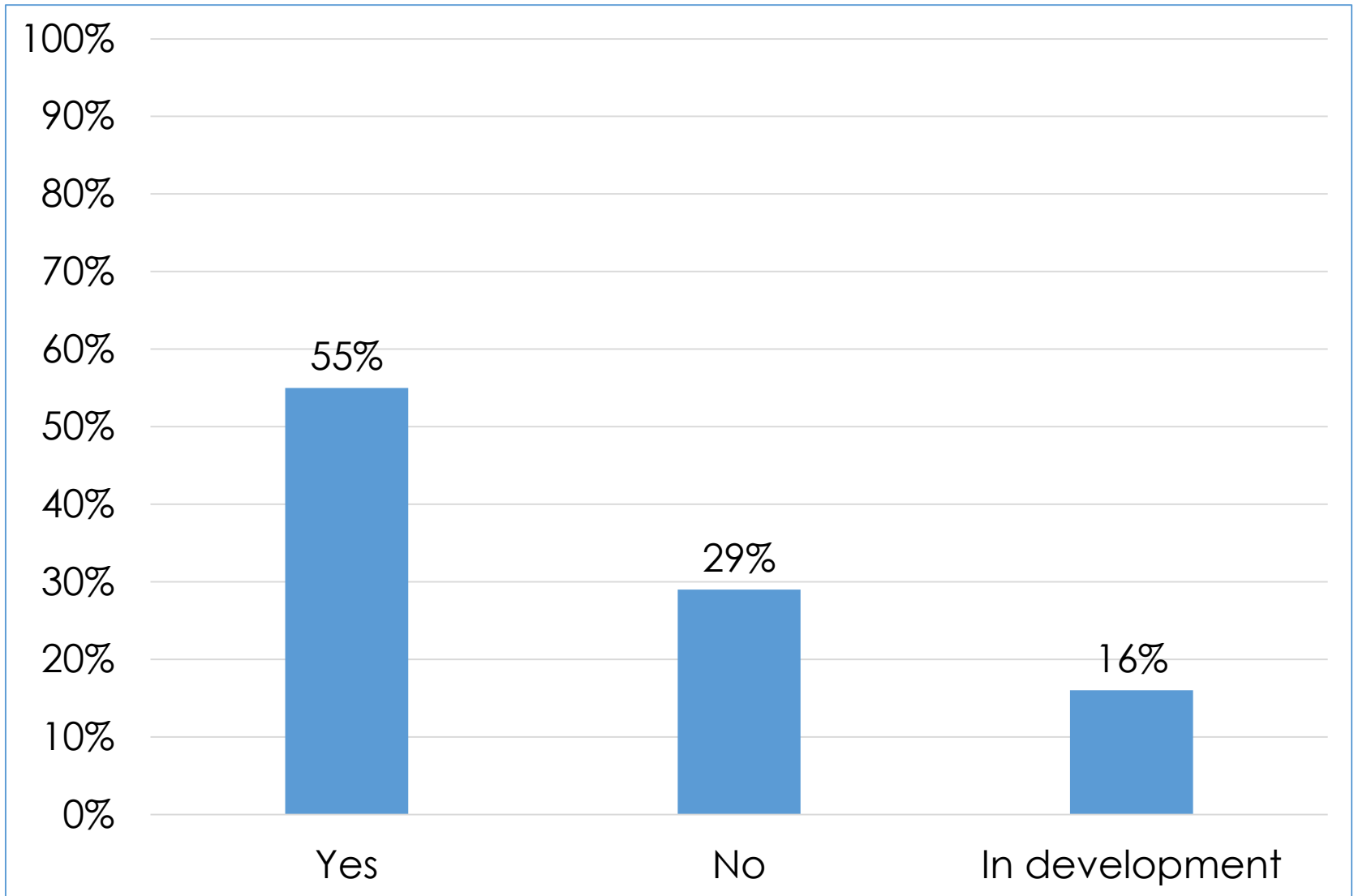
- Targeted employment sectors (n = 47 to 100)



- More than 50% of each service have threshold grade-level, test score, or language requirements (n = 15 to 83)



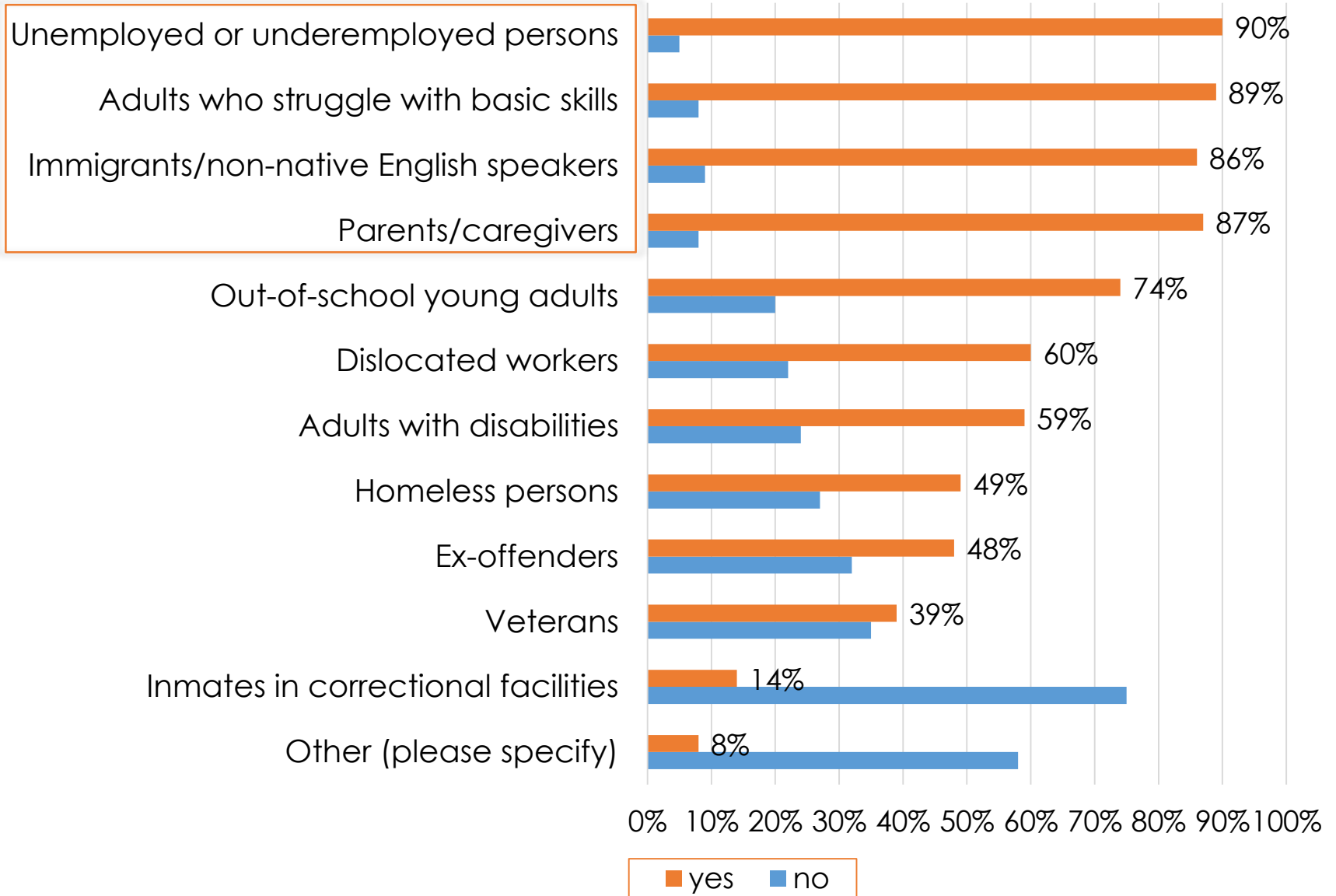
- Majority of programs formally assist students in developing their own, individualized CP plan (n = 106)





Survey Findings: Student Characteristics

Types of students served (n = 36 to 104)



- Approx. 60% women

- Racial/ethnic groups (US-born only)
 - Latino/a: ~58%
 - African American: ~21%
 - White: ~8%
 - Asian: ~6%

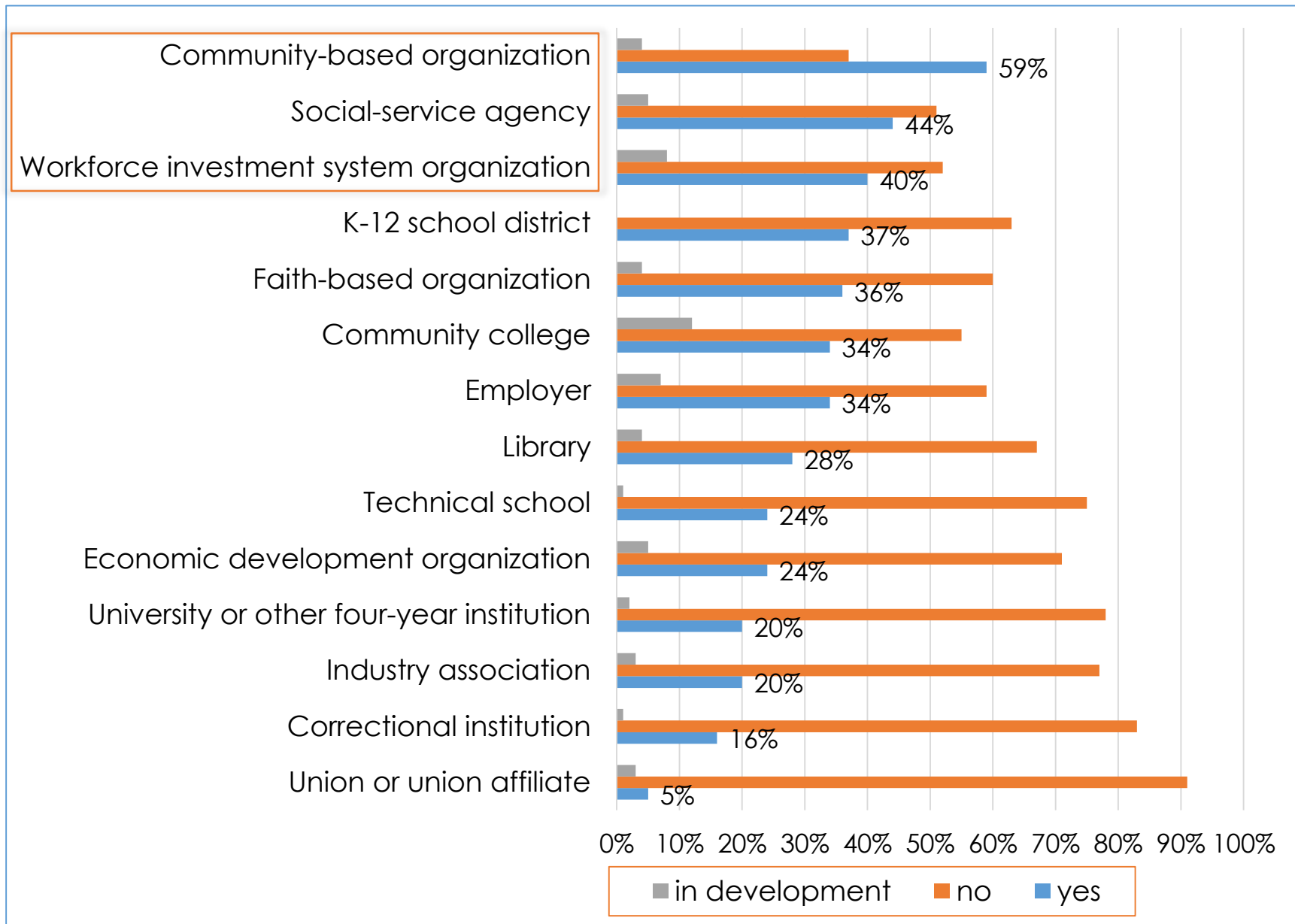
- Educational attainment: ~2/3 lack HS/GED diploma

- Over 50% unemployed

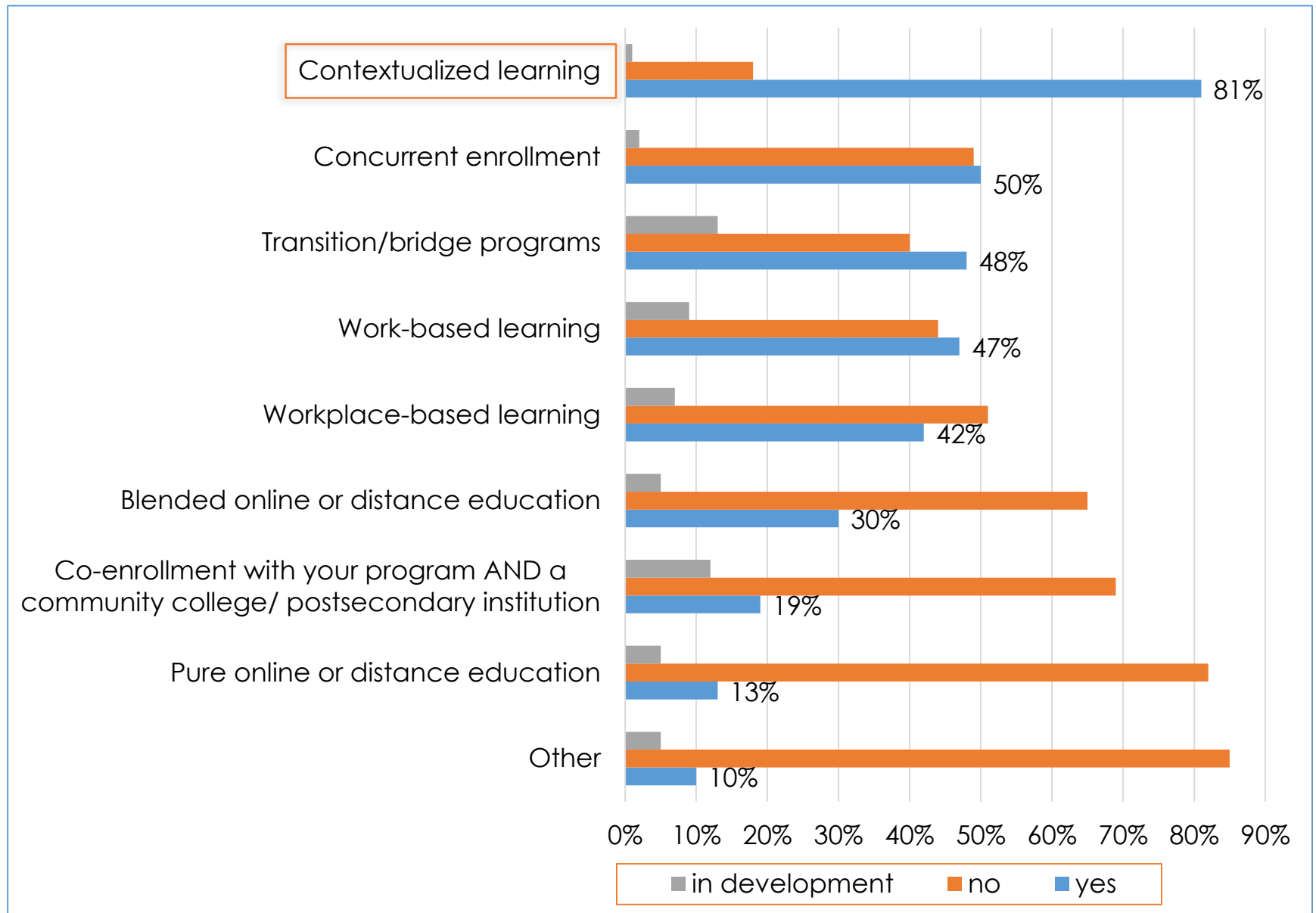


Survey Findings: Program Design & Delivery

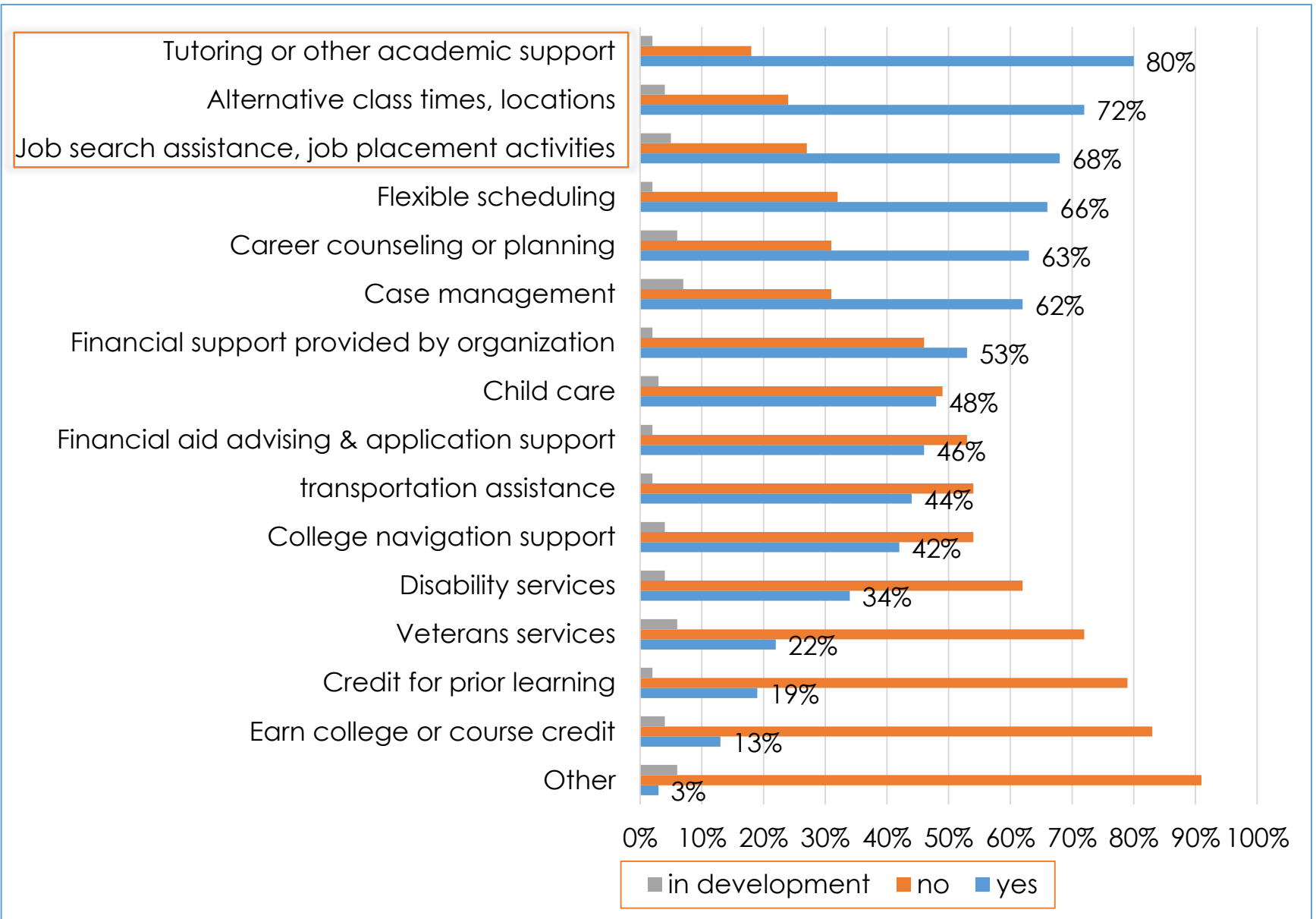
- CP partners (n = 43 to 97)



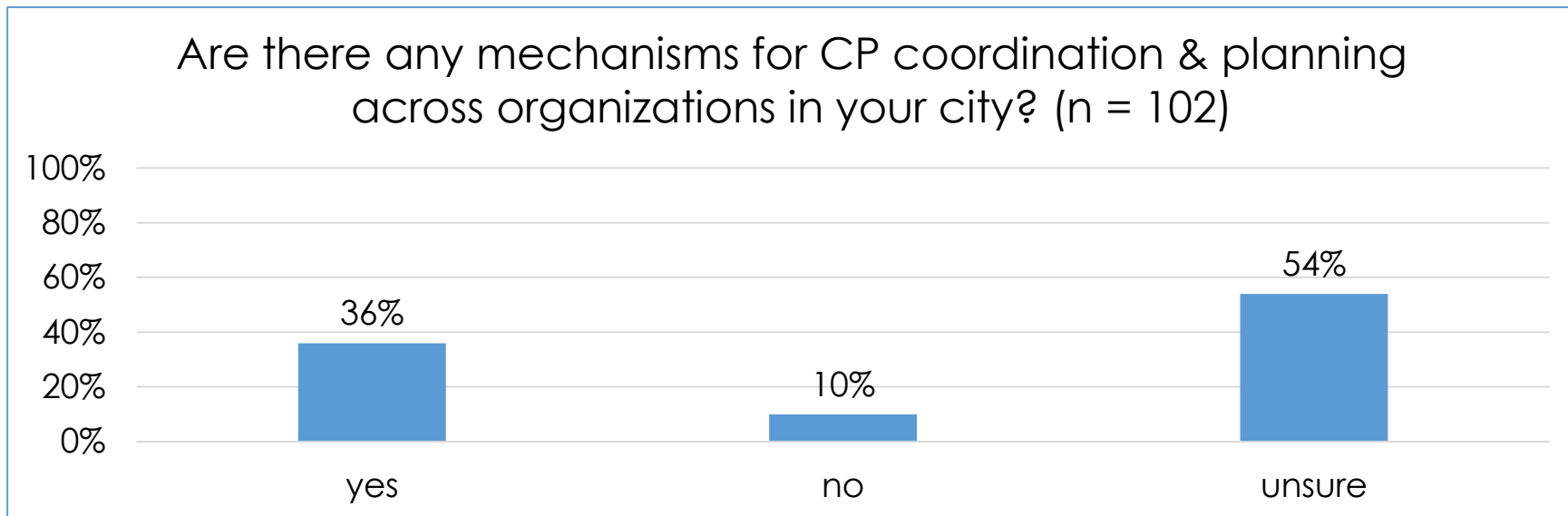
■ Instructional approaches (n = 41 to 98)



- Support services (n = 33 to 101)



- Career pathways coordination



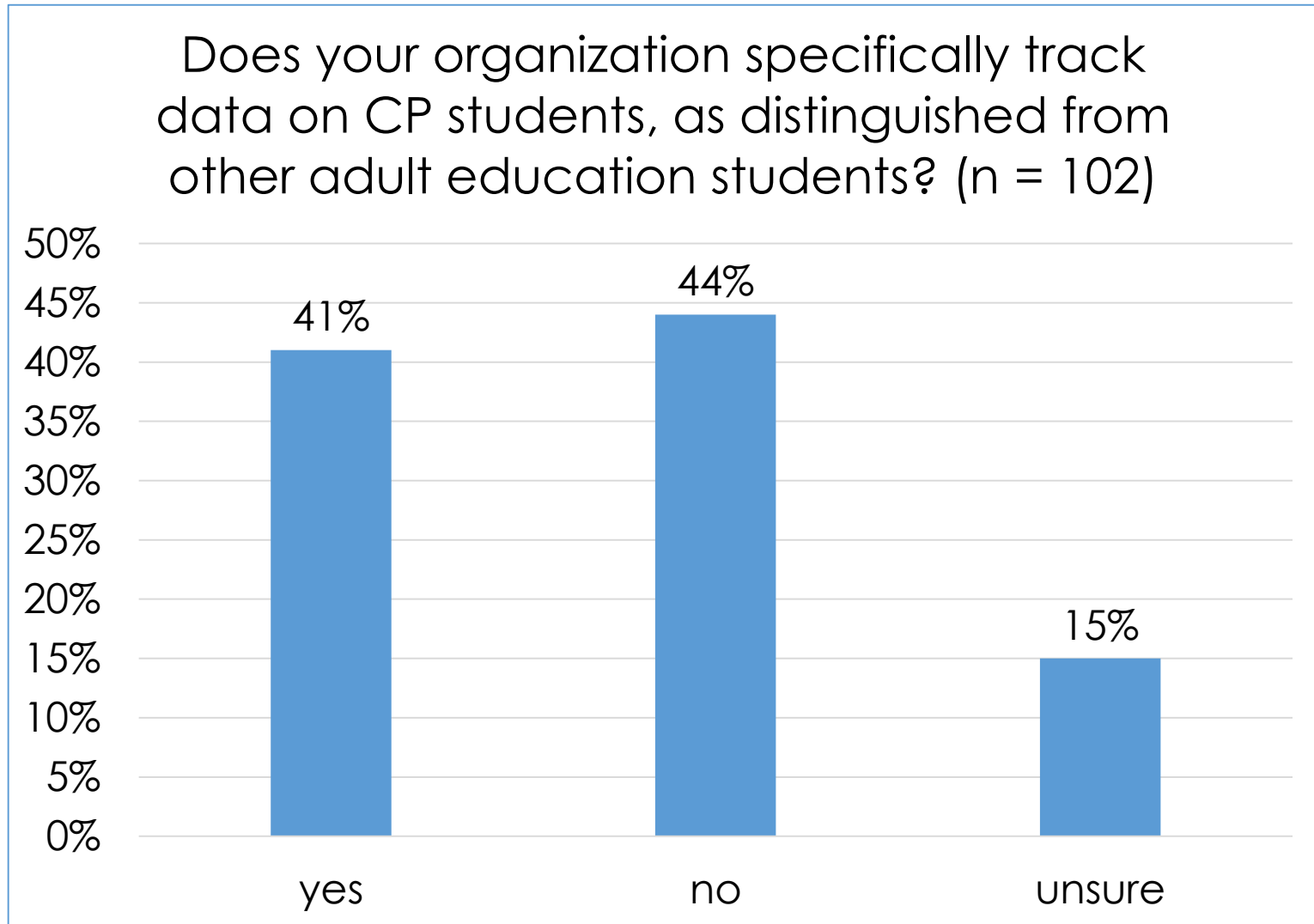
- On average, CP coordination perceived as “somewhat effective” (leaning toward “slightly”)





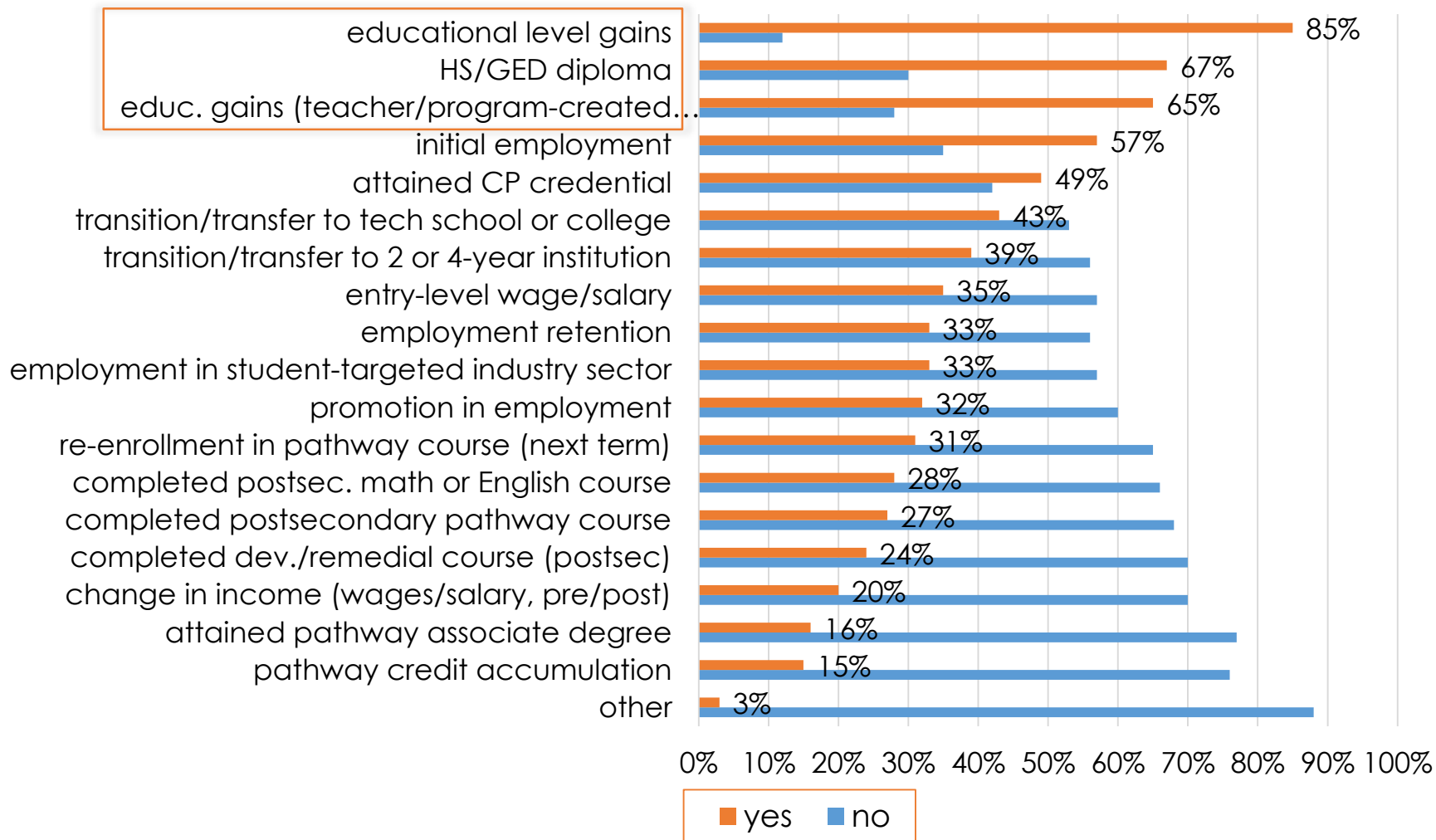
Survey Findings: Data Collection Systems & Outcome Measures

- Less than ½ of agencies track data specifically on CP students



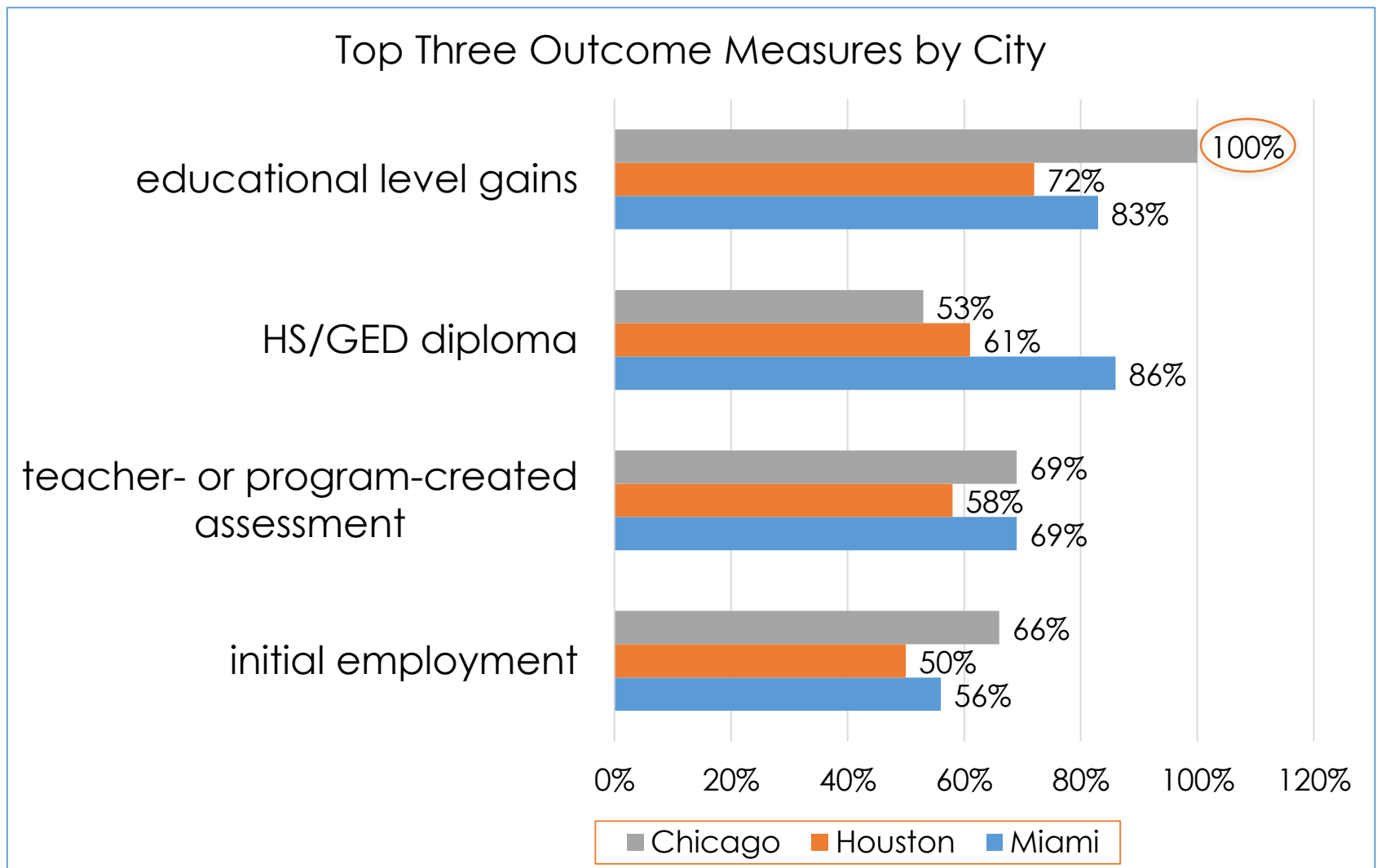
- No single measure was used by all agencies

For your CP students, does your program measure...
(n = 70 to 100)

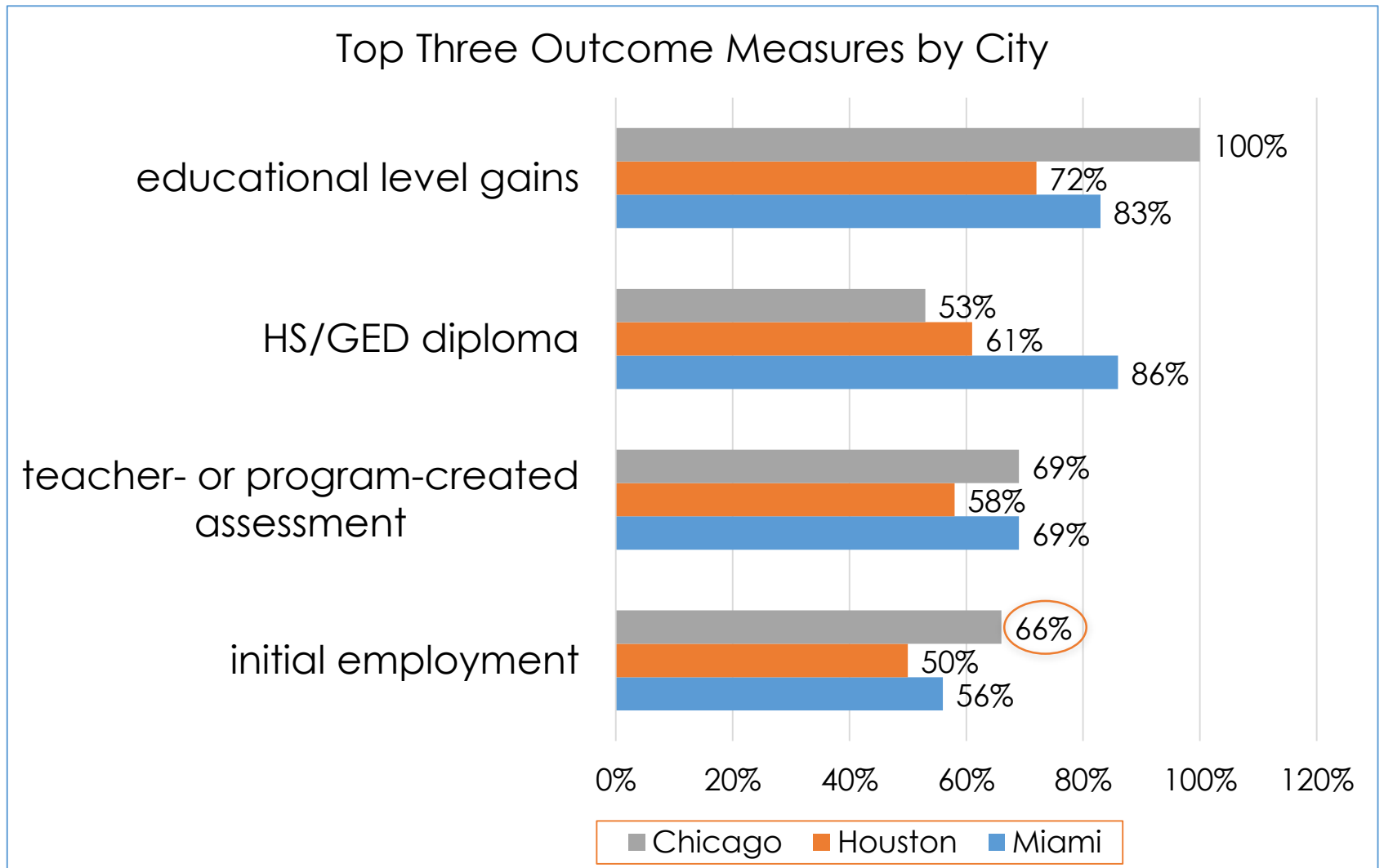


*excludes "unsure"

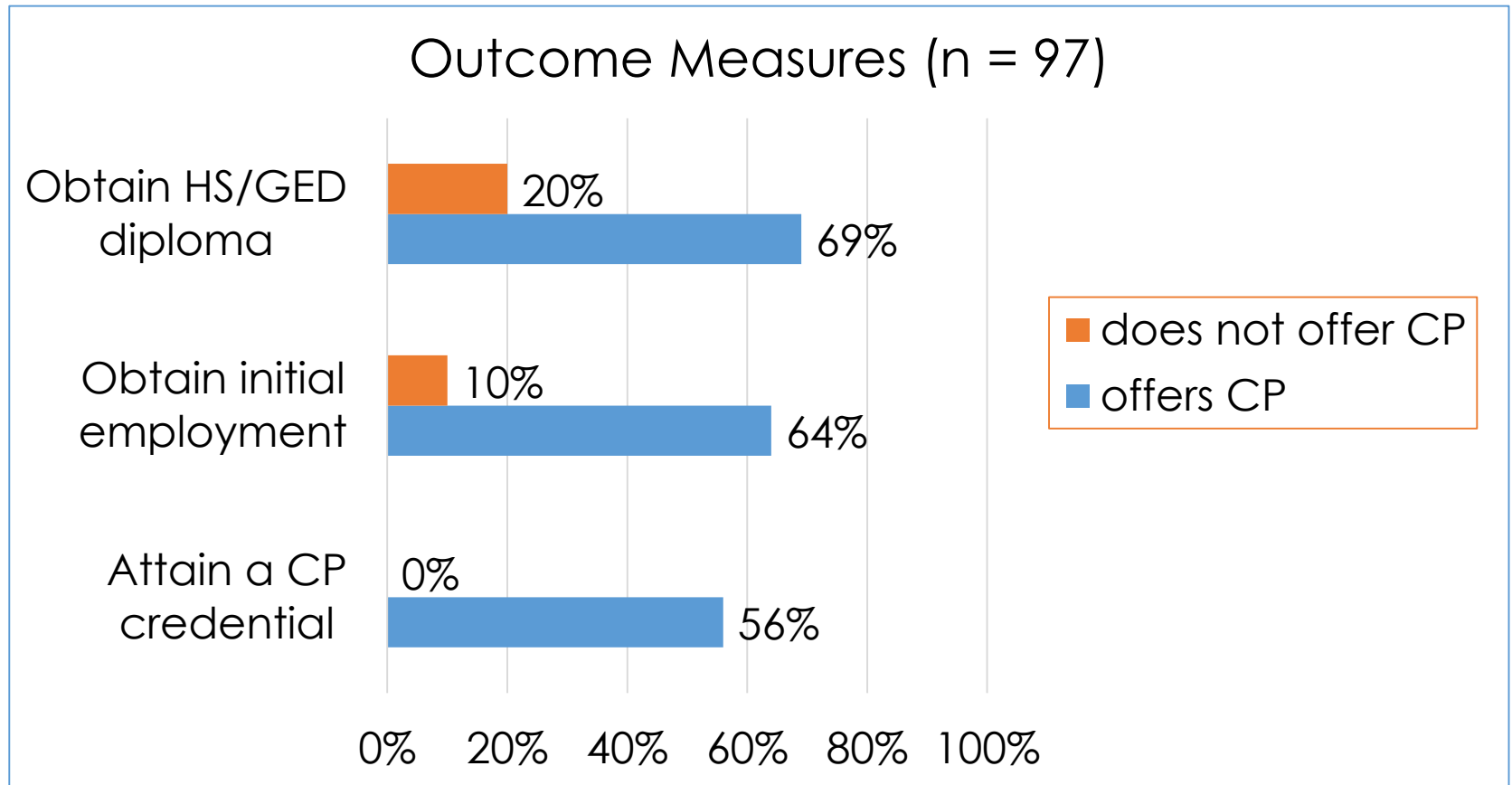
- Chicago: only city with...
 - a measure used by all agencies



- Chicago: only city with...
 - initial employment as top 3 measure



- Agencies that say they offer CP are significantly more likely to track 3 outcomes:



*Excludes agencies that are developing CP programming (n = 7)

DISCUSS

- How do the survey findings compare to your experience with career pathways in your city or community?
- Which survey findings...
 - are surprising?
 - confirm what you already knew or suspected?
 - are encouraging?
 - are concerning?
- What kinds of topics should we be researching on adult education career pathways for the future?

For More Information...

- Visit our project website & view the presentation slides:
 - <http://adultpathways.psu.edu/>
- Visit the Institute of Education Sciences website:
<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/details.asp?ID=1642>
- Contact the PI, Dr. Esther Prins
 - esp150@psu.edu; 814-865-0597
- These are tentative, preliminary findings. Please do not quote or cite without permission from the PI.
- Acknowledgements:
 - Survey respondents and pilot testers
 - Kent Miller, SESRC
 - Penn State graduate assistants: Ally Krupar and Ruth Sauder
 - Institute of Education Sciences