



Survey of Schools

Impact of cutbacks on second level schools

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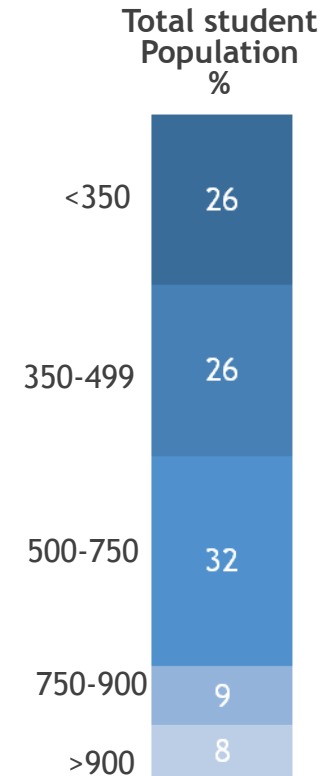
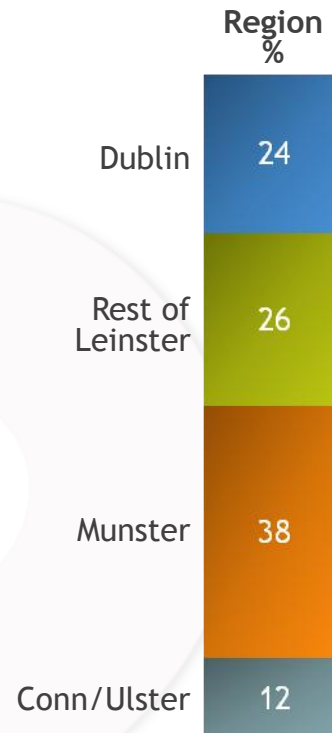
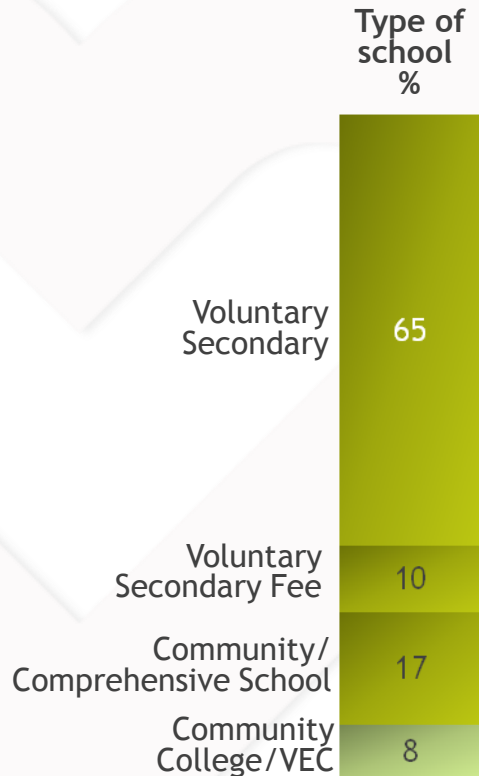
- This research has been conducted under a backdrop of austerity measures. Schools are in their fifth year of budget cuts; they are having to do a lot more with reduced resources. Schools have less finances, fewer teachers and eroded management structures -and all the while, student numbers continue to rise and their needs become greater.
- In conjunction to this, the pace of educational change continues to accelerate. Project Maths commenced in all schools in September 2010, the National Literacy & Numeracy Strategy was introduced in September 2012 along with removal of the ex-quota provision for guidance posts. Schools also have to contend with the introduction of additional evaluation measures including incidental inspection and school self-evaluation. In recent weeks, guidelines on bullying and guidelines on supporting mental health have been issued to schools for implementation. Coinciding with this schools are preparing for a significantly revised Junior Cycle curriculum in September 2014. It must also be noted that in the near future significant responsibility for professional self-regulation and initial teacher education and induction /probation of new teachers will be devolved to schools.

- This presentation reviews the findings of a survey of second level school principals carried out on behalf of the Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI) by Millward Brown in January/February 2013.
- This follows the first survey that was conducted in February/March 2012. Comparisons are made where applicable.
- The key objectives of this study are:
 - To assess the impact of the cutbacks implemented since 2009
 - To understand the impact on Junior Cycle and the Leaving Certificate programmes
 - To gain an understanding of the impact of the moratorium on appointments to promotional posts
 - To assess how the change in Guidance Counselling allocation has impacted on schools

- A questionnaire was developed between Millward Brown and the ASTI.
- The ASTI sent a letter of introduction to the survey to all secondary schools, explaining the rationale to the survey and encouraging school principals to participate. Subsequently, an email containing a link to the questionnaire was sent by Millward Brown to 524 schools around the country.
- Fieldwork took place from January 23rd until 11th February 2013. A total of 145 completed surveys were submitted, representing a response rate of 28%. (In our Millward Brown experience, we would view this to be an excellent response rate, as we typically see response rates for email only surveys in the region of 10-20%.)
- In 2012, a similar study was conducted with school principals, using a postal self-completion methodology. 151 surveys were completed, yielding a response rate of 25%. Where relevant, comparisons are made versus the 2012 study in this report.

Profile of Participating Schools

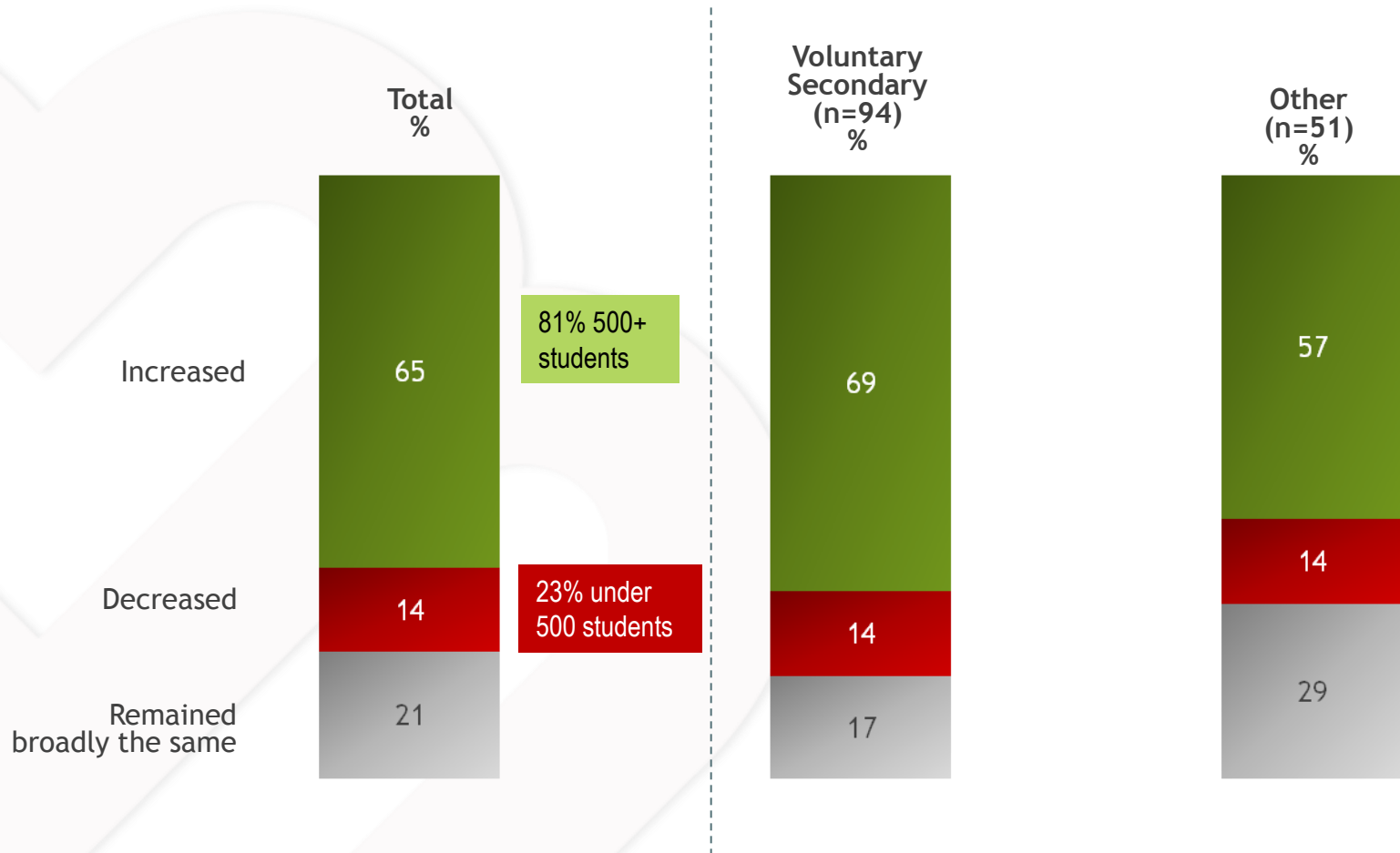
(Base: Total sample n=145)



Q1. How would you describe your school?
 Q2. Please select what province your school is located in:
 Q3. Please indicate student numbers in your school for the school year 2012/13

Student Intake - Over 6 in 10 schools experienced an increase in student numbers since 08/09. One fifth say numbers have remained steady

(Base: Total sample n=145)



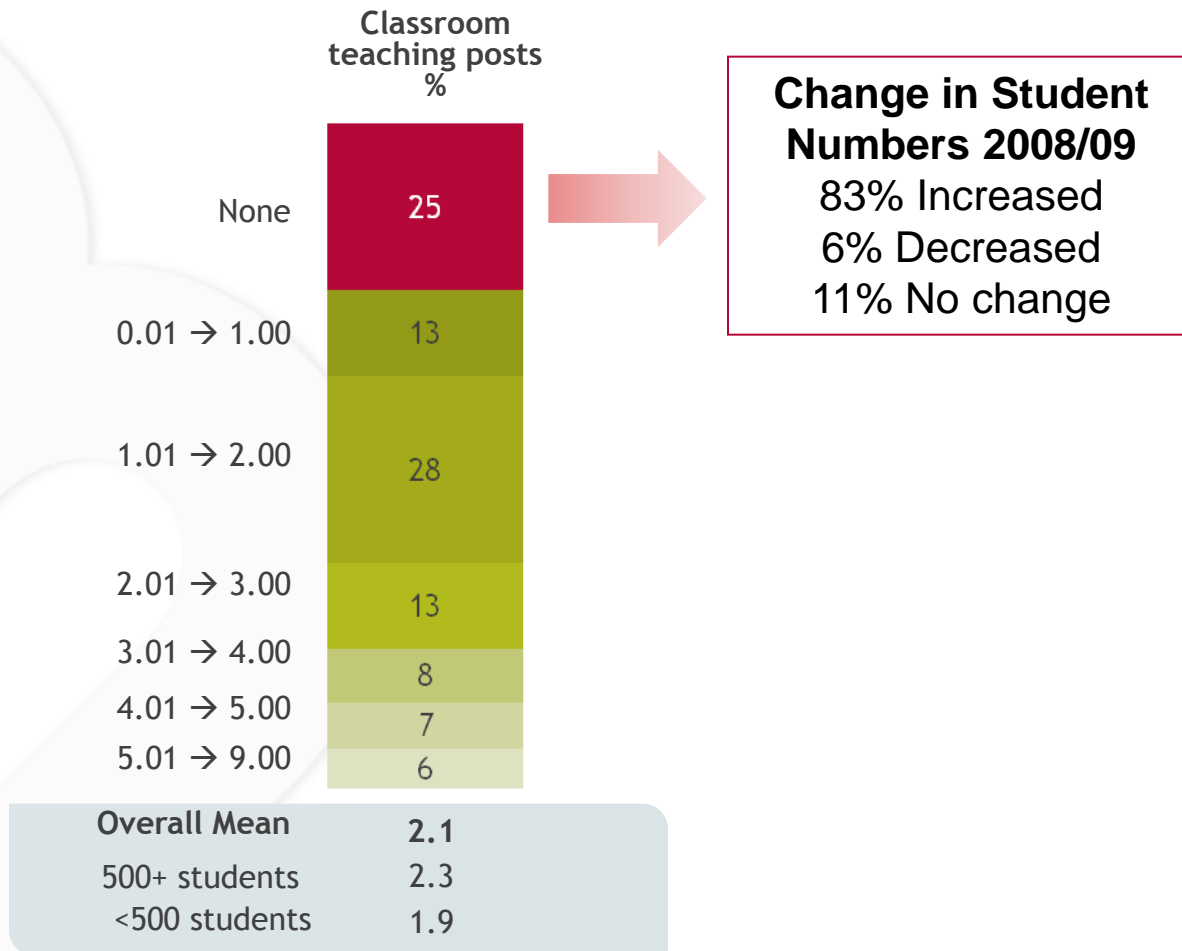
Other: Community/ Comprehensive School n=25
 Voluntary Secondary Fee n=14
 Community College/VEC n=12



Impact of Cuts: Posts Lost

Teaching Posts Lost since 2009 - 98% of schools lost teachers (i.e. classroom teachers and/or specialist posts)

(Base: Total sample)



Q5a Firstly, please indicate for each category of teaching or support post listed below the total number of posts lost in your school since the school year 2008/2009 due to budget cuts. If none were lost, insert 00 in the relevant box. Please note that the increase in pupil-teacher ratio took effect in September 2009.

Specialist Posts Lost since 2009: Learning Support/Resource teachers impacted most

SPECIALIST POSTS

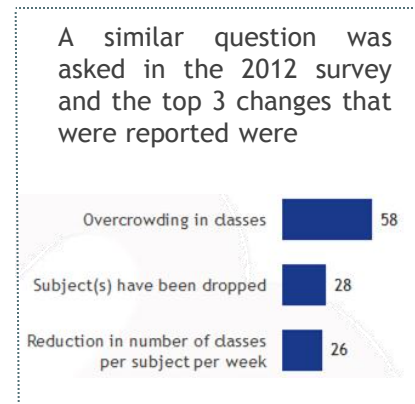
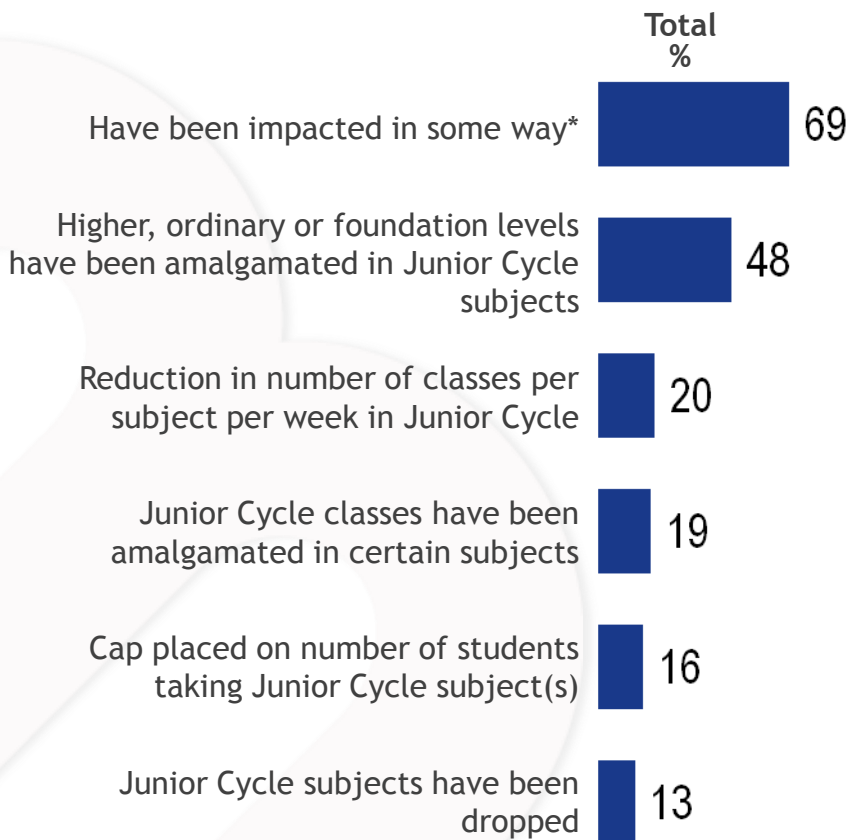
	Learning support/ resources teachers posts %	Traveller resource teacher posts %	Language support teacher posts %	Home school community liaison posts %
None	60	77	63	86
0.01 → 1.00	30	20	31	14
1.01 → 2.00	10	3	6	0
2.01 → 3.00	1	-	1	0
Overall Mean	.41	.17	.33	.14
500+ students	.34	.16	.18	.15
<500 students	.50	.18	.50	.13



Impact of Cuts: Junior Cycle

Impact of Cuts on Junior Cycle curriculum - biggest impact is the amalgamation of Junior Cert subject levels

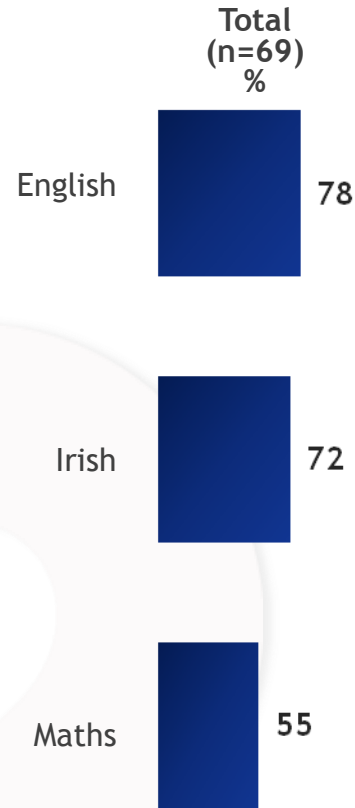
(Base: Total sample n=145)



**This represents the proportion of schools who have implemented at least one of the changes listed here.*

Junior Cycle Core Subjects Amalgamated: High level of amalgamated levels (higher, ordinary, foundation)

(Base: subjects have been Amalgamated n=69)



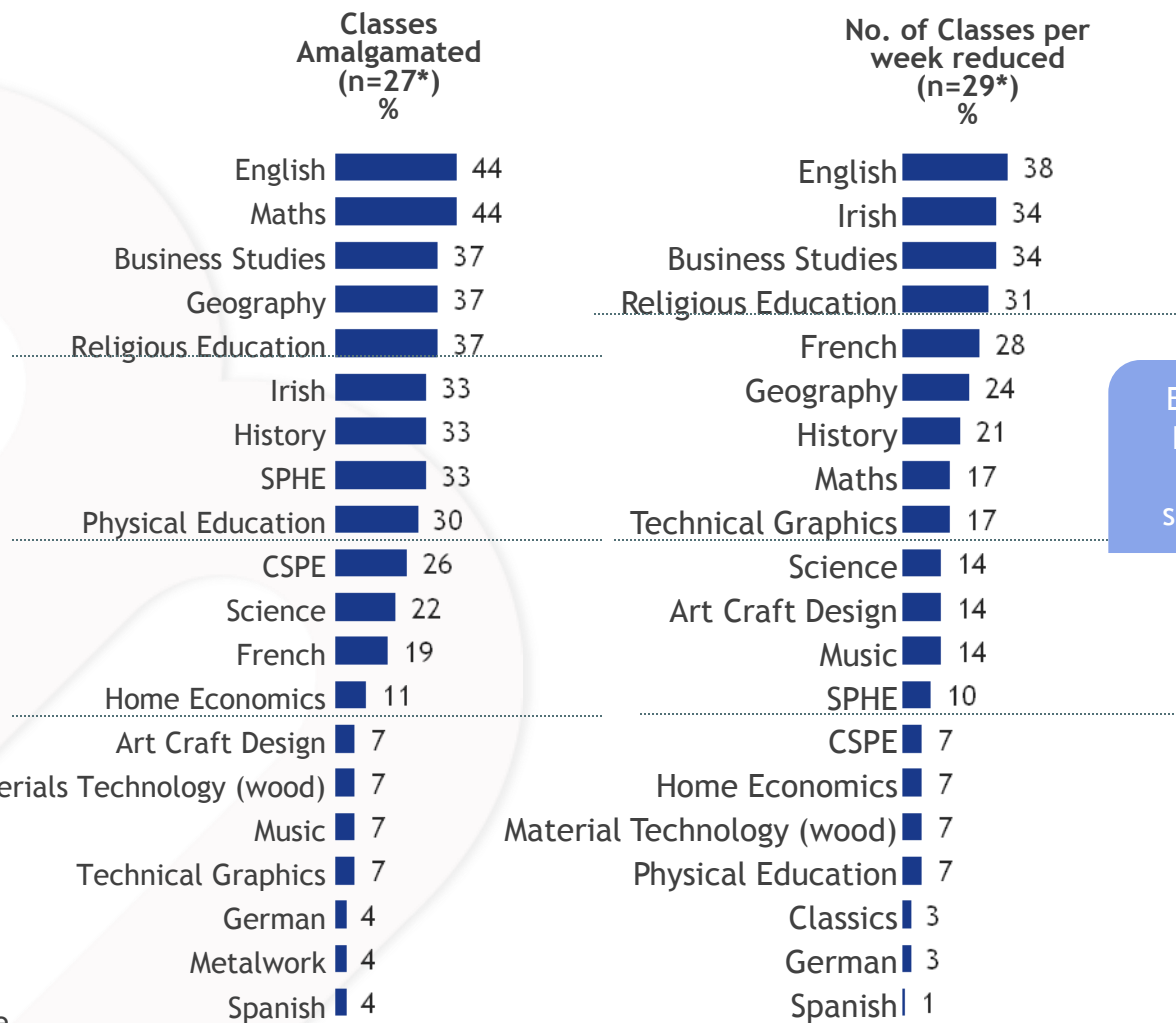
78% of schools said they have amalgamated higher, ordinary and foundation level English classes

*Caution Small Base Size

Q. In which subjects listed below have higher, ordinary or foundation levels been amalgamated

Junior Cycle classes amalgamated/reduced in number: Core subjects English, Irish, Maths most likely to be affected

(Base: All affected by each)



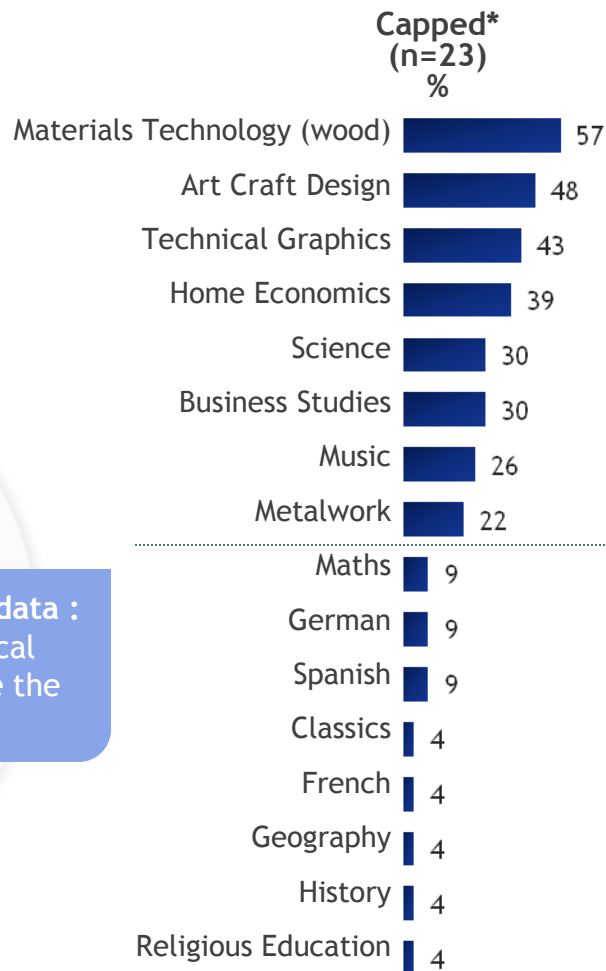
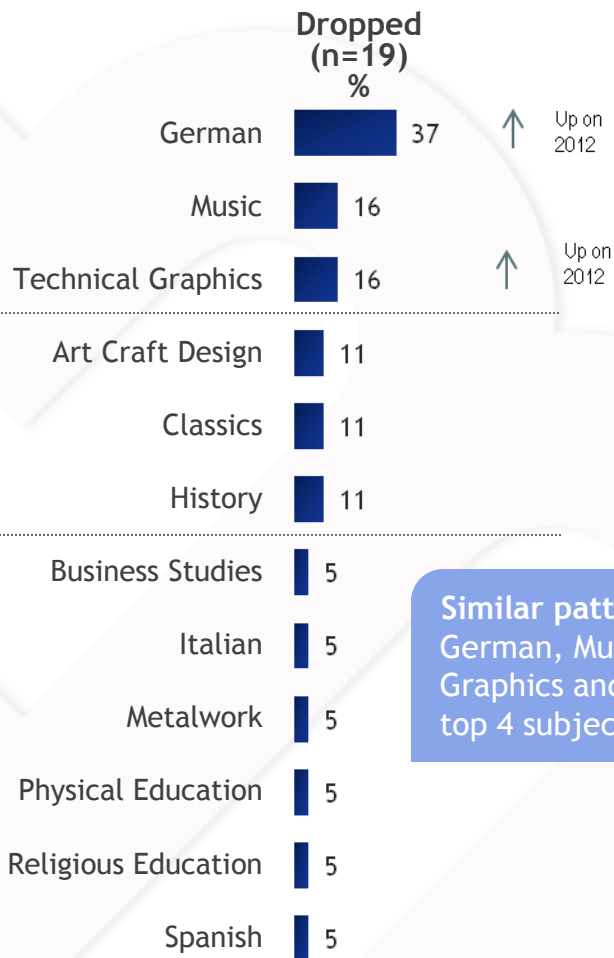
English, Maths and Business Studies were the top 3 subjects affected

English, Irish and Business Studies were the top 3 subjects affected

*Caution Small Base Size

Junior Cycle Subjects dropped/capped - German was most likely to be dropped as was the case in 2012. Subjects requiring physical materials were most likely to be the focus of capping

(Base: All affected by each)



Similar patterns to 2012 data : German, Music and Technical Graphics and Classics were the top 4 subjects affected

Key foreign languages and technology subjects being dropped at junior cycle

*No comparable data for capped 2012

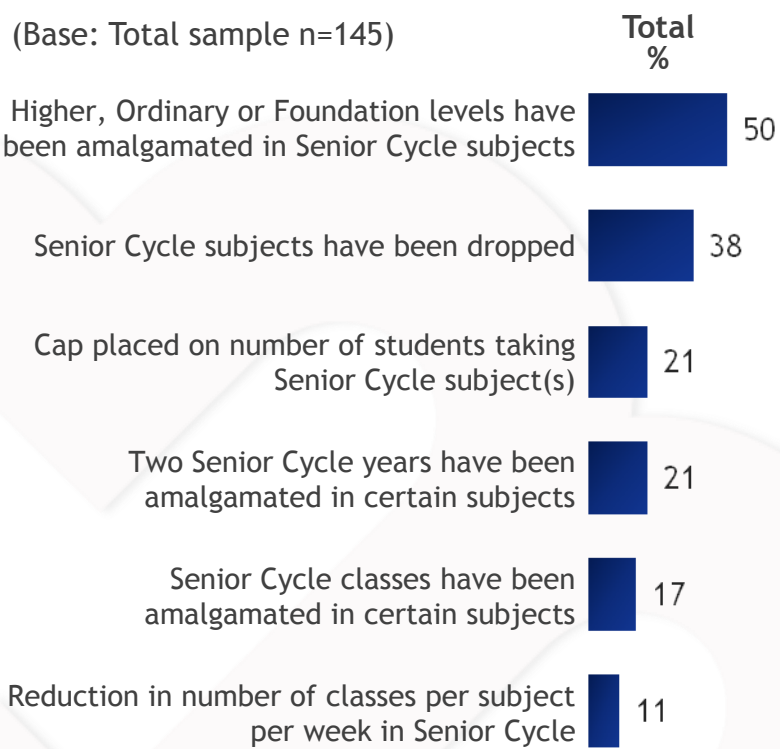
- Q. Which of the subjects listed below have been dropped?
- Q. Which of the subjects listed below have had a cap applied to the number of students eligible to take the subject?



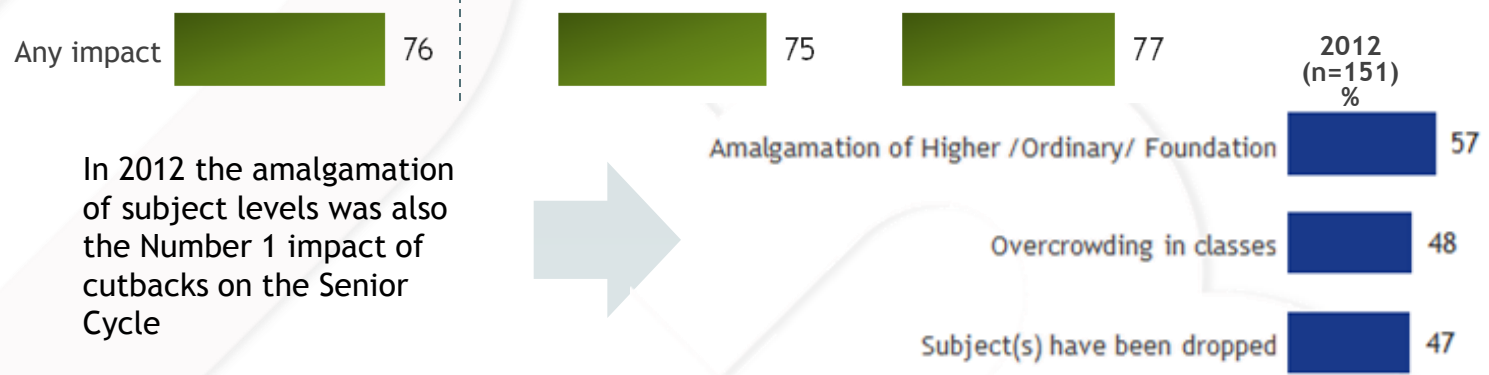
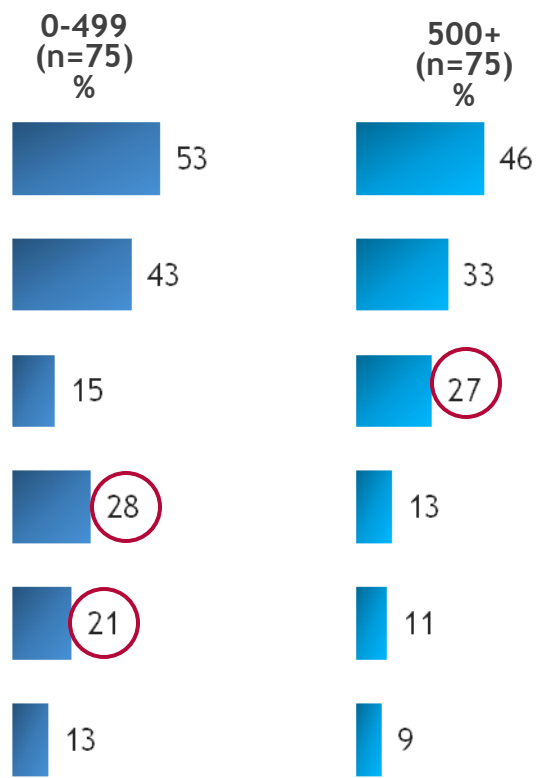
Impact of Cuts: Senior Cycle

Senior Cycle: Almost half of schools have amalgamated levels whilst 4 in 10 have dropped at least one subject. There is a consistent pattern of consolidating resources.

(Base: Total sample n=145)



SIZE OF SCHOOL

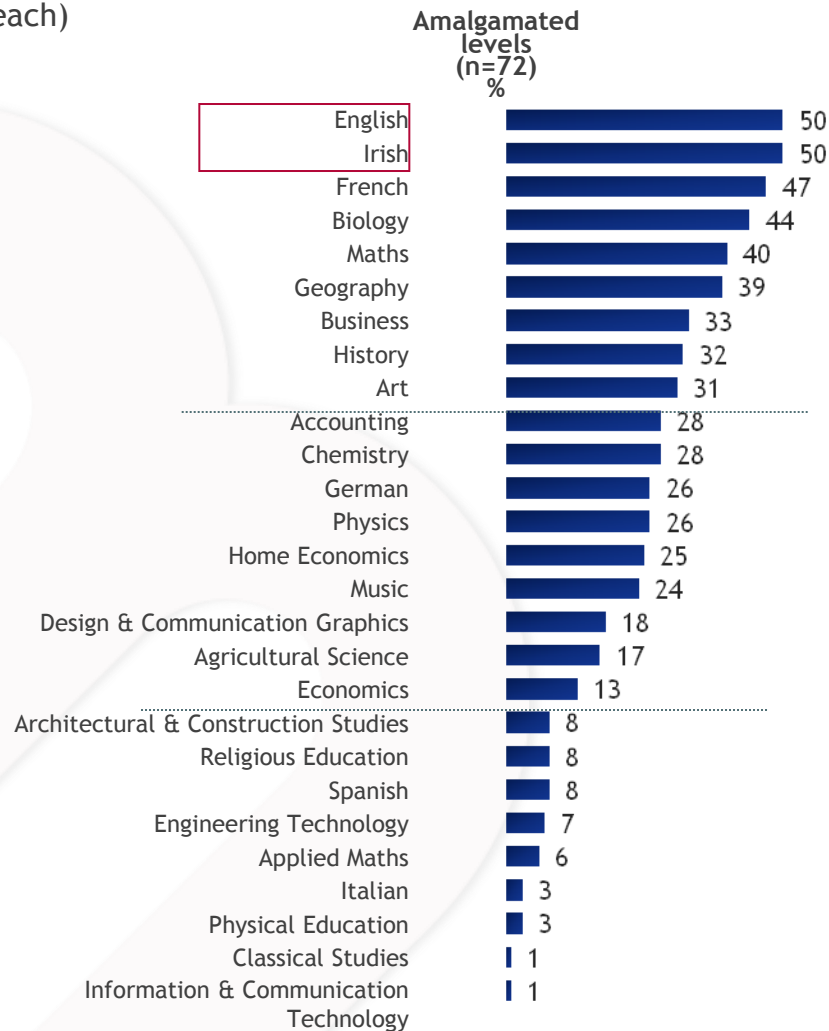


In 2012 the amalgamation of subject levels was also the Number 1 impact of cutbacks on the Senior Cycle

Q. 7a We would like to understand to what extent the Senior Cycle curriculum in your school has been impacted by the cutbacks. Please indicate which, if any, of the following changes have been implemented in your school since the school year 2008/2009 due to the cutbacks. Please select all that apply.

Senior Cycle - Levels for English and Irish were most likely to be amalgamated, followed by French and Biology

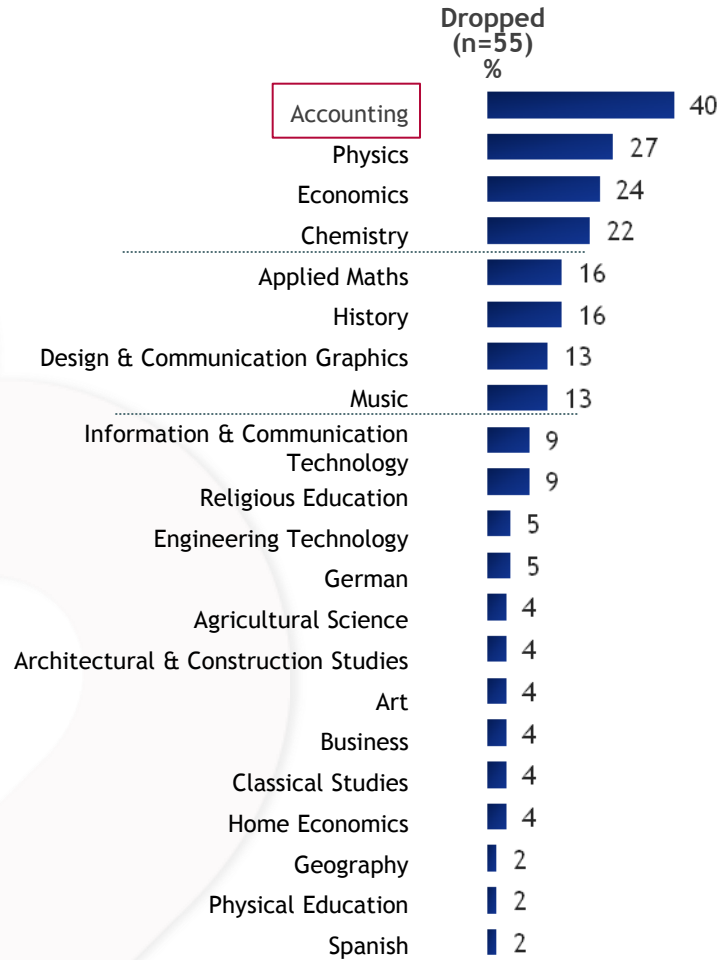
(Base: All affected by each)



Q. In which subjects listed below have higher, ordinary or foundation levels been amalgamated?

Senior Cycle - Accounting was most frequently dropped, followed by science subjects

(Base: All affected by each)

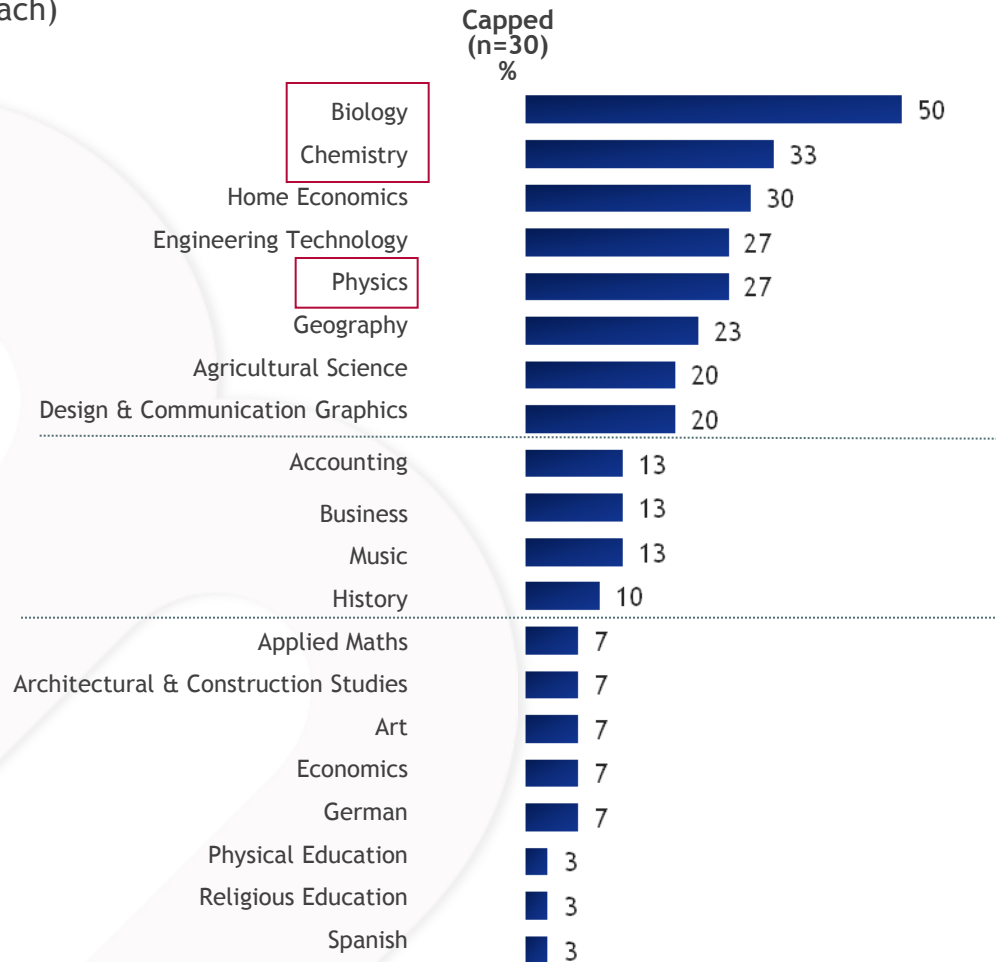


Accounting, Economics and Physics were top 3 subjects reported to have been dropped in the 2012 research

Q. Which of the subjects listed below have been dropped?

Senior Cycle - Science subjects were the focus of capping.

(Base: All affected by each)

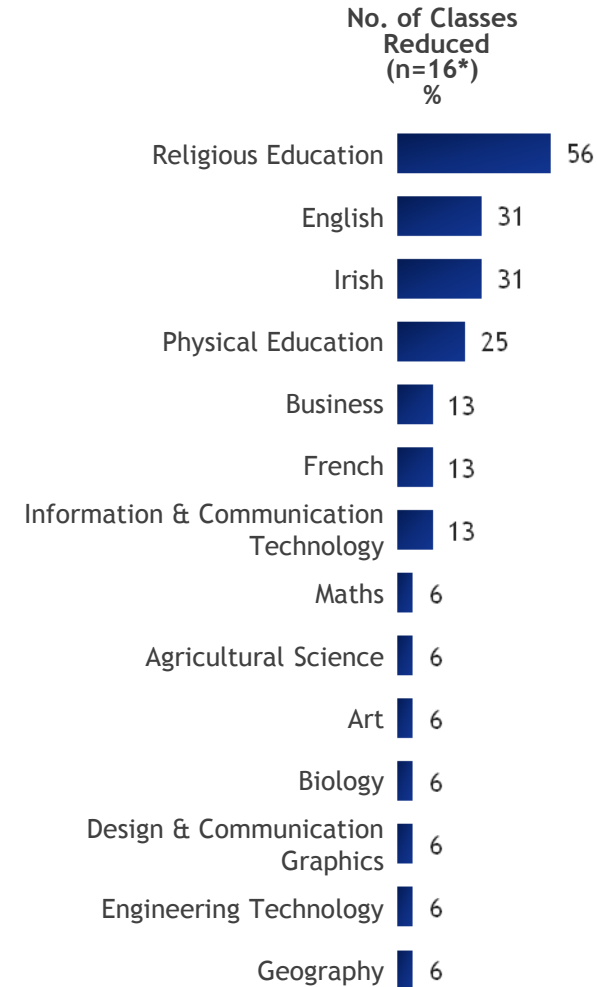
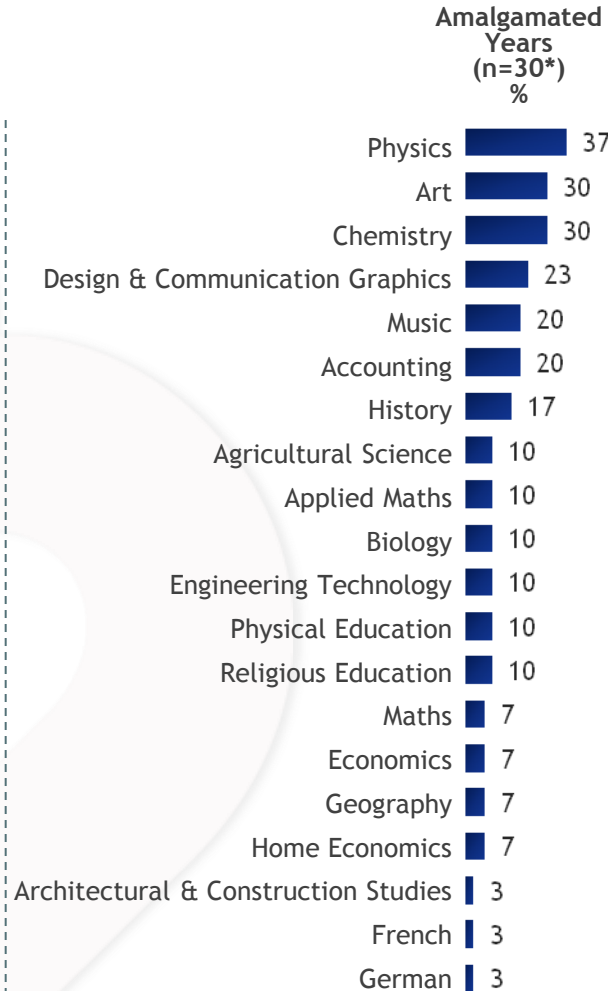
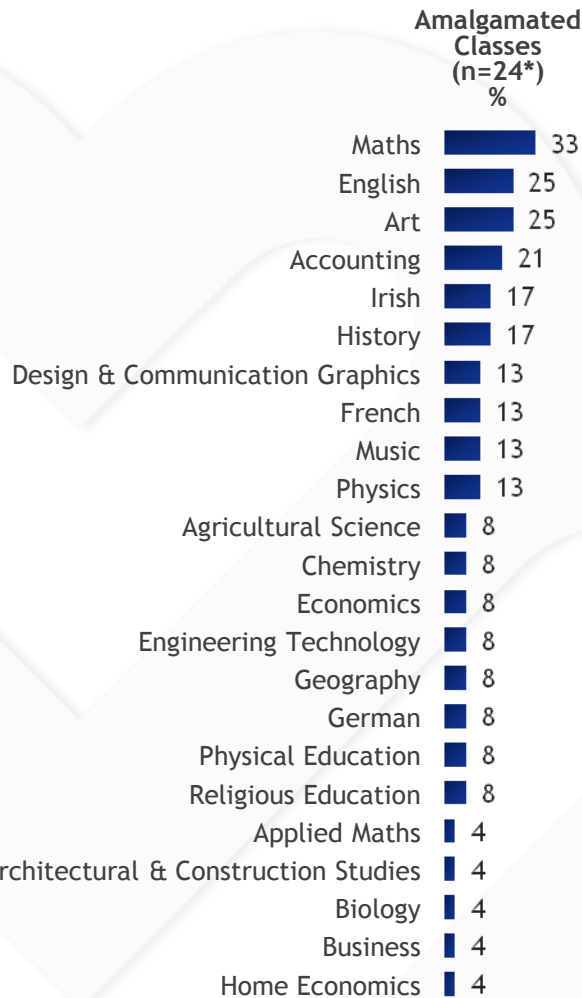


Subjects involving significant practical / hands-on work have been the focus of capping

Q. Which of the subjects listed below have had a cap applied to the number of students eligible to take the subject?

Senior Cycle- Amalgamation of classes and years occurred on a small scale.

(Base: All affected by each)



*Caution Small Base Size

- Q. In which subjects listed below have Senior Cycle classes been amalgamated?
- Q. In which subjects listed below have Senior Cycle years been amalgamated?
- Q. In which subjects have the number of classes per subject per week been reduced?

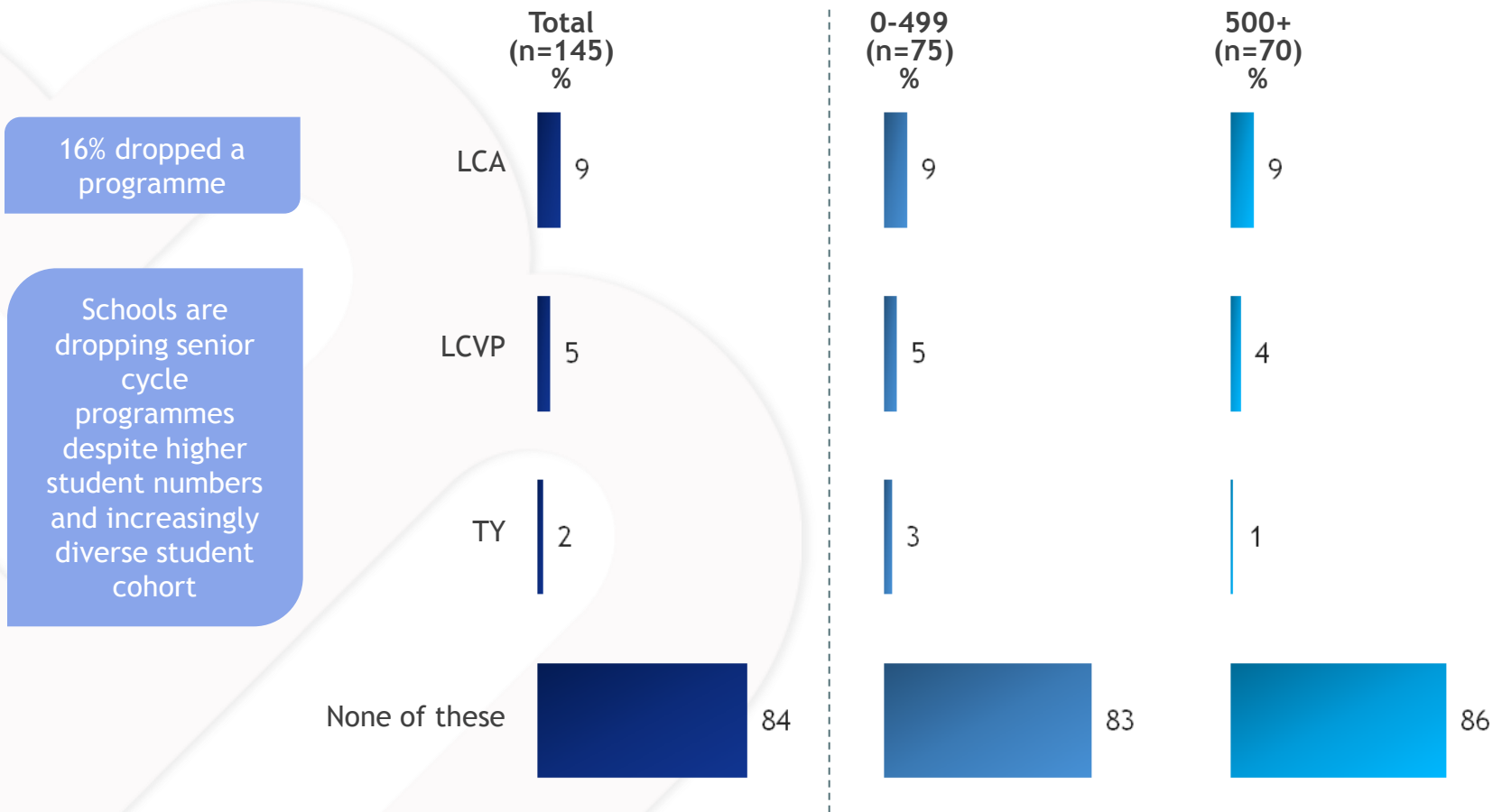


Impact of Cuts: Programmes

Senior Cycle programmes dropped - 16% dropped a Senior Cycle programme

(Base: Total Sample n=145)

SIZE OF SCHOOL



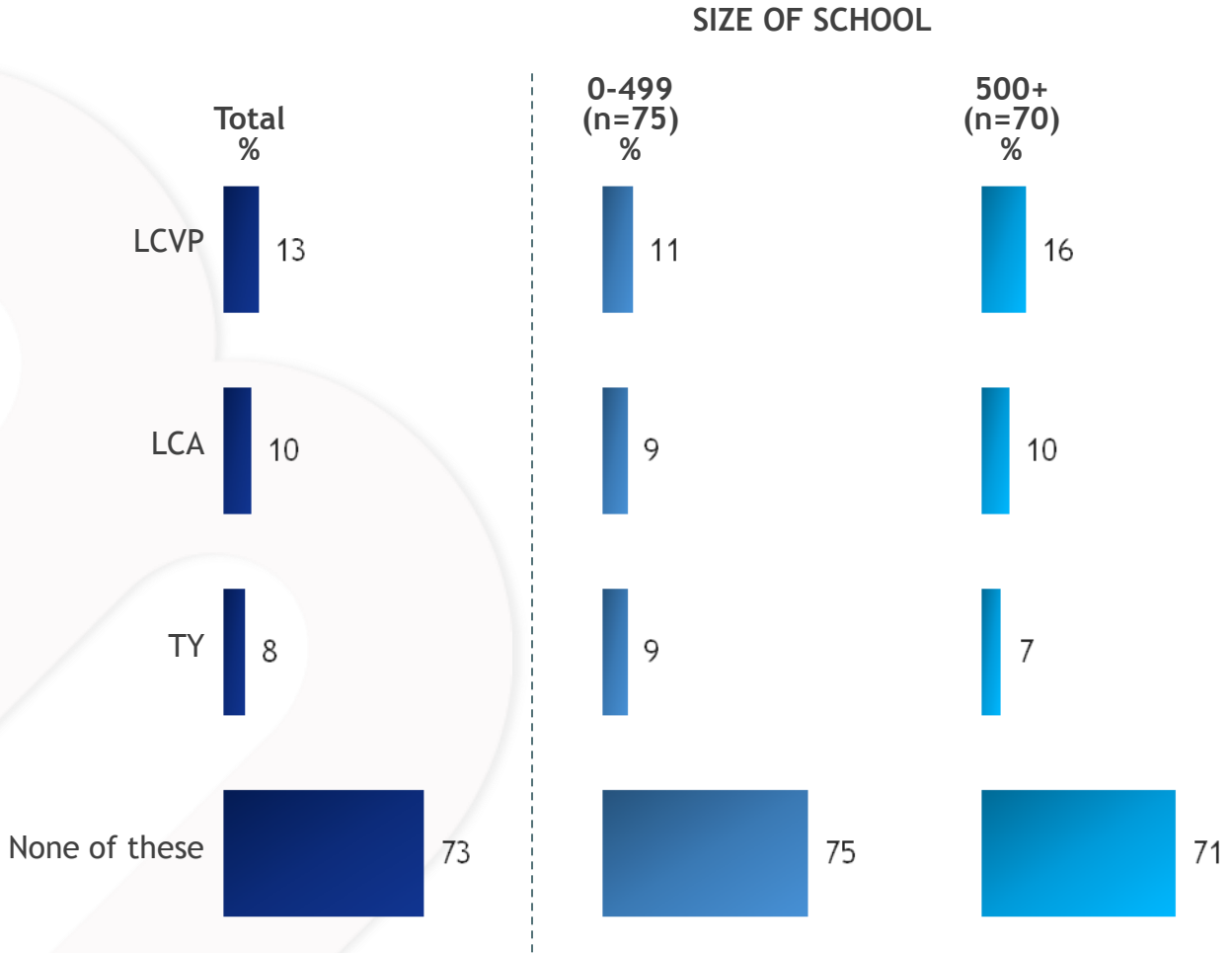
16% dropped a programme

Schools are dropping senior cycle programmes despite higher student numbers and increasingly diverse student cohort

Results are in line with 2012 data whereby 9% of schools reported dropping their LCA programme, 5% the LCVP and 1% TY

Reduced Numbers - More than a quarter of schools reduced student numbers in one of the 3 programmes.

(Base: Total Sample n= 145)

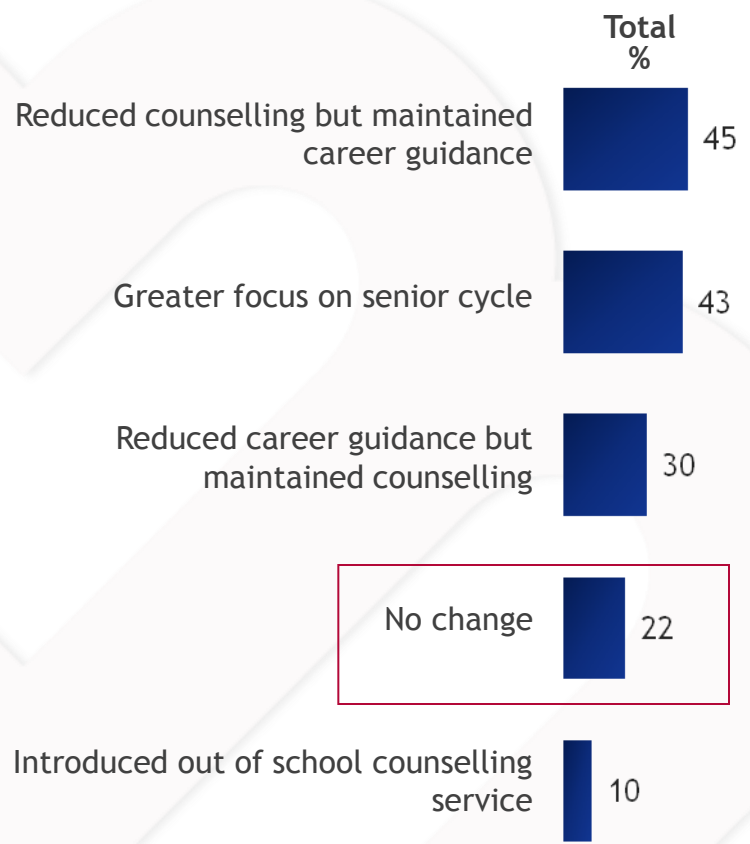




Impact of Cuts: Guidance Services

Career Guidance Counselling Posts – career guidance and counselling services both came under pressure. 45% of schools reduced counselling services, 30% reduced career guidance services.

(Base: Total Sample n=145)



In September 2012 all schools lost their ex-quota Guidance Counsellor provision.

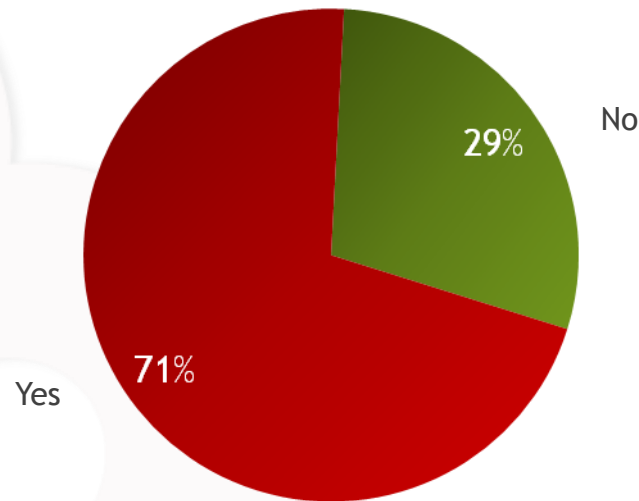
In effect this was the equivalent of a 1 point increase in the pupil-teacher ratio.

All schools reduced staffing as a result.

Q. 9 September 2012 saw the removal of the ex-quota provision for guidance posts. We would like to know if this resulted in changes to your school's guidance services (career guidance & counselling service). Please select all that apply.

Reduced one-to-one counselling - 70% of schools affected. This may have far-reaching consequences for student welfare.

(Base: Total Sample n=145)



One-to-one counselling is vital, but resource intensive

No difference between size of school



Impact of Cuts: Whole school services/supports

Posts lost due to Moratorium (March 2009) - 95% of schools lost posts of responsibility (in-school middle management posts) - 77% have lost special duty posts while 89% indicated having lost Assistant Principal posts.

(Base: Total sample 2013
All who lost promotional posts 2012)

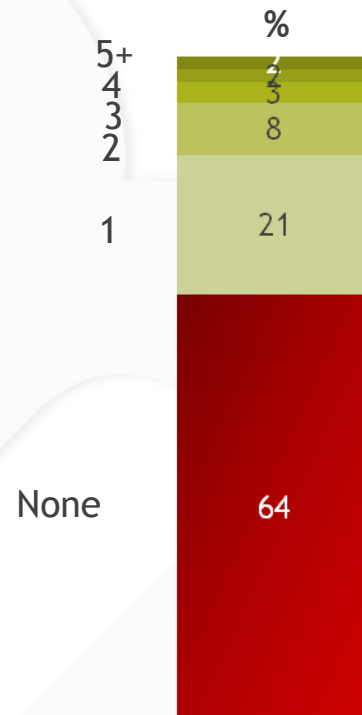


95% lost either a Special duties or Assistant Principal post.

Q5b Secondly, please indicate for each category below the total number of posts of responsibility lost in your school due to the moratorium. Enter 00 for none. Also please note that the Moratorium on posts of responsibility took effect in March 2009.

No. of Assistant Principal Posts Regained - Over 60% say they have not regained any Assistant Principal posts

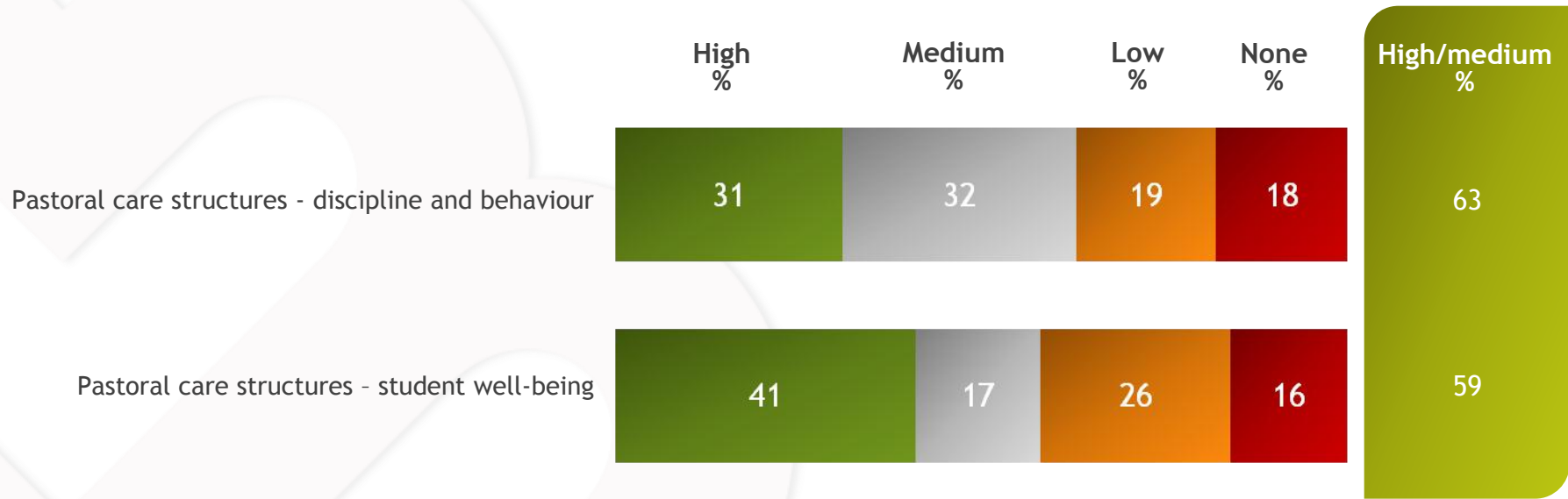
(Base: Total sample n=145)



In 2012, 70% of schools had not regained any promotional posts. In 2013 some schools benefited from the re-implementation of a moratorium. However, the majority of schools did not benefit

Impact of loss of posts of responsibility (in-school middle management posts) on whole school services / supports - Pastoral Care: has been largely impacted by cuts with 6 in 10 stating a high/medium adverse impact

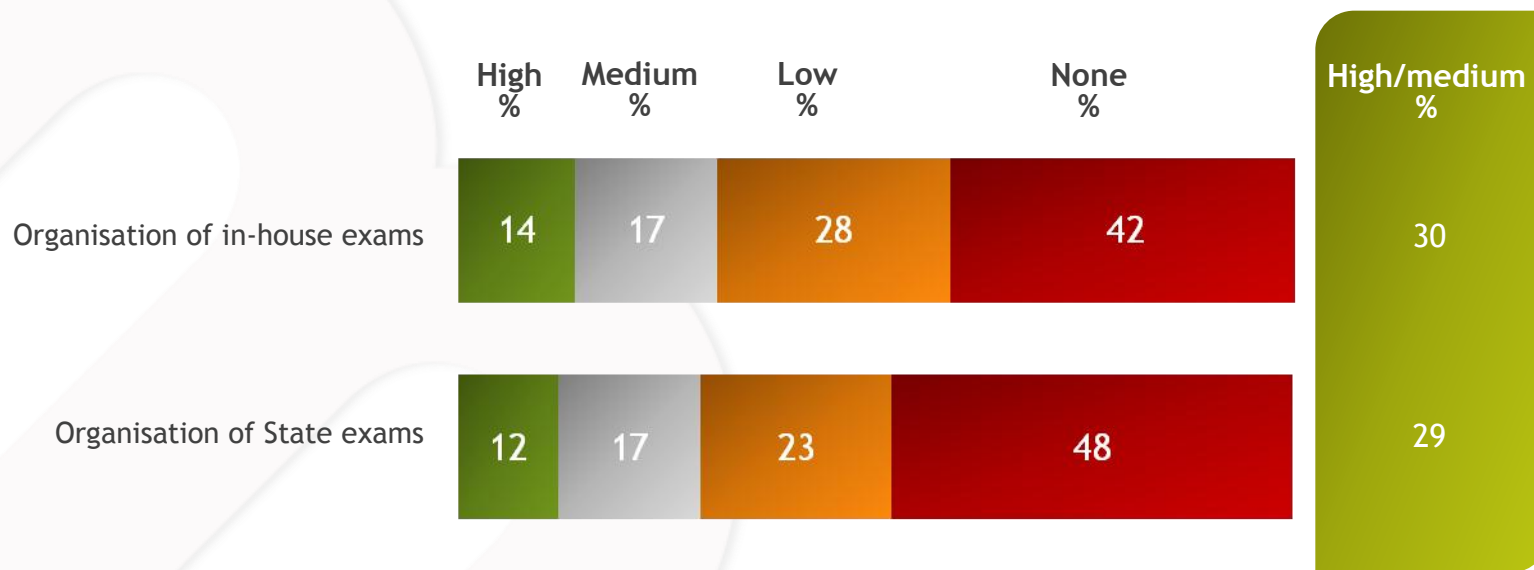
(Base: Total Sample n=145)



Impact of loss of posts of responsibility (in-school middle management posts) on whole school services/supports - Organisation of Exams: Just under half say the loss of posts has not had any impact on exam organisation.

(Base: Total Sample n=145)

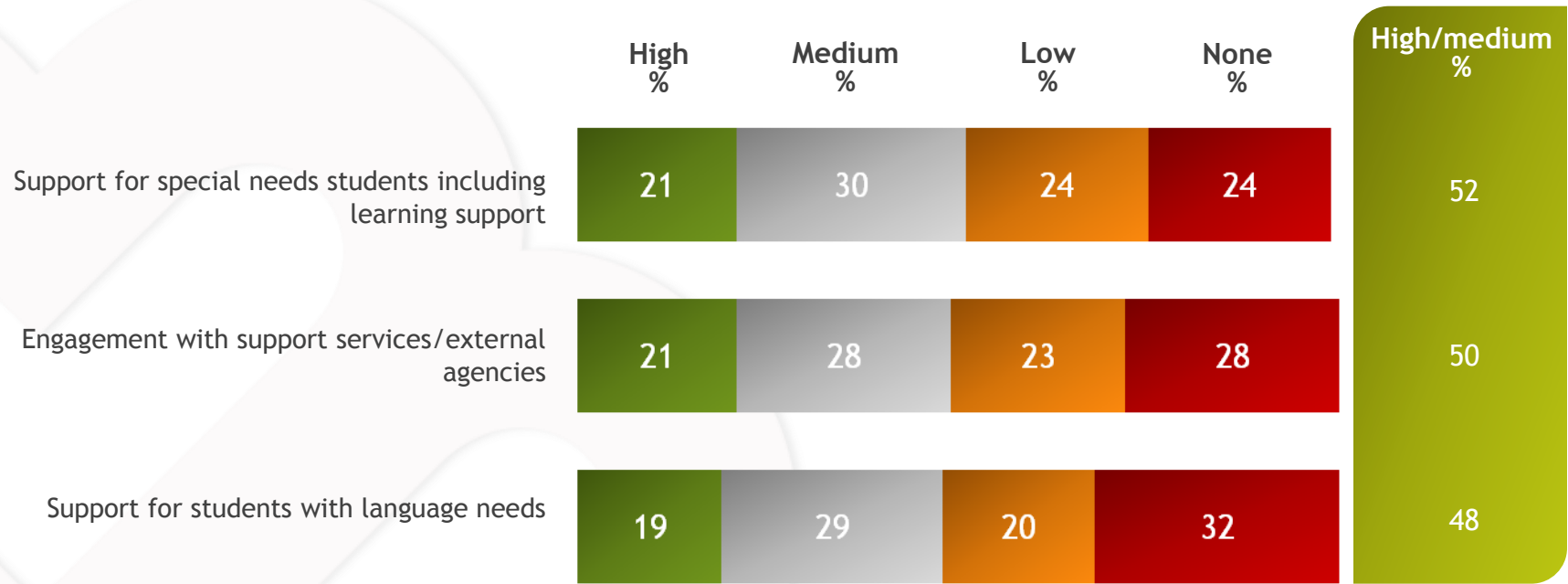
This perceived minimal impact may be due to the fact that exam related posts are still in place in many schools as they are considered essential.



Impact of loss of posts of responsibility on whole school services / supports

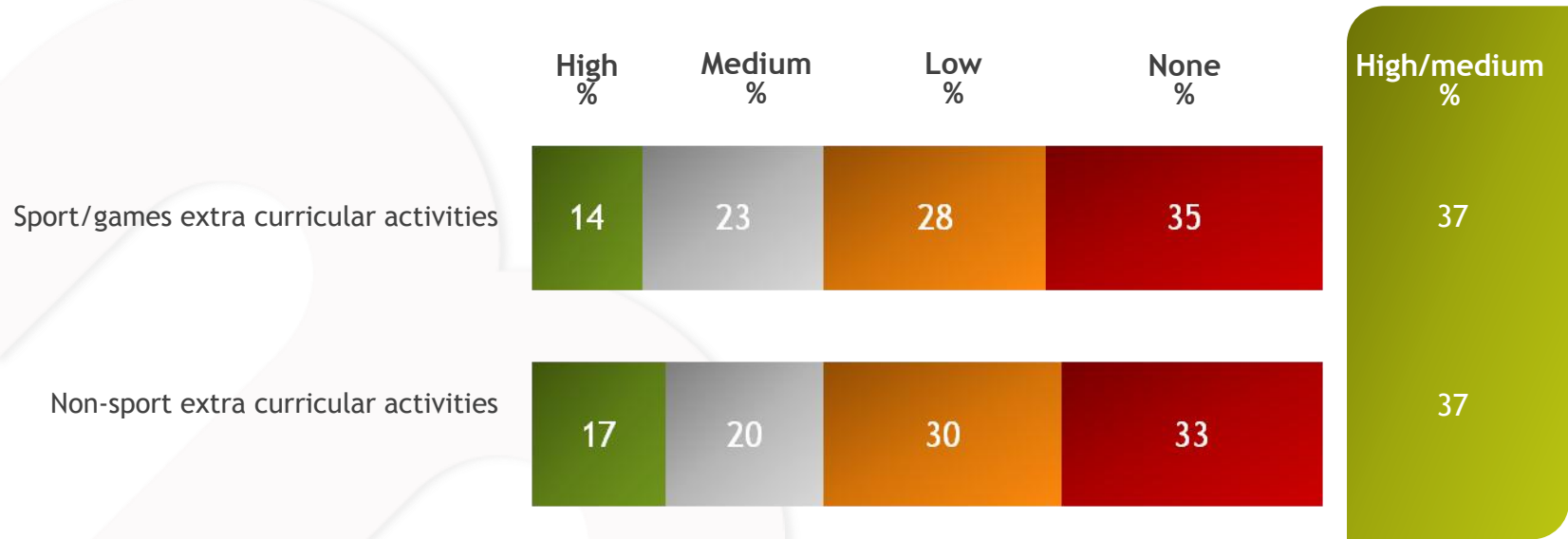
- About half of schools have seen a significant adverse impact on the out-of-class supports they can provide to their students

(Base: Total Sample n=145)



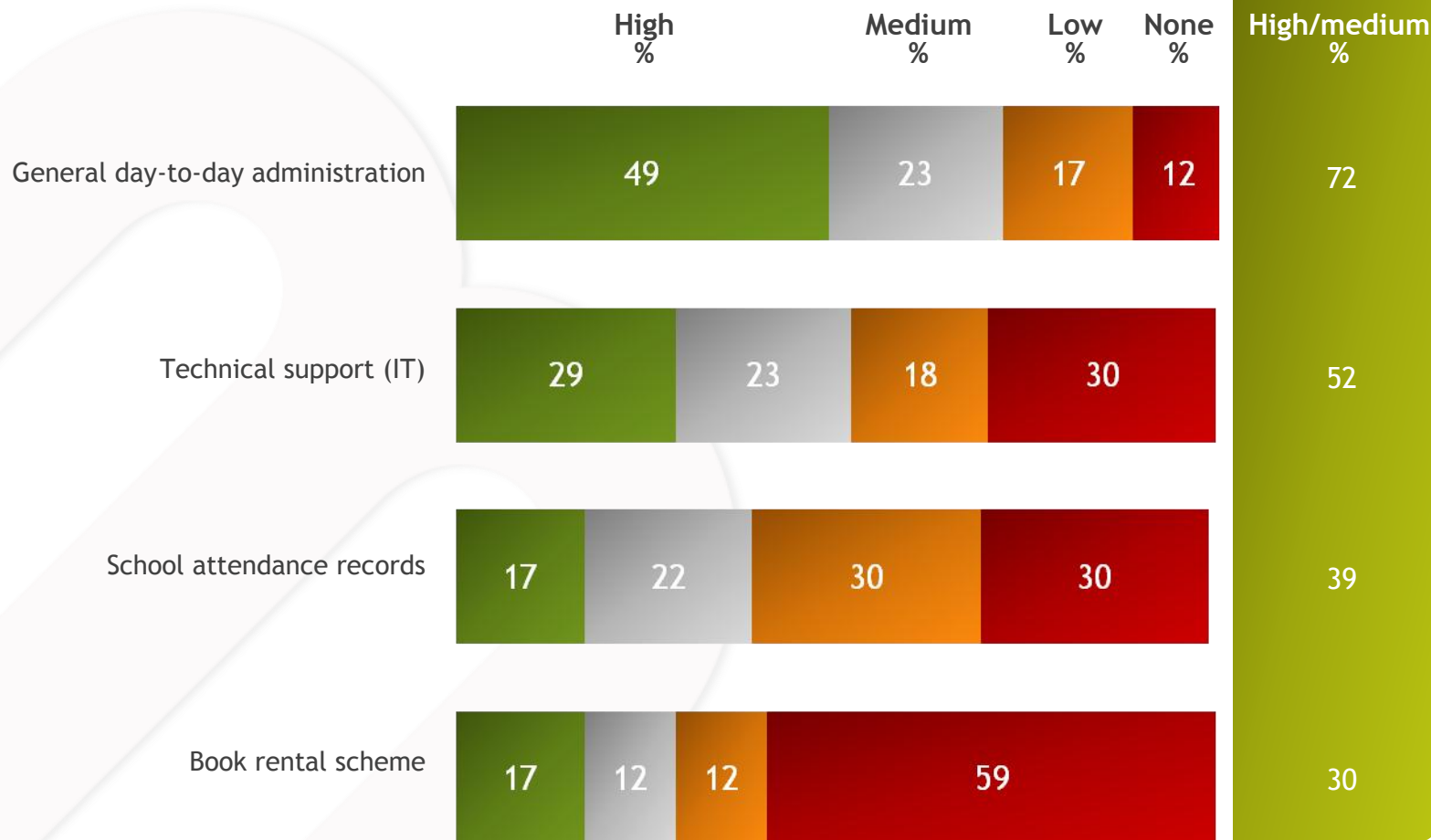
Impact of loss of posts of responsibility on whole school services/supports - Extra Curricular: Two thirds report some level of adverse impact on their extra curricular activities

(Base: Total Sample n=145)



Impact of loss of posts of responsibility on whole school services - School Administration Related: The day-to-day school administration has been hardest hit

(Base: Total Sample n=145)

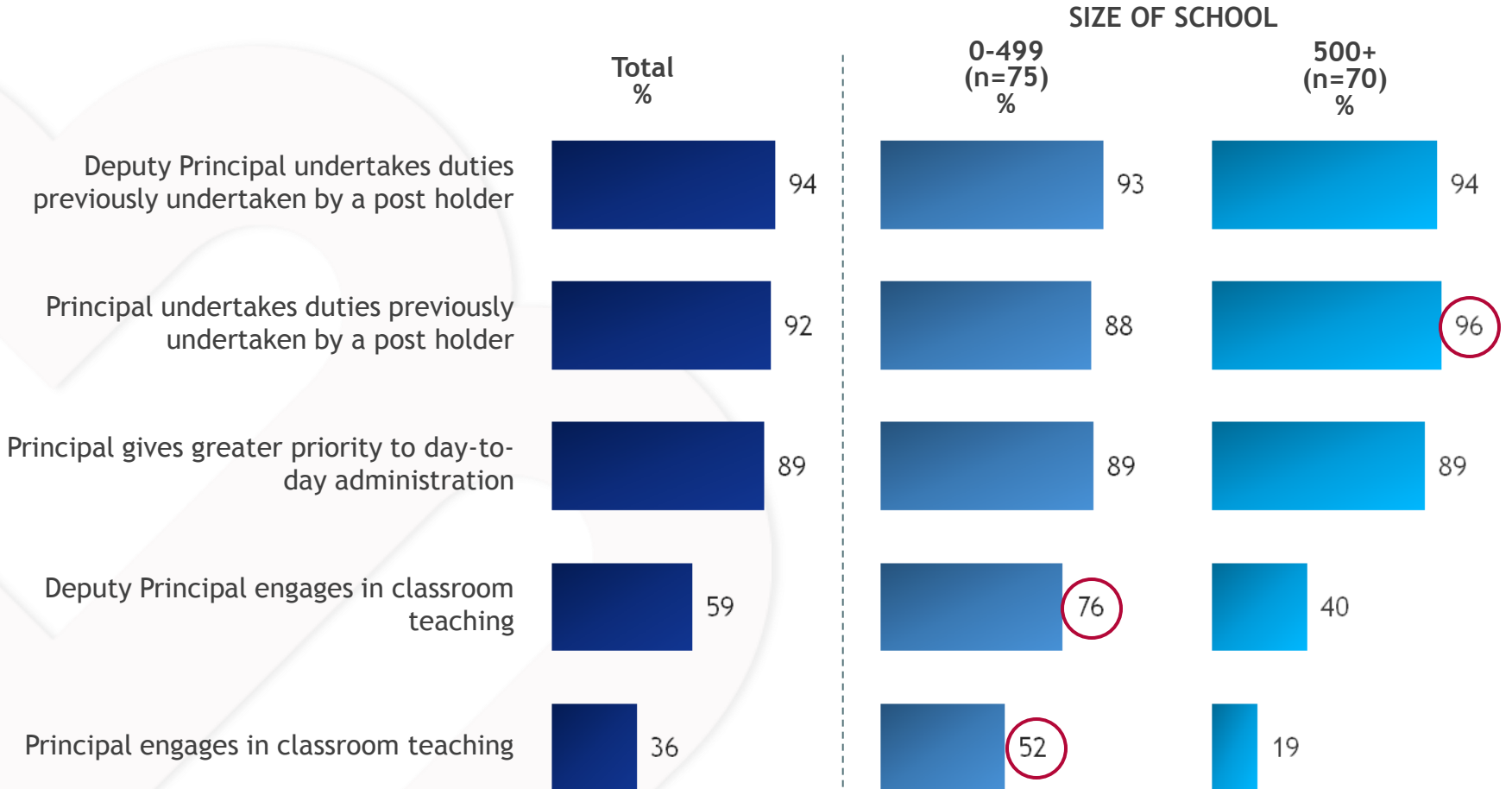




Impact of Cuts: Principals & Deputy Principals

Principals' and Deputy Principals' work: 9 in 10 Principals/Deputy Principals undertake additional duties to compensate for cutbacks

(Base: Total Sample n=145)



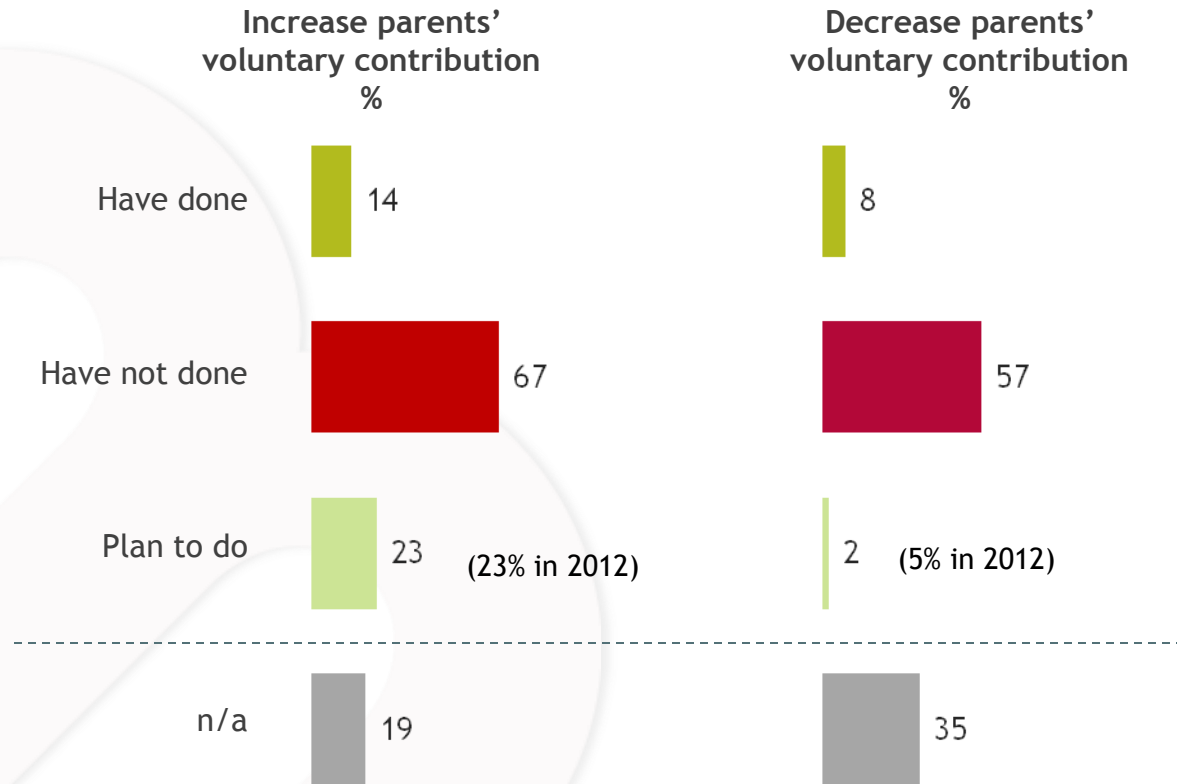
Principals and Deputy Principals compensate for cutbacks by engaging in classroom teaching particularly in smaller schools

Q. 12 We would like to ascertain how the education cutbacks have impacted on the way in which principals and deputy principals work. Please select any of the following as appropriate for your school. You can select as many answers as relevant:



Impact of Cuts: Reduction in Student Capitation Grant

Response to reduction in Capitation Grant : Parents' voluntary contributions have increased in 14% of schools. A further 23% intend to increase it in the coming year

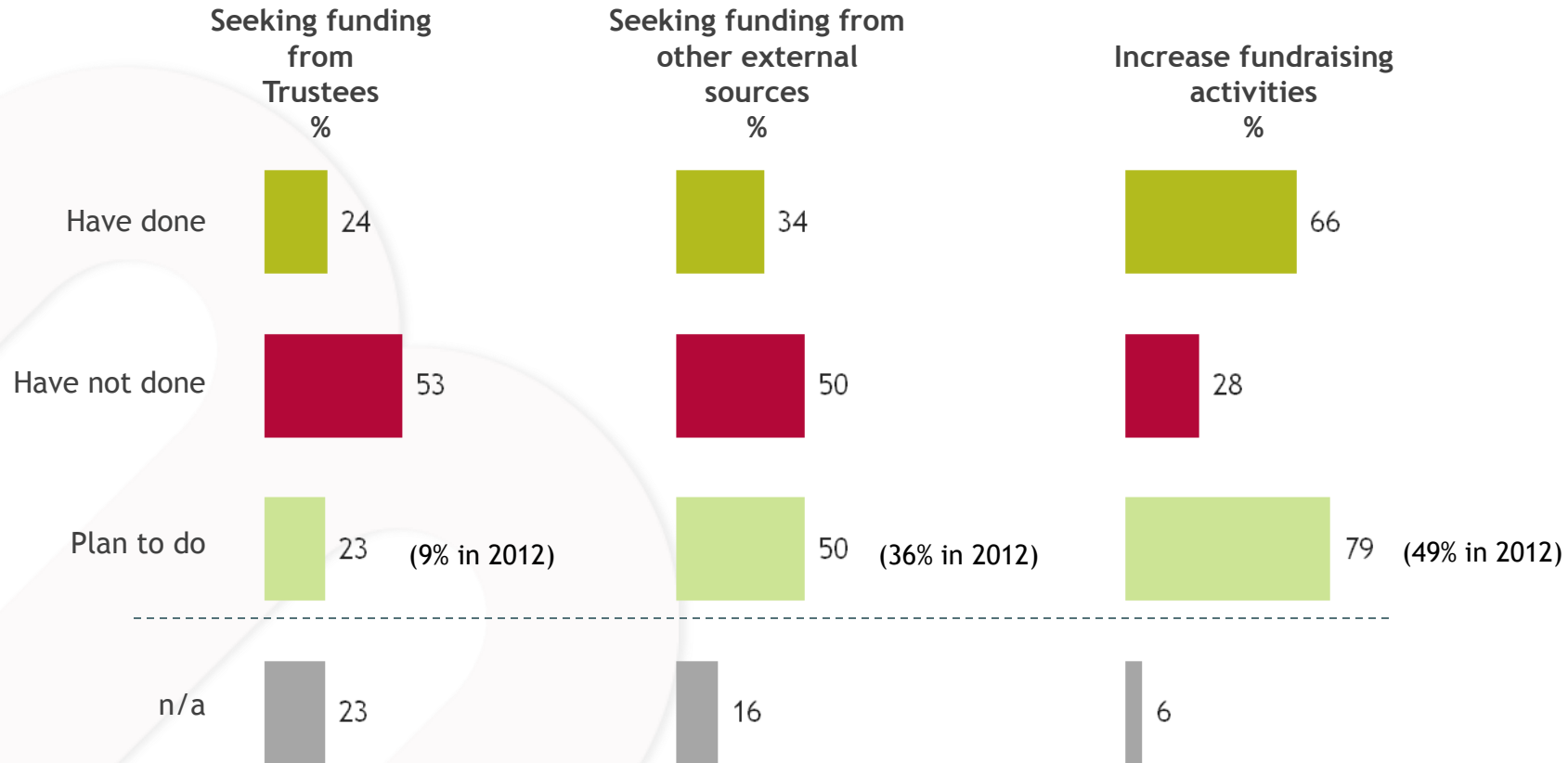


() = % indicating they were considering implementing the measure in 2012

Q.13 Since 2009, successive budgets have reduced the capitation grant. Budget 2013 imposed a 2% reduction in the capitation grant, meaning an average of €11 less per student in 2013. We would like to know (a) if you have already implemented any of the following measures in response to previous cuts, and (b) if you are considering implementing any of the following measures in response to the reduction in the student capitation grant. Please choose one response only for each measure:

2012 Question wording: For the coming school year, are you considering implementing any of the following measures in response to the reduction in the student capitation grant? Please tick all that apply

Response to reduction in Capitation Grant - Funding Sources: 8 in 10 plan to implement additional measures to increase school funding

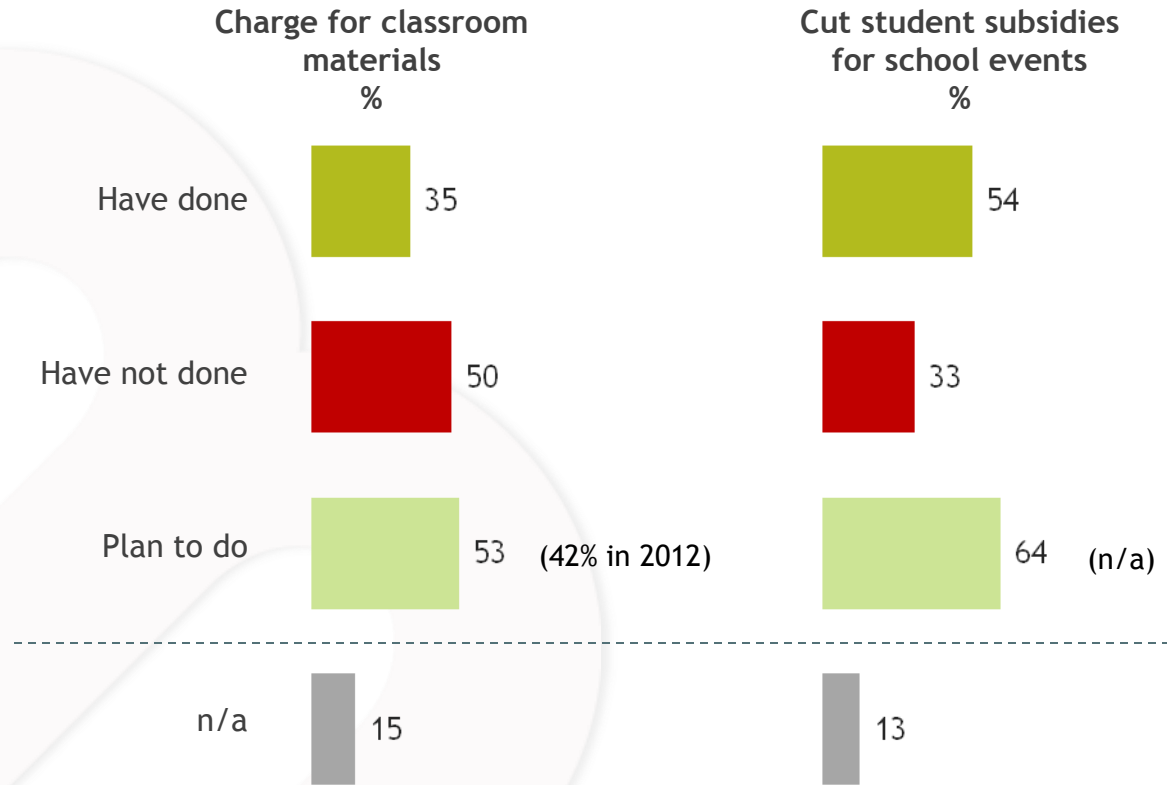


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Q.13 Since 2009, successive budgets have reduced the capitation grant. Budget 2013 imposed a 2% reduction in the capitation grant, meaning an average of €11 less per student in 2013. We would like to know (a) if you have already implemented any of the following measures in response to previous cuts, and (b) if you are considering implementing any of the following measures in response to the reduction in the student capitation grant. Please choose one response only for each measure:

2012 Question wording: For the coming school year, are you considering implementing any of the following measures in response to the reduction in the student capitation grant? Please tick all that apply

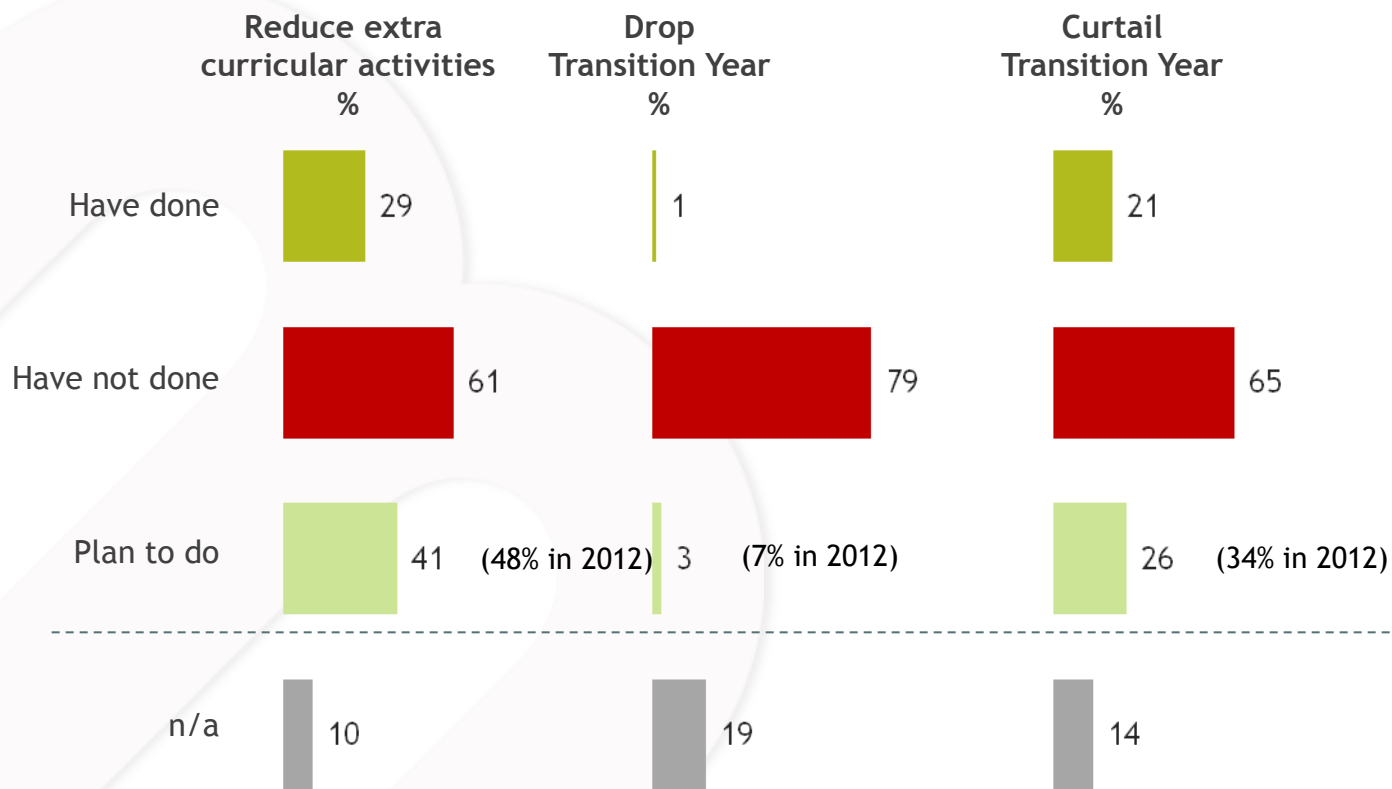
Response to reduction in Capitation Grant - Classroom Materials & Subsidies: Half of schools plan to charge for classroom materials in the future while one-third already do this; student subsidies have already been hit and will continue to be



()= % indicating they were considering implementing the measure in 2012

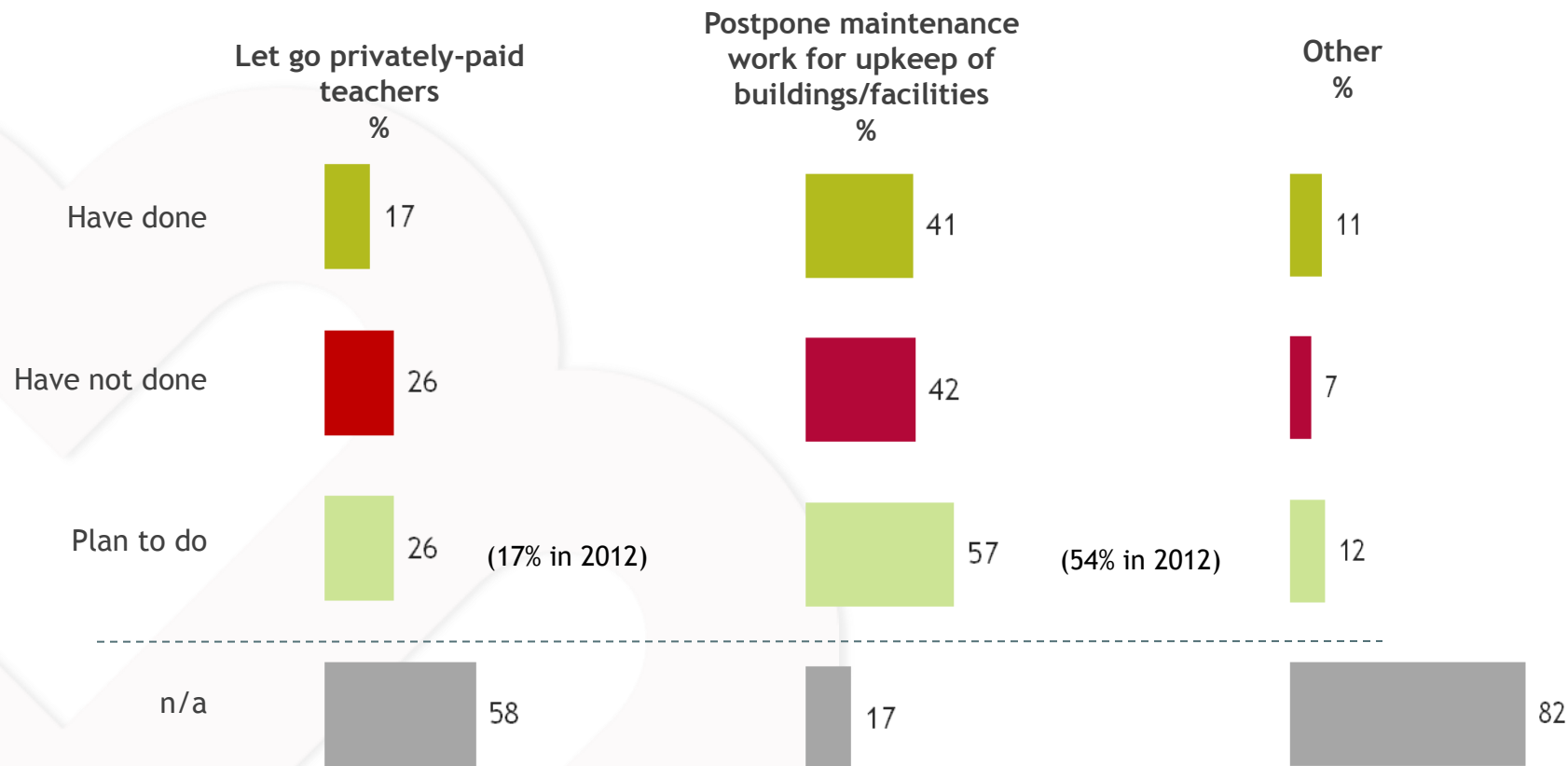
Q.13 Since 2009, successive budgets have reduced the capitation grant. Budget 2013 imposed a 2% reduction in the capitation grant, meaning an average of €11 less per student in 2013.

Response to reduction in Capitation Grant - 3 in 10 schools have reduced extra-curricular activities while a further 4 in 10 intend to do so.



()= % indicating they were considering implementing the measure in 2012

Response to reduction in Capitation Grant - school maintenance : 4 in 10 schools have postponed maintenance on their building and this remains on the agenda for a significant proportion of schools for the future.



The ASTI is very concerned that 26% of schools intend to let go privately paid teachers due to reduced funding.

()= % indicating they were considering implementing the measure in 2012

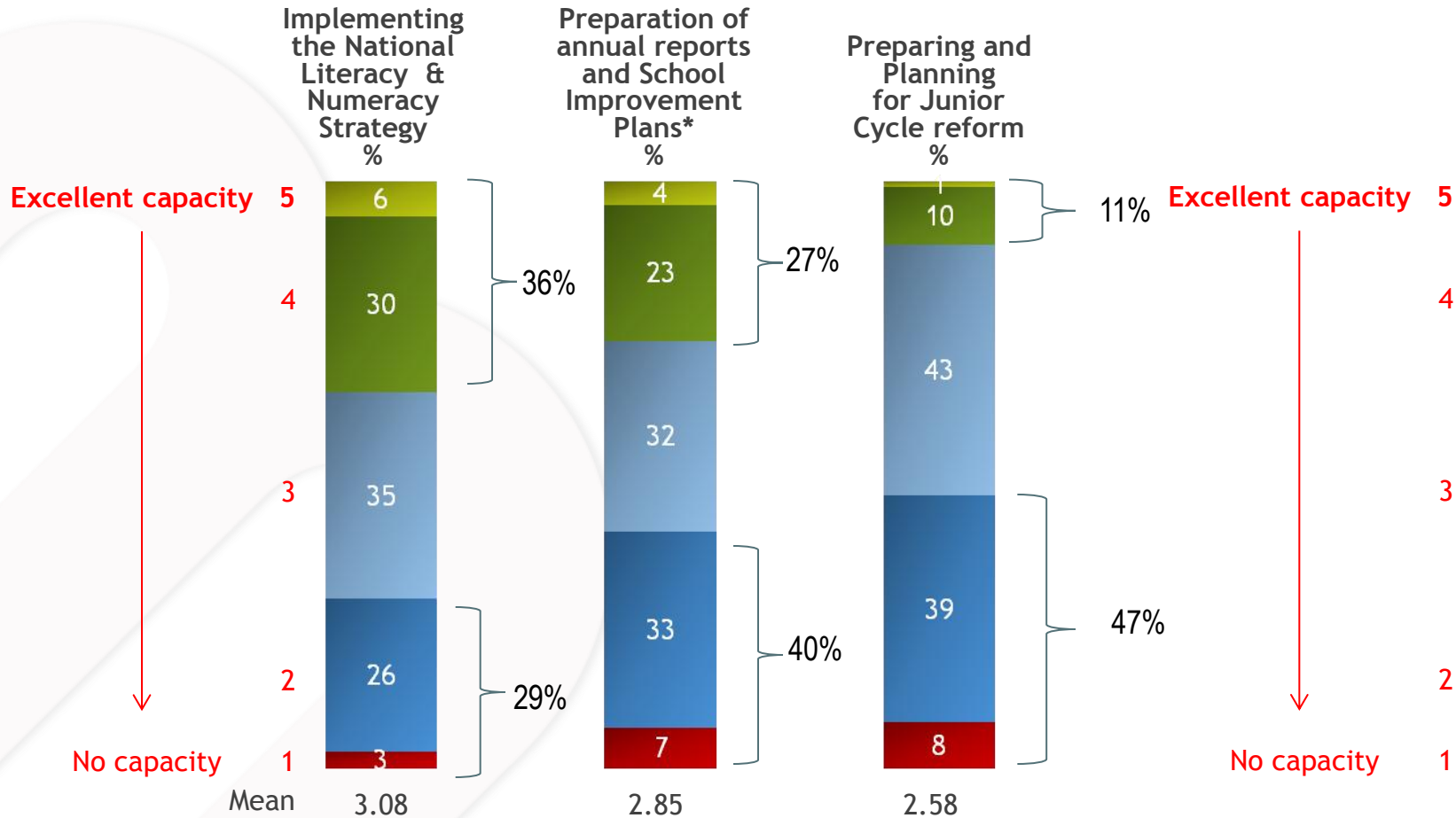
Q.13 Since 2009, successive budgets have reduced the capitation grant. Budget 2013 imposed a 2% reduction in the capitation grant, meaning an average of €11 less per student in 2013.



Impact of Cuts: Whole School Community

Schools' capacity to implement initiatives: The lack of capacity is greatest in relation to preparation and planning for Junior Cycle reform; only 1 in 10 indicated good capacity for its implementation

(Base: Total sample n=145)



*School Self-Evaluation included here

Q. 14 Bearing in mind all of the education cutbacks to date and their impact on the whole school community, how would you rate your school's capacity to implement the following initiatives where 5 equals excellent capacity and 1 = no capacity.

Challenges Facing Principals:

“My challenge is to maintain staff morale in a challenging era of pay cuts, no promotion for colleagues, eroding middle management structures and reduced school budgets”.

Principal of 900+ student school

“Provision of meals for malnourished students, mental health issues and support, increasing demands on time of school leaders, lack of guidelines and support of school leaders in the implementation of the new Junior Certificate, lack of school support for the implementation of a Literacy and Numeracy program.”

Principal 350- 500 student school

“Challenge to find time for demands - longer working hours, work brought home, weekend work. Loss of ancillary staff is as critical as loss of teaching posts. Double jobbing as Principal and Secretary two afternoons per week ... Trying to mind pastoral care teachers whose workload has increased significantly. Increase in social work involvement with families, decrease in availability of psychiatric services for students in need. Emotional drain on school staff involved palpable.”

Principal 350- 500 student school

“It is very difficult to ask teachers to take on new initiatives and programmes when they are already under strain from joining year groups together in the one class, teaching different levels within classes, having increased numbers in their classes, giving an extra 33 hours per year and having their take home pay reduced.”

Principal <350 student school

Summary - I

LOSS OF TEACHERS AND SUBJECTS

Almost 9 in 10 schools surveyed say their student numbers have increased or remained constant since austerity measures began in 2008/09. Despite this, **98%** per cent of schools have lost teaching staff. Overall, **schools have lost an average of 2.1 subject teachers** in addition to specialist teachers/ teaching hours (e.g. learning support/ resource teachers, home school liaison teachers).

For every subject teacher lost, the school has had to distribute that teacher's 33 subject classes across the remaining teachers in the school. Schools have achieved this by:

- Dropping subjects from the curriculum
- Amalgamating classes
- Reducing the number of classes per week
- Placing a cap on the number of students for particular subjects

SENIOR CYCLE

The Senior Cycle curriculum has been hardest hit by the cutbacks overall.

Of particular concern to the ASTI is that **38 per cent of schools said they had dropped at least one subject at Senior Cycle level**. The subjects most likely to have been dropped: **Accounting, Physics, Economics and Chemistry**. This is contrary to the Government's stated policy of focusing on STEM subjects.

16% of schools have dropped at least one Senior Cycle Programme (Leaving Cert Applied, Leaving Cert Vocational, Transition Year). Leaving Cert Applied has been most affected (dropped by 9% of schools). Twenty-seven per cent of schools have reduced the number of students on these programmes. While very few (3%) plan to drop Transition Year as a response to budget cuts, one in four schools intend to curtail it in the future.

Summary - II

JUNIOR CYCLE

In order to cope with the cutbacks, a number of changes have been implemented by schools in Junior Cycle - the most widely introduced change is the amalgamation of levels in Junior Cycle subjects (almost half of all schools). One in five schools have reduced the number of classes per week. Twenty per cent have amalgamated classes, and at least one in 10 have either dropped subjects or put a cap on student numbers.

As with the 2012 research we see that **the main subjects dropped were German, Music and Technical Graphics. While subjects requiring use of materials - such as Materials Technology, Art Craft Design, Technical Graphics, Home Economics - were the focus of capping.** The latter makes sense in the context of reduced school budgets.

IMPACT ON OPERATION OF SCHOOLS

Schools have lost an average of 2.5 Special Duties Teacher posts and 2.88 Assistant Principal Teacher posts. While some schools have benefited from a limited alleviation to the moratorium on Assistant Principal posts, the majority of schools have not benefited from this alleviation.

Day to day school administration has been hit the most by the loss of posts of responsibility (in-school middle management posts). Seventy-two per cent of Principals reported a high/ medium adverse impact. Nine in 10 stated that Principals and Deputy Principals are undertaking duties previously completed by Special Duties Teachers and/ or Assistant Principals. **In six out of 10 schools Deputy Principals are engaging in classroom teaching (either for the first time or in addition to previous teaching duties) as a result of the education cuts; this was also the case for more than third of Principals.**

These findings clearly demonstrate that Principals and Deputy Principals are increasingly spending their time fire-fighting and covering up the cracks caused by the cutbacks and have less time to devote to management and leadership tasks.

Summary - III

STUDENT WELLBEING

The survey looks at the impact of the abolition of ex-quota guidance counselling provision in schools since September 2012. **Seventy-eight per cent of schools have made changes to guidance counselling services** as a result of this. Of particular concern is that **seven in 10 schools have reduced the provision of one-to-one guidance counselling for students**. This comes at a time when teachers are reporting that increased numbers of students are manifesting stress-related symptoms such as negative behaviour, and/ or dis-engagement.

In addition, almost **60% of principals stated that the loss of posts of responsibility has had a high or medium adverse impact on the wellbeing of students** in their schools. This is because in many schools pastoral care structures and services are managed by Special Duties Teachers and Assistant Principals, and these posts have been significantly reduced due to the moratorium.

CAPACITY FOR REFORM

Almost half of schools have little to no capacity to prepare and plan for Junior Cycle reform due to be implemented from 2014. Schools, it seems, are reeling from the impact of the cutbacks and are overwhelmed by current reform initiatives. Almost 30 per cent of schools say they have little to no capacity to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy strategy which is being rolled out in schools since 2011. Forty per cent say they have little to no capacity for the preparation of annual reports and school improvement plans under recent initiatives such as School Self Evaluation.

FINANCIAL COSTS TO SCHOOLS/ PARENTS

Many schools have already implemented measures to make up the deficit in their finances (exacerbated by a series of cuts to the 'school capitation grant'). **The most popular moved adopted has been to increase fundraising activities; eight in 10 schools indicate that they plan to do this in the future. Other options include increasing parents' voluntary contribution (23% plan to do this), and postponing school building maintenance work (57% plan to do this).**