

# Chef Industry Survey 2020

## Introduction

The Chef Industry Survey was conducted by Foodservice Australia to find out Australian chefs' thoughts regarding their careers and the hospitality industry over the next 12-24 months.

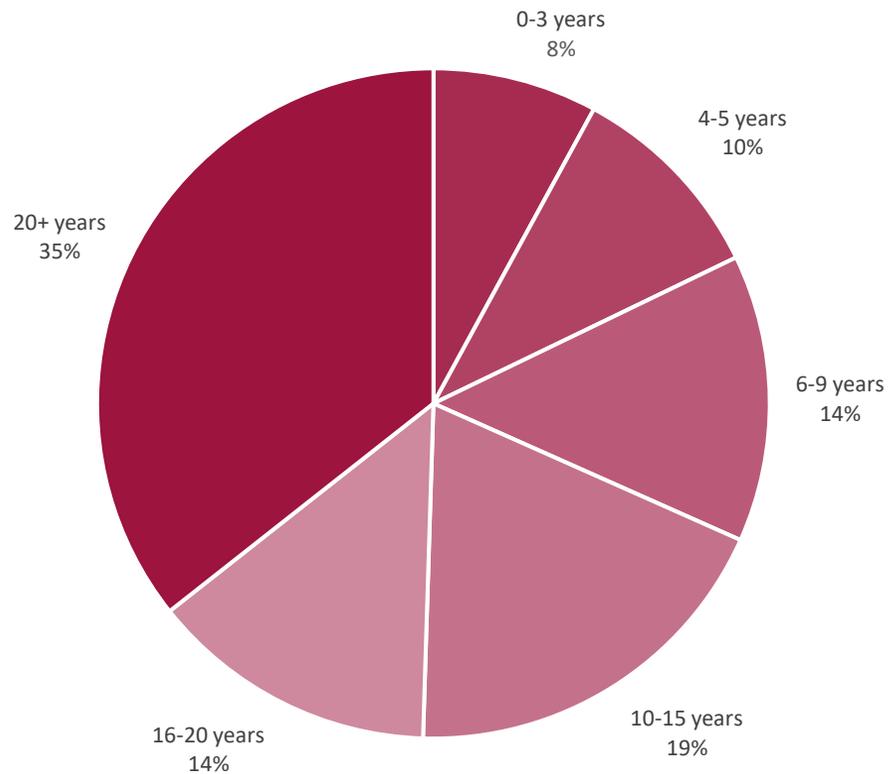
Participants were asked fourteen questions, a mixture of multiple choice and rating scale, of which 101 responses were received. The survey was promoted through the Foodservice Australia chef database, The Sydney Chef Exchange, Chef's Milk Crate, and The Sydney Chef/Cook/Barista/Wait staff/Kitchen hand exchange. Respondents were predominantly from New South Wales.

Feedback from industry and government bodies was sought, including the Australian Culinary Federation (ACF) and Restaurant & Catering Industry Association of Australia (R&CA).

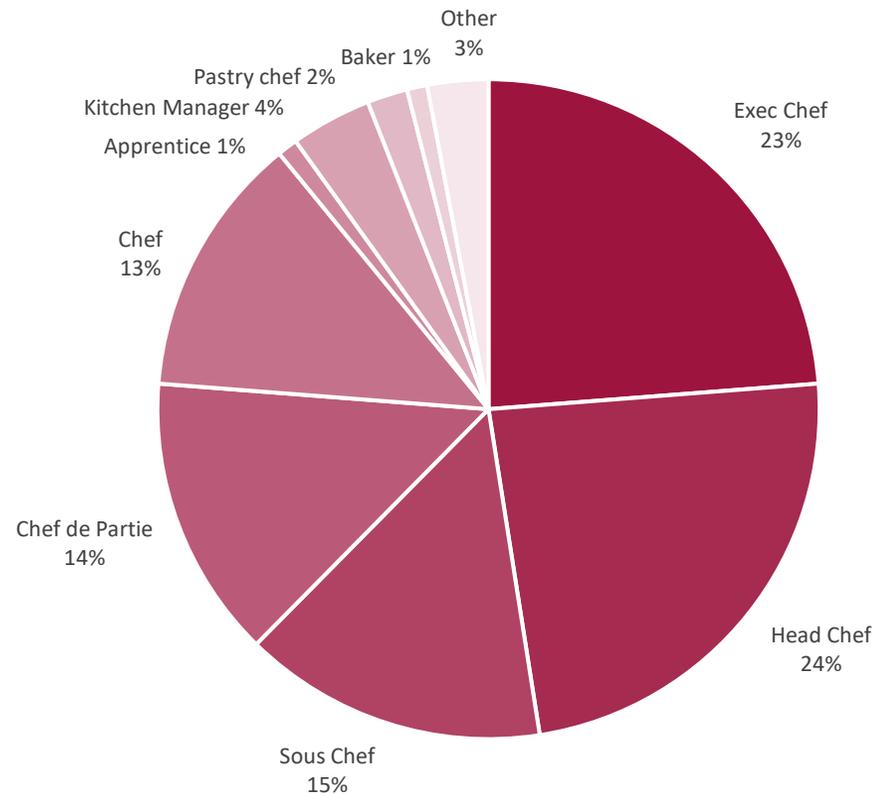
This data will be used as part of the reference material, to develop the Chef Success Workshop program, being launched at the Foodservice Australia show in June 2021.

# Respondents

How long have you been working as a chef?



Which best describes your current or last held kitchen role?



**68%** have been working as a chef for over ten years



**66%** work in a management position (Sous Chef at minimum)



**27%** work in a Chef or Chef de Partie role



# Working Environment

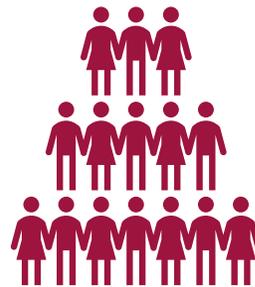
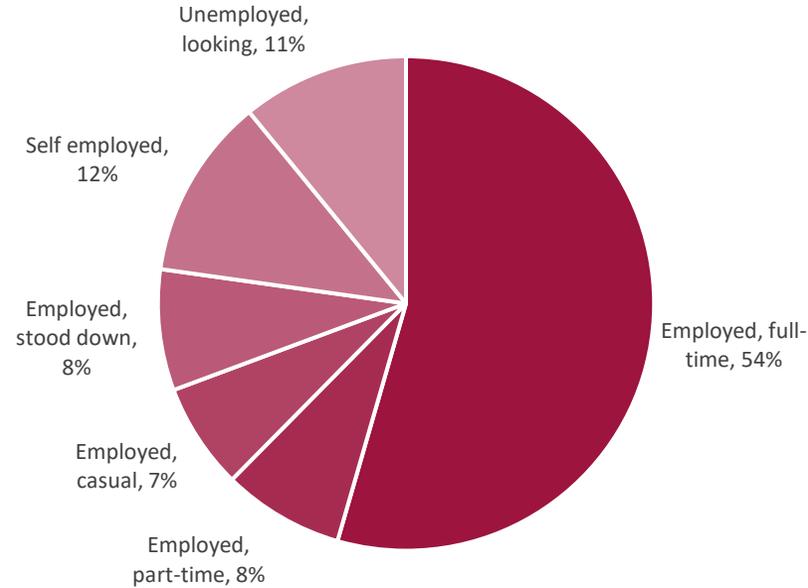
Participants were asked what type of employment they held and what type of business they worked in.

The greatest proportion of participants were engaged in full-time work, at **54%**, whilst casual employment was the smallest a **7%**.

**47%** of respondent's identified themselves as working in a café/restaurant.

Takeaway and QSR/Franchise style businesses made up the smallest portion of business types at just **2%** of the total.

Describe your current employment status?

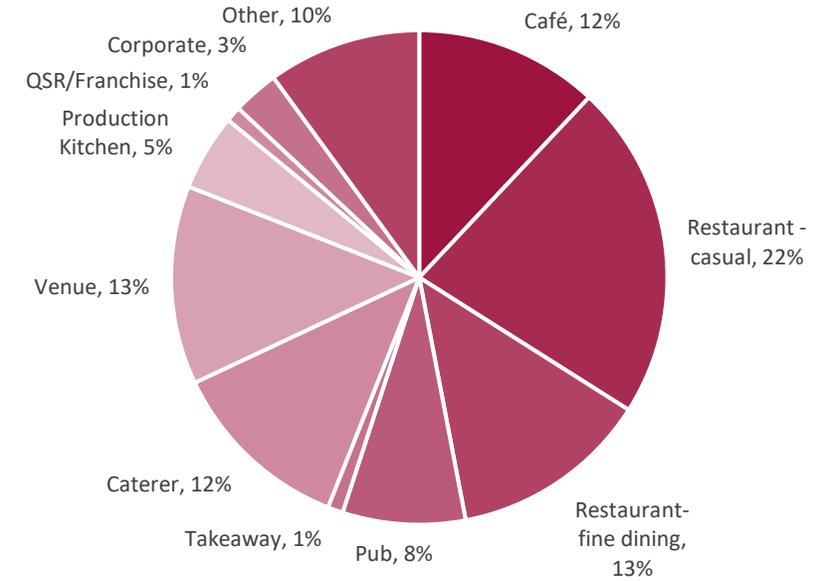


**54%** are engaged in full-time employment

**15%** are employed on a part-time or casual basis.

**19%** are currently not working, being either unemployed and seeking work, or having been stood down.

Type of business where currently or last worked?



**47%** work in a café or restaurant



**Other** businesses included Aged Care, Healthcare/ Hospitals and Community Services.



**Venue** included Clubs, Pubs, Hotels and Private Dining Rooms.



# Concerns for the next 12-24 months

Participants were asked what were their concerns regarding the industry and their career over the next 12-24 months. This identified the greatest concern was for job security, closely followed by impacts of the economy and achieving a work/life balance.

There was moderate concern for their career prospects, business closures and opportunities, consumer spending habits, skills shortages, food costs, wage issues, decreased working hours and mental health issues.

There was low concern about customer expectations, supply issues, employer expectations, increased working hours, rostering issues and wage theft.



**60%** concerned about job security, moving forward

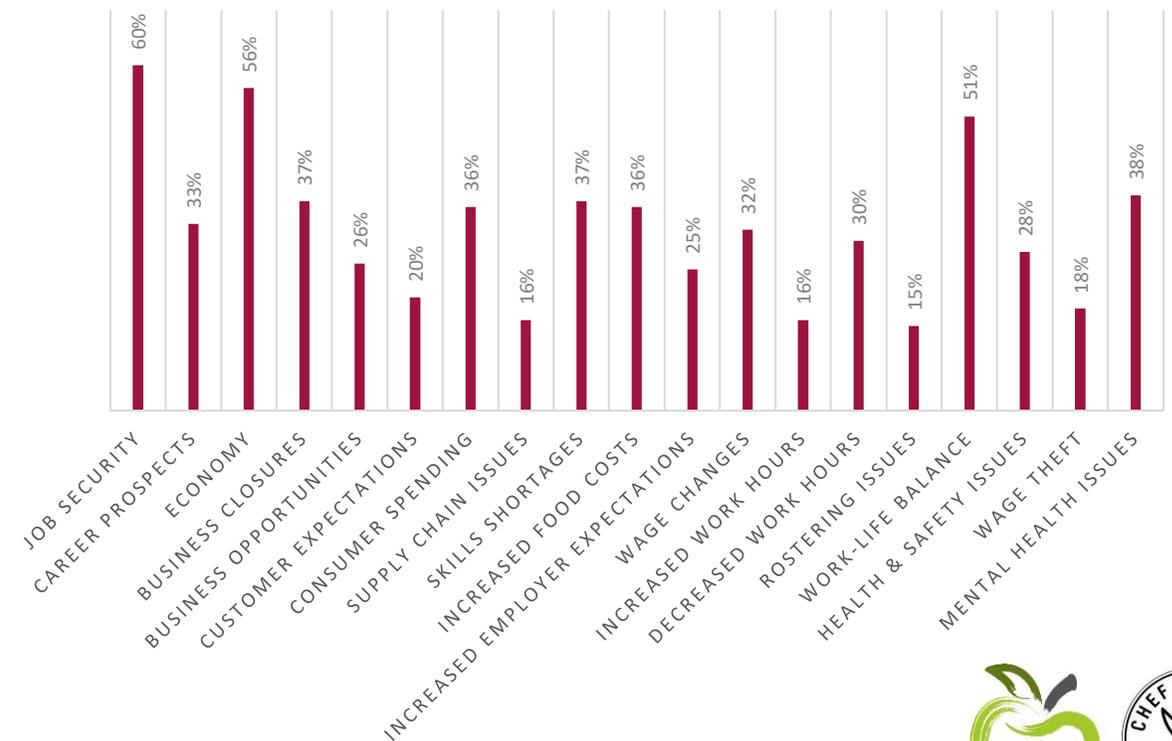


**56%** concerned about the economy



**51%** concerned about work-life balance

**What are your concerns regarding the industry and career growth over the next 12-24 months?**



# Opportunities for the next 12-24 months



**63%** identified an opportunity to achieve a better work-life balance

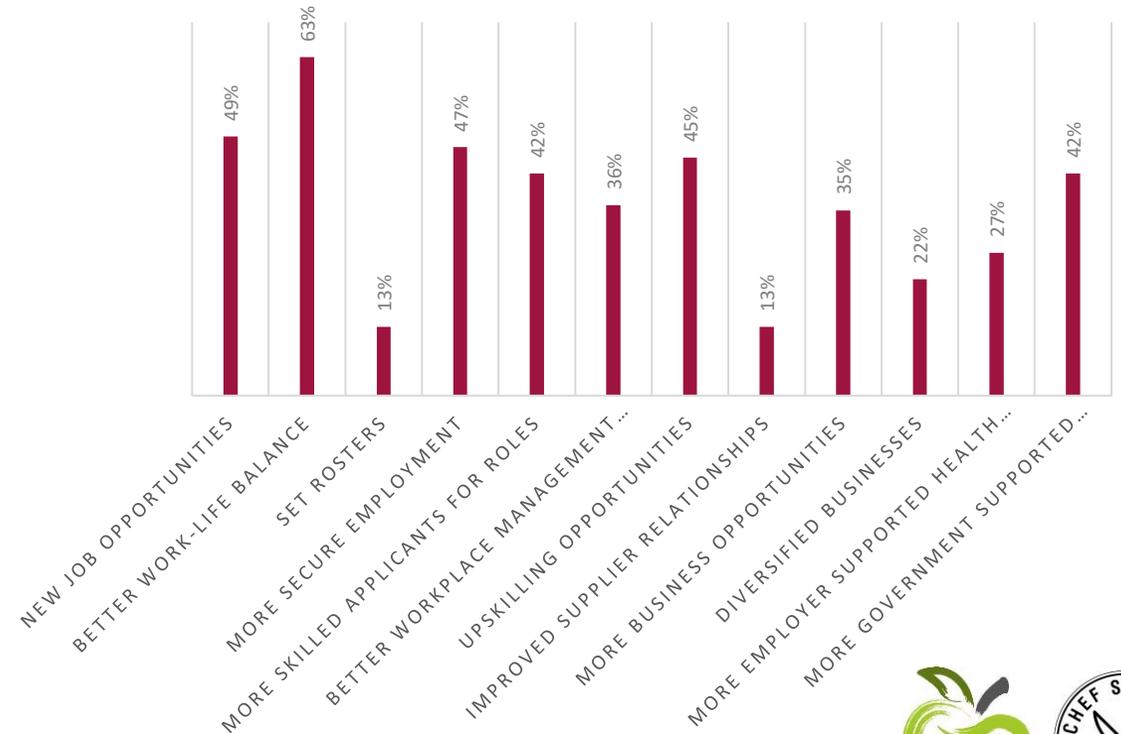


**49%** identified new job opportunities becoming available



**13%** identified improved supplier relationships

## What career opportunities would you like to see over the next 12-24 months?



Participants were asked what career opportunities they would like to see over the next 12-24 months.

Achieving a better work-life balance was identified as the top item responders said they would like to achieve, with **63%** of them selecting this.

**49%** of responders would like to see more new job opportunities, closely followed by more secure employment, upskilling opportunities, government supported health & safety training opportunities, and more skilled applicants for roles.

They identified better workplace management practices and business opportunities as of moderate interest, and there was low interest in set rosters, improved supplier relationships, diversified businesses and employer support health & safety training.



# Learning opportunities

Participants were asked what topics they would like to learn more about regarding their career. Over half the participants selected business management and work-life balance as something they would like to know more about.

There was interest from at least **40%** of participants in learning more about networking, business planning, food photography, people management, social media management and marketing, education & training opportunities and successful career habits and skills.

At least **30%** of participants were interested in finding out about mental health awareness & support, healthy living, government initiatives and mentoring.

Understanding your working rights and workplace health & safety skills were of the lowest interest whilst still being selected by around **25%** of participants.



**55%** would like to learn more about business management



**52%** would like to learn more about how to achieve a work-life balance



**45%** would like to learn more about networking

Which would you like to learn more about?



# Changing Careers

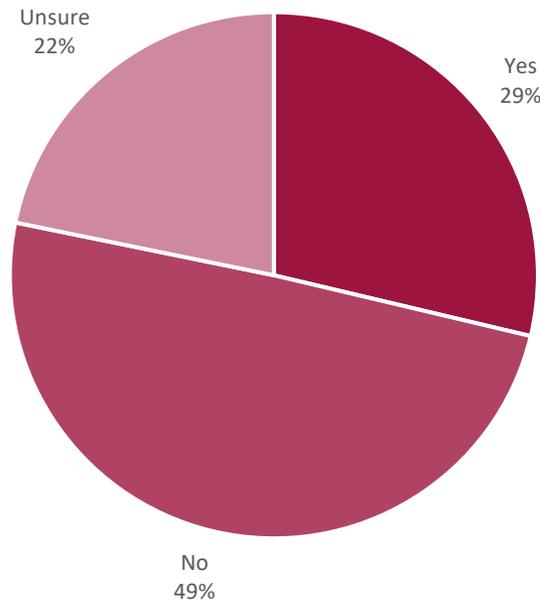
Participants were asked if they could see themselves changing careers at any point in the future.

Most answered that they did not and **22%** were unsure.

**29%** responded yes, with most of them citing that they were planning to make this change within the next 24 months. The main reason they shared for this decision was for a better work-life balance and to spend time with family.

Majority of those who selected yes to changing careers were unsure what type of role they would move to.

## Do you see yourself changing careers in the future?



## Reasons for changing careers:

*"I would like a career with opportunity for progression and work life balance"*

*"I need to devote weekends to my young children"*

*"I love my job but I want a better work life balance and less stress and pressure in my life. I think wages and working hours need to be improved. Most chefs work 10-20 hours for free every week"*

*"The added pressure with decreased staff and the expectation to meet standards regardless. The level of unskilled people in the workforce increases pressure to train on the job"*

*"[Looking for] better long-term conditions."*

*"Better work life balance"*

*"Better quality of life"*



# Information engagement platforms

Facebook, Instagram, websites and dining out were identified as the most used platforms by participants for finding inspiration and connecting with new chefs and restaurants.

Twitter was identified as the least engaged platform, followed by community forums, blogs, industry competition and seminars.

Moderate engagement with trade shows and face-to-face meetings was identified, whereas LinkedIn, industry publications, magazines, and direct supplier information show a low-moderate level of engagement.

Other platforms that participants identified as using for this purpose were Podcasts, YouTube, cooking shows and word of mouth.

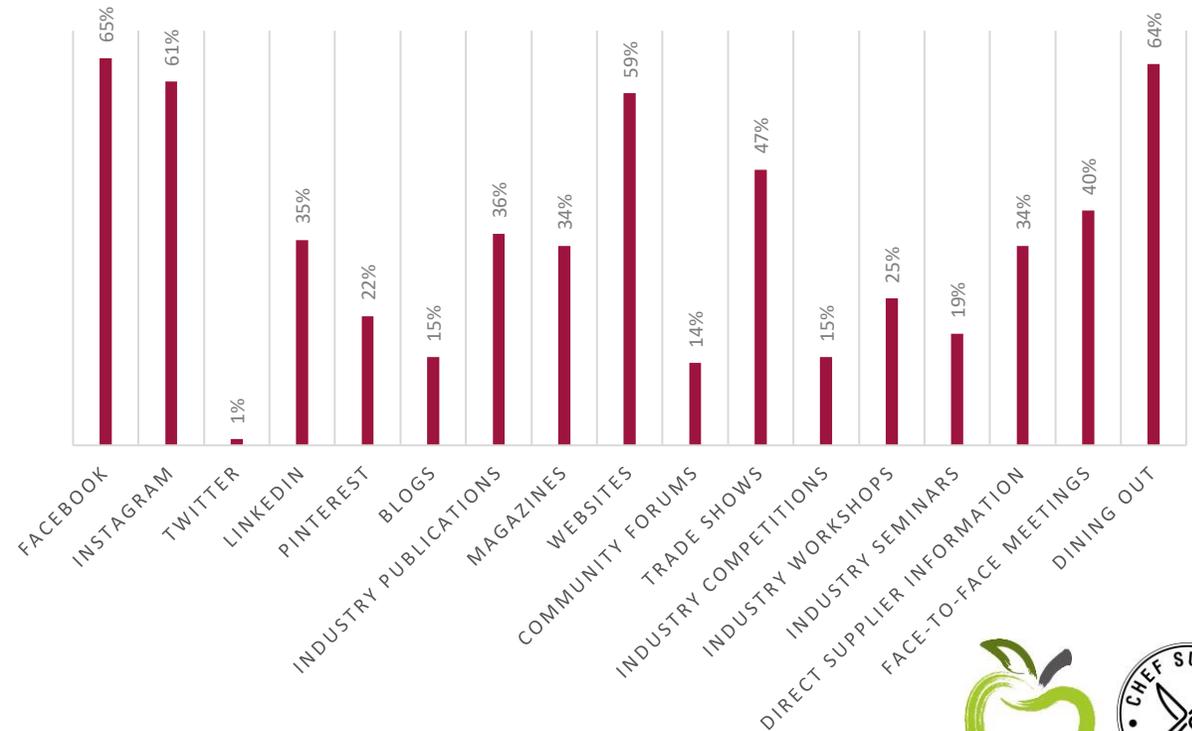


Online work engagement platforms:  
Facebook- **65%**  
Instagram- **61%**



**64%** Dine Out to find inspiration, and to connect and research new chefs and businesses

Which platforms do you engage with for work purposes ie: inspiration; connecting or finding out about new chefs/ restaurants?



# How often they engage

Participants were asked how often they engage with specific platforms for work purposes.

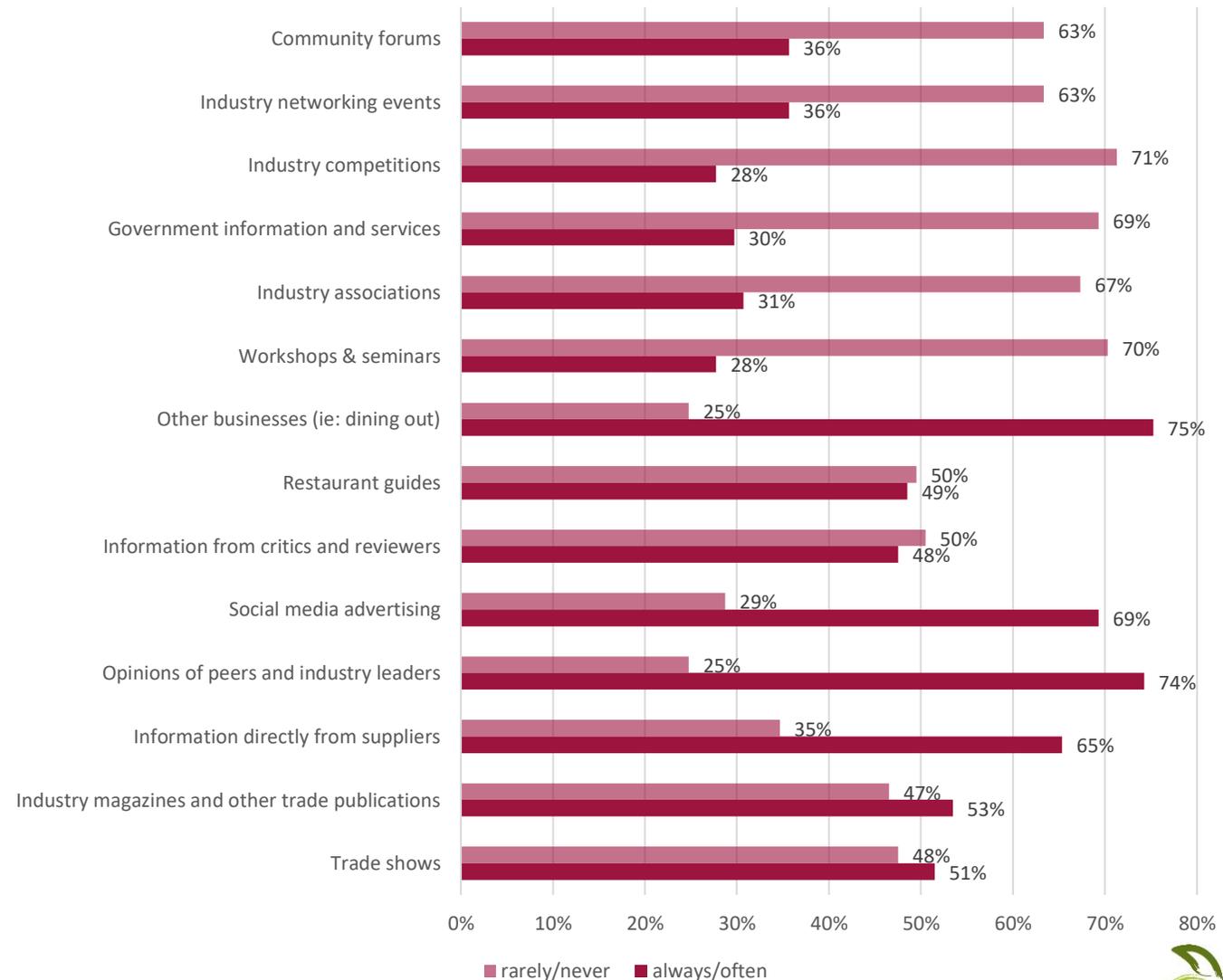
The highest overall engagement was through experiencing other businesses, including dining out, with **75%** of participants doing this often or always. This was closely followed by seeking the opinions of their peers and industry leaders; and engaging with social media advertising.

Information directly from suppliers had high engagement, with **25%** of participants saying they always engage and **41%** selecting that they often do so.

Trade shows; restaurant guides; industry magazines and other trade publications are reasonably evenly split in how often participants do, or do not, engage for work purposes.

Low engagement was identified with community forums; industry networking events and competitions; and government services.

How often do you engage with these categories for work purposes?



# Accuracy of information

Participants were asked how trustworthy they felt certain platforms were in regard to the accuracy of the information they provide.

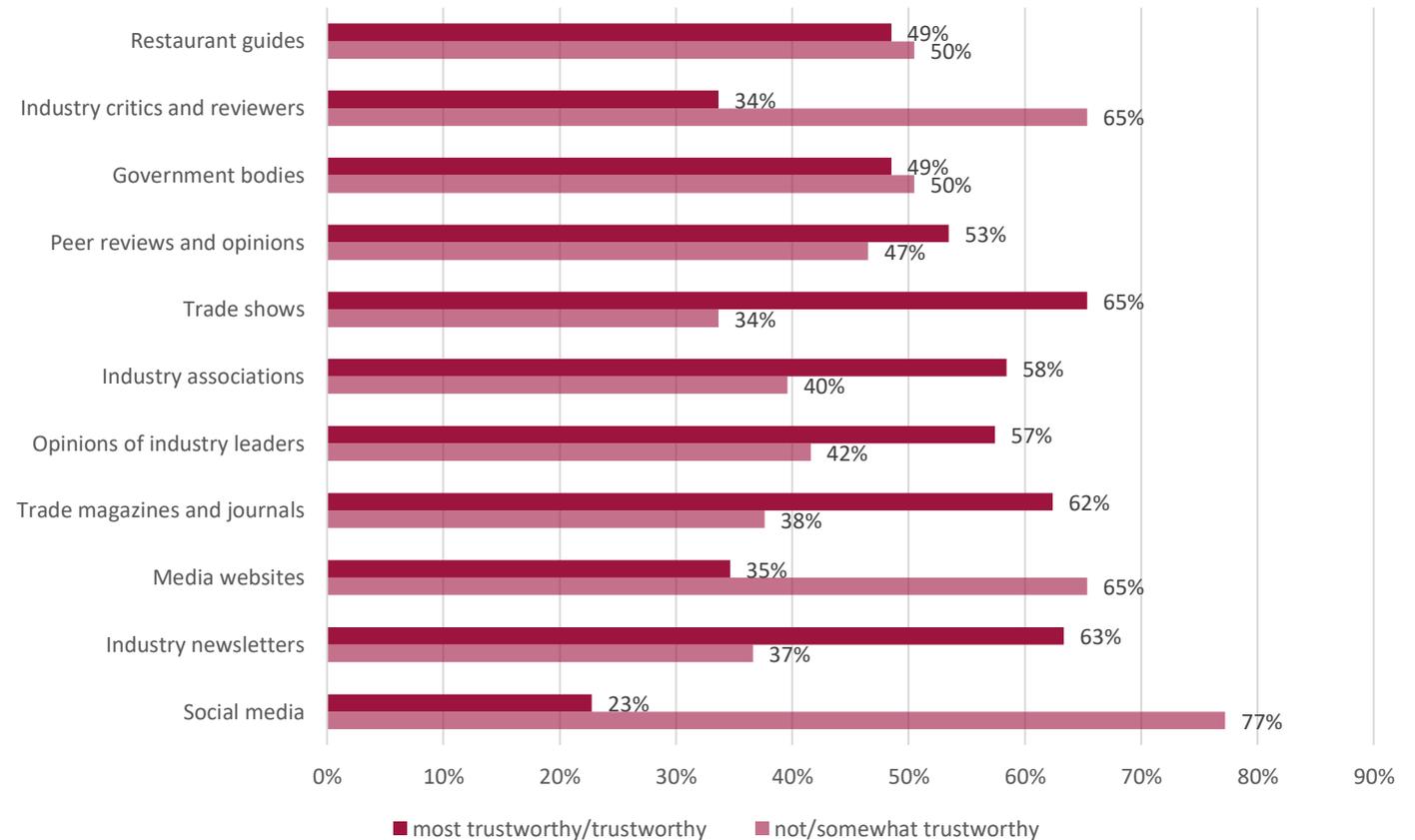
Trade shows; industry newsletters; and trade magazines and journals were deemed the most trustworthy platforms by participants with over **60%** selecting them as being mostly trustworthy or trustworthy.

The least trustworthy platform was social media with **77%** of responders marking it not trustworthy or somewhat trustworthy. Only **3%** of respondents said they believed social media platforms were trustworthy

Information on media websites; and from industry critics and reviewers were not seen as very credible sources. Restaurant guides; government bodies; and peer reviews were divided in their overall trustworthiness levels.

Industry associations and leaders; and peer opinions were of moderate trustworthiness.

How trustworthy do you rate these platforms, in regard to accuracy of information?



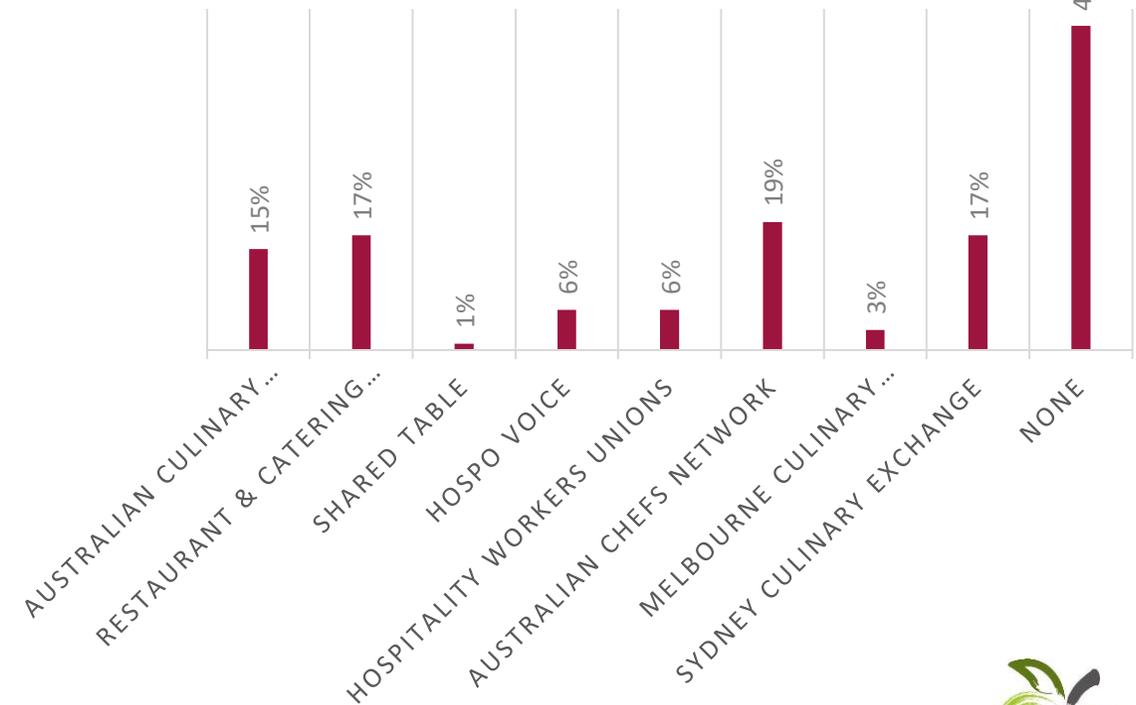
# Industry associations, bodies and groups

Participants were asked if they were members of any hospitality industry trade associations, bodies or groups. Almost half of the survey participants are not a member of any association, group or body.

The Australian Chefs Network, Restaurant & Catering Industry Association of Australia (R&CA), the Sydney Culinary Exchange and the Australian Culinary Federation (ACF) had the most members. R&CA and ACF are the only industry association accredited groups. The Sydney Culinary Exchange and Australian Chefs Network are Facebook groups.

Other groups that participants are members of included The Australian Chef's Society, Federazione Italiana Cuochi, and the Australian Industry of Food Safety.

Which of the following hospitality industry trade associations, bodies or groups are you a member of?



**48%** of respondents are not a member of any industry association, body or group





**Melbourne Convention  
& Exhibition Centre  
Sunday 27 June 2021  
10am-2pm**



**Foodservice  
Australia 2021**