

# Casino Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program Evaluation



## 7<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Gambling Studies and Policy Issues

Nova Gorica, Slovenia  
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# What is Voluntary Self-Exclusion?

- History
  - Crystal Casino, Winnipeg, Canada; 1989
  - Holland Casino; 1990
  - Missouri; 1996
- Purpose and intent
- Enrolment process
- Effectiveness issues
- Liability litigation

# Alberta's Program

- Province wide; 23 casinos and 3 RECs
- Extensive and thorough legal agreement
- Exclusion periods:
  - 6 months
  - 1 year
  - 2 year
  - 3 year
- Centralized database (GIN); all properties linked
- Penalty; offence under Section 70b of the GLA



Baffin  
Sea

NU

YT

NT

Canada

Hudson  
Bay

AB

MB

BC

SK

ON

QC

NL

WA

MT

ND

MN

NB

PE

# Evaluation Purpose

- Examine current systems, processes and procedures and determine opportunities for improvement
- Determine program objectives
- Assess the effectiveness of the program's current design and implementation

# Objectives

- Identify the current “best & promising practices” with respect to VSE programs.
- Clarify and document current systems, processes and procedures through which the program is currently being delivered.
- Clarify and document the Alberta Casino/REC VSE program goals, objectives and desired outcomes.
- Identify key performance indicators and develop a set of reasonable performance measures by which to gauge program performance.
- Identify gaps between actual and intended process outcomes and recommend modifications to improve program effectiveness.

# Guiding Questions

- Who is using the program?
- Is the program serving the right persons?
- What is the role of the program in helping VSE program clients manage their gambling behaviour?
- How is the program supporting or limiting recovery?
- Is the program being implemented according to plan?
- Is the program design able to meet VSE program client needs?
- Is the program producing the desired outputs?
- What are the areas for improvement?

# Deliverables

- Final Report and improvement recommendations
- Program Plan Template
- Program Logic Model



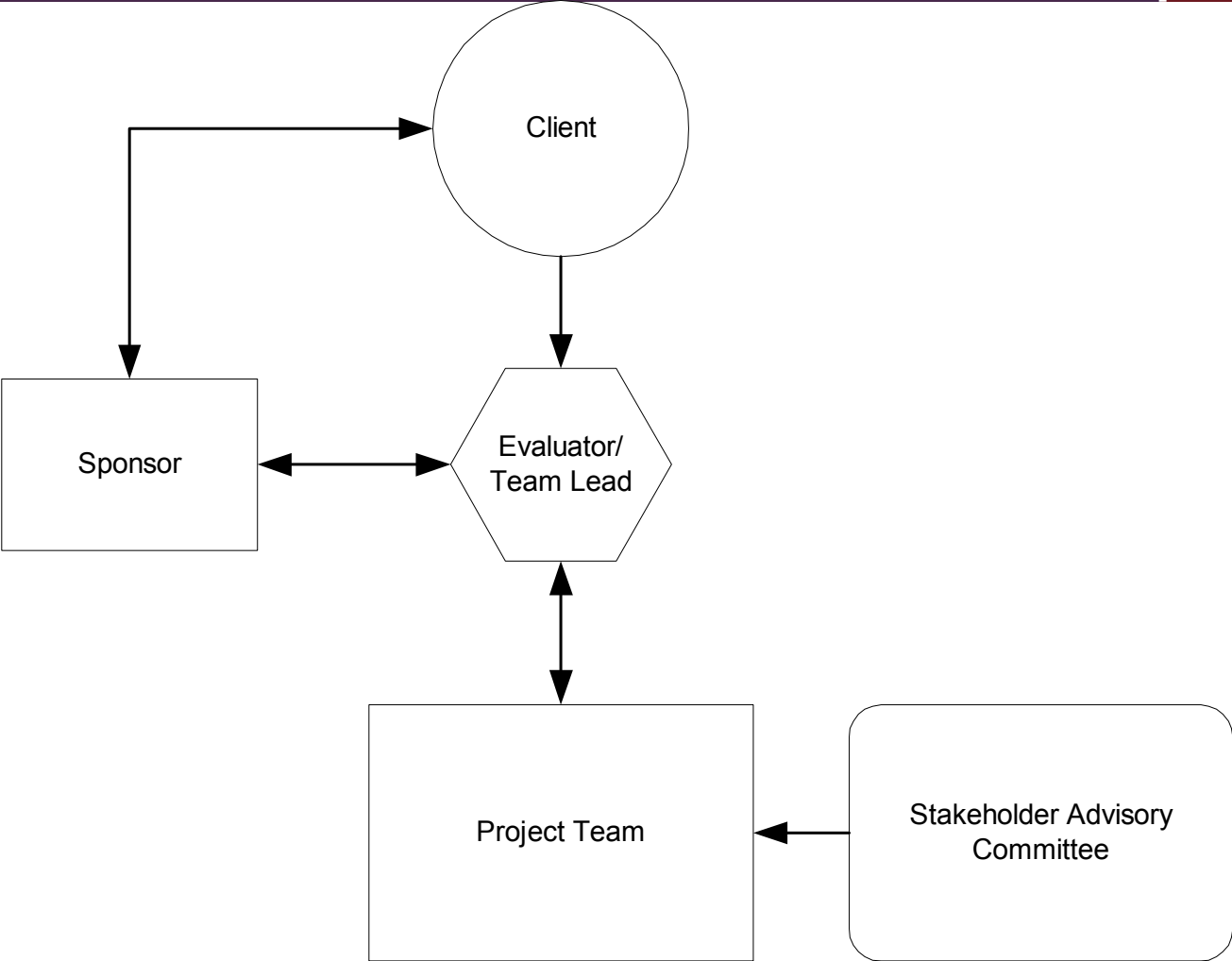
# Methodology

- Internal, formative (process) evaluation
- Client/stakeholder focused
- Mixed Design – Qualitative and Quantitative
- Literature search
- Cross-Jurisdictional survey
- VSE Program Client Survey (N=300)
- Focus groups:
  - Significant others of program clients
  - Casino and racing entertainment centre managers
  - AGLC and AADAC VSE Program staff
- Key Informant Interviews

# Ethical and Privacy Considerations

- Contact protocols
- Informed consent
- Protection of privacy
  - FOIP compliant
  - Non-disclosure agreement
  - Data aggregated
  - Individual identifiers severed

# Team Structure



# Casino Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program Evaluation



## Literature Review

# Findings

- Academic literature on VSE is still in its infancy
- Six published papers
- Little, if any evidenced based research into the experience of VSE clients and how to increase effectiveness
- Low proportion of clients maintain abstinence
- High proportion of clients find alternative ways to gamble
- Few VSE clients seek treatment
- Some evidence to suggest success increases when some type of additional supports are provided

# Casino Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program Evaluation



## Cross-Jurisdictional Review

# Study Design and Methodology

- Goal of review was to determine the extent of other provincial jurisdictions VSE programs with respect to:
  - Rules and regulations (policy and legal) governing self-exclusion;
  - Program objectives, structure, administration, and access;
  - Complementary and support programs and agencies;
  - Security and tracking procedures and data management;
  - Number and treatment of breaches;
  - Technological requirements of the program;
  - Overall cost of implementation;
  - Promotion/advertising;
  - Program Enhancements; and
  - Current Programs' Weaknesses and Strengths

# Review Design and Methodology

- Web-based survey instrument was developed to gather information in each of the 10 areas for inquiry
- Survey participants were recruited from the membership of the Canadian Partnership for Responsible Gambling (CPRG) in jurisdictions with casinos (7 jurisdictions – BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, PQ, NS)
- Participants were invited via email to:
  - complete online survey;
  - provide samples of any products (e.g. posters, agreements) used in their VSE program; and
  - participate in a follow-up phone interview (if required)



# Rules and Regulations

## Regulation and Administration of VSE Program

Jurisdiction	Years	Regulates	Administers
British Columbia (BC)	10	GPEB; Solicitor General	BCLC
Alberta (AB)	6	AGLC	AGLC
Saskatchewan (SK)	10	SLGA	SGC; SIGA
Manitoba (MB)	18	MGCC	MLC
Ontario (ON)	10	No regulation	OLG
Quebec (QC)	14	RACJ	RACJ
Nova Scotia NS	10	AGD; Environ & Labour	NSGC

# Exclusion Term Options

Exclusion Periods	BC	AB	MB	ON	PQ	NS
3 months	X	X	X	X	√	X
6 months	√	√	X	X	√	X
1 year	√	√	√	X	√	X
2 years	√	√	√	X	√	X
3 years	√	√	X	X	√	X
5 years	X	X	X	X	√	X
Lifetime	X	X	X	√	X	√

# “Cooling off” and Irrevocability

- Except for AB no other jurisdiction offers or is considering offering a 48 Hr “Cooling Off” Period
- 2 (ON & NS) of the 6 jurisdictions report allowing participants to rescind their VSE agreement
  - ON – agreement lifetime participant can apply to the gaming facility for reinstatement after 6 months
  - NS – patrons can apply to regain access to Casino Nova Scotia but must state their case before Utility Review Board

# Facilities Offering VSE

Current Programs	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NS
Casinos	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Race tracks with slots	√	√	X	X	√	X	X
Gaming centre with slots	√	X	X	X	X	√	X
Bingo	√	X	X	X	X	X	X
VLT	NA	X	X	X	NA	X	X
Internet	√	X	X	X	X	X	X

# Client Accessing VSE

VSE Client Status	BC	AB	MB	ON	PQ	NS
Current participants	3700	1505	400	9850	3241	1216
Total participants	9500	4214	UK	UK	18882	1311

# Training

- 5 of 6 jurisdictions report their staff receive training on VSE program
- Training is incorporated in mandatory gaming venue staff training programs
- AB offers specialized training for staff on their gaming information network (GIN) used for monitoring program participants

# Complementary and Support Programs and Agencies

- All jurisdictions report they do offer complimentary services to their VSE program
- All report offering an onsite responsible gambling information centre, which provide at the very least information on RG and PG services
- All offer referral to PG services, provide literature (e.g. cards, brochures) with helpline/PG service provider information

# Security/Tracking Procedures and Data Management

Monitoring and Data Collection	BC	AB	MB	ON	PQ	NS
Centralized database	√	√	√	√	√	√
Photo monitoring by venue staff	√	√	√	√	√	√
Facial Recognition	√	X	X	X	X	X
Patron File Tracking (breaches)	√	√	√	√	√	√
Player cards, promotions	√	X	√	√	X	X



# Technological Requirements of the Program

- 5/6 jurisdictions technological requirements are a digital camera and linked database
- BC have incorporated facial recognition technology
- MB & ON incorporate a link to their card services (players/club cards)

# Number and Treatment of Breaches

Breaches	BC	AB	MB	ON	PQ	NS
2003	376	306	NA	NA	10625	66
2004	1539	692	NA	NA	10721	54
2005	3261	650	NA	1400	11015	62

# Number and Treatment of Breaches

- How breaches are handled:
  - patron is identified and lead off the property
  - multiple breaches may lead to trespassing charges being laid
  - security/investigators may use the opportunity to remind the patron about the terms and conditions of their agreement and offer a referral to PG services

# Promotion and Advertising

Promotion and Advertising Activities	BC	AB	MB	ON	PQ	NS
Staff	√	√	√	√	√	√
Brochures	√	√	√	X	√	√
Posters	√	√	√	X	X	X
Website	√	√	X	√	√	√
Staff Intervention	√	√	√	√	√	√
Self-service terminals	√	√	X	X	X	X
Annual Reports, etc.	√	√	√	√	√	X
RGIC	√	√	X	X	√	√

# Program Enhancements

Program Enhancements	BC	AB	MB	ON	PQ	NS
Mandatory ID checks	C	C	X	X	X	X
Facial recognition software	√	C	C	X	X	C
Facilitated referral to PG service	√	C	√	√	√	√
Mandatory re-entry program	C	C	√	X	√	X
Lifetime enrollment	X	C	√	√	X	√
Mandatory jackpot ID checks	X	C	X	X	√	X
Third party initiation	X	C	C	X	X	X

√ - Available

C= considering

X – Not Available

# Current Programs' Weaknesses and Strengths

- Common weaknesses reported:
  - Ability to effectively monitor for breaches
  - Low number of participants presenting for PG services
  - Lack of consequences
- Common strengths reported:
  - Declaration of a gambling problem
  - Link to PG services
  - Patron choices in length of program
- Overall consensus that VSE is “somewhat effective”

# Results of Telephone Survey of VSE Program Clients



# Profile of VSE Program Client Survey Participants

- Representative random sample; N=300;
- 58% response rate;
- $\pm 5.4\%$  at 95% confidence level
- 25% 18 to 34 years old, 49% 35 to 54 years old and 21% 55 years or older
- 58% male and 42% female
- 30% single, 51% married/common-law, 14% divorced, separated or widowed
- 16% less than high school, 25% graduated high school, 33% college or technical school, 22% university or professional designation
- 68% employed full-time, 8% part-time, 7% retired, 12% other employment status



# Sources of Information

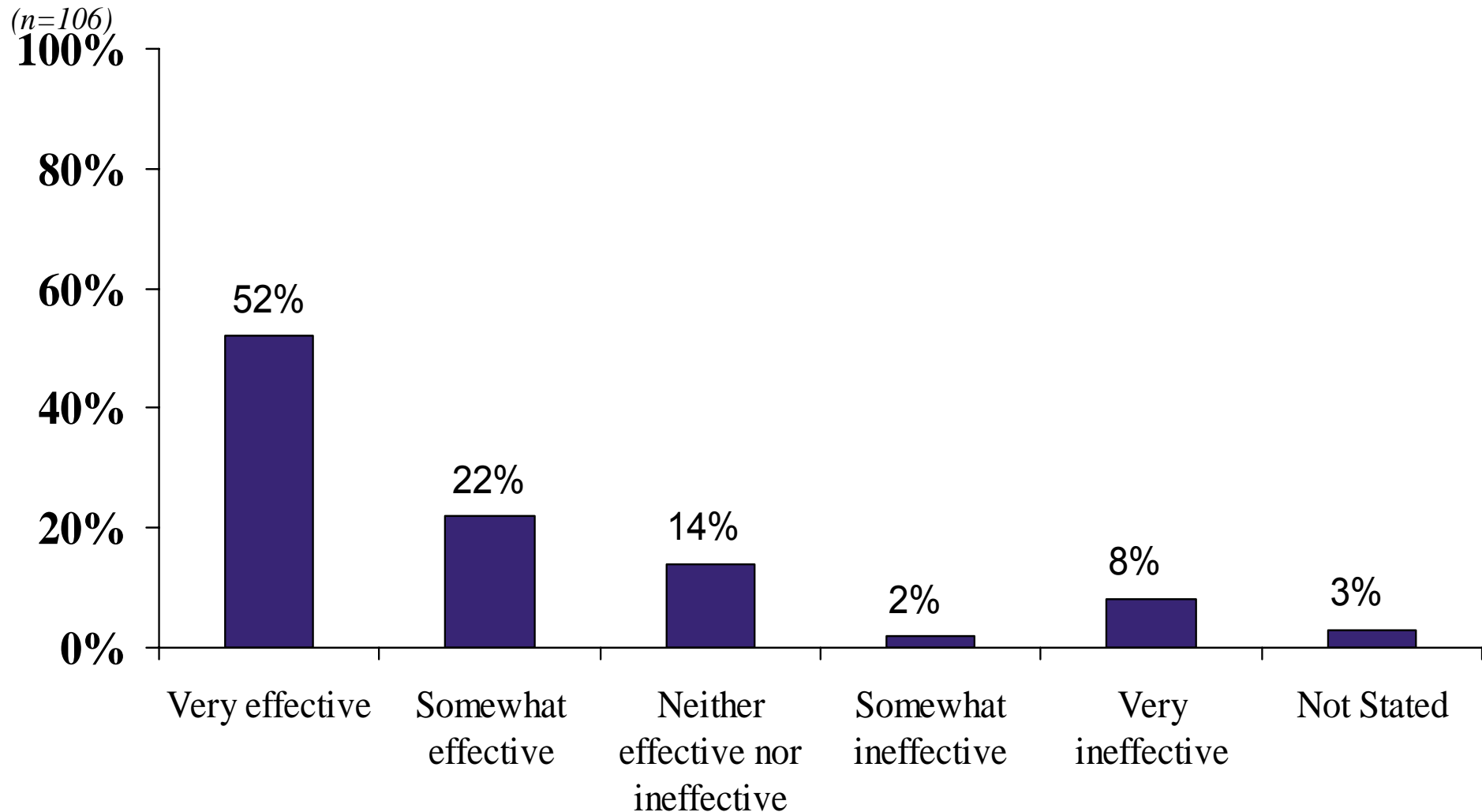
- Another family member or friend not including their spouse or partner (34%)
- Staff at a casino or racing entertainment centre (24%)
- Poster, pamphlet, or brochure (20%)
- AGLC staff (10%)
- Spouse or partner (8%)
- AGLC website (6%)

# Effectiveness of Information

- Most rated casino staff (74%) and AGLC staff (73%) as very or somewhat effective in providing them with information
- Most (73%) rated the printed information as effective

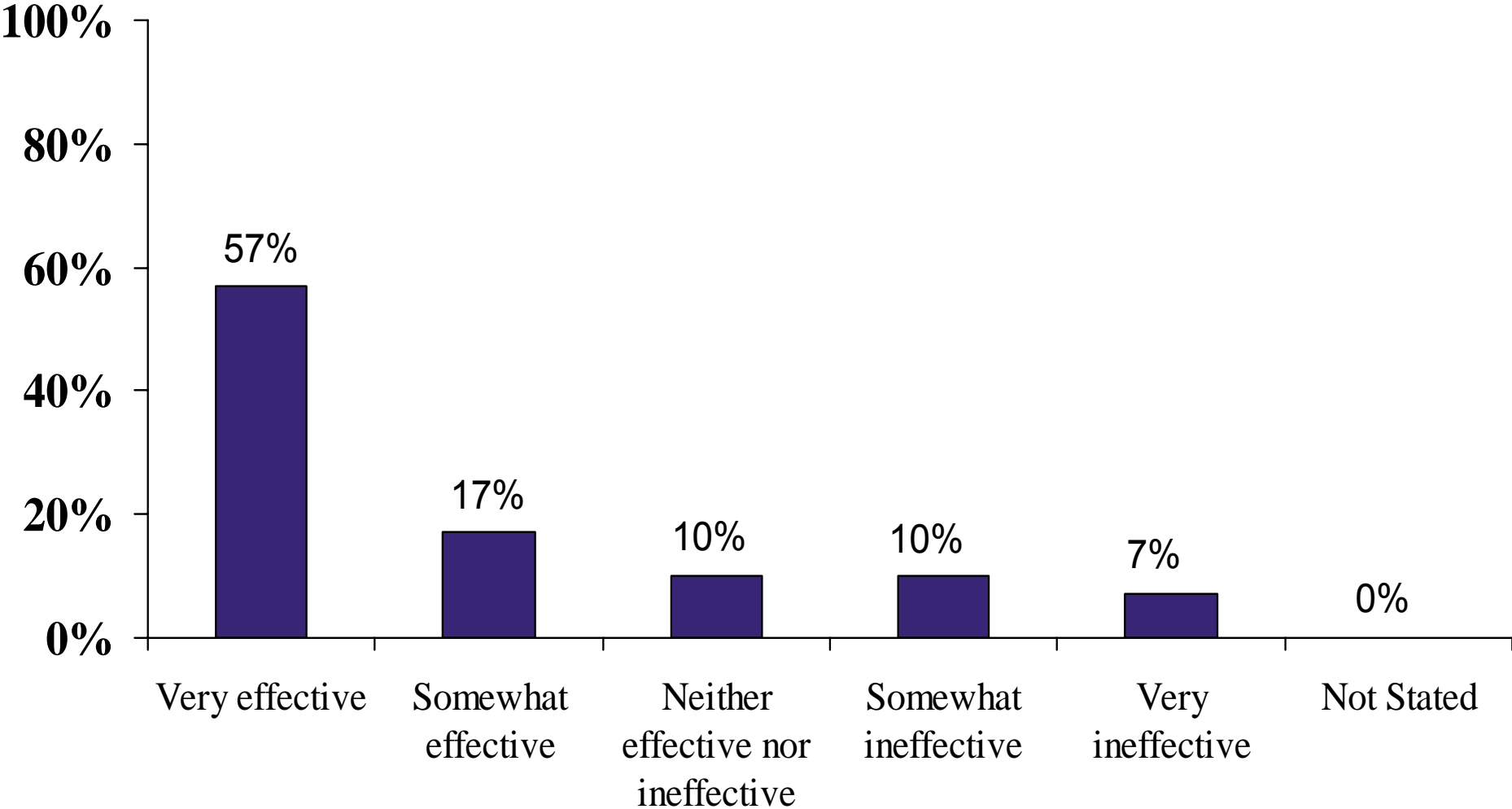
**When thinking about the information provided by staff at a casino or racing entertainment centre, how effective were they in providing you with information about the program?**

**(n=106)**



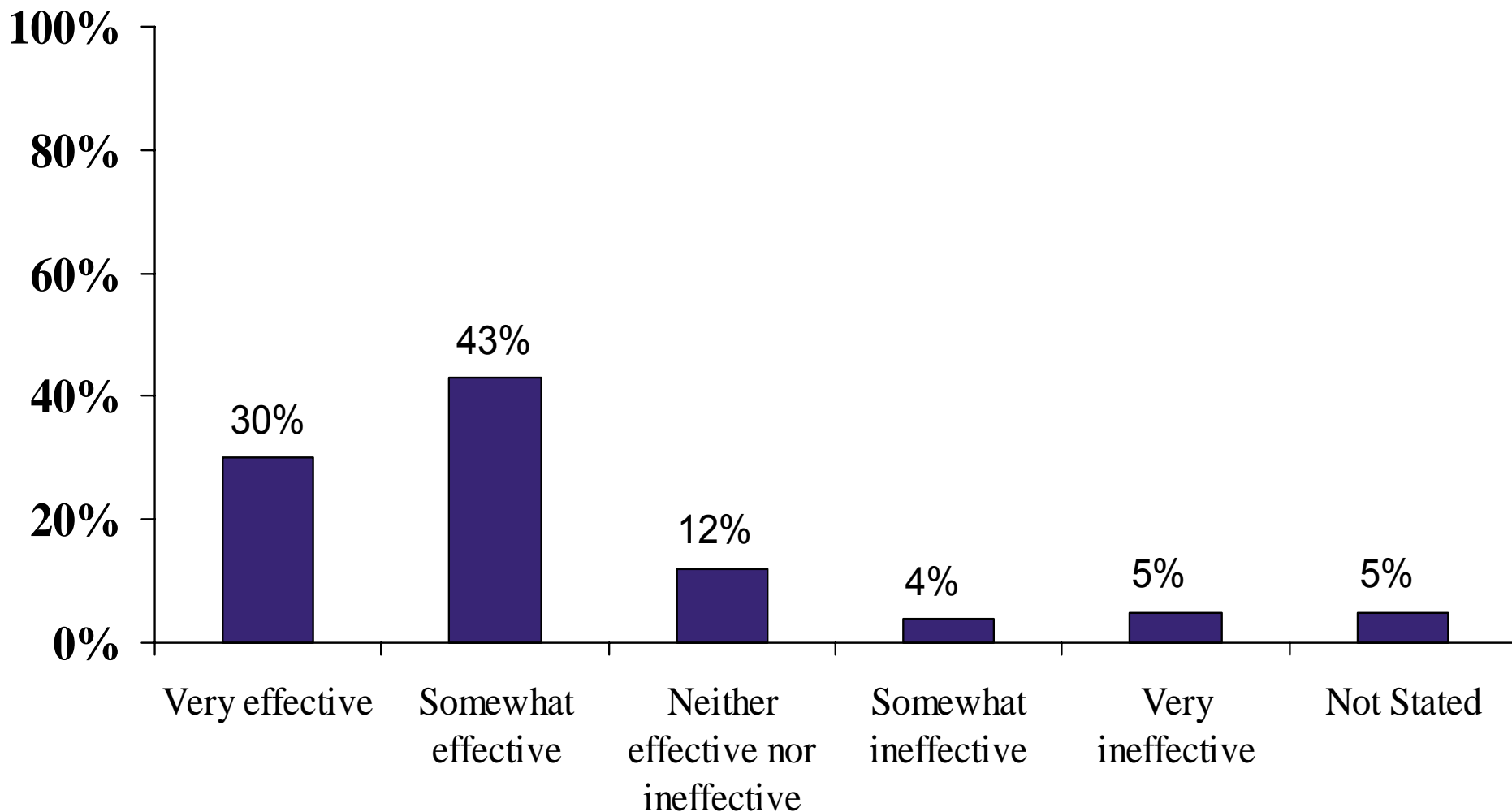
**When thinking about the information provided by Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission staff, how effective were they in providing you with information about the program?**

**(n=30)**

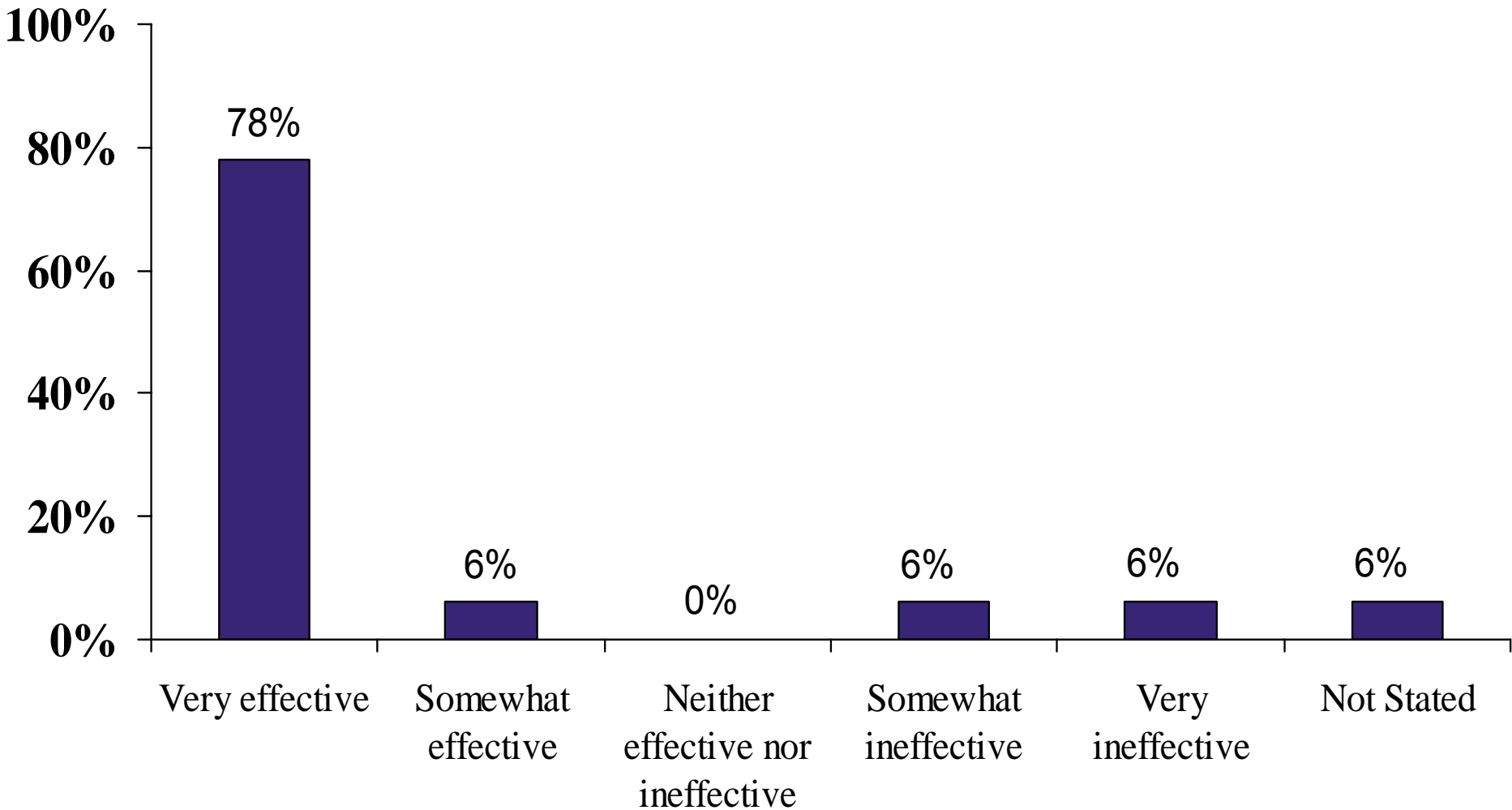


**When thinking about the printed information you received about the program, including any brochures, pamphlets, agreements, or posters, how effective were they in providing you with information you needed to decide whether or not the program was right for you?**

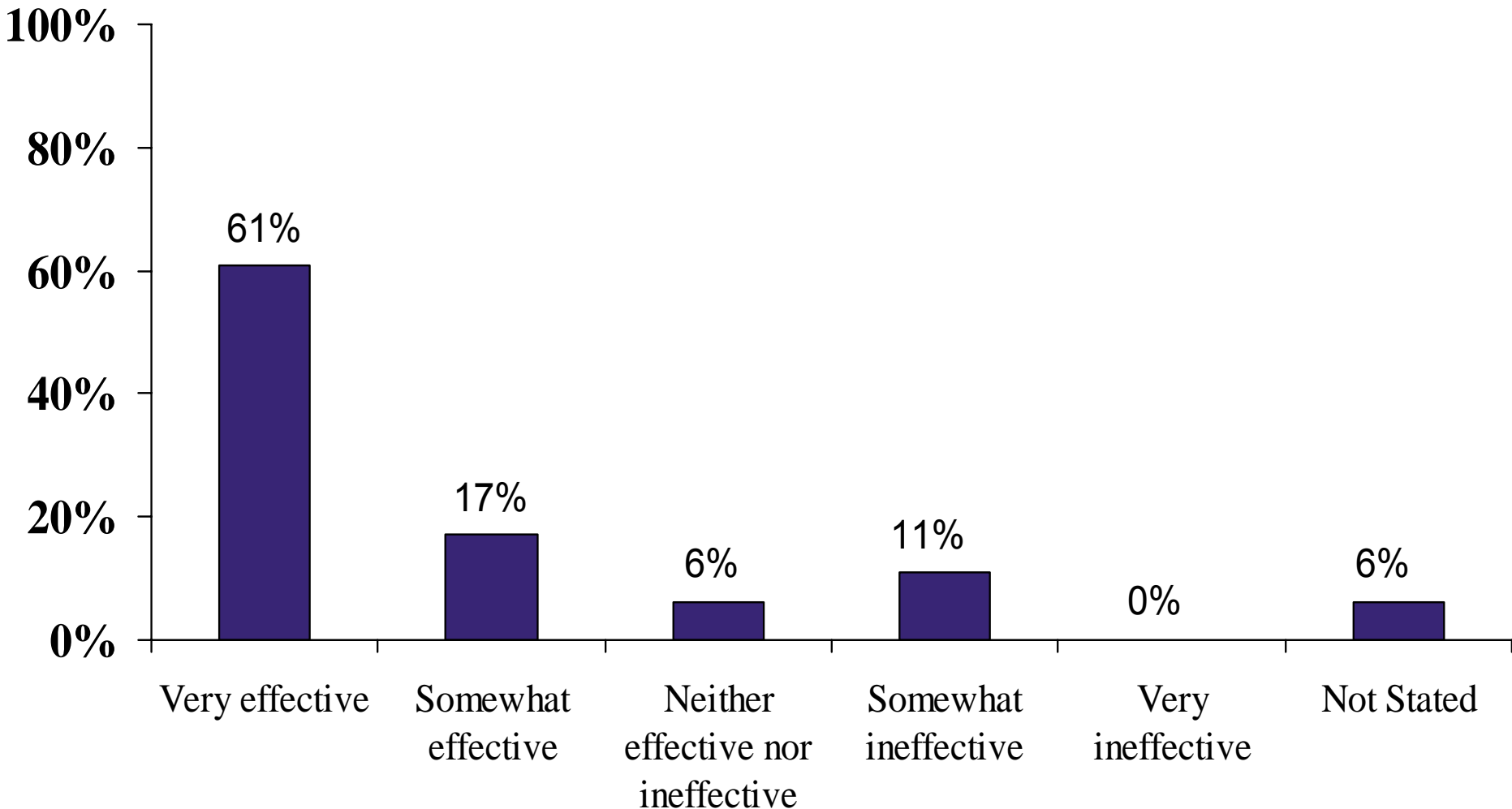
**(n=113)**



**When thinking about the AGLC website, how effective was the website in helping you get to or find the information you needed about the program?  
(n=18)**



**When thinking about the AGLC website, how effective was the information on the website in explaining the program to you?  
(n=18)**



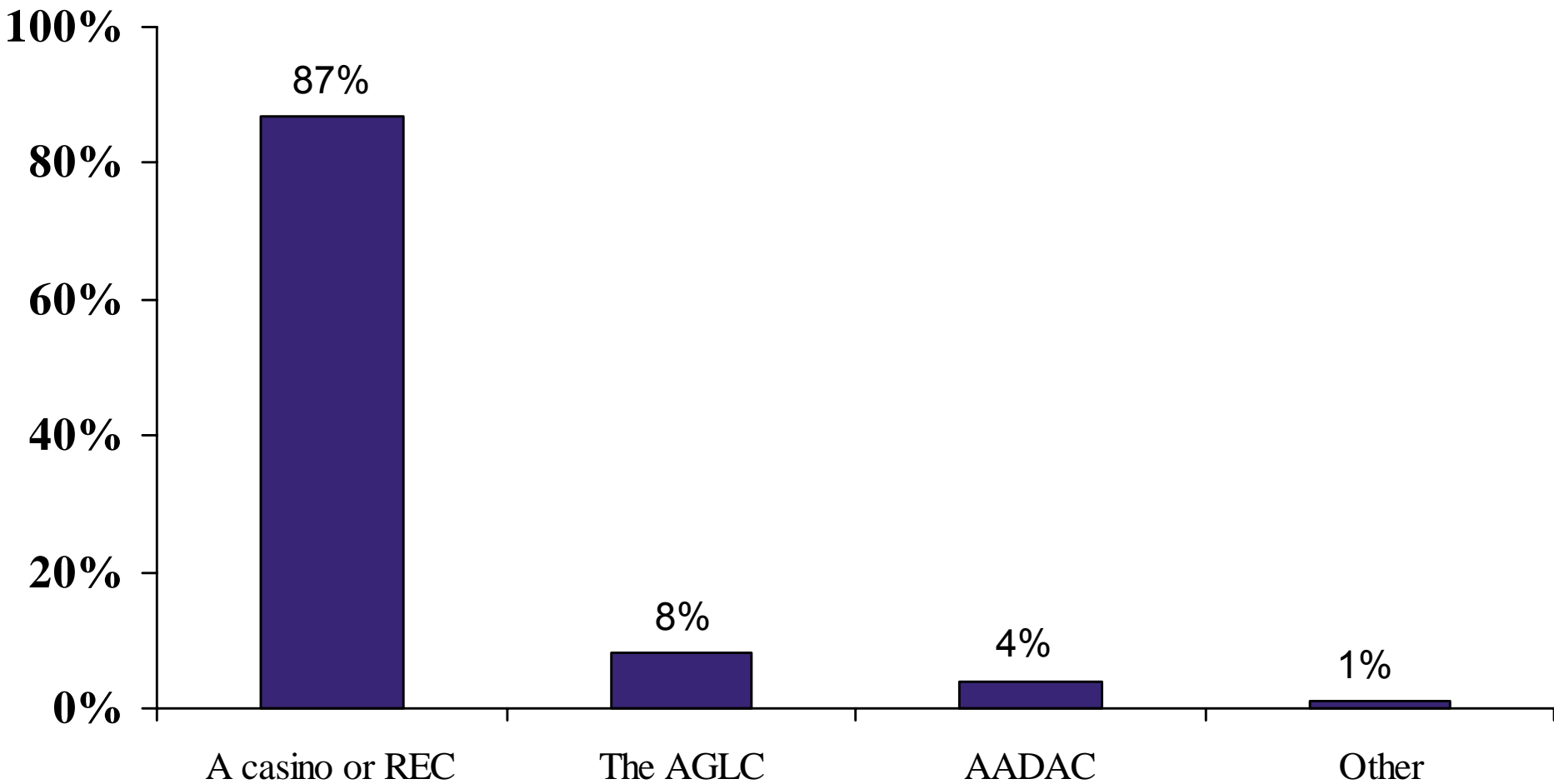
# Enrollment and Registration

<i>How long did the registration and enrollment process take?</i>				
	<i>Percent Of Respondents</i>			
		<i>Enrolled Through</i>		
		<i>All (n=300)</i>	<i>Casino/ REC (n=260)</i>	<i>AGLC (n=24)</i>
Mean number of minutes	12	12	18	13
1 to 5 minutes	31	32	17	25
6 to 10 minutes	31	33	17	17
11 to 15 minutes	14	13	17	25
16 to 20 minutes	9	8	17	8
More than 20 minutes	9	7	25	8
Don't Know/Not Stated	8	7	8	17

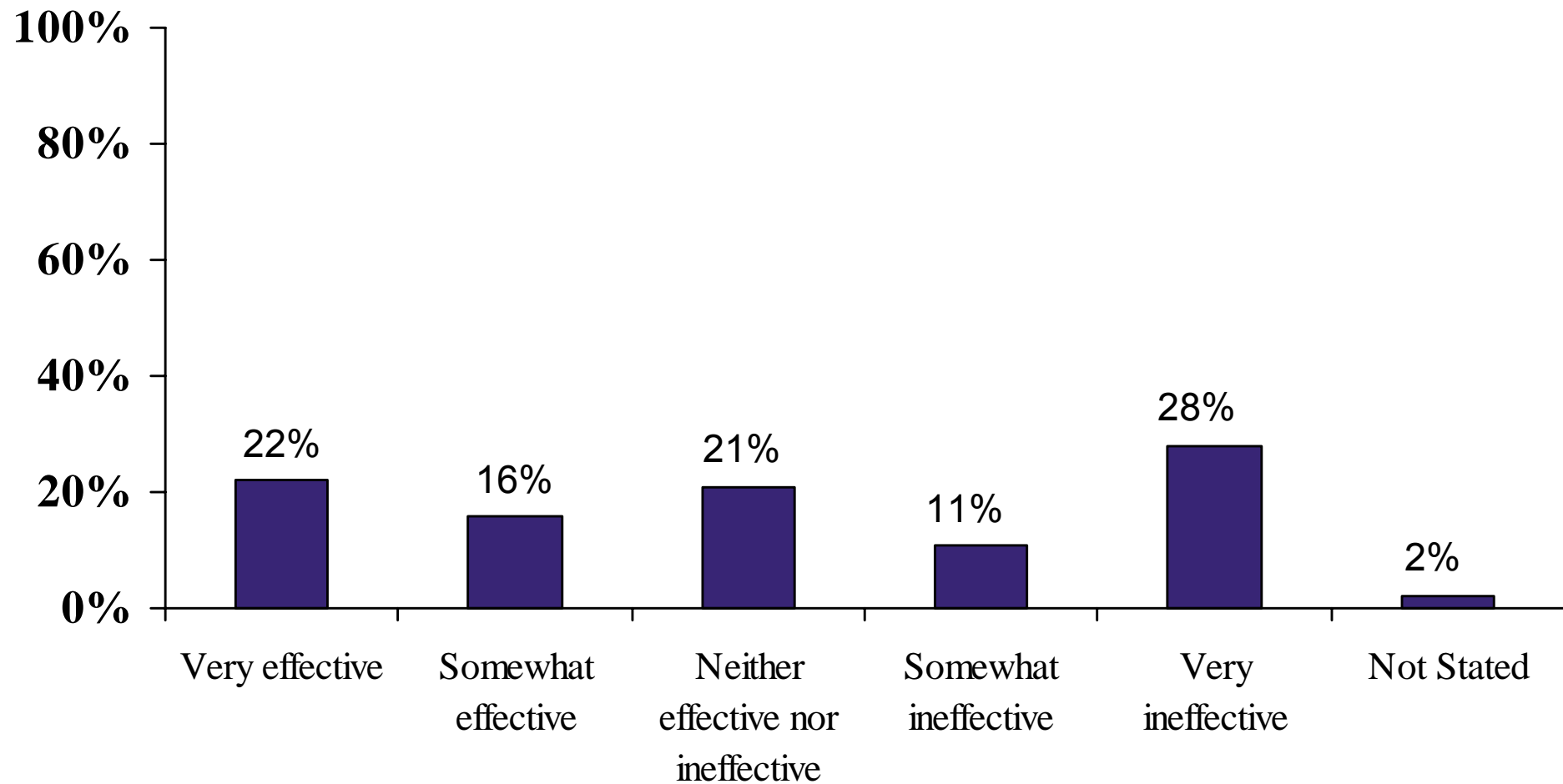
- Typical enrollment process took an average of 12 minutes
- AGLC process somewhat longer (18 minutes)
- Mixed views on the effectiveness of the 48 hour cooling off period



# How did you enroll in the program? Did you enroll through...



**How effective was the 48 hour waiting period in helping you decide that the program was the right decision for you?  
(n=197, or 66% of all respondents)**



# Effectiveness of people involved in enrollment process

*When thinking about the person or people who enrolled you in the program, how effective were they in...  
Explaining the program to you?*

	<i>Percent Of Respondents</i>			
		<i>Enrolled Through</i>		
		<i>All (n=300)</i>	<i>Casino/ REC (n=260)</i>	<i>AGLC (n=24)</i>
Very effective	41	39	50	58
Somewhat effective	25	26	21	25
Neither effective nor ineffective	11	10	8	17
Somewhat ineffective	7	8	4	0
Very ineffective	11	12	13	0
Not Stated	5	5	4	0

# Effectiveness of people involved in enrollment process

*When thinking about the person or people who enrolled you in the program, how effective were they in...  
Explaining your responsibilities as a participant in the program?*

	<i>Percent Of Respondents</i>			
		<i>Enrolled Through</i>		
		<i>All (n=300)</i>	<i>Casino/ REC (n=260)</i>	<i>AGLC (n=24)</i>
Very effective	43	42	50	50
Somewhat effective	26	27	29	25
Neither effective nor ineffective	9	9	8	25
Somewhat ineffective	7	8	0	0
Very ineffective	10	10	8	0
Not Stated	4	4	4	0

# Effectiveness of people involved in enrollment process

*When thinking about the person or people who enrolled you in the program, how effective were they in...  
Explaining the responsibilities of the casinos or RECs?*

	<i>Percent Of Respondents</i>			
		<i>Enrolled Through</i>		
		<i>All (n=300)</i>	<i>Casino/ REC (n=260)</i>	<i>AGLC (n=24)</i>
Very effective	38	37	46	42
Somewhat effective	25	26	17	25
Neither effective nor ineffective	7	7	8	17
Somewhat ineffective	10	10	13	8
Very ineffective	14	15	13	0
Not Stated	5	5	4	8

# Effectiveness of people involved in enrollment process

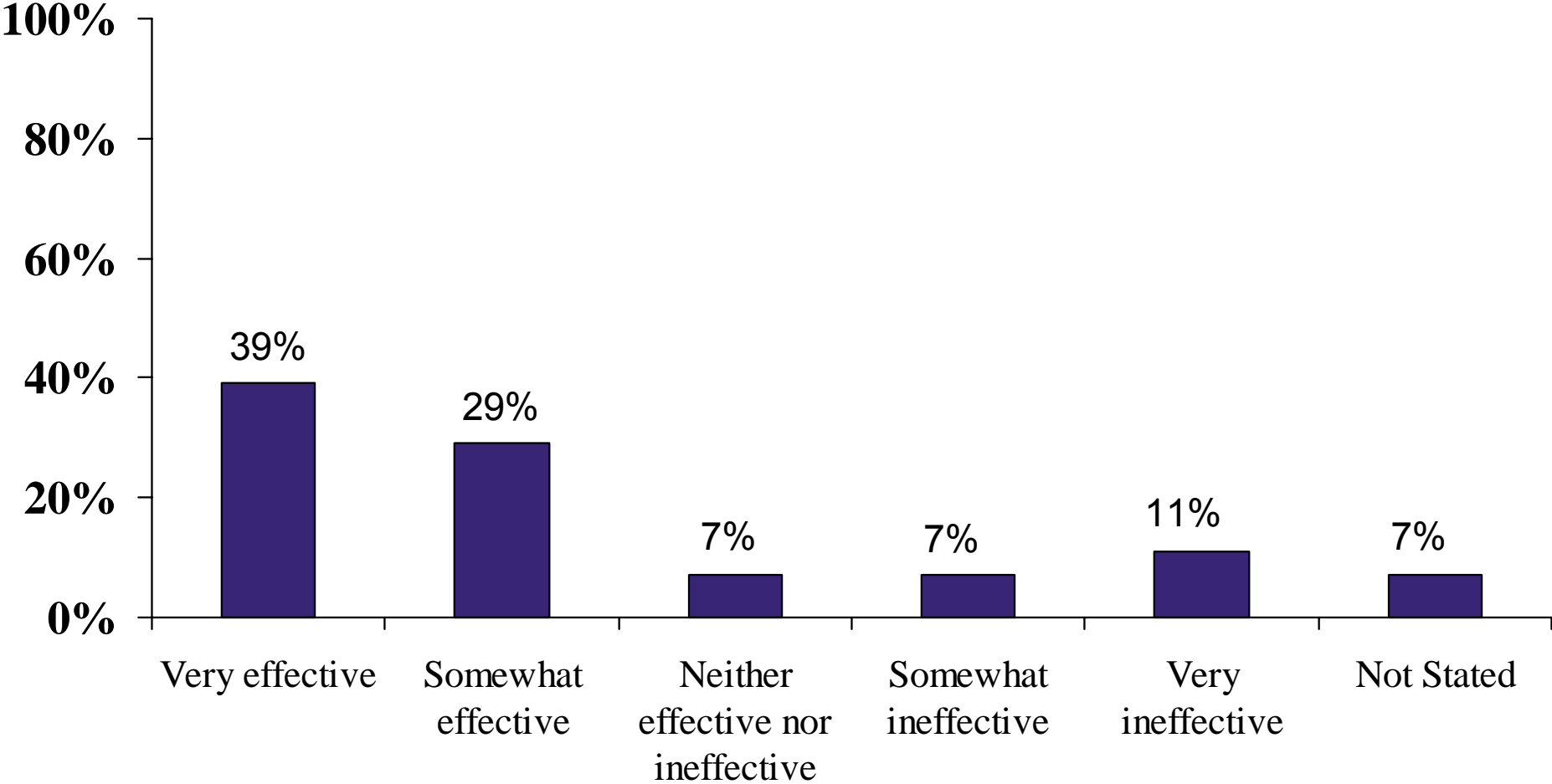
*When thinking about the person or people who enrolled you in the program, how effective were they in...  
Explaining the responsibilities of the AGLC?*

	<i>Percent Of Respondents</i>			
		<i>Enrolled Through</i>		
		<i>All (n=300)</i>	<i>Casino /REC (n=260)</i>	<i>AGLC (n=24)</i>
Very effective	34	33	42	33
Somewhat effective	24	22	38	42
Neither effective nor ineffective	13	14	8	8
Somewhat ineffective	7	7	4	8
Very ineffective	15	16	8	8
Not Stated	8	9	0	0

# Effectiveness of Staff Who Enrolled Them in the VSE Program

- 69% very or somewhat effective in explaining the participant's responsibilities in the program
- 66% very or somewhat effective in explaining the program to them
- 63% very or somewhat effective in explaining the responsibilities of the casinos or RECs
- 57% very or somewhat effective in explaining the responsibilities of the AGLC

# Overall, how effective is the program's current enrollment and registration process? (n=300)



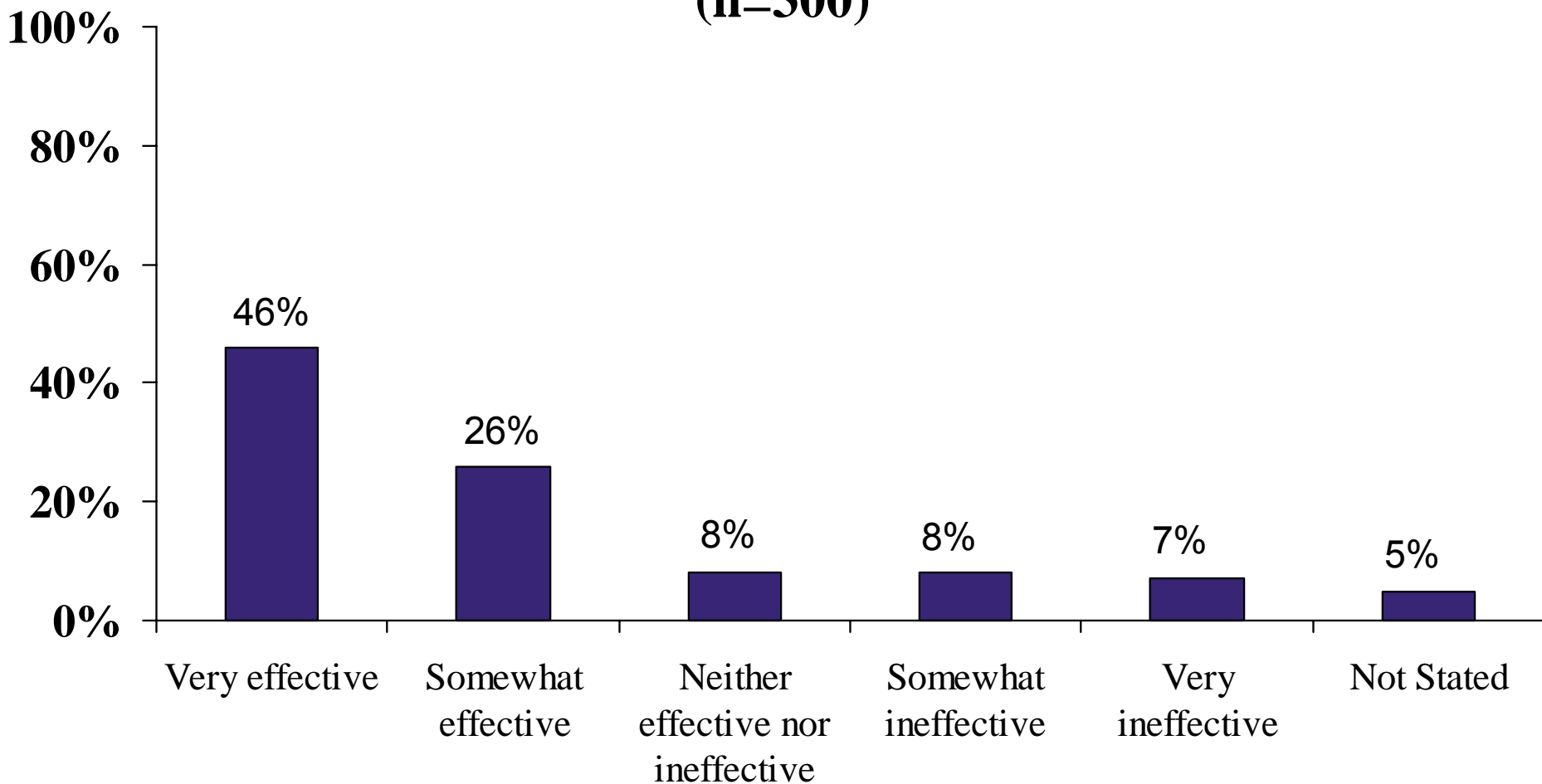


# Evaluation of VSE Agreement

- Most (72%) felt enrollment periods were effective
- 41% of those who felt the enrollment periods were ineffective would like to have the option of a lifetime ban

**Currently a person can enroll in the program for a minimum of 6 months, as well as for 1 year, 2 years, or 3 years as the maximum. In your view, how effective are the current program enrollment periods for you?**

**(n=300)**

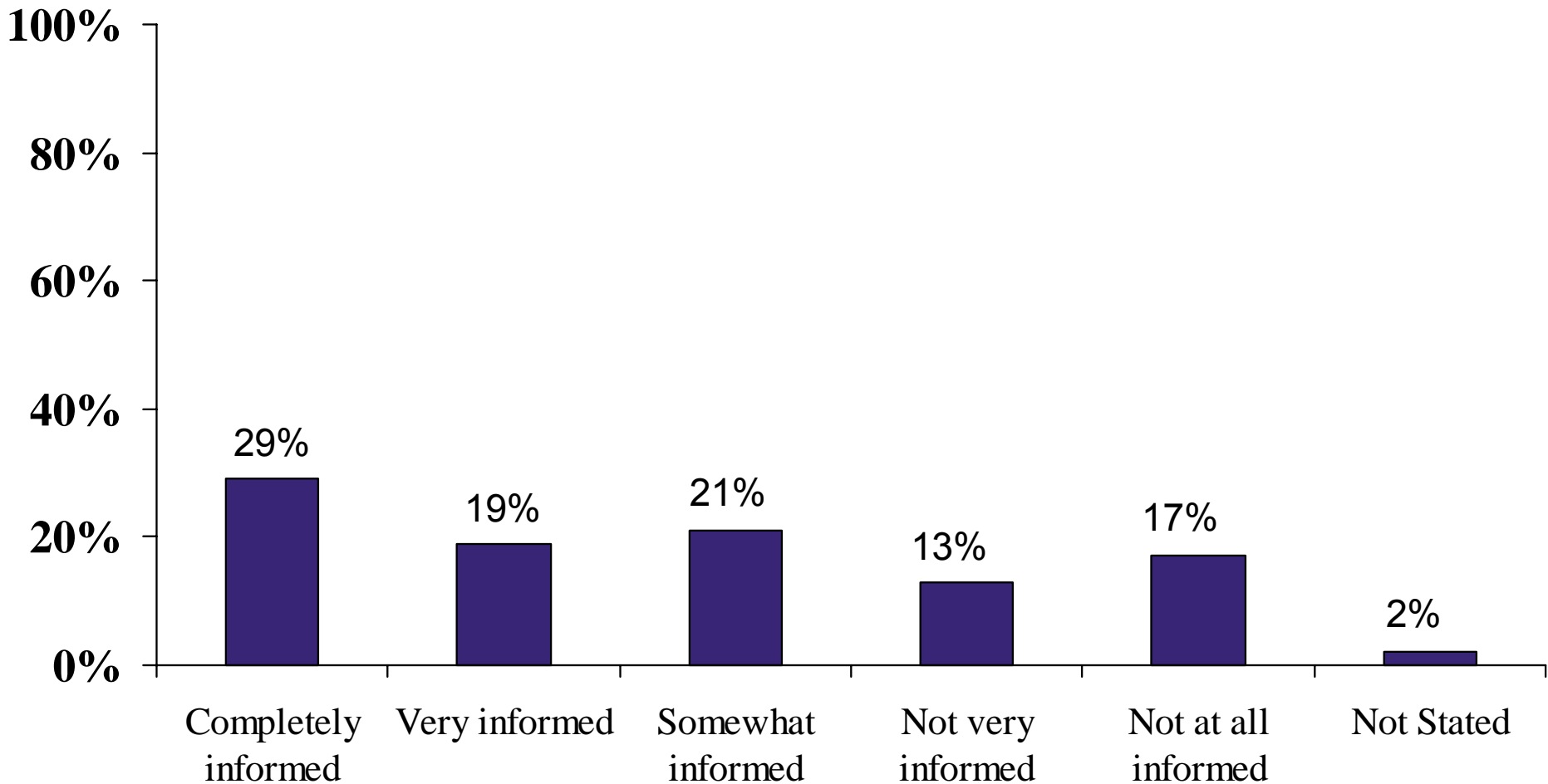


# What would be the best enrollment period for you?

- 41% lifetime
- 13% less than a year
- 7% one year or more
- 13% other time periods
- 7% none
- 20% don't know

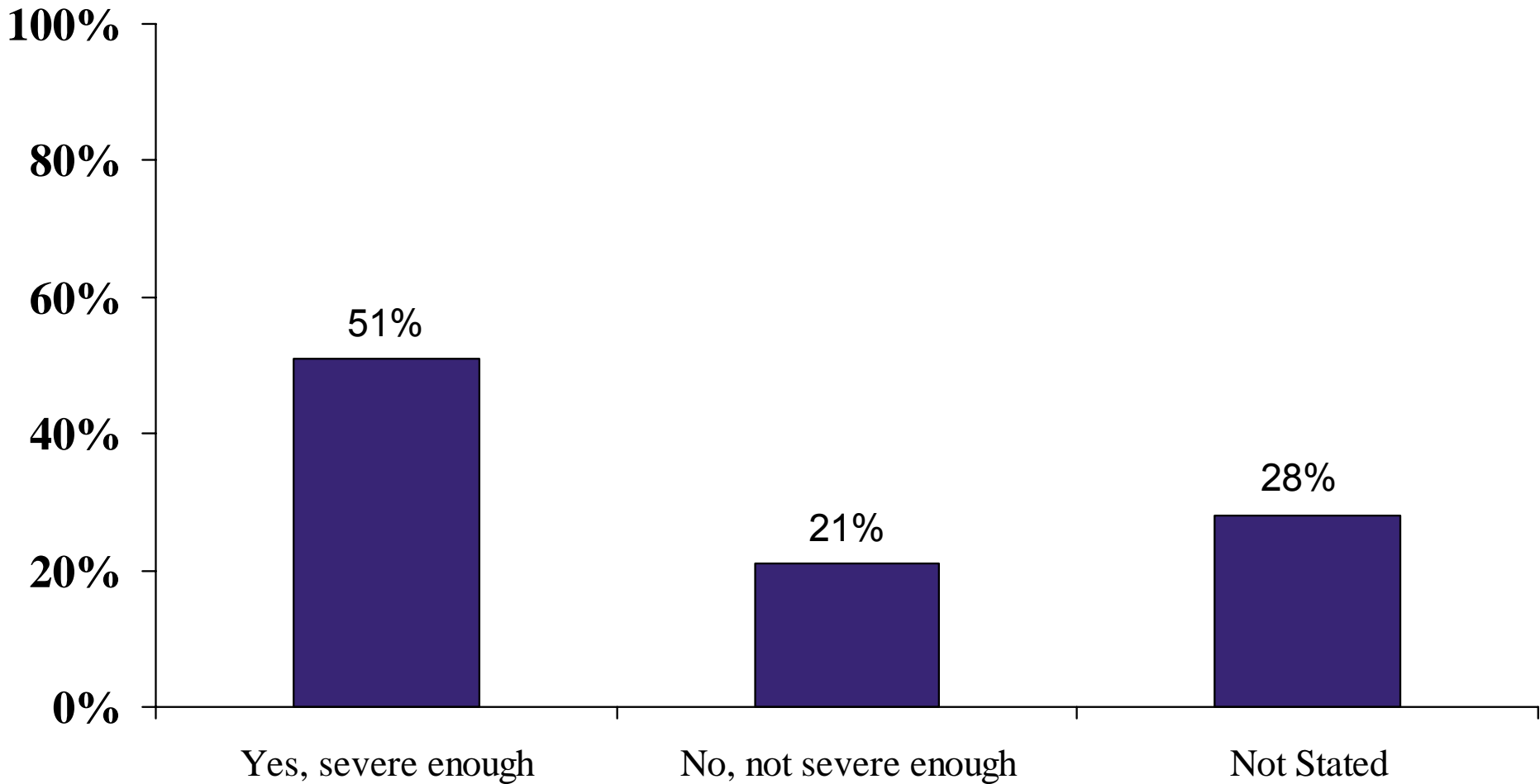
# How informed do you feel about the penalties for breaking the program agreement?

(n=300)

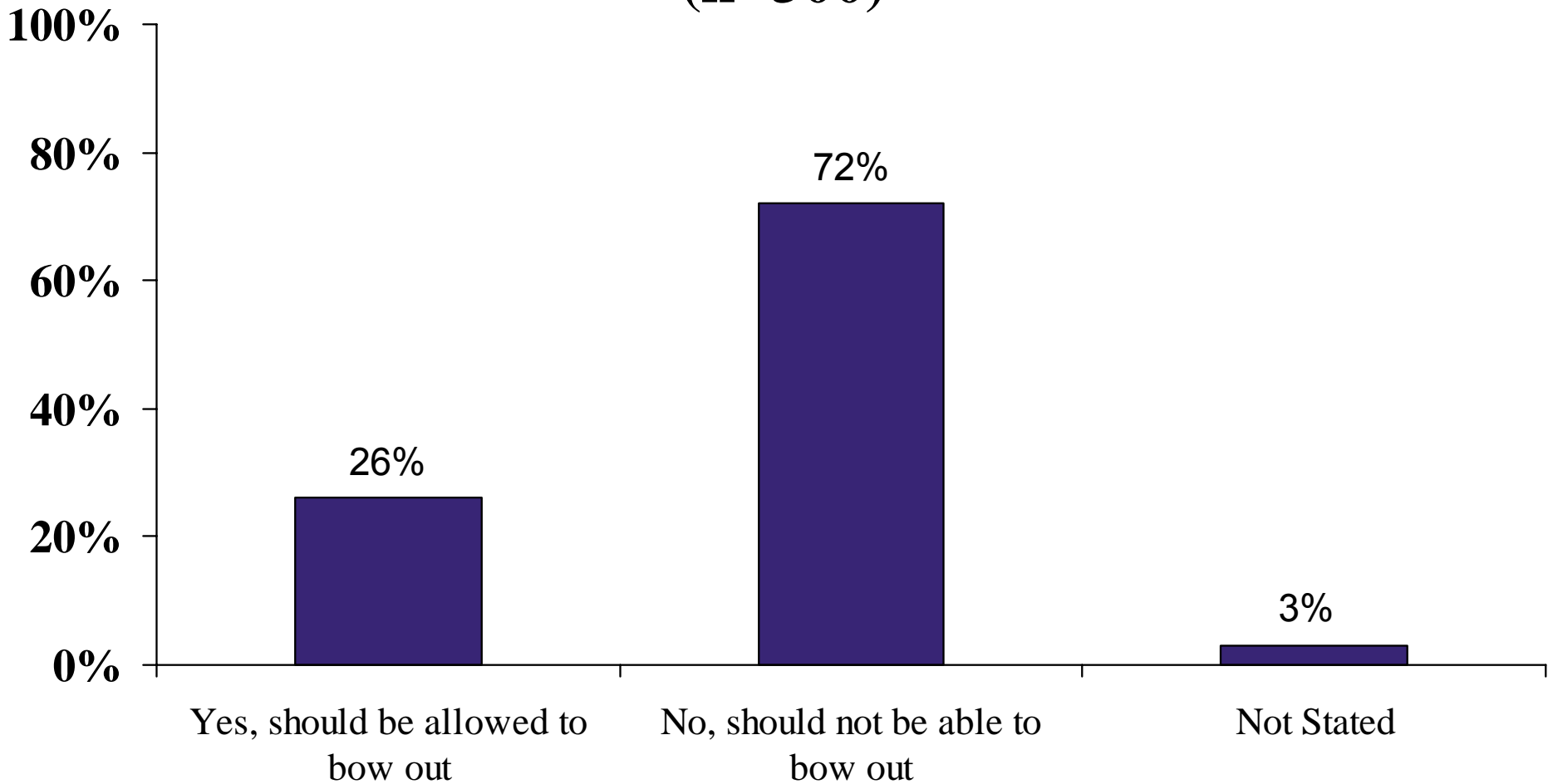


# Do you think the penalties are severe enough?

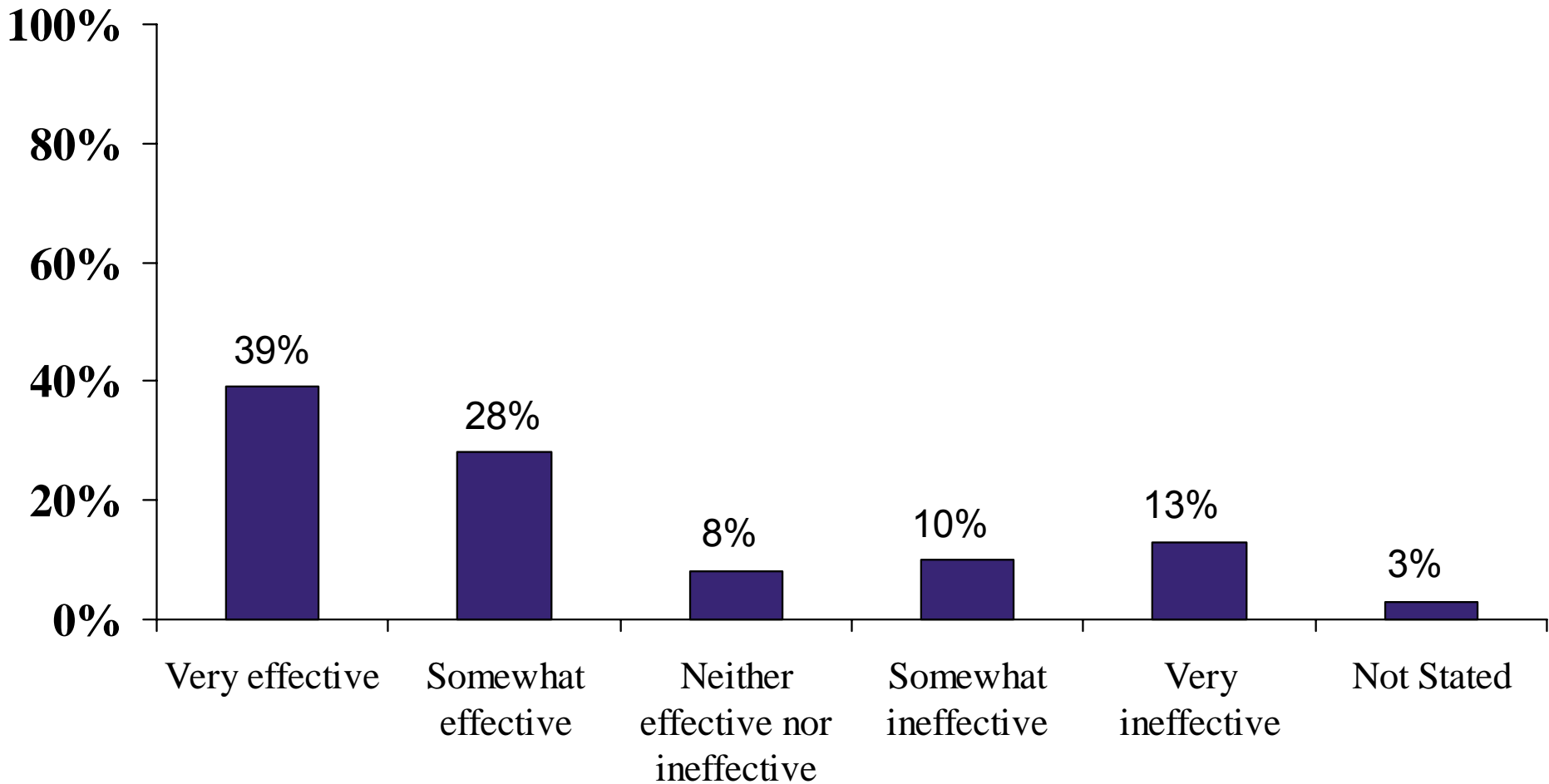
(n=300)



**In your view, should participants be allowed to bow out of the program prior to the agreement expiry date?**  
**(n=300)**



# How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the current VSE agreement in doing what you expected it would do? (n=300)



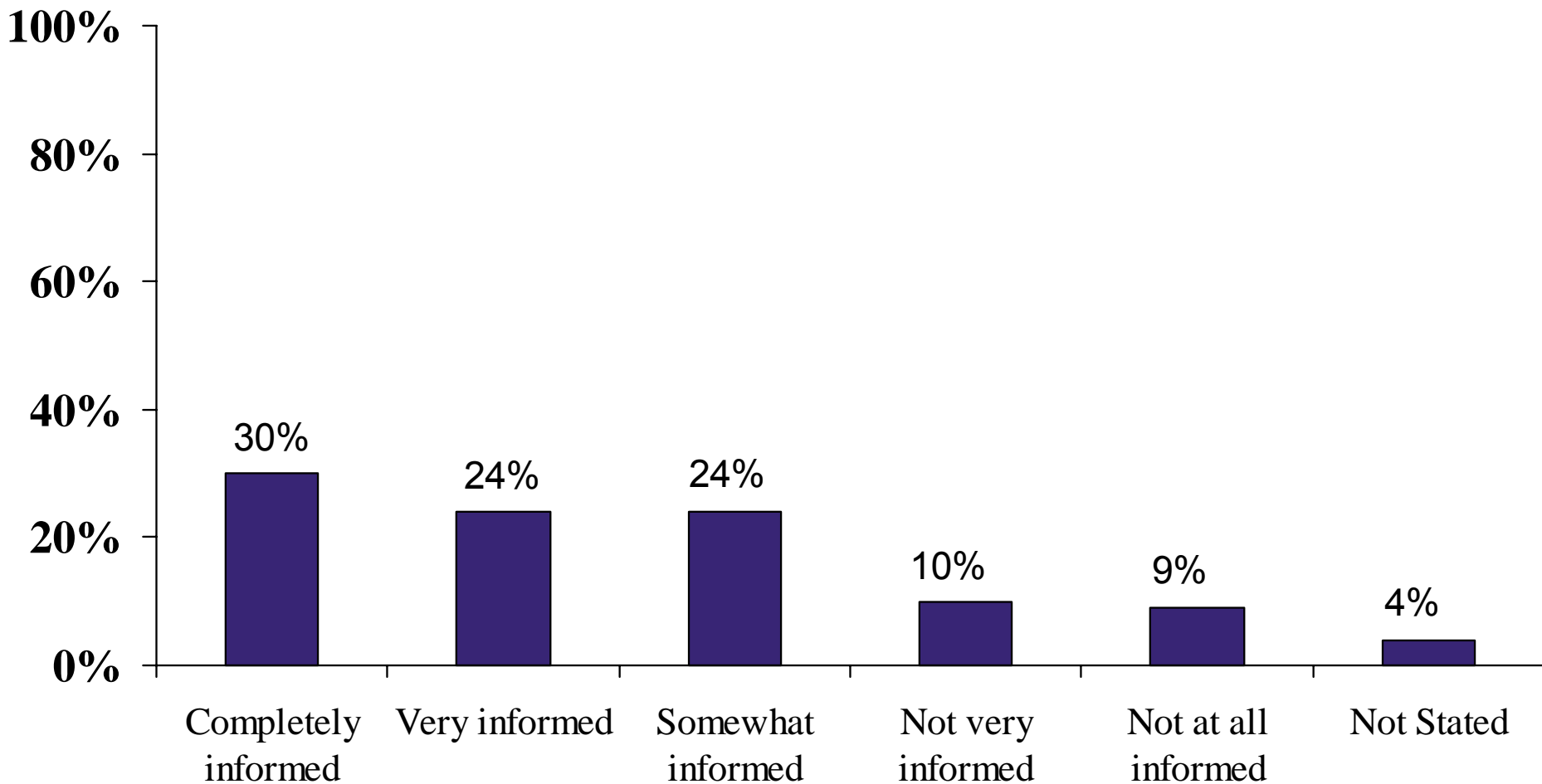
# Ratings of Decision Criteria to Enter the Program

*Please rate the importance of each of the following in your decision to enter the VSE program. How important...*

	<i>Mean Rating*</i>	<i>Percent Of Respondents (n=300)</i>			
		<i>Extremely or Very Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Not Very or Not at all Important</i>	<i>Not Stated</i>
Was it for you to stop gambling altogether	4.3	81	14	3	2
Was the threat of personal consequences	3.9	70	14	12	3
Were other people, including friends and family	3.7	65	14	18	3
Were casino or REC staff	2.2	22	14	54	11



**Overall, how informed do you feel about the problem gambling services available in Alberta, such as AADAC or Gamblers Anonymous?  
(n=300)**



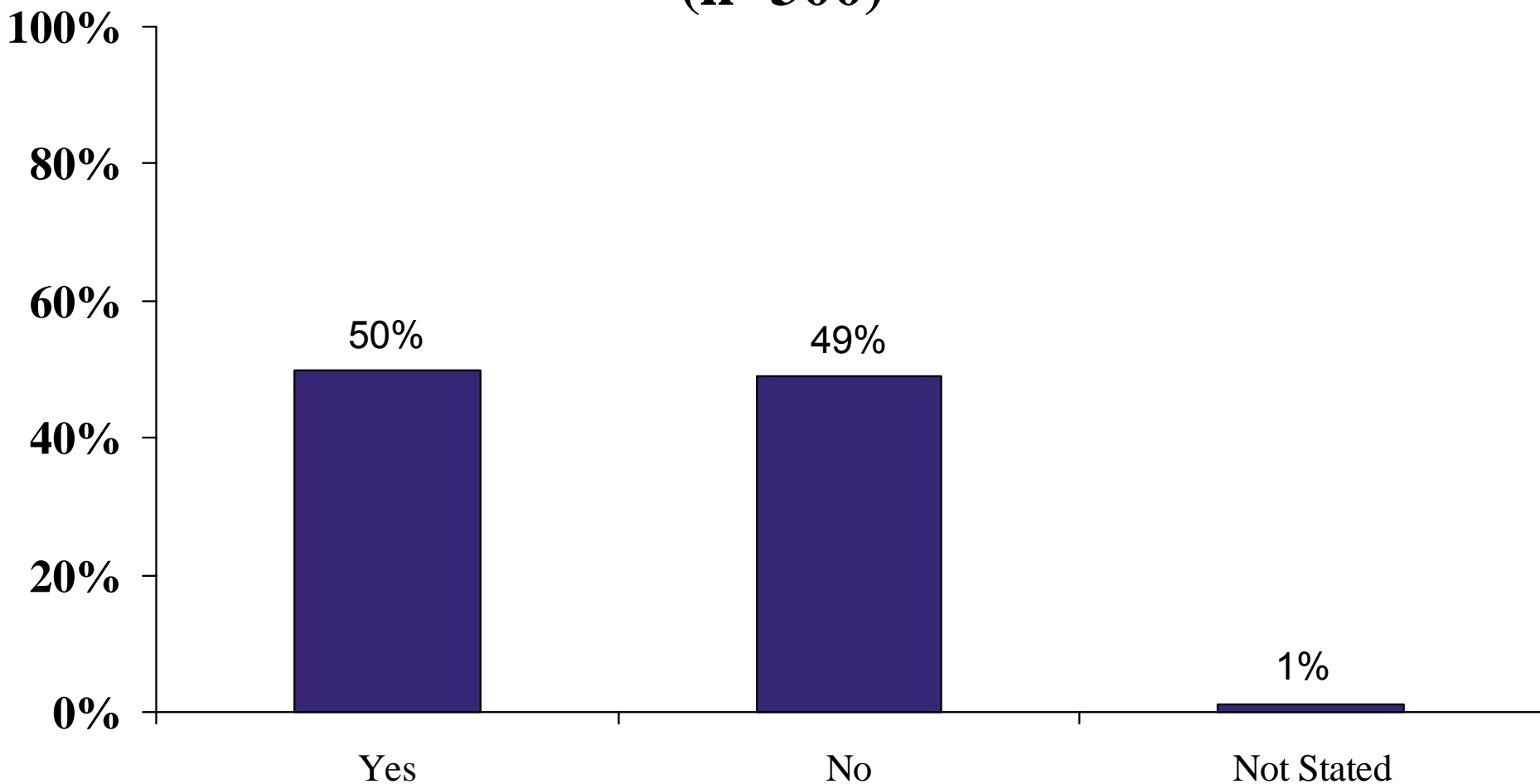
# Who Influenced Their Decision the Most

- 55% no one or myself
- 25% spouse or partner
- 8% other relative
- 6% friend
- 4% other

# Experiences While In The program

- Just over 50% of VSE clients breach their agreement
- Clients that breach their agreement do it a lot

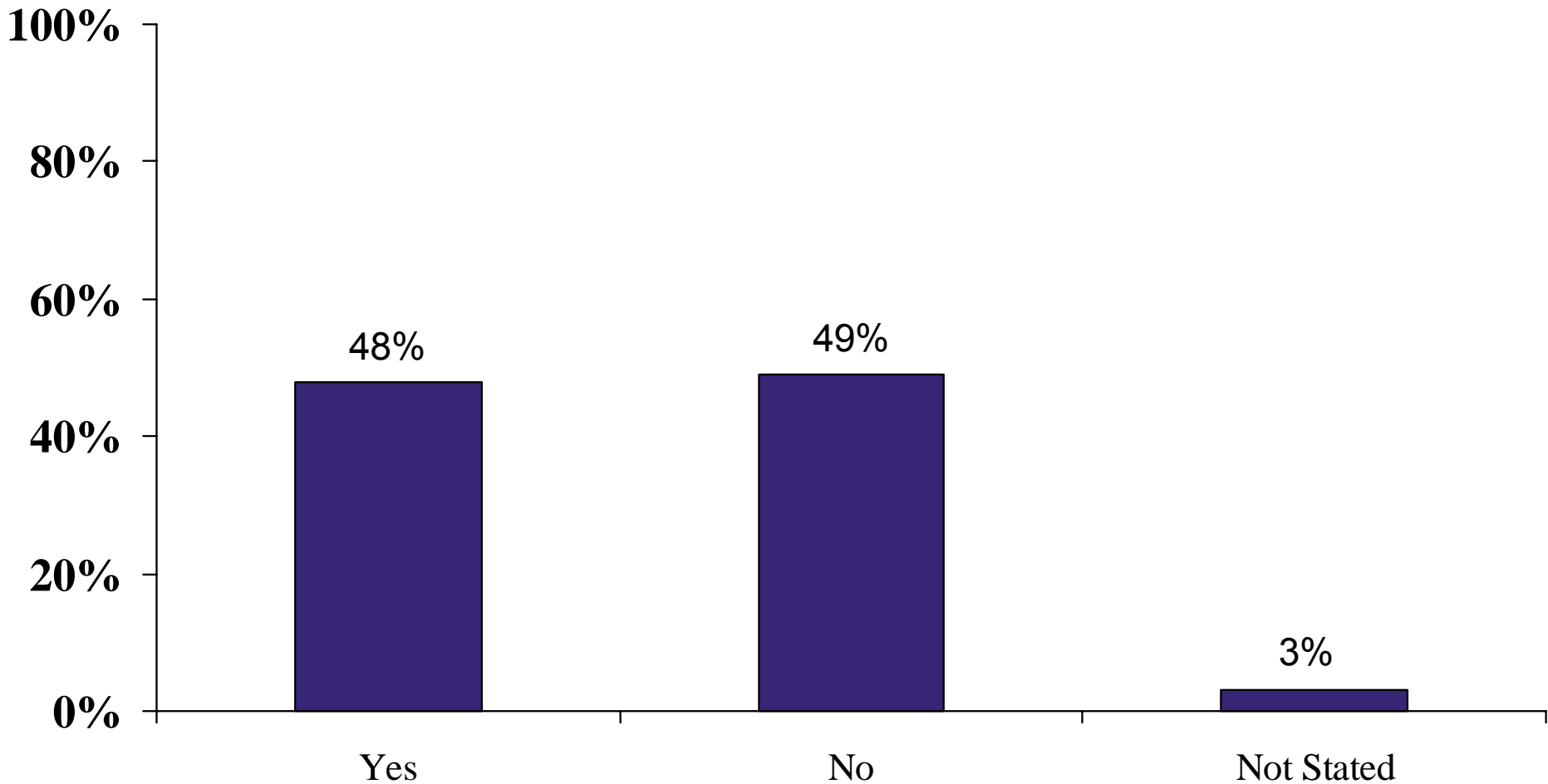
**While enrolled in the program, did you enter or try to enter any Alberta casinos or racing entertainment centres?  
(n=300)**



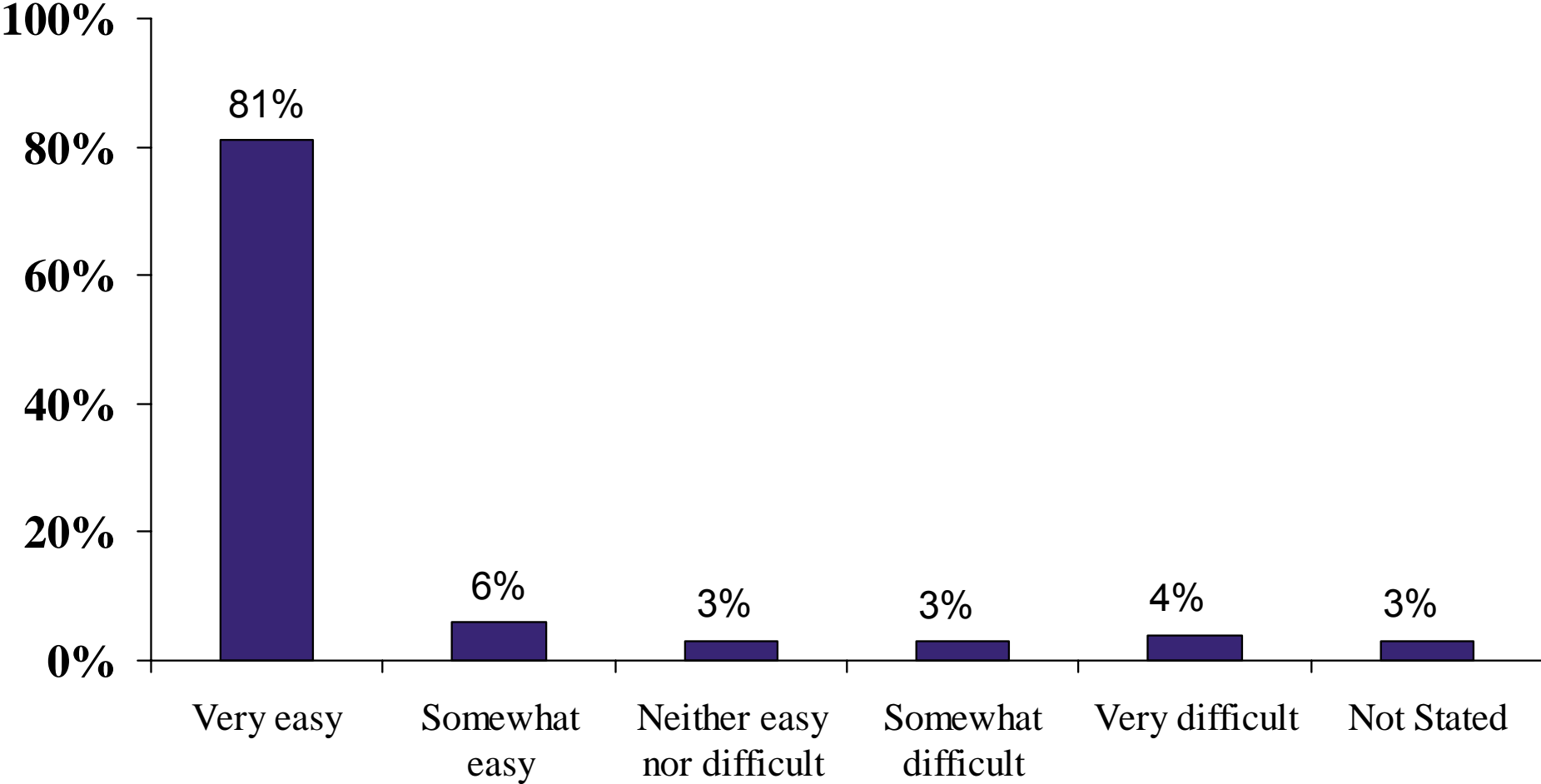
# How many times did you enter or try to enter while enrolled in the program? (n=151)

<i>About how many times did you enter or try to enter while enrolled in the program?</i>			
	<i>Percent Of Respondents (n=151)</i>		
	<i>Estimated Total Times</i>	<i>Times Where Enrolled</i>	<i>Times Where Not Enrolled</i>
Mean	33	13	28
1 time	14	16	16
2 times	17	12	9
3 times	7	5	5
4 -5 times	11	9	10
6-10 times	13	8	7
11-25 times	11	3	8
26-50 times	5	1	5
51 to 100 times	9	3	6
More than 100 times	3	2	3
None	1	31	18
Not stated	8	11	14

**While enrolled in the program, were you ever recognized and asked to leave after entering or trying to enter an Alberta casino or racing entertainment centre?  
(n=151)**



**How easy or difficult was it to gain entry into the casinos or racing entertainment centres while enrolled in the program?  
(n=151)**

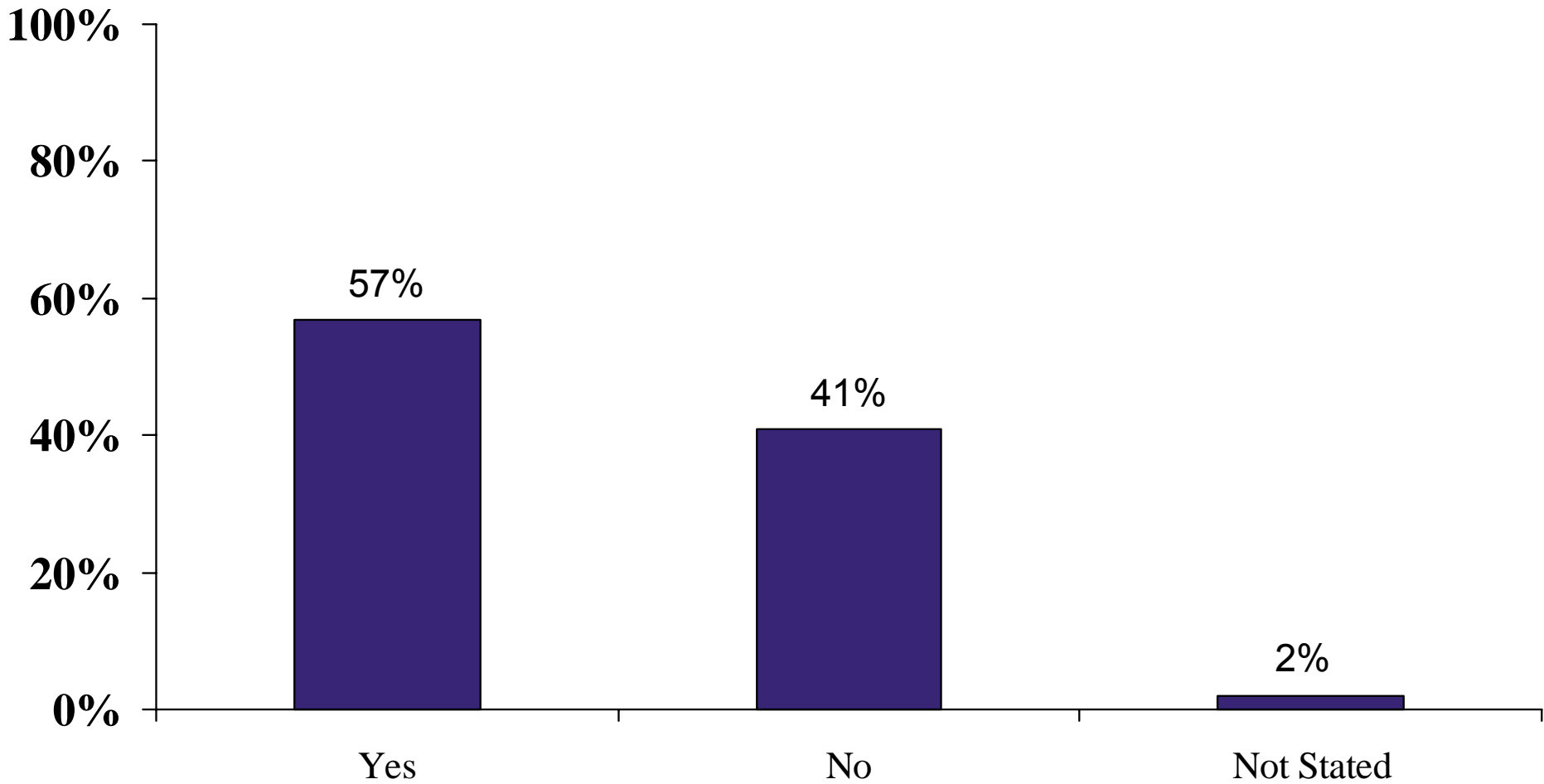


# Year First Enrolled in the Program (n=300)

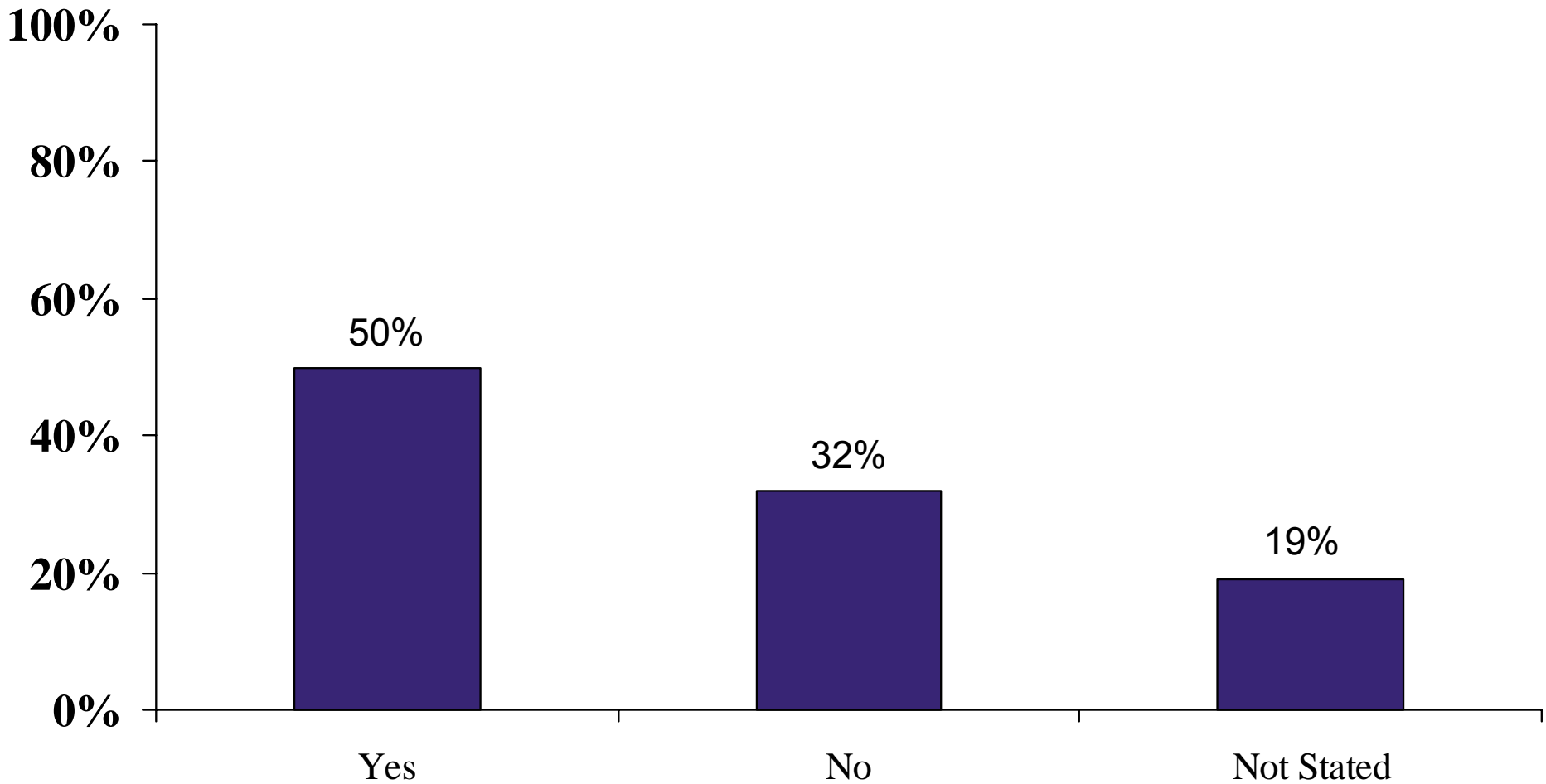
- 15% in 2006
- 21% in 2005
- 20% in 2004
- 20% in 2003
- 8% in 2002
- 11% said prior to 2002



**Are you currently enrolled in the program?  
(n=300)**



**Upon completion of your current program agreement, do  
you plan to re-enroll in the program?  
(n=171)**



# For how long? (n=85)

- 6% for 6 months
- 5% for 1 year
- 11% for 2 years
- 73% for 3 years

# Age Start Gambling at Casinos/RECs

- 36% under 25 years
- 18% 25 to 34 years
- 21% 35 to 44 years
- 13% 45 to 54 years
- 6% 55 years or older

# Favourite Games

- 57% Slot machines
- 18% Black Jack/Extreme 21
- 15% Poker/Texas Hold 'Em

# When Usually Played

- Most (at least 55%) played on any day of the week, with Saturday being the day mentioned most often(68%)
- They usually played at the following times of
  - 32% 10 am to 2 pm
  - 43% 2 pm to 6 pm
  - 58% 6 pm to 10 pm
  - 50% 10 pm to 2 am
  - 19% 2 am to 10 am

# How Often Usually Played

- 15% daily
- 60% 2 to 6 times per week
- 12% about once per week
- 8% 2 to 3 times per month
- 1% about once per month

# Average Hours and Expenditures Each Time They Played

- 4.5 hours
- \$608



# Who They Normally Went With

- 70% went alone
- 13% went with friends or coworkers
- 12% went with their spouse or partner

# What Attracted Them to Where They Played Most Often

- 41% location/convenience/easy to access
- 14% atmosphere/to relax/escape/familiar
- 9% making money/winning
- 8% friendship/treated well/staff are great
- 6% the games/machines

# Recent Gambling Activities

- 64% Lottery games
- 30% VLTs
- 15% Bingo
- 13% Cards or dice for money, but not in a casino/REC
- 7% Sports betting
- 6% Games of skill for money, such as pool, darts, or golf

# When they Gambled, Most Respondents Experienced the Following Most or All of the Time...

- Felt guilty about the way they gamble or what happens when they gamble
- Felt they might have a problem with gambling
- Have gone back another day to try and win back the money they lost
- Have bet more than they really could afford

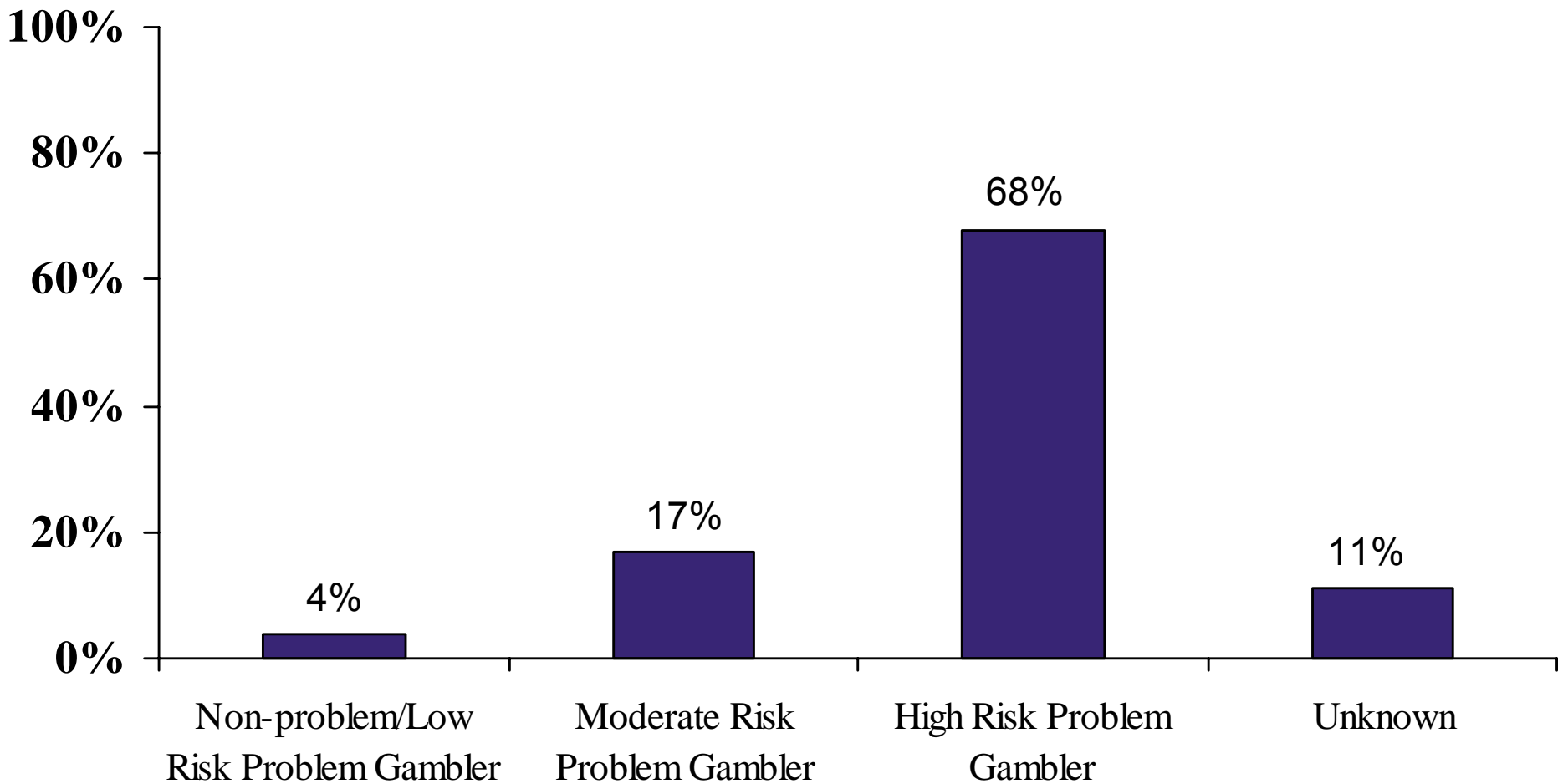
# When they Gambled, Most Experienced the Following at Least Some of the Time...

- Their gambling caused them health problems, including stress and anxiety
- Their gambling caused financial problems for them or their household
- They needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement
- People criticized their betting or told them that they have a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not they thought it was true

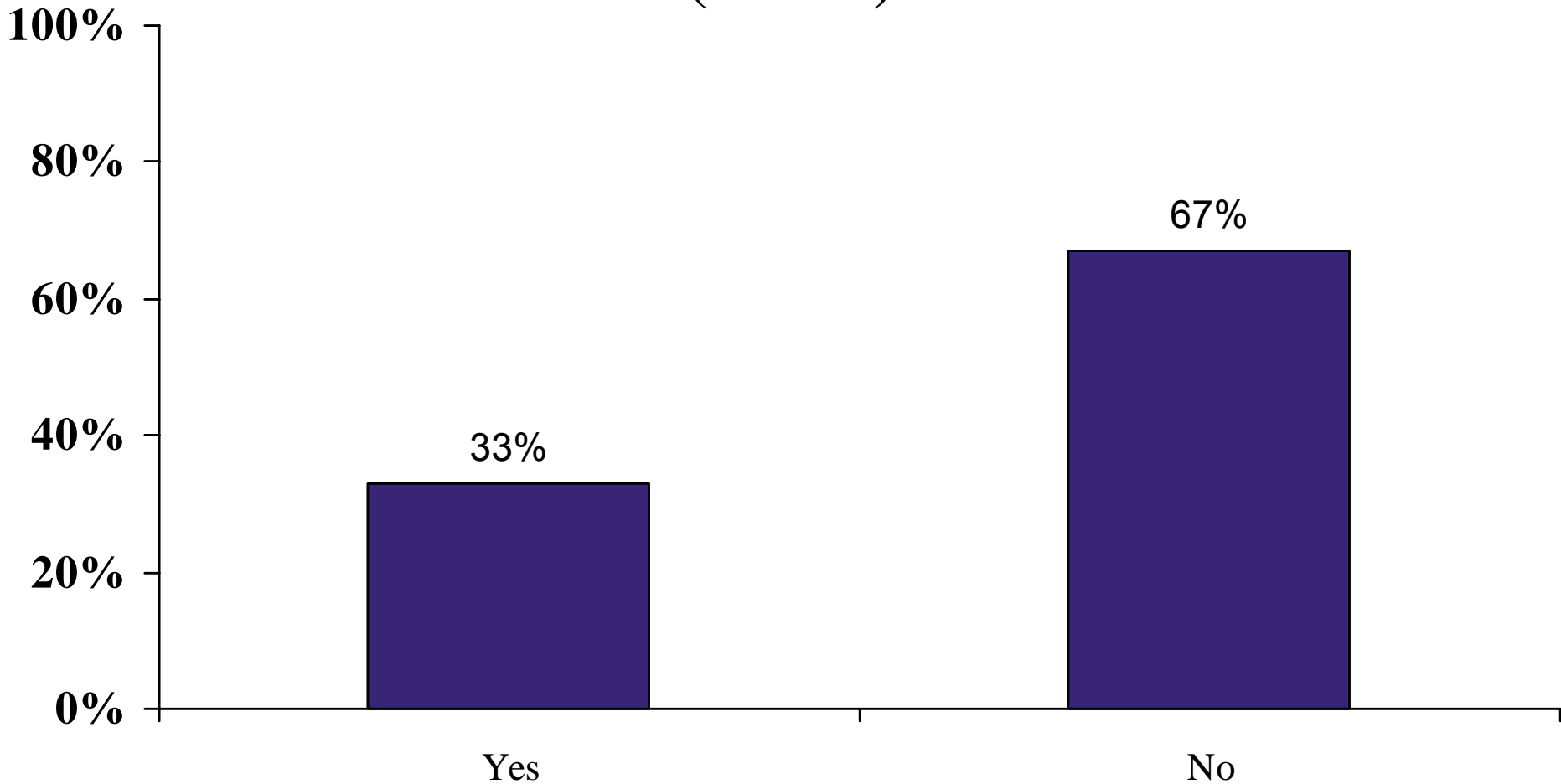
# When they Gambled, Half Experienced the Following at Least Some of the Time...

- They borrowed money or sold things to get money to gamble (51% never and 49% at least some of the time)

# Problem Gambling Risk Level (n=300)



**Have you used any type of program to help deal with your gambling related problems since enrolling in the program**  
**(n=300)**





# Which program or programs have you used? (n=98)

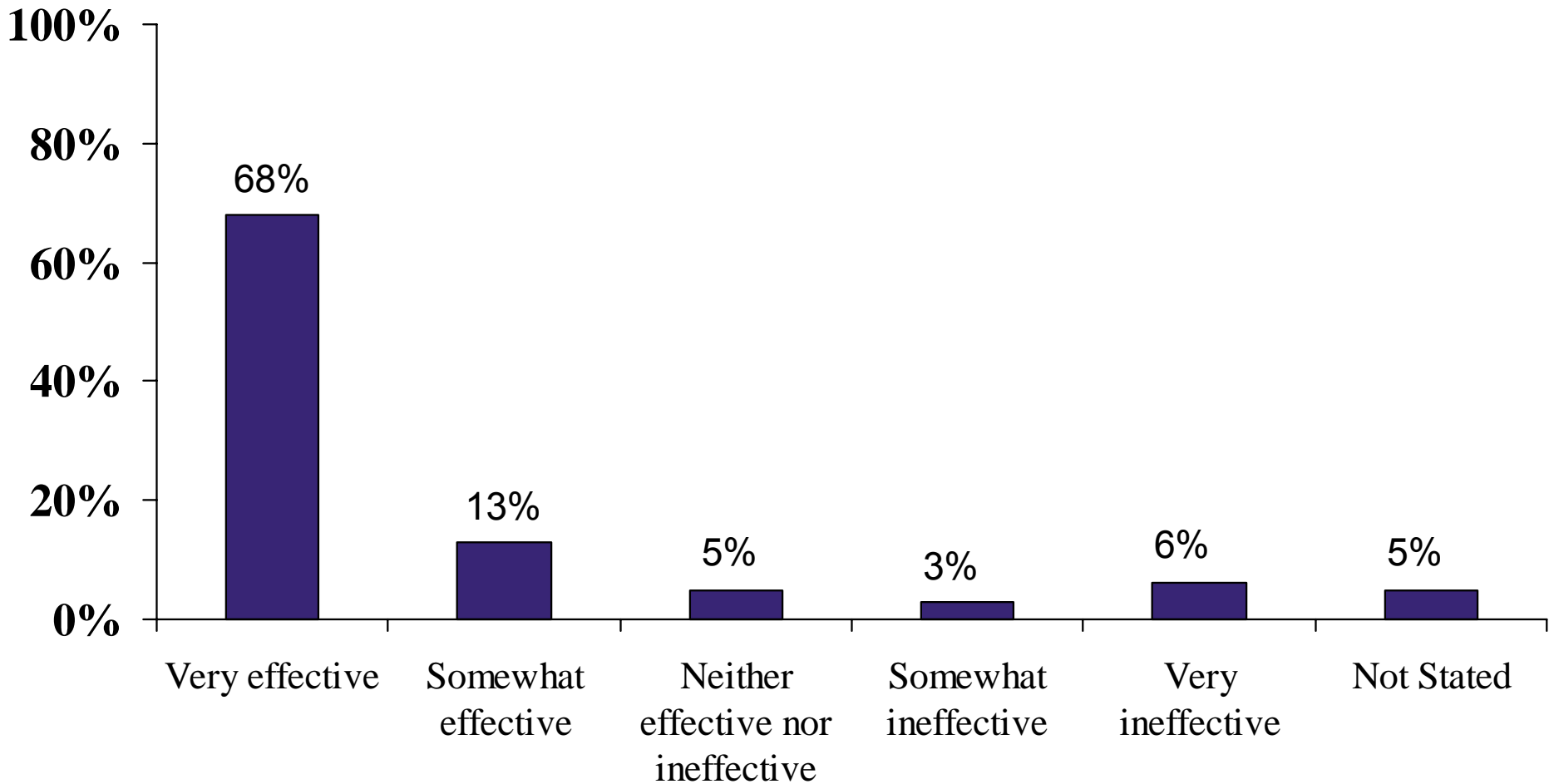
- 52% Gamblers Anonymous
- 44% AADAC
- 12% Other counseling such as with a minister or priest
- 10% Other addiction services
- 19% Other programs/services

# Comments on Program Weaknesses (n=300)

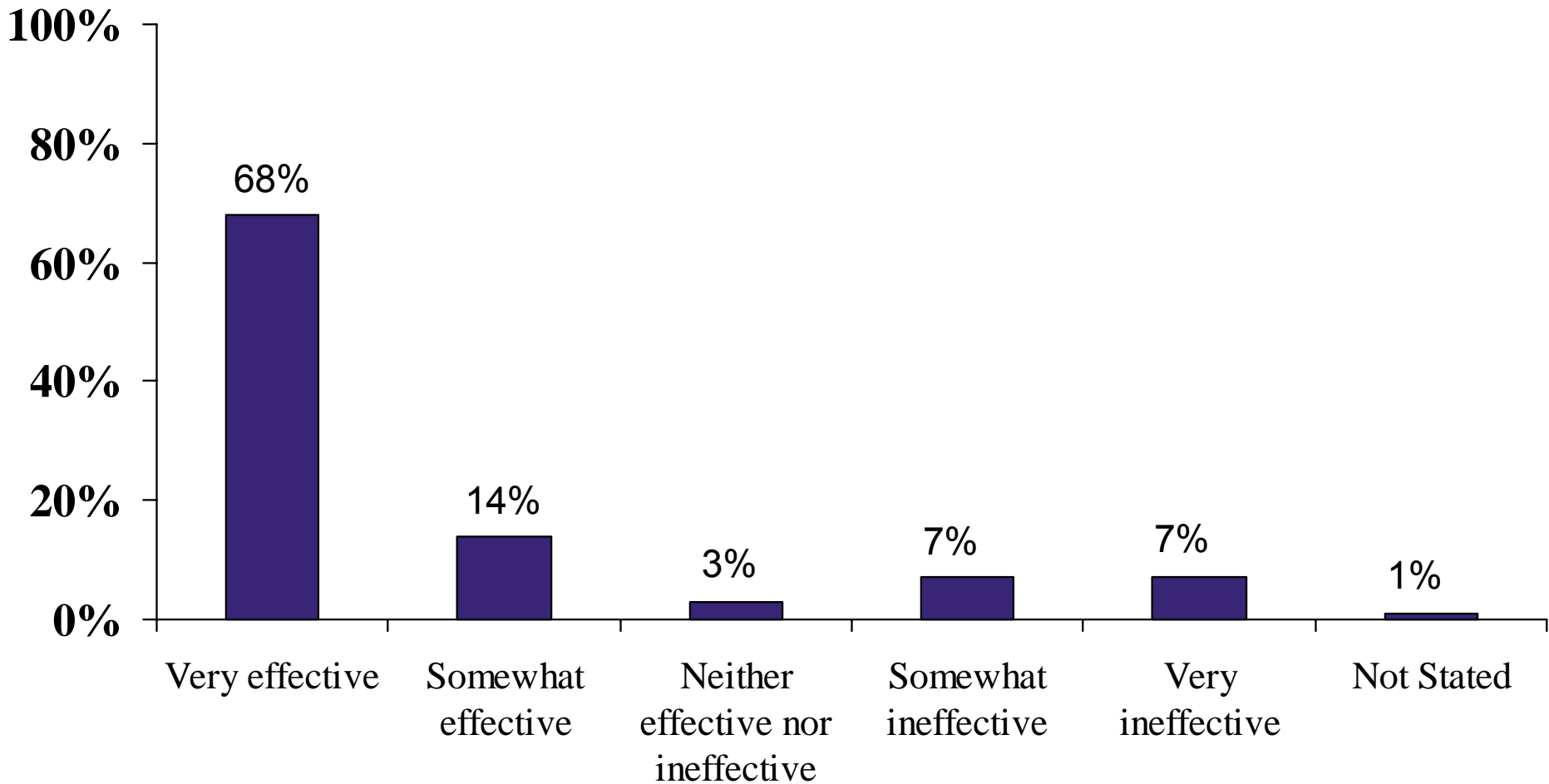
*Do you have any comments on the “weaknesses” of the current Casino/REC VSE program?*

	<i>Percent Of Respondents (n=300)</i>
They are not able to recognize people right away/many people on the program enter the casino	20
They should circulate information about participants to all casinos/staff should check photos everyday	13
The enforcement or high security measures are not met	8
Waive the 48 hour waiting period/don't give the person a chance to leave and think about it	6
It is not effective in the casinos outside of the one where you signed up	6
The consequences for entering should not be a criminal offence	5
Gambling is everywhere, not just at casinos (e.g. off-track betting)	5
They should let everybody know about it/It should be advertised	5
It doesn't address real needs of gamblers/should follow-up/recommend or supply counselling	4
Enrollment period should be shorter than 6 months/3 years is too long	4
The system feeds off problem gamblers/commercials portray casinos as family atmosphere	4
It is a personal decision/it only works if they are seniors	4
Need more confidentiality/let people enroll in private	3
There should be more information about services available for people enrolled in the program	3
Train more staff	2
Make enrollment easier/website not easily navigated	2
Get rid of casinos/gambling should not be funded by government	2
Nobody cares	1
Other (less than 1% per item)	1
Don't Know/Not stated	36

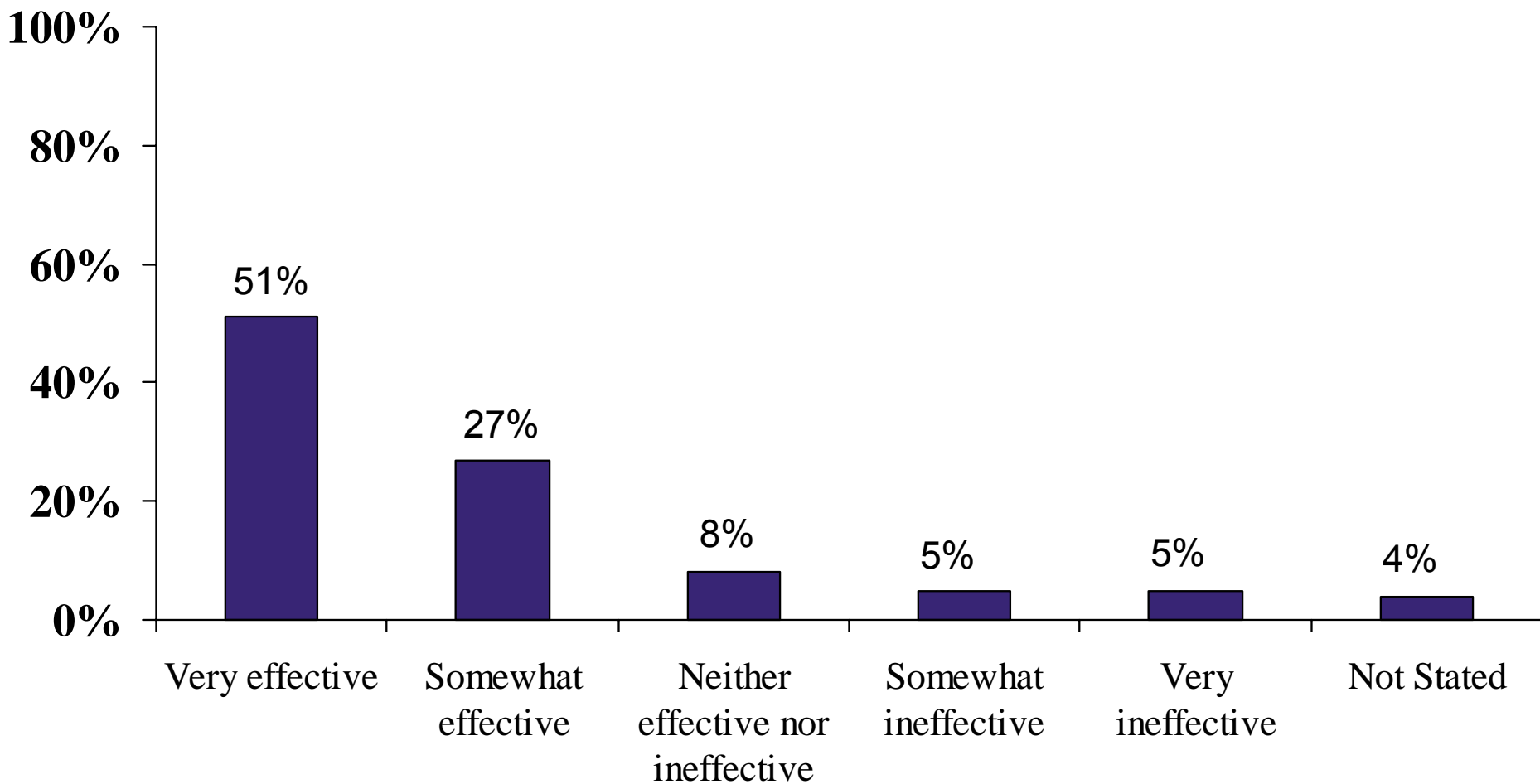
# How effective would it be to have facial recognition software at all Alberta casinos and racing entertainment centres? (n=300)



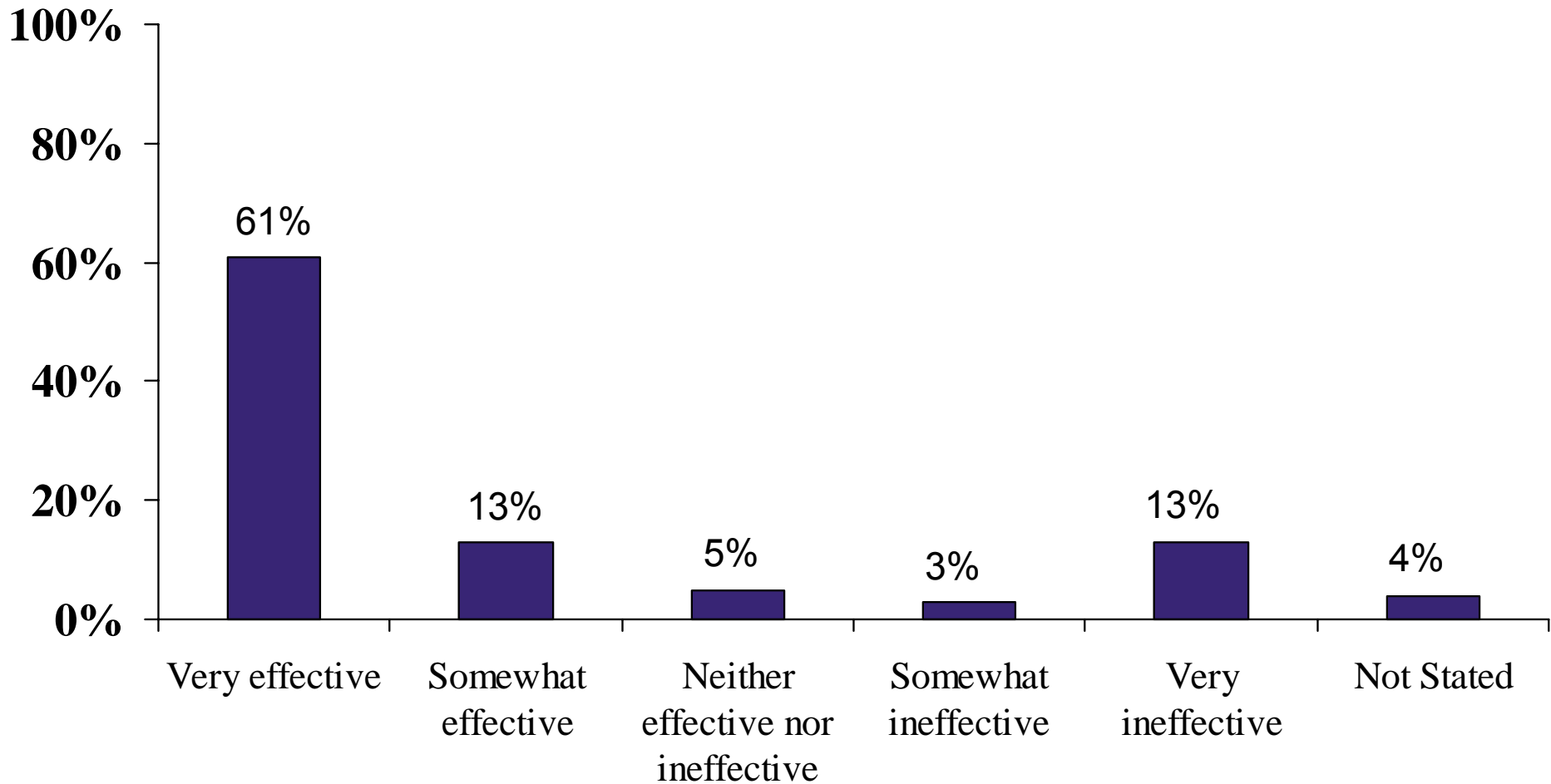
# How effective would it be to have a mandatory ID check at all Alberta casinos and racing entertainment centres? (n=300)



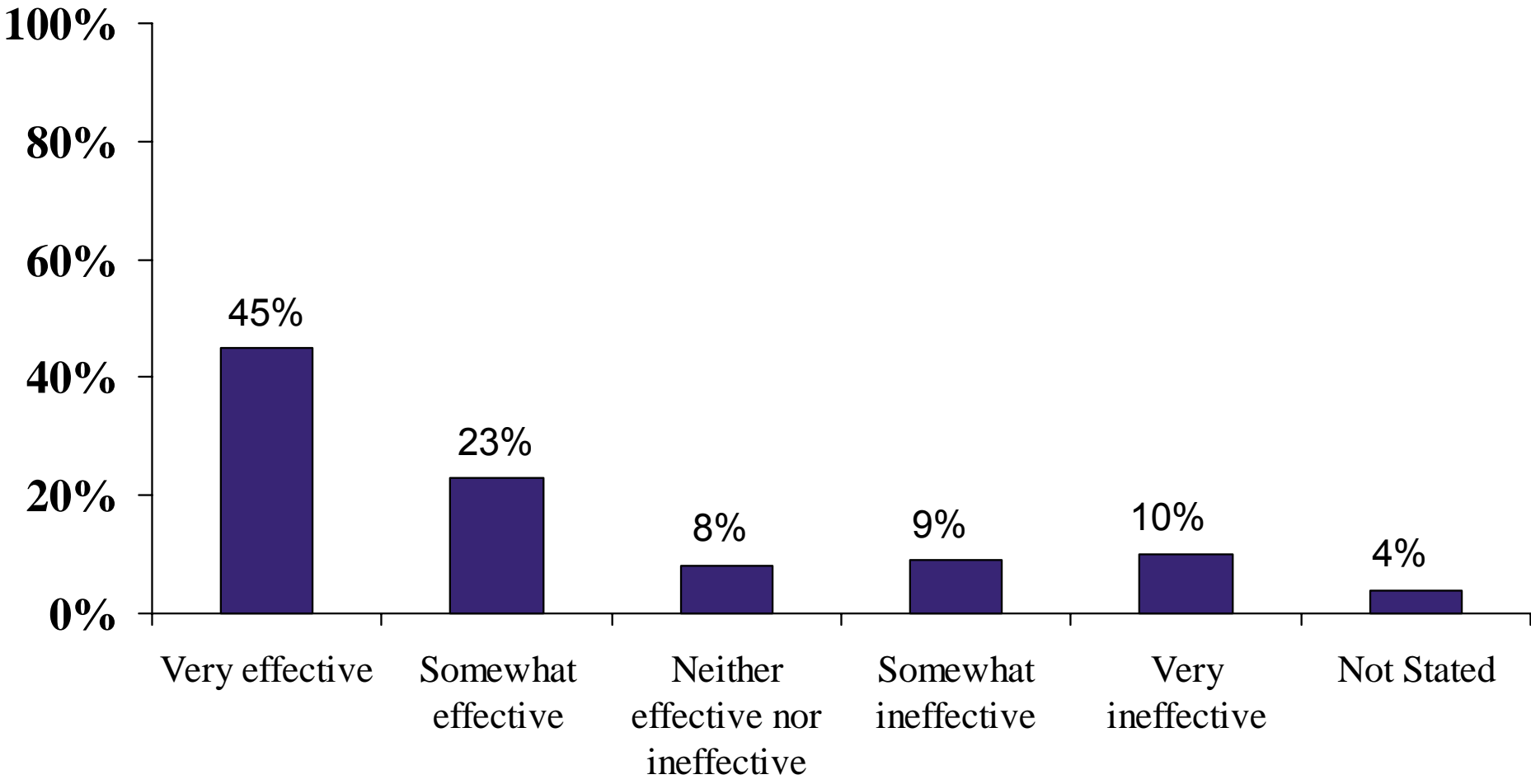
**How effective would it be to have a more information provided to participants regarding problem gambling services, such as AADAC?  
(n=300)**



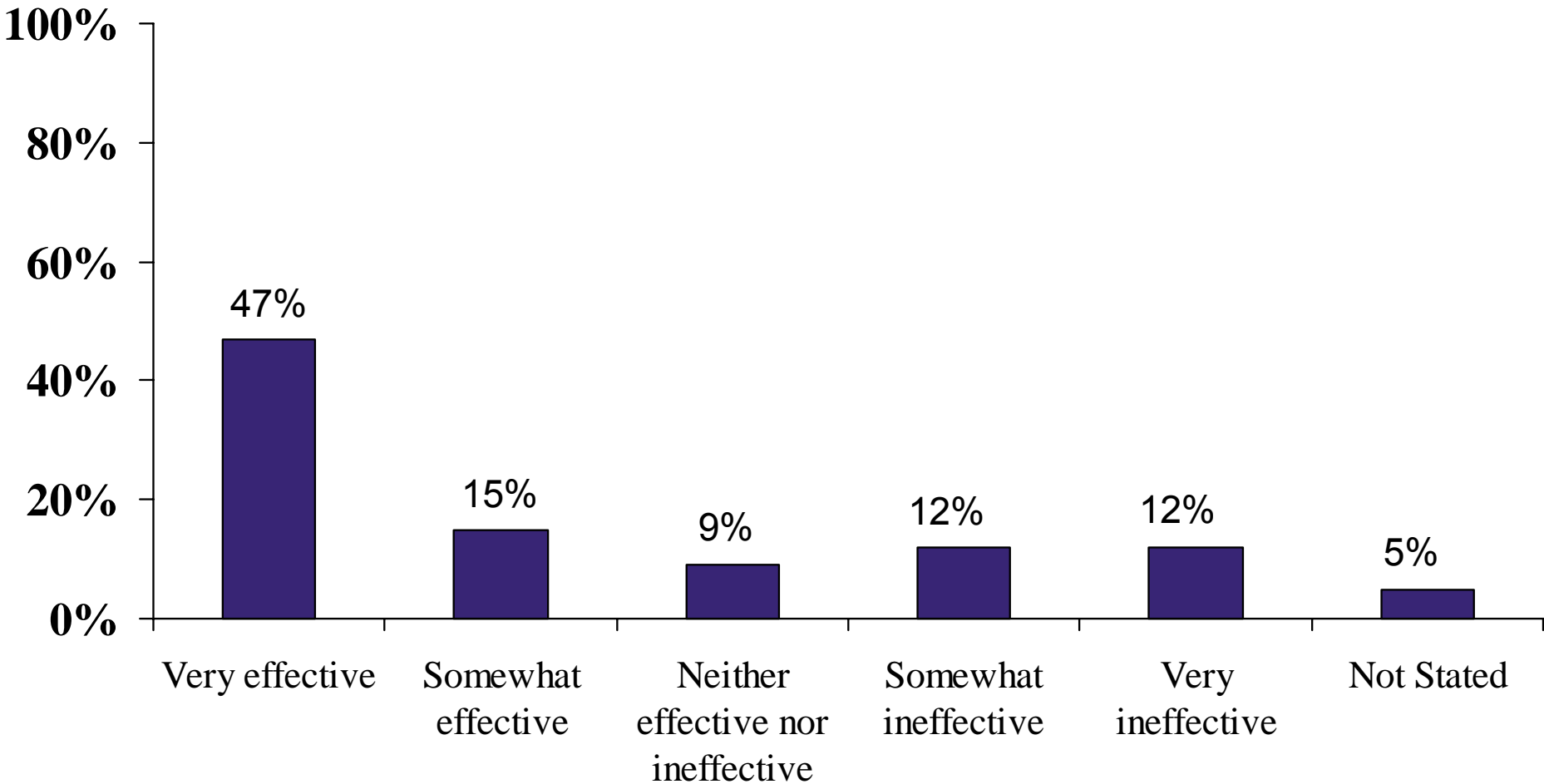
**How effective would it be to have mandatory “jackpot” ID checks and having your winnings forfeited if you are registered in the program?  
(n=300)**



**How effective would it be to have a mandatory re-entry program, such as a problem gambling awareness seminar, prior to the expiry of the agreement?  
(n=300)**

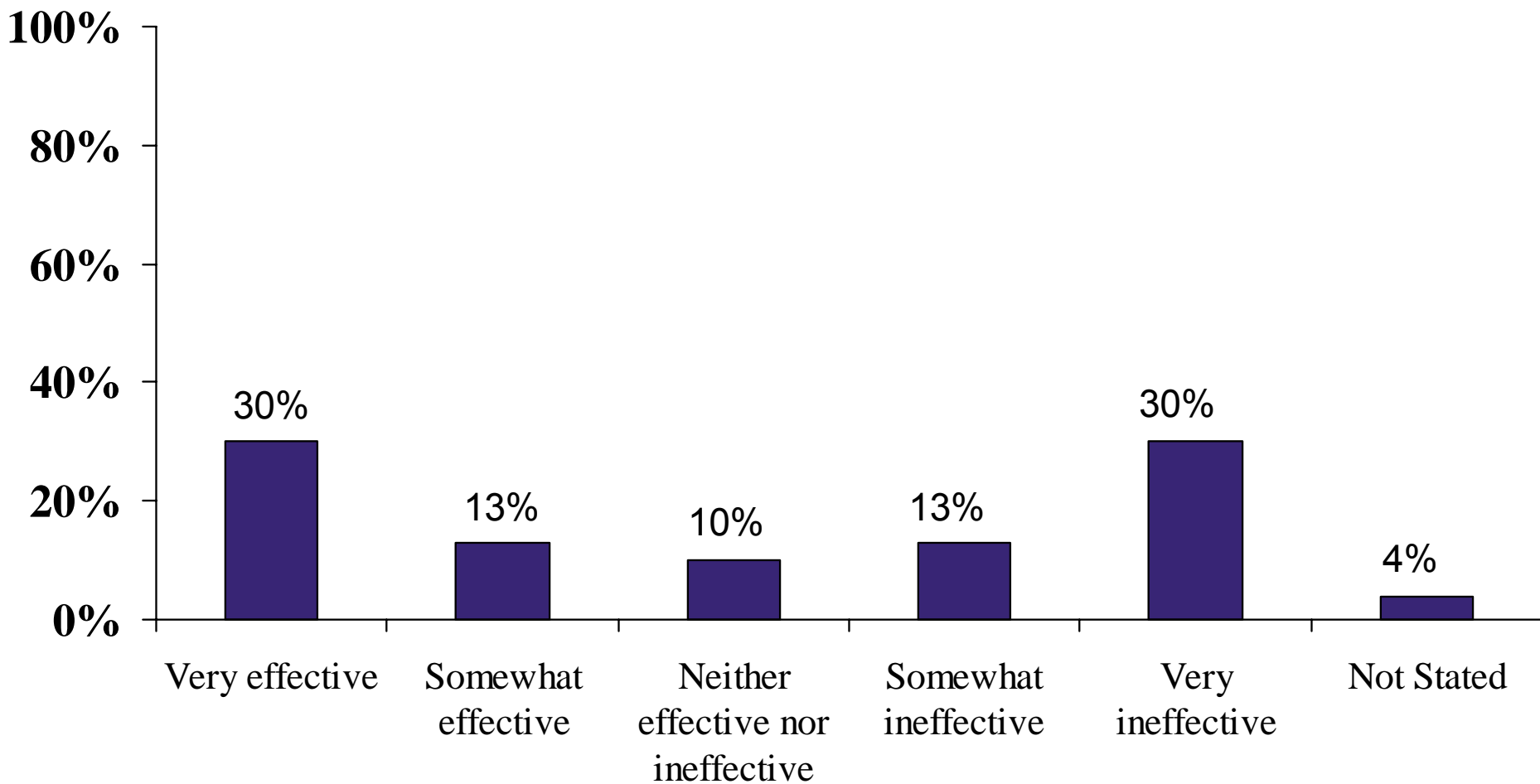


# How effective would it be to have the option of choosing lifetime enrollment in the program? (n=300)

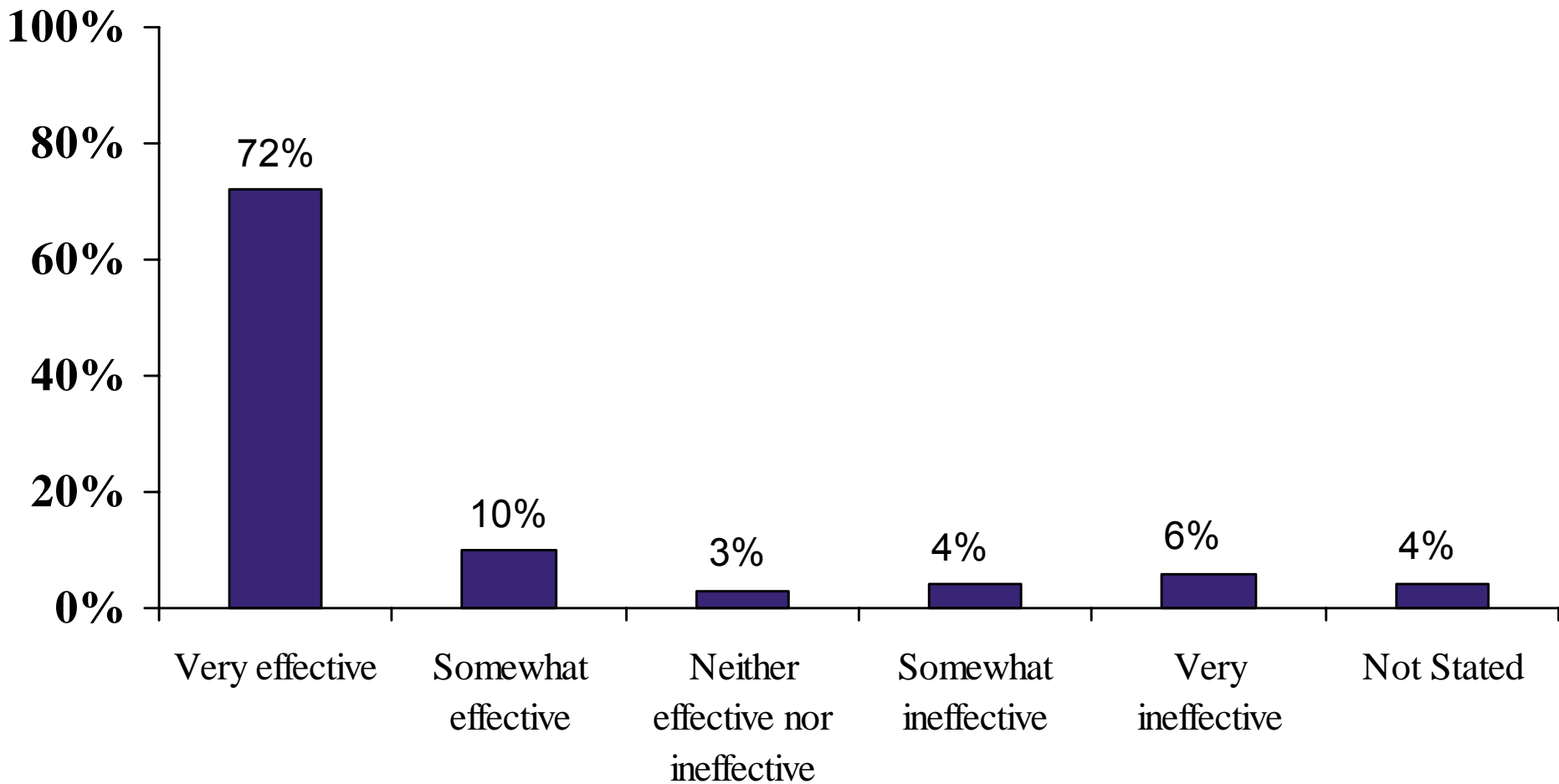




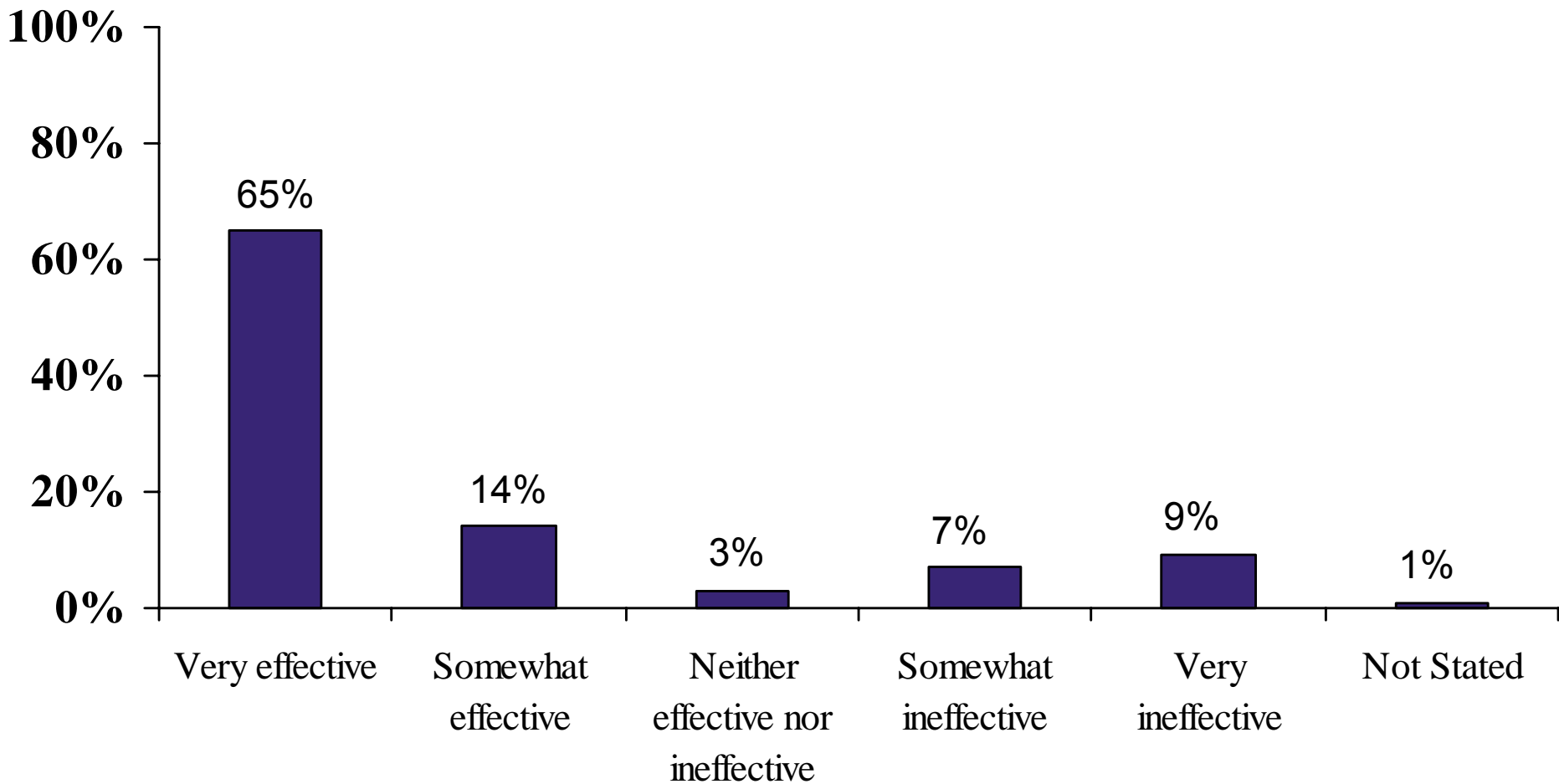
**How effective would it be to have third party initiation, for example, your spouse or children could enroll you in the program?  
(n=300)**



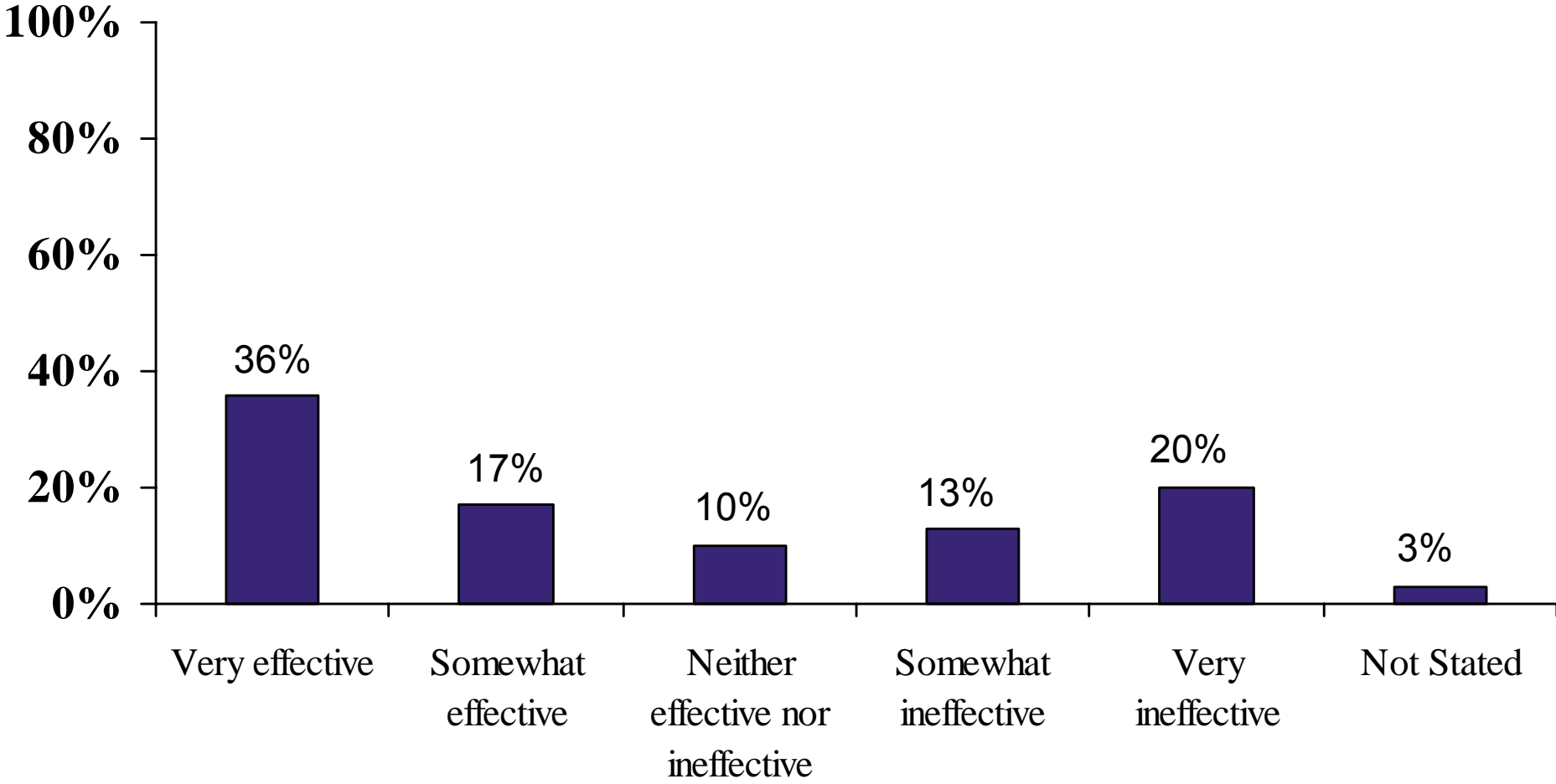
# How effective would it be to restrict credit card access to ATM machines? (n=300)



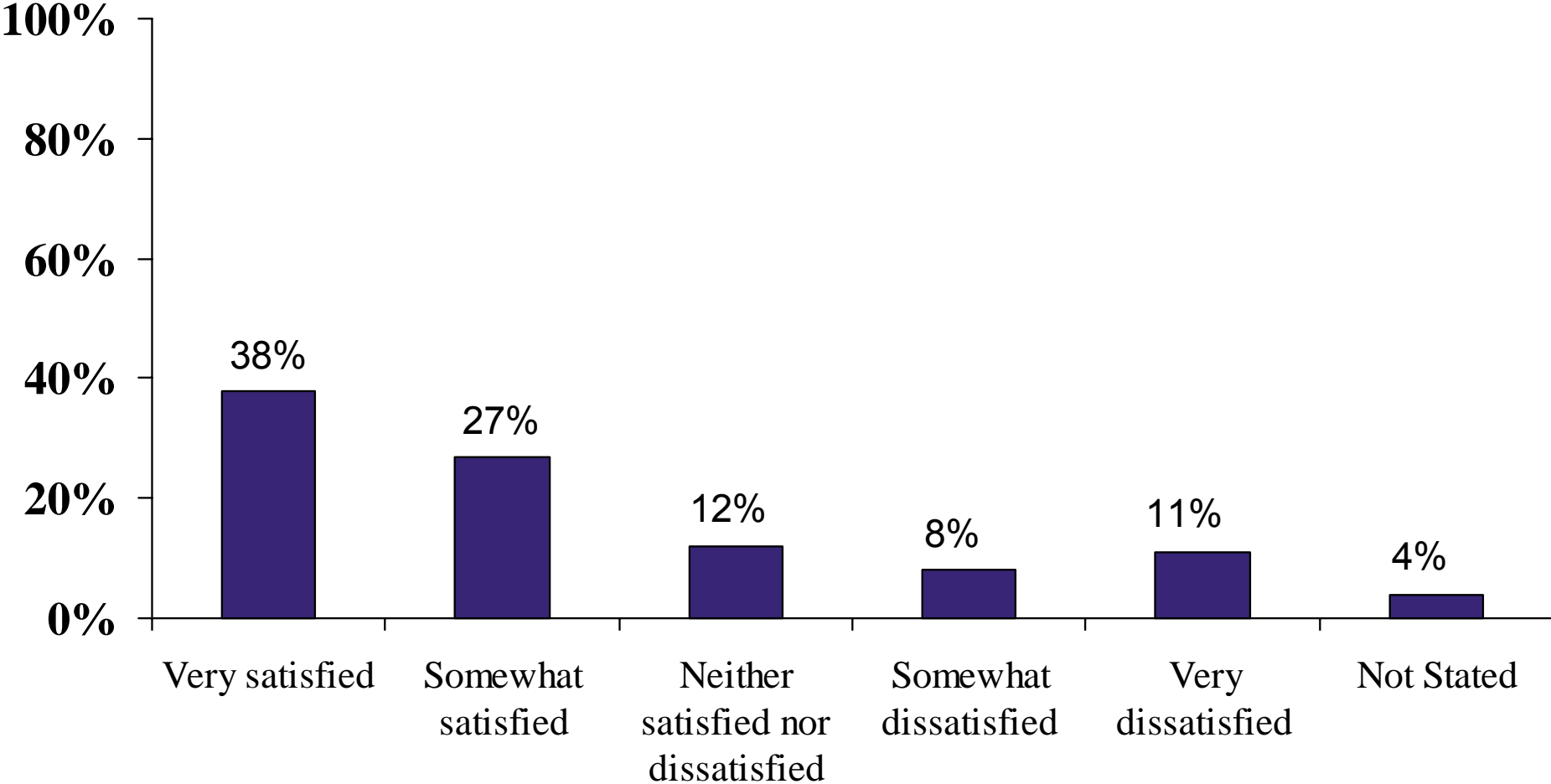
# How effective would it be to restrict access to ATM machines? (n=300)



**How effective would it be to restrict casino access, for example, patrons could only play 2 days per week?  
(n=300)**

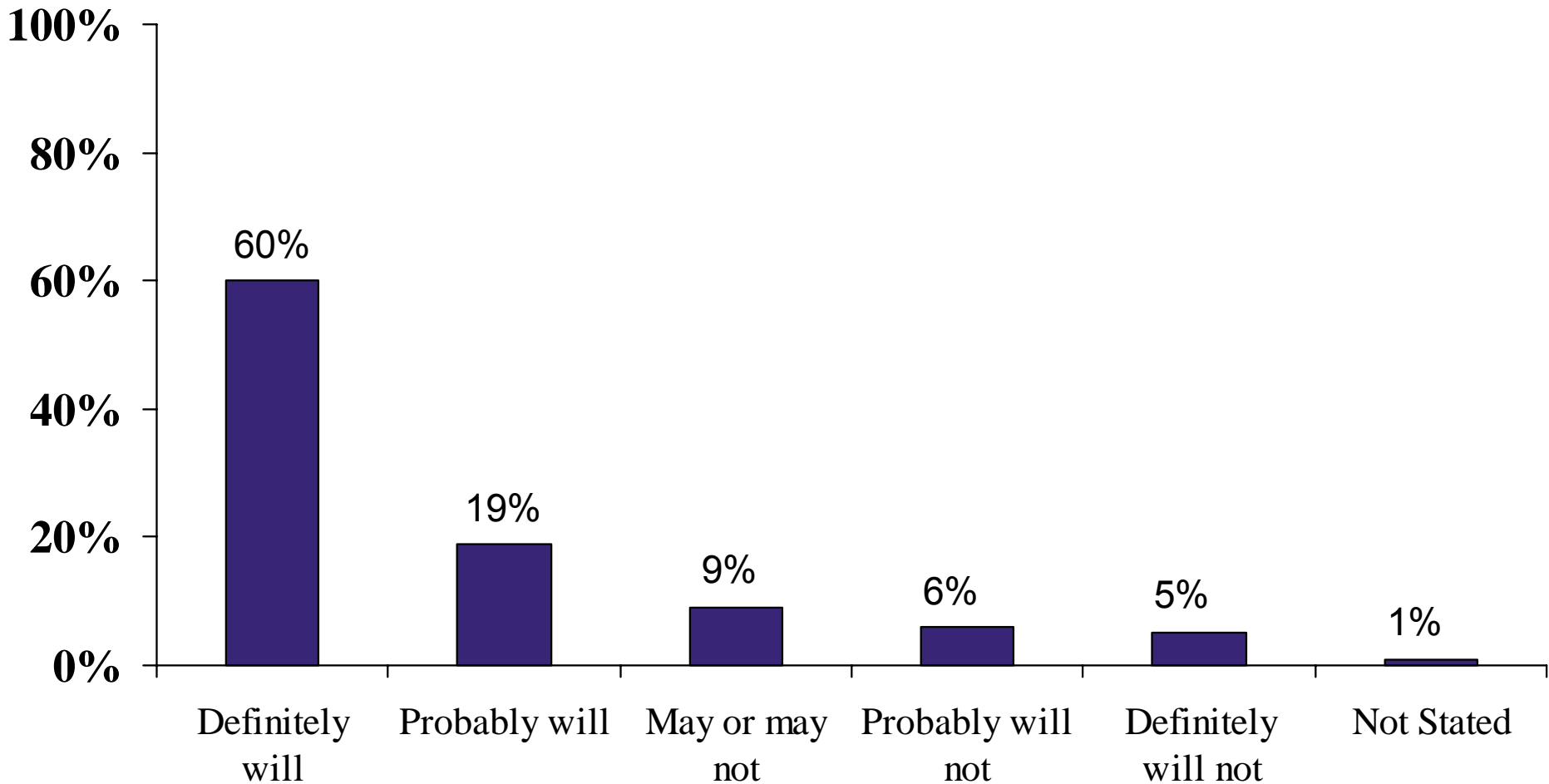


**Overall, how satisfied are you with your most recent experience with the program?  
(n=300)**



**Based on your experience with the program, how likely is it that you will recommend the program to others?**

**(n=300)**



# Suggested Improvements (n=300)

*Do you have any comments on the “strengths” of the current Casino/REC VSE program?*

	<i>Percent Of Respondents (n=300)</i>
The treatment programs are good to have	33
The overall cooperation of security and employees is good	6
It’s a personal commitment/gives a different way of thinking	6
When I signed up I got scared because it’s a binding agreement by law	5
It gives people time to get their lives in order	2
The registration process is easy/it’s easy to enroll	2
Staff were very nice/did not put me down	1
I’m encouraged that Alberta has this program	1
Other (less than 1% per item)	4
Don’t Know/Not stated	48

# Results of Focus Groups





# Across the three sessions...

- General agreement that:
  - the program should be continued
  - more needs to be done to identify clients and restrict entry to casinos/RECs
  - the program is a “first step” to helping those with gambling problems
  - proposed AADAC/AGLC staff at casinos and RECs should sign up and provide information to VSE clients

# Significant Others Recommendations

- Provide a contact person should they wish to alert someone that the program client may be entering a casino or REC
- That more information should be provided to program clients when they sign up, including information for friends and family
- That casinos should not be open 24 hours per day (or eliminated altogether)
- Follow-up with the program client after they sign up
- Do more to recognize clients at casinos and RECs, especially at venues where they did not sign up
- Extend the program to VLT players
- Invite program clients to renew at the end of their agreement
- Ensure casinos and RECs are upholding their part of the agreement
- More effective programs for problem gamblers are needed
- Do more to encourage the problem gambler

# Casino Managers and AGLC/AADAC Program Staff Findings

- Facial recognition software may not yet be able to help when trying to recognize program clients
- ID checks on entry may be the best way to identify program clients, although will probably be very costly and difficult to do
- Better ways are needed to help identify program clients, such as an electronic data base, rather than a book, so they can search by various characteristics
- Repeat offenders should be removed from the program
- Forfeiting “jackpots” would not be an effective solution
- Third parties should not be able to sign up people in the program
- The large number of clients is making it very difficult to identify them on entry, and that this number will probably continue to grow
- Better communication is needed between venues, especially those in the same city
- Follow-up services should be provided to clients after they sign up
- A program is needed for VLT players

# Key Informant Interview Results



# Purpose

- Gather expert opinions
- Wide range of perspectives
- Compare to cross-jurisdictional review, client survey and focus group data

# Methodology, Selection & Recruitment

- Expert opinions:
  - Gambling researchers and treatment professionals,
  - Responsible and Problem Gambling service providers
  - Gaming industry and Law
- Personal interviews
- Standard survey outline
- Responses recorded

# Program Effectiveness

- No real consensus on effectiveness
  - Has some value as a barrier
  - Works for some
  - Needs more “teeth”
- Depends on intended program goals
  - Barrier to access largely symbolic
  - Paradigm shift towards treatment is required
  - More participation required
- Shared responsibility

# Goals and Objectives

- Gateway to treatment
  - Attract set % of PGs
  - Assessment
  - Referral services
- Liability mitigation
  - Clearly defined roles & responsibilities
  - Documented referral reduces liability
- Promote PG awareness
  - Early detection
  - Harm minimization
- Reduce PG prevalence
- Improve public support for gambling



# 48 Hour “Cooling Off” Period

- Respondents very divided, even among the same category
  - Most support among legal experts
  - Least support among research & treatment professionals
- Valuable when a client is under duress but a barrier for those who have already made the decision

# Irrevocability

- No consensus; differences by sector
- Concerns over liability
- Conditions:
  - Minimum exclusion terms
  - Must apply for re-entry even after the term expires
  - Demonstrated action to address the problem
  - Must provide evidence of regained control
  - Review panel?

# Complementary Services

- PG assessment and referral
- PG treatment and counseling
  - Disagreement on who and where
  - Case management
- Financial/budget and legal counselling
- Print material and program information
- Card based systems for EGMs

# Program Promotion

- Consensus re: primary communication channels
  - PSAs, TV, radio, print, posters, brochures, website, business cards
- Beware of “habituation” of venue signage
- Staff interaction vs. intervention
- Potential channels
  - Treatment offices, physicians, self-help groups, financial counselors
- Mail outs to “loyalty program” patrons should be prohibited

# Staff Training

- Consensus
  - Mandatory training
  - Delivered by 3rd party
  - Varied content (management vs. front line)
  - Refresher training
- Universal Content
  - PG awareness
  - Identifying PG behaviour
  - Program rules, procedures, penalties

# Monitoring and Data Collection

- Linked, integrated database systems
- Confidentiality and privacy protection issues
- Facial recognition and other card based systems may provide technological solutions, but questions remain
- Mandatory ID at “natural” opportunity points

# Handling Breaches

- No consensus on all issues
- Areas of general agreement:
  - Progressive discipline
  - Penalties must be enforced
  - Shared responsibility between counselor and security or inspections staff
- Discreet vs. adverse interaction
- Balance between punitive and helpful consequences

# Views on New Initiatives

- **Mandatory ID**
  - No consensus
  - Researchers/treatment vs. industry/legal experts
- **Facial recognition**
  - No consensus
  - Cost/efficacy issues
- **Facilitated referral**
  - Universal agreement
  - Seen as a key program requirement



# Views on New Initiatives

- **Mandatory re-entry program**
  - General agreement
  - Concerns regarding effectiveness and necessity
- **Lifetime enrollment**
  - General agreement
  - Should be an available program option
- **Jackpot ID & forfeiture**
  - Controversial, but generally considered an effective deterrent
  - Concerns regarding public perception
  - Legal issues require more research
- **3<sup>rd</sup> party initiation**
  - Least supported initiative
  - Civil rights concerns

# Consensus and Disagreement

- Areas of consensus:
  - Ease of access
  - Program promotion
  - PG referral and case management
  - Mandatory training and documentation procedures
  - Venues where offered
- Areas of disagreement
  - Enforcement and detection
  - Casino security/staff responsibilities
  - 48 Hour cooling off period
  - Irrevocability
  - Who should administer?

# Summary

- No real consensus on effectiveness
  - Has some value
  - Works for some
  - Needs more “teeth”
- Barrier to access largely symbolic
- Great potential as a “Gateway to treatment”
- An essential liability mitigation strategy
- Shared responsibility

# Summary of Key Findings



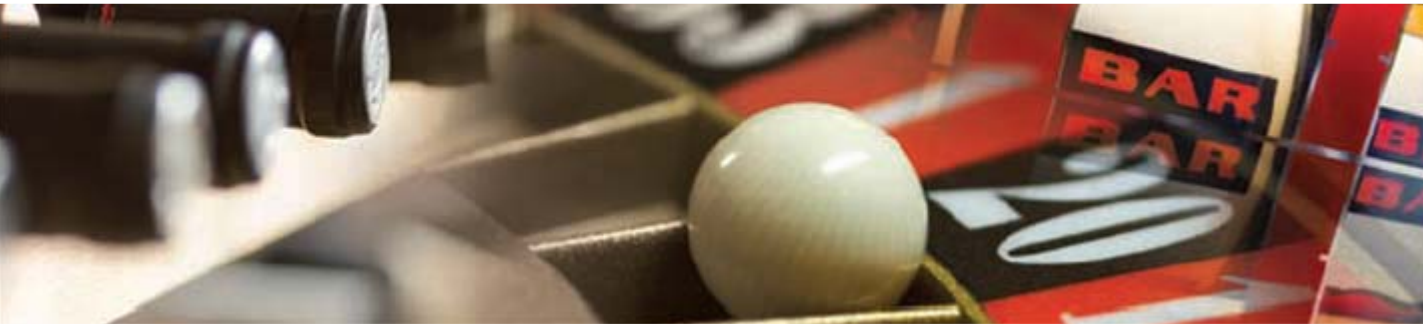
# Best Practices

- VSE is used as a Gateway to Treatment
- Variable length of agreement terms are offered
- Violation penalties are well communicated
- VSE program clients databases are effectively used
- Mandatory training for program staff is provided

# Program Gaps

- No lifetime enrollment option
- No mandatory referral services are provided
- Communication of penalties is weak
- Mandatory training for program staff not provided
- Mandatory ID checks and jackpot forfeiture regulations are not required
- Technological systems are not used to aid detection

# Recommendations



# Administration

- Designated Casino/REC program contacts
- Enhance the role of Responsible Gaming Information Centres



# Program Promotion

- Improve Casino/REC program advertising and promotion
- Mandatory VSE signage
- Expand the Casino/VSE program to other gaming facilities
- Mandatory removal of VSE program clients from loyalty mailing lists

# Training

- Mandatory training for designated Casino/REC VSE program contacts
- Mandatory re-entry program
- Upgrade Casino/REC VSE program information in staff training programs

# Enrollment and Registration

- Mandatory referral process
- Lifetime enrollment option
- VSE agreement amendments
- Modify the 48 hour cooling off period
- Send information to VSE program clients prior to agreement expiry

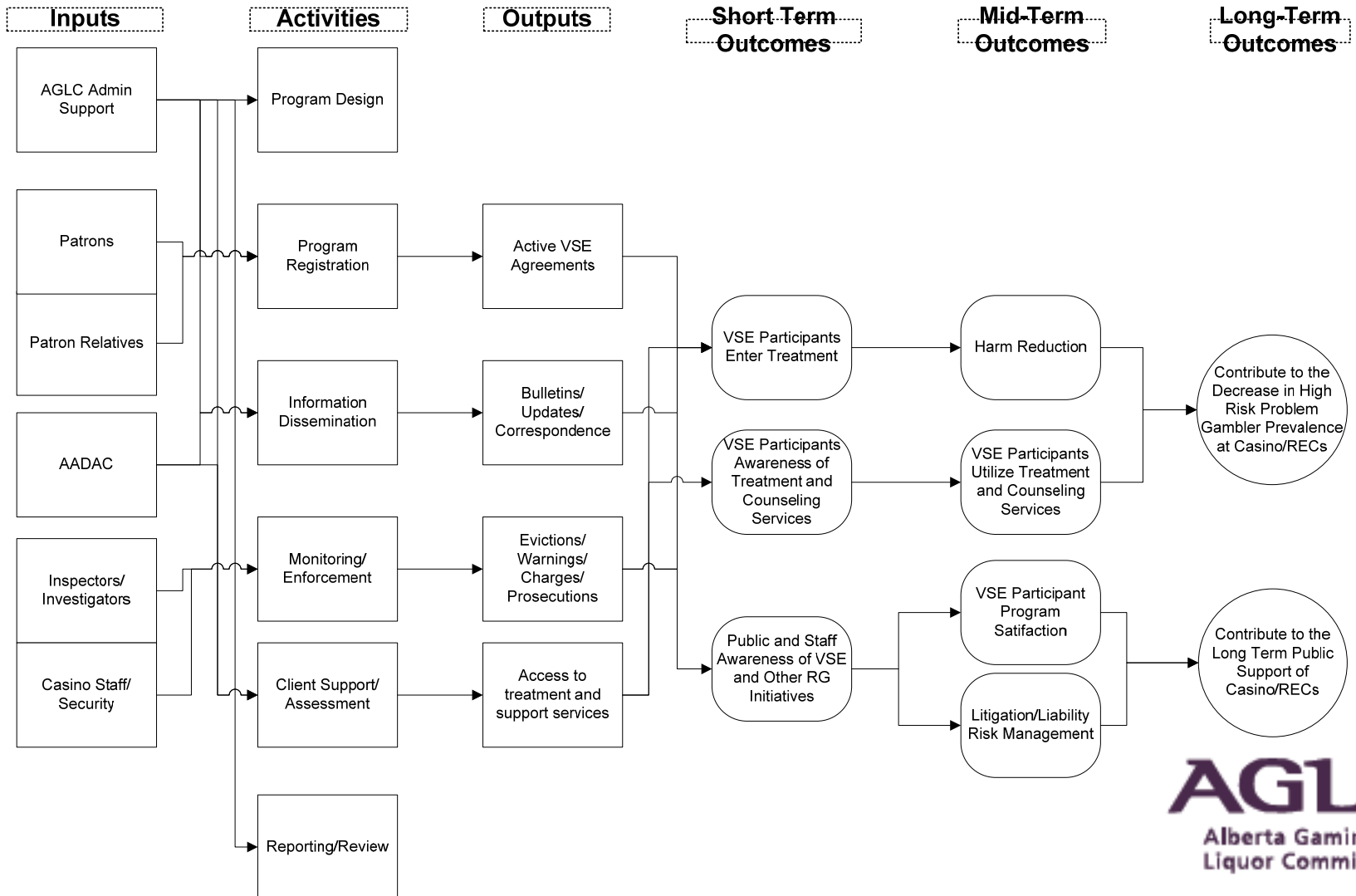
# Program Monitoring

- Case management approach
- The VSE enrollment process should be regularly monitored
- Upgrade the Casino/REC VSE program client database

# Detection and Enforcement

- Investigate options to improve VSE client detection
- Establish VSE program Client Detection Committees
- Standardize the procedures for successive violations
- Implement a fine option program
- The penalty for agreement violation should be clearly communicated

# Program Logic Model



# Performance Measures

OUTPUTS		
Output	Output Measures	Target
Active VSE Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of active VSE agreements from Alberta casinos/RECS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of active VSE agreements from 6% of problem gamblers who play at Alberta casino/RECs to 10%.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of the public and staff aware of VSE and other RG initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of the general public and casino/REC staff who are aware of the VSE program and other RG initiatives</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
Bulletins, Updates and Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of bulletins, updates and correspondence related to VSE program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the number and types of bulletins, updates and correspondence that is currently produced for the VSE program.</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
Evictions, Warnings, Charges and Prosecutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of evictions, warnings, charges and prosecutions to VSE participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the number of evictions, warnings, charges and prosecutions handed down to VSE participants</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants receiving evictions, warnings, charges and prosecutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of VSE participants who are receiving evictions, warnings, charges and prosecutions</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
Access to Treatment and Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants referred to problem gambling treatment or counseling services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of VSE participants will receive a referral to problem gambling treatment or counseling</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants aware of treatment and counseling services for problem gamblers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of VSE participants who are aware of the types of treatment and counseling services available to the problem gambler</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>

# Short Term Outcome Measures

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES		
Outcome	Outcome Measures	Target
VSE Participants Enter Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of VSE participants that follow through with their referral and access treatment services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the number of VSE participants who access treatment services after receiving a referral</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants receiving a referral who enter treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of VSE participants who access treatment services after receiving a referral</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
VSE Participant Awareness of Treatment and Counseling Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants who are aware of problem gambling treatment and counseling services in Alberta</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100%</li> </ul>
Public and Staff Awareness of VSE and Other RG Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of Casino/REC staff who are aware of VSE program and other RG initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100%</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of the general public who are aware of VSE program and other RG initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of the general public who are aware of the VSE program and other RG initiatives</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>



# Mid-Term Outcome measures

MID-TERM OUTCOMES		
Outcome	Outcome Measures	Target
Harm Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of VSE participants that reduce the severity of their gambling problems after accessing treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the number of VSE participants who reduce the severity of their gambling problems</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants that reduce the severity of their gambling problems after accessing treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of VSE participants who reduce the severity of their gambling problems</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
VSE Participants Utilize Treatment and Counseling Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of VSE participants that follow through with their prescribed treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the number of VSE participants who follow through with the treatment prescribed</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants that follow through with their prescribed treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the percentage of VSE participants who follow through with the treatment prescribed</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
VSE Participant Program Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of VSE participants satisfied with their VSE program experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the satisfaction rate of VSE participants VSE program experience</li> <li>Increase over baseline</li> </ul>
Litigation/Liability Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of lawsuits or other legal matters related to casinos/RECs launched against the Alberta government and or operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No successful litigation</li> </ul>

# Long Term Outcome Measures

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES		
Outcome	Outcome Measures	Target
Contribute to the Decrease in High Risk Problem Gambler Prevalence at Casinos/RECs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The prevalence of adult Albertans who play at casinos/RECs reporting a gambling problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of the problem gambling prevalence rate of adult Albertans who play at casinos/RECs in Alberta</li> <li>Decrease baseline</li> </ul>
Contribute to the Long Term Public Support for Casinos/RECS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of the general public who are satisfied that gaming activities are conducted fairly and in a socially responsible manner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain public satisfaction rates of 93% for casino table games; 82% for casino slot machines; and 79% for slot machines at racetracks</li> <li>Annual revenue from the casino/REC sector is maintained</li> <li>Attendance at casinos/RECs is maintained</li> </ul>

# Current Action

- VSE Program Enhancement project initiated
- Four sub-committees
  - Administration
  - Marketing
  - Training
  - Enforcement
- Work plans developed
- Completion scheduled for December 2009

# Questions?



# Thank you!