



Tourism **HR**
Canada



RH Tourisme
Canada

ITA LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE INITIATIVE



CURRENT CONTEXT: Covid-19 reverses previous gains

Alberta's Indigenous tourism industry included at least 125 businesses in 2018.

After a five-year growth period, Canada's Indigenous tourism industry had 39,000 employees and generated \$1.86 billion in direct GDP in 2019.

In 2020, compared to 2019, Canada's Indigenous tourism sector saw a 65.9% decline in direct GDP (down to \$555 million) and a 59.4% decline in employment (down to 14,624 jobs) due to the impact of COVID-19 on global tourism.

CURRENT CONTEXT: Covid-19 reverses previous gains

ITAC Business Inventory by Tourism Sector Domains and Region (2019)	ALBERTA
Accommodation	15
Arts and heritage	62
Food and beverage	5
Gaming	5
Other	3
Recreation and outdoor adventure	12
Transportation	1
Travel services–retail	22
Total	125
Source: Conference Board of Canada (2019)	

Growth Indicators	2014	2019	2020
Jobs	33,100	39,000	14,624
GDP	\$1.4B	\$1.86B	\$555M
Export-ready Co.s	65	130	n/a
Source: ITAC (2021)			

SUMMARY OF KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Perception that efforts to raise awareness of the tourism sector as a place of employment for Indigenous persons need greater consistency.
- Pressing economic and social factors are dissuading the Indigenous youth from seeking employment in tourism ventures located outside of their local communities or at Alberta's rural tourism attractions.
- The most significant barriers to recruiting and hiring prospective Indigenous applicants within the tourism sector are a lack of access to transportation and a lack of specialized skillsets.
- Large operators (such as hotels and resorts along with parks and heritage attractions) have found talent attraction and labour retention success through offering incentives such as employee shuttle service, onsite childcare and seasonal accommodations.

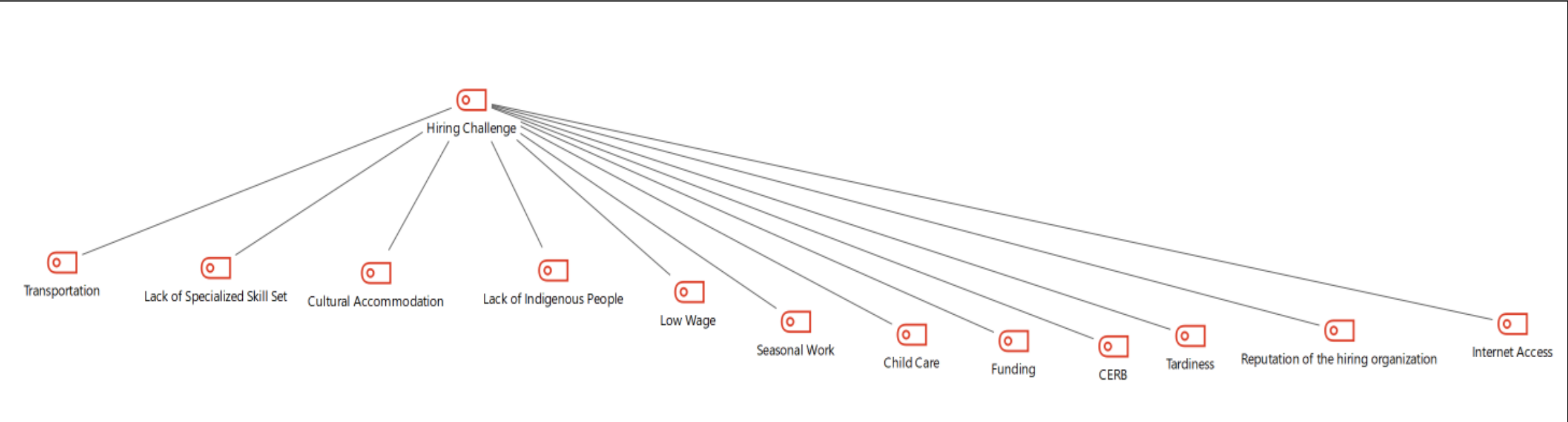


SUMMARY OF KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Business operators are seeing increased demand for Indigenous tourism cultural experiences and cultural products on the part of International visitors to the province.
- Alberta's Indigenous tourism operators have been quick to embrace online platforms as a means of reaching new customers by offering events, talks, tours and education via the Internet or by expanding their retail presence via e-commerce.
- During the lockdowns, Indigenous people "returned to their roots" through engaging in community and cultural activities via online platforms and content.
- Informal networks, partnerships and collaborations are the preferred method of helping to promote the local tourism sector as a place to work and learn.



HIRING CHALLENGES



HIRING CHALLENGES

1. PROXIMITY TO EMPLOYERS

A lack of access to personal and public transportation was indicated as a key barrier to seeking and attaining employment opportunities.

2. SPECIALIZED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Employers indicated that there is often a need for highly specialized skills and, often, cultural and historical knowledge among employees

3. CULTURAL ACCOMMODATION

The absence of Indigenous supervisors, peers, and the perceived inclusiveness of the workplace are felt to be important factors for Alberta's Indigenous job seekers.

HIRING CHALLENGES

4. COMPENSATION

Perceived low wages was a deterrent for potential applicants.

5. SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT

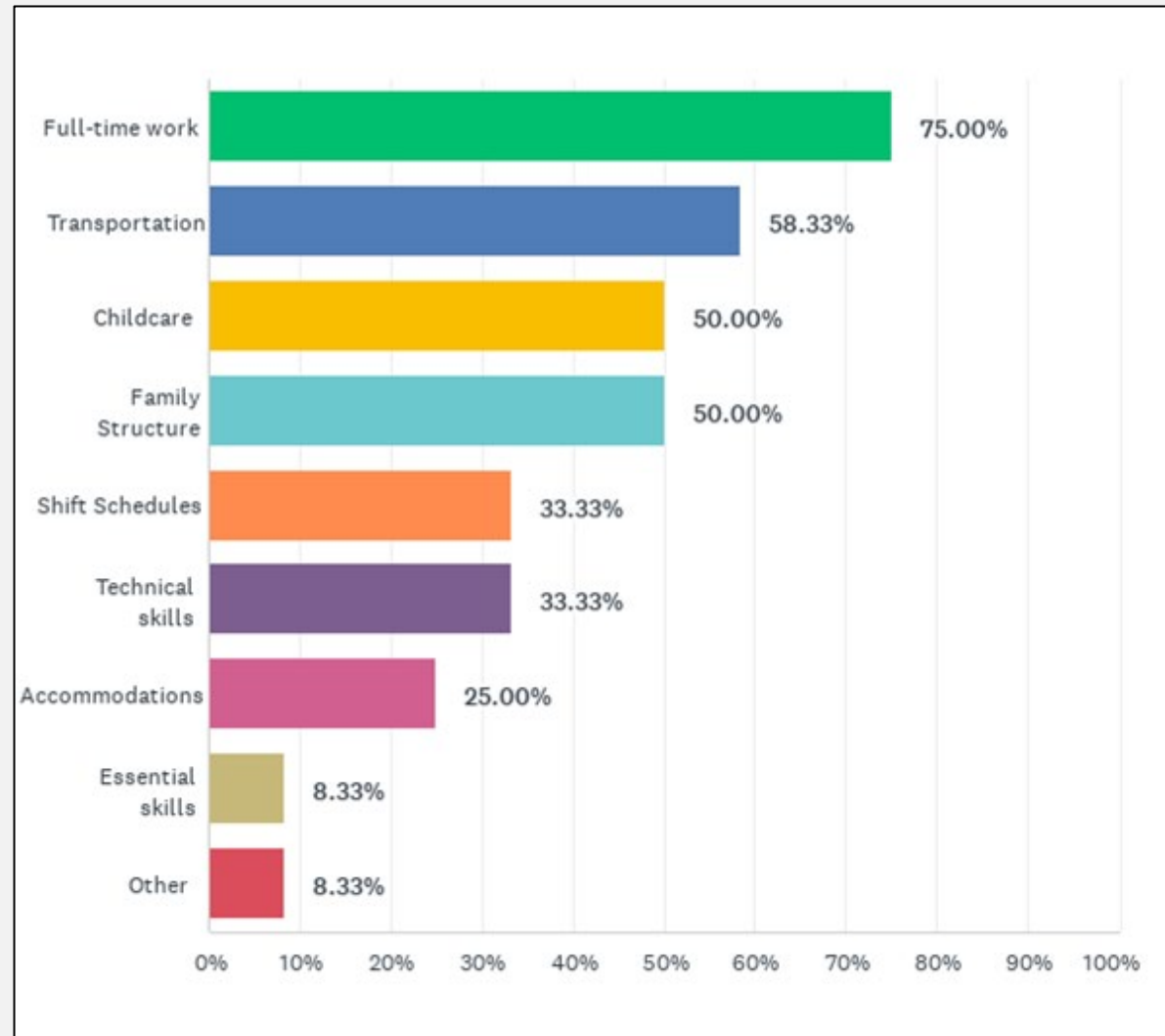
The seasonal nature of many employment opportunities was seen as a deterrent for potential applicants.

Other employment barriers included the absence of readily available and affordable childcare and fluctuations in job creation funding/supports.

HIRING CHALLENGES

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT IN INDIGENOUS TOURISM BUSINESSES

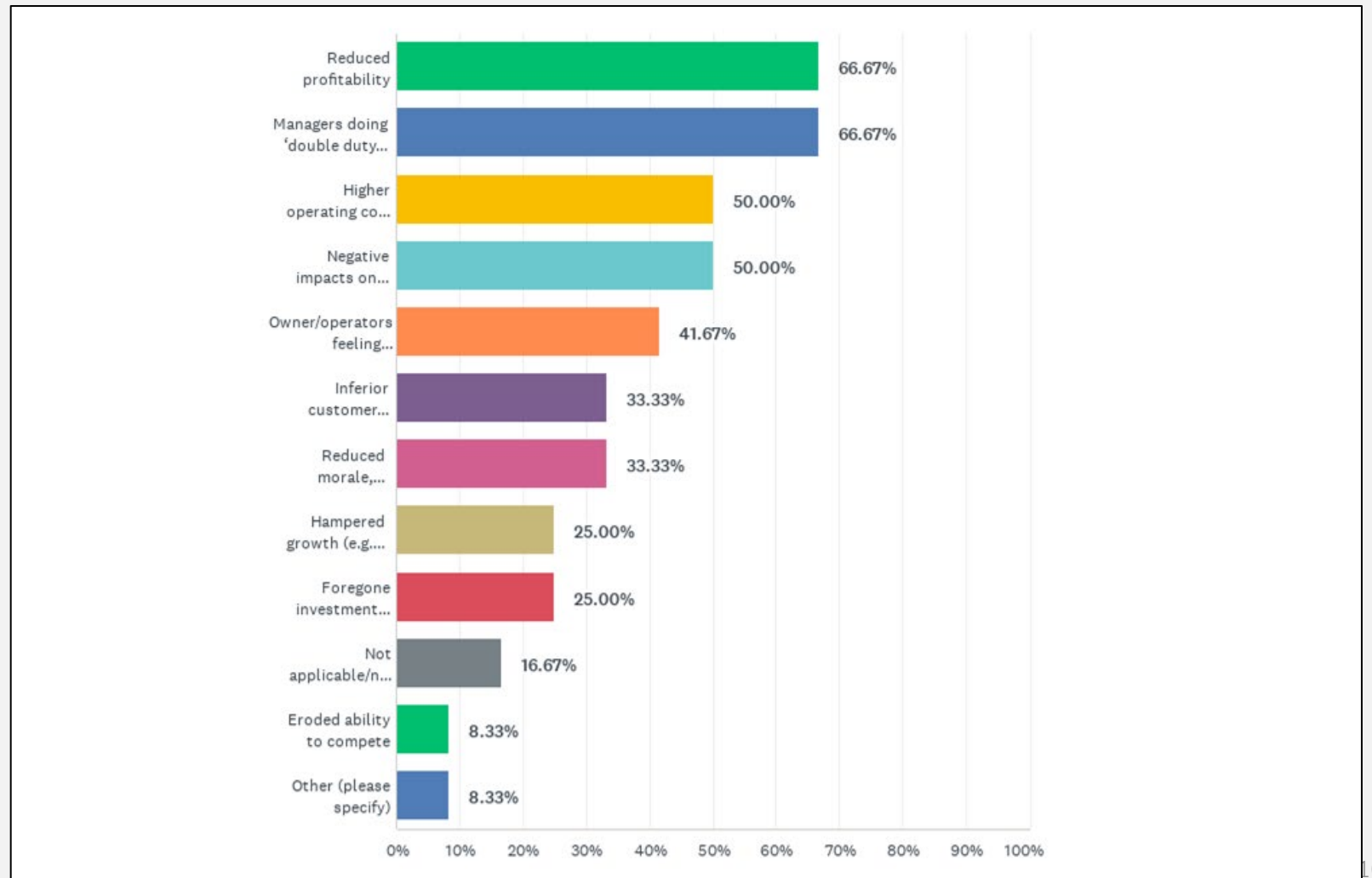
- Nearly identical barriers to employment in Alberta's Indigenous tourism industry were indicated in the focus group sessions and the survey conducted by THRC.



HIRING CHALLENGES

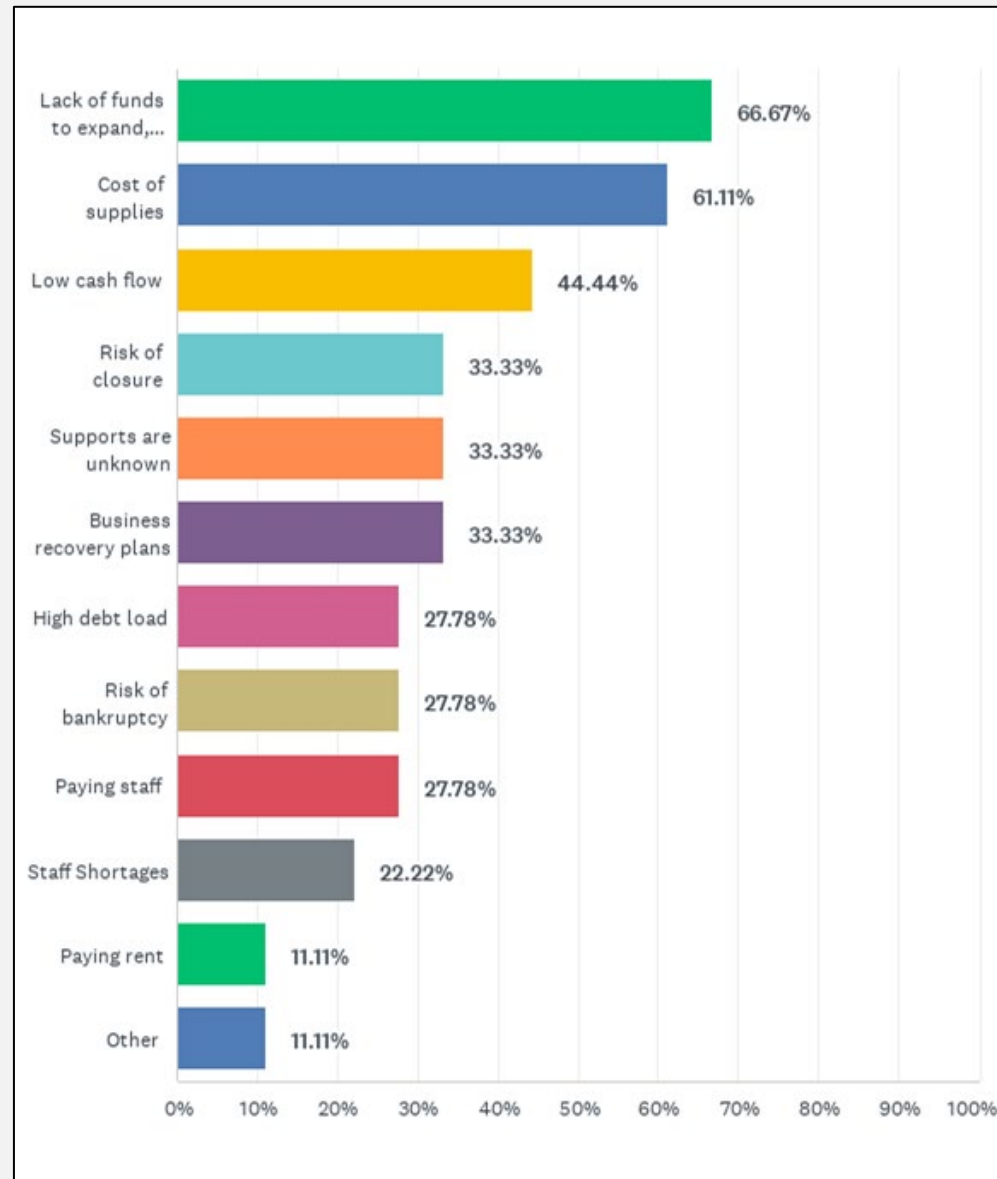
CHALLENGES CAUSED BY LABOUR SHORTAGES

- Labour shortages have resulted in wide variety of challenges for Indigenous tourism businesses.

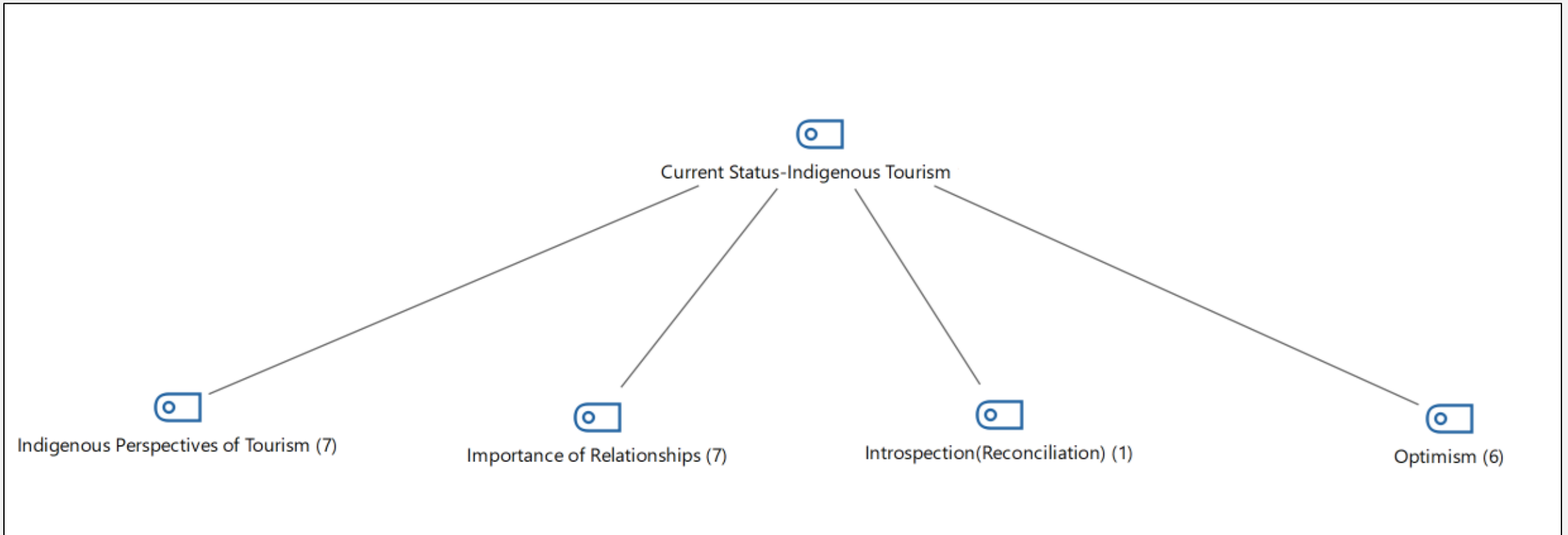


BUSINESS CHALLENGES

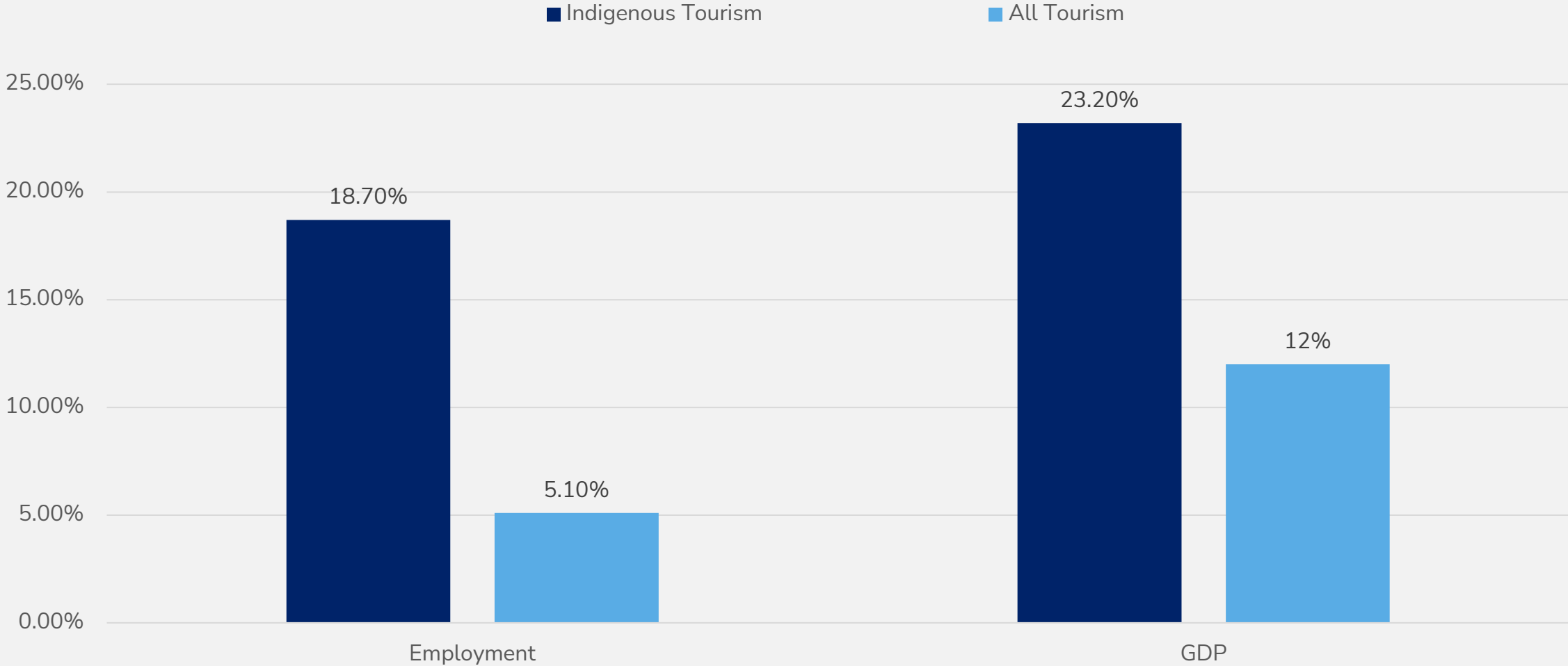
BUSINESS CHALLENGES FACED DURING THE PANDEMIC



IMPORTANT THEMES FOR RECOVERY EFFORTS



EVIDENCE FOR OPTIMISM



INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop specialized skill sets and qualifications for career advancement within Alberta's Indigenous tourism industries.
- Work with local and provincial stakeholders to secure funding and solutions to address transportation-related barriers and provide greater access to rural tourism workplaces.



INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Augment regional mentorship initiatives specific to Indigenous tourism business operators since the exchange of ideas and knowledge is seen as a central component of industry success.
- Assess the availability of customized training opportunities specific to:
 - Business innovation, digitalization and e-commerce
 - Skills that support employment in public speaking and group facilitation roles





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