



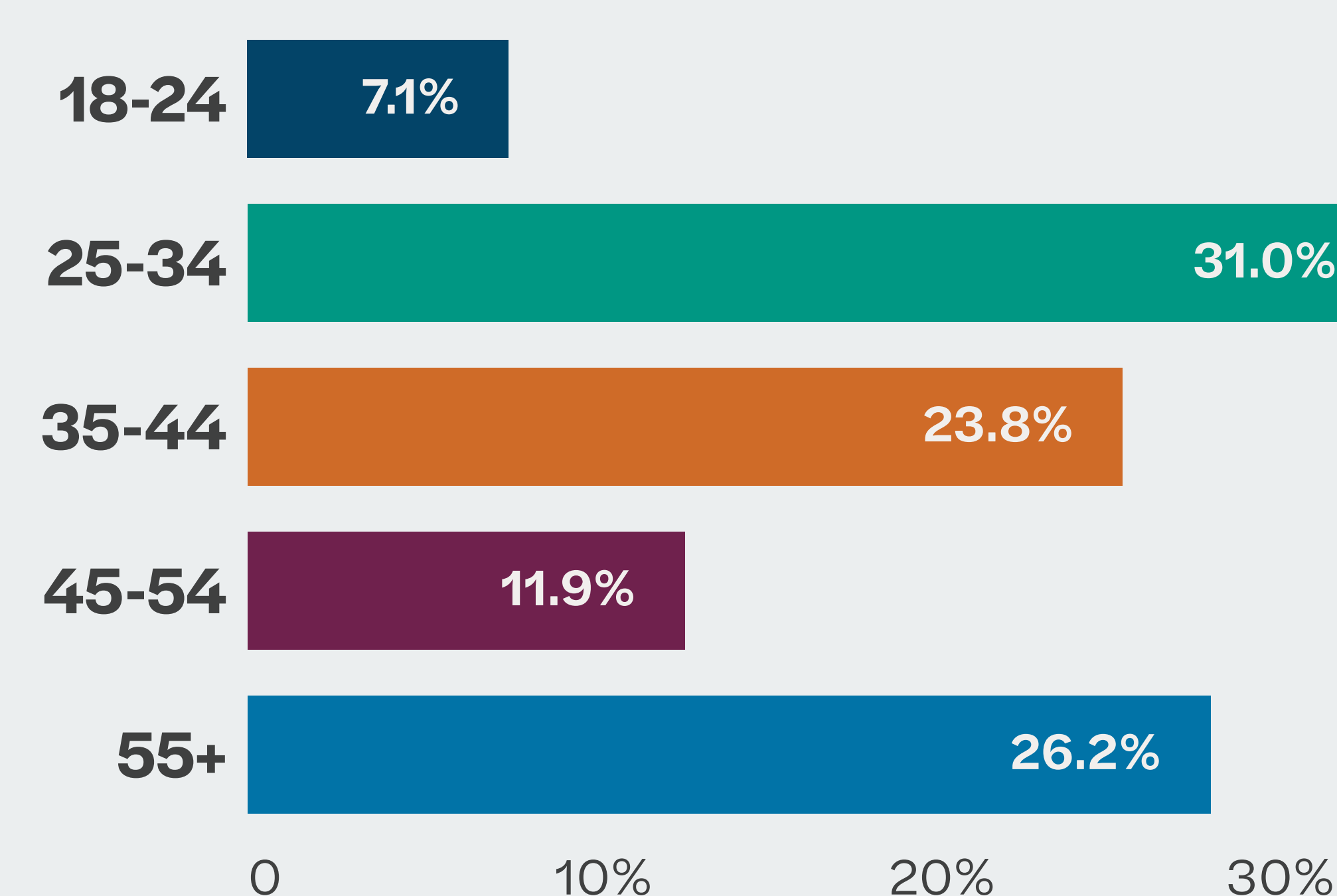
Voices of the Unseen: Community Informed Recommended Practices in Data Collection

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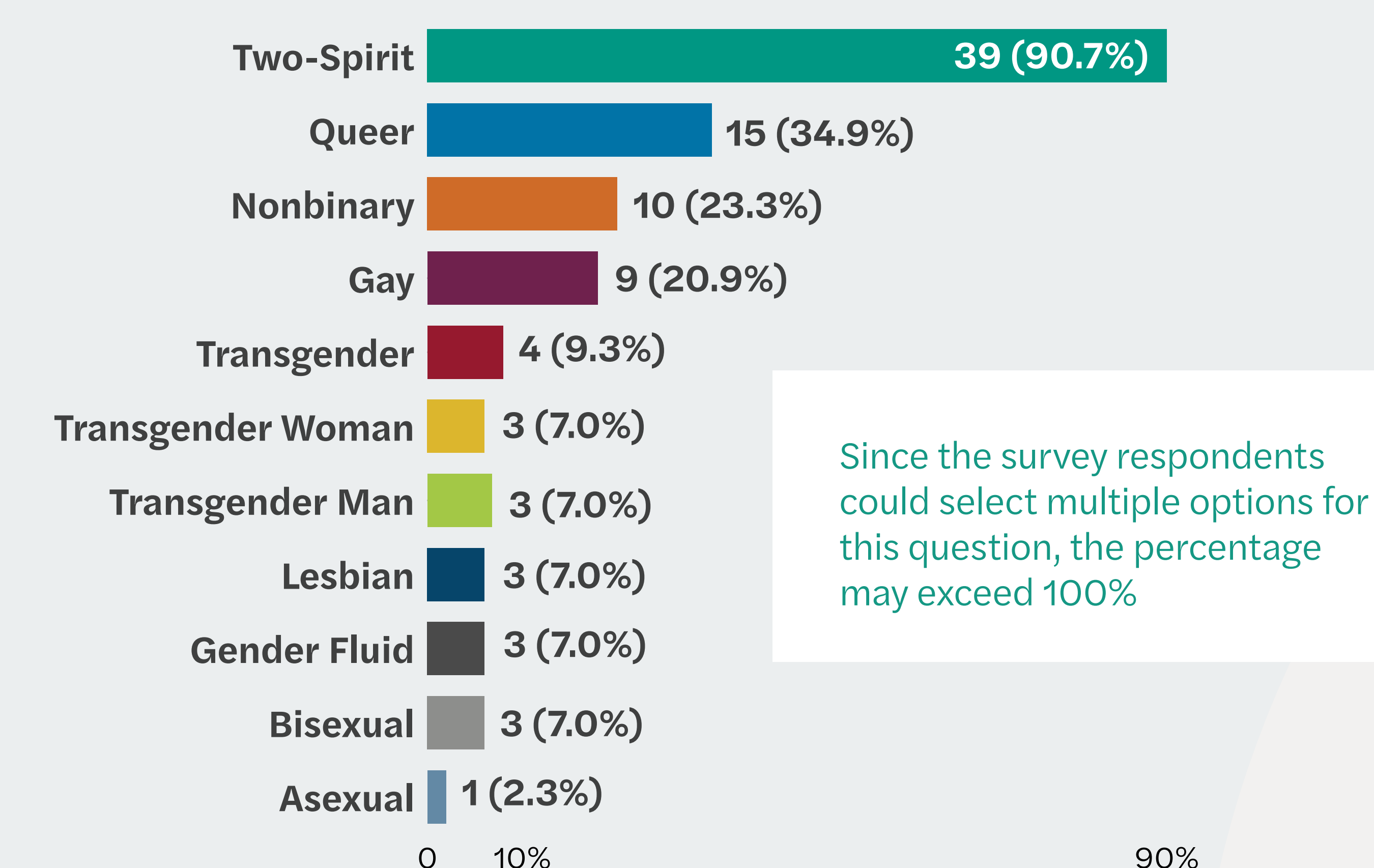
Two-Spirit people are not accurately represented in Western methods of data collection. Urban Indian Health Institute works to uphold the traditional role of 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual+) people in our tribal communities and at the request of community members, advocacy groups, and human rights organizations, conducted a survey with the goal of creating best practices for collecting representative demographic data among North American Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ adults. The survey was administered to participants (n=43) affiliated with 40 tribal nations. Eligibility requirements included being Indigenous to North America, 2SLGBTQIA+, and 18 years or older.

Demographic data is a term used to represent socioeconomic factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, income, education level, relationship status, and more. This information is used by data analysts and public health professionals to identify health patterns among different groups of people. This data helps organizations recognize where individuals and communities are doing well and where there is opportunity to improve health outcomes.

Age Distribution of Survey Respondents



What identity do you identify with today?



Considerations in Survey Design & Terminology

Respondents identified appropriate terminology used in demographic data collection:

- Is trauma-informed.
- Allows for varied, diverse, and specific response options.
- Includes pansexual, asexual, Indigiqueer and Two-Spirit to sexual identity questions.
- Allows participants to identify using their Indigenous languages(s).

What respondents said:

don't be afraid of the word trans
more open-ended Questions, less Multiple choice

Additional questions proposed by respondents:

Do you perceive sex and gender as different aspects of self?
Which term do you most often use when you describe yourself to others?

Considerations in Data Collection

- Ensure participant's feelings of safety and comfort during data collection.
- Ensure the data collection process transparently communicates who is using the data, how it will be used, and how the data will benefit the community.

Considerations in Data Analysis

- Contextualize data during the analysis process using tribal affiliation, geography, historical context, etc.
- Respect data and stories throughout the analysis process.

What respondents said:

Two-spirit means different things to every tribe. Some tribes believe in 4 or 5 genders.
That data be respected, and not to be shared without prior consent.
I would add explanations as to why they are being asked + what the data will be used for (including why it is important)

Creating a Culturally Respectful and Affirming Survey

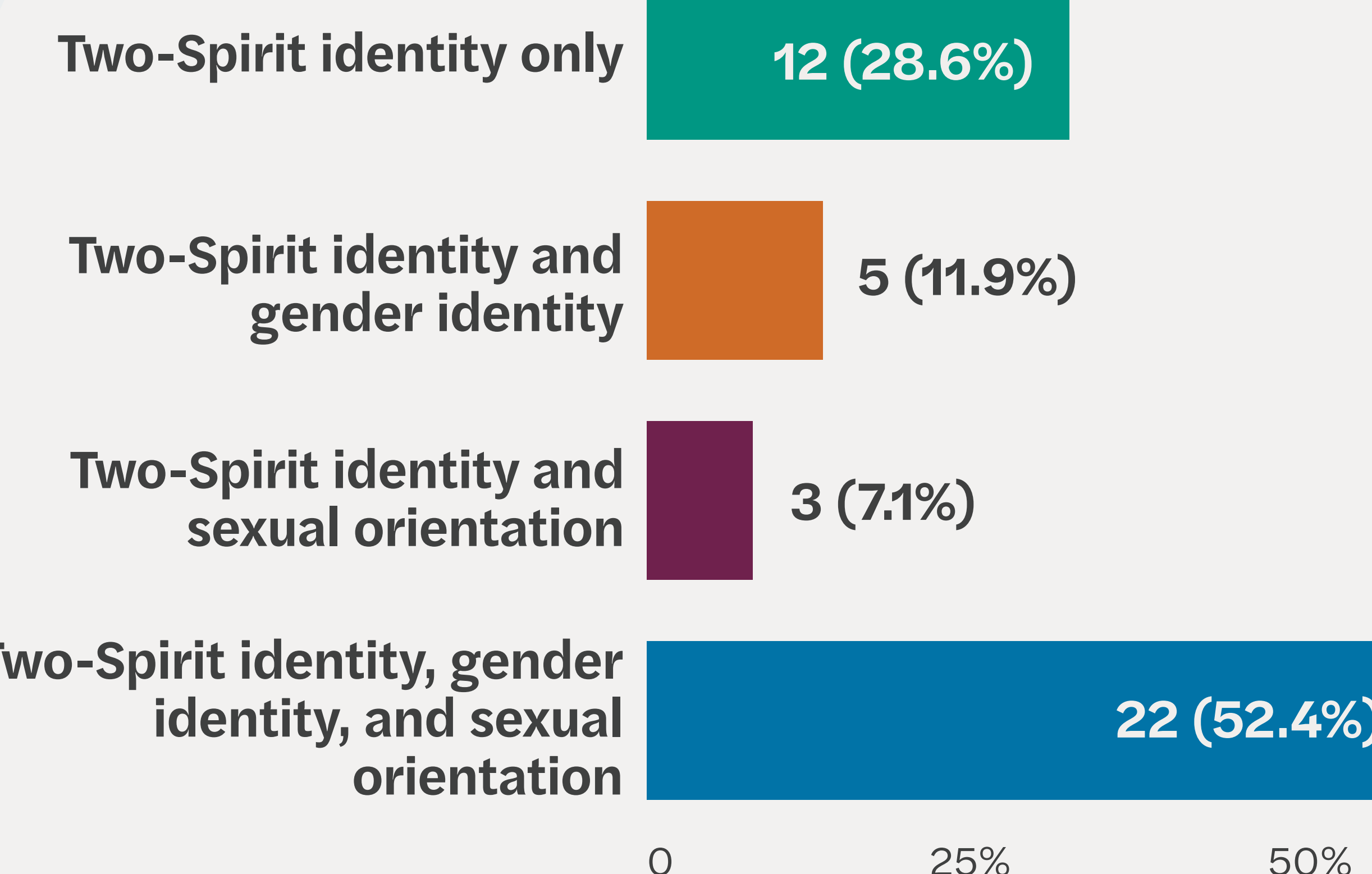
Respondents encourage engaging with people with lived experiences during survey development to ensure a culturally competent survey design. Participants describe cultural respect as:

- Being included in data collection, acknowledged as Indigenous peoples, and invited to share space.
- Cultural practices are treated respectfully, traditions are honored, and participants are accepted free of discrimination.
- Indigenous sovereignty is respected and the diversity of Native cultures are acknowledged, avoiding using a pan-Indigenous lens.

What respondents said:

you understand the background attached with the culture and respecting that culture even with little knowledge.
Ceremonies allowed, Smudge. Things important to be passed on to future generations. Family, community, Nation Traditions
Acknowledging the diversity of tribal cultures + the complexity of Native people's identities (multiple tribes, plus identification with additional races)

When asking if someone identifies as Two-Spirit, should the question ask about:



Community Recommendations and Feedback: What to Consider When Collecting Demographic Information From North American Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities

- Organizations should include a statement about the purpose of data collection and how they plan to utilize this data in the survey introduction.
- When asking about gender identity, organizations include response options that allow transgender people to identify themselves as Male or Female, without being defined by sex assigned at birth.
- Response options should encourage the use of tribal languages and terms to describe gender and sexual identities.
- When designing response options to questions categorizing gender and sexuality, organizations should provide options that are inclusive of fluid identities and, when possible, allow respondents to write in their answers.
- Include "Indigiqueer," "Two-Spirit," "pansexual," and "asexual" in response options to questions categorizing sexual identity.

UIHI encourages tribal communities to use these recommendations and continue this conversation with their LGBTQIA+ and Two-Spirit Relatives on how best to update electronic health records, needs assessments, and other instances of demographic data collection.