

# MONTANA WORLD TRADE CENTER

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE & INVESTMENT SURVEY

2023

MAY 2024



BUREAU OF BUSINESS AND  
ECONOMIC RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA



WORLD TRADE CENTER  
MONTANA

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## Acknowledgements

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of the Montana World Trade Center® International Trade and Investment Survey is to illuminate key characteristics of Montana businesses that engage in international trade. These characteristics demonstrate the importance of international trade to Montana's economy in terms of jobs produced, wages paid, and revenue generated. The findings of this survey also provide information that business and government decision makers can use to grow Montana's international trade portfolio.

This survey was sponsored by the Montana World Trade Center® and was administered by University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research. The survey was conducted in January through March 2024. Of the 221 eligible businesses in the Bureau's sample, 76 (38%) participated (American Association for Public Opinion Research, 2023). In addition, 12 firms responded to Montana World Trade Center® requests to participate. Thus, the total number of firms responding to the survey was 88.

The statements that follow highlight the central findings of this survey:

- The responding businesses reported that they employed a total of 2,413 Montanans in early 2024.
- On average, the responding businesses reported employing 28 Montanans per business.
- The responding businesses paid their Montana employees an average annual wage of \$66,000 in 2023. This is a decrease when compared with 2022. This average is considerably higher than the Montana average annual wage of \$55,920 as reported in May 2023 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- These businesses paid a total of \$159,258,000 in wages to Montana workers in 2023.
- The responding businesses averaged \$10,700,000 per business in annual revenue in 2023. Readers should keep in mind that revenue here is the total for the entire company and not just revenue earned by the company in Montana.
- Total revenue for these companies in 2023 was \$683 million.
- The average anticipated change per firm in annual revenue in 2024 is an increase of 19%.
- The 2024 average estimate per firm for the change in annual wages is a 7% increase.
- Of the 88 responding businesses, 66 reported they export products or services.
- 46 exporting businesses reported the sales value of their products or services exported to markets outside the U.S. The total sales value reported was \$182,000,000 in 2023.
- The average total export sales value per business was \$4,000,000 in 2023.
- A majority of the participating export firms (31) sell directly using a sales team.
- The top 5 export markets for these firms were Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, and People's Republic of China.
- Marketing was the top ranked factor (10 firms) that would cause the responding firms to be more successful exporting.
- 54 of the 85 firms (64%) that answered the question about importing, reported importing products or services for use in Montana operations.

- The total 2022 value of imports reported by the participating businesses was \$74,500,000.
- The average 2023 value of imports per business was \$1,800,000.
- Three in ten responding businesses (31%) said they are currently seeking investment for expansion of operations in Montana.
- More firms (10) said that the manufacturing sector was most likely to make an investment in Montana when compared with any other industry or sector.
- Half of responding businesses (50%) said that their firm was negatively impacted by U.S. tariffs over the last four years.
- More responding businesses (15) cited Montana's quality of life as a competitive advantage conferred by being located in Montana when compared to any other advantage.



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## Introduction

The purpose of the Montana World Trade Center® Survey is to illuminate key characteristics of Montana businesses that engage in international trade. These characteristics demonstrate the importance of international trade to Montana's economy in terms of jobs produced, wages paid, and revenue generated. The findings of this survey also provide information that business and government decision makers can use to grow Montana's international trade portfolio.

### Background of this project

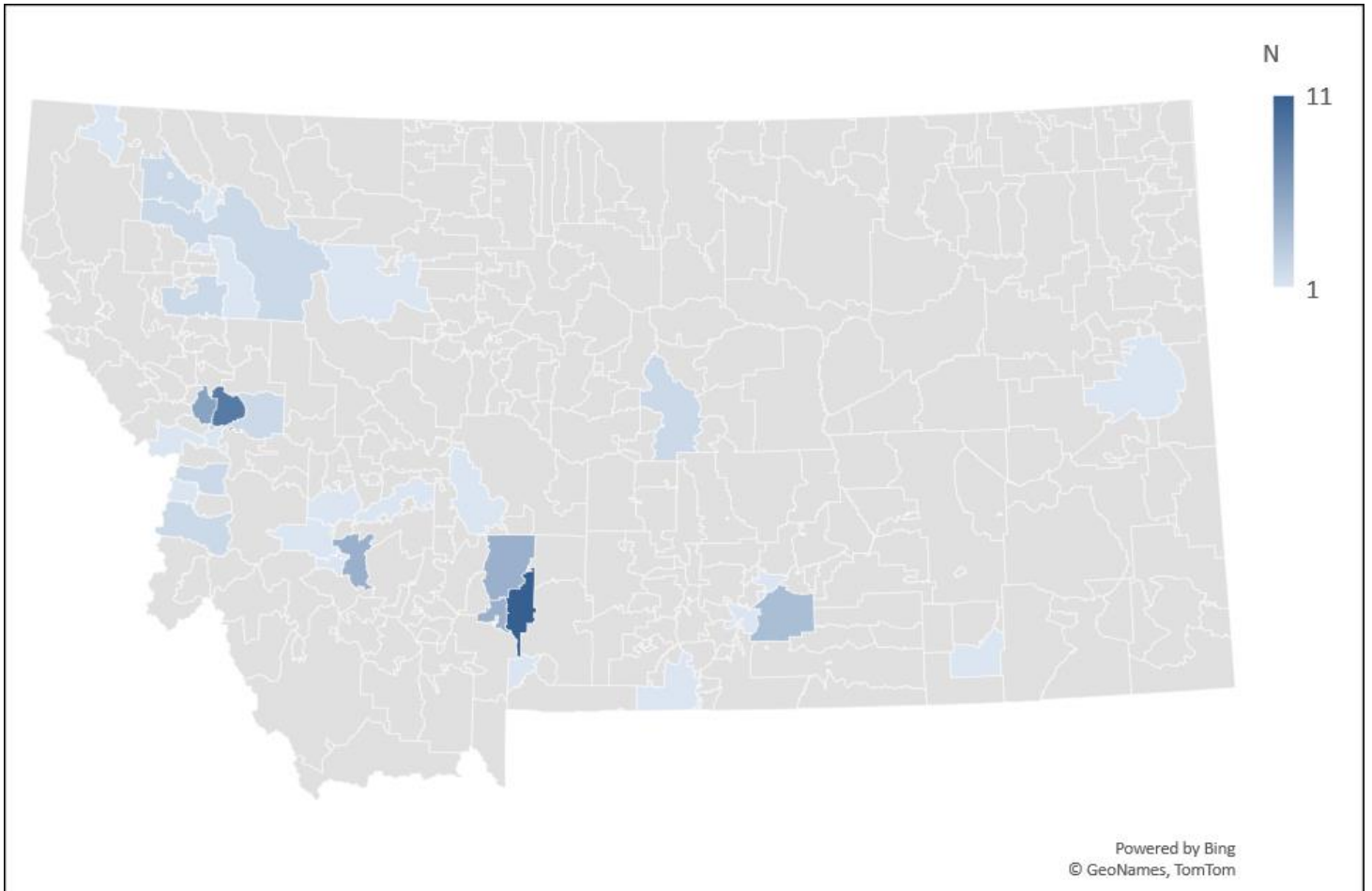
Growing international trade in Montana is central to the mission of the Montana World Trade Center® (MWTC), a longstanding program of the University of Montana. MWTC is part of the World Trade Centers® Association (WTCA), which includes nearly 300 World Trade Centers® (WTCs) in 100 countries around the globe.

MWTC's work falls into three primary areas. First, by integrating the extended resources available through the University system, compiling, and analyzing information obtained through the World Trade Centers® Association, governmental organizations, trade associations, professional networking, and comprehensive primary and secondary research, MWTC trade specialists and students serve as an on-demand extension to businesses across Montana. Second, MWTC offers myriad trainings and forums relating to international business and trade each year. Finally, MWTC spearheads initiatives statewide that help grow Montana's international trade and investment portfolio.

## Locations of responding Montana businesses

As Figure 1 demonstrates, the Montana World Trade Center® International Trade and Investment Survey collected data from international trading businesses located across Montana.

Figure 1: Number of responding businesses by ZIP Code



The responding international trade businesses were most frequently located in Bozeman or Missoula. Important concentrations of responding international trade businesses were also located in Billings, Butte, Kalispell, and the Bitterroot Valley.

## Methods

This survey was sponsored by the Montana World Trade Center® and was administered by University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). The survey was conducted in January through March 2024. Of the 221 eligible businesses in the Bureau's sample, 76 (38%) participated. In addition, 12 firms responded to Montana World Trade Center® requests to participate. Thus, the total number of firms responding to the survey was 88. The response rate for this survey is calculated using the American Association for Public Opinion Research's formula RR3 (American Association for Public Opinion Research, 2023).

The data for this survey were collected by administering a questionnaire via the internet to a list of businesses provided by the MWTC. Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Agriculture and the Montana High Tech Business Alliance also shared a hyperlink for this survey with existing lists of businesses and sought participation through social media. BBER used Qualtrics survey research software to manage this survey (Qualtrics, 2020). Data were collected using industry standard methods (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). The questionnaire invitation was transmitted by email and respondents are asked to click on a hyperlink to access the online questionnaire. MWTC's Executive Director, Brigitta Miranda-Freer, assisted significantly by conducting additional non-respondent prompts and helping to manage the respondent list. The questionnaire was developed by the MWTC in consultation with BBER.

Following receipt of the survey responses, the data were inspected to ensure no duplicate cases were included and to correct any obvious typos made by respondents. Appropriate variable and value labels were added to the data set. Appropriate composite variables and flags, including indicators for industry type, number of employees and import / export participation, were coded and added to the data set to facilitate the analysis process.

BBER conducted a statistical analysis of the survey data using statistical analysis computer software packages SPSS and SAS (IBM Corporation, 2023). BBER analyzed the data collected using frequencies, cross-tabulations, standard measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode), sums and ratios (Heeringa, West, & Berglund, 2017).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the Montana World Trade Center® International Trade and Investment Survey in the order questions appeared in the questionnaire. The exact question language is displayed at the top of each page to provide context necessary for understanding responses. Finally, this report presents the references that underpin the methods used for the study.

## Q1. Which industry best represents your company?

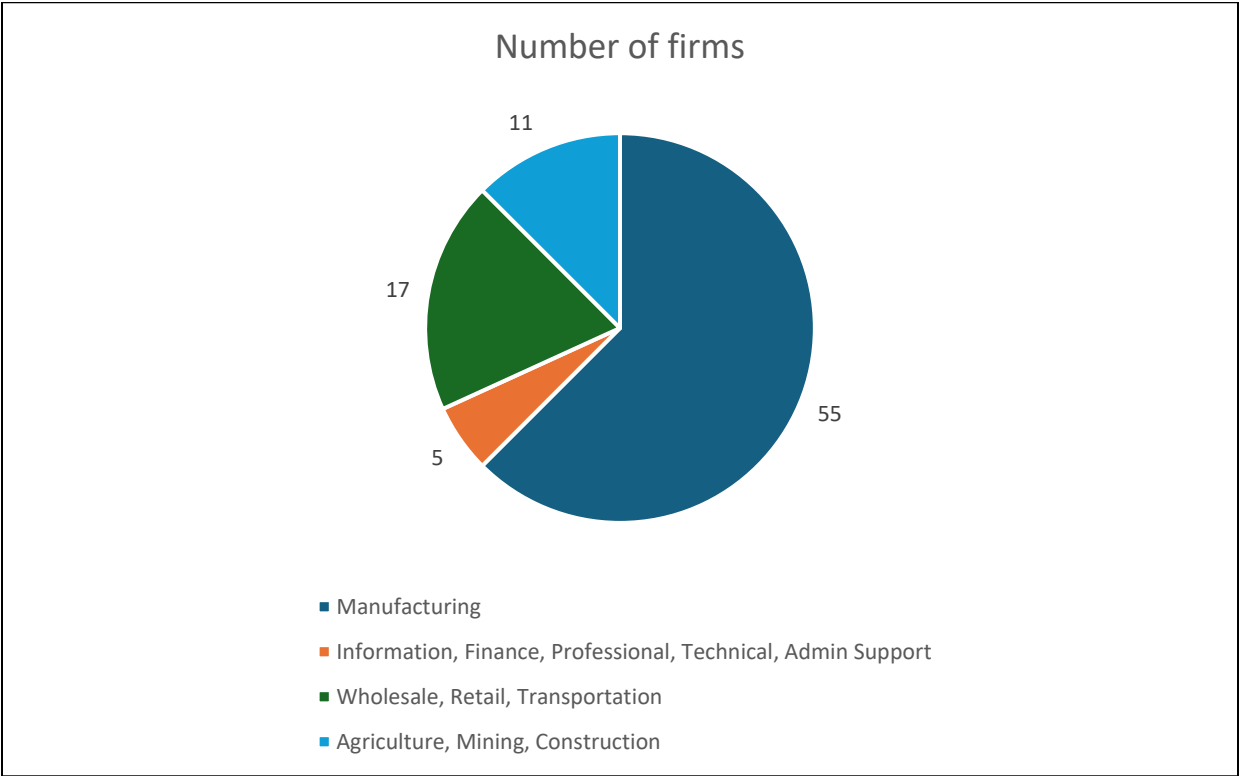
70% of the firms that participated in this survey classified themselves as manufacturing firms. Table 1 describes the types of firms that responded to the survey. Just under one in ten firms (7%) said that they are biotechnology firms.

Table 1: Self-assessed firm type

	%
Manufacturing - Other	31%
Manufacturing - Industrial equipment	13%
Other	10%
Manufacturing - Value added agriculture	9%
Manufacturing - Biotechnology/Pharma	7%
Aerospace/Automotive/Transportation	6%
Manufacturing - Outdoor products	6%
Ecommerce	3%
Manufacturing - Photonics or optics products	2%
Energy/Extractive Minerals	2%
Manufacturing - Medical/Healthcare Devices	2%
Software/SaaS	2%
Construction	2%
Advertising/Marketing	2%
Consulting	1%
Engineering	1%
Financial Services/Payment Processing	1%
Total	100%

A second useful way to classify the responding businesses is by their 2022 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code. (Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2022) BBER assigned each business a NAICS code. Those classifications are summarized in Figure 2 below. 55 responding businesses were classified by BBER as manufacturing businesses. 5 were classified as information, finance, professional, scientific, technical, or administrative support. BBER assessed that 17 of the businesses were wholesale, retail, or transportation firms, and 11 were agriculture, mining, or construction.

Figure 2: Industry type

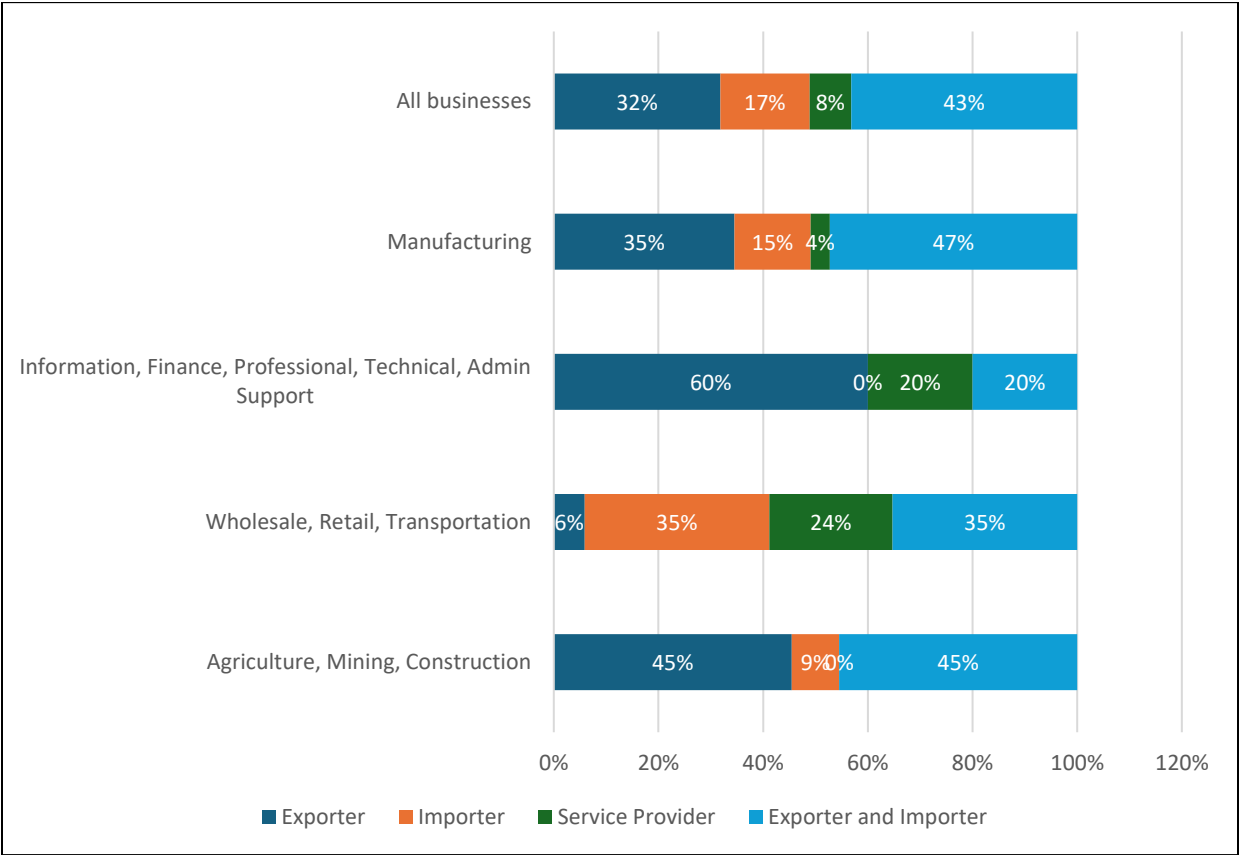




**Q2. Are you an Exporter, Importer, or Service Provider to firms that export/import (e.g., Freight Forwarder)?**

A plurality of the firms that responded to this survey reported that they engage in exporting and importing (43%). Figure 3 presents firms' reports on their importing or exporting activity.

Figure 3: Importing or exporting activity

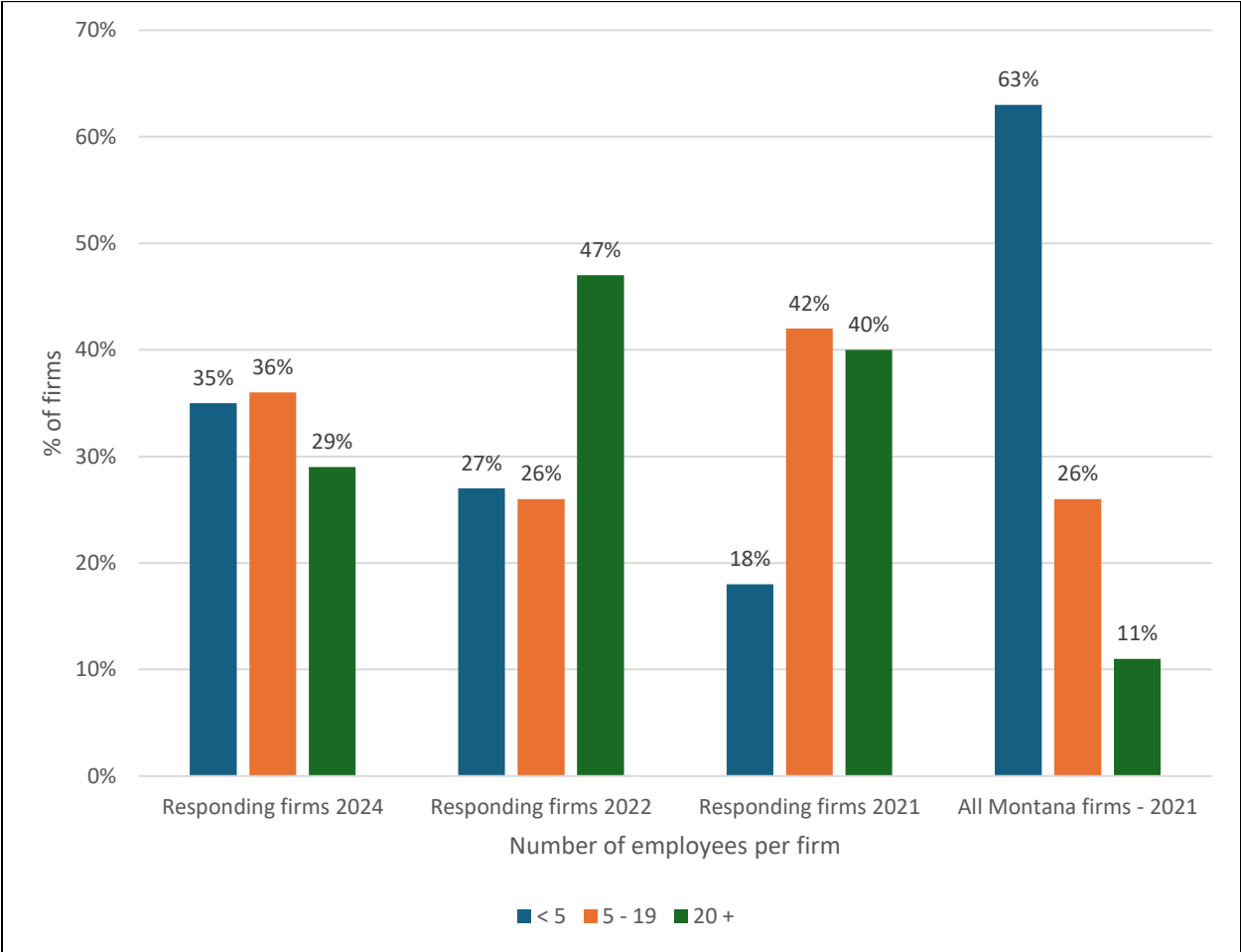


One-third of the businesses (32%) reported that they engage in exporting. 17% of businesses said that they only import goods.

### Q3. How many employees does your company have in Montana?

The 88 responding businesses reported that they employed a total of 2,413 Montanans in early 2024. On average, the responding businesses reported employing 28 Montanans per business. This average is greater than the average number of employees per business for all Montana businesses (11). The median responding firm reported employing 7 Montanans. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023) The median number of employees per business reported in 2024 is larger than the median reported in 2022 (16). Figure 4 presents the percentage distribution of responding businesses by the number of Montanans they employed in 2024.

Figure 4: Distribution of employees among responding firms



The responding firms employ more workers per firm than do all firms in Montana. 29% of responding firms reported employing 20 or more employees, while only 11% of all Montana firms employ 20 or more employees (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). On the other end of the spectrum, 35% of responding businesses said they employ fewer than 5 employees, but 63% of all Montana businesses employ fewer than 5 employees.

When examining number of employees per firm by business type or import / export activity, it is apparent that manufacturing and information, finance, professional, technical, and admin support businesses most commonly employ 20+ employees. Similarly, exporting businesses most commonly employ 20+ employees. Table 2 below presents the distribution of Montana workers employed by various types of business.

*Table 2: Distribution of employees by type of business of import / export activity*

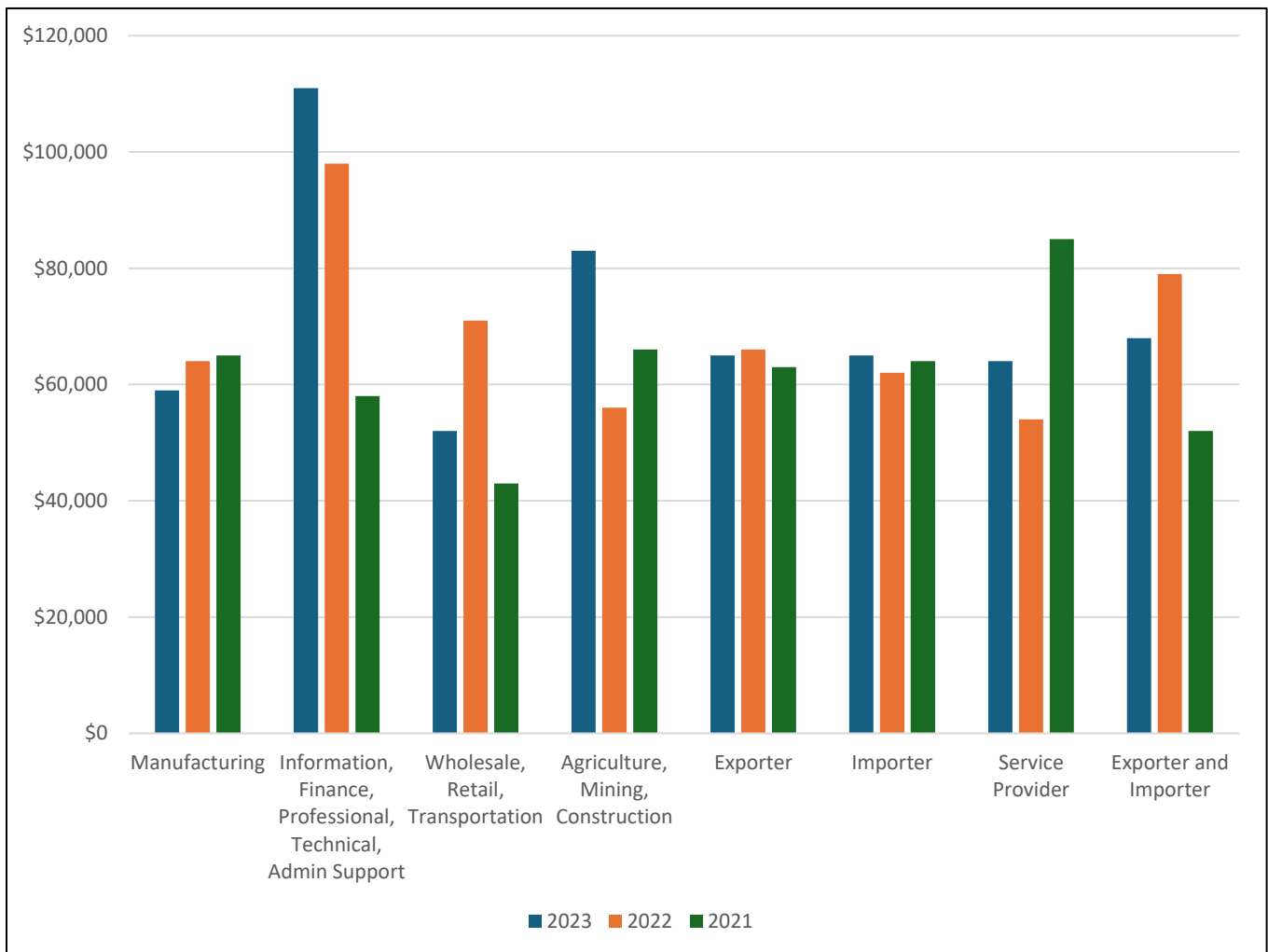
Type of business or import / export activity	Number of Montana Employees		
	< 5	5 - 19	20+
Manufacturing	24%	39%	37%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	40%	20%	40%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	65%	35%	0%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	45%	27%	27%
Exporter	37%	22%	41%
Importer	40%	47%	13%
Service Provider	29%	71%	0%
Exporter and Importer	34%	34%	32%

#### Q4. What is your company's average annual Montana wage?

The responding businesses paid their Montana employees an average annual wage of \$66,000 in 2023. This represents a very small decrease when compared to 2022 (\$68,000). This average is considerably higher than the Montana average annual wage of \$55,920 as reported in May 2023 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). These businesses paid a total of \$159,258,000 in wages to Montana workers in 2023.

Figure 5 displays the average annual wage paid by the various types of responding business and by their import / export activity.

Figure 5: Average annual wage



## Q5. What were your company's annual revenues in 2023?

The responding businesses averaged \$10.7 million in annual revenue in 2023, down from \$77.9 million in 2022. The estimates reported for question 5 exclude responses from one large mining firm. Total revenue for these companies in 2023 was an estimated \$683 million, down from \$7.5 billion in 2022. Readers should keep in mind that revenue here is the total for the entire company and not just revenue earned by the company in Montana, and is dependent on which firm responds to the survey.

Table 3 below displays the average 2023 revenue earned by the various industry types of the responding businesses and by their import / export activity.

Table 3: Average 2023 revenue

Type of business or import / export activity	Average 2023 Revenue	Average 2022 Revenue
All responding businesses	\$10,700,000	\$77,900,000
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	\$12,900,000	\$48,200,000
Manufacturing	\$12,300,000	\$90,700,000
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	\$3,400,000	\$16,600,000
Information, Finance, Professional, Scientific, Technical, Admin Support	\$8,200,000	\$106,100,000
Exporter	\$5,300,000	\$26,800,000
Importer	\$13,000,000	\$10,200,000
Service Provider	\$8,600,000	\$1,300,000
Exporter / Importer	\$13,800,000	\$198,700,000

**Q6. By what percentage do you estimate your company's annual revenues may increase or decrease next year (2024)?**

Of the businesses that responded to this survey in early 2024, the average anticipated change in the upcoming year's revenue is an increase of 19%. This anticipated growth rate decreased from last year's anticipated growth rate (24%). Table 4 below presents the anticipated change in revenue for 2023 by type of business and by the business's import / export activity.

*Table 4: Mean anticipated change in 2024 revenue (%)*

<b>Type of business or import / export activity</b>	<b>Anticipated change in 2024 revenue (%)</b>	<b>Anticipated change in 2023 revenue (%)</b>
All responding businesses	19%	24%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	18%	71%
Manufacturing	24%	19%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	12%	0%
Information, Finance, Professional, Scientific, Technical, Admin Support	1%	10%
Exporter	30%	16%
Importer	29%	41%
Service Provider	0%	28%
Exporter / importer	10%	23%

The following are the specific NAICS classifications (Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2022) of the companies reporting the largest anticipated revenue growth in 2024 (in percentage terms):

*Table 5: Fastest growing companies*

<b>NAICS</b>	
Plastics and rubber products manufacturing	In vitro diagnostic substance manufacturing
Kaolin clay and ceramic and refractory minerals mining	Metal kitchen cookware utensil cutlery and flatware manufacturing
Other nonmetallic mineral mining and quarrying	Mining machinery and equipment manufacturing
All other miscellaneous textile product mills	Analytical laboratory instrument manufacturing
Sawmills	Motorcycle ATV and all other motor vehicle dealers



**Q7. By what percentage do you estimate your company’s annual Montana wages may increase or decrease next year (2024)?**

Responding businesses estimated the anticipated percentage change in annual Montana wages their company would pay in 2024. The 2024 average estimate for these companies was a 7% increase, down from last year’s estimate of 13%. Table 6 displays the average anticipated change in annual wages that will be paid to Montana workers in 2023 by business type and import / export activity.

*Table 6: Mean anticipated change in 2023 wages (%)*

<b>Type of business or import / export activity</b>	<b>Mean anticipated change in 2024 wages (%)</b>	<b>Mean anticipated change in 2023 wages (%)</b>
All responding businesses	7%	13%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	11%	38%
Manufacturing	7%	11%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	5%	5%
Information, Finance, Professional, Scientific, Technical, Admin Support	4%	8%
Exporter	2%	13%
Importer	20%	30%
Service Provider	3%	7%
Exporter / importer	6%	8%

**Q8. About how much money do you anticipate your company will invest in major capital expenditures in Montana next year (2024)?**

The responding firms estimated that, on average, they will spend \$1,200,000 on major capital expenditures in 2024, down from the 2023 estimate of \$2,200,000. Table 7 presents the 2024 per firm major anticipated capital expenditure by business type and import / export activity.

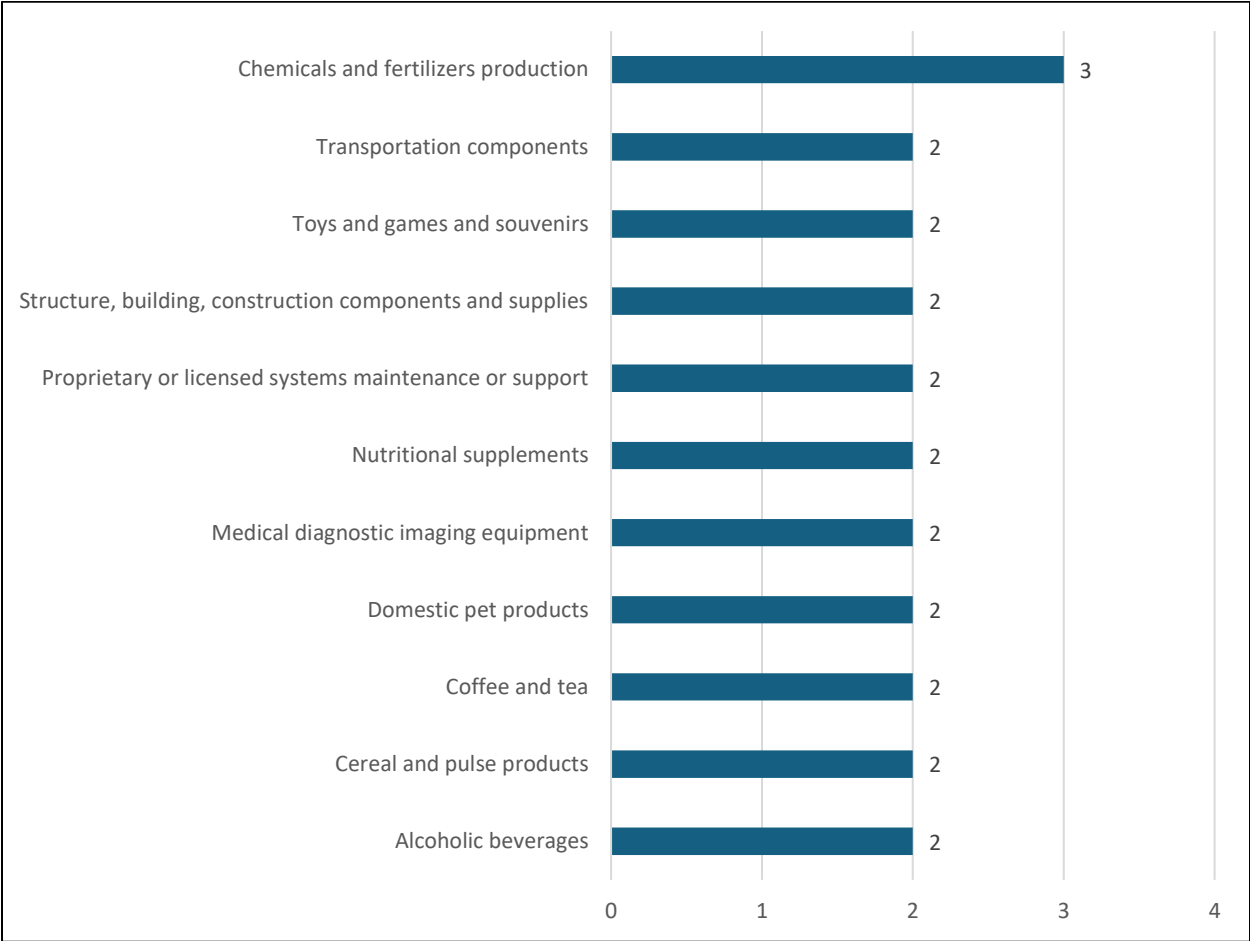
*Table 7: 2024 Anticipated major capital expenditure per firm*

<b>Type of business or import / export activity</b>	<b>2024 anticipated major capital expenditure</b>	<b>2023 anticipated major capital expenditure</b>
All responding businesses	\$1,200,000	\$2,200,000
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	\$3,400,000	\$3,400,000
Manufacturing	\$980,000	\$1,400,000
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	\$240,000	\$4,000,000
Information, Finance, Professional, Scientific, Technical, Admin Support	\$28,000	\$4,400,000
Exporter	\$1,700,000	\$3,900,000
Importer	\$300,000	\$400,000
Service Provider	\$300,000	\$800,000
Exporter / importer	\$1,300,000	\$1,900,000

Q9. What three main products/services do you export? For purposes of this survey, export refers specifically to sale of products or services to markets outside the U.S.

The exporting businesses that responded to this survey reported exporting 84 different segments of product or service type in 2024. (United Nations Development Program, 2020) Figure 6 below lists the most commonly exported segments of types of products or services as reported by the responding businesses.

Figure 6: Most commonly cited export products or services in 2024



Q10. What is the estimated total U.S. dollar value of your firm’s export sales? For purposes of this survey, export refers specifically to sales of products or services to markets outside the U.S.

The 46 exporting businesses that responded to question 10 reported sales of products or services to markets outside the U.S. with a total sales value of \$182,000,000 in 2023. The estimates reported for question 10 exclude a response from one large mining firm. The average total export sales value per business in 2023 was \$4,000,000, down from \$8,900,000 in 2022. Table 8 presents average 2023 export sales by business type.

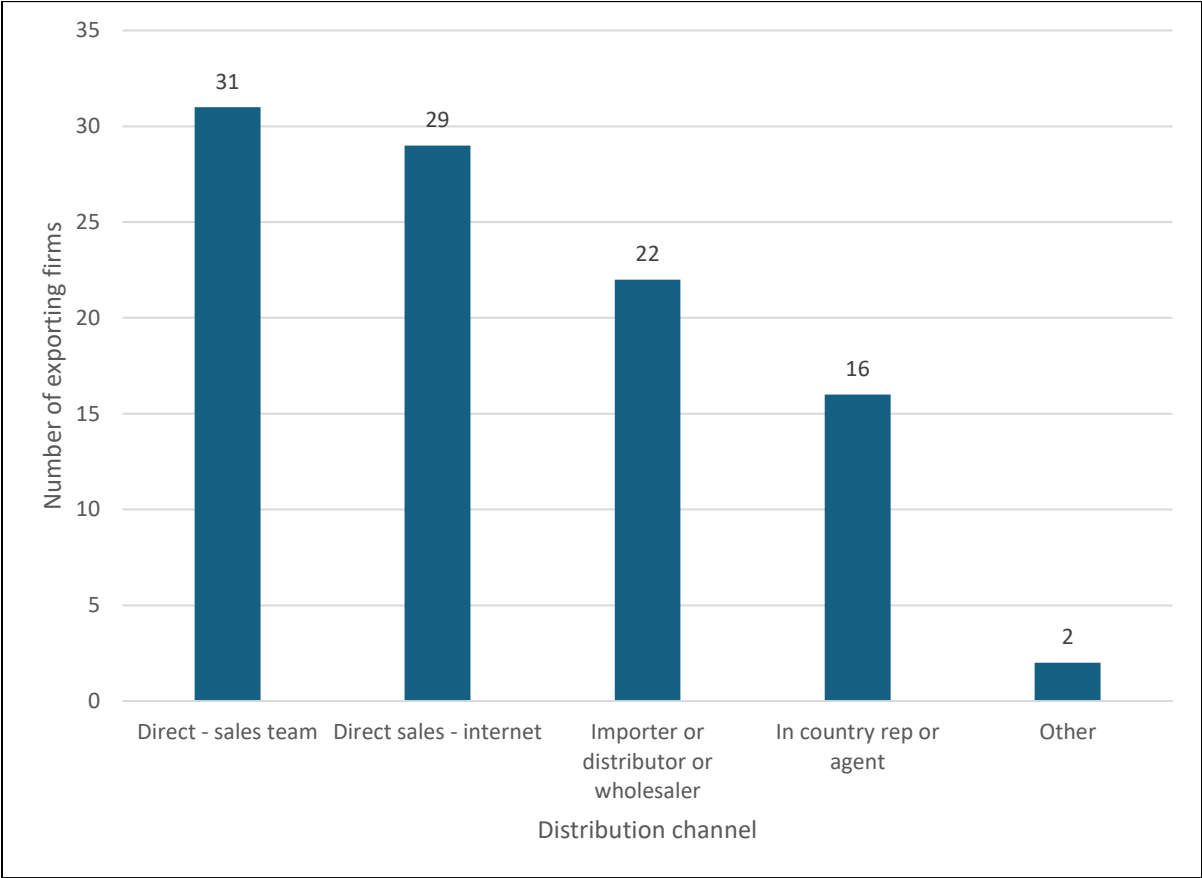
Table 8: Mean 2023 export sales (\$)

Type of business	Mean 2023 export sales	Mean 2022 export sales
All responding businesses	\$4,000,000	\$8,900,000
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	\$5,500,000	\$46,100,000
Manufacturing	\$4,300,000	\$3,100,000
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	\$30,000	\$11,400,000
Information, Finance, Professional, Scientific, Technical, Admin Support	\$1,300,000	\$20,200,000

Q11. What distribution channels do you use for export?

About two-thirds of the participating export firms (31) sell directly using a sales team. Figure 7 illustrates the frequency of use of various export distribution channels in 2023.

Figure 7: Export distribution channels

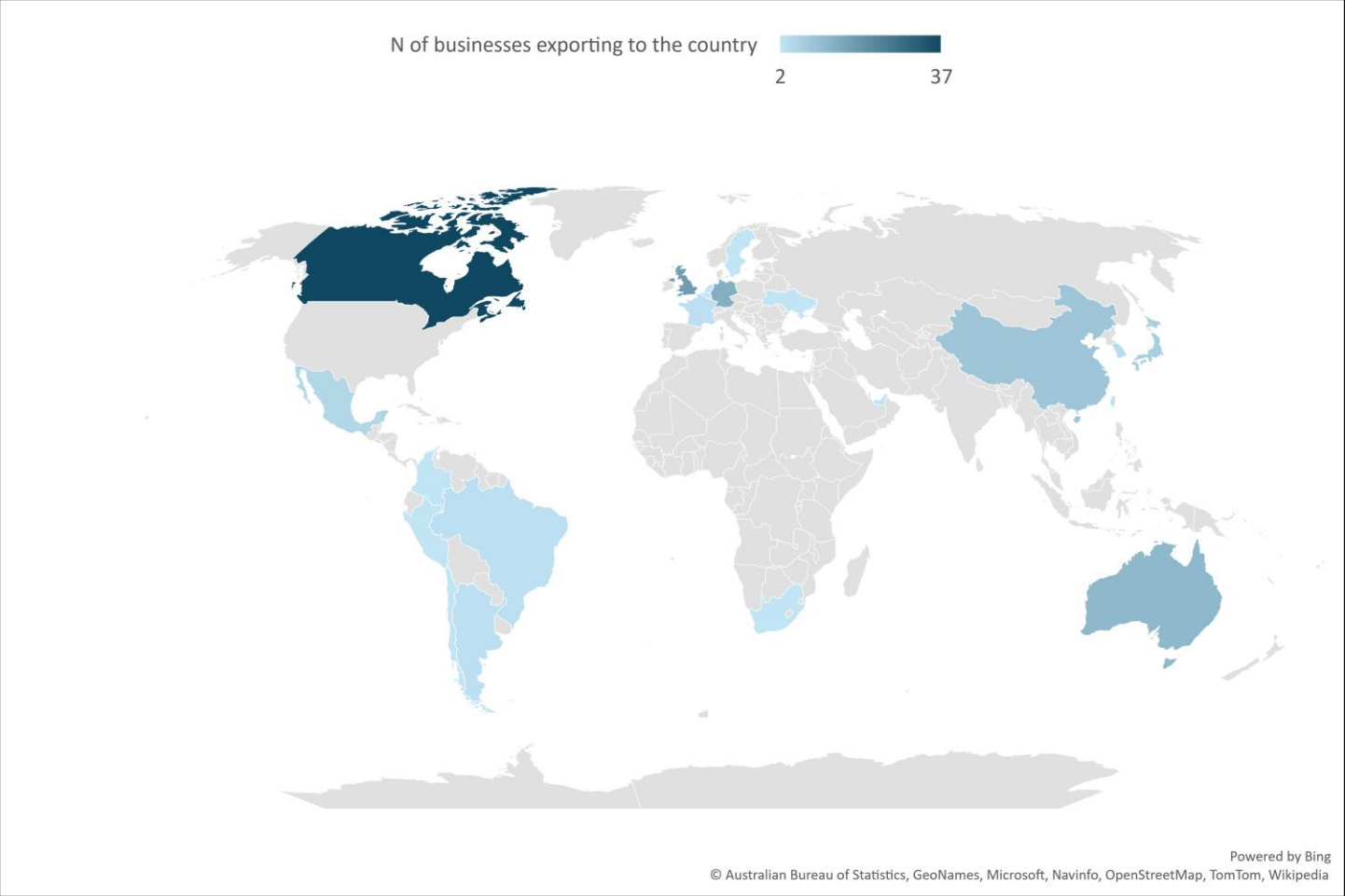


Slightly fewer businesses (29) make direct sales using the internet. In terms of use, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked distribution channel (22 businesses) was using an importer, distributor, or wholesaler.

Q12. To what main three countries do you export your product/service? For purposes of this survey, export refers specifically to sales of products or services to markets outside the U.S.

Exporting businesses that responded to this survey reported exporting products or services to 47 different countries or regions throughout the world (ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency, 2020). Canada was the dominant destination for exports (37 firms). Figure 8 presents the distribution of top destinations for exports among the businesses surveyed.

Figure 8: Export destinations



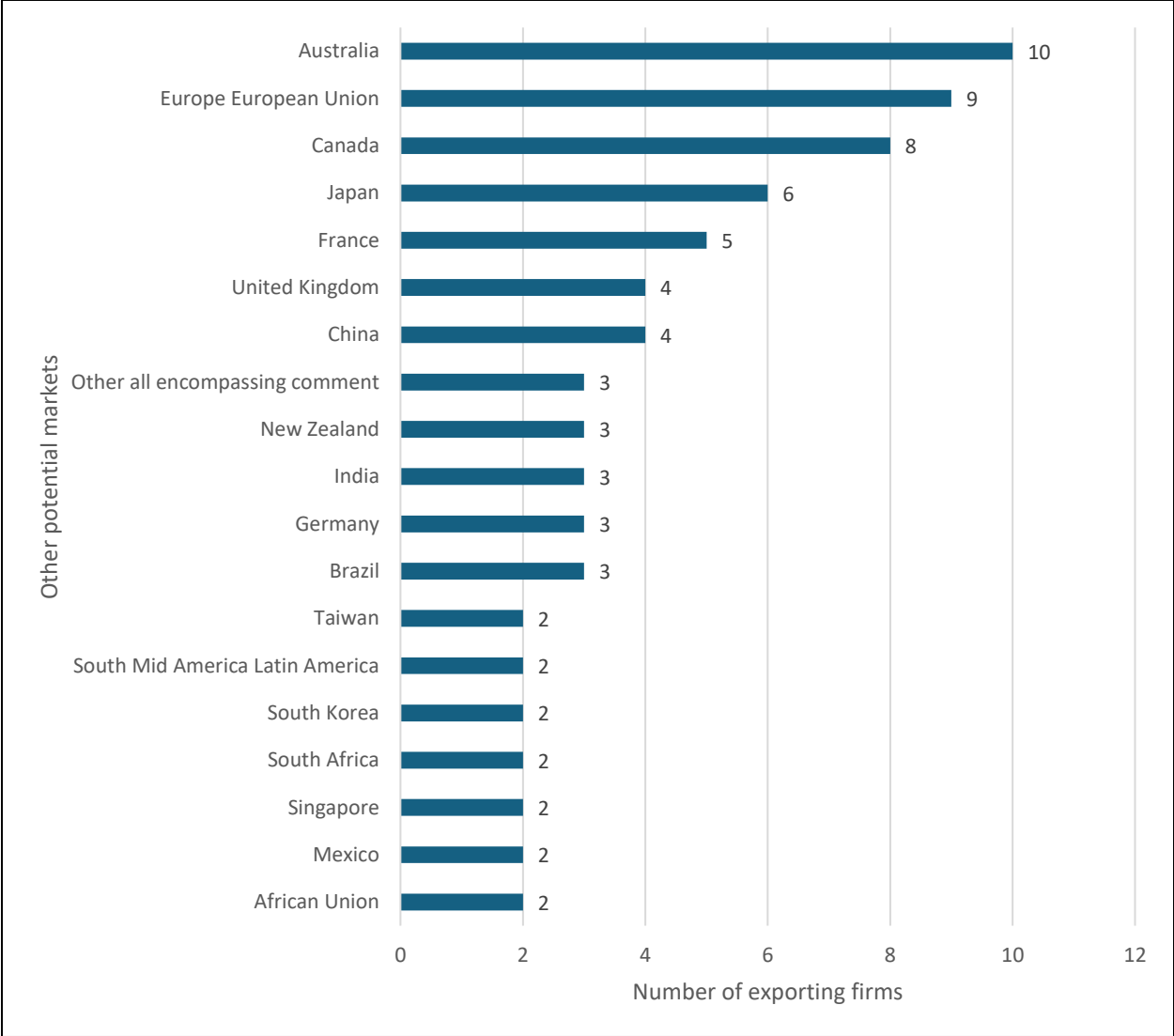
United Kingdom ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> (18 firms) as an export destination. Germany was the 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked destination (14 firms) for exports among the businesses that participated in the survey. Australia ranked 4<sup>th</sup> (12 firms) and People’s Republic of China ranked 5<sup>th</sup> (9 firms).



**Q13. Outside of these existing foreign markets, in what other foreign market are your product/services currently likely to be competitive?**

Exporting businesses reported a total of 40 additional countries or regions that they viewed as potential markets. A plurality of responding firms (10) cited Australia as a foreign market in which their product or service may be competitive. Figure 9 displays the distribution of top potential foreign markets for exporting firms.

*Figure 9: Other potential export markets*

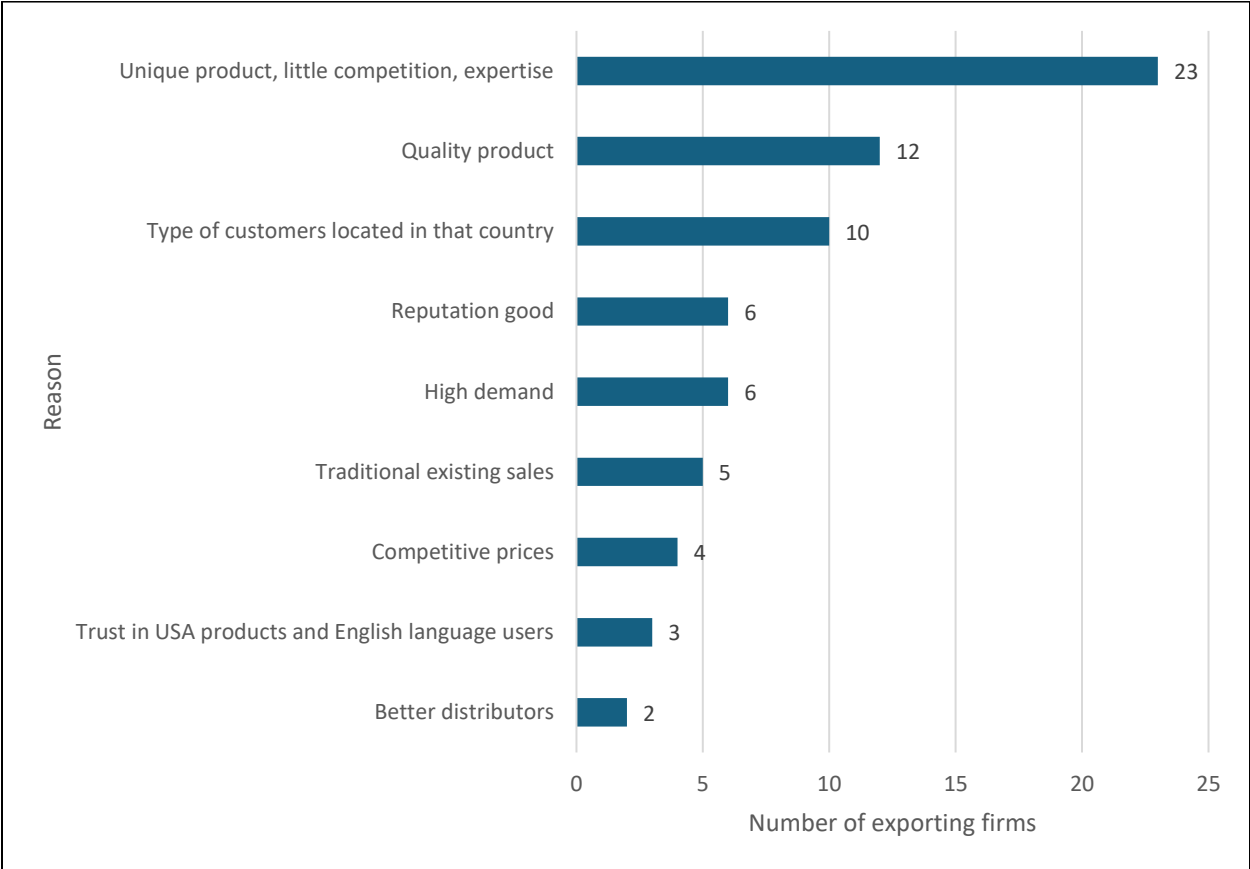


Europe or the European Union were the areas ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> (9 firms) as potential markets. Canada was 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked (8 firms), Japan (6 firms) and France (5 firms) were next.

Q14. Why are your products/services likely be competitive in these regions?

Most exporting firms (23) said that the reason they expected their products or services to be competitive were that their product was unique, there was little competition or their company's expertise was substantial. Figure 10 describes the range of reasons cited by responding firms.

Figure 10: Reasons exports will be competitive

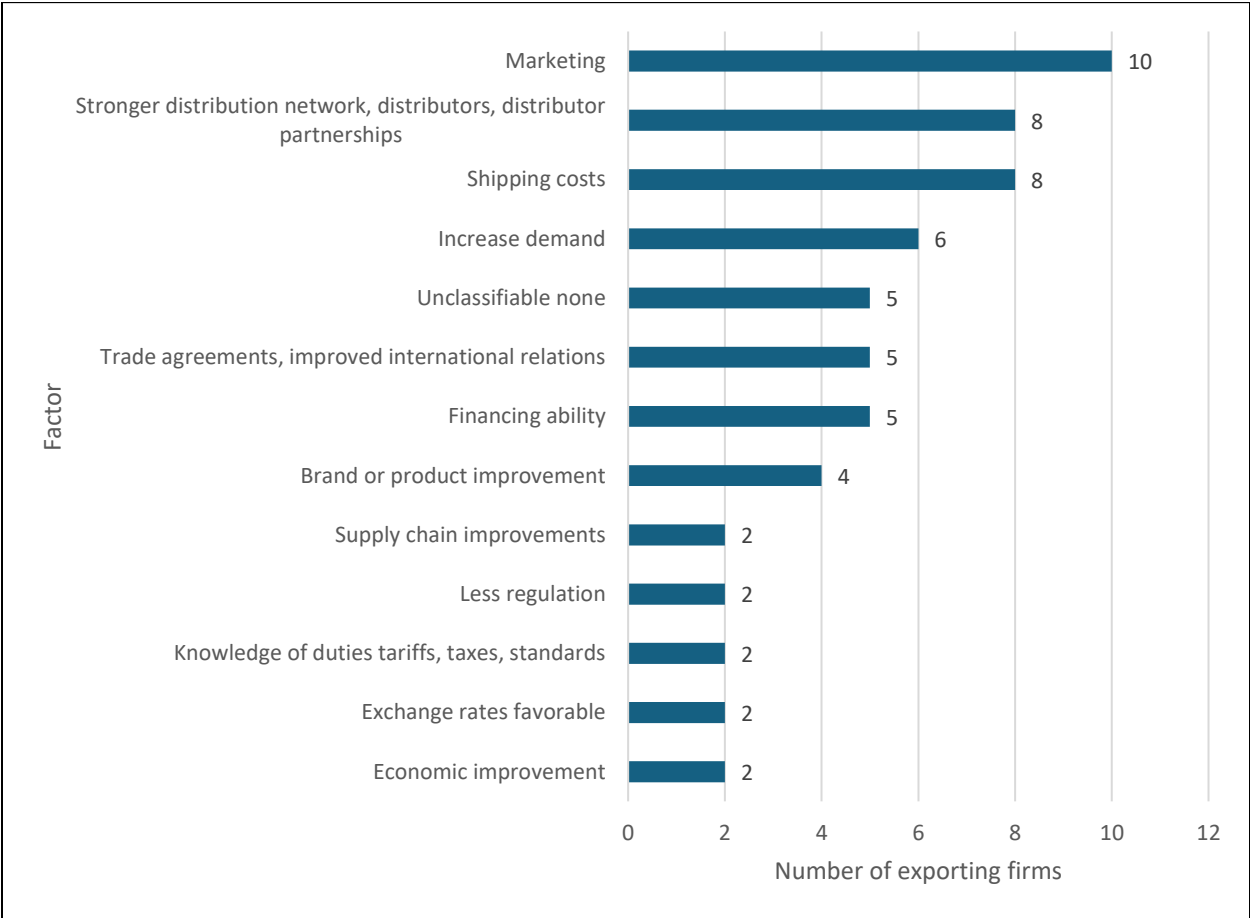


The 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked competitive edge cited by firms (12) was the exporter has a quality product. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked reason was the type of customers located in the prospective country.

Q15. What factors might cause you to become more successful at exporting to these countries?

Marketing was the top ranked factor (10 firms) that would cause the responding firms to be more successful exporting. Figure 11 presents the top ranked factors mentioned by firms.

Figure 11: Factors that would increase export success

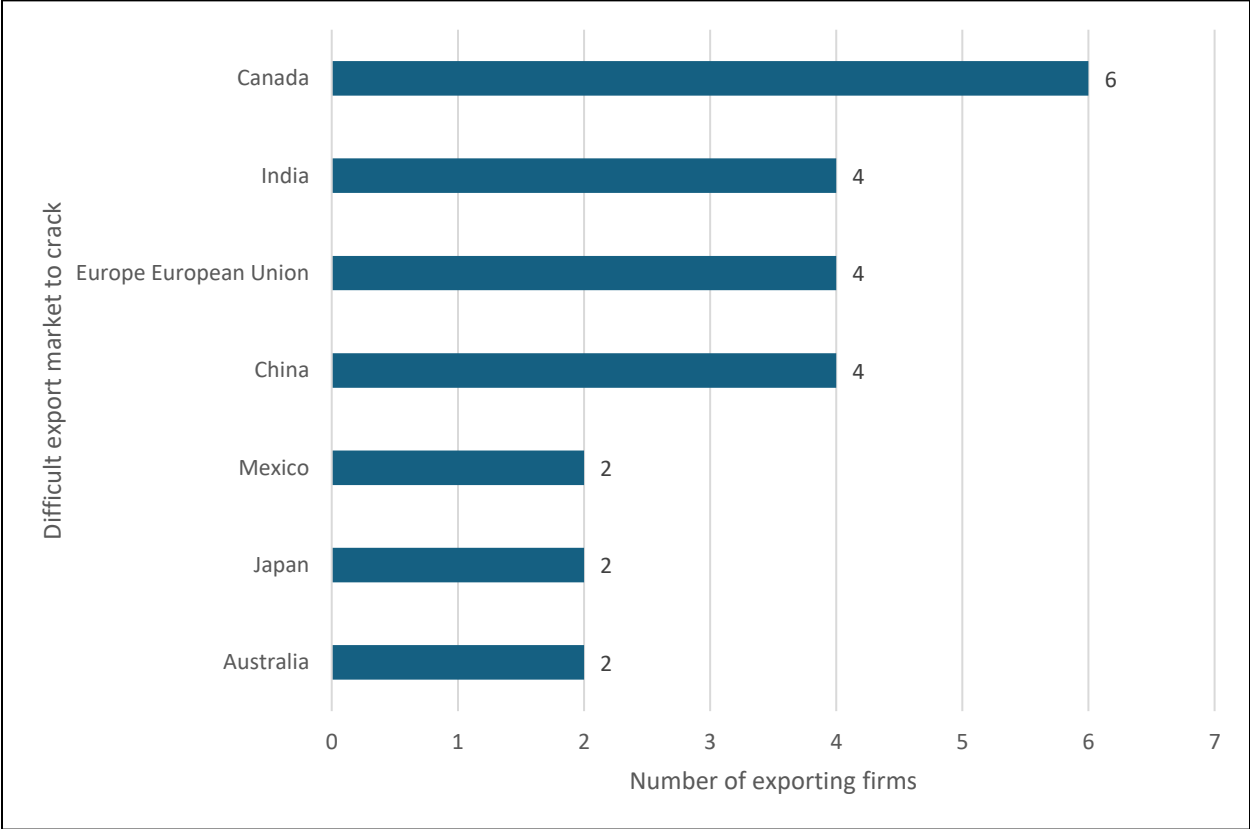


Obtaining stronger distribution networks, distributors, or distributor partnerships was tied as the 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked success factor (8 firms) along with shipping costs (8 firms). Increase in demand was the 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked factor (6 firms).

**Q16. Are there export markets that you have an interest in but are particularly difficult to crack? If yes, what are they?**

Of the firms that provided an answer to question 16, 31 (42%) answered Yes - there are export markets in which they are interested but are hard to crack. 44 firms (59%) answered No. Canada was most frequently mentioned (6 firms) as a market in which firms were interested but had difficulty gaining access. Figure 12 displays the top markets in which firms were interested but had difficulty gaining access.

*Figure 12: Interesting export markets that are difficult to crack*



Europe, the European Union, India, and People’s Republic of China were tied as the 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked markets (4 firms) that were interesting but difficult to crack.

**Q17. Are you thinking that you may have to curtail export efforts in the coming year?**

Nine firms (12% of responding firms) stated that they may have to curtail export efforts in 2024, while 67 firms (88%) stated they would not curtail exporting. Table 9 presents the proportion of businesses that may curtail exporting in 2024 by the type of business.

*Table 9: Firms that may curtail exporting in 2024*

Type of business	May curtail exporting in 2024	
	Yes	No
Manufacturing	14%	86%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	20%	80%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	9%	91%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	0%	100%

Almost nine in ten (86%) of the manufacturing firms will definitely continue exporting in 2024. All agriculture, mining, or construction companies (100%) will continue exporting in 2024. 80% of information, finance, professional, scientific, technical and admin support companies (will continue exporting in 2024. 91% of wholesale, retail or transportation companies are likely to continue exporting.

**Q18. Does your firm currently import (from outside the U.S.) products or services for use in your Montana operations?**

54 of the 85 firms that responded to this question (64%) reported importing products or services for use in Montana operations, while 36% reported importing no products or services. Table 10 describes the proportions of businesses that import products or services by the type of business.

*Table 10: Imported products or services for use in Montana operations*

Type of business	Imported products or services for use in Montana operations	
	Yes	No
Manufacturing	68%	32%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	20%	80%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	75%	25%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	45%	55%

68% of responding manufacturing firms reported importing products or services. Among responding wholesale, retail, or transportation companies 75% said they import products or services. 20% of responding information, finance, professional, scientific, technical or admin support companies import products or services for use in Montana operations. 45% of responding agriculture, mining, or construction companies reported importing goods or services.



## Q19. What is the estimated annual U.S. dollar value of those imports?

The total 2023 value of imports reported by the 42 responding businesses was \$74,500,000, down from \$181,300,000 in 2022. Table 11 presents the average 2022 value of imports by business type.

Table 11: Mean 2023 value of imports per firm

<b>Type of business</b>	<b>Mean 2023 value of imports</b>	<b>Mean 2022 value of imports</b>
All responding businesses	\$1,800,000	\$3,600,000
Manufacturing	\$2,000,000	\$3,700,000
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	No responses	\$2,500,000
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	\$960,000	\$7,600,000
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	\$1,500,000	\$7,200,000

**Q20. Do you have foreign suppliers that might benefit you if they were a resident in Montana?**

Among importing businesses, 23% reported that their firm would benefit from a foreign supplier being a Montana resident, down from 42% in the previous survey. 77% said they have no such foreign supplier. Table 12 shows the proportion of firms answering Yes to this question by type of business.

*Table 12: Importer would benefit from a foreign supplier becoming a Montana resident*

Type of business	Importer would benefit from a foreign supplier becoming a Montana resident	
	Yes	No
Manufacturing	23%	77%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	20%	80%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	33%	67%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	9%	91%

33% of wholesale, retail, or transportation firms said that they have a supplier that would benefit from becoming a Montana resident. This proportion exceeds those found among the other responding business types.

**Q21. Is your firm currently seeking investment for expansion of operations in Montana?**

About three in ten responding businesses (33%) said they are currently seeking investment for expansion of operations in Montana, while 67% said that they are not. The proportion of firms currently seeking investment for expansion is nearly identical to that found in the previous survey (34%). Table 13 displays the proportion of businesses that are currently seeking investment for expansion of Montana operations by business type and import / export activity.

*Table 13: Firm is currently seeking investment for expansion of operations in Montana*

Type of business or import / export activity	Firm is currently seeking investment for expansion of operations in Montana	
	Yes	No
Manufacturing	31%	69%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	20%	80%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	25%	75%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	64%	36%
Exporter	25%	75%
Importer	47%	53%
Service Provider	29%	71%
Exporter / importer	35%	65%

When examining responses by business agriculture, mining, and construction firms (64%) were most likely to be seeking investment for expansion in Montana. When viewing responses by import / export activity importers (47%) were most likely to be seeking investment for expansion in Montana.

## Q22. Does your firm have ownership over 10% by a foreign investor?

Relatively few responding firms (3%) reported having ownership of over 10% by a foreign investor. This represents a decline from the previous survey (11%). Table 14 describes rates of firms with greater than 10% foreign ownership by business type and import / export activity.

Table 14: Firm has ownership over 10% by a foreign investor

Type of business or import / export activity	Firm has ownership over 10% by a foreign investor	
	Yes	No
Manufacturing	4%	96%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	20%	80%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	0%	100%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	0%	100%
Exporter	4%	96%
Importer	7%	93%
Service Provider	0%	100%
Exporter and Importer	3%	97%

Information, finance, professional, technical, or admin support businesses were most likely (20%) to report having ownership of over 10% by a foreign investor.

**Q23. Has your firm ever considered seeking Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or has your firm been approached by a foreign-owned entity seeking an ownership interest in your firm?**

About 13% of responding businesses reported that they have considered seeking Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Another 16% of responding businesses reported that they have been approached by a foreign-owned entity seeking an ownership interest in their firm. These proportions represent a small change from those found in the 2022 survey (20% considered, 15% approached). The remaining 71% have neither considered FDI nor been approached about it. Table 15 presents the proportions of firms that have had experiences with FDI by business type or import / export activity.

*Table 15: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) experiences*

Type of business or import / export activity	Foreign Direct Investment		
	Considered	Approached	Neither
Manufacturing	8%	17%	75%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	29%	14%	57%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	7%	7%	86%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	31%	23%	46%
Exporter	21%	28%	52%
Importer	0%	13%	87%
Service Provider	0%	0%	100%
Exporter and Importer	14%	11%	76%

Q24. Do you know of any majority foreign-owned firms in your area? If Yes, please specify which firms.

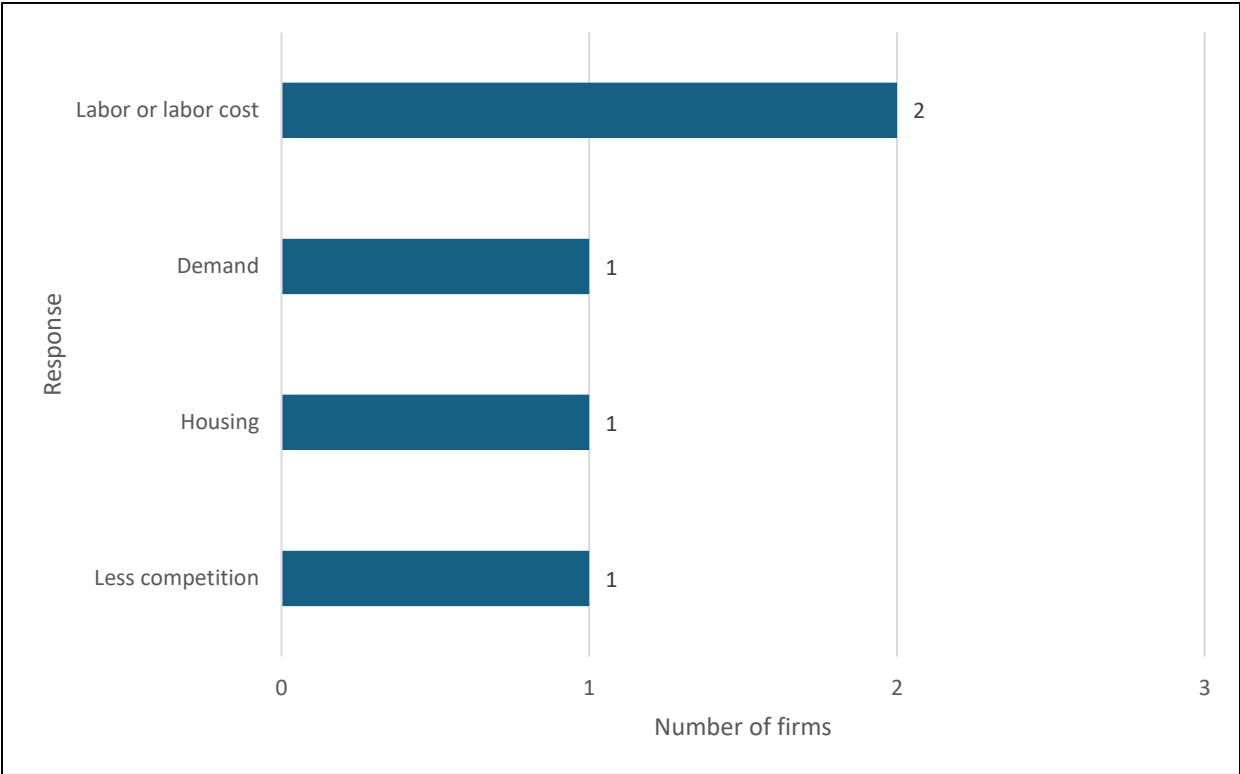
22% of responding businesses reported knowing of any majority foreign-owned firms in their area, the remaining 78% reported not knowing of any. The companies that respondents named were:

1. Brixtel
2. Daher Aircraft
3. Lumibird
4. Pasta Montana
5. OBOZ Footwear
6. GSK
7. REC
8. Sibanye-Stillwater
9. TSI Group Ltd.

Q25. If your company has international operations, what prevents your company from moving your resources to the U.S. (specifically to Montana) and what would incent this investment?

5 companies provided an answer to question 25. Figure 13 below presents the responses to question 25 and the frequency of those responses.

Figure 13: Factors that prevent moving international operations to Montana

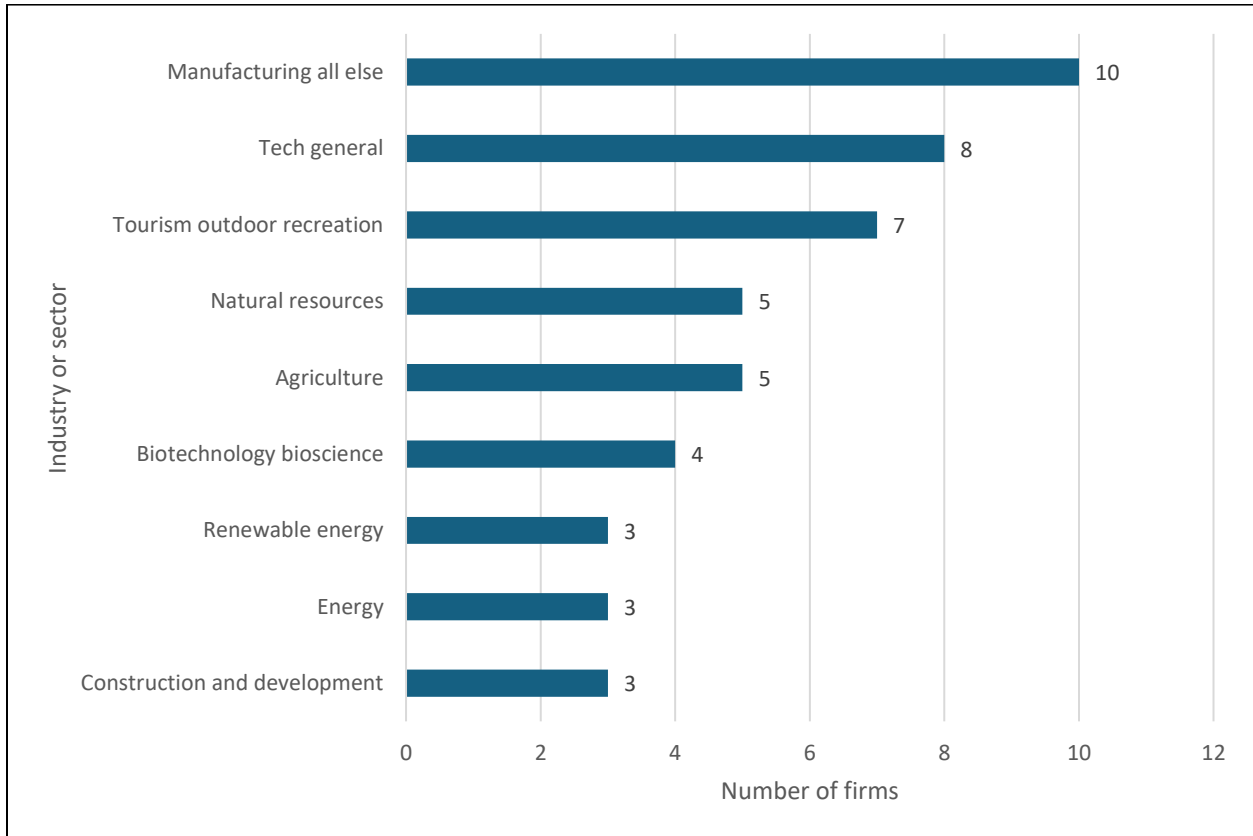


Labor costs were most often mentioned as a barrier to moving company resources to the U.S.

**Q26. From your perspective, what industry/sectors are likely to make an investment in Montana?**

More firms (10) said that the manufacturing sector was likely to make an investment in Montana than any other industry or sector. Figure 14 list the top industries or sectors cited by firms as likely to invest in Montana.

*Figure 14: Industries or sectors that are likely to invest in Montana*



Tech firms were mentioned by 8 firms as being likely to invest in Montana. Tourism was the 3<sup>rd</sup> most often cited industry (7 firms) that is likely to invest in Montana.



## Q27. Has your firm been impacted by U.S. tariffs over the last four years?

Half of responding businesses (50%) said that their firm was negatively impacted by U.S. tariffs in the four years prior to the survey. Only 5% said their firm was positively impacted. The remaining 45% experienced no impact from U.S. tariffs over the past four years. Figure 15 describes the proportions of firms that report various impacts by business type and import / export activity.

Figure 15: Impact of U.S. tariffs over the last 3 years

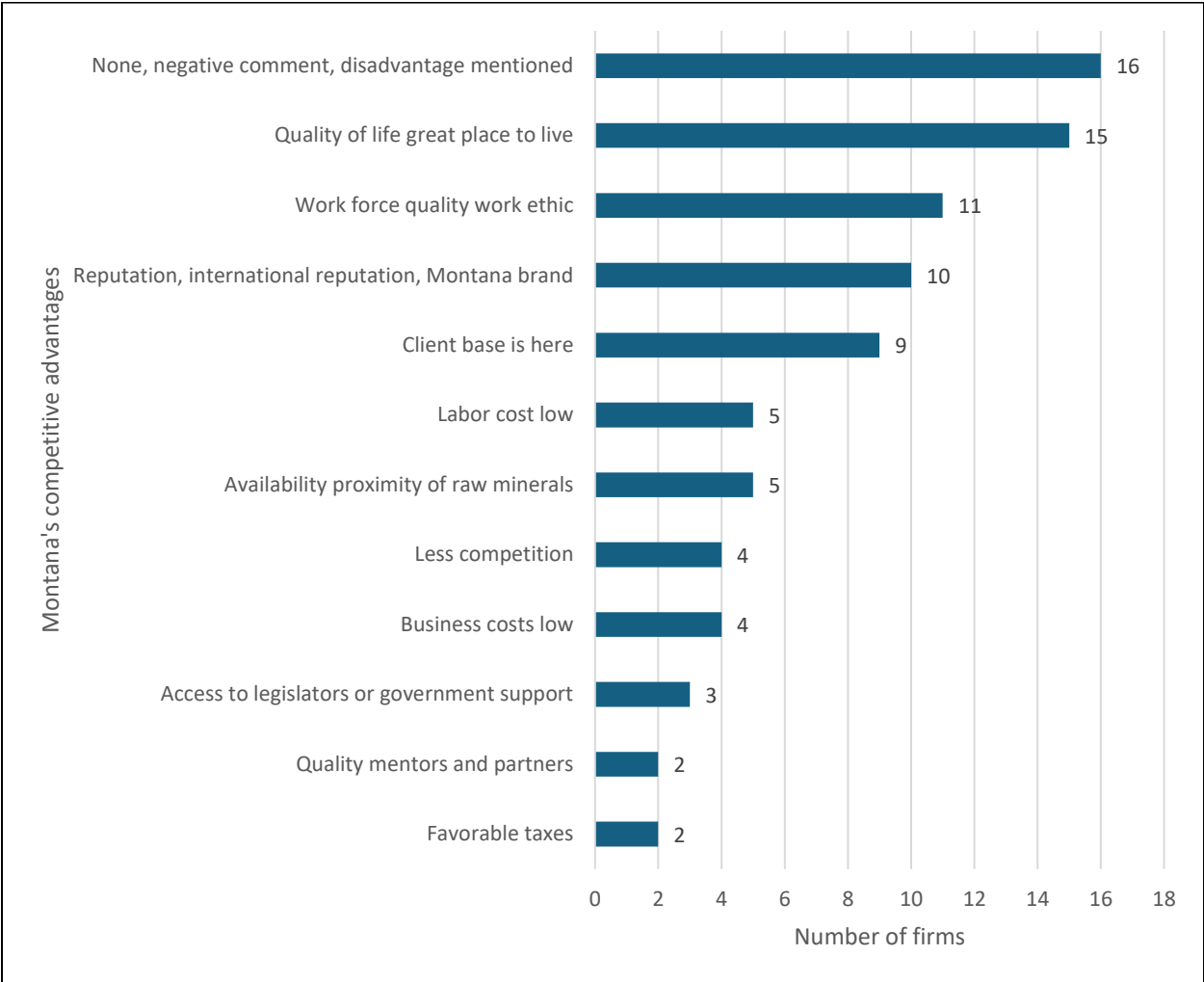
Type of business or import / export activity	Impact of U.S. tariffs over the last 4 years		
	Positive	Negative	No impact
Manufacturing	6%	52%	42%
Information, Finance, Professional, Technical, Admin Support	0%	20%	80%
Wholesale, Retail, Transportation	7%	71%	21%
Agriculture, Mining, Construction	0%	27%	73%
Exporter	0%	40%	60%
Importer	7%	67%	27%
Service Provider	0%	20%	80%
Exporter and Importer	9%	54%	37%

A very large proportion (71%) of wholesale, retail, or transportation companies and importers (67%) reported being negatively impacted by U.S. tariffs.

**Q28. What competitive advantage, if any, do you attribute to being located in Montana?**

More responding businesses (15) cited Montana’s quality of life than any other advantage. Figure 16 lists the top competitive advantages cited by responding businesses. Readers should keep in mind that respondents could give more than one answer to this question.

*Figure 16: Competitive advantage from being located in Montana*

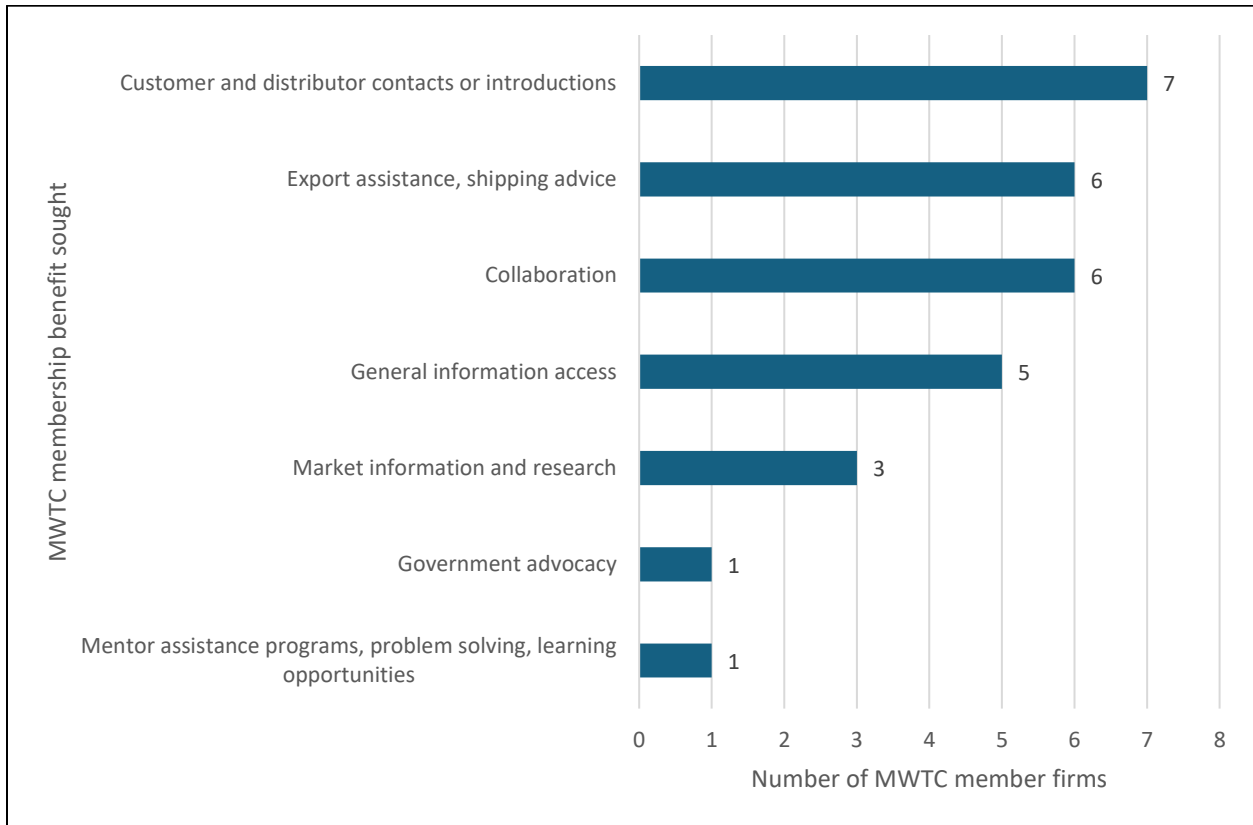


It is important to note that 16 firms said that Montana either conferred no advantage or was a disadvantage. Overall, 82% percent of the items cited had positive competitive advantages while 18% of the items cited were either none or a disadvantage.

**Q29. If you are a MWTC member, what is the one most important thing you would like to get out of your Montana World Trade Center® membership?**

According to Montana World Trade Center® (MWTC) member businesses, the most important things they seek out of membership is customer and distributor contacts and introductions. These benefits were mentioned by 7 MWTC member firms. Six firms are seeking export assistance, shipping advice, or collaboration. Figure 17 below lists the most important things MWTC member firms want out of membership.

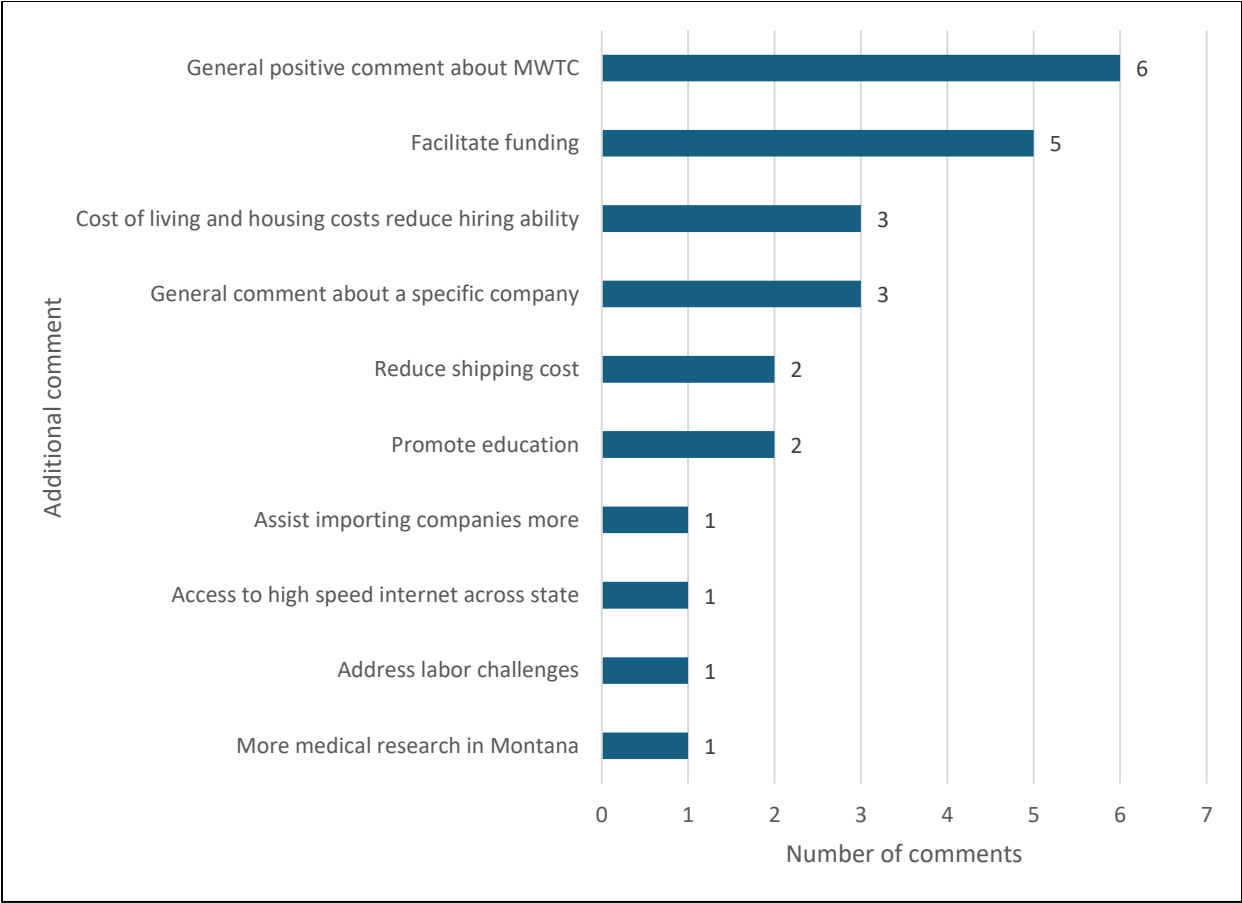
*Figure 17: MWTC membership benefits sought*



Q30. What additional comments do you have? MWTC is particularly interested in your observations about creating new, high-paying Montana jobs tied to international trade.

Six firms made general, positive comments about MWTC. Five firms said that MWTC needs to facilitate obtaining funding. Three firms said that housing costs and the cost of living was reducing the firm’s ability to hire workers. Figure 18 describes all of the additional observations received.

Figure 18: Additional comments



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