

Corporate Social Responsibility Engagement in the East Midlands 2024-5

Dr Elaine Conway – Loughborough Business School

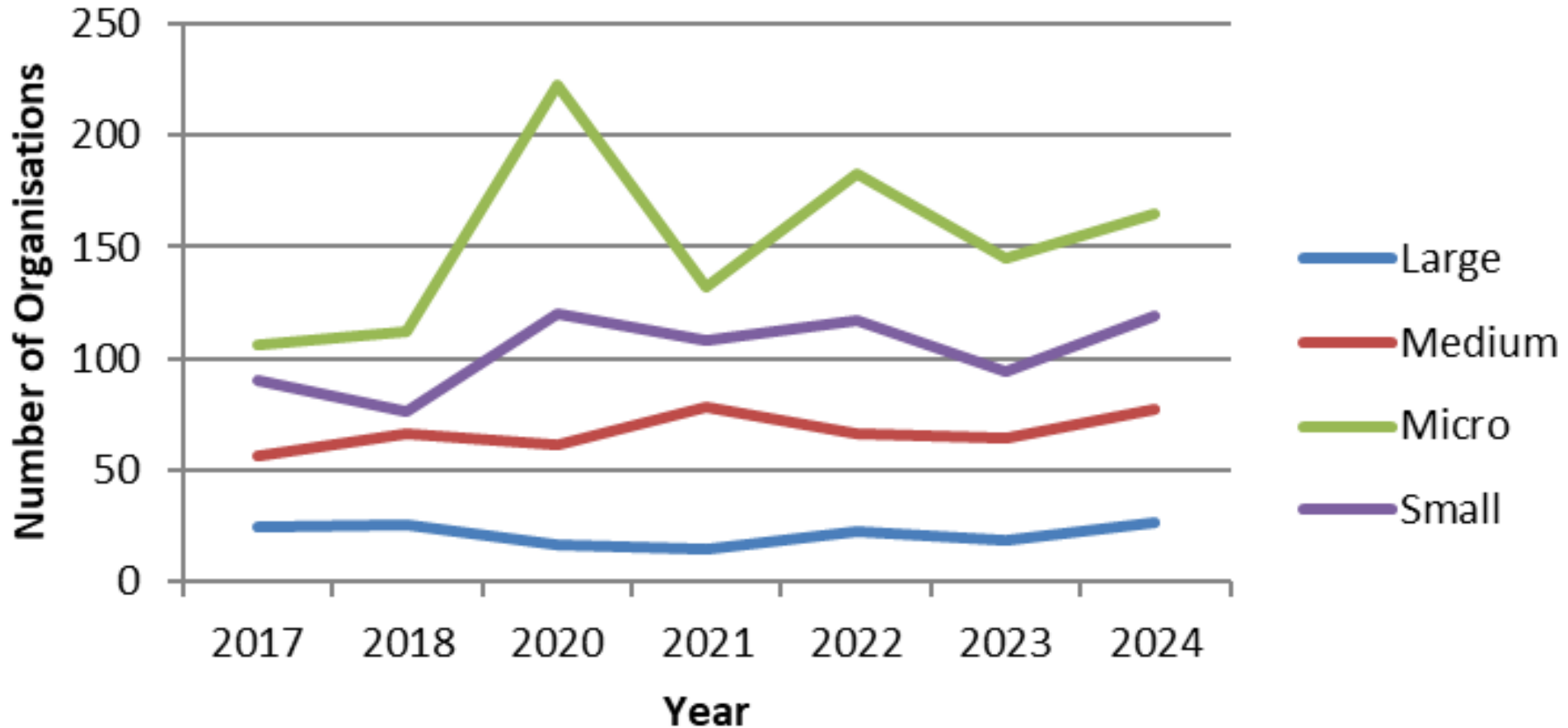
Dr Barbara Tomasella – Derby Business School



Key highlights CSR Survey 2024-5

- Organisations continue to engage in CSR, despite post-Covid and cost of living impacts, although a slightly smaller percentage engaged in CSR during 2024.
- There is a correlation between CSR engagement and the size of the organisation, with larger firms having higher levels of engagement than smaller ones.
- Lack of resources still presents as the main barrier to greater CSR adoption; cost savings, profile building and it being the 'right thing to do' are the main motivators to CSR engagement.
- Charitable activities are the most popular, followed by community activities.
- Most organisations are looking to maintain, if not increase, their CSR activities in the coming year.

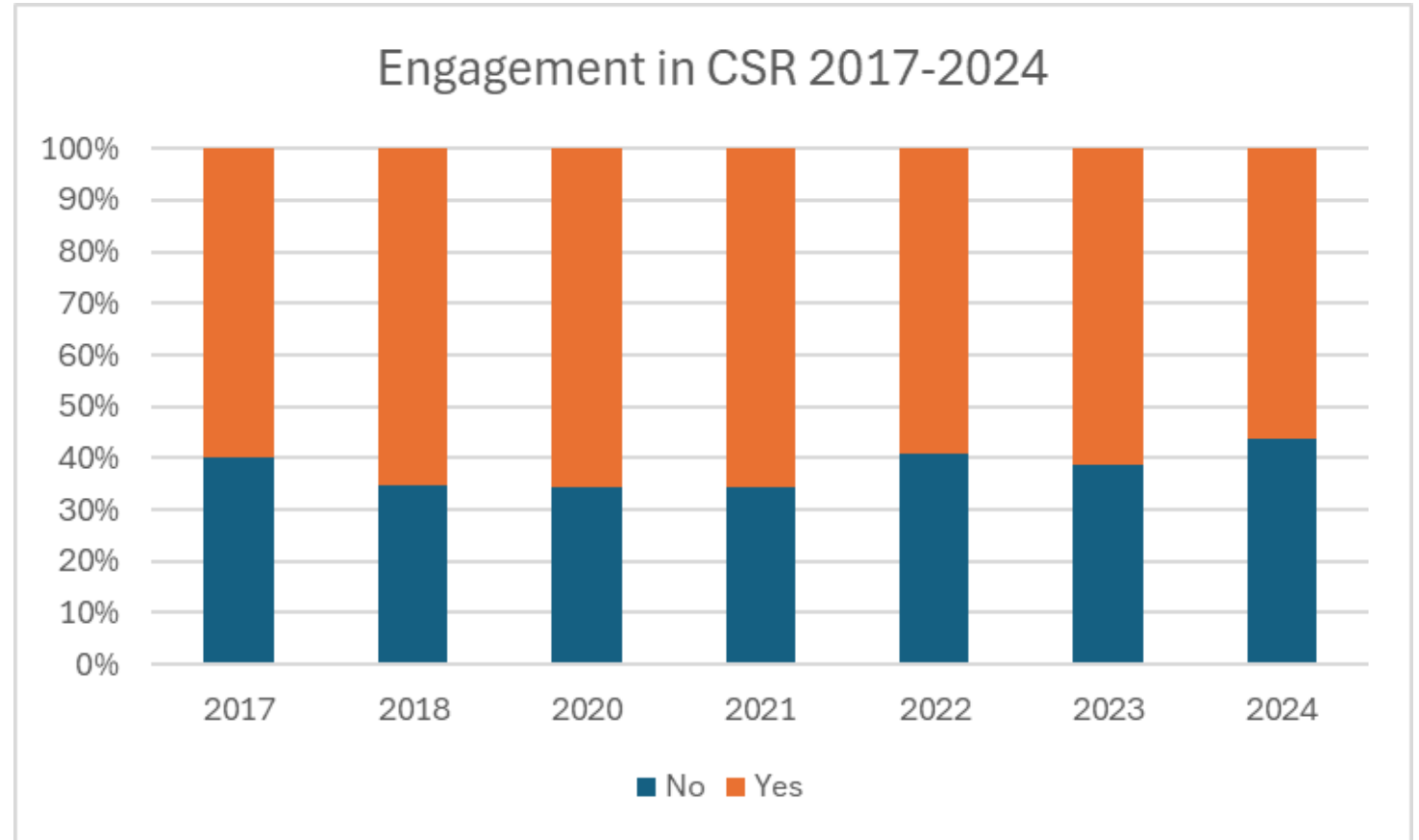
Firm Size Demographics by Year



- Organisation size based on number of employees: Micro ≤ 10 , small 11-50, medium 51-249, large 250+.
- Total: 2017: 277, 2018: 280, 2020: 421, 2021: 333, 2022: 389, 2023: 322, 2024: 388

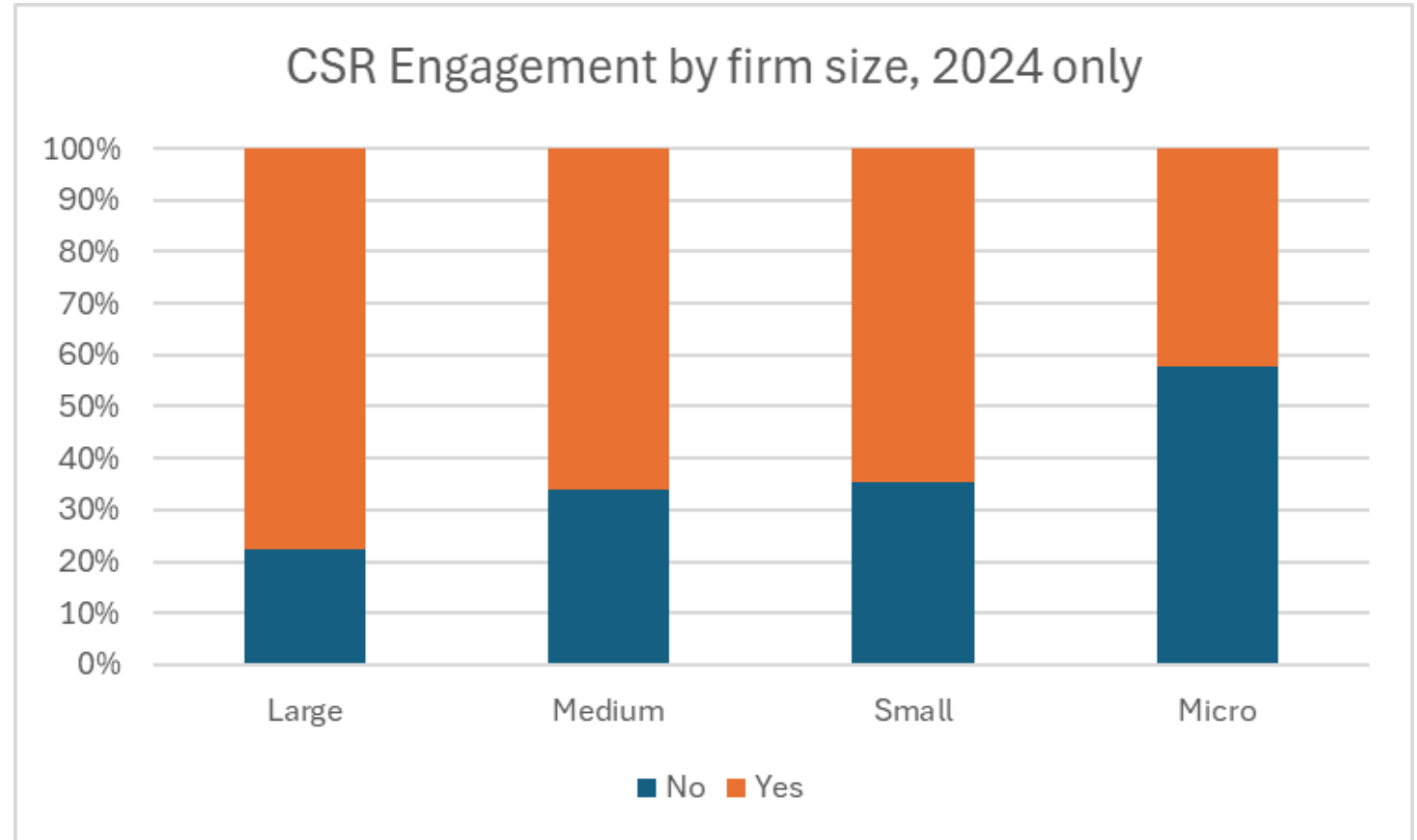
CSR Engagement over the years

- There is evidence that organisations are not doing as much CSR in 2024 as in previous years, possibly due to the macro-economic factors which have hit businesses, both profit and non-profit during the past year. Despite this, there are still more than half of East Midlands organisations investing in CSR in 2024.

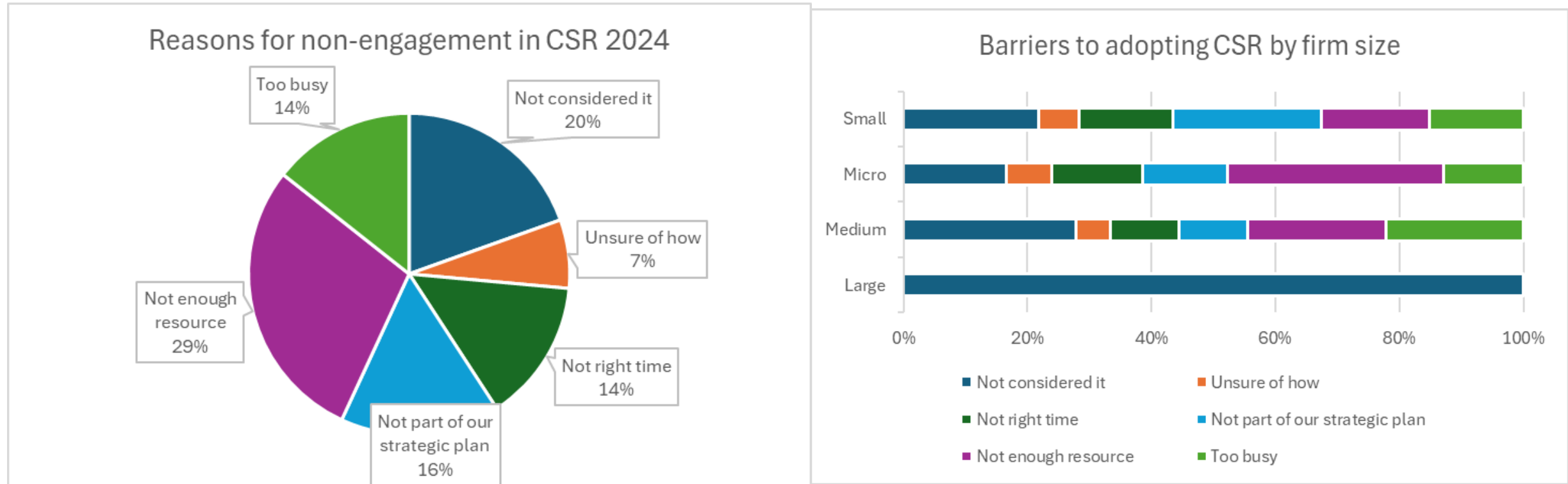


CSR Engagement by size 2024

- There is a clear correlation between the size of the organisation and its CSR engagement, with larger organisations being more engaged with CSR activities. (This was found consistently over the years)



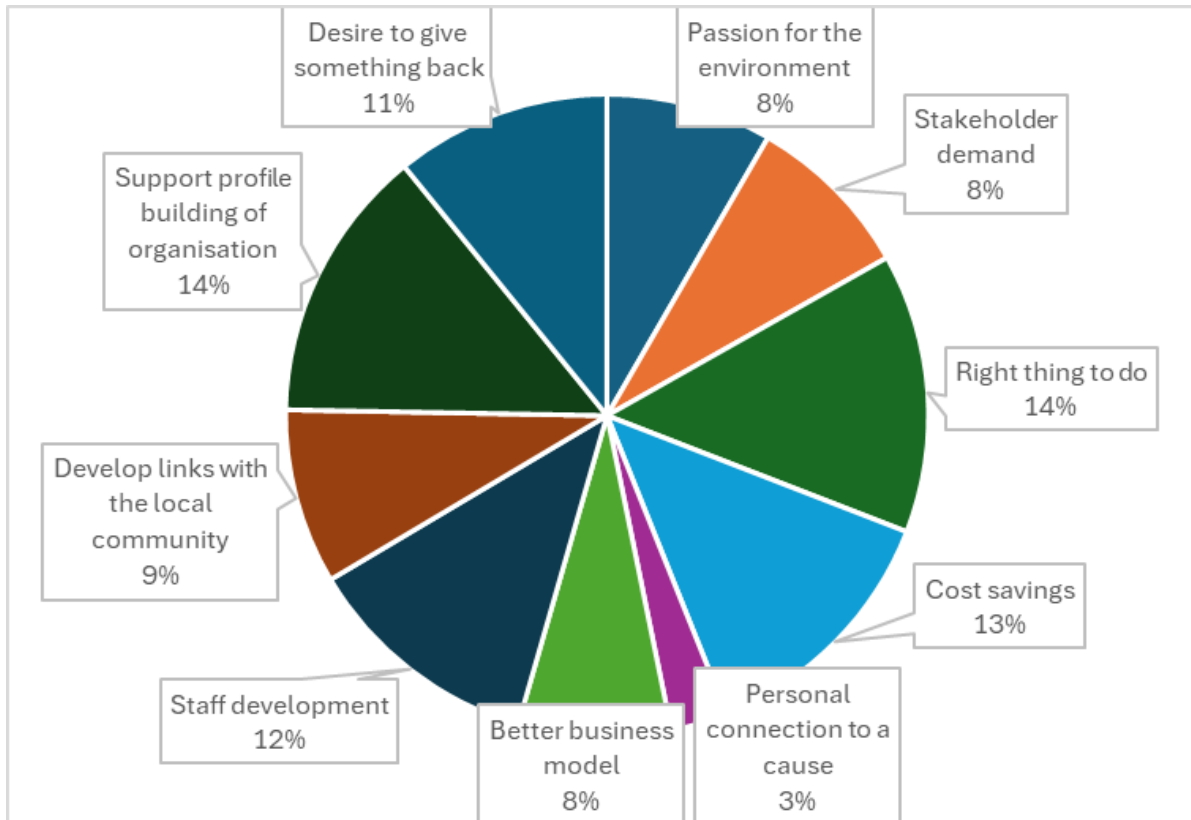
Reasons for non-engagement with CSR 2024



The main barriers in 2024 are 'not enough resource' or 'not considered it' during 2024. More awareness of the benefits of CSR and how little some activities cost could be key to greater CSR engagement.

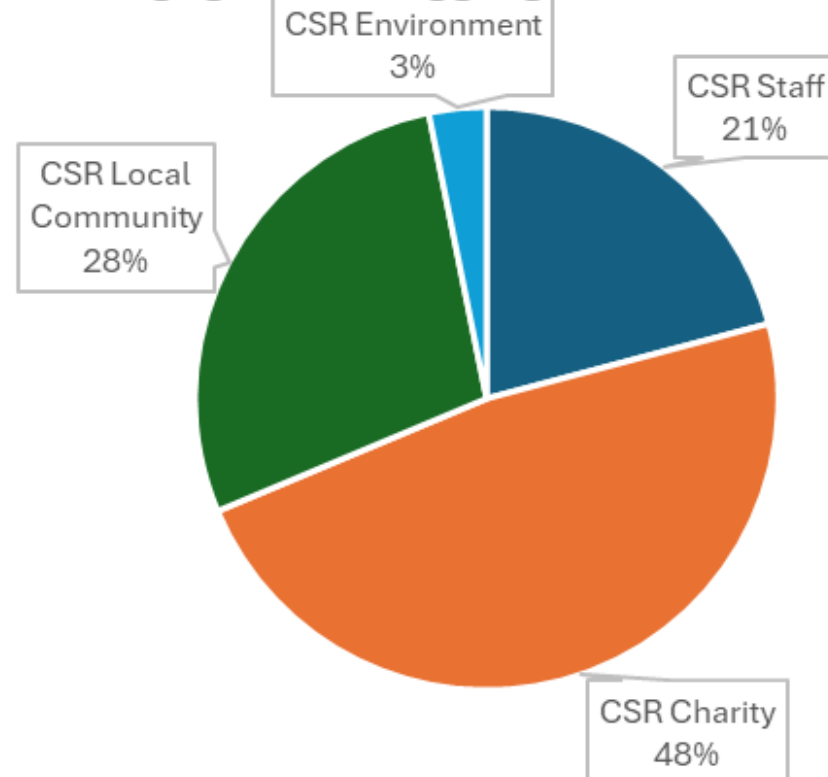
Reasons why organisations engage with CSR

- The main reasons organisations choose to engage in CSR is to support the profile building of the organisation, cost savings and it is the right thing to do. These are the main motivations for micro organisations, whereas larger organisations also consider the possibilities for staff development as quite a key driver.



CSR engagement: aggregated activities

CSR engagement: aggregated activities 2024



CSR Staff:

- Staff volunteering
- Voluntary giving through salary sacrifice

CSR Charity:

- Corporate fundraising
- One-off donations
- Continued donations
- Own charity establishment

CSR Local Community:

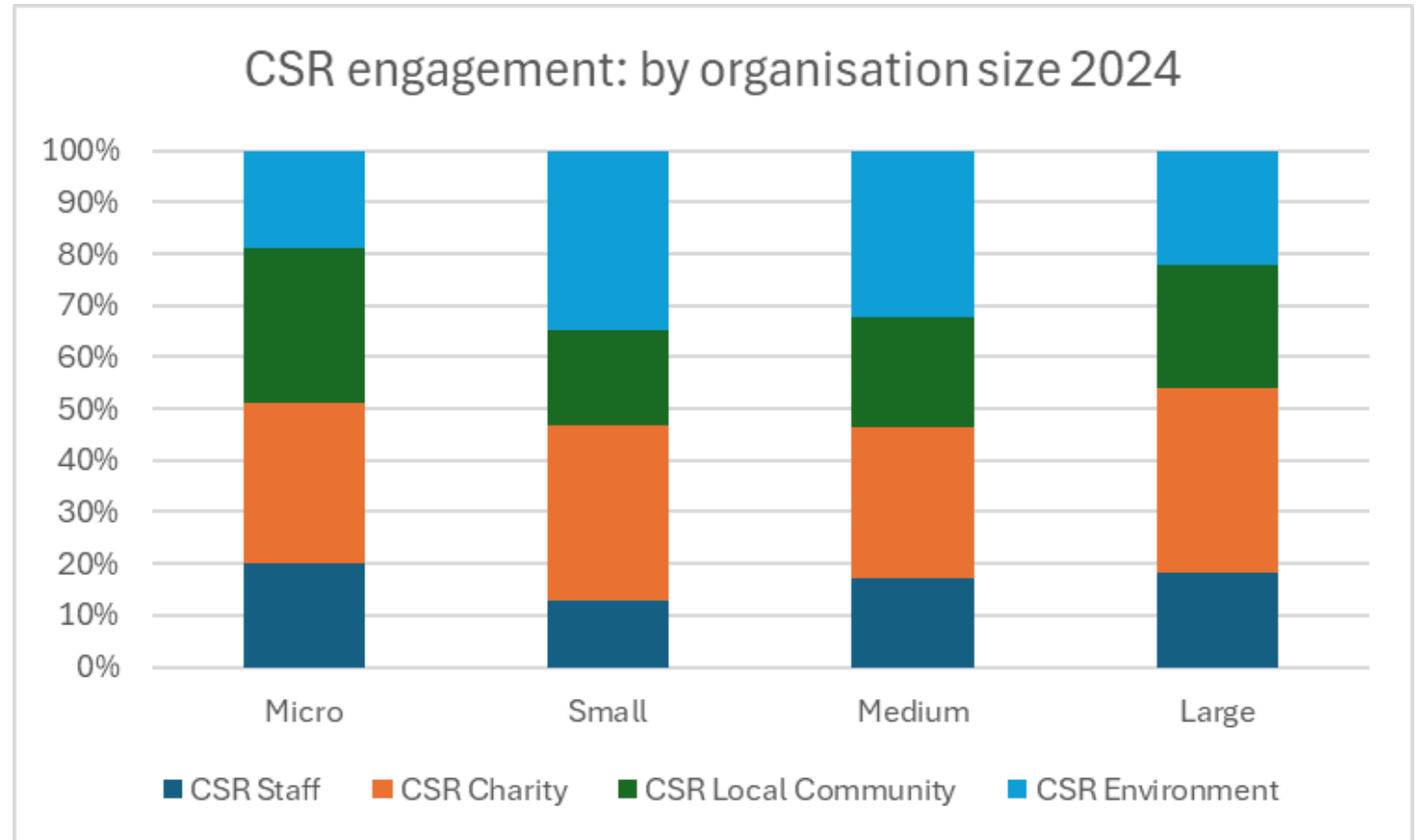
- Use of facilities
- Offer of in-kind support
- Support local school(s)
- Any other activity (e.g. sponsorship)

CSR Environment:

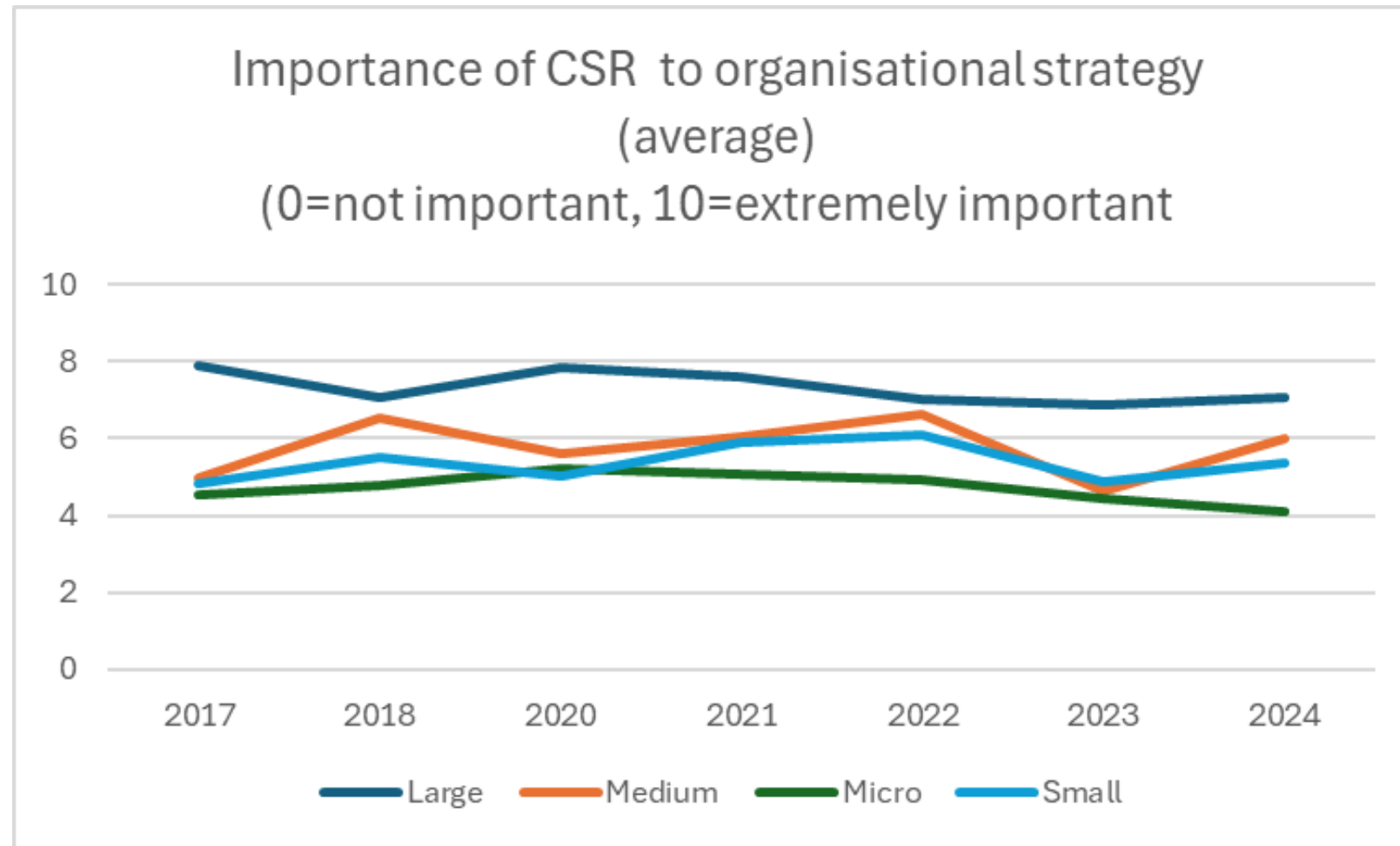
- Recycling
- Circular economy
- Low carbon technologies

CSR engagement: by organisation size 2024

- Larger organisations : higher focus on charitable activities.
- SMEs: focused on charitable activities and the environment.

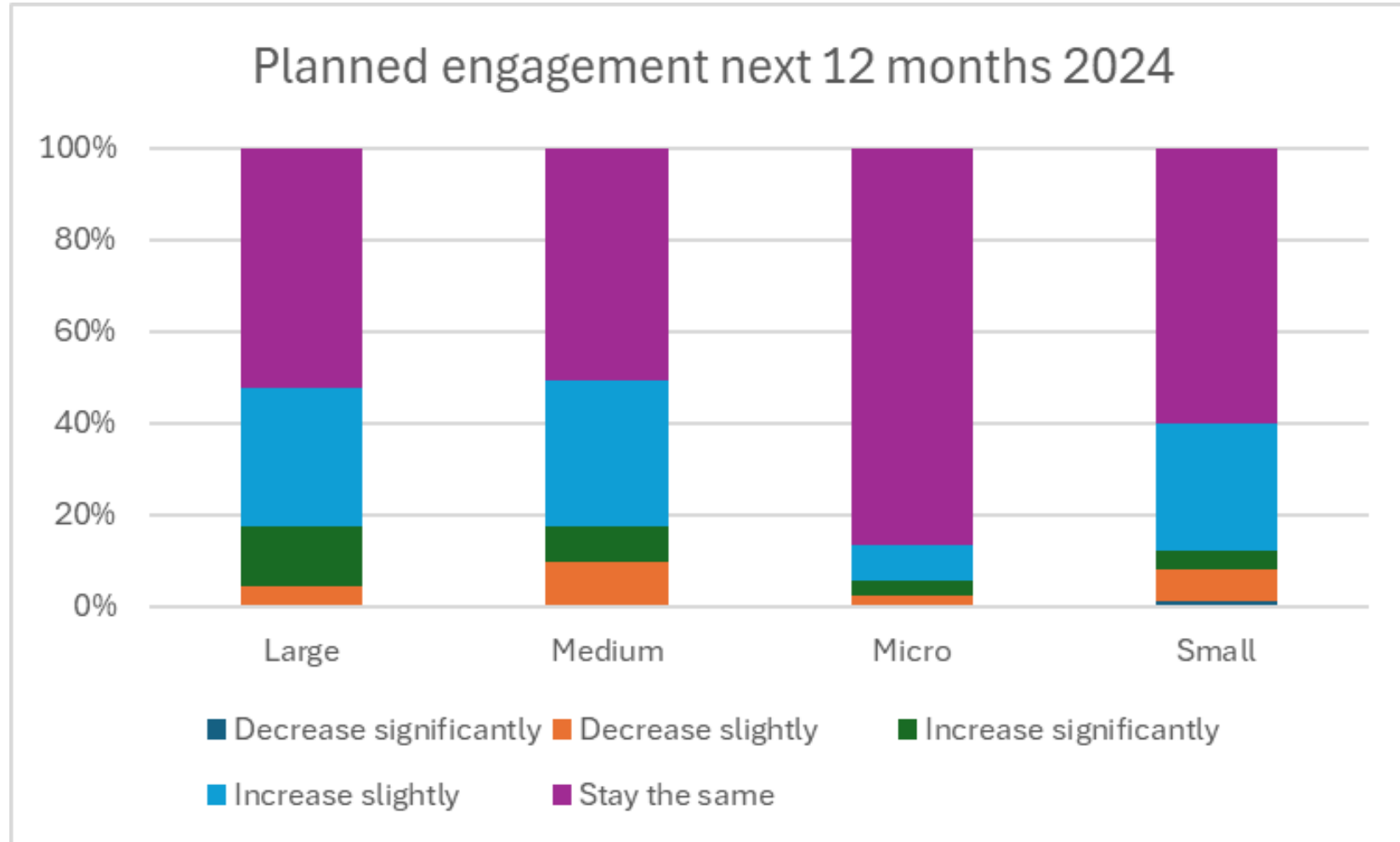


How important is CSR for the firm's strategy?



Particularly for large organisations in particular, CSR is important to their overall strategy, and this seems to have trended slightly upwards for all but micro-organisations during 2024.

Planned engagement – next 12 Months



The vast majority are expecting to maintain or increase their CSR activities either slightly or significantly in the next year, which is a positive indicator of the commitment East Midlands organisations have in the value of CSR.



Conclusions

- Organisations in the East Midlands are good advocates for engaging in CSR. Firms of all sizes are getting involved in CSR activities, and often in more than one activity.
- Despite barriers of resource availability, many organisations do find the opportunity to invest in CSR and have a strong sense of wanting to give back and develop their local communities, however cost savings is now a growing motivation.
- One-off charitable donations can be dependent on firm resources and are more tactical. Environment is growing in importance. Staff-based initiatives are lowest as these are usually a longer-term commitment.
- For large organisations in particular, CSR is important to their strategy overall.
- CSR commitment is still strong looking ahead to the coming year, with virtually all organisations seeking to maintain or extend their CSR activities, which is a very positive bellwether of the strength of community spirit in the East Midlands.



east midlands
chamber

Derbyshire | Leicestershire | Nottinghamshire

