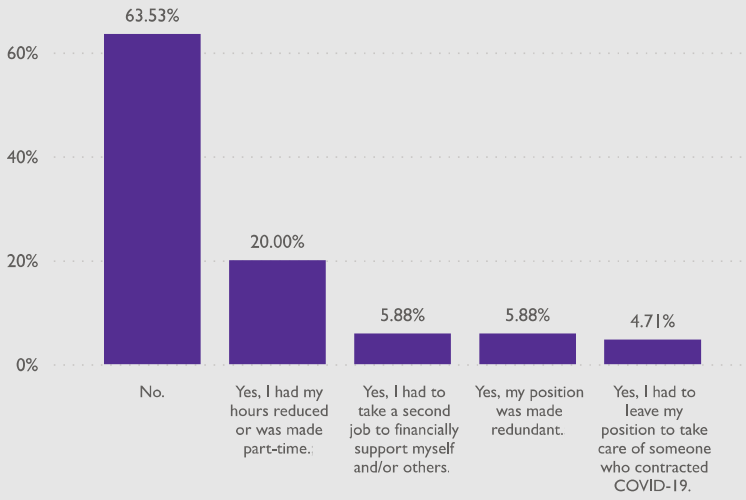
COVID-19 Impact on Biosafety Implementation

A survey study detailing the COVID-19 Pandemic's impact on biosecurity and biosafety work, professionals, funding, and livelihoods

Biosafety and biosecurity professionals have become indispensable resources to the rest of the world in trying to understand and combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, little attention is paid to how the COVID-19 pandemic affects those tasked with trying to prevent a pandemic such as this one from ever occurring. This survey aimed to ask questions relevant to biosafety and biosecurity professionals and how they coped with the challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic. 90 respondents from the biosafety and biosecurity fields answered this survey starting in February 2022 and have since provided significant, specific, and often personal insight into their own responses.

"It was very tough for people who had lost their jobs in the pandemic. In the beginning, it all revolved around people's safety and security measures. In the pandemic and beyond, people's lives have been entirely changed, either their daily work routine or type of work."

Has pandemic affected your work security?



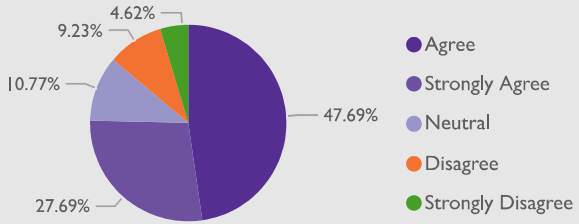
Respondents reported finding more challenging working conditions during the height of the pandemic. The majority of respondents, **(63%)**, were able to retain their type of work and hours of work against the backdrop of the pandemic, but almost **40%** experienced some type of reduction of working hours.

Respondents also noted difficulties in adjusting to virtual implementation or work at the beginning of the pandemic. A **sharp increase** in the number of virtual events occurred from 2019 to 2020, and only had a slight drop-off in 2021. This indicates that virtual implementation is likely going to be a mainstay of biosafety and biosecurity work in the future.

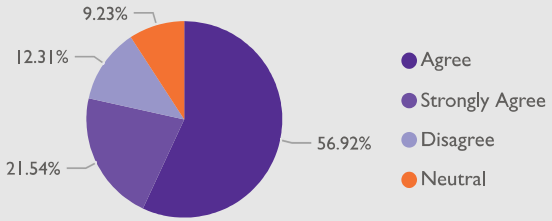
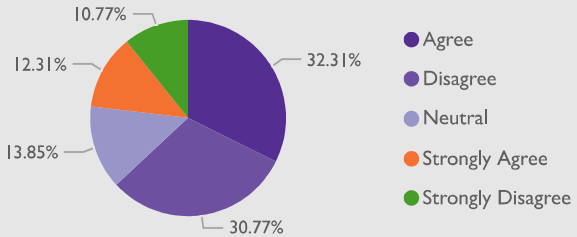
The vast majority of respondents **(83%)** are optimistic about working in the biosafety and biosecurity fields in the future. Challenges to implementation still remain, as evidenced by the survey results below:

Describe working through the pandemic:

The pandemic has made implementation more unpredictable:



The pandemic has slowed down implementation of programs:



The pandemic lessened the impact of the programs I work on: