

Growing the Vermont Recreation and Tourism Economy: Vermont Visitor Survey



Vermont Welcome Centers

Introduction - Why Monitor Tourists

- Tourism is of vital importance to the Vermont economy
- The more we know about our visitors, the stronger our tourism base can be
- Importance of nature-based tourism lends an economic justification to protect natural resources
- State parks are heavily reliant on fees for their budgets, thus visitation is important

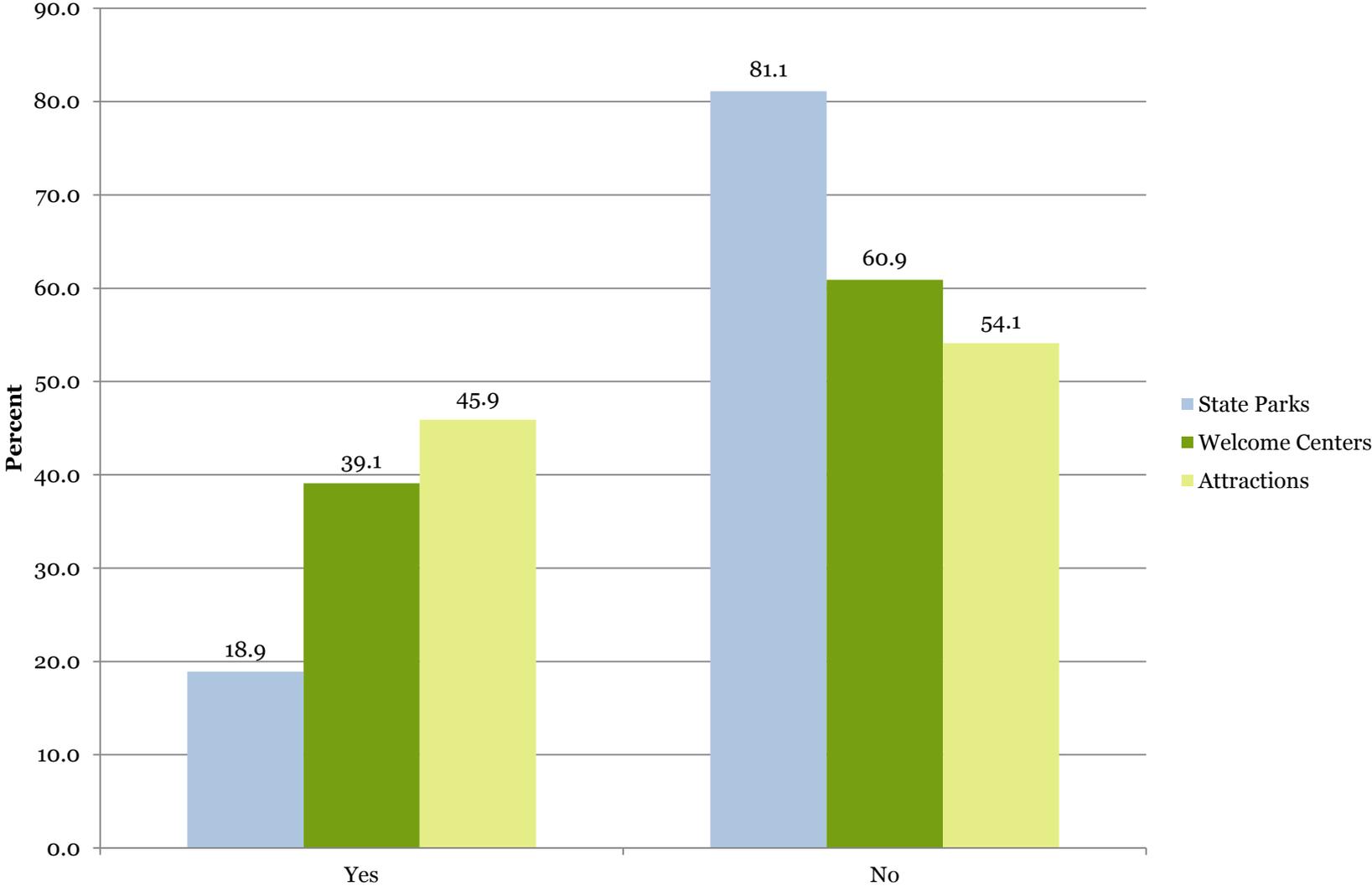
Methods

- Self-administered questionnaires
- Sampling sites represented every corner of Vermont
- Conducted in:
 - 25 Vermont State Parks
 - 8 Vermont Welcome Centers
 - 13 Vermont attractions
- Completed questionnaires
 - Vermont State Parks: 1,902
 - Vermont Welcome Centers: 2,388
 - Vermont attractions: 3,902

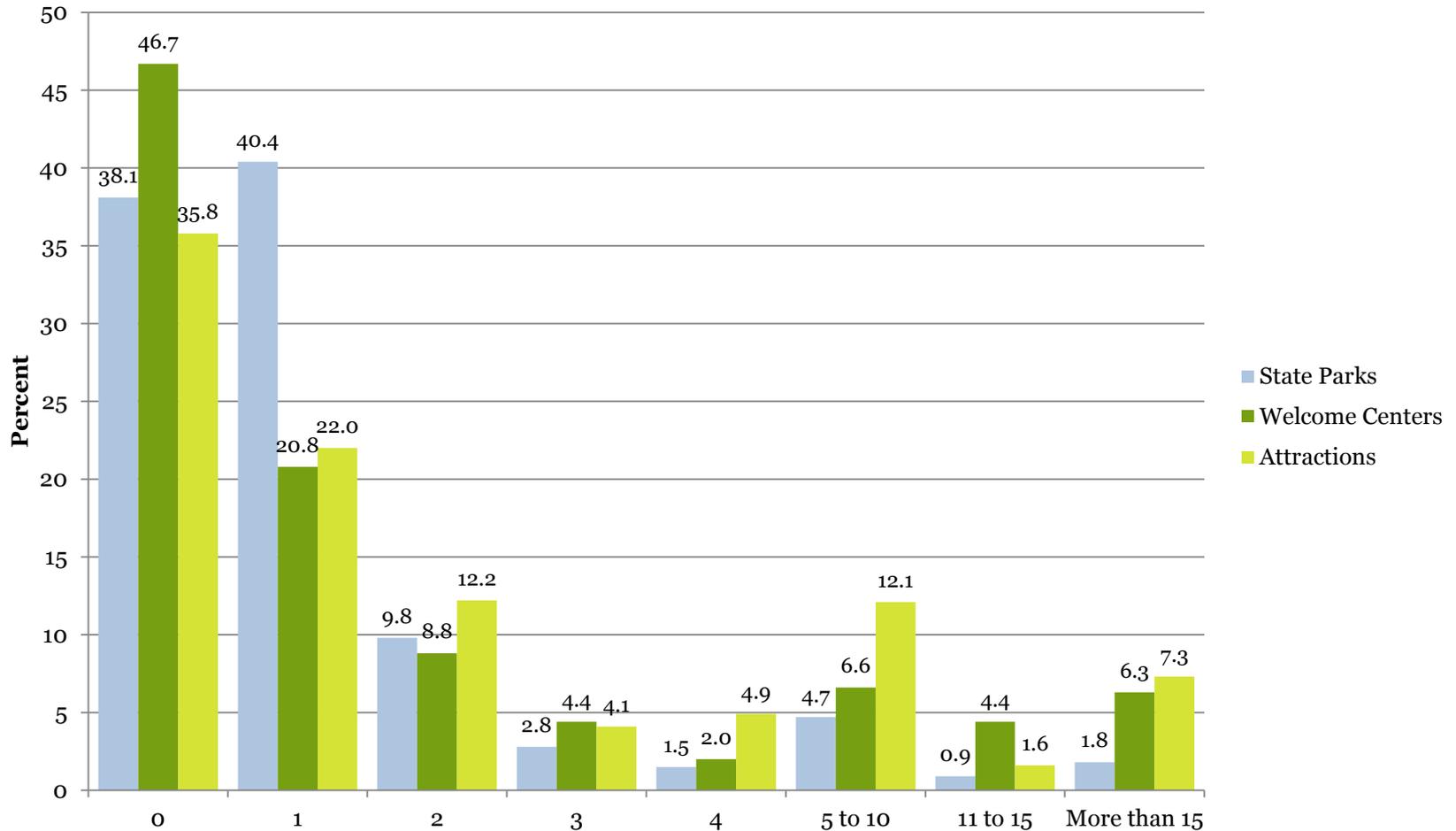
Sampling

- Adaptive strategy
- 3-4 completed questionnaires per day
- Establishment selected times each day
- First guest/visitors to enter after each time is asked to participate
- Welcome Centers ask visitors who are looking for information

Is this your first vacation in Vermont?



Years Since Most Recent Visit



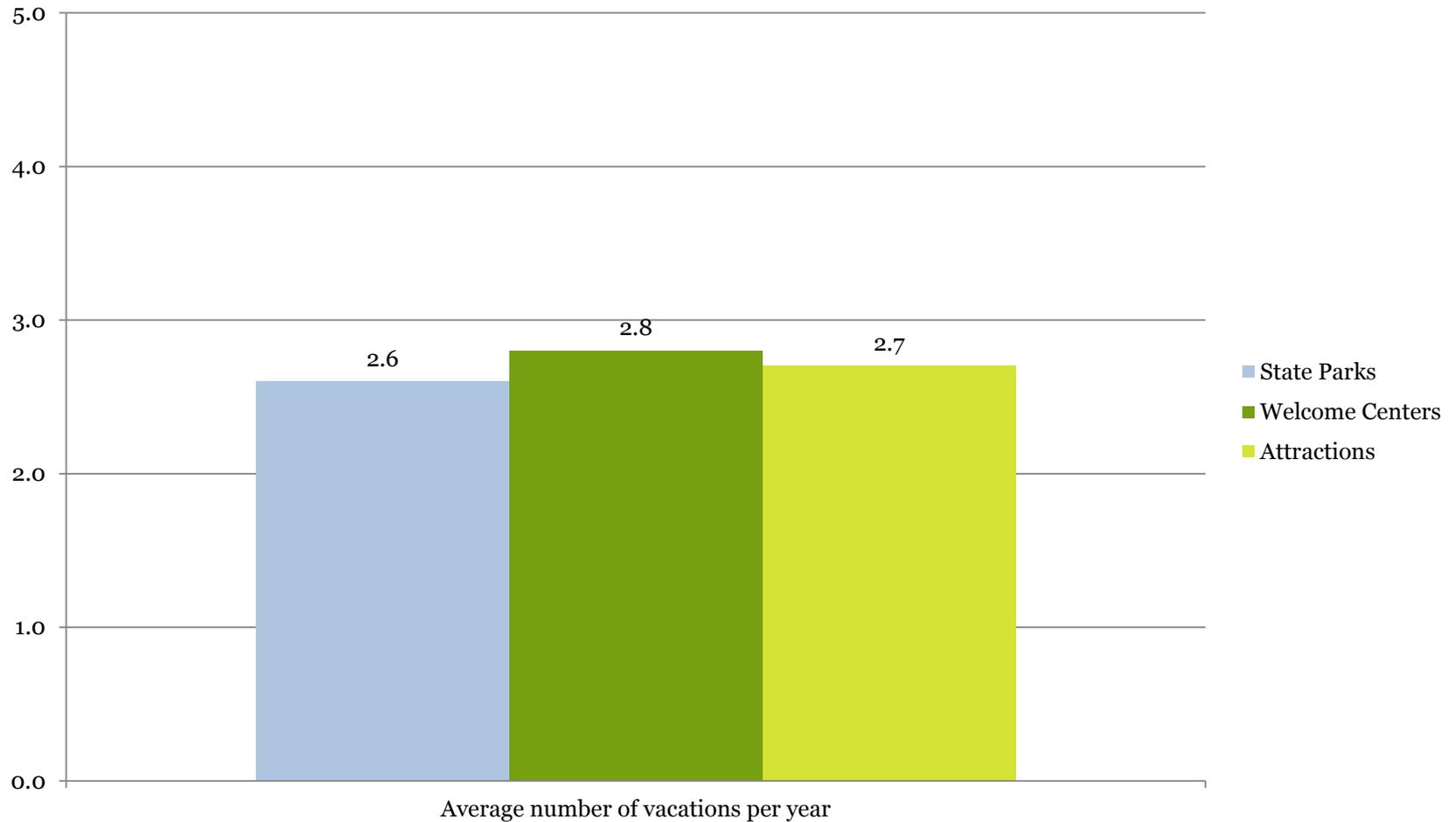
Average:

State Parks – 1.7 years

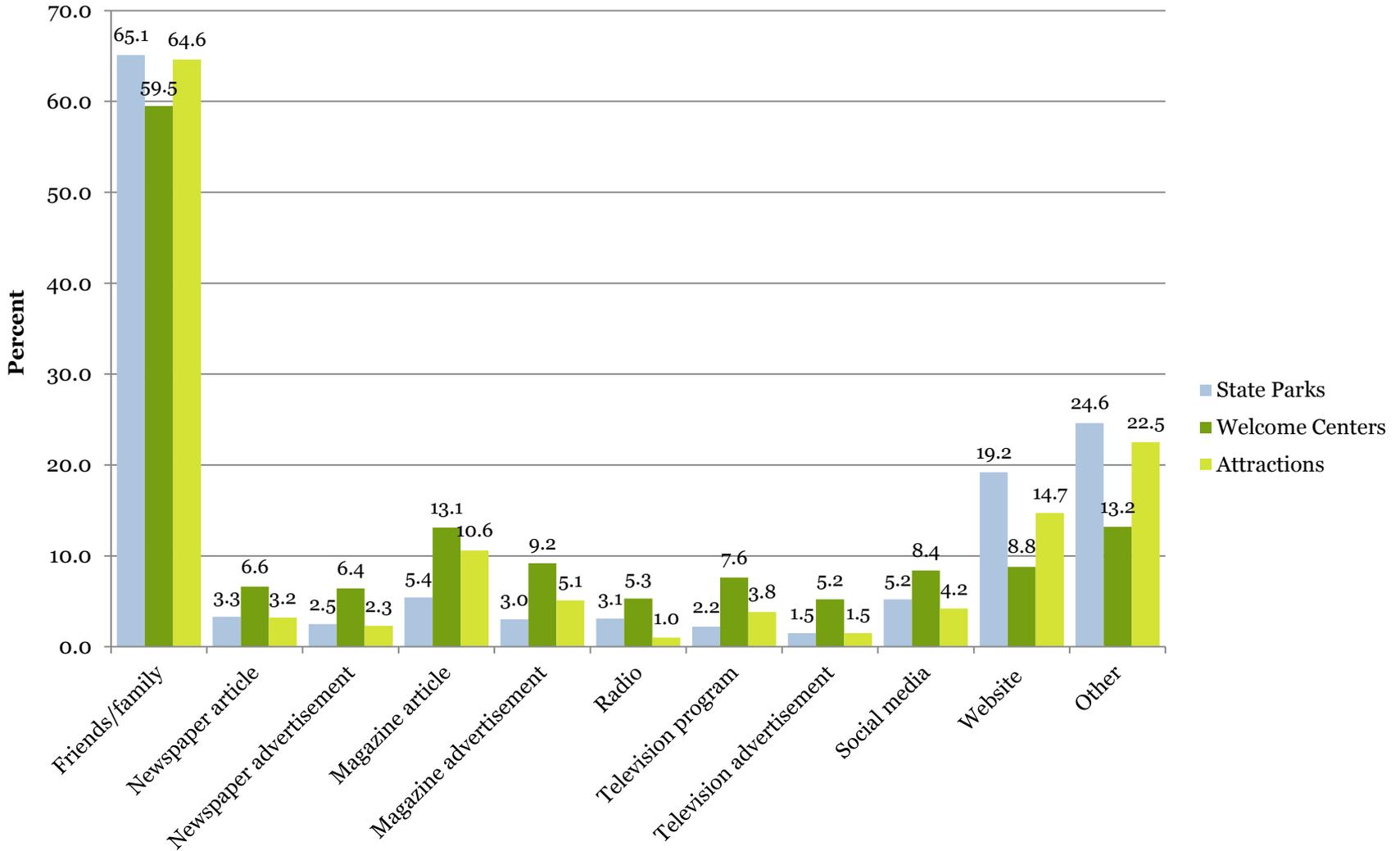
Welcome Centers – 3.4 years

Attractions – 3.9 years

In a typical year, how many vacations do you take in Vermont? (Average)



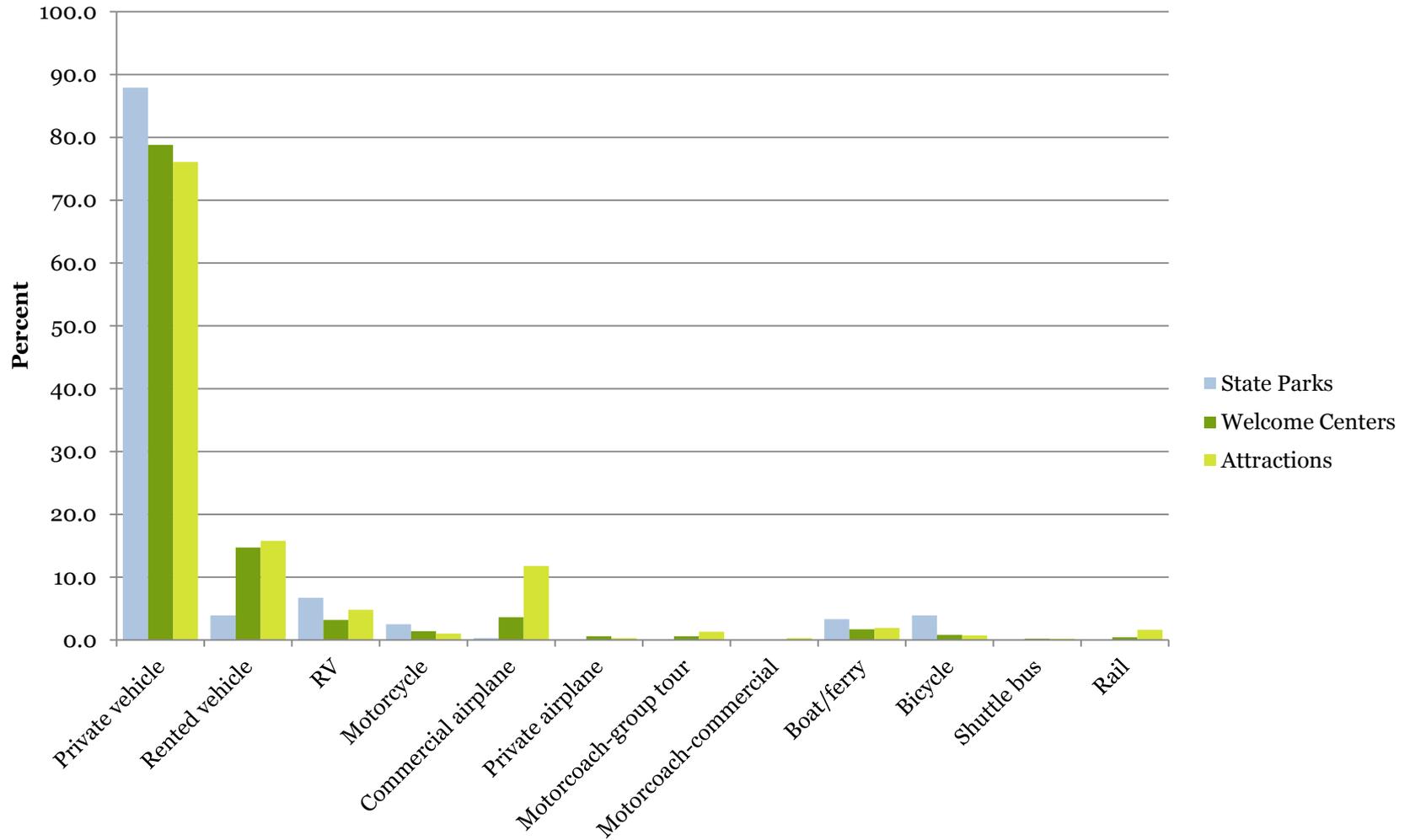
Which of the following influenced your decision to vacation/travel in Vermont?



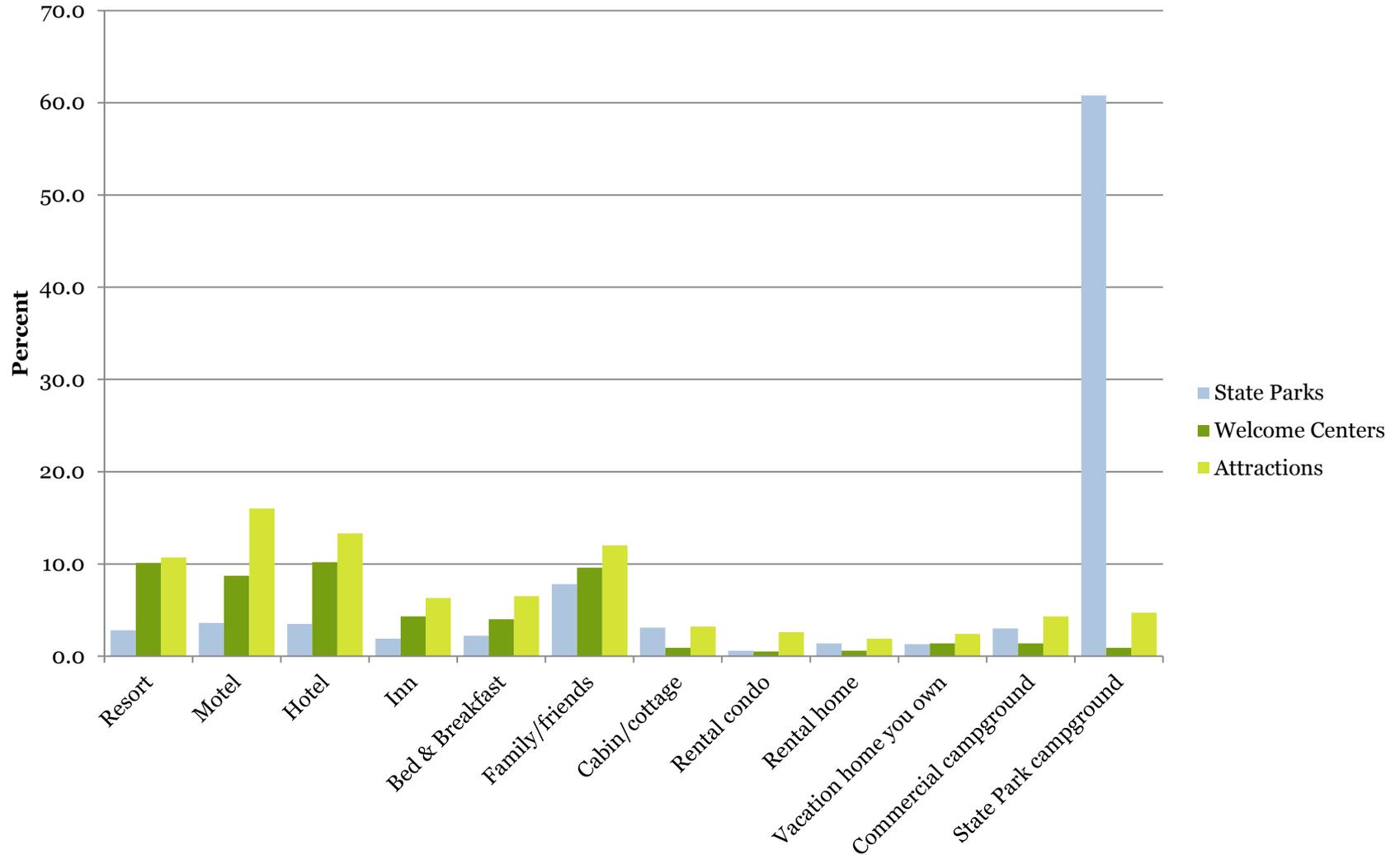
Question 3. In what activities do you plan to participate during this vacation in Vermont?

	State Parks	Welcome Centers	Attractions
Hiking/backpacking	68.2	20.5	30.5
Sightseeing	63.8	68.8	90.0
Canoeing/kayaking	43.2	7.3	12.1
Viewing wildlife	42.2	15.6	29.5
Food and drink experiences	37.1	30.4	50.6
Farms/farmer's market	36.1	26.2	44.8
Historic sites/museums	28.5	23.2	60.3
Shopping	28.3	42.4	56.9
Factory tours	12.8	18.2	40.3

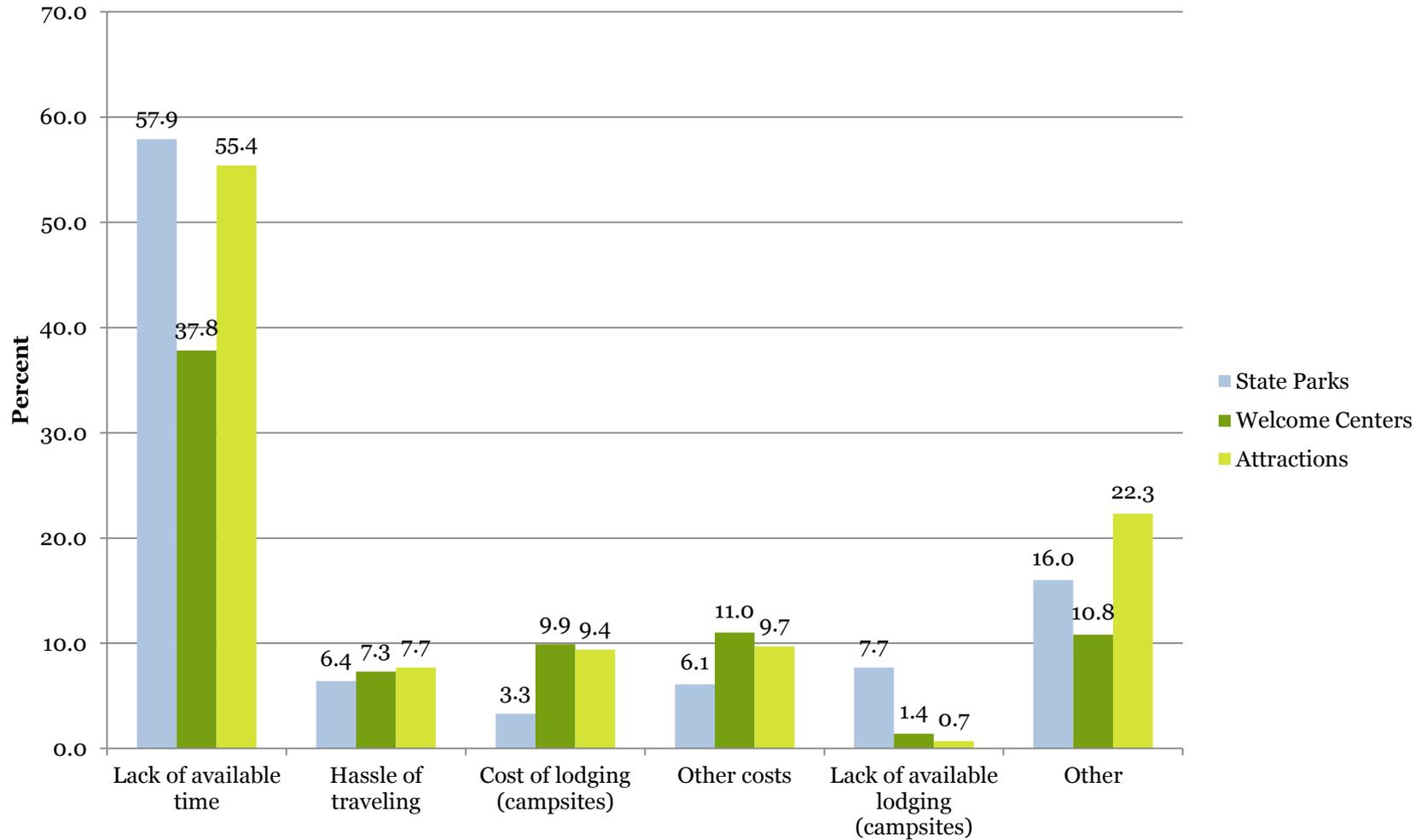
What transportation did you use to travel to and in Vermont?



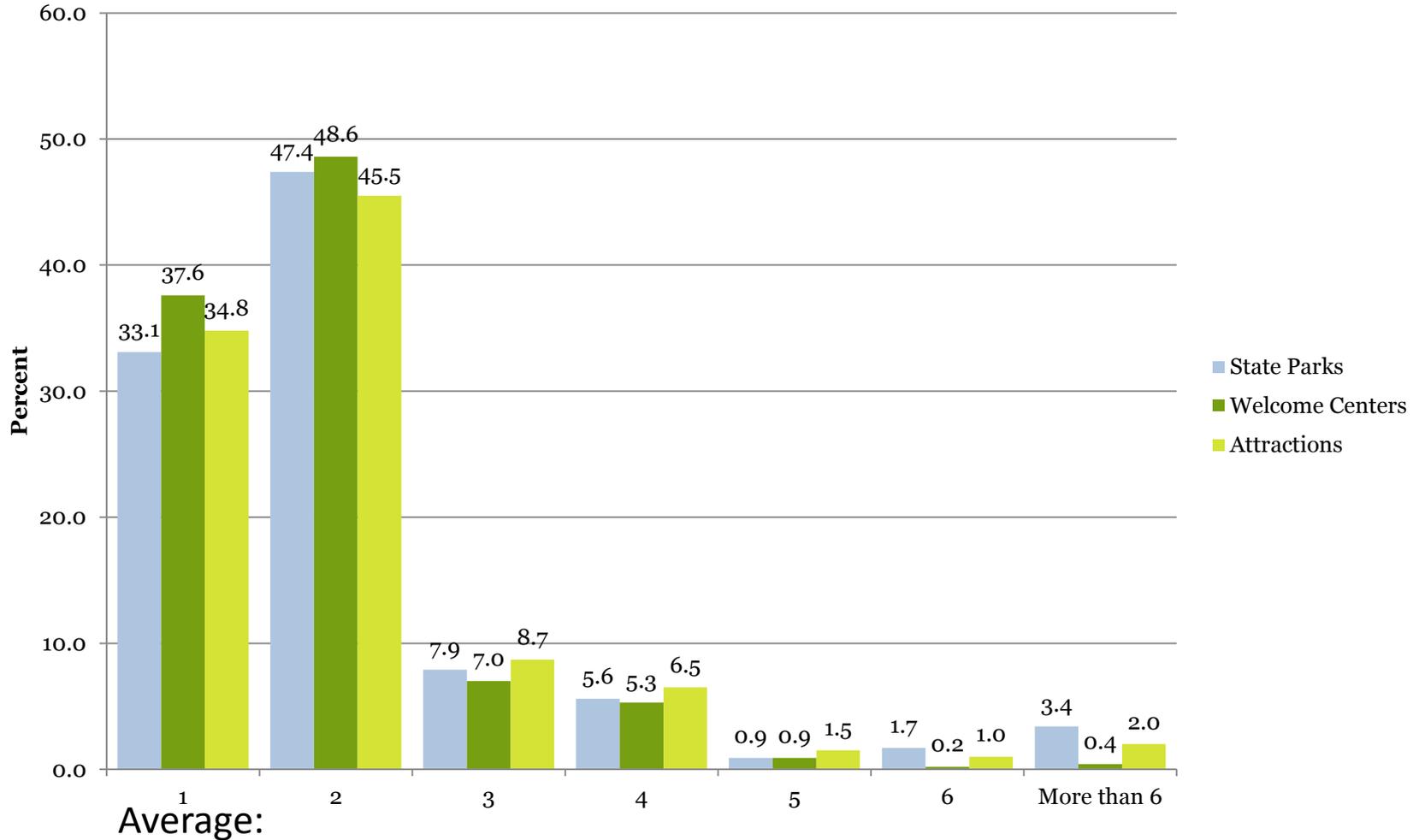
Percentage of Visitors Staying in Accommodation Type



What prevents you from vacationing/traveling in Vermont more often?



How many people are in your personal travel group (including you)? (Adults)

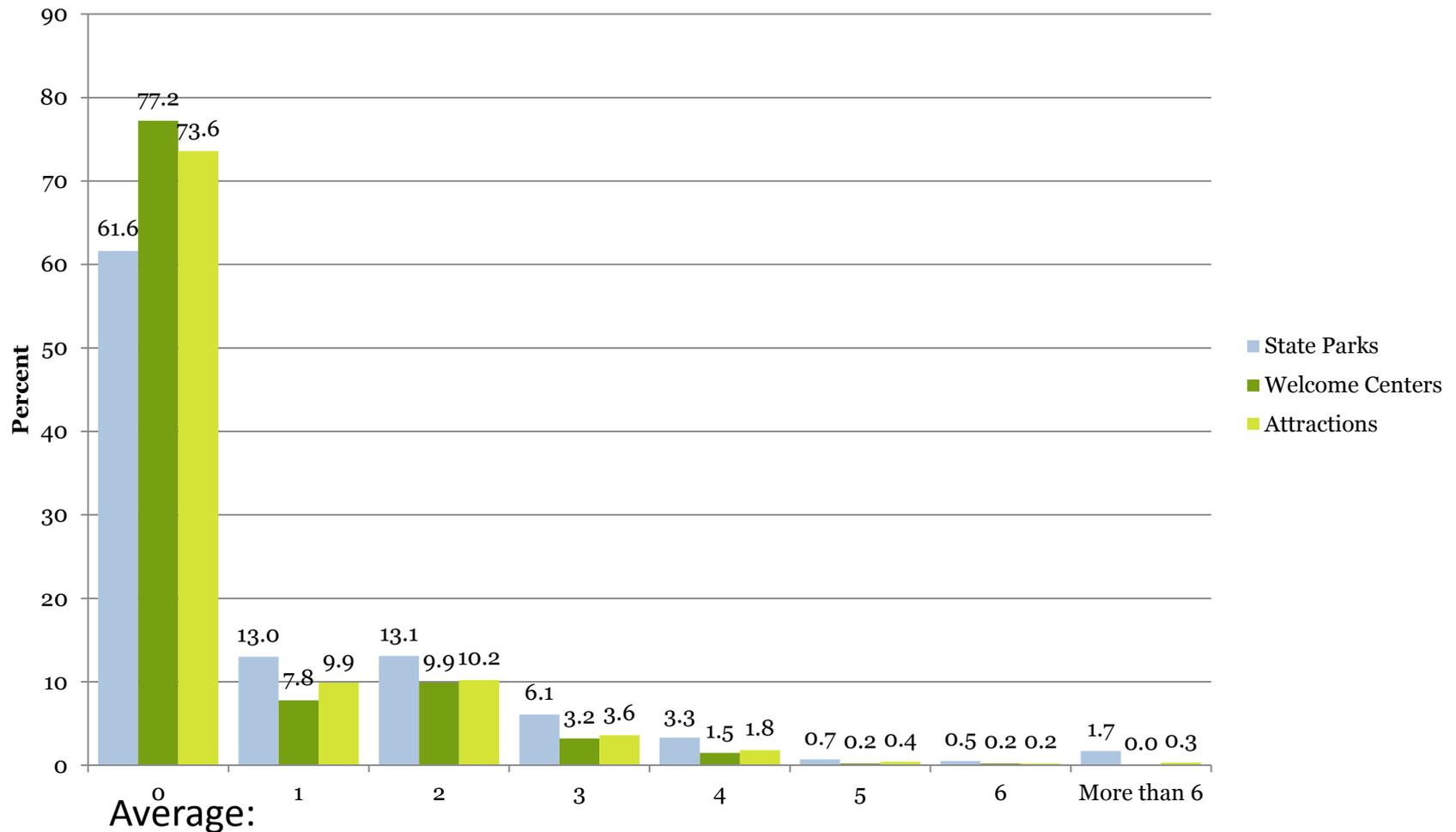


Average:
State Parks – 2.3

Welcome Centers – 2.0 people

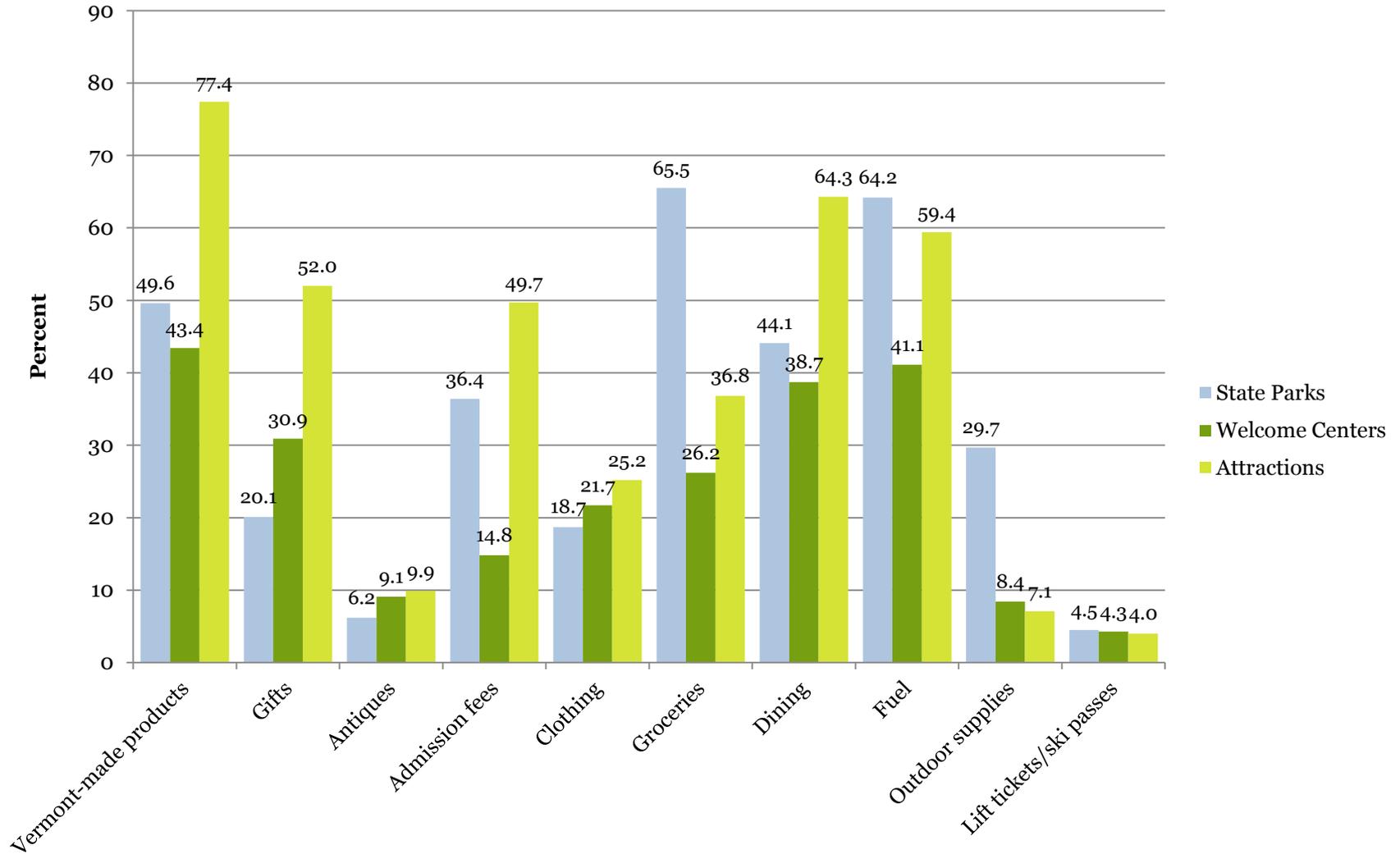
Attractions – 2.4 people

How many people are in your personal travel group (including you)? (Children)

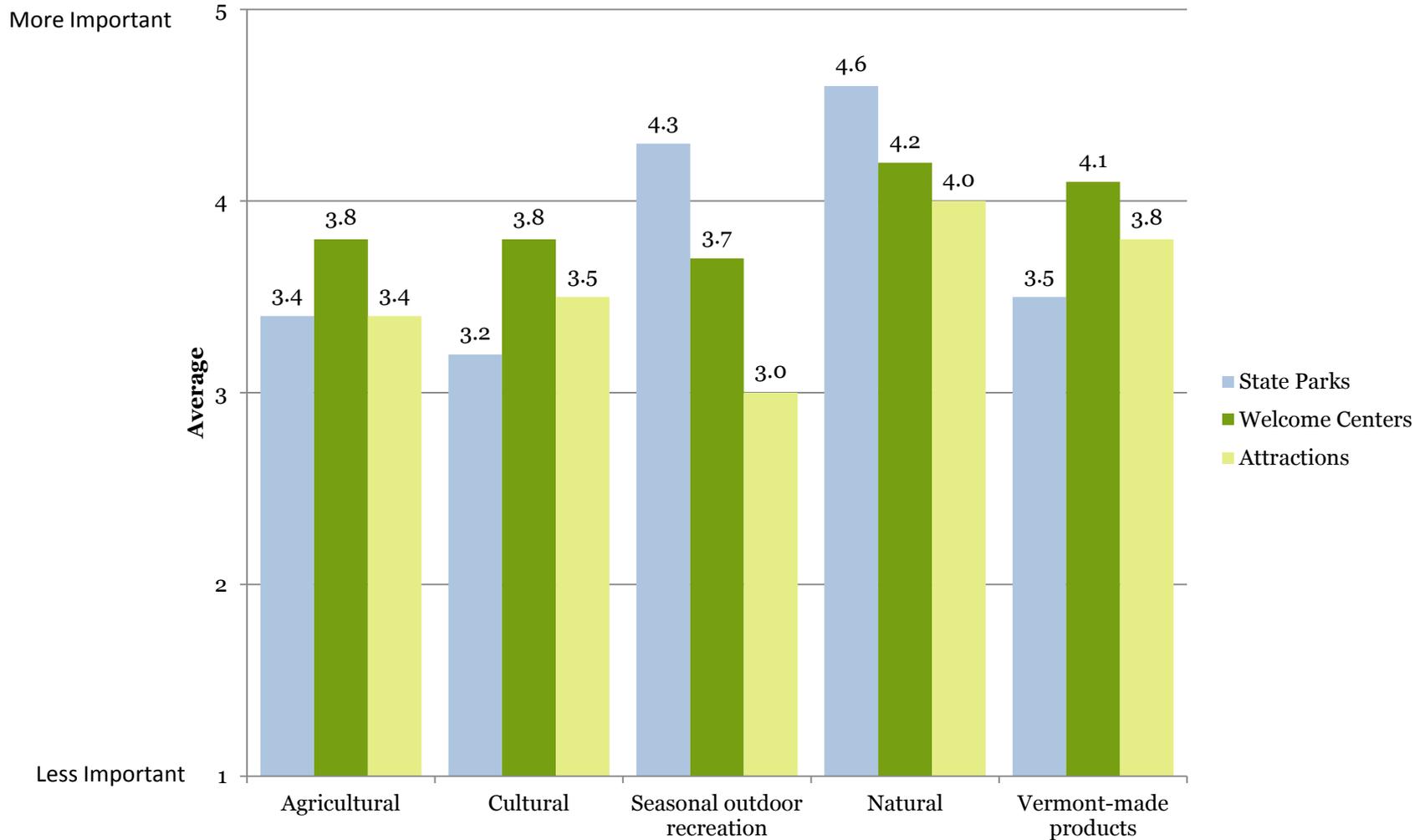


Average:
 State Parks – 1.0
 Welcome Centers – 0.5 people
 Attractions – 0.6 people

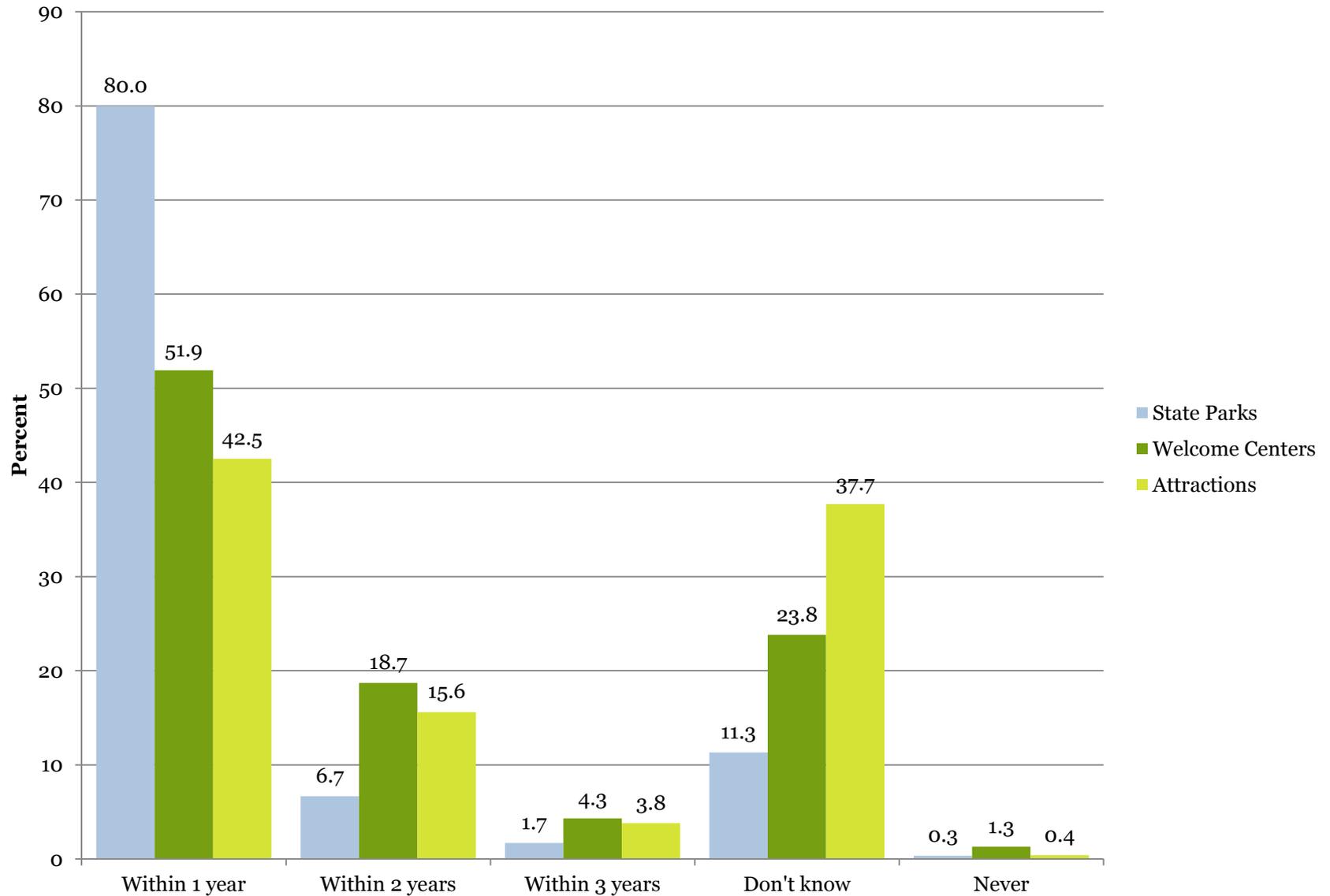
What type of purchases do you plan to make during your vacation/trip in Vermont?



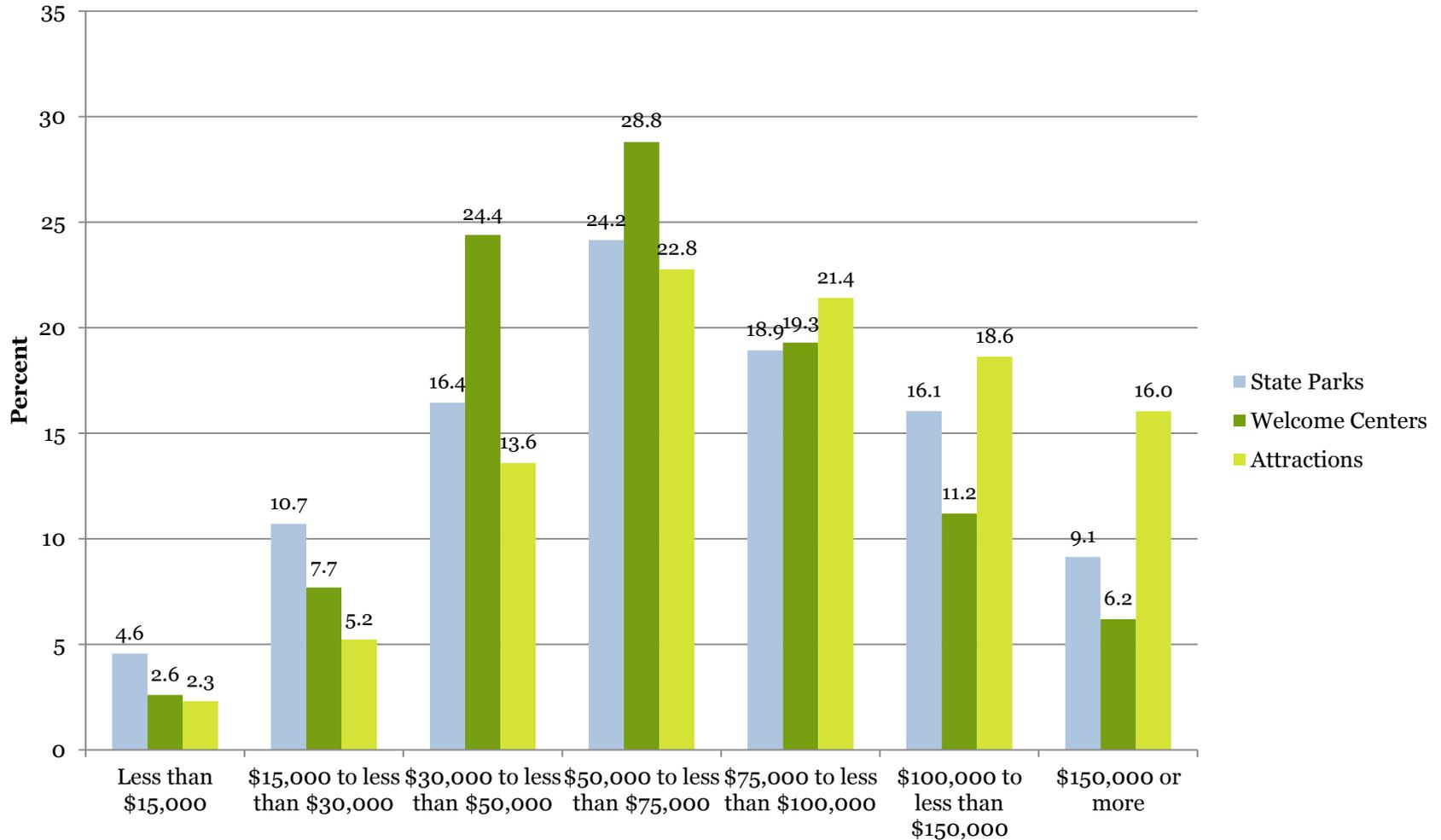
How important are the following types of attractions to you? (Average on a 5-point scale)



When do you expect to vacation in Vermont again?



What is your approximate annual household income?



Median Category:

State Parks - \$50,000 to less than \$75,000

Welcome Centers – \$50,000 to less than \$75,000

Attractions – \$75,000 to less than \$100,000

Summary and Conclusions

- Visitors rate natural attractions (mountains, wildlife, state parks, lakes, etc.) as the most important type of attraction
- A majority of visitors are return visitors
- On average, return visitors come 2 to 3 times
- Visitors are influenced to visit by family and friends
- Most visitors drive to Vermont and reside in nearby states (MA, NY, CT)
- Most visitors travel in groups of two adults, most without children
- Many visitors intend to return within a year

Implications

- Vermont's natural environment is of primary importance for maintaining a strong tourism base
- Because many visitors return, they are knowledgeable about what the state has to offer
- Promotion of Vermont to residents brings visitors to Vermont (every citizen an ambassador)
- Vermont's state parks offer an opportunity to introduce the next generation to the outdoors
- Vermont-made products are important and can serve as a reminder of what Vermont offers visitors