

Supplemental Survey Report

Benefit Costs Again Top the List of Problems; Finding Qualified Workers a Rising Concern

Supplementary questions in the October 2014 *Empire State Manufacturing Survey* and *Business Leaders Survey* focused on the extent to which certain business issues posed problems for firms. In addition, respondents were asked if each issue was expected to become more or less of a problem over the next year. Similar questions had been posed in December 2013 and in earlier surveys.

As in previous surveys, the cost of employee benefits was cited most frequently, by far, as a major problem. Among service firms, finding qualified workers was viewed as considerably

more of a problem in the current survey than in previous surveys, evidently reflecting the stronger labor market. Among manufacturers, this issue was not seen as quite as problematic as it was in 2013, but it was still regarded as considerably more of a problem than it was in 2011 or 2010. Government regulation remained near the top of the list in both surveys, but it was viewed as less of a problem than in the earlier surveys. Moreover, respondents in both surveys expect all three of these business issues to be more of a problem, on balance, a year from now. Taxes and resource costs were more widely considered to be problematic by

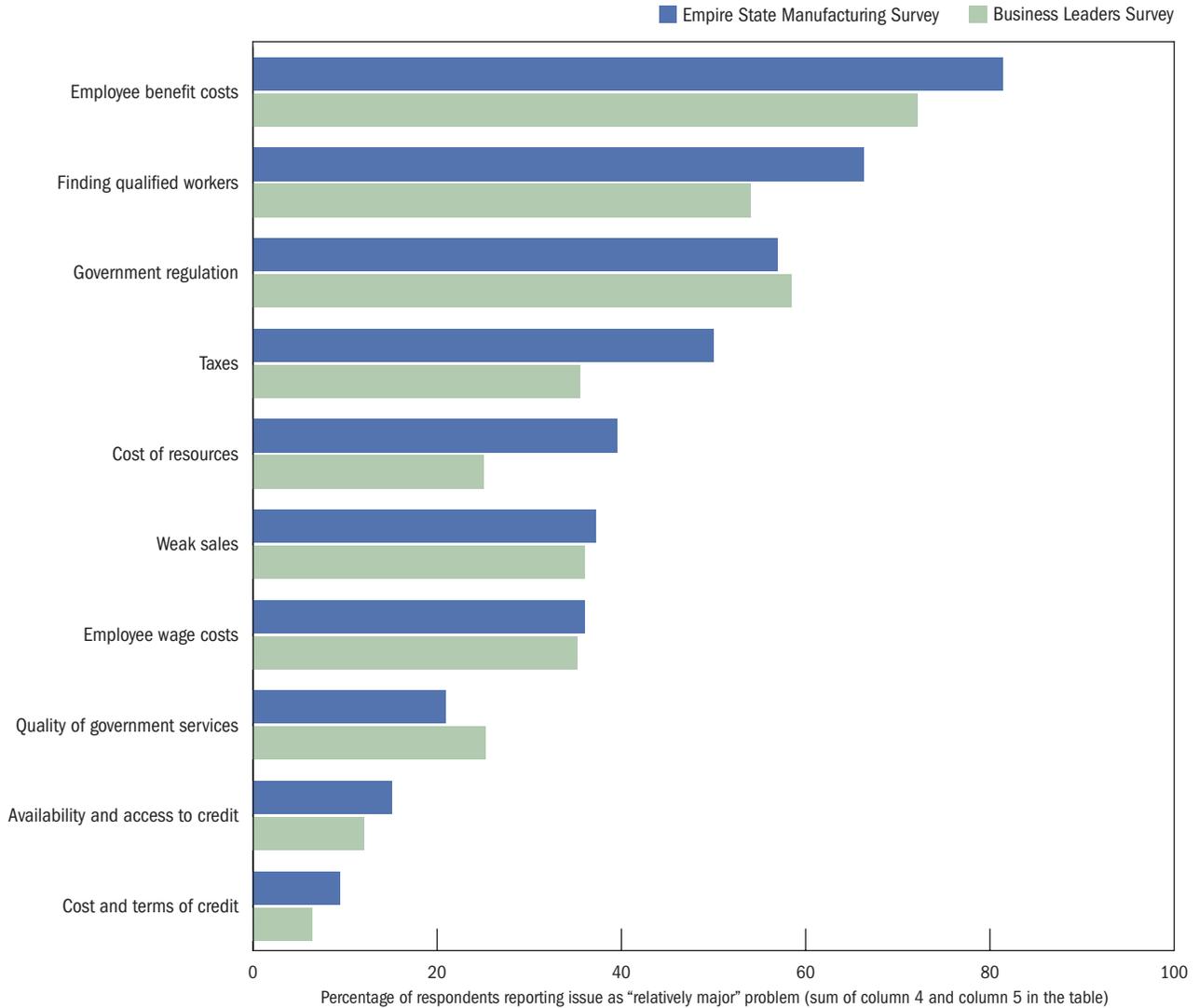
manufacturers than by service firms. At the other end of the spectrum, availability and access to credit, as well as cost and terms of credit, were not considered to be a major problem by either manufacturers or service firms.

Businesses were also asked about the extent to which these issues are expected to become more or less of a problem in the year ahead. In general, the issues seen as major problems now are most widely expected to be even more of a problem in the future. ■

Supplemental Survey Report, *continued*

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW FOR QUESTION 1

To what extent does each of the following issues pose a problem for your firm?



Note: Categories are ranked from most problematic to least problematic, based on the current Empire State Manufacturing Survey.

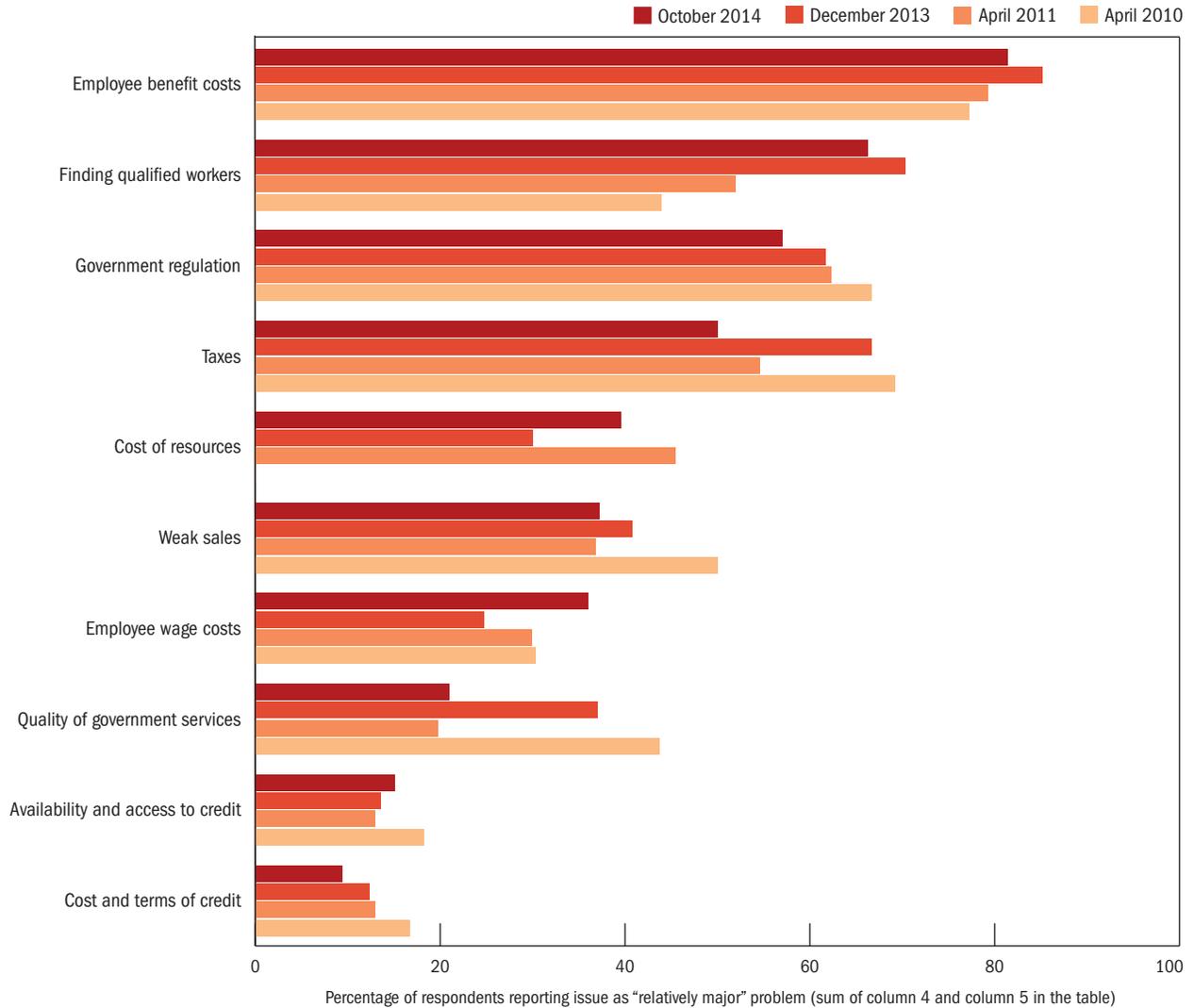
Supplemental Survey Report, *continued*

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW FOR QUESTION 1

To what extent does each of the following issues pose a problem for your firm?

Problem Ratings: October 2014, December 2013, and Earlier Surveys

Empire State Manufacturing Survey



Note: Categories are ranked from most problematic to least problematic, based on the current Empire State Manufacturing Survey.

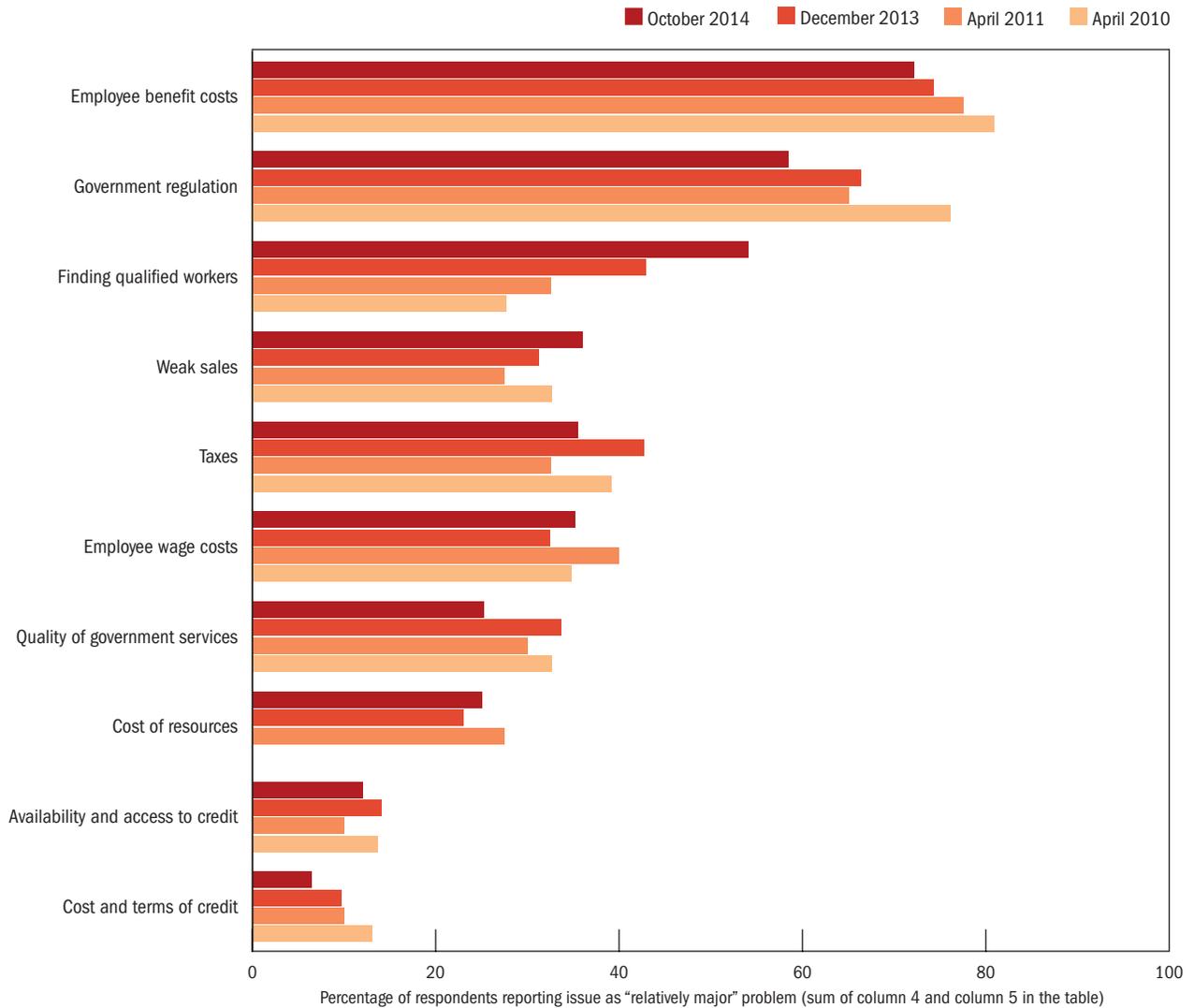
Supplemental Survey Report, *continued*

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW FOR QUESTION 1

To what extent does each of the following issues pose a problem for your firm?

Problem Ratings: October 2014, December 2013, and Earlier Surveys

Business Leaders Survey



Note: Categories are ranked from most problematic to least problematic, based on the current Business Leaders Survey.