

Lifeway **research**

# Hispanic Church Planting Study 2025

Comparison of Responses to 2019 Survey

**EXPONENTIAL<sup>7</sup>**



**CHURCH  
PLANTING  
LEADERSHIP  
FELLOWSHIP**

# Contents

Methodology	4
Descriptors of New Church Work	6
Communication & Publicity	32
Outreach Activities	39
Activities	42
Funding Sources	49
Denominational & Network Support	54
Sponsor Church Support	62
Education & Training	67
Church Starter	72

# Acknowledgements

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  - SEND Network (SBC)
  - Evangelical Free Church of America
  - Church Multiplication Network (AG)
  - Christian & Missionary Alliance
  - Baptist Missionary Association of America
  - The Wesleyan Church
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# Methodology

- The online survey of 292 Hispanic new church works was conducted September 3 – November 5, 2025
- New church work starters were individually invited by email to participate in either Spanish or English
- The invitation and survey defined “new church works” to include church starts, church mergers, revitalizations, restarts, Spanish-language congregations within a non-Hispanic church, and new sites for an existing congregation
- Up to 4 reminder emails were sent to all who did not respond to the initial invitation, and phone calls were made to five smaller denominations
- All survey respondents were either the founding pastor or the current lead pastor of the new church work
- Responses were weighted by denomination to more accurately reflect the population
- The participating 2025 sample is 292 surveys (all in the U.S.); number answering varies by question
- Comparisons are made to a Lifeway Research study of 218 Hispanic new church works conducted March 15–June 26, 2019

# Who the Studies Included:

## Included in Both 2019 and 2025

- Church Multiplication Network/ Assemblies of God
- Evangelical Free Church of America
- Mission to North America/ Presbyterian Church in America
- Missionary Church
- Reformed Church in America
- Resonate Global Mission/ Christian Reformed Church in North America
- SEND Network/ Southern Baptist Convention
- Vineyard
- The Wesleyan Church

## Included in 2025 and not 2019

- Baptist Missionary Association of America
- Christian & Missionary Alliance
- Evangelical Covenant Church
- Foursquare
- Free Methodists
- Texas District Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

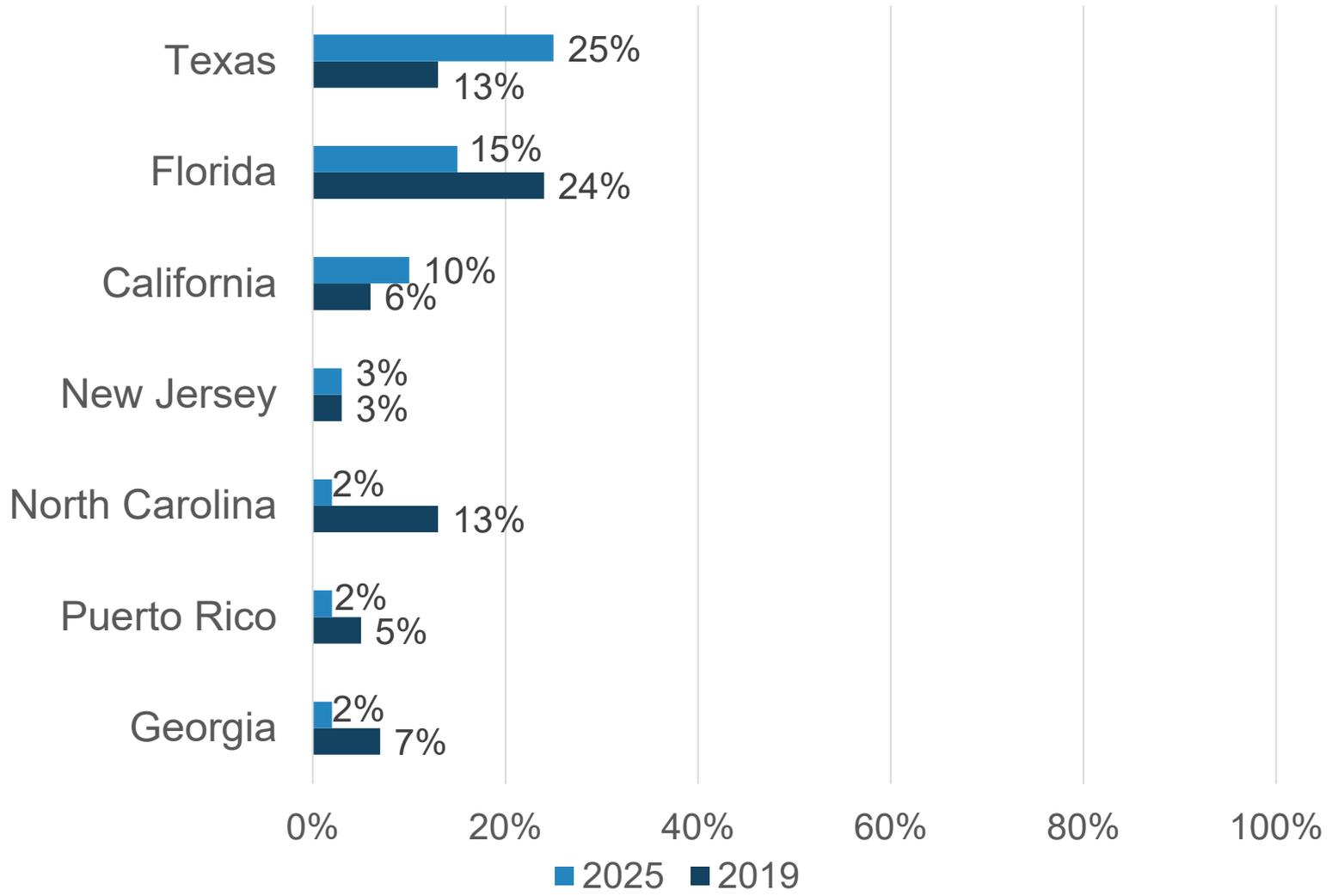
## Included in 2019 and not 2025

- Converge
- Orchard
- Outreach North America (ARP)
- Project Jerusalem
- Stadia

# Descriptors of Hispanic New Church Works

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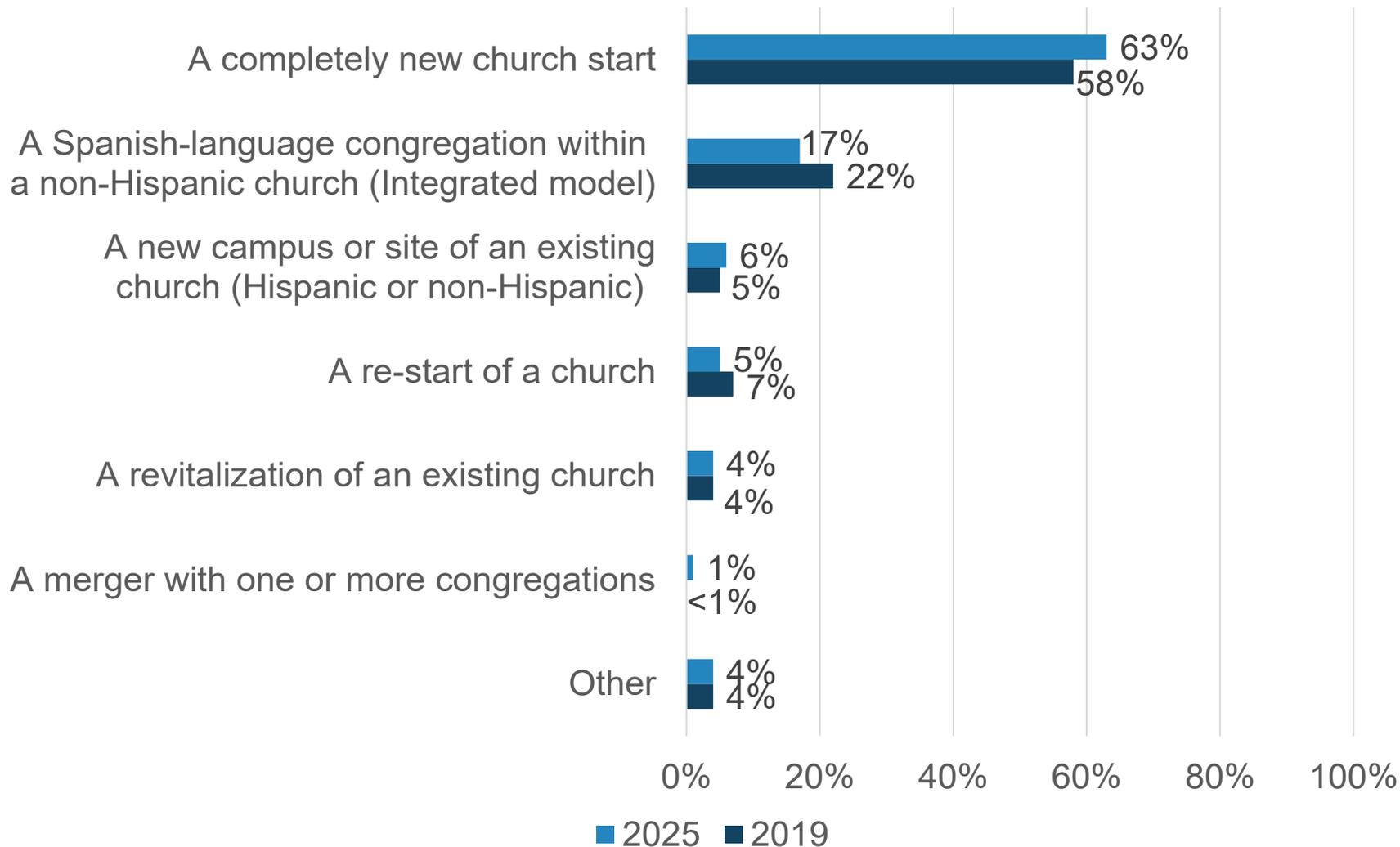
# Location of participating new church works shifted a little among the top states



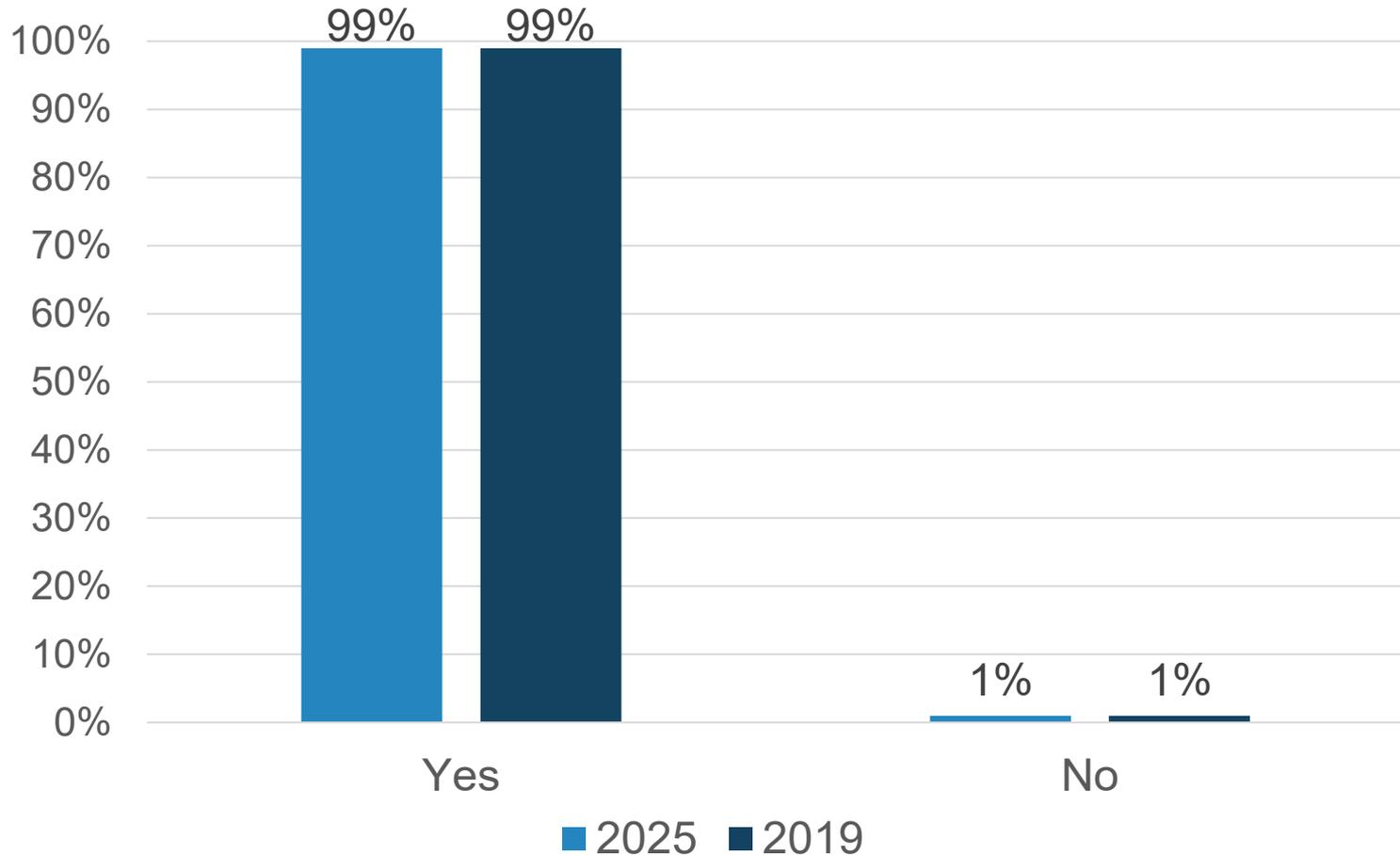
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Q1: "What state or province is your church located?"

# The types of new church works is similar to 2019



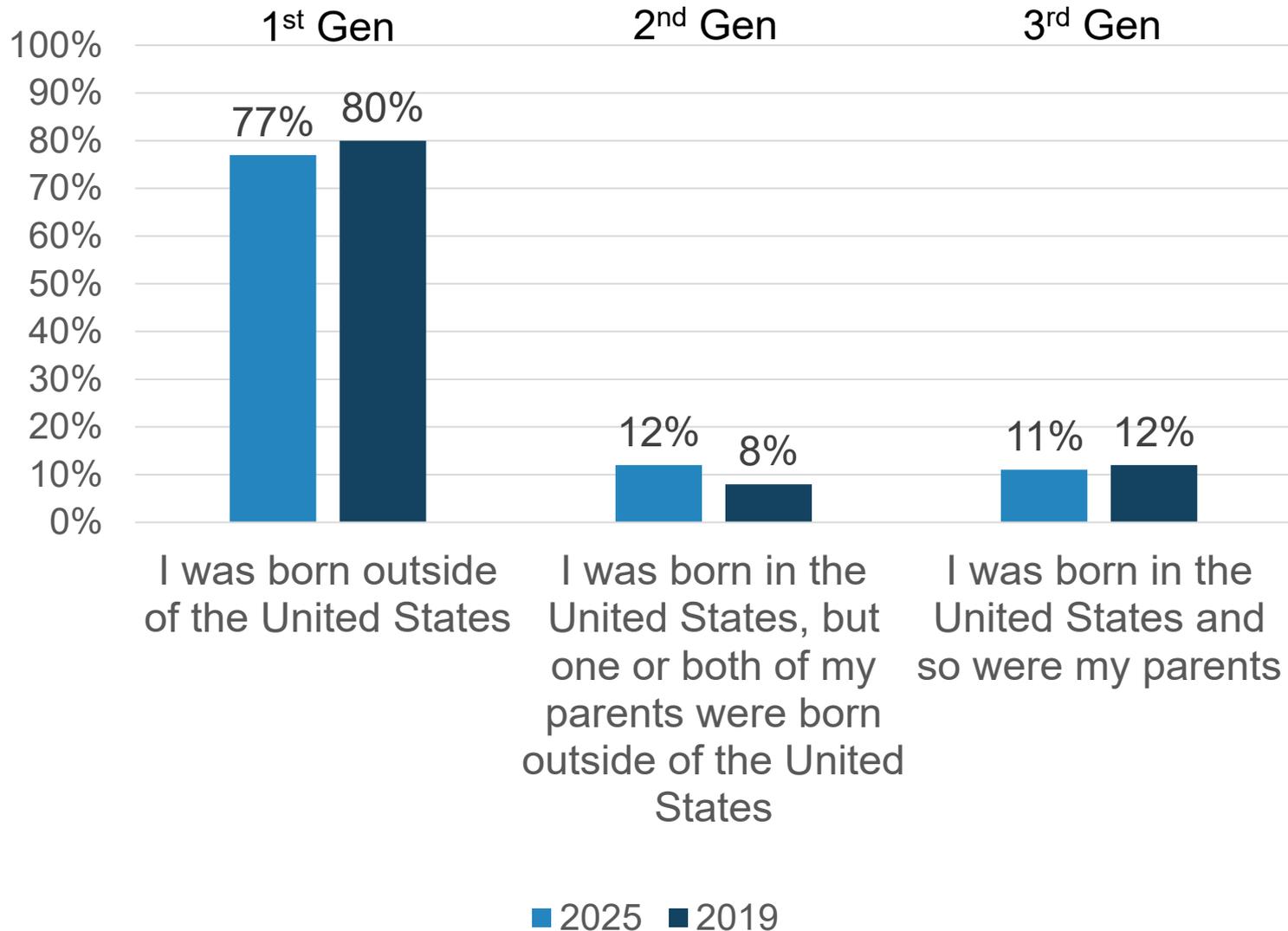
# 99% of participating new church works still existed when surveyed



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Q9: "Does the new church work still exist today?"

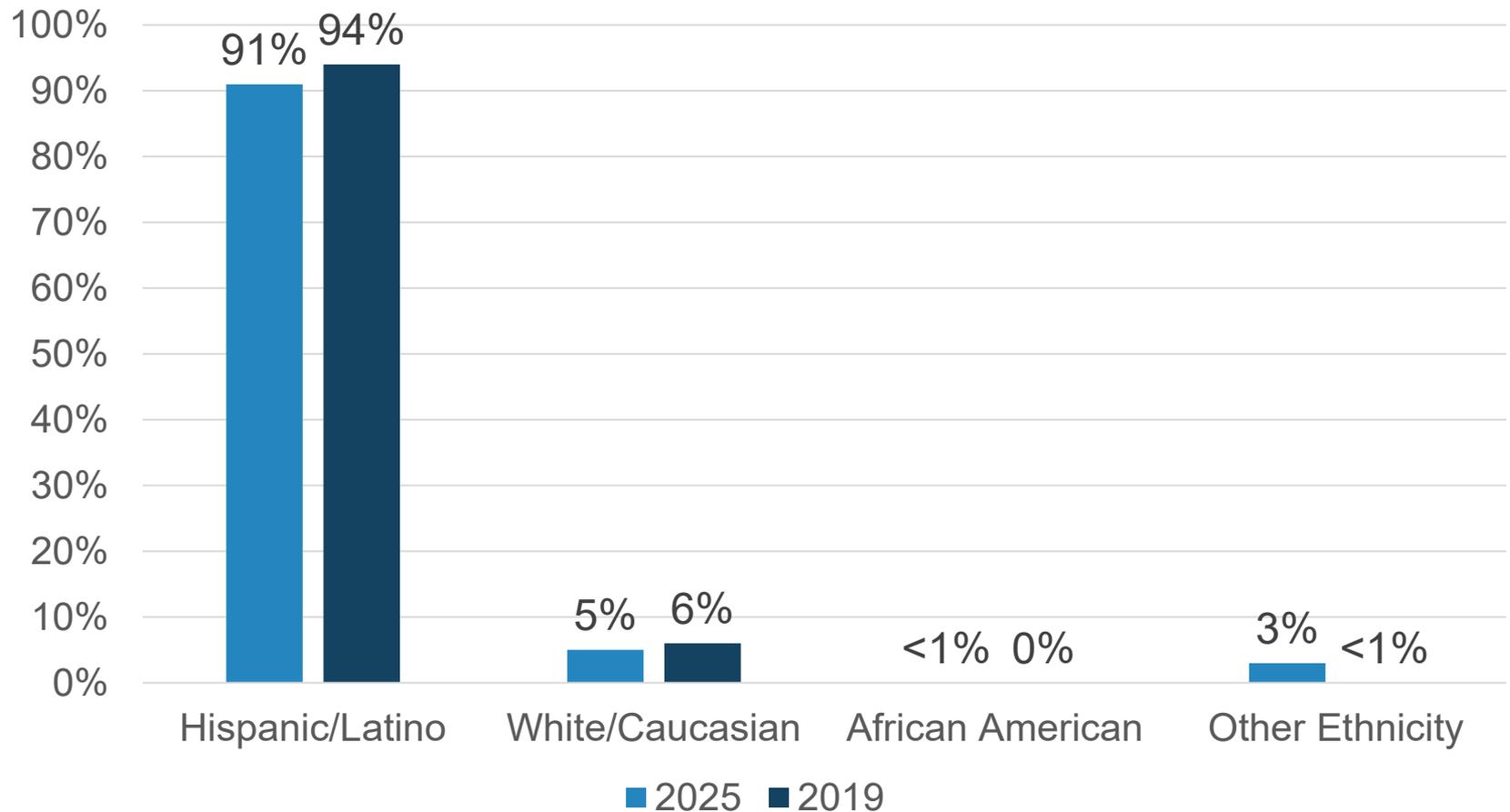
# Most lead pastors are still born outside of the U.S.



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Q10: "Which of the following best describes where you and your parents were born?"

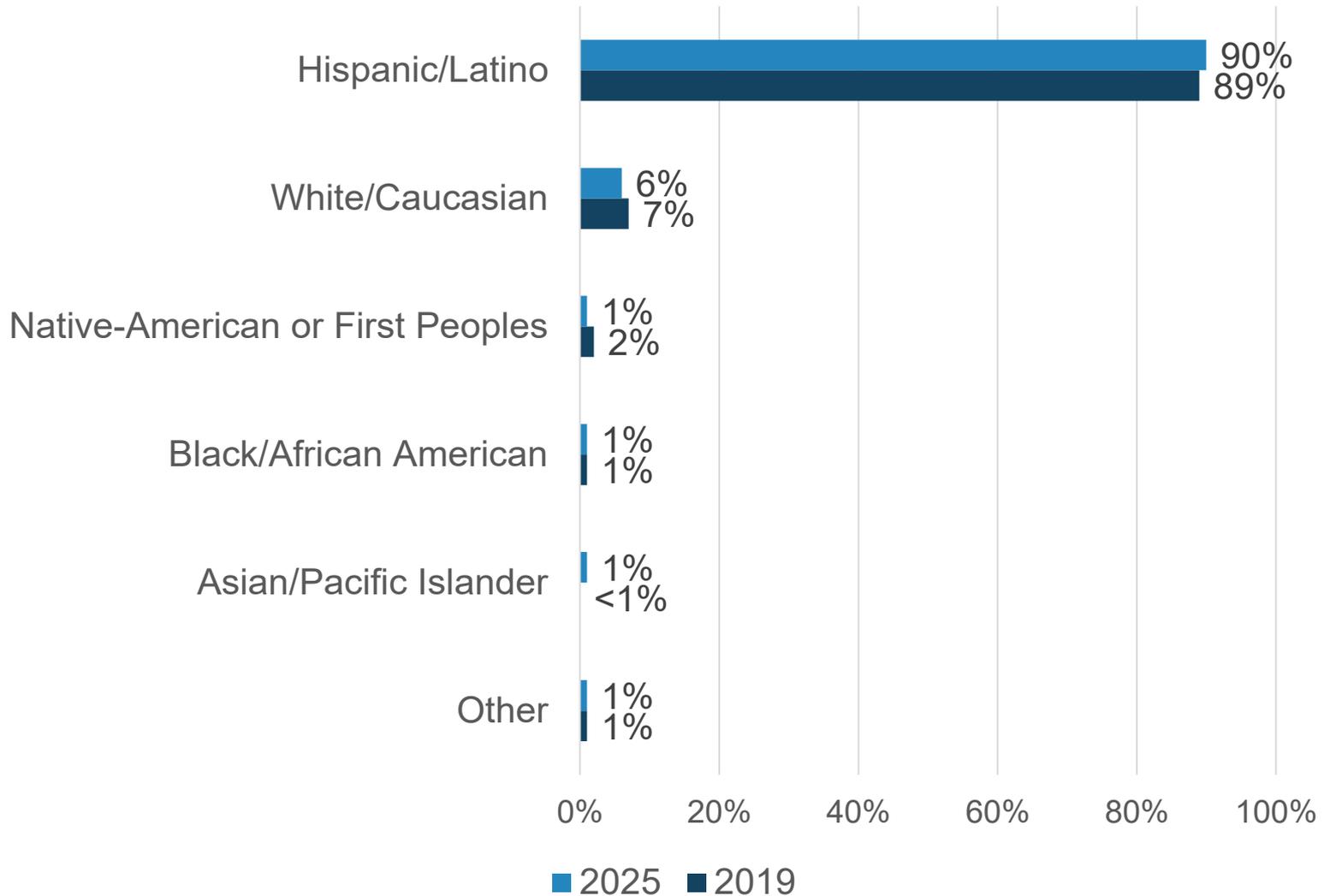
# Ethnic and racial background of the pastors of Hispanic new church works is still mostly Hispanic



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Q12: "What is your racial or ethnic background? (Select one)"

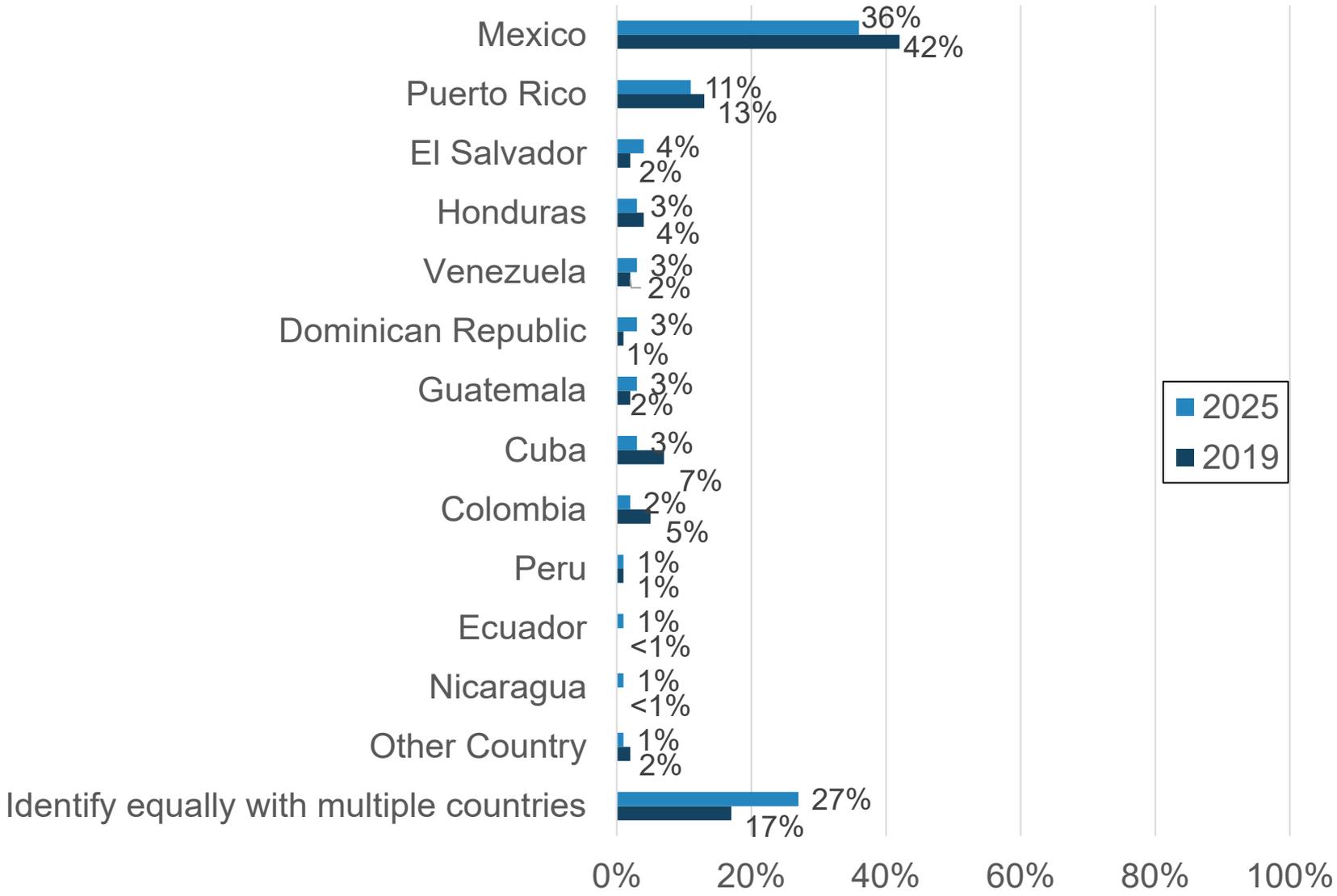
# Average ethnic make-up of congregations is unchanged



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Q13: "What is the current ethnic and racial make-up of your church? Rough estimates are acceptable. If no one from a particular ethnic/racial group is in your church, please mark 0%. Total percentages should add to 100%."

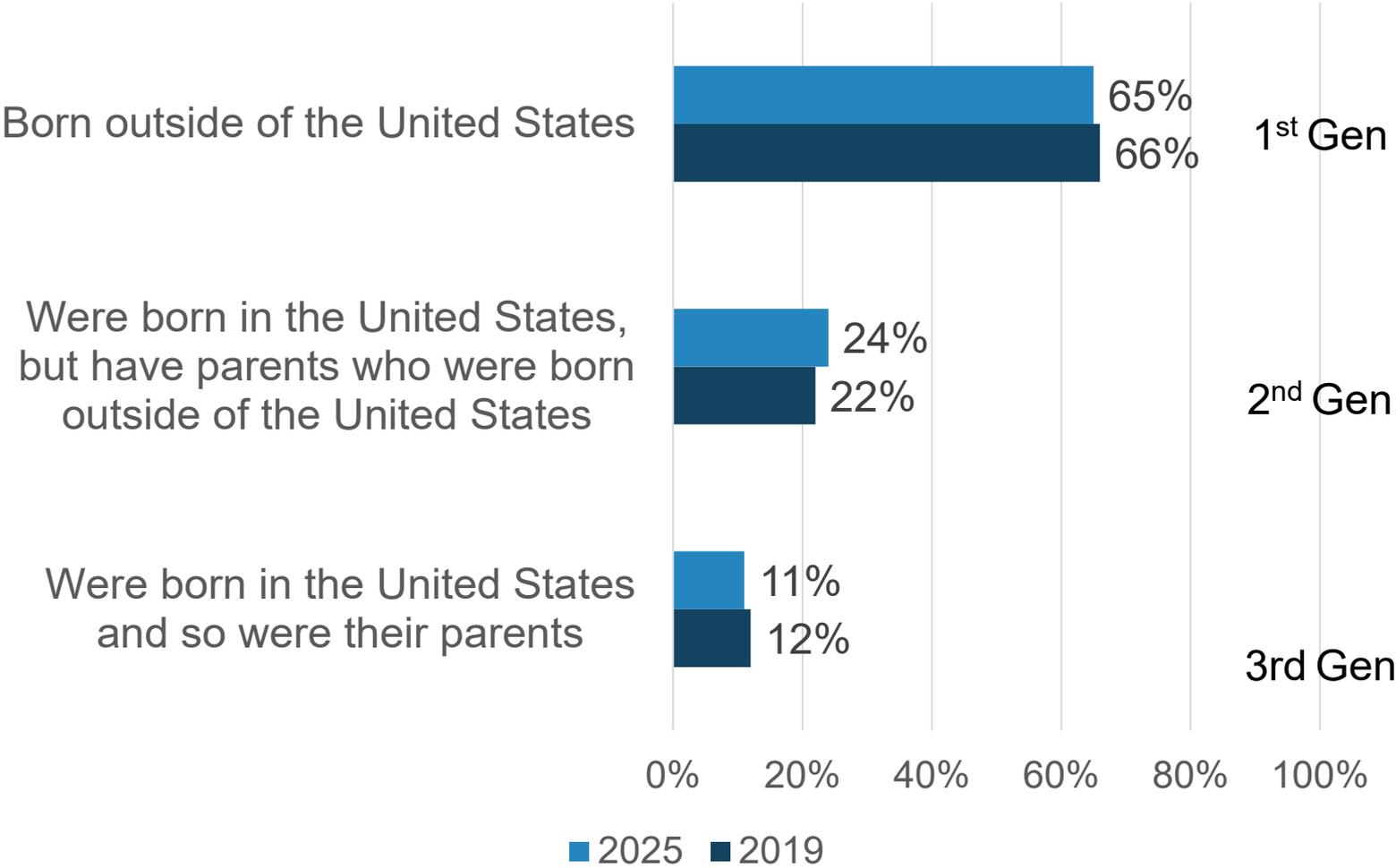
# More new church works say the largest group of attendees identifies equally with multiple countries



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Q14: "From which country of Hispanic or Latino origin do the largest number of attendees of your new church work identify with the most? (Select one)"

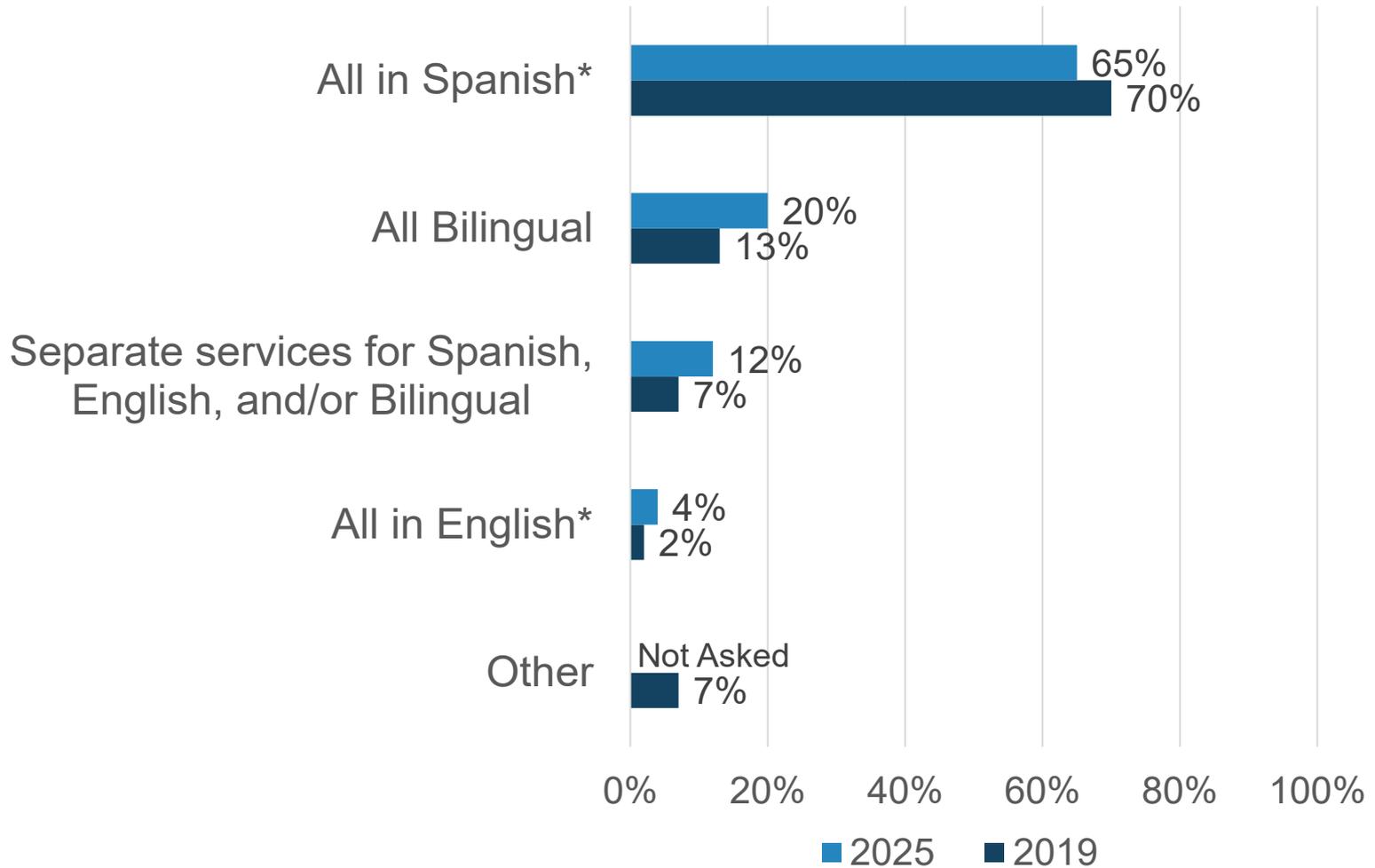
# Average current immigration breakdown of new church work congregations is unchanged



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Q15: "What is the current immigrant breakdown of your church? Rough estimates are acceptable. If no one from a particular immigrant group is in your church, please mark 0%. Total percentages should add to 100%."

# More new church works conduct all their worship services bilingual (20% v. 13%)

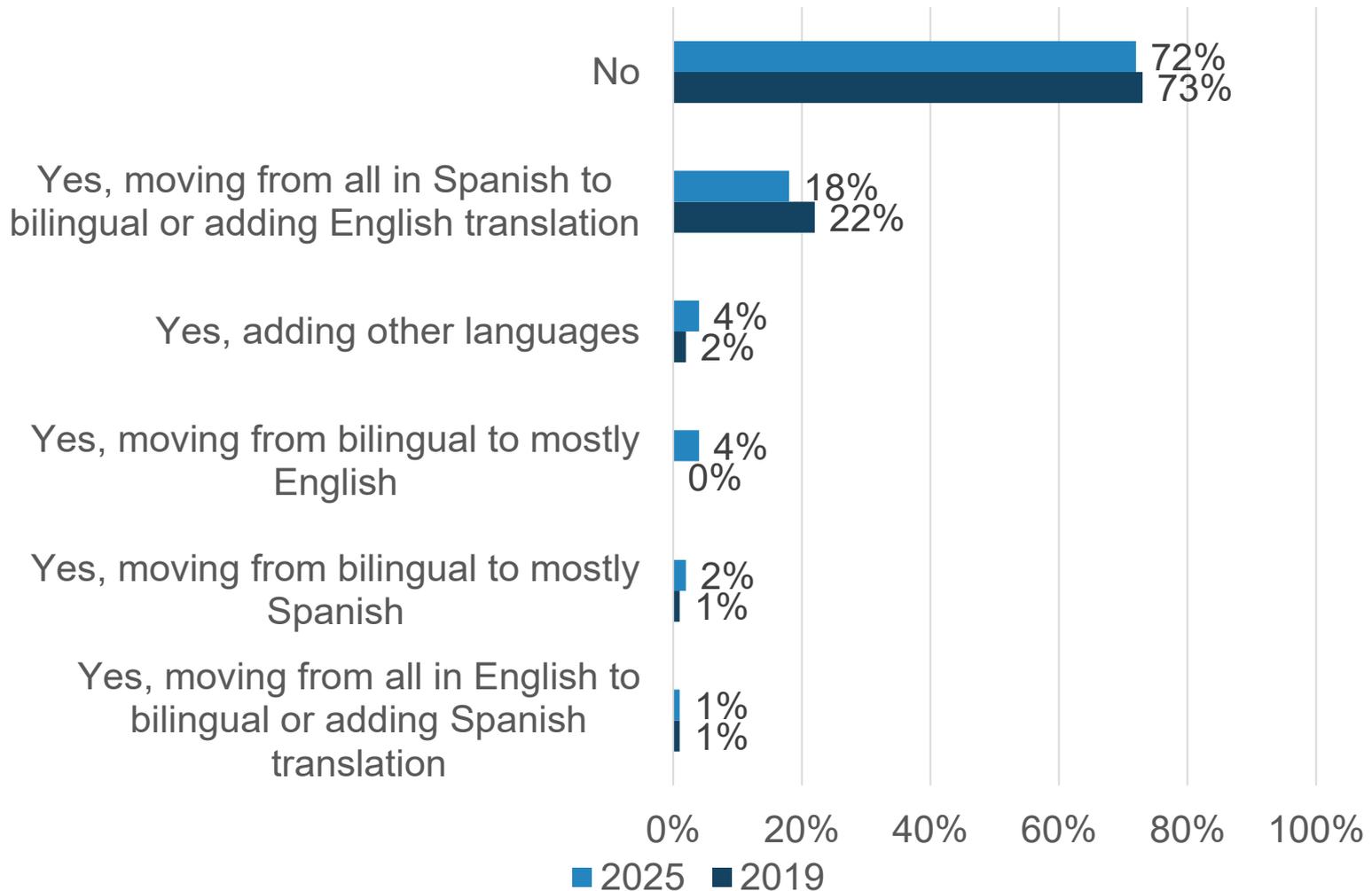


\*Includes options where translation was offered

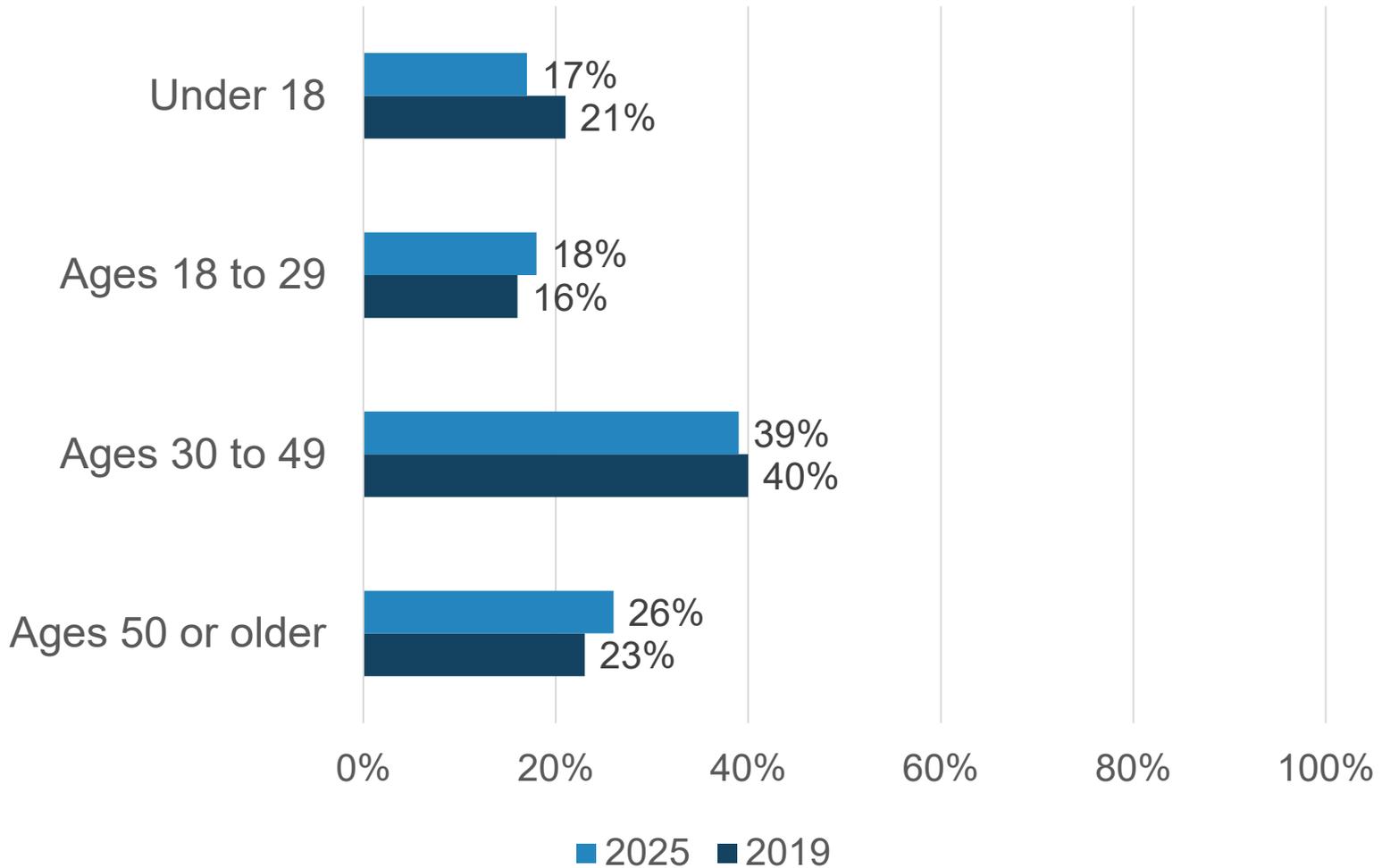
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Q18: "What language(s) are used to lead your worship services? (Select one)"

# 7 in 10 do not plan to transition the language used in their church in the next year



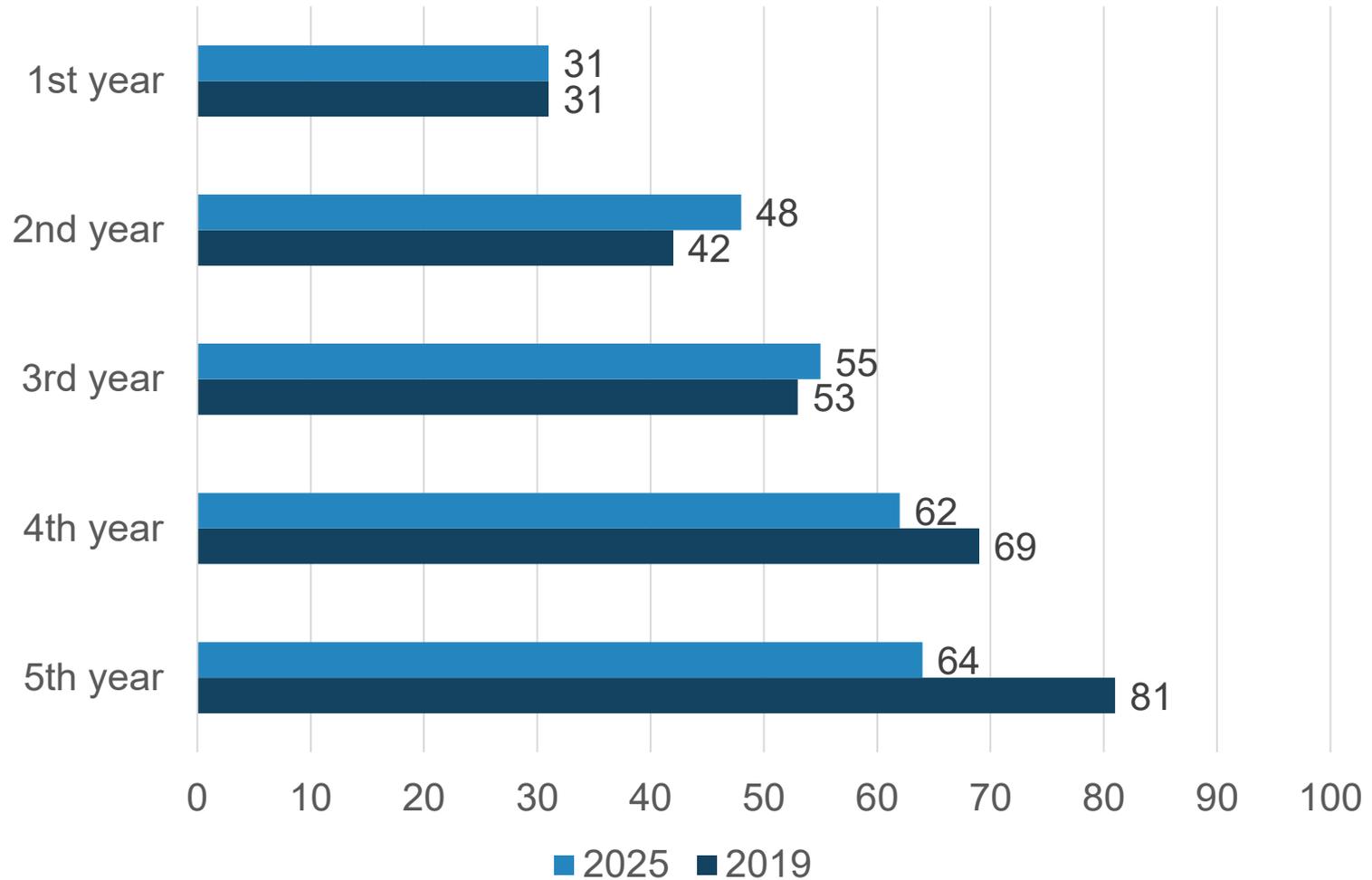
# Average age breakdown of new church work attendees is similar to 2019



**Lifeway** research

Q21: "What is the approximate age breakdown of your church? Rough estimates are acceptable. If no one from a particular age group is in your church, please mark 0%. Total percentages should add to 100%."

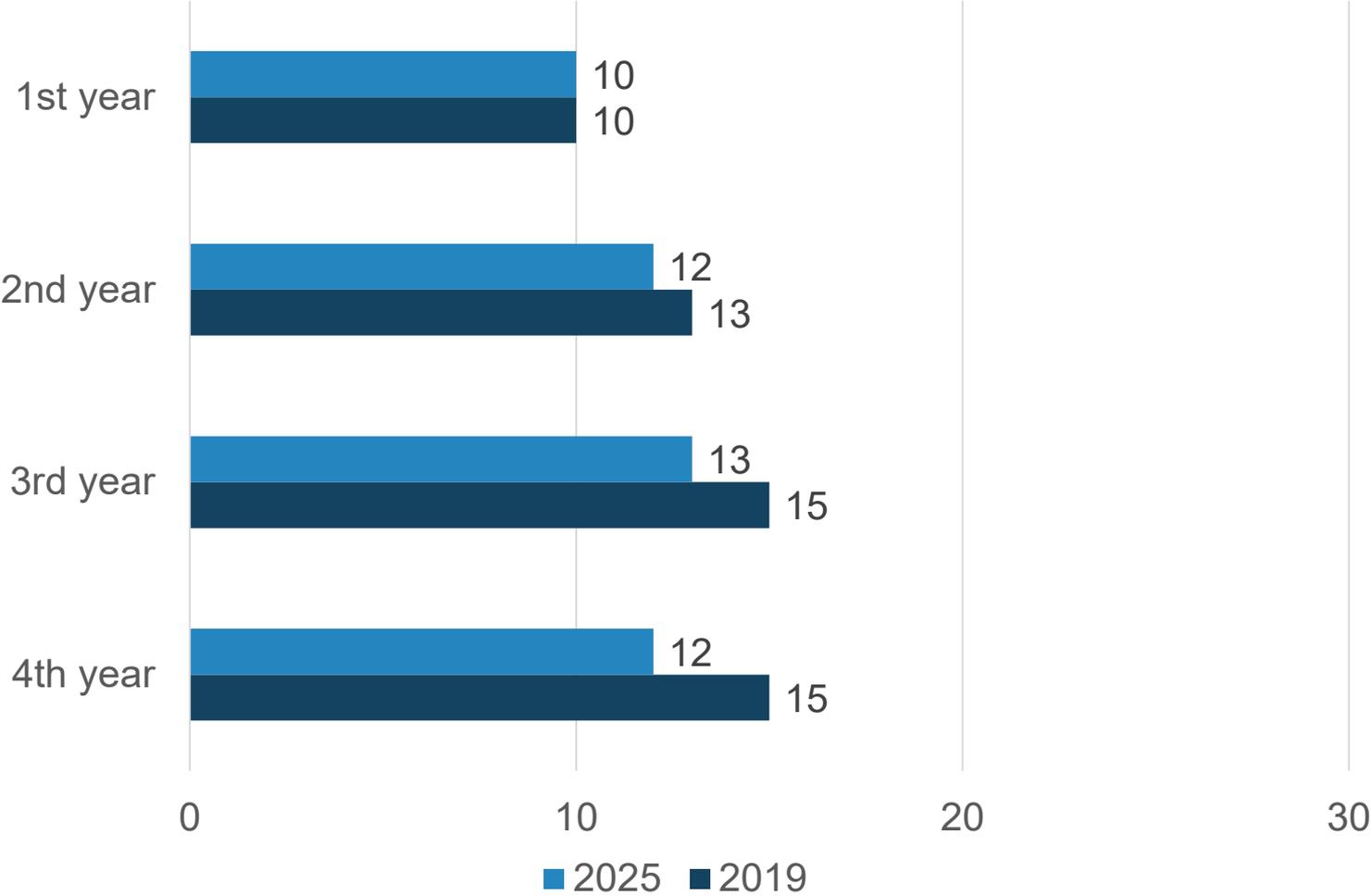
# Average weekly worship attendance by year



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Q24: "Please provide the WEEKLY average worship attendance for each year since the new church work began. Include all ages. If you do not have a single gathering each week, add the total number of people in smaller groups gathered each week. (If later years are not applicable, leave those blank.)"

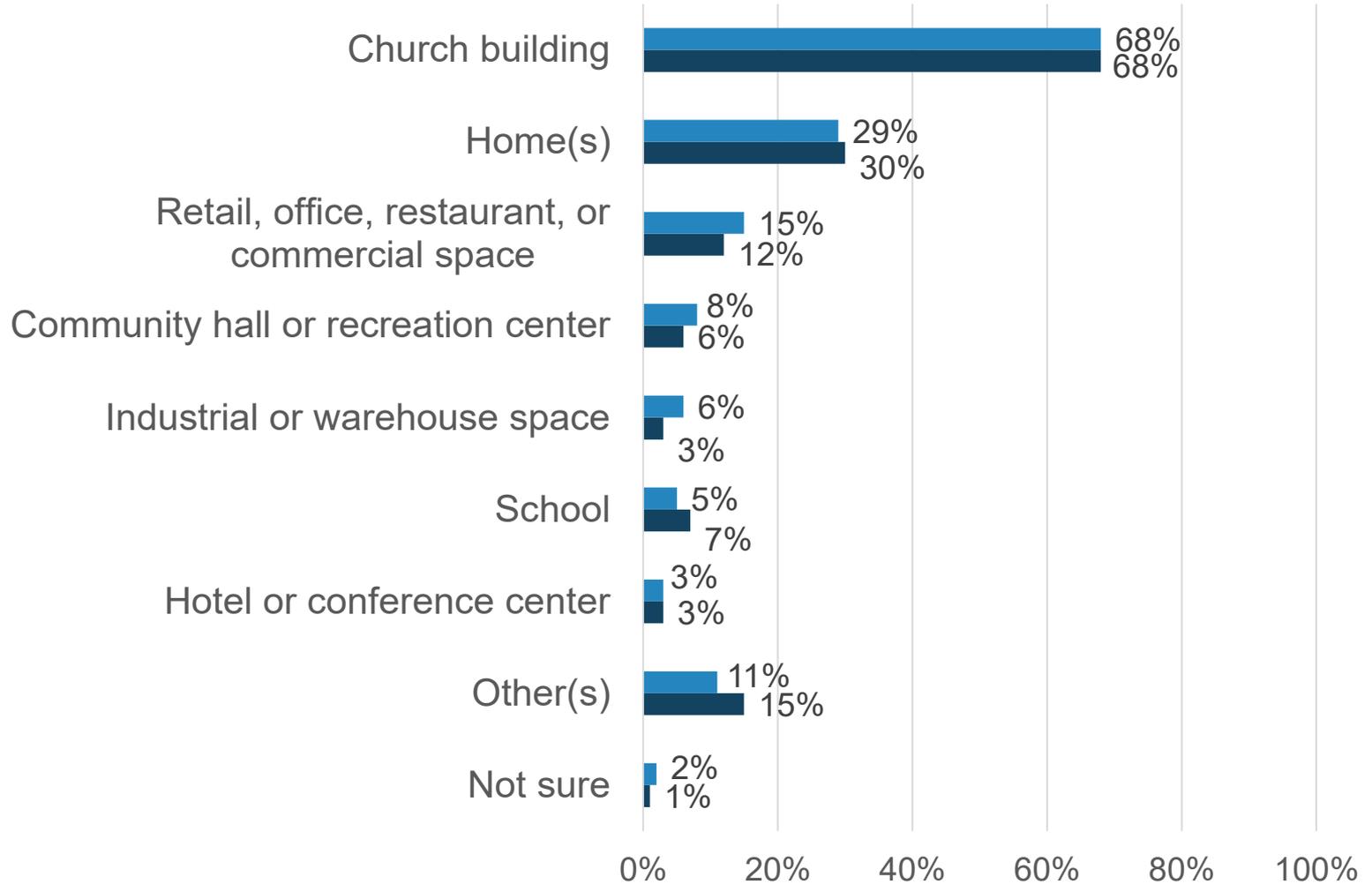
# Average number of new, first-time commitments to Jesus Christ by year



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Q25: "For each year the church has been in existence, please estimate the annual number of NEW, FIRST-TIME COMMITMENTS to Jesus Christ through your new church work since it began. (If later years are not applicable, leave those blank.)"

# Facilities churches have used since they started is similar to 2019



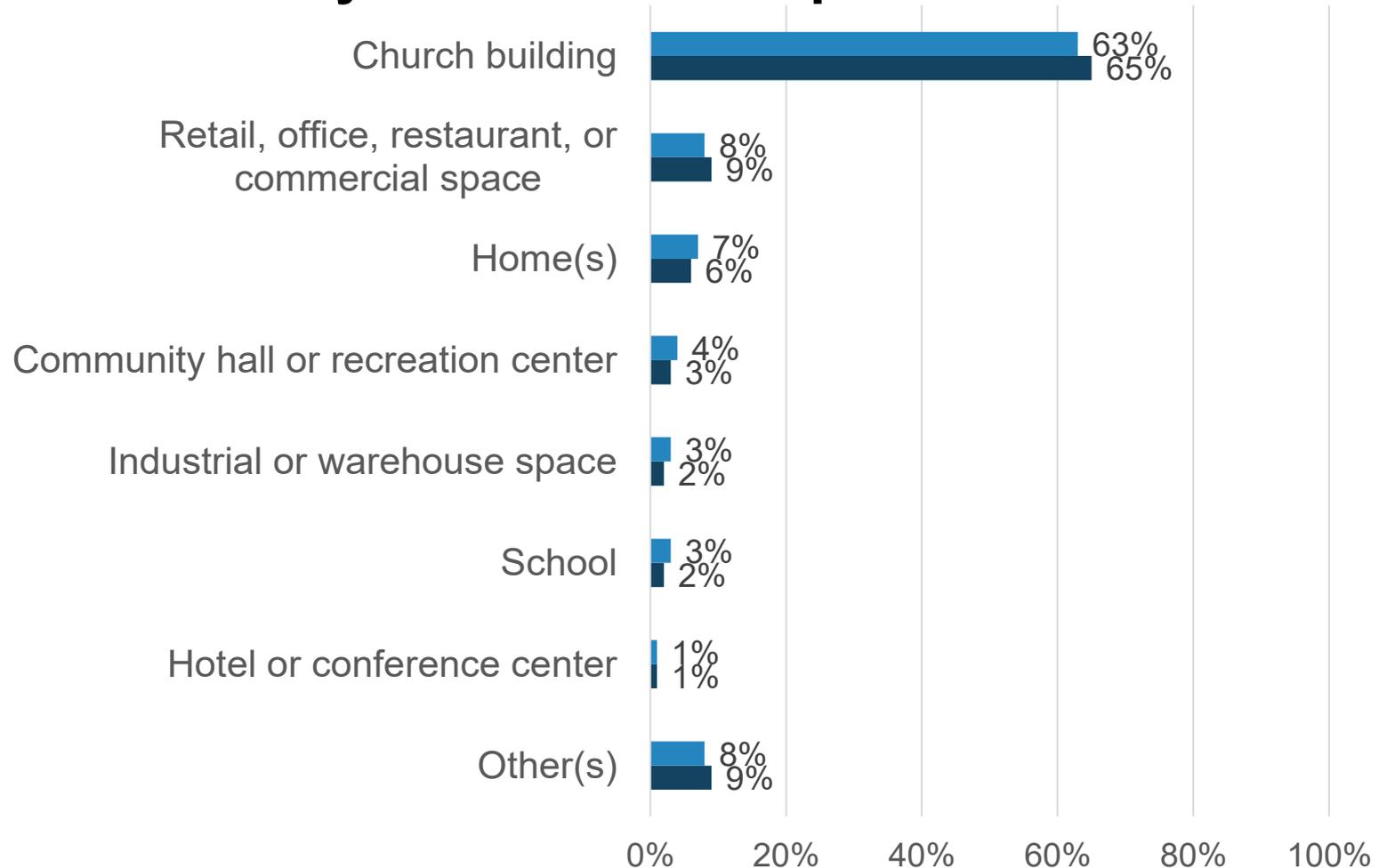
2019 also had separate options for: Office (4%), Business establishment (6%), Day care (2%), and Movie theater (1%).

■ 2025 ■ 2019

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Q26: "What facilities has the church used since it started? (Please select all that apply)"

# A church building is still the most common facility currently used for worship services



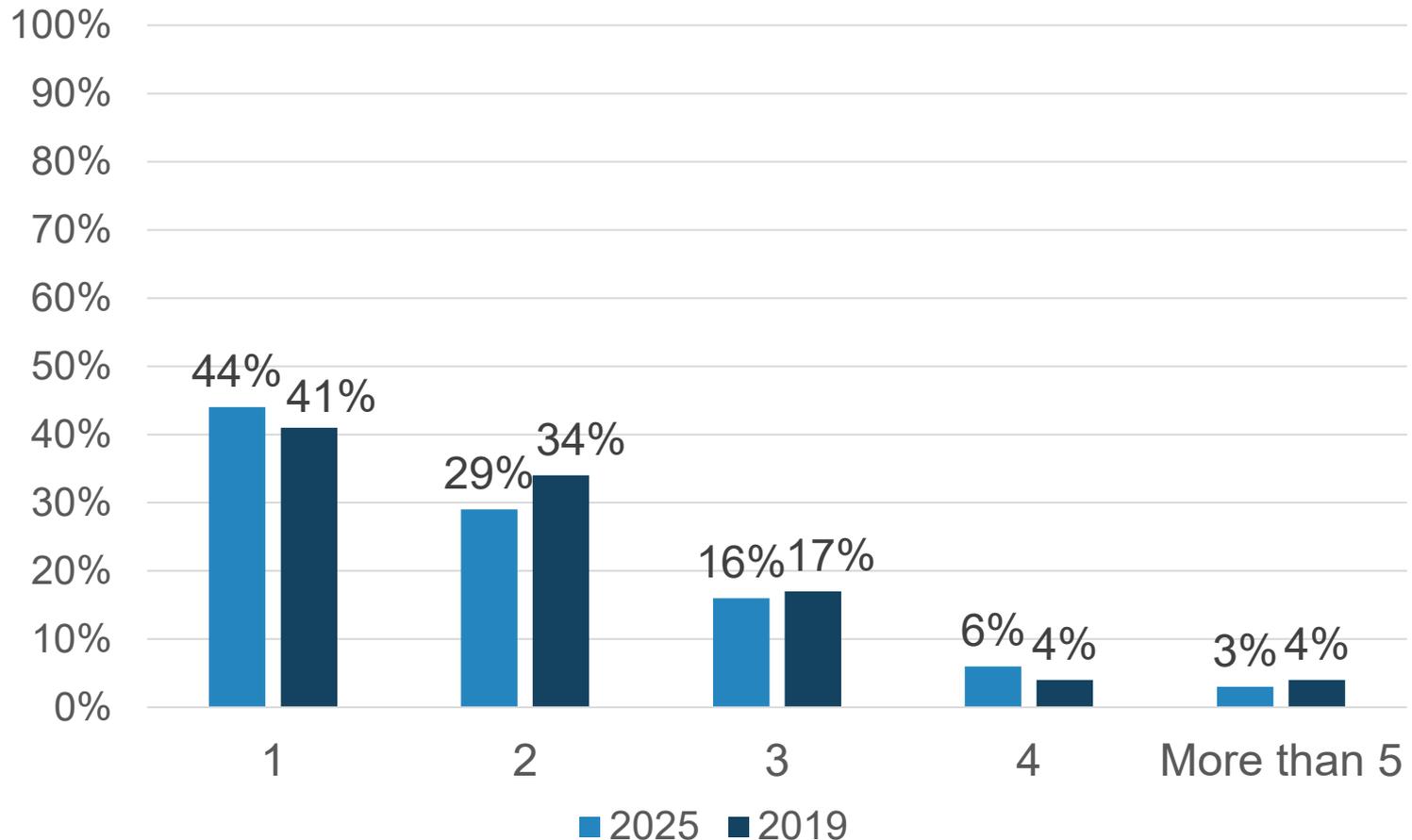
2019 also had separate options for: Office (1%), Business establishment (2%), Day care (1%), and Movie theater (0%).

■ 2025 ■ 2019

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Q27: "What is the primary facility for the church's CURRENT worship services? (Select one)"

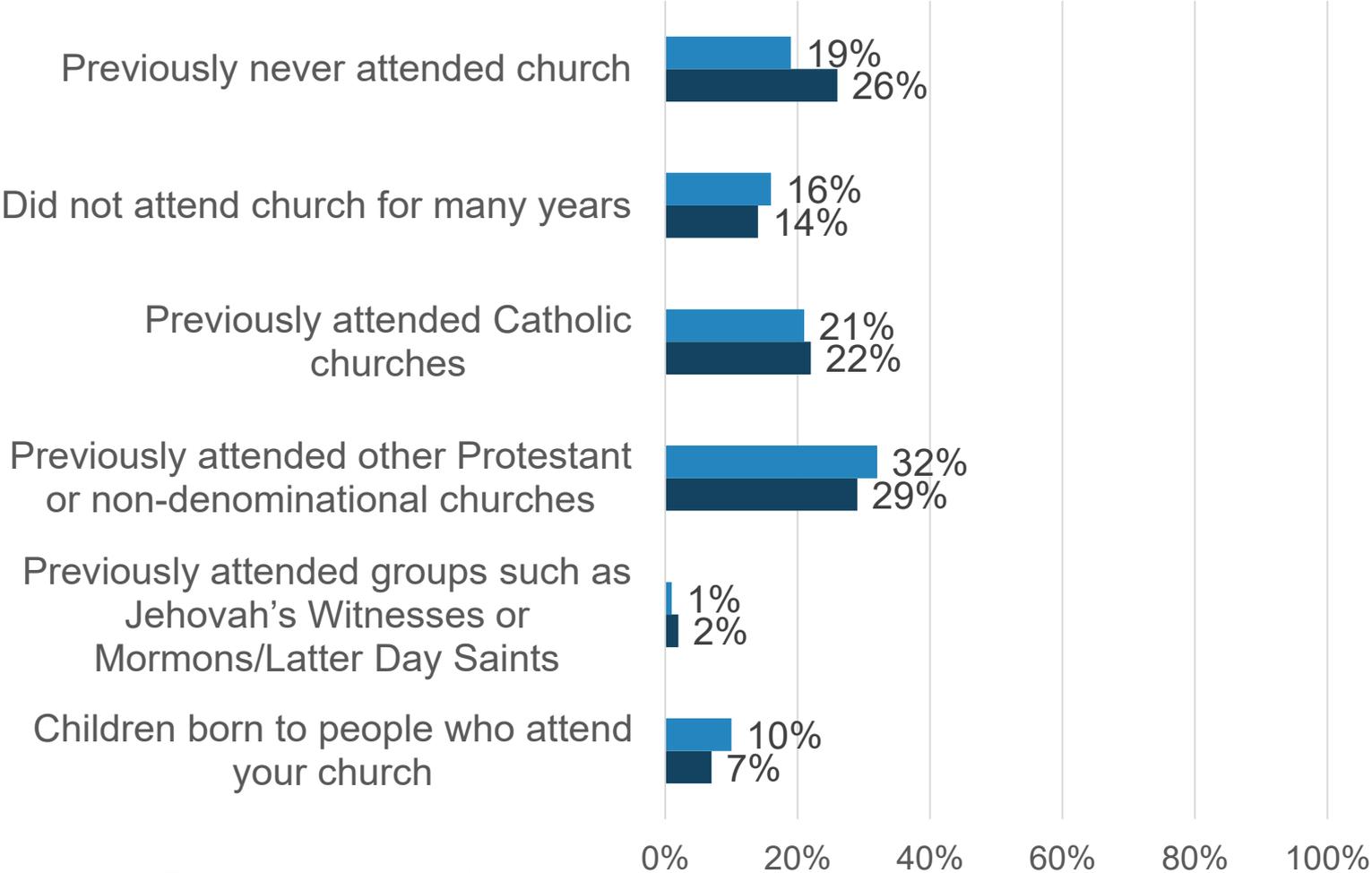
# The number of facilities used since they started is similar to 2019 participants



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Q28: "In how many different facilities has your new church work conducted worship services since it began?"

# Average percentage of attendees with each church background



2019 used the wording “Previously completely unchurched” and “Unchurched for many years” for the first two options.

■ 2025 ■ 2019

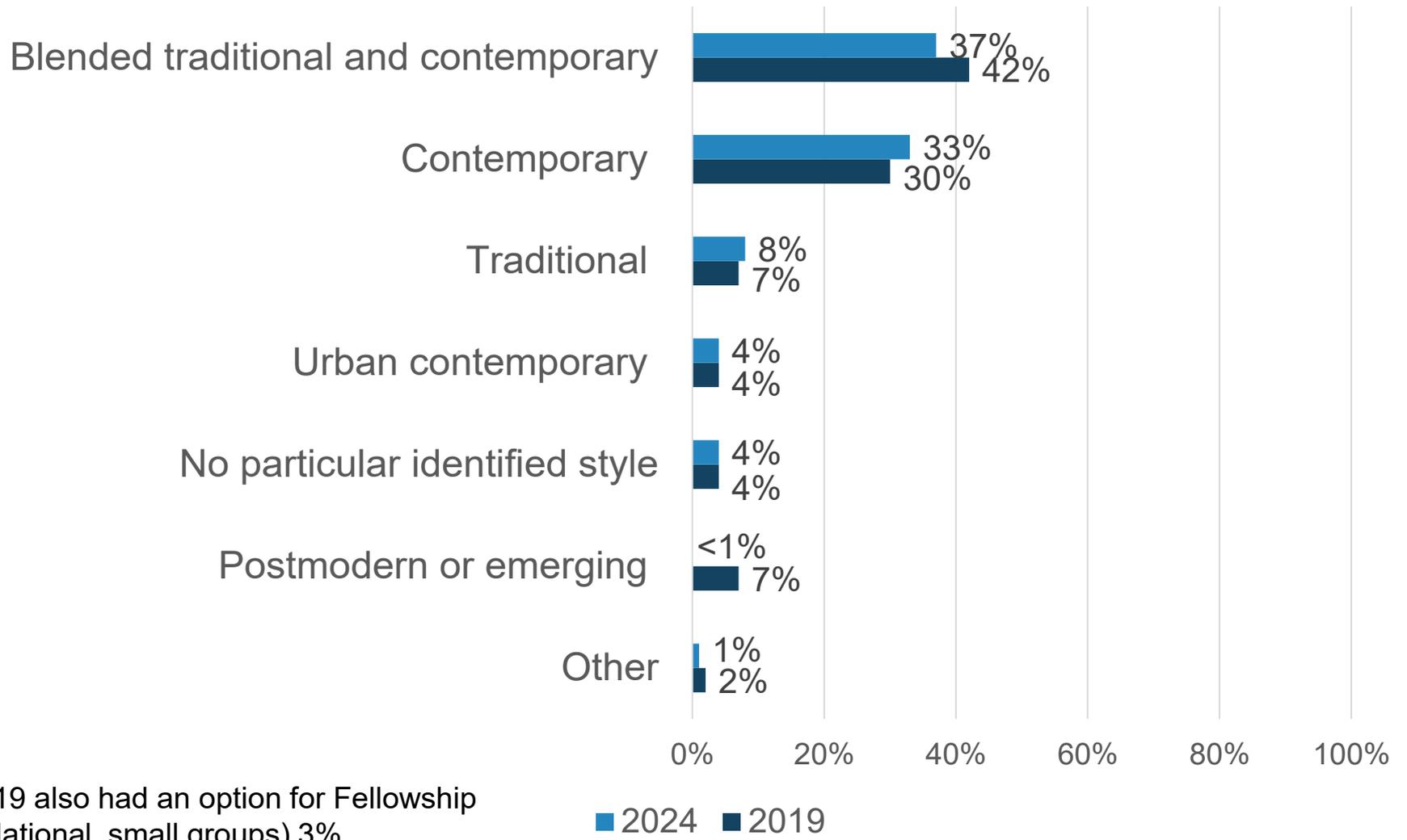
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Q32: “Among the people who have attended this new church work since it began, please estimate the percentage from each of the following church backgrounds. (If no one belongs to a particular group in your church, please mark 0%. Total percentages should add to 100%.)”

# How would you best describe the worship style of your church? *Full 2025 Question Text*

- **Traditional** (formal, orderly, majestic, contemplative)
- **Contemporary** (expressive, celebrative, informal)
- **Pentecostal** (spontaneous, participatory praying out loud, speaking in tongues, healing, signs, highly expressive)
- **Postmodern or emerging** (ancient reverence, multisensory, experiential, use of technology, visual art)
- **Urban contemporary** (use of technology, spoken word, informal)
- **Liturgical** (people participating in readings, reciting prayers, rituals)
- **Blended traditional and contemporary**
- **No particular, identified style**
- **Other**
- **Not sure**

# A blended worship style is still the most common



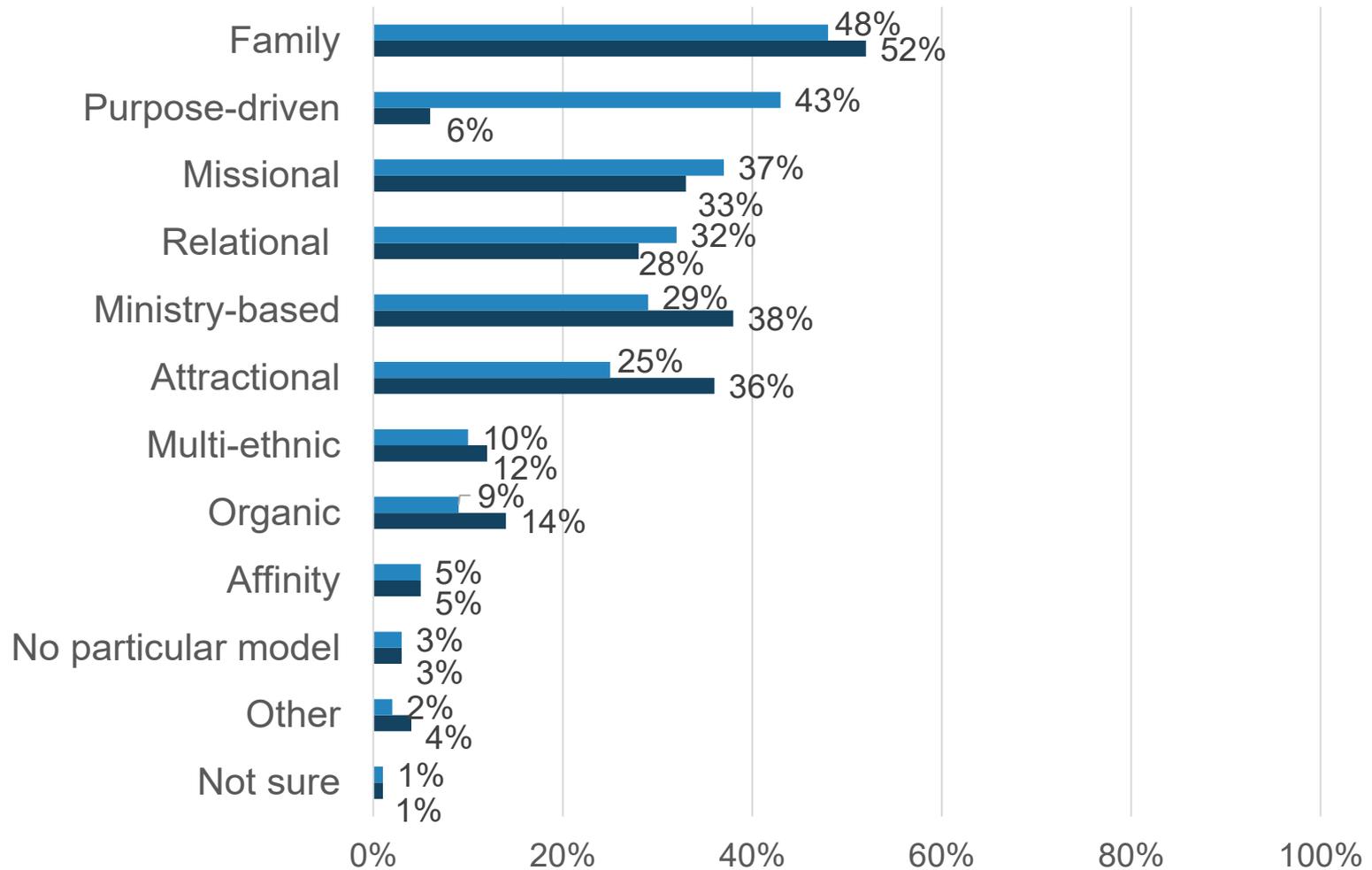
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Q33: "How would you best describe the worship style of your church? (Select one)"

## Which, if any, of the following models most strongly influenced the approach used in starting the church? *Full 2025 Question Text*

- **Affinity** (seeking to gather people around a leisure activity, interest, or occupation. For example, hospitality workers, soccer players, or video gamers)
- **Attractional** (emphasizing outreach that draws people to visit the church to learn about God and follow Him)
- **Family** (emphasizing gathering families in informal and multigenerational celebration times and having close relationships in which the whole church celebrates birthdays and life events)
- **Ministry-based** (emphasizing going into the community to meet particular felt needs, impact people's lives and draw them to the gospel)
- **Missional** (emphasizing that church members are "sent" to join God on His mission in this world)
- **Multi-ethnic** (intentionally connecting people and adopting practices from diverse ethnic backgrounds)
- **Organic** (emphasizing rapid reproduction and community often gathering in homes or non-traditional settings)
- **Purpose-driven** (focusing on balancing worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and mission)
- **Relational** (intentionally remaining small enough that all relationships are face to face. For example, cell or house church)
- Other
- No particular model
- Not sure

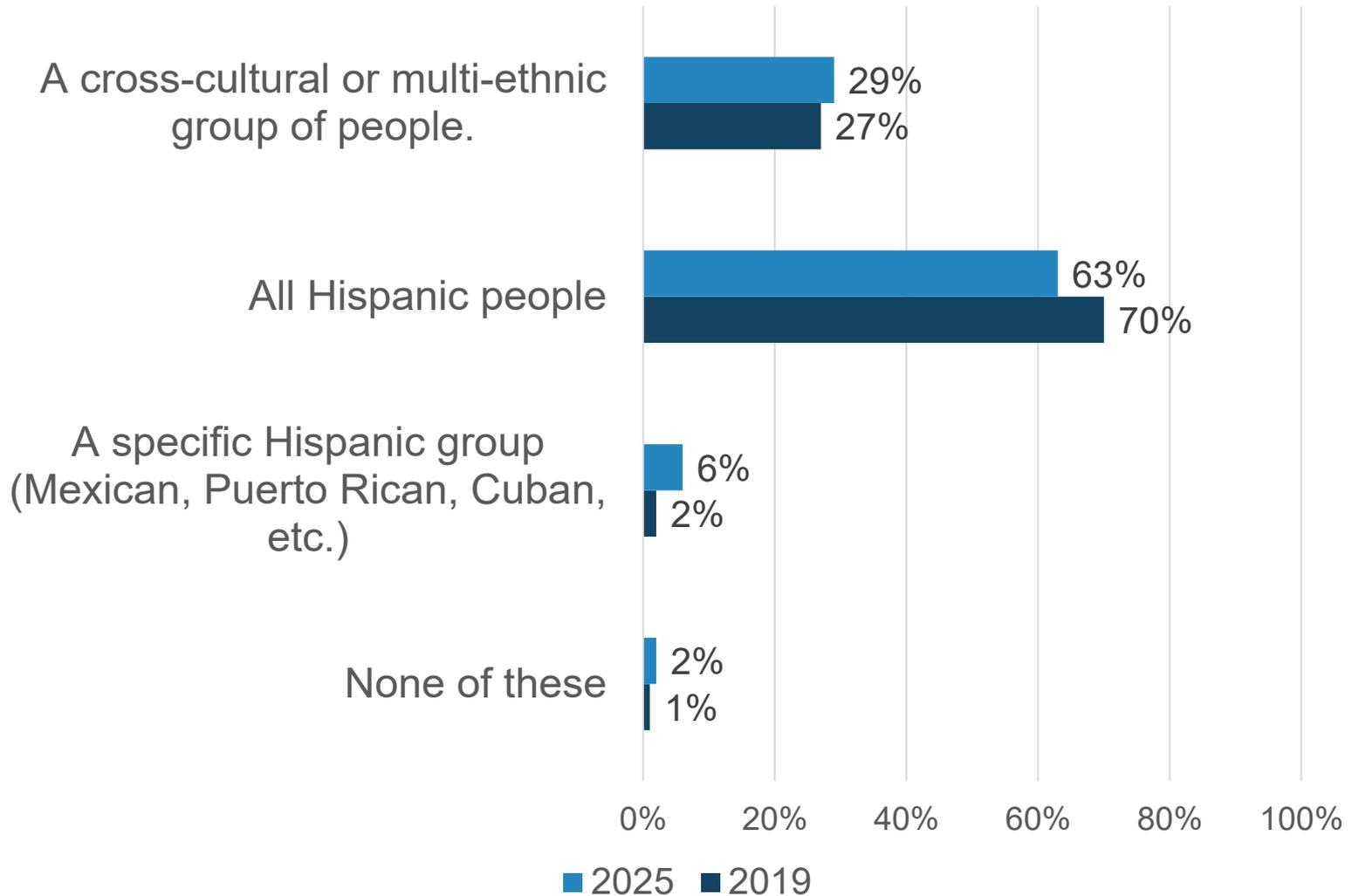
# More list Purpose-driven and fewer list Ministry-based or Attractional models as influencing their approach



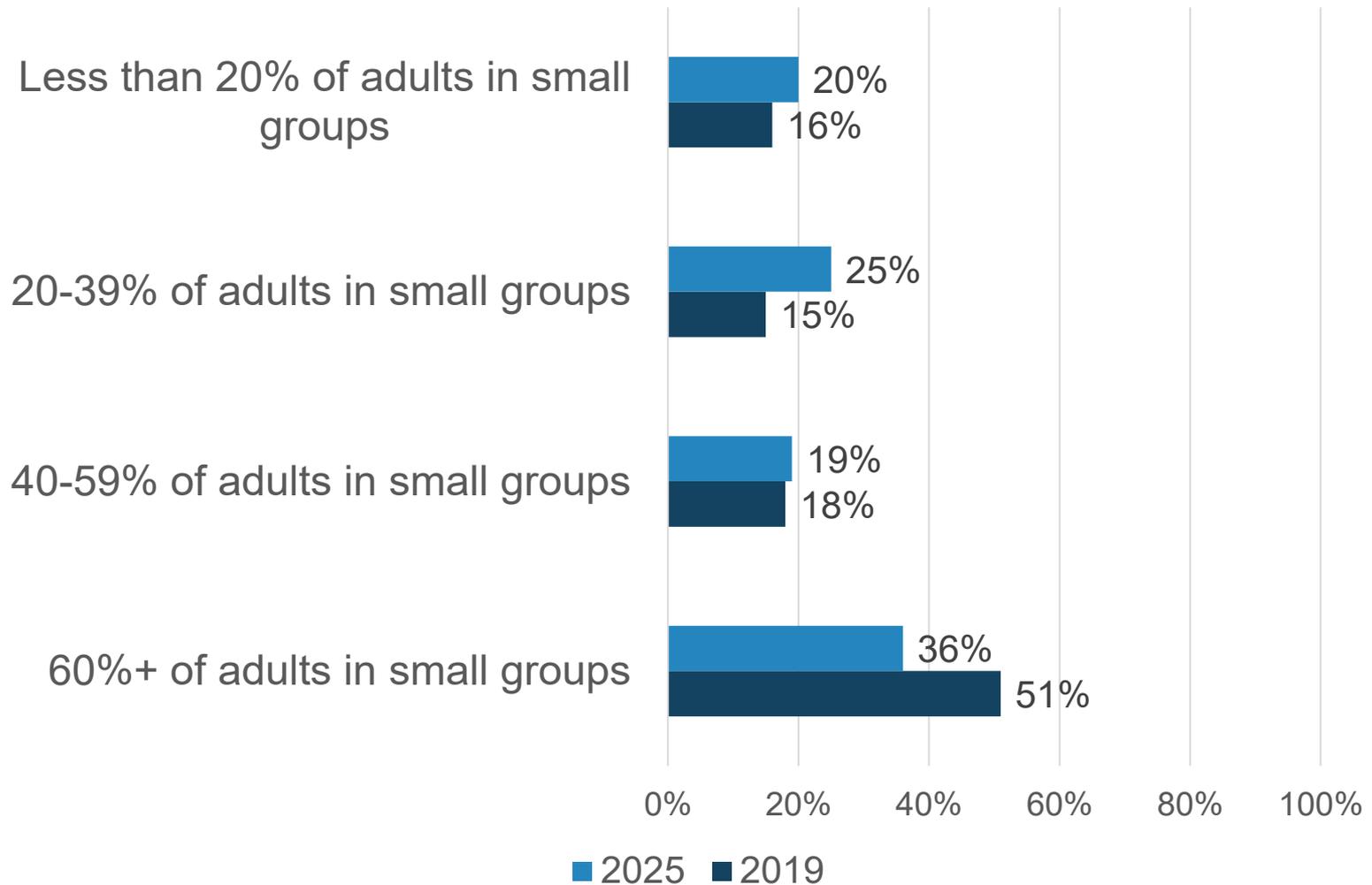
2019 also had separate options for: Simple (4%) and Seeker targeted (2%).

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# A few more sought to reach a specific Hispanic group with their new church work than in 2019



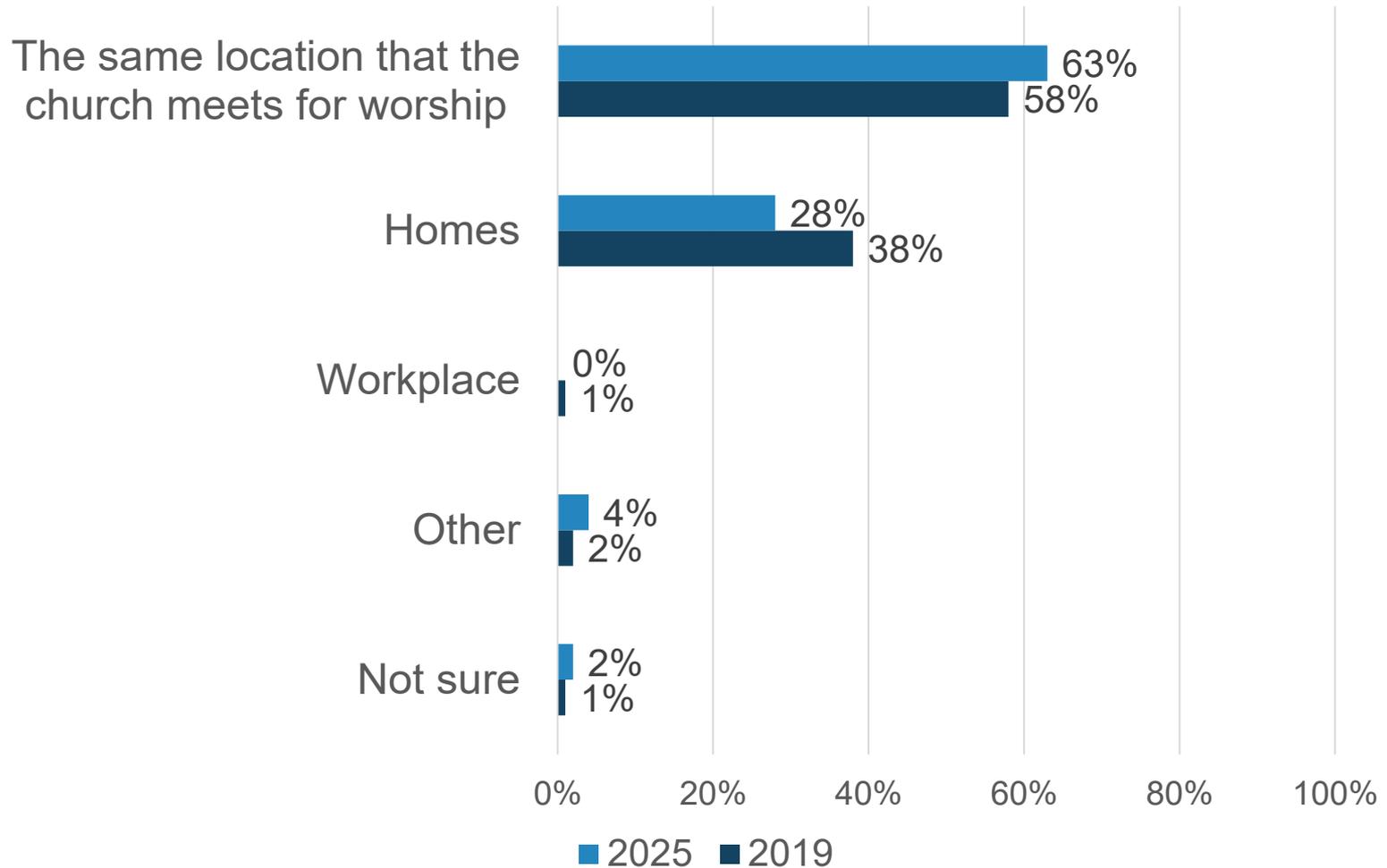
# Percentage of adults involved in small group dropped from an average of 56% in 2019 to 45% in 2025



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Q37: "What percent of your current **adult** weekend worship attendance is involved in some small group, Sunday school class, community group or similar group? (Enter 0 if none)"

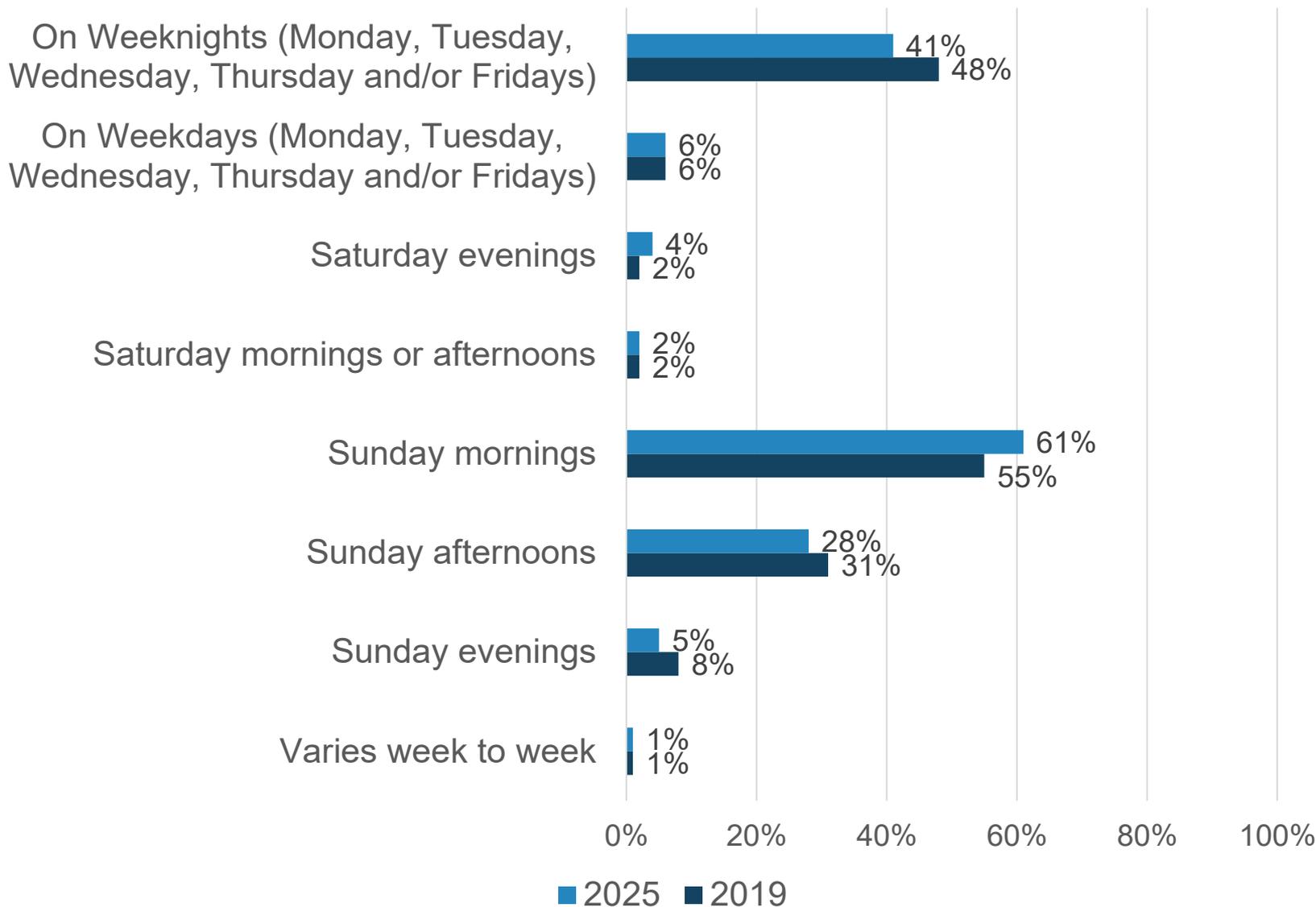
# Fewer say the largest number of adult small classes or groups meet in Homes than in 2019



Lifeway research

Q38: "In which location does the largest number of small classes or groups for adults meet? (Select one)"

# 94% still have a primary worship service on Sunday



Not sure 0%

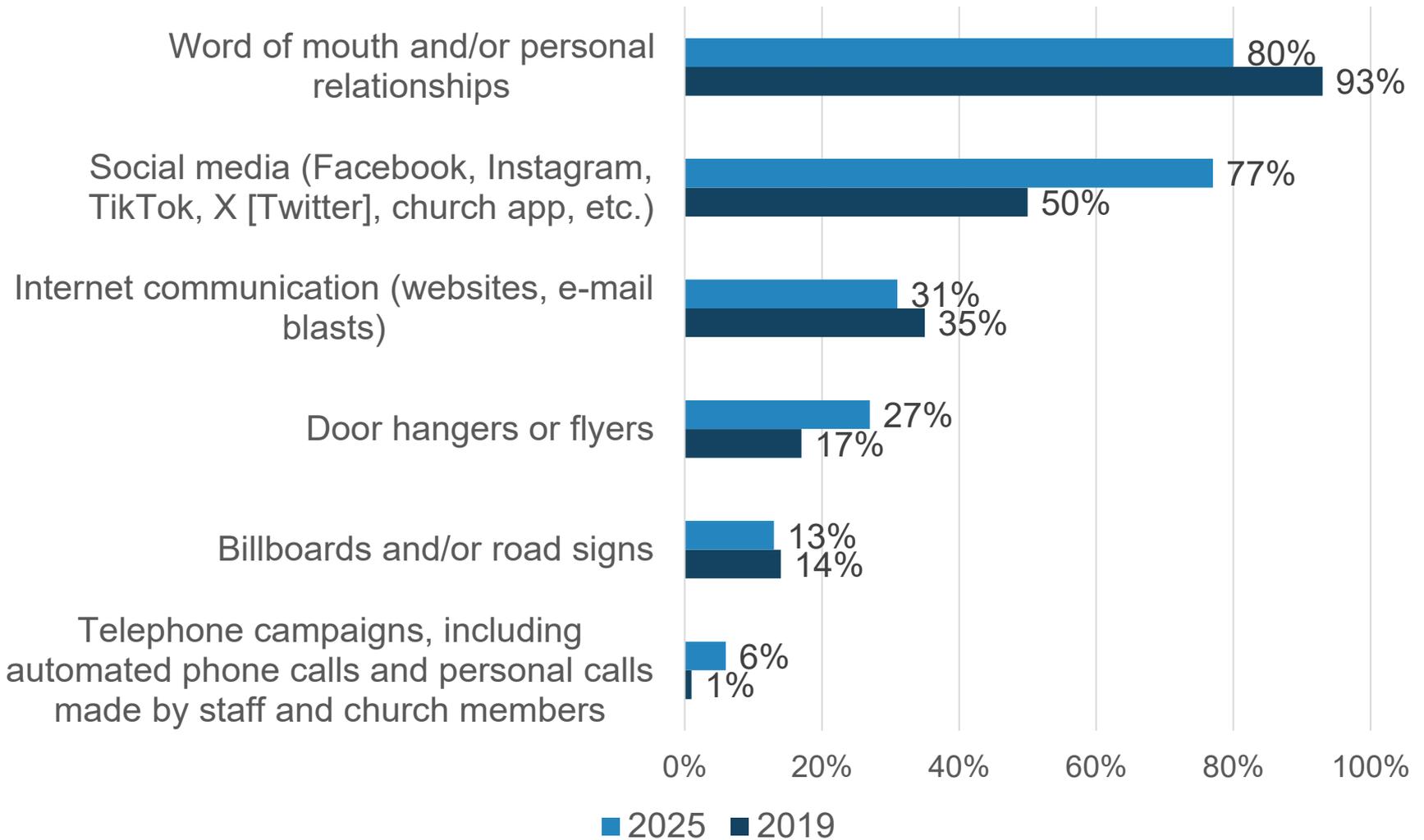
Lifeway research

Q39: "What time(s) during the week does the primary worship service(s) or gathering of the church happen? (Select all that apply)"

# Communication and Publicity

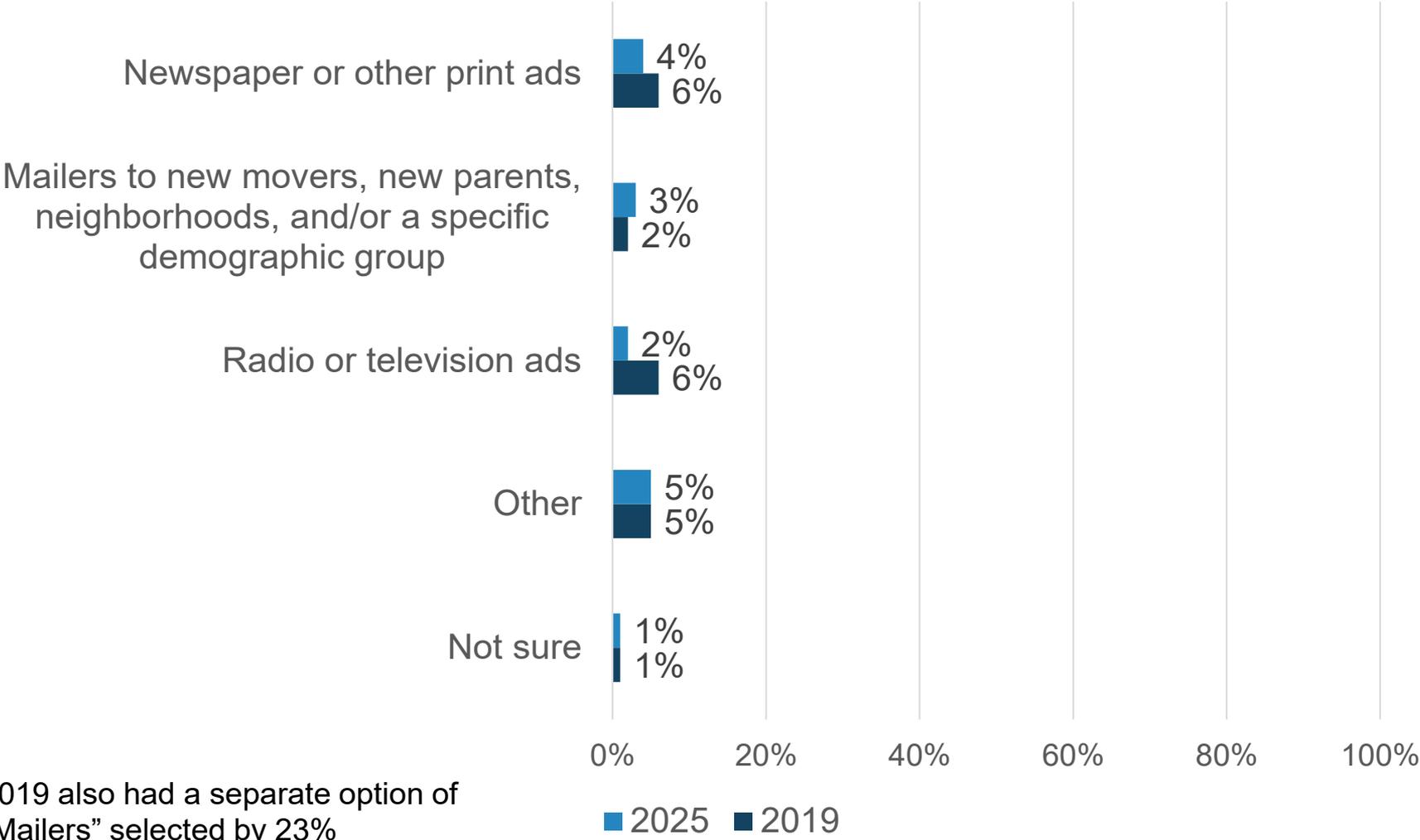
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# Use of Social media and Flyers have increased while Word of mouth has decreased since 2019

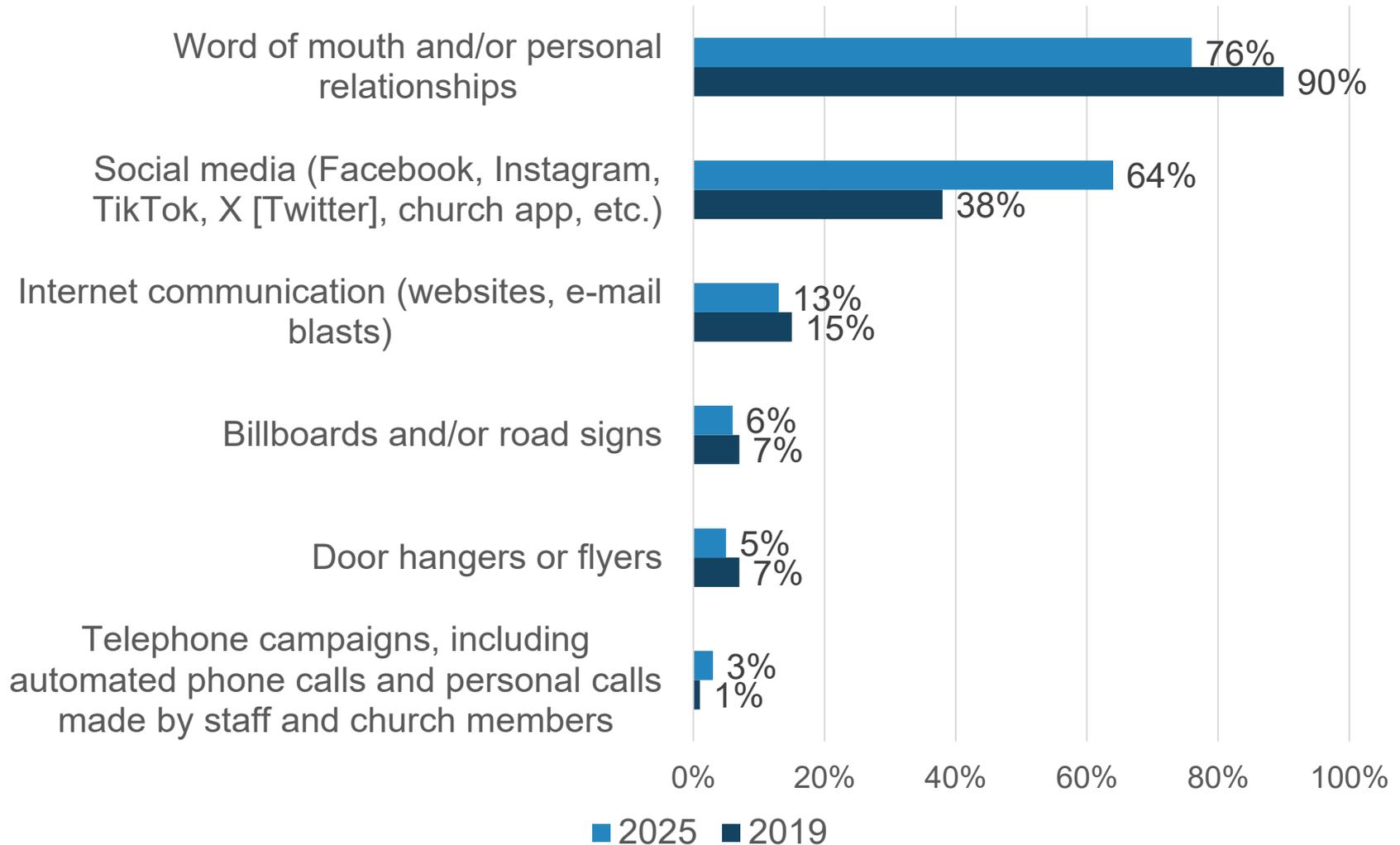


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# Publicity used to communicate news of the new church in the community (continued)



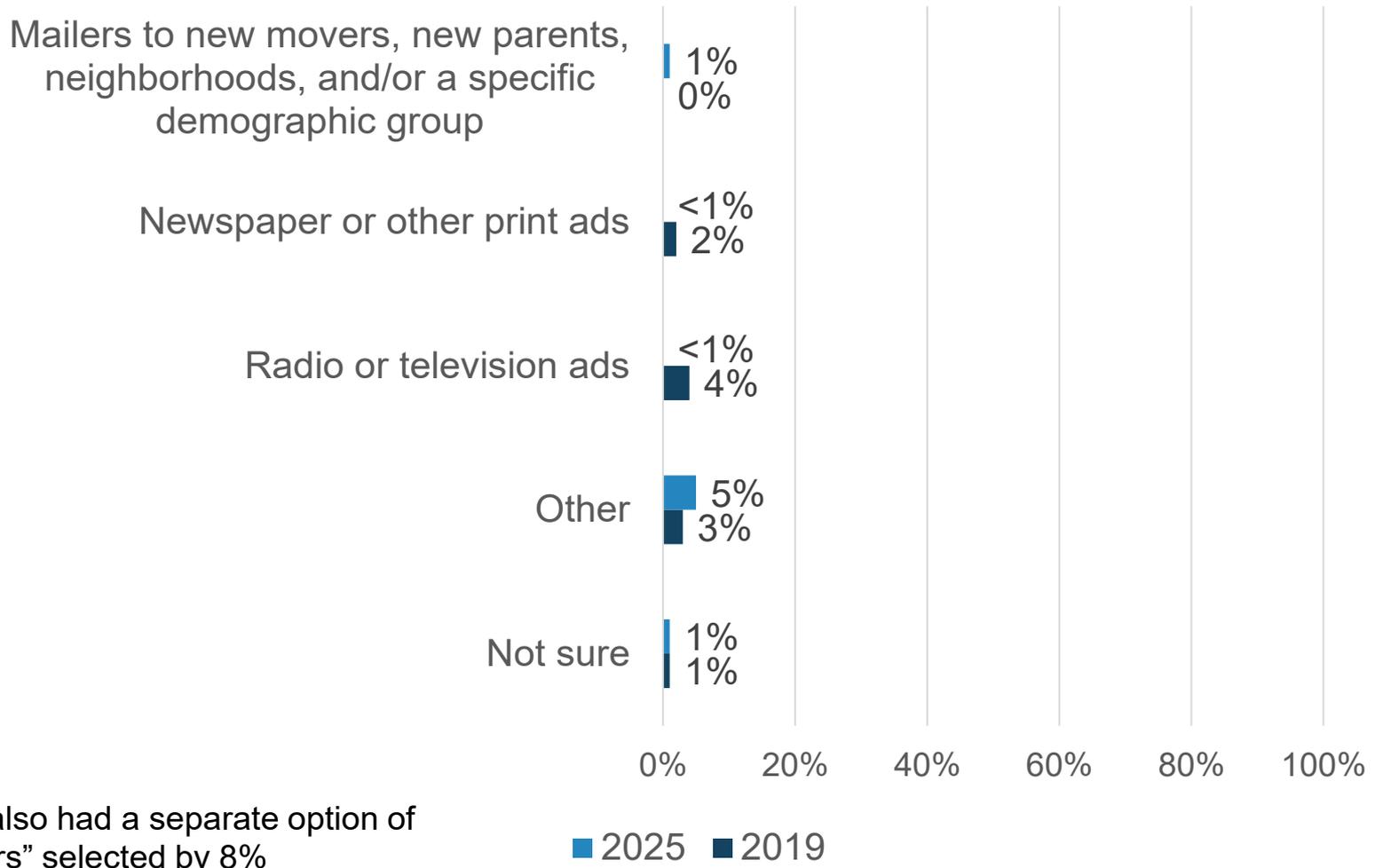
# Social media is more likely and Word of mouth less likely than 2019 to be in top two most successful forms of publicity



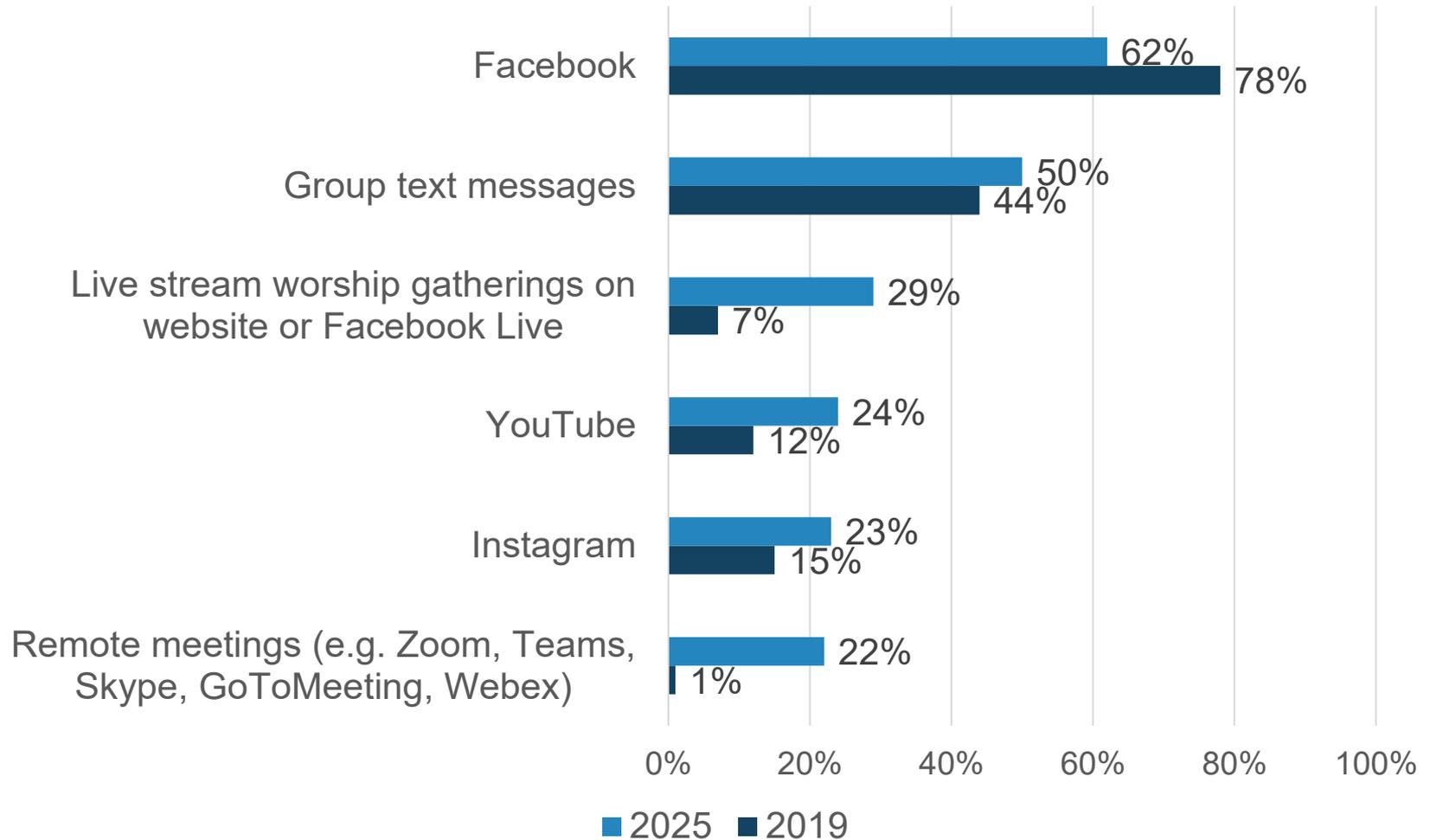
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Q30: "What were the 2 most successful forms of publicity that attracted the most newcomers to your church? (Select up to two)"

# Successful forms of publicity that attracted newcomers (continued)



# For communication *within* the new church work more use Live-streamed worship, YouTube, Instagram and Remote meetings than in 2019

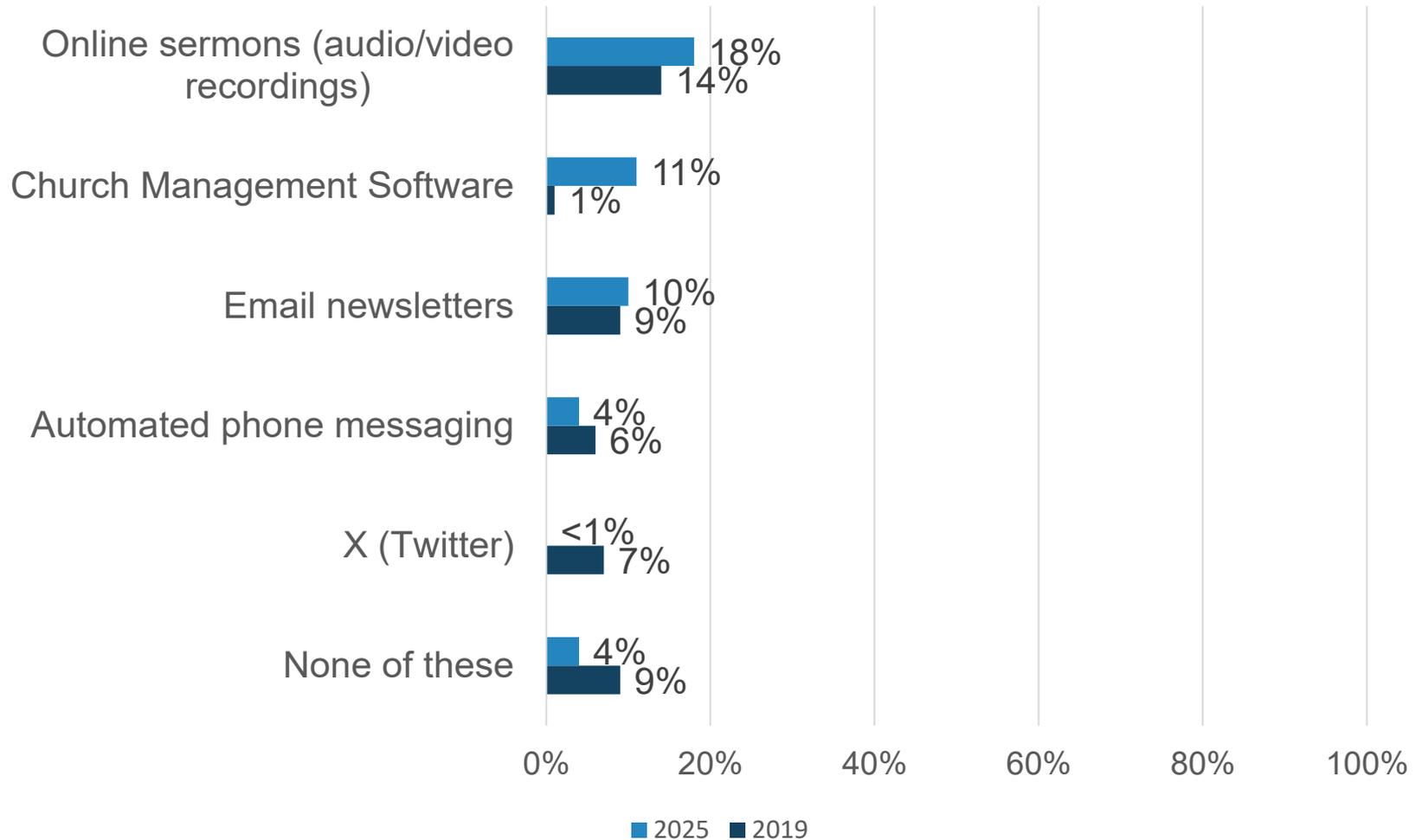


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Q31: "Which of the following (if any) electronic communication was regularly used for communication within your new church work during the first 5 years? (Select all that apply)"

# For communication *within* the new church work more use Church Management Software than in 2019

(continued)

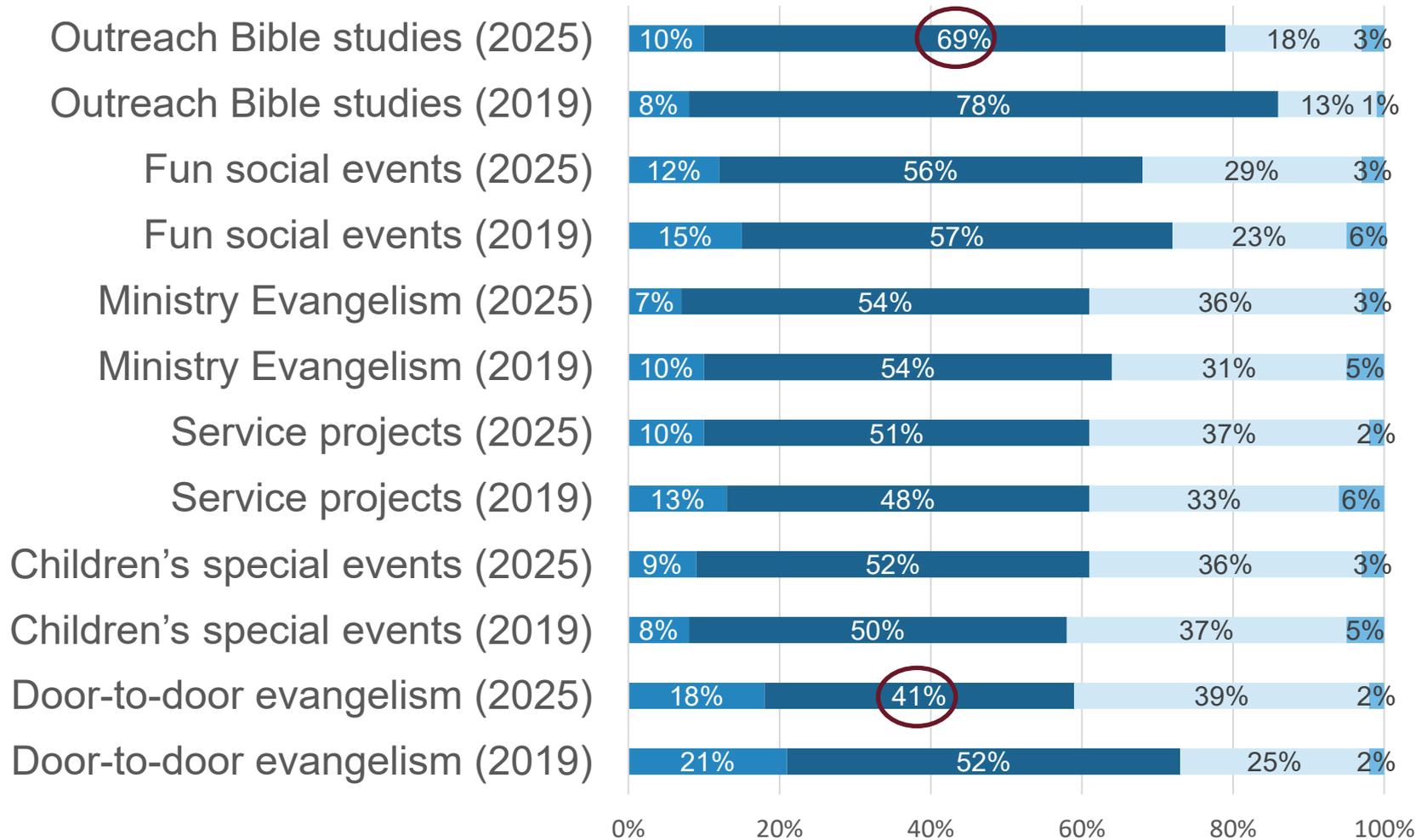


# Outreach Activities

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# Outreach Activities

■ Used only for launch of new church work ■ Continued to be used after launch of new church work ■ Not used ■ Not sure

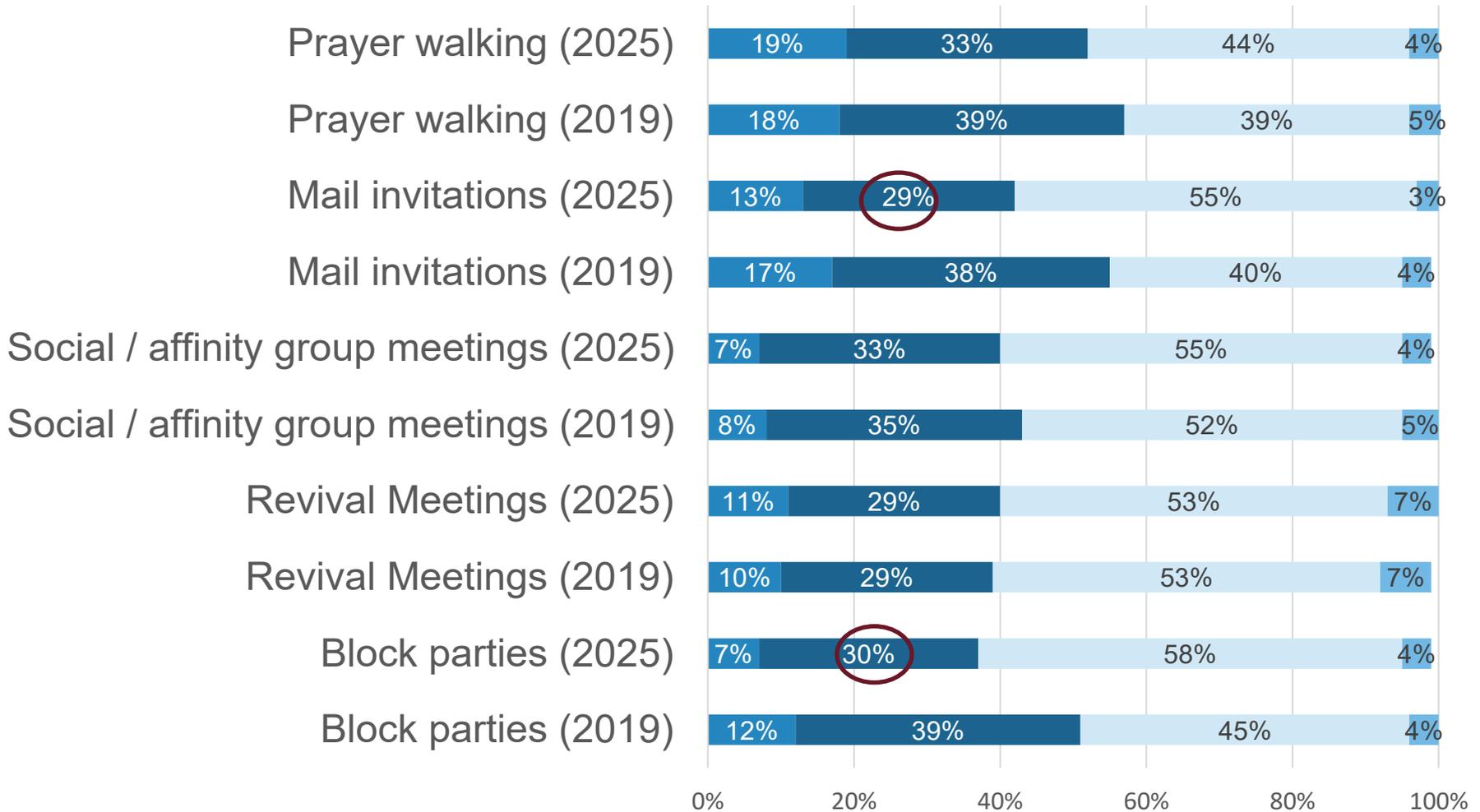


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Q40: "For each of the following outreach activities, please indicate if it was used by the church start, either when launching the new church work or continued to be used after the launch. (Select one response for each activity)"

# Outreach Activities (continued)

■ Used only for launch of new church work ■ Continued to be used after launch of new church work ■ Not used ■ Not sure



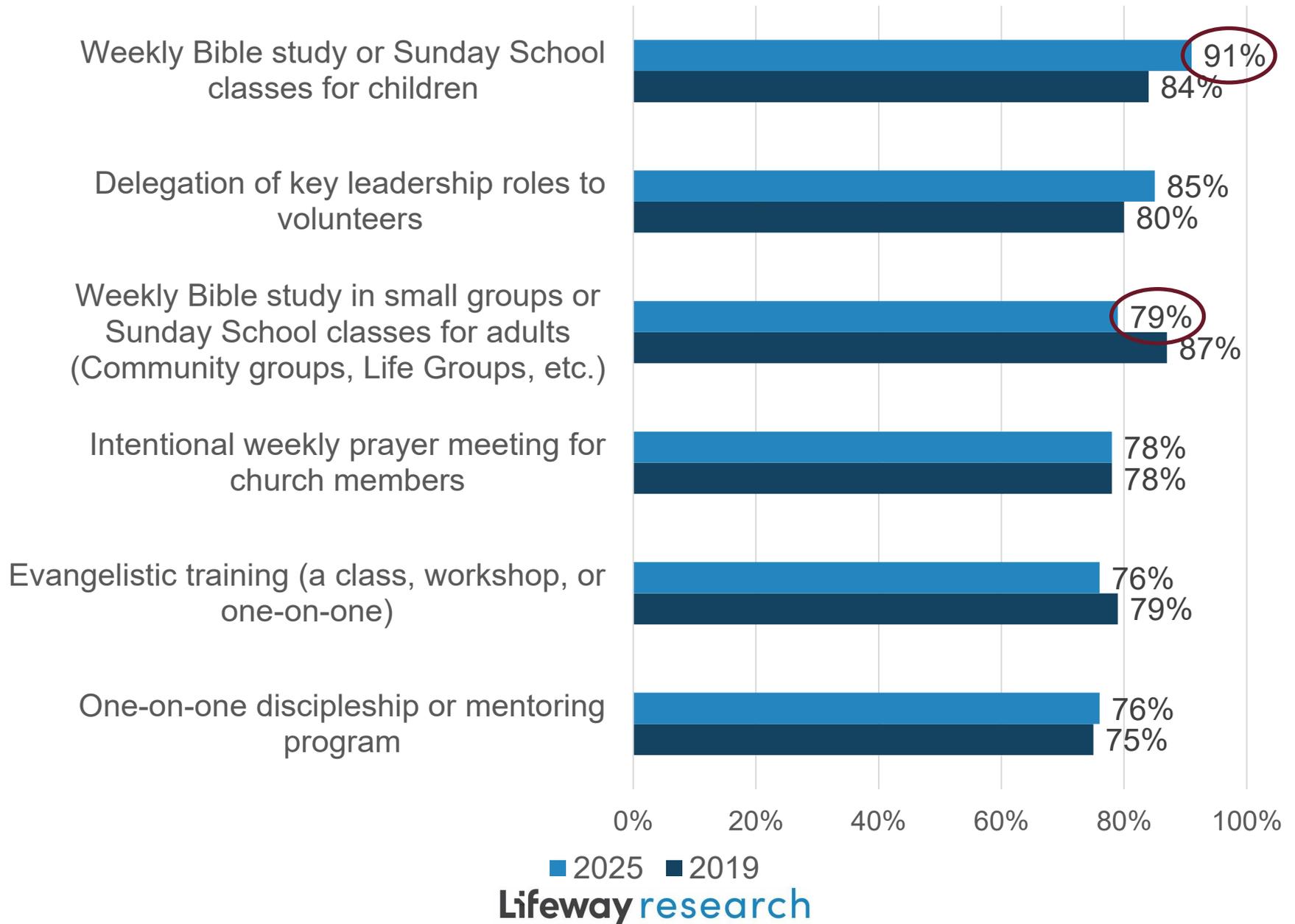
Lifeway research

Q40: "For each of the following outreach activities, please indicate if it was used by the church start, either when launching the new church work or continued to be used after the launch. (Select one response for each activity)"

# Activities

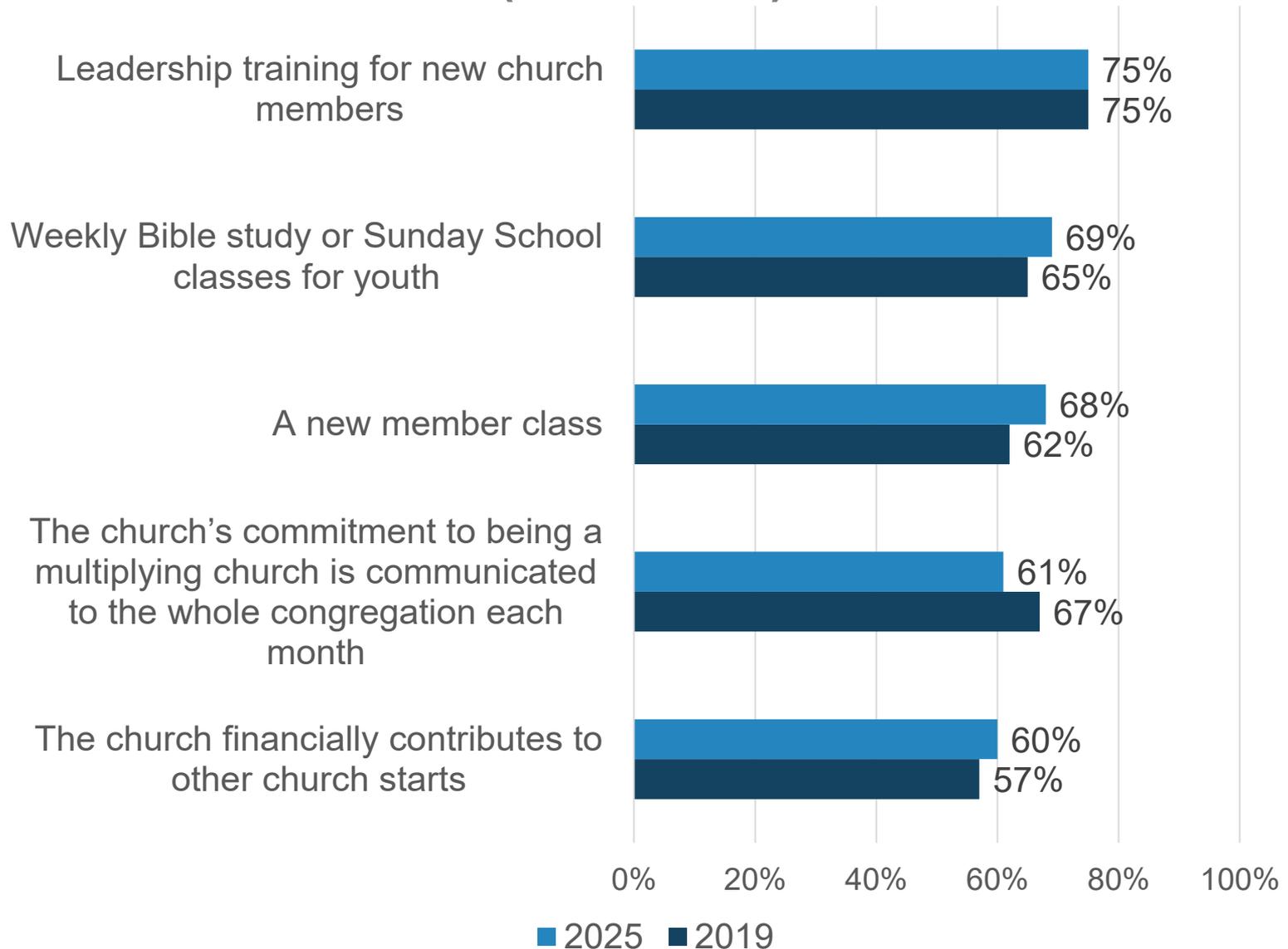
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# Activities occurring since start of new church work



Q41-43: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity) "

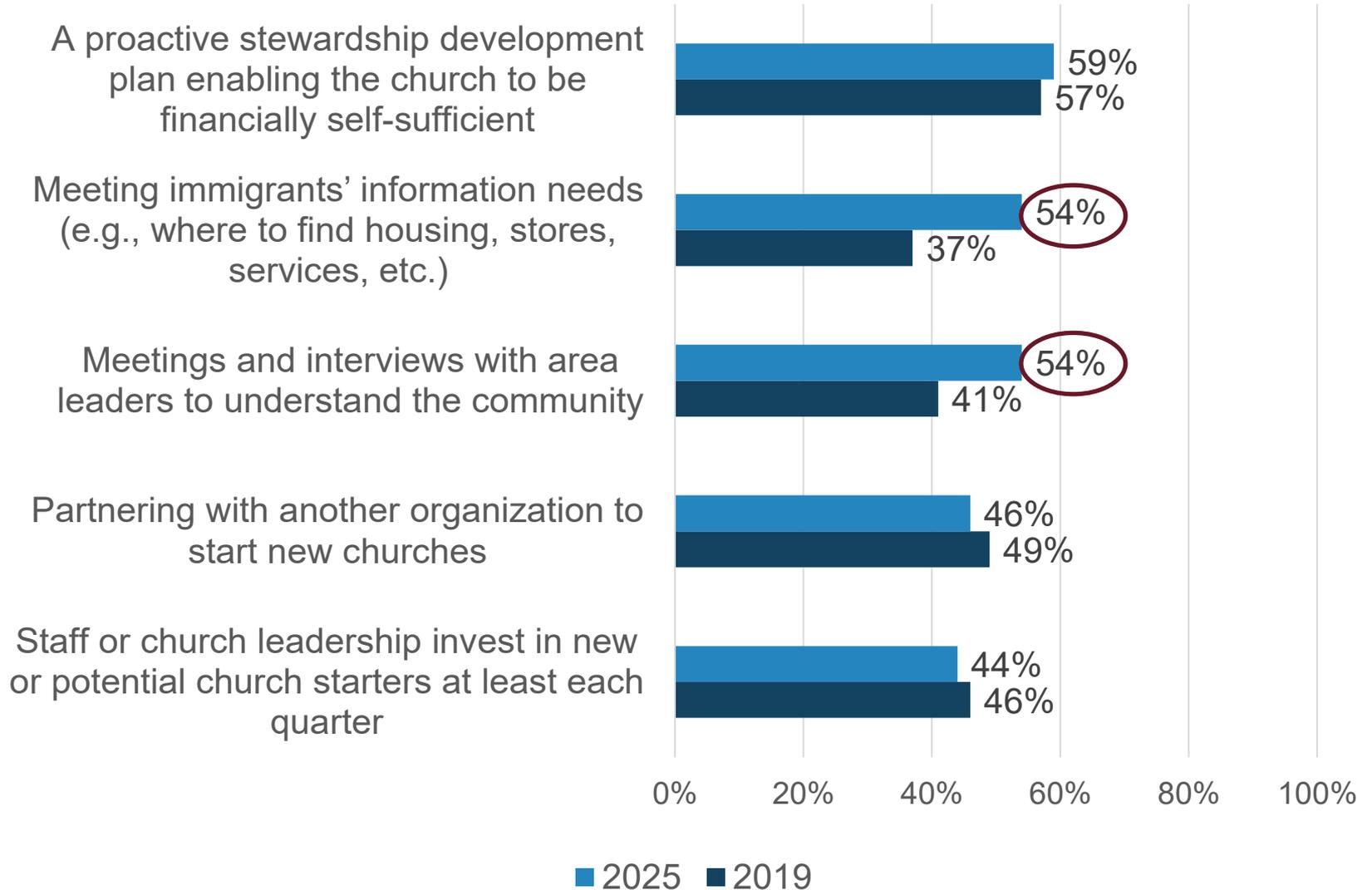
# Activities occurring since start of new church work (continued)



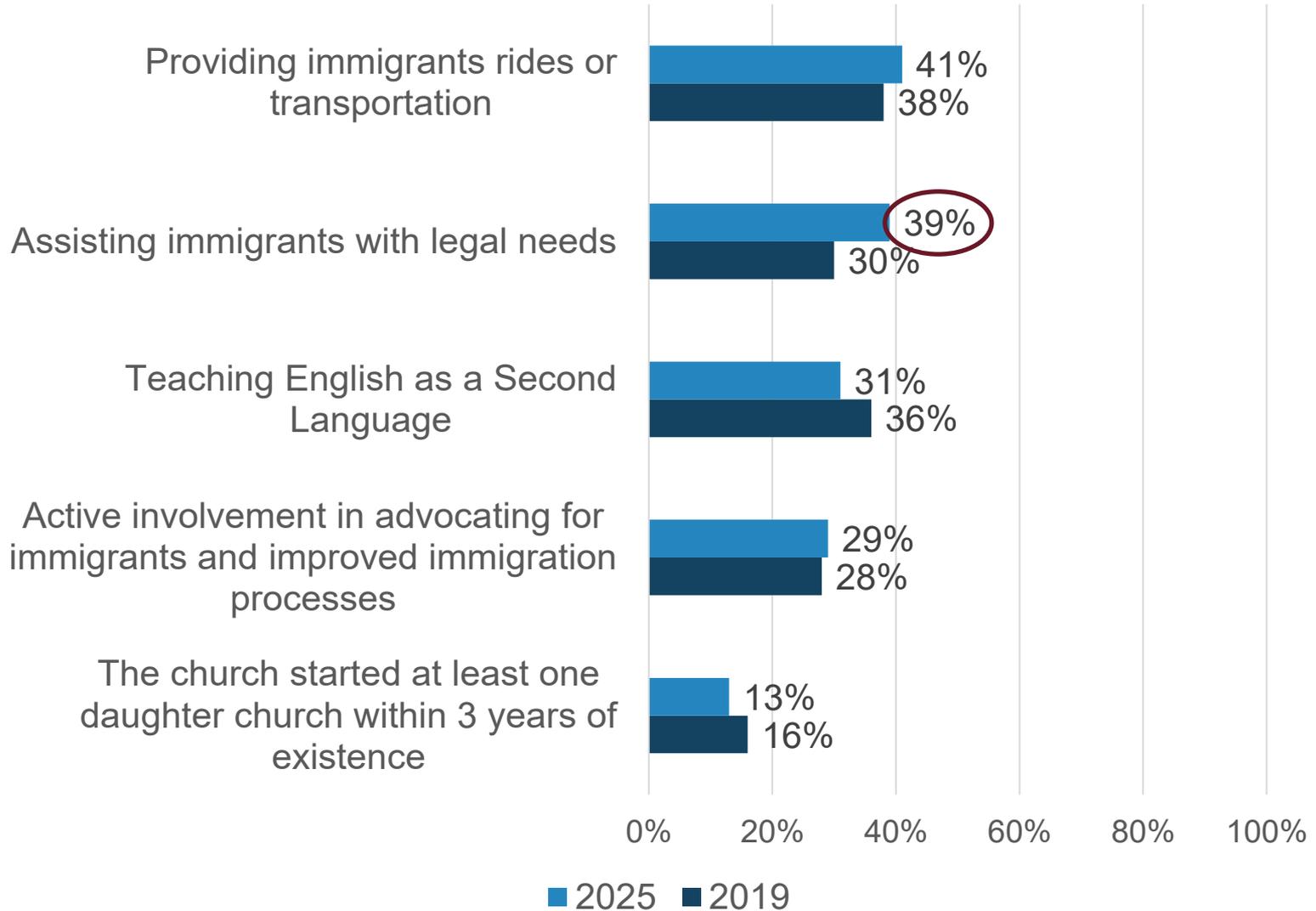
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Q41-43: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity) "

# Activities occurring since start of new church work (continued)



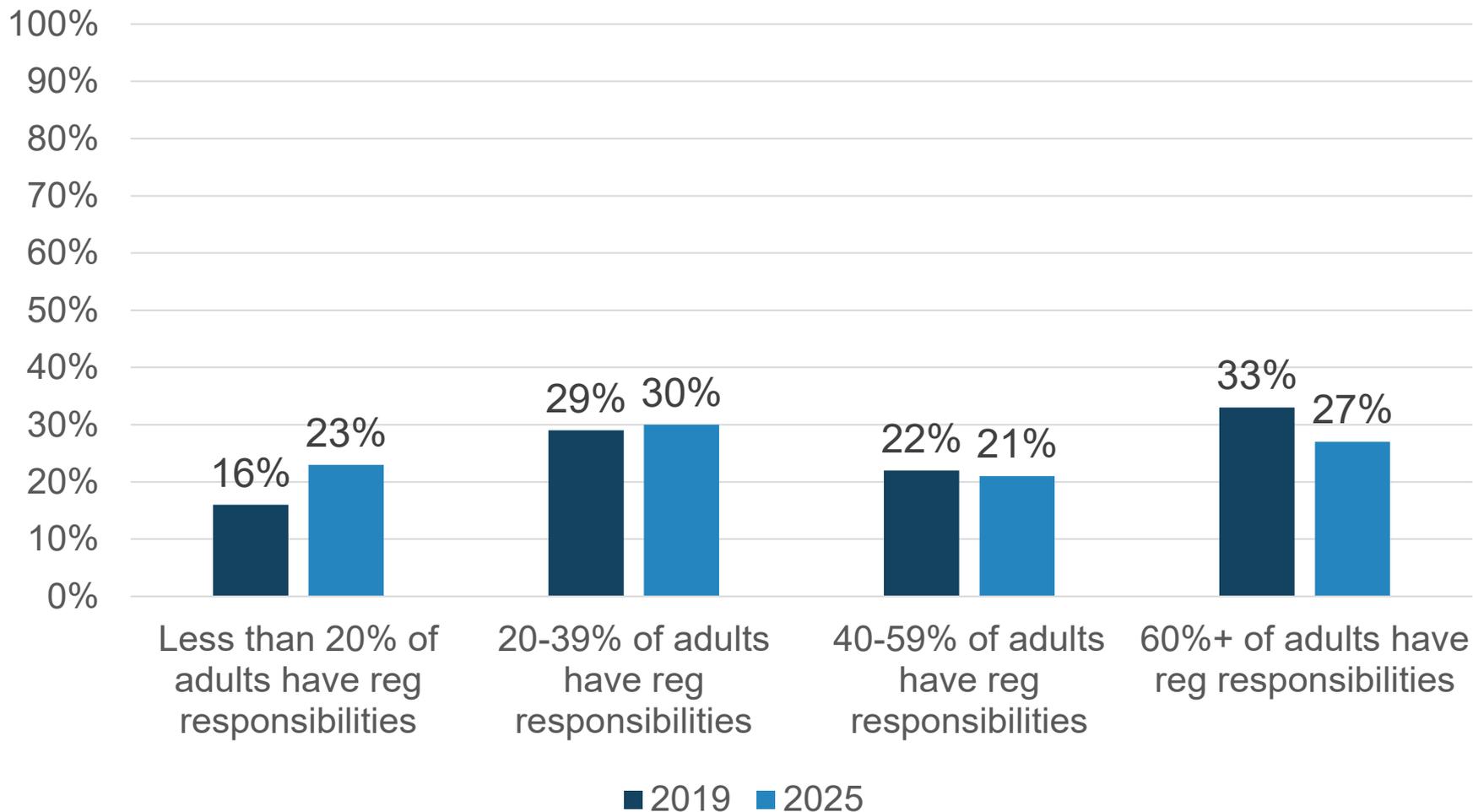
# Activities occurring since start of new church work (continued)



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Q41-43: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity) "

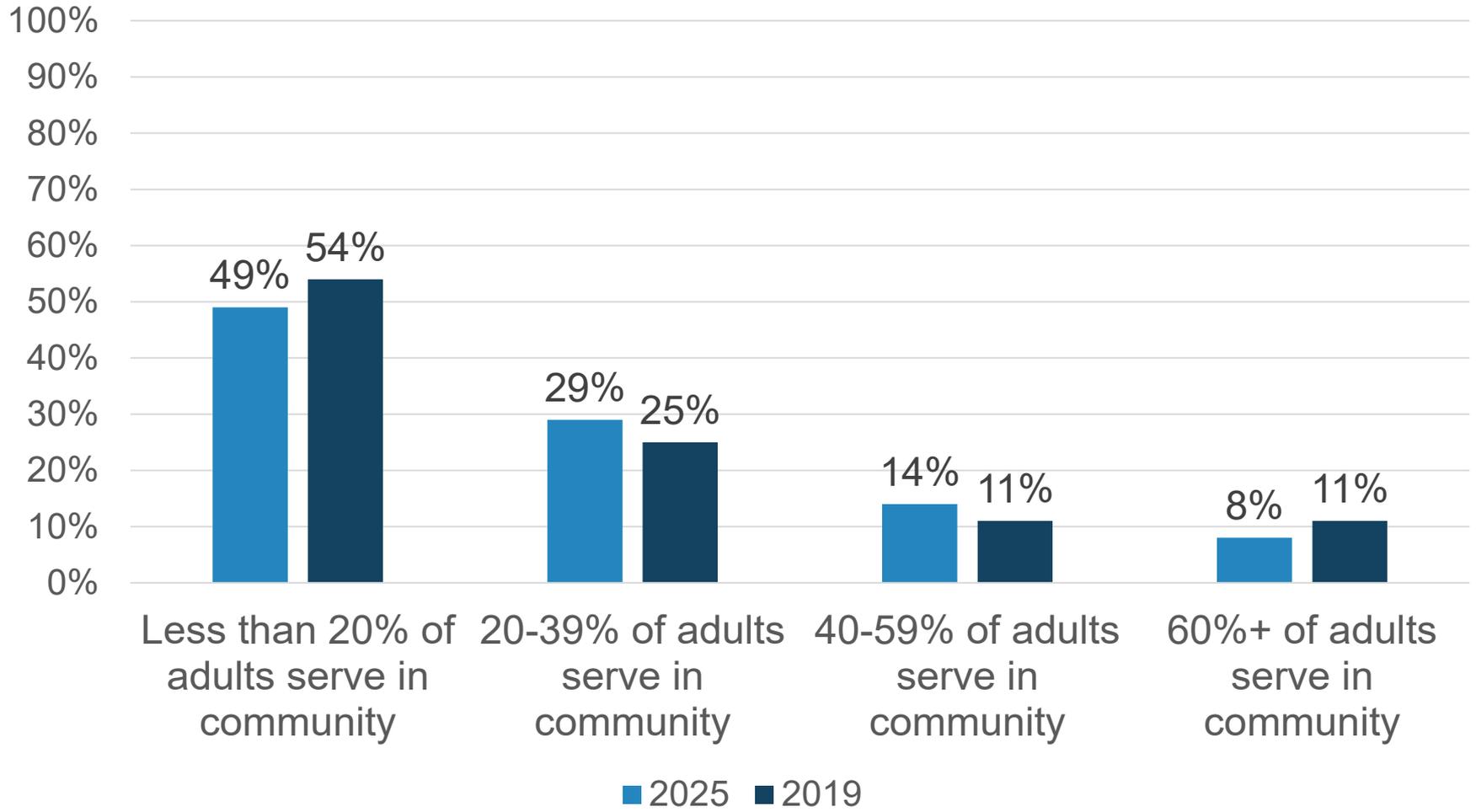
# The median percentage of adults having regular responsibilities at church dropped from 40% in 2019 to 30% in 2025



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Q44 "What percentage of adults who attend your church at least once a month have regular responsibilities at your church, for example, greeter, teacher, child care, etc.? (If you are not sure, provide a rough estimate)"

# The median percentage of adults serving in the community increased from 15% in 2019 to 20% in 2025

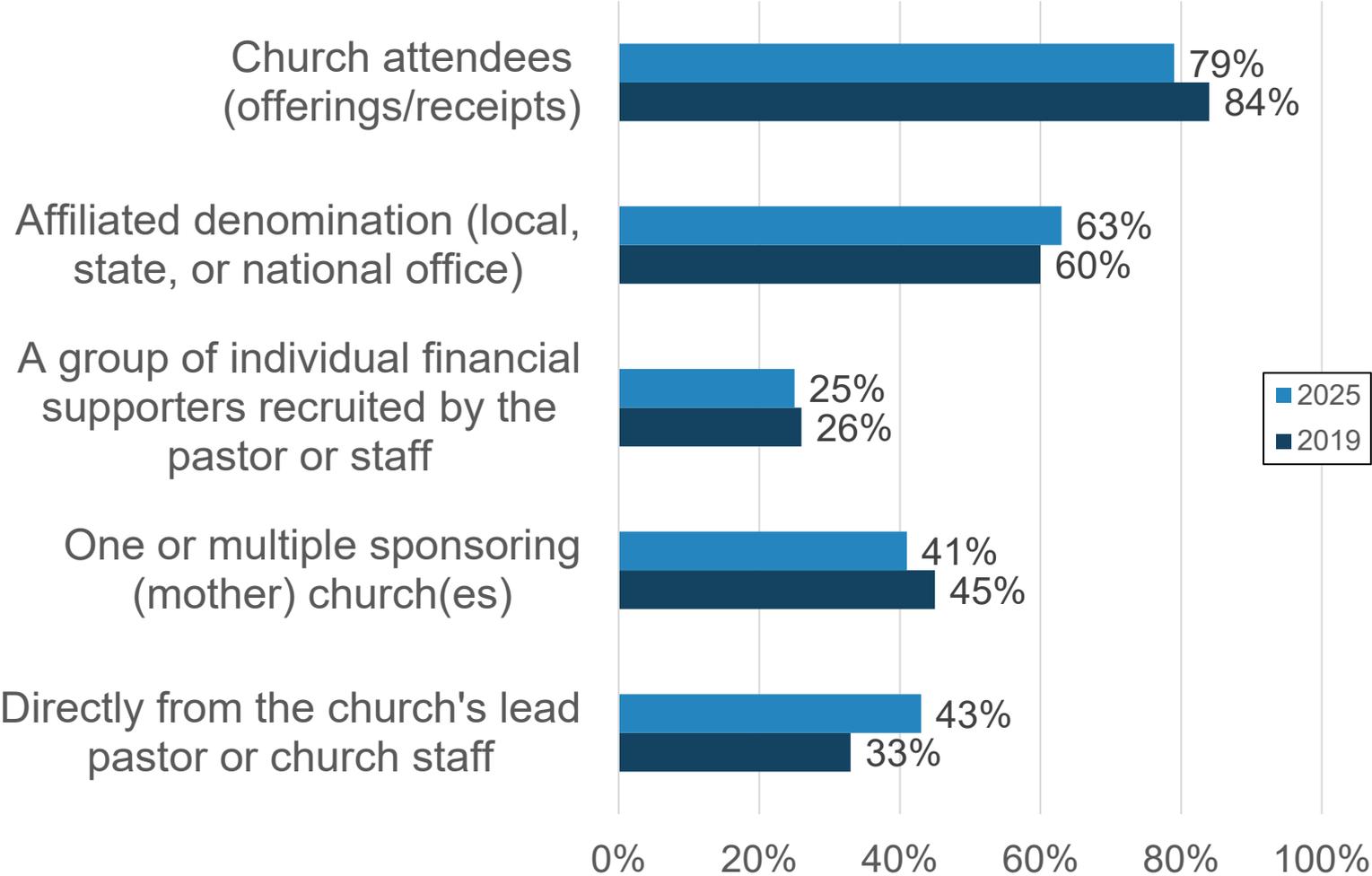


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# Funding Sources

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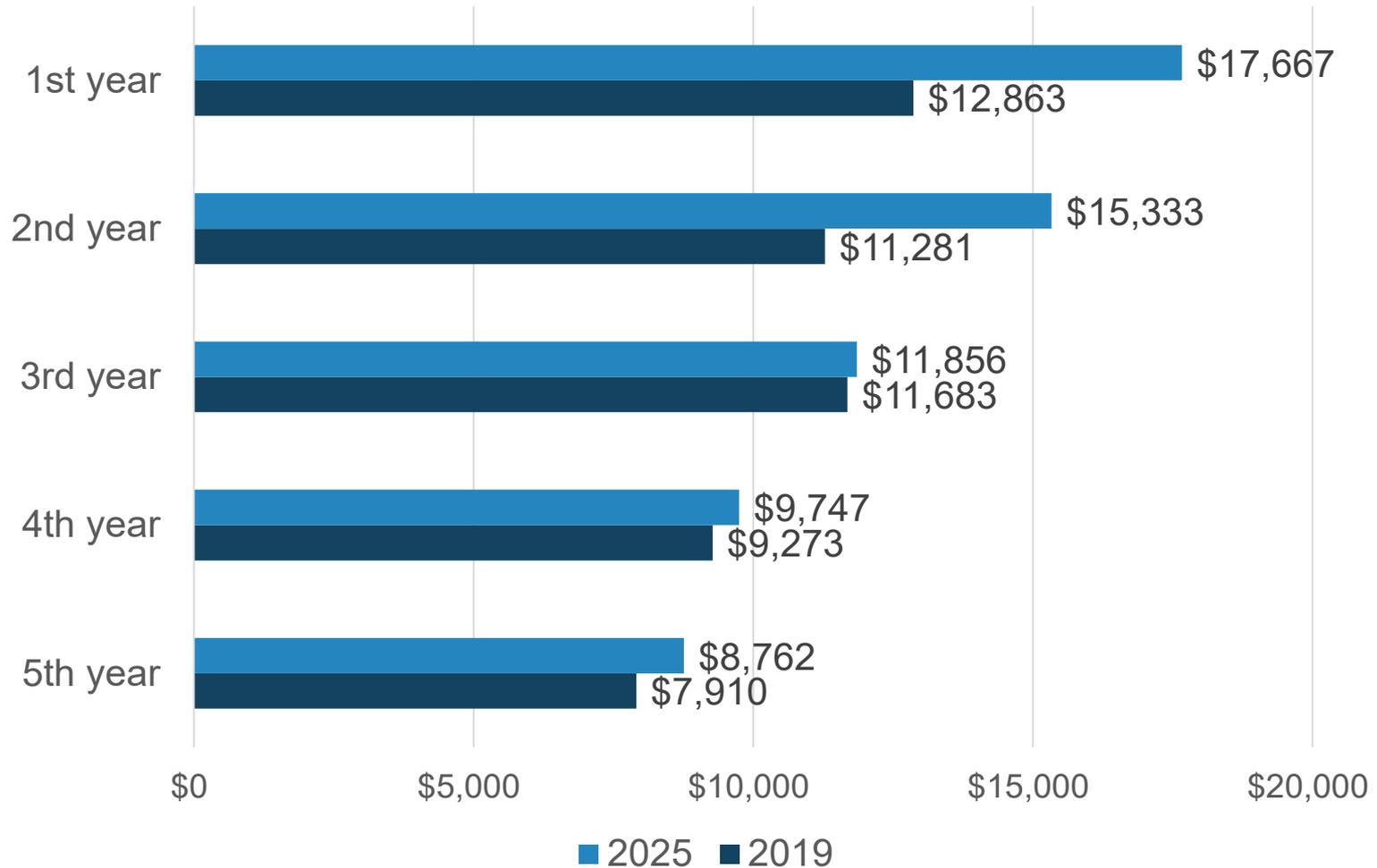
# Funding sources used to start the new church work are similar to 2019



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Q46 "Please indicate whether the following funding sources were used to start the new church work (including the pastor's or church staff's salary)."

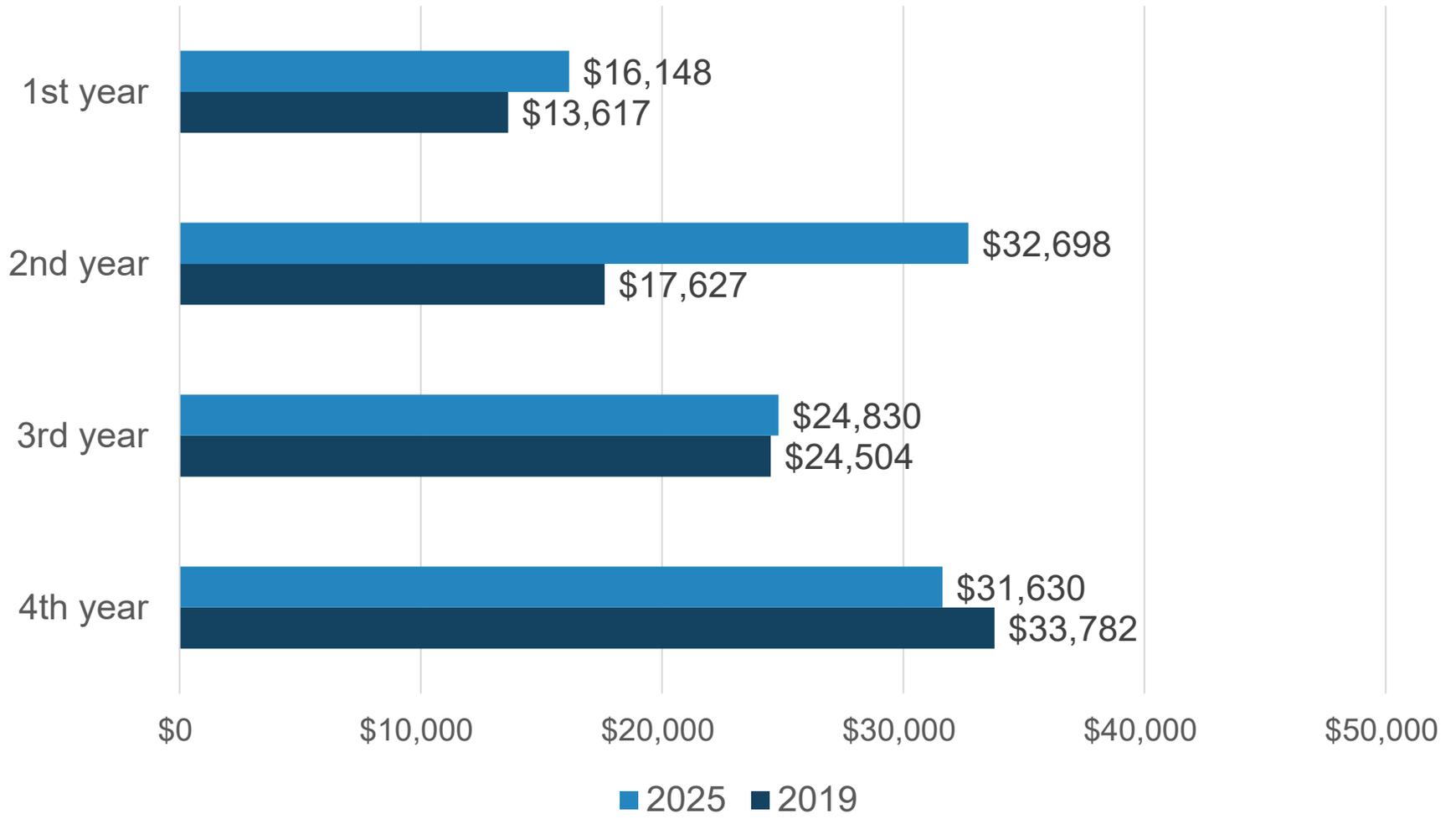
# Average total dollars received from outside sources has increased for the first two years



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Q47: "For each year of the new church work's existence, please indicate the amount of TOTAL dollars received from OUTSIDE SOURCES. This does not include funds given by the church's members. Rough estimates are acceptable. If later years are not applicable, leave those blank."

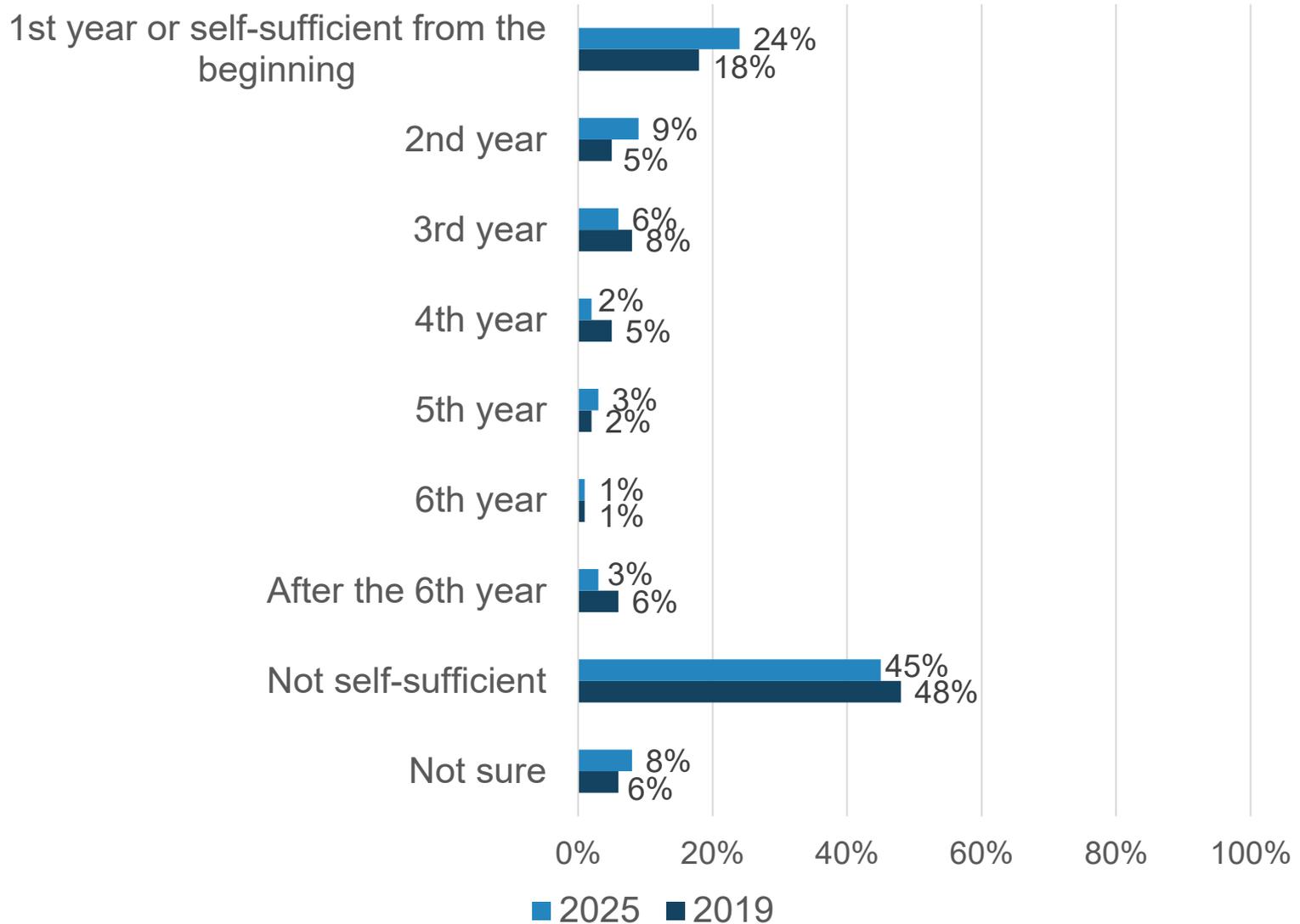
# Average total dollars received from church members and attendees by year



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Q48: "For each year of the new church work's existence, please indicate the amount of TOTAL dollars received from CHURCH MEMBERS AND ATTENDEES. Rough estimates are acceptable. If later years are not applicable, leave those blank."

# Almost half of new church works are not self-sufficient



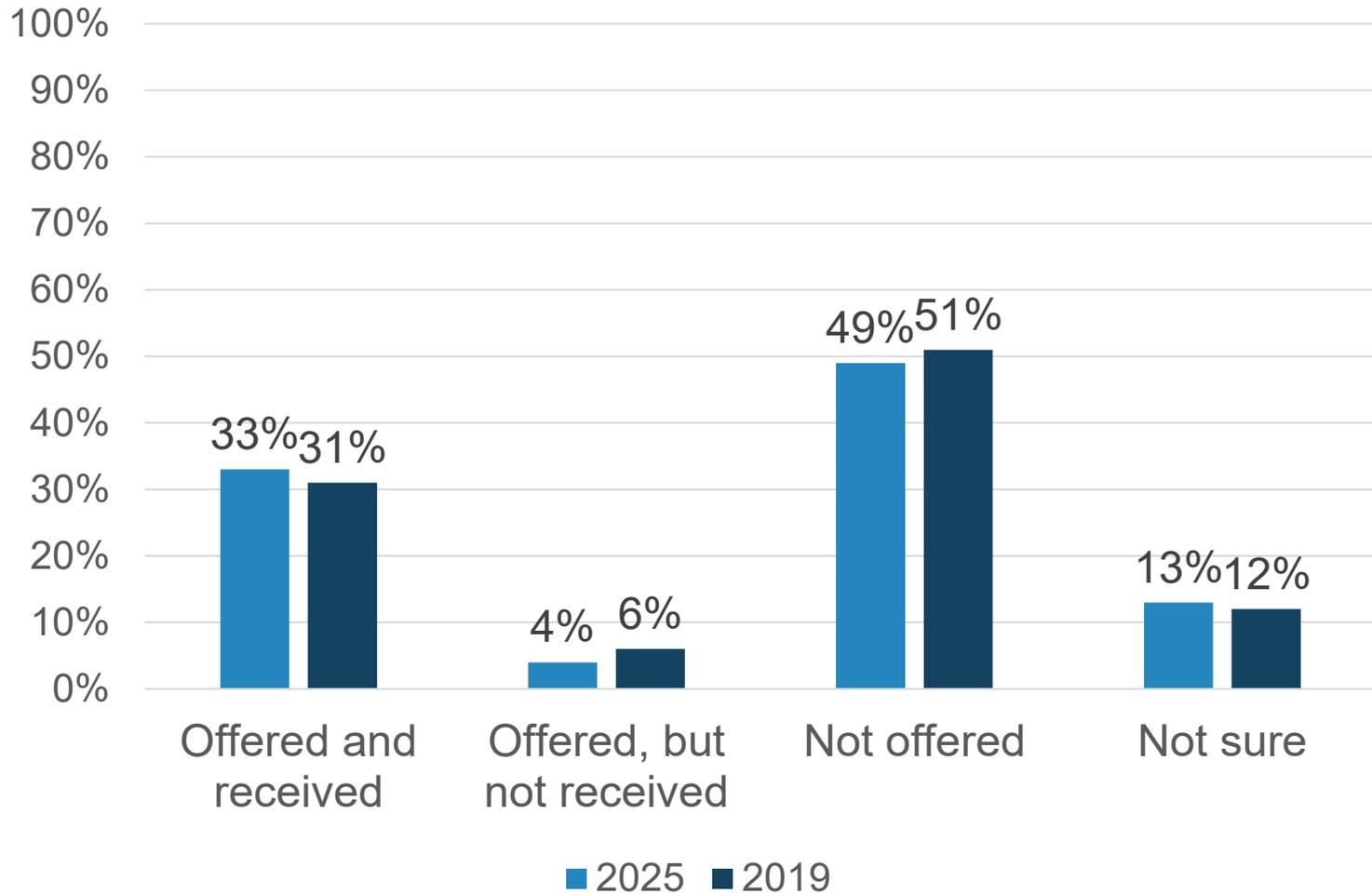
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Q49: "During which year (if at all) did the church become financially self-sufficient, meaning no financial support is being received from outside sources."

# Denomination & Network Support

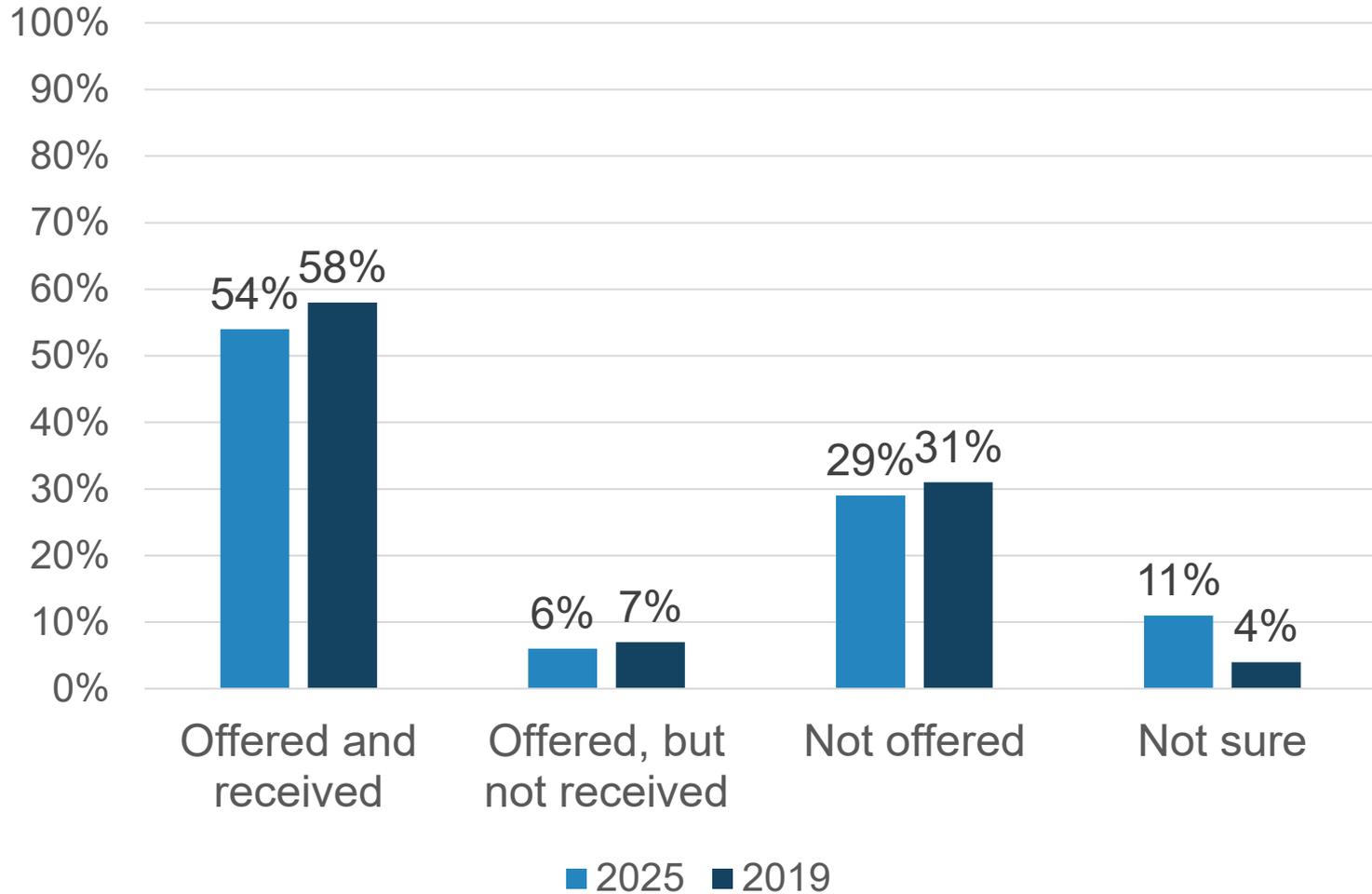
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# Demographic and/or research expertise from a denomination or network is similar to 2019



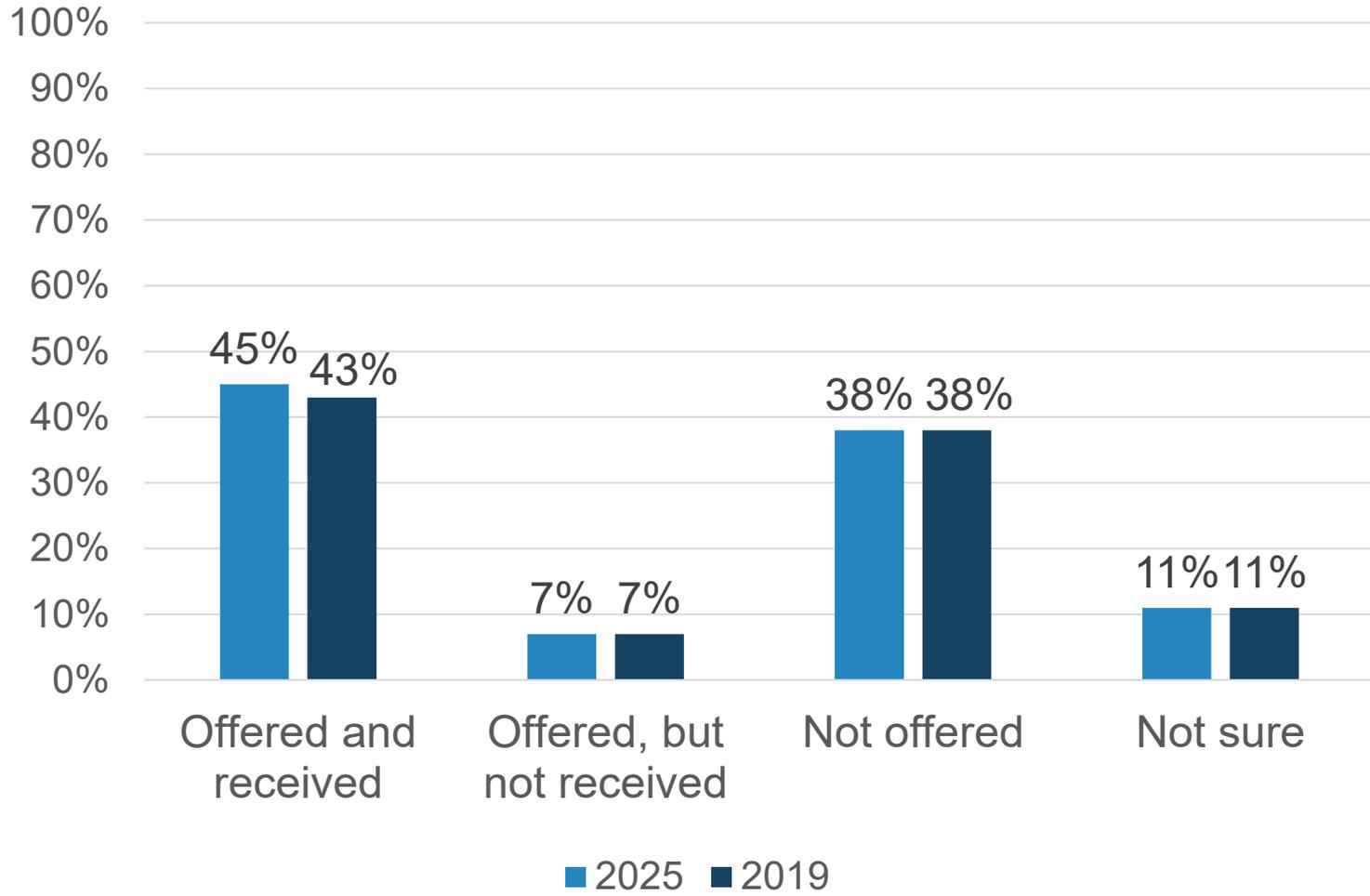
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# Church leader mentoring, coaching, and/or supervision support is similar to 2019



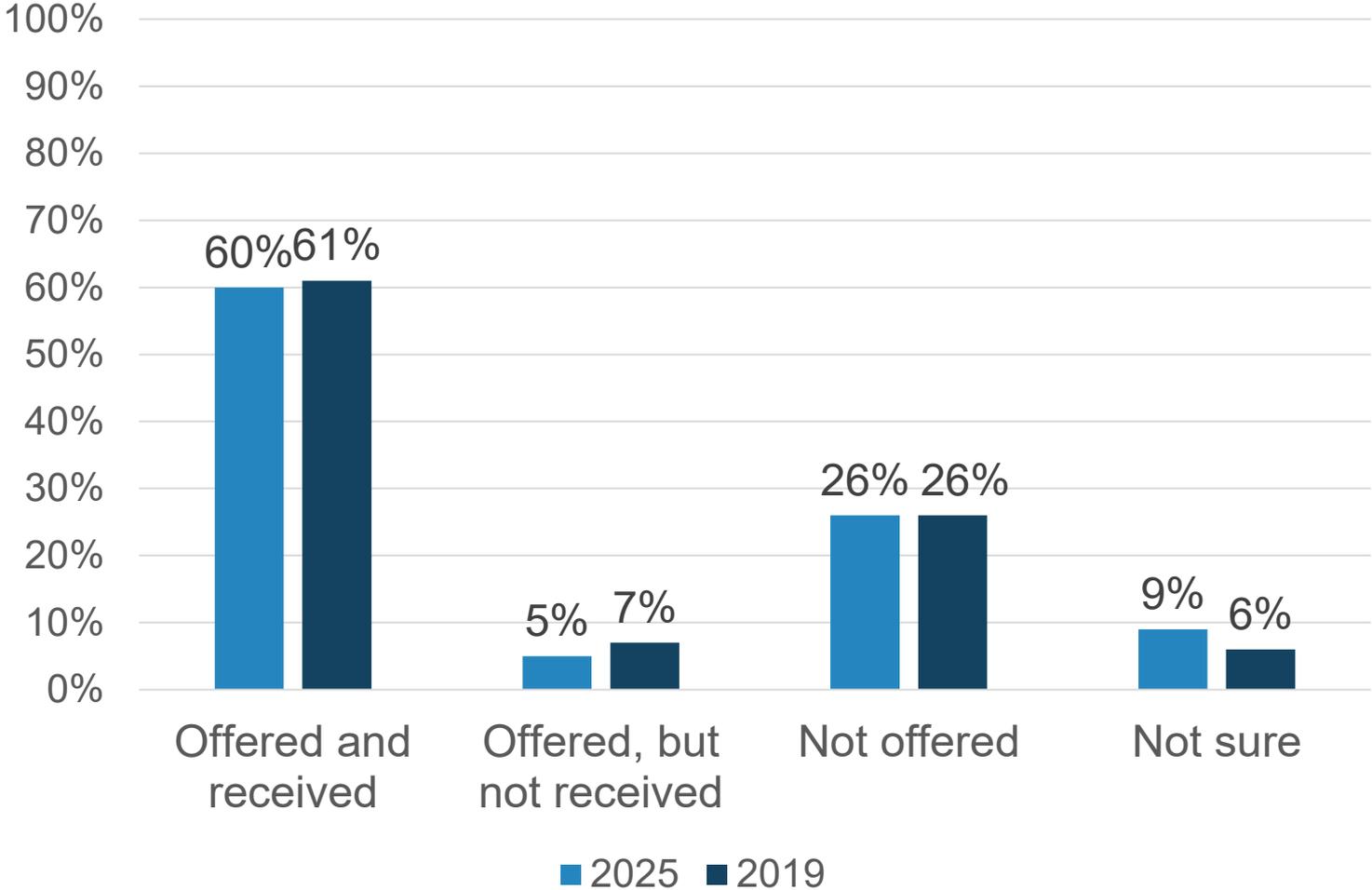
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# Support through a starting pastor peer network is similar to 2019



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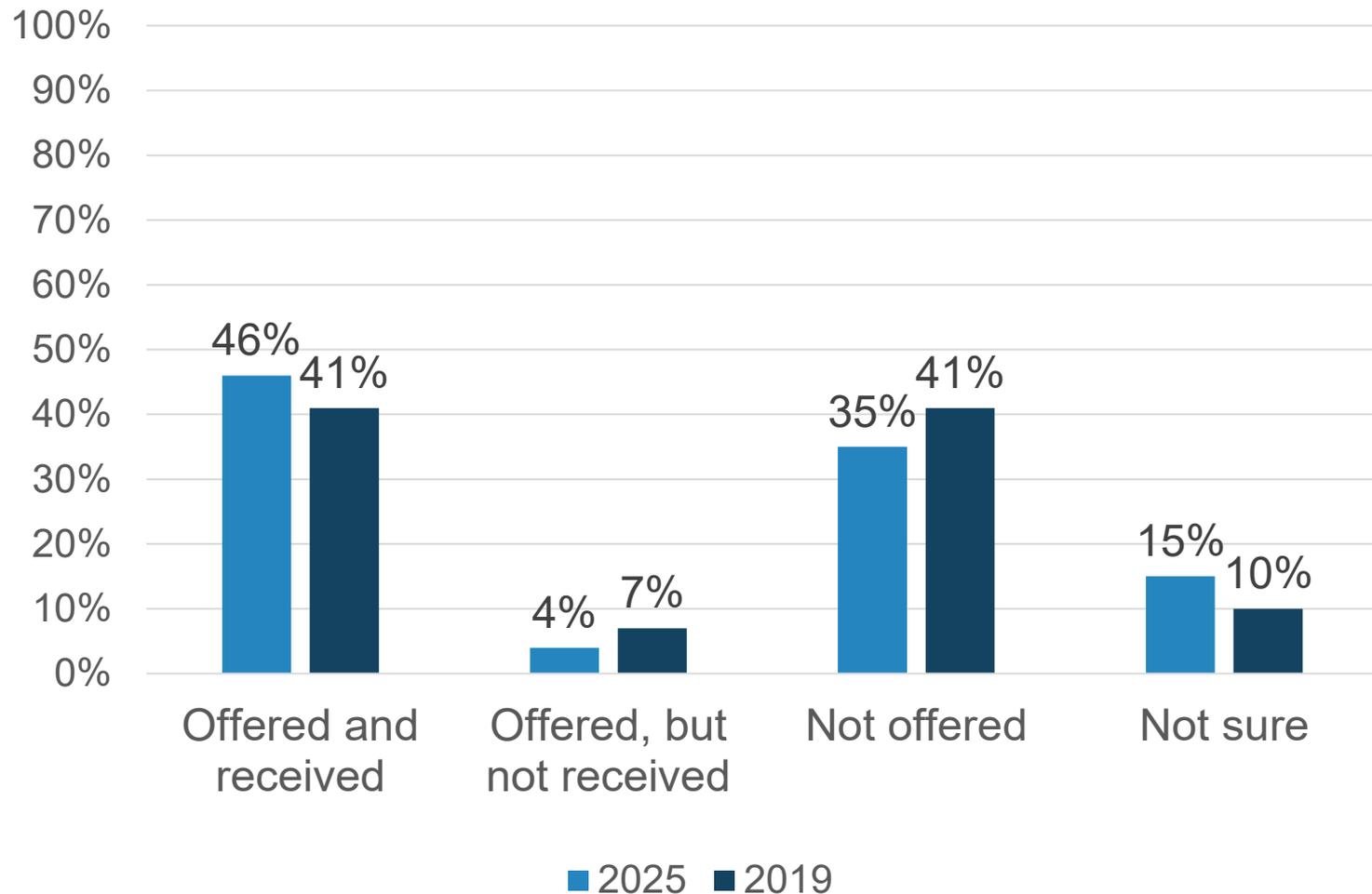
# Support through training for the church's pastor and/or team is similar to 2019



Lifeway research

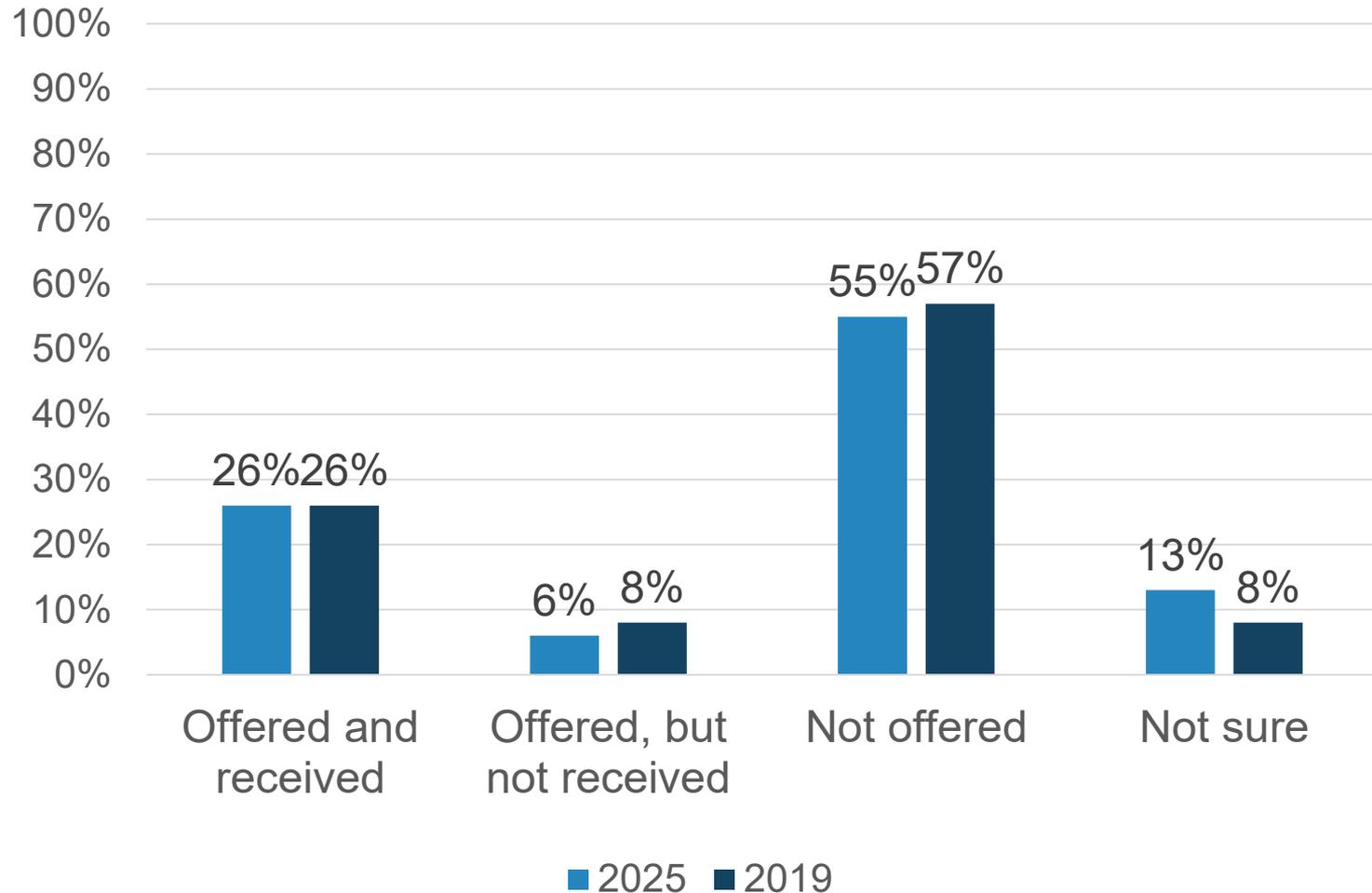
Q50\_4 "For each of the following other forms of support please indicate whether the resource was offered to the church and/or received from a denomination or network. (Select one response for each statement) Training for church's pastor and/or team"

# Support through a church starter assessment program is similar to 2019



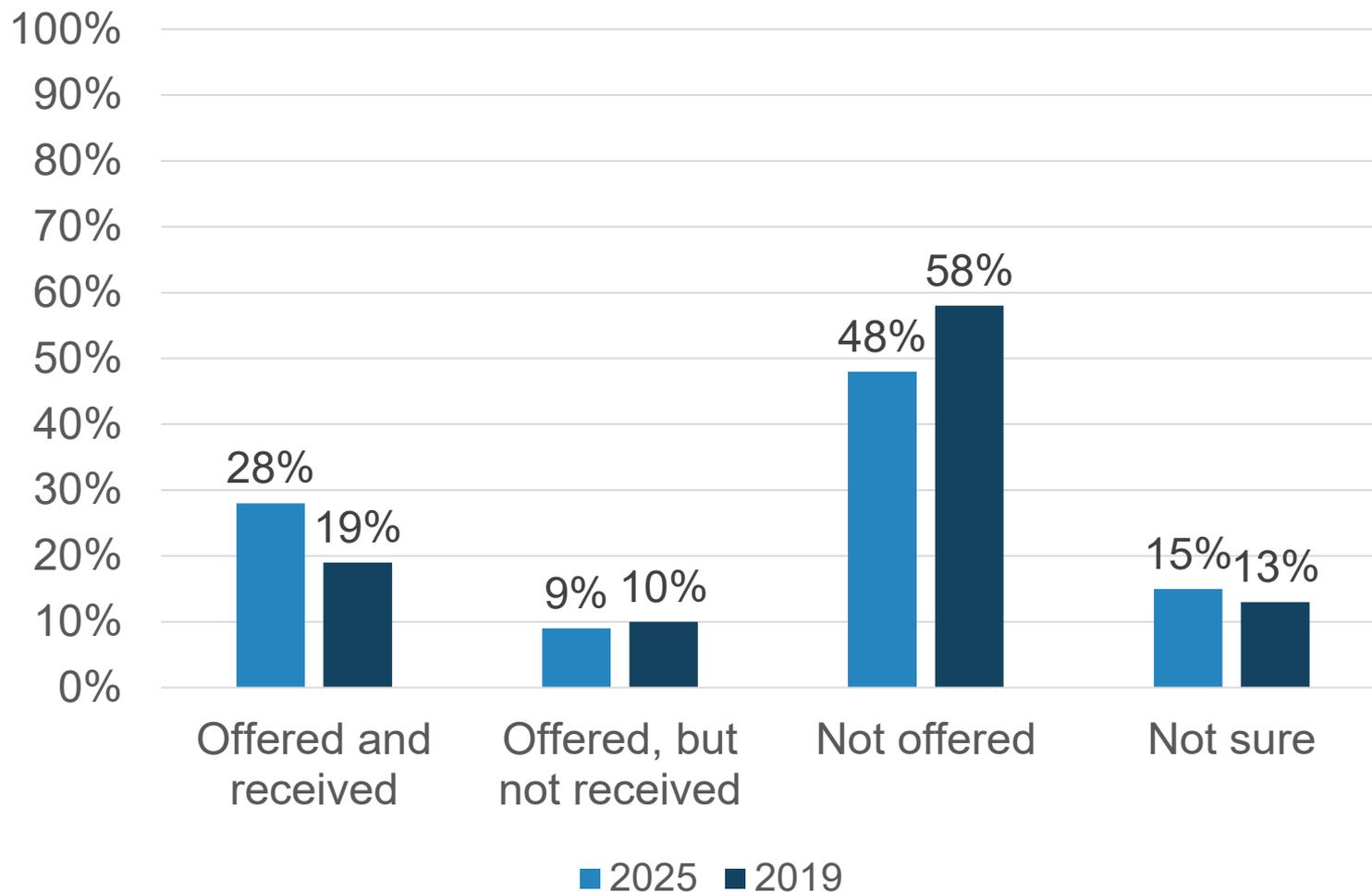
Lifeway research

# Support for accounting or bookkeeping is similar to 2019



Lifeway research

# More say they have received legal advice or help than in 2019

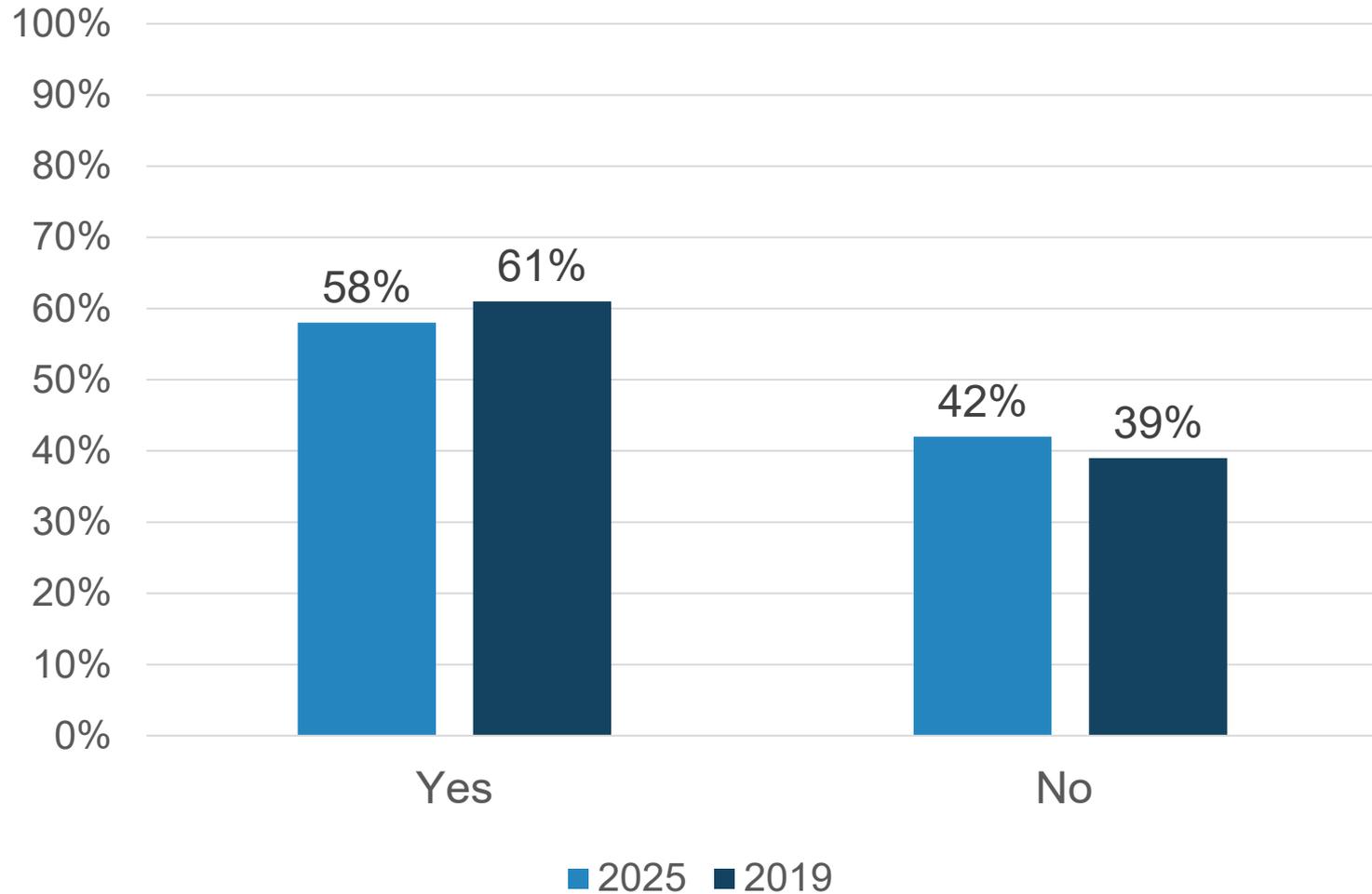


Lifeway research

# Sponsor Church Support

Lifeway research

# Almost 6 in 10 new church works still say they had a sponsoring or mother church

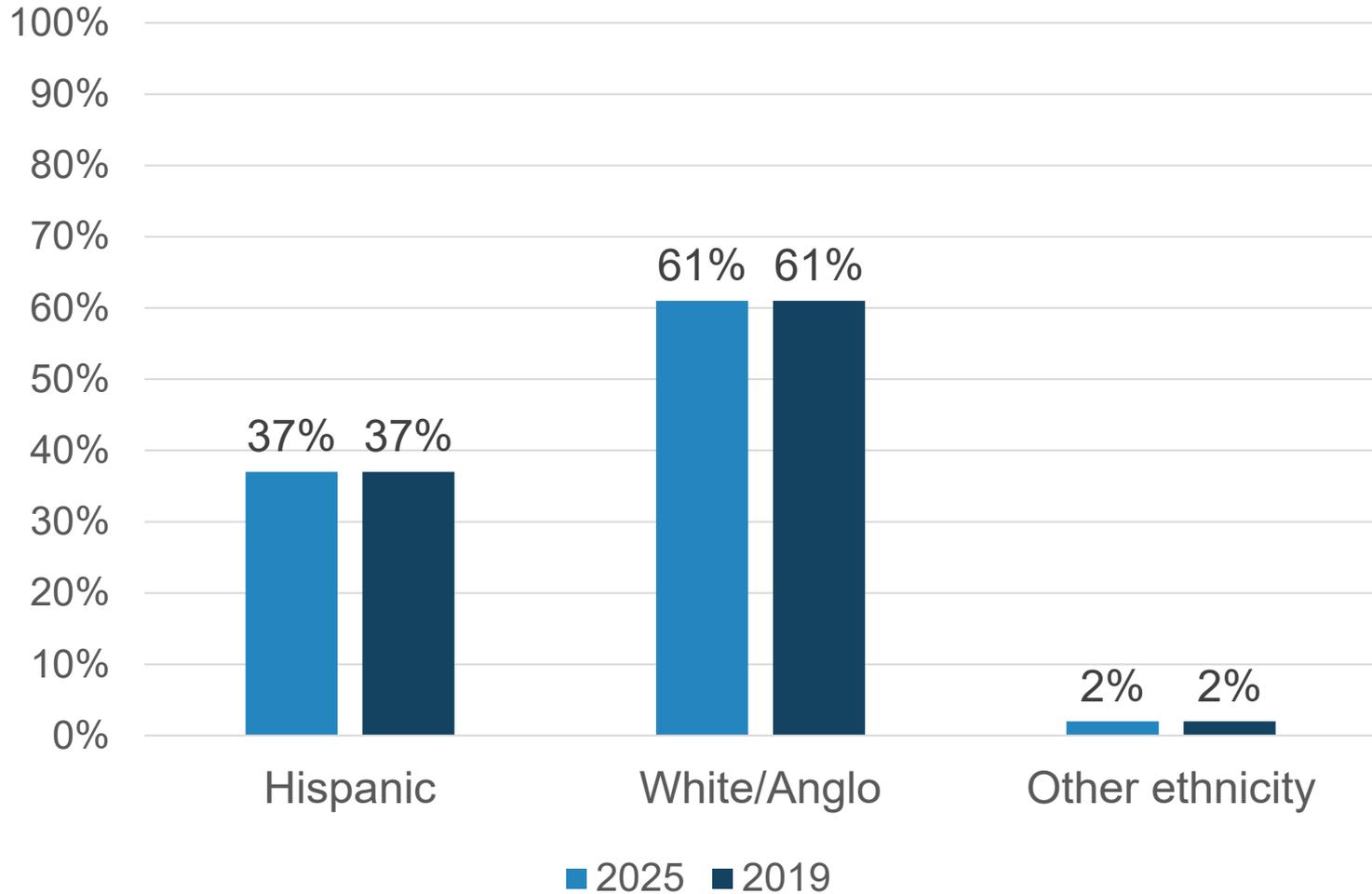


**Lifeway**research

Q51 "Did the new church work have any sponsoring or mother churches?"

# 61% of sponsoring or mother churches were primarily White/Anglo

Among Those With a Sponsoring or Mother Church

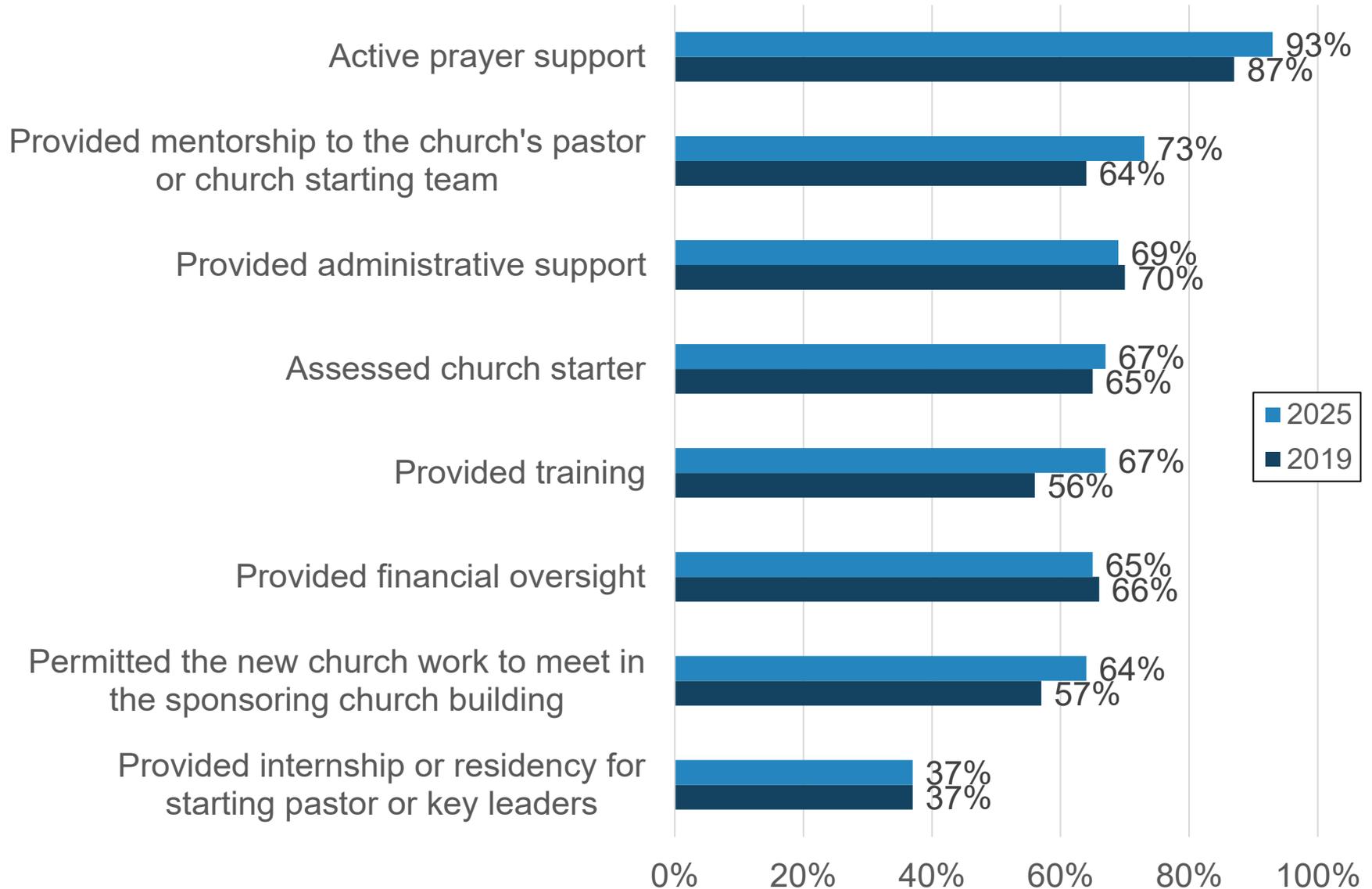


Lifeway research

Q52 "Was the sponsoring congregation primarily people of Hispanic, White/Anglo, or another ethnicity?"

# Assistance from sponsoring church(es)

Among those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

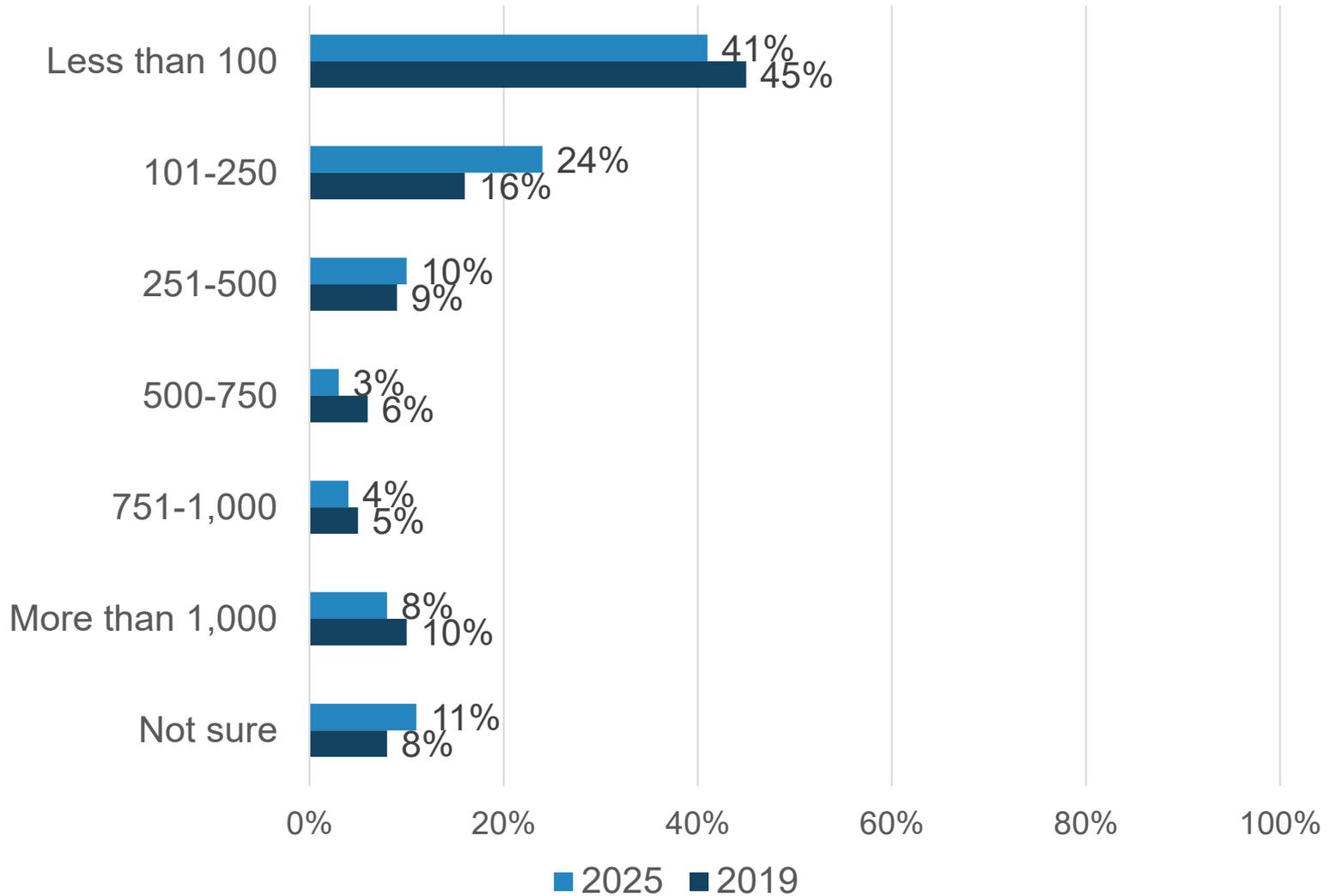


Lifeway research

Q53 "Please indicate whether the new church work received the following types of assistance from sponsoring church(es) during the first 5 years of existence. (Select one response for each activity)"

# Average worship attendance of primary sponsoring church

Among Those With a Sponsoring or Mother Church



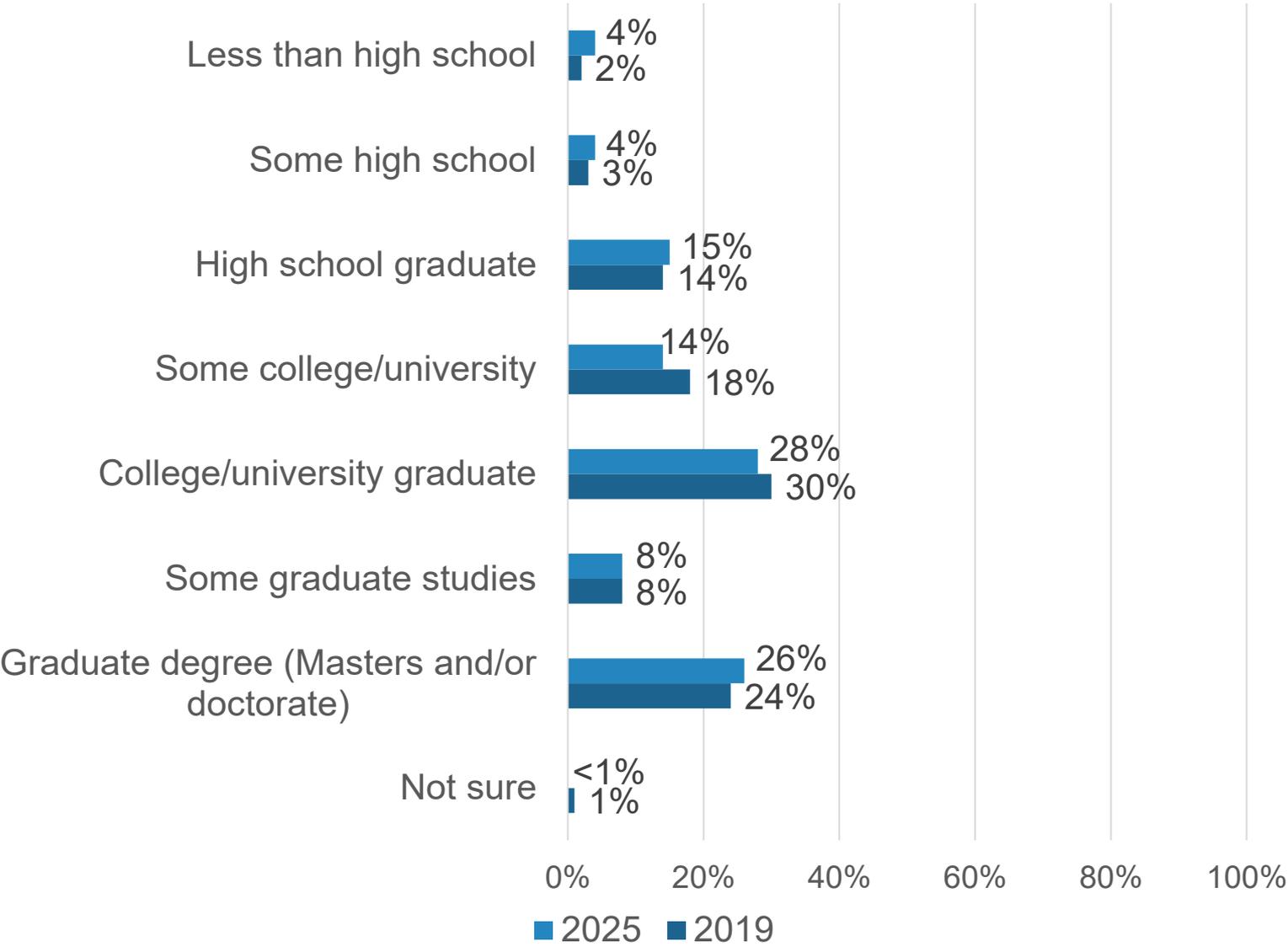
Lifeway research

Q54: "What was the average attendance of the primary sponsoring church's weekly worship service(s) at the time your new church work launched? (Select one)"

# Education & Training

Lifeway research

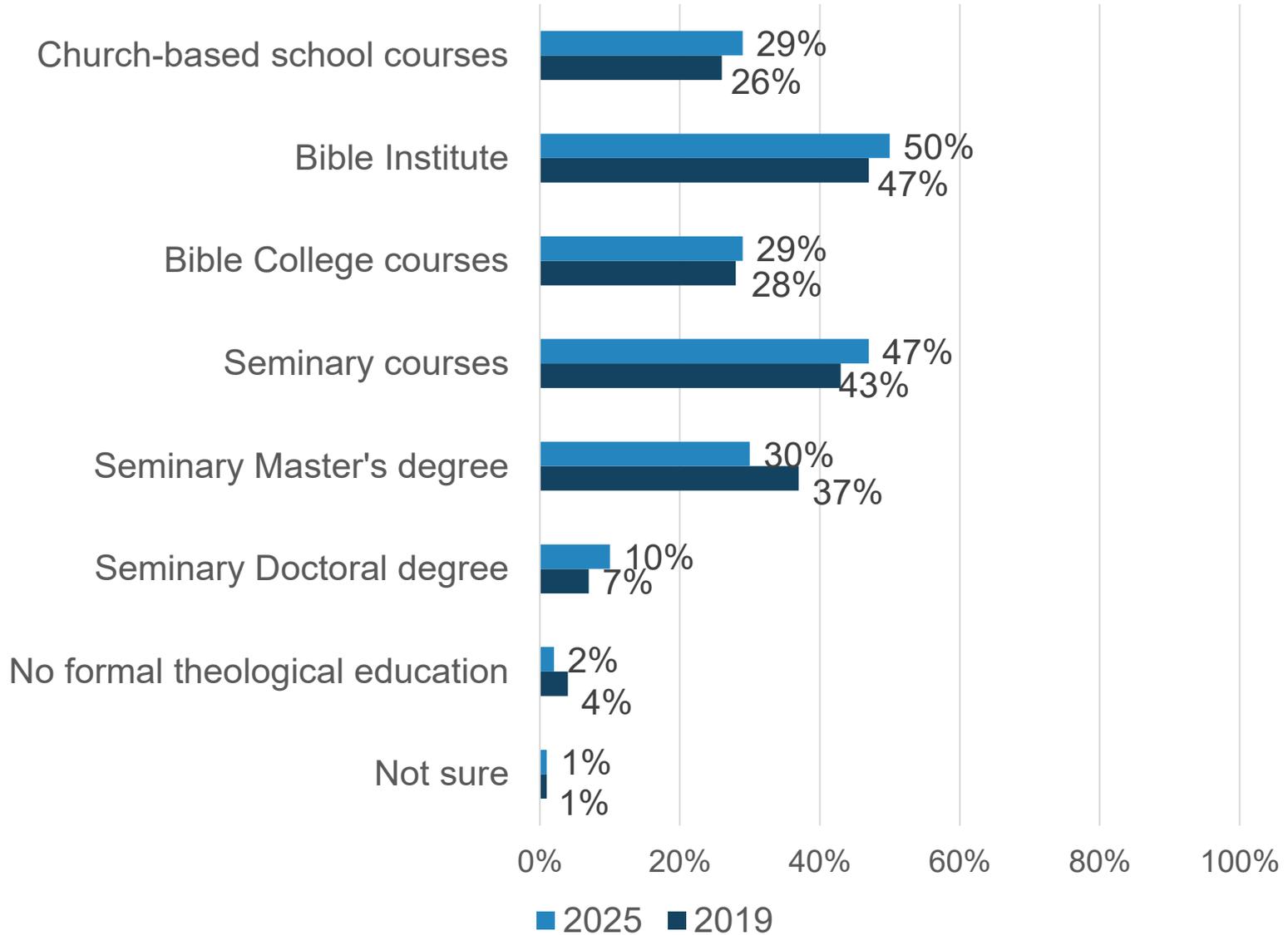
# Education of Church Starters/Pastors is similar to 2019



Lifeway research

Q57: "What is your highest level of education? Do not include formal theological education. (Select one)"

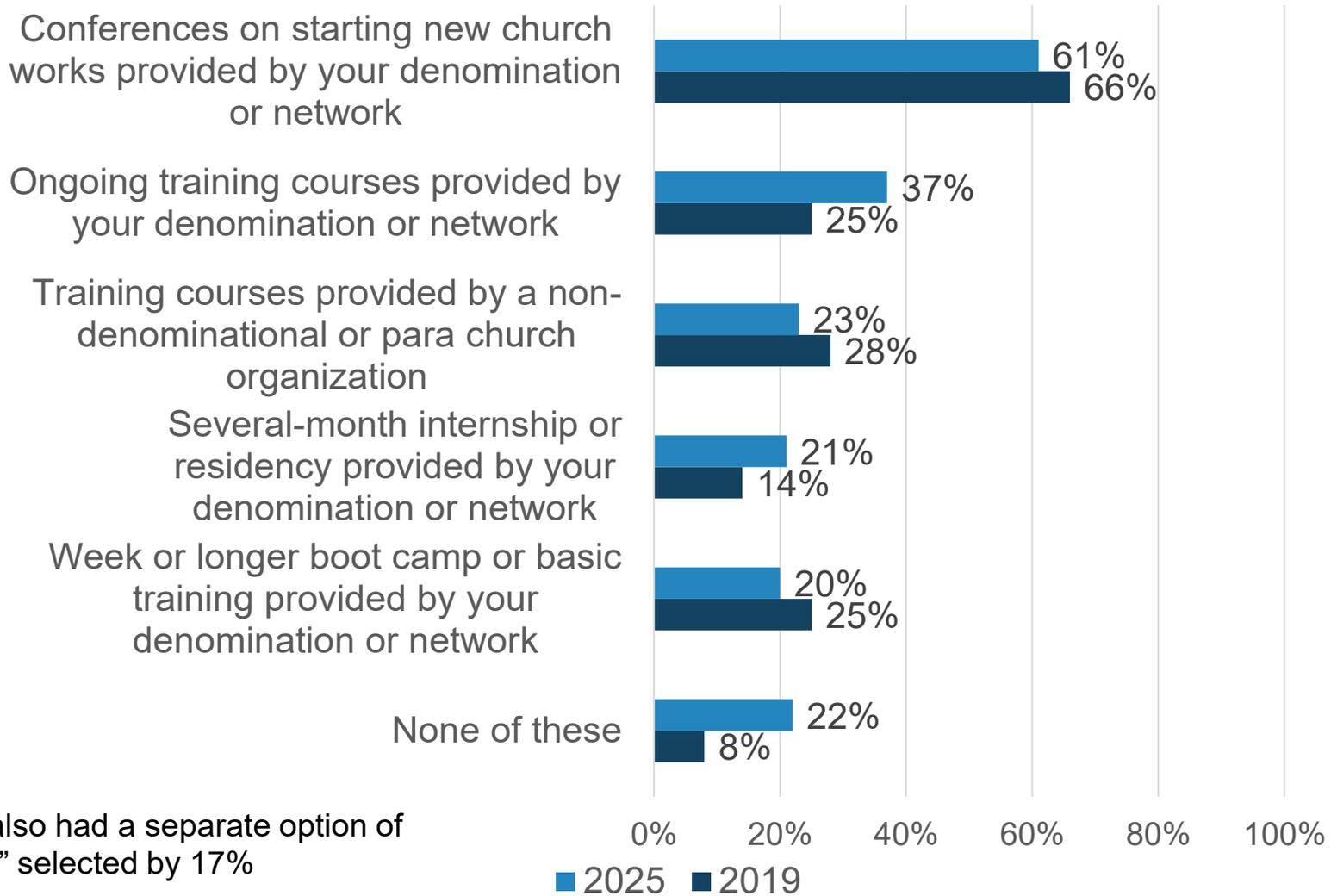
# Types of theological education completed



Lifeway research

Q58: "What types of theological education have you completed? (Select all that apply)"

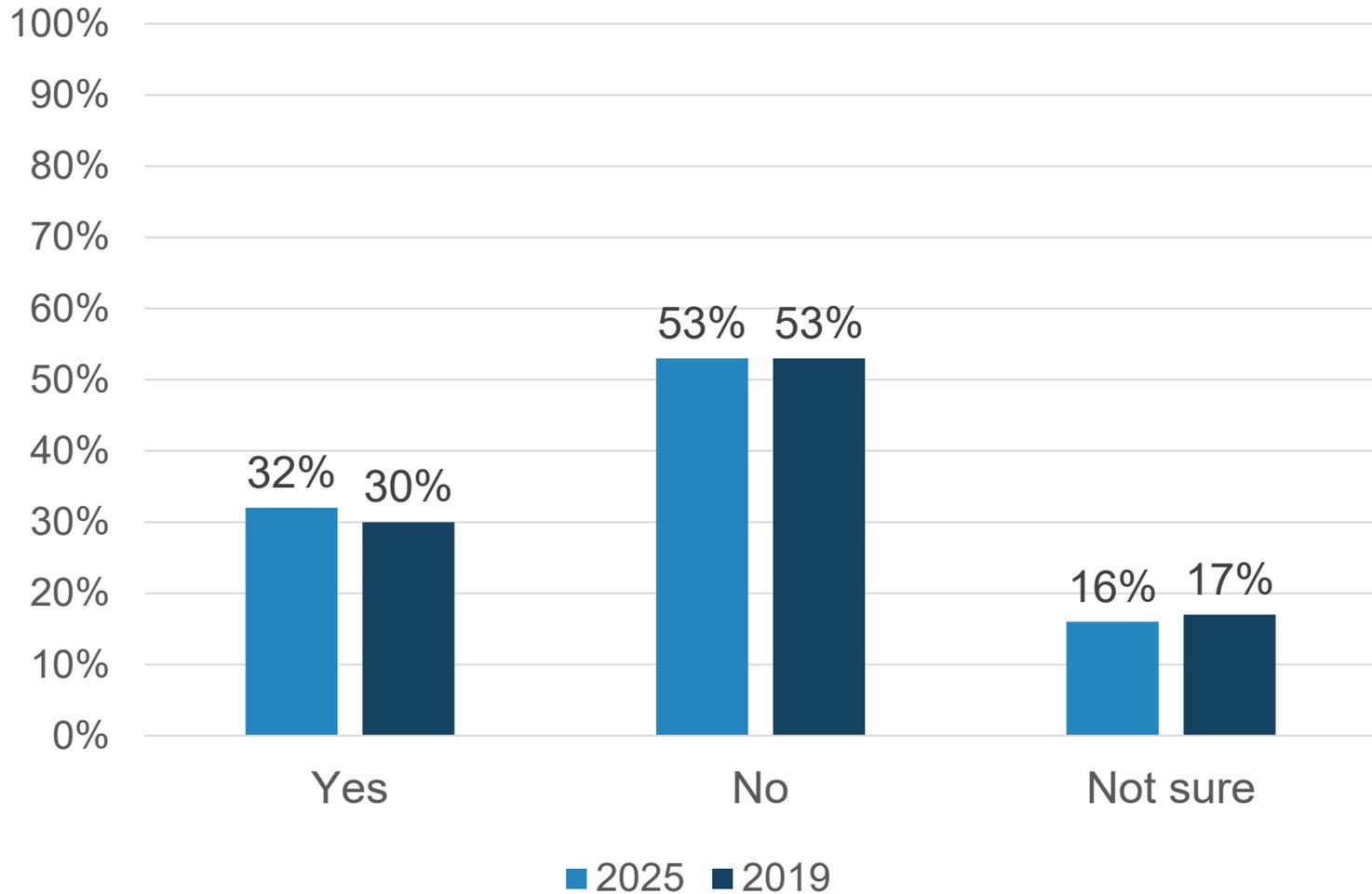
# Church starting training taken prior to launch includes more ongoing training courses than in 2019



**Lifeway**research

Q59: "Which of the following types of church starting training had you taken prior to the new church work? (Select all that apply)"

# Founding pastor receiving church starting training incorporating dynamics of the Hispanic/Latino context is similar to 2019

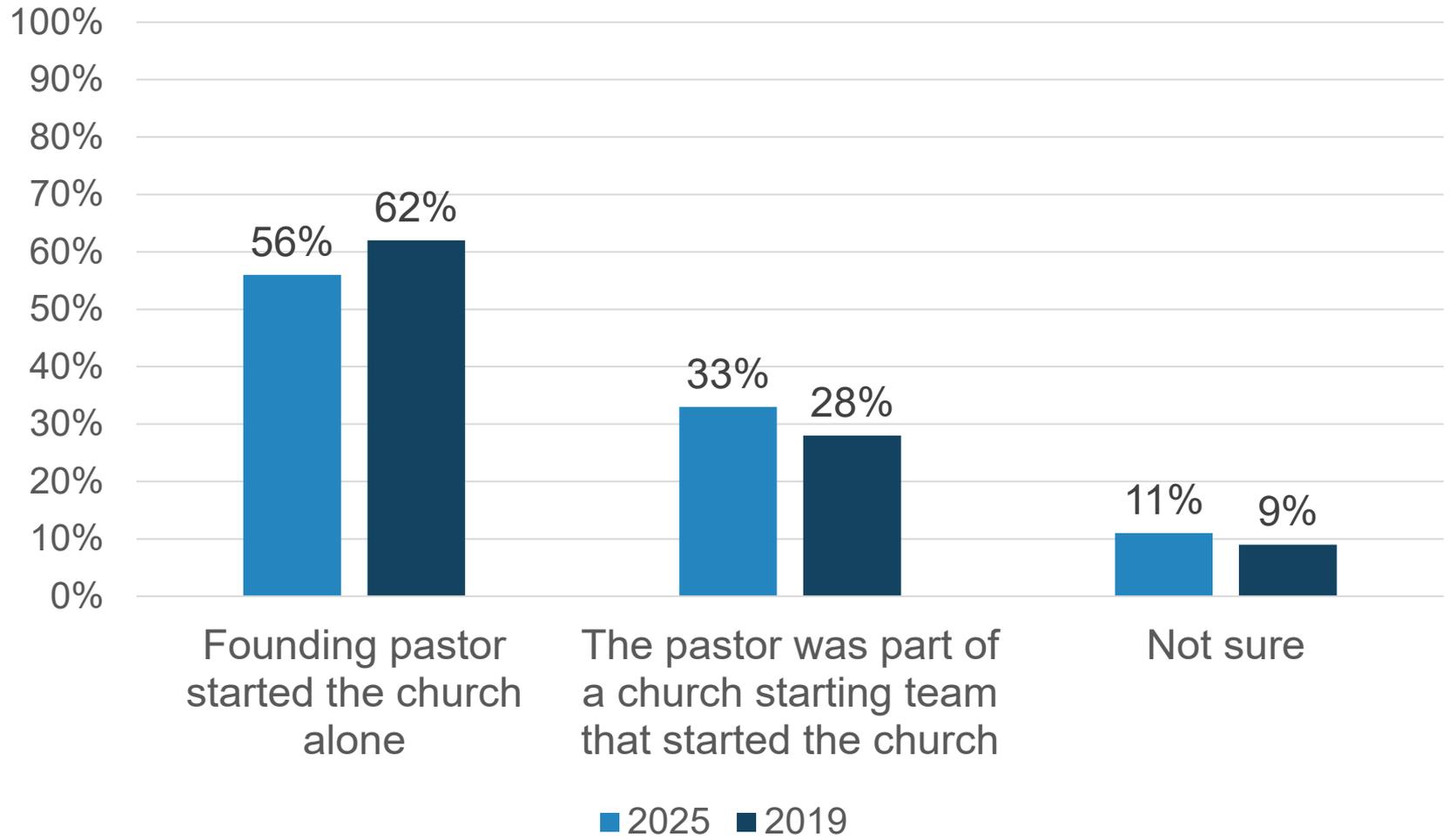


Lifeway research

# Church Starter

Lifeway research

# The majority of Hispanic new church works are still started by the founding pastor alone

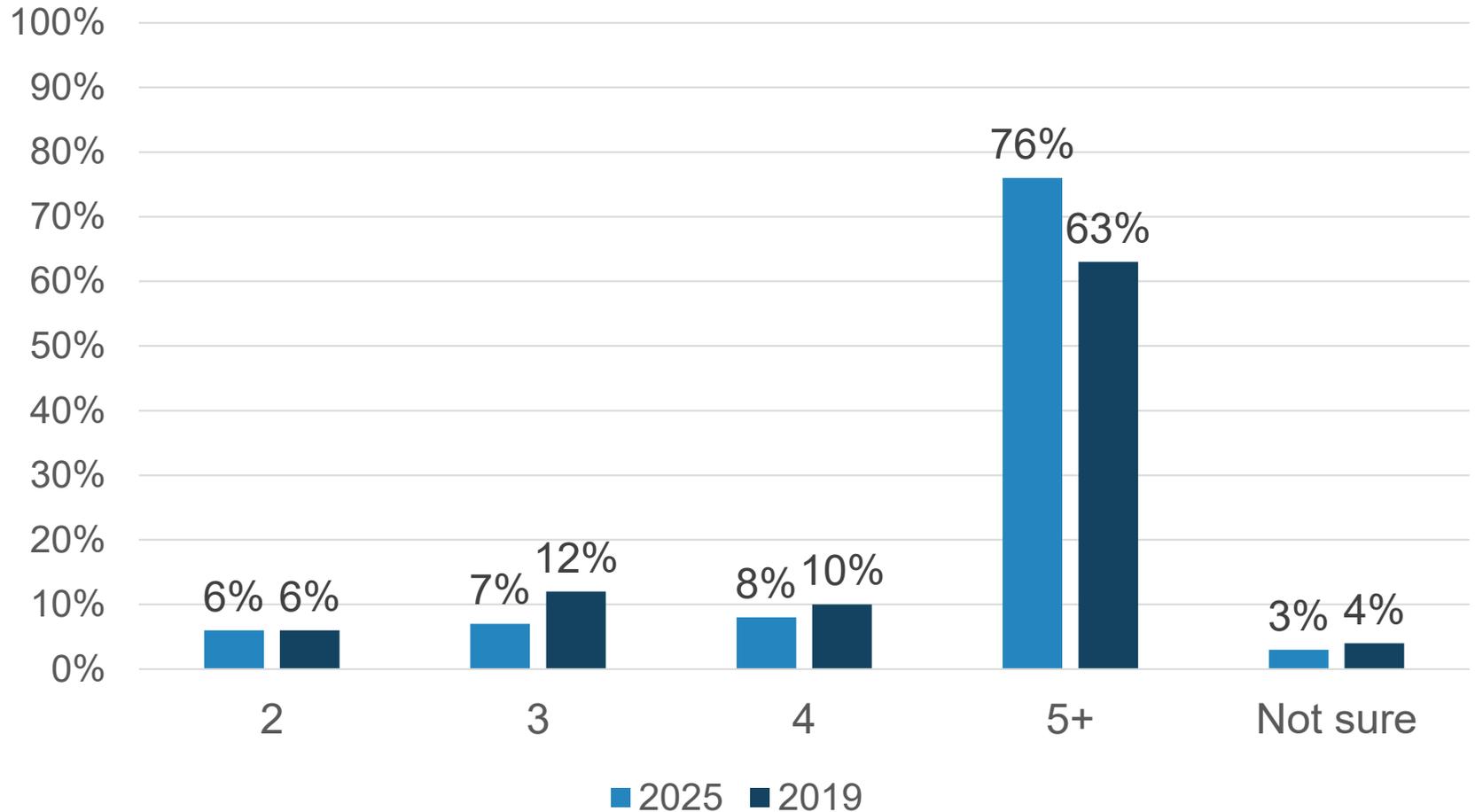


Lifeway research

Q55 "Did the founding pastor start the church alone or was there a church starting team that started the new church work?"

# Starting teams are more likely to have 5 or more people than in 2019

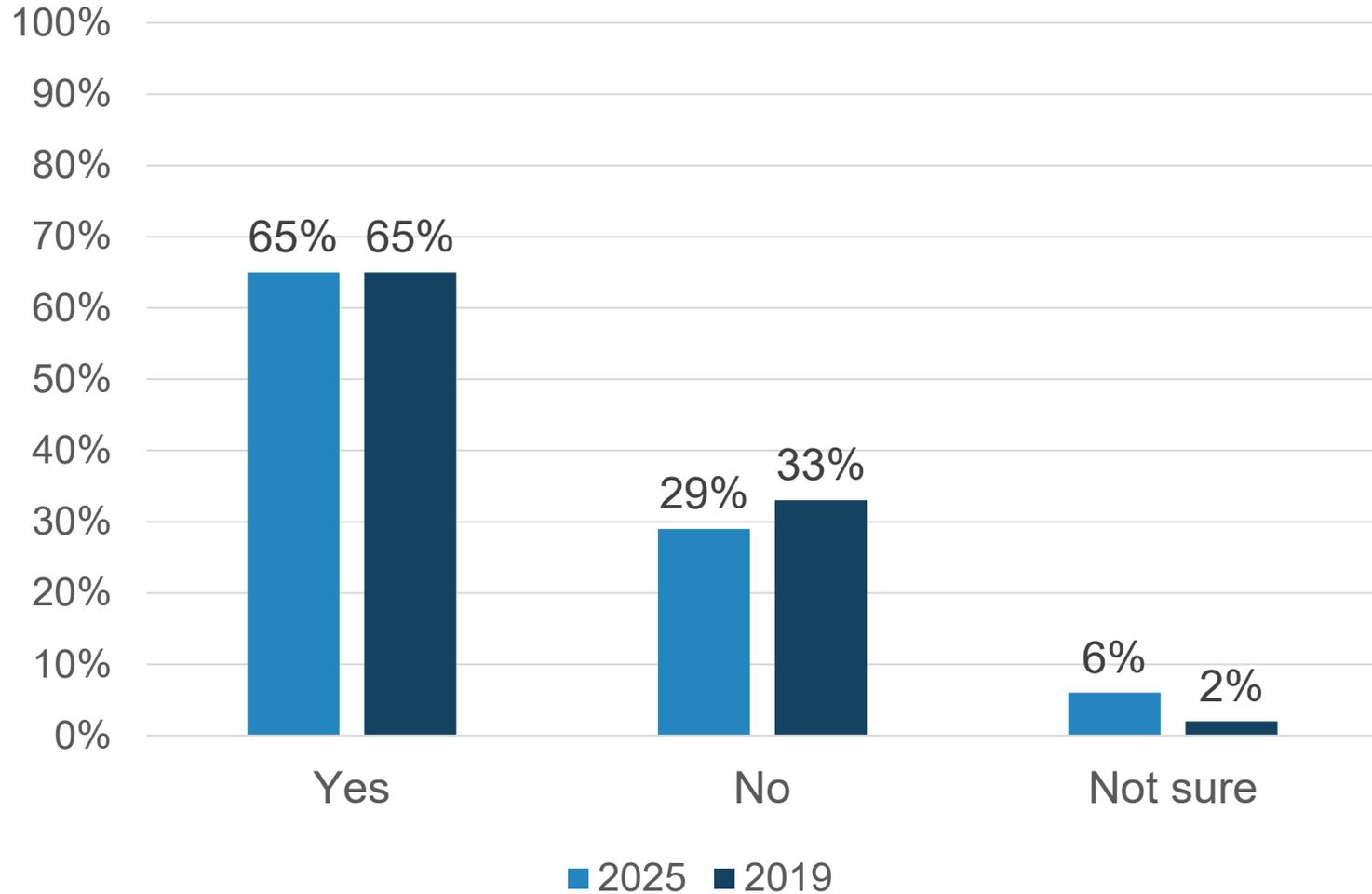
Among Those Started With a Church Starting Team



Lifeway research

Q56 "How many people (including the founding pastor) were on the church starting team when the new church work began? (Select one)"

# 65% received financial compensation for their work with the church in the first five years

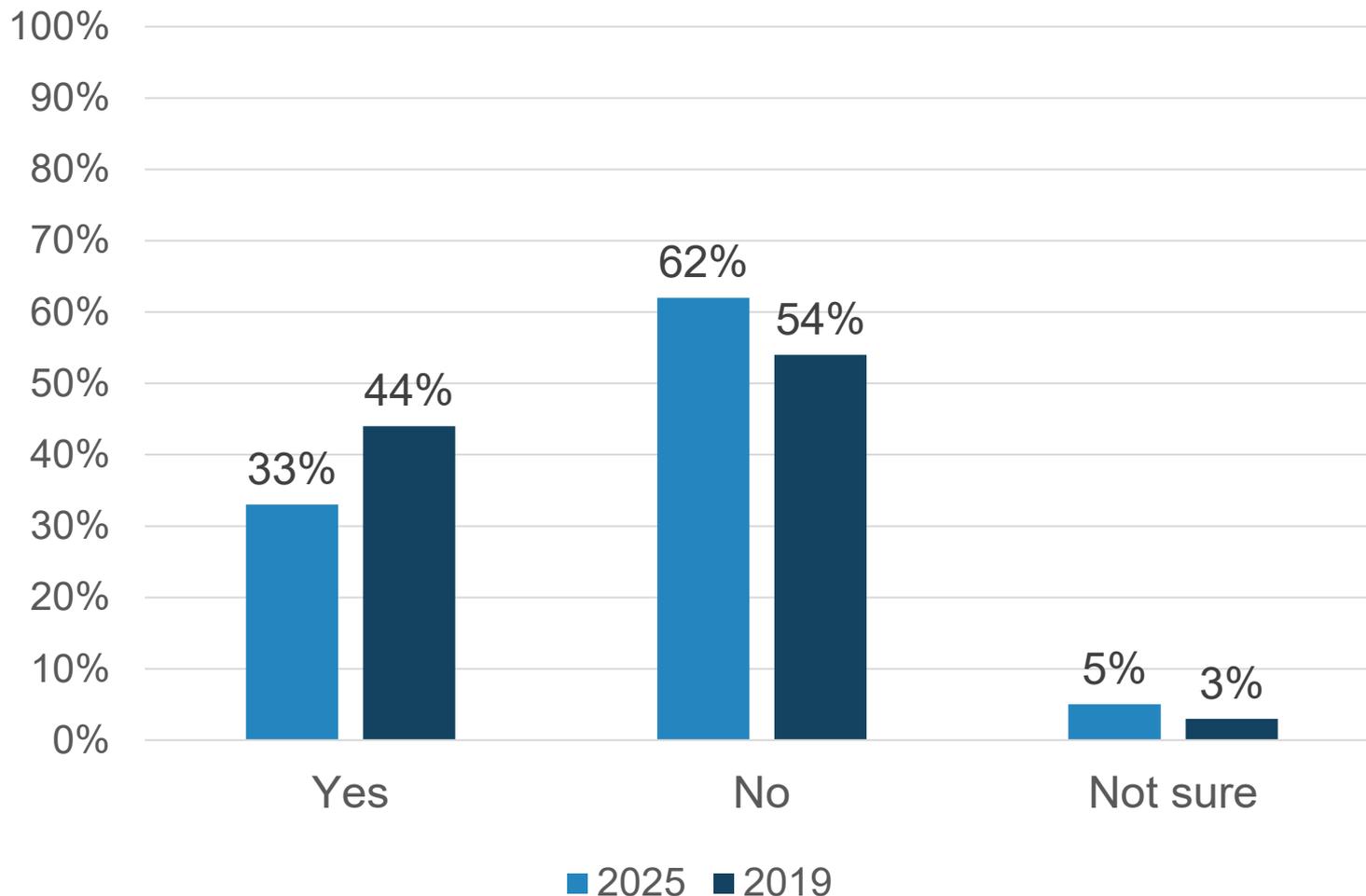


Lifeway research

Q61 "Did you receive any financial compensation for your work in the church in the first five years?"

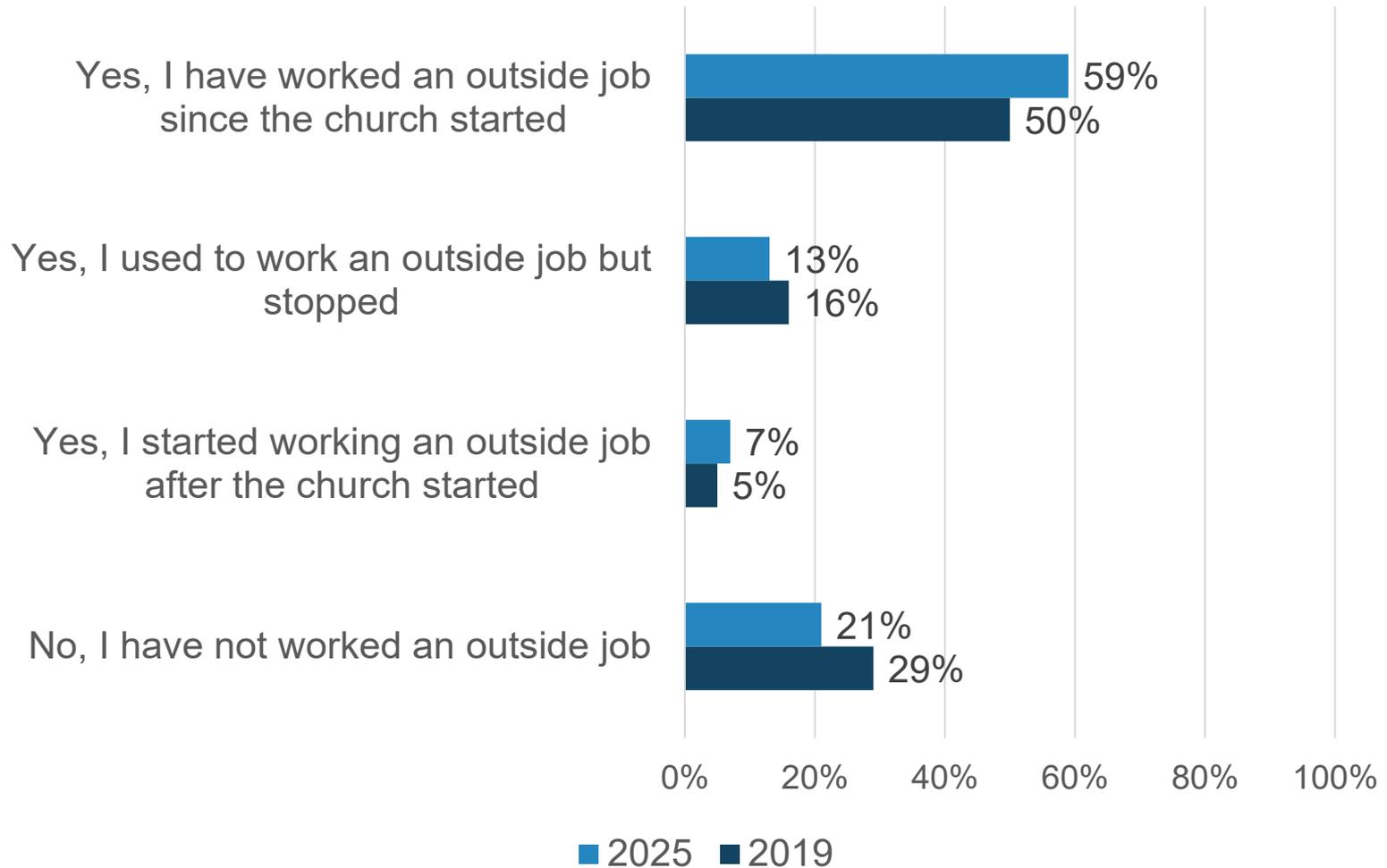
# Fewer think the financial compensation received was adequate to meet their family's basic needs (33% v. 44%)

Among Those That Received Financial Compensation



Lifeway research

# The small increase in pastors working an outside job at some point since the church started is not statistically significant

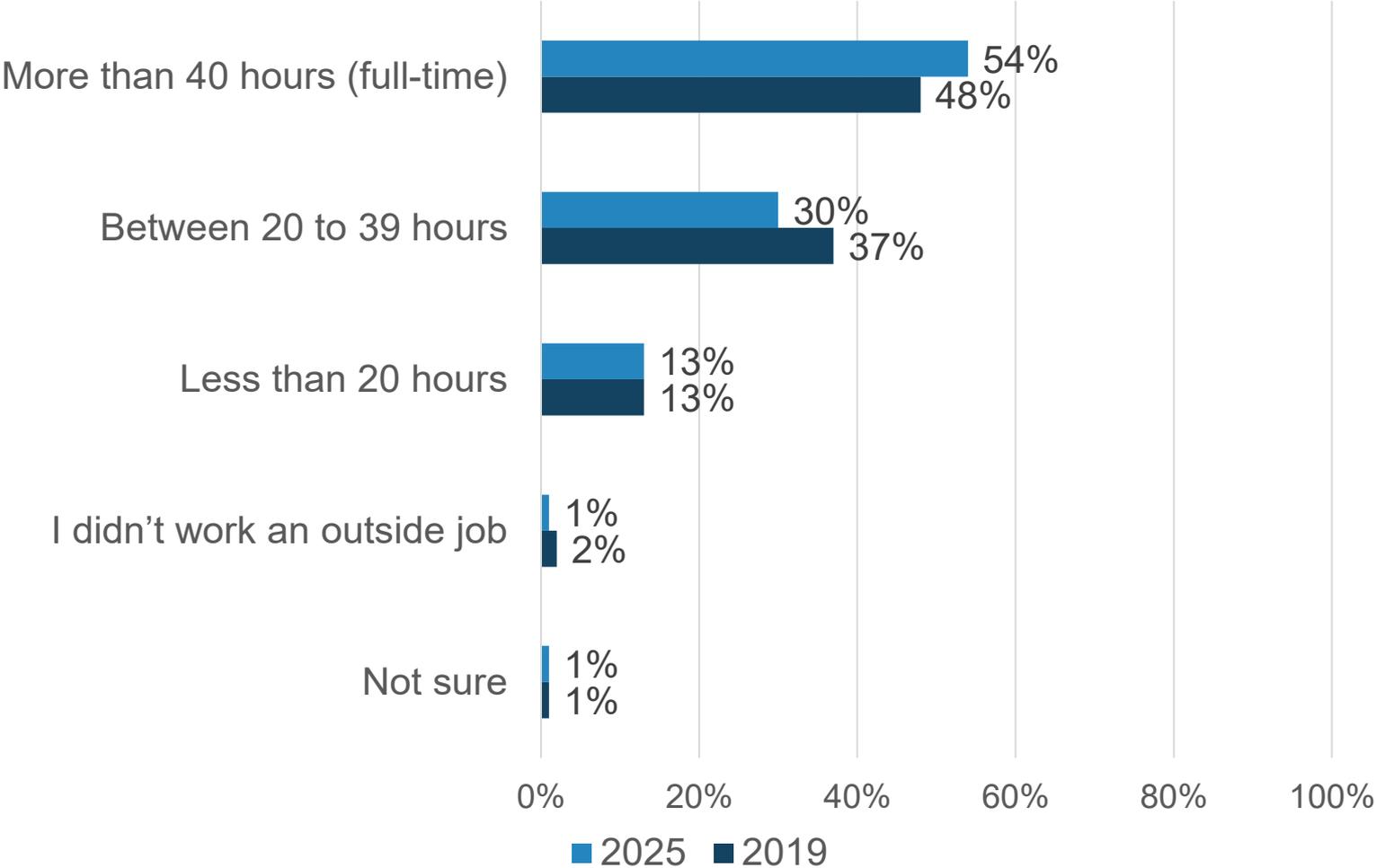


Lifeway research

Q63: "Have you worked at a paying job outside of the church at any time since the new church work began? (Select one)"

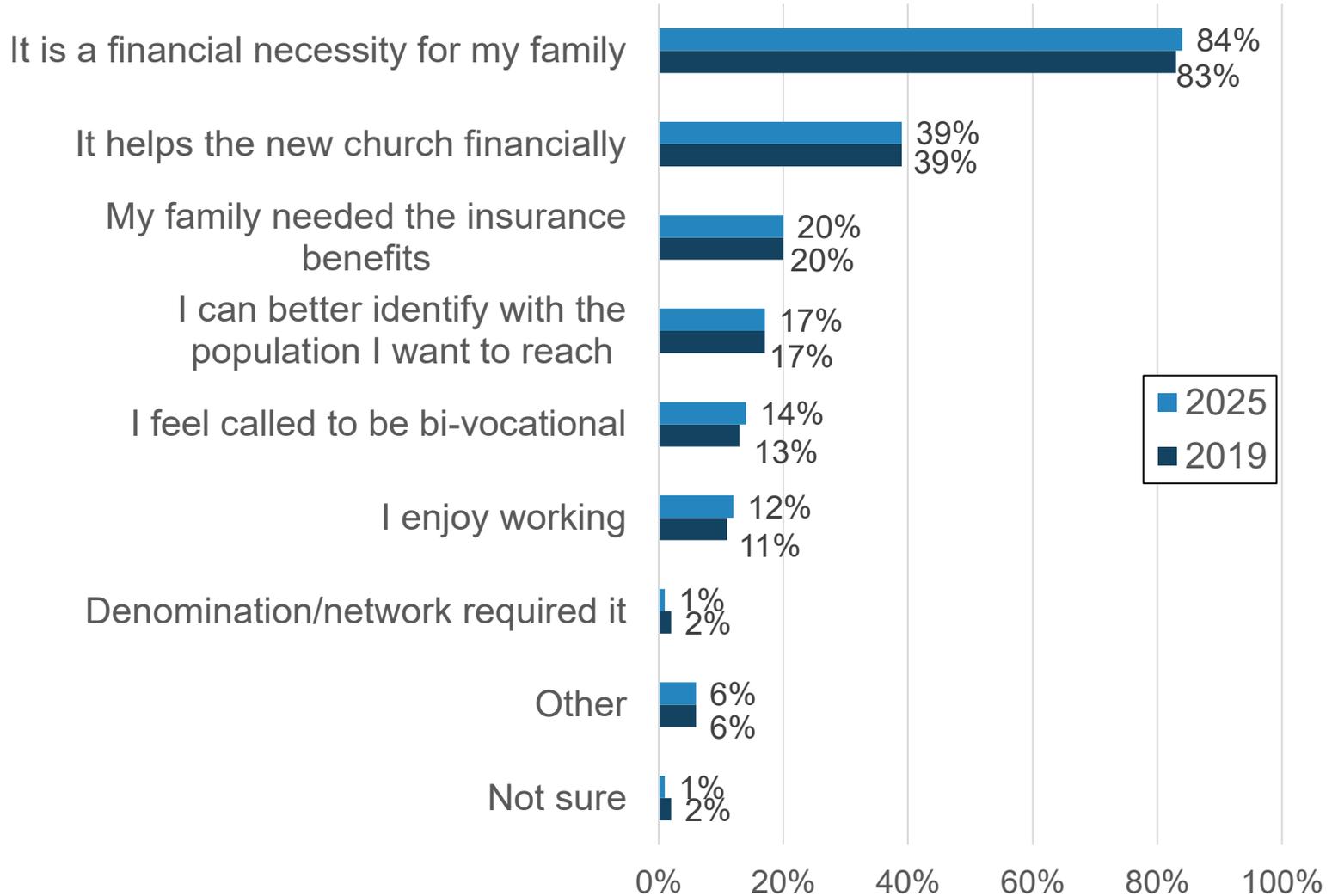
# About half of those who have worked an outside job worked full time in addition to working as pastor

## Among Those That Worked an Outside Job



# Reasons for working an outside job have not changed

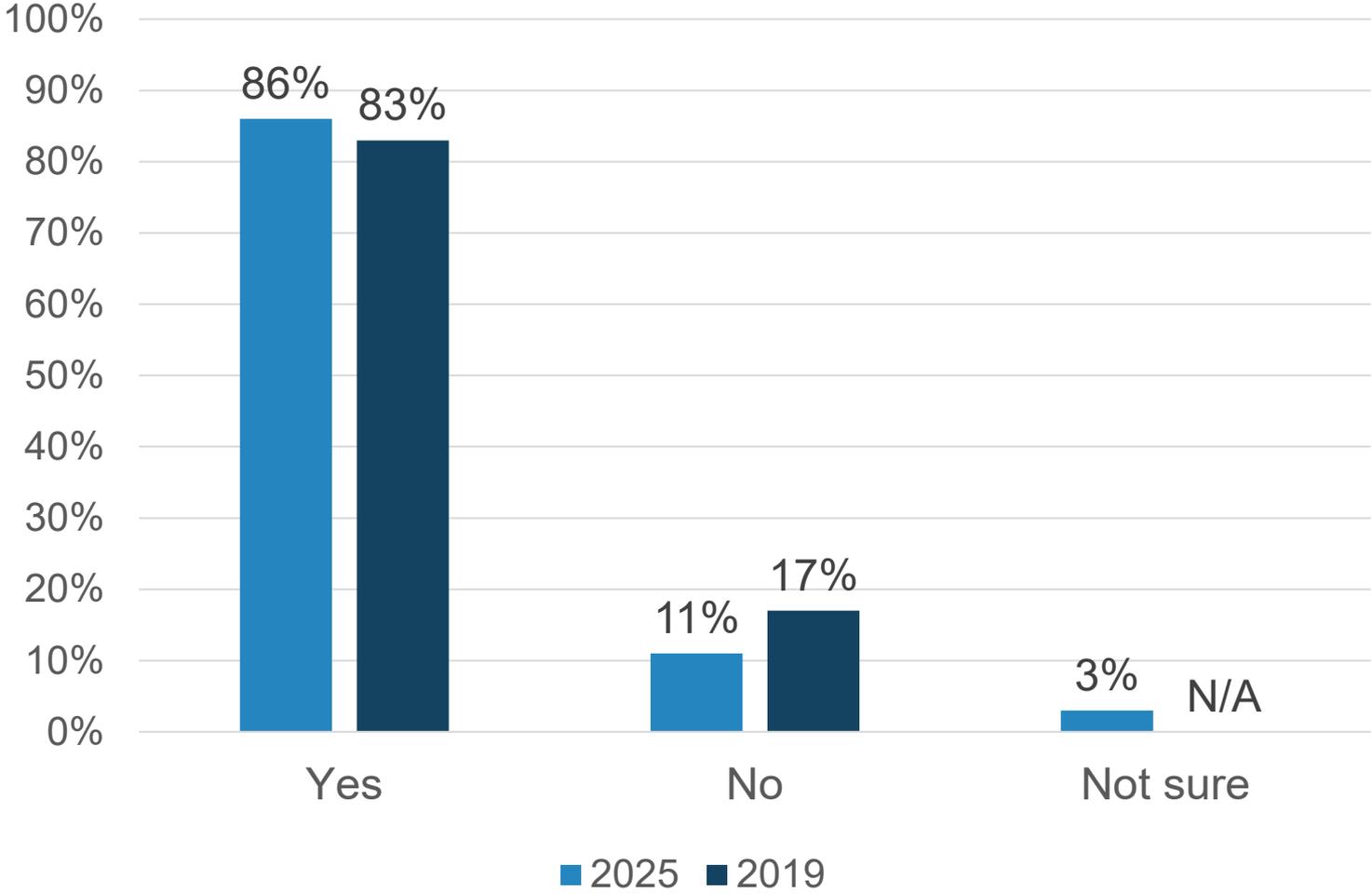
## Among Those That Worked an Outside Job



Lifeway research

Q65: "What reasons have you had for working an outside job in addition to working as a pastor? (Select all that apply)"

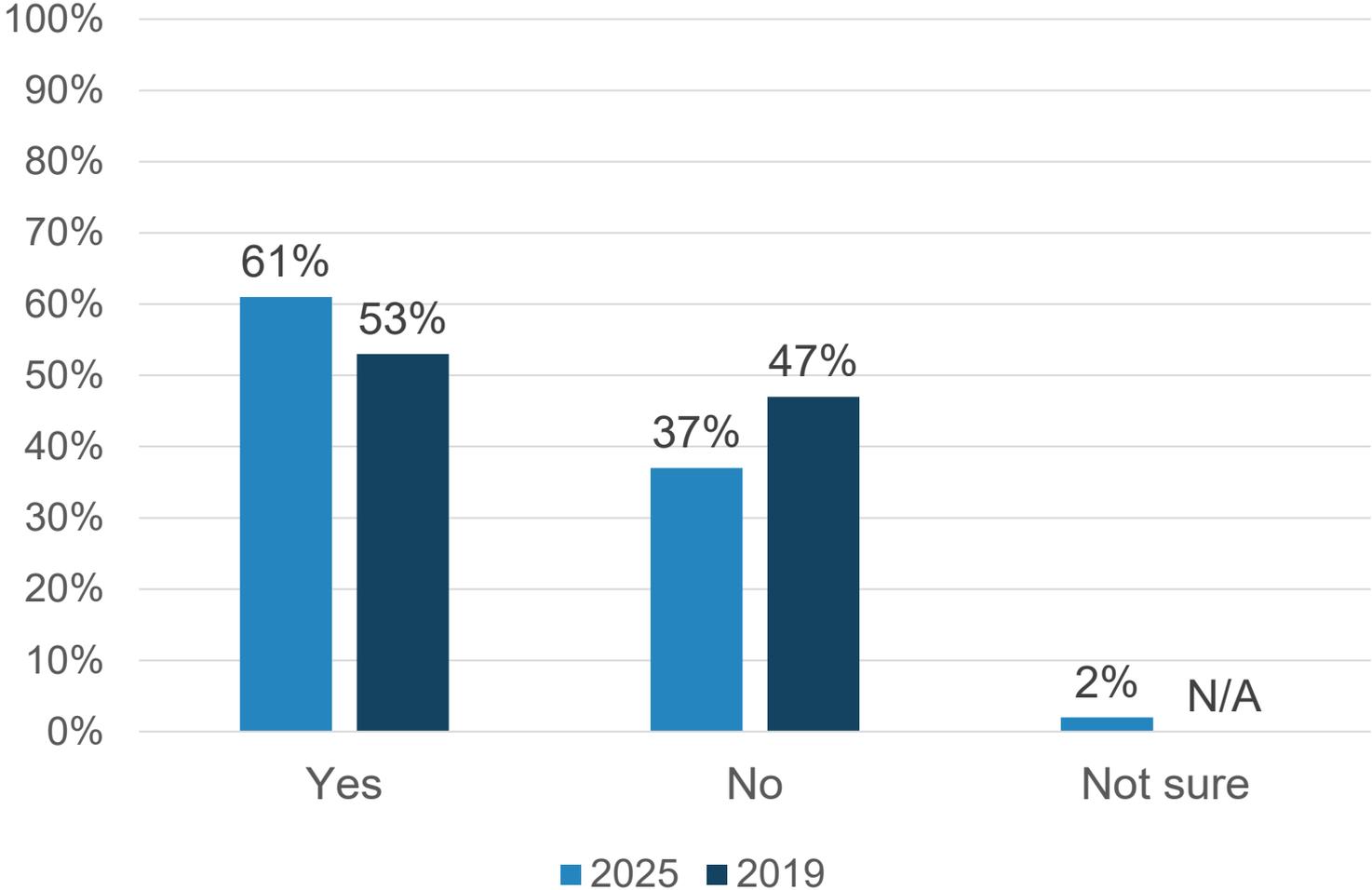
# “I had previous ministry experience as a pastor or church staff prior to starting the new church work”



Lifeway research

Q66\_1 “For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) I had previous ministry experience as a pastor or church staff prior to starting the new church work.”

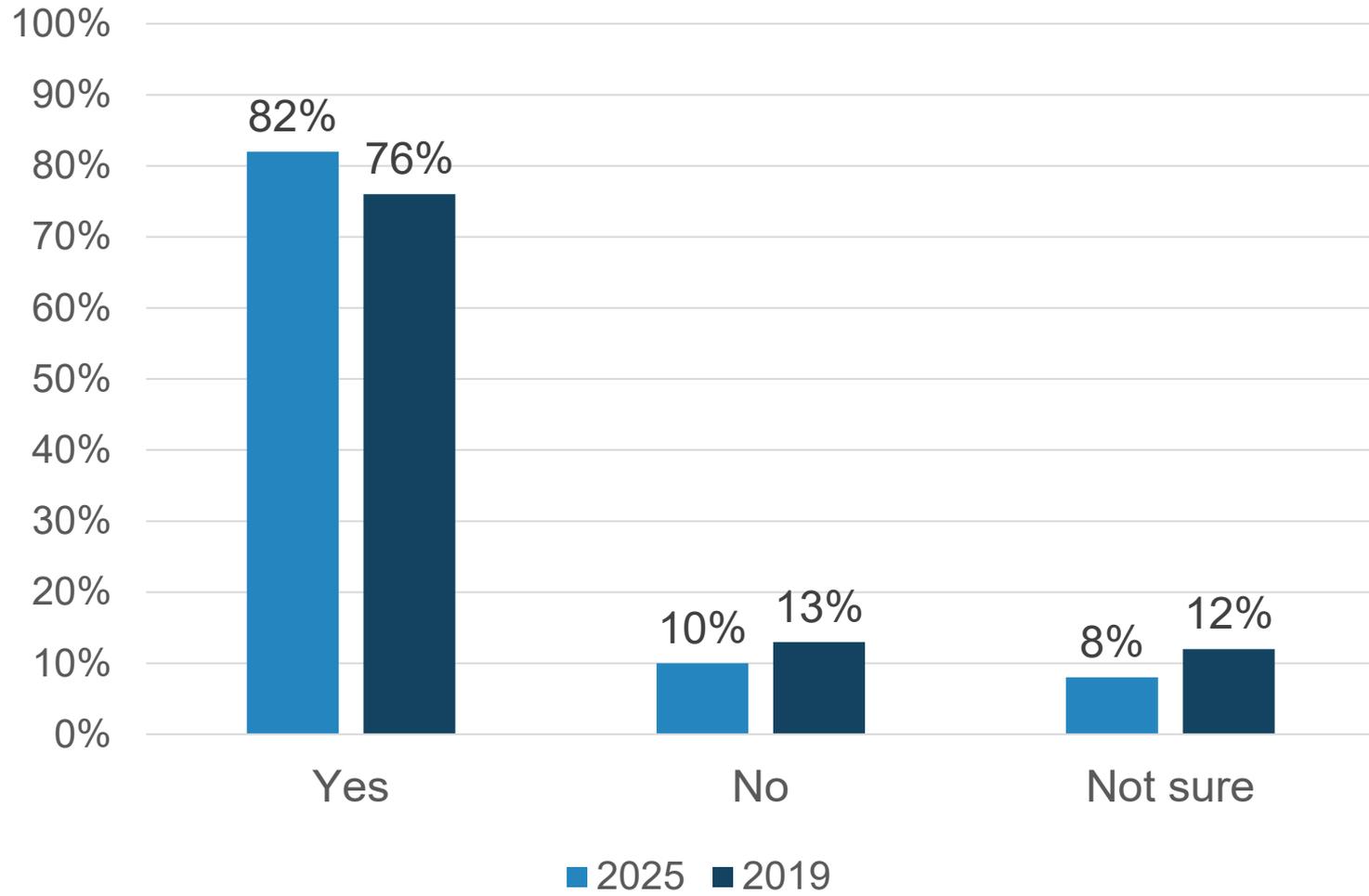
# The number of respondents lacking previous experience as a church starter has decreased since 2019



Lifeway research

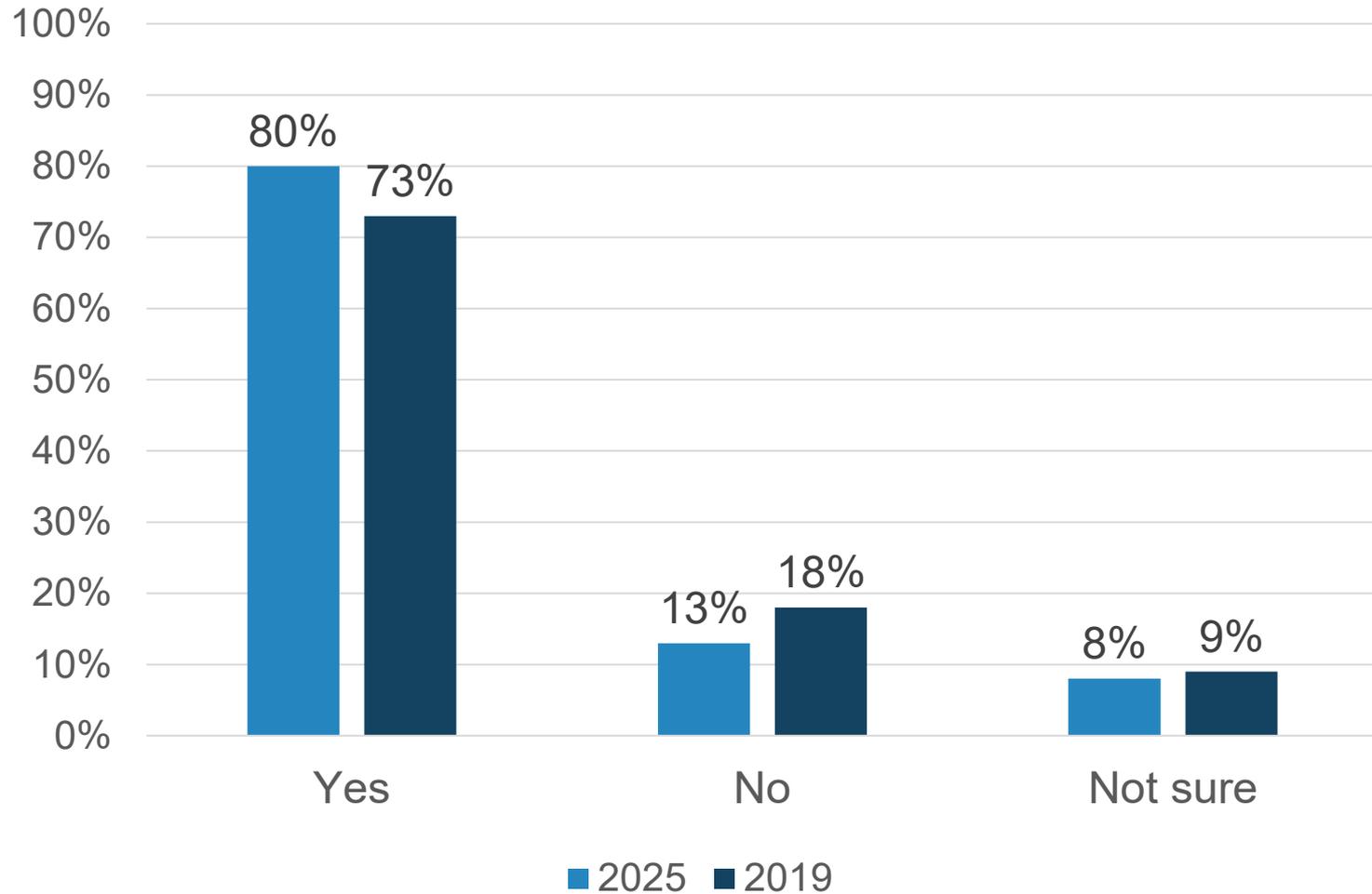
Q66\_2 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) I had previous church starting experience as a church starter or as part of a church starting team."

# “I had a definite calling to the geographic location of the new church work”



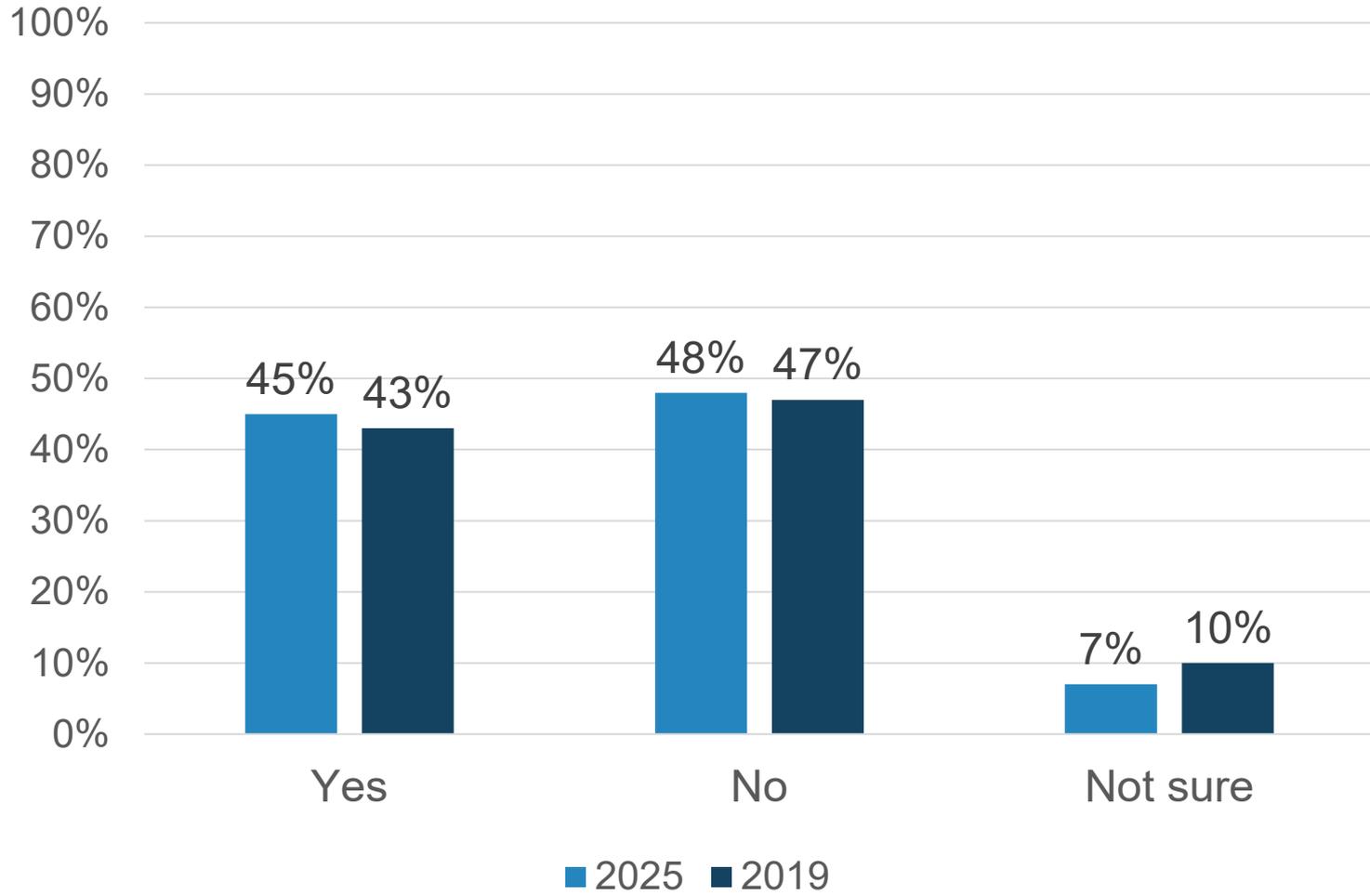
Lifeway research

# “My cultural background matched those the new church was seeking to reach”



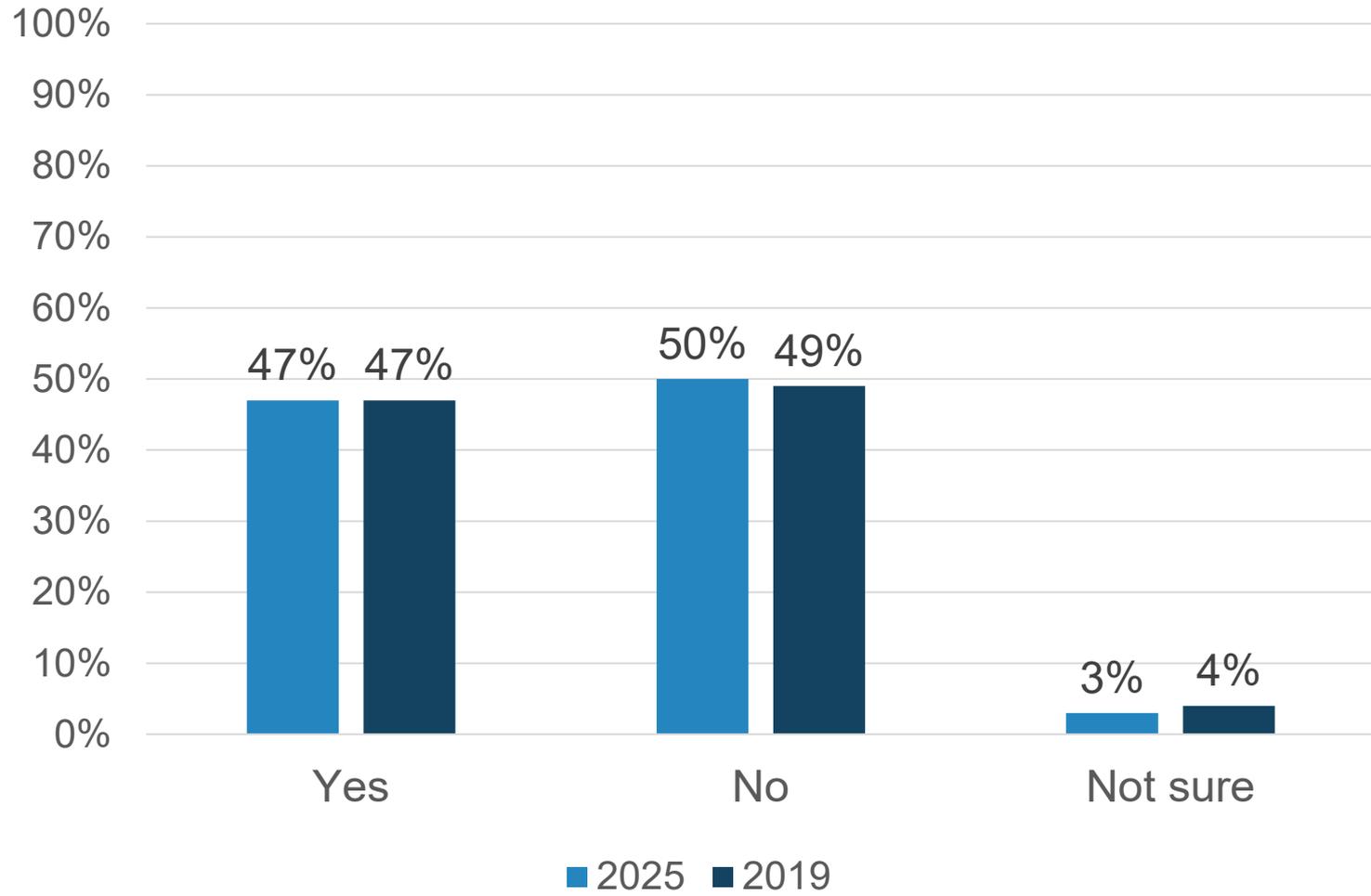
Lifeway research

# “My geographic roots are relatively nearby the new church work’s setting”



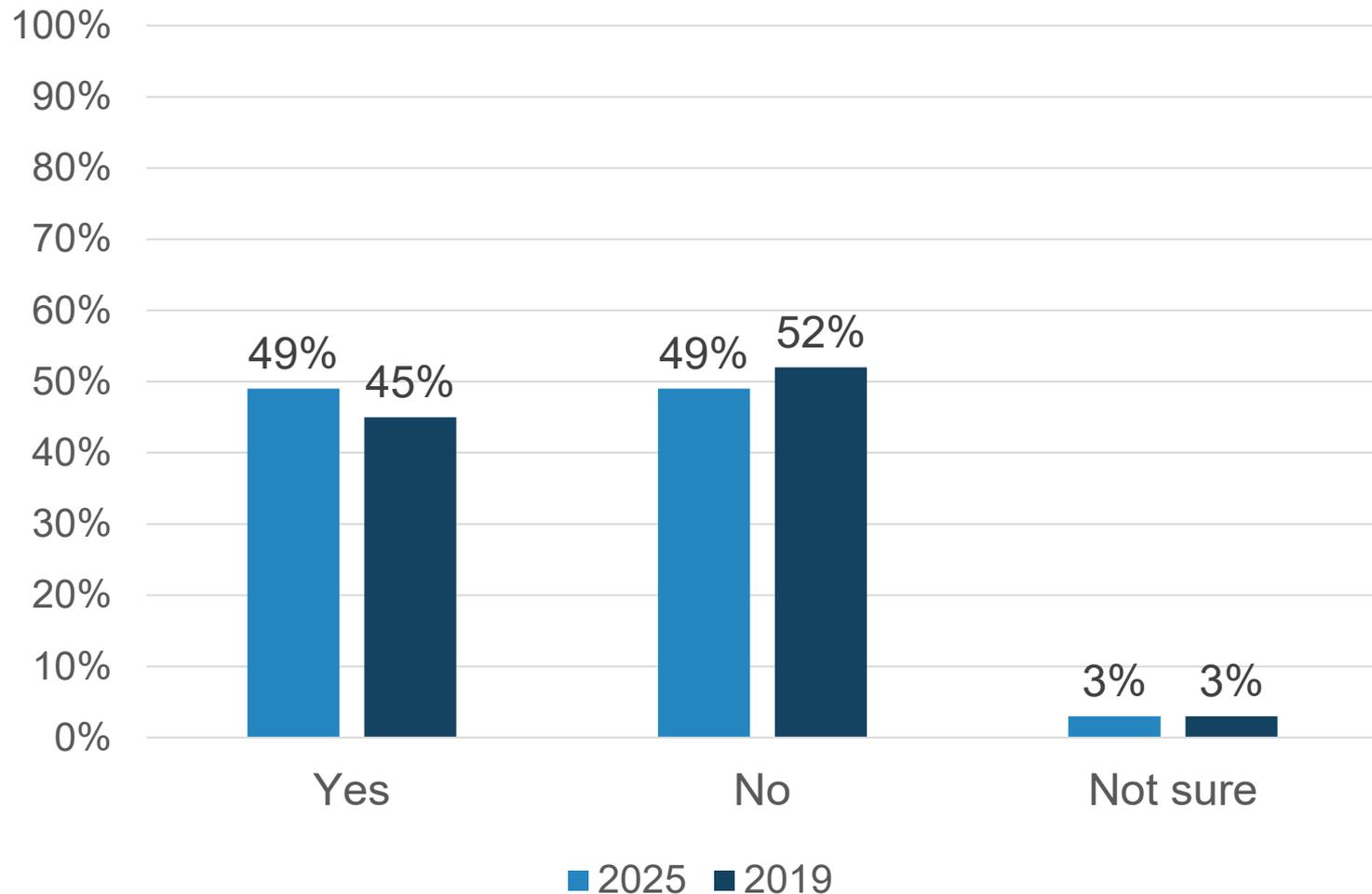
Lifeway research

# “I met at least monthly with a supervisor who guided me in starting the new church work”



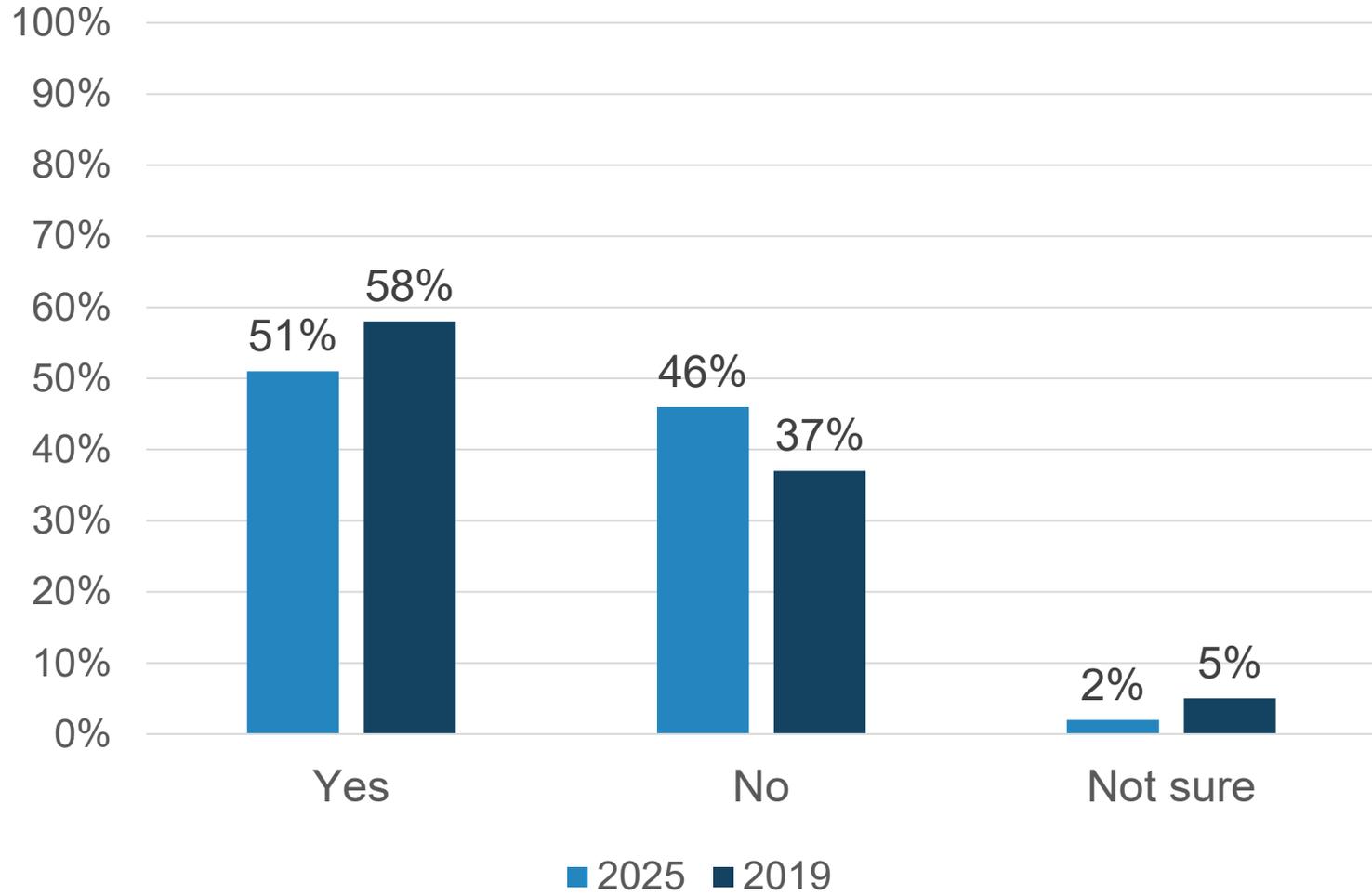
Lifeway research

# “I met at least monthly with a church starting mentor who guided me both in the church starting work and my own personal spiritual formation”



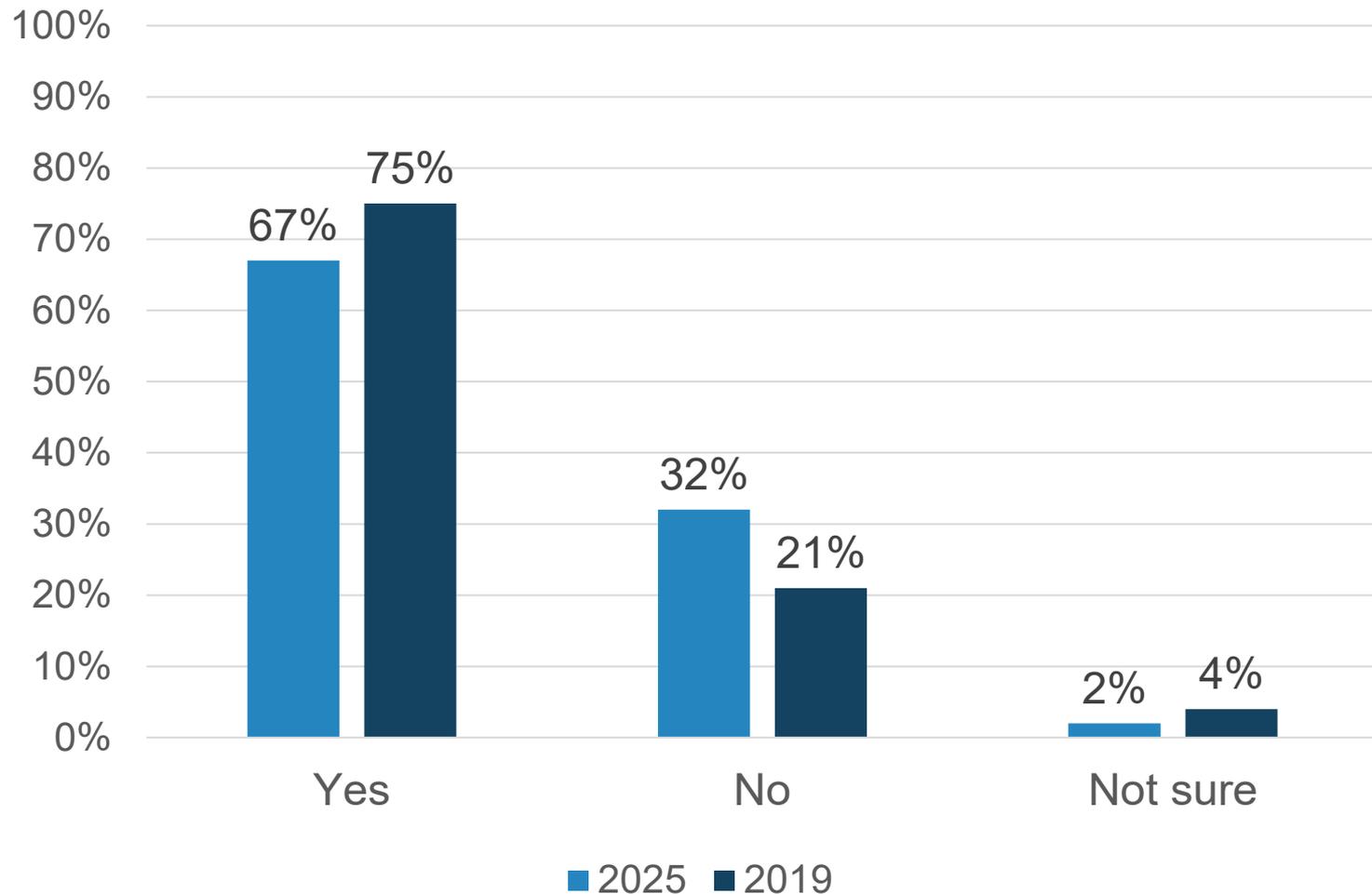
Lifeway research

# “I met at least monthly with church starting peers for accountability and support”



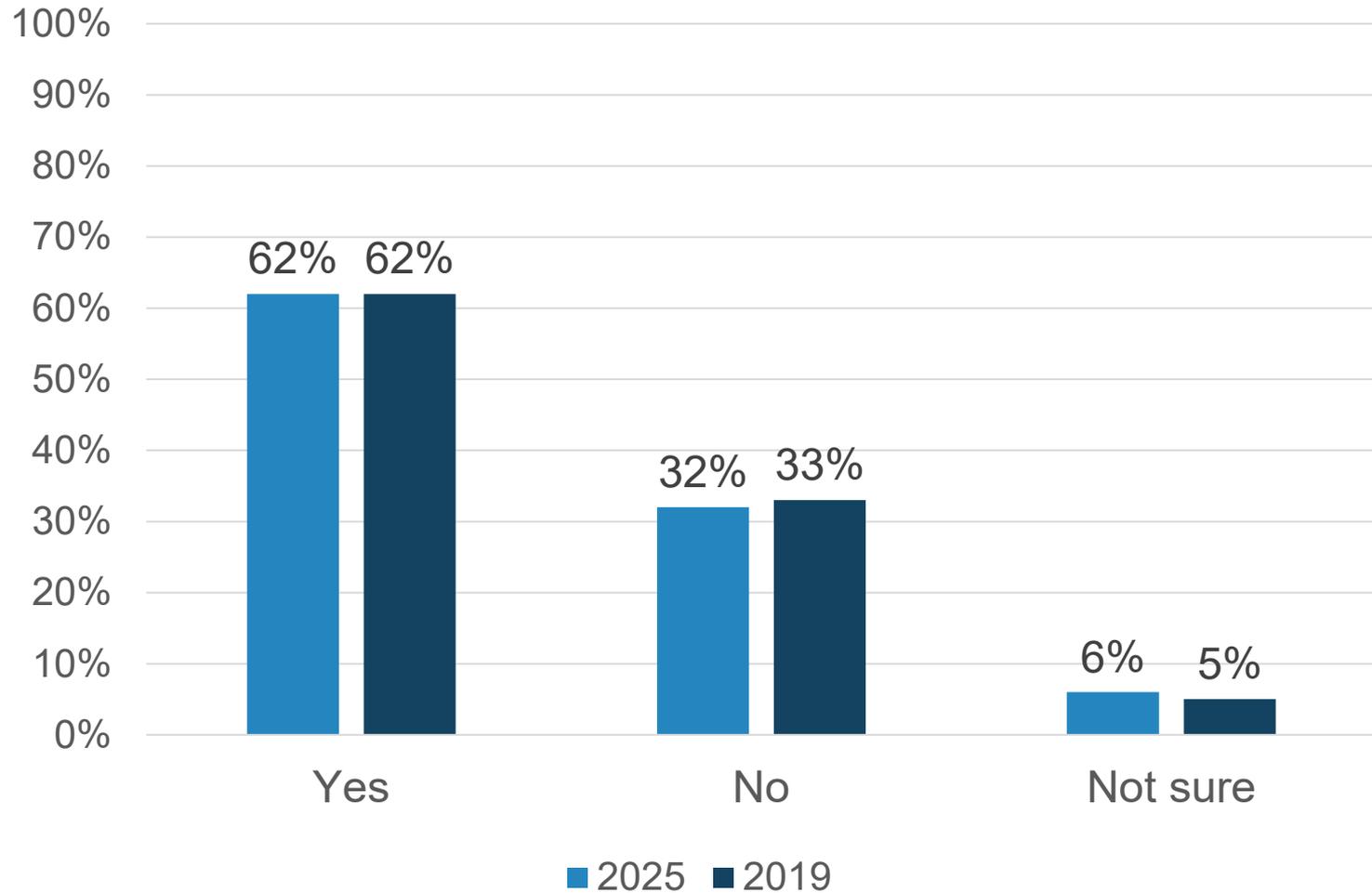
Lifeway research

# More say they did not enlist several personal prayer partners for the first few years of the new church work than in 2019



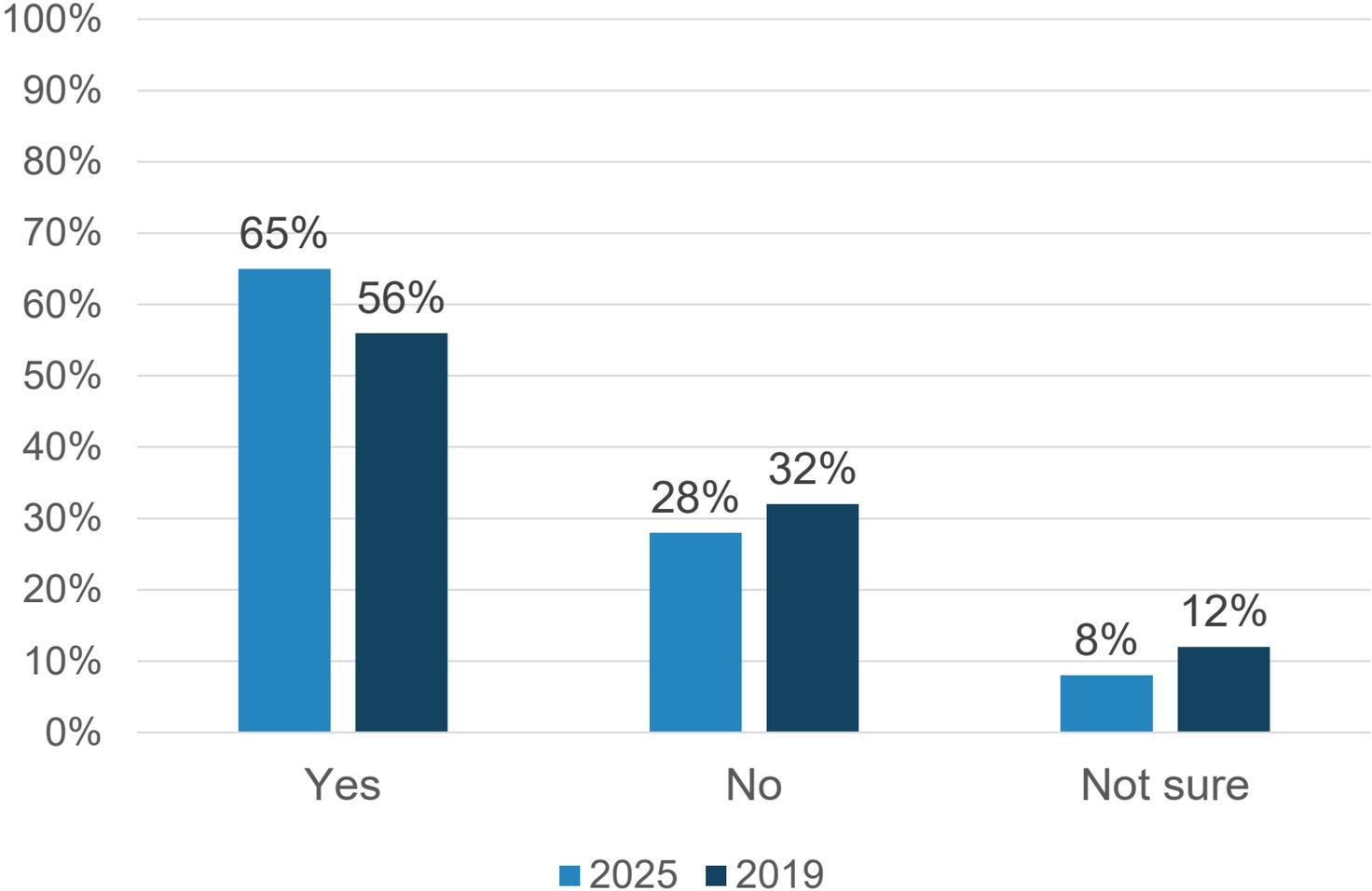
Lifeway research

# “I was actively engaged in a plan of personal spiritual formation during the duration of the new church work”



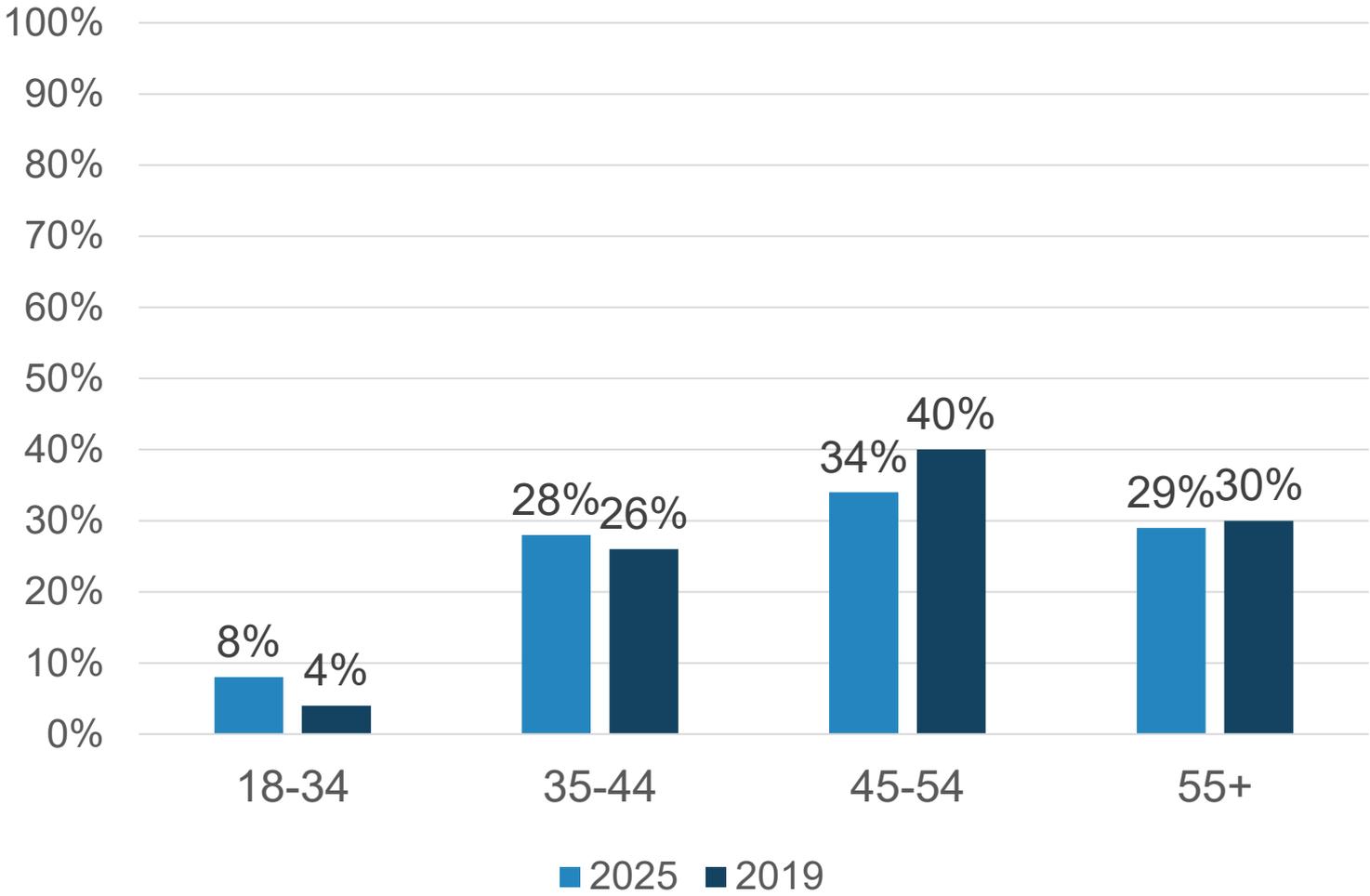
Lifeway research

# The increase in expectations of the new church work meeting the reality of the church starting experience is not statistically significant

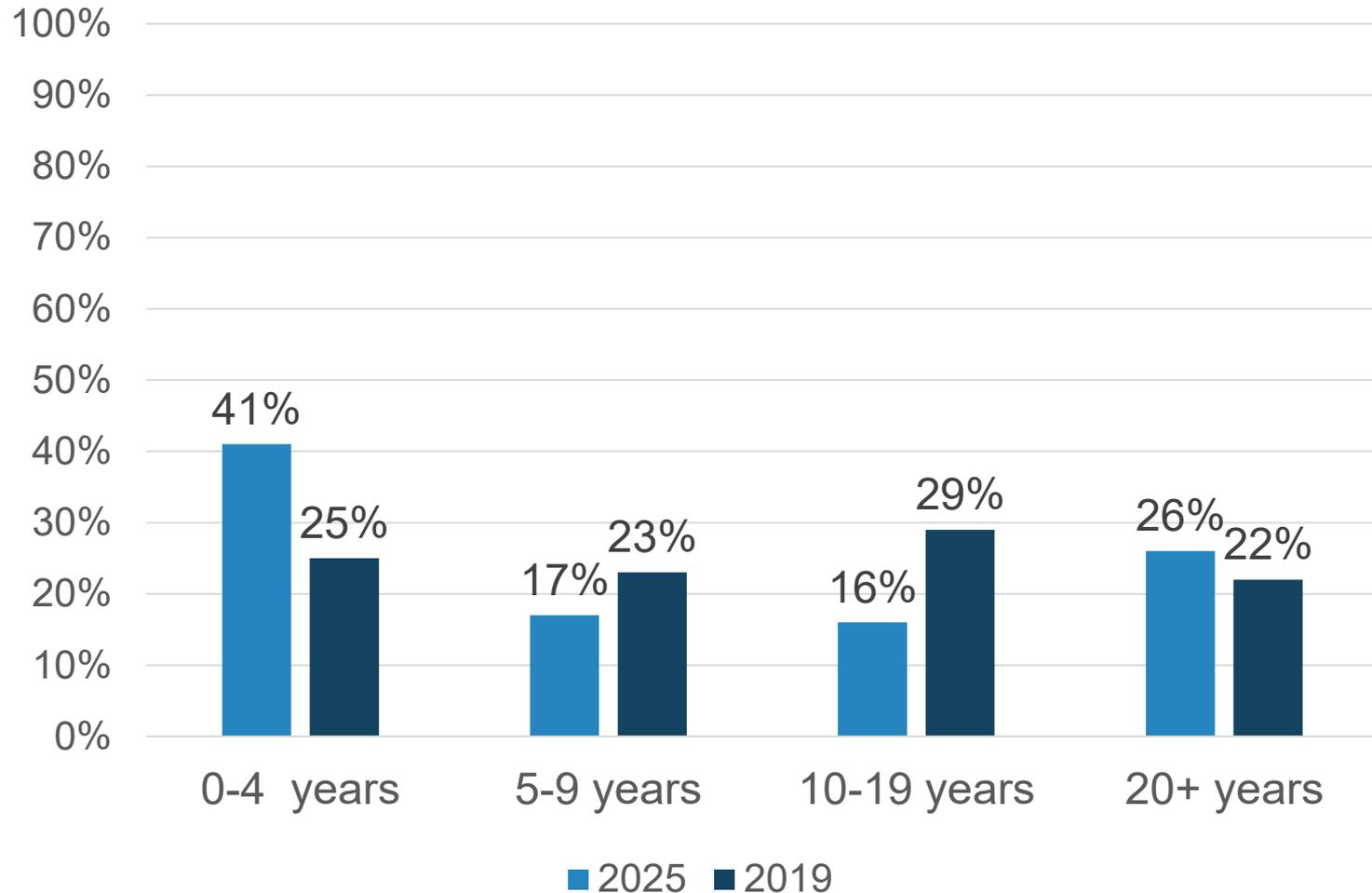


Lifeway research

# Ages of participants



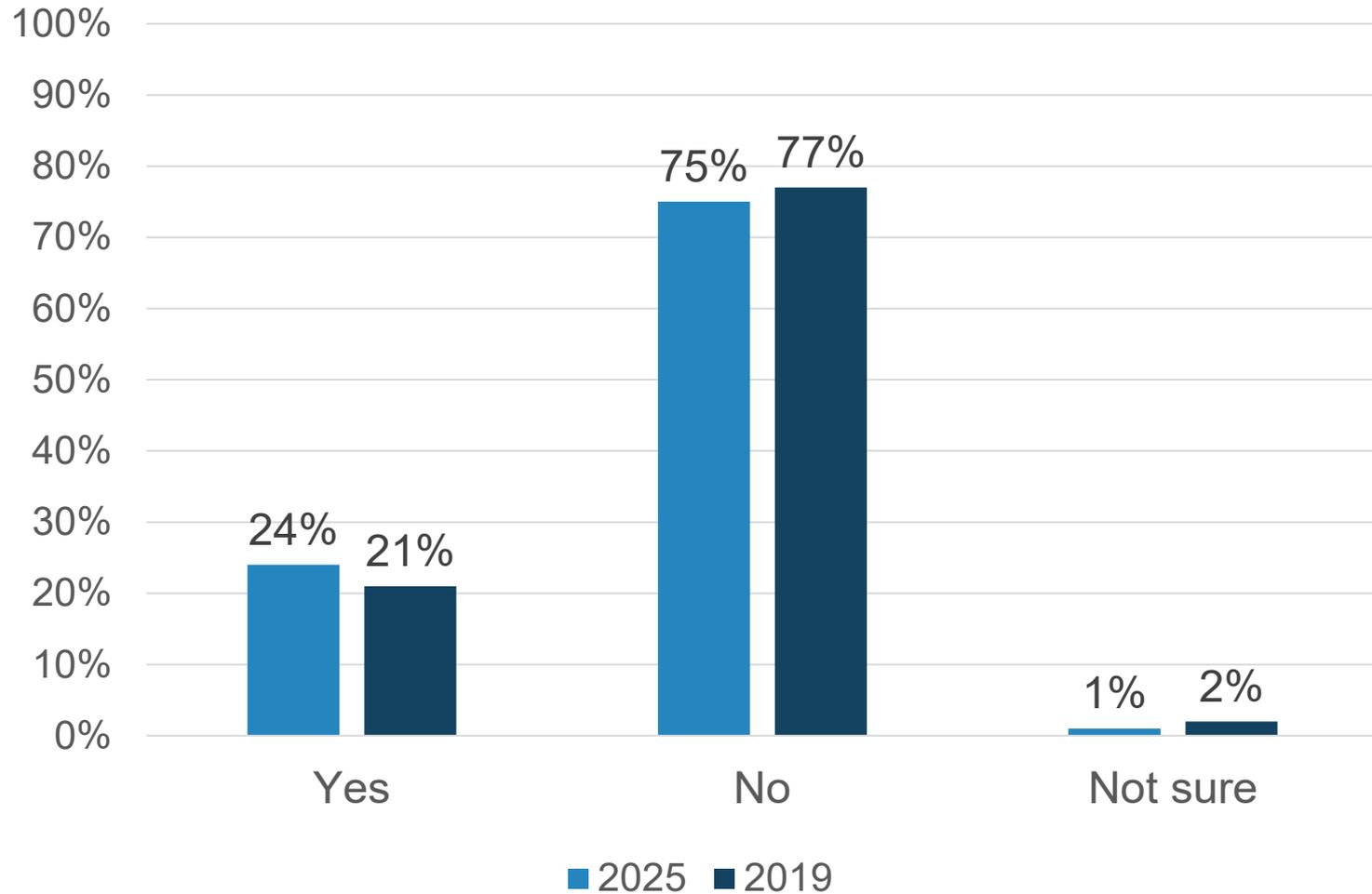
# The median number of years the starter lived in the area before the new church work began declined from 10 in 2019 to 7 in 2025



**Lifeway**research

Q69 "How many years had you lived in this town/city before the new church work began?"

# Three in four did not have health insurance where the majority of the premiums were paid for by others



Lifeway research

Q70 "Did you and your family (if married) have health insurance where the majority of the premiums were paid for by the church, the sponsoring church, the denomination or a church starting network? (Select one)"