

Lifeway **research**

Hispanic Church Planting Study 2025

A SURVEY OF CHURCH PLANTERS

Sponsored by

EXPONENTIAL⁷



**CHURCH
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 - Evangelical Free Church of America
 - Church Multiplication Network (AG)
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 - Baptist Missionary Association of America
 - The Wesleyan Church
 - Evangelical Covenant 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 sample is 292 surveys (all in the U.S.); number answering varies by question

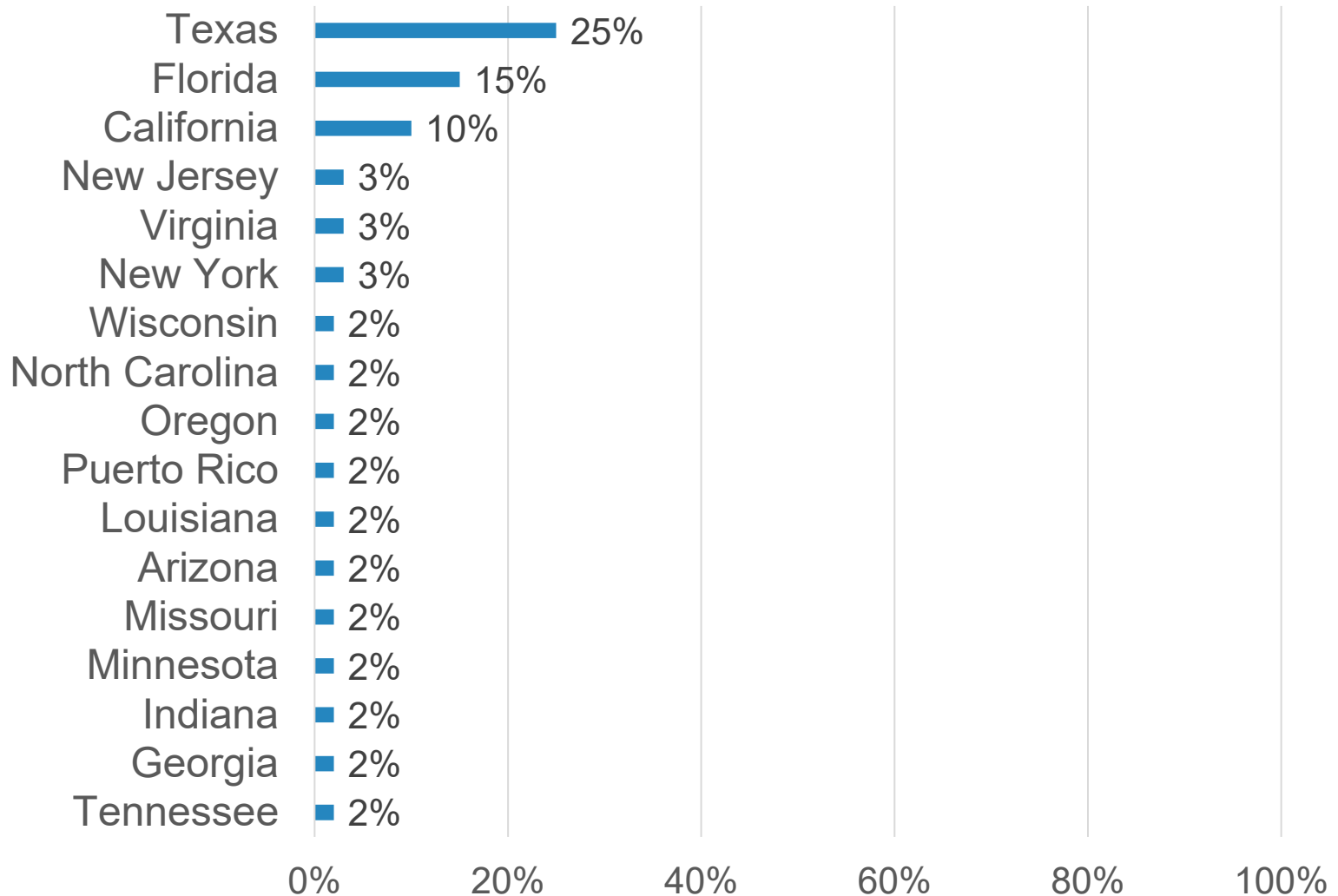
Who the Study Includes:

- Baptist Missionary Association of America
- Christian & Missionary Alliance
- Church Multiplication Network/Assemblies of God
- Evangelical Covenant Church
- Evangelical Free Church of America
- Foursquare
- Free Methodists
- 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
- Texas District Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
- Vineyard
- The Wesleyan Church

Descriptors of Hispanic New Church Works

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Location of new church work

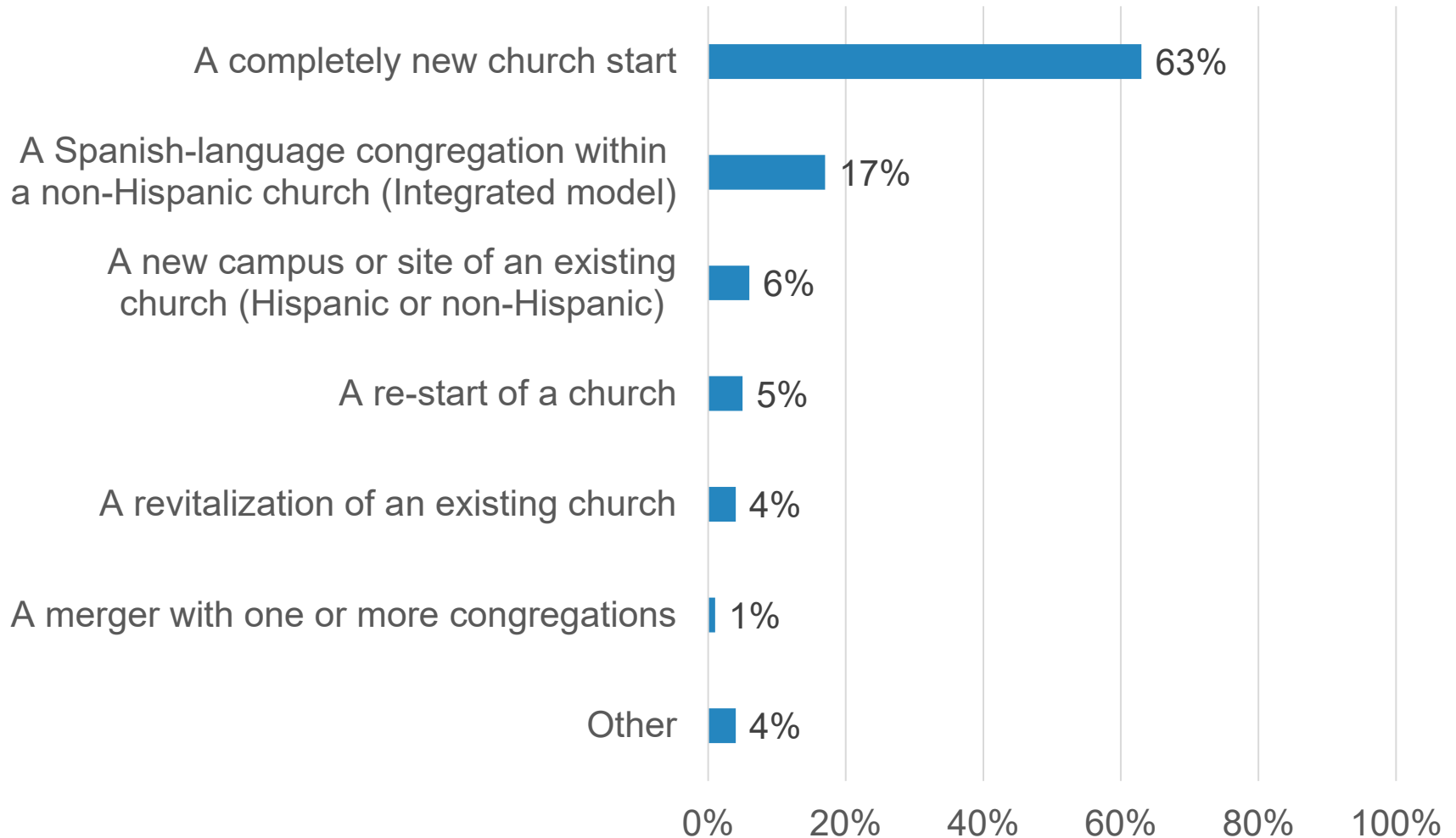


States with 1% or less: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, West Virginia

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Q1: "What state or province is your church located?" n=292

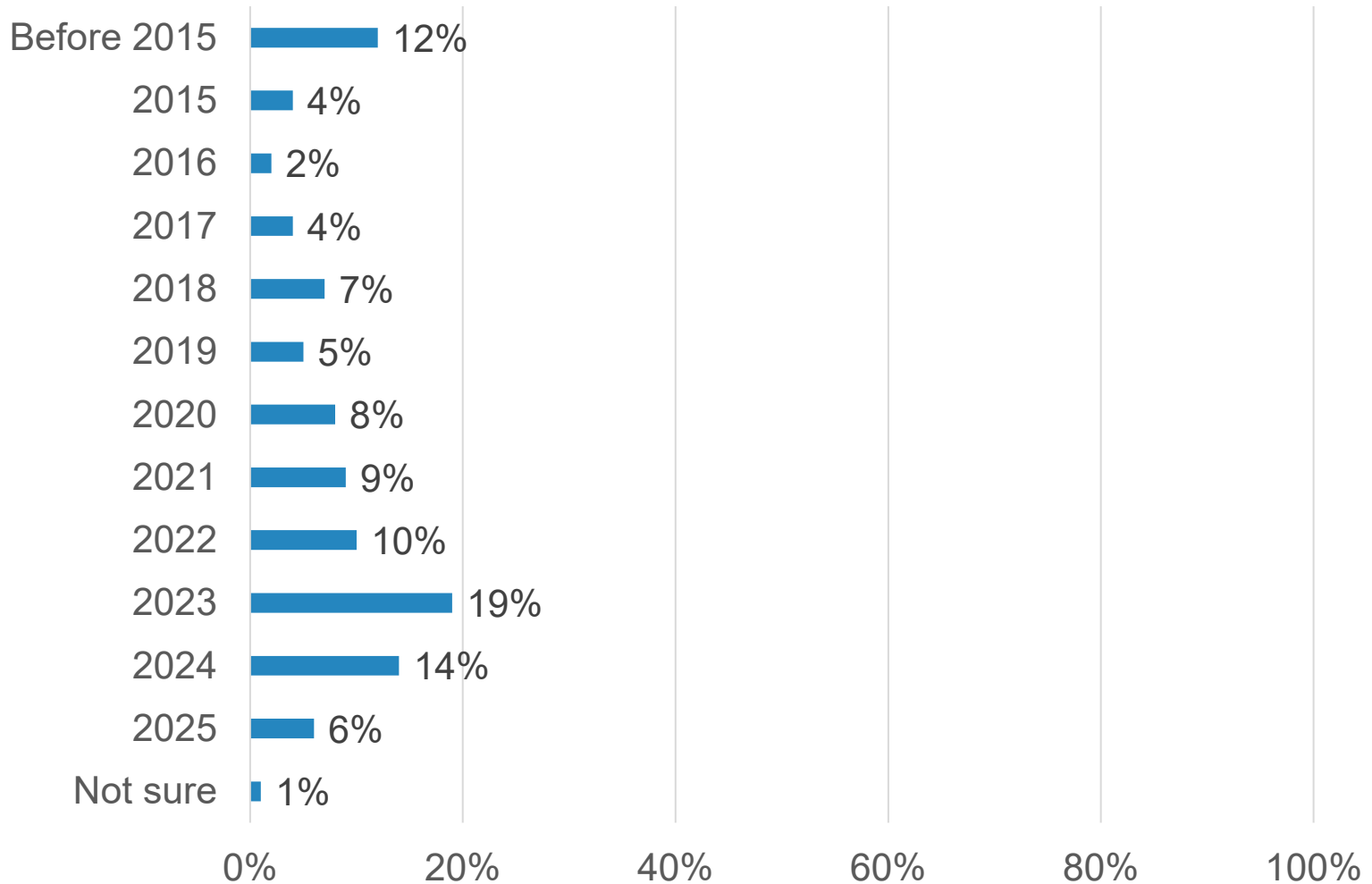
63% began as a completely new church work or start



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Q7: "What best describes the beginning of the new church work? (Please select one)" n=292

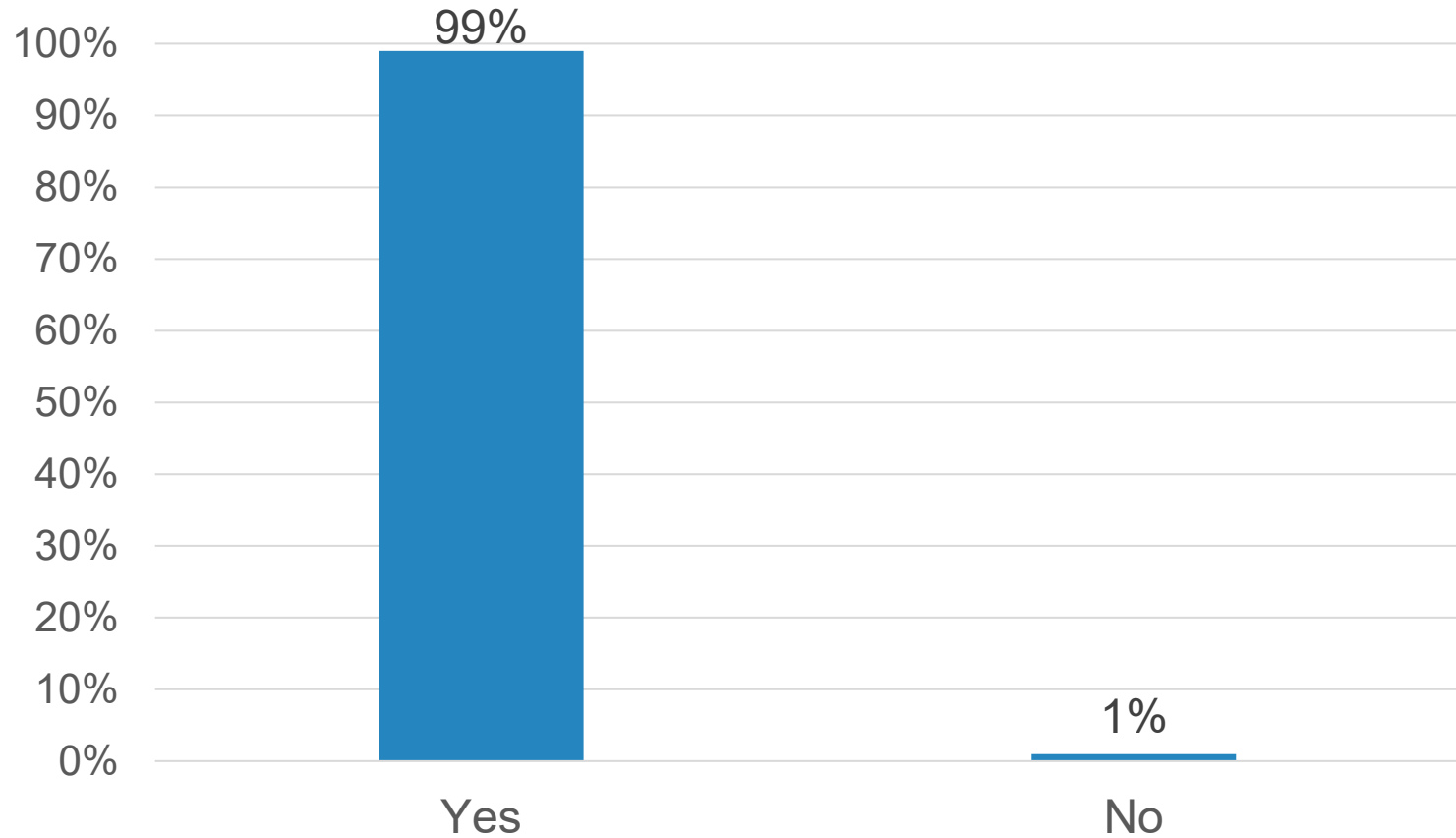
60% began in 2022 or earlier



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Q8: "What year did this new church work start? (If you are not sure, please give your best estimate.) For church starts, new sites or campuses: the year when people began to meet together regularly. For mergers, revitalization, or re-starts: the year the church began to meet regularly after this change in leadership took place. (Please select the best year)" n=292

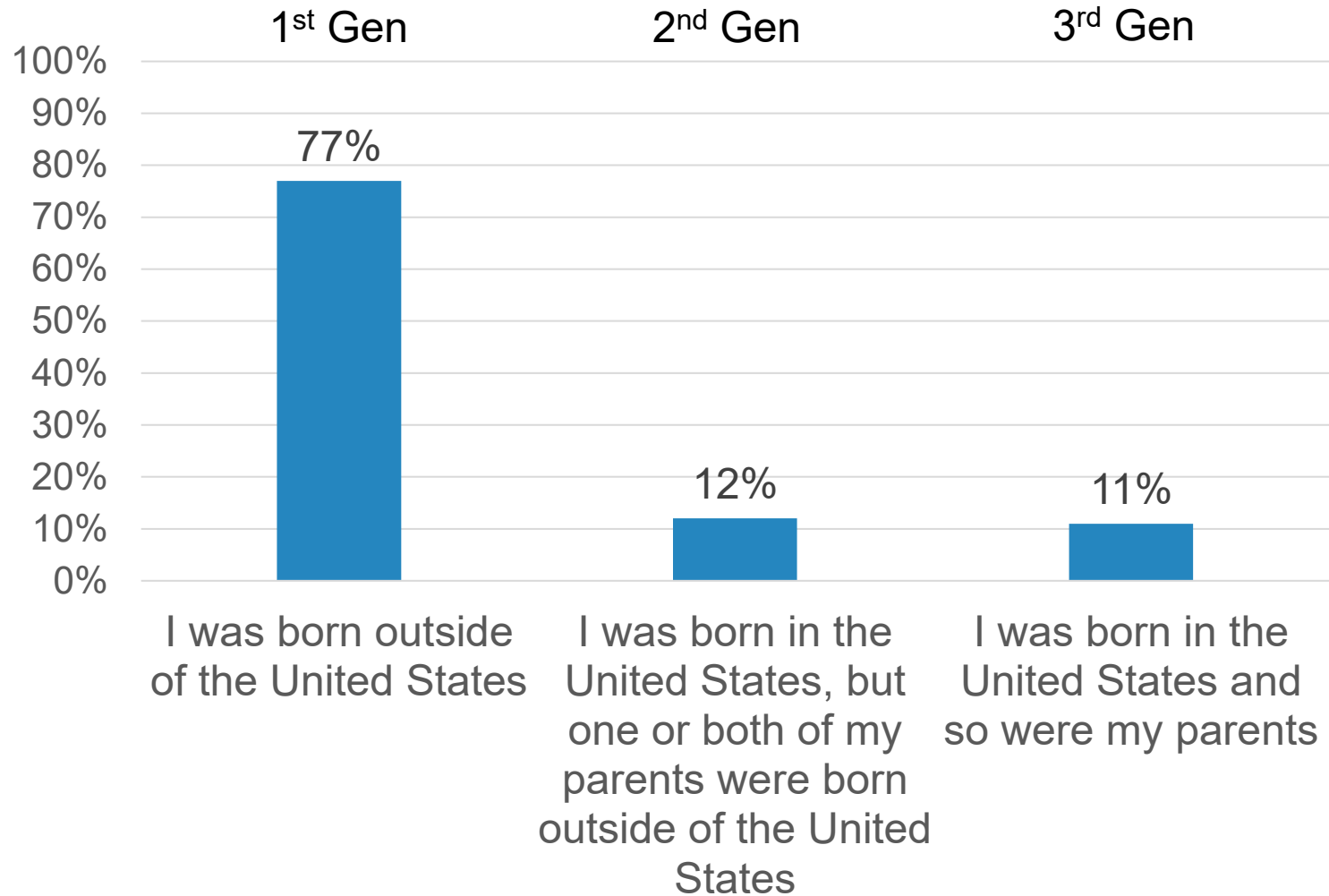
99% of participating new church works exist today



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Q9: "Does the new church work still exist today?" n=292

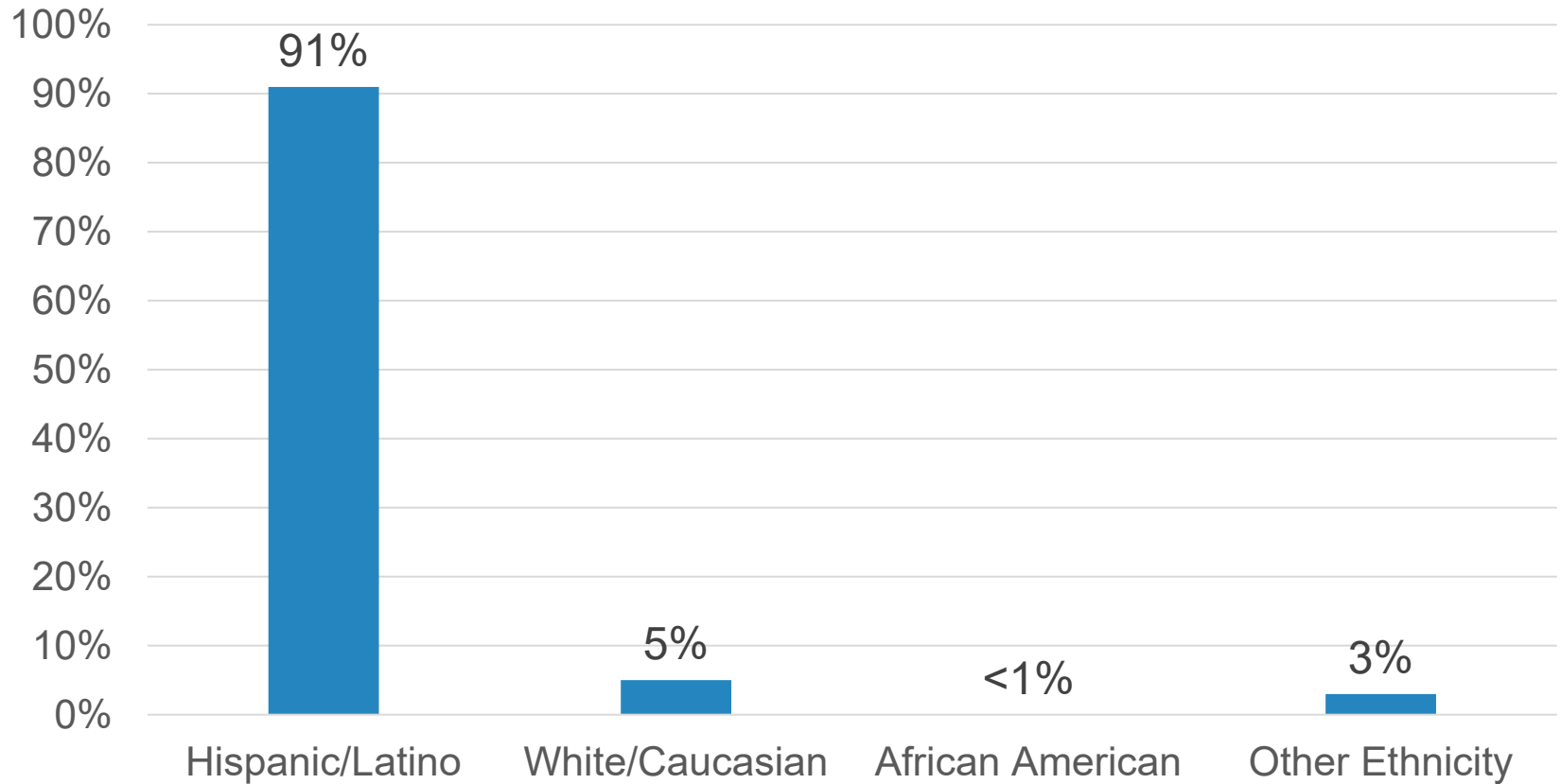
77% of lead pastors were born outside of the U.S.



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Q10: "Which of the following best describes where you and your parents were born?" n=292

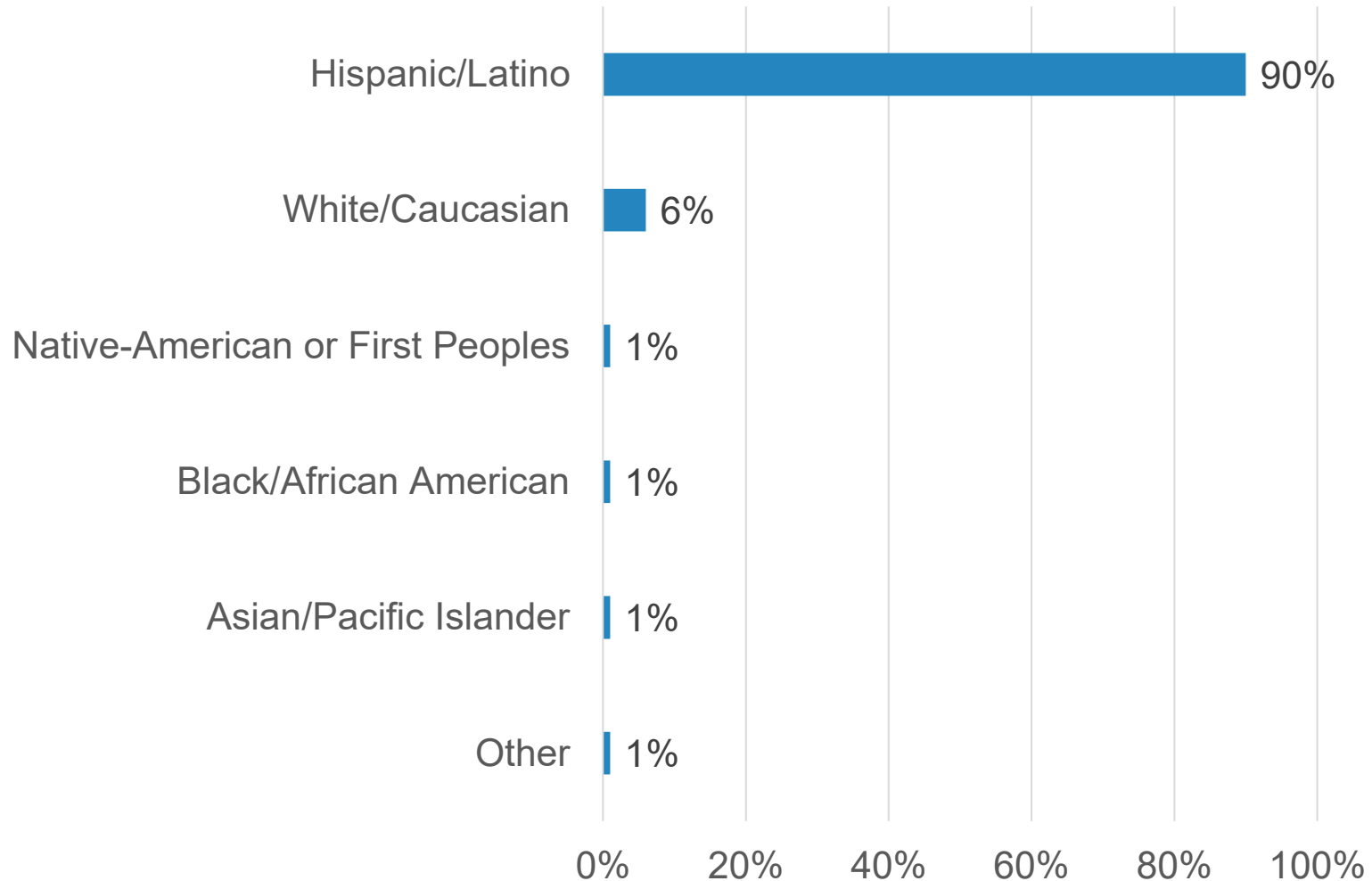
Ethnic and racial background of the pastors of Hispanic new church works



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Q12: "What is your racial or ethnic background? (Select one)" n=292

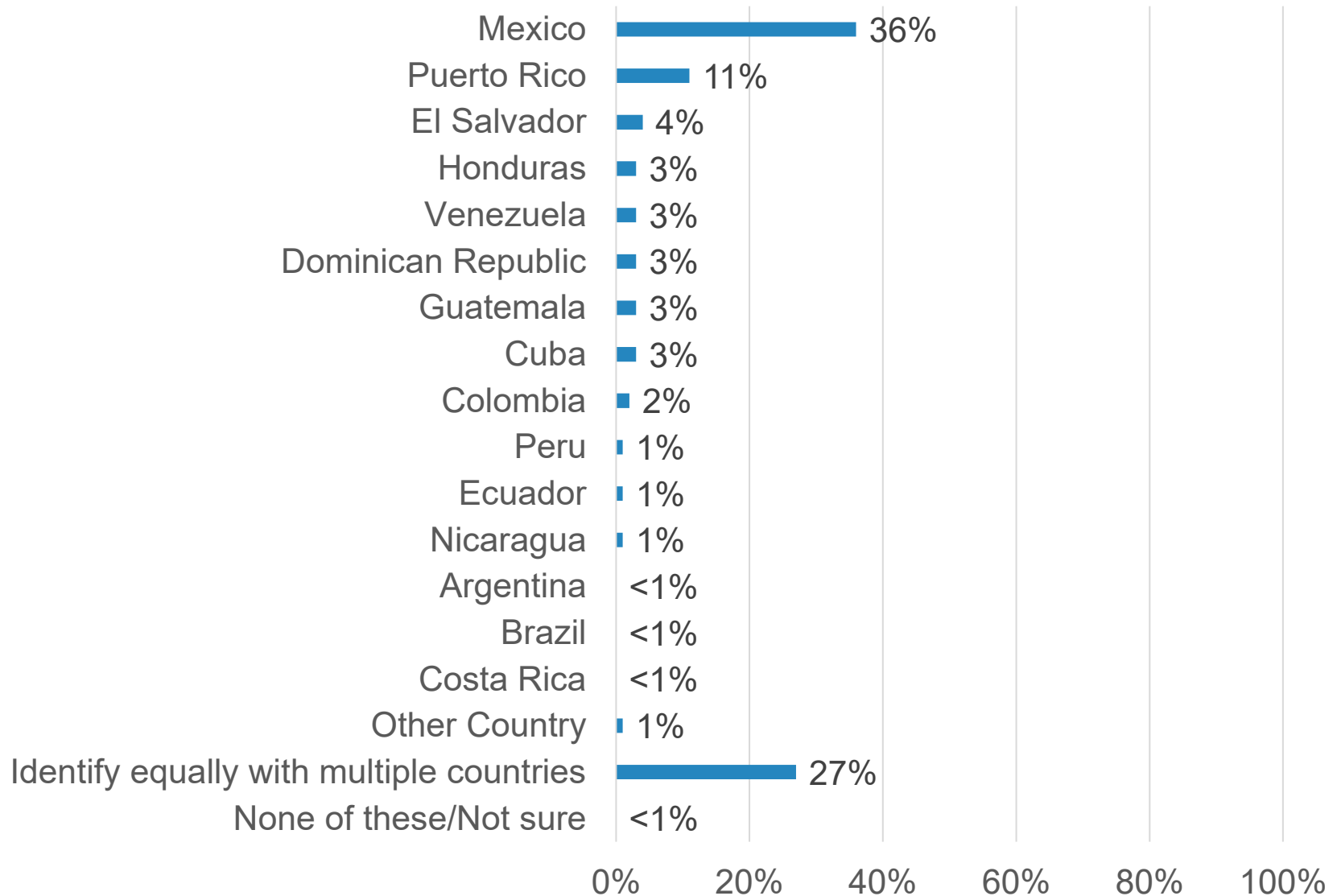
Average current ethnic make-up of congregations



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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%." n=292

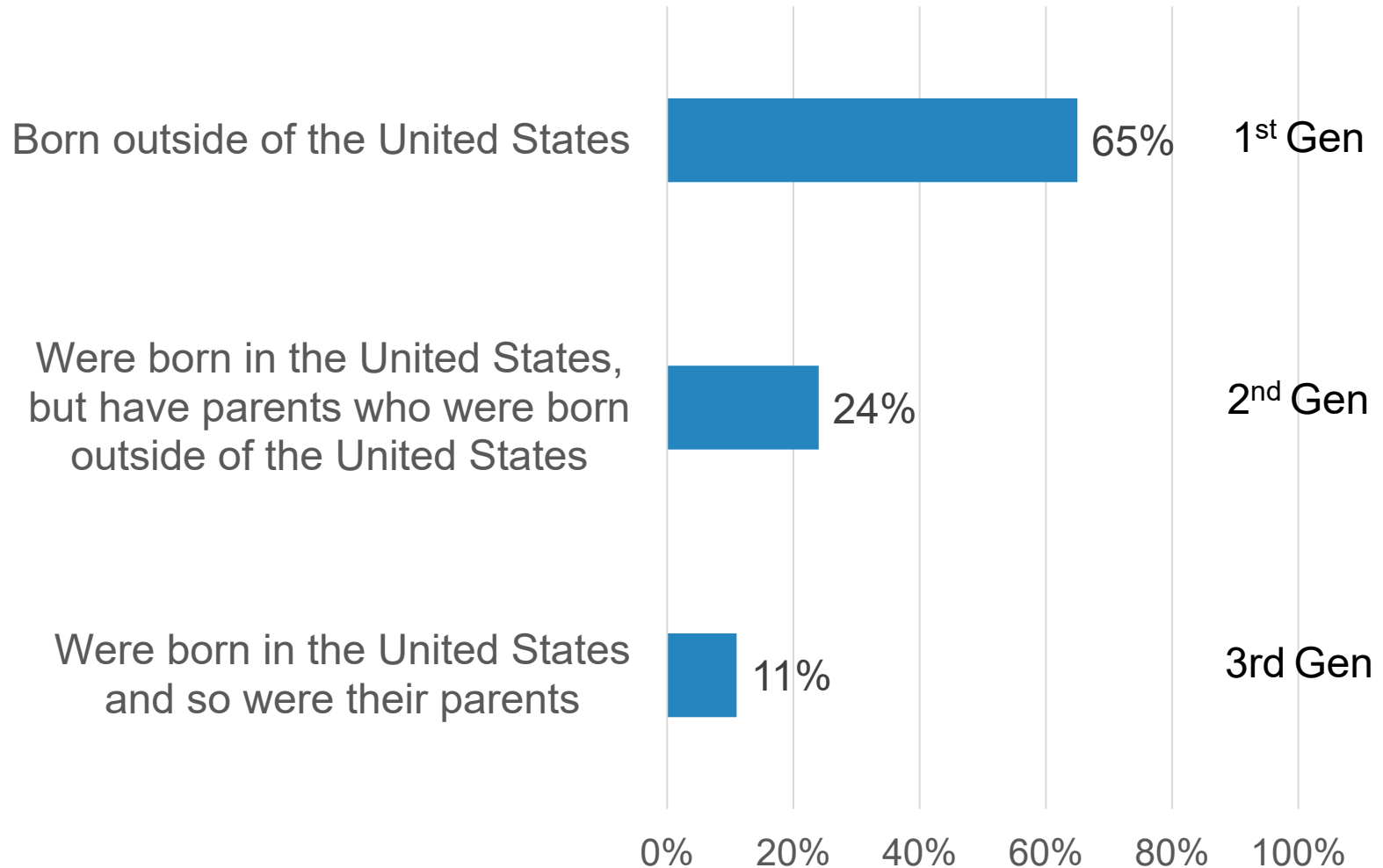
36% of new church works say they have the most attendees with Mexican origin



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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)" n=287

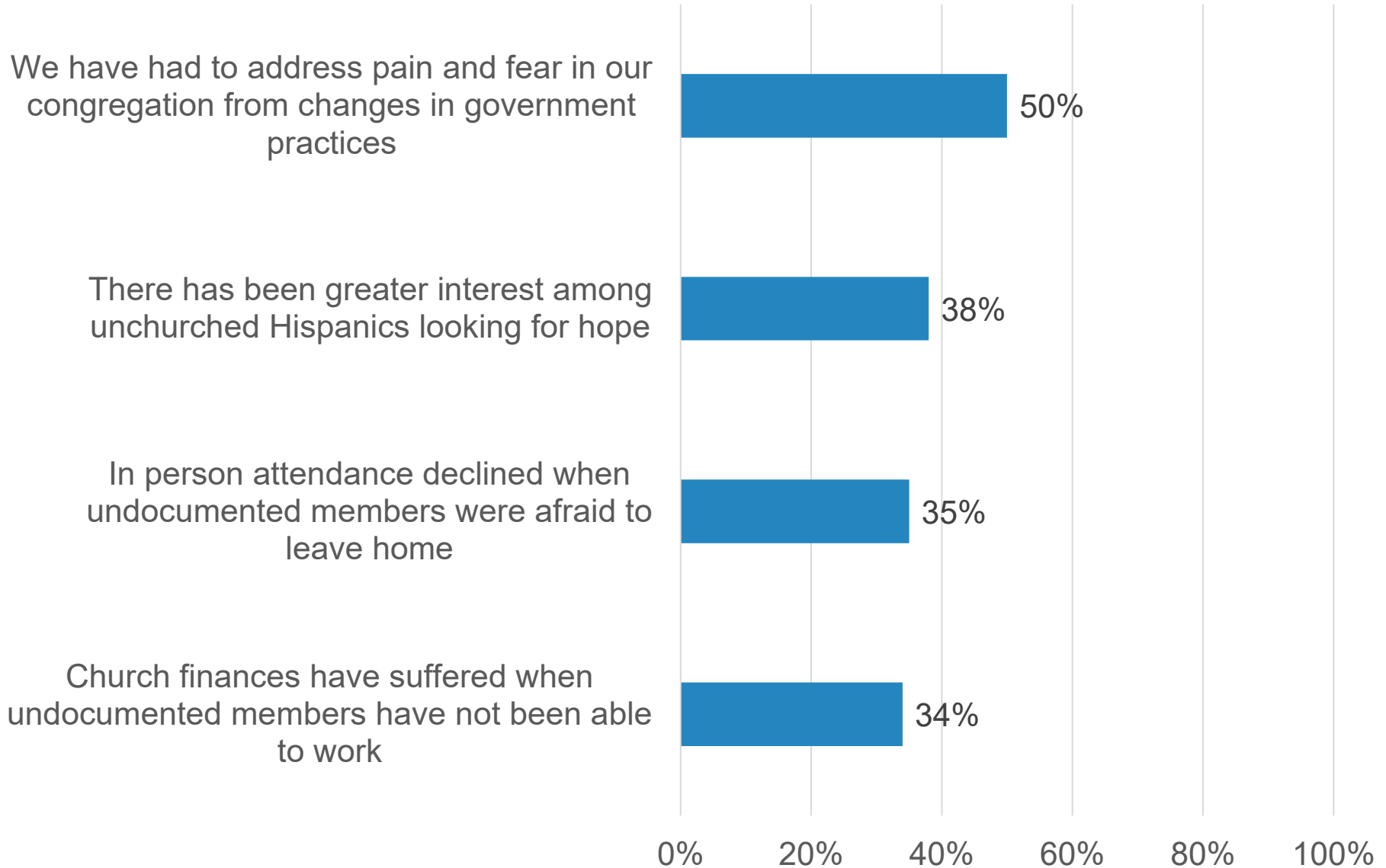
Average current immigration breakdown of new church work congregations



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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%." n=292

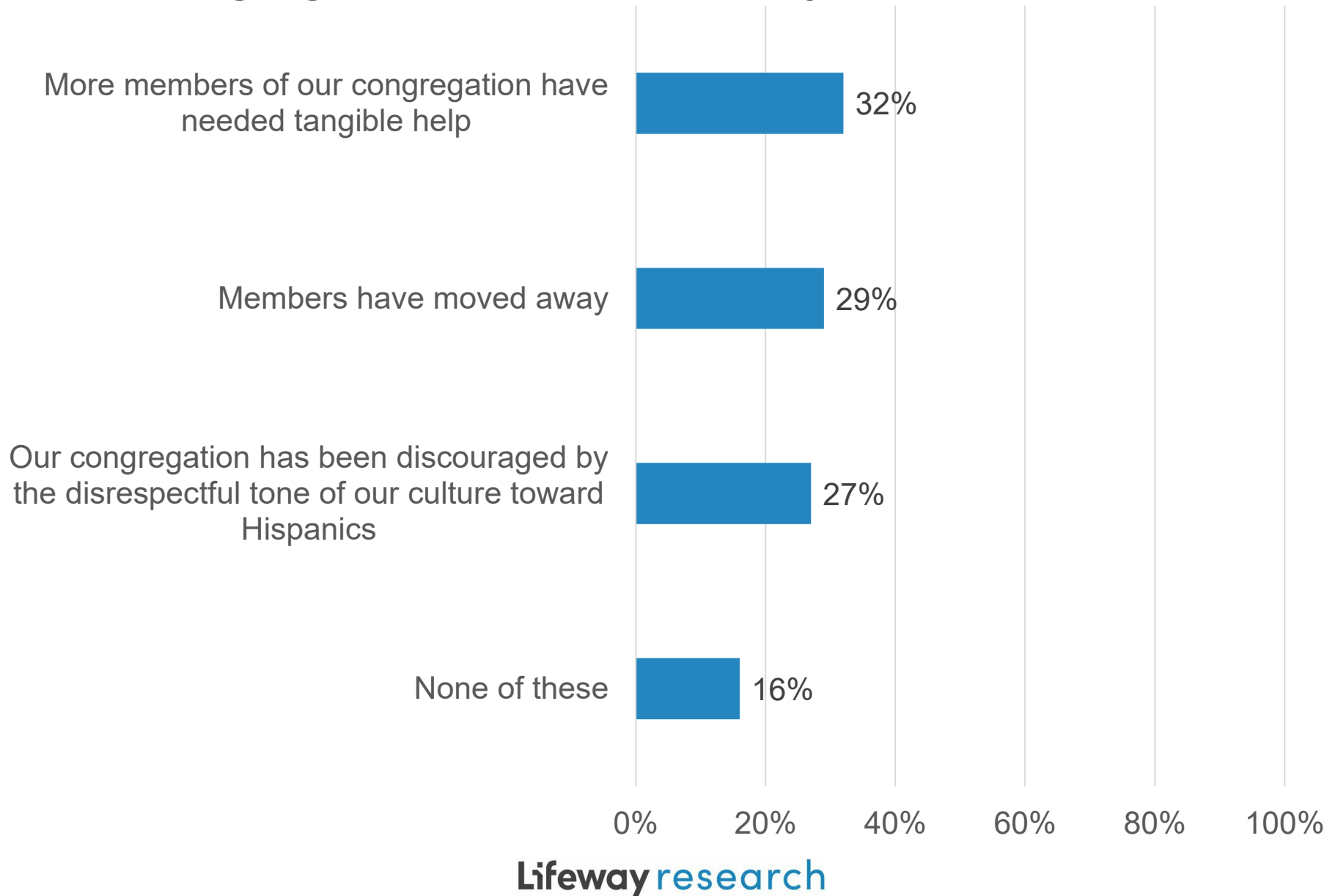
“Which, if any, of the following changes has your congregation seen in the last year?”



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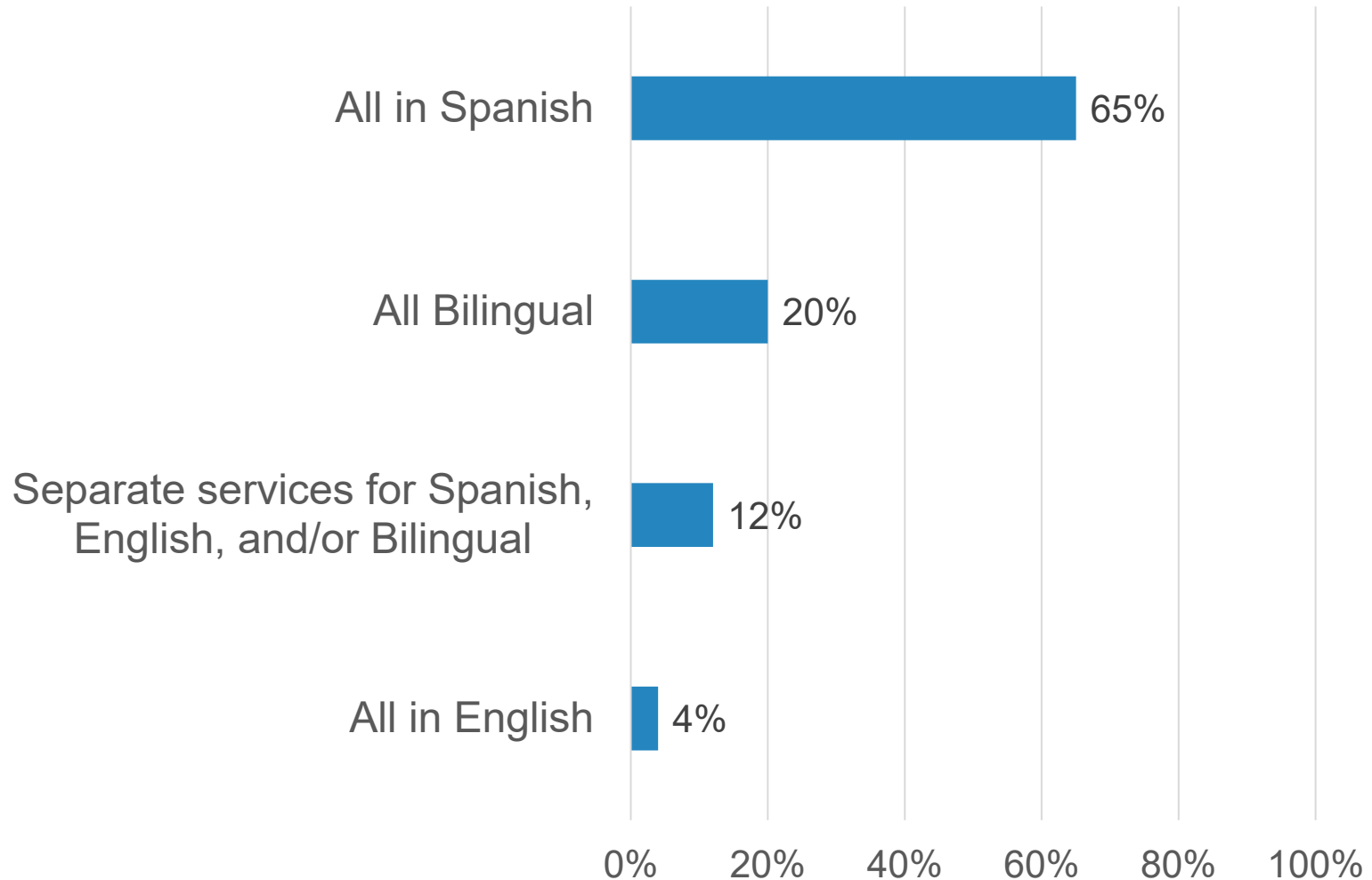
Q17: “Which, if any, of the following changes has your congregation seen in the last year? (Select all that apply) ” n=291

“Which, if any, of the following changes has your congregation seen in the last year?” (continued)



Q17: “Which, if any, of the following changes has your congregation seen in the last year? (Select all that apply) ” n=291

65% conduct worship services only in Spanish; 20% conduct bilingual services

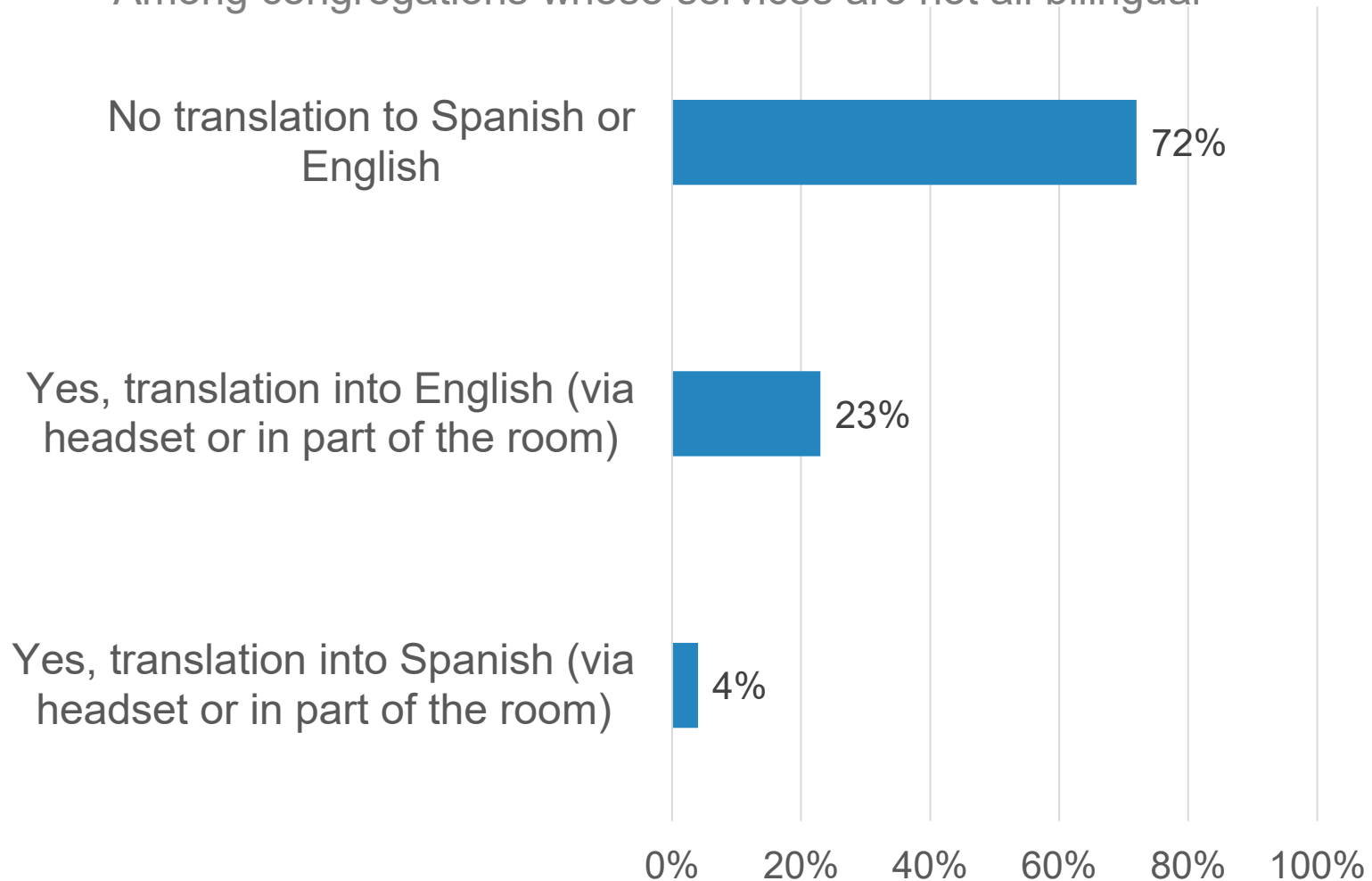


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Q18: "What language(s) are used to lead your worship services? (Select one)" n=292

72% do not offer translations for the single language used in worship

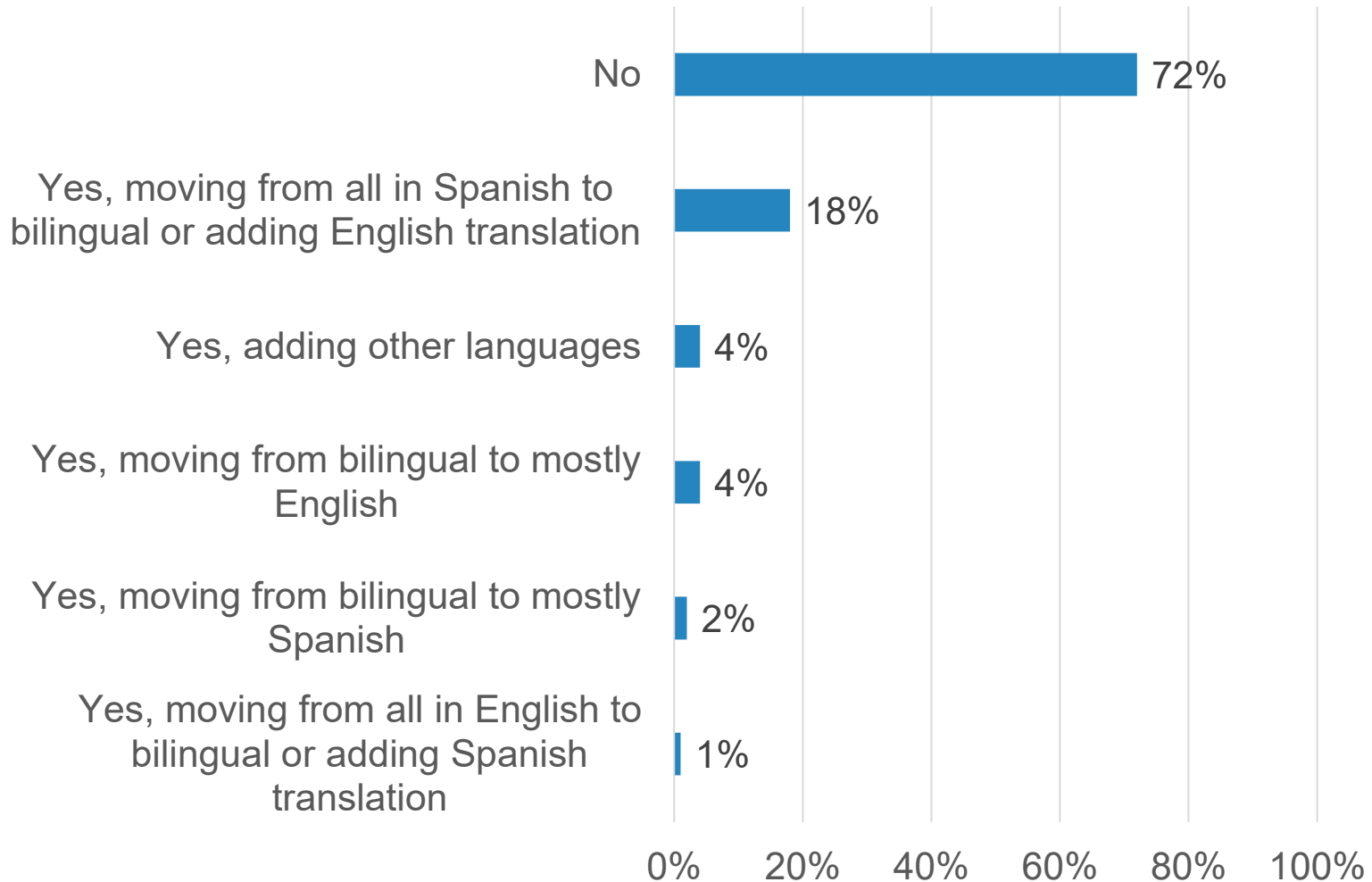
Among congregations whose services are not all bilingual



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Q19: "Does your church offer translation each week of the language used in worship?" n=231

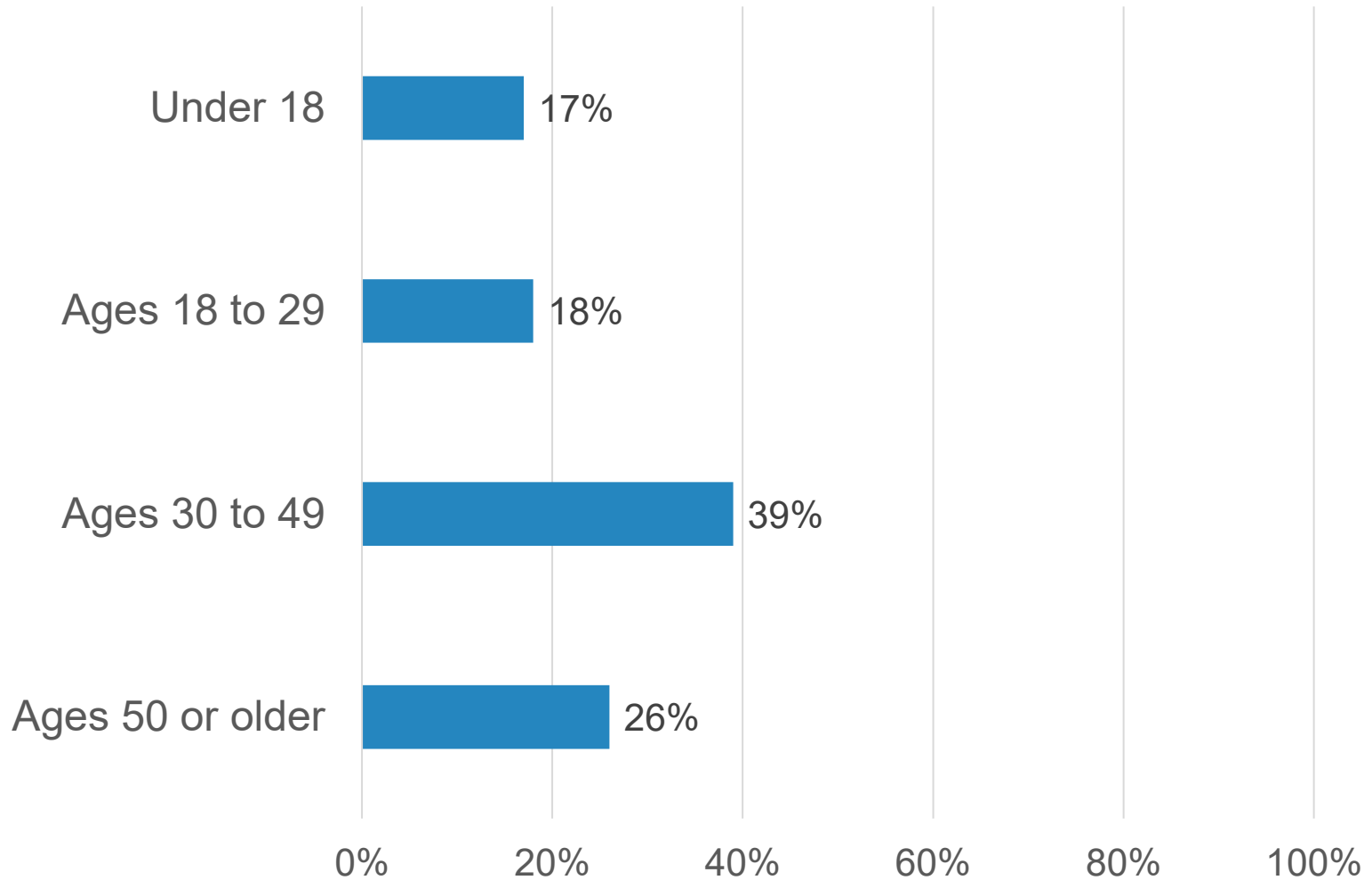
72% do not plan to transition the language used in their church in the next year



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Q20: "In the next year will your church be transitioning the language used in your church?" n=292

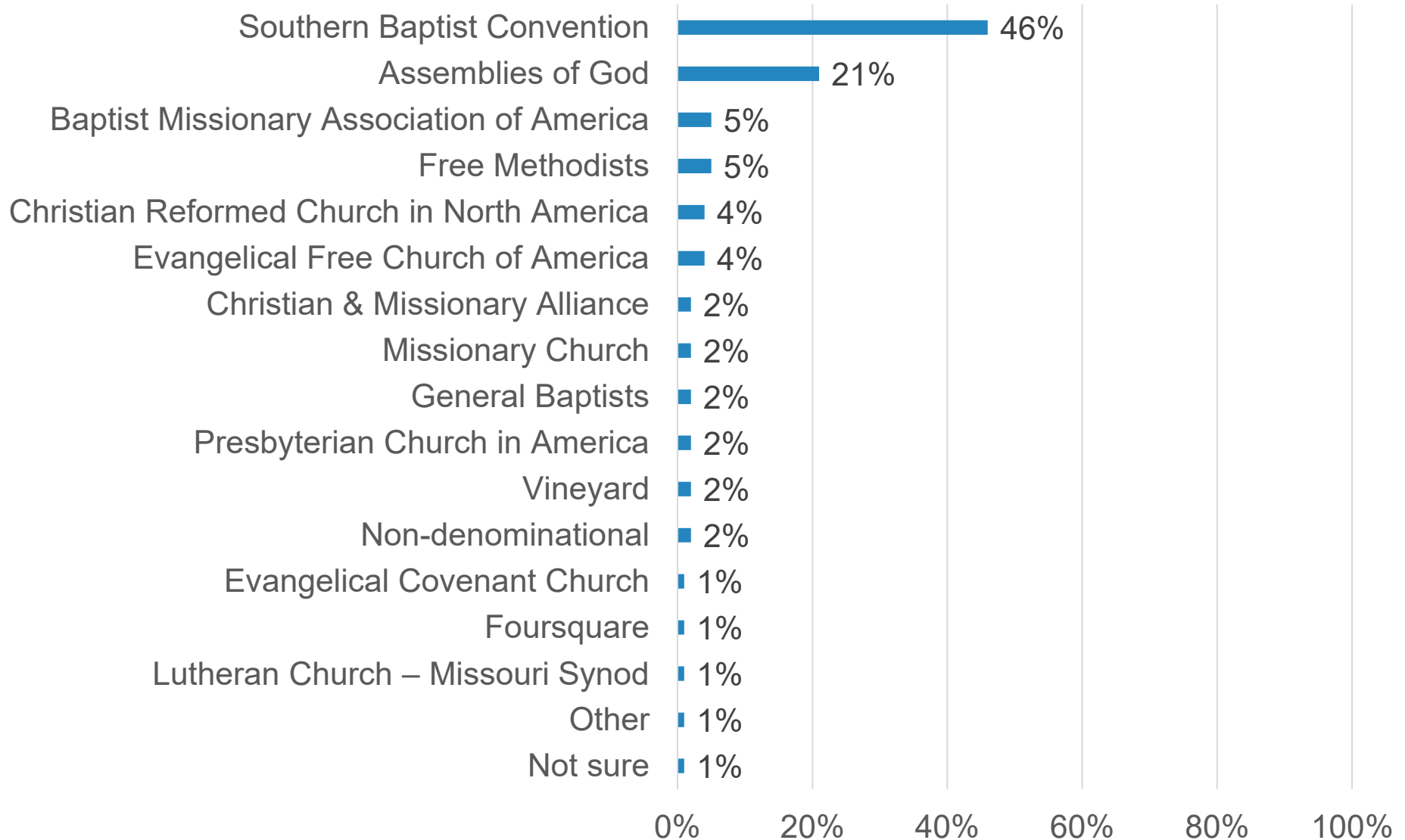
Average age breakdown of new church work attendees



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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%" n=292

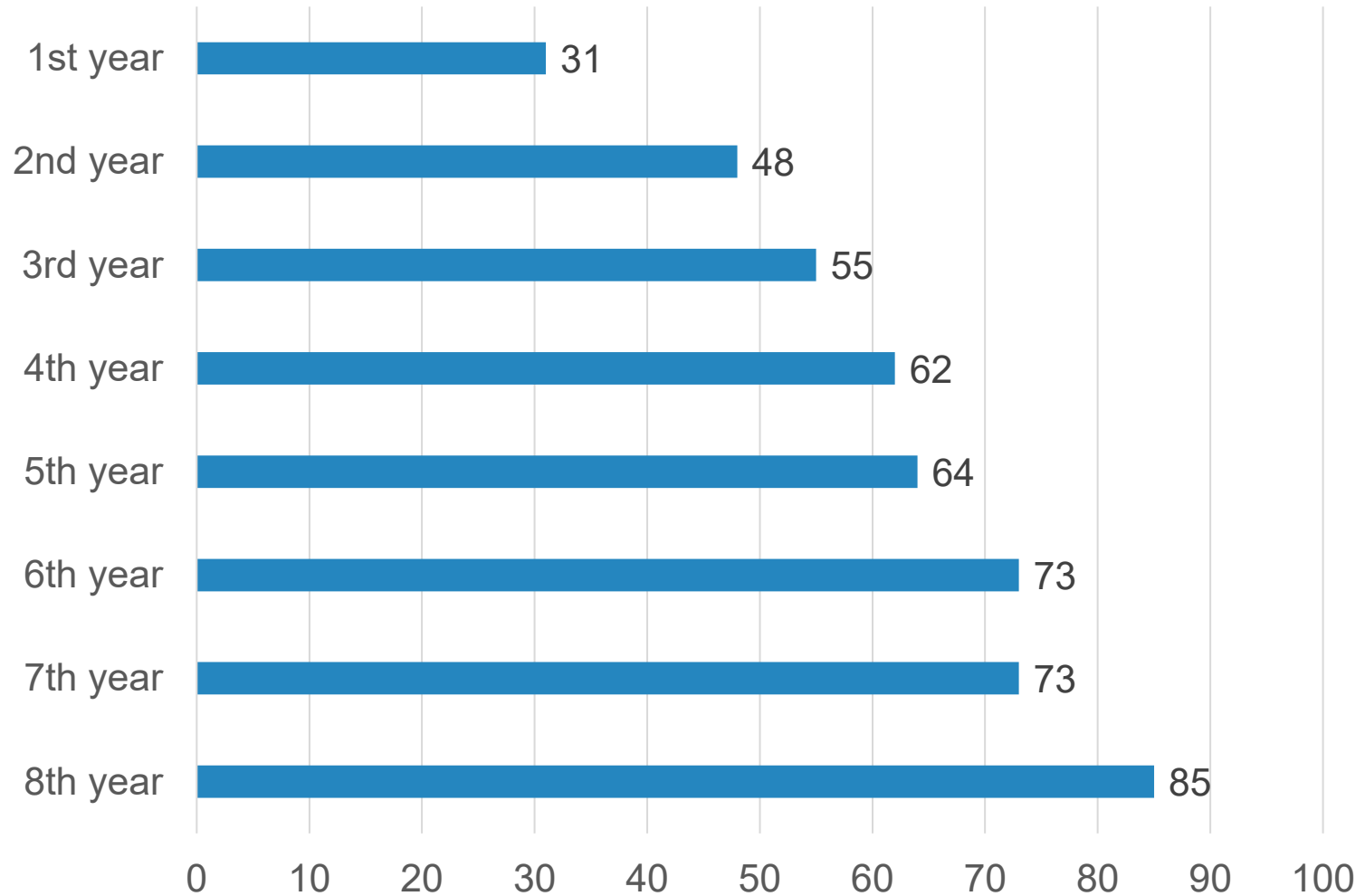
Denomination of new church work



Receiving less than 1%: Free Will Baptist, Reformed Church in America, Wesleyan Church, Other

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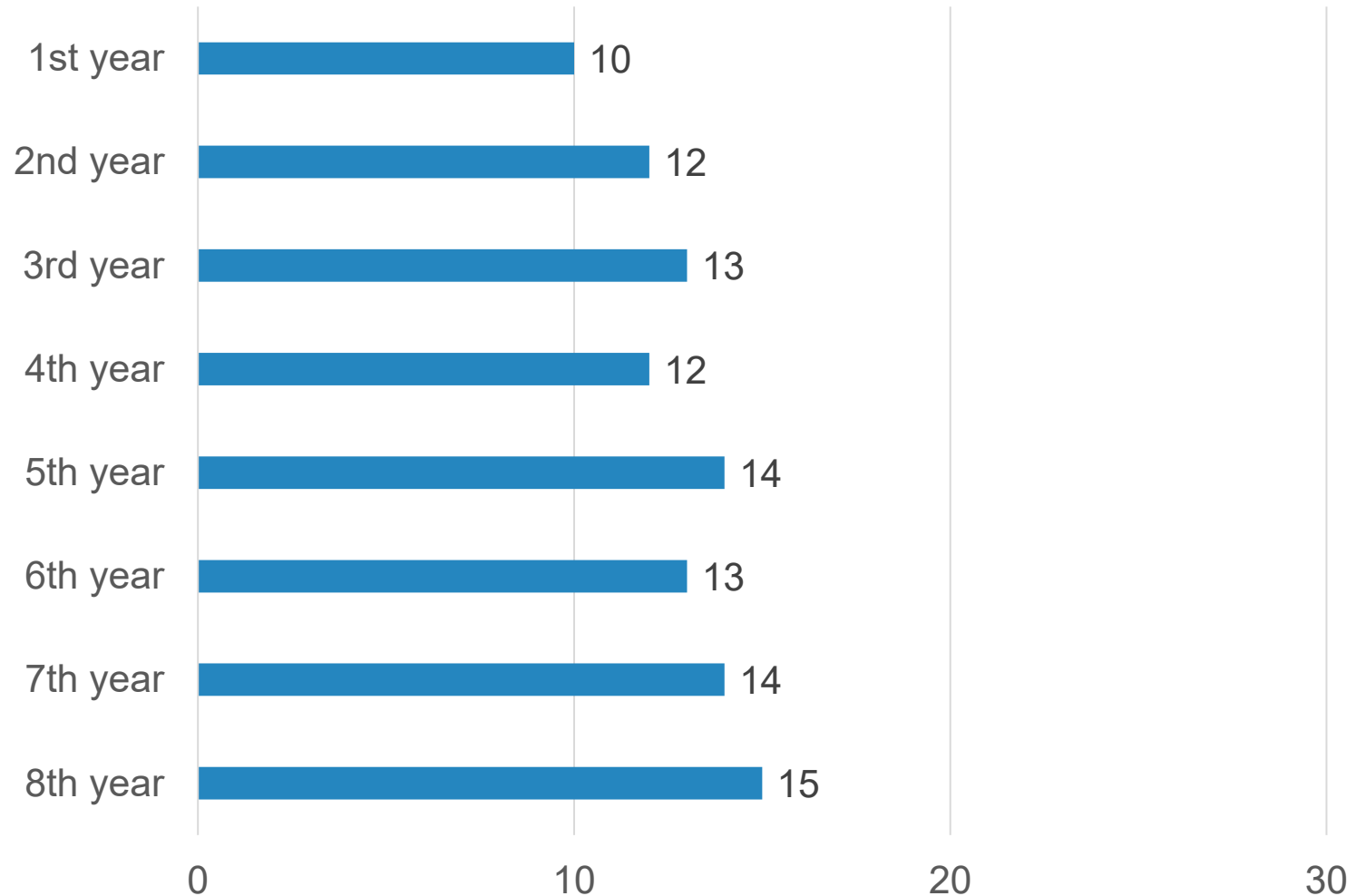
Average weekly worship attendance by year



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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.)" Year 1 n=282

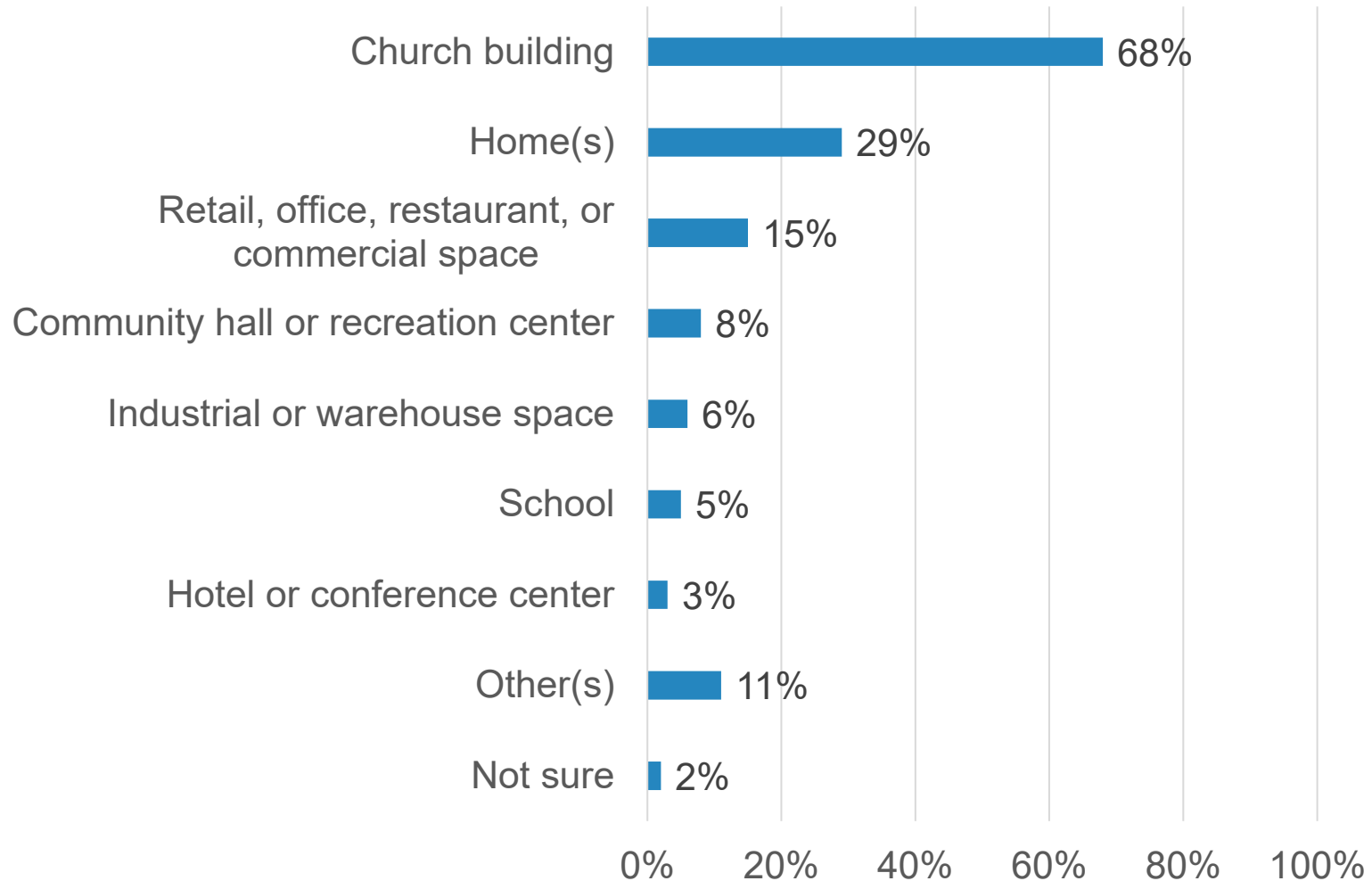
Average number of new, first-time commitments to Jesus Christ by year



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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.)" Year 1 n=244

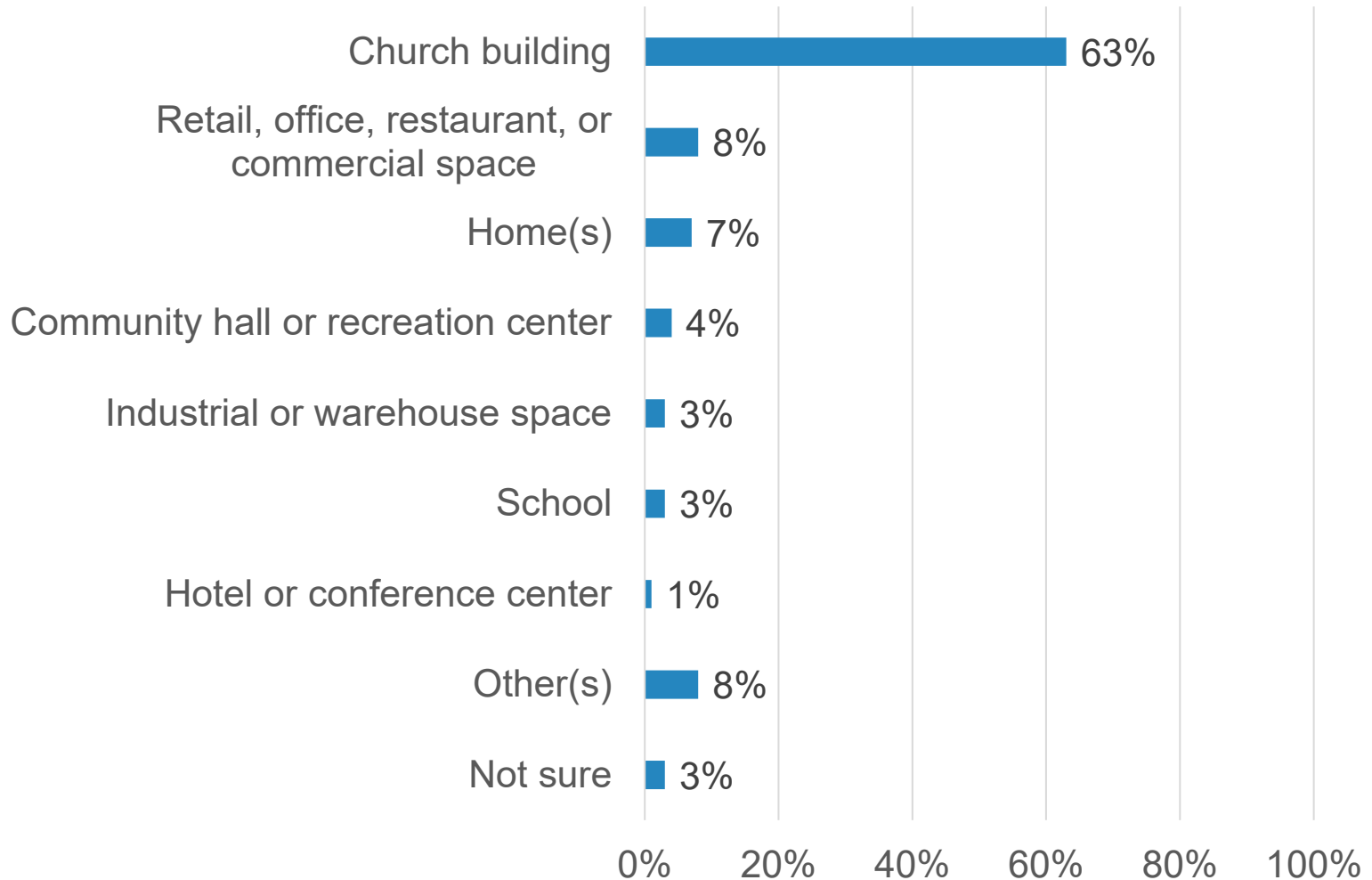
“What facilities has the church used since it started?”



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Q26: “What facilities has the church used since it started? (Please select all that apply)” n=289

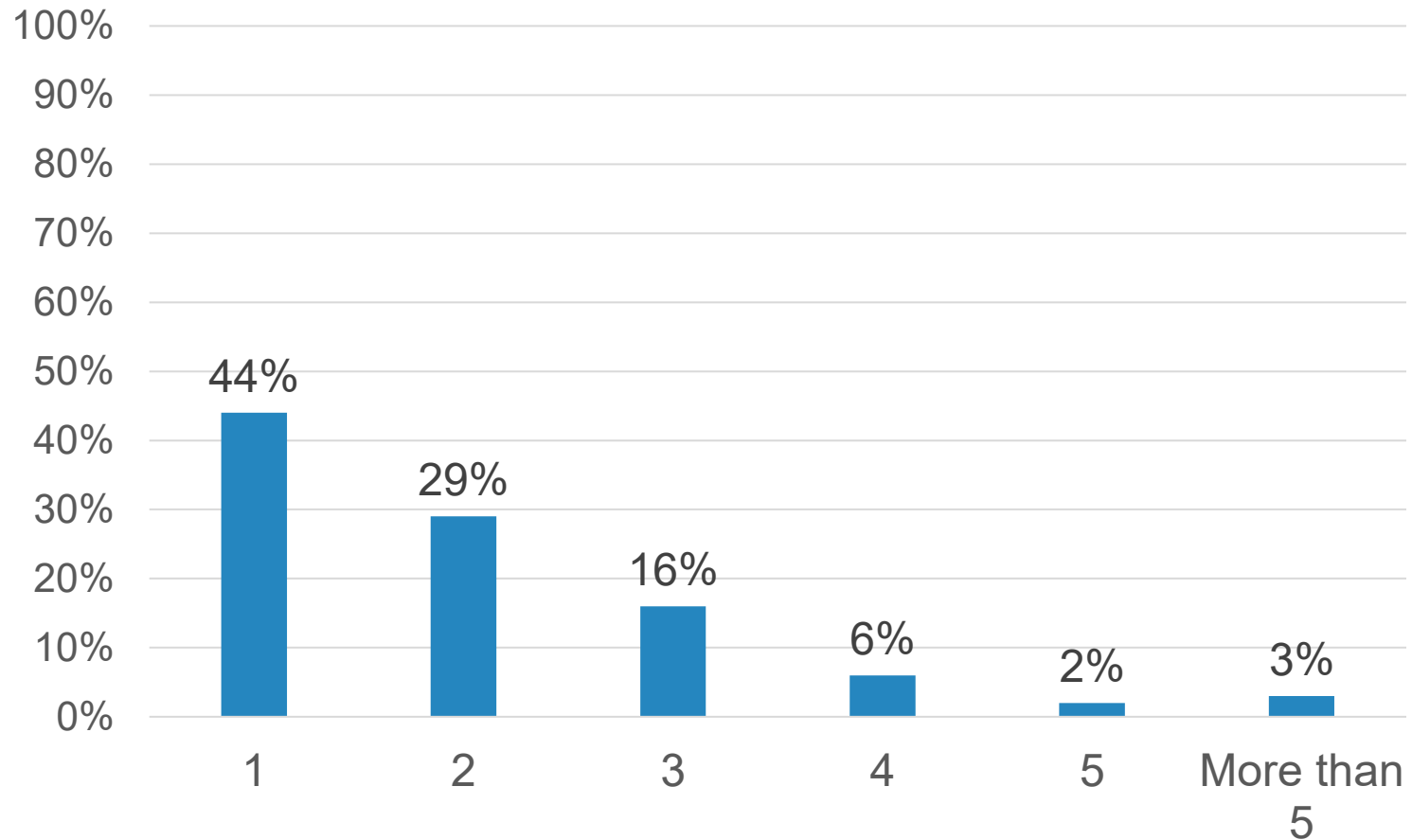
63% currently use a church building for their worship services



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Q27: "What is the primary facility for the church's CURRENT worship services? (Select one)" n=289

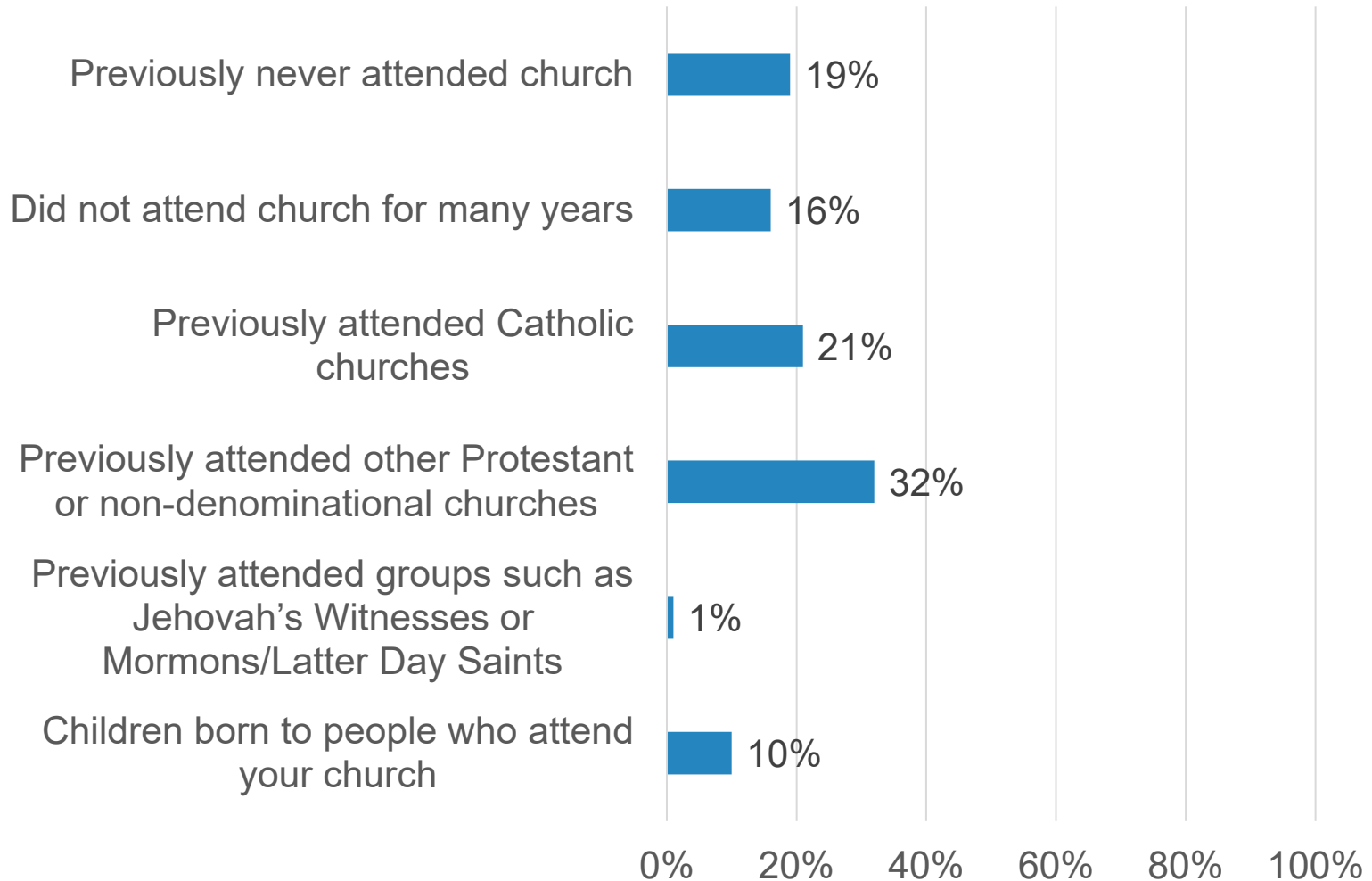
73% have met in 2 facilities or less



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Q28: "In how many different facilities has your new church work conducted worship services since it began?" n=289

Average percentage of attendees with each church background



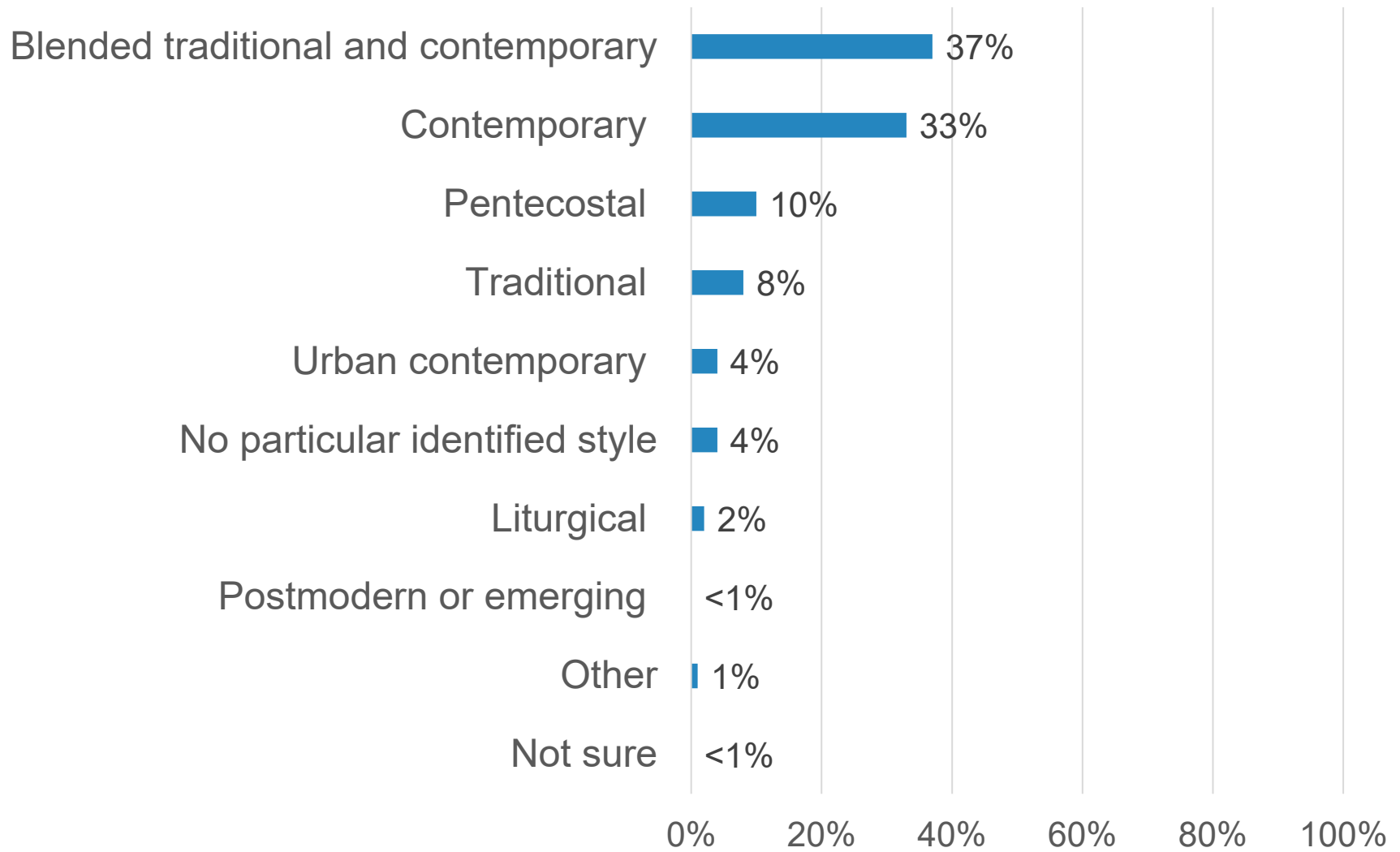
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Q32: "Among the people who have attended this new church work since it began, please estimate the percentage from each of the following church backgrounds. (If no one belongs to a particular group in your church, please mark 0%. Total percentages should add to 100%.)" n=281

How would you best describe the worship style of your church? *Full 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**

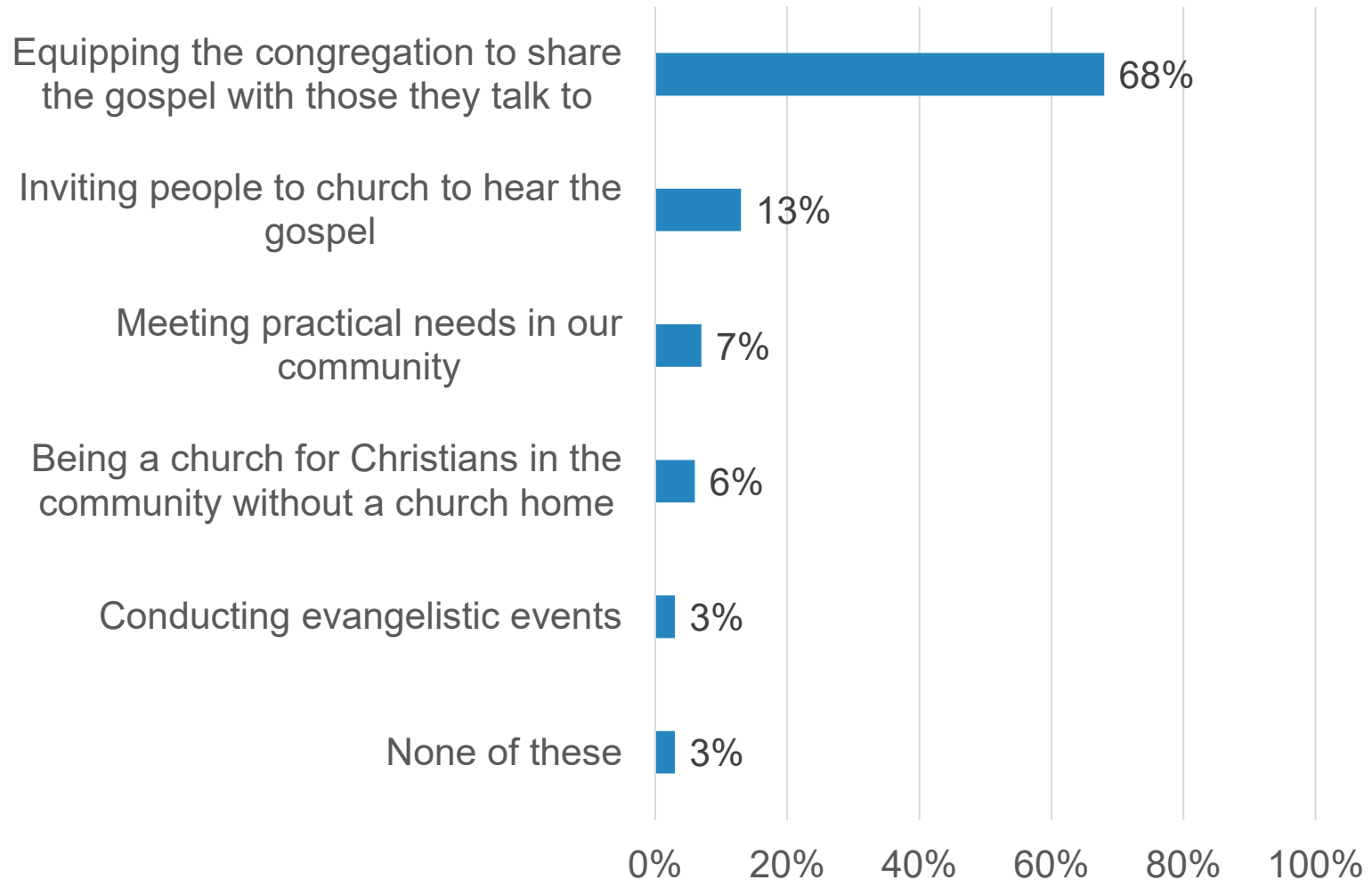
70% have a blended or a contemporary worship style



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Q33: "How would you best describe the worship style of your church? (Select one)" n=281

68% most wanted to equip their congregation to share the gospel



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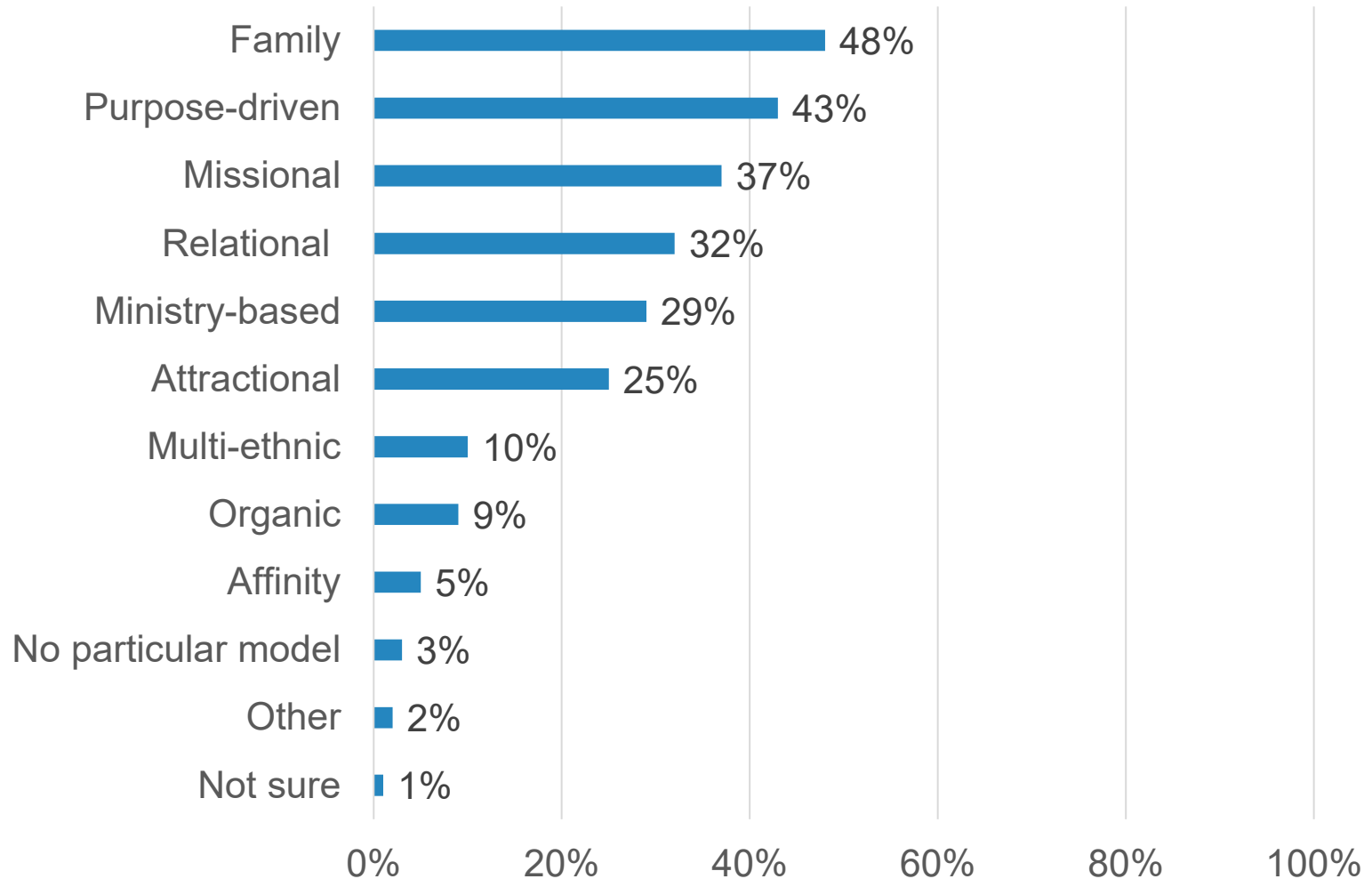
Q34: "Which of the following best describes what you wanted your church to emphasize the **most**?" n=280

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

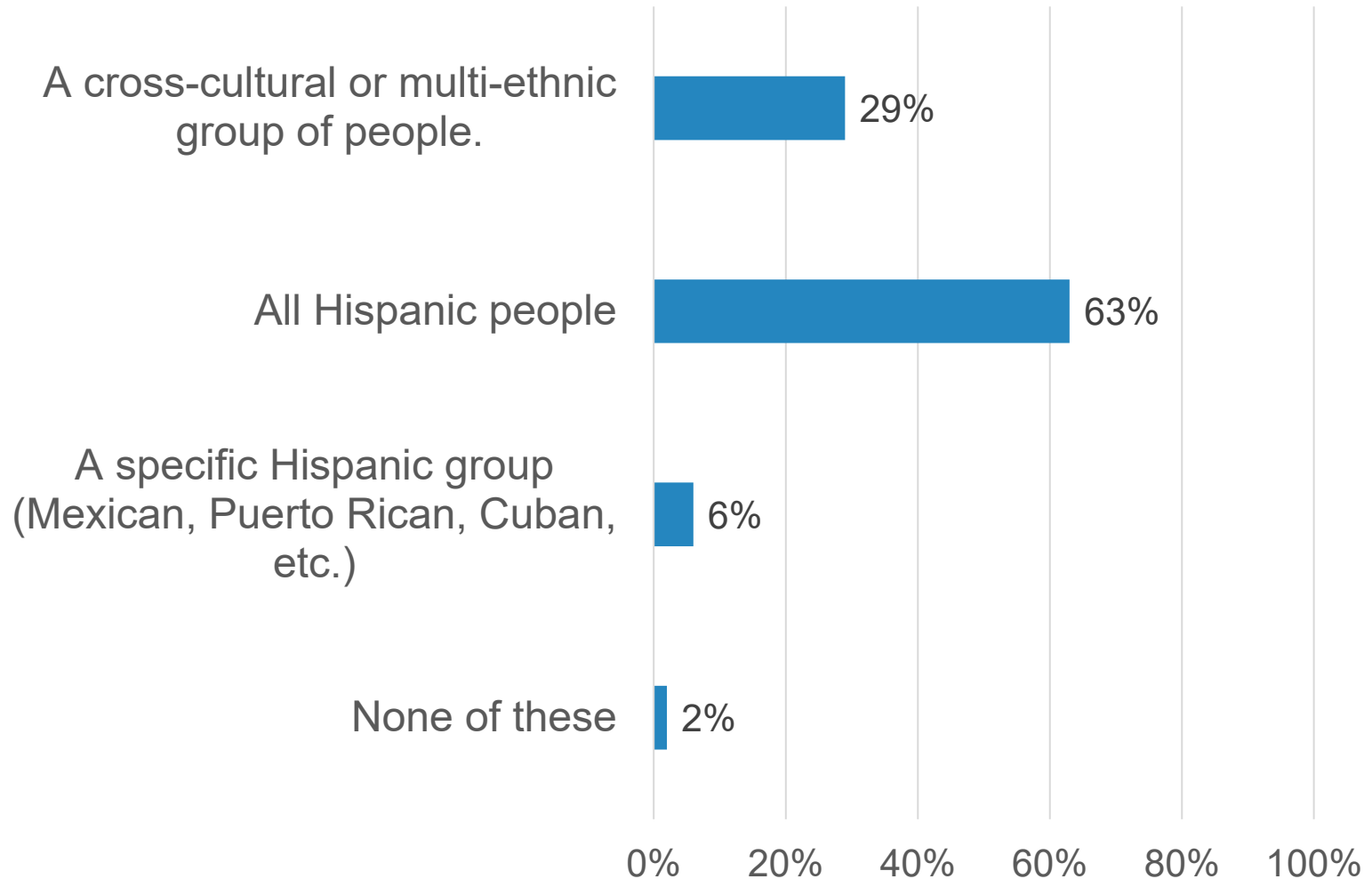
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48% say the family model most strongly influenced the approach used in starting the church



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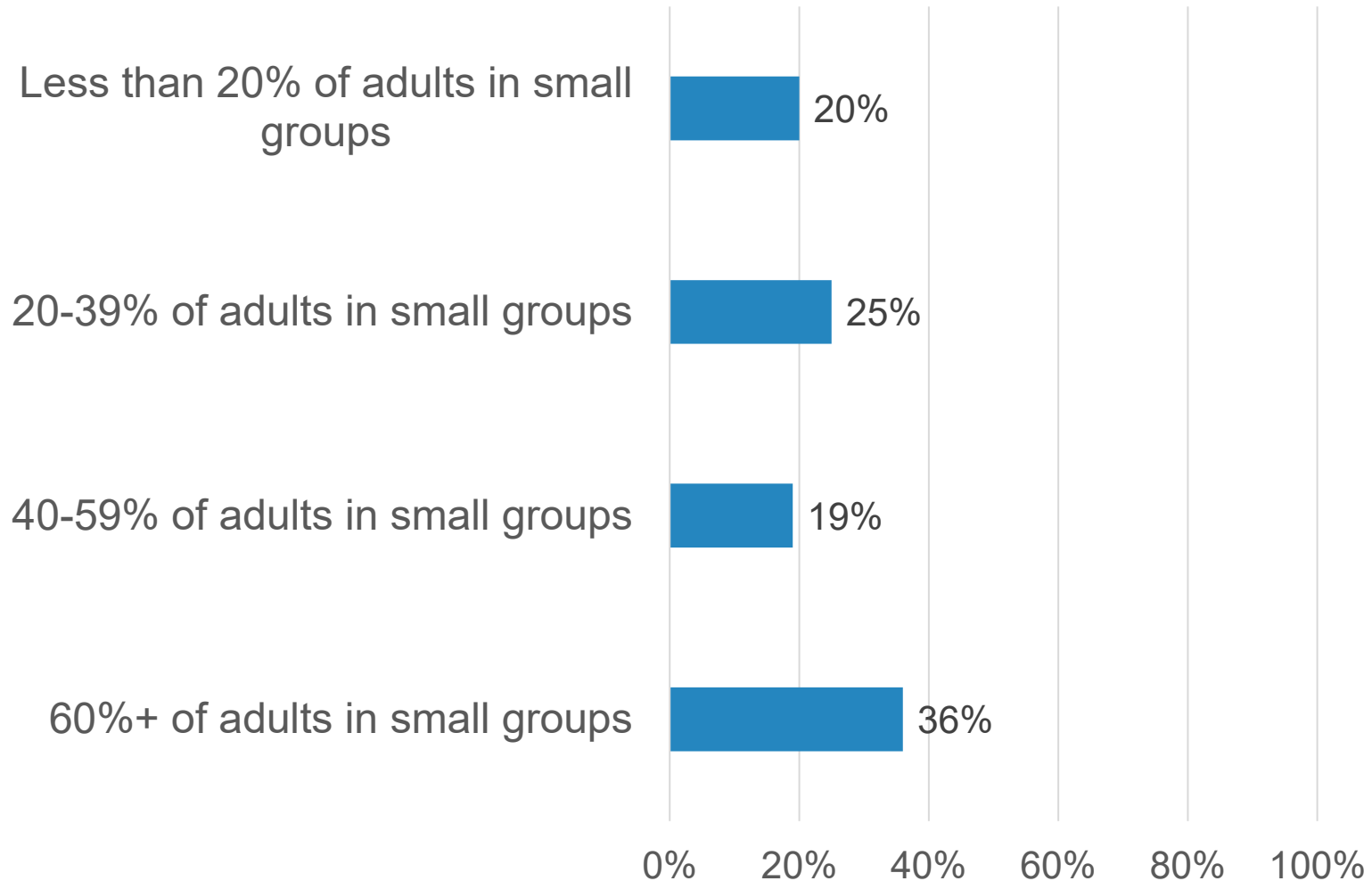
63% say the church has sought to reach all Hispanic people



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Q36: "Which of the following best describes the population your new church work has intentionally sought to reach from the beginning?" n=275

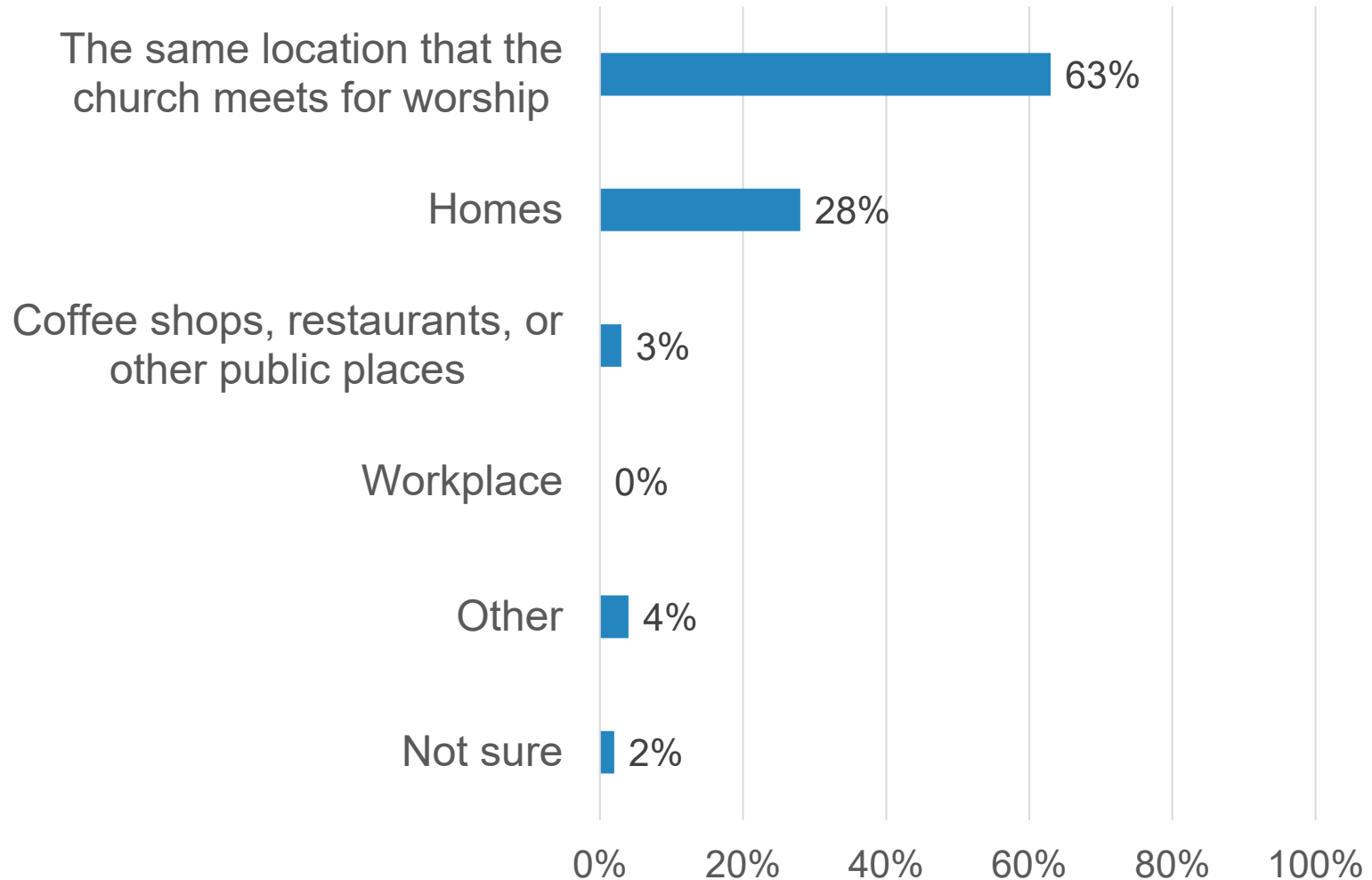
Percentage of adults involved in small group (average 45%, median 40%)



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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)" n=280

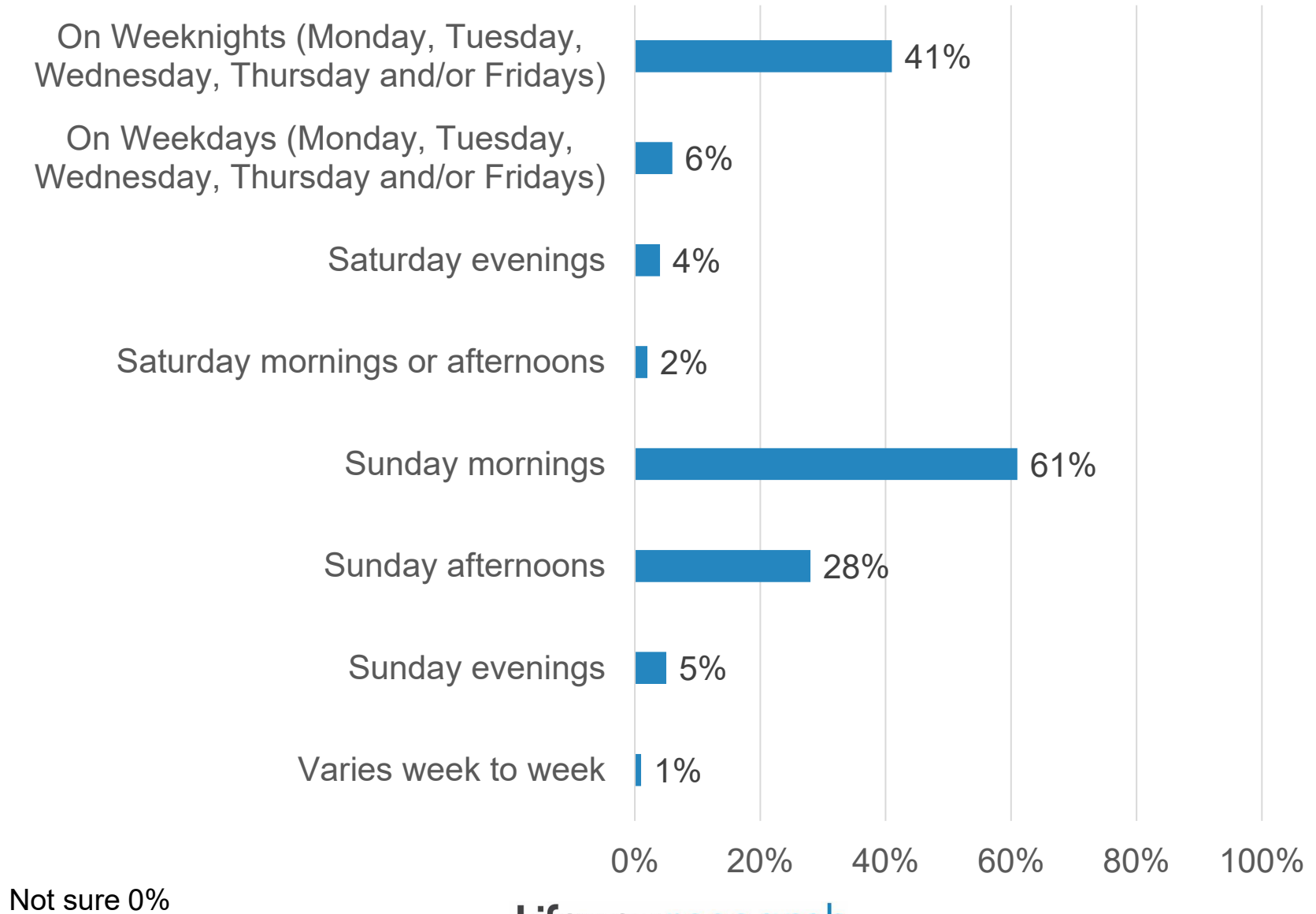
63% of adult small classes or groups meet at the same location the church meets for worship



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Q38: "In which location does the largest number of small classes or groups for adults meet? (Select one)" n=280

61% have a primary worship service on Sunday morning



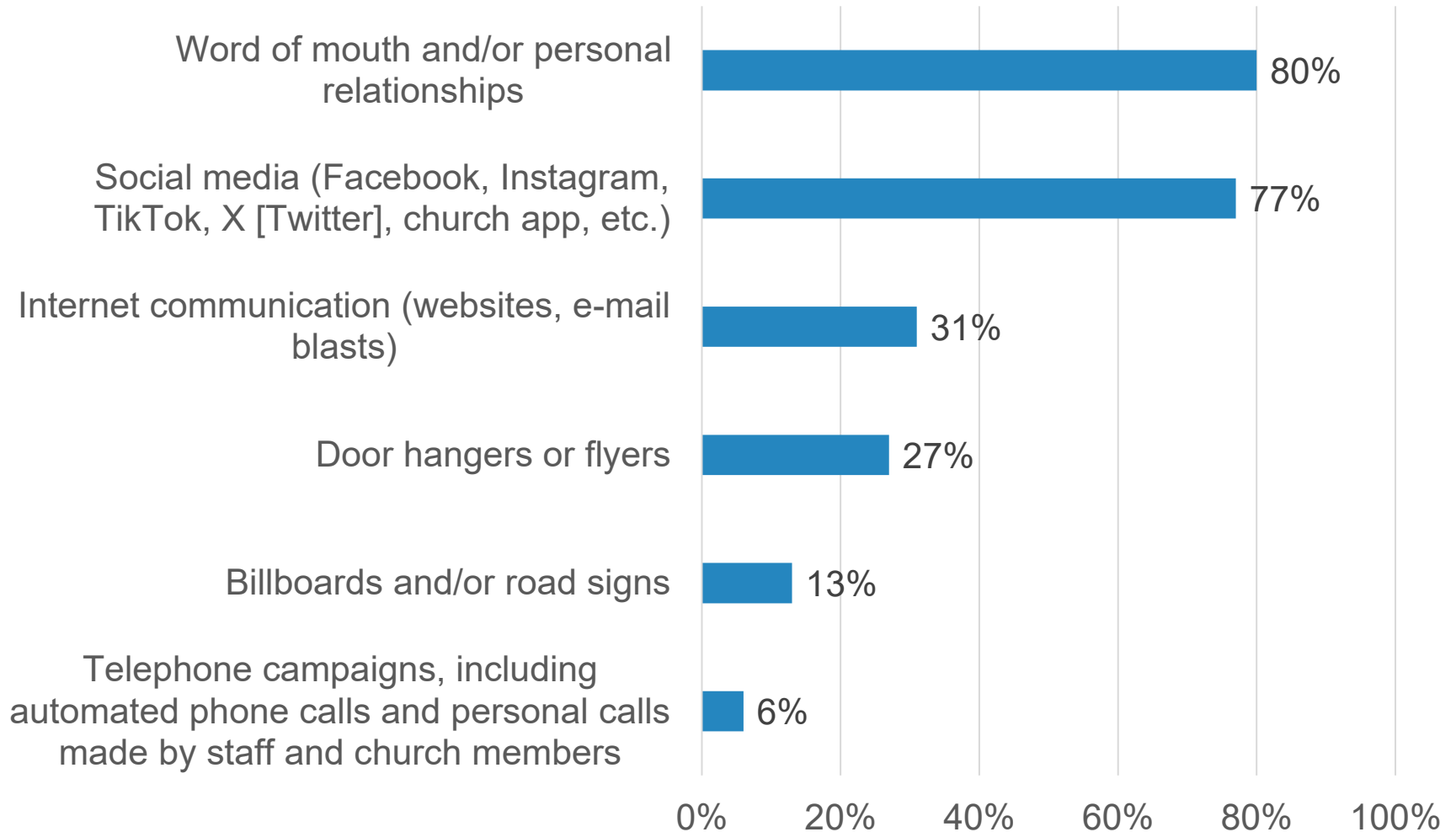
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Q39: "What time(s) during the week does the **primary** worship service(s) or gathering of the church happen? (Select all that apply)" n=280

Communication and Publicity

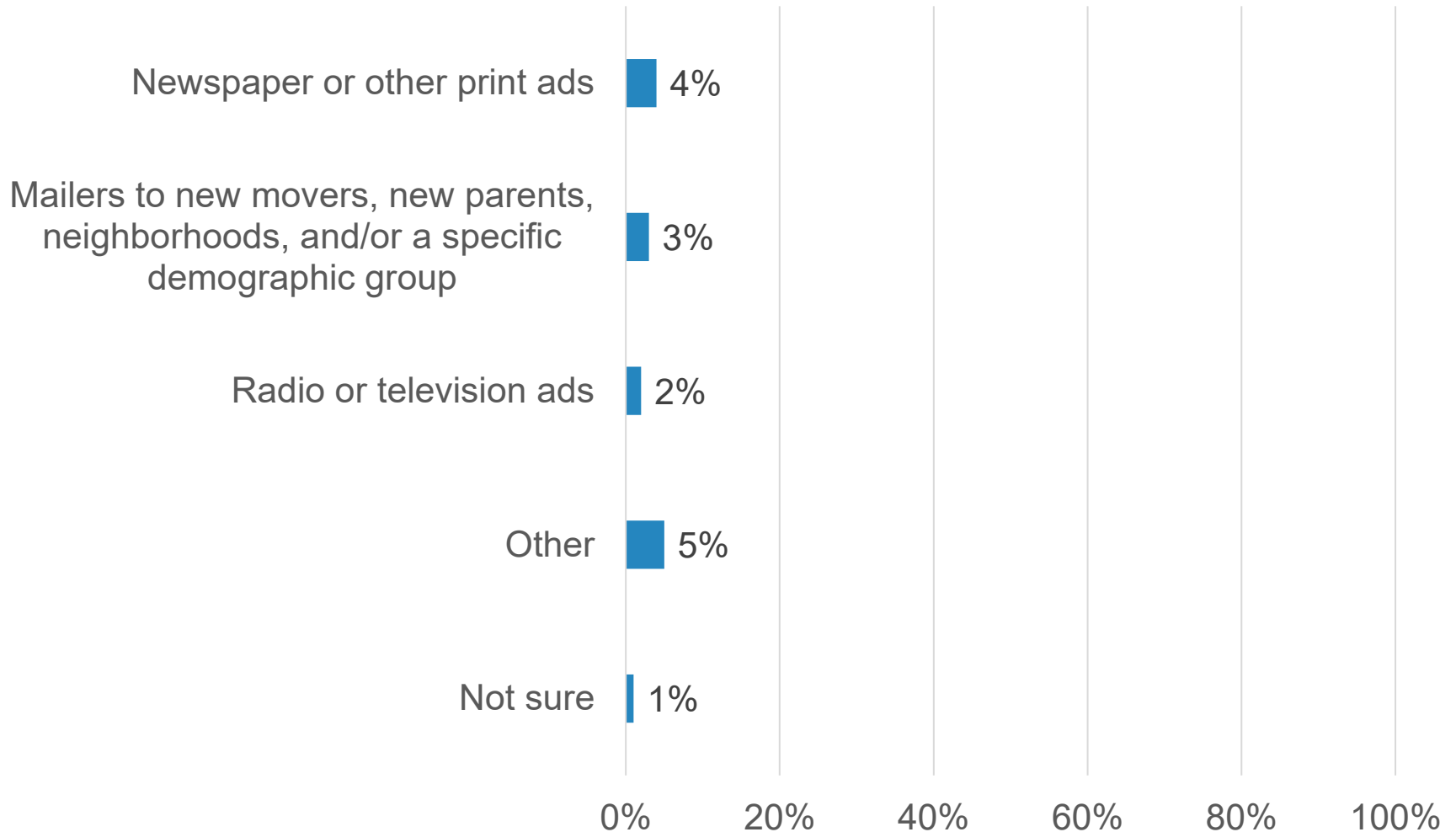
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77% used social media to communicate news of the new church in the community



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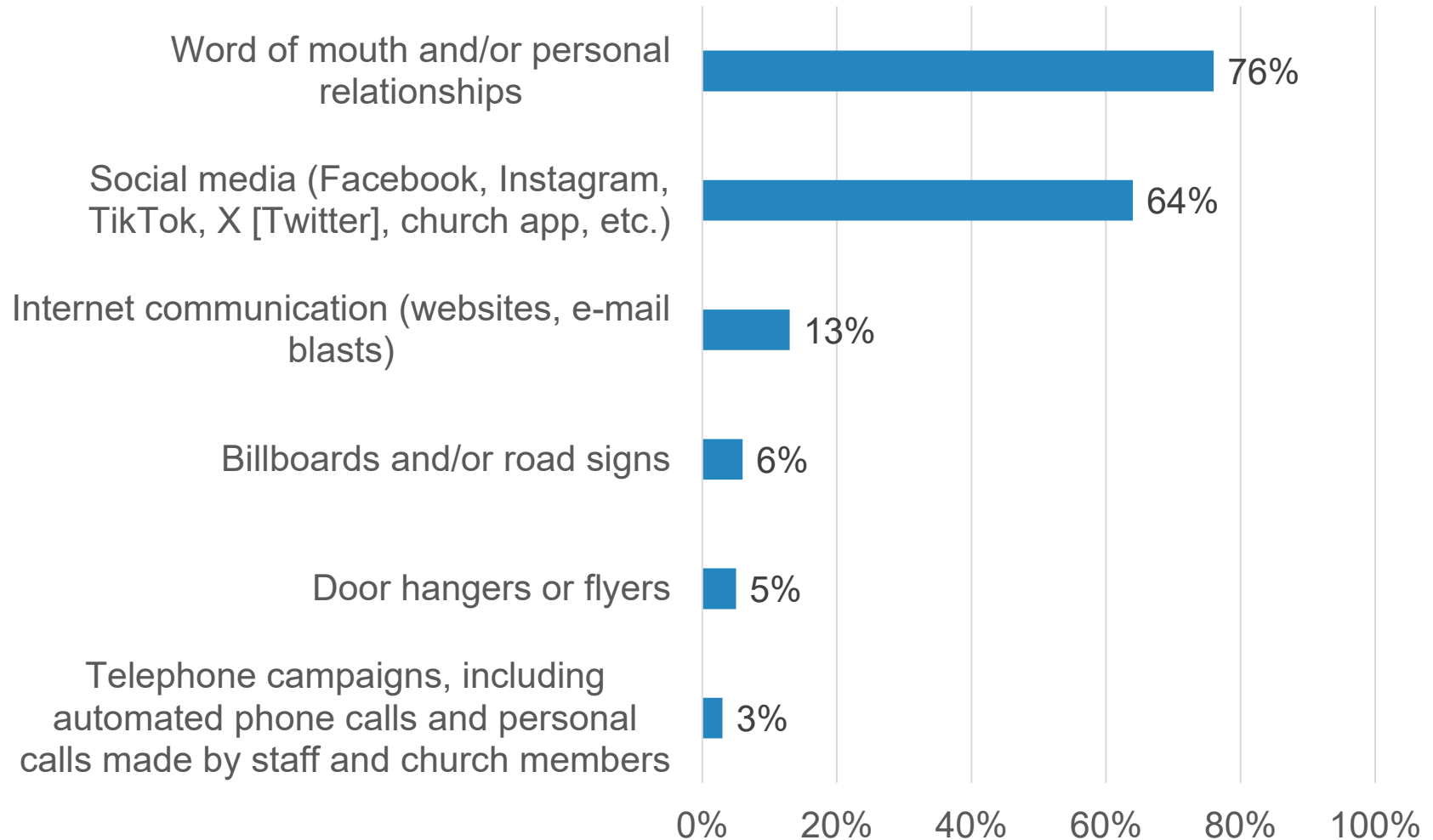
3% used mailers to communicate news of the new church in the community (continued)



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Q29: "What were the top 3 forms of publicity **most frequently** used to communicate news of a new church in the community? (Select up to three)" n=288

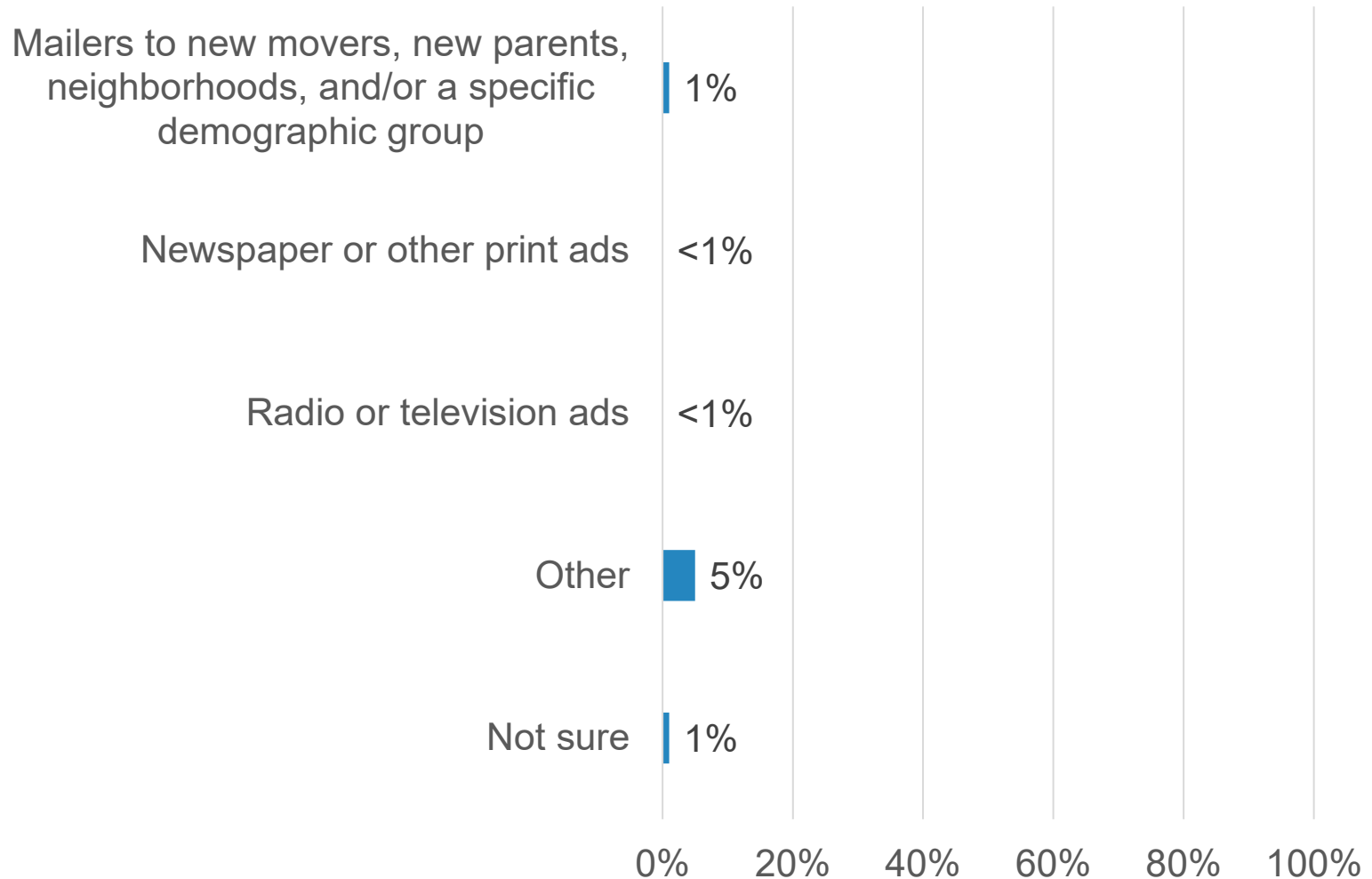
Word of mouth/personal relationships and social media were the most successful forms of publicity



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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)" n=289

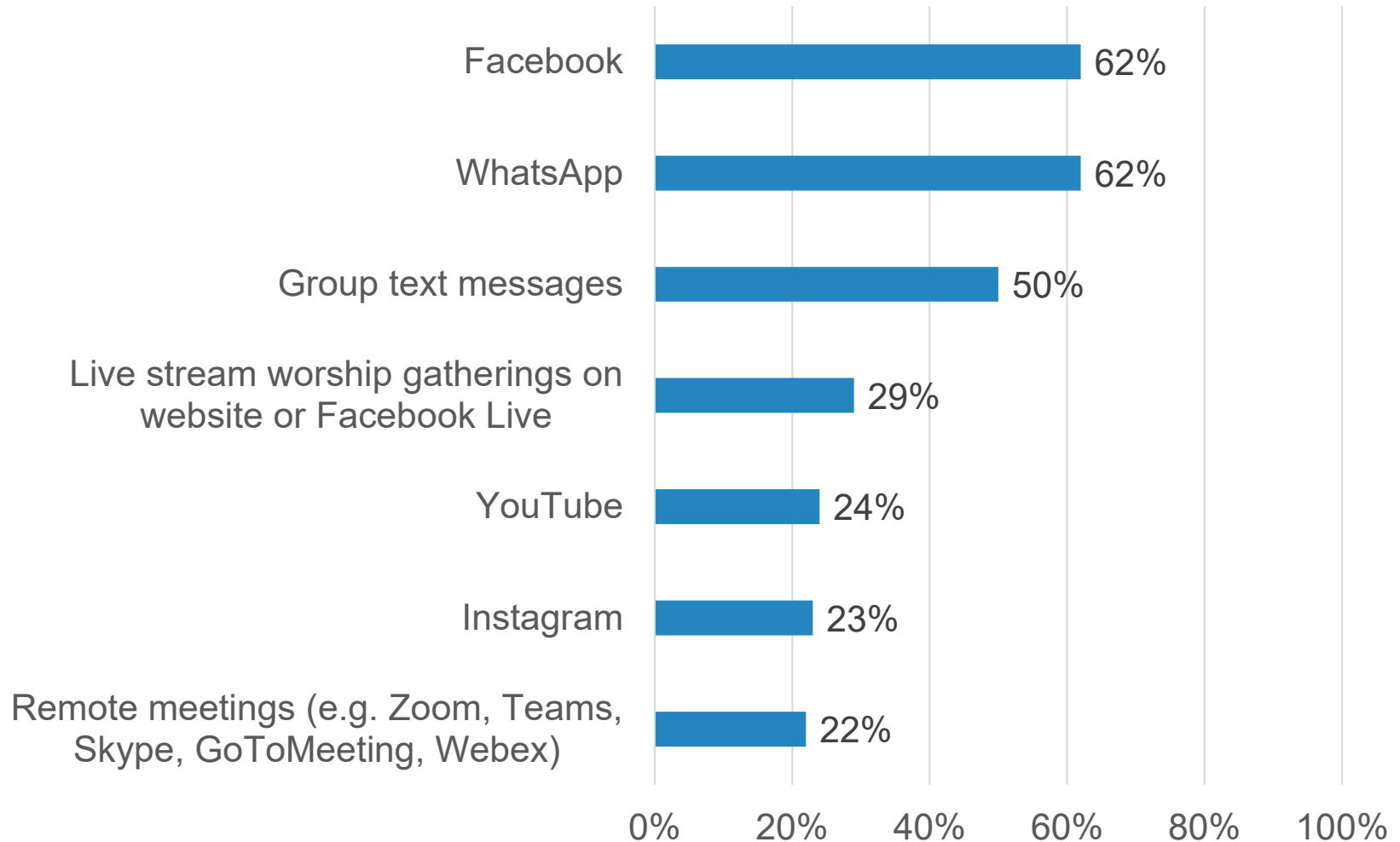
Successful forms of publicity that attracted newcomers (continued)



Lifewayresearch

Q30: "What were the 2 most successful forms of publicity that attracted the most newcomers to your church? (Select up to two)" n=289

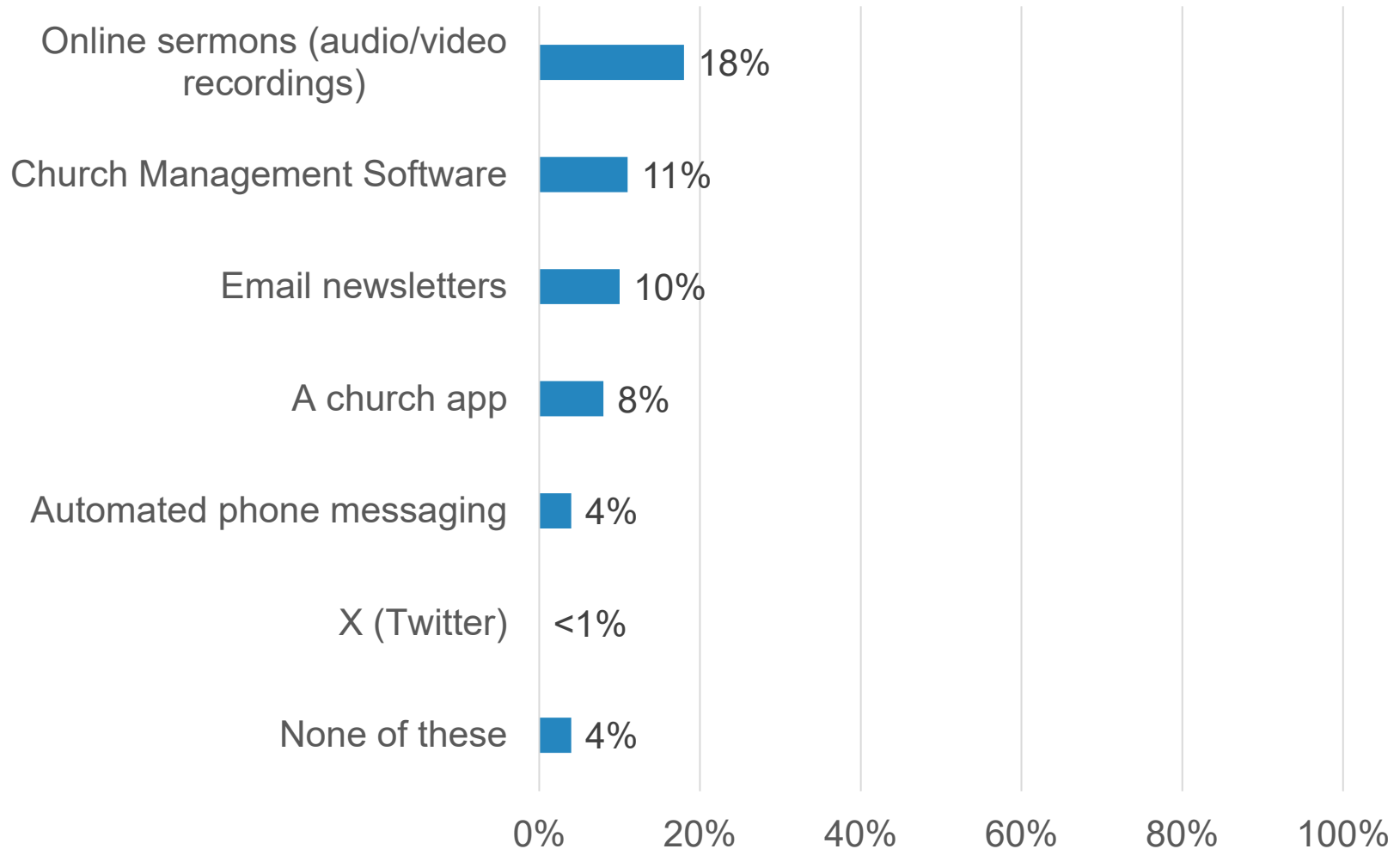
62% regularly used Facebook and WhatsApp for communication *within* the new church work during the first 5 years



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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)" n=287

11% regularly used church management software for communication *within* the new church during the first 5 years (continued)



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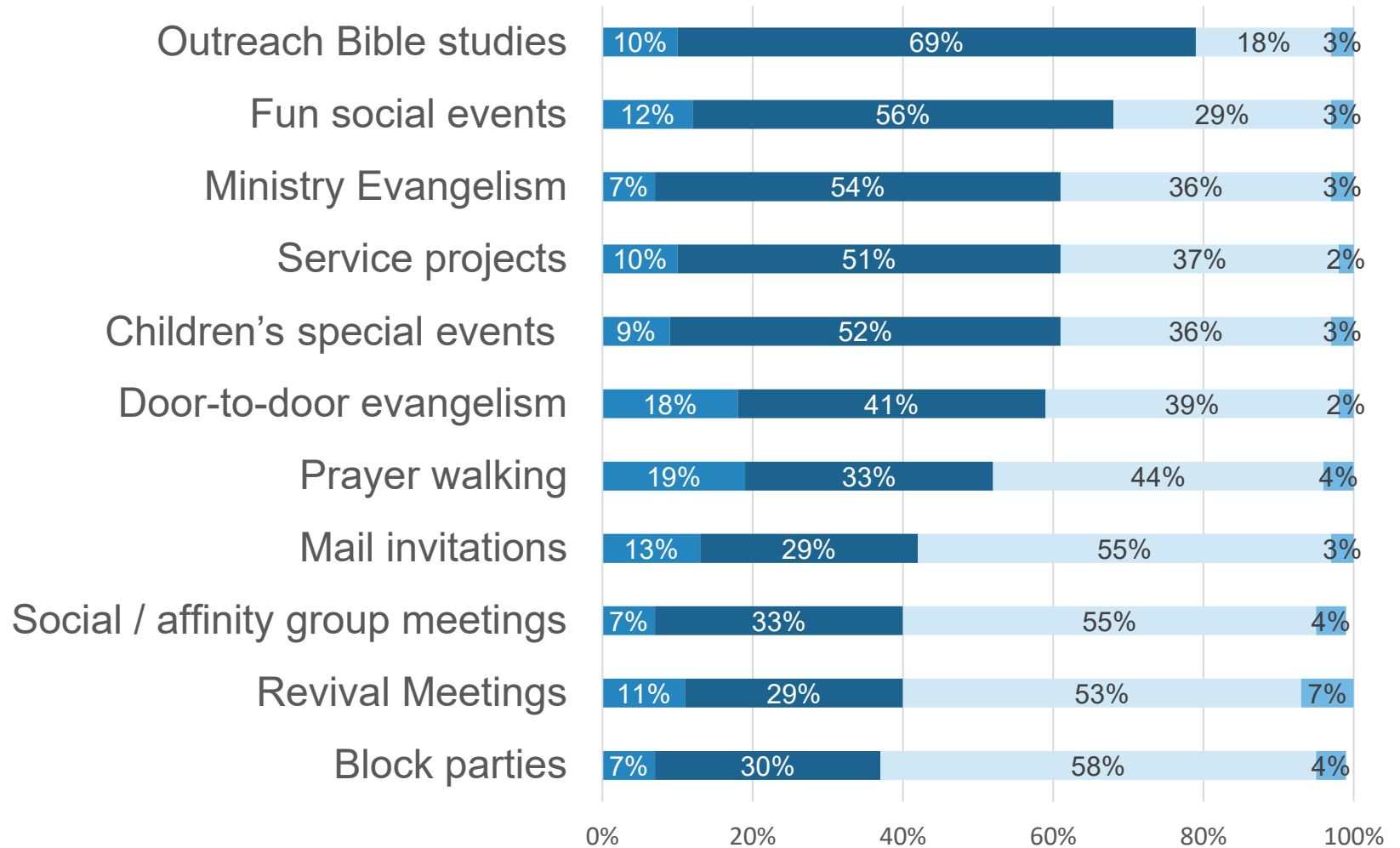
Q31: "Which of the following (if any) electronic communication was regularly used for communication within your new church work during the first 5 years? (Select all that apply)" n=287

Outreach Activities

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Outreach Activities

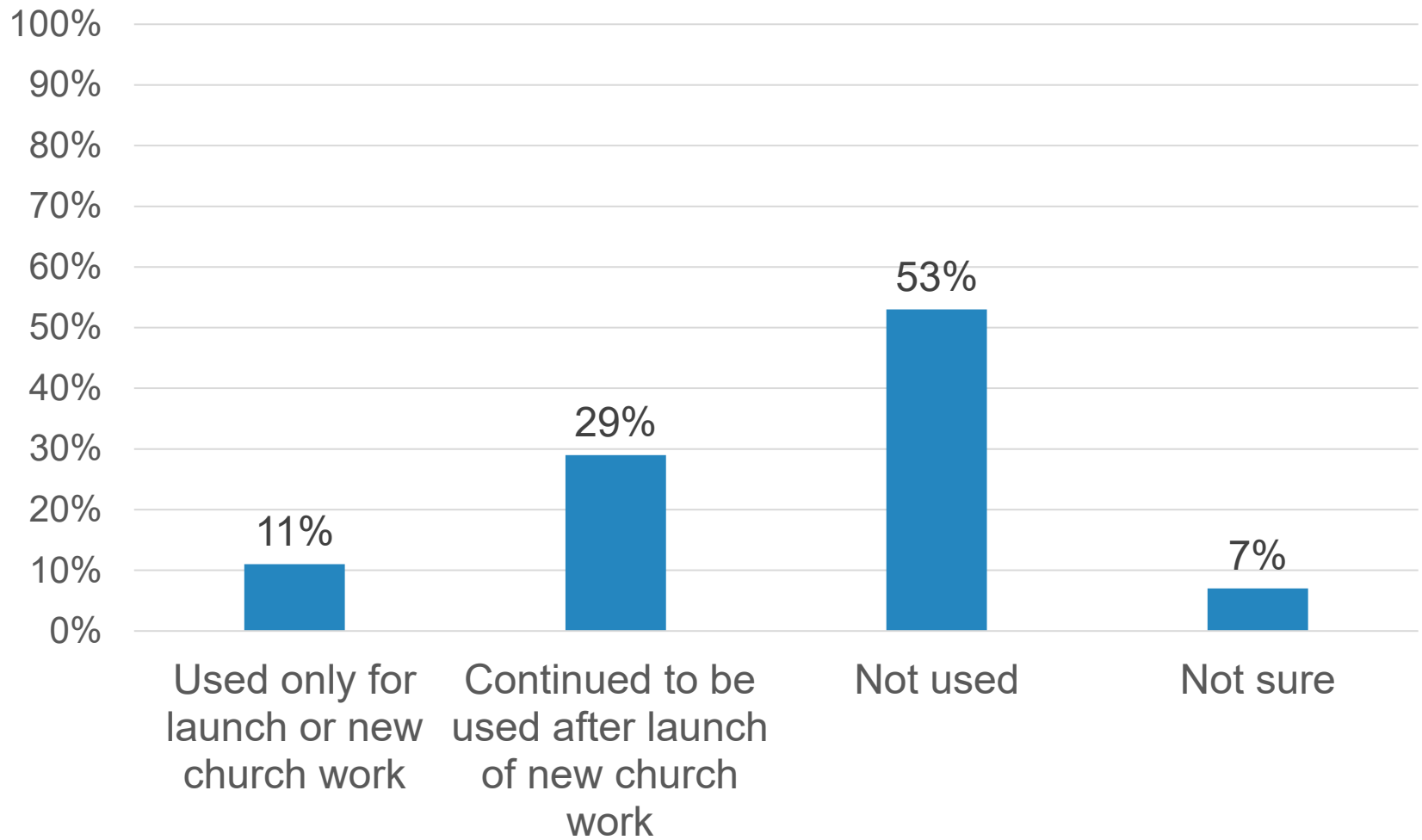
■ Used only for launch of new church work ■ Continued to be used after launch of new church work ■ Not used ■ Not sure



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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)"

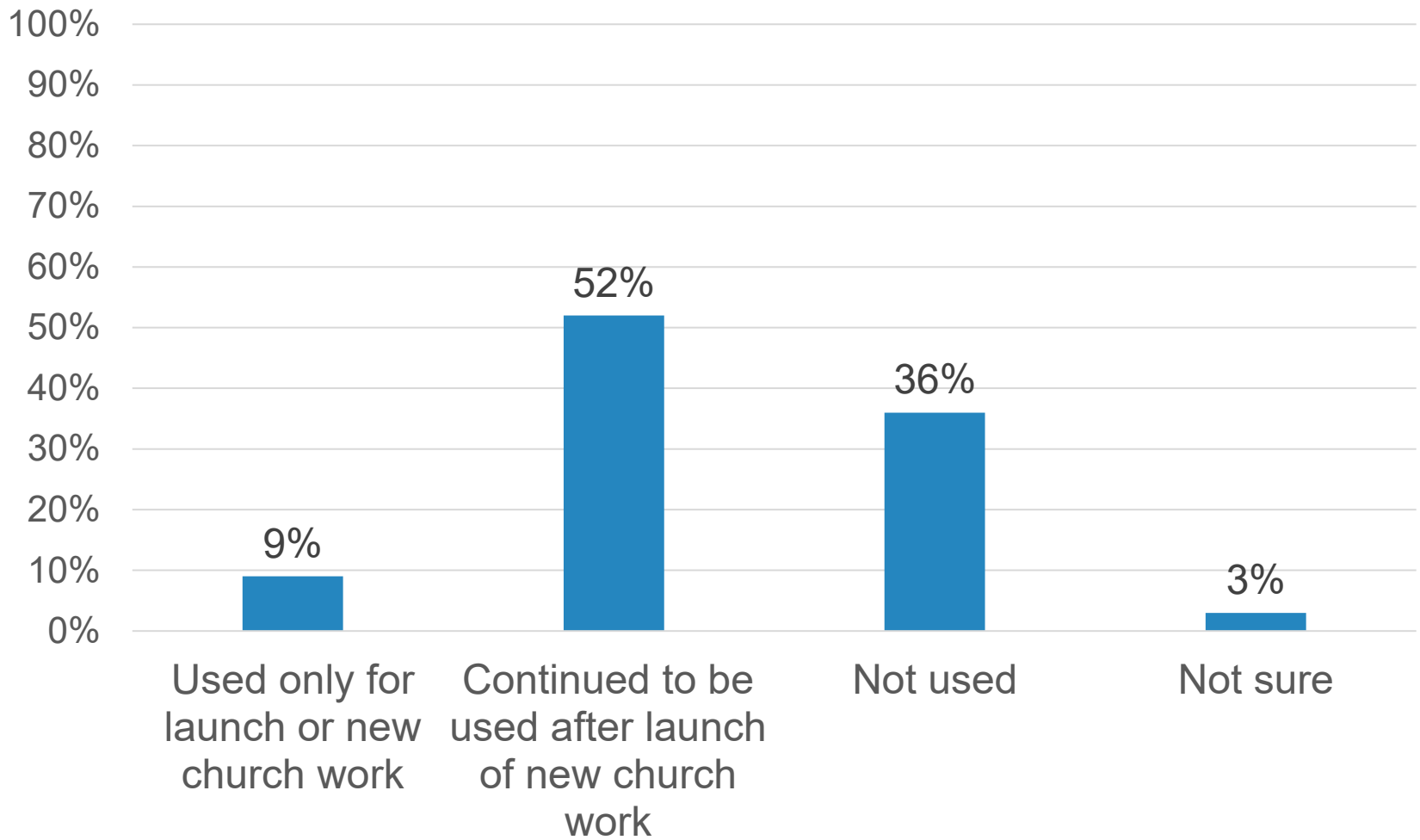
Revival meetings



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Q40_1: "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) **Revival meeting**" n=244

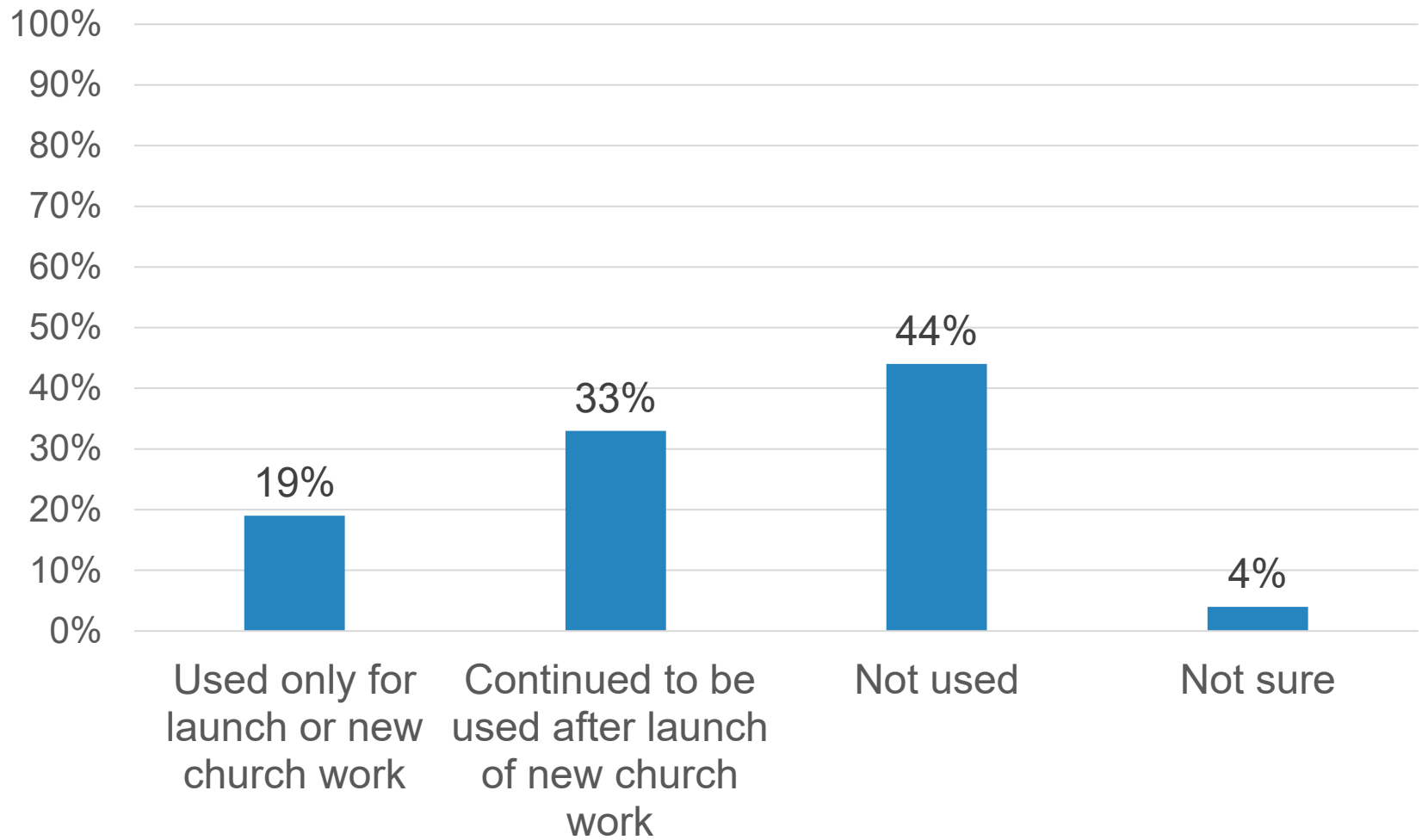
Children's special events (e.g., Easter Egg Hunt, Fall Festival)



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Q40_2: "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) **Children's special events (e.g., Easter Egg Hunt, Fall Festival)**" n=244

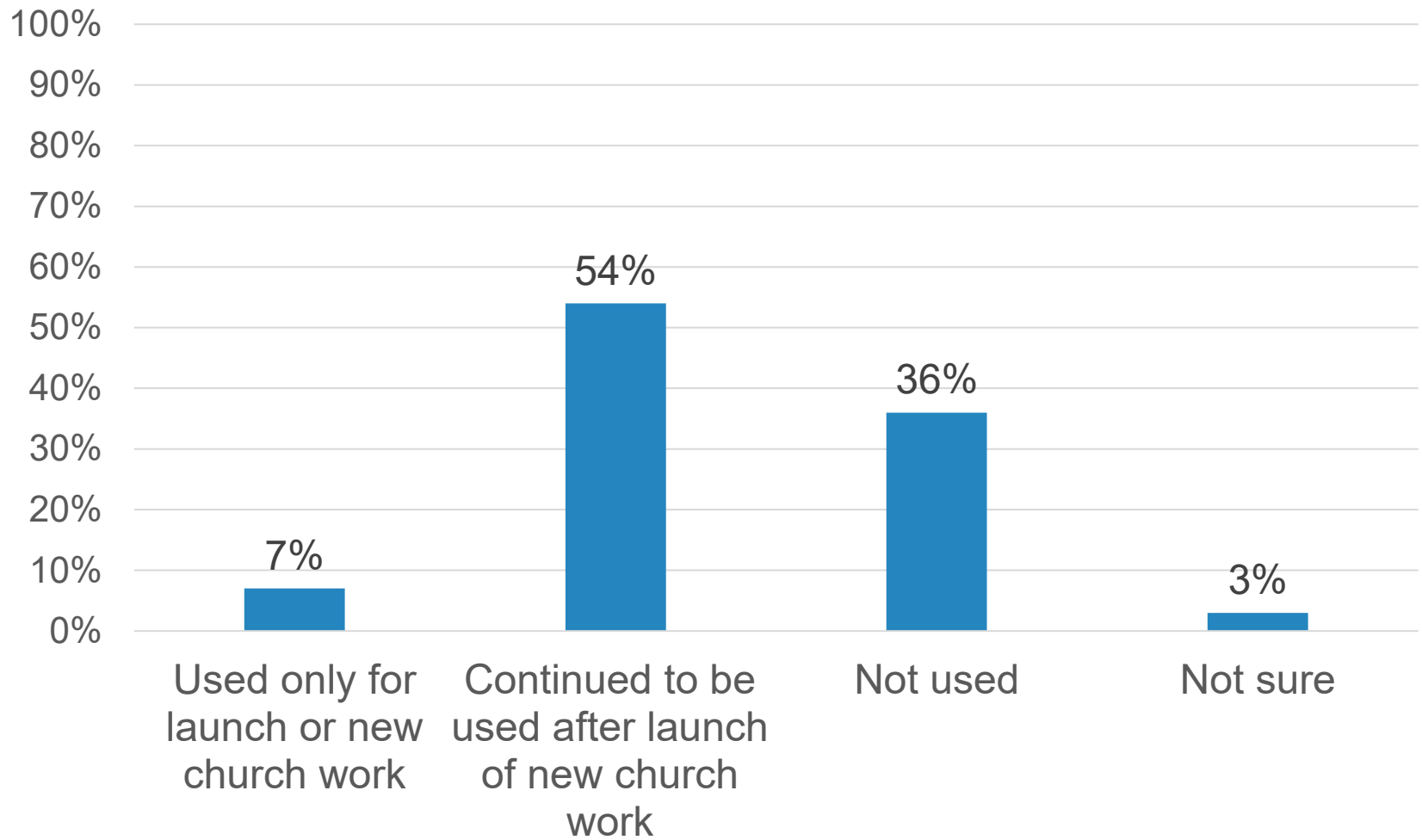
Prayer walking



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Q40_3: "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) **Prayer walking**" n=241

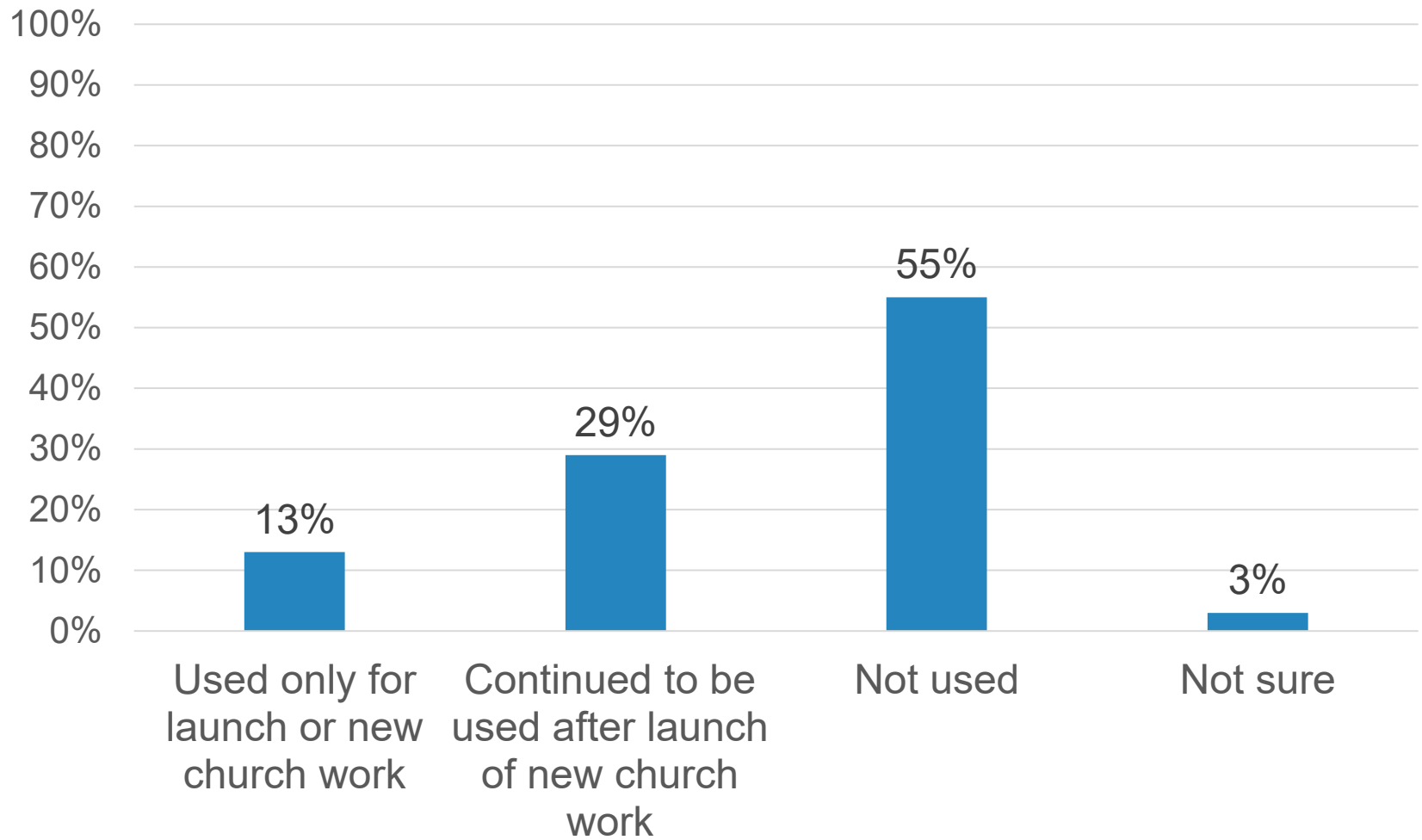
Ministry evangelism (e.g., food banks, clothing, shelters, drug/alcohol recovery)



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Q40_4: "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) **Ministry evangelism (e.g., food banks, clothing, shelters, drug/alcohol recovery)**" n=241

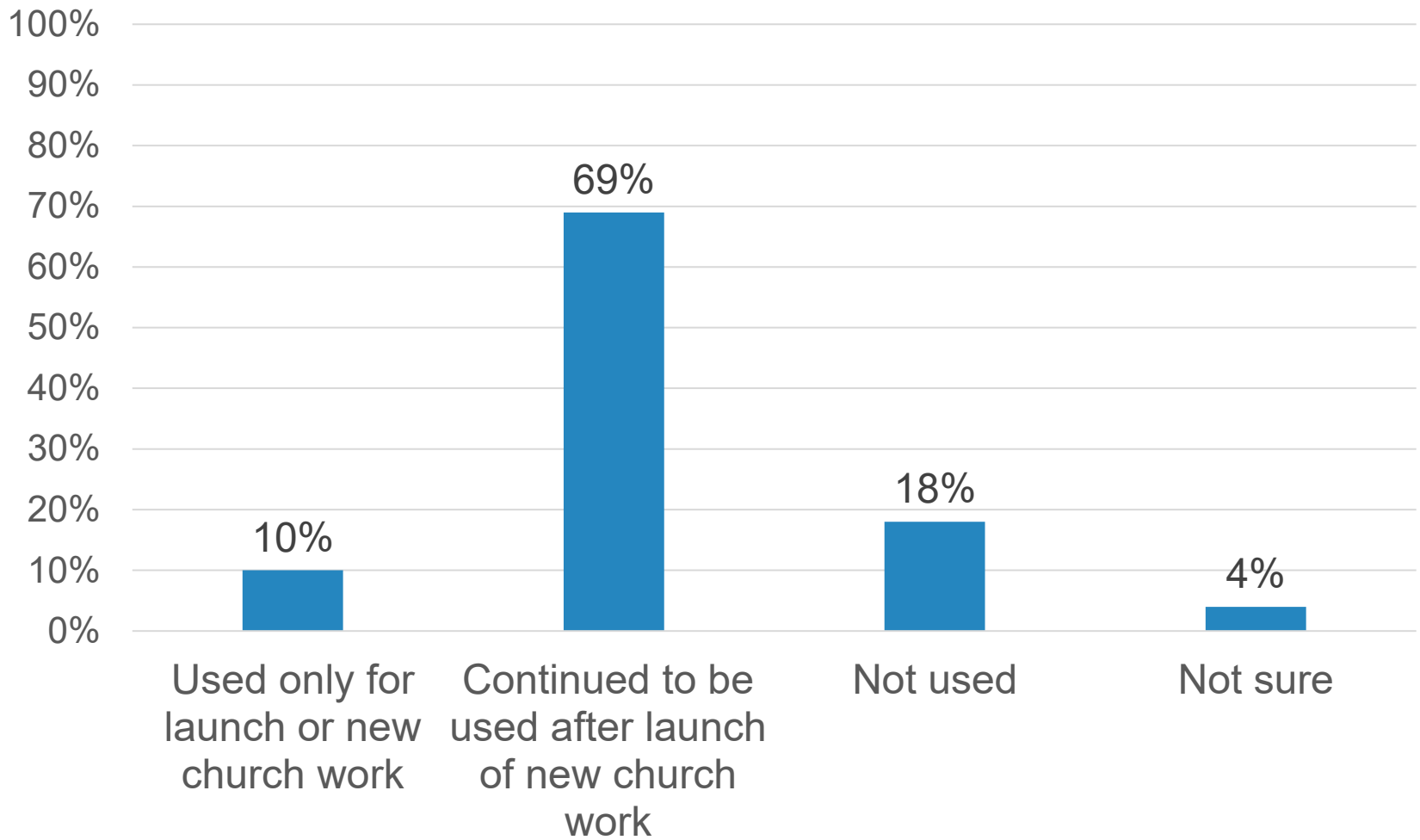
Mail invitations to services, programs, events



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Q40_5: "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) **Mail invitations to services, programs, events**" n=237

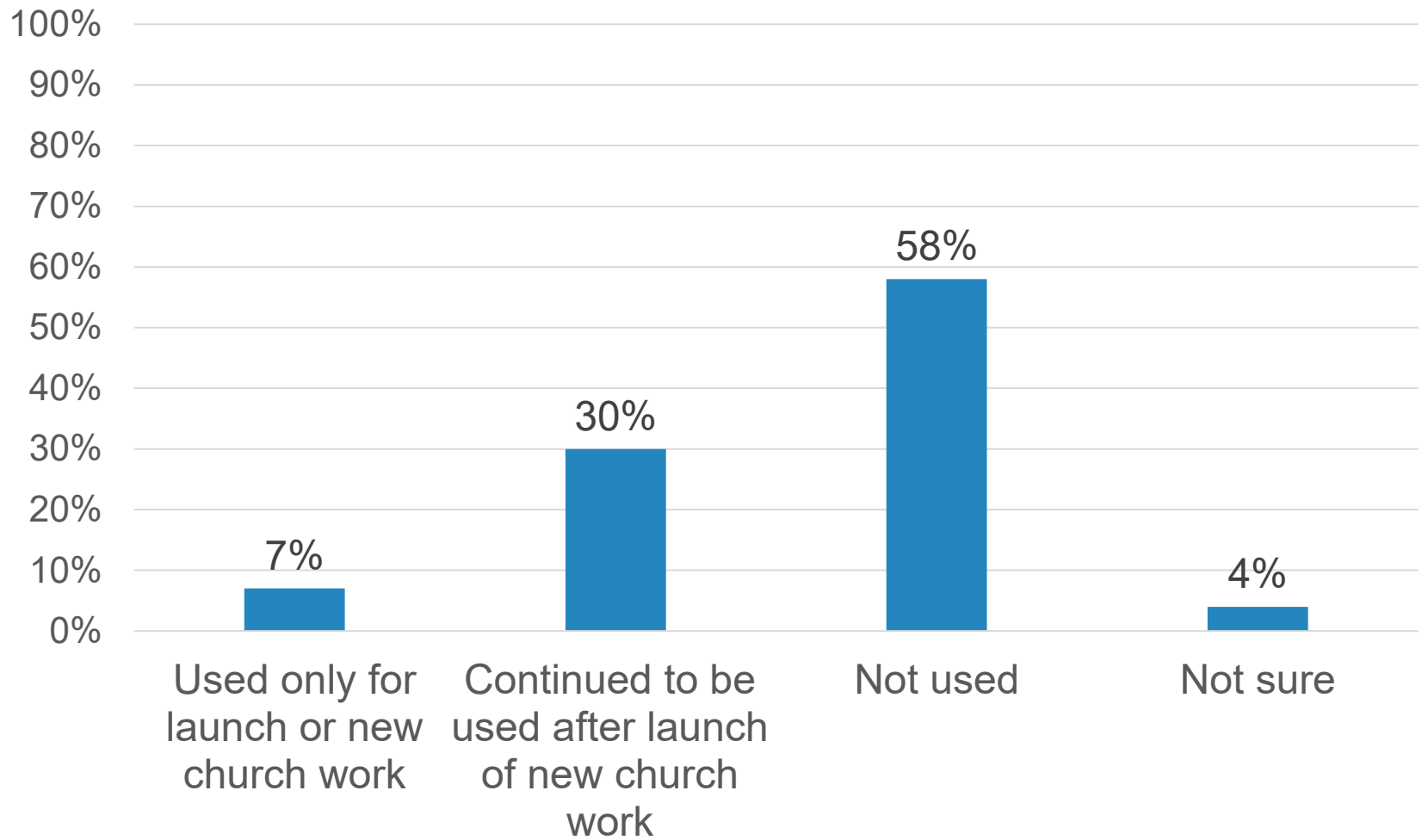
Outreach Bible studies



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Q40_6: "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 Bible studies**" n=247

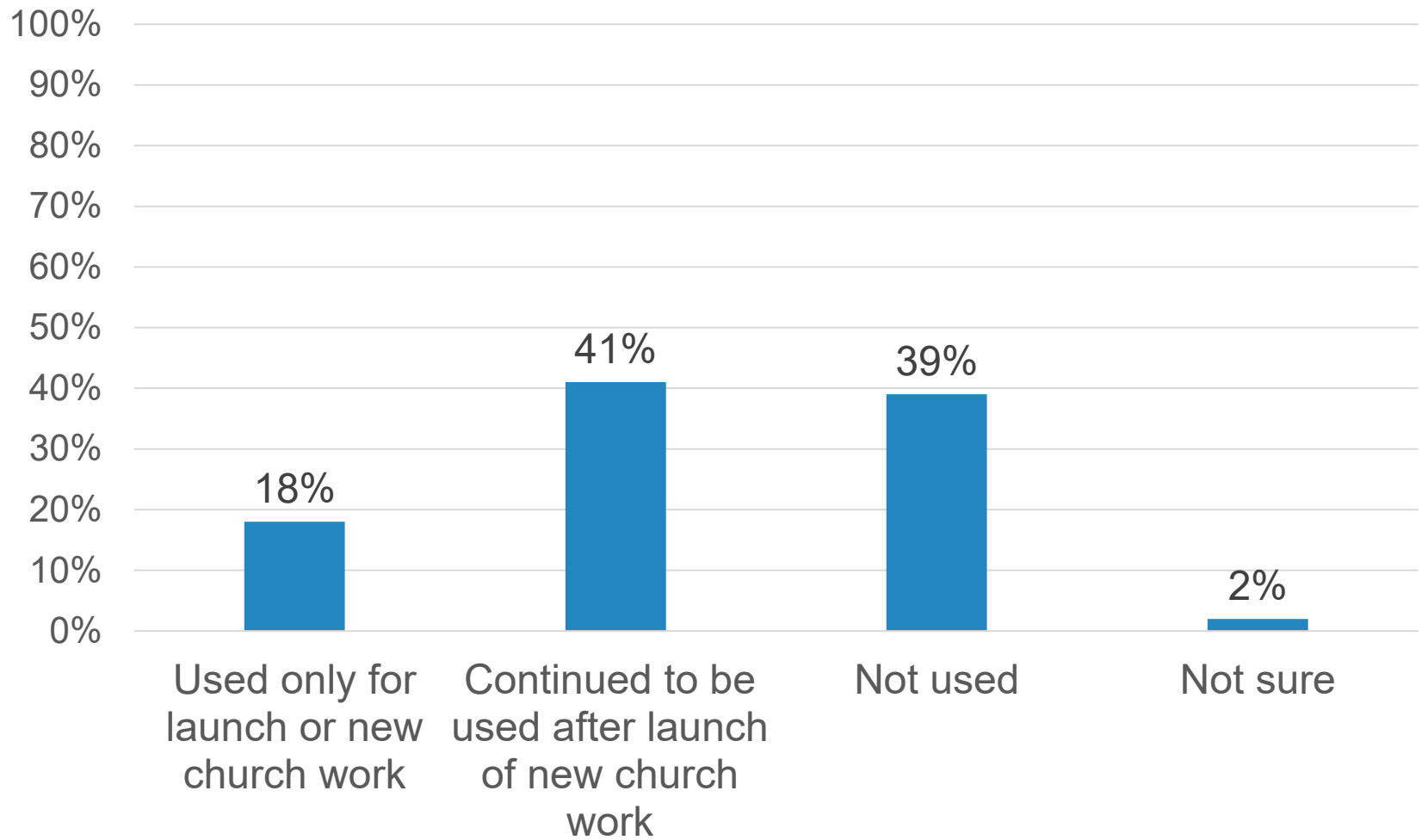
Block parties



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Q40_7: "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) **Block parties**" n=231

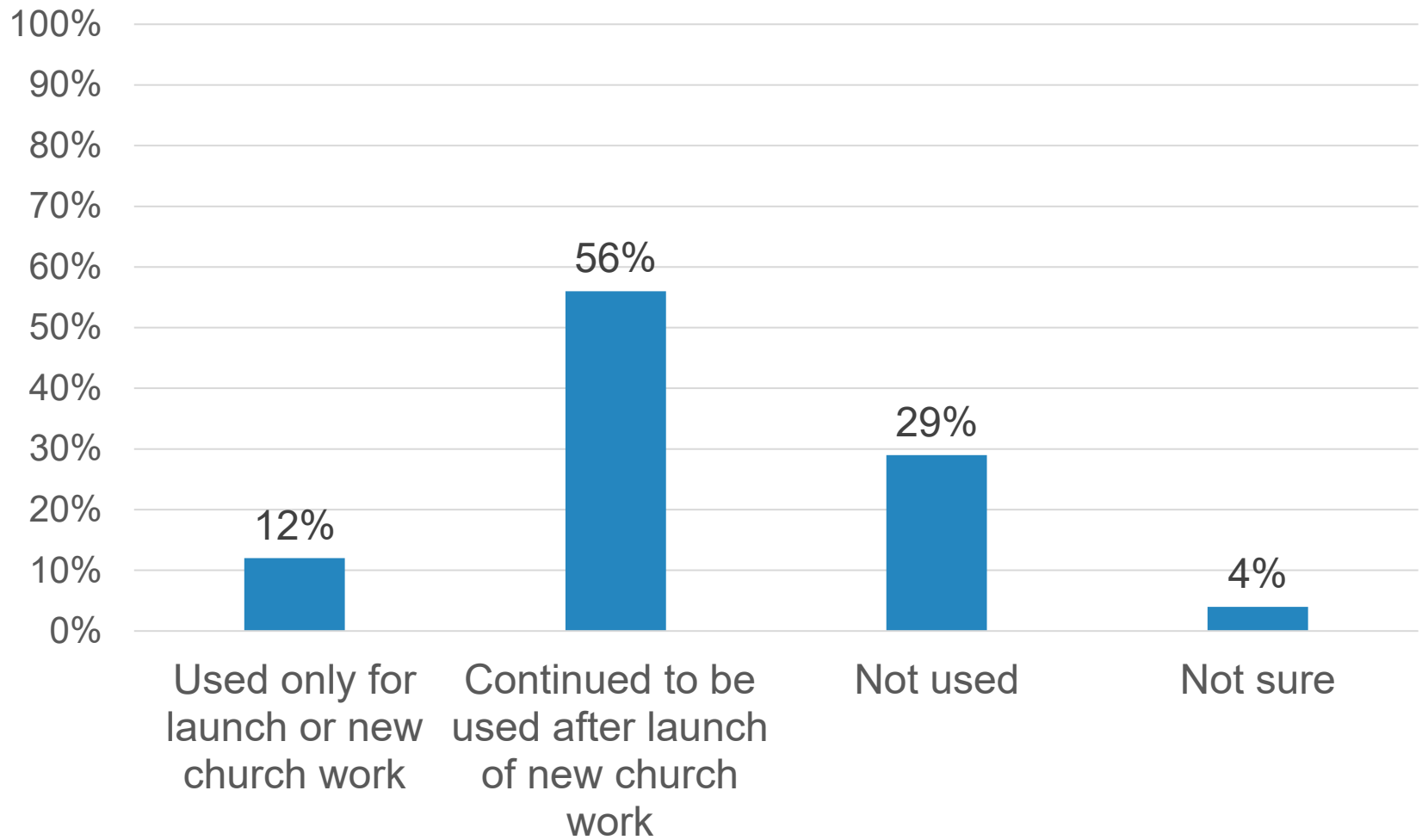
Door-to-door evangelism



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Q40_8: "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) **Door-to-door evangelism**" n=235

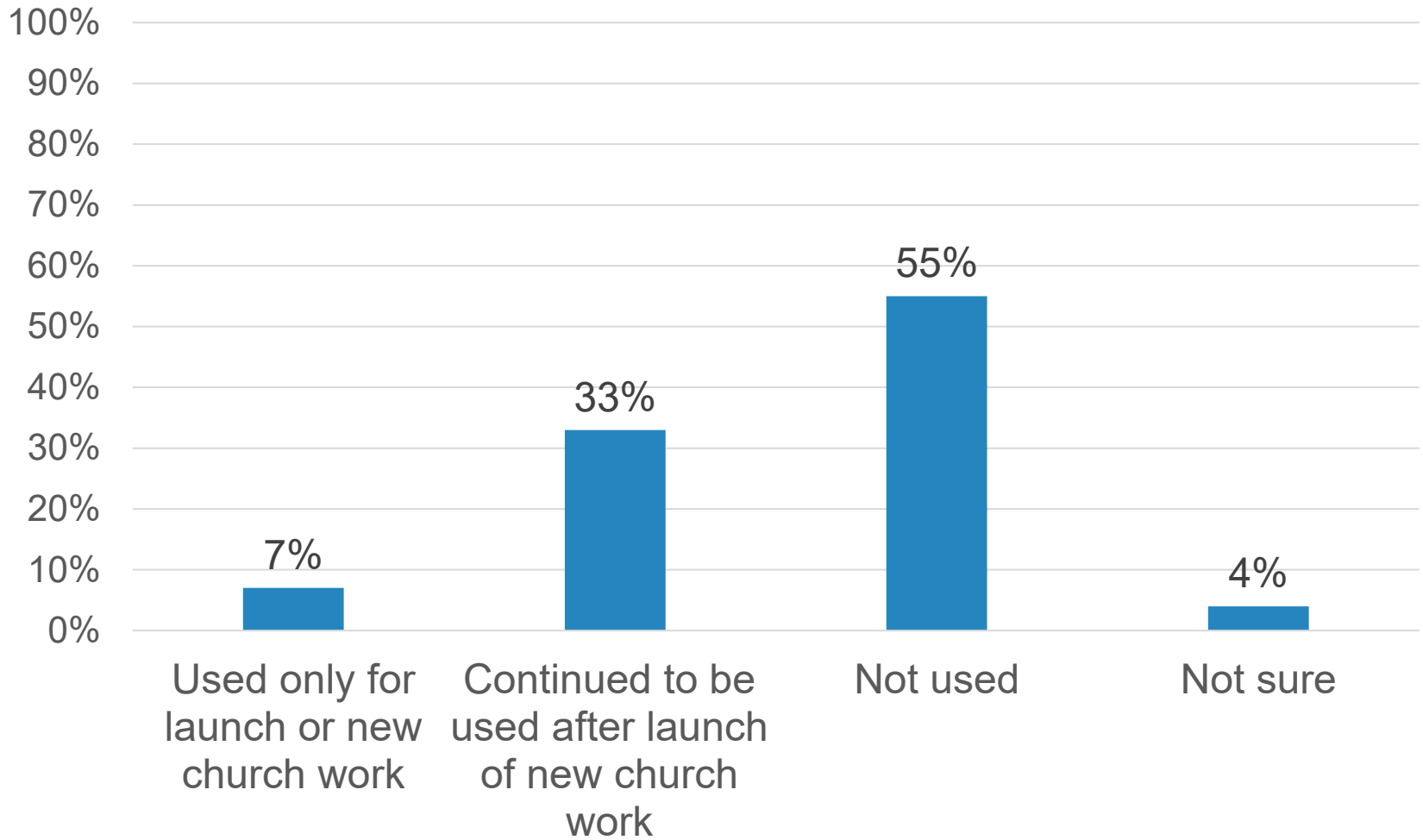
Fun social events to meet people in the community



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Q40_9: "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) **Fun social events to meet people in the community**" n=233

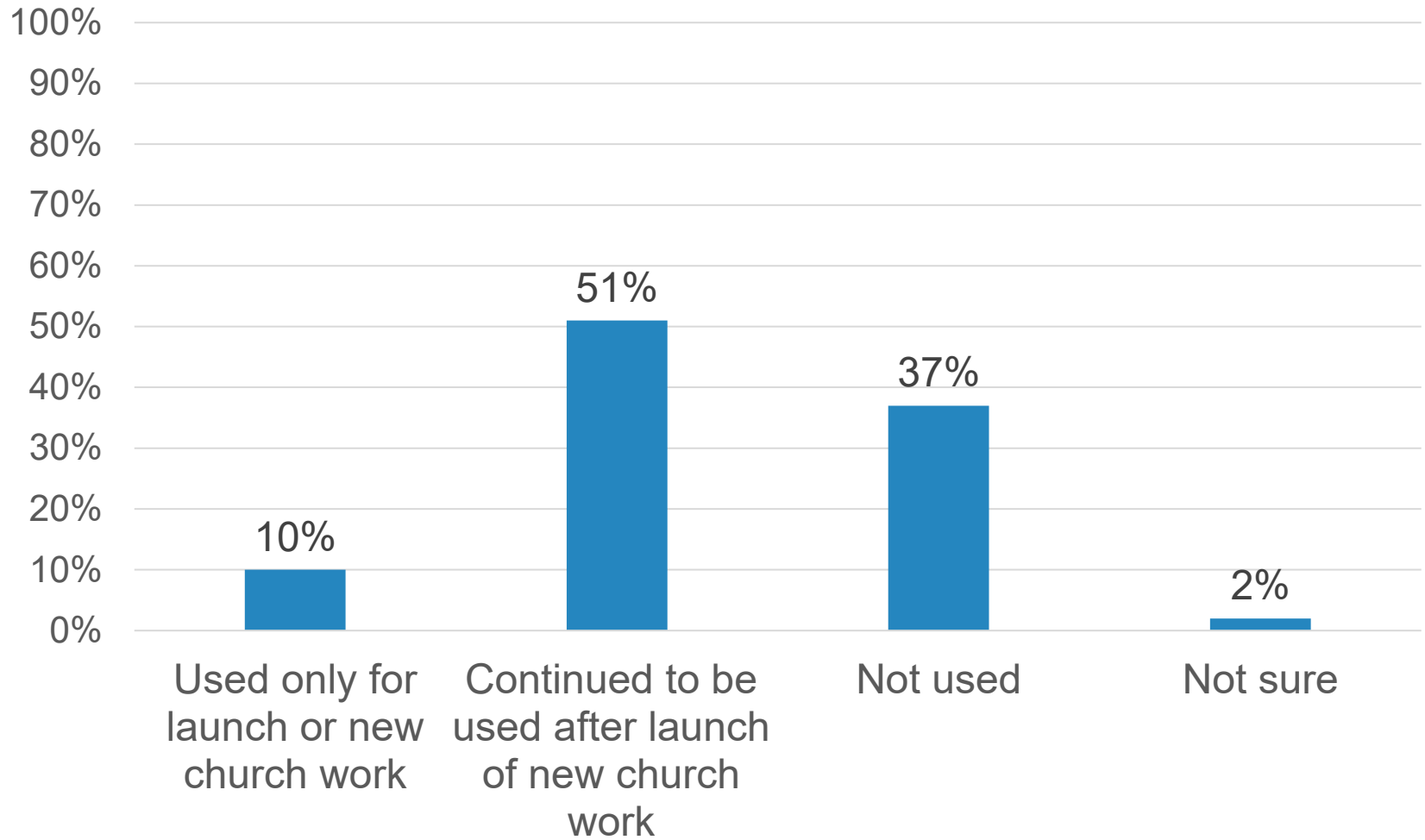
Ongoing social or affinity group meetings for people from the community (e.g., Monday Night Football, Movie nights, etc.)



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Q40_10: "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) **Ongoing social or affinity group meetings for people from the community (e.g., Monday Night Football, Movie nights, etc.)**" n=236

Service projects to meet practical needs in the community



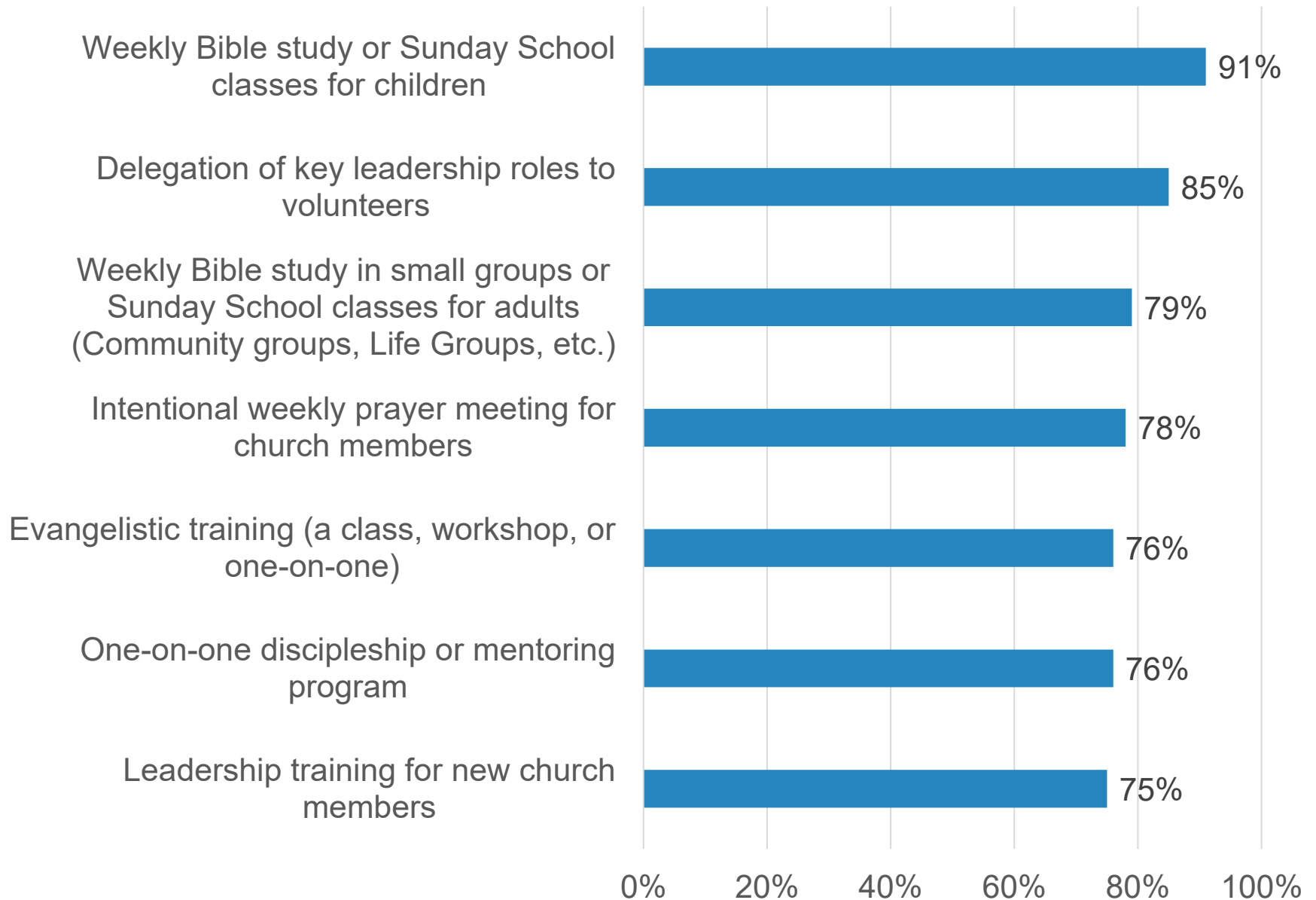
Lifewayresearch

Q40_11: "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) **Service projects to meet practical needs in the community**" n=239

Activities

Lifewayresearch

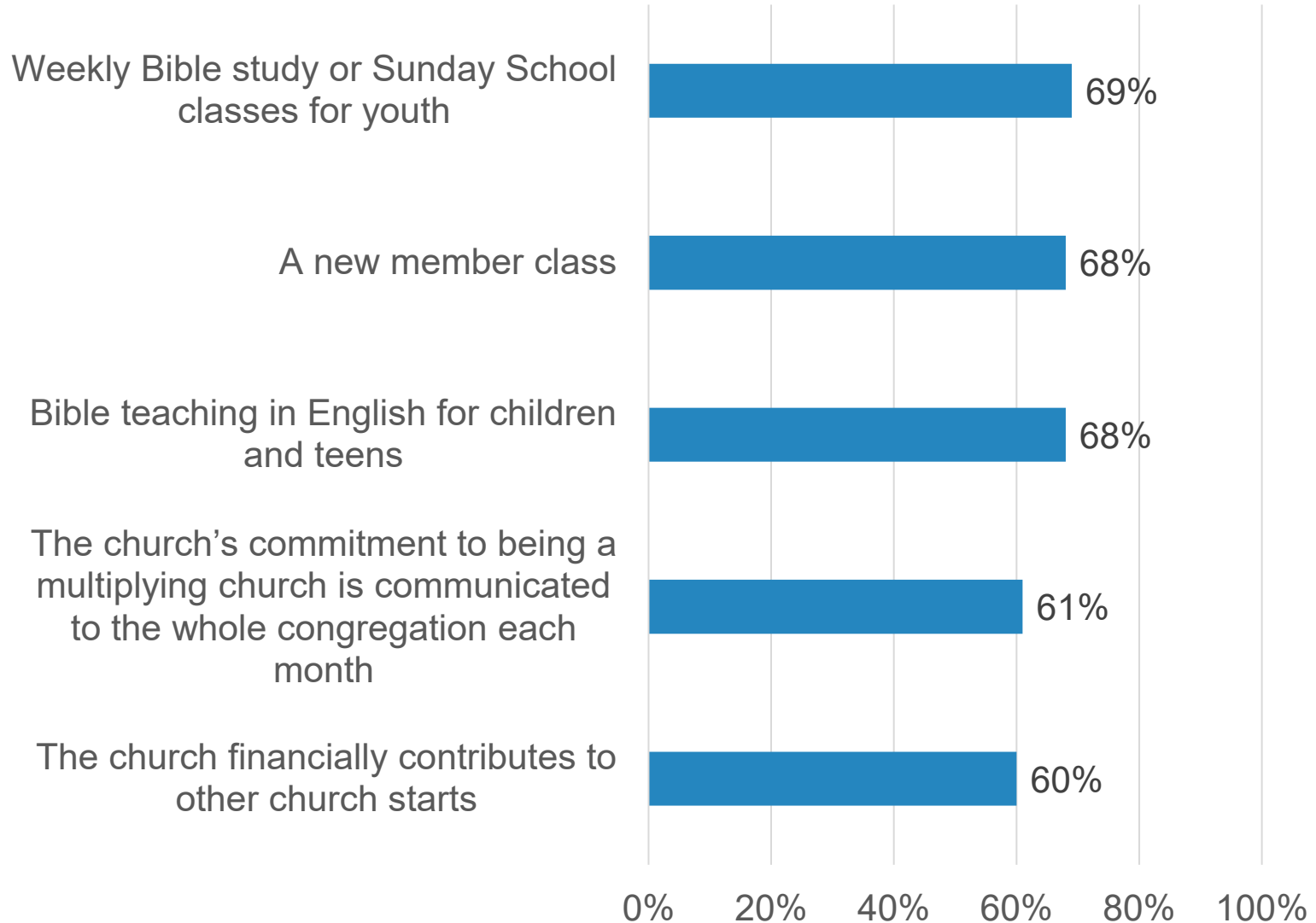
Activities occurring since start of new church work



Lifewayresearch

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)



Lifewayresearch

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)"

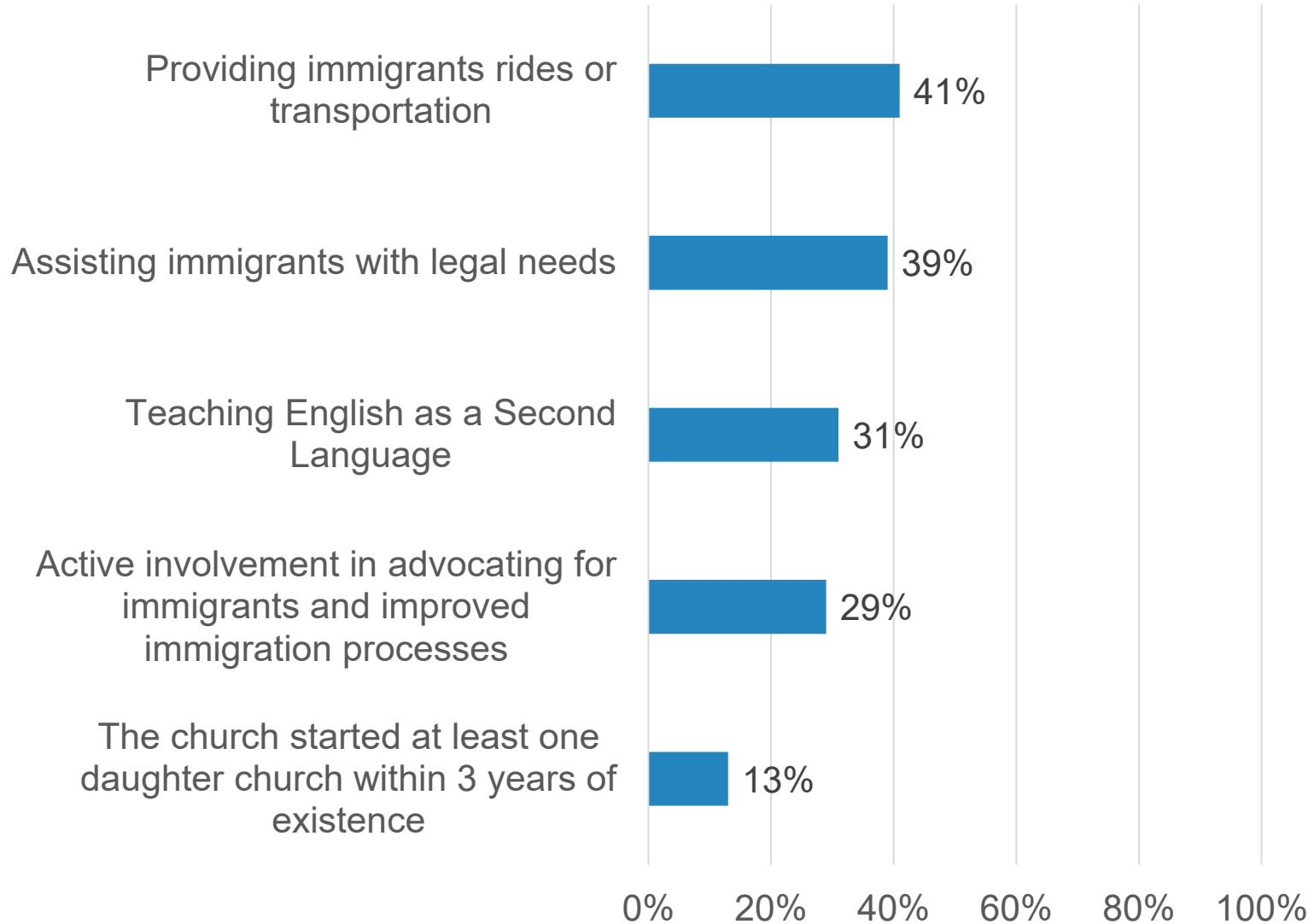
Activities occurring since start of new church work (continued)



Lifewayresearch

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) "

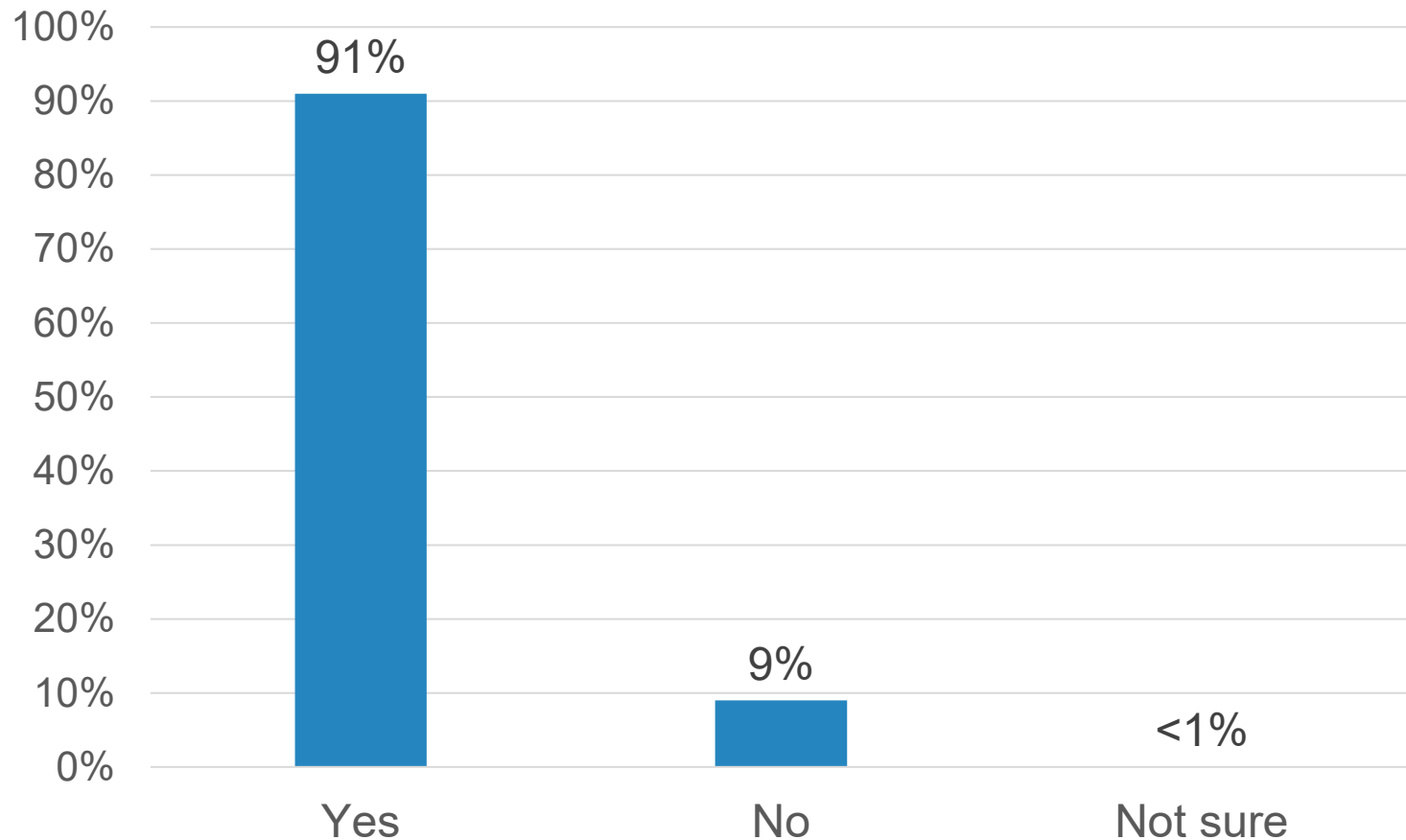
Activities occurring since start of new church work (continued)



Lifewayresearch

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) "

Weekly Bible study or Sunday School classes for children

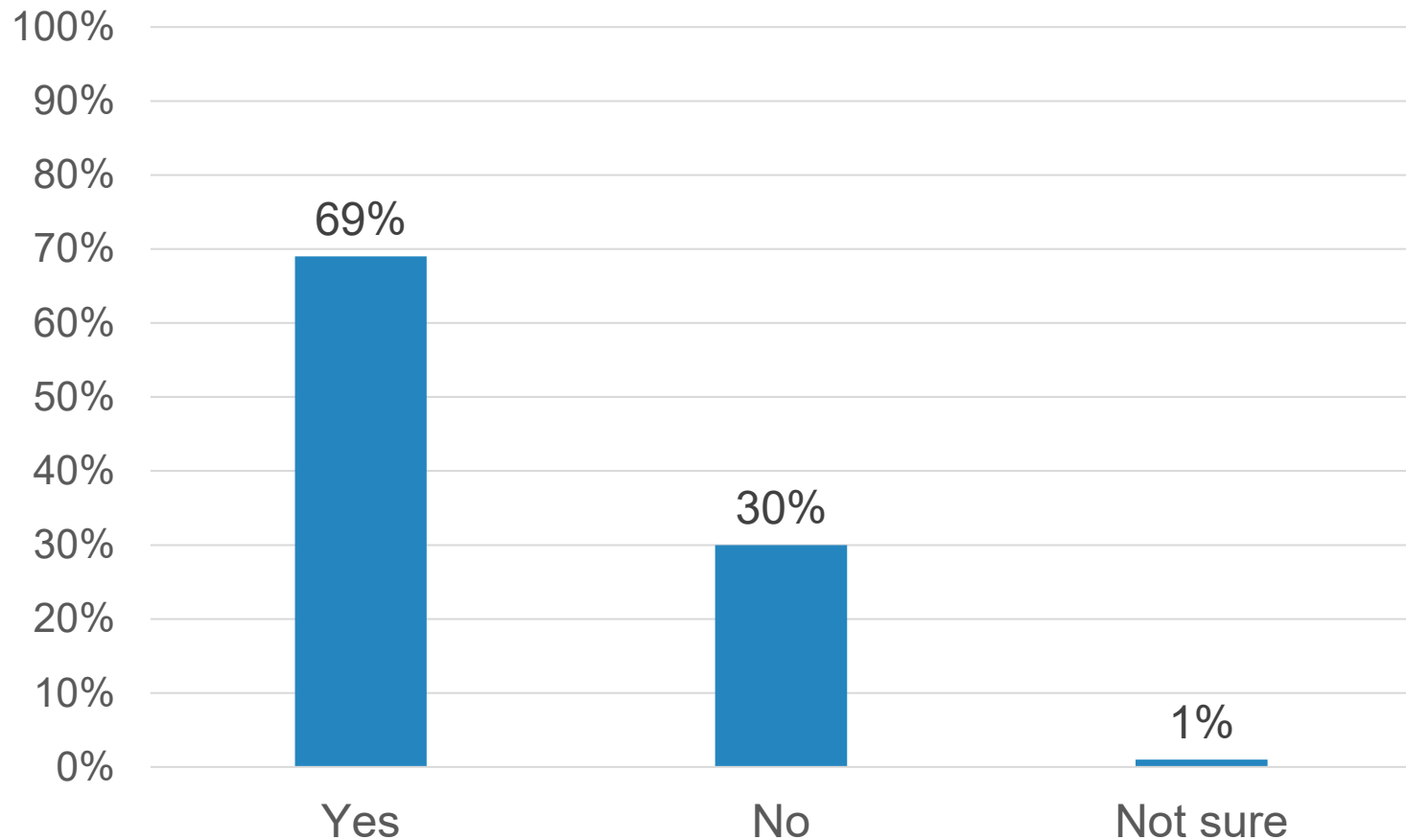


Lifewayresearch

Q41_1: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Weekly Bible study or Sunday School classes for children" n=268

Weekly Bible study or Sunday School classes for youth

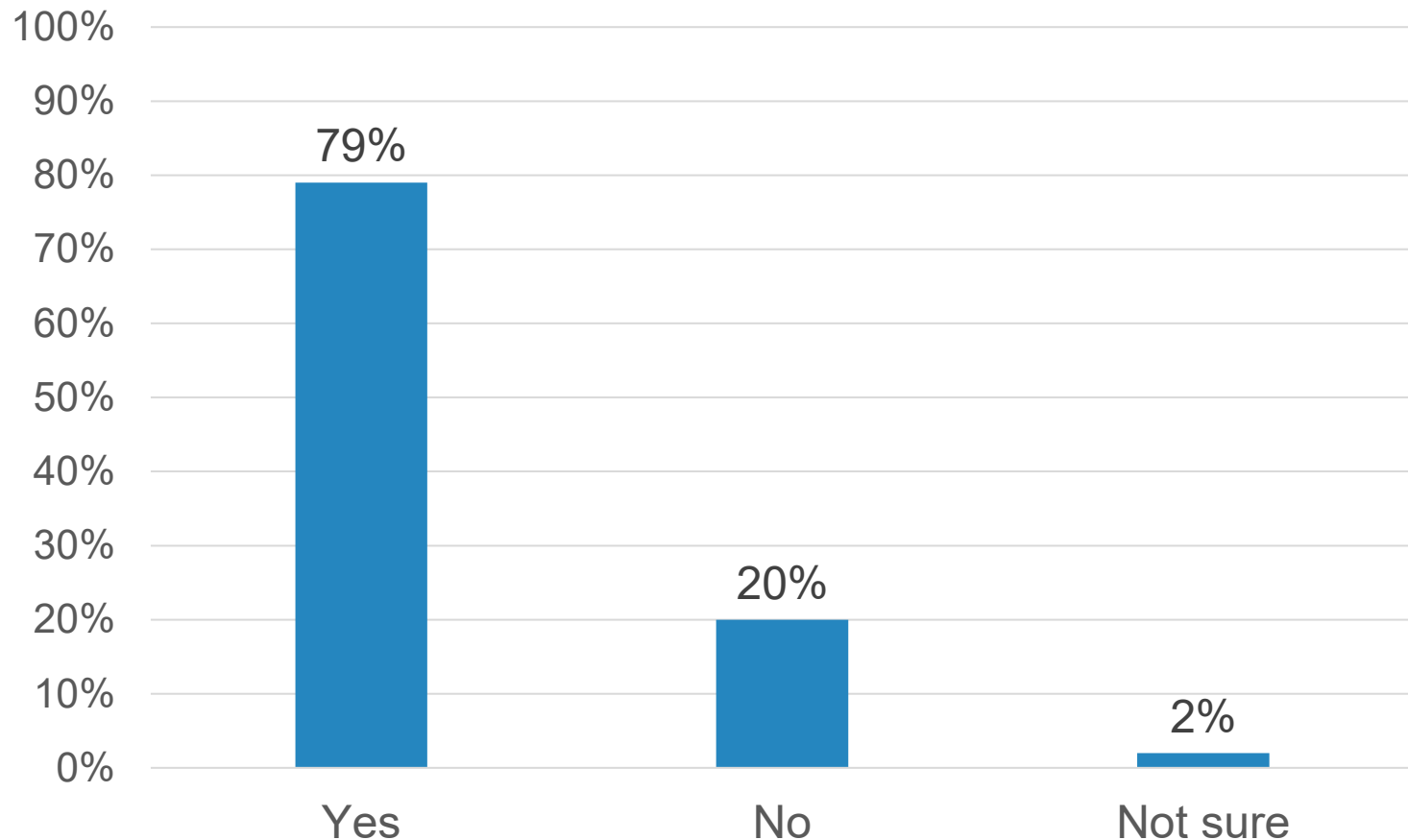


Lifewayresearch

Q41_2: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Weekly Bible study or Sunday School classes for youth" n=256

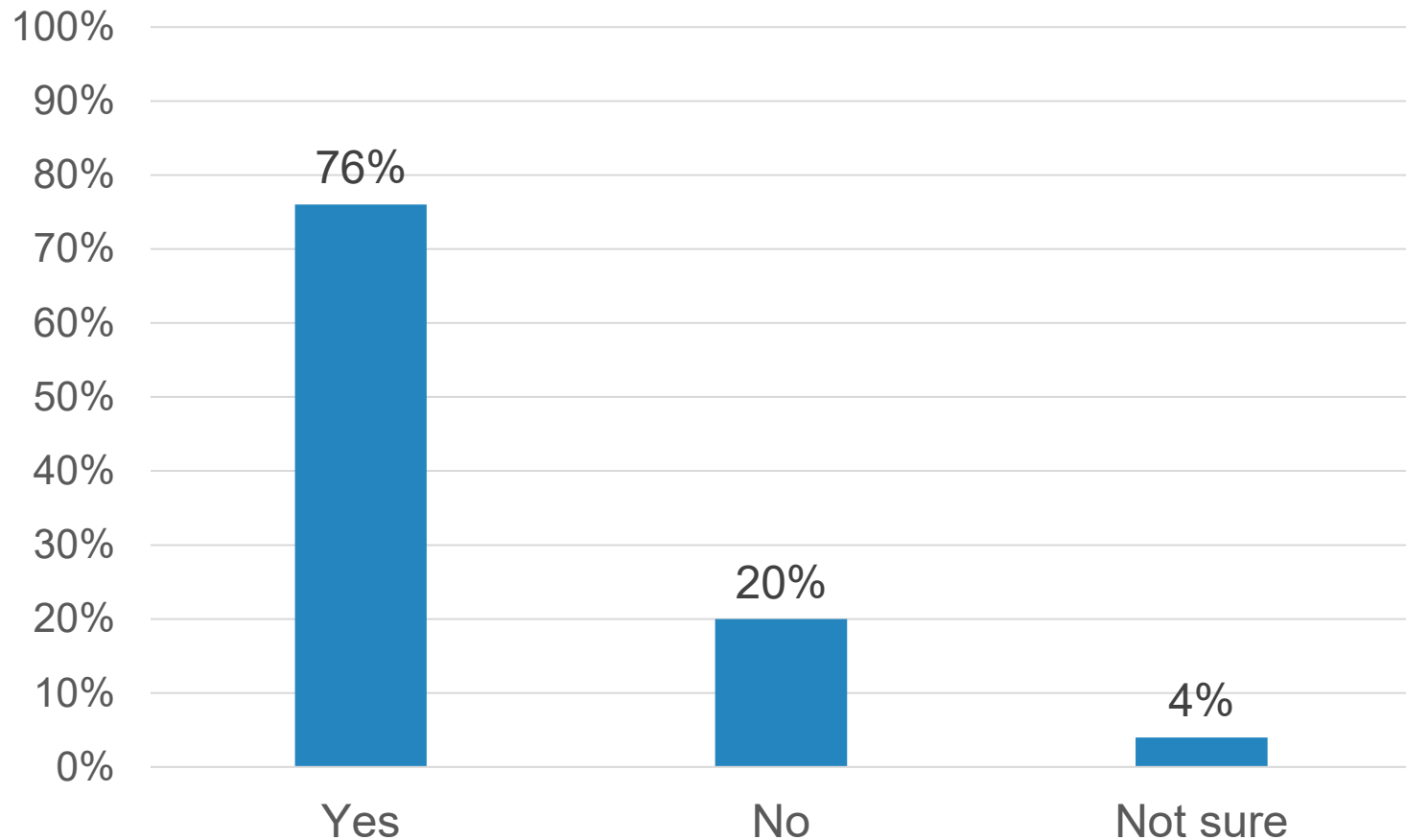
Weekly Bible study in small groups or Sunday School classes for adults (Community groups, Life Groups, etc.)



Lifewayresearch

Q41_3: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Weekly Bible study in small groups or Sunday School classes for adults (Community groups, Life Groups, etc.)" n=257

One-on-one discipleship or mentoring program

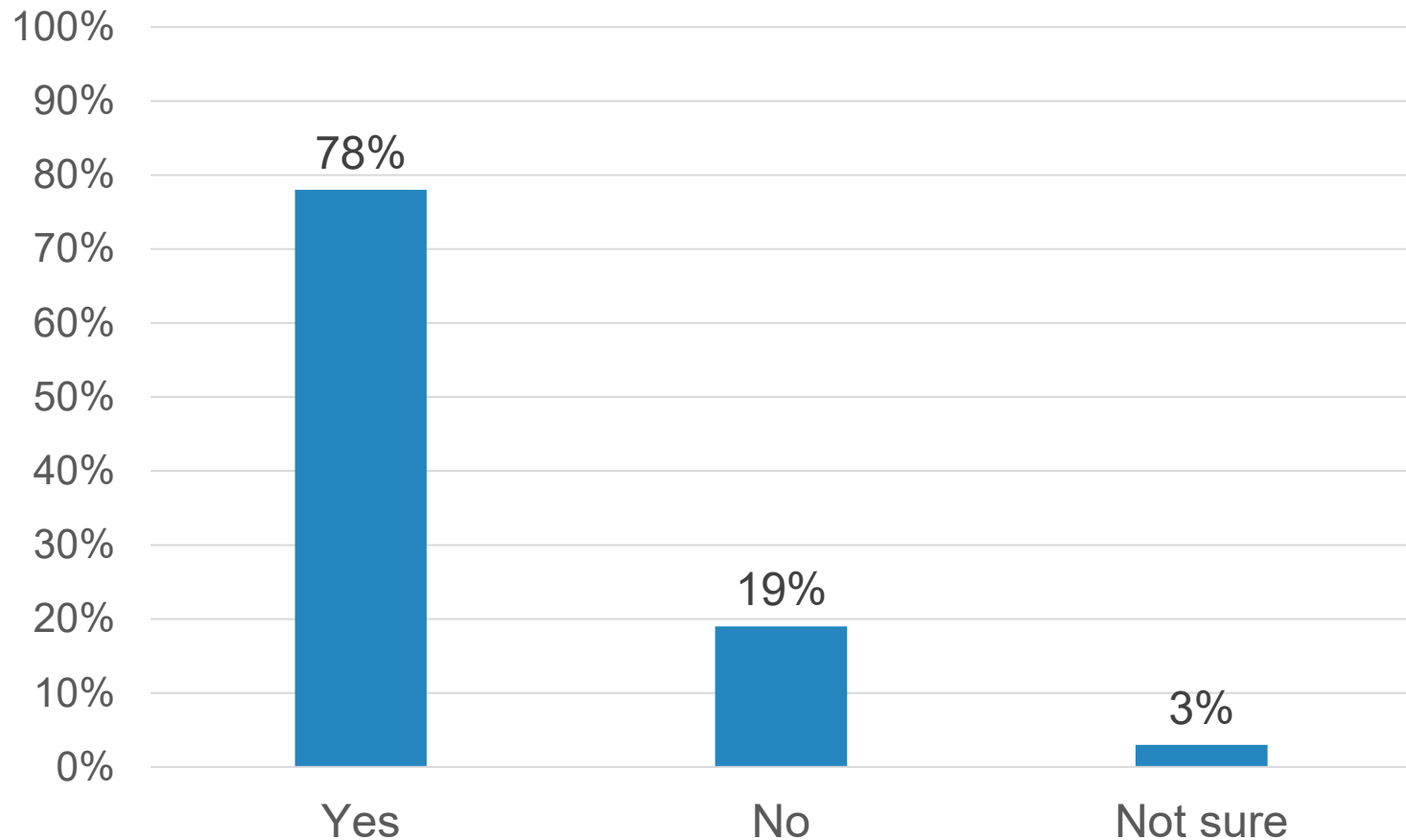


Lifewayresearch

Q41_4: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

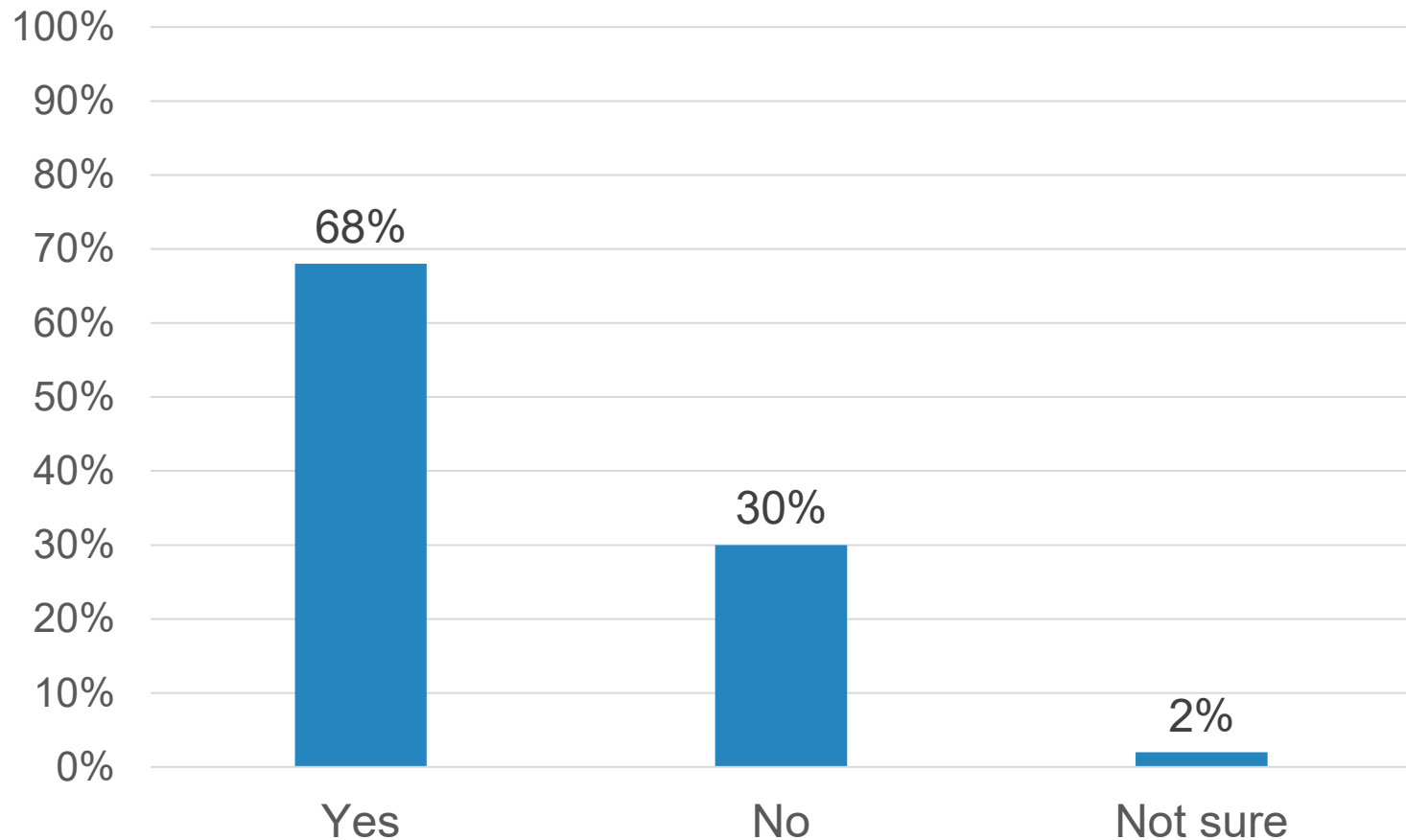
One-on-one discipleship or mentoring program" n=253

Intentional weekly prayer meeting for church members



Lifewayresearch

A new member class

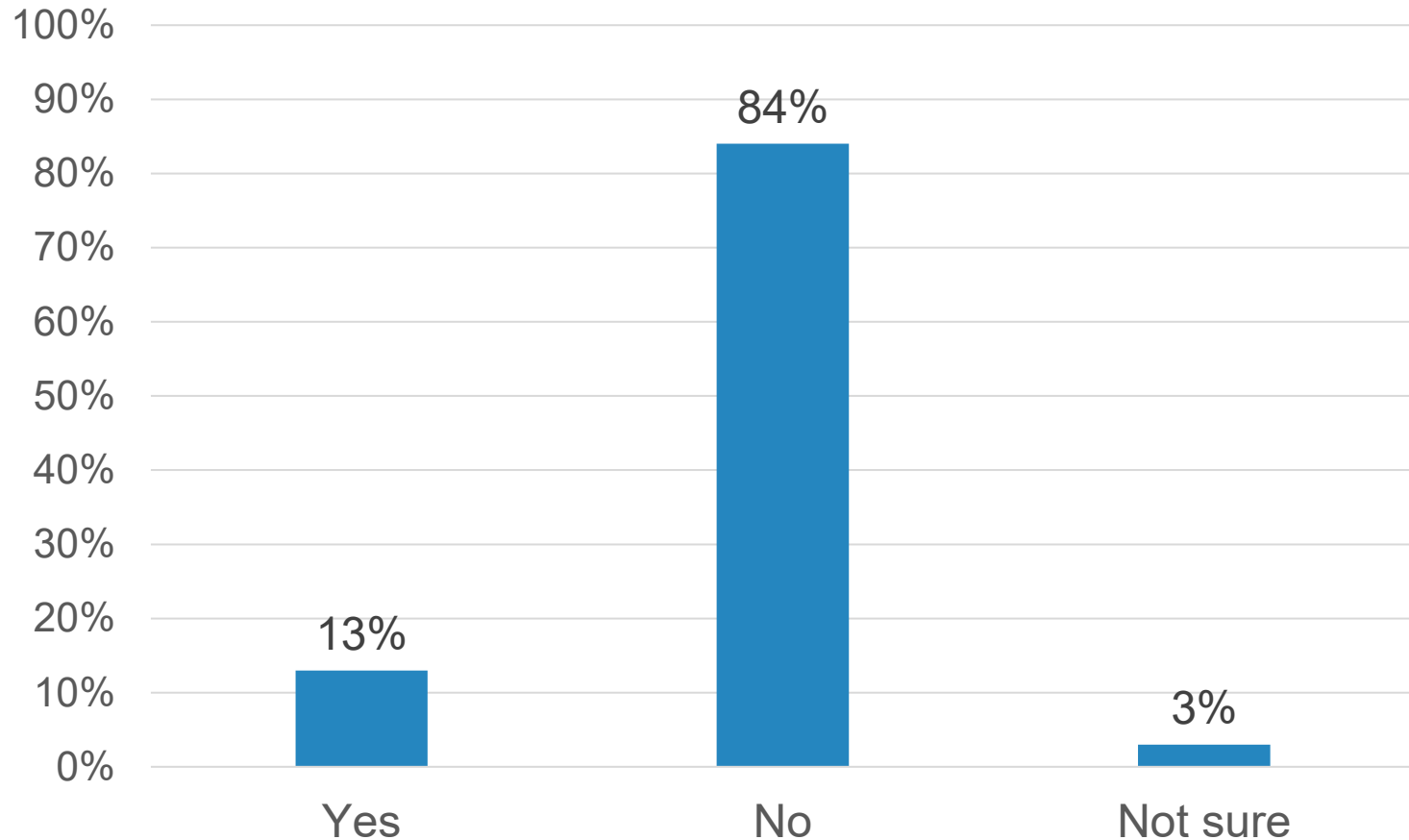


Lifewayresearch

Q41_6: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

A new member class" n=255

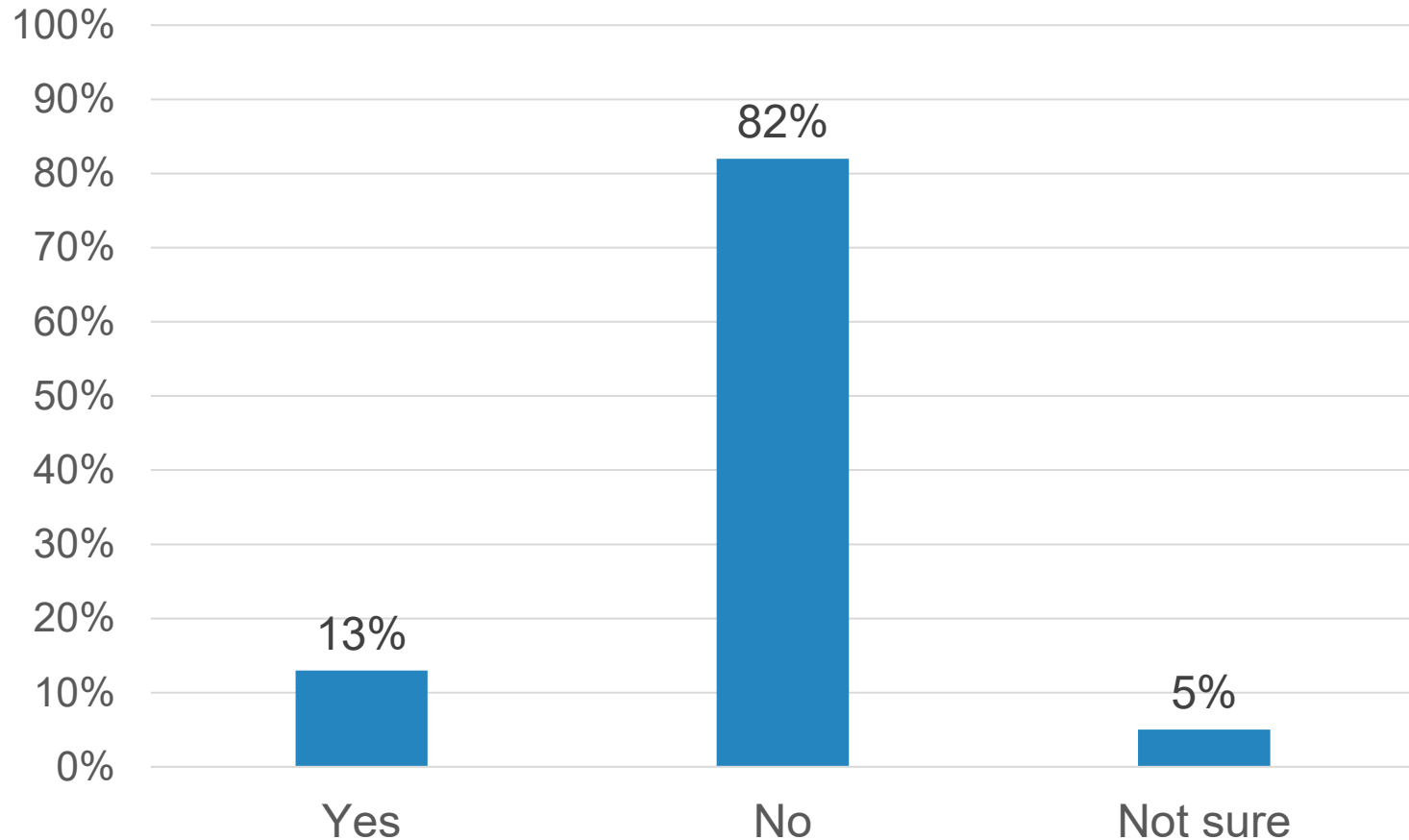
The church started at least one daughter church within 3 years of existence



Lifewayresearch

Q41_7: "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 church started at least one daughter church within 3 years of existence" n=246

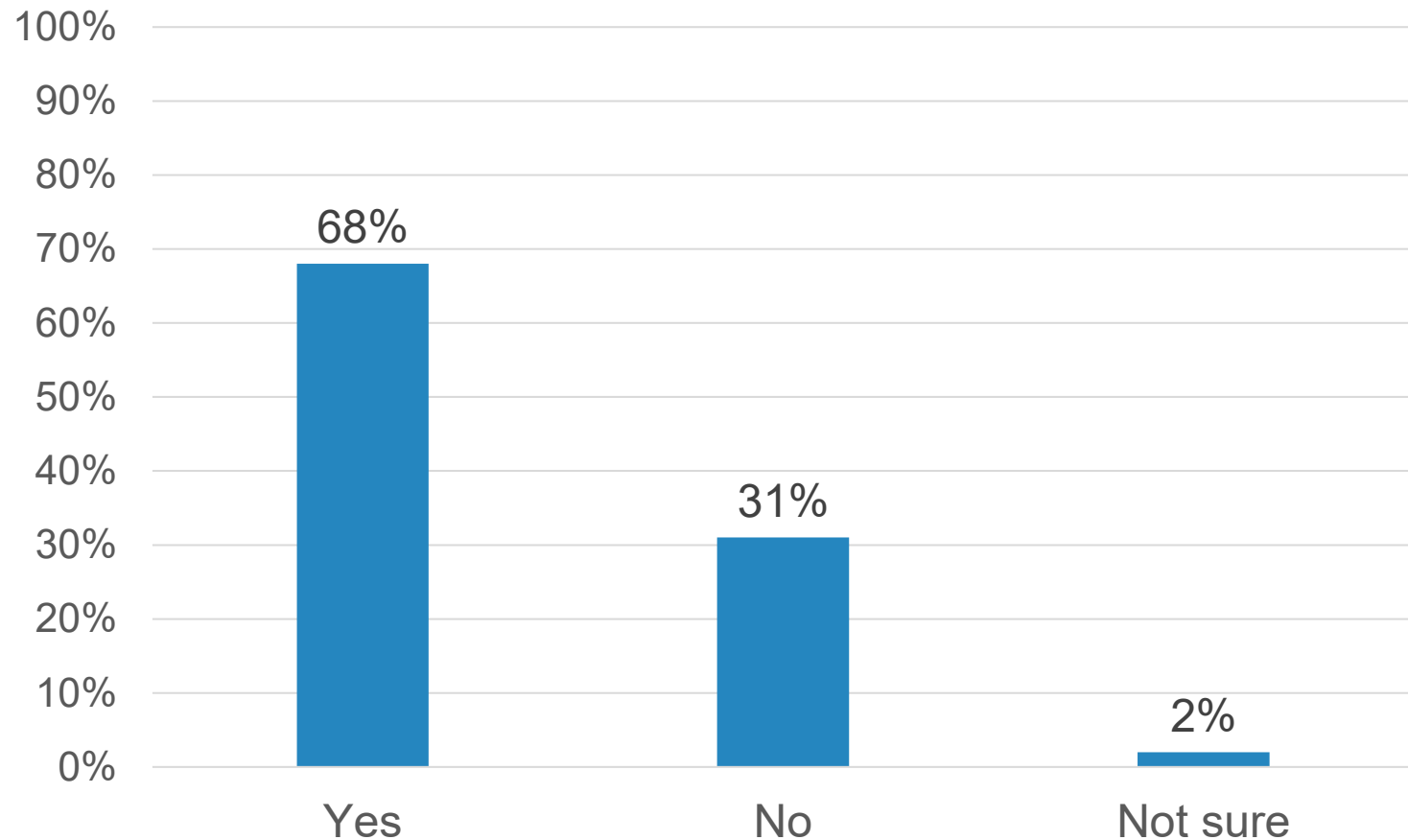
The church started at least one daughter church within 5 years of existence



Lifewayresearch

Q41_8: "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 church started at least one daughter church within 5 years of existence" n=241

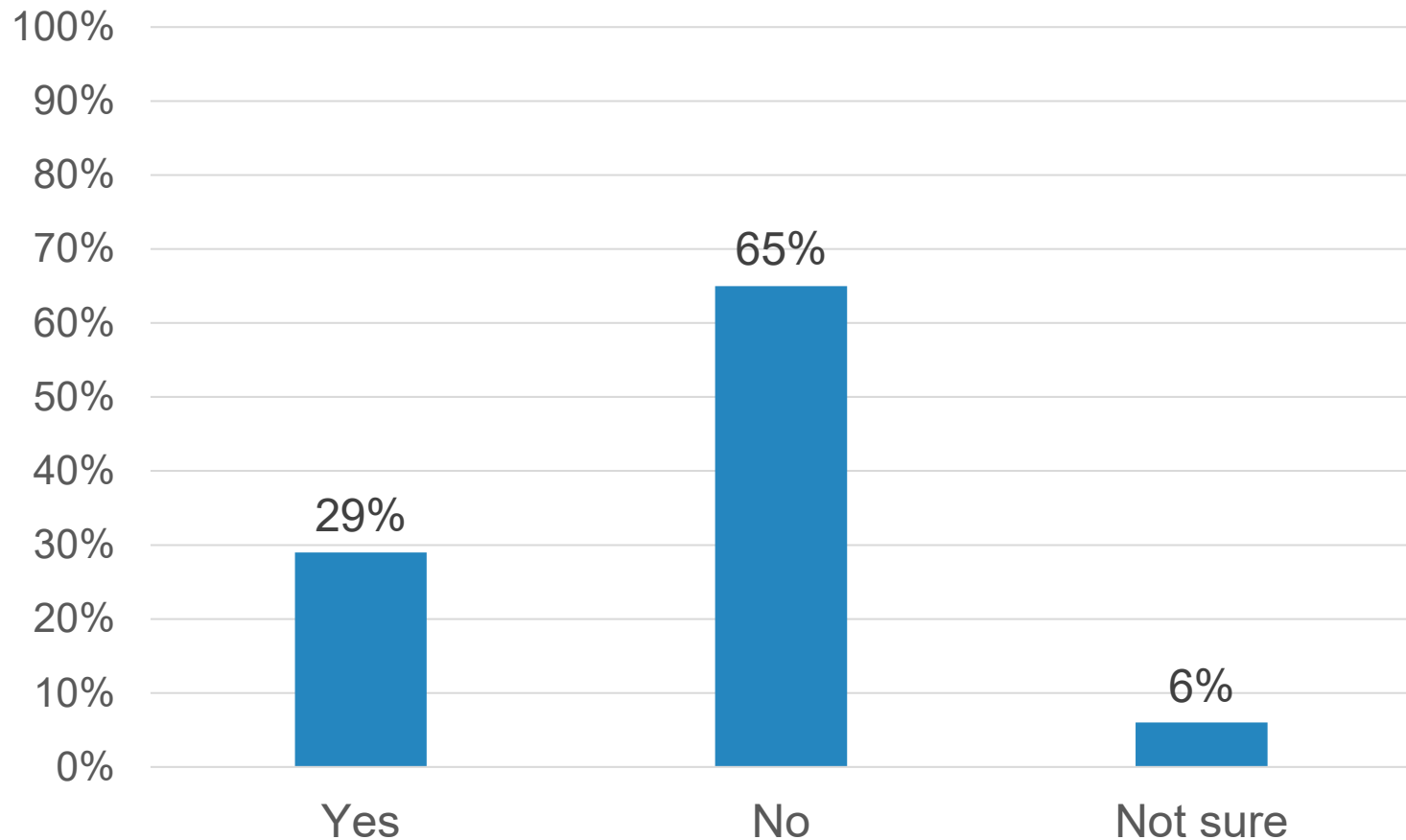
Bible teaching in English for children and teens



Lifewayresearch

Q41_9: "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Bible teaching in English for children and teens" n=248

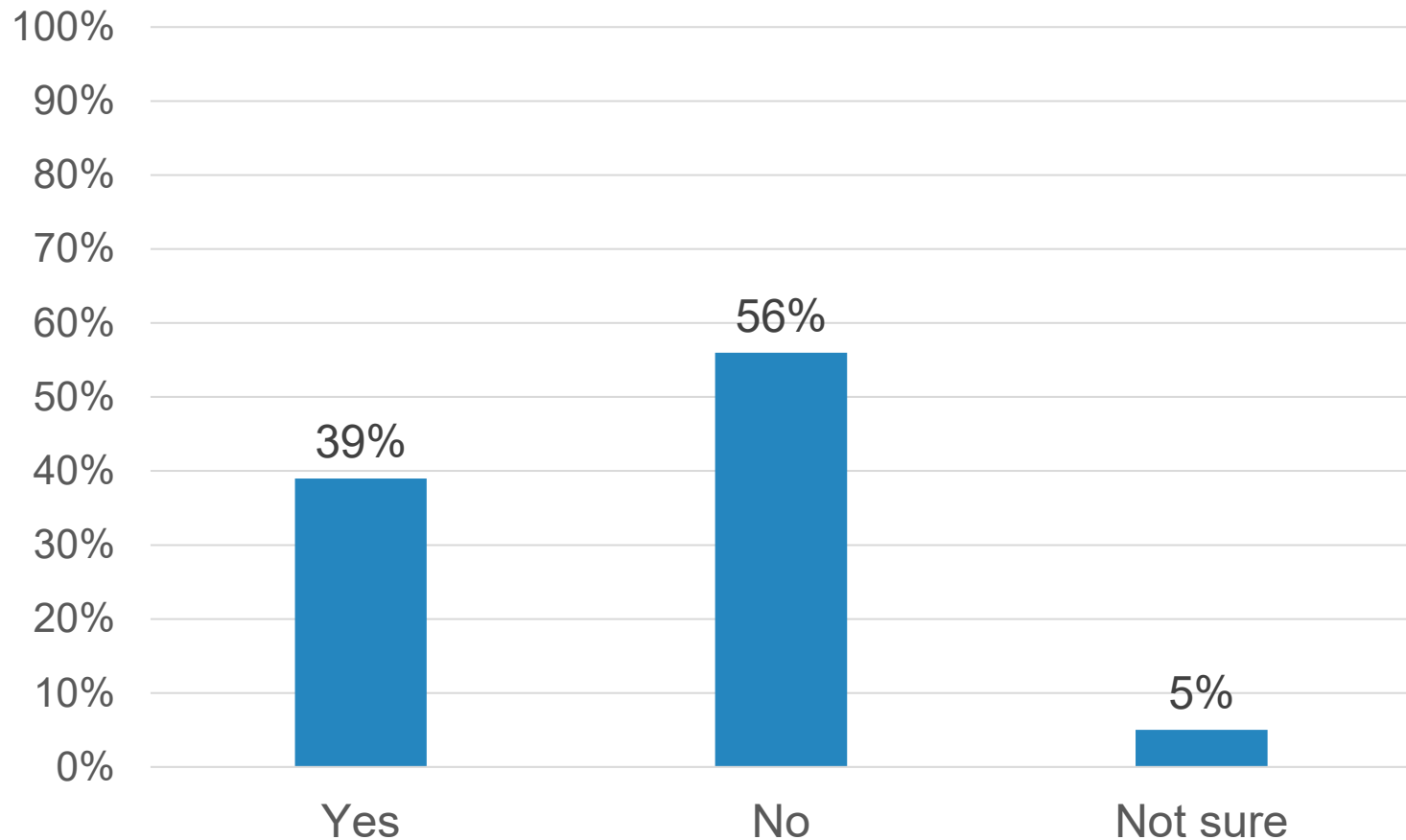
Active involvement in advocating for immigrants and improved immigration processes.



Lifewayresearch

Q42_1 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Active involvement in advocating for immigrants and improved immigration processes." n=260

Assisting immigrants with legal needs

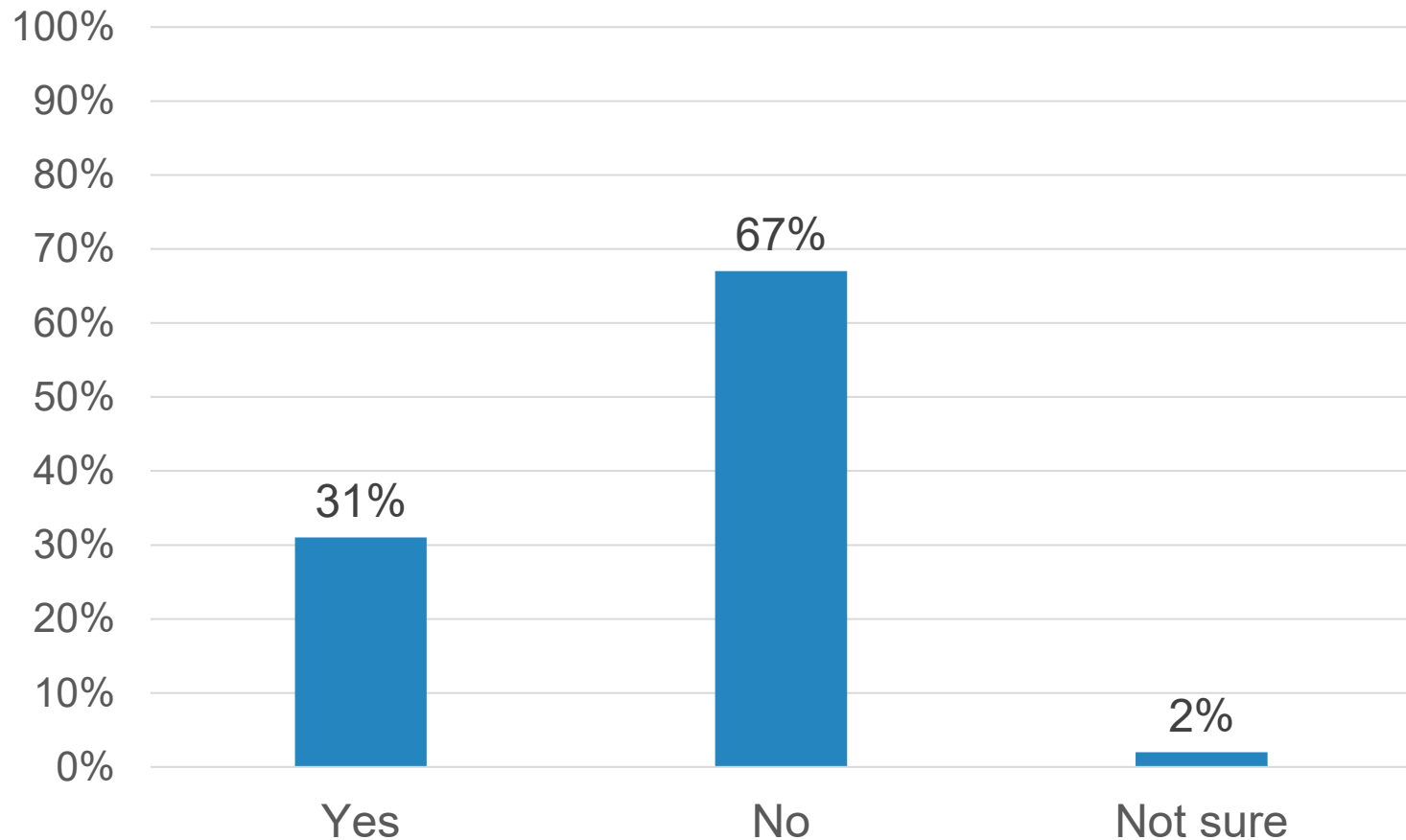


Lifewayresearch

Q42_2 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Assisting immigrants with legal needs" n=261

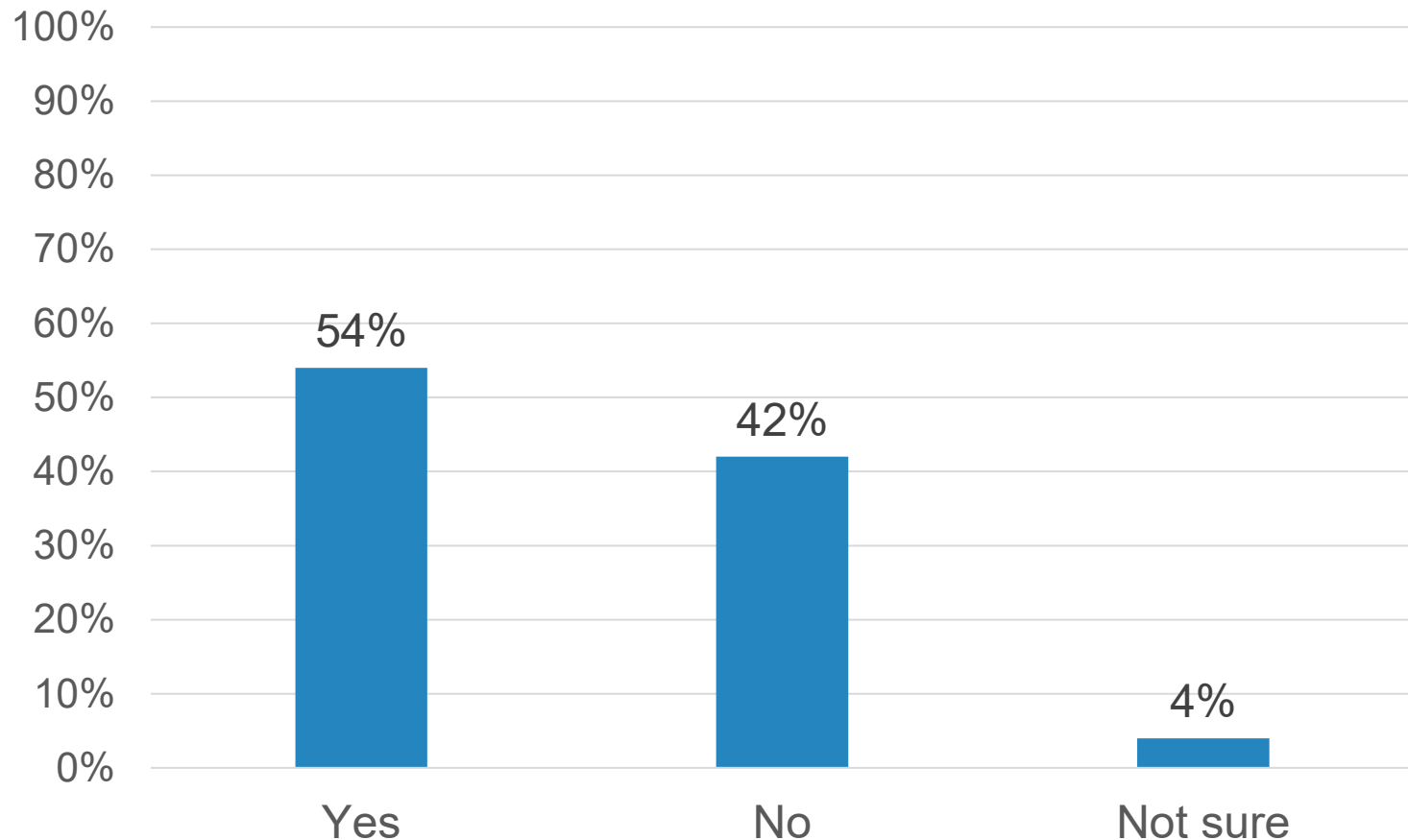
Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL)



Lifewayresearch

Q42_3 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL)" n=261

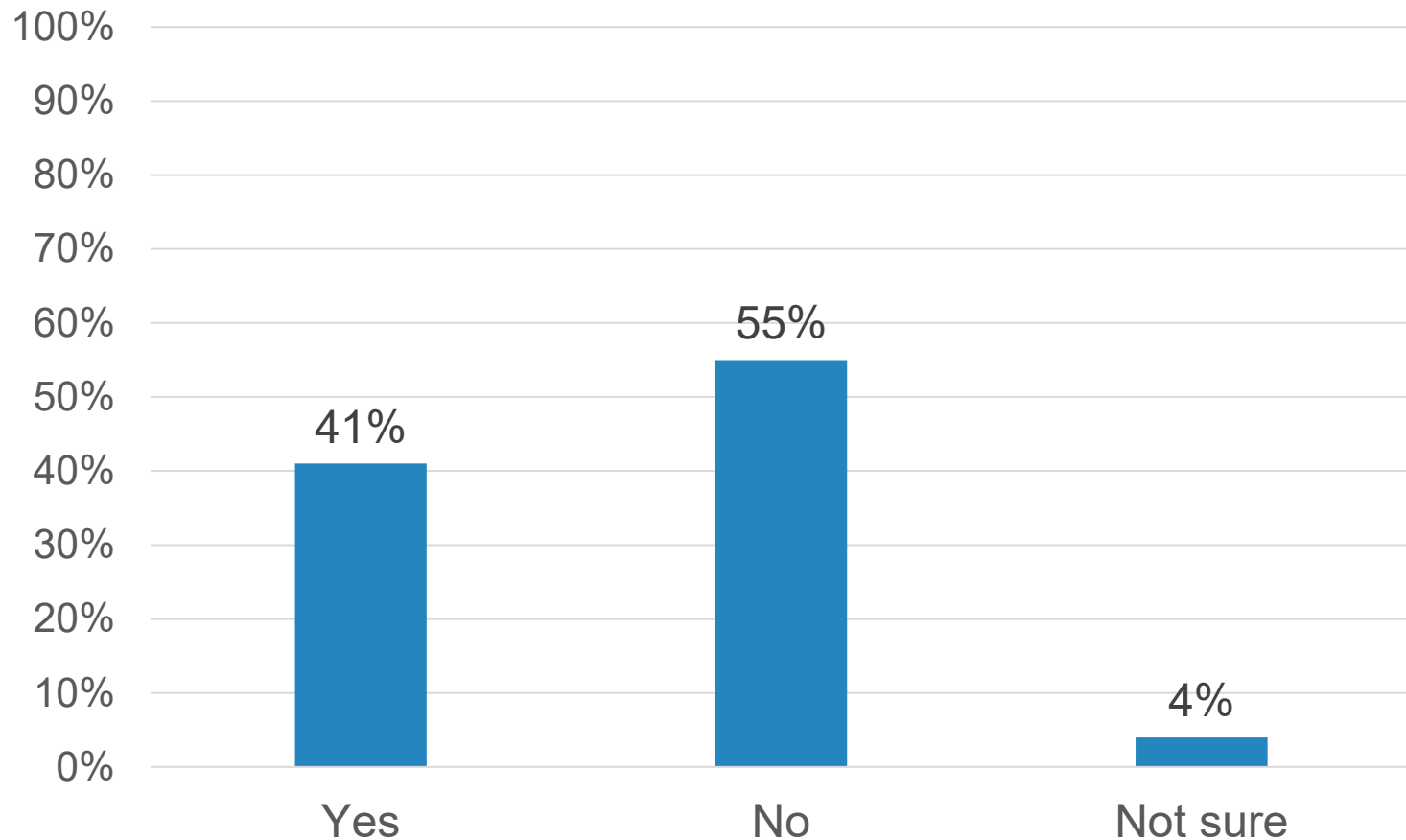
Meeting immigrants' information needs (e.g., where to find housing, stores, services, etc.)



Lifewayresearch

Q42_4 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Meeting immigrants' information needs (e.g., where to find housing, stores, services, etc.)" n=260

Providing immigrants rides or transportation

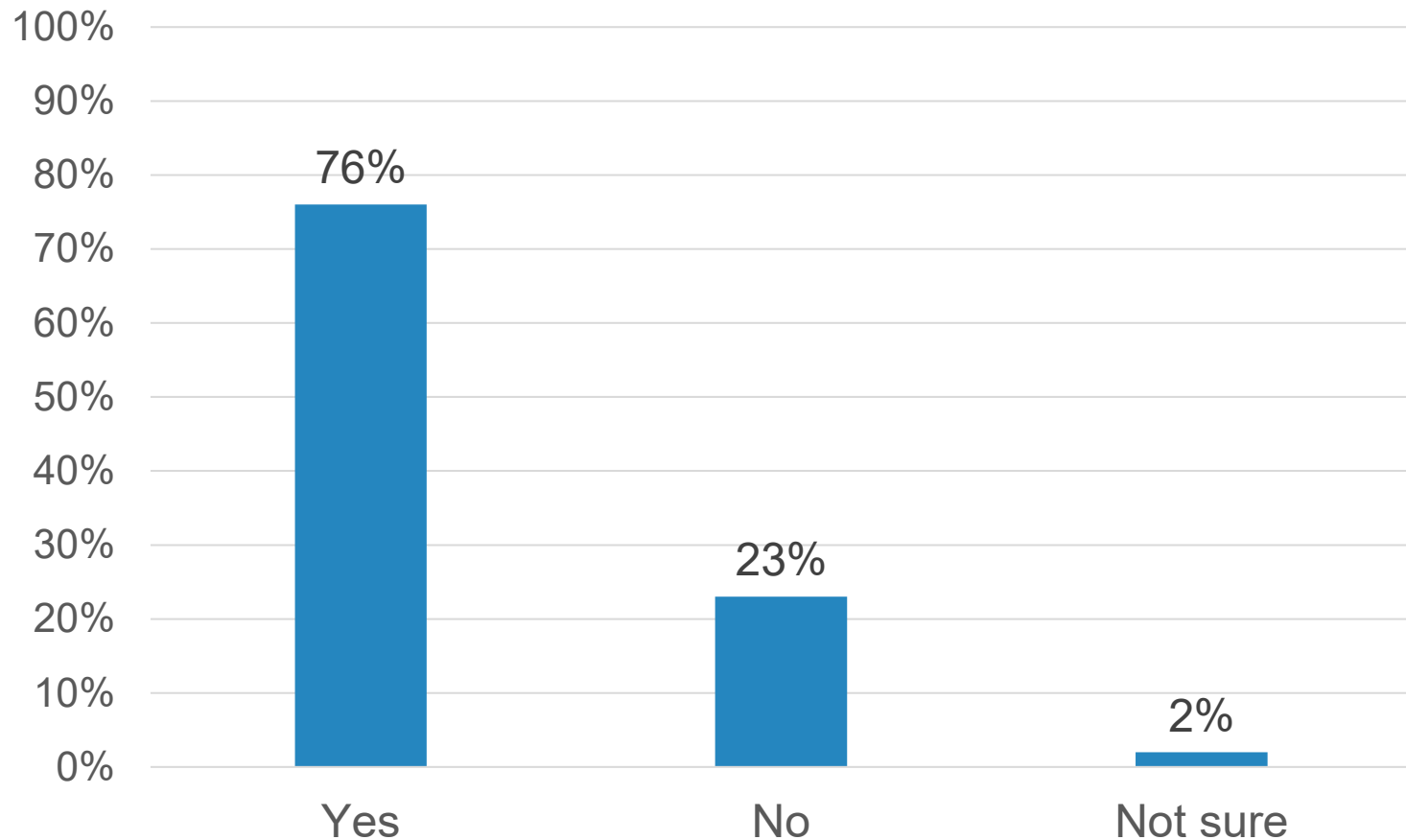


Lifewayresearch

Q42_5 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Providing immigrants rides or transportation" n=258

Evangelistic training (a class, workshop, or one-on-one)

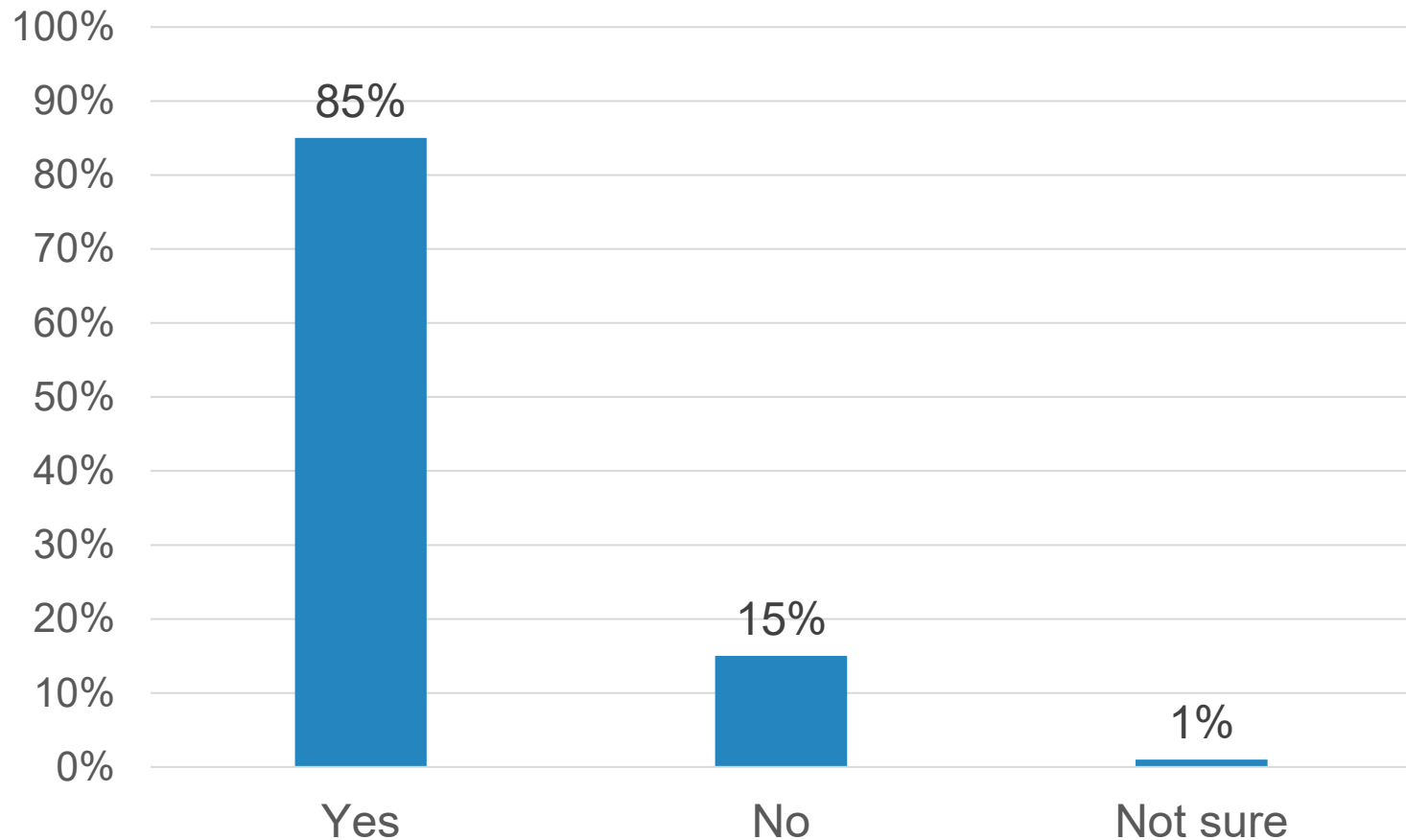


Lifewayresearch

Q43_1 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Evangelistic training (a class, workshop, or one-on-one) n=261

Delegation of key leadership roles to volunteers

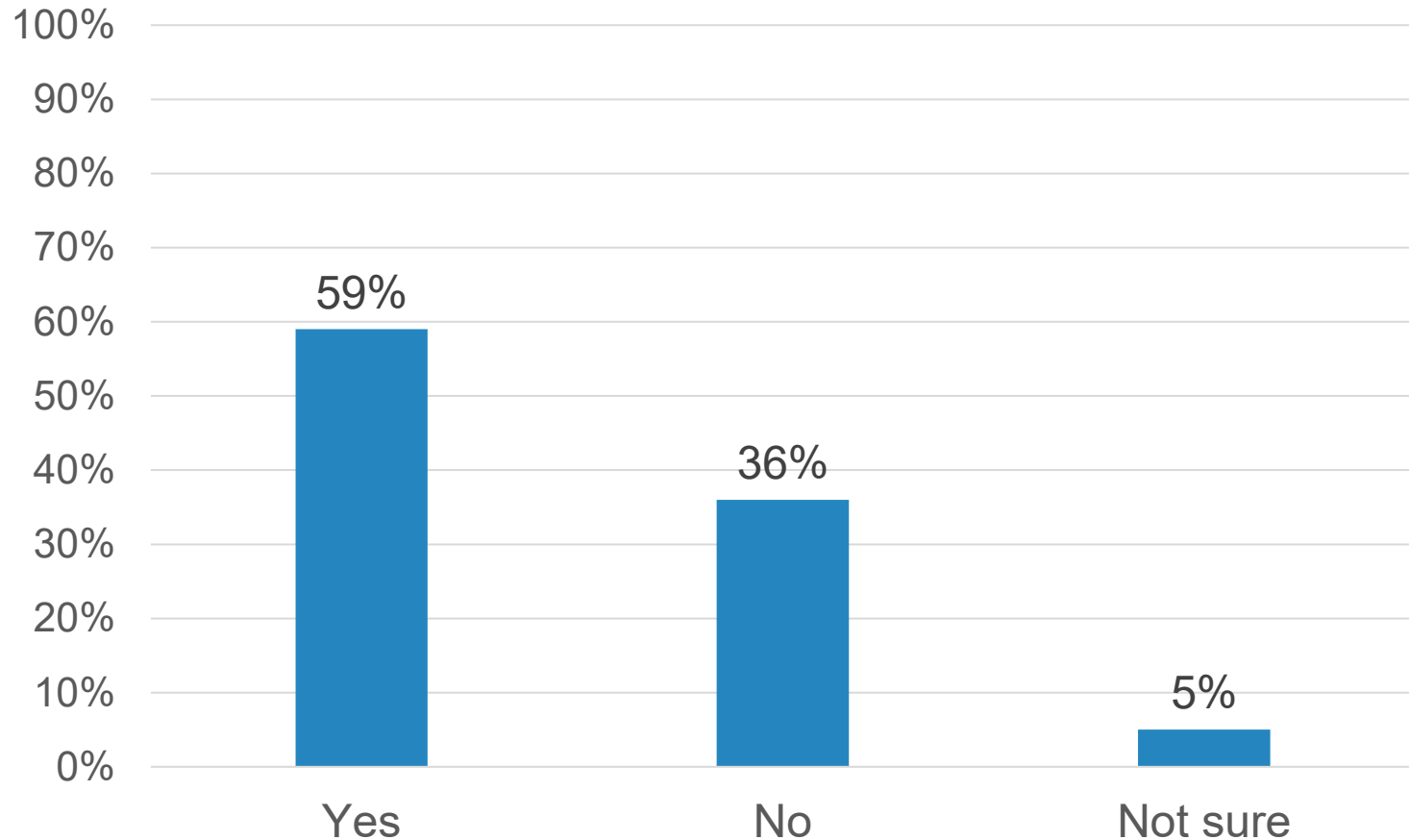


Lifewayresearch

Q43_2 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Delegation of key leadership roles to volunteers" n=263

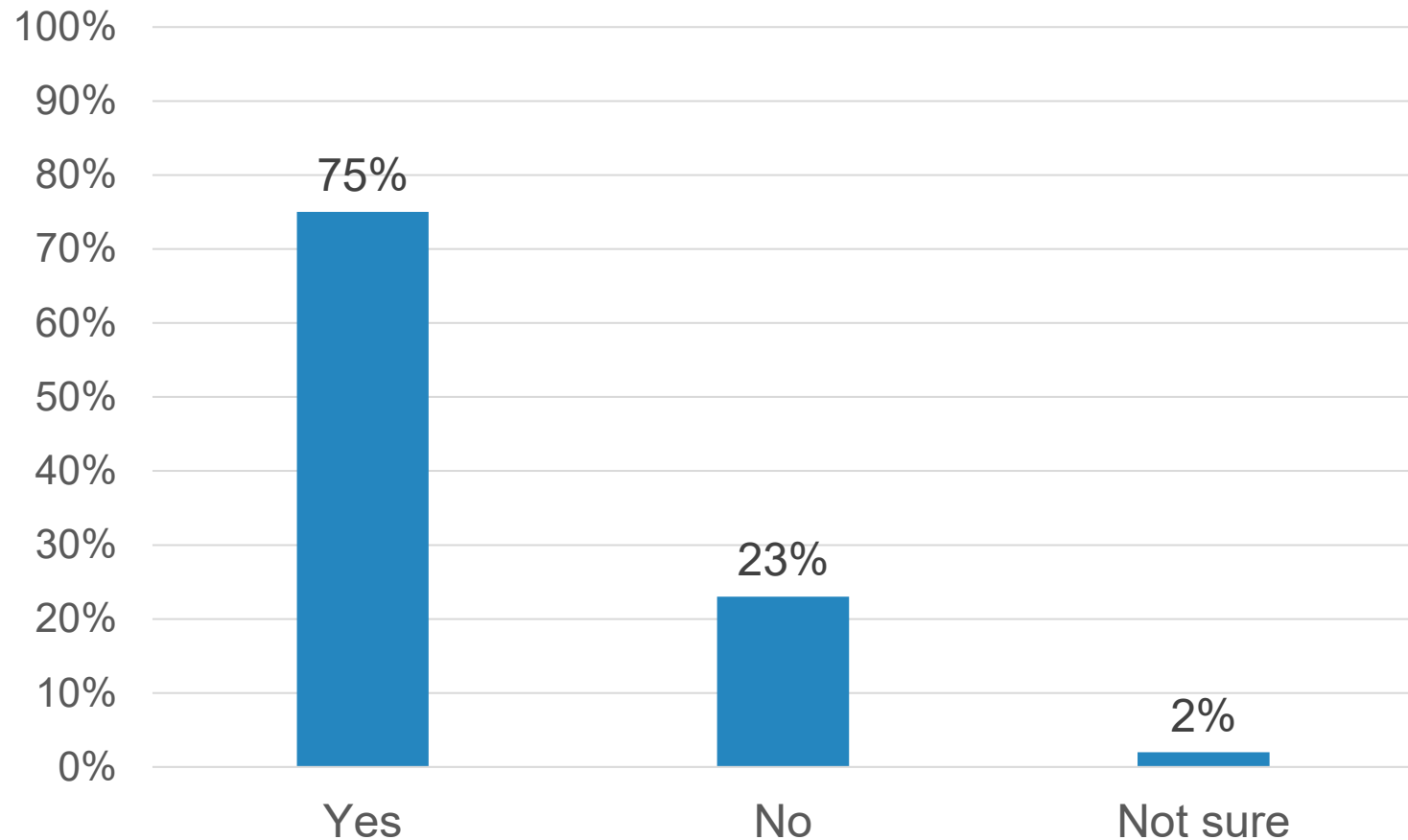
A proactive stewardship development plan enabling the church to be financially self-sufficient



Lifewayresearch

Q43_3 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
A proactive stewardship development plan enabling the church to be financially self-sufficient" n=261

Leadership training for new church members

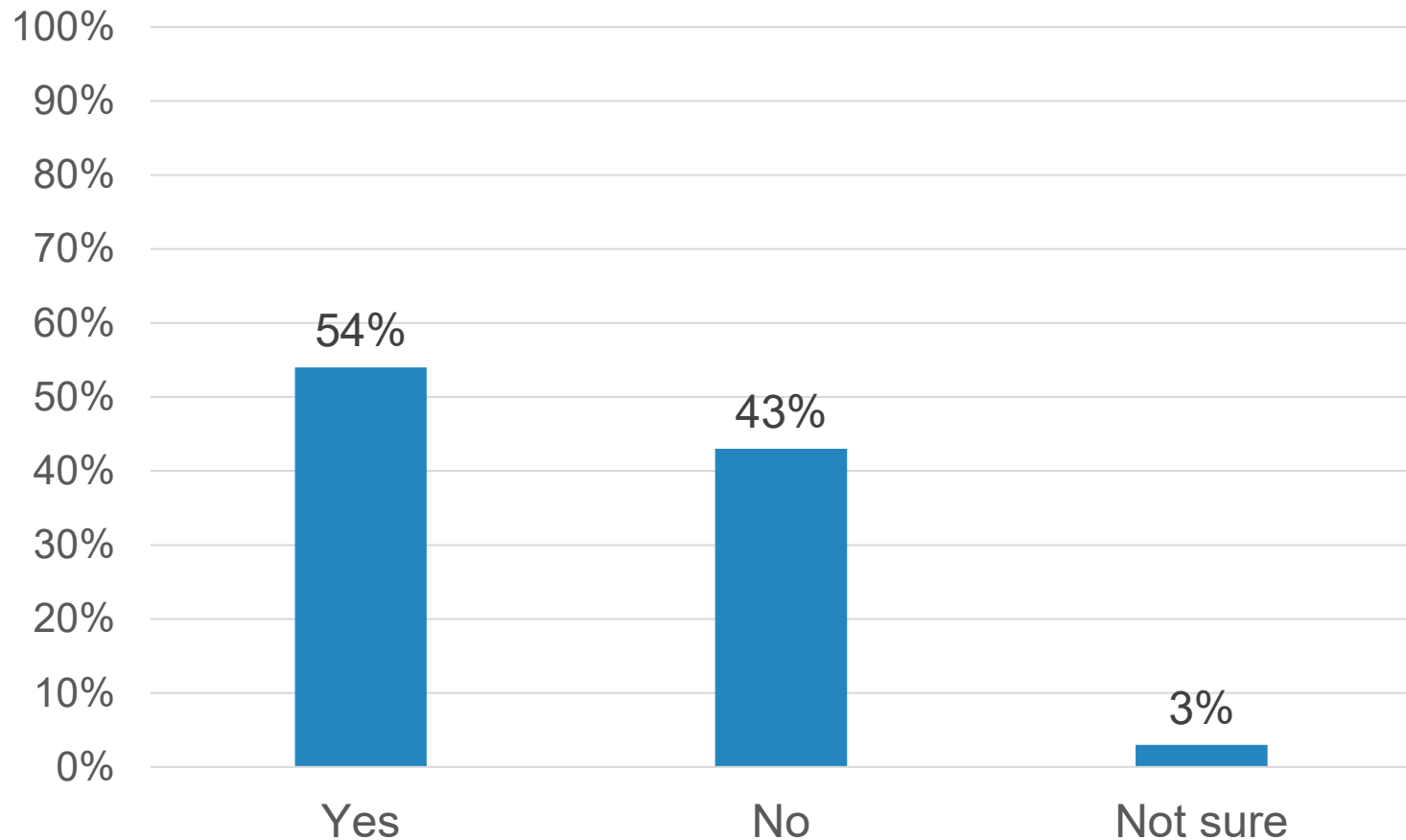


Lifewayresearch

Q43_4 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Leadership training for new church members" n=263

Meetings and interviews with area leaders to understand the community

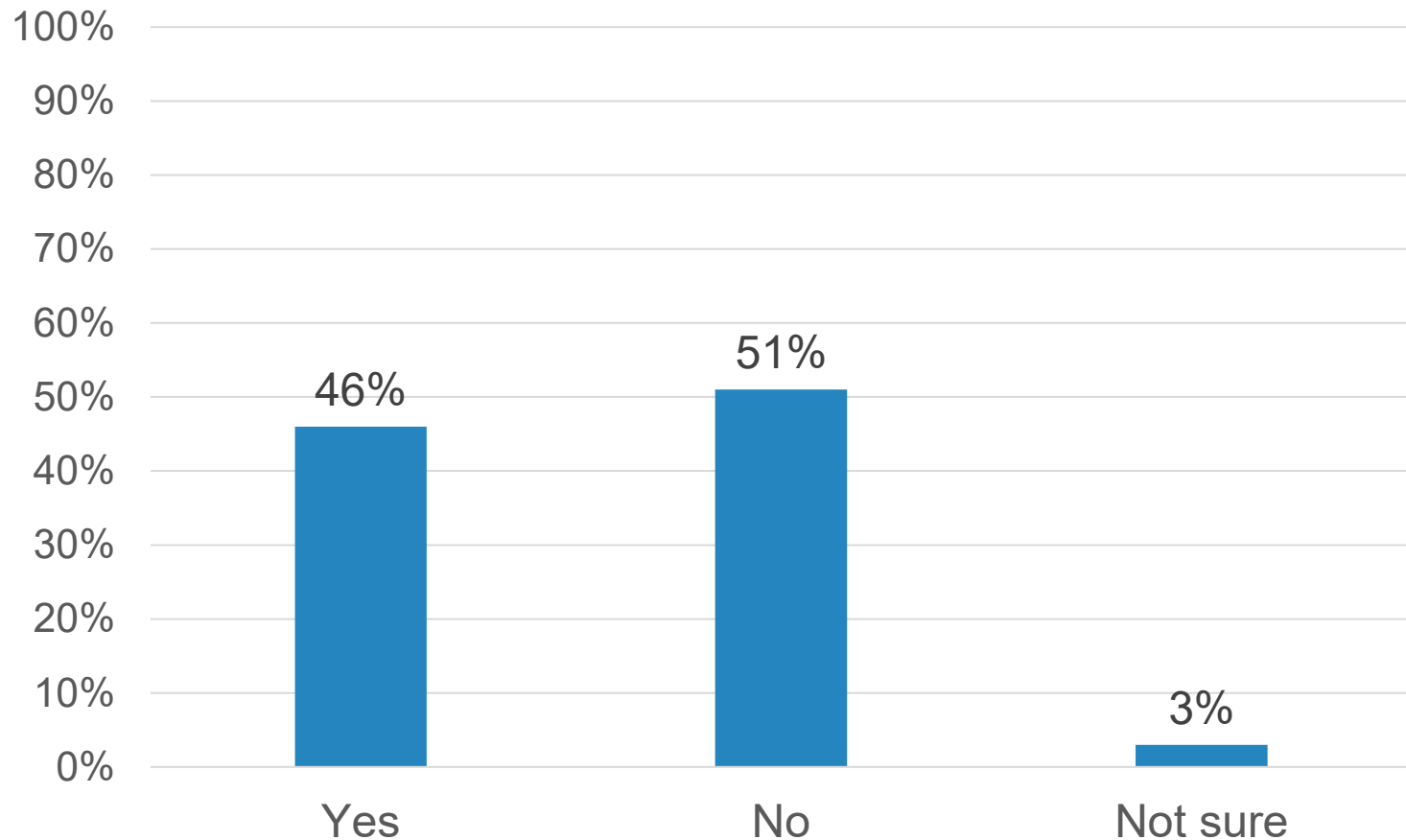


Lifewayresearch

Q43_5 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)

Meetings and interviews with area leaders to understand the community" n=256

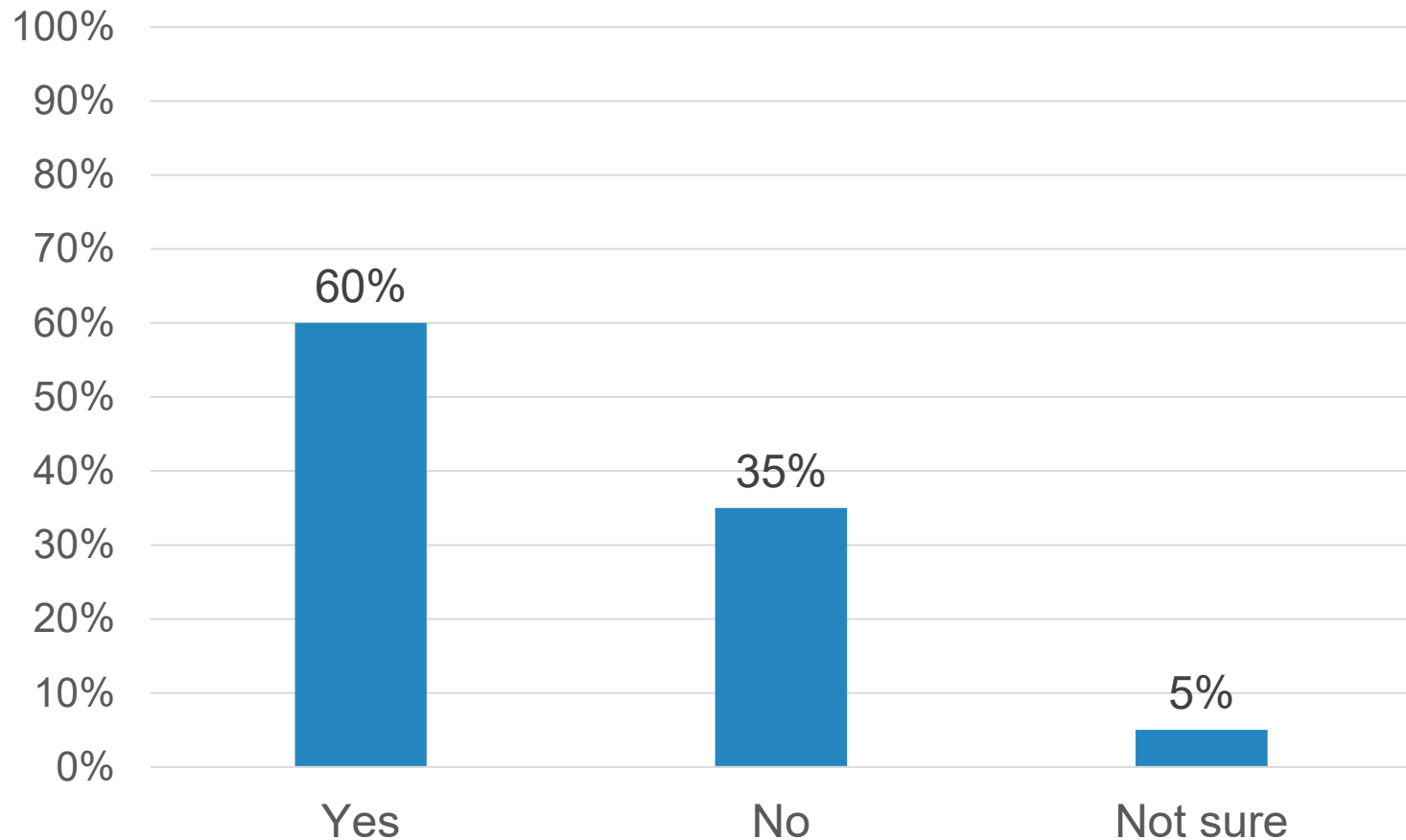
Partnering with another organization to start new churches



Lifewayresearch

Q43_6 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Partnering with another organization to start new churches" n=257

The church financially contributes to other church starts

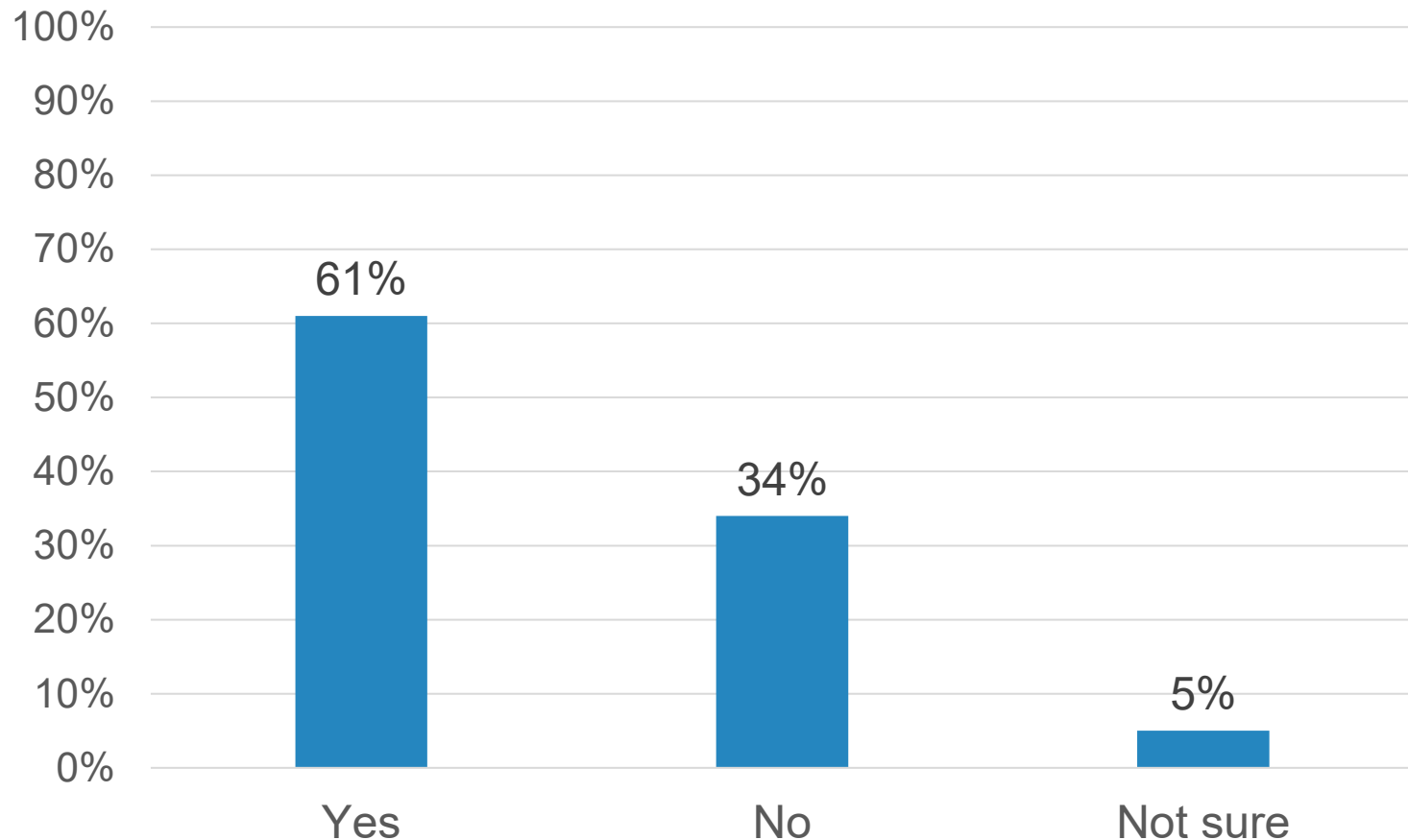


Lifewayresearch

Q43_7 "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 church financially contributes to other church starts." n=257

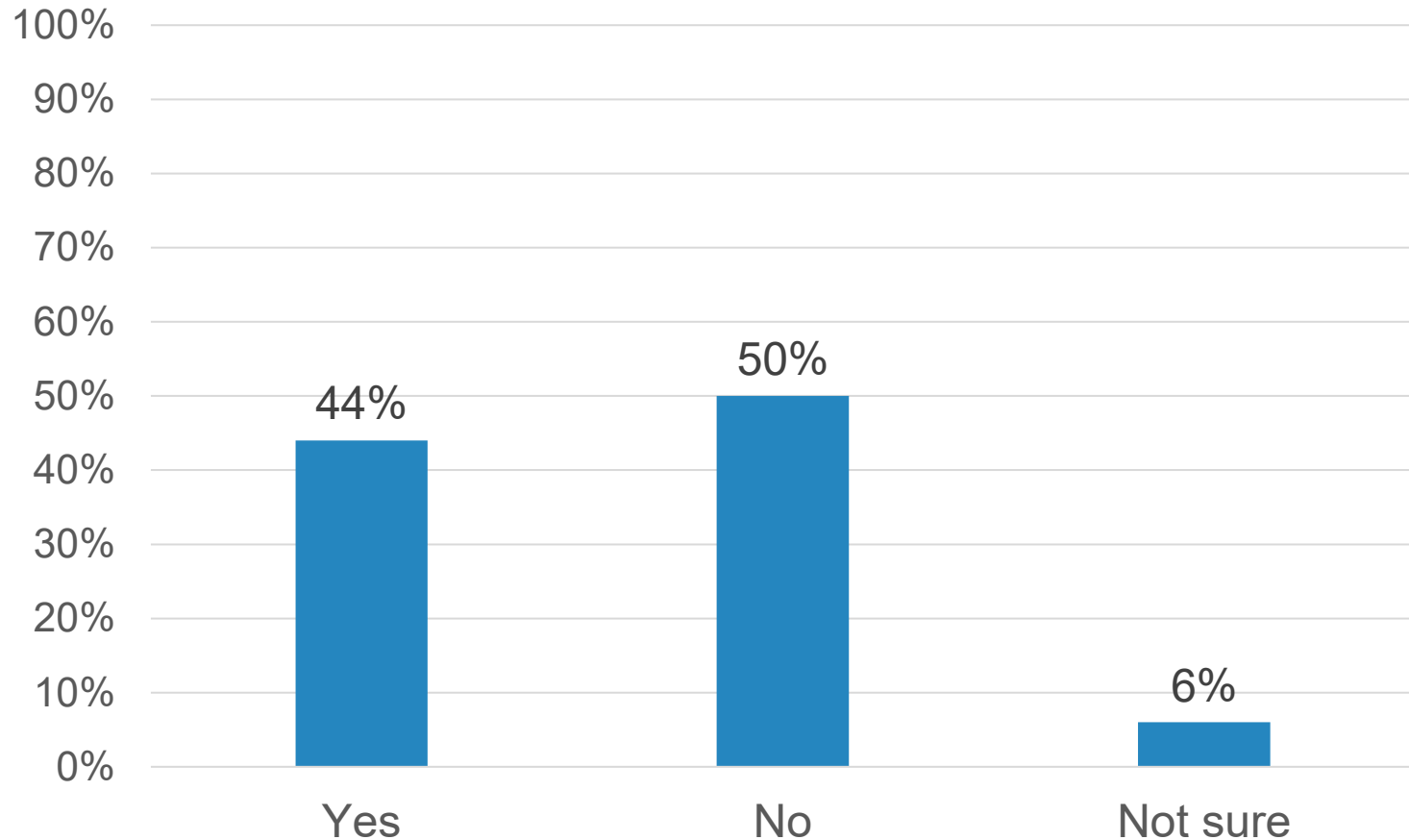
The church's commitment to being a multiplying church is communicated to the whole congregation each month



Lifewayresearch

Q43_8 "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 church's commitment to being a multiplying church is communicated to the whole congregation each month." n=258

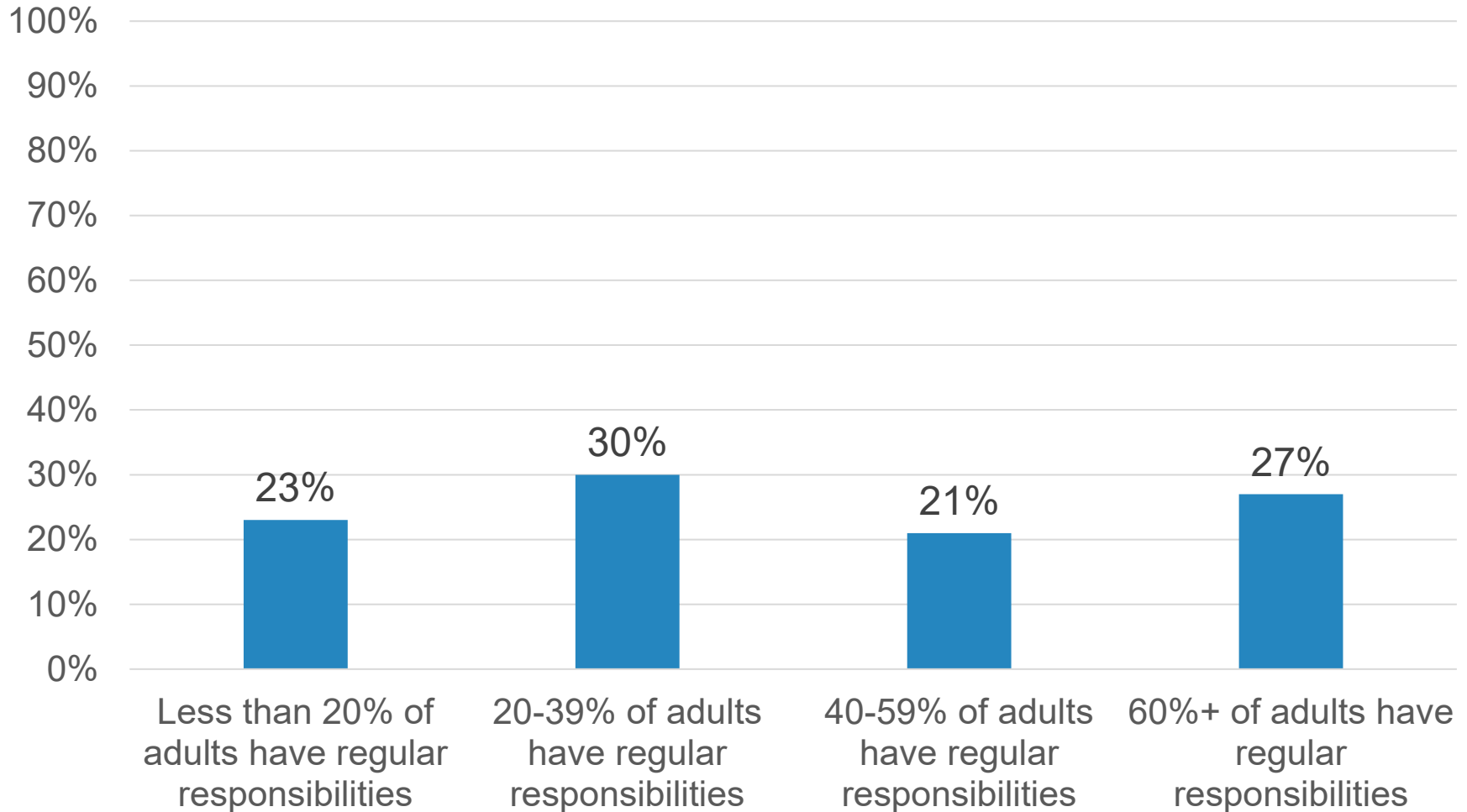
Staff or church leadership invest in new or potential church starters at least each quarter (mentor, train, internship, residency, coach, etc.)



Lifewayresearch

Q43_9 "Please indicate whether the activity below occurred in the church since the start of the new church work. (Select one response for each activity)
Staff or church leadership invest in new or potential church starters at least each quarter (mentor, train, internship, residency, coach, etc.)" n=259

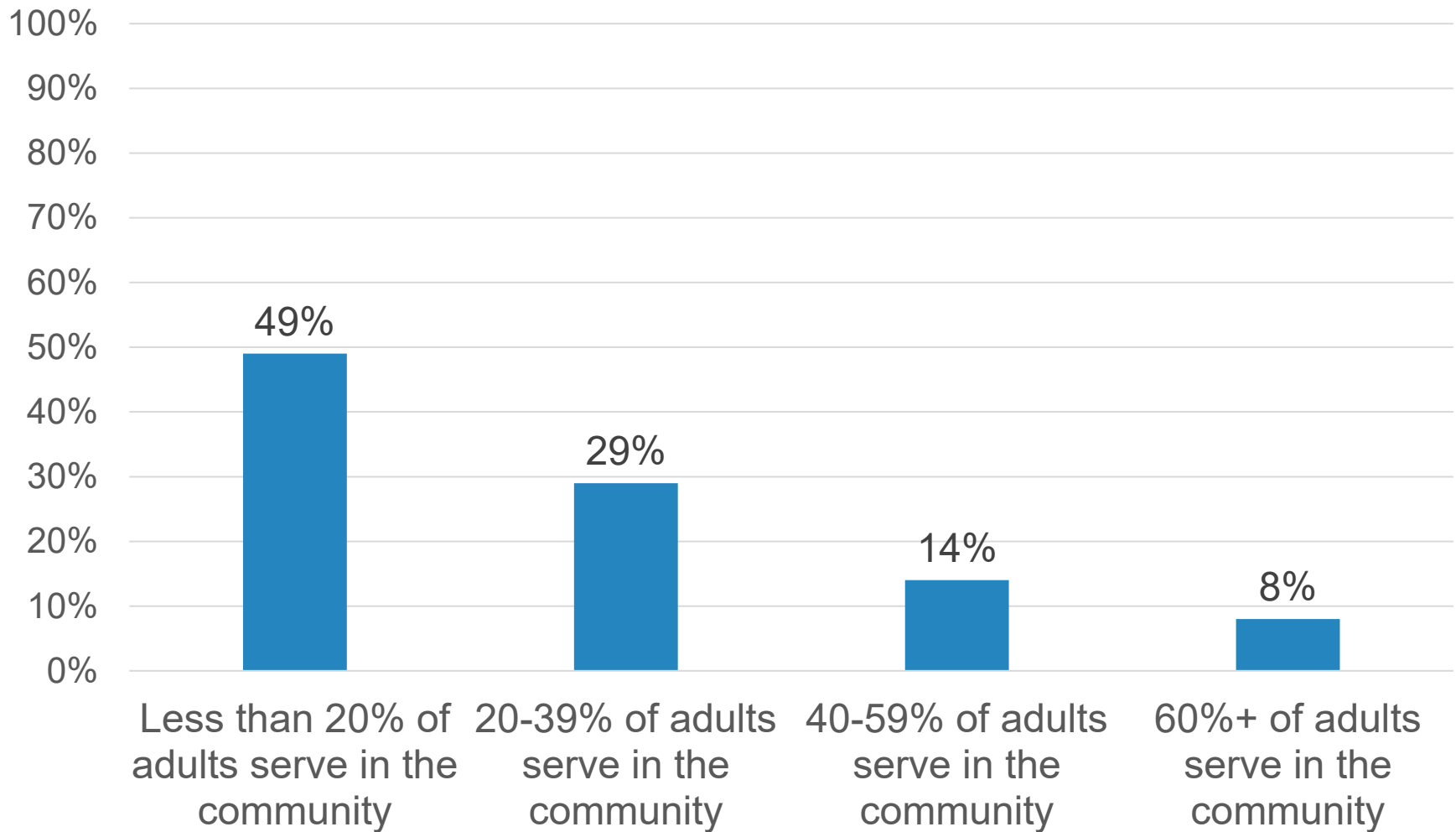
Percentage of adults having regular responsibilities at church (Mean 39%, Median 30%)



Lifewayresearch

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)" n=265

Percentage of adults serving in the community (Average 23%, Median 20%)



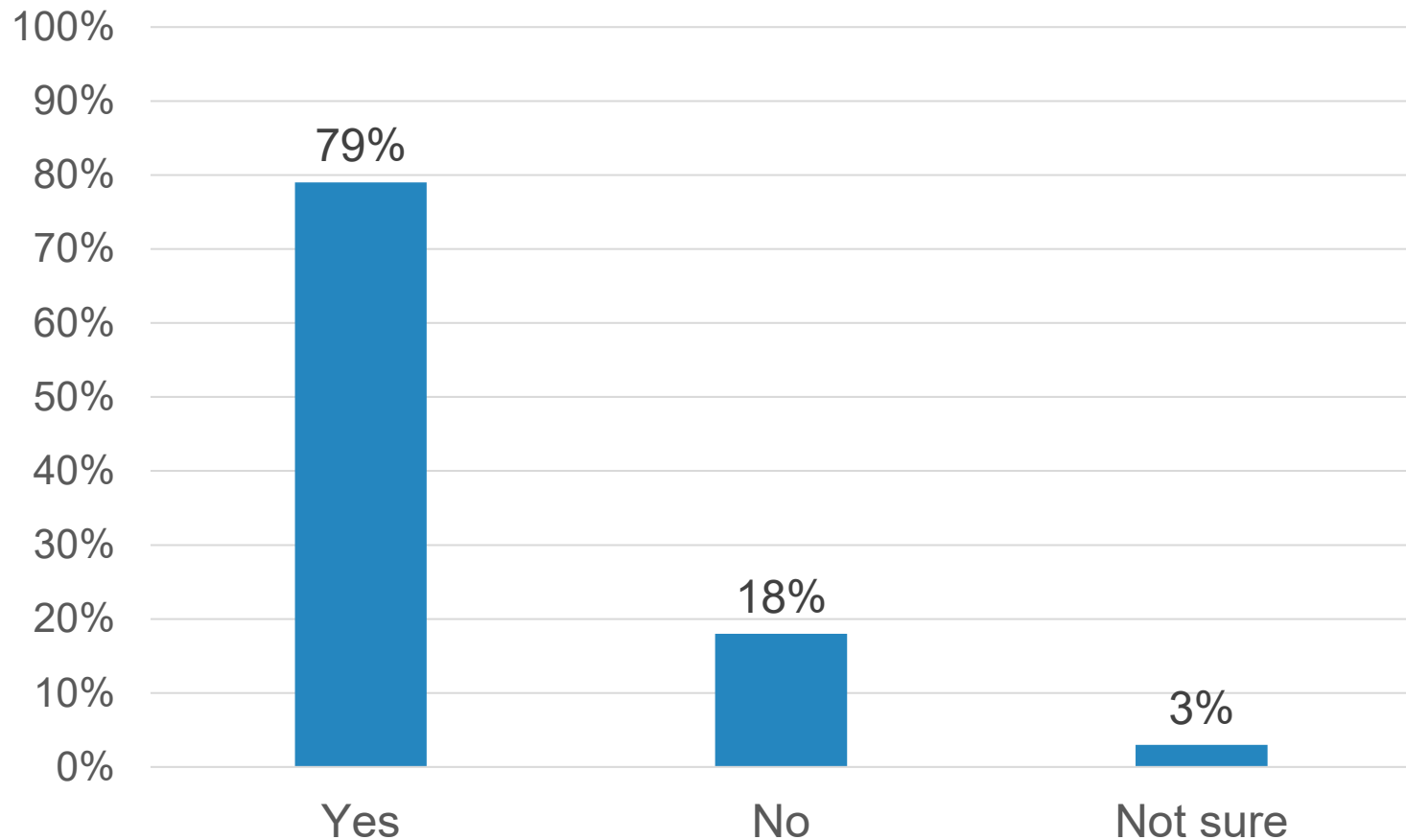
Lifewayresearch

Q45 "What percentage of adults who attend your church at least once a month are involved in ministries or projects that serve people in your community not affiliated with your church? (If you are not sure, provide a rough estimate)" n=265

Funding Sources

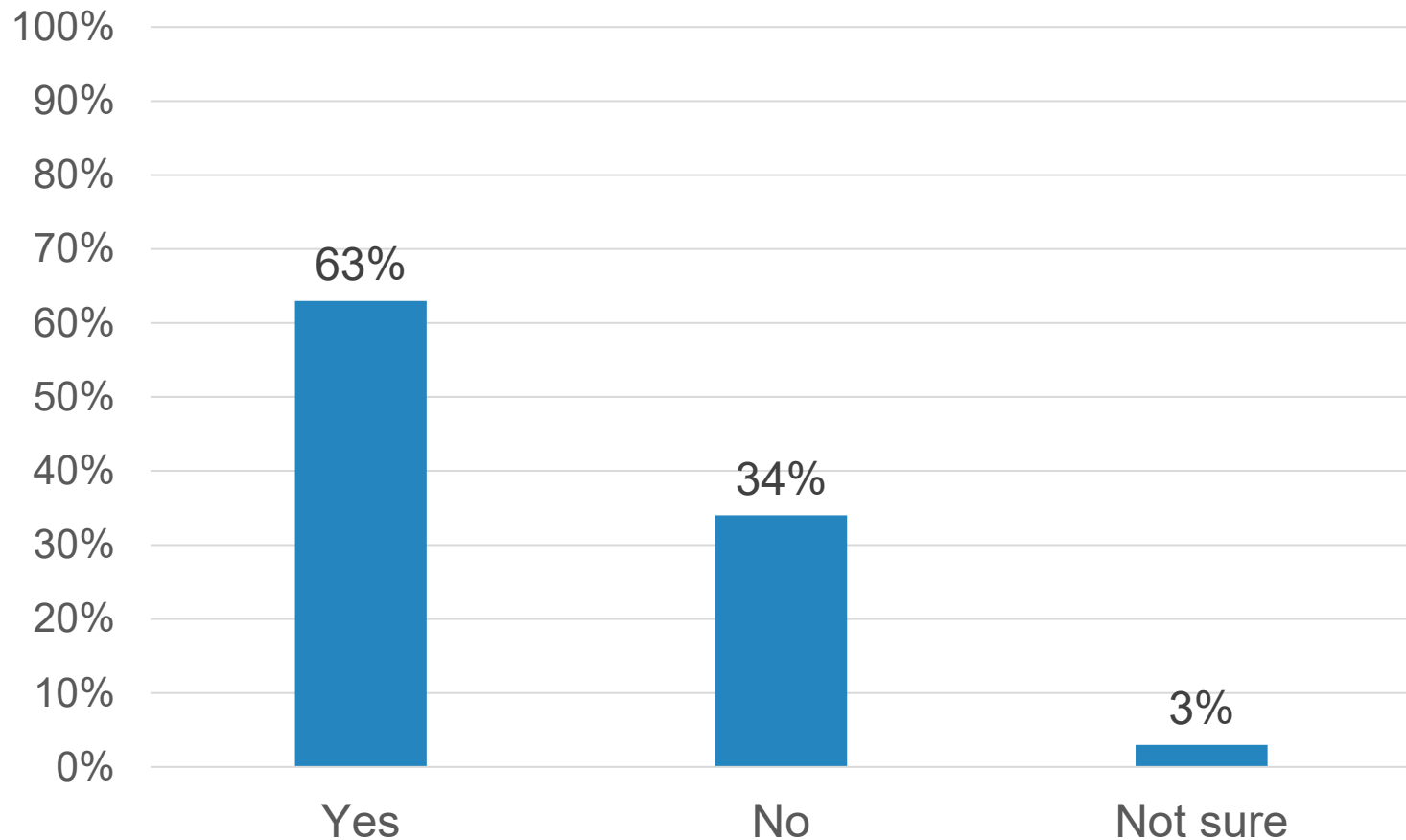
Lifewayresearch

79% received initial funding from church attendees (offerings/receipts)



Lifewayresearch

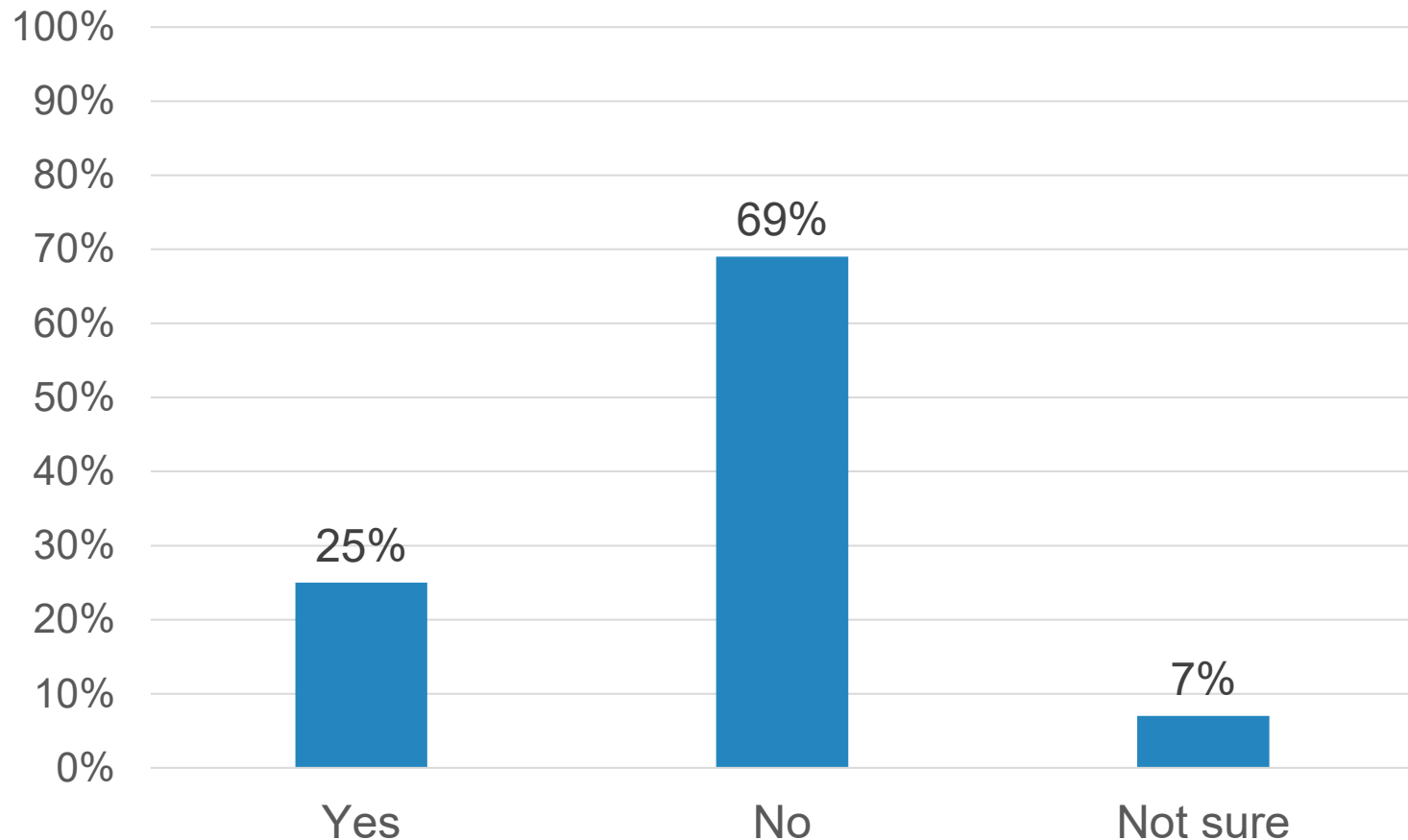
63% received initial funding from affiliated denomination



Lifewayresearch

Q46_2 "Please indicate whether the following funding sources were used to start the new church work (including the pastor's or church staff's salary).
Affiliated denomination (local, state, or national office)" n=265

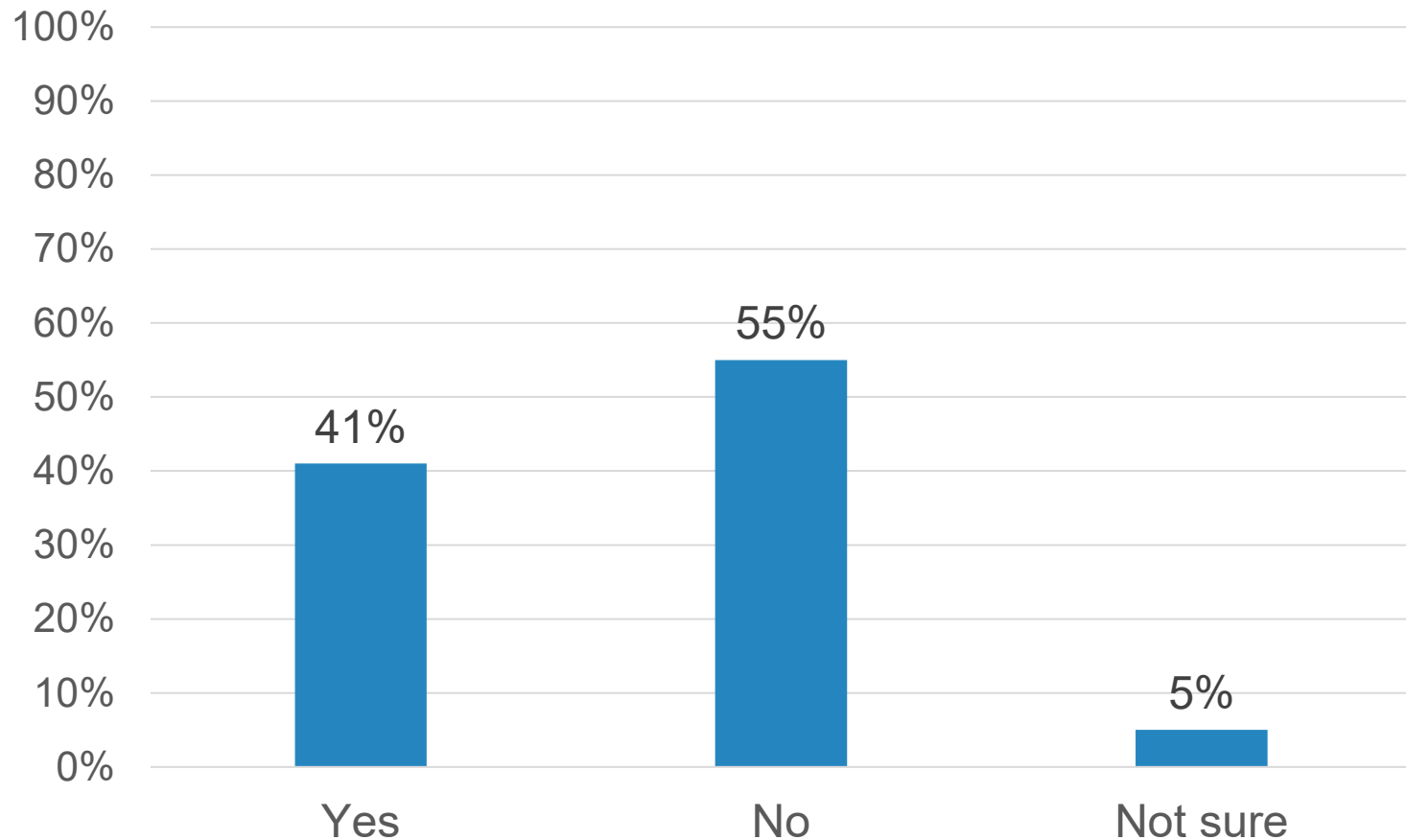
25% received initial funding from a group of individual financial supporters recruited by the staff



Lifewayresearch

Q46_3 "Please indicate whether the following funding sources were used to start the new church work (including the pastor's or church staff's salary).
A group of individual financial supporters recruited by the church's lead pastor or church's staff" n=265

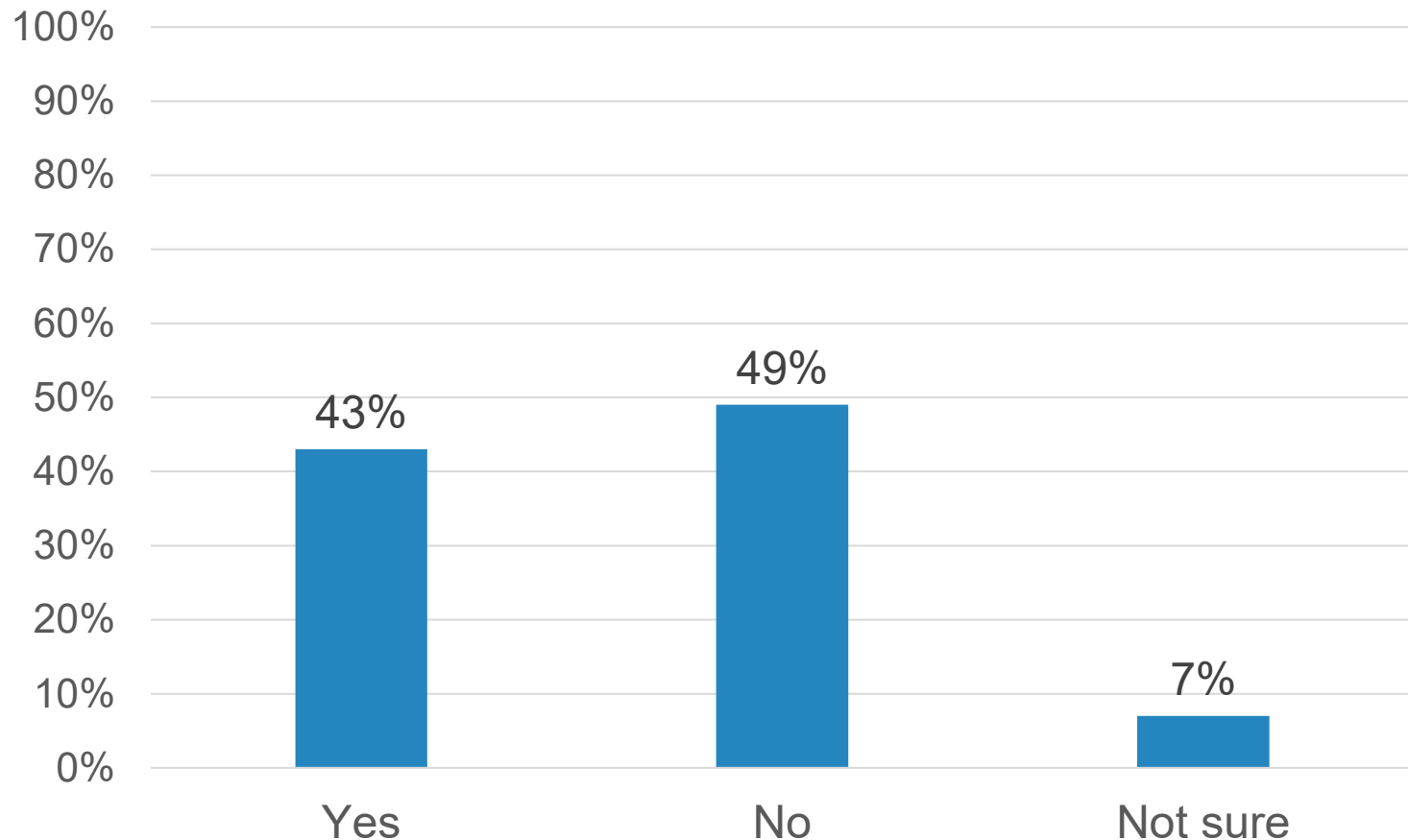
41% received initial funding from sponsoring (mother) church(es)



Lifewayresearch

Q46_4 "Please indicate whether the following funding sources were used to start the new church work (including the pastor's or church staff's salary).
One or multiple sponsoring (mother) church(es)" n=265

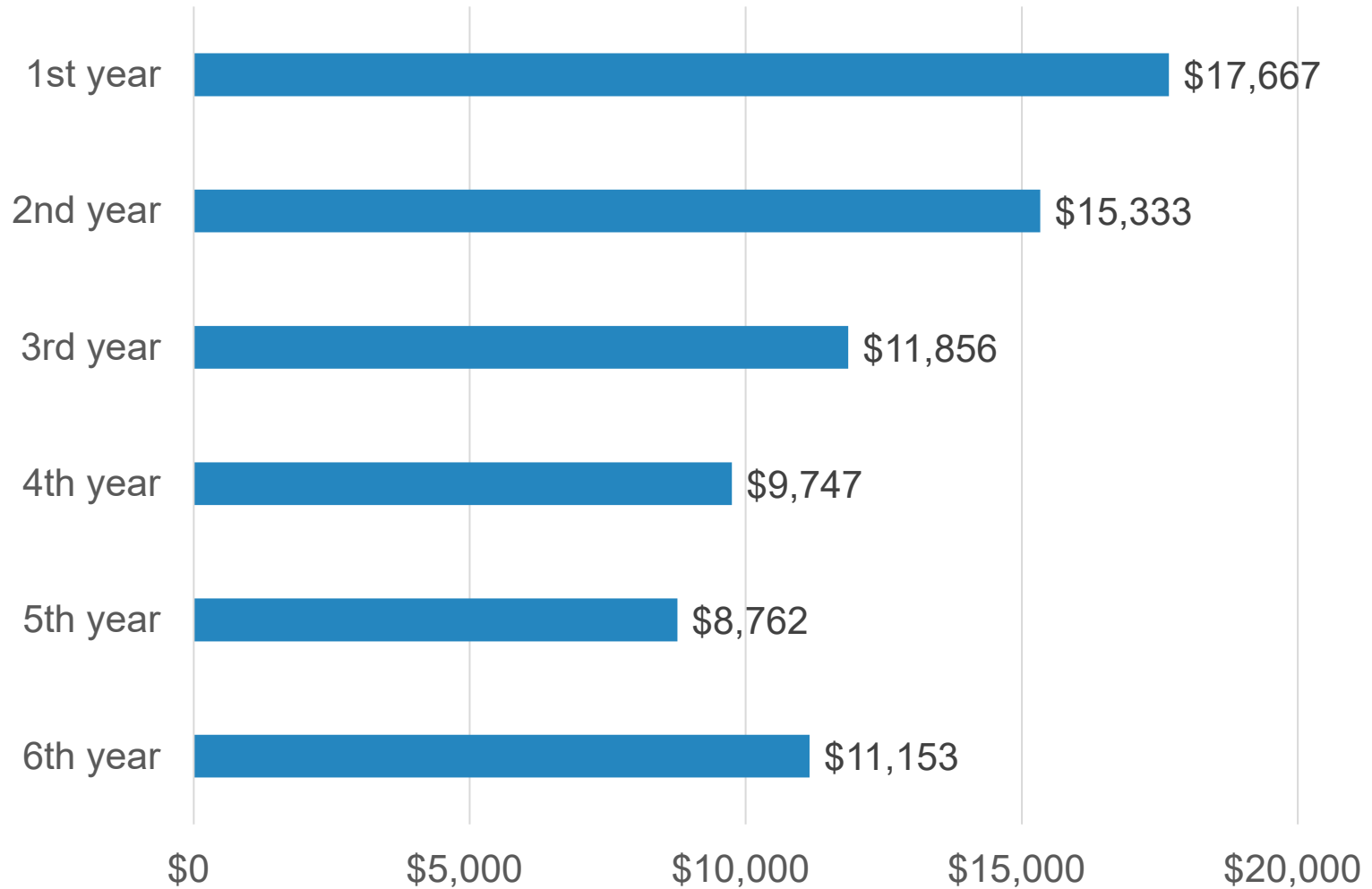
43% received initial funding directly from the church's lead pastor or church staff



Lifewayresearch

Q46_5 "Please indicate whether the following funding sources were used to start the new church work (including the pastor's or church staff's salary).
Directly from the church's lead pastor or church staff (using savings or funds from a job outside the church)" n=265

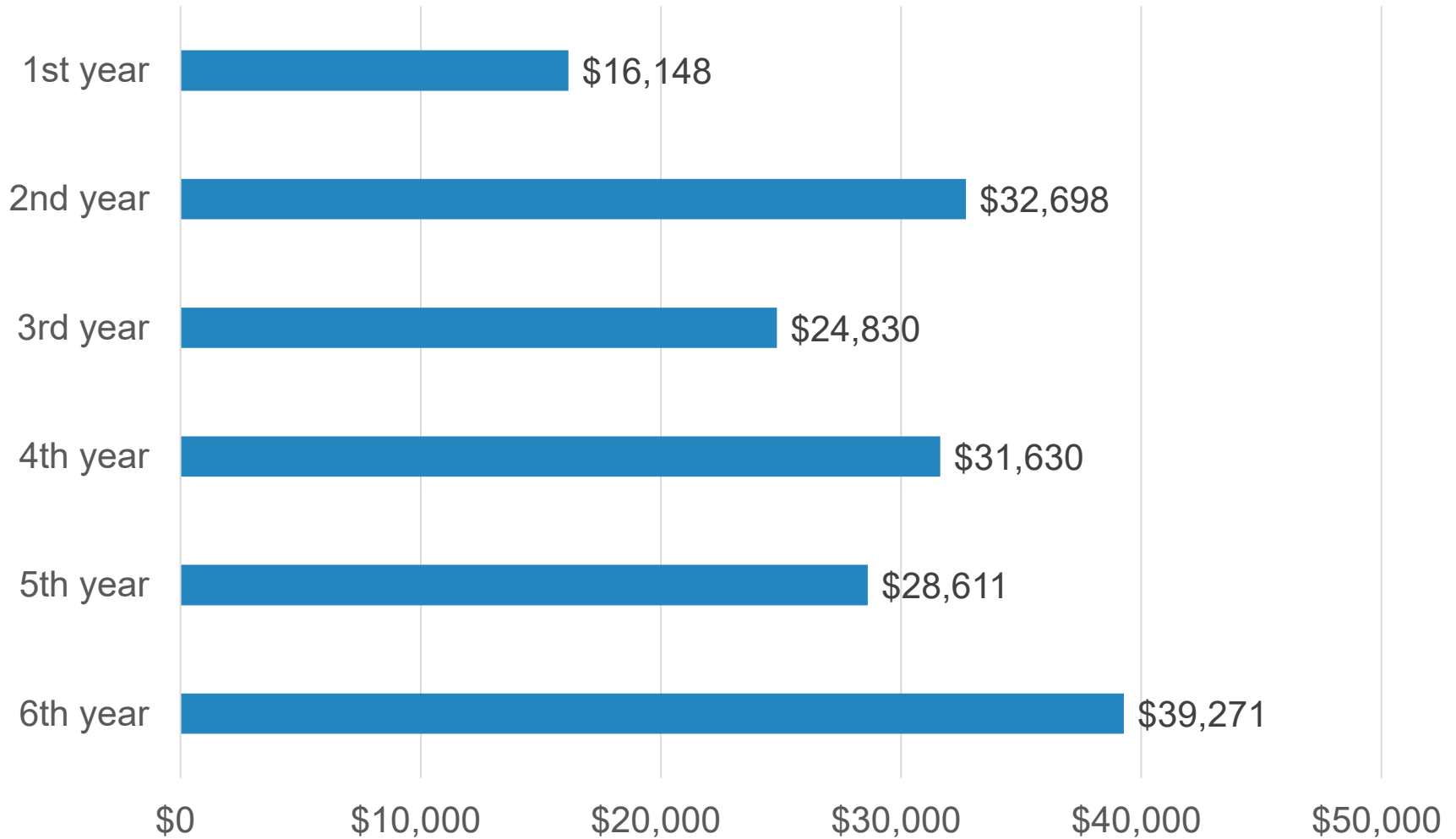
Average total dollars received from outside sources by year



Lifewayresearch

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." Year 1 n=195

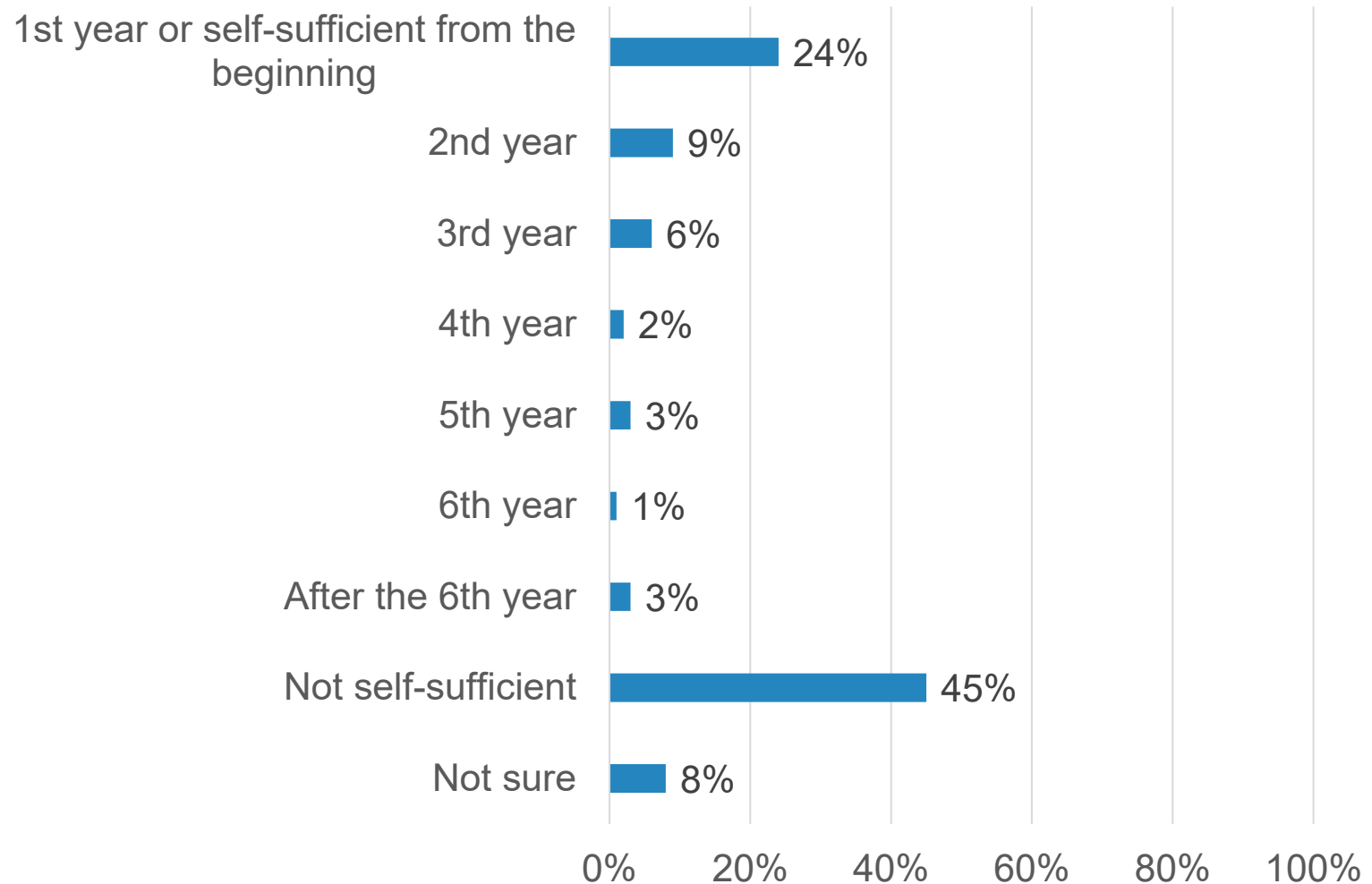
Average total dollars received from church members and attendees by year



Lifewayresearch

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." Year 1 n=195

45% of new church works are not self-sufficient



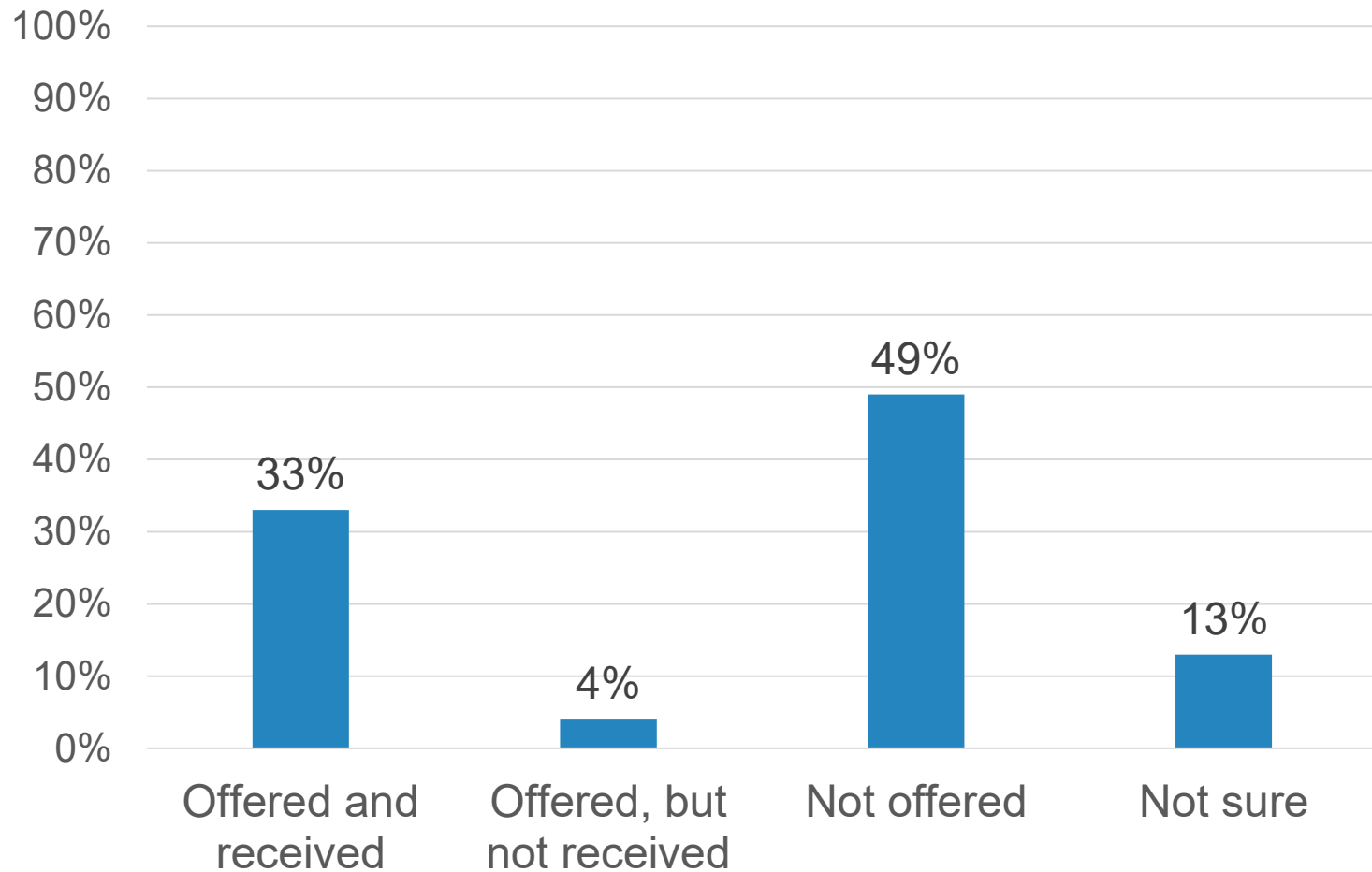
Lifewayresearch

Q49: "During which year (if at all) did the church become financially self-sufficient, meaning no financial support is being received from outside sources." n=252

Denomination & Network Support

Lifewayresearch

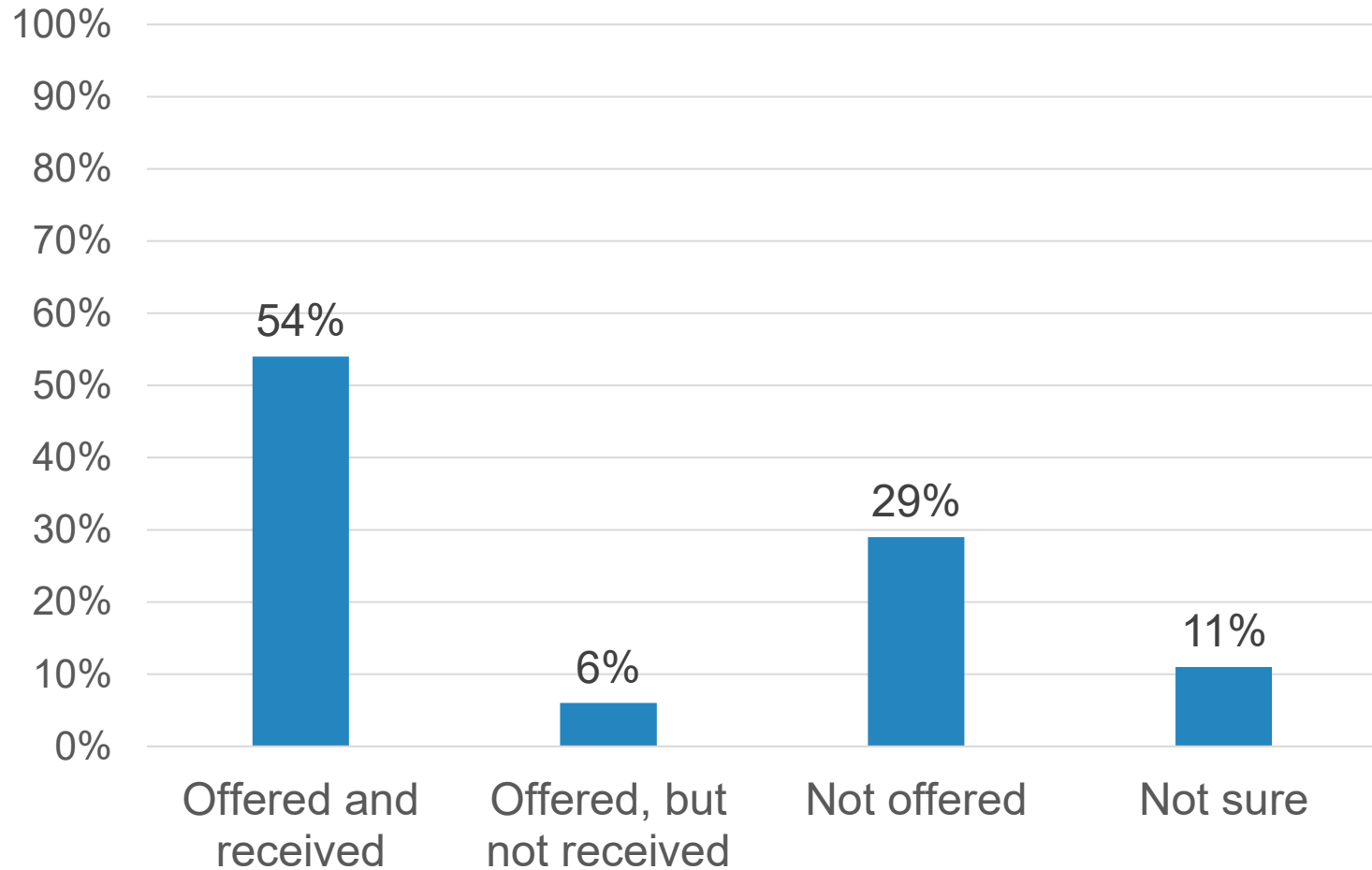
49% say they were not offered demographics and/or research expertise from a denomination or network



Lifewayresearch

Q50_1 "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) **Demographics and/or research expertise**" n=250

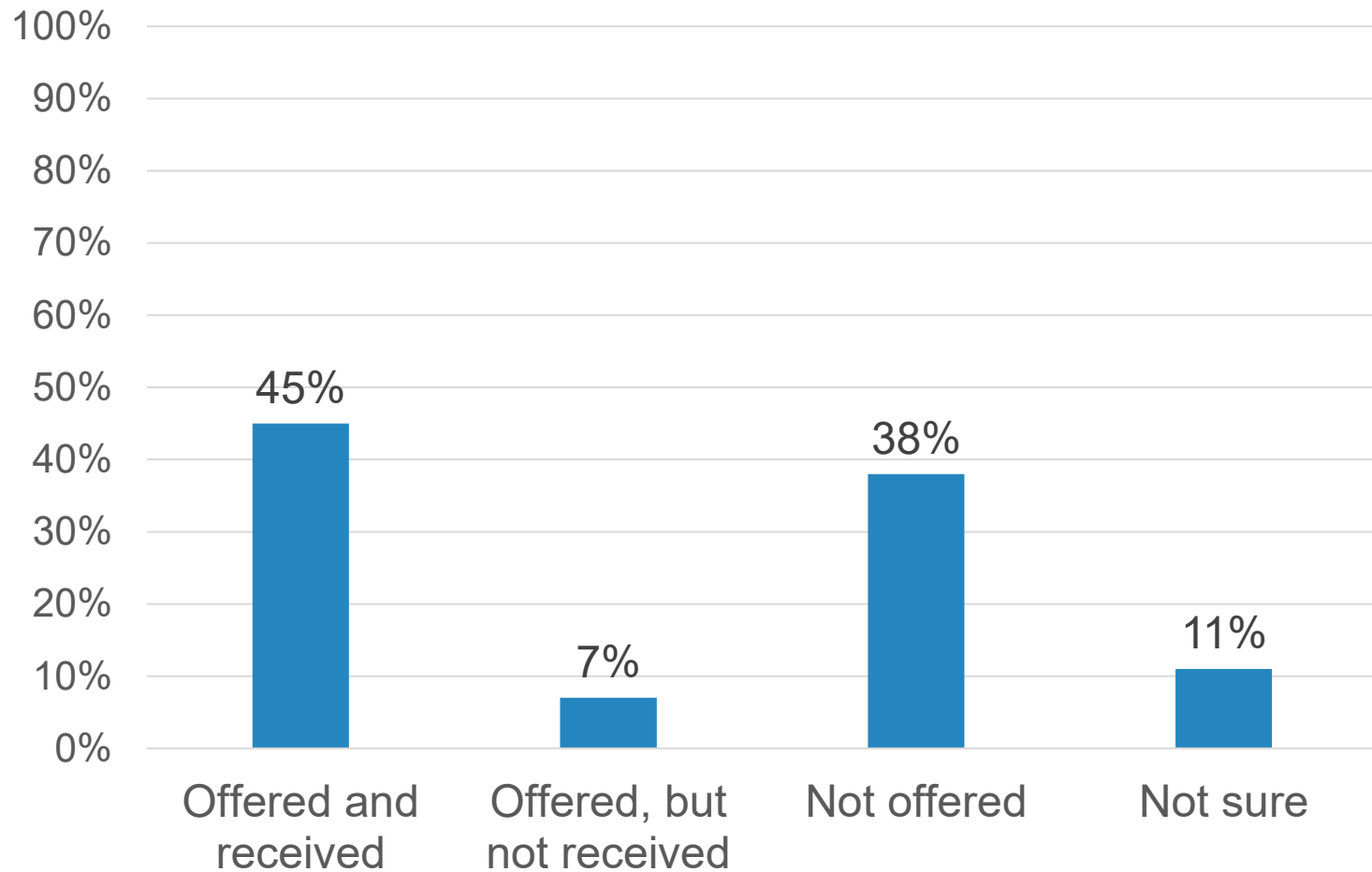
54% say they were offered and received church leader mentoring, coaching, and/or supervision



Lifewayresearch

Q50_2 "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) **Church leader mentoring, coaching, and/or supervision**" n=250

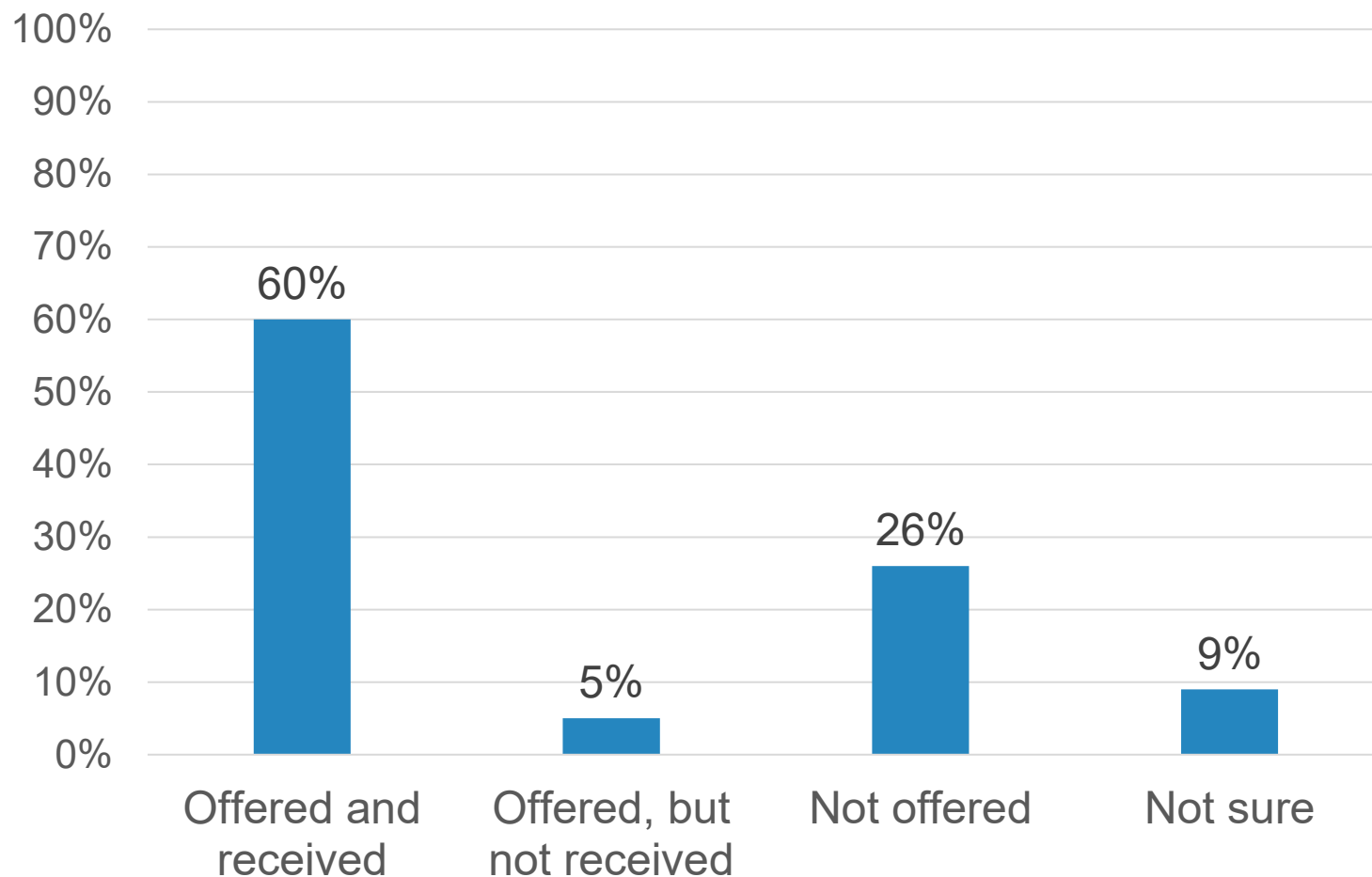
45% say they were offered and received support through a starting pastor peer network



Lifewayresearch

Q50_3 "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) **Starting pastor peer network**" n=250

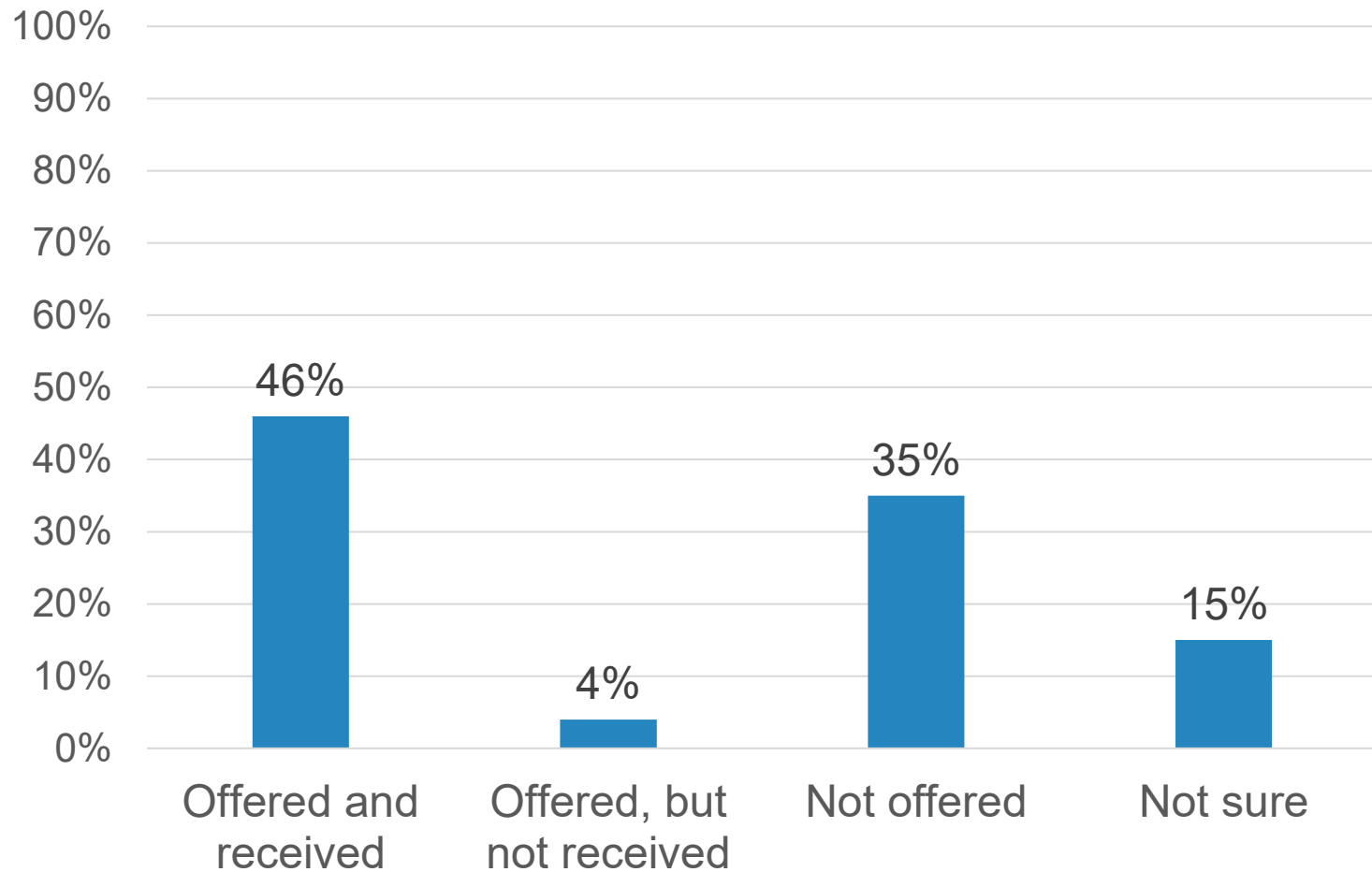
60% say they were offered and received support through training for the church's pastor and/or team



Lifewayresearch

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**" n=250

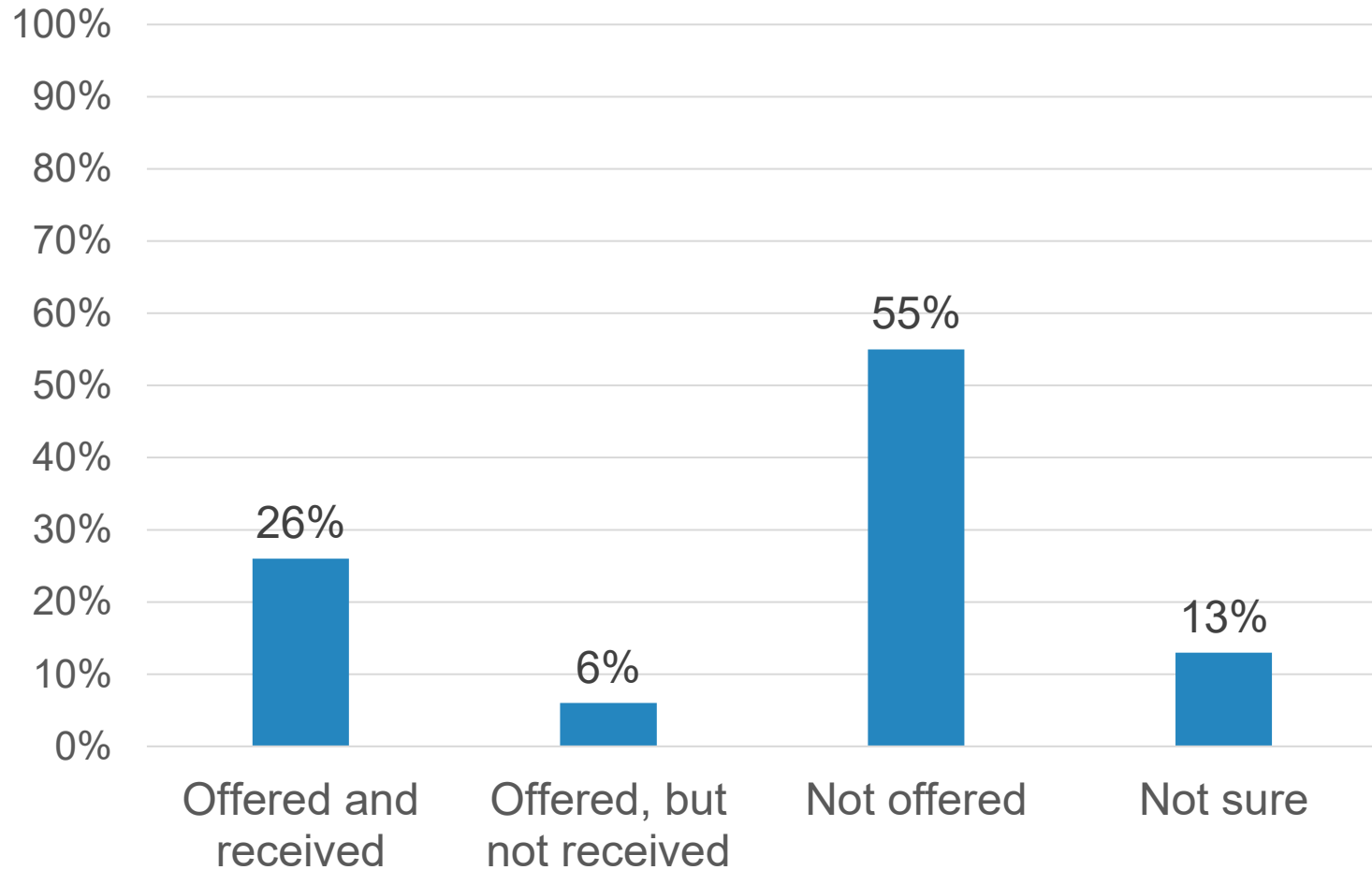
46% say they were offered and received support through a church starter assessment program



Lifewayresearch

Q50_5 "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) **Church starter assessment program**" n=250

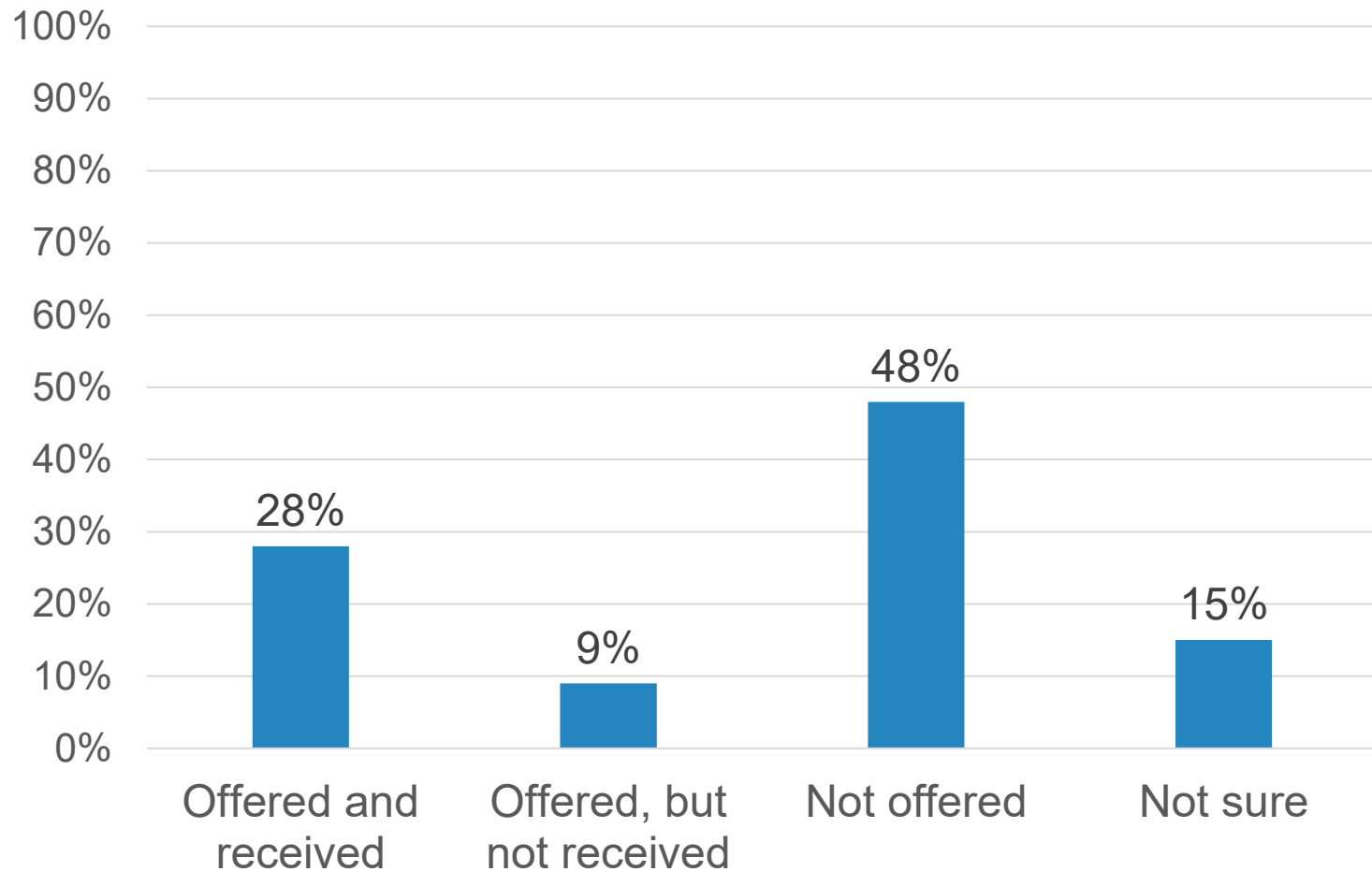
55% say they were not offered support for accounting or bookkeeping



Lifewayresearch

Q50_6 "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) **Accounting or bookkeeping**" n=250

48% say they were not offered support for legal advice or help



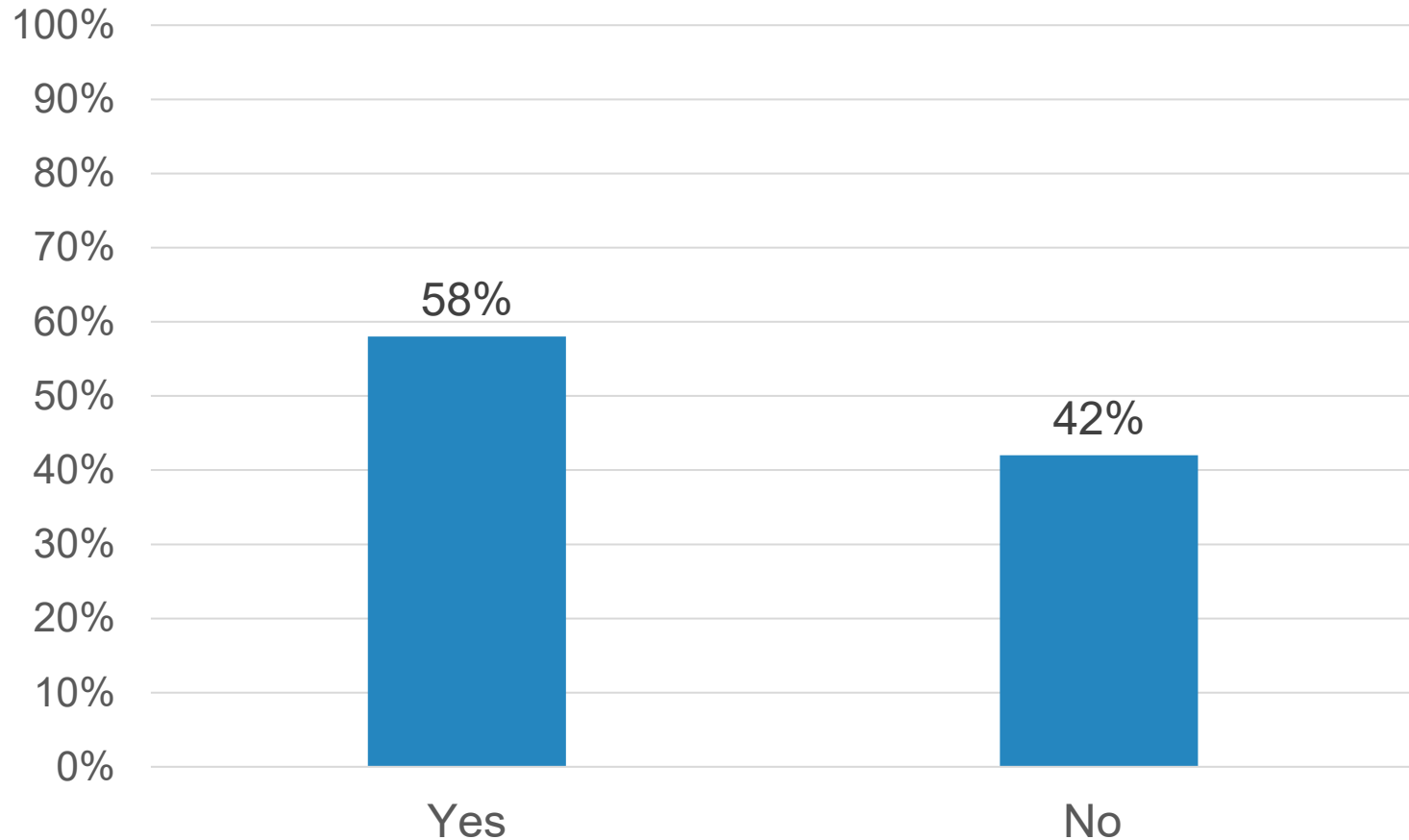
Lifewayresearch

Q50_7 "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) **Legal advice or help**" n=250

Sponsor Church Support

Lifewayresearch

58% of new church works say they had a sponsoring or mother church

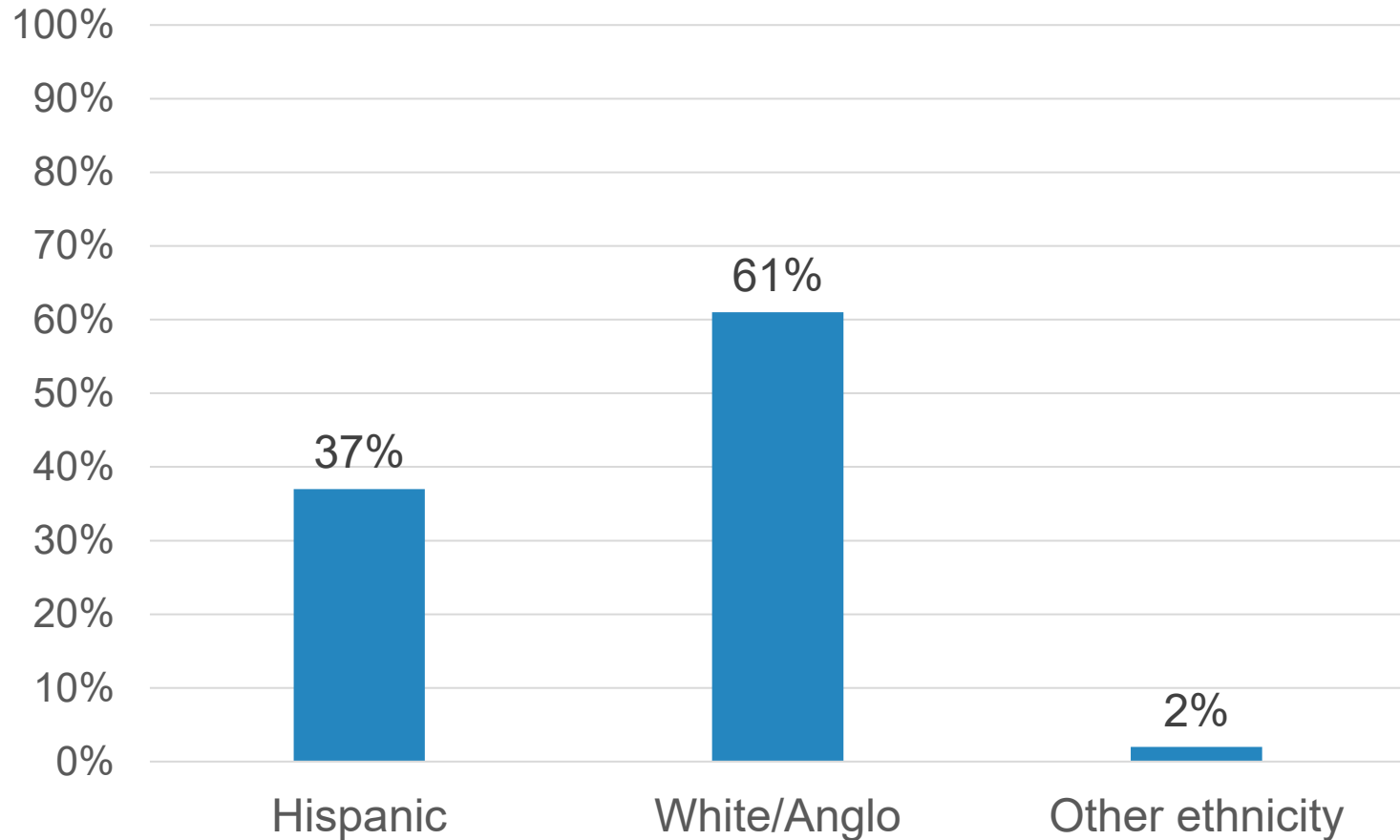


Lifewayresearch

Q51 "Did the new church work have any sponsoring or mother churches?" n=250

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

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

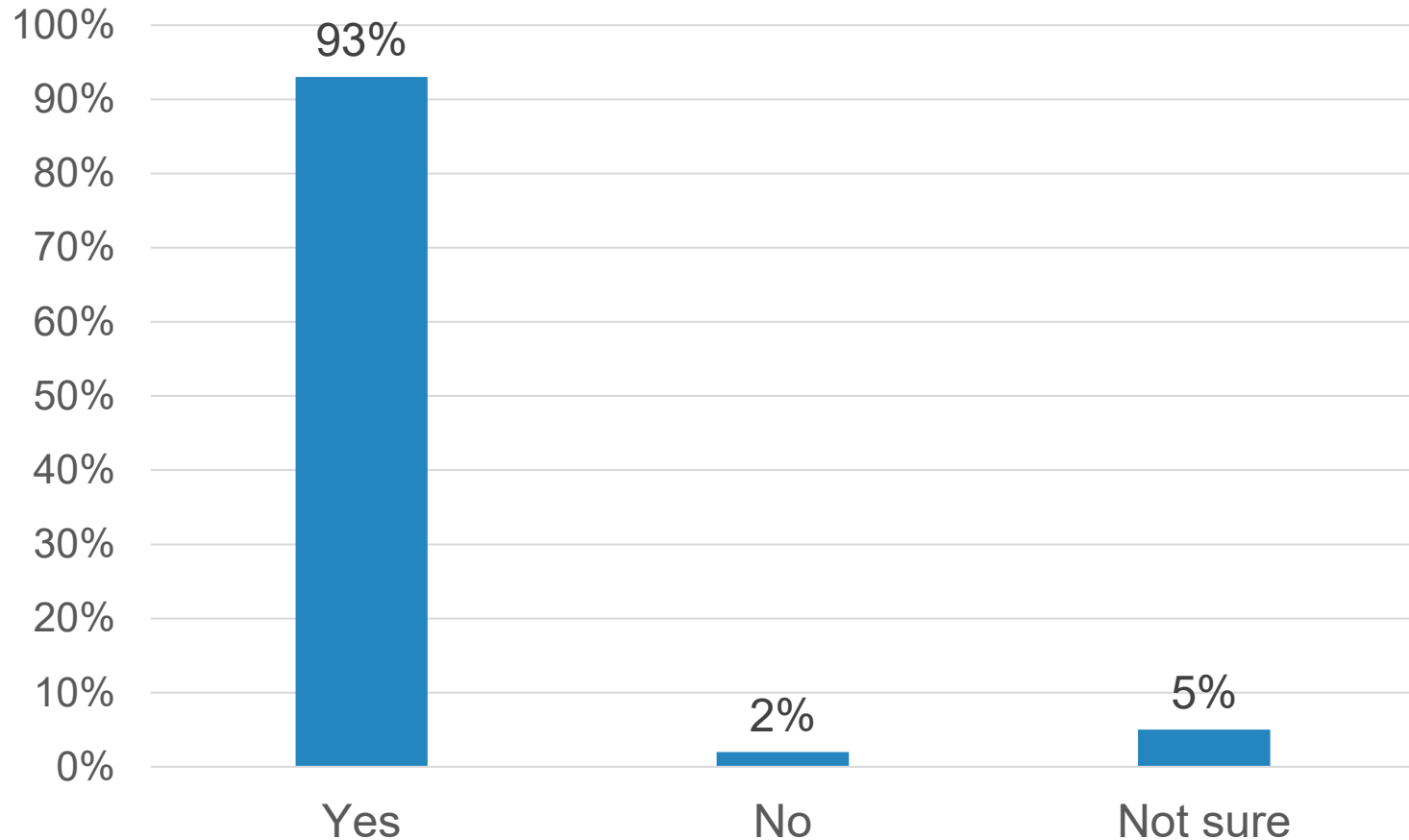


Lifewayresearch

Q52 "Was the sponsoring congregation primarily people of Hispanic, White/Anglo, or another ethnicity?" n=151

Active prayer support

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

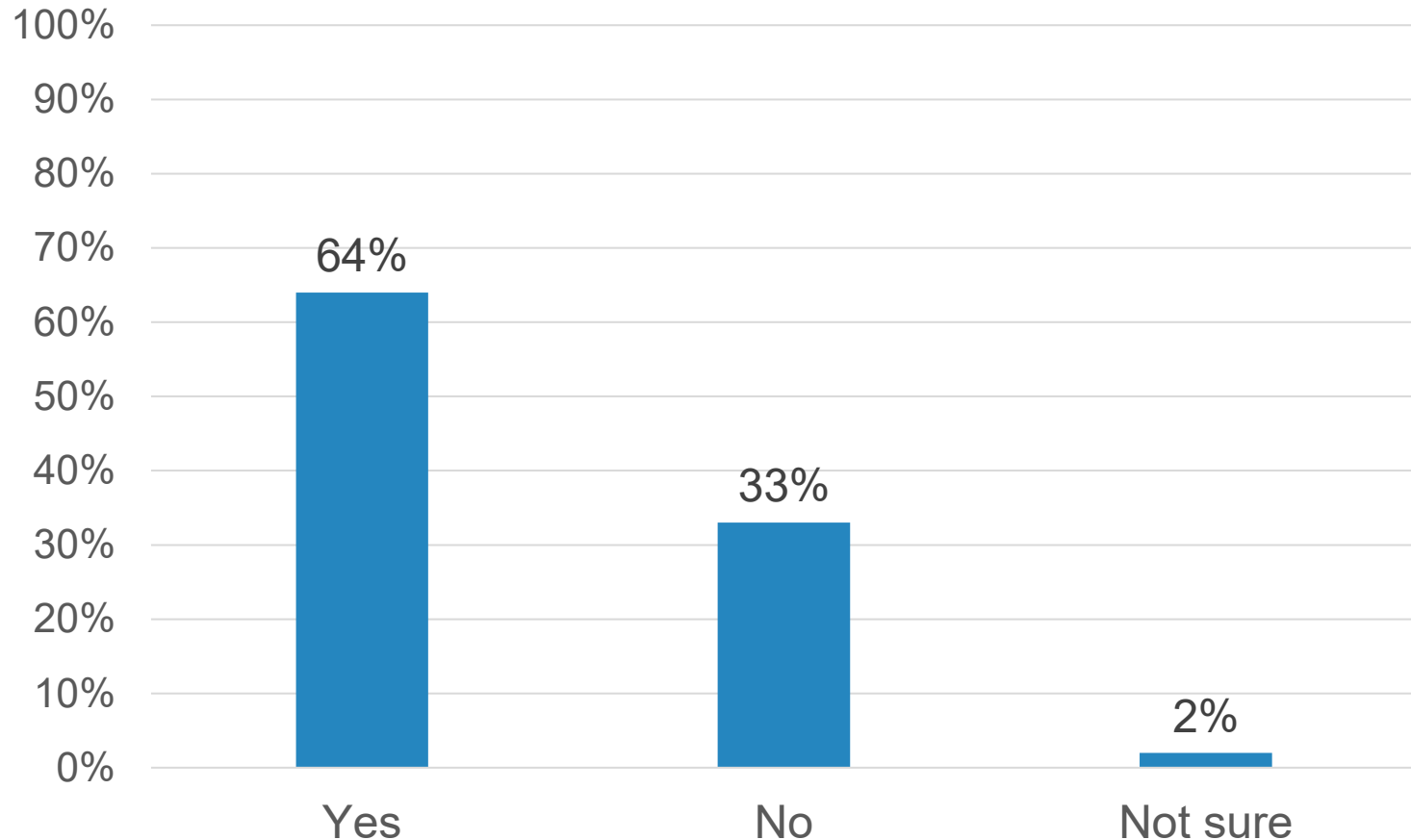


Lifewayresearch

Q53_1 "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) Active prayer support" n=152

Permitted the new church work to meet in the sponsoring church building

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

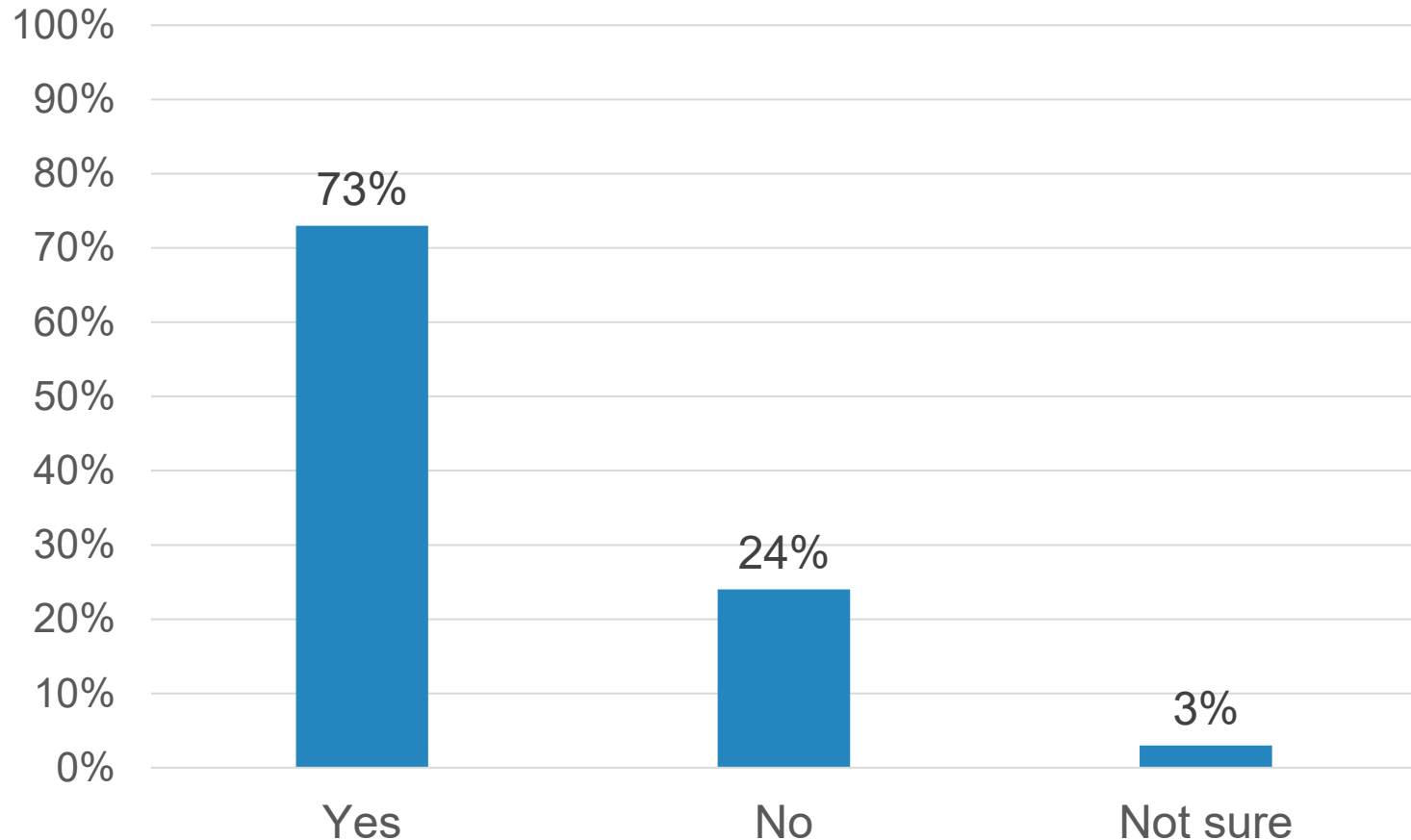


Lifewayresearch

Q53_2 "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) Permitted the new church work to meet in the sponsoring church building" n=152

Provided mentorship to the church's pastor or church starting team

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

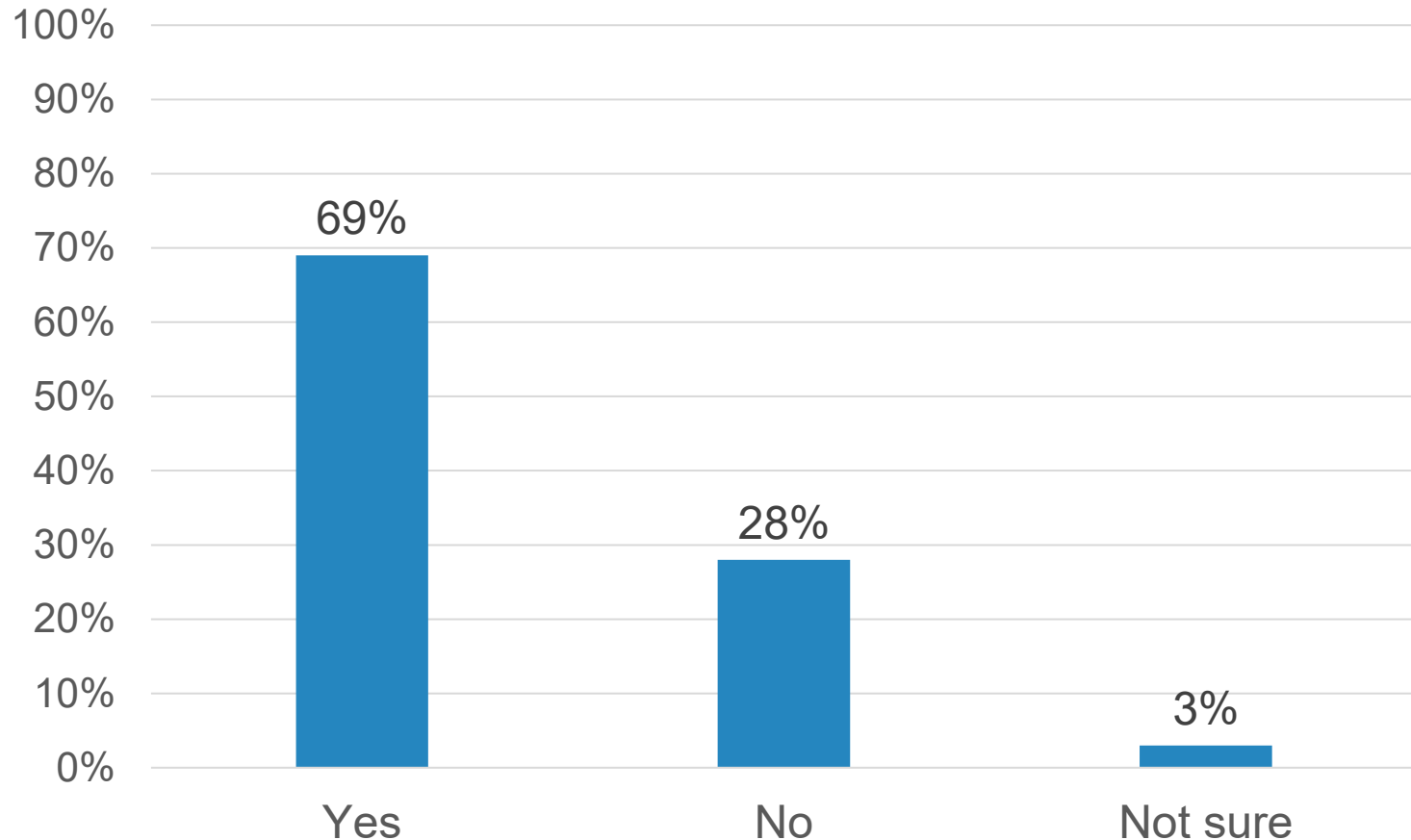


Lifewayresearch

Q53_3 "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) **Provided mentorship to the church's pastor or church starting team**" n=152

Provided administrative support (could include clerical, accounting, written policies, etc.)

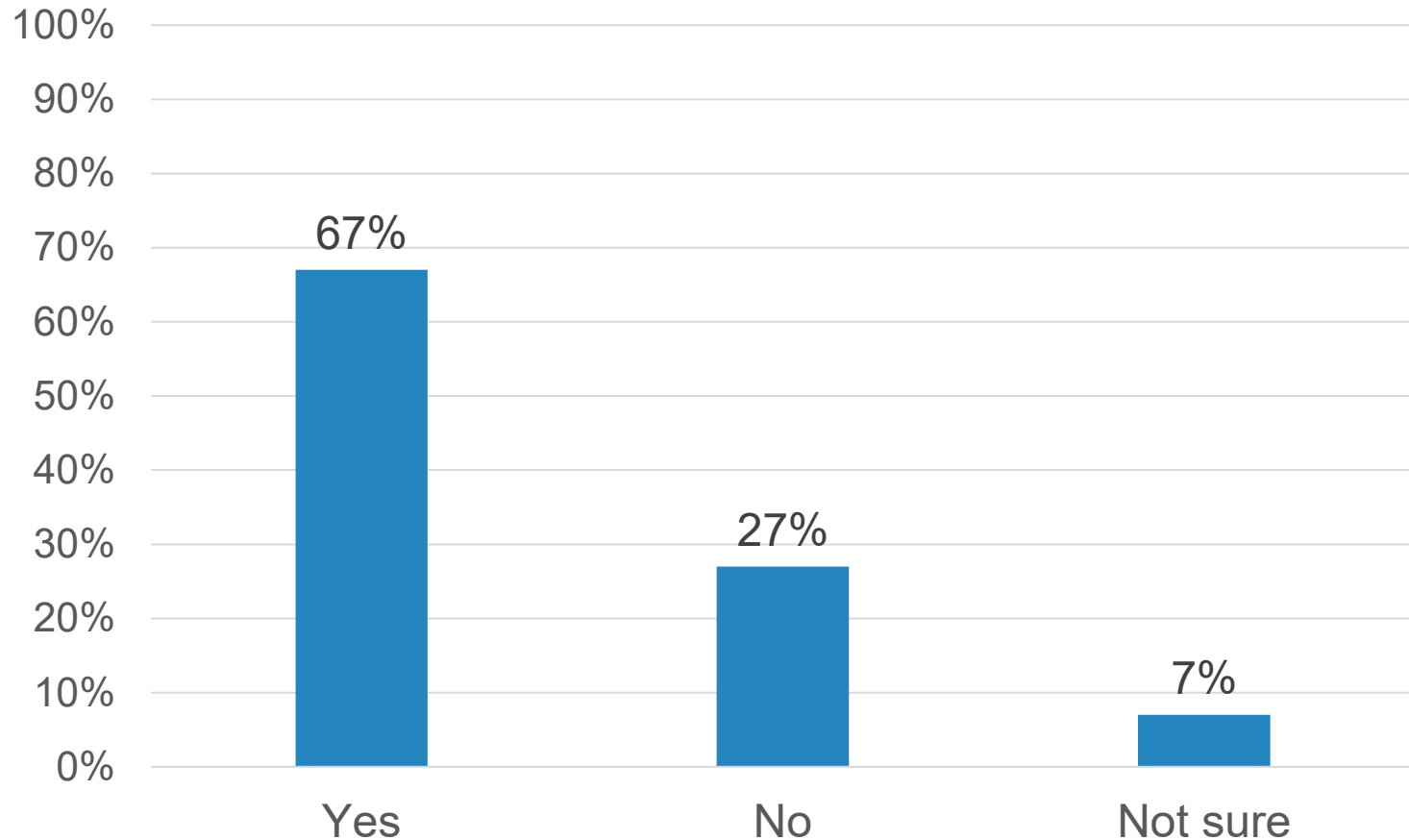
Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church



Lifewayresearch

Assessed church starter

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

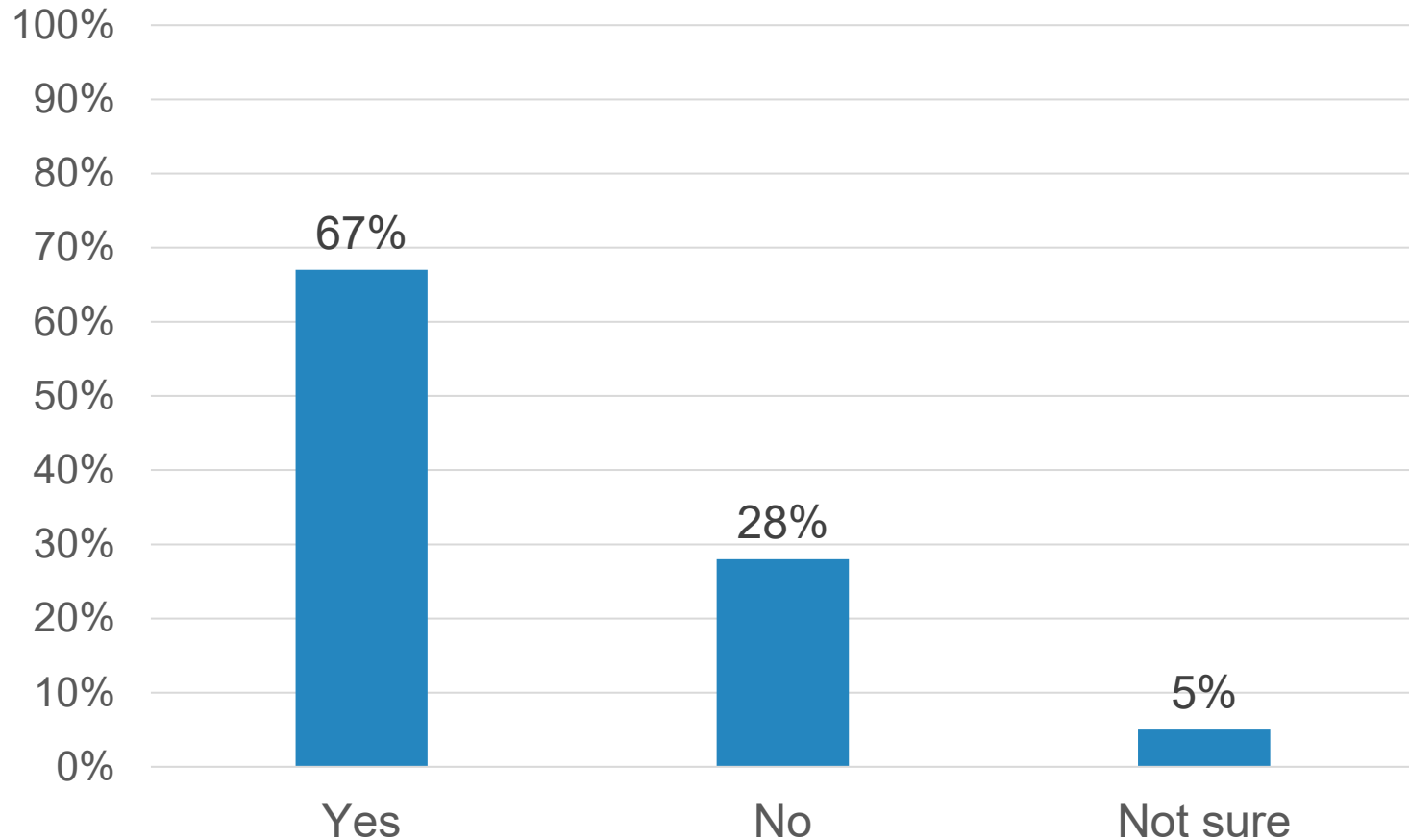


Lifewayresearch

Q53_5 "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) **Assessed church starter**" n=152

Provided training

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

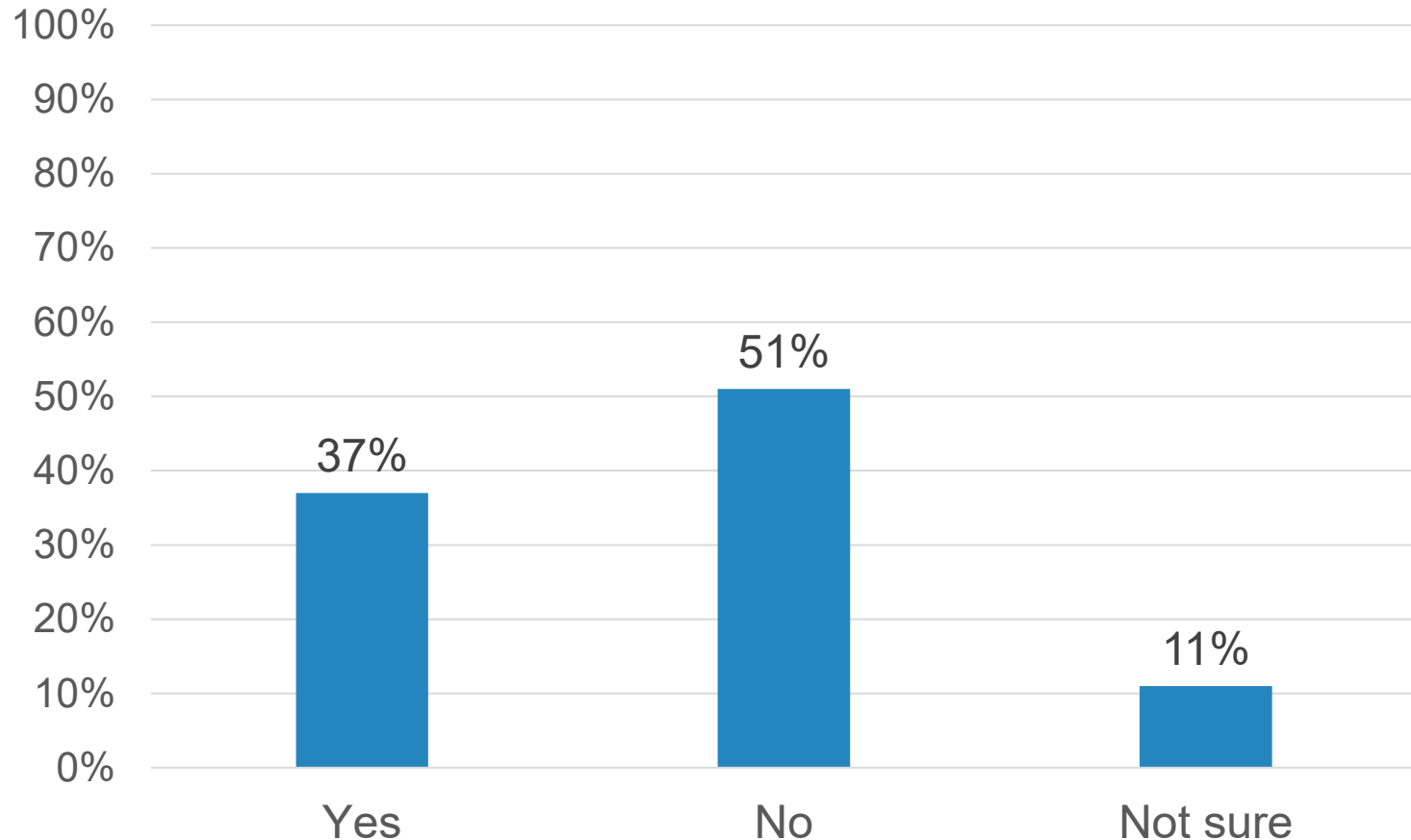


Lifewayresearch

Q53_6 "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) **Provided training**" n=152

Provided internship or residency for starting pastor or key leaders

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

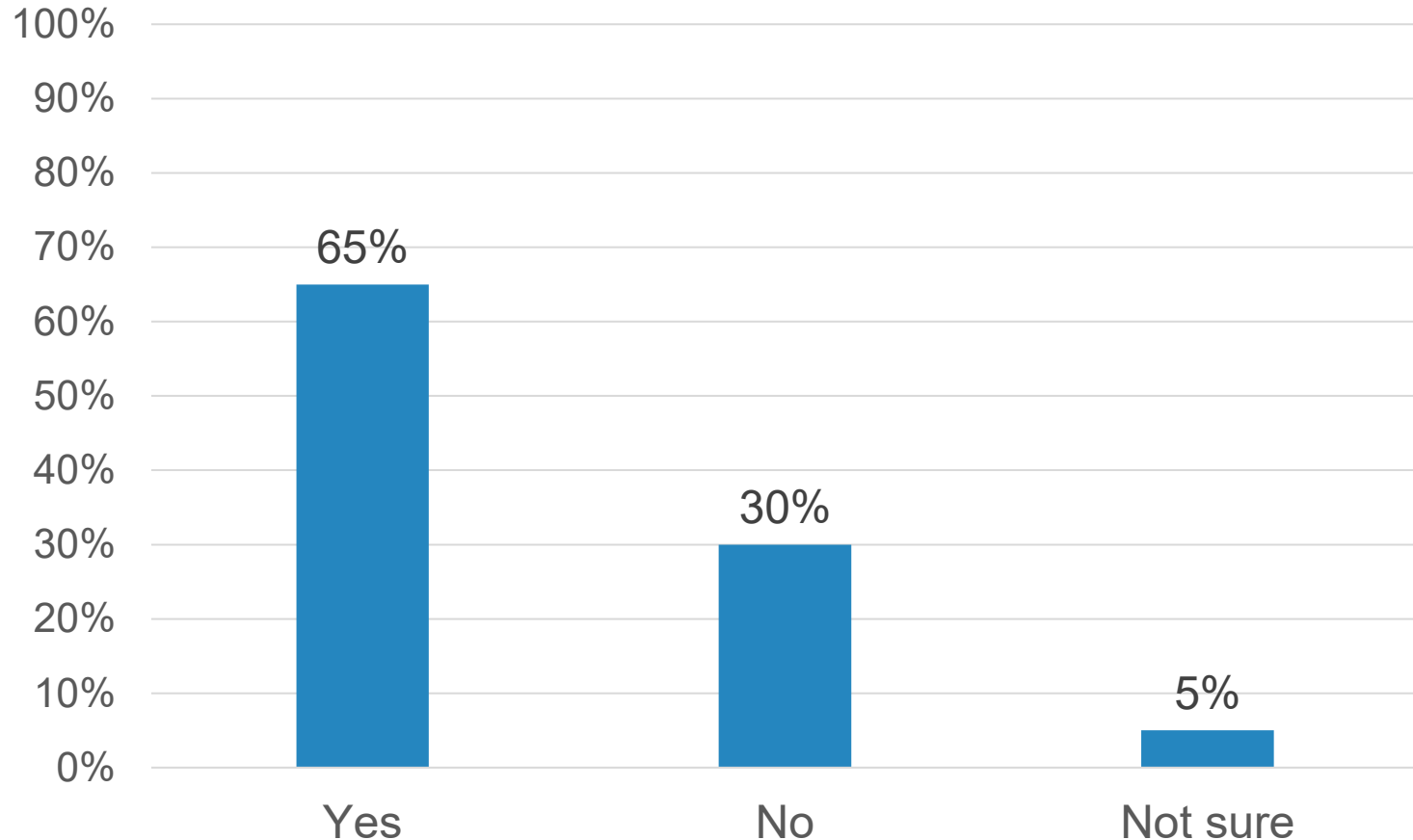


Lifewayresearch

Q53_7 "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) **Provided internship or residency for starting pastor or key leaders**" n=152

Provided financial oversight

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church

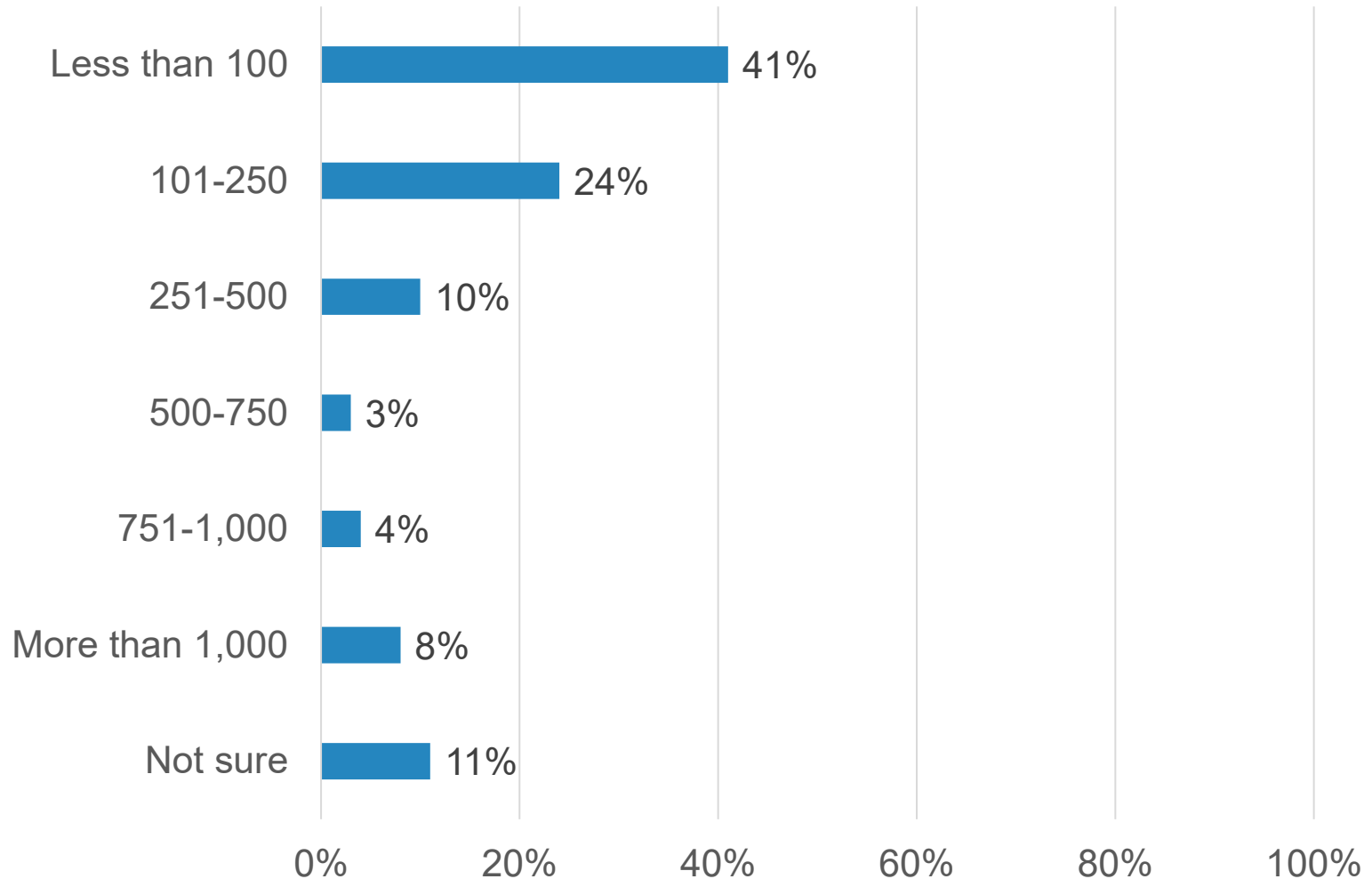


Lifewayresearch

Q53_8 "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) **Provided financial oversight**" n=152

Average worship attendance of primary sponsoring church

Among Those with a Sponsoring or Mother Church



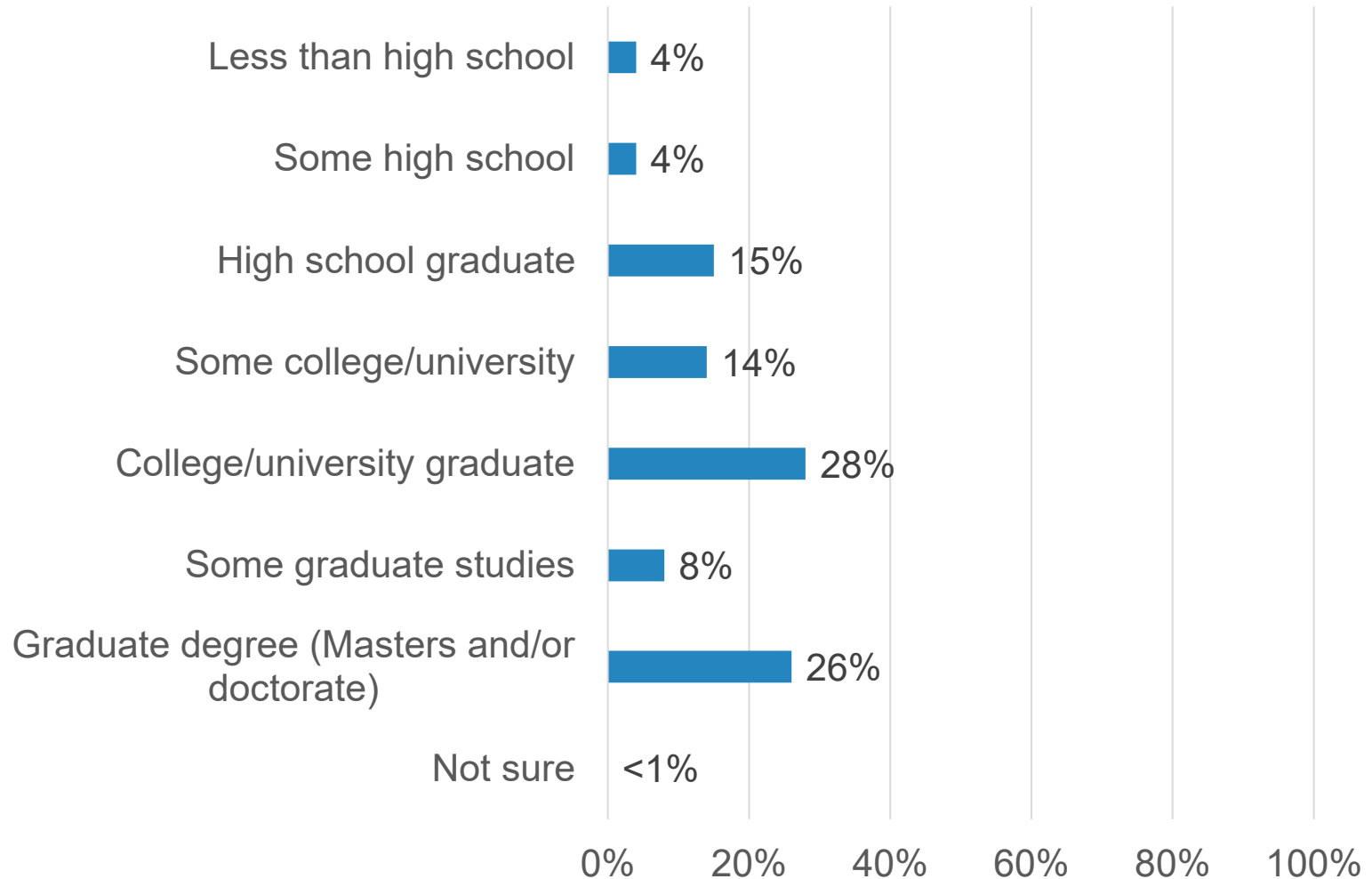
Lifewayresearch

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)" n=151

Education & Training

Lifewayresearch

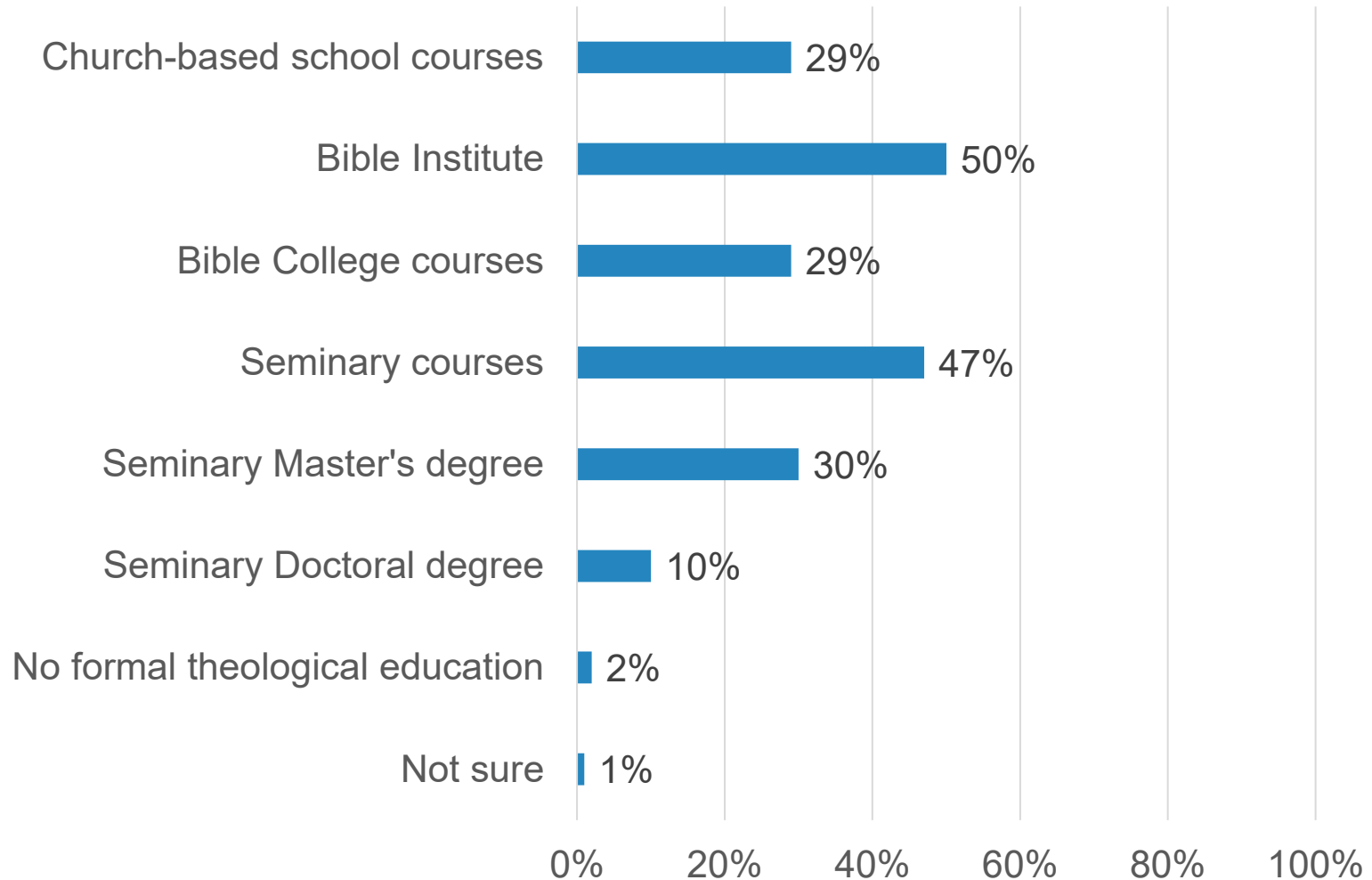
Highest level of education among participants



Lifewayresearch

Q57: "What is your highest level of education? Do not include formal theological education. (Select one)" n=248

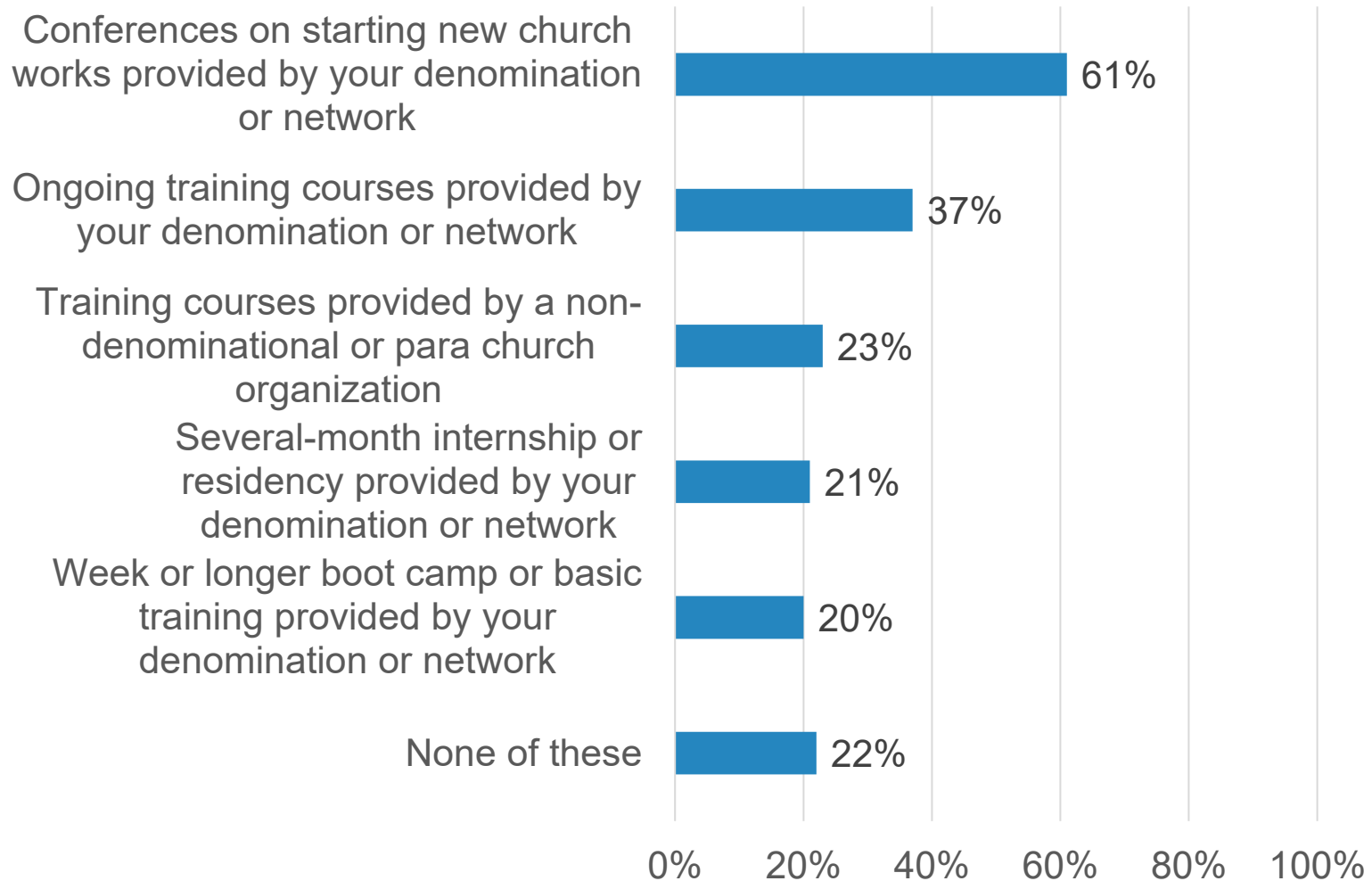
Types of theological education completed



Lifewayresearch

Q58: "What types of theological education have you completed? (Select all that apply)" n=247

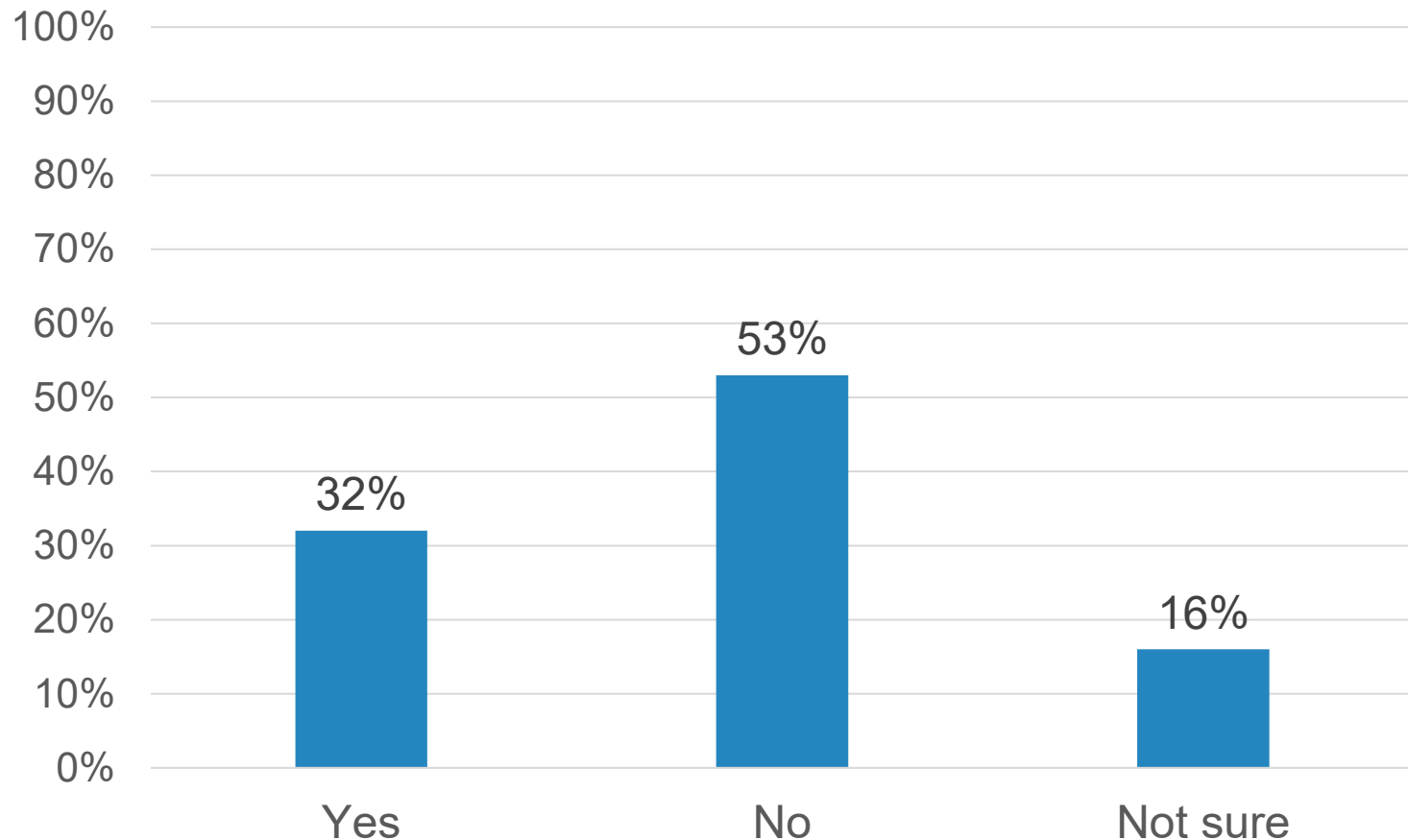
Church starting training taken prior to launching new church work



Lifewayresearch

Q59: "Which of the following types of church starting training had you taken prior to the new church work? (Select all that apply)" n=247

32% received church starting training incorporating dynamics of the Hispanic/Latino context



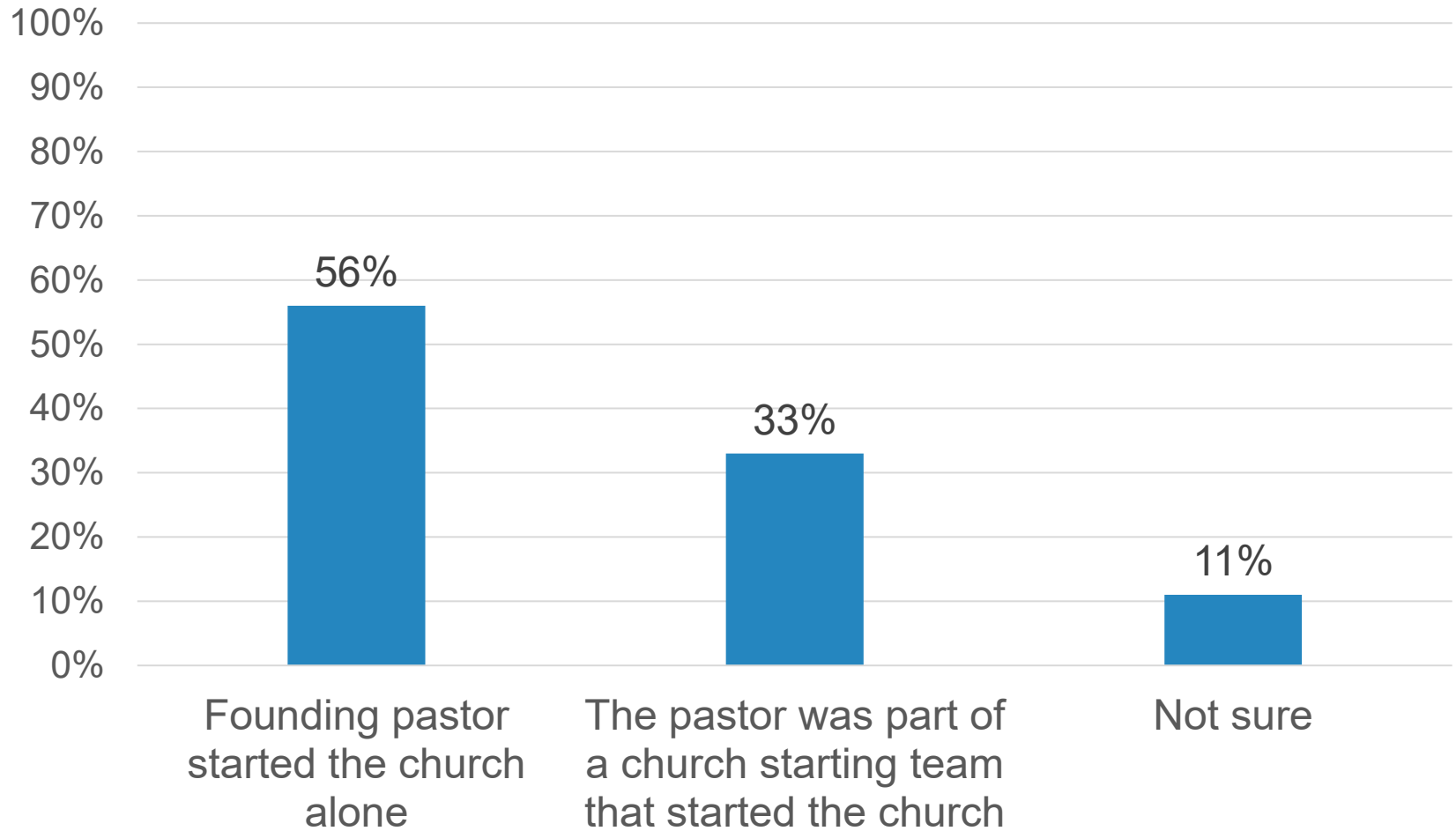
Lifewayresearch

Q60 "Did the founding pastor receive church starting training that specifically incorporated the dynamics of a Hispanic/Latino context prior to starting the church?" n=247

Church Starter

Lifewayresearch

56% of new church works were started by the founding pastor alone

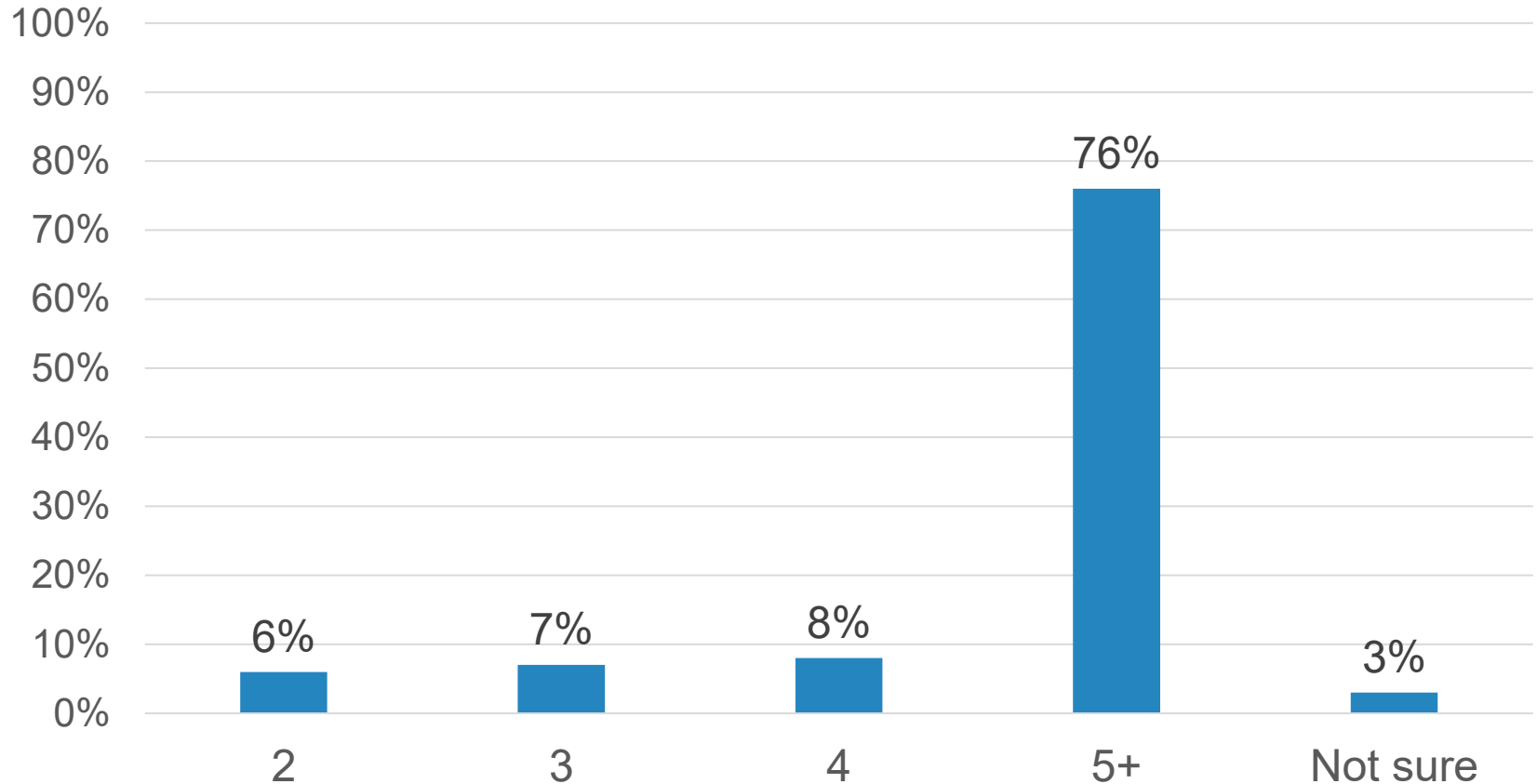


Lifewayresearch

Q55 "Did the founding pastor start the church alone or was there a church starting team that started the new church work?" n=248

Starting teams are most likely to have 5 or more people

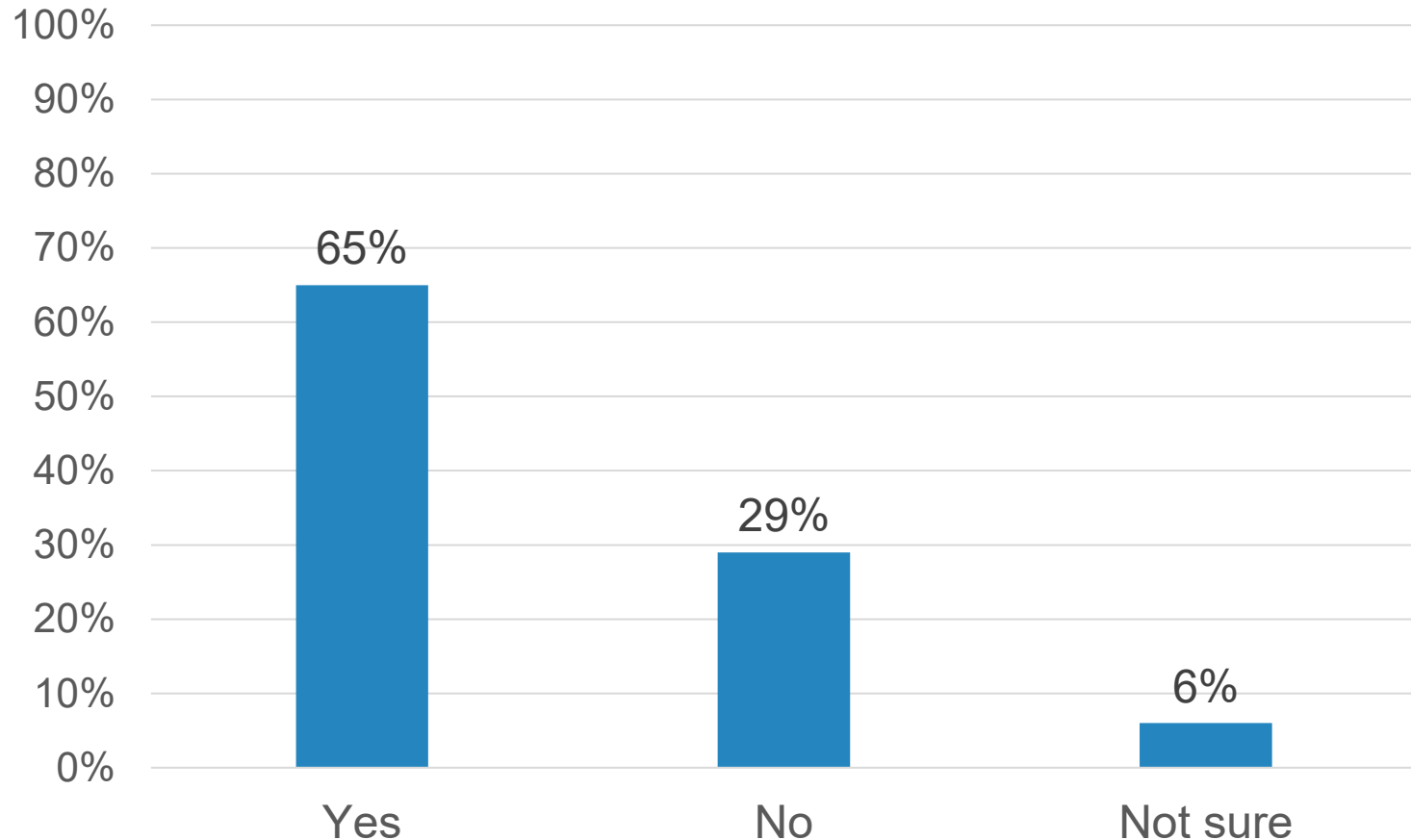
Among Those Started with a Church Starting Team



Lifewayresearch

Q56 "How many people (including the founding pastor) were on the church starting team when the new church work began? (Select one)" n=84

29% did not receive financial compensation for their work with the church in the first five years

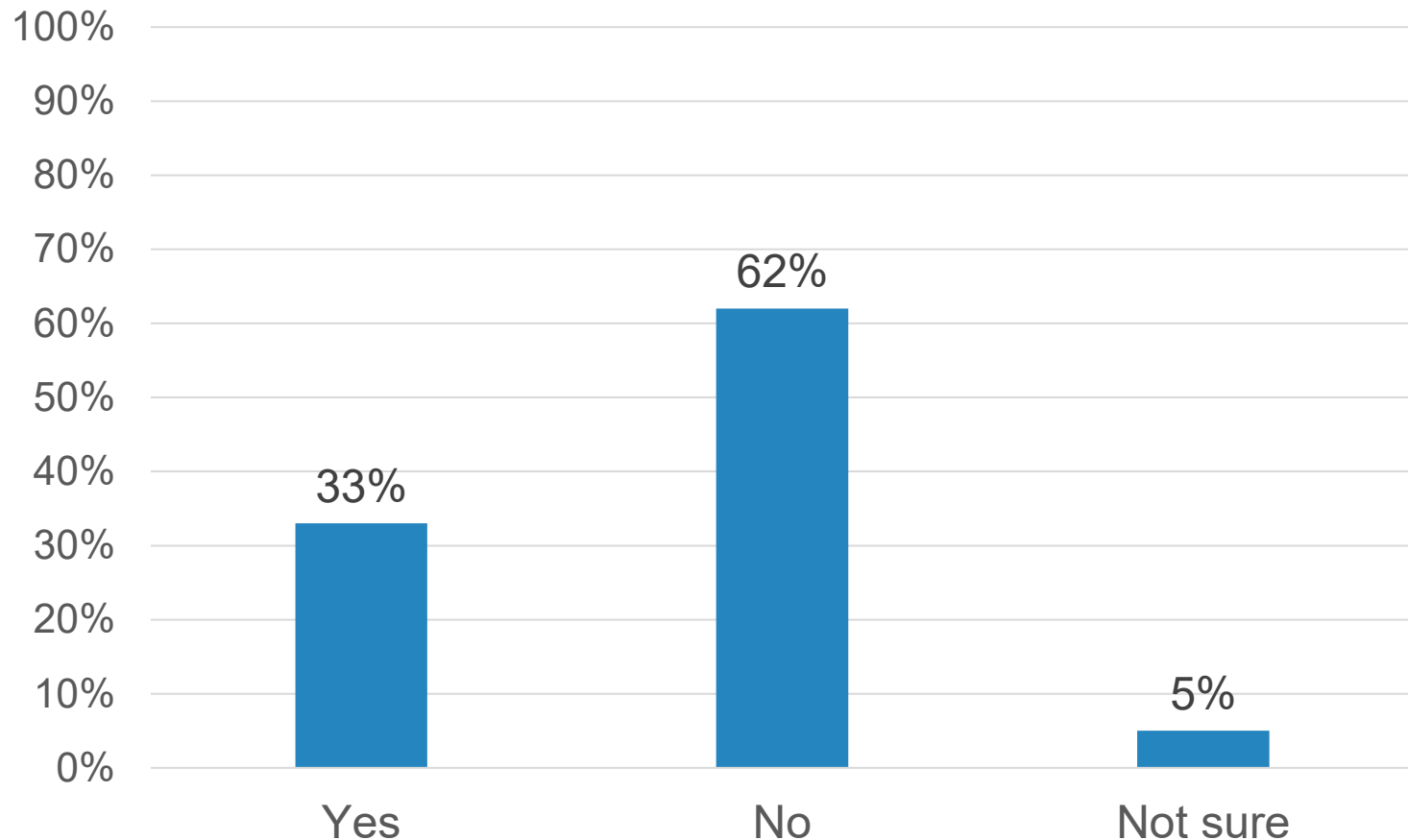


Lifewayresearch

Q61 "Did you receive any financial compensation for your work in the church in the first five years?" n=247

62% do not think the financial compensation received was adequate to meet their family's basic needs

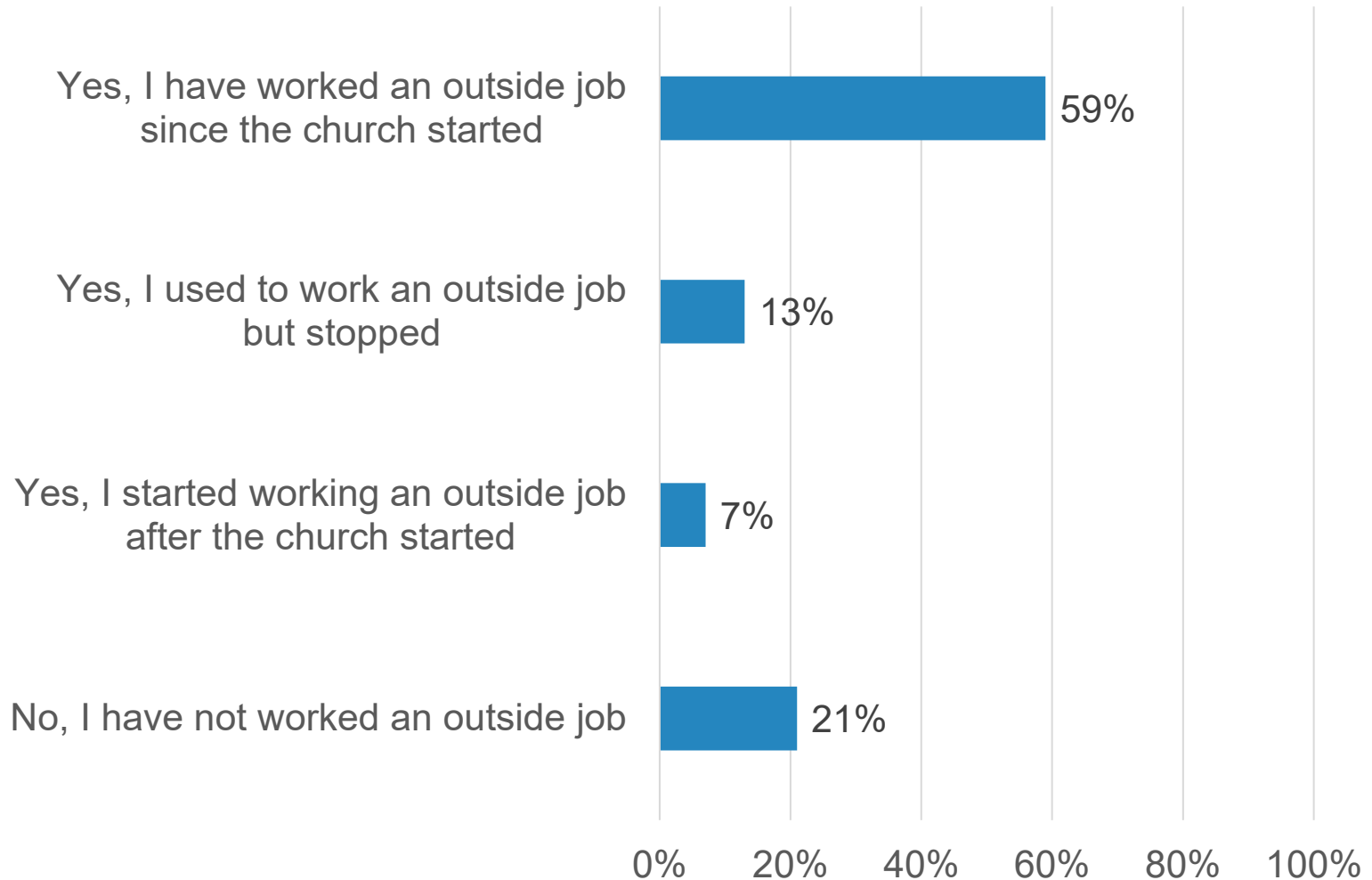
Among Those That Received Financial Compensation



Lifewayresearch

Q62 "In your opinion, was the financial compensation received adequate to meet all of your and your family's basic needs in the new church work's location?" n=168

79% have worked an outside job at some point since the church started

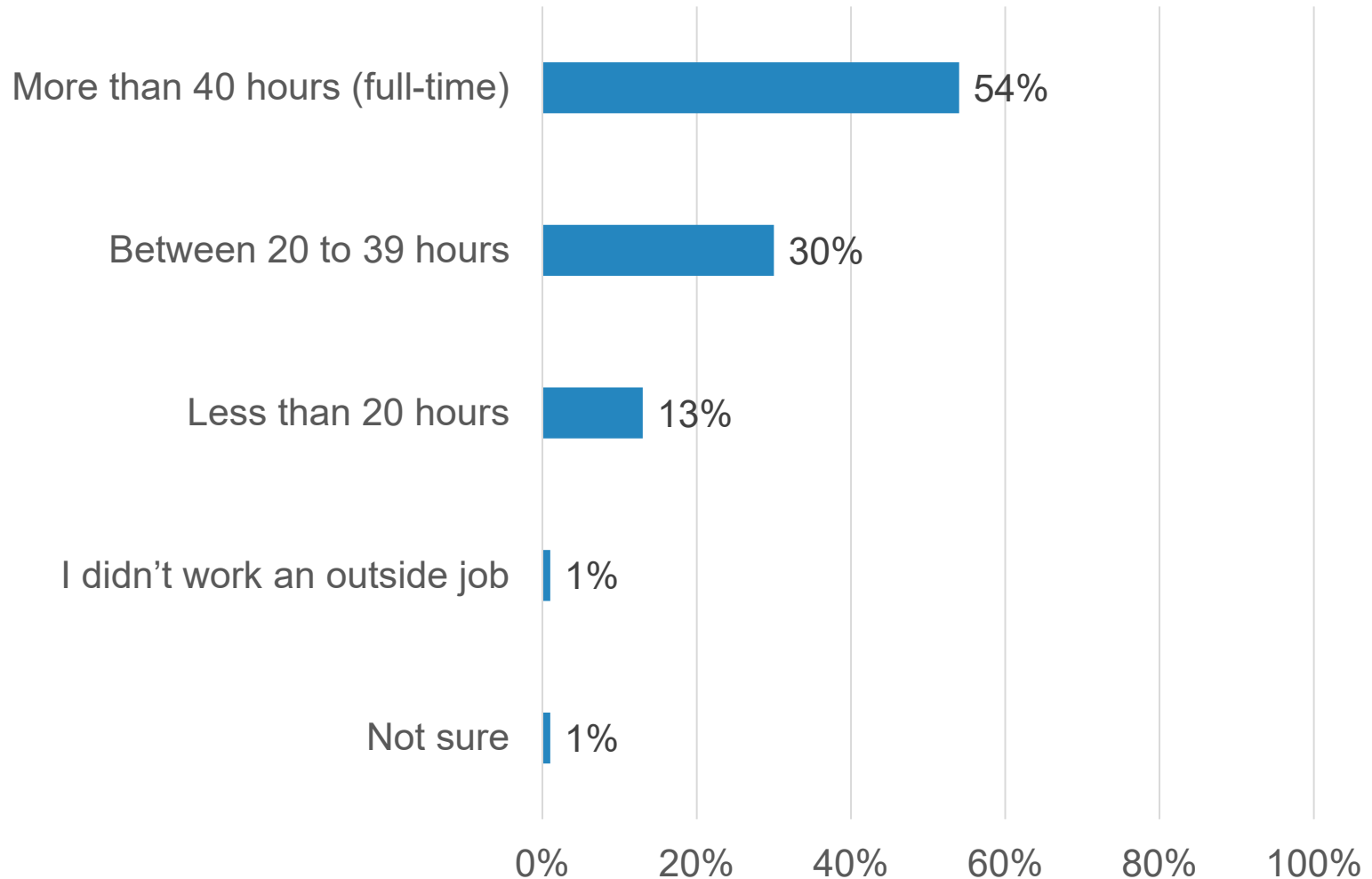


Lifewayresearch

Q63: "Have you worked at a paying job outside of the church at any time since the new church work began? (Select one)" n=247

54% of those who have worked an outside job worked full time in addition to working as pastor

Among Those That Worked an Outside Job

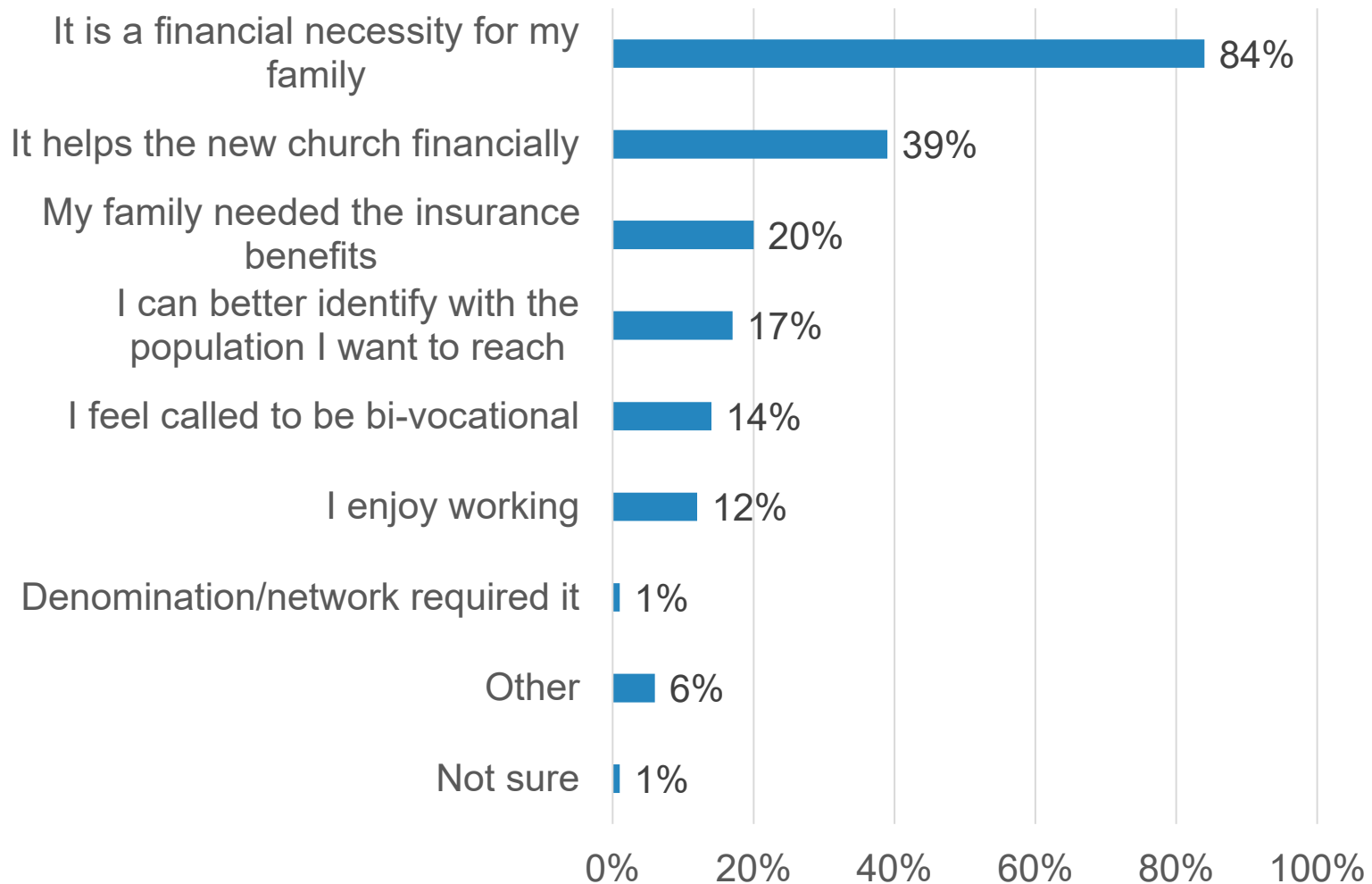


Lifewayresearch

Q64: "How many hours did you, on average, work at an outside job each week in addition to working as a pastor? (Select one)" n=193

Reasons for working an outside job

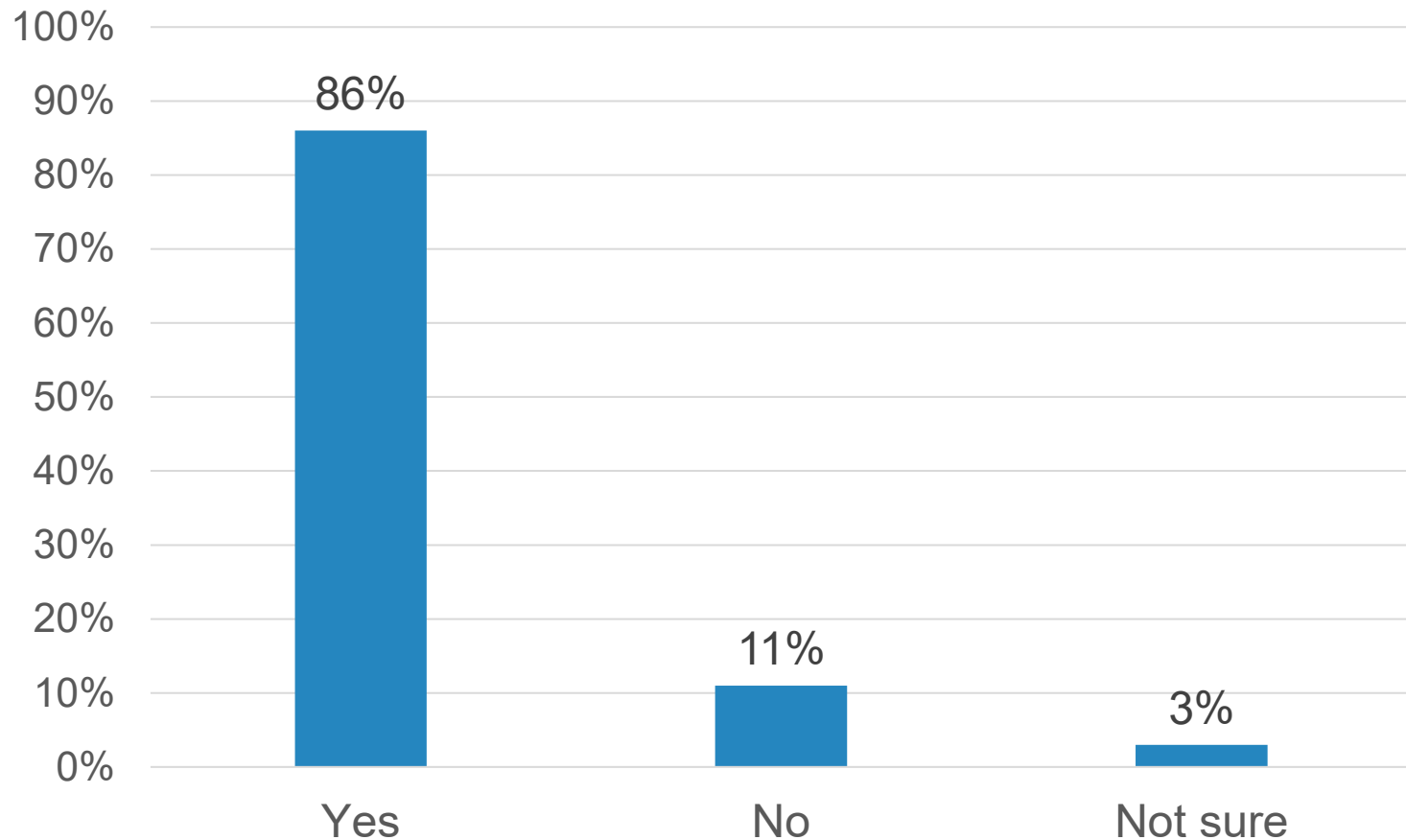
Among Those That Worked an Outside Job



Lifewayresearch

Q65: "What reasons have you had for working an outside job in addition to working as a pastor? (Select all that apply)" n=191

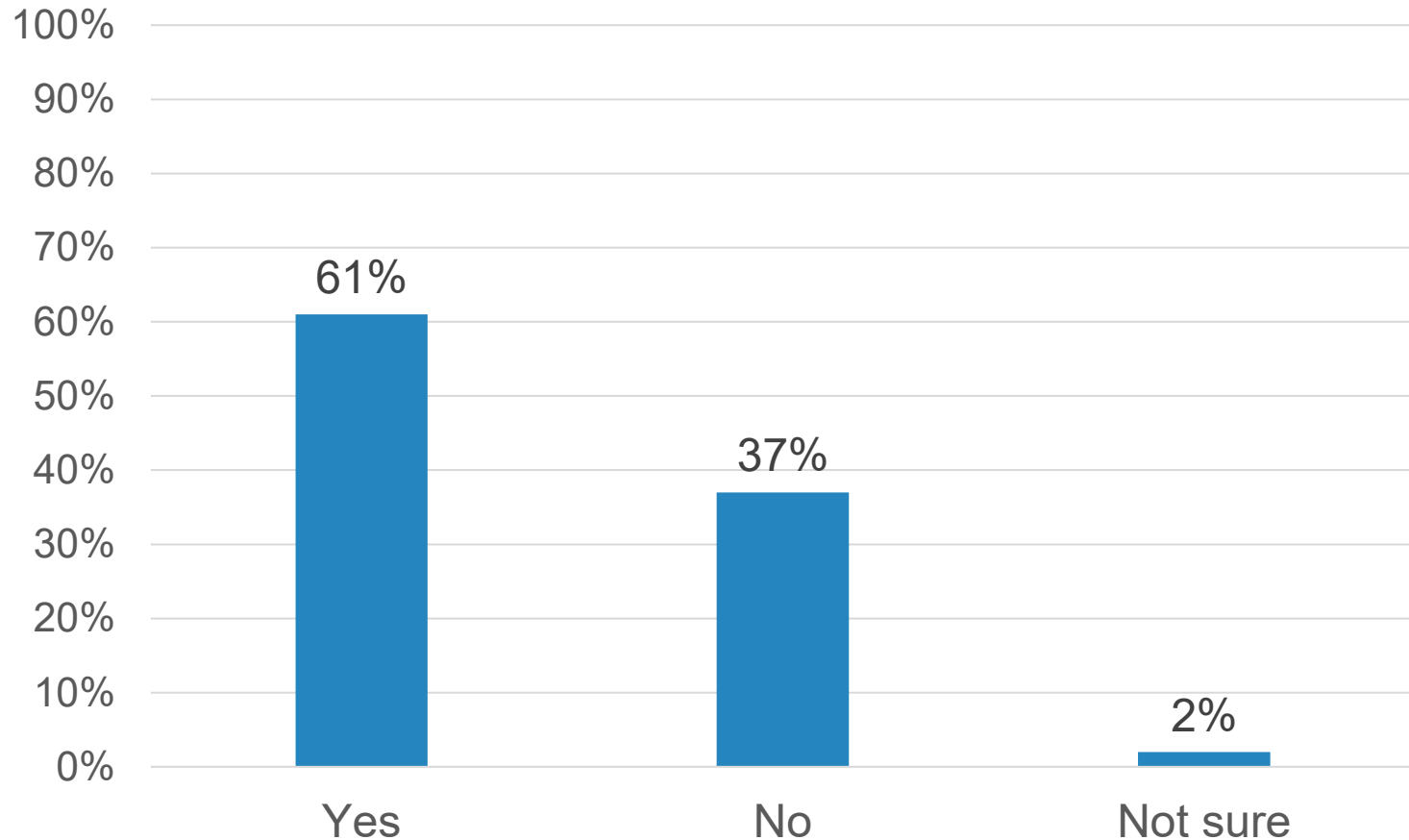
86% had previous ministry experience as a pastor or church staff



Lifewayresearch

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. " n=245

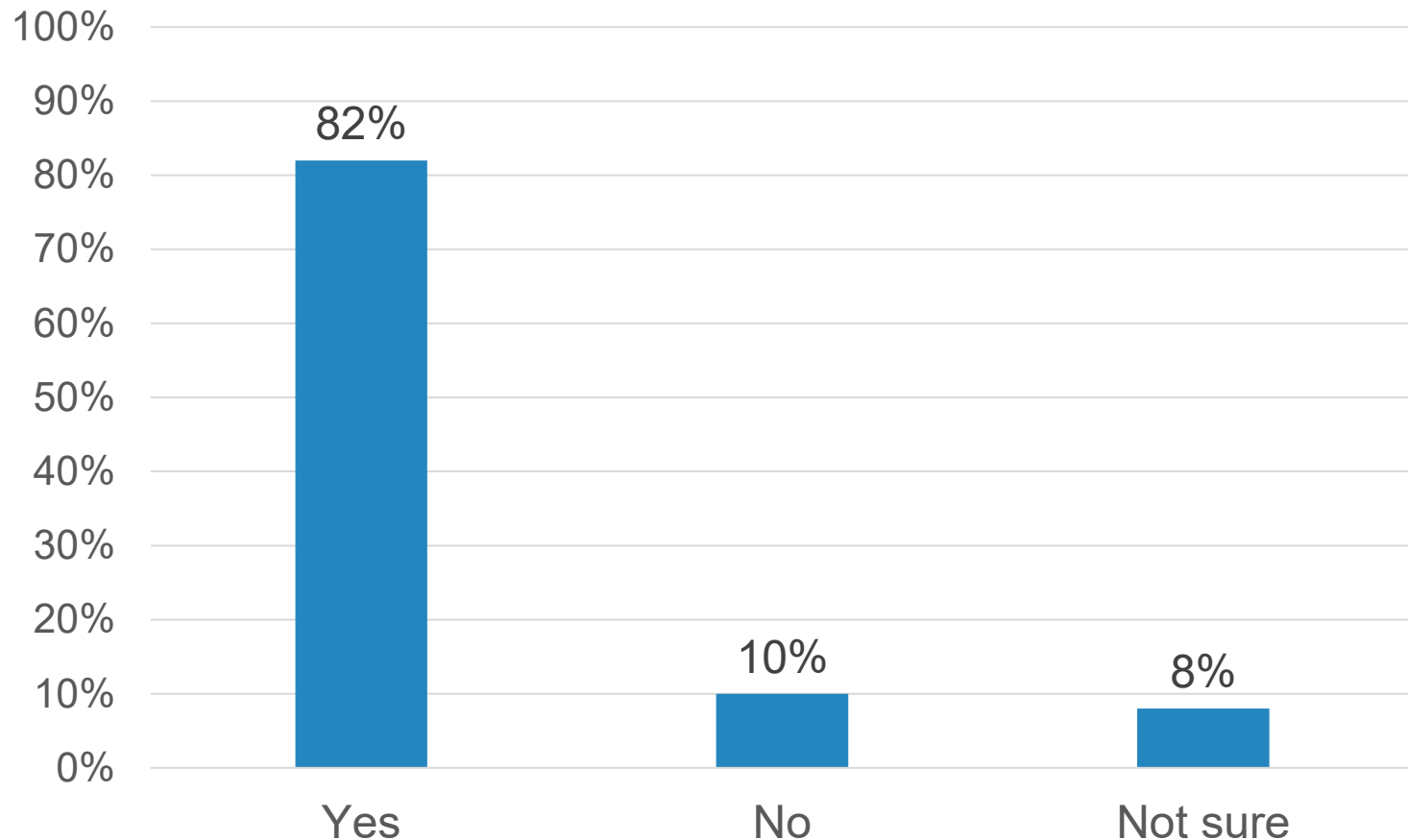
61% had previous experience as a church starter or as part of a church starting team



Lifewayresearch

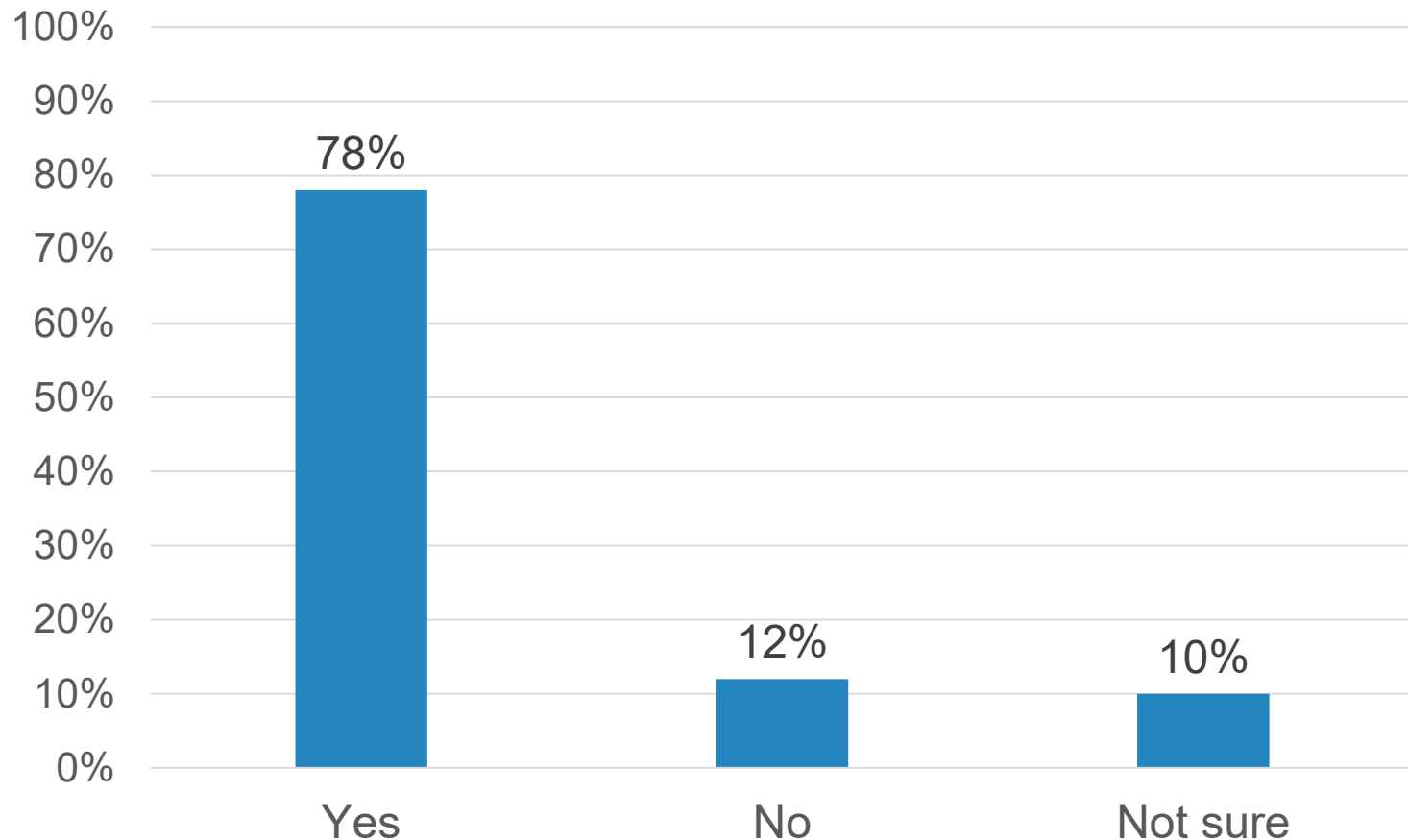
Q66_2 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) I had previous church starting experience as a church starter or as part of a church starting team." n=245

82% had a definite calling to the geographic location of the new church work



Lifewayresearch

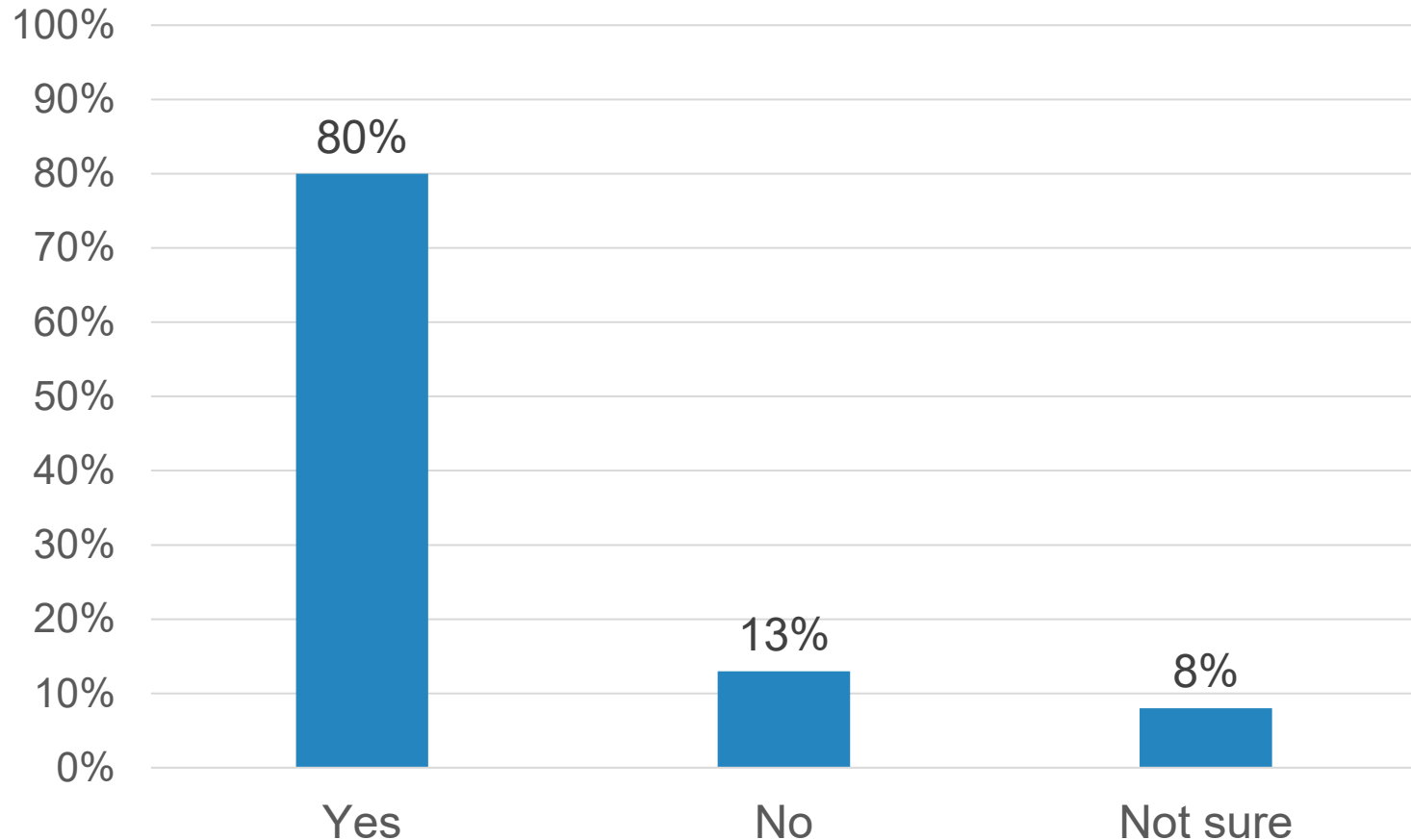
78% had a definite calling from the Lord to be a church planter.



Lifewayresearch

Q66_4 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) I had a definite calling from the Lord to be a church planter." n=245

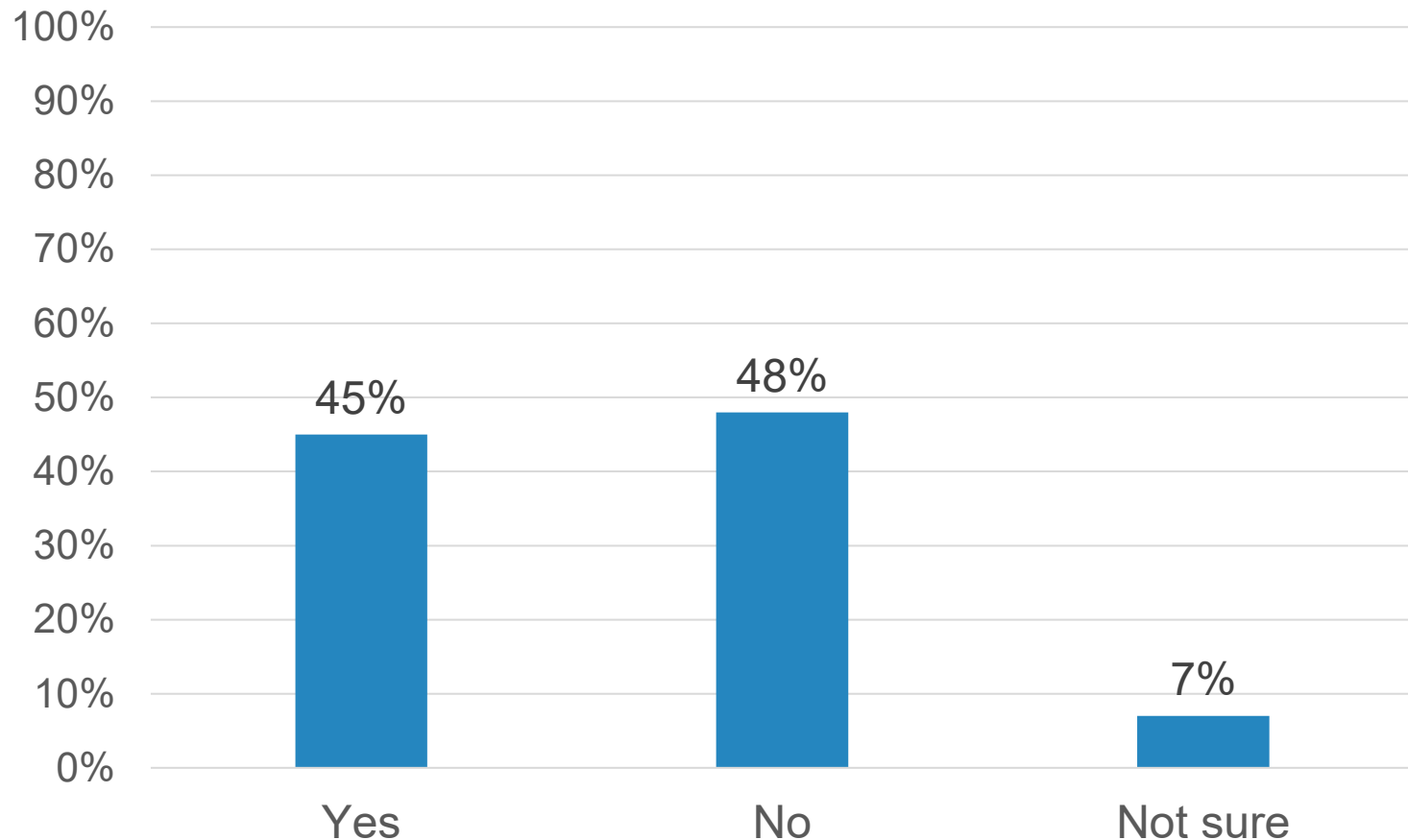
80% say their cultural background matched those the new church was seeking to reach



Lifewayresearch

Q66_5 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) **My cultural background matched those the new church work was seeking to reach.**" n=245

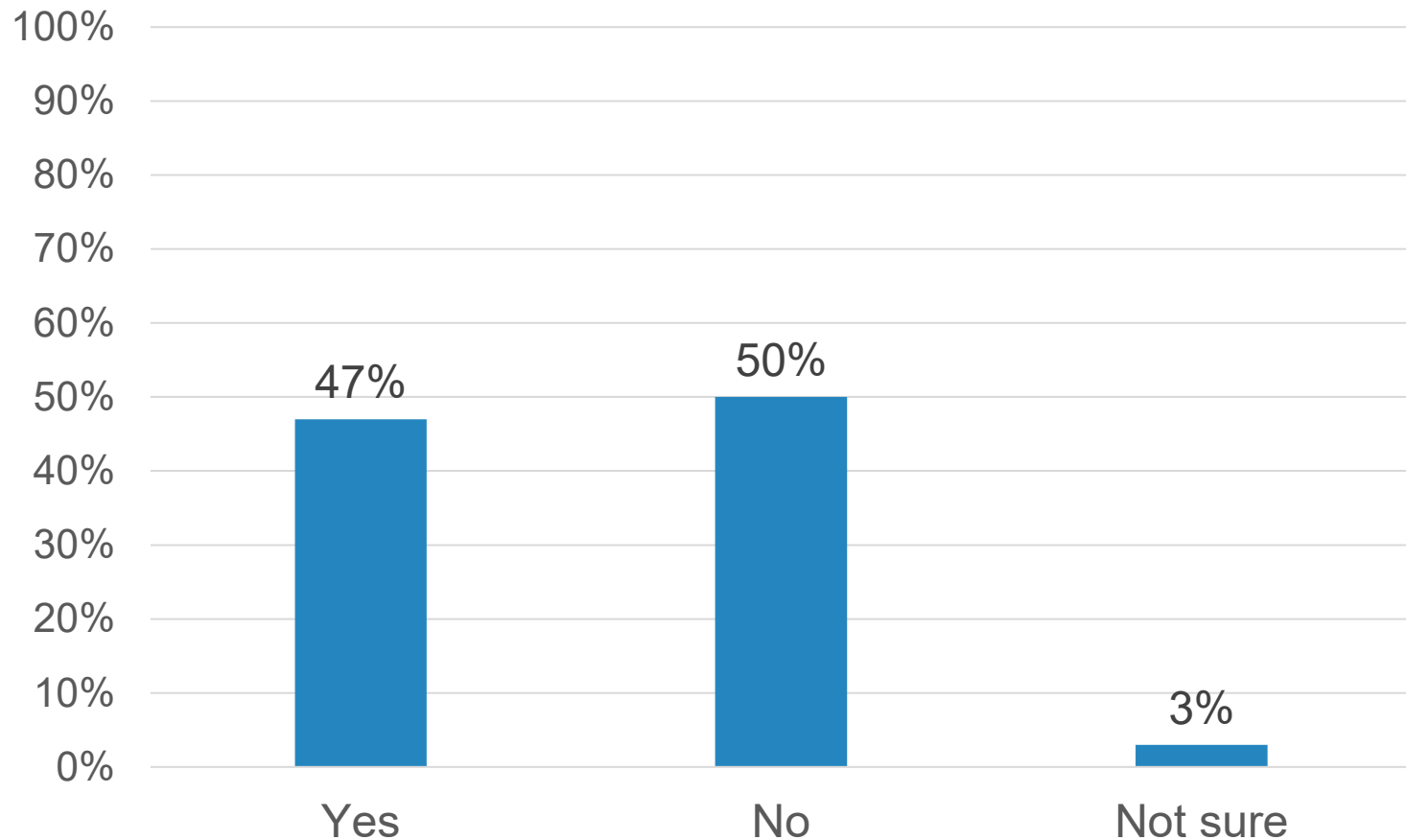
45% say their geographic roots are relatively near the new church's setting



Lifewayresearch

Q66_6 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) **My geographic roots are relatively nearby the new church work's setting.**" n=245

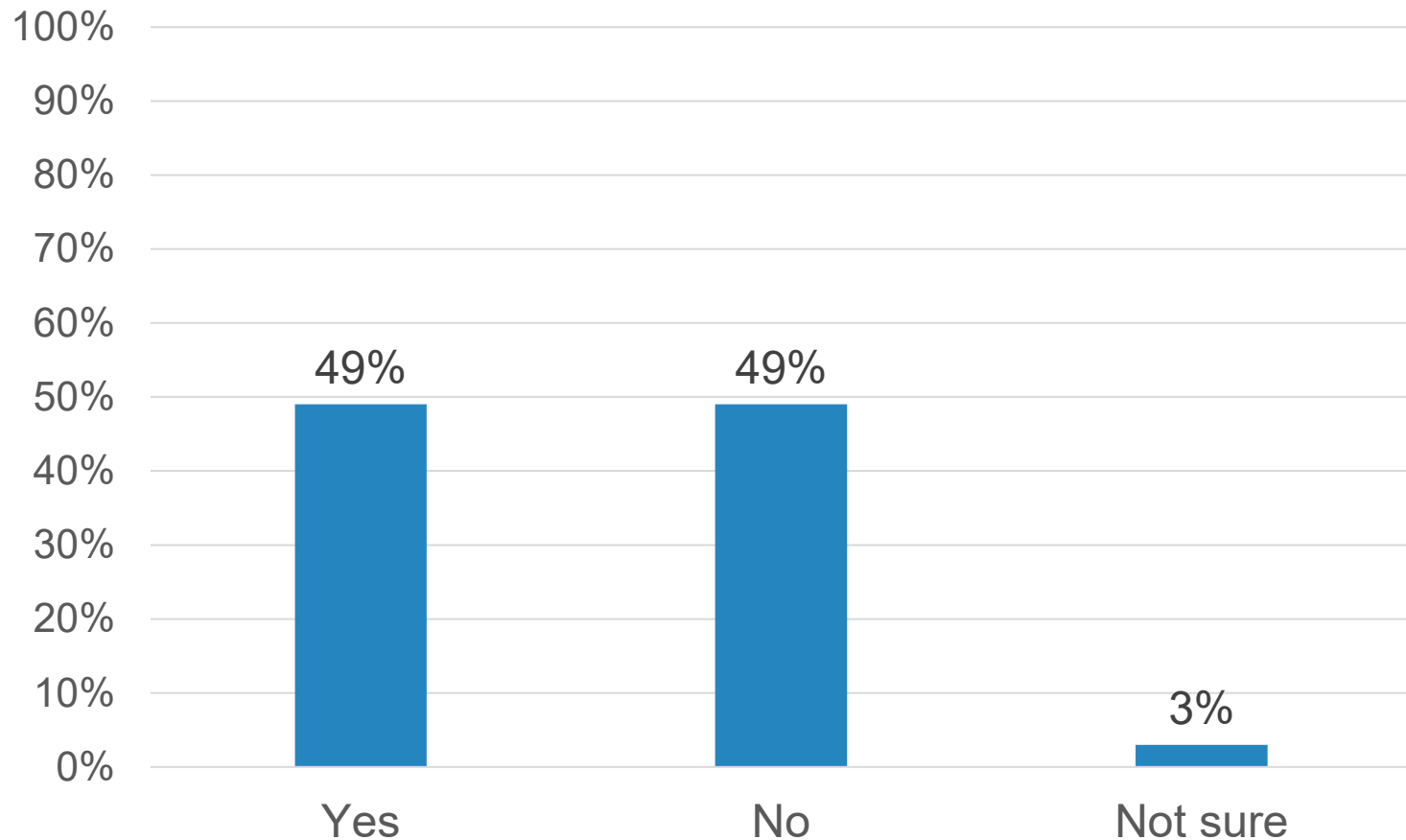
47% met at least monthly with a supervisor



Lifewayresearch

Q67_1 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) **I met at least monthly with a supervisor who guided me in starting the new church work.**" n=245

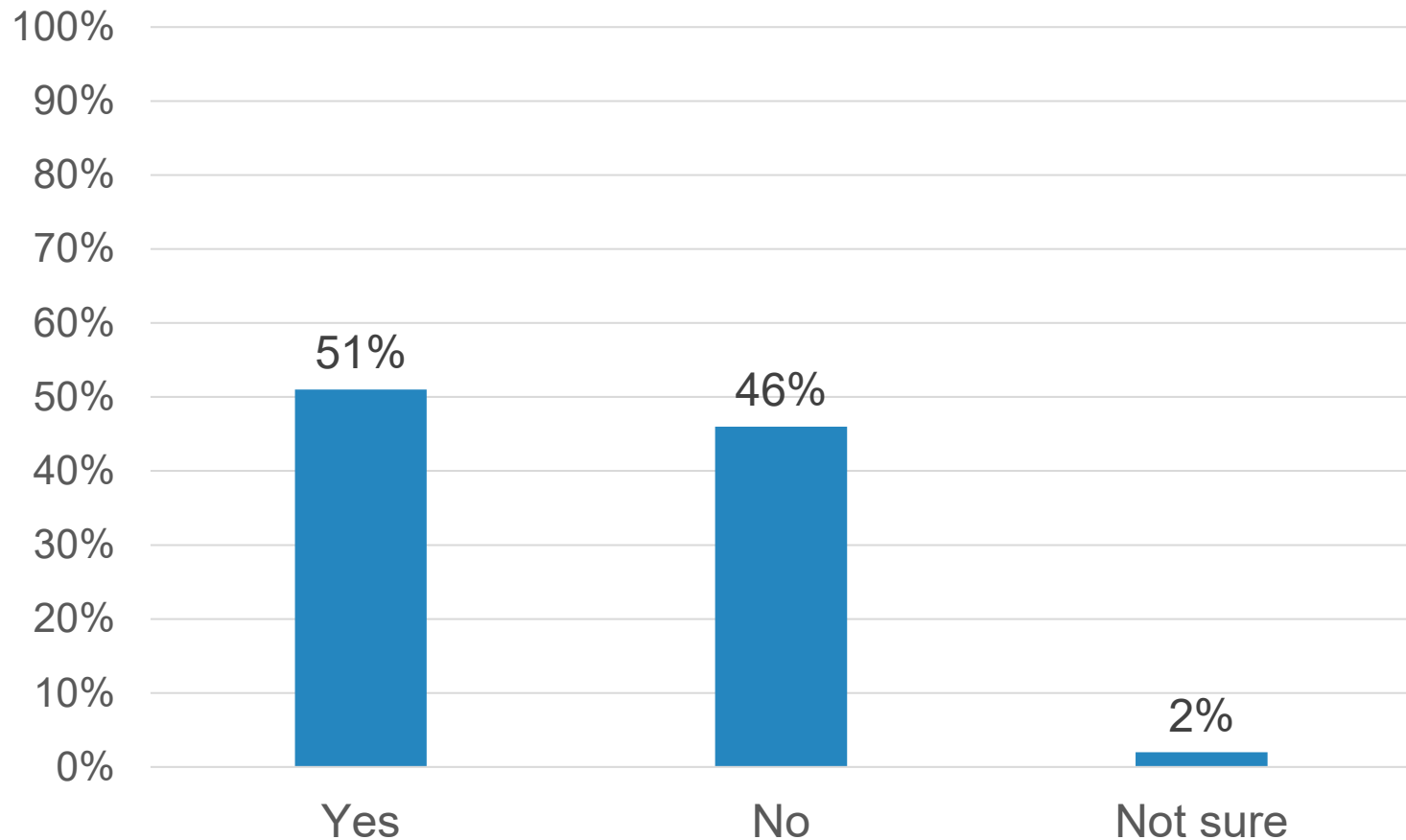
45% met at least monthly with a mentor



Lifewayresearch

Q67_2 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) **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.**" n=245

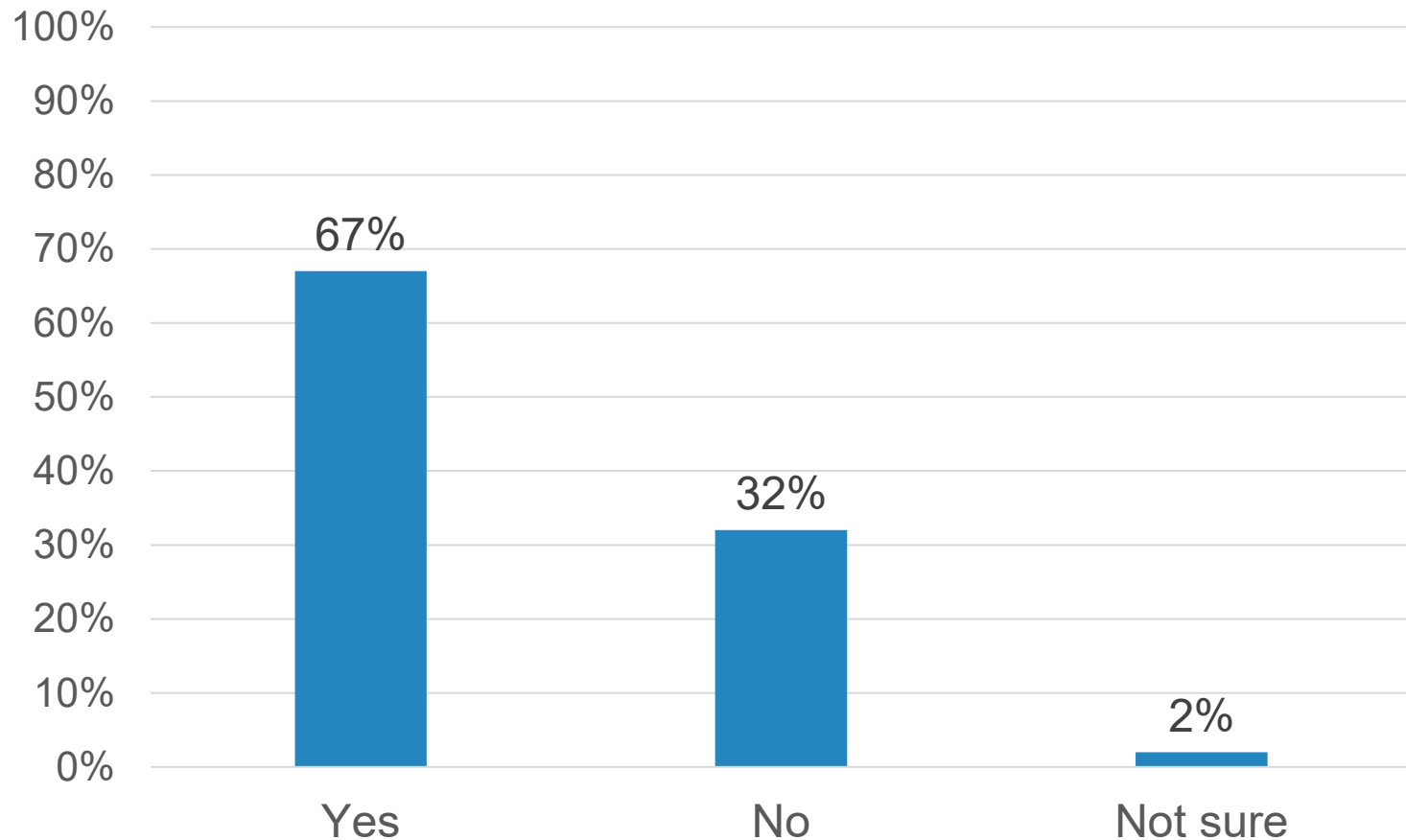
51% met at least monthly with church starting peers



Lifewayresearch

Q67_3 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) I met at least monthly with church starting peers for accountability and support." n=245

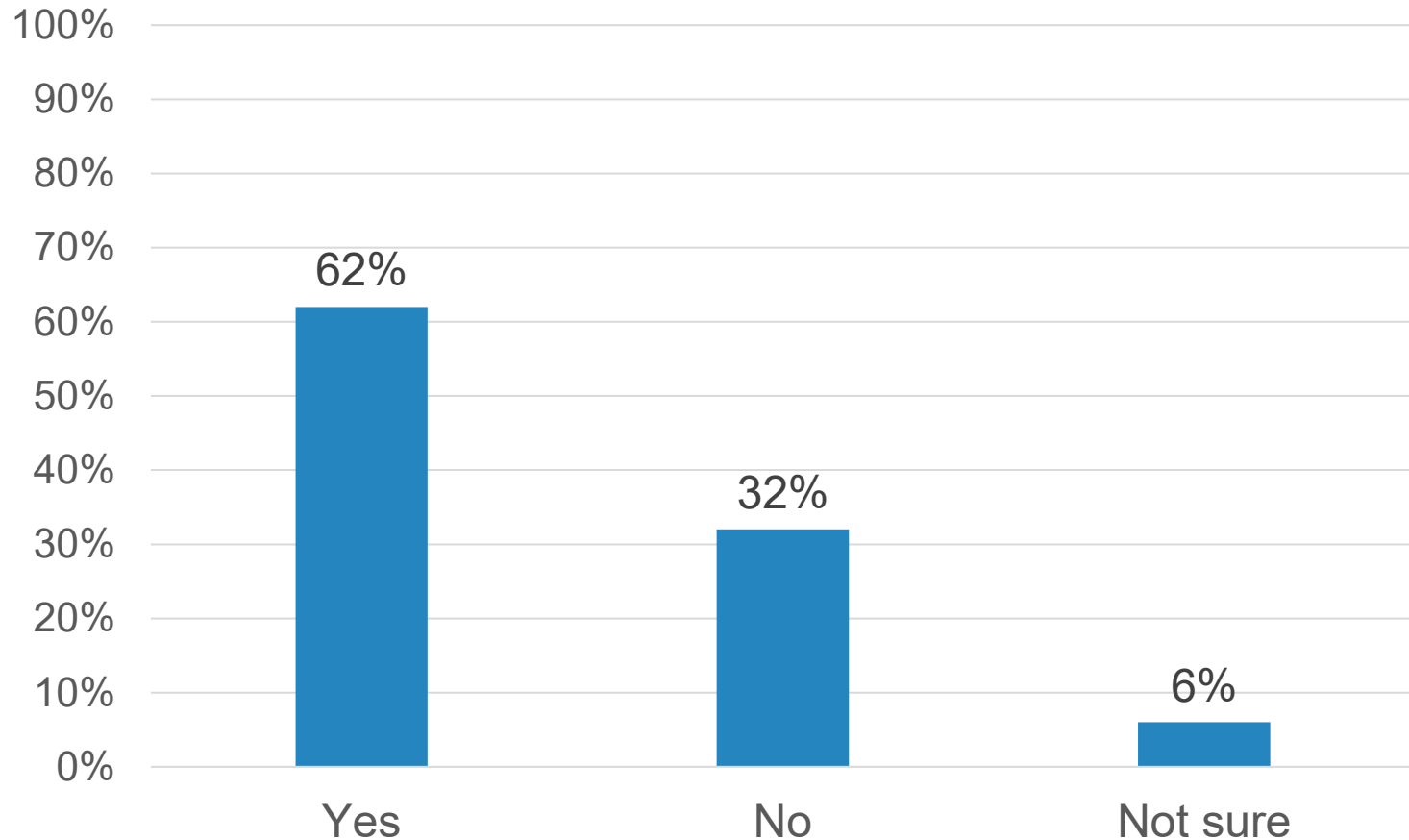
67% enlisted several personal prayer partners



Lifewayresearch

Q67_4 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) **I enlisted several personal prayer partners prior to starting the new work and continued to engage their prayer support during the first few years of the new church work.**" n=245

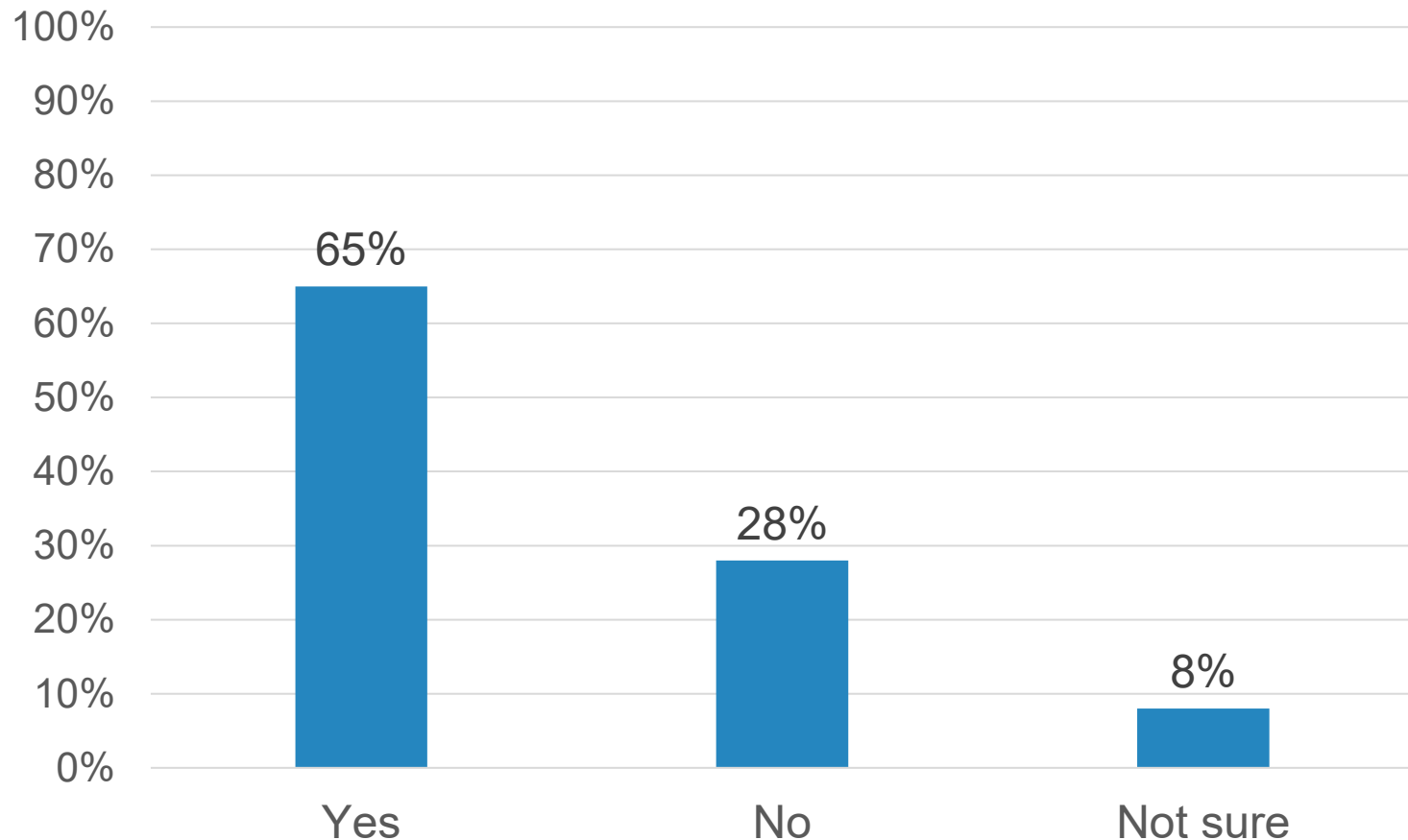
62% were actively engaged in a plan of personal spiritual formation



Lifewayresearch

Q67_5 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) I was actively engaged in a plan of personal spiritual formation during the duration of the new church work." n=245

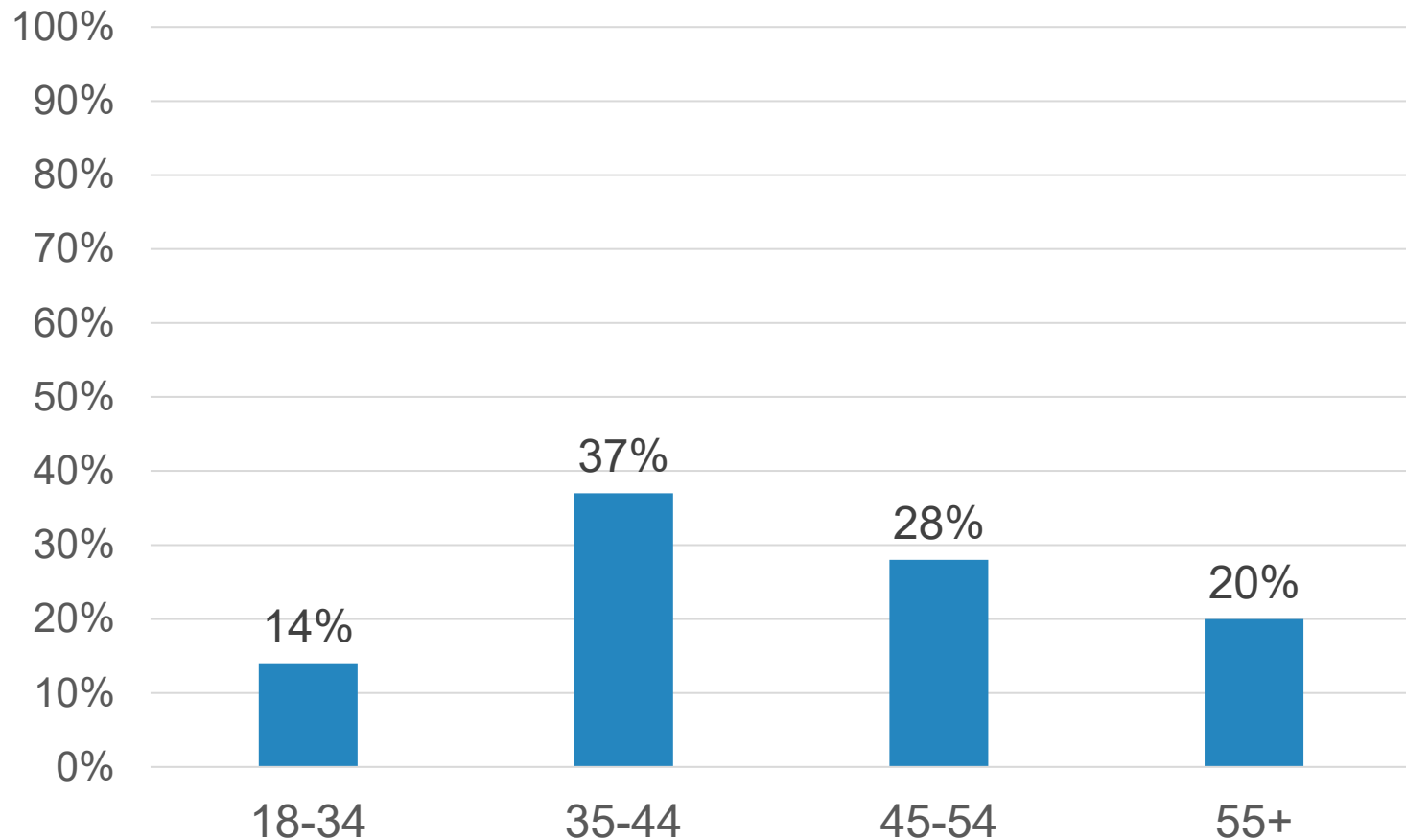
65% say their expectations of the new church work met the reality of the church starting experience



Lifewayresearch

Q67_6 "For each of the following items, please indicate if it was true for your situation. (Select one response for each statement) **My expectations of the new church work met the reality of the church starting experience.**" n=245

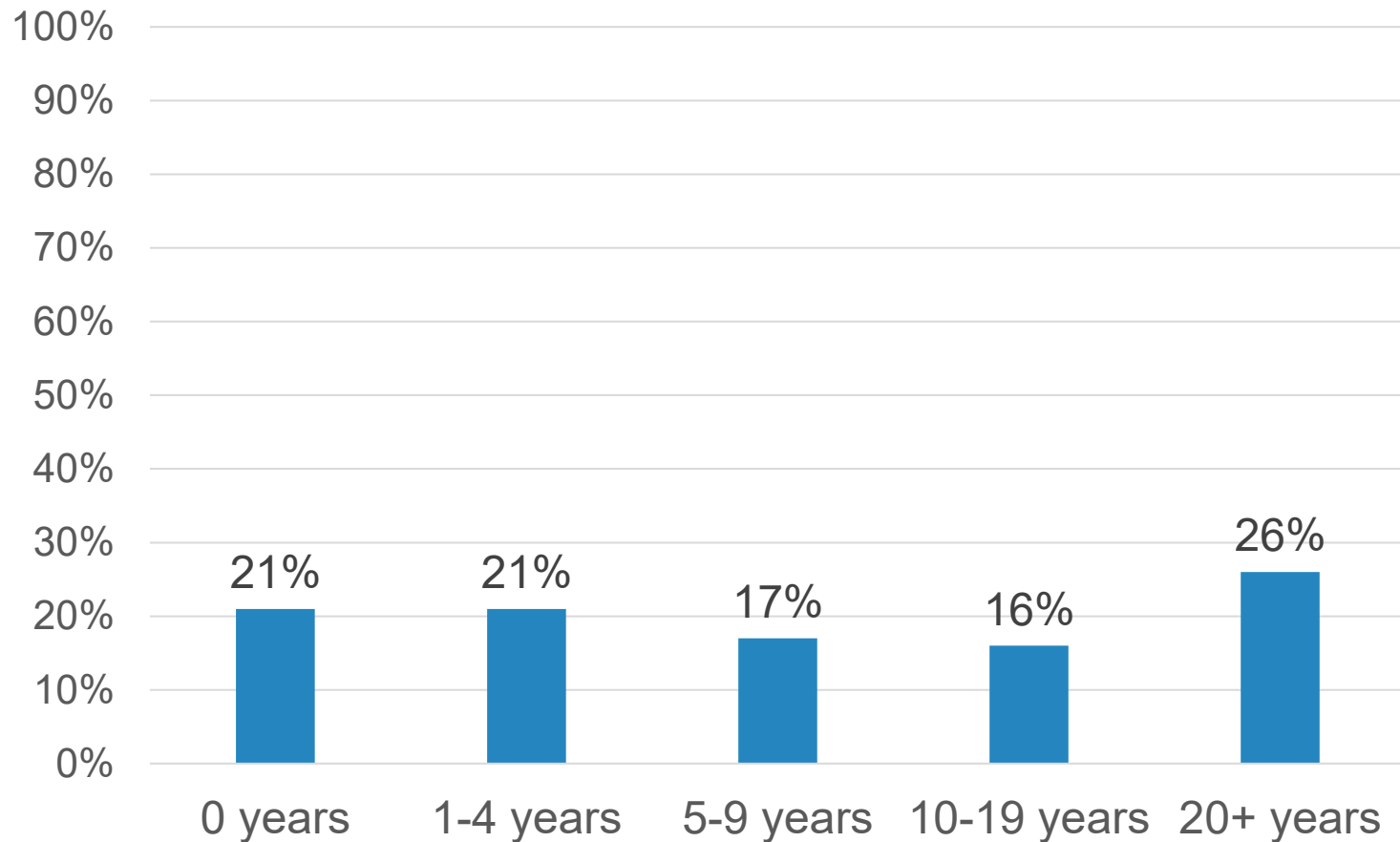
Church starter age at time of launch (average 46, median 44)



Lifewayresearch

Q68 "How old are you?" n=205

41% lived in the area for less than 5 years before the new church work began

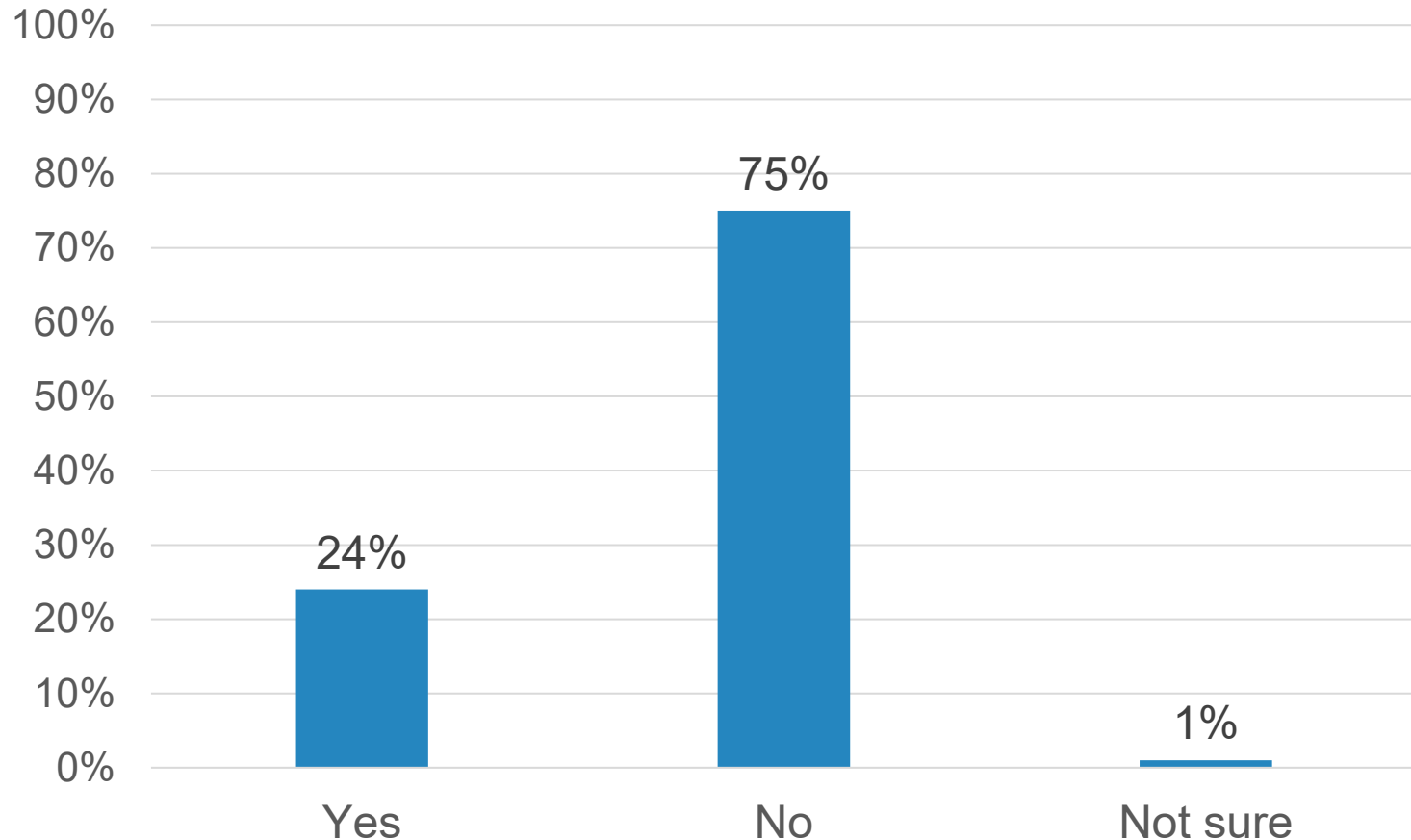


Mean 11, Median 7

Lifewayresearch

Q69 "How many years had you lived in this town/city before the new church work began?" n=244

75% say they did not have health insurance where the majority of the premiums were paid for by others



Lifewayresearch

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)" n=245

Participant Advice for Denominations & Church Planting Networks

Lifewayresearch

Cultural Advice

It is important to understand cultural differences and find ways to fellowship and serve together

In their own words:

“We need more bilingual churches where the family of God is encouraged to cross the divide, be a little uncomfortable, and sacrifice the comforts of an English-only service so that we reflect so many of our communities across America.”

“Hispanic and English pastors must spend time together and get to know one another. Stop separating the Hispanic Church from the English Church in all our "church" stuff.”

“My advice would be to prioritize relationships over programs, since Hispanic/Latino communities value trust, family, and personal connection. Organizations and denominations should listen first, understand cultural realities, and walk alongside church planters rather than imposing a “one-size-fits-all” model.”

“Most Anglo churches have good intentions toward our Hispanic community, but they are unaware of our challenges, contexts, limitations, and difficulties. I believe we should find ways to help them understand who we are and what we do.”

Financial Support

Better financial support would allow church planters to spend their time on starting the church rather than an outside job

In their own words:

“We don’t need money to start or organize monthly events/ pamphlets/invitations, we need funding to provide health insurance and be able to pay rent without worrying month to month.”

“Financial aid, so that the church planter can dedicate more time to do the work, which is very time-consuming at the beginning.”

“We’ve grown numerically, the potential for any type of financial help or partnership from other churches becomes even harder because they assume that with a growing congregation comes financial stability. However, our people don’t earn a comparable wage to citizens nor are they paid salaries, rather they are dependent on available work that fluctuates and is also heavily affected by the current political climate.

“Instead of trying to plant several churches at once, a few should be given solid support so that they can dedicate themselves full-time.”

Training

Church planters need contextual church planting training including areas such as fundraising, legal compliance, and community engagement

In their own words:

“A more in-depth training system for church planters before they begin the new work is needed, along with a mechanism for ongoing supervision and monitoring.”

“It is essential to have comprehensive, intentional training on church planting.”

“Hispanic churches face different challenges than American churches. Something I noticed in church planter training is that they address topics irrelevant to a Hispanic congregation. For example, finances, church planting teams, programs, budgets, to name a few. These topics are very different from a Hispanic perspective.”

“We need more frequent and in-depth training coverage as pastors and leaders.”

Mentoring

There is a desire for church planters to have mentors who are experienced leaders with regular check-ins

In their own words:

“It is crucial to have a mentor/coach with whom the church planter can meet regularly.”

“Provide a tutor to every pastor who needs one.”

“For a Hispanic church planter, mentoring is crucial—having guidance from someone who has already navigated the challenges of ministry provides wisdom, accountability, and encouragement.”

“Mentoring is very necessary.”

“There needs to be more individual counseling, not just theoretical guidance.”

Follow God's Leading

It is important that denominations or church planting networks emphasize prayer, discernment of calling, and reliance on God's guidance

In their own words:

“Help discern the pastor's call to ministry. This is critical for the pastor to be able to continue and persevere in his calling to lead a church work.”

“Certainty of the calling, much prayer.”

“The call to God's work must be real; God's work will not be accomplished by human effort. The direction must come from the Lord, and the missionary must be sensitive in hearing and in their heart to the Holy Spirit.”

“Focus on God's expectation, on what the Holy Spirit wants to do in the place where we are planting.”

Team Building

There is value in first forming strong core teams

In their own words:

“Building an experienced core team is equally essential, since no planter can carry the vision alone; a strong team brings diversity of gifts, leadership support, and shared responsibility.”

“I am convinced that the success of planting new Hispanic churches in some sectors of the United States should be exclusively sponsored by mother churches that prepare a core team before effectively starting a church plant.”

“The best way to start a new church work is to have a team of committed people supporting the planter, including their own family.”

“Never send the planter alone, without a team. Emphasize the importance of community involvement as part of the planting process.”

Collaboration

There is value in partnering with established churches and building networks of support

In their own words:

“Build relationships and collaborate with leaders. There is so much to learn from one another.”

“I would recommend forming alliances with other Hispanic churches in the area. This strengthens the work and helps our brothers and sisters to see ourselves as the Church of Christ united in one accord.”

“Promote collaboration. Encouraging established churches to walk alongside new church works generates synergy and prevents the church-planting pastor from facing the burden alone.”

“We should visit each other in order to learn from other Hispanic churches how to do a better job of growth.”

Practical Help

Respondents requested practical help, such as access to buildings, space, pulpit supply, and support for outreach and evangelism

In their own words:

“Visit them, help them with evangelism and preaching from time to time.”

“Network with large established churches who might have an unused classroom to lend on Sundays for free or a low cost for church planters perhaps for the first 1 or 2 years.”

“Have established Anglo churches consider allowing a Spanish congregation to use their building.”

“Help is needed in order to find a location.”

Pastoral Care

It is important to care for the wellbeing of pastors and their families with visits, encouragement, friendship, and care

In their own words:

“Provide a pastoral care environment that at least once a year allows the planter and his family to be taken away from their mission in order to be spiritually cared for, shown love, and recharged.”

“Do not leave the pastors alone in any way.”

“Greater attention to the care of the planter and family.”

“Financial, spiritual, and moral support. Genuine friendship.”

“They need to be more communicative with the planters. Pray with them and be attentive to their needs.”

“Visit each congregation to encourage them.”

“Contact, visit, and get to know the pastor and his team, identify weaknesses, and thus provide appropriate support.”

“More support, including emotional, financial, and academic support.”

Patience

Respondents advised patience and endurance, recognizing that church planting is a long and difficult process that requires perseverance and realistic expectations

In their own words:

“They shouldn't rush things but rather depend on God. Planting is a priority, but not a rush. We don't usually walk before we crawl.”

“My advice is simple: sometimes the sponsoring church expects quick results, and I believe we must be patient to see the fruits of a new church. In my case, I'm under an Anglo church that's over 100 years old, and they expect people to arrive soon and start weekly meetings. I think they sometimes fail to see the cultural context, that Latinos are different from Anglos. It's simply a matter of asking for a little more patience to begin seeing the results of a new church's birth.”

“Patience. Don't water down the gospel for what might be culturally accepted. Don't try to act Anglo.”

“They need to recognize that the launch is different from the launch of an English-speaking church, and it requires patience and flexibility.”

“Be prepared for Slow growth and enter into the ministry with a mindset of patient endurance.”

Participant Advice for Hispanic Church Starters

Lifewayresearch

Cultural Advice

Participants offer advice for Anglo churches and Hispanic church planters navigating the variety among Hispanic cultures

In their own words:

“You must have a heart for Hispanic people. Don't try to change their culture. Instead, love their culture and use it to reach souls.”

“Gospel kingdom above cultural preferences.”

“English-speaking pastors should jump in to love this part of your community, and don't let language stop you. Find other believers who speak Spanish to teach you and translate for you. The Hispanic community should be a part of what we do, not just a good thing that we support financially, but don't get involved in.”

“Try as much as you can not to label the church as “Mexican”, or “Honduran”, or any other nationality. To be open to learn about the culture of different Hispanic countries and be willing to show real love to everyone without distinction no matter their financial or educational background. Be with the people and make everyone feel welcome.”

“We live in a politically polarized world- so; preparing the Anglo congregation to welcome an ethnic ministry is crucial.”

Bi-vocational Ministry

While there are calls for more financial resources, there are also those that advise planters to have an outside job in addition to the church

In their own words:

“They must be bi-vocational to survive the expenses and cost living in my area.”

“Bi-vocational works best.”

“Start bi-vocational.”

“Don't stop working a job.”

Trust God

Advising church planters to depend on God reveals how intentional this must be

In their own words:

“Depend on God at all times. There will be moments of discouragement and loneliness. Only God can instill courage and valor.”

“Depend on Christ in everything.”

“Have total dependence on the Lord and do not be discouraged if you do not see results soon.”

“If you have God's calling, if we know that our Lord Jesus Christ has sent us to plant a new work, then we must be sure that He will give us the necessary resources to do it, even though things may get difficult at times. It is His church, and He sustains us. In the end, we will see the glory of God.”

Family Care and Pastoral Care

Planters are encouraged to keep caring for their families and to have a strong network caring for them personally

In their own words:

“Make sure to carve time for yourself and your family, God will protect His church, and you need to be aware of your limitations.”

“Don't neglect your family.”

“Constant training and also do not neglect your devotional life. Never put ministry before family.”

“Do not neglect your family and marriage. They are the first sheep that we must shepherd.”

“Church planting is a commendable but difficult path, so you need a good support network to persevere.”

“Find a support network.”

Connect with Other Pastors

A specific type of support that is recommended is a network of relationships with other pastors

In their own words:

“Find a strong network of pastors that can be involved in your spiritual life and family.”

“You need to work on the language if you don’t master it. You also need to establish a broad relationship with church associations and other planters in the same geographical area.”

“Don’t start alone or without a coach with whom you have a strong relationship. Pray fervently that God will enable you to build relationships with pastors in the area, believers, and the community. This work cannot and should not be done alone. It is very difficult, unhealthy, and unbiblical.”

“Learning English is so important. Connect with other pastors where you can share your heart and struggles.”

Seek Church Sponsors

Planters are advised to seek churches to sponsor their plant with shared ministry, finances, volunteers, and support

In their own words:

“If possible, find a "mother church" that feels and shares the "spiritual burden" for the ethnic group that you are trying to reach.”

“Have an excellent connection with the sponsoring church. Manage all types of resources in order to move forward.”

“Start with some type of committed, long term support from partnering churches. We’ve struggled and learned as we go. Things grew quickly for us in the beginning which also quickly brought on the need for more financial assistance that we didn’t have.”

“If possible, seek sponsorship from established churches that will provide and support you with volunteers and funds.”

“Try to get involved with American church/ministry to sponsor your ministry. Be brave! We, the Hispanos, are facing a hard time in the local culture.”

Build a Church Planting Team

Planters are encouraged to plant the church with a team of people, not the pastor alone

In their own words:

“Don't do it alone. Start with a team or develop a team first.”

“Do not start the church until you have a working group.”

“Identify three families that are leaders, co-labor with them, lead with them, they are your best team members”

“It is more effective to arrive at a new project with a team already in place than to arrive and build one.”

“Under no circumstances are they plant churches alone; they need a core team. Otherwise, they, their families, and their churches will become frustrated and fail.”

Training and Mentorship

Planters are encouraged to obtain many kinds of training and to find someone experienced in ministry as a mentor

In their own words:

“Get trained in church planting before you begin.”

“Seek out and receive all the necessary training before starting.”

“More training, more networking, more resources, more theological formation.”

“They should prepare thoroughly before beginning. They should work closely with an experienced pastor, learning about the ministry. They should study at a seminary where most of the professors have pastoral experience.”

“The need for a mentor is imperative.”

“Search for and find someone to walk alongside you for advice in ministry and personal/family support.”

Patience and Perseverance

Church planting is a slow process; patience, prayer, and perseverance are vital

In their own words:

“My advice would be no, don't rush into planting a church. Often, we want to plant a church because we think we're running out of time, but the truth is, that's not the case. The more time you spend planning and developing the vision, building a stronger team, the stronger the church will be.”

“Have patience, for the work is arduous and the fruits are evident in the long term. Never stop praying.”

“Patience, prayer, perseverance, discipline, and temperance.”

“It's necessary to be patient and not try to force people to serve when they do not have the desire to serve. Continue praying and sharing the Gospel, and God will bring growth in His time.”

Prayer and Spiritual Guidance

Prayer is repeatedly emphasized as foundational along with following God's calling and leadership

In their own words:

“Be absolutely certain that you are called to plant churches.”

“Have a prayer group partnering with you before you start.”

“Pray and listen to the voice of God.”

“Should not be profession to make money instead call from God”

“It is a hard and joyous work of sanctification. Stay the course, seek help, build partnerships, and above all, continue to pray.”

“If you have doubts about a true calling, it is best to wait, pray, and prepare yourself spiritually until God confirms your calling.”