

A STUDY BY
MUCK RACK

STATE OF
JOURNALISM
2024

Executive summary

- **Funding and Trust:** About **one-third** of journalists express concerns about lack of funding and trust in journalism, consistent with last year's findings.
- **Employment Trends: More than one-third** report layoffs or buyouts, with **30%** turning to LinkedIn for job opportunities. **Over half** prefer a hybrid work arrangement, yet many find themselves working in the office more than desired.
- **Work Hours and Compensation:** A significant **64%** work over 40 hours weekly, with **79%** working after hours. Yet, only **46%** earn more than **\$70k per year**, indicating a gap between workload and compensation.
- **Content Production:** Nearly a quarter produce **11 or more stories** weekly, and about **one in four** primarily publish in legacy media, despite the digital shift.
- **AI and Social Media:** **28%** currently use generative AI, with **20%** planning to explore its uses, mainly for behind-the-scenes tasks. Social media is crucial, with **70%** valuing it for promotion.
- **Relations with PR:** Despite **46%** of journalists receiving over **6 pitches daily**, **49%** seldom or never respond, mainly due to relevance issues. Still, **70%** acknowledge PR professionals as at least moderately important to their success.

2024 Partners

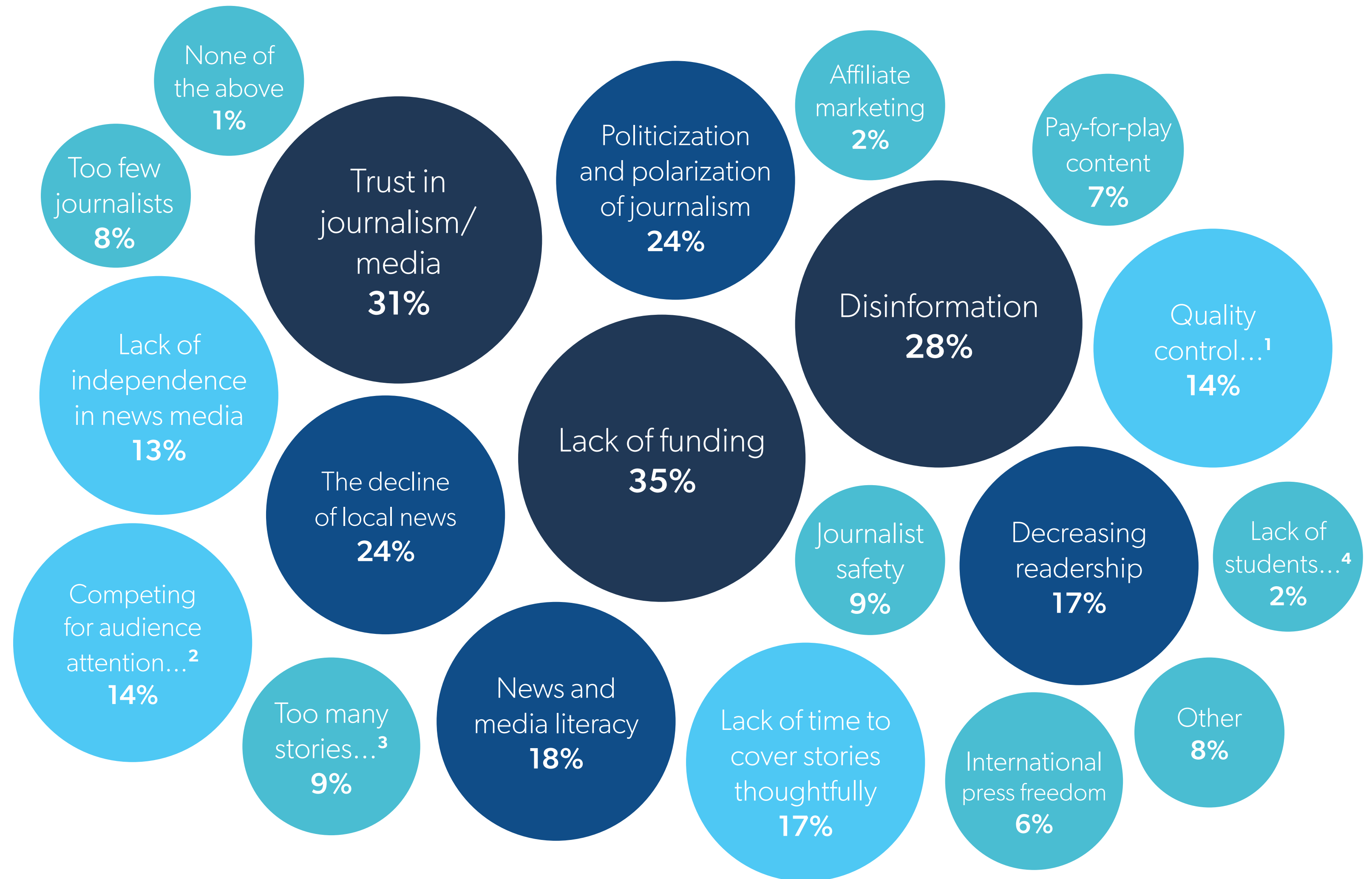


How journalists work

Lack of funding tops the list of journalists' concerns in 2024

About **one third** of journalists surveyed express concern about “lack of funding” and “trust in journalism,” the same top three issues found in last year’s State of Journalism.

What issues facing journalists are most concerning to you? (choose your top three)



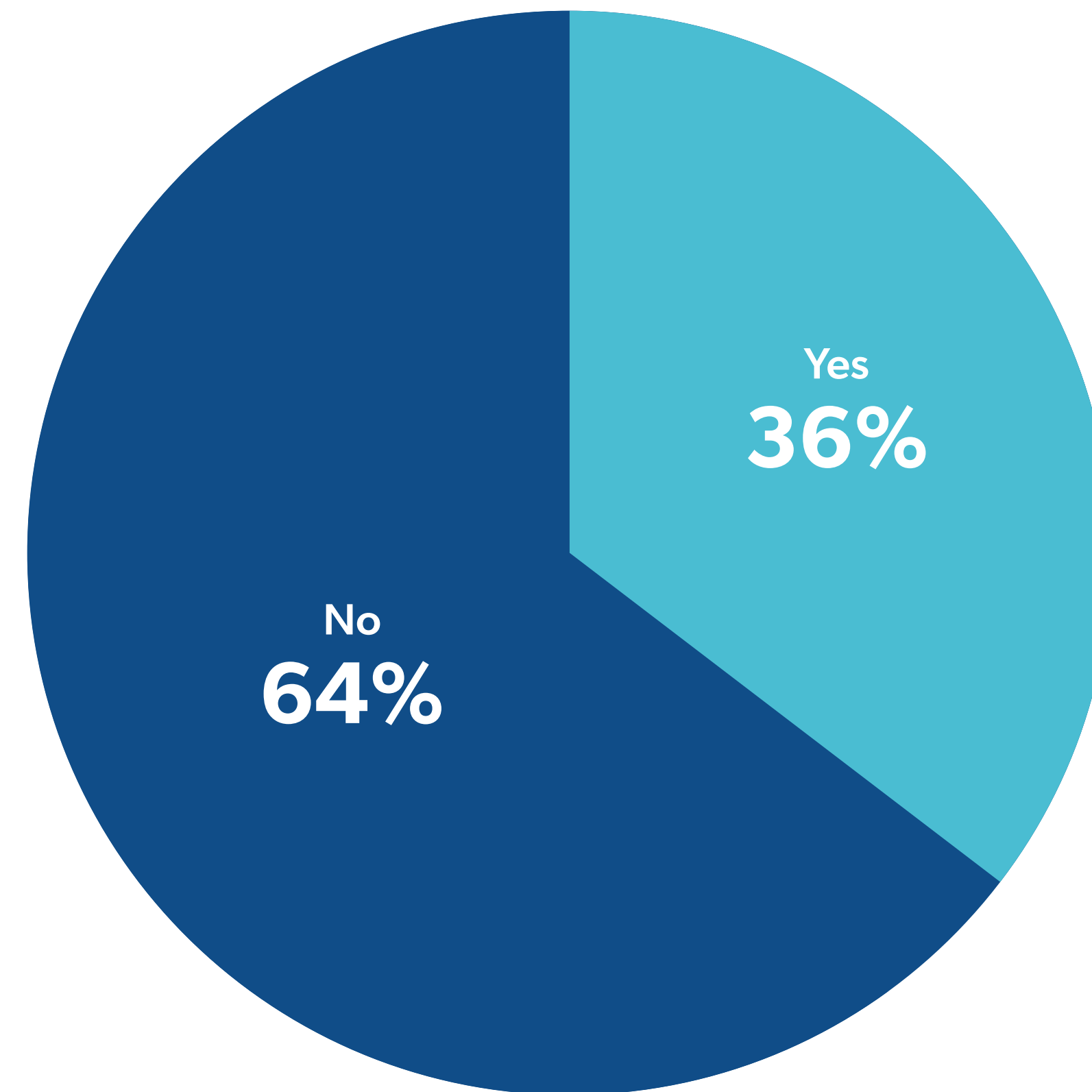
1. Quality control/fact-checking support in newsrooms 2. Competing for audience attention/against too many other stories
3. Overwhelming news cycle/too many stories to cover 4. Lack of students/new job seekers interested in journalism

HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

More than one third of journalists report layoffs or buyouts at their organizations

This may be why many cite lack of funding in the industry as a primary concern.

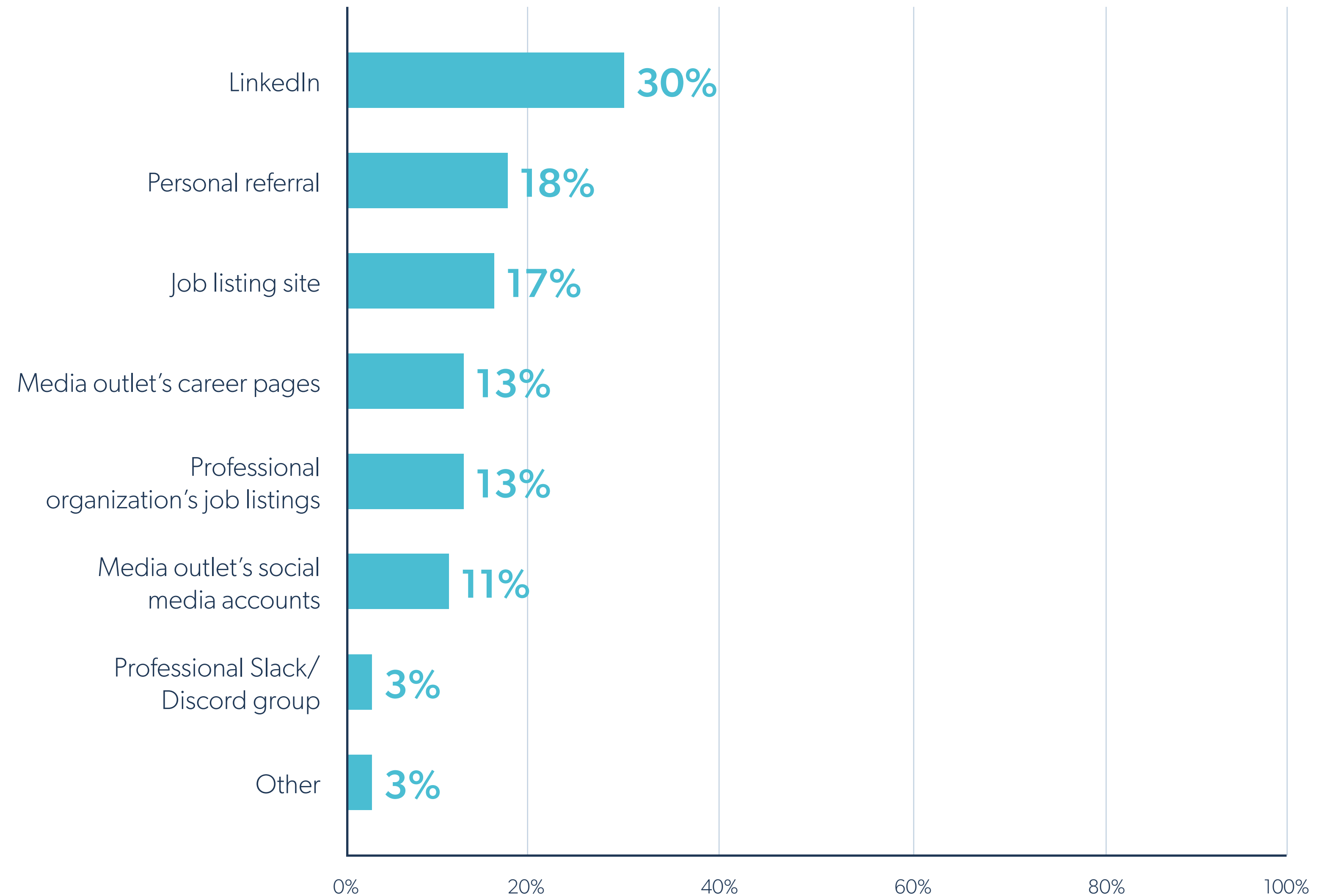
Did your workplace go through layoffs or voluntary buyouts in the last year?



When layoffs hit, journalists turn to LinkedIn for their new gig

30% report using the professional platform to find job openings. Personal referrals and job listing sites were the second and third most used sources.

If you changed jobs this year, which platforms or sources have you used to find job openings?

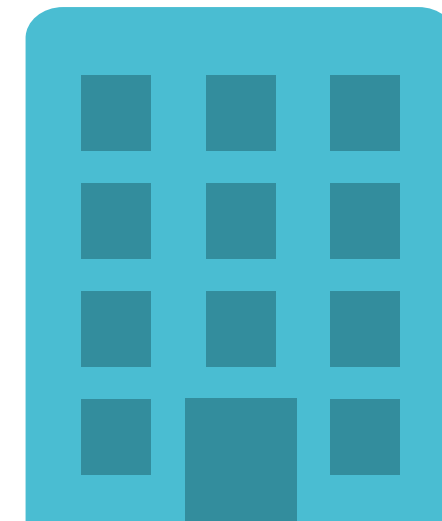


HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

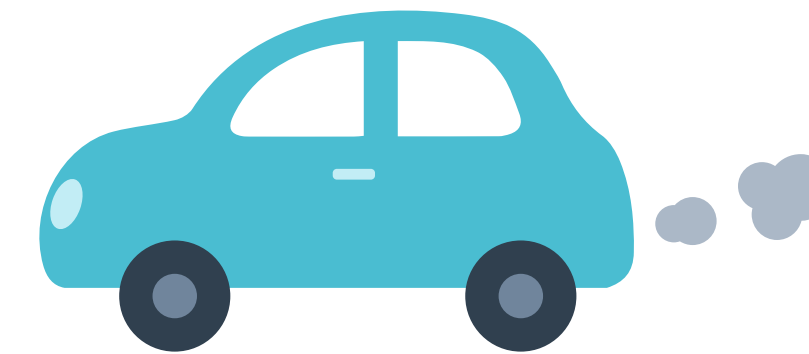
Most journalists want a hybrid work arrangement

More than half of journalists say they only want to go into the office sometimes, and **17%** say they want to be there full time.

What is your preferred work arrangement?



In office
17%



Hybrid
51%



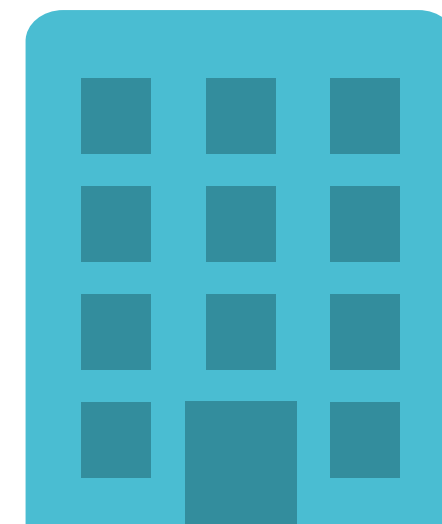
Fully remote
32%

HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

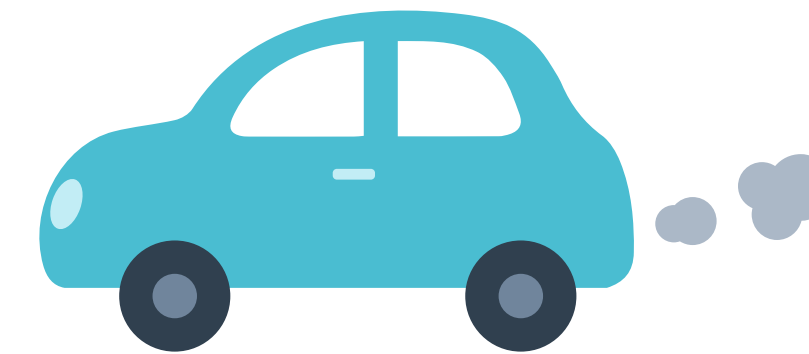
But many longing for flexibility are stuck in the office

Compared to their ideal arrangement, **7%** more journalists are in the office while **9%** fewer are hybrid.

What is your current work arrangement?



In office
24%



Hybrid
42%



Fully remote
34%

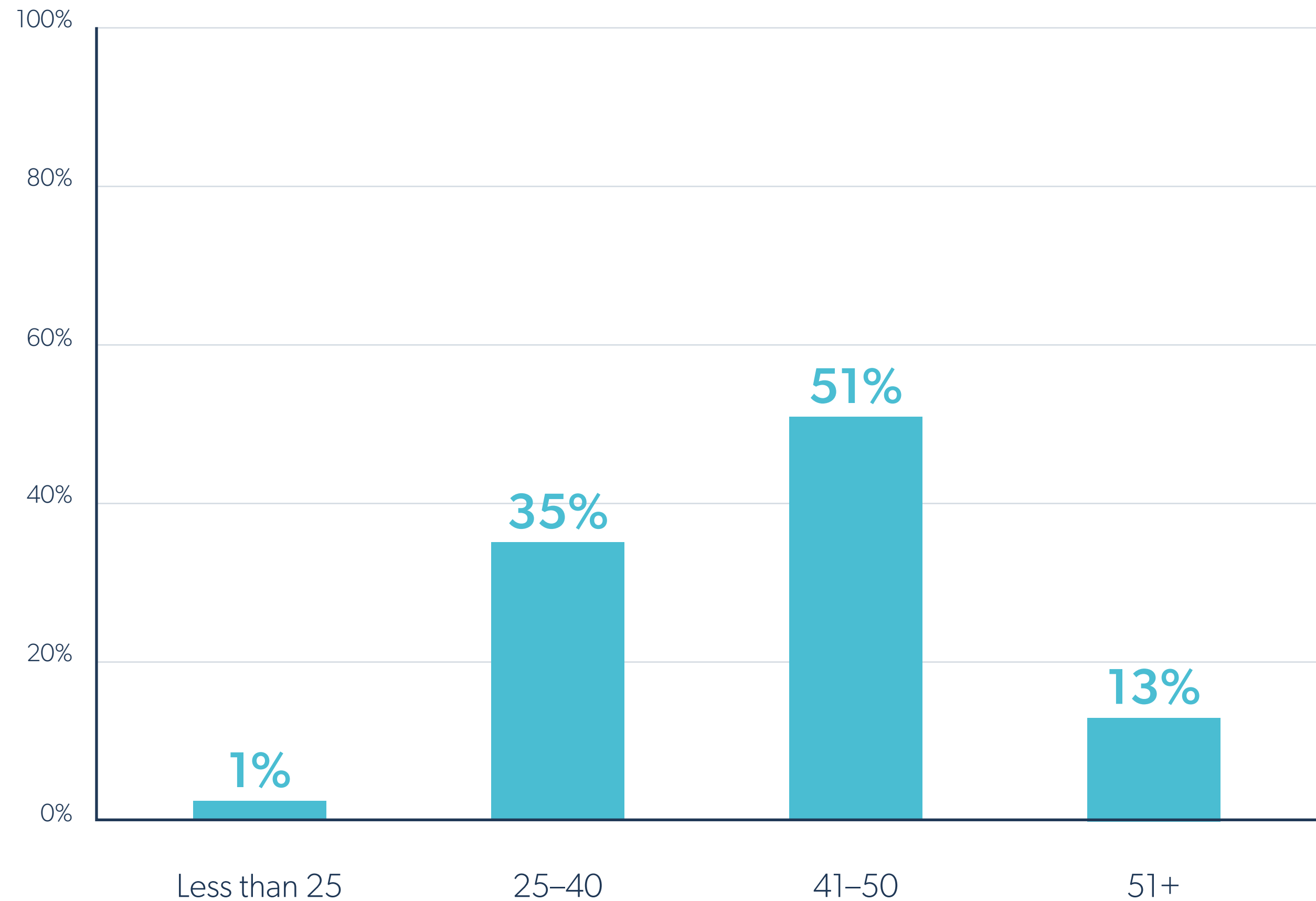
HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

Most full-time staff journalists are working long days

64% report working more than 40 hours a week while about **36%** report 40 hours or less.

Freelancers are more likely to say they work more than 40 hours a week. **41%** of staffers report working more than 40 hours while **64%** of freelancers report the same.

Over the last normal work week, about how many hours did you work? (Only includes full-time employees)

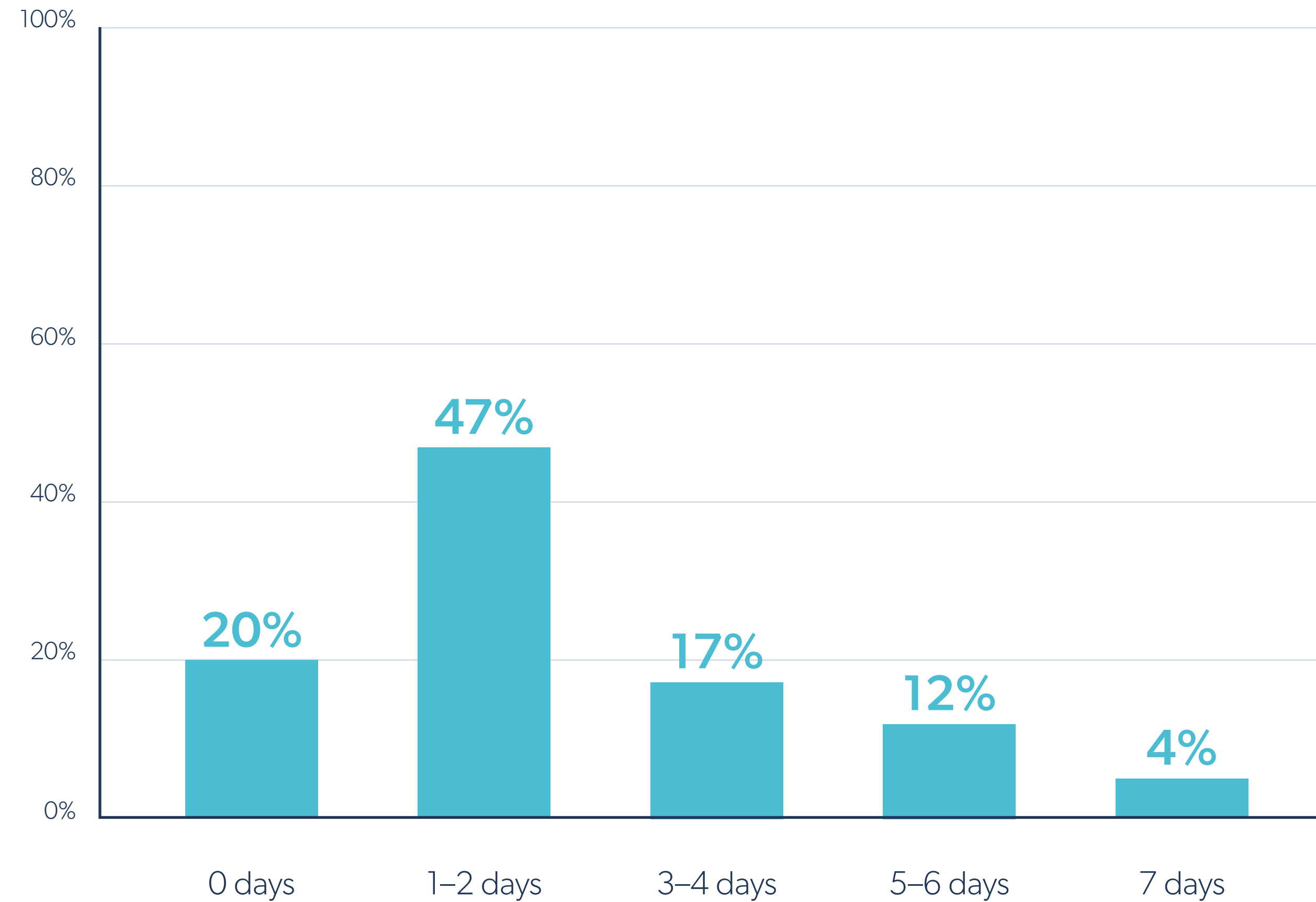


HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

Journalism is not a 9-to-5

79% report working after hours at least once a week and **34%** are doing it most days.

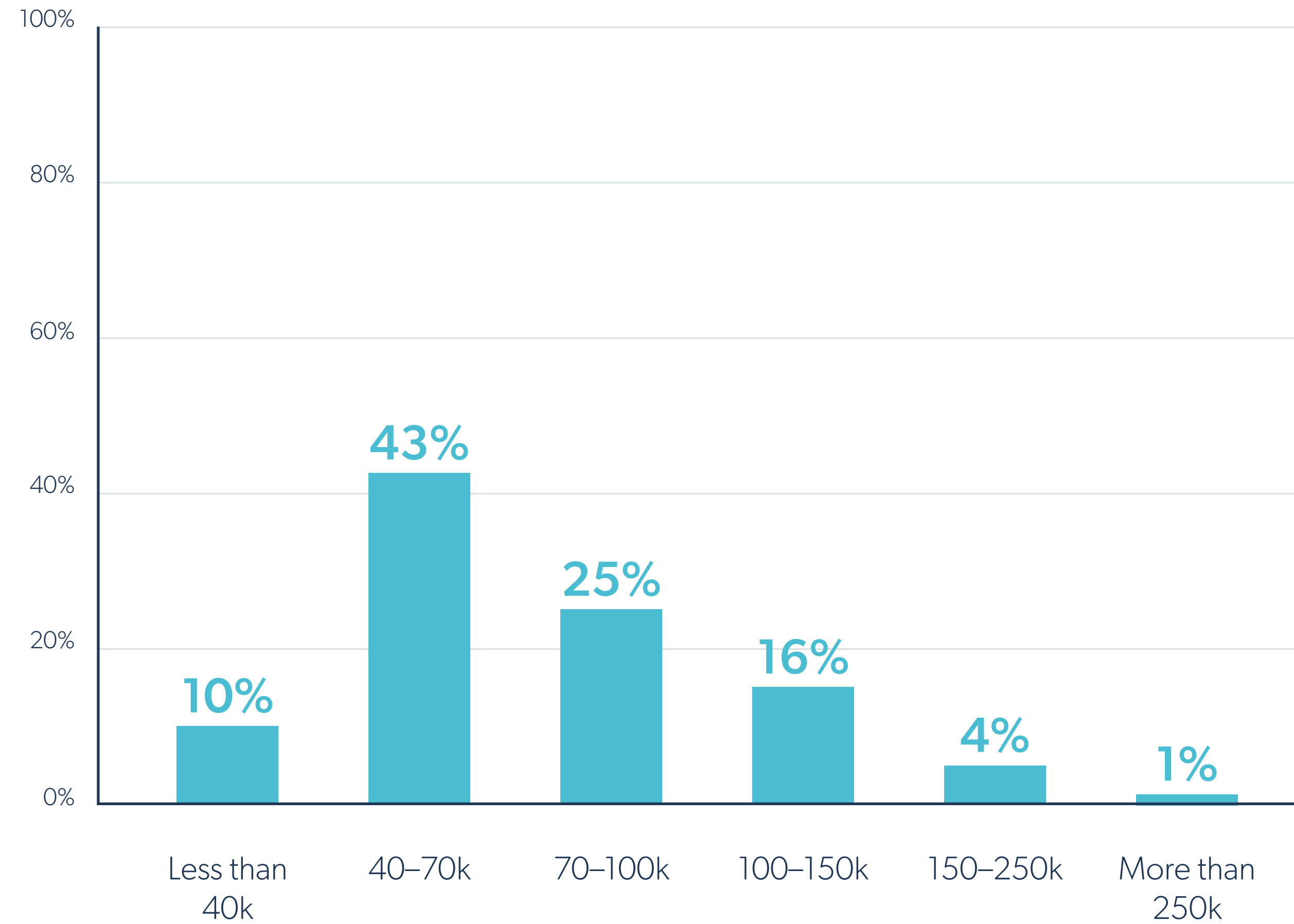
Over the last normal work week, how many days have you had to work after hours, like late nights, early mornings or on weekends?



Those extra hours may not be paying off

Only **46%** of journalists earn more than \$70k per year.

How much do you earn per year from your full-time job?

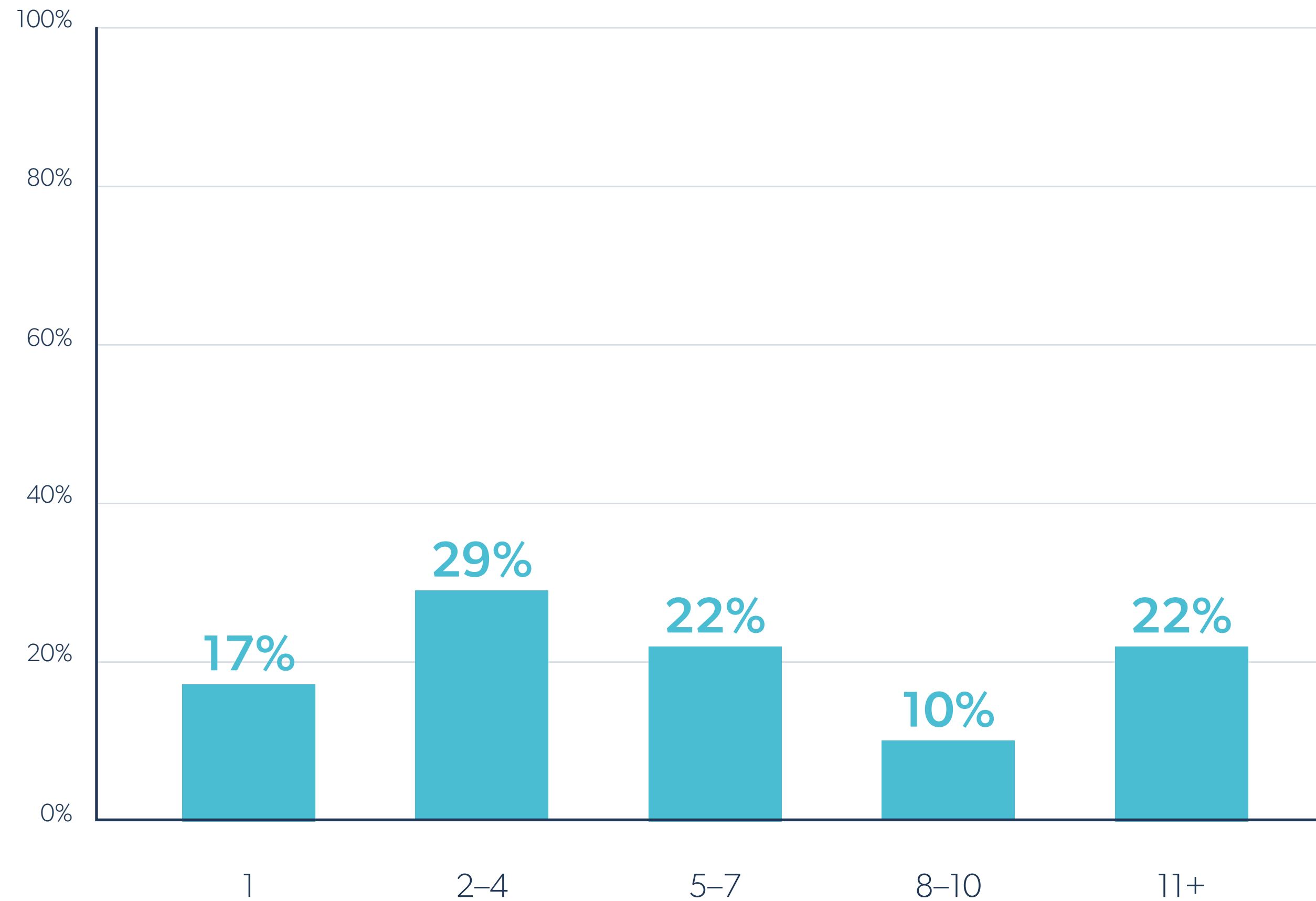


HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

Journalists have very different work loads

While nearly **a quarter** of journalists produce a whopping 11 or more stories per week, a **similar number** produce 5–7 and marginally fewer publish only **once a week**.

About how many stories do you publish in an average week?



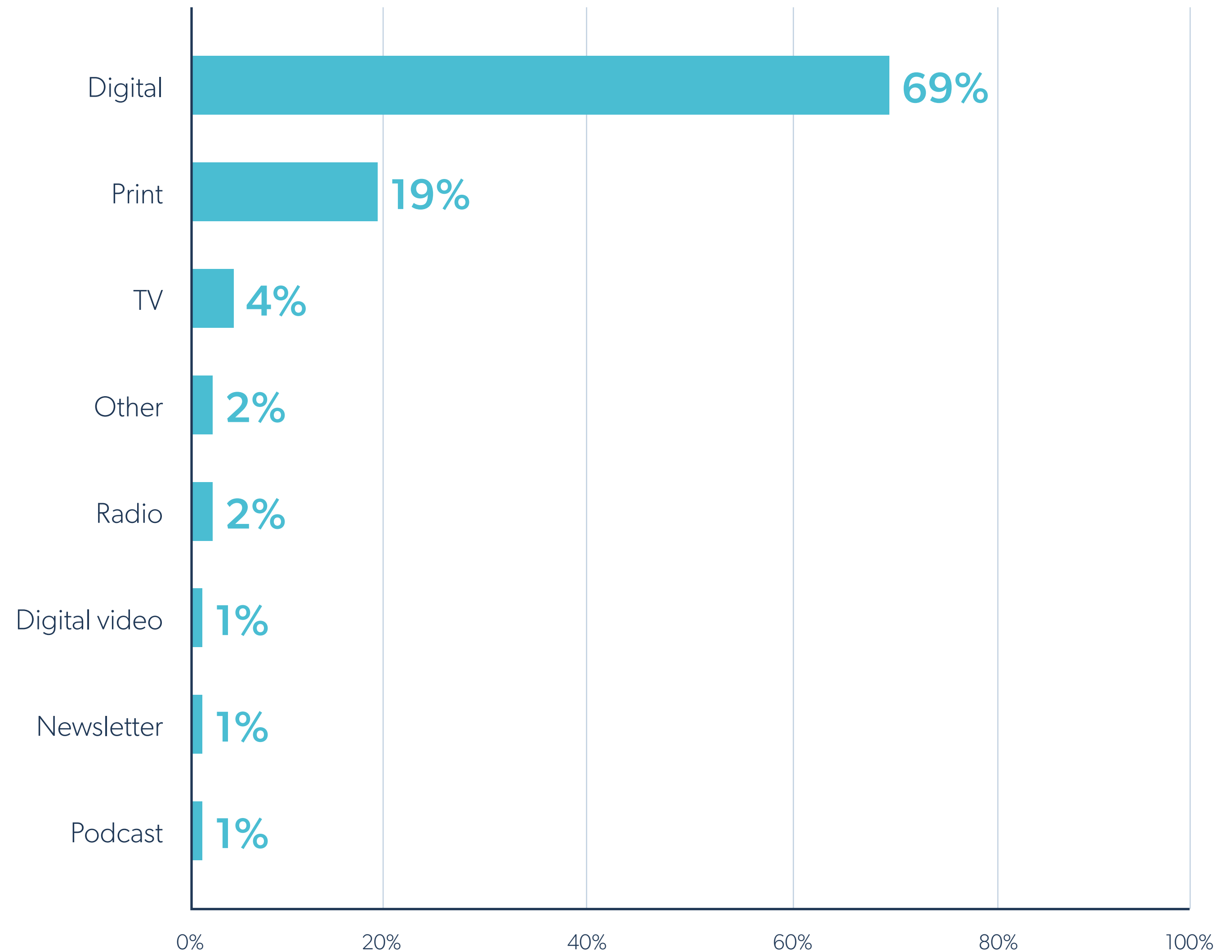
HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

Most work is made for online publication

About **one in four** journalists are primarily publishing in a legacy media—print, TV and radio.

In the other category, people mention books and wire services.

If you publish stories, what is the primary medium of your work?



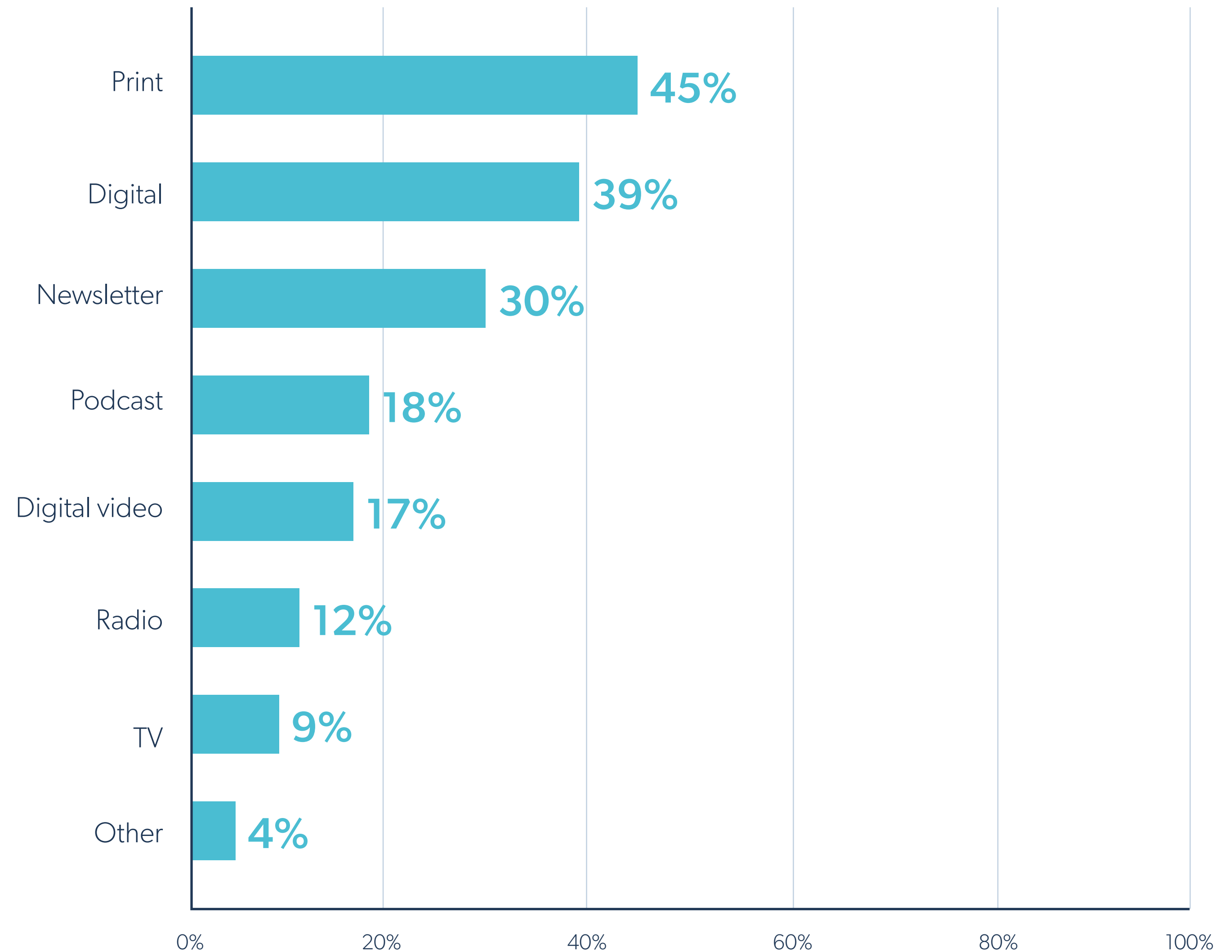
HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

Legacy media, like newspaper and radio, is sticking around as an additional media format

66% report their stories additionally publish in a legacy media format.

On average, journalists say their work is published in about **two additional types** of media.

Aside from your primary medium, is your work published in any additional medium? (Select all that apply)



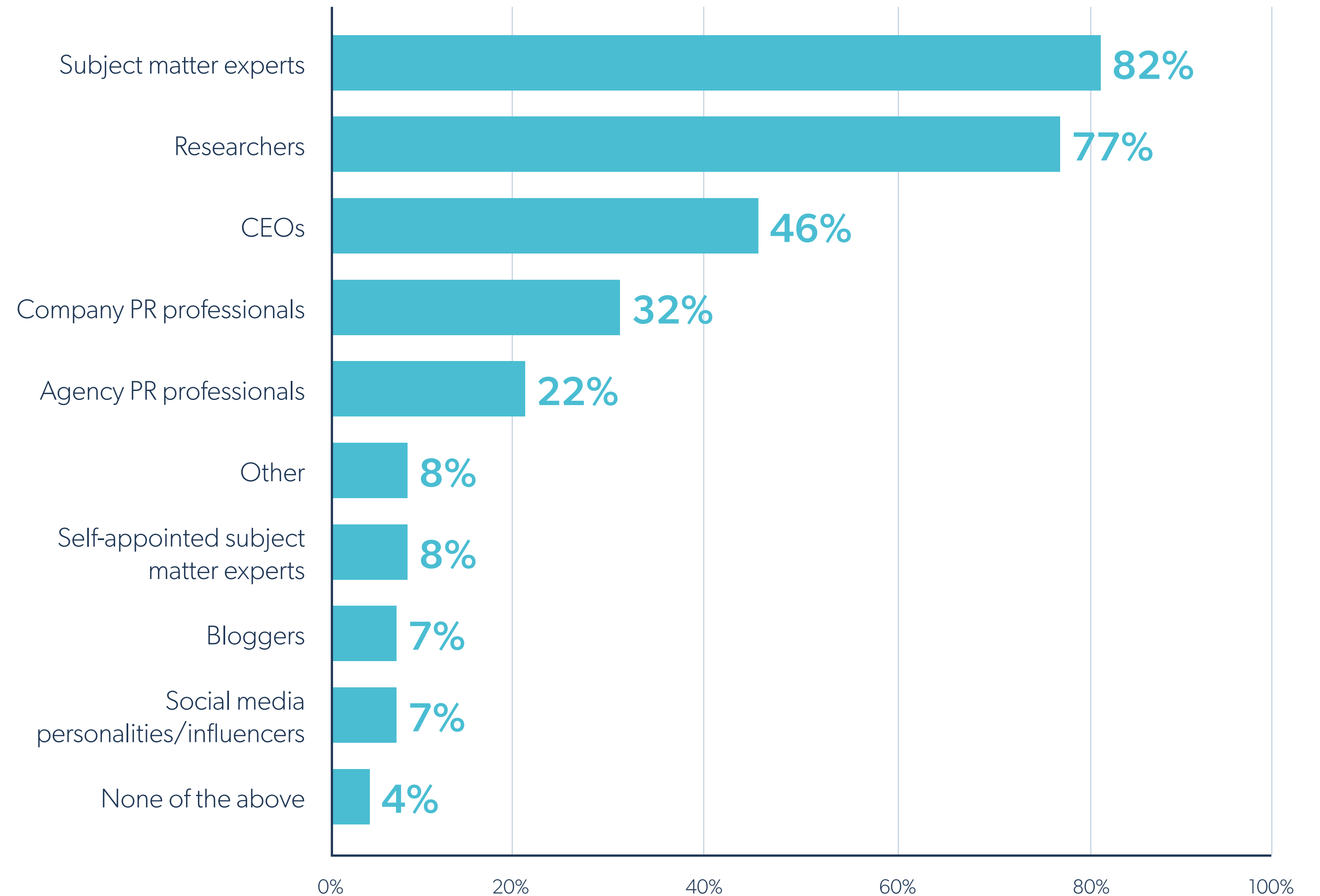
HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

Experts and researchers make the best sources

When it comes to sources for their stories, journalists have a strong preference for researchers and subject matter experts winning near universal approval. CEOs round out the top three most credible sources.

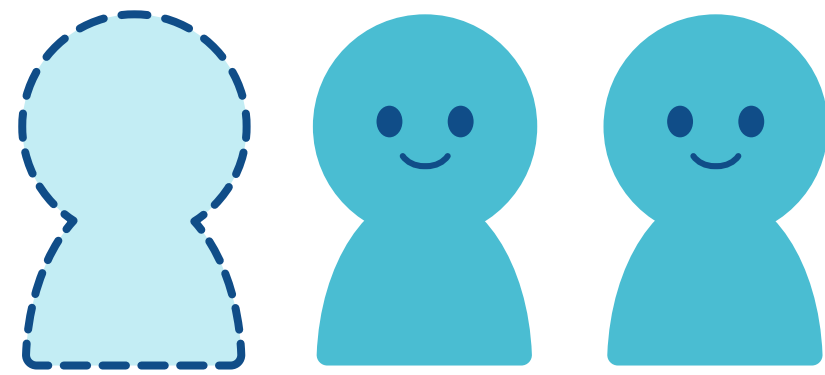
In the “other” category, many mention their community and other “ground truth” sources like those directly related to the story being published.

Which of the following do you consider to be credible sources for your reporting? (Select all that apply)



HOW JOURNALISTS WORK

According to a survey of 1000+ journalists



36% report layoffs or buyouts at their company



64% work more than 40 hours per week



Median salary:
\$70,000



51% prefer hybrid work arrangements



54% produce at least one story per day

AI and social media

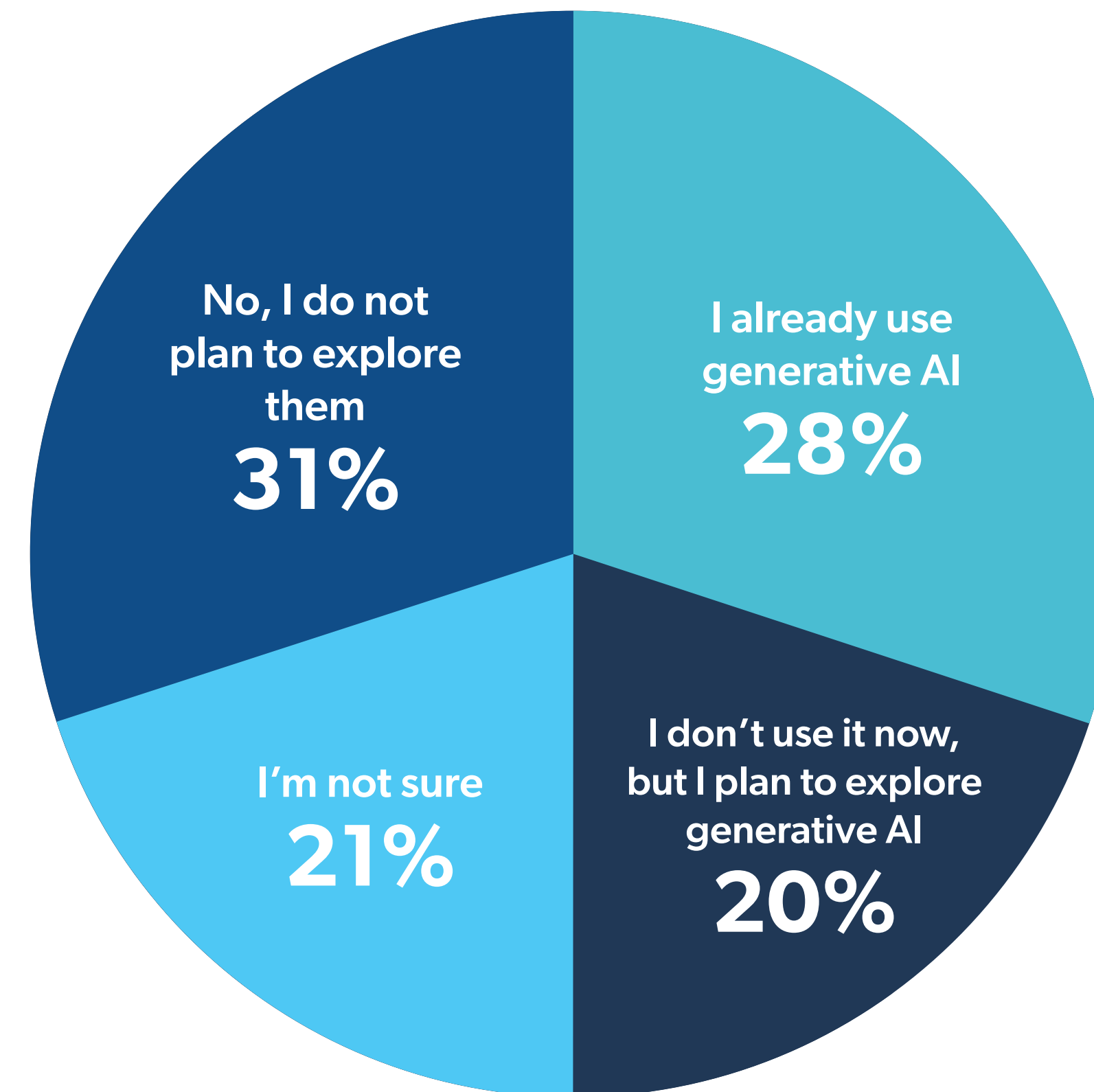
Journalists are split on generative AI

About **28%** of journalists report using the technology and another **20%** plan to explore its uses.

Compared to their PR counterparts, journalists are much less likely to be using gen AI. Our most recent [State of AI in PR](#) report showed **64%** of PR pros are already using the technology.

Journalists were about **six times** more likely to say they don't plan to explore gen AI compared to PR pros.

Do you plan to explore generative AI, like ChatGPT or DALL-E, in your workflow?

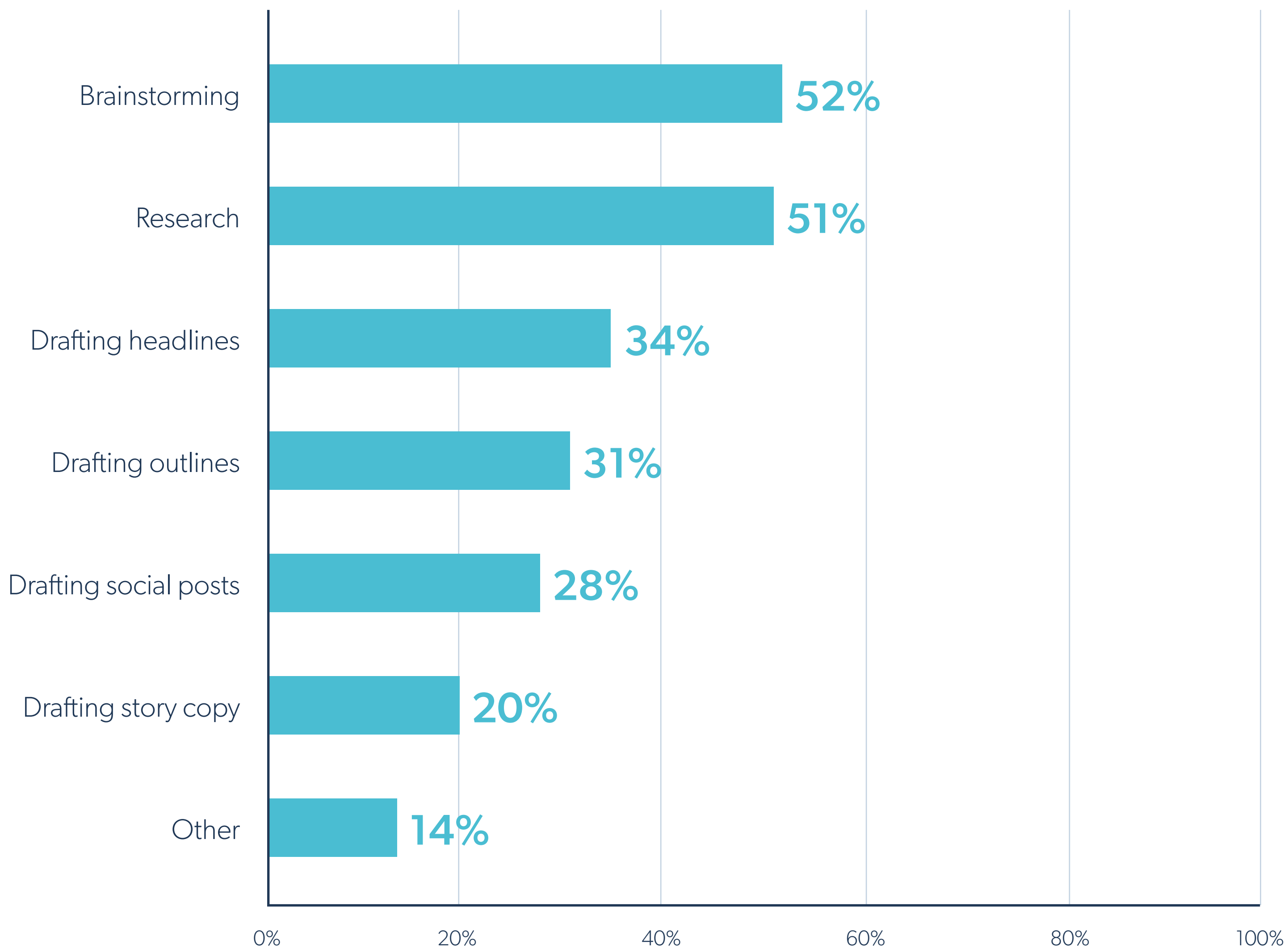


AI is a better fit for behind the scenes work

Of the journalists already using or planning to explore the technology, most want to use it for tasks like brainstorming and research assistance. Writing any public-facing copy is a less popular use case.

The other category includes many ideas like proofreading copy, transcribing meetings and to helping with data analysis.

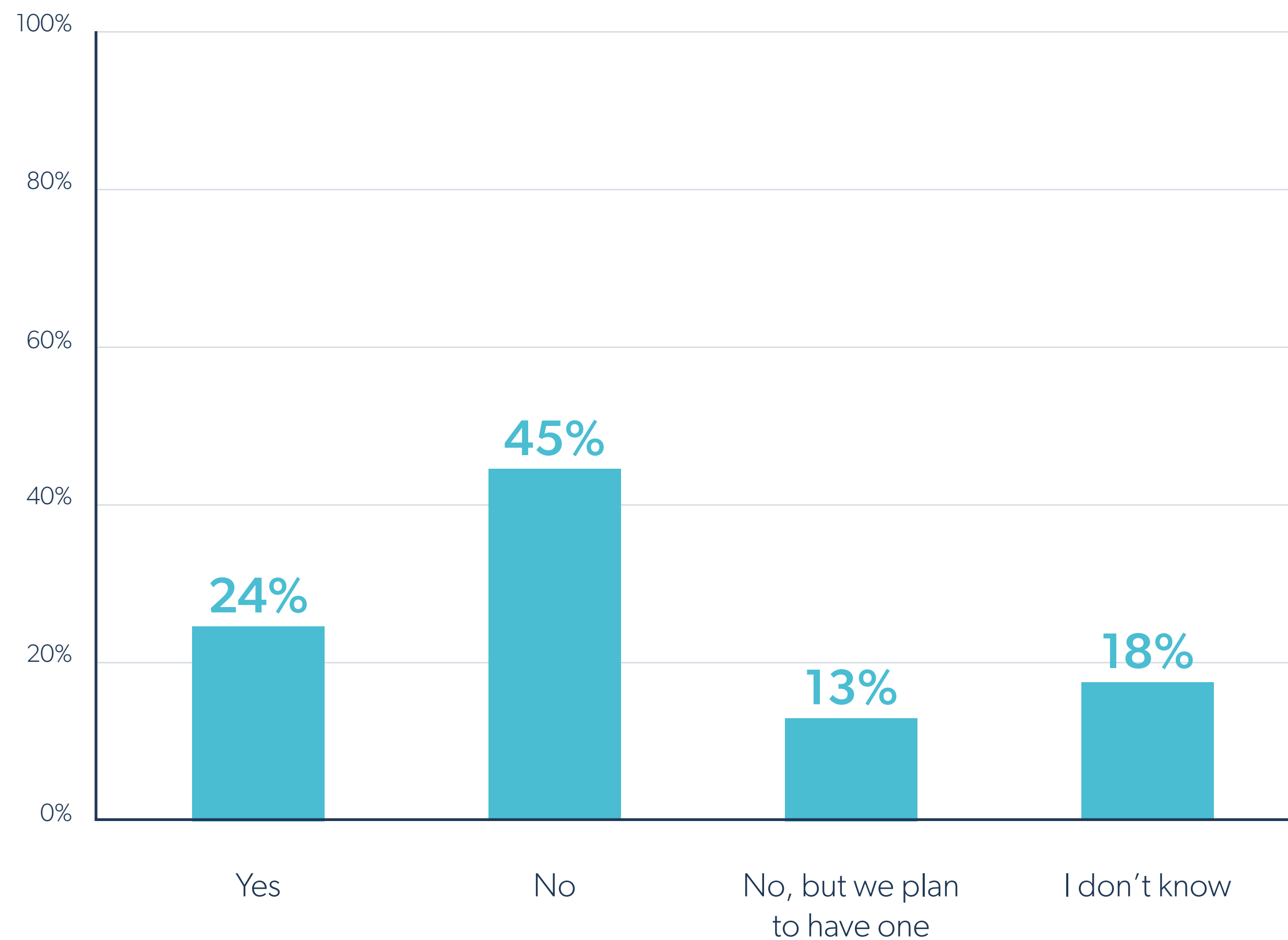
How do you use or plan to use generative AI in your workflow?
(Select all that apply)



Few newsrooms have AI policies

Nearly **60%** report their newsroom has no AI use case policy while **24%** have one. It's difficult to tell whether the lack of policies are preventing journalists from exploring the tools or the lack of journalist interest or other reasons why the policies aren't being created.

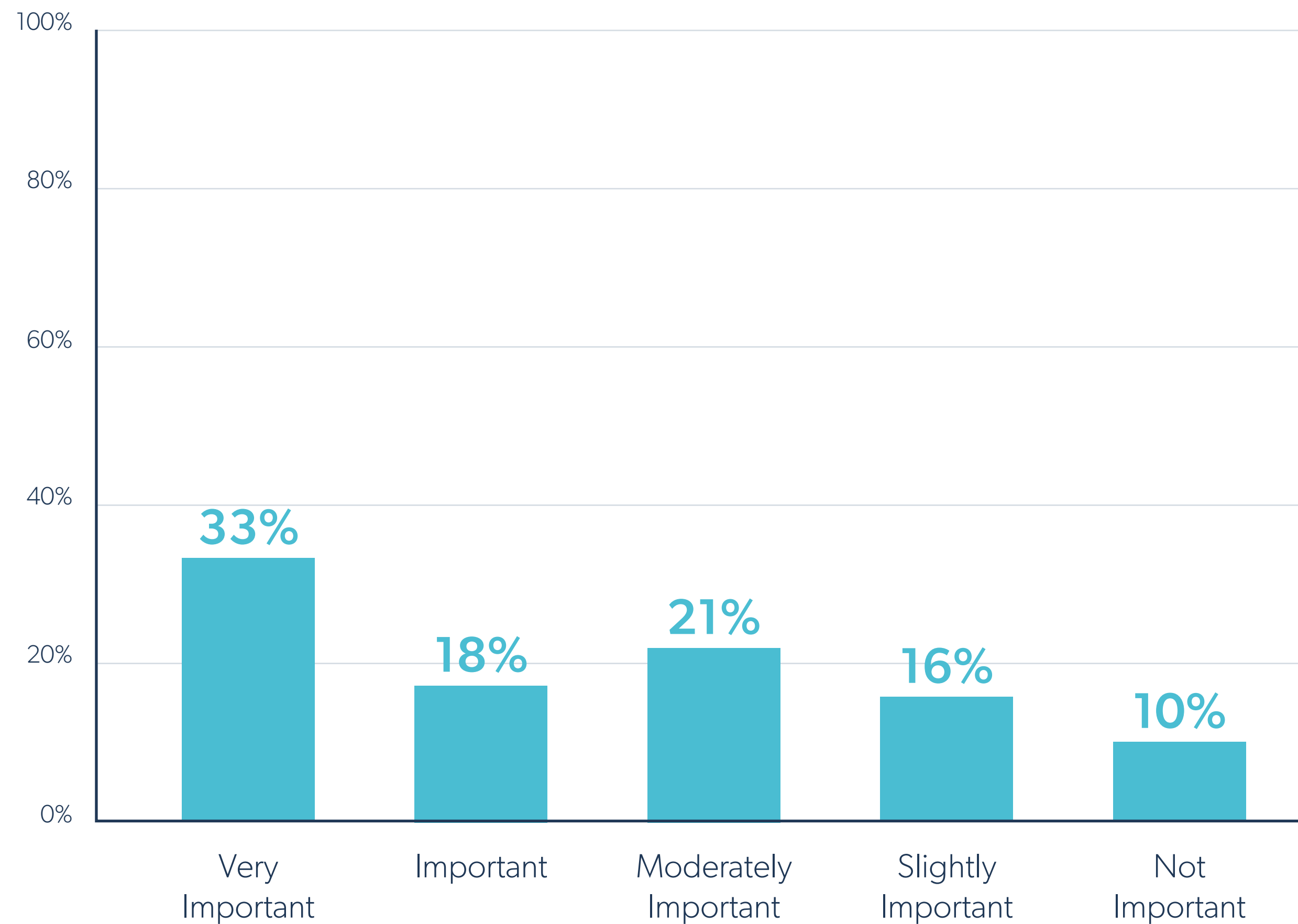
Does your company have an AI use case policy?



Social media continues to be an important tool in creating journalism

More than **half** of journalists say social media is either important or very important to produce their stories, while about **one quarter** say it's not or only slightly important.

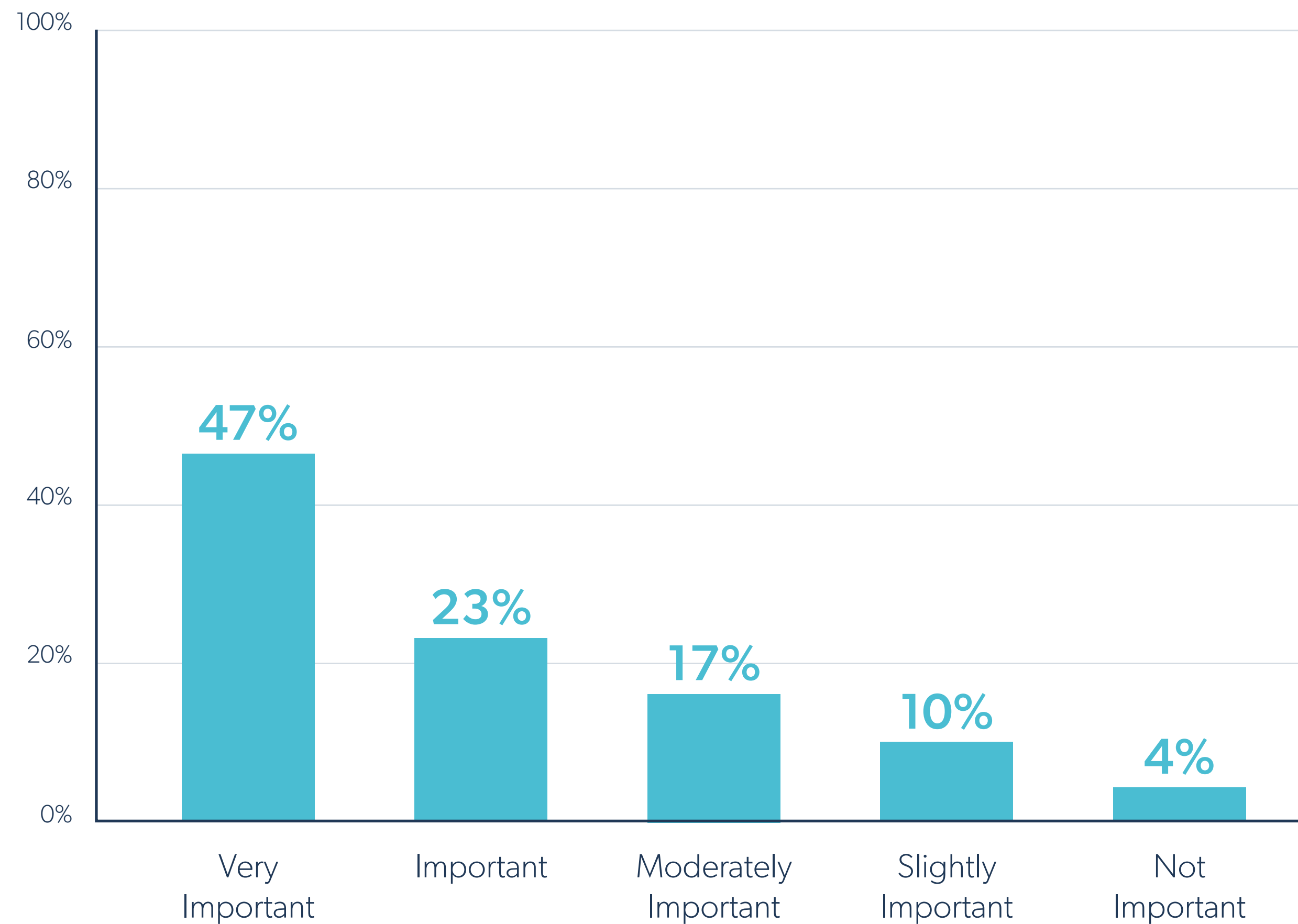
How important is social media to producing your work?



Journalists are more likely to rely on social media for promotion than production

70% of journalists say social media is important or very important for promoting their work. That's **20% more** that say they use social media for producing work.

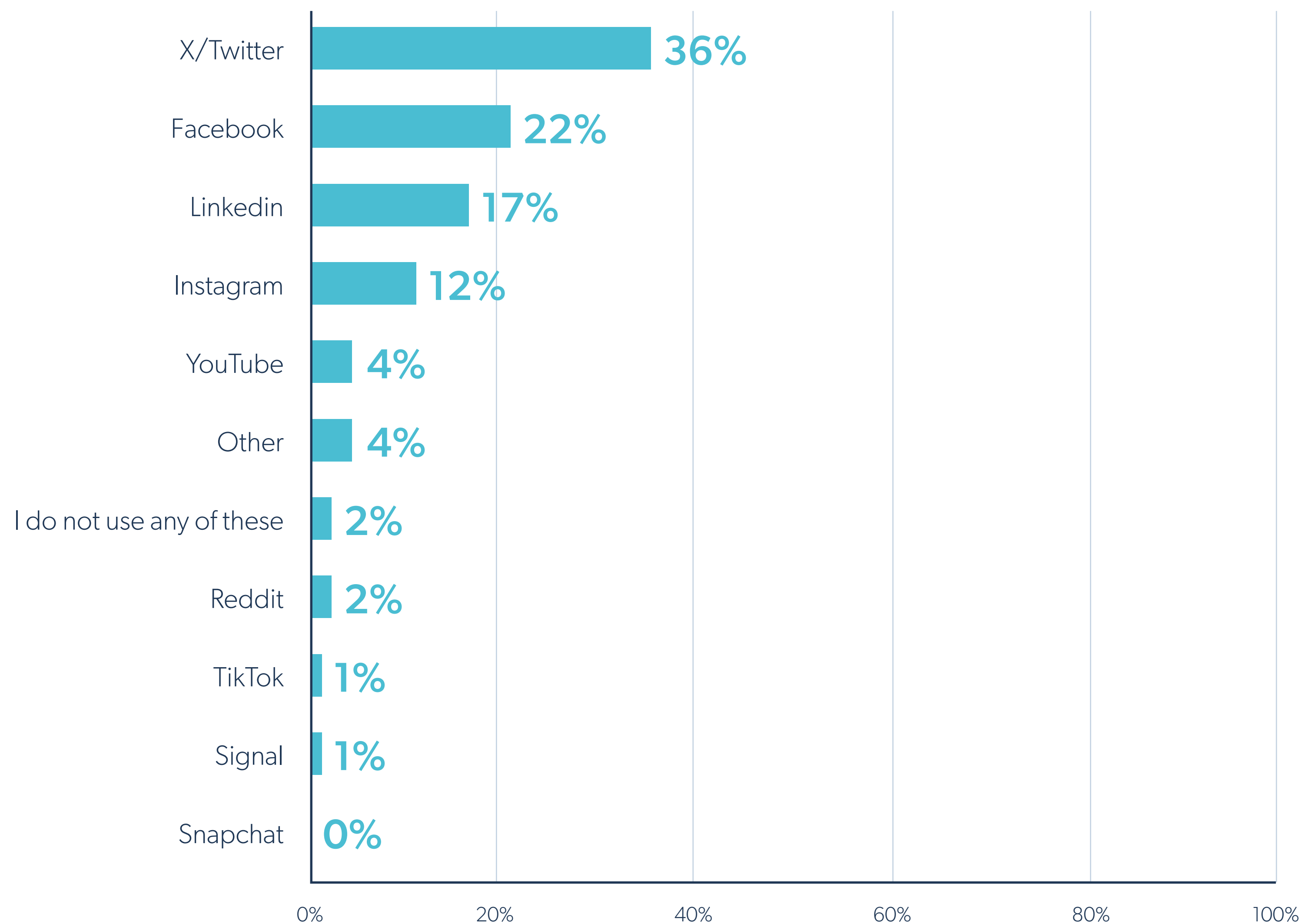
How important is social media for promoting your work?



X is still the dominant social platform for journalists

Only a few people mention Meta's X alternative, Threads.

Overall, which social media is most valuable to you as a journalist?

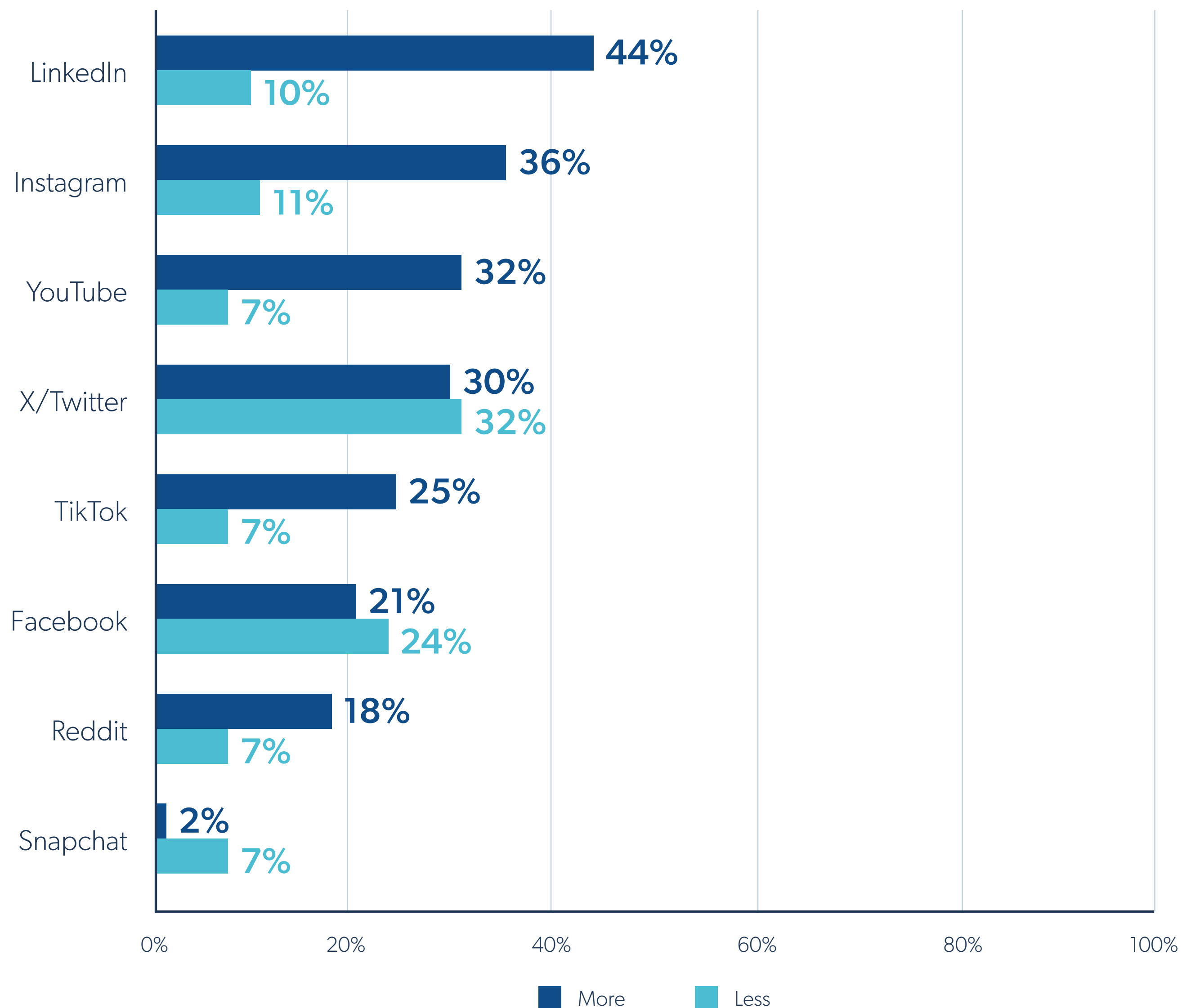


LinkedIn is set to grow, X to shrink

LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube are projected to grow the most of these social networks. More people say they'll spend more time on the platforms than less.

Meanwhile, X joins Facebook and Snapchat as one of the social networks that may experience a net loss of journalists.

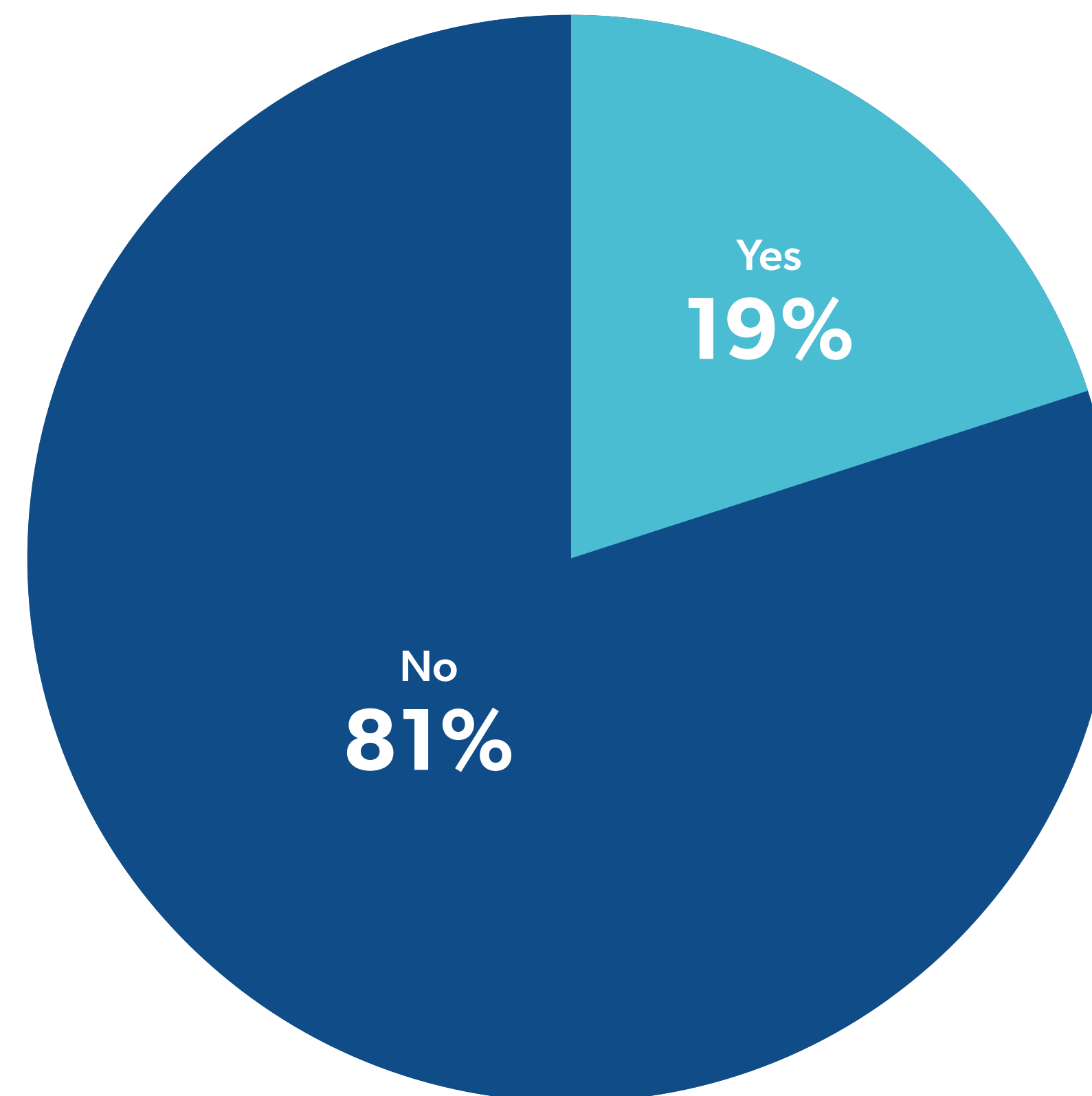
Do you expect to spend more or less time on the following social networks this year?



Most journalists on X are staying on X

One in five said they moved away from the platform this year. According to the [2023 State of Journalism](#), **half of respondents** considered leaving the platform last year. It seems like many of them changed their mind.

Did you delete, suspend or stop using your professional X/Twitter account this year?

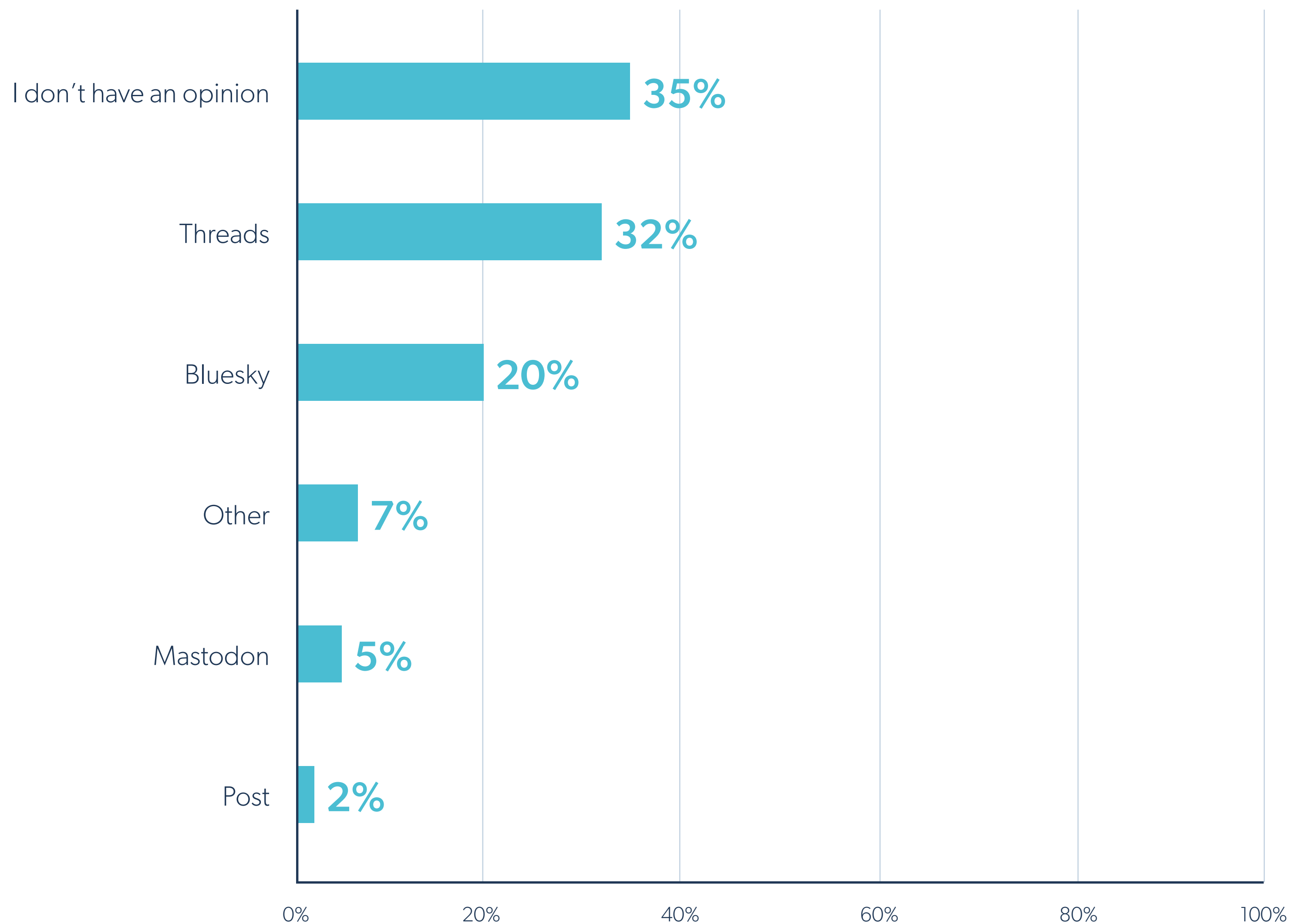


There isn't a consensus on an X alternative

About **one third** of journalists say they are looking for an alternative to X, but they aren't sure where to go. While **32%** say they prefer Threads, **35%** didn't have an opinion.

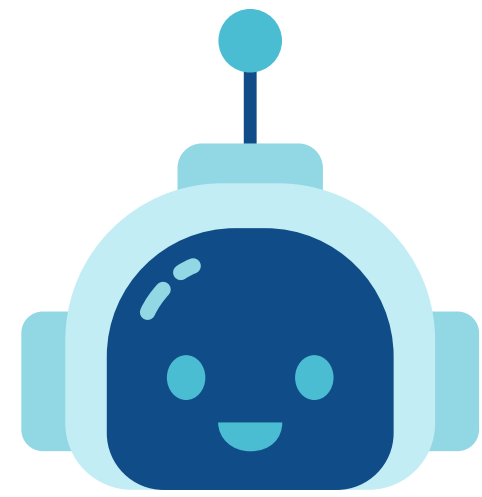
In the other category, many lament the lack of alternatives with some saying nothing compares to X yet.

Which X/Twitter alternative do you prefer?



HOW JOURNALISTS USE AI AND SOCIAL MEDIA

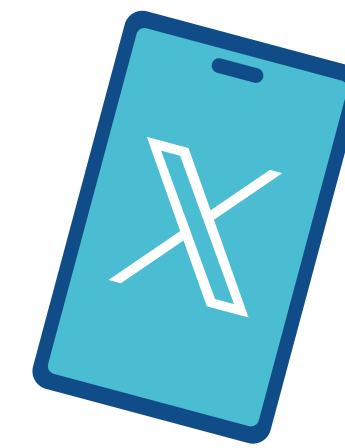
According to a survey of 1000+ journalists



28% use generative AI



58% report their newsroom has no AI use case policy



36% say X is the most valuable social media platform



44% plan to use LinkedIn more this year

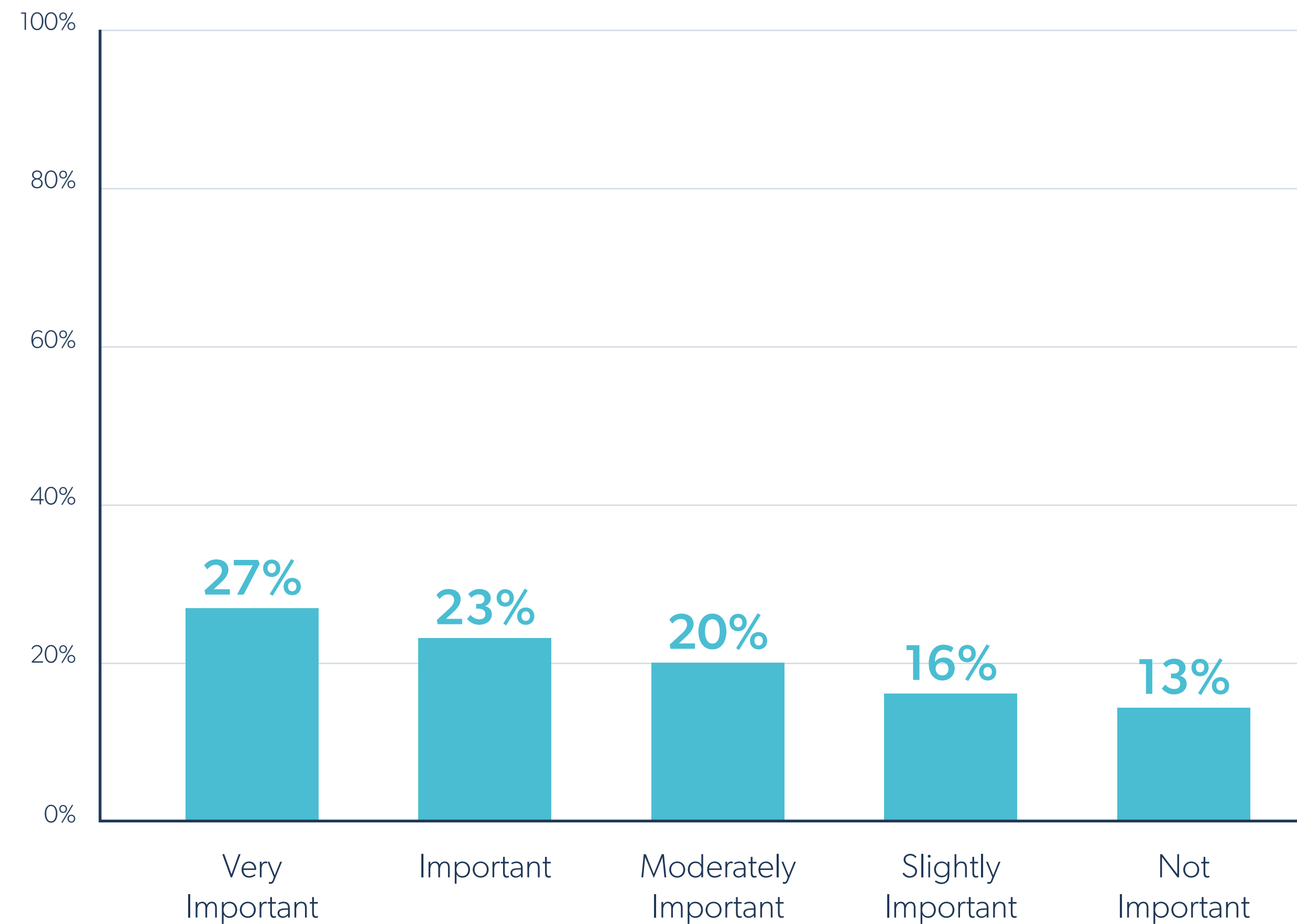
Media relations

MEDIA RELATIONS

Most journalists think PR pros are important to their success

70% of journalists say PR pros are either important or very important to the success of their jobs. 29% say they are either slightly or not at all important.

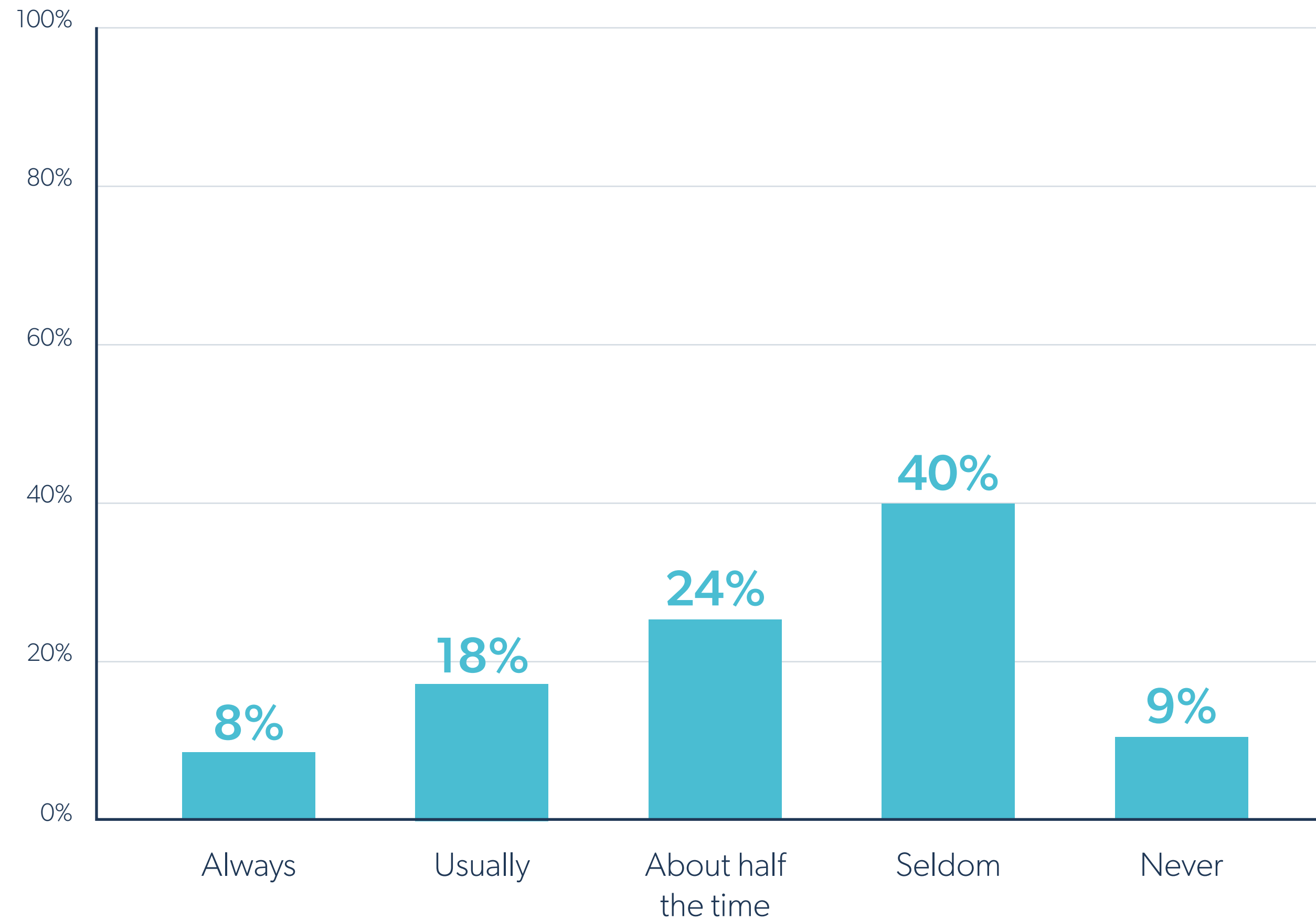
How important are your relationships with public relations professionals to being successful at your job?



Most PR pitches get ignored

49% say they respond to PR pitches seldom or never while about half as many say they respond usually or always.

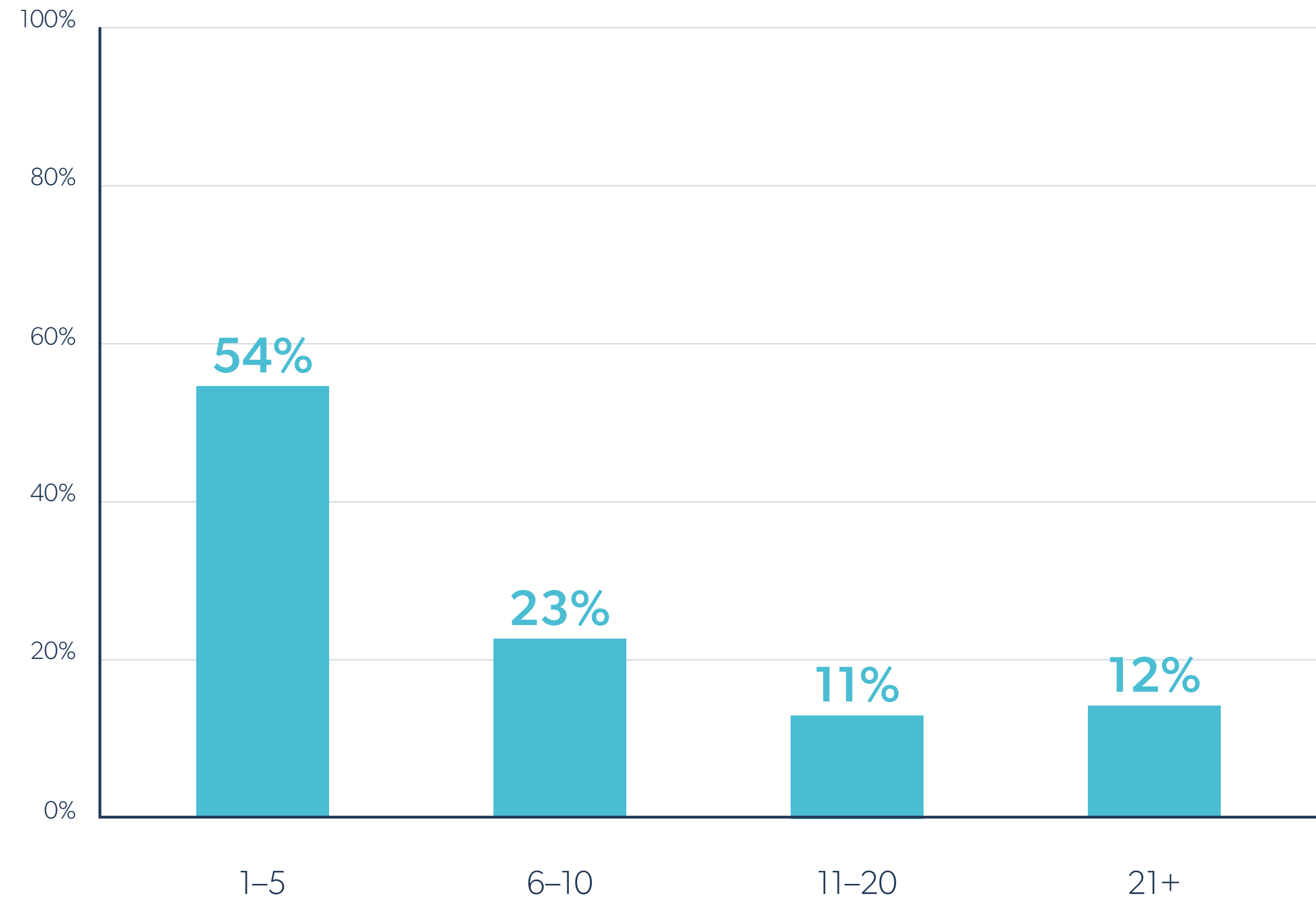
How often do you respond to PR pros when they pitch you stories?



Despite low response rates, the pitches keep coming

46% of journalists receive 6 or more pitches per day. That works out to at least **30 pitches per week** for **almost half** of all journalists.

How many PR pitches did you receive during your last normal work day?



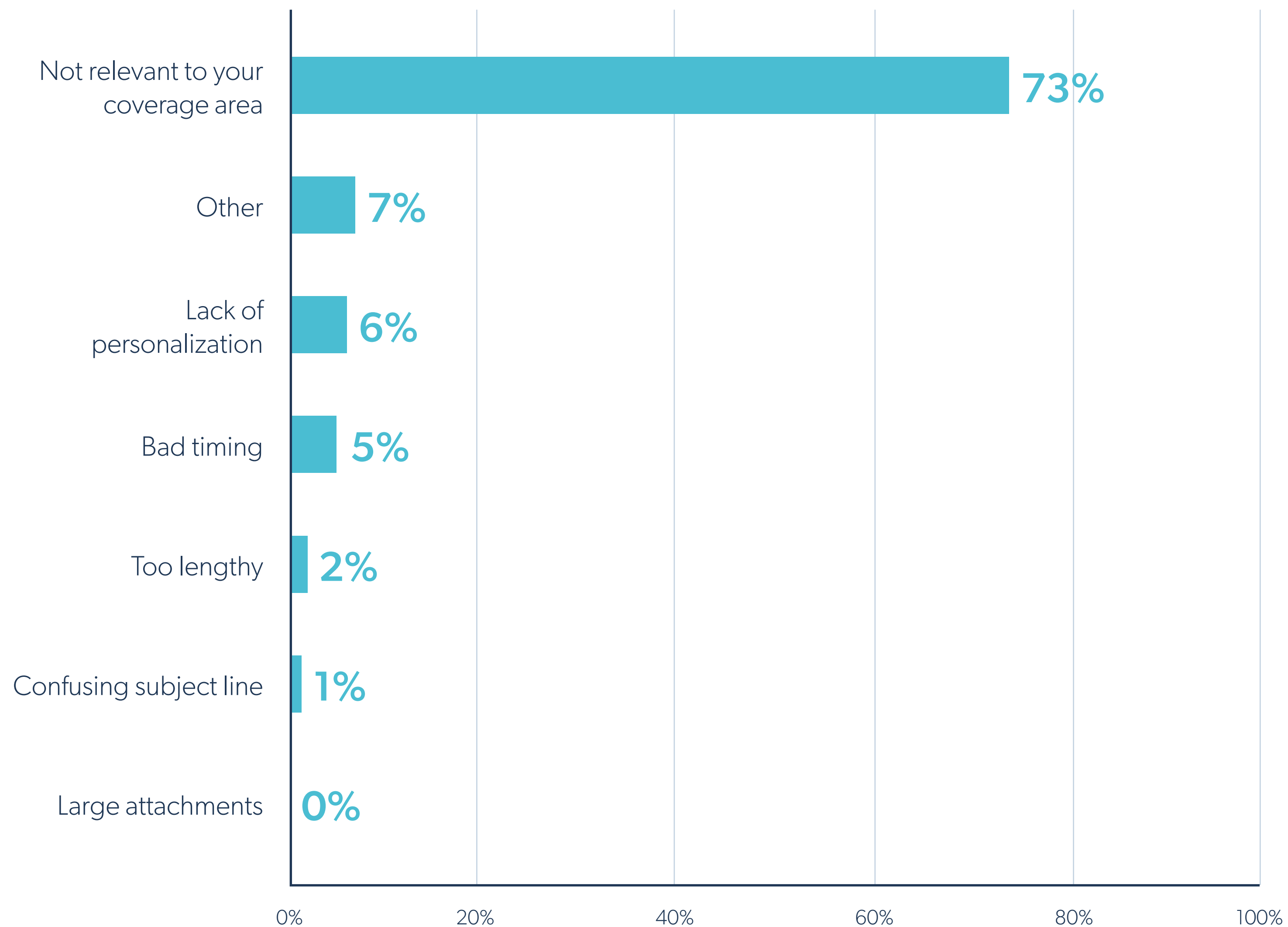
MEDIA RELATIONS

Journalists reject pitches because they're not relevant to what they cover

Far more than any other reason, journalists are rejecting PR pitches because they don't match their coverage.

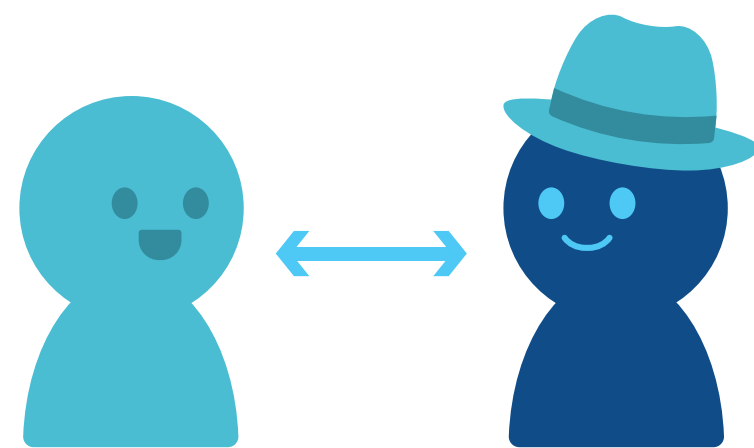
In the other category, many say the pitches are too promotional or not newsworthy.

What is your top reason for rejecting a PR pitch?

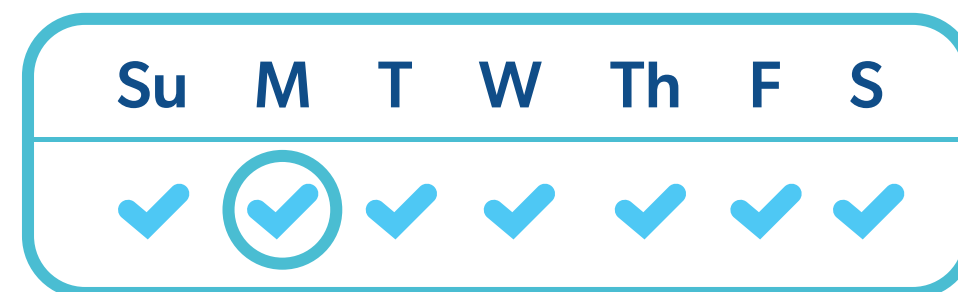


THE PERFECT PITCH

According to a survey of 1000+ journalists



83% of journalists prefer to be pitched via 1:1 email



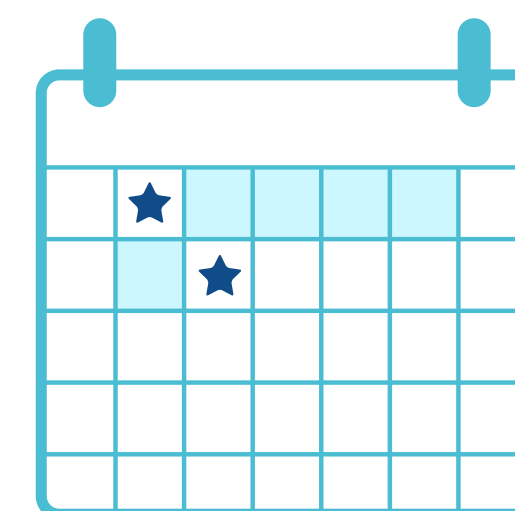
64% don't care which day they are pitched—of those who do, **22%** prefer to be pitched on a Monday



44% want to receive pitches before noon



65% prefer pitches that are under 200 words



51% say one follow up is ideal and **48%** say it should come within 3–7 days later

What's one thing you wish PR pros knew?

"Have a regular conversation. We are all humans here, and keeping things real makes it easier for everyone to work together."

"Journalists seldom read past 200 words. Avoid ridiculous hyperbole and get to the point already."

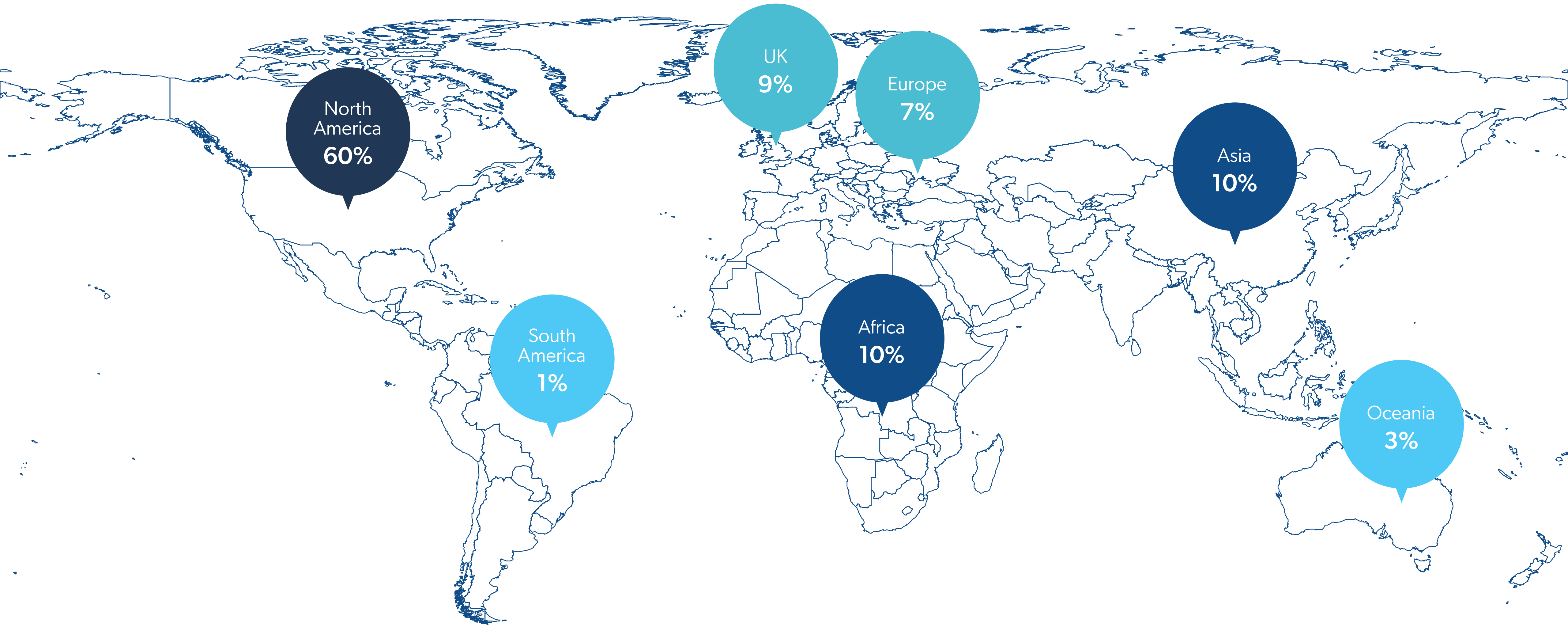
"Personalization is key, we can tell when it's a mass-email"

"Look at a journalist's Muck Rack profile. Don't pitch them unless the topic and approach fall in line with that journalist's work."

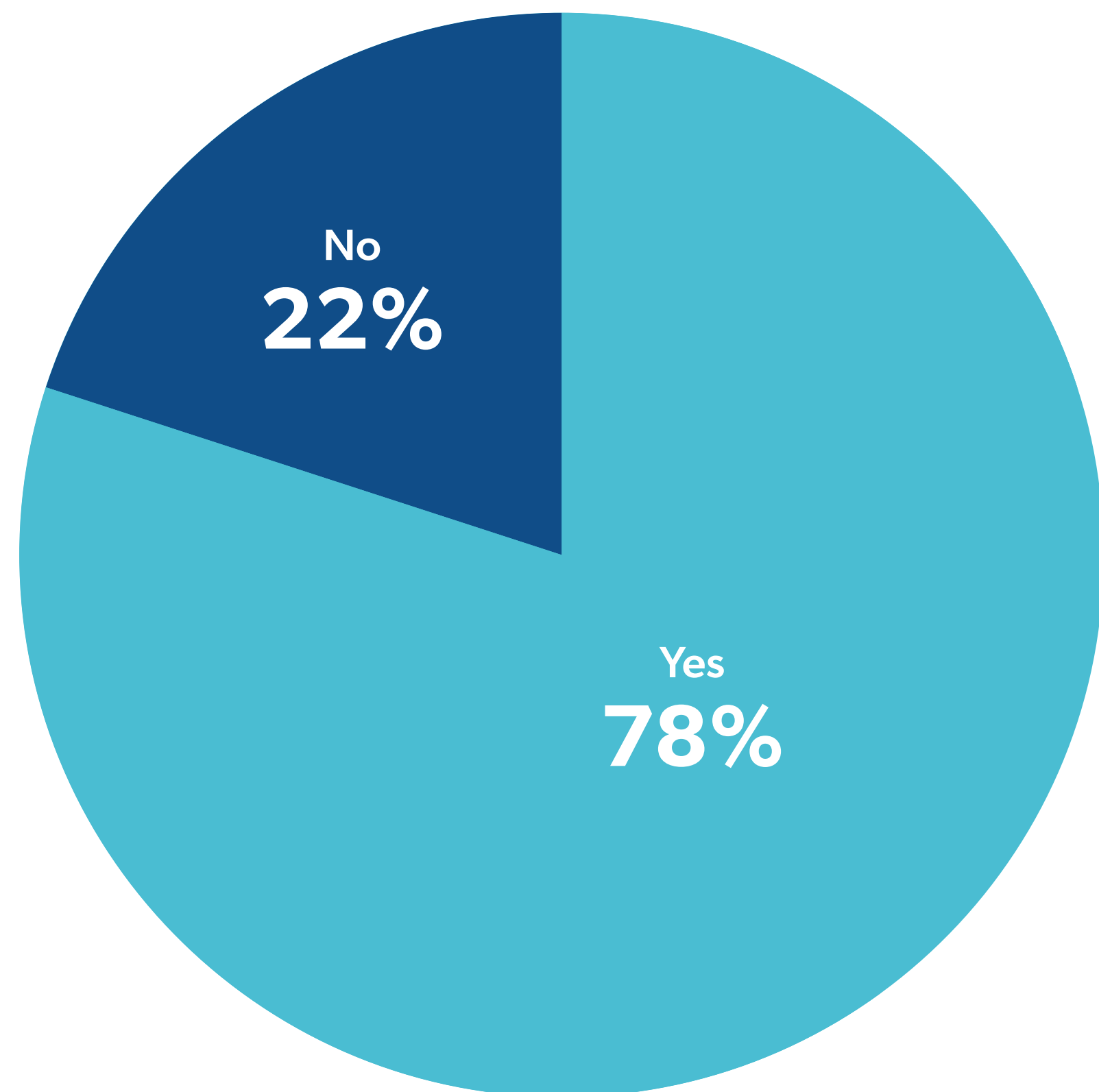
"To understand what freelancing means, I now have to go and pitch this story to outlets. **I can't guarantee a story.**"

Demographics

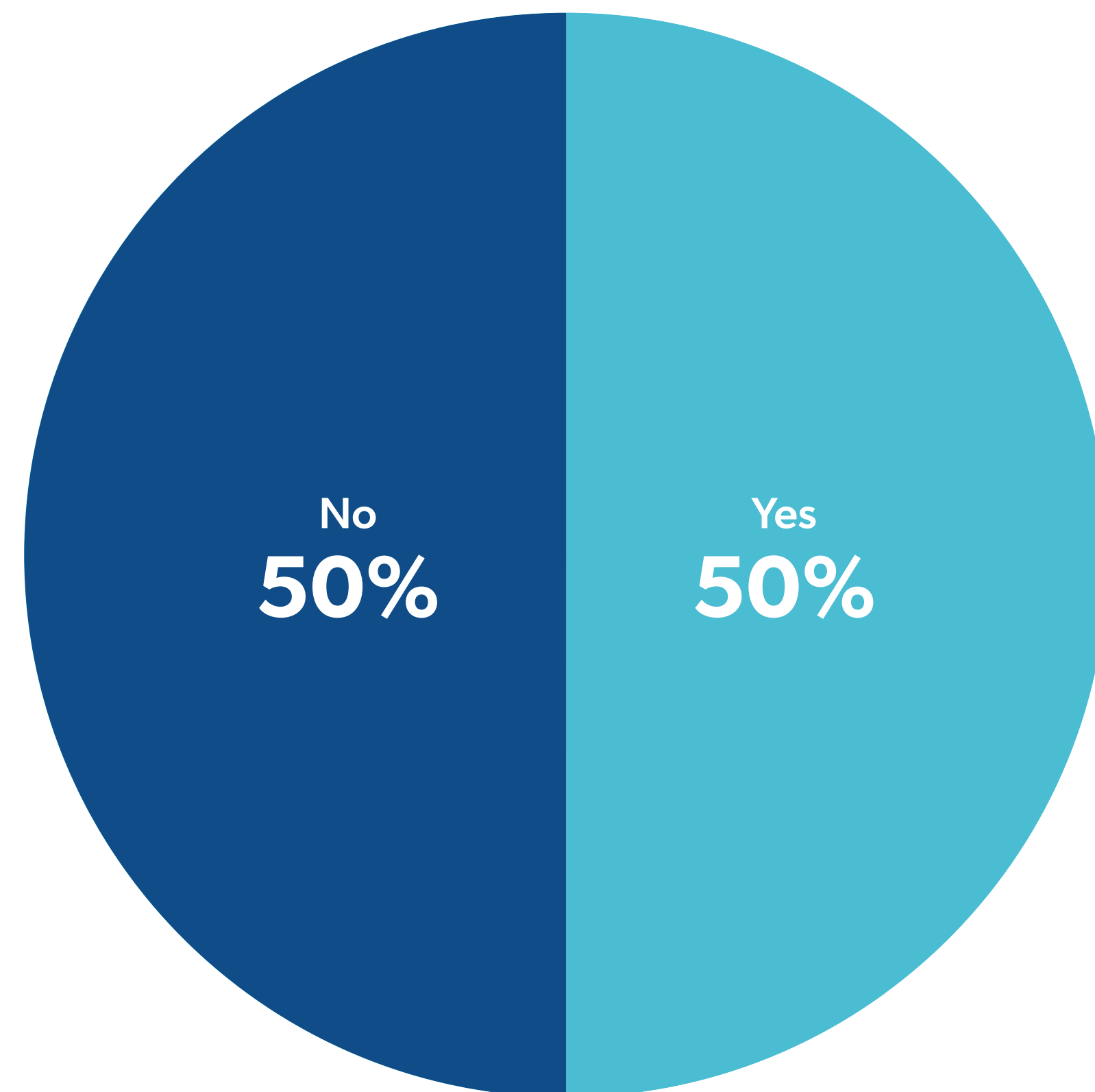
In what country do you work?



Do you work full time in the journalism industry?



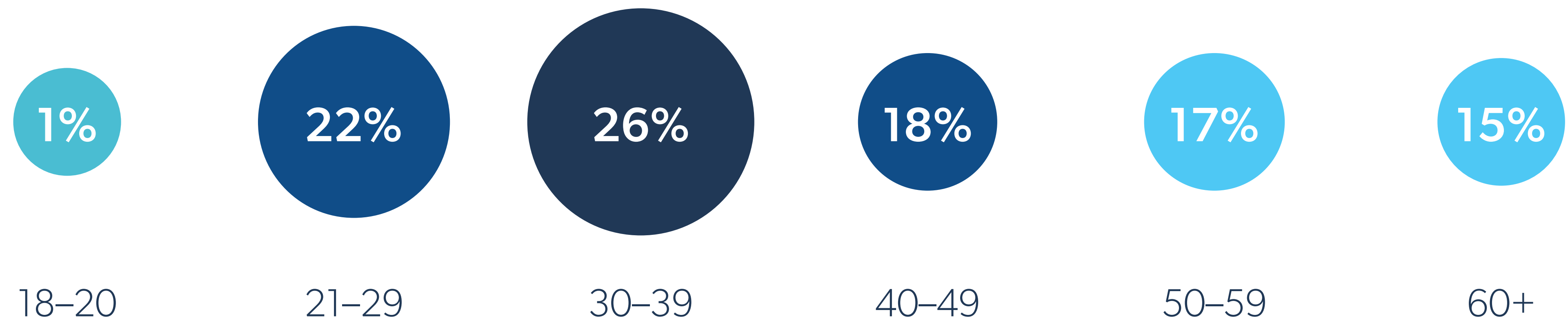
Are you a freelancer?



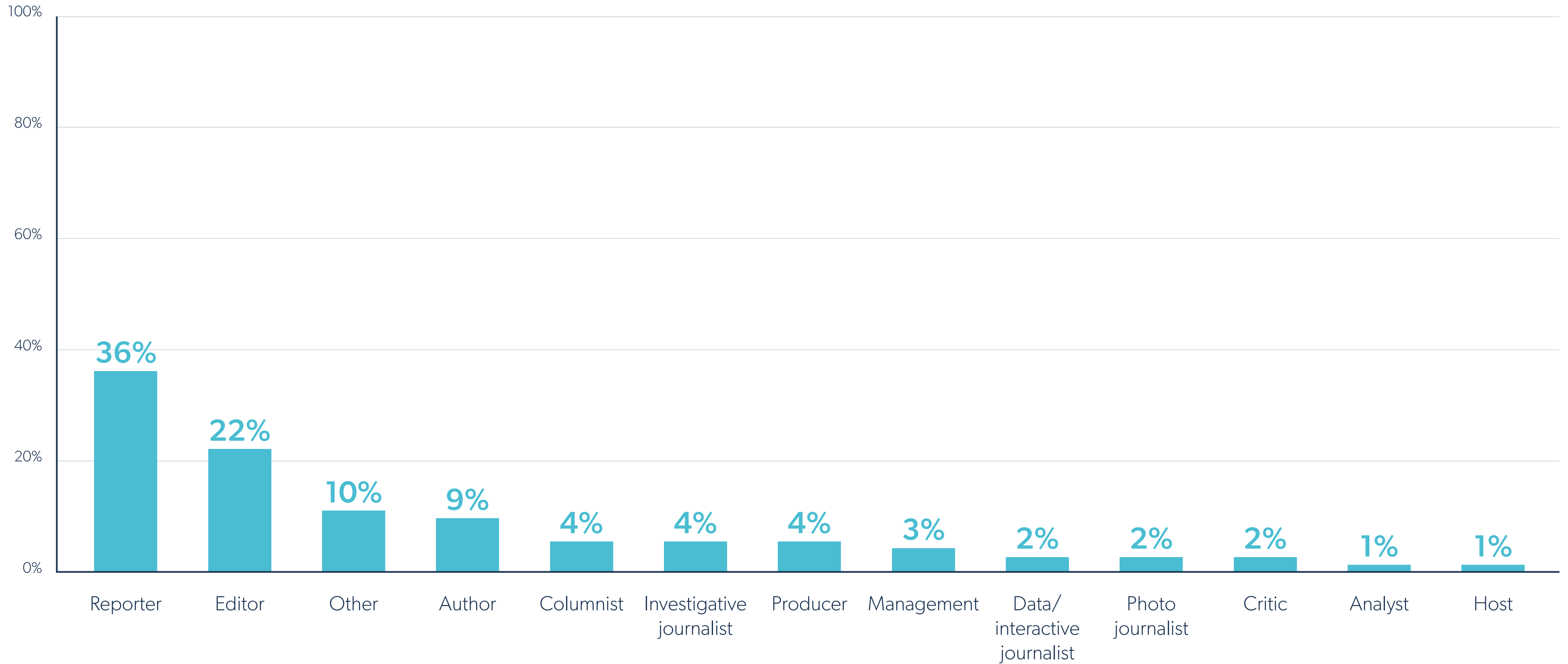
How long have you been a journalist?



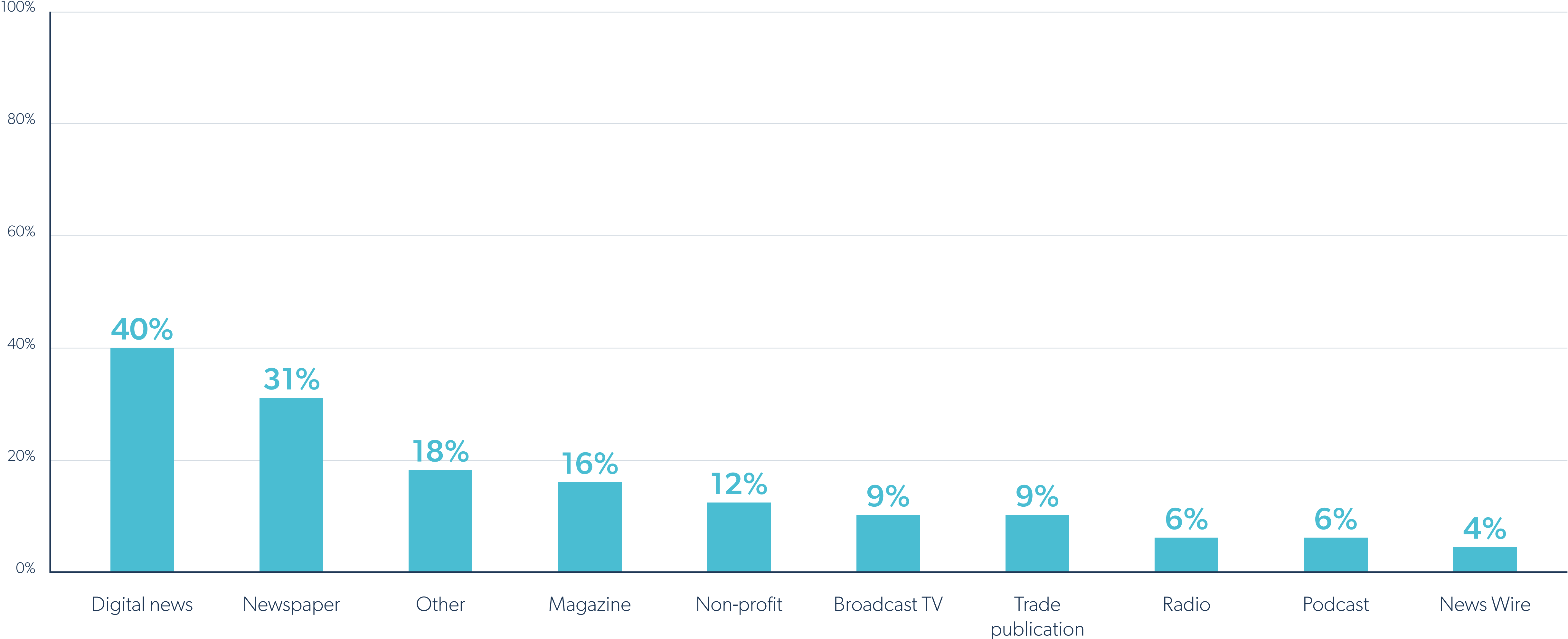
How old are you?



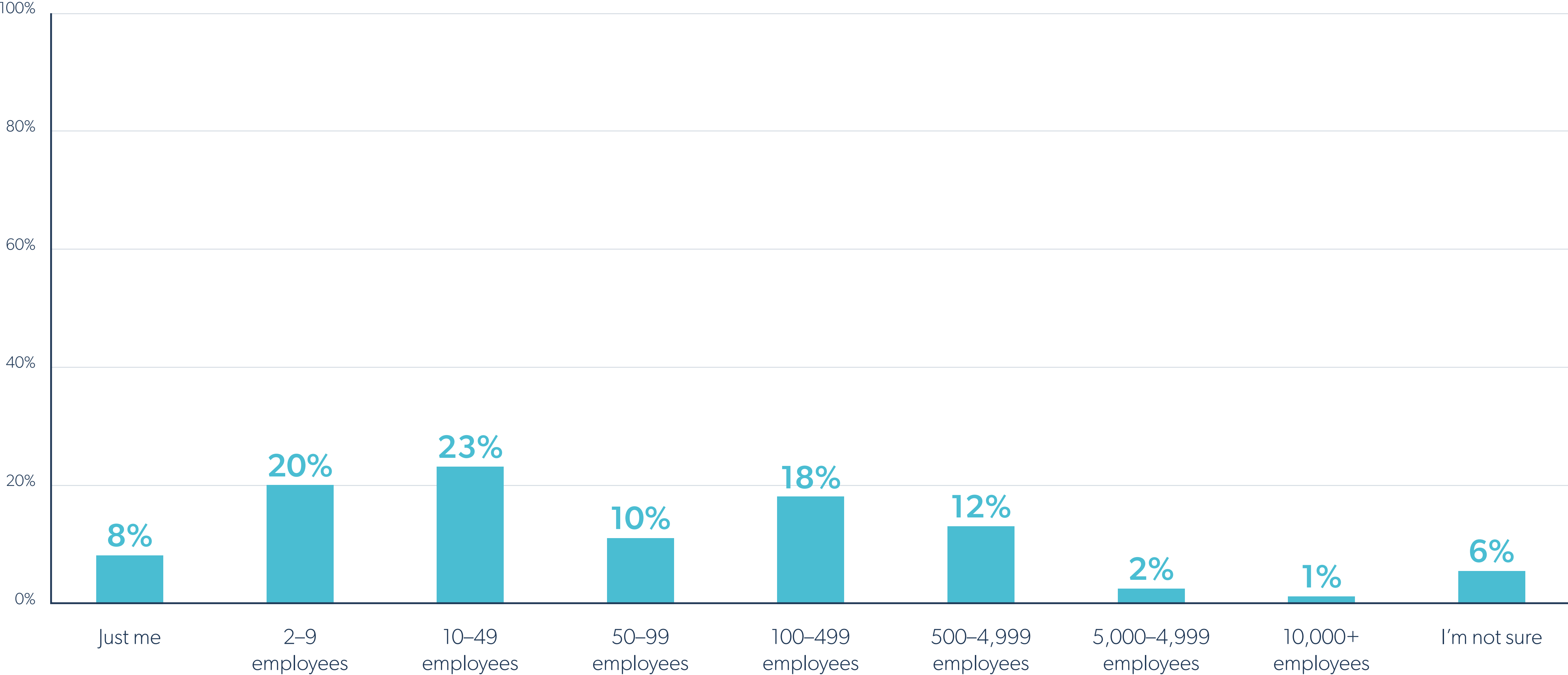
What best describes your role?



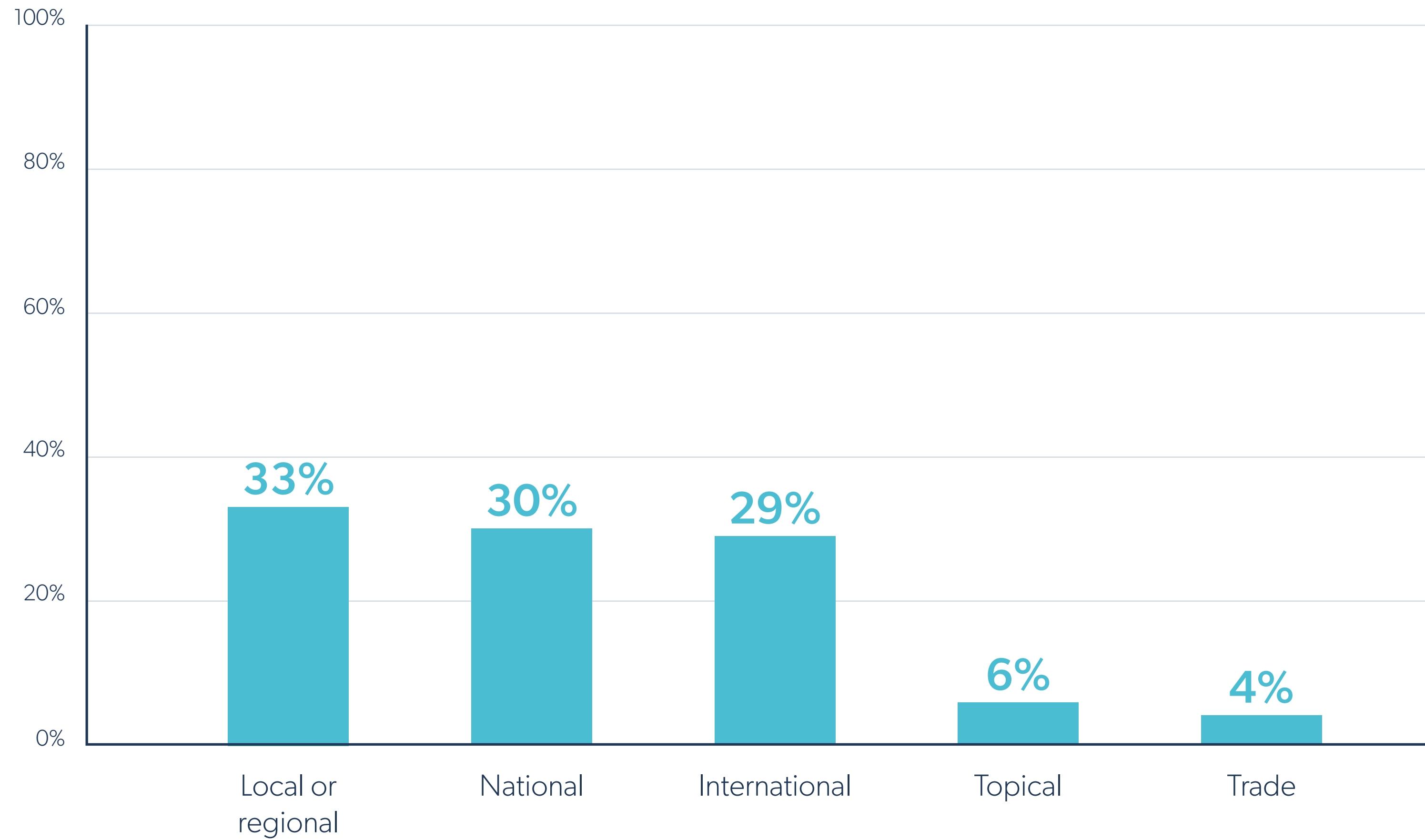
What type of organization do you work for?



If you work full time at a news organization, about how many full-time employees work at your company?



If you work full time at a news organization, what is the scope of your publication's coverage?



Methodology

We surveyed 1,106 journalists from January 3 to February 9, 2024.

The goal of this survey is to understand the current state of journalism and the future outlook of the industry by speaking to the people who produce the news. The self-administered online survey collected 1,106 responses.

Muck Rack distributed the survey with the help of 9 research partners including Society of Professional Journalists and American Press Institute.

The survey was distributed through emails to journalists in Muck Rack's database from January 3 until February 9, 2024. Most responses came from U.S.-based journalists, and Africa, Asia and Europe are also represented.

Low-quality responses were removed from the sample. This includes duplicates, responses that appeared to be spam, low-effort responses and straight-line responses. The conservative estimate of the margin of error is +/- 2.9%. Unless otherwise noted, results should not be compared to previous year's responses due to changes in how the questions were asked.

Salary data includes only U.S.-based journalists who work full-time.

MUCK RACK

Thank you!

Muck Rack enables organizations to build trust, tell their stories and demonstrate the unique value of earned media. Thousands of journalists use Muck Rack's free tools to showcase their portfolios, analyze news about any topic and measure the impact of their stories.

[Muck Rack for journalists](#)

[Muck Rack for PR pros](#)

<https://muckrack.com>