

STUDENT OPINION CLIMATE CHANGE AND COP26



STUDENTS
ORGANISING FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
UNITED KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

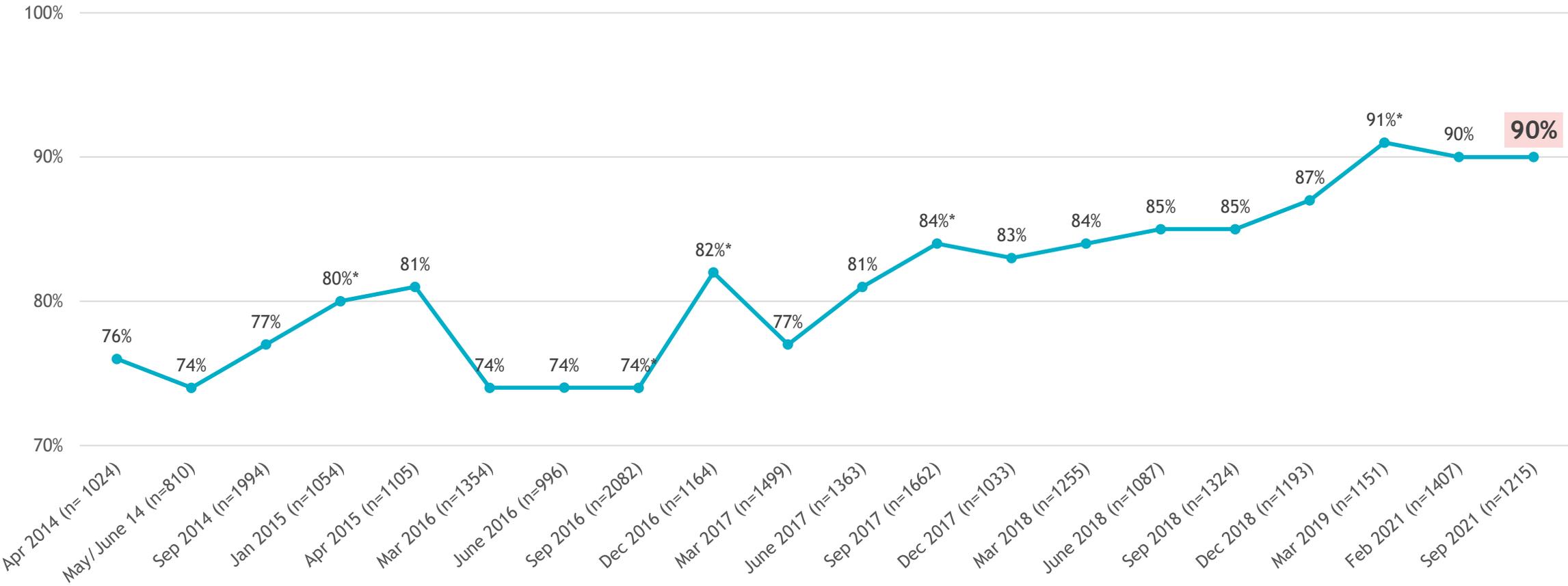
In the lead up to [COP26](#), the UN's climate change negotiations held in Glasgow, UK from 31st October to 12th November 2021, SOS-UK conducted research with students across the UK to understand more about their views related to the negotiations. We repeated some questions and also explored some of the outcomes of COP26 with students in the aftermath of the event in January 2022.

Both surveys were distributed through the National Union of Students to the database of TOTUM cardholders and formed part of a wider omnibus survey containing questions on a variety of topics. Respondents are incentivised to complete the survey with a cash prize draw. Responses have been weighted by gender to reflect the demographic make up of the UK higher education student population.

Over 1000 students responded to the surveys, and details of their characteristics can be found at the end of this report.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Since 2014, we've been asking students how concerned they are about climate change. They have consistently shown high levels of concern about climate change, with a majority saying they are fairly or very concerned. In this research, 90% of respondents feel this way.



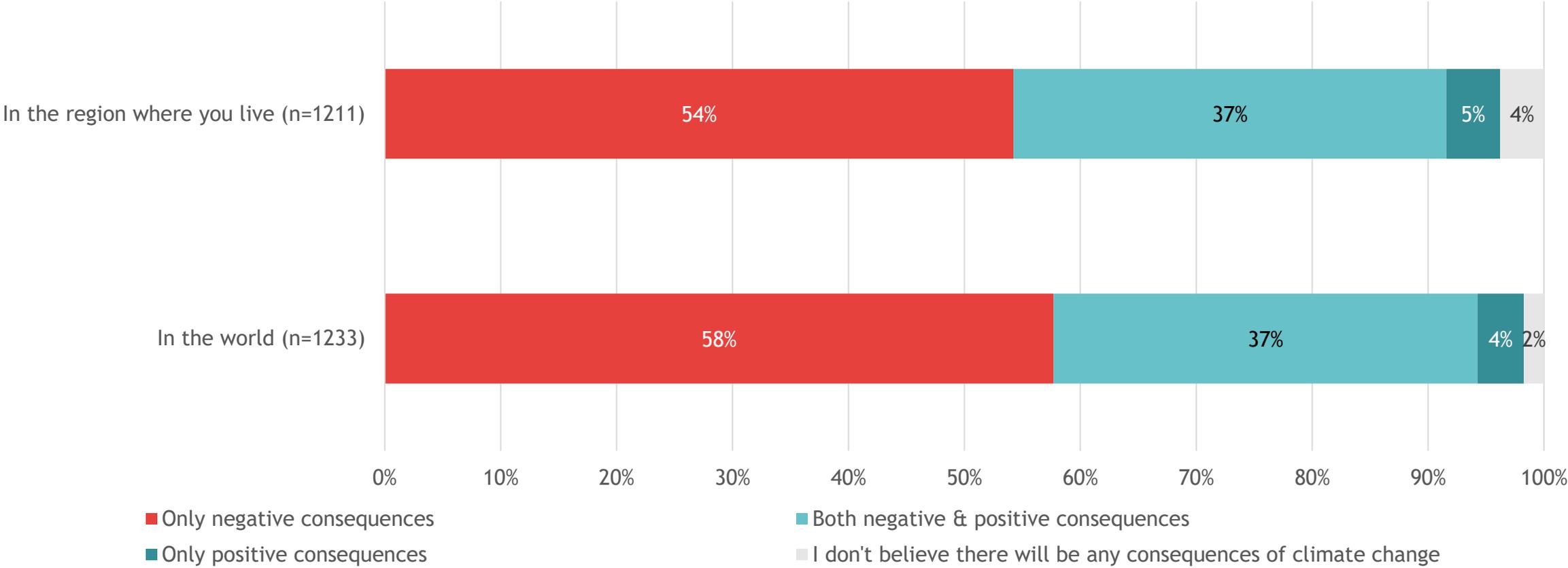
Q. How concerned, if at all, are you about climate change? [Responses shown for very or fairly concerned]

* Statistically significant change over the previous quarter (at 95% confidence level)

[Base : In brackets Balance: No response or not concerned]



More than half of respondents believe climate change will have only negative consequences in the region where they live (54%) and in the world overall (58%).

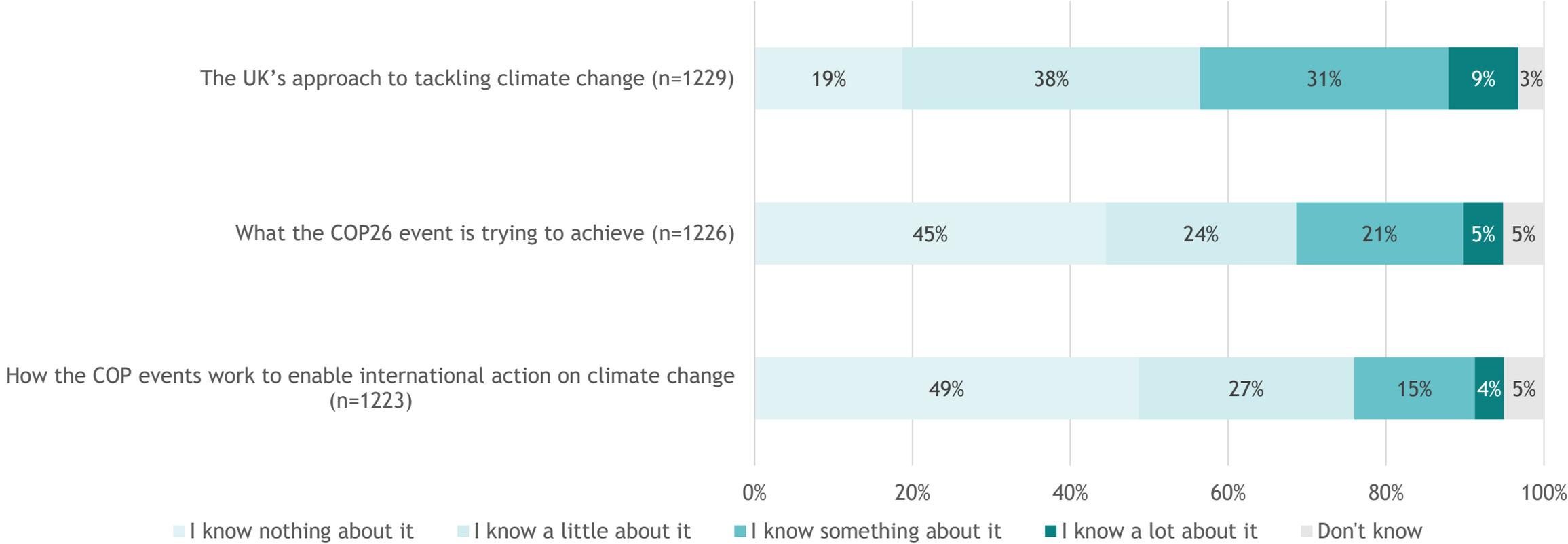


Q. In your opinion, climate change will have...
[Base: In brackets Balance: No response]



PRE-COP26

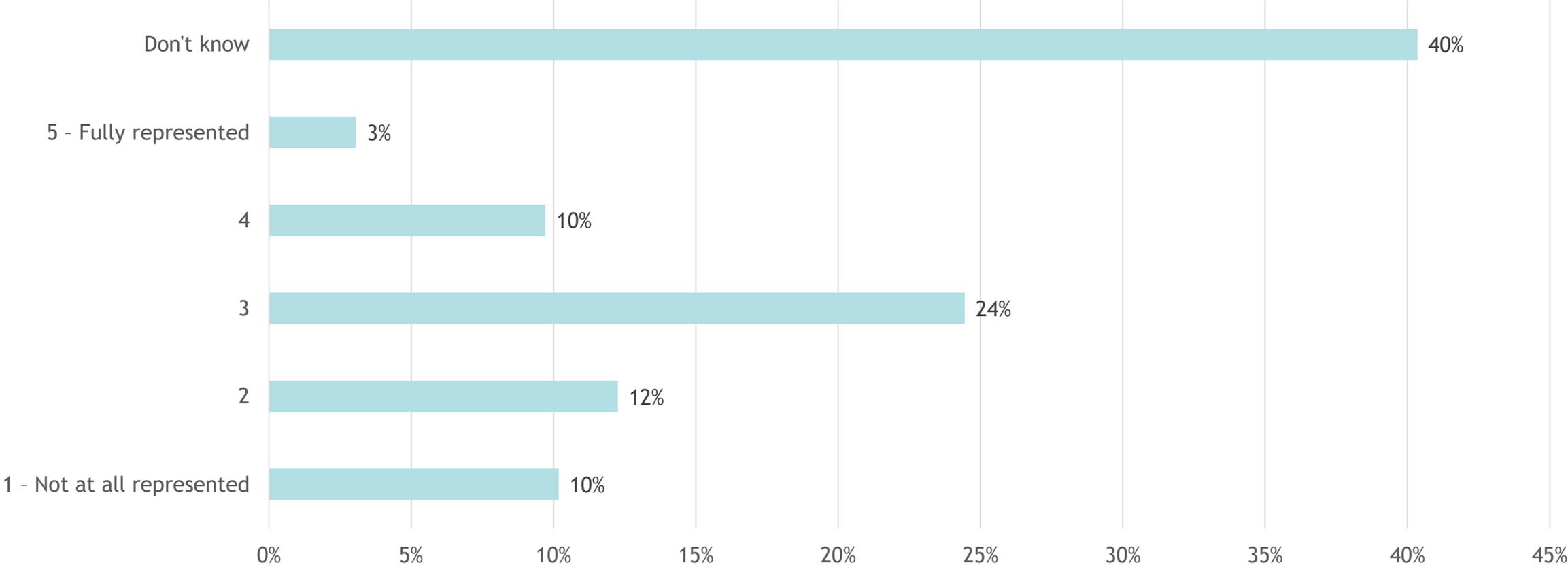
40% of respondents say they know at least something about the UK’s approach to tackling climate change, however just 26% say they know the same about what COP26 is trying to achieve.



Q. Which of the following options best describes your knowledge and understanding of these aspects related to COP26?
 [Base: In brackets Balance: No response]



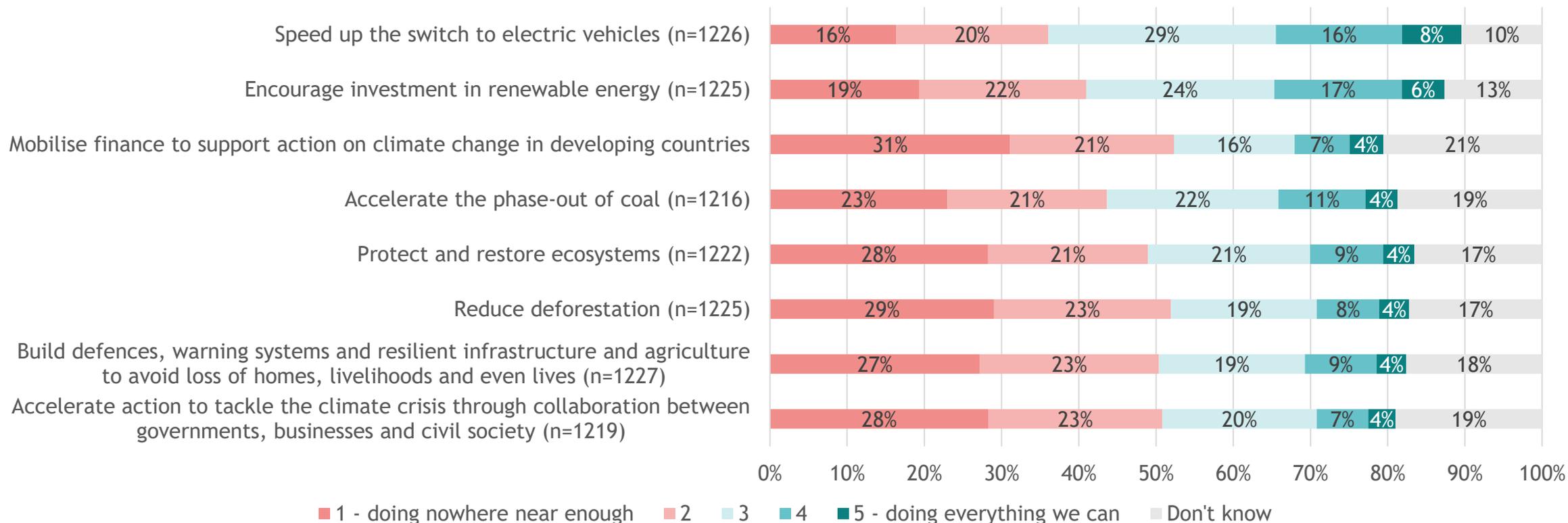
The most commonly reported response is that respondents ‘don’t know’ how their views, experiences and concerns related to climate change are represented at COP26. For those that do know (60%), just 13% see their views and experiences being represented.



Q. To what extent, if at all, do you feel your views, experiences and concerns related to climate change are represented at the COP26 event?
[Base: In brackets Balance: No response]



For all goals outlined by the UK government for COP26, more respondents believe the UK is not doing enough to deliver on the goals than those believing enough is being done. For example 52% believe not enough is being done on mobilising finance to support climate action in developing countries, compared to 11% that do.



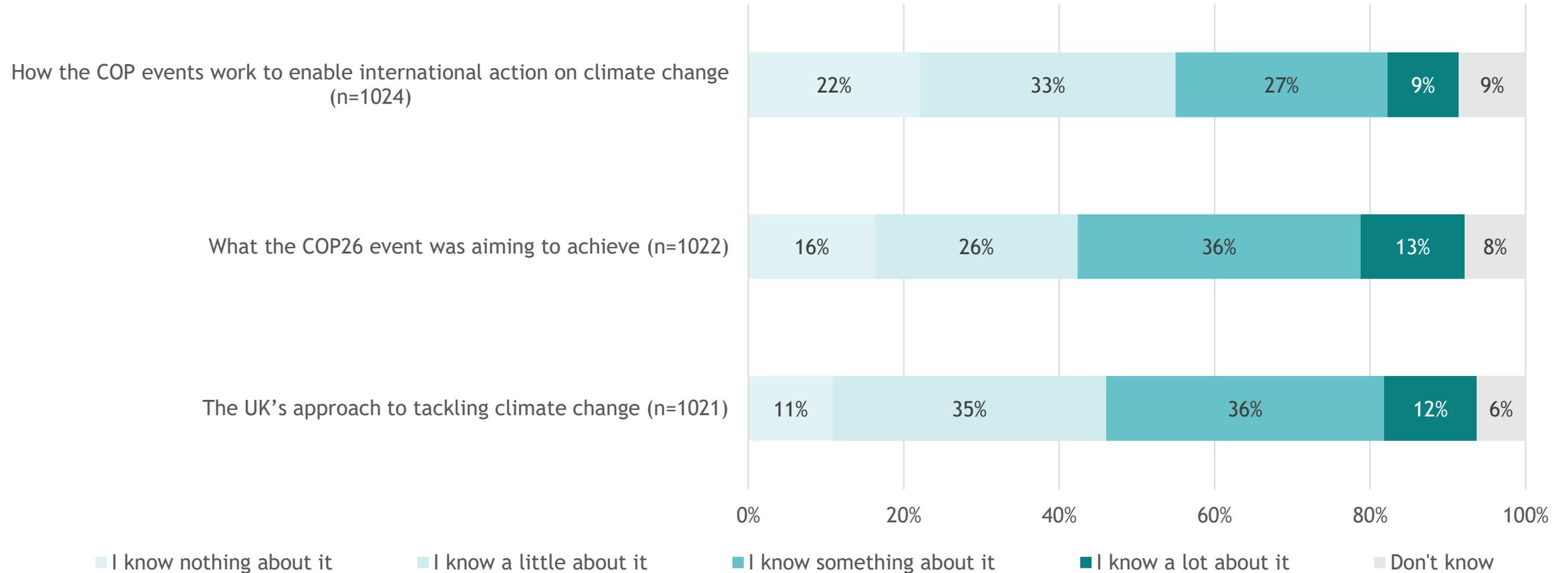
Q. Which of the following options best represents your views of how the UK is delivering against the following goals?

[Base: In brackets Balance: No response]

Goals presented are based on the goals outlined by the UK for COP 26 - <https://ukcop26.org/cop26-goals/>

POST-COP26

48% of respondents say they know at least something about the UK's approach to tackling climate change, and 50% say they know the same about what COP26 was trying to achieve.



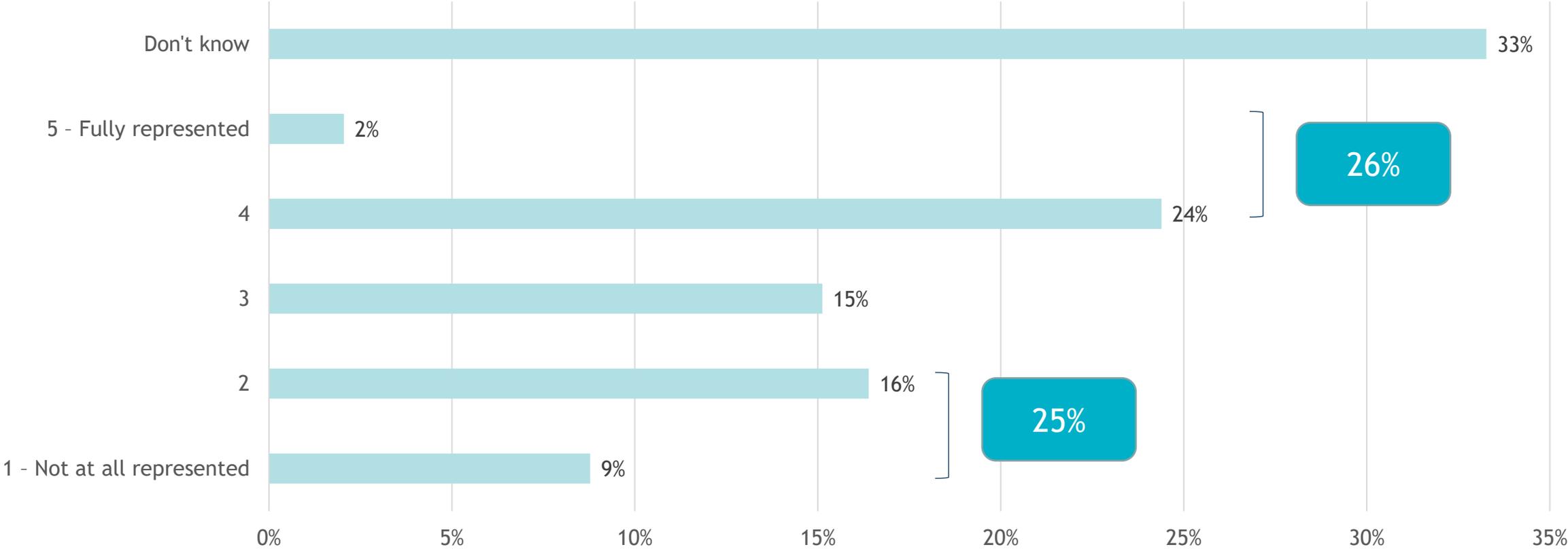
Q. Which of the following options best describes your knowledge and understanding of these aspects related to COP26?
 [Base: In brackets Balance: No response]

Comparing the surveys conducted pre and post-COP26 shows an improvement in understanding on how the events work, what they aim to achieve and the UK's approach to tackling climate change.

“I know something / a lot about...”

	Pre-COP26	Post-COP26
How the COP events work to enable international action on climate change	19%	36%
What the COP26 event was aiming to achieve	26%	50%
The UK's approach to tackling climate change	40%	48%

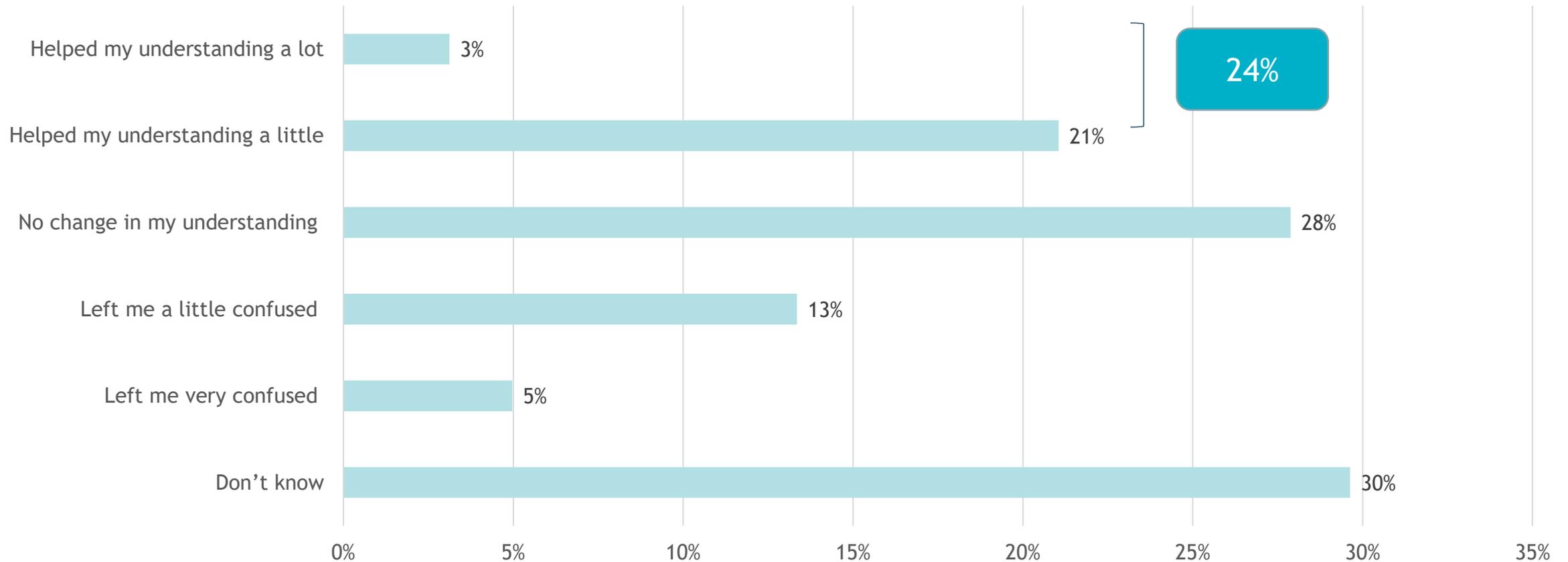
The most commonly reported response is that respondents ‘don’t know’ how their views, experiences and concerns related to climate change were represented at COP26. For those that do know (67%), 26% see their views and experiences being represented, and 25% do not. Prior to the event, 13% saw their views represented.



Q. To what extent, if at all, do you feel your views, experiences and concerns related to climate change were represented at the COP26 event?
[Base: 1025 Balance: No response]

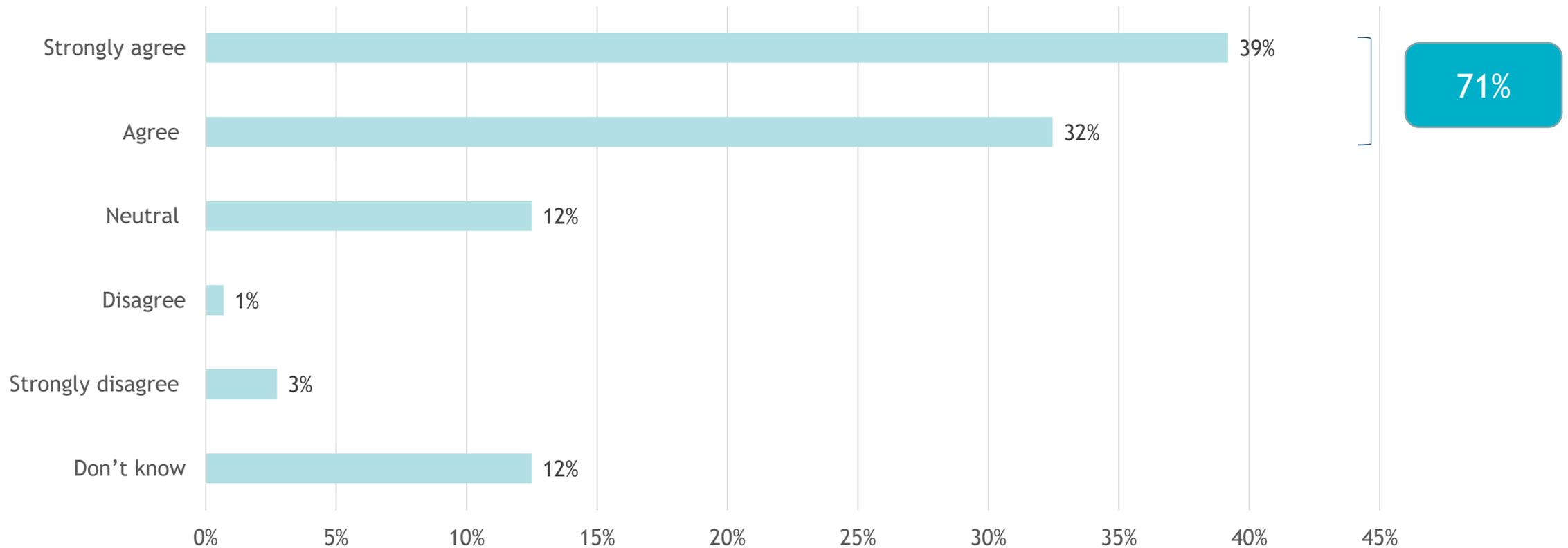


The most commonly reported response is that respondents ‘don’t know’ how their understanding of the UK’s approach to climate change changed as a result of COP26 (30%). 24% say that their understanding improved, and 28% say there was no change in their understanding.



Q. How, if at all, did your understanding of the UK’s approach to climate change as result of COP26?
[Base: 1026 Balance: No response]

COP26 saw the first ever education ministers' summit, bringing ministers from around the world together to engage them in the role education plays in addressing climate change. 71% would support the inclusion of education in all future COP events.

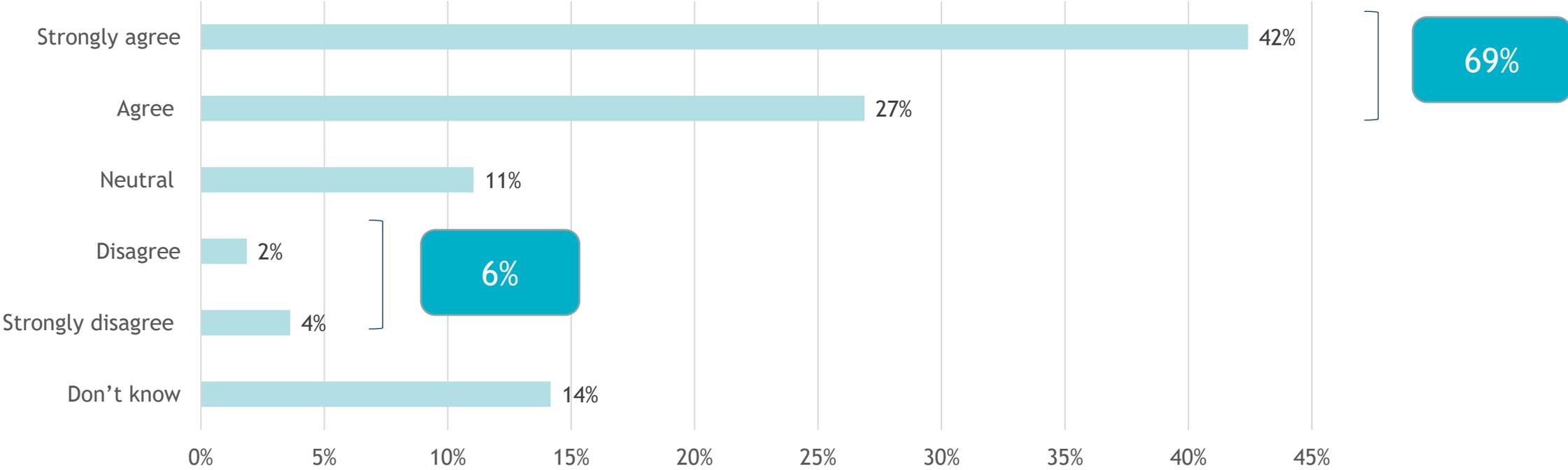


Q. COP events are held every year to progress action on climate change. To what extent, if at all, do you agree that education should be an important part of every future COP?

[Base: 1026 Balance: No response]

COP26 UK PROPOSALS FOR EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE

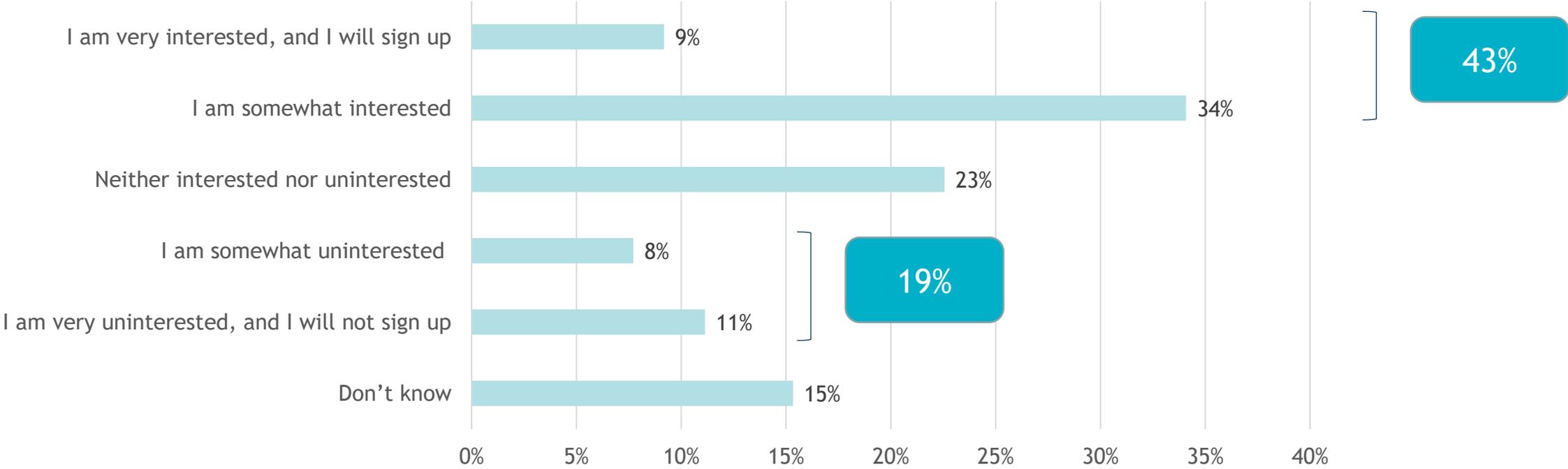
69% agree with the proposal announced by the UK government during COP26 that young people in the UK should be educated from nursery to university levels on the importance of conserving and protecting our planet.



Q. One goal from COP26 is to educate youth in the UK, as early as nursery level through to university, on the importance of conserving and protecting our planet. To what extent, if at all, do you agree with this goal?
[Base: 1023 Balance: No response]



43% are interested, to some extent, in the proposals made by the UK Government for a Climate Leaders Award - recognising the contribution and achievement of young people involved in protecting their local environment.



Q. The new [Climate Leaders Award](#) will allow children and young people to develop their skills and knowledge in sustainability and celebrate and recognise their work in protecting the local environment. Students will be able to progress through different levels of the award, 'bronze', 'silver' and 'gold', in a similar way to the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

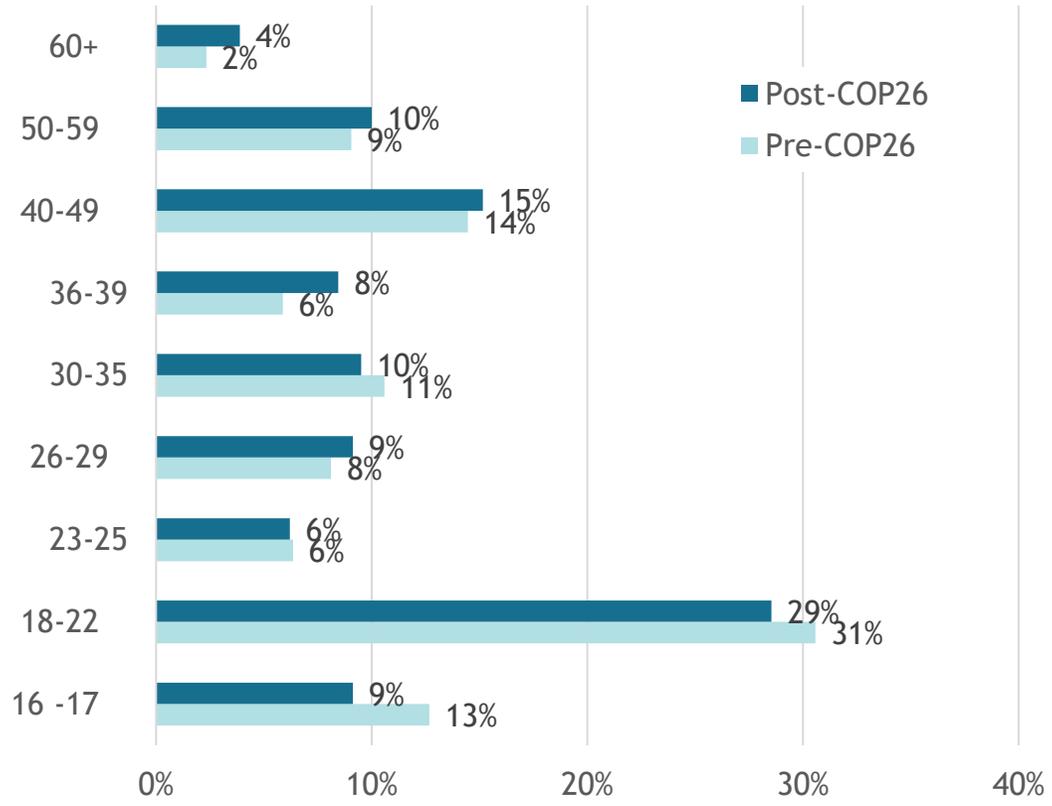
To what extent, if at all, are you interested in being involved in this opportunity?
[Base: 1024 Balance: No response]



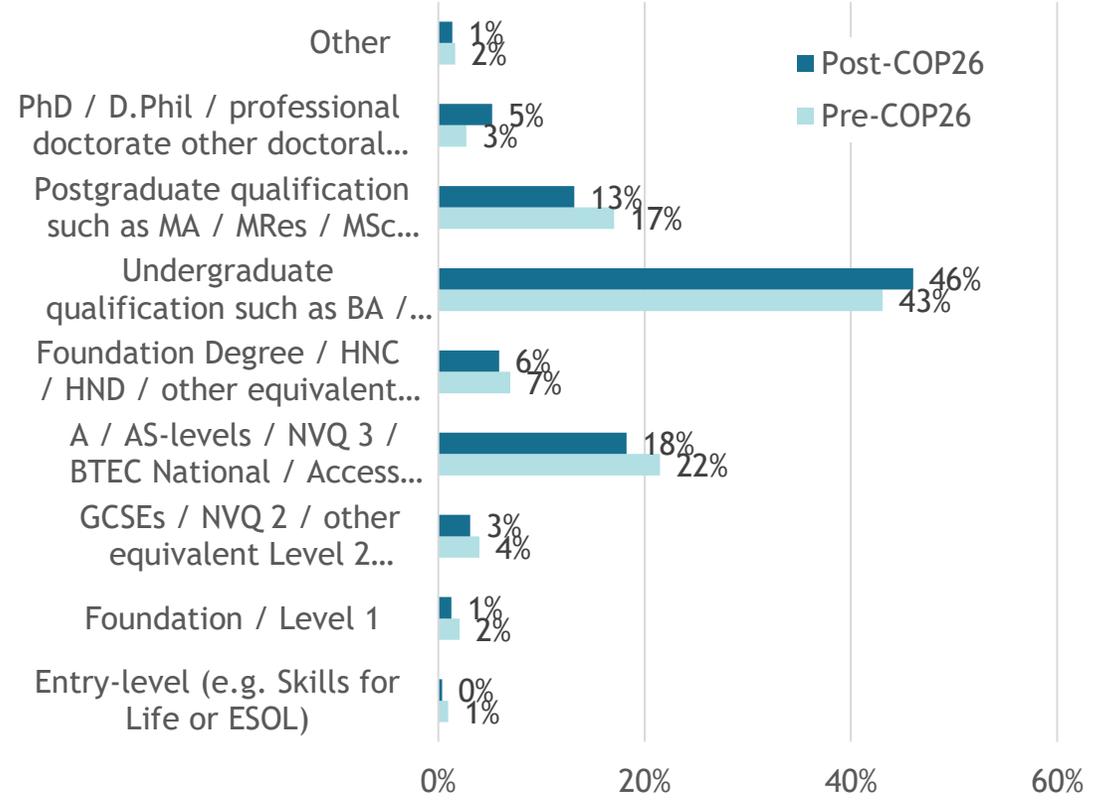
RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Respondent characteristics

AGE

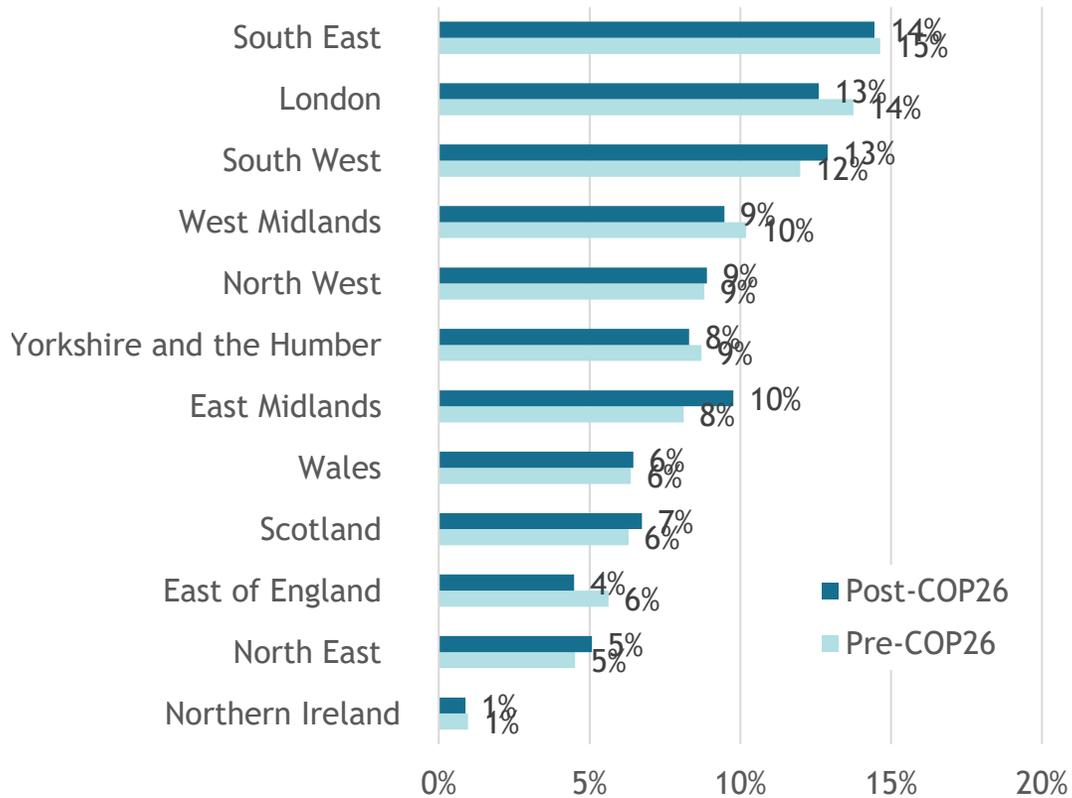


STUDY LEVEL

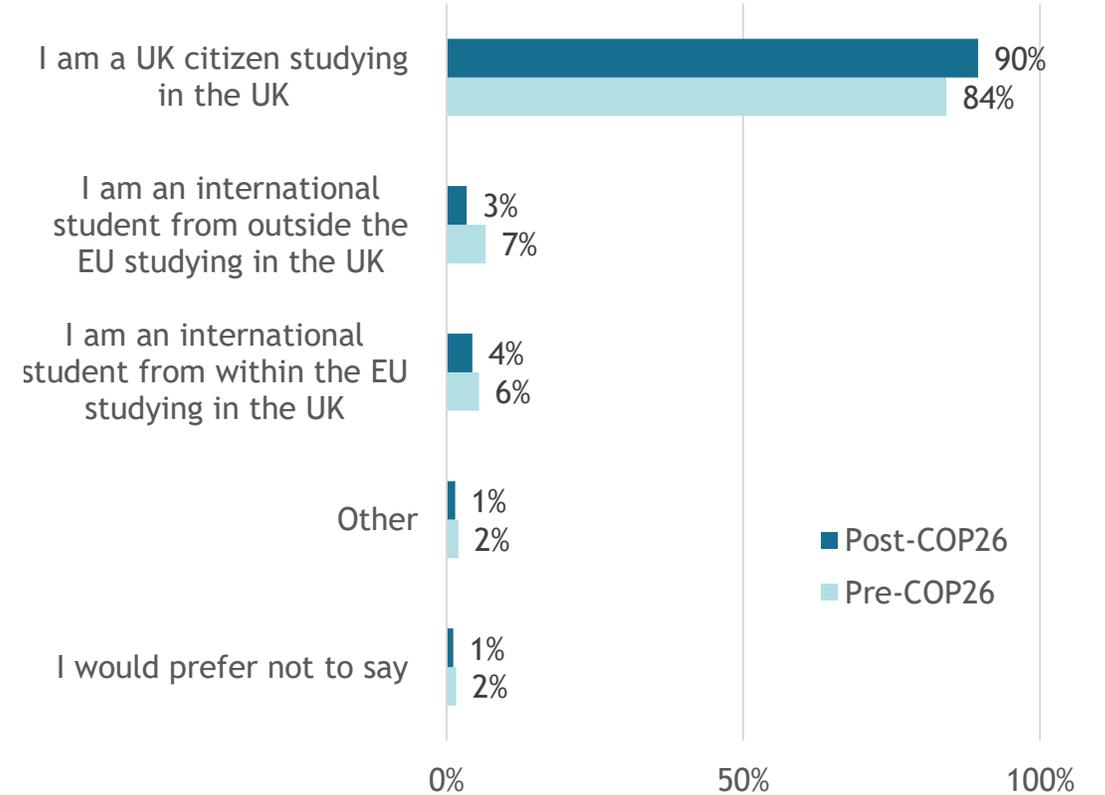


Respondent characteristics

STUDY REGION

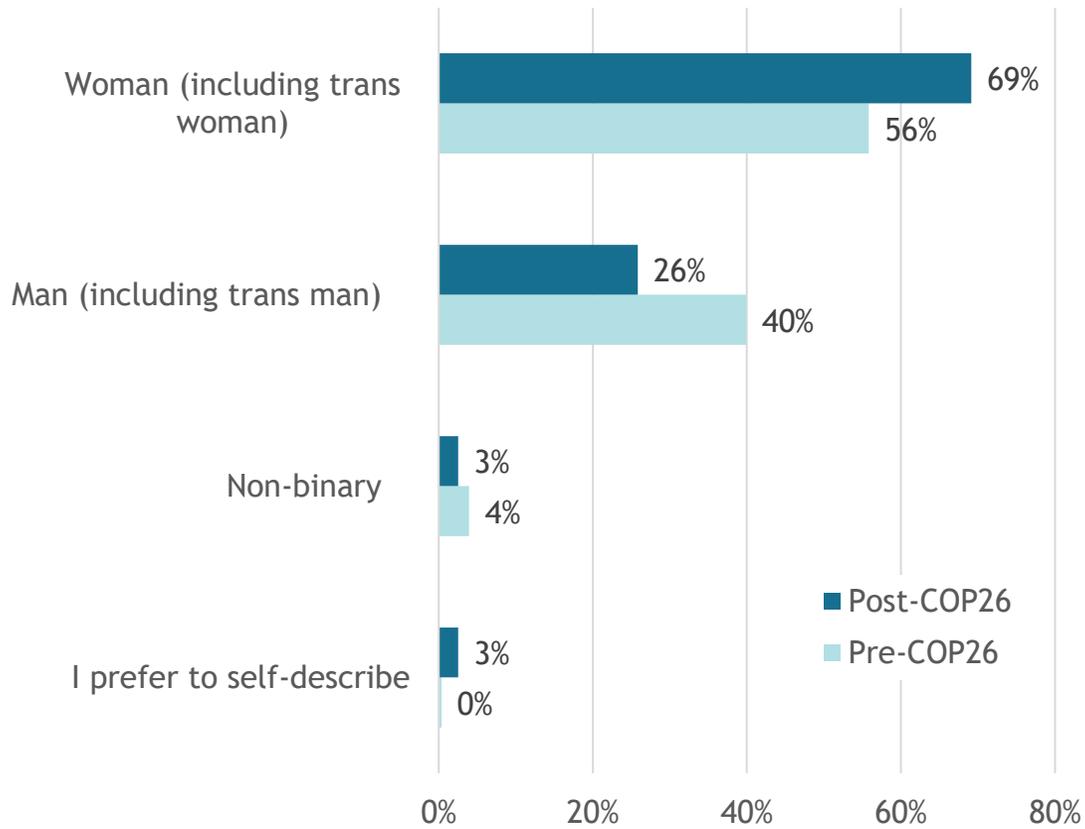


NATIONALITY

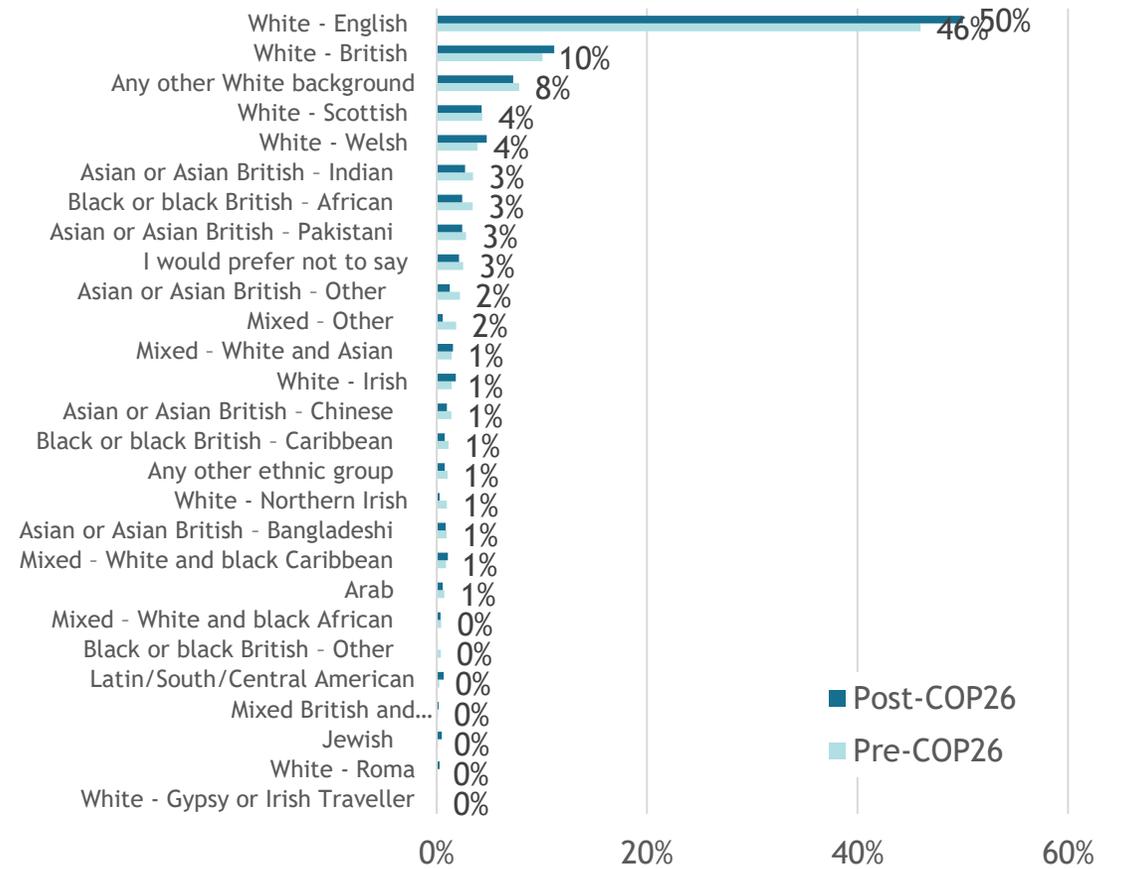


Respondent characteristics

STUDY REGION



NATIONALITY



To read more of SOS-UK's research, please visit our website: www.sos-uk.org/research