

Climate Matters in the Newsroom

Society of Environmental Journalists
Member Survey, 2018



**Climate Matters in the Newsroom:
Society of Environmental Journalists Member Survey, 2018**

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Introduction

This report provides the initial findings from an online census survey of Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ) members conducted as part of the *Climate Matters in the Newsroom* project—a National Science Foundation-funded collaboration between George Mason University, Climate Central, NASA, NOAA, SEJ and other professional societies—the aim of which is to enable local, science-based reporting on climate change. This survey was designed to identify the needs of journalists who wish to report on climate change as a local issue and the challenges they face in doing so.

The findings presented in this report provide broad insights into SEJ members' views on journalism, climate change, and more specifically local climate change reporting. The survey findings include: (a) members' views about the role of journalists and their impacts on society; (b) understanding of climate change; (c) perspectives on and experience with climate change reporting; (d) obstacles to reporting on climate change; and (e) perspectives and practices of presenting opposing viewpoints in climate change stories. These survey findings will be used to guide the ongoing development and delivery of *Climate Matters* materials, a science-based, localized, informational resource originally developed to help TV meteorologists report on the local relevance of global climate change.

This survey was conducted in early 2018. All 1,274 SEJ members were invited to participate in this survey via an email sent on January 3rd, and five additional requests to participate were sent throughout the month. By the end of January, when the survey closed, 617 SEJ members had participated in the survey, yielding a survey participation rate of 48.4%.

This survey and its findings are an important first step in producing localized climate change reporting resources for SEJ members and other United States-based journalists. We would like to recognize the important contributions and partnership of SEJ board members and staff. Without their help, this survey would not have been possible. We would also like to sincerely thank the 617 SEJ members who took time out of their busy schedules to participate in this survey. We hope they will find the information in this report enlightening and useful.

Funding for this research was provided by NSF Award #DRL 1713450. Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Notes:

Due to rounding error, the figures in this report do not always total to 100%. Open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.

Key Findings

About Climate Change Reporting Practices:

- Nearly 7 out of 10 SEJ survey participants had reported on—or supervised journalists reporting on—a local climate change-related story in the prior 12 months. Of those, approximately half reported four or fewer stories during that period, while the other half reported five or more stories; nearly 1 out of 10 reported or supervised more than 40 stories.
- Nearly all SEJ survey participants say they are at least slightly interested in reporting local climate impacts stories, with nearly 7 out of 10 saying they are very interested. Similarly, more than 7 out of 10 say they are very interested in reporting local climate solutions stories. The local climate change stories they are most interested in reporting focus on ecosystems, droughts and water shortages, local wildlife, forests, extreme precipitation, energy, human health, air quality, extreme heat events, sea-level rise and coastal flooding, the economy, and crop and livestock production.
- Nearly two-thirds of SEJ survey participants receive—or expect—largely positive responses from management when covering or supervising local climate change stories; only 7% receive—or expect—largely negative responses from management.
- Nearly two out three of SEJ survey participants receive—or expect—largely positive responses from their audience when covering or supervising local climate change stories; only 7% receive—or expect—largely negative responses.
- Nearly all SEJ survey participants feel that reporting on climate change will be beneficial to society, with 4 out of 5 believing it will be very beneficial.
- Two-thirds of SEJ survey participants identify lack of time for field reporting as an important obstacle to reporting on climate change, making this their most common obstacle. Half also identify lack of time or space in their news outlet as an obstacle, and over 4 in 10 identify lack of training in climate science as an obstacle. A small number of participants also identify lack of news management support, general management or owner support, and lack of access to role models as important obstacles to climate change reporting.
- Nearly 6 out of 10 SEJ survey participants think downsizing in their news organization has created or exacerbated obstacles to reporting on climate change, with about 2 out of 10 saying this has occurred “a lot” in their news organization.
- Almost 1 in 5 SEJ survey participants say they have experienced at least one instance where management softened or censored a climate change-related story that they had personally reported or supervised.
- SEJ survey participants overwhelmingly think climate change is very relevant to most beats, especially environment, energy, agriculture, science and technology, weather, and food—each of which are seen as relevant by more than 90% of participants. Large majorities also

see politics, business and finance, military and national security, investigative reporting, health and medical, and transportation as climate-relevant beats. Conversely, fewer than 30% think of climate change as very relevant to crime, public safety, and religion, and fewer than 10% think of it as very relevant to art and entertainment and sports.

- More than half of SEJ survey participants are interested in a range of professional development activities related to climate change reporting, especially learning about climate change solutions, followed by learning about climate change impacts, learning how to access credible sources of climate stories, and learning how to craft local climate stories.
- SEJ survey participants tend to most trust the climate information provided by independent science organizations—including professional science societies, the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Universities and journalism professional societies are also highly trusted. In comparison, relatively few trust think tanks (liberal, conservative or non-partisan), and advocacy organizations (both business and environmental).
- More than 3 out of 4 SEJ survey participants say their trust in U.S. government agencies as sources of information about climate change has decreased over the prior 12 months, coinciding with the first year of the Trump administration; few say their trust has increased.
- Fourteen percent of SEJ survey participants say they purposively avoided using the terms global warming or climate change on at least one occasion in their reporting.
- More than 7 out of 10 SEJ survey participants who had covered climate change in the prior year say they rarely or never presented an opposing view point (i.e., someone not convinced of climate change). Conversely, 2 out of 10 say they did so sometime or often, and nearly 1 out of 10 say they did so almost always or always.
- While nearly all SEJ members are convinced that human-caused climate change is occurring, many feel that reporting two sides of a climate change story is advantageous for one or more reasons. About 3 out of 10 feel that doing so will: avoid the impression of biased reporting; help maintain the journalist's credibility; avoid audience criticism; and is essential to objective journalism. About 3 out of 10 also feel that this practice strengthens the argument that climate change is occurring, and almost one quarter feel it will help them reach more people (i.e., grow the size of their audience). However, nearly 6 out of 10 feel this practice undermines the argument that climate change is occurring, and 85% disagree that the practice “is important because the science of climate change is still being debated.”

About Views on Climate Change

- Nearly 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants feel they know the science of climate change somewhat, moderately, or very well.
- SEJ survey participants are more or less equally divided on whether the terms climate change and global warming mean the same thing or different things to them.

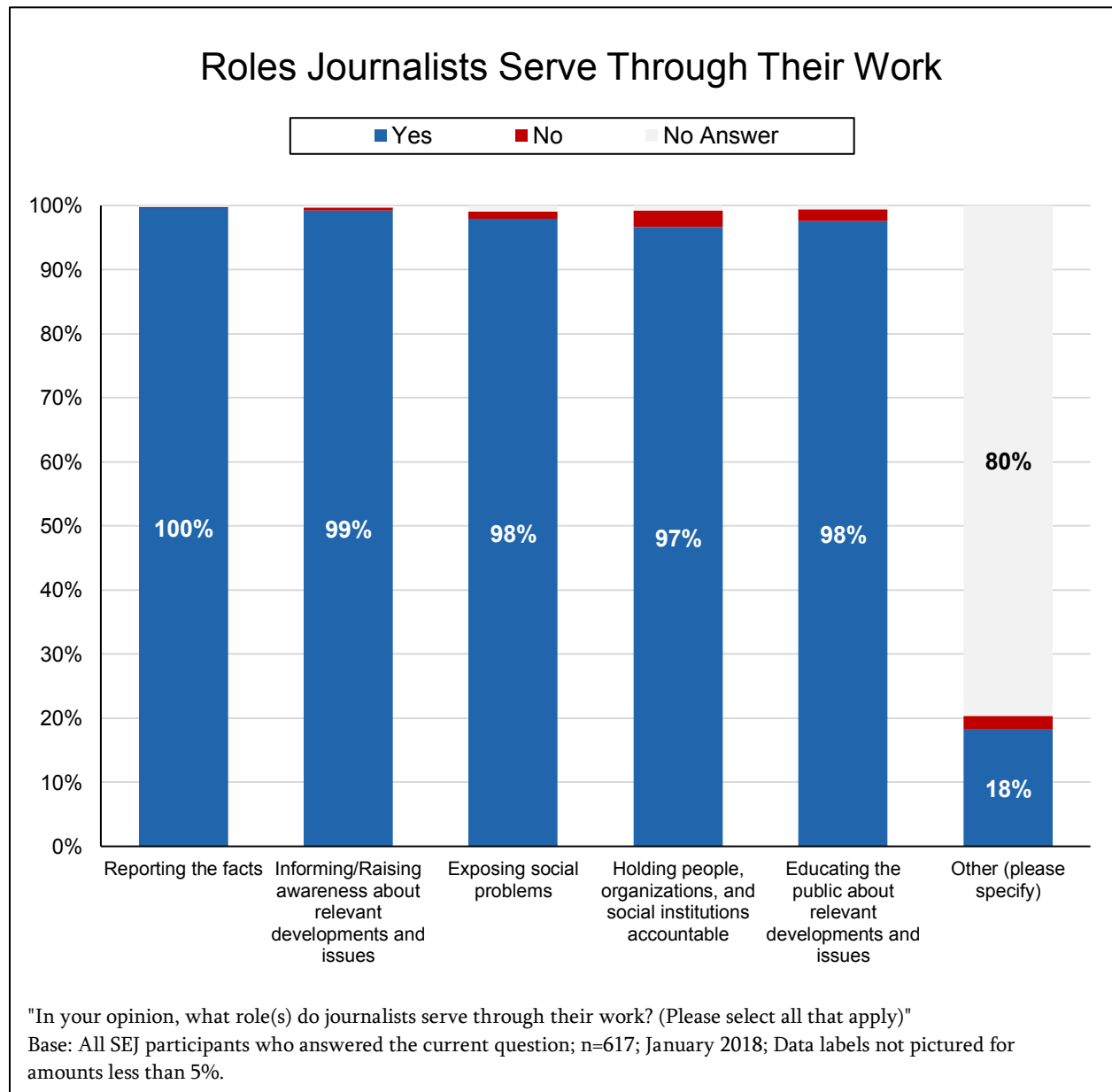
- With few exceptions, all SEJ survey participants think global warming is happening; 4 out of 5 say they are extremely sure.
- Nearly all SEJ survey participants think the global warming that has occurred in the past 50 years is due mostly to human activity.
- Fully two-thirds of SEJ survey participants are aware that 97% or more of climate scientists think human-caused global warming is occurring; fully 9 out of 10 say the scientific consensus is 90% or greater.
- More than 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants think at least a small amount of additional climate change can be averted over the next 50 years if mitigation measures are taken worldwide; about 3 out of 4 think a moderate or large amount of climate change can be averted.
- Similarly, more than 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants think at least a small amount of harm from climate change can be averted in the U.S. over the next 50 years if adaptation measures are taken, while more than 3 out of 4 think a moderate or large amount of harm can be averted.
- Fully 96% of SEJ survey participants agree with the statement “I have personally experienced the effects of global warming,” with more than 7 out of 10 strongly agreeing.
- Nearly all SEJ survey participants say the climate has changed in their region in the past 50 years. Of those who do, more than 7 in 10 say the impacts have been primarily or exclusively harmful, and about 1 in 10 say the impacts have been equally mixed between beneficial and harmful; less than 1% say the impacts have been primarily or exclusively beneficial.
- SEJ survey participants who think there have been climate change impacts in their region—whether harmful or beneficial—and those who don’t know were asked about the nature of those impacts. The harmful impacts most commonly mentioned were related to water resources, ecosystems or forests, coastal properties, infrastructure, seasonal cycles, and human health. The most common “mixed” impacts—that is, impacts with both positive and negative aspects—included economic, tourism/recreation/leisure, and agricultural.
- Nearly all SEJ survey participants say the issue of global warming is at least somewhat personally important to them; nearly three-quarters say it is extremely important to them.
- Nearly all SEJ survey participants say they are worried about global warming; nearly 4 out of 5 say they are very worried.
- More than 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants feel they will be personally harmed by global warming; nearly 8 out of 10 feel they will be personally harmed a moderate amount or a great deal.

Roles of Journalists

The survey began with general questions about how participants see the role(s) of journalists in society.

Which Roles do Journalists Serve?

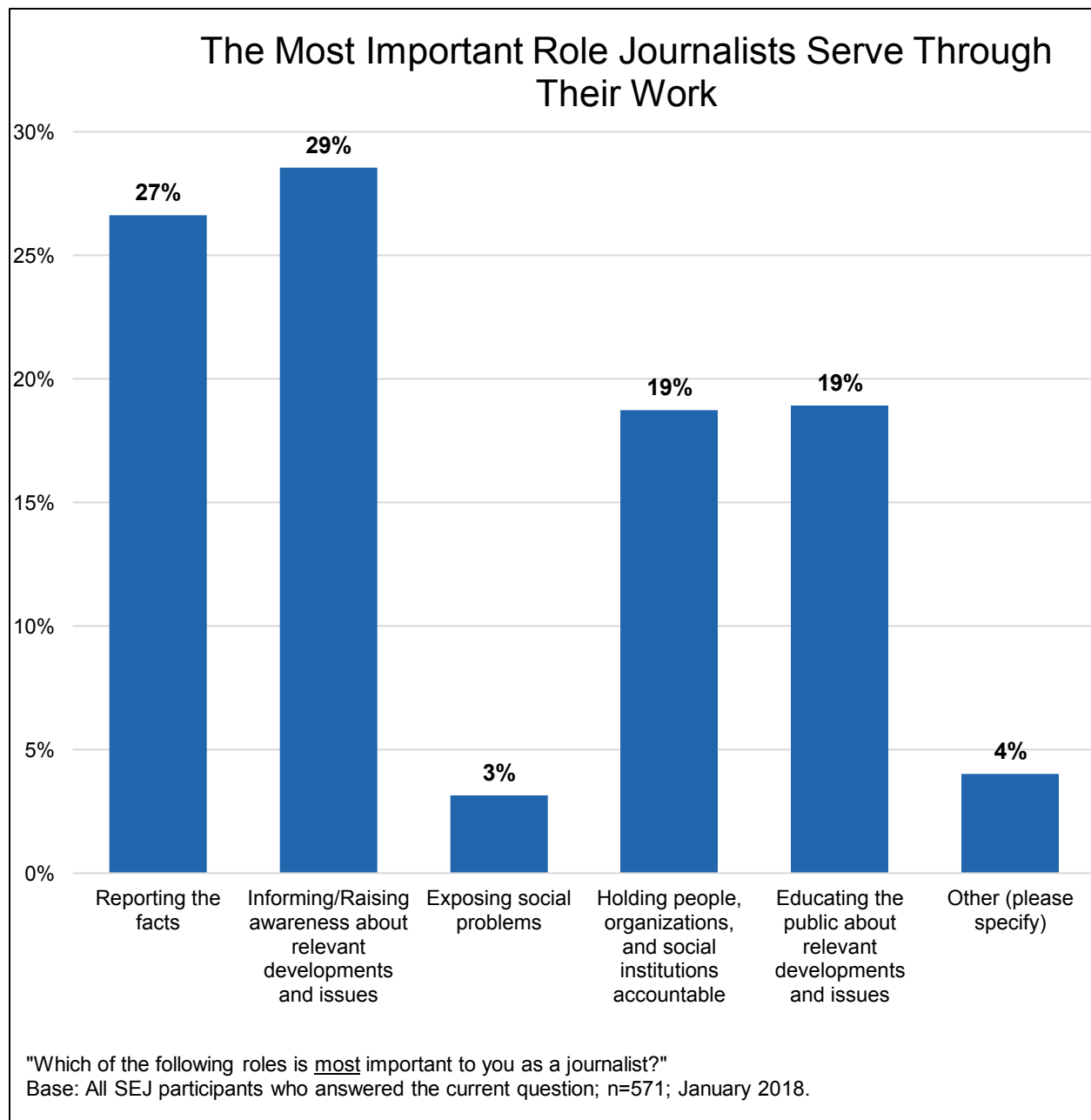
Nearly all SEJ survey participants feel that journalists serve society through a range of roles from reporting the facts to holding people, organizations and social institutions accountable.*



* The additional roles that survey participants identified in response to the “Other” are open-ended responses that will be coded and reported at a future date.

Which Role is Most Important?

SEJ survey participants hold a wide range of views about which of the roles that journalists play in society is personally most important to them. Slightly more than half feel that either reporting the facts or informing and raising awareness about relevant developments and issues are the most important role they serve through their work. In addition, 20% most value their role in educating the public about relevant developments and issues. Another 20% most value the role of holding people, organizations, and social institutions accountable, and 3% most value the role of exposing social problems.

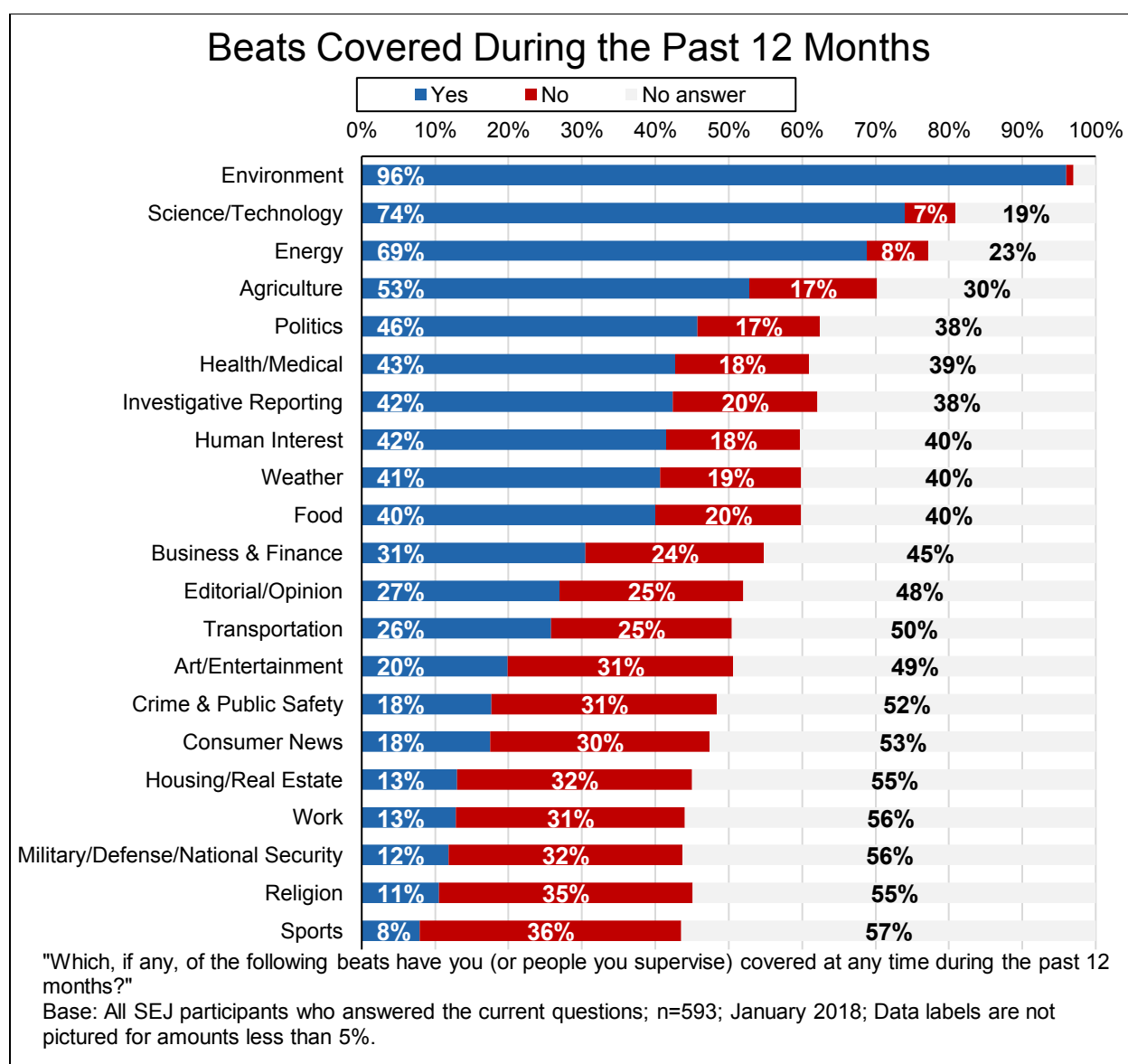


Beat Experience and Perceived Relevance of Climate Change

To get a sense of what kind of story climate change is seen as by journalists, we asked questions about participants' beat experiences, and about the relevance of climate change to various beats.

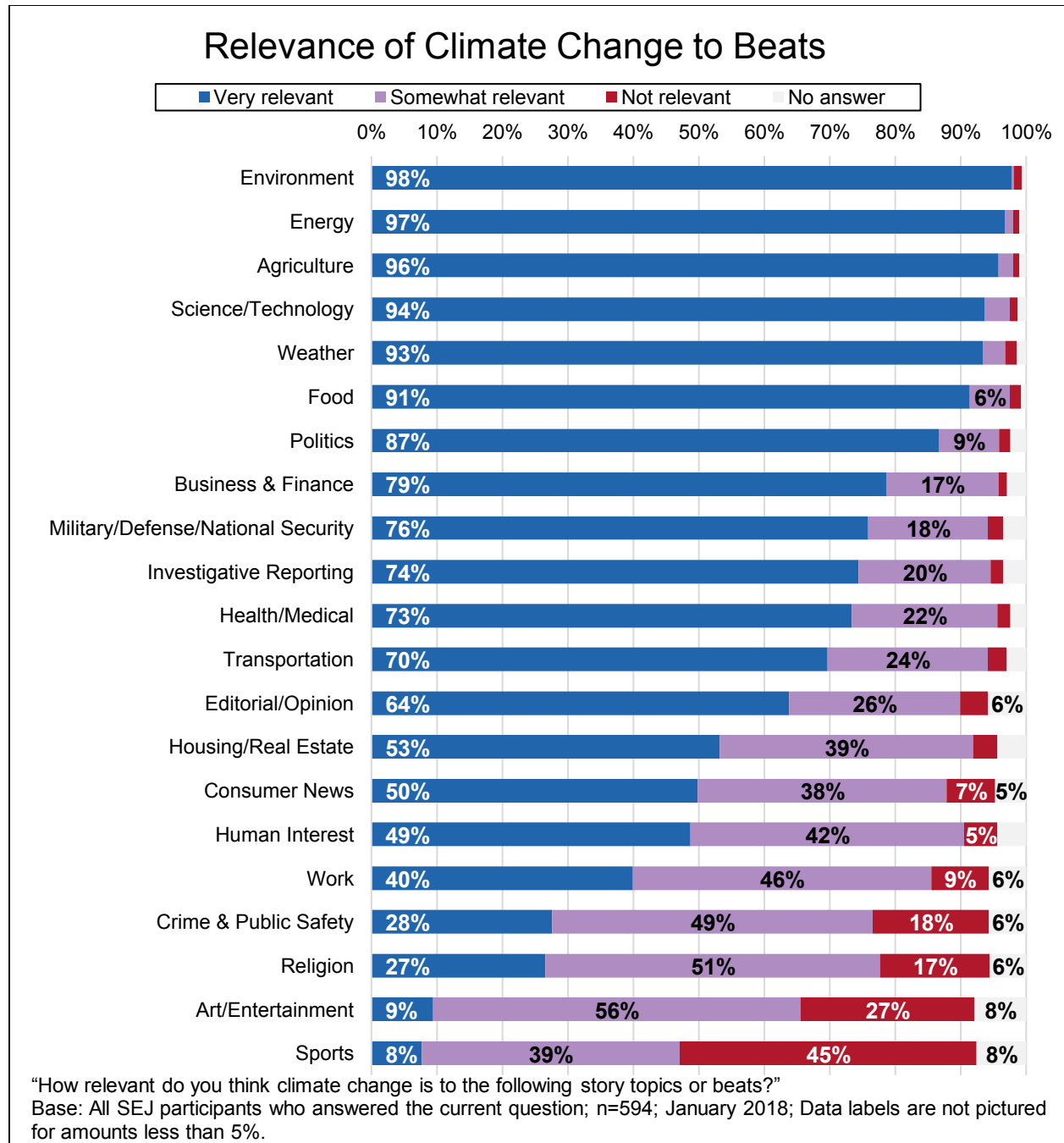
Experience Covering Beats

Not surprisingly, the most common beats covered by SEJ survey participants in the prior year were environment, science and technology, and energy—each of which was covered by nearly 70% or more. Other common beats included agriculture, politics, weather, health/medical, food, human-interest, and investigative reporting—each of which were covered by approximately 40% to 50%.



Relevance of Climate Change

SEJ survey participants overwhelmingly think climate change is relevant to most beats, especially environment, energy, agriculture, science and technology, weather, and food—each of which are seen as very climate-relevant by more than 90% of participants. Large majorities also see politics, business and finance, military and national security, investigative reporting, health and medical, and transportation as climate-relevant beats. Conversely, fewer than 30% think of climate change as very relevant to crime, public safety, and religion, and fewer than 10% think of it as very relevant to art and entertainment and sports.



Difference Between Climate Change and Global Warming

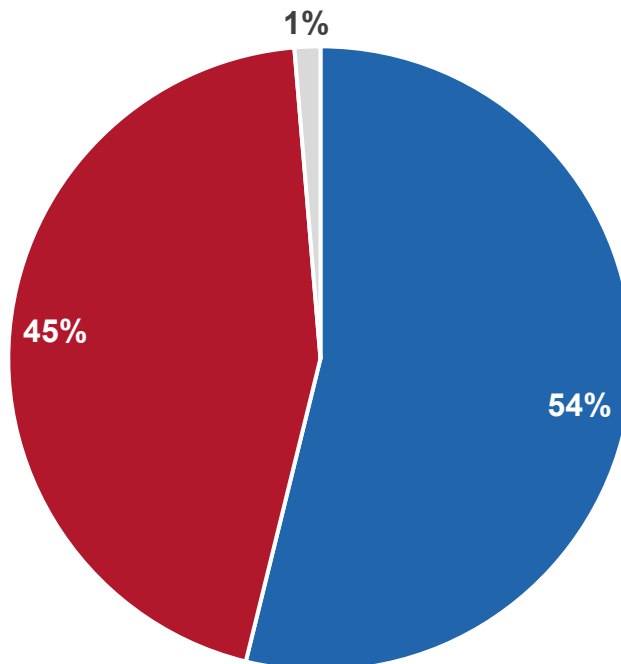
Polling research has shown that the terms global warming and climate change mean largely the same thing to some people, and different things to other people. We asked several questions to determine how SEJ members see these terms.

Is There a Difference?

SEJ survey participants are more or less equally divided on whether the terms climate change and global warming mean the same thing or different things to them. Those participants who see global warming and climate change as being different things were asked: "Briefly, how would you describe the difference in meaning between the terms "climate change" and "global warming"?" These open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.

"Global Warming" and "Climate Change": Same Thing or Different Things?

■ Same things ■ Different things ■ Don't know



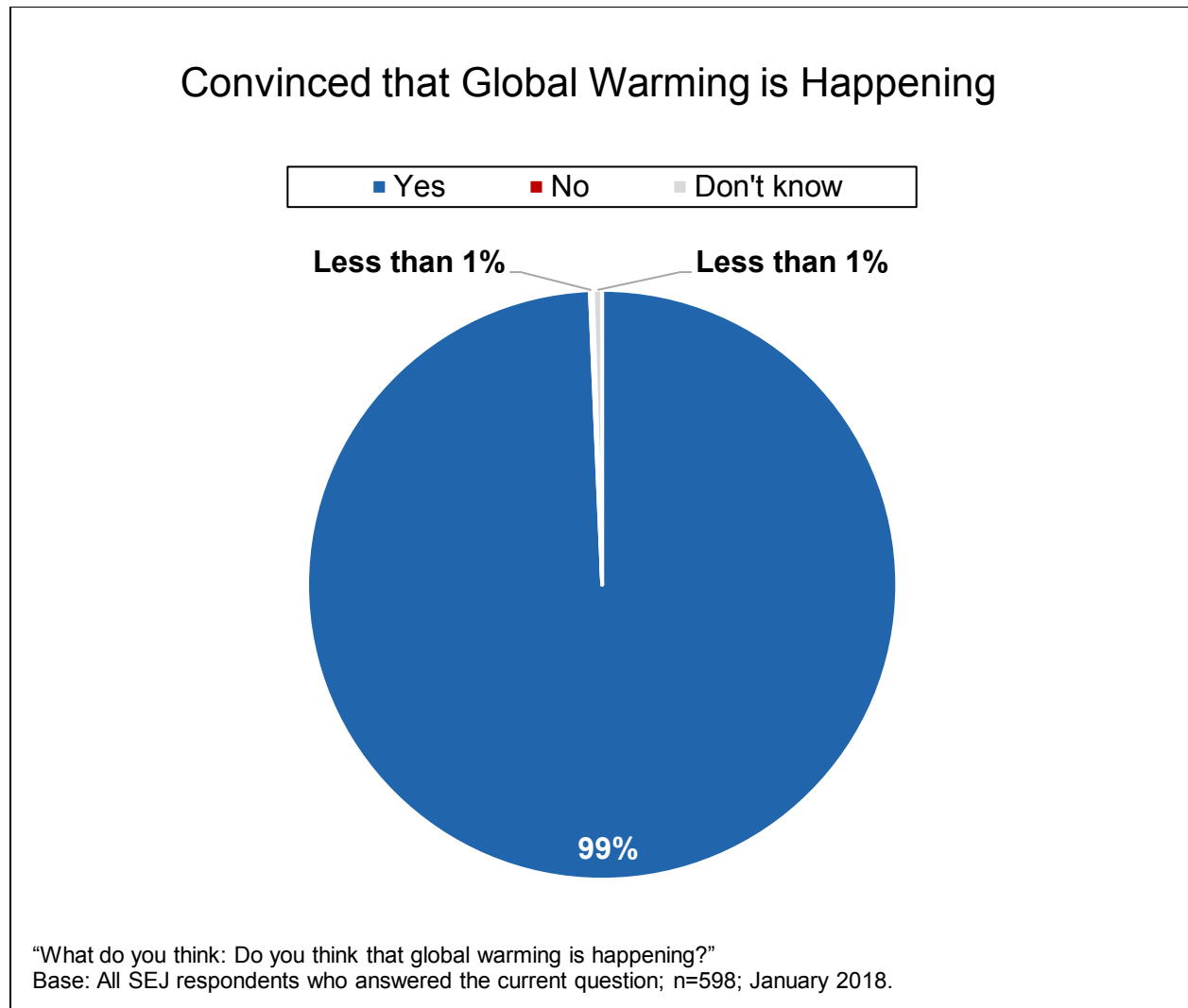
"For you, do the terms "climate change" and "global warming" mean the same thing or different things?"
Base: All SEJ participants who answered the current question; n=598; January 2018.

Convinced that Global Warming is Happening

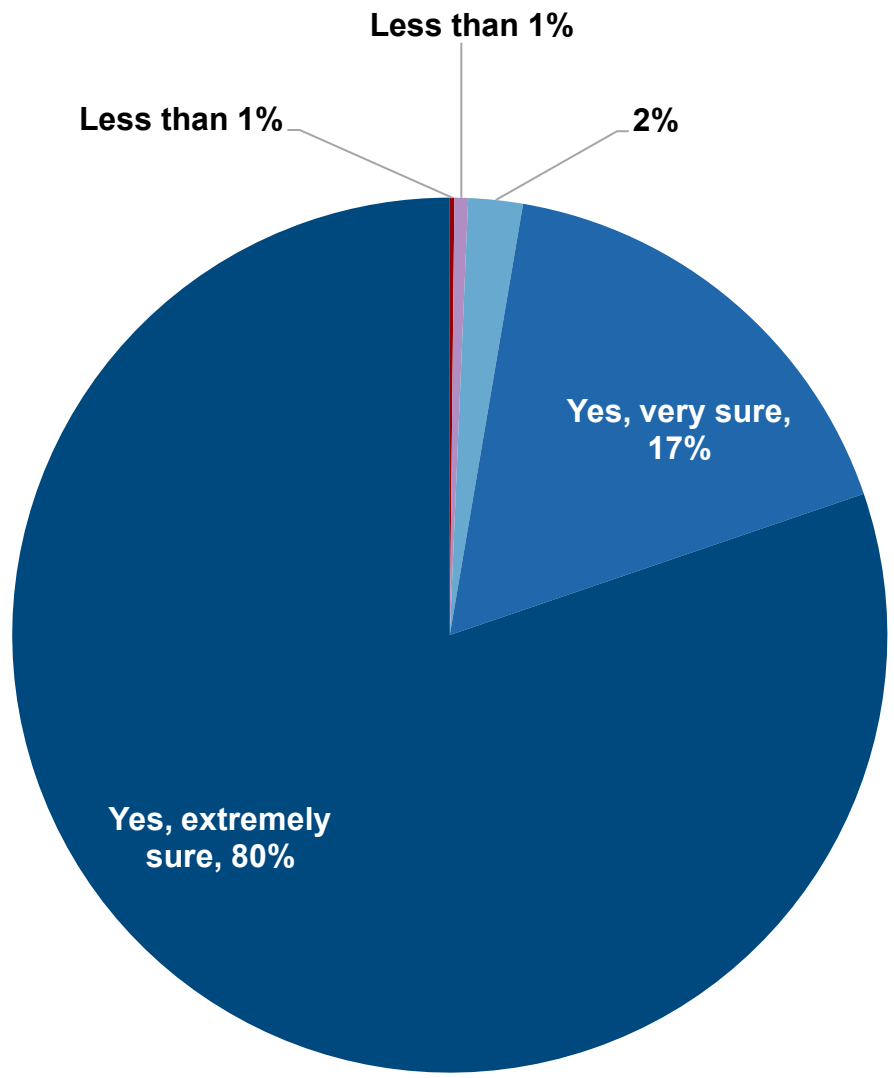
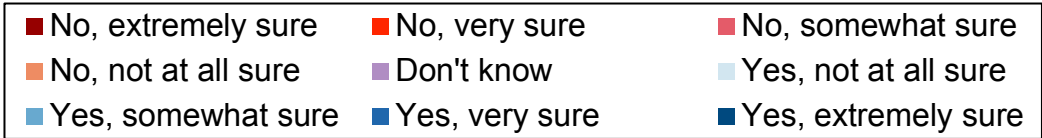
Research has shown that Americans hold a wide range of views about global warming. At various points throughout the survey, we posed questions to SEJ participants about some of their climate change views that might, or might not, influence their climate change reporting. The most basic of these views is whether or not they think global warming is happening. Prior research has shown that the vast majority of climate scientists—97% or more—are convinced that human-caused climate change is happening. In fact, the 2014 U.S. National Climate Assessment found that a range of impacts from global climate change are already occurring in every region of the country.

Is Global Warming Happening? How sure are you?

With few exceptions—specifically, one participant who says it isn't happening and three who say they don't know—all SEJ survey participants think global warming is happening. In response to a follow-up question asking how sure they are, 4 out of 5 say they are extremely sure global warming is happening and nearly all of the rest say they are very sure.



Certainty that Global Warming is Happening

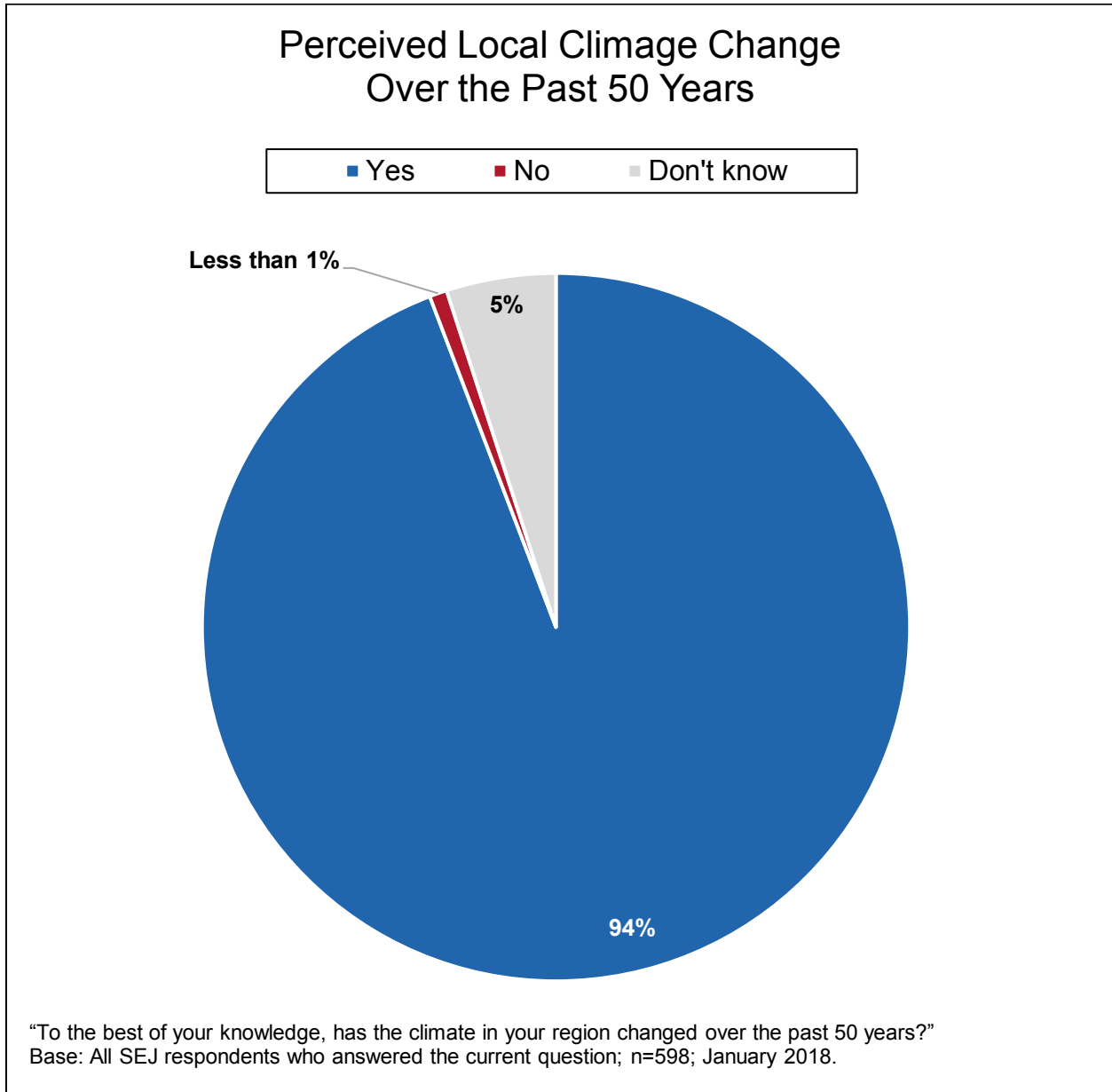


"What do you think: Do you think that global warming is happening?"
 "How sure are you that global warming is happening?"
 "How sure are you that global warming is not happening?"
 Base: All SEJ respondents who provided answers to any of the following questions: "Do you think global warming is happening?" "How sure are you that global warming is happening?" or "How sure are you that global warming is not happening?"; n=597; January 2018.

Perceptions of Local Climate Change

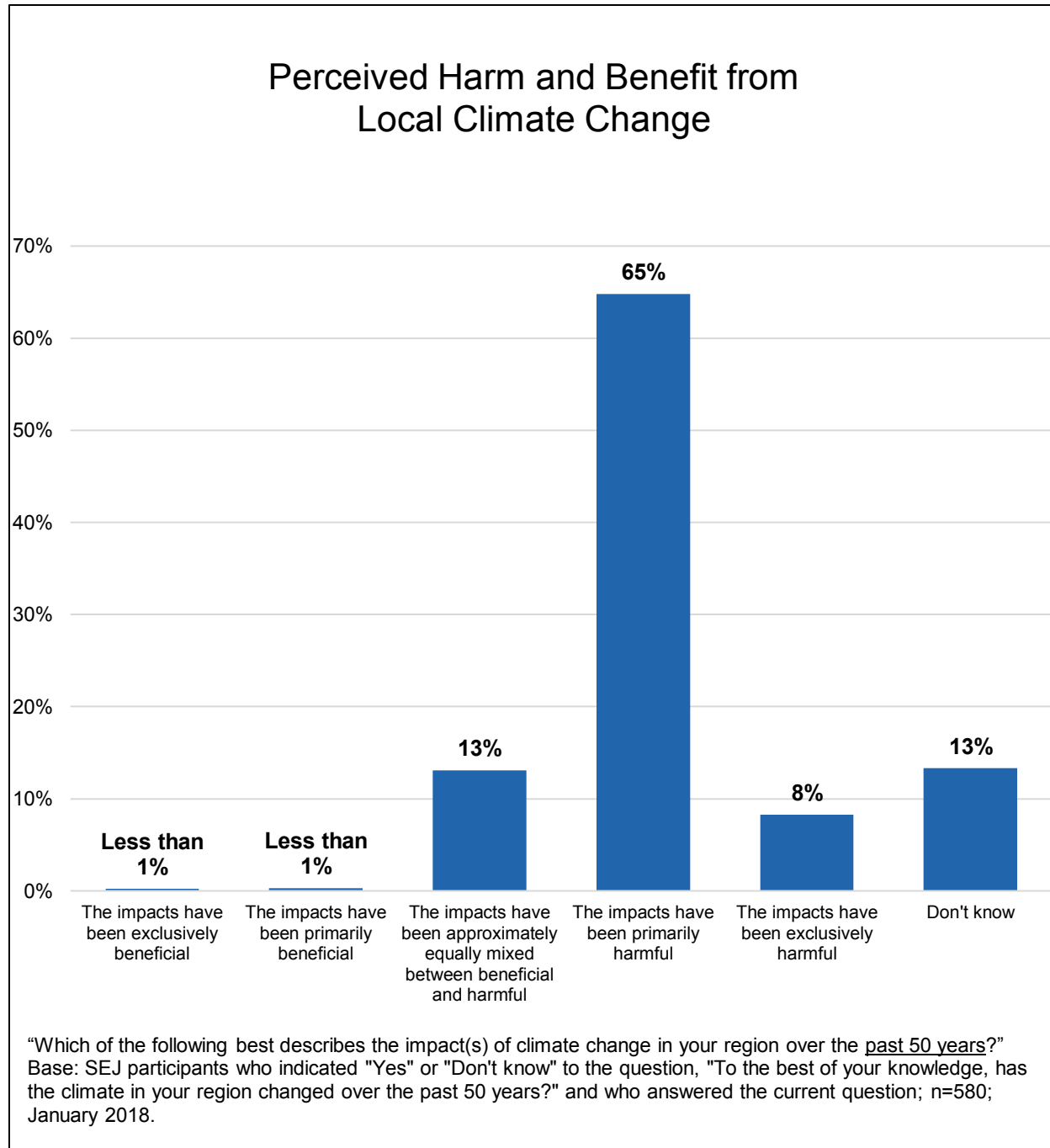
Has the Climate Changed?

Nearly all SEJ survey participants say the climate has changed in their region in the past 50 years.



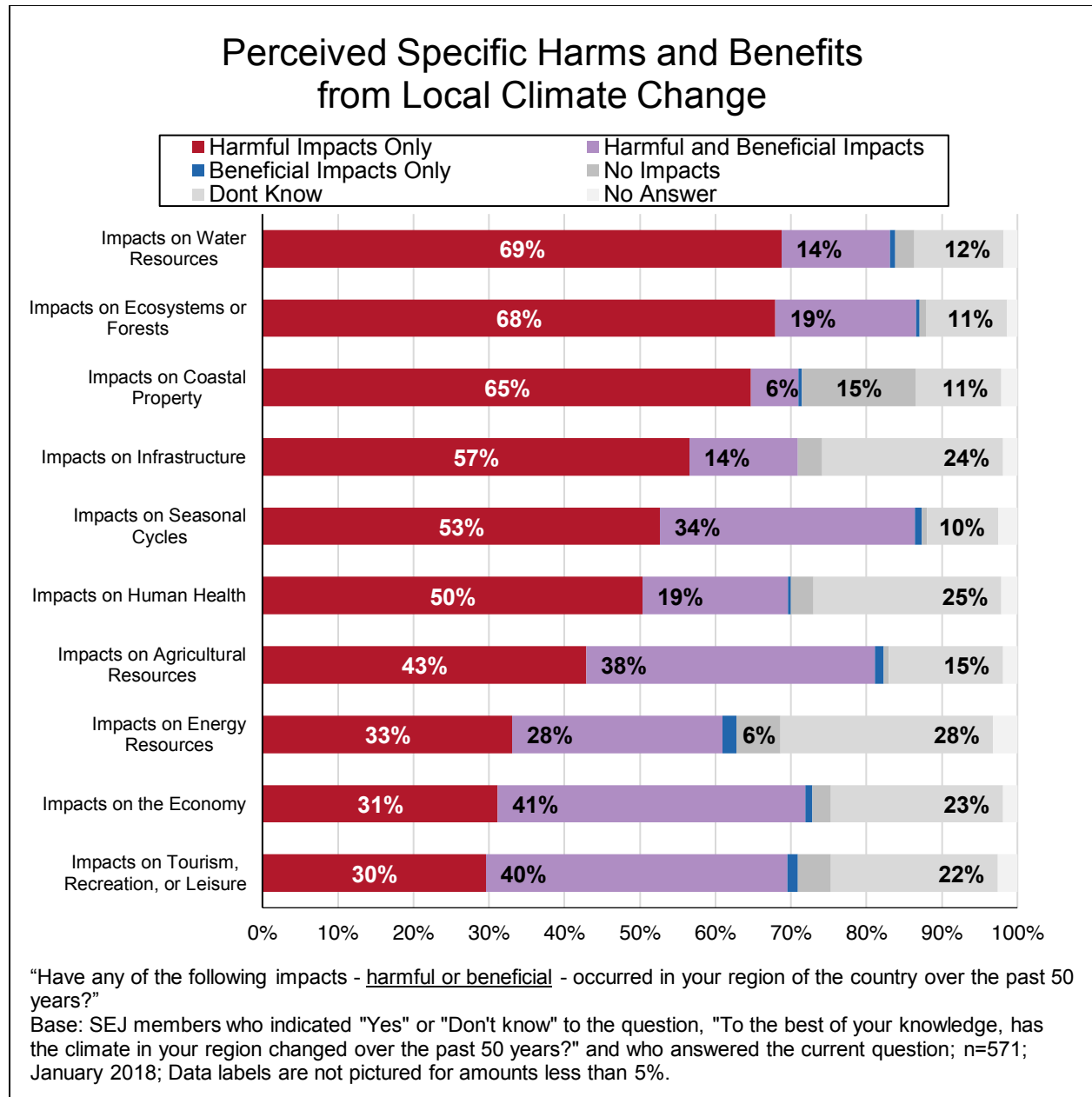
Description of Climate Change Impacts in Region

Among those SEJ survey participants who think the climate has changed in their region over the past half-decade, more than 7 in 10 say the impacts have been primarily or exclusively harmful. Approximately 1 in 10 say the impacts have been approximately equally mixed between beneficial and harmful, while almost none say the impacts have been primarily or exclusively beneficial.



Harmful or Beneficial Impacts

SEJ survey participants who think there have been climate change impacts in their region—whether harmful or beneficial—and those who don’t know were asked about the nature of those impacts. Nearly 70% or more of SEJ participants say there have been harmful impacts on water resources, ecosystems or forests, coastal properties, infrastructure, seasonal cycles, and human health in their region, and half or more feel those impacts were exclusively harmful. The most commonly identified “mixed” impacts—that is, where participants are experiencing both positive and negative impacts—include economic, tourism/recreation/leisure, and agricultural impacts.

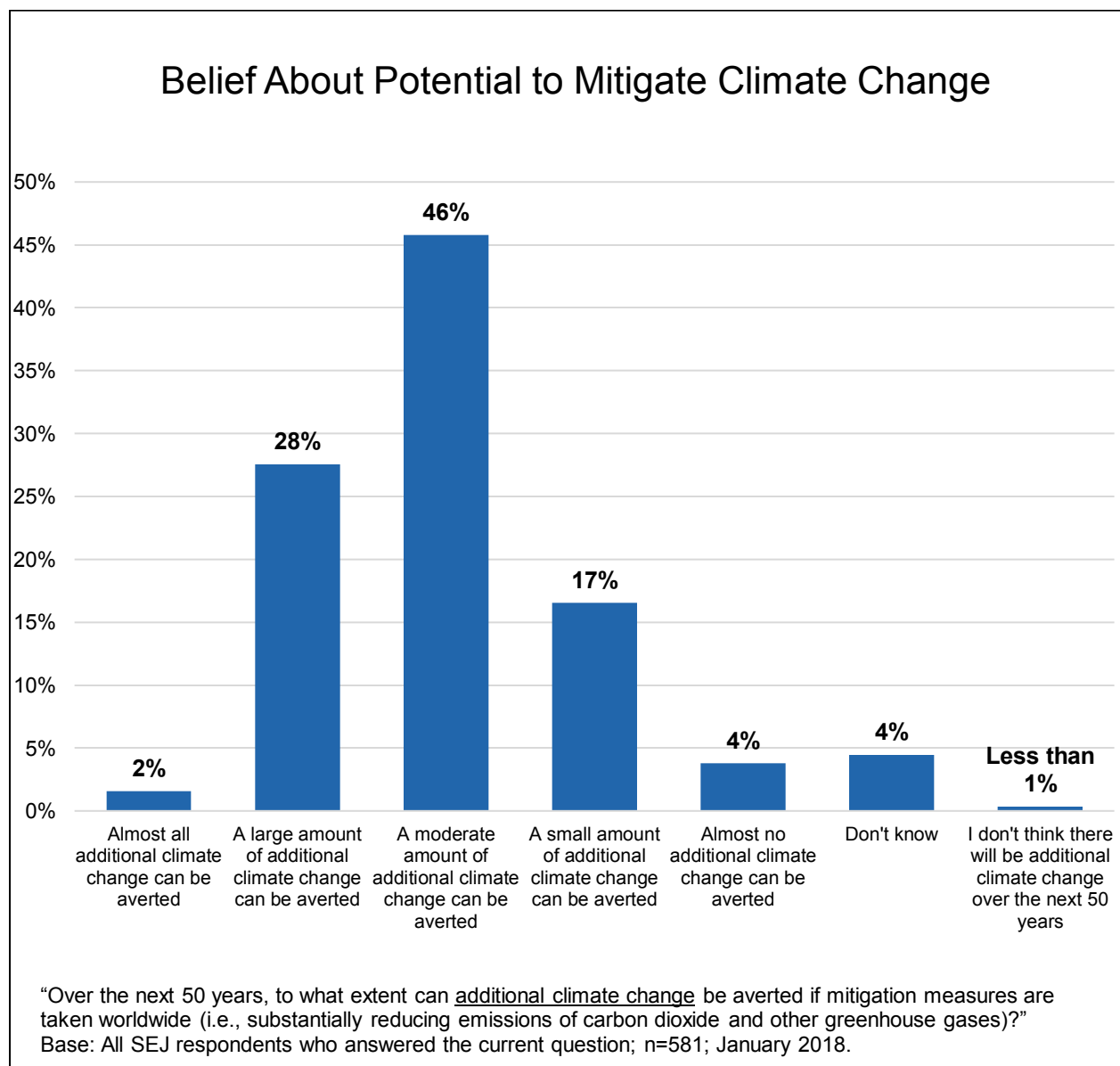


Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The current impacts of climate change are a matter of facts. Future impacts, however, are less certain and will be largely influenced by human decisions and actions going forward. We asked journalists for their views on the extent to which climate change can be prevented, and harm averted, if appropriate actions are taken.

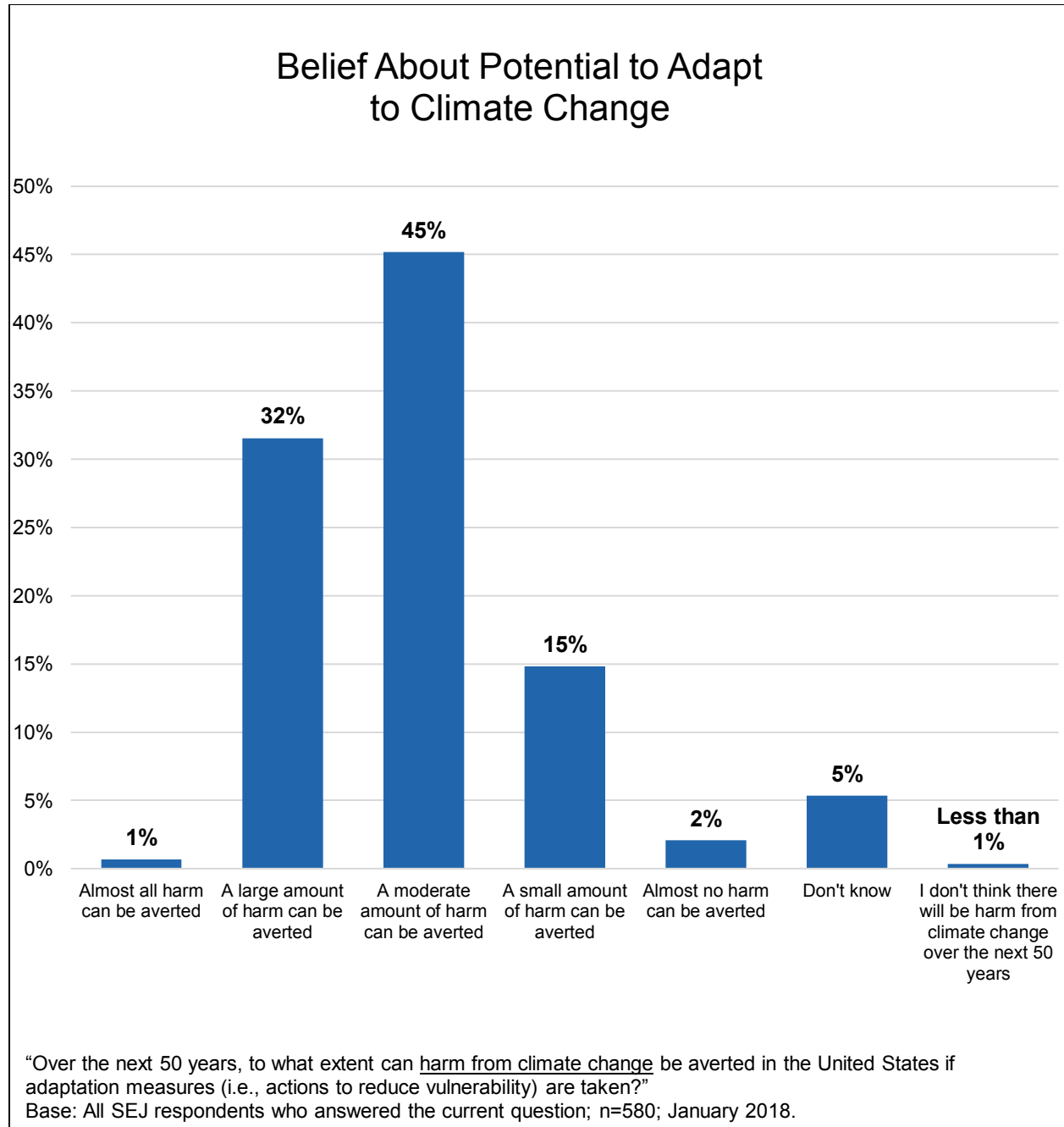
Averting Additional Climate Change

More than 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants think that at least some amount of additional climate change can be averted over the next 50 years if mitigation measures are taken worldwide; about 3 out of 4 think a moderate or large amount of climate change can be averted.



Averting Harm from Climate Change

More than 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants think at least some harm from climate change can be averted in the United States over the next 50 years if adaptation measures are taken, while more than 3 out of 4 think a moderate or large amount of harm can be averted.

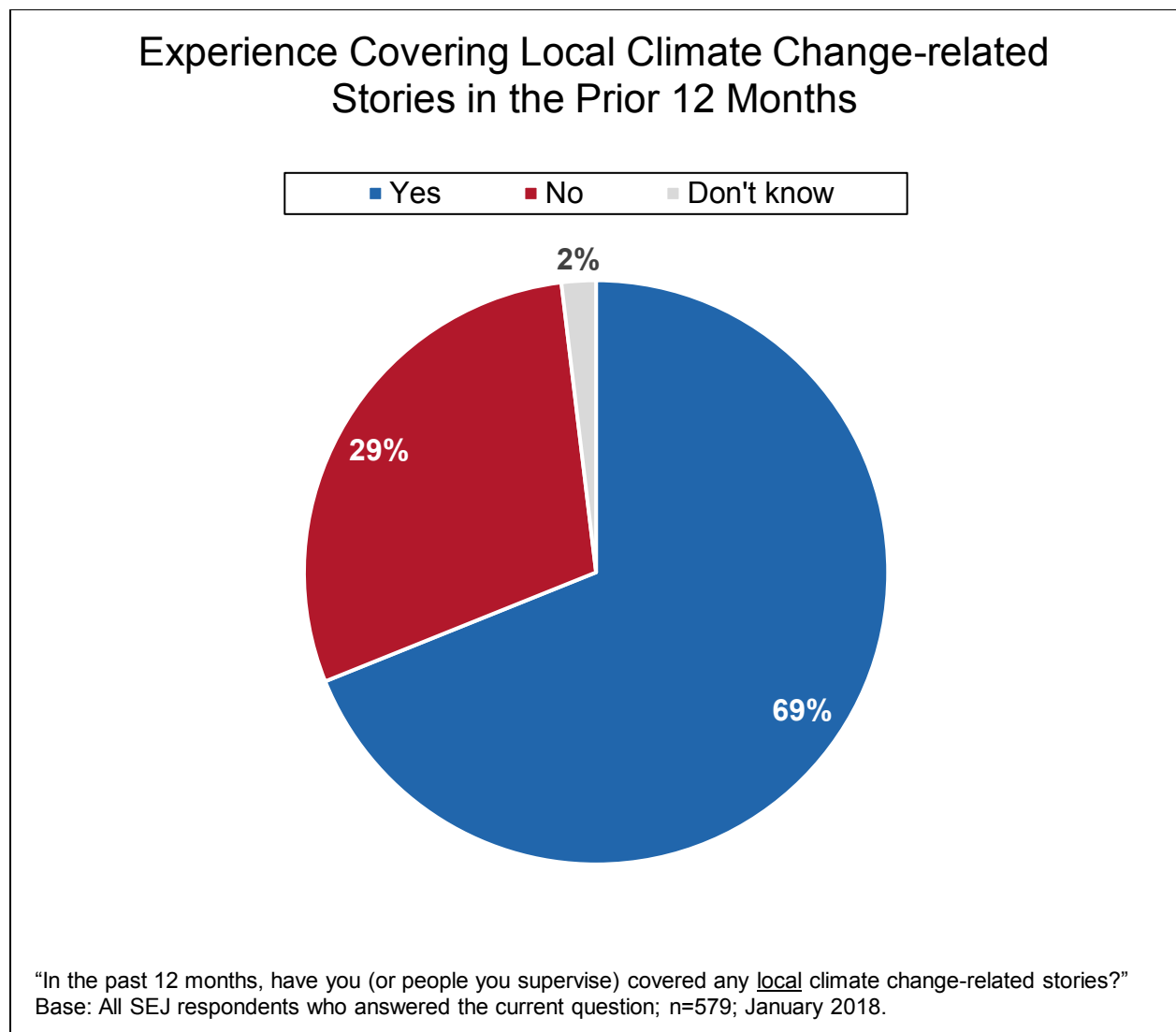


Local Climate Change Coverage: Experience, Interest, and Expectations

Surveys of the public reveal that most Americans don't read or hear much about climate change in the media. Central to the purpose of our survey is determining SEJ members' level of interest in reporting on climate change, and how much they are currently doing. To that end, we asked a number of questions about SEJ members' experiences, interests, and expectations regarding climate change reporting, especially local stories.

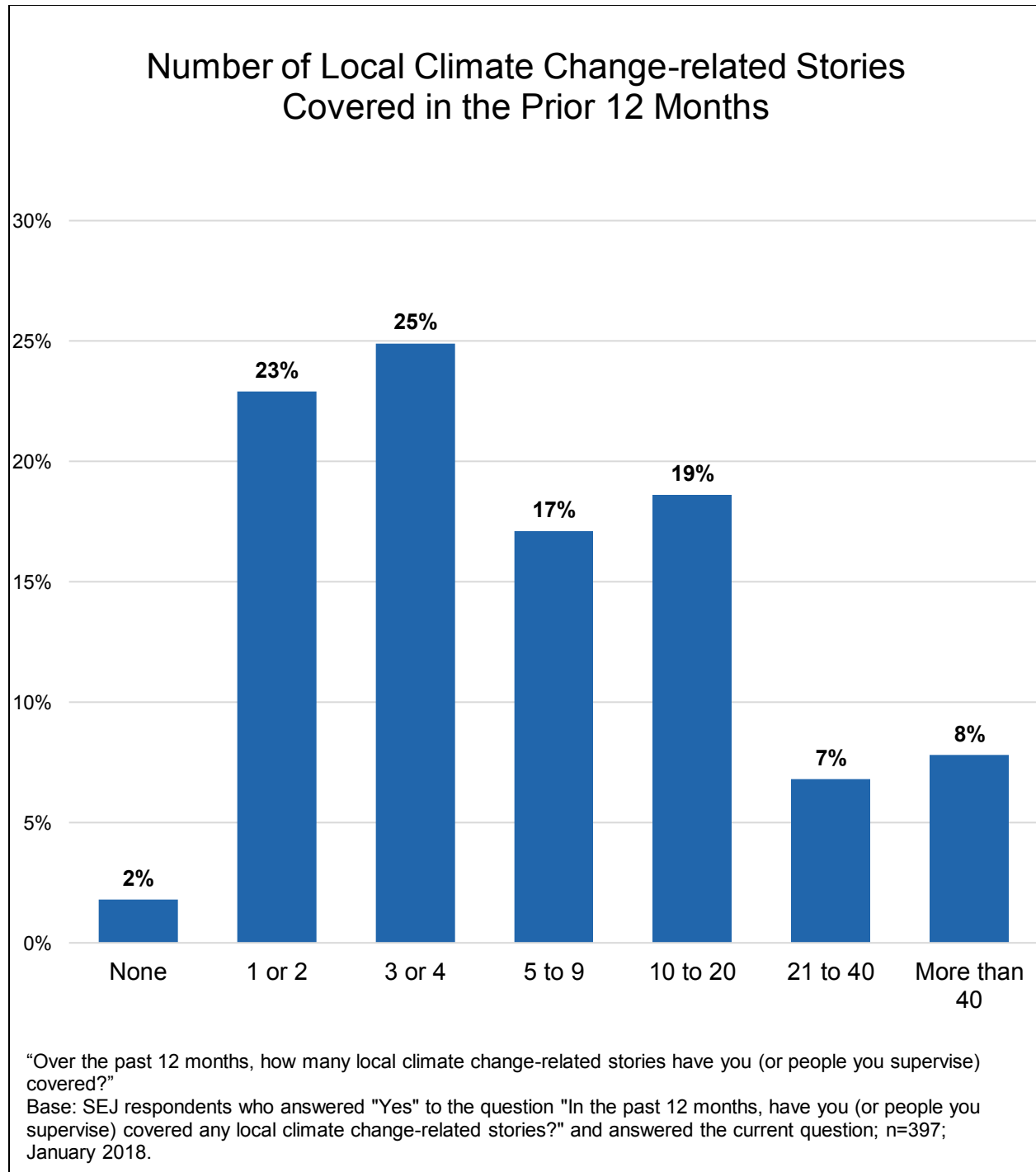
Experience Covering Local Climate Change

Nearly 7 out of 10 SEJ survey participants had reported on—or supervised journalists reporting on—a local climate change-related story in the prior 12 months.



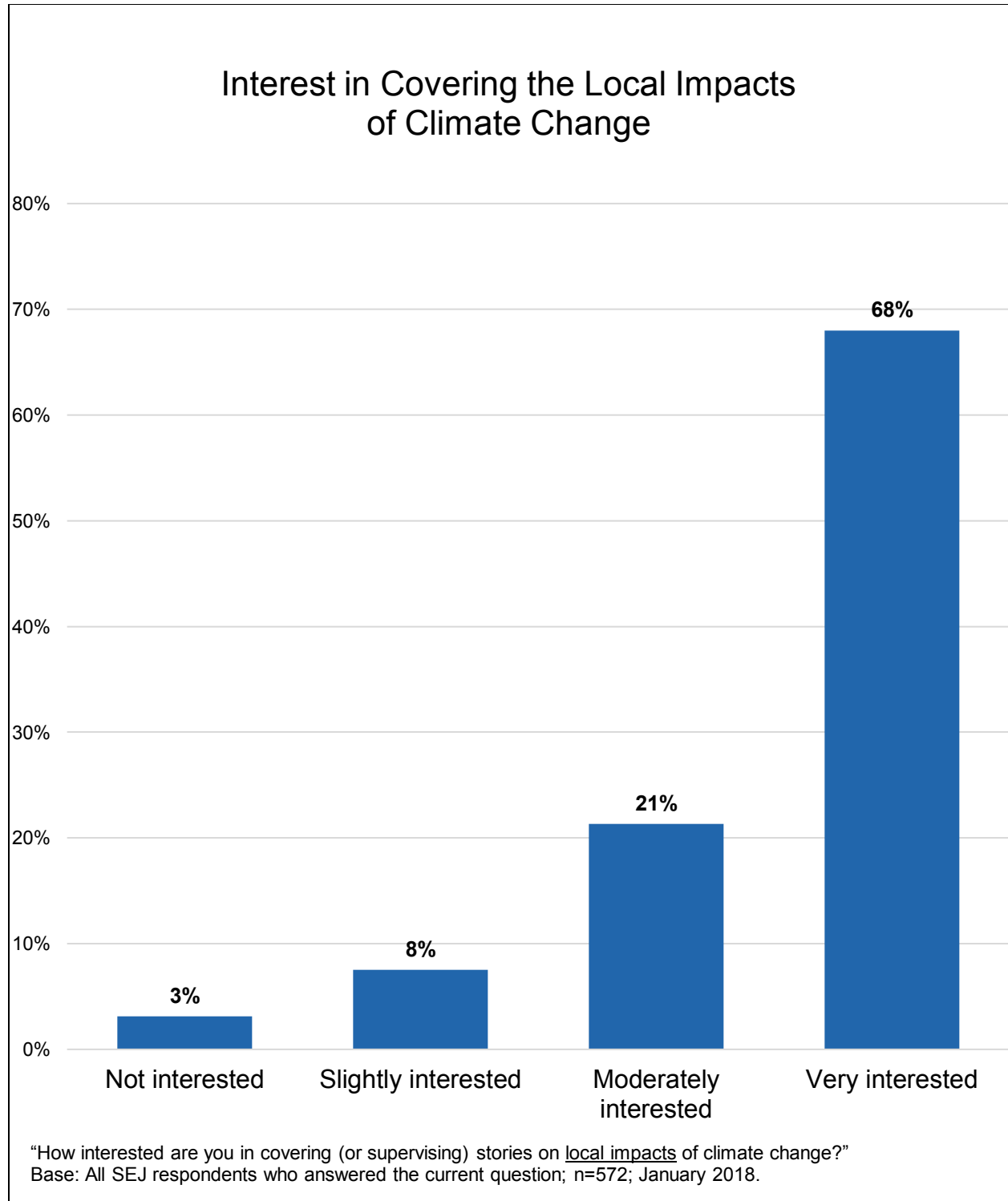
Frequency of Covering Local Climate Change

Of those SEJ members who had reported or supervised at least one local climate change-related story in the past 12 months, approximately half had reported four or fewer stories during the period, while the other half had reported five or more stories, with nearly 1 out of 10 having reported or supervised more than 40 stories.



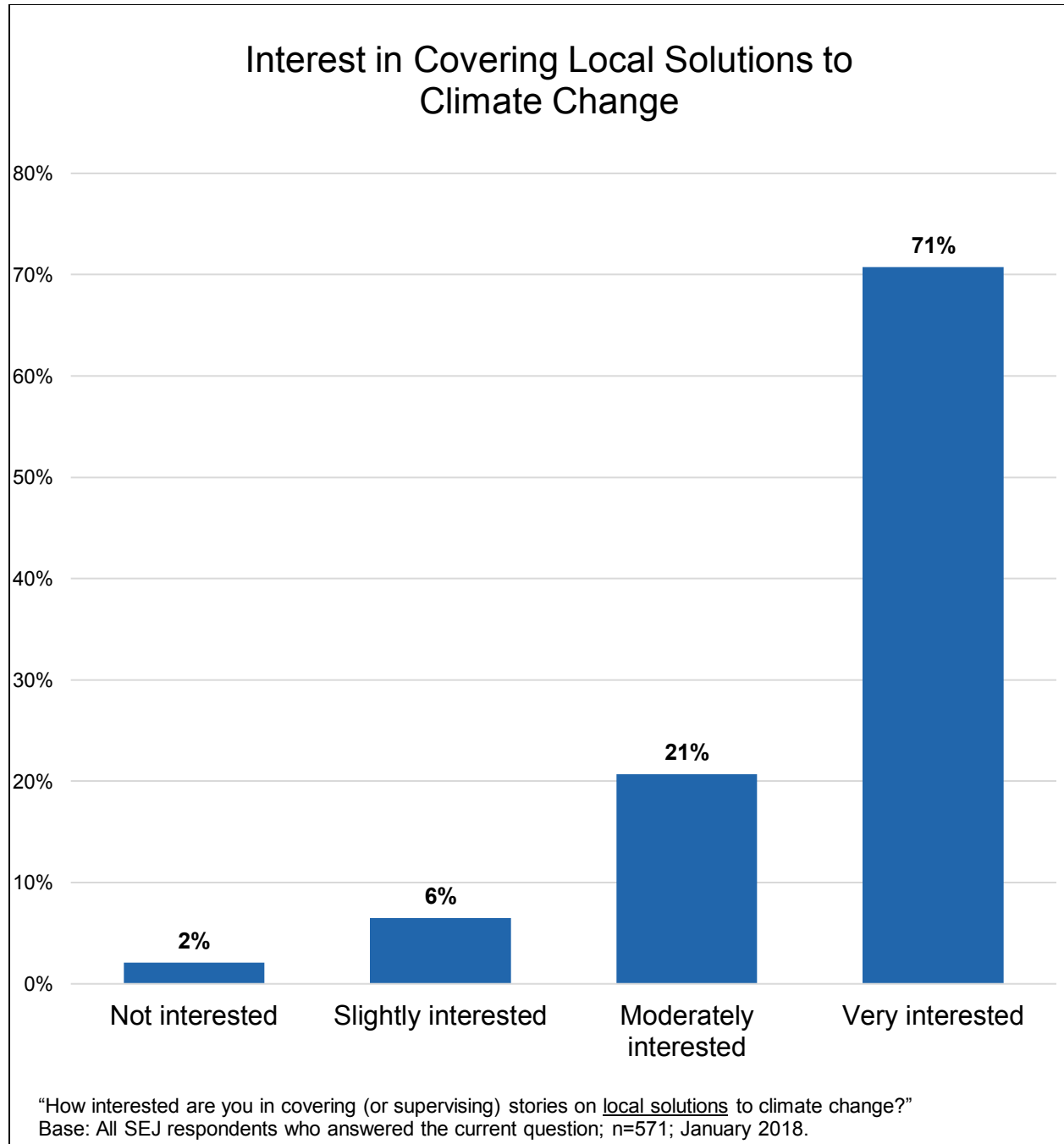
Interest in Reporting on Local Impacts of Climate Change

Nearly all SEJ survey participants say they are at least slightly interested in reporting local climate impacts stories, with nearly 7 out of 10 saying they are very interested.



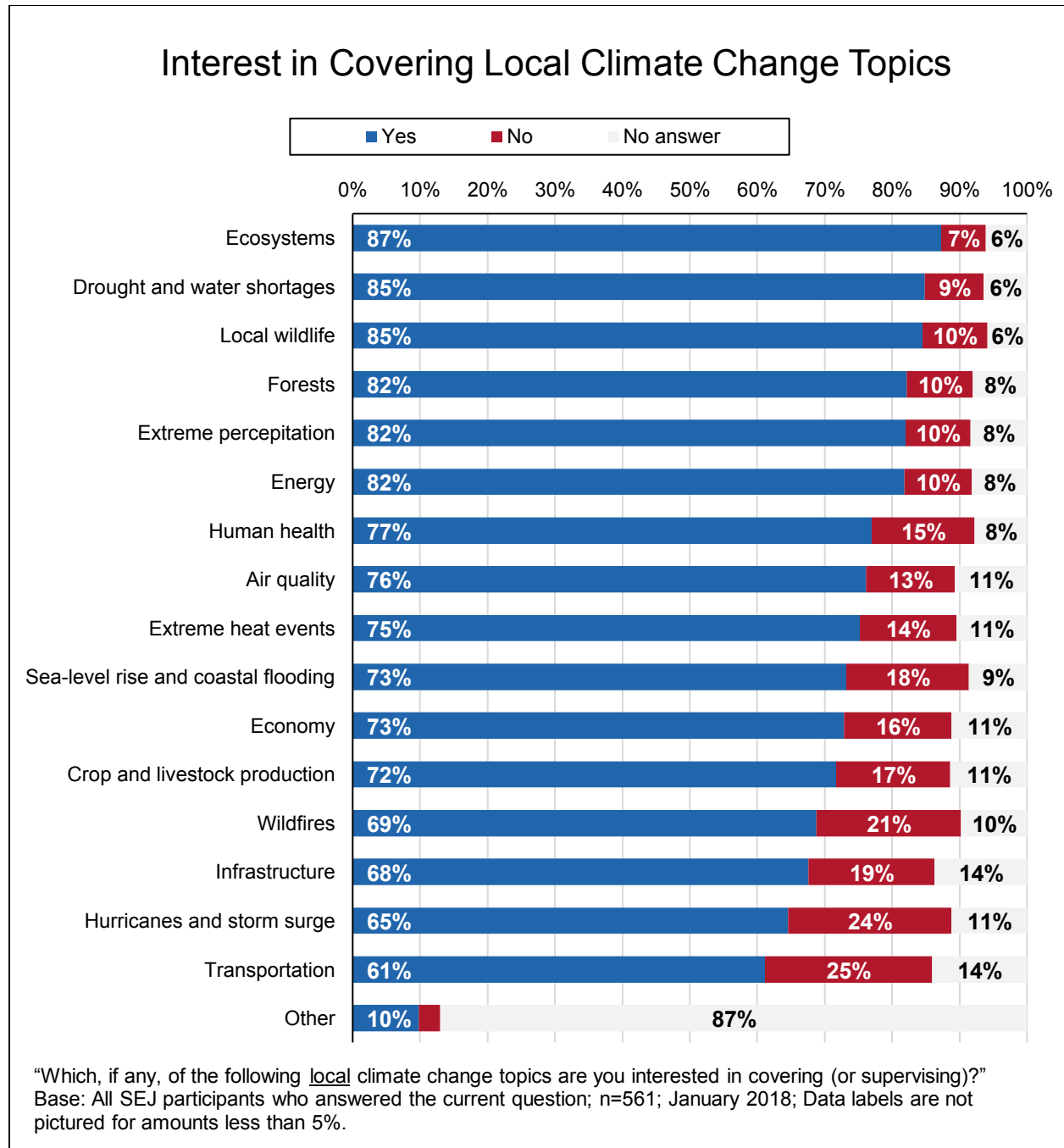
Interest in Reporting on Local Solutions to Climate Change

Nearly all SEJ survey participants say they are at least slightly interested in reporting on local climate solutions stories, with more than 7 out of 10 saying they are very interested.



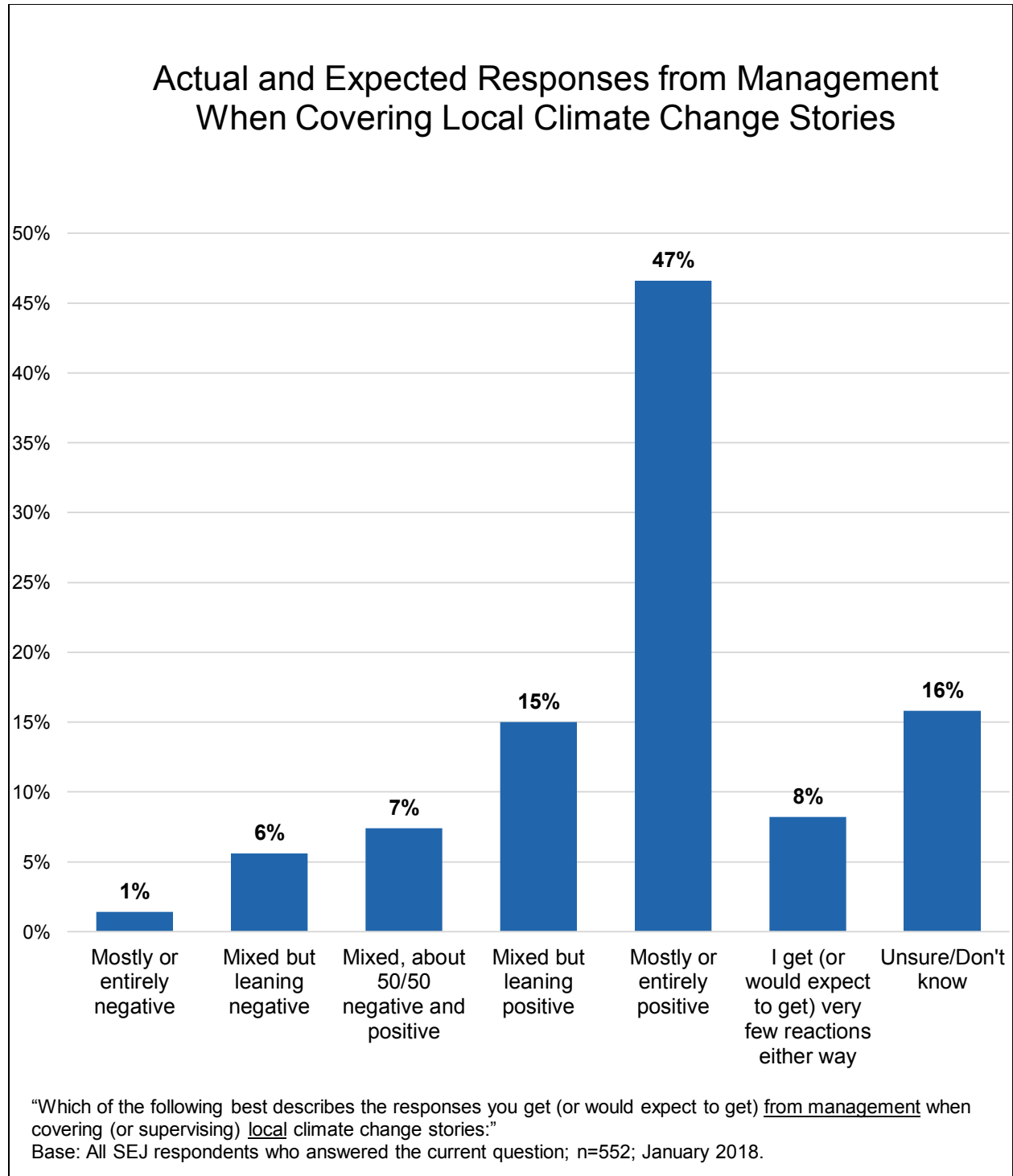
Interest in Local Climate Change Topics

Most SEJ participants say they are interested in covering or supervising a wide range of local climate change stories. The highest level of interest is for stories focused on ecosystems, droughts and water shortages, local wildlife, forests, extreme precipitation, and energy—more than 8 out of 10 are interested in reporting on these topics. Other topics with high levels of interest include human health, air quality, extreme heat events, sea-level rise and coastal flooding, the economy, and crop and livestock production—with more than 7 out of 10 interested in reporting on these topics.



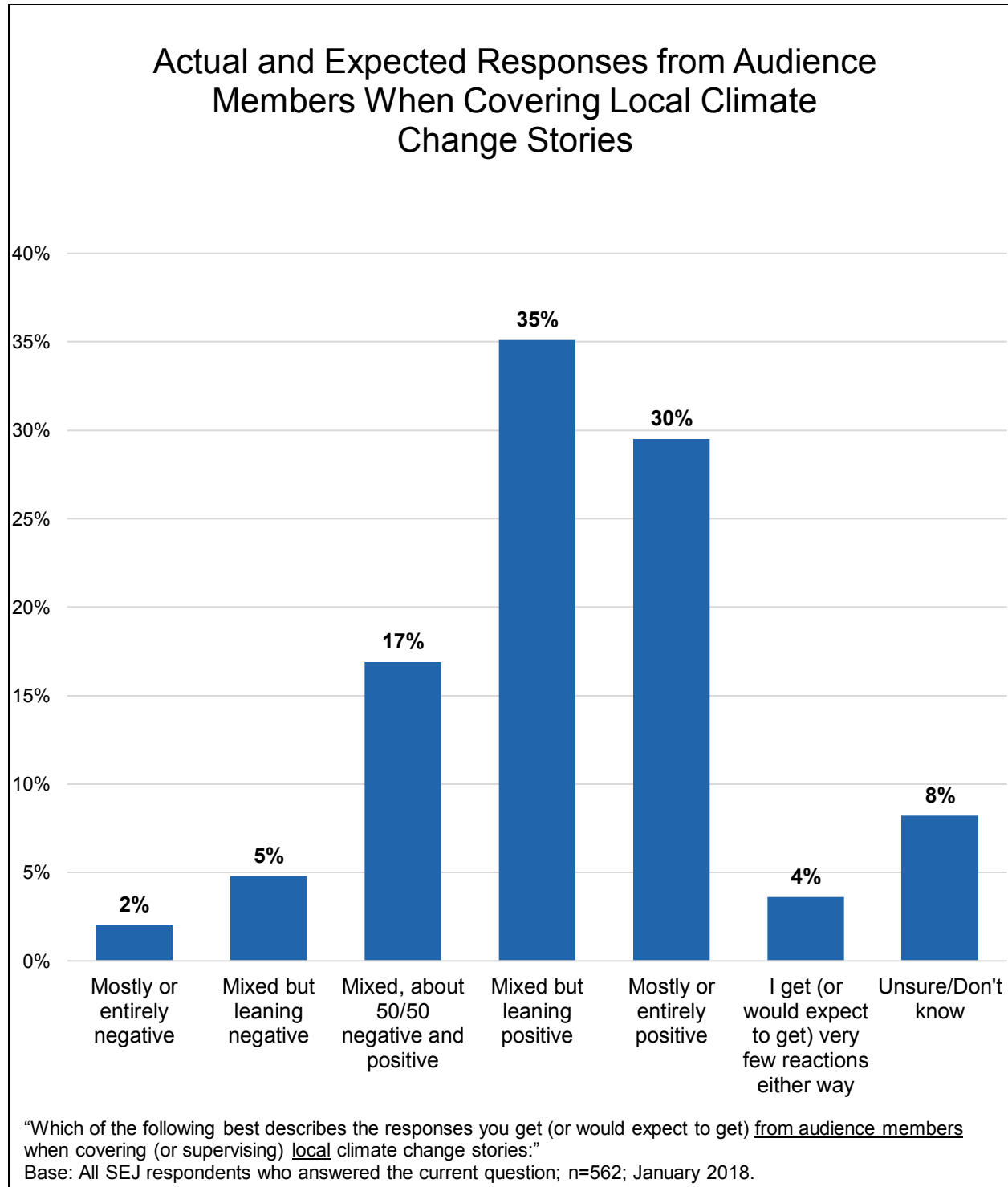
Expected Responses from Management

Nearly two-thirds of SEJ participants receive—or expect—largely positive responses from management when covering or supervising local climate change stories. Only 7% receive—or expect—largely negative responses from management.



Expected Responses from Audience

Nearly 2 out of 3 SEJ survey participants receive—or expect—largely positive responses from their audience when covering or supervising local climate change stories. Only 7% receive—or expect—largely negative responses from their audience.

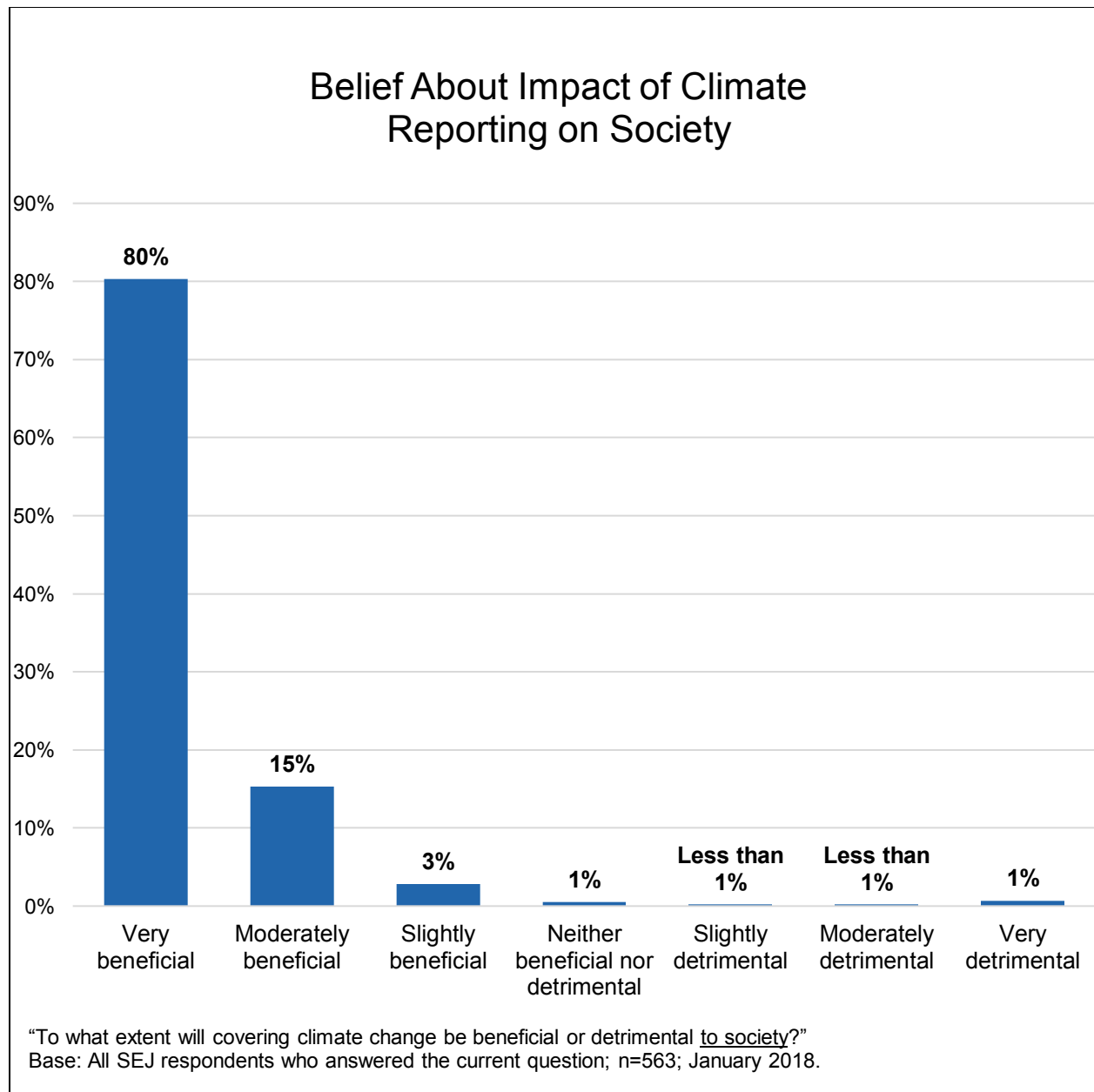


Impacts of Covering Climate Change

Journalists—like all professionals—are likely to consider the impact of their work decisions on the broader community of which they are a part. We asked SEJ members what they see to be the likely consequences of reporting on climate change.

Impact on Society

Nearly all SEJ survey participants feel that reporting on climate change will be beneficial to society, with 4 of 5 saying it will be very beneficial.



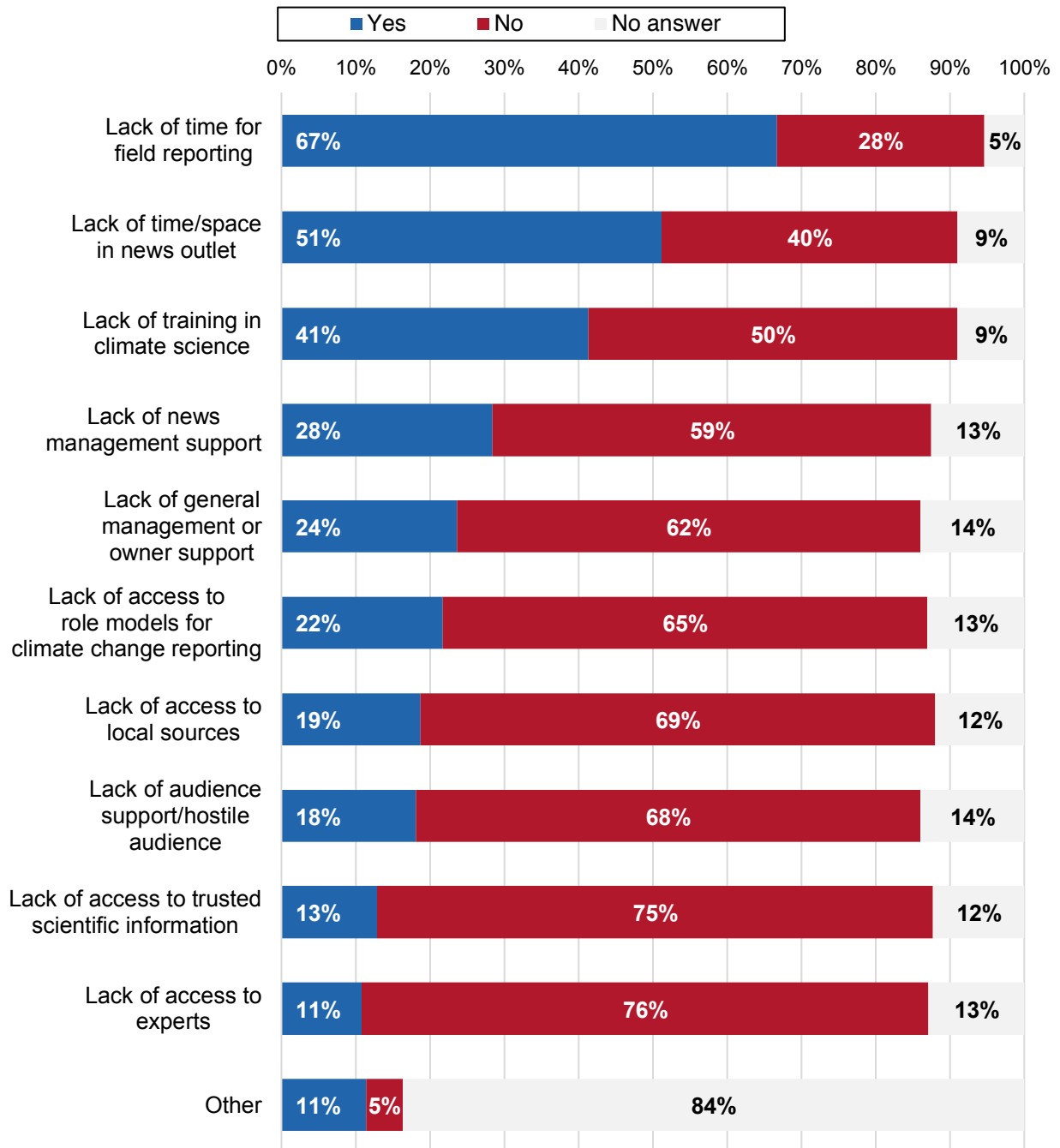
Obstacles to Covering Climate Change

Behavioral science research consistently shows that—across a broad range of beneficial behaviors—many people fail to perform beneficial behaviors not because they don't see value in them, but rather because they find the behaviors to be difficult to perform. Identifying what makes a behavior difficult to perform—that is, identifying the obstacles to behavioral performance—can lead to important insights about how to design resources that make the behavior easier to perform.

Most Frequent Obstacles to Covering Climate Change

Fully two-thirds of SEJ participants identify lack of time for field reporting as an important obstacle in reporting on climate change, making this their most common obstacle. Half also identify lack of time or space in their news outlet as an obstacle, and over 4 out of 10 identify lack of training in climate science as an obstacle (even though more than 9 out of 10 feel they know the science of climate change somewhat, moderately, or very well). Fewer participants identify lack of news management support, general management or owner support, and lack of access to role models as important obstacles to climate change reporting.

Perceived Obstacles to Reporting on Climate Change

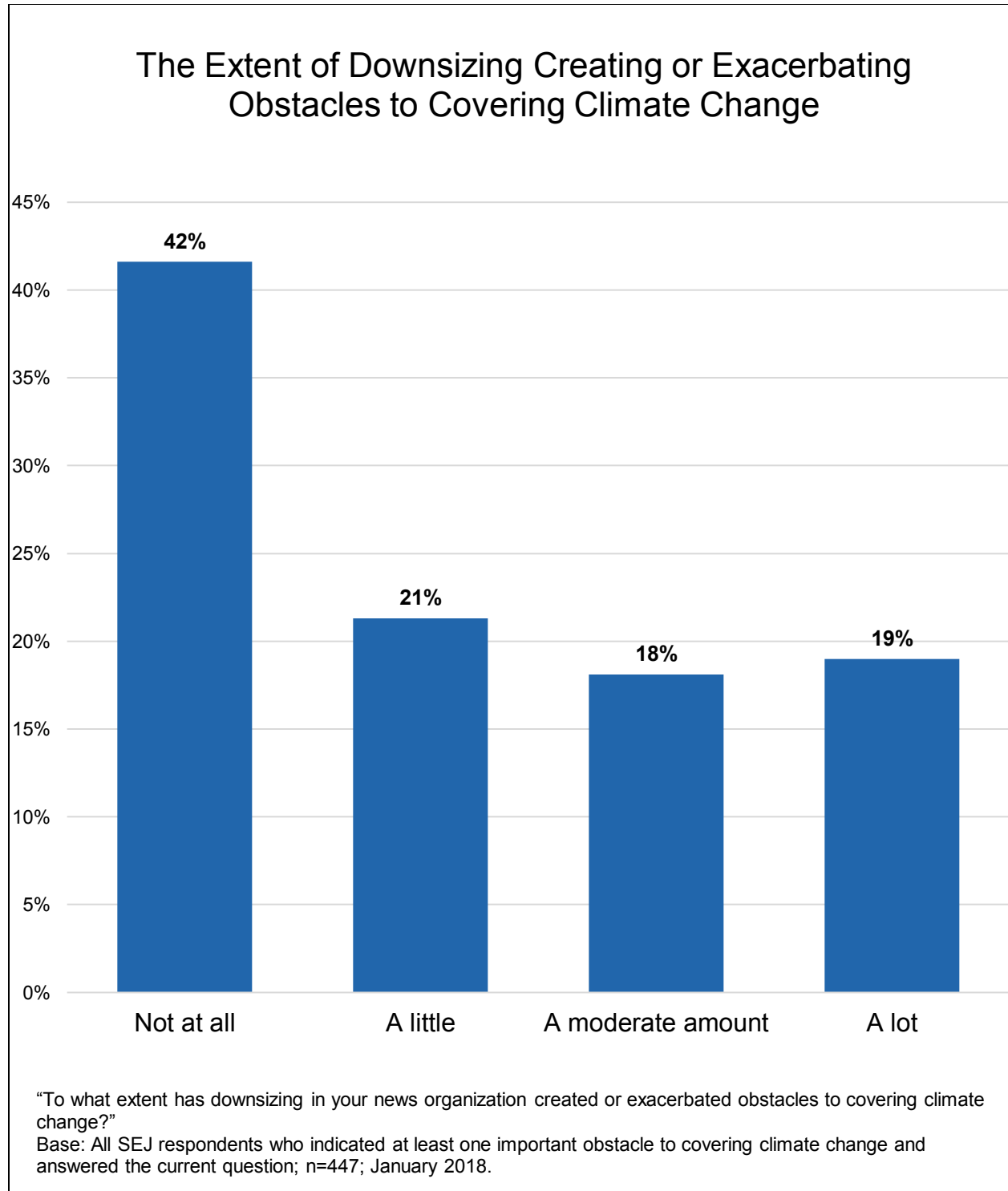


“Which of the following, if any, are important obstacles for you in covering climate change (or supervising others)?”

Base: SEJ participants who have covered (or supervised) a local climate change-related story in the past 12 months, or who indicated interest in reporting on local impacts or solutions to climate change and who answered the current question; n=535; January 2018.

Is Downsizing an Obstacle?

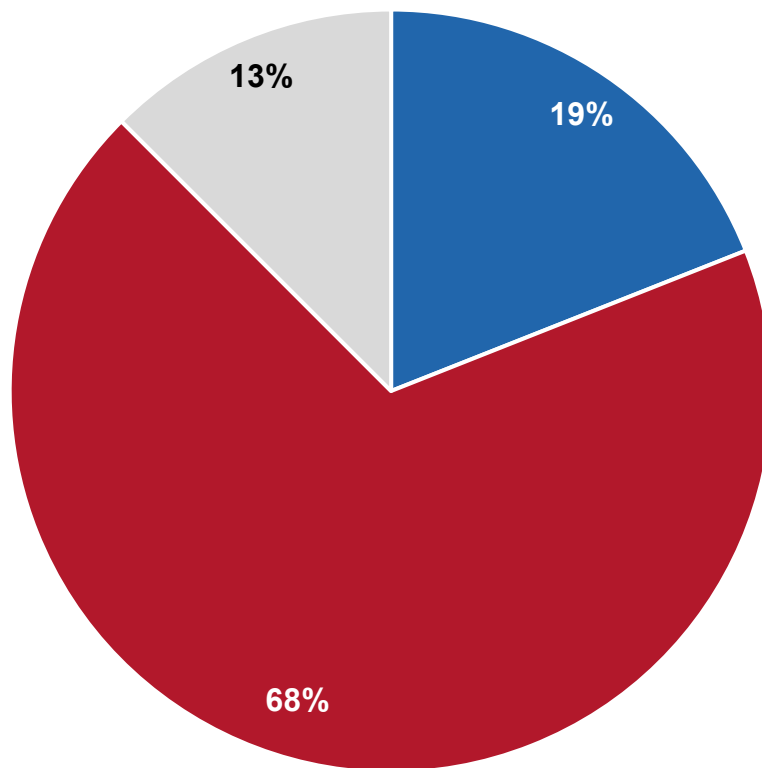
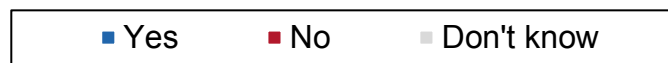
Nearly 6 out of 10 SEJ survey participants think downsizing in their news organization has created or exacerbated obstacles to reporting on climate change, with about 2 out of 10 saying this has occurred “a lot” in their news organization.



Is Management an Obstacle?

Almost 1 in 5 SEJ survey participants say they have experienced at least one instance where management softened or censored a climate change-related story that they had personally reported or supervised. We asked a follow-up question to those who had this experience: “In what way(s) has management ever softened or censored a story you covered (or supervised) related to climate change?” These open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.

Management's Censorship and Softening of Climate Change-related Stories

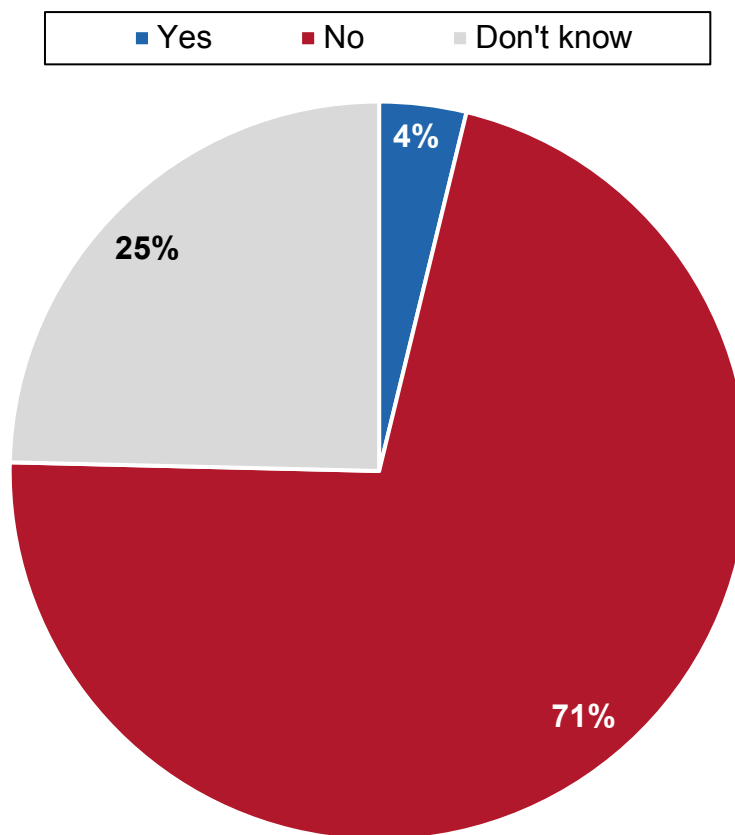


“Has management ever softened or censored a story you covered (or supervised) related to climate change?”
Base: All SEJ respondents who indicated a lack of support from news management, general management, or owner as an obstacle to climate reporting, and who answered the current question; n=168; January 2018.

Is Management an Obstacle for Colleagues?

Interestingly, given the higher prevalence of personally experiencing the situation, only 4% of SEJ survey participants say they have ever seen management soften or censor a colleague's climate change reporting. We asked a follow-up question to those who had: "In what way(s) has management ever softened or censored a story a colleague covered (or supervised) related to climate change?" These open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.

Management's Censorship and Softening of Colleague's Climate Change-related Stories

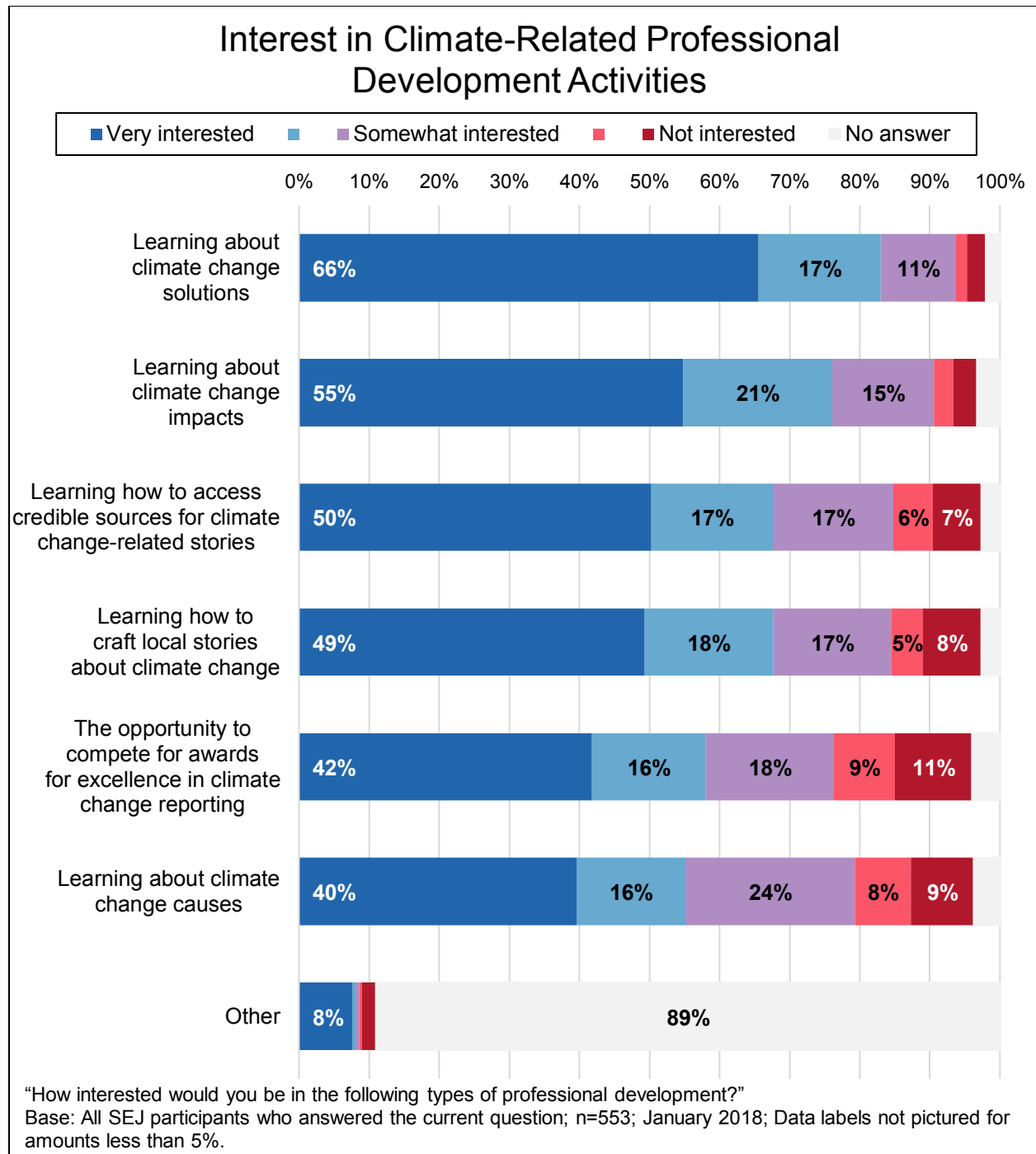


"Have you seen management soften or censor a story a colleague covered (or supervised) related to climate change?"

Base: All SEJ respondents who indicated lack of general management or owner support or lack of news management support as an obstacle and have not personally experienced management softening or censoring a story related to climate change, and who answered the current question; n=130; January 2018.

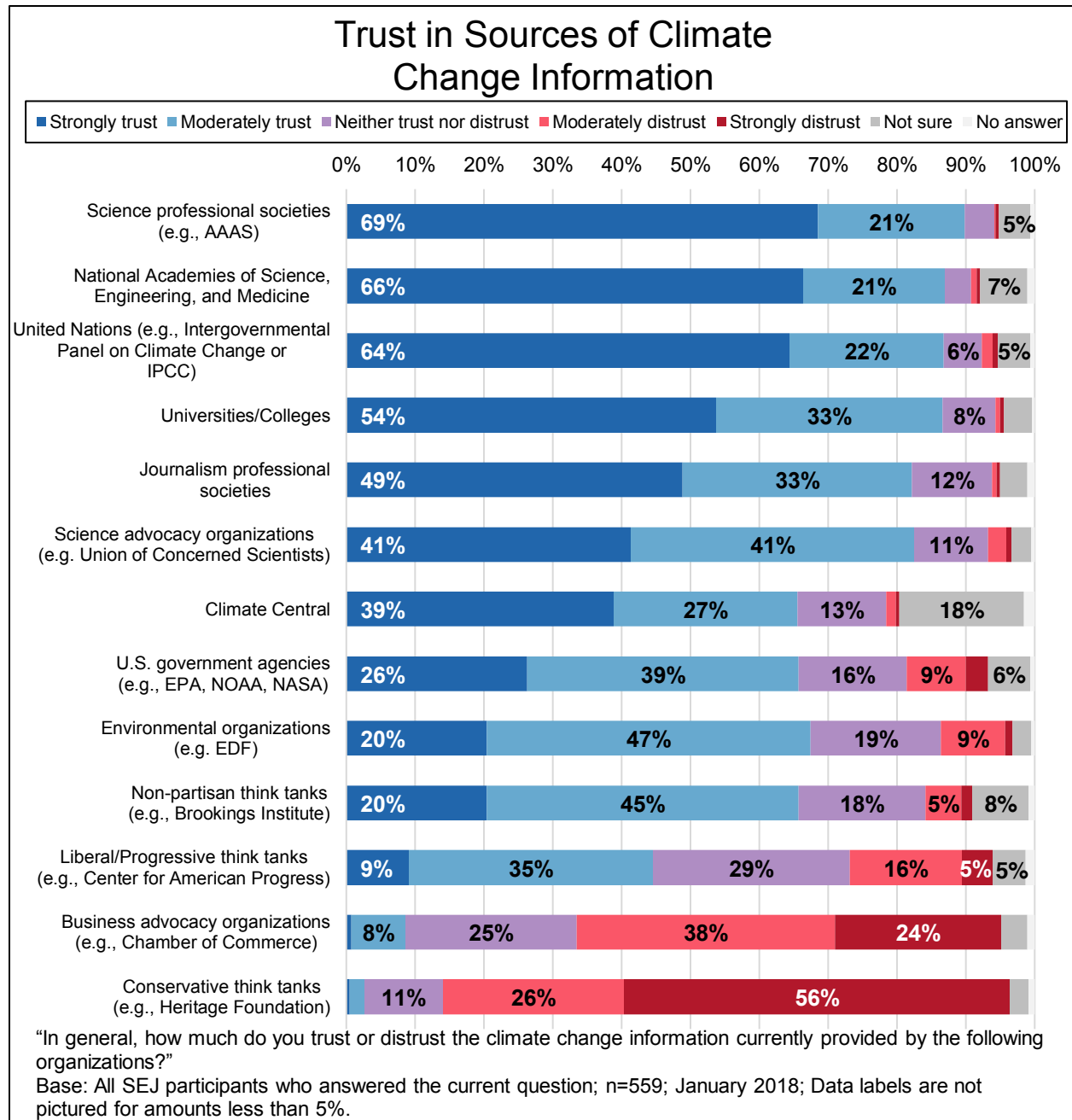
Professional Development on Climate Change

Well over half of SEJ survey participants are interested in a range of professional development activities related to climate change reporting. The professional development activities of greatest interest are learning about climate change solutions, followed by learning about climate change impacts, learning how to access credible sources of climate stories, and learning how to craft local climate stories.



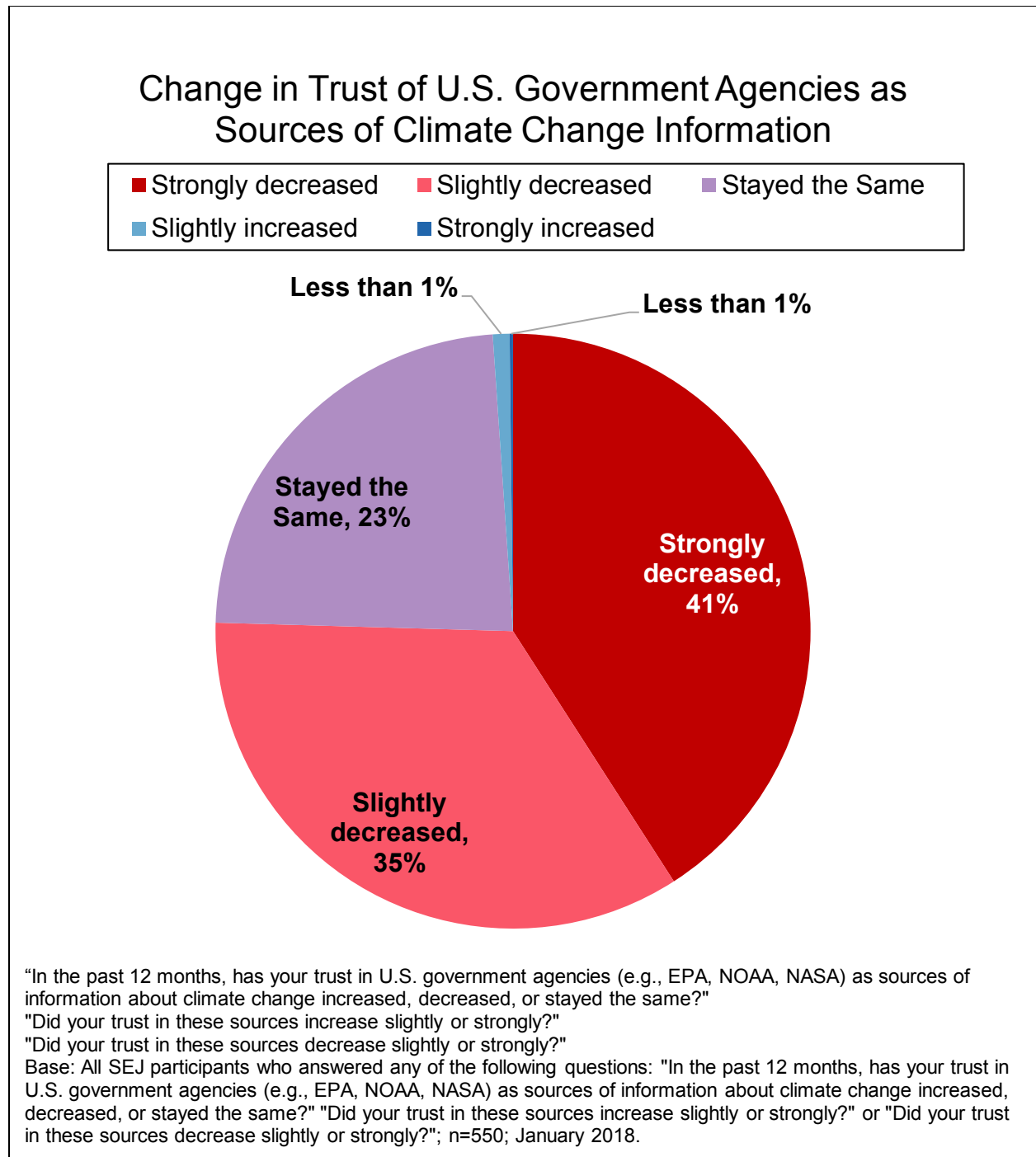
Trust in Sources of Climate Change Information

SEJ survey participants tend to most trust the climate information provided by independent science organizations—including professional science societies, the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, and the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Universities and journalism professional societies are also highly trusted by about half of the survey participants. In comparison, think tanks (liberal, conservative, or non-partisan) and advocacy organizations (both business and environmental) are highly trusted by relatively few.



Change in Trust of Government Institutions?

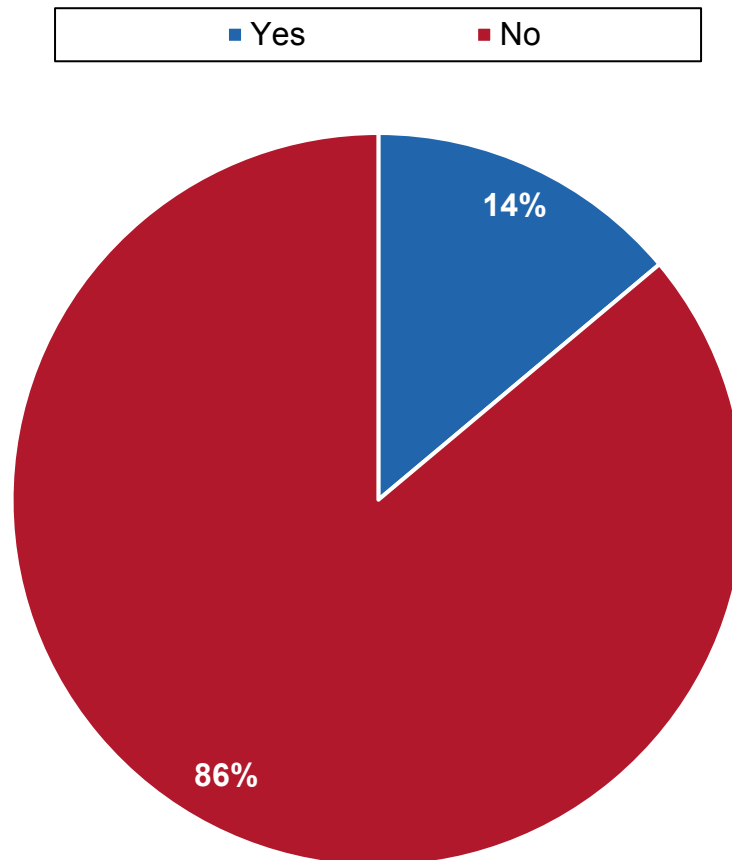
More than 3 out of 4 SEJ survey participants say their trust in U.S. government agencies as sources of information about climate change has decreased over the prior 12 months, coinciding with the first year of the Trump administration. Those participants who say they had experienced decreased (and increased) trust were asked: “Did your trust in these sources decrease (increase) slightly or strongly?” A small majority of these participants said their trust had decreased strongly.



Avoidance of the Terms Global Warming and Climate Change

Fourteen percent of SEJ survey participants who had covered or supervised climate change stories in the past year say they purposely avoided using the terms “global warming” or “climate change” on at least one occasion. In a follow-up question, we asked them why they did so. These open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.

Avoiding the Terms "Global Warming" and "Climate Change" When Covering Climate Change Stories



"When you covered (or supervised) climate change stories in the past 12 months, did you ever purposely exclude the terms "global warming" or "climate change"?"

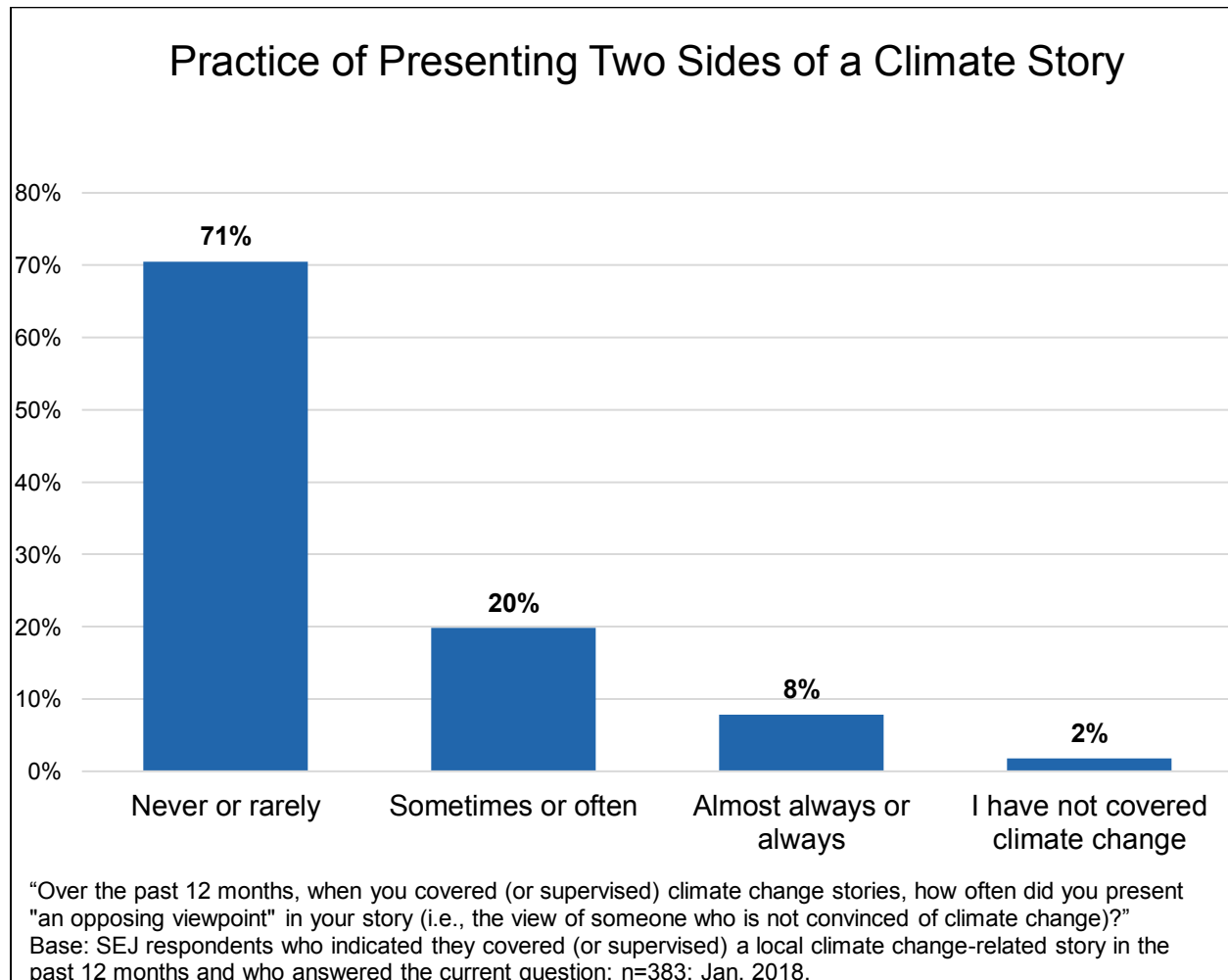
Base: SEJ respondents who covered or supervised local climate change-related stories in the past 12 months and who answered the current question; n=389; January 2018.

Presenting Opposing Viewpoints: Practices and Attitudes

Balance is the professional norm used by some journalists to ensure their reporting remains objective, by including spokespersons on conflicting sides of a debate and by giving equal time and weight to both sides of a story. A ‘false balance’ occurs when this approach is taken despite a weight of evidence strongly favoring one side over another. In effect, such ‘false balance’ has the potential to perpetrate an information bias. Scholars suggest that journalistic accounts of human-caused climate change that include an opposing viewpoint are presenting a false balance.

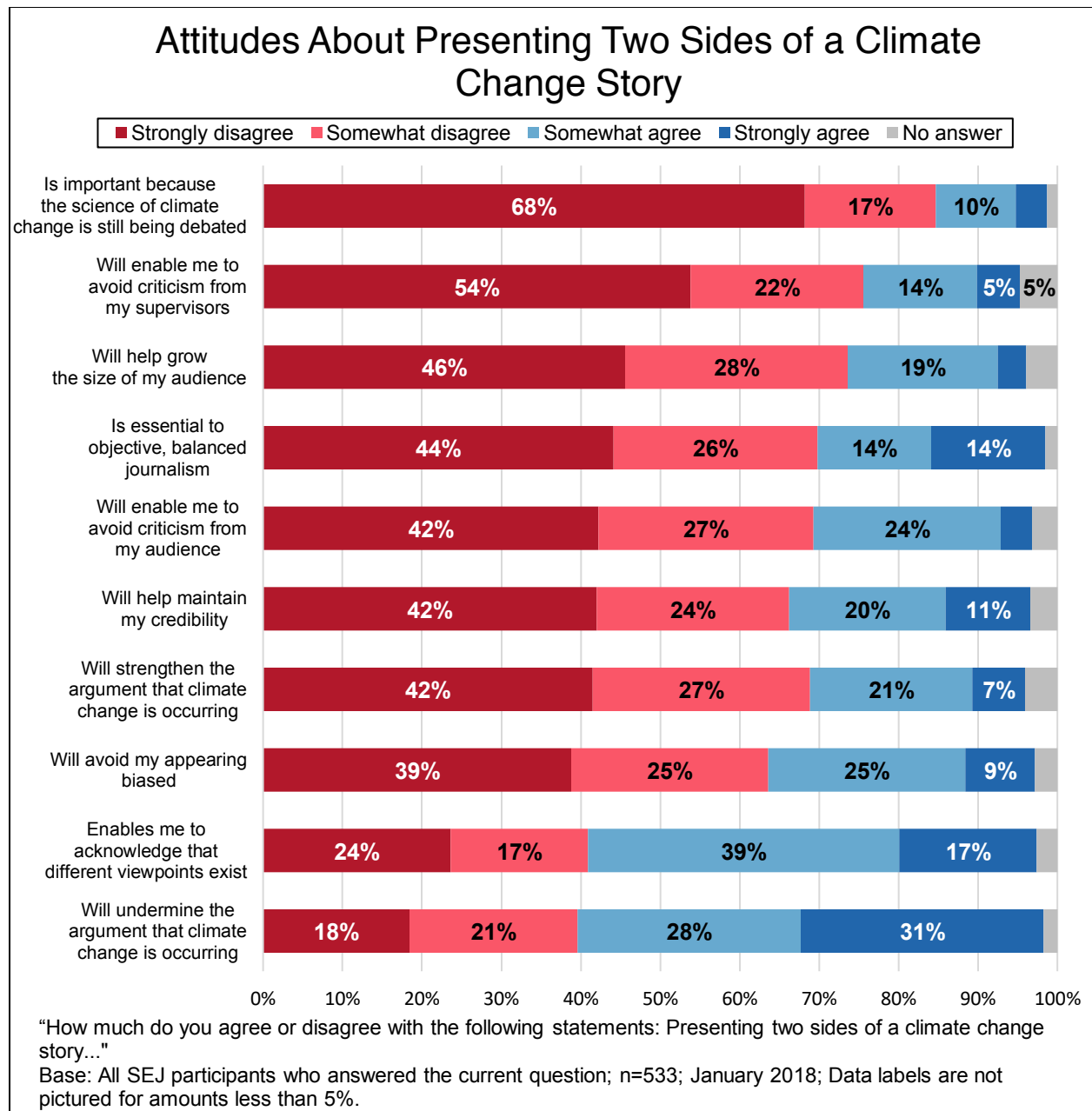
The Practice of Presenting Opposing Viewpoints

More than 7 out of 10 SEJ survey participants who had covered climate change stories over the past year say they rarely or never presented an opposing view point (i.e., someone not convinced of climate change). Conversely, 2 in 10 say they did so sometimes or often, and nearly 1 in 10 say they did so almost always or always. In a follow-up question, we asked them why they did so. These open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.



Attitudes about Presenting Two Sides to a Climate Change Story

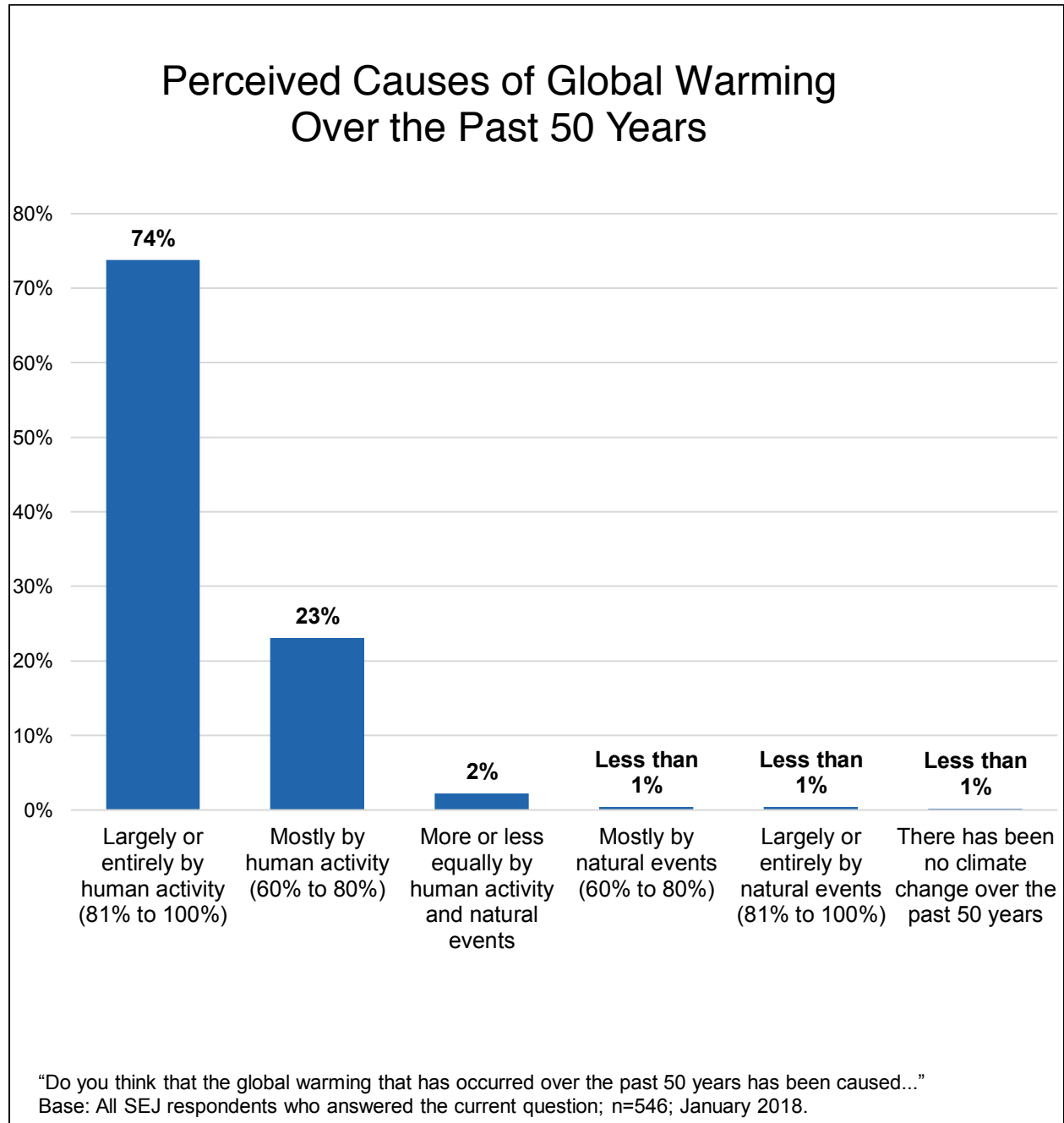
While nearly all SEJ members are convinced that human-caused climate change is occurring, many feel that reporting two sides of a climate change story is advantageous for one or more reasons. For example, approximately 3 in 10 feel that doing so will: avoid the impression of biased reporting; help maintain the journalist’s credibility; avoid audience criticism; and is essential to objective journalism. Approximately 3 in 10 also feel that this practice strengthens the argument that climate change is occurring, and almost one quarter feel it will help them reach more people (i.e., grow the size of their audience). However, nearly 6 in 10 SEJ survey participants feel that this practice undermines the argument that climate change is occurring, and 85% disagree that the practice “is important because the science of climate change is still being debated.”



Additional Beliefs, Attitudes and Experiences with Global Warming

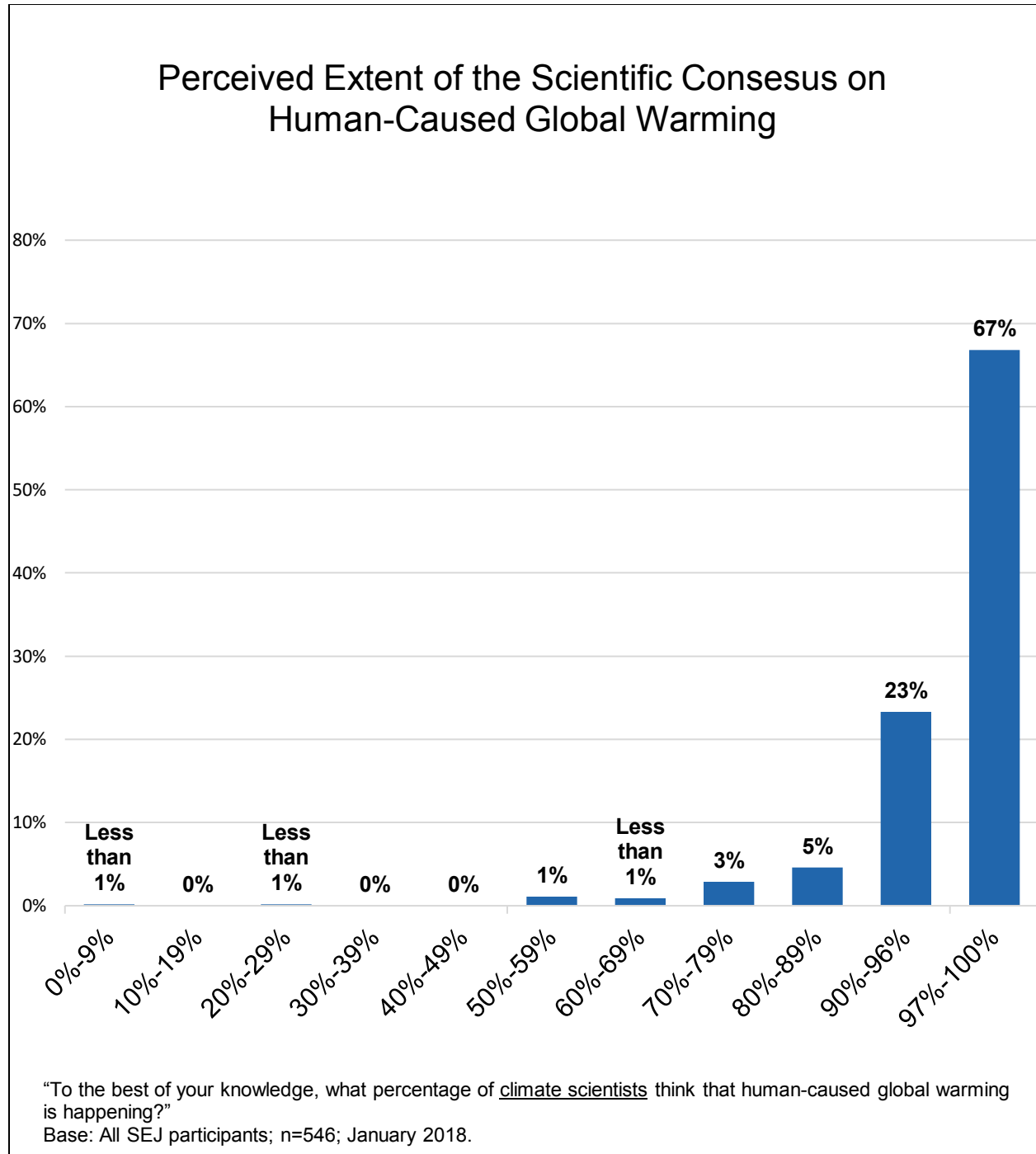
Human Activity or Natural Events

Nearly all SEJ survey participants think the global warming that has occurred in the past 50 years is mostly due to human activity. Only 3% think it is caused equally by human activity and natural causes or mostly due to natural causes.



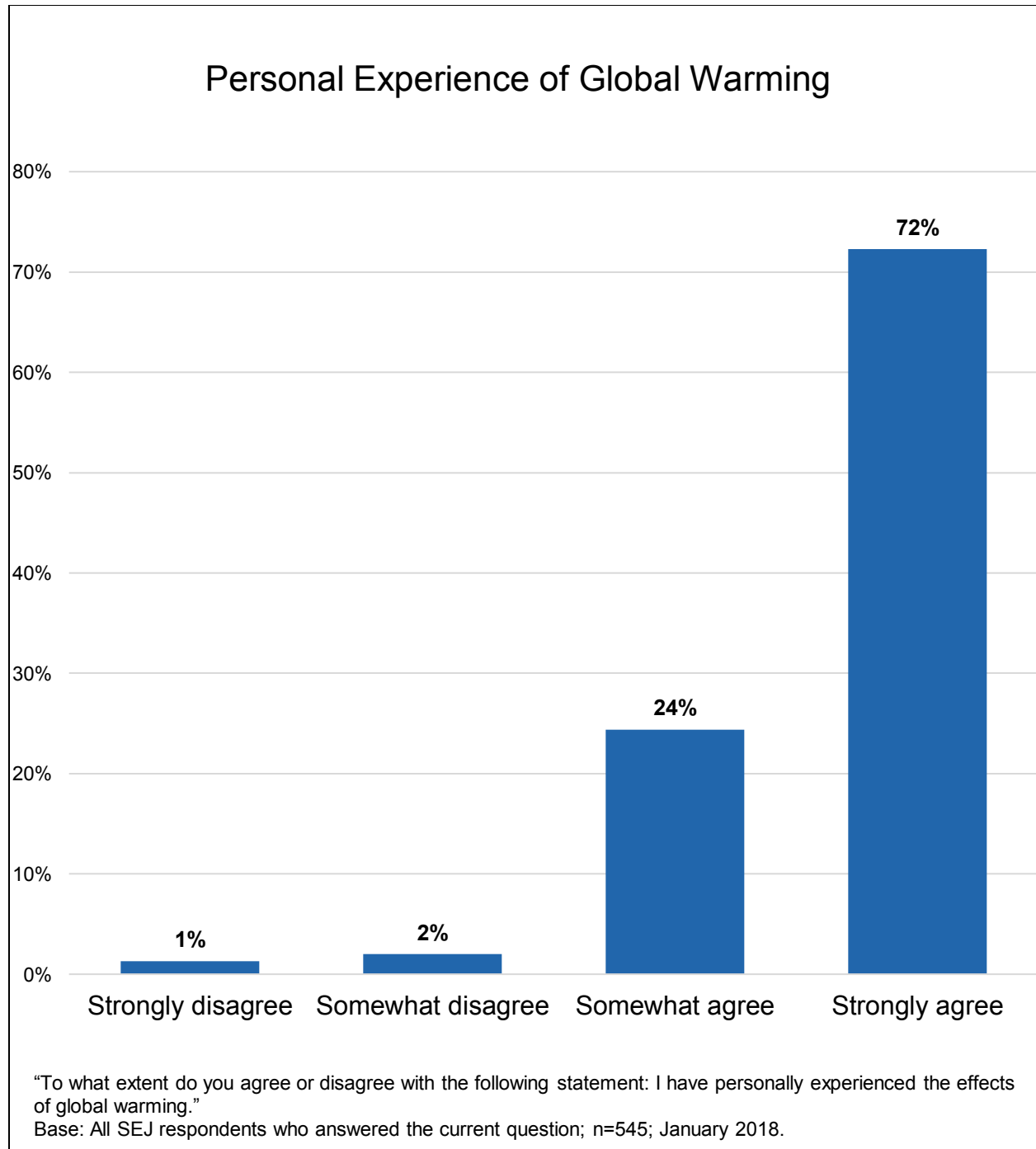
Perceived Scientific Consensus about Human-Caused Global Warming

Fully two-thirds of SEJ survey participants are aware that 97% or more of climate scientists think human-caused global warming is occurring, and 9 out of 10 think the scientific consensus is 90% or greater.



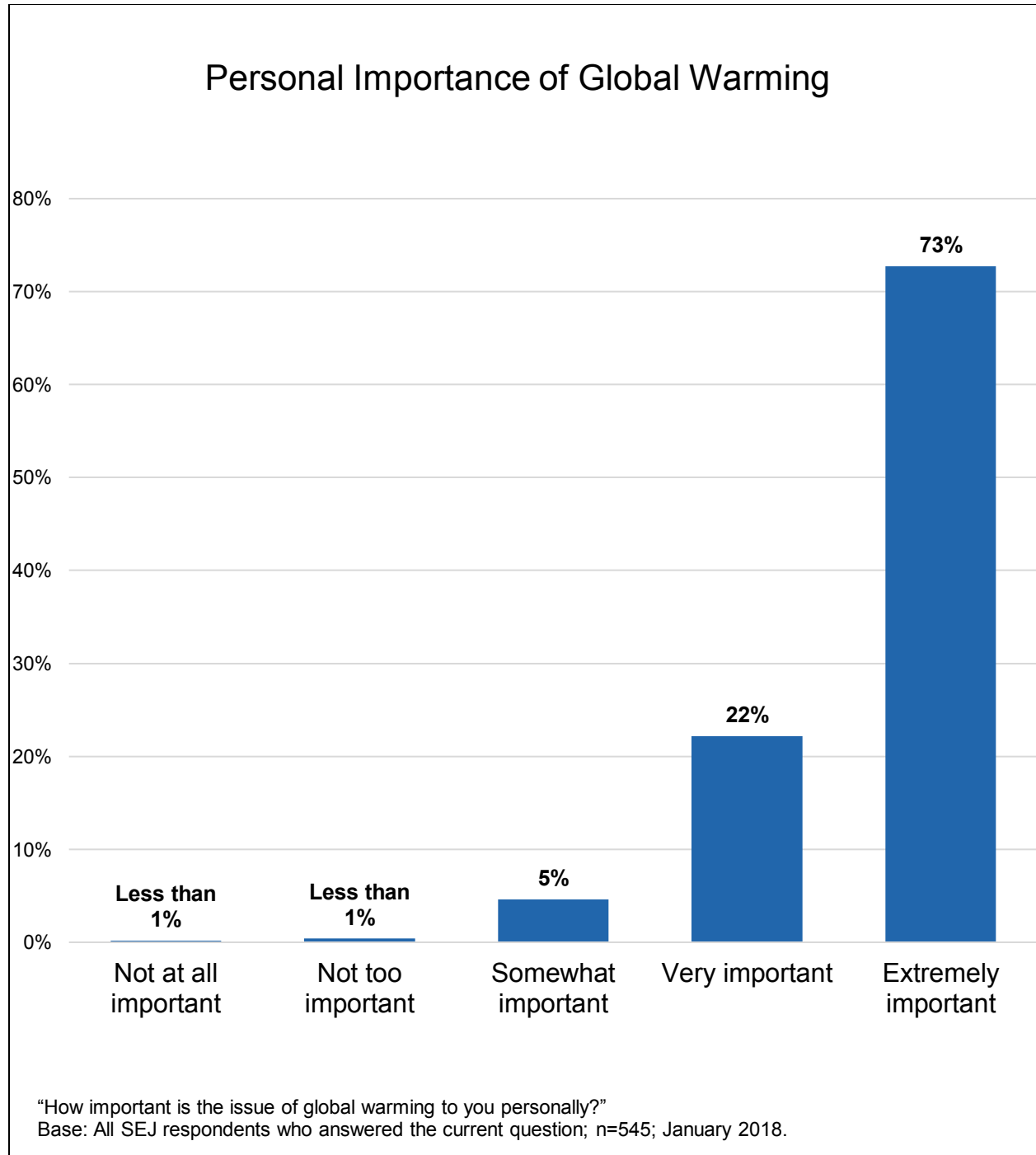
Personal Experience of Global Warming

Fully 96% of SEJ survey participants agree with the statement “I have personally experienced the effects of global warming,” with more than 7 out of 10 strongly agreeing. In a follow-up question, we asked these participants, “In what way(s) have you personally experienced global warming?” These open-ended responses will be coded and reported at a future date.



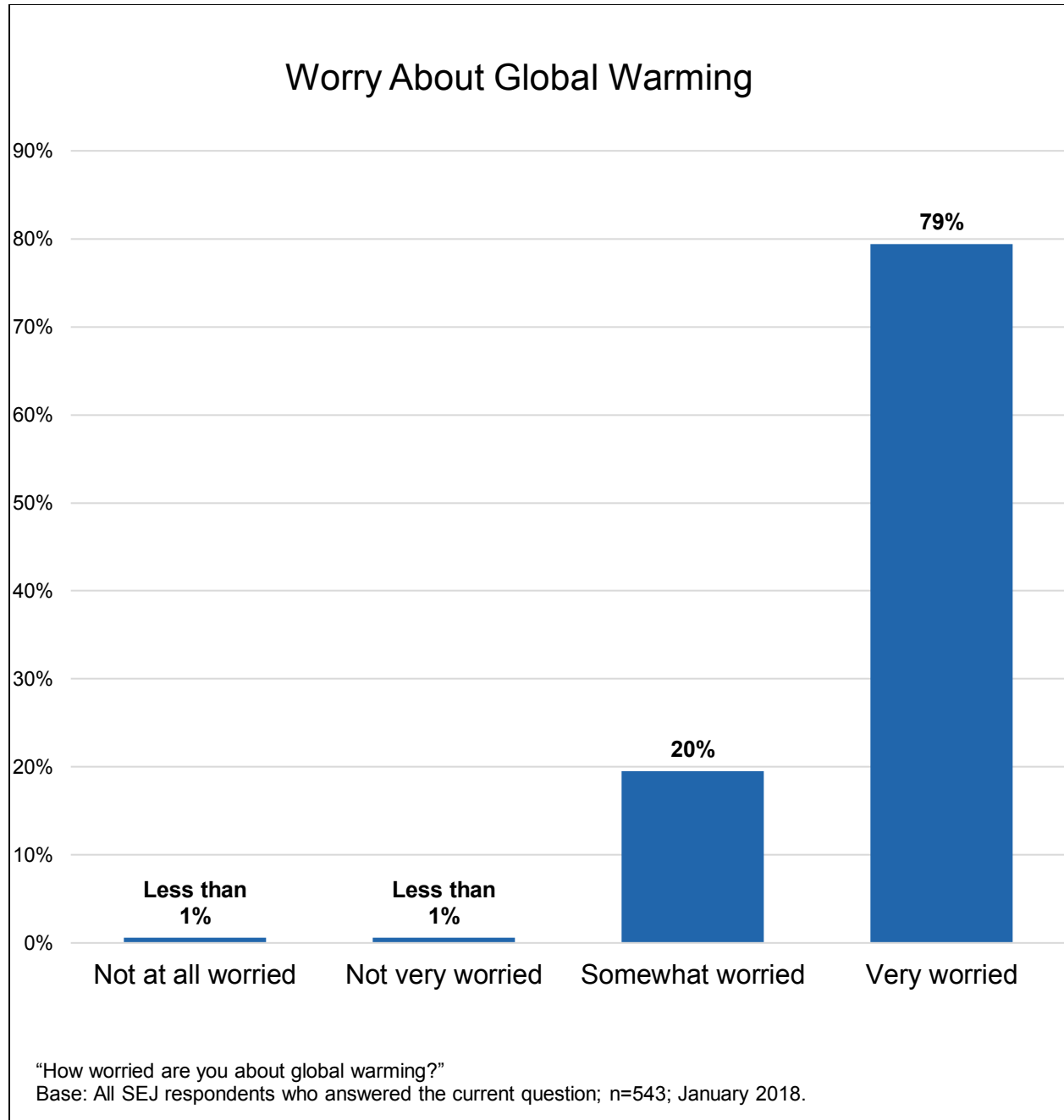
Personal Importance of Global Warming

Nearly all SEJ survey participants say the issue of global warming is at least somewhat personally important to them; nearly three-quarters say it is extremely important to them.



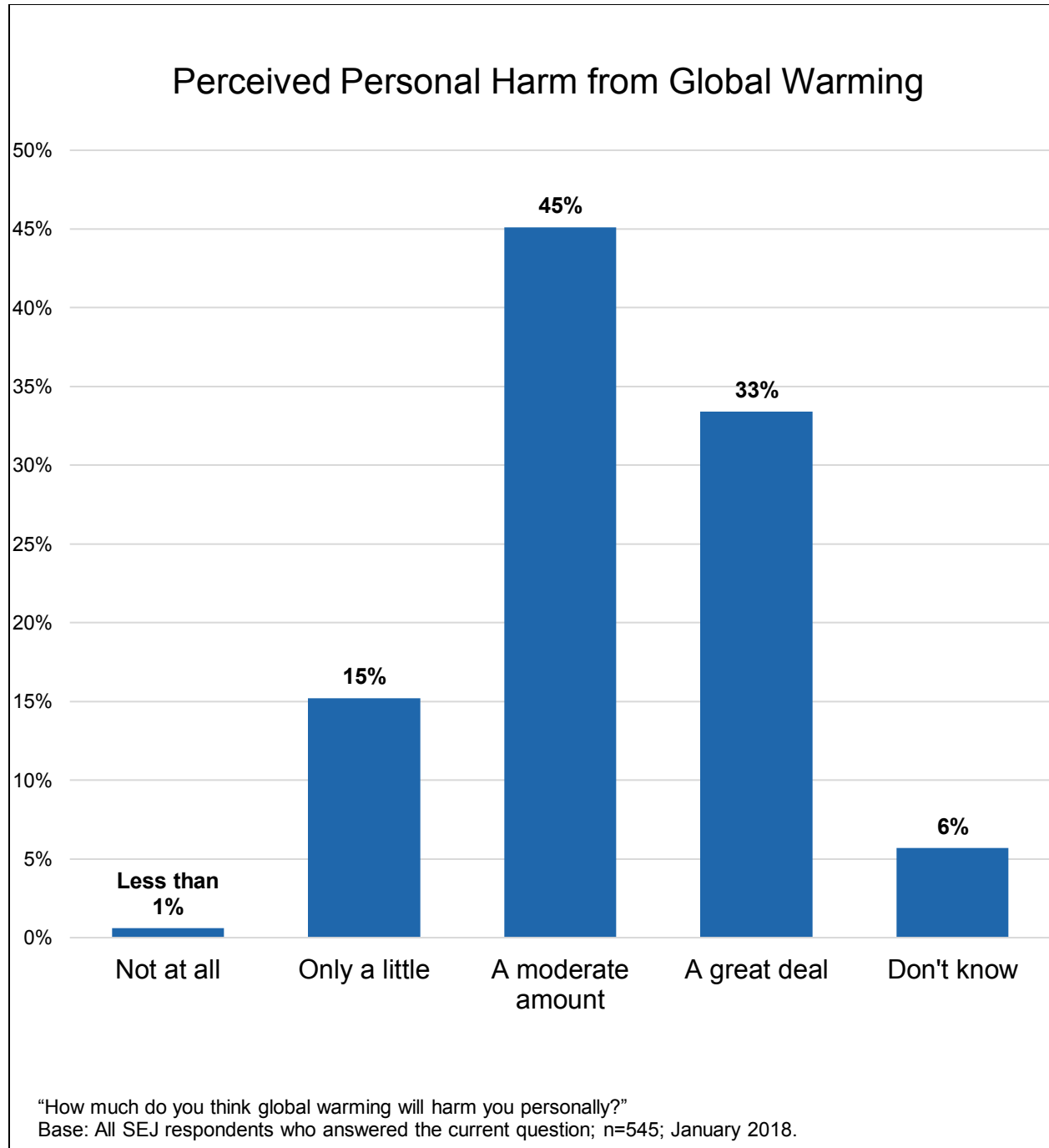
Worry About Global Warming

Nearly all SEJ survey participants say they are worried about global warming; nearly 4 in 5 say they are very worried.



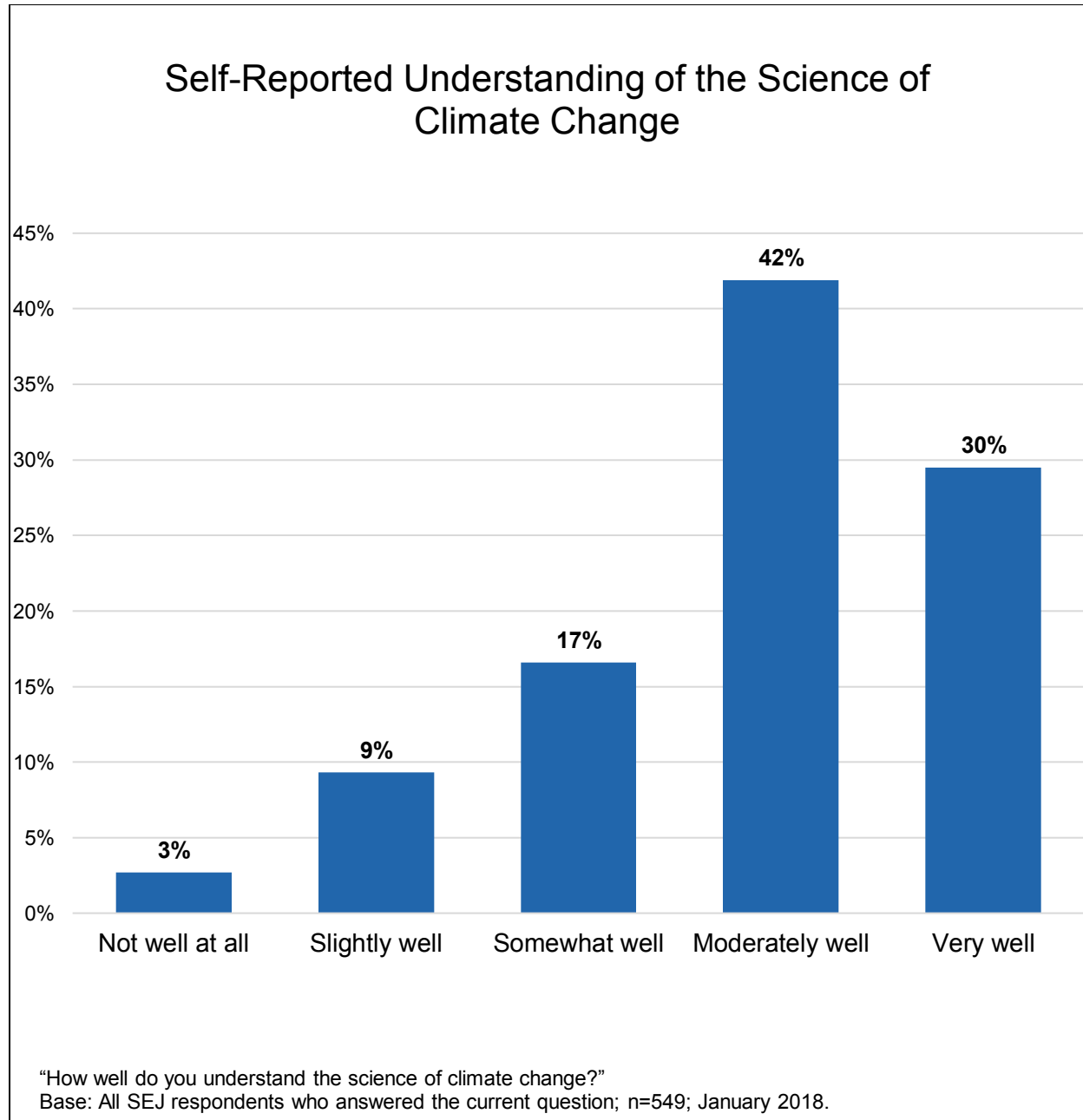
Personal Harm from Global Warming

More than 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants feel they will be personally harmed by global warming; nearly 8 out of 10 feel they will be personally harmed a moderate amount or a great deal.



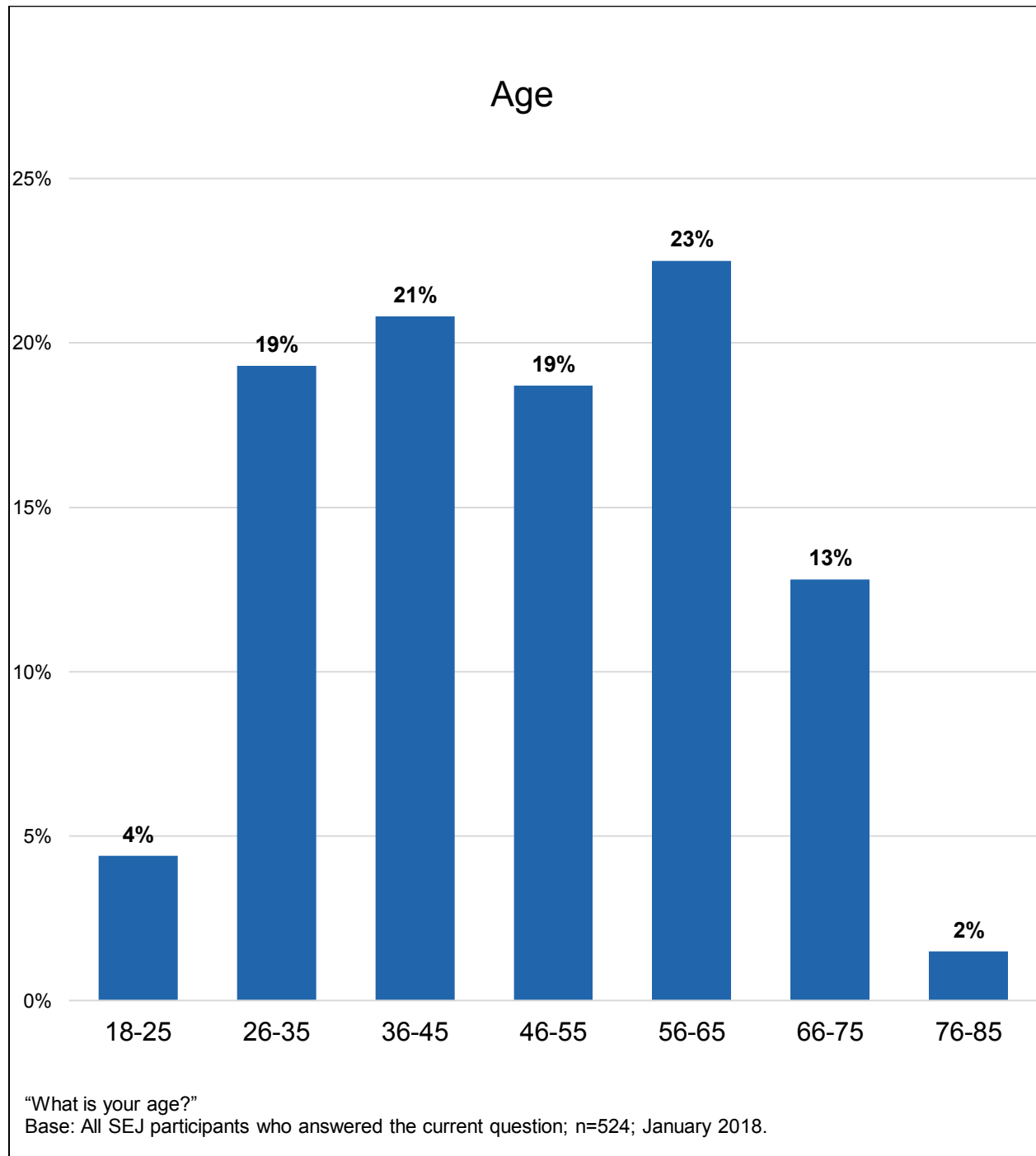
Understanding the Science of Climate Change

Nearly 9 out of 10 SEJ survey participants feel they know the science of climate change somewhat, moderately, or very well.

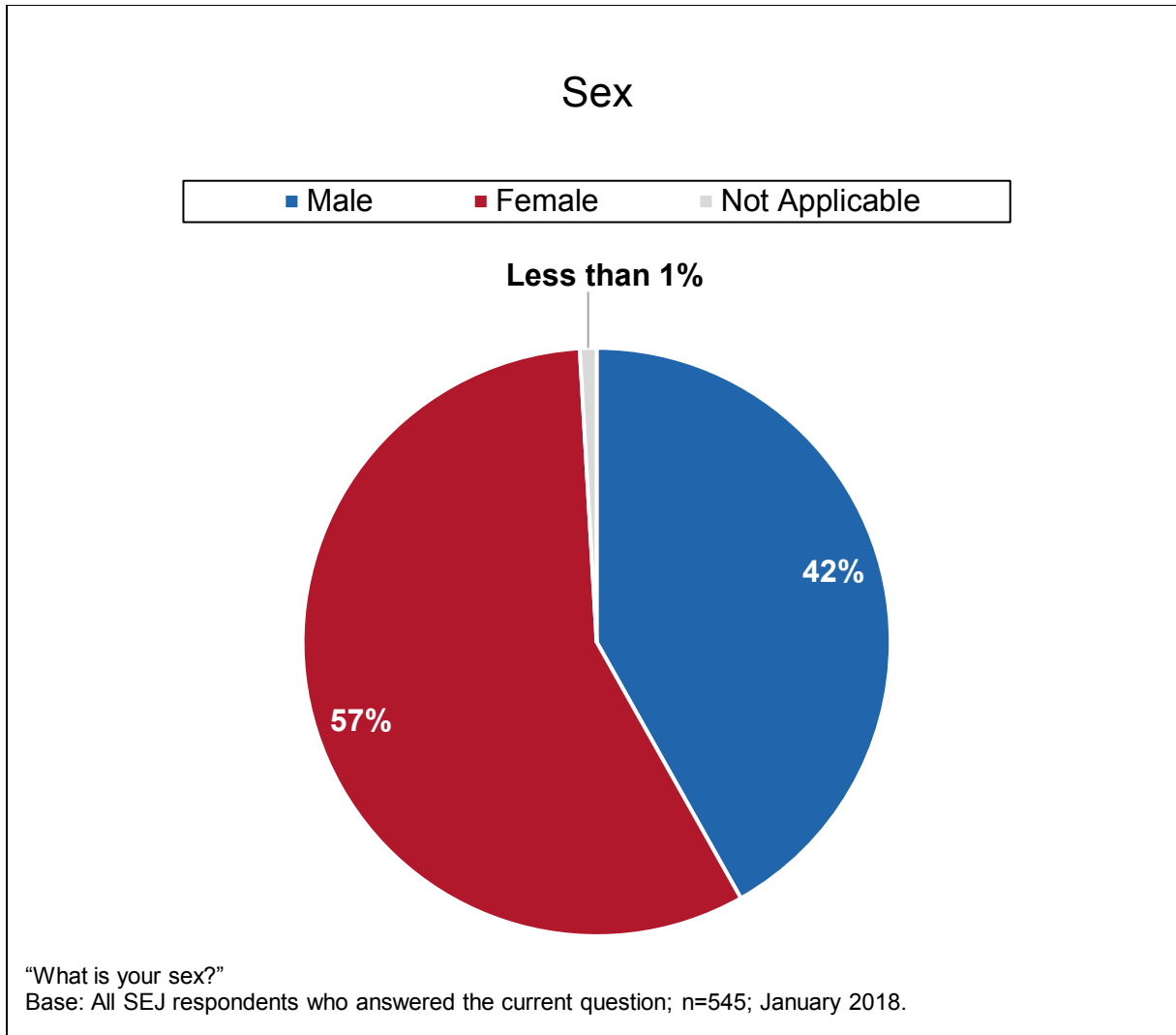


Personal Characteristics

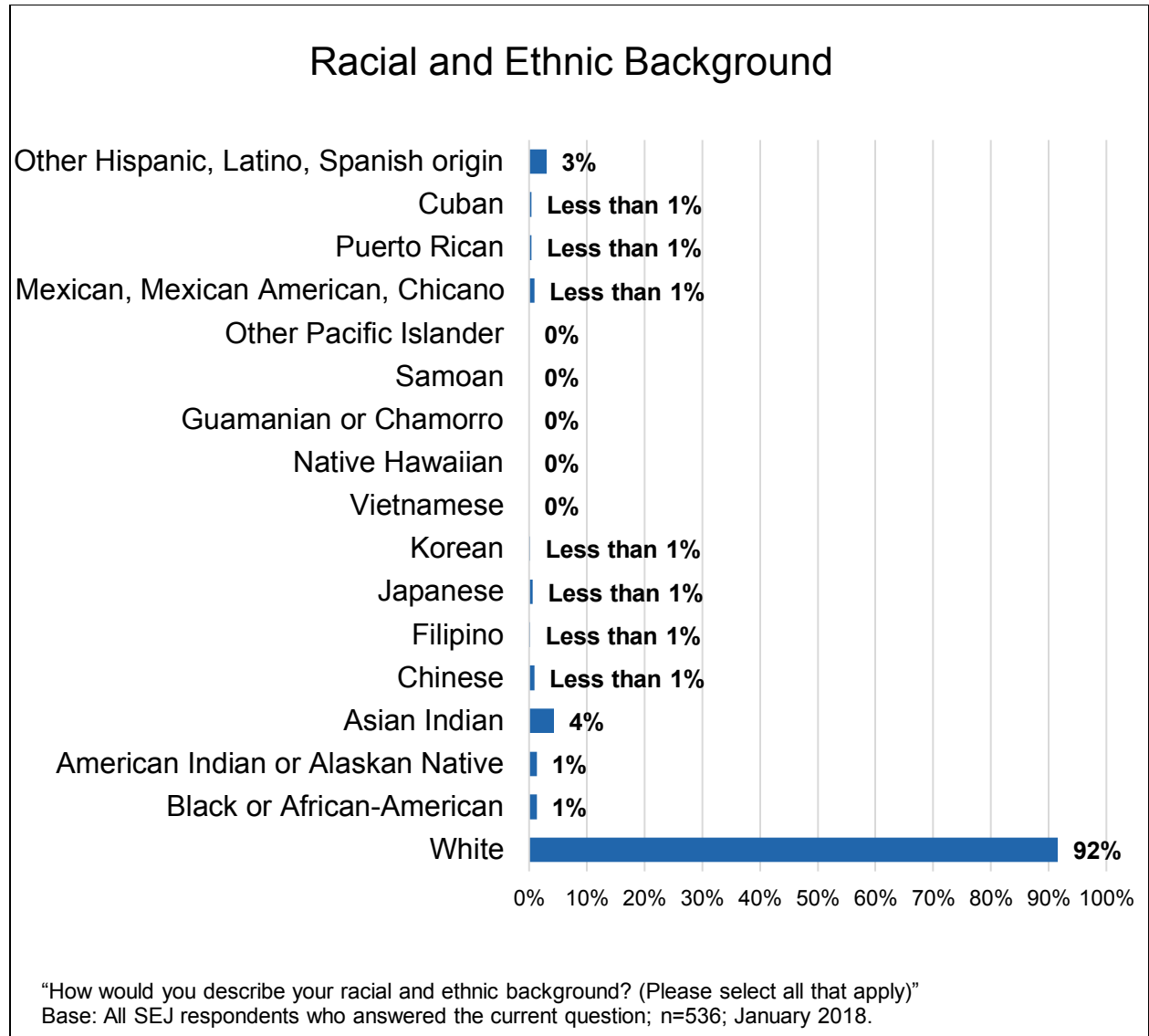
Age of Respondents



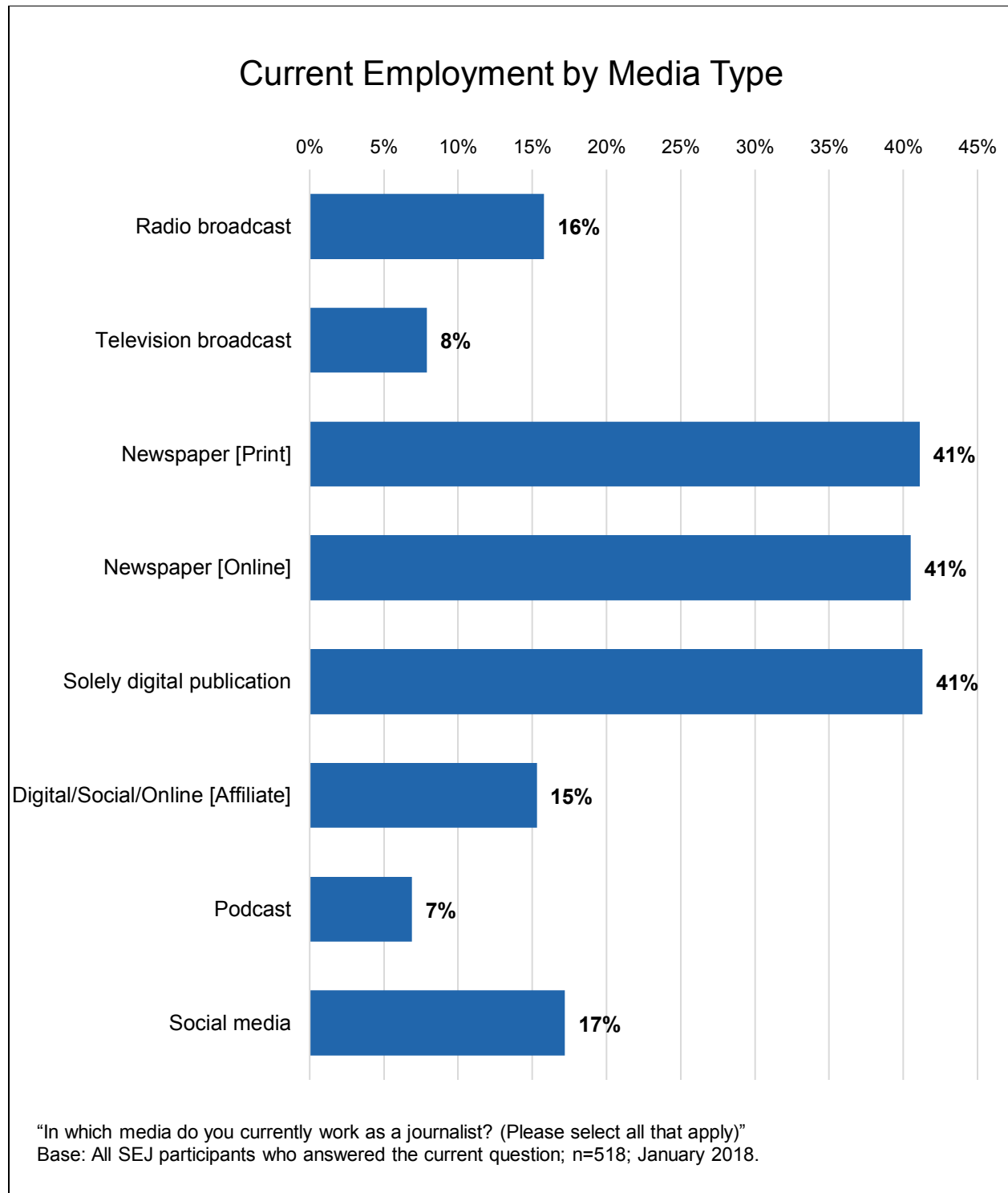
Sex of Respondents



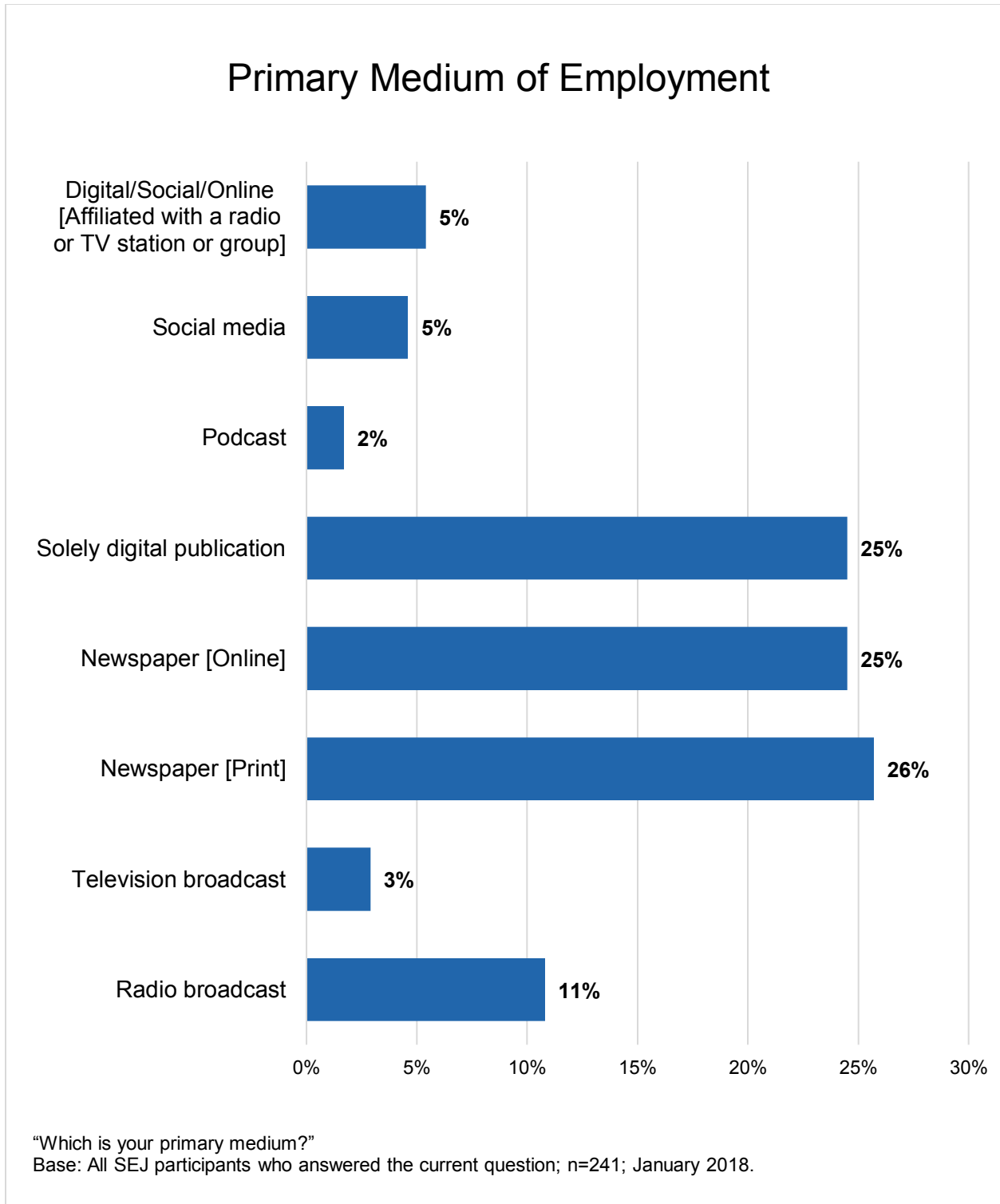
Race and Ethnicity of Respondents



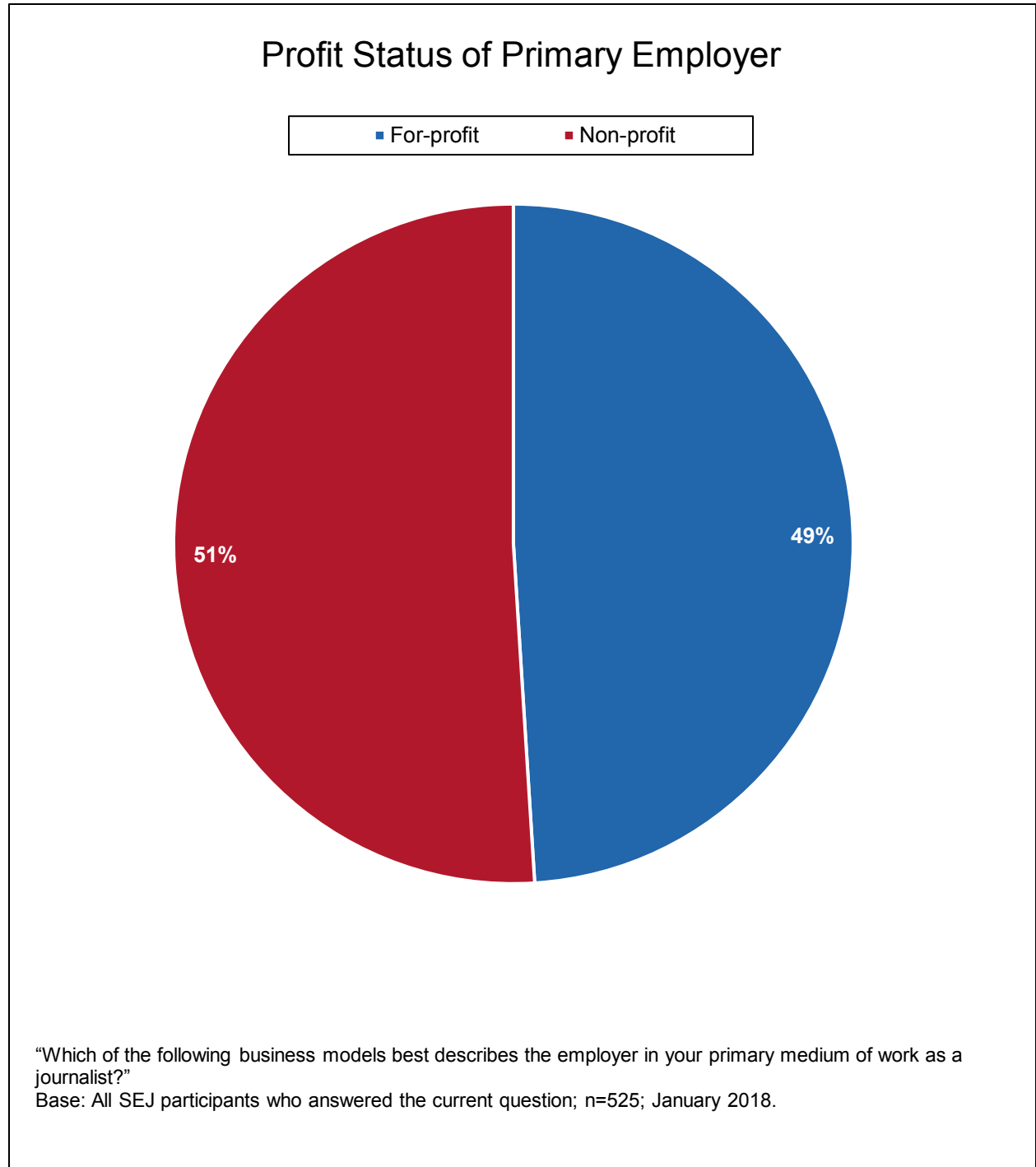
Current Employment by Media Type



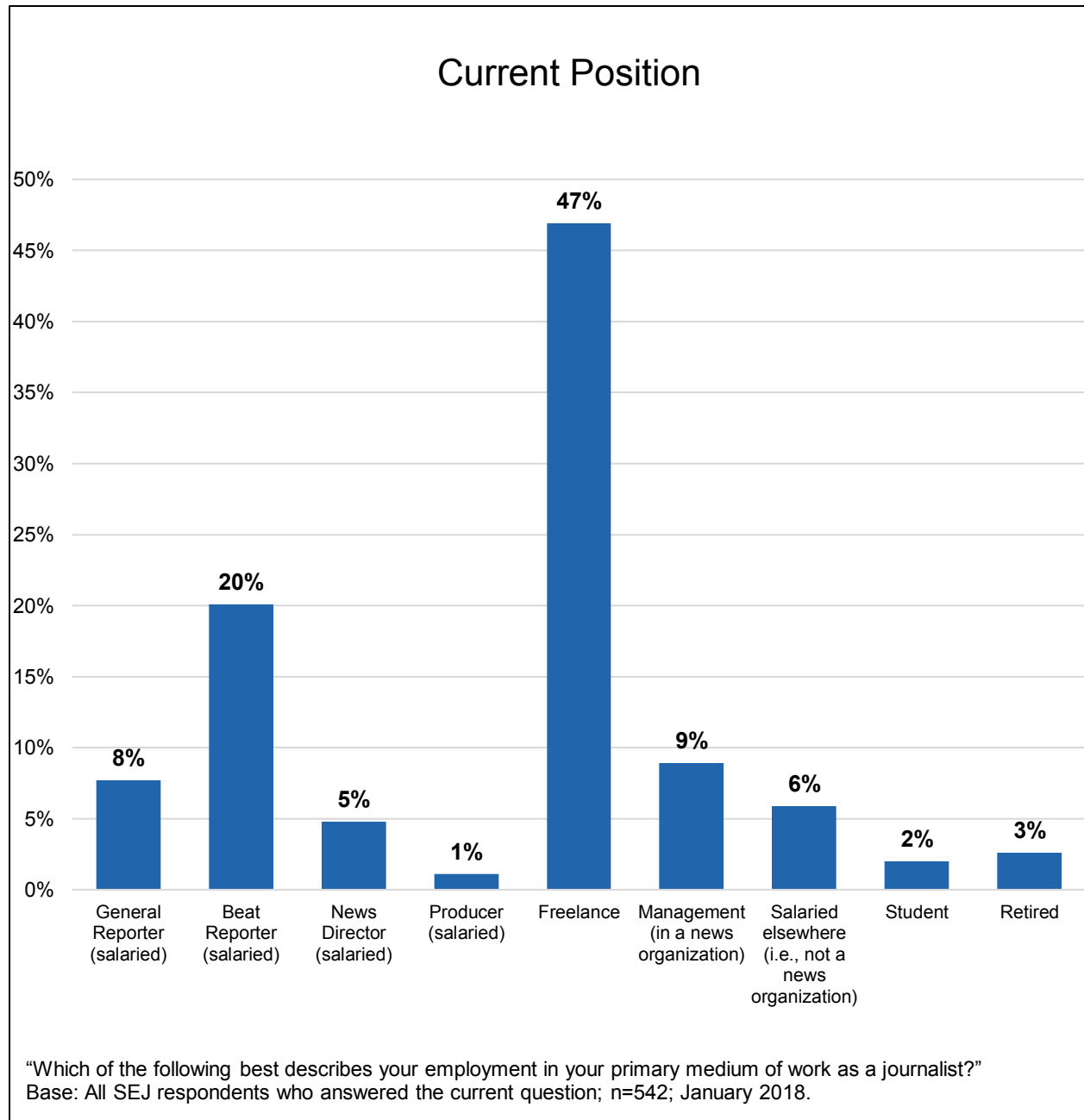
Primary Medium



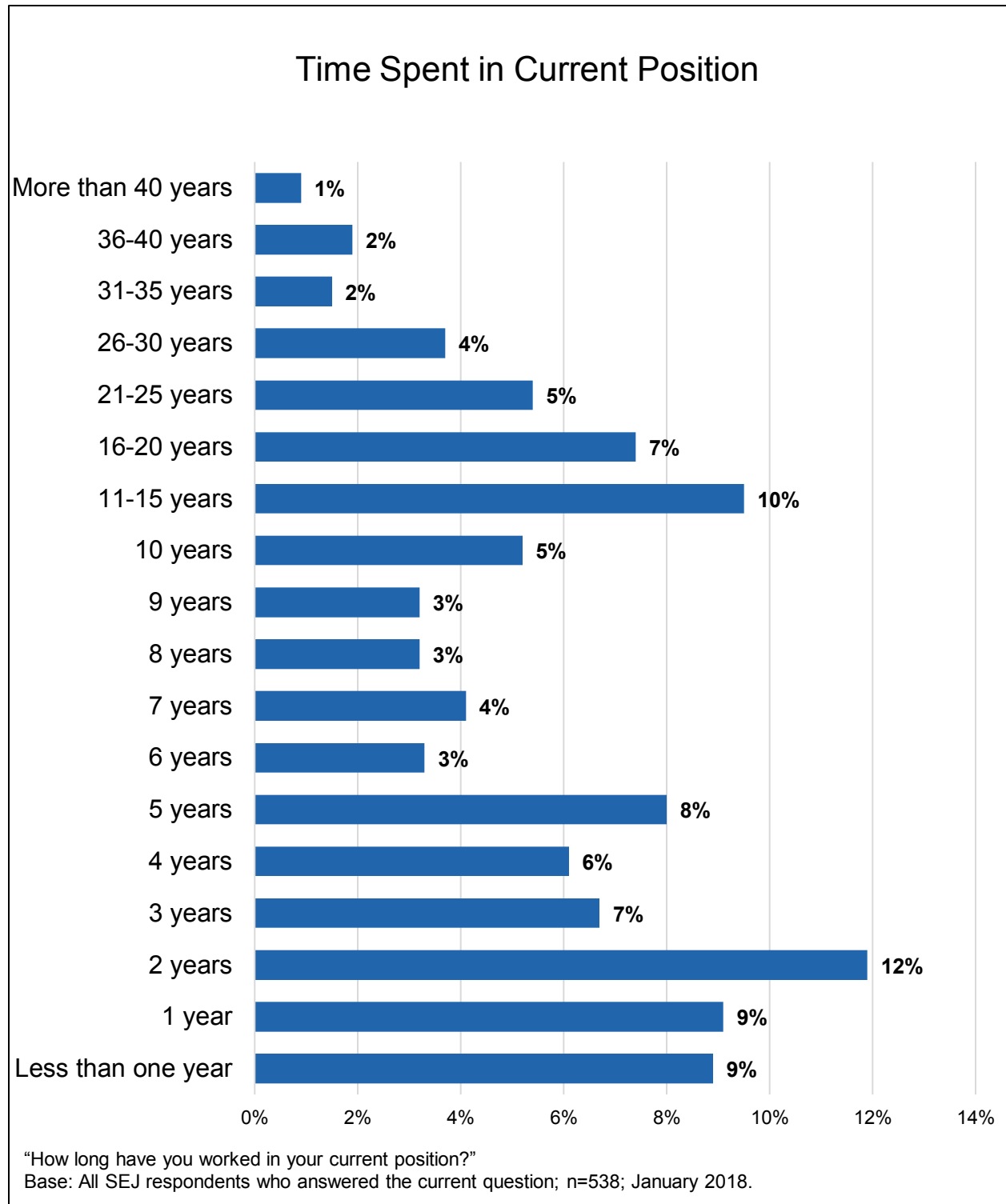
Profit/Non-Profit Status of Primary Place of Employment



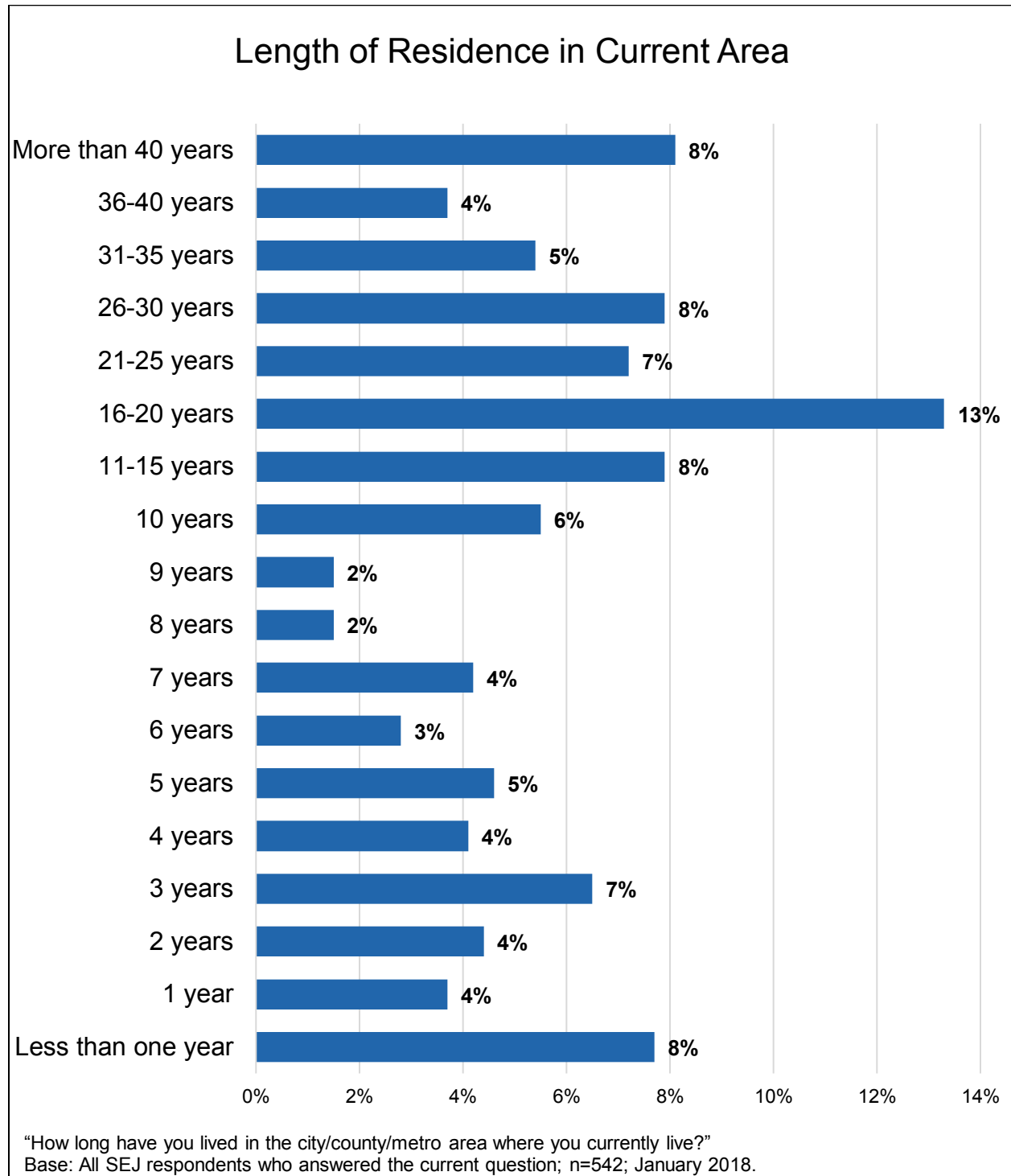
Current Position



Time Spent in Current Position

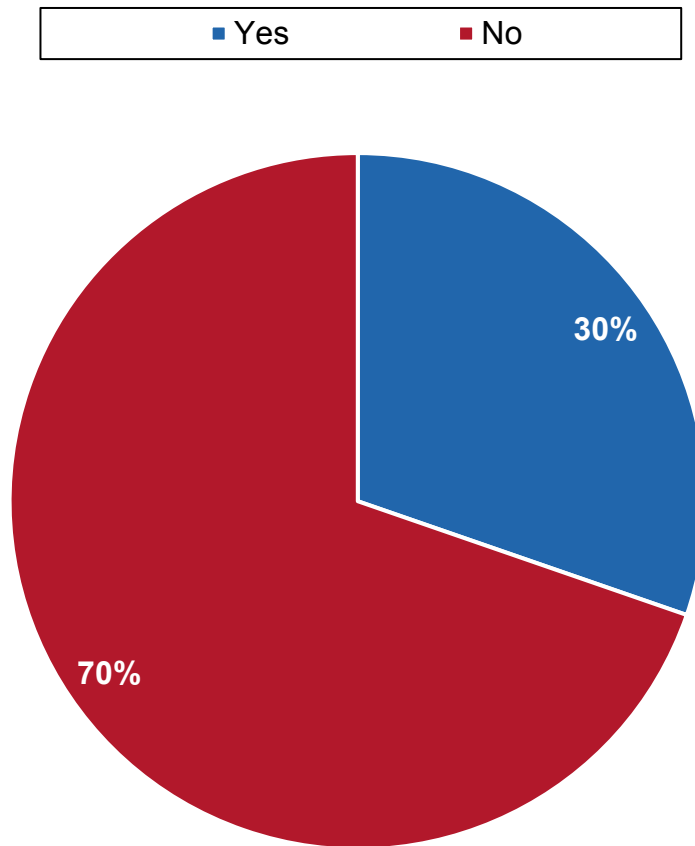


Length of Residence in Current Area



STEM Training

Formal Education (Major or Minor) in STEM Discipline



“Did you major or minor in a STEM discipline (science, technology, engineering, or math) in college or graduate school?”

Base: All SEJ participants who answered the current question; n=548; January 2018.

Appendix I: Survey Method

This survey of Society of Environmental Journalists members aims to better understand members' feelings, experience, and opinions of climate change and climate change reporting. Thus, the survey's sampling frame was based on SEJ's membership base and members who had valid email addresses on file. This provided contact information for 1,274 SEJ members. The survey was administered online using Qualtrics, a web-based survey system.

SEJ members were made aware of this survey via an email to all members from the leadership of SEJ, several days prior to receiving a formal invitation to participate. On January 3rd, 1,274 emails were sent from Qualtrics, inviting the individual members to participate via a personalized link to the survey. Over the course of the following four weeks, SEJ members who did not complete the survey were sent up to five reminders to participate. The survey was closed on January 31st. In total, 617 SEJ members participated in the survey, yielding a participation rate of 48.4%, and 552 survey participants completed the survey, a completion rate of 43.3%. The survey took participants a median time of 20 minutes to complete.

The survey instrument was designed by Edward Maibach, Richard T. Craig, William Yagatich, Kristin Timm, Shaelyn Patzer, and Josh Murphy of George Mason University. The survey instrument is available upon request.