

2022 National Survey  
Full Report

# The Next Normal

The Future of Christian Ministries  
and Churches in Canada

# Goal

To understand the current state of Christian charities, how they have adapted to shifting challenges, and future implications.

# Participant Data

- 2,033 leaders of Christian organizations in Canada
- Survey conducted February 2022
- Excellent distribution of organization types
- Underrepresented in Quebec and Catholic respondents

## Researchers

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WayBase

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The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

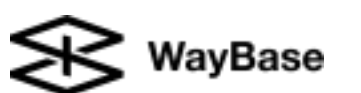
**Steve Hewko**  
Wycliffe College

**Mike Wood Daly (DMin)**  
Sphaera Research and Halo Canada

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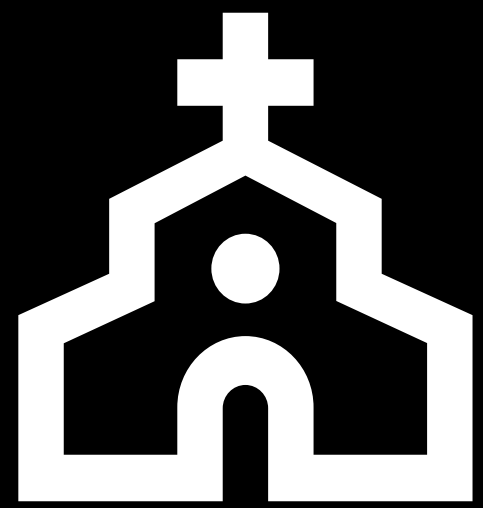
**Sam Reimer (PhD)**  
Crandall University

## Partners



# The Christian sector in Canada at a glance

February 2022

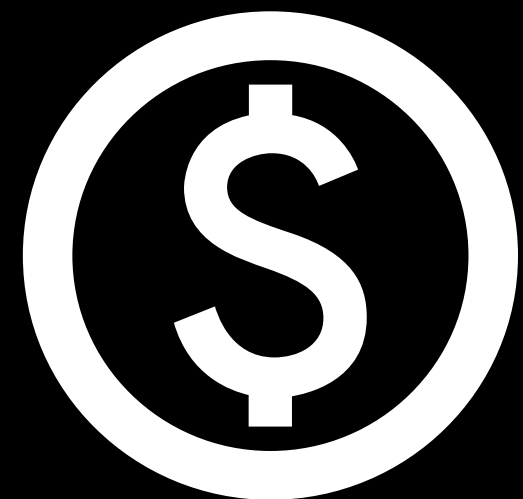


32k+

Christian organizations

74%

Churches



Est.

\$10B+

Ministry revenue

Est.

\$5B+

Church revenue

The Christian movement plays a vital role in communities and cities across Canada.



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# Finances

1

# Key Insights

- In general, churches and ministries from all Christian traditions and all parts of Canada were financially impacted by the effects of the pandemic.
- The changes to revenue in 2021 were compounded by the changes to revenue (often declines) experienced in 2020.
- During the two years of the pandemic, overall revenues dropped by almost \$1B with 90% accounted for by a decline in church revenues.
- Christian leaders continue to wisely manage their expenses to their revenue.

## Opportunities to explore

**Increase networking between churches and ministries to find ways to mutually support each other during the recovery process.**

**Invest in cooperative and collaborative initiatives that help revitalize the mission of the Church and activate renewed generosity.**

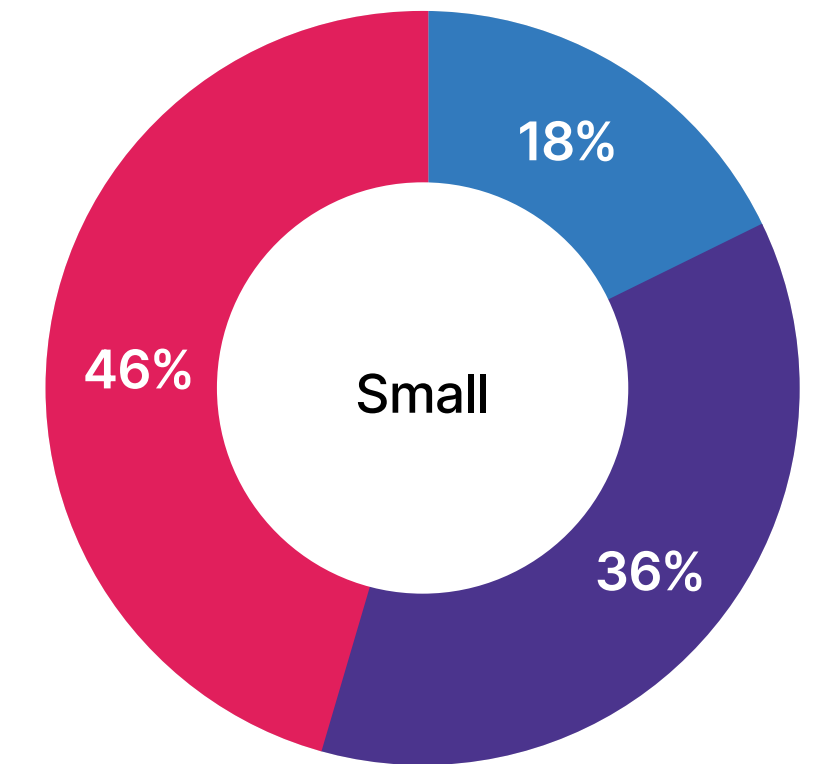
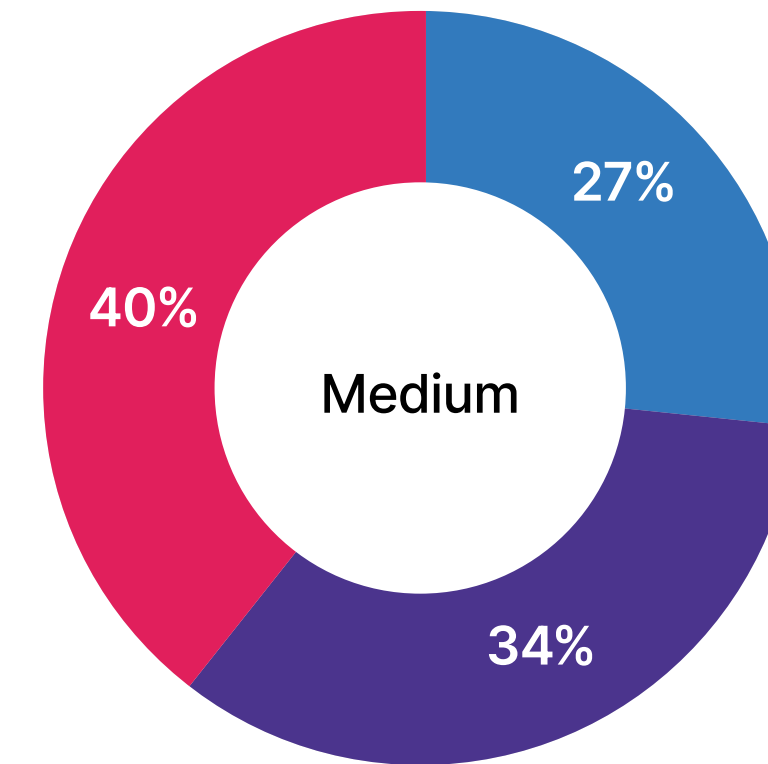
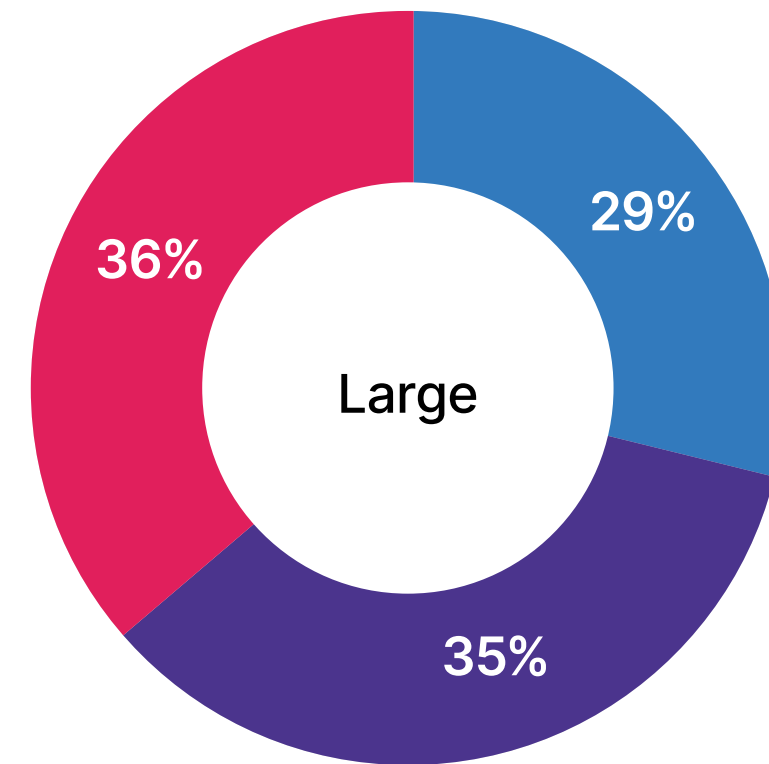


# How was your organization's revenue at the end of the 2021 calendar year compared to the end of the 2020 calendar year?

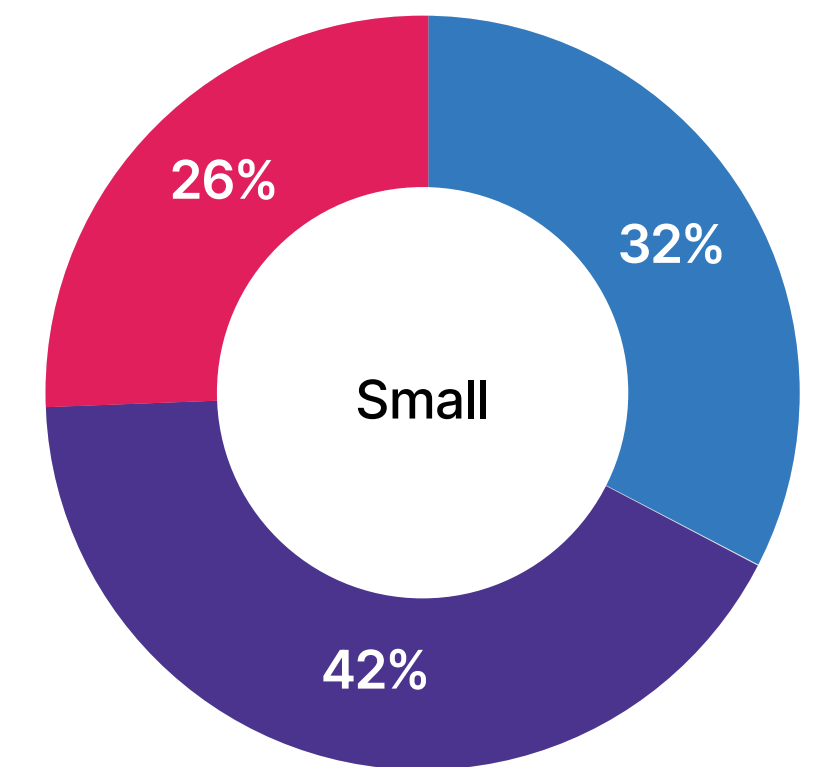
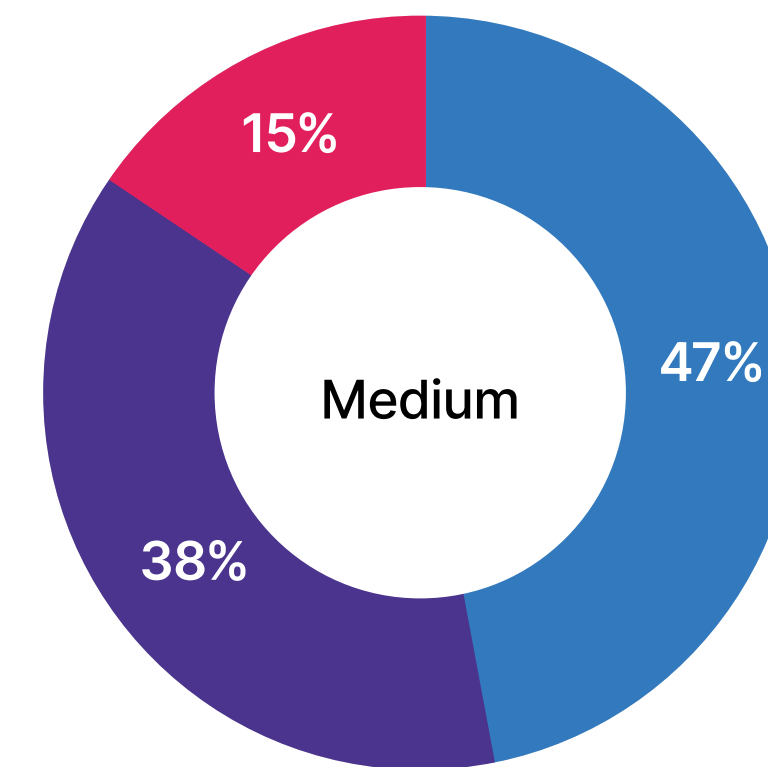
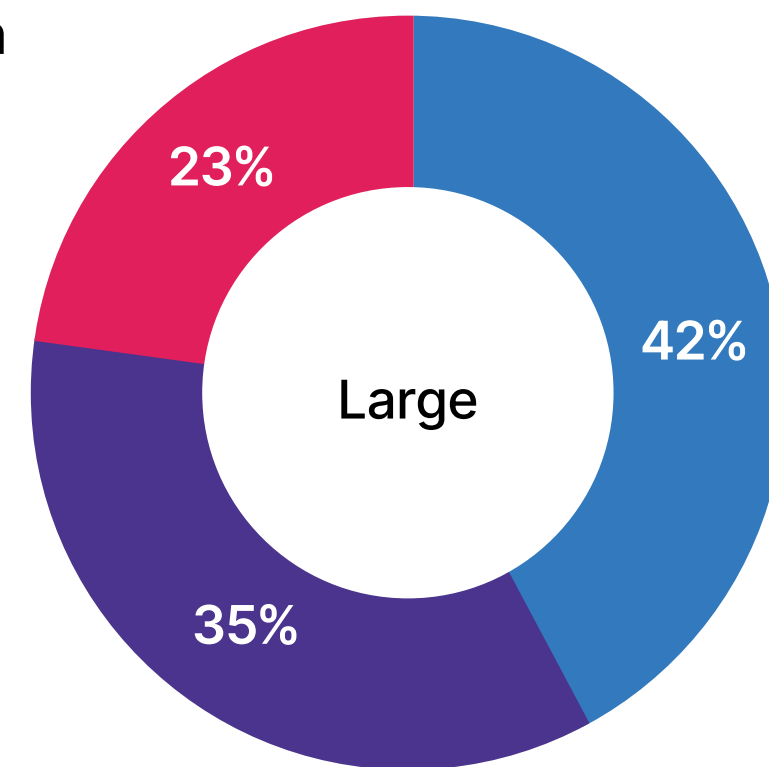
Churches of all sizes were similarly impacted by the pandemic. Larger churches tended to fare slightly better.

The impact on ministries was more correlated to the type of ministry than the size of the ministry.

## Church



## Ministry or Christian Organization



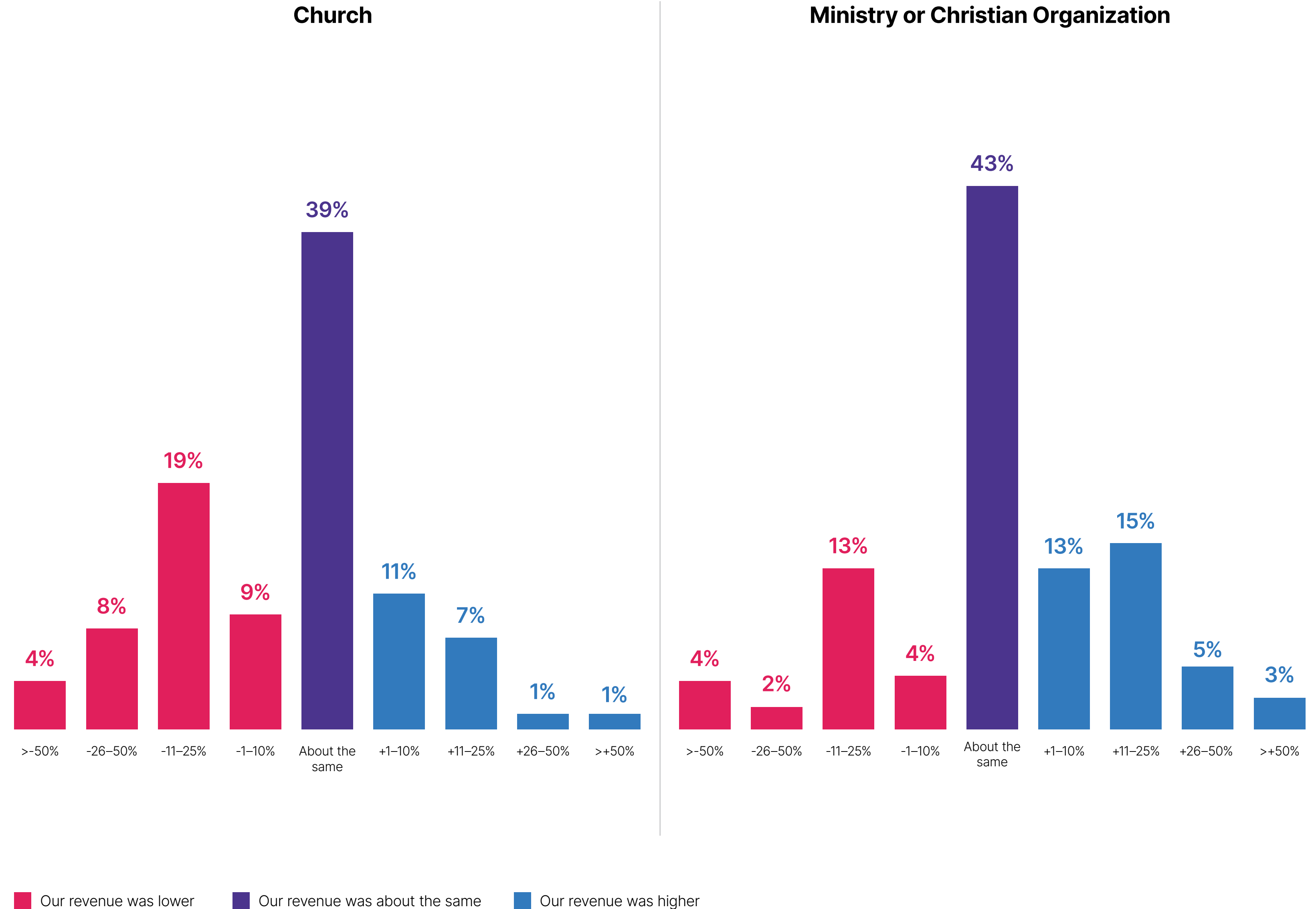
■ Our revenue was lower   ■ Our revenue was about the same   ■ Our revenue was higher



# How was your organization's revenue at the end of the 2021 calendar year compared to the end of the 2020 calendar year?

Overall, finances shrank approximately 3.9% in 2020 and an estimated 2.3% in 2021. Cumulatively, the pandemic has shrunk the finances of the Christian sector by 6.1%—just over \$1B.\*

This was attributed mostly to the Church, making up 90% of the financial losses (\$973M)—a 13% drop from 2019.



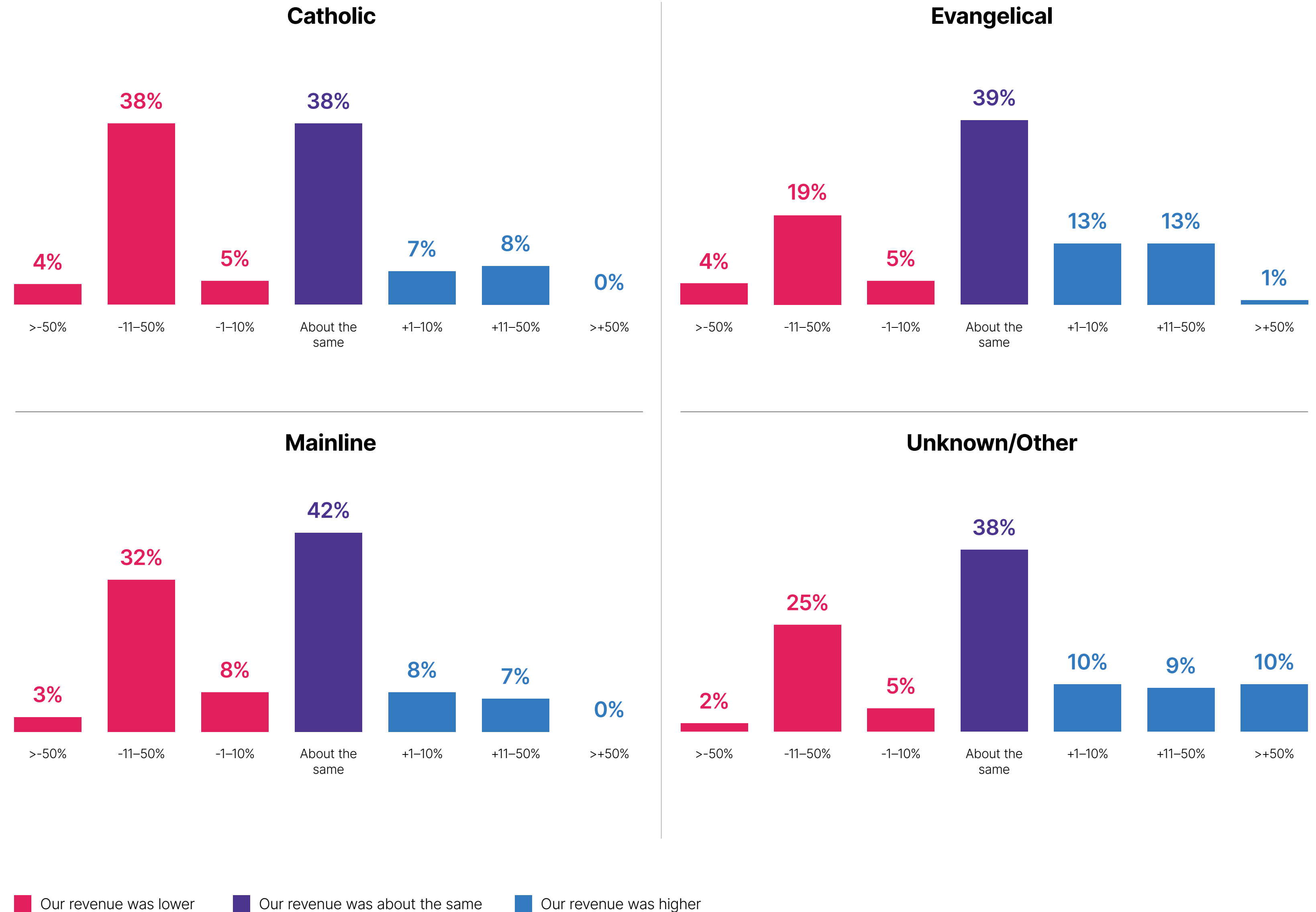
\* Based on simulations using historic CRA data against our sample of reported impacts (see Appendix)





# How was your organization's revenue at the end of the 2021 calendar year compared to the end of the 2020 calendar year?

In general, Evangelical churches fared slightly better than their Catholic and Mainline counterparts, although the general pattern of the decline was uniform.

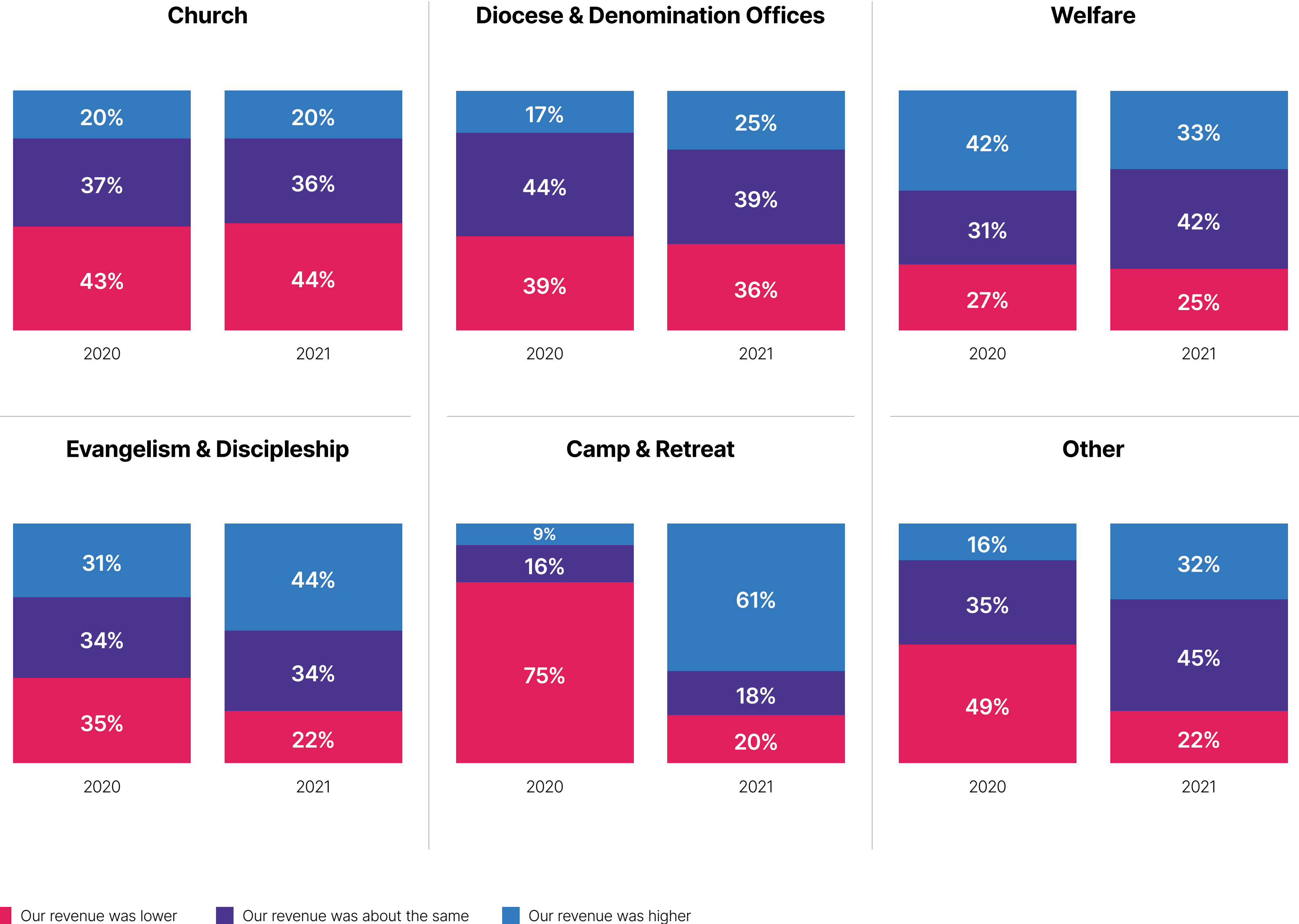




# How was your organization's revenue at the end of the 2021 calendar year compared to the end of the 2020 calendar year?

By and large, reports of year over year change from the prior year were similar with two positive exceptions: camps and retreat ministries as well as evangelism and discipleship ministries tended to fare better.

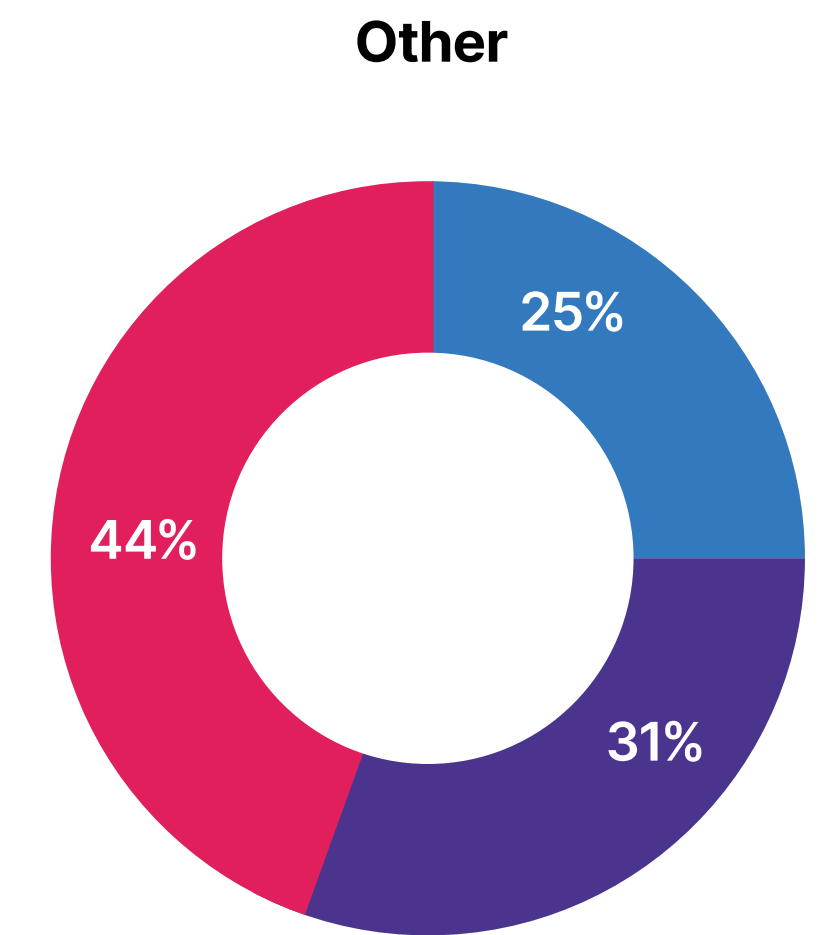
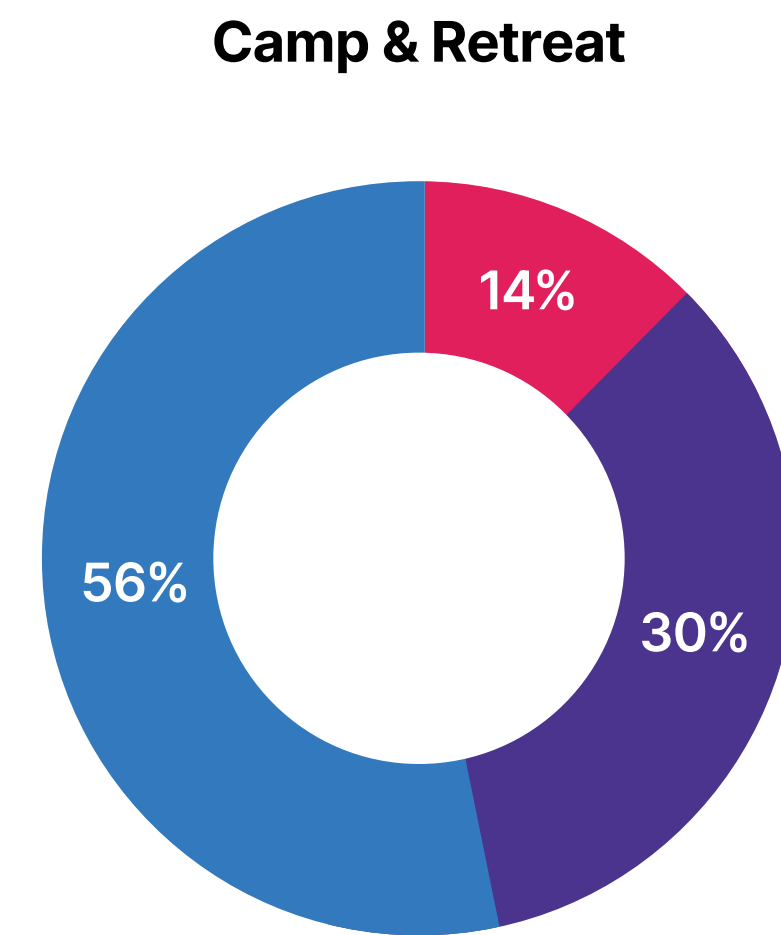
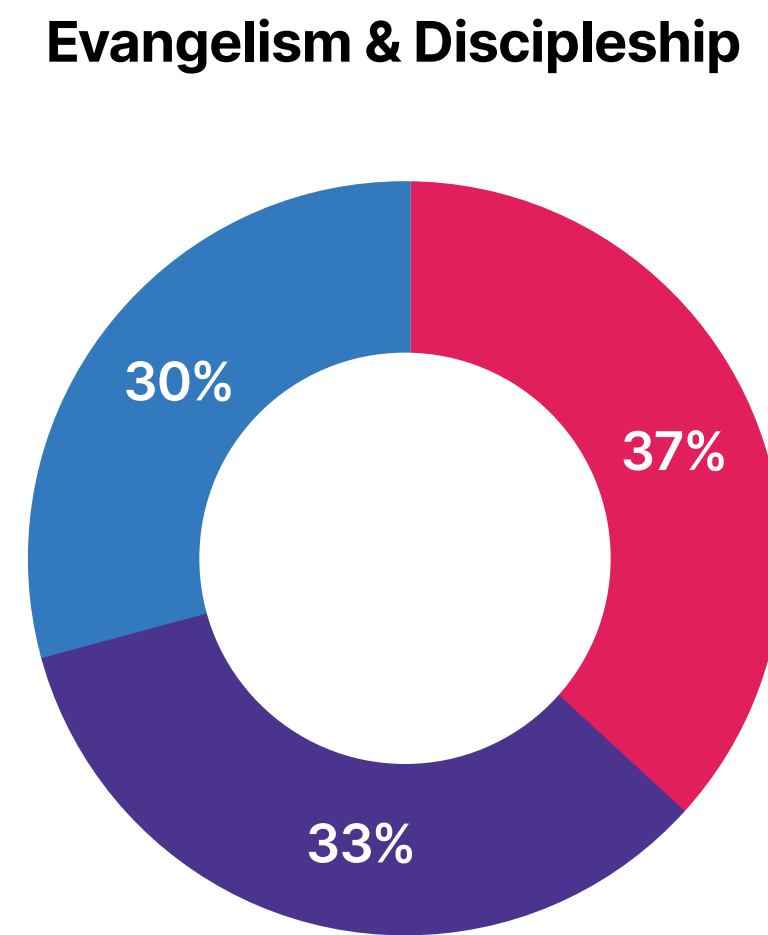
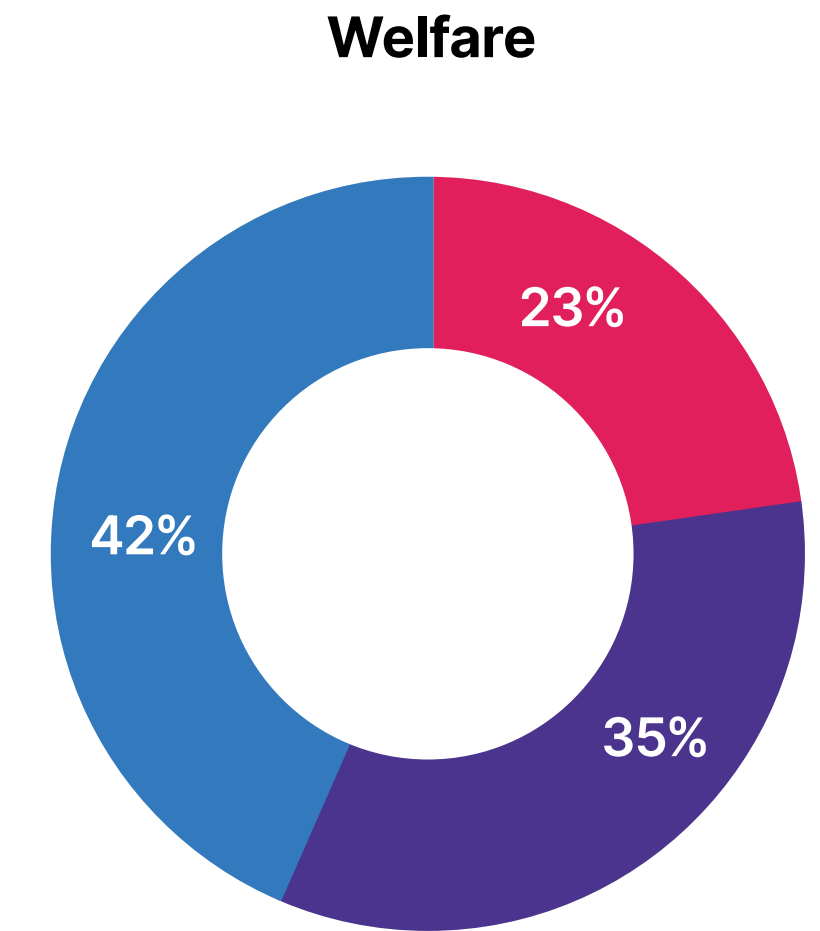
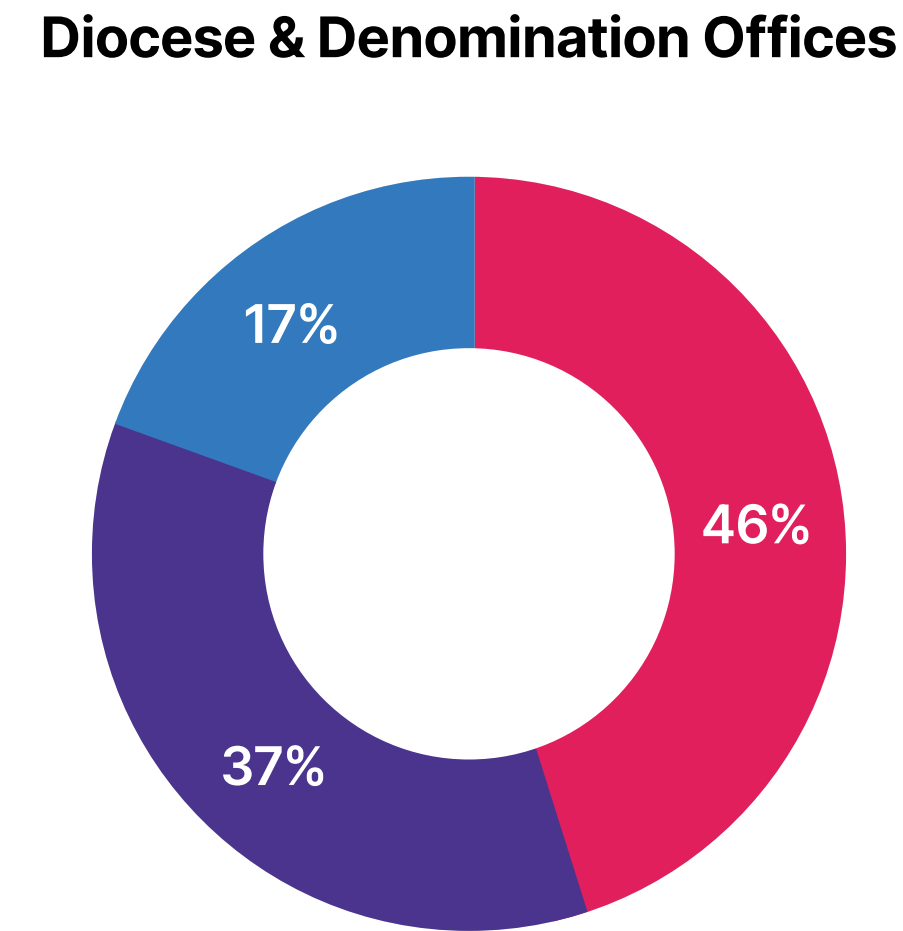
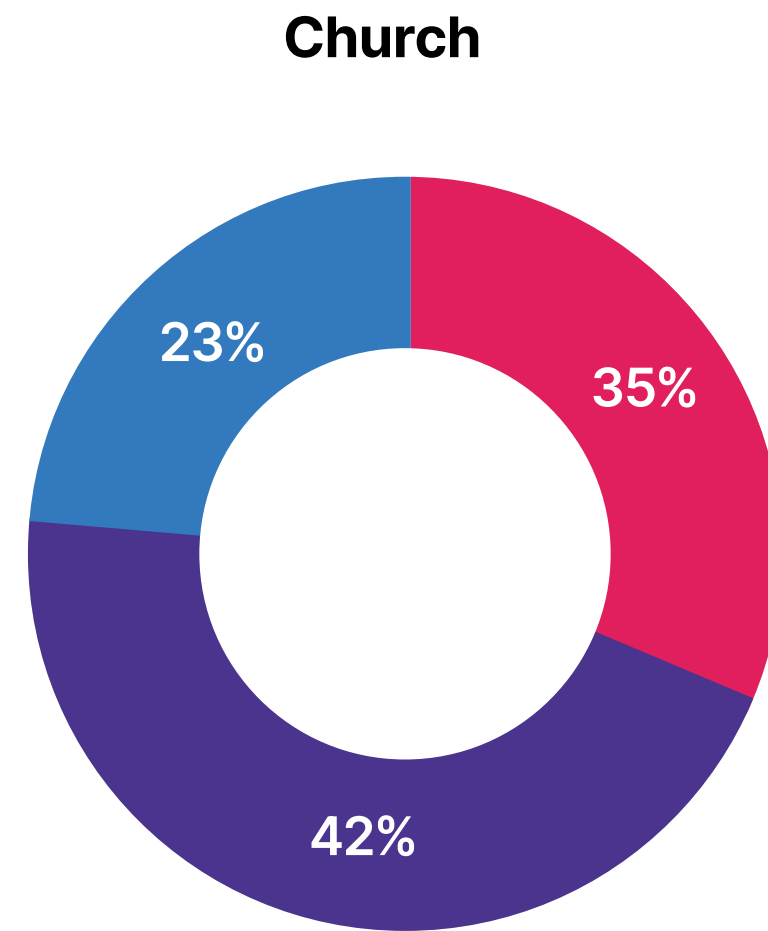
It is important to keep in mind that changes to revenue reported for 2021 were compounded by changes reported for 2020, the first year of the pandemic.





# How were your organization's expenses at the end of the 2021 calendar year compared to the end of the 2020 calendar year?

Overall, expenses changed in conjunction with changes to revenue. This means that leaders were continuing to manage expenses to align with their revenue.



■ Our expenses were lower  
 ■ Our expenses were about the same  
 ■ Our expenses were higher



# In the next six months, do you expect your organization's revenue to decrease, increase, or stay the same?

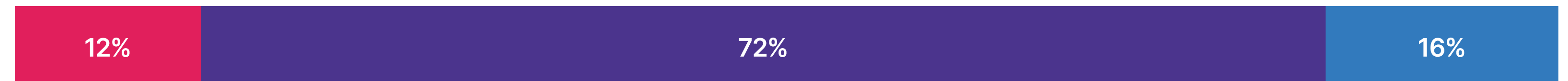
As leaders look ahead to the next six months, most are expecting revenues to stay the same. If a leader is optimistic or pessimistic in their projection, it is largely associated with their ministry's increase or decrease in revenue in the previous year.

This underscores the way changes in revenue can directly impact the vision and outlook of the leader.

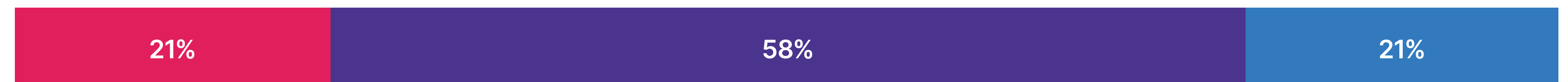
Our revenue was higher



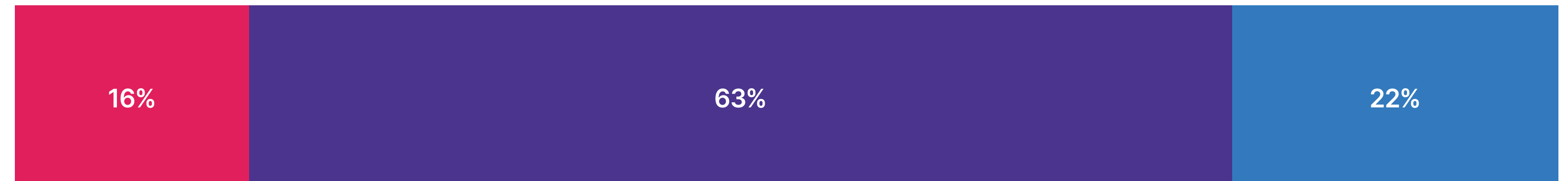
Our revenue was about the same



Our revenue was lower



All responses



Decrease Stay the same Increase

# Church Operations

2

# Key Insights

- Many churches are facing significant declines in weekly attendance at their in-person services.
- Children, youth, and young adults continue to see an absence of services and programs for their age and stage.
- Churches that offer children's, youth, and—if possible—young adult programs, even if it is less than once a week, have a higher percentage of their attendees return to their in-person services.
- Churches remained committed to financially supporting local ministries, with about 50% of churches promoting volunteer opportunities beyond their church on either a monthly or weekly basis.

## Opportunities to explore

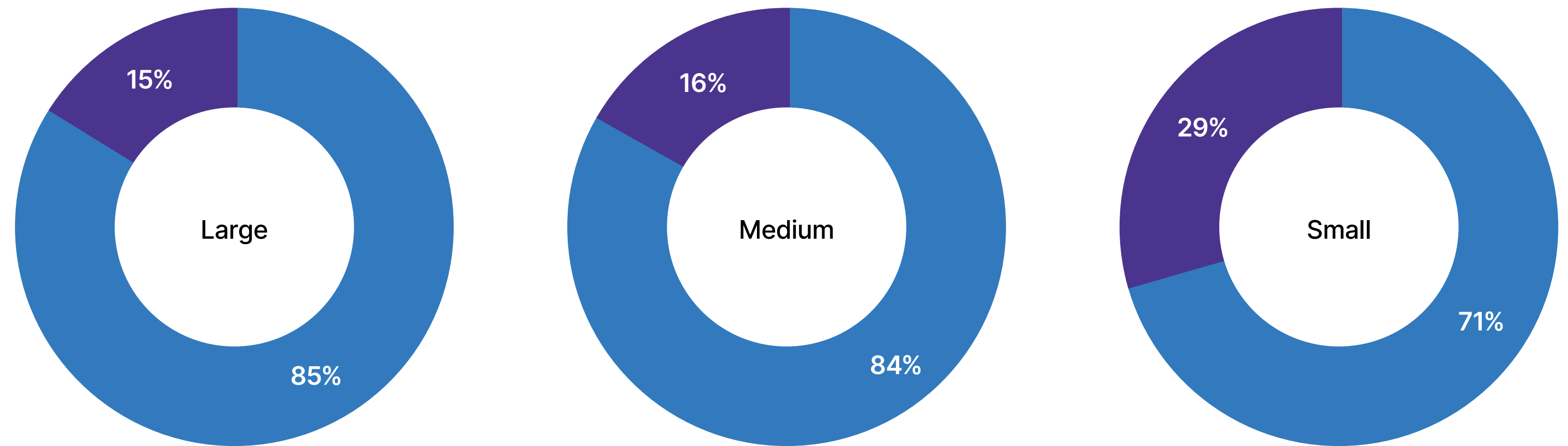
**Invest significantly in children's, youth, and young adult ministry to encourage greater involvement.**

**Create or strengthen local city or community networks (e.g. pastors groups, ministerials) to understand the needs of the local community and how congregations can support those needs.**



# At present, what is the current status of your in-person worship services?

Of those who were not limited by restrictions at the time of the survey, 75% have reopened in person. Smaller churches reported facing greater challenges with restarting in-person services, likely due to a decline in volunteers and a higher percentage of vulnerable people in their congregations. These challenges were correlated with overall declines in revenue. Understandably, smaller churches struggling with these issues find it harder to fully reopen.



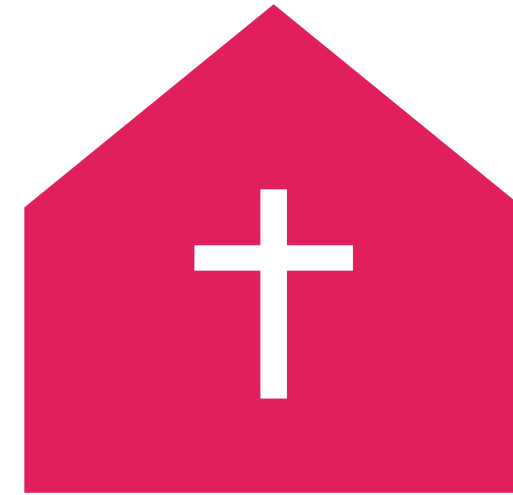
■ Meeting in person   ■ Not meeting in person

# In-person attendance compared to pre-pandemic numbers

On average, churches are seeing about 60% of their pre-pandemic attendance return to their services. Smaller churches see 65%, while medium and larger churches see 50–55%.

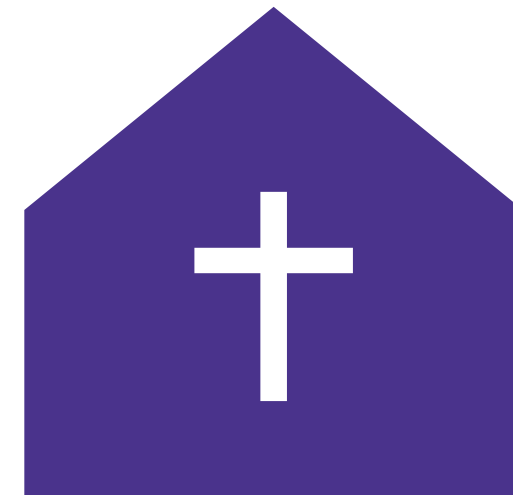
This reveals a decline from the attendance reports of October 2020, which saw a average of 70% of pre-pandemic attendance.

This further decline in attendance may be seasonal, but it may also indicate that more attendees have disengaged from attending in-person services, even after vaccines became available and gathering restrictions changed.



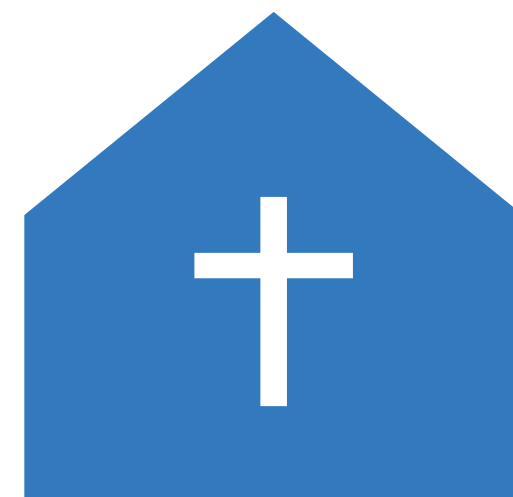
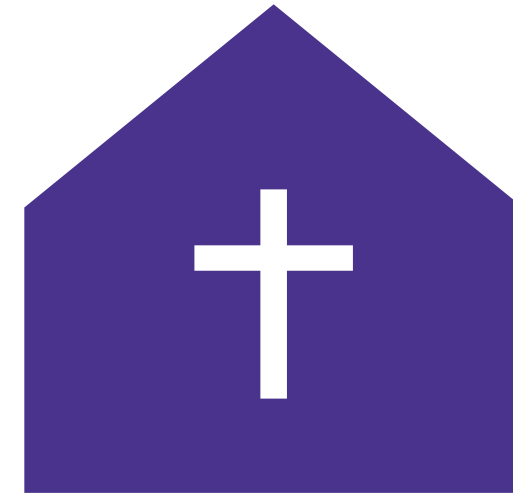
**1 out of 4 churches**

has **less than 40%** of pre-pandemic attendance



**2 out of 4 churches**

have **40–70%** of pre-pandemic attendance



**1 out of 4 churches**

has **more than 70%** of pre-pandemic attendance





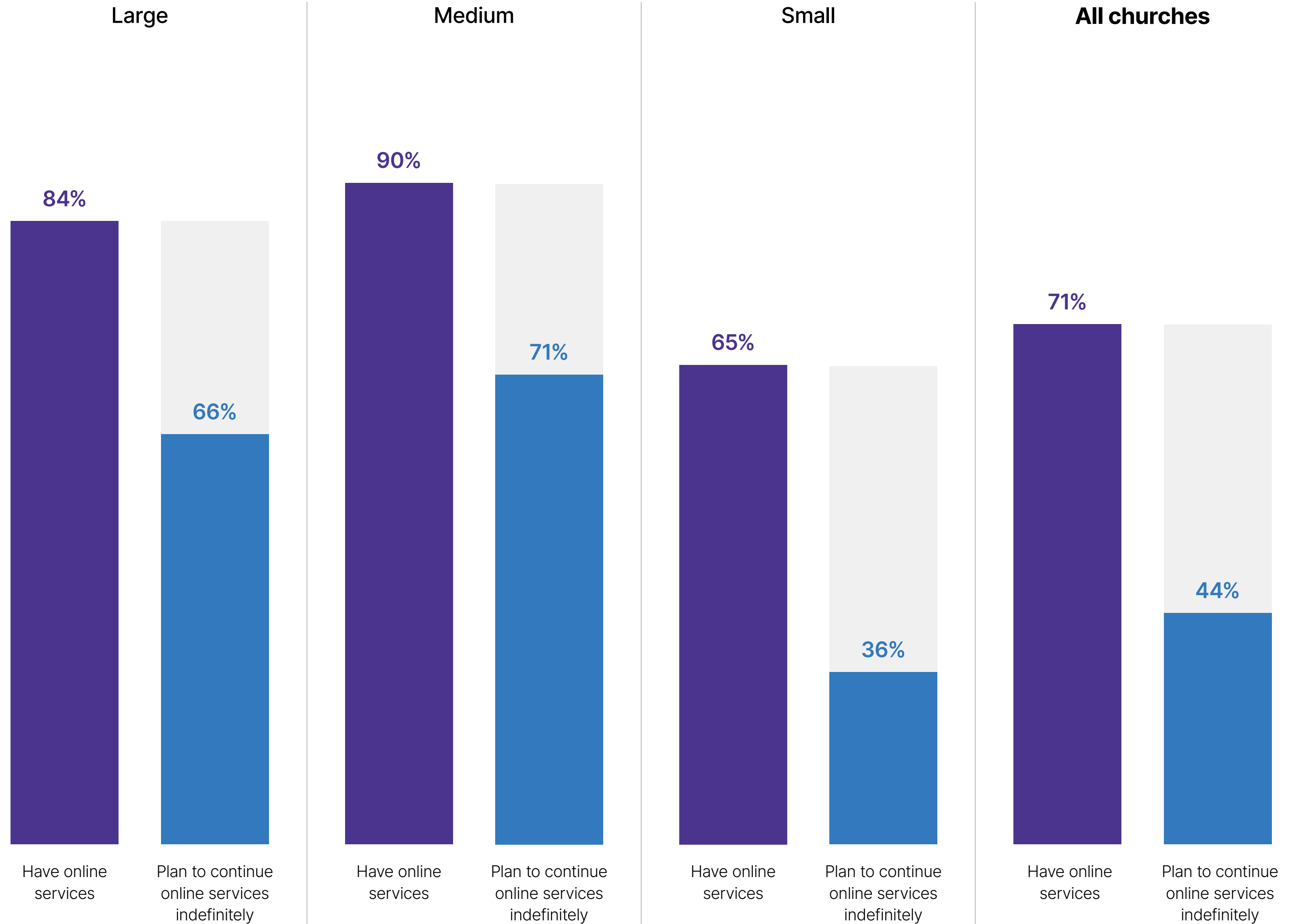
# Current use of online services and plans for the future

Over 70% of churches now offer online services. This percentage has remained consistent since October 2020.

Church leaders reported that 44% plan to continue online services indefinitely, while 27% will stop at some point.

This represents significant growth as prior to the pandemic, only about 10% of churches in Canada had an online service.

Overall, this indicates that the pandemic has served as a catalyst for helping churches adopt new ways of using technology as part of their ministry.

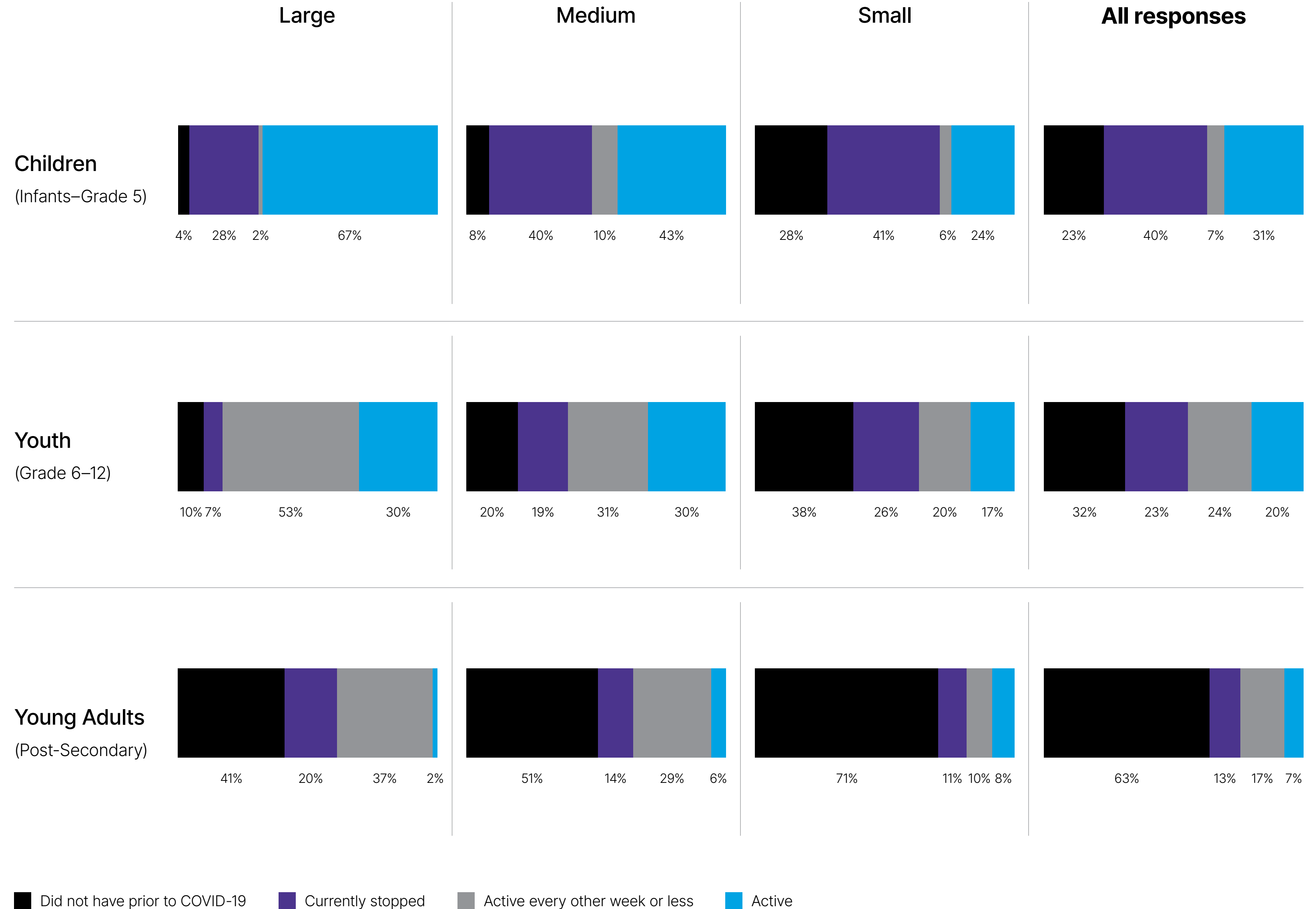




# Status of children's, youth, and young adult programs

Prior to the pandemic, most churches offered children's and youth programs. The smaller the church, the less likely the church was to offer these and the more likely to stop offering these programs during the pandemic.

As restrictions lift, more children's ministries are restarting. Yet at the time of the survey, more than 50% remained closed. Effort is being made to restart as indicated by those that are starting some form of regular programs for children or youth.





# Percentage of people returning to churches based on the status of their children's and youth programs

A higher number of people were likely to re-engage with a church that was offering programs for children and youth.

A key hurdle churches may have to overcome is recruiting enough volunteers for these programs to be restarted.

The evidence suggests that the extra effort to relaunch these programs helps draw people back into community, especially as it applies to children's ministry.

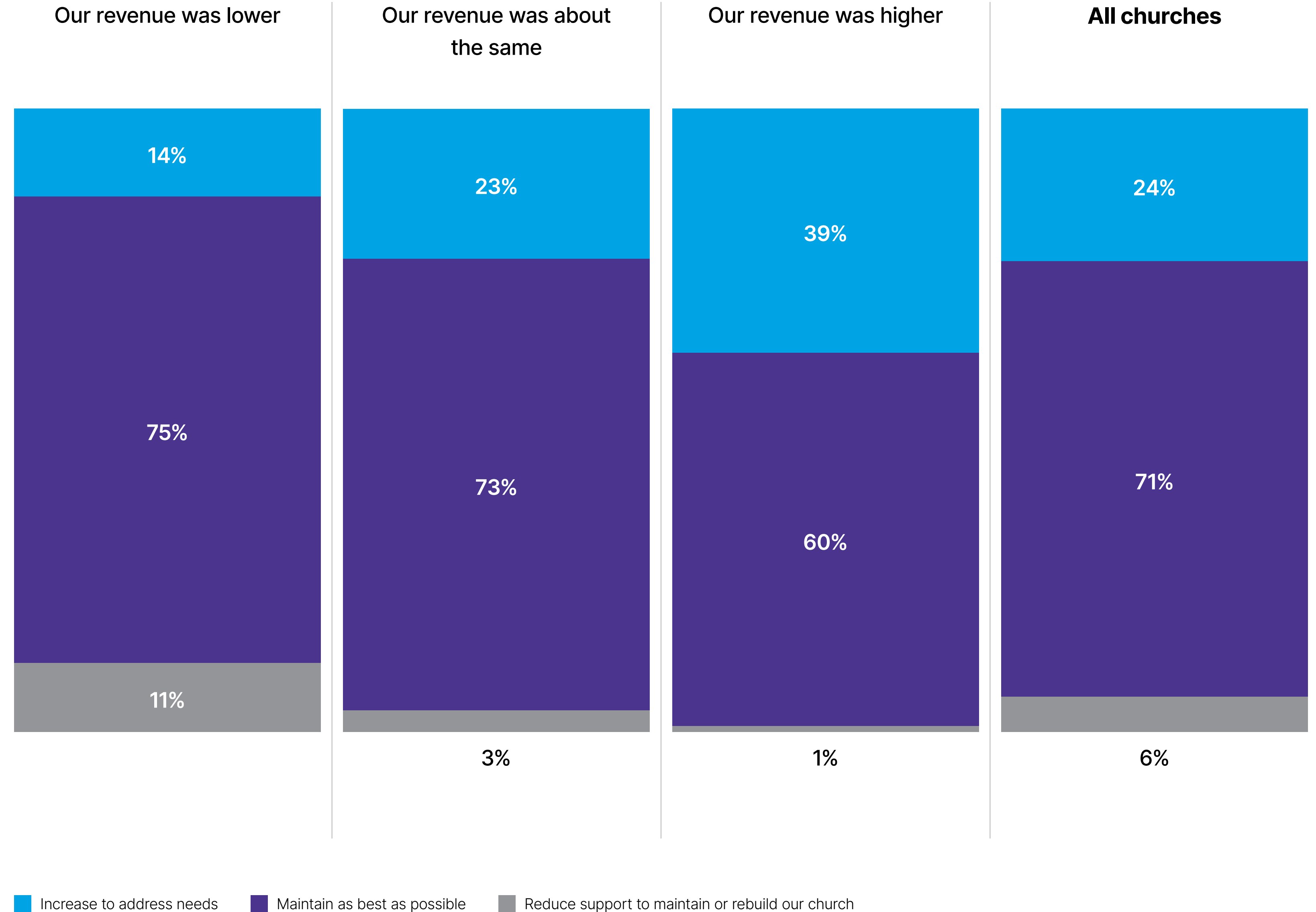




# Support for other ministries based on impacts on church revenue

Even with declining revenue, churches were generous in supporting other ministries. The overwhelming majority maintained their giving to other ministries as best as possible, with more increasing than decreasing their financial support.

This trend is consistent with previous surveys. This is an encouraging sign that churches worked to maintain an outward focus and vision for partnering with other ministries.

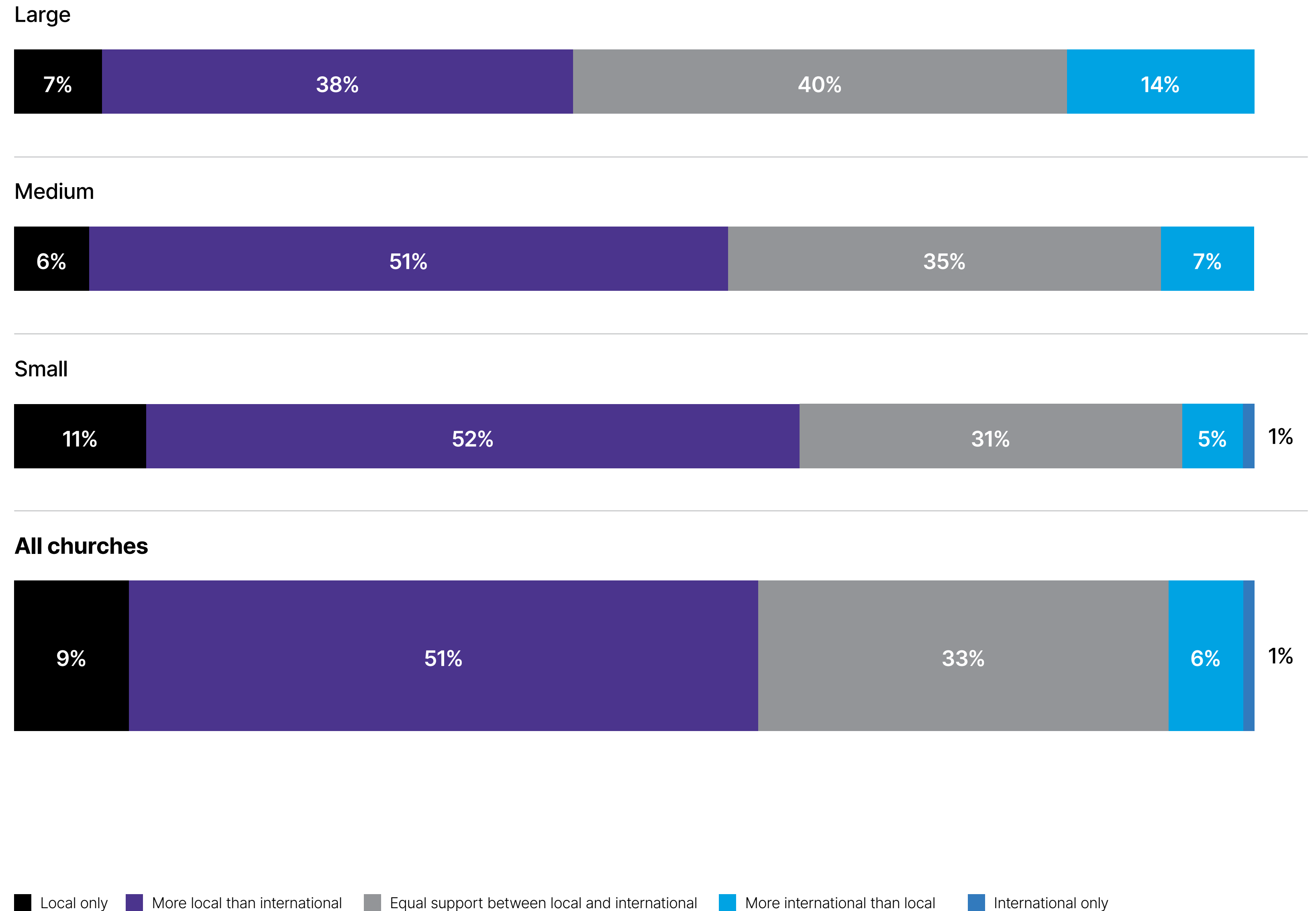




# What best describes your church's current emphasis between local and international ministries?

Most churches are strong supporters of local ministries.

In general, larger churches are more likely to support international ministries.

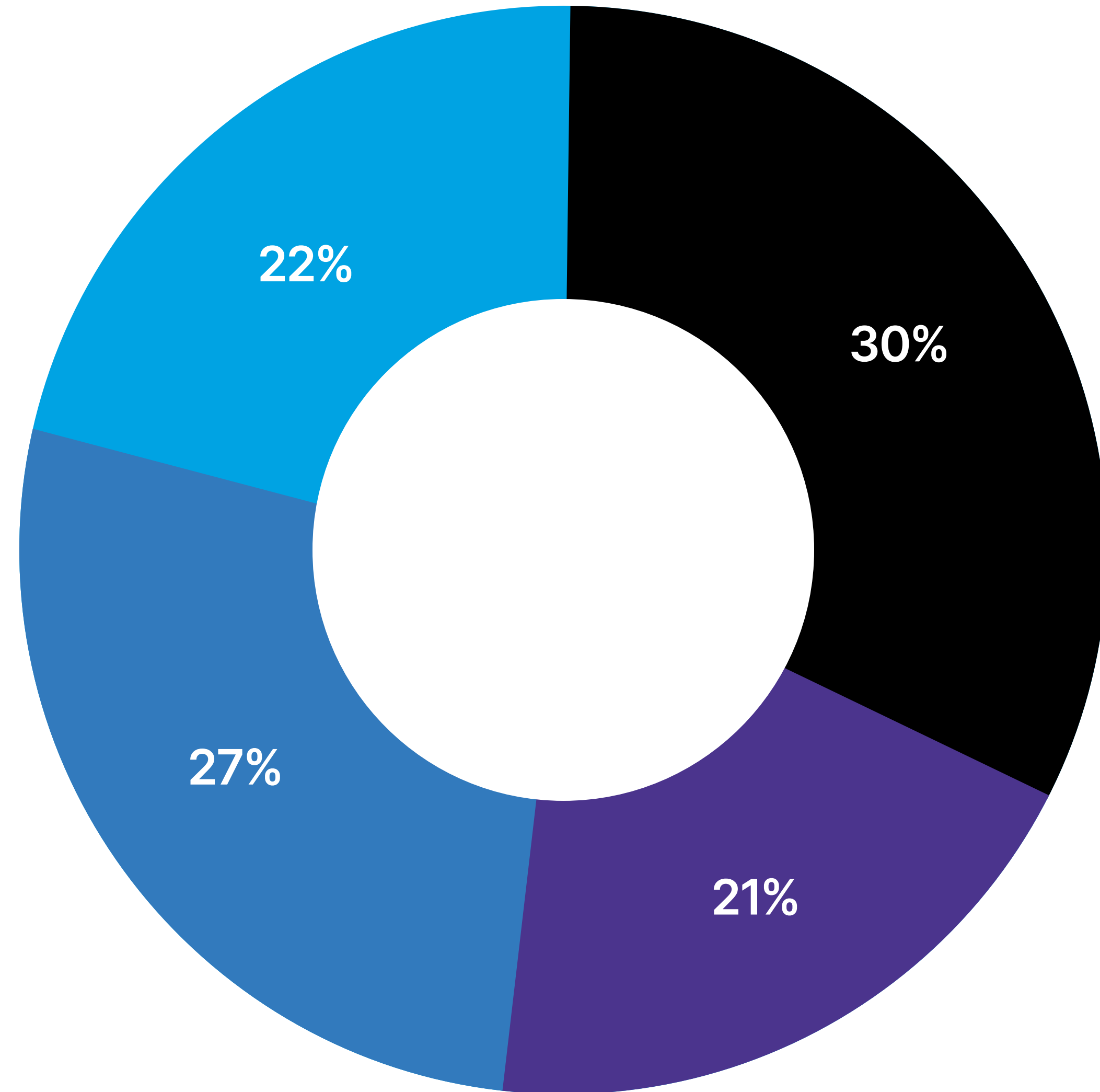




# How often do you encourage your congregants to connect to and serve in ministries beyond your local congregation?

Approximately 50% of churches promote volunteerism beyond their church on a weekly or monthly basis.

The remaining 50% only promote volunteerism quarterly or annually. For these churches, there is an opportunity to consider the benefit of promoting volunteerism beyond the church, especially as a part of helping in the recovery of our communities and cities.



■ Annually or less   ■ Quarterly   ■ Monthly   ■ Weekly

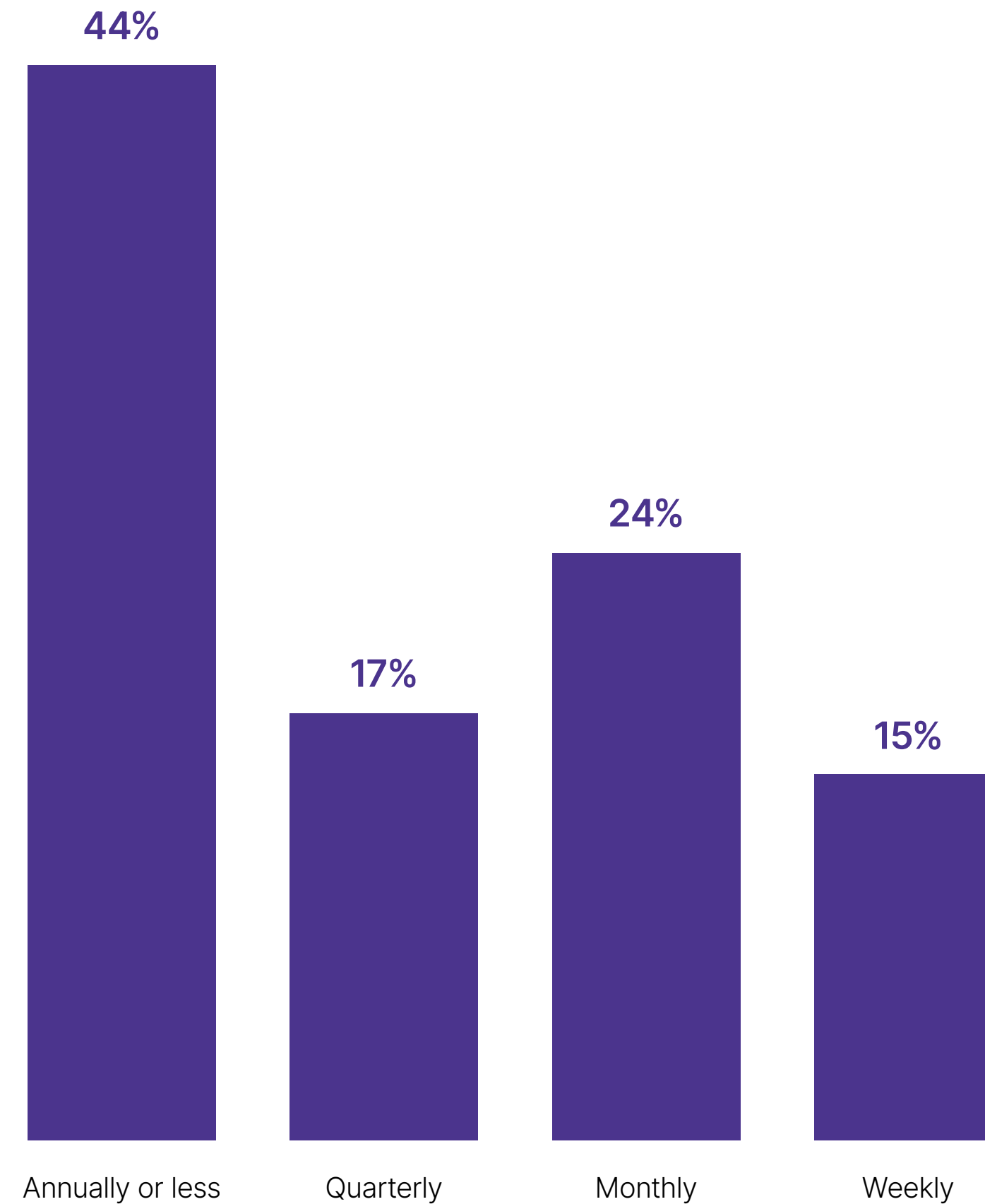


# Involvement with local groups and frequency of promoting external volunteerism

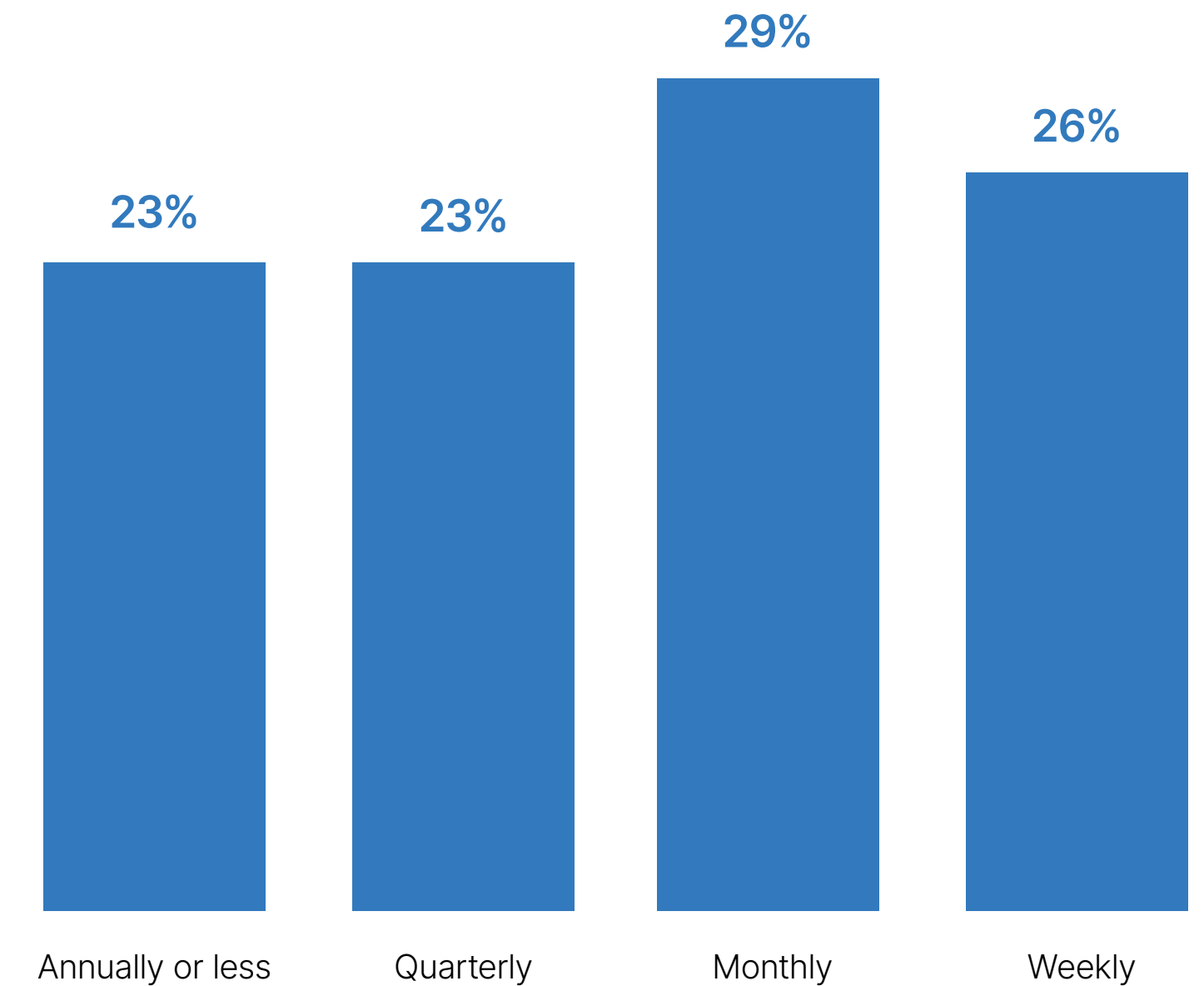
Two out of three church leaders are involved in some form of cooperative leadership group, such as a ministerial, pastoral network, or community roundtable.

The one third of leaders who were not in a cooperative group were also much less likely to regularly promote volunteerism beyond their church. A first step to better engaging a church community may be as simple as joining a local network to become more aware of opportunities to serve.

Frequency of promoting external volunteerism



Not involved with a group to address local needs



Involved with a group to address local needs

# Ministry Operations

3





# Key Insights

- Ministries rely heavily on individual donors to support their work. At the same time, there is a desire of ministries to form stronger partnerships with churches.
- There are real obstacles that hinder partnerships between ministries and churches that will need to be addressed—in particular, finding quicker ways to identify ministries and churches that are a good match for collaboration.
- Generosity and volunteers are a top concern for both churches and ministries.
- There are a wide variety of support needs when it comes to ministries. There is opportunity to explore new creative and timely ways of sharing these needs broadly, rather than sharing the occasional announcement in a church service.
- In the coming years, 50% of ministries are looking to develop a new strategy for innovation.

## Opportunities to explore

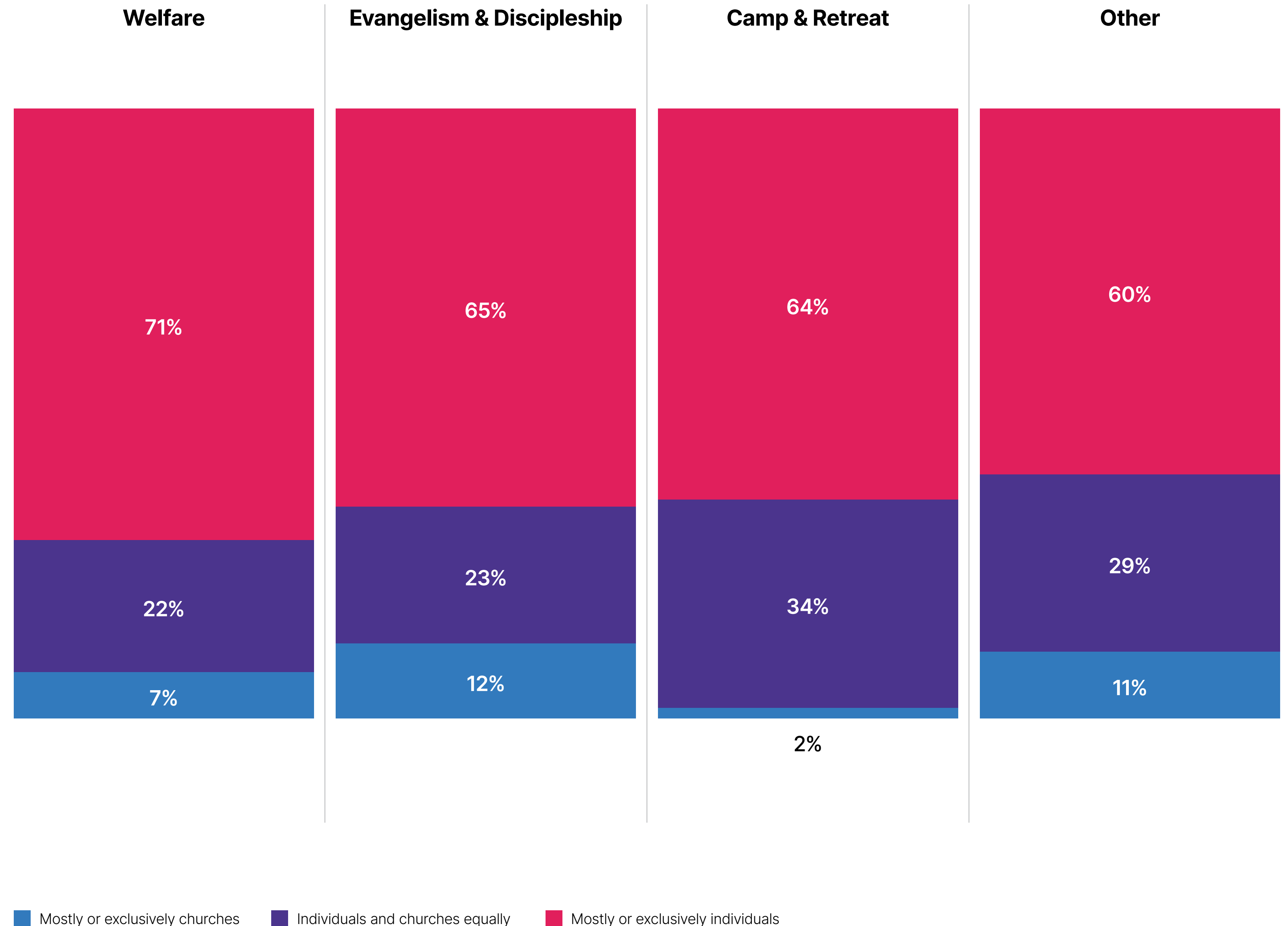
**Shift to a proactive approach of partnering with other ministries by emphasizing the wide range of opportunities for support, as opposed to just focusing on financial support.**



# Between churches and individuals, what best describes your ministry's emphasis on gaining support?

Most ministries receive support from both individual donors and churches. The majority of ministries receive support primarily from individual donors, with a much smaller percent receiving support from churches. This may lead ministries to view churches as a place to reach out to individual donors rather than to see the church itself as a partner.

There is an opportunity to consider how to deepen partnerships between ministries and churches and find new ways to engage Christians in both giving and serving.





# What most hinders your ministry from working with churches?

The pandemic has made partnerships between churches and ministries more challenging.

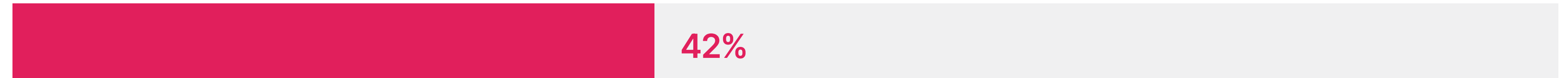
It appears that even once COVID restrictions are lifted, churches and ministries will still face challenges related to working together.

There is an opportunity to re-envision the model of church and ministry partnerships and explore new options that help the right partners on both sides find each other and collaborate.

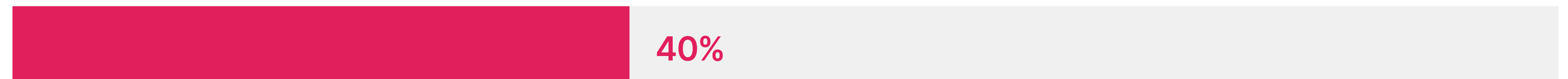
Current COVID restrictions



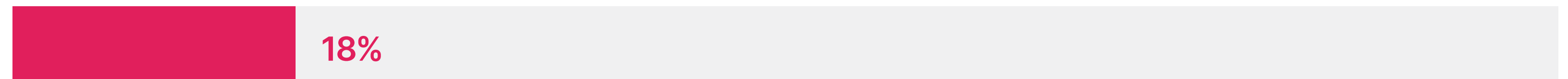
Difficult to identify churches that may be interested in our work



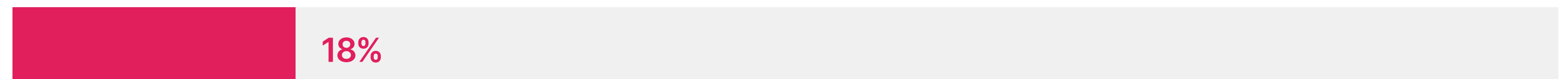
Lack of staff time to engage churches



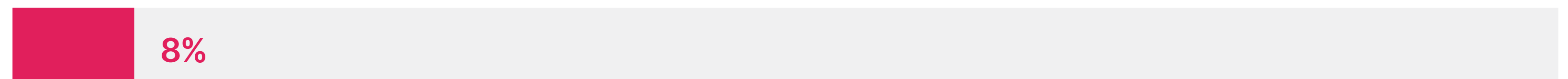
Need to improve our website or marketing materials



Limited ways for the church to support our work



Unclear how our work supports the church

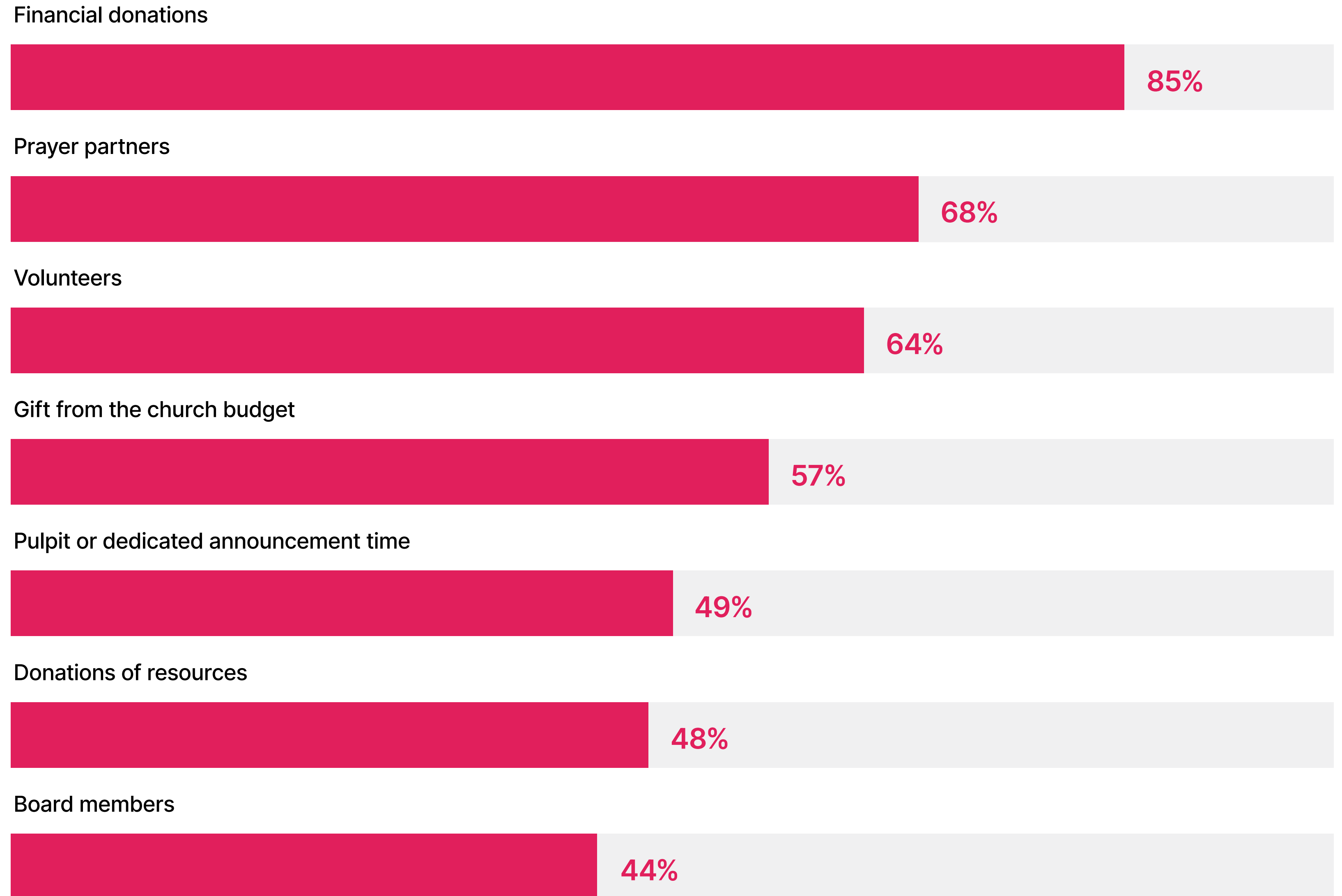




# How can churches support your ministry?

Ministries are looking for a variety of support. A typical way to request that support is through dedicated announcement times during church services, but this creates an obvious limitation in terms of how often requests are made or what can be shared in a brief announcement.

There is an opportunity to explore how cooperative leadership networks can create new ways to share these diverse needs with pastors and their congregations.

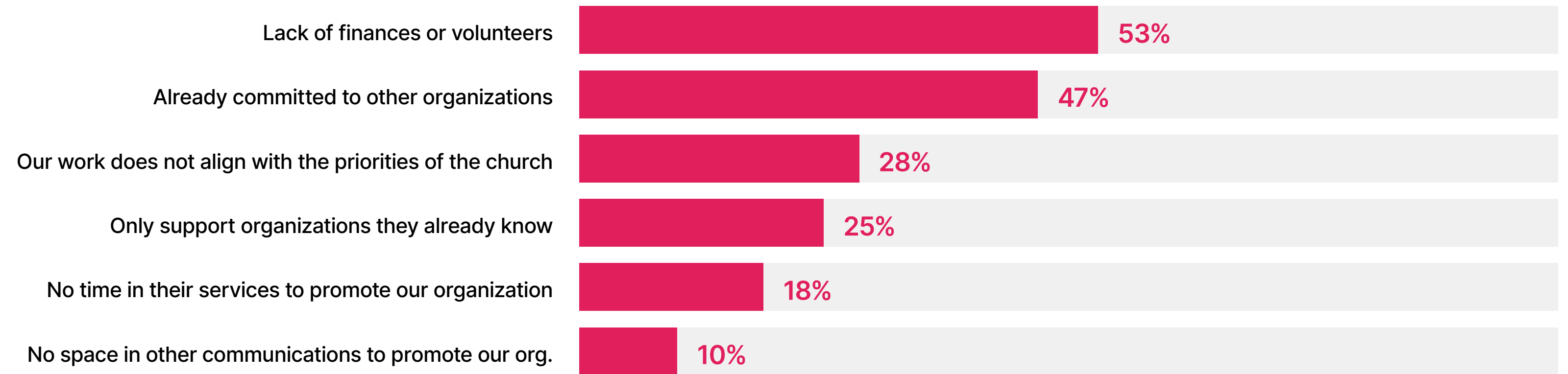




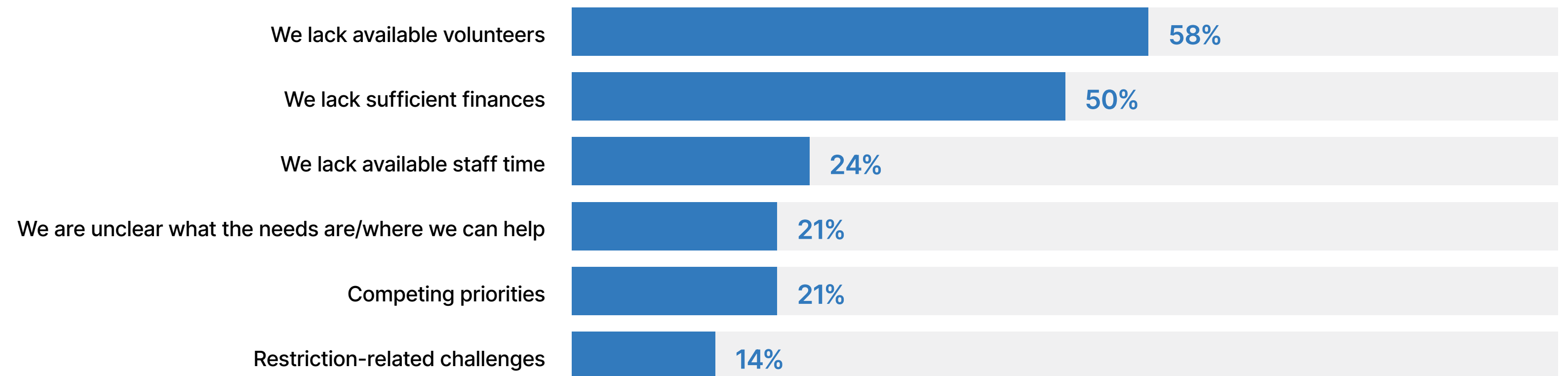
# Challenges of supporting ministries from both a church and ministry perspective

There is close alignment between what is said by churches and what is heard by ministries. Volunteerism and donations remain at the top of this discussion. This suggests that there is an opportunity for churches and ministries to collaborate together on new ways to inspire greater generosity and volunteering.

## Reasons for churches not supporting other ministries as heard by ministries



## Reasons for not supporting other ministries as explained by churches





# What are the top three initiatives for your ministry over the next 1–2 years?

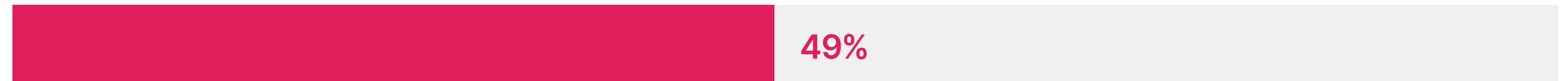
Ministries are placing a high priority on growing their support base, improving communications, and adding church partnerships. Although most ministries receive the bulk of their funding from individual donors, this priority on church partnerships indicates the need for greater cooperation between churches and ministries. In addition, 35% of ministries are looking to add partnerships with other ministries.

Innovation is also a priority. Almost half of all ministries are looking to develop a new strategy for the future. This is more evidence that leaders are looking at doing new things in new ways.

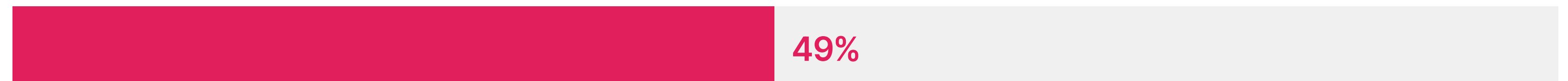
Finding new donors or supporters



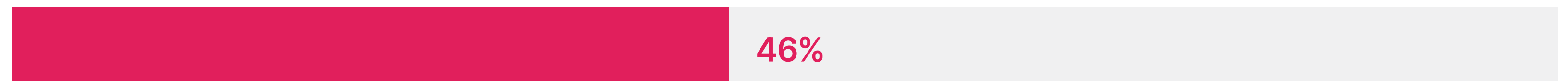
Improving external communications



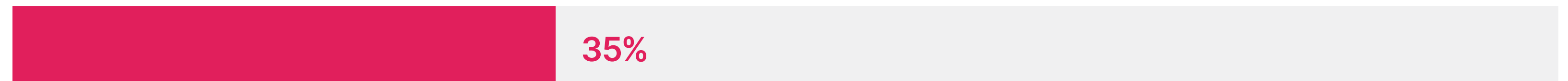
Building partnerships with churches



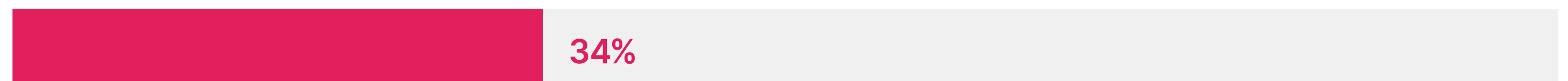
Developing a new strategy for the future



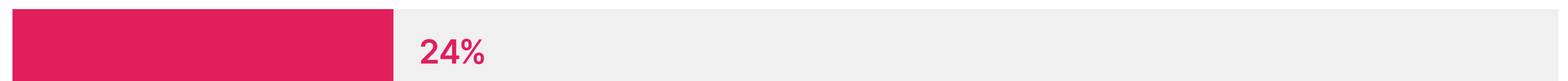
Building partnerships with other ministries



Improving internal operations



Hiring new staff

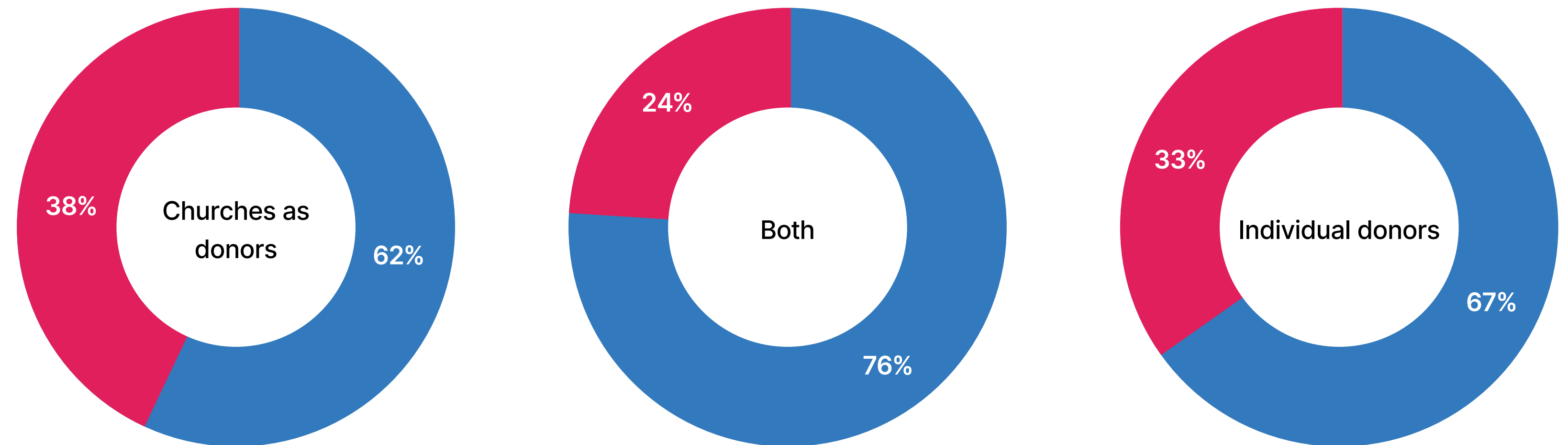


# Openness to new church partnerships grouped by primary donor base

Ministries that rely primarily on individual donors are just as likely to be looking for new church partnerships as ministries that rely primarily on church donors.

This is more evidence that partnership is a vital part of the pathway forward.

Are you looking for new church partnerships in 2022?



■ Yes ■ No

# Health Protocols

4



# Key Insights

- Christian leaders were divided over health protocols, and within that broader division there were many reasons that led people to either accept or oppose the protocols.
- Whether leaders accepted or rejected health protocols, they were all concerned about people's wellbeing.
- This division impacted the various Christian traditions differently, with Evangelicals being the most divided.
- Those who accepted the health protocols did so because of a concern for people's physical health, a basic trust in health professionals, and a desire to obey the law.
- Those who opposed the health protocols were concerned about health impacts (emotional, mental, spiritual) beyond the physical risks, the economic and social impacts, and government overreach.
- In the complexity of all of the impacts of COVID and the wide range of convictions held by Christian leaders, there is an opportunity to rebuild greater unity by focusing on working together to restore all aspects of wellbeing in our communities and cities.

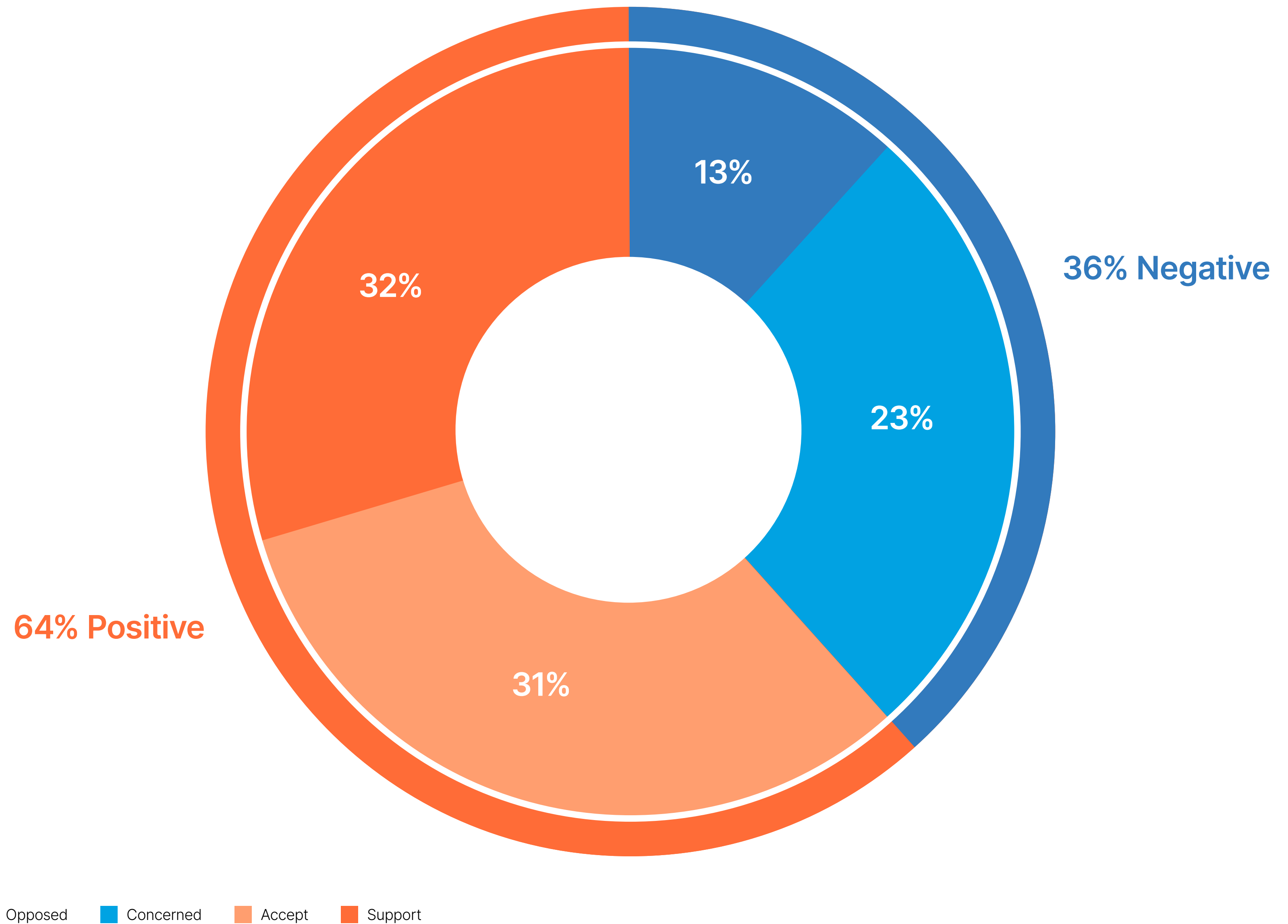
## Opportunities to explore

**Focus dialogue among leaders on the shared values that unite them and then work to understand the different approaches to achieving those values.**

**Develop new skills to navigate complex issues among leaders who hold different views on how to resolve those issues.**

# What is your personal perspective on the government health protocols in addressing the pandemic?

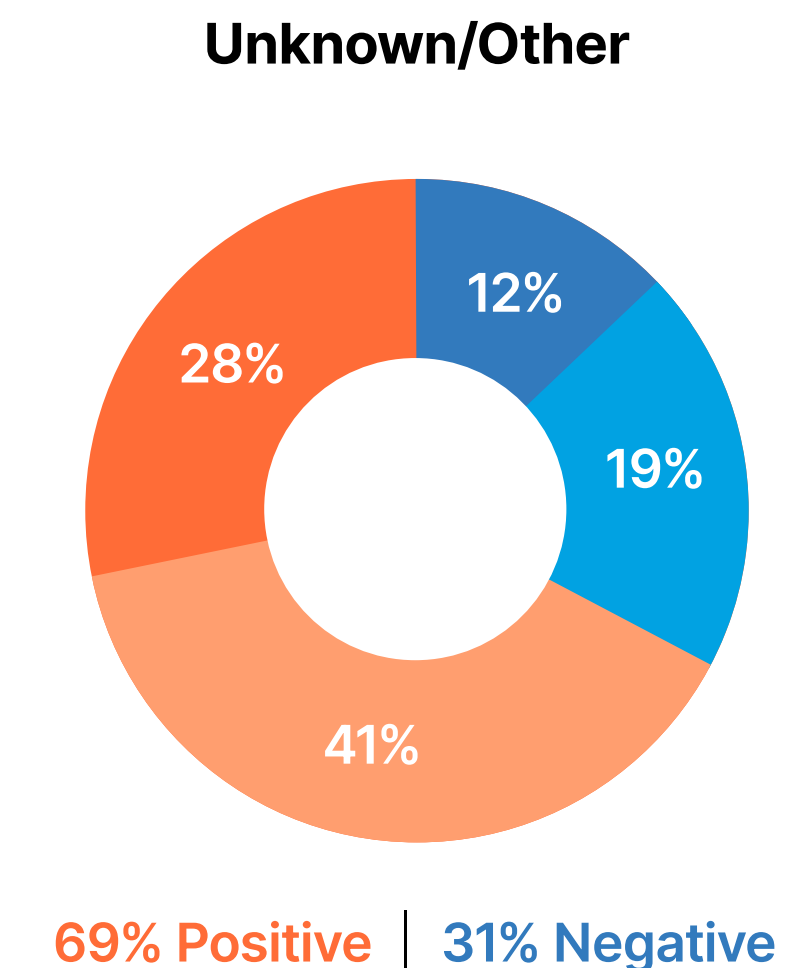
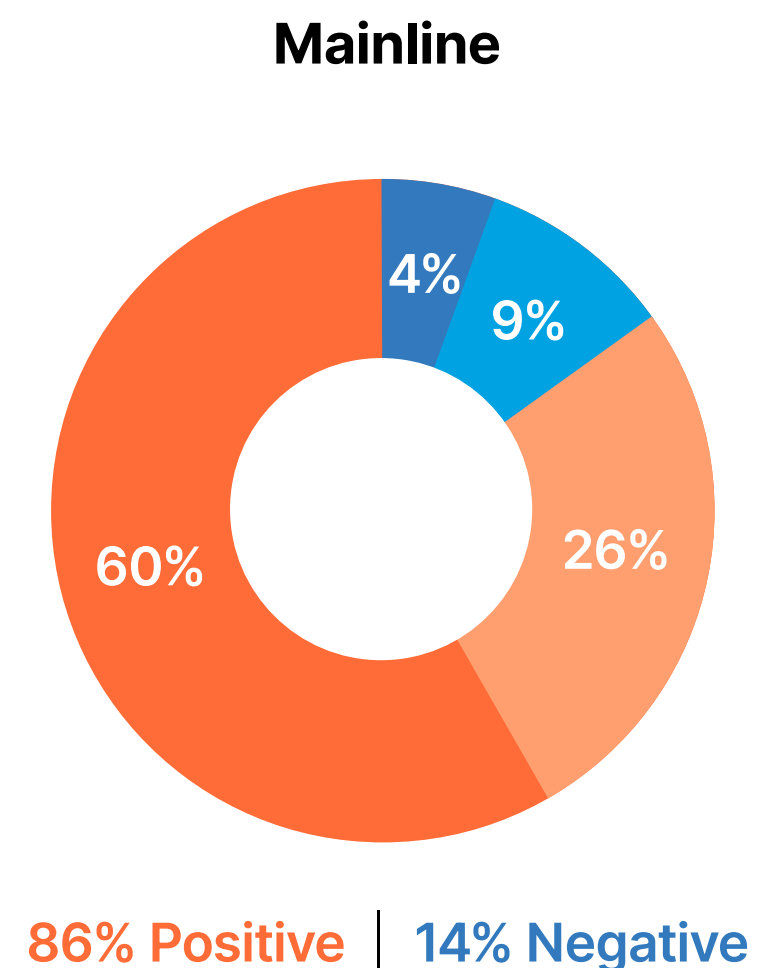
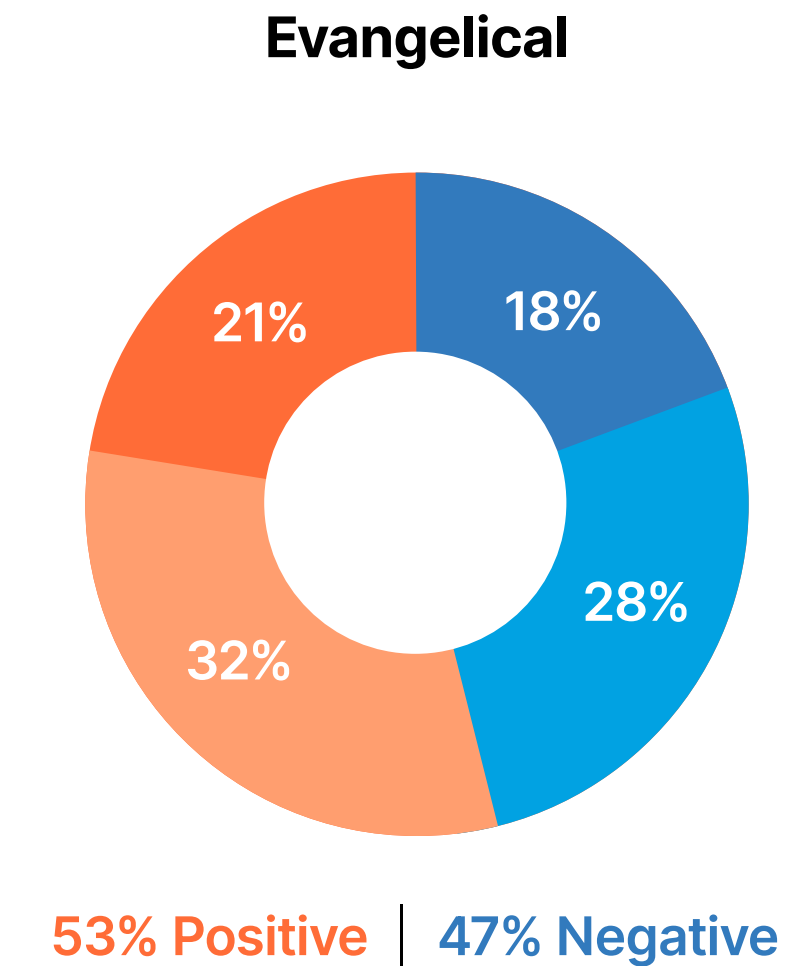
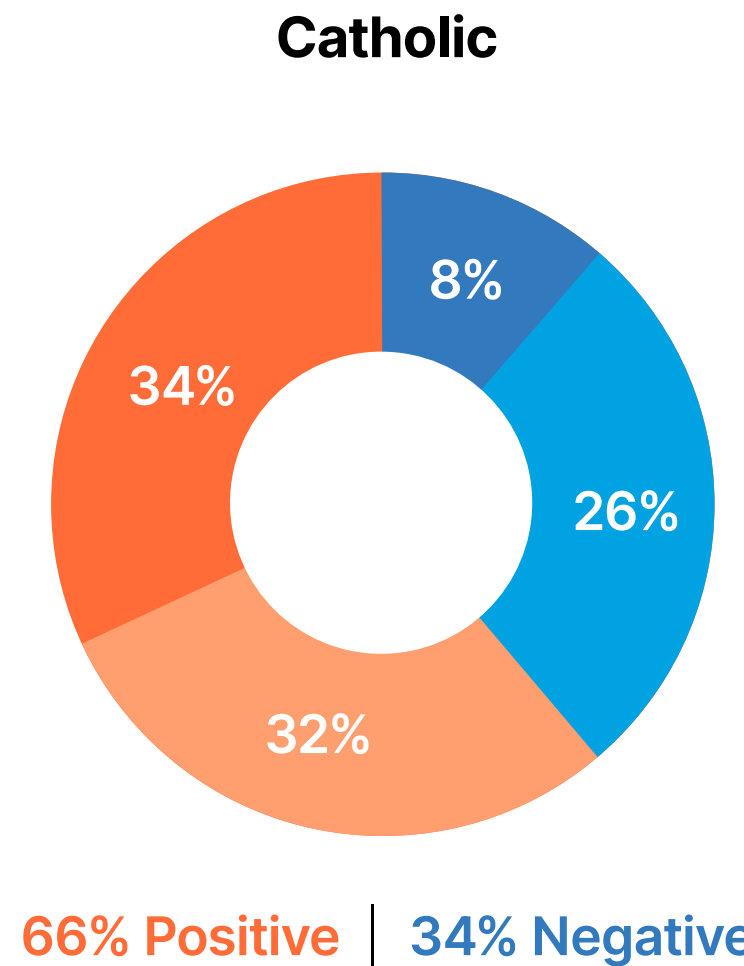
Roughly two out of three leaders held a supportive or accepting attitude towards health protocols, where one of three were either concerned or opposed the health protocols. Overall, Christian leaders' perspectives are not significantly different compared to the general population of Canada.





# Comparing the perspectives of faith leaders by their broad Christian faith traditions

The division over health protocols was markedly different between the various Christian traditions. While working through difference of perspective is important for everyone, Evangelicals will need to make the biggest effort to reconcile these differences of opinion.



■ Opposed ■ Concerned ■ Accept ■ Support

## Questions to consider

How can leaders give greater focus to the convictions that draw us together?

How can leaders develop new skills in working through deeply-felt differing perspectives?



# What are the primary reasons you accept or support these protocols?

The top concern of those who were supportive or accepting towards health protocols was a desire to protect people's health.

Want to protect people's health



Trust guidance of medical professionals



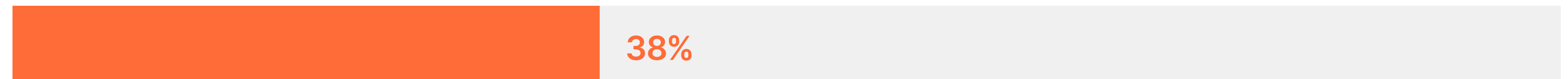
Committed to obey the law



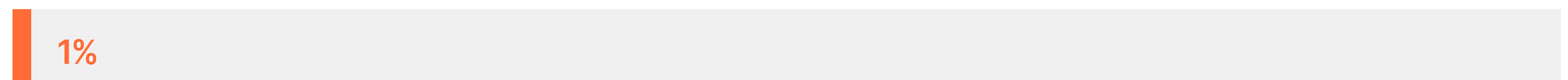
Fastest way to end the pandemic



Following our denomination's or diocese's direction



Other



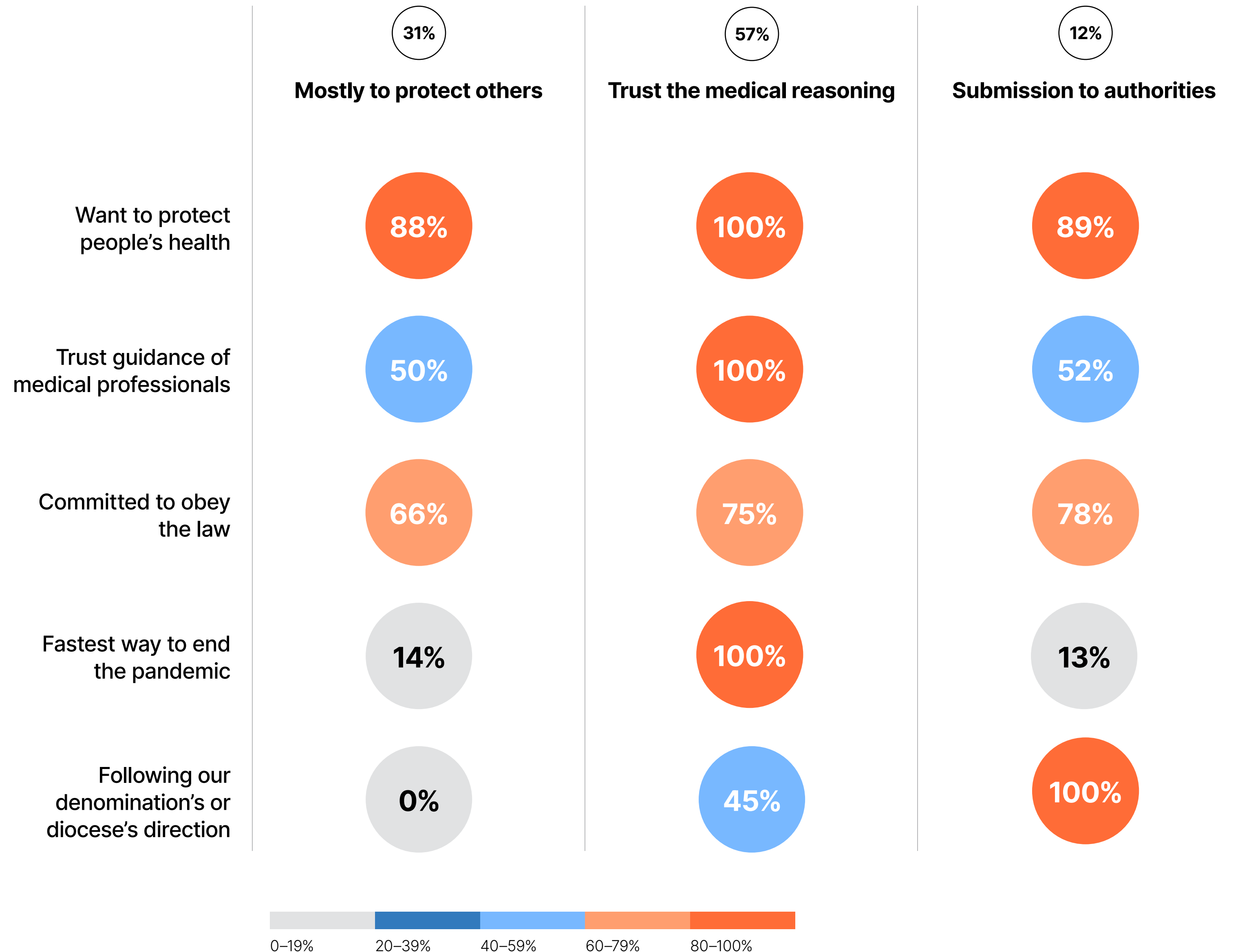


# Common sets of answers for positive attitudes towards health protocols

Those who accepted the protocols fell into three broad groups. All groups wanted to protect other people's health.

One group's reason was simply to protect others and less so for other reasons. The second group trusted in and believed that following the guidance of medical professionals was the fastest way to end the pandemic. The last group prioritized obeying the law and following the direction of their denomination/diocese.

It is worth noting that the first and third groups seemed to hold some reservations about the guidance of medical professionals but for other reasons accepted or supported the health protocols.





# What are the primary reasons you are concerned about or opposed to the health protocols?

Similar to those that generally accepted the health protocols, the vast majority of those concerned or opposed were motivated by a concern about negative impacts to people’s health—including mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

Negative impacts to people’s health (emotional, mental, spiritual)



Negative impacts to people’s economic well-being



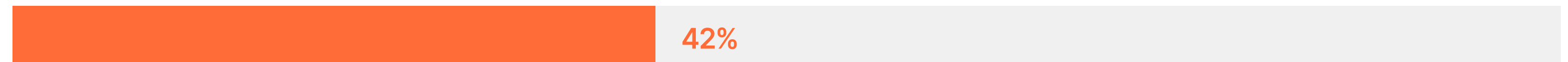
The government has overreached its authority



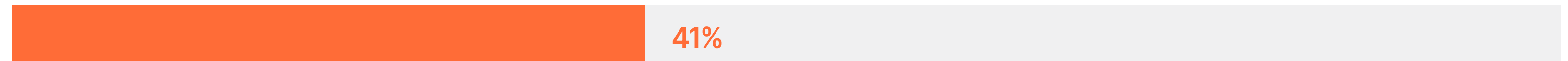
Restrictions create unequal access to our services



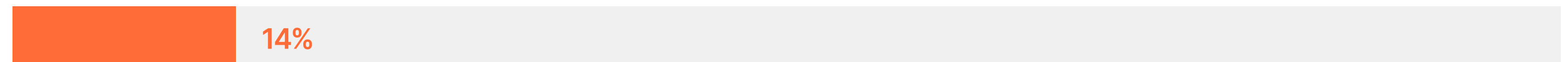
Concern about the safety of the vaccine



The pandemic is not as severe as reported



This is a sign of the end times

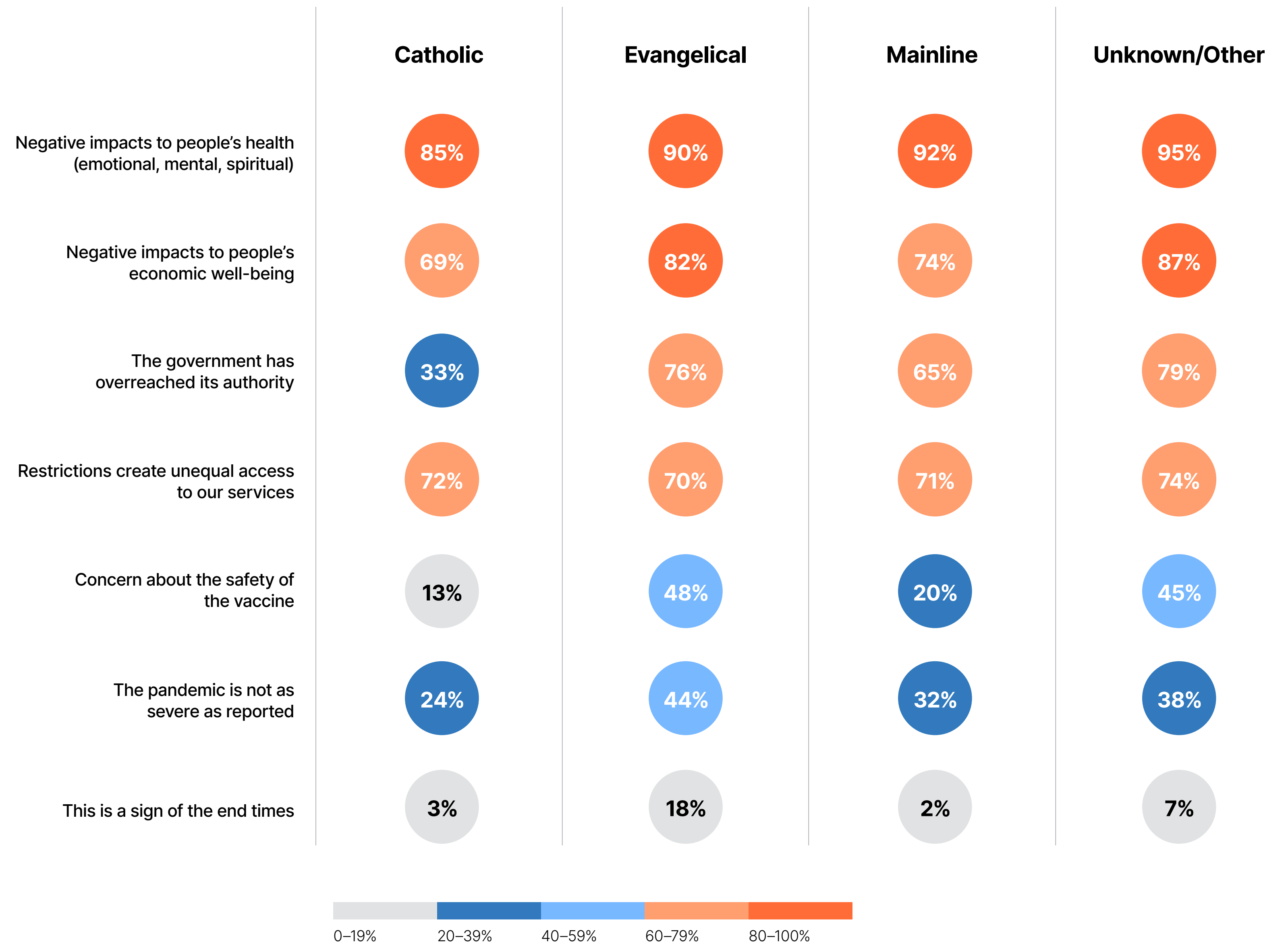




# Reasons for negative perspectives on the health protocols by Christian faith traditions

Different groups identified different reasons for their negative view of the health protocols.

For example, Evangelicals were more likely to be concerned about the safety of the vaccine, and Catholics were generally less concerned about government overreach. While leaders may hold concerns, it is important to note that they hold these concerns for different reasons.





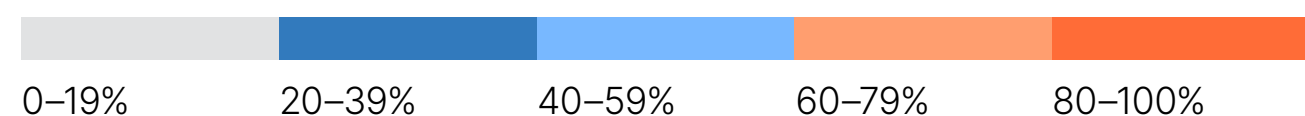
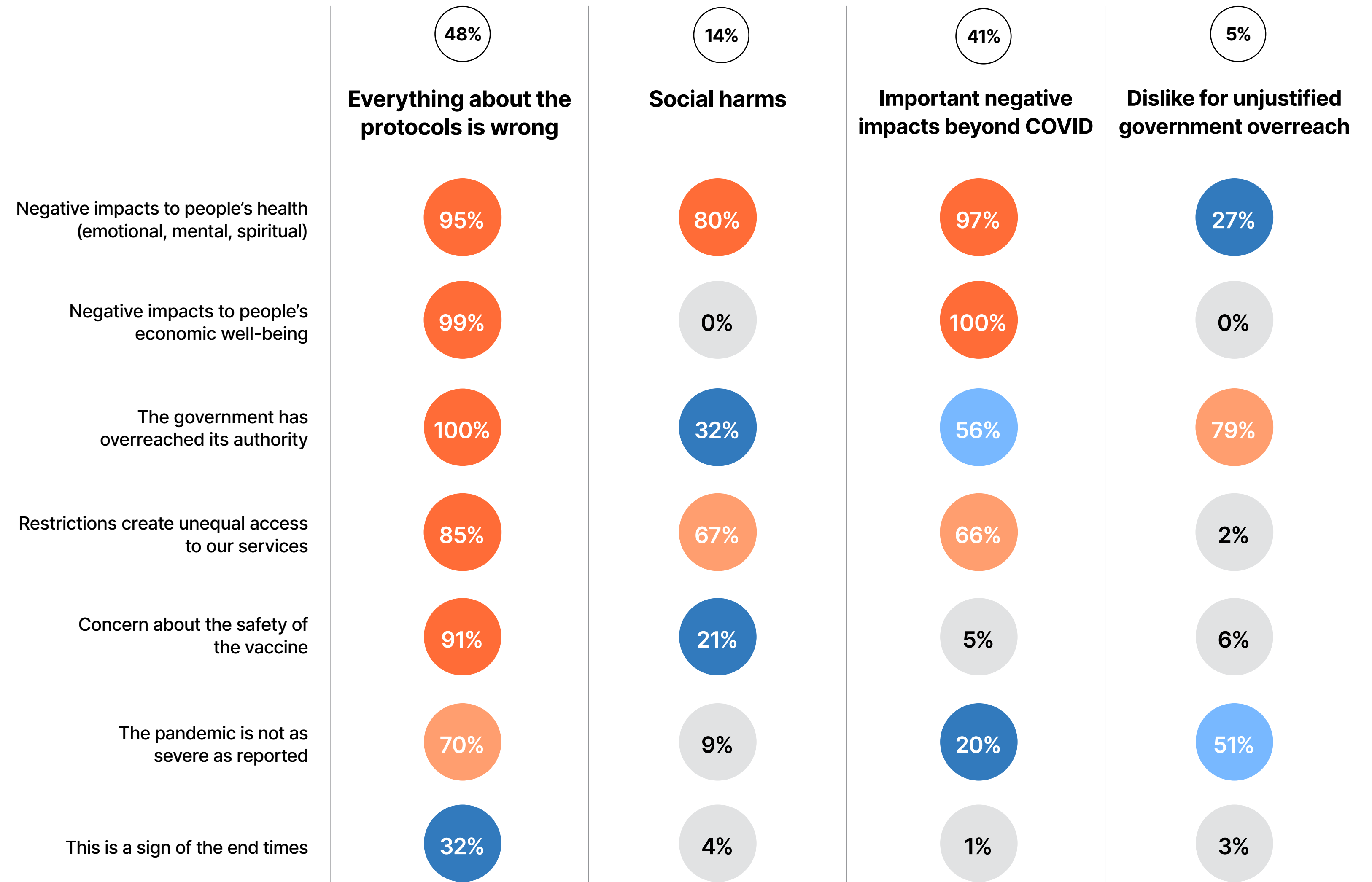
# Common sets of answers for negative attitudes towards health protocols

Those who had a negative perspective about the health protocols fell into four broad groups. The first had many concerns.

The second and third groups were concerned about other kinds of harm created by the protocols, whether social harms or a broad range including economic harm.

It is worth noting that these two groups did not deny the dangers of COVID but were concerned about other harms beyond the physical dangers of COVID.

A minority fourth group was predominantly concerned with government overreach.





# Change & Technology

5

# Key Insights

- Leaders feel that change, and in many cases major change, is now unavoidable because of the pandemic.
- One of the key areas of change for Christian ministries has been the use of technology.
- Moving forward, many churches and ministries plan to retain and further invest in many of the changes they have implemented—whether that be new programs, new ways of working, or new ways of communicating with their people online.
- The majority of leaders see technology as important to discipleship, engaging the needs of their local community, and reaching out to people who don't attend their church services.
- Churches and ministries see the lack of people to help them implement technology as the greatest challenge to overcome.
- As leaders use new technology, they start to see more potential for technology to aid their ministry.

## Opportunities to explore

**Seek out a consulting relationship with a ministry or organization that can help evaluate the best ways to use technology to advance an organization's mission.**

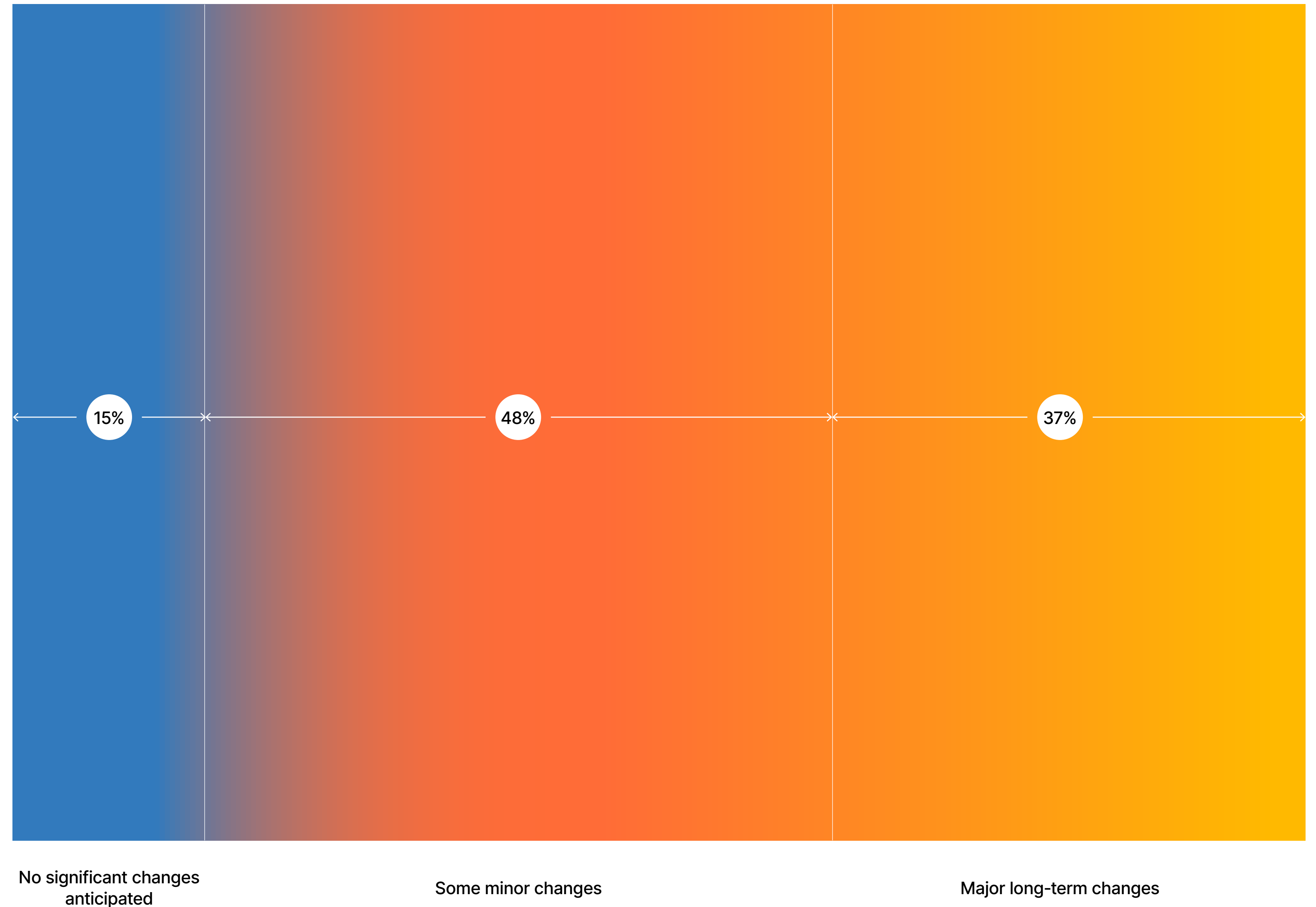
**Leverage that consulting ministry to help train people to use the tools that best serve the mission.**



# Once COVID-19 is managed to the point that health-related mandates are removed, how will COVID-19 have changed the way your ministry operates compared to pre-COVID?

Almost 40% of leaders believe that there will be major changes, and almost another 50% believe there will be minor changes after COVID.

This indicates that change is unavoidable. The question now is how can leaders take this moment of change and use it to re-imagine new and better approaches for their churches or ministries?





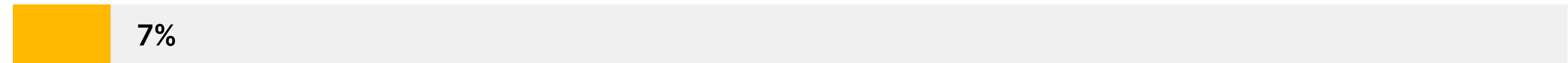
# For those who do not believe there will be long-term changes, what is the primary reason?

Of the 15% of leaders who believe there would be no significant long-term changes, four out of five believe that everything will return to normal. This suggests that a minority of leaders may not be interested in new approaches but prefer to focus on returning to previous approaches.

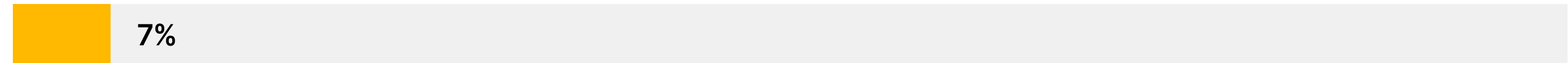
No long-term changes necessary; we are waiting for the situation to return to normal



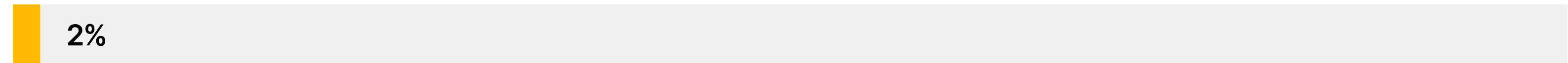
We lacked the right staff/skills to implement changes



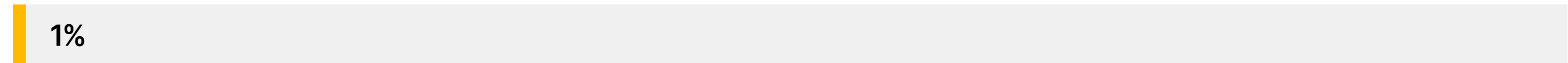
We do not have the finances/resources available to implement long-term change



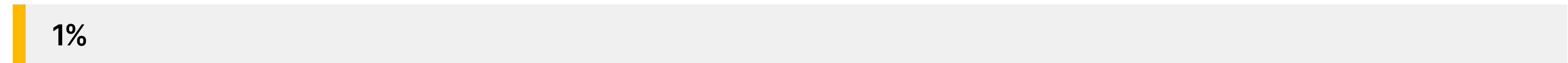
Our organization or members resisted change



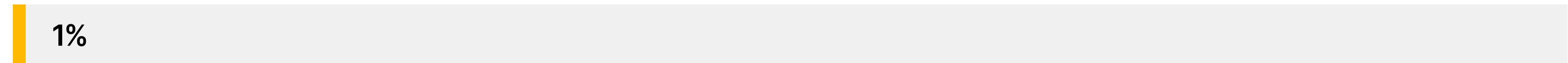
We made changes, but they were already planned or in process



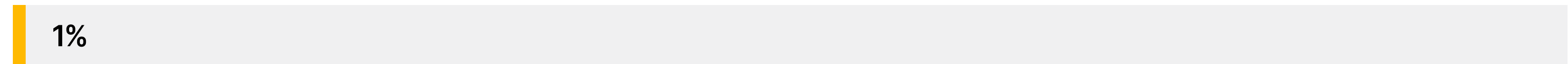
We could not come up with new ways of operating



We did not have the time to do more than implement short-term changes needed to allow us to function



We made changes, but they were manageable and have become normalized



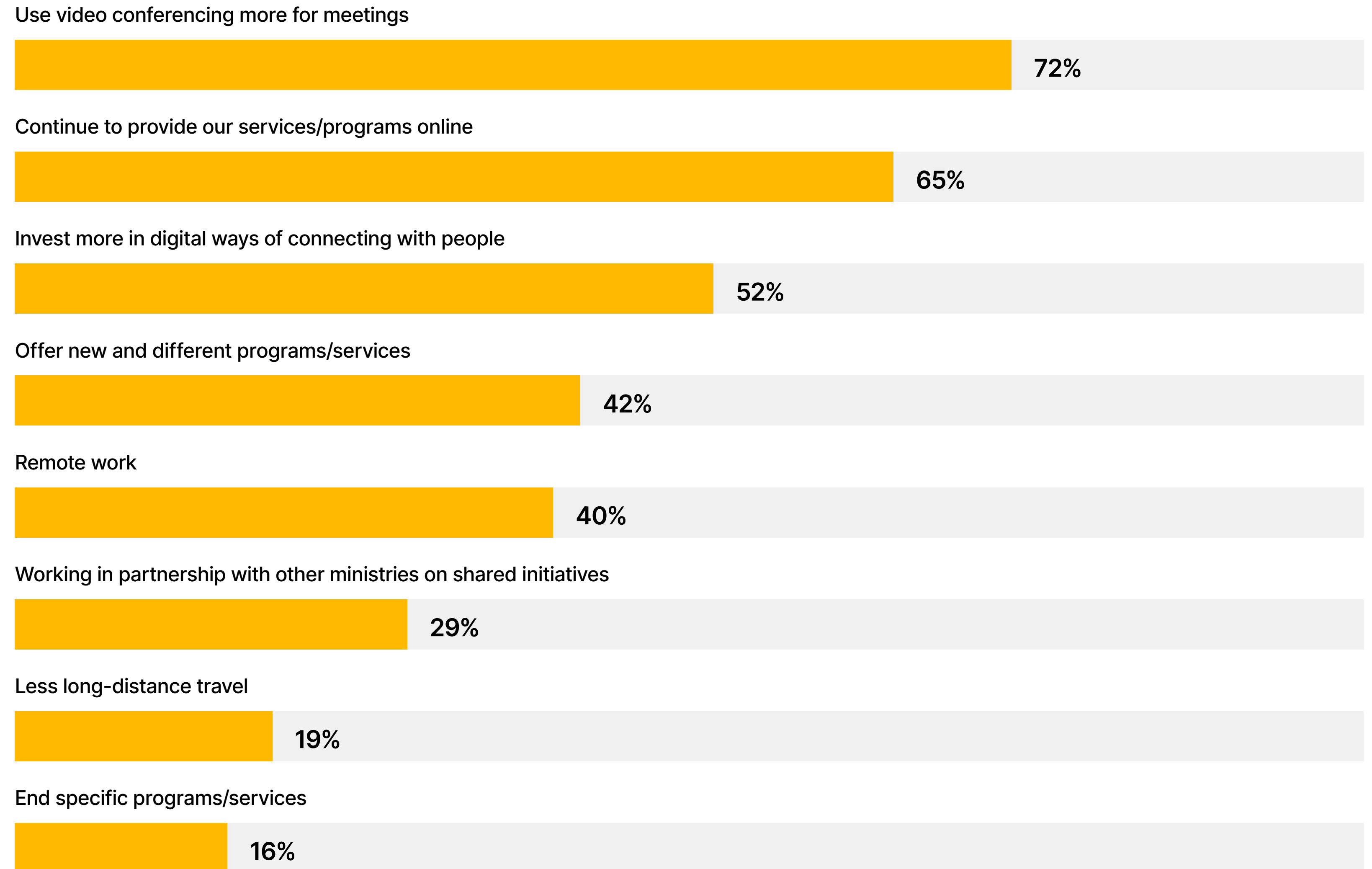


# What types of changes made during COVID will your church or ministry retain moving forward?

The pandemic forced everyone to change. A number of these changes will be retained moving forward, such as using online or digital tools, but ministries are not necessarily changing the content of their programs or services.

However, 42% plan to offer new or different programs and services, while only 16% plan to end specific services.

This suggests leaders want to continue to adapt, be creative, and expand rather than see present challenges as a reason to close programs. This may lead to additional burdens on leaders.





# To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about the role of technology in ministry?

Overall, church leaders are thinking seriously about the role of technology and its value to their ministry.

About two out of three leaders see technology as an important discipleship opportunity, a way to better engage with the needs of their community and world, and a way to engage people who don't attend their services.

This suggests most leaders, after these last two years, see new ways they can use technology to support their ministry.

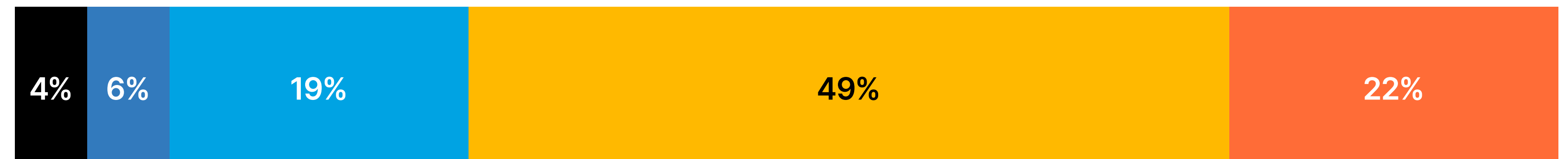
Ministries should have a clear approach to addressing technology as an important discipleship issue



Ministries should use technology to help their people learn about and engage with needs in their community or around the world



Technology can help churches make disciples of people who do not attend in-person gatherings



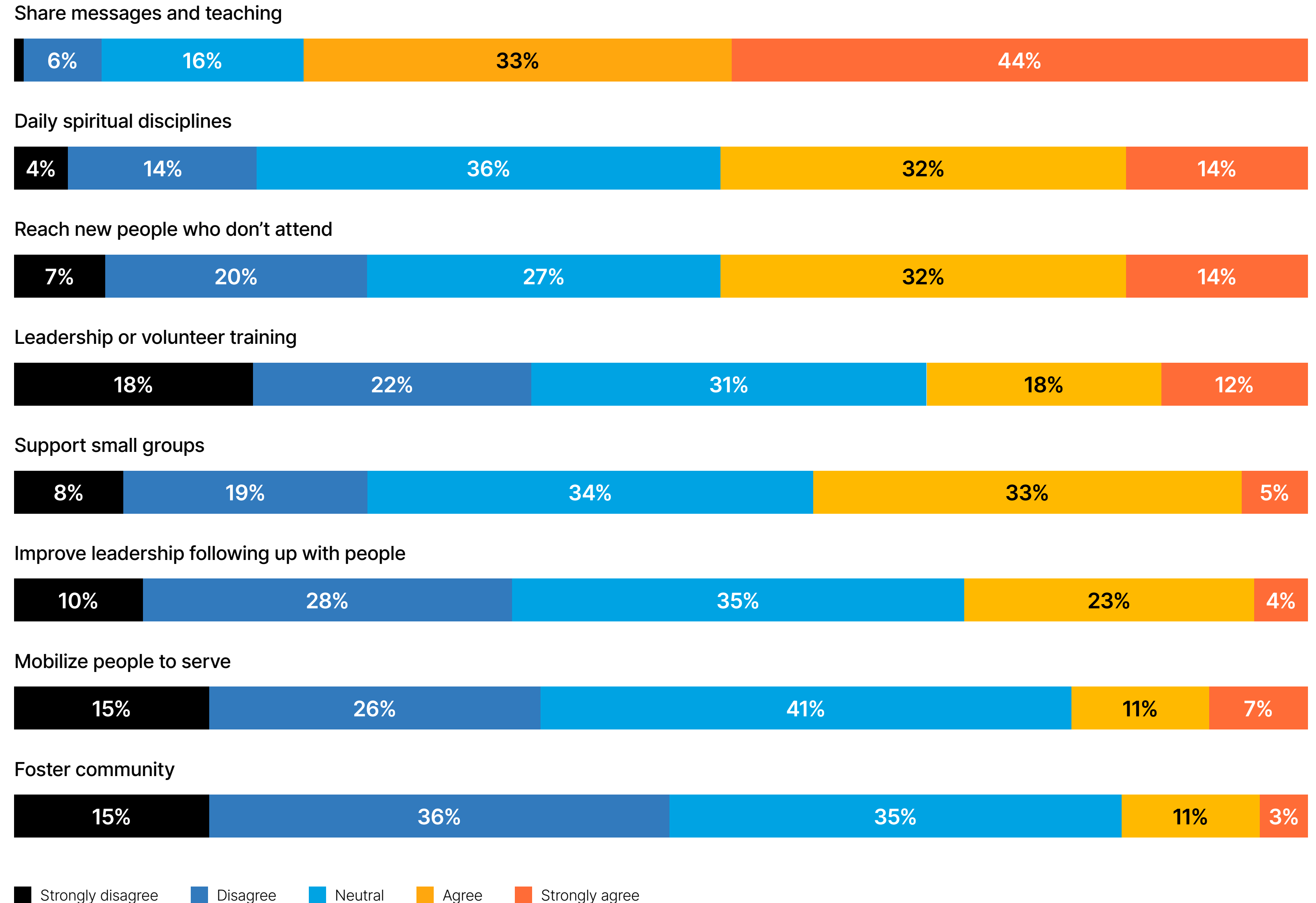
Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree



# How potentially useful is technology for supporting the spiritual lives of your members in these ways?

Responses suggest that leaders need practical experiences using technology as part of learning how it can be helpful to their ministry. For example, prior to the pandemic, only 10% of churches had online services, and now after the pandemic, over 90% see value in sharing messages online and 74% see value in reaching new people using technology.

While other responses suggest leaders are still somewhat unsure how they can use technology in new ways, a learning from this pandemic is that once leaders start to use new digital tools and become comfortable, they will start to see the value in those tools for their ministry.

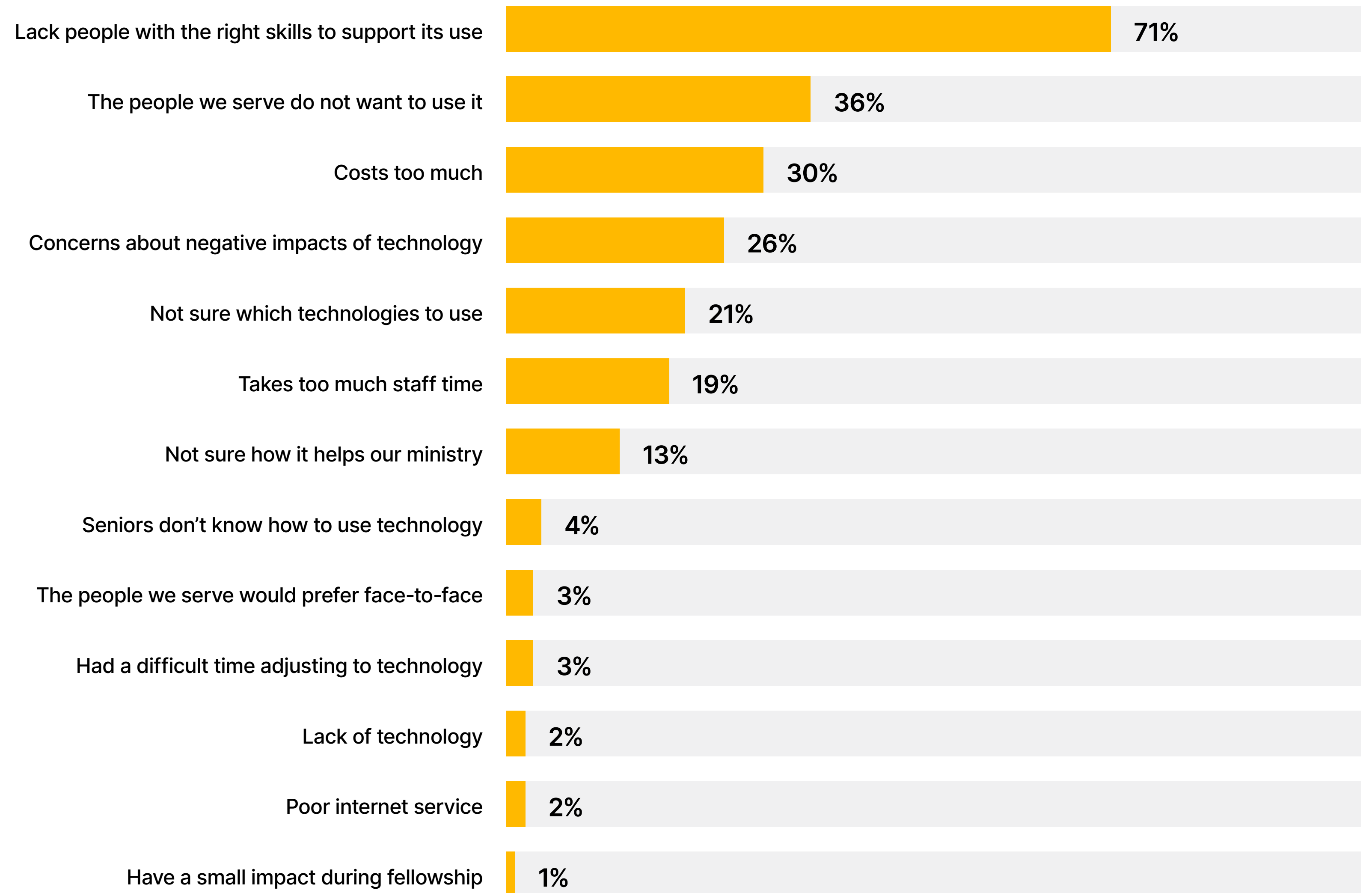




# What are the biggest challenges to using technology in your organization?

Technology can be a challenge to learn and implement. The main challenge for leaders is the lack of people with the right skills to help them. This would be a particular problem in smaller organizations that have a smaller pool of people to draw on.

As leaders look to the future, they can work together to find ways gaining this practical support for their organizations. Many parts of our society, from schools to restaurants, have found new ways to engage using new technologies. This is an opportunity to explore in the coming years as ministries look to change and innovate.





# Leaders

# 6

# Key Insights

- Most leaders reported only moderate energy levels, consistent with data on energy levels from the previous year. To remain healthy and motivated for the long haul, leaders need to invest time in personal renewal.
- Christian churches and ministries are led by seasoned leaders, and by and large they are committed to continue leading.
- The vast majority of senior leaders are over 50 years of age, and there is a clear need to develop young leaders.
- Most senior leaders who are 60 years or older are not considering retiring in the foreseeable future.
- While most leaders leaving ministry were leaving for a mix of issues, two groups stood out: 19% were leaving because of divisions around COVID and 16% because of operational difficulties like finances.

## Opportunities to explore

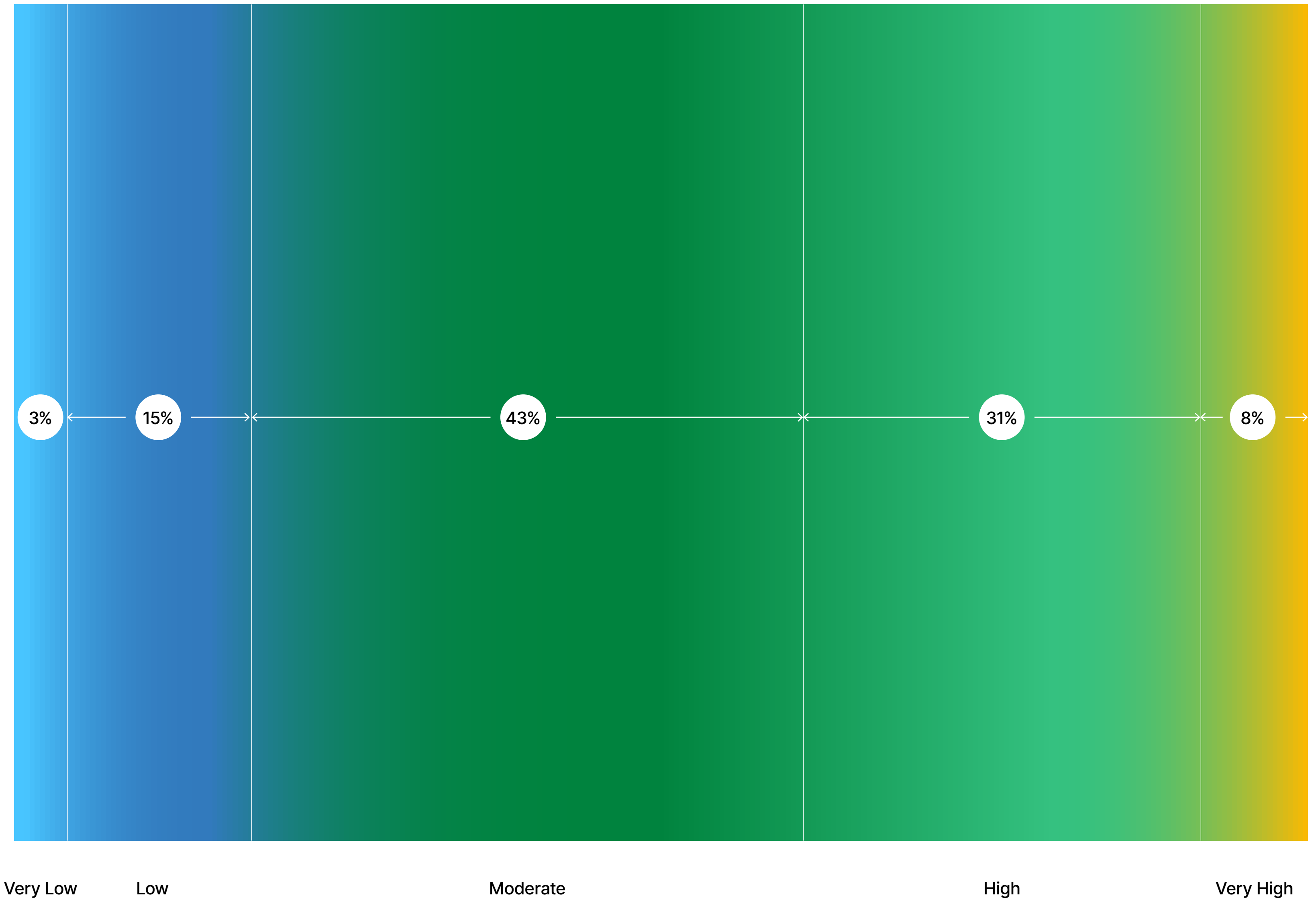
**Prioritize personal renewal of leaders in the coming months.**

**Partner with ministries that can help support the development of younger leaders.**



# How would you rate your current energy level for ministry?

The energy levels for most leaders are moderate. These levels are remarkably similar to those revealed in our 2021 national survey. This suggests that most leaders are still feeling weary as they work through challenges to rally people, reopen their programs and services, and navigate financial strain.





# Age demographics of senior leaders

The age ranges of our senior leaders are heavily weighted towards those over 50, not unlike senior leadership roles in other sectors.

One important difference is that many churches only have one or at most two senior leaders. This raises possible concerns about the development of new leaders for the future.

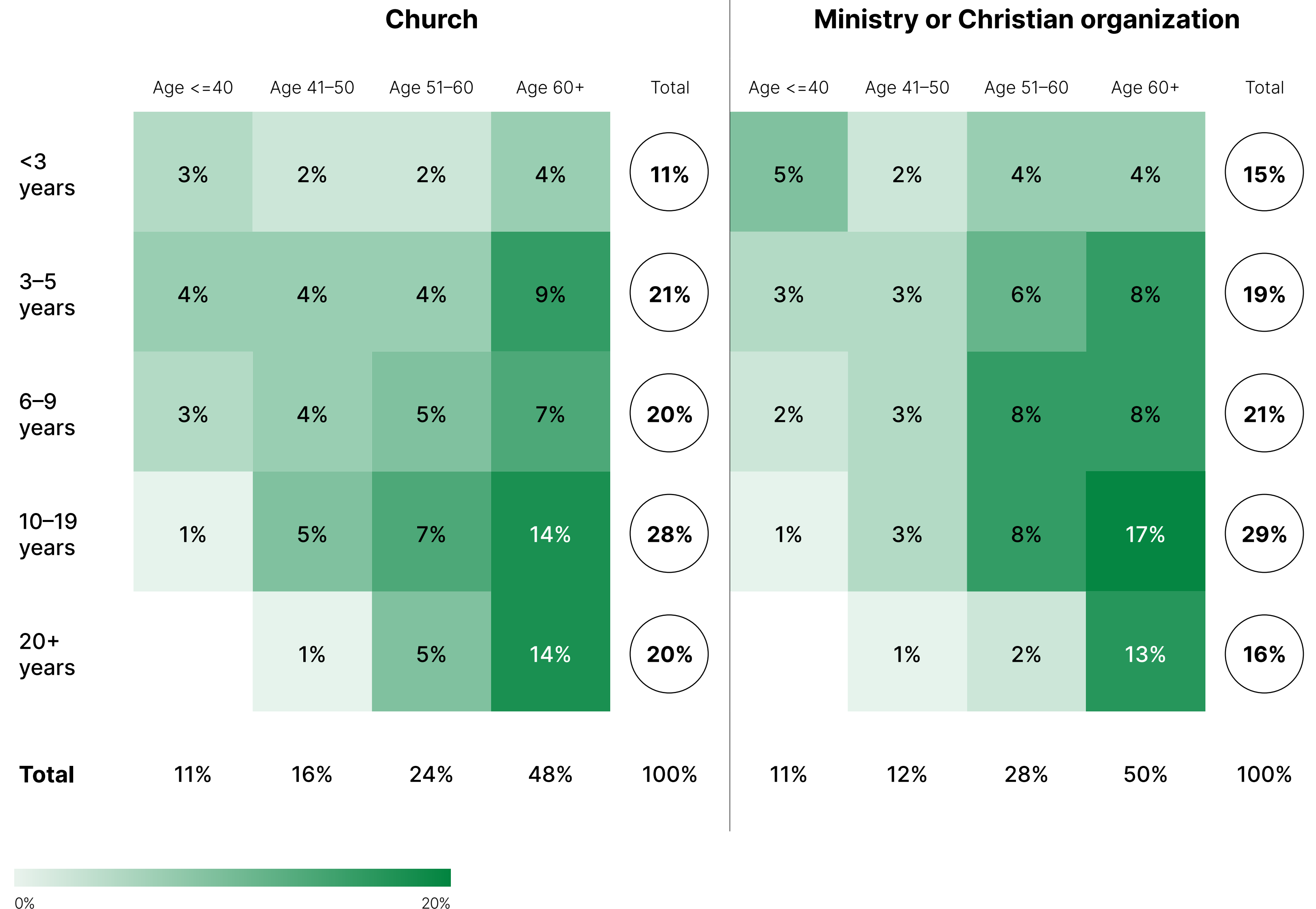




# Age and tenure in current role

For one out of three leaders, the pandemic has defined their current role as they have been in their role for under five years.

For another third, the pandemic has been two years of disruption after a very long tenure. This is a simple reminder that the difficulty of these two years can impact leaders very differently as they seek to serve their people.

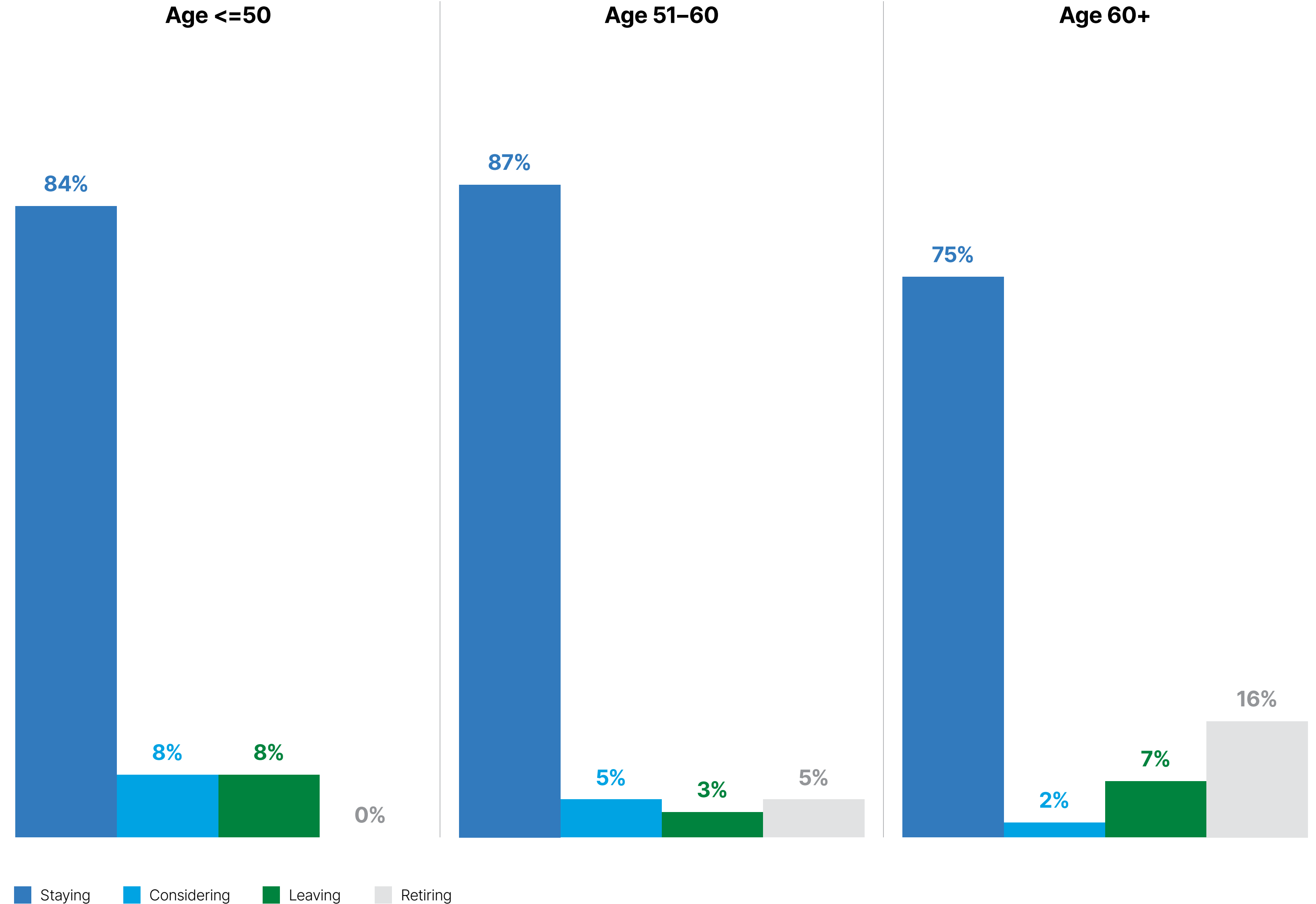




# What are your current thoughts for your future role in your organization?

Amidst reports of “The Great Resignation” across multiple sectors, the overwhelming majority of leaders in the Christian sector are staying.

What is most surprising is that the vast majority of those over 60 are not considering retiring in the foreseeable future. This may be due to a passion to continue in their role, a financial need that prevents retirement, or the lack of a younger leader to take on their responsibilities.

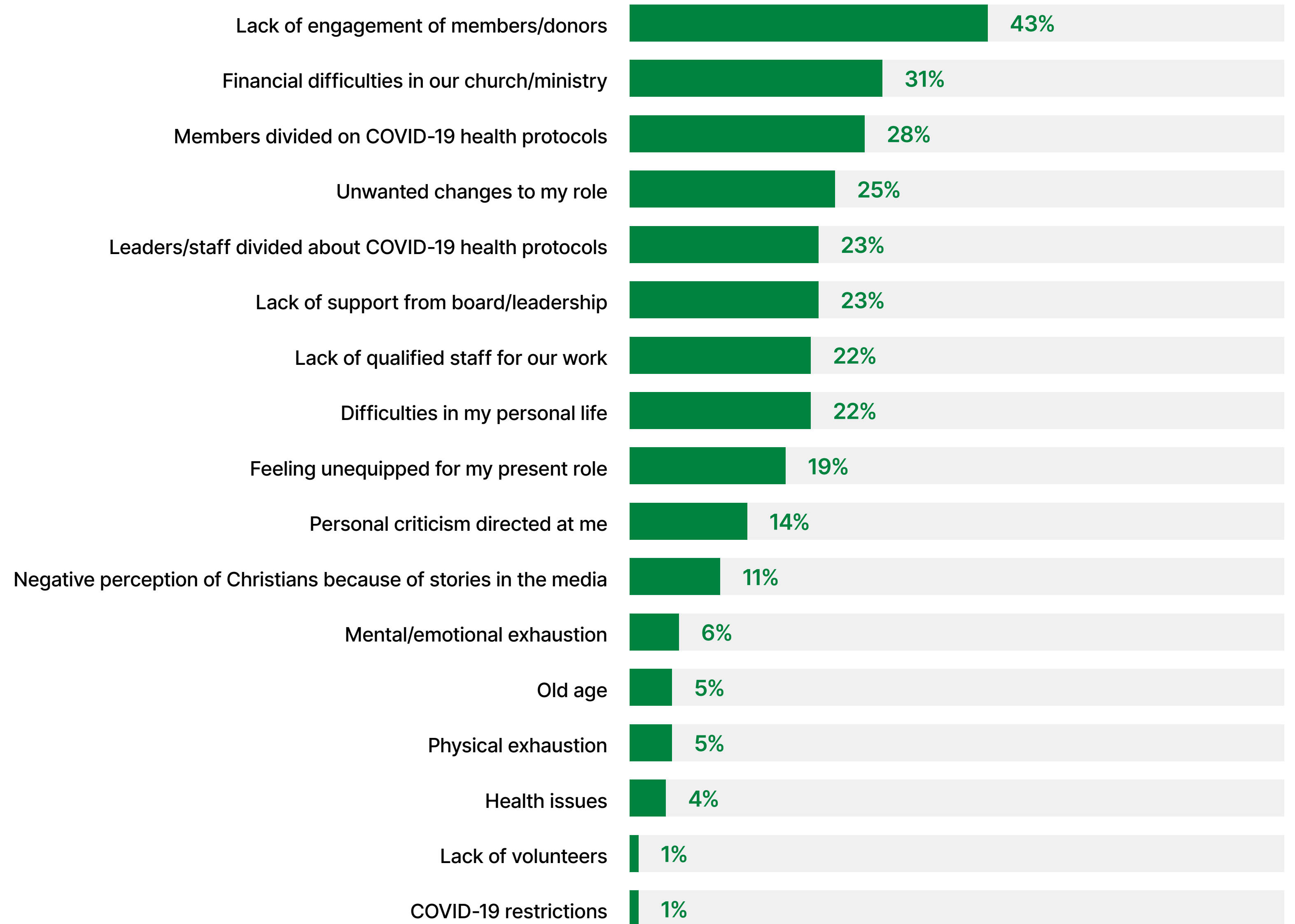




# Stressors influencing the attitude of those leaving

Financial strain or lack of engagement of members were the greatest factors. Emotional impacts from internal division, changes to their role, lack of support from their board, or personal struggles all play a role for leaders deciding to leave ministry.

This is a reminder that leaders need both very practical support as well as emotional support for them to remain committed and energized for their leadership role.



6 Leaders

# Groups of reasons for leaving

We found four main groups of reasons why leaders chose to leave:

- 19% focused on division amongst membership and leadership
- 16% are facing operational challenges, particularly around finances
- 5% were leaving because they are physically and mentally exhausted

The other 59% really didn't fall into any noticeable pattern, reflecting a combination of smaller weighted issues. What may be surprising is how few leaders are identifying some major problem (like exhaustion or division) as the reason for their transition.

This is possible evidence that the compounding impact of many smaller issues can add up to the weight of a large issue.





# Challenges & Opportunities



# Key Insights

- In the coming year, most churches plan to focus on re-engaging their people and ministries as well as strengthening their ministry operations.
- Leaders across the Christian movement are unified about the need for unity. In fact, they agree on the priorities of rebuilding unity and re-engaging their people and the need for outreach and evangelism.
- The key opportunity now is to set aside past perspectives that have caused division and rally around the values and key convictions that unite the Church in its mission to share and live the message of Jesus in our neighbourhoods, towns, cities, and world.

## Opportunities to explore

**Focus on the top core convictions that are broadly shared by Christian churches and ministries as a part of re-igniting the sense of mission and hope for the future.**

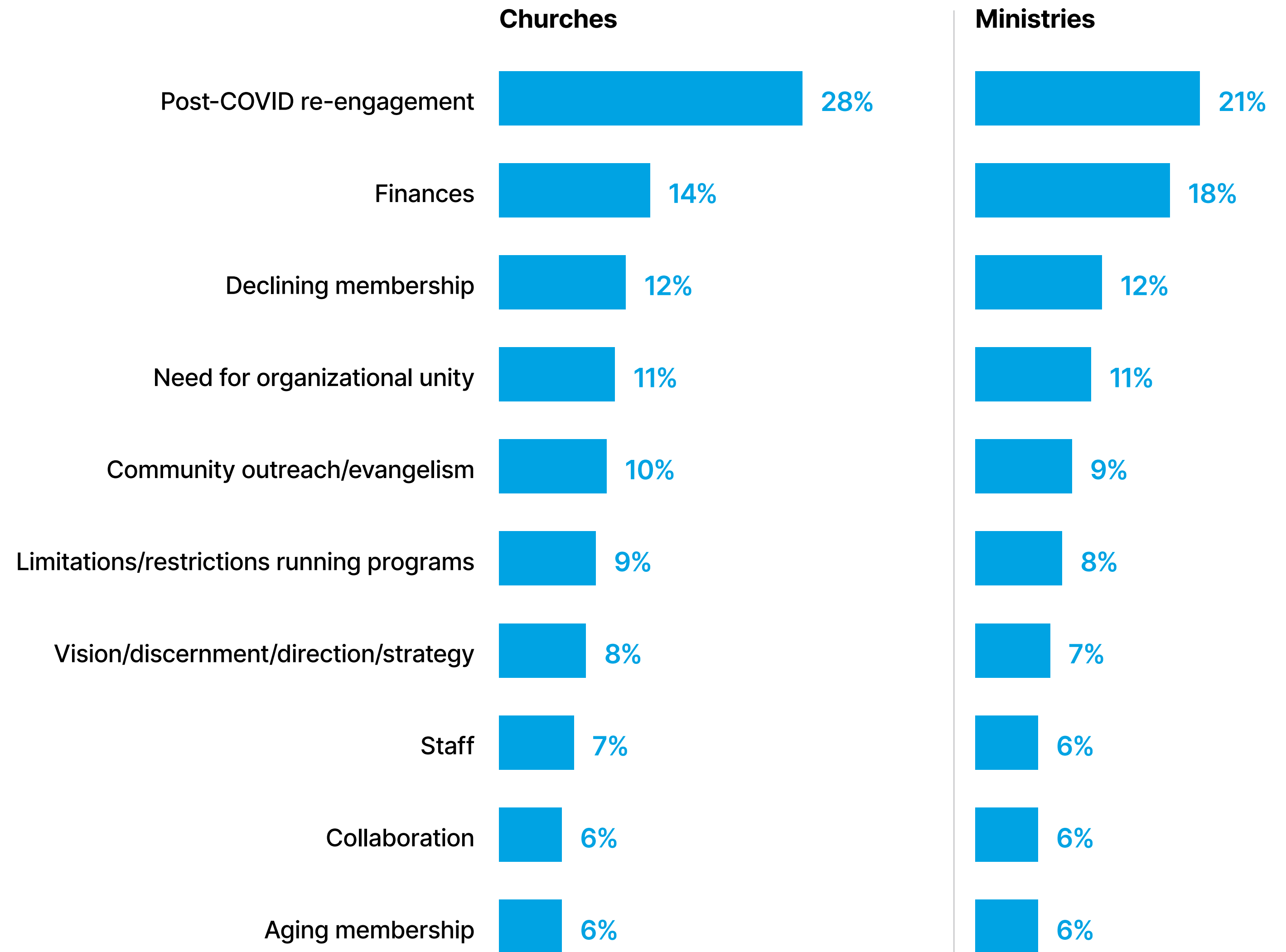


# What is the top challenge facing your church or ministry in 2022?

The top issue facing churches in 2022 is how to rally people back into community, to regather and re-engage them in the vision and mission of the church.

The top issue facing ministries in 2022 is to see their ministry fully operational with the needed finances, staff, and strategy.

As both aspects of the Christian Church emerge from the pandemic, any opportunities to rally together and support one another will only strengthen and speed revitalization and renewal.

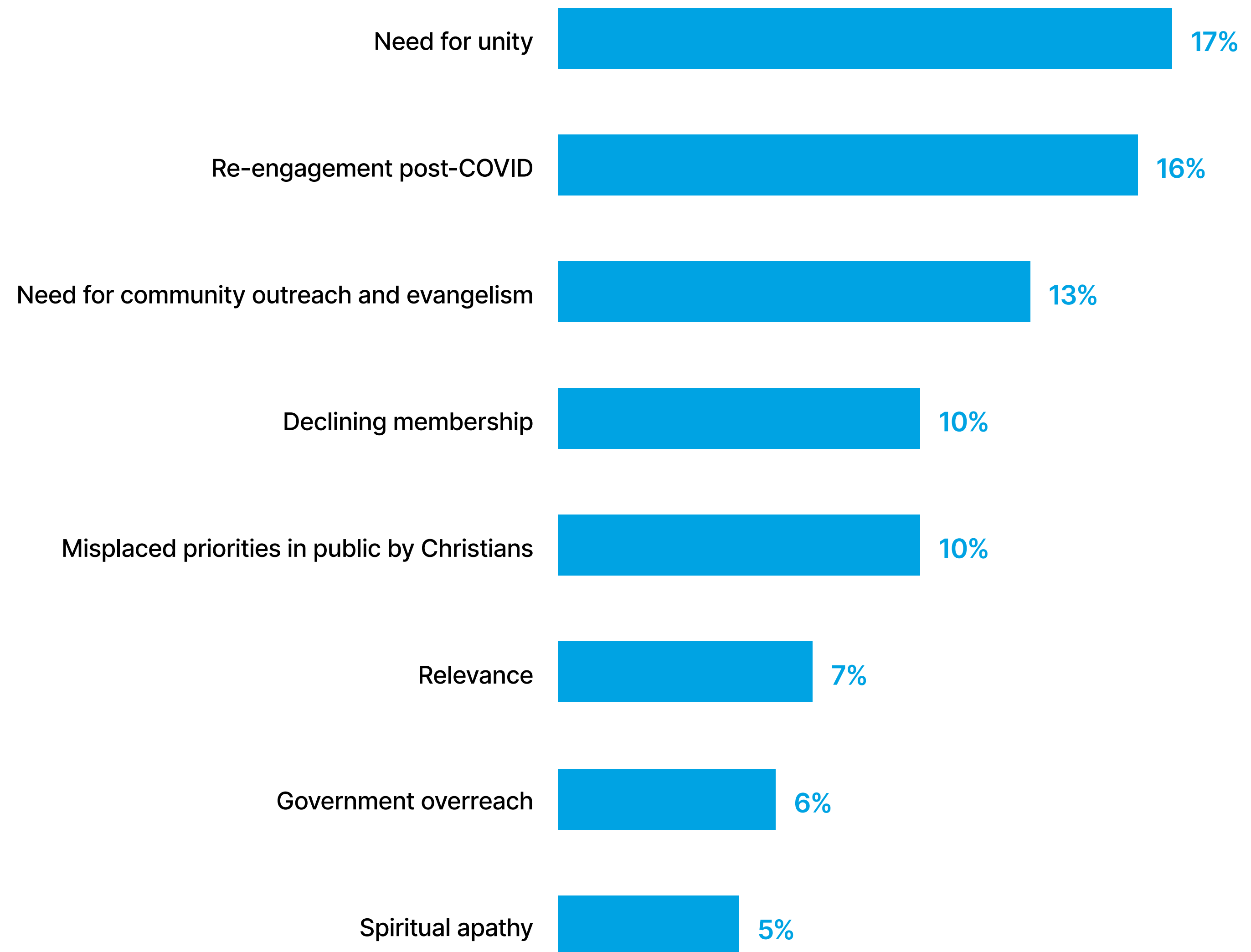




# What is the top challenge facing the broad Christian Church in 2022?

Unity was a top issue across all segments—regardless of one’s stance on health protocols. Leaders from all segments shared the exact same top concerns: unity, re-engaging their people, and the need for outreach and evangelism.

When looking to the future and what the top priorities of the broader Church ought to be, 86% of leaders showed their unity in identifying issues shared by all segments. This is a powerful opportunity for leaders to forge our unity based on where God is calling the Church and to choose to set aside the perspectives from the past that could continue to divide us.



# Concluding Thoughts

8

# What will be the next normal?

The Church was thrown into a turbulent time of unexpected change. As it emerges from the pandemic, 2022 is a time for assessing the impacts of the pandemic as well as charting a hopeful path forward.

There are strong reasons for hope. Most churches and ministries have adapted to the new financial realities. Leaders are committed to their churches and ministries. Programs are restarting with a heart to bring people together. Ministries are looking for new ways to leverage technology to aid their mission. There is new openness to partnerships, as well as a sense that change—even major change—must happen.

There is an opportunity to come together. One of the most striking insights from this national survey is that beyond all the ways we may feel divided right now, there are three shared convictions that unite Christian leaders:

- **We must restore our unity**
- **We must regather our communities**
- **We must reach out to our local communities to share and live Jesus' message of love**

The pandemic produced problems that divided Christians, but the call of Christ has the power to reunite and refocus the Church on what truly matters moving forward.

# And there is much to do.

Leaders need rest and renewal. The younger generation of leaders needs more investment and support.

Churches and ministries alike need to link arms in partnership and embrace new opportunities in using technology for their mission.

Christian organizations across the country can seize this unique moment as a time for change and renewed mission.

## The next normal?

In one sense, the decade to come will be significantly different than the decades leading up to the pandemic. Leaders are squarely facing this challenge. Yet, more importantly, it is clear that the next normal will also be a call back to core convictions that have grounded the Church for 2,000 years:

- **Jesus' prayer for unity of the Church**
- **Jesus' call to make disciples who love and serve all peoples**
- **Jesus' charge to bring God's love, hope, and peace to the world**

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May the next normal be both a new normal in how God works through the Church and a return to the first normal, a deep renewal of God's timeless call to the Church.

## City Impact Tour Spring 2022

We're partnering with Christian organizations across Canada to host the 2022 City Impact Tour. This spring, join us at an event in your city to connect with local Christian leaders, gain a deeper understanding of the opportunities in your area, and find ways to work together.

See locations and register by clicking below.

[Register](#)

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## About WayBase

WayBase is a platform that helps connect and organize the entire Christian sector to work together for good. Our website helps Christian organizations work together, and our app helps people engage their spiritual life in meaningful ways—together creating a movement for greater impact and deeper growth.

Your church or ministry is already on WayBase! Claim your listing today and sign up for a demo by clicking below.

[Sign Up](#)



## General methodology

WayBase provides empowering online tools for organizations and individuals to take action with others to improve their lives, the lives of others, their communities, and the world. As a part of this vision, WayBase maintains a database that endeavours to contain data on every Christian ministry in Canada.

The qualification for being listed in WayBase.com is dependent on that ministry:

- Identifying as Christian (affirming a statement of faith by either: The Canadian Council of Churches, The Canadian Centre for Christian Charities, or The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada).
- Having charitable status or being confirmed as a ministry by another ministry already listed on WayBase.

Between January 31–February 14, 2022, we invited leaders from these Christian organizations to respond to our online survey on the impact of COVID-19 on wellbeing.

## Linking results with ministries

Emails inviting responses were connected with the organization name and a unique identifier, ensuring all responses were associated with the correct organization.

Where the responder modified the organization name or location, a verification was done to assign the response to the new organization.

Where multiple responses were received on behalf of a single organization, these were manually reviewed to assess the individual in the best position to give a representative answer on behalf of the organization.

## Representativeness

In order to ensure the representativeness of the results, we reviewed the distribution of results by organizational category, revenue size, province, and area type (urban vs. rural). Revenue size was determined by the following revenue buckets (determined by their 2017 charitable return): <\$25K, \$25K–\$100K, \$100K–\$249K, \$250K–\$499K, \$500K–\$759K, \$750K–\$999K, \$1M+. These were then grouped into small, medium, large (<\$250K, \$250K–\$750K, >\$750K, respectively). This was done after observing minimal differences between the more granular sized buckets.

For the most part, responses were well in line with the distributions of organizations identified in WayBase, however we have not fully validated by Christian faith stream or faith tradition.

Data was re-sampled according to revenue group, province, and area type (urban vs. rural) in order to produce results representative of the localized nature of COVID-19 effects.

## Other notes

If multiple organizations are using the same charitable number, their sizes are treated the same. This is because we have no principled criteria to assign a size, and at the same time, the responses of sub-organizations is to a certain extent a representation of the larger organization. This was a relatively minor factor affecting <1% of responses.

References to small, medium, and large refer to size of revenue, not people served. Estimating functional size based on revenue size is a common practice. Revenue data was only available in the case of charities. Non-charity responses were used when division by revenue size was not a factor. WayBase recognizes that organizations can have small revenue but serve a large number of people. Size of congregation is described explicitly by congregation size in some cases.

## Clustering methodologies

To identify patterns of common sets of answers where multiple selections were allowed, we utilized hierarchical clustering by Manhattan distance using complete linkages to systematically find centroids minimizing distance amongst responses.

## Revenue impact estimation

Utilizing the re-sampled distribution of revenue impacts amongst those surveyed combined with historic CRA financial data, we applied a Monte Carlo simulation based on types and sizes of organizations to examine a possible range of impacts on Christian charities, then aggregated to find a likelihood of possible net impacts across all charities.

## Previous Survey Reports

To view the previous survey reports on the impact of COVID-19 on Canadian Christian Charities, [click here](#).



### Church

Includes ministries engaged in the following work:

Congregation
Multi-site Congregation (Campus)
Church Office – Multi-site
Church Office – Parish/Pastoral Charge

### Evangelism & discipleship

Includes ministries engaged in the following work:

Student Ministry
Conferences & Events
Discipleship General
Evangelism General
Missionary Sending/Support
Evangelism/Discipleship – Other

### Welfare/community benefits

Includes ministries engaged in the following work:

Abuse Services	Thrift Stores
Agricultural Programs	After School Program
Disaster/War Relief	Community Benefits – Child Care
Food Bank/Food Security	Disability Services
Homelessness/Homeless Shelter	Drop-In Centre
Indigenous Peoples Social Services	Employment and Career Services
Infrastructure Development	Government Engagement
Low Income Housing	Group Home
Orphanage	Legal Services
Peace Work	Marriage, Family, and Sexuality
Prison & Reorientation Services	Community Benefits – Pregnancy Care/Family
Refugee/Immigration Services	Community Benefits – Other
Relief and Development	Welfare – Other
Social Justice Advocacy	

### Camp and retreat

Includes ministries engaged in the following work:

Congregation
Multi-site Congregation (Campus)
Church Office – Multi-site
Church Office – Parish/Pastoral Charge

### Denomination/diocese

Includes ministries engaged in the following work:

Church Office – Church Network
Church Office – Church Planting
Church Office – Denomination
District/Diocese/Conference
Church Office – Denomination Head Office



## Other

Includes ministries engaged in the following work:

Association – Faith and Work	Education – Elementary/High School	Foundation – Health	Property/Trusts – Trust	Religious Order – Vincentian
Association – Financial Services/Financial Benefit Programs	Education – Higher Education	Health – Addiction Recovery	Property/Trusts – Other	Religious Order – Other
Association – Ministerial/City Networking Association	Education – Adult Education	Health – Children's Hospital/Care	Religious Order – Augustinians	Resource Individuals – Author/Blogger
Association – General	Education – Alternative Education	Health – Hospice/Palliative Care	Religious Order – Benedictines	Resource Individuals – Chaplain
Culture & Media – Bookstores	Education – Library	Health – Hospital	Religious Order – Carmelites	Resource Individuals – Choir
Culture & Media – Museum/Heritage	Education – Literacy/Language Studies	Health – Mental Health Services	Religious Order – Carthusians	Resource Individuals – Counselor
Culture & Media – Music	Education – Research	Health – Seniors Homes/Elder Care	Religious Order – Cistercian	Resource Individuals – Entertainer
Culture & Media – Online Media	Education – Scholarships & Educational Awards	Health – Other	Religious Order – Convent	Resource Individuals – Musician/Band
Culture & Media – Publishing/Curriculum	Education – Other	Leadership Development – Conferences & Events	Religious Order – Dominicans	Resource Individuals – Speaker/Communicator
Culture & Media – Radio Broadcasting	Education – School District/Board/Division*	Leadership Development – Resources	Religious Order – Franciscans	Resource Individuals – Spiritual Director
Culture & Media – Technology	Environment/Animals – Animal Care & Preservation	Leadership Development – Training Programs	Religious Order – Jesuits	Resource Individuals – Visual Artist
Culture & Media – TV Broadcasting	Environment/Animals – Environmental Care & Preservation	Leadership Development – Other	Religious Order – Missionaries of Charity	Resource Individuals – Wedding Officiant
Culture & Media – Other	Foundation – Christian Ministry	Property/Trusts – Cemetery	Religious Order – Monastery	Resource Individuals – Other
Education – Early Childhood	Foundation – Education	Property/Trusts – Facilities, Buildings, and Maintenance	Religious Order – Salesians	

\* Note: The Catholic District School Board was excluded from this survey due to its significant size and unique funding model that would skew results