

**SHEILA
MCKECHNIE
FOUNDATION**

**UNLEASHING
SOCIAL POWER**

SMK Campaigner Survey 2020: results

www.smk.org.uk

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About the results

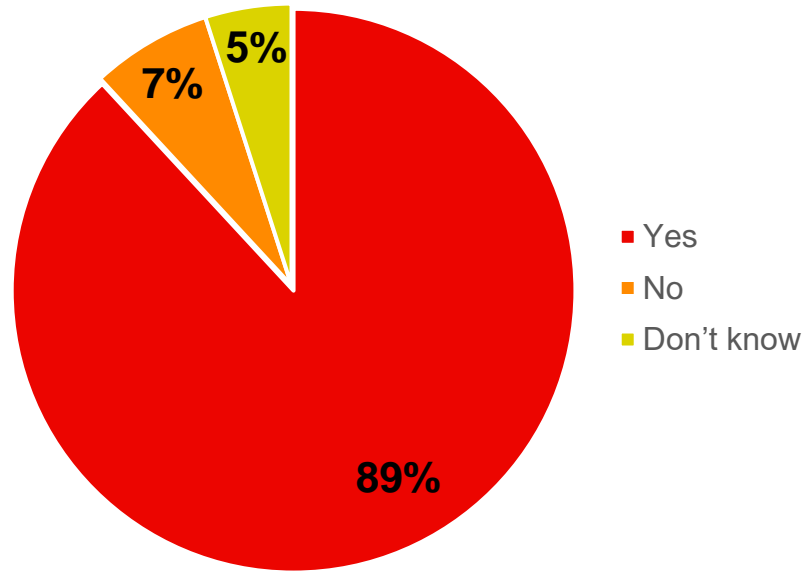
176 respondents
(breakdown in final section)

Percentages may not total 100% where figures have been rounded to one decimal place or where participants were able to select more than one answer

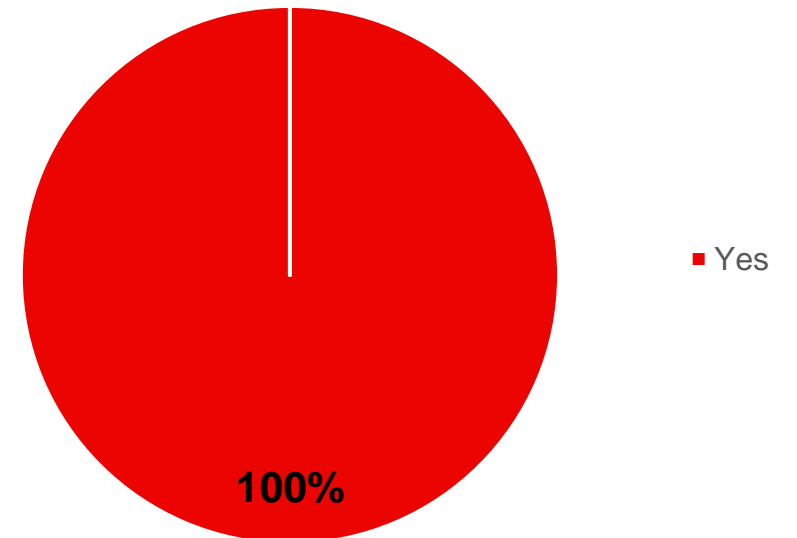
Threats & opportunities

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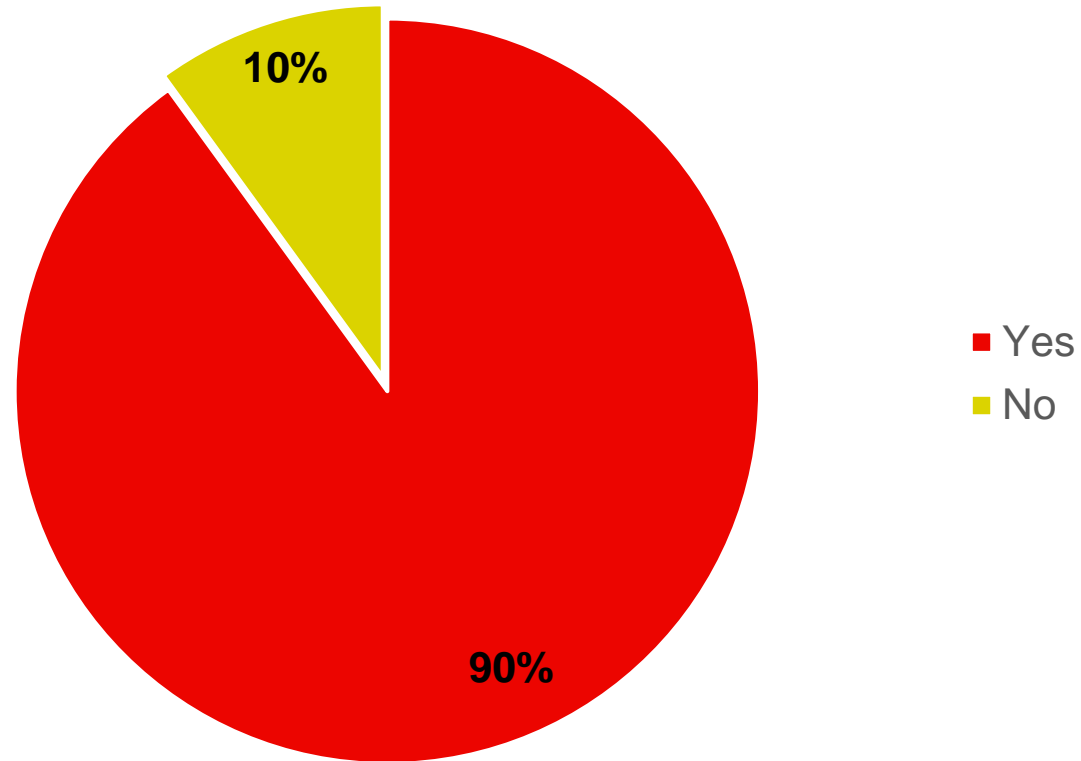
Does your organisation regard campaigning as a vital way to deliver its mission?



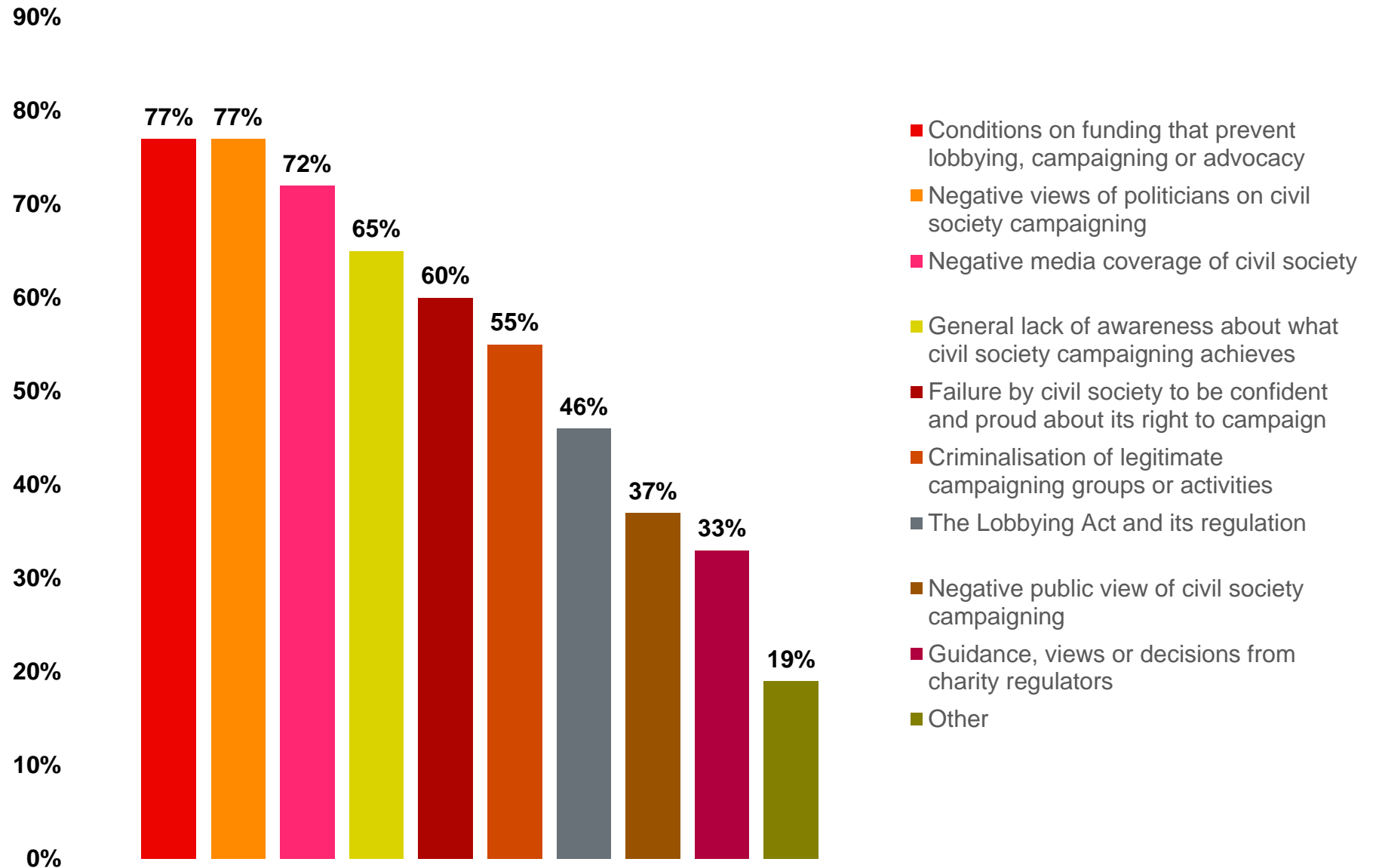
Do you believe that it's legitimate for civil society organisations, including charities, to campaign for changes to policy, law, attitudes and behaviours?



Do you think that there are threats, formal or informal, to the freedom to organise, speak out or protest (otherwise called 'civic space')?

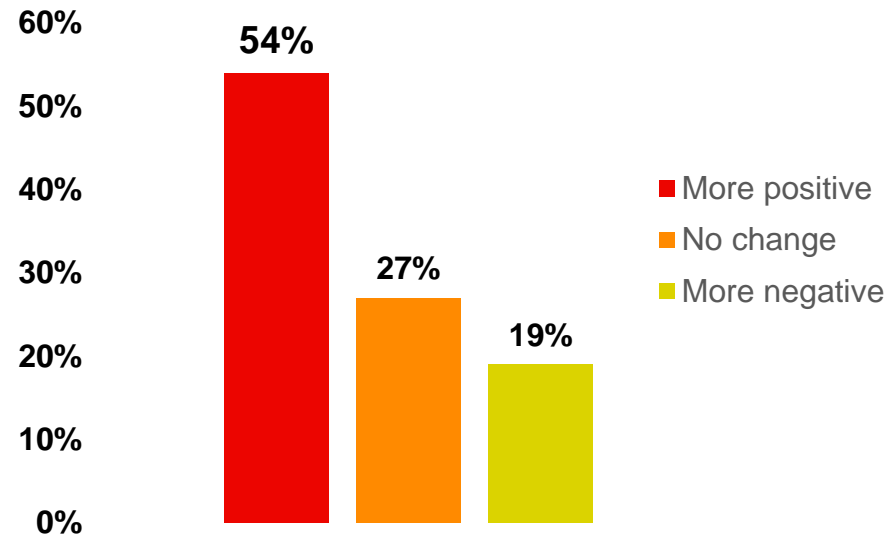


What factors do you think are threatening our civic space?

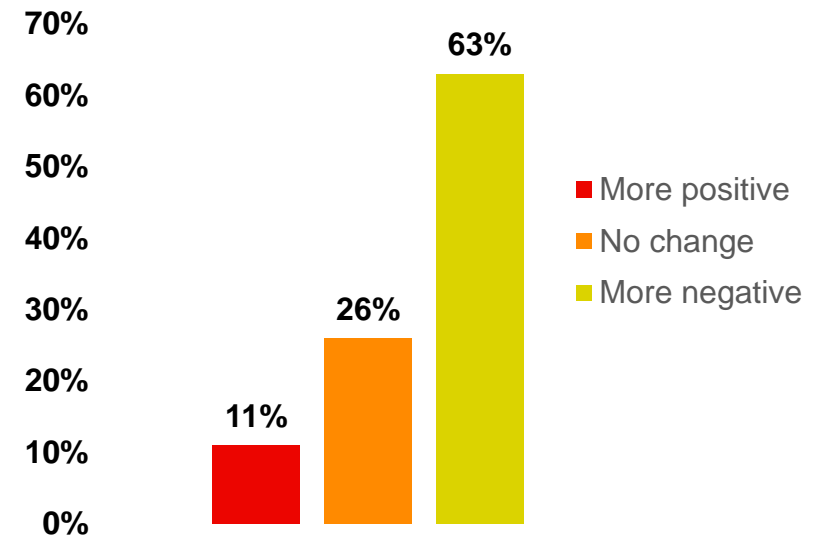


In the past year, have you noticed any changes in attitudes to civil society campaigning, amongst...?

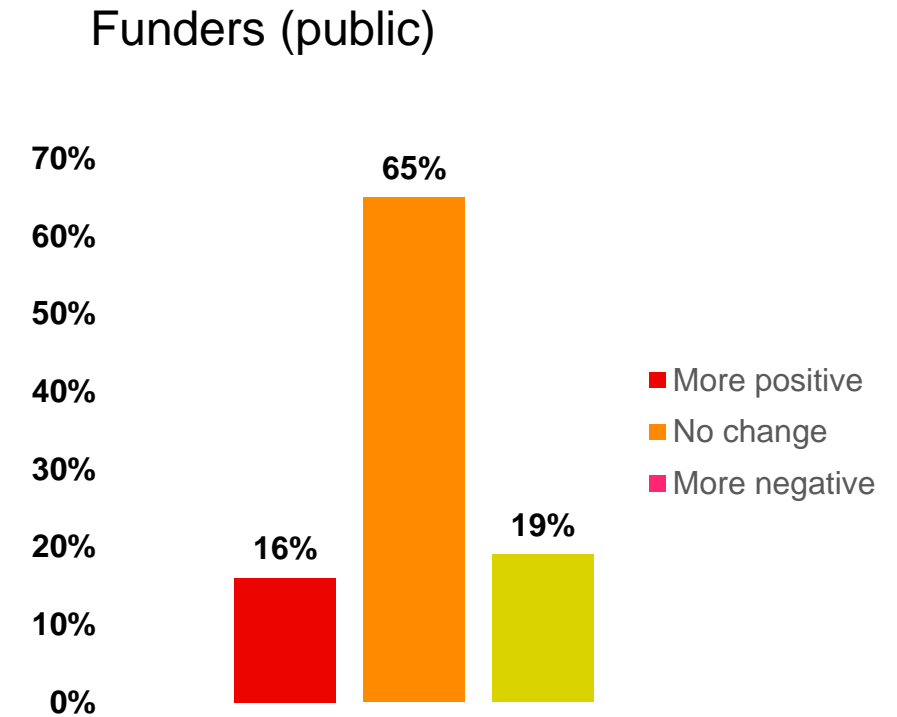
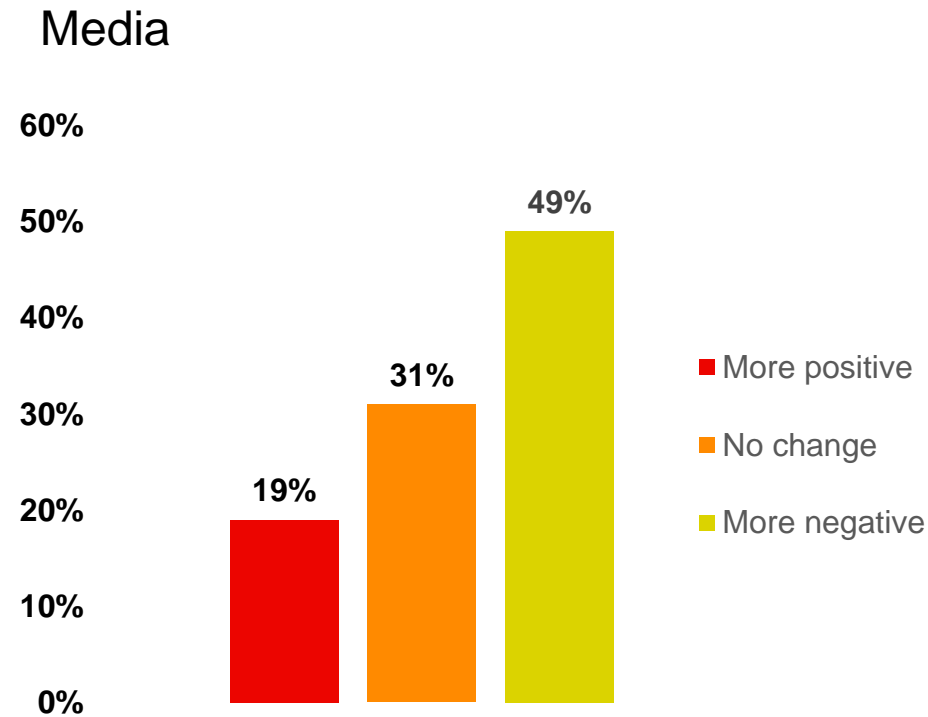
The public



Politicians

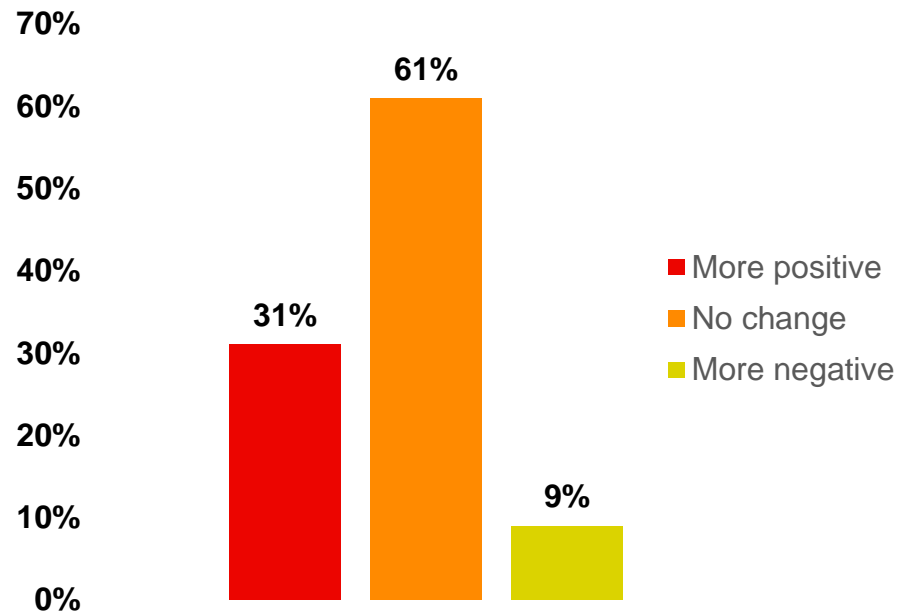


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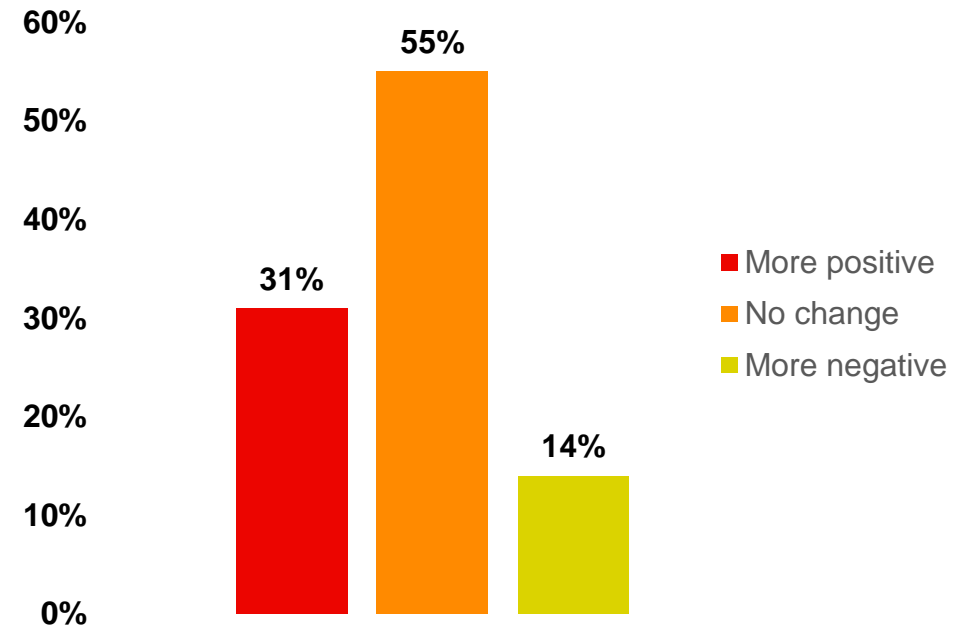


In the past year, have you noticed any changes in attitudes to civil society campaigning, amongst...?

Funders (independent)

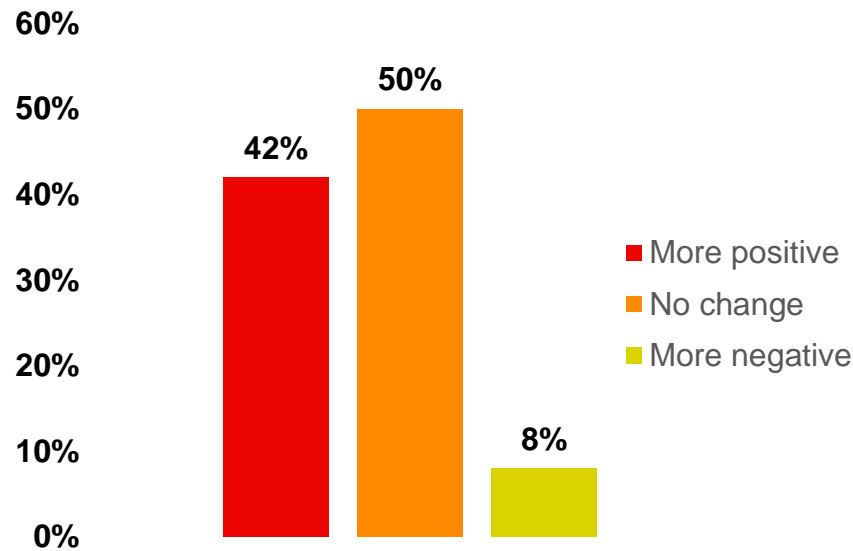


Board & senior leaders

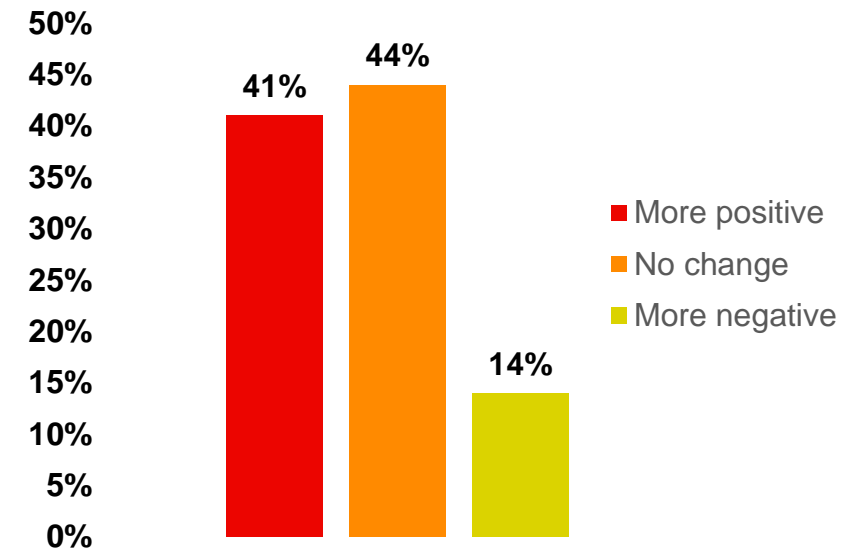


In the past year, have you noticed any changes in attitudes to civil society campaigning, amongst...?

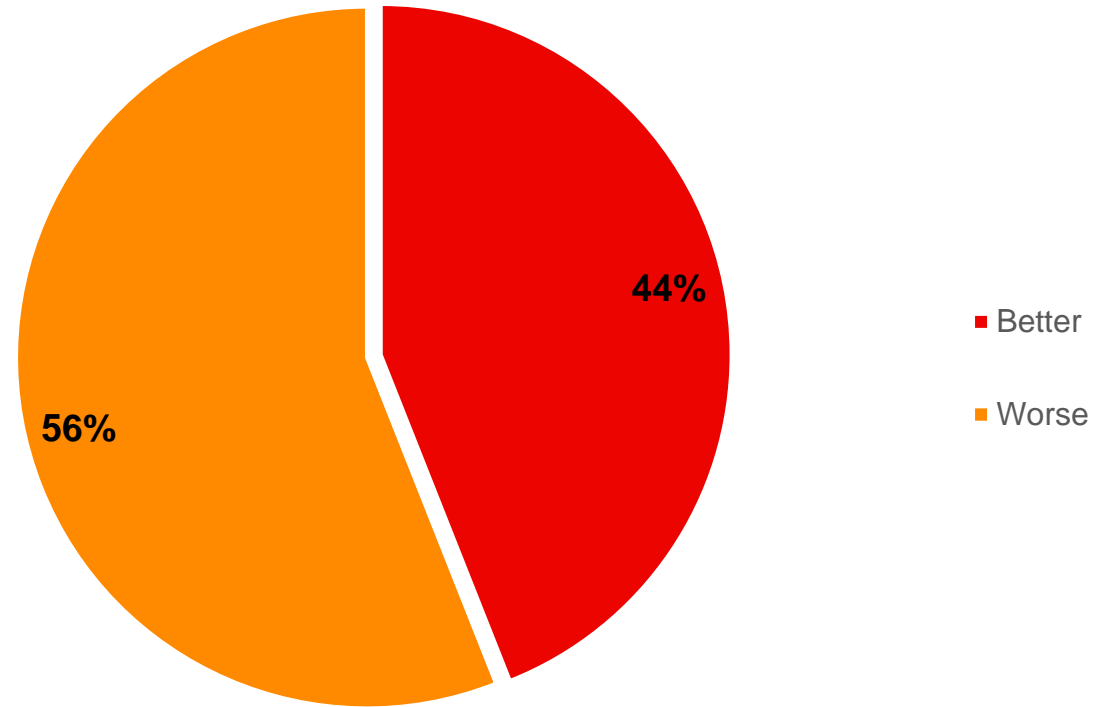
Other colleagues



Civil society more broadly



Overall, have things got better or worse in the last year for campaigning?



You answered 'worse' to the above question, tell us a bit about why or how?

WORSE

1. A more hostile political environment has seen politicians shutting down channels of communication, and attacking campaigners and their allies as a threat to the common good.

"...the awful way the Home sec has described lawyers who work with asylum seeking clients".

2. The pandemic has restricted traditional ways of campaigning, such as protest and face-to-face persuasion.

"We're still trying to work out how to campaign without protest, everyone is exhausted by constant online stuff now".

3. 2020 saw proposals for further formal restrictions (e.g. restrictions on protest and judicial review) and more informal restrictions (e.g. attacks by politicians and media on charities campaigning).

"Anti-capitalist materials being banned in schools and XR being labelled a 'terrorist' organisation. Geez."



You answered 'better' to the above question, tell us a bit about why or how?

BETTER

1. Greater willingness by the public to step forward and support campaigns (especially amidst the pandemic and high-profile campaigns like Black Lives Matter and Marcus Rashford). More community-led campaigns are emerging.

“I think the pandemic has made people more aware that they need to fight for change to happen”.

2. There's more campaigning because there's greater need and, as a result, people are becoming more aware of existing injustices.

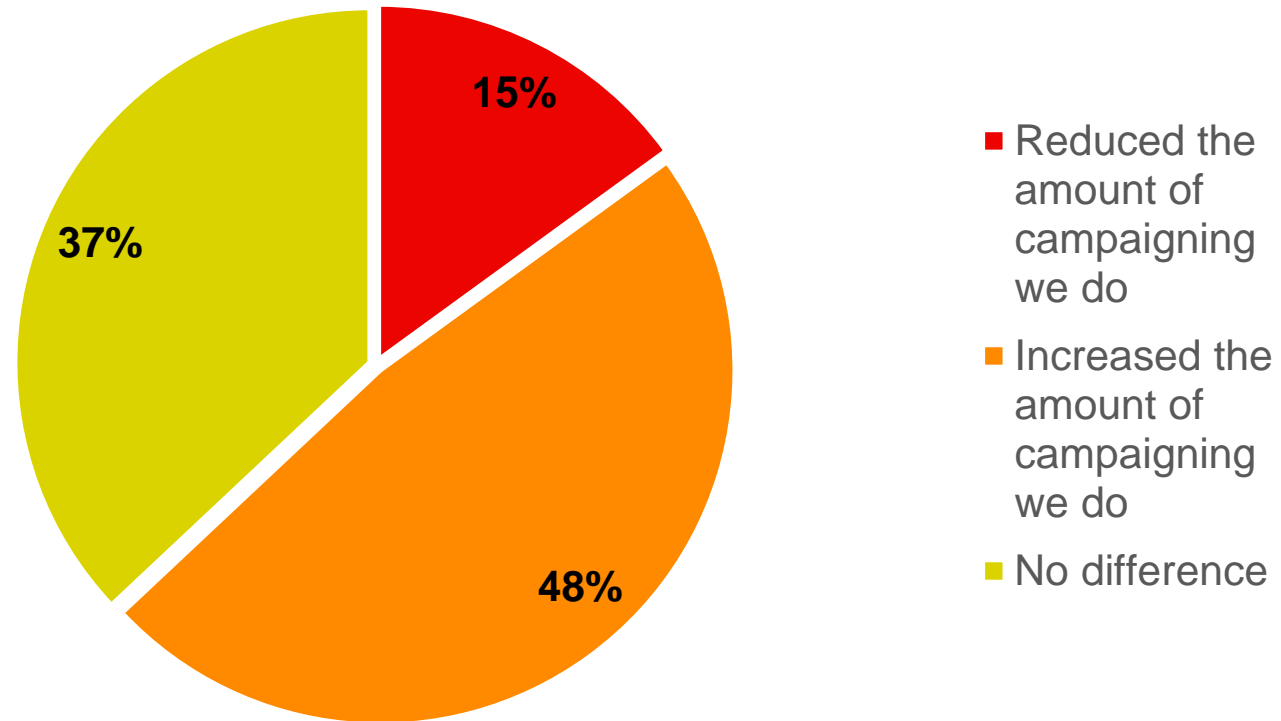
“Whilst it is harder [to campaign during the pandemic] this is exposing an ever-greater need and people are responding to that”.

3. Charities and voluntary groups are responding to increased need and greater public awareness by being braver.

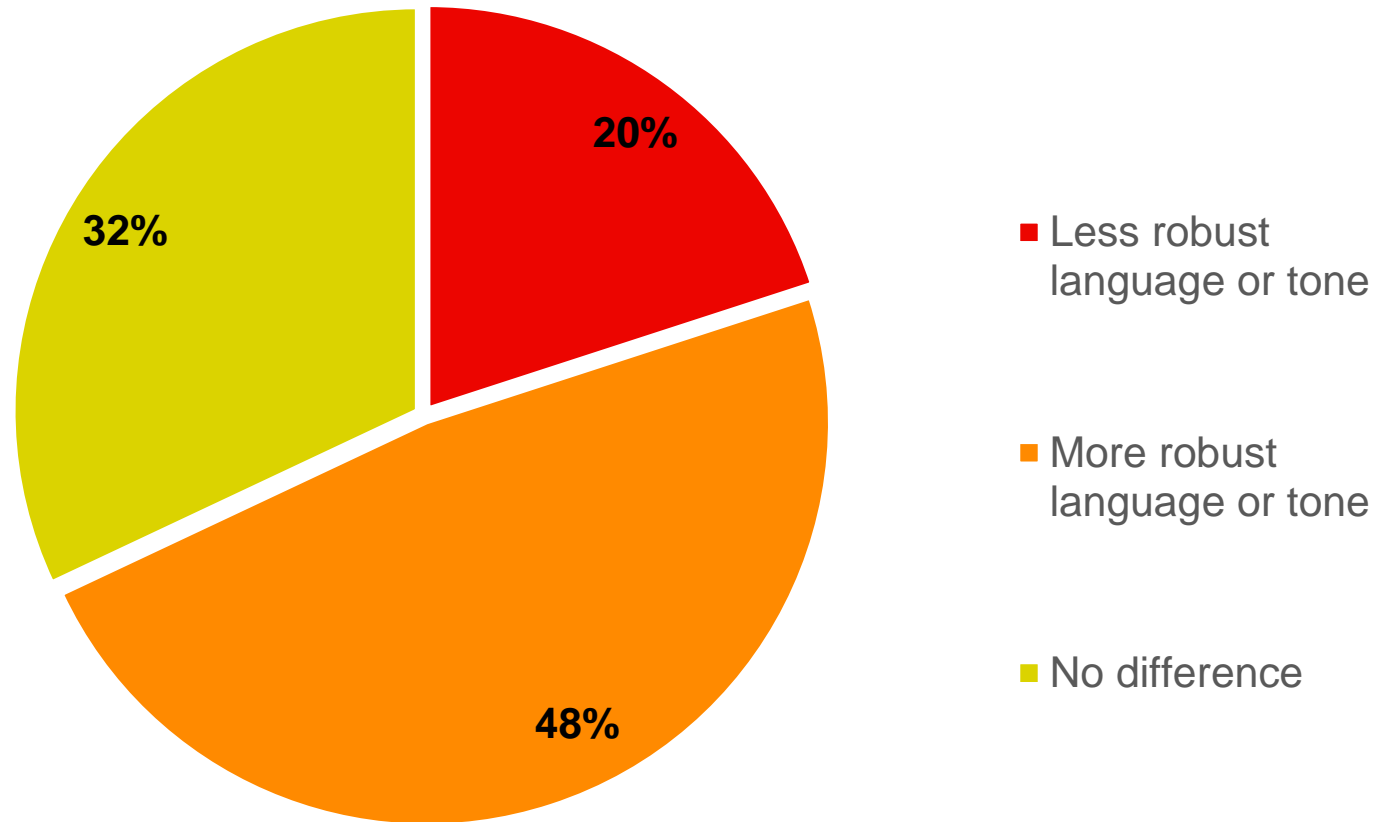
“I think a wider proportion of civil society has found its voice this year - the crisis has meant many organizations have no choice but to be more vocal”.



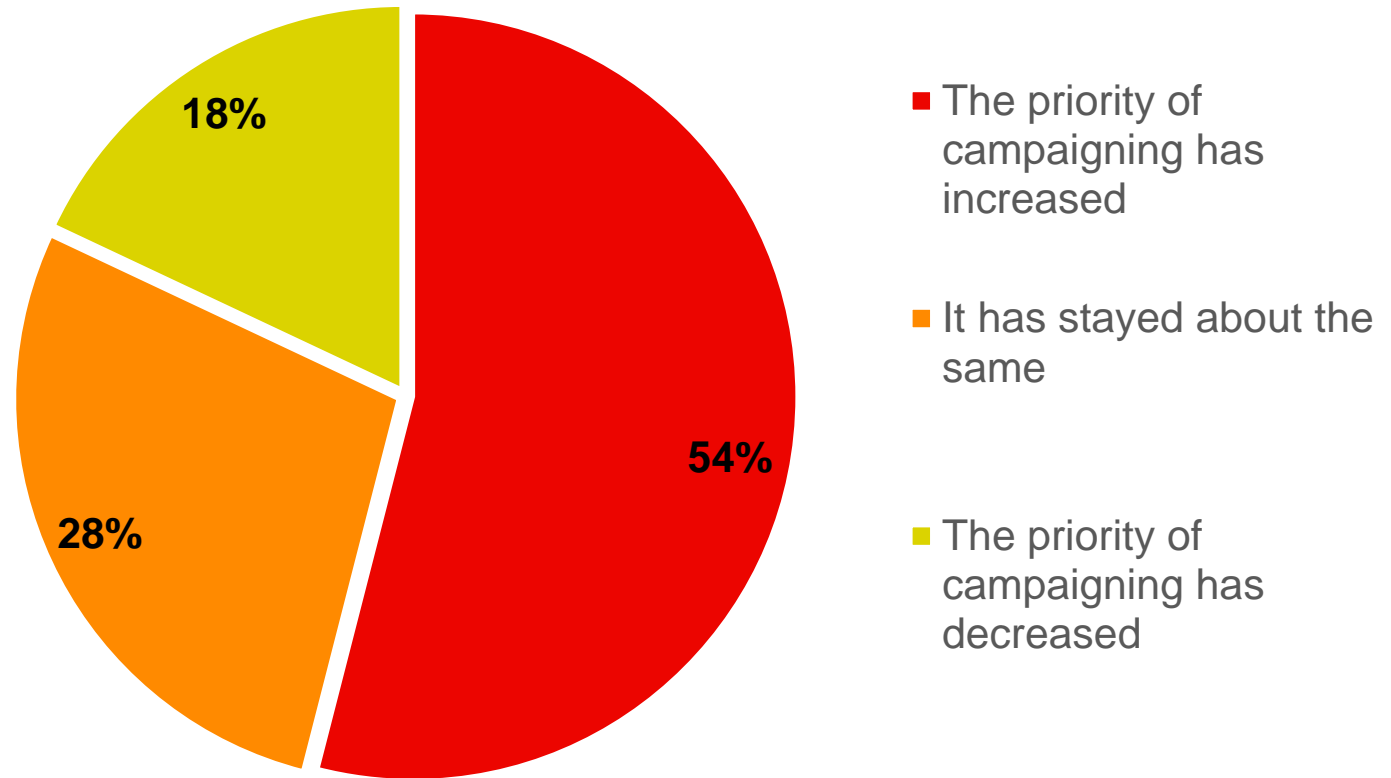
Thinking about the past three years, how have attitudes to campaigning affected the **AMOUNT** of campaigning your organisation does?



Thinking about the past three years, how have attitudes to campaigning affected the **TONE** of your campaigns?



How has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the way your organisation prioritises campaigning work?



Tell us about any opportunities or discoveries you have made during the pandemic that you think have improved your campaigning.

1. Utilising digital tools and switching to online models of working has created opportunities: expanding geographies, people are more open to working together, easier to organise meetings etc.

“Being forced to make everything online rather than in person has changed the number of times we can directly work with our campaigning”.

“Digital literacy and adaptation has made us jump ahead 10 years. We need to continue seizing it”.

2. Cross-organisational working, which increases impact.

“It's united a lot of organisations that we wouldn't have typically partnered with - not just in the UK but internationally”.

“...we are involved in a coalition that campaigns and it has more success and stronger reach because we have so many members across so many subject areas - there is strength in unity and simplicity of message.”

3. People are more engaged and want to get involved, or get their voices heard.

“I've found my voice and I'm a bit braver”.

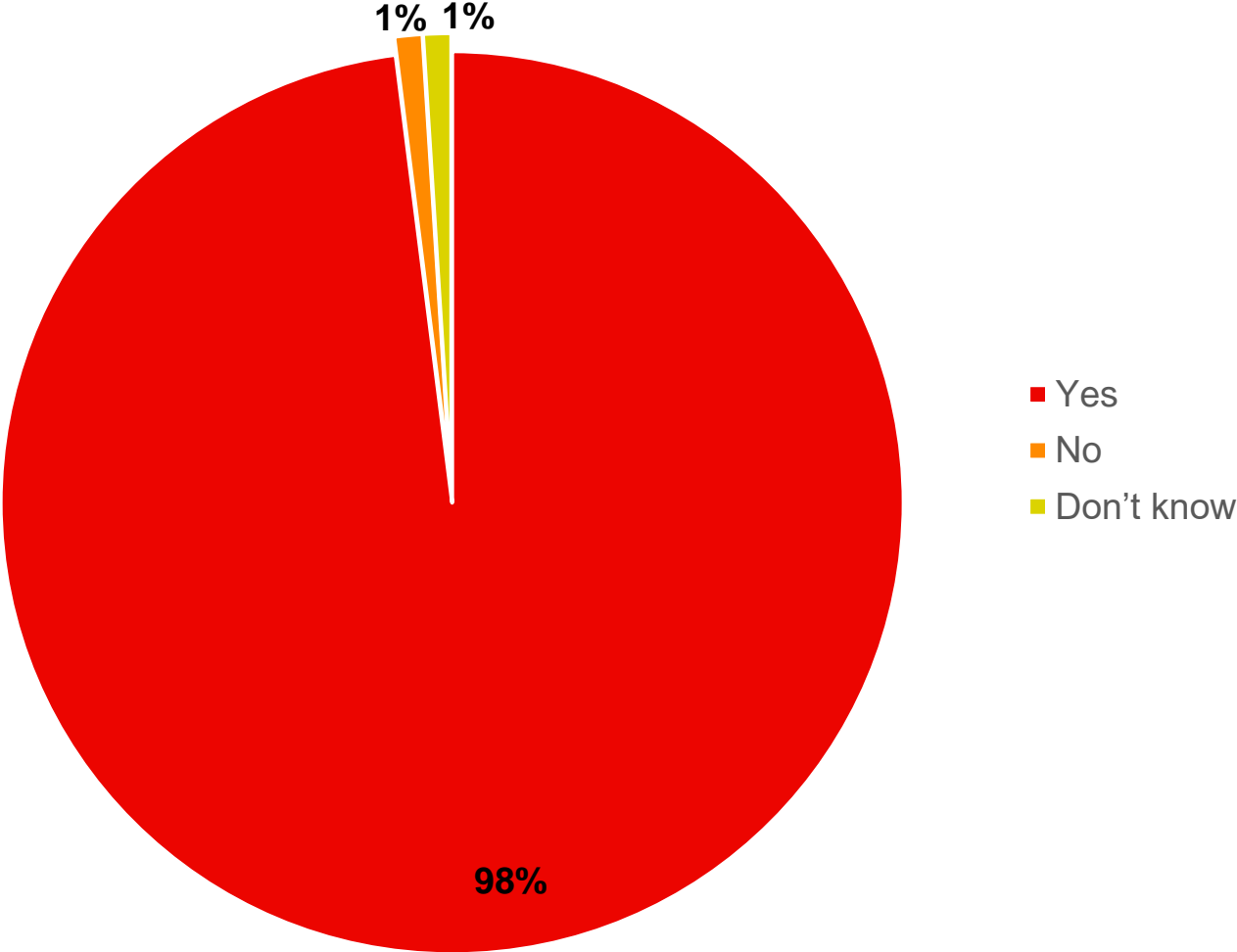


Tell us about any barriers or problems you have encountered during the pandemic that you think have made campaigning harder.

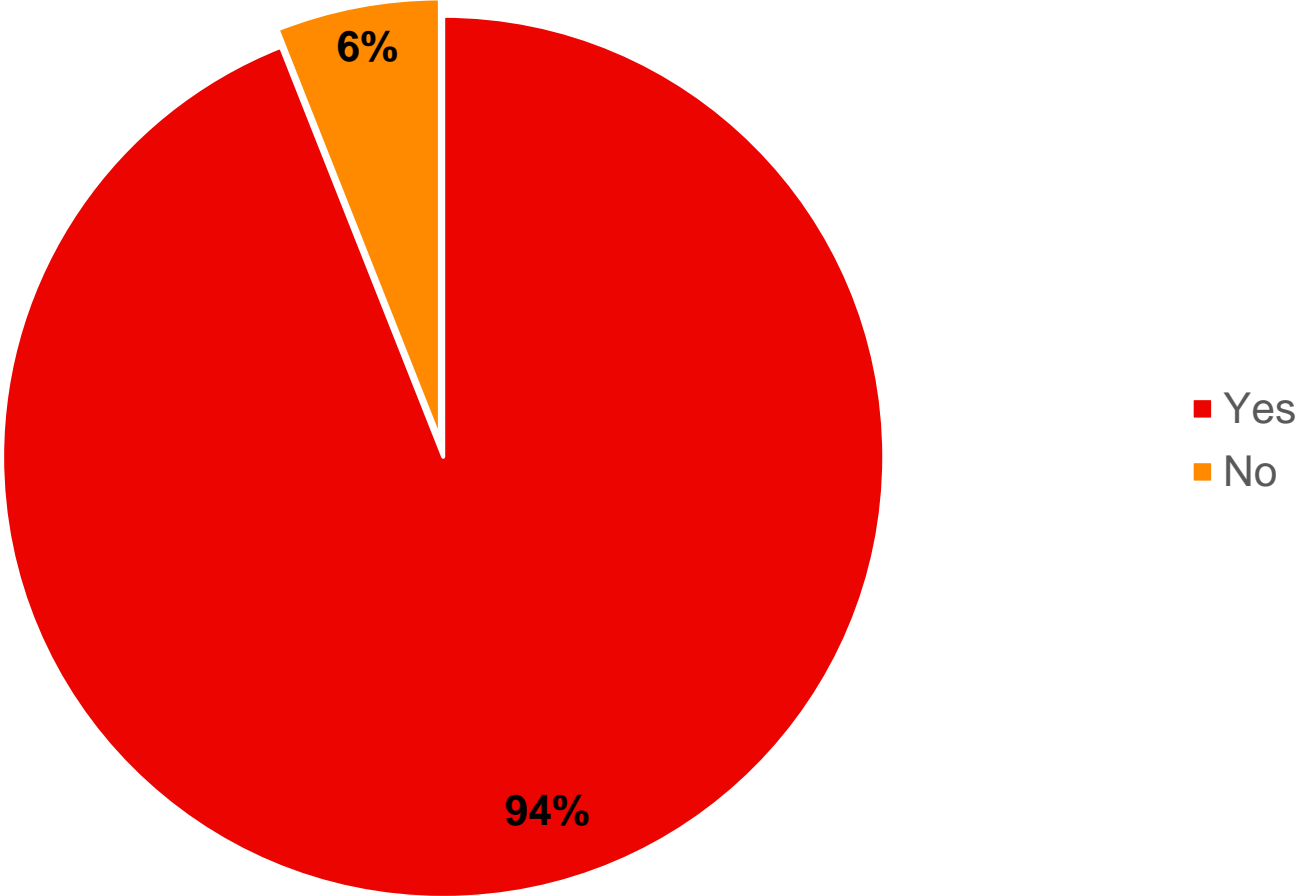
1. The physical barriers the pandemic presents, it's harder to mobilise people.
"Hard to get volunteers together in one place".
"The impact of Covid has prevented or put some people off joining in-person organising activities, making it harder to reach people."
2. Politicians, decision-makers and media are pre-occupied with pandemic issues.
"Our organisation works to reduce and prevent violence affecting young people. There has been virtually no news coverage of this during lockdown, so it is not top of anyone priority list anymore, including politicians".
3. Lack of funding, resources, capacity.
"Charities are struggling with resources and capacity, so campaigning takes a back seat to service delivery".



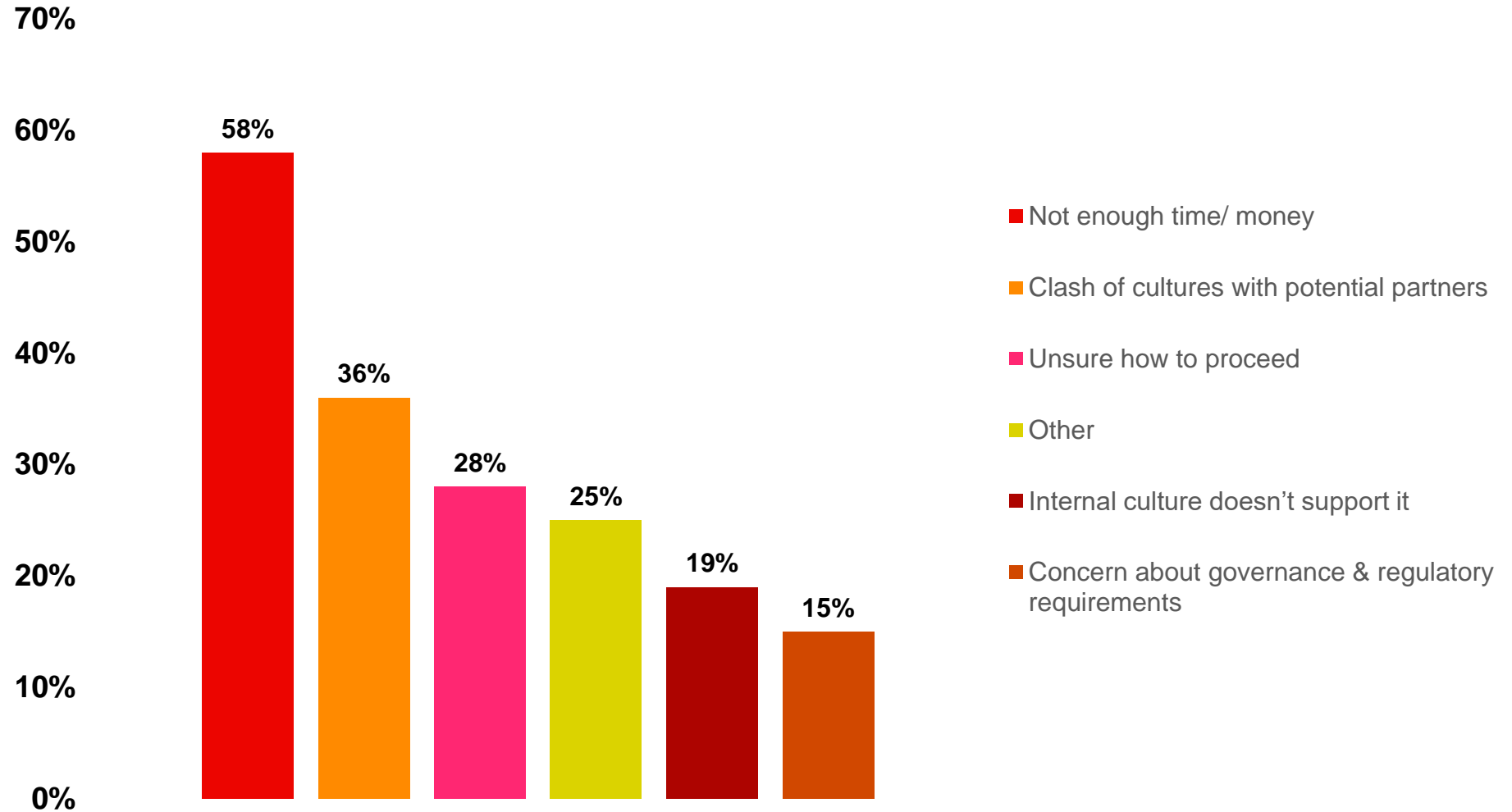
Do you think that there will be a need for more campaigning by civil society in the next 12 months?



Would you like to collaborate more on campaigning with other civil society organisations?



You answered 'yes' when we asked if you wanted to collaborate more with other organisations on campaigning. What do you think is getting in the way now?

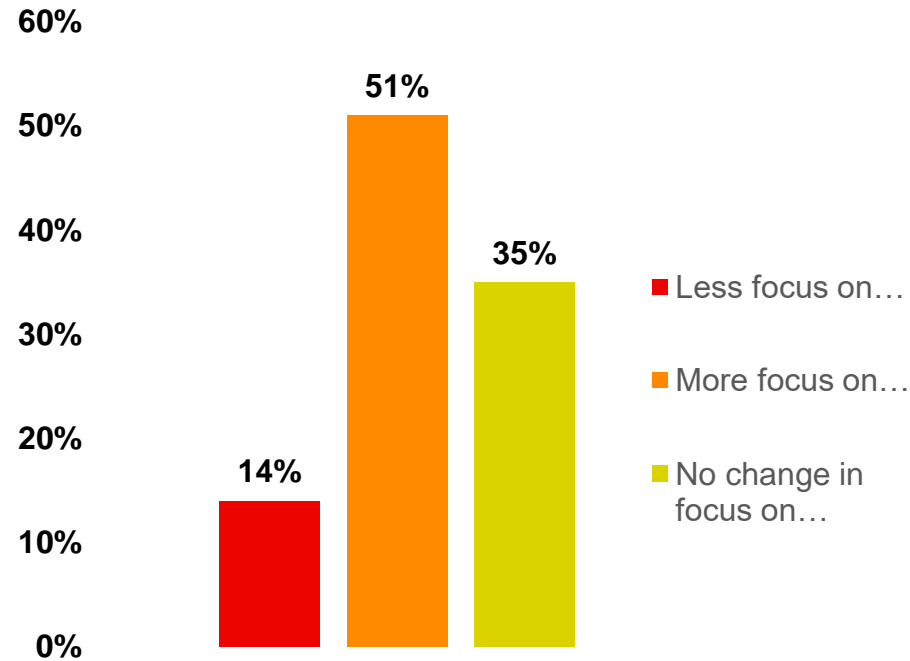


Tactics

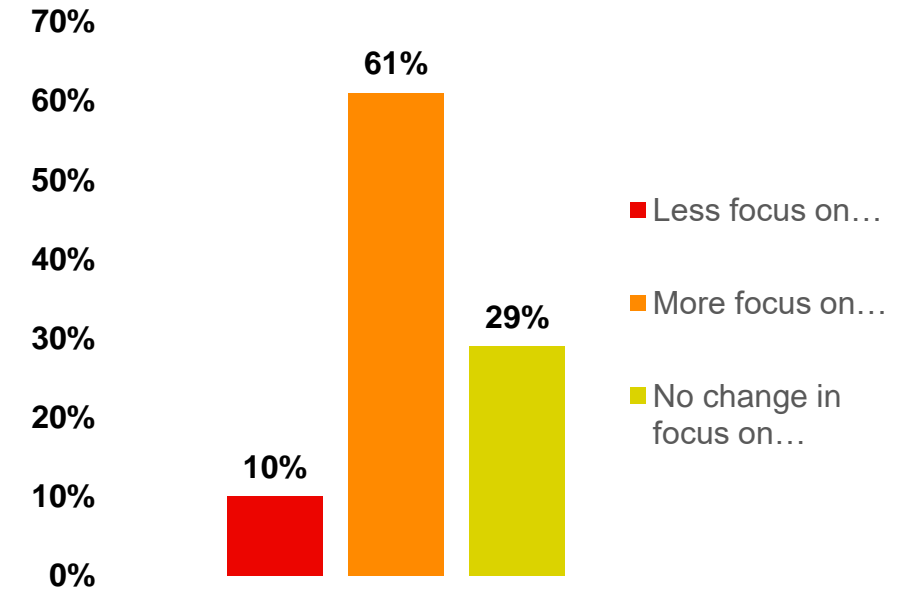
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Thinking about the past three years, have the targets or focus of your campaigning changed?

UK Government

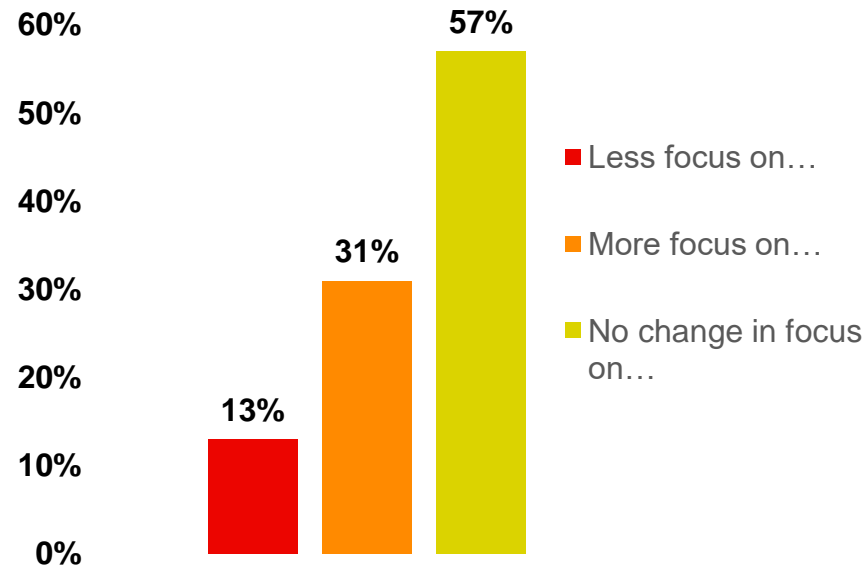


Public attitudes or behaviours

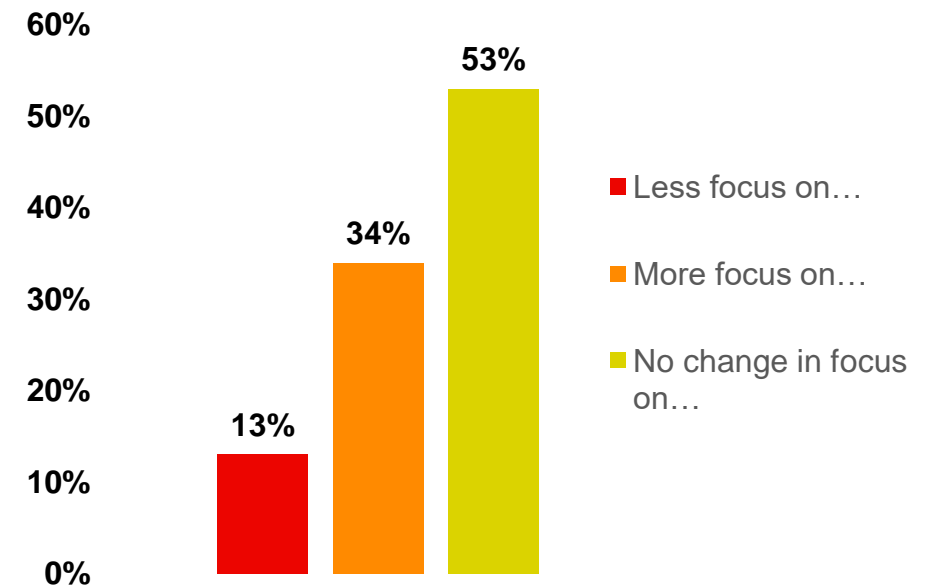


Thinking about the past three years, have the targets or focus of your campaigning changed?

Devolved administrations

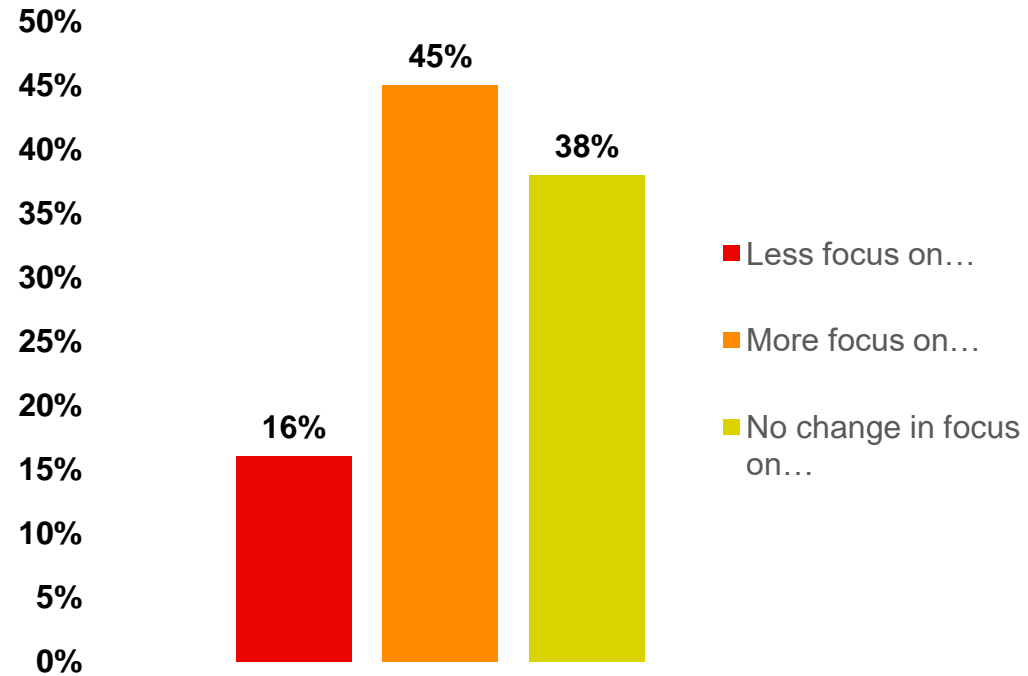


Business practices



Thinking about the past three years, have the targets or focus of your campaigning changed?

Local or regional Govt



**About
you**

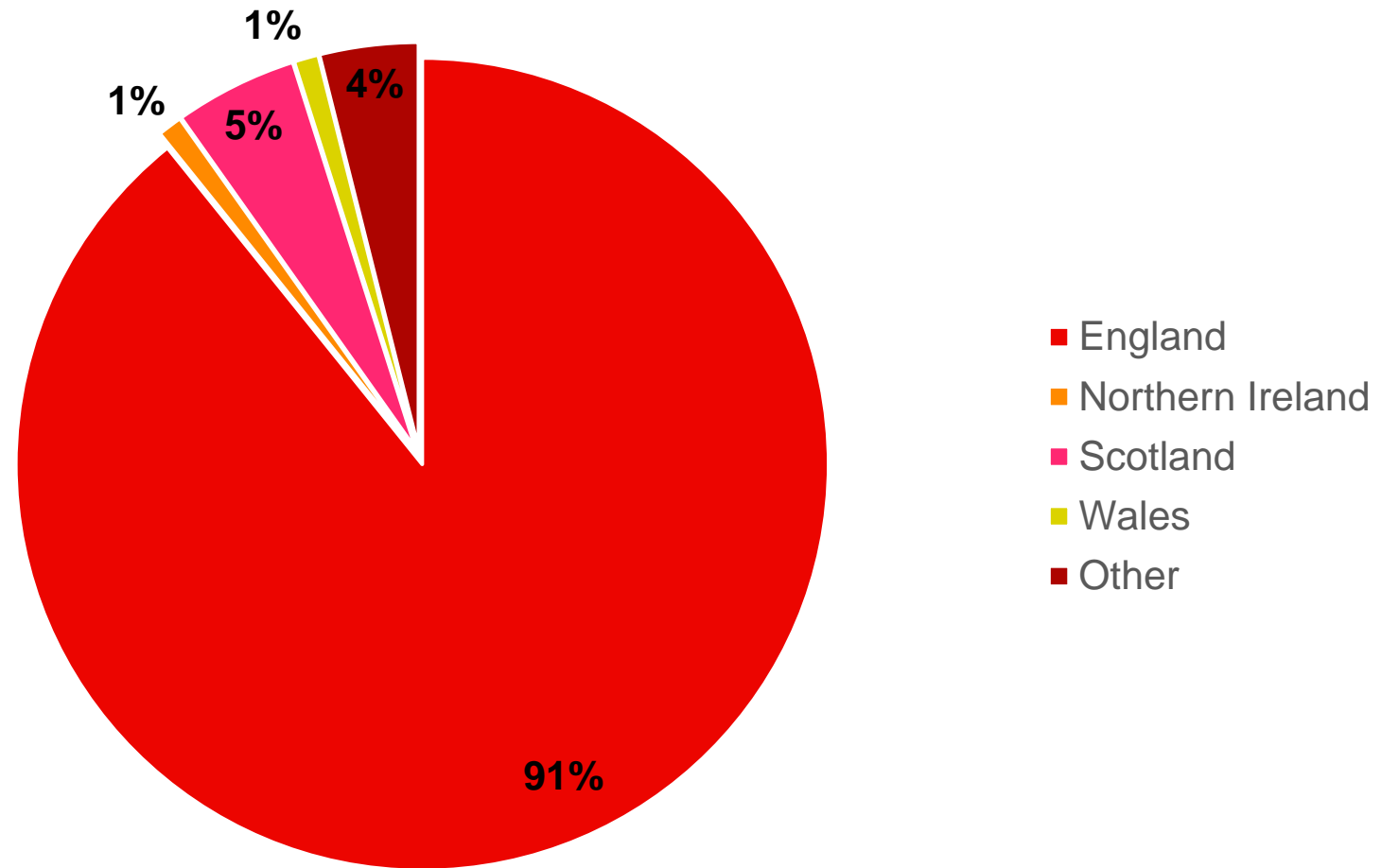
**Who were the
people and
organisations
who
responded?**

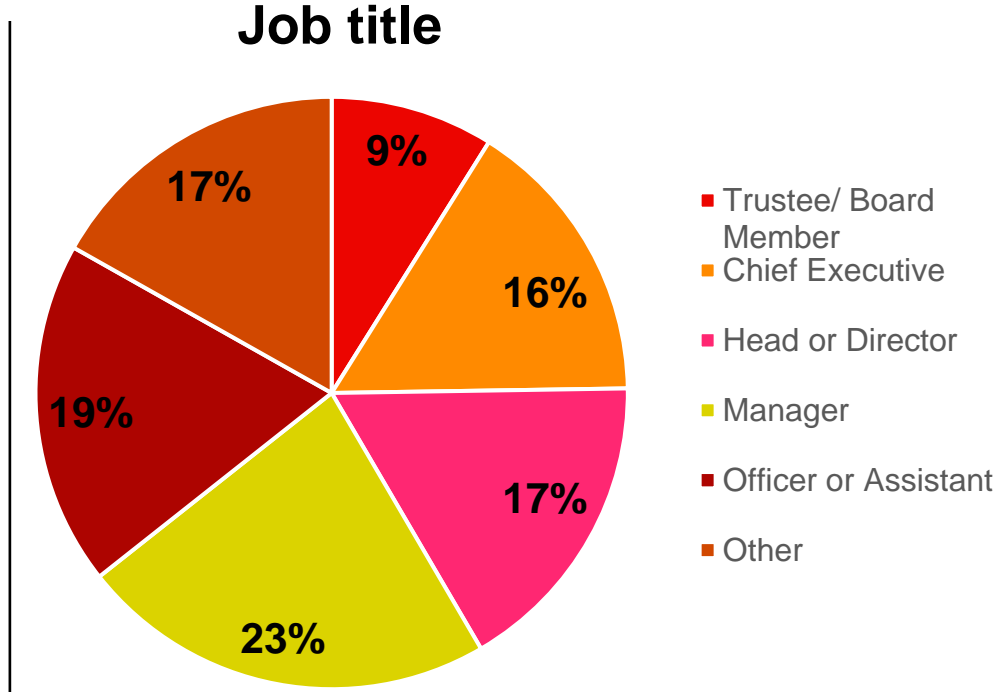
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Do you think of yourself as a
campaigner, a change-maker, an
activist, or something else?

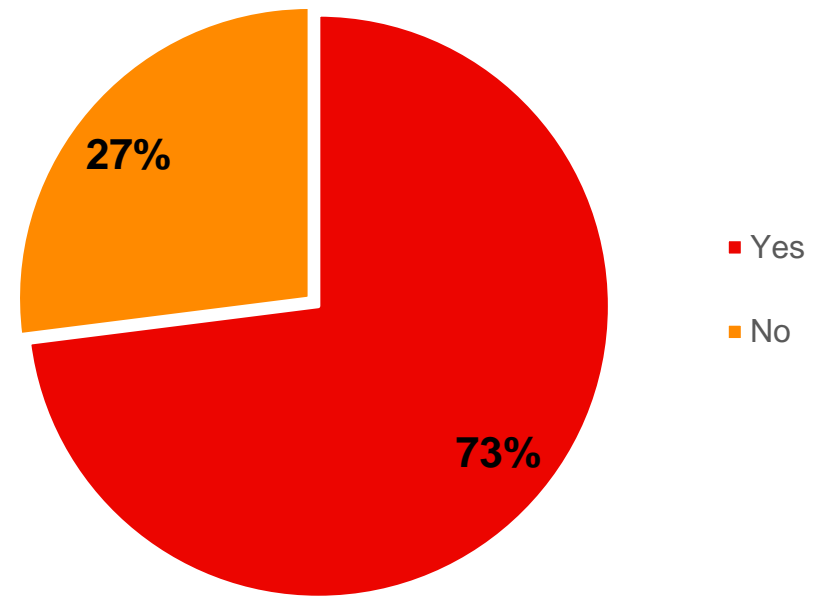


Where are you based?

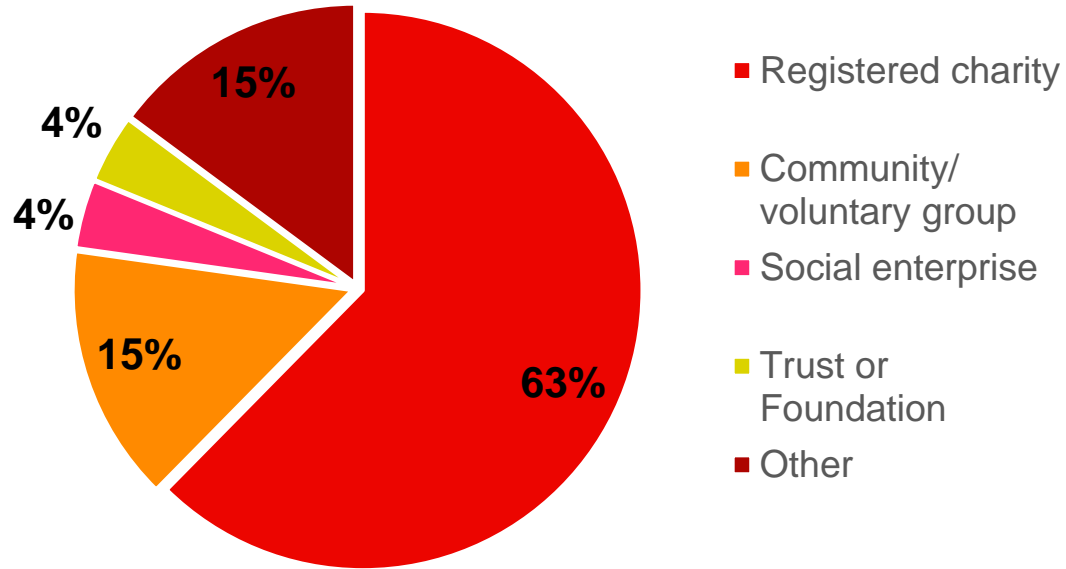




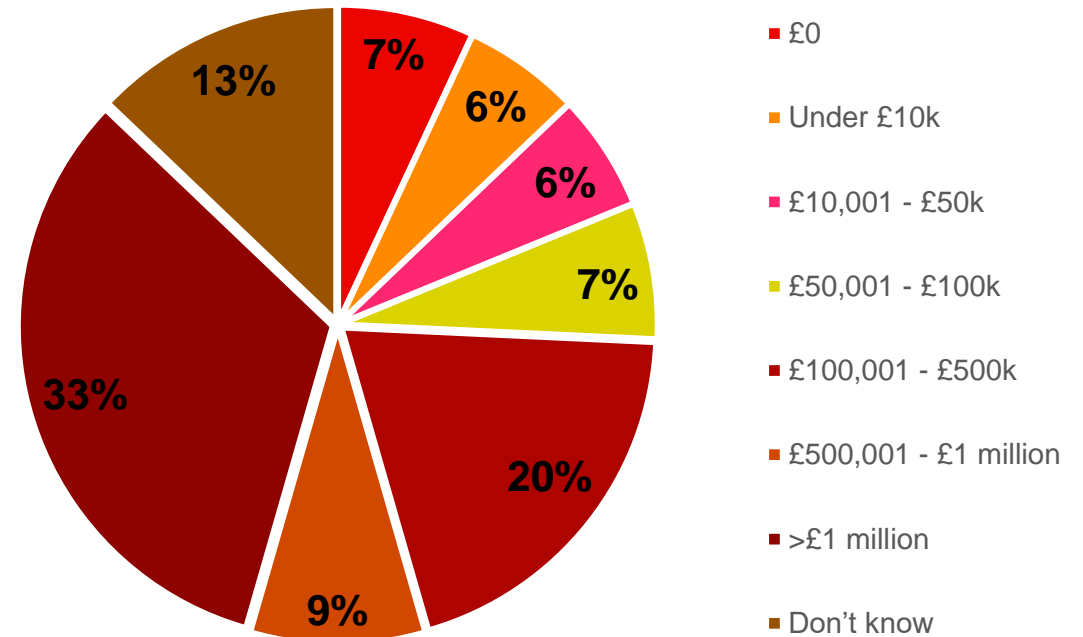
Are you paid for this role?



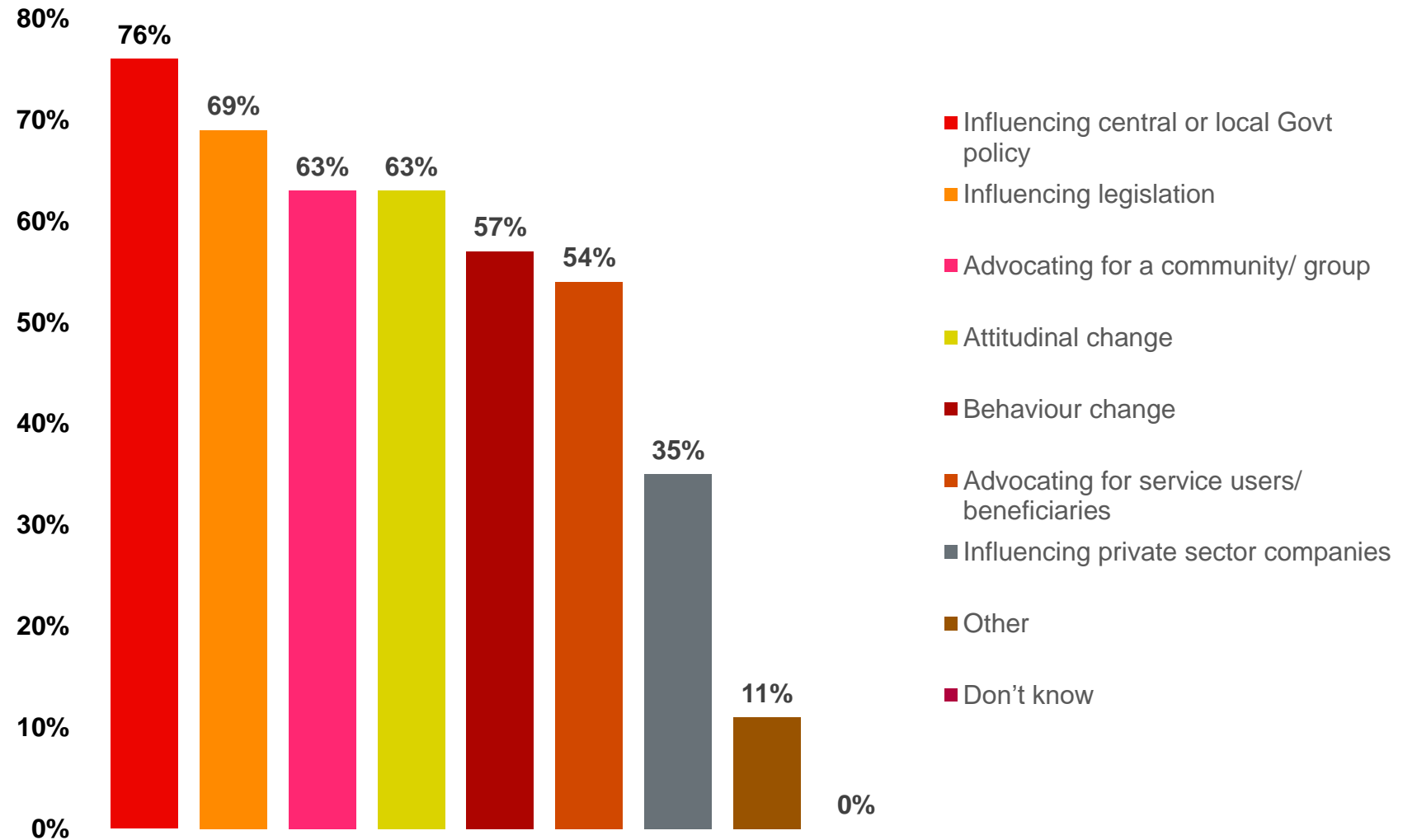
Type of organisation



Turnover of organisation



Organisation's campaigning activities



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