



Customer Satisfaction Survey



Report of Findings

16 June 2023
Confidential & Proprietary

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Project Overview

- GreatBlue Research was commissioned by Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant (hereinafter “HMLP”) to conduct research among its customers to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions of the utility and satisfaction with the services provided.
- The primary goals of this research study were to assess the effectiveness of HMLP's ability to serve its customers, identify areas for improvement, and isolate areas that may increase engagement.
- In order to service these research goals, GreatBlue conducted digital surveys among a random sampling of HMLP's customers.
- The outcome of this research will enable HMLP to a) more clearly understand, and ultimately set, customer expectations, b) act on near-term opportunities for improvement, and c) create a strategic roadmap to increase customer satisfaction.

Areas of Investigation

The HMLP Customer Satisfaction Study leveraged a quantitative research methodology to address the following areas of investigation:

- Satisfaction with HMLP
- Satisfaction with customer and field service personnel
- Perceived value of HMLP's communication methods
- Preferred methods of communication
- Outage communication and resources
- Perceptions of rate objectives
- Awareness of and likelihood to support the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project
- Willingness to spend additional money on electric bill to support HMLP's initiatives
- Awareness of and interest in "Time of Use" rate programs
- Past and anticipated use of programs and services
- Awareness of and likelihood to participate in demand response programs
- Demographic profile of respondents



Research Methodology Snapshot

Methodology Digital	No. of Completes 775	No. of Questions 52*	Incentive None	Sample Customer List
Target Residential Customers	Quality Assurance Dual-level**	Margin of Error +/- 3.5%	Confidence Level 95%	Research Dates May 1 - 30, 2023

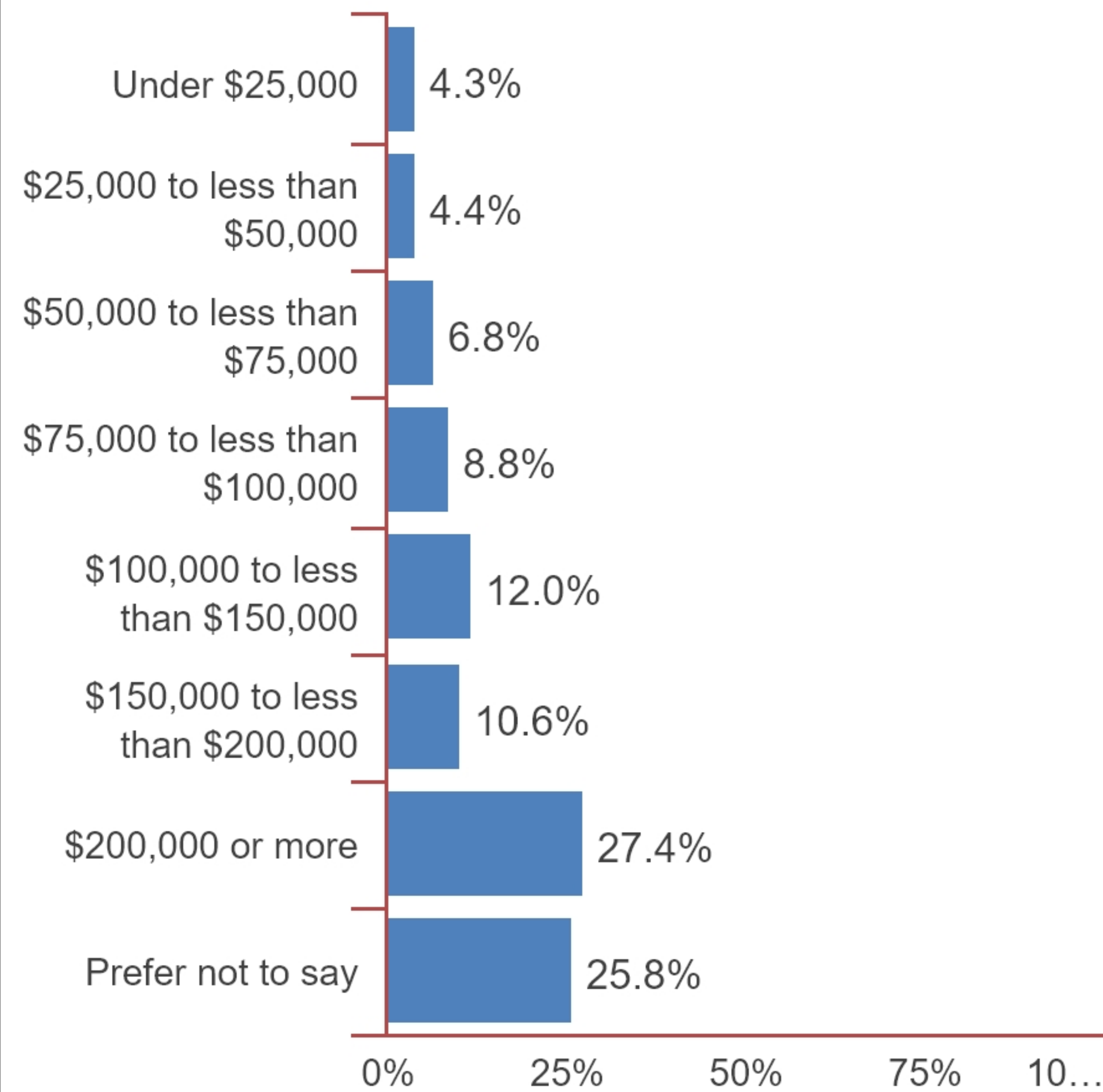
* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.

** Supervisory personnel, in addition to computer-aided interviewing platform, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

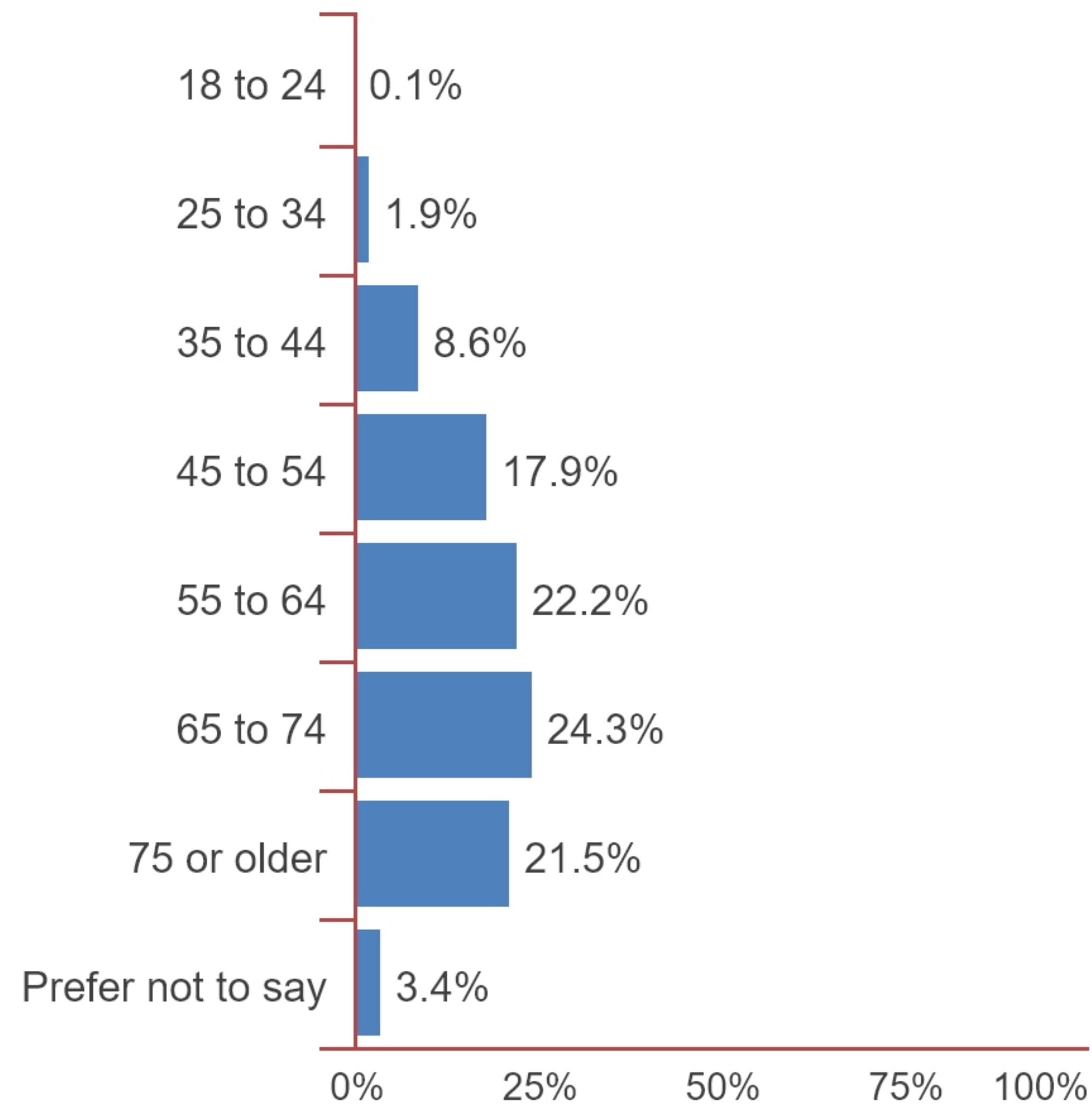
Respondent Snapshot

This slide quantifies select data points to provide context for this research study. The data is not meant to be proportional to population contribution, rather to provide an empirical view into the demographic profile of the participants.

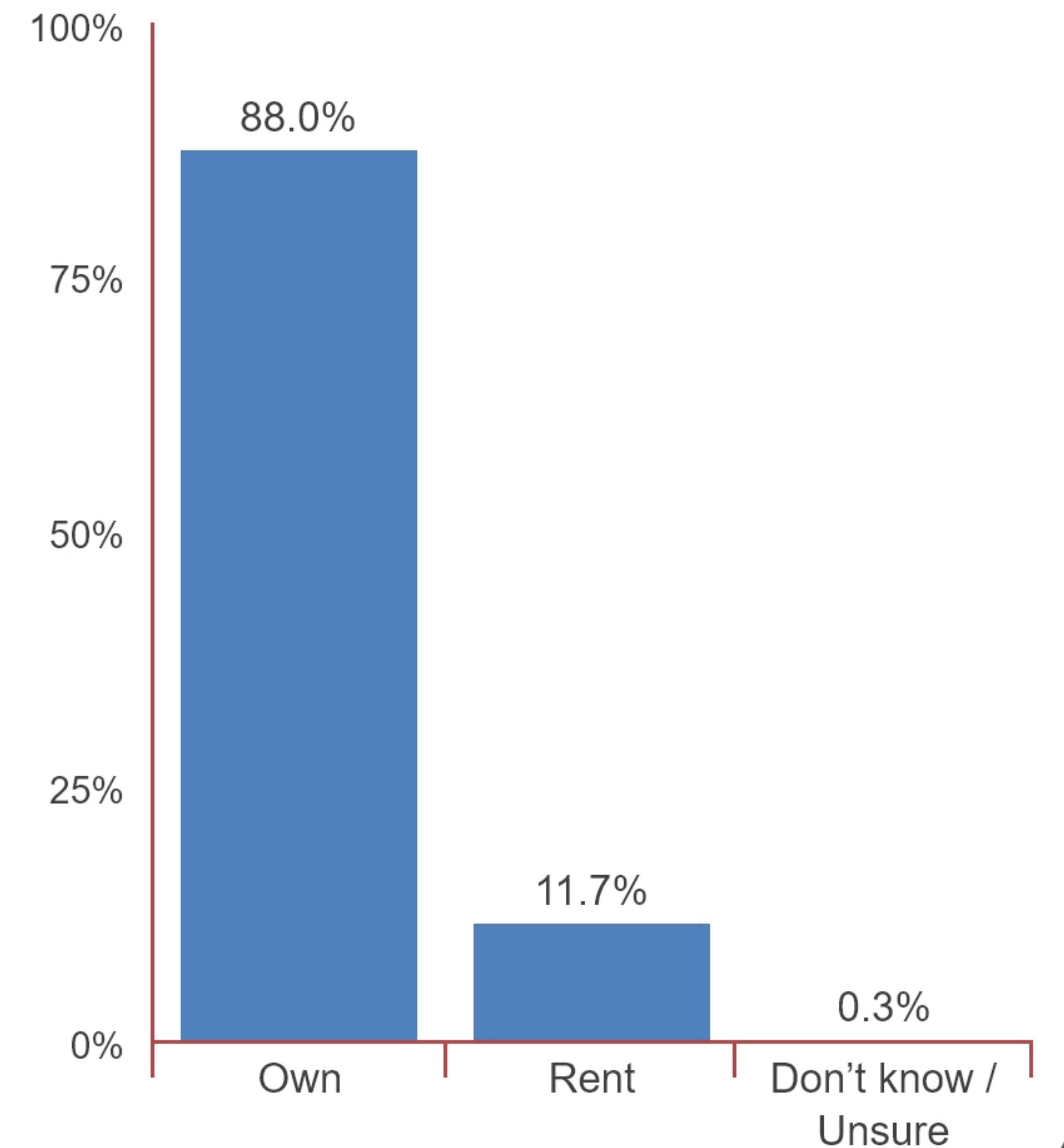
Income



Age



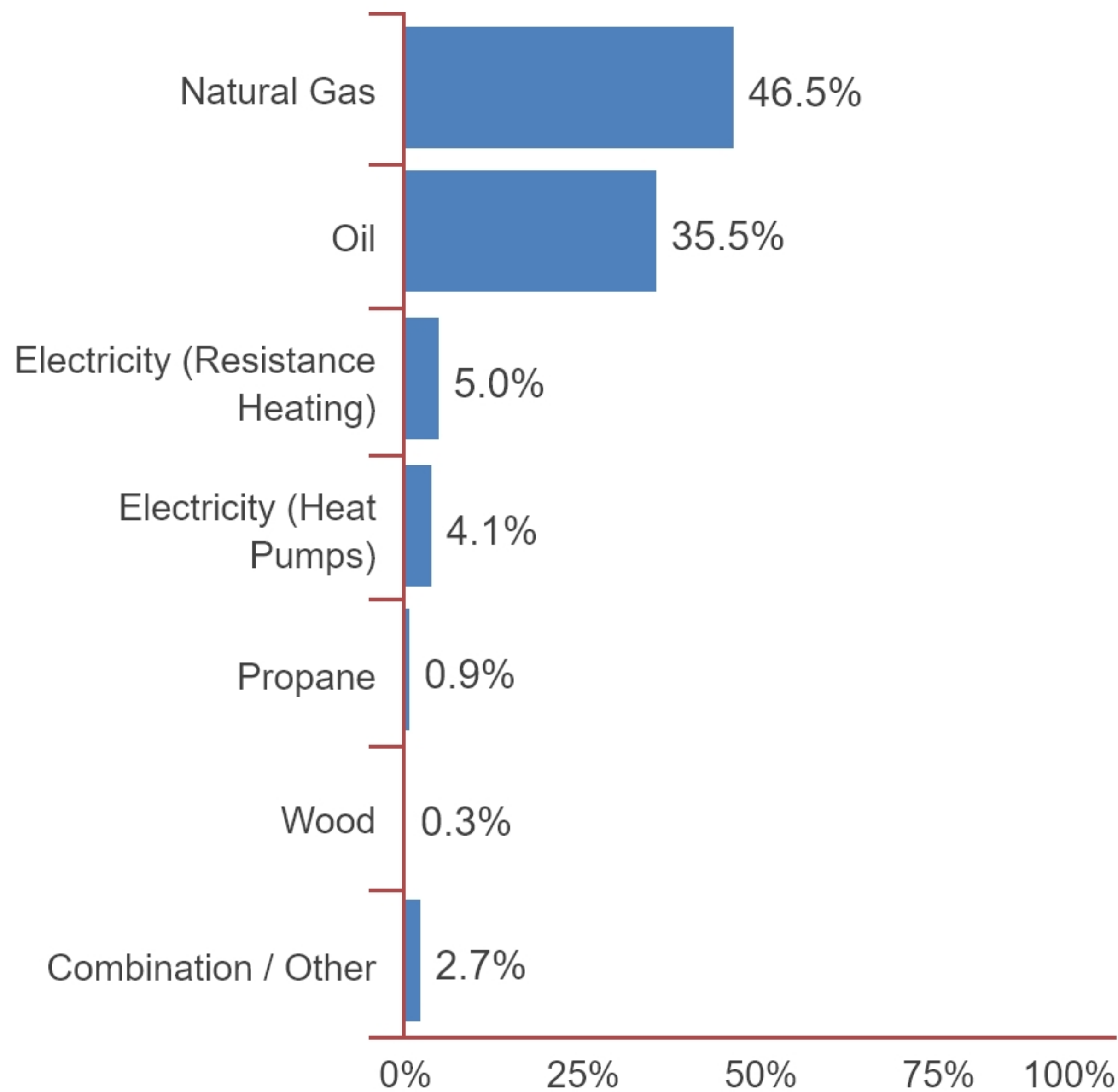
Rent or Own



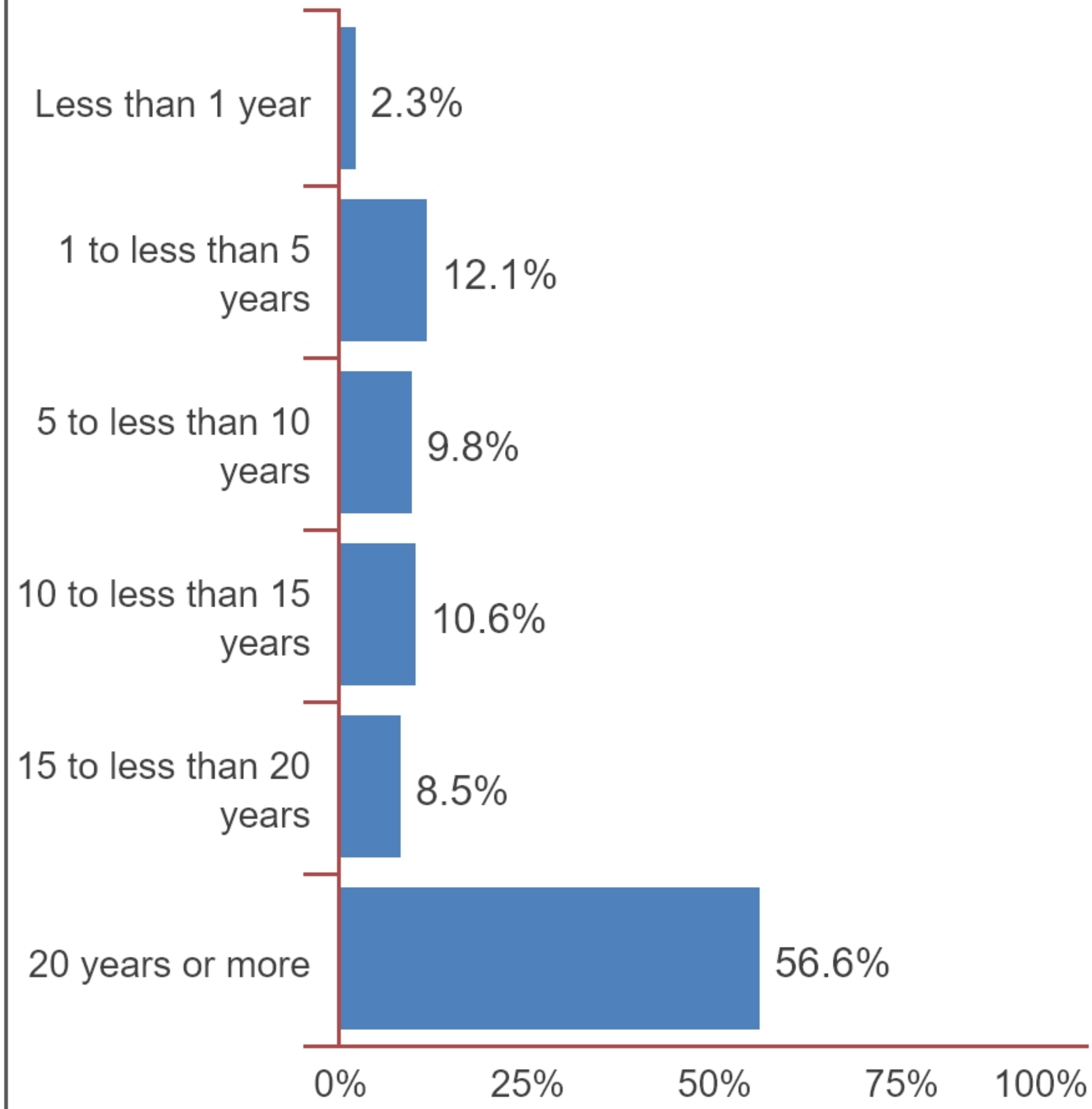
Respondent Snapshot

This slide quantifies select data points to provide context for this research study. The data is not meant to be proportional to population contribution, rather to provide an empirical view into the demographic profile of the participants.

Heating Method



Length of Residency



Type of Dwelling

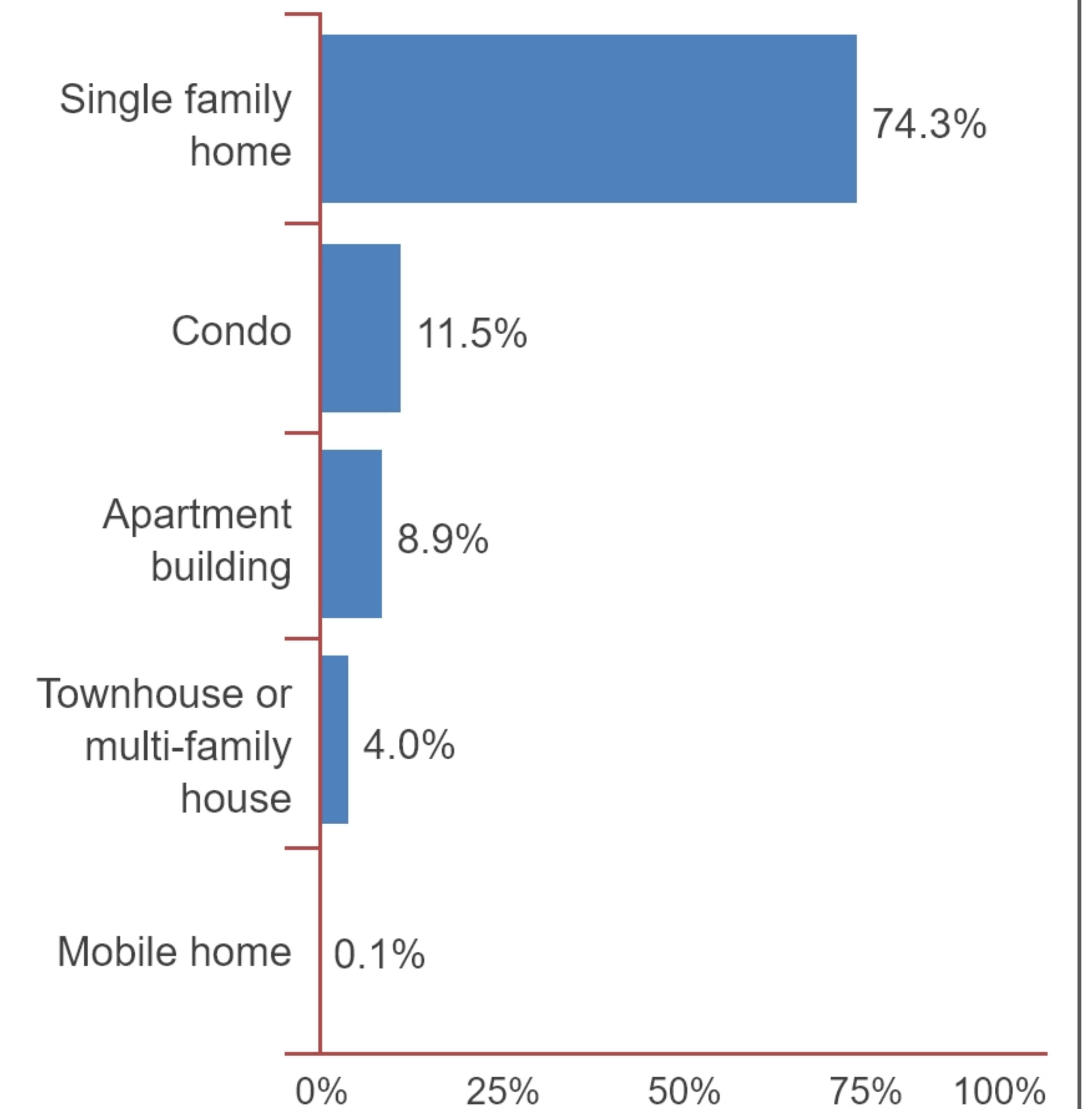


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Key Study Findings



- When rating HMLP on a series of organizational characteristics, respondents provided the highest ratings for HMLP having "reliable service" (99.1%) and its "honesty / integrity" (96.8%). While still strong, lower ratings were recorded for HMLP's "rates" (81.0%) and "helping customers use energy efficiently" (82.2%).
- The majority of the respondents who recently had an interaction with HMLP (95.1%) indicated they were either "very satisfied" (88.5%) or "somewhat satisfied" (6.6%) with the way the HMLP employee handled the call or visit. Respondents primarily reported calling HMLP due to an "outage" (24.9%) or a "question on bill (not a complaint)" (14.2%).
- Of the respondents who have recently had an interaction with an HMLP field representative, the vast majority, 98.5%, indicated they were either "very satisfied" (92.9%) or "somewhat satisfied" (5.6%) with the way the HMLP employee handled the call or visit. Those who had a field representative visit their home primarily indicated this was for a "repair" (15.9%), a "service problem" (15.1%) or an "outage."
- Over three-quarters of respondents, 78.1%, indicated they "strongly agree" (53.8%) or "somewhat agree" (24.3%) that the level of service they receive at HMLP matches the electric rates they pay.

Key Study Findings



- The majority of respondents rated HMLP's "e-mail" (83.0%) and the "HMLP website" (71.6%) as either "very valuable" or "somewhat valuable."
- Nearly one-half of respondents reported the "website" (47.7%) is their most preferred way to look for information from HMLP. Of the respondents that visited the website recently, over nine-out-of-ten (92.6%) reported they were satisfied with the ease of finding information on the HMLP website.
- Roughly one-third of respondents reported looking for outage restoration information by "Calling HMLP" (33.4%) or accessing the "outage map on HMLP's website" (31.4%). Of the respondents who reported using the "outage map on HMLP'S website," three-fifths, 60.1%, reported being satisfied, with 35.4% being "very satisfied" and 24.7% being "somewhat satisfied."
- When asked about their awareness of the HEIRP Transmission and Substation, over one-half of respondents reported they were "not at all aware" (55.6%). However, over one-half of respondents reported they are likely (58.6%) to support the project, with 27.5% being "very likely" and 31.1% being "somewhat likely."
- Three-fifths of respondents (60.1%) ranked "system reliability" first as the most important rate objective, and one-fifth of respondents (20.2%) ranked it second in importance.

Key Study Findings



- Over one-third of respondents (34.7%) indicated they would be willing to pay "1% to less than 3% more" or "3% to less than 5% more" for enhanced rebate programs and efficiency incentives, while a similar frequency (31.4%) reported they would pay "1% to less than 3% more" or "3% to less than 5% more" for a green tariff.
- Roughly one-quarter of respondents (26.9%) reported being "very aware" or "moderately aware" of Time of Use rate programs, while over one-half (53.3%) indicated they are "not at all aware." However, nearly three-fifths of respondents (59.8%) reported being interested in enrolling in a Time of Use program.
- Nearly one-half of respondents reported previously participating in "paperless billing" (49.5%) and "autopay" (47.4%), and will continue to participate in the future, while nearly one-quarter of respondents indicated they have not previously, but have plans to receive "rebates for energy efficiency" (23.0%) or the "no-cost energy assessment" (22.2%).
- The majority of respondents are "not at all aware" (73.2%) of demand response rate programs. However, nearly two-thirds (64.9%) reported being "likely" to enroll in a demand response program if HMLP offered one.

Reliable Service Drives Company Ratings

When rating HMLP on a series of organizational characteristics, respondents provided an average positive rating of 90.9%.

Of note, respondents provided the highest ratings for HMLP having "reliable service" (99.1%) and its "honesty / integrity" (96.8%), but provided the lowest ratings for HMLP's "rates" (81.0%) and "helping customers use energy efficiently" (82.2%).

Below is a list of different organizational characteristics. For each one, please rate HMLP's electric service. Using a scale of one to ten where one (1) is very poor and ten (10) is very good. (Total ratings 7-10) (w/o "don't know" responses)

Reliable service	99.1
Honesty / Integrity	96.8
Customer interactions and communication	95.0
Community service / supporting activities / events	91.2
Helping customers use energy efficiently	82.2
Rates	81.0
Average	90.9

Of Those Who Provided Poor Ratings, Majority Cite High Bills

Among the 70 respondents who provided poor ratings for HMLP for any characteristic mentioned, nearly one-half (45.7%) cited "high bills / too expensive" as the top reason for providing poor ratings for HMLP. Others reported providing poor ratings because of a "lack of energy efficiency information / programs" (8.6%).

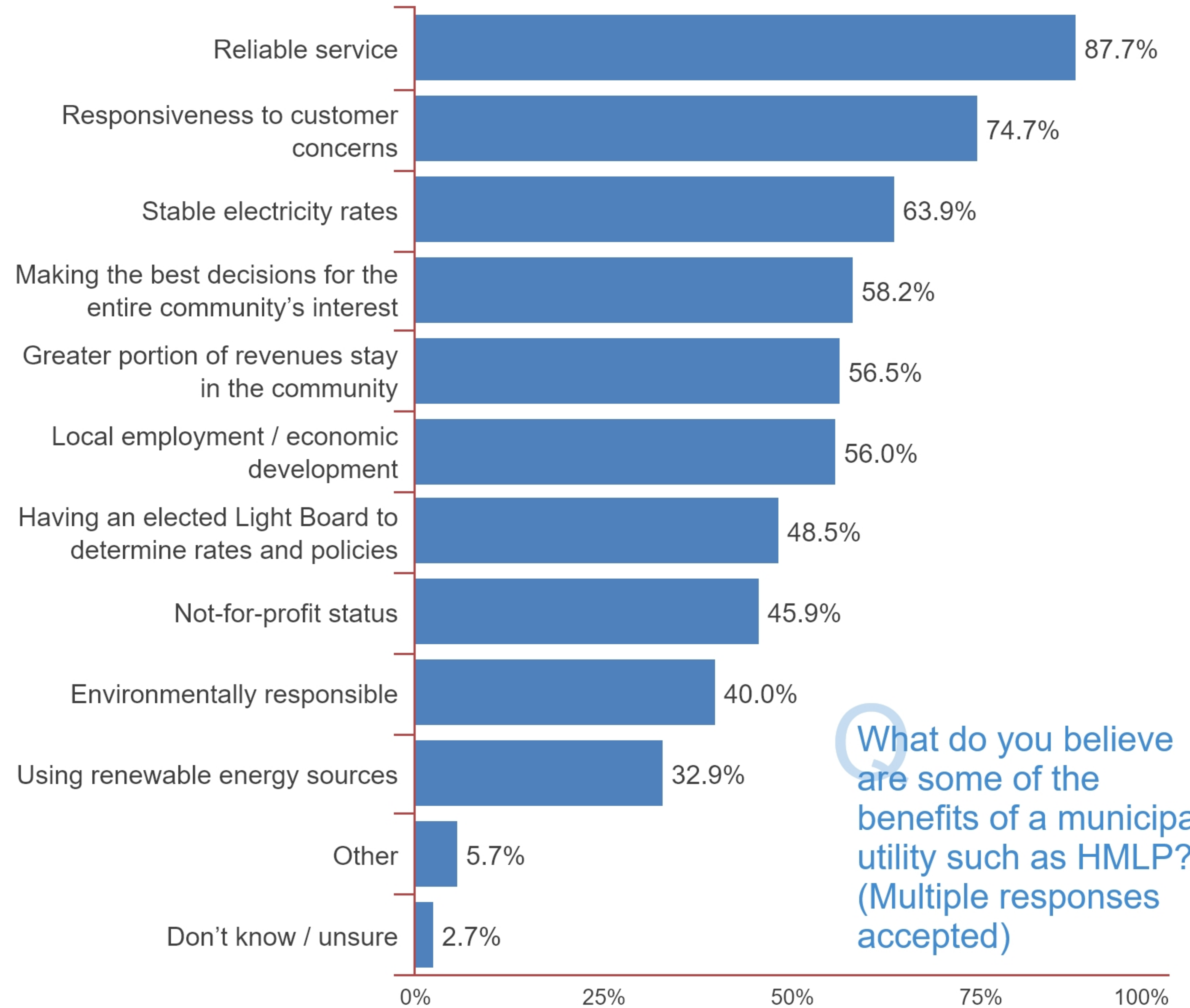
Q Please indicate why you provided poor ratings for HMLP: (N=70) (Top 8 values shown)

High bills / too expensive	45.7
Lack of energy efficiency information / programs	8.6
Multiple reasons	8.6
Rebate issues	4.3
Poor communication	4.3
Provide more solar programs	4.3
Did not make poor ratings / neutral	4.3
Need to participate in Mass Save program	2.9

Reliable Service Seen as Top Benefit of a Municipal Utility

Nearly nine-out-of-ten respondents (87.7%) indicated "reliable service" is a benefit of a municipal utility like HMLP, and roughly three-quarters (74.7%) indicated a benefit of municipal utilities is their "responsiveness to customer concerns."

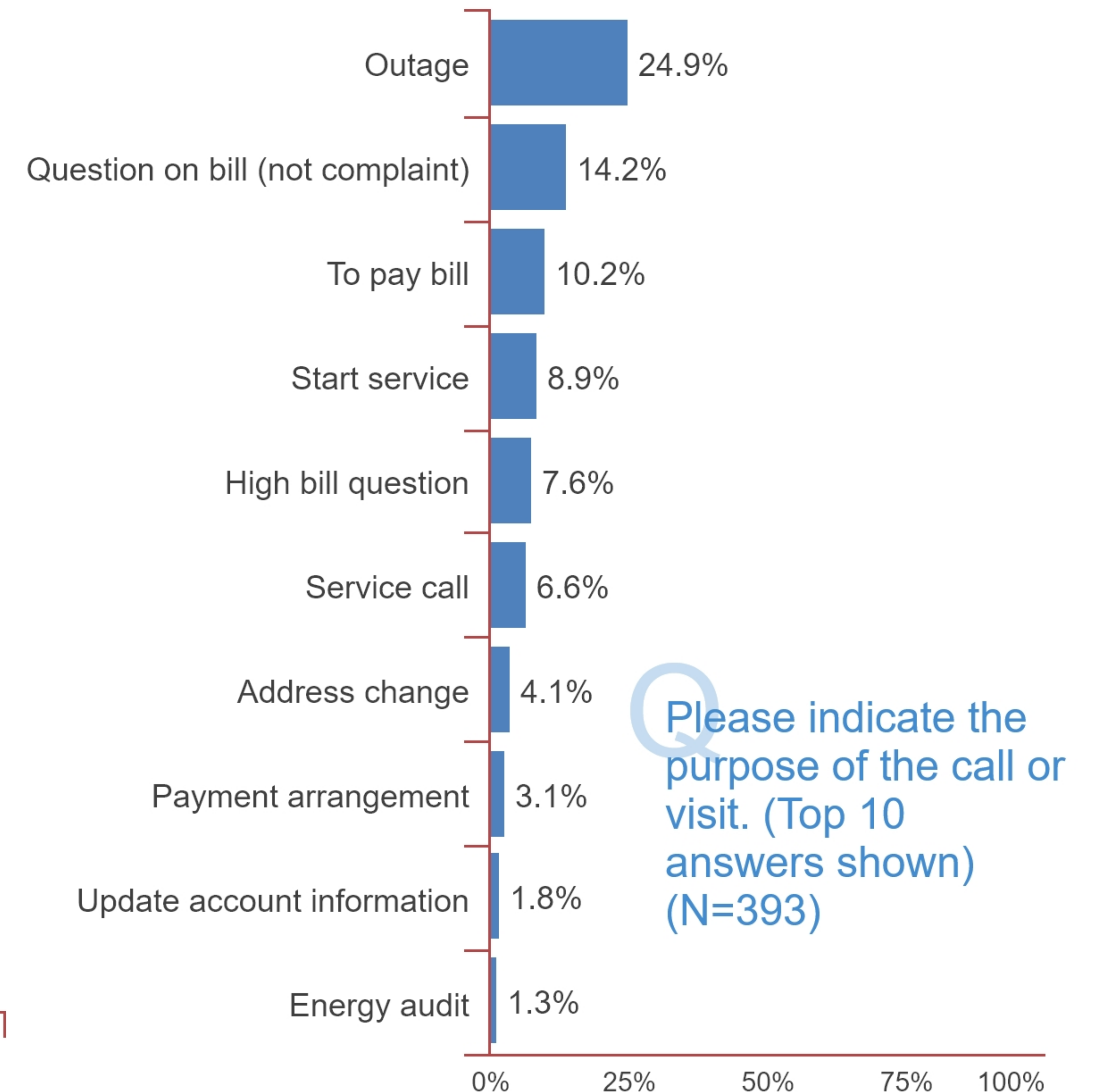
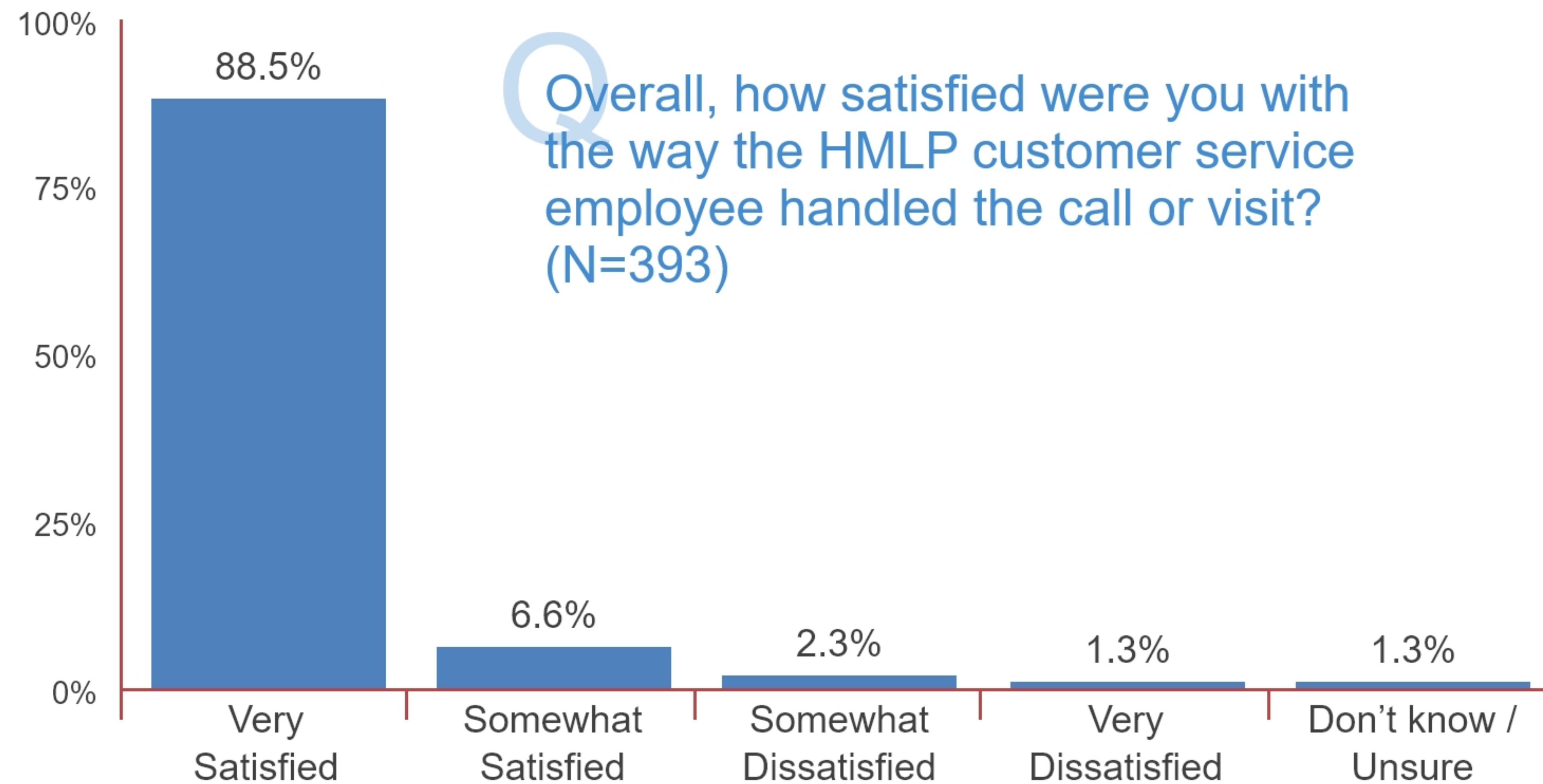
Over three-fifths of respondents (63.9%) also indicated "stable electricity rates" are a top benefit of a municipal utility.



What do you believe are some of the benefits of a municipal utility such as HMLP? (Multiple responses accepted)

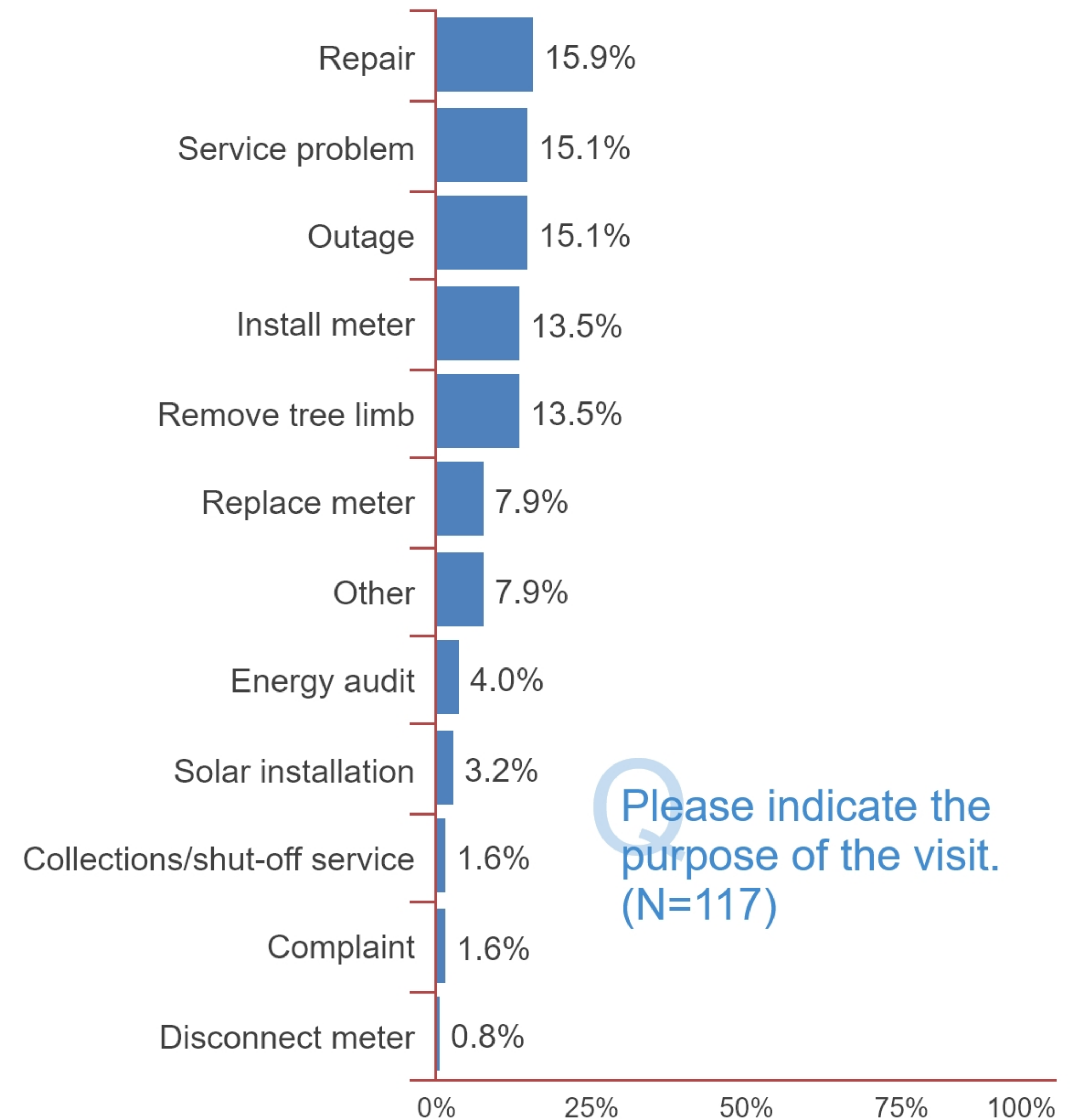
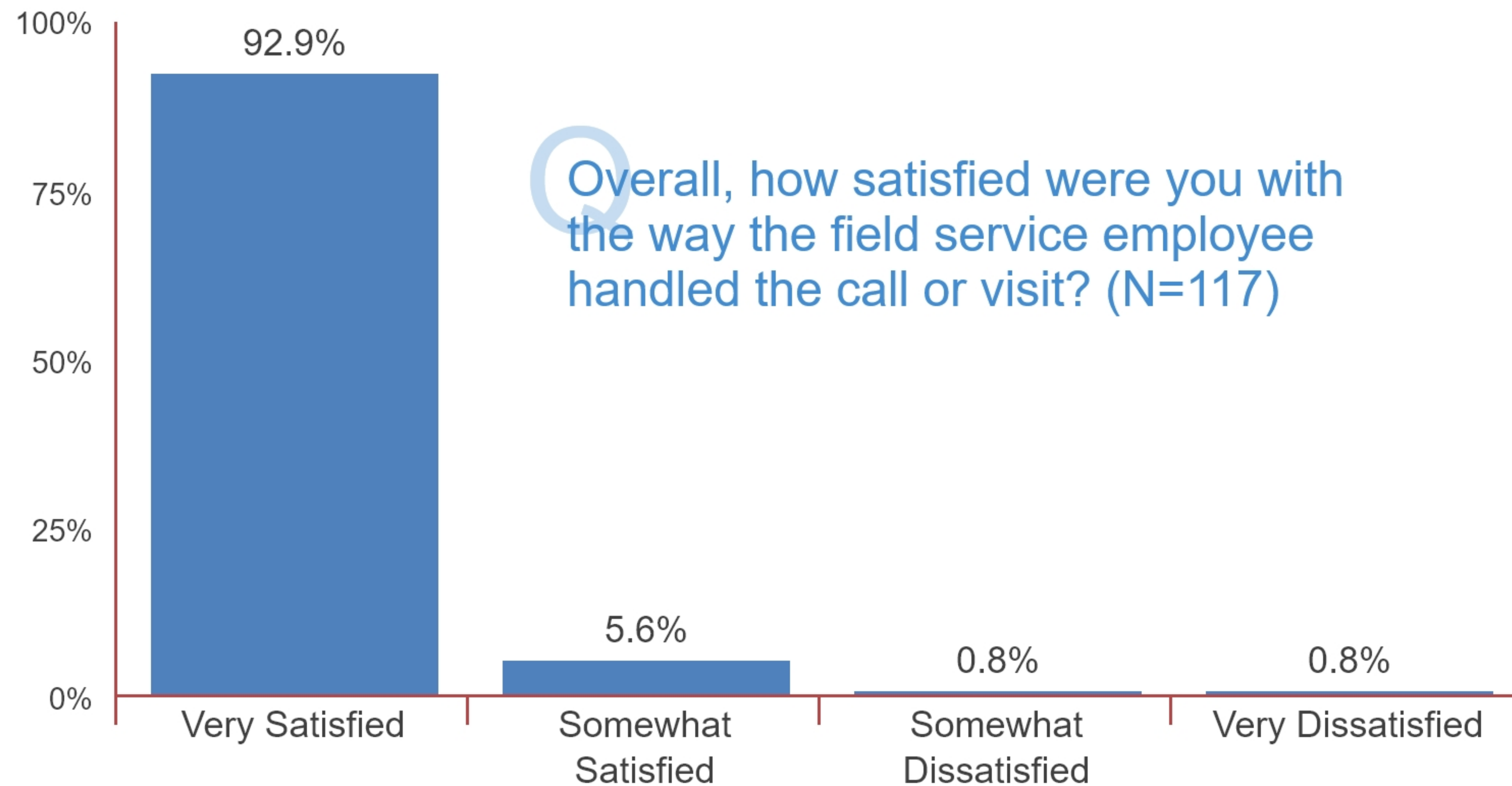
Majority Satisfied with Customer Service

Of the respondents who have recently had an interaction with HMLP, over nine-out-of-ten (95.1%) indicated they were either "very satisfied" (88.5%) or "somewhat satisfied" (6.6%) with the way the HMLP employee handled the call or visit. Those who had a recent interaction with HMLP primarily indicated they called due to an "outage" (24.9%), while others reported they called for a "question on bill (not a complaint)" (14.2%).



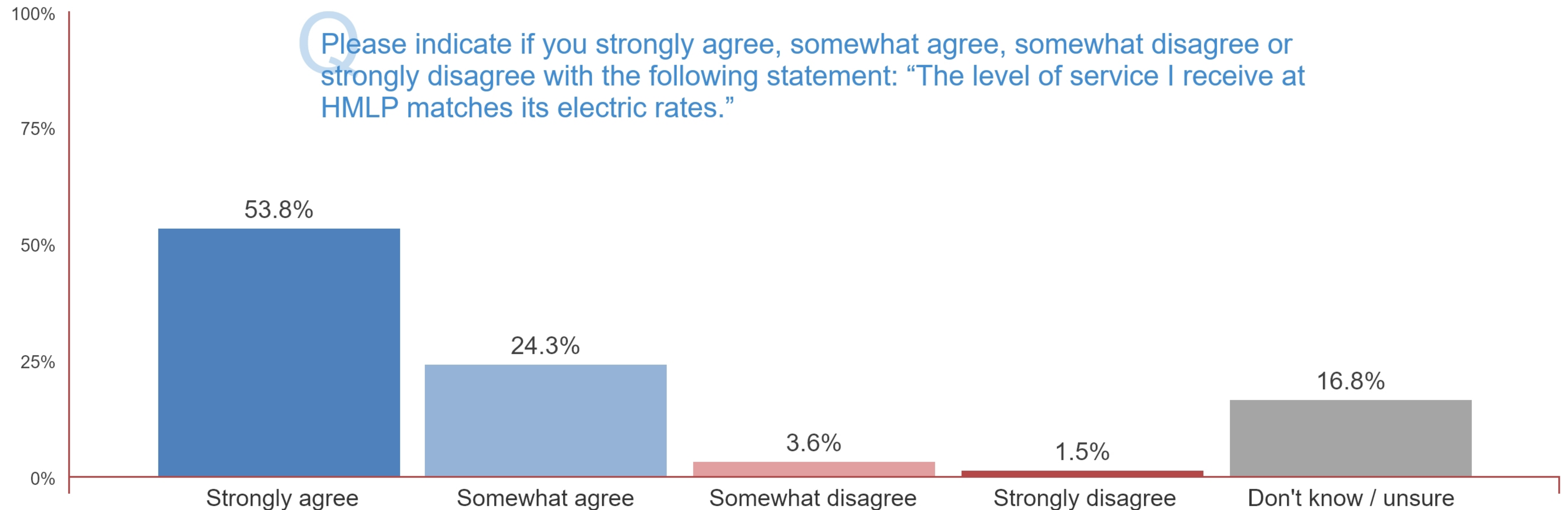
Majority Satisfied with Field Service Representative

Of the 126 respondents who have recently had an interaction with HMLP, the vast majority of respondents, 98.5%, indicated they were either "very satisfied" (92.9%) or "somewhat satisfied" (5.6%) with the way the HMLP employee handled the call or visit. Those who had a field representative visit their home primarily indicated this was for a "repair" (15.9%), a "service problem" (15.1%) or an "outage."



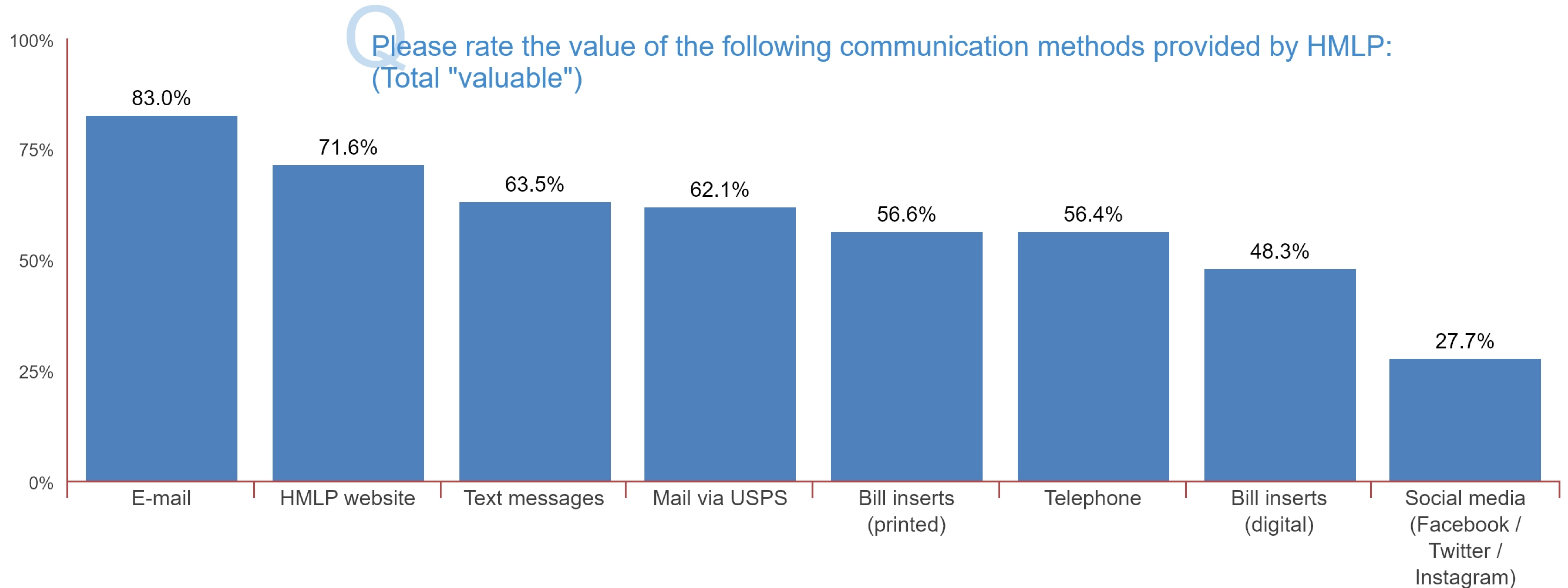
Most Agree Level of Service Matches Electric Rates

Over three-quarters of respondents, 78.1%, indicated they "strongly agree" (53.8%) or "somewhat agree" (24.3%) that the level of service they receive at HMLP matches the electric rates they pay.



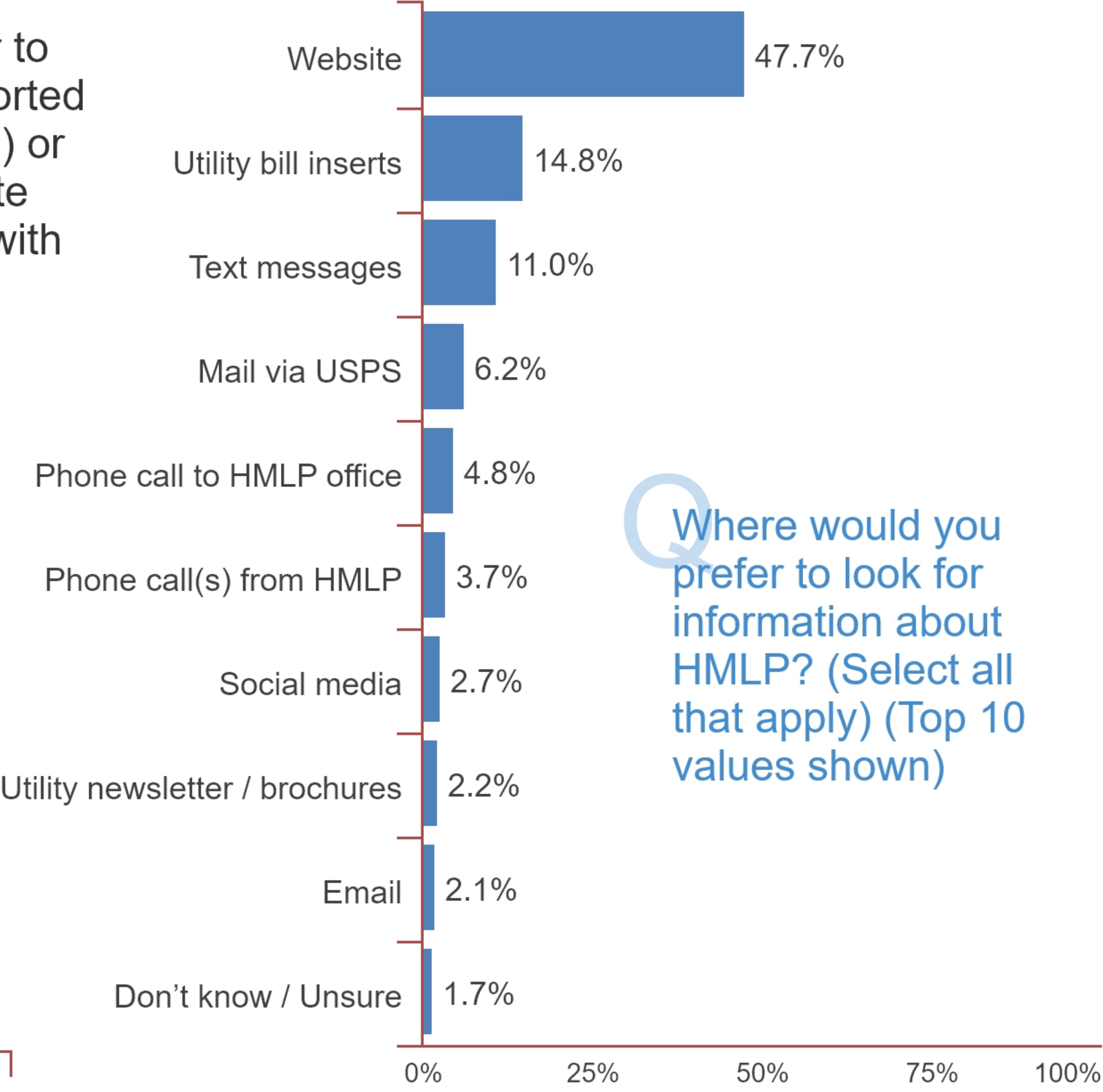
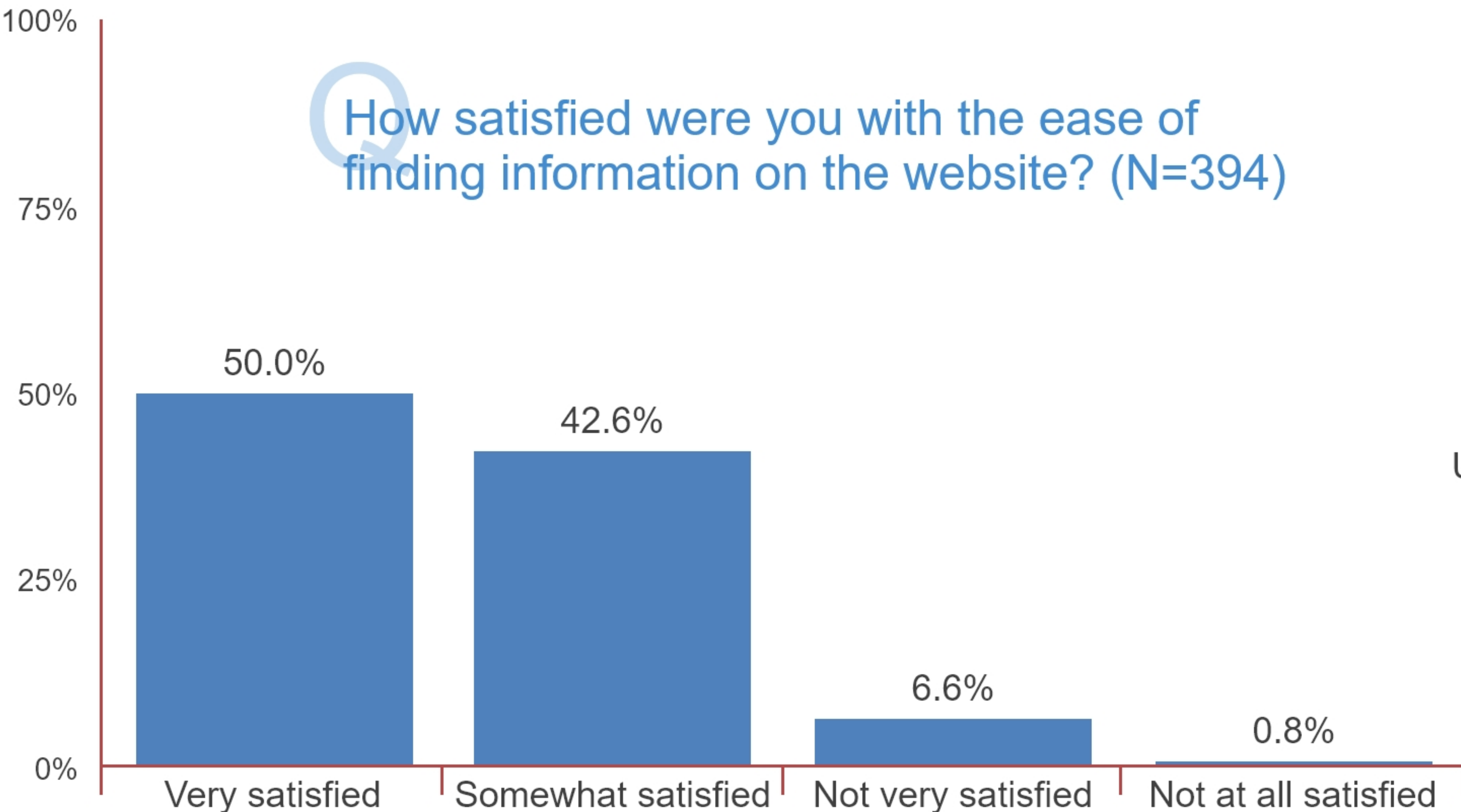
E-mail and Website Most Valuable

When rating the value of several HMLP communication methods, more respondents rated HMLP's "e-mail" (83.0%) and the "HMLP website" (71.6%) as either "very valuable" or "somewhat valuable" than other communication platforms. Of note, less than three-out-of-ten respondents (27.7%) rated HMLP's "social media (Facebook / Twitter / Instagram)" as "very valuable" or "somewhat valuable."



Prefer to Look for Information on the Website

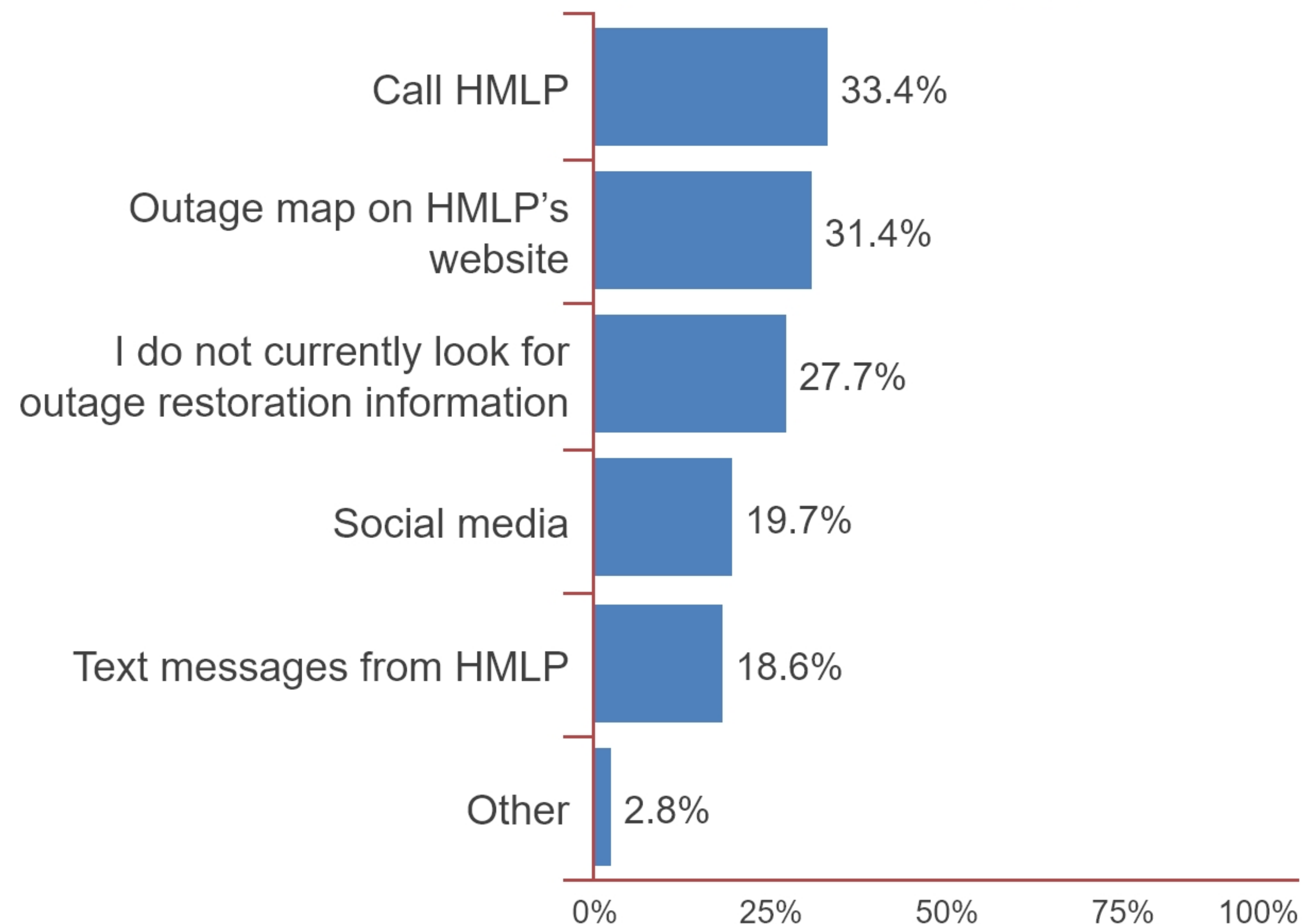
Nearly one-half of respondents (47.7%) indicated they would prefer to look for information about HMLP on the "website," while others reported a preference for looking for information in "utility bill inserts" (14.8%) or "text messages" (11.0%). Of the respondents that visited the website recently, over nine-out-of-ten (92.6%) reported they were satisfied with the ease of finding information on the HMLP website.



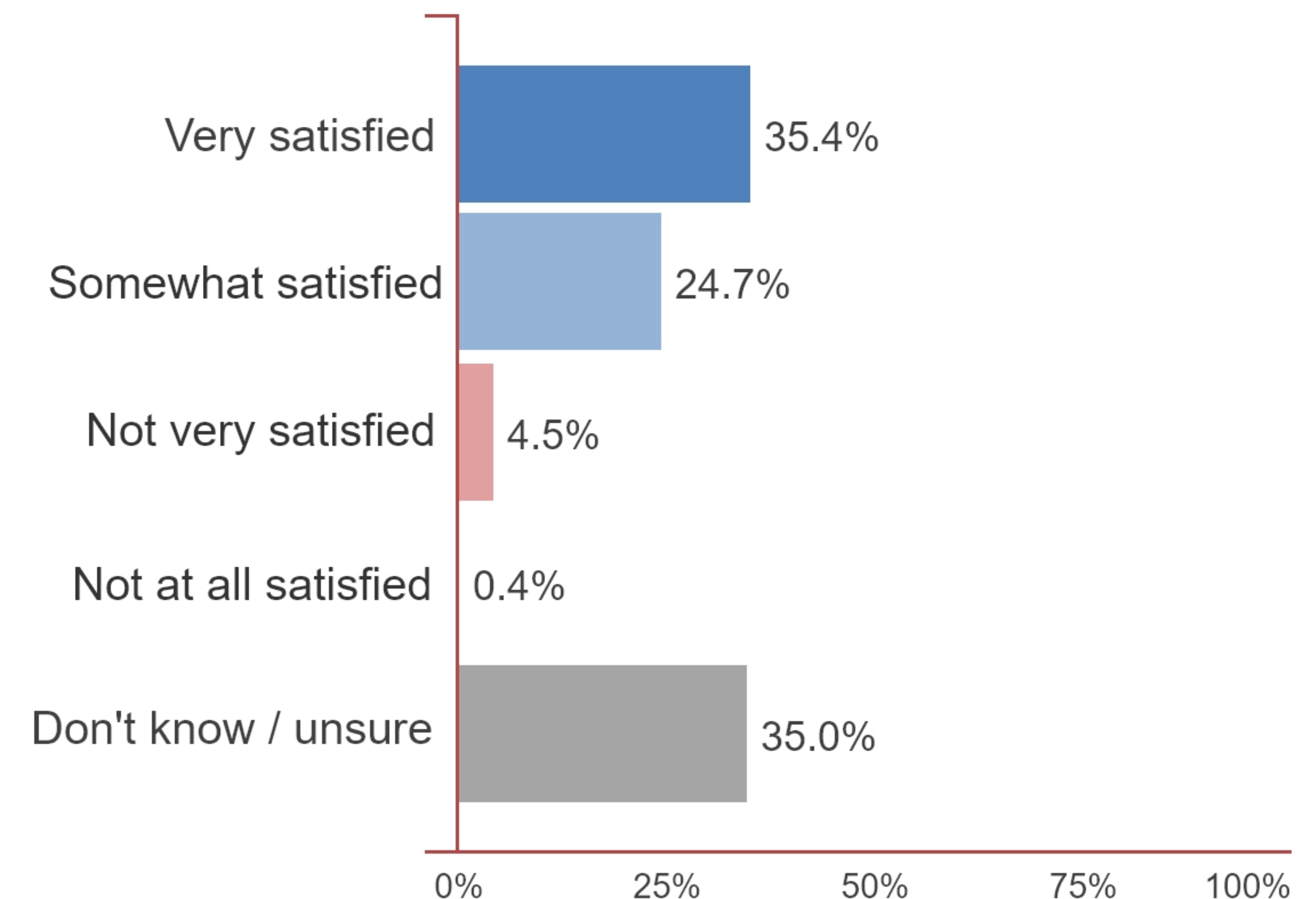
Majority Call HMLP for Outage Information

Roughly one-third of respondents reported looking for outage restoration information by "calling HMLP" (33.4%) or accessing the "outage map on HMLP's website" (31.4%). Of the respondents who reported using the "outage map on HMLP'S website," three-fifths, 60.1%, reported being "very satisfied" (35.4%) or "somewhat satisfied" (24.7%) with their experience.

Q How do you currently look for outage restoration information from HMLP? (Select all that apply)

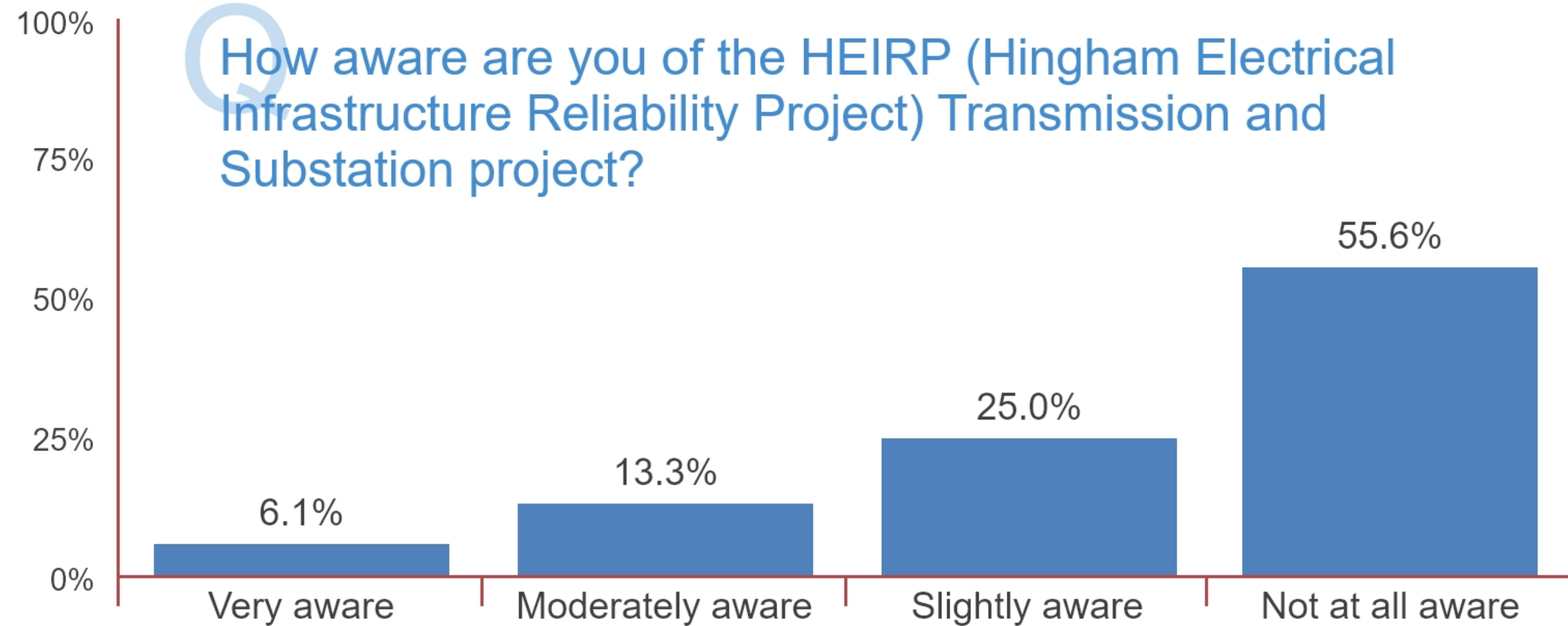


Q If you have used HMLP's outage map recently, how satisfied were you with your experience? (N=243)

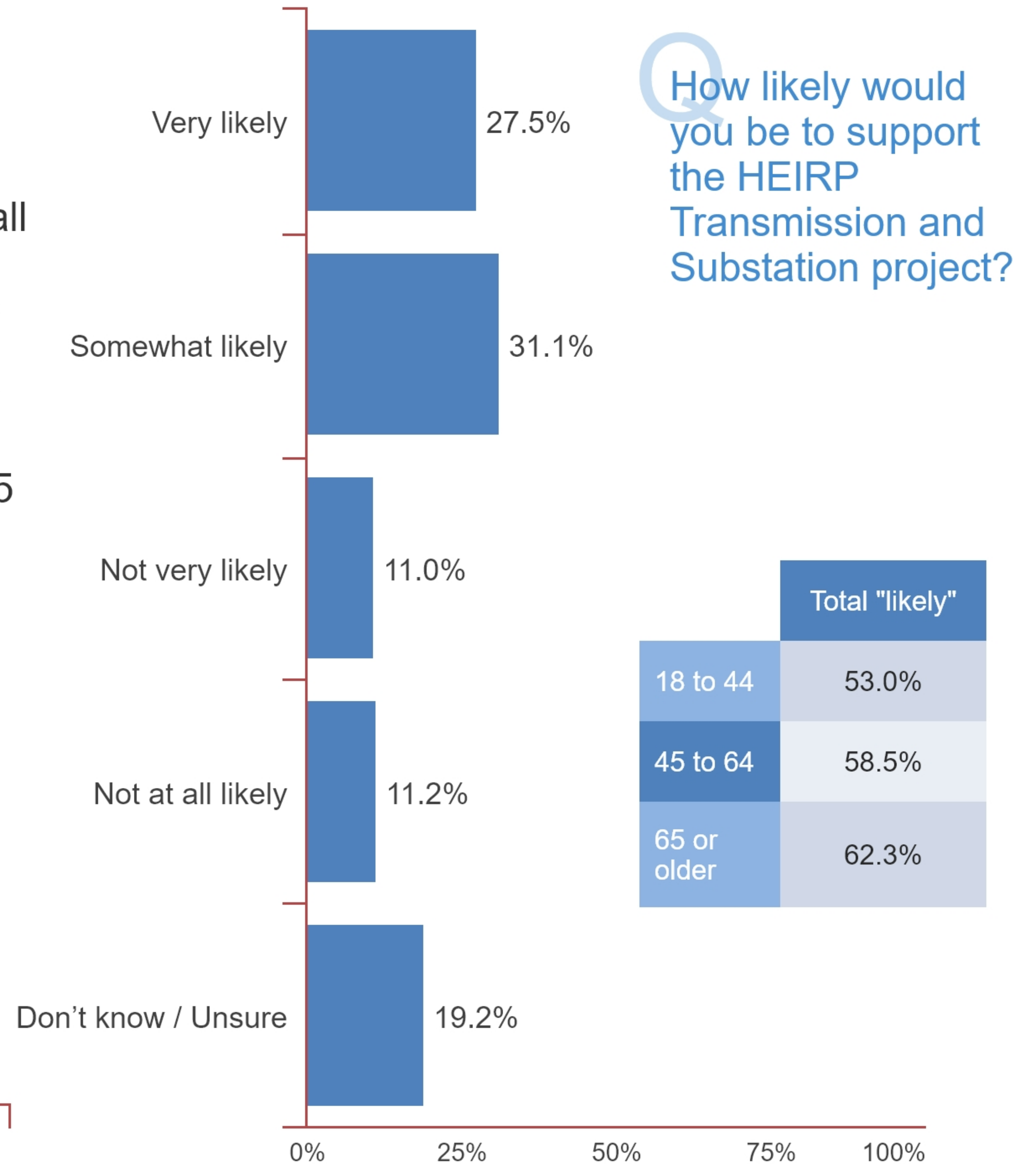


Low Awareness of HEIRP

Nearly one-fifth of respondents (19.4%) reported being "very aware" or "moderately aware" of the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project, while over one-half of respondents (55.6%) reported they were "not at all aware" of this project. After reading a description of the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project, nearly three-fifths of respondents (58.6%) reported being "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to support this project, while nearly one-fifth (19.2%) indicated they are unsure of their support for this project. Of note, likelihood to support the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project was higher among respondents 65 years or older (62.3%) and those 45 to 64 years of age (58.5%) than those 18 to 44 years of age (53.0%).



How aware are you of the HEIRP (Hingham Electrical Infrastructure Reliability Project) Transmission and Substation project?



How likely would you be to support the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project?

System Reliability Ranked as Most Important

When asked to rate objectives or design features in order of importance, three-fifths of respondents ranked "system reliability" (60.1%) first in importance, and one-fifth (20.2%) ranked it second in importance. Meanwhile, two-fifths of respondents (40.0%) ranked "utility financial stability" either first (12.5%) or second (27.5%) in importance, and a similar frequency (39.9%) ranked "least cost of service" first (16.1%) or second (23.8%) in importance.

 Please rank the following rate objectives or design features in order of their importance to you.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
System reliability	60.1	20.2	12.4	3.8	1.7	1.8
Least cost of service	16.1	23.8	17.3	12.4	12.0	18.4
Utility financial stability	12.5	27.5	25.5	18.2	9.7	6.6
Increasing HMLP's share of renewable / green energy	6.9	9.6	13.6	16.0	23.7	30.2
Promotion of efficient energy use	3.4	9.5	15.7	23.5	30.4	17.5
Equitable cost recovery from all customers	3.3	11.4	17.7	25.0	20.1	22.6

Willing to Pay More for Enhanced Rebate Programs

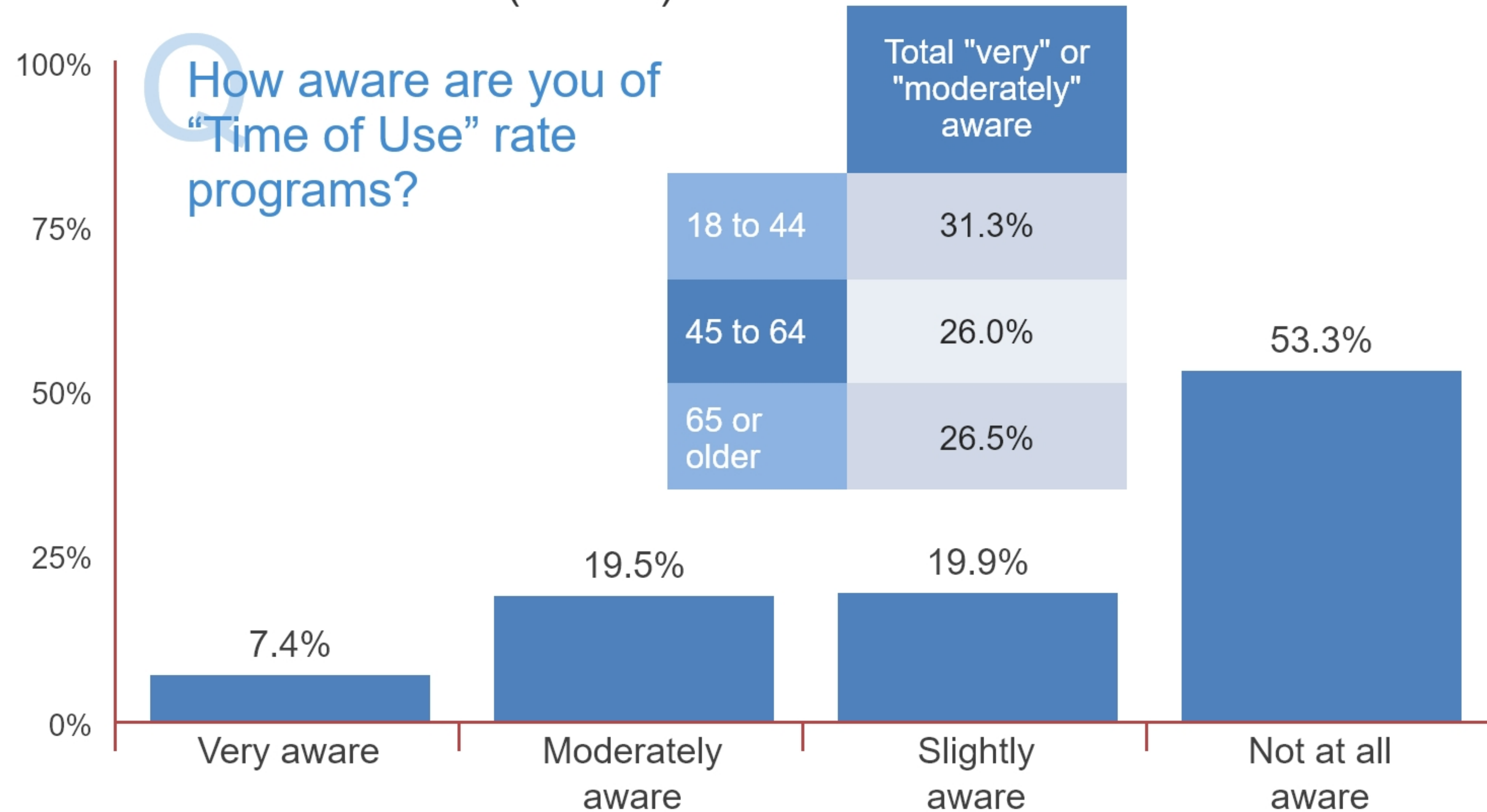
While many respondents indicated they would pay "no additional amount" for any of the services listed, over one-third of respondents, 34.7%, reported they would be willing to pay "1% to less than 3% more" (21.8%) or "3% to less than 5% more" for "enhanced rebate programs and efficiency incentives" (21.8%). Further, nearly one-third of respondents, 31.4%, indicated they would pay "1% to less than 3% more" (20.8%) or "3% to less than 5% more" (10.6%) for "a green tariff."

How much more per month would you be willing to pay for each of the following initiatives?

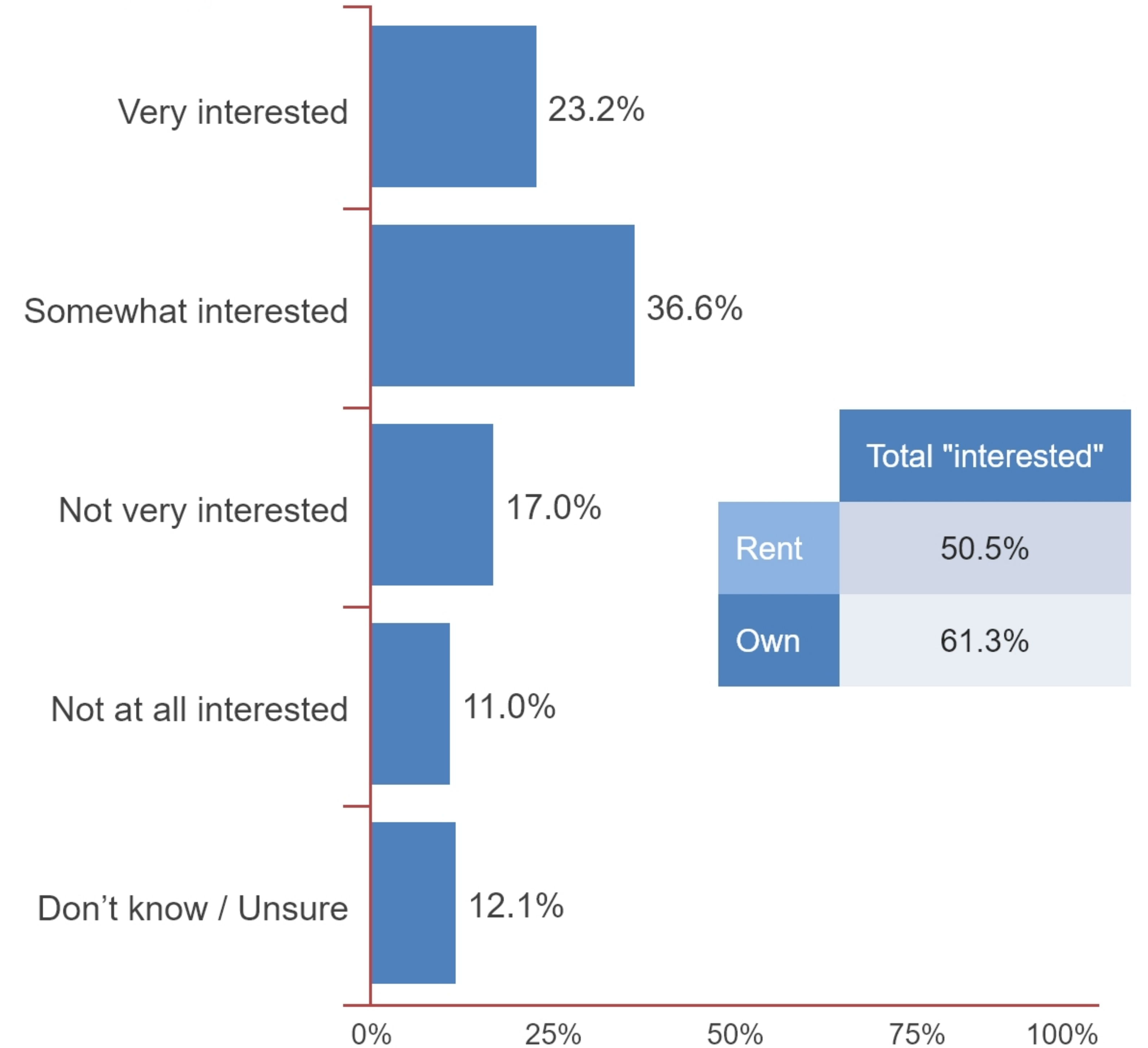
	No additional amount	1% to less than 3% more	3% to less than 5% more	5% to less than 10% more	10% or more	Dont know / Unsure
Renewable energy credits to offset your individual carbon consumption	39.7	19.4	10.8	5.3	1.7	23.1
A green tariff, which is an opt-out program that would include expanding local renewable energy investments and enhance rebate programs	39.1	20.8	10.6	5.2	1.7	22.7
Enhanced rebate programs and efficiency incentives	34.8	21.8	12.9	5.5	3.0	21.9

Many are Interested in Time of Use Program

Roughly one-quarter of respondents (26.9%) reported being "very aware" or "moderately aware" of Time of Use rate programs, while over one-half (53.3%) indicated they are "not at all aware." Of note, awareness of Time of Use rate programs was greater among respondents 18 to 44 years of age (31.3%) than among respondents 45 to 64 years of age (26.0%) or 65 or older (26.5%). Nearly three-fifths of respondents (59.8%) reported being interested in enrolling in a Time of Use program, with more home owners (61.3%) being interested than renters (50.5%).



How interested would you be in enrolling in a "Time of Use" program if HMLP offered one?



Anticipate Future Use of Rebates for Energy Efficiency and Energy Assessments

Q For each program or service please tell me if you have participated in the past, plan to in the future, or if you were unaware of this offer prior to this survey.

Nearly one-half of respondents reported previously participating in paperless billing(49.5%) and autopay (47.4%), and will continue to participate in the future.

Nearly one-quarter of respondents indicated they have not previously, but have plans to receive "rebates for energy efficiency" (23.0%) or the "no-cost energy assessment" (22.2%).

Of note, roughly three-out-of-ten respondents reported being unaware of HML"P's "rebates for weatherization / insulation" (31.5%), "rebates for energy efficiency appliances" (29.8%), and "rebates for heat pump systems" (29.5%).

	Yes, have in the past & will in future	Yes, have in the past but won't in future	Not previously, but plans for future	Not previously, and no plans for future	Wasn't aware of this Program	Dont know / Unsure
Paperless billing	49.5	2.5	8.8	29.0	5.5	4.6
Autopay	47.4	1.4	6.6	32.9	7.0	4.8
Rebates for energy efficiency appliances	22.7	2.2	23.0	14.8	29.8	7.5
Online start/stop service form	15.9	0.8	11.4	26.1	25.4	20.5
No-cost energy assessment	15.7	3.9	22.2	21.2	27.7	9.3
Rebates for weatherization / insulation	10.6	3.7	20.6	23.9	31.5	9.7
Rebates for heat pump systems	7.4	2.2	18.2	30.5	29.5	12.3
Rebates and on-bill credits for electric vehicle charging	4.8	0.5	16.9	38.3	28.3	11.2
Solar Rebates	4.1	1.5	13.9	45.7	23.6	11.1

Majority Unaware of Demand Response Program

Only 11.3% of respondents reported being "very aware" or "moderately aware" of demand response programs, and the majority of respondents reported being "not at all aware" (73.2%) of these programs. While one-in-ten customers were aware of demand response programs, that rate is nearly doubled among 18-44 year olds. However, nearly two-thirds of respondents (64.9%) reported being likely to enroll in a demand response program if HMLP offered one, with more customers 18 to 44 years of age and more home owners being likely to participate.

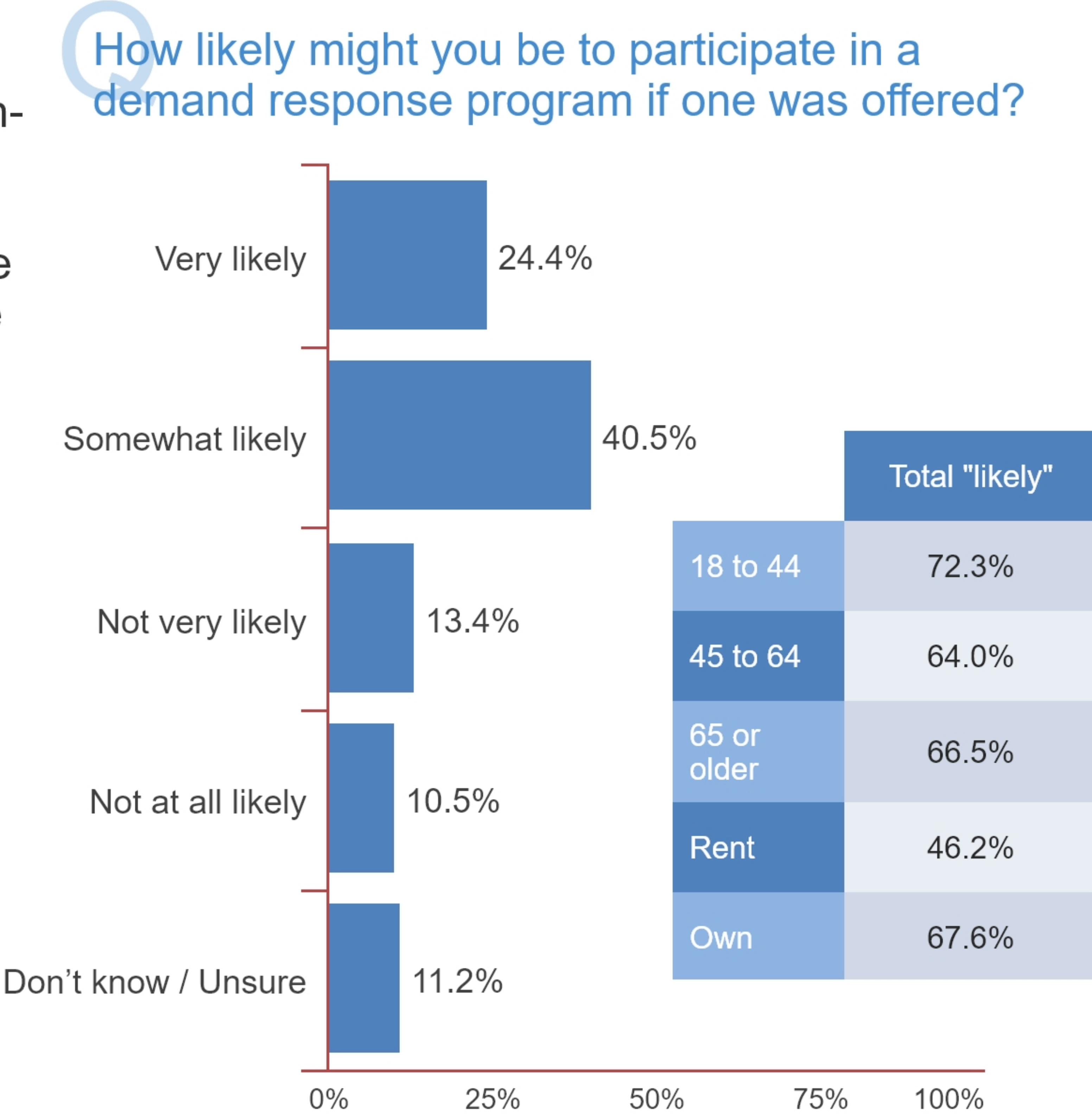
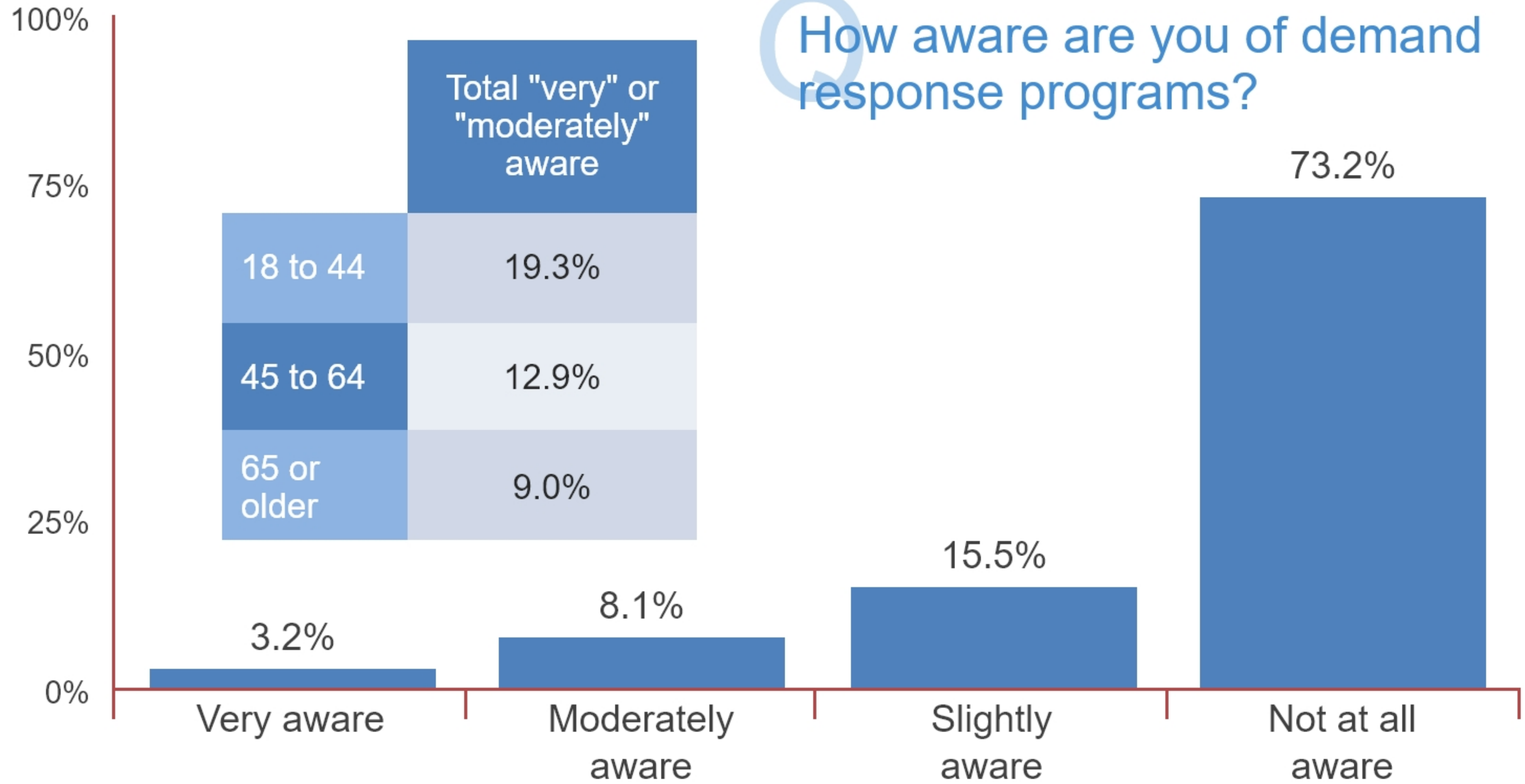


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Considerations

- **Boost awareness of rebates and program offerings for residents.** Roughly three-out-of-ten respondents reported being unaware of HMLP's rebates for weatherization / insulation, rebates for energy efficiency appliances and rebates for heat pump systems, and respondents provided lower ratings for HMLP "helping customers use energy more efficiently" compared with other organizational characteristics measured in the survey. Thus, it is recommended that HMLP increase its communication to customers about the various rebate programs and energy efficiency offerings available to them. This should also include details about how customers can qualify for each rebate program and the benefits of enrolling in each program; boosting awareness of and enrollment in these programs. Improved awareness of these programs may lead to an improved perception of HMLP "helping customers use energy efficiently."
- **Increase awareness of the Time of Use and demand response programs.** Most respondents were unaware of demand response programs, and of Time of Use programs. However, over one-half of respondents indicated they would be interested in participating. Along with the rebate messaging, HMLP should consider marketing their Time of Use and demand response programs—particularly to renters who have higher interest and more control over their use and demand.
- **Demonstrate value of the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project.** While only roughly one-fifth of respondents reported being "very" or "moderately aware" of the HEIRP Transmission and Substation project, after reading a description of the project, nearly three-fifths reported being likely to support the project. Given that more are likely to support than those currently aware, there is clear value to the initiative. Focusing the project on the day-to-day value to customers with consistent messaging should result in more public support.

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