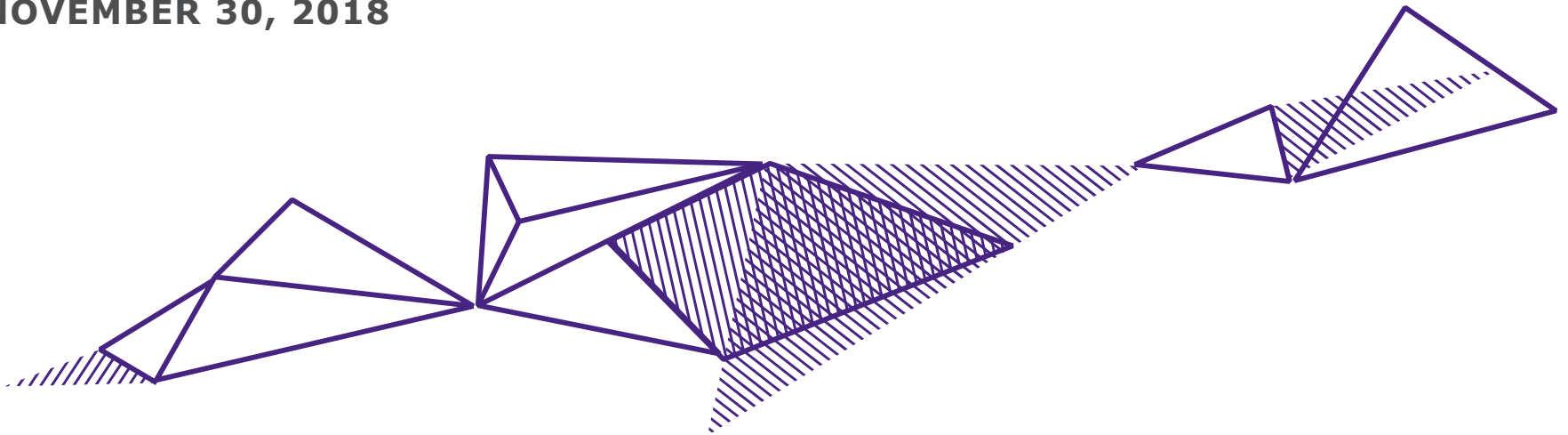


# City-Wide Climate Perceptions Study

**Prepared for: The City of Toronto**

**NOVEMBER 30, 2018**



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# OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

**Objective.** The City of Toronto commissioned Environics Research to conduct an online survey among a representative sample of Toronto residents to capture perceptions about climate change. The survey was also designed to gauge citizens’ willingness to take action in the community to help the City establish goals, priorities and metrics that will measure success in this area.

**Methodology.** A total of n=404 interviews were conducted online between October 11 to October 18, 2018 with adult residents (aged 18 years and over) living in the City of Toronto. The survey was 10 minutes in duration.

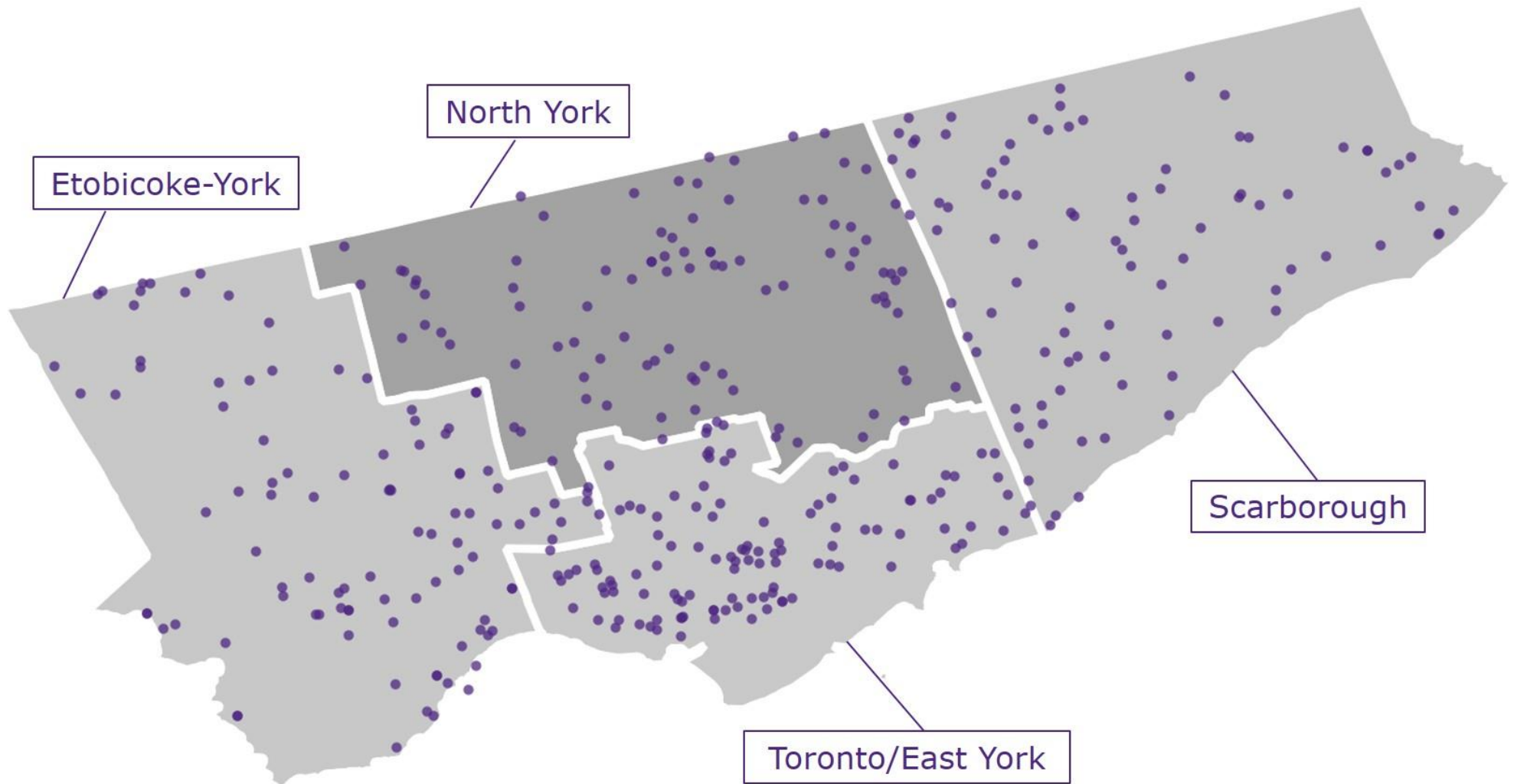
Because an online survey represents a sample of convenience, no margin of error can be ascribed to the results. However, a random sample of this size can be considered accurate to  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Quotas were set by region, age, and gender to be proportionately representative of Toronto's population (based on 2016 Census data), with minor weighting applied.

	Unweighted	Weighted
Etobicoke-York	99	95
North York	101	102
Scarborough	91	94
Toronto and East York	113	113
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>404</b>

In this report, results may not add to 100% due to rounding.

# RESPONDENT DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of respondents is according to the City of Toronto's geographic representation. In the map below, each dot represents the approximate location of each individual respondent, based on unweighted counts.





# **Executive summary**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The majority of Toronto residents express concern about climate change and are willing to take action to address it.**

**Concern.** A strong majority (78%) of Torontonians express concern about climate change affecting the City.

Three-quarters of Torontonians consider themselves to be extremely or very informed about what causes climate change, and four-in-five claim there is a link between extreme weather and climate change.

**Attitudes.** Almost all residents agree that climate change threatens personal health and well-being (92%), and requires collective action from all individuals and nations (both 91%). Those who are concerned about climate change in Toronto/the GTA are more likely to agree compared to those not concerned. While one-half of residents claim they don't know what they can do to help address climate change, one-quarter express outright helplessness.

When it comes to individuals' impact on climate change, over two-in-five residents agree the amount of waste they produce, how it is disposed, their transportation choices, and the things they buy have an impact. Meanwhile, a similar proportion of residents claim the amount of meat they consume has little to no impact on climate change. Unconcerned residents are less likely to feel their lifestyle choices will have an impact on climate change compared to concerned residents.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

**Behaviour.** Three-in-five residents claim to be already sorting waste into correct streams. Two-in-five claim to be walking or cycling when travelling short distances, or to be driving less and using transit more.

One-quarter say that they have reduced their meat consumption or purchase green products, while fewer than one-in-ten use electric or hybrid vehicles.

At least three-in-five residents indicate they are likely to take action in the form of purchasing green products and reducing their energy and water consumption.

The most common barriers preventing climate change action are convenience, expense, lack of interest.

Over four-in-five residents indicate they would be motivated to take action against climate change through incentives for home energy efficiency, infrastructure and sustainable transportation methods. Concerned residents are more likely to find all supports motivating, particularly education and community supports, compared to unconcerned residents.

**Government action.** While three-quarters of Toronto residents are aware of federal efforts to address climate change, only two-in-five are aware of municipal action on the issue.

Fewer than one-in-five are aware of the City's climate action strategy, TransformTO.

There is widespread appetite for the City to do more to address climate change (64% say that the city should be doing more to address climate change).



# Concern about climate change



# Concern about climate change

**Most residents of Toronto are concerned about climate change. Somewhat fewer, but still a strong majority, are concerned about how climate change affects Toronto compared to the rest of the world.**

■ Extremely concerned      ■ Very concerned  
■ Not very concerned      ■ Not at all concerned

**NET  
Concern**



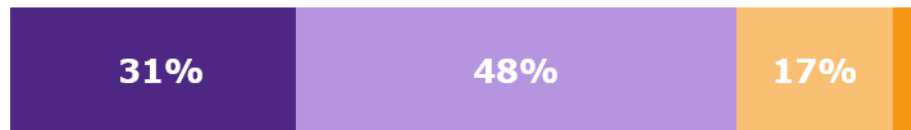
As it affects the rest of the world



**86%**



As it affects Toronto / the GTA



**78%**

Those most likely to report concern about climate change as it affects Toronto / the GTA include women (85%), residents of Etobicoke/York (90%), people with a graduate education (86%), and those who believe there is a link between extreme weather and climate change (86%).

Q1. For each of the following, how concerned are you about climate change?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Note: Responses of <4% not shown

# Profile of concerned and unconcerned residents

Concerned residents are most likely to be older women, residents of Etobicoke/York, have graduate education and higher levels of income.



## Concerned Residents

- Residents of Etobicoke/York (27%)
- Women aged 35-64 (30%)
- Graduate education (32%)
- Household income \$80K-\$100K



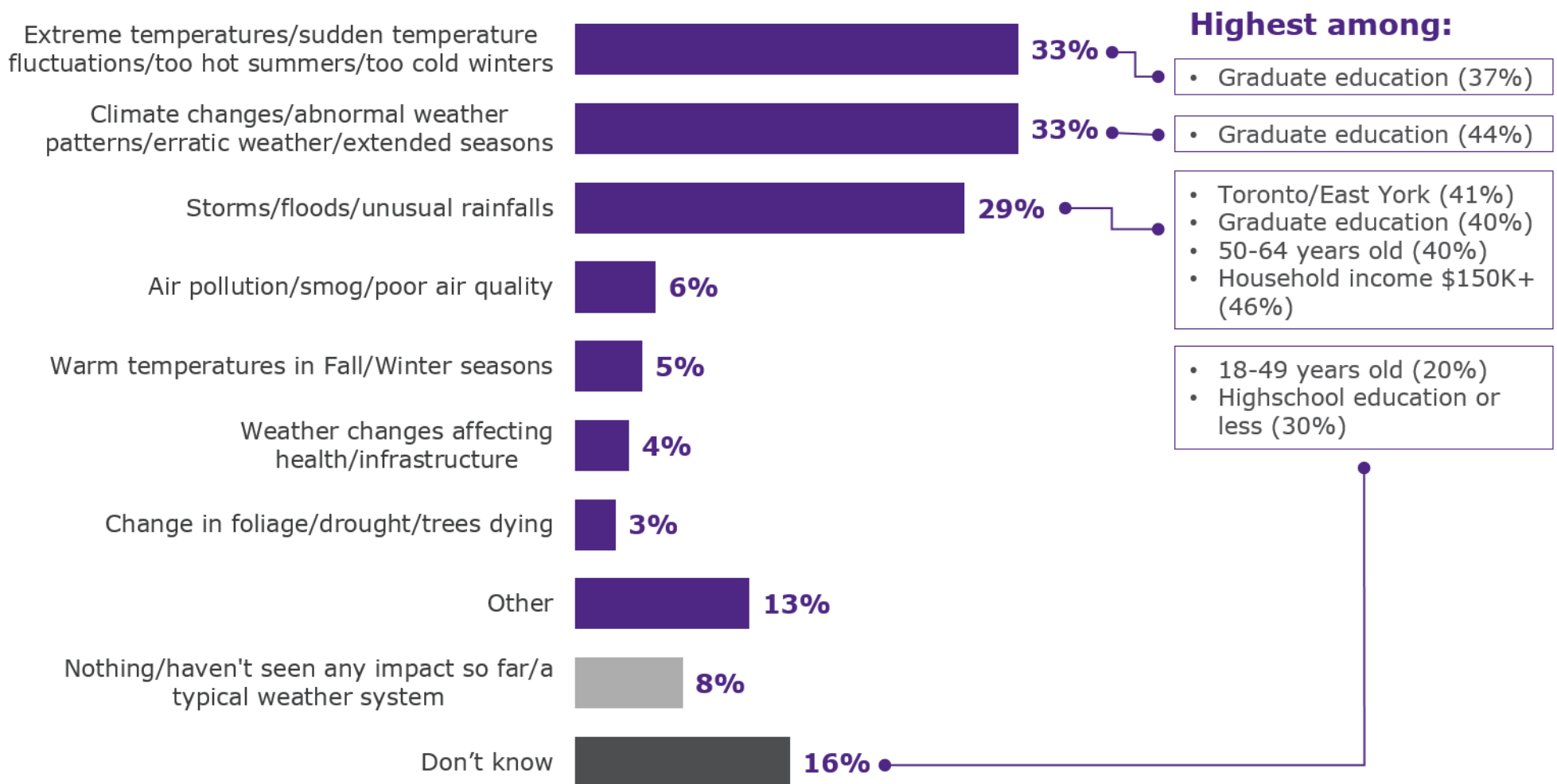
## Unconcerned Residents

- Residents of North York (35%)
- Men aged 50-64 (23%)

Q1. For each of the following, how concerned are you about climate change? - As it affects Toronto/the GTA  
Base: Total Sample (n=404)

# Observed impacts of climate change

Torontonians claim to have observed the impacts of climate in the form of extreme temperatures, abnormal weather patterns, and storms.



Q3. In what ways, if any, have you seen climate change impact the City of Toronto and/or your local community? Open end response

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

# Observed impacts of climate change

## Observations in the City of Toronto

*"Lake Ontario water rise. Toronto Island flooding. Drastic changes in temperature."*

*"Toronto is becoming an extreme climate zone due to high carbon emission which is destroying the ozone layer, and the inefficient waste disposal system affecting the water reserve."*

*"Record-breaking temperatures year after year."*

*"Flooding of streets in my neighborhood. Water does drain very well sometimes too much rain at one time more than in the past. Ice storms that I believe are due to change in weather patterns as I do not remember having such drastic weather when I was a child."*

## Implications of climate change

*"More flooding and severity causing damage to buildings and infrastructure. Higher energy demand for AC in the summer months. That crazy heat is also responsible for more deaths and sickness – a breeding ground for germs. More flip flop winter temperatures causing freeze-thaw cycle also not good for our buildings, roads..."*

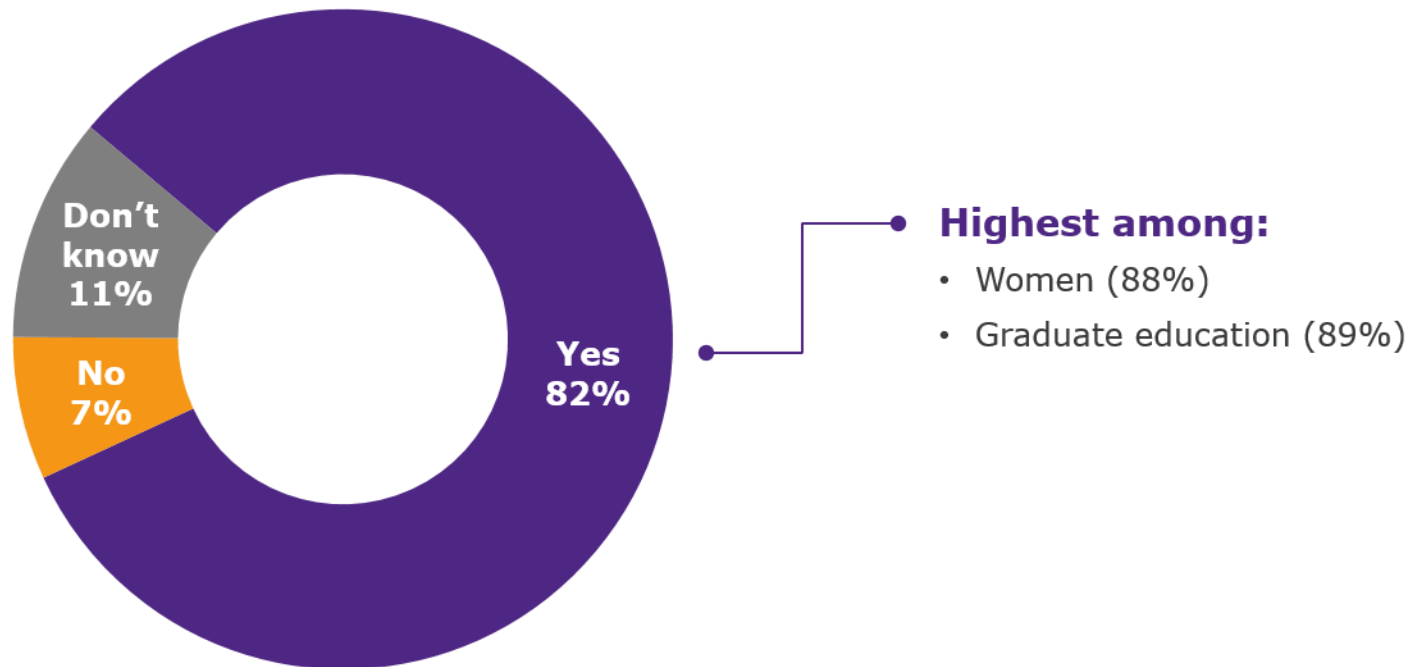
*"There was a significant drought this year that has affected crop production in Ontario and food prices in Toronto; tornado in Ottawa; fires all over Canada – which trigger weather all over the country, including Toronto; changes to the plant ecology..."*

*"Longer hot spells in summer. More frequent storms in spring summer, fall. Less snow in winter. Increased West Nile Virus. Increased Lyme disease. Increased flooding... Increased flooding particularly in the cities because they do not have storm drainage systems."*

Q3. In what ways, if any, have you seen climate change impact the City of Toronto and/or your local community?  
Base: Total Sample (n=404)

# Extreme weather and climate change

Four-in-five Toronto residents say that there is a link between extreme weather events in Toronto and climate change.

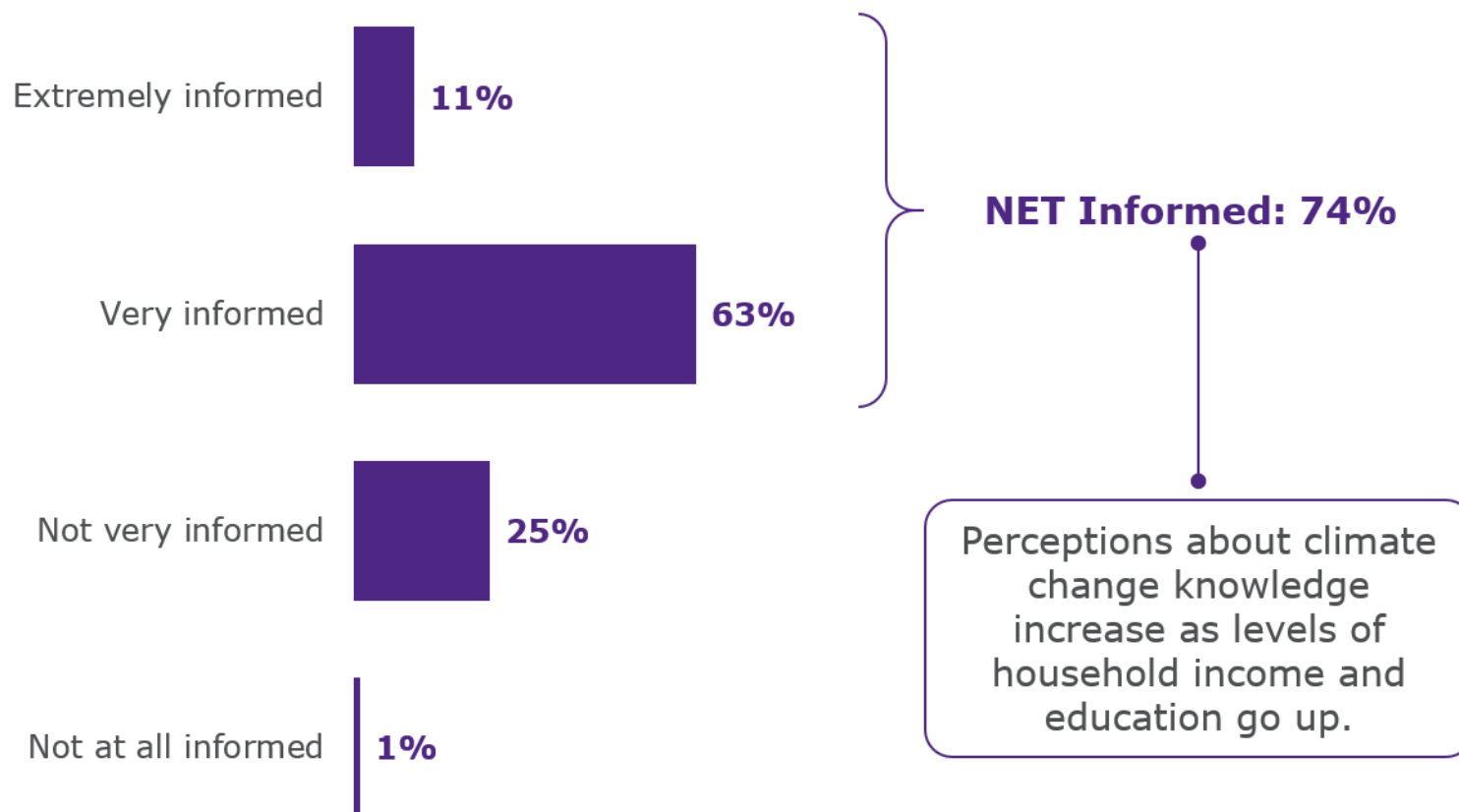


Q4. Do you think there is a link between extreme weather events (e.g. severe rain storms and flooding, extreme heat, heavy winds, etc.) in Toronto and climate change?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

# Claimed level of knowledge about climate change

Three-quarters of Toronto residents consider themselves informed about climate change, although only a small proportion describe themselves as “extremely informed”.



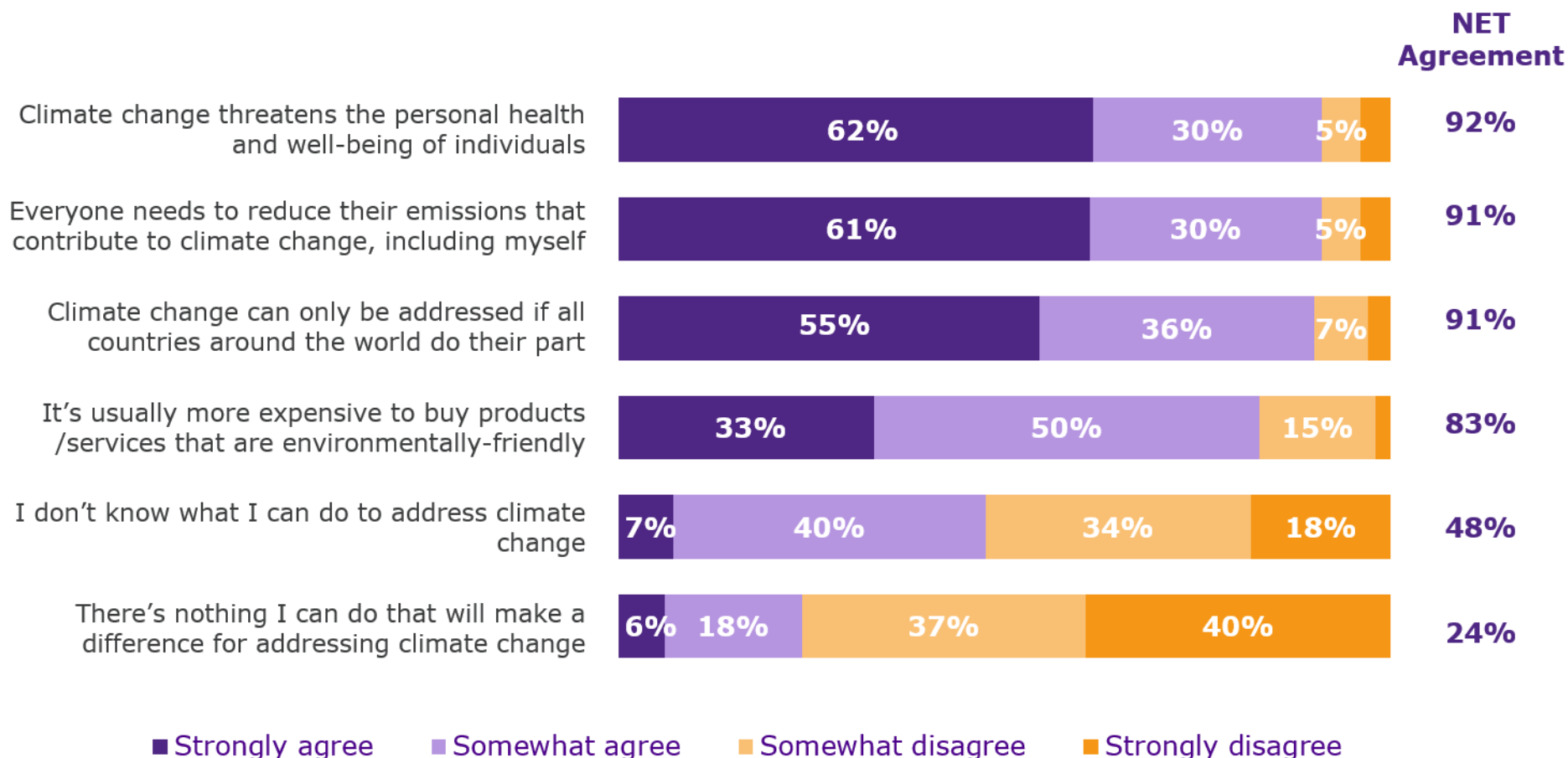
Q2. To what extent do you consider yourself to be informed about what causes climate change?  
Base: Total Sample (n=404)



# **Attitudes towards climate change**

# Attitudes towards climate change

**Most residents of Toronto agree that climate change threatens personal health and well-being. Meanwhile, a lack of knowledge about how to address climate change appears to be more of a barrier to action than a lack of empowerment.**



Q8. When it comes to climate change, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

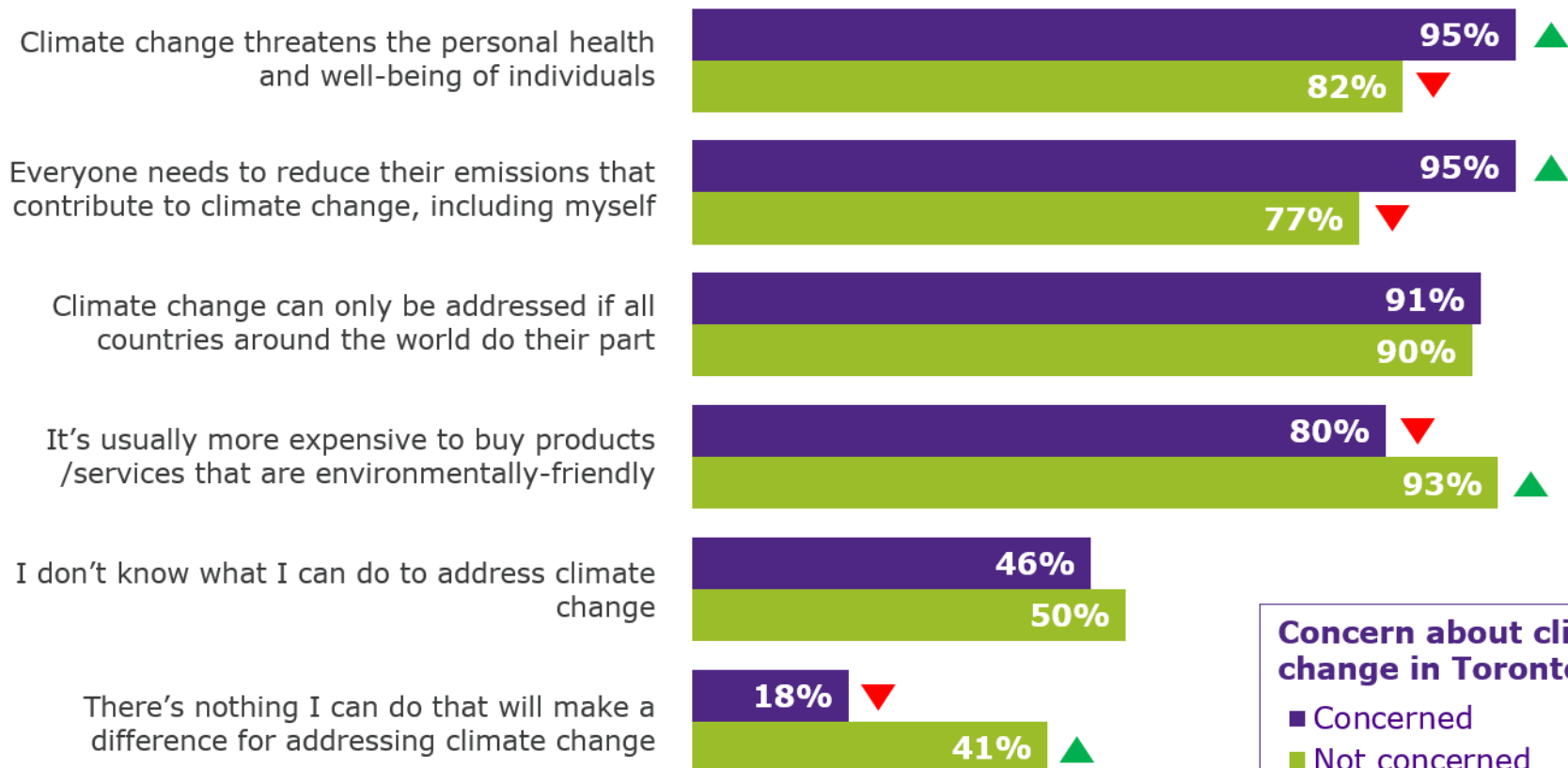
Note: Responses of <4% not shown



# Attitudes towards climate change

Those not concerned about climate change are more likely than those who are concerned to think green products are expensive and to harbour feelings of helplessness.

% Strongly/somewhat agree



## Concern about climate change in Toronto

■ Concerned  
■ Not concerned

Q8. When it comes to climate change, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

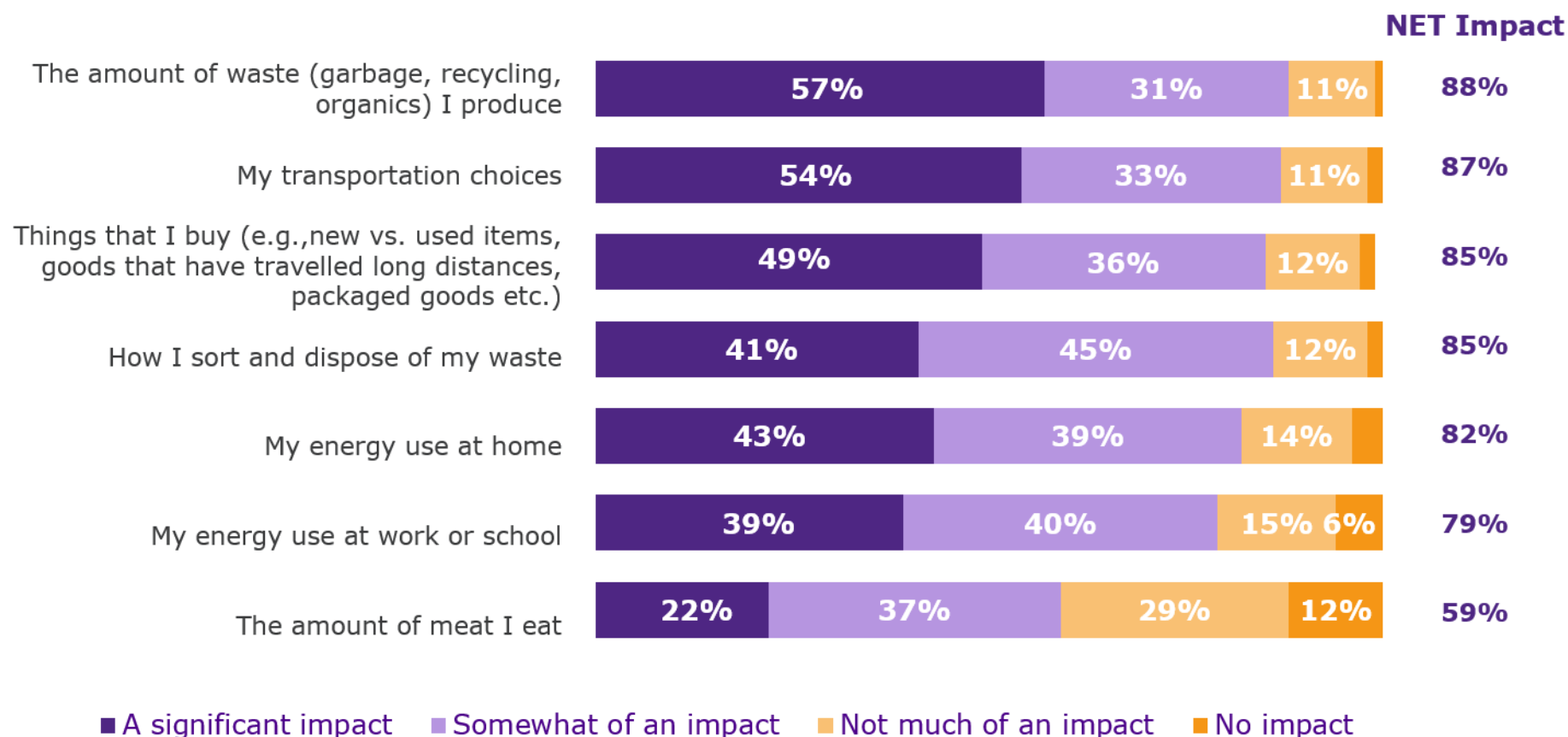
Base: Total Sample (n=404)

▲ Indicates score is significantly higher than one or more comparable subgroup

▼ Indicates score is significantly lower than all comparable subgroups

# Impacts of lifestyle on climate change

**While a majority of residents feel their waste and transportation choices have a significant impact on climate change, Torontonians are less clear on the impact of their meat consumption.**



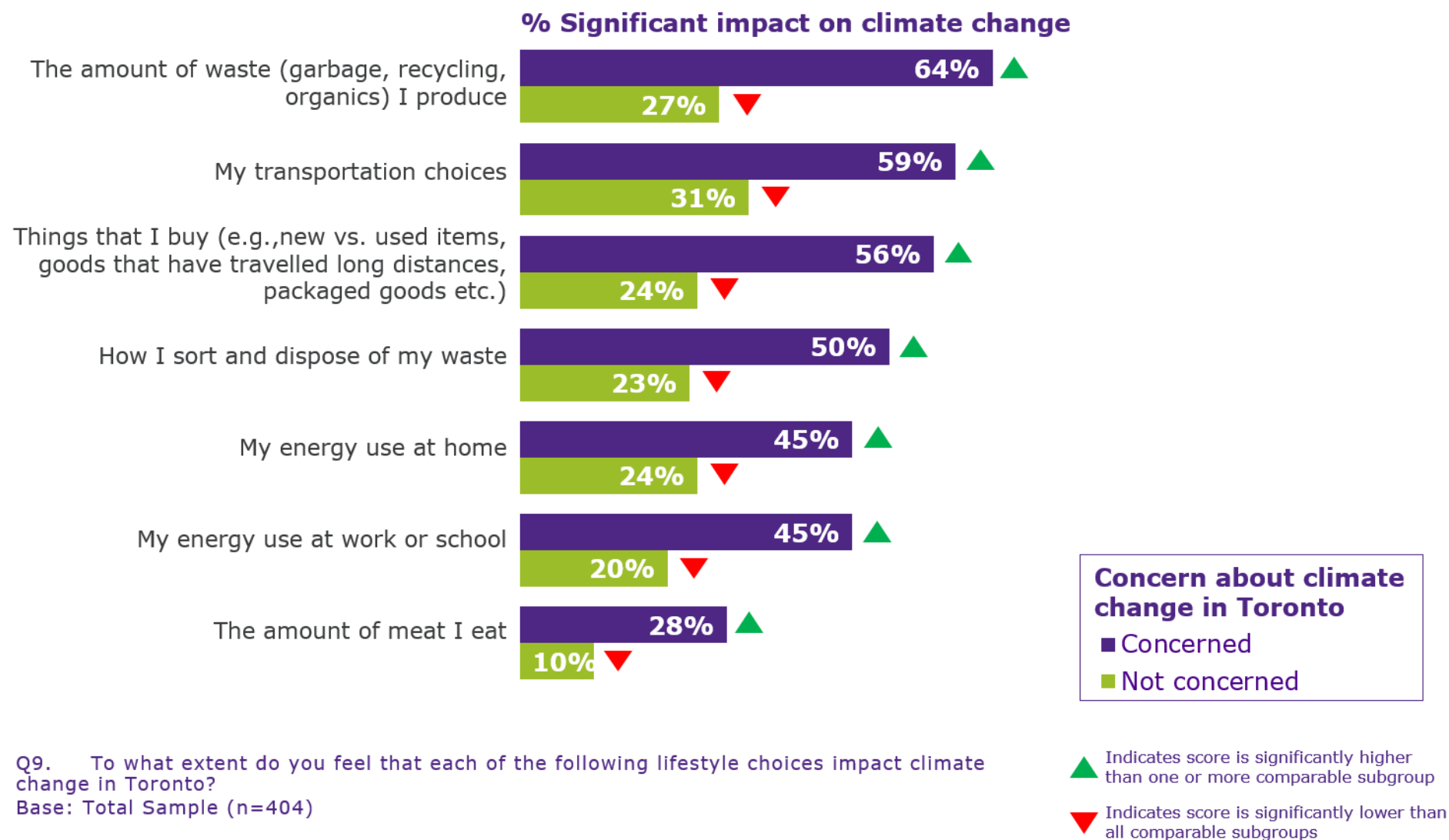
Q9. To what extent do you feel that each of the following lifestyle choices impact climate change in Toronto?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Note: Responses of <4% not shown

# Impacts of lifestyle on climate change

Toronto residents who are not concerned about climate change are less likely to feel their lifestyle choices will have an impact on climate change.

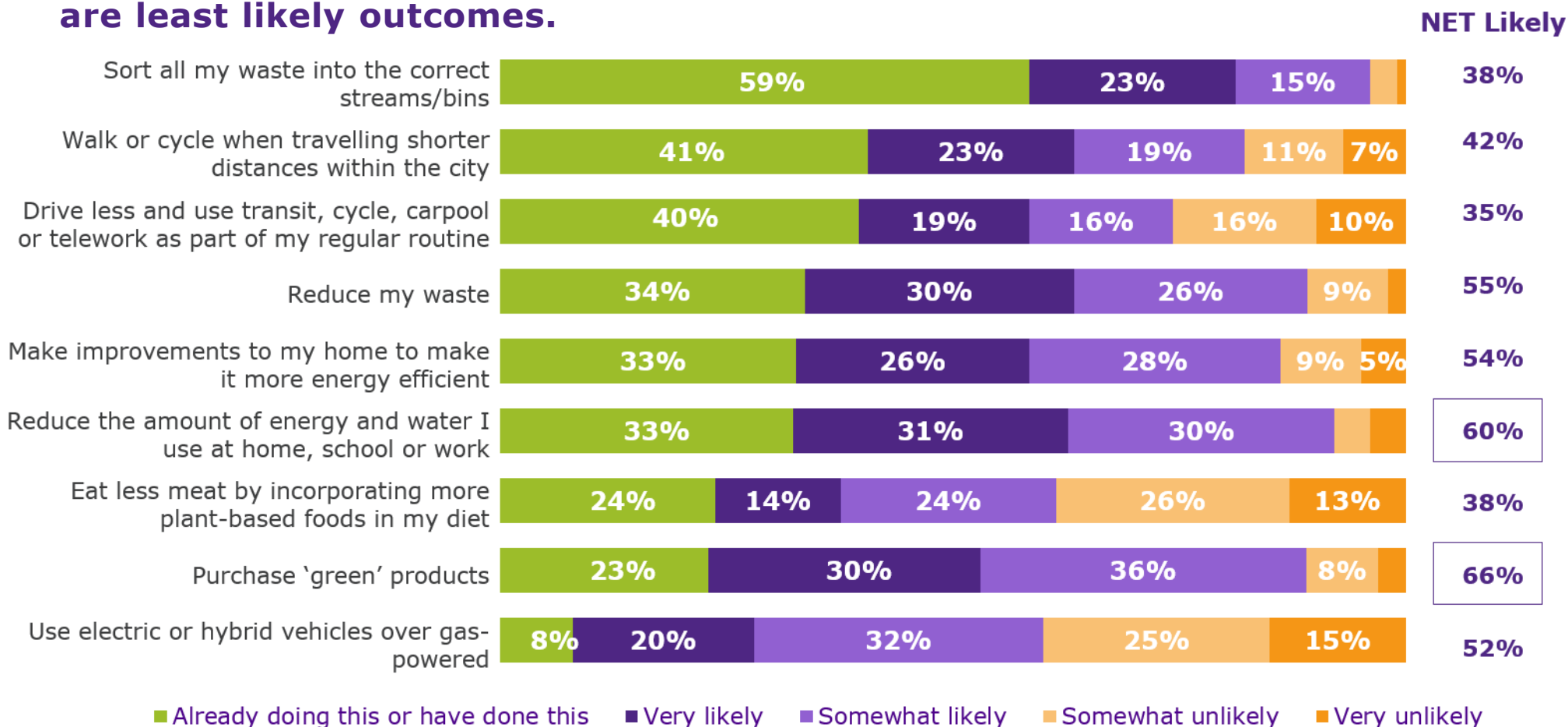




# **Behaviour towards climate action**

# Likelihood for climate action take-up

A majority of Toronto residents report that they sort their waste, however other actions to address climate change are less prevalent. Majorities report aspirational intentions when it comes to purchasing green products and reducing energy usage. Dietary changes and usage of EV technology are least likely outcomes.



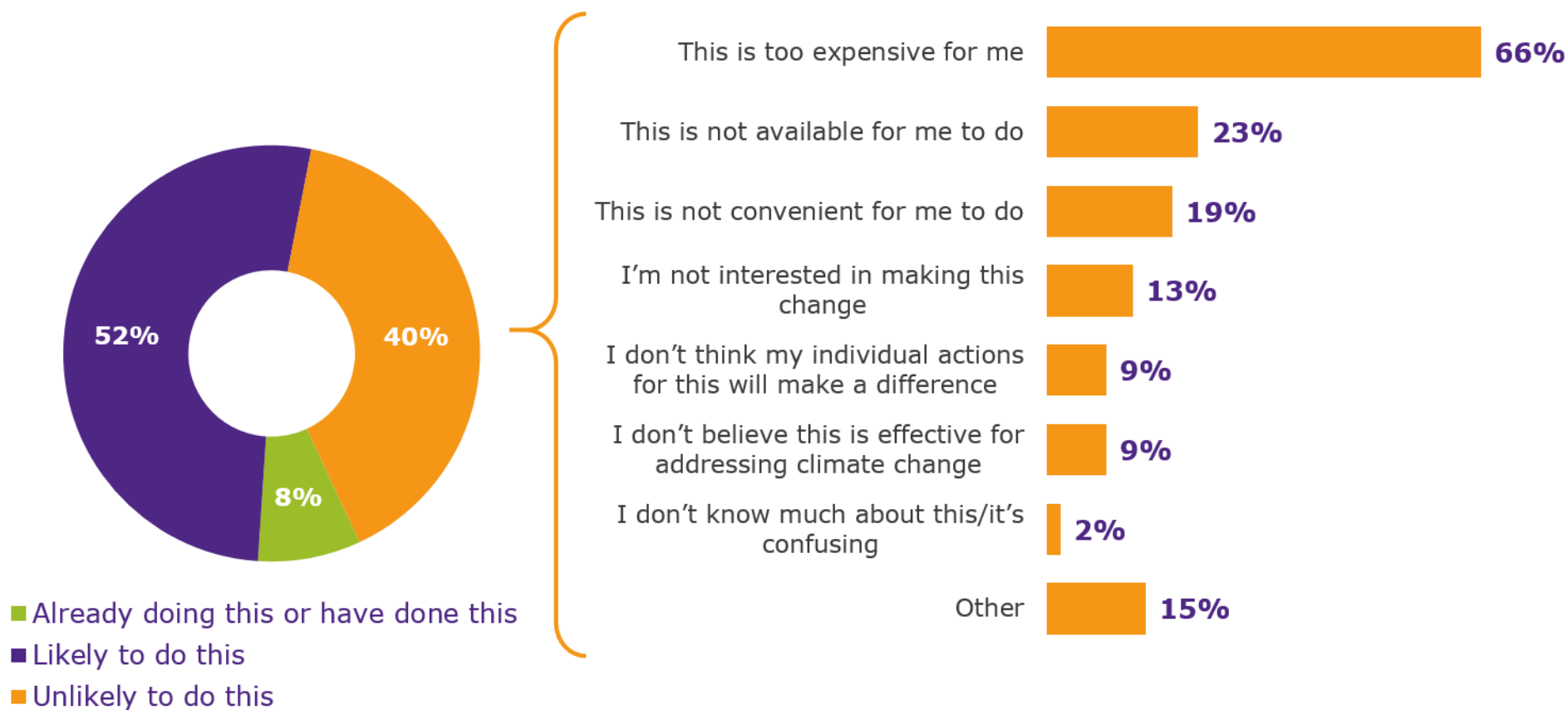
Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Note: Responses of <4% not shown

# Barriers to using hybrids/electric vehicles

Among those unlikely to use electric or hybrid vehicles, two-thirds believe that it is too expensive.

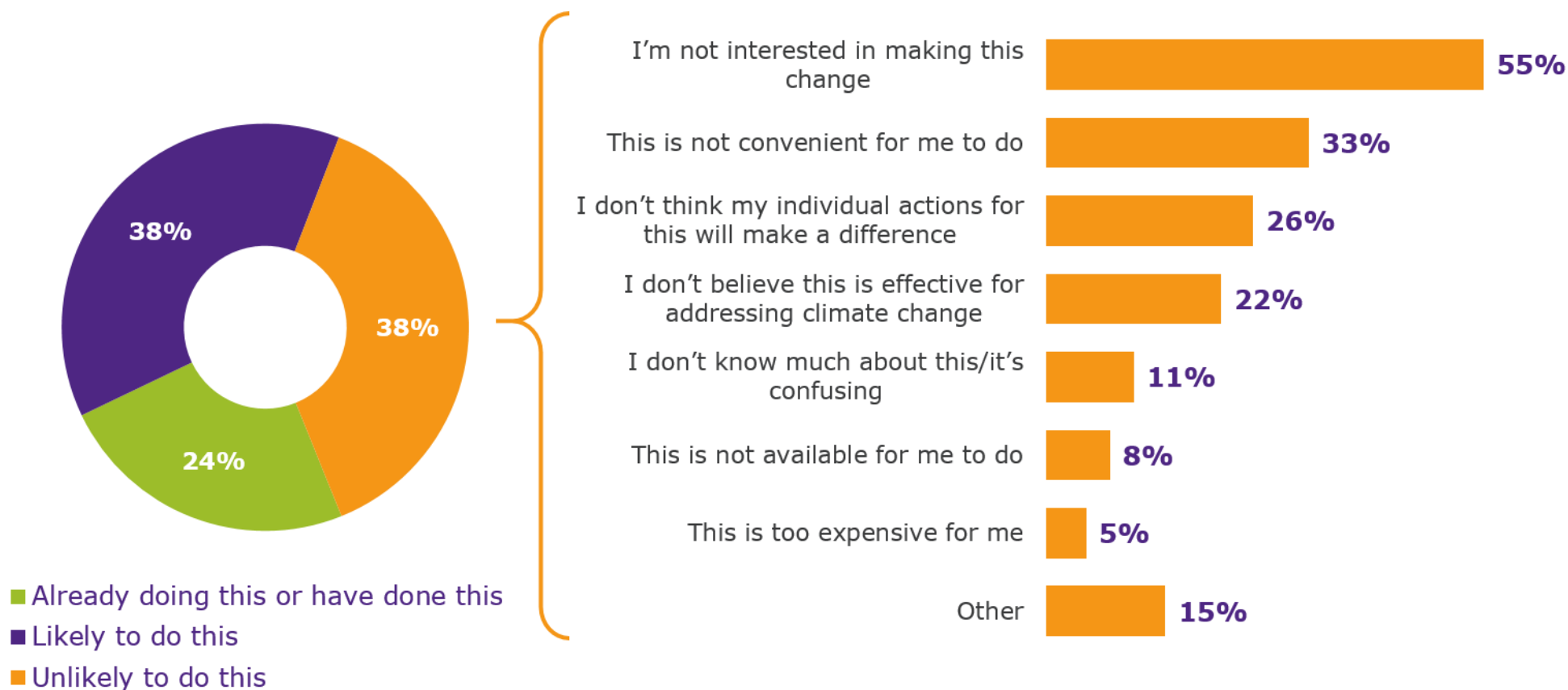


Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11D. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Use electric or hybrid vehicles over gas-powered. Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=163)

# Barriers to reducing meat consumption

Almost two-in-five residents have no plan to reduce their meat consumption, the majority of whom say it is because they are not interested in making this change.

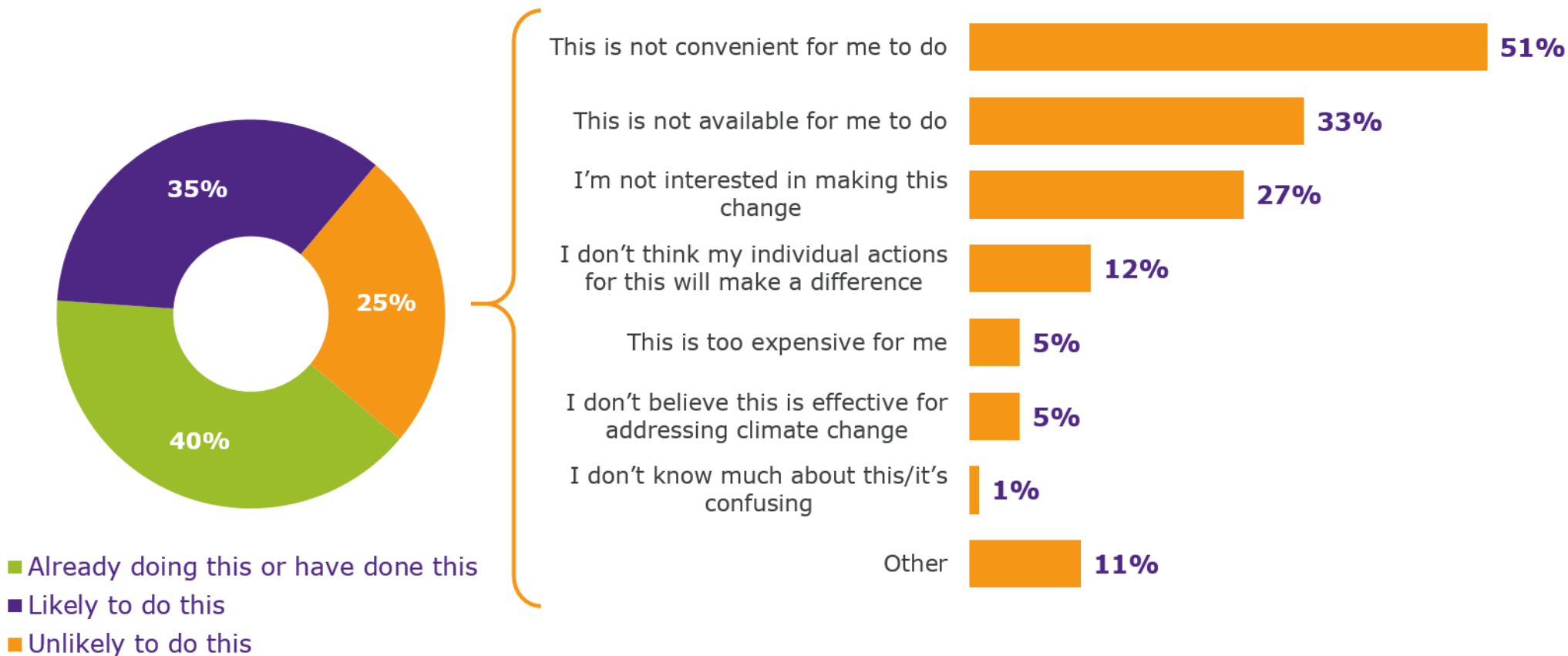


Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11E. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Eat less meat by incorporating more plant-based foods in my diet. Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=141)

# Barriers to driving less

Among those unlikely to drive less, one-half claim it is inconvenient while around three-in-ten indicate it is either unavailable to them, or have no interest in making this change.



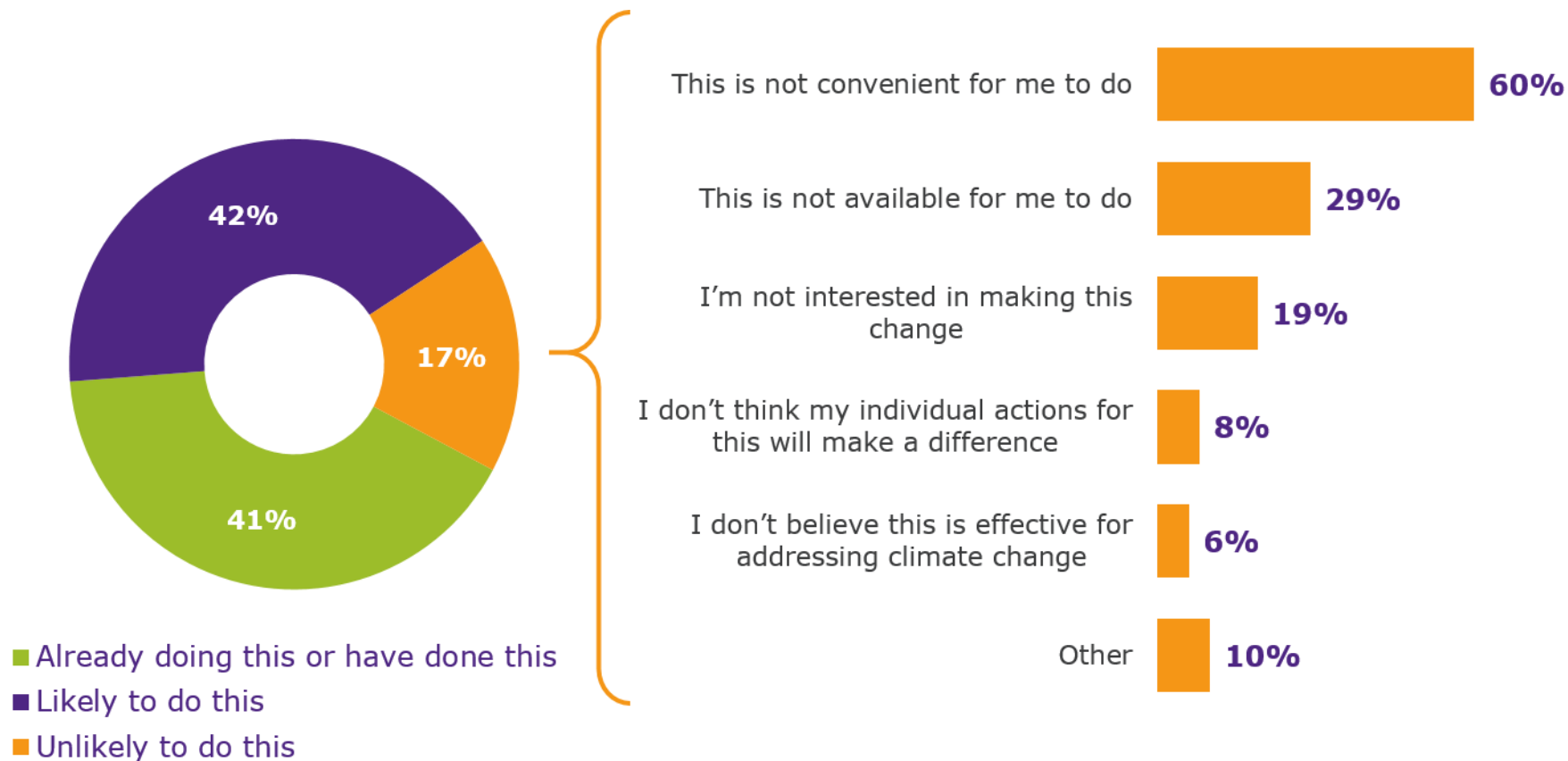
Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11C. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Drive less and use transit, cycle, carpool or telework as part of my regular routine. Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=104)



# Barriers to walking or cycling more

Among those unlikely to walk or cycle short distances, three-in-five claim it is inconvenient.

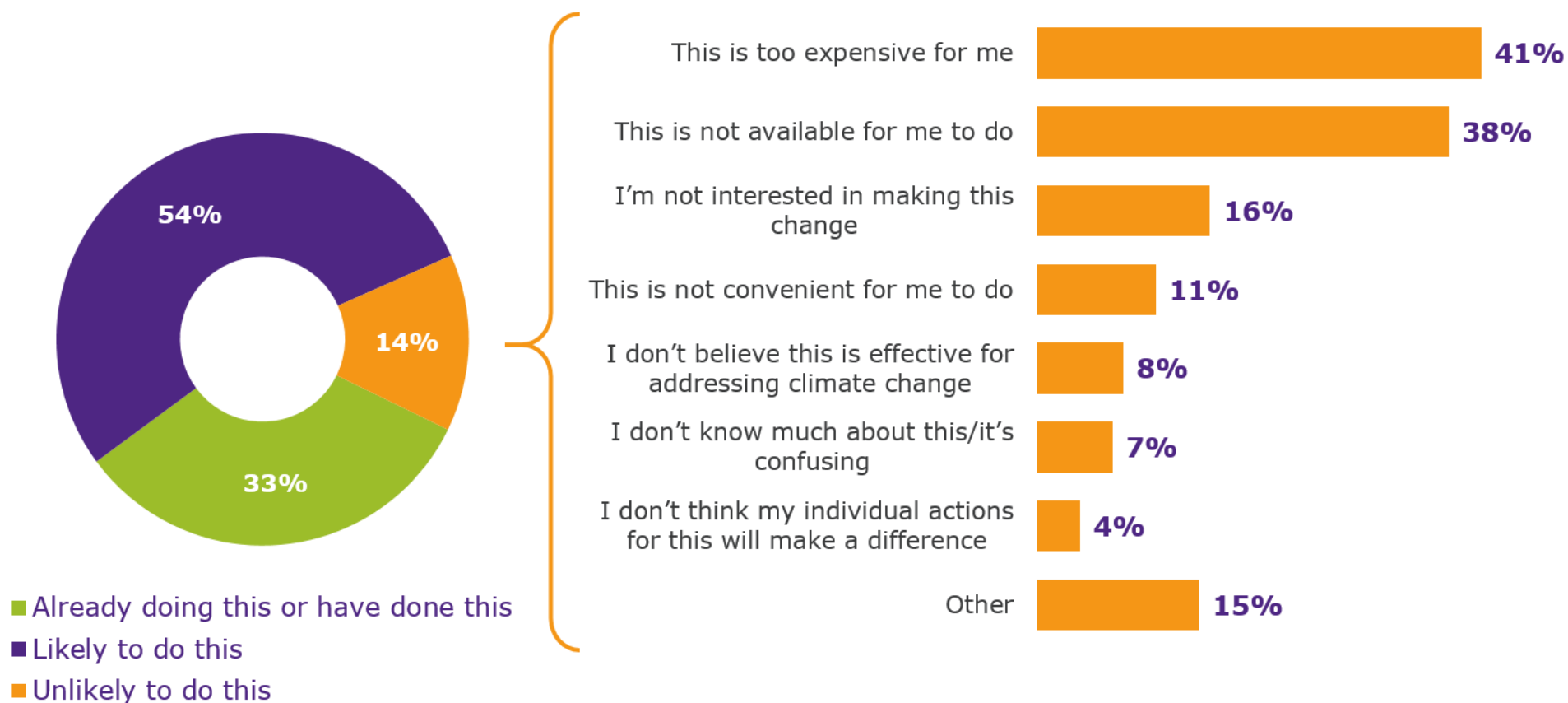


Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11H. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Walk or cycle when travelling shorter distances within the city. Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=68)

# Barriers to home energy efficiency improvements

Among those unlikely to make energy efficiency improvements to their home, about two-in-five claim it is too expensive or unavailable to them.



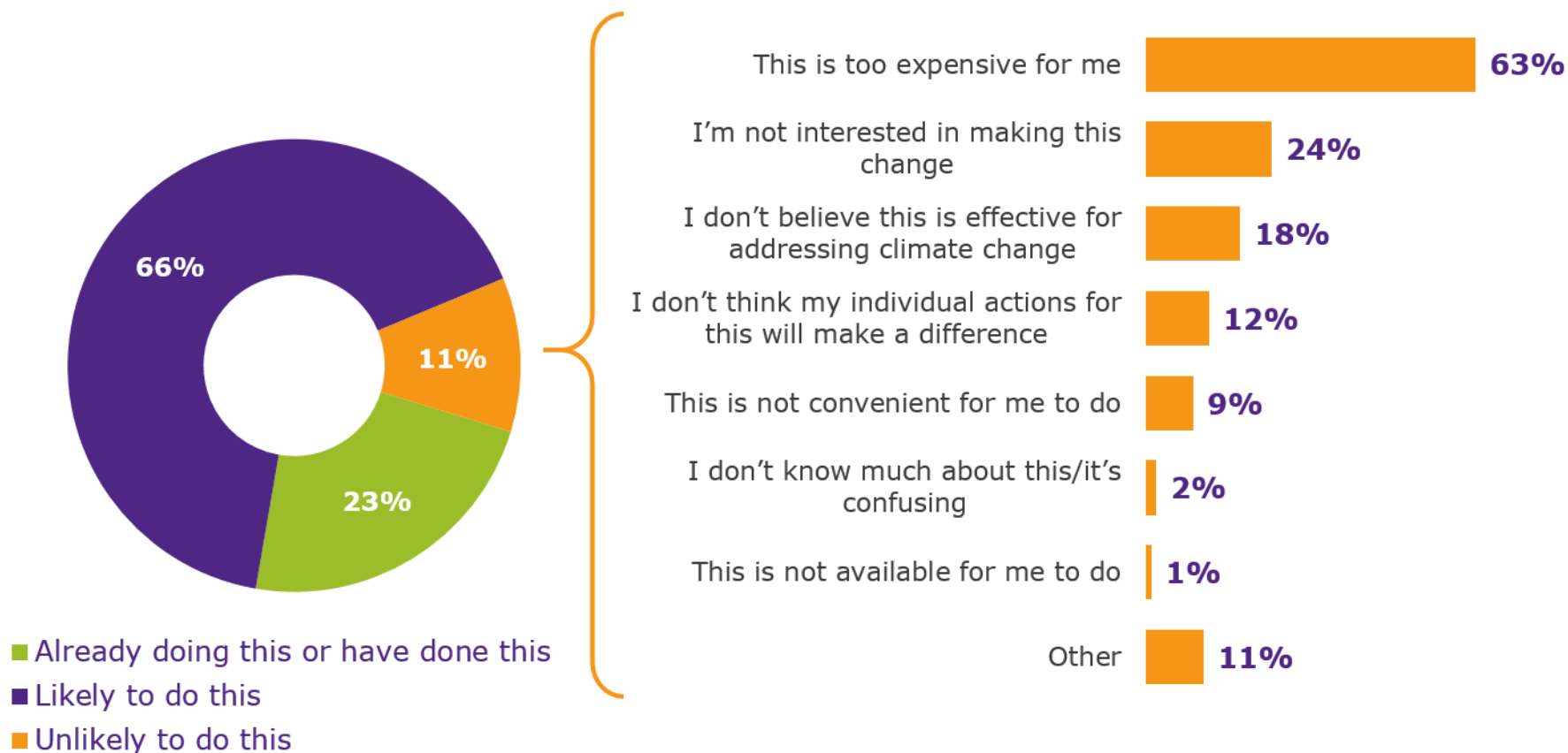
Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11A. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Make improvements to my home to make it more energy efficient. Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=49)\*

\*Small base size, interpret with caution

# Barriers to purchasing green products

Among those unlikely to purchase green products, about three-in-five believe that it would be too expensive.



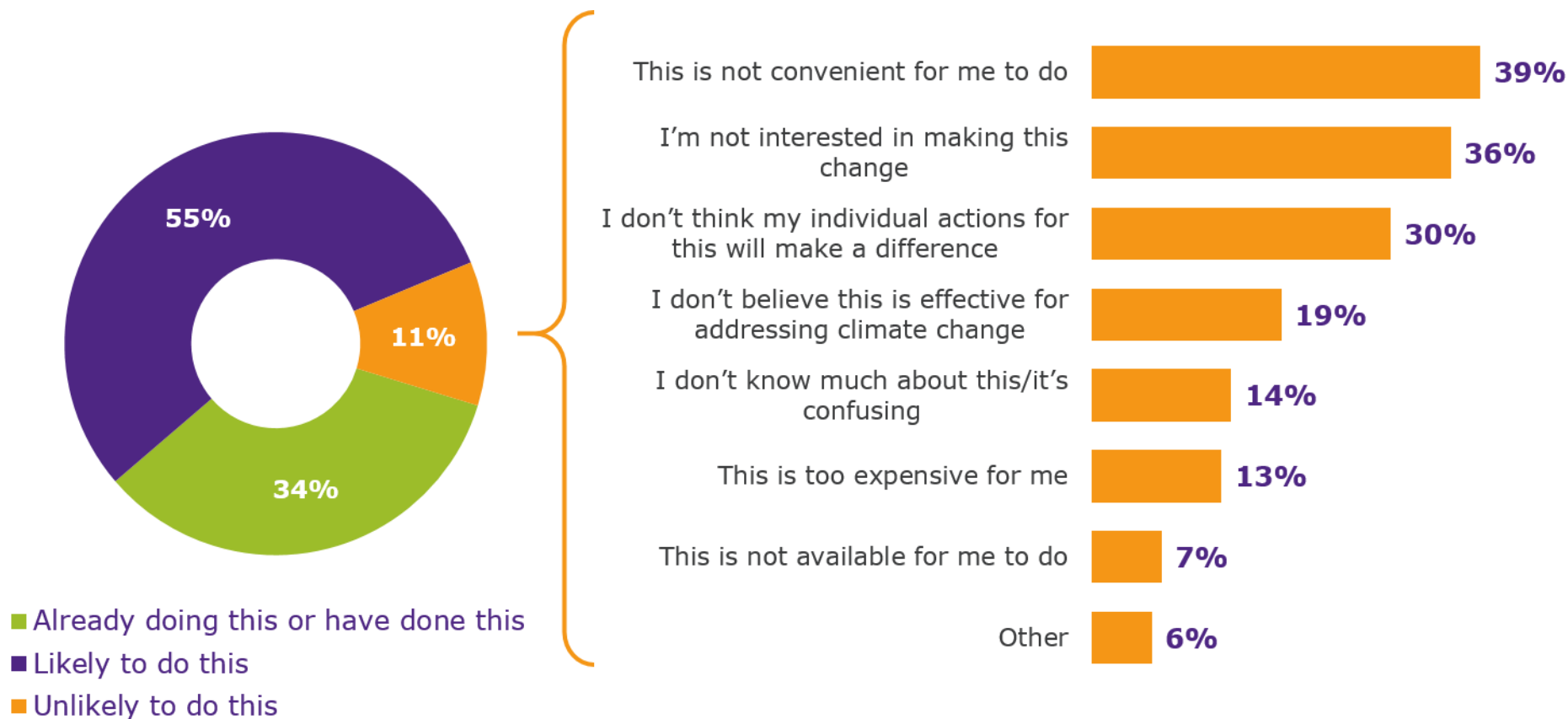
Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11G. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Purchase 'green' products (e.g., minimal packaging, eco-friendly, reusable, local, organic). Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=48)\*

\*Small base size, interpret with caution

# Barriers to reducing waste

Among those unlikely to reduce their waste, at least three-in-ten claim it is either inconvenient, have no interest in making this change, or that individual actions would have no impact.



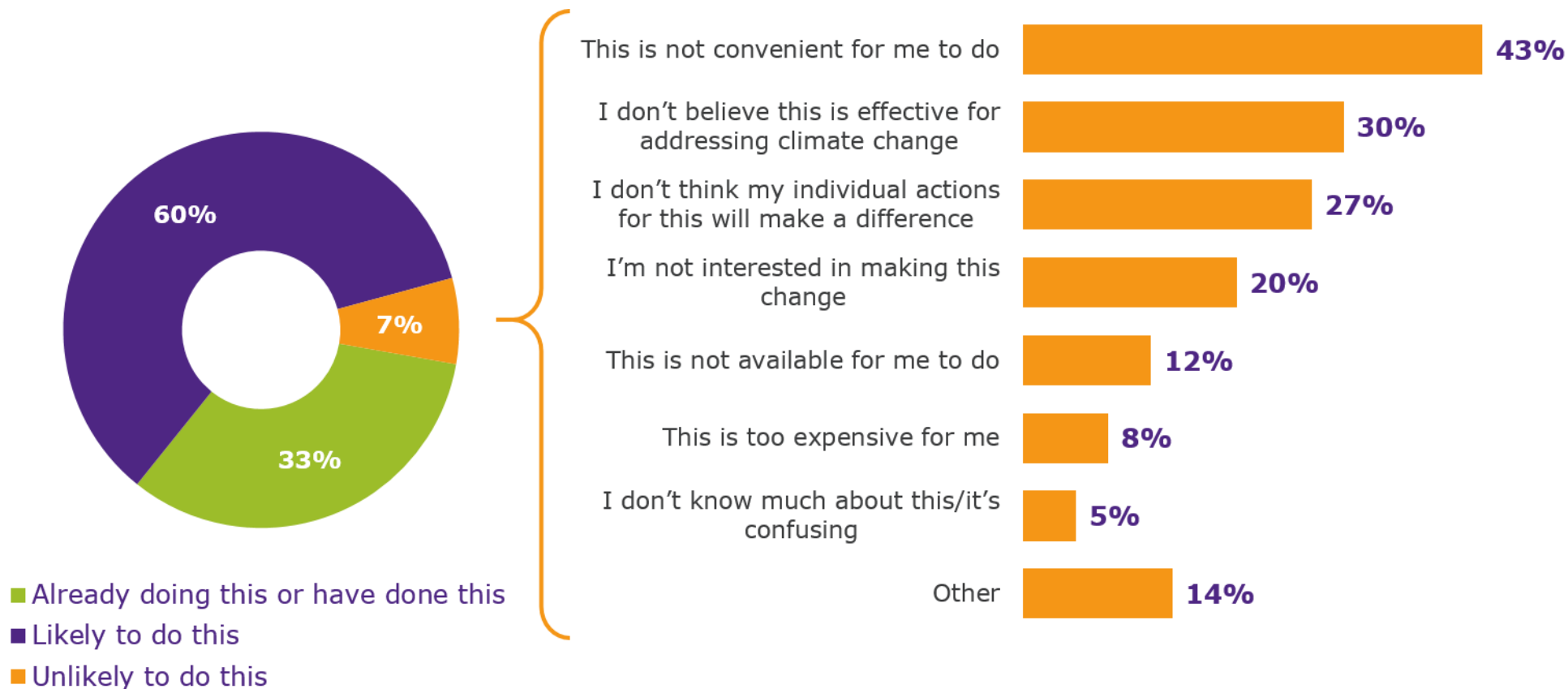
Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11F. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Reduce my waste (e.g., purchase/repair/swap/donate used products) Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=41)\*

\*Small base size, interpret with caution

# Barriers to water/energy reductions

Among those unlikely to reduce energy and water consumption, over two-in-five claim it is inconvenient or ineffective.



Q10. How likely are you to take the following actions to address climate change? Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Q11B. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action. Reduce the amount of energy and water I use at home, school or work. Why is that? Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (n=33)\*

\*Small base size, interpret with caution

# Summary of barriers towards climate action

The most common barriers preventing climate change action are convenience, expense, and lack of interest.

	Expensive	Not available	Inconvenient	Not interested	Not effective	Won't make a difference	Confusing
Using hybrids/ electric vehicles	<b>66%</b>	23%	19%	13%	9%	9%	2%
Reducing meat consumption	5%	8%	33%	<b>55%</b>	22%	26%	11%
Driving less	5%	33%	<b>51%</b>	27%	5%	12%	1%
Walk/cycle more	-	29%	<b>60%</b>	19%	6%	8%	-
Home energy efficiency improvements*	<b>41%</b>	38%	11%	16%	8%	4%	7%
Purchase green products*	<b>63%</b>	1%	9%	24%	18%	12%	2%
Reduce waste*	13%	7%	<b>39%</b>	36%	19%	30%	14%
Water/energy reduction*	8%	12%	<b>43%</b>	20%	30%	27%	5%

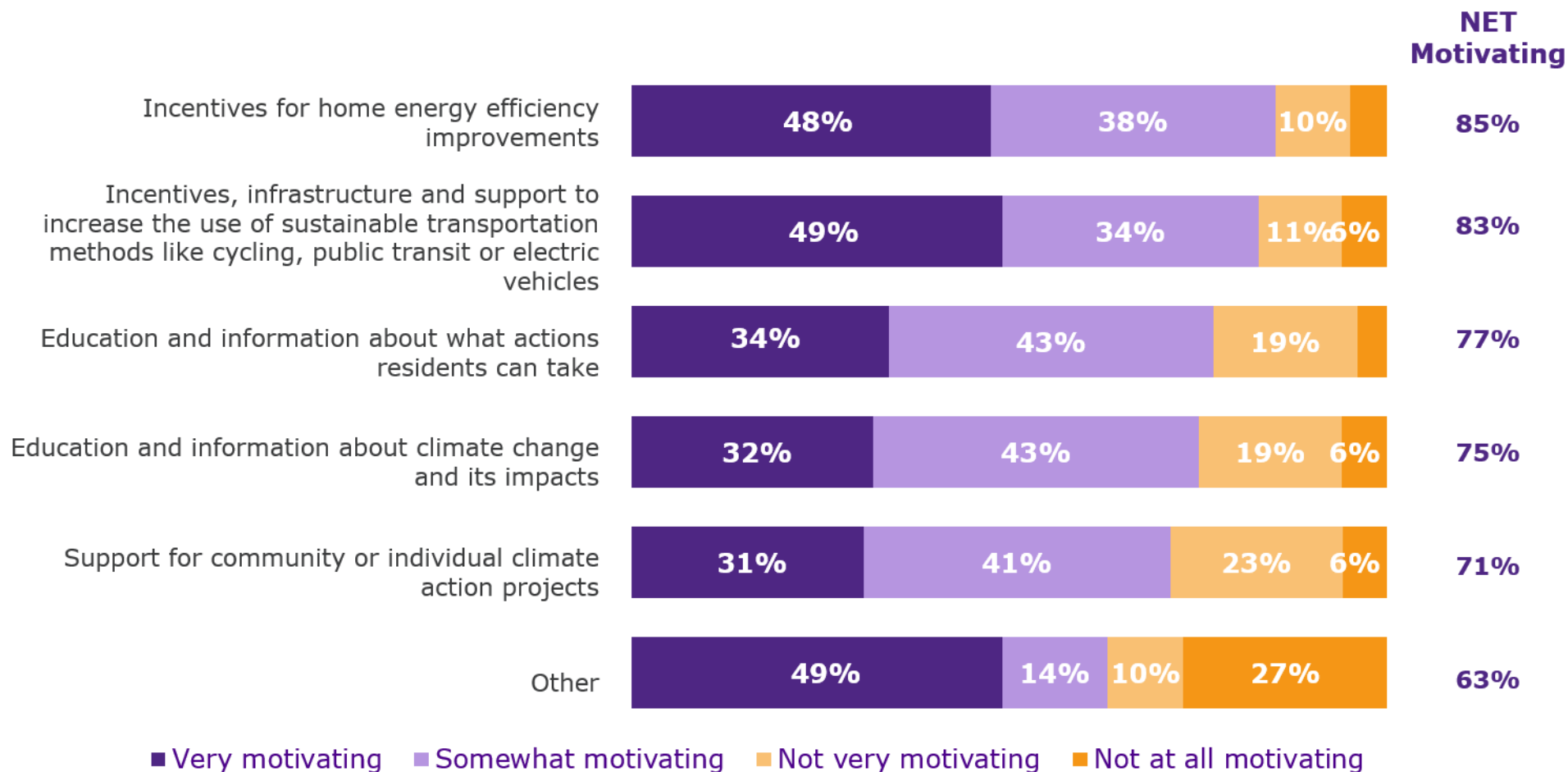
Q11. You mentioned that you are unlikely to take the following action... Why is that?

Base: Unlikely to take action at Q10 (varies from n=33-163)

\*Small base size (n<50), interpret with caution

# Motivators for climate action

**While Toronto residents are motivated by all supports, incentives top the list with one-half indicating them to be 'very motivating'.**



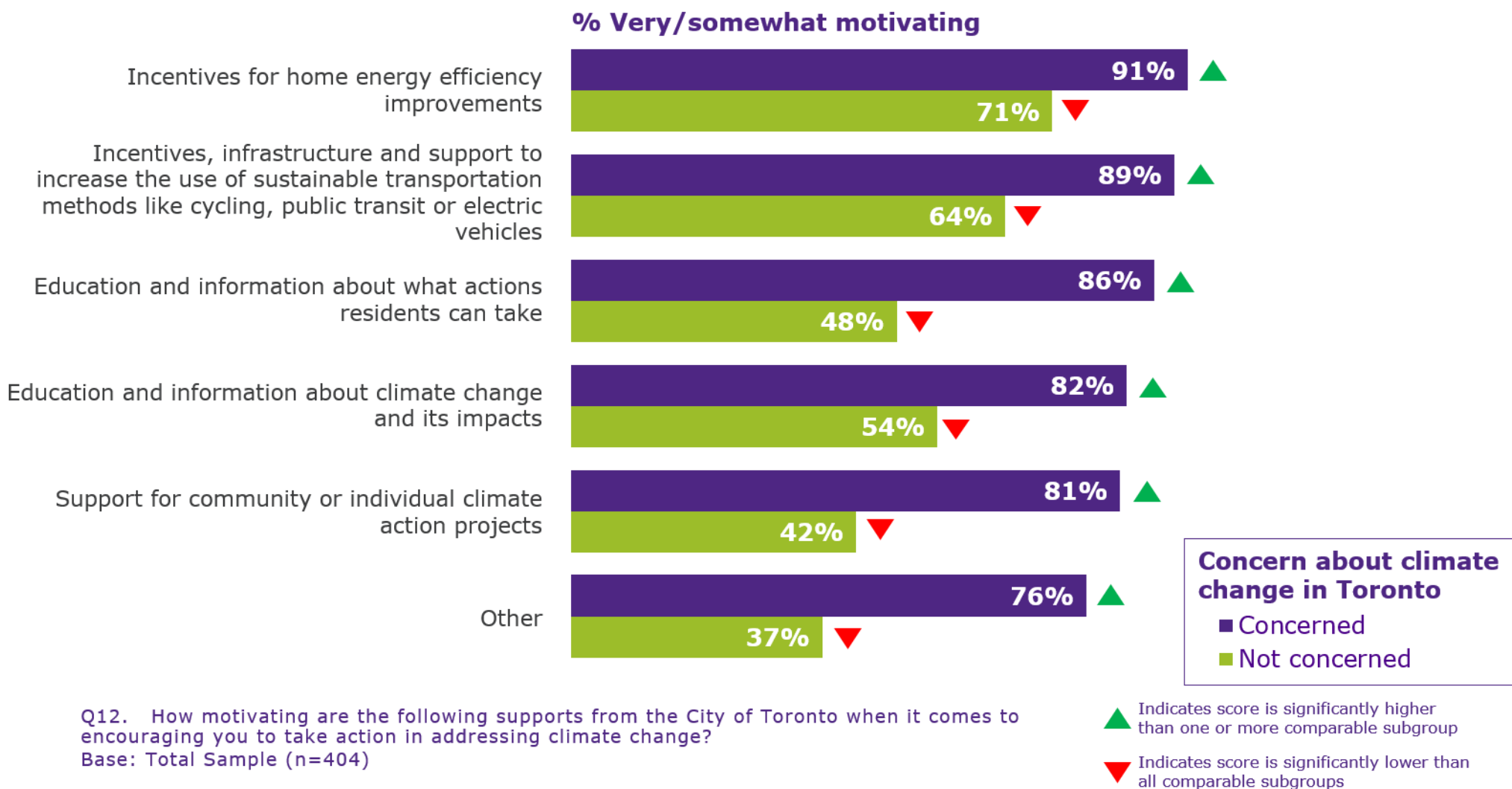
Q12. How motivating are the following supports from the City of Toronto when it comes to encouraging you to take action in addressing climate change?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

Note: Responses of <4% not shown

# Motivators for climate action

**Residents who are concerned about climate change are more likely to find all supports motivating compared to those who are not concerned, particularly education/information and community supports.**





# Other motivators for climate action

Among those who indicated 'other' supports as motivational, one-in-five suggest incentives/supports, and better recycling/composting options. One half do not specify further.



Q12F. How motivating are the following supports from the City of Toronto when it comes to encouraging you to take action in addressing climate change? - 'Other'

Base: Other motivators selected at Q12 (n=77)

\*Other

# Other motivators for climate action

## Other motivating supports

Increased bike lanes allowing safer commutes

Strong leadership by example from city officials on the matter

Initiatives to reduce plastic usage, particularly supermarkets

Actual climate change data education

## Other mentions

It is difficult when living in a condo when there is not a green bin program and not as much as stuff is recycled as it is in a house.

Malls and restaurants do not recycle. They pretend to do so but because customers put stuff in any bin they want, it all goes in the garbage. This makes me crazy. The city should take stronger action on this.

Q12F. How motivating are the following supports from the City of Toronto when it comes to encouraging you to take action in addressing climate change? - 'Other'

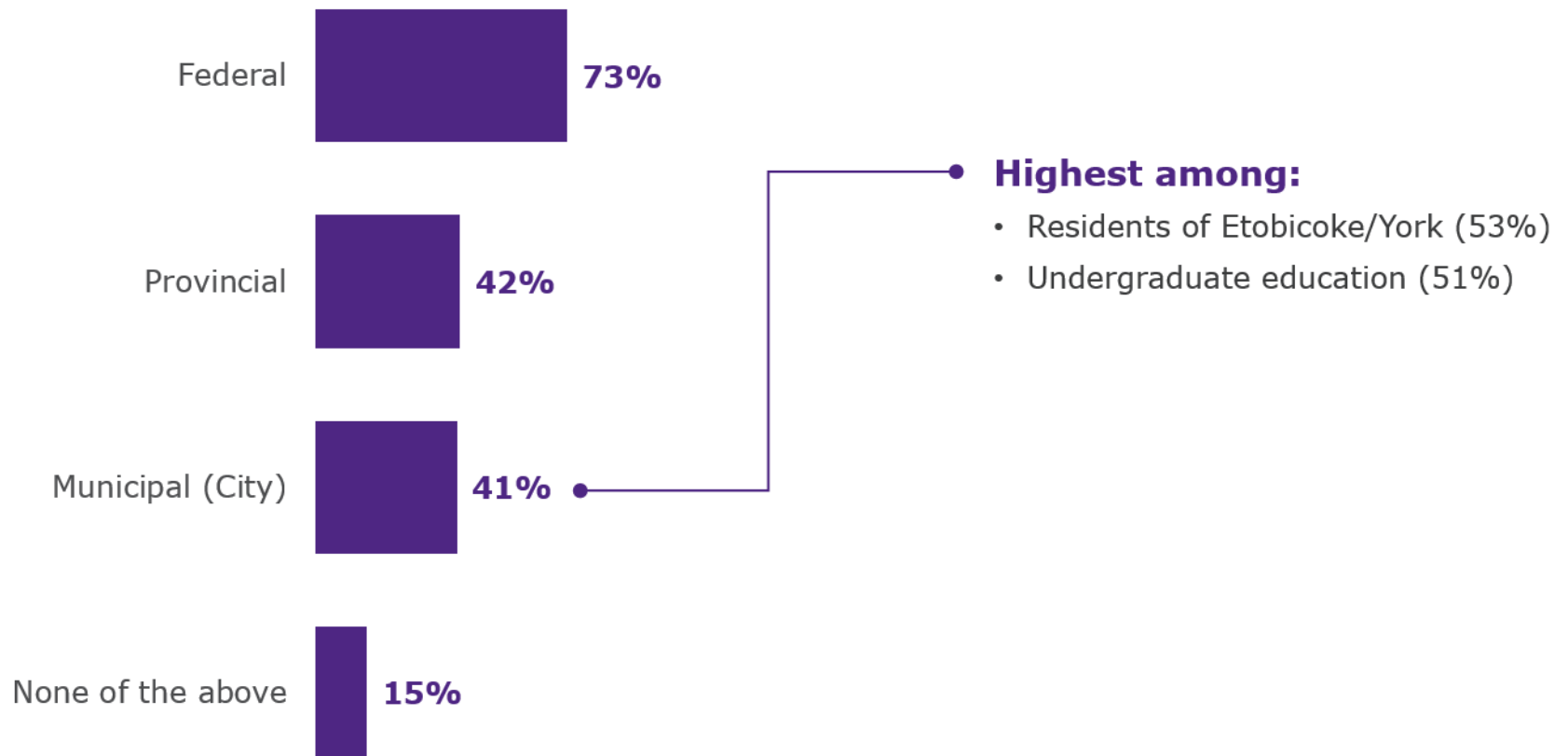
Base: Other motivators selected at Q12 (n=77)



# **Government action towards climate change**

# Perceptions of government action

About three-quarters of Torontonians are aware that the federal government is taking action to address climate change, while four-in-ten are aware of municipal efforts.

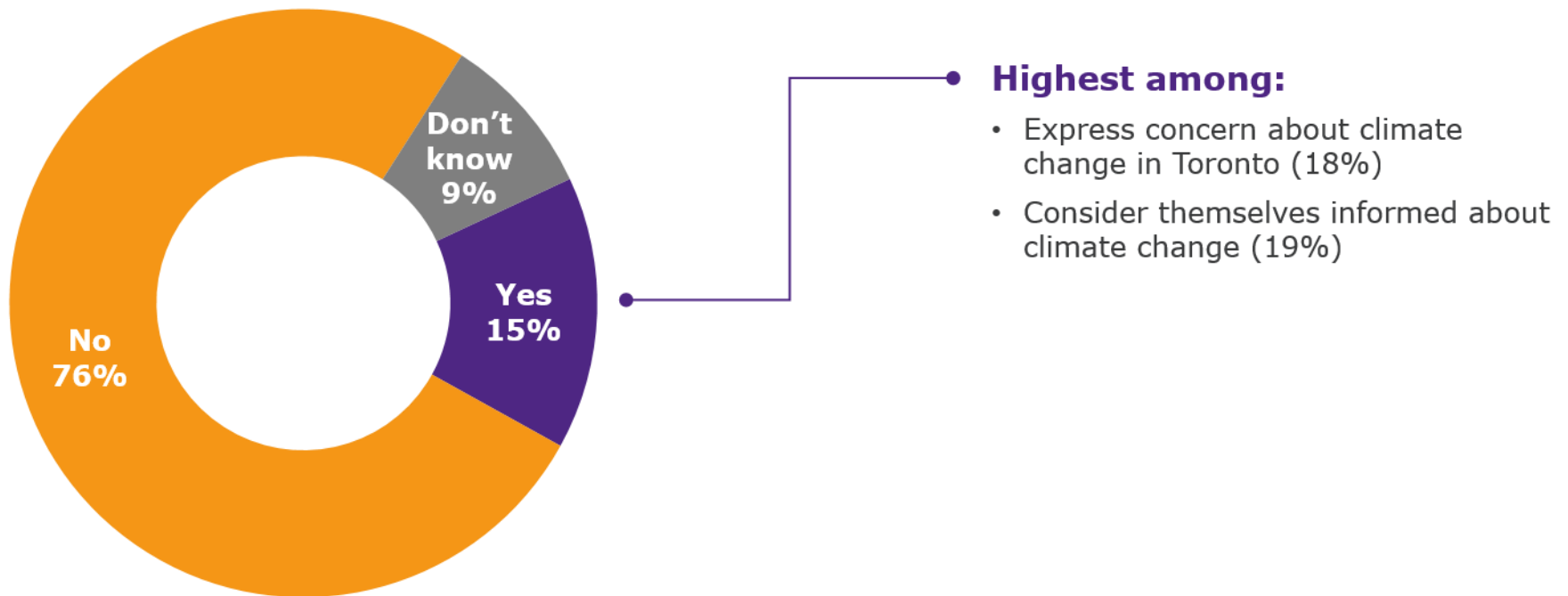


Q5. To the best of your knowledge, what levels of government in Canada have programs, initiatives or strategies to address climate change?

Base: Total Sample (n=403)

# Awareness of City of Toronto climate action strategy

When prompted, fewer than two-in-ten Toronto residents are aware of TransformTO, the City of Toronto's climate action strategy.

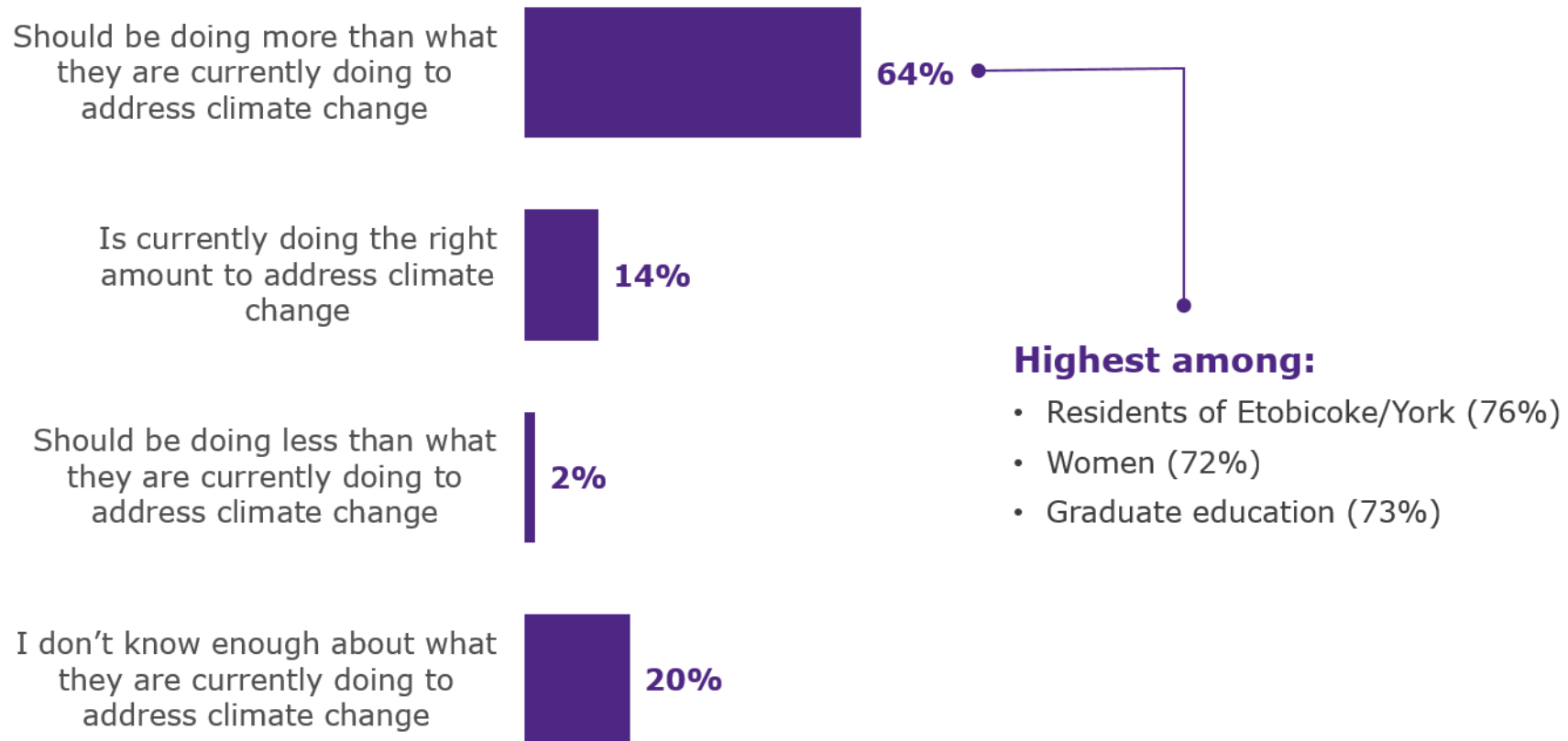


Q7. The City of Toronto has developed a new climate action strategy called TransformTO. This initiative aims to reduce local emissions that contribute to climate change, improve health, grow the economy, and improve social equity, and identifies a set of long-term goals and the strategies to reach them... Before today, had you ever heard about the City's TransformTO Climate Action Strategy?

Base: Total Sample (n=404)

# Perceptions of municipal action

**Two-thirds of Toronto residents indicate the City should be doing more than what they are currently to address climate change.**

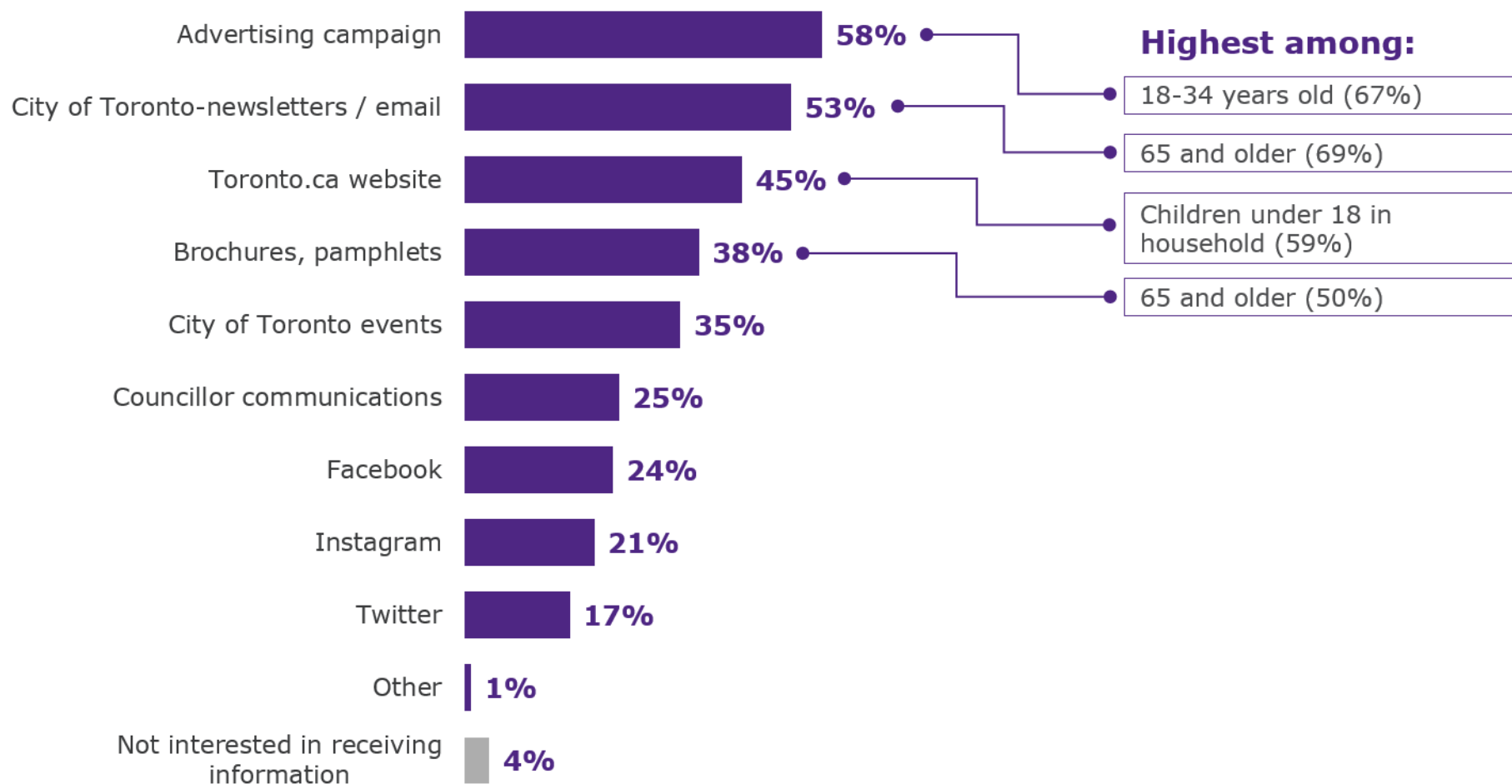


Q6. Do you think the City of Toronto...  
Base: Total Sample (n=403)

# Appendix

# Preferred communication methods

Over one-half of Toronto residents would prefer to receive information about climate change through advertising campaigns or City e-newsletters/email. Fewer than one-quarter indicate interest in social media sources.



Q13. The City of Toronto delivers information to residents through a number of channels. What would be your preferred ways to receive information about climate change and climate action from the City of Toronto?

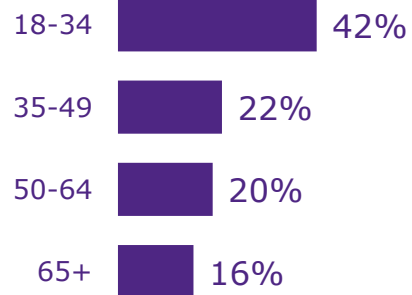
Base: Total Sample (n=404)



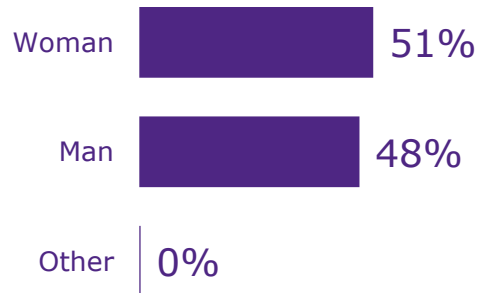
# DEMOGRAPHICS



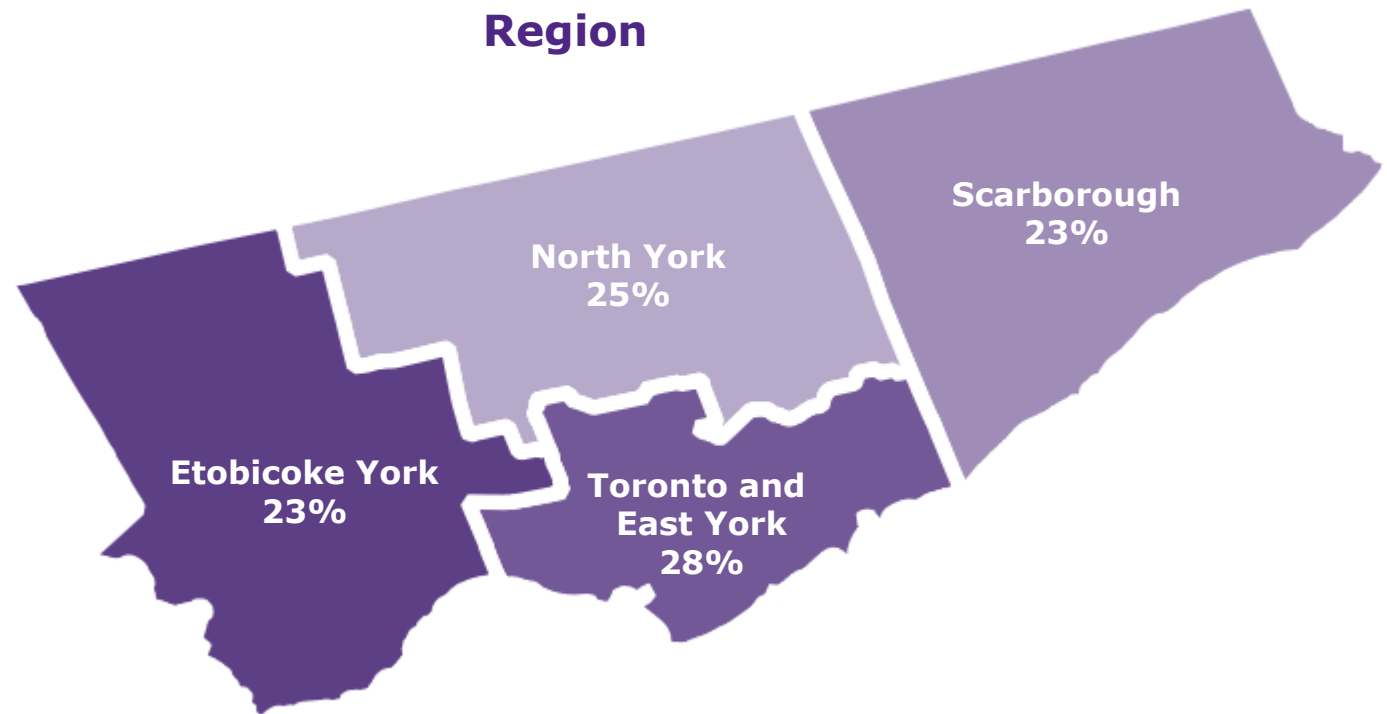
## Age



## Gender



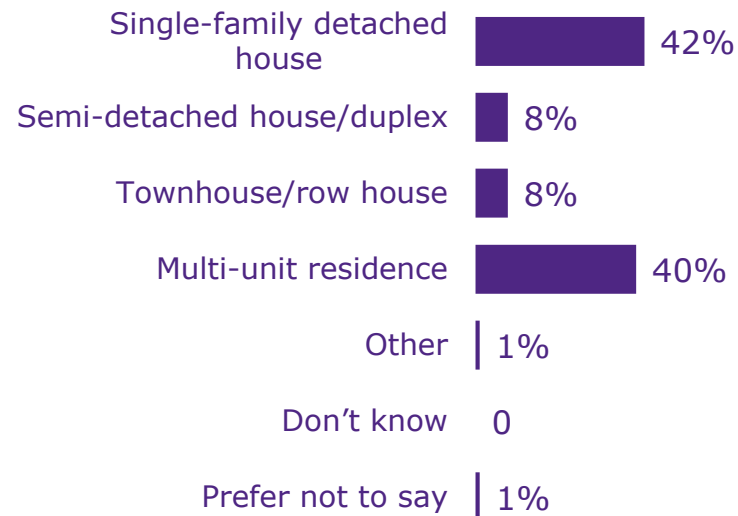
## Region



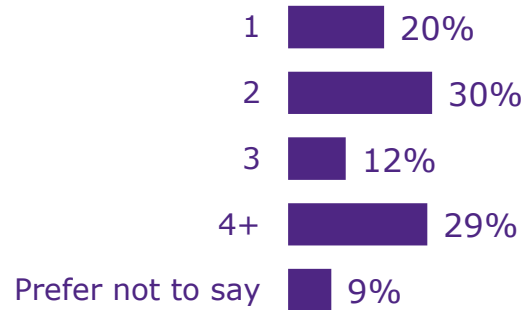
# DEMOGRAPHICS (continued)



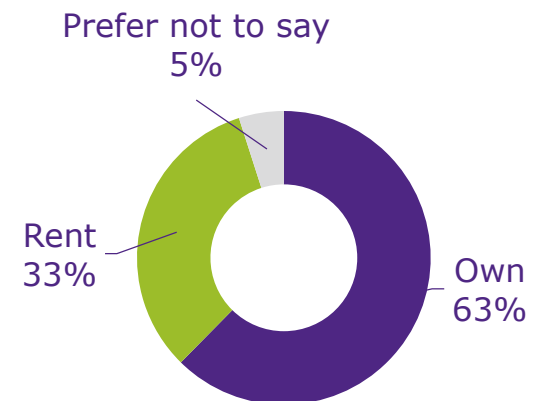
## Home type



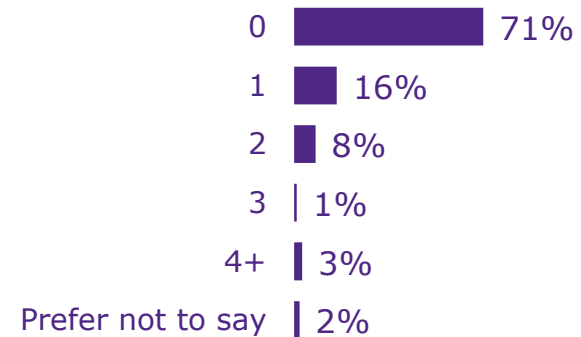
## Household size



## Homeownership



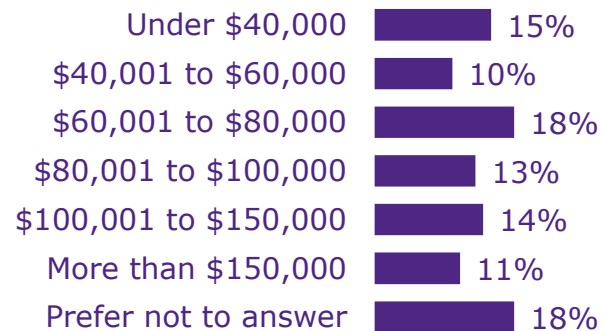
## Children in household



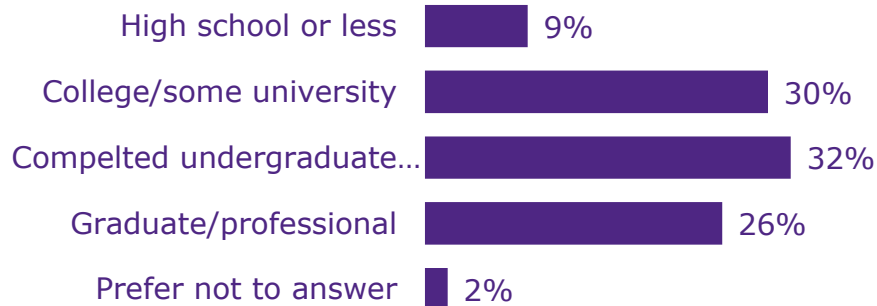
# DEMOGRAPHICS (continued)



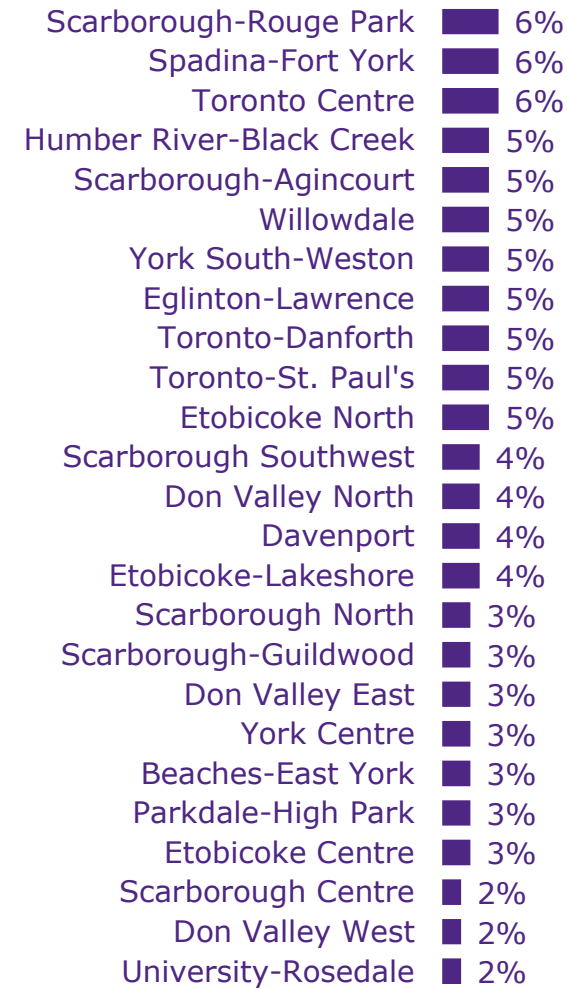
## Household income



## Education



## Ward



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