

Attitudes towards Climate Change and the Just Transition

An Overview of Emerging Survey Results



**PRESIDENTIAL
CLIMATE COMMISSION**
TOWARDS A JUST TRANSITION

Developmental, Capable and Ethical State (DCES)
Research Division, HSRC

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Context of the Survey



- Lack of representative data on public awareness, beliefs and behaviour relating to climate change, just transition
- In response, the PCC aimed to survey:
 - Awareness on climate change.
 - Perceptions of climate change as a threat to their lives and livelihoods.
 - Responsibility for addressing the problem.
 - Awareness about the transition in response to climate change, including familiarity with the term “just transition”.
 - Perceived impact of transition on peoples’ lives and livelihoods.
 - Support for policy measures in the just transition.
 - Inclusive decision-making processes around the transition and trust in different institutions.

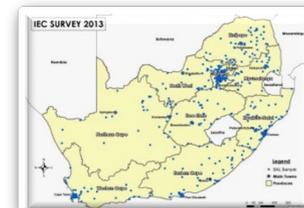


Methodology



Survey was conducted by the **Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)**

- **Nationally representative** of the population 16 years and older in private households across the 9 provinces
- **500 Small Area Layers (SALs)** were selected using Census 2011 framework
- **3,500** addresses issued
- Collected by **face-to-face interview**
- Data collection: **August-October 2023.**
- Realised sample: **3,103 respondents**
- Data will be **weighted** using StatsSA's **latest mid-year population** estimates once data cleaning completed
- **PCC module:** conceptually grounded, and draws on previously fielded items



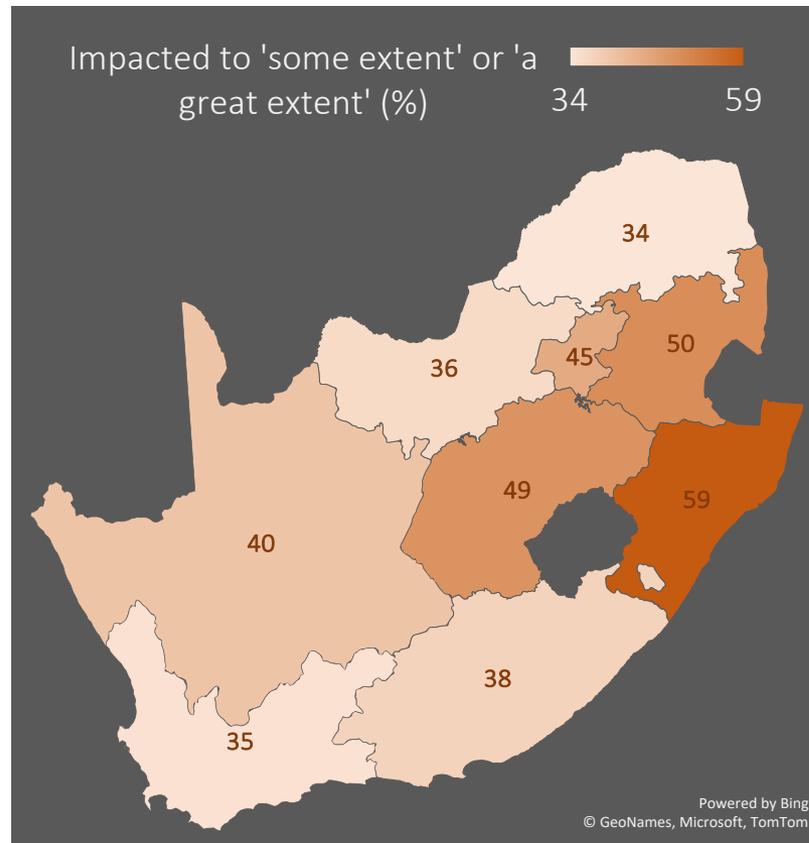
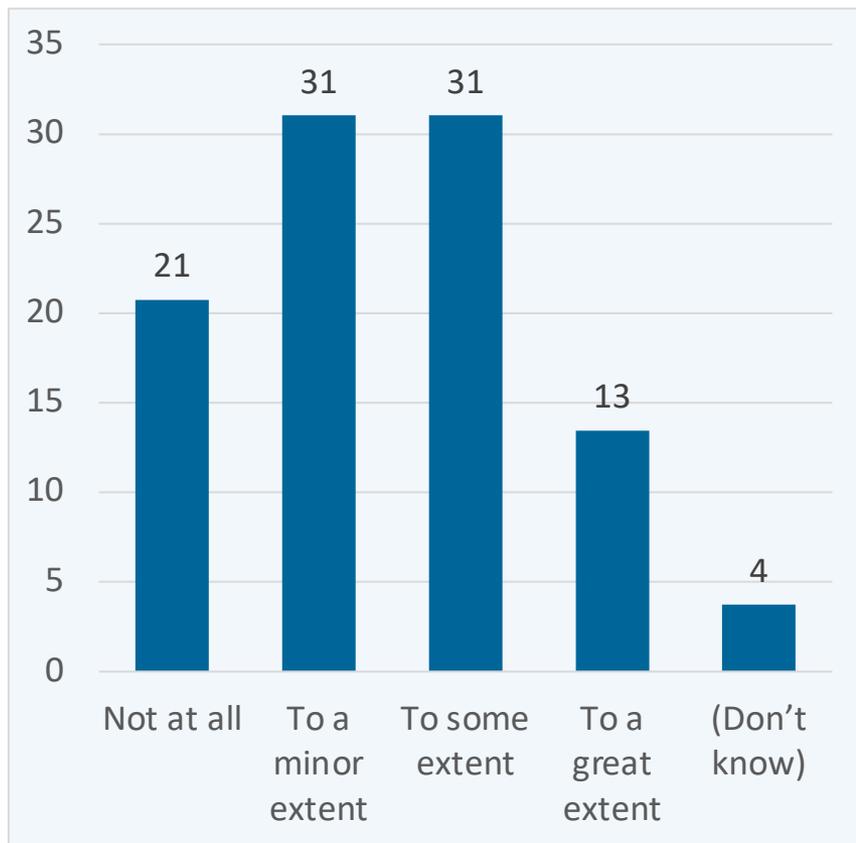


Experience of extreme weather events



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To what extent have extreme weather events (such as floods, big storms, droughts, heatwaves) affected you and your family over the past 10 years?

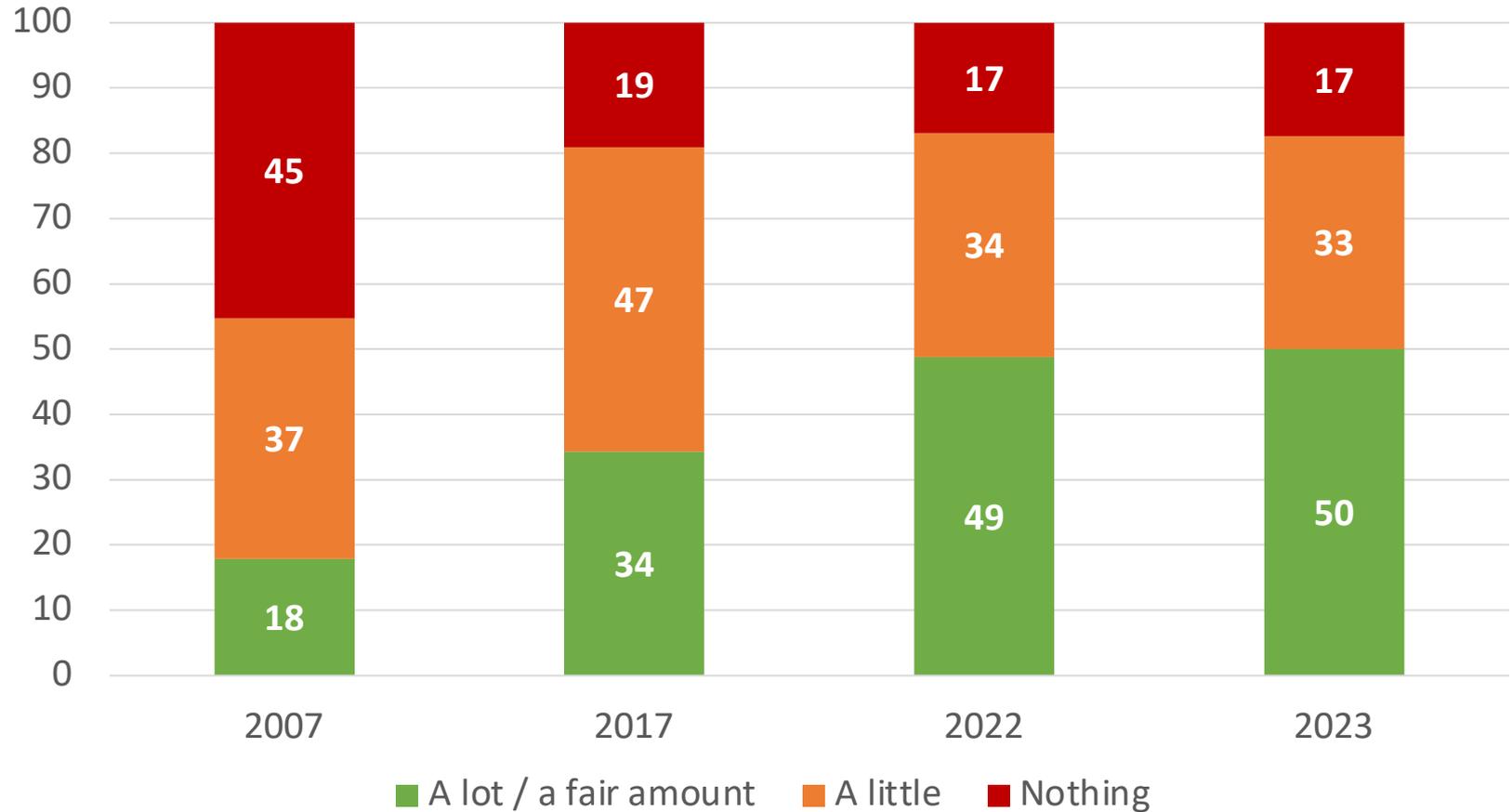




Climate change awareness



How much, if anything, would you say you know about climate change?

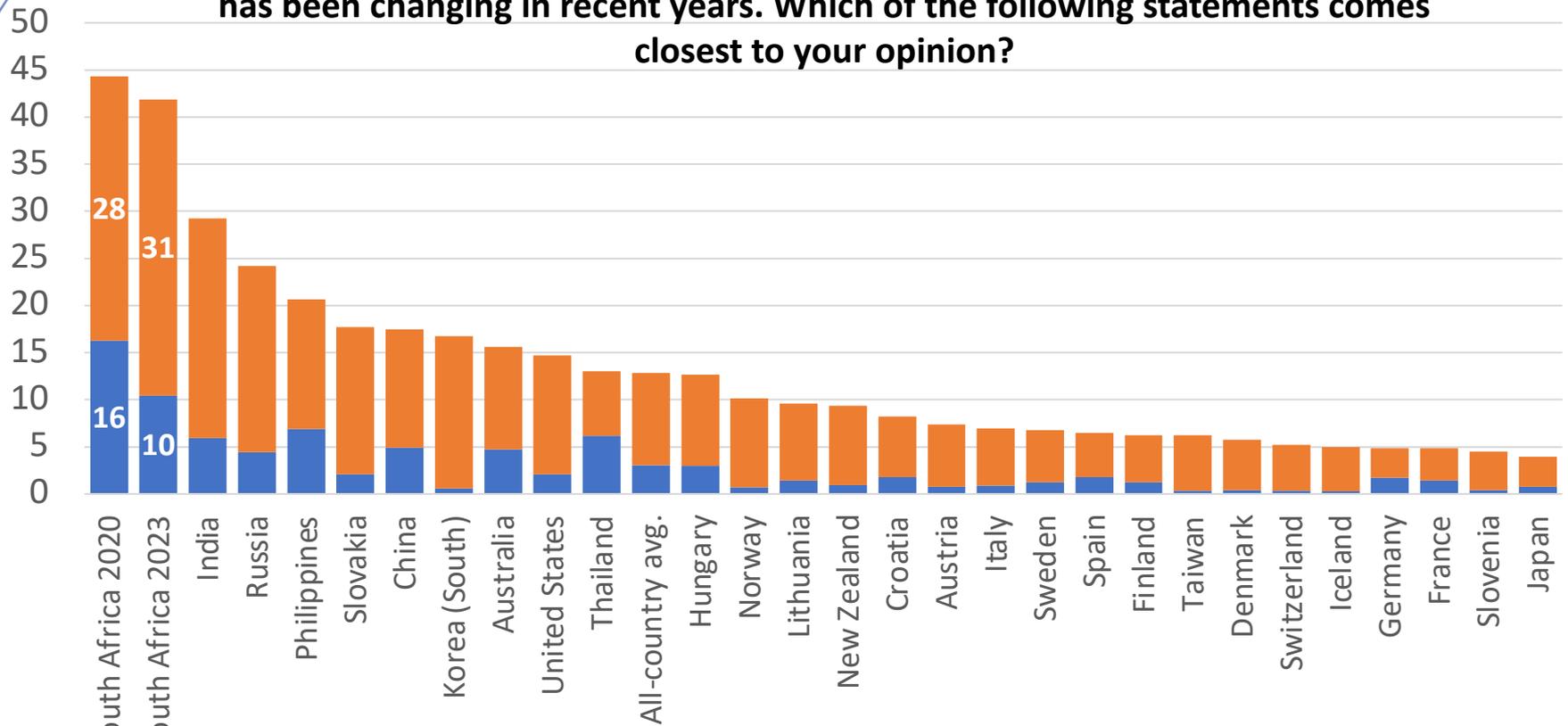




Climate change scepticism in comparative perspective



There has been a lot of discussion about the world's climate and the idea that it has been changing in recent years. Which of the following statements comes closest to your opinion?



- The world's climate has been changing mostly due to natural processes
- The world's climate has not been changing

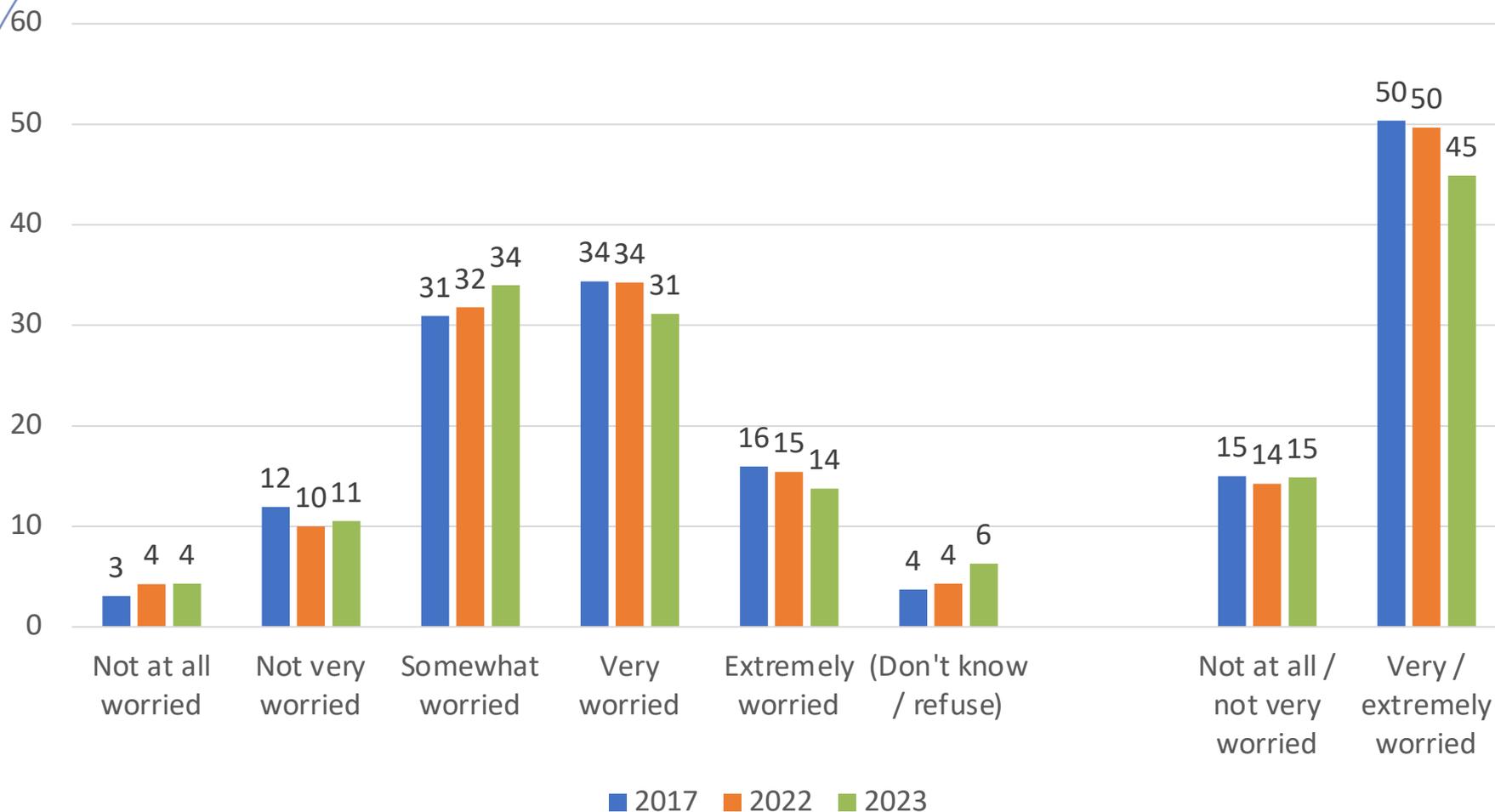
Attribution scepticism

Trend scepticism



Climate concern

How worried are you about climate change?

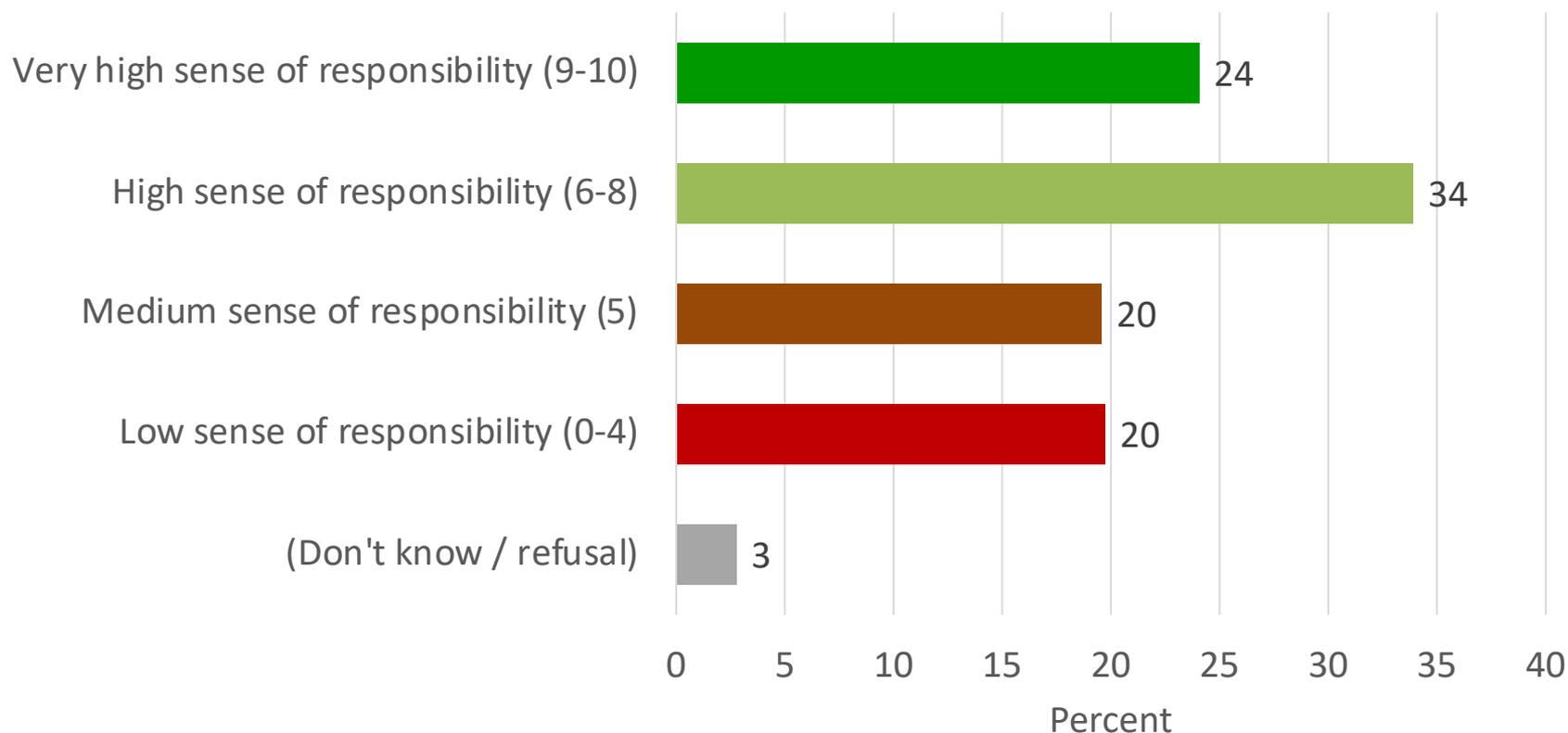




Pro-environmental personal norms

To what extent do you feel you have a personal responsibility to try and protect the environment? (0-10 scale)

Mean score (excl DK/RA) = 6.35 out of 10



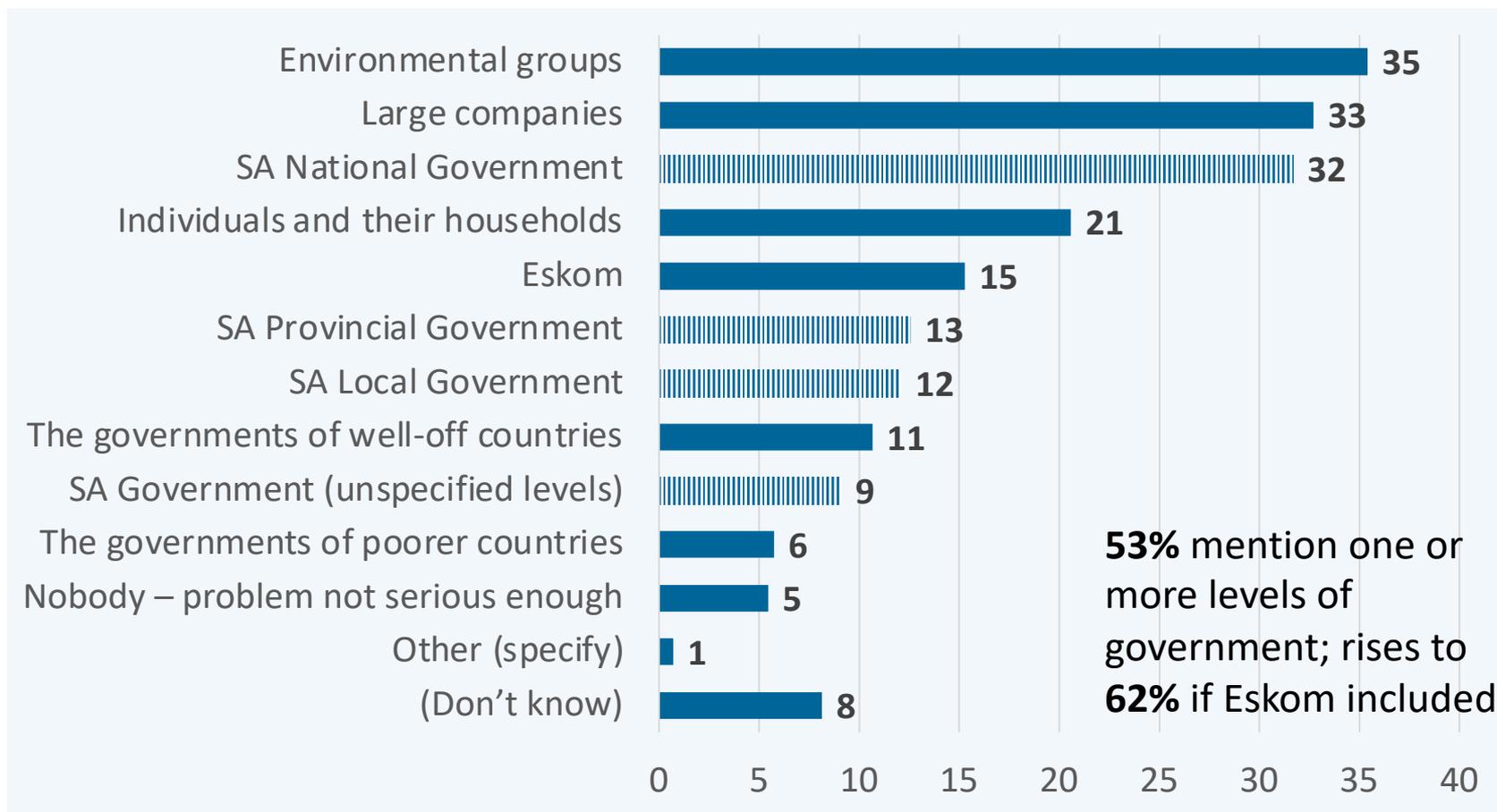
Strong socio-economic gradient underlying personal pro-environmental norms
(lower SES=lower sense of pro-environmental norm, vice versa).



Primary responsibility for addressing climate crisis



Who do you think bears the most responsibility for preventing climate change from getting worse? (multiple response – select up to 3) (%)

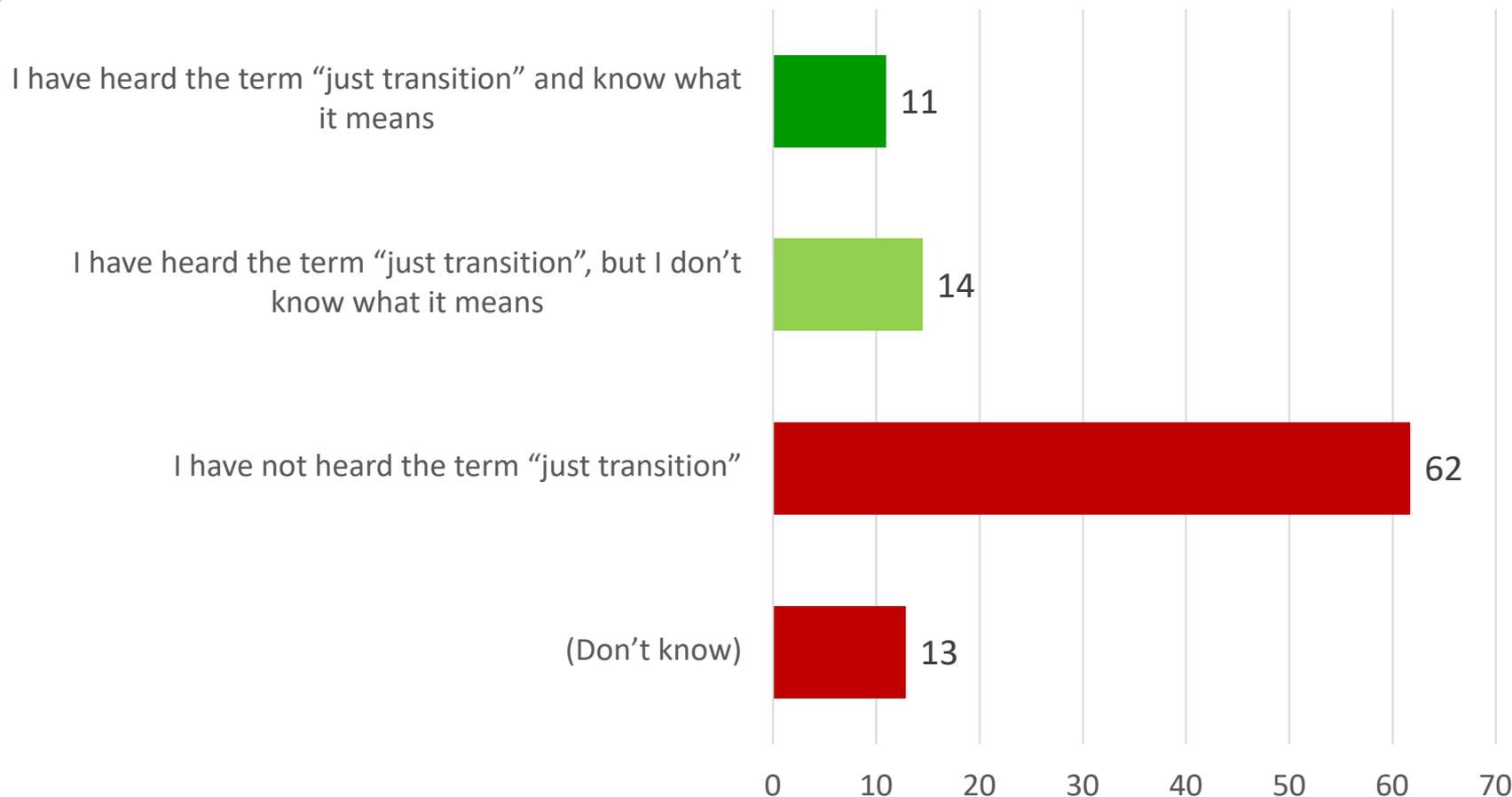




“Just Transition” Familiarity with the term



Have you heard of the term "just transition"?

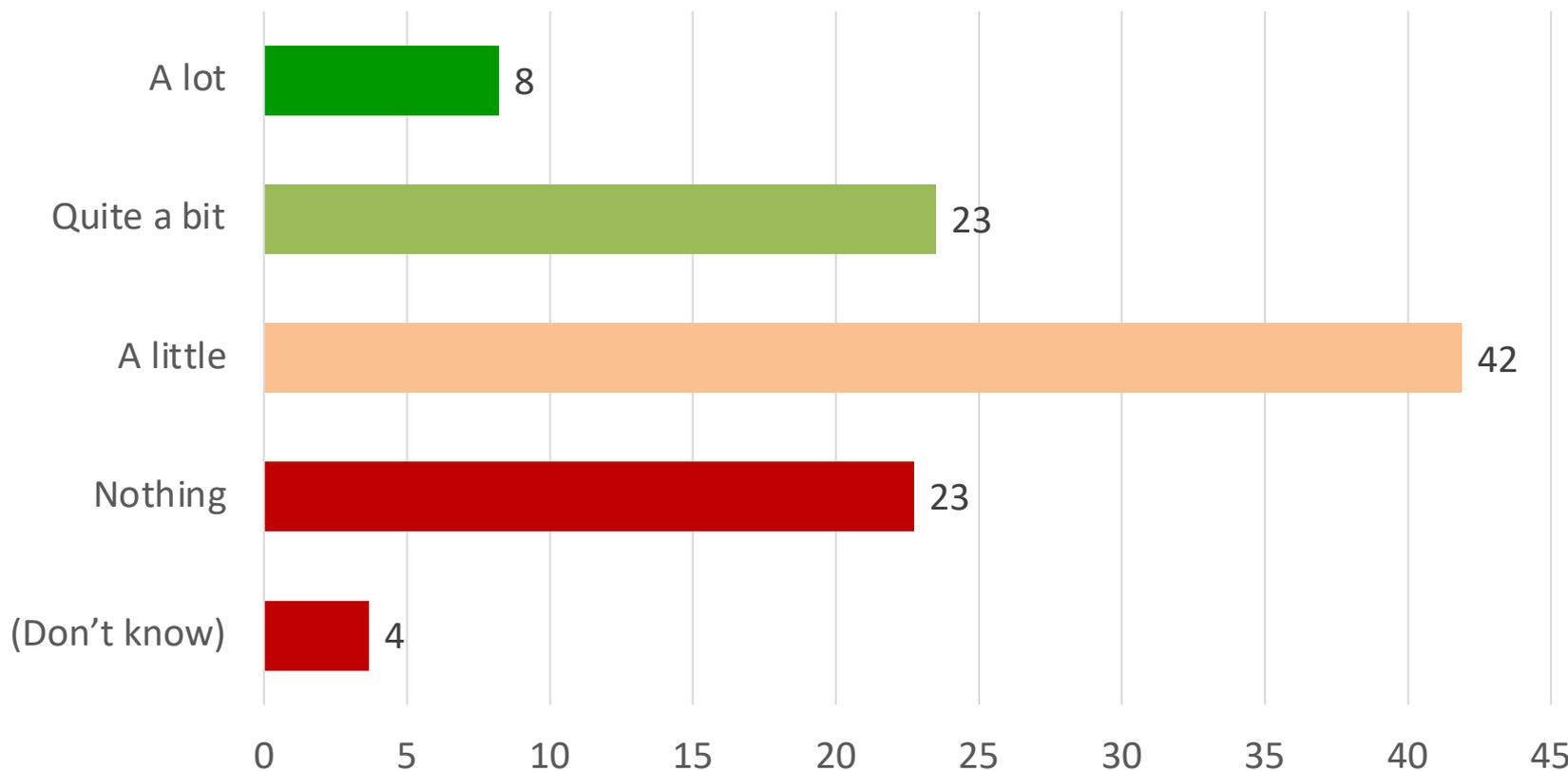




Awareness of just energy transition



Most of South Africa's electricity currently comes from coal. There are now actions being taken to change from coal power to other sources of energy (like solar and wind). How much have you read or heard about these actions?

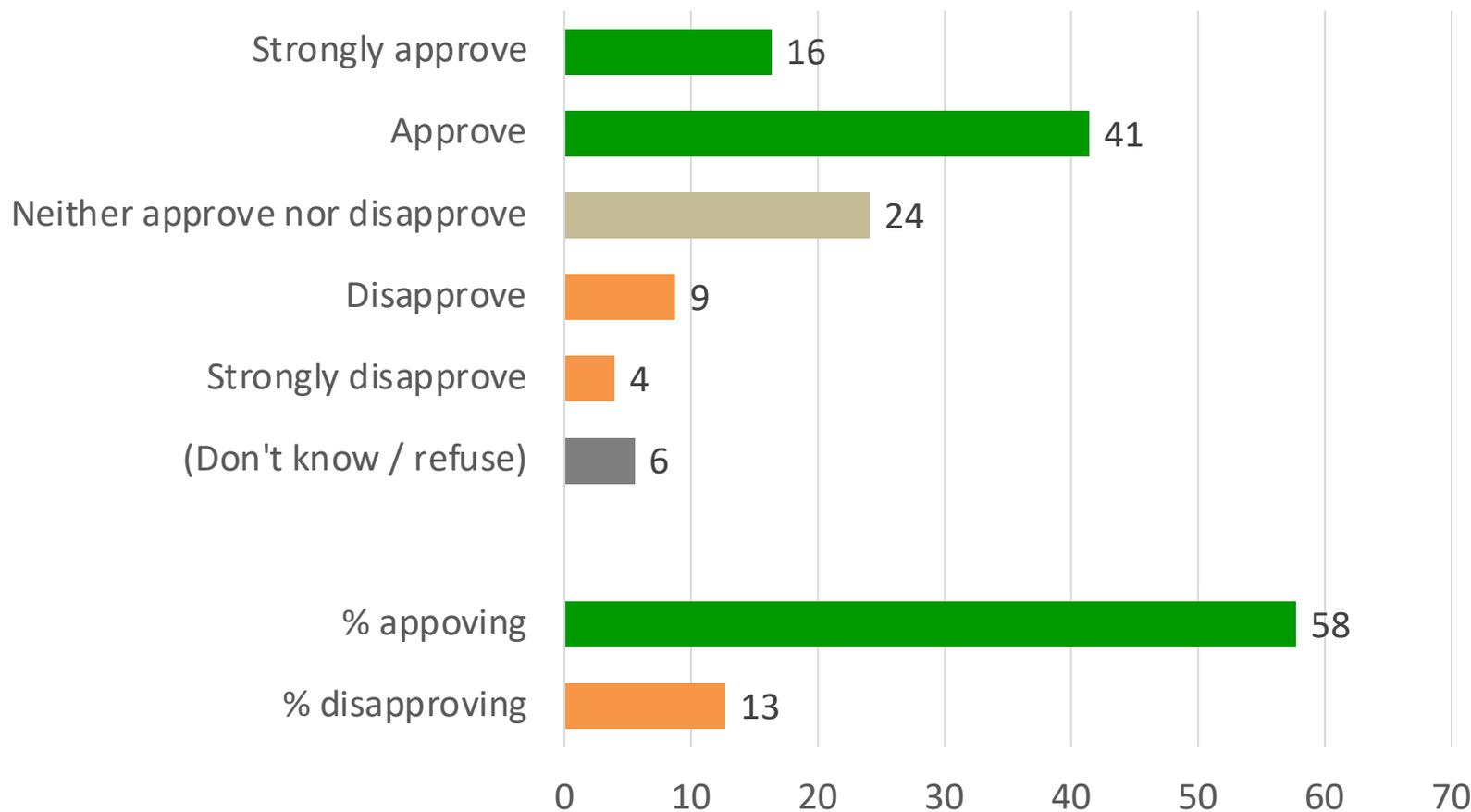




Support for the just energy transition



To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the actions being taken to change from coal to other sources of energy (like solar and wind)?

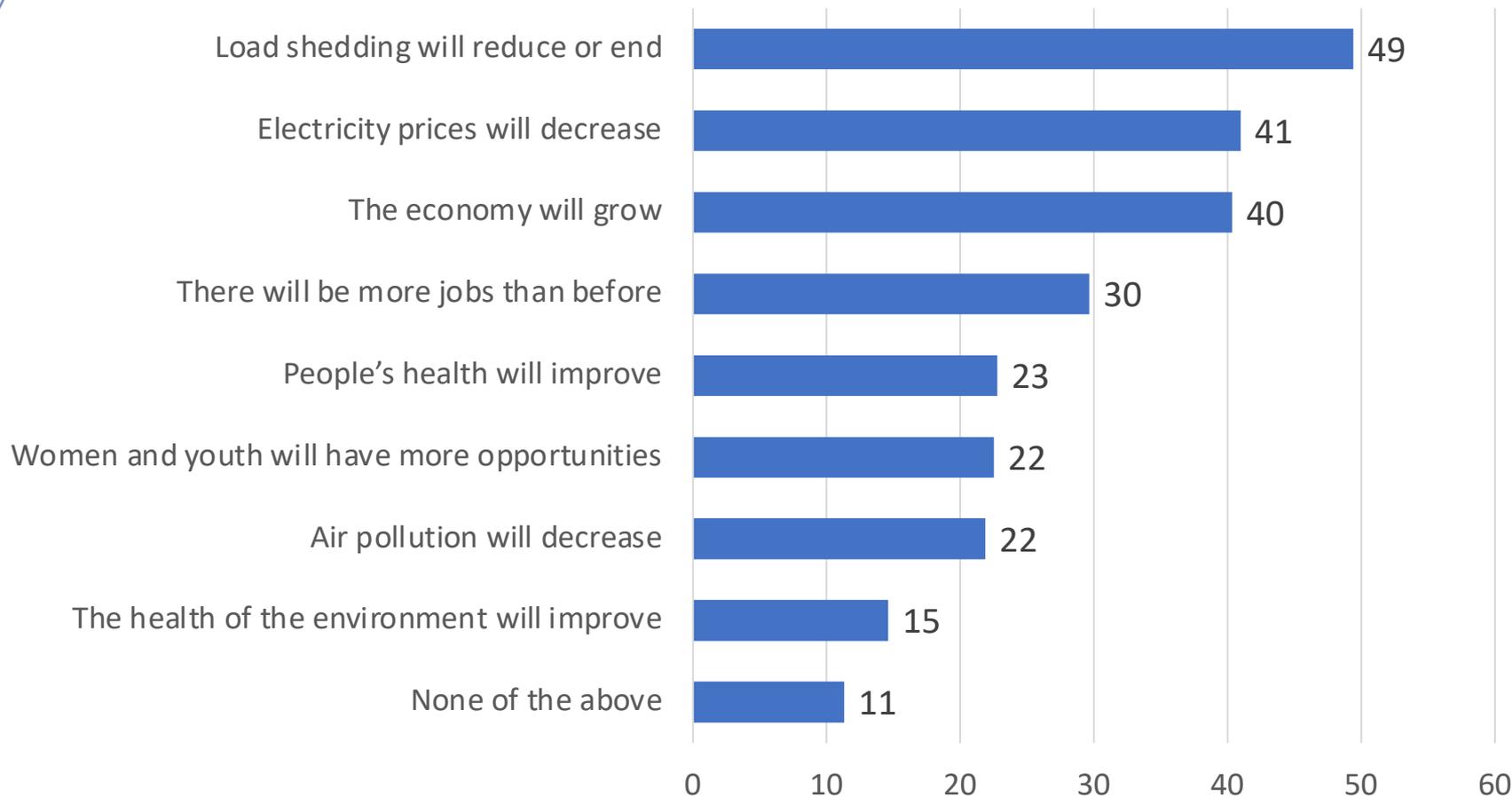




Perceived **positive** impacts of the just energy transition



Which of the following positive impacts do you believe will happen **in South Africa** because of the shift from coal power to other energy sources (like solar and wind)?

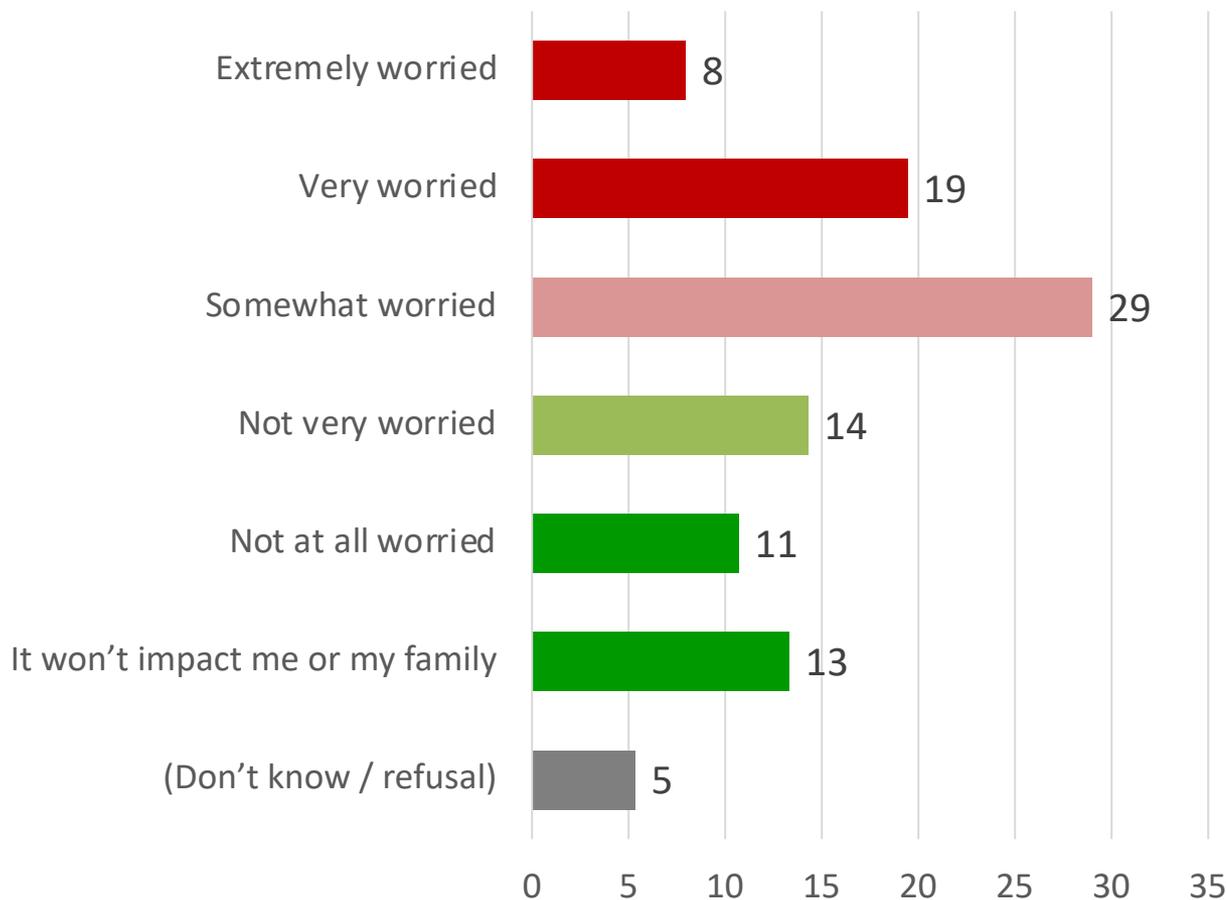




Concern over personal **negative** impacts of the just energy transition



How worried are you that **you and your family** will be negatively affected by the change from coal to other energy sources (like solar and wind)?



Specific concerns

- Paying more for electricity (34%)
- Job/income loss (32%)
- Increased loadshedding (25%)
- Damage to the environment (20%)



Support for policy measures in the just energy transition



As South Africa moves from coal power to other energy sources like solar and wind, workers in the coal industry will lose their jobs, but new jobs will be created in other sectors.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following policies should be implemented to help address these potential impacts?

	POLICY SUPPORT					
	Training & skills programmes for workers who lose jobs	Short-term financial help to workers who lose jobs and can't find new ones right away	Help women, youth and vulnerable groups find jobs	Support local businesses & create job opportunities in affected areas	Improve education to help people find jobs in new sectors	Create BIG that all South Africans would receive
Agree	74	70	76	77	78	70
Neutral	18	18	15	15	15	17
Disagree	5	9	7	6	6	11
(Don't know / refuse)	3	3	2	2	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

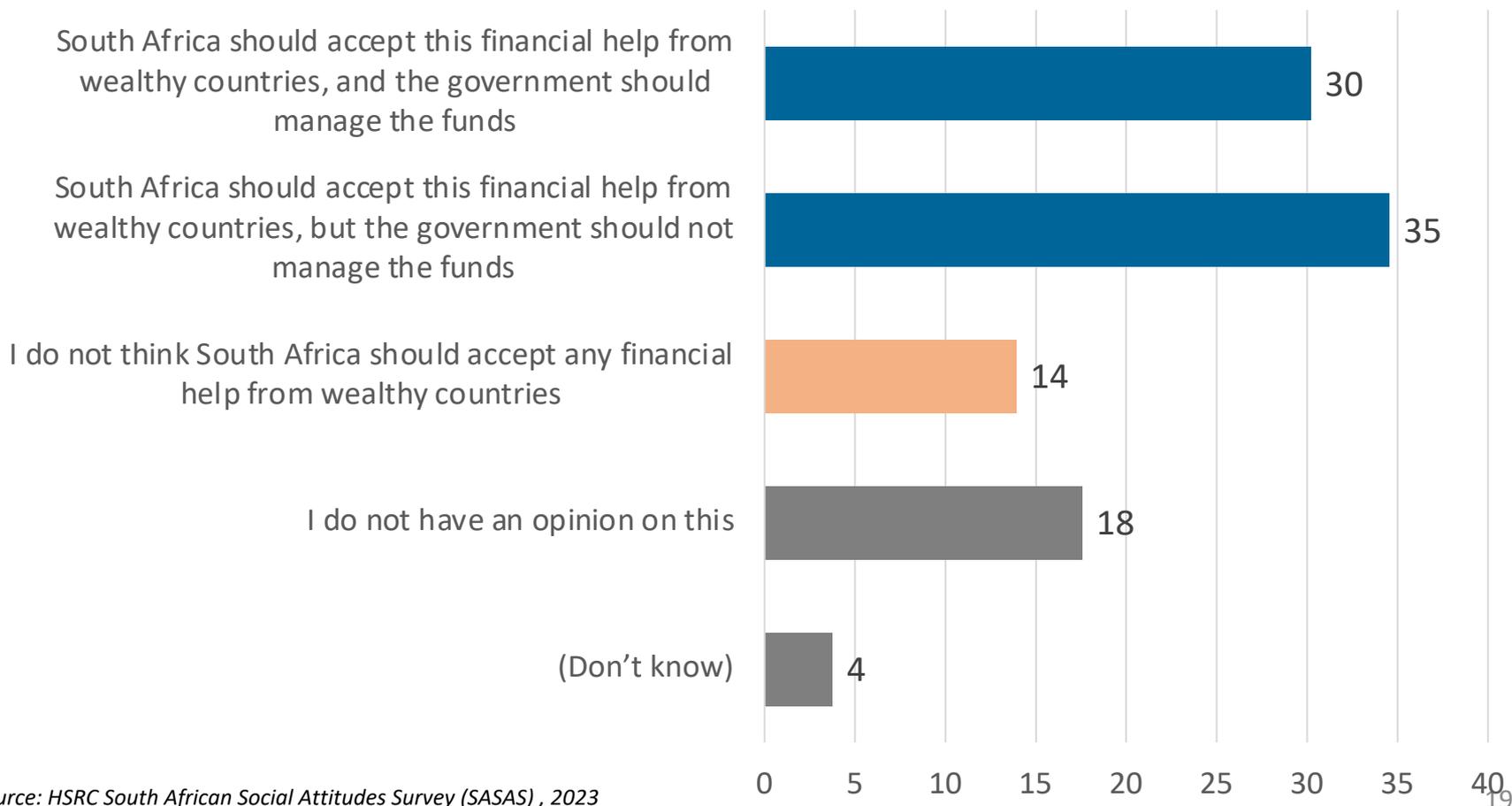


Climate finance



Wealthy countries have promised to give money to South Africa to help make the change from coal to other energy sources like solar and wind.

Which of the following statements comes closest to your opinion on this?





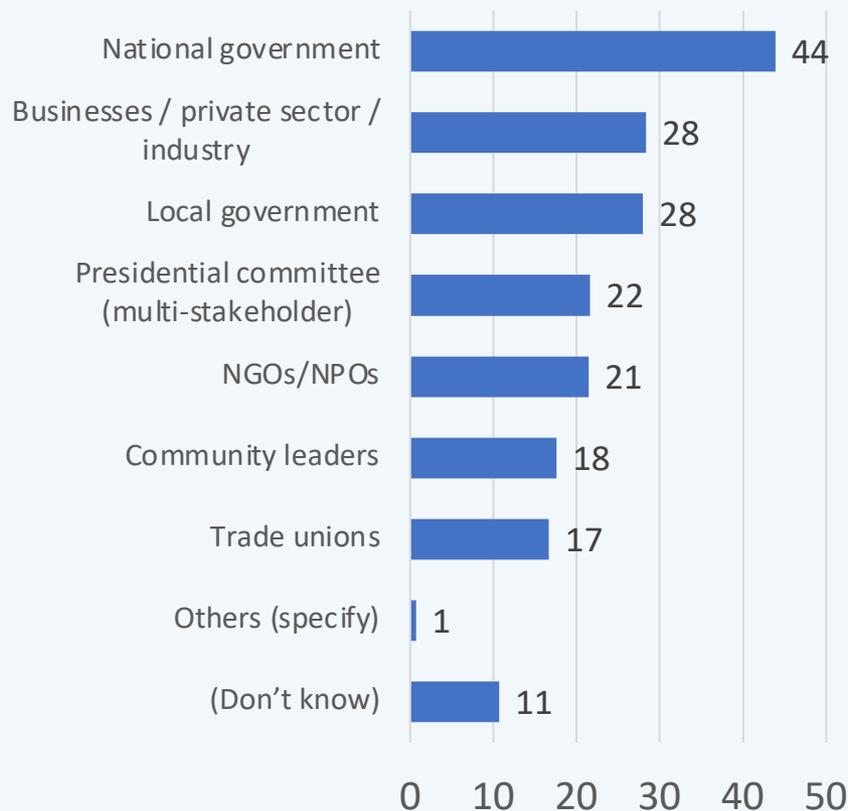
Just transition decision-making



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Which of the following groups should be involved in decisions about the change from coal to other energy sources (like solar and wind)? (multiple response) (% mentioning each)

Who should be involved (%)



Who do you MOST trust to manage this change from coal to other energy sources (like solar and wind)? (%)

Most trusted to manage JET (%)





In sum...



Climate change

- **Climate change awareness increasing**, driven by experiences of extreme weather events and socio-demographics
- Although a sizeable minority remain **climate sceptics**, **climate concern is broad-based** in the country
- South Africans display **moderate personal pro-environmental ethic**; strong government role in climate change mitigation envisaged, supported by environmental groups, private sector

Just energy transition

- **Circumscribed awareness** (incl. JT term), but clearly favoured
- **High expectations of personal & national benefits**; environmental gains subsidiary for now
- **Many worry about adverse personal impacts**, including cost and reliability of energy supply; job / income loss
- **Resolute social policy support** to offset adverse impacts
- **International climate finance** supported, divisions over government management of funds
- **Recognition of role for multiple stakeholders** in just transition decision-making, but government predominates



Next steps



Analysis

- Once data weighting complete...
 - Rerun **national findings**
 - In-depth **analysis** to better profile climate and just transition beliefs among the public
 - Integrate a **spatial analysis**, including proximity to coal-fired power stations and coal mines
 - **Testing the conceptual model** (values-beliefs-norms)

Publications

- Contribution to government's **30 Year Review**
- **Separate in-depth analytical report on the survey results**
- **Policy brief(s)**
- Other ideas?

Replication with monitoring in mind

- Routine testing of changing public values, norms and behaviours



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Human Sciences
Research Council

DCES
Developmental, Capable
& Ethical state



thank you

English	Thank you
Afrikaans	Dankie
Ndebele	Ngiyathokoza
Xhosa	Enkosi
Zulu	Ngiyabonga
Sepedi	Ke a leboga
Sesotho	Ke a leboha
Setswana	Ke a leboga
Xitsonga	Ndzi khense ngopfu
SiSwati	Ngiyabonga
Tshivenda	Ndi a livhuwa
Nama	Gangans