

PUBLIC SQUARE
putting the people back in research

Managing Noise in Toronto survey

- 1) Overview of Research
- 2) Survey Demographics
- 3) Interest and Satisfaction
- 4) Experience with Noise
- 5) Knowledge of Current Bylaws
- 6) Support for Change
- 7) Key findings

A photograph of four women of diverse ethnicities and ages gathered around a table, looking at a large sheet of paper. The woman on the far left is wearing a black and white polka-dot dress and holding a pen. The woman in the center-left is wearing an orange top and holding a small black device. The woman in the center-right is wearing a green top. The woman on the far right is wearing a white top and pointing at the paper. They are all smiling and appear to be in a positive, collaborative environment.

Research Overview

Research Goals

Evaluate and analyse the attitudes towards noise control in Toronto:

1. Understand general interest in noise control and general satisfaction with the level of noise
2. Appreciate and understand the everyday experience with noise
3. Gauge awareness and support for changes in law

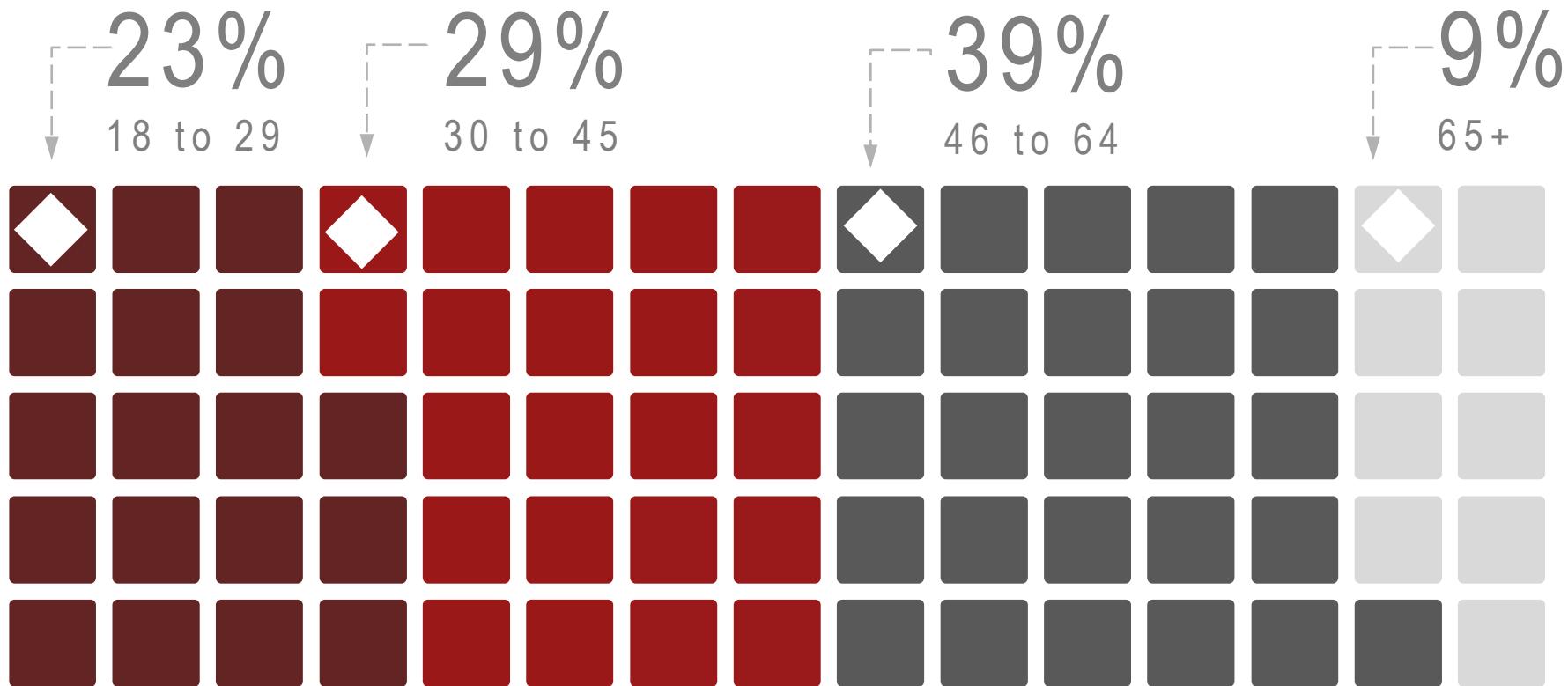
Survey Methodology

- The research involved a survey of 600 Torontonian adults—300 residing in the Downtown core and 300 living outside the core including Etobicoke, Scarborough and North York.
- The survey was fielded April 26 – April 28, 2016.
- It consisted of a total of 27 discrete questions, with a median respondent completion time of just under 10 minutes.
- All participants are members of the ‘Angus Reid Forum’ online panel.

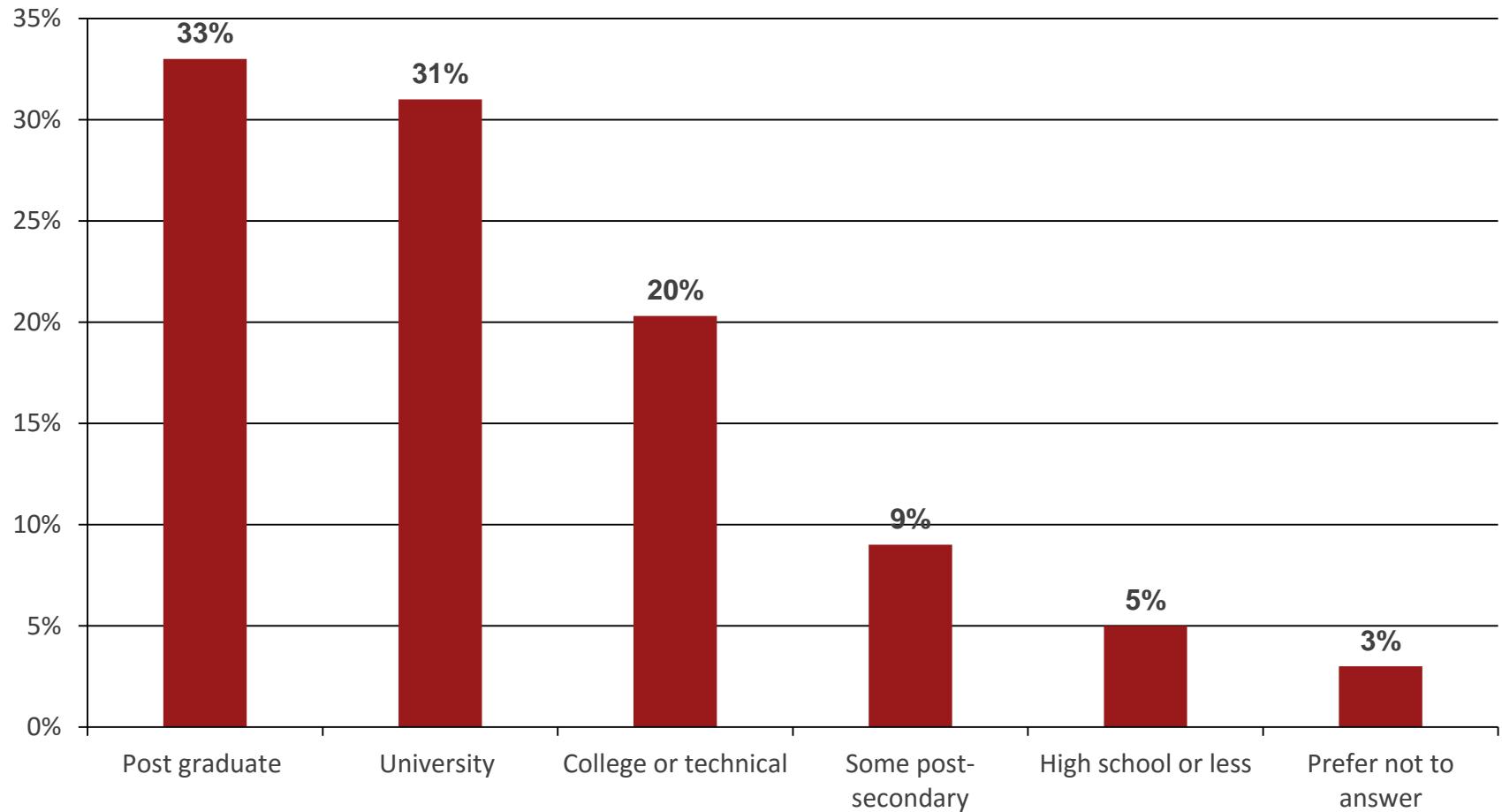
A photograph of a diverse group of people smiling. In the foreground, a young woman with curly hair and a yellow top looks up and to the side with a joyful expression. Behind her, a man with a beard and a plaid shirt is laughing heartily. To the left, an older man with white hair and a blue shirt is also smiling. The background is slightly blurred, showing more people and greenery, suggesting a social gathering or event.

Survey Demographics

Age

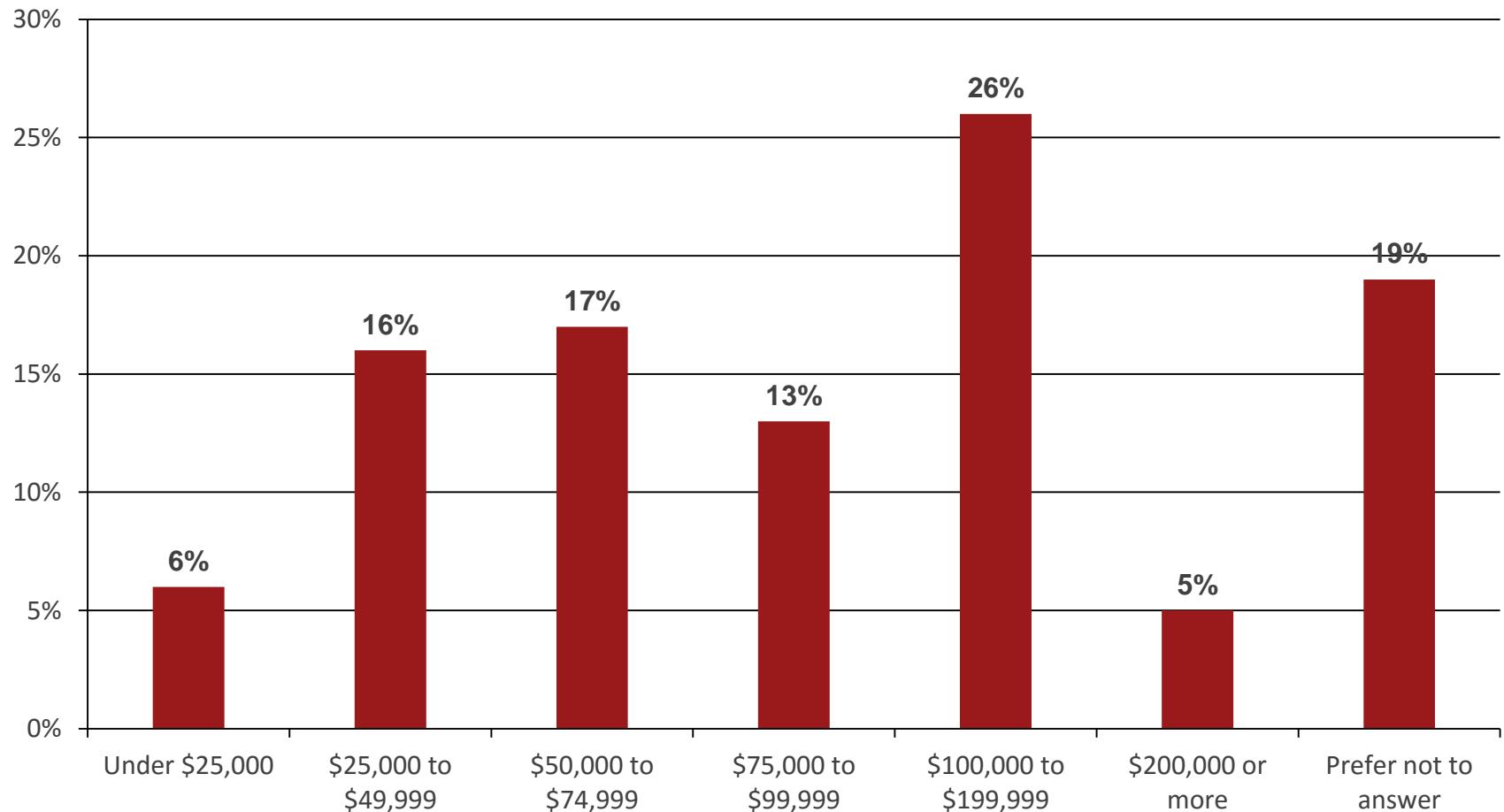


Education



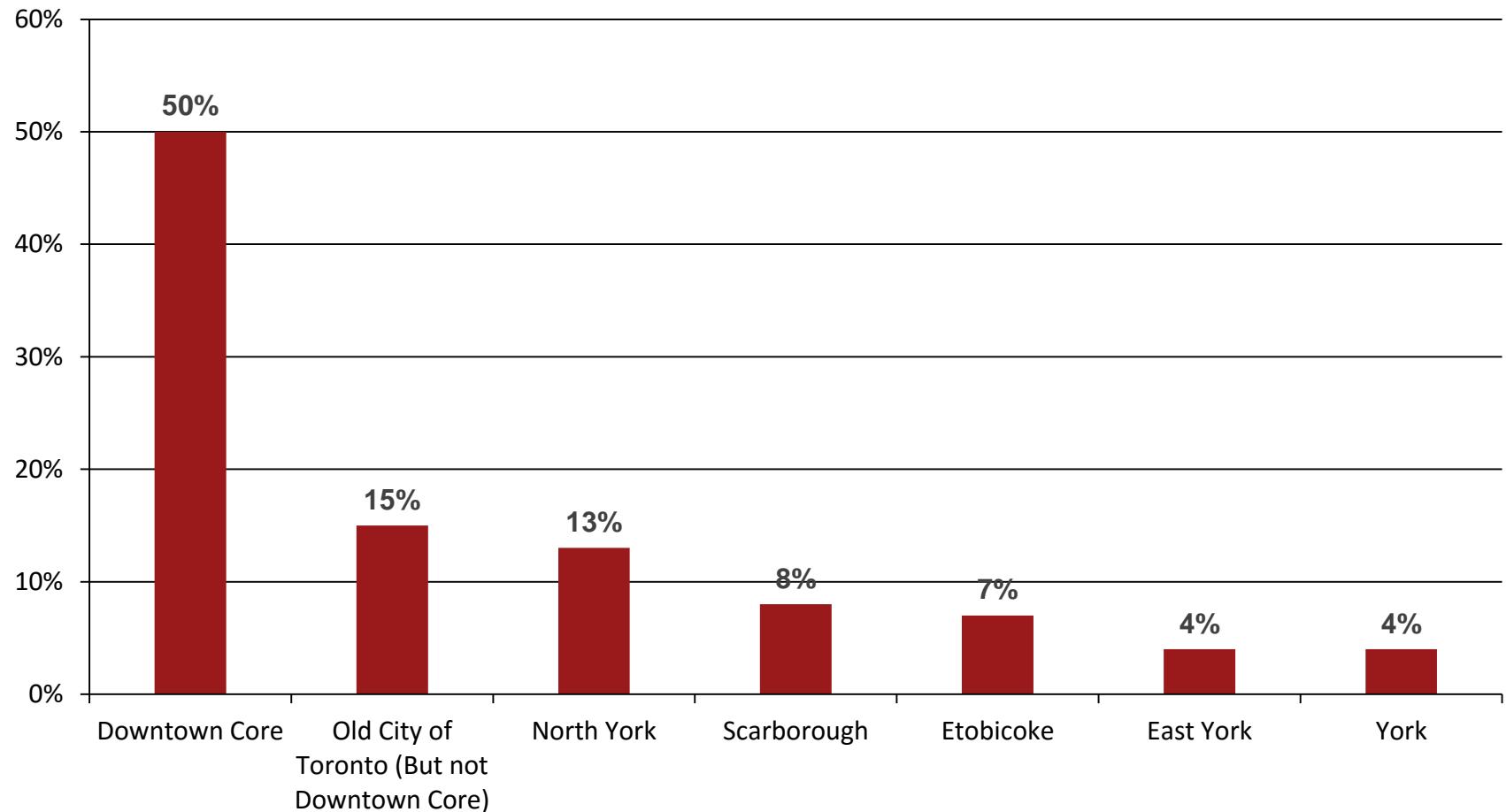
Q27. What is the highest level of education that you have completed or the highest degree that you have received?

Income



Q28. Within which of the following categories does your yearly total household income fall?

Region of Toronto



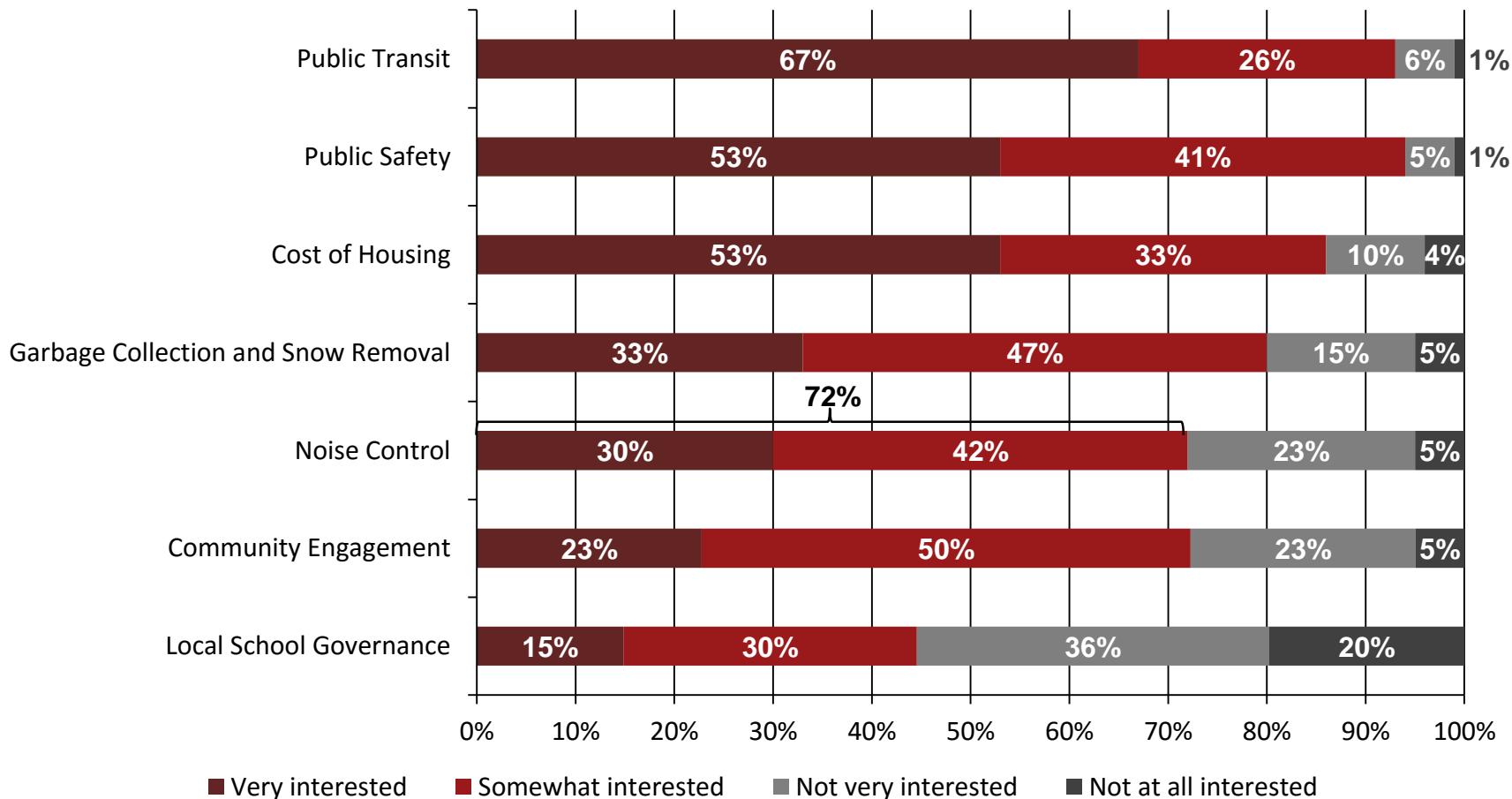
Q2. What are the first three digits of your postal code?



Interest and Satisfaction

Issue Interest

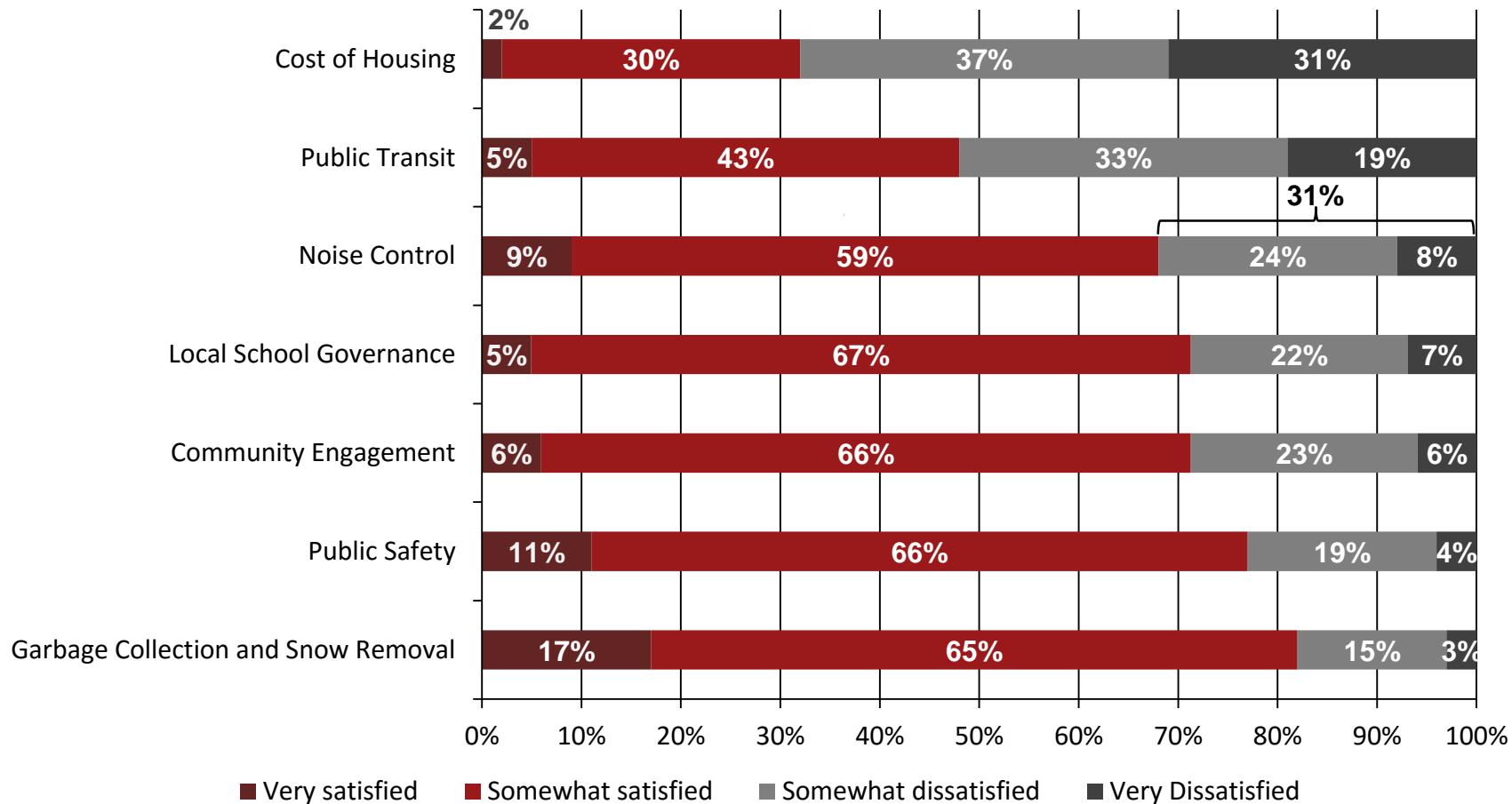
Close to three quarters (72%) of all Torontonians express interest in Noise Control—3 in 10 are very interested.



Q3. How interested would you say you are in the following municipal issues?

Issue Satisfaction

Close to a third (31%) said they were **not satisfied with the city of Toronto when it comes to noise control**, the highest rate of dissatisfaction after **Public Transit (52%)** and **Cost of Housing (68%)**

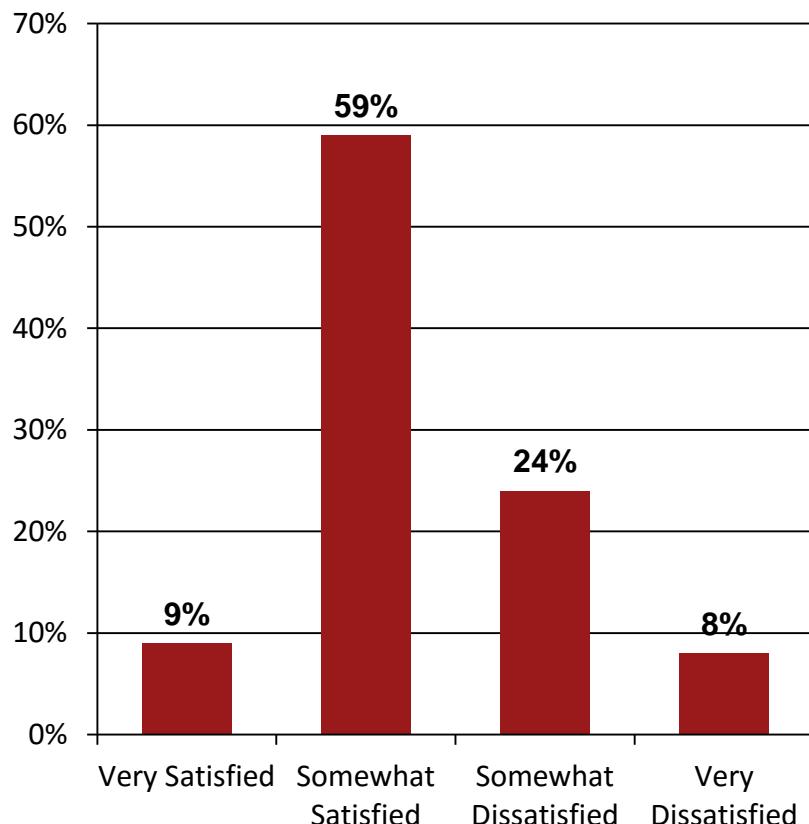


Q4. How satisfied with the city of Toronto are you on those same issues?

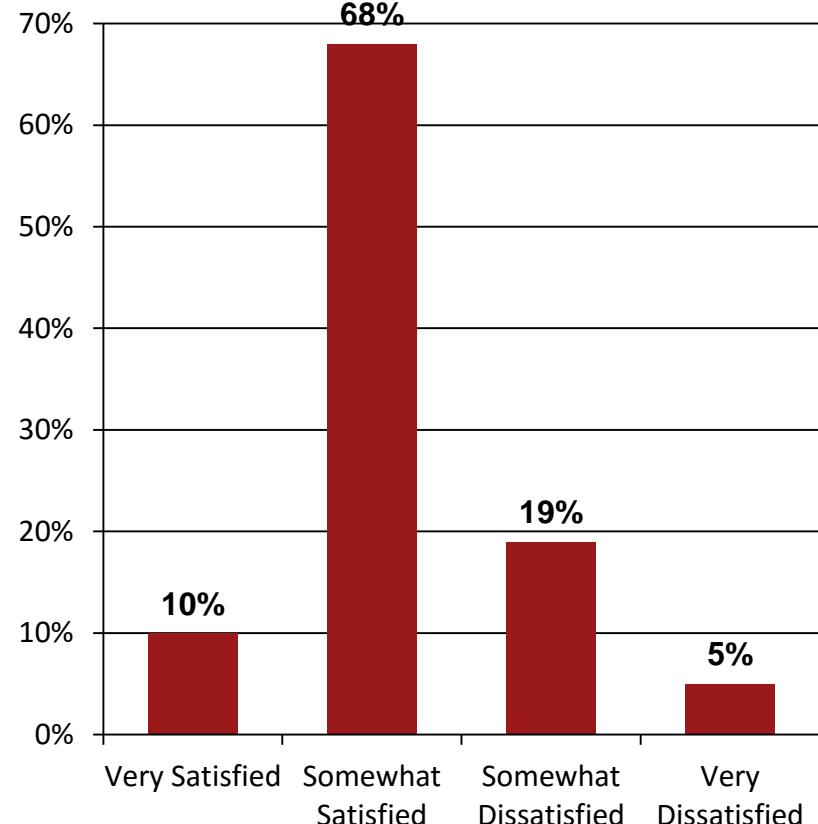
Satisfaction with Noise vs. Overall

Torontonians are **markedly less positive about how the city is handling noise control** compared with the overall job that the city of Toronto is doing.

Satisfaction with the Noise Control

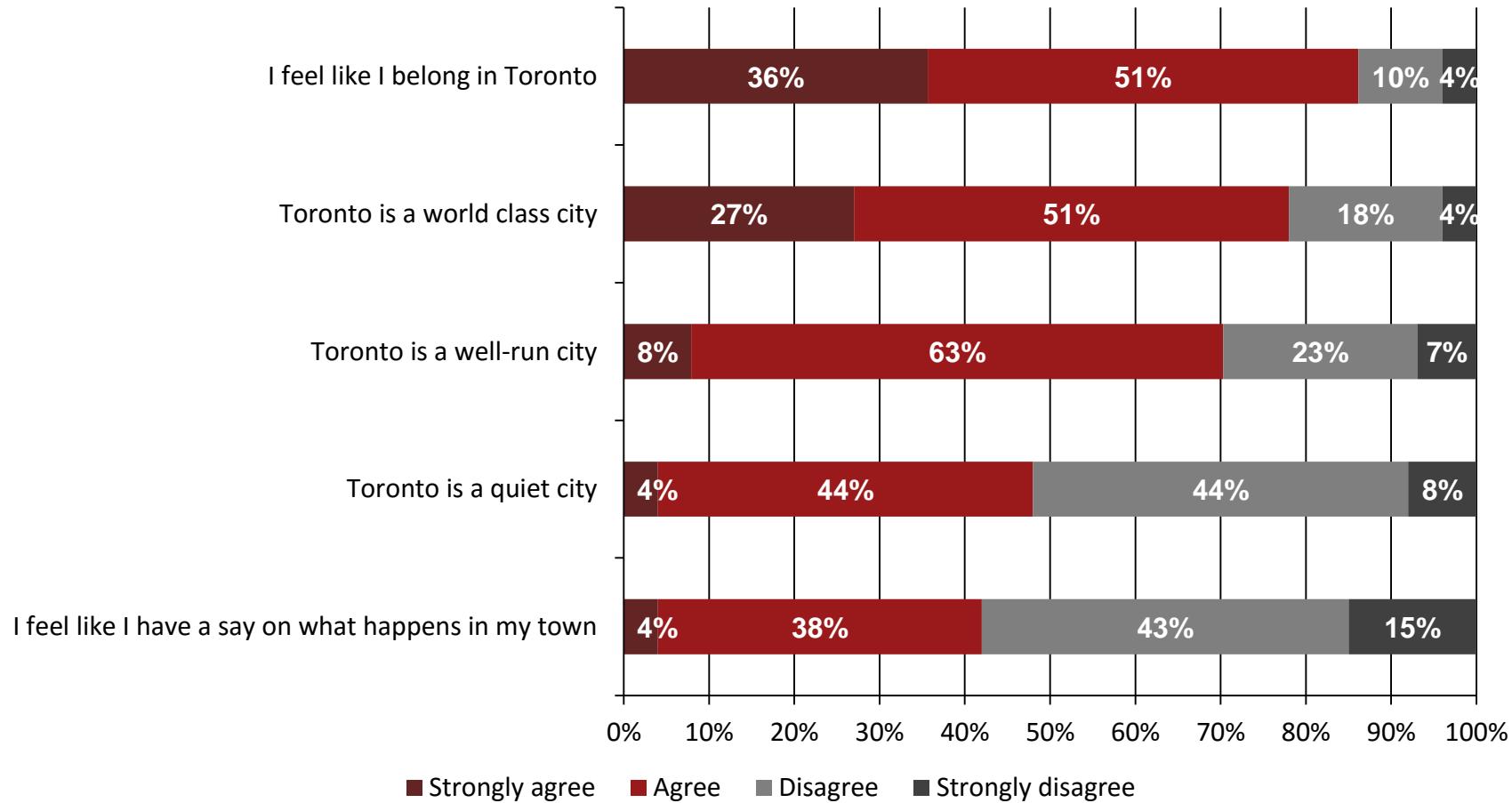


Satisfaction with Overall Job of the City



Assessment of Toronto

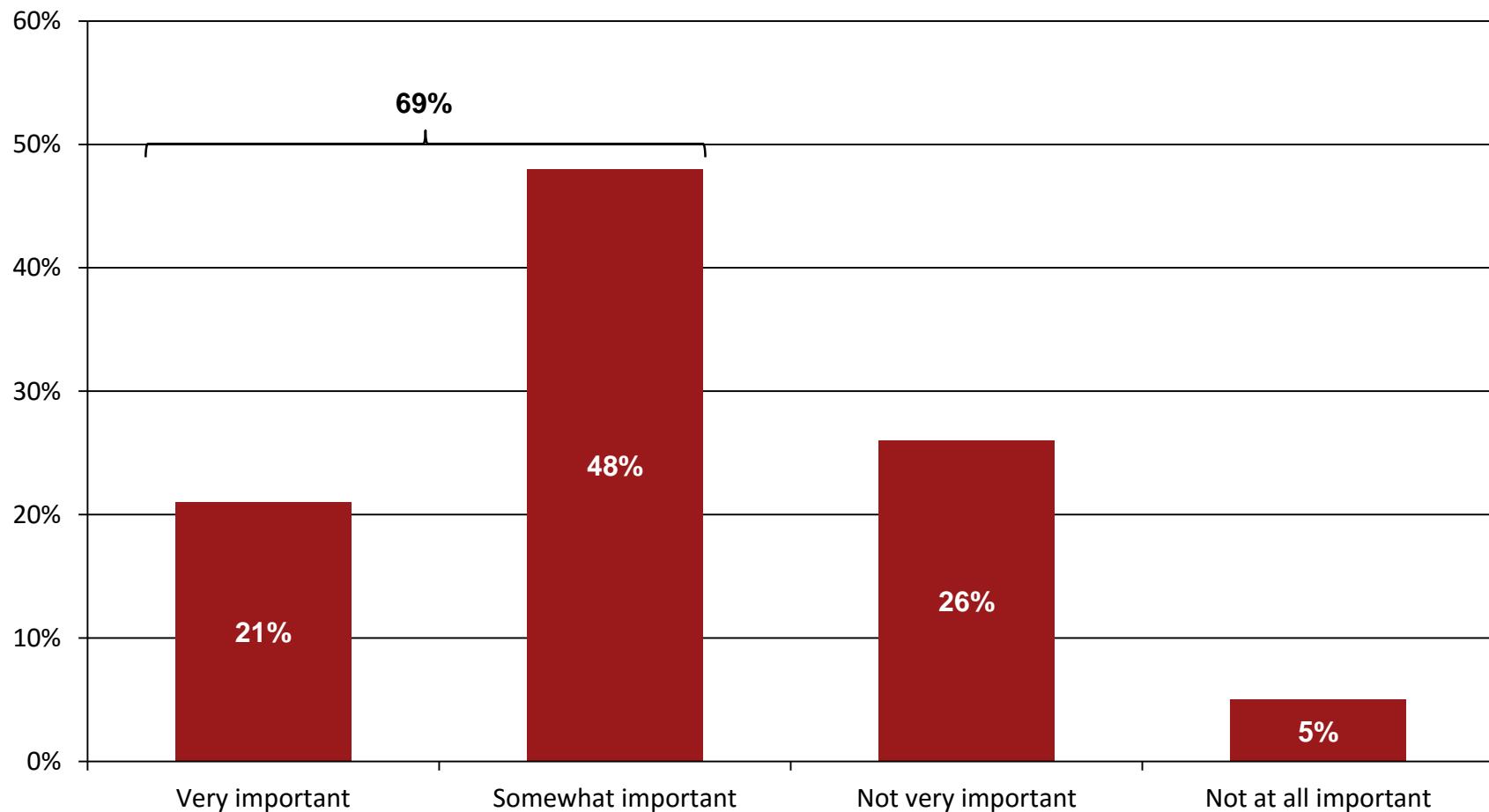
Where a majority describe Toronto as a place where they feel like they belong, and say that it is world class and well run, fewer than half (48%) agree that Toronto is a quiet city.



Q6. Would you say that you strongly agree, agree or disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements?

Importance of a Quiet City

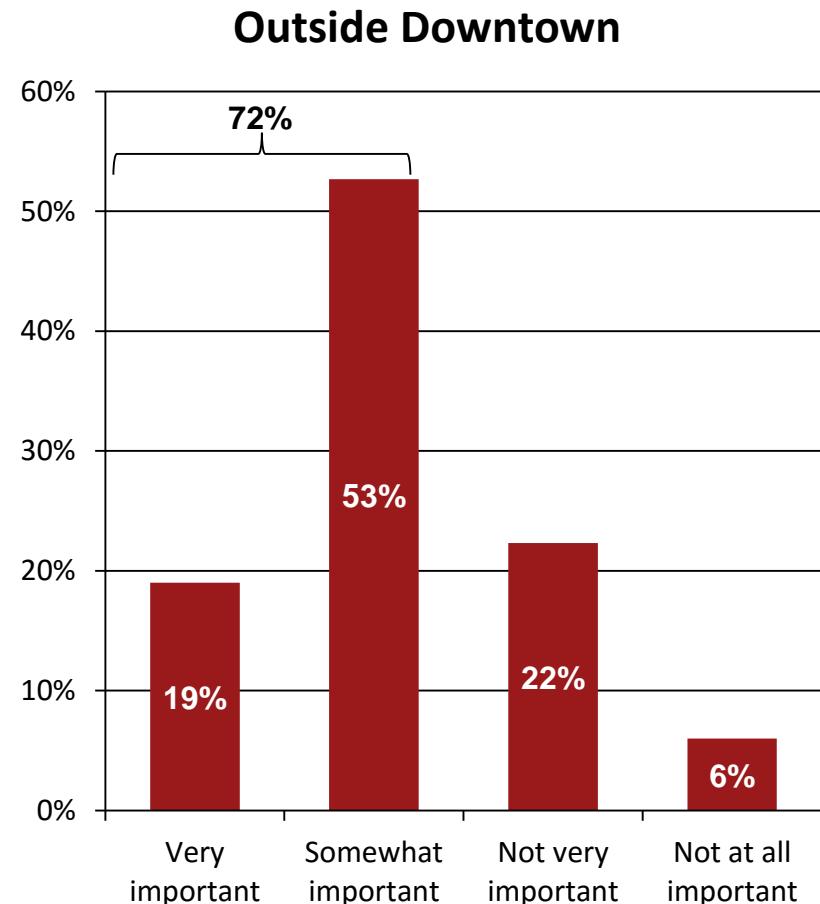
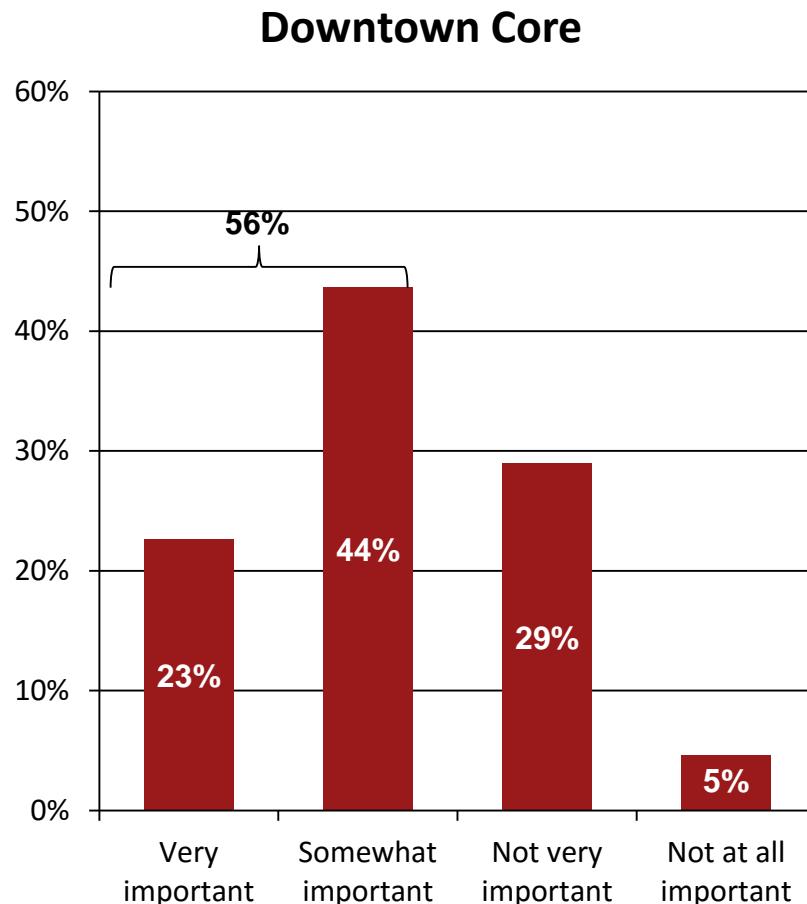
Toronto being quiet is **important to 7 in 10**, and **21% consider it very important**.



Q7. More specifically, how important are the following statements to you?

Importance of a Quiet City: By Region

Those outside the downtown core were significantly more likely to rate a quiet city as important, but less likely to rate it as very important.



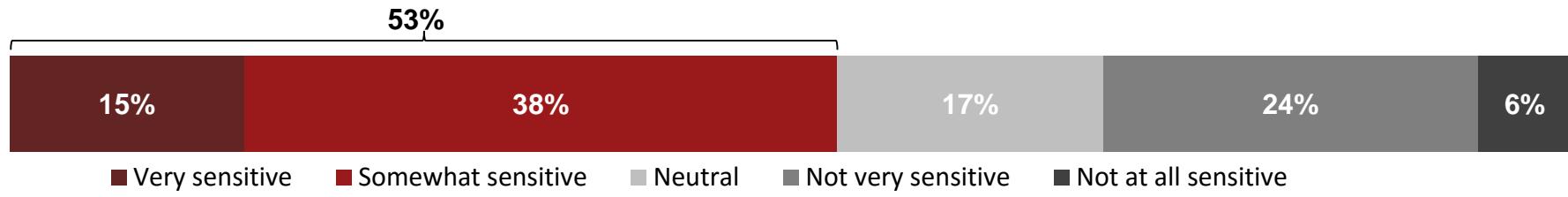
Q7. More specifically, how important are the following statements to you?



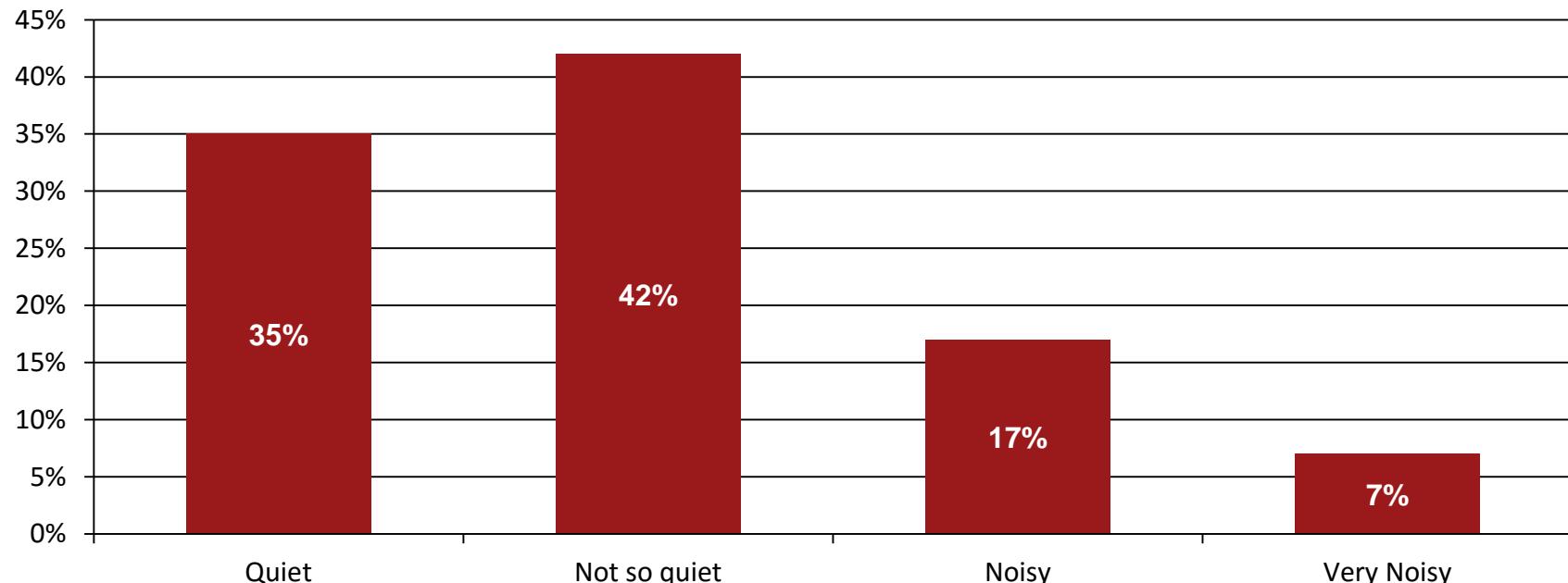
Experience with noise

Your experience of noise

How sensitive are you to noise in your own neighbourhood?



Noise in your neighbourhood

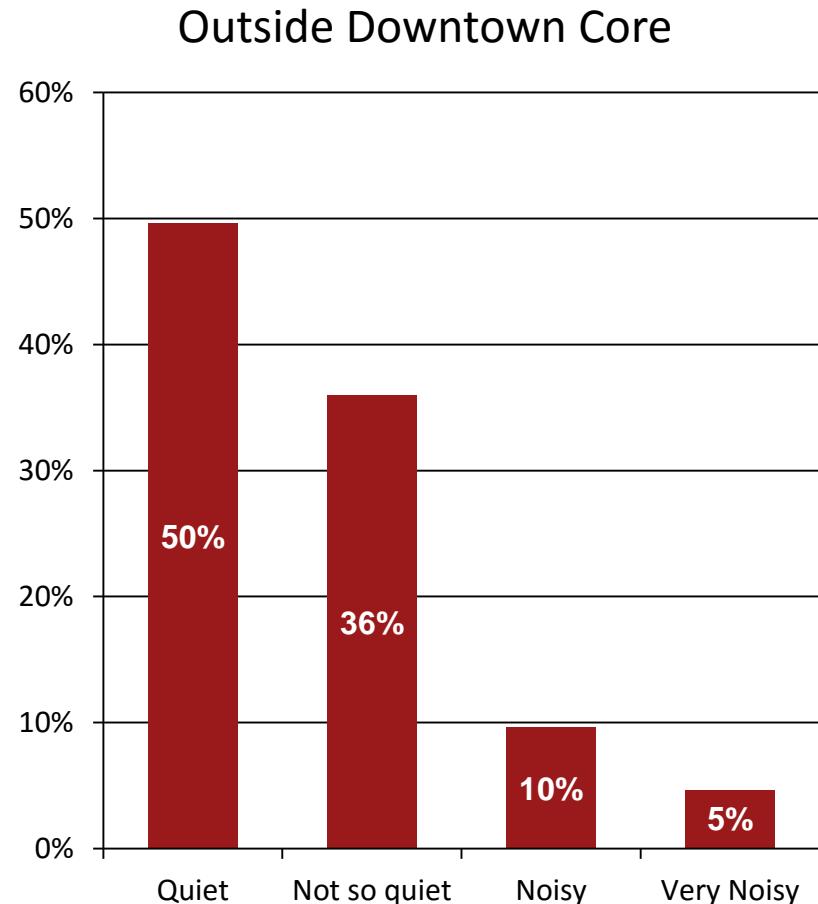
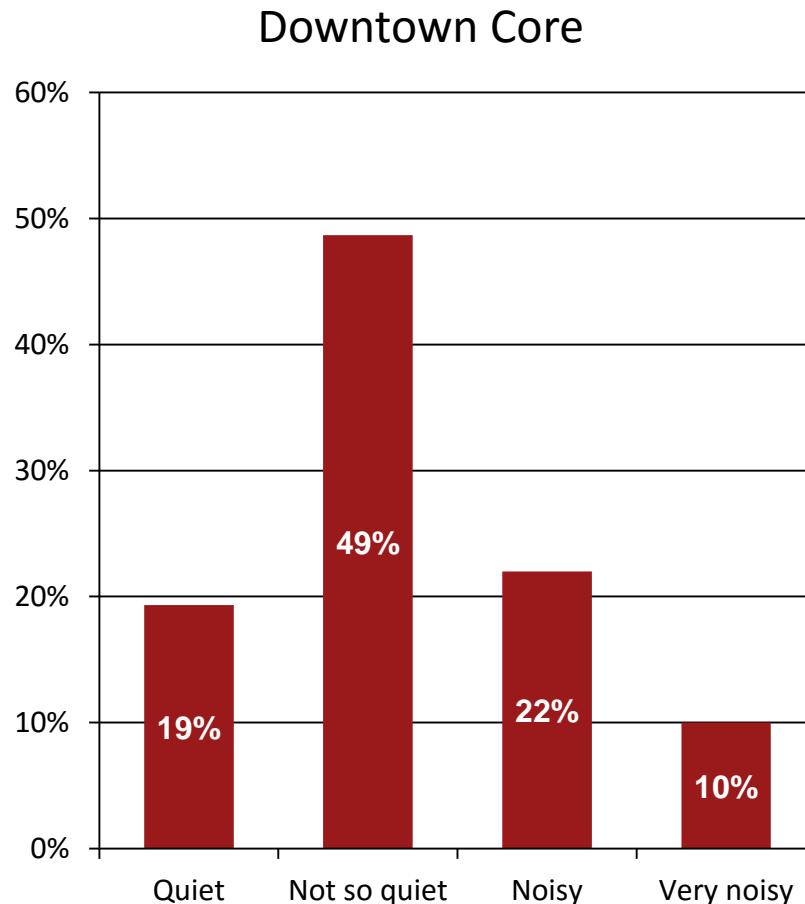


Q12. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all sensitive and 10 being very sensitive, how sensitive are you to noise in your own neighbourhood?

Q11. Now, thinking about the neighbourhood that you live in, would you say that it is quiet, not so quiet, noisy or very noisy?

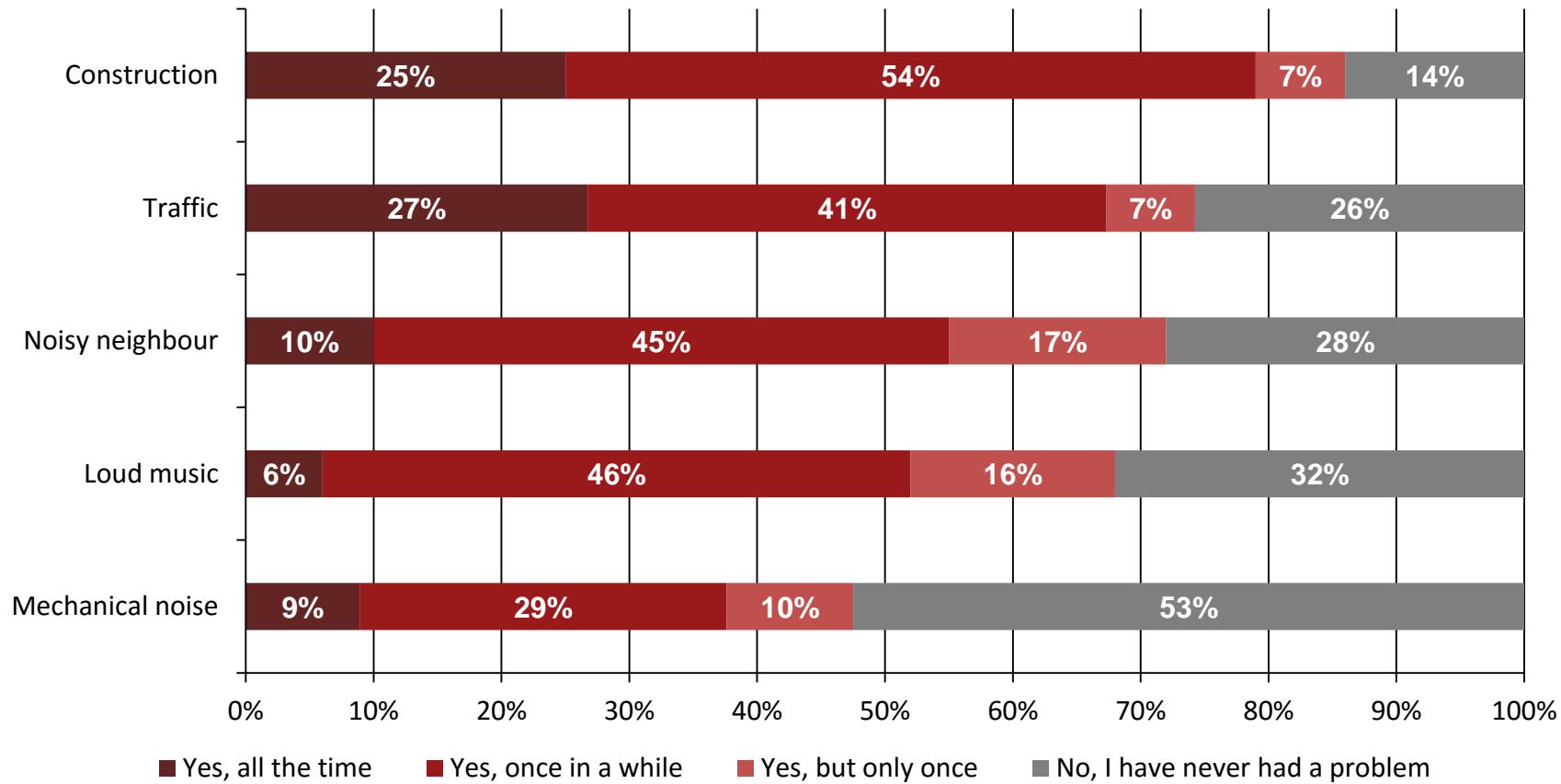
Your experience of noise: by Region

Those in the downtown core were **less than half as likely** to say their neighbourhoods were **quiet**, and **at least twice as likely** to say their neighbourhoods were **noisy or very noisy**.



Issues with Noise Disturbance

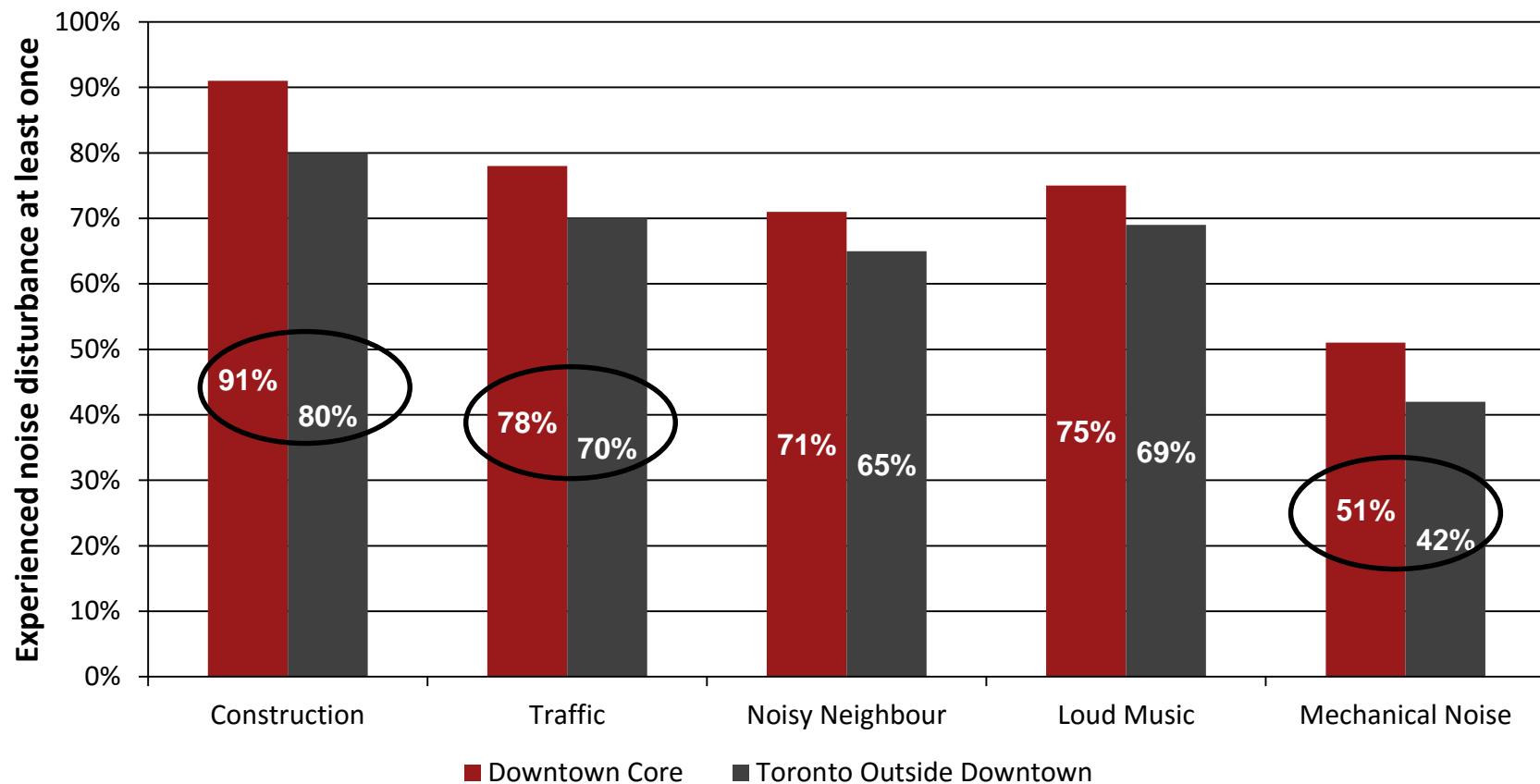
More than half of Torontonians have **had issues** with noise from **construction (79%), traffic (68%), neighbours (55%) and loud music (52%)**.



Q13. Have you ever had an issue with a noise disturbance of this kind yourself?

Issues with Noise Disturbance: By Region

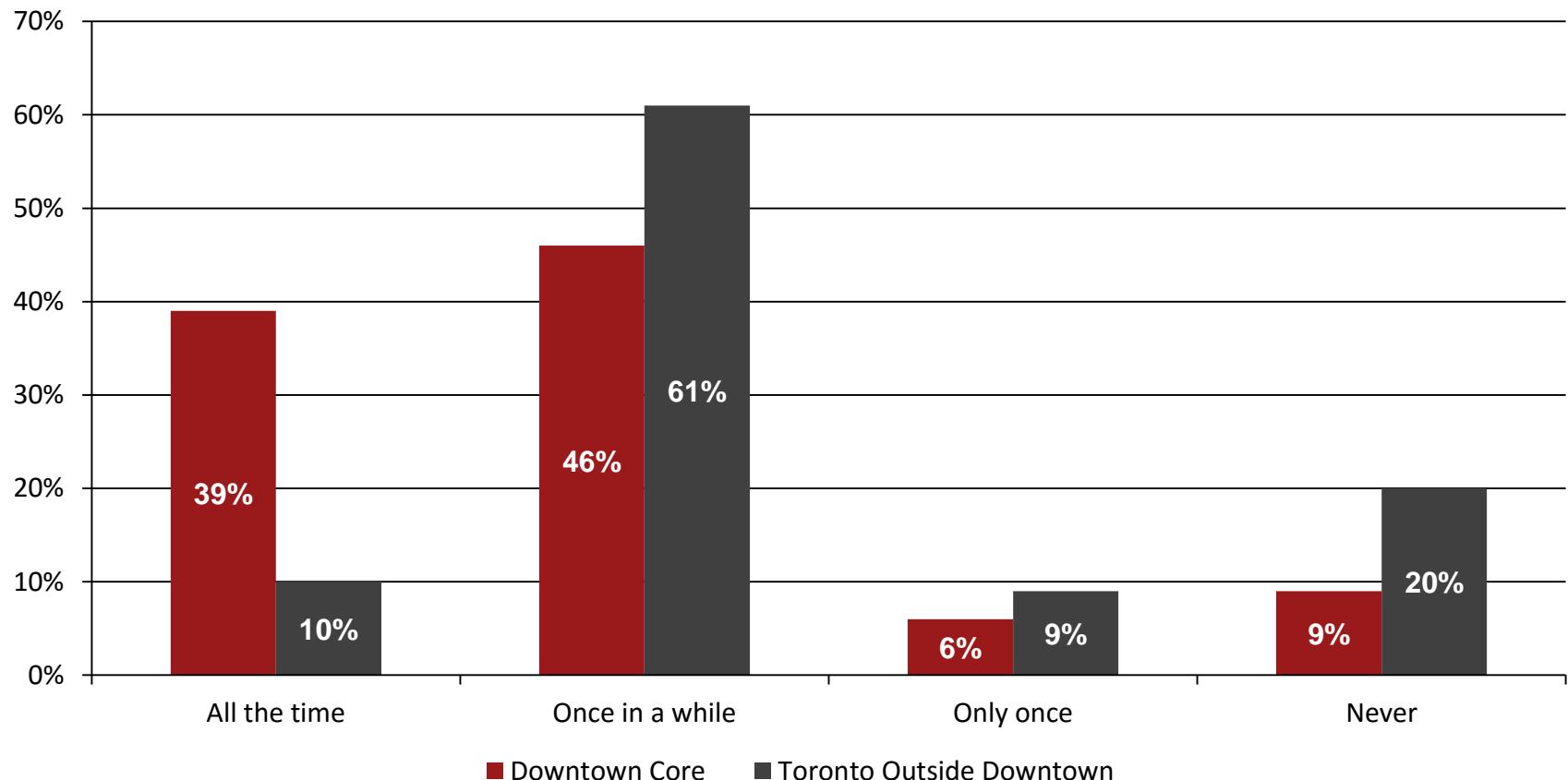
Residents of the Downtown Core were more likely to have had problems with noise disturbances, and were specifically more likely to have been disturbed by Construction, Traffic, or Mechanical Noise.



Q13. Have you ever had an issue with a noise disturbance of this kind yourself?

Noise Disturbance from Construction: By Region

As well as having more issues with construction, residents of the Downtown Core were more likely to have chronic problems with construction—**4 in 10 have issues all the time**.

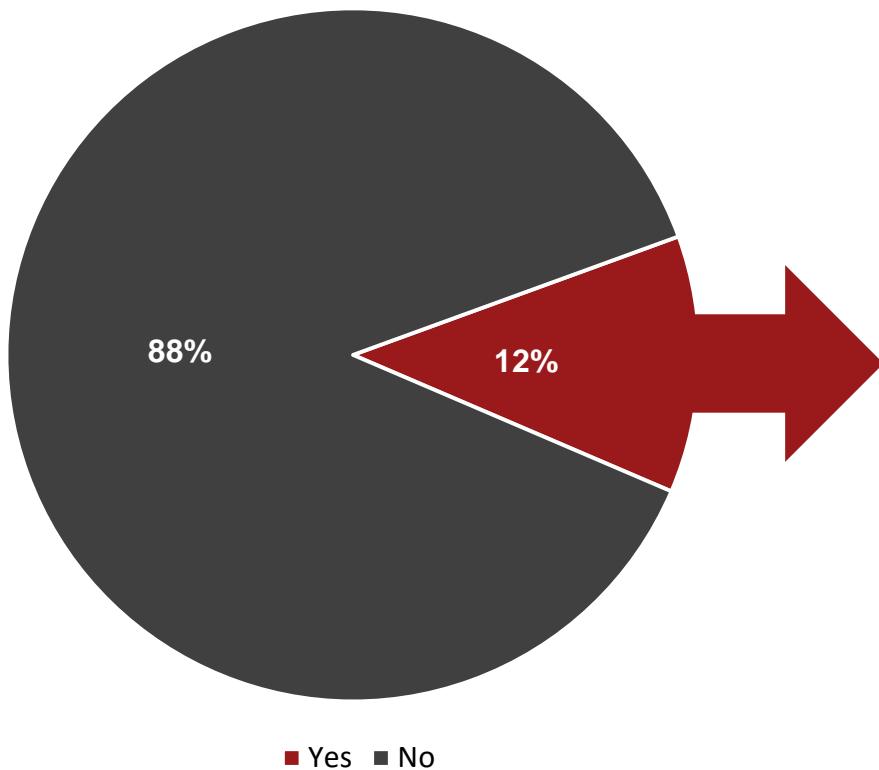


Q13. Have you ever had an issue with a noise disturbance of this kind yourself?

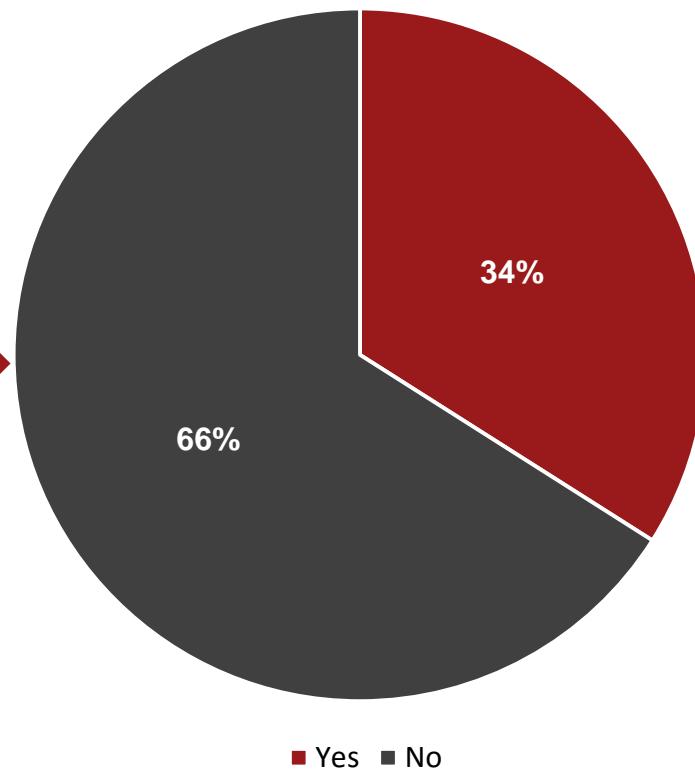
Complaints and Satisfaction

Few have called to complain, (only 12%), and majority who have called were dissatisfied with how the complaint was resolved.

Did you ever call 311 to complain about the noise?



Were you satisfied with how your complaint was resolved?

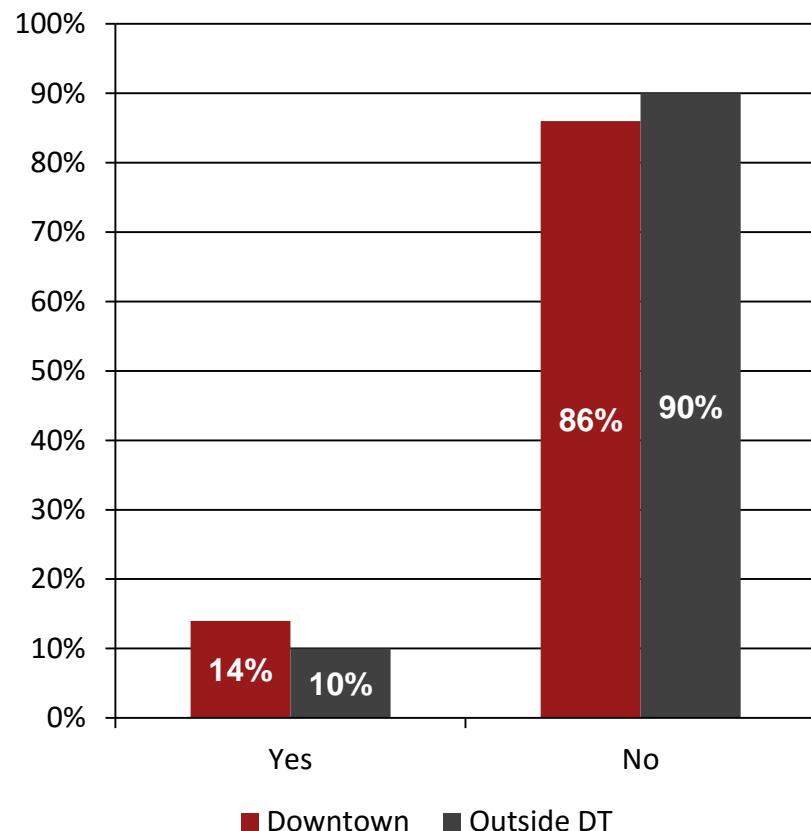


Q14. Did you ever call 311 (*City of Toronto) to complain about the noise? (N=572)
Q16. If yes in 14 above, were you satisfied with how your complaint was resolved? (N=67)

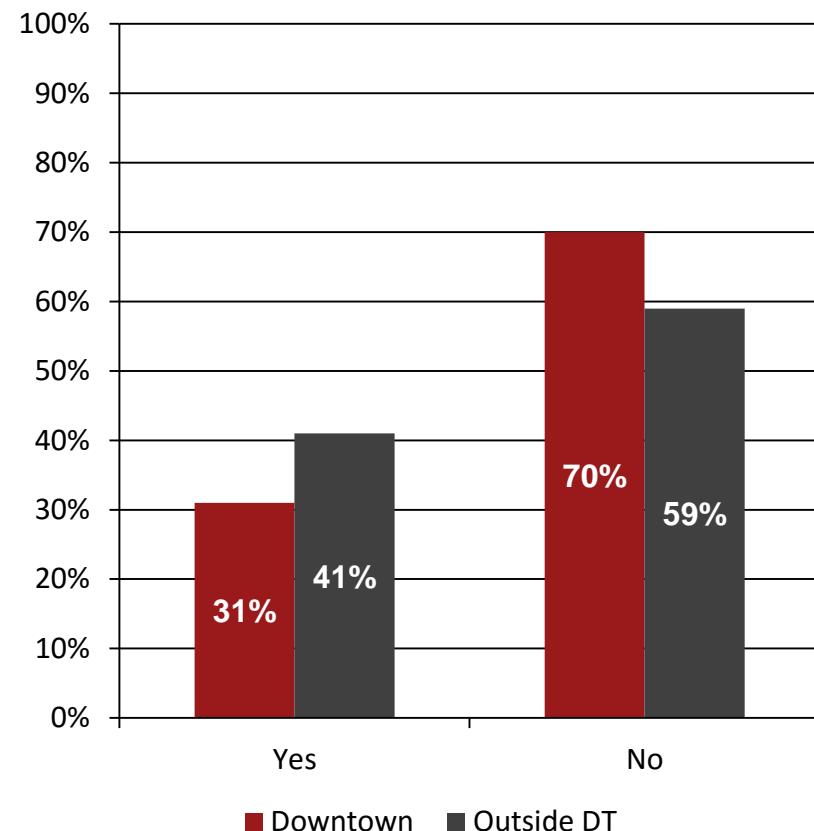
Complaints and Satisfaction: By Region

Residents of the Downtown Core were slightly more likely to have reported noise disturbances, and they were also less satisfied.

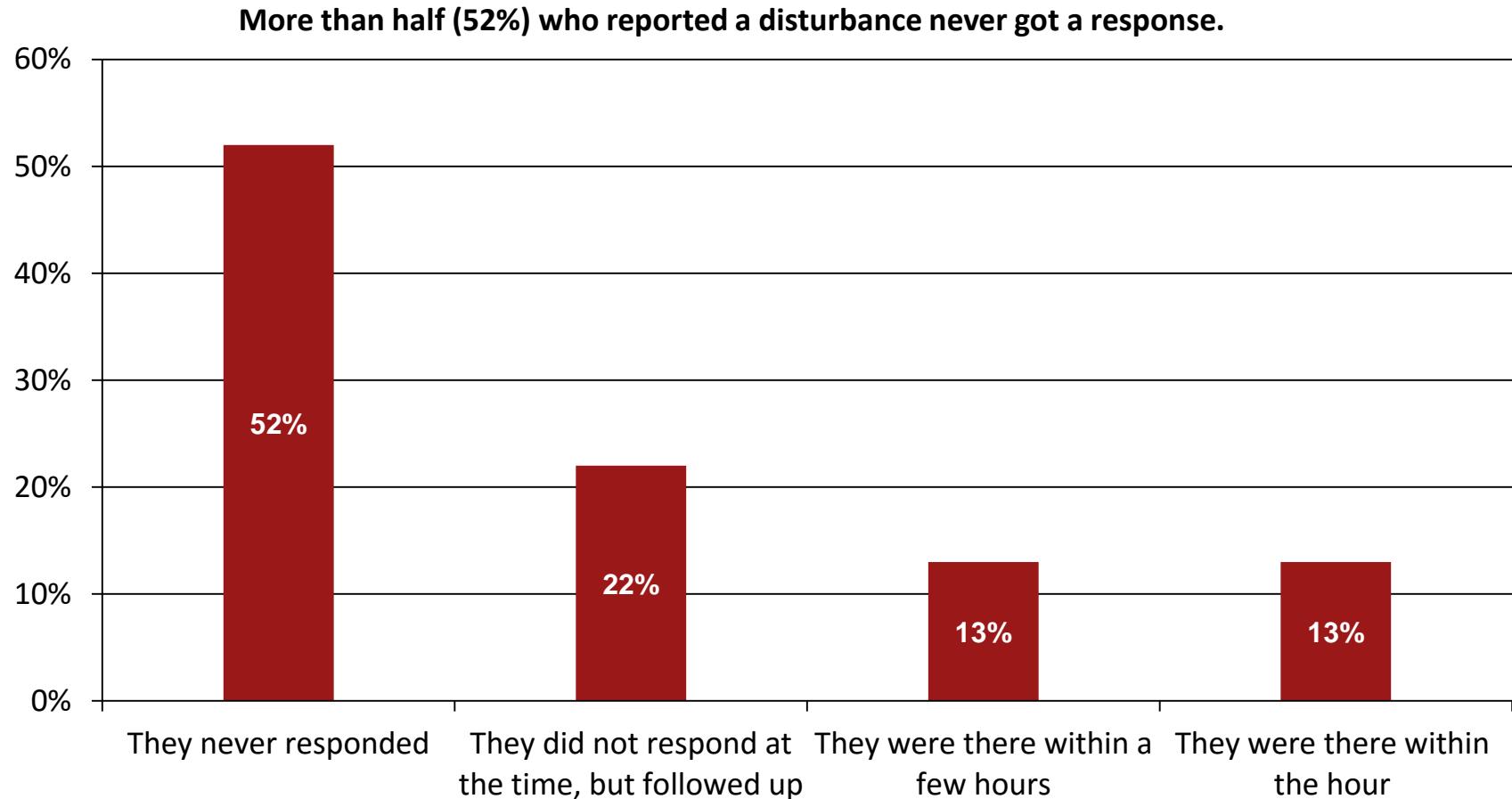
Did you call 311 to complain?



Were you satisfied?



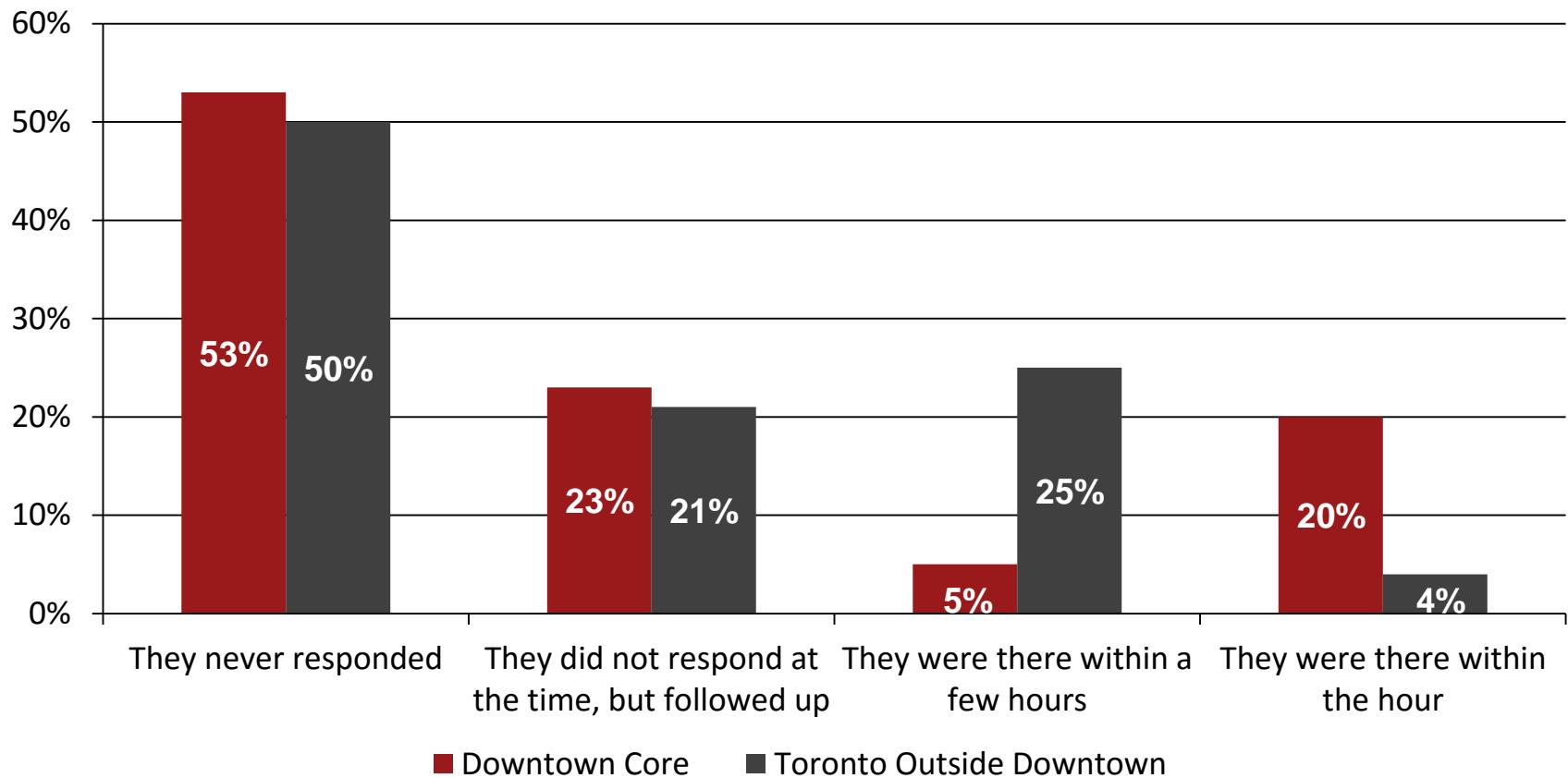
How long did the bylaw officer(s) take to address your concern?



Q15. If yes in 14 above, how long did the bylaw officer(s) take to address your concern? (N=68)

How long did the ByLaw Officer(s) take: By Region

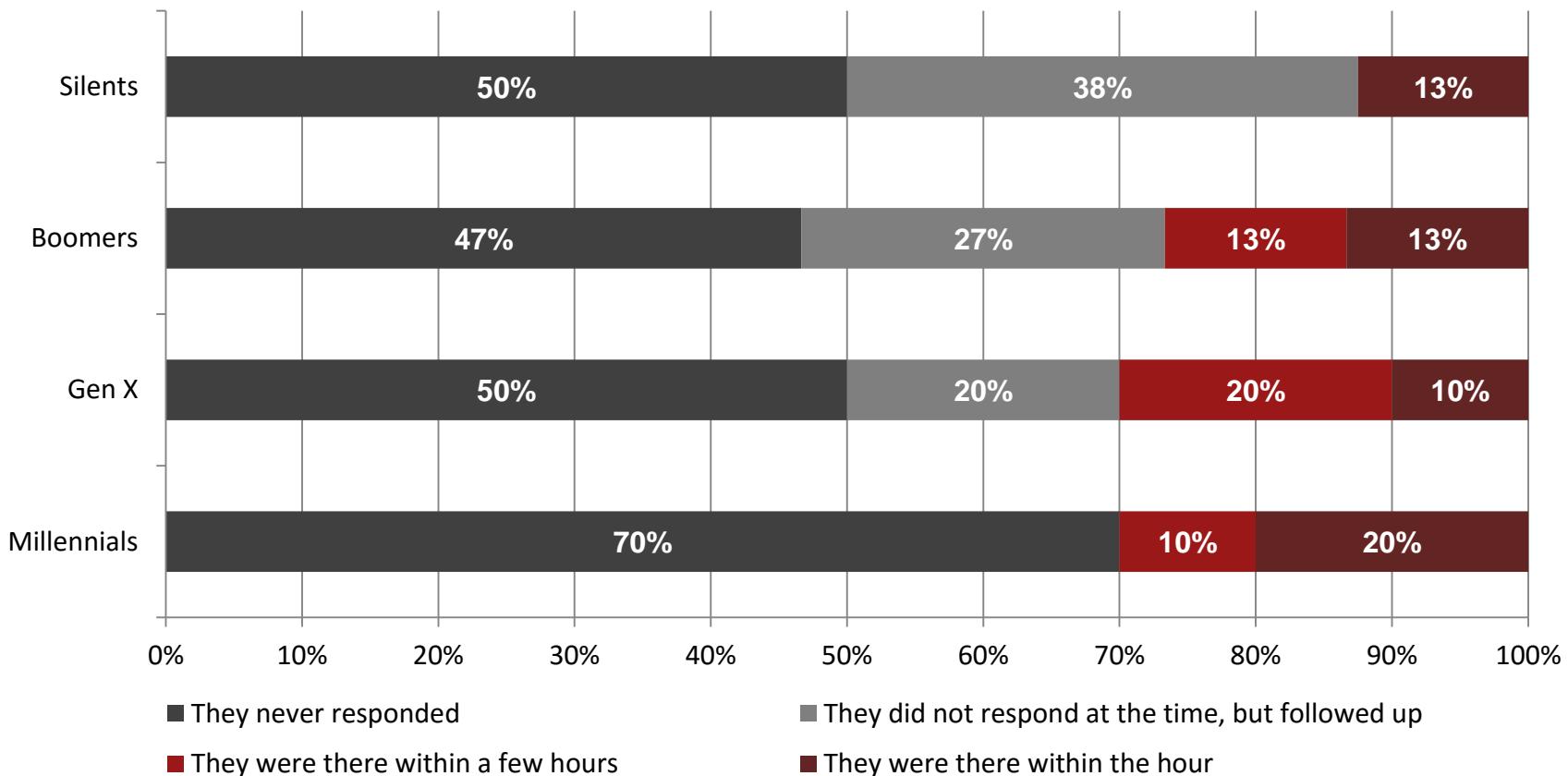
Residents of the Downtown Core were **more likely to get a response within the hour**, compared with those living outside the core.



Q15. If yes in 14 above, how long did the ByLaw Officer(s) take to address your concern? (N=68)

How long did the ByLaw Officer(s) take: By Age

Millennials were much more likely to get a response within the hour, but were also significantly less likely to get a response.



Q15. If yes in 14 above, how long did the ByLaw Officers take to address your concern? (N=68)



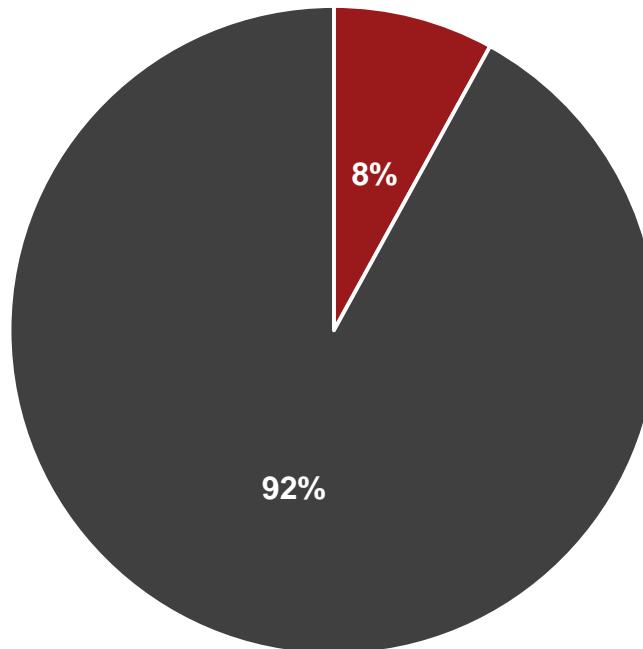
Knowledge of current bylaws

Awareness of noise regulation

How knowledgeable are you about noise bylaws in Toronto?



■ Very knowledgeable ■ Somewhat knowledgeable ■ Neutral ■ Not very knowledgeable ■ Not at all knowledgeable



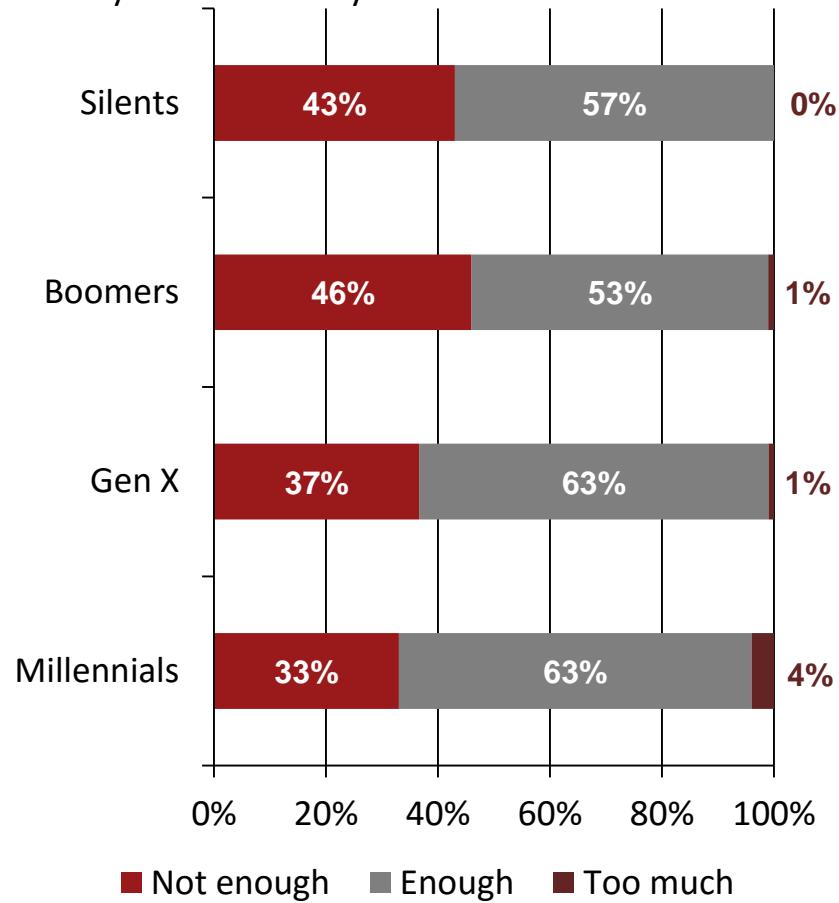
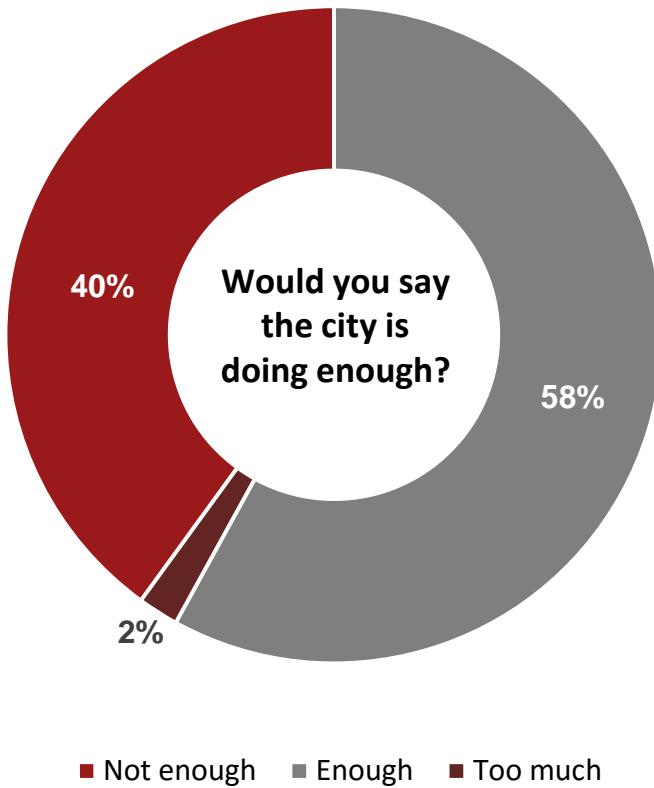
■ Yes ■ No

Were you aware
that the
municipal
government is in
the process of
revising noise
bylaws?

Q17. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all knowledgeable and 10 being very knowledgeable, how knowledgeable would you say you are when it comes to noise bylaws in Toronto?
Q19. Were you aware that the municipal government is in the process of revising noise bylaws?

Assessment of noise regulation

Overall, although 6 in 10 Torontonians are satisfied with noise regulation, 40% say that the city is not doing enough. Boomers are the most likely to feel this way.



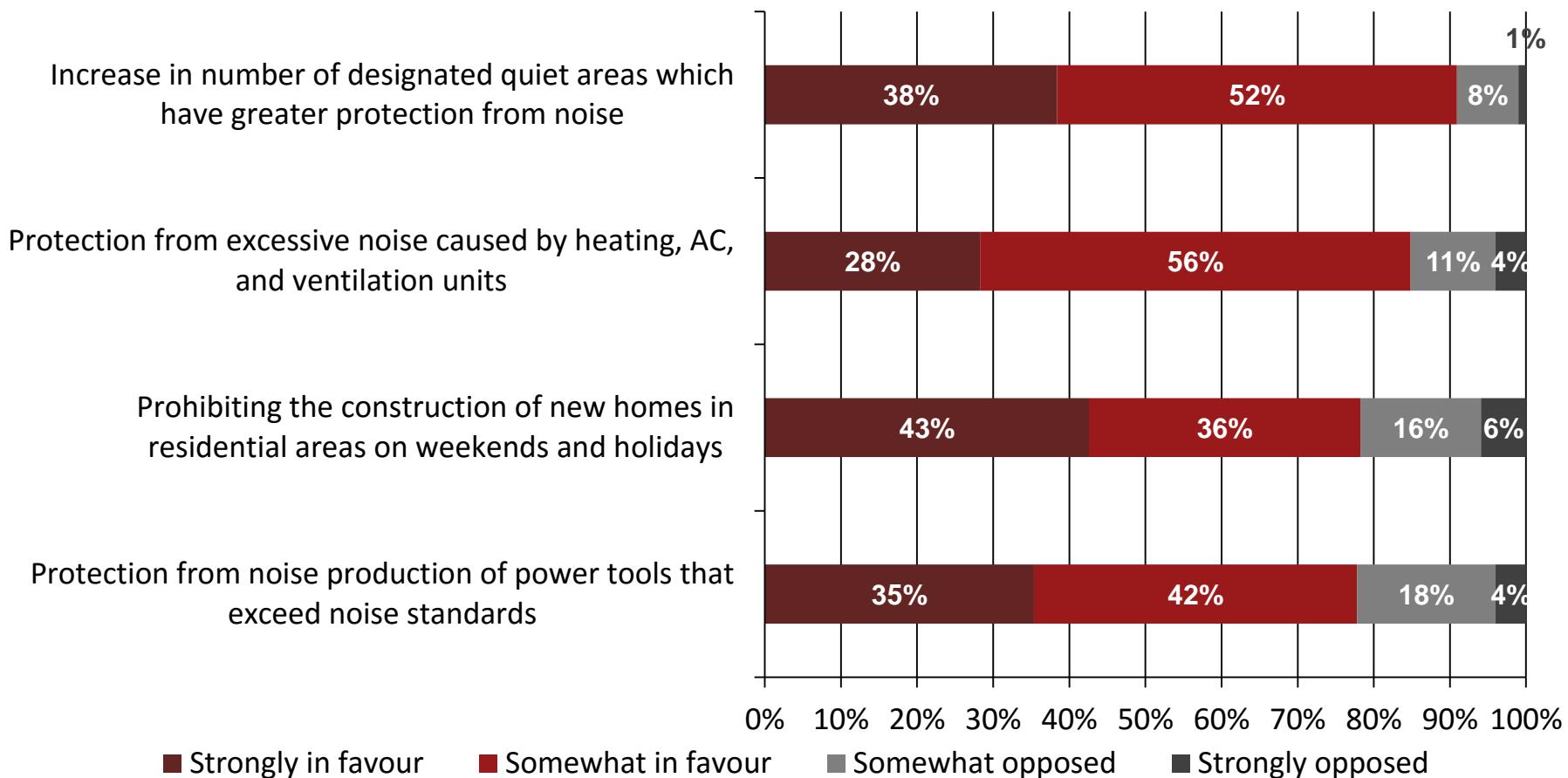
Q18. Generally speaking would you say that the city is doing not enough; enough; or too much to regulate noise in the city?

A large crowd of people with their hands raised in a concert setting, illuminated by blue and purple stage lights.

Support for Change

Increased Protections

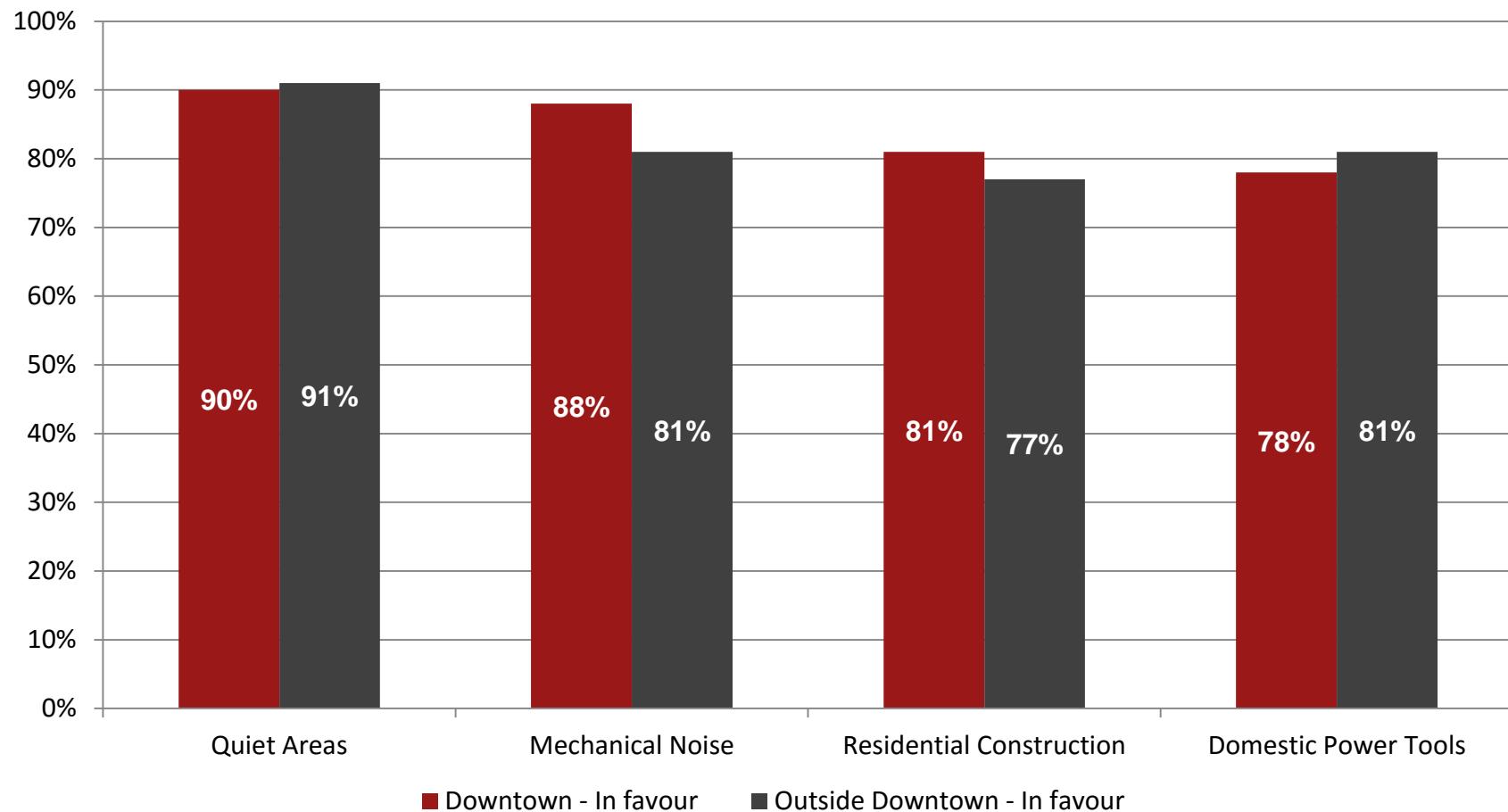
Overwhelming support for increased noise protections.



Q20. Here is a list of some existing bylaws and potential bylaw changes. Are you in strongly in favour, somewhat in favour, somewhat opposed, or strongly opposed to these initiatives?

Increased Protections: By Region

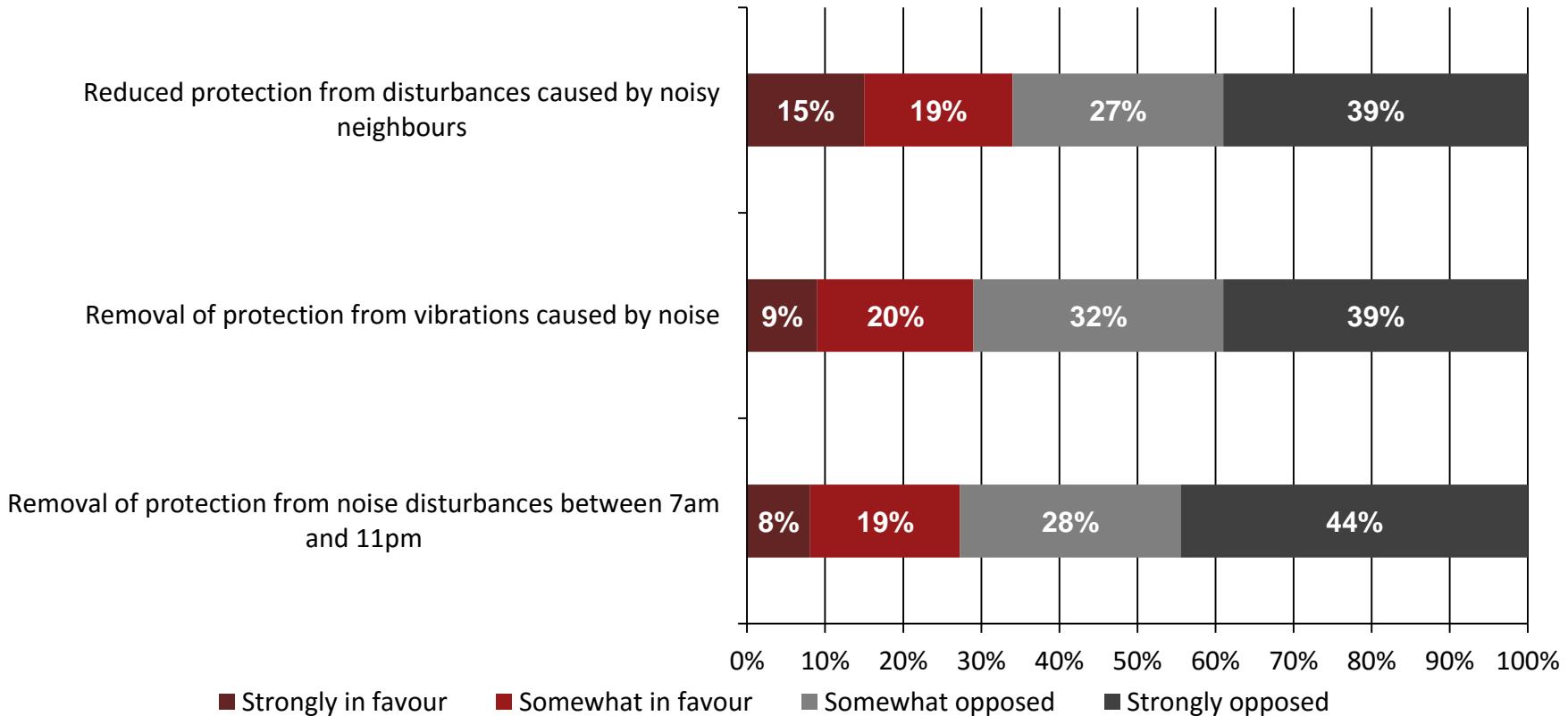
There was no significant difference in support for increased protections depending on reg.



Q20. Here is a list of some existing bylaws and potential bylaw changes. Are you in strongly in favour, somewhat in favour, somewhat opposed, or strongly opposed to these initiatives?

Reduced protections

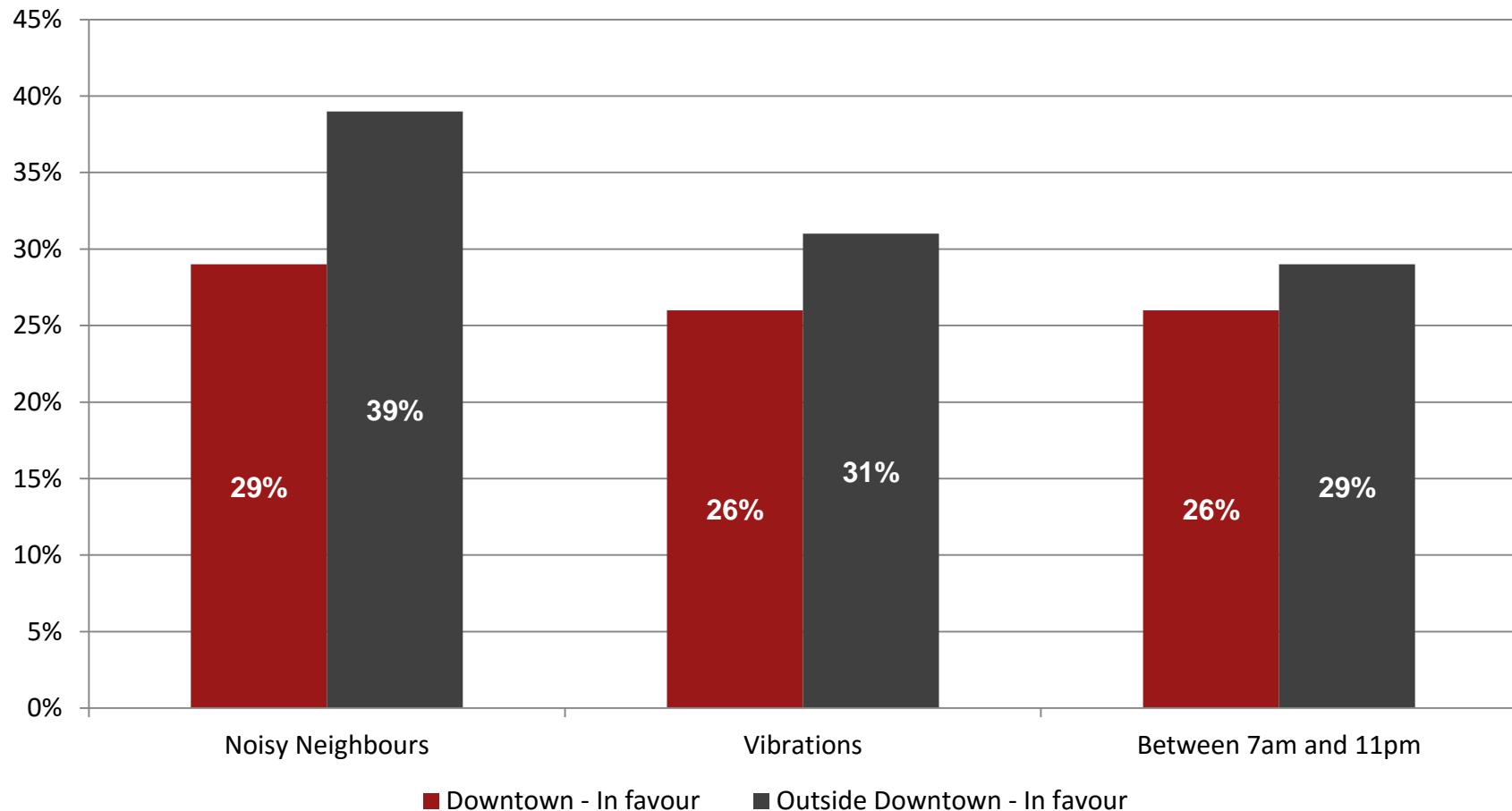
Respondents were much less supportive of any reduction in protection.



Q20. Here is a list of some existing bylaws and potential bylaw changes. Are you in strongly in favour, somewhat in favour, somewhat opposed, or strongly opposed to these initiatives?

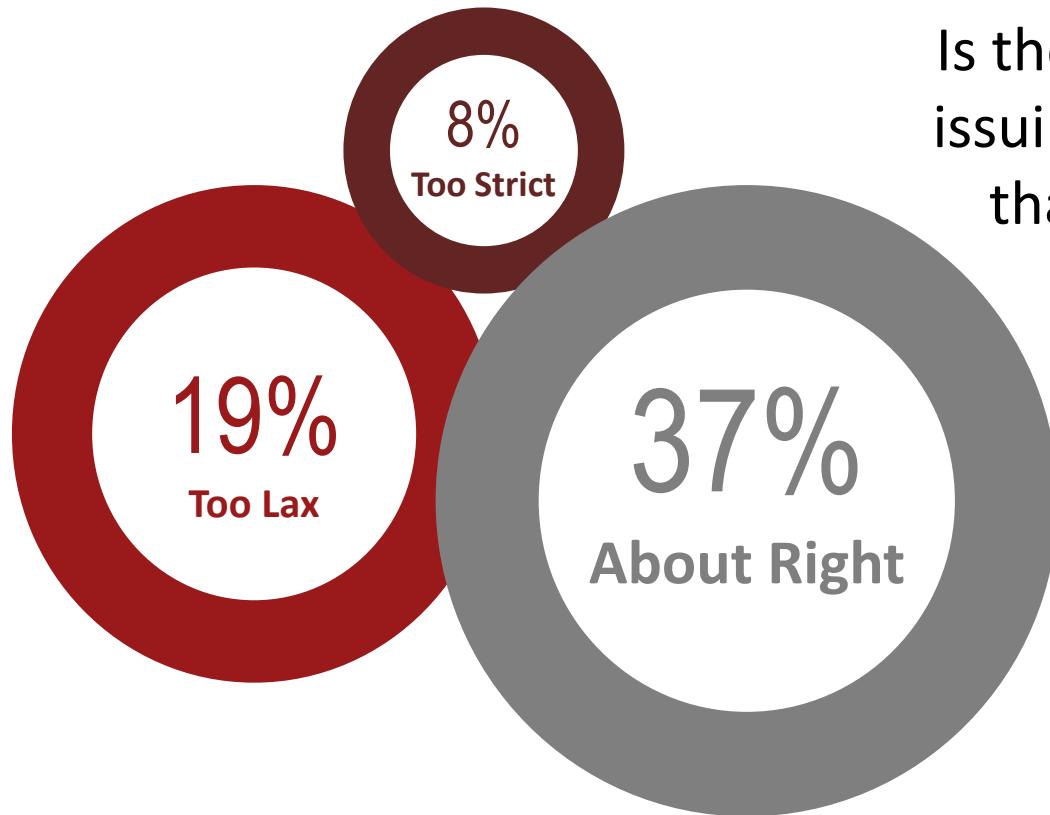
Reduced Protections: By Region

Residents of the Downtown Core were less supportive of reduced protections from noisy neighbours.



Q20. Here is a list of some existing bylaws and potential bylaw changes. Are you in strongly in favour, somewhat in favour, somewhat opposed, or strongly opposed to these initiatives?

Permits for Noisy Events

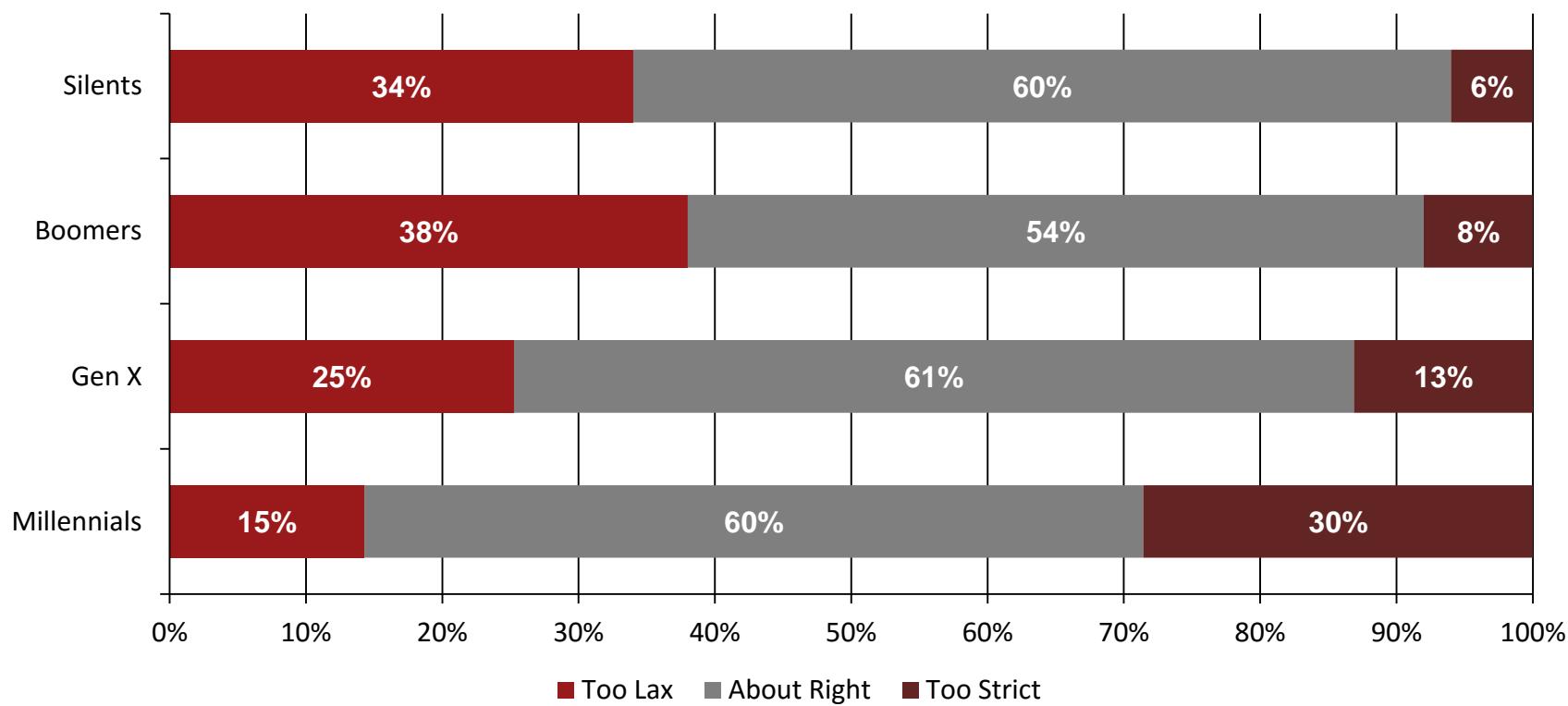


Is the city being too lax in issuing permits for events that will violate noise restrictions?

Permits for Noisy Events: By Age

Older Torontonians were not less satisfied with existing regulations, but were much less likely to say they are too strict, and more likely to say they are too lax.

Is the city is being too lax in issuing permits for events that will violate noise restrictions?

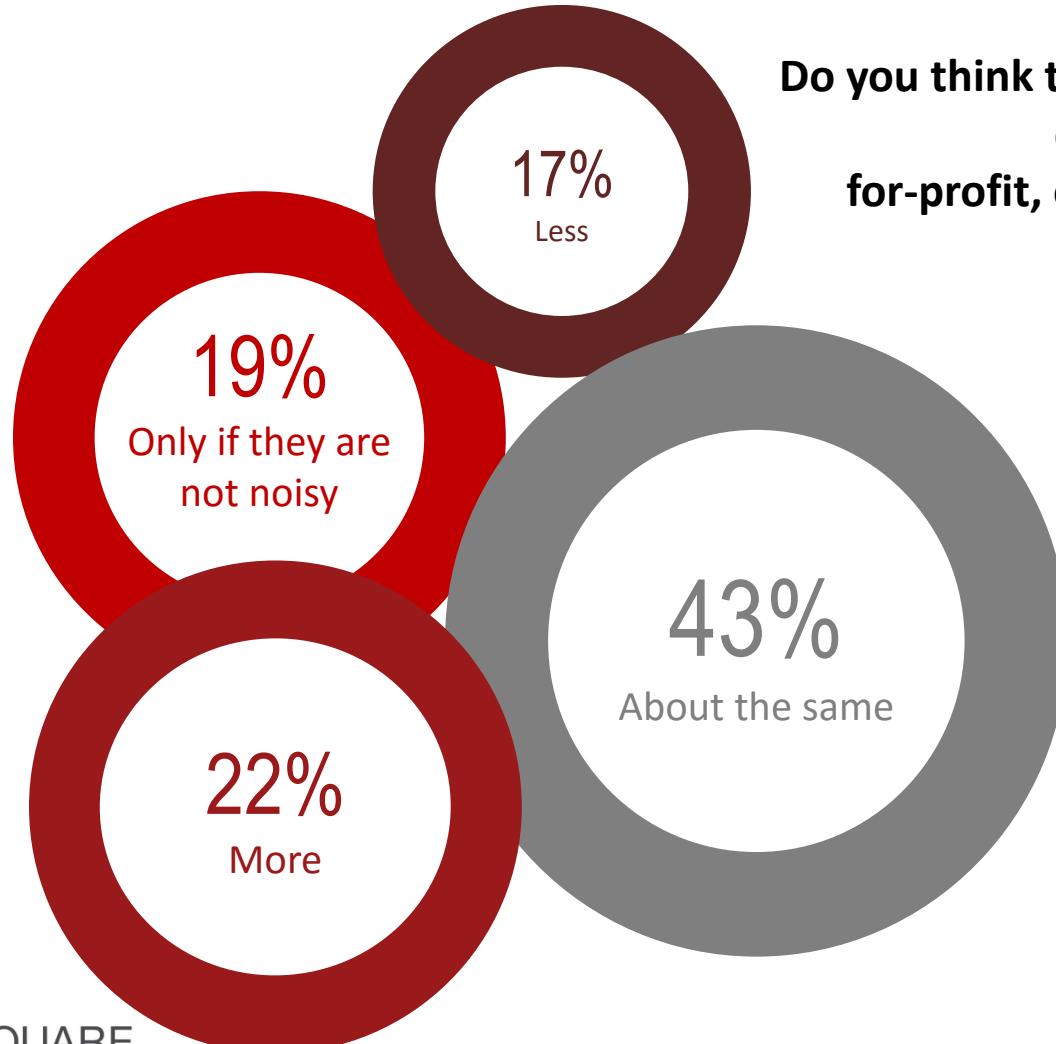


Q21. When it comes to issuing permits for special events that will violate noise restrictions, do you think the city is currently being too lax, too strict or about right?

Q22. Do you think the city should allow more commercial, for-profit, events in public parks?

For-Profit Events in Public Parks

6 in 10 do not want more events, and a further 2 in 10 qualify that they want more only if they are not noisy.



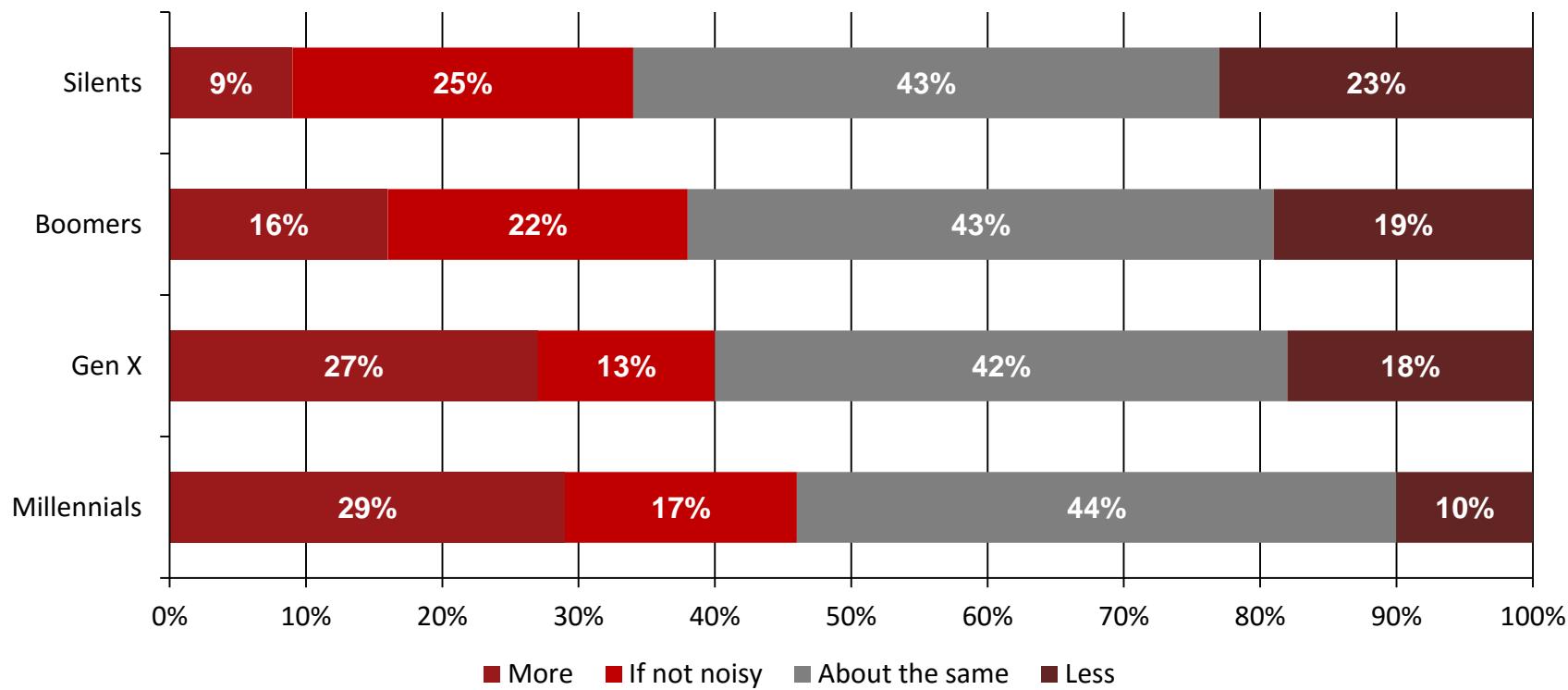
Do you think the city should allow more commercial, for-profit, events in public parks?

Q22. Do you think the city should allow more commercial, for-profit, events in public parks?

Attitudes towards events: By Age

Older Torontonians were not less satisfied with existing regulations, but were much more likely to say there should be less events, much less likely to say there should be more, and more likely to qualify that they should not be noisy.

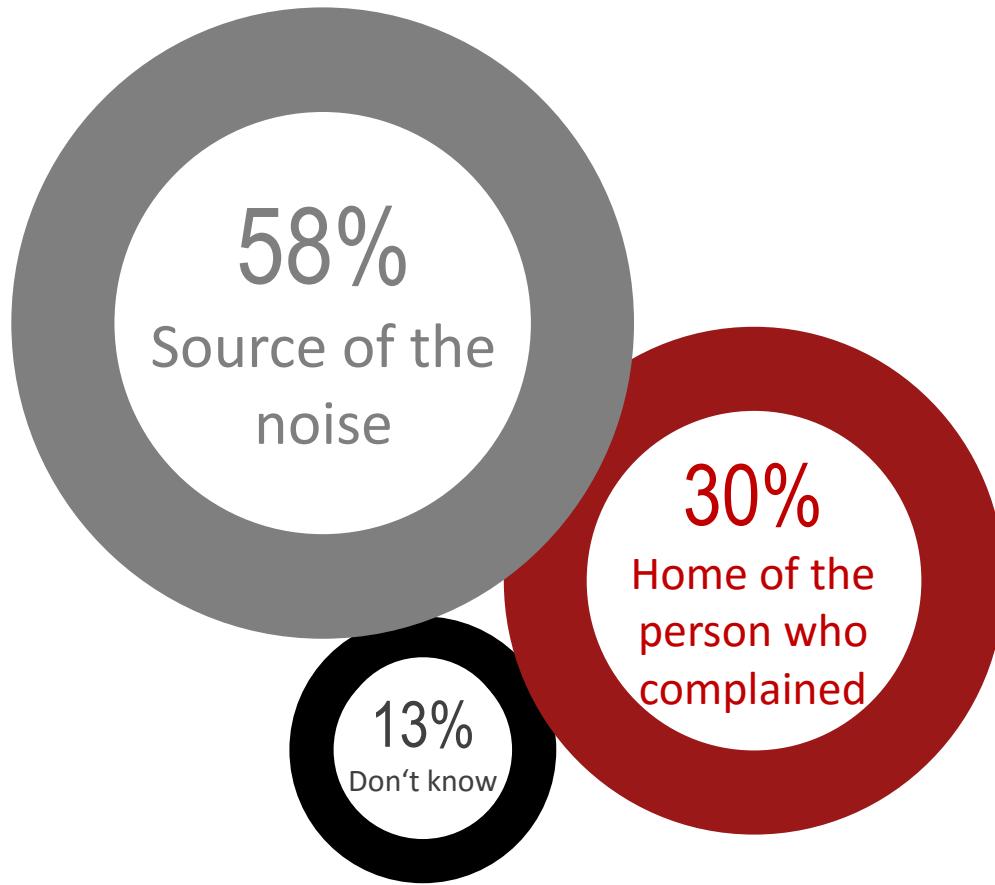
Do you think the city should allow more commercial, for-profit, events in public parks?



Q21. When it comes to issuing permits for special events that will violate noise restrictions, do you think the city is currently being too lax, too strict or about right?

Q22. Do you think the city should allow more commercial, for-profit, events in public parks?

When investigating a noise complaint, where should bylaw officers visit?

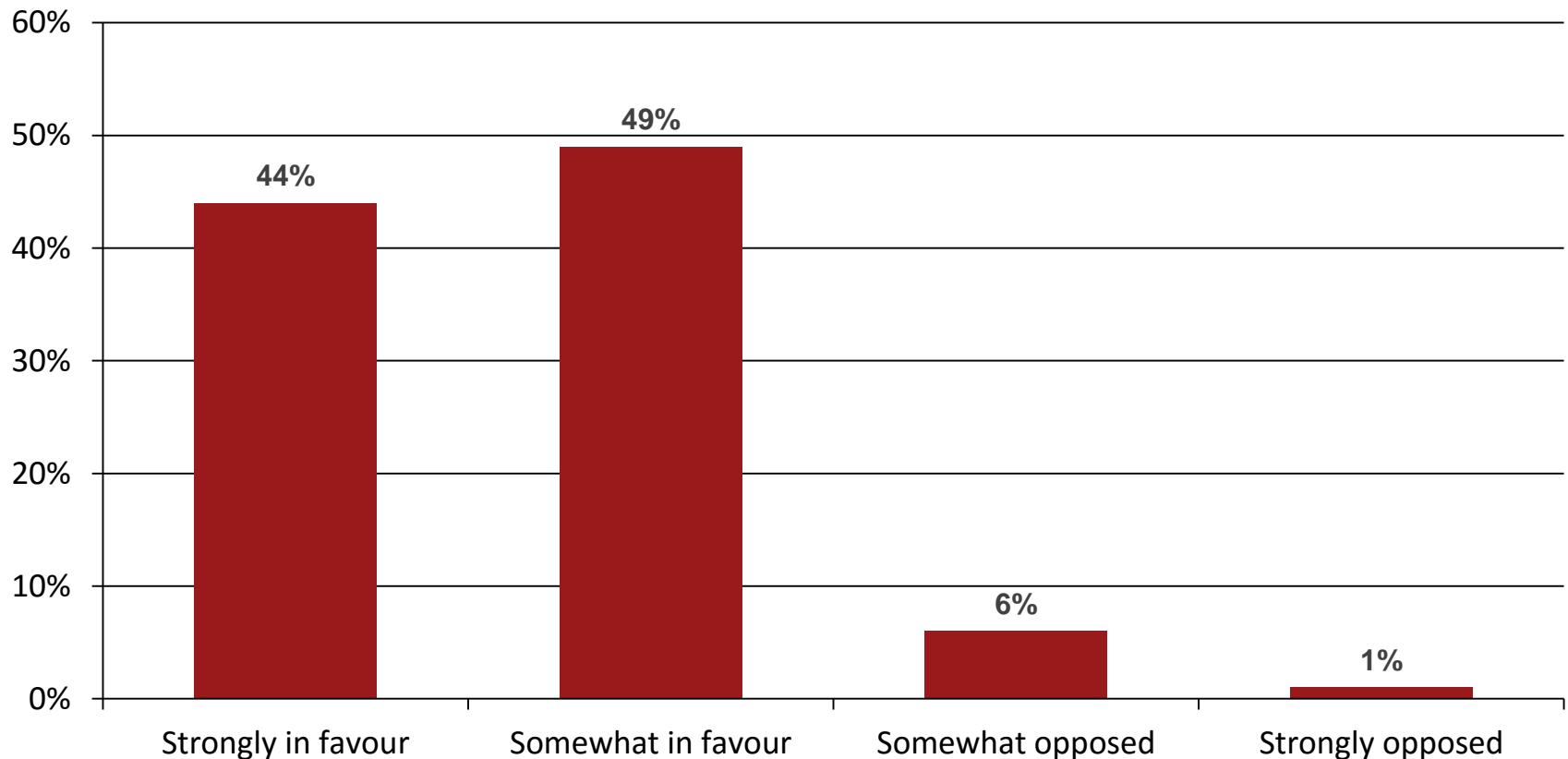


More than half (58%) were satisfied with current policy of investigating noise complaints at the source of the noise, and only 3 in 10 (30%) were dissatisfied.

Q23. Currently when someone calls in a noise complaint, the City visit the source of the noise to investigate; but this could change to have the City bylaw officers visiting home of the person who complained to measure the level of disturbance. Where do you think the bylaw officers *should* visit?

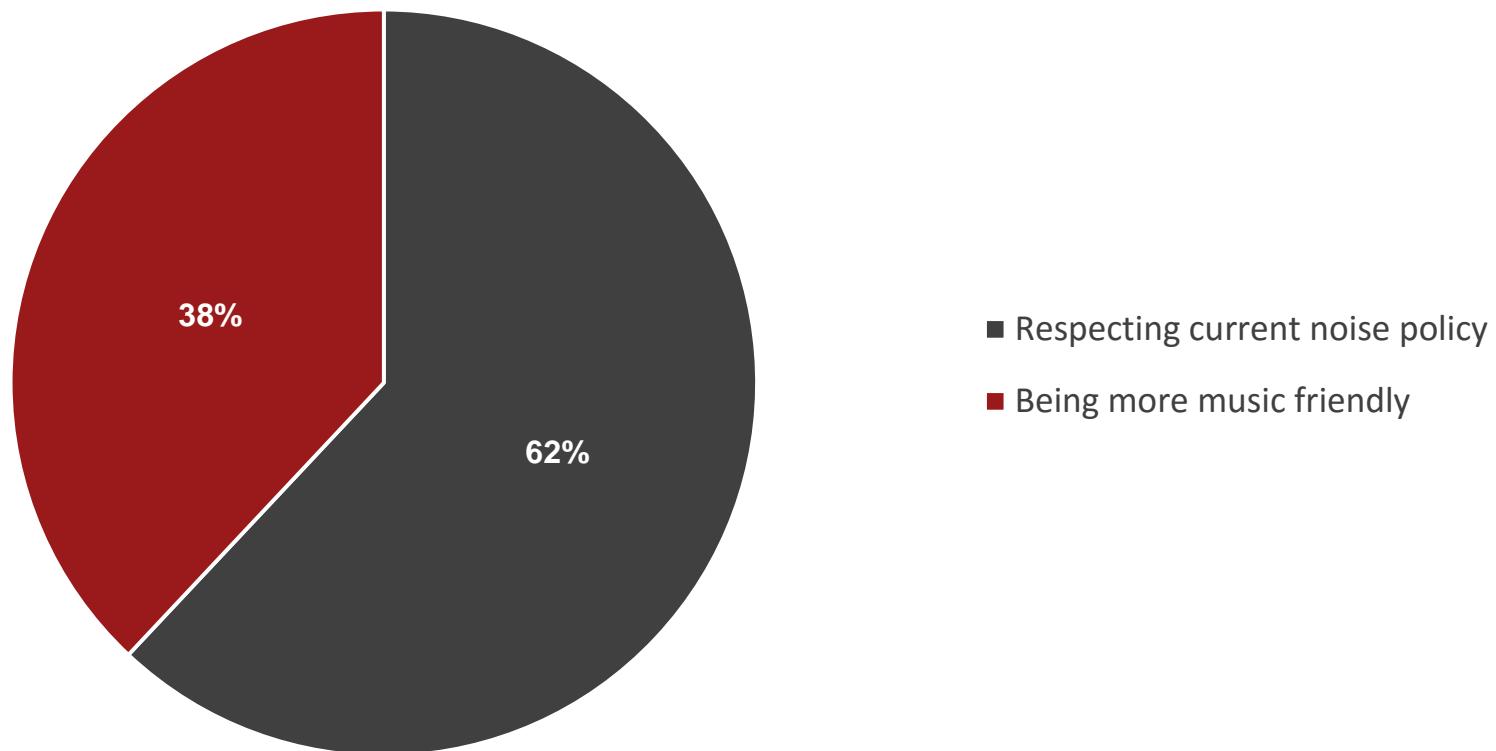
Noise Mitigation Plan for Contractors?

Would you be in favour or opposed to the requirement of contractors to develop a noise mitigation plan as part of the approval process for construction?



Noise control vs. Music friendly?

What do you think is more important - being music friendly or respecting current noise policy?

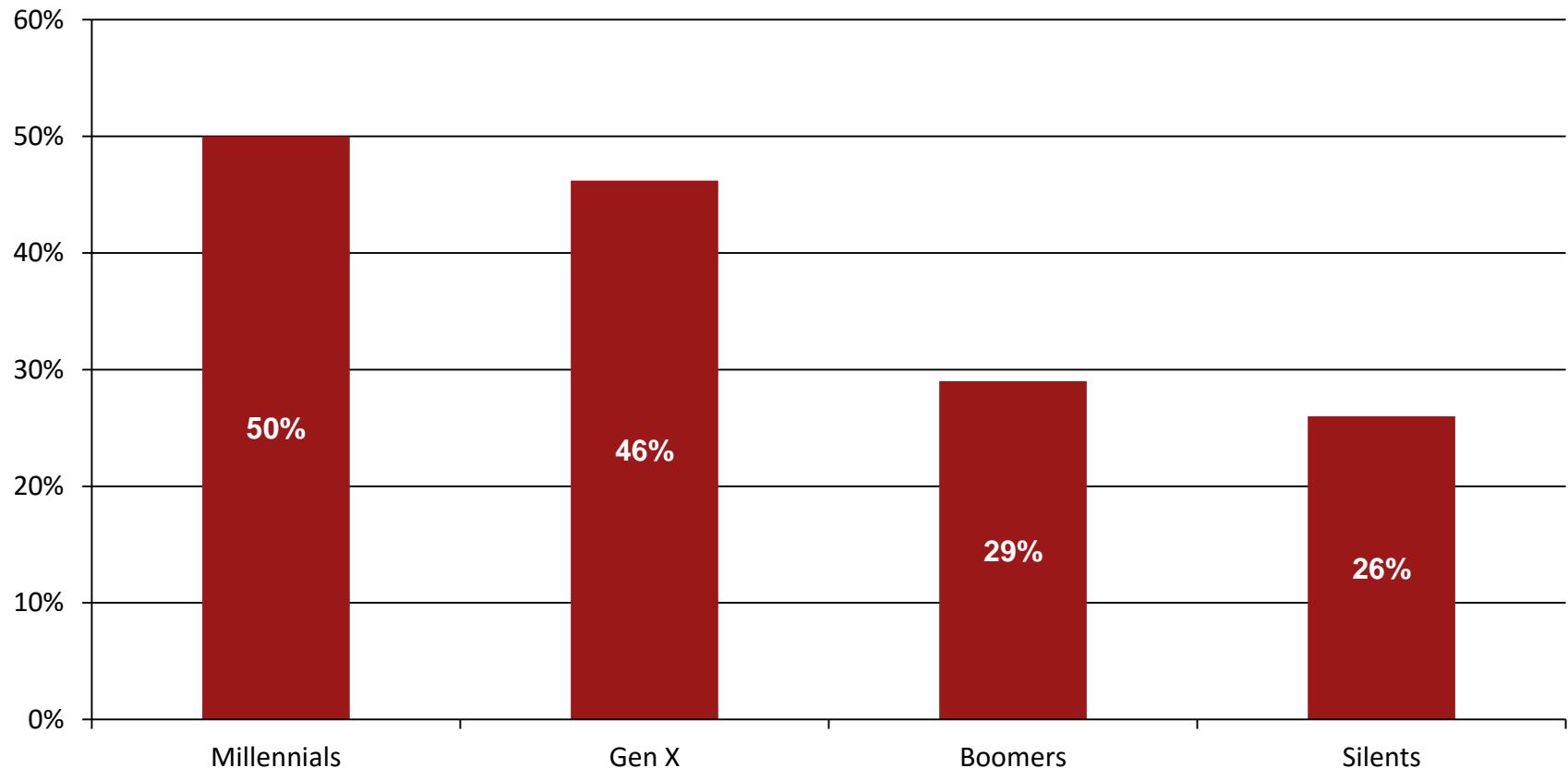


Q23. Some say that Toronto must become more relaxed about its noise violation policy in order to be known as a music friendly city. What do you think is more important—being music friendly, or respecting current noise policy?

Music Friendly: By Age

Not surprisingly, older Torontonians were more likely to favour resecting current noise policy over being more music friendly. (Millennials) almost twice as likely as those over 70 to want a more music friendly city, but they too are evenly split on the issue.

Being more music friendly



Q23. Some say that Toronto must become more relaxed about its noise violation policy in order to be known as a music friendly city. What do you think is more important—being music friendly, or respecting current noise policy?

A woman with long brown hair and bangs, wearing a white cable-knit sweater, stands outdoors. She has her hands near her face, with her fingers touching her cheeks. The background is blurred, showing a red structure and some greenery.

Key Findings

Downtown vs. Outside the Core

Overall Noise Levels

Those outside the Downtown Core were much more likely to describe their own neighbourhoods as quiet.

Construction

91% in the Downtown Core had experienced noise disturbances from construction at least once, compared to 80% from outside Downtown. As well, residents of the Downtown Core were also much more likely to describe the problem as chronic (All the time) rather than occasional (Once in a while) or exceptional (Only once).

Response time

Those in the Downtown Core were not more likely to get responses when they called 311—roughly half of the calls go unanswered—but responses were more likely to be within the hour in the core.

Other noise

The downtown core was also more likely to experience noise disturbances from Traffic and Mechanical Noise.

Events and Music

The Downtown Core is more supportive of making the city music friendly and having more events.

Key Overall Findings

1

Noise is an important issue: The majority of Torontonians are interested in the issue of noise control (72%). This is not altogether surprising as fewer than half describe Toronto as a quiet city (48%), and 7 in 10 say that having a quiet city is important.

2

Majority are affected by noise issues: Drilling down to look at experiences with noise we find that the majority have had regular issues with noise, but few have ever lodged a complaint. Those who call are not likely to be satisfied, and more than half never get a response at all.

3

Lack of Awareness: Few feel that they are knowledgeable when it comes to noise regulations, and only 8% were aware that the municipal government is in the process of revising the bylaws.

4

Overwhelming support for greater protection from noise: 4 in 10 say that the city is not doing enough when it comes to noise, and an overwhelming majority support greater protections from noise, and place greater importance on respecting current noise protection over making Toronto a more music friendly city.

THANK YOU

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