

# PORI

HONG KONG PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

香港民意研究所

## *Survey on People's Attitudes towards Climate Change*

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# Background

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- In July 2019, Civic Exchange commissioned Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute (HKPORI) to conduct “Survey on People’s Attitudes towards Climate Change”, with the following objectives:
  - To gauge Hong Kong people’s understanding of global climate change;
  - To understand their attitudes and actions towards climate change;
  - To understand their views and willingness on tackling climate change; and
  - To understand which channels they would obtain information about climate change.
- HKPORI consulted Civic Exchange when designing the telephone survey questionnaire, but HKPORI retained full autonomy in every aspect of the study and takes full responsibility for all findings reported.
- In addition to the telephone survey, a supplementary focus group study with four evening sessions was also conducted to collect some in-depth and elaborative views from the general public.

# Contact Information of Telephone Survey

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Date of survey:	August 16 to 28, 2019
Survey method:	Random telephone survey conducted by real interviewers
Target population:	Cantonese-speaking residents in Hong Kong of age 18 or above
Sample Size:	1,011 (including 503 landline and 508 mobile numbers)
Effective response rate:	68.4%
Sampling error:	Less than 1.6% (no more than +/-3.1% at 95% confidence level)
Weighting adjustment:	The raw figures were statistically weighted according to the latest gender, age, education and economic activity status distributions as reported by the Census & Statistics Department.

# Contact Information of Focus Groups

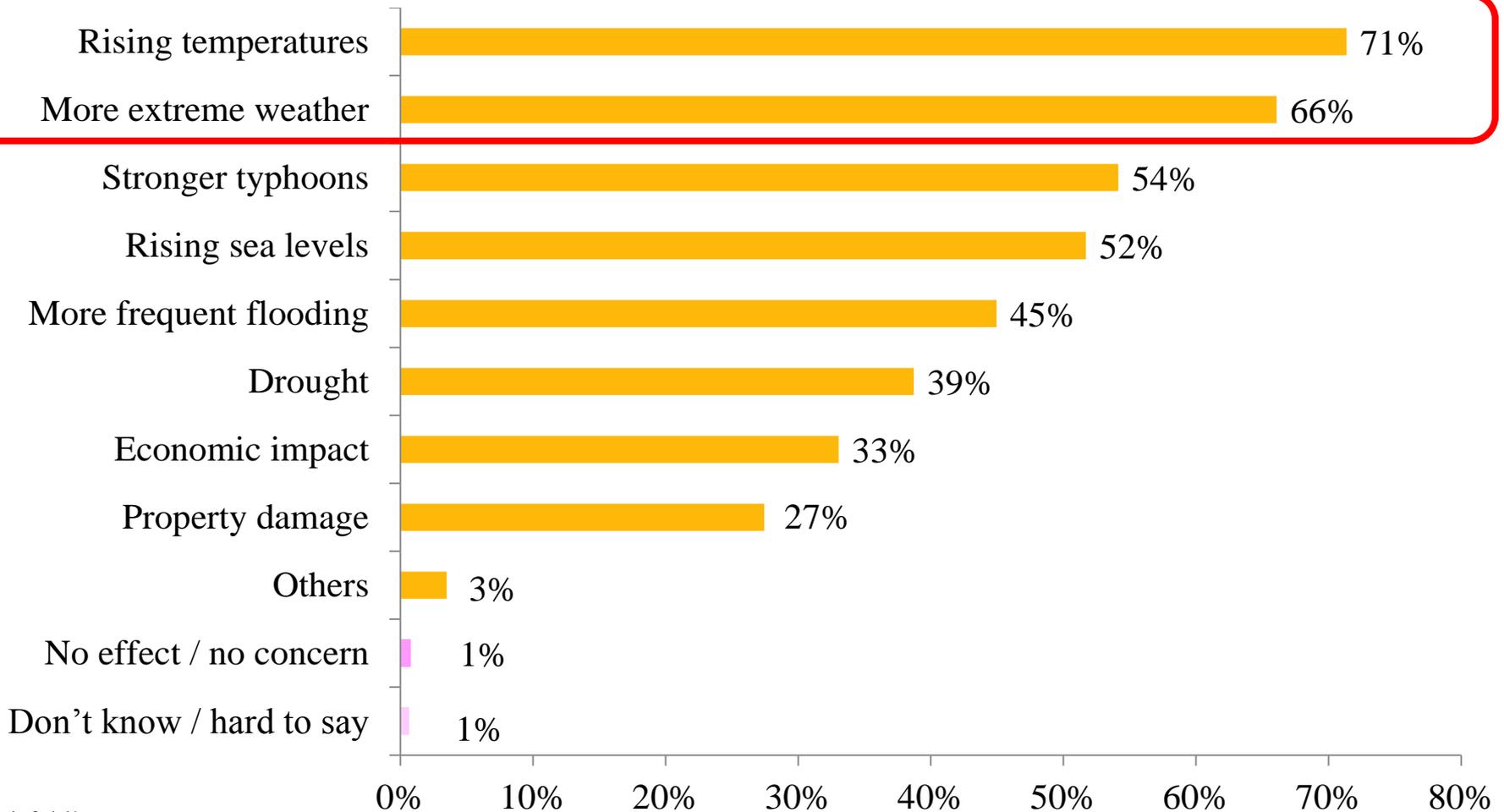
No. of groups:	4 groups
Date and time:	October 28 - 31, 2019 (Mon-Thurs) 2 hours (from 1915 ~2115)
Venue:	Room 706, 7/F, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU, Pokfulam, Hong Kong
Target participants:	Cantonese-speaking residents in Hong Kong of age 18 or above
No. of participants:	38 in total
Moderators:	Ms Joyce Chan (Representative of HKPOP) Mr Lawrence Iu (Representative of Civic Exchange)

# Survey Results

# **Part I.**

# **Understanding of Climate Change**

# 71% are concerned with rising temperatures most followed by more extreme weather



(n = 1,011)

[Q1] What effects of climate change concern you most? (Read out 8 answers below, order to be randomized by computer, multiple answers allowed, interviewer to probe by asking “anything else?”)

# Highlights from Focus Group

- \* **Changes in climate noticed in lifetime** - **rising temperature**, no distinctive seasons, more extreme weather, stronger typhoons and higher rainfall levels
- \* **Major concerns** – more susceptible to illnesses, the **general health condition** of the future generations
- \* **Daily life impacts** – **pay more for electricity** (air-con), reduced outdoor activities
- \* **Long-term concerns** – **melting glacier and rising sea-level**; affect ecosystem, food supply, and water supply; **endanger the survival** of some species and even human beings; political instability and conflicts between countries



# Direct Quotes...

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*We don't have cold Christmas in HK now, and most of the time the temperature is over 20 degrees Celsius, even in December...*

*Maybe there will be more influenza epidemics and virus infections, or bacteria will grow...*

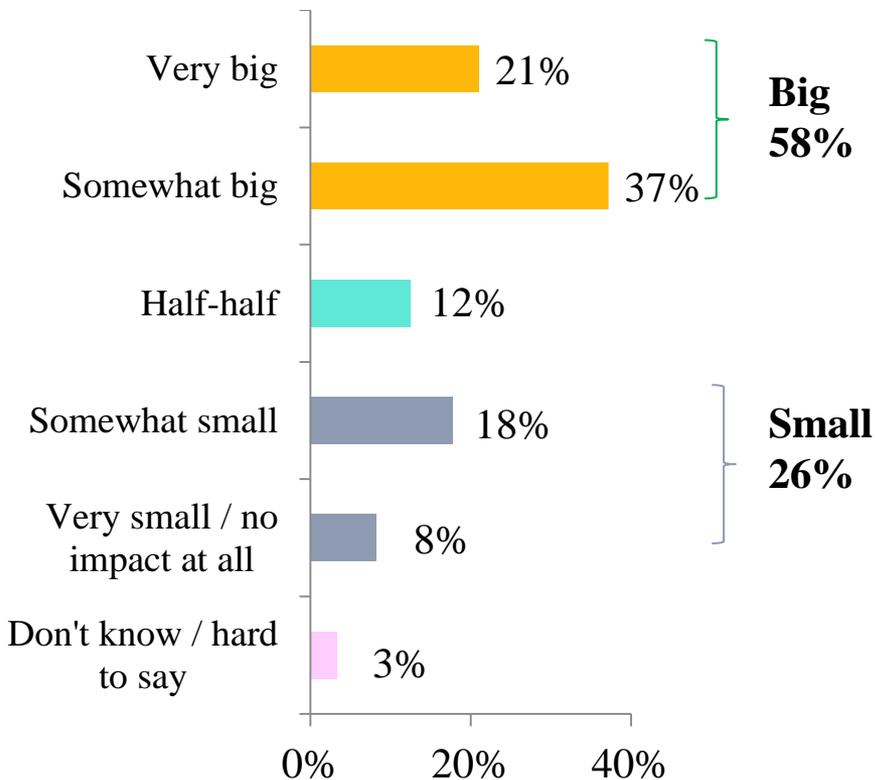
*Weather changes rather abruptly without a regular pattern to follow, I can personally feel that ever since 2010 there is no track to follow...*

*Typhoons seem to have become more severe, such as the super typhoons Mangkhut and Hato, those really affected us...*

*I am worried more about whether the living environment for the next generation will become life-threatening...*

*It is especially tragic for the coastal cities... when a lot of their land or resources gradually decrease, not only the climate being affected, but also their economy or politics..."*

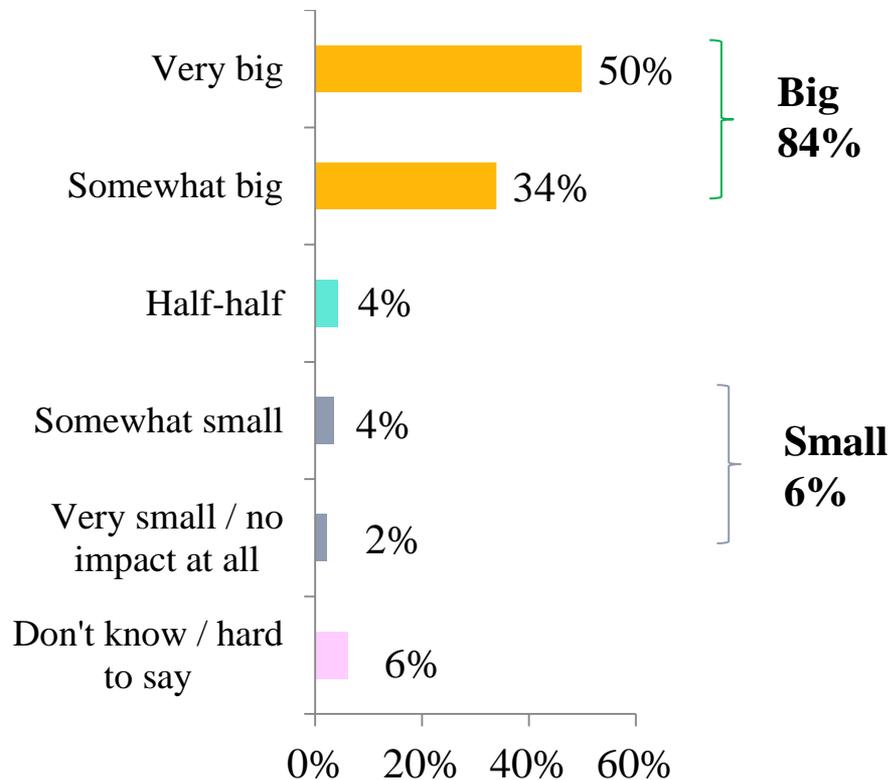
# 84% think the impact of climate change on their future generations is big; 58% expect big impact in 3 to 5 years



(n = 1,010)

[Q2] How big or small do you think the impact of climate change to Hong Kong in 3 to 5 years?

(Interviewer to probe the intensity)



(n = 1,011)

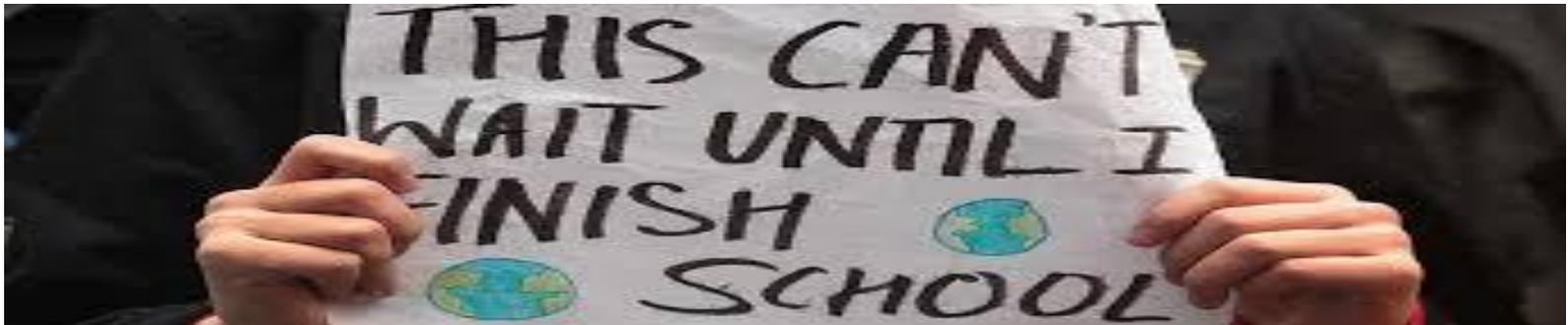
[Q3] How big or small do you think climate change is to your children's and grandchildren's future?

(Interviewer to probe the intensity)

# Highlights from Focus Group

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- \* Basically all participants agree the impacts of climate change are big at this moment and believe it **will pose more serious impacts to the next generations.**
- \* Commit to try to adopt a low carbon living; however, most people **feel helpless and powerless**, they think individual effort is very limited.
- \* HK people only become concerned when something catastrophic happened, such as territory-wide destructions caused by typhoons.
- \* **Top-down push from the government and new technologies** are considered to be more effective in tackling climate change.



# Direct Quotes...

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*To me, it is definitely urgent because it brings impacts to the environment, individuals, and carried forward to the next generations, but it is helpless that we, as individuals, really can't make any big differences...*

***Many things need to be promoted and pushed through by the government...***

***What individuals can do are limited, say try their best to go green, eat less meat, or commuting by cycling... actually many of these are more for promoting environmentally-friendliness...***

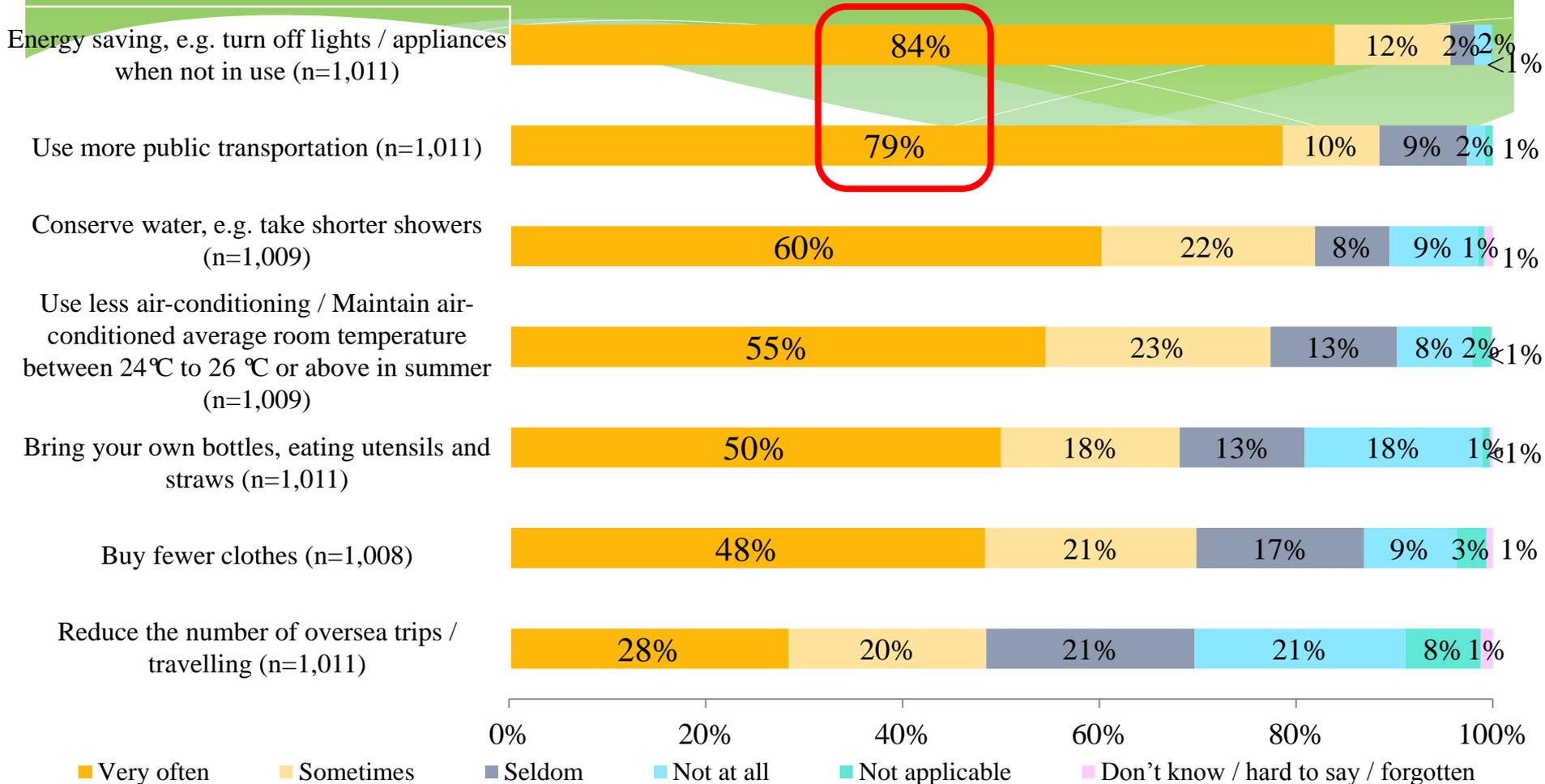
*I think most people are feeling powerless. They say they care, they know about this issue, but what can they do in reality?*

*If the temperature keeps increasing, many disasters will follow in the future, so we have to make many decisions today, such as what fuels to use. It will greatly affect the situation 10 to 20 years from now...*

*If our leaders are visionary, they should use alternative energy such as solar panels, that could help slow down global warming...*

**Part II.**  
**Attitudes and Actions towards  
Climate Change**

# 84% very often practiced energy saving in the past year, followed closely by using more public transportation

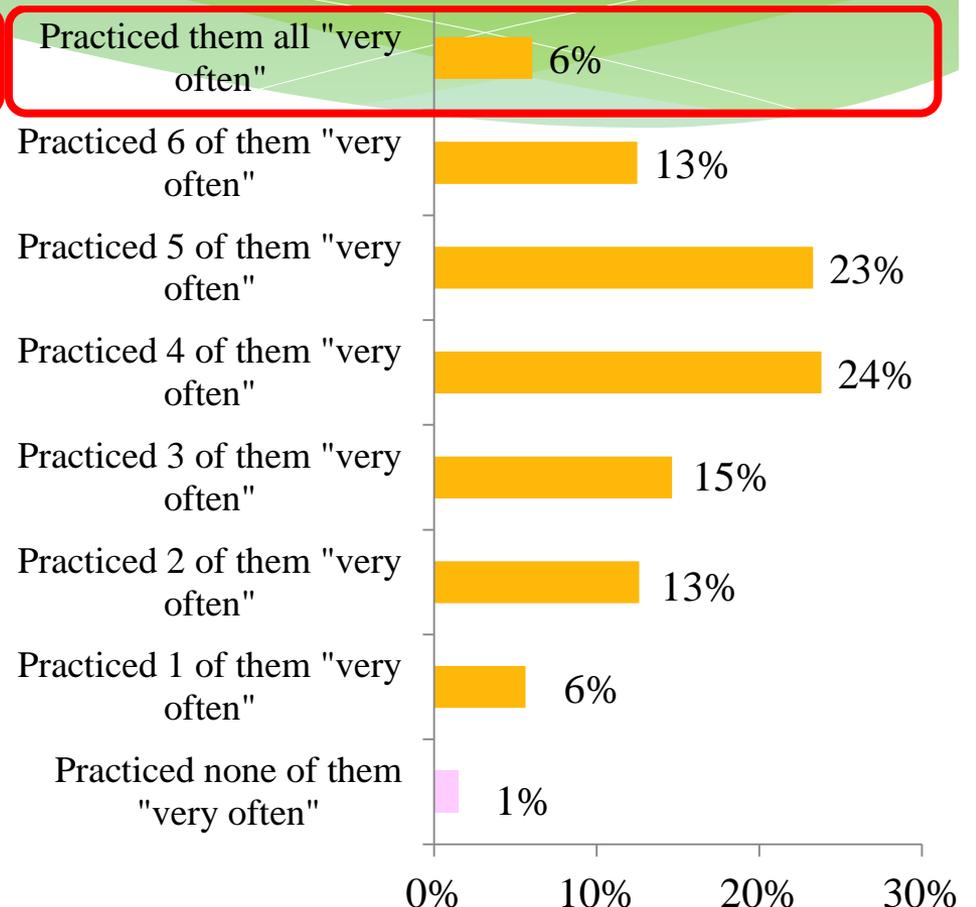
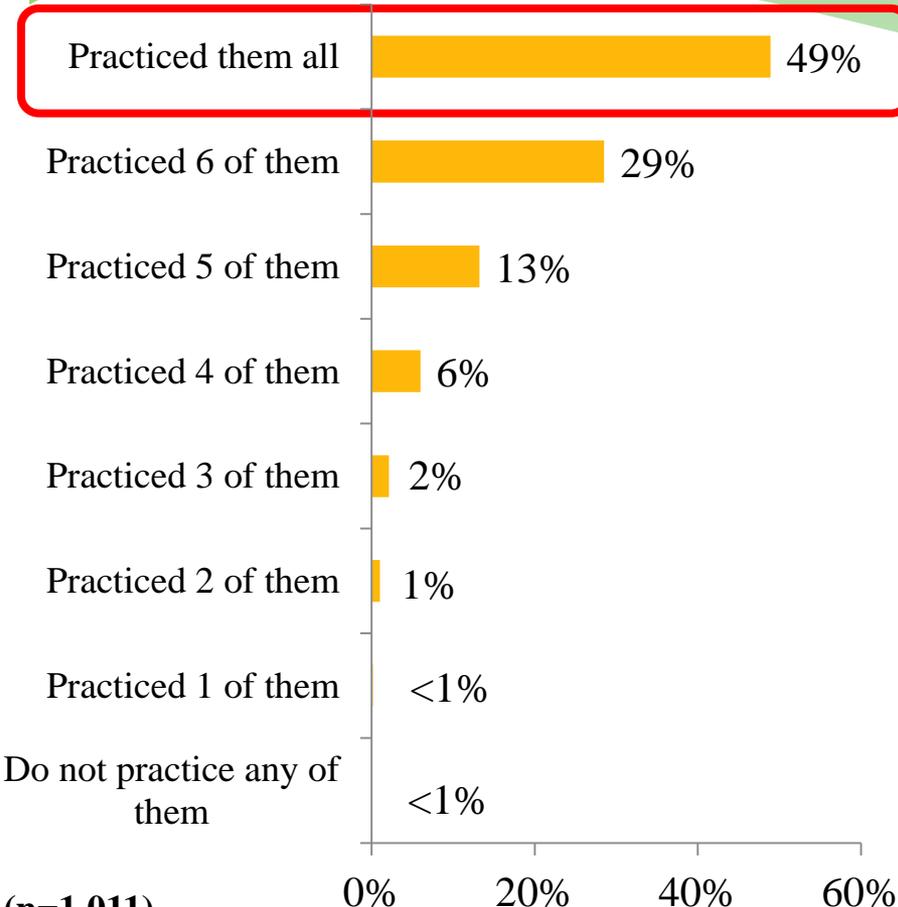


**[Q5] In the past year, how often did you take the following actions for the purpose of carbon emission reduction? (Read out 7 items below, order to be randomized by computer; interviewer to probe intensity)**

# Nearly half practiced all 7 actions to reduce carbon emission while 6% even practiced them all very often

**No. of items respondents practiced**

**No. of items respondents practiced "very often"**



(n=1,011)

[Q5] In the past year, how often did you take the following actions for the purpose of carbon emission reduction?  
 (Read out 7 items below, order to be randomized by computer; interviewer to probe intensity)

# Direct Quotes...

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*I start to change from my personal habits... I use a broom now instead of vacuum cleaner...*

*I usually walk 10,000-20,000 steps a day. I would try to avoid any transportation but to walk as much as possible...*

*I need to save money, so save, save, and save, it actually works.*

*We reuse a lot of things, like when my socks are worn I will mend them... And I transformed my long pants to medium-length, then to shorts...*

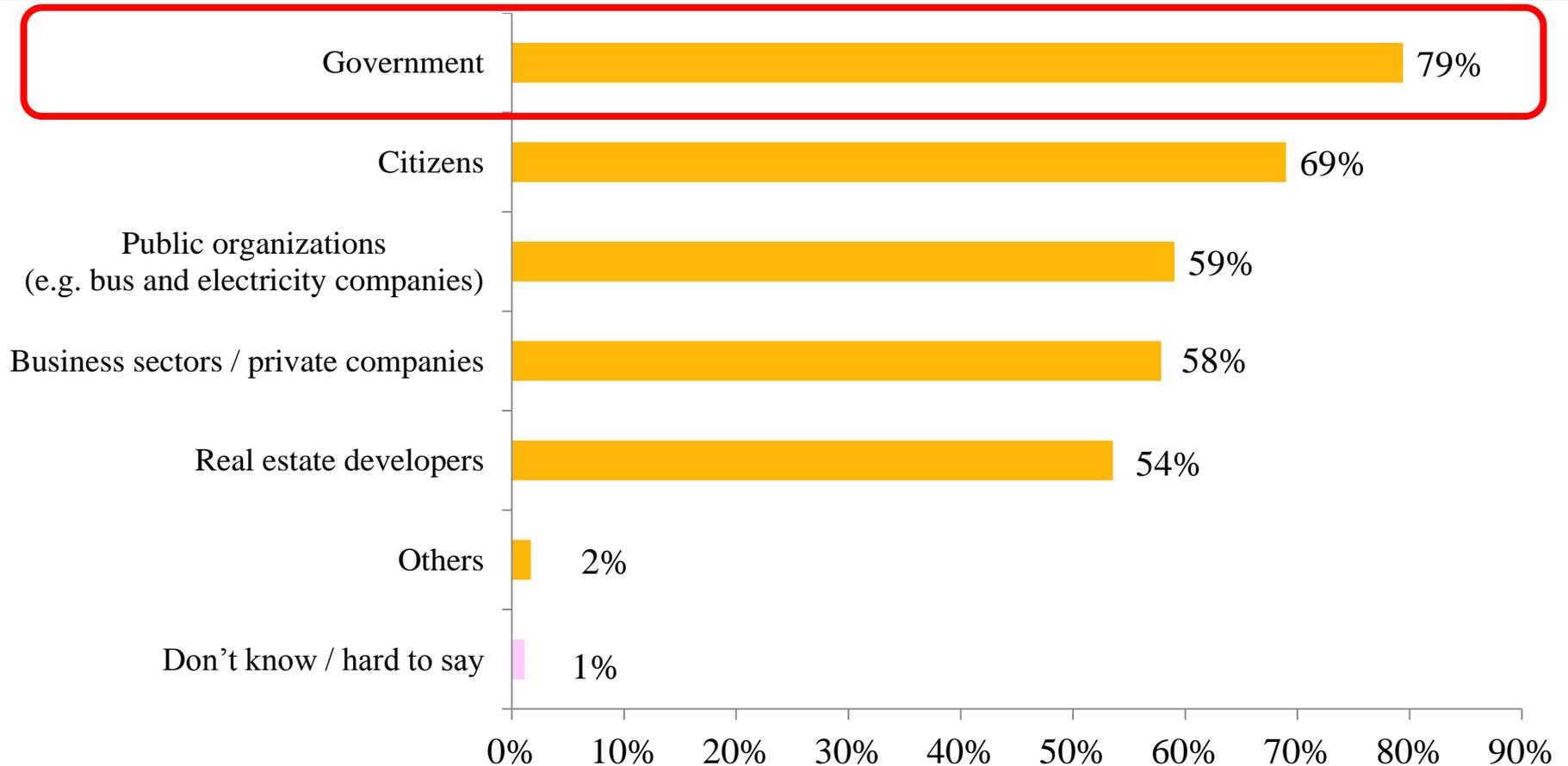
*I don't shop online because it would come along with a lot of unnecessary packaging as well as the long-distance shipping...*

*Because this is not only for us, but also for our next generation, and for the sake of their future...*

*Although may not do much help, I believe it is these small things, when added together, would make a big difference one day!*

**Part III.**  
**Responsibilities for Tackling  
Climate Change**

# Almost 80% think the Government should bear the biggest responsibility in tackling climate change



(n = 1,009)

[Q7] Who do you think should bear the biggest responsibilities in tackling climate change? (Read out 5 items below, order to be randomized by computer, multiple answers allowed, interviewer to probe by asking “anything else?”)

# Highlights from Focus Group

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- \* Its everybody's responsibility in tackling climate change
- \* **Government should bear the biggest responsibilities** – to LEAD, to EDUCATE, to MAKE & REVIEW POLICIES, to PROVIDE INCENTIVES, to MONITOR BUSINESS SECTOR – to make Hong Kong a low carbon society.
- \* **Business sector also has their role to play:**
  - ✓ To use more environmental-friendly raw materials and products
  - ✓ To install solar energy device on the building rooftop
  - ✓ To encourage the customer to use less plastic goods
  - ✓ To give discounts or special offers to customers
  - ✓ To implement carbon reduction policies within the company

# Direct Quotes...

*Our lifts only stop once every 3 floors and our canteen don't offer meat menu on some days, also have very strict printing policy...*

*Customers can bring along their old shampoo bottles and refill directly from their very large shampoo machines...*

*There is an app that counts the no of steps you walk every day, and if you can meet the target, there will be a 10% off your insurance premium next year...*

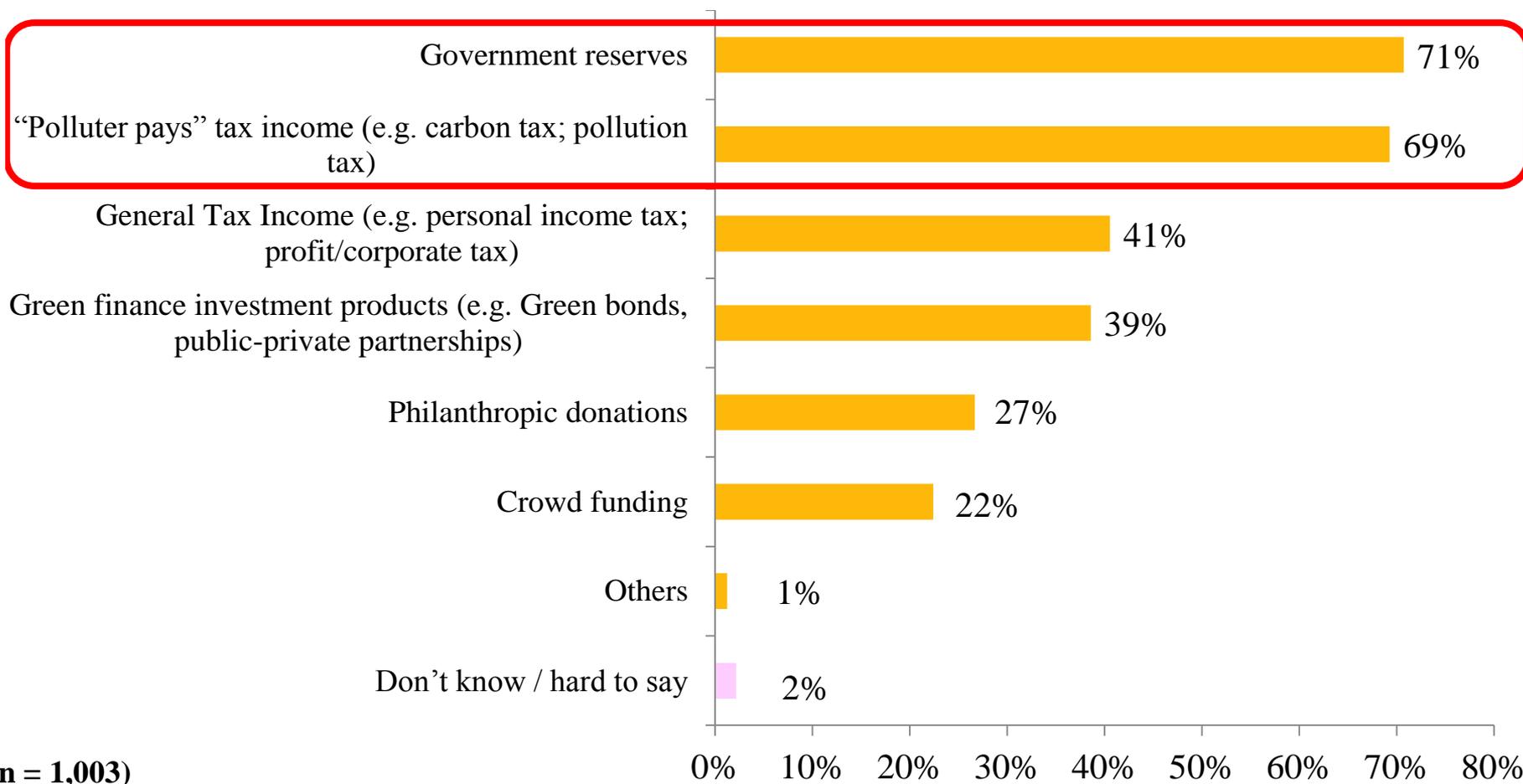


*Like a chain reaction, the government rolls out a new policy, then the large corporations follow, and then the citizens cooperate... so we are speaking of the responsibility of the entire community....*

*The Community Green Stations (GCS) are really good. It can help promote waste reduction and recycling at the district level...*

*It is more the responsibility of business sector, we won't use plastic bottle if they do not manufacture in the first place...*

# Government reserves and “polluter pays” tax are the top two solutions to fund climate change mitigation and adaptation measures

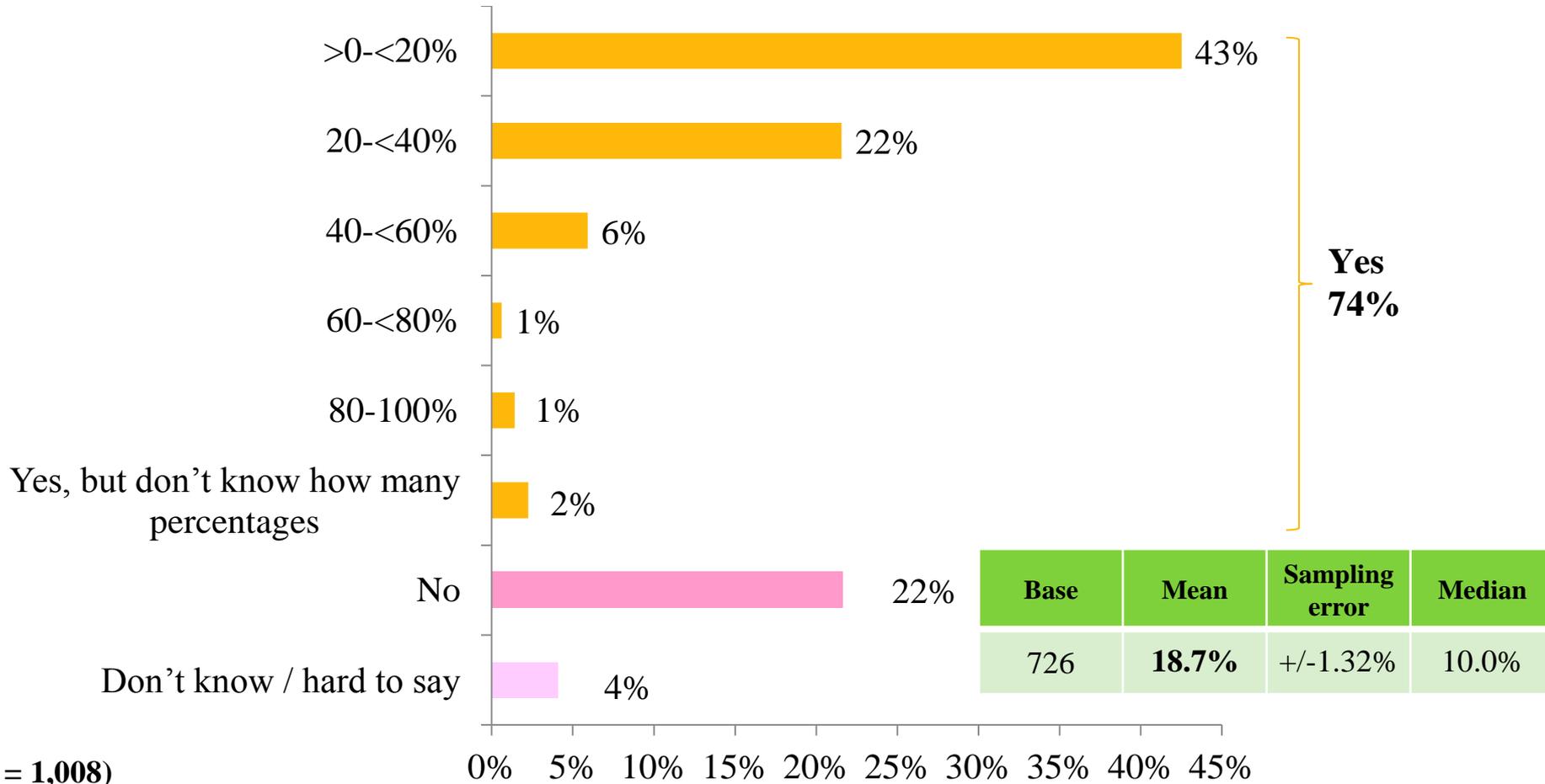


(n = 1,003)

[Q8] The mitigation and adaptation measures for building a more climate resilience city require lot of investment. How should Hong Kong fund climate change mitigation and adaptation measures? (Read out 6 items below, order to be randomized by computer, multiple answers allowed, interviewer to probe by asking “anything else?”)

# 74% are willing to pay more for an increase of renewable energy

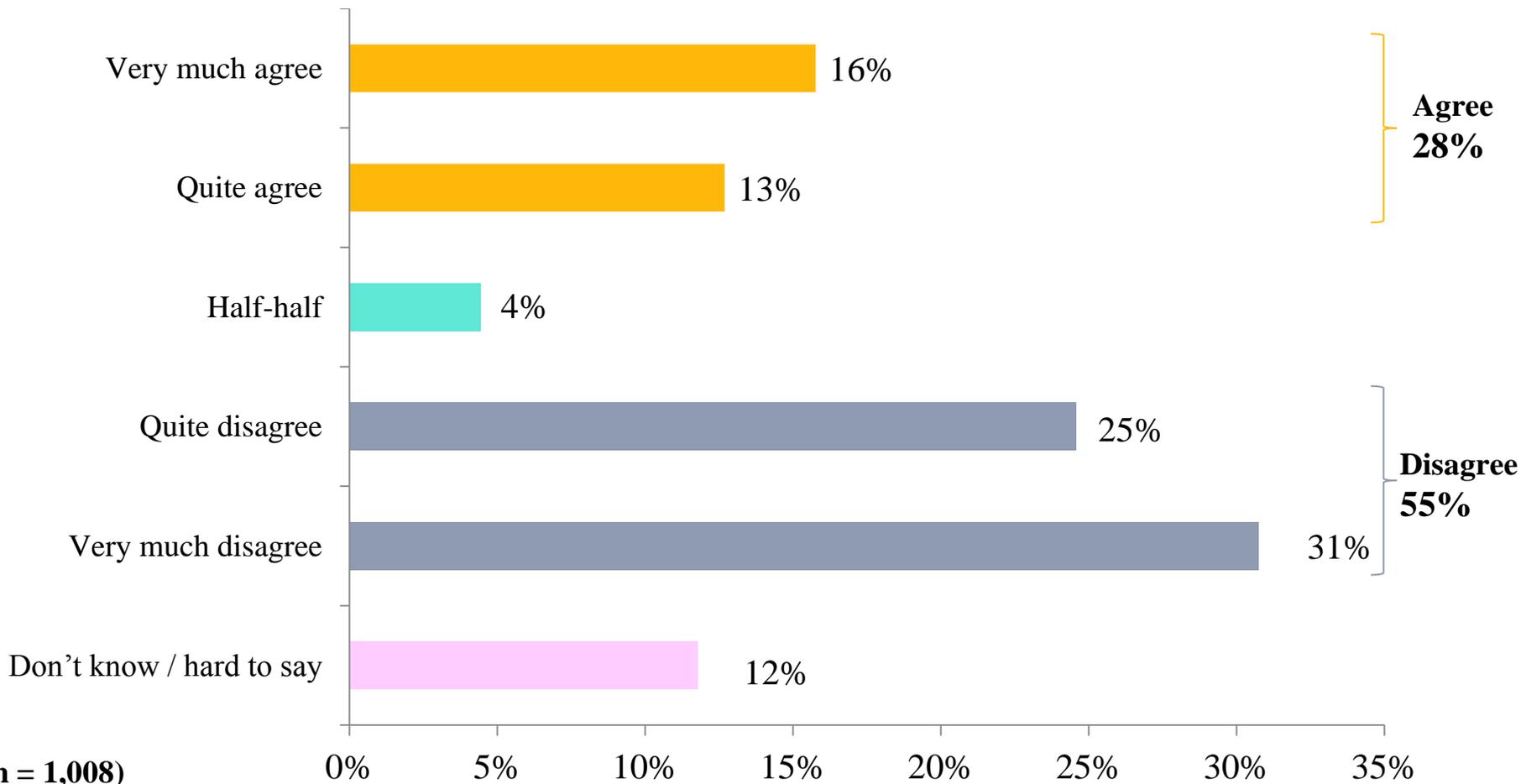
## On average they are willing to pay 19% more



(n = 1,008)

[Q10] Currently 25% of electricity in Hong Kong is generated by non-fossil fuels, including imported nuclear and renewable energy. Are you willing to pay more in order to increase the percentage of renewable energy? If yes, how many percentages are you willing to pay?

# 55% disagree that HK government has implemented sufficient policies on carbon emissions reduction



[Q9] Do you agree or disagree that Hong Kong government has implemented sufficient policies on carbon emissions reduction? For example, the government has set out Hong Kong's carbon emissions reduction target for 2030. (Interviewer to probe the intensity)

# Highlights from Focus Group

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- \* Most participants believe the government **has not implemented sufficient policies** on carbon emission reduction
- \* Some policies are **outdated** such as the 3-colored waste separation bins
- \* Looking ahead, participants suggest the Government should:
  - ✓ **Strengthen the enactment** and **review the policies regularly**
  - ✓ Publicize its long-term planning and goals; **increase transparency** in updating the progress made as part of publicity
  - ✓ Pay persistent efforts to promote public awareness; **incorporate climate change & related topics into the regular curriculum** of schools
  - ✓ Subsidize green enterprises; introduce green tax and green bonds
  - ✓ Take the lead in adopting carbon emissions reduction

# Direct Quotes...

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*Styrofoam is Styrofoam, #1 plastic is #1 plastic... if the government still sticks to simple 'blue for paper, yellow for metal, and brown for plastic', this is obviously outdated...*

*In some places, green tax is introduced where to act more eco-friendly may give you tax benefits. I think these can be very good financial incentives...*

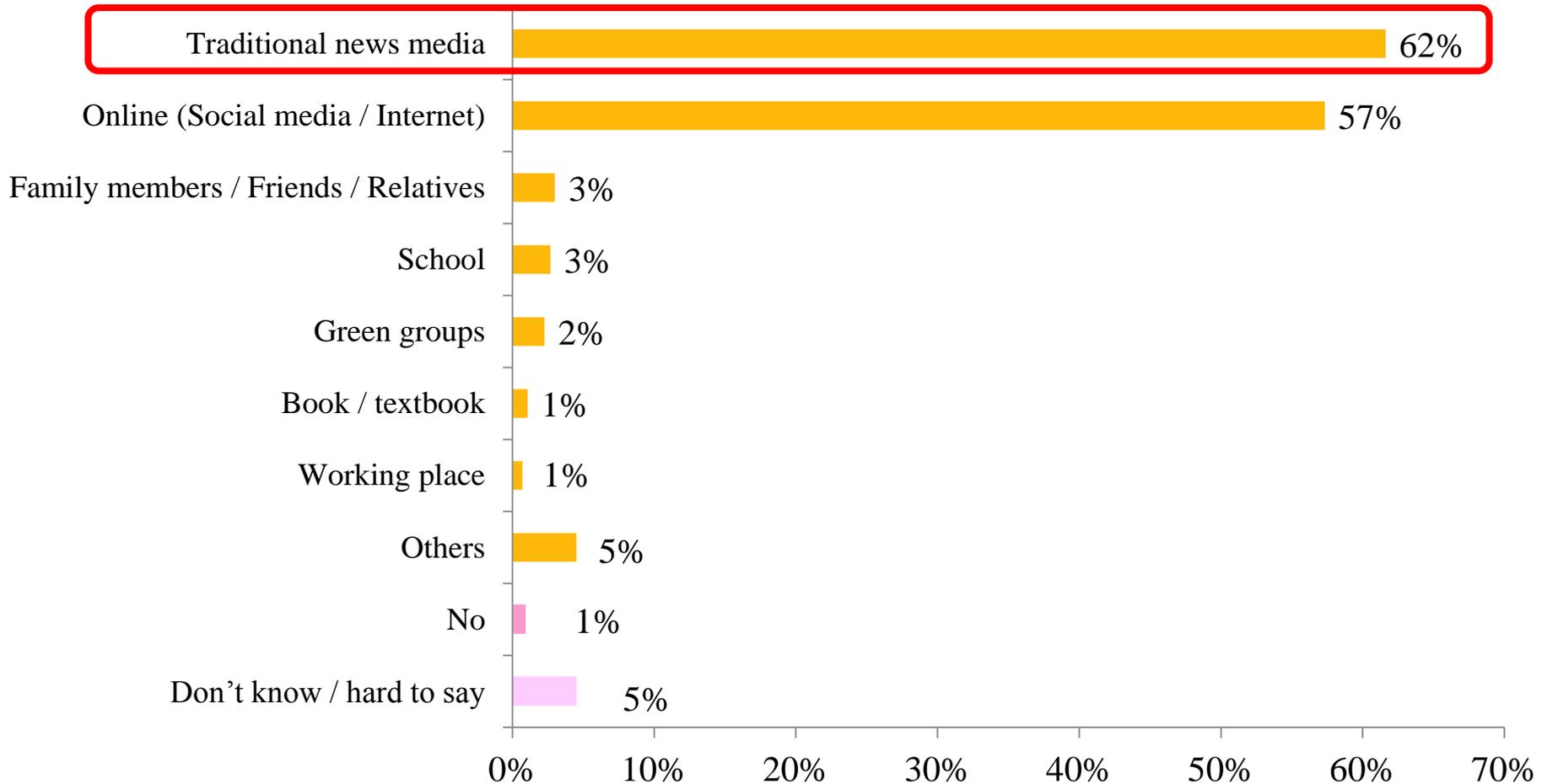
*Government premises e.g. public libraries, sports ground and community halls, should take the lead to do these things, so that people know the government is determined to do this, then they would be more convinced to follow...*

*If the government wants to re-gain some popularity, or to show that they are capable, why not collaborate with the green enterprises more?*

*Some foresight and persistence is necessary...*

**Part IV.**  
**Information about Climate**  
**Change**

# Majority people use traditional news media and online channels such as social media to look for information about climate change



(n = 1,010)

[Q12] Usually through what channels would you search for/obtain information about climate change? (Do not read out answers, multiple answers allowed, interviewer to probe by asking “anything else?”)

# Highlights from Focus Group

- \* Up & rising channels - **social media, like Facebook & Instagram**
- \* **New laws and regulations** to raise public awareness effectively; there should be **penalties for people who fail to comply**
- \* Adopting **the term “climate crisis”** to help reflect the escalating urgency of the issue and to serve as a wake-up call to the public

*Social media is very important, no matter young or old, more and more people are using them like Facebook, while less and less people watch TV now...*

*Legislation will catch the attention of everyone quickly, they know it will be illegal if they don't comply with it. Then it will become a habit sooner or later...*

*The Guardian in UK uses the term 'climate crisis' as they think 'climate change' is too mild... Here in Hong Kong, we still use 'climate change', people might still be wondering is the change good or not?*

# Conclusion

# Conclusion

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- \* Telephone survey results show that HK people are found to be most concerned with rising temperatures and more extreme weather as caused by climate change. As many as **84%** think the impact of climate change on their future generations is big.
- \* As high as 84% claimed they very often **practiced energy saving to reduce carbon emission** in the past year, followed by **using more public transportation**.
- \* Majority people think the **Government should bear the biggest responsibilities** in tackling climate change. And over **half disagree it has implemented sufficient policies** on carbon emissions reduction.
- \* Most people think climate change mitigation and adaptation measures should be **funded by government reserves and “polluter pays” tax income**. More than 70% are willing to pay more electricity charges for an increase of renewable energy. On average, they are willing to pay about 20% more.

# End of Presentation

For details, please visit HKPORI's website at:

<http://pori.hk>