

## Survey results: How are international technology experts doing?

TEK & Insinööriliitto

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# **International Technology Experts 2025 – highlights of the results**

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- Background and implementation of the survey
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# Background and implementation of the study



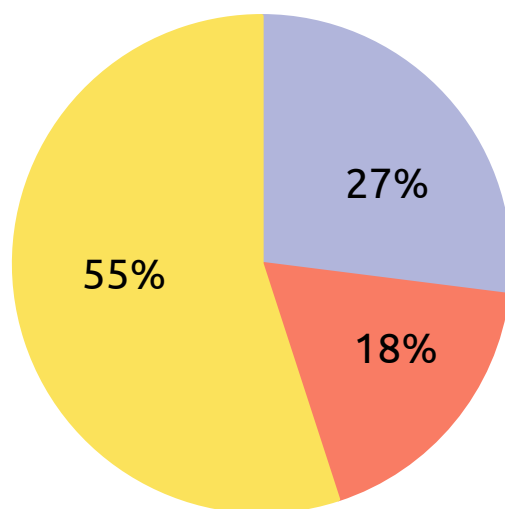
- The survey was a follow-up to the 2024 edition – in 2025, the focus shifted more towards *integration* (work & social) and *perceived equality*.
- Data collection took place in March 2025. The invitation to participate was sent to English-speaking members of the Union of Professional Engineers in Finland and Academic Engineers and Architects in Finland (TEK). The open link was also shareable within personal networks.
  - 65% of respondents were TEK members, 27% members of the Union of Professional Engineers, and 8% others (including those who preferred not to disclose membership).
- The results were primarily analysed using statistical methods; open-ended responses were examined through qualitative content analysis.

**756 respondents**

# Nationality and length of stay in Finland

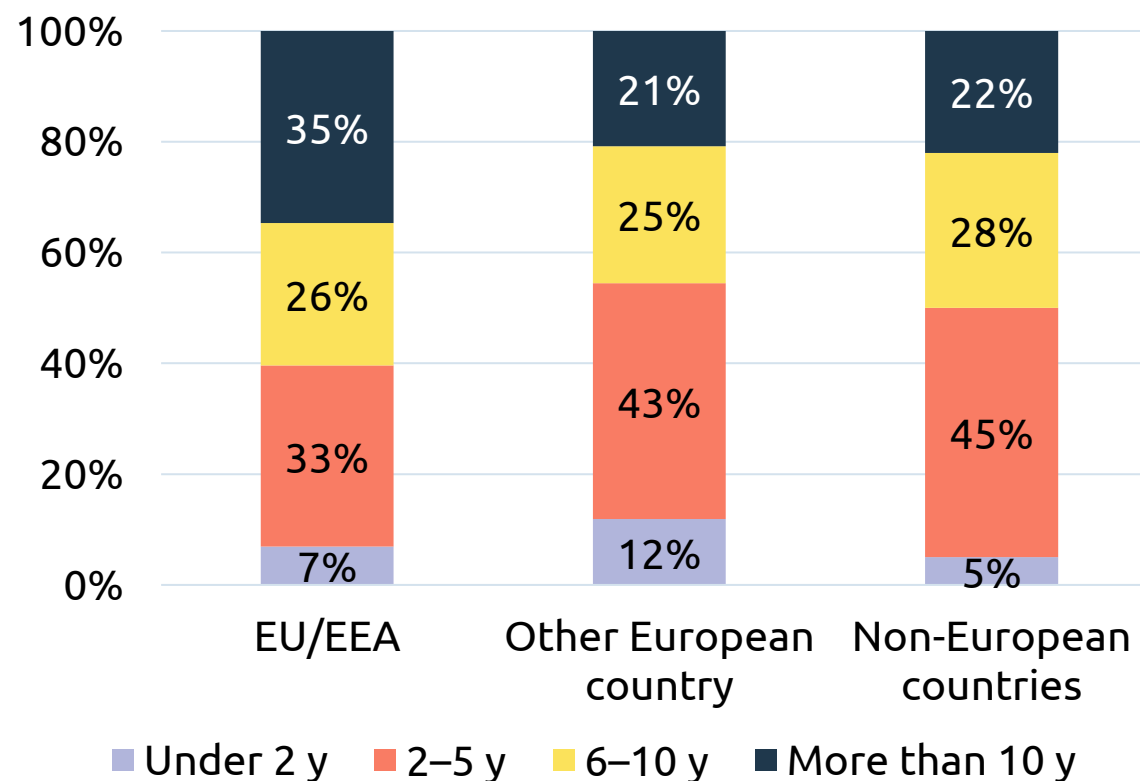


Over 70 nationalities represented:  
most commonly Russia, India and China  
17 % hold dual citizenship



■ EU/EEA  
■ Other European country  
■ Non-European countries

Average length of residence in Finland: 7,6 years



# Summary of respondents' backgrounds

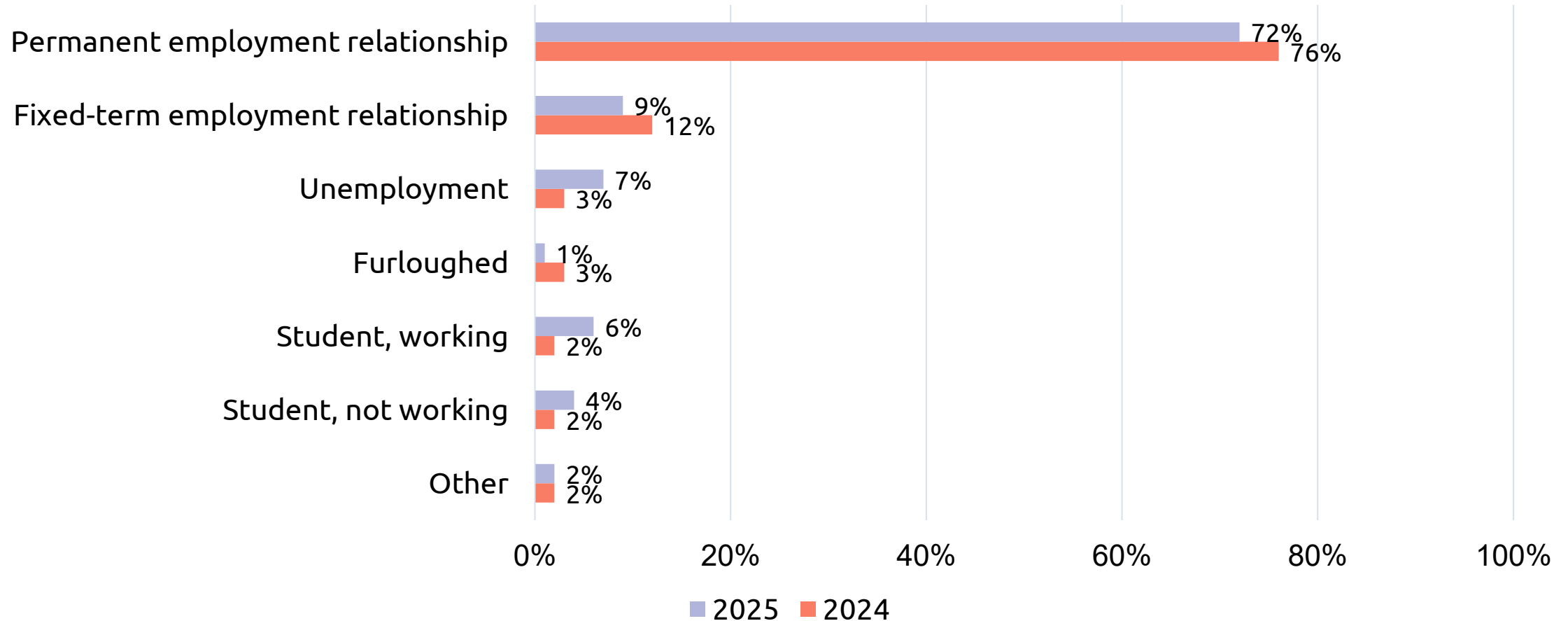


- Average age 36,4 years
- 28% female
- 59% hold a master's degree
- 18% hold a licentiate or doctoral degree
- 48% obtained their highest degree in Finland
- 60% have Finnish citizenship or permanent residence
- 54% live outside the Helsinki metropolitan area
- 67% have family (spouse or children) in Finland

# Employment and job hunting



# Employment status

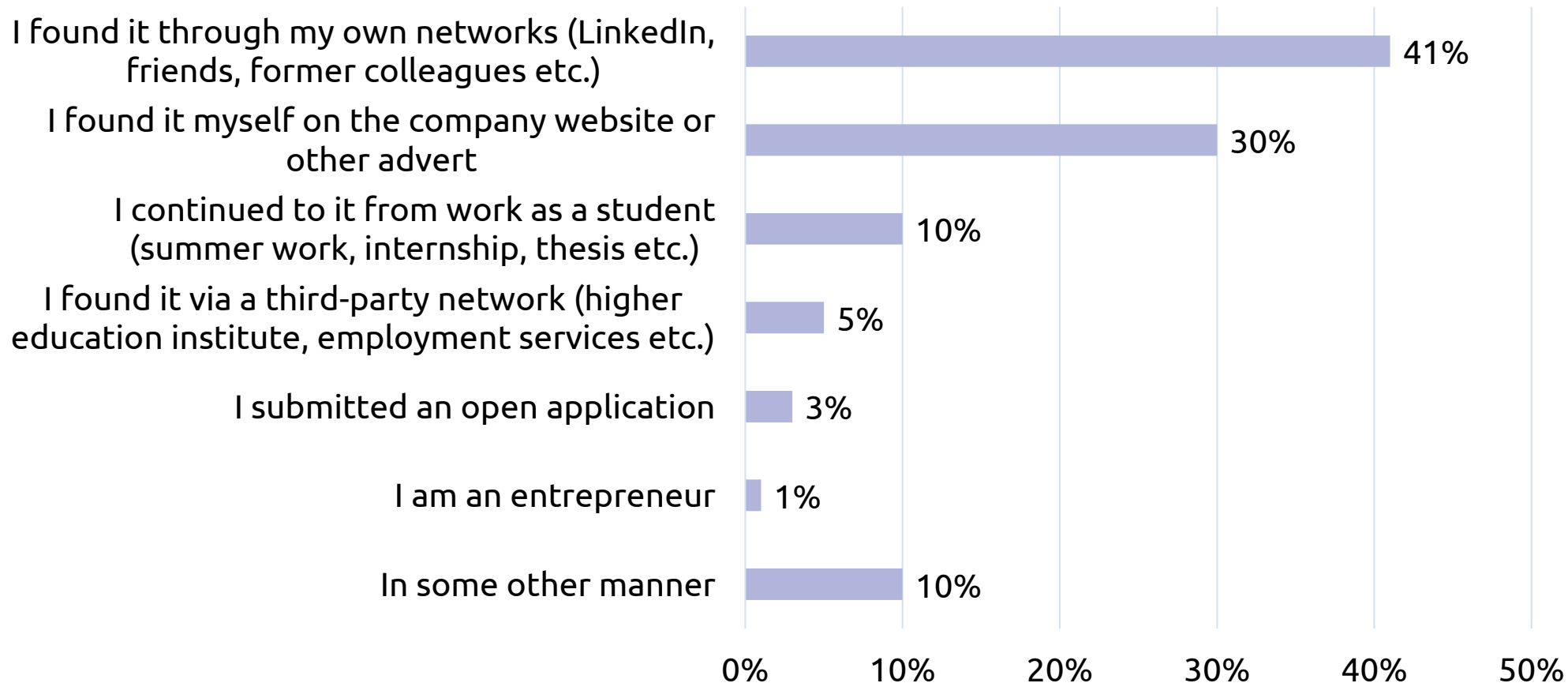


- Among respondents from outside Europe, only two-thirds are permanently employed.
- 29% have experienced unemployment within the past three years.
- Most often respondents worked in expert roles.

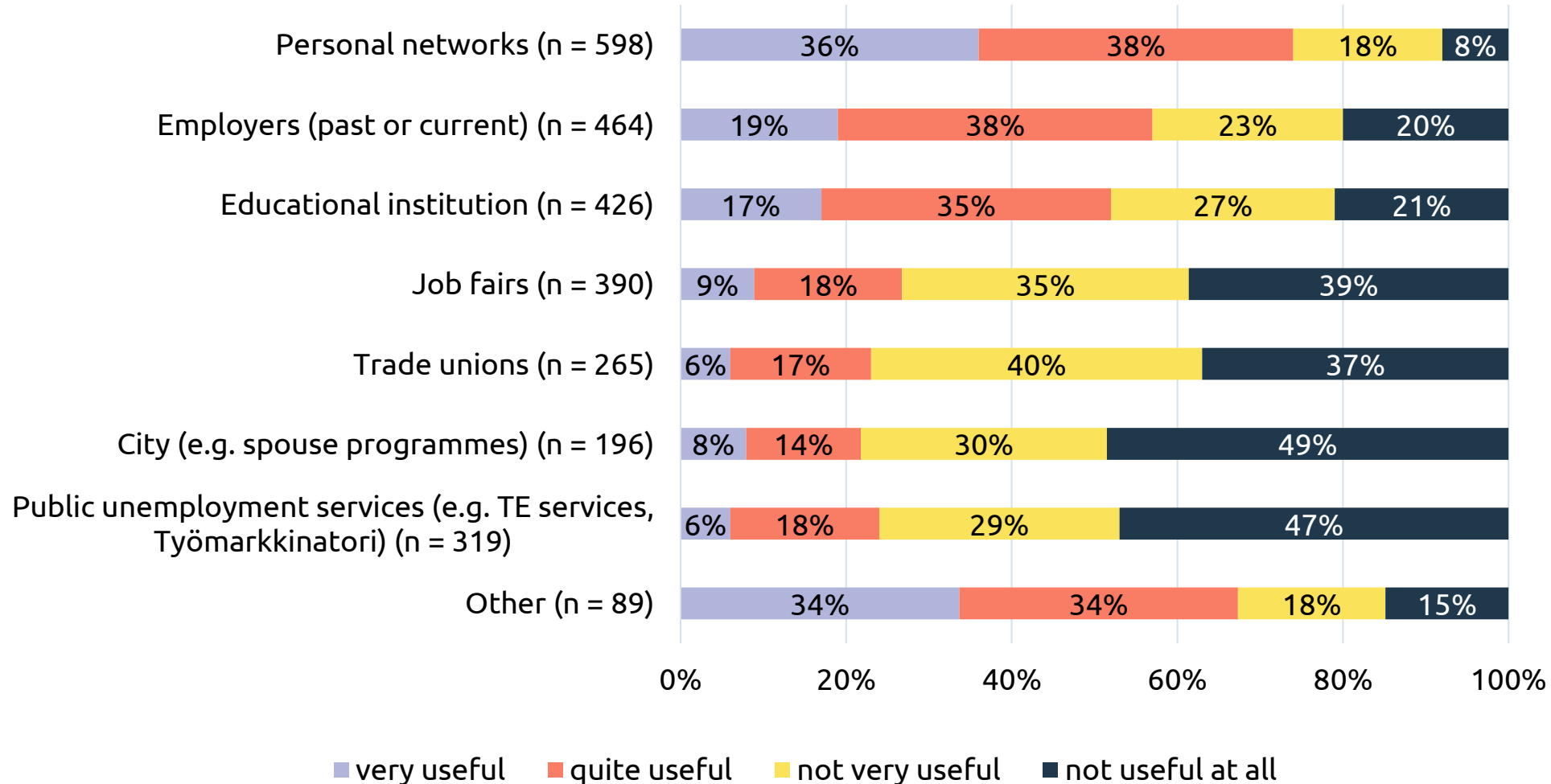
# Job search channels highlight the importance of networks and job advertisements



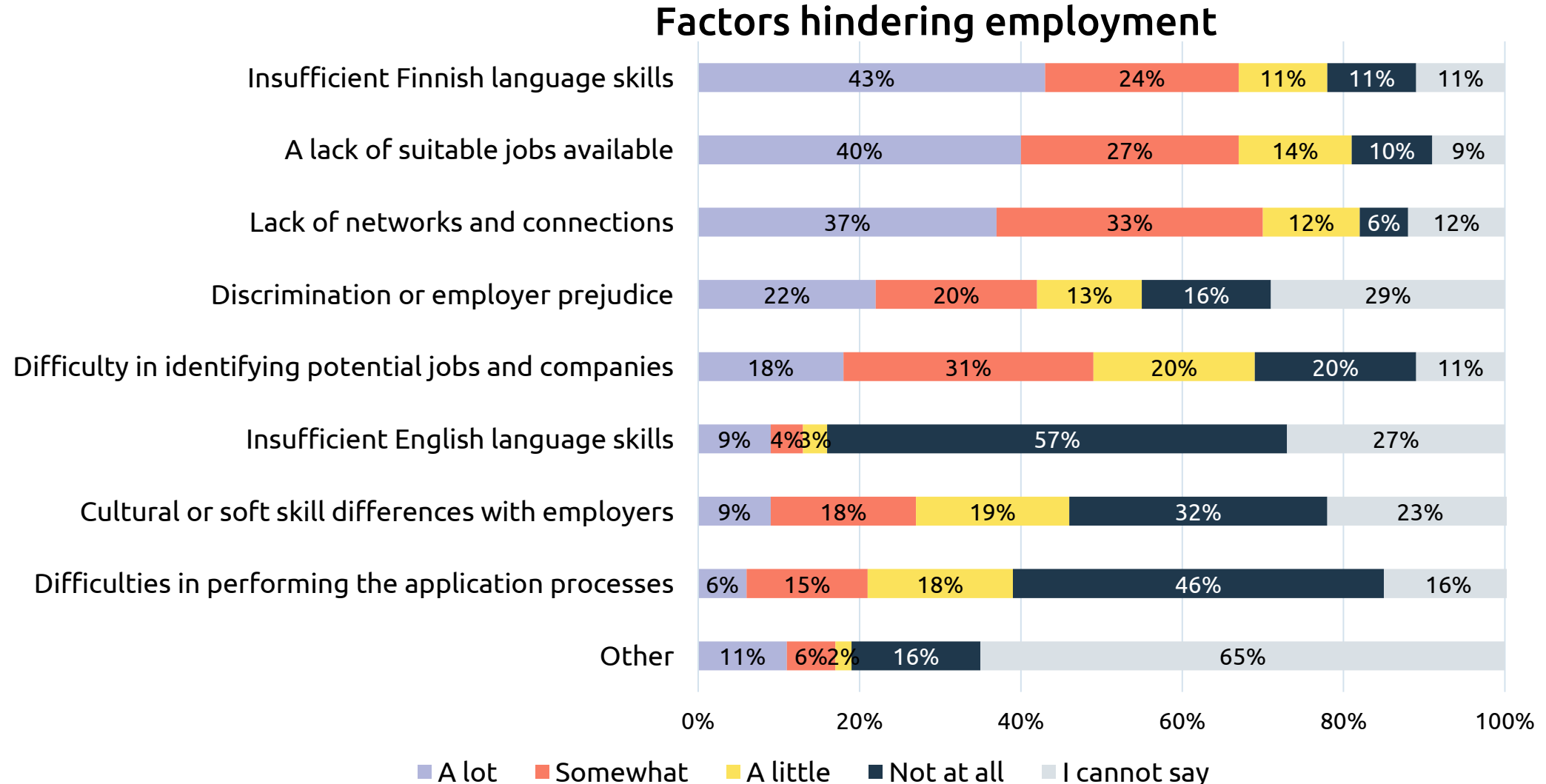
Ways to find current or recent job



# Most useful channels for job search, employment and career planning (% of users)

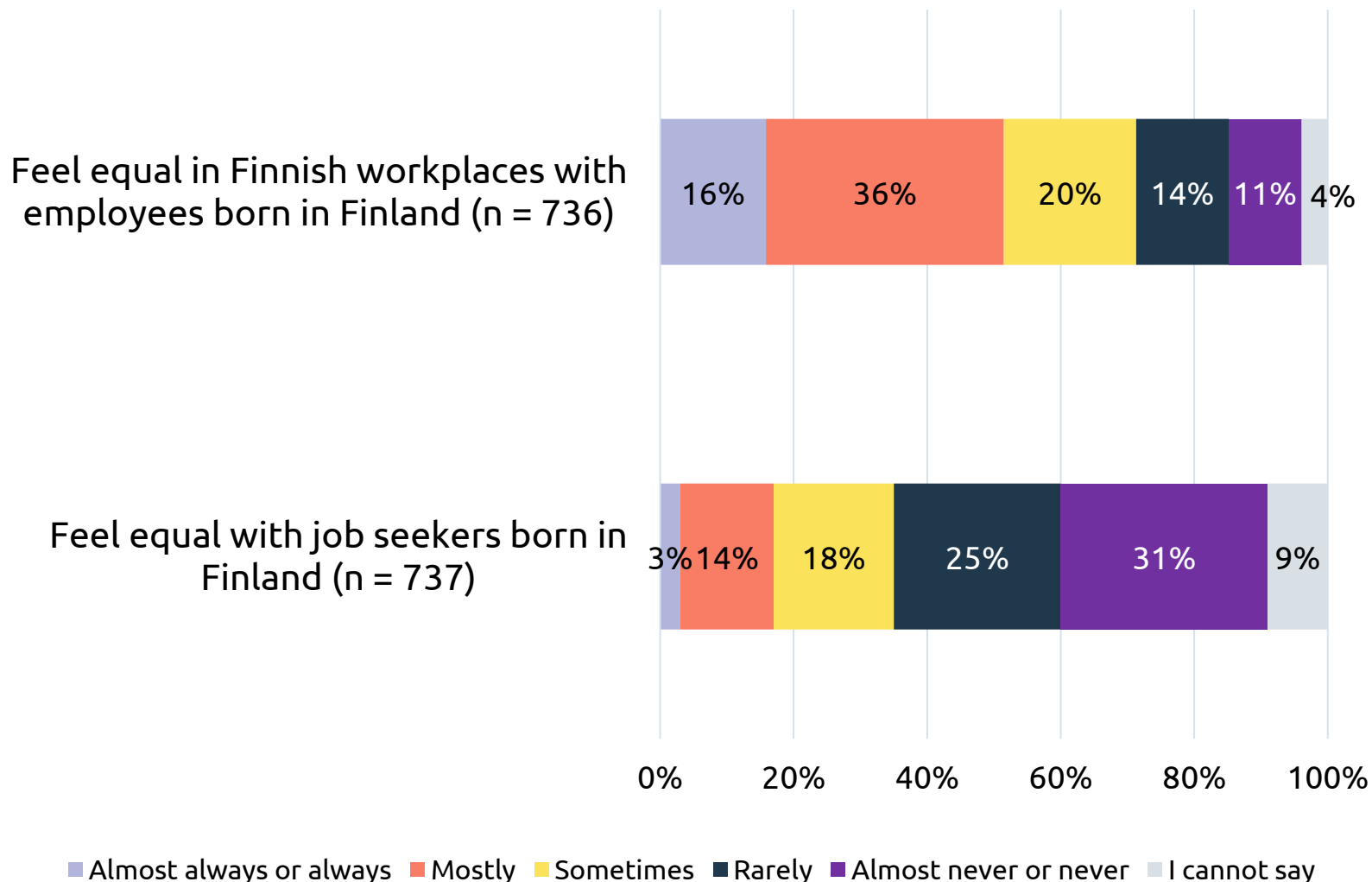


# Finnish language, limited job opportunities and lack of networks hindered employment



# Integration and equality

# Increasing perception of inequality compared to native Finns



- Perceived equality has declined: 52% in 2025 vs. 64% in 2024
- Citizenship or length of stay in Finland did not significantly affect perceptions of equality
- Those who felt unequal during job seeking also felt more unequal in the workplace

# Underlying attitudes and discriminatory practices behind perceived inequality

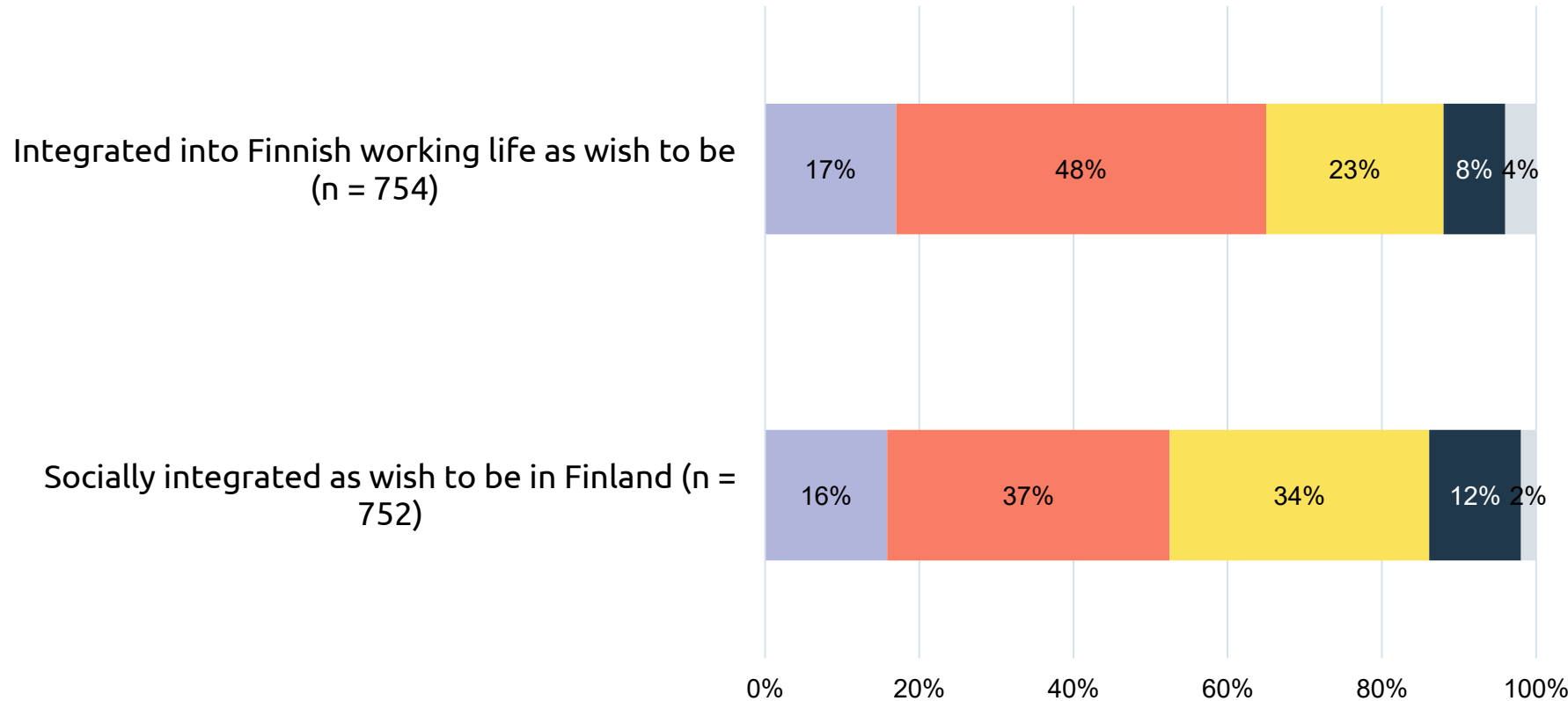


*“Also feels like having a Finnish name could help to pass the initial application filter.”*

*“Finnish language is mandatory even in most of international companies with branch in Finland even if it’s not mentioned in the job description.”*

*“I feel equal because I know I’m a top talent in my area. I regularly get appealing offers from abroad. However when it comes to hiring pipelines in Finland, I know it doesn’t matter how much value I can bring. There is always someone’s school friend who will get the job.”*

# Better integration into work than social life



- I feel as integrated as I wish to be
- Quite well integrated, but could be better
- Poorly integrated compared to where I wish to be
- Very poorly integrated compared to where I wish to be
- I cannot say

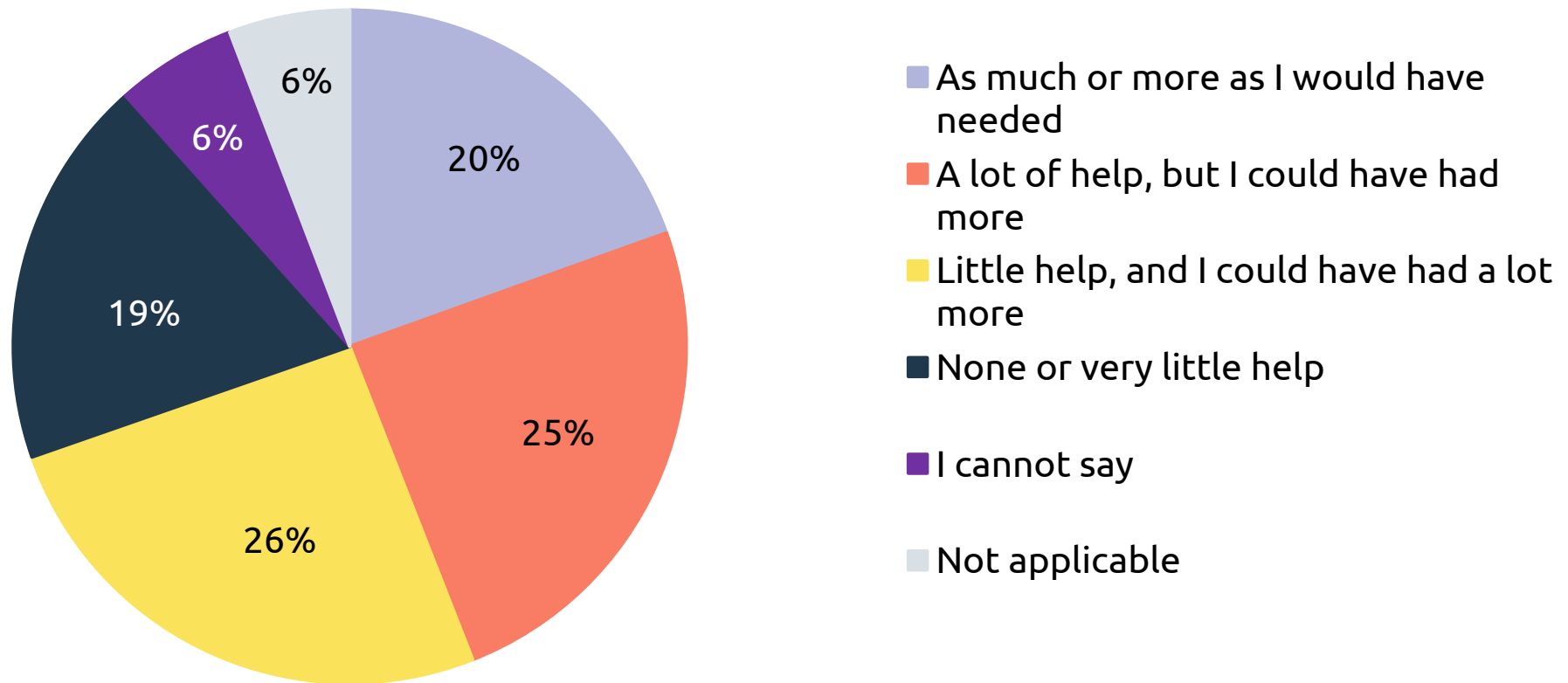
- 47% of respondents feel well integrated to work and social life
- Longer residence in Finland correlates with better integration



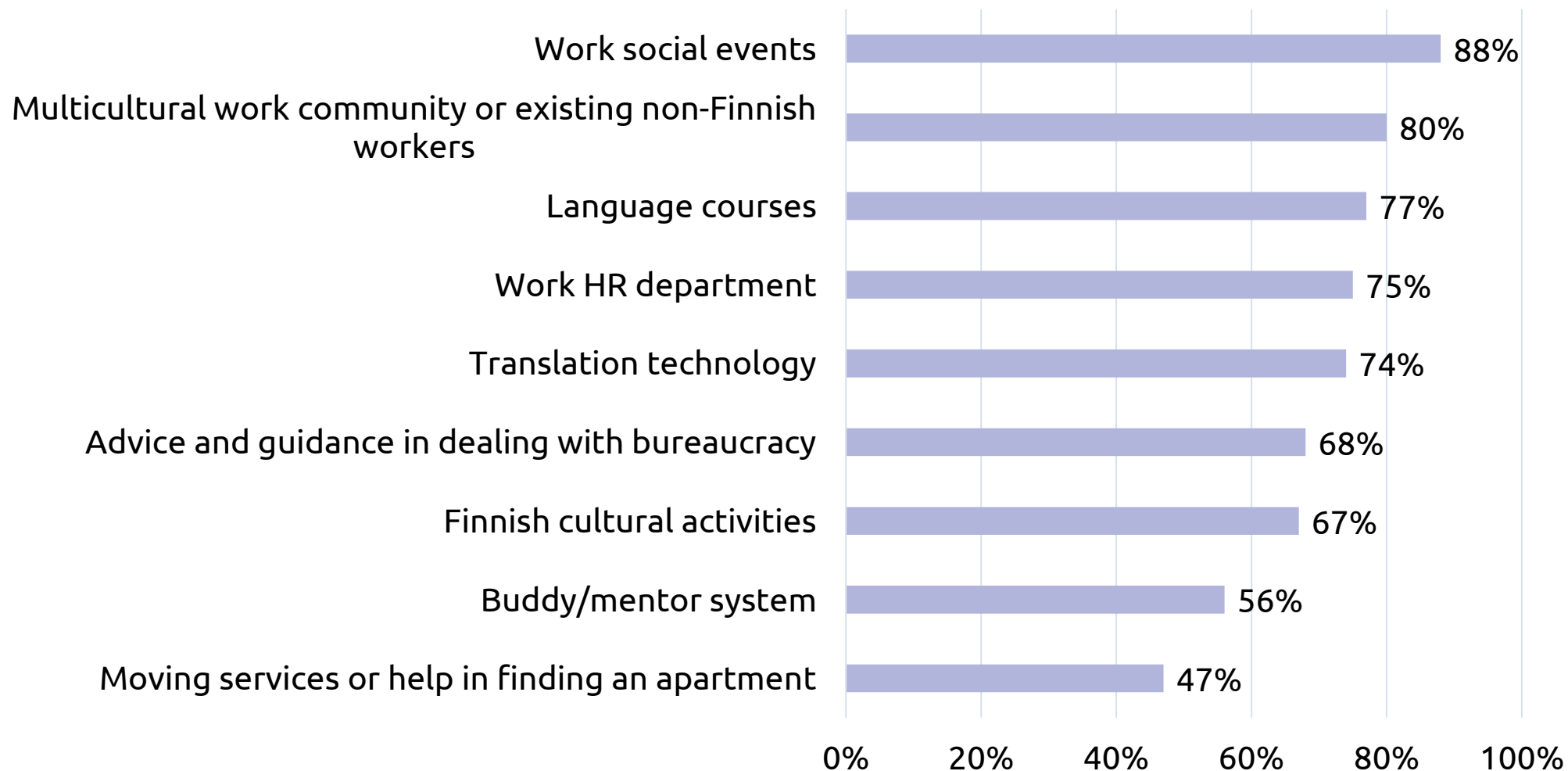
# Majority would have needed more support from employers for Integration



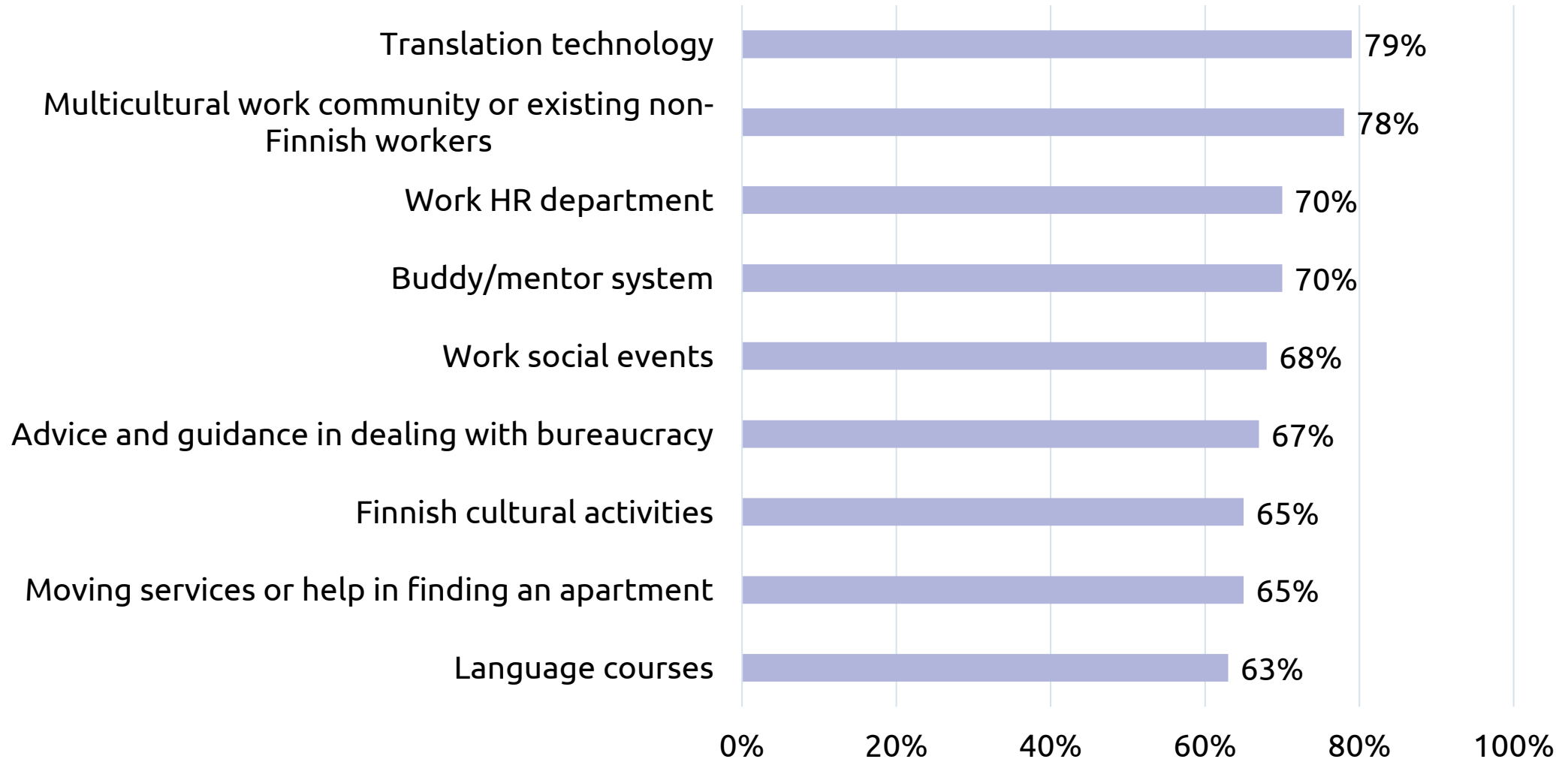
Employer supported integration



# Factors supporting integration (% if applicable)



# Perceived usefulness of integration support measures (% of users who found them useful)

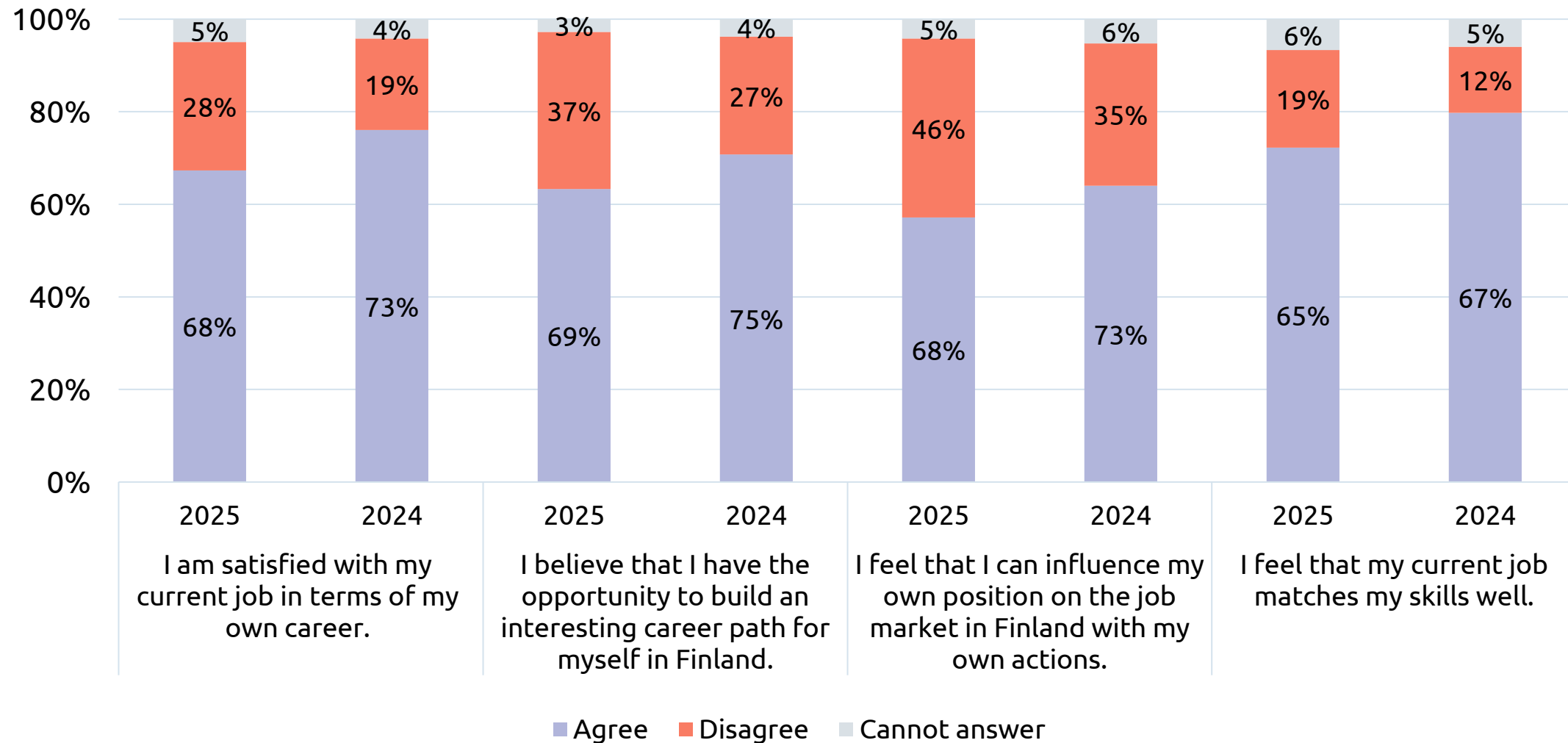


# **Views on Finnish working life, society and the future**

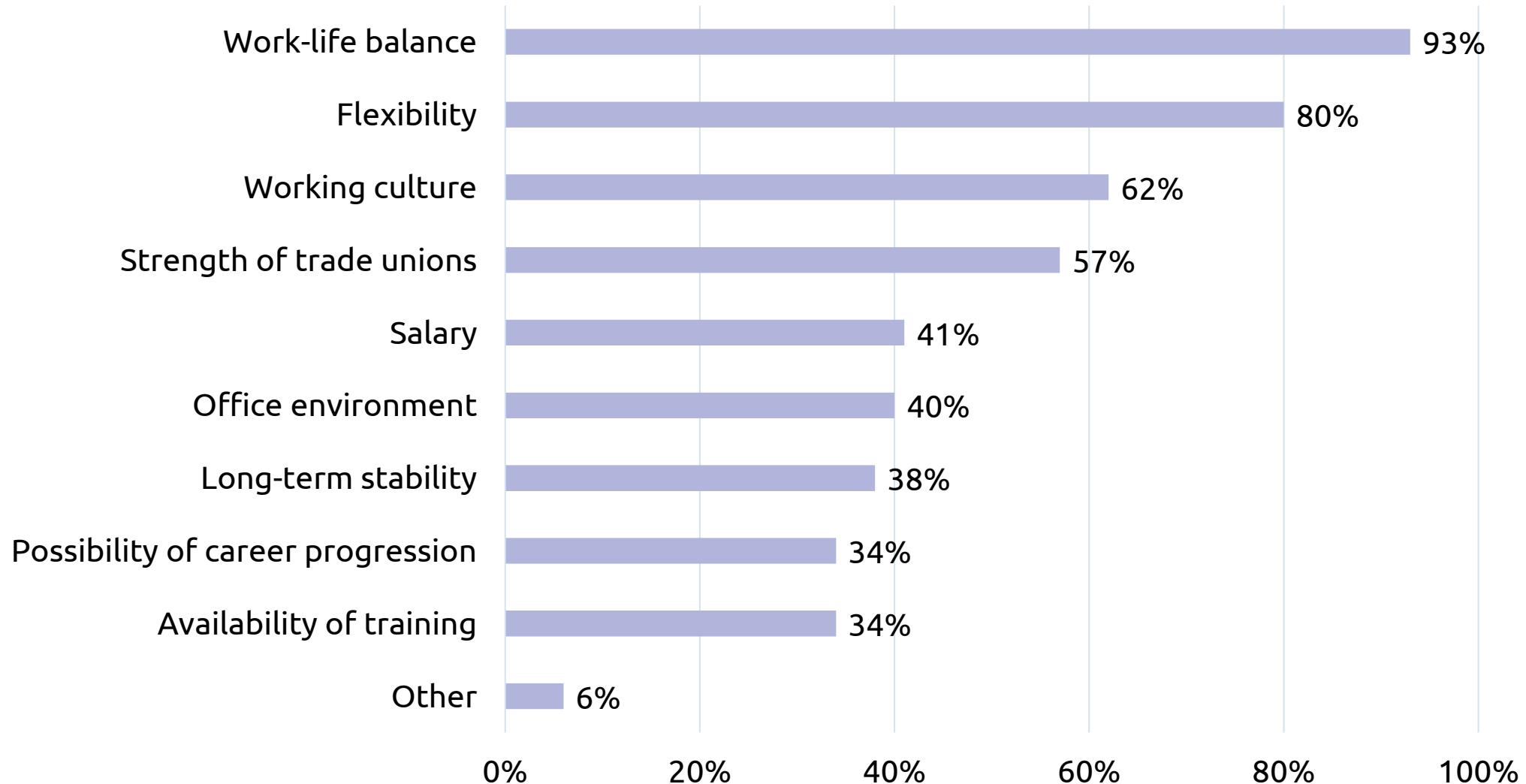
# Perceptions of own situation in working life



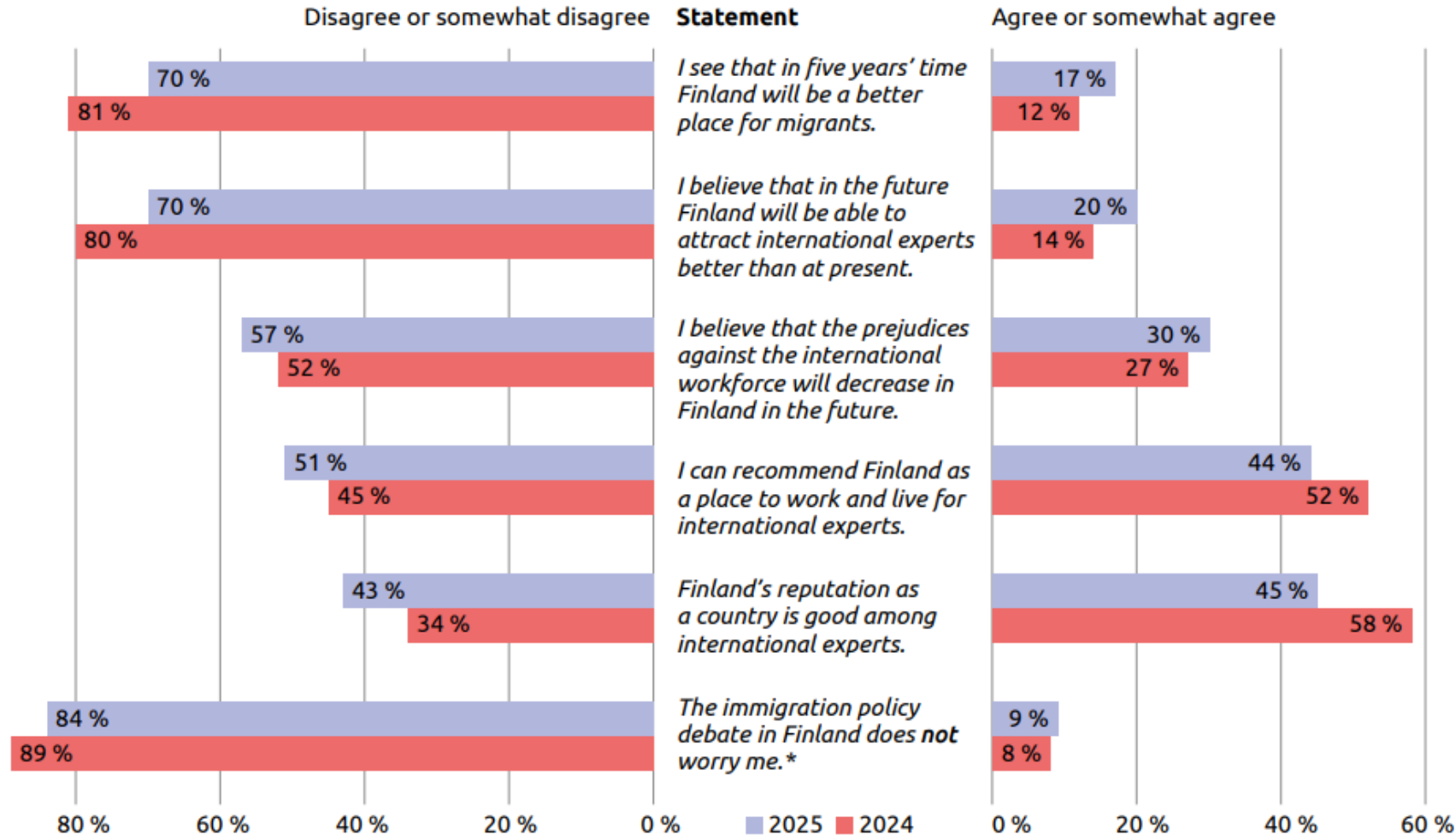
# Perceptions of the job market weaker than in 2024



# Strengths of Finnish working life (% mentioned)

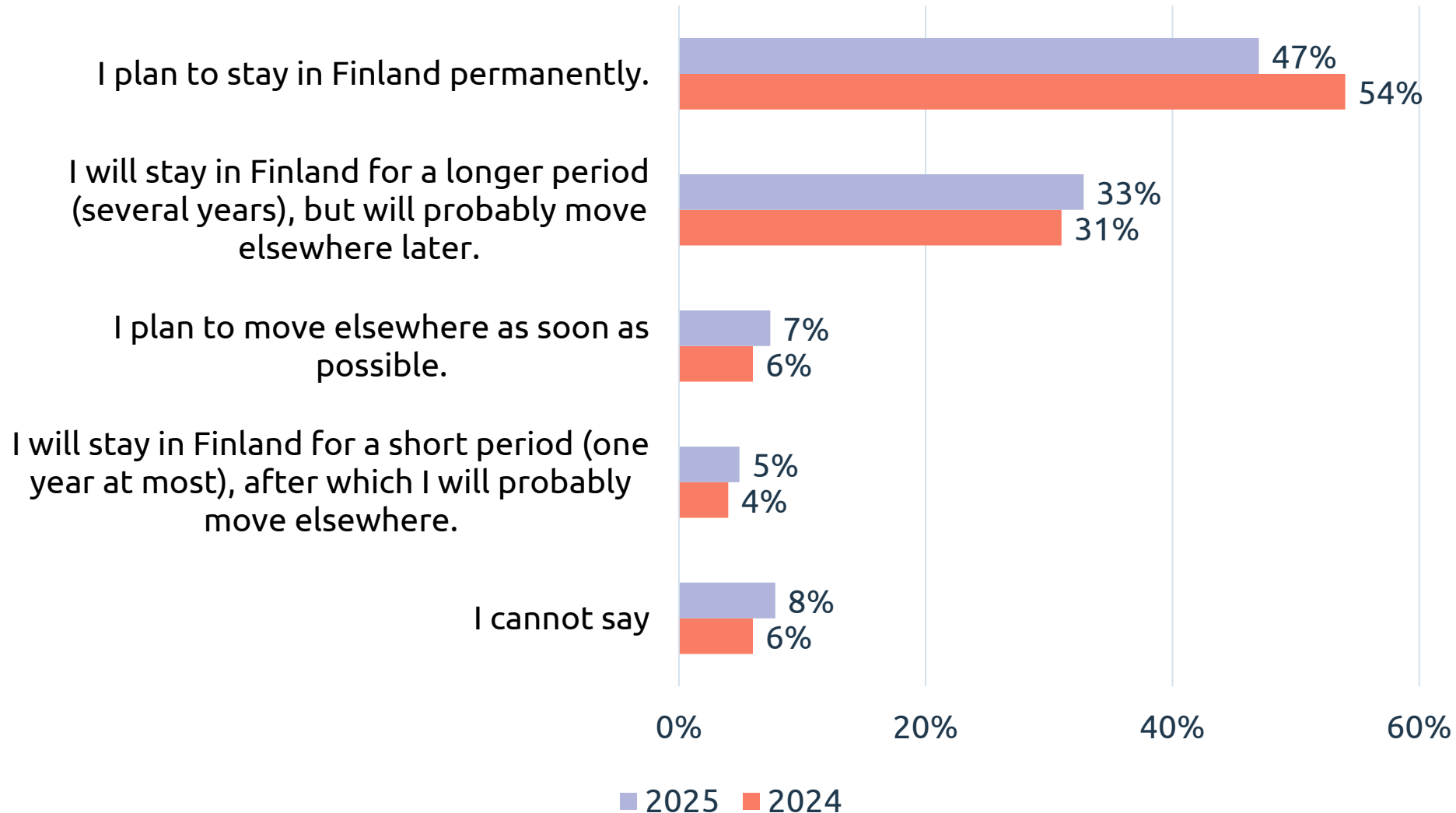


# Trust in the future has improved, attractiveness of Finland has declined





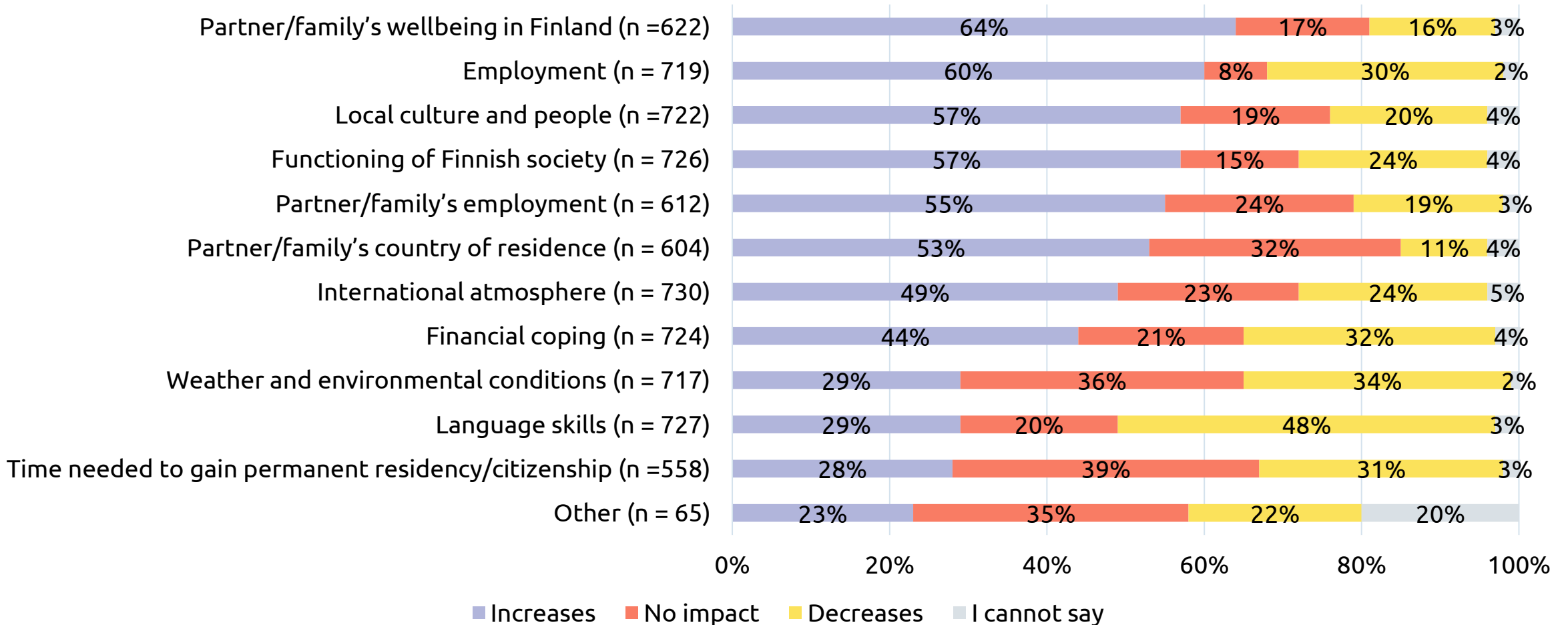
# Increasing number of international technology experts planning to leave Finland



# Why stay, why leave?



Positive and negative factors influencing the decision to stay in Finland, if applicable



# Why stay, why leave?



*"I have family and kids who will benefit from staying here, despite hardships. But if it were to do only with work situation, I would move away."*

*"Salaries are not competitive enough compared to rest of EU and compared to cost of living. The job market is saturated (low offer, high demand)"*

*"I have no opportunity to grow and develop my carrier in Finland because discrimination level is not acceptably high."*

*"I'm happier and healthier in Finland than anywhere else I've lived. I have a wonderful social circle of finns and non-finns, access to nature, public transportation, sports, libraries, affordable housing."*

*"The situation at work leaves me with the impression that there is no point trying to get involved in social activities until I am fluent in Finnish."*

# Summary

# Key observations



- Increasing number of international technology experts perceive Finnish society negatively; work-life balance remains the strongest asset
- Majority feel better integrated into working life than social life; many lack sufficient employer support
- Perceived equality is higher in workplaces than during job seeking
- Language is a major factor contributing to inequality and reduced attractiveness of Finland
- Personal networks play a crucial role in job seeking
- Family reasons also contribute to staying in Finland – the role of social circles should not be overlooked

# Recommendations

# Recommendations

**Develop an  
immigration model  
built around  
incentives**

**Reduce the brain  
waste of  
international experts**

**Improve  
integration both in  
and out of the  
workplace**

# Recommendations (1/3)

## **Develop an immigration model built around incentives, not punishments**

1. Provide a fast-track route to permanent residence for international experts when moving to Finland and for those already here.
2. Remove the 3-/6-month rule or add alterations that increase flexibility, for example for those with children in the middle of school years.
3. Link economic and migration strategies more closely, with a focus on the positive role immigration has played and will play in the Finnish economy.



## Recommendations (2/3)

### **Reduce the brain waste of international experts**

1. Broaden current work discrimination laws to include common forms faced by international experts, such as purposefully unrealistic language requirements, non-recognition of foreign experience and education and hiring decisions based on worries that someone won't stay in Finland.
2. Adopt anonymous recruiting and build upon the EU Pay Transparency Directive to require salary ranges to be listed in all job advertisements in an aim to reduce salary exploitation.
3. Develop and fund the local employment services to provide fast and specialized services for international experts, working to understand local employer needs and to match them with individuals.

# Recommendations (3/3)

## **Improve integration both in and out of the workplace**

1. Fast-track the production and adoption of suitable language and cultural classes for those in working life, to do during working hours.
2. Provide genuine opportunities for international experts to network and build social communities outside of work via city-led efforts.
3. Include trade unions in integration course planning, to improve the understanding of rights and how to notice and respond to exploitation.

# Credits and Contacts

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**A special thank you to everyone who answered the survey!**



International Technology Experts 2025

# Thank you!

<https://www.tek.fi/itesurvey25>

<https://www.ilry.fi/en/information-on-the-union-of-professional-engineers/production-of-data/research-publications/>