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SURVEY ON ATTITUDES OF THE RESIDENTS OF LIBERATED AND FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES IN UKRAINE: *VYSOKOPILLIA COMMUNITY OF KHERSON OBLAST*

**is supported by the Ukraine Confidence Building Initiative (UCBI),
implemented with the support of the
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**

Kyiv International Institute of Sociology

January 2024



INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY

Target audience

Adult residents (18+) of Vysokopillia community (Beryslav district, Kherson oblast)

Sample size

418 respondents

Method

Computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI)

Fieldwork

December 15 – 22, 2023

Weighting

Data have been weighted in order to correspond to the gender structure of the permanent residents according to the data of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine as of 1 January, 2021

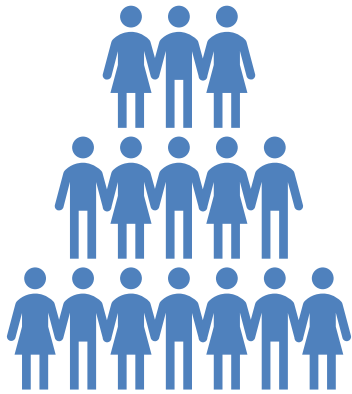
Sample error
(with 0.95
probability and
without design
effect)

5,0% for indicators close to 50%;
4,3% for indicators close to 25 or 75%;
3,0% for indicators close to 10 or 90%;
2,2% for indicators close to 5 or 95%.

IN ADDITION:
4 online focus-
group discussions

youth aged 18-29;
working population aged 30-59;
active population (volunteers, business, activists);
residents who temporarily don't live in the community.





MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS



SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

**BY QUANTITATIVE SURVEY DATA*

Gender:

55% female,
45% male.

Age:

12% – aged 18-29,
24% – aged 30 to 44,
32% – aged 45 to 59,
32% – aged 60 and older.

Education level:

25% have higher education (bachelor, specialist, master, degree),
39% – secondary specialized (technical school, college),
36% – professional (vocational school, lyceum), complete secondary or lower education.

Occupation:

36% are employed
64% are not occupied

Self-evaluation of the family's financial situation:

10% lack money for food,
53% have enough for food but cannot buy clothes,
35% have enough money for food, clothes and some savings,
1% – can afford buying some expensive things or make significant savings.

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY

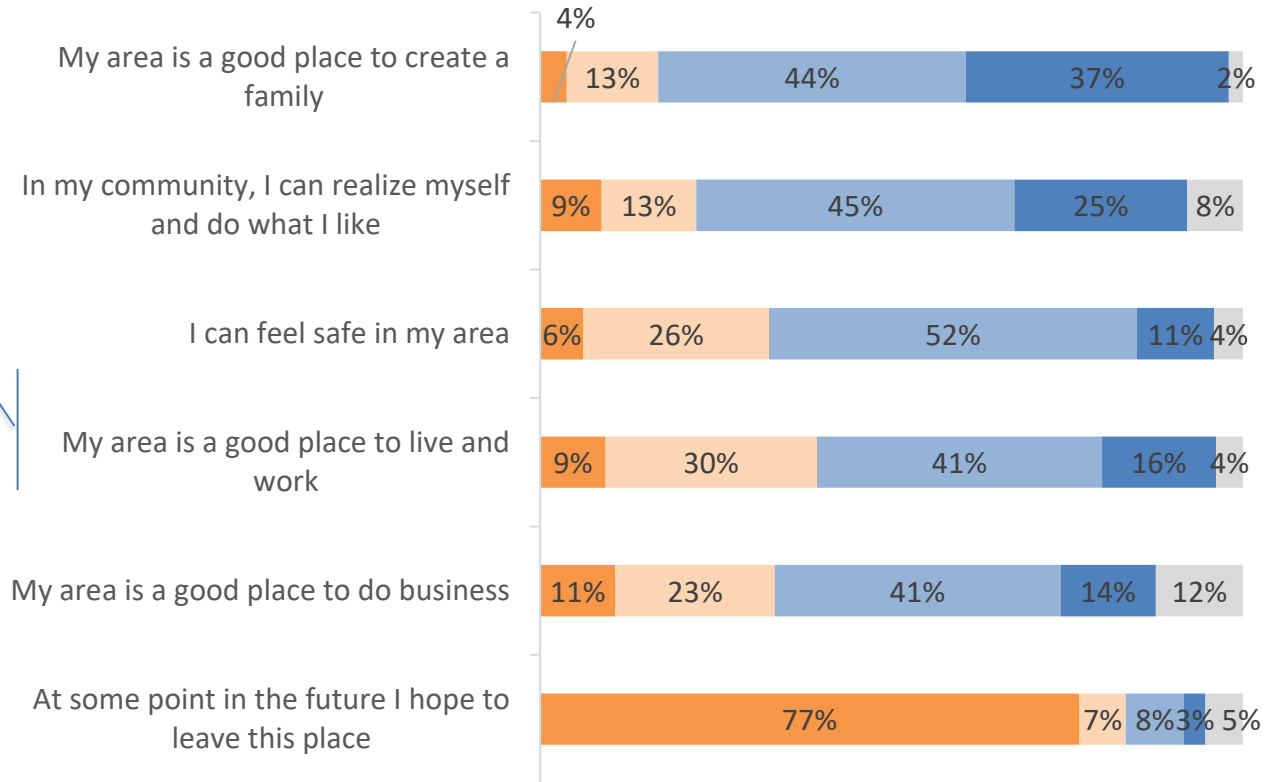


SATISFACTION WITH DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current place of residence:

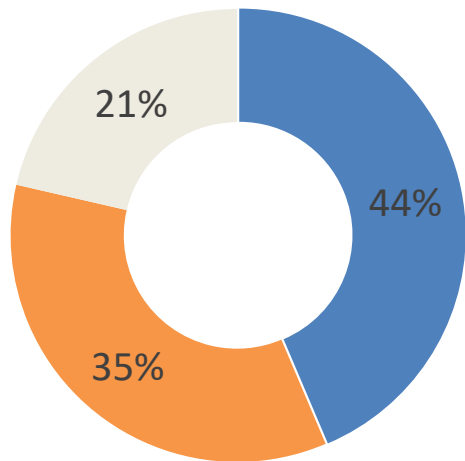
■ Completely disagree ■ Rather disagree ■ Rather agree
■ Completely agree ■ Difficult to say

FGD: Most of the community settlements have gas supply provided, before the war work has been carried out to create a water supply system in some villages (the GOOD program), and build roads.



Base: all respondents (n=418)

Do you think, in general, things in your community are going in the right or wrong direction?



- In the right direction
- In the wrong direction
- Difficult to say

FGD: When characterizing their region in general, the respondents focused on the following advantages: good location, availability of railway connections, beautiful scenery; the following were emphasized: the agrarian potential of the community and the rationality of land use, despite the zone of “risky agriculture”. Respondents characterized their community as the “homeland of watermelons” and “the granary of Ukraine”.

The respondents characterized their community residents as hard workers, laborious farmers. These are “ordinary people”, kind, friendly and easy-going.

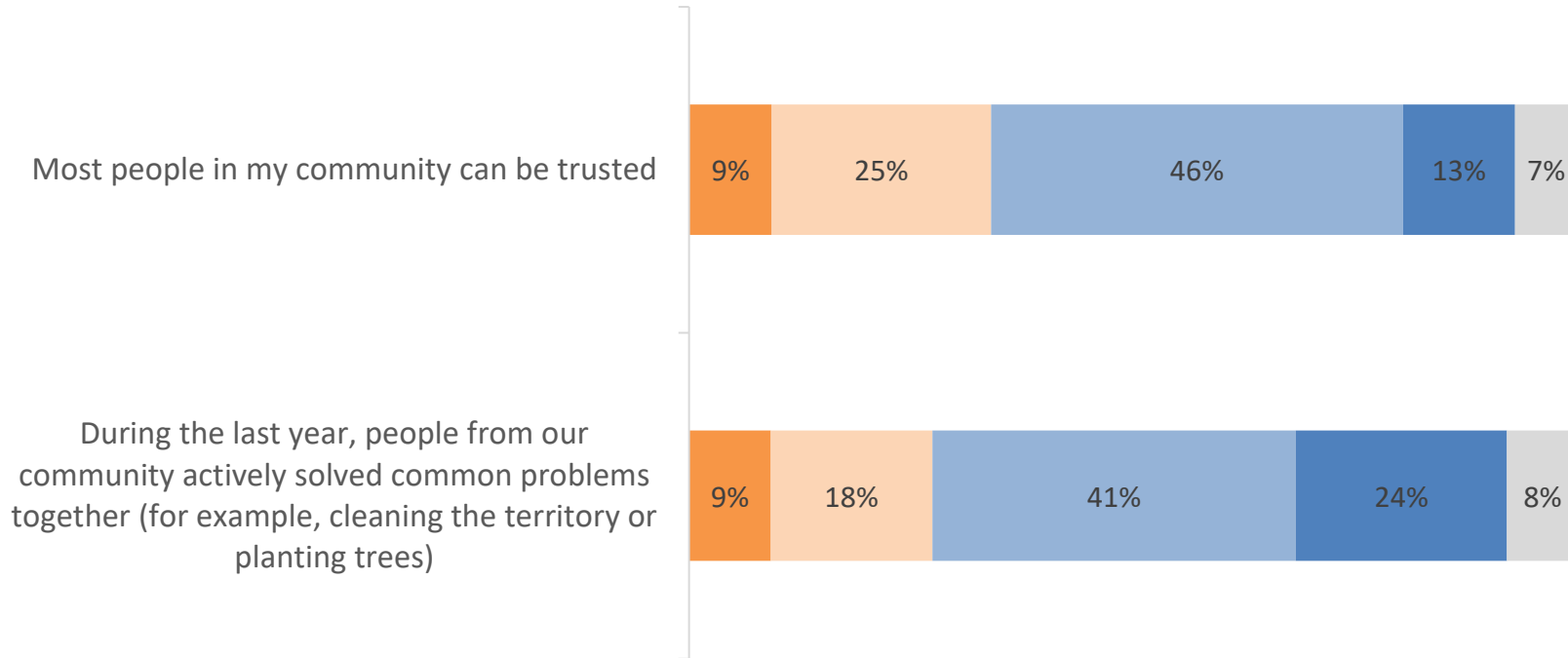
Base: all respondents (n=418)



TRUST AND COOPERATION

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your community and neighbors:

■ Completely disagree ■ Rather disagree ■ Rather agree ■ Completely agree ■ Difficult to say

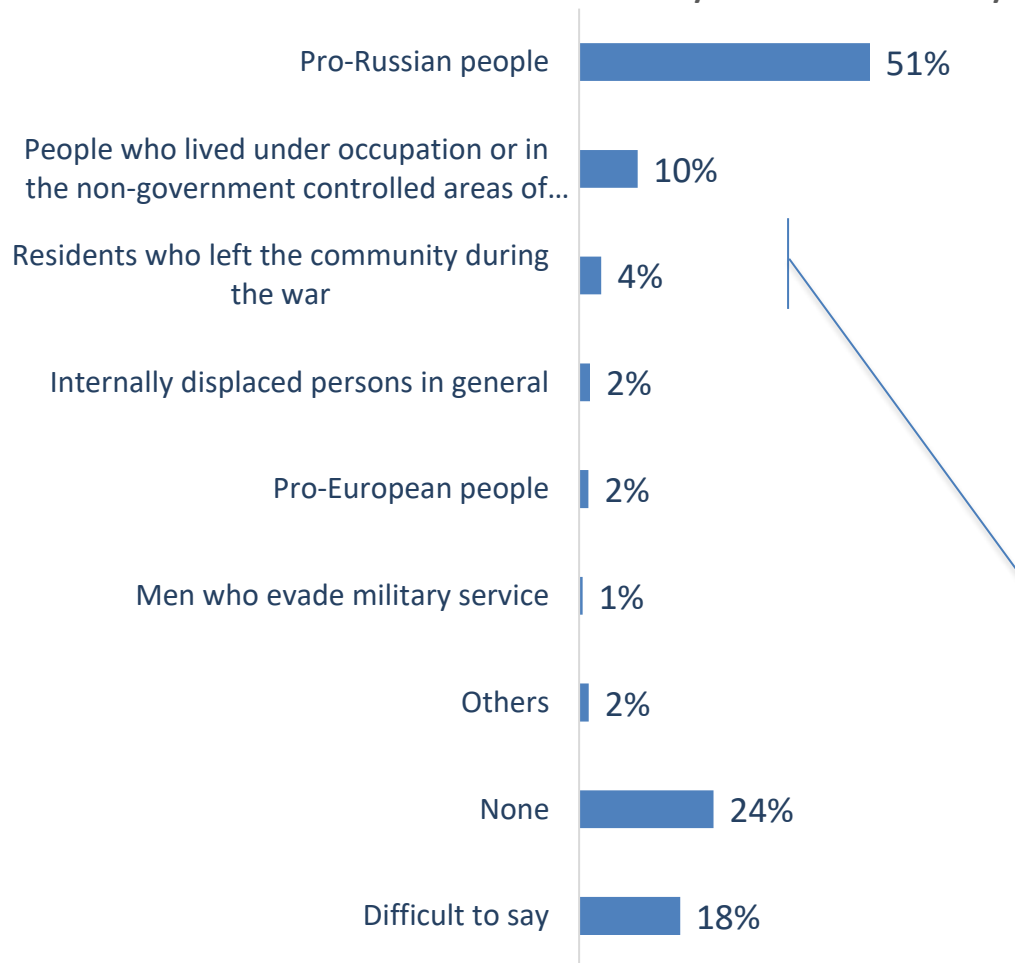


Base: all respondents (n=418)



GROUPS THAT MAY BECOME A SOURCE OF CONFLICT IN THE COMMUNITY

In your opinion, an increase in the number of representatives of which of the groups listed on card 4 could cause conflicts in your community?



FGD: According to the respondents' evaluations, two large destructive splits are visible, affecting the attitude of citizens to each other and the trust level to the authorities:

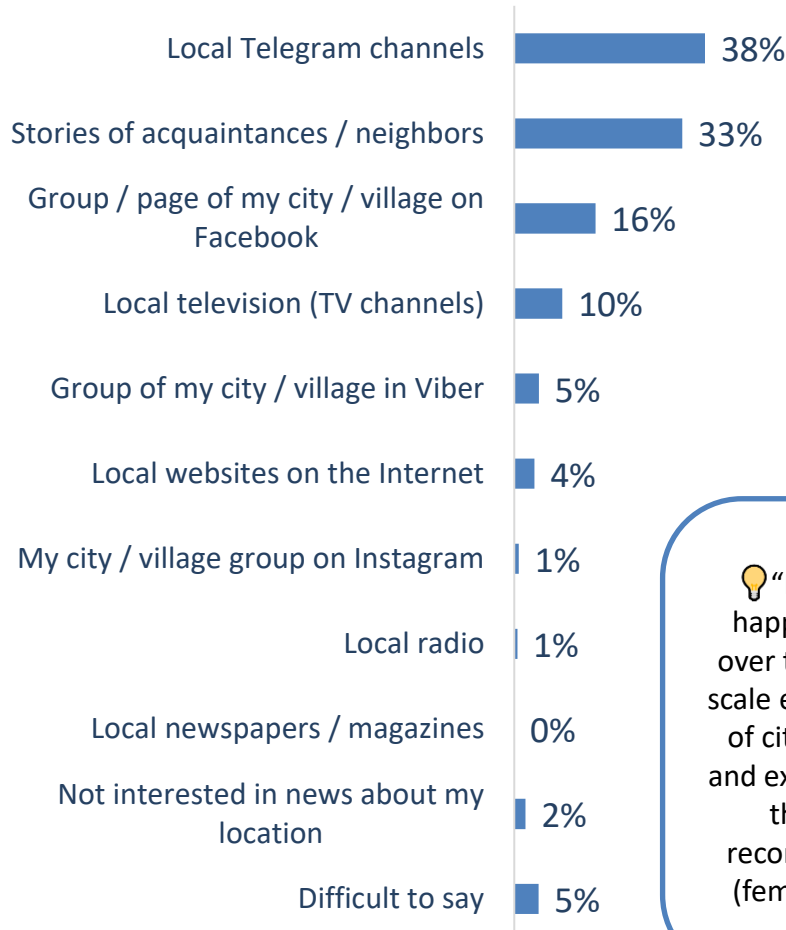
1) the split tied to the huge presence of collaborators, who, according to the observations of some respondents, were in every settlement of the community;

2) the spit related to unequal opportunities to receive humanitarian aid. Opinions were voiced that those responsible for its distribution are profiting from it and the very distribution is not fair.

SOURCES OF LOCAL NEWS

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What sources do you use to get local news?



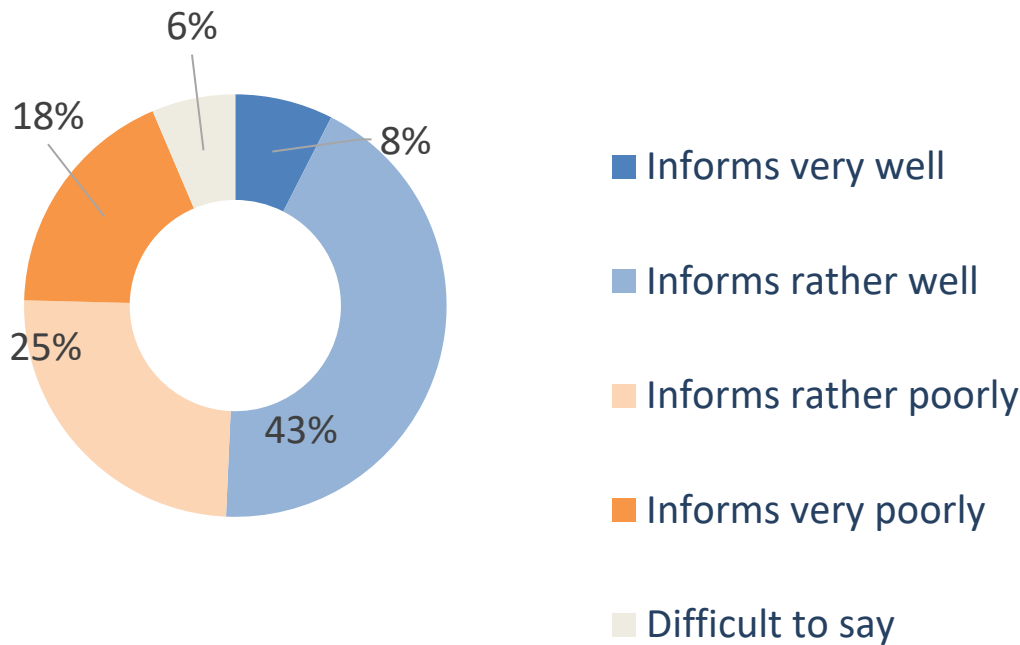
FGD: Internet sources (Facebook, Telegram channels) and “word of mouth” (communication with neighbors, acquaintances) took the undisputed lead among the channels for obtaining information. It was also emphasized that the telephone can be an important tool for obtaining information for the elderly. There were nostalgic references to local newspapers, which haven’t been functioning for a long time, and there were very few cases when respondents directly addressed the local authorities.

💡 “If such meetings actually happen, it's like a few people over there, not like some large-scale events with a large number of citizens would gather there and express their opinions, or on the contrary, give some recommendations out loud”, - (female, working population)

💡 “...When I was still a schoolgirl, we ordered this newspaper with my parents because we liked horoscope (laughs), which coincided with real life at that time. But then, when I grew up... it was really a good newspaper informing about events and activities in our community. It's a pity that it's no longer there”, - (female 28, youth 18-29)

INTERACTION BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND COMMUNITY

How would you rate how well the local government informs the residents of the community about its activities?

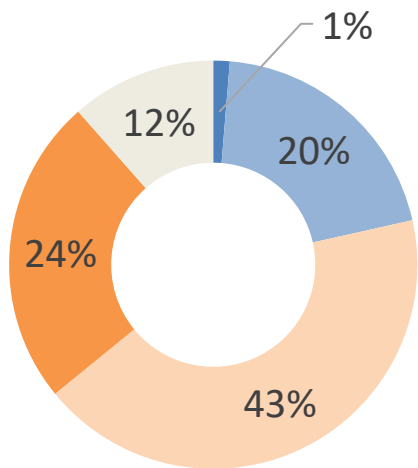


Base: all respondents (n=418)

FGD: In all four groups, the participants stood in full solidarity when evaluating the information level from the authorities as insufficient. To a greater or lesser extent, the local population is able to receive information about administrative orders made by the MCA head.

The authorities, according to the participants, should be more open and transparent and communicate more with the population, even taking into account the martial law.

In your opinion, to what extent do the residents of your community influence important decisions of the local government?



- Influence very much
- Somewhat influence
- Influence quite little
- Have no influence
- Difficult to say

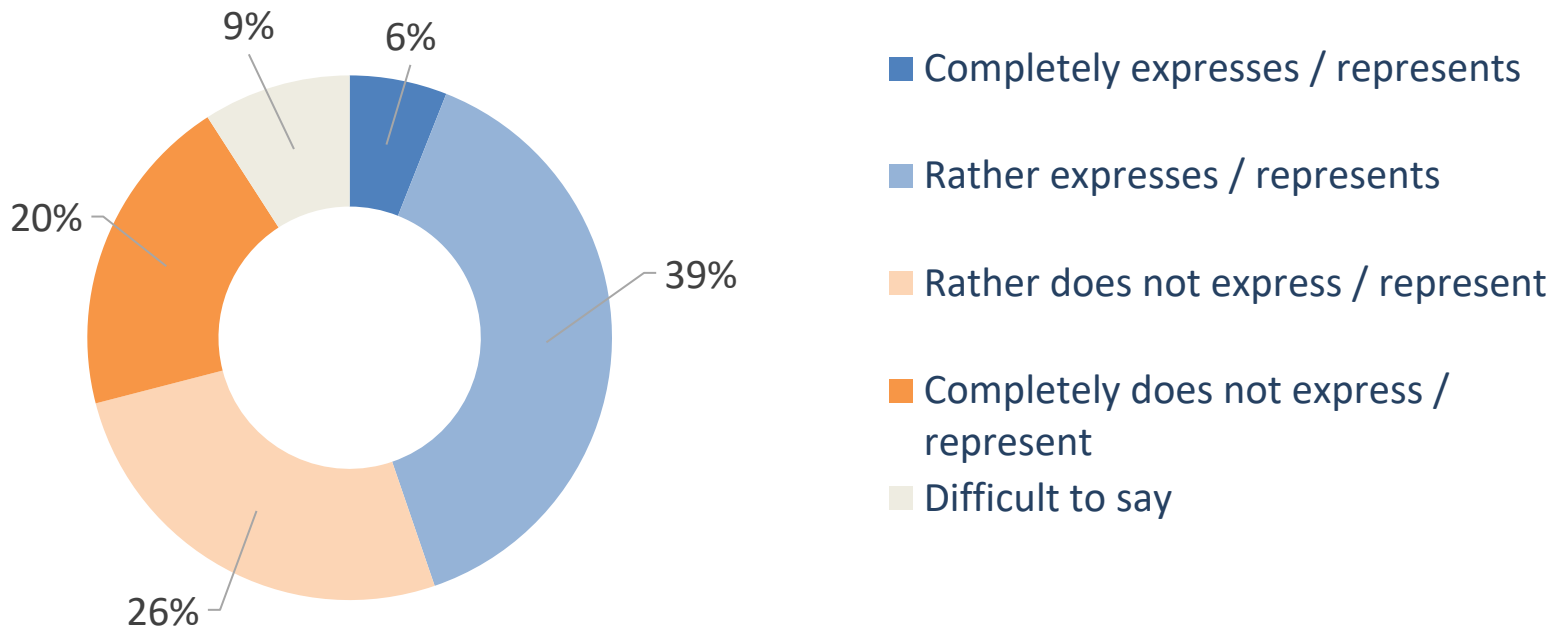
FGD: Respondents provided only a few examples of successful cases of public influence on government decisions, most of them didn't even have such experience. For example, shared about successful cooperation with volunteers when the community was helped to build a cleaning station and improve water quality, although the role of local authorities in this process was not detailed.

💡 "I remember the last such announcement by the village council in the community. It was spread in social networks and related to street renaming in some settlements, which was part of the decommunization process. We had the Google form where the council invited people to discuss the changes. So, I mean, the government didn't just make the decision and inform us about it. So everyone could go to the Facebook page and express their opinion using this form", - (female, temporarily not living in the community)



EXPRESSION OF COMMUNITY INTERESTS

To what extent do you think the local government expresses or represents the interests and point of view of the residents of the community?

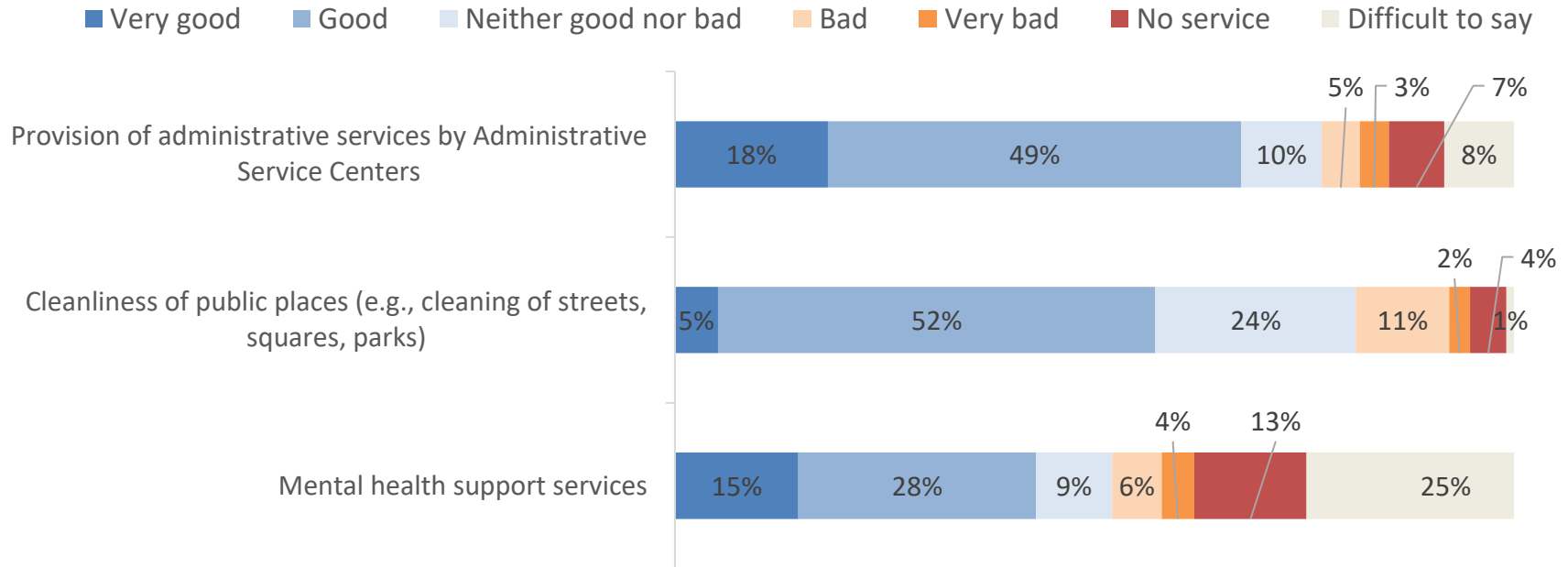


EVALUATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY



EVALUATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Please rate the provision of the following services in your community:

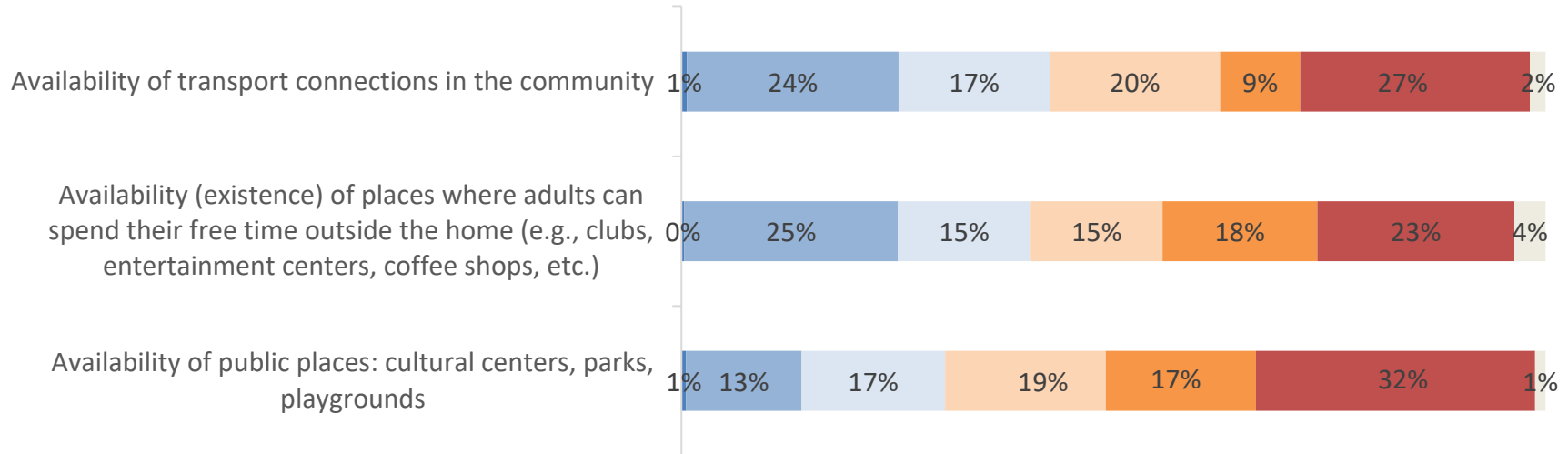


Base: all respondents (n=418)

FGD: When it comes to evaluation of the administrative services provision, we witnessed quite a lot of **positive comments about the ASC work**, especially in the area of working with vulnerable segments of the population, when the ASC or village council representatives paid home visits to people with disabilities, pensioners, or people with special needs. The practice of “mobile ASCs” was also mentioned in the positive context – this is all about travelling to populated areas according to the schedule. Some respondents found the information on the bulletin board in the ASC premises to be useful.

Please rate the provision of the following services in your community:

■ Very good
 ■ Good
 ■ Neither good nor bad
 ■ Bad
 ■ Very bad
 ■ No service
 ■ Difficult to say



Base: all respondents (n=418)

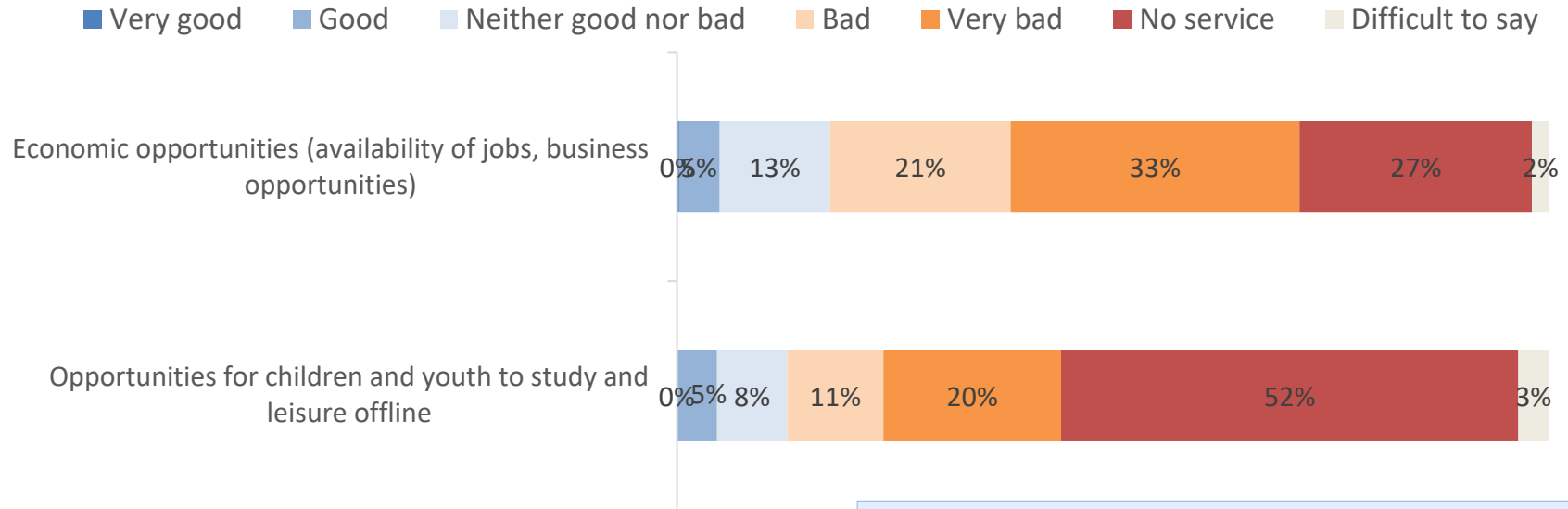
FGD: Study group workshops and places for self-realization that functioned before the war have not yet resumed their activities. Respondents mentioned concerts, a dance club, and sports sections. To some extent, it is due to infrastructure destruction, and partly due to the fear of holding mass public events.

💡 [in Russian] “There’s no place for my child to attend and develop because our kindergarten worked for a short period of time in-home, but then it was just quickly closed, and that was it. It is forbidden for children to come together in a place that has no bomb shelter. That’s what we got – my child lacks communication with other children”, - (female, youth)



EVALUATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY (cont.)

Please rate the provision of the following services in your community:



Base: all respondents (n=418)

FGD: The employment center was also mentioned, which offers many vacancies in the community, but job finding remains difficult. “Komunservice” (utility service) received positive evaluations both in terms of direct duties (cleaning streets, parks) and from the job creation point of view (welder, electrician).

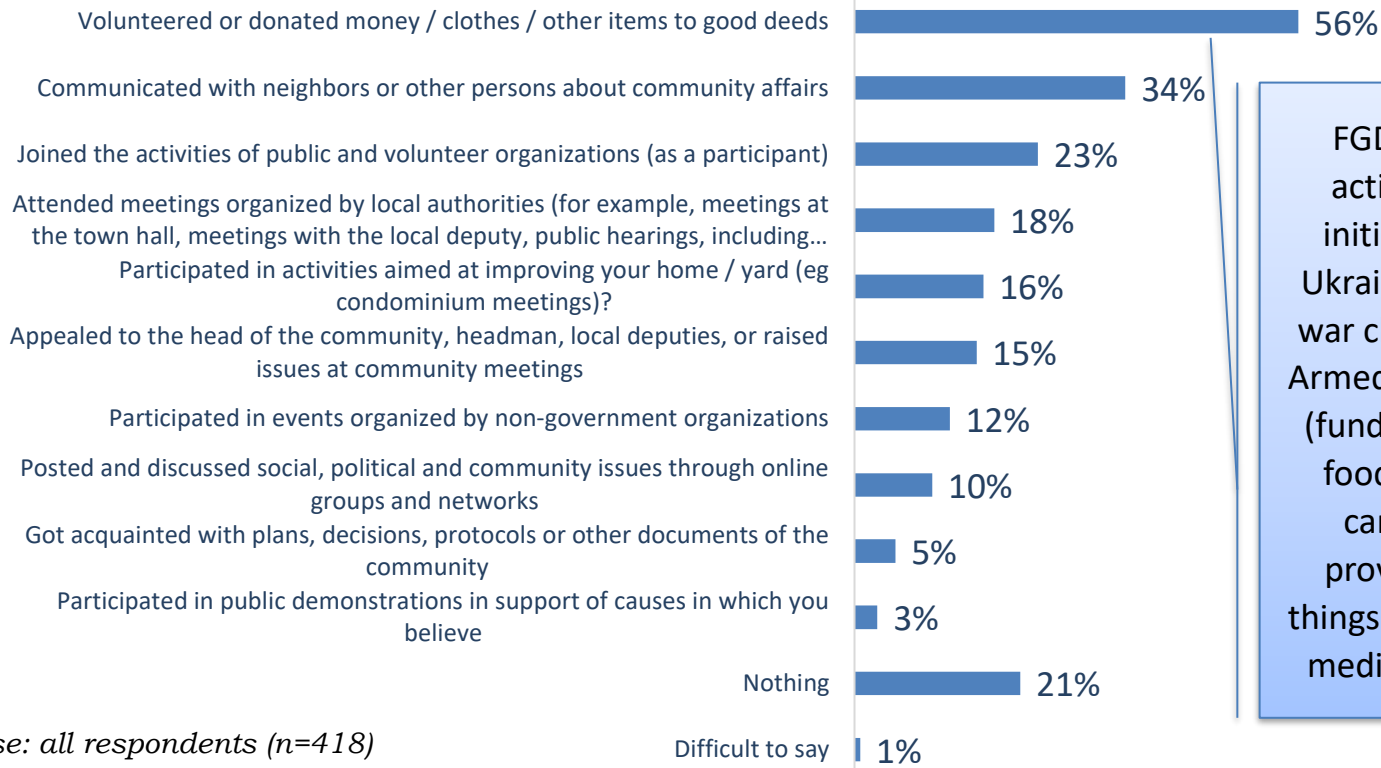
FGD: A number of comparisons regarding the provision of services were made by residents who temporarily do not live in the community, and these comparisons were generally not in favor of the Vysokopillia community. In particular, it was noted that there are more opportunities for children's development, it is easier to get administrative services than in rural areas, medical care works better, and there are more various vacancies in other communities and cities.

CIVIC ACTIVITY



PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Which of the following have you done in the past 12 months?



Base: all respondents (n=418)

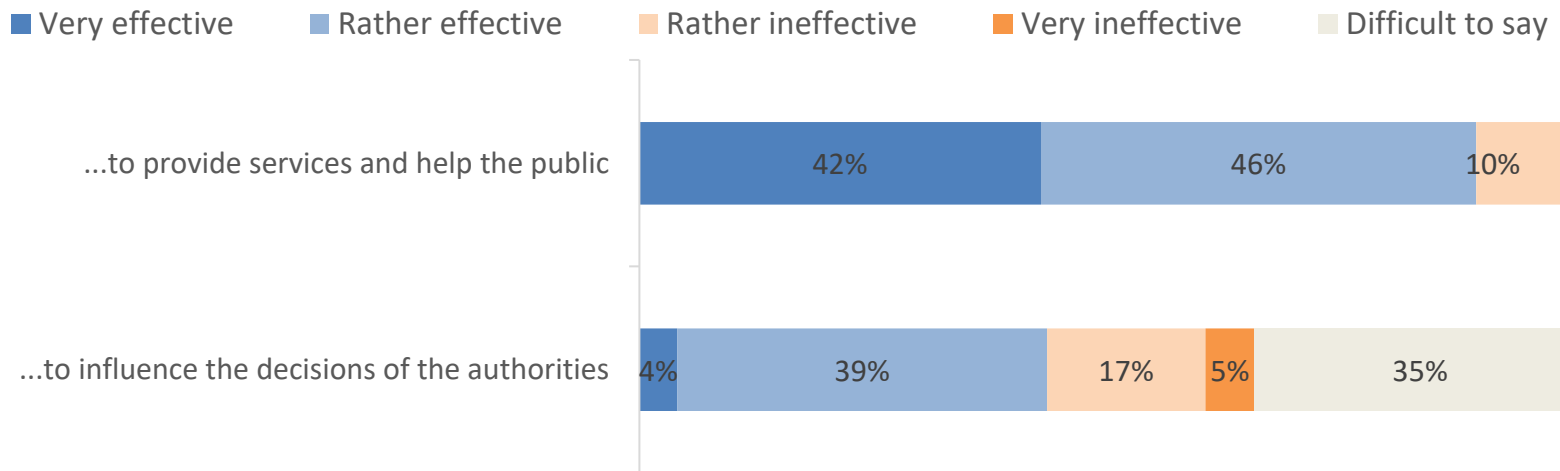
FGD: Residents are actively involved in initiatives that bring Ukraine's victory in the war closer and help the Armed Forces of Ukraine (fundraising, providing food, making trench candles and nets, providing necessary things: clothes, blankets, medical supplies, etc.)

FGD: There were many examples of the population self-organization at the local level (repair of playgrounds, environmental care, cleaning of roads, organization of classes for preschoolers, repair of the school roof by parents).

💡 "We, Ukrainians, have always existed and never relied on the authorities. This process should not be organized by the government. As it has been said, people need to rely on themselves and not wait for the government to do something... We need to get people together and help each other. One may need help with fence, the other one with windows. We need to start helping each other, but some people keep on waiting for the deputies to provide some help", - (male, 56, active population)

AWARENESS AND EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

How would you rate the activities of civil society (non-governmental) organizations in your community from the point of view of their ability...



Base: the respondents who are aware of the activities of civil society (non-governmental) organizations and associations in their community (n=74).

FGD: Research participants couldn't recall successful cases of direct community influence on government decisions. On the contrary, there are examples of unsuccessful communication of local volunteers with the authorities, with the latter one not responding to the request. The outlined positive initiatives related to work with local volunteers and international organizations with some organizational support from local authorities.

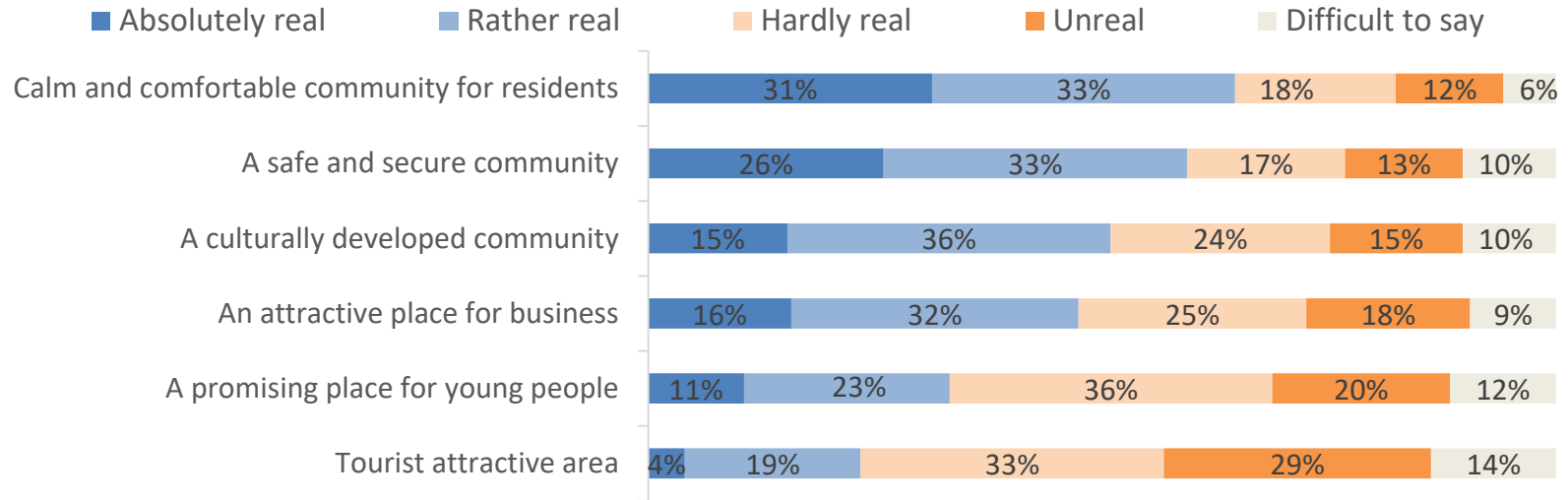
💡 "These should be civic organizations and activists. They must act in cooperation with the authorities and stop waiting. There are days when we go out together and plant flowers. We are happy for each other, talk. I'd love to have more of such things", - (female, active population).

PROSPECTS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



PROSPECTS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

How real do you think the following prospects for the development of your community are:



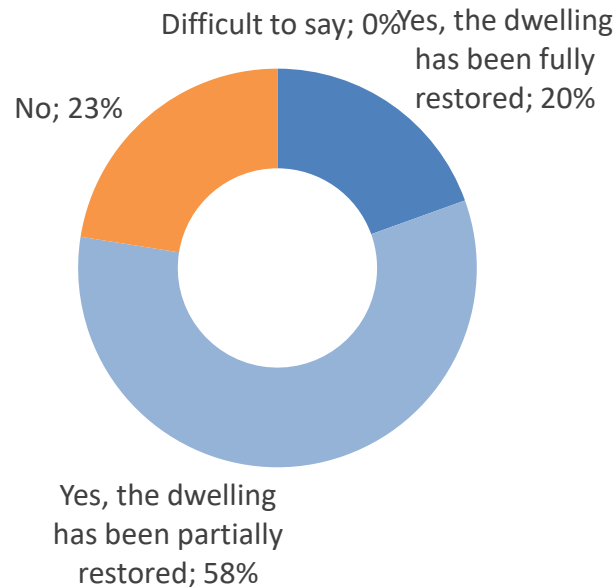
Base: all respondents (n=418)

FGD: In their wishes regarding **future development areas of the community**, the respondents focused primarily on the urgent need to create jobs. As part of this initiative, the following measures were proposed: build a plant that disposes construction and household waste, bakery, tomato processing facility, canning factory, butter factory, and develop cattle breeding.

According to the respondents, one of the main prospects for the job development is demining and recovery of agrarian business, but currently demining hasn't been carried out to the extent required, which often leads to injuries and deaths.

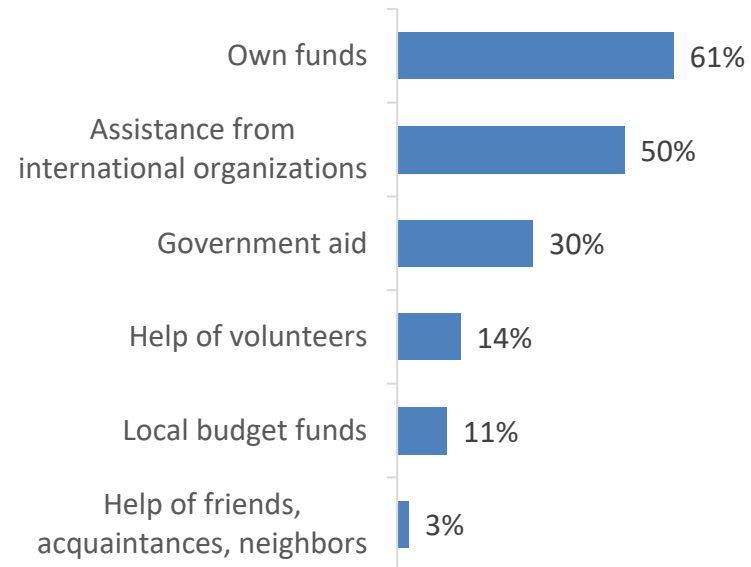
RECOVERY

Has your dwelling been restored?



Base: respondents whose homes were damaged as a result of war (n = 358).

At whose expense were these restoration works carried out?



Base: respondents whose dwellings were fully or partially restored (n=276).

FGD: Some respondents spoke about the idea to start restoring buildings with the active involvement of builders from other regions. At the same time, selection criteria for the recovery of residential buildings, streets, provision of construction materials, and food aid remain unclear for many respondents. This, in turn, leads to conflicts between the population and growing distrust of the authorities (which actually coordinate and distribute the aid).



SOURCES OF HOPE FOR RECOVERY

Which of the following gives you hope that the recovery of your community is possible?

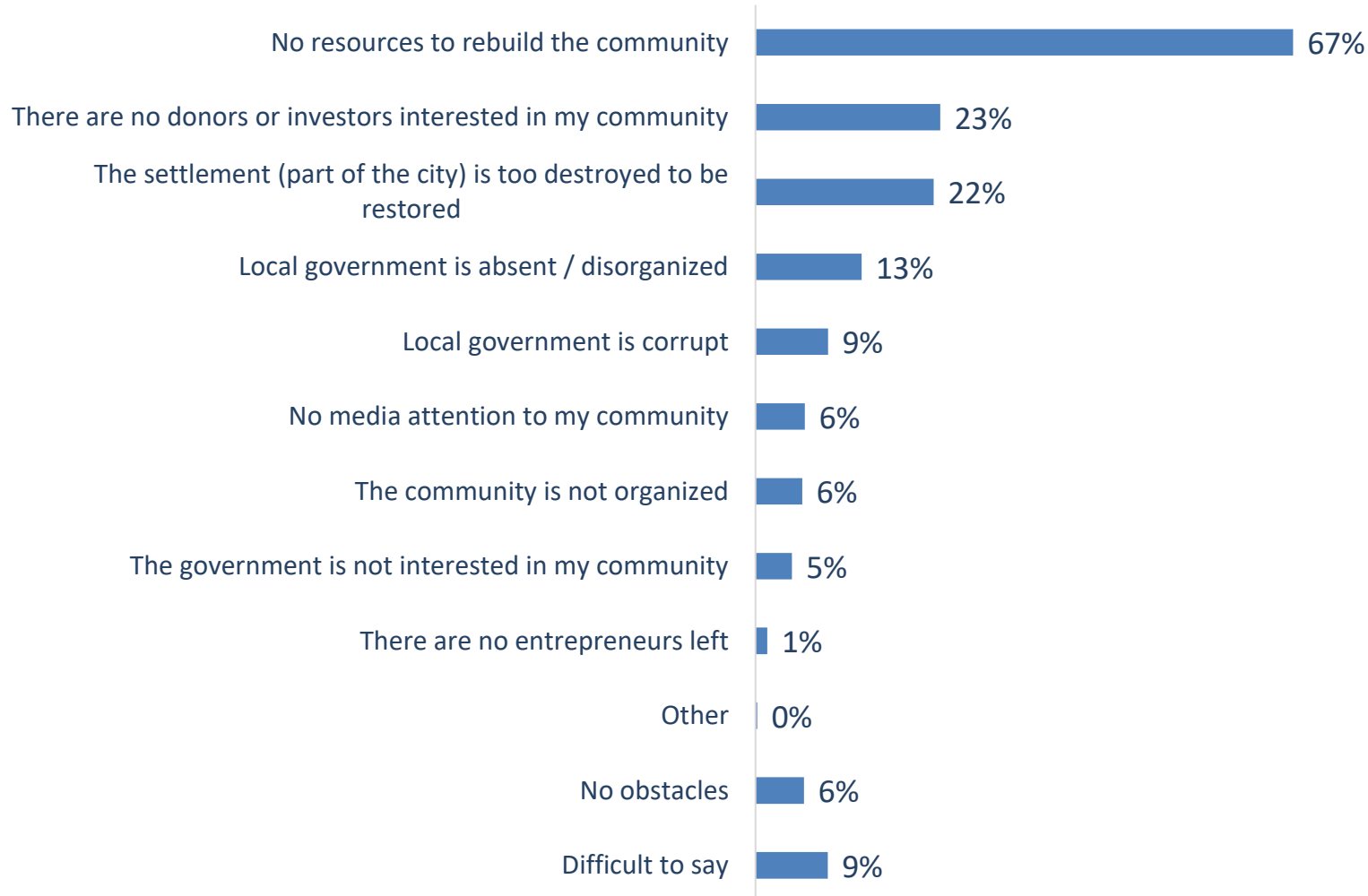


FGD: Respondents emphasized the importance of such personality traits as cohesion, honesty and generosity, reliability, “wisely and on trust”. They also expect a roadmap of actions and priority areas of recovery, attraction of investments, cooperation between foreign volunteers and the local ones, job placement, recovery of the economy.



BARRIERS FOR RECOVERY

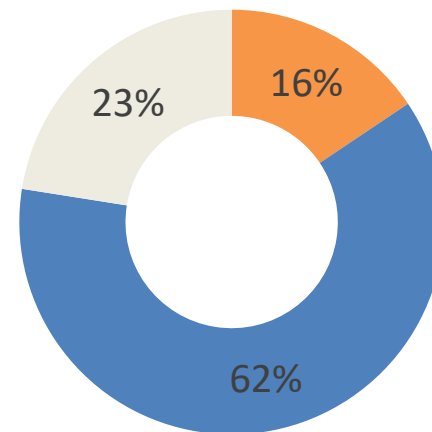
What obstacles to recovery in your community do you see?



POSITION ON RESTORATION OF DAMAGED INFRASTRUCTURE

Which of the following points of view on the restoration of damaged infrastructure is closer to you:

FGD: The participants of all four groups unanimously identified that longer, but also better recovery, with the use of investments, is a much more reliable option. Respondents also mentioned that the destroyed infrastructure should be rebuilt in a better-quality way. This also relates to rebuilding from the scratch. At the same time, some respondents said that several institutions had already been in neglected state even before the war.

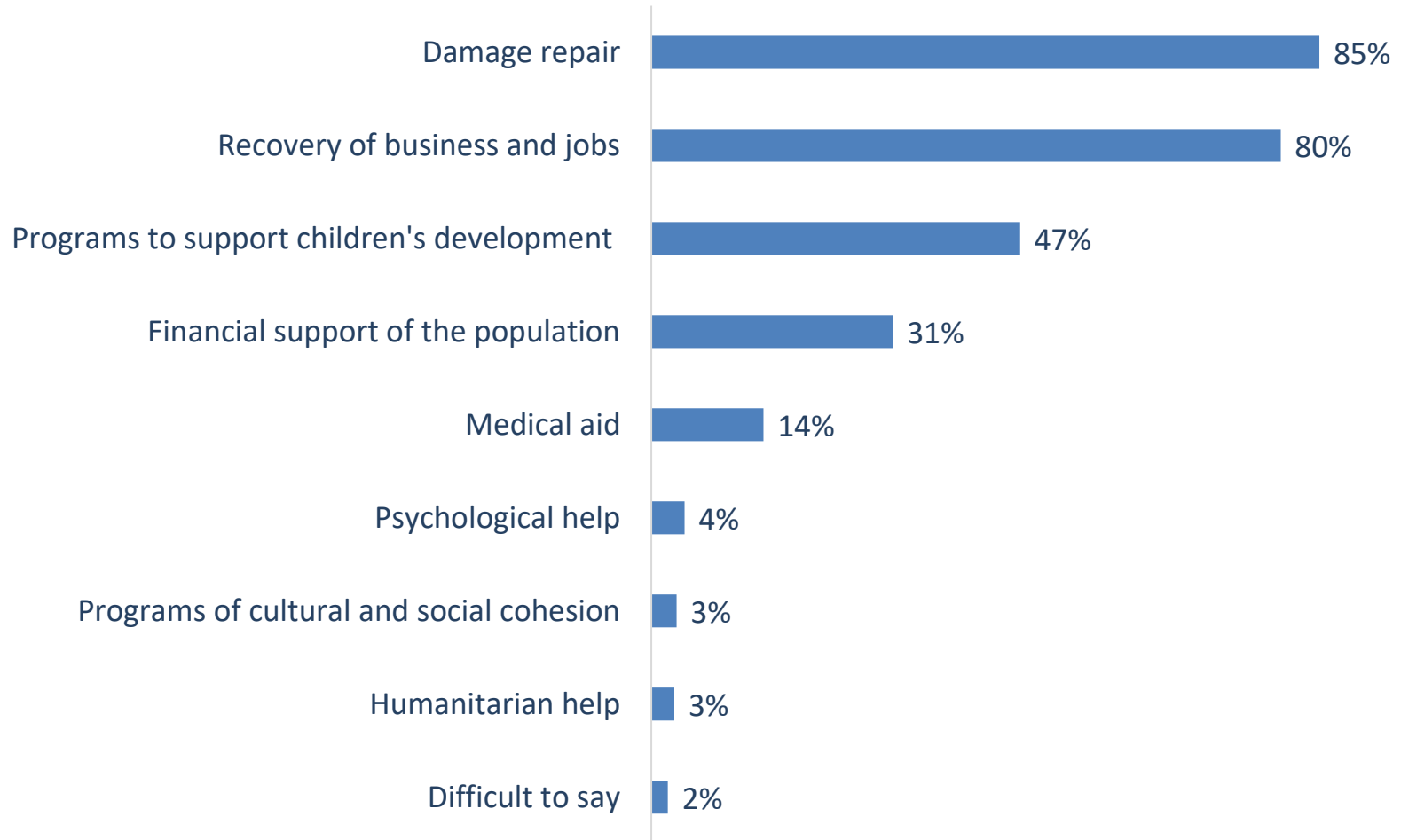


- Restoration of the community should take place quickly and be aimed at restoring the level that existed before the start of the war
- Restoration may take longer, but should include the implementation of green, energy-saving technologies and modernization
- Difficult to say



PRIORITY RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

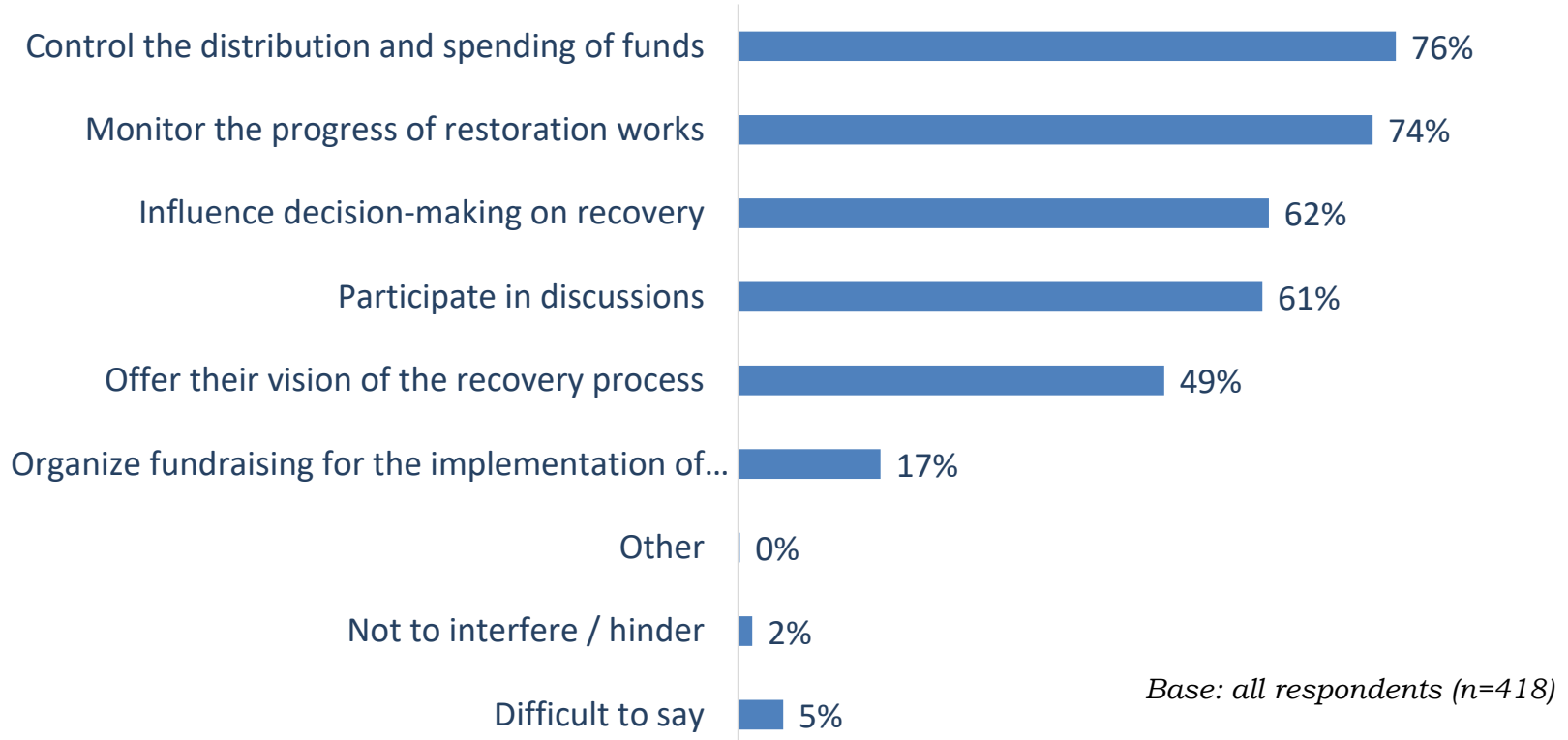
Which of the listed programs should be implemented in your community as a priority?





THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTS IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS

What should ordinary residents of the community do in the process of recovery?



FGD: When talking about involvement in community recovery processes, the respondents cited many positive examples of self-organization to solve local problems or some individual initiatives based on their own experience. Examples include: repair of local playgrounds; care for the environment (do not litter on the street); mowing grass, clearing roads in winter, planting flowers near one's house; some respondents would be ready to plant trees and help with construction; some mentioned preschool training.



READINESS TO JOIN RECOVERY INITIATIVES

Are you ready to personally join recovery initiatives?

