

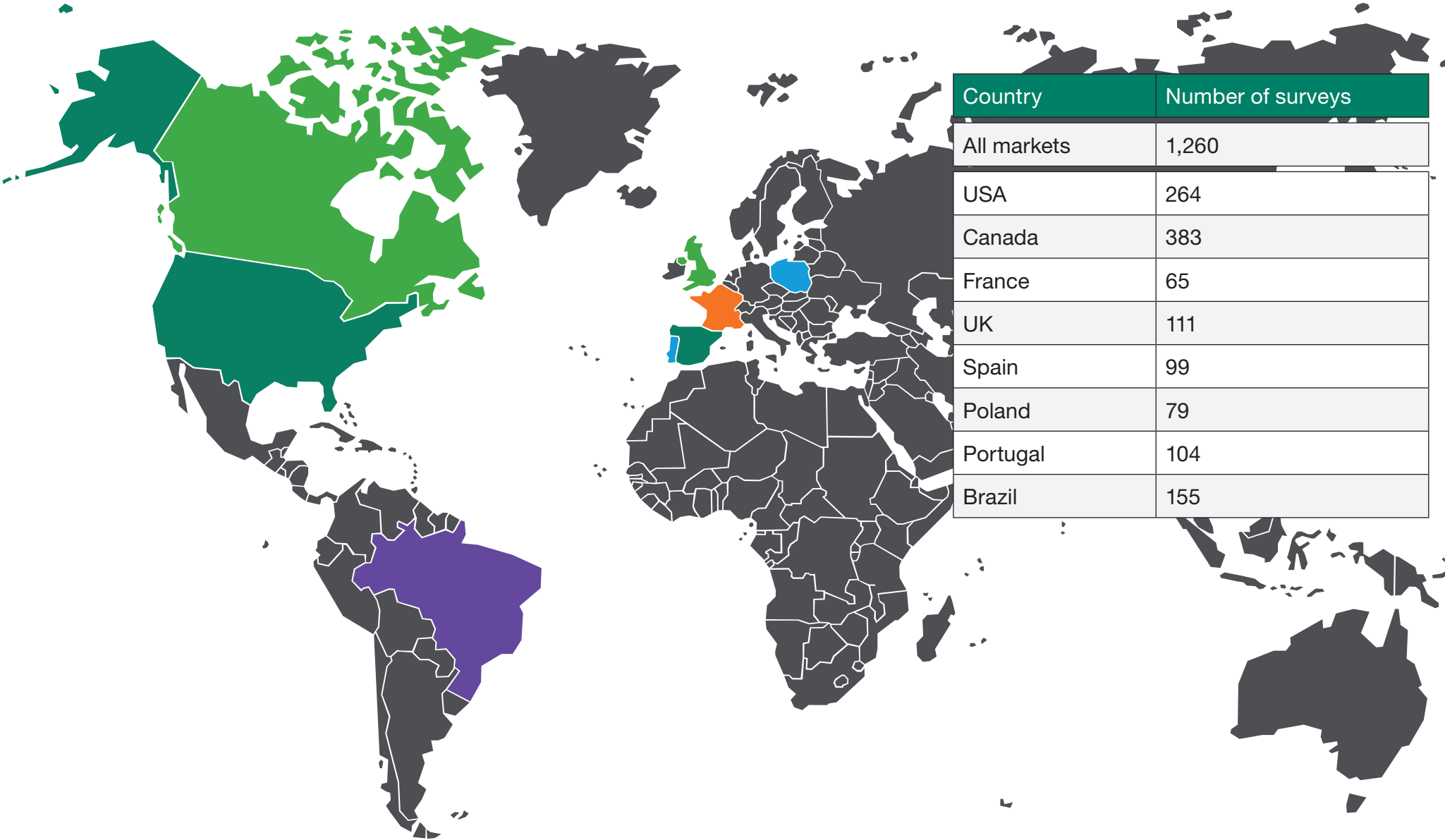
Sage Accountancy Index 2014



Methodology



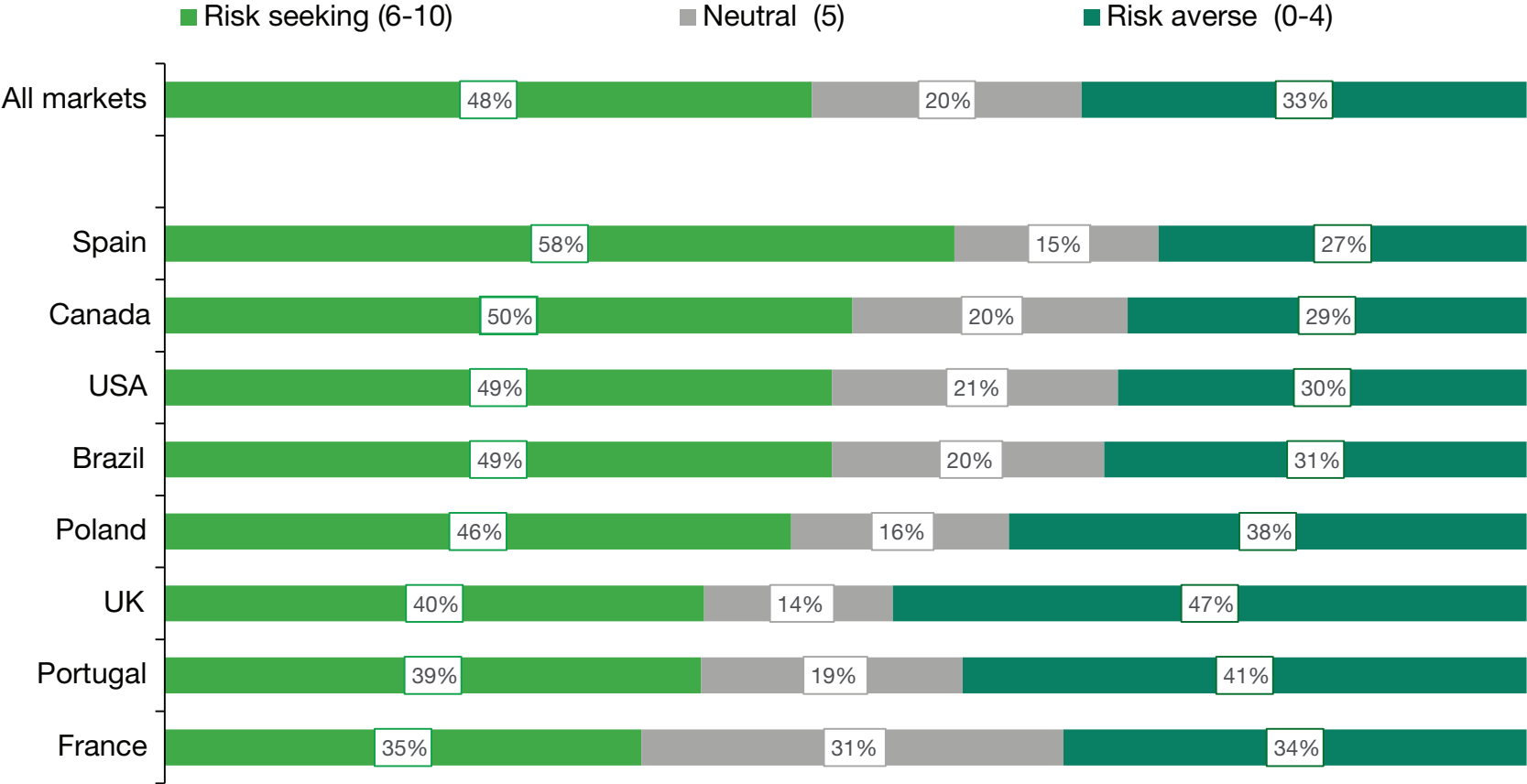
Populus surveyed 1,260 accountants at Sage customer businesses in eight countries between July 29 and September 30, 2014.



Attitudes toward risk: Nearly half describe themselves as more risk seeking than risk averse.

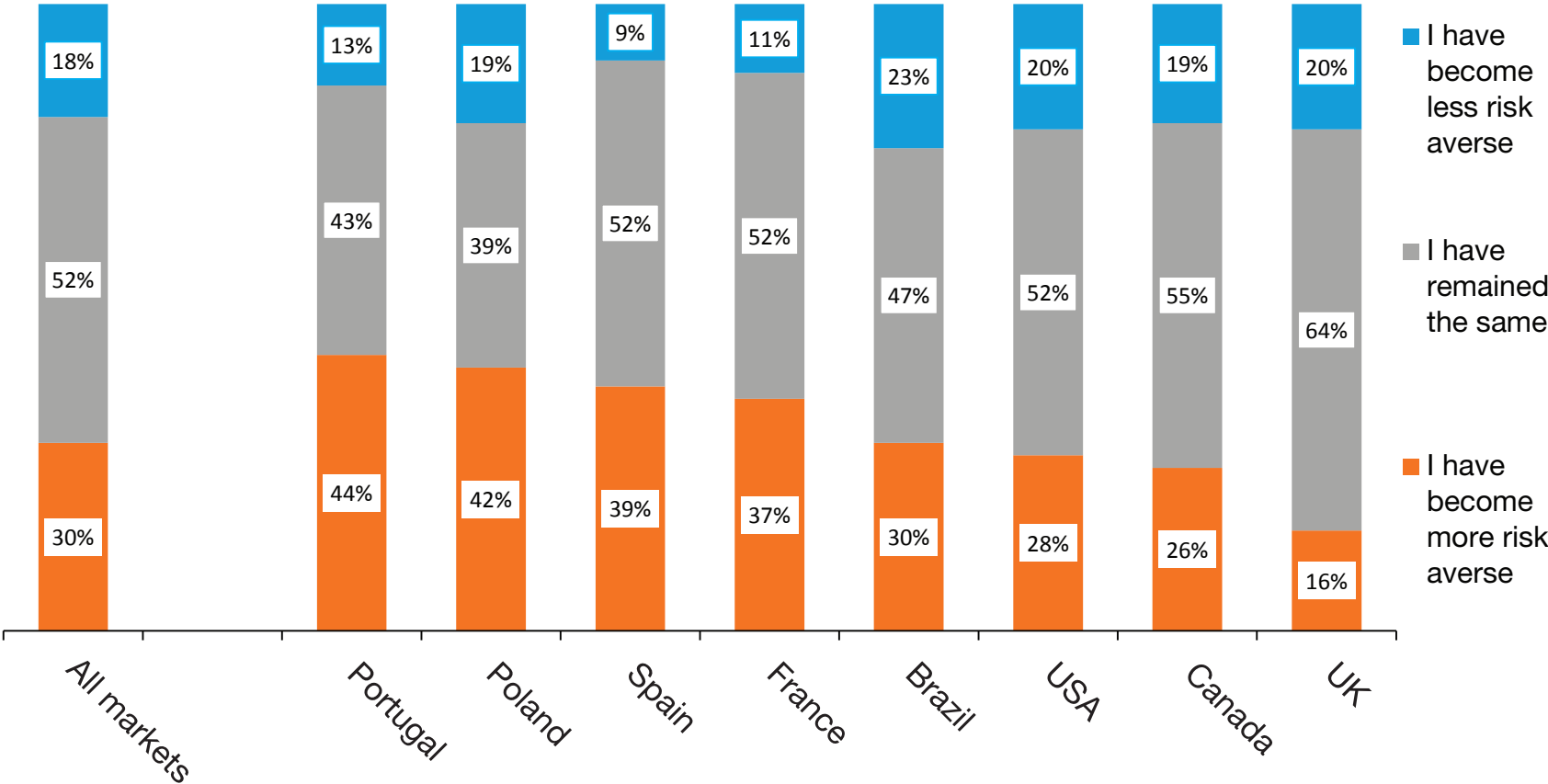


On a scale of 0-10, where would you place yourself in terms of your attitude to risk?



Attitudes toward risk: Nearly a third—rising to more than two-fifths in Portugal—say they have become more risk averse.

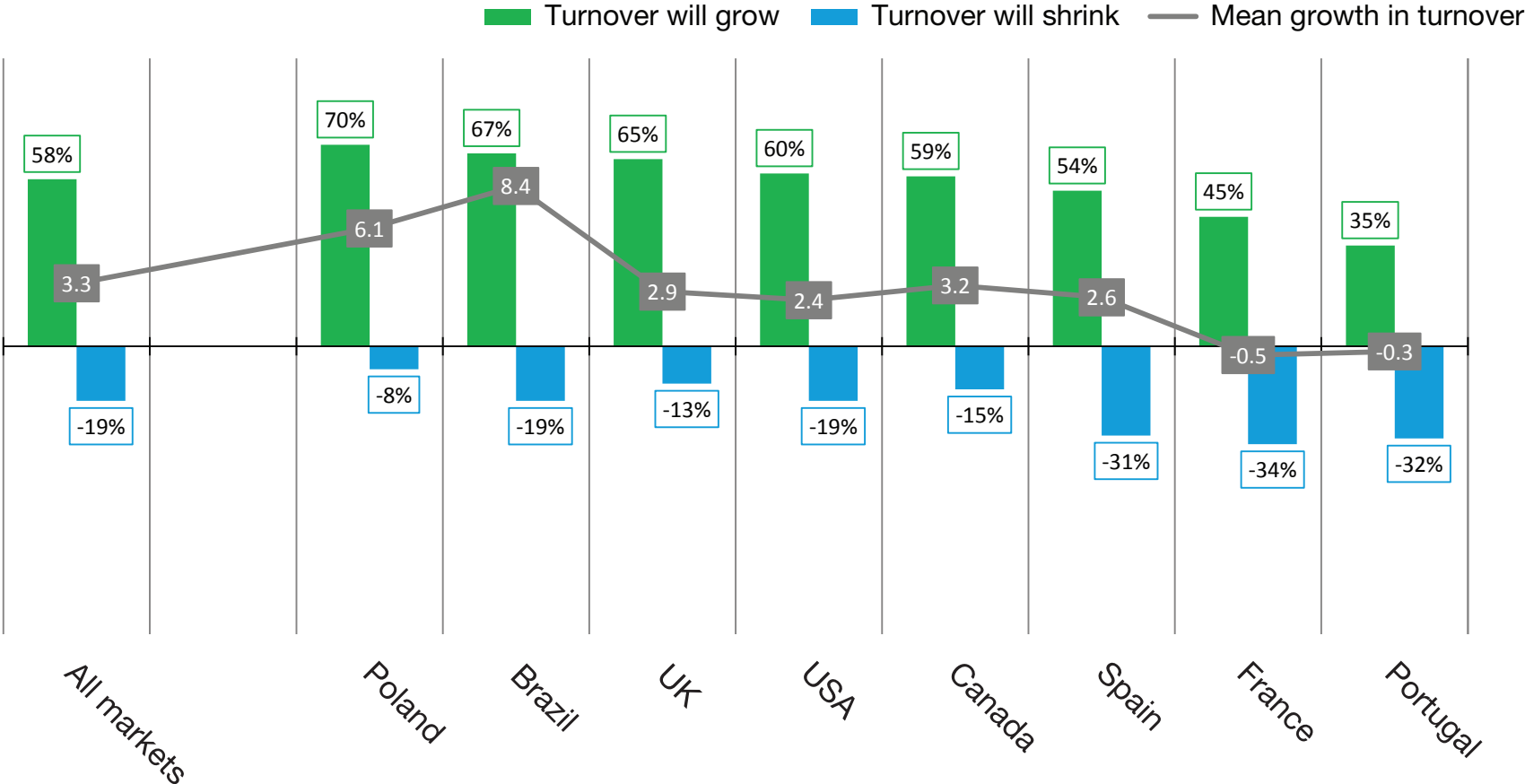
How do you think your attitude to risk has changed in the last seven years?



Business growth: The majority anticipate turnover revenue will grow over the next 12 months.



By how much do you anticipate your business's turnover revenue to grow or shrink over the next 12 months?



Business growth: More than a third say they plan to grow their business by increasing customer loyalty.

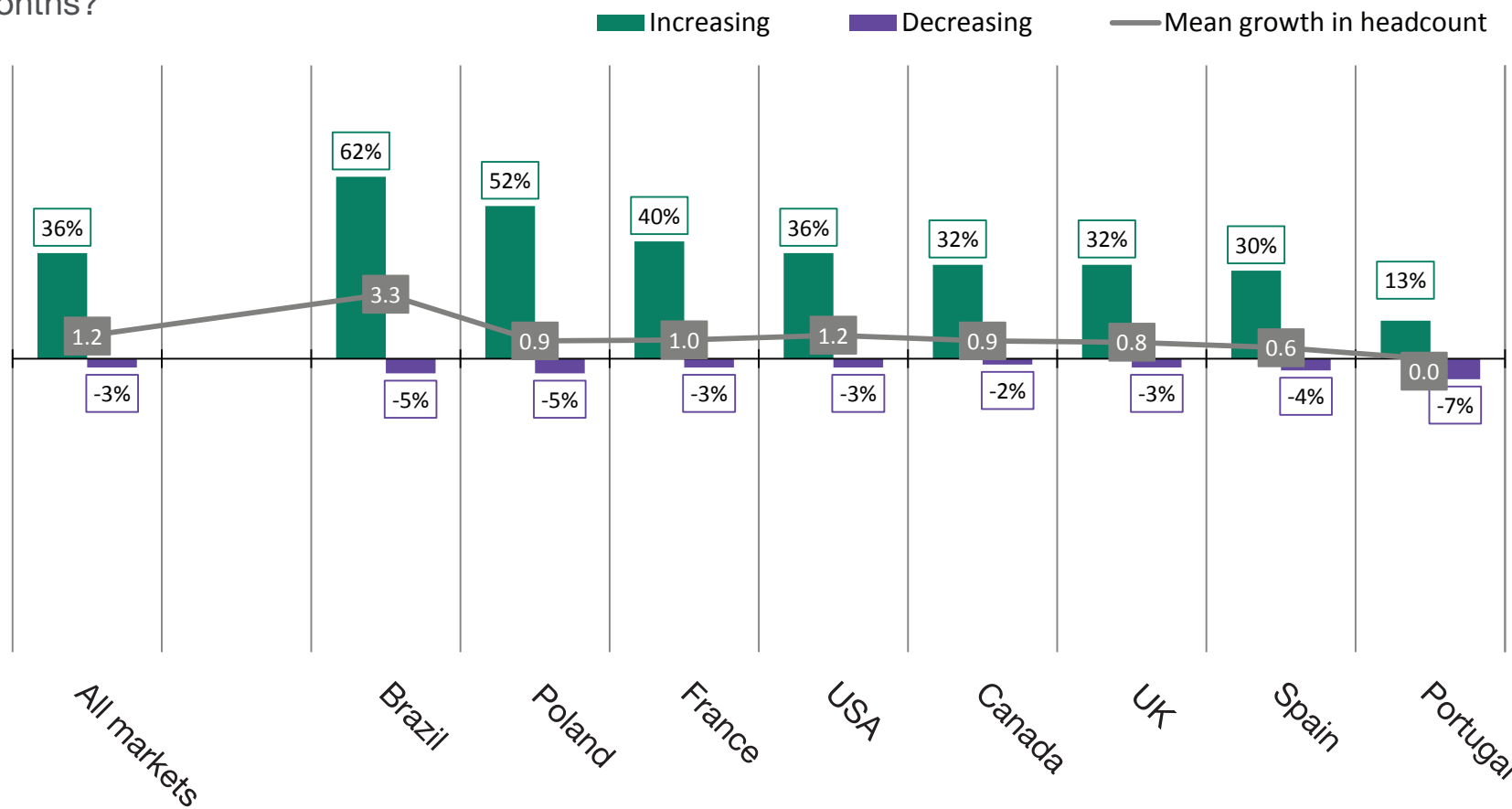
How do you plan to grow your business in the next 12 months? (All markets)



Business growth: 36% say that the number of people employed by their firm will increase over the next 12 months.

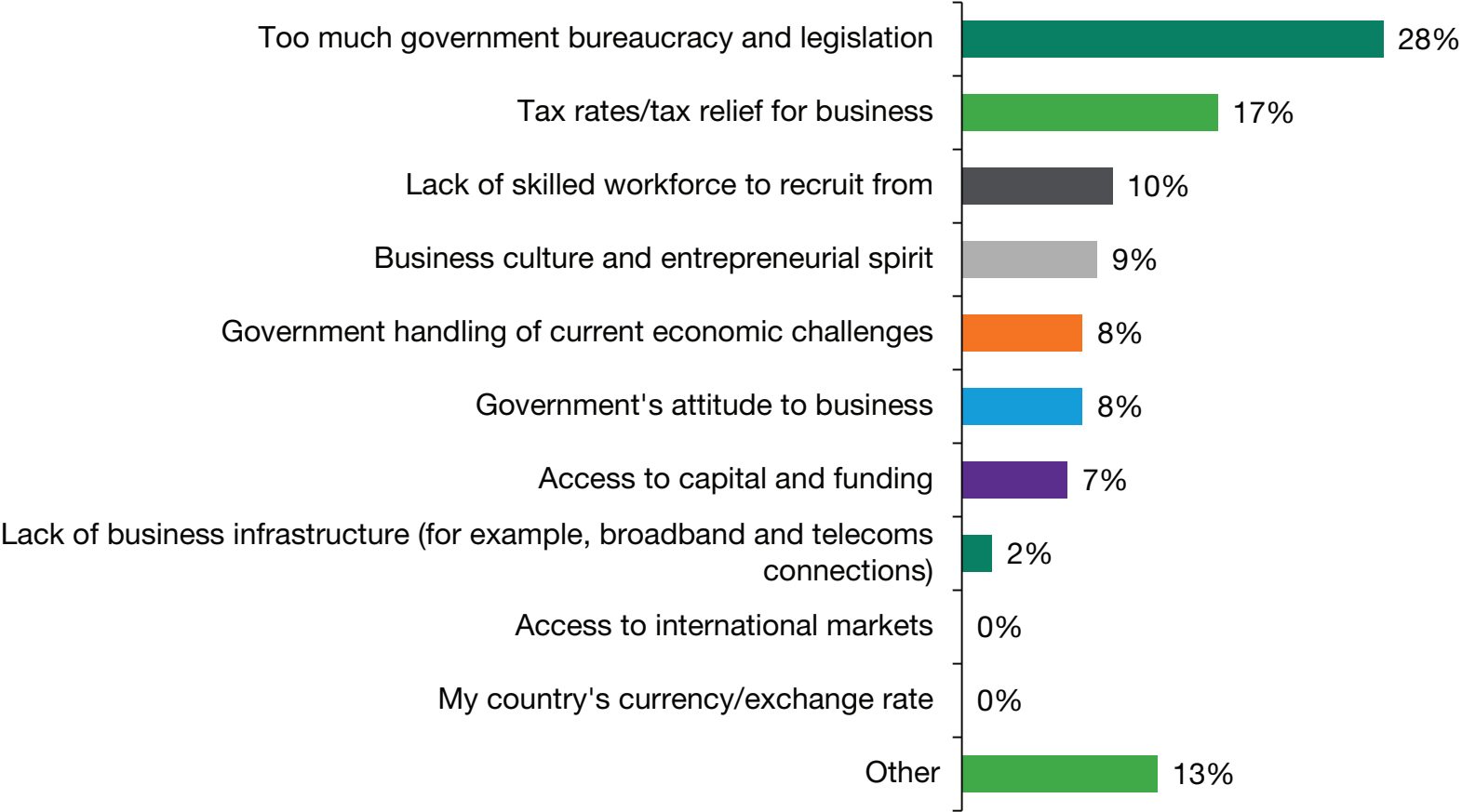


Do you anticipate the number of people employed by your company increasing or decreasing over the next 12 months?



Business growth: Government bureaucracy and legislation are seen as the most common challenges to growing businesses.

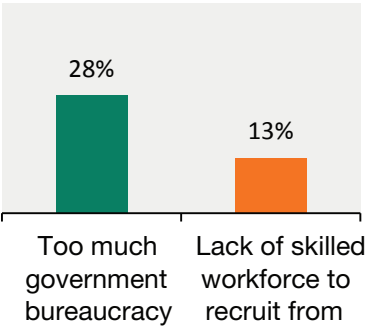
Thinking about your country as a place to do business, what is the biggest challenge to growing your business? (All markets)



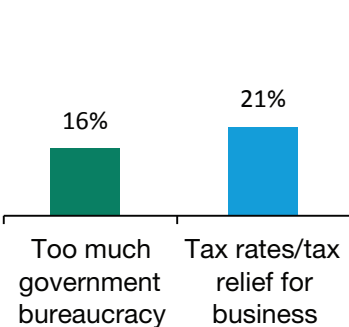
Many markets identify the level of government bureaucracy and tax rates as the biggest challenges to growing businesses.

Thinking about your country as a place to do business in, what is the biggest challenge to growing your business? (Top two challenges in each market)

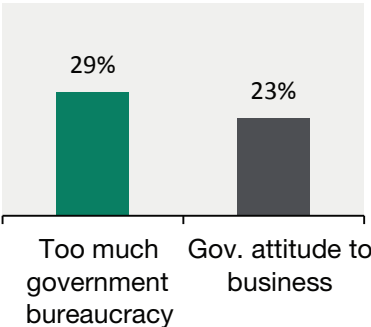
USA



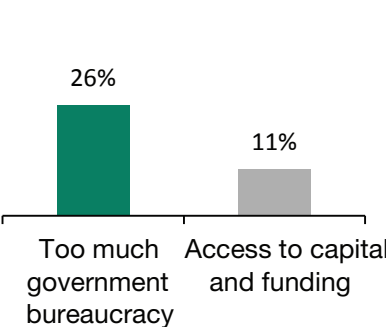
Canada



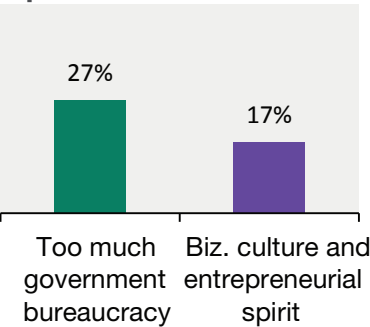
France



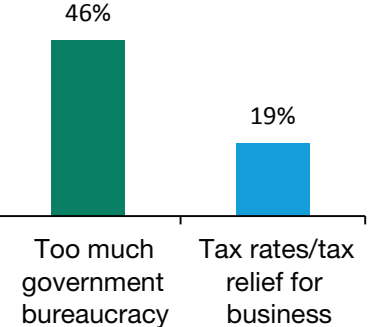
UK



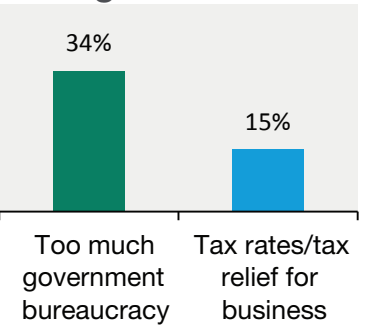
Spain



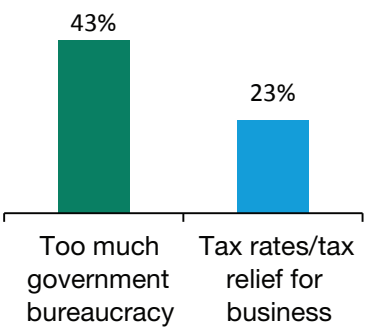
Poland



Portugal

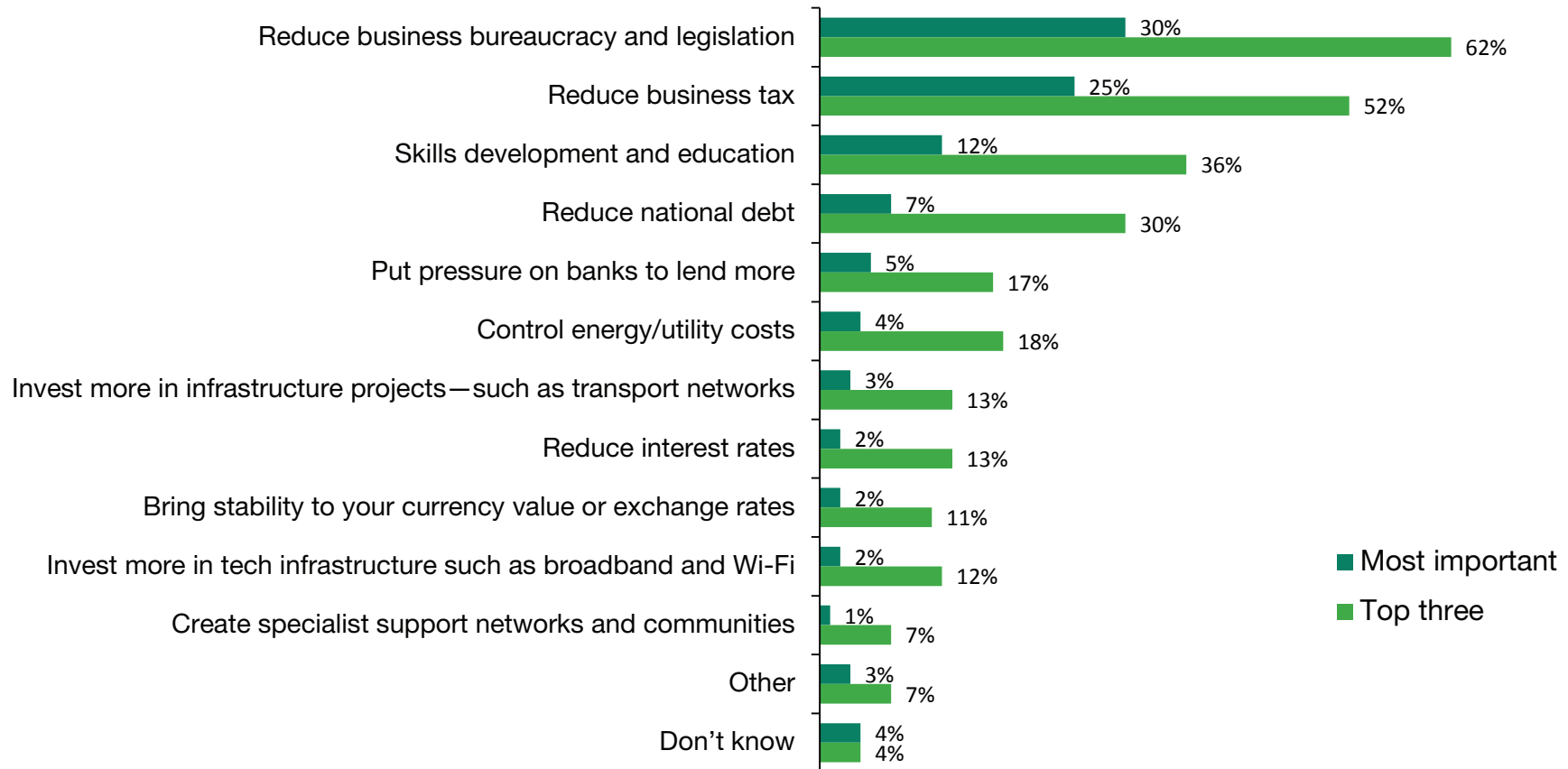


Brazil



Helping businesses: Reducing bureaucracy and business taxes are generally seen as the most important things for government to do.

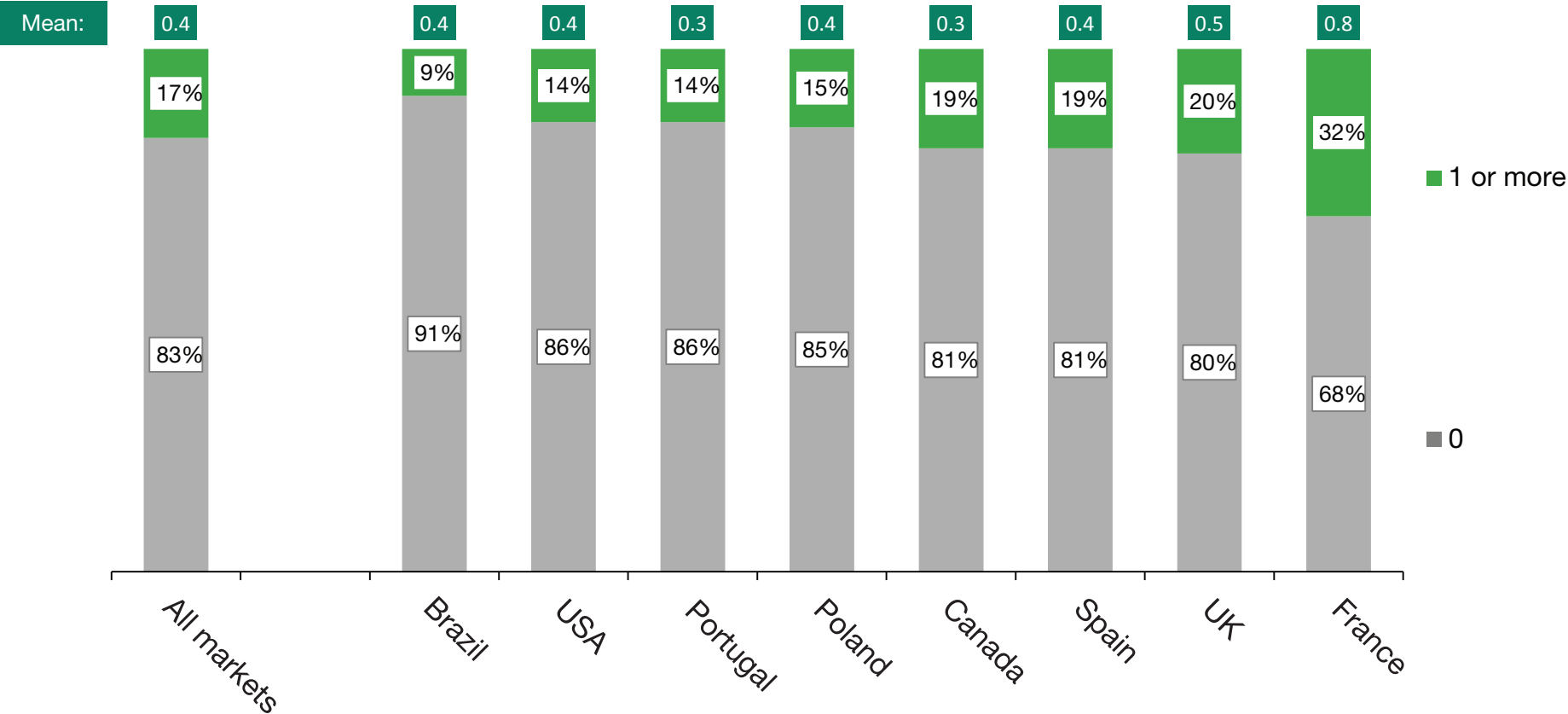
What do you think are the three most important things your government should be doing to help businesses in your country? (All markets)



Exporting: Less than 20% do business in a country outside of their own.

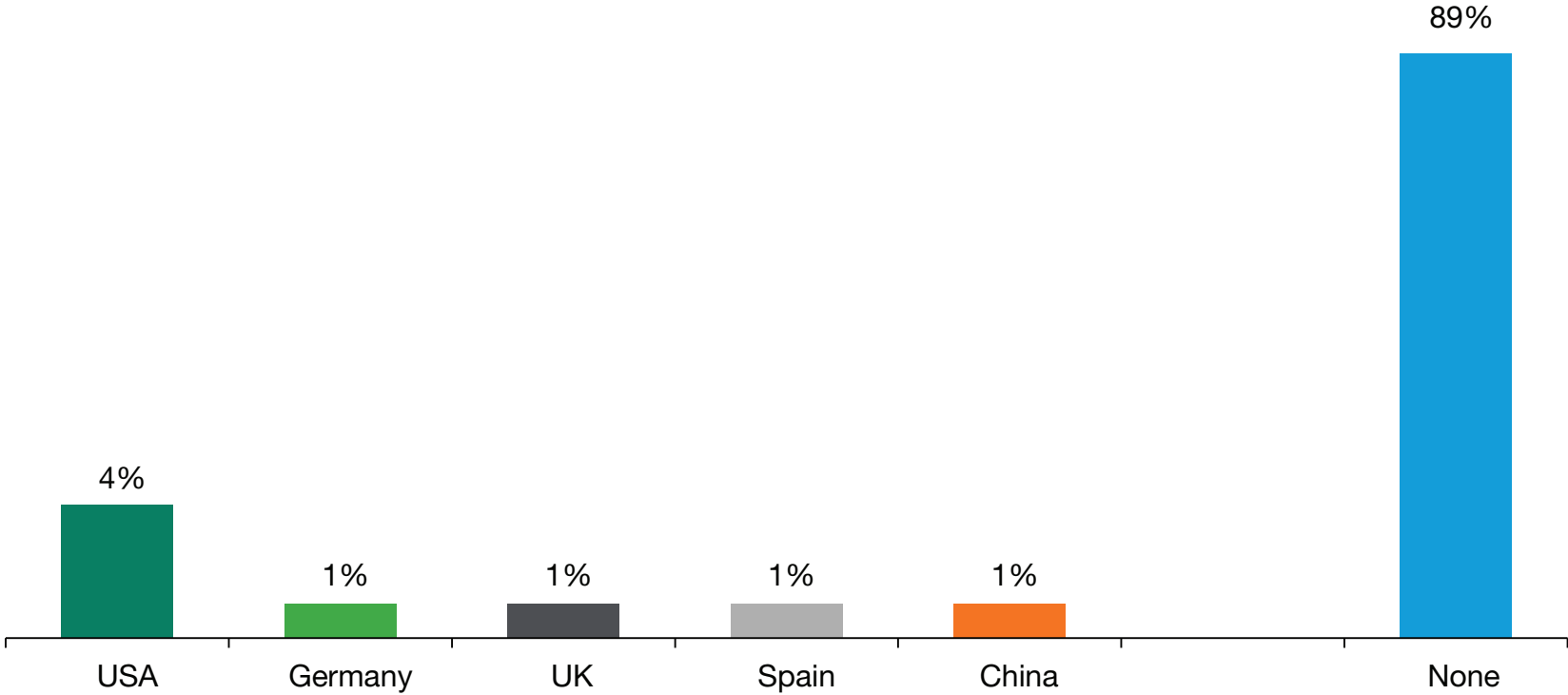


In how many countries outside of your own do you currently do business (sell products or services in)?



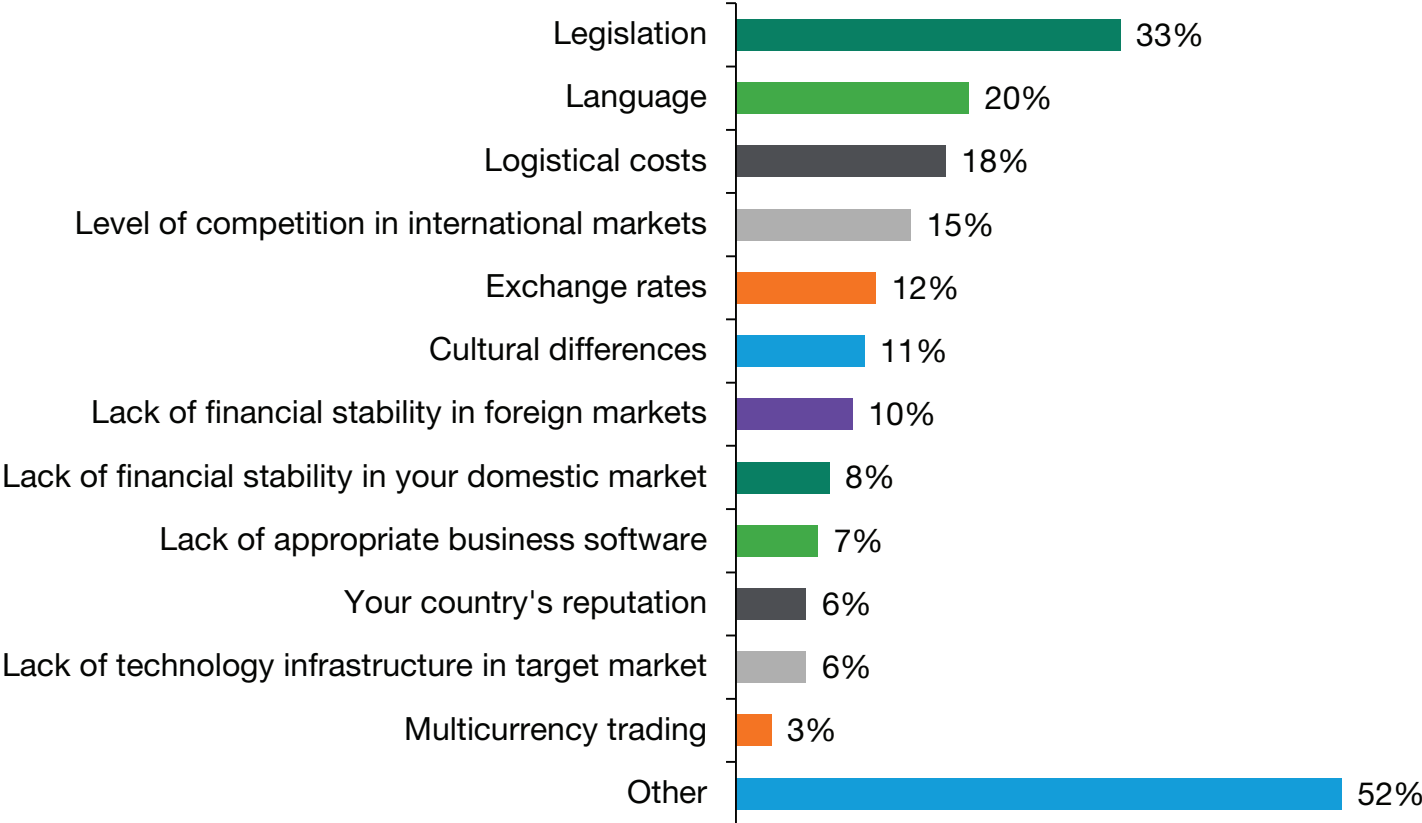
Future exports destination: The vast majority don't plan to expand their business in to other countries.

In which countries do you plan to grow your exports in the next 12 months? (All markets—top five reasons)



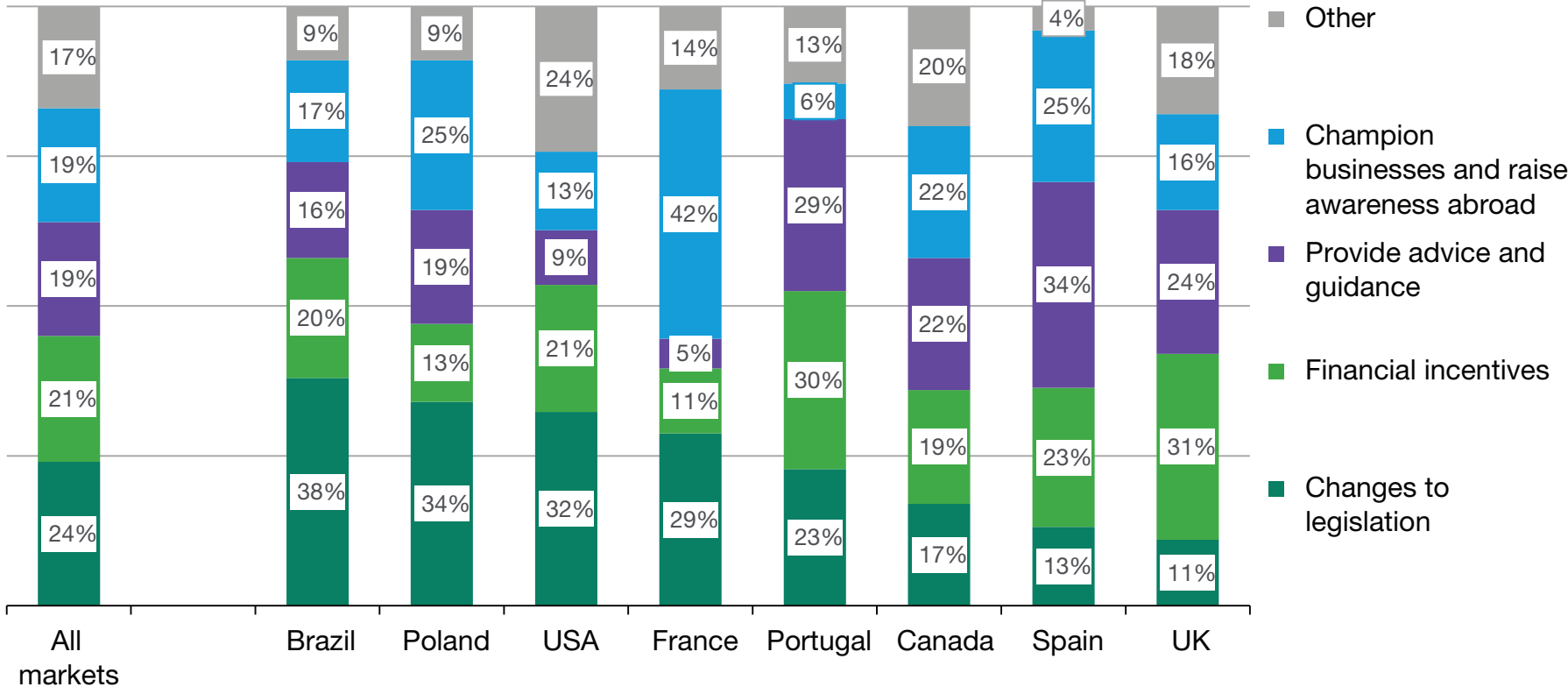
Export growth: Legislation and language are the two most common barriers to expanding their services internationally.

What do you think are the two biggest barriers to growing your exports? (All markets)



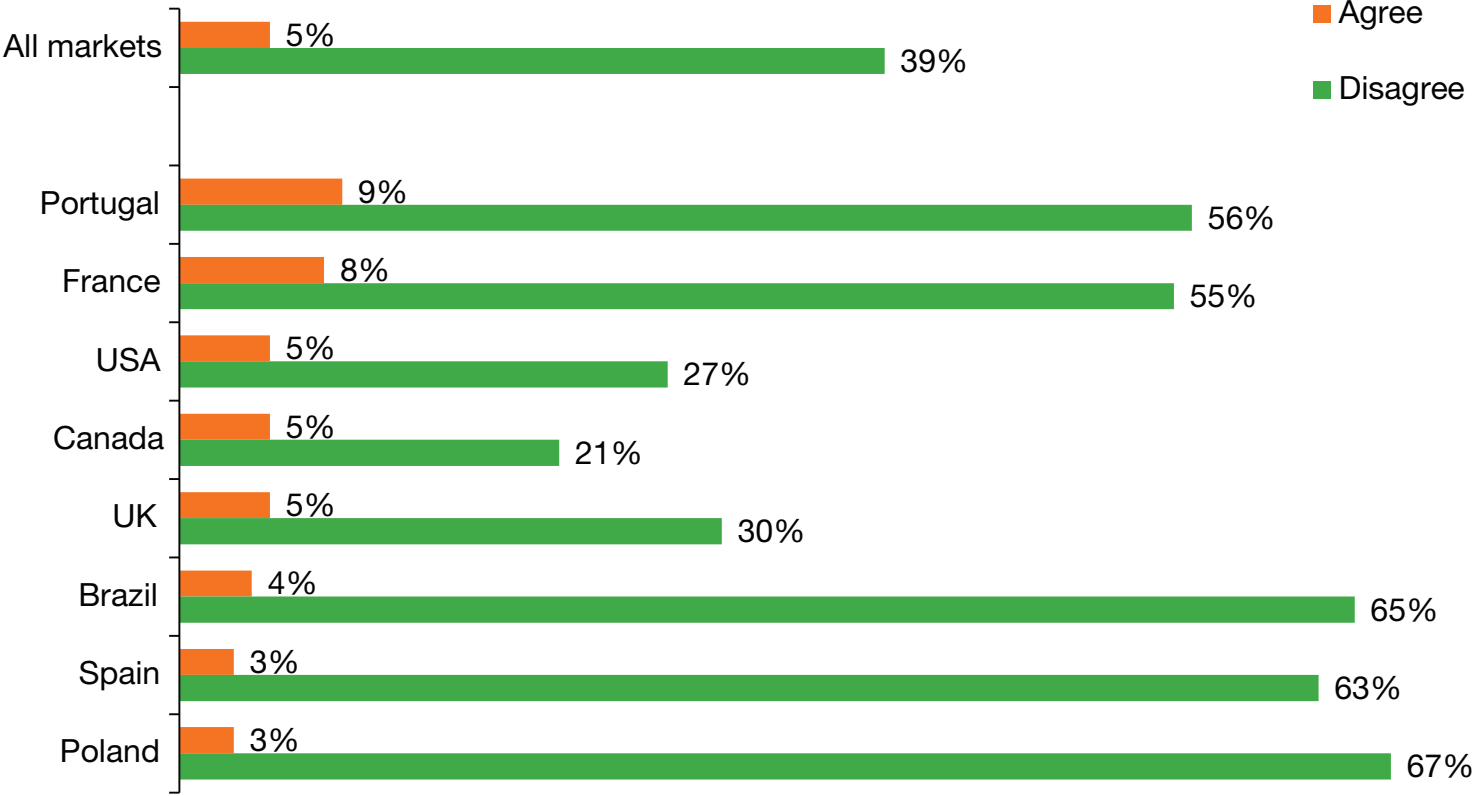
Export growth: Accountants call for changes to legislation and financial incentives to help businesses grow exports.

What one thing do you think your government should be doing more to help businesses grow exports?



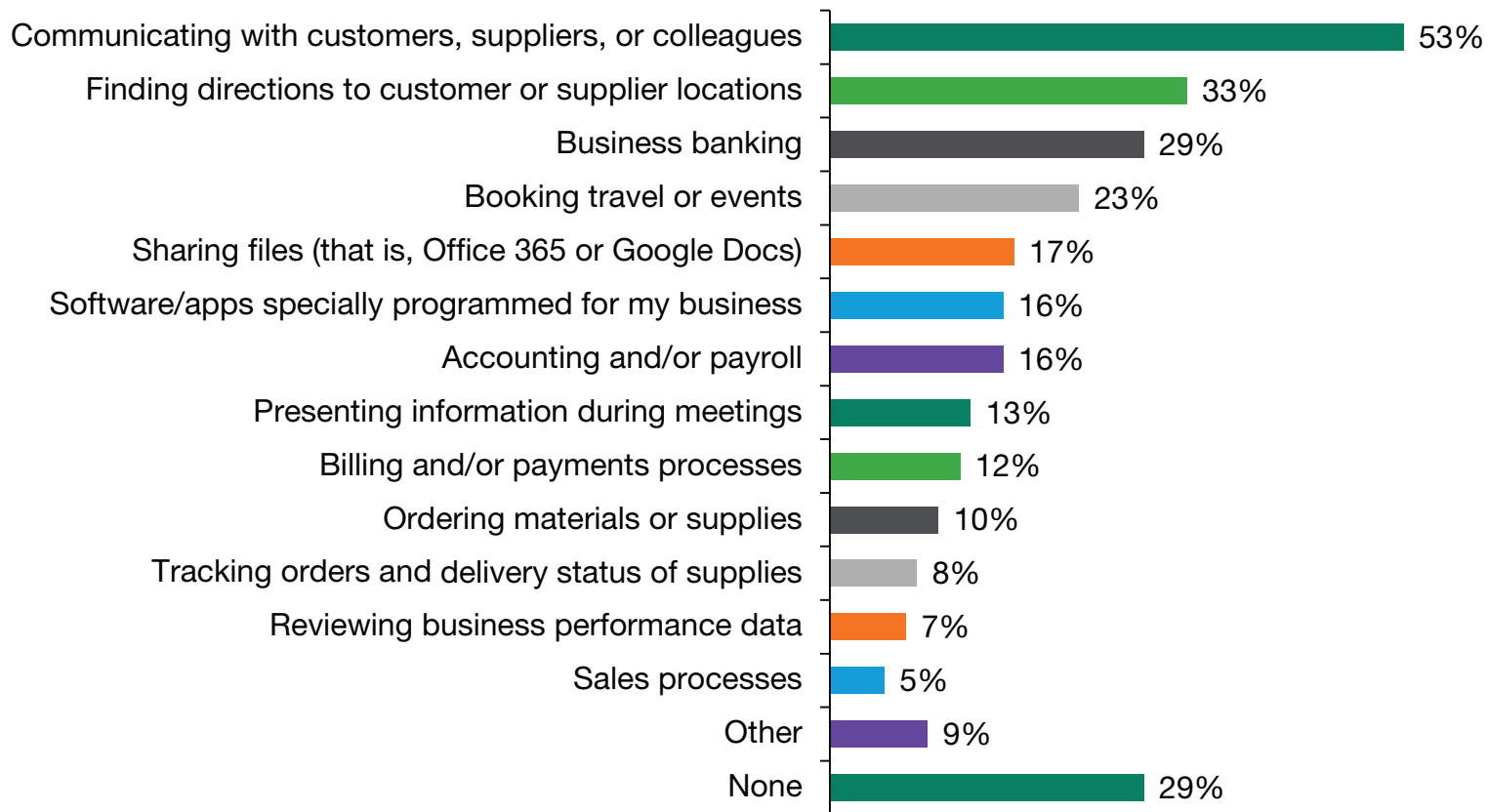
Export growth: Just 5% agree they receive the support they need from government to enable them to grow their international presence, while two-fifths disagree.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “I receive the support I need from government to enable me to grow my exports.”



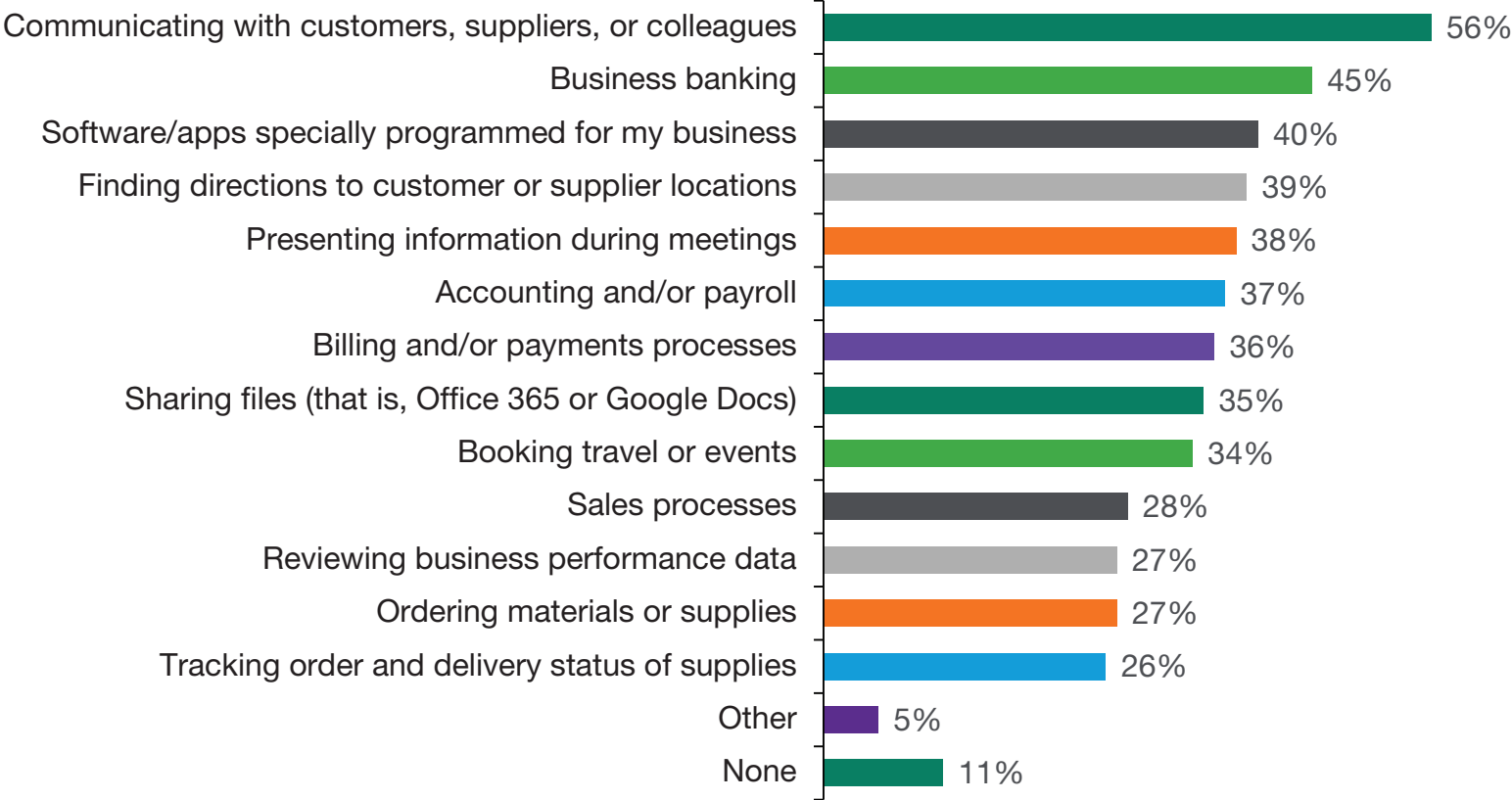
Remote working: More than half say they use a tablet or smartphone to communicate with customers, suppliers, or colleagues.

Which of the following work activities do you currently complete using a tablet or smartphone? (All markets)



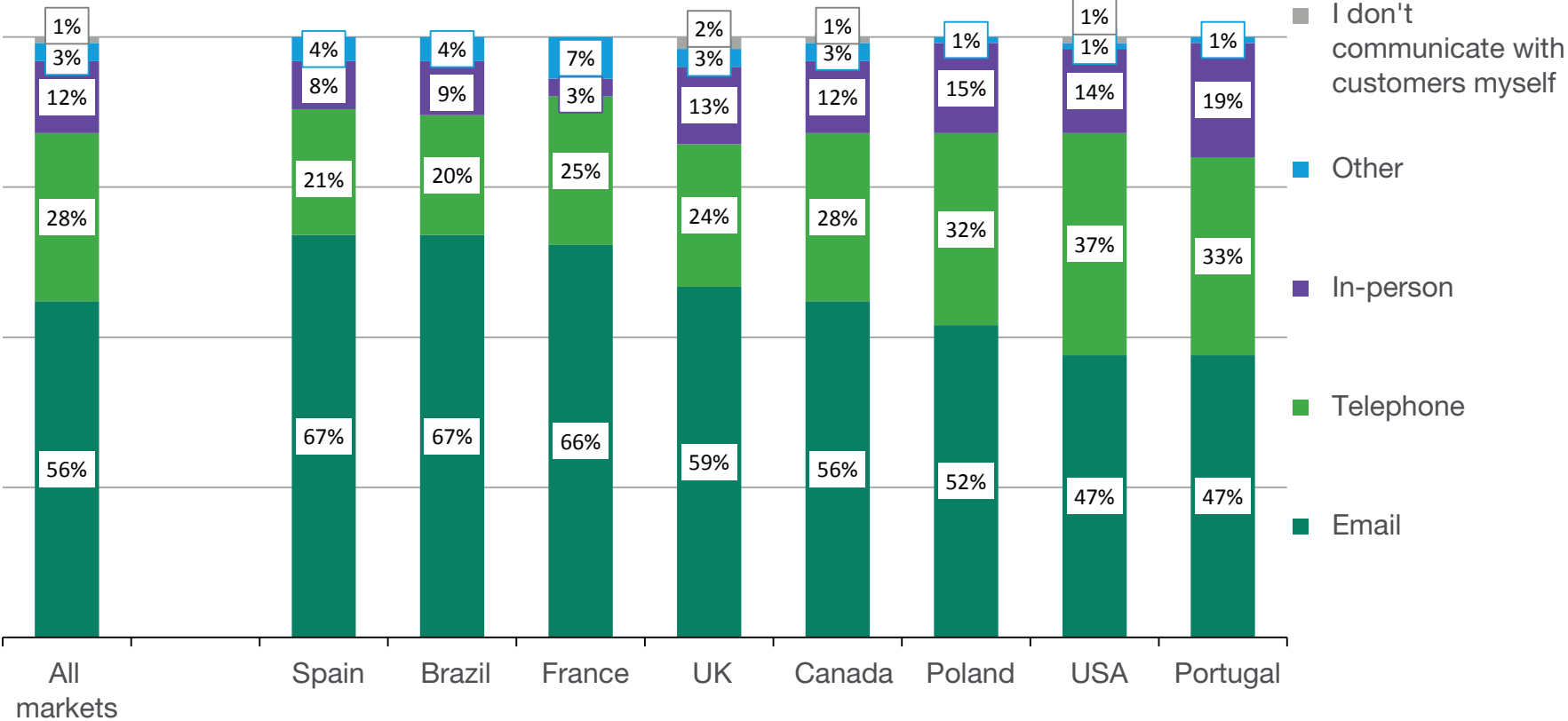
Remote working: The majority think tablets and smartphones will be most useful for communicating with customers, suppliers, and colleagues in the future.

For which of the following work activities do you think tablets and smartphones would be of most use in the future (including those that you currently use mobile devices for)? (All markets)



Communicating with customers: The majority most commonly use email to communicate with their clients.

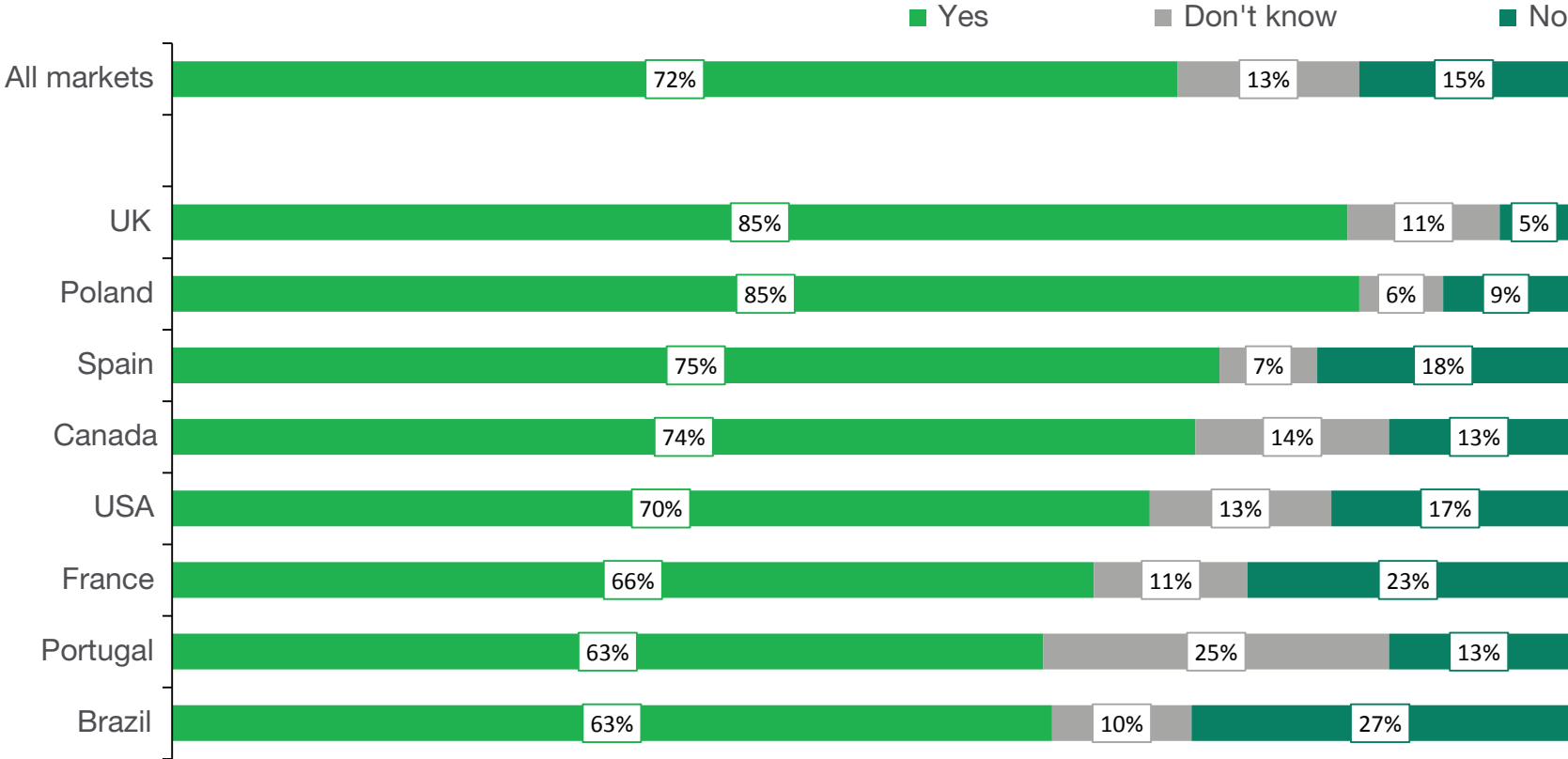
How do you most commonly communicate with customers?



Data protection: The majority believe their company has adequate data protection, but nearly one in six do not.



Do you feel your company has adequate data protection, privacy, and cybersecurity measures in place?



Mobile devices: The main advantage of using mobile devices is seen as the ability to continue working when on the move.

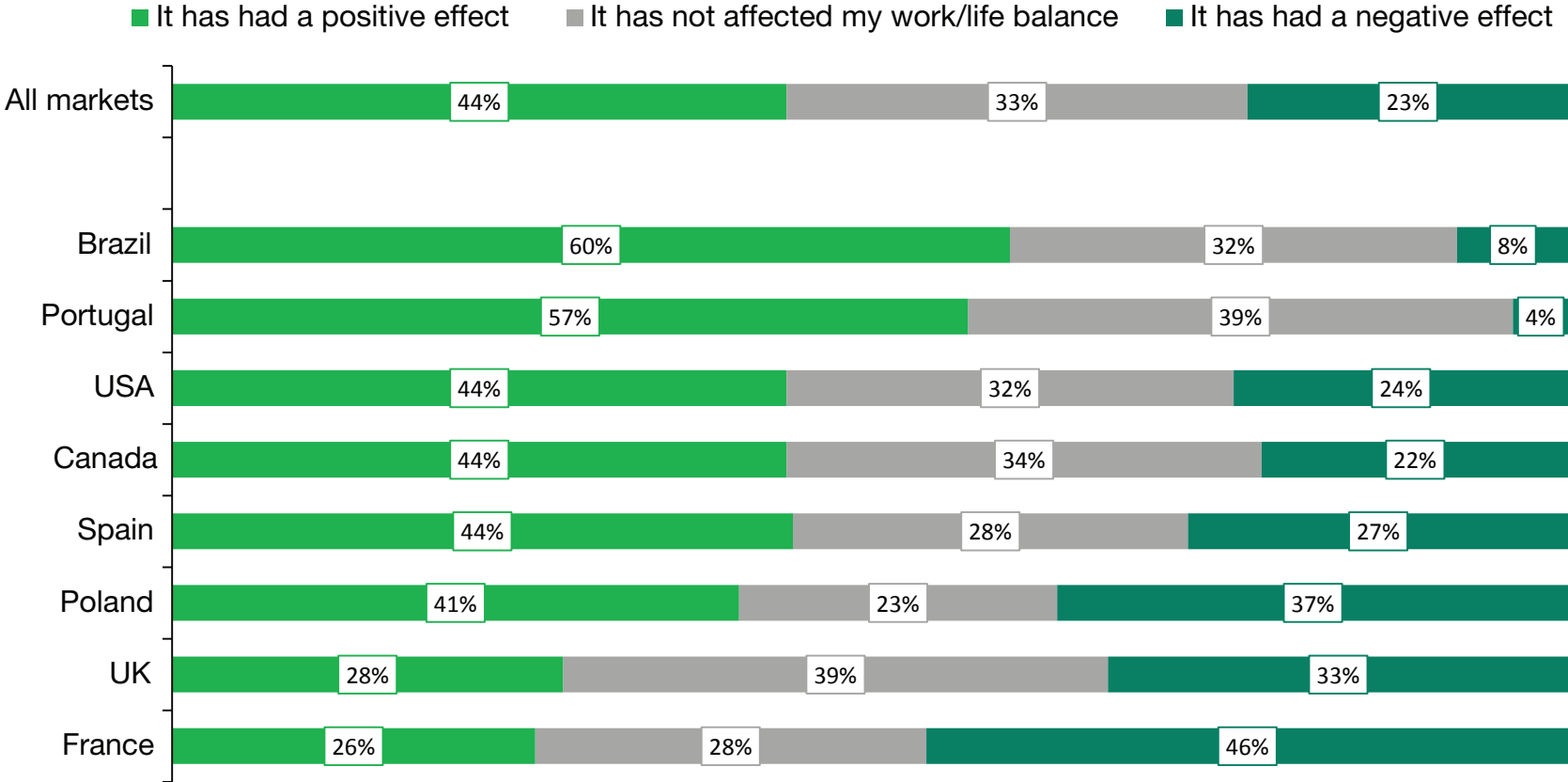
What do you think are the main business advantages of using mobile devices, such as smartphones or tablets?

	Main business advantage
All markets	I can continue working when I'm on the move./I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (both 56%)
USA	I can continue working when I'm on the move. (60%)
Canada	I can continue working when I'm on the move./I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (both 60%)
France	I can continue working when I'm on the move. (66%)
UK	I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (54%)
Spain	I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (68%)
Poland	I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (56%)
Portugal	I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (49%)
Brazil	I can stay in touch with customers and suppliers more easily. (59%)

Work/life balance: Nearly a quarter say mobile business has had a negative effect on their work/life balance.

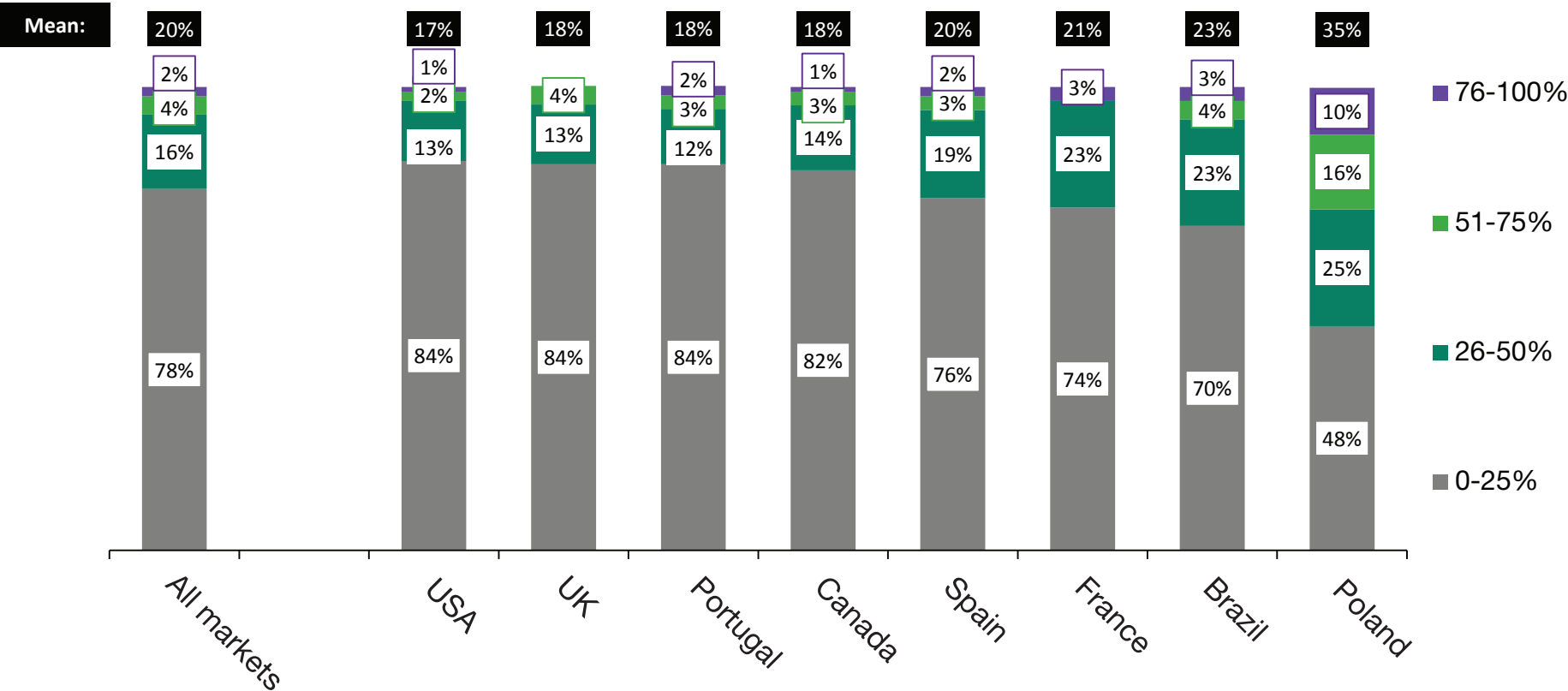


What impact do you think mobile business has had over your work/life balance?



Remote working: On average, accountants estimate they spend 20% of their working day on mobile devices.

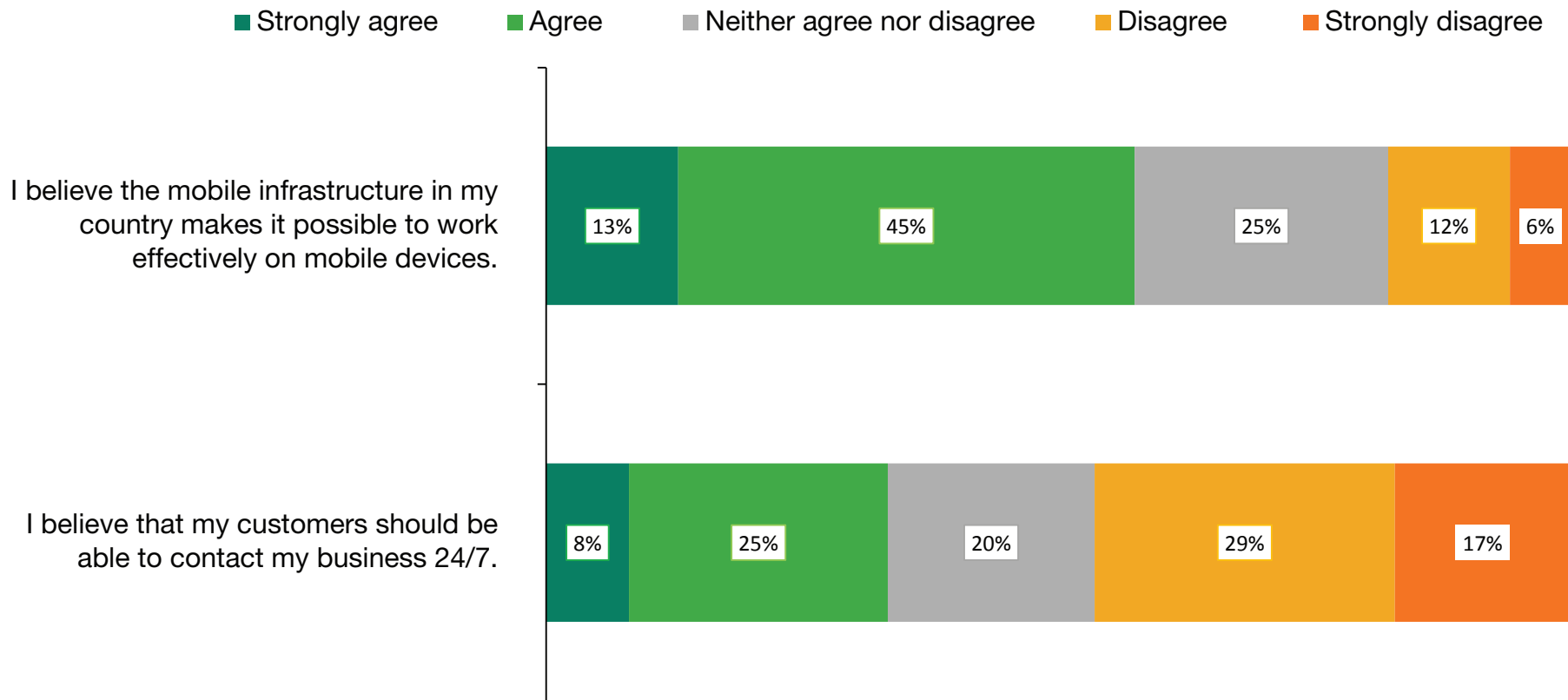
Of the time you spend working each day, what percentage do you spend working on mobile devices, such as smartphones or tablets?



Remote working: Just a third agree their customers should be able to contact their business 24/7.



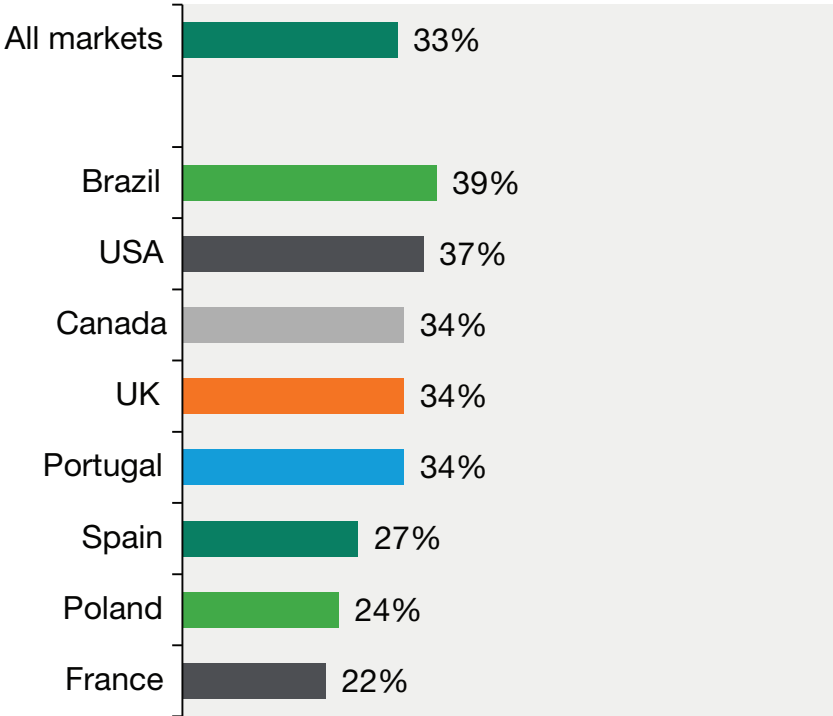
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



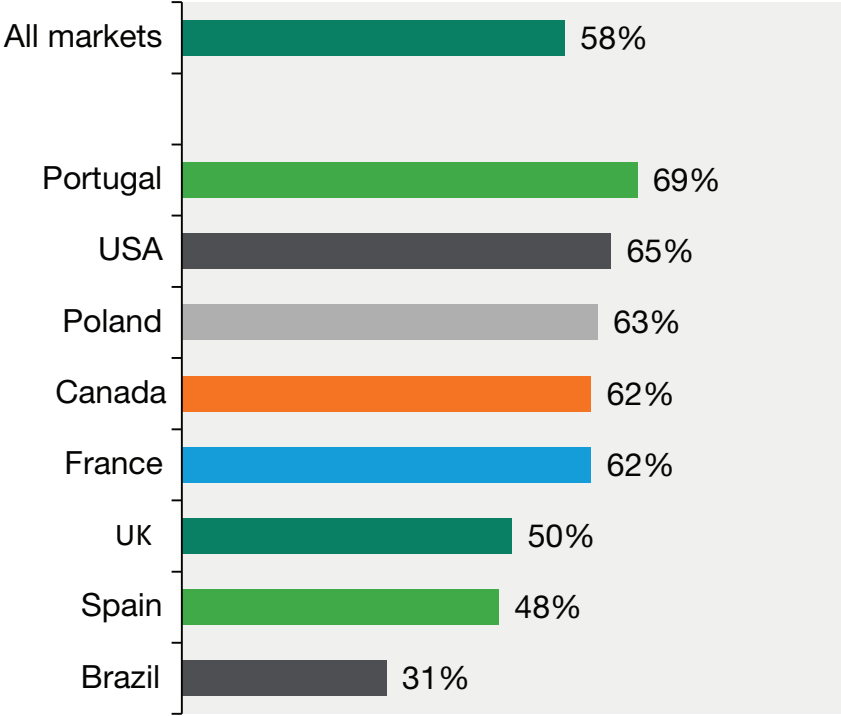
Remote working: On average, more than half of accountants believe in the strength of their country's mobile infrastructure.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% agreeing)

“I believe that my customers should be able to contact my business 24/7.”



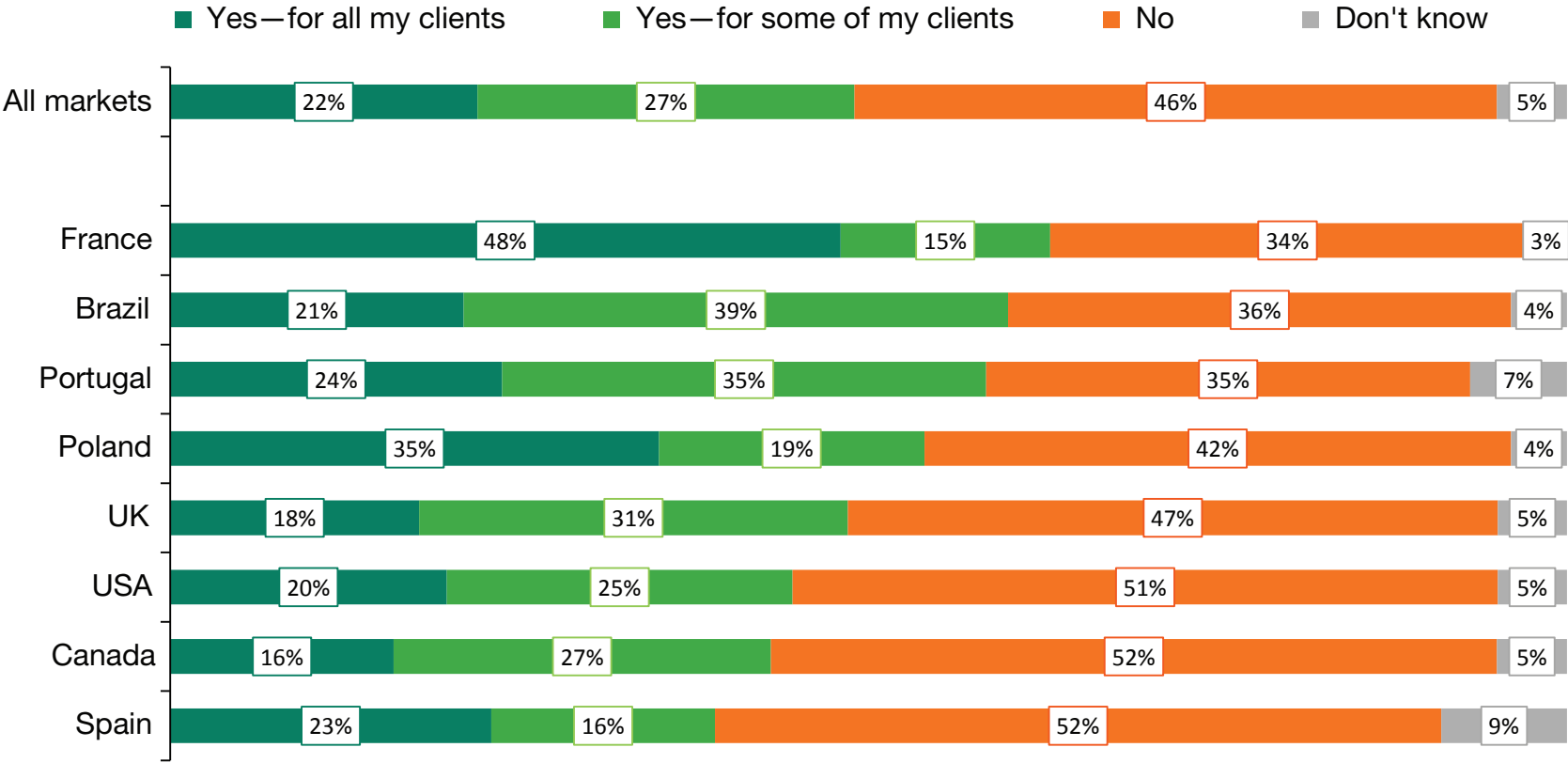
“I believe the mobile infrastructure in my country makes it possible to work effectively on mobile devices.”



Access: A fifth say they can access, exchange, or update all their clients' accounting information at any time and location.



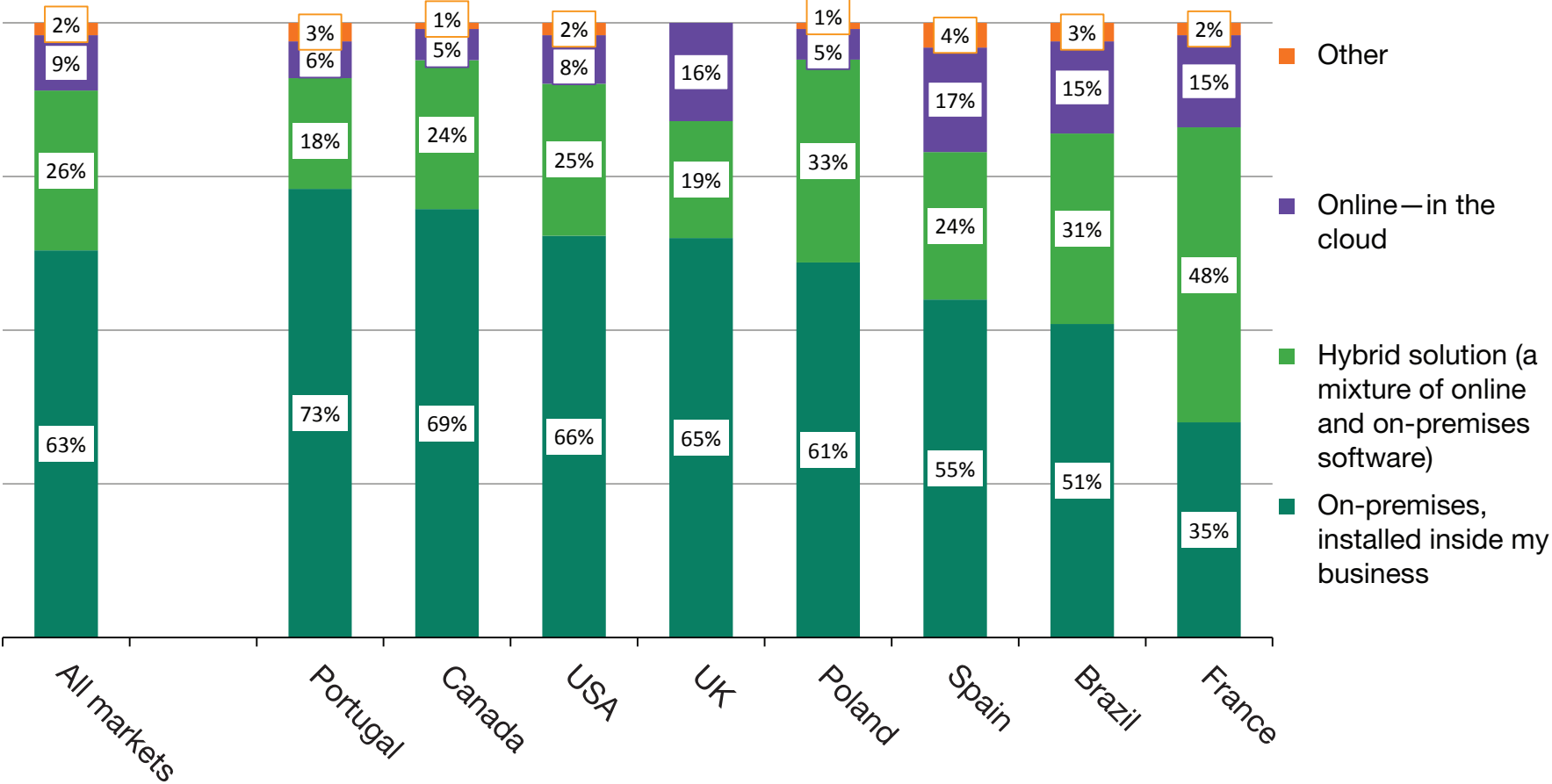
Can you access, exchange, or update client accounting information from any location at any time?



Access: Most still prefer to access their software on-premises, with it installed inside their business.



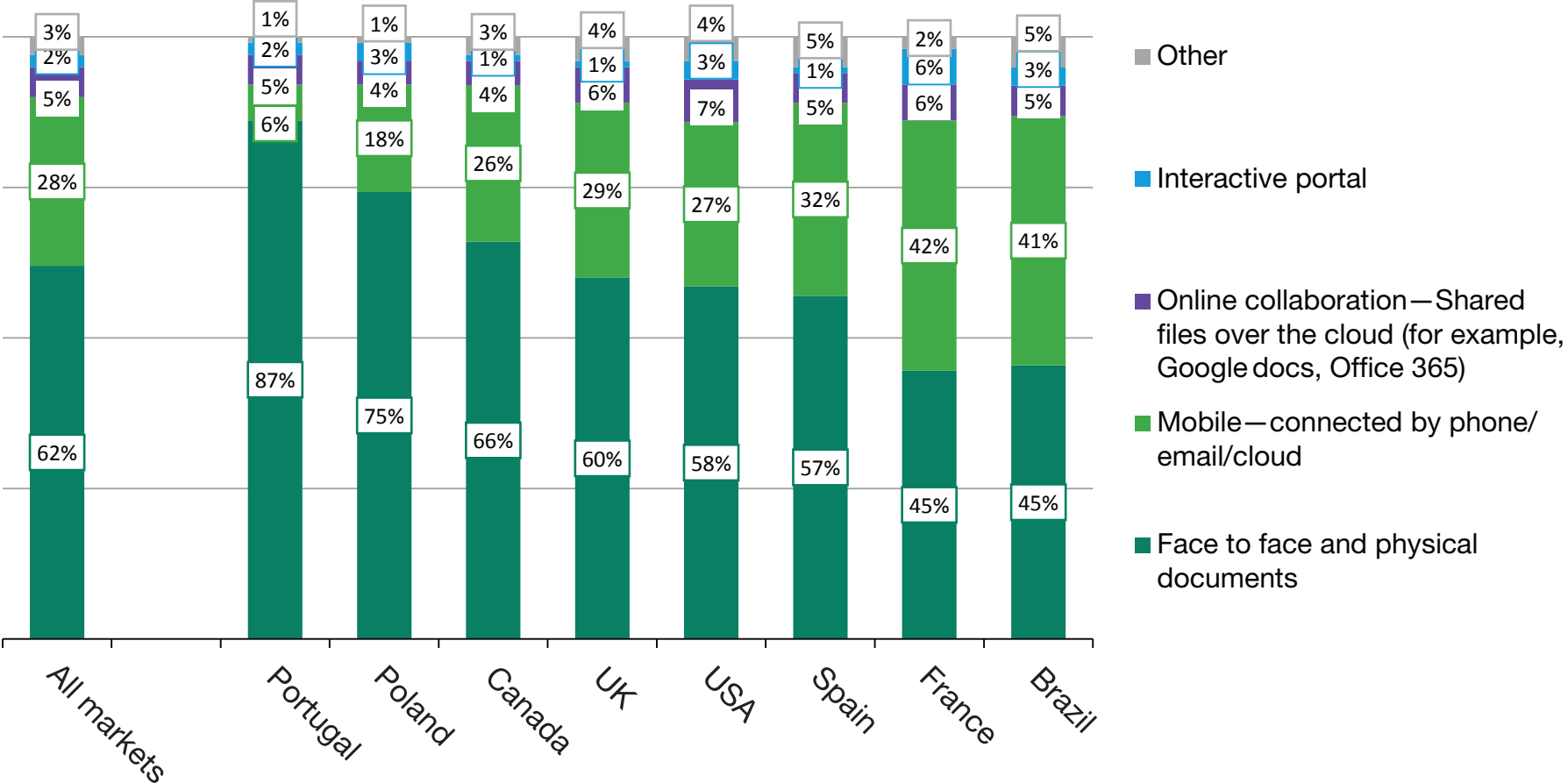
Which is your first preference to access your fiscal, accounting, and payroll software?



Access: Most accountants say their clients work with them face to face and with physical documents.



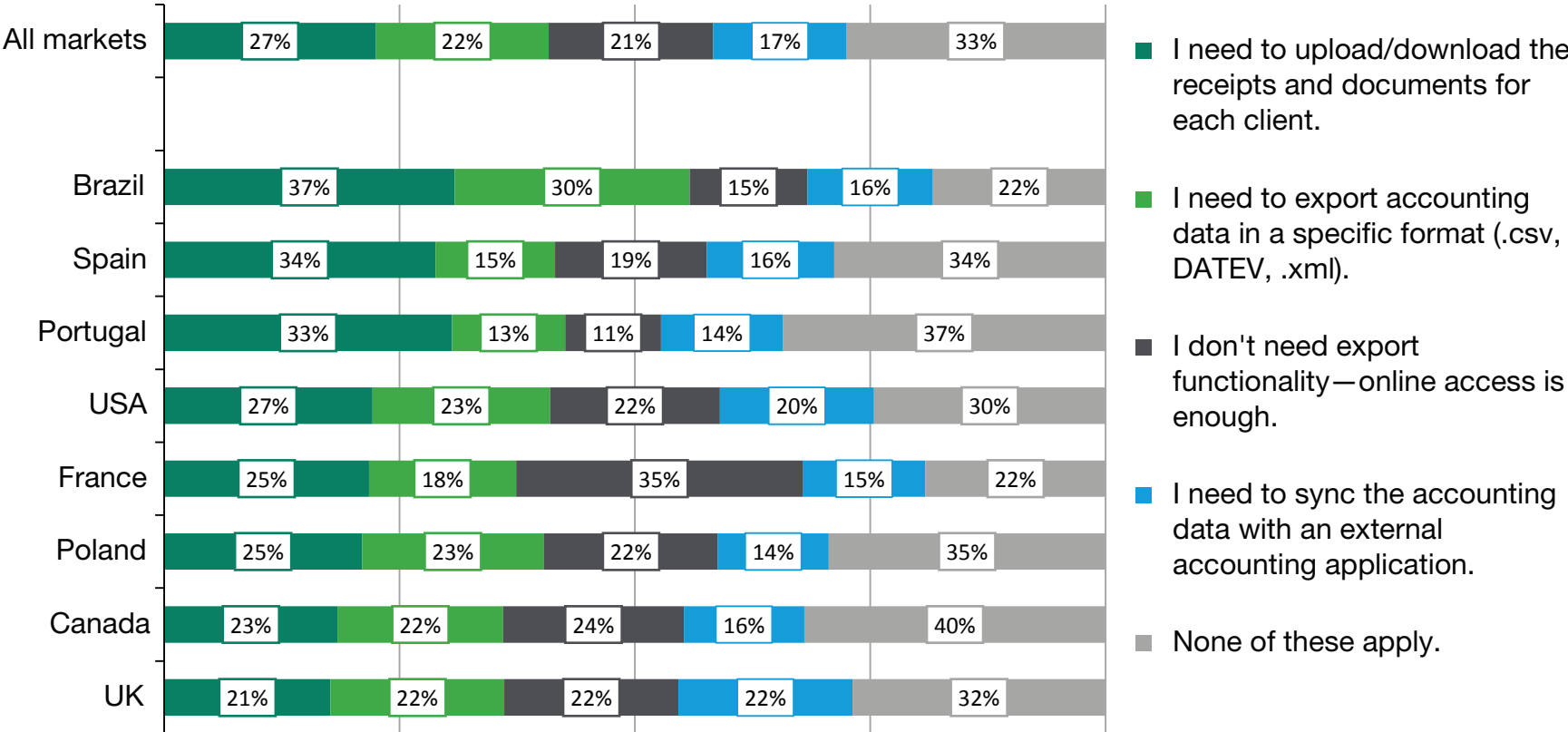
In general, how do your customers work with you most often?



Access: Accountants deal with clients' data in a variety of ways.



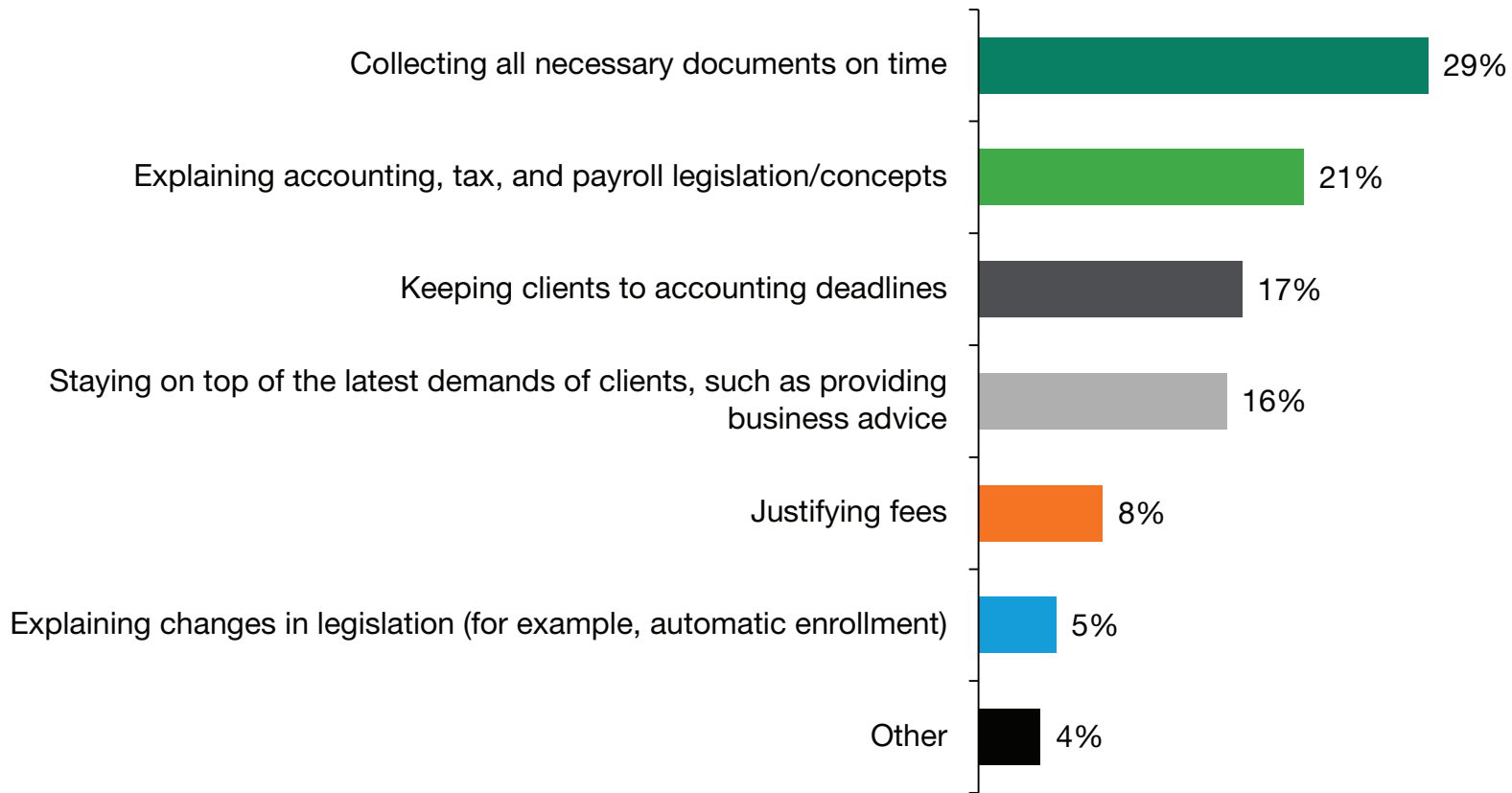
Which, if any, of the following statements describe how you deal with your clients' data?



- I need to upload/download the receipts and documents for each client.
- I need to export accounting data in a specific format (.csv, DATEV, .xml).
- I don't need export functionality—online access is enough.
- I need to sync the accounting data with an external accounting application.
- None of these apply.

Access: Three in ten say that collecting all necessary documents on time is the main business challenge when working with their clients.

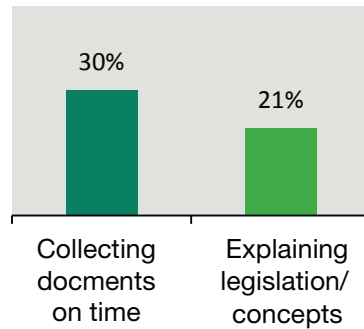
In general, what is the main business challenge you face with your clients? (All markets)



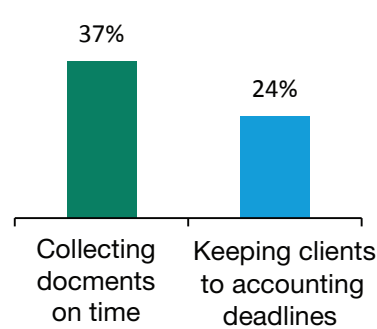
Access: Collecting all necessary documents on time and explaining legislation or concepts are frequently seen as challenges.

In general, what is the main business challenge you face with your clients? (Top two accountancy challenges in each market)

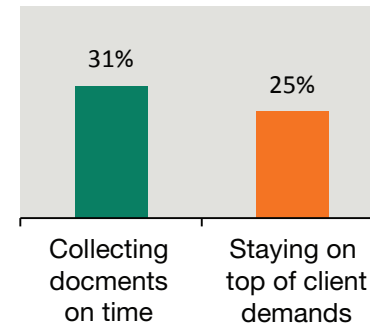
USA



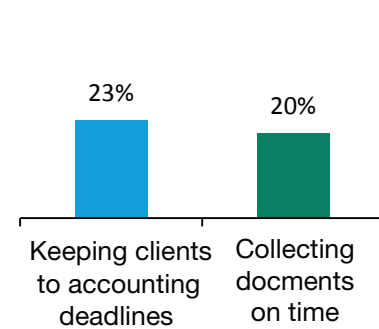
Canada



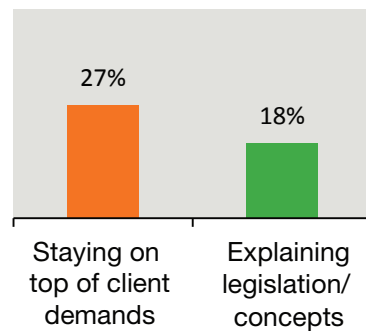
France



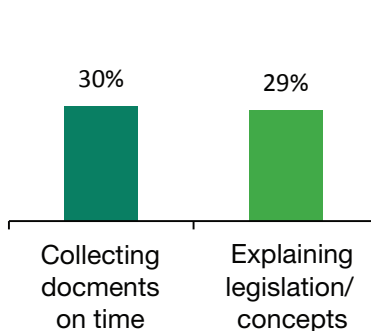
UK



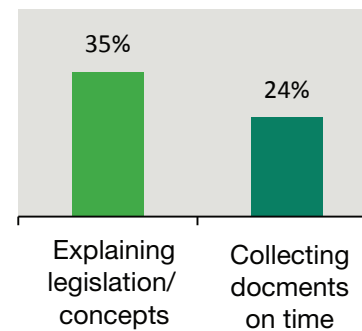
Spain



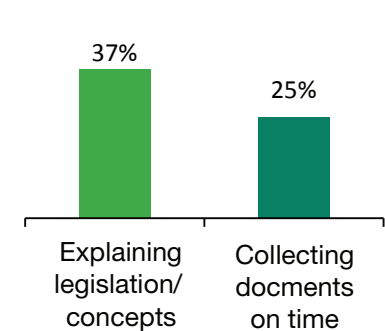
Poland



Portugal

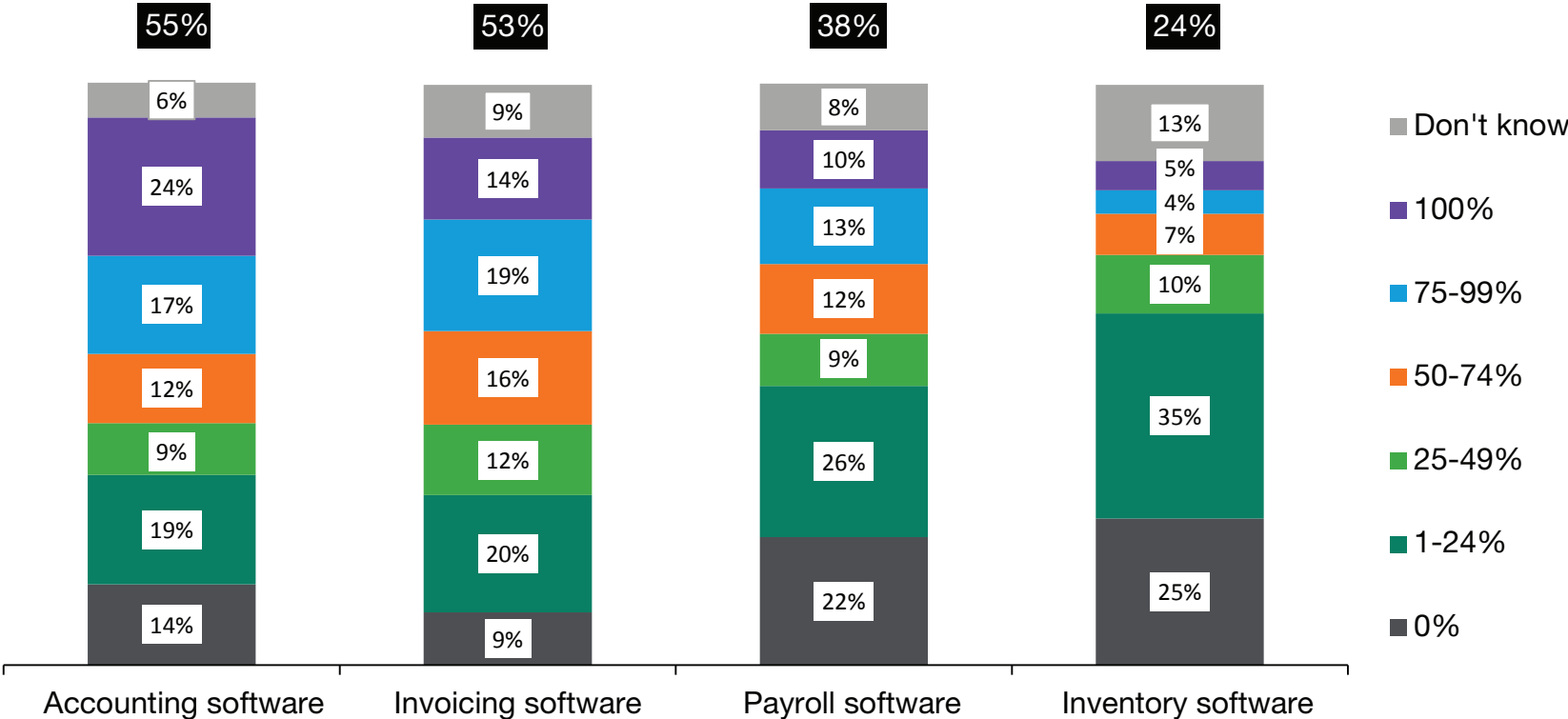


Brazil



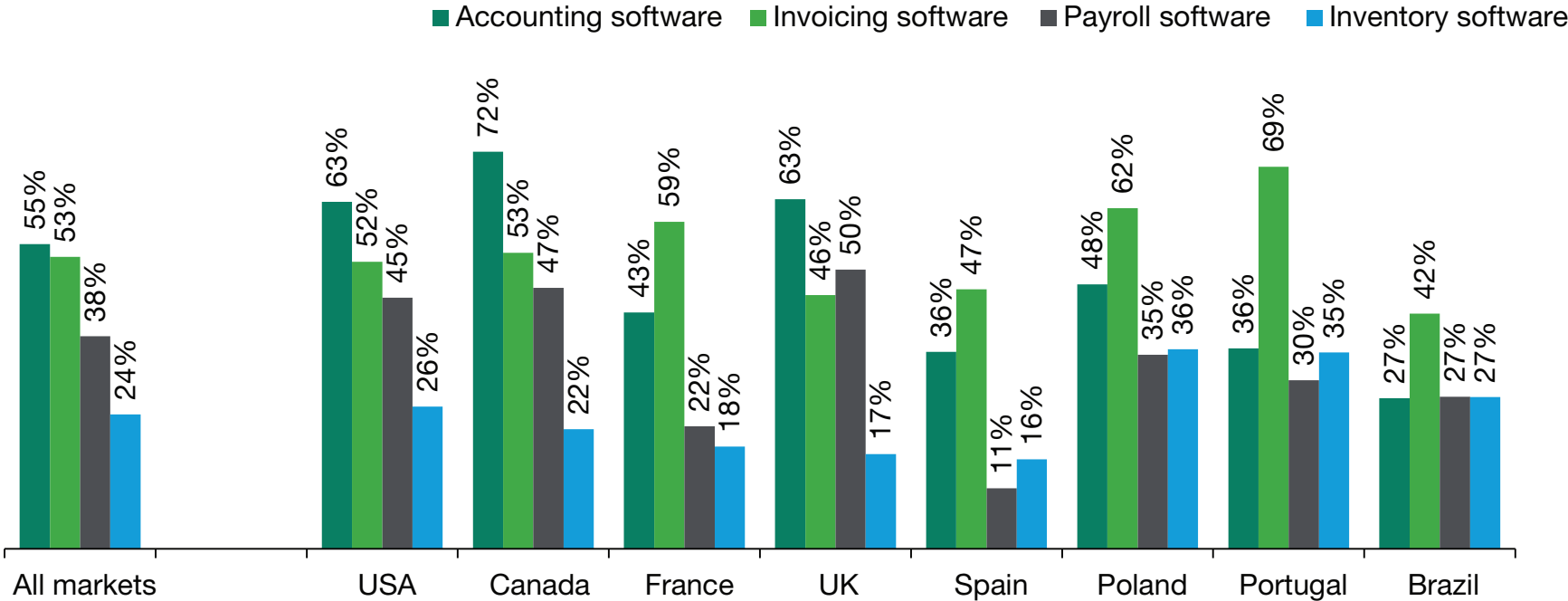
Usage: On average, accountants estimate that more than half their clients use accounting software and/or invoicing software.

Approximately how many of your clients use the following types of software to manage their business?
(All markets)



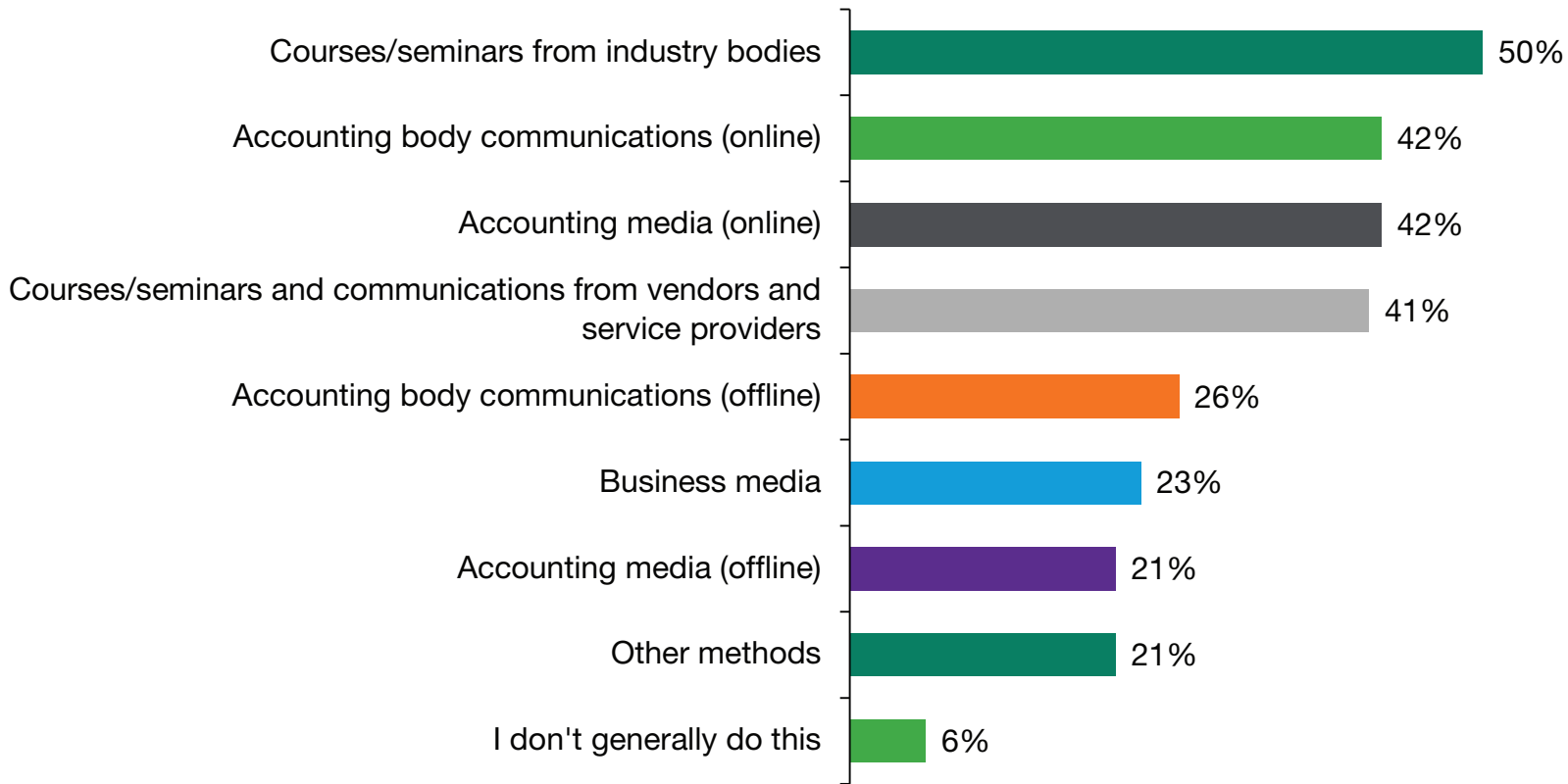
Usage: Accounting software is used more often in North America than in most other countries.

Approximately how many of your clients use the following types of software to manage their business?
(Mean scores)



Information: Courses and seminars from industry-focused organizations are the most common ways accountants keep up to date with legal changes and best practices.

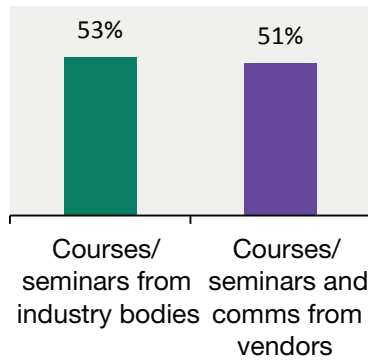
How do you keep yourself and your employees up to date with legal changes and best practices?
(All markets)



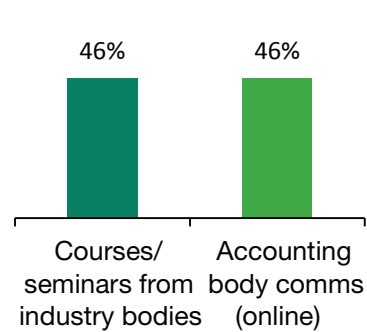
Information: In the U.S. and Canada, courses and seminars from industry-focused organizations and accounting body communities are the second-largest ways accountants keep up to date with legal changes and best practices.

How do you keep yourself and your employees up to date with legal changes and best practices?
(Top two sources in each market)

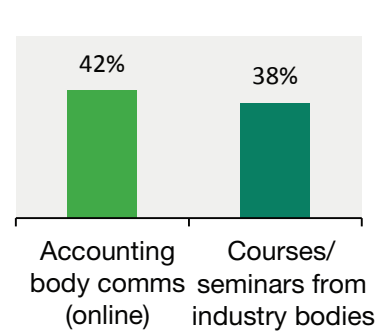
USA



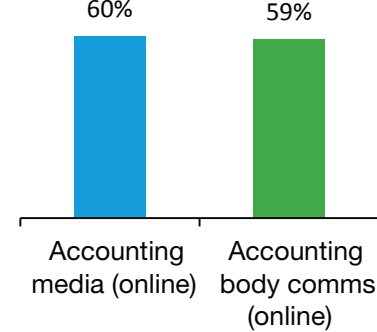
Canada



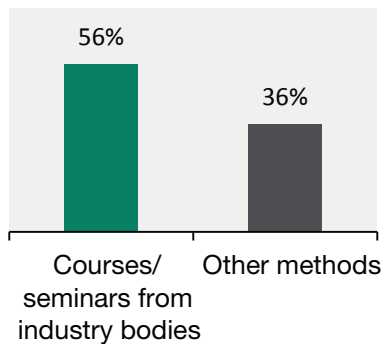
France



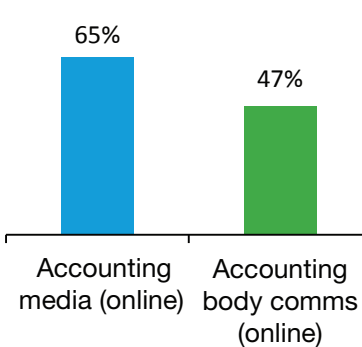
UK



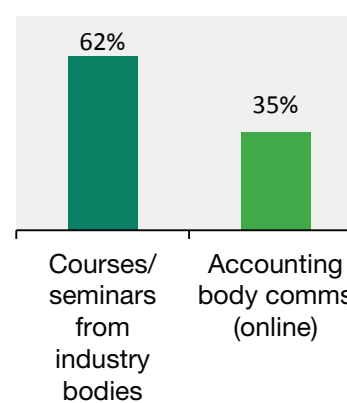
Spain



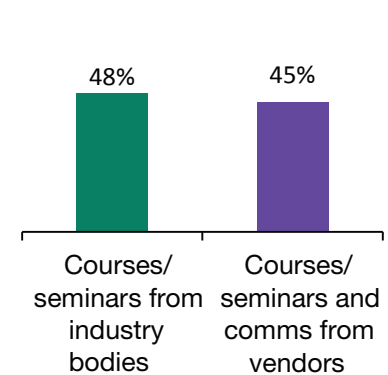
Poland



Portugal



Brazil

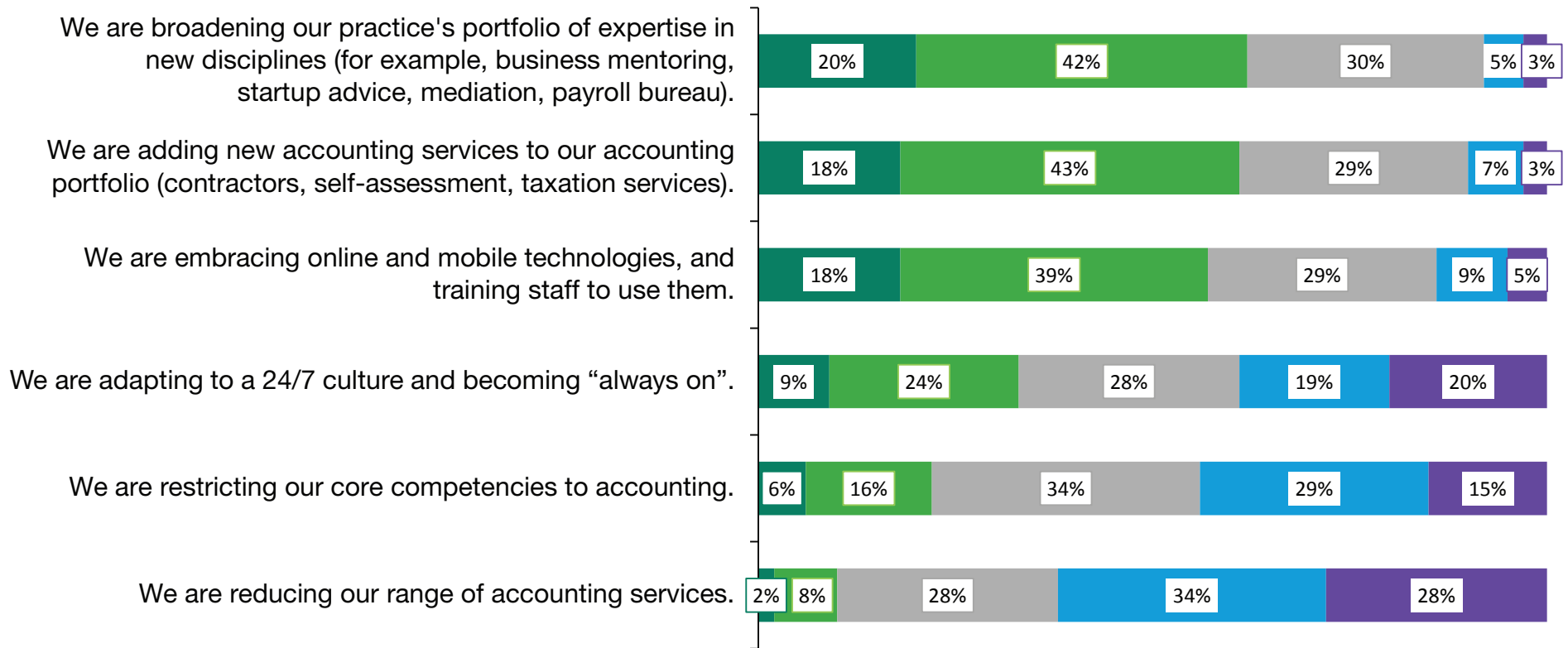


Growth: The changing roles of accountants



Thinking about the changing role of accountants, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Slightly agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Slightly disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

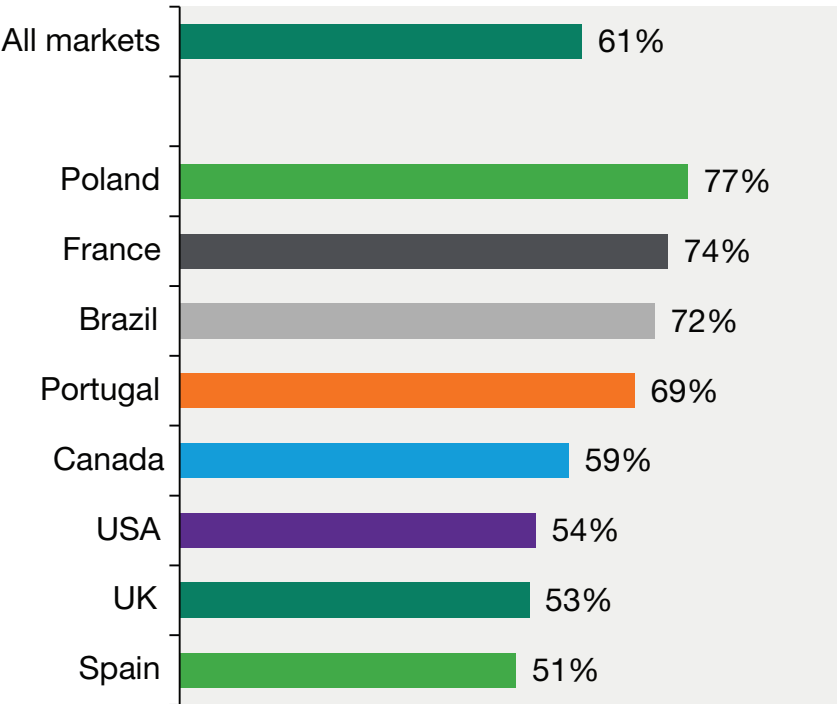
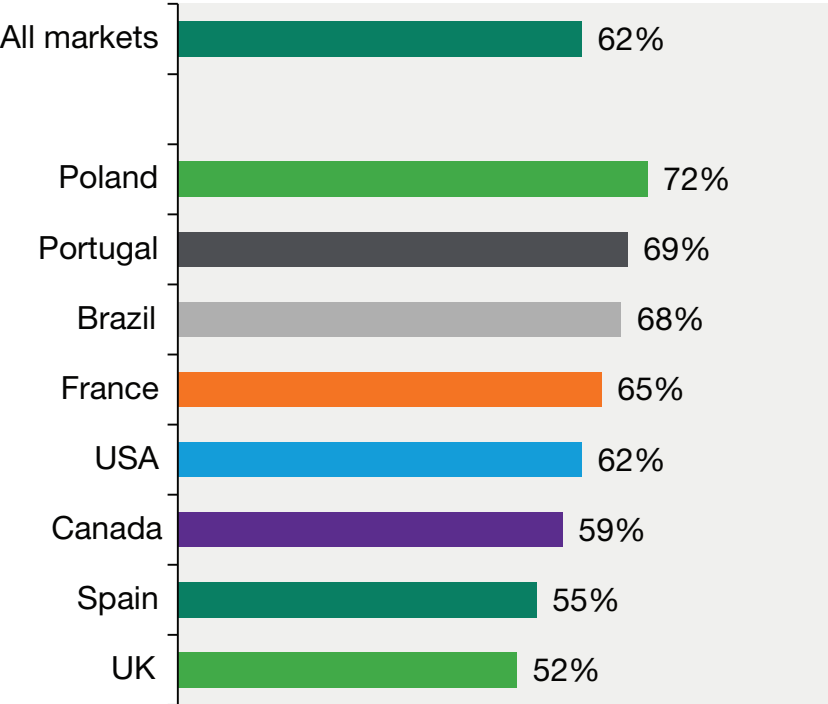


Growth: Most say they are broadening their practice's portfolio and/or adding new services.

Thinking about the changing role of accountants, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% agreeing)

“We are broadening our practice's portfolio of expertise in new disciplines (for example, business mentoring, startup advice, mediation, payroll bureau).”

“We are adding new accounting services to our accounting portfolio (contractors, self-assessment, taxation services).”

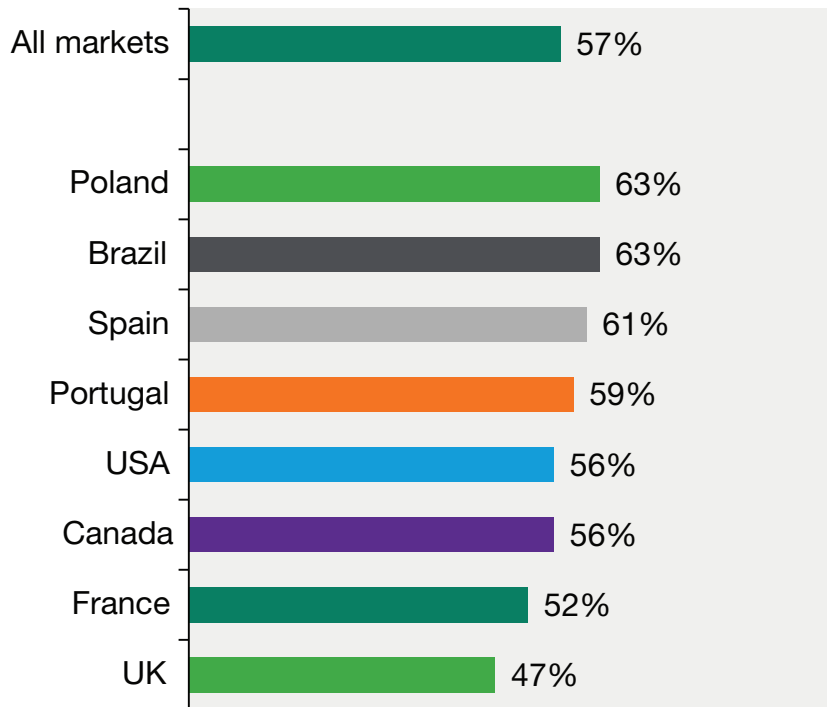


Growth: Many are embracing online and mobile technologies, but just a third are adapting to a 24/7 culture.

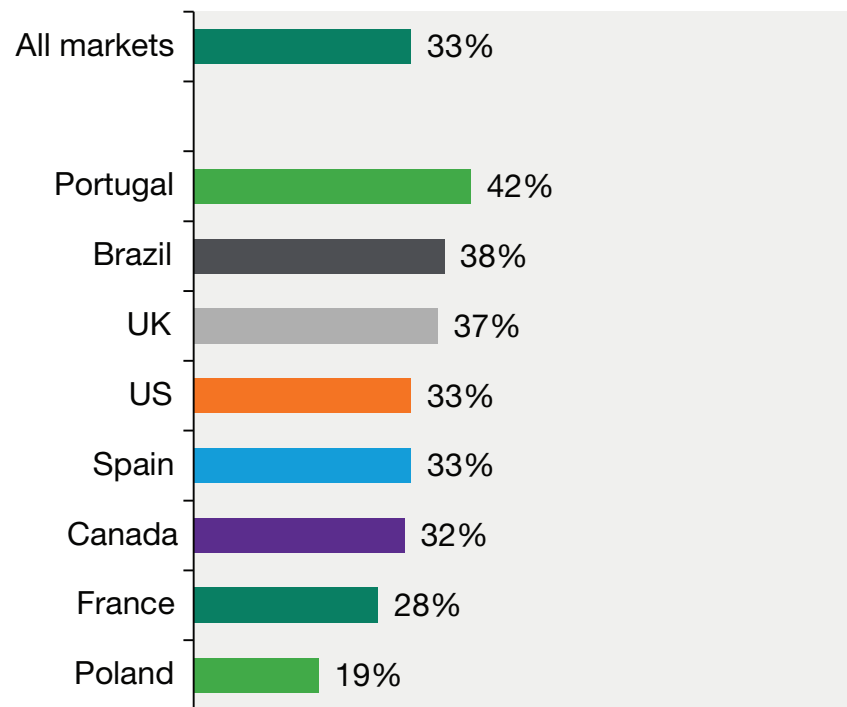


Thinking about the changing role of accountants, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(% agreeing)

“We are embracing online and mobile technologies and training staff to use them.”



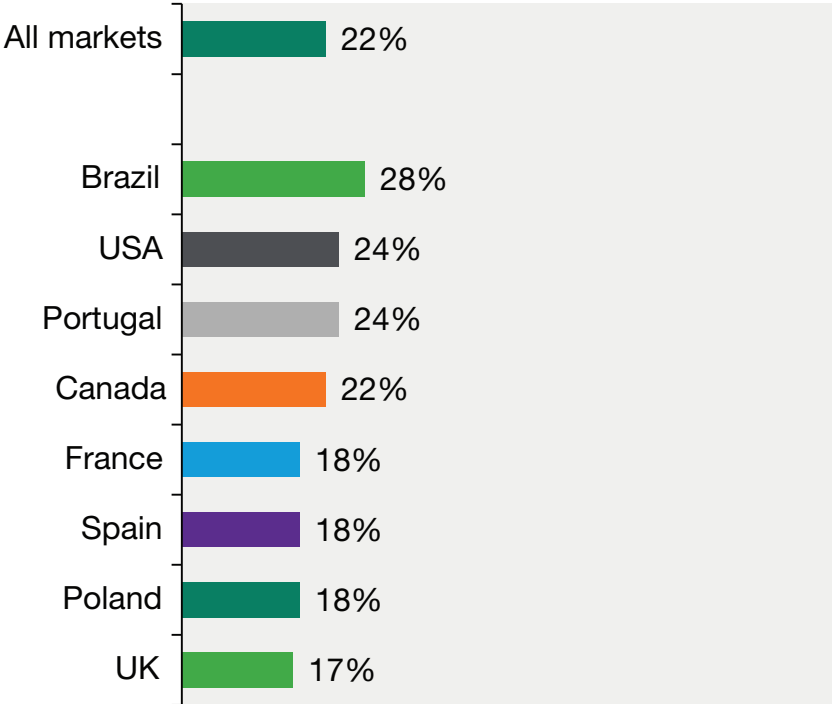
“We are adapting to a 24/7 culture and becoming ‘always on.’”



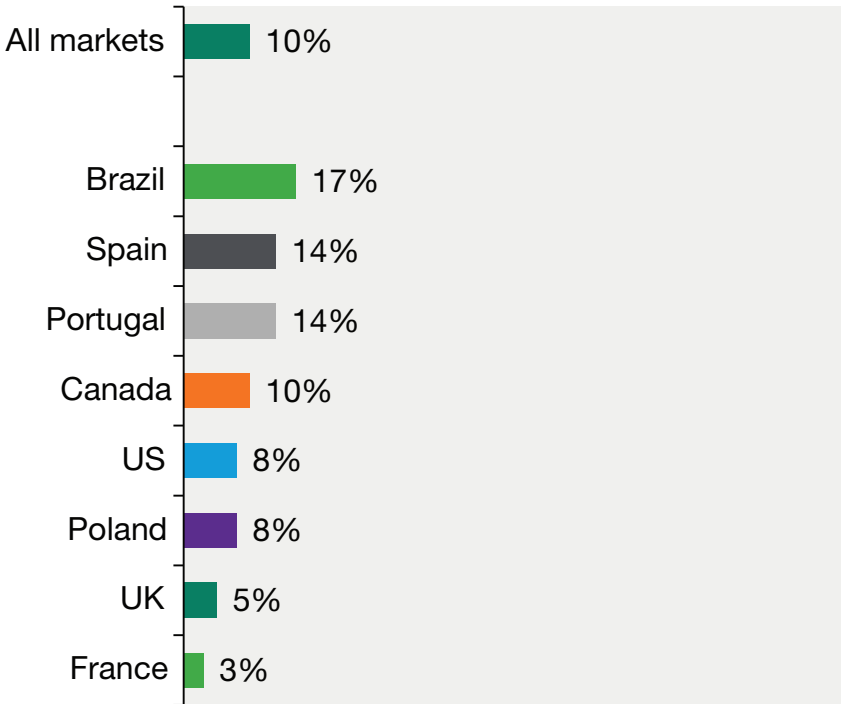
Growth: A fifth are restricting core competencies to accounting, and one in ten are reducing their range of accountancy services.

Thinking about the changing role of accountants, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(% agreeing)

“We are restricting our core competencies to accounting.”



“We are reducing our range of accounting services.”

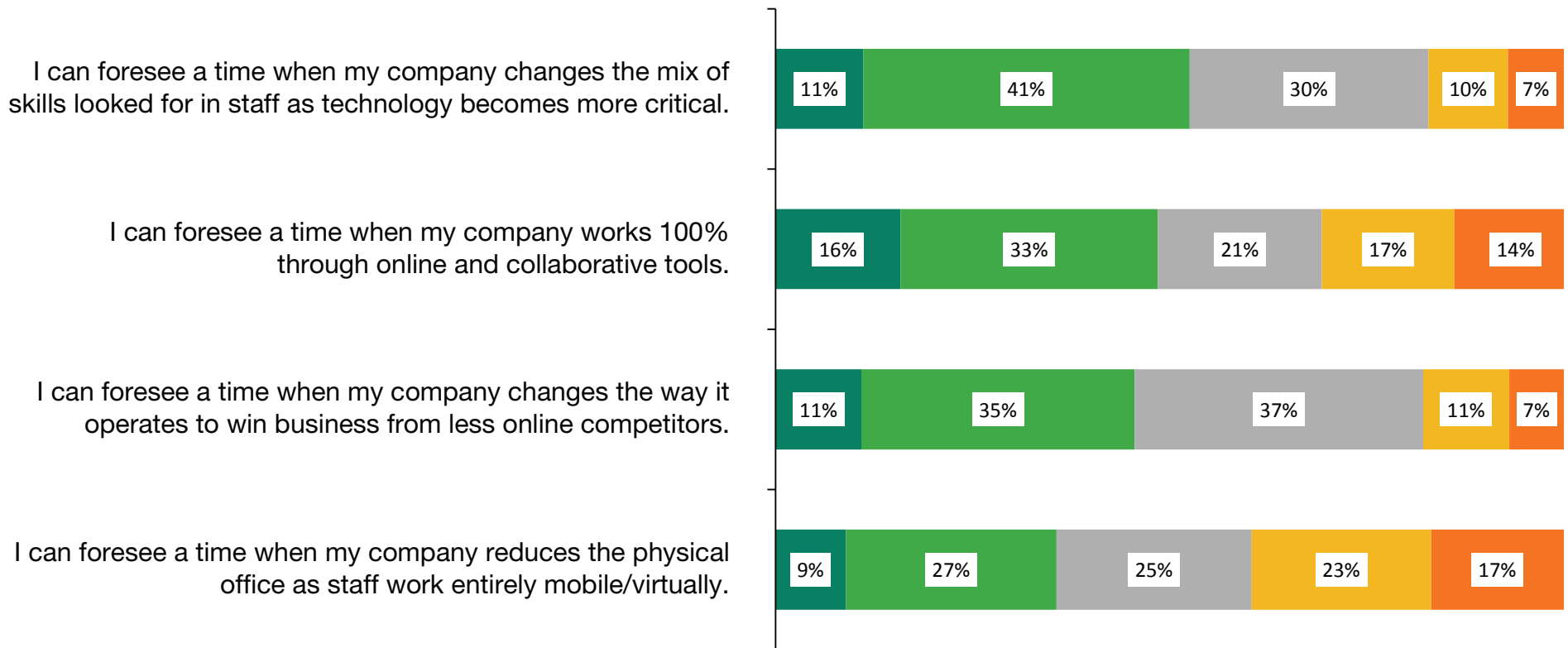


Future changes: 40% of accountants do not foresee reducing their company's physical office as staff work virtually.



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

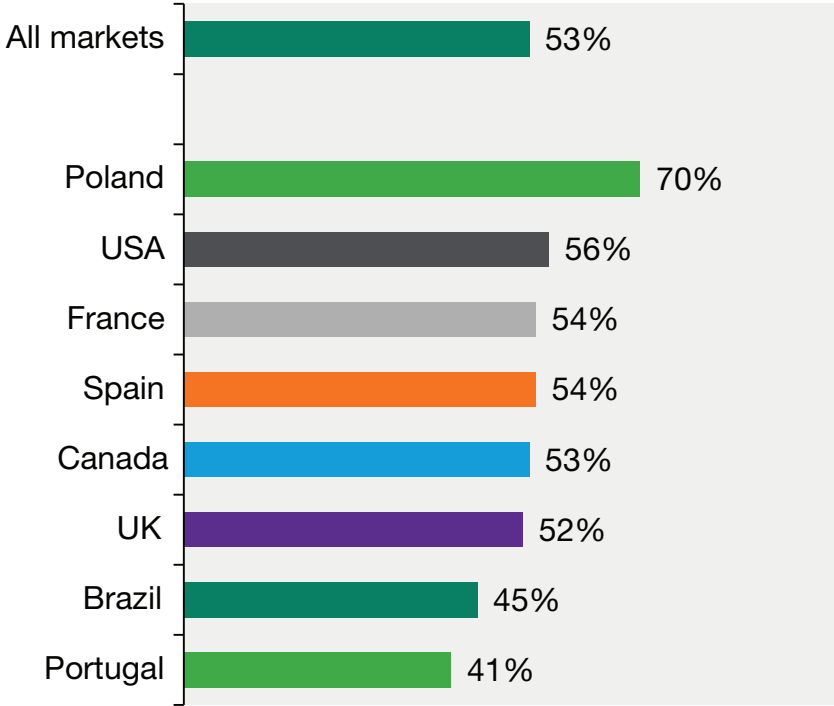
■ Strongly agree ■ Slightly agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Slightly disagree ■ Strongly disagree



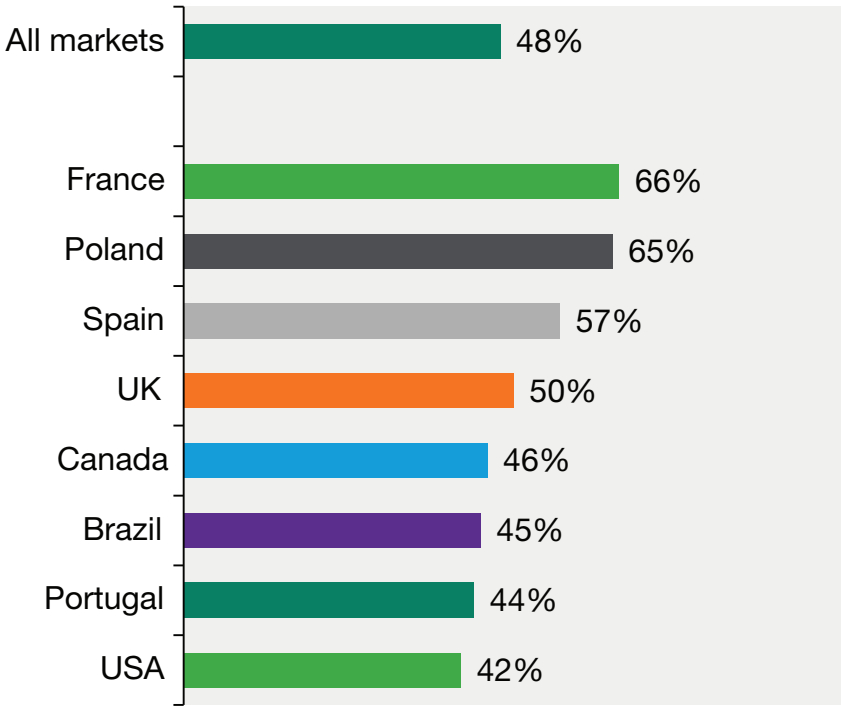
Future changes: Majority of accountants foresee changing the mix of skills looked for in staff as technology becomes more critical.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% agreeing)

“I can foresee a time when my company changes the mix of skills looked for in staff as technology becomes more critical.”



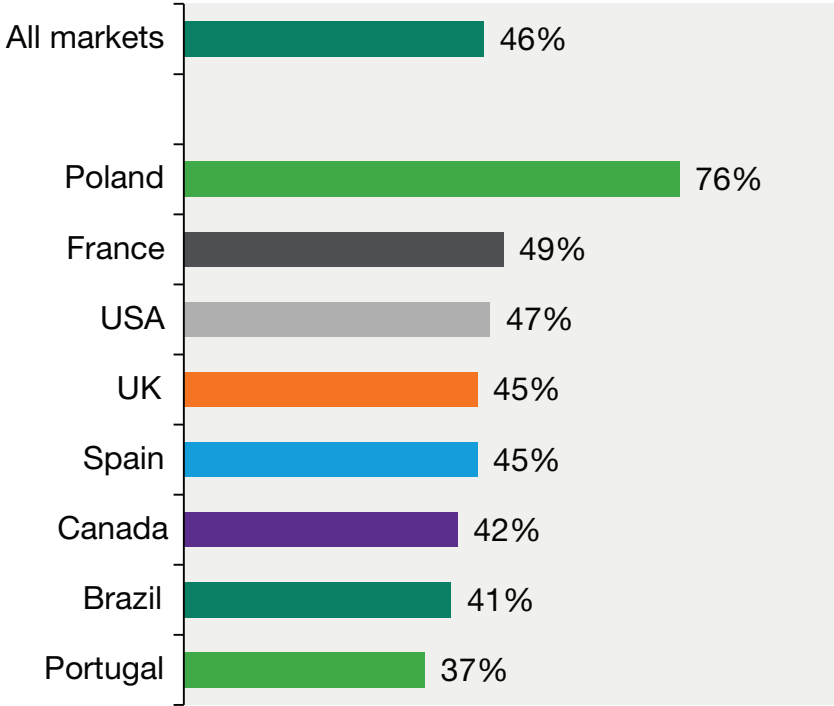
“I can foresee a time when my company works 100% through online and collaborative tools.”



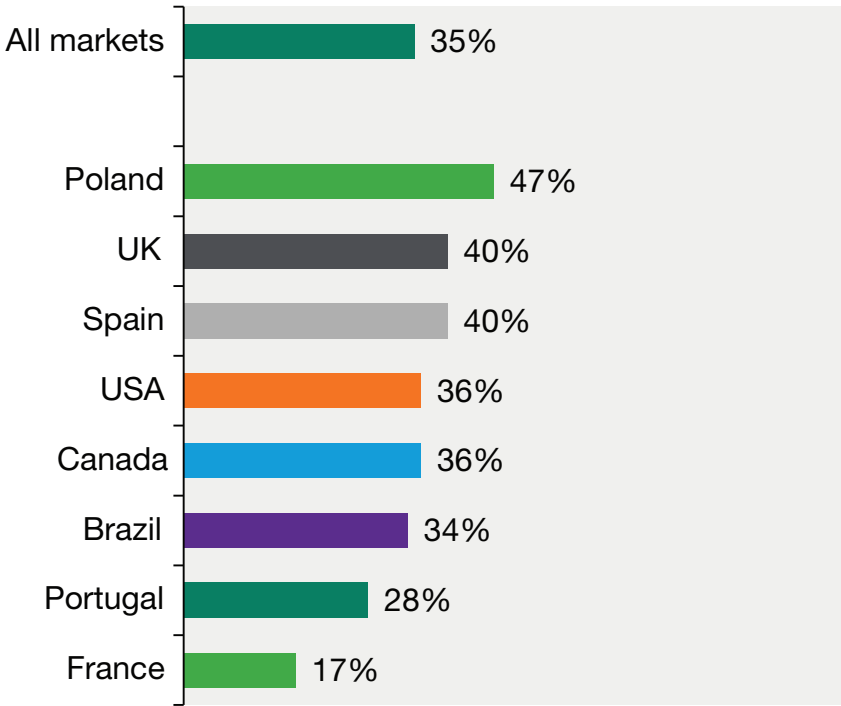
Future changes: Nearly half of all accountants foresee changing the way it operates to win business from less online competitors.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% agreeing)

“I can foresee a time when my company changes the way it operates to win business from less online competitors.”

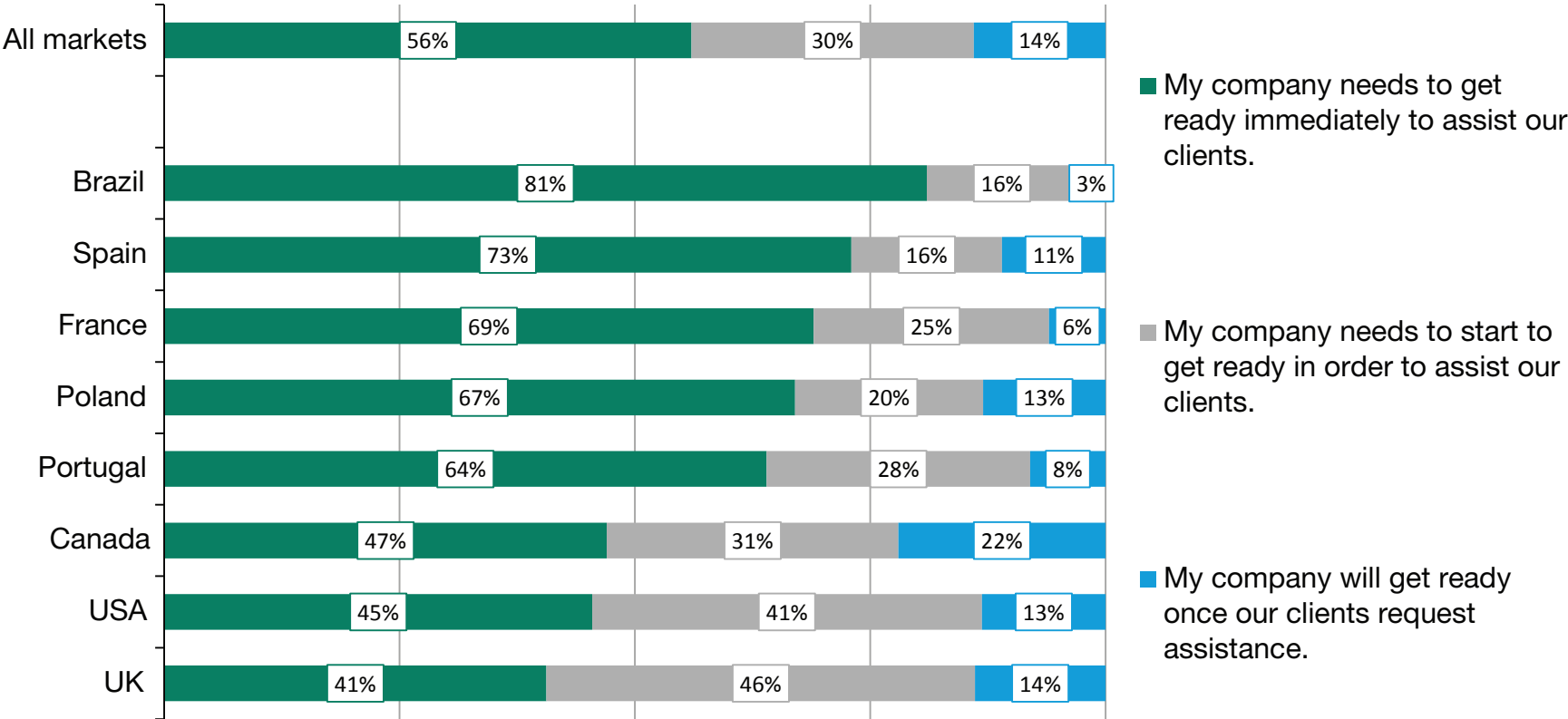


“I can foresee a time when my company reduces the physical office as staff work entirely mobile/virtually.”



Readiness: More than half say when new legislation comes into place, their company needs to get ready immediately to assist clients.

Thinking about when new legislation comes into place that will affect clients, which of the following statements best describes your company's approach?



Readiness: Nearly half feel their company has already adopted online technology.



When do think your company intends to adopt online technology?

- We already have it in our practice.
- We intend to adopt it in 6–12 months.
- We intend to adopt it in more than 24 months.
- Don't know
- We intend to adopt it in the next 6 months.
- We intend to adopt it in 12–24 months.
- We do not intend to move online.

