



**KANTAR**

S U S T A I N A B L E  
T R A N S F O R M A T I O N

Understanding the barriers to more effective  
**climate journalism**

Climate News Tracker  
Newsroom Survey



**Climate  
News  
Tracker**

# Content



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## What we did

# 01

## In Depth Interviews

To inform the design of the survey we interviewed 5 people doing a variety of roles in PSB journalism in the UK

# 02

## Survey

- 12-15 minute online survey of people that work in UK public service journalism
- 80 people completed the survey from October 2025 to January 2026
- A variety of news organisations, newsroom roles and desks are represented in the research



## Reminder of **WHY**

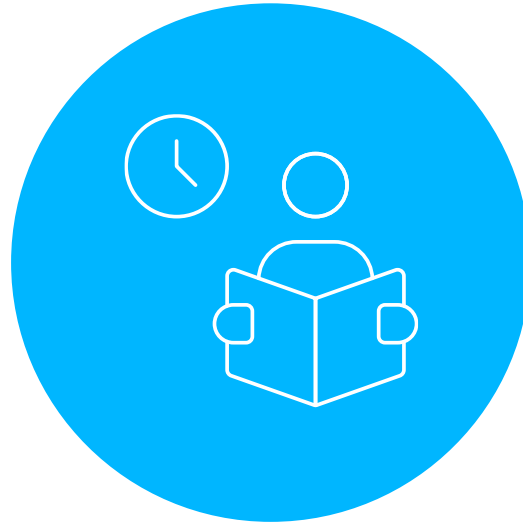
To shine a light on what **inspires and blocks** covering climate and environment stories.

# 80 colleagues across 5 UK public service newsrooms responded to our survey



## Roles

Reporters, producers, editors and more



## Desks

People from all subject areas took part – only 24 people had specific climate/environment specialism



## Organisations

Majority of respondents are from the BBC but Sky, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 are included



## Experience

Majority of respondents have over 7 years of experience

An aerial photograph of a dense, vibrant green forest. A light blue river winds through the trees, forming a large, irregular loop. A white rectangular frame is superimposed over the center of the forest, enclosing the text. The text is in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

# THE HEADLINES

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**89%** say climate reporting needs a new approach.

**64%** think climate reporting is not meeting audience needs.

Newsrooms rank climate and the environment as more urgent to cover than international conflicts.

74% of people working in newsrooms think all desks should cover more climate stories.

More than 8 in 10 people working in newsrooms say climate change is important and urgent, but 7 in 10 think there is not enough climate reporting.

40% feel getting climate stories commissioned is more of a fight now than 5 years ago.

8 in 10 people working in newsrooms say climate reporting needs to be integrated into their role.

Only 5 out of 100 people working in newsrooms think climate reporting is fine the way it is.



# THE RESULTS

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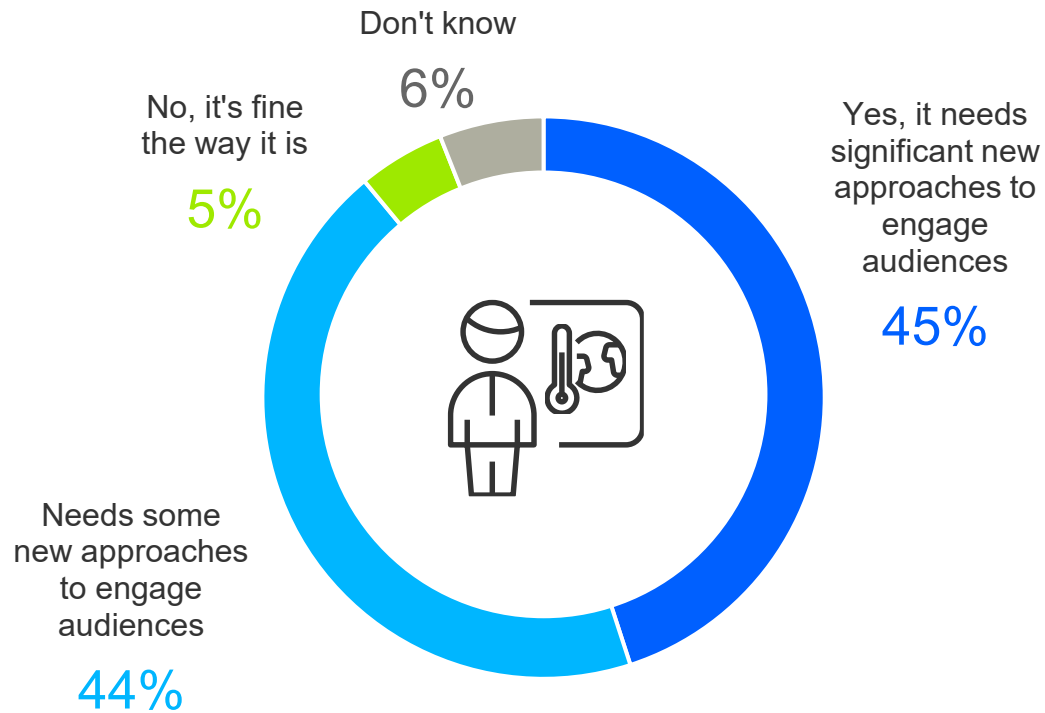
S U S T A I N A B L E  
T R A N S F O R M A T I O N



Climate  
News  
Tracker

# Improving Climate Change reporting

Do you think there is a need for changes in Climate Change reporting?

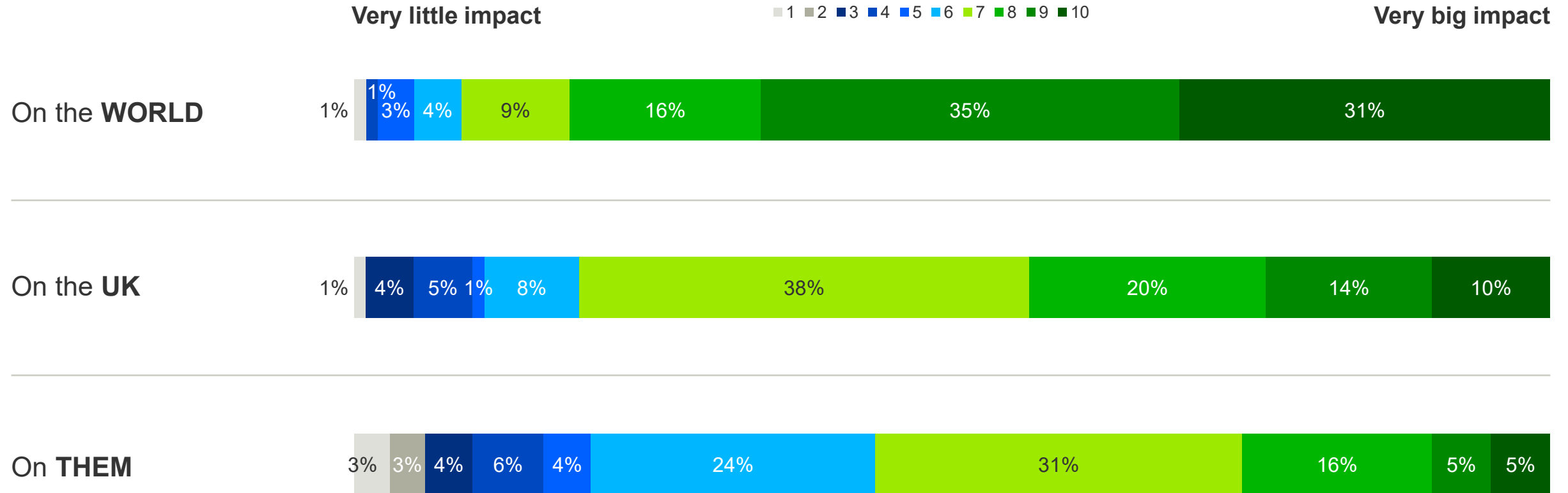


What would help increase the prominence, frequency, or effectiveness of climate change reporting in your news organisation?

Theme	Description
<b>Leadership &amp; Prioritisation</b>	Need for stronger editorial direction and institutional support for climate coverage.
<b>Audience Engagement</b>	Emphasis on relevance, public interest data, and relatable framing for audiences.
<b>Training &amp; Expertise</b>	Improved climate literacy, data interpretation, and topic understanding among staff.
<b>Resources &amp; Funding</b>	Financial and staffing support required for robust climate storytelling.
<b>Storytelling &amp; Creativity</b>	More compelling visuals, narratives, and solutions-focused approaches.
<b>Linking to Other Beats</b>	Integrating climate coverage with political, economic, and global news.
<b>Balance &amp; Tone</b>	Ensuring reporting avoids bias, fatigue, or overly negative framing.
<b>Data &amp; Localisation</b>	Need for accessible, localised data to support meaningful audience understanding.

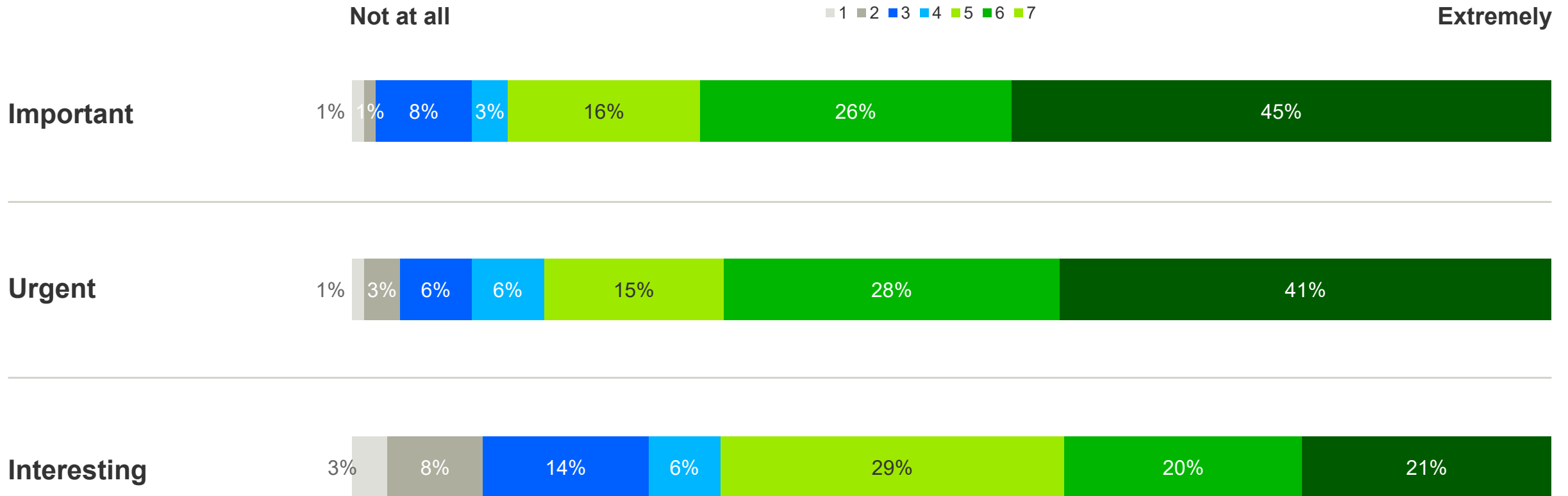
# Impact of Climate Change – personal view

Speaking from a personal perspective, how would you assess the impact that climate change is having?



# Importance of Climate Change reporting – professional view

How would you generally characterise / rate climate change as a topic?....



# Urgency of covering Climate Change in relation to other issues

What are the topics that are most urgent to cover?

## Rank order based on mean scores

1	The cost of living
2	The economy
3	<b>Climate change and the environment</b>
4	The NHS
5	International conflict
6	Immigration
7	Housing
8	Education
9	Employment
10	EU exit
11	Crime
12	Industrial action

## Ranked based on #1 (% who chose this topic)

1	The cost of living	28%
2	The economy	19%
3	<b>Climate change and the environment</b>	18%
4	The NHS	10%
5	International conflict	9%
6	Immigration	6%
7	EU exit	4%
8	Housing	3%
9	Crime	1%
10	Education	1%
11	Employment	1%
12	Industrial action	1%

# Quantity and quality of coverage

How well do you think your news organisation covers climate change?

Not enough Climate Stories

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Too many Climate stories



Don't give Full Context

Give full context



Not made relevant

Made relevant



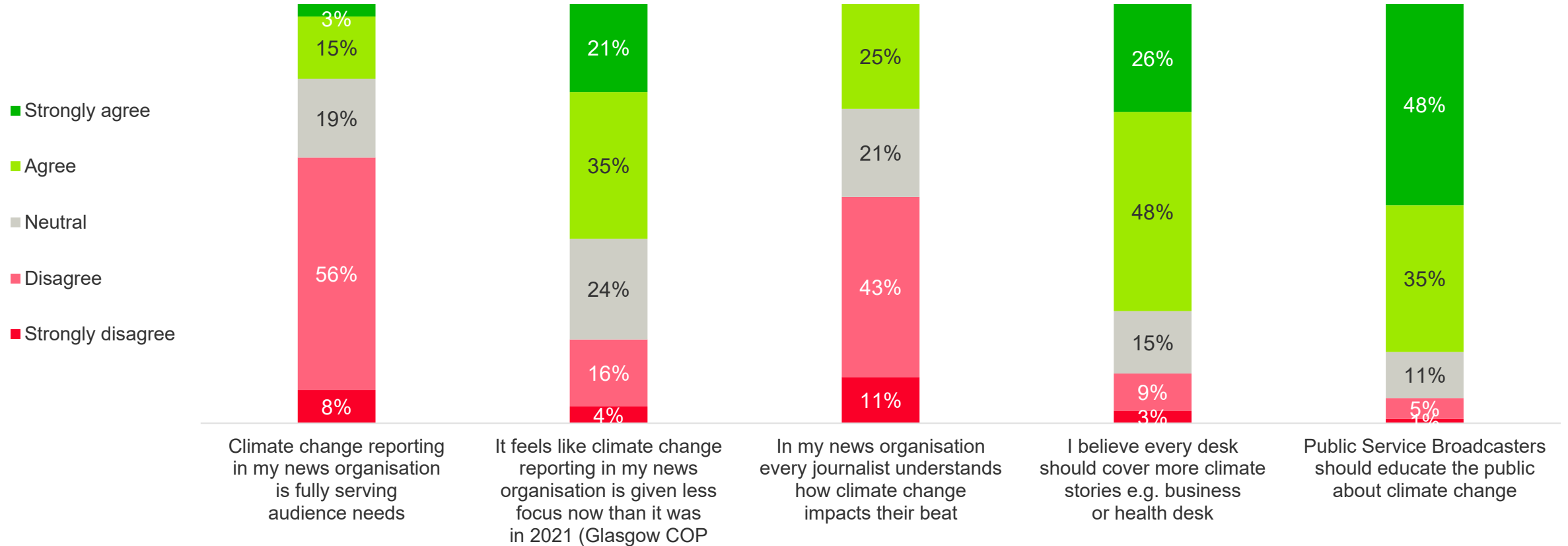
Not enough prominence

Enough prominence



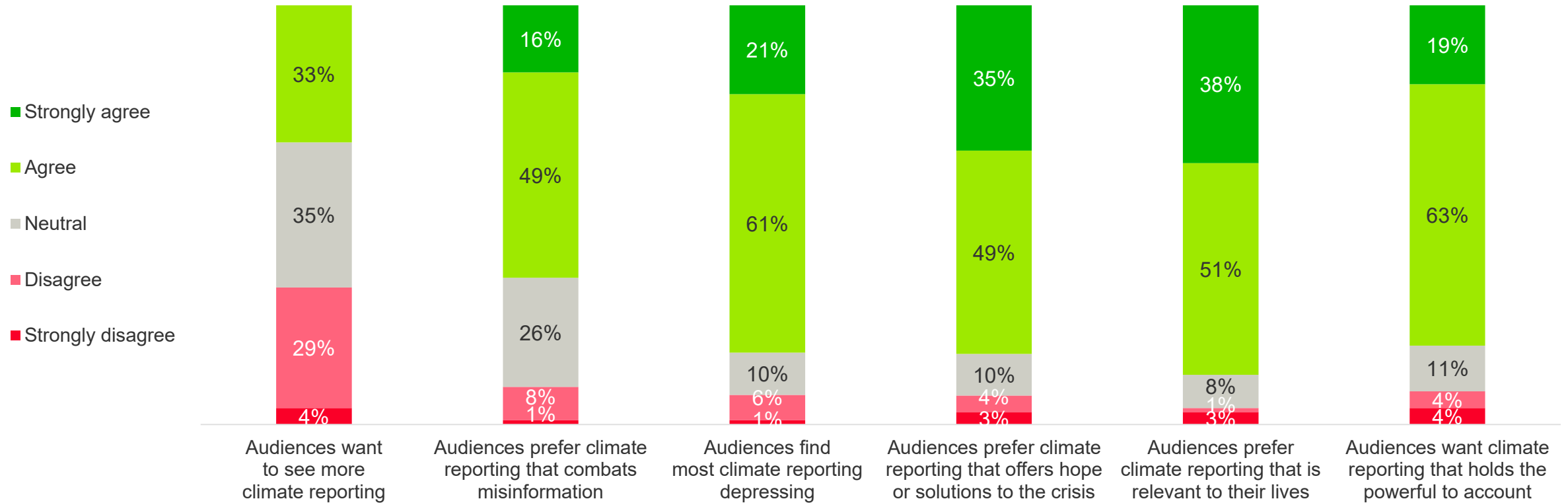
# Detailed opinions about coverage

How strongly do you Agree/Disagree with the following statements?



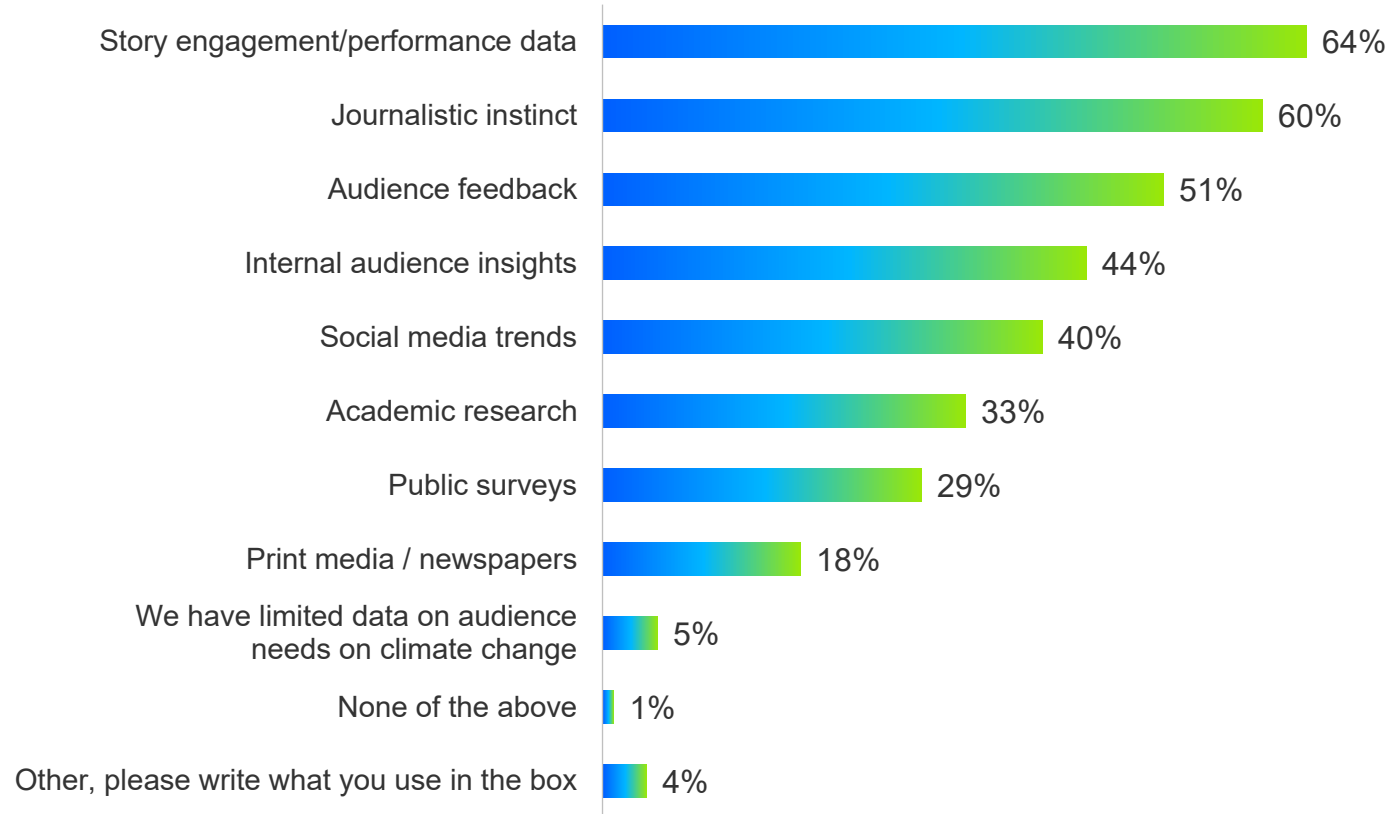
# Audience needs

How strongly do you Agree/Disagree with the following statements about UK news audiences?



# Sources of audience insights

Which, if any, of the following do you use to understand what your audience wants from climate reporting?



# Triggers of climate change stories

What are the most likely triggers for climate coverage in your news organisation?

## Rank order based on mean scores

1	Extreme weather e.g. heat waves or natural disasters or forest fires
2	International conferences e.g. UN COP
3	Scientific announcements e.g. climate change committee or environmental scientists
4	A story with great pictures
5	Government announcements e.g. The Budget
6	Debate around net zero
7	Renewable energy / business / industry announcements
8	Personal passion/interest of staff
9	Climate change demonstrations/activist action
10	Direction from senior leadership
11	Newspaper headlines

## Ranked based on #1 (%)

1	Extreme weather e.g. heat waves or natural disasters or forest fires	56%
2	A story with great pictures	11%
3	International conferences e.g. UN COP	9%
4	Scientific announcements e.g. climate change committee or environmental scientists	9%
5	Debate around net zero	8%
6	Personal passion/interest of staff	1%
7	Direction from senior leadership	1%
8	Climate change demonstrations/activist action	1%
9	Renewable energy / business / industry announcements	1%
10	Newspaper headlines	1%
11	Government announcements e.g. The Budget	-

# Barriers of climate change stories

What prevents more climate change coverage in your news organisation?



The climate related stories the team publish often don't reach a big enough audience, in my view because they are pitching the wrong type of stories.

International conflicts and security-related stories will always get more priority though the climate angle is increasingly being highlighted in top stories as well.

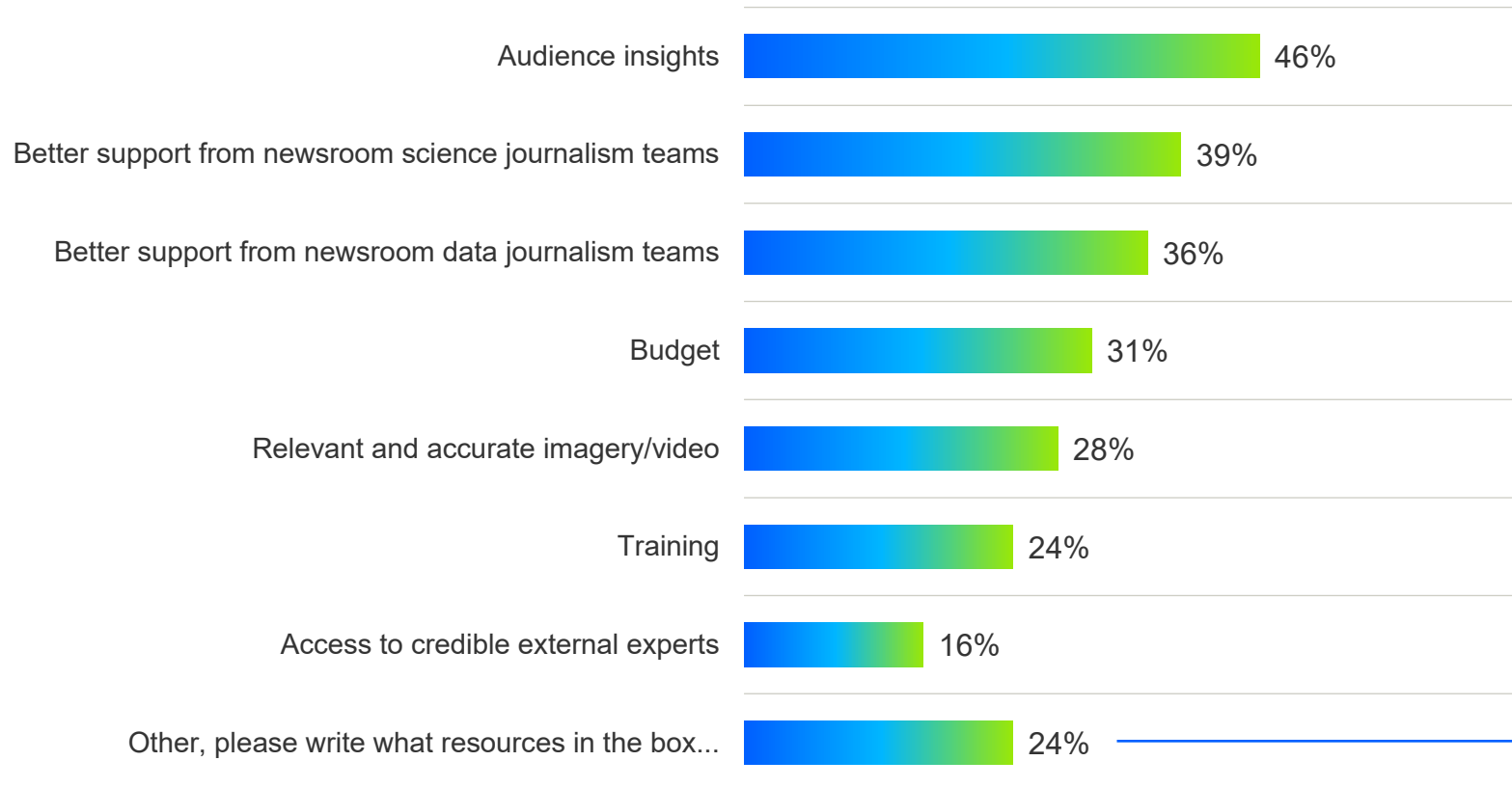
Hard to keep telling the same stories based on 'worst ever' scientific milestones in new ways.

Failure to link it to existing stories e.g. Iran and drought

The way sometimes climate stories are presented i.e. not enough thought about pictures or how to make it engaging to audiences

# Resources needed for more effective climate coverage

What resources are most needed for more effective climate coverage in your news organisation?



It's not resources. It's the priorities of newsroom leadership.

More resources to cover climate stories especially when there is stiff competition with international conflicts and security stories.

Enough reporters and producers.

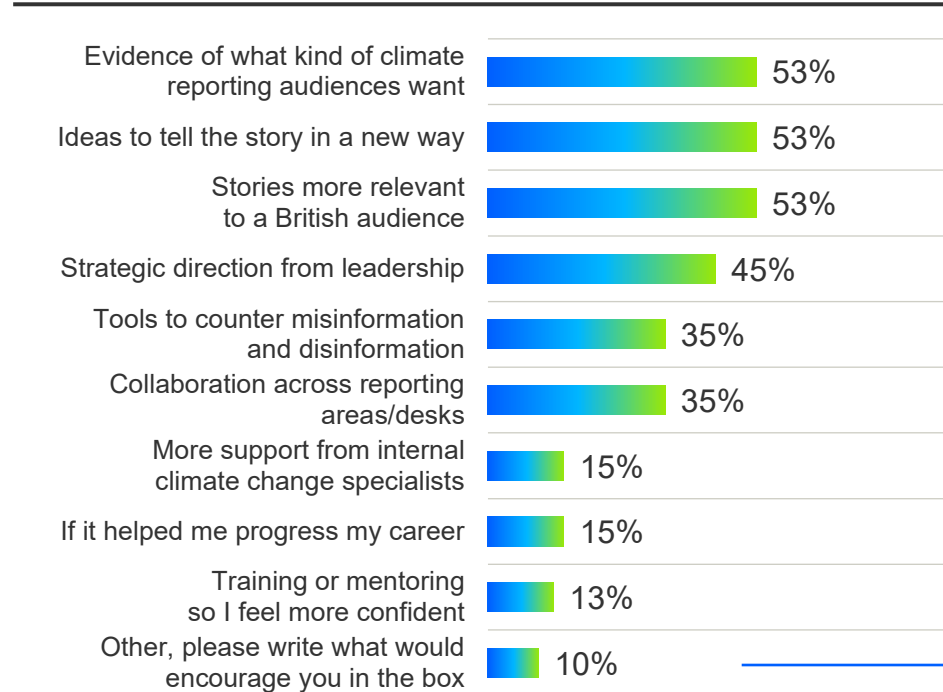
A more objective view - less evangelical about e.g. heat pumps/net zero.

Public interest.

Needs to discuss the politics around climate change - what really causes it and its links to capitalism (and, conversely, the argument from the "other side" too, we need to be unbiased). More toothless "recycle more!" articles will not engage anyone.

# Climate Change within the individual's role

## What would encourage you to pitch or include more climate change stories?



If I was allowed to discuss the real issues and problems (deeply rooted in political agendas) rather than write fluff pieces.

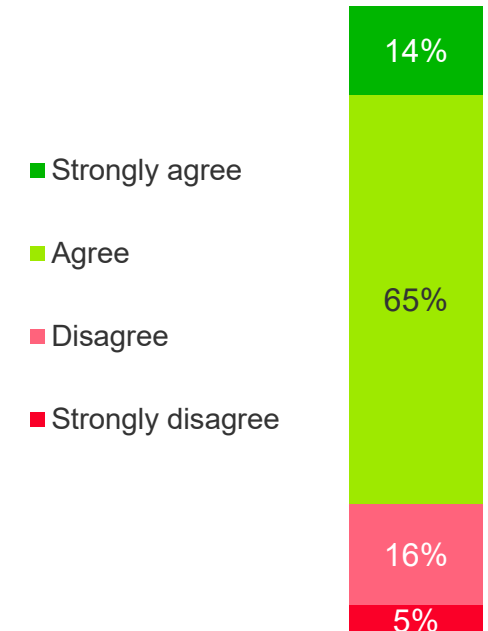
Courage from the leadership to face the reputational risk.

Less emphasis or concern for populism / ratings (and more investigative journalism; plus some inspiring stories from around the world on the solutions; more prominence for science-environment-climate on news).

Evidence of a specific investigative angle that made it appropriate for my kind of film making i.e. a major insider scandal malfeasance by individuals or companies

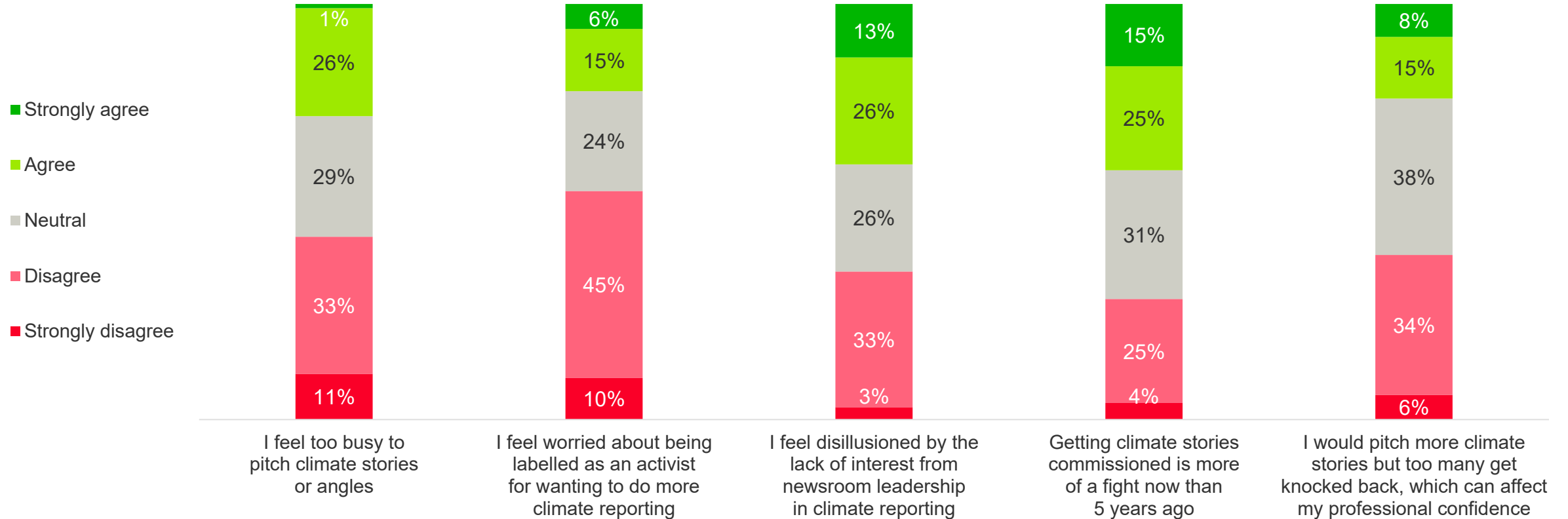
## How strongly do you Agree / Disagree with the following statement?

### Need to integrate climate change into current role



# Emotional impact of climate change reporting

How strongly do you Agree/Disagree with the following statements?





# Thank you