

Cork Citizens/Residents Engagement Baseline Data Collection (CorkCitiEngage) Report

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

In recognition of the need to pursue a smart agenda, Cork City Council and Cork County Council with Nimbus Research Centre and Tyndall National Institute established a new initiative called the Cork Smart Gateway. The Cork Smart Gateway Initiative aims to enhance the reputation of Cork as an attractive region for people to live, to work, and to invest by employing smart solutions to solve regional challenges and improve the quality of life of its citizens.

In tandem, Cork is also positioning itself to develop as one of the world's first four pilot cities to pursue Learning City under UNESCO's Beijing Declaration. The two initiatives converge to bring together hard infrastructure and social capital – including local skills, community institutions and digital technologies – in innovative ways to stimulate the economy, create public service delivery mechanisms and provide an attractive environment for all. Both initiatives require quantifiable indicators to measure progress and success while ensuring meaningful engagement and involvement of major sectors in society – public bodies, private business, academic institutions, and citizens/residents – in consultation, feedback, decision-making, and implementation of projects. Engagement and involvement of stakeholders ensures maximisation of overall benefits for all.

To this end the Cork Smart Gateway and the International Energy Research Centre (IERC) carried out a series of surveys as part of the CorkCitiEngage project over a four month period concluding in January 2016 to better understand Cork citizen's opinions about the Cork region and its future development. The project used crowd-sourced information gathered by student volunteers going door-to-door and combined these results with an online survey. There were 3,599 responses to these surveys which captured the views of Cork citizens, senior citizens (over 65 years), youth (16-18 years) and local authority employees. The results of the surveys will be considered as a key resource when considering future Smart programmes or projects for Cork. In addition the



results will also act as a baseline against which we can measure progress towards smart initiatives and Cork's learning city.

1.2 Key Findings and Recommendations

Findings

- Cork citizens/residents highly value a shared and collaborative vision of their participation in public issues;
- 63% of Cork citizens/residents strongly believe that they have big/moderate impact in making Cork a better place to live;
- However, 62% of Cork citizens/residents indicated that there are too few opportunities for them to participate in local decision making;
- Top concerns on Cork citizens/residents' minds are sustainable jobs (28%), health and wellbeing (27.4%);
- 66% of Cork citizens/residents volunteered in various arrangements citing both personal interest and helping others as their top motivations;
- 78% of Cork citizens/residents identify Cork as an excellent place for life-long learning and education opportunities;
- Cork citizens/residents are skilful in the use of digital tools such as email and text;
- 58% of Cork citizens/residents use mobile on a regular basis, while 43.2% use email, making the two as the most common communication methods for Cork citizens/residents use. Therefore, email (60%) and mobile phone (40%) are the preferred methods of communication by the residents from public offices;
- Facebook is the dominating social network (by 57%) used by Cork citizens/residents;
- Cork citizens/residents enjoy good internet connection at home (over 80% access internet at home), and have a strong demand for hardware (i.e. tablet or computer) and Wi-Fi access (nearly 50%) at public offices and libraries;
- 77% of the people surveyed would use a smart phone app designed especially for Cork.

Recommendations

- Harnessing Cork citizens/residents' participation in future city development and planning should be done regularly;
- Using multi-modal citizens/residents engagement models can be considered for sustained engagement; platforms and frameworks for the models can be designed based on the findings;
- Identifying and nurturing local champions and leaders in locally generated interventions should be considered, especially in energy, environment, health and wellbeing aspects;
- Leveraging the volunteering spirit of the Cork citizens/residents should be part of everyday best practice thus helping them to participate with



- decision makers in government, academia, and industries;
- Improving hardware and free Wi-Fi in public offices and libraries or key public areas should be considered;
- Up-Skilling the digital skills for older or less digitally experienced groups can be done using local volunteers (such as students);
- Creating a Cork smart phone app should be considered as a mechanism for citizen feedback. Embedding the app with attractive incentives increases participation and uptake;
- Utilising social media networks for pushing information to the citizens/residents and recruiting them for official communication methods.

2. CorkCitiEngage

2.1 Aim

The overall aim of this project was to collect relevant citizens/residents data and produce a baseline and analysis for both Cork Smart Gateway and Cork Learning City. The result of this effort provided information and evidence for relevant authorities and stakeholders to map out areas of impact for investment planning, policy implications, and deployment programmes.

2.2 Objectives

The majority of the citizens/residents engagement data indicators collected fit the three major aspects of participation in public issues, digital skills, and key public infrastructure access and usage (e.g., public transport and broadband). The specific proposed indicators are:

Public Participation

- ✓ Current understanding about smart city projects in Cork
- ✓ Current practices and willingness to engage/participate in public issues
- ✓ Current practices and willingness to volunteer

Digital skills

- ✓ Preferred means of communications (mobile, post, social media, text message...)



- ✓ Current usages and using skills of numerous means of communications
- ✓ Current usages of social media

Public infrastructure access and usage

- ✓ Use of broadband, internet
- ✓ Use of public transport: buses, trains, bicycle hire
- ✓ Use of city's open data

Updated demographical data, mapped with the 2011 census

- ✓ Time of stay in Cork
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Gender
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Ethnic background
- ✓ Employment



2.3 Survey areas

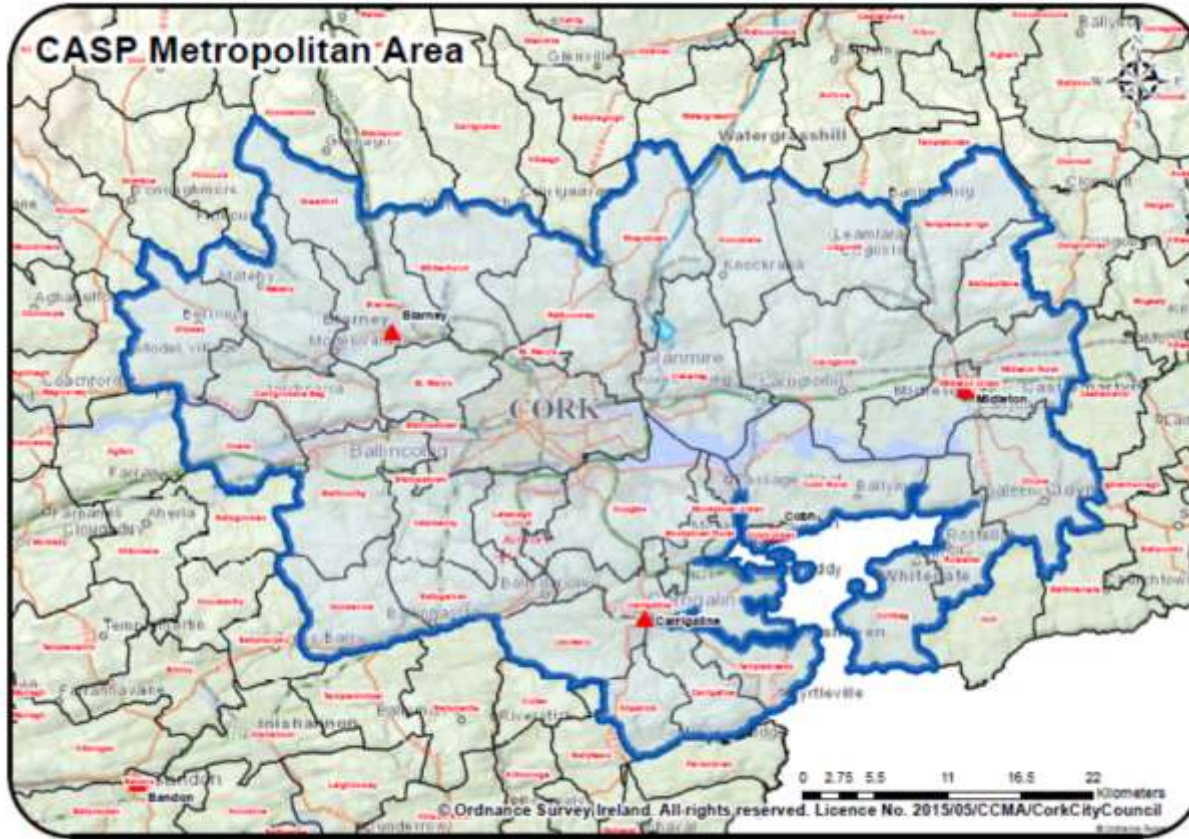


Figure 1: The boundary of the Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP)



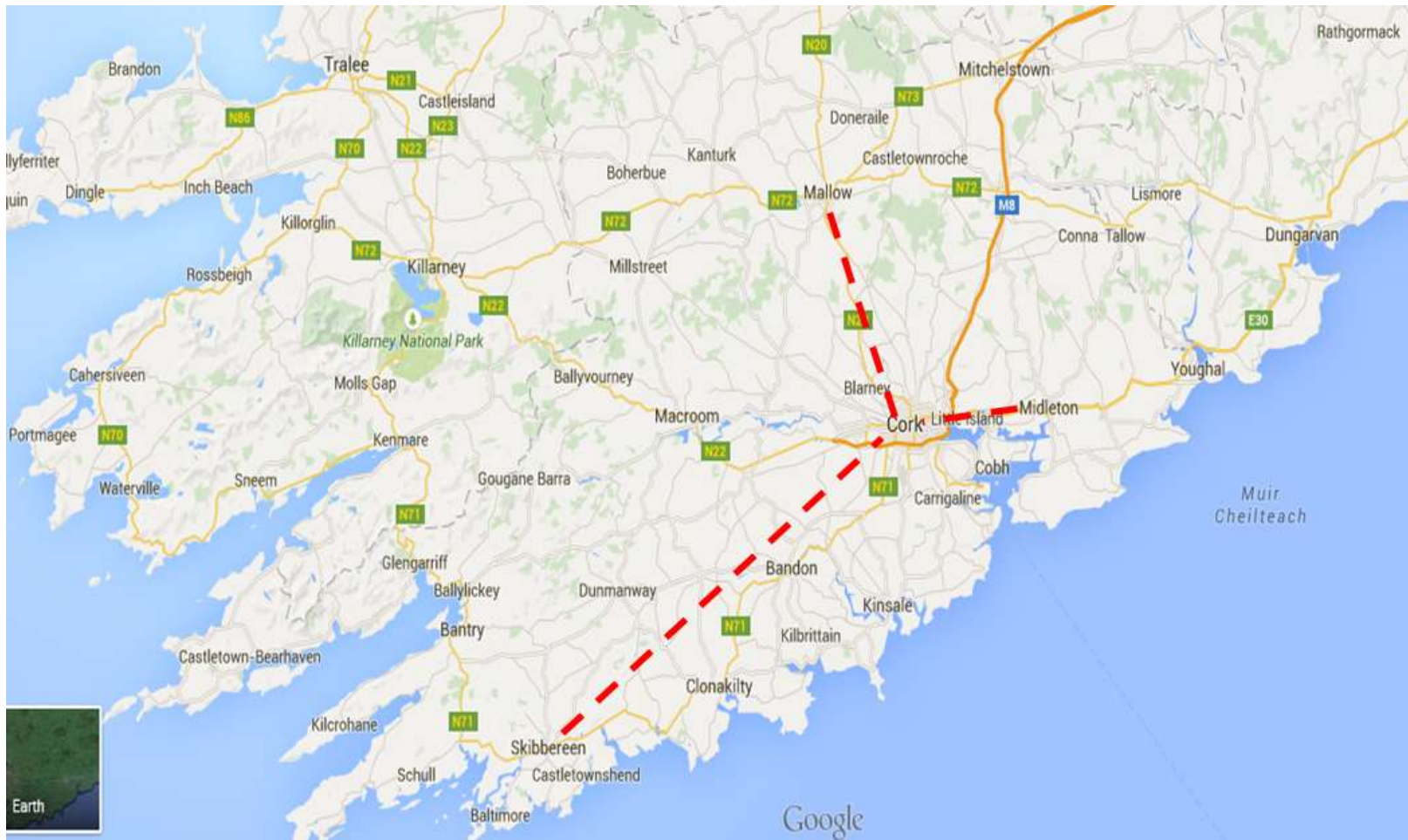


Figure 2: The regional towns outreach of the project



3. Survey sets

The CorkCitiEngage project produced five survey sets: Have Your Say – Representative General Public sample (Rep); Have Your Say – Non-Representative General Public (NonRep) sample or tech-savvy general public/adults; Have Your Say – Senior; Speak up Youth (Youth) – the teenager group; and Work with Citizens/Residents – the local authorities/officials (Official).

Have Your Say – Representative General Public sample – gathered 950 respondents through face-to-face and door-to-door interviews by student volunteers in 20 selected small areas in Cork.

Have Your Say – Non-Representative General Public (NonRep) or tech-savvy general public/adults yielded largest respondents of 1301. This group of respondents accessed the survey web link through internet applications (i.e. social media, email, web link on websites...). Despite the fact that this was a non-probability sample, this group's skills, perceptions, practices, and understandings could be considered as an ideal group for smart city interactions. This is because of their high proficiency of digital skills especially in the context of largely ICT enabled solutions that are usually adopted in SC projects







Have Your Say – Seniors - student volunteers collected 141 respondents using face-to-face interviews. Due to the small sample size, the sample may not be representative of the general population of this group, and it is important to keep this in mind while reviewing the results of the study.

Speak up Youth – the teenager group – attracted 768 respondents from 26 schools and youth reach centres. While it was not a large selection of the general population of this group, it sufficiently significant to show consistent views, practices, and skills across relevant activities, policies, and programmes benefiting or targeting this age group.



Work with Citizens/Residents – the local authorities/officials – harvested 352 respondents from Cork City Council, Cork County Council and their affiliates. The responding rate was at more than 10% of the total employees at the two halls and this was the common responding rate in organisation-wide surveys.



 Representative	950	 Senior	141
 Non-Representative	1301	 Youth (15-18)	768
 Mallow	87	 Official	352
3599 respondents			



4. Cork 360 Degree View

The Cork 360 degree view is the aggregated data from common questions included in all of the five sets of the surveys.

3.1 Demographical characteristics

The collected sample of respondents from Cork rural and urban area provided a representation of the gender distribution in the population. The collected sample included 49% female and 51% male respondents as compared to known census data in 2011 that shows a 48% female and 52% male populations.

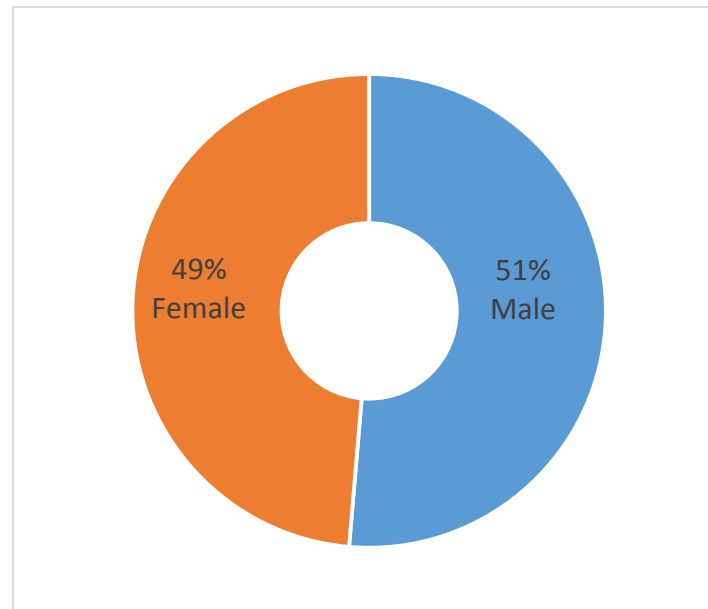


Figure 0-1. What is your gender? This question allows only one choice, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100%.



The majority of the respondents, 75.9%, have been living in Cork either all of their life or more than 10 years. The remaining 24.1% of the respondents, including 9.3% who have been in Cork for less than a year, have been living in Cork less than 10 years.

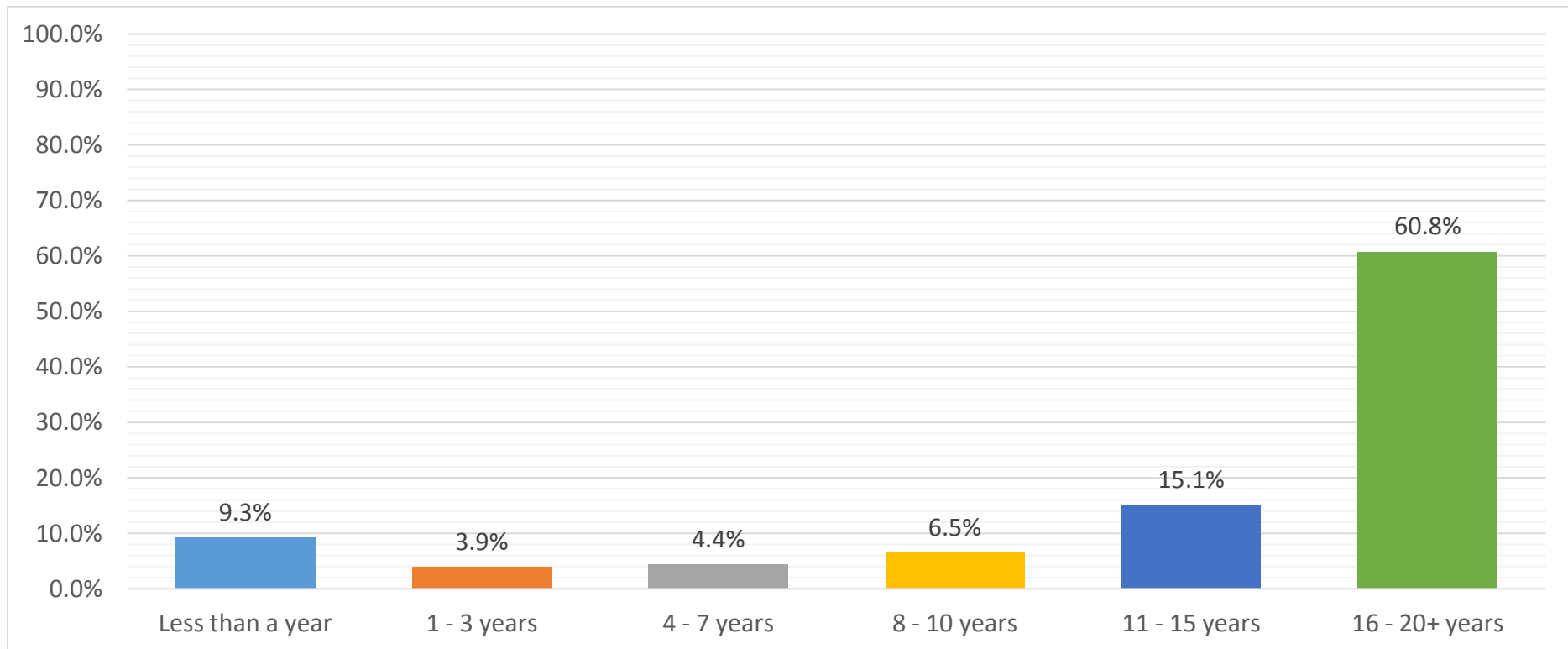


Figure 0-2. How long have you lived in Cork? This question allows only one choice, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100%.



The respondents live mainly in suburbs, 44%, followed by rural areas, 19.6%, city centre, 19%, commuter towns, 15.3%, and the rest live outside of the survey areas (Non-Cork Counties).

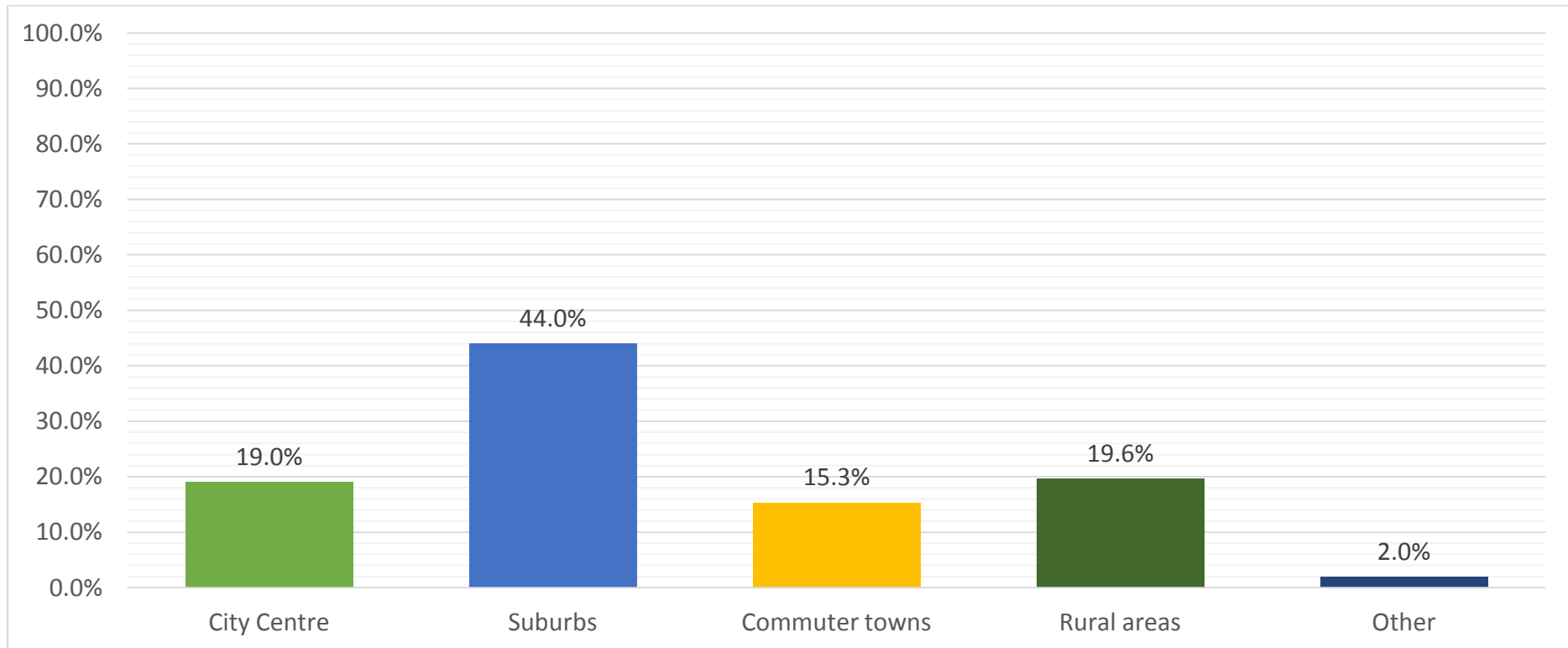


Figure 0-3. Where do you live in Cork? This question allows only one choice, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100%.



3.2 Public participation

Regarding the reasons for the participation of citizens in public issues in Cork, the most popular reasons are to improve collaboration for common good and co-create useful ideas (36.5% and 35% respectively). Also, people take part in public issues to develop shared goals (25.3% of respondents) and to achieve their local insights (18.1% of respondents). Other reasons are to co-implement new development programmes and practice the civic rights which make up less than 14%.

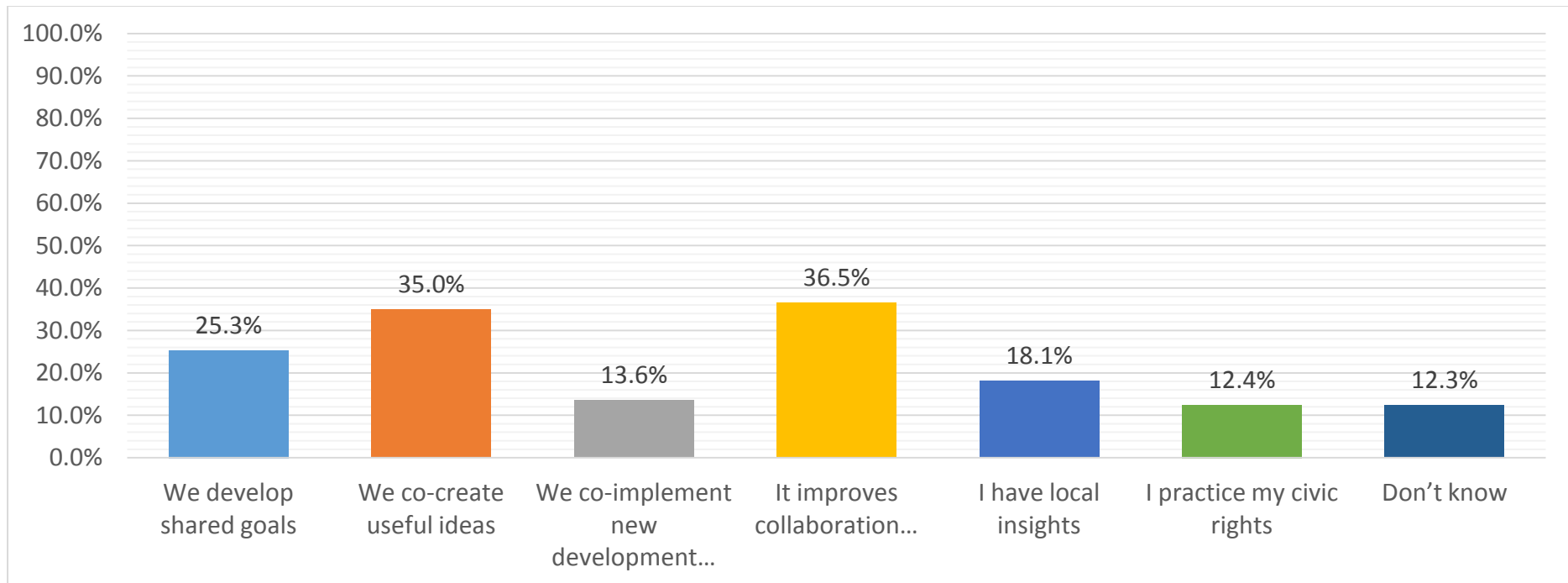


Figure 0-4. Why do you think your participation in public issues is important for Cork? This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results in each survey add up more than 100%.



The majority of respondents (62%) thought they have too few opportunities in local decision making whilst only 2% of respondents believe that they have many opportunities to contribute to local decisions. 17% of respondents are fairly satisfied with their chances to take part in local issues.

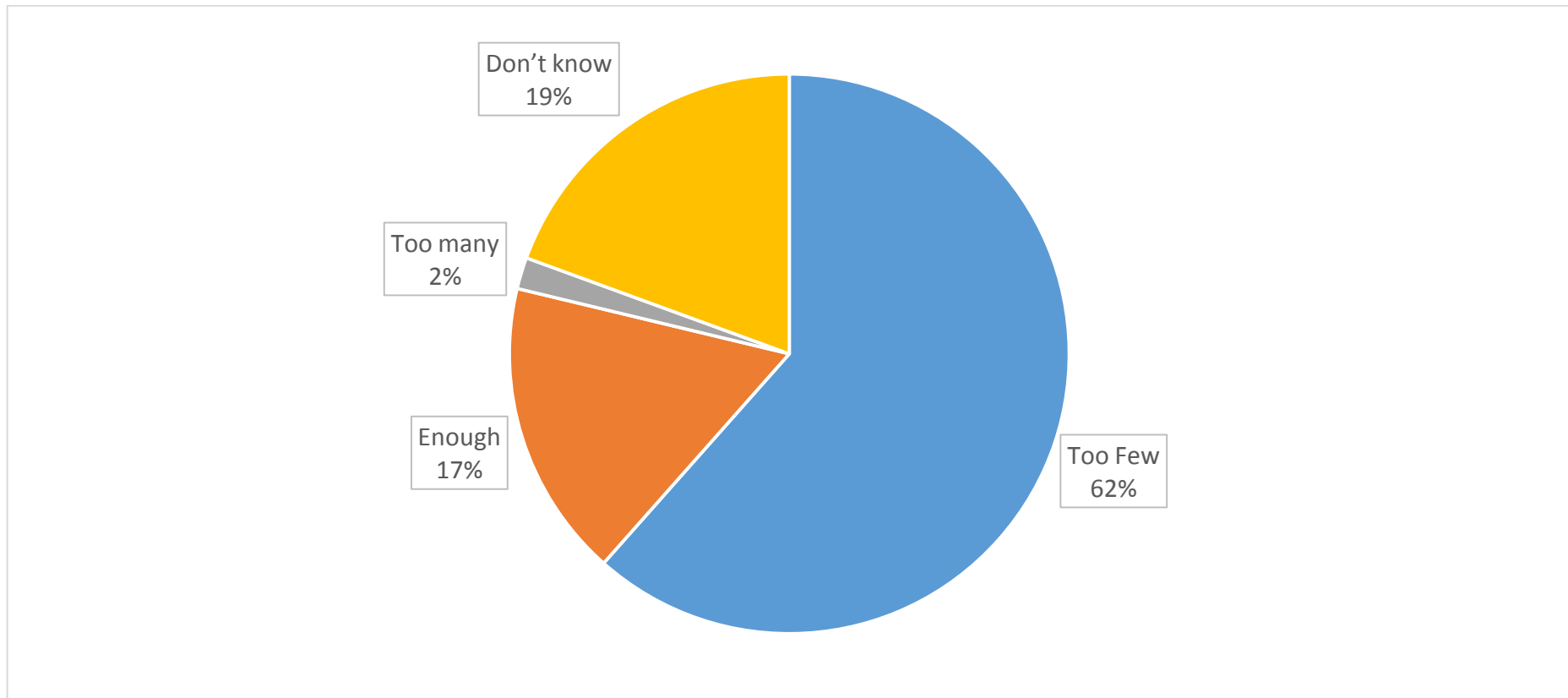


Figure 0-5. Please rate the opportunities for people in Cork to participate in local decision-making. This question allows only one choice, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100%.



Regarding the impact of the citizens in making their city a better place, 63% of the respondents thought that they would have either big or moderate impact, 26% though they would have 'small' impact while only 7% said 'no impact at all' and 4% 'did not know' if they would have an impact.

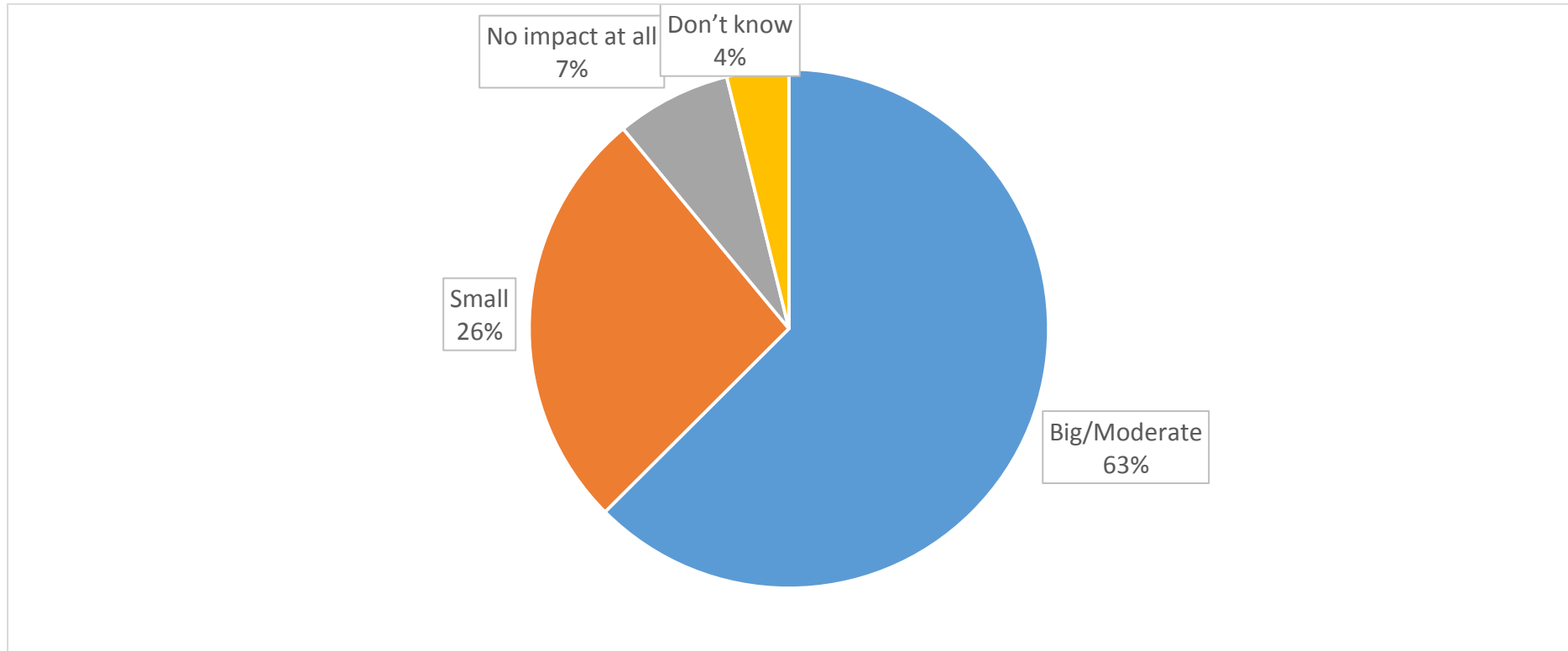


Figure 0-6. How much impact do you think people can have in making Cork a better place to live? This question allows only one choice, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100%.



Many people thought that sustainable jobs (selected by 28.3% respondents) and health & well-being (selected by 27.4% respondents) are the most important issues to Cork’s future, followed by the issues of safe public spaces (21.9%) and education opportunities (14.7%). However, only 8.4% of respondents consider environmental protection as a crucial problem to the development of Cork.

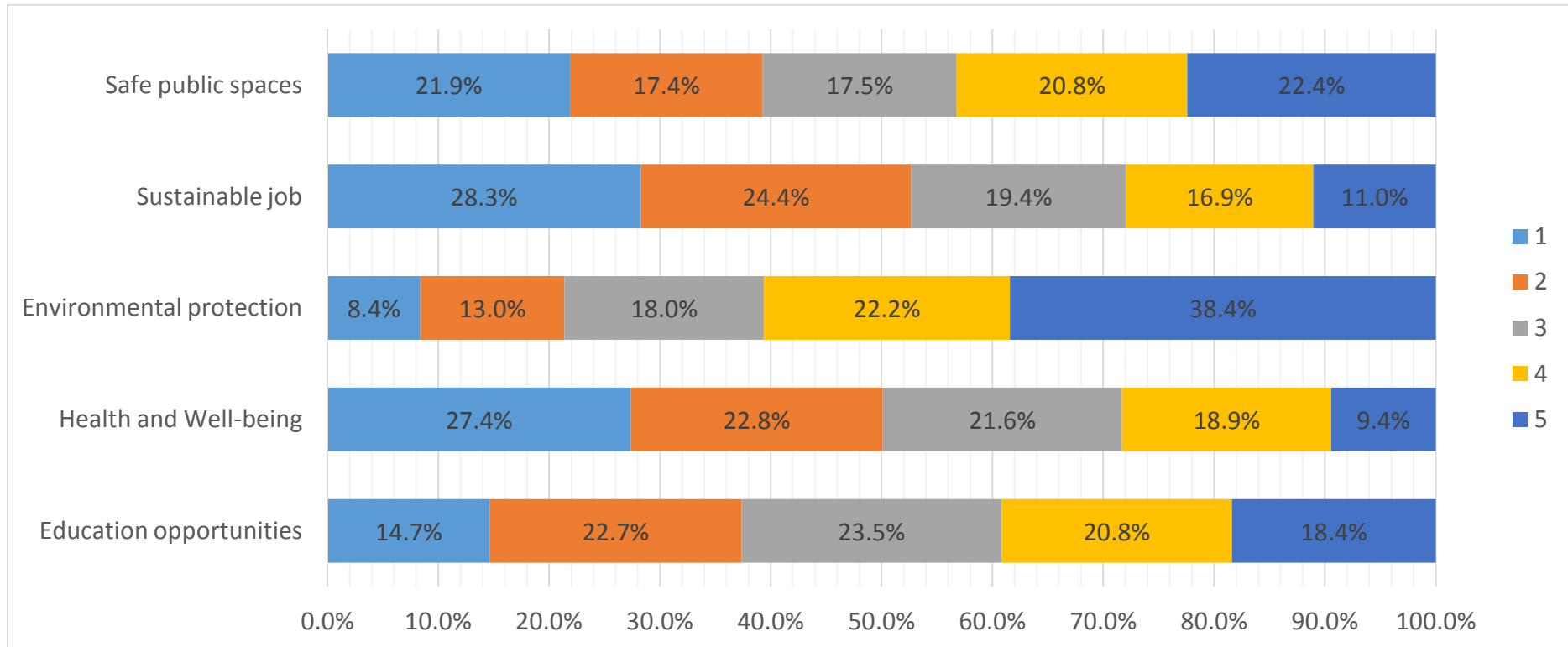


Figure 0-7. Please rank their importance to Cork’s future (where 1 means “the most important”) This question allows only one choice in each of the topics, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100% in each of the bars.



In terms of rating the characteristics of Cork, the majority of citizens thought that Cork has an excellent opportunity for lifelong learning (78.1%) and immigration-friendly environment (59.9%). The rest of the characteristics including the opportunity for jobs, active citizenship and quality of public transport are also well rated by respondents.

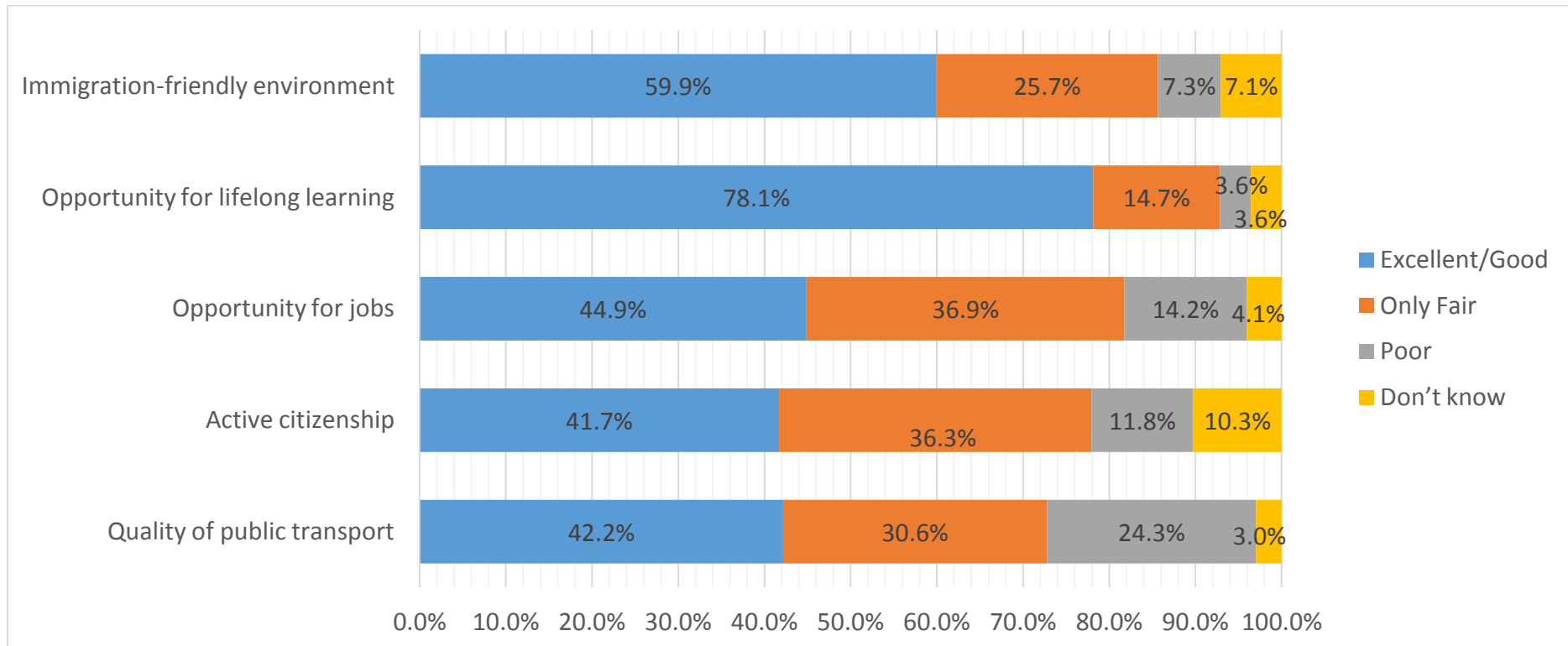


Figure 0-8. How would you rate the following characteristics of Cork? This question allows only one choice in each of the topics, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100% in each of the bars.



Bicycle hire, selected by 80.2% of respondents, is the most popular Smart City project in Cork. Following that are Broadband networks, Electric Vehicles and CCTV in public spaces which are selected by more than 40% of respondents. However, many people have not heard about the project of LED public lighting which is selected by 21% of respondents.

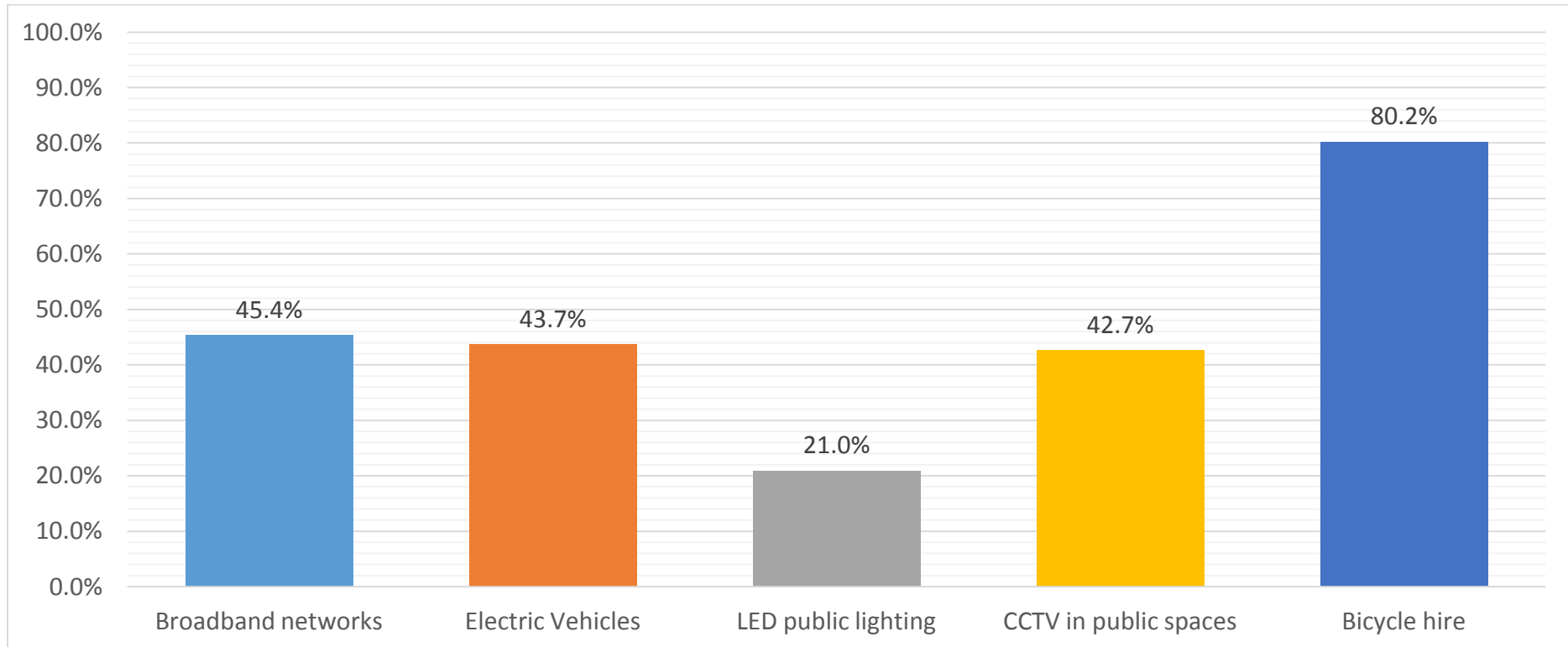


Figure 0-9. Please indicate if you know about any of the following Smart City projects in Cork (tick all that apply)? This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results for this question add up more than 100%.



Regarding involvement and participation in public issues, Cork citizens were strongest (40.4% strong, and 23.1% some involvement) in projects concerning the 'used of shared-payment car ride'. The 'use of city's open data' also recorded high levels of involvement from the respondents (35.5% strong and 25% some involvement). The lowest area of involvement in smart city projects was the 'efficient use of water' with 47.4% saying no involvement at all.

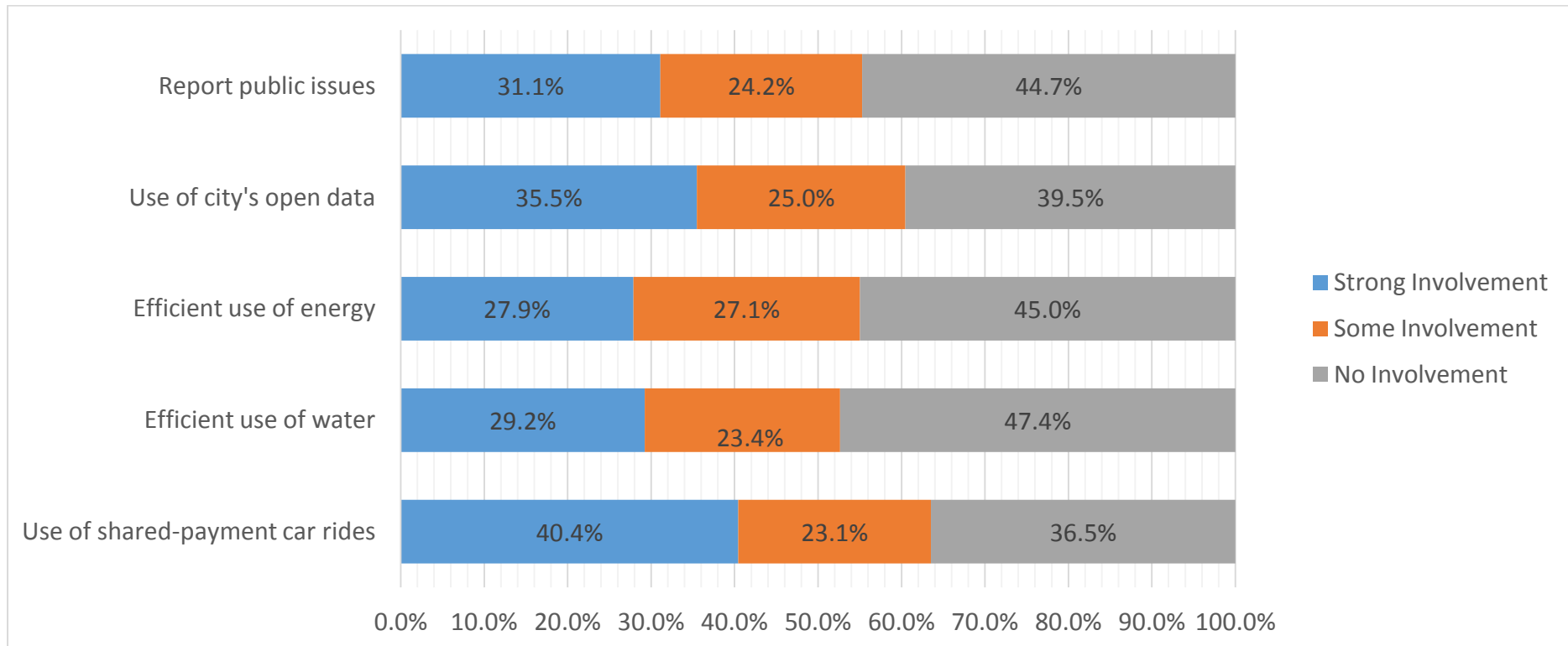


Figure 0-10. How much involvement do you want in the following future Smart City projects? This question allows only one choice in each of the topics, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100% in each of the bars.



Regarding volunteer activities, 32.8% of respondents participated in Sport/re-creation activities while 23% of respondents volunteered in community service and academic events. Other voluntary activities contributed by Cork citizens are supporting disadvantaged people and faith/religious events. However, there are 30.5% of respondents who have not voluntarily taken part in any activities.

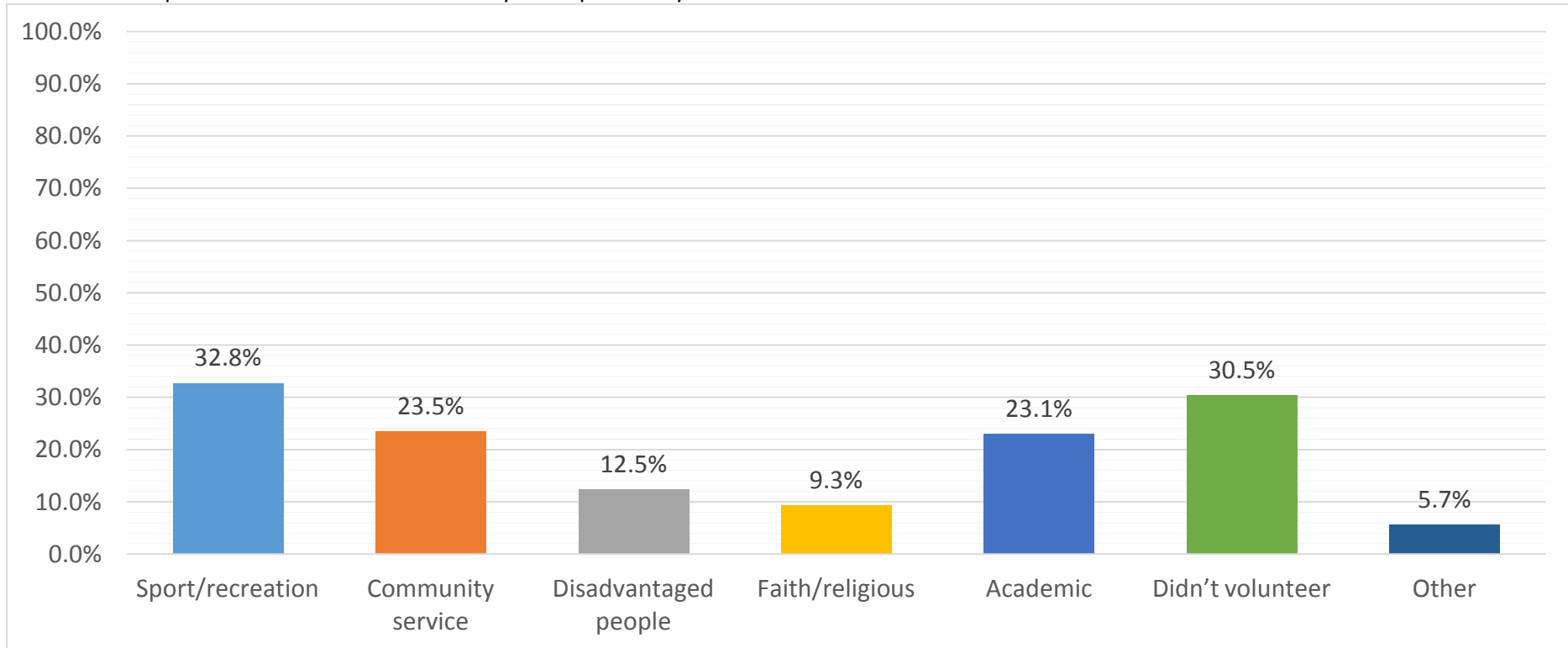


Figure 0-11. Please select the groups you voluntarily participated within the last 12 months. This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results of this question add up more than 100%.



Regarding motivations to volunteer, 41% of respondents participated in volunteering activities to satisfy their personal interest. Meanwhile, helping people is the main purpose of 31.5% of respondents when taking part in volunteering. Other motivations for people to volunteer are community attachment (18.2%) and meeting new people (16.6%). 2.3% respondents are doing volunteer work for 'Other' (non-categorized) targets.

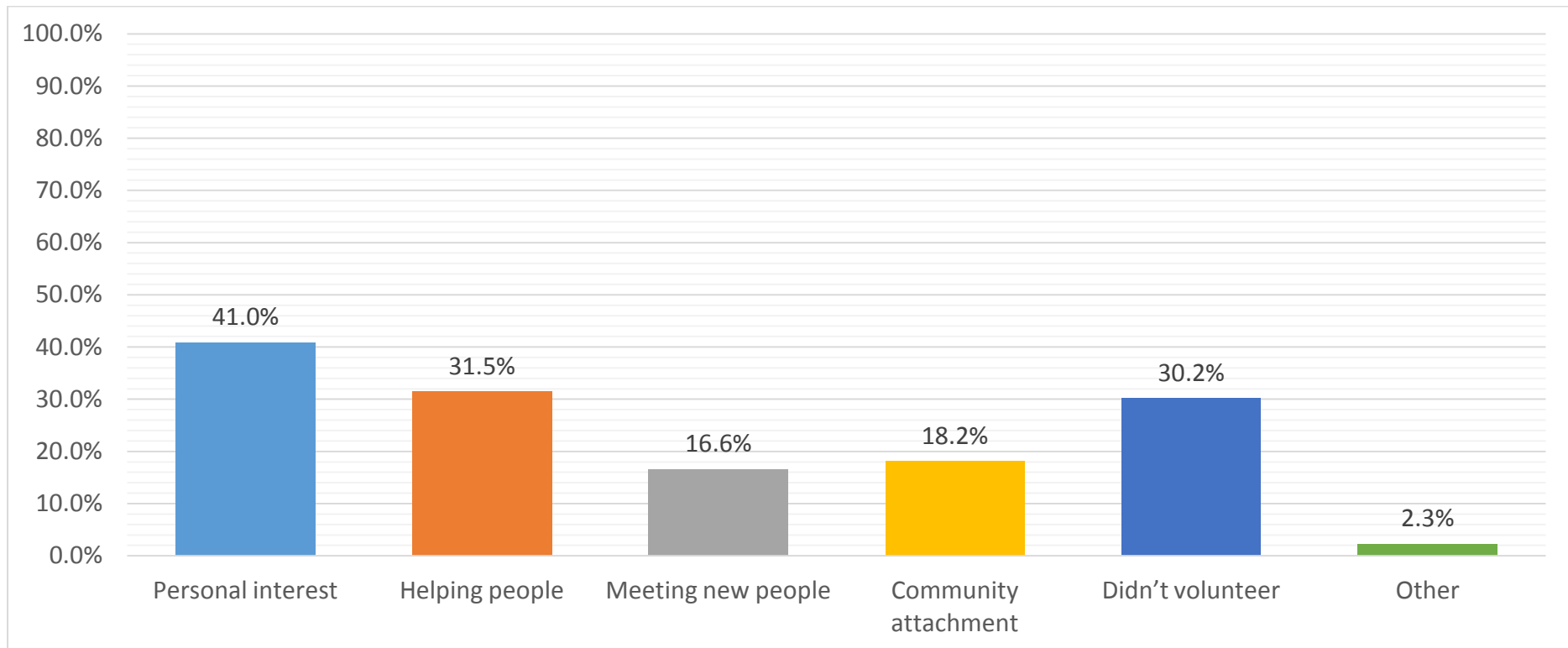


Figure 0-12. What motivated you to volunteer? This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results of this question add up more than 100%.



3.3 Digital skills

Cork citizens/residents often use Mobile phone (58.1%) and Email (43.2%) in communications. Meanwhile, Text, Apps and Social networks are the main communication methods of more than 30% of respondents. However, Land phone and Post are among less popular methods which are usually used by less than 13% of respondents.

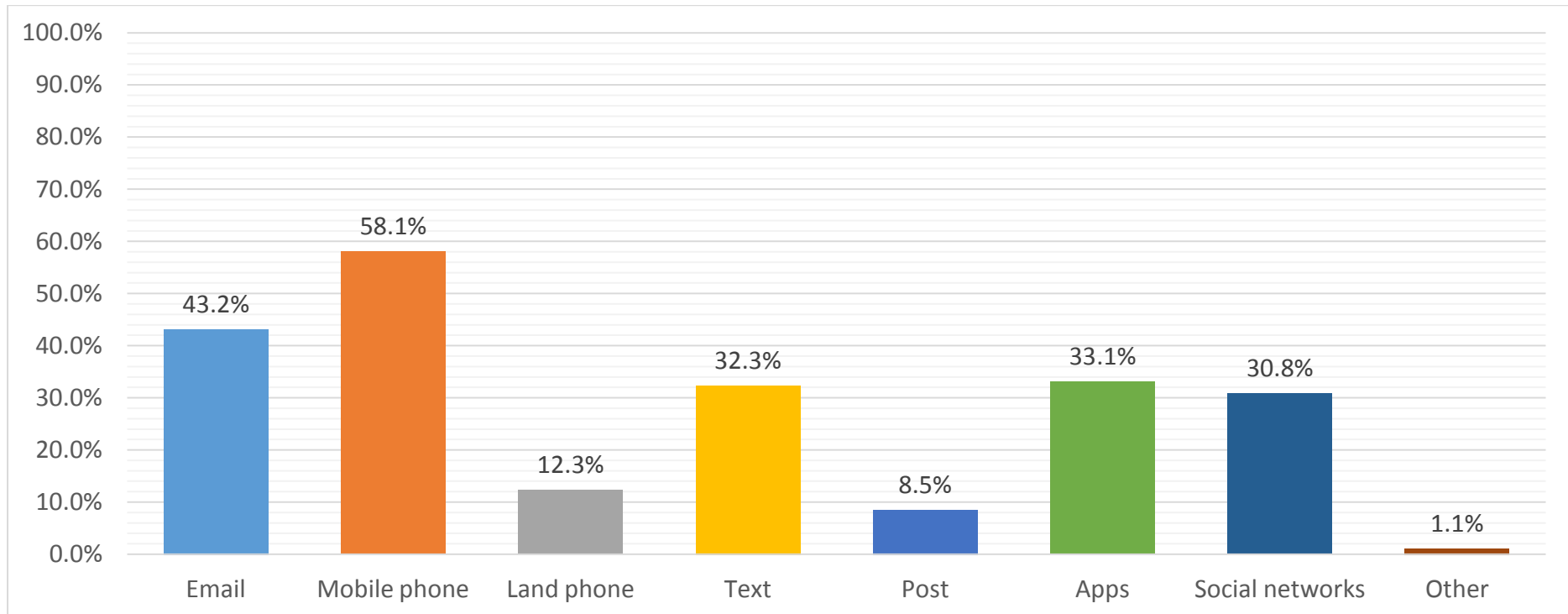


Figure 0-13. Which of the below communication methods do you use most often? This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results of this question add up more than 100%.



About 60% of respondents would like to be contacted by public offices via Email. This reflects a fact that Email is now considered as a more official and acceptable means of communication for most of the people. Meanwhile, Mobile phone and Post are also acceptable communication methods selected by 39.8% and 27% of respondents, respectively. Despite a fact that Text, Apps and Social Networks are used by more than 30% of the respondents, but they are not considering those channels as appropriate communication methods. This suggests that those channels should be used as information adverts to recruit interested citizens/residents to join via more authorised means of communication such as emails.

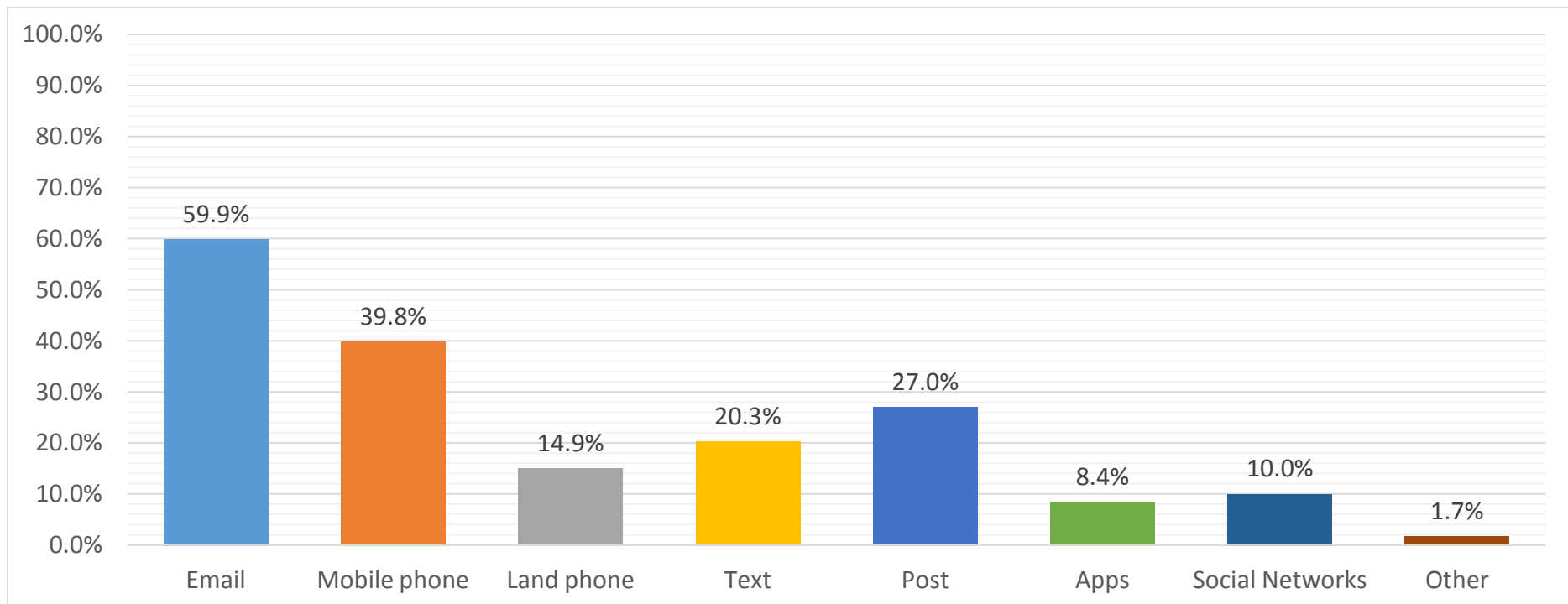


Figure 0-14. Please indicate the communication methods you are most comfortable with when public offices contact you. This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results of this question add up more than 100%.



Facebook is the most popular social media in Cork (57%), followed by YouTube (25%), Twitter (19.5%), Instagram (16.4%), Google+ (11.6%) and LinkedIn (10.6%). Only 2.4% of respondents are using Tumblr. Those results corresponding with the global market share reports of the leading social media networks, which Facebook leads the market share at 43.2%, followed by YouTube at 22.7%, Twitter at 4.9%, and Instagram at 1.7% (Statista, 2016).

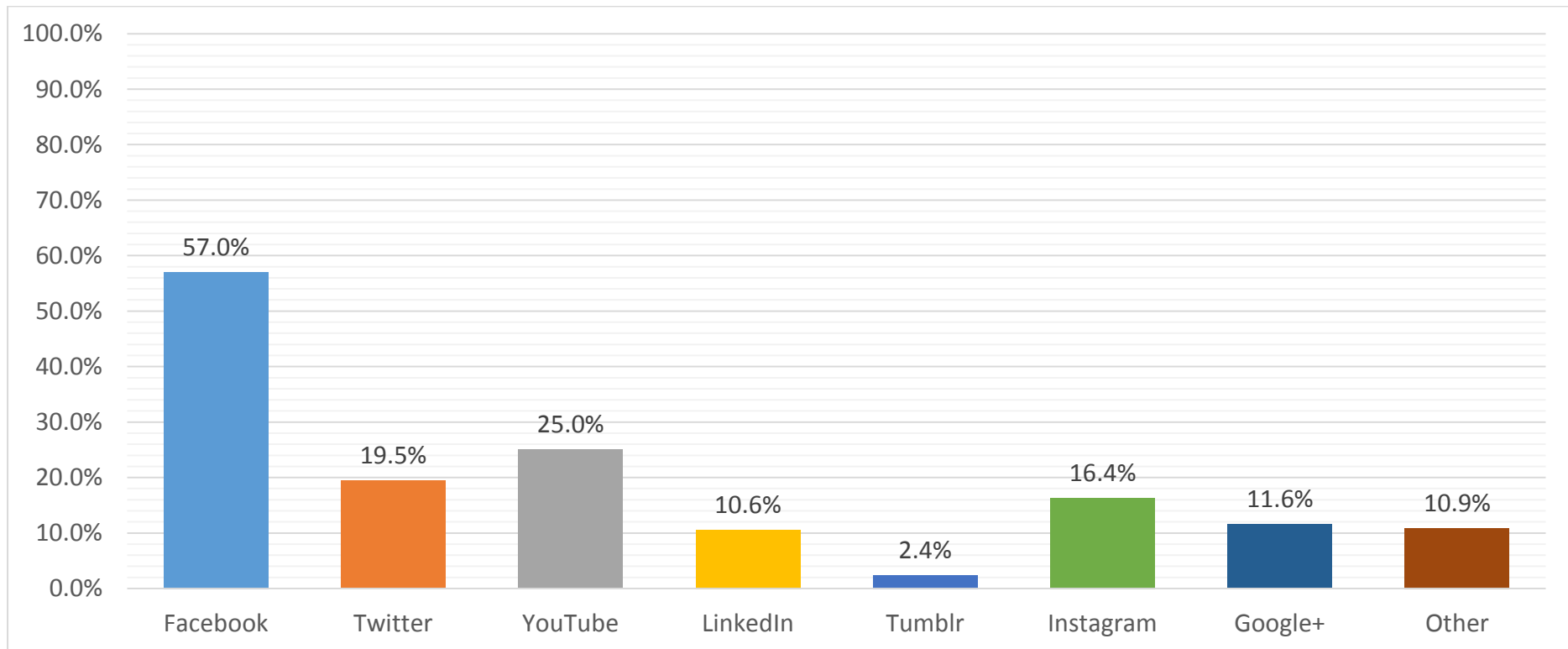


Figure 0-15. Which social media do you use the most? This question allows more than one choice, therefore, the results of this question add up more than 100%.



The majority of respondents (77%) are willing to use a smartphone app designed specifically for Cork.

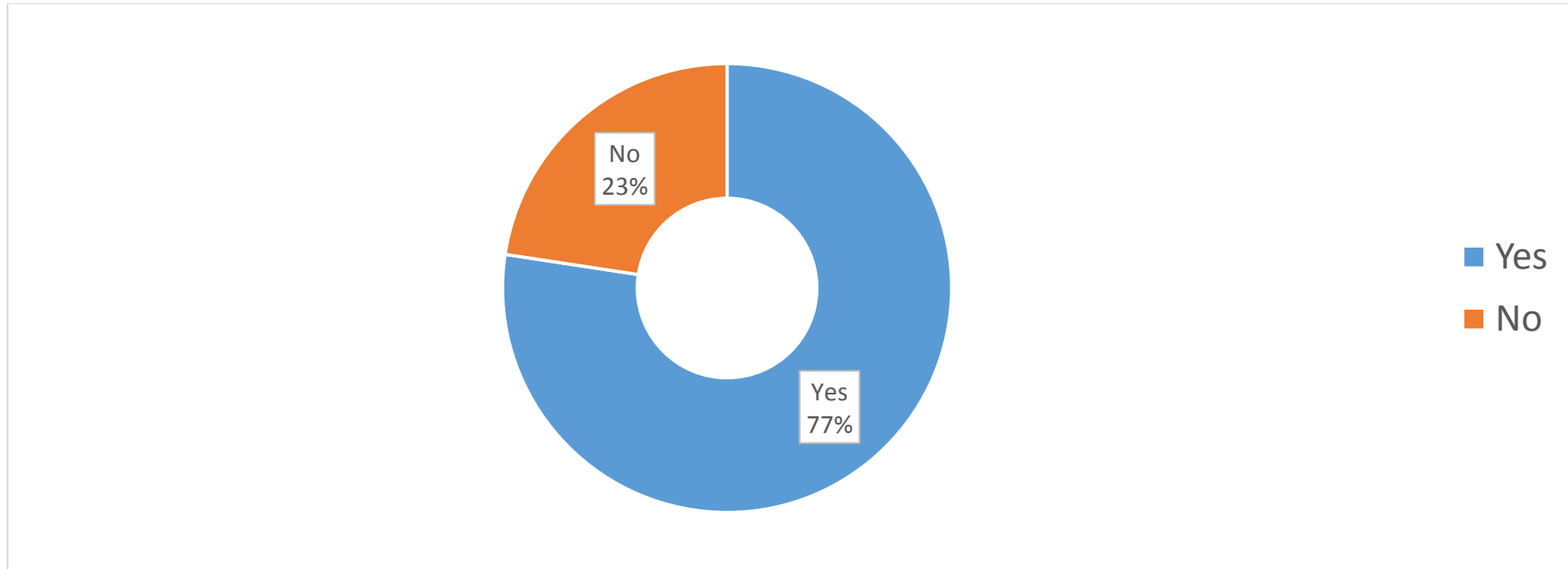


Figure 0-16. Would you use a smartphone app designed specifically for Cork? This question allows only one choice, therefore, the total percentages of the choices add up to 100%.

3.4 Key findings

The Cork 360 degree view is the data aggregated from all collected survey sets. It reflects the views of all survey participants in the key areas of public participation and digital skills. These findings summarise the Cork 360 degree view:

- The respondents value a shared and collaborative vision of their participation in public issues;
- They have too few opportunities to participate in local decision making;



- However, they strongly believe that they have big/moderate impact in making Cork a better place to live;
- Top concerns on their minds are sustainable jobs and health and wellbeing;
- Two third of the respondents volunteered in various arrangements with personal interest and helping people are their top motivation;
- Email and mobile phone are the most common communication methods they use and want the public to communicate with them using these;
- Facebook is the dominating social network used by the respondents;
- 77% of the people are interested in a smart phone app designed especially for Cork.

4. Conclusions

The Cork Smart Gateway embraces a Quadruple Helix innovation model where government, industry, academia and civil participants work together to co-create the future and drive structural changes far beyond the scope of what any one organization or person could do alone. This survey represents Cork citizen's opinions on a number of issues that are relevant to the Cork region and its future development. This report has presented the overall results of the CorkCitiEngage project. Additional survey sets are available online via the Cork Smart Gateway Website and these survey sets represent the results from the various cohorts of citizens surveyed including the representative sample, non-representative sample, youth, elderly and local authority employees. The results of this work will be reflected in the identification of Cork Smart Gateway projects and developing Cork's smart agenda.

