

A group of young men are silhouetted against a bright sunset sky. They are standing on a sandy, uneven ground, possibly a beach or a dry riverbed. Some of the men have their arms raised in the air, and one is clapping. The scene is captured in a warm, golden light, with long shadows cast on the ground. The background shows sparse trees and a clear blue sky.

TRAIN MY GENERATION SURVEY

Opportunities for Pan-African Generation Y

May 23, 2014

Africa's rising generation

In advance of this year's summit the **New York Forum AFRICA** in Gabon - in association with the **Train My Generation** vocational training fund established by the **New York Forum Institute** in 2013 - has undertaken the first pan-African canvas of the views of Africa's Generation Y as they enter the workplace. The Train My Generation survey sought out the views of technologically-connected and educated young Africans from across the continent on the future and their prospects. An online survey and questionnaire - undertaken in collaboration with **Global Counsel** and **Tribal Brands** - asked members of this unique cohort of future African leaders and influencers about their hopes for the future and the challenges they face in achieving their goals.

While this group reflects just a fraction of the complexity and diversity of young Africa, for those seeking insight into the continent's future, understanding them is critical. These young Africans, who are both highly educated and technologically connected, have both the skills and the tools to drive the continent forward to the next stage of its development.

It is this group that is most likely to provide the next generation of entrepreneurs, the policymakers and civil servants who will build Africa's institutional strength; and the next generation of political leaders with a new vision of their country and the continent. It is these voices for the future that this conversation aimed to record.

Profile of respondents

Respondents came from 42 of Africa's 54 countries, with the majority aged 18-26 and slightly more male respondents than female. The majority of respondents are in full time education, either in secondary education or in university. The questionnaire was administered online, and the respondents as a group are well connected with around 40% quoting online media as their main source of news.

KEY INSIGHTS:

- **This is an optimistic generation. Almost 90% of respondents believe that their living standards will be better than those of their parents.** There remain however concerns about unemployment and the cost of living.
- **There was a strong and widespread belief in the value of education, for the future of both the respondents themselves and the development of their respective countries.** But there were some concerns evident about the availability and level of government funding for educational opportunities.
- **This is a group alive to the opportunities of the private sector and the service industries in particular with 40% of respondents seeking employment in sectors such as IT, consultancy, accounting and finance.** Whilst this is good news for African entrepreneurialism, it raises questions about where countries will find the next generation of technocrats and policymakers to staff and strengthen governance institutions.
- **Entrepreneurial ambition was clear in the responses but access to start up capital emerged as a major barrier to those starting their own businesses - 75% of respondents had relied on savings, family or friends for start-up capital.** The challenges of starting a business, and areas where government could do more - providing finance and reducing bureaucracy - were also clear.

Optimism for the future

88%

of respondents believe that their living standards will be better than those of their parents.

“My country has a lot of hardworking citizens. People with abilities and creativity. I believe so much in my country.”

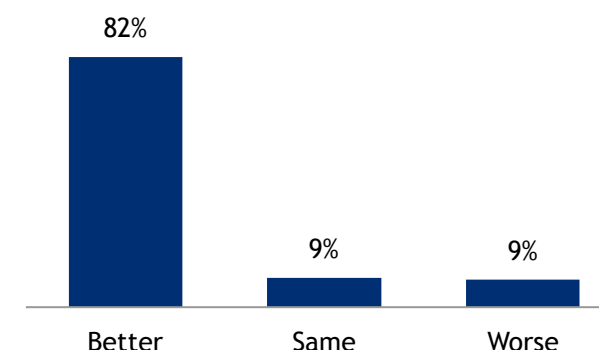
“I strongly believe that the future of a nation depends greatly on the empowerment of the younger generation.”

“What makes me proudest about my country is the hope we have for the future.”

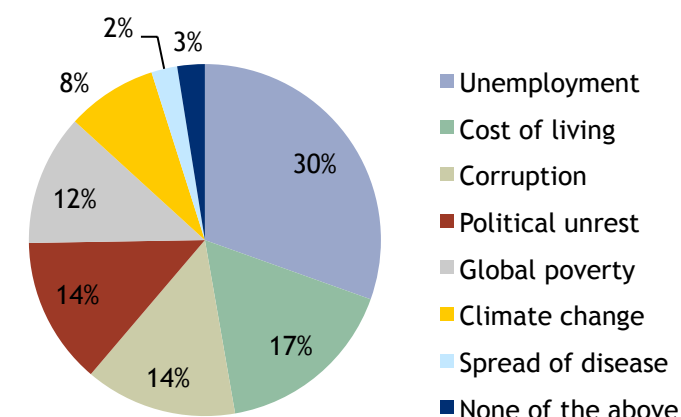
One of the most encouraging findings from the conversation was the optimism of the respondents, with responses suggesting that the narrative of ‘Africa rising’ is reflected in this confident group.

- **Almost 90% of the respondents believe that their living standards will be better than those of their parents.** This optimism for future generations is in stark contrast to Europe where a recent Pew Center poll found that only 13% of people in France, and 23% of people in the UK think that today’s children will be financially better off than their parents.
- **This optimism extends to the workplace.** Two thirds of respondents (63%) think they have a better job than their parents did at the same age, and over 80% believe that their career prospects are better than those of their parents.
- **This is also a group who believe that the system delivers fair rewards.** Whilst three quarters (76%) of respondents think that a person’s life chances are determined by their ability and hard work, only 4% believe they are determined by “who you know”.
- **There remain however sources of concern on economic issues.** Unemployment was the top concern for the future, with 30% of respondents highlighting it as the number one issue. The cost of living (17%) was the second highest concern. Beyond this political unrest (14%), corruption (14%), and global poverty (13%) were also significant concerns.
- On the political front views were mixed, with only half of respondents (48%) saying that politics in their country reflects their concerns.

Q. Do you think your career prospects are _____ than your parents’ were?



Q. What is your biggest concern about the future?



Recognising the value of education

78%

of respondents believe that their education or training will help them find a job.

“...people should first understand that education is the key to any success in life.”

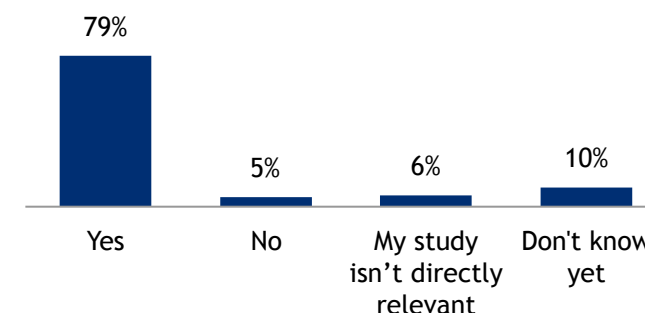
“...education should create leaders with the ability to know HOW to think instead of knowing WHAT to think.”

“The provision of educational funding should be made available...people who cannot afford the university fees are forced to either study for a field that does not interest them or not study at all.”

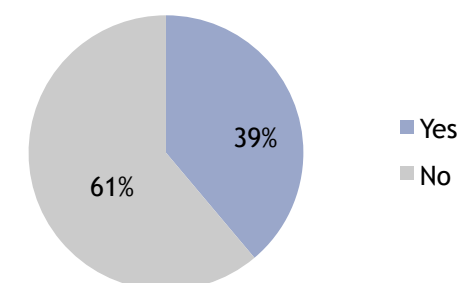
This is a generation who have high educational ambitions and see education as integral to their plans for employment.

- **Educational aspirations in the group are high, with over 85% of those still in education seeking to earn a masters-level degree or higher.**
- **However, this is not merely education for its own sake.** Respondents saw a clear link between education and their future prospects in the job market with almost 80% saying they believe that their education will help them to find a job. Approximately 80% of those asked were looking for a job in their field of study.
- **70% of those respondents now in work feel they are doing a job for which they were educated or trained.** Most respondents also feel that they are qualified or even over-qualified for the job which they are now doing.
- **However there were widespread concerns about the availability of education - particularly secondary and tertiary education - to those from lower income families.** Less than 40% of respondents had received financial support from government for their education, and of those who did two thirds thought that the level of help was not enough.
- **More broadly, there was a strong message that education is critical to the continent's future development.** When asked for the most important factors in their country's development, “improving education” was the most often selected answer.

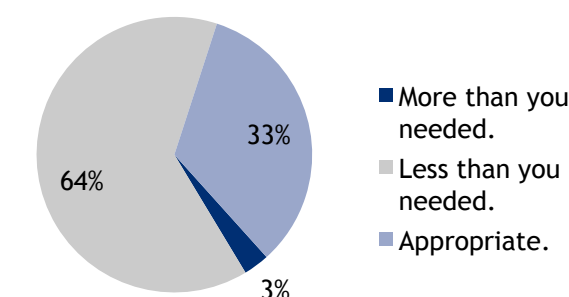
Q. Will you be looking for a job in the field of your study?



Q. Have you received any financial support from the government for your education?



Q. The level of help the government gave you was _____?



Jobs market: aspiration and necessity

61%

of respondents would prefer to be educated outside of Africa.

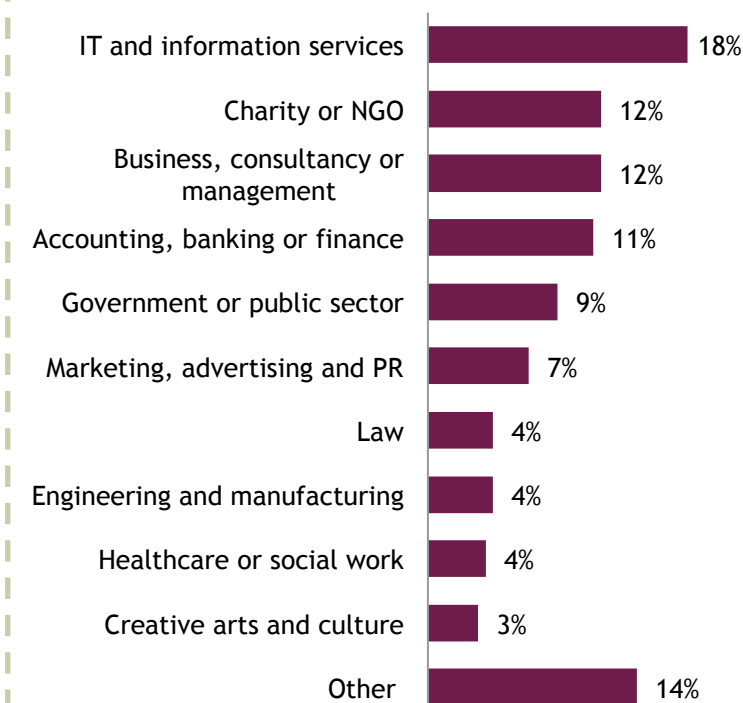
“We need to empower the teachers and make sure that the curriculum matches the job market requirements.”

“Curricula should be relevant to society's problems - practical courses like agriculture that encourage students to embrace problem-solving as a means of earning a living.”

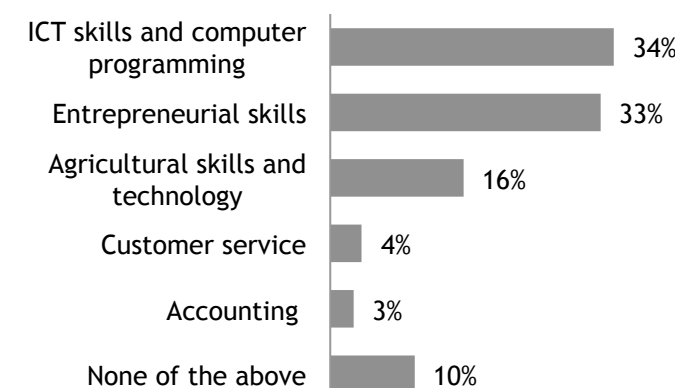
The story on education was mixed, with some areas of concern emerging. In particular, there are suggestions that in particular sectors the education system may not yet be producing the skills that the African labour force requires.

- **Governments may in some cases struggle to recruit the talent that they require to build institutional capacity.** Strikingly, only 9% of respondents stated that they were seeking to work in government and the public sector, raising questions over Africa's ability to produce the next generation of 'technocrats' and public servants.
- **Respondents were twice as likely to want to be educated outside Africa as inside Africa.** Clearly there are benefits to studying abroad - as Africa's highly educated diaspora demonstrate. However, governments will need to manage the risks that talented young people leave Africa and do not return, draining it of its future workforce - the 'brain drain' which has afflicted other emerging economies in the past.
- **Professional services dominate the sectors which respondents would prefer to work in.** Around 40% said that they are seeking to work in “IT and information services”, “business, consultancy or management”, or “accounting, banking or finance”. This bodes well for the growth of a thriving private sector, which will be critical to powering sustainable African growth.
- **However, the responses also suggest that there may be areas of concern about a lack of desire to enter into careers of importance to future African growth** - in particular healthcare, education, and the legal profession.

Q. Which sector are you seeking to work in?



Q. Which of the following skills are you interested in learning?



50%

of respondents said that finding a job was “difficult” or “very difficult”.

“Both [state and private] sectors should be ready to give the necessary and equal opportunity to young graduates to show their worth.”

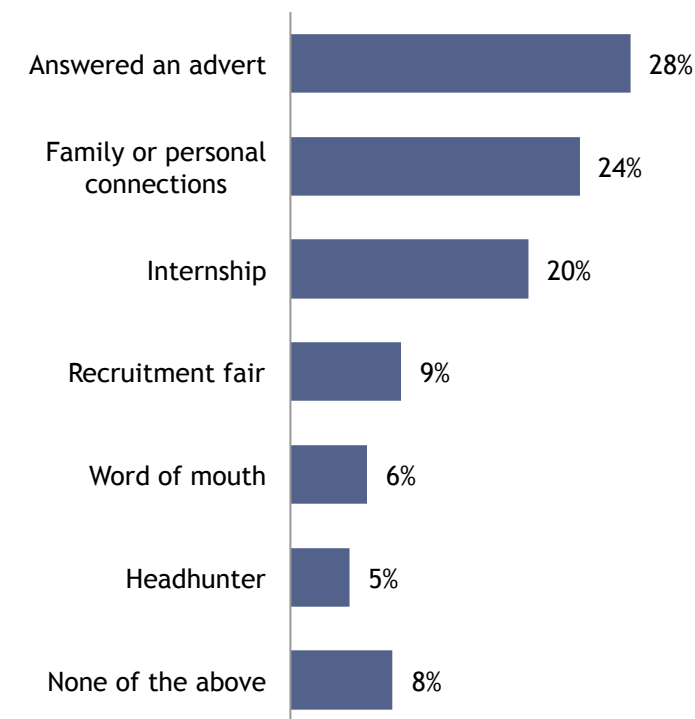
“We need to connect young people with employment opportunities through support for job placement and work-readiness schemes.”

“When I look at the ratio of men to women in my office and the resulting office culture, it is very much a man's world.”

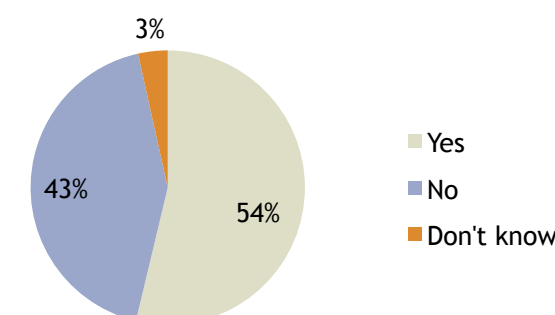
Responses suggest that even for those fortunate enough to have received a good education, there remain real challenges in accessing the job market.

- **Half of respondents said that they found finding a job “difficult” or “very difficult”.** This was also reflected by the 30% of respondents who considered unemployment to be their biggest concern about the future.
- **Experiences of how long it took to find a job varied widely.** Whilst around a quarter of respondents had found a job within a month, for a significant proportion this had taken over 6 months, and almost 30% remain unemployed.
- **Methods of engaging in the job market were relatively diverse including through adverts, internships and recruitment fairs.** Family and personal connections were also a significant provider of job opportunities.
- **A small majority of respondents considered women to enjoy fewer opportunities in the workplace than men.** Particular issues highlighted included employers' negative perceptions that women may leave jobs when starting families and patriarchal social norms and stereotypes. The dearth of women in senior African management roles was also widely noted.

Q. How did you find your job?



Q. Do you think women have the same employment opportunities as men?



Funding the African entrepreneur

75%

of respondent entrepreneurs had relied on savings, friends or family for start-up capital.

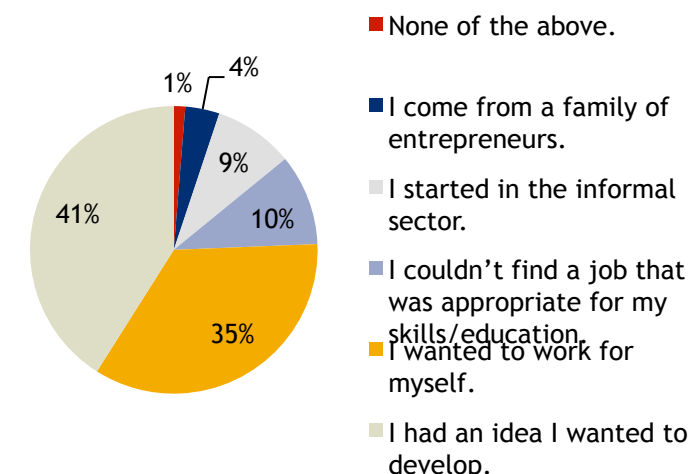
“The government should establish a youth enterprise fund for the young entrepreneurs to finance and guide them.”

“We need to empower young people who have unconventional ideas for development that can't fit in formal & institutionalized sectors. We need to create the environment for young people to think creatively and bring out their spirit of innovation.”

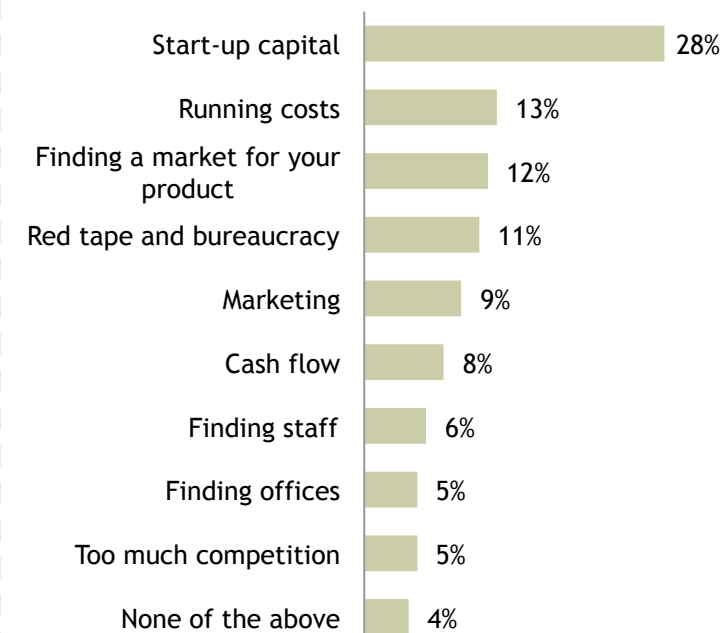
The entrepreneurial spirit of the group of respondents was clear. However so too were the barriers to realising these ambitions.

- **Entrepreneurial spirit was clearly evident in the responses.** Three quarters of respondents were interested in starting their own business, seeking either to develop their own idea or work for themselves. Ambition was also high, with over half of the entrepreneurs questioned saying that in 10-15 years they see themselves running a business of 15-40 people.
- **The challenge of starting a business were also clear however, with over half of respondents rating starting a business as either “difficult” or “very difficult”.** The most frequently mentioned barrier to starting new business ventures was access to start-up capital. Over three quarters of respondents rated accessing start-up capital as “difficult” or “very difficult”, and the same proportion had relied on their own savings or friends and family to finance their business. Banks were scarcely mentioned as a source of capital for start-ups.
- **These young African entrepreneurs were also not enthusiastic about government’s ability to encourage new businesses.** Only 12% of respondents rated the government as “helpful” or “very helpful” when starting a new business.
- **Beyond funding, reducing bureaucracy and red tape, increasing transparency and reducing corruption were also mentioned by respondents as key reforms to reduce barriers to entrepreneurialism.**

Q. Why did you decide to become an entrepreneur? (Choose as many as apply.)



Q. What were the biggest hurdles in starting your business? (Choose as many as are appropriate)



What happens now?

In a major new development in 2014, the New York Forum AFRICA will play host to the first ever **African Citizens' Summit**, in association with Train My Generation. The Summit will present the results of the survey profiled in this report, which was undertaken in collaboration with Global Counsel and Tribal Brands, and hosted on mPowering Action, the online and mobile platform - powered by the UN Foundation and the UNDP - that encourages young people to articulate their views on social and economic issues. The outcomes of the survey and Summit will be presented as policy recommendations to ministers and heads of state present at the NYFA.

The results will also go to feed discussion among an audience of students from local colleges and high schools about the issues which mean the most to them: opportunities in secondary and higher education; in the workplace; and for entrepreneurs. The discussion will also be livestreamed to universities and high schools across the continent enabling them to join in the debate.

The Train My Generation survey is just one insight into a much wider conversation which is going on across Africa (and prefaced in Gabon by Les Assises Sociales social summit in April 2014).

These vital debates around education and employment for young people will be critical for what will be the youngest continent in the world, and experiencing a huge demographic bulge which could power Africa into its next generation of growth. This 'demographic dividend' however will only be enjoyed if Africa's youth get the support they need with the right policies and priorities in place from both government and the private sector. As the conversation continues, listening to and learning from Africa's youth will be more important than ever.

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May 23-25, 2014
Libreville, Gabon

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Train My Generation Survey Results

23 May 2014

Africa's rising generation

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Profile of respondents

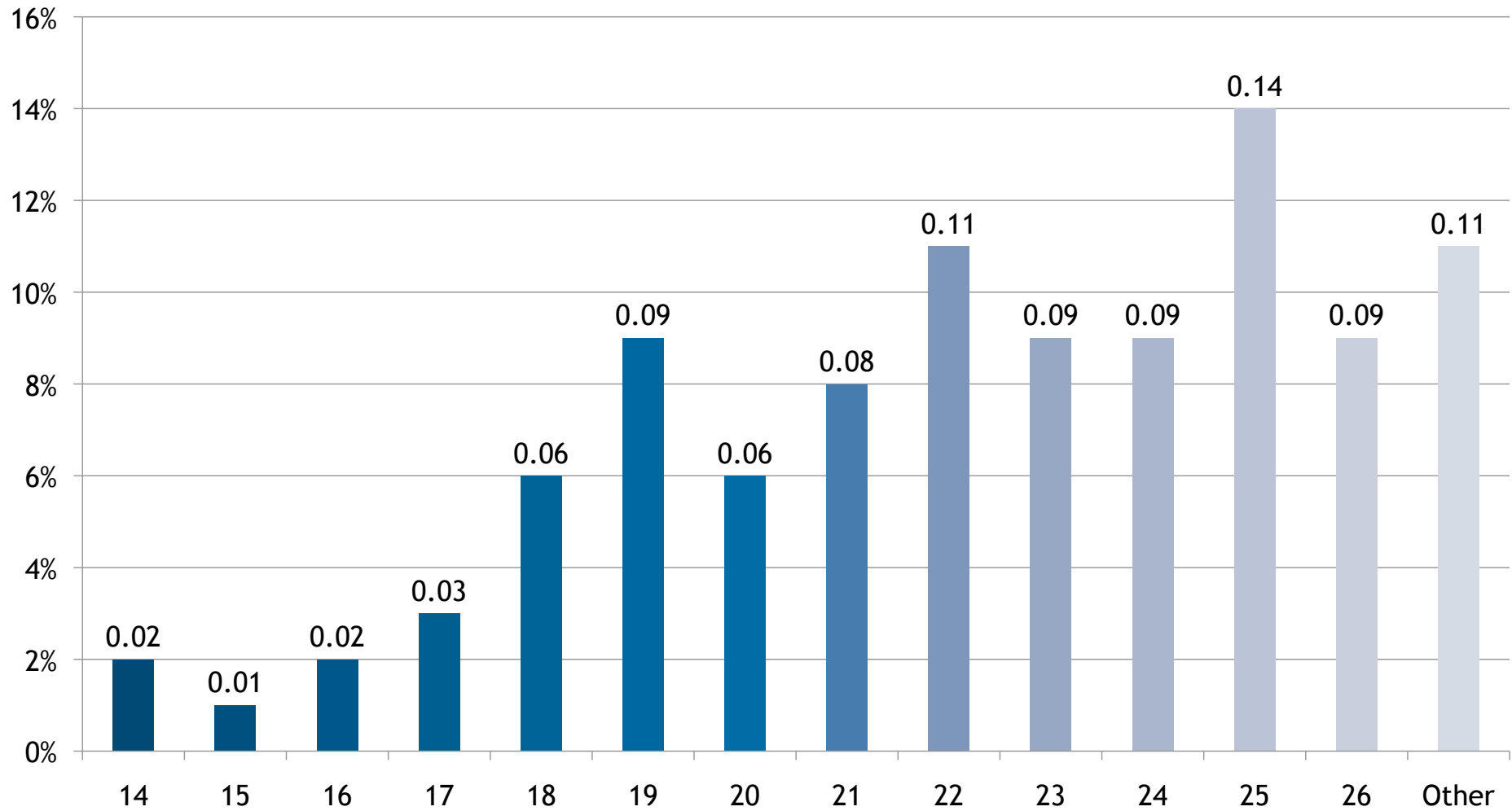
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Africa's rising generation

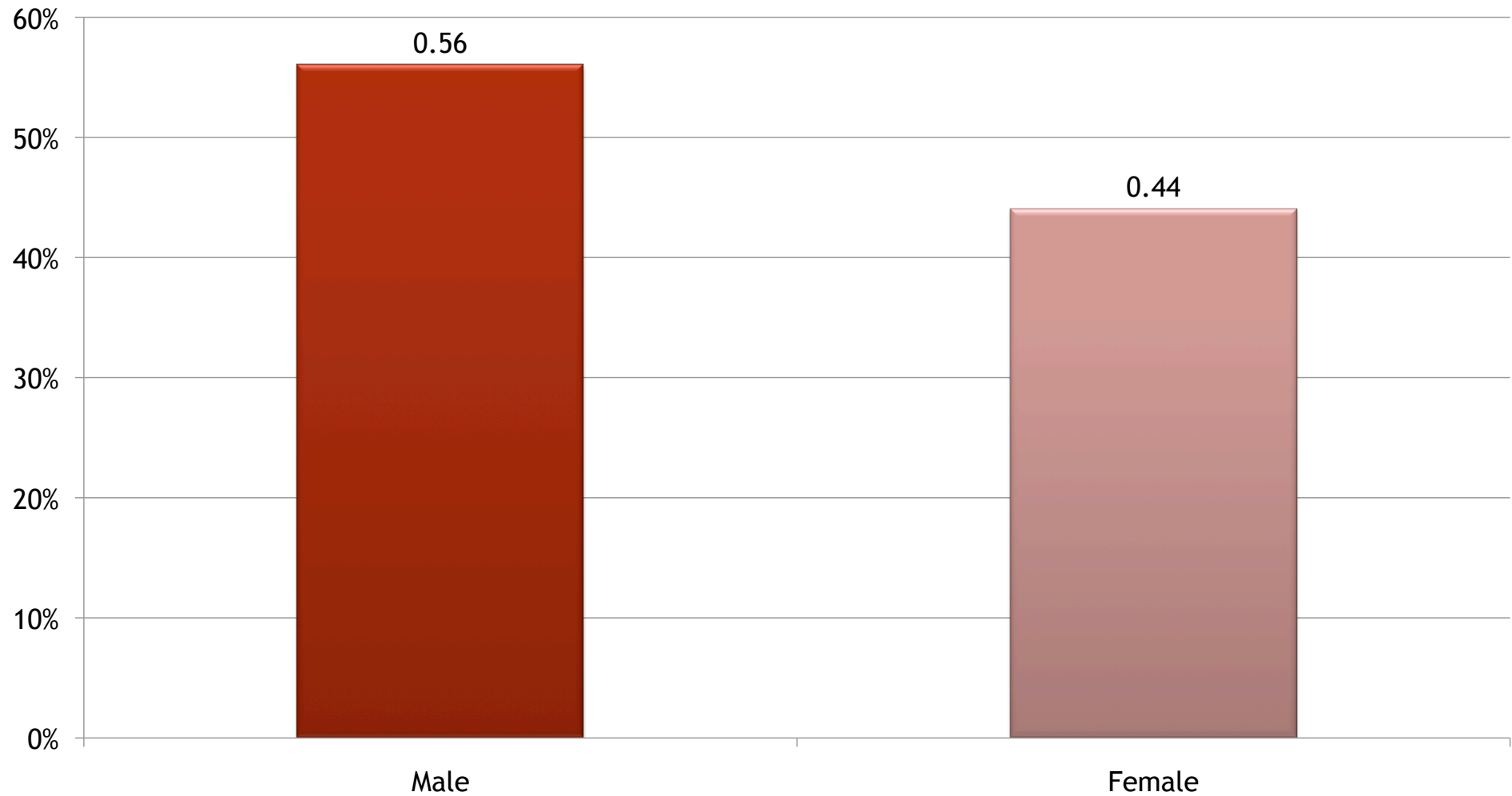
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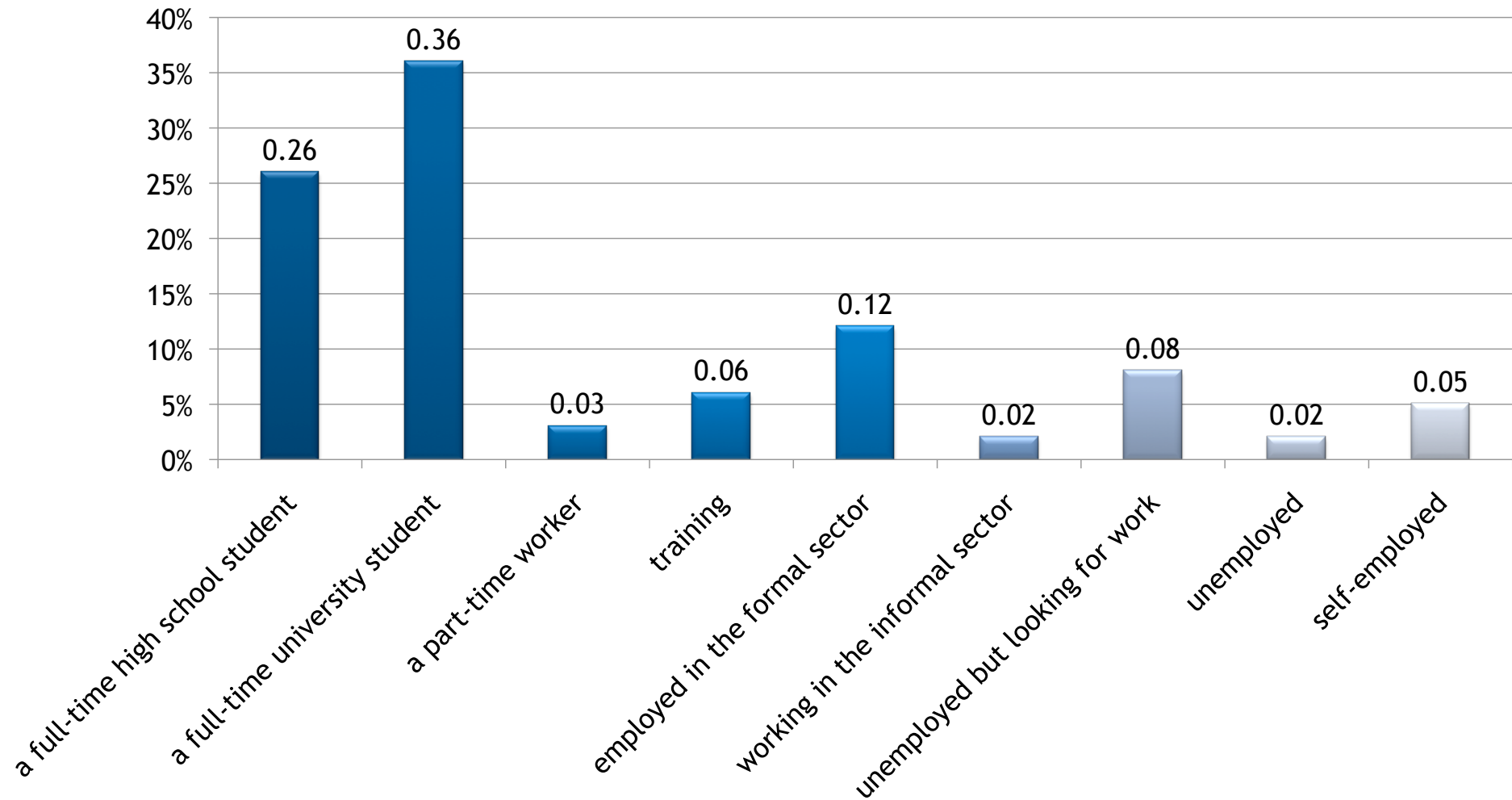
Age



Gender

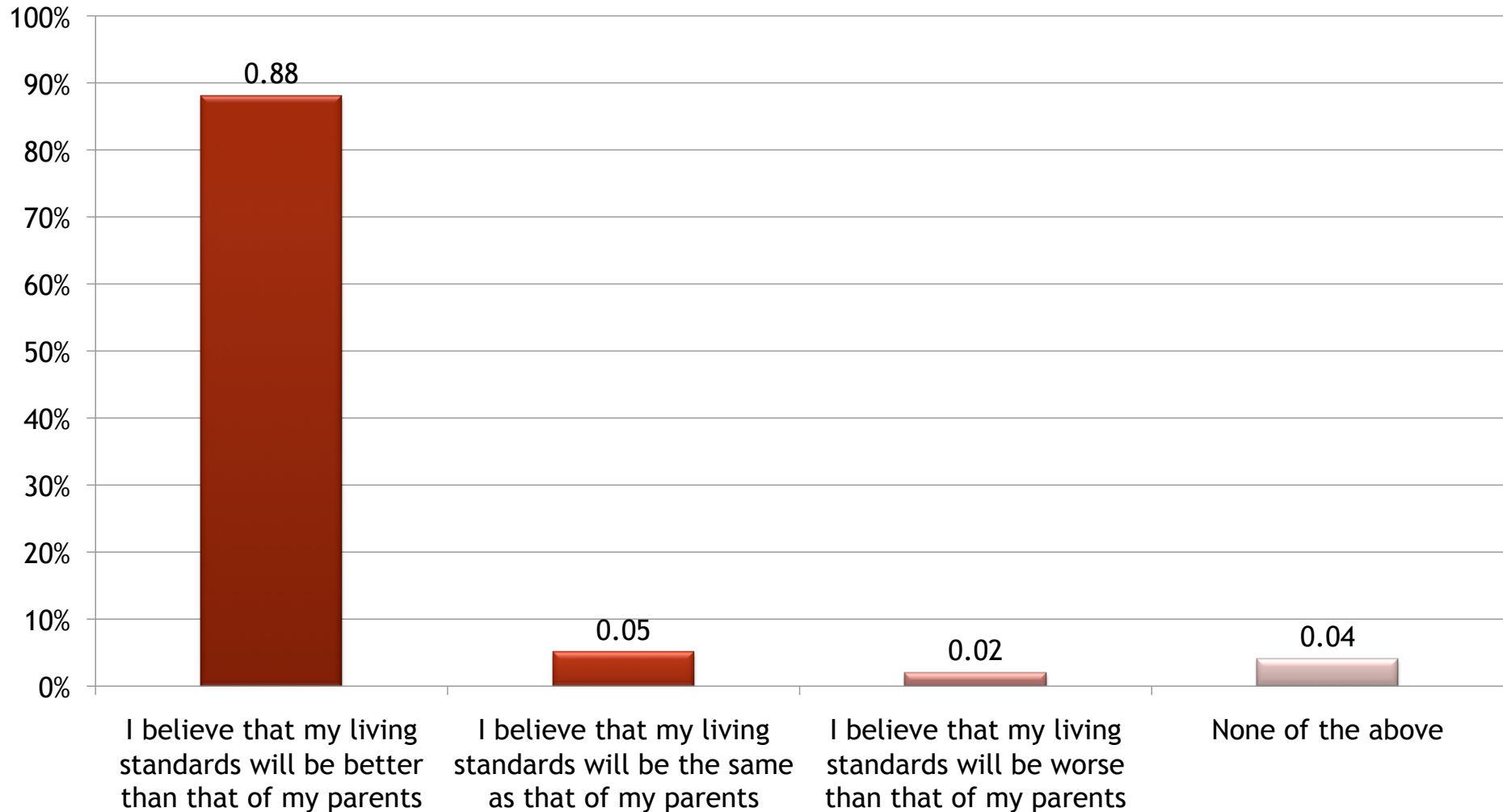


I am (choose the most accurate description):



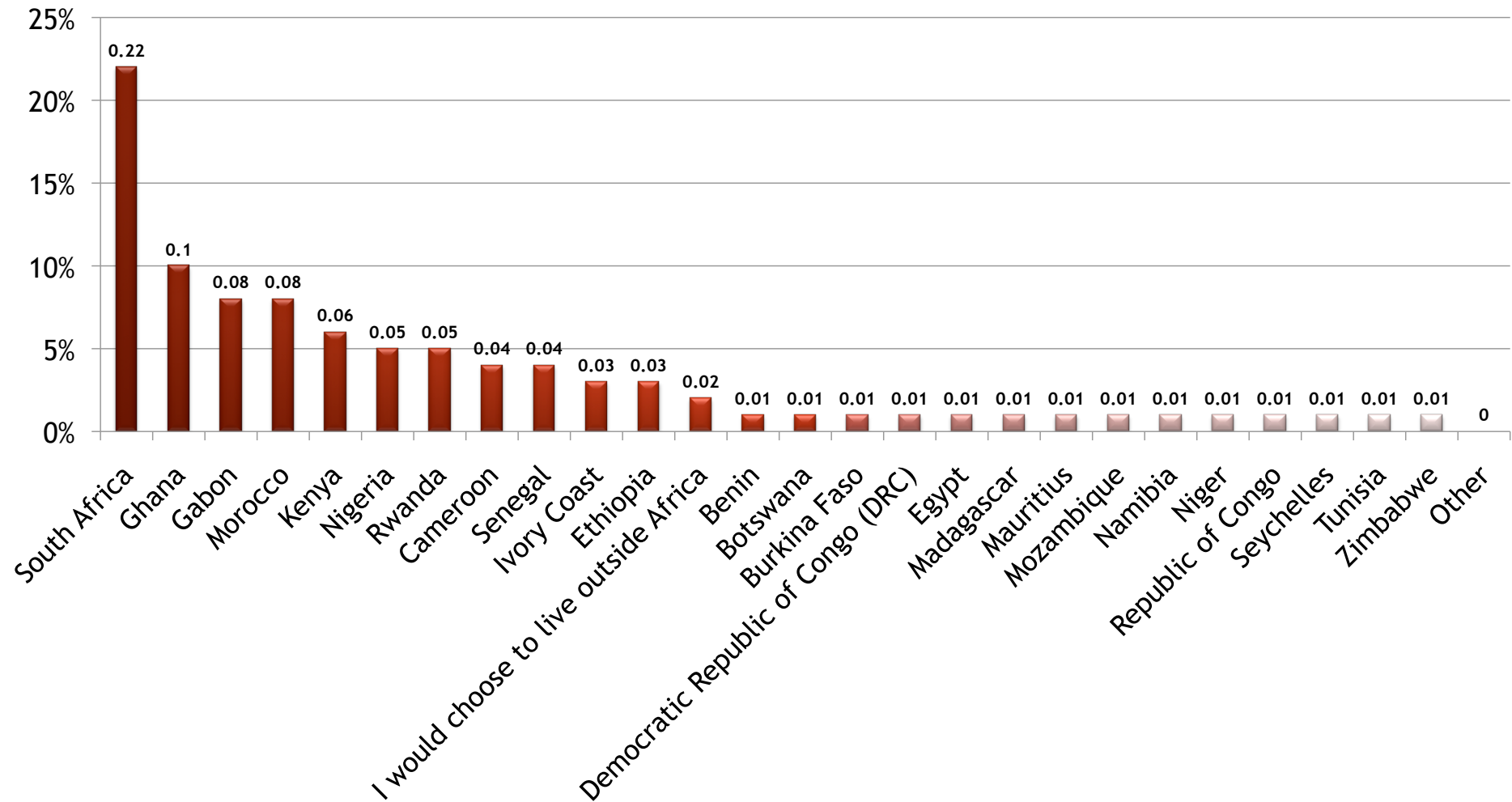
Which statement do you most agree with?

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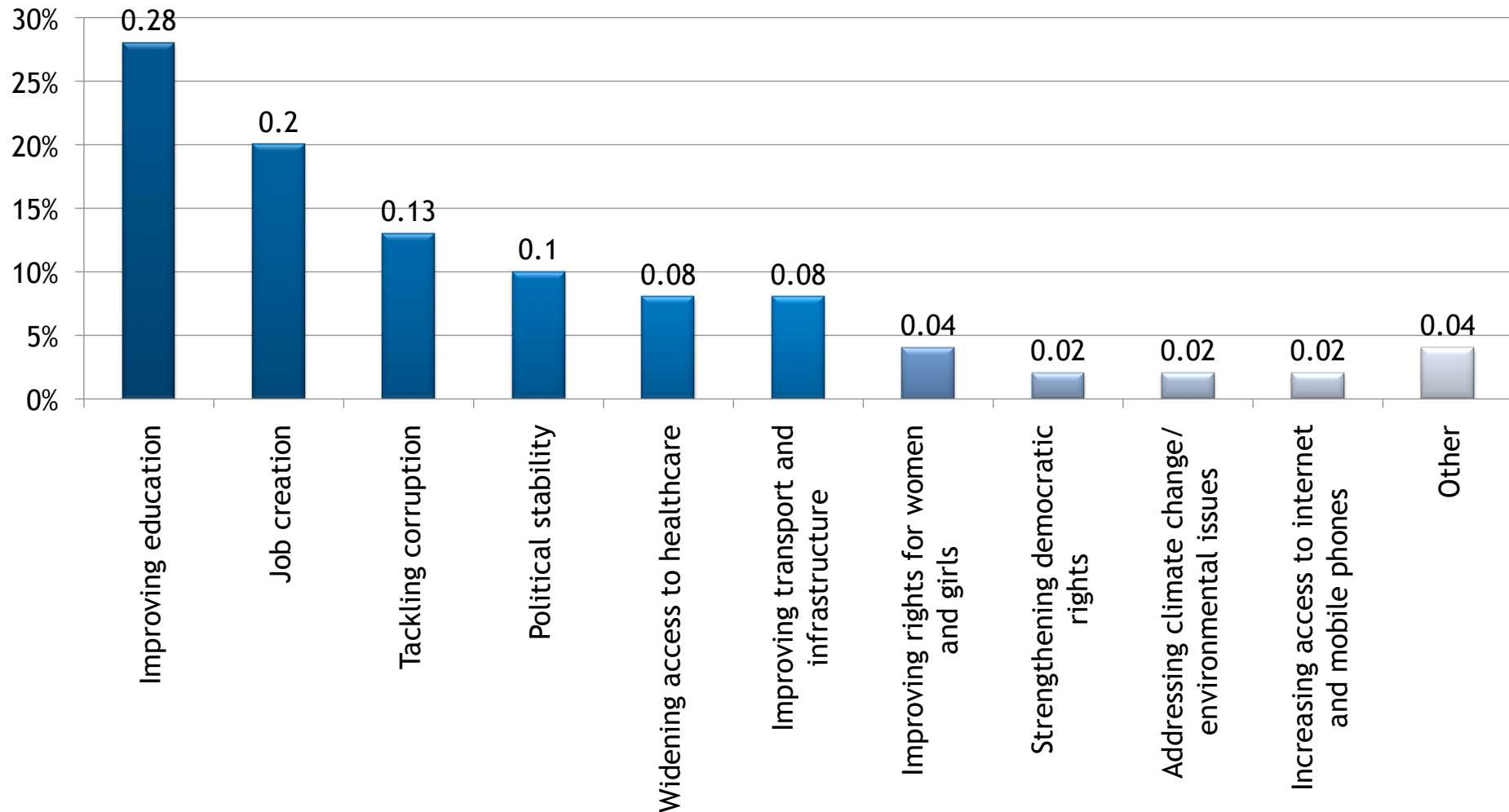
If you could live in any African country, including your own, which would it be?

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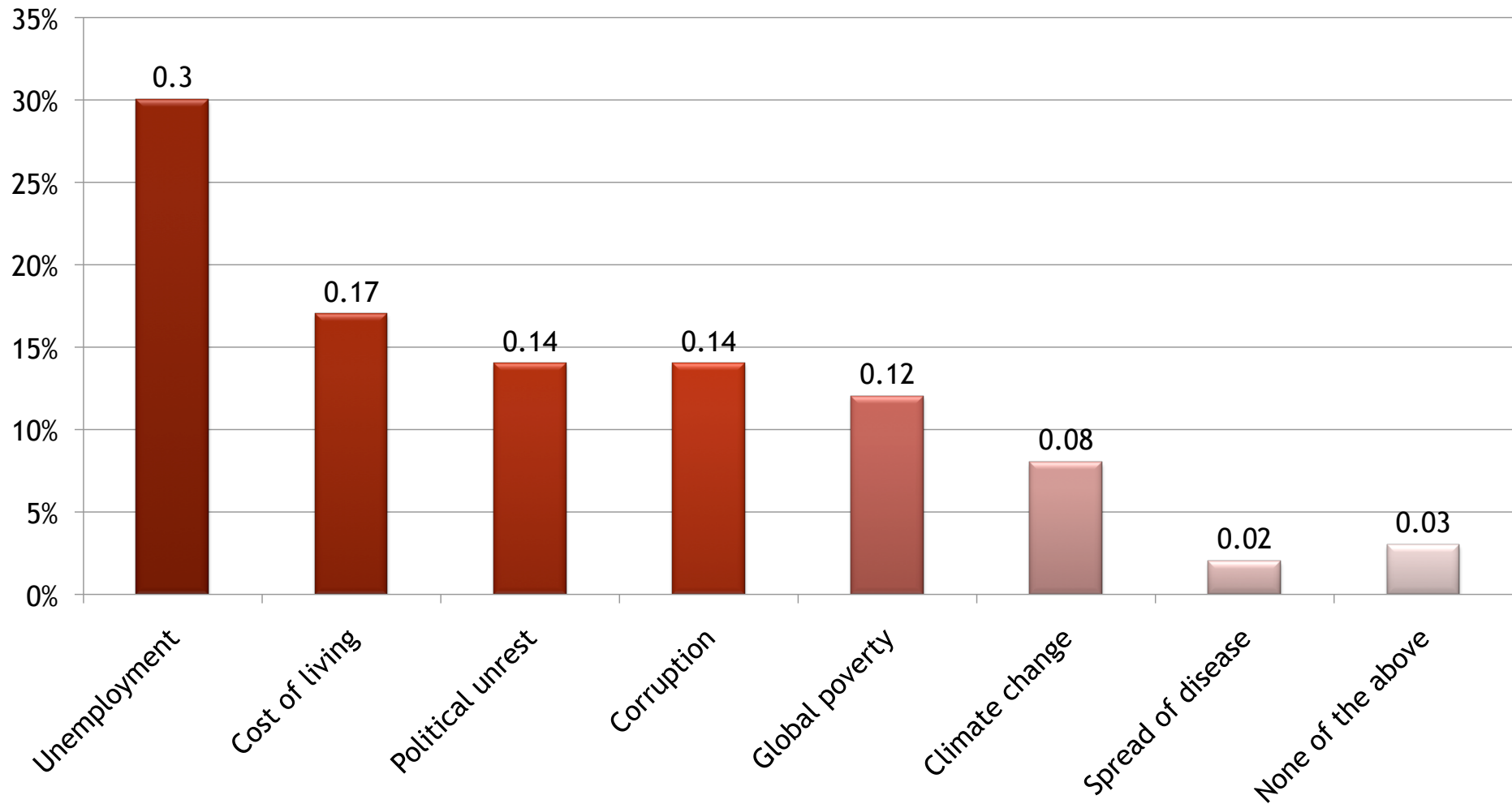
What do you think are the most important factors for development in your country?

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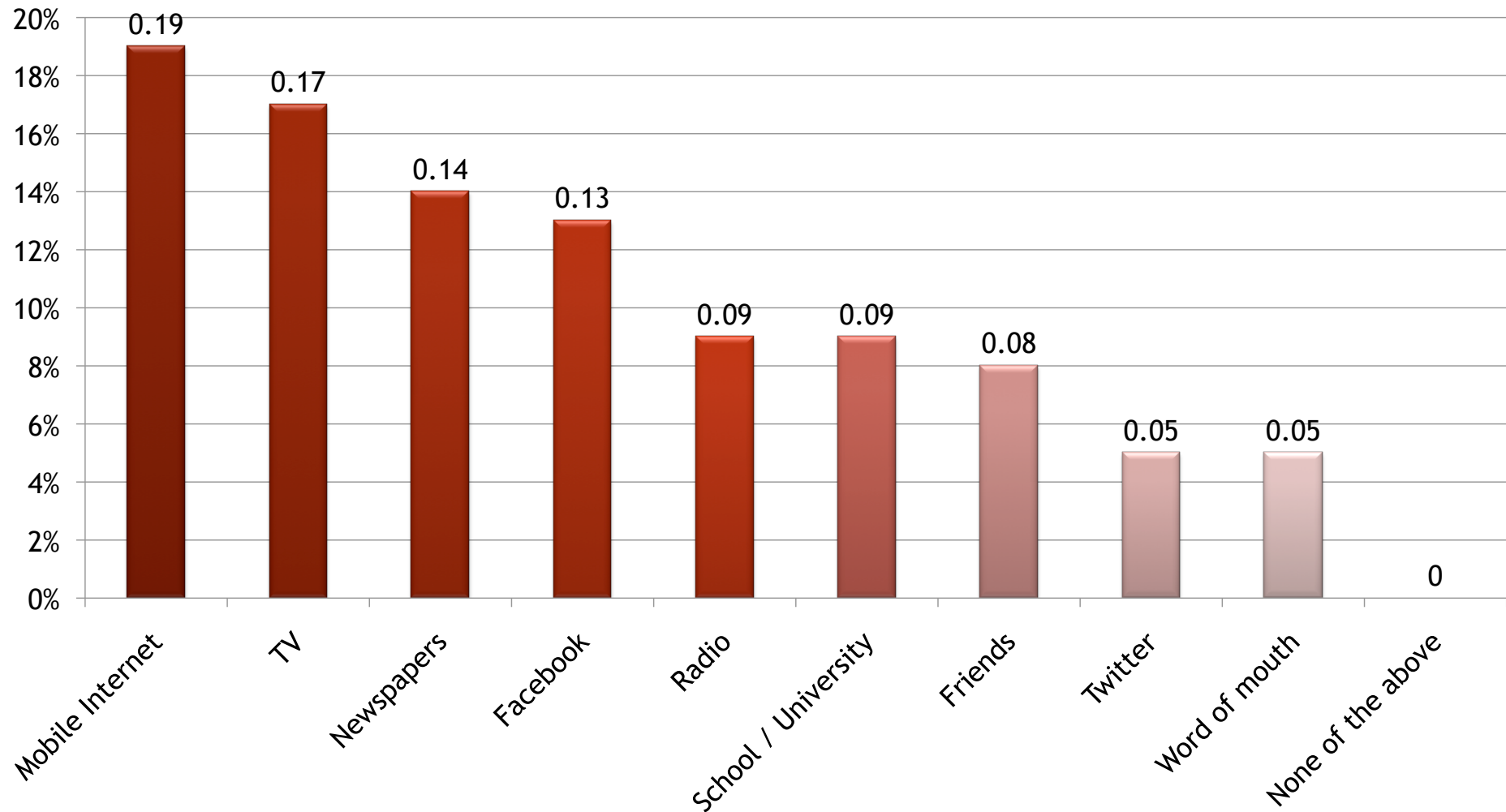
What is your biggest concern about the future?

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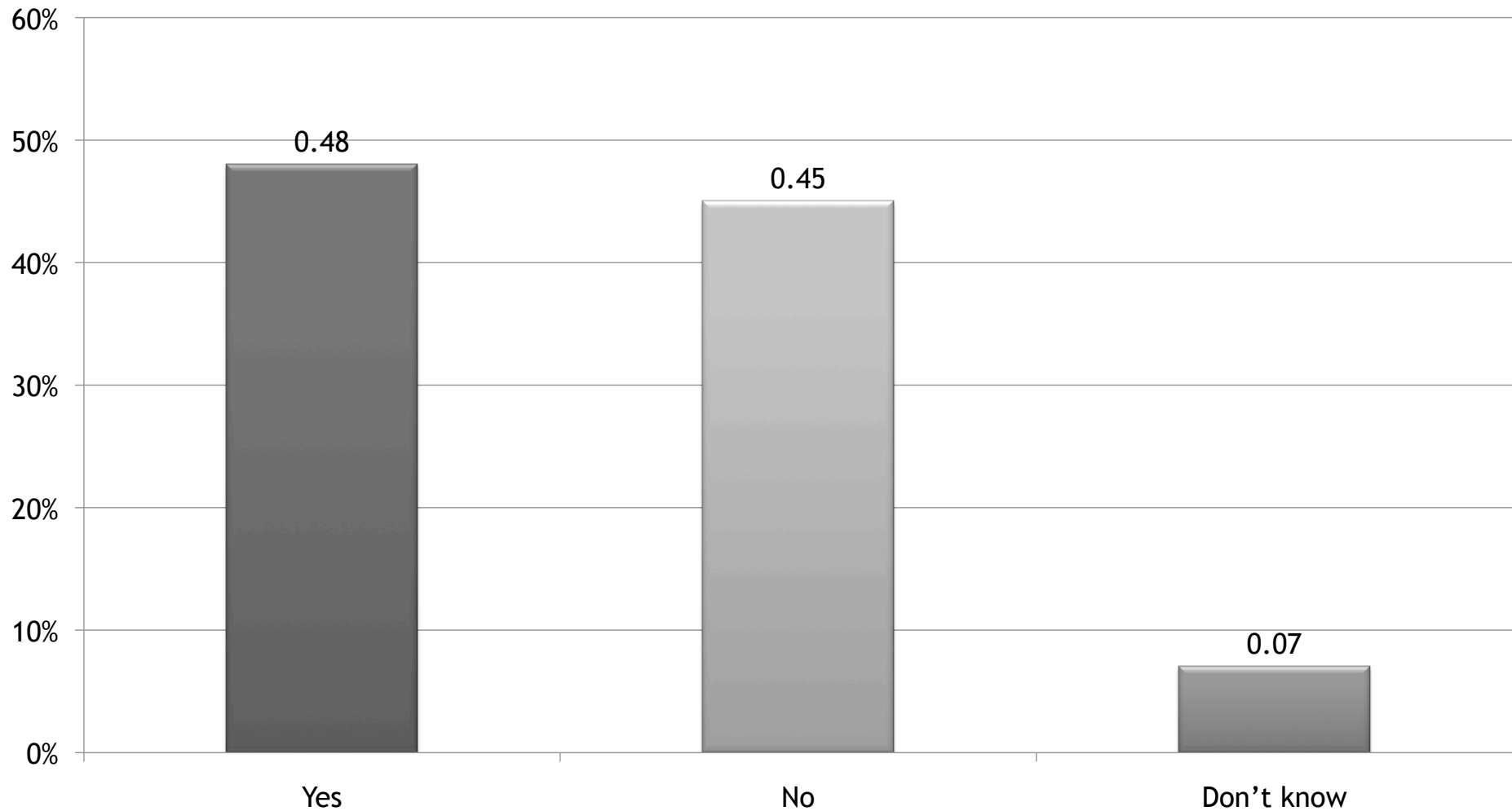
What are your main sources of information?

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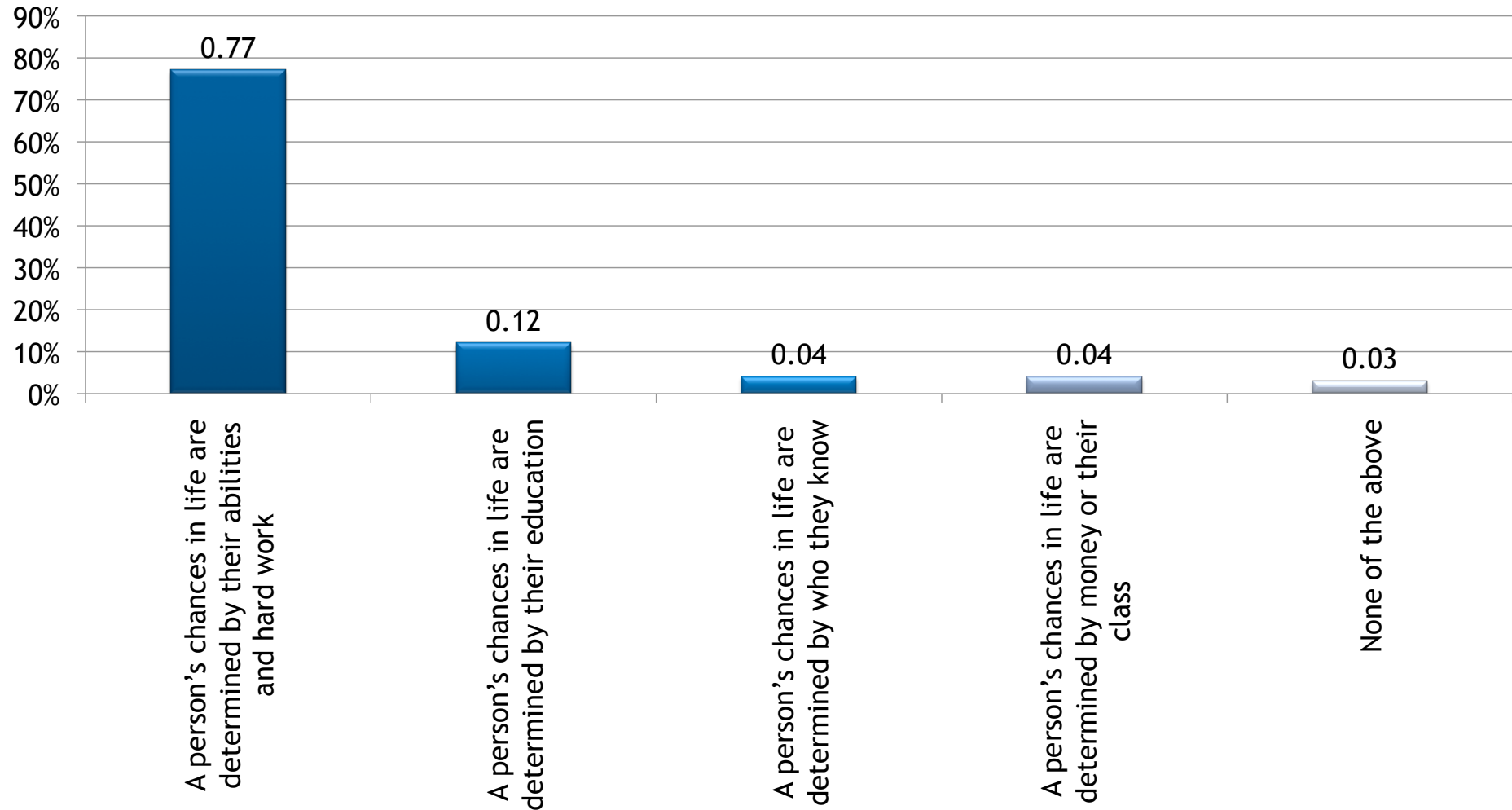


Do you think politics in your country reflects your concerns & those of your generation?

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Which statement best describes your view?



What makes you proudest of your country?

"What makes me proud of my country is the mentality of the people that live there. Like most African countries, my country has a mix of cultures - my country is open to the rest of the world and we do not discriminate. And even though our political troubles are known, we know we have to face them and we are in the process of forming our nation again."

Ivory Coast (translated)

"The importance given to students and young Gabonese people; and its resources."

Gabon (translated)

"I am proud to be an indigenous of Namibia. A country that thrived political stability, democratic rights since independence in 1990. I'm happy of the transformation our current government has done since then, even though a lot has to be done still for us to achieve improve economically. The government has given us lots of opportunities so far to uplift ourselves."

Namibia

"Cultural diversity and the open-minded spirit of the Gabonese people."

Gabon (translated)

"My country is faced with lots of challenges, from terrorism, to corruption, unemployment and little access to education, but I am proud to be a Nigerian because the youths of my generation still believe we can conquer our fears and make our Future Nigeria a better place"

Nigeria

"The political stability despite the unrest in neighboring countries and the fact that everyone can by its own capacity provide for its needs, the resilience of my compatriots and the efforts of the government to improve the living conditions of citizens. "

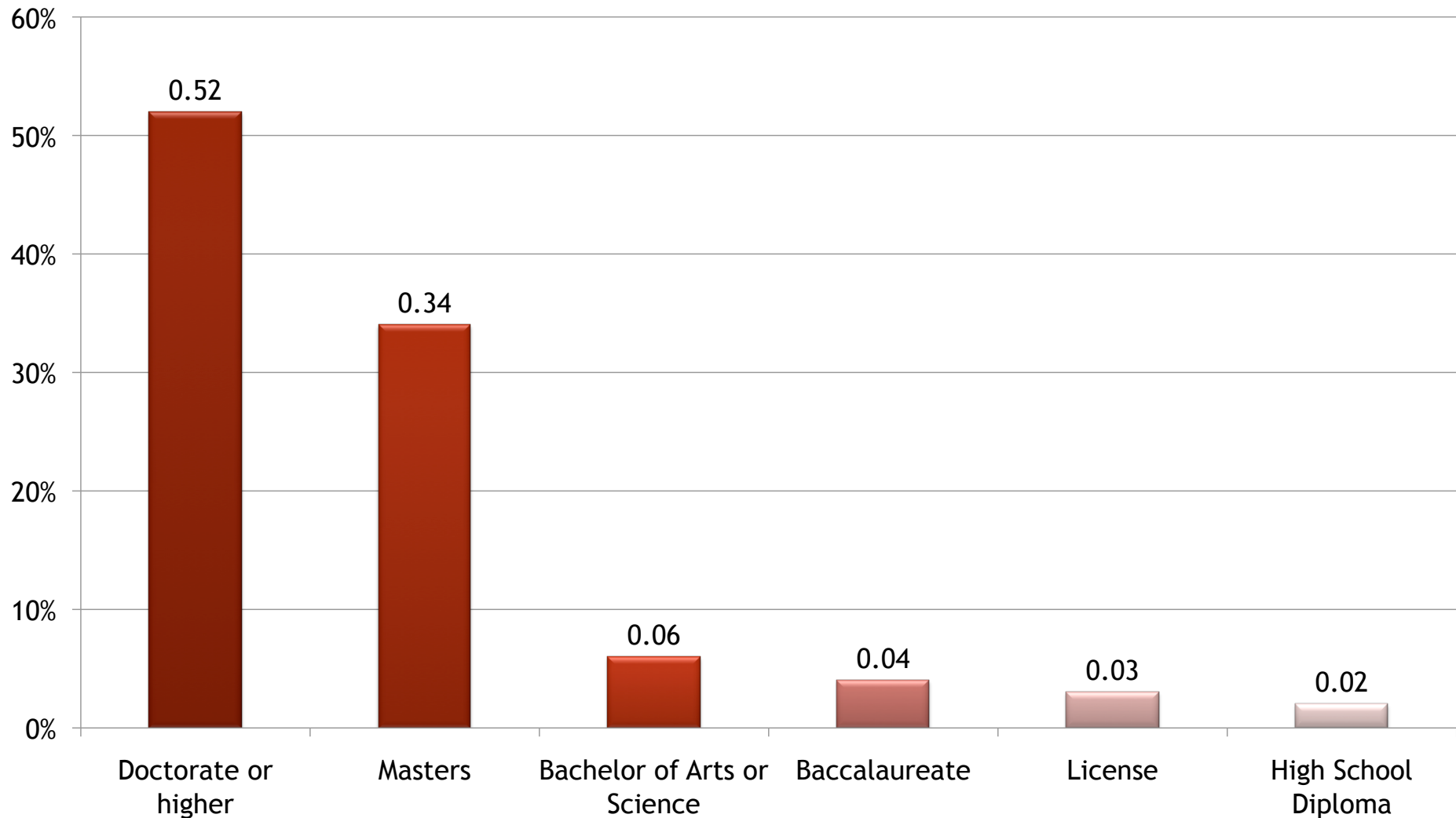
Cameroon (translated)

"Its diversity. In fact, there are nearly 300 ethnic groups and cultures in Cameroon, which gives it a very diverse and welcoming appearance."

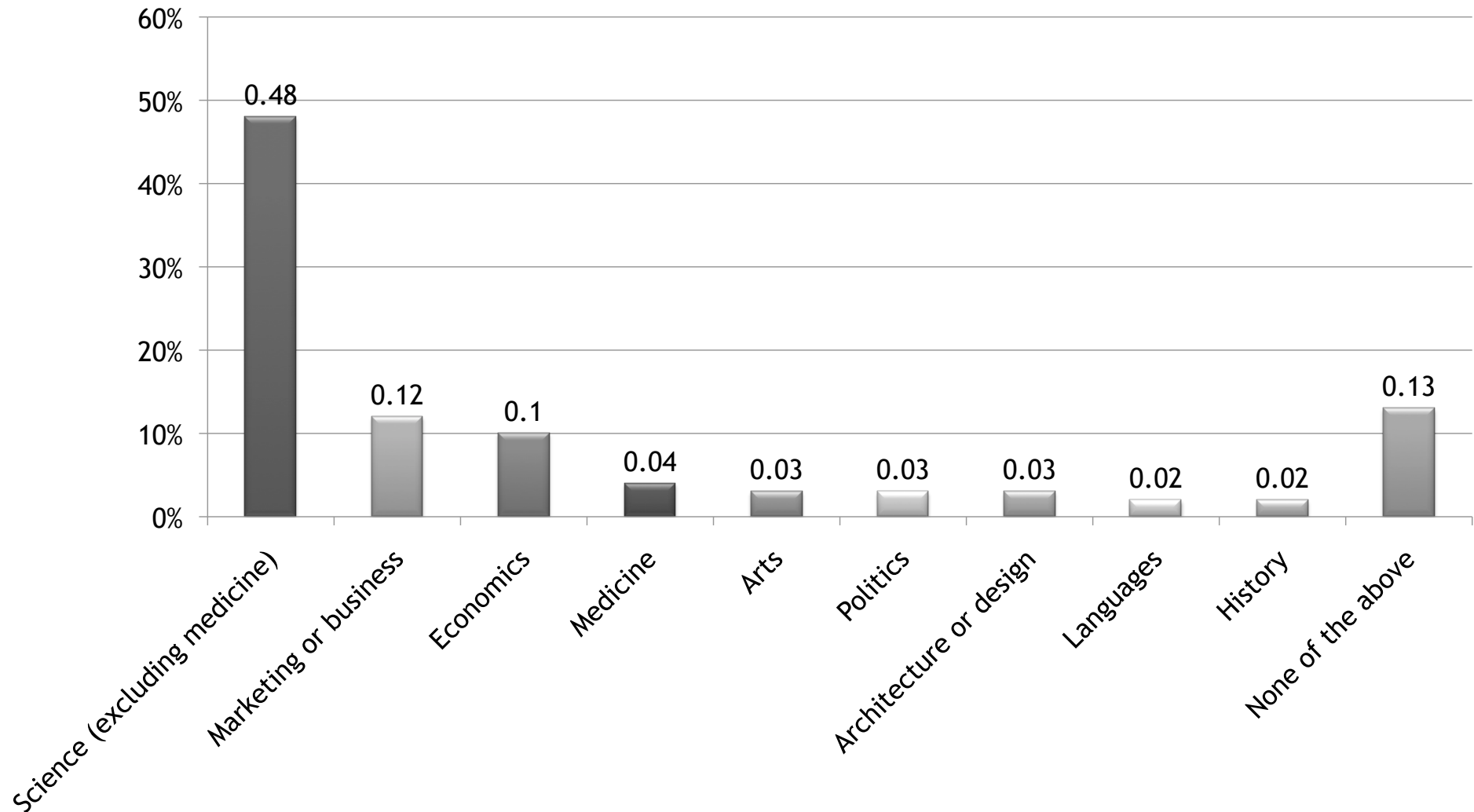
Cameroon (translated)

What level of education are you aiming for?

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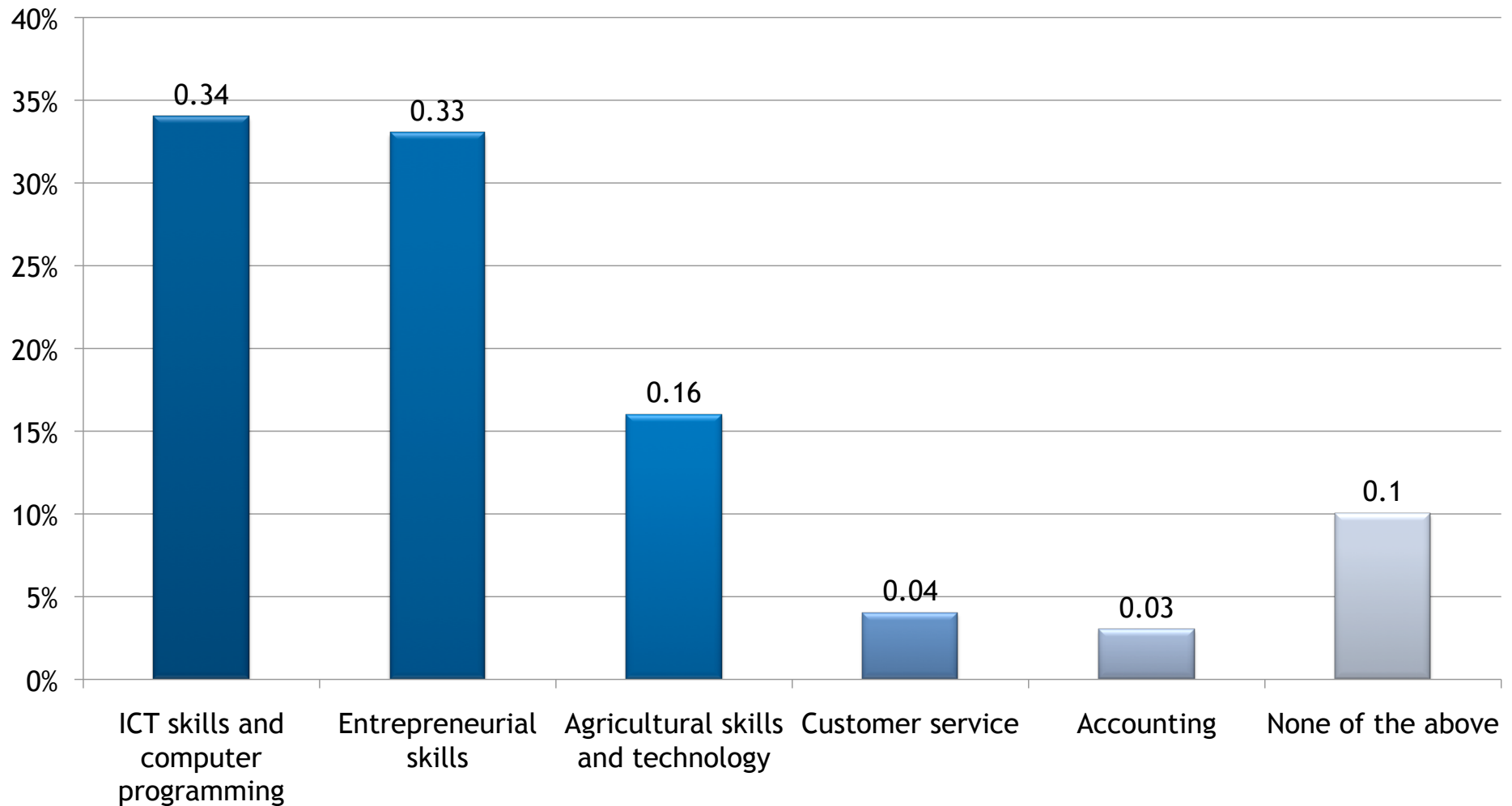


Which subject are you studying?



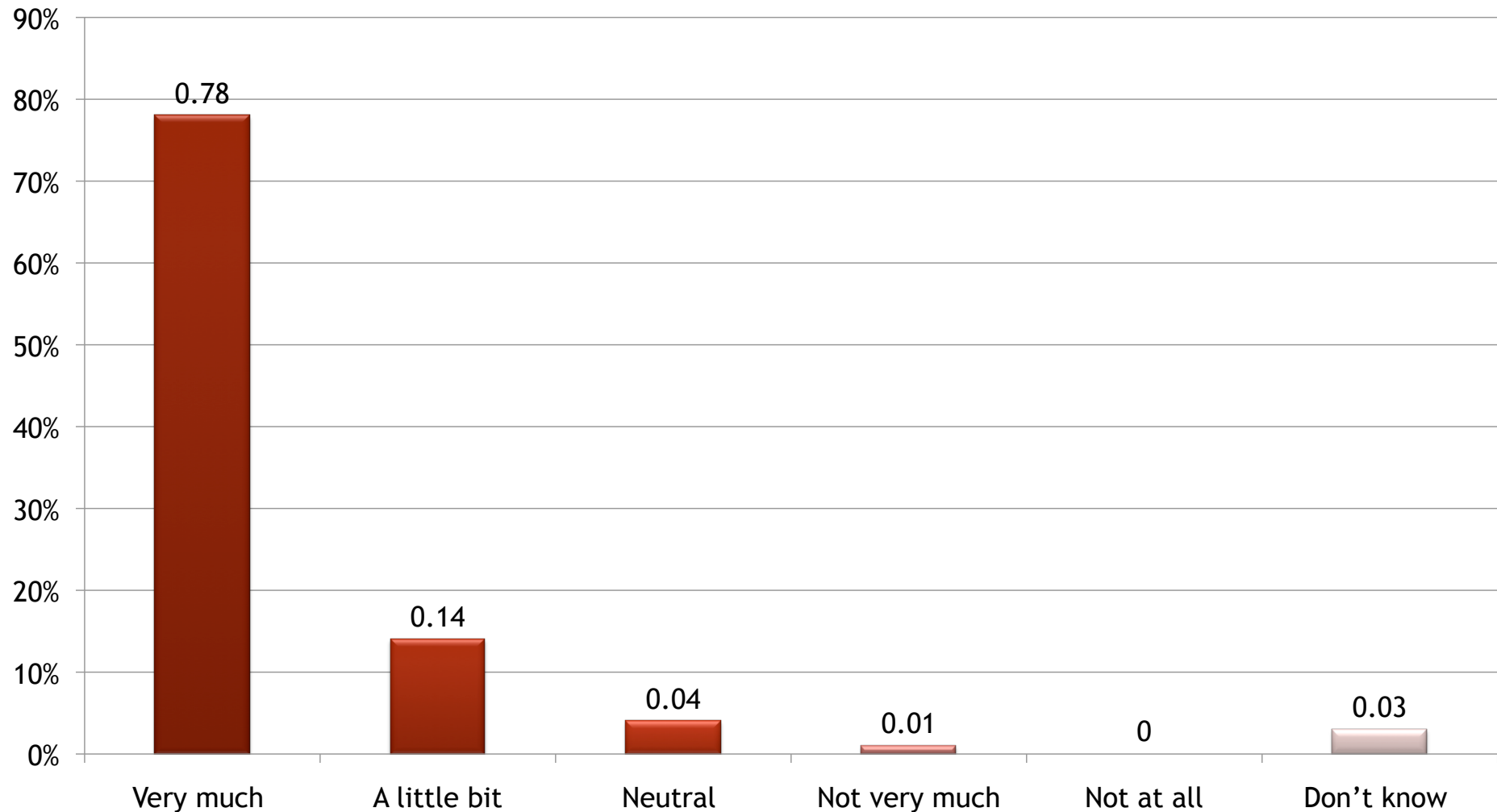
Which of the following skills are you interested in learning?

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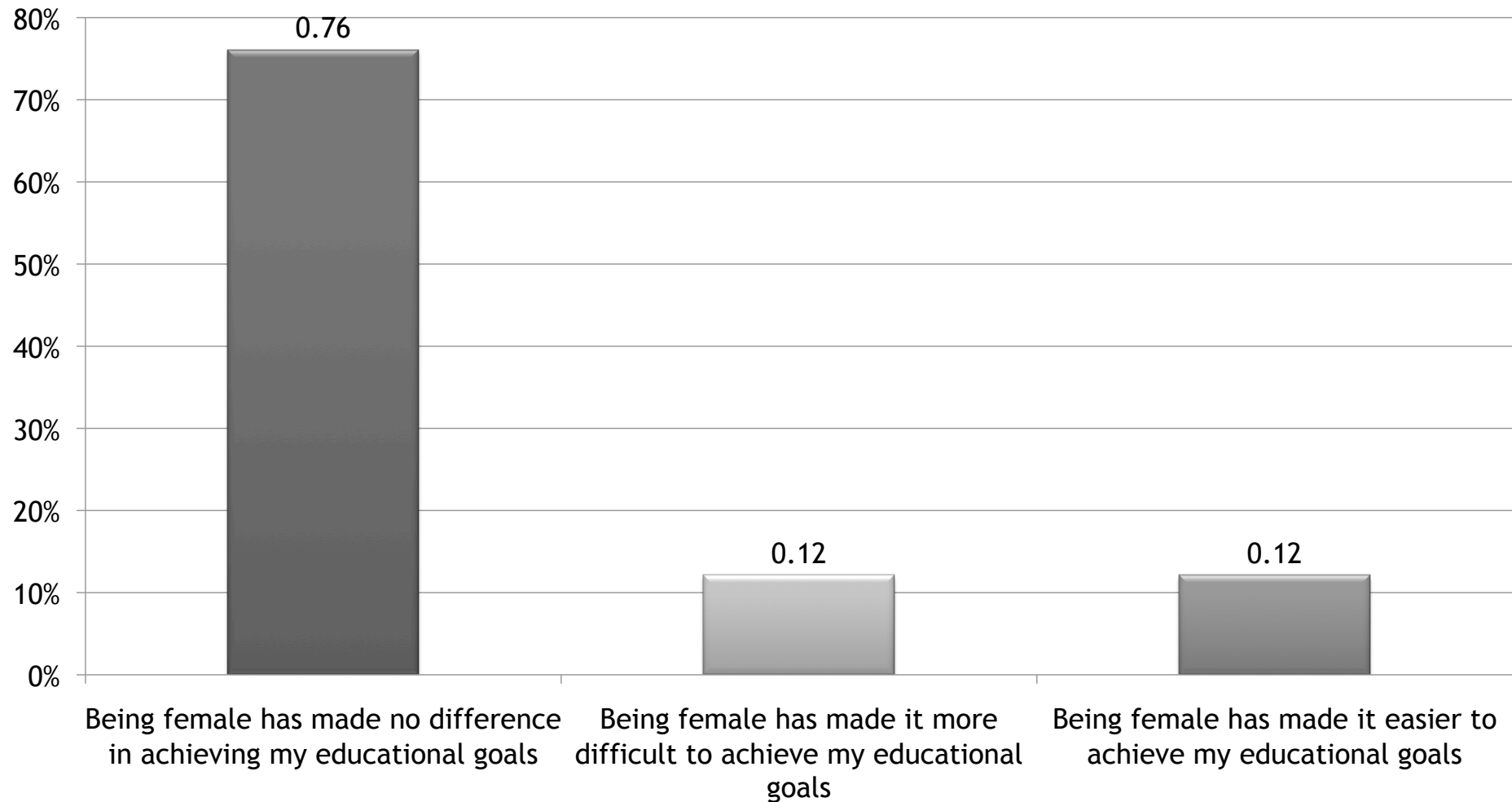


How much do you think your education/training will help you find a job?

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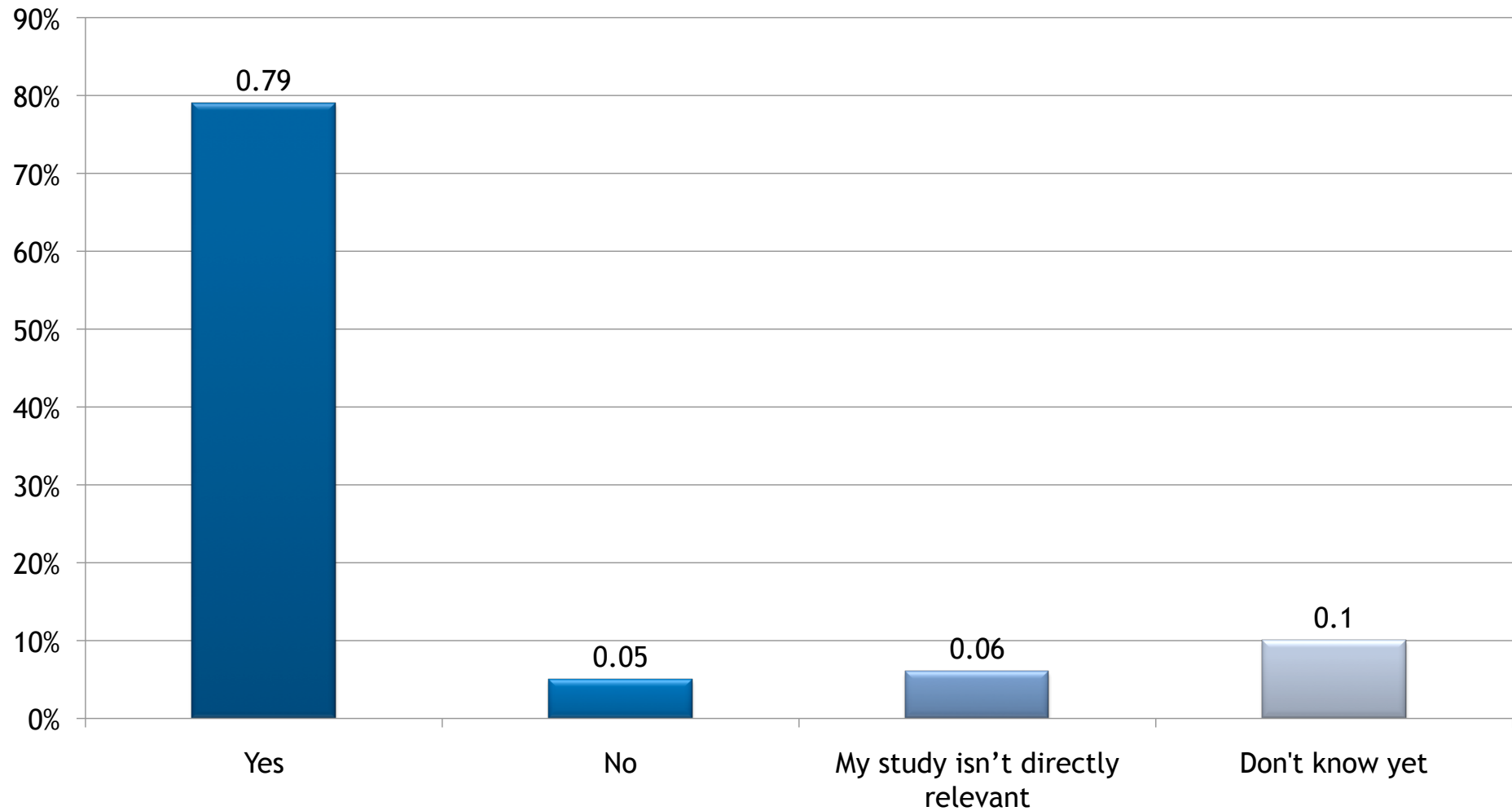


Which statement best describes your experience?



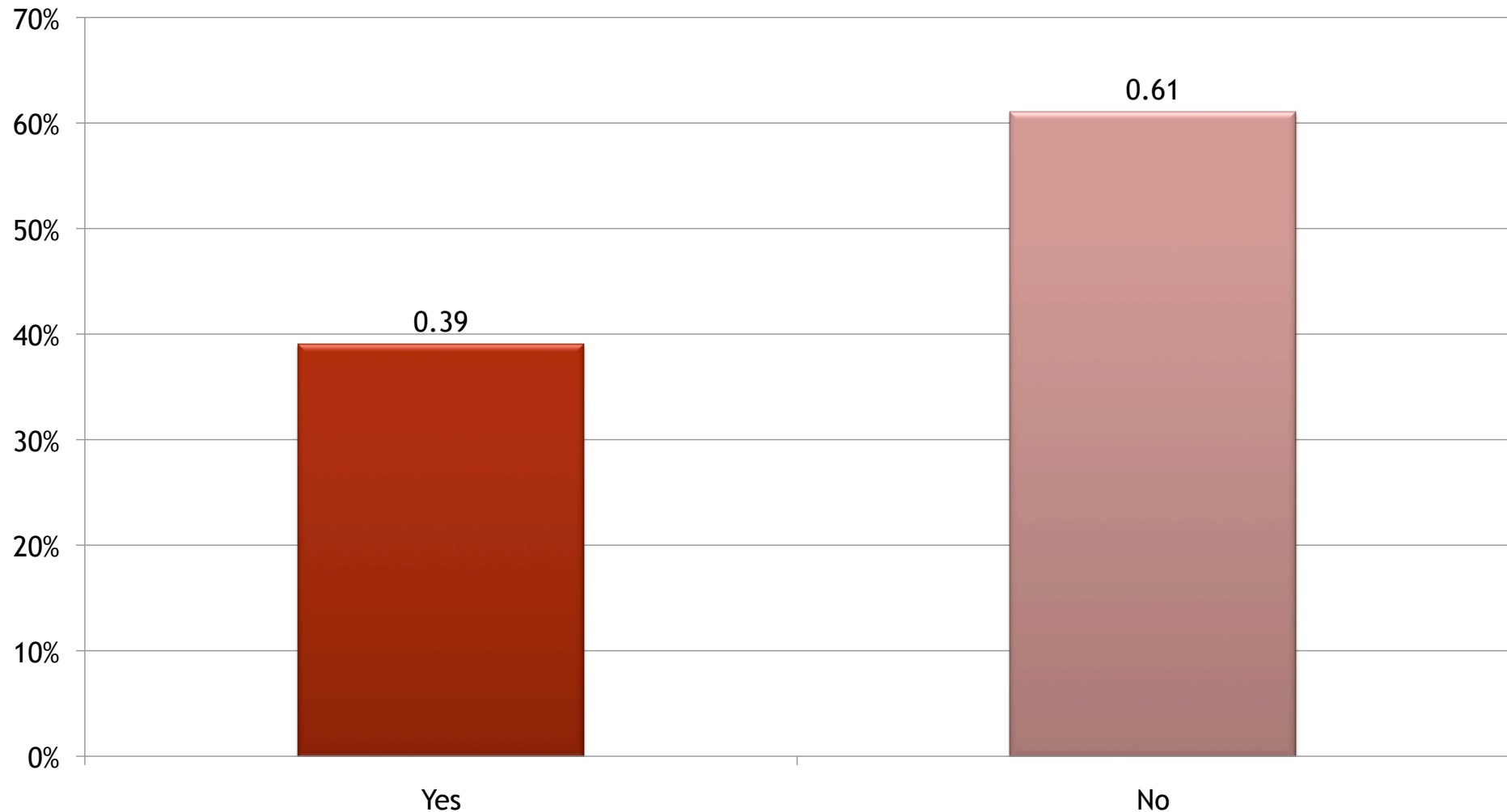
Will you be looking for a job in the field of your study?

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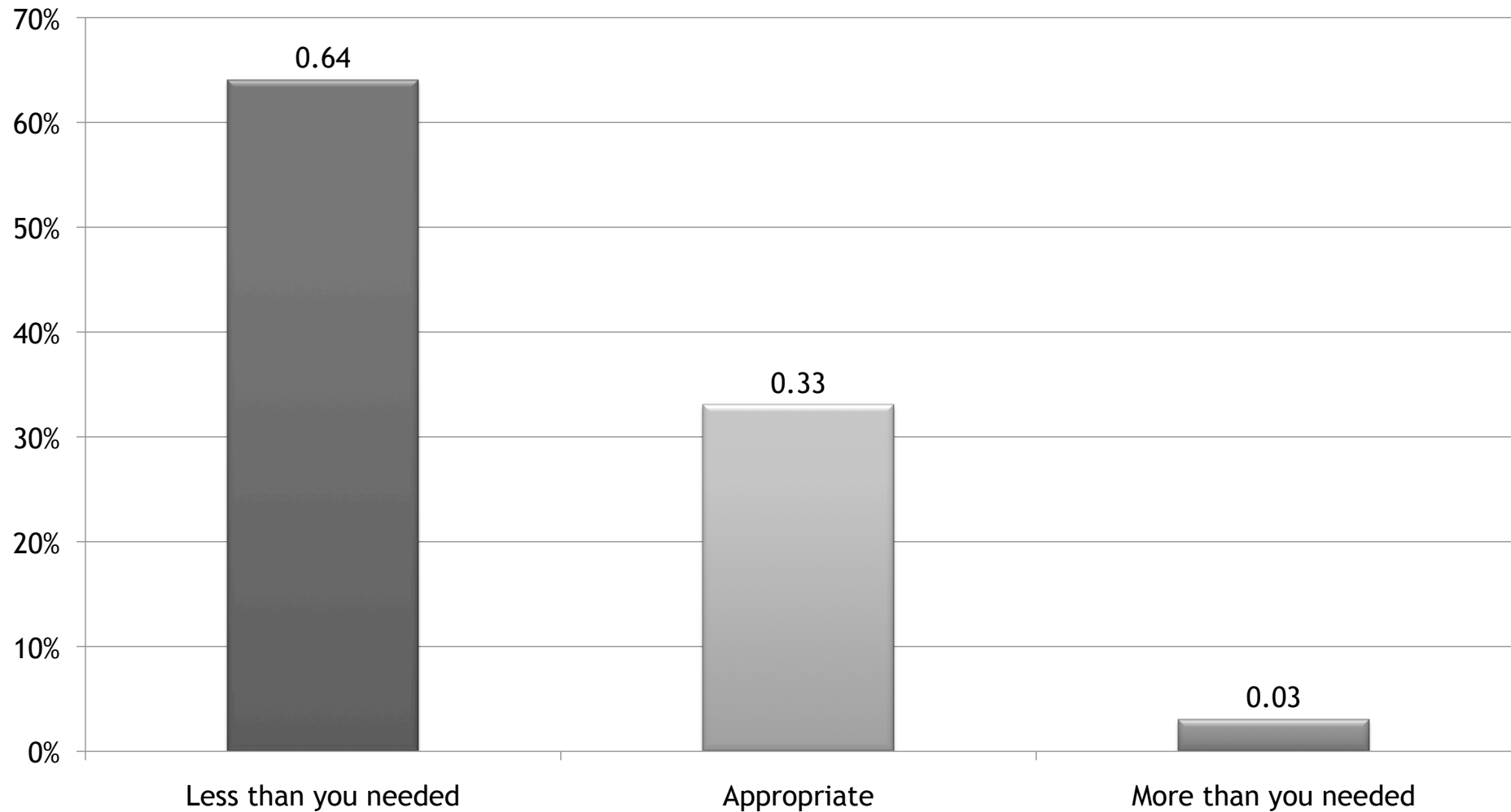
Have you received any financial support from the government for your education?

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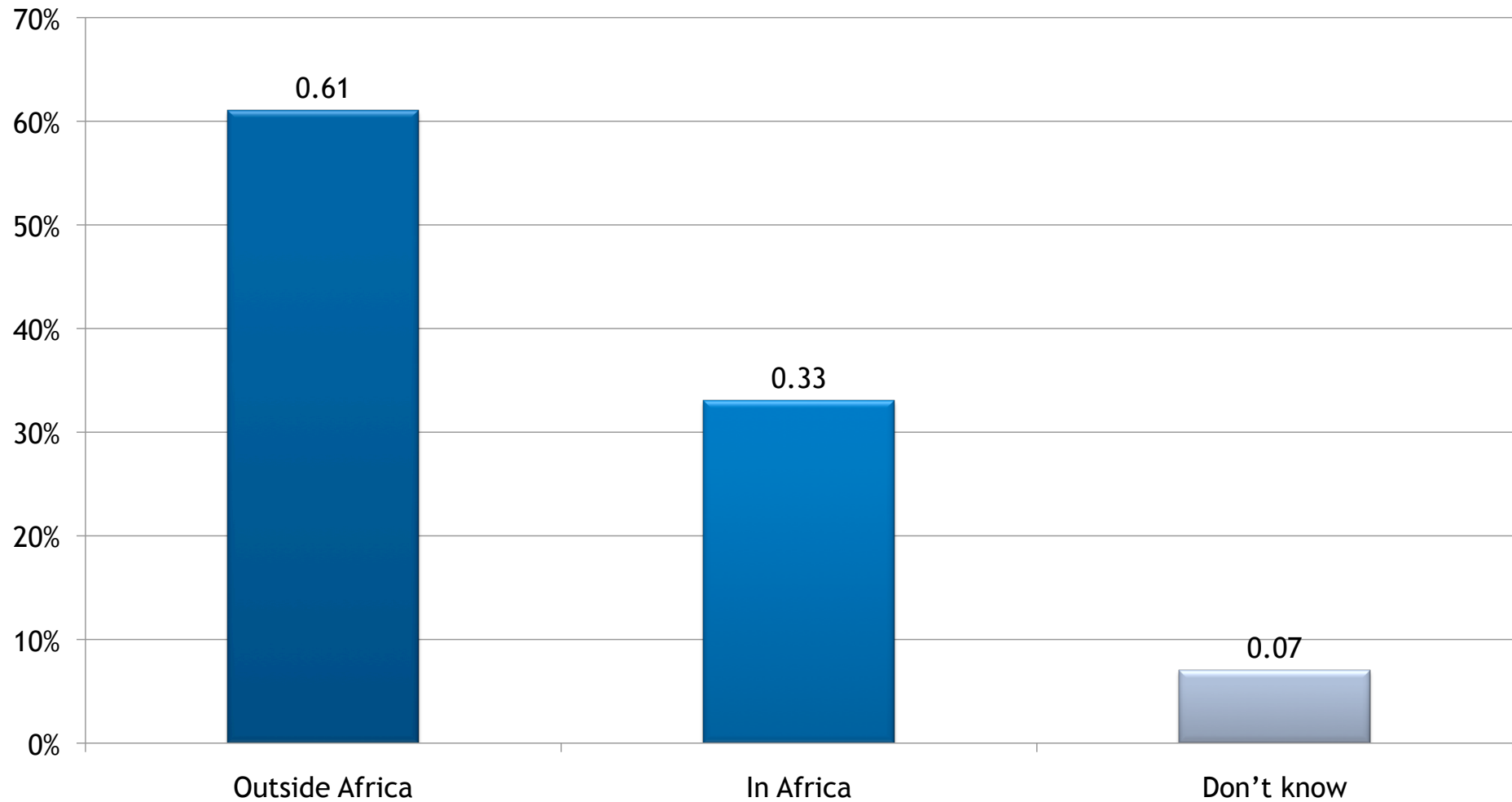
The level of help the government gave you was

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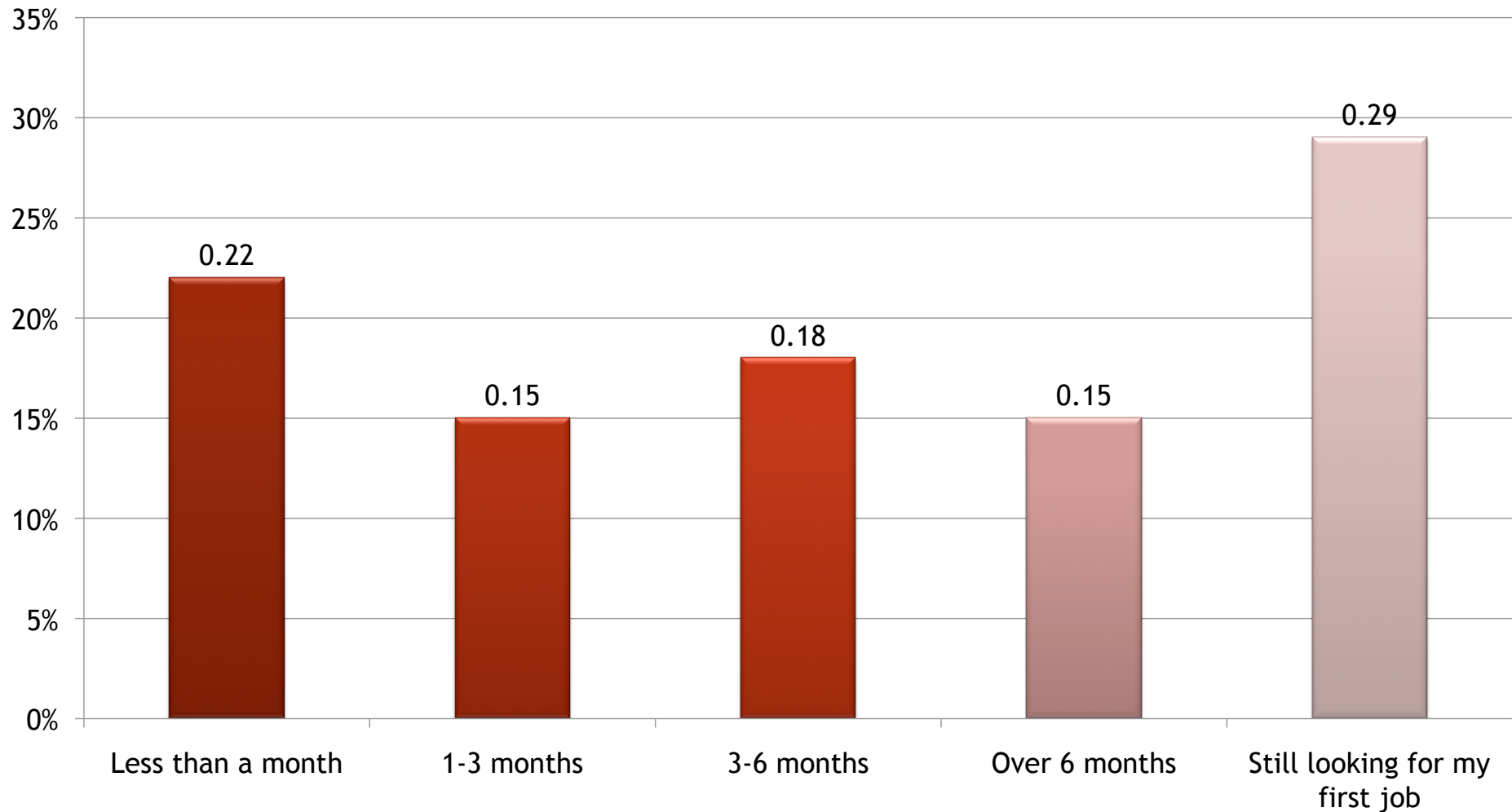
Would you prefer to be educated in Africa, or outside Africa?

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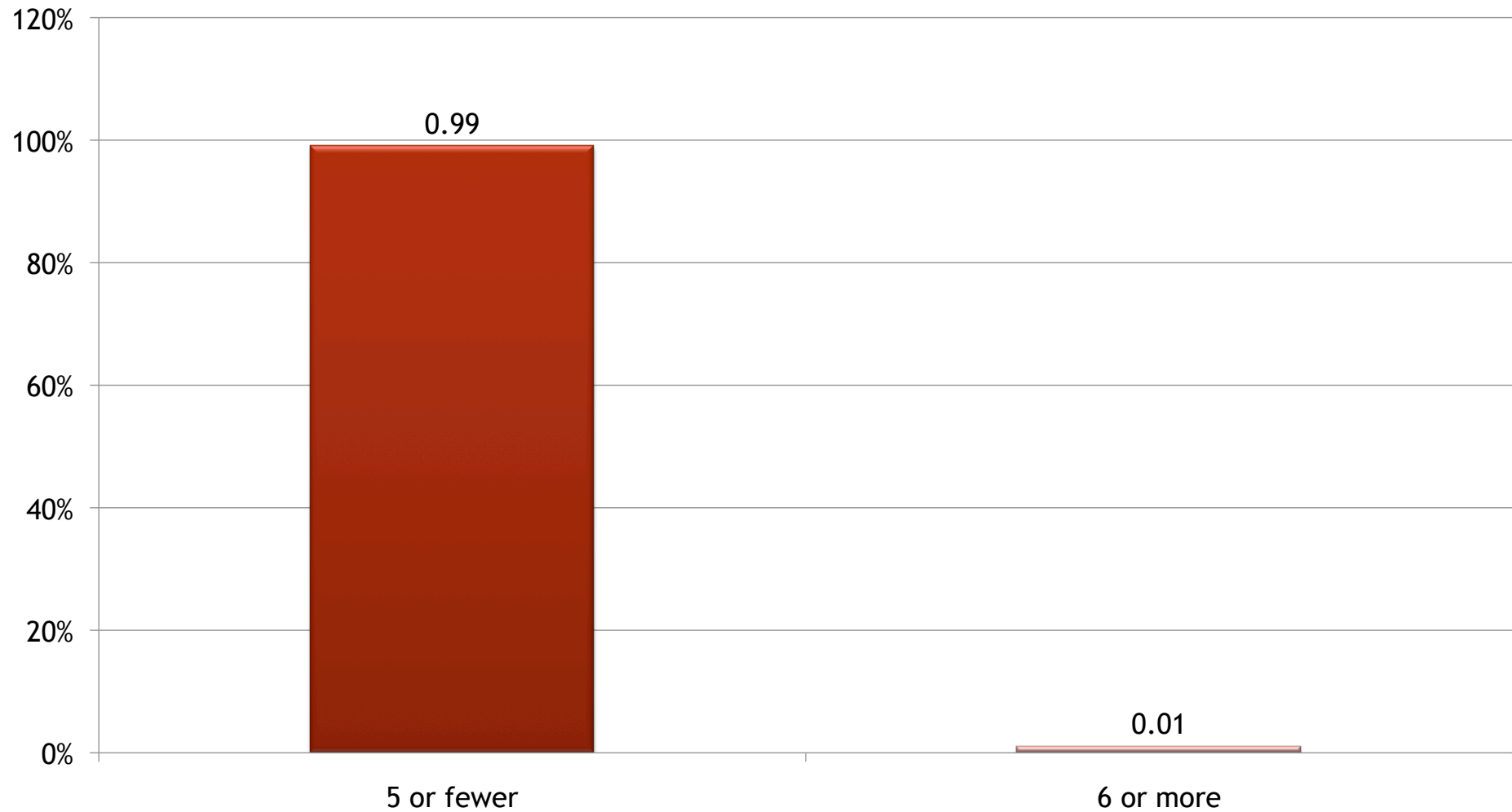


How long did it take you to find your first job?

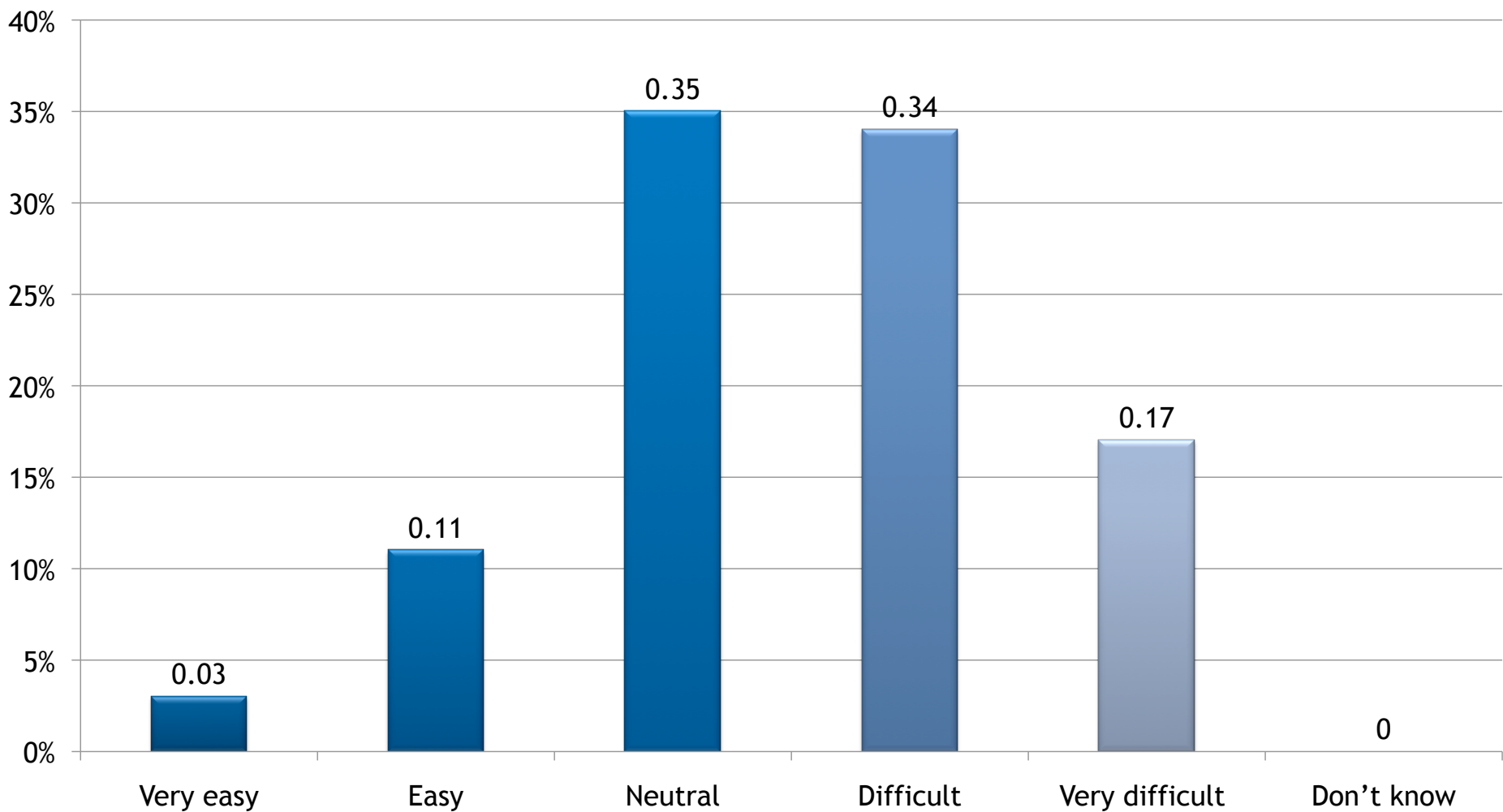
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How many jobs have you had?

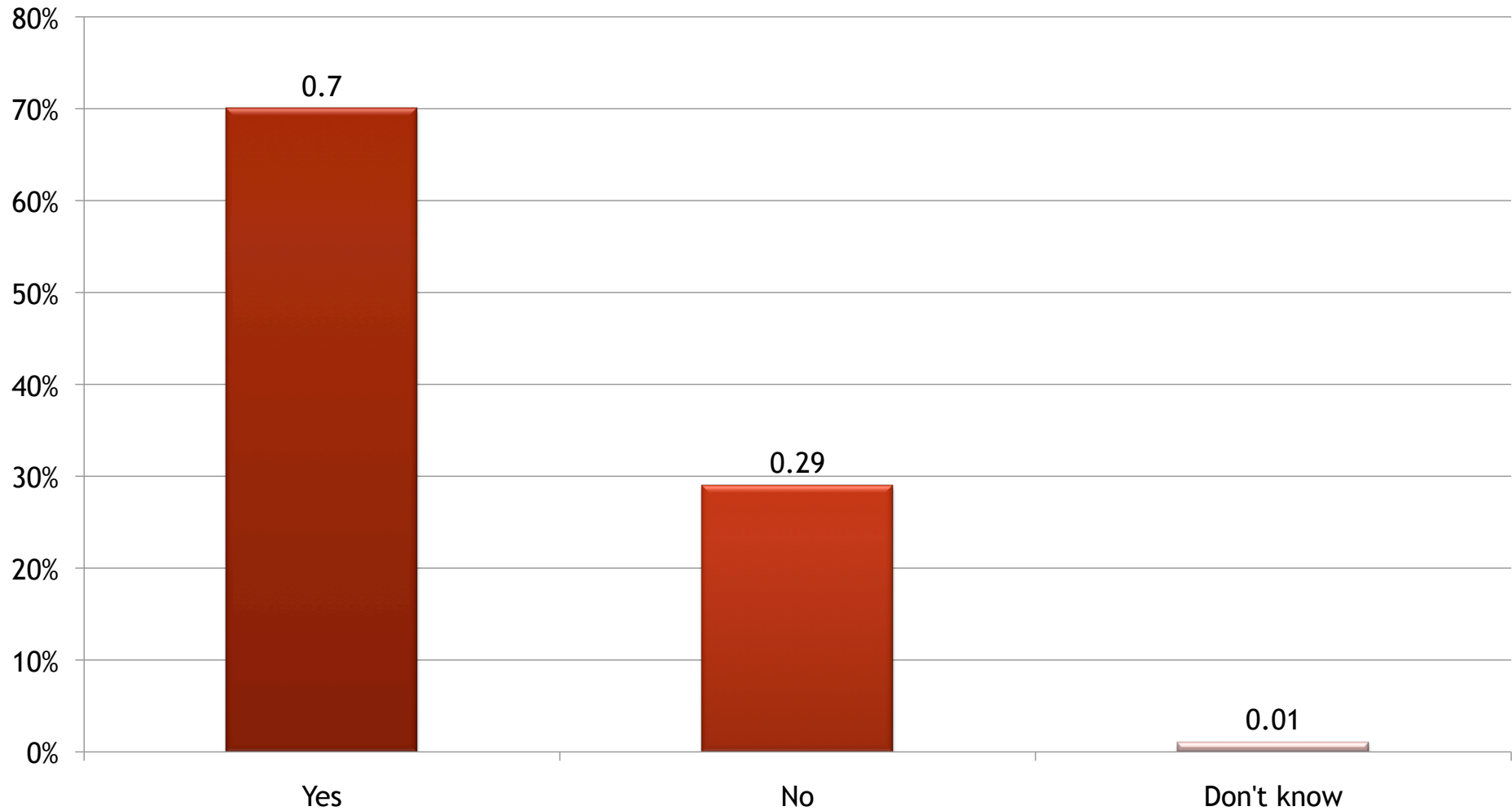


How easy was it to find a job?



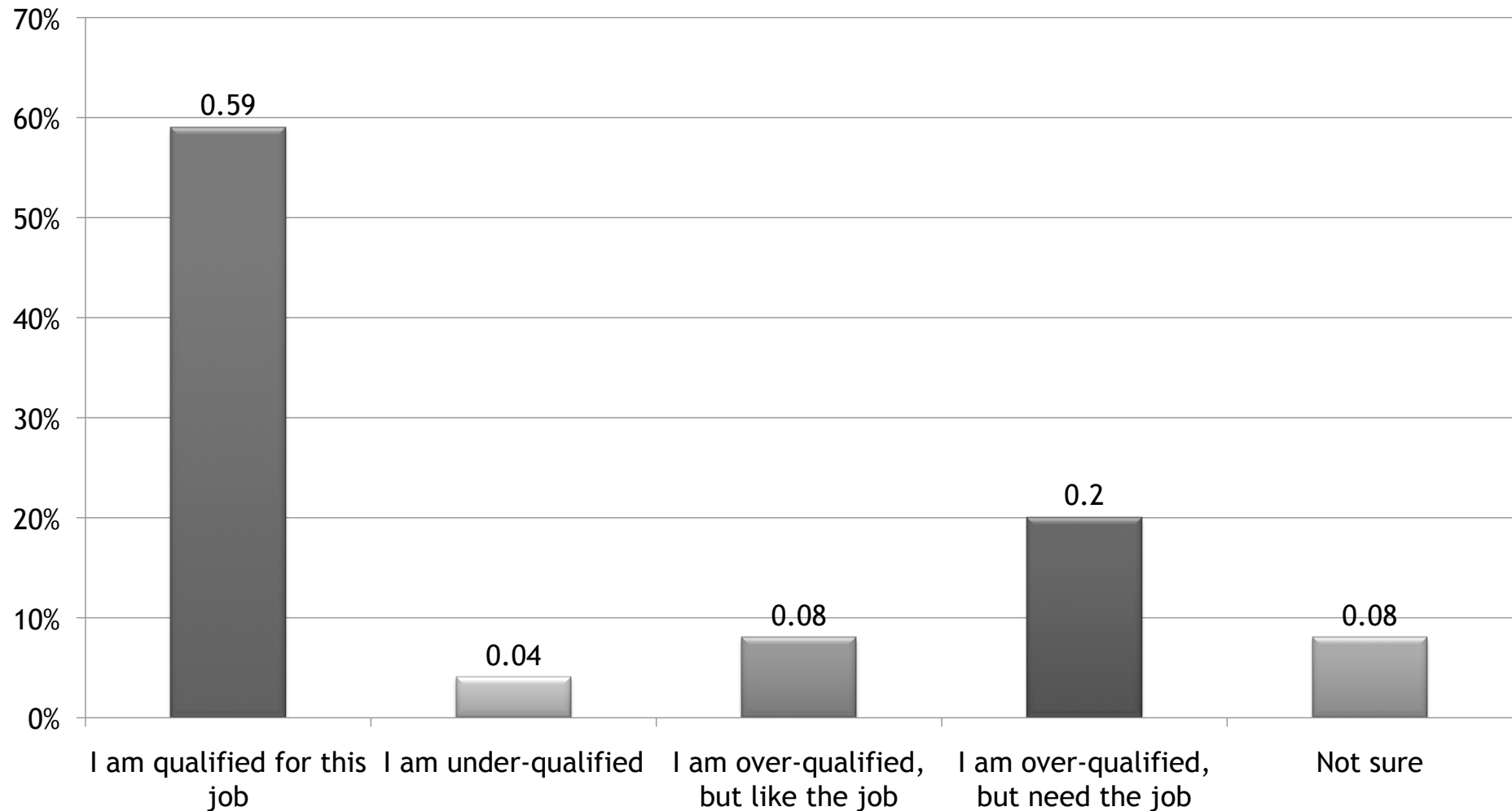
Is this a job you were trained or educated for?

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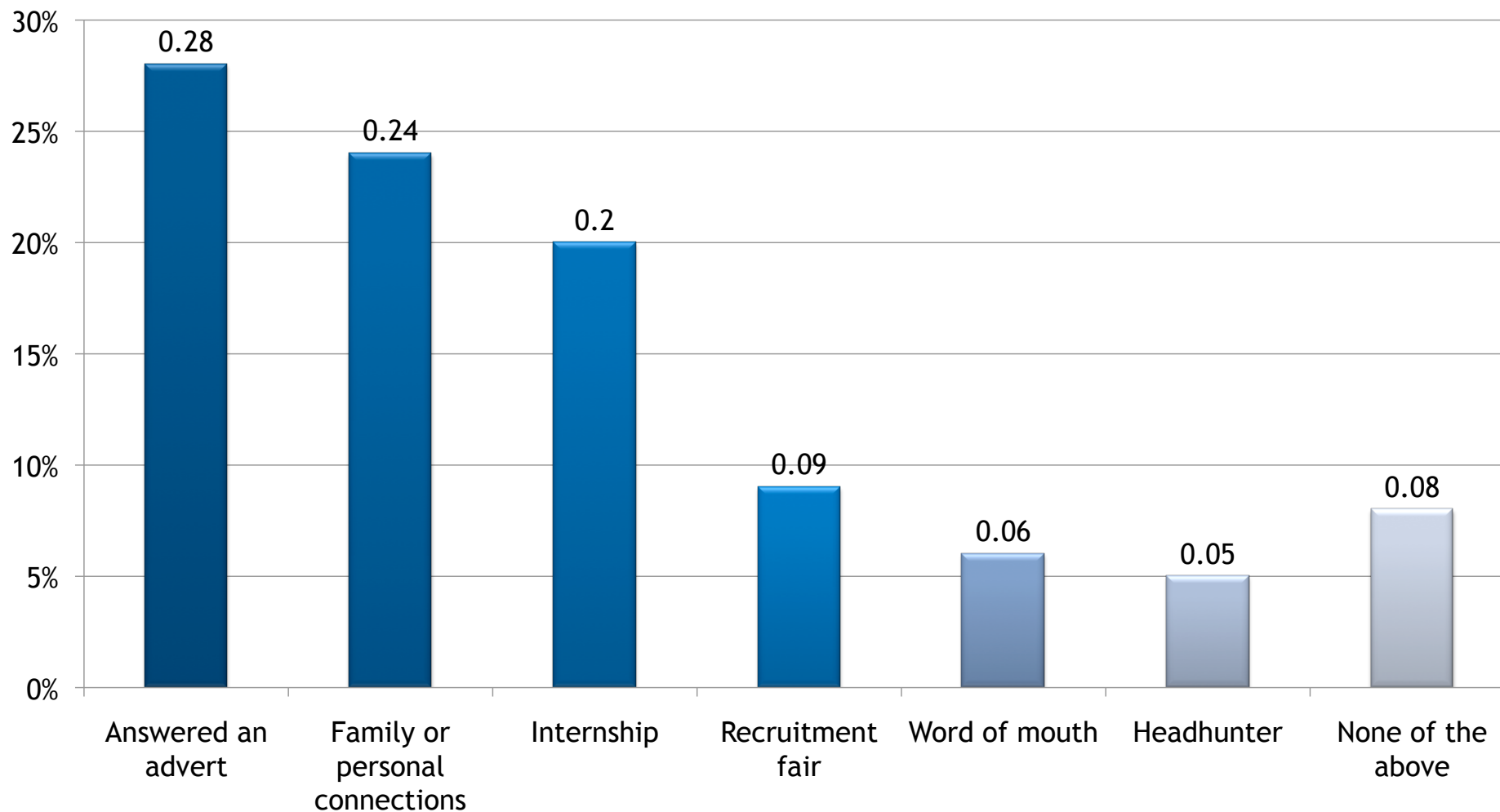


Do you believe this is the most suitable job for your skills?

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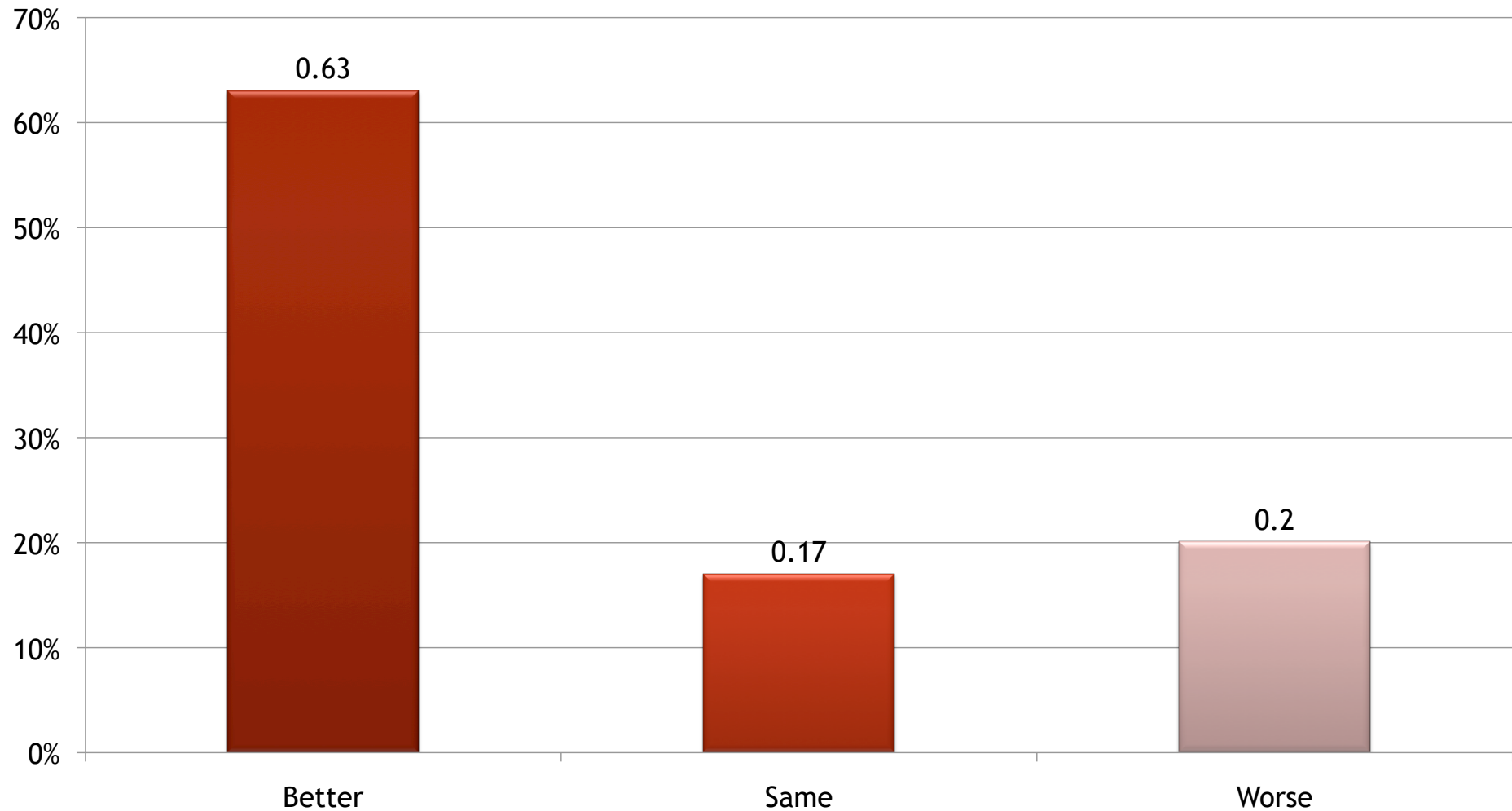


How did you find your job?



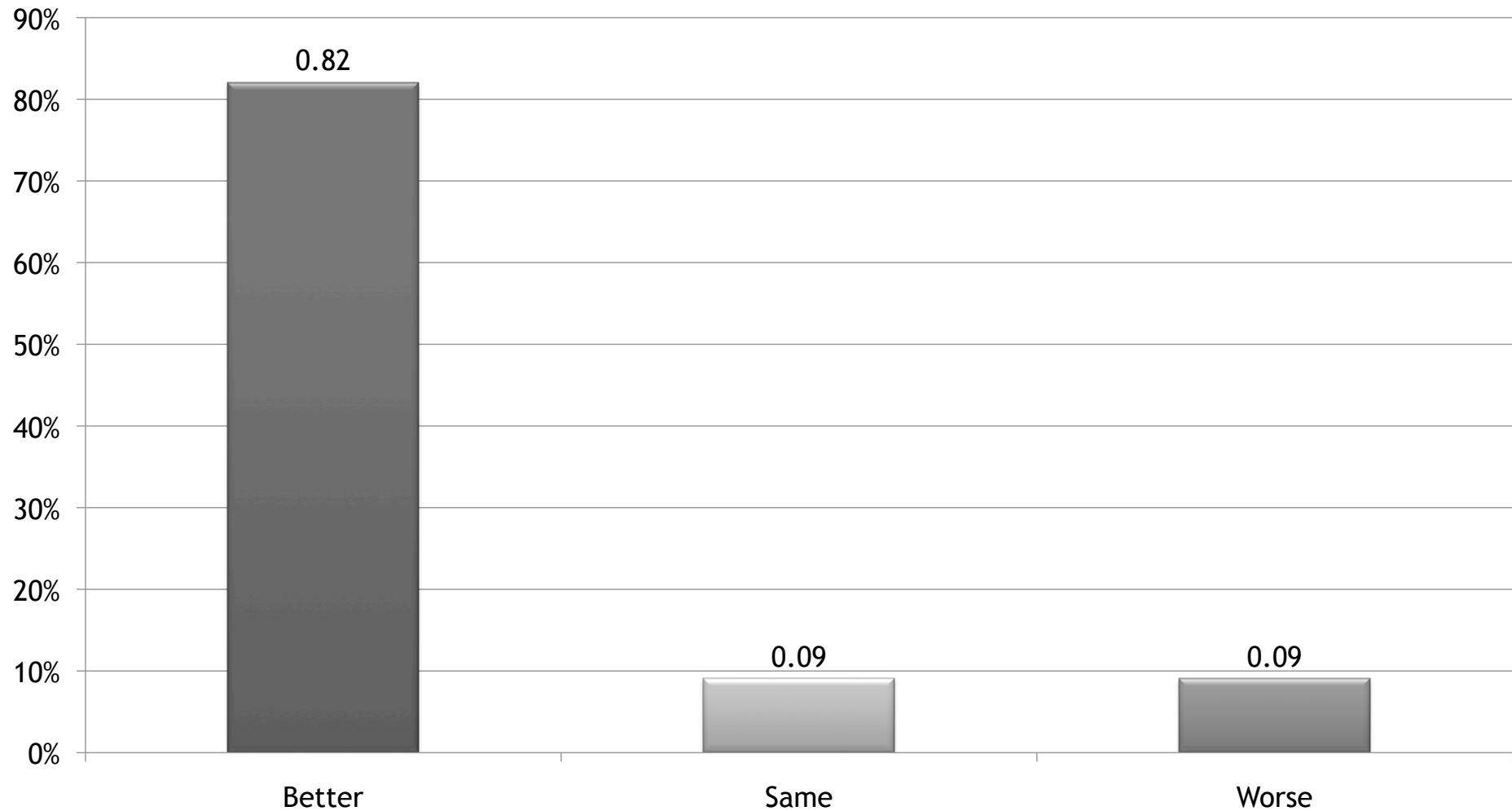
Do you have a _____ job than your parents had at your age?

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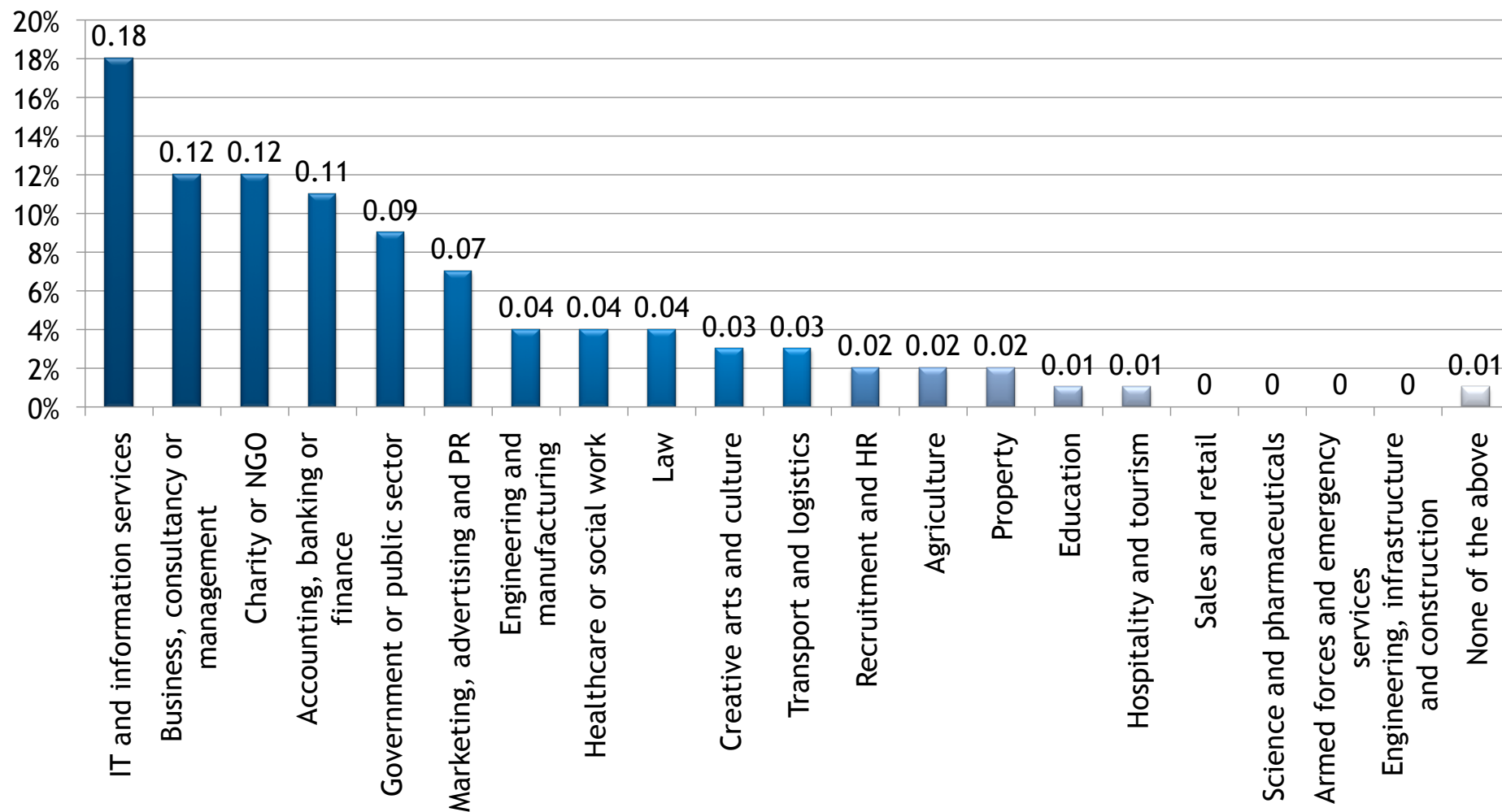


Do you think your career prospects are _____ than your parents' were?

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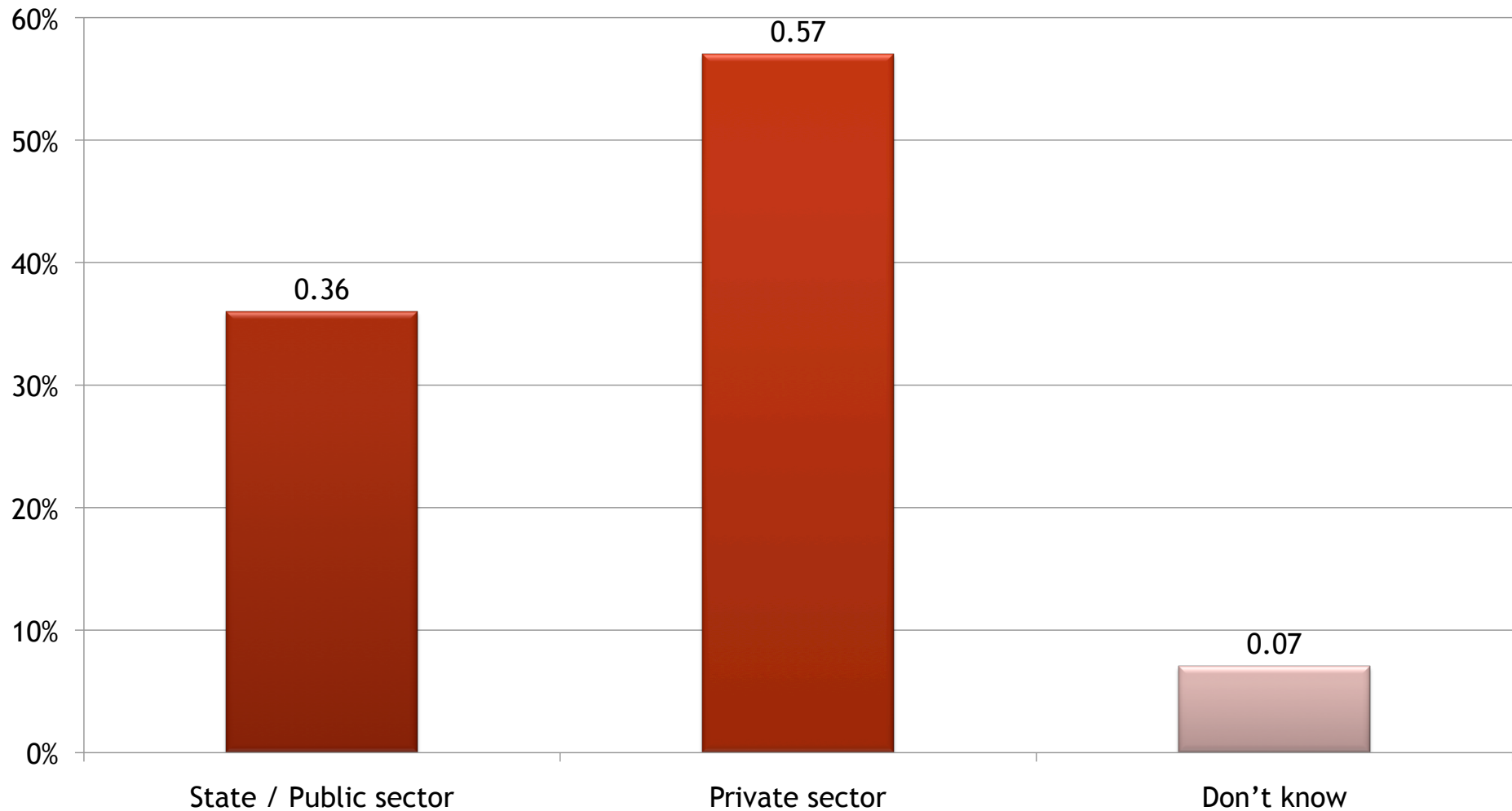


Which sector are you seeking to work in?



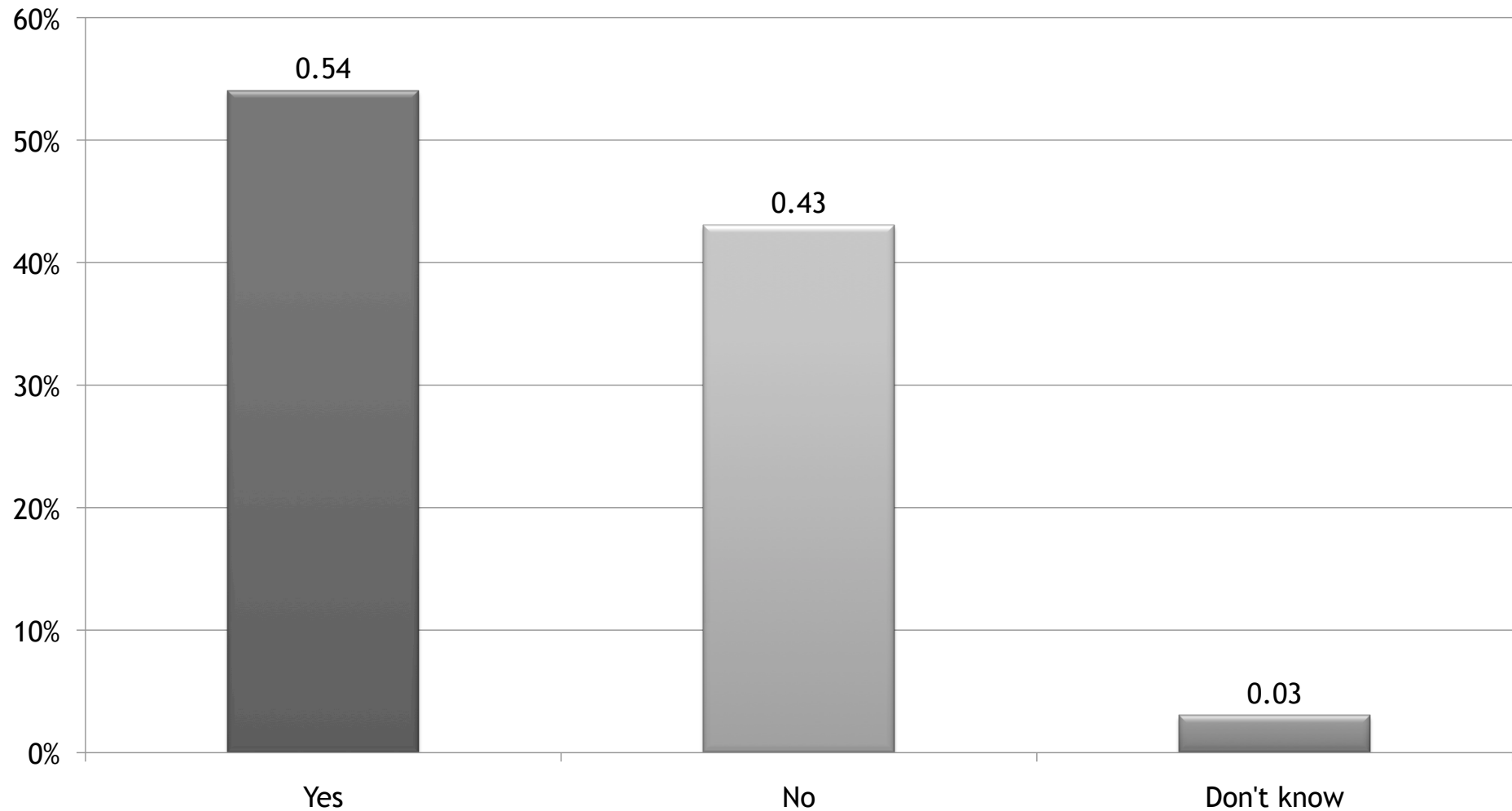
Would you rather work for the state or in the private sector?

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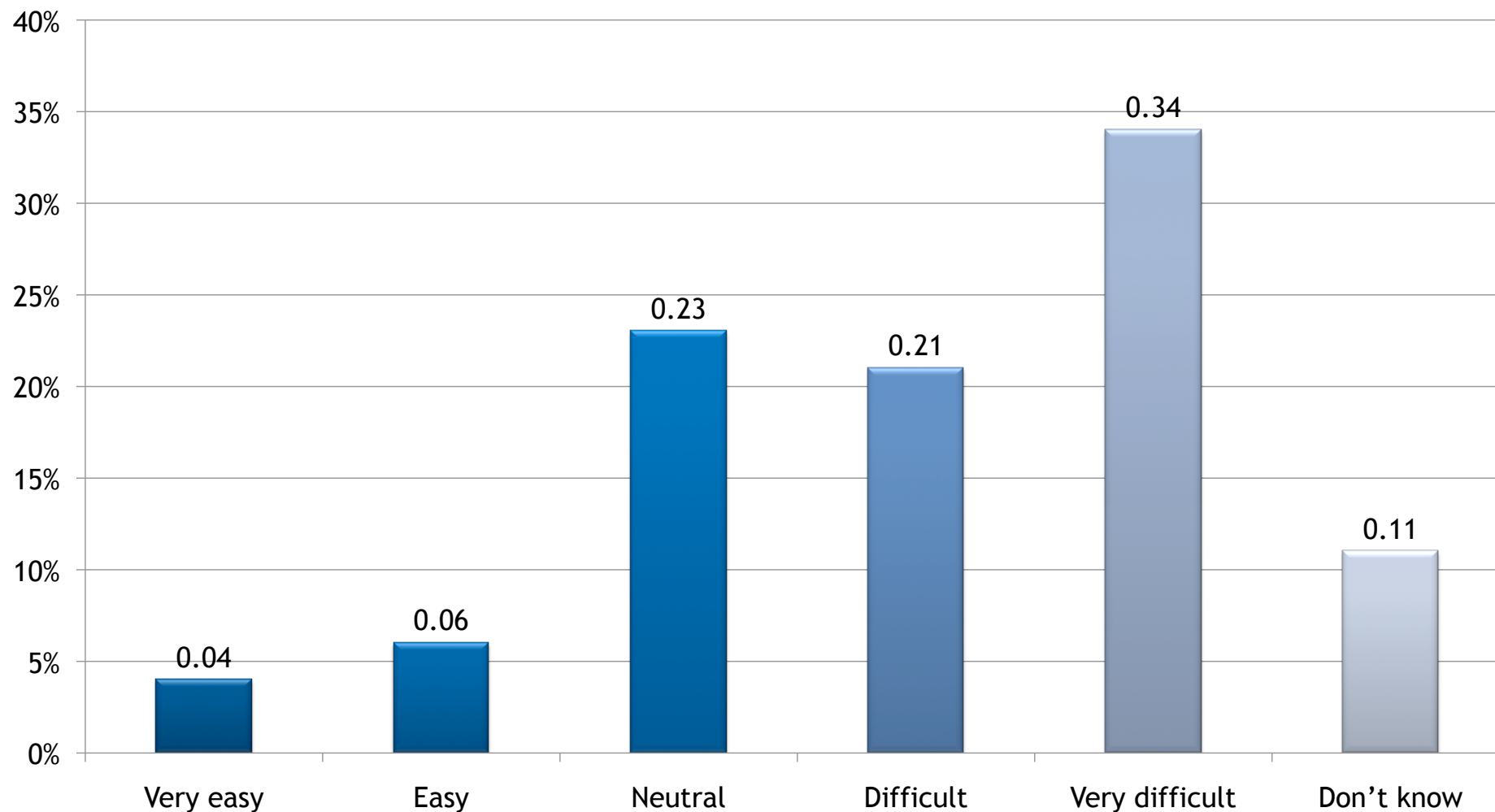


Do you think women have the same employment opportunities as men?

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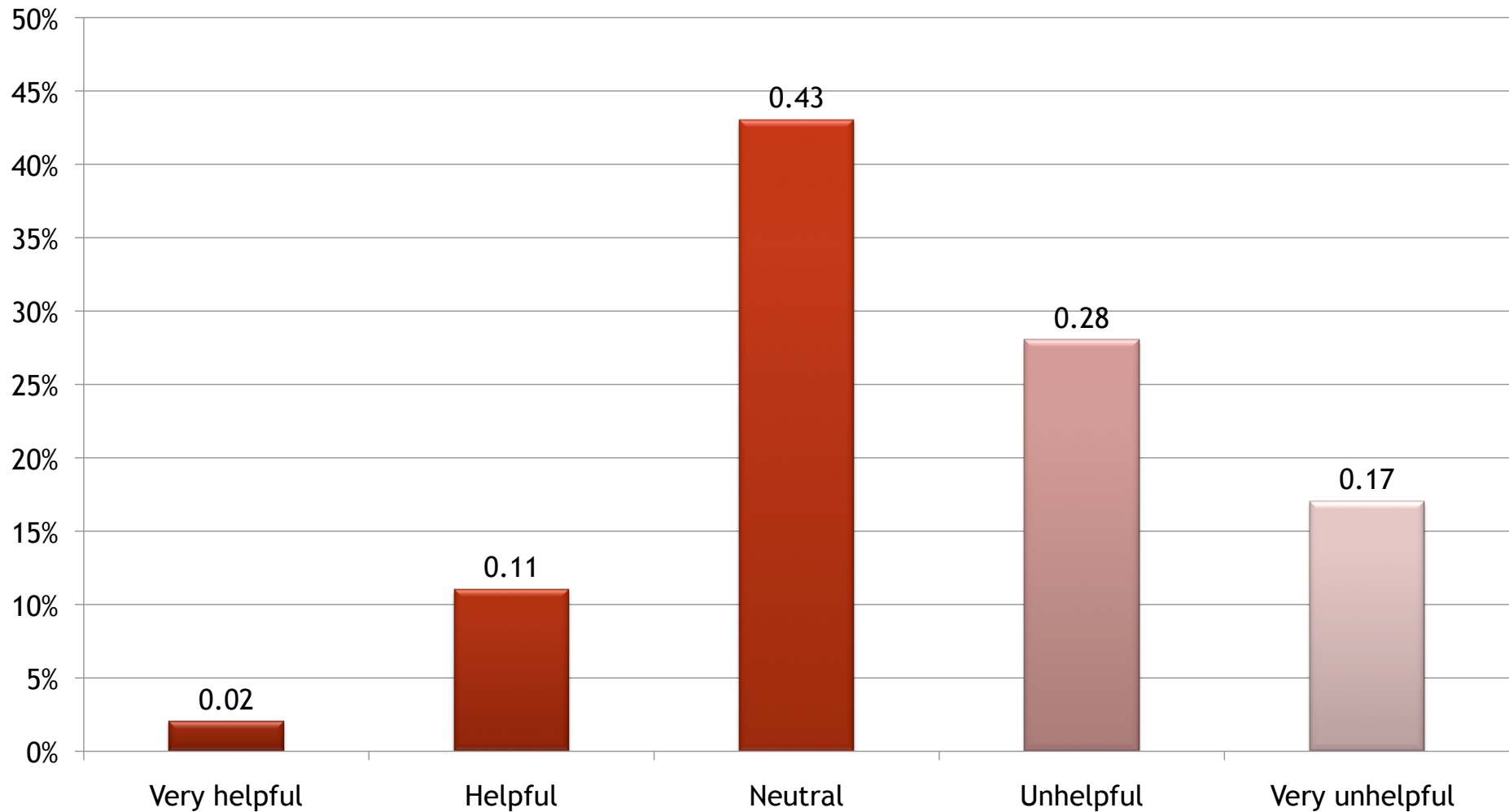


How easy was it to start your company?

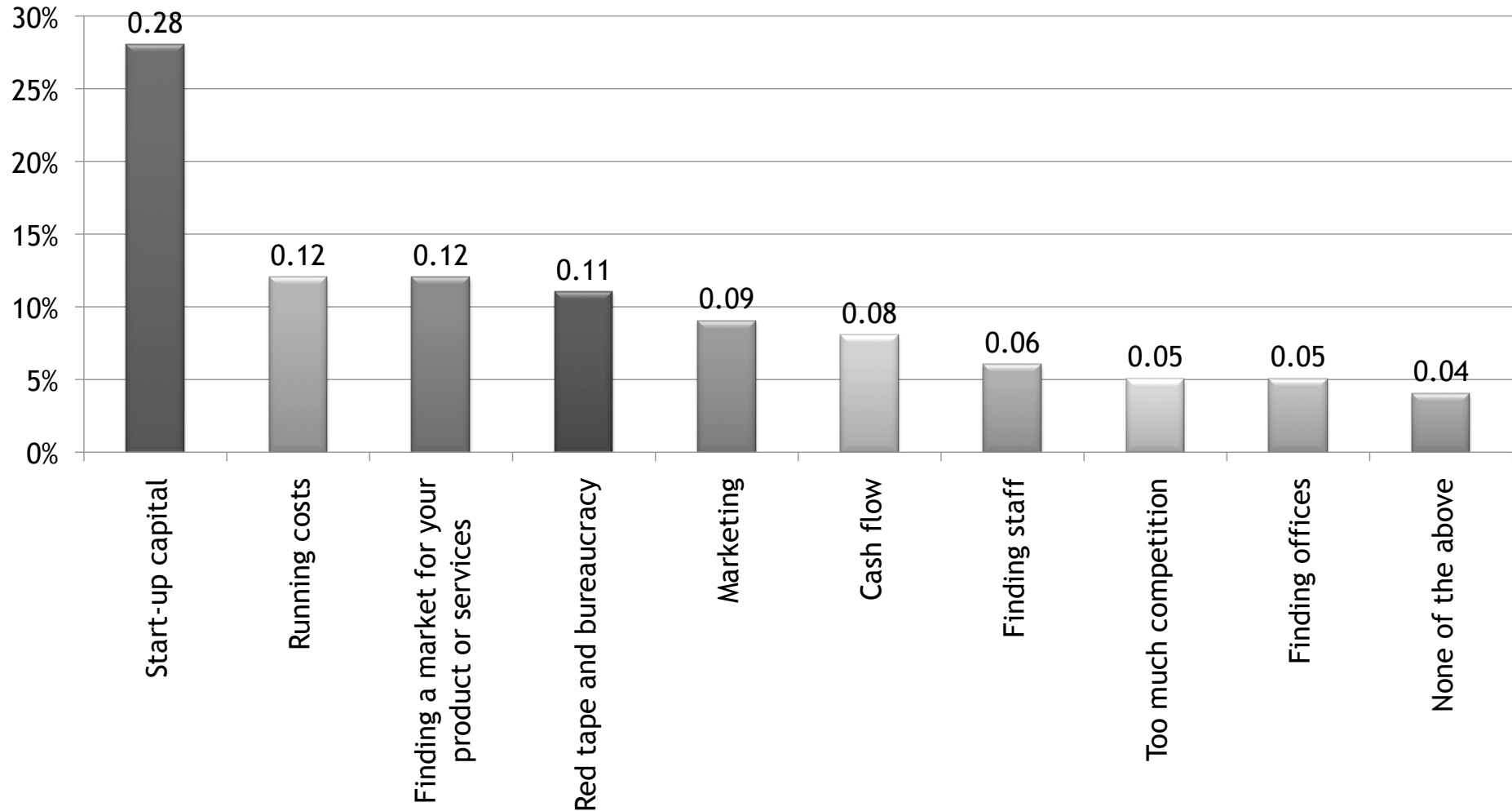


When starting your company, how helpful was the government?

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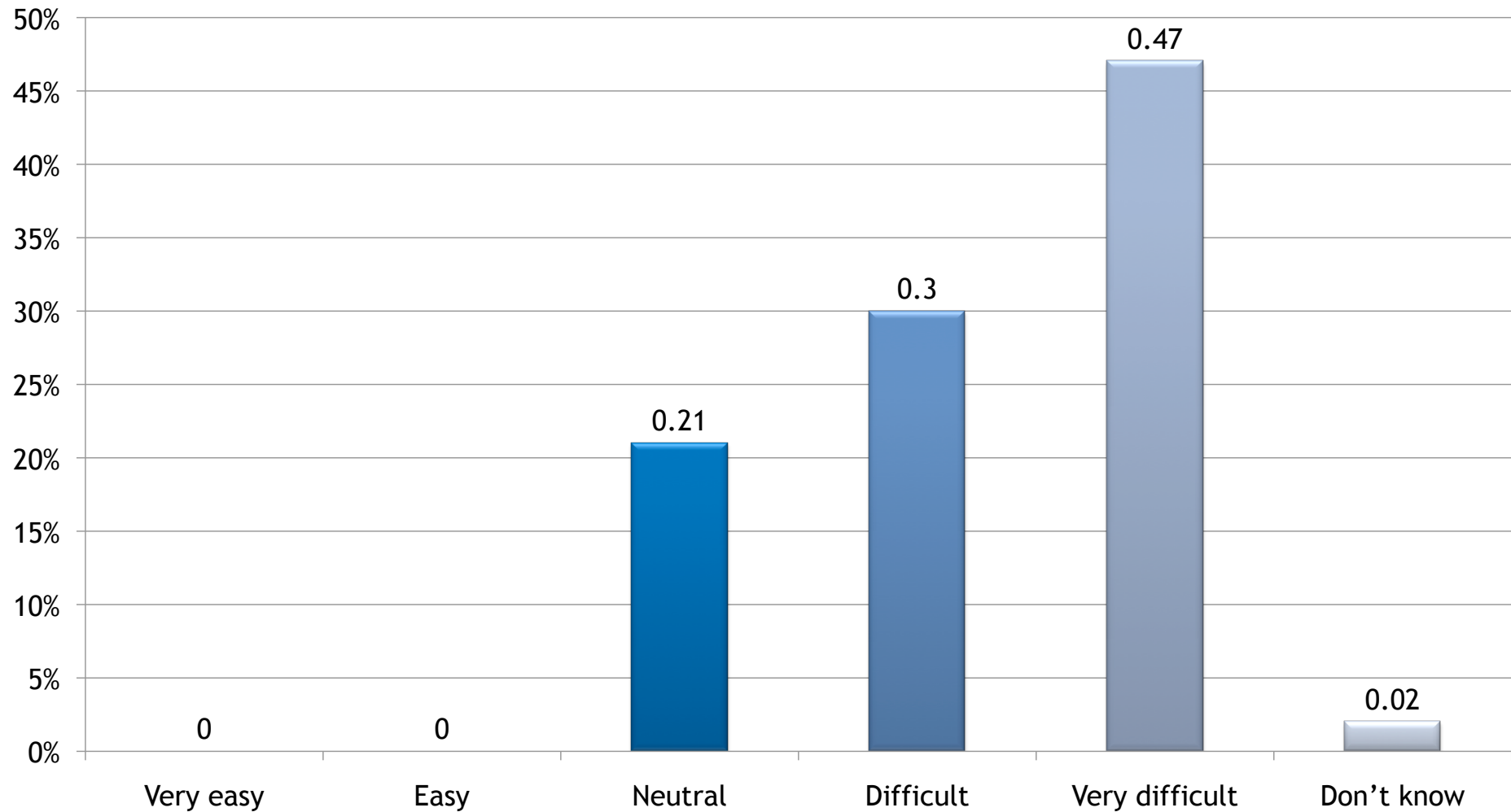


What were the biggest hurdles in starting your business?



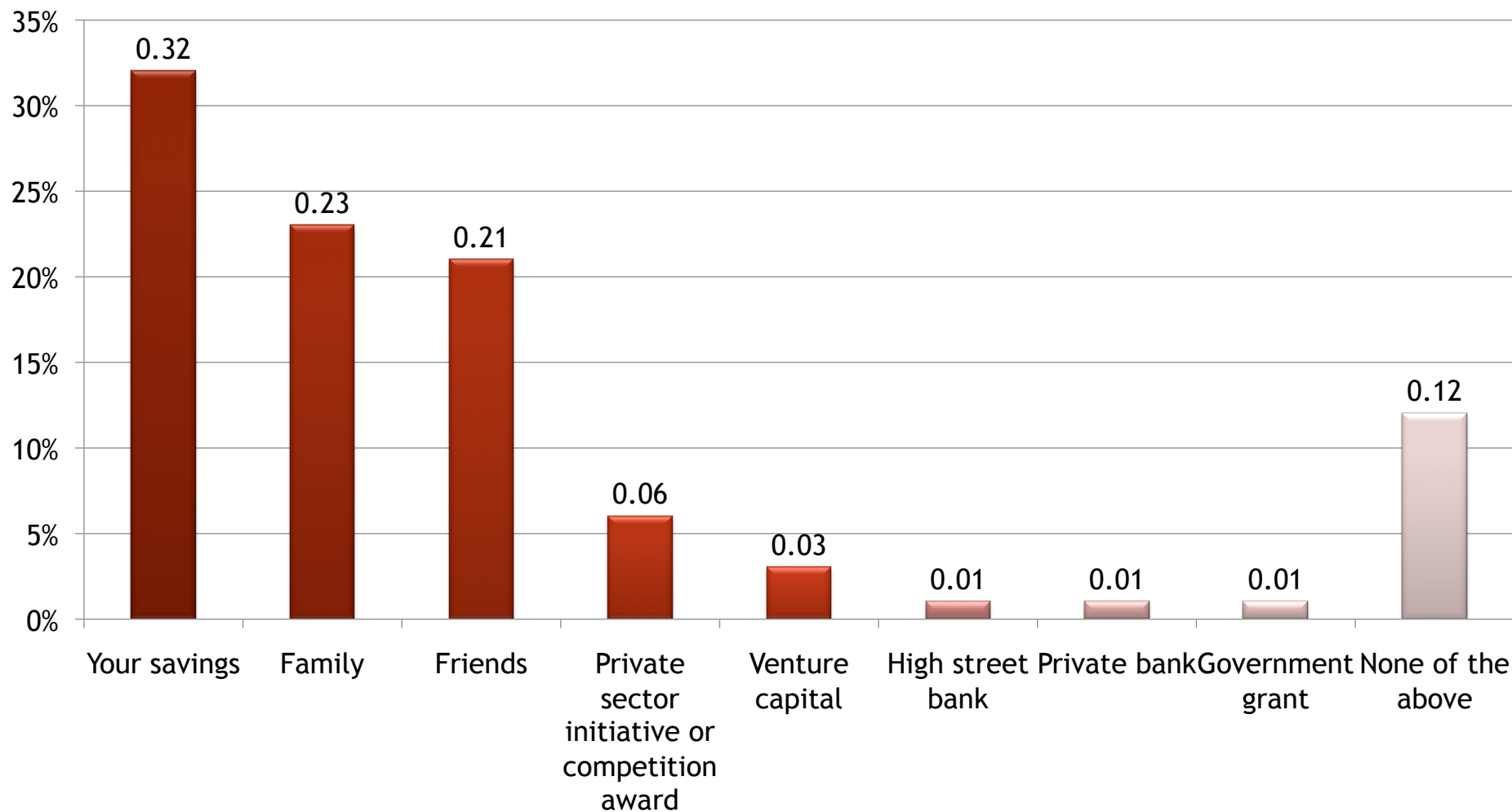
How easily accessible are funds for start-ups?

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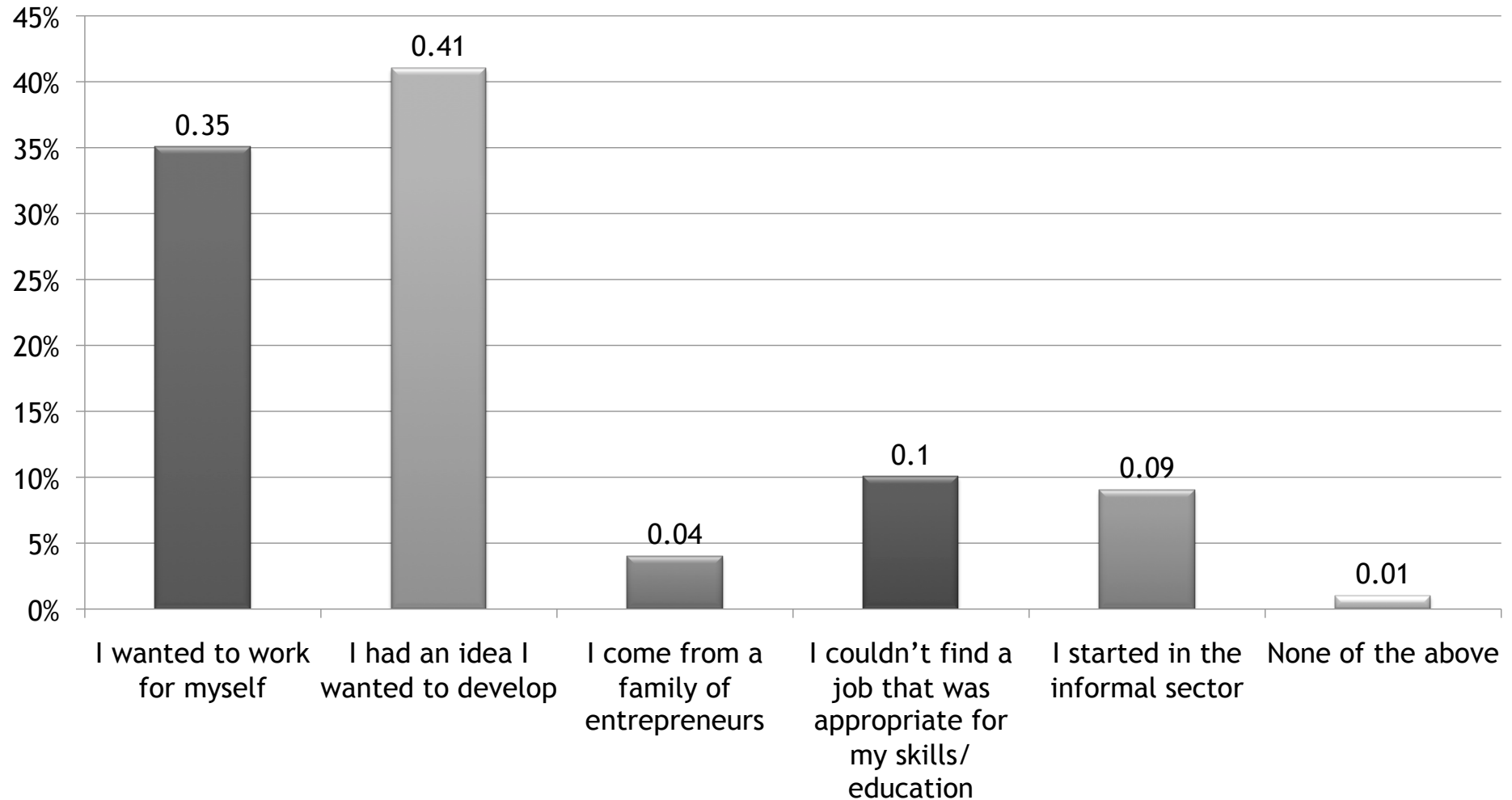
Who provided the capital to help you start your business?

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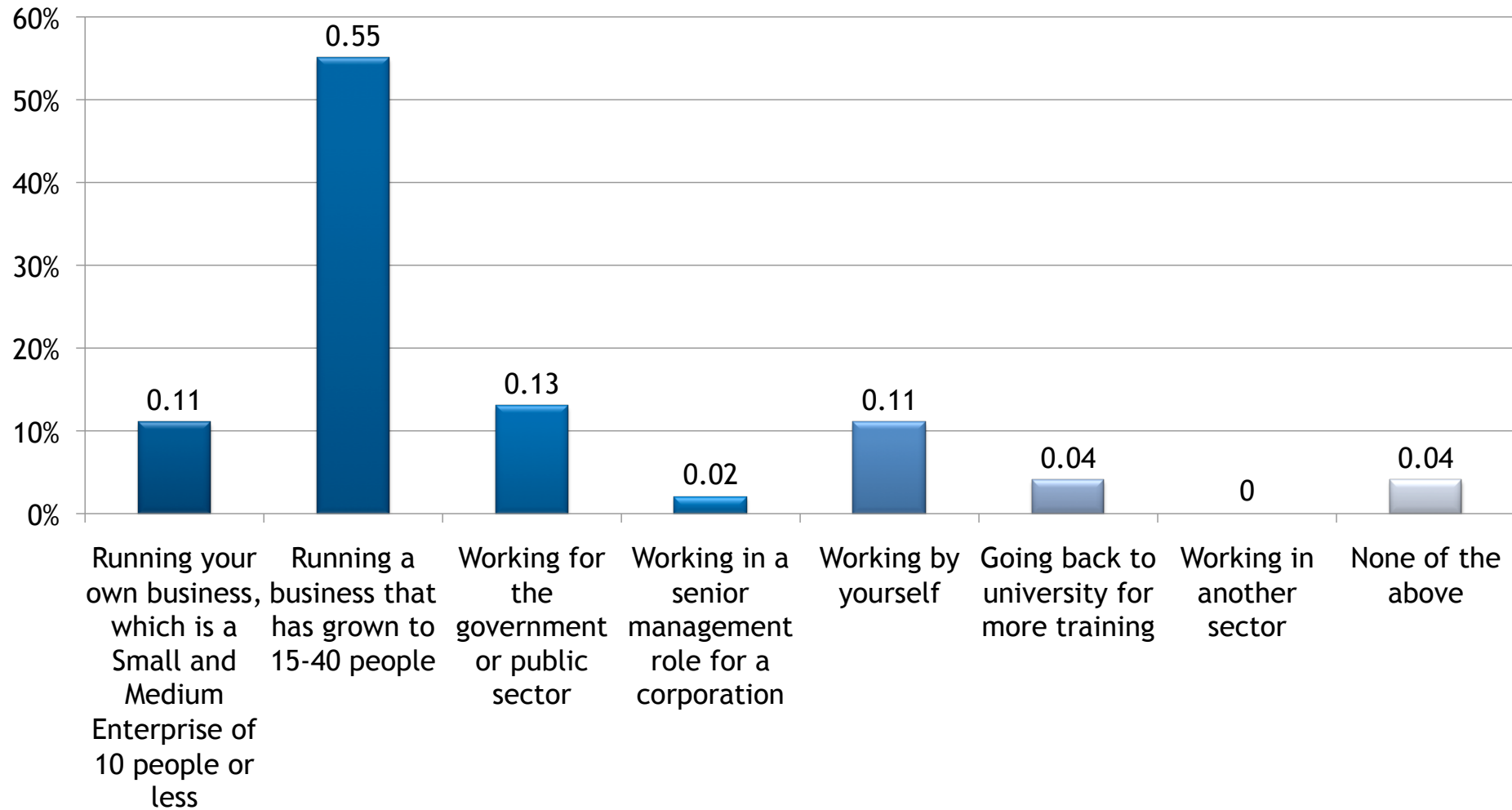


Why did you decide to become an entrepreneur?

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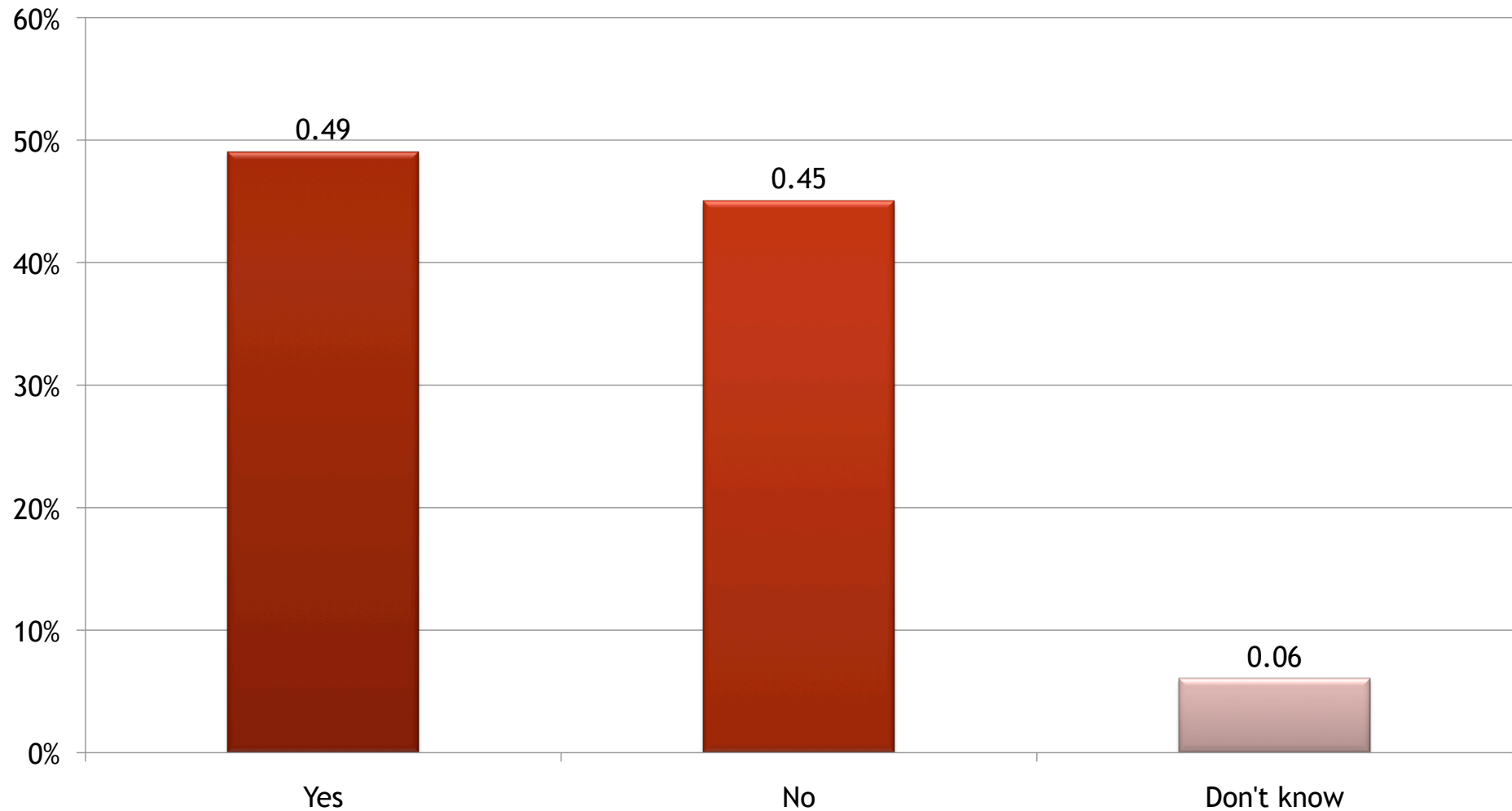


Where do you see yourself in 10-15 years?



Do you think women have the same employment opportunities as men?

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What happens now?

In a major new development in 2014, the New York Forum AFRICA will play host to the first ever **African Citizens' Summit**, in association with Train My Generation. The Summit will present the results of the survey profiled in this report, which was undertaken in collaboration with Global Counsel and Tribal Brands, and hosted on mPowering Action, the online and mobile platform - powered by the UN Foundation and the UNDP - that encourages young people to articulate their views on social and economic issues. The outcomes of the survey and Summit will be presented as policy recommendations to ministers and heads of state present at the NYFA.

The results will also go to feed discussion among an audience of students from local colleges and high schools about the issues which mean the most to them: opportunities in secondary and higher education; in the workplace; and for entrepreneurs. The discussion will also be livestreamed to universities and high schools across the continent enabling them to join in the debate.

The Train My Generation survey is just one insight into a much wider conversation which is going on across Africa (and prefaced in Gabon by Les Assises Sociales social summit in April 2014).

These vital debates around education and employment for young people will be critical for what will be the youngest continent in the world, and experiencing a huge demographic bulge which could power Africa into its next generation of growth. This 'demographic dividend' however will only be enjoyed if Africa's youth get the support they need with the right policies and priorities in place from both government and the private sector. As the conversation continues, listening to and learning from Africa's youth will be more important than ever.

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