



Plain Language  
Association  
International

2017 conference Graz, Austria

# International public sector survey

**Miguel Martinho**

Claro

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**Graz, Austria**



# PLAIN public sector survey

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## Goals

- Find out how governments around the world are implementing plain language and how citizens view their success.
- Build and update a major resource for plain language: [this is for you](#).
- Help to advocate for plain language around the world: [again, for you all](#).



# Project partners

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## PLAIN

The international association for plain language professionals  
[plainlanguagenetwork.org](http://plainlanguagenetwork.org)



## Claro

Pioneer organisation for plain language in Portugal, and host of 2010 Clarity conference.  
[claro.pt](http://claro.pt)



# A three-part survey

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## Three perspectives

1. Central government
2. Public sector agencies
3. Public perception



# 1. Central government

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## We want to find out

- Which countries have plain language laws?
- Do these laws improve government communication?
- How are governments resourcing plain language?

## Who will answer

- Plain language experts
- One survey participant per country: [will it be you?](#)
- Research-based survey

# 1. Central government

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## Outline of topics

- Laws mandating plain language
- Definition of plain language
- Compliance and reporting
- Policy or strategy
- Resources allocated
- Initiatives in place



# 1. Central government

## IPLSurvey - central government - for feedback

5. If there is a law requiring government agencies to communicate clearly, what are its requirements?

3 Total Responses | [Hide Responses](#) ▼

Count	Response
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1	(3) PLAIN WRITING- The term `plain writing' means writing that is clear, concise, well-organized, and follows other best practices appropriate to the subject or field and intended audience.
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1	Na redação dos documentos, designadamente de formulários, ofícios, minutas de requerimentos, avisos, convocatórias, certidões e declarações, em especial na comunicação com os cidadãos, deve usar-se linguagem simples, clara, concisa e significativa, sem siglas, termos técnicos ou expressões reverenciais ou intimidatórias. In the drafting of documents, particularly forms, letters, minutes of applications, notices, summons, certificates and declarations, especially in communication with citizens, simple, clear, concise and meaningful language should be used, without acronyms, technical terms or intimidating or reverential expressions.
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# 2. Government agencies

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## We want to find out

- What are agencies doing to communicate clearly?
- How effective have they been?
- How are they resourcing plain language?

## Who will answer

- A person in charge of an agency's communication
- Other authorised person in agency
- As many agencies as possible: [do you work for one?](#)



# 2. Government agencies

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## Outline of topics

- Initiatives in place
- Motivations and goals
- Plain language strategies
- Effectiveness of initiatives
- Support for clear communication



# 2. Government agencies

## IPLSurvey - public sector agencies - for feedback

### Clear communication activities

6. When did your agency start taking steps to communicate clearly with the public?

- Less than 1 year ago
- 1 to 5 years ago
- 5 to 10 years ago
- More than 10 years ago

7. Why did your agency start taking steps to communicate clearly with the public? *Select all that apply.*

- Example of a similar organization
- Initiative of an executive member of the organization
- External requirement (such as law or regulations)
- External criticism
- Improvement of internal processes
- Other - Please specify:

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# 3. Public perception

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## We want to find out

- How do people view public sector clarity?
- Is plain language important?
- Are government initiatives working?
- What elements do the public most value?

## Who will answer the questionnaire

- Members of the public
- As broad a reach as possible: [thanks to you!](#)

# 3. Public perception

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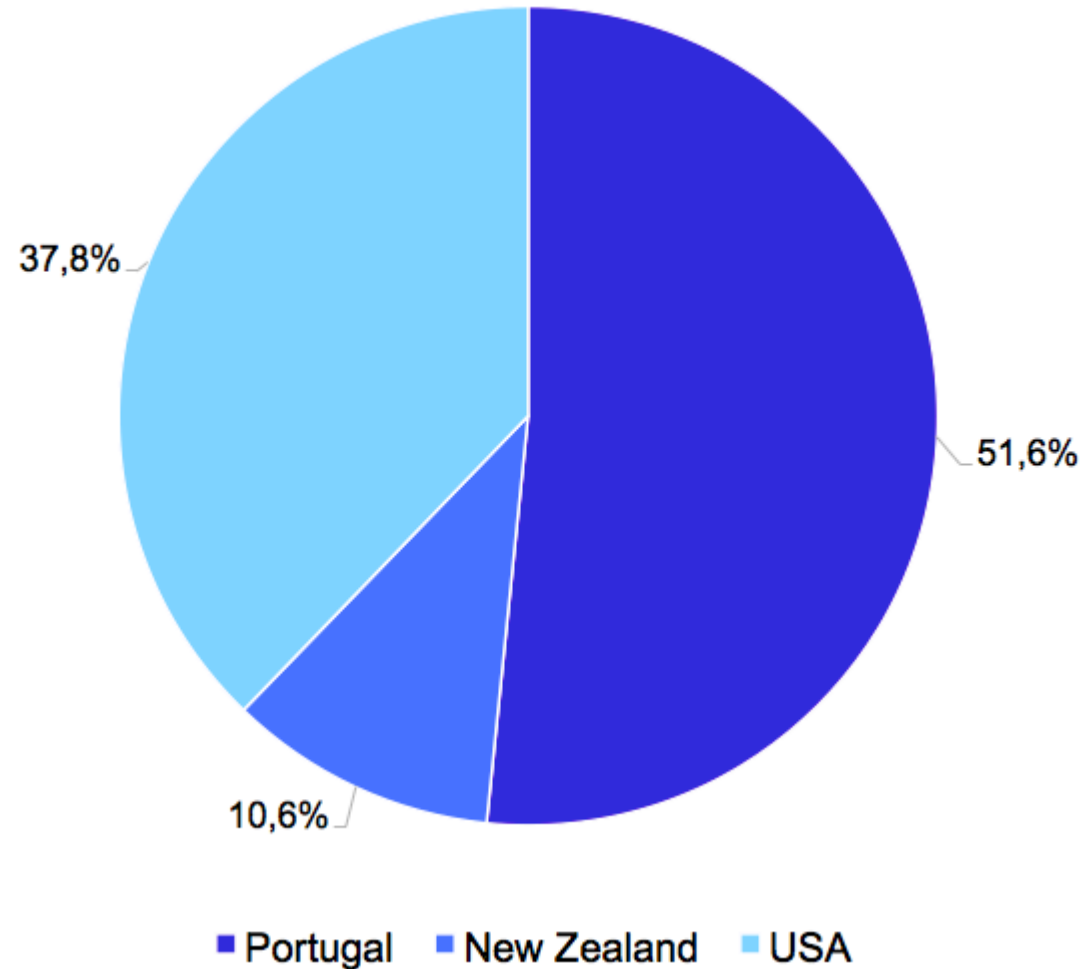
## Outline of topics

- Demographics (age, education, income)
- Perception of clarity
- Importance of plain language
- Preferred channels
- Current experience and consequences
- Value of clear communication
- Elements public most value

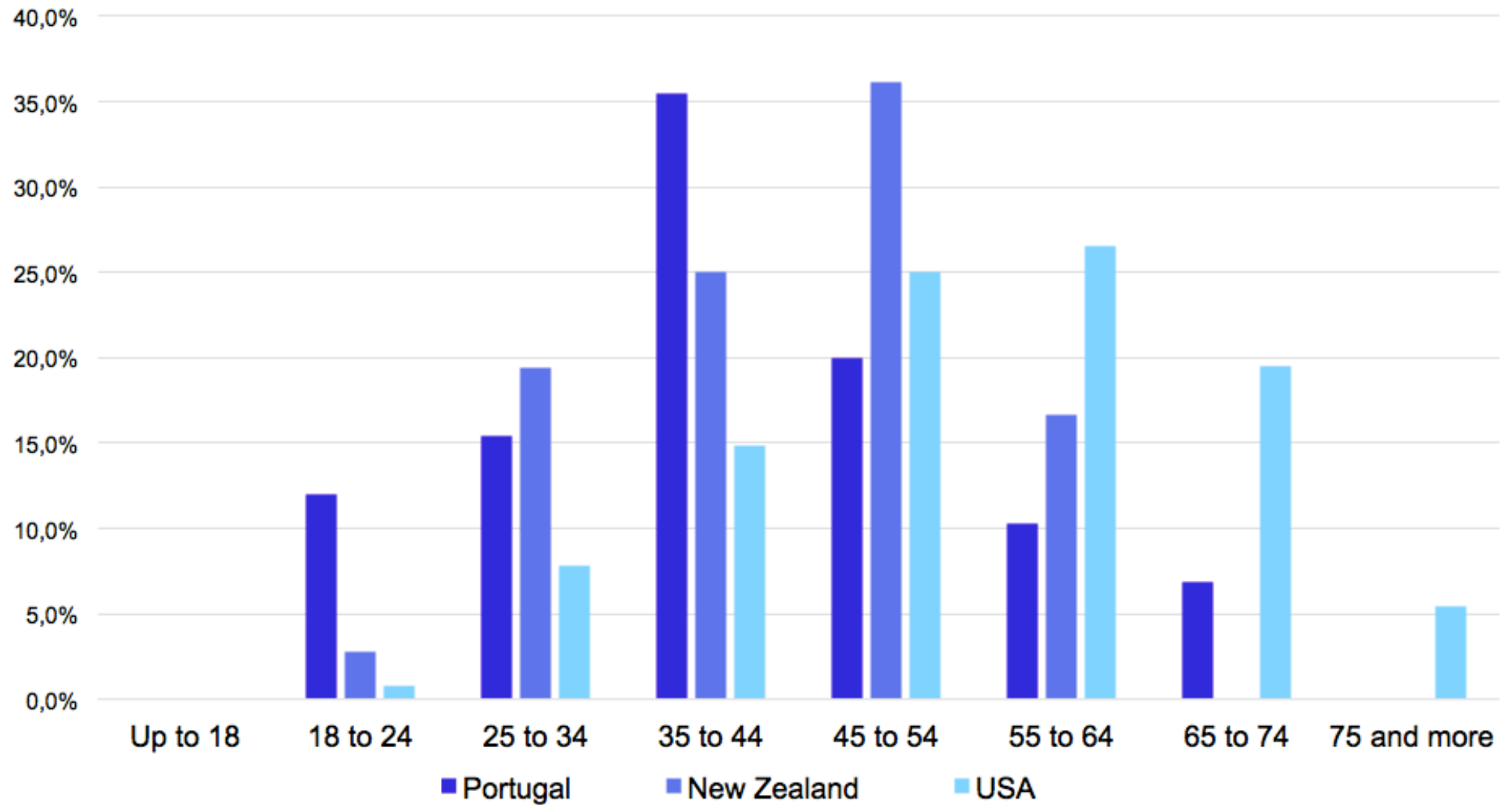


# 3.1 Public perception pilot survey results

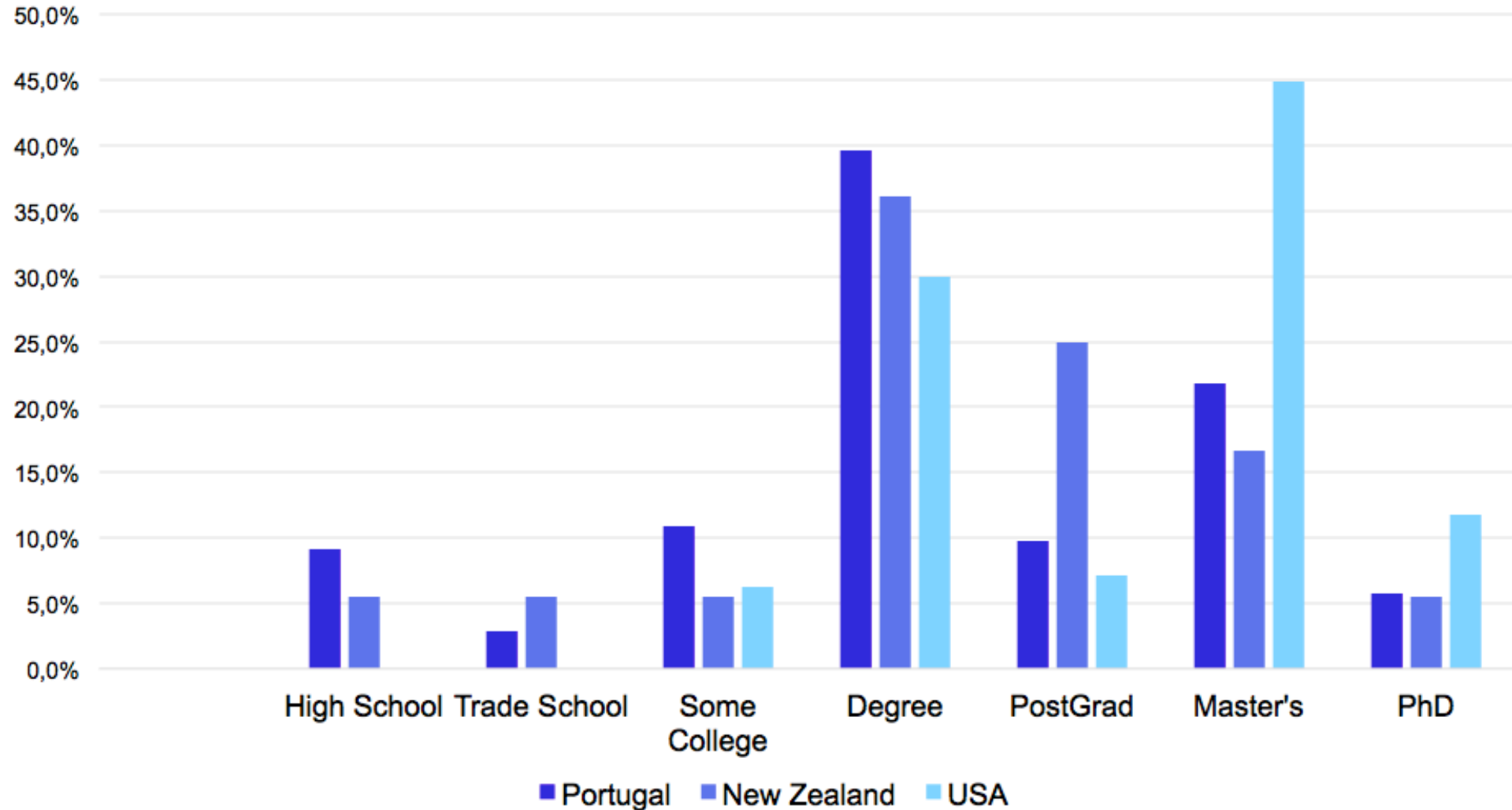
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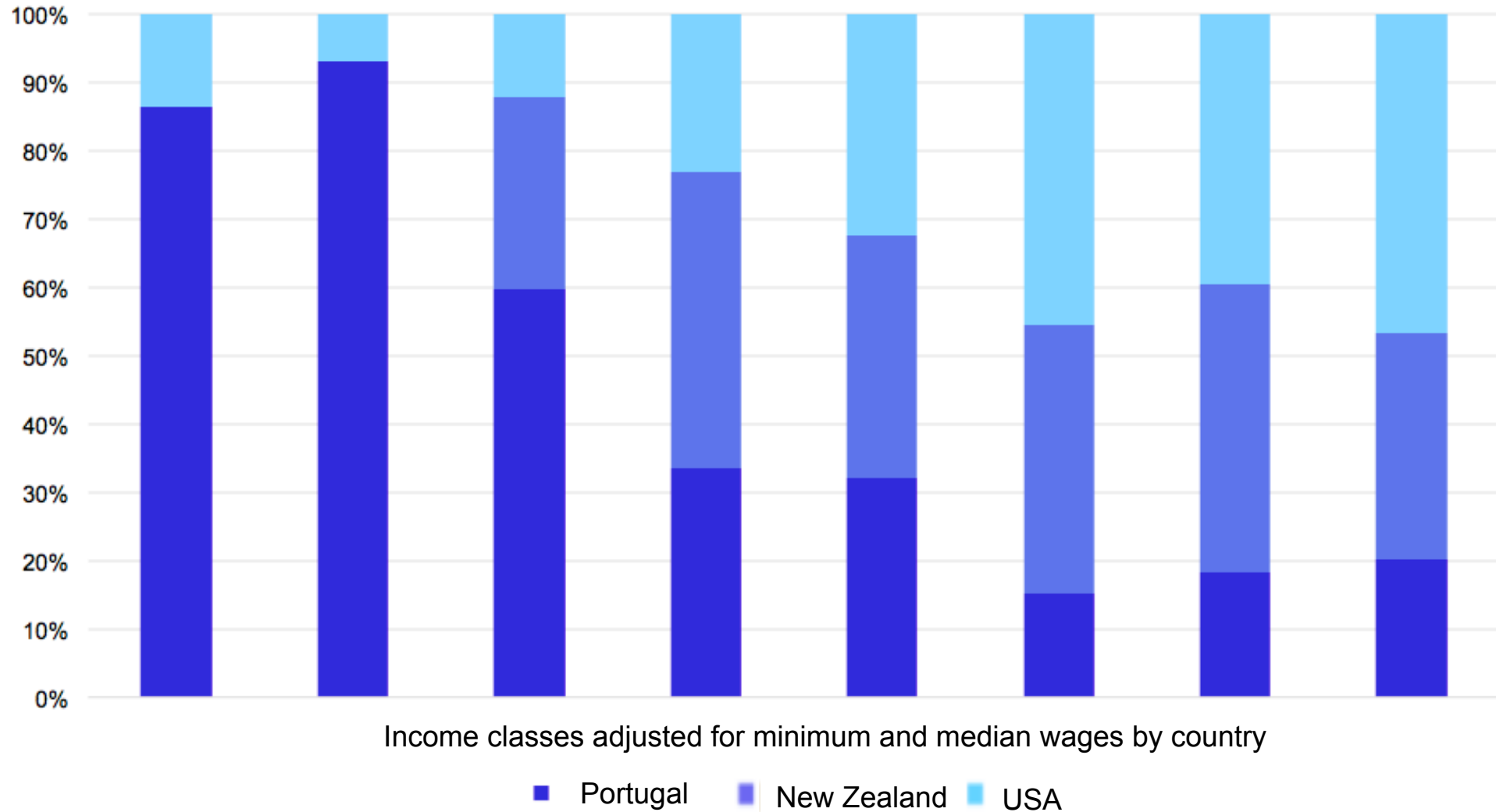
# What is your age?



# What is the highest level of education you have completed?

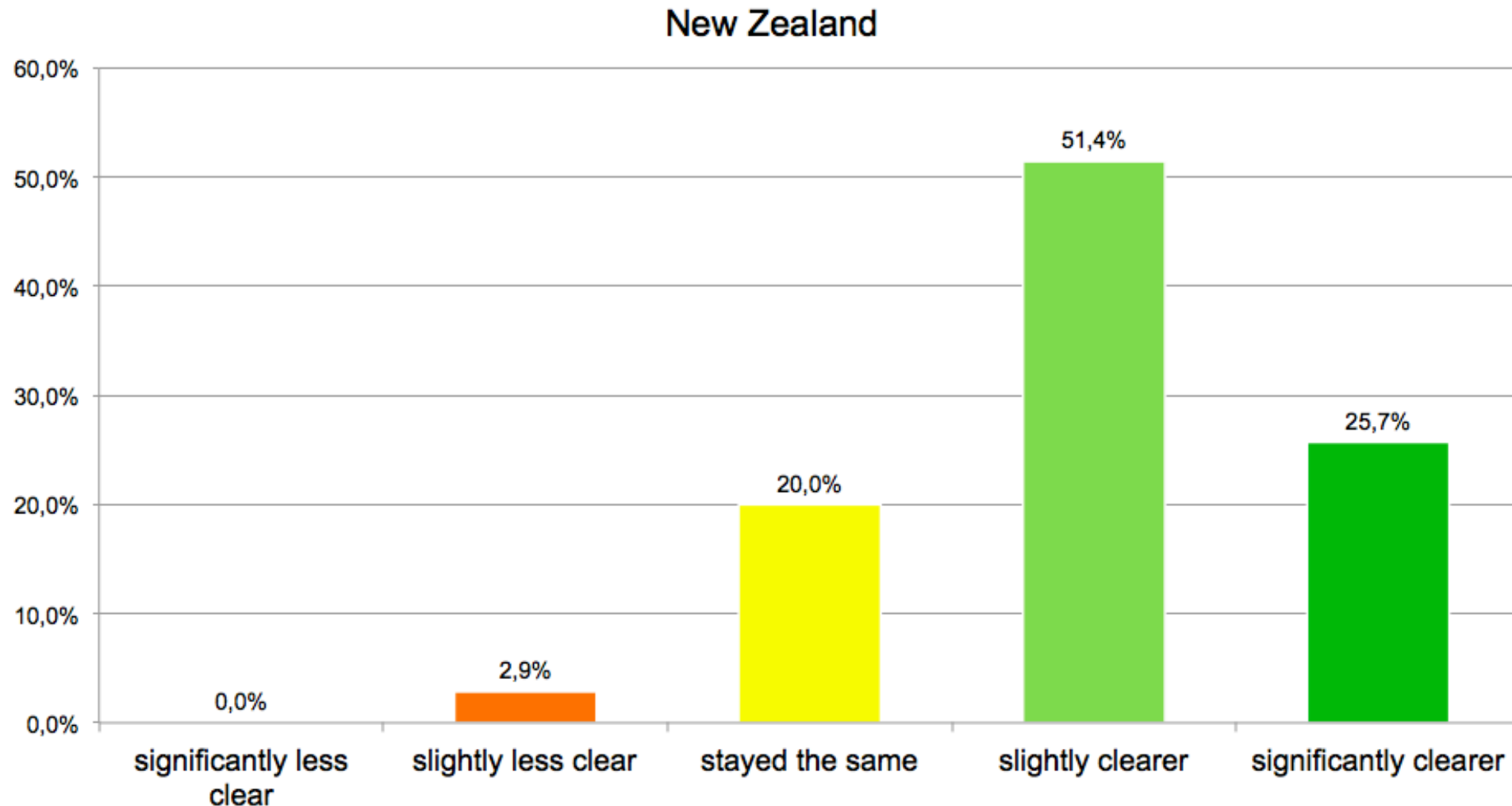


# What is your yearly household income (before tax)?

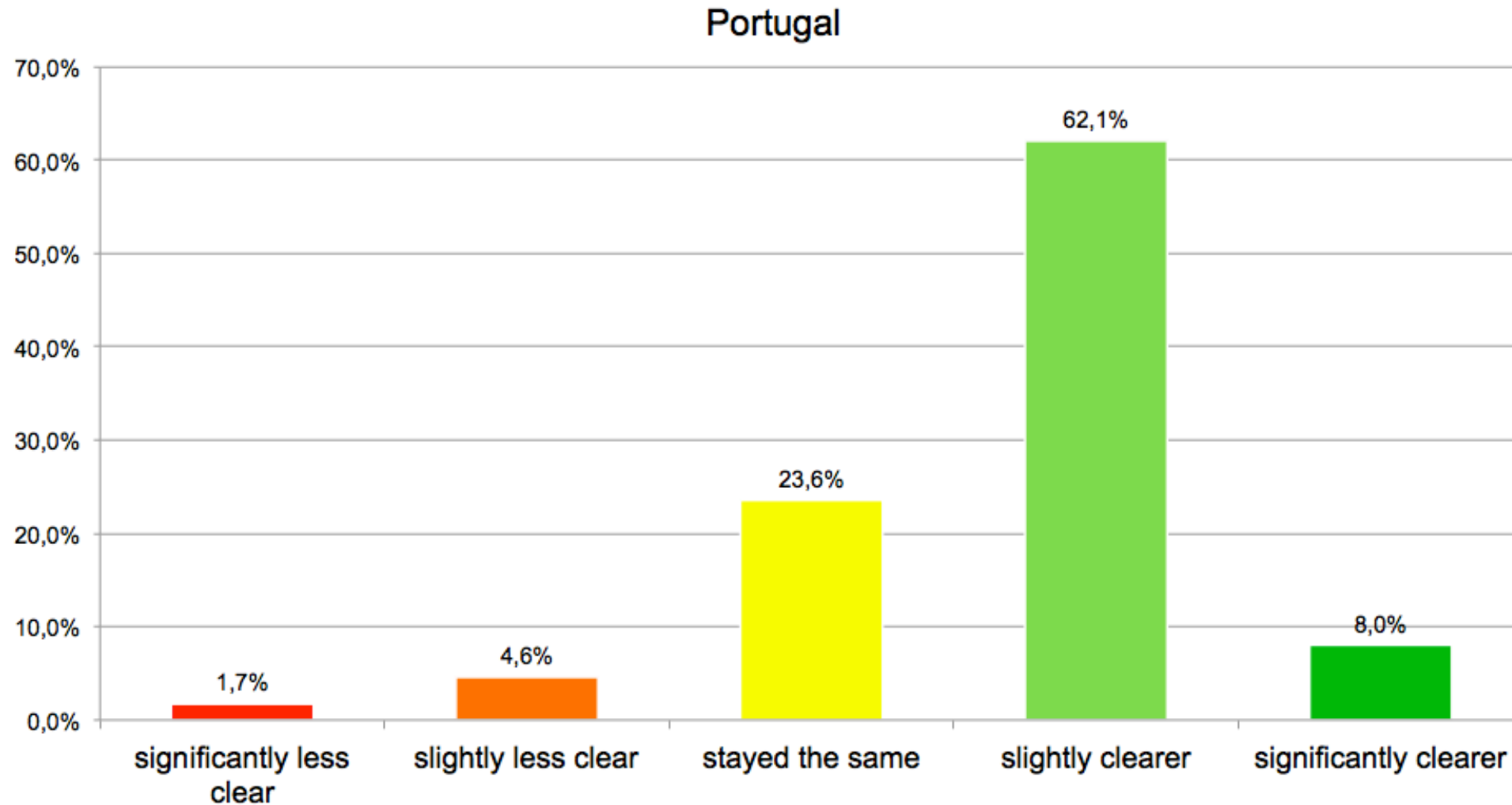




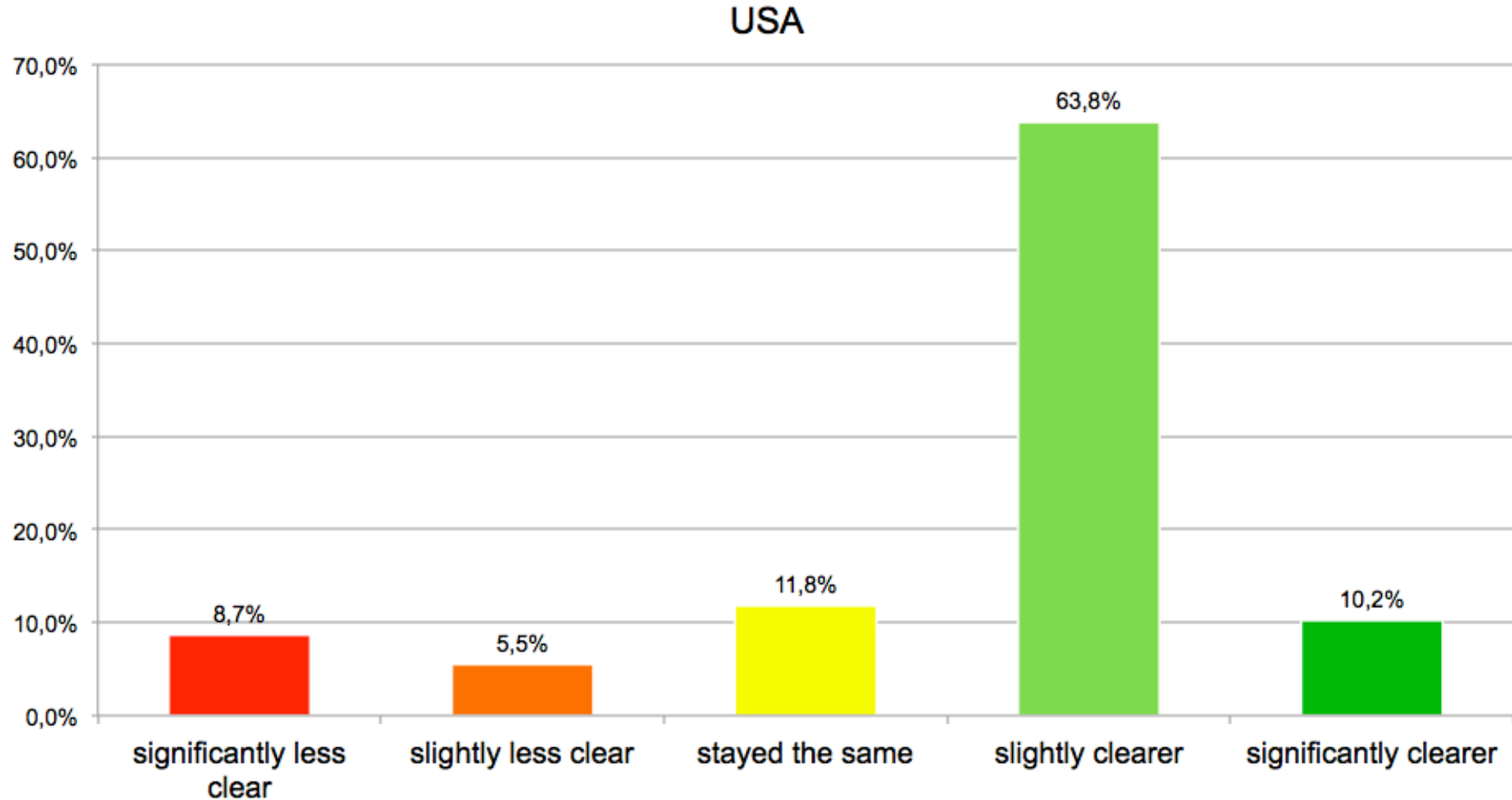
# Has communication from government organizations changed in the last 10 years?



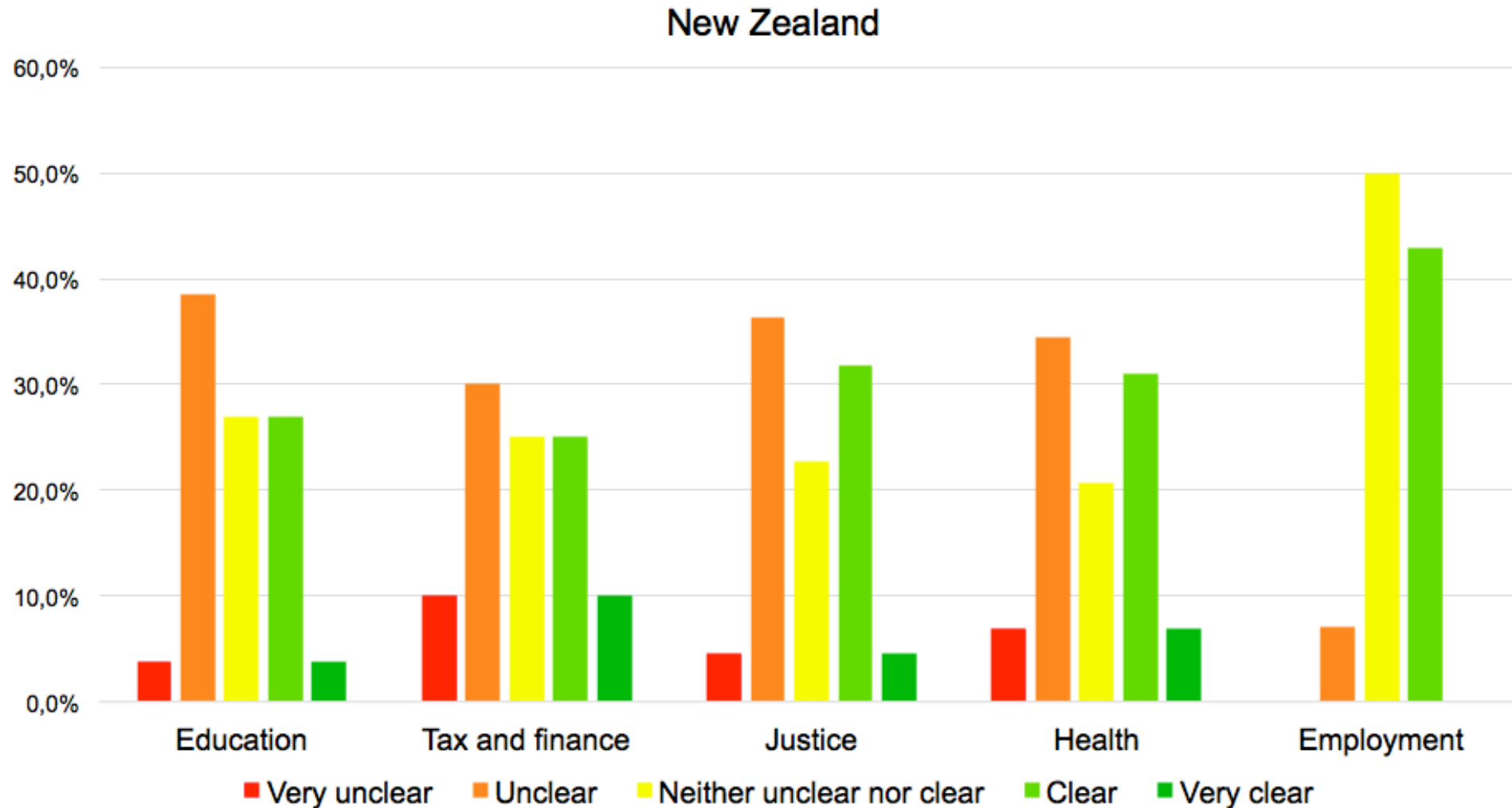
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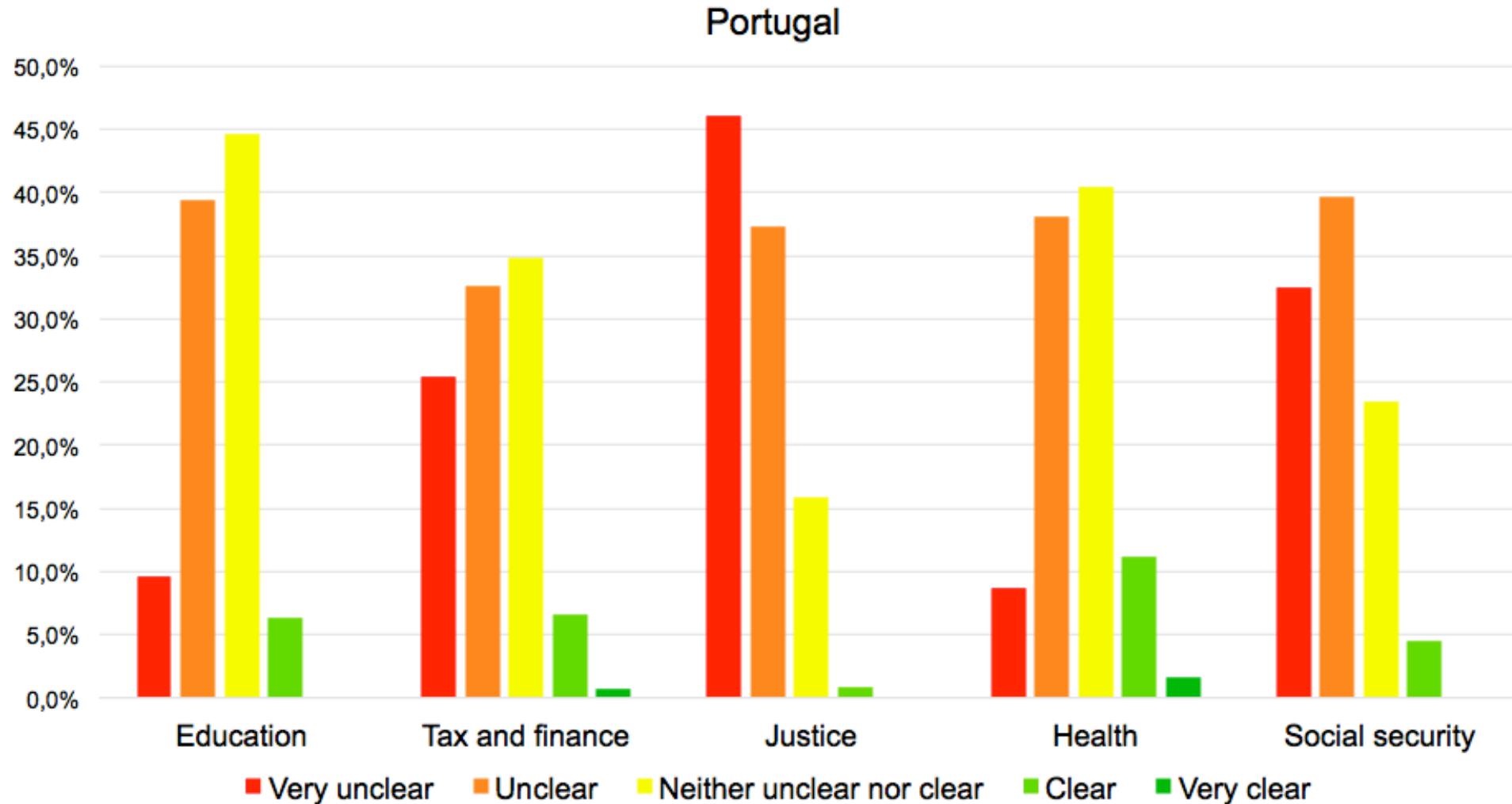
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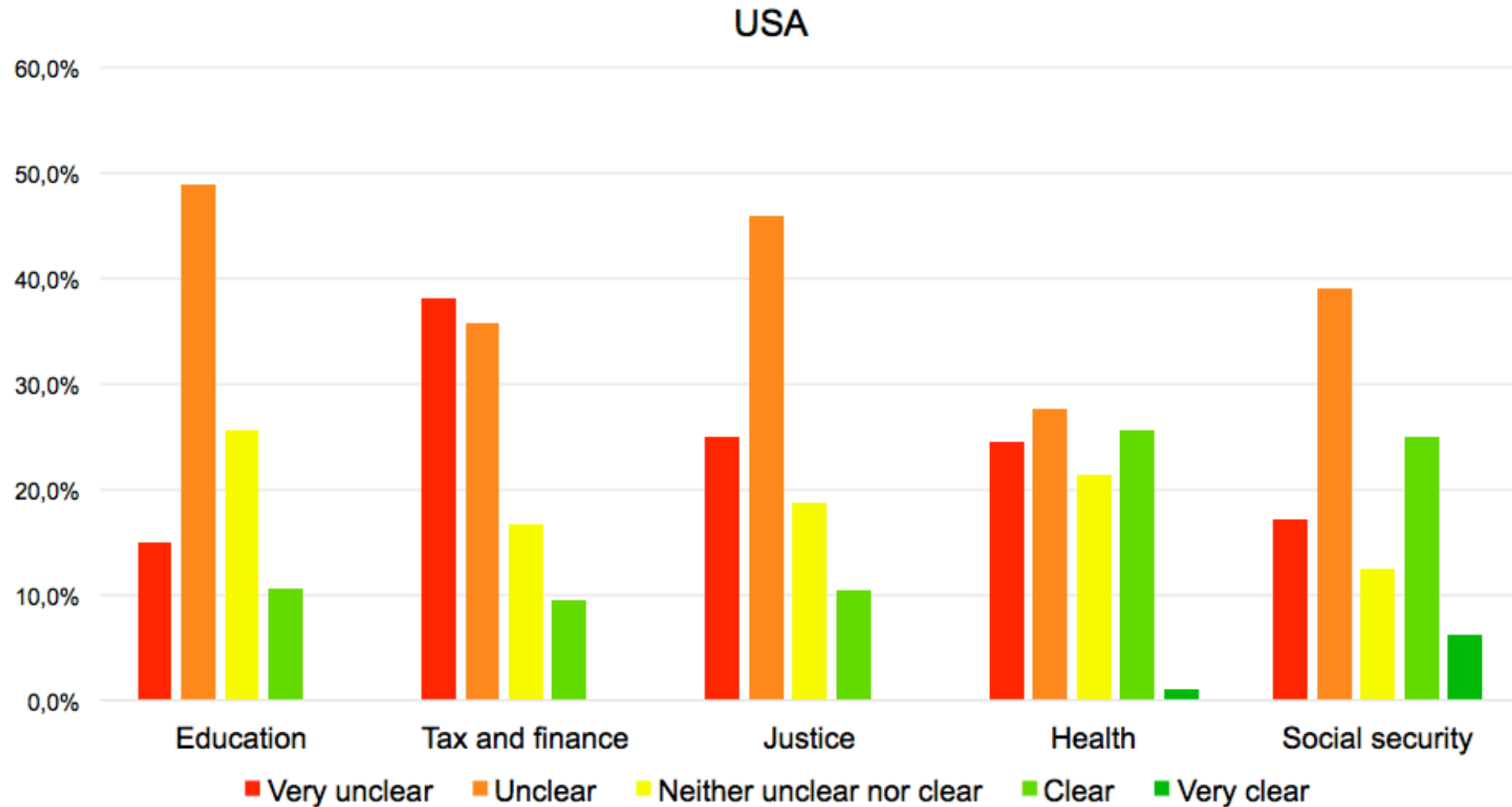
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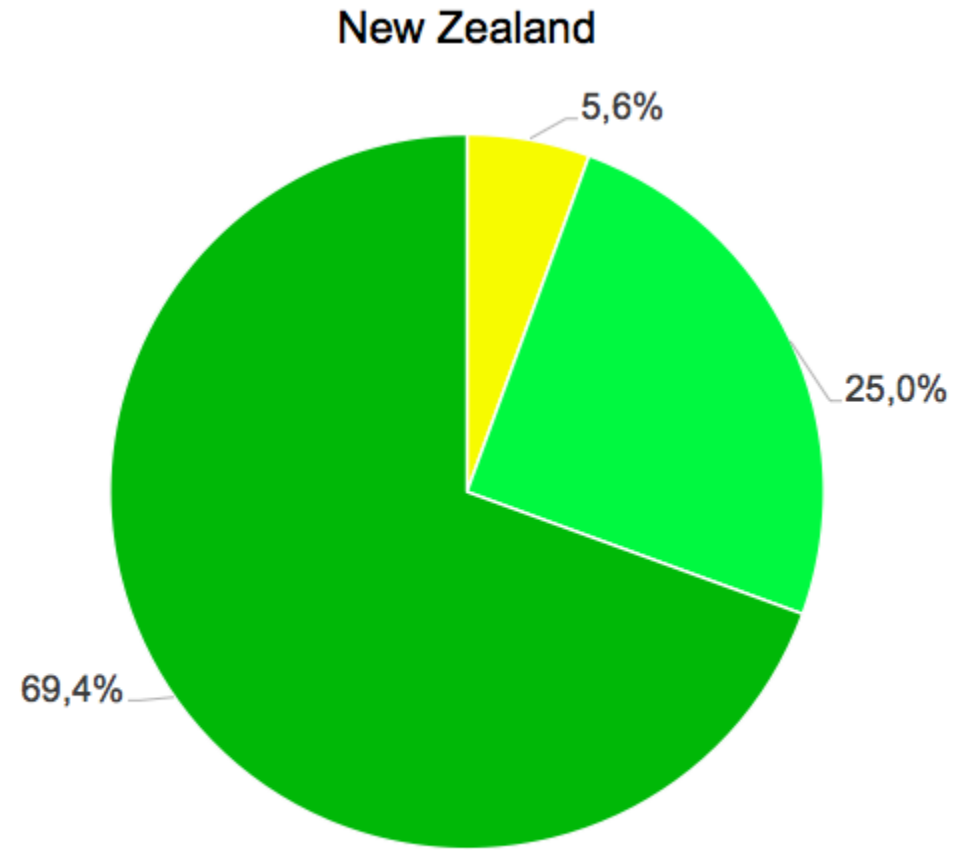
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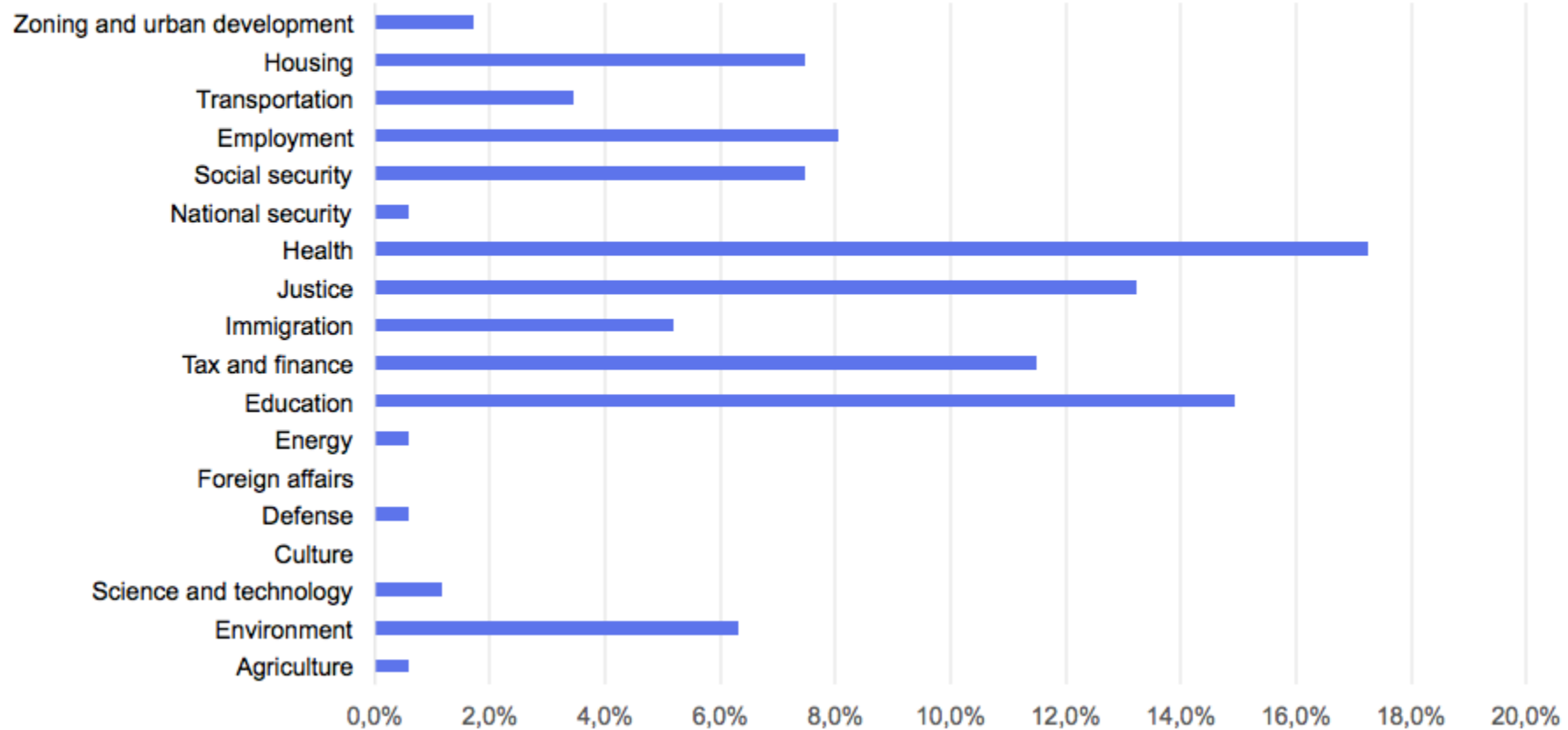
# How important is it for you that government organizations communicate clearly with the public?



■ Not at All Important ■ Of Little Importance ■ Important ■ Very Important ■ Extremely Important

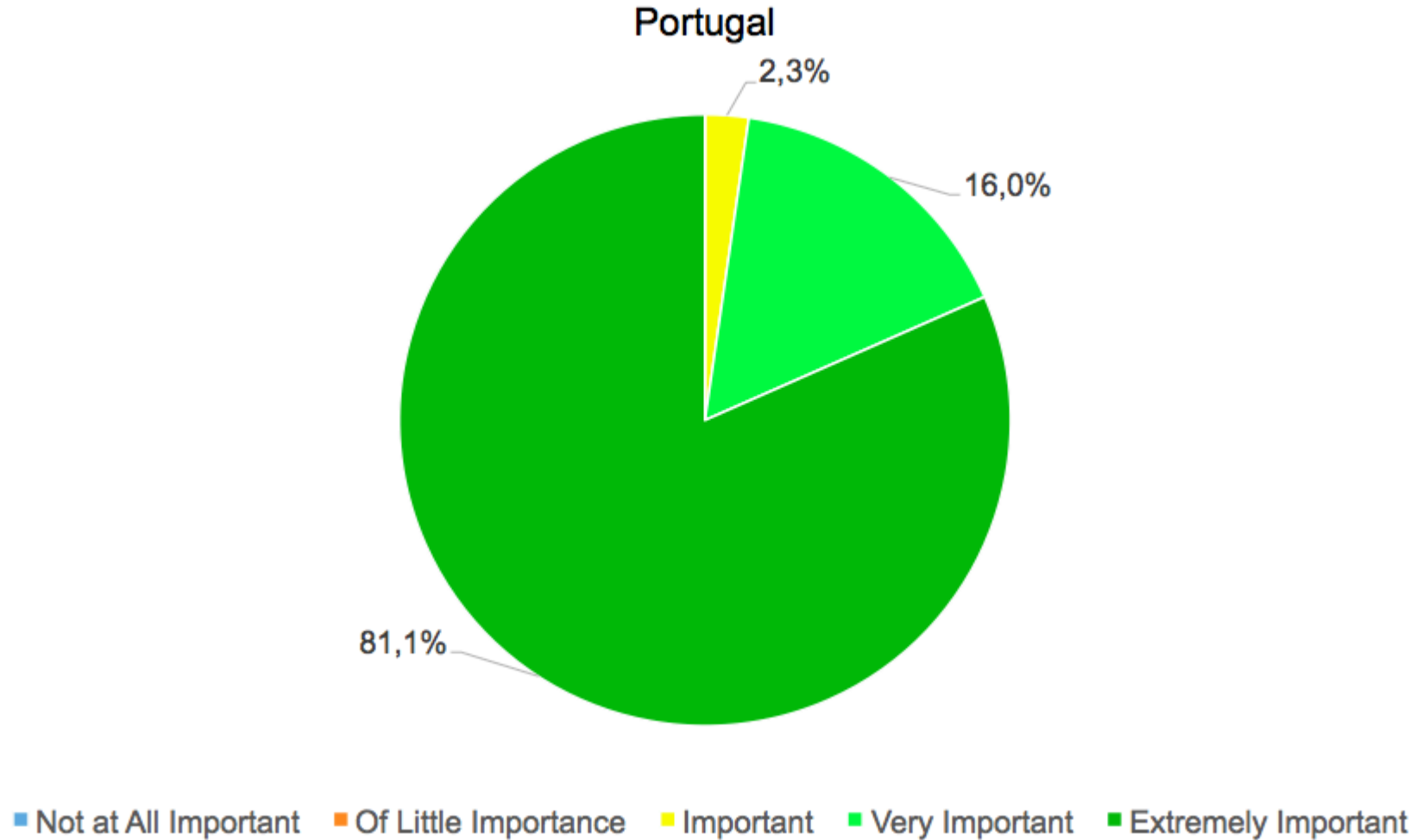
# In which areas do you consider clear communication to be the most important?

## New Zealand

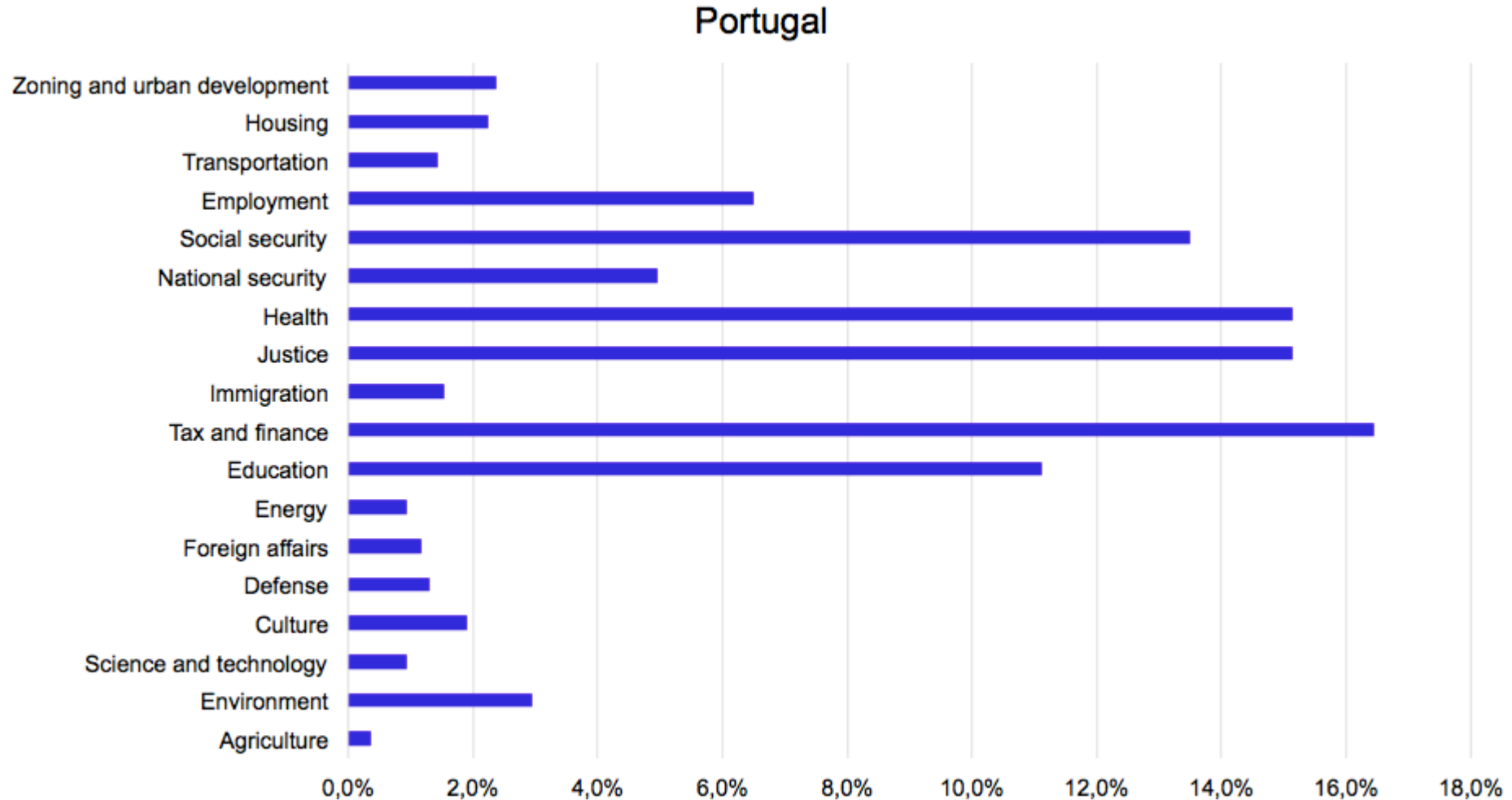




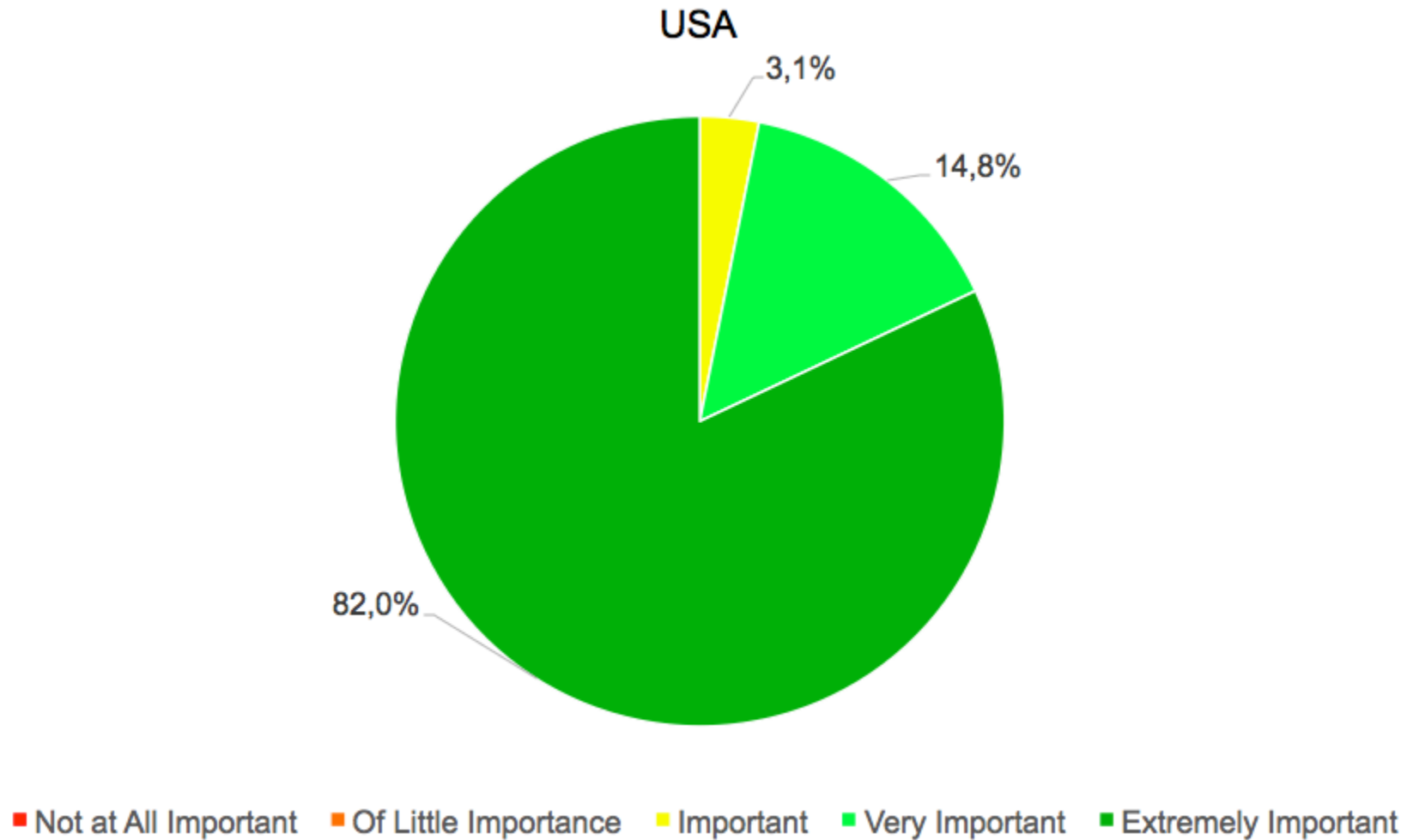
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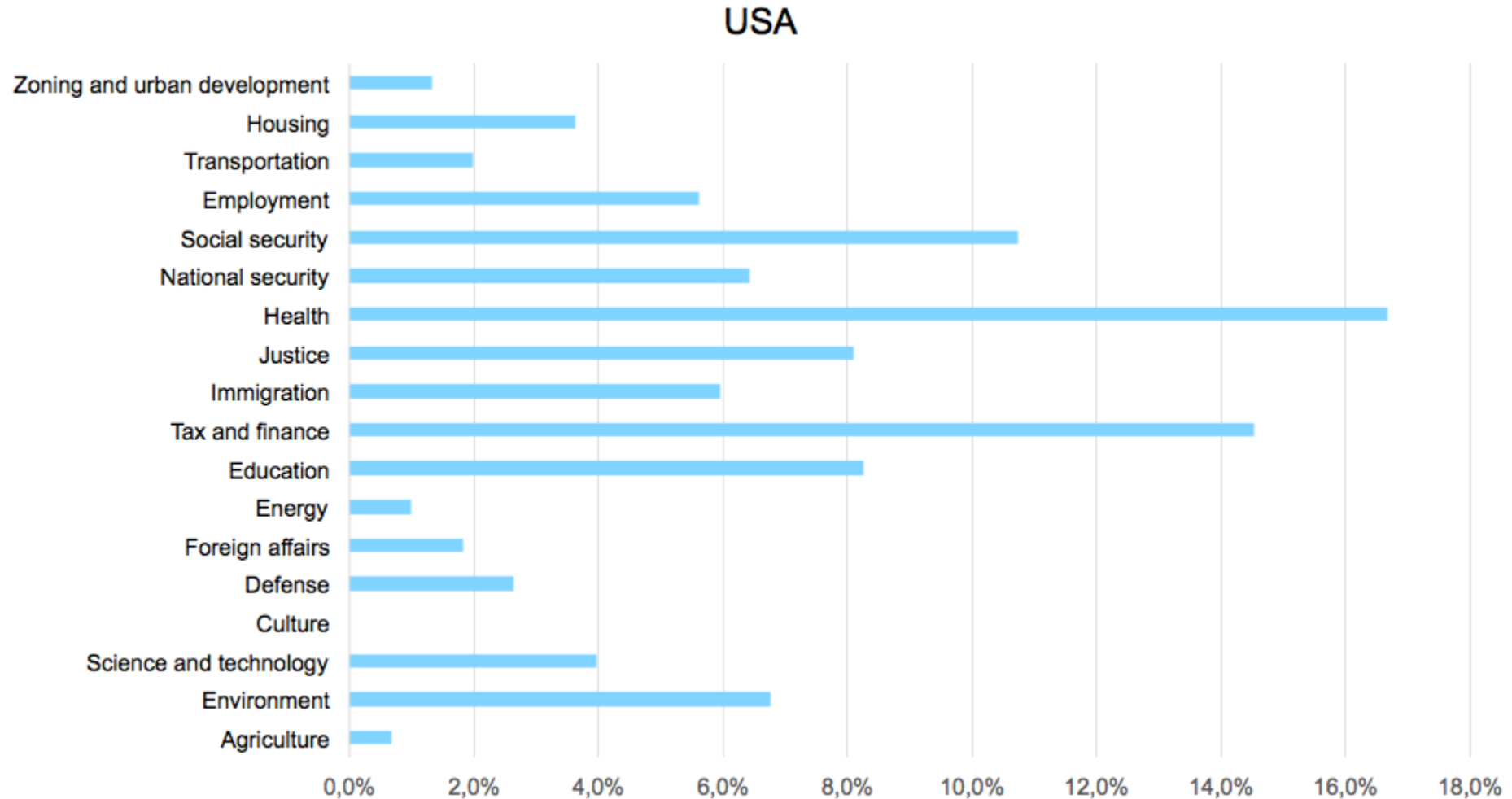
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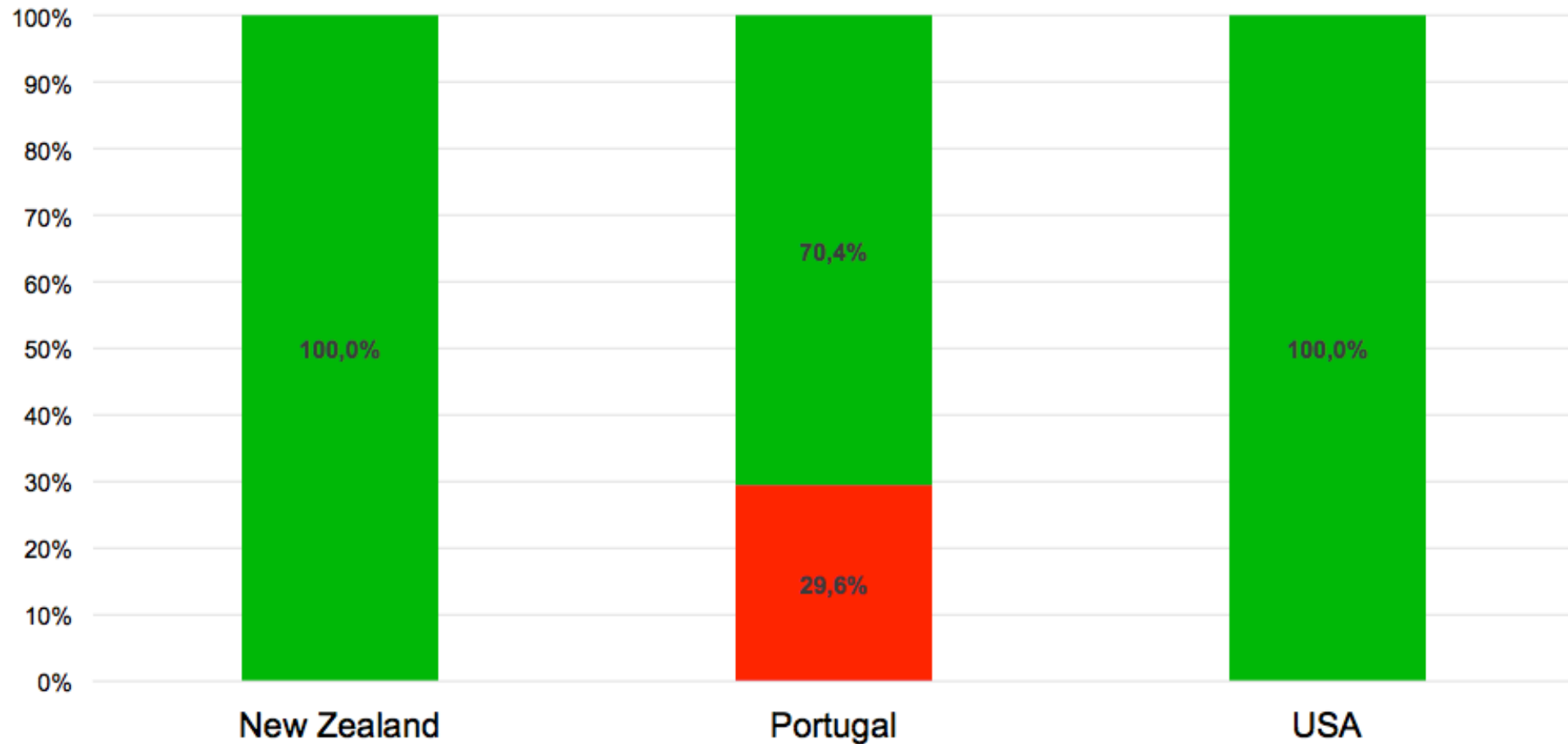
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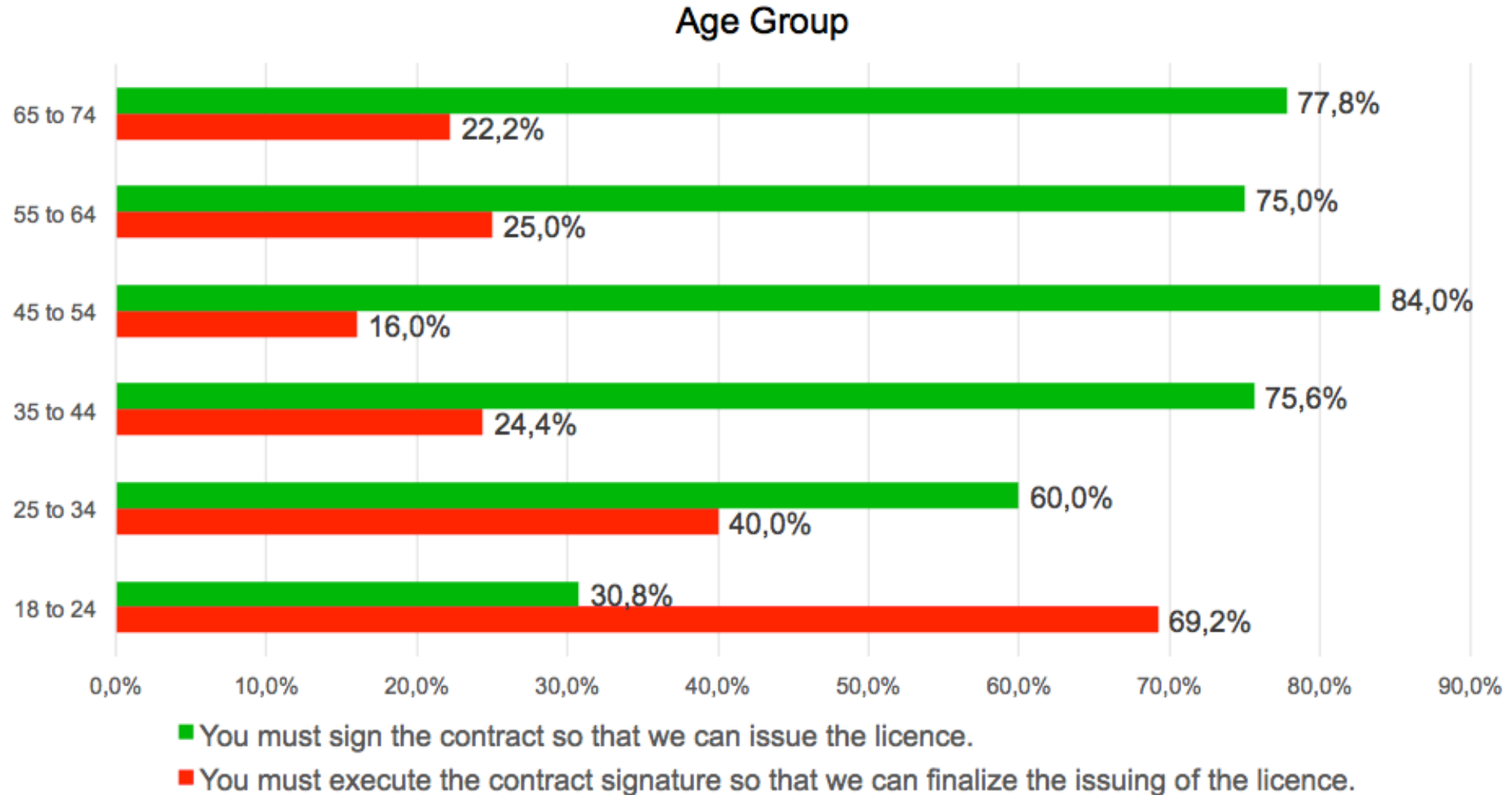
Which sentence do you prefer?

- You must execute the contract signature so that we can finalize the issuing of the licence.
- You must sign the contract so that we can issue the licence.

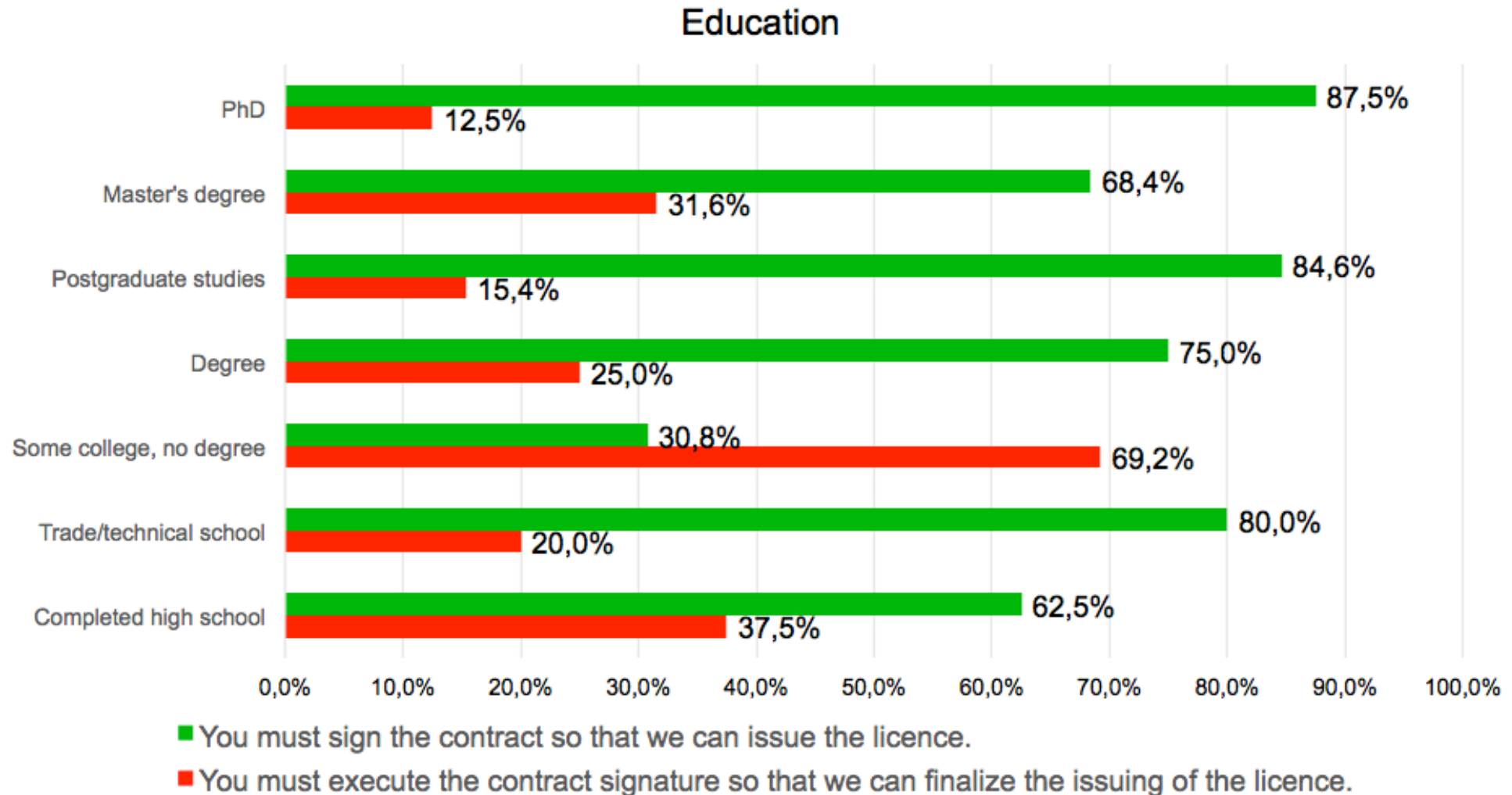
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- You must sign the contract so that we can issue the licence.



# Portugal: who are those people?

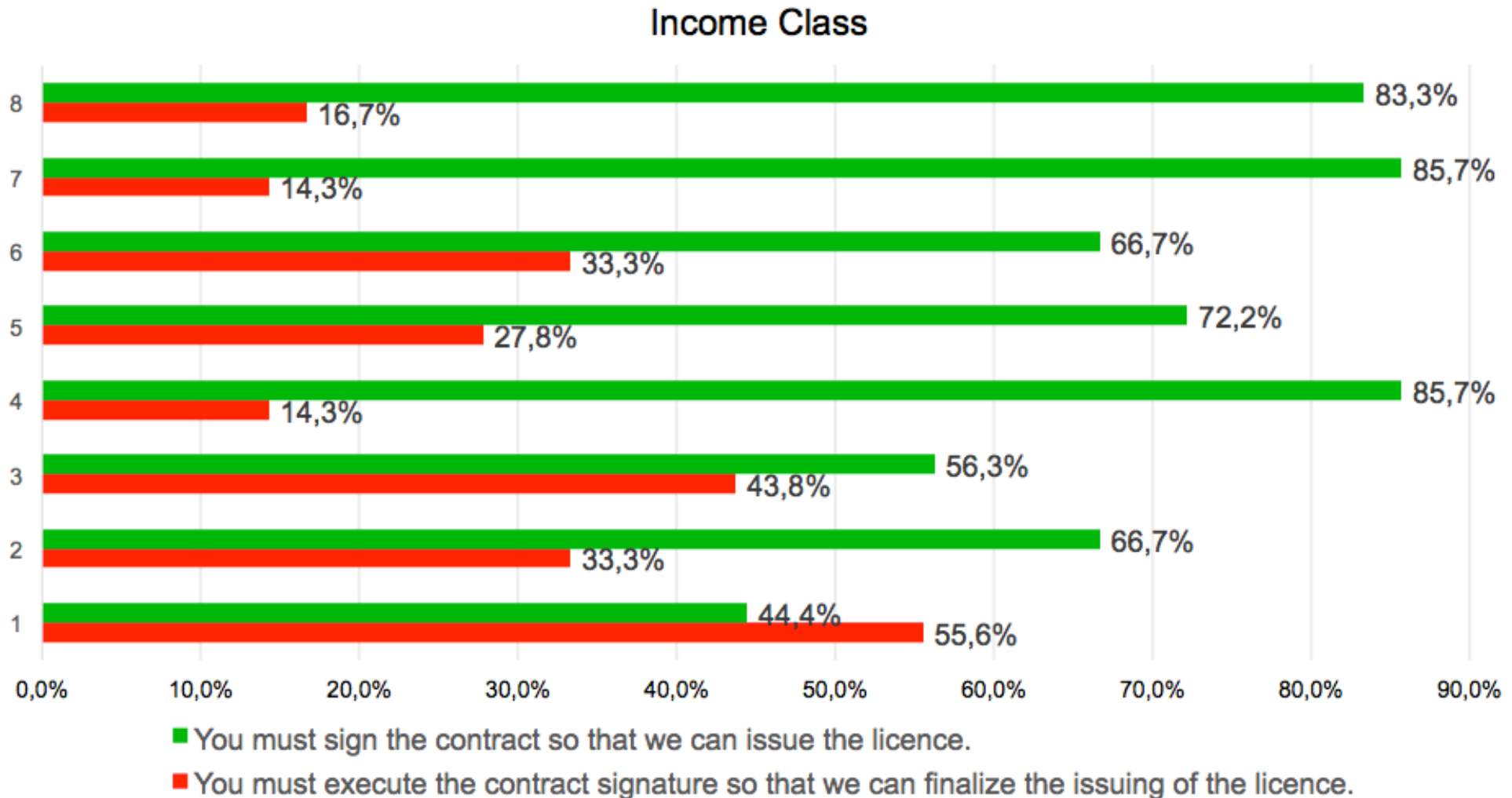


# Portugal: who are those people?

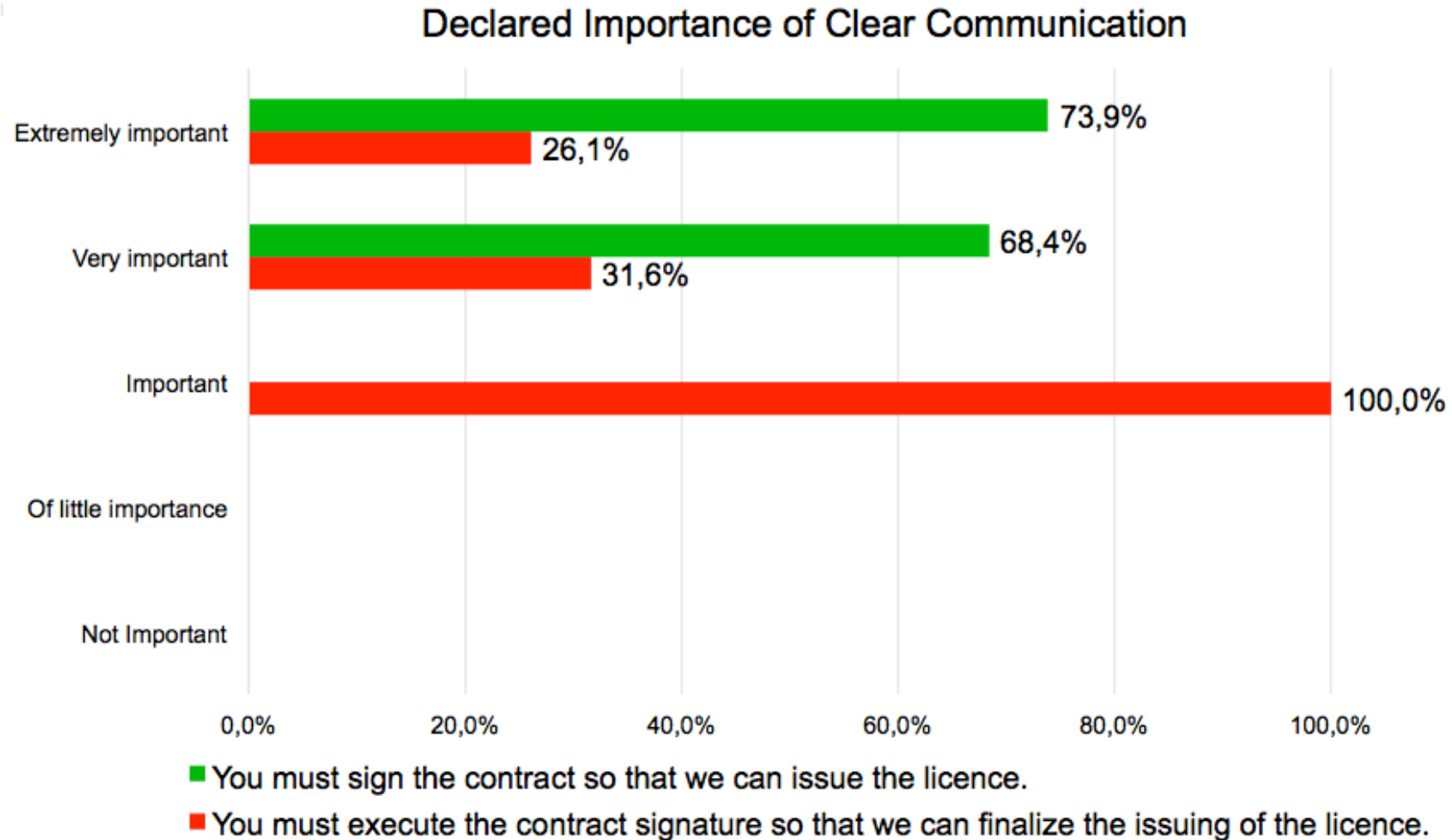




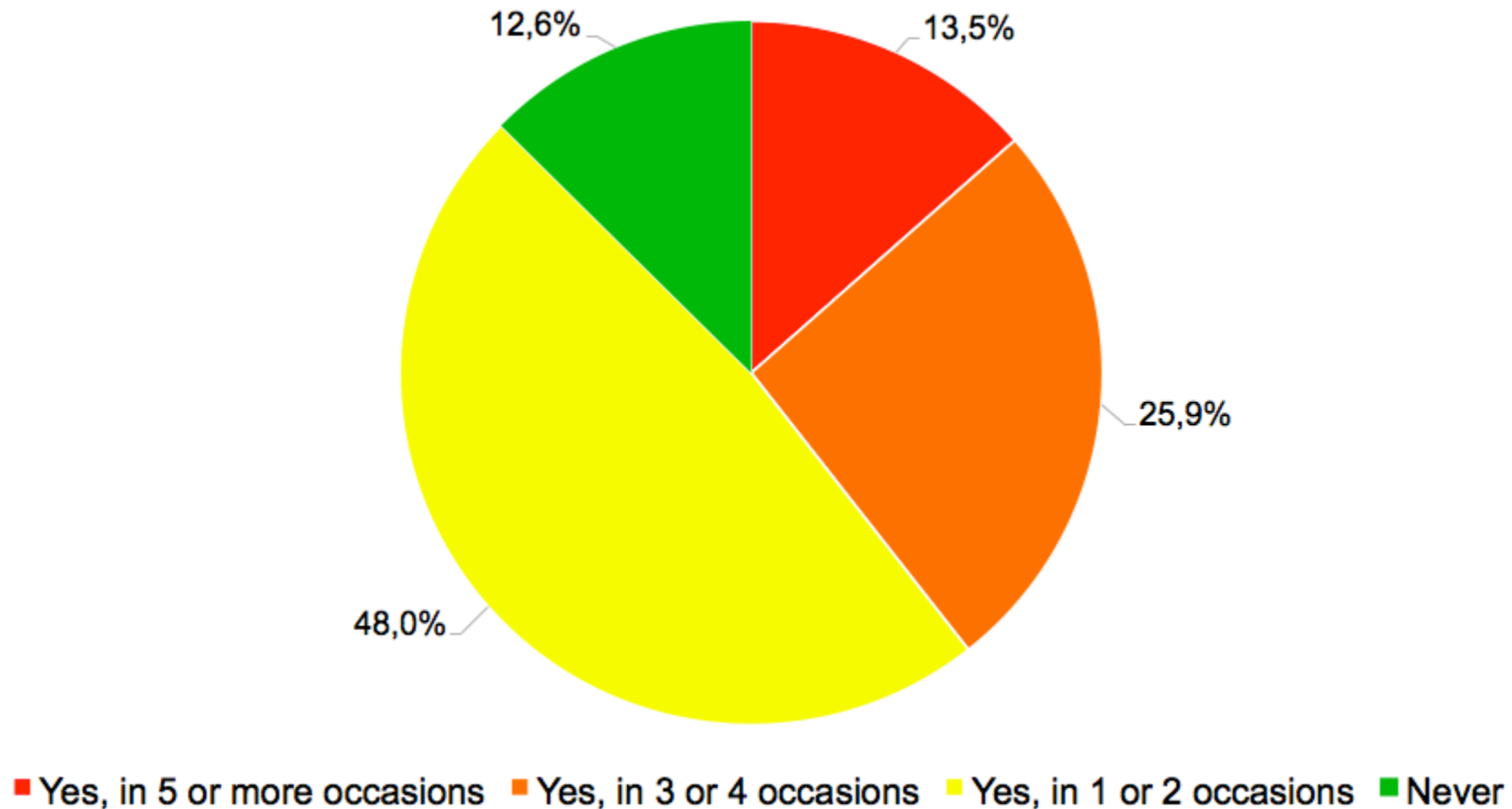
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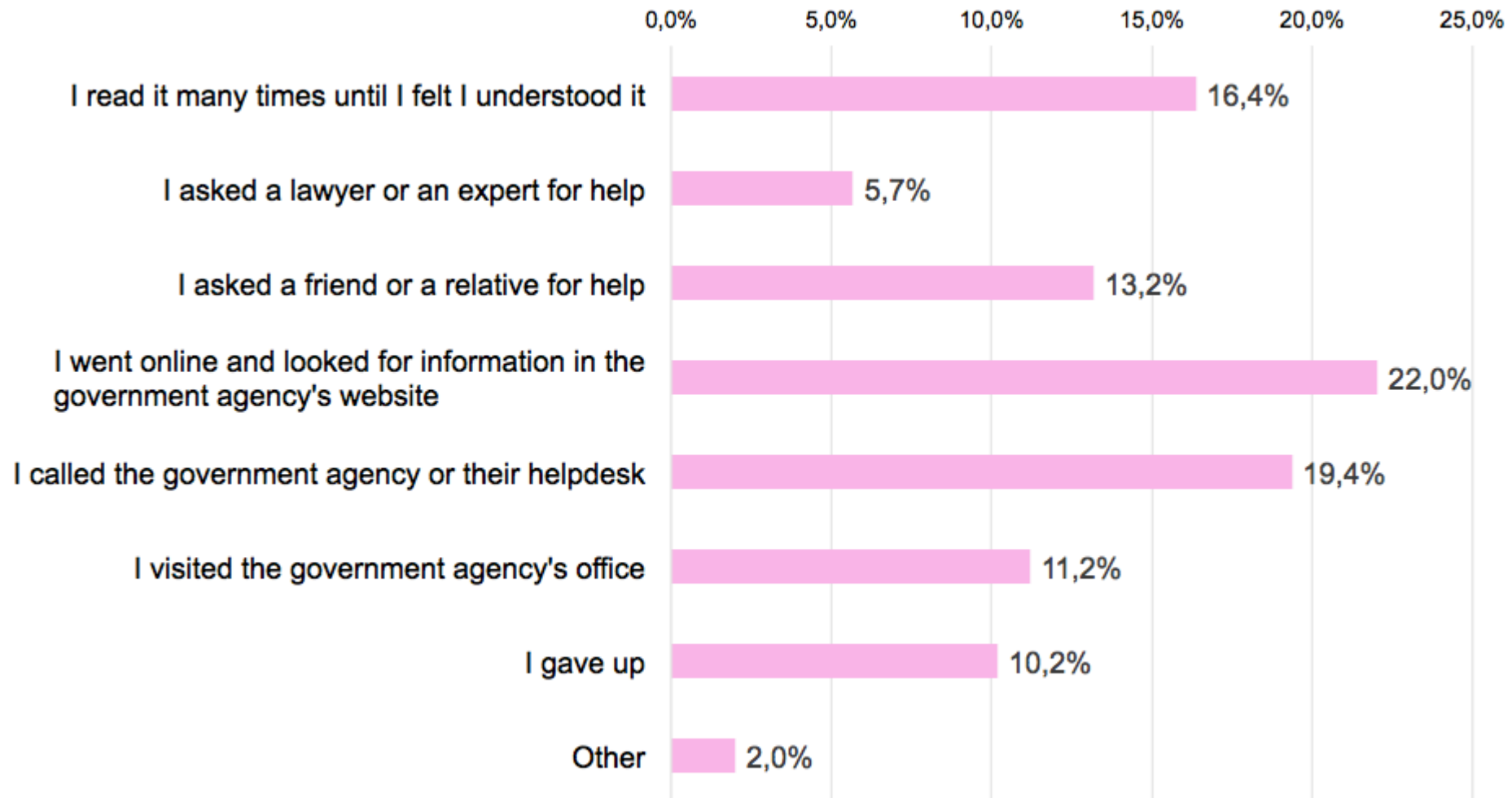
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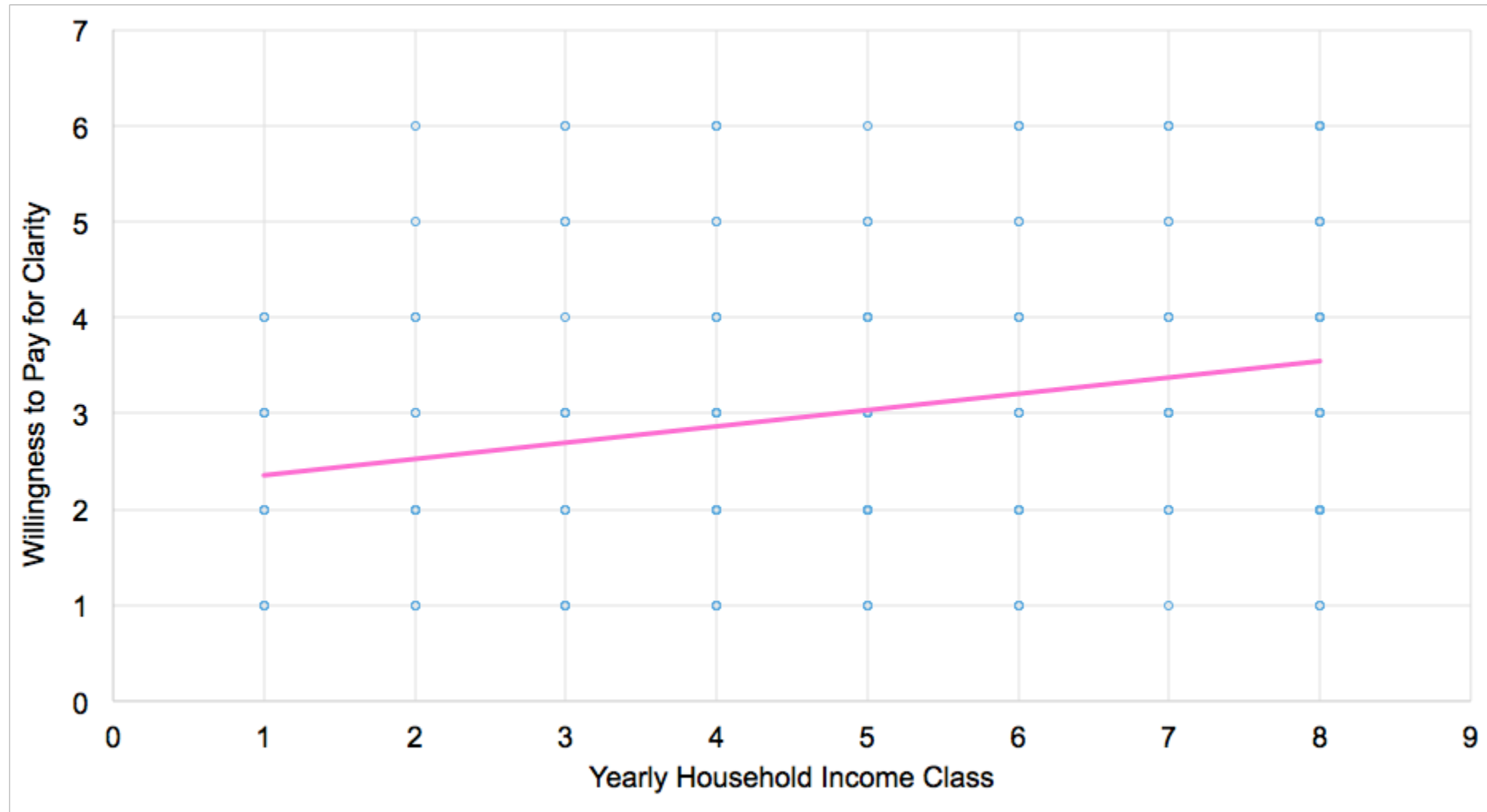
In the last 12 months, did you struggle to understand a communication from a government organization or failed to find the information you needed?



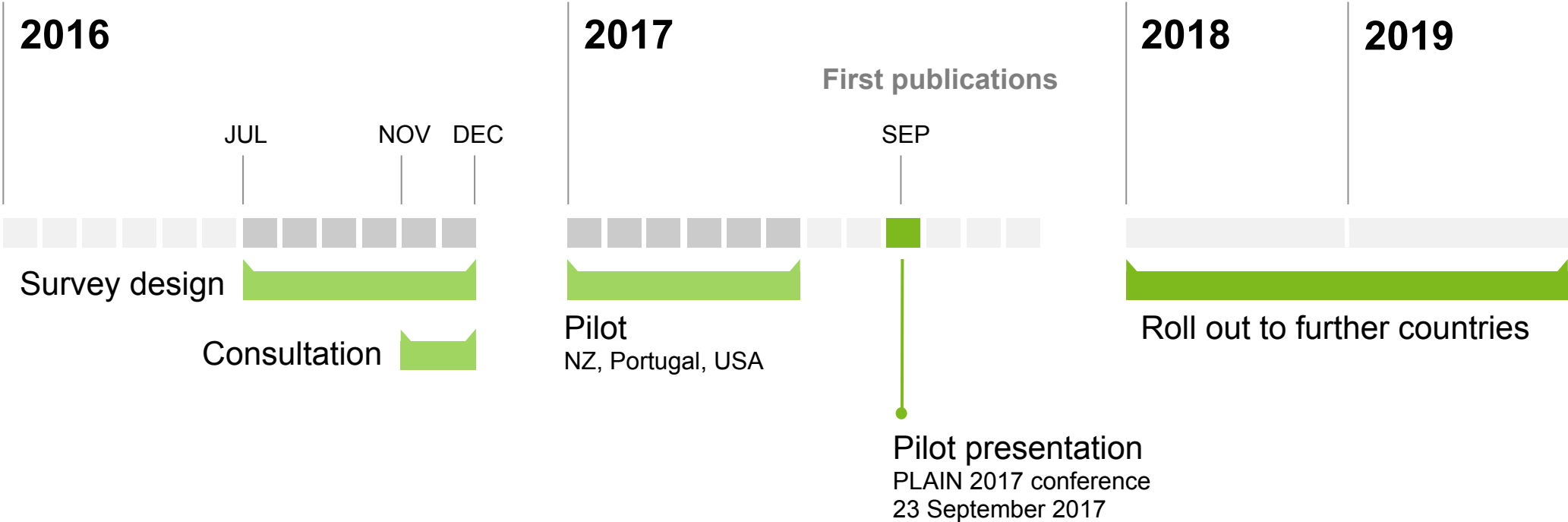
# What did you do, when you struggled to understand a communication from a government organization or failed to find the information you needed?



How much of your taxes would you allow the government to spend on clarity, instead of using it for other purposes?



# 4. Timeline



# Publishing our results



## Reports

- General reports
- Country reports



## Website

- Dedicated site
- Building as resource over time



## Conferences

- Annual presentations
- Clarity and PLAIN

# 5. How you can take part

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## Develop

- Help us translate the questionnaires in your language

## Participate

- Volunteer to be your country's liaison
- Promote further surveys through your contacts
- Submit your email to participate: [plainlanguagenetwork.org/survey](http://plainlanguagenetwork.org/survey)

## Support

- Become a sponsor!



# For further information

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## Contact

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[@miguel.martinho](#)

## Survey results and updates

[plainlanguagenetwork.org/survey](http://plainlanguagenetwork.org/survey)



**CLARO**

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