

Substance misuse and public policy considerations of consumers

November 2017

Introduction

This survey was commissioned following a previous study to establish the views of over 100 frontline drug, alcohol and homelessness professionals on substance misuse and the potential impact of whole population measures to reduce alcohol harm.

This cohort of 2,000 members of the general public is representative of the total population for gender, region and whether they were a drinker or not. The cohort was out by between 1% and 2% in terms of being representative of age.

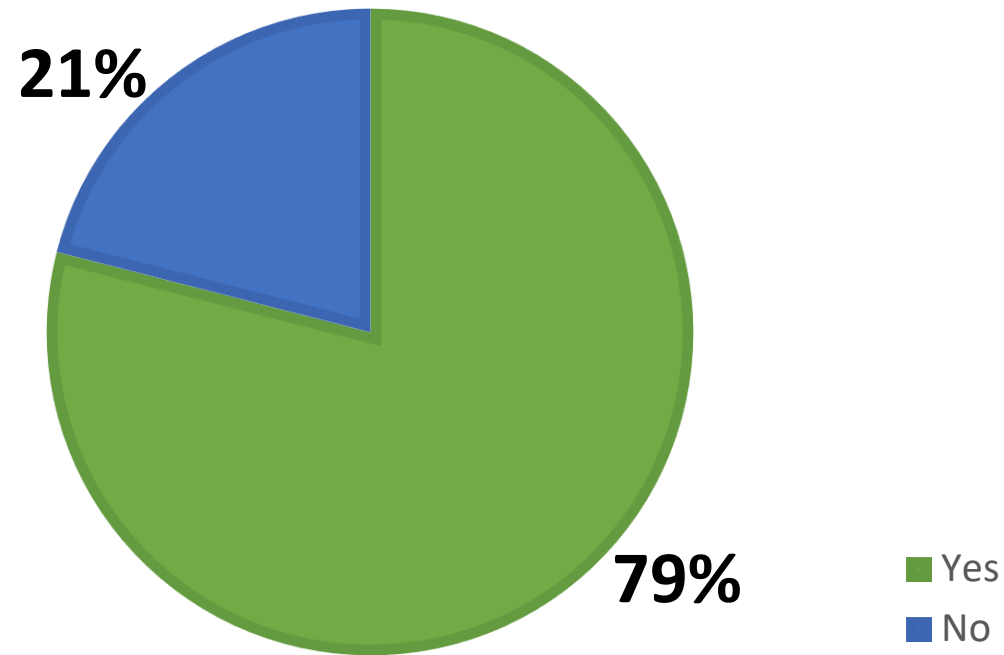
As can be seen from the data, the response was a very similar picture to that of the first study. 74% of people think that if a substance is made more expensive or supply is restricted that misuse will either switch or more resources will be used to sustain misuse.

Less than one in five think it is effective to target specific drinks or introduce measures like minimum unit pricing (MUP).

A reasonable proportion were unsure on several questions – which reflects the complex nature of the issue and potentially the level of public debate on the options to support those who misuse a range of substances.

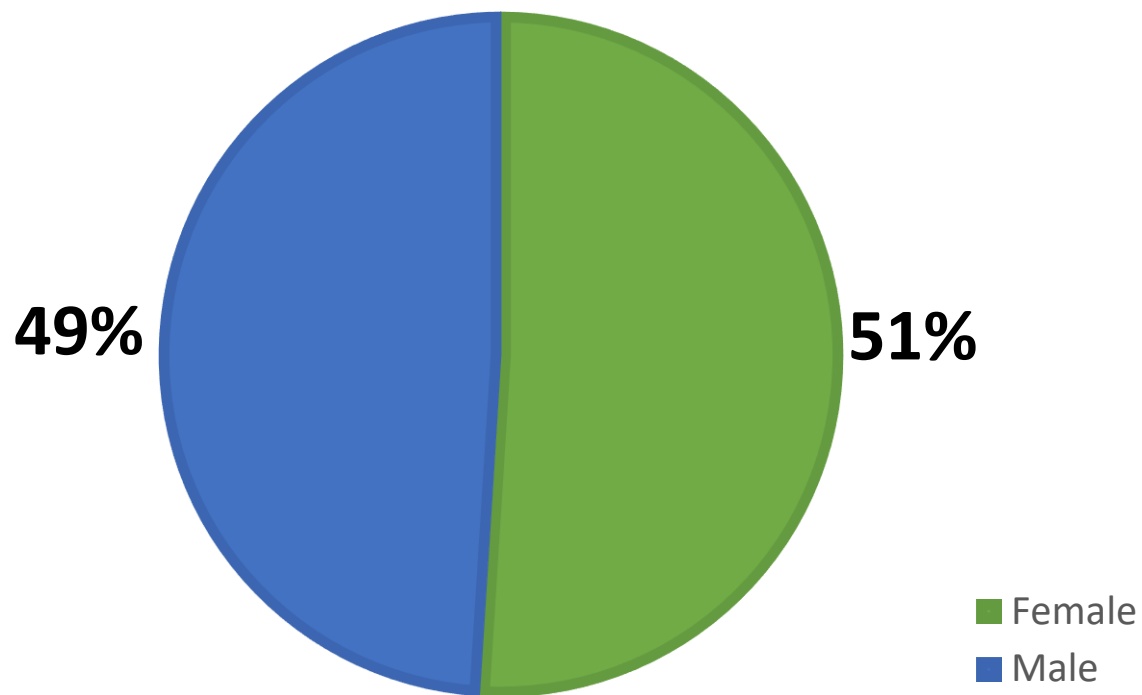
Breakdown by drinkers/non drinkers

Do you typically drink alcohol?



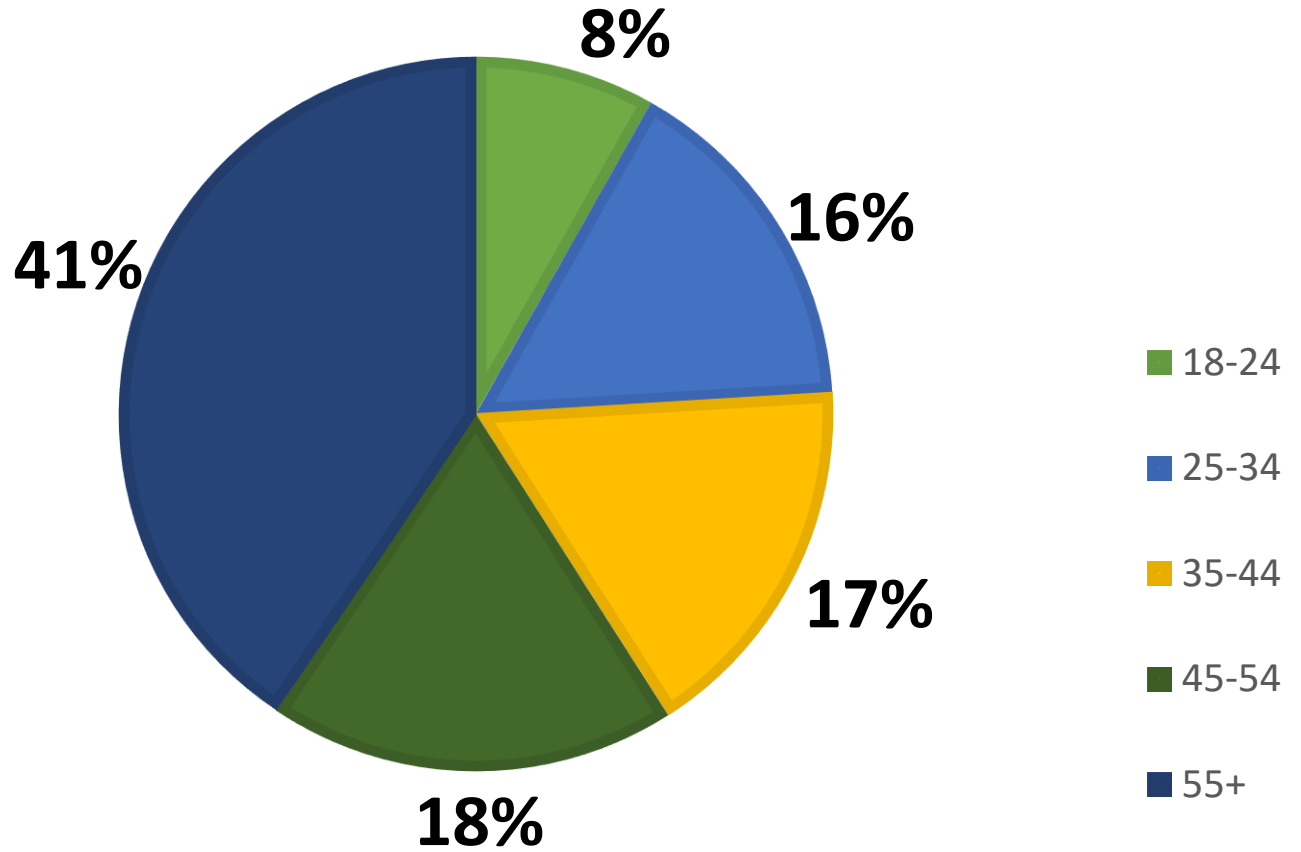
Representative of the total population

Breakdown by gender



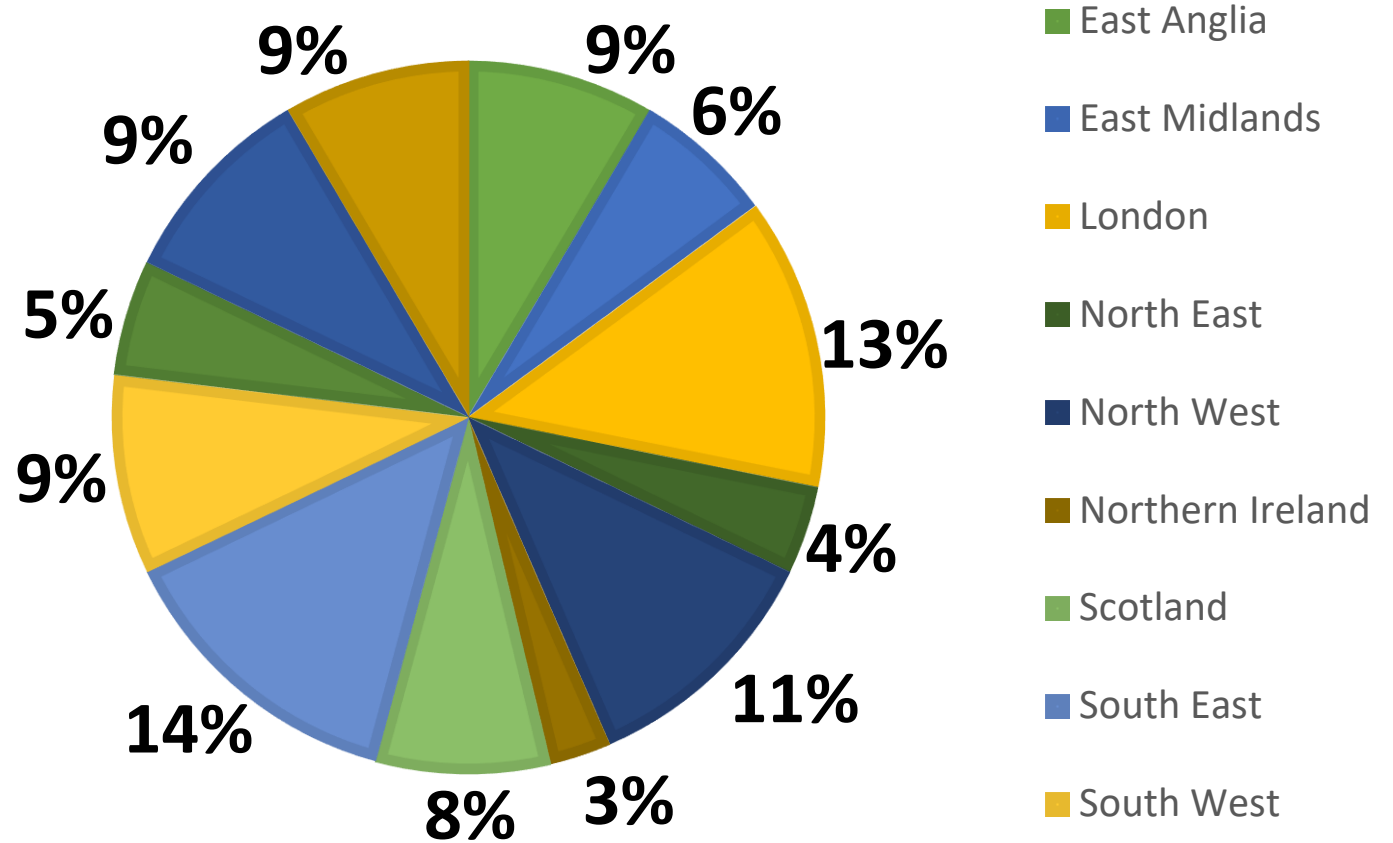
Representative of the total population

Breakdown by age



Perhaps a 1-2% margin in terms of being representative of total population

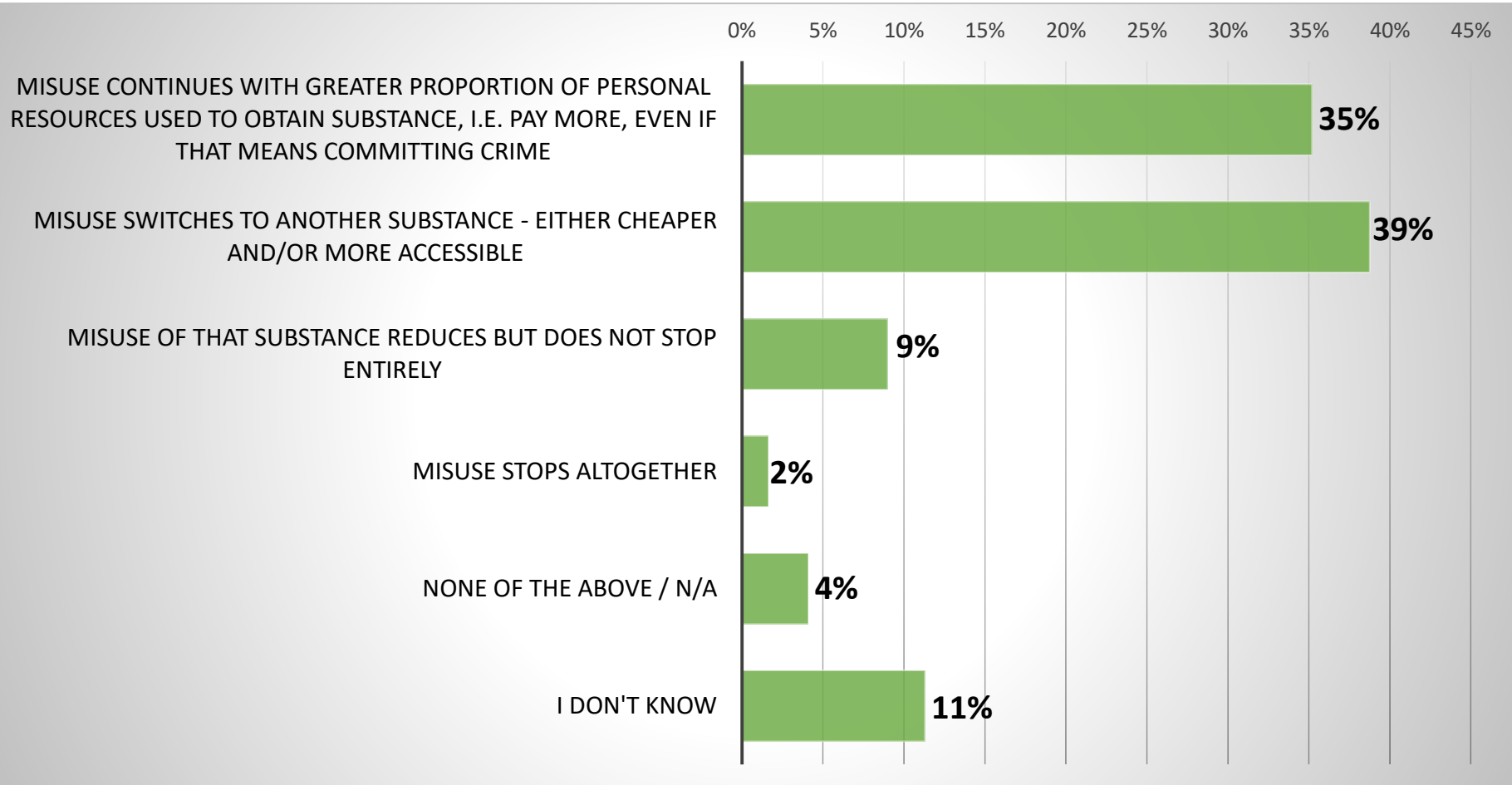
Breakdown by region



Representative of the total population

Substance misused – impact of increasing price

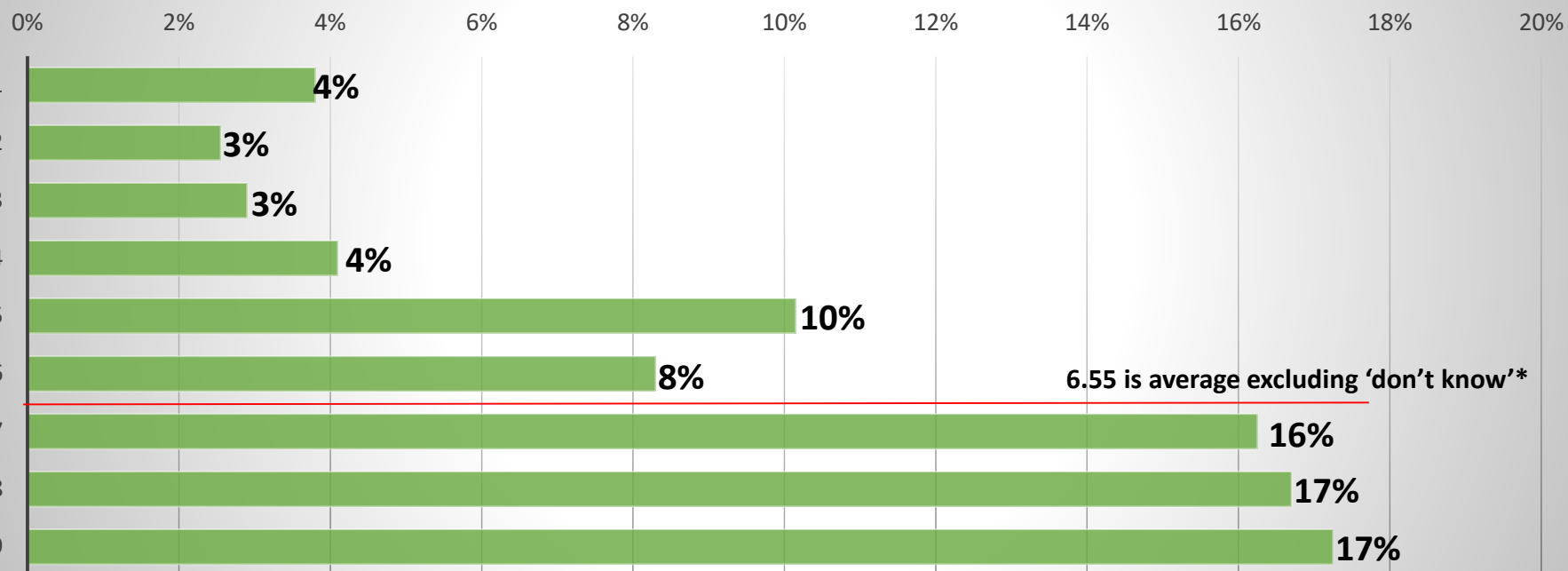
If one substance being misused becomes more expensive, or supply is somehow restricted, what do you think typically happens most often from the options below?



Importance of the substance misused

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree

The most important thing to them is their use of any substance as a coping mechanism given challenging circumstances or events in their lives



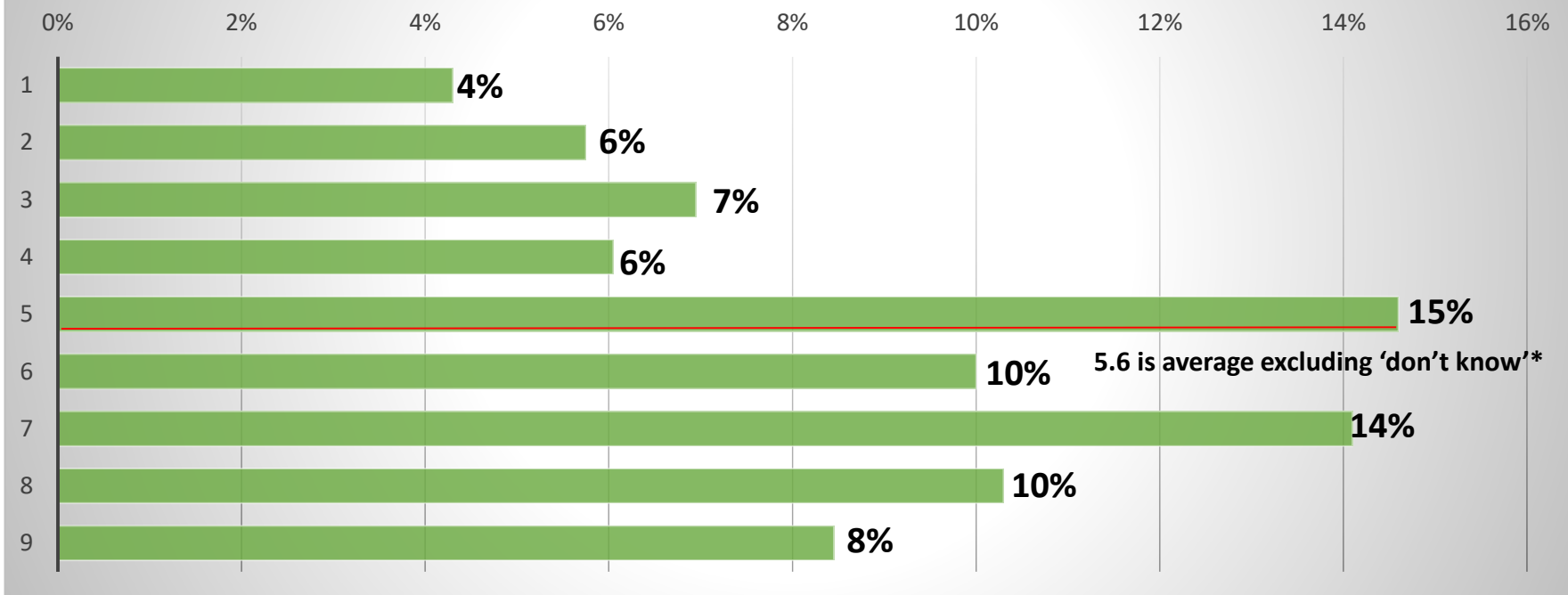
Composite result: Disagree 14%; Agree 58%; Neutral 10%

*Don't know = 18%

Specific substance misused

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree

The specific substance misused is not a priority (other than the impact it has and the fact that it is addictive)



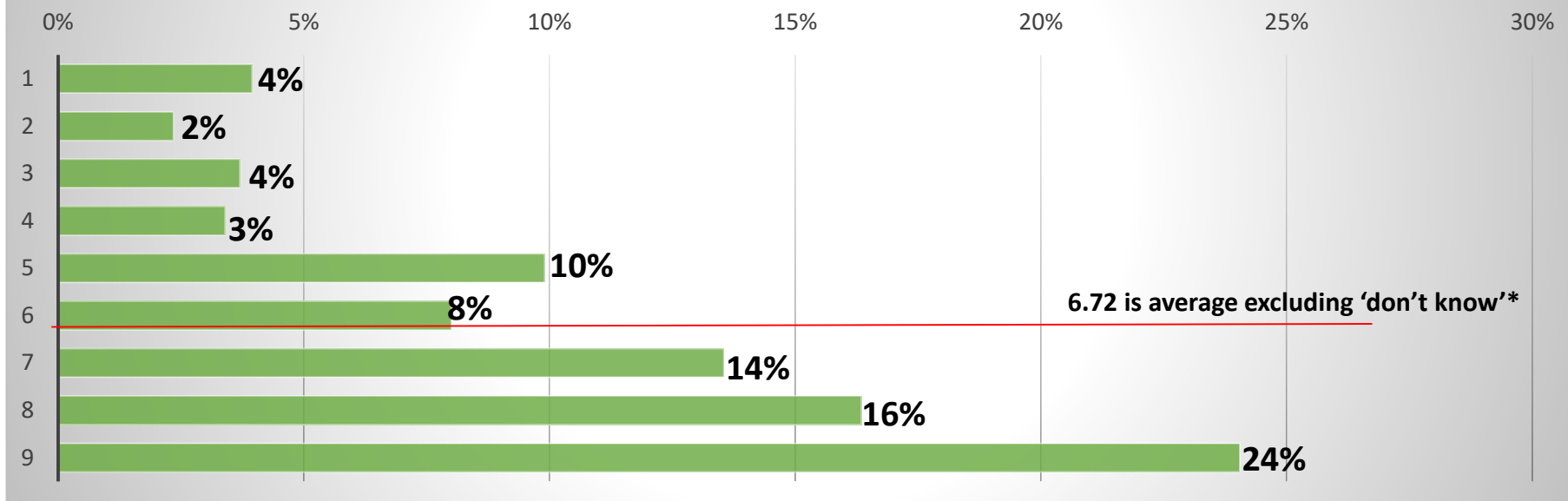
Composite result: Disagree 23%; Agree 42%; Neutral 15%

*Don't know = 19%

There are not 'problem drinks'

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree

Specifically on alcohol - there are not 'problem drinks' rather people who have a problem with alcohol, i.e. some people misuse alcohol and the form of alcohol is not the issue rather the issues they face/or their personality traits

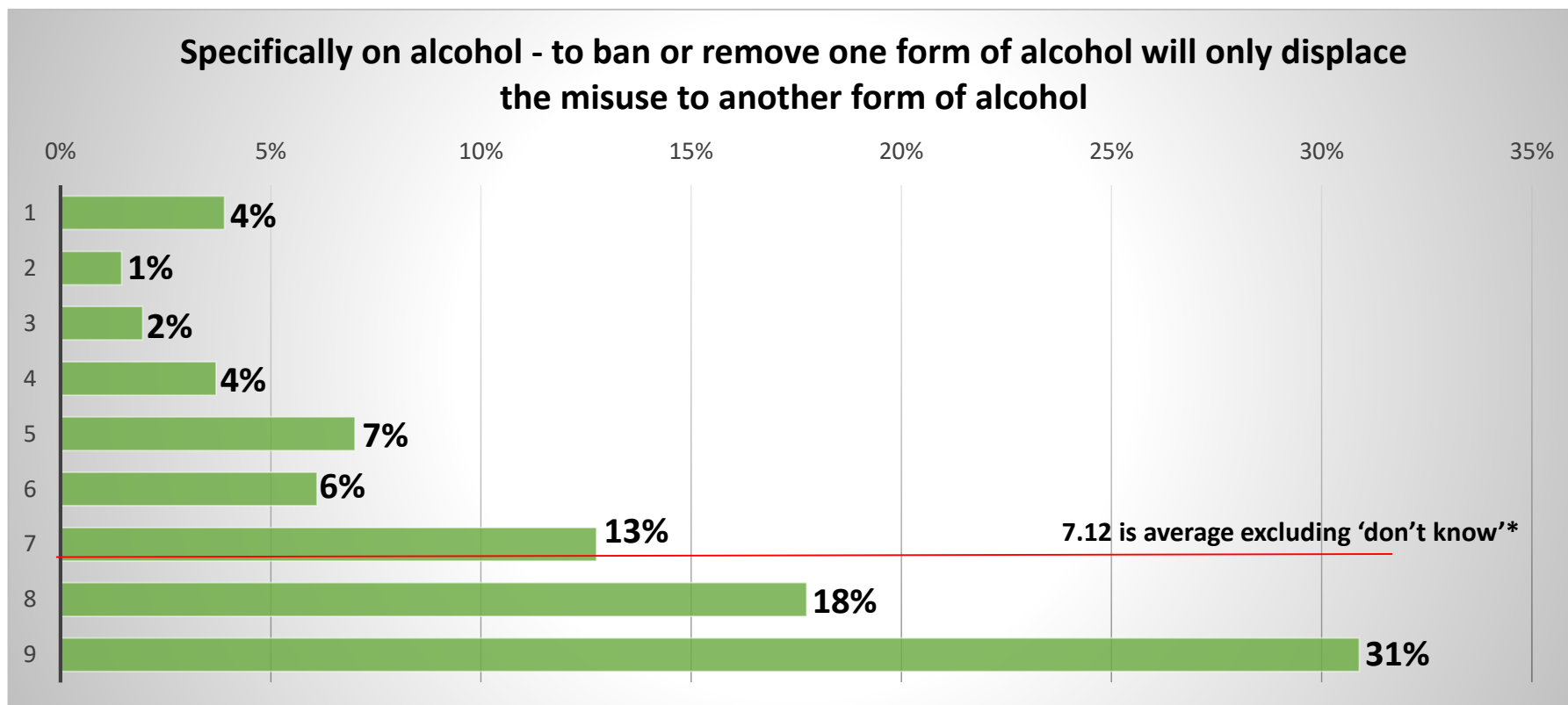


Composite result: Disagree 13%; Agree 62%; Neutral 10%

*Don't know = 15%

Bans only displace misuse

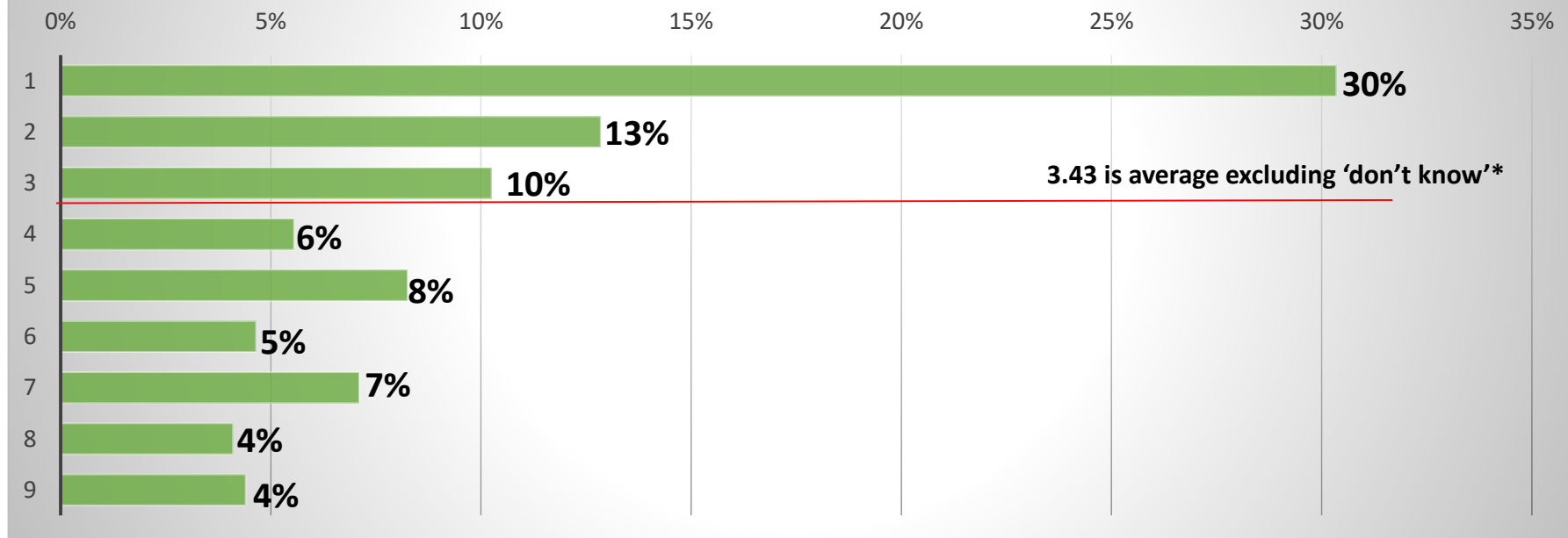
For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree



Switching to lower strength

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree

If retailers stop selling high strength beer, lager and cider, those who seriously misuse alcohol will start consuming fewer units of alcohol or stop drinking all together

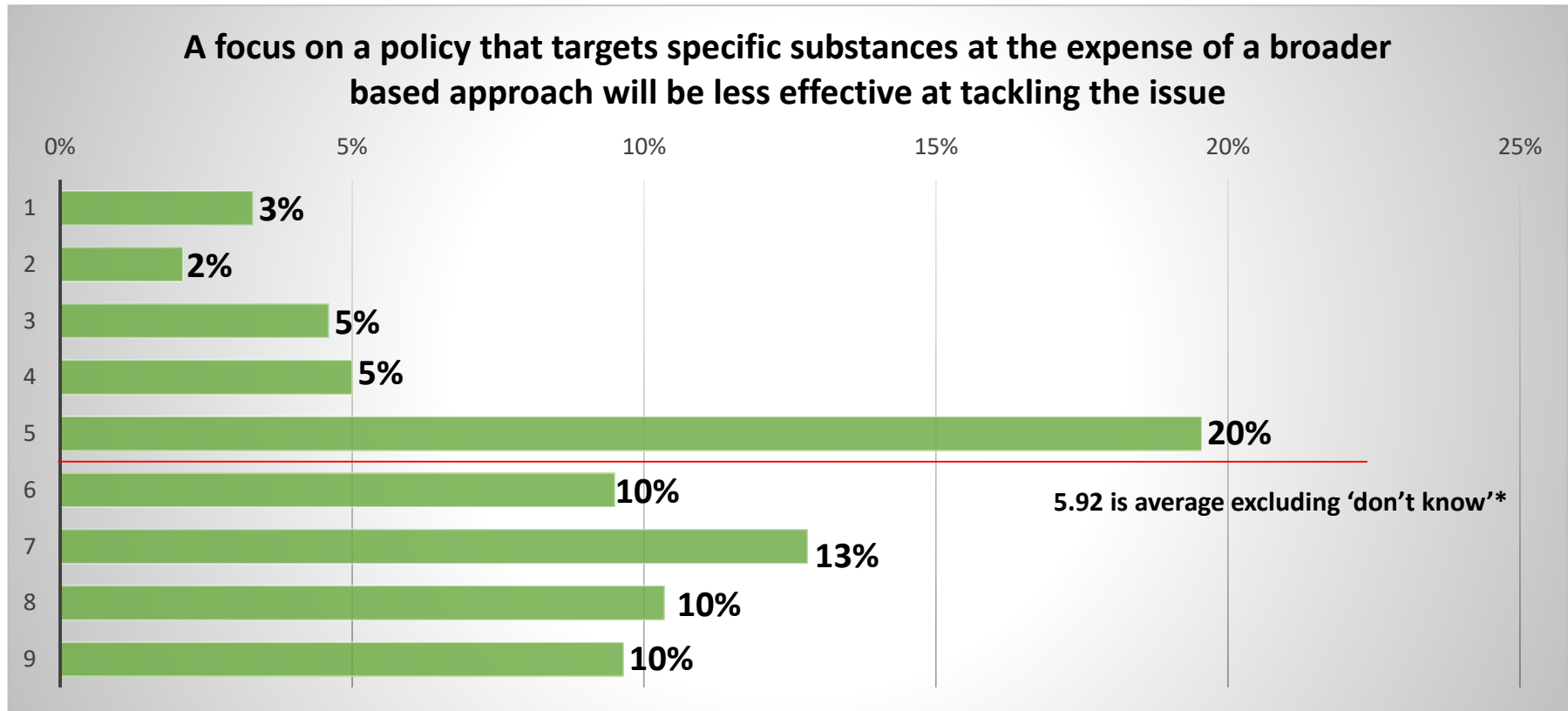


Composite result: Disagree 59%; Agree 20%; Neutral 8%

*Don't know = 12%

Specific substance policies or a broader based approach

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree

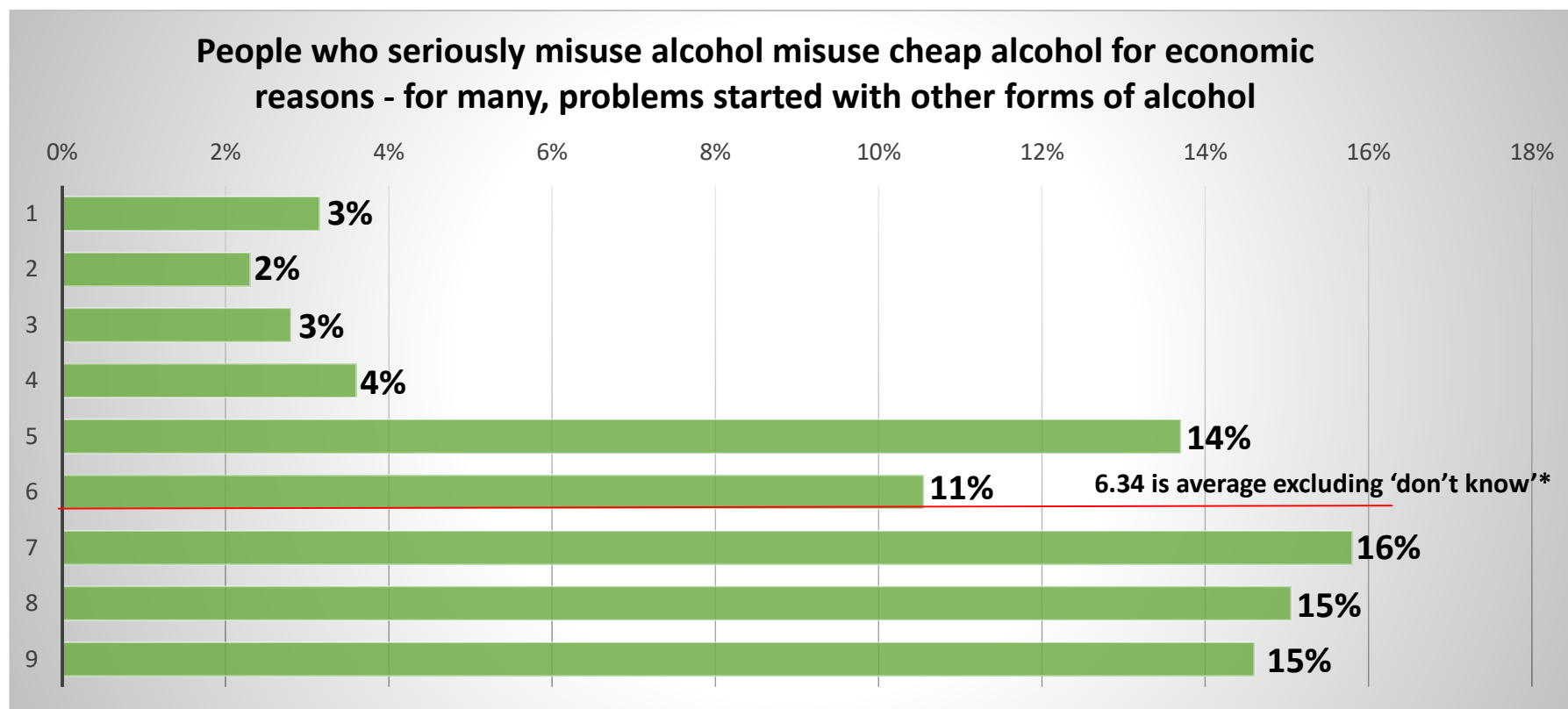


Composite result: Disagree 15%; Agree 43%; Neutral 20%

*Don't know = 23%

Misuse may start with substances other than cheap alcohol

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree

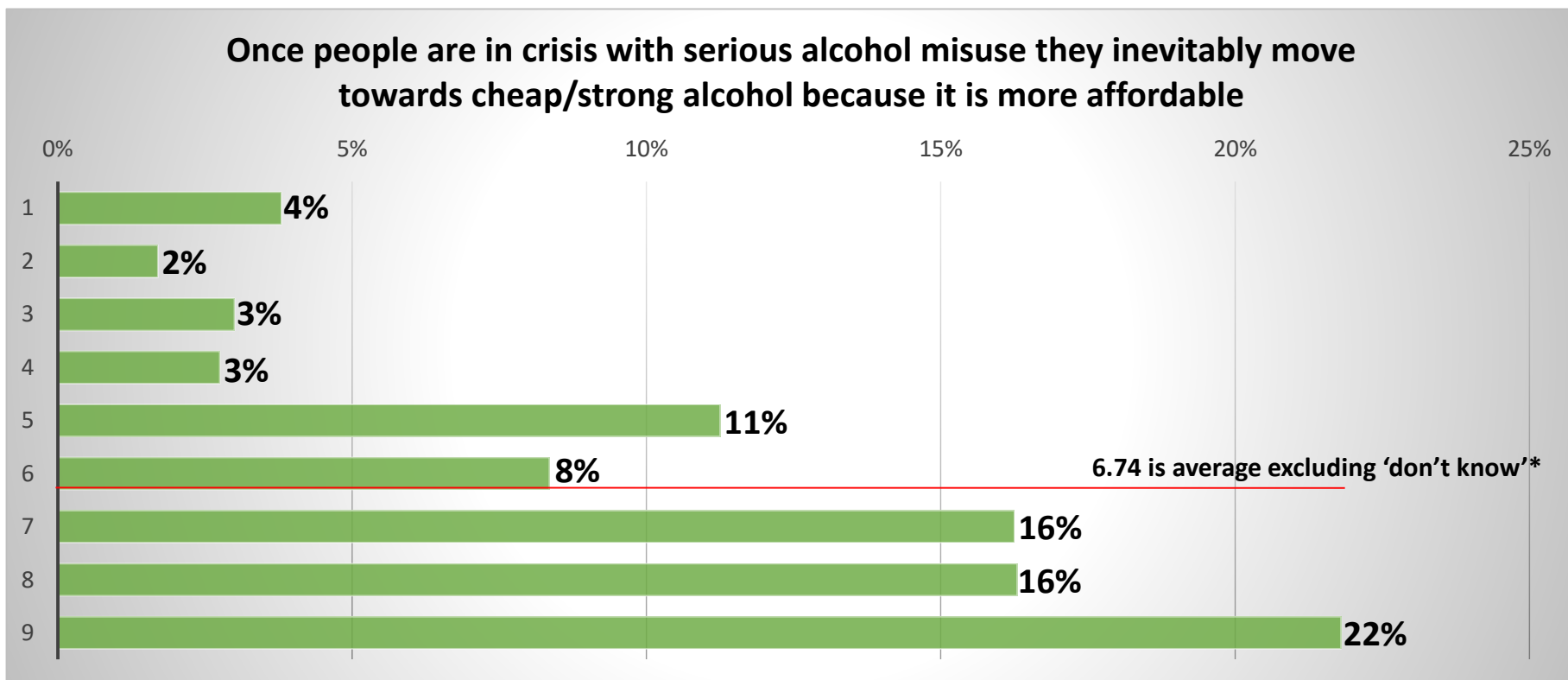


Composite result: Disagree 12%; Agree 57%; Neutral 14%

*Don't know = 18%

Decision to move to cheap/strong alcohol is economic

For people who misuse one or more substances, please select how far you agree or disagree with the following statements. Where 1 = strongly disagree and 9 = strongly agree. 5 = neither agree nor disagree



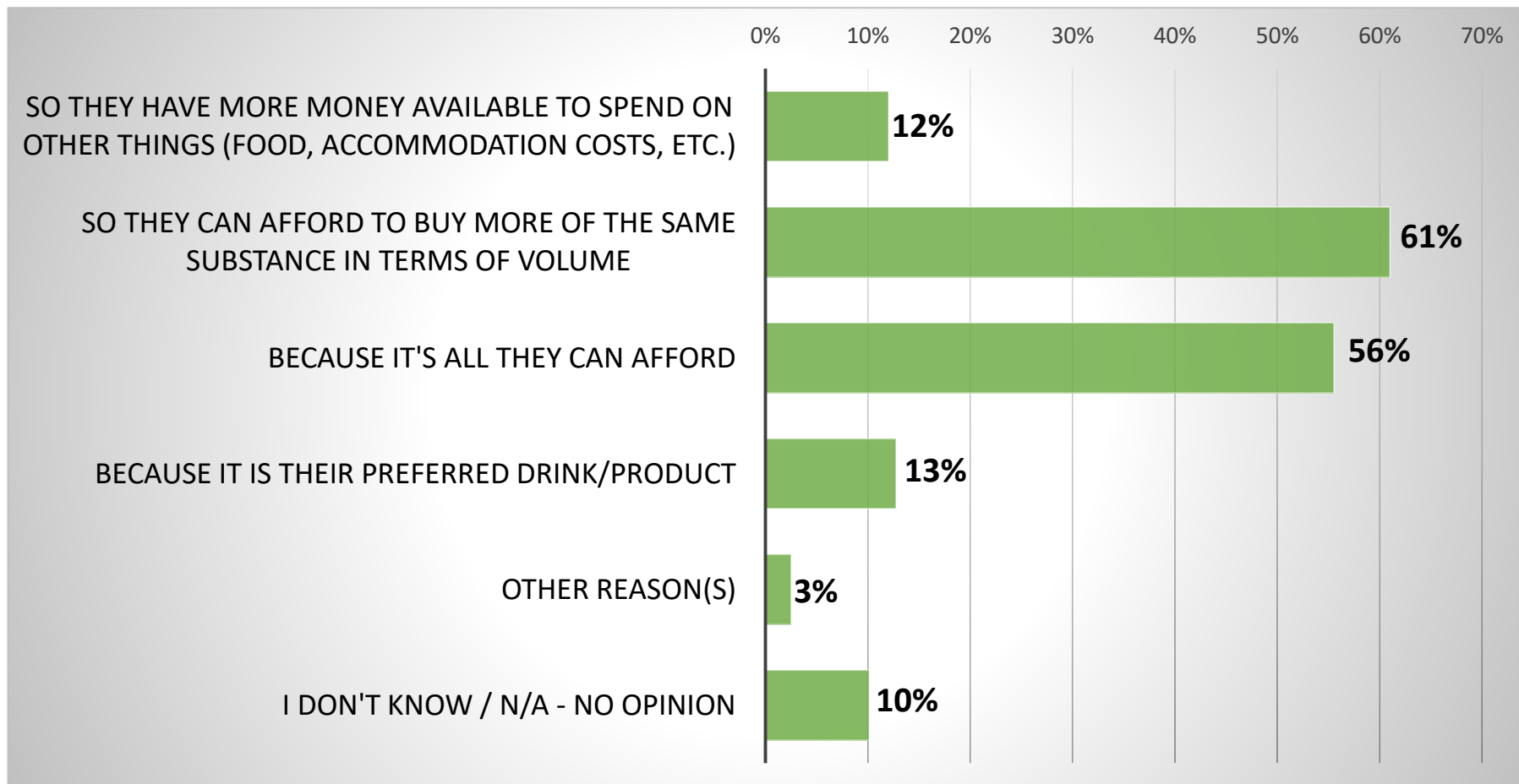
Composite result: Disagree 12%; Agree 62%; Neutral 11%

*Don't know = 15%

Reasons cheap alcohol is misused

If people are misusing cheap alcohol do you think it is...?

(All options considered relevant selected)



Most effective approaches?

In terms of approach, which do you think are the most effective forms of treating substance misuse, from the below? *(All options considered relevant selected)*

