



# Wind Energy Ireland Public Attitudes Monitor

December 2022



research & evaluation

# Contents



- A. Research Background & Objectives
- B. Profile of Sample (nationally representative)
- C. Profile of Sample (residence area)
- D. Executive Summary

## **Main Findings**

- Section 1: Favourability to Wind Power
- Section 2: Favourability to Wind Power (Verbatim Comments)
- Section 3: Prompted Benefits of Wind Power
- Section 4: Openness to Developing Wind Farms Locally
- Section 5 Openness to Wind Farm Locally (Verbatim Comments)
- Section 6: Attitudes to Offshore Wind

# Research Background, Objectives & Methodology

---

Wind Energy Ireland is the representative body for the Irish wind industry with a remit to promote wind energy as an essential, economical and environmentally friendly part Ireland's low-carbon energy future.

---

Interactions has conducted an annual online poll for WEI since 2017:

***“To measure & track perceptions and attitudes around wind energy amongst Irish adults.”***

---

This year's survey sampled a representative sample of 1,017 Irish adults together with a supplementary booster sample of 201 rural dwellers.

---

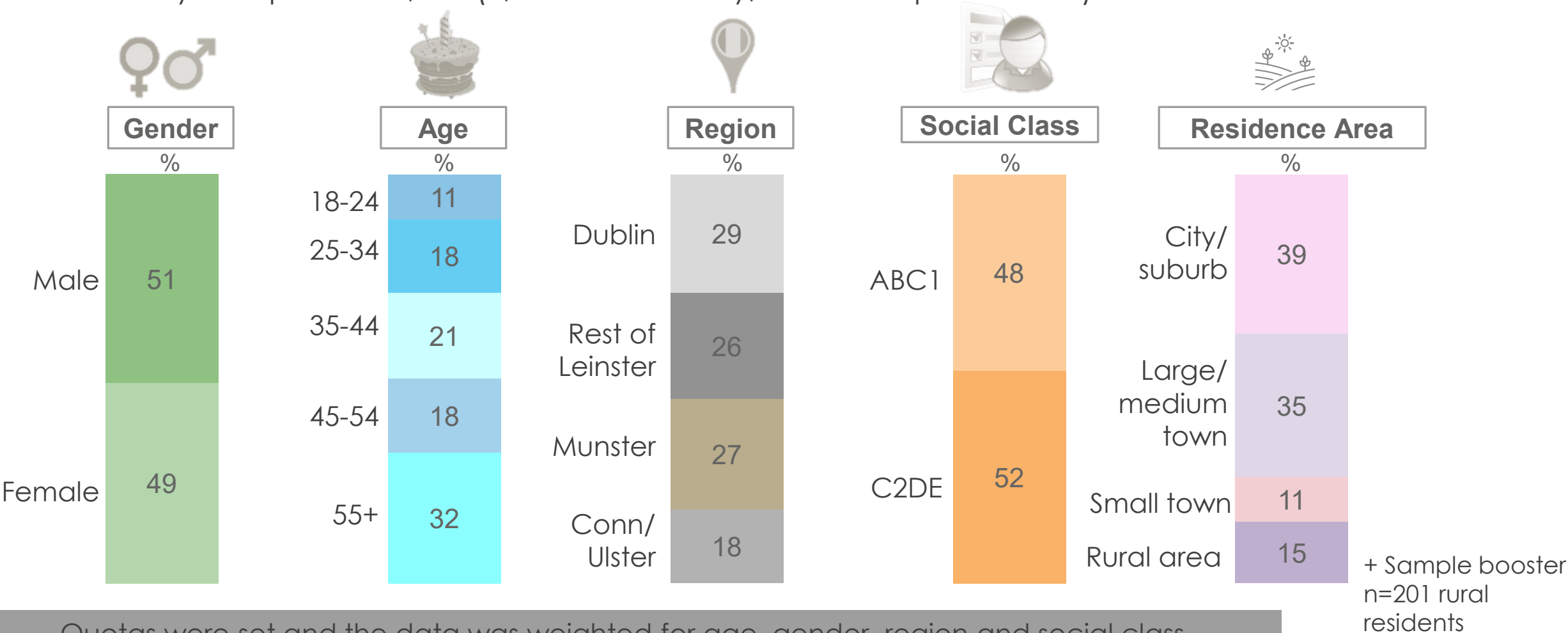
Fieldwork took place between 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.

---



# Sample Profile

Base: All survey completes – 1,200 (1,000 main survey, + 200 sample booster)



Quotas were set and the data was weighted for age, gender, region and social class. An additional n=201 surveys were carried out amongst adults living in rural areas. In total, between main and boost surveys, 333 interviews was achieved with a bullseye rural key target.



# 2022 Research Summary





## Attitudes to Wind Power

---

4 in 5 nationally (80%) are now in favour of wind power.

---

This is an increase of +6% versus last year's results.

---

Amongst rural residents, 4 in 5 (85%) registered favourable attitudes.

---

This is the highest level recorded since tracking commenced.



# Prompted Wind Benefits

---

Almost half (45%) ranked **cheaper electricity** as the top wind energy benefit.

---

Prompted benefits remain reasonably stable year on year for national sample

---

'I don't know of any benefits' has fallen again, to just 1 in 10 this year.

---

Amongst rural residents, reducing negative feedback levels is evident year on year.



## Openness to Developing Wind Farms Locally

---

Nationally, 58% said they would be in favour of a wind farm in their area.

---

Again, this marks highest number in favour since tracking began.

---

Amongst rural residents just 1 in 10 registered being opposed.





## Offshore Wind Energy

---

4 in 5 (79%) are in favour of offshore wind energy's use in Ireland.

---

Over 4 in 5 (83%) agreed that offshore wind farms can support Ireland's energy security.

---

Endorsement of offshore wind's potential for energy security has risen +5% since last year's poll

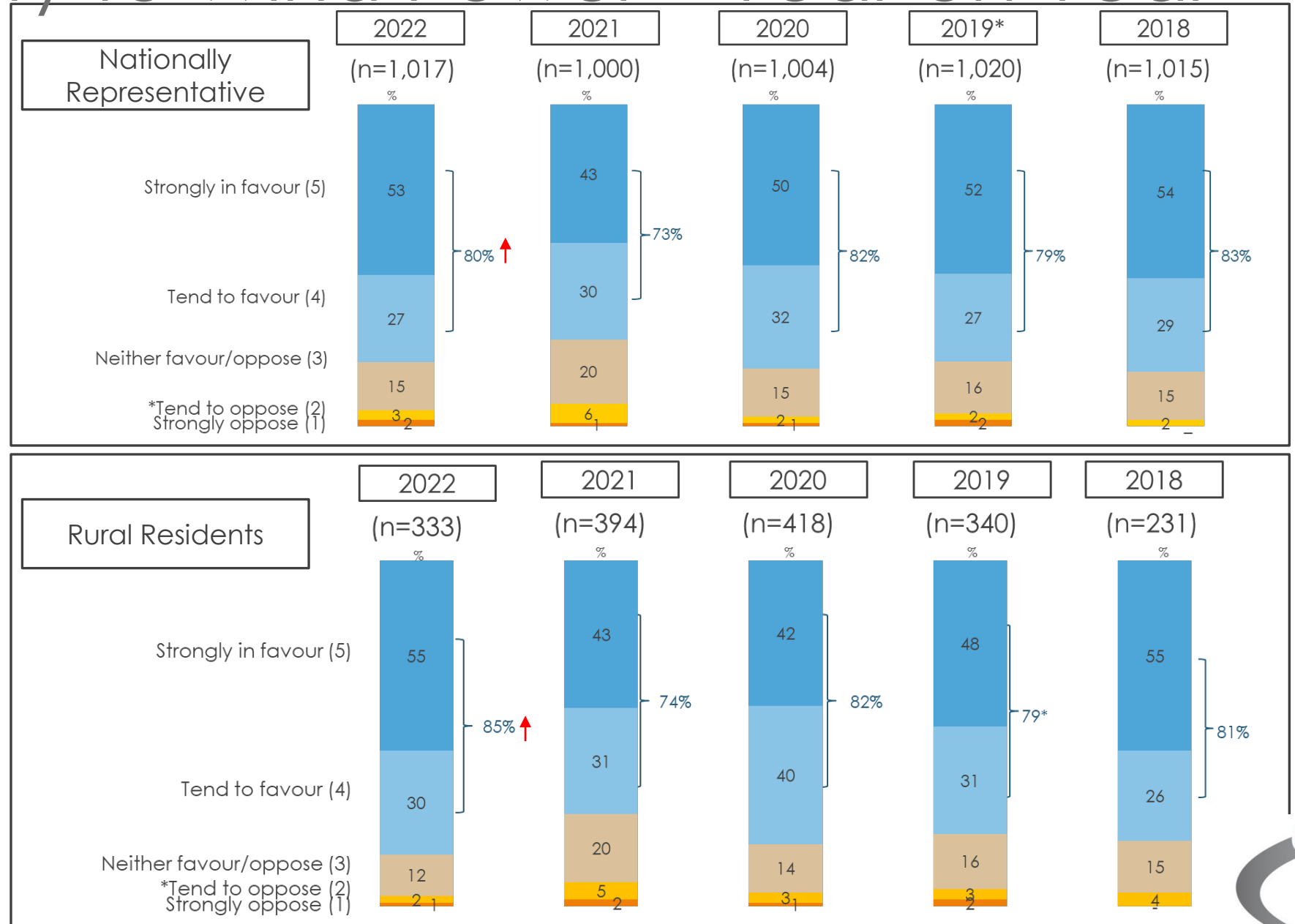
---

Less than 1 in 3 (31%) say Ireland is doing enough to develop offshore wind.

# Favourability to Wind Power – Year on Year

A shift of +7 percentage points versus last year amongst the nationally representative sample, and +11% amongst the rural sample, means that over 4 in 5 now are favourable to wind power.

Margin of error for 1,000 sample = 3%; therefore only shifts of +/-4% should be considered significant. Margin of error for 400 sample (rural residents) = 5%; therefore only shifts of +/- 6% would be deemed significant.



# Openness to Local Wind farm – Year on Year

A gradual movement towards being in favour of a local wind farm development can be seen in both the nationally representative sample (+5% versus last year), and the rural residents (+6% versus last year).

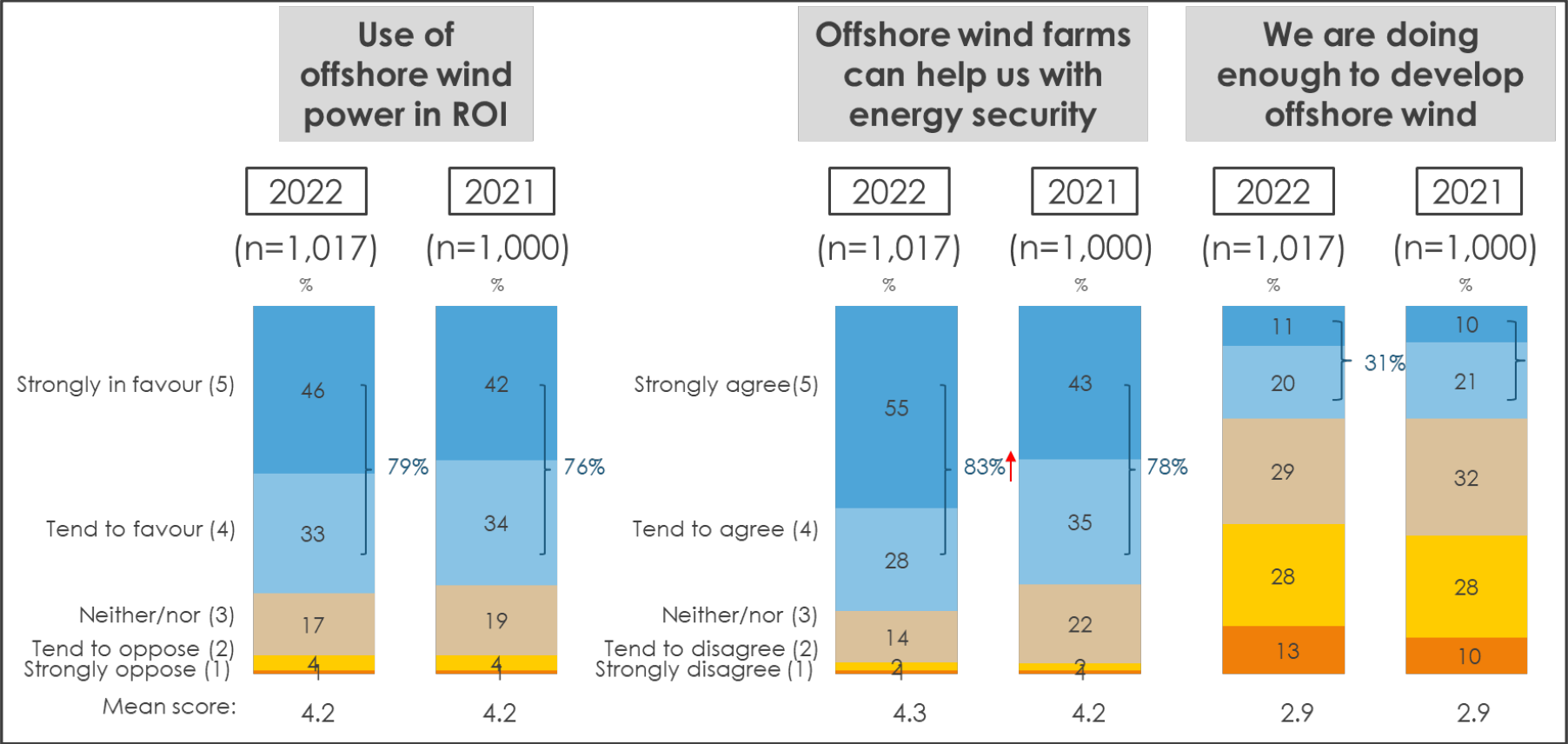


Margin of error for 1,000 sample = 3%; therefore only shifts of +/-4% should be considered significant. Margin of error for 400 sample (rural residents) = 5%; therefore only shifts of +/- 6% would be deemed significant.



# Attitudes to Offshore Wind farm – Year on Year

Largely consistent levels of agreement on offshore wind between 2021 and 2022 however endorsement of energy security has risen +5% since last year's poll.



Margin of error for 1,000 sample = 3%; therefore only shifts of +/-4% should be considered significant.



Main Findings

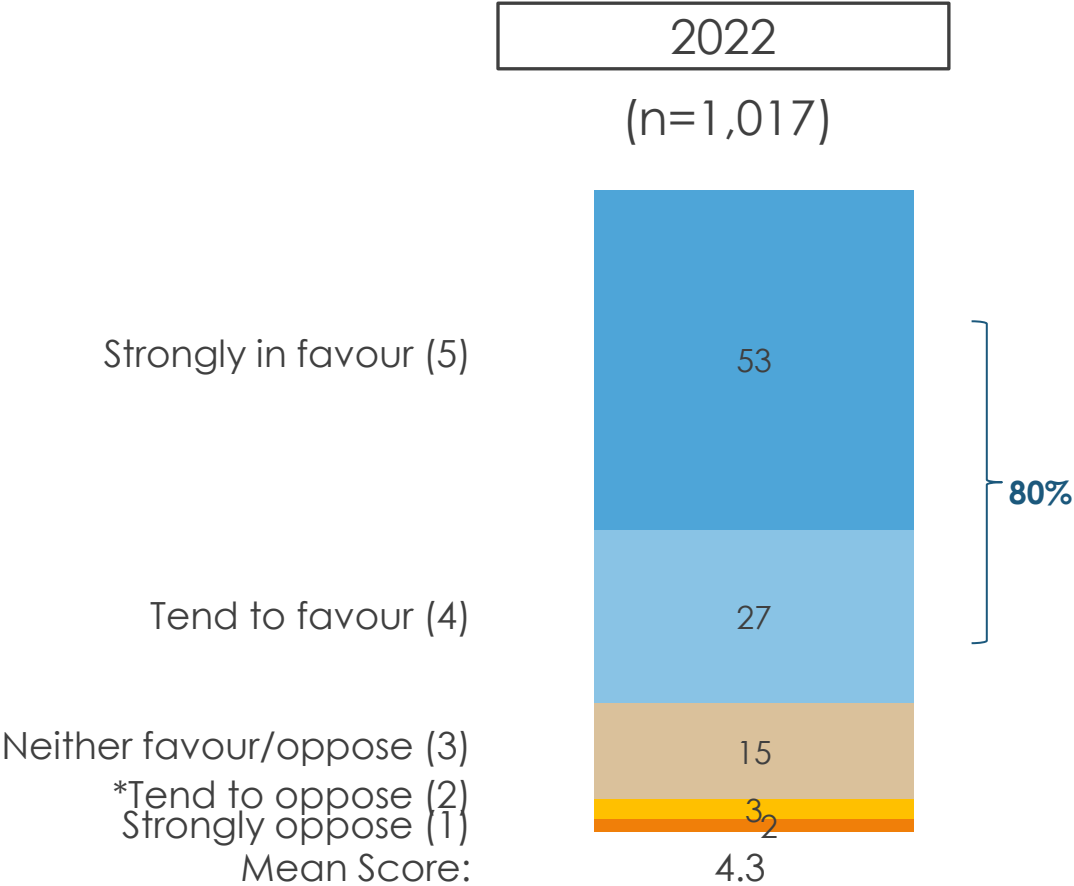




## 1. Favourability to Wind Power

# Favourability to Wind Power (Nationally Representative)

Q. To what extent are you in favour of, or opposed to, the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?

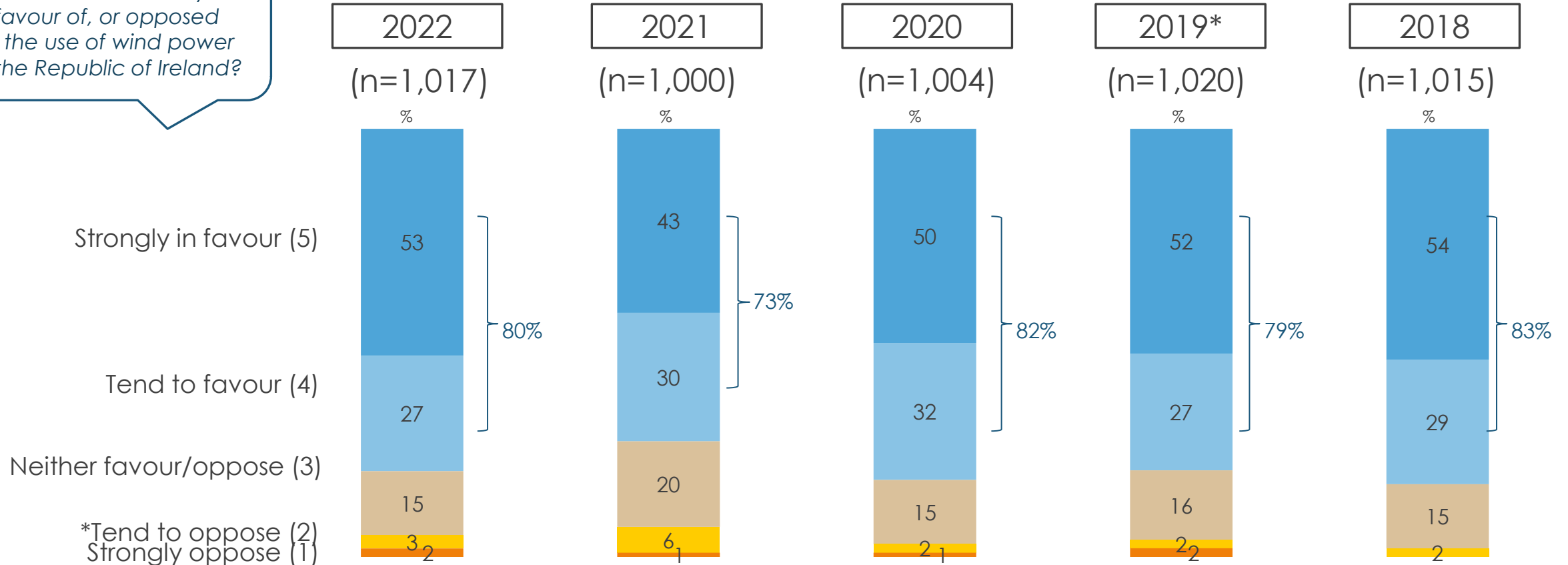


Over 4 in 5 nationally (81%) are in favour of wind power; over half (54%) claim to be strongly in favour, while a further quarter (27%) generally tend to favour wind power. Only 1 in 20 (5%) are opposed.

# Favourability to Wind Power (Nationally Representative)



Q.To what extent are you in favour of, or opposed to, the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?



Increase amongst the nat. rep. sample of +7% versus last year's results shows that wind power is once again a key concern.

\* Format change 2019 – addition of 'Tend to Oppose' option.

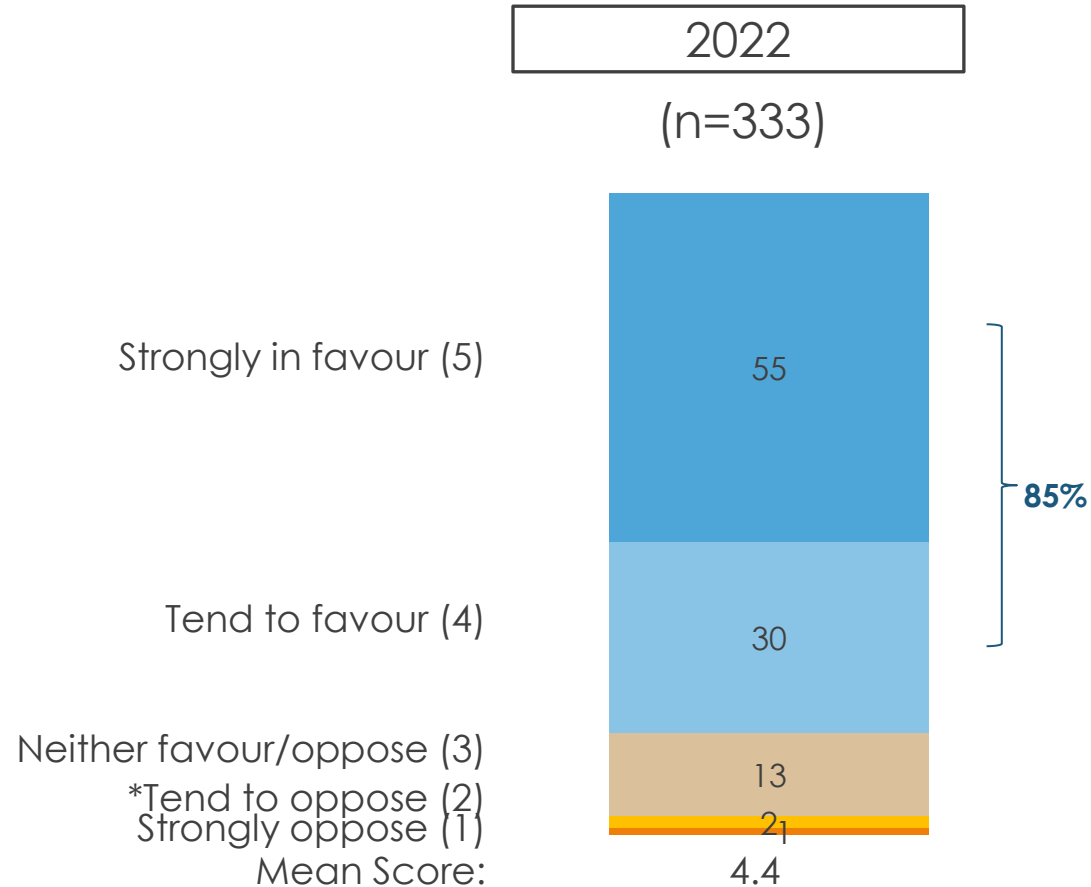
( ) = sample size.



# Favourability to Wind Power (Rural)



Q. To what extent are you in favour of, or opposed to, the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?

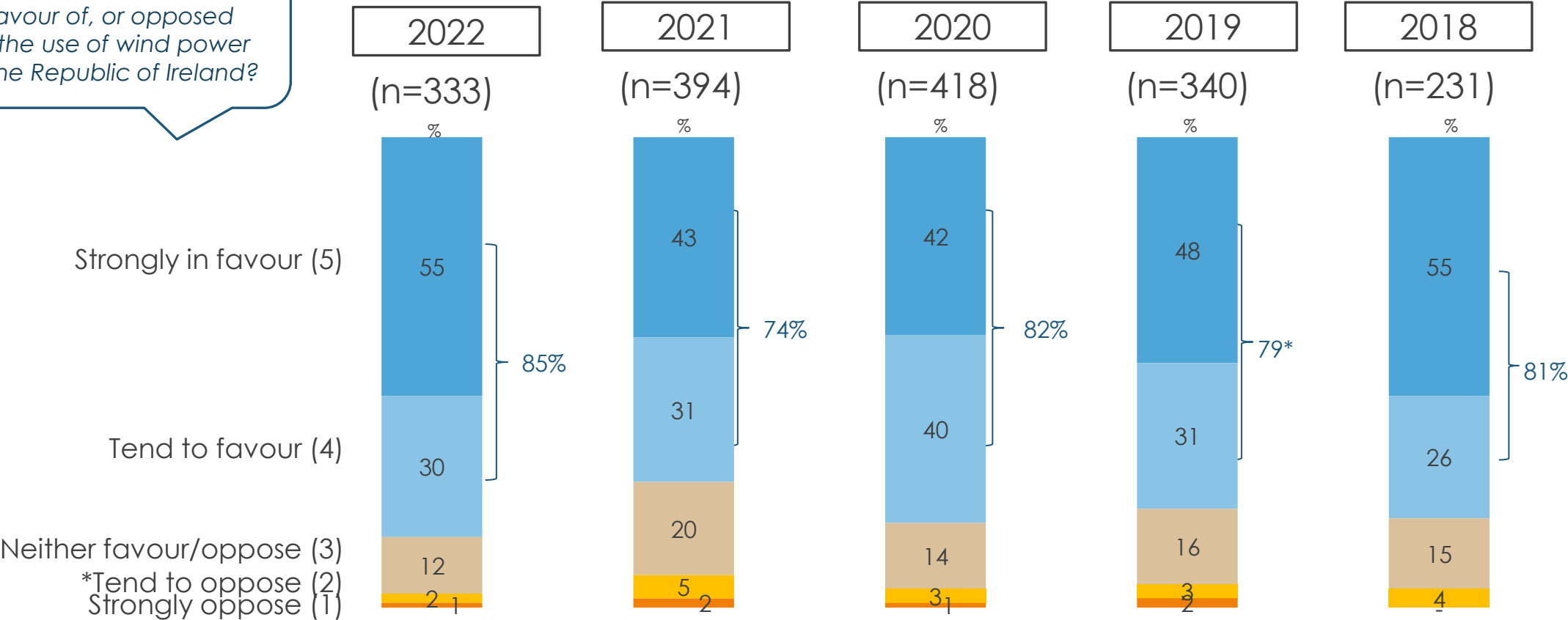


Very strong endorsement for wind energy amongst the rural sample. 4 in 5 rural residents registered favourable attitudes while only a very niche minority (3%) claimed to be against wind power.

# Favourability to Wind Power (Rural)



Q.To what extent are you in favour of, or opposed to, the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?



A jump in favourability versus last year, +11%, is highest level recorded amongst rural dwellers.

\* Format change 2019 – addition of 'Tend to Oppose' option.

( ) = sample size.



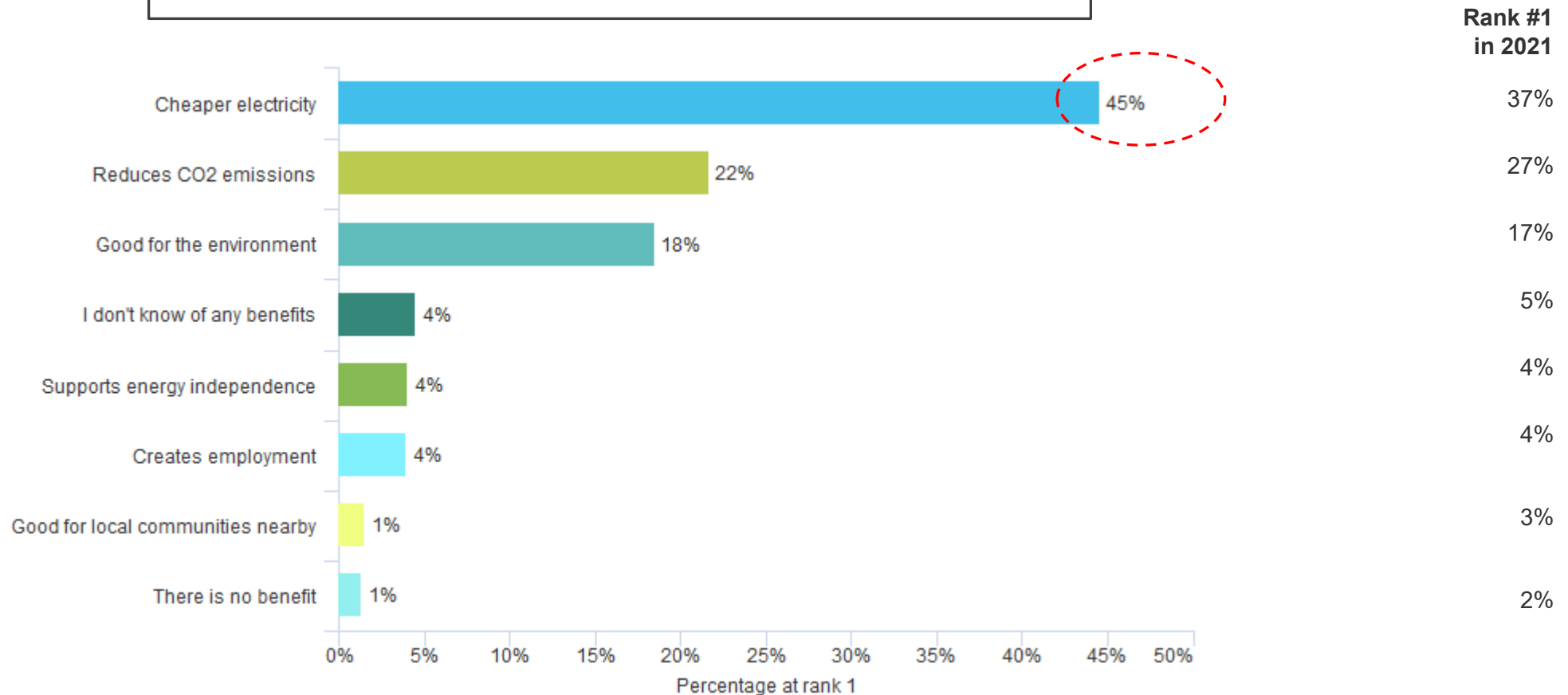


## 2. Prompted Responses to Wind Power

# Ranked benefits of wind energy (Rank #1)



Nationally Representative Sample (n=1,017)



Almost half the sample (45%) ranked cheaper electricity as their top wind energy benefit, this has increased +8% versus last year.

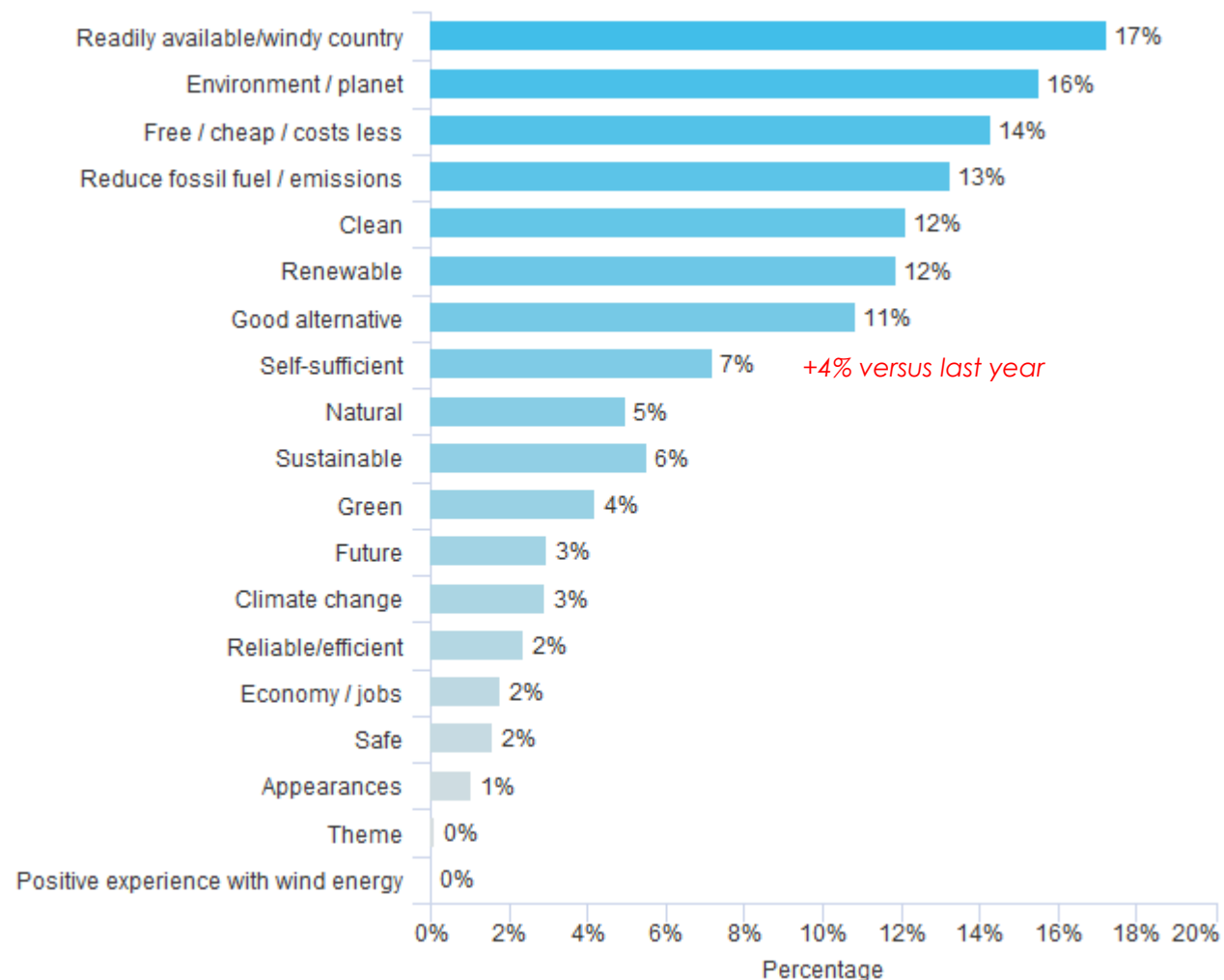
# Favourability to Wind Power: Coded Verbatim

Base: All who said they were in favour of wind power (865 people)

%

Q. Why do you say you are ***in favour*** of the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?

The most cited reason for being in favour of wind power are that there is plenty of wind to be harnessed in Ireland. Other benefits mentioned were helping the environment, and the cost effectiveness / cost saving nature of wind power.

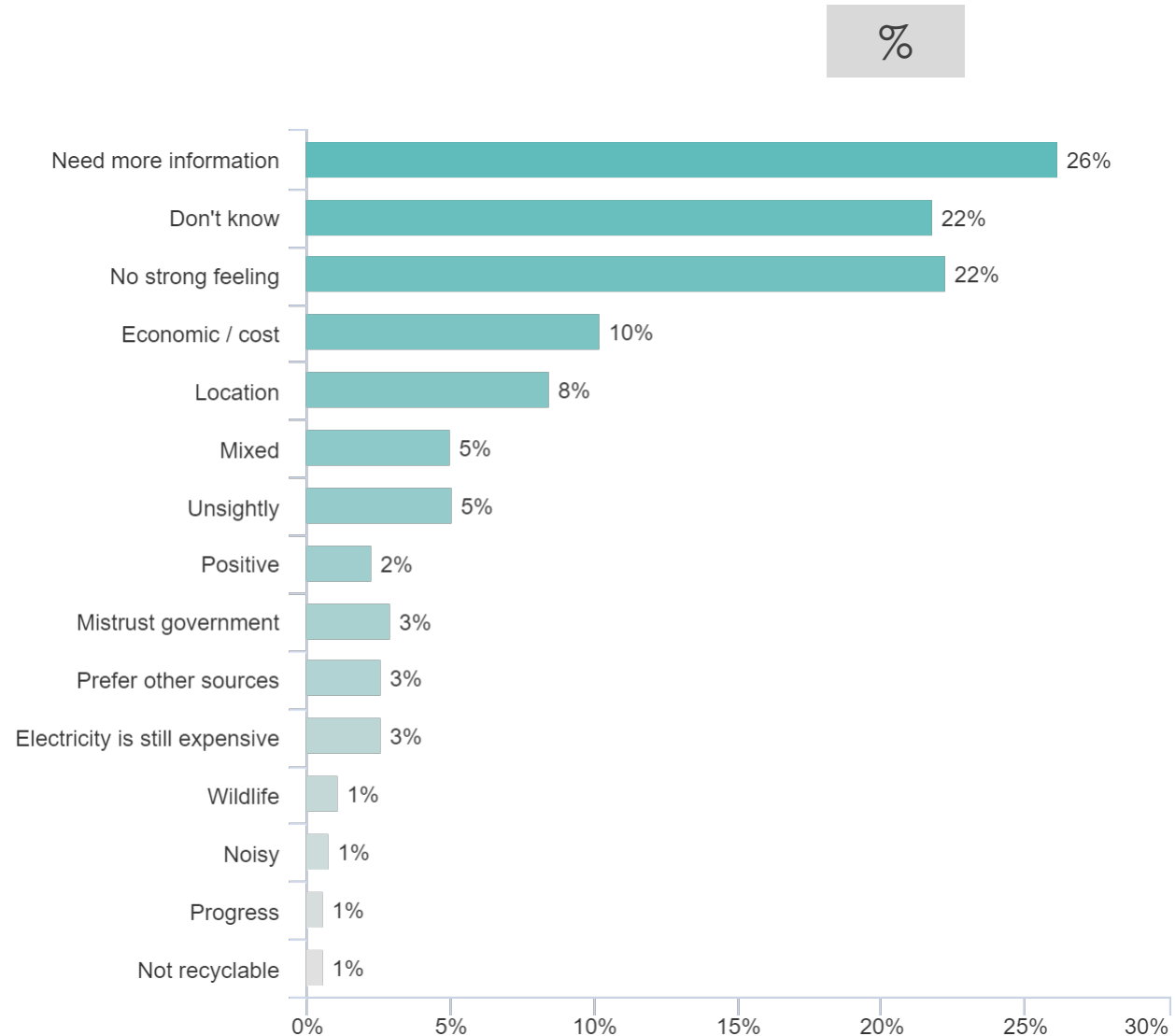


# Neutral to Wind Power: Coded Verbatim

Base: All who said they were in neutral towards wind power (164 people)

Q. Why do you say you are **neutral toward** the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?

A quarter of those neutral to wind power said they would need more information. A fifth did not know, and a similar number have no strong feelings on the matter.

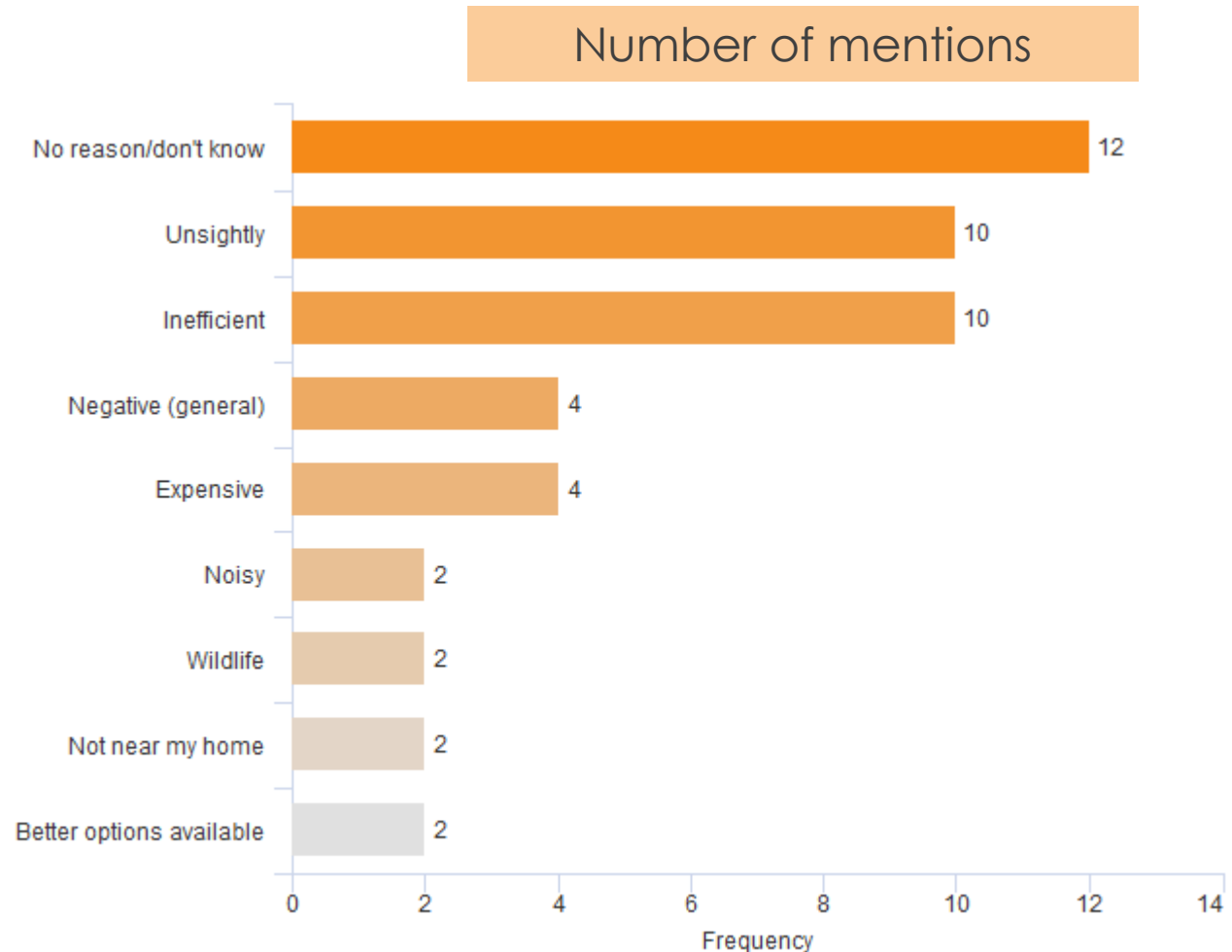


# Opposed to Wind Power: Coded Verbatim

Base: All who said they were opposed to wind power (40 individual responses)

Q. Why do you say you are **opposed** to the use of wind power in the Republic of Ireland?

Amongst those who gave a reason for being opposed to wind power, the most common cited were that it is considered unsightly and perceived to be inefficient.



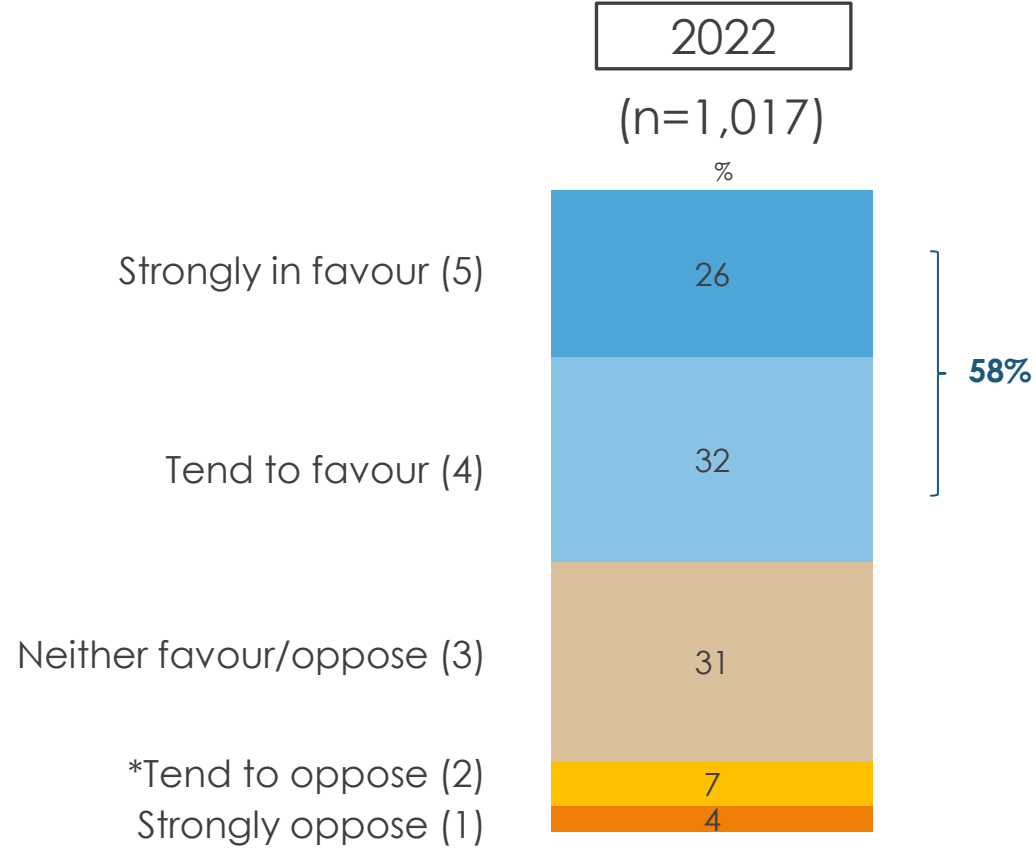


## 4. Openness to Developing Wind Farms Locally



# Openness to Local Wind Farm (Nationally Representative)

Q. How would you feel about having a wind farm set up in your local area?

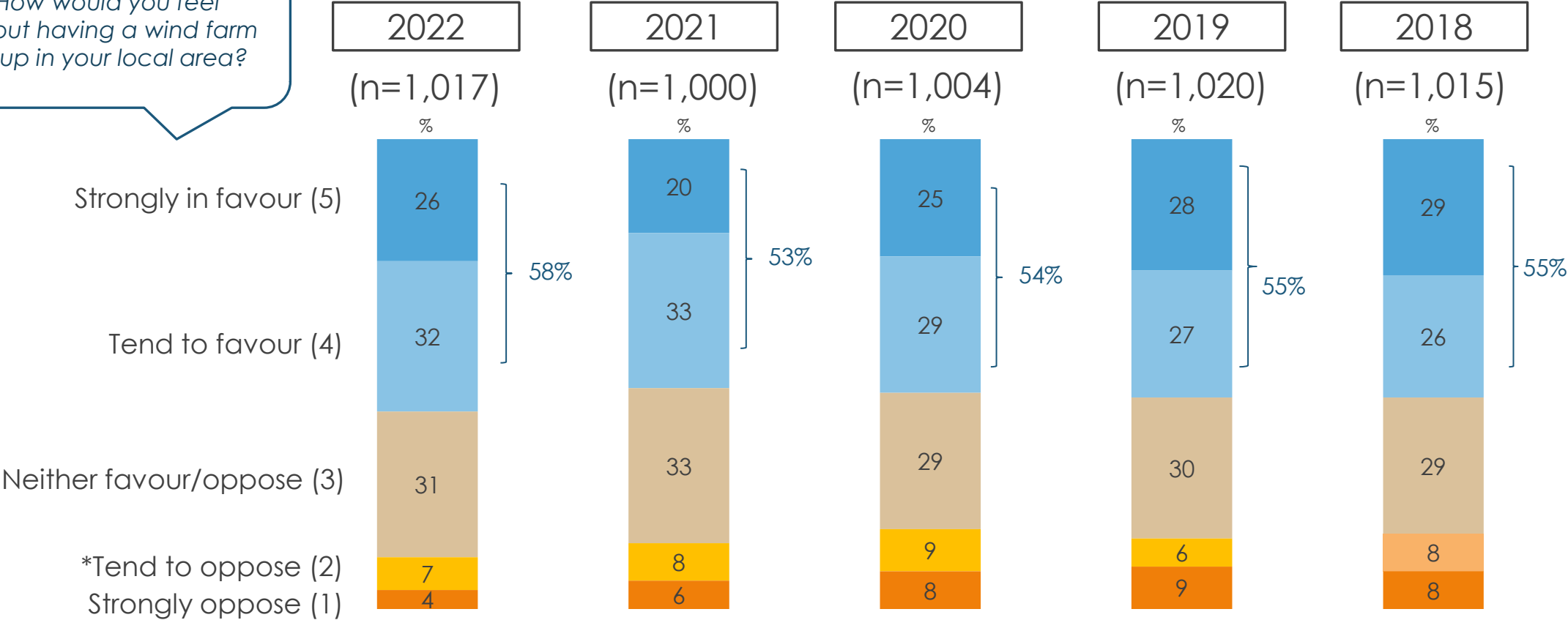


A quarter (26%) nationally said they would be strongly in favour of a wind farm development in their area, while just under a third (32%) would tend to favour this.

( ) = sample size.

# Openness to Local Wind Farm (Nationally Representative)

Q. How would you feel about having a wind farm set up in your local area?



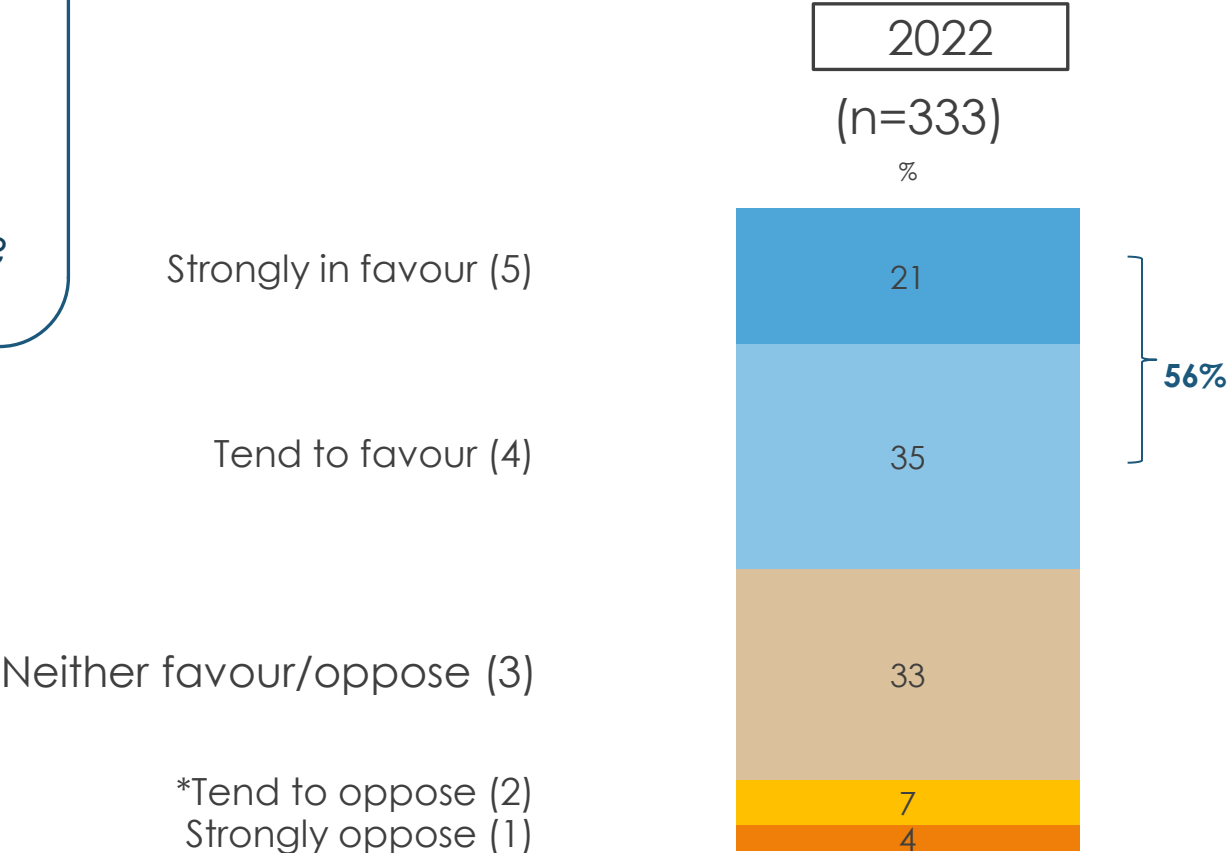
Rise of +5% in favour of a wind farm in their area marks highest number in favour since tracking began.

( ) = sample size.



# Openness to Local Wind Farm (Rural)

Q. How would you feel about having a wind farm set up in your local area?



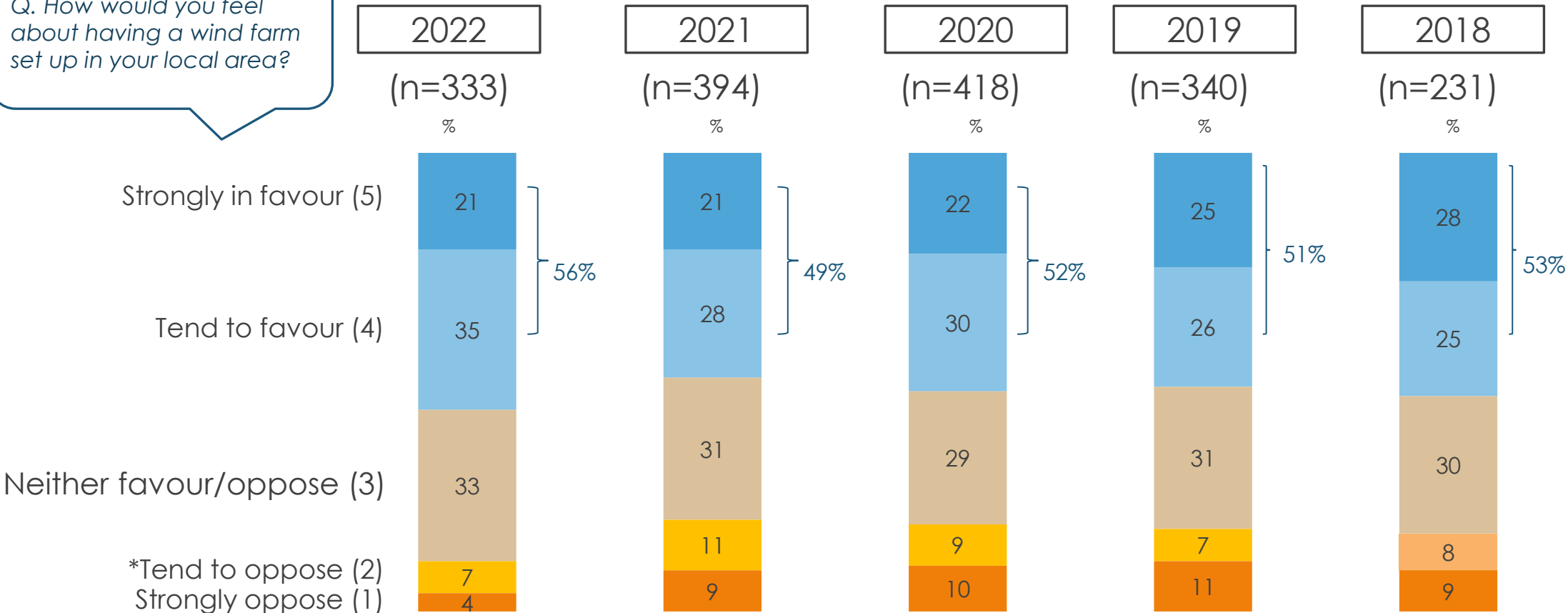
Broadly favourable response to wind farm development amongst rural residents at just over 1 in 2. Just 1 in 10 registered being opposed.

( ) = sample size.

# Openness to Local Wind Farm (Rural)



Q. How would you feel about having a wind farm set up in your local area?



Very consistent rural favourability to wind farm development at just over 1 in 2 while just 1 in 10 registered being opposed to a local wind farm this year.

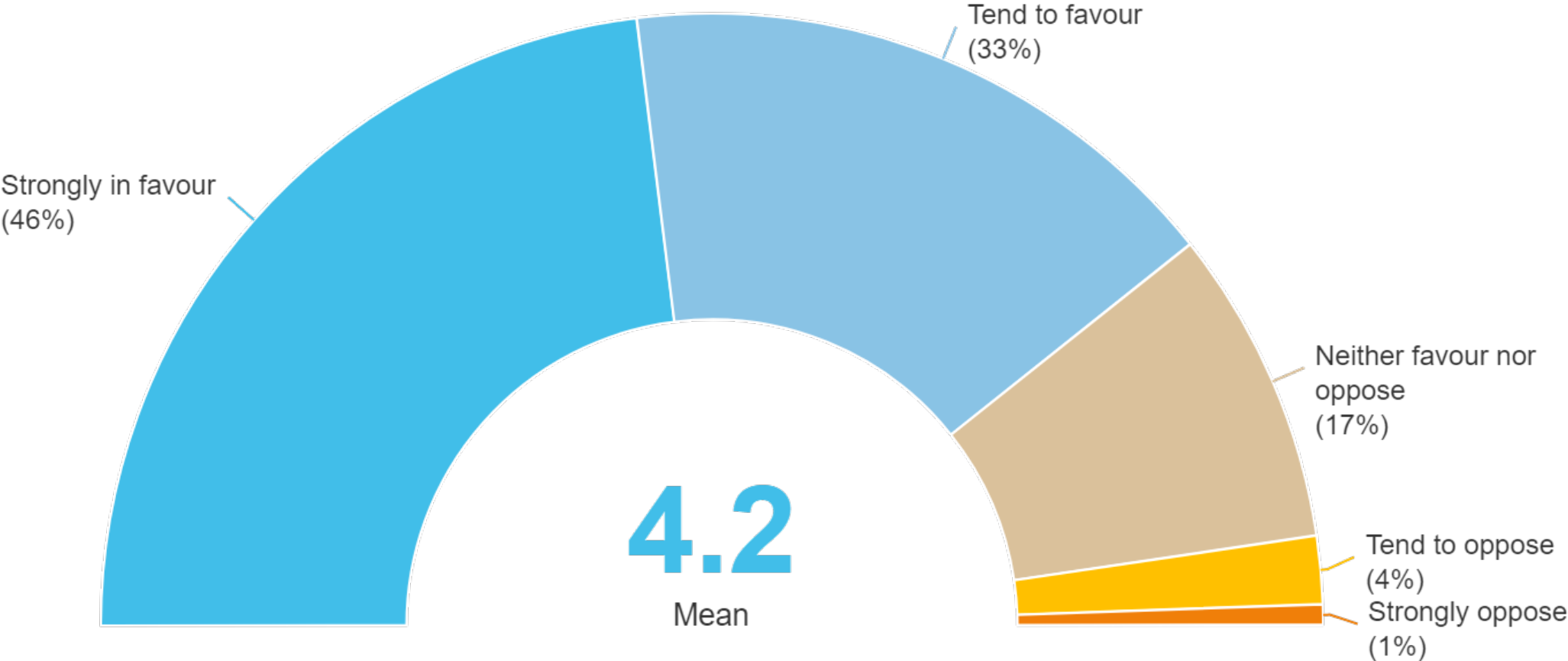
\*new measure 2018

( ) = sample size.



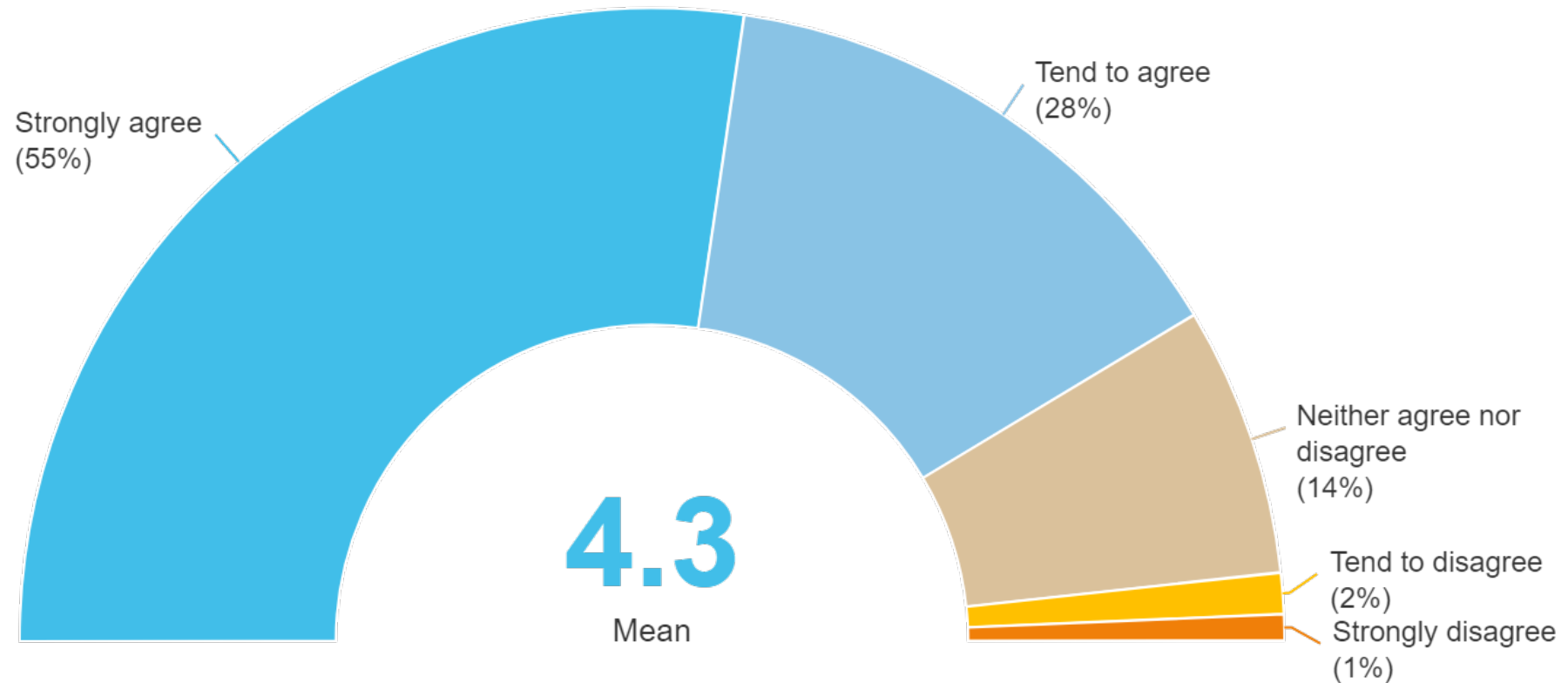
## 6. Attitudes to Offshore Wind Energy

To what extent are you in favour of, or opposed to, the use of OFFSHORE wind power in the Republic of Ireland?



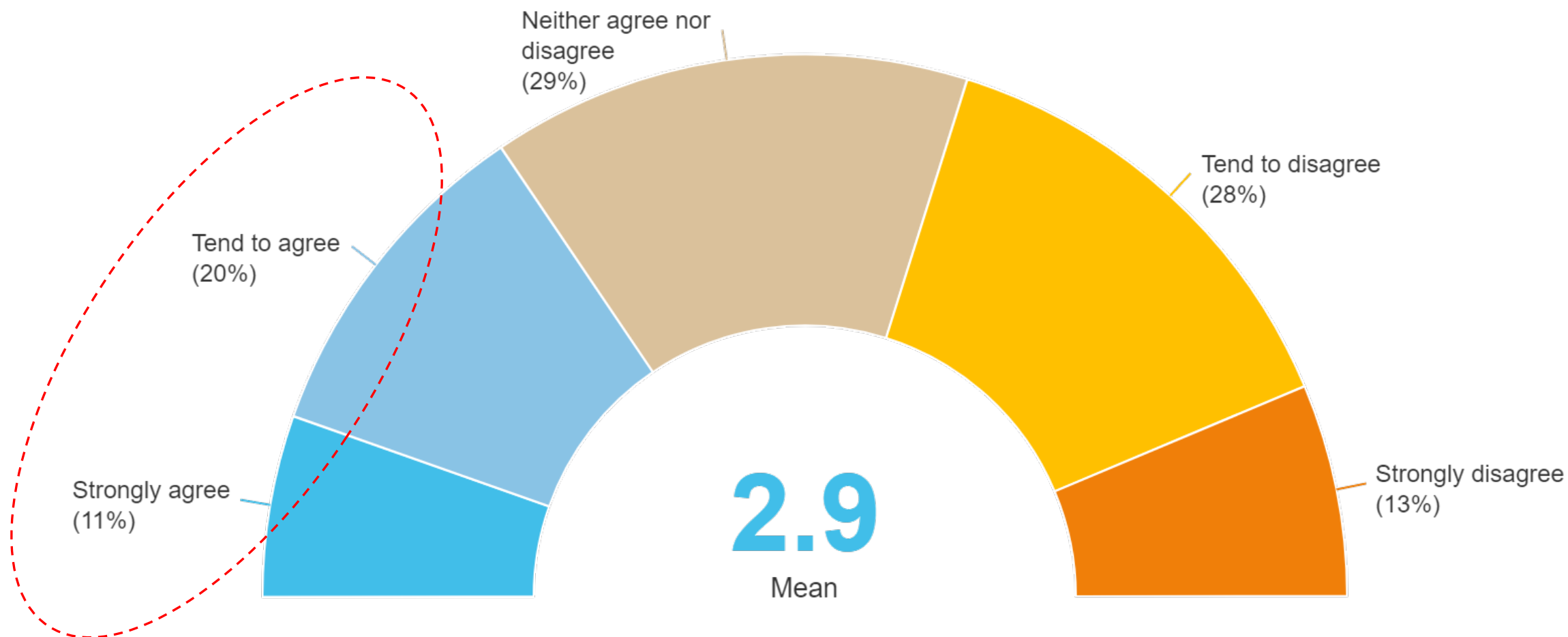
4 in 5 (79%) are in favour of offshore wind energy's use in Ireland.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that **OFFSHORE** wind farms can help us with energy security  
(having our own energy, not having to import fuel)?



Over 4 in 5 (83%) agreed that offshore wind farms can support Ireland's energy security.

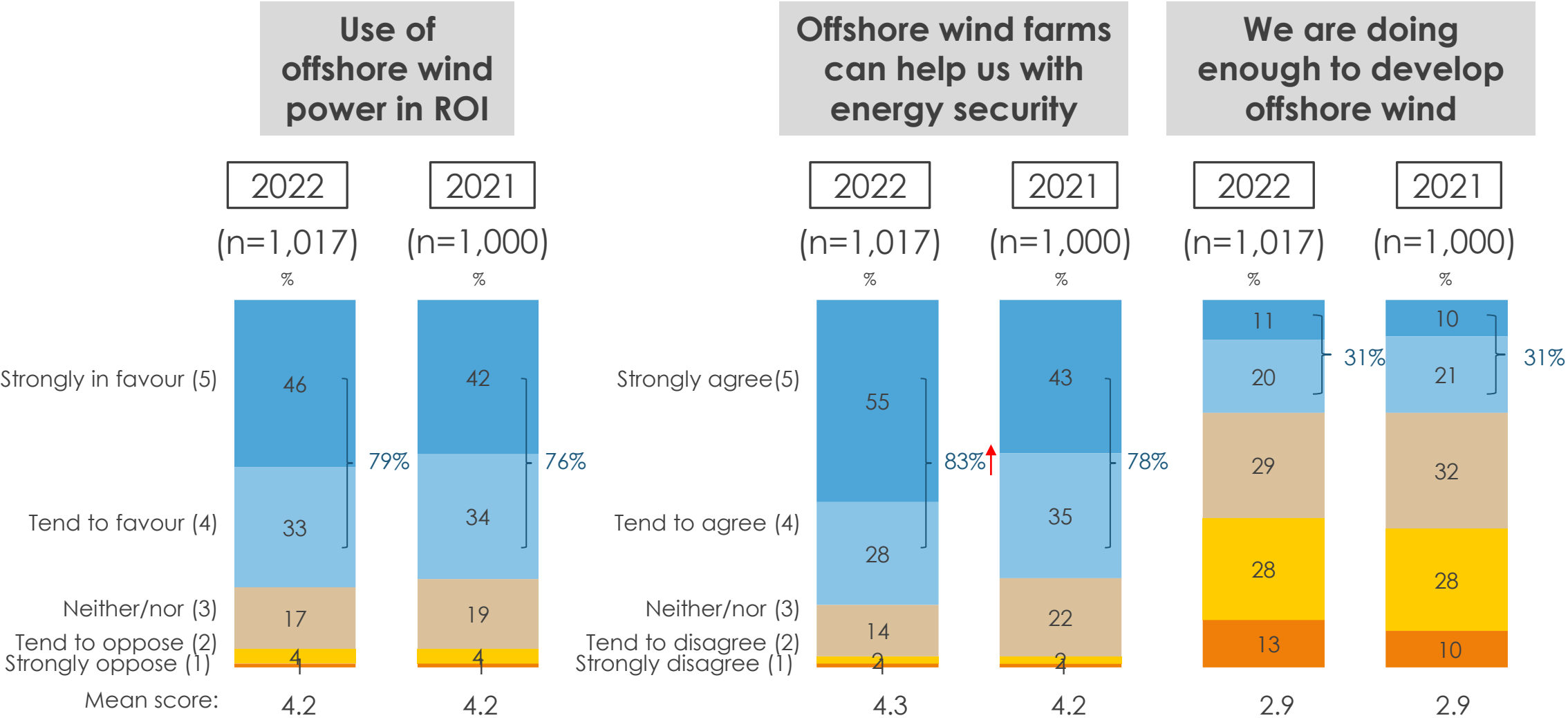
To what extent to do you agree or disagree that we are doing enough as a society and in national policies to develop **OFFSHORE** wind for Ireland?



Less than 1 in 3 (31%) say Ireland is doing enough to develop offshore wind.



# Offshore attitudes – year on year



Largely consistent levels of agreement on offshore wind between 2021 and 2022 however endorsement of energy security has risen +5% since last year's poll.





**Claire Rountree**

*Research Director*

**Interactions Ltd**

**p:** +353 (1)201 7774

**m:** +353 (0)87 1703521

**a:** Unit 2 Beach Court,  
Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow,  
Ireland

**w:** [www.interactions.ie](http://www.interactions.ie)

**e:** [claire@interactions.ie](mailto:claire@interactions.ie)

