

INSIGHTS 2020

AudienceProject 

Attitude towards advertising
and use of ad blocking

US
UK
Germany
Denmark
Sweden
Norway
Finland

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EDITORIAL

Has ad blocking peaked?

Fewer people are annoyed with the ads they are exposed to. Naturally, fewer people are using ad blockers.

While online ads are still not particularly loved (the majority still has a negative attitude towards online ads), we see that fewer people today are annoyed with online ads than in 2018. At the same time, ad block usage is dropping. From 2016 to 2020, the share of the online population using ad blockers has decreased across all countries, and in most countries, the share of sessions blocked by ad blockers has decreased on both computer and mobile.

Though ad blocking is decreasing, we still see that irrelevant ads are a big issue. In most countries, more than half of the online population finds that the online ads they are exposed to are irrelevant to them. And when looking at why people are using ad blockers, we see that ad relevance (or the lack of it) is one of the main reasons for blocking ads.

Finally, we see that brand perception is increasingly affected by where brands are advertising. In most countries, around one-third of the online population express that ads shown next to relevant content have a positive effect on their brand perception. At the same time, the majority of the online population in most countries expresses that ads shown in non-safe environments cause a negative perception of the brands.

Rune Werliin

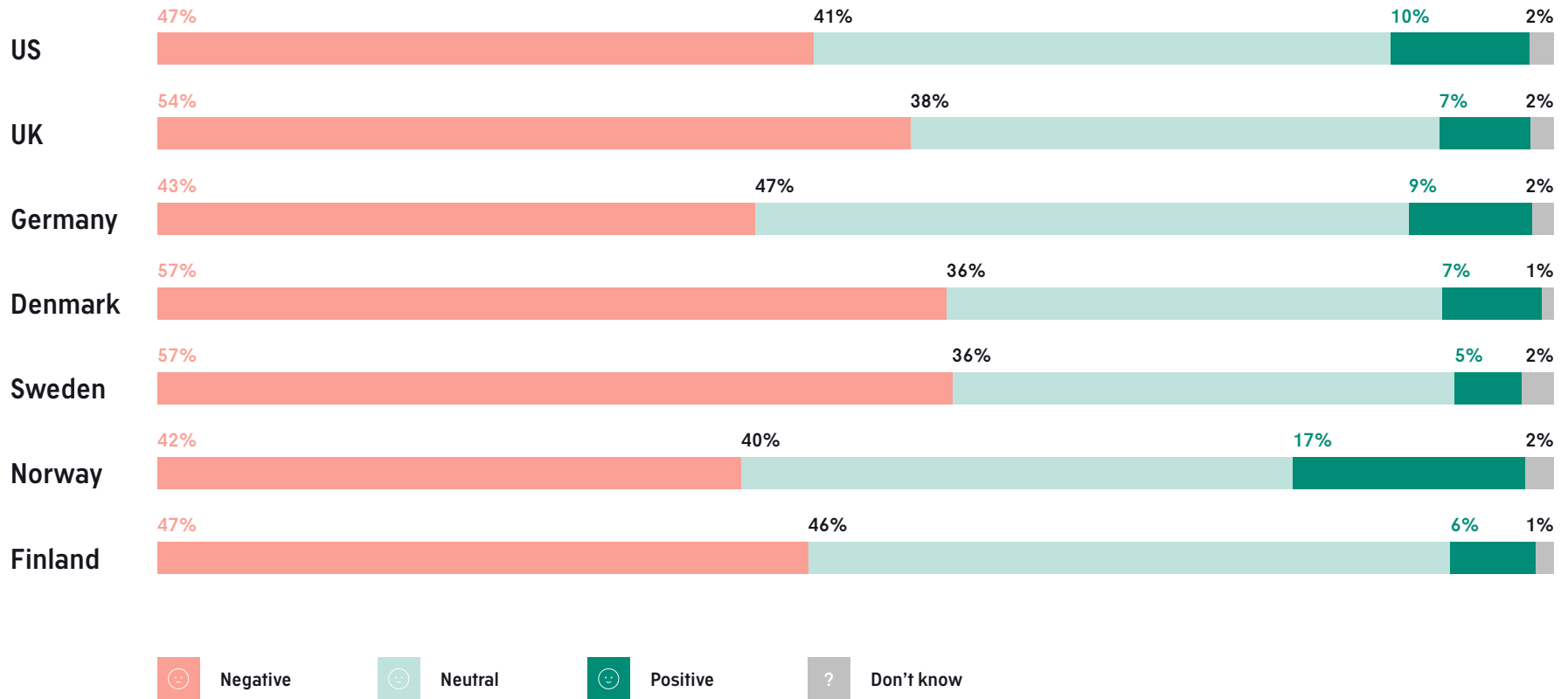
Chief Product Officer @ AudienceProject

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ADVERTISING

Despite the majority still having a negative attitude towards ads on websites and in online video clips, we see that fewer people are annoyed with the ads they are exposed to. At the same time, we see that brand perception is increasingly affected by where the brands are advertising.

Half of the online population are annoyed with ads on websites

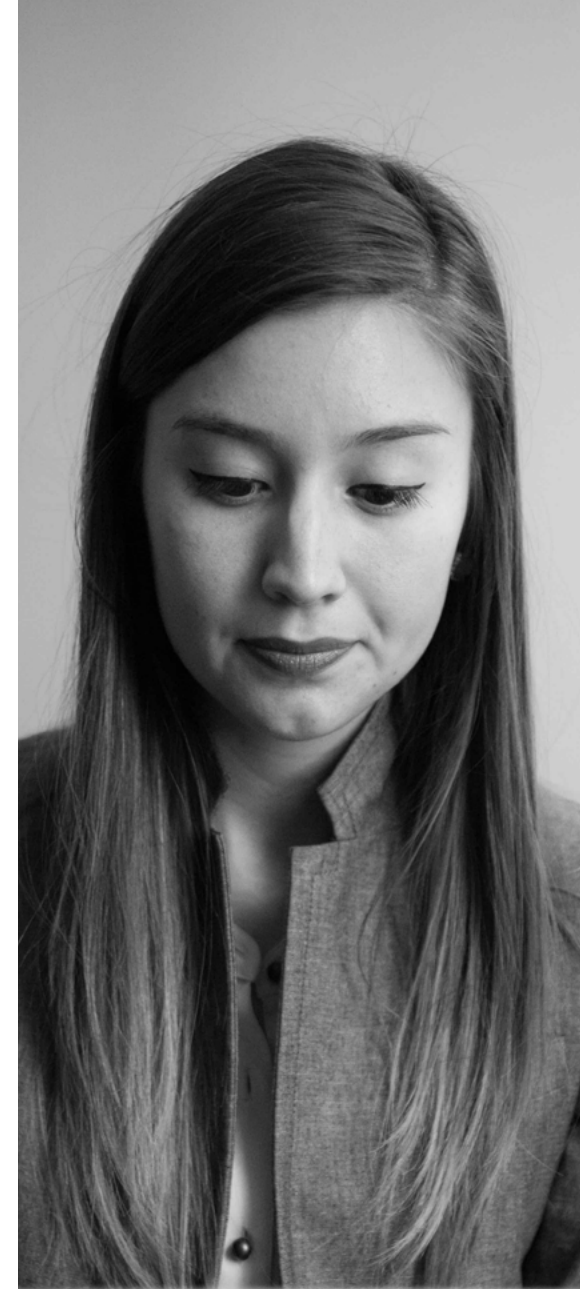
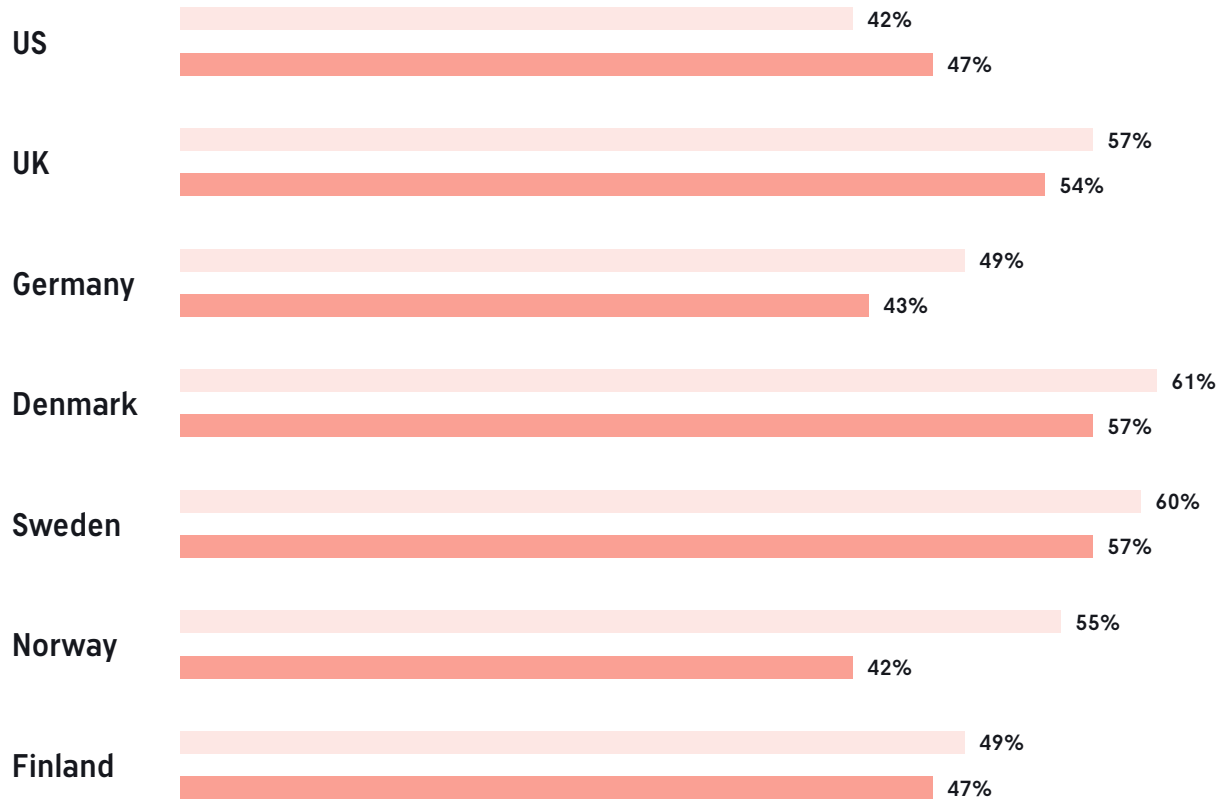
[What is people's attitude towards ads on websites?]



Fewer people are annoyed with ads on websites

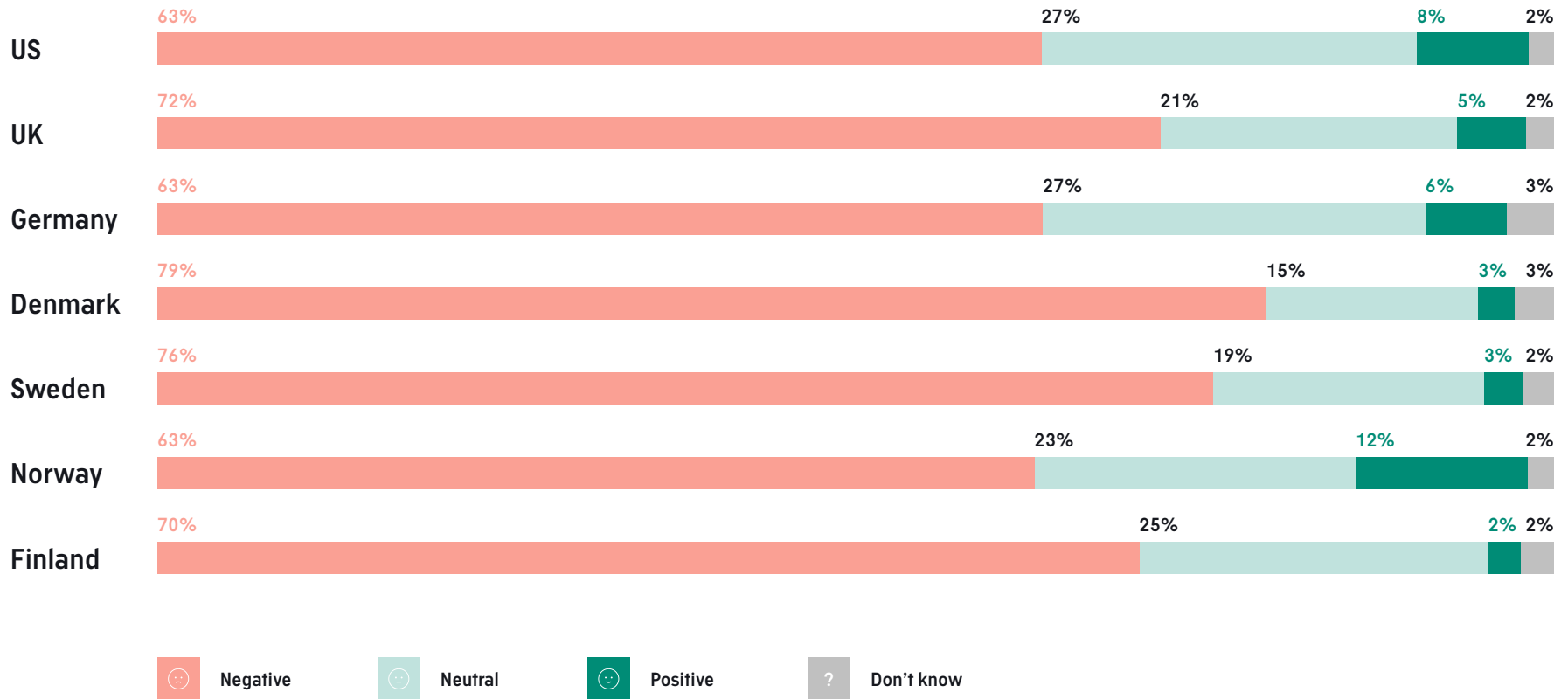
2018
2020

[How many have a negative attitude towards ads on websites?]



Seven out of ten are annoyed with online video ads

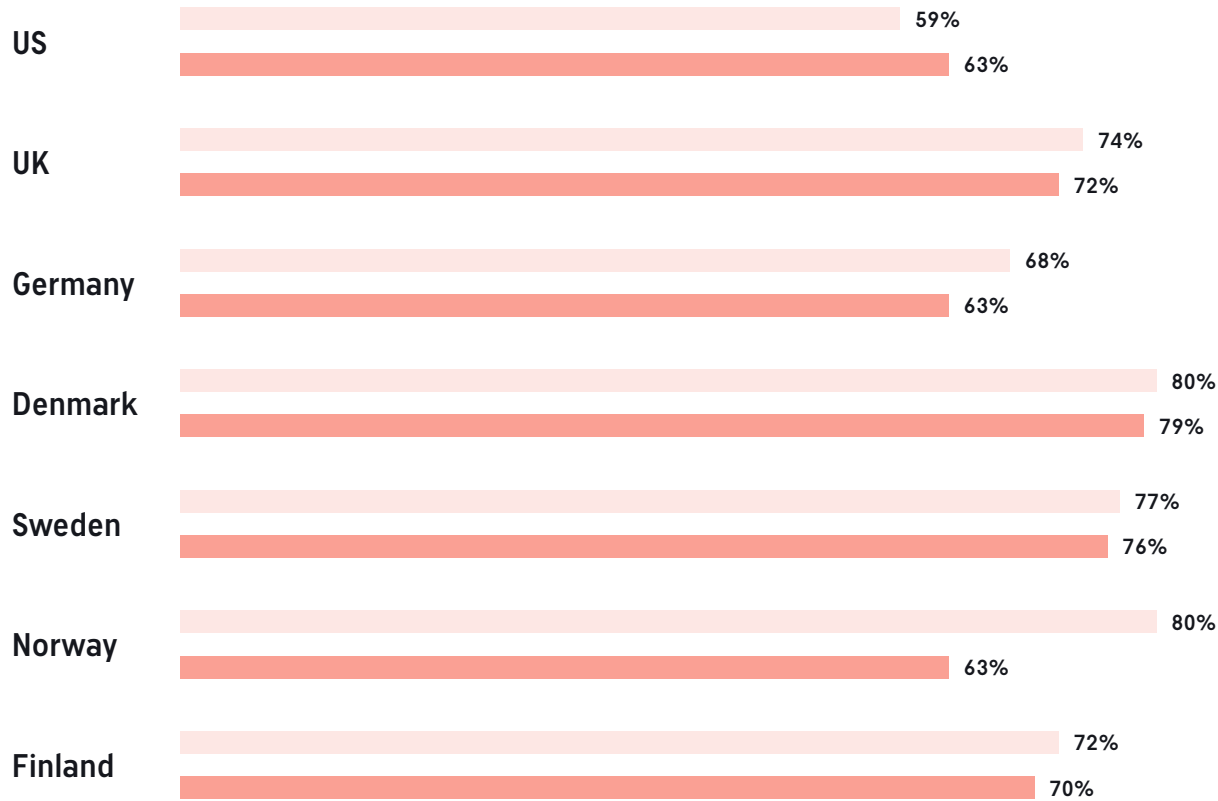
[What is people's attitude towards ads in online video clips?]



Fewer people are annoyed with online video ads

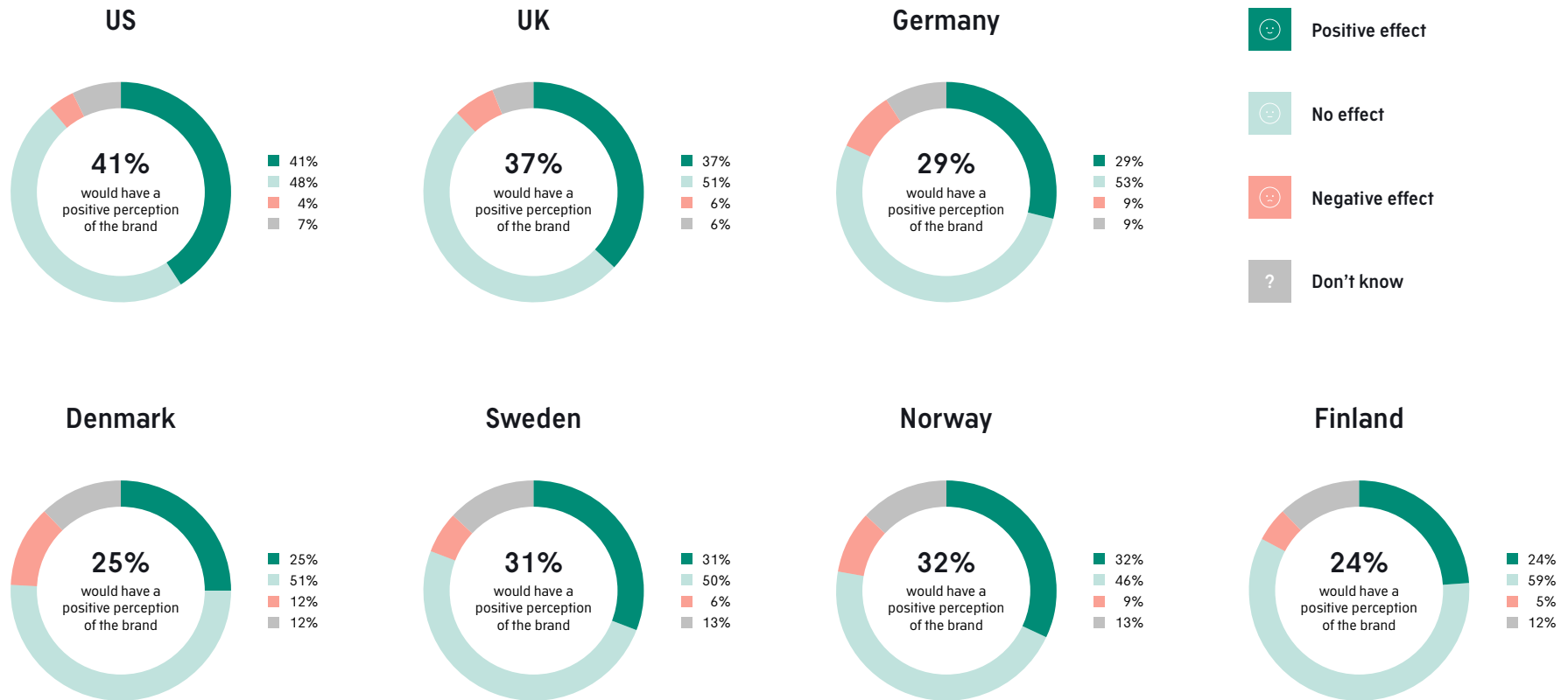
2018
2020

[How many have a negative attitude towards ads in online video clips?]



Ads shown next to relevant content have a limited positive effect on brand perception

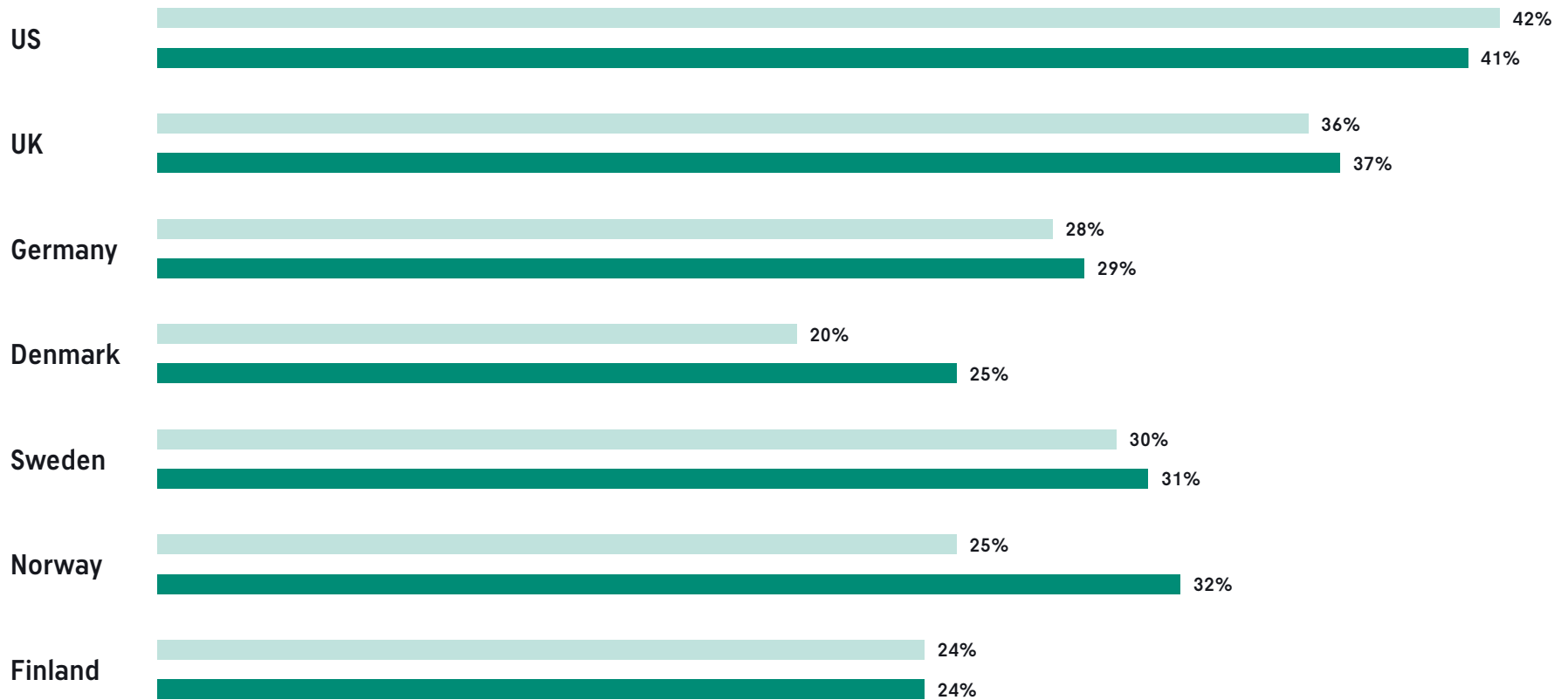
[How would it affect people's perception of a brand if it was advertised next to relevant and trustworthy content?]



More people are positively affected if ads are shown next to relevant content

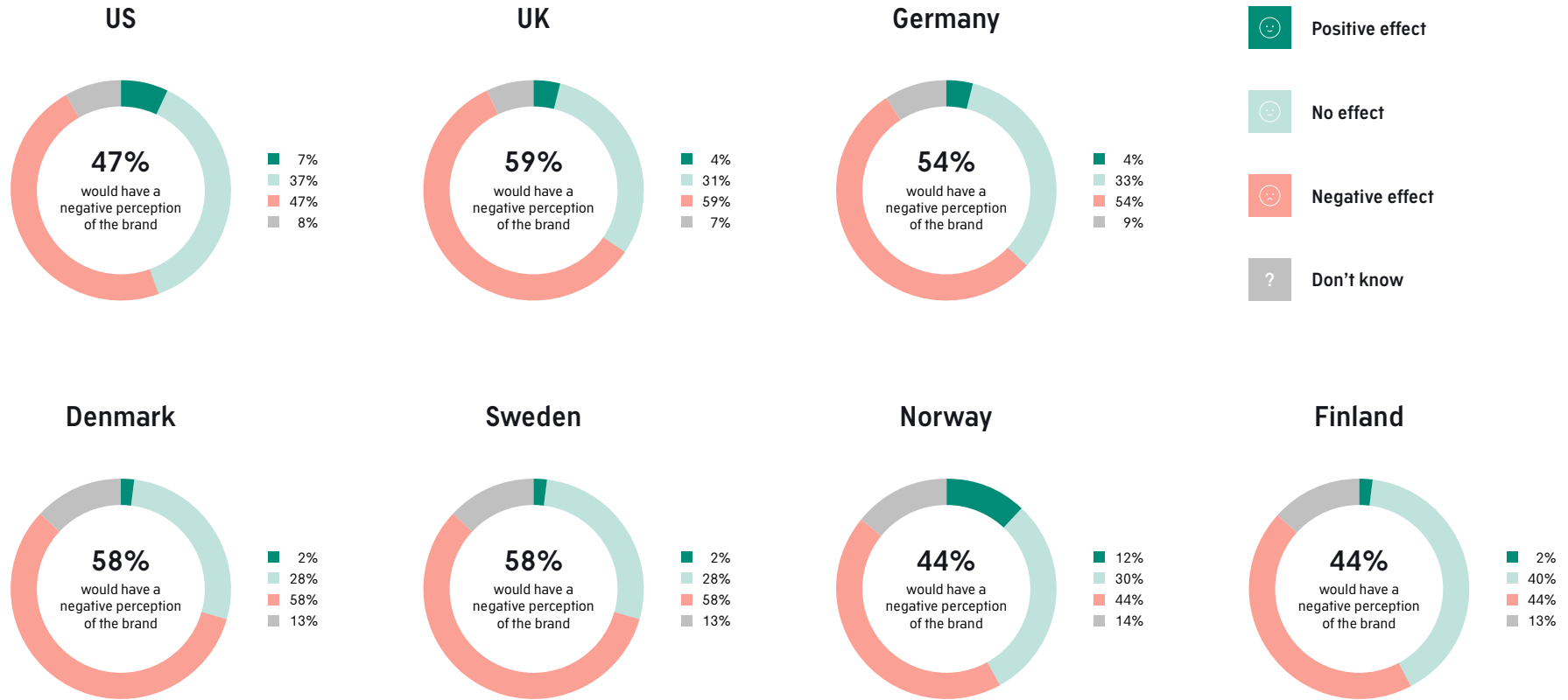
2018
2020

[How many would have a positive perception of a brand if it was advertised next to relevant and trustworthy content?]



Ads shown in non-safe environments cause a negative perception of brands

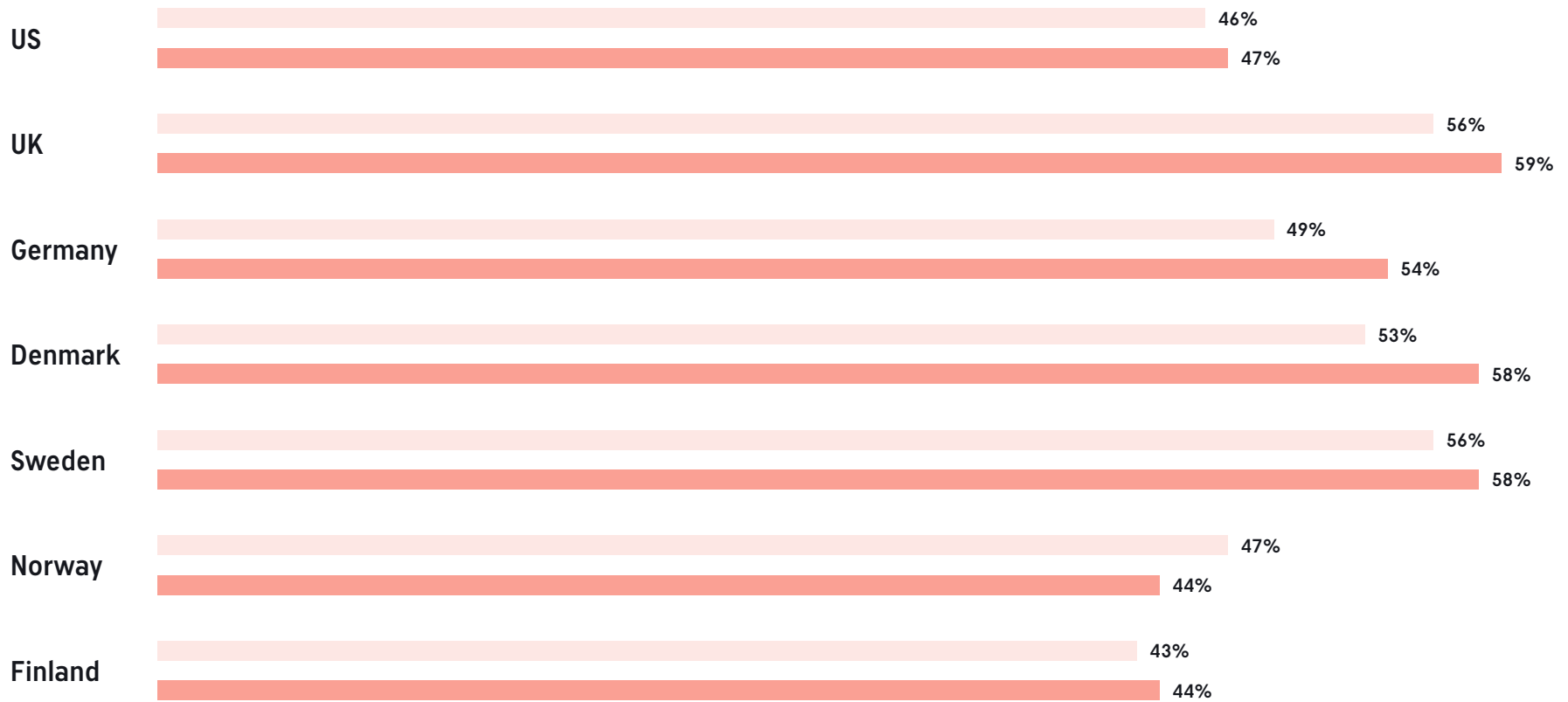
[How would it affect people's perception of a brand if it was advertised next to offensive and/or controversial content?]



More people are negatively affected if ads are shown in non-safe environments

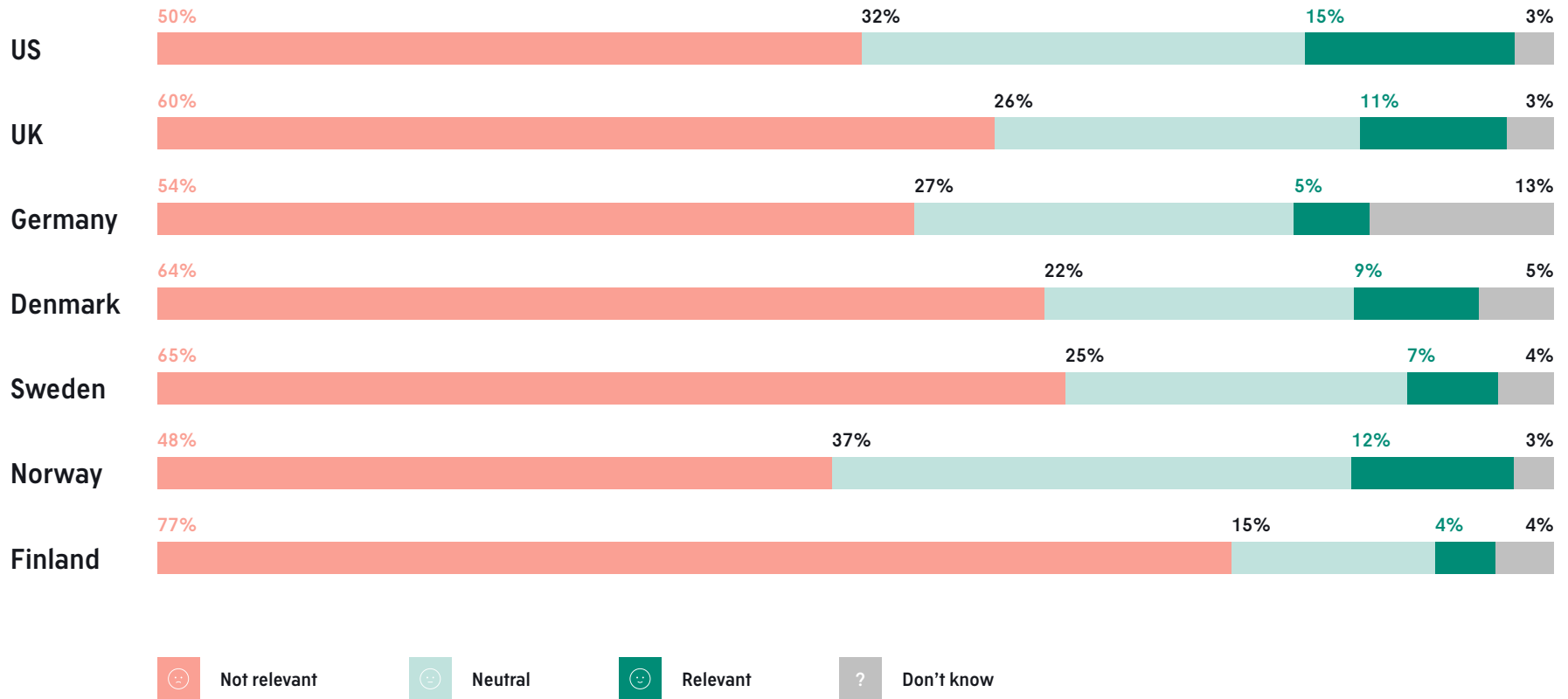
2018
2020

[How many would have a negative perception of a brand if it was advertised next to offensive and/or controversial content?]



Up to three quarters feel that online ads are irrelevant to them

[To what degree do people feel that the online advertisements they receive are relevant to them?]





AD BLOCKING

Ad blocking is still widely used, particularly by men and the younger generations. However, fewer people are using ad blockers. Though the time spent on mobile keeps increasing, ad blocking remains a computer phenomenon. Almost three times as many people use ad blockers on their computers compared to their mobiles.

Answered use of ad blocking vs detected use of ad blocking

In this study, we are showing the use of ad blocking in two different ways; the **answered use of ad blocking** and the **detected use of ad blocking**.

The answered use of ad blocking is related to the respondents' answers on whether they use ad blocking, while the detected use of ad blocking is related to the sessions, where we have detected a use of ad blocking. This means that the answered use of ad blocking represents the number of people having an ad blocker on one device or another, while the detected use of ad blocking represents the number of sessions being blocked by an ad blocker on the device used when the survey was answered.

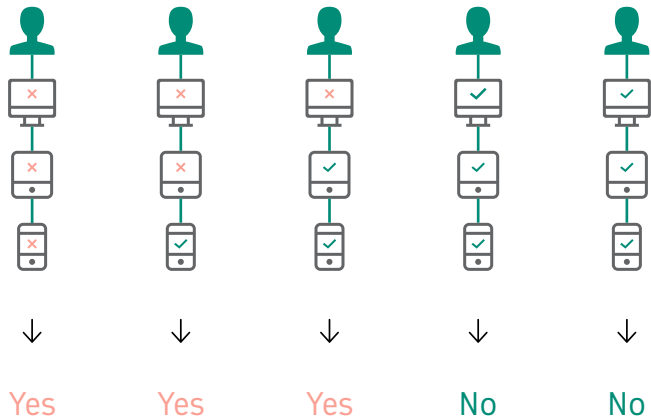
The discrepancy between the answered use of ad blocking and the detected use of ad blocking can be explained by the differences in metrics. An individual who uses an ad blocker will most likely not use it every time she visits a website as she most likely will not use an ad blocker on all devices and in every browser. Furthermore, even though a respondent believes she uses an ad blocker, it might not be active at all time or can be inactive for several reasons.

In the following, we will clarify when the use of ad blocking represents the number of people who have answered that they use an ad blocker and when the results represent the number of sessions where we have detected a use of ad blocking.

Answered use of ad blocking



Survey question: Do you use an ad blocker?

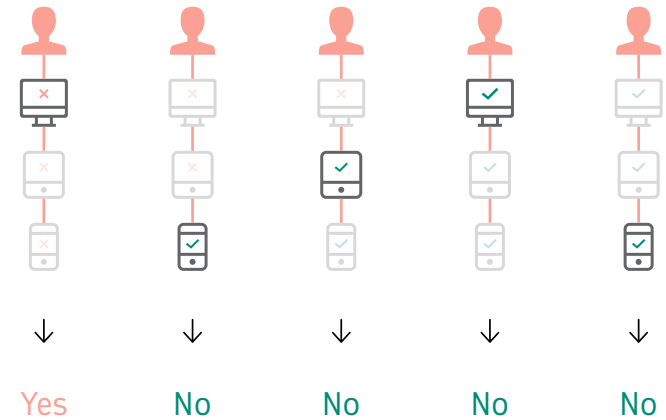


Conclusion: **60%** use an ad blocker

Detected use of ad blocking



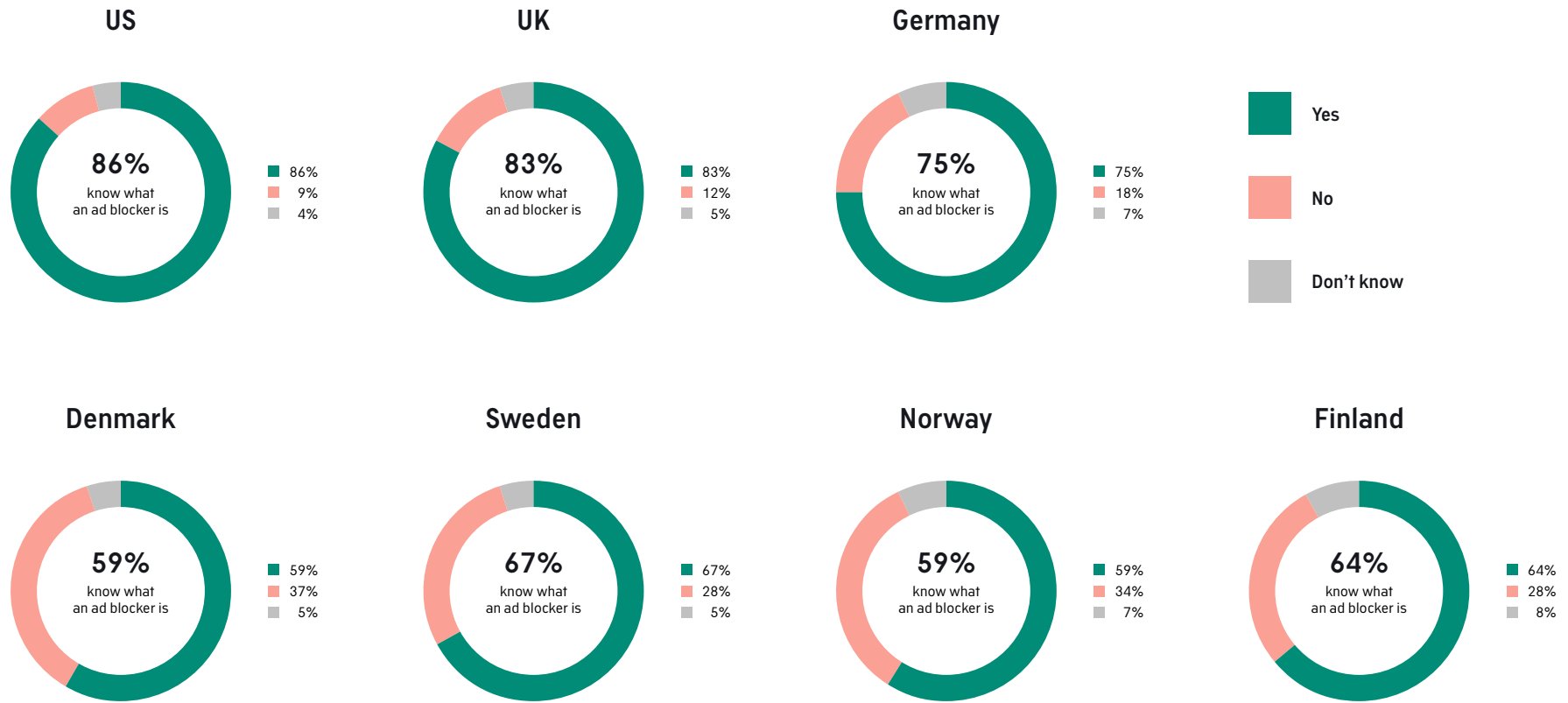
In how many sessions is use of ad blocking detected?



Conclusion: **20%** of sessions are blocked

One third in the Nordics don't know what an ad blocker is

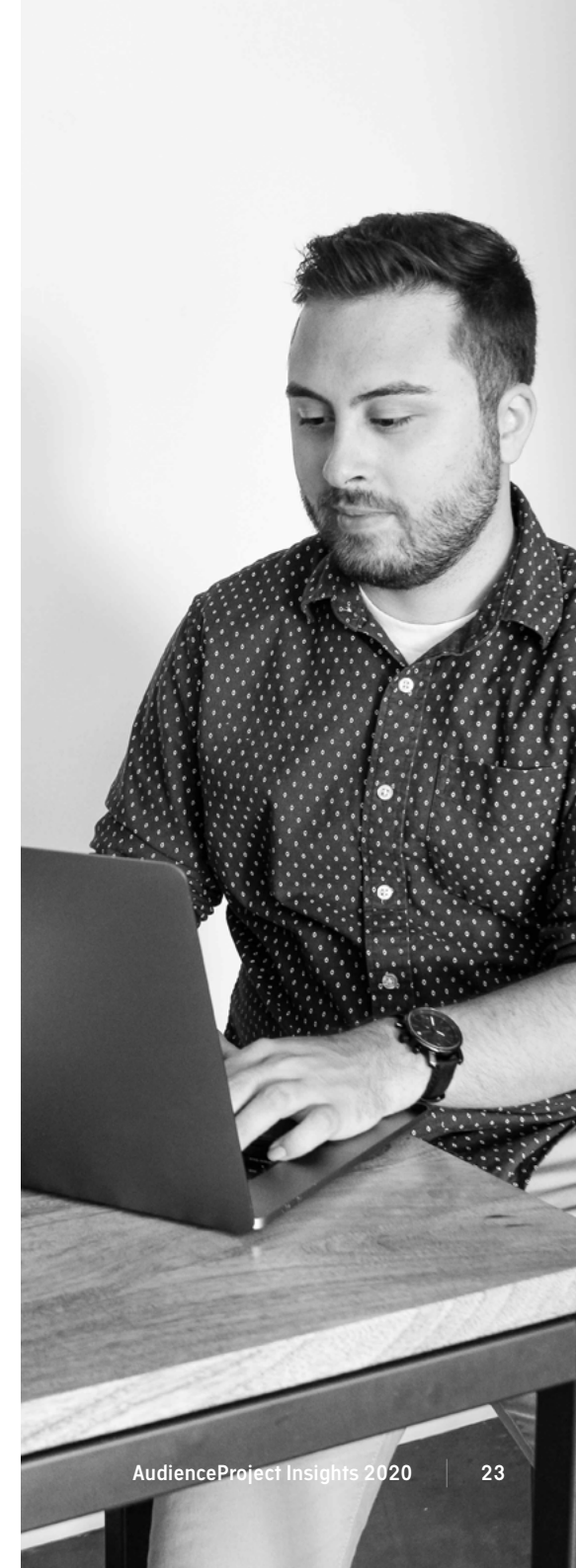
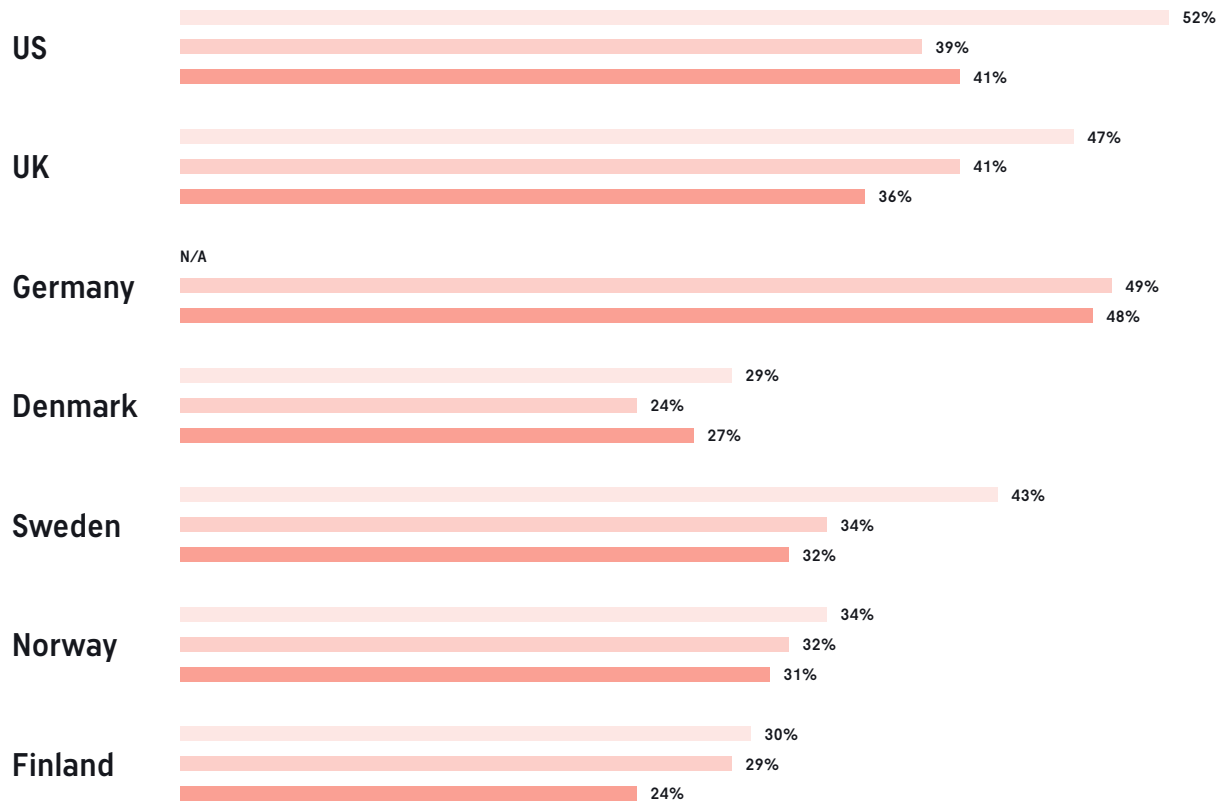
[How many know what an ad blocker is?]



Fewer people use ad blockers

[How many have **answered** that they use an ad blocker?]

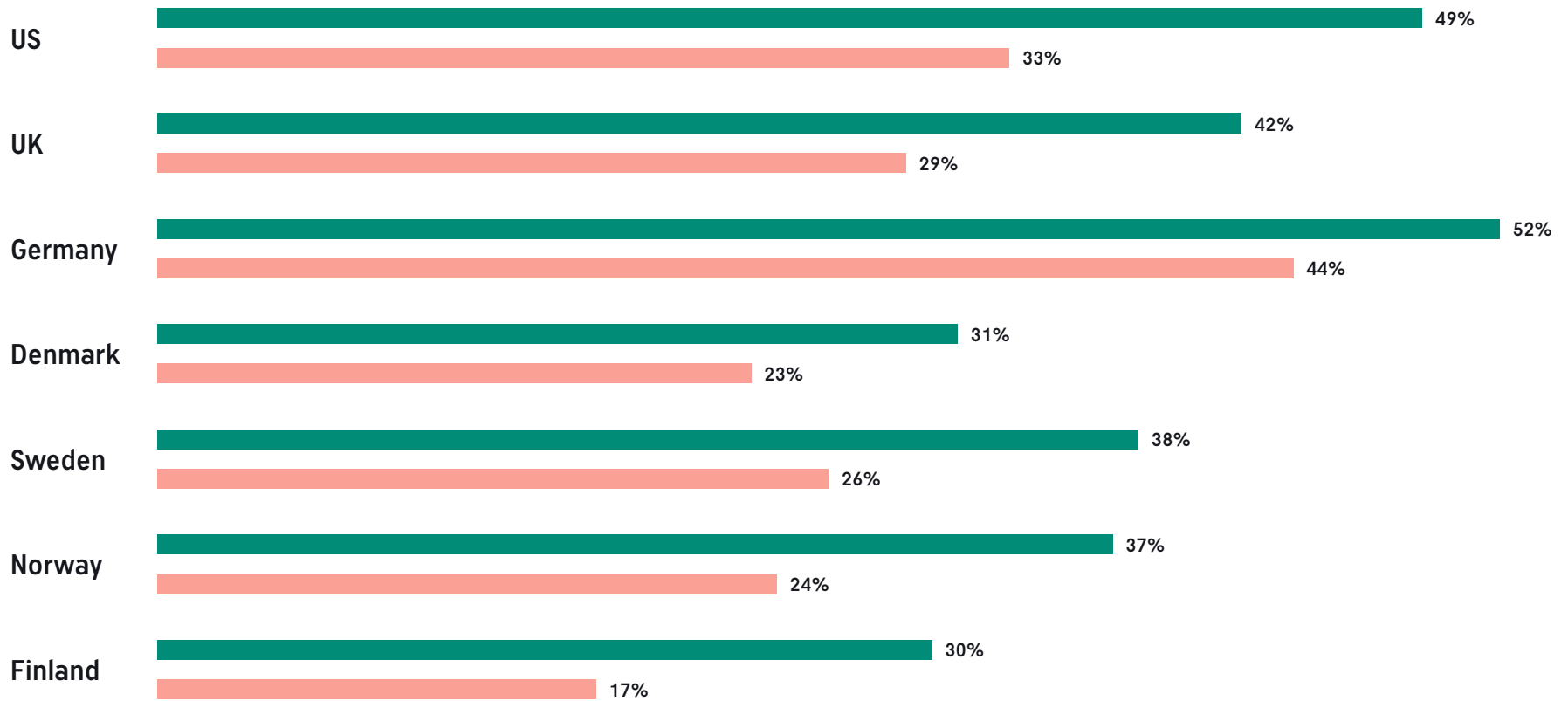
2016
2018
2020



Ad blockers are primarily used by men

■ Men
■ Women

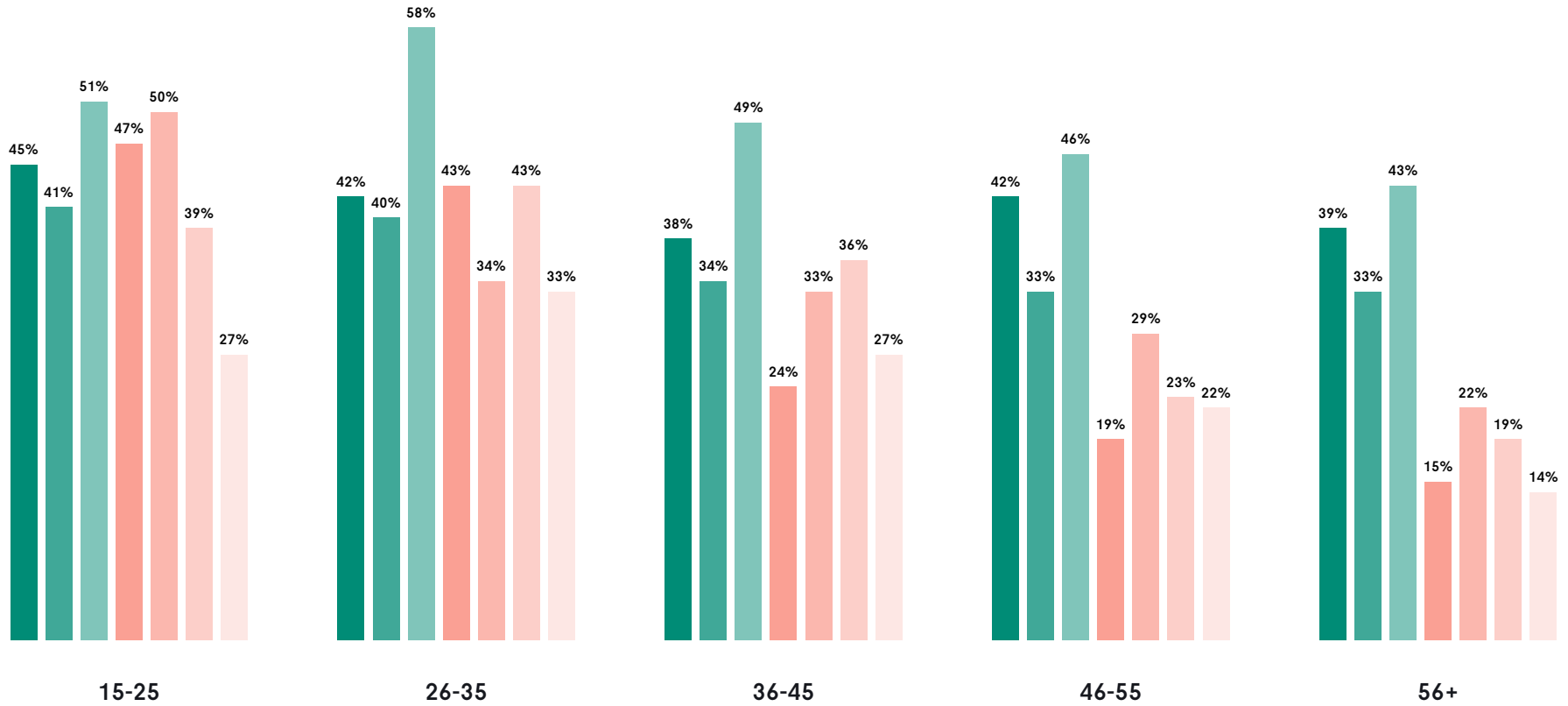
[How many men and women have **answered** that they use an ad blocker?]



Ad blockers are primarily used by the younger generations

[How many in different age groups have **answered** that they use an ad blocker?]

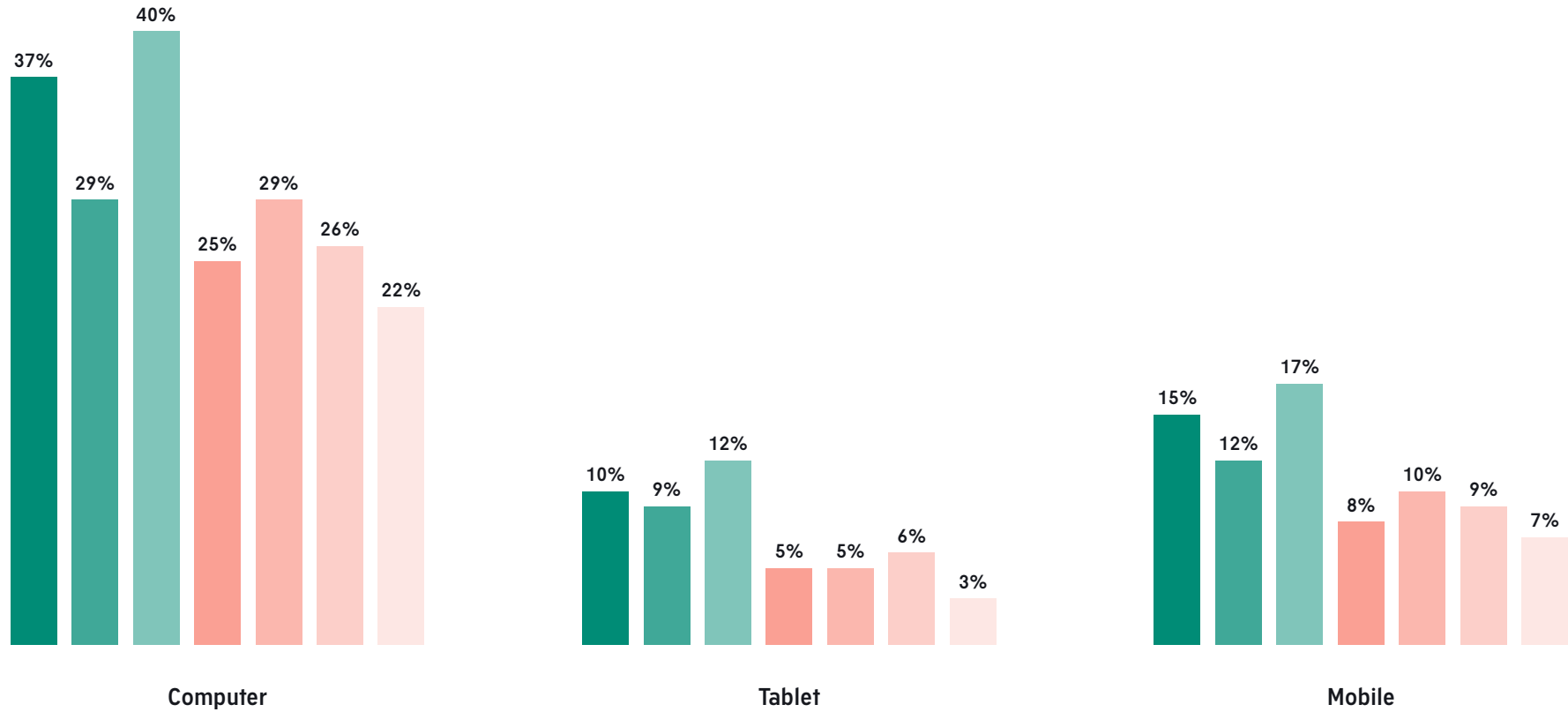
- US
- UK
- Germany
- Denmark
- Sweden
- Norway
- Finland



Ad blockers are primarily used on computers

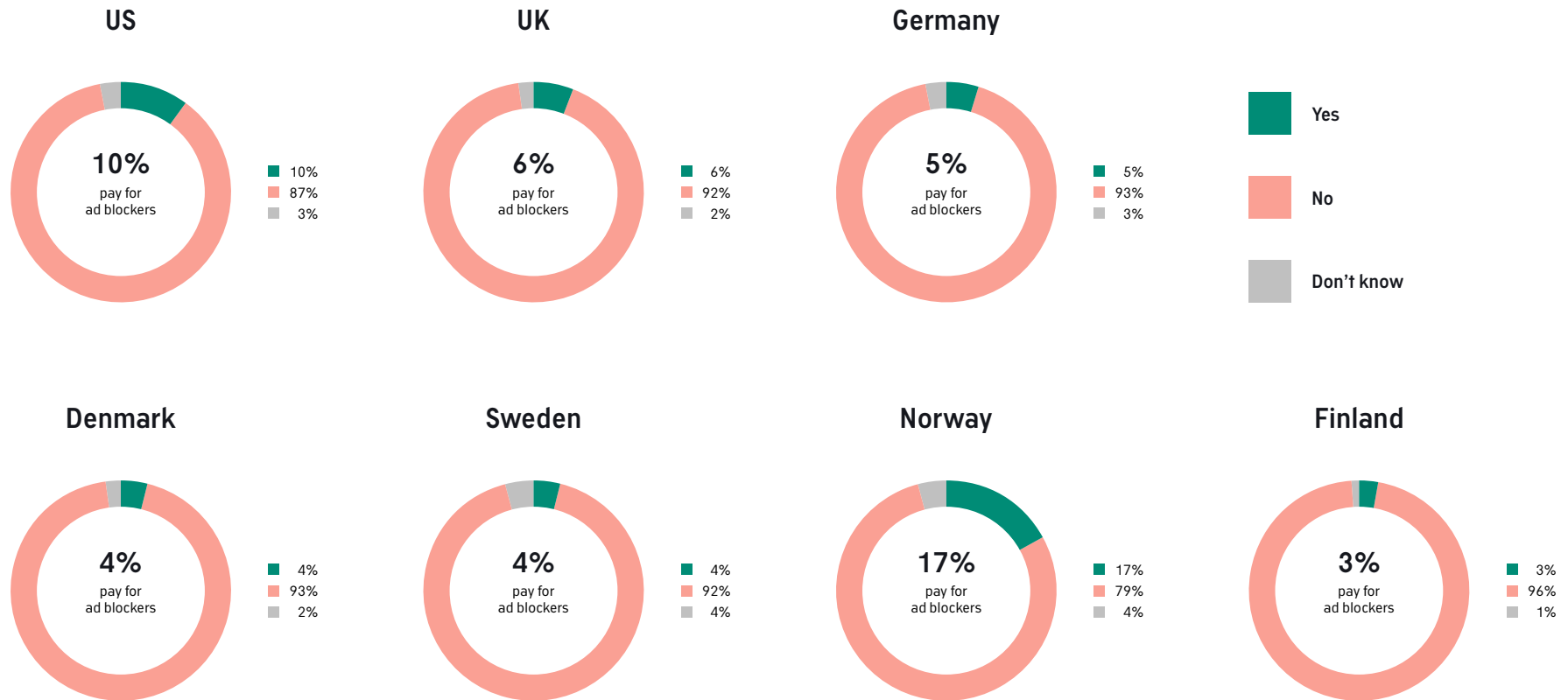
[How many have **answered** that they use an ad blocker on their computer, tablet and mobile?]

- US
- UK
- Germany
- Denmark
- Sweden
- Norway
- Finland



Few people using ad blockers pay for their ad blockers

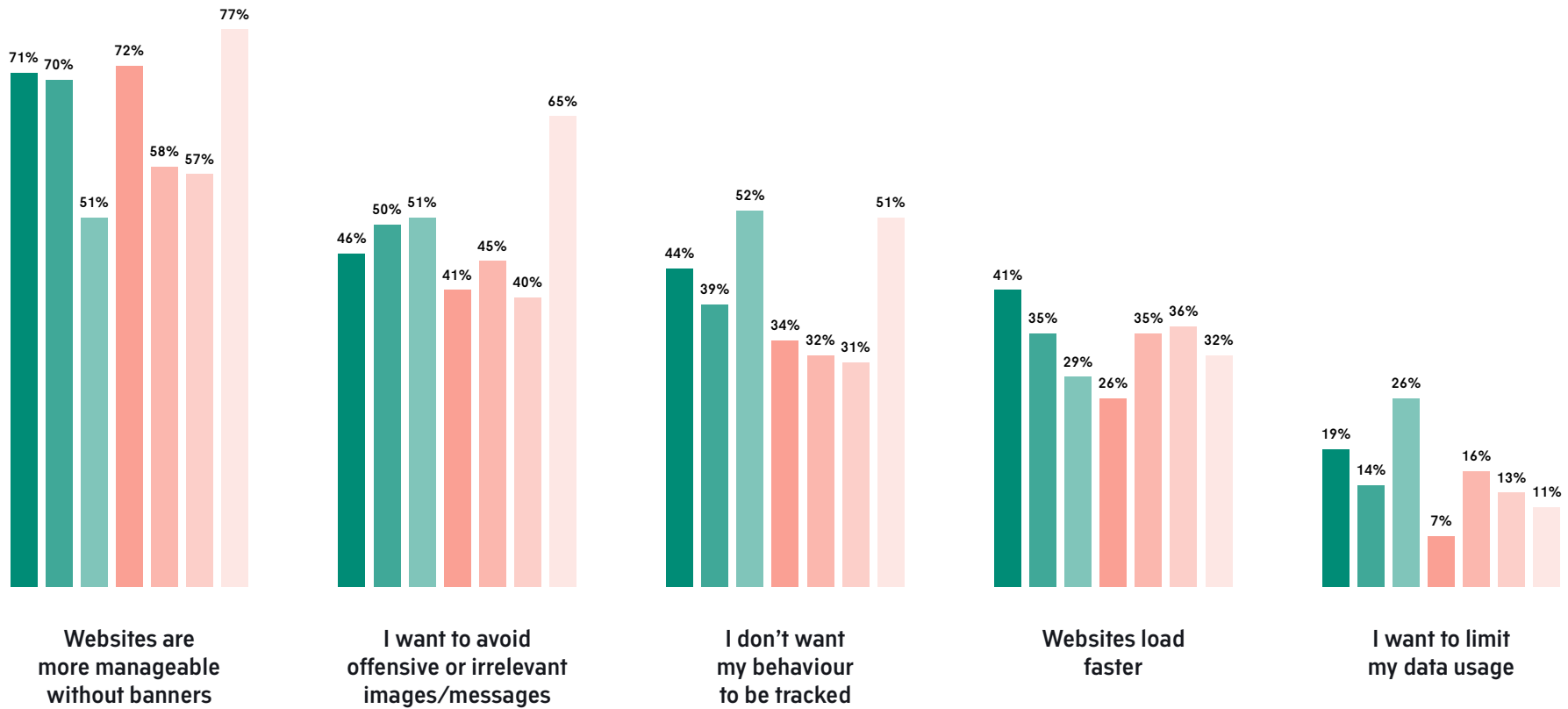
[How many of those who have **answered** that they use an ad blocker are paying for ad blockers?]



People use ad blockers to get cleaner websites and avoid irrelevant ads

[Why do people use ad blockers?]

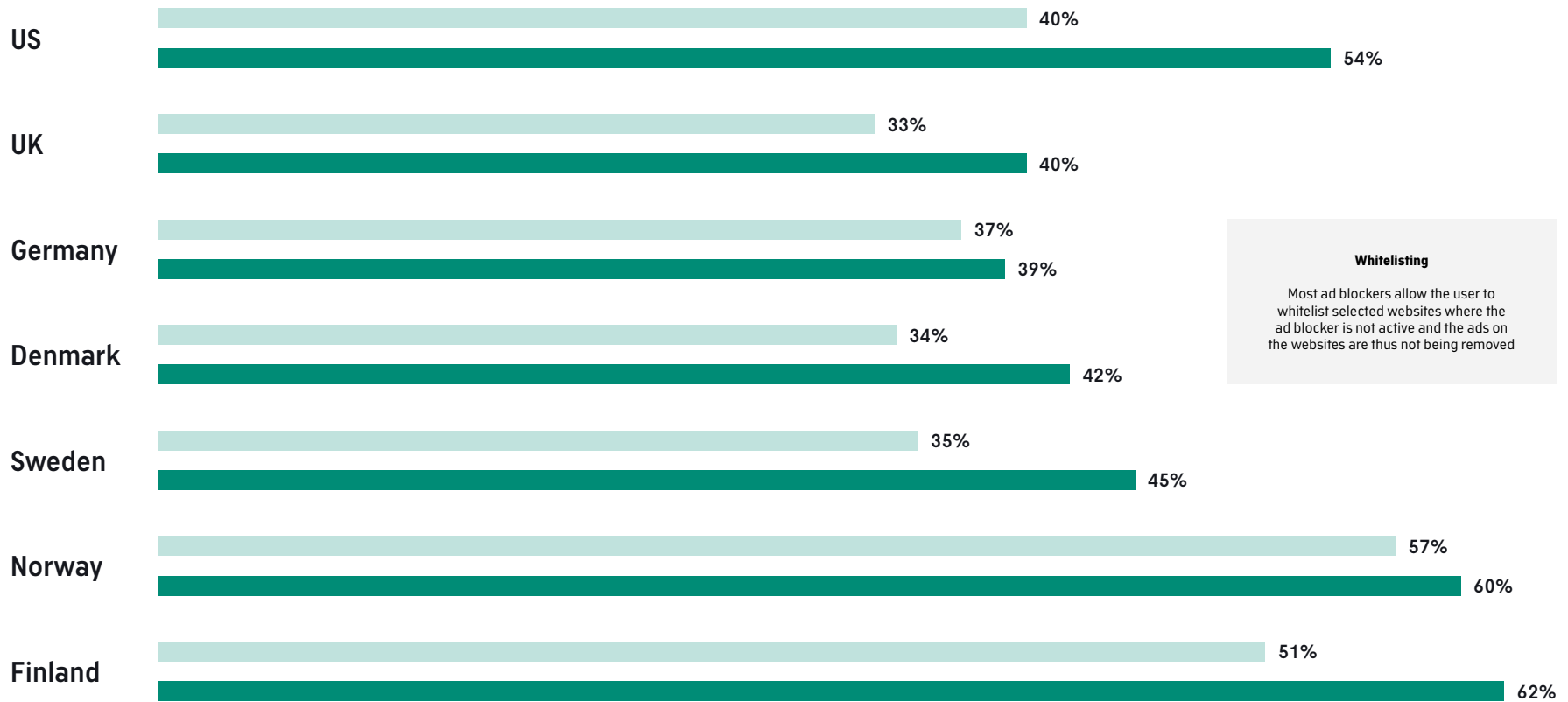
- US
- UK
- Germany
- Denmark
- Sweden
- Norway
- Finland



More people have whitelisted websites in their ad blockers

2018
2020

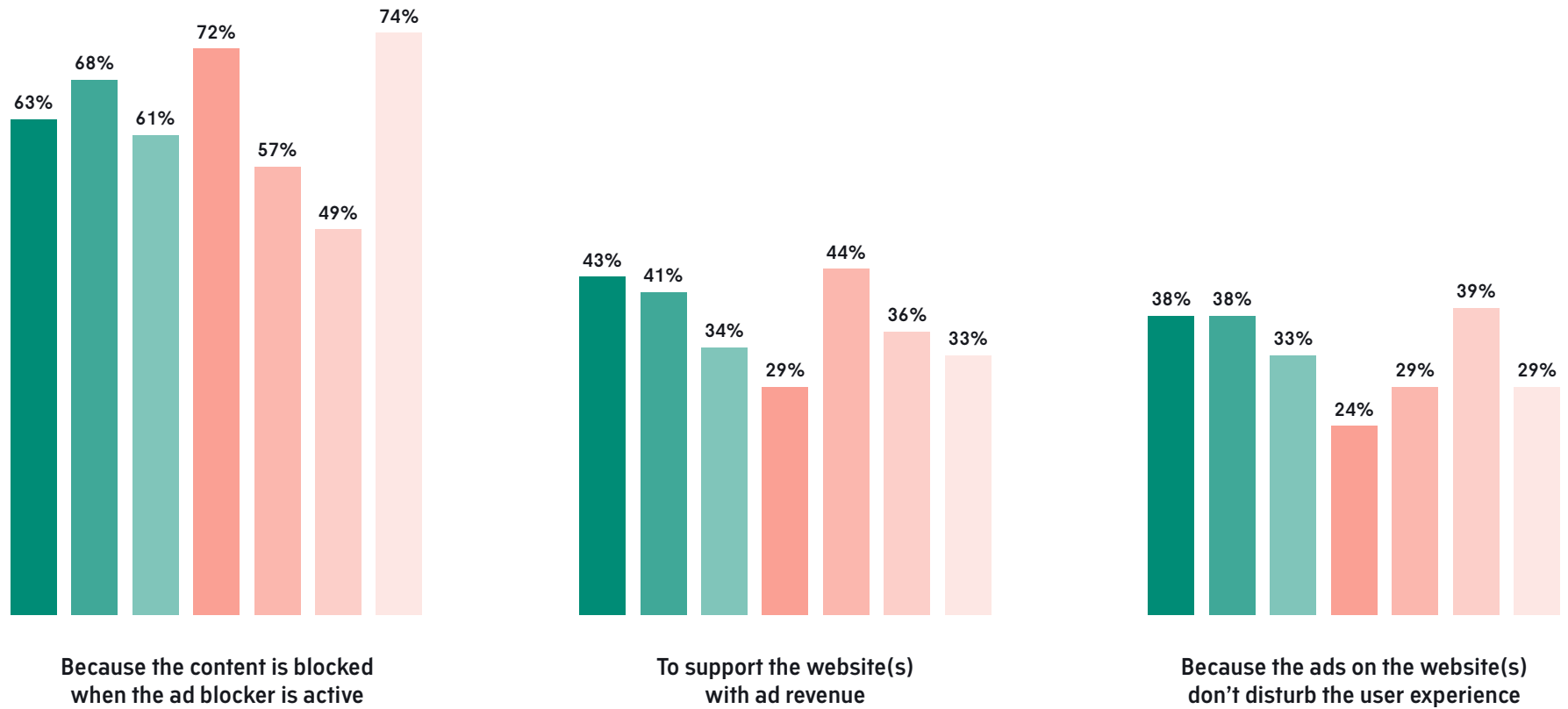
[How many have whitelisted selected websites in their ad blocker?]



People primarily whitelist websites because the content is otherwise blocked

[Why do people whitelist selected websites?]

- US
- UK
- Germany
- Denmark
- Sweden
- Norway
- Finland





In most countries, the sessions blocked on computer decreases

[In how many sessions have we **detected** a use of ad blocking on computer?]

	2016 (Q1)	2016 (Q3)	2018 (Q2)	2020 (Q2)
US	N/A	23%	21%	18%
UK	N/A	26%	25%	15%
Germany	N/A	N/A	26%	28%
Denmark	14%	12%	9%	6%
Sweden	18%	19%	19%	23%
Norway	15%	19%	21%	15%
Finland	15%	17%	19%	20%

Sessions blocked on mobile stays on a low level

[In how many sessions have we **detected** a use of ad blocking on mobile?]

	2016 (Q1)	2016 (Q3)	2018 (Q2)	2020 (Q2)
US	N/A	2%	5%	7%
UK	N/A	2%	8%	6%
Germany	N/A	N/A	13%	12%
Denmark	4%	1%	3%	2%
Sweden	4%	2%	7%	8%
Norway	3%	3%	9%	5%
Finland	2%	2%	6%	6%

ABOUT THE STUDY

Further insights

This is just the tip of the iceberg. AudienceProject has in-depth data on the digital market. For more in-depth data about attitudes towards ads and use of ad blocking - or other digital trends, please reach out to us.

Methodology

The study is a part of AudienceProject Insights 2020. Data is collected through online surveys done in Q2 2020. The respondents have been selected from our Nordic, German, UK and US panels consisting of more than 1.5 million panelists and weighed to achieve representativity on the more than 14.000 respondents who completed the survey.

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About AudienceProject

AudienceProject is a technology-based market research company founded in Denmark and operational worldwide that helps publishers, agencies and advertisers identify, build, reach and measure audiences.

AudienceProject empowers publishers, agencies and advertisers to collect and activate their own audience data, so they can create unique data offerings and show advertisers the true value of omnichannel marketing.

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