

Digital
Business
Ireland

Digital Insights Series

Online Behaviour
February 2022

conducted by

*Ireland
Thinks.*



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Question:

"Do you consider the sustainability credentials of who you are buying from when shopping online?"

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Lorraine Higgins

Secretary General, Digital Business Ireland



“While Irish businesses have been at the forefront of developing sustainable innovation, our Digital Insights research shows that consumers remain somewhat ambivalent.”

Overall, less than one in every five consumers in Ireland always consider the sustainability credentials of the businesses they purchase from, when shopping online. This is an incredibly low proportion, and contradicts the popular belief that customers value sustainability above all else. Perhaps most surprisingly, almost one in every four (23%) consumers have never considered sustainability when purchasing goods and services online. Evidently, the link between climate crisis and online purchases are not connected for many, and the priority surrounding the green agenda has been stifled either through lack of awareness or education, judging by this crucial research.

On the issue of age, our research contests societal assumptions once again – with 25% of those respondents aged 55+ prioritising sustainability when purchasing goods online, compared to just 17% of those aged between 18–24. While common perceptions suggest that Millennials and Generation Z are more likely to value and practice environmentally friendly behaviours, our research demonstrates that, in fact, it is the older generations who are leading the charge on this front.

When it comes to gender, our previous Digital Insights research highlighted that while men outspend women online, they are less likely to make a concerted effort to purchase from Irish websites. On sustainability, 28% of men reported that they never considered the environmental credentials of the businesses they buy from, compared to just 18% of women who noted the same.

Finally, our research demonstrates that income alone does not dictate attitudes towards sustainability. Despite having a higher level of disposable income, just 6% of respondents earning in excess of 80k per annum prioritise sustainability when shopping online – this is compared to more than a third (37%) of those earning less than 5k who reported the same.



Rose O'Donovan

Chairperson of the Digital Business Ireland
CSR & Sustainability Committee



**Every single business – regardless of sector –
has the potential to benefit from the
commercial opportunities that embracing
sustainability presents.**

For consumers, buying from sustainable businesses that prioritise green manufacturing, operations and distribution helps to build a better, more resilient economy.

Across industry, we have ambitious plans to reduce carbon emissions. At Digital Business Ireland, we know that the SME sector is keen to play its part in this, which is why many businesses are investing heavily in enhancing their sustainability credentials. We need consumers to get behind businesses and respond to –by making a concerted effort to purchase sustainable goods from Irish businesses.

Evidently, the time is nigh to initiate a target national campaign, to encourage consumers to shop sustainably. We know that price is often cited as a common barrier to purchasing eco-friendly products and services. However, while sustainable goods can cost more at present, over time, increased demand for green products will mainstream their availability and ultimately facilitate businesses in reducing these costs over time. This long-term investment by consumers will enable growth in sustainable goods aiding the creation of a sustainable and resilient economy in Ireland.



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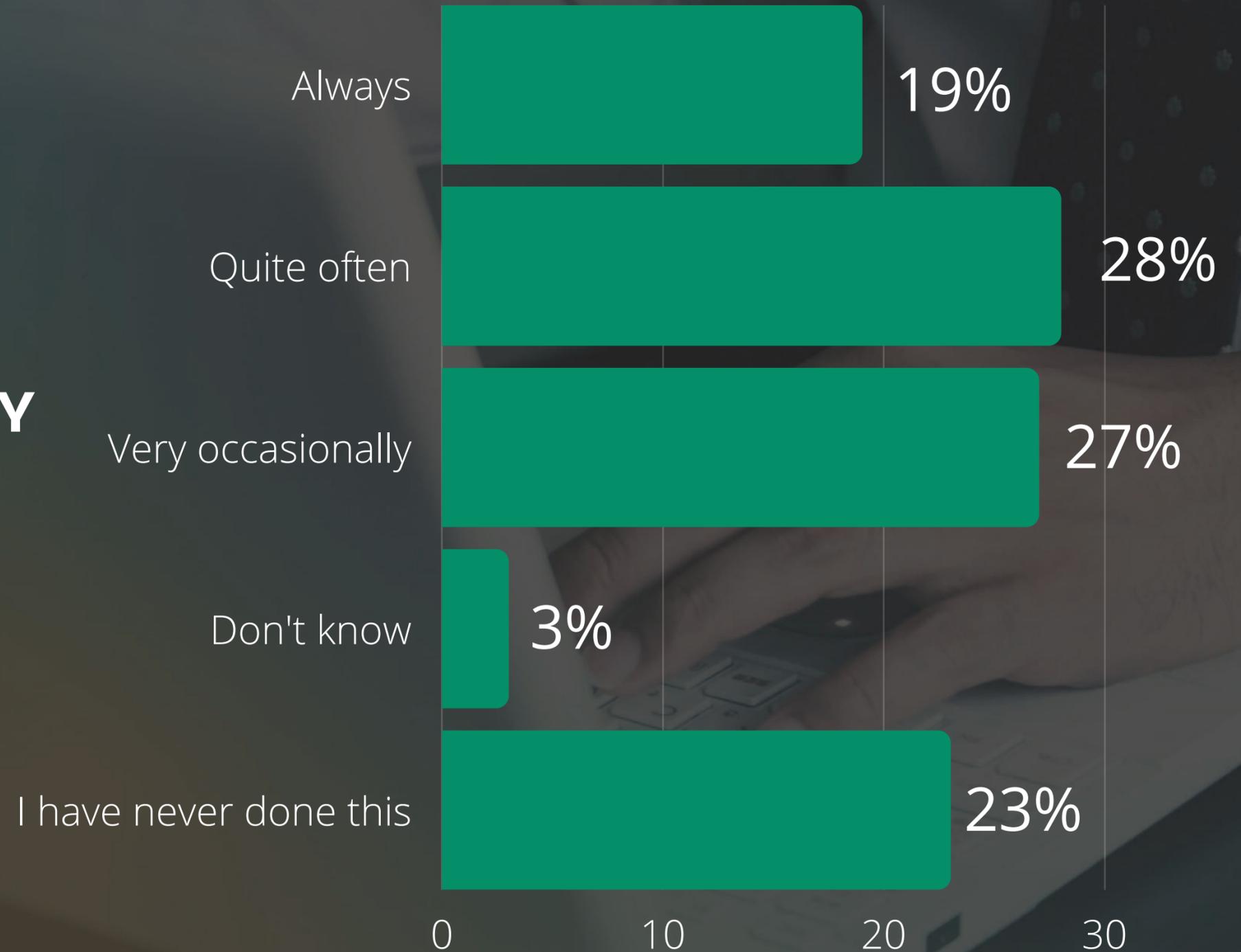
Overall Result

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OVERALL

LESS THAN ONE IN EVERY FIVE CONSUMERS IN IRELAND ALWAYS CONSIDER SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

The question asked was "Do you consider the sustainability credentials of who you are buying from when shopping online?"



Source: Ireland Thinks • The poll was conducted on Friday 7th of January 2022. A nationally representative sample of 1,369 responses was carefully selected from a larger group of over 30,000 panellists. The results were tuned by a weighting procedure all to ensure that the poll was exactly representative in terms of age, gender, region, educational attainment, religious adherence, housing status, and past voting behaviour. Methodologically this is overseen by statisticians.



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We are
Ireland online

Age Group

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Age Group

18-24 Age Group Responses

NEARLY ONE FIFTH OF 18 - 24 YEAR OLDS HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

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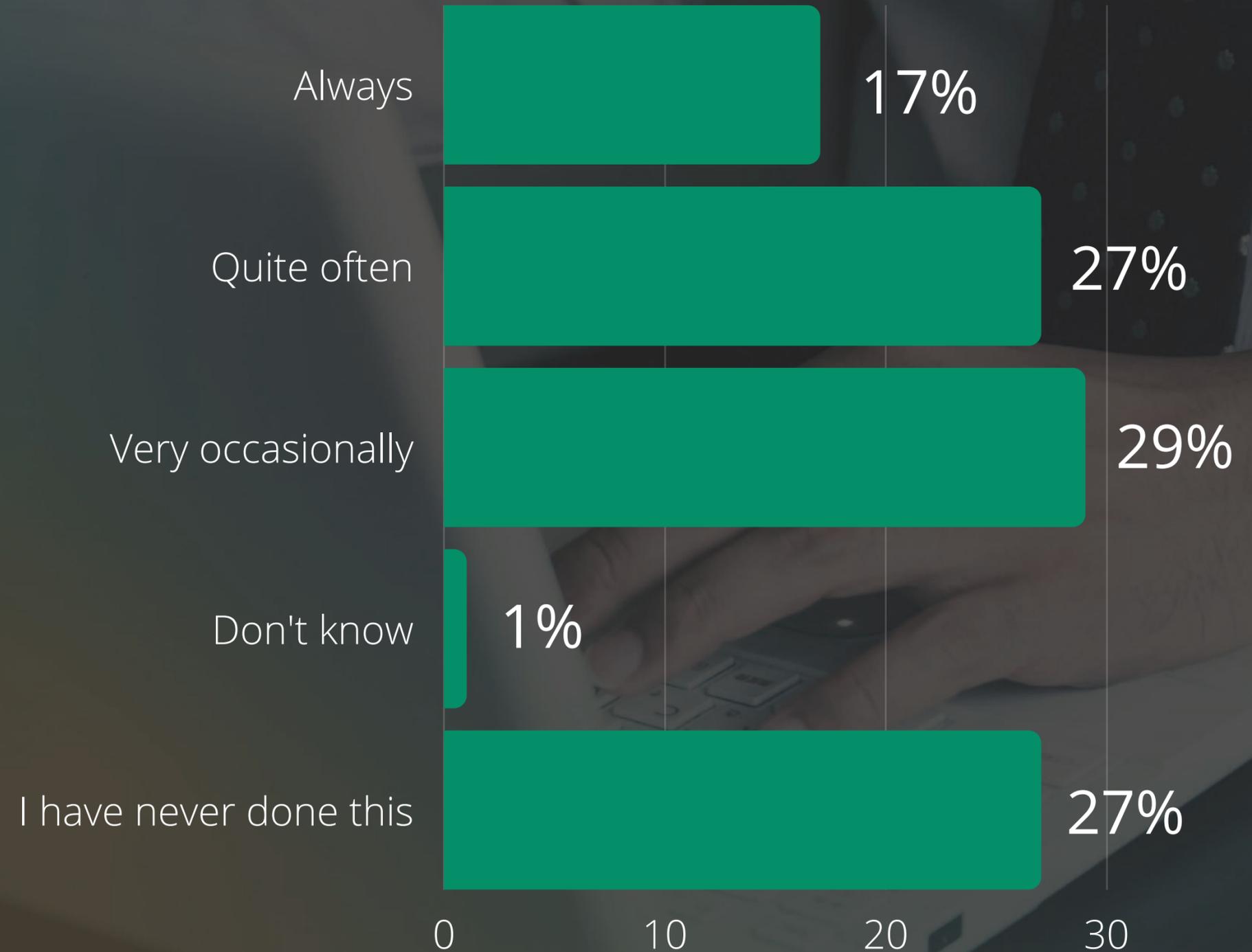


Age Group

25-34 Age Group Responses

JUST 17% OF 25 - 34 YEAR OLDS ALWAYS CONSIDER SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

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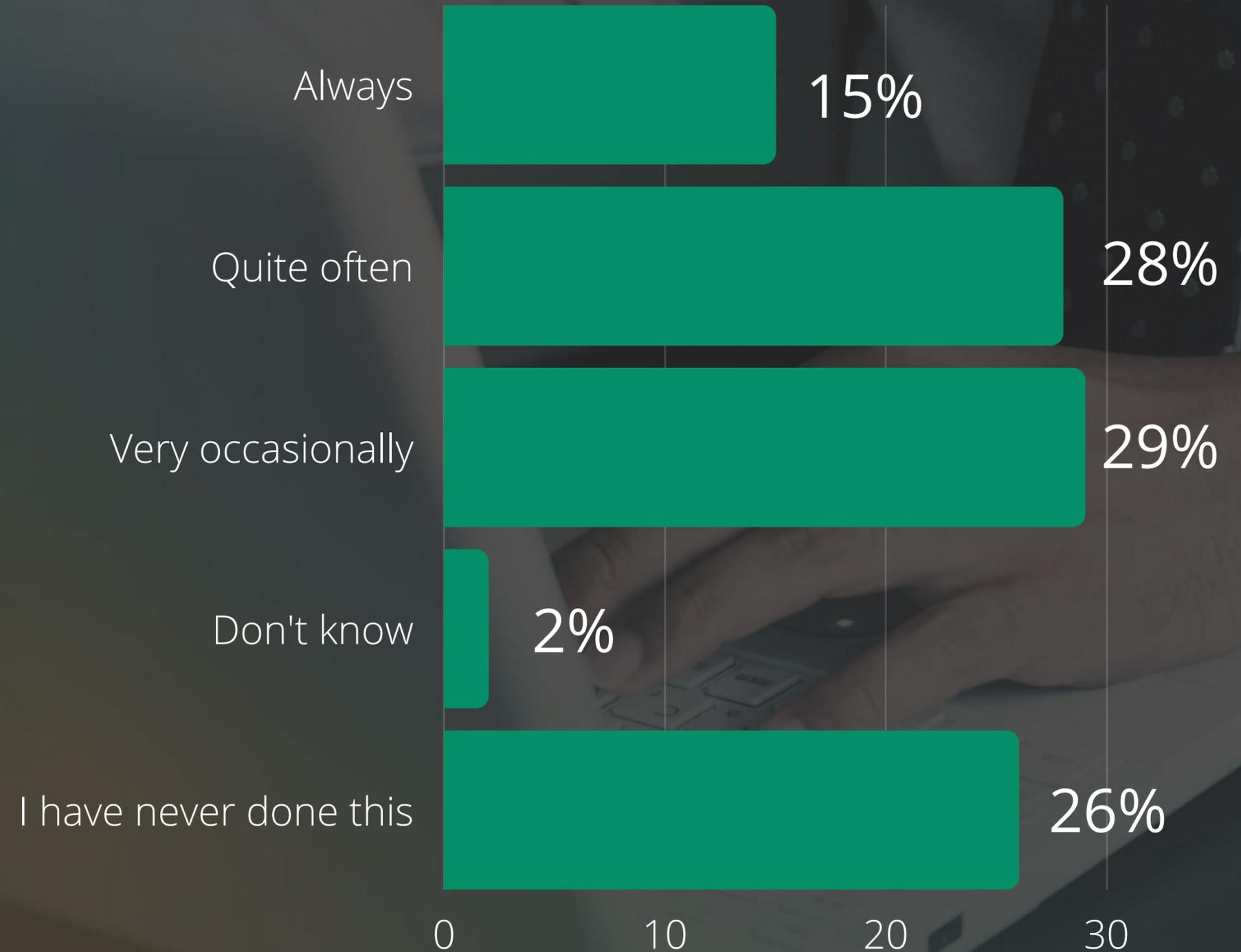
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Age Group

35-44 Age Group Responses

MORE THAN A QUARTER OF 35 - 44 YEAR OLDS HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED THE ENVIRONMENTAL CREDENTIALS OF THE BUSINESS THEY ARE BUYING FROM WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

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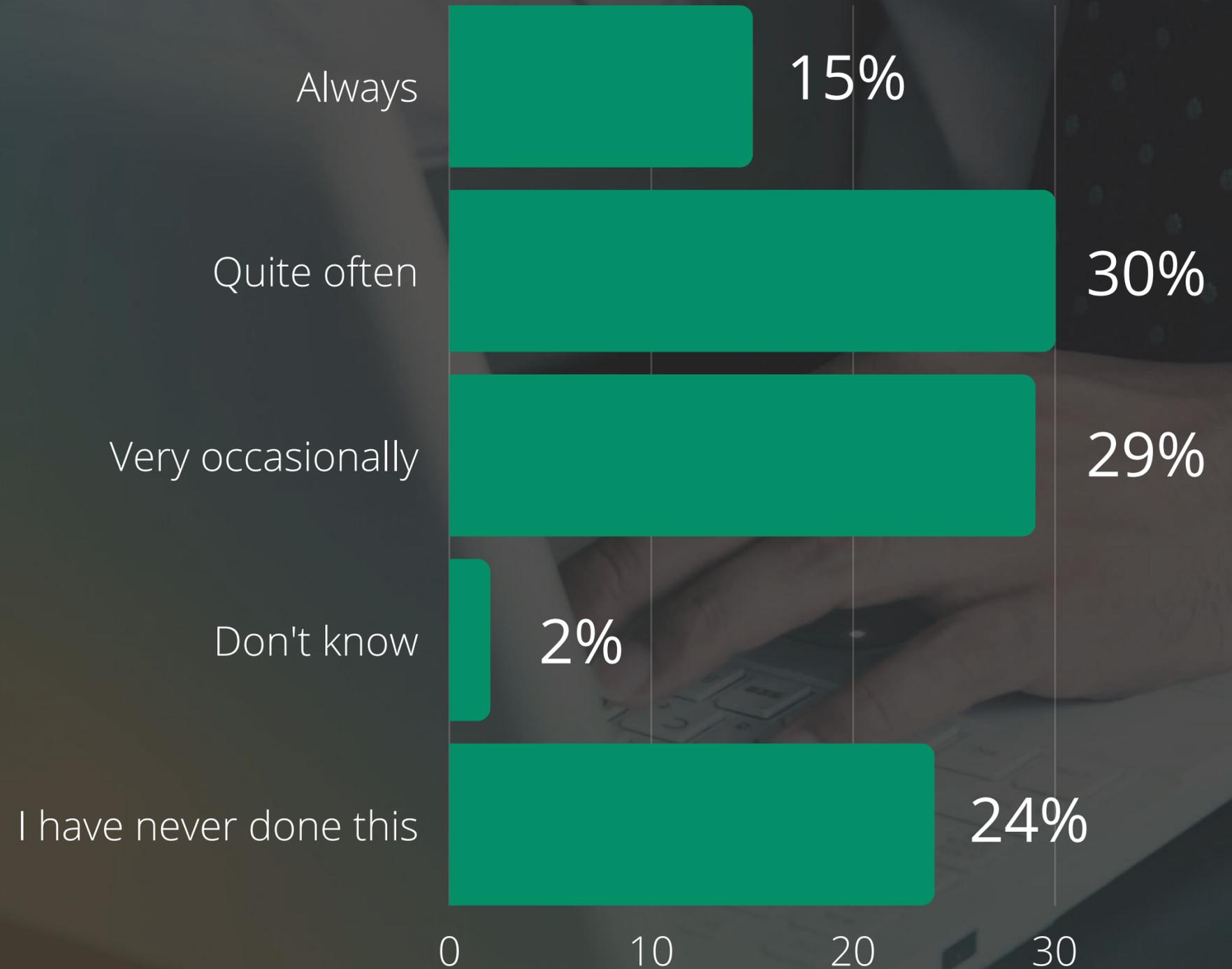
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Age Group

45-54 Age Group Responses

NEARLY ONE IN EVERY FOUR CONSUMERS AGED 45 - 54 HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

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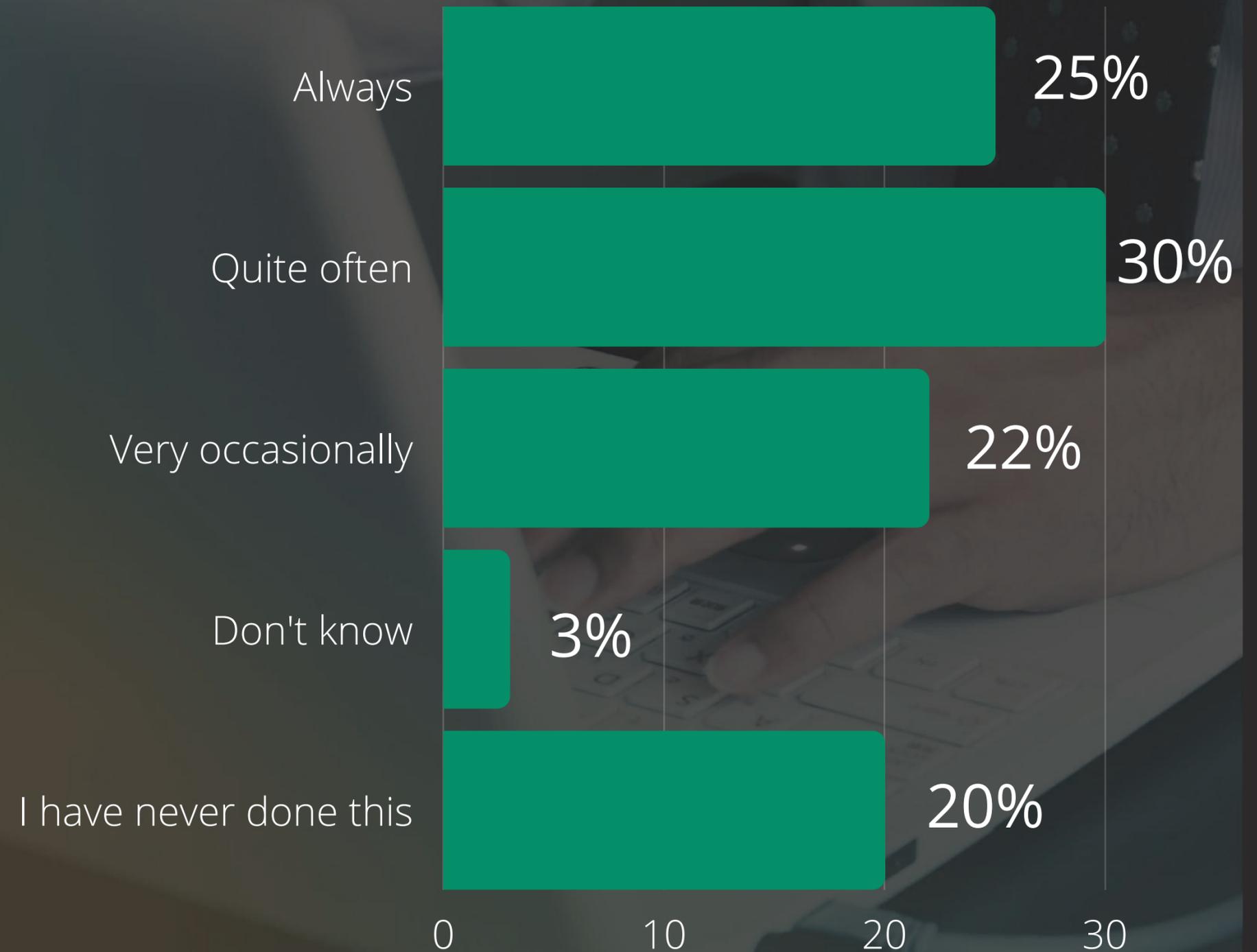
Age Group

55-64 Age Group Responses

25% OF THOSE AGED 55 - 64 ALWAYS CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL CREDENTIALS OF THE BUSINESS THEY ARE BUYING FROM, WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

The question asked was "Do you consider the sustainability credentials of who you are buying from when shopping online?"

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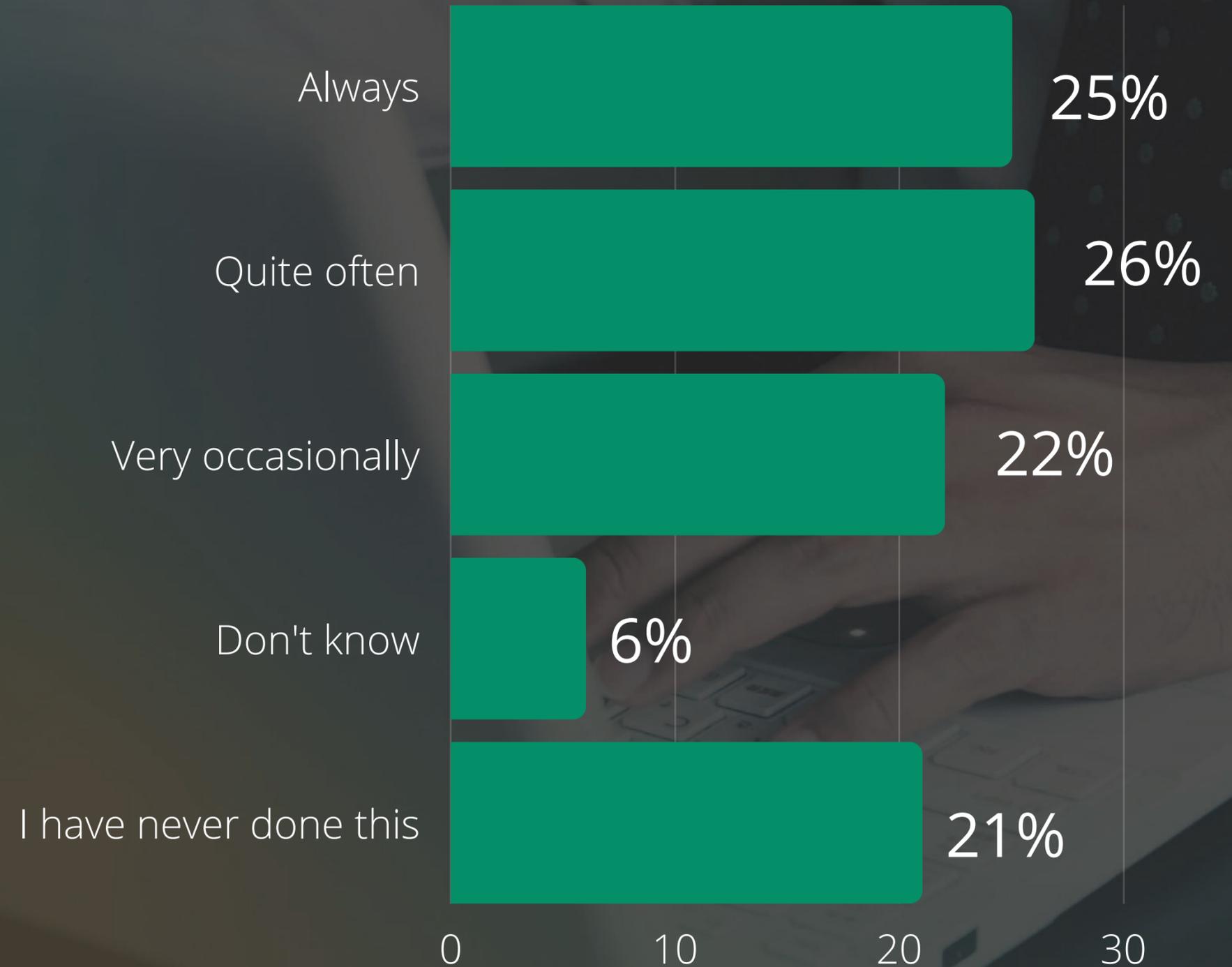


Age Group

65+ Age Group Responses

MORE THAN HALF OF THOSE AGED 65+ EITHER ALWAYS OR SOMETIMES CONSIDER SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

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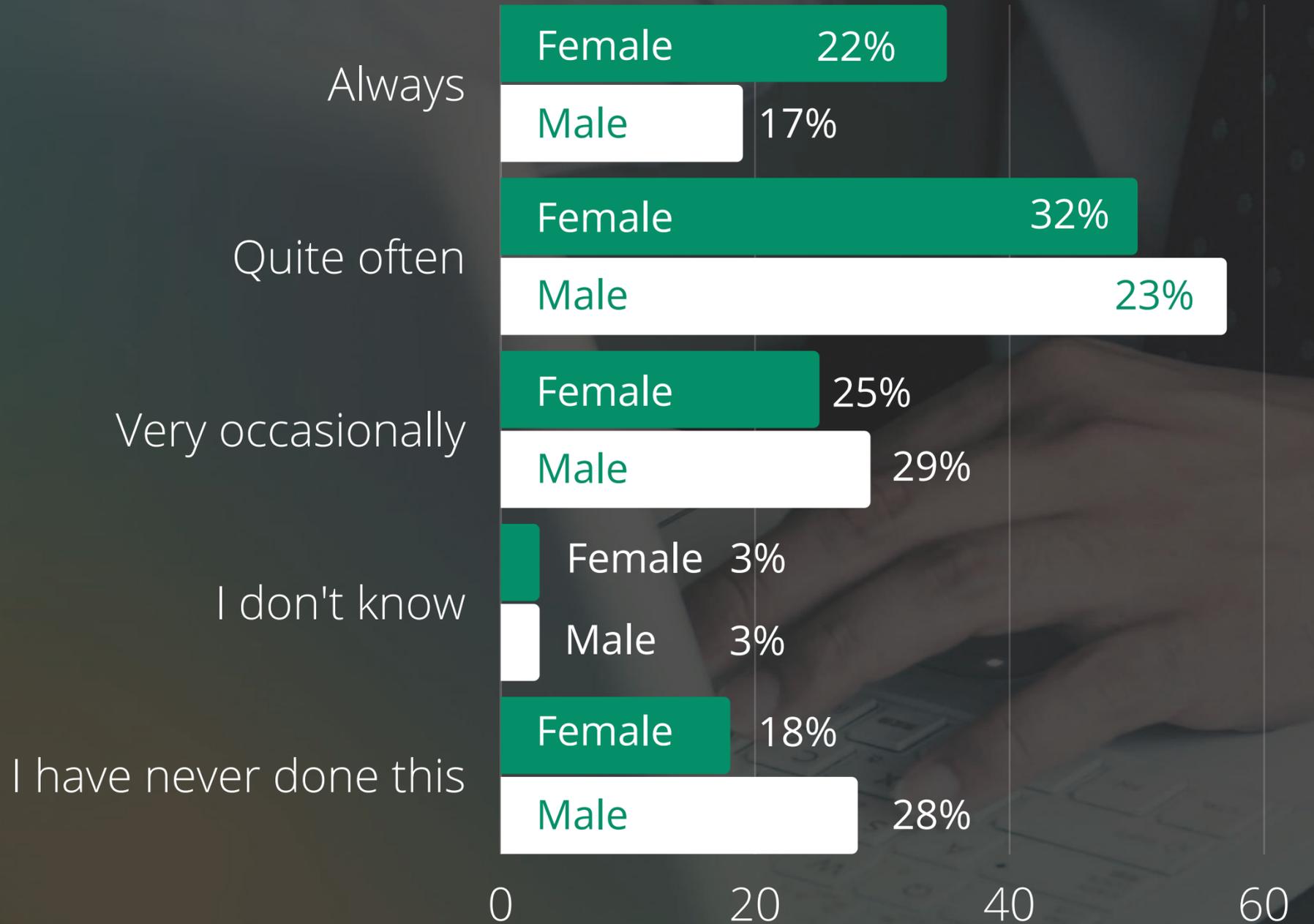
Gender

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Gender Responses

28% OF MEN SAY THEY HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE – COMPARED TO 18% OF WOMEN WHO REPORTED SAME

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Income Breakdown

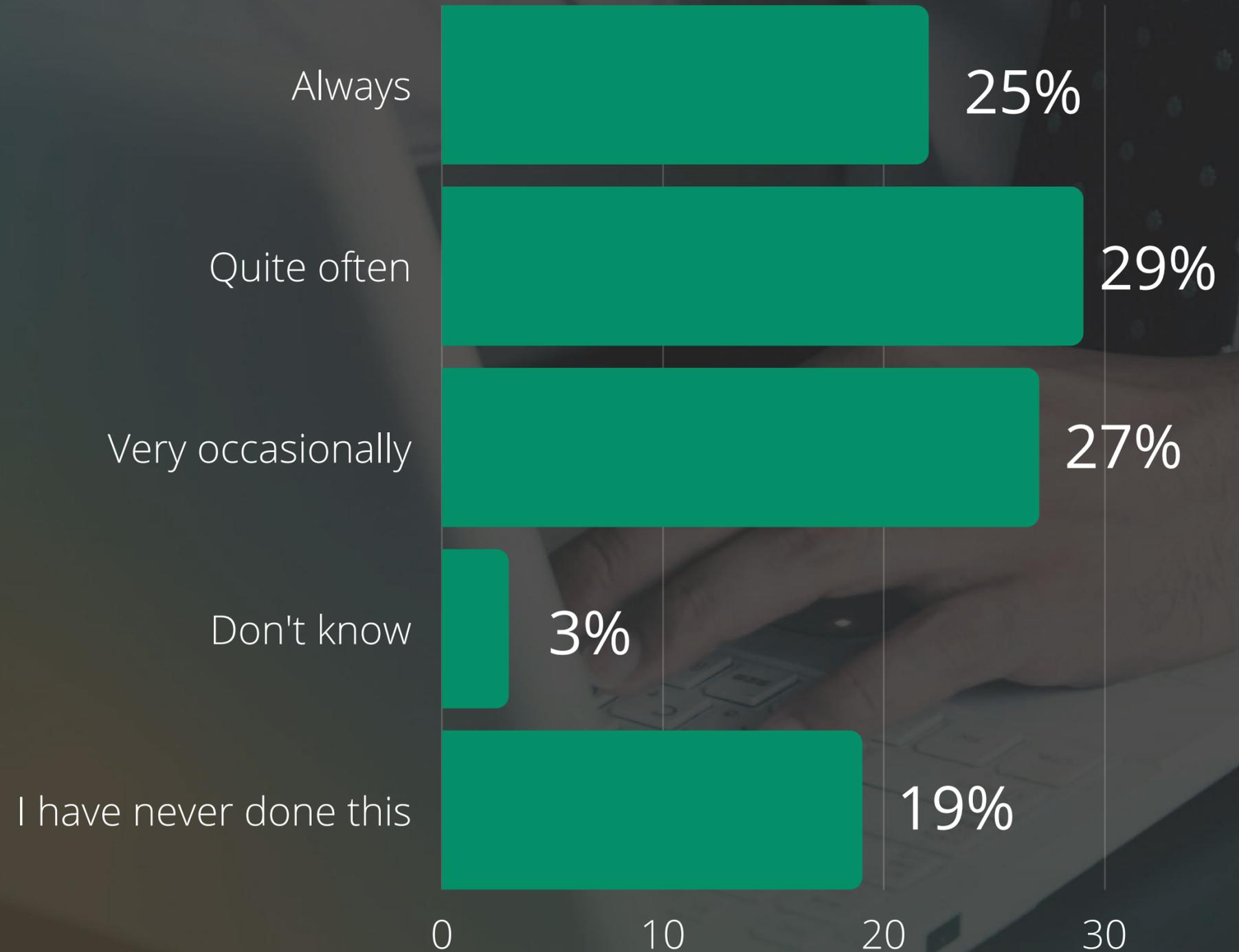
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Income Breakdown

€5k-20k

A QUARTER OF THOSE EARNING BETWEEN 5-20K ALWAYS PRIORITISE SUSTAINABILITY WHEN MAKING A PURCHASE ONLINE

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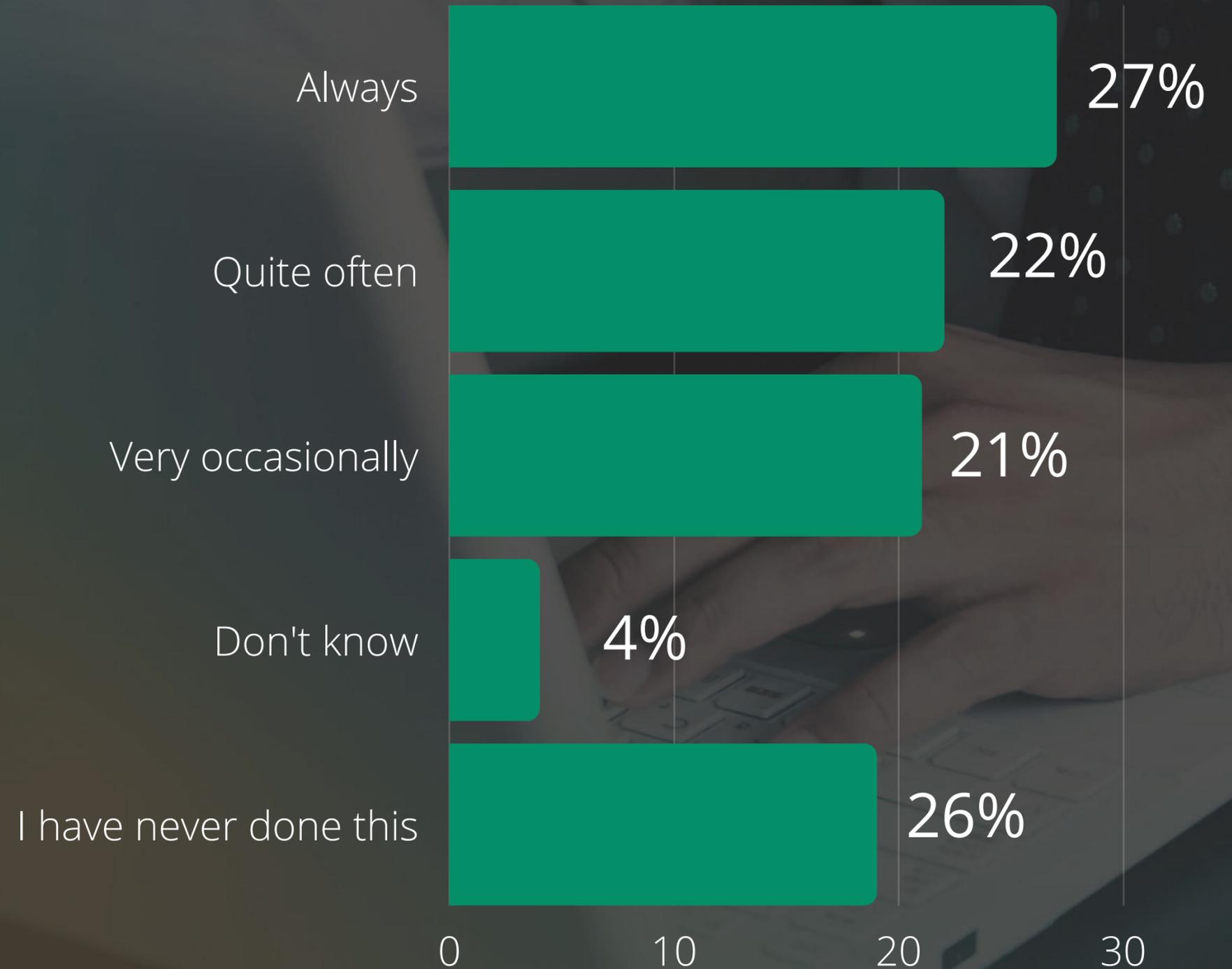
Income Breakdown

€20k-30k

MORE THAN A QUARTER OF THOSE EARNING BETWEEN 20-30K HAVE NEVER PRIORITISED SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

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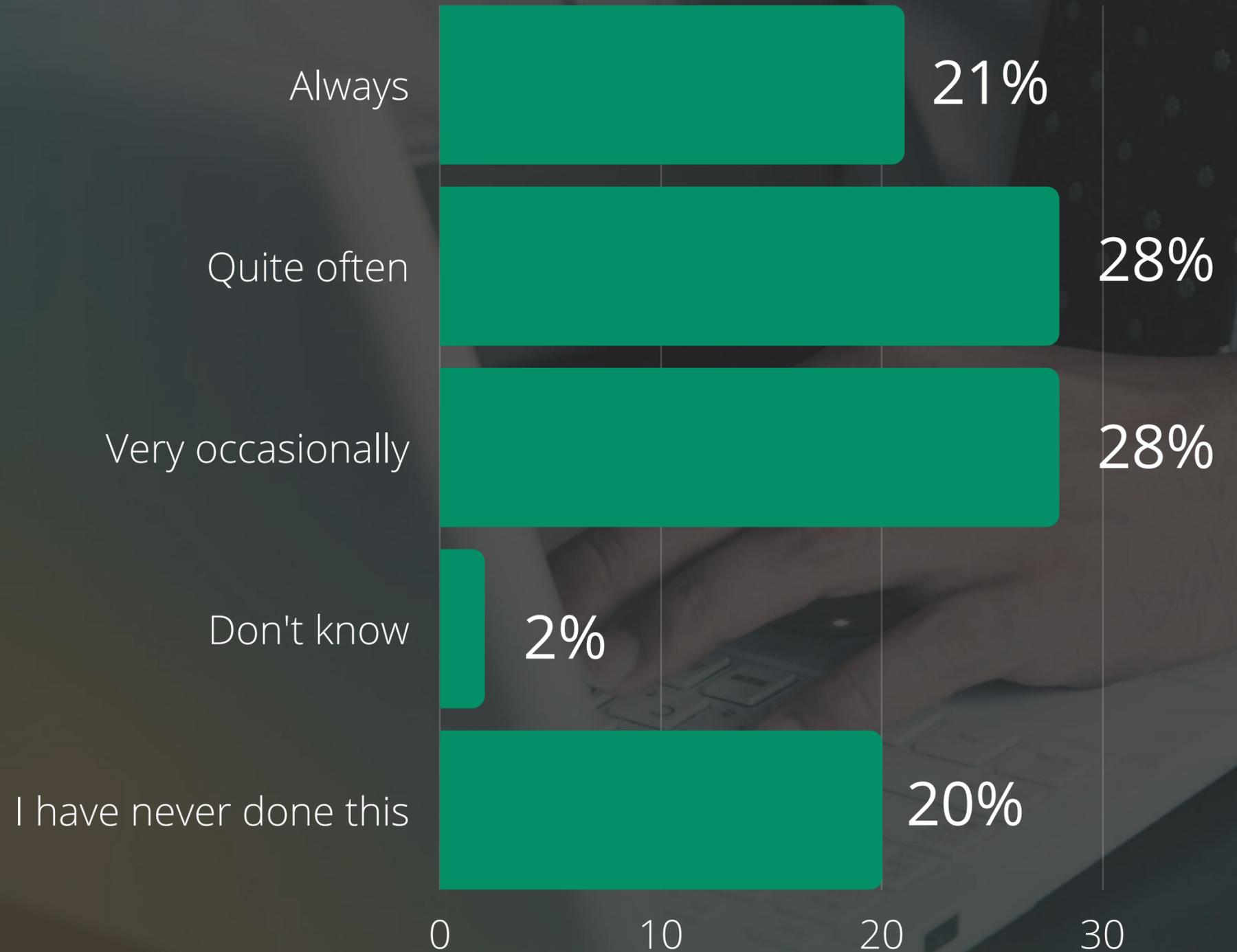


Income Breakdown

€30k-50k

MORE THAN ONE IN EVERY FIVE OF MIDDLE EARNERS ALWAYS PRIORITISE SUSTAINABILITY WHEN BUYING GOODS ONLINE

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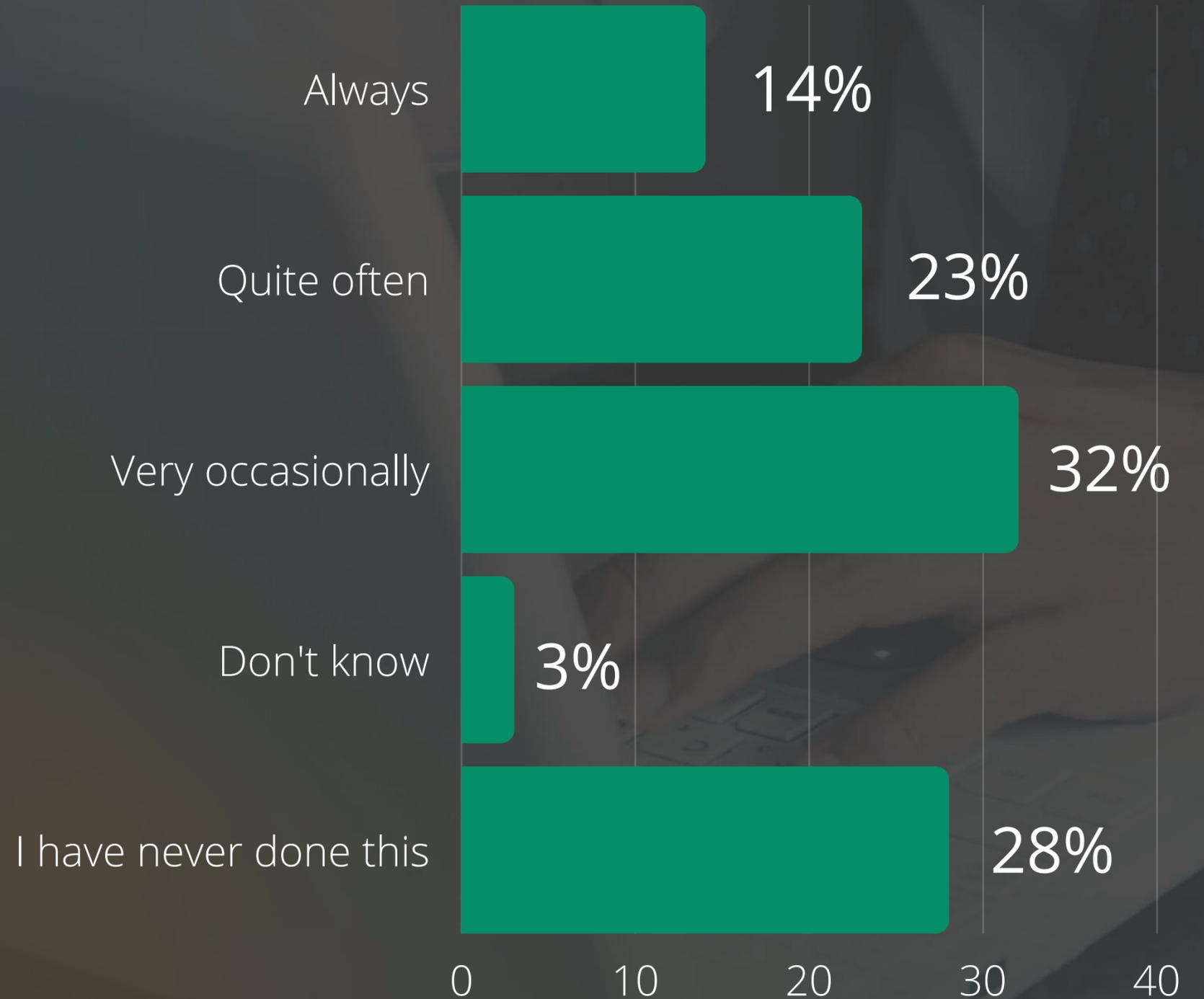
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Income Breakdown

€50k-80k

NEARLY A THIRD OF THOSE EARNING BETWEEN 50 - 80K HAVE ONLY CONSIDERED SUSTAINABILITY VERY OCCASIONALLY WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

The question asked was "Do you consider the sustainability credentials of who you are buying from when shopping online?"



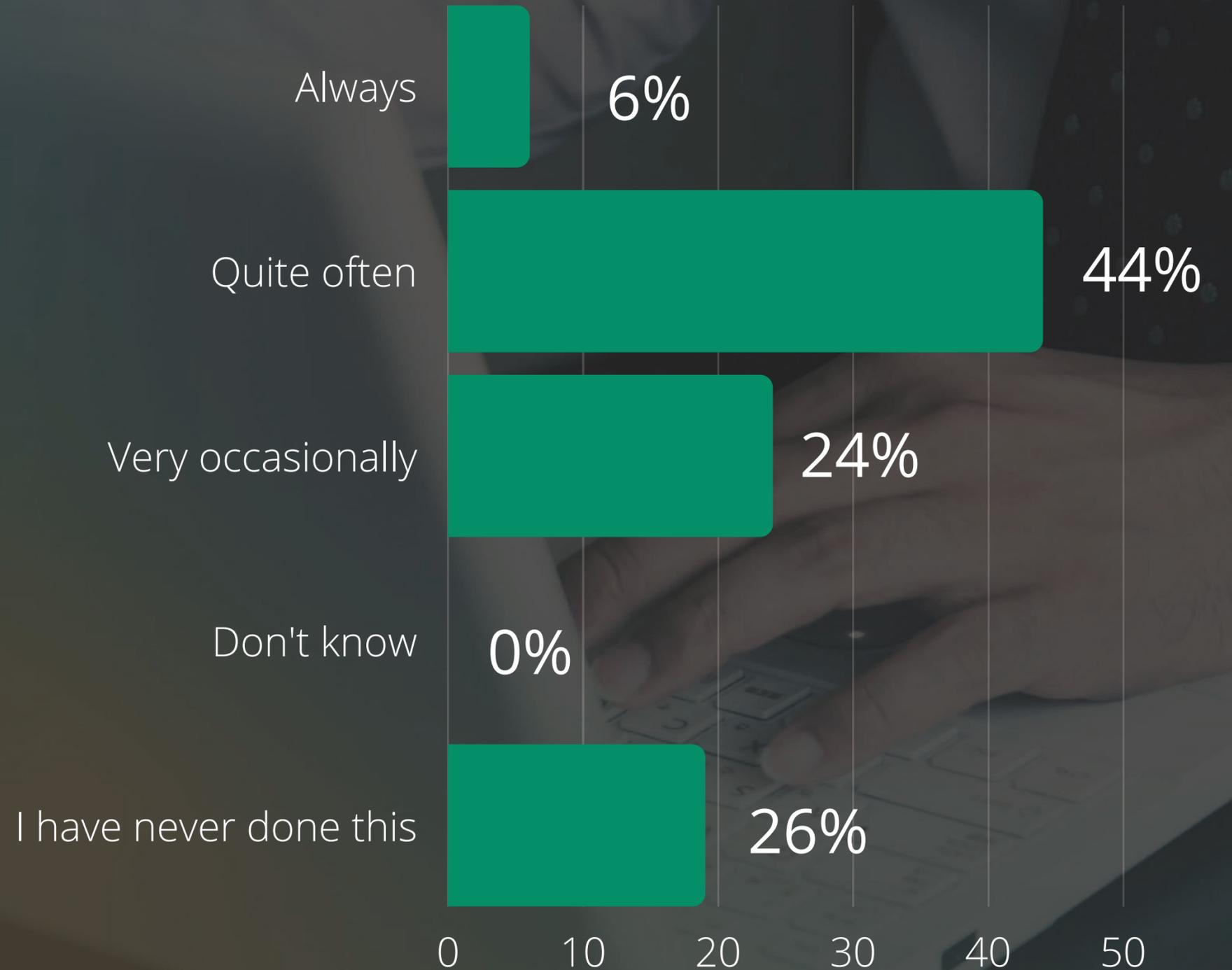
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Income Breakdown

more than €80k

JUST 6% OF HIGH EARNERS ALWAYS PRIORITISE SUSTAINABILITY WHEN BUYING GOODS ONLINE

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