Smart Marketing For Engineers 2017 Research Report

Europe

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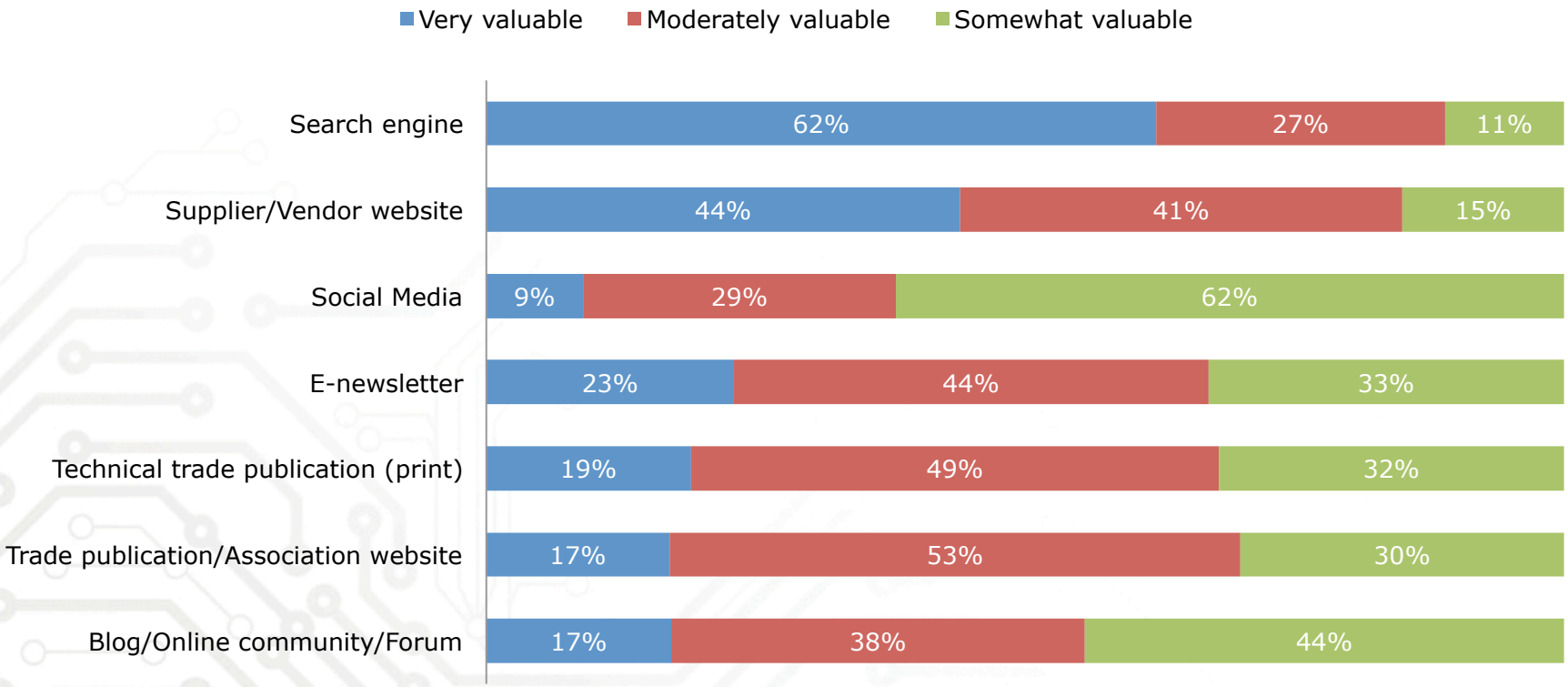
Top 10 Findings

1. Search engines and vendor websites are the most valued content sources
2. Companies regularly producing content are preferred, especially by younger engineers
3. Engineers go deep on search engines: 30% go 4-10 pages, and more go 10+ pages than stop on page one
4. Most trusted content authors are engineering experts at vendor companies followed by trade editors
5. The three lead form fields engineers are most likely to complete:
    a. Work email address
    b. First name
    c. Last name
6. Vendors should thank leads within 48 hours
7. Company websites significantly impact brand perceptions
8. The majority of the engineer's buying process occurs online
9. Engineers prefer to search online and read available content before talking to sales
10. The majority have 3-4 interactions with a vendor before talking directly with them

Survey Findings

Section 1:
The Value of Content Marketing

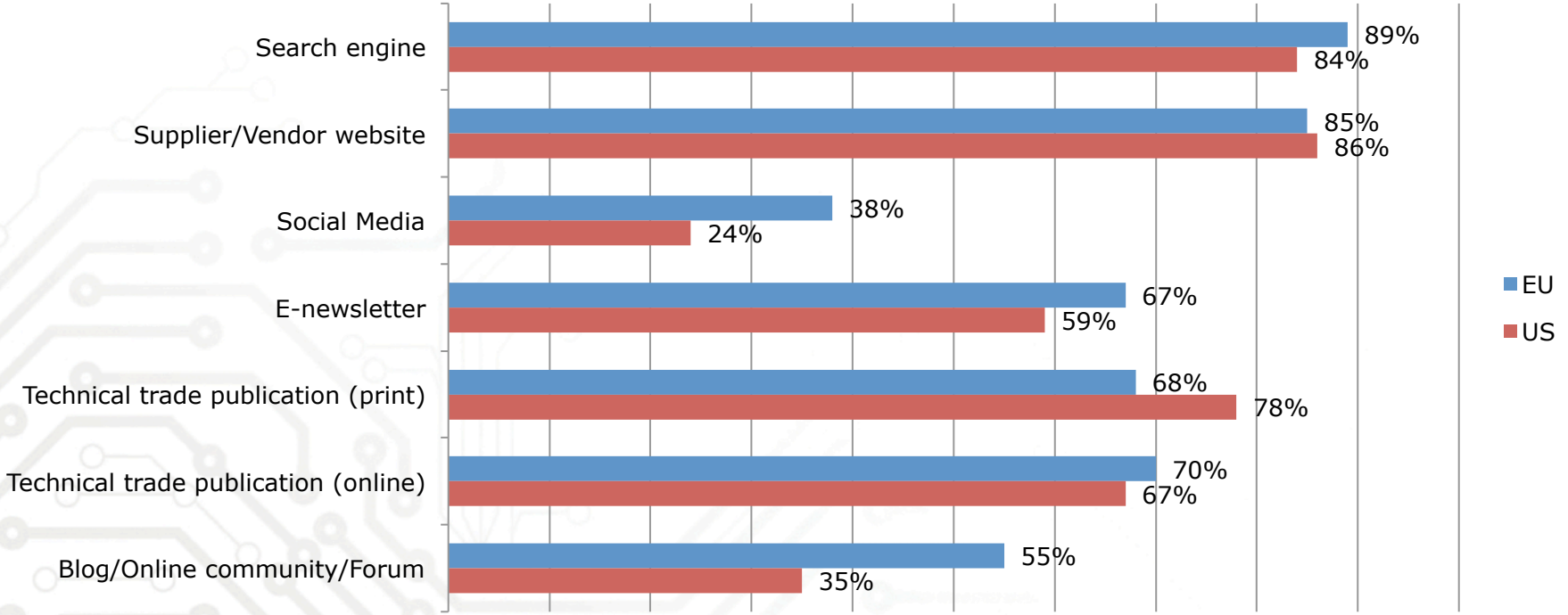
Engineers in Europe value online sources most, leading with search engines and vendor websites, when seeking information about technologies, trends, products and services. Data was similar when looking by specific country.



n = 241

Q: How valuable are the following content sources when seeking information on the latest engineering technologies, industry trends, and products or services? (note: respondents were offered the option to select multiple answers)

Engineers in both Europe and the U.S. view search engines and supplier/ vendor websites as the most valuable sources for technical information. Engineers in the U.S. value trade publications slightly more than their peers in Europe, while engineers in Europe value social media more.

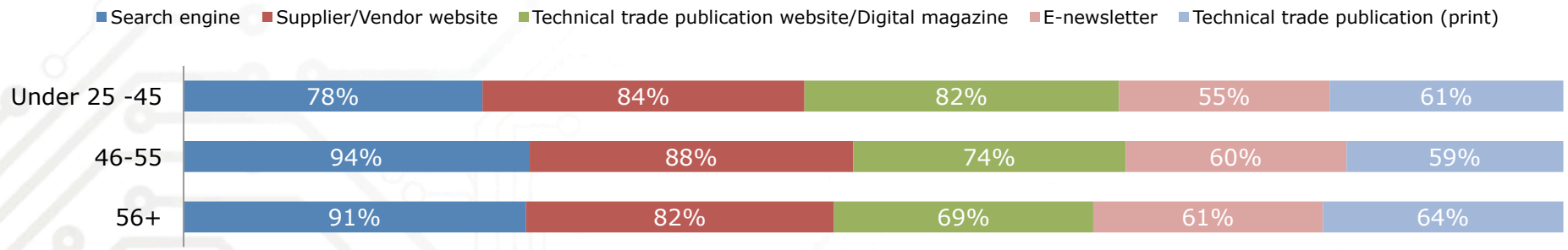


Colored bars represent "Very Valuable" or "Moderately Valuable" only.

EU = 241, US = 705 US data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2015 Study*

Q: How valuable are the following content sources when seeking information on the latest engineering technologies, industry trends, and products or services?

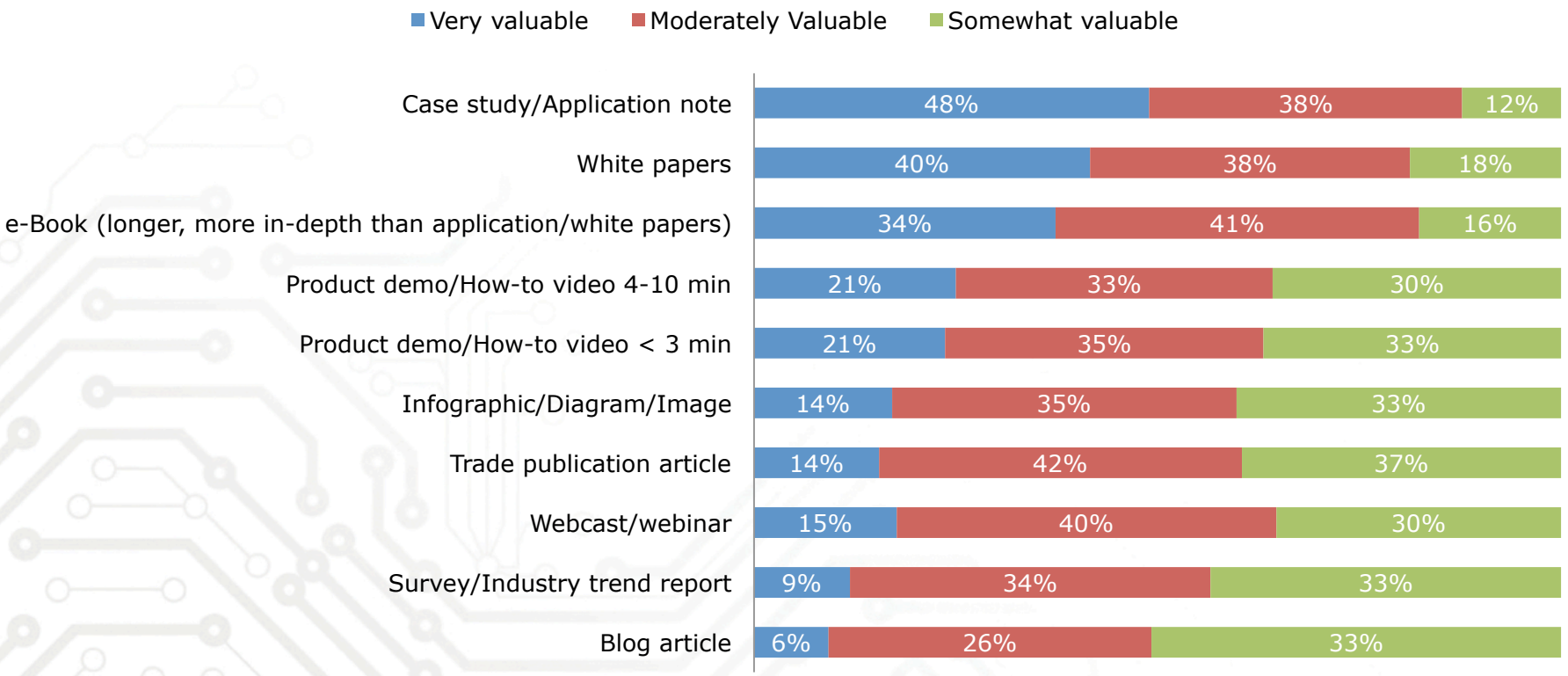
Interestingly, younger engineers in Europe value vendor and trade publication websites more than slightly more than search engines when seeking information about technologies, trends, products and services.



Total n = 241, Under 25-45 = 87, 46-55 = 70, 56+ = 84

Q: How valuable are the following content sources when seeking information on the latest engineering technologies, industry trends, and products or services?

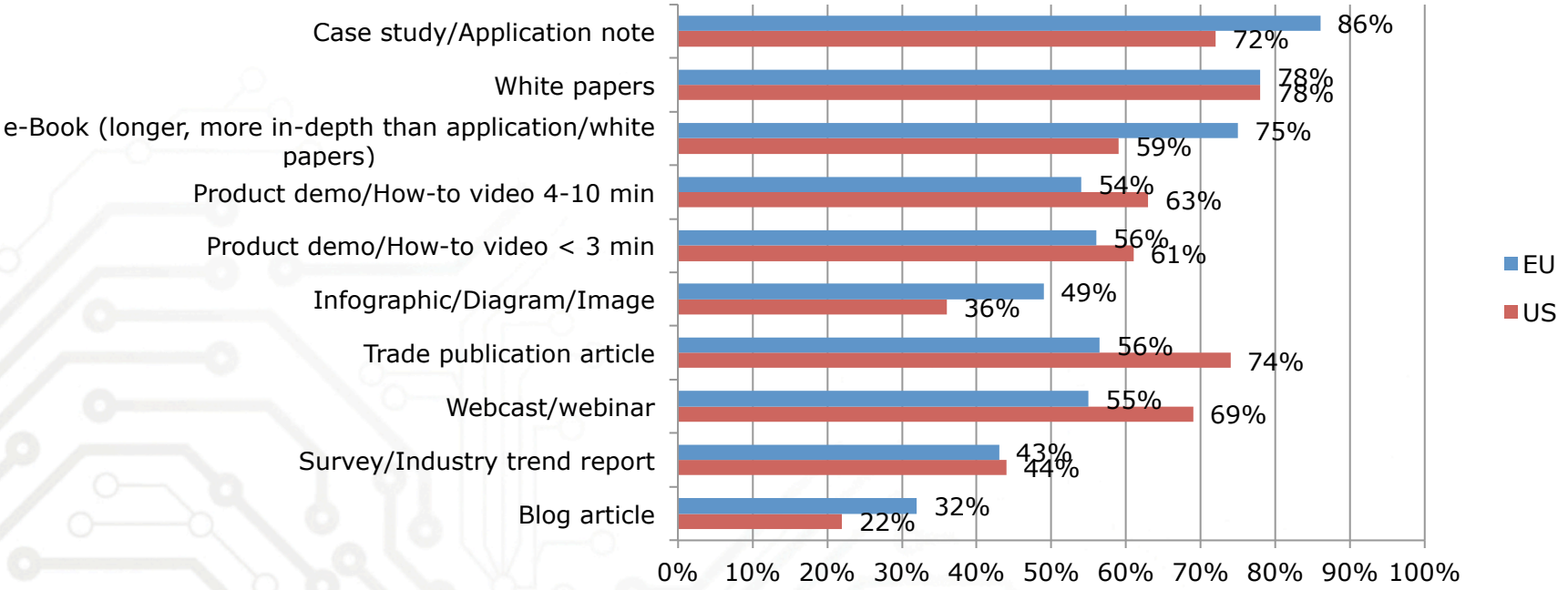
When asked about the value of specific types of content, engineers in Europe prefer case studies and application notes most, followed by white papers and longer, more in-depth e-books. Interestingly, these are followed by digital and visual content types including video and infographics/diagrams/images.



n = 241

Q: How valuable are the following types of content when researching the latest engineering technologies, industry trends, and products or services?

Engineers in Europe and U.S. share common preferences for their top 2 content types: case studies and white papers. One of the biggest differences is with webinars, where U.S. engineers value them much more (69%) than their peers in Europe (55%).

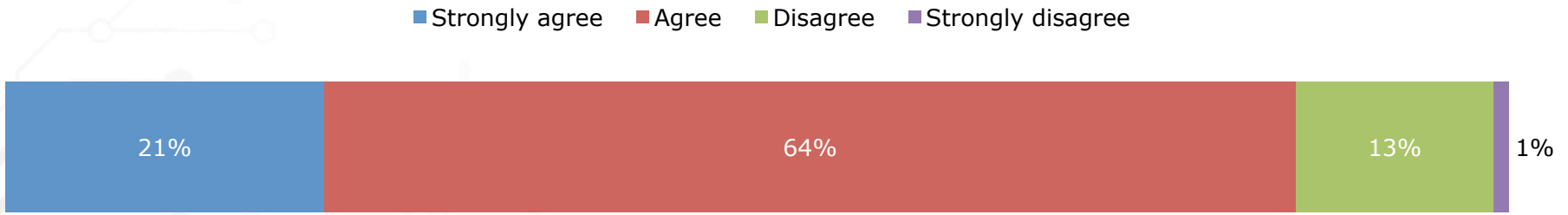


Colored bars represent "Very Valuable" or "Moderately Valuable" only.

EU = 241, US = 873 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2014 Study*

Q: How valuable are the following types of content when researching the latest engineering technologies, industry trends, and products or services? (note: respondents were offered the option to select multiple answers)

85% of engineers in Europe indicate they are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content.

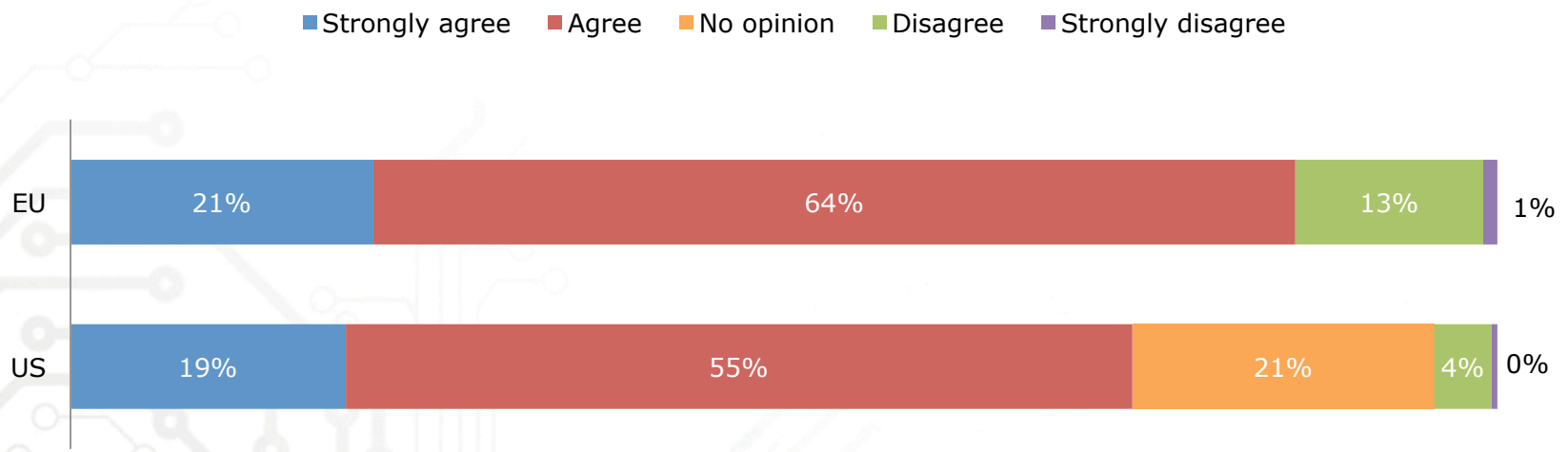


n = 241

Q: Agree or disagree: You are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content?

More engineers in Europe (85%) than the US (74%) say they are more likely to do business with companies that regularly produce content.

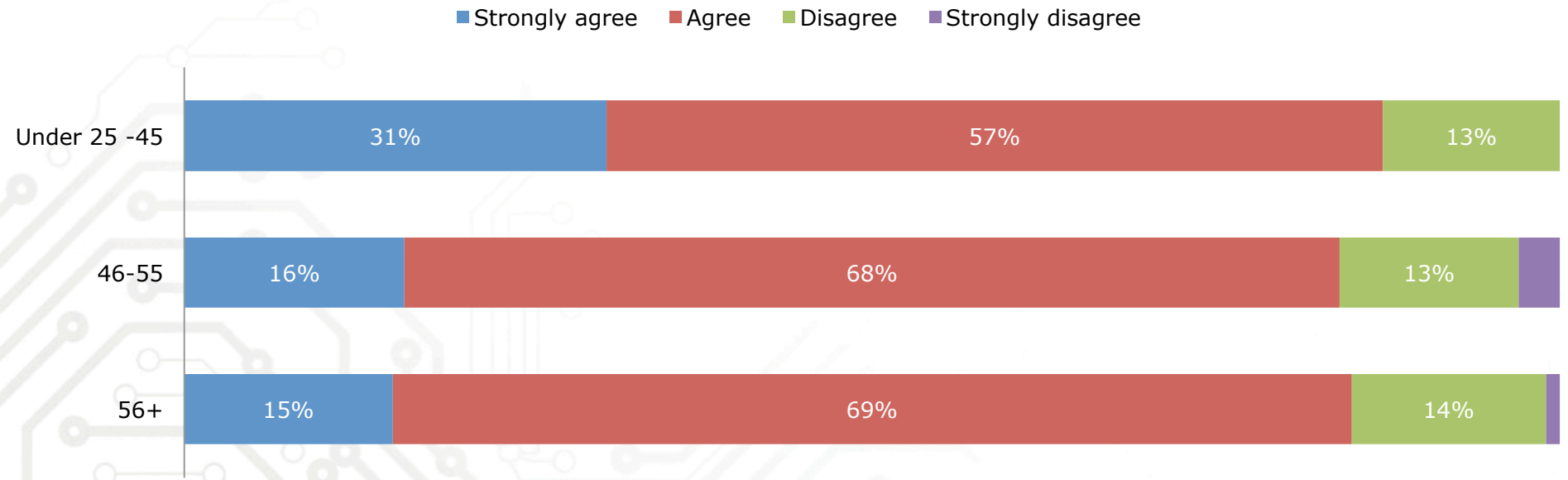
(Note: in the US survey, we offered the answer option "no opinion". Without this option, it's possible the discrepancy would be less.)



EU = 241, US = 705 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2014 Study*

Q: Agree or disagree: You are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content?

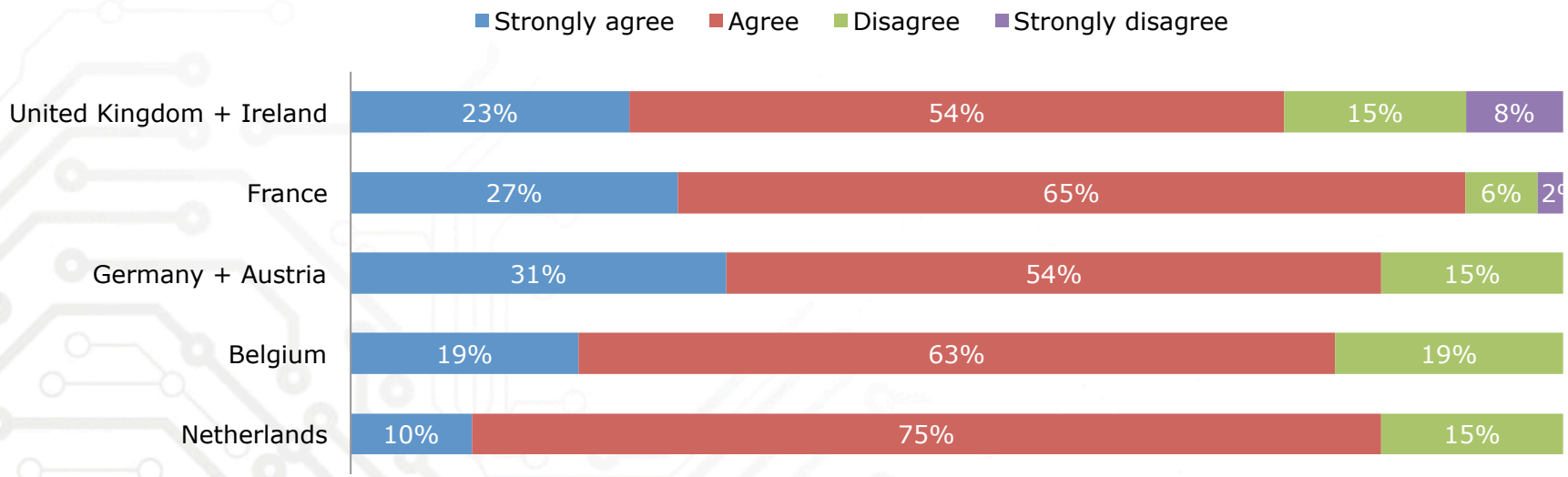
Twice the number of younger engineers (31%) than the older age groups (16% and 15%) in Europe strongly agree that they are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content.



Total n = 241, Under 25-45 = 87, 46-55 = 70, 56+ = 84

Q: Agree or disagree: You are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content?

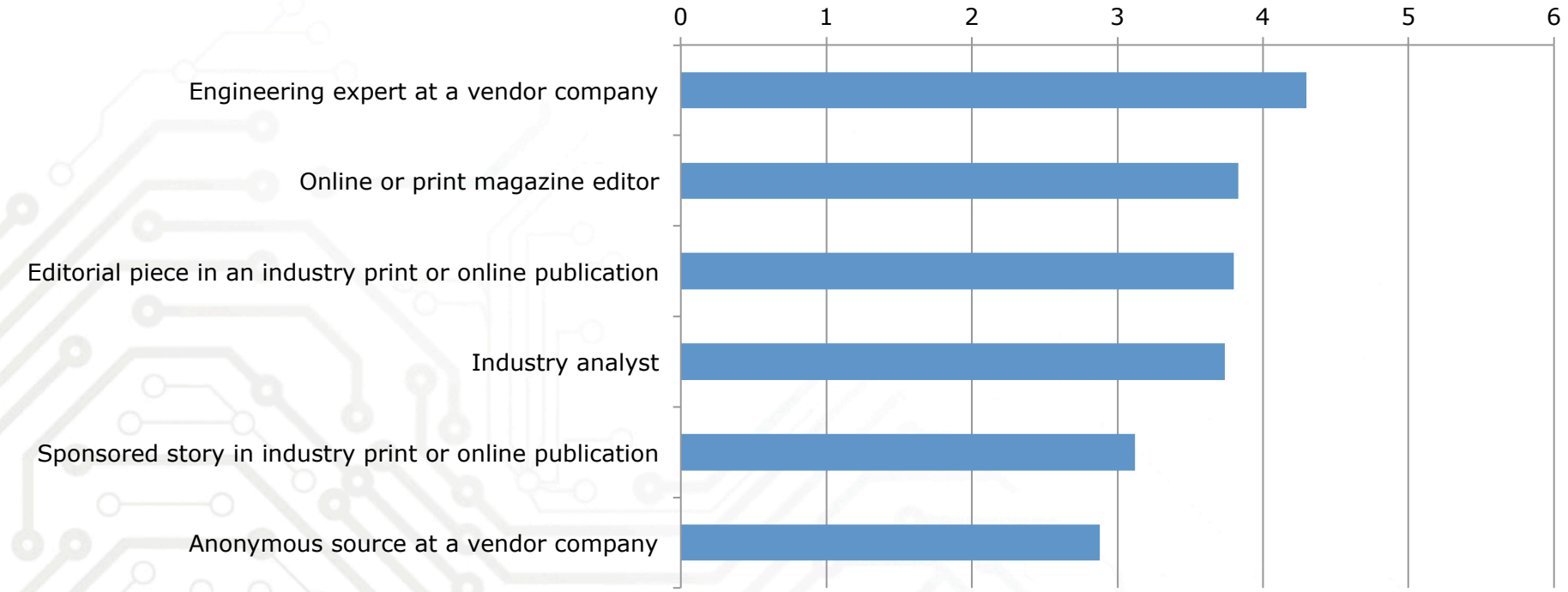
Similarly, more engineers in Germany & Austria (31%) strongly agree that they are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content than engineers in other countries.



Total n =241, Netherlands = 60, France = 48, Belgium = 43, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 24, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: Agree or disagree: You are more likely to do business with a company that regularly produces new and current content?

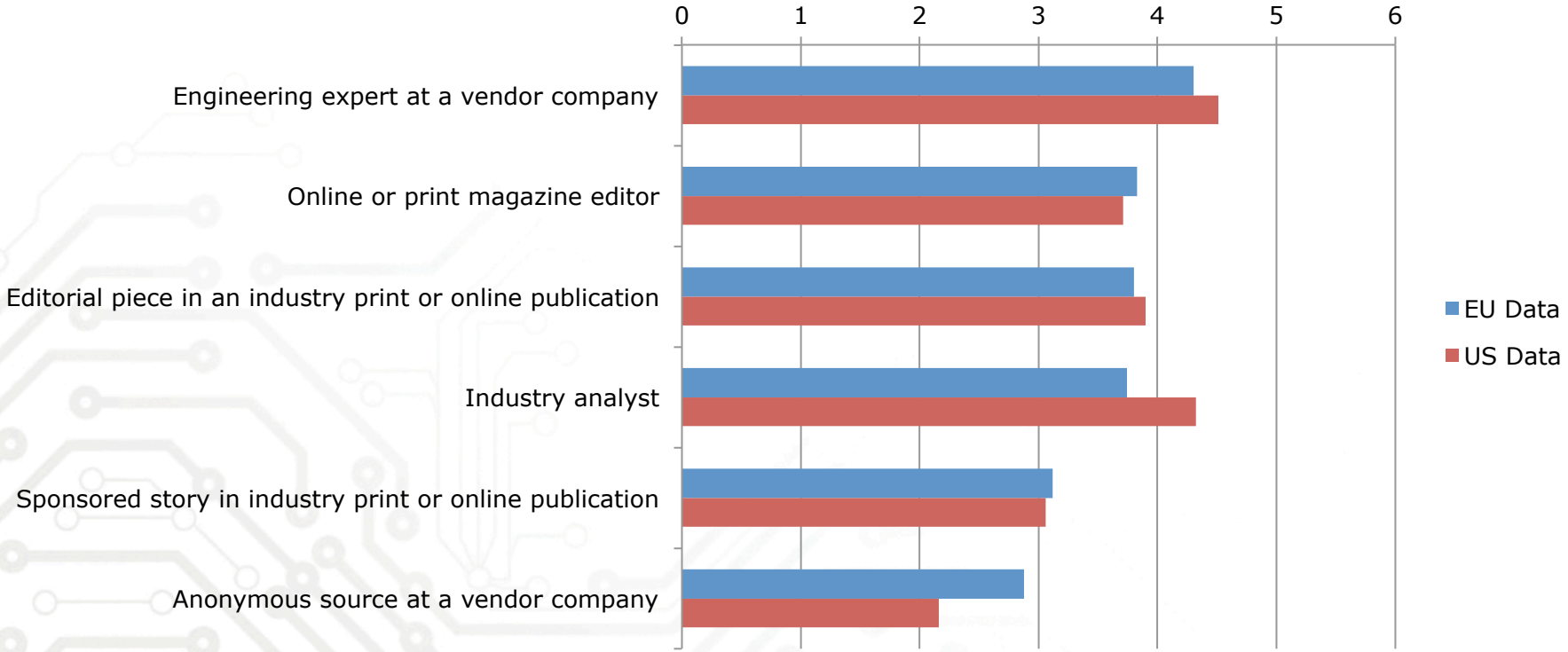
Engineers in Europe place the most trust in content written by an engineering expert at a vendor company, followed by trade editors, editorial written in trade publications and industry analysts. They place the least trust in content that is sponsored or written anonymously by a source at a vendor company.



n = 241

Q: Rank your level of trust in content that is written or published by the following, where a rank of 6 is your highest level of trust, and a rank of 1 is your lowest.

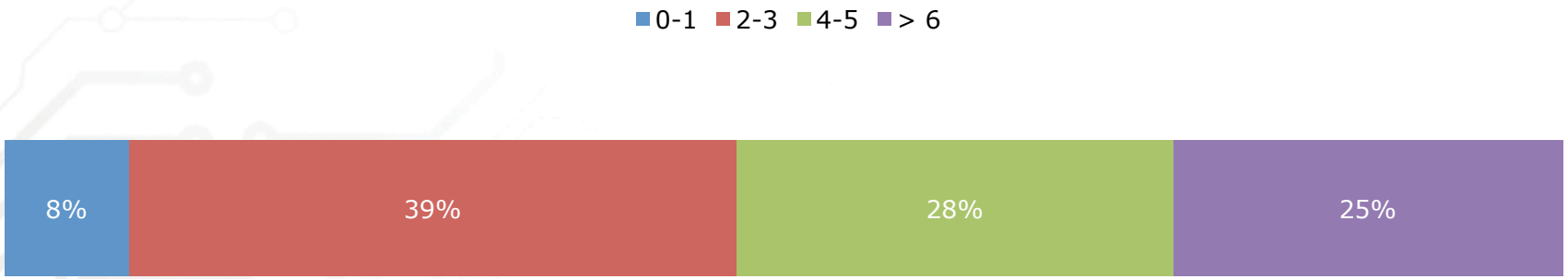
Engineers in the U.S. and Europe both trust content written by engineering experts at vendor companies the most, and both place the least trust in sponsored or anonymous content. Engineers in Europe rate their 2nd highest level of trust in trade editors and 4th in industry analysts. In contrast, engineers in the U.S. rate their 2nd highest level trust with industry analysts and trade editors 4th.



EU = 241 , US = 501 US Data is from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2015 Study*

Q: Rank your level of trust in content that is written or published by the following, where a rank of 6 is your highest level of trust, and a rank of 1 is your lowest.

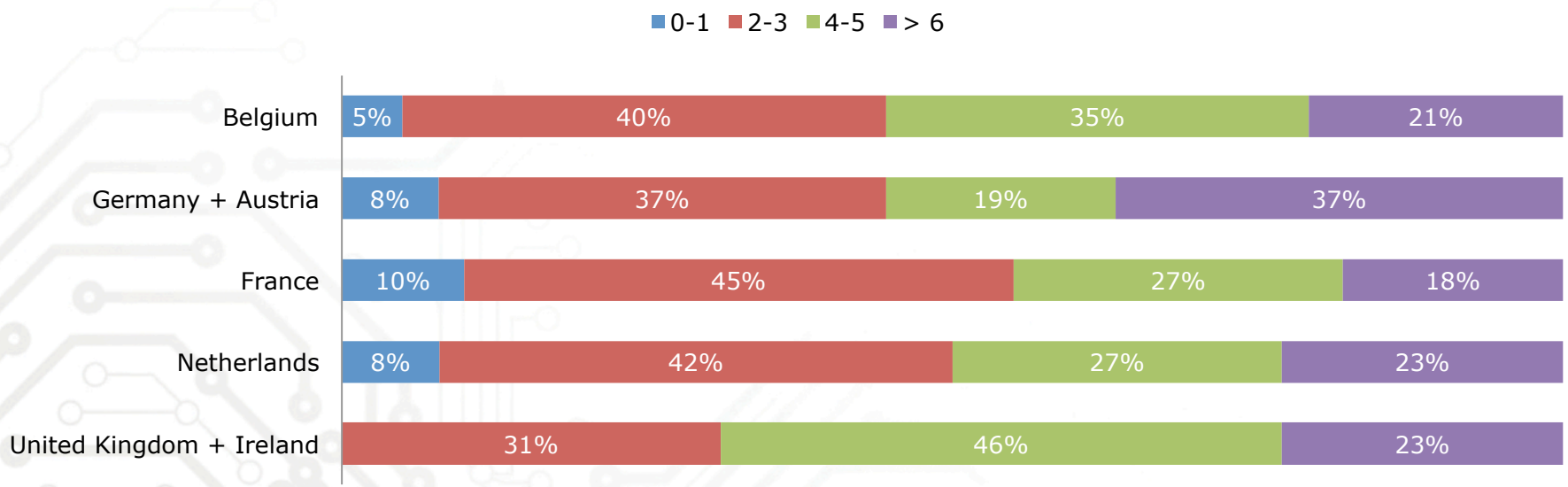
Over 50% of engineers in Europe subscribe to at least four enewsletter while 39% selected 2-3. This trends follows a similar pattern with engineers in the U.S.



n = 241

Q: How many e-newsletters do you subscribe to?

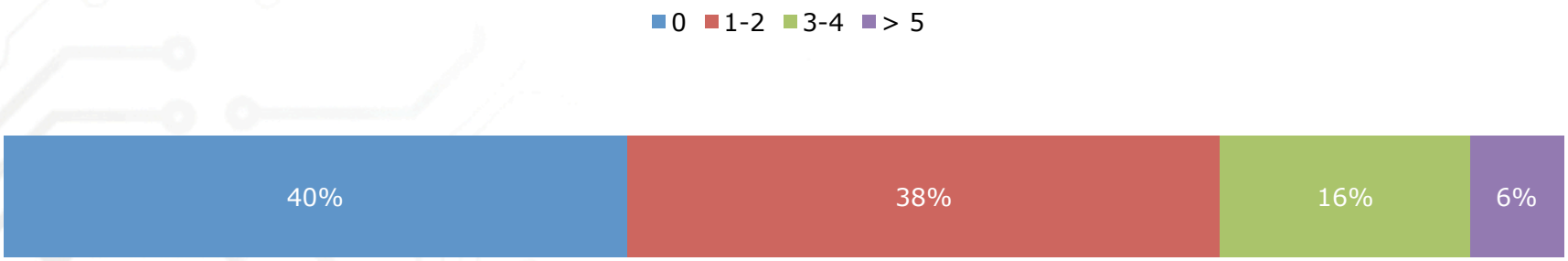
The UK/Ireland had the most engineers select 4-5 enewsletters (46%) and Germany+Austria had the most engineers select >6 enewsletters.



Total n =241, Netherlands = 60, France = 48, Belgium = 43, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 24, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: How many e-newsletters do you subscribe to?

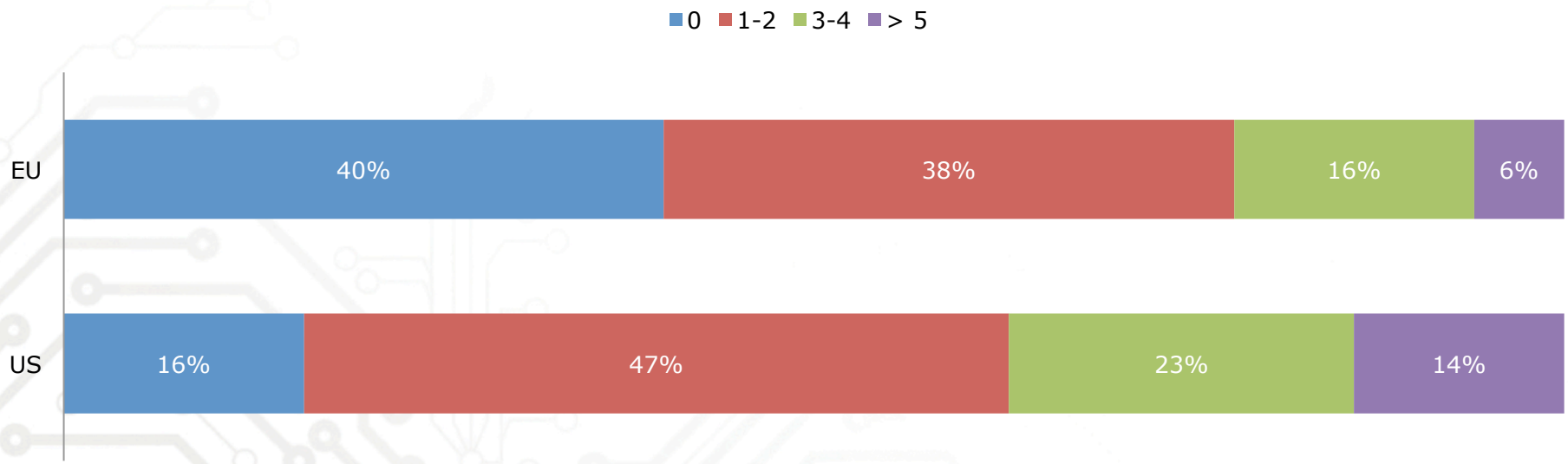
Engineers across Europe are not attending many webinars. In the last three months, 40% did not attend a webinar and only 22% attended three or more.



n = 239

Q: How many webcasts/webinars have you attended within the last three months?

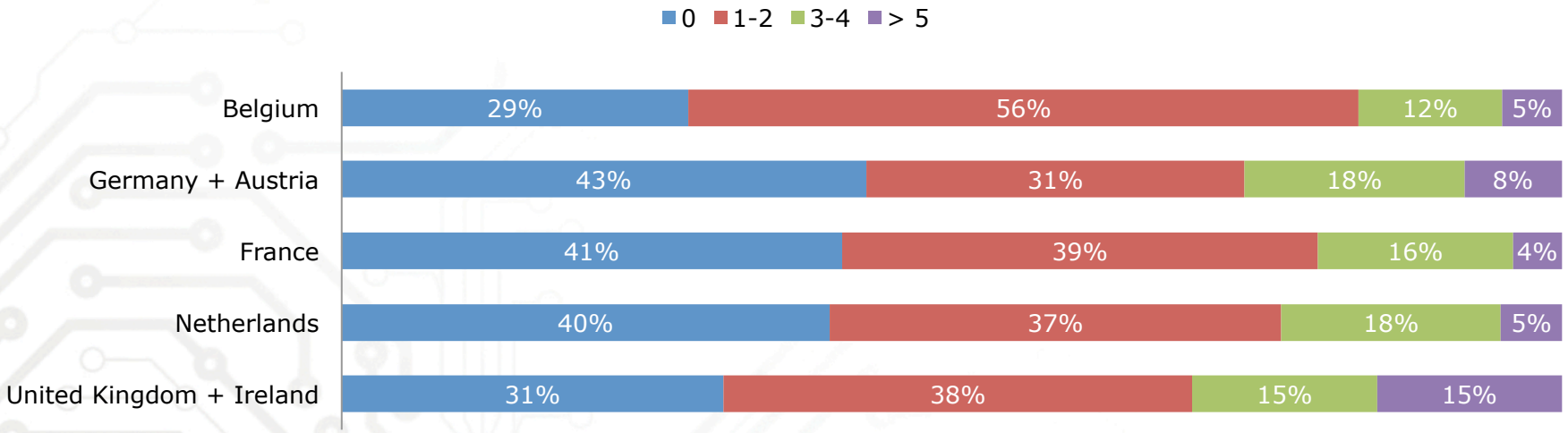
Engineers in the U.S. attend webinars much more often than their peers in Europe. In the last three months, 40% attended 3 or more compared to only 22% in Europe. And while 40% in Europe did not attend a webinar at all in the last three months, only 16% of engineers in the U.S. said this.



EU = 239, US = 64 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2016 Study*

Q: How many webcasts/webinars have you attended within the last three months?

There are certain regions in Europe where engineers are attending webinars. 56% of engineers in Belgium watched 1-2 webinars in the last three months, and 30% in UK + Ireland watched more than three.

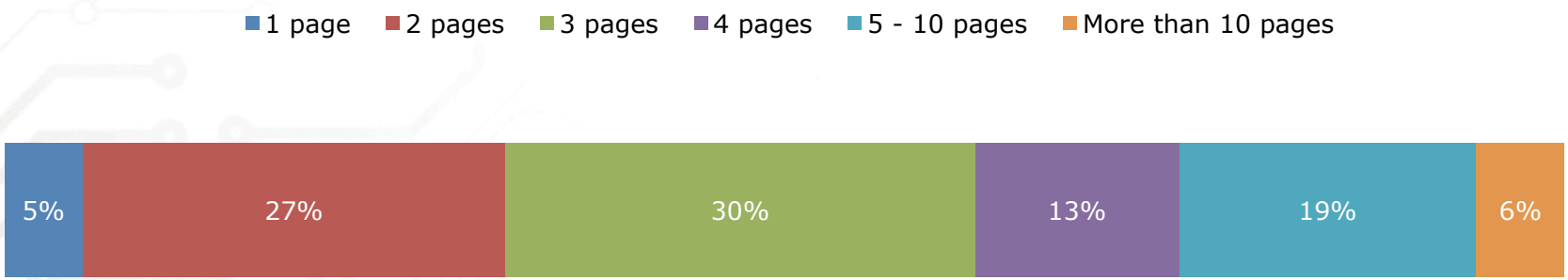


Total n =239, Netherlands = 60, France = 47, Belgium = 42, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 24, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: How many webcasts/webinars have you attended within the last three months?

Section 2:
Engineers' Search and Website Preferences

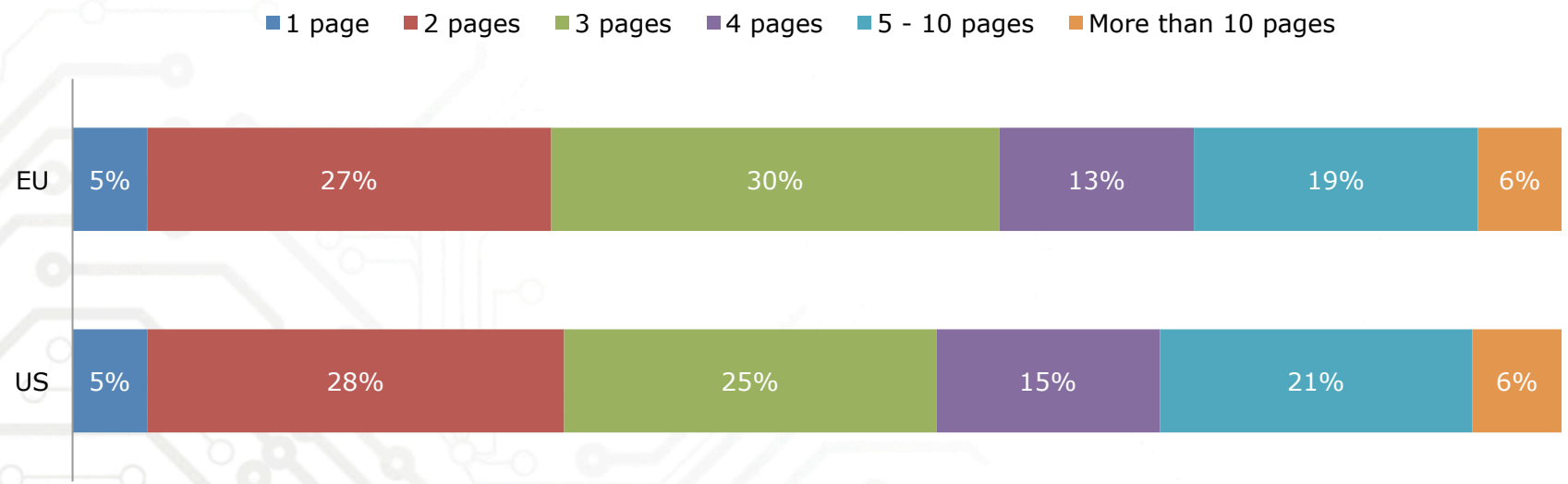
When using a search engine, nearly 40% go 4-10 pages deep and 1% more go more than 10 pages (6%) than stop on page one (5%).



n = 240

Q: When searching for information on a topic using a search engine, how many pages of results are you willing to view before you select one or start your search over?

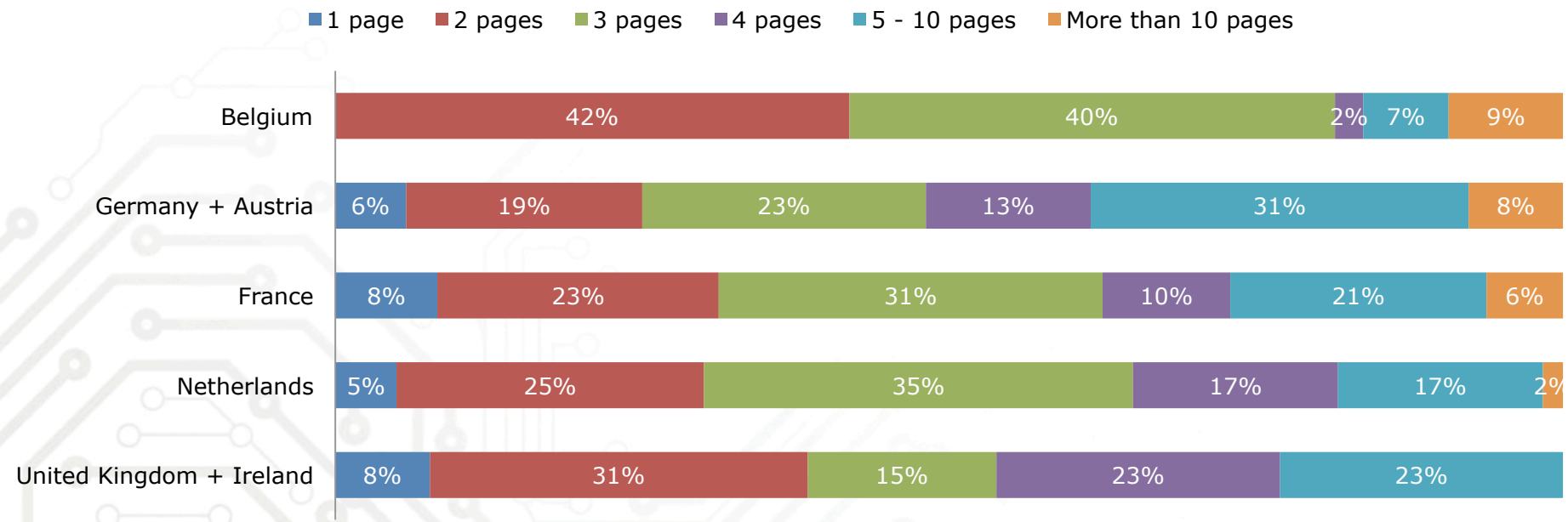
Engineers in the U.S. mostly follow the search trends of their peers in Europe. Remarkably, in both groups, more will go 10+ pages to find what they are searching for than will stop on page 1.



EU = 240, US = 705 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2014 Study*

Q: When searching for information on a topic using a search engine, how many pages of results are you willing to view before you select one or start your search over?

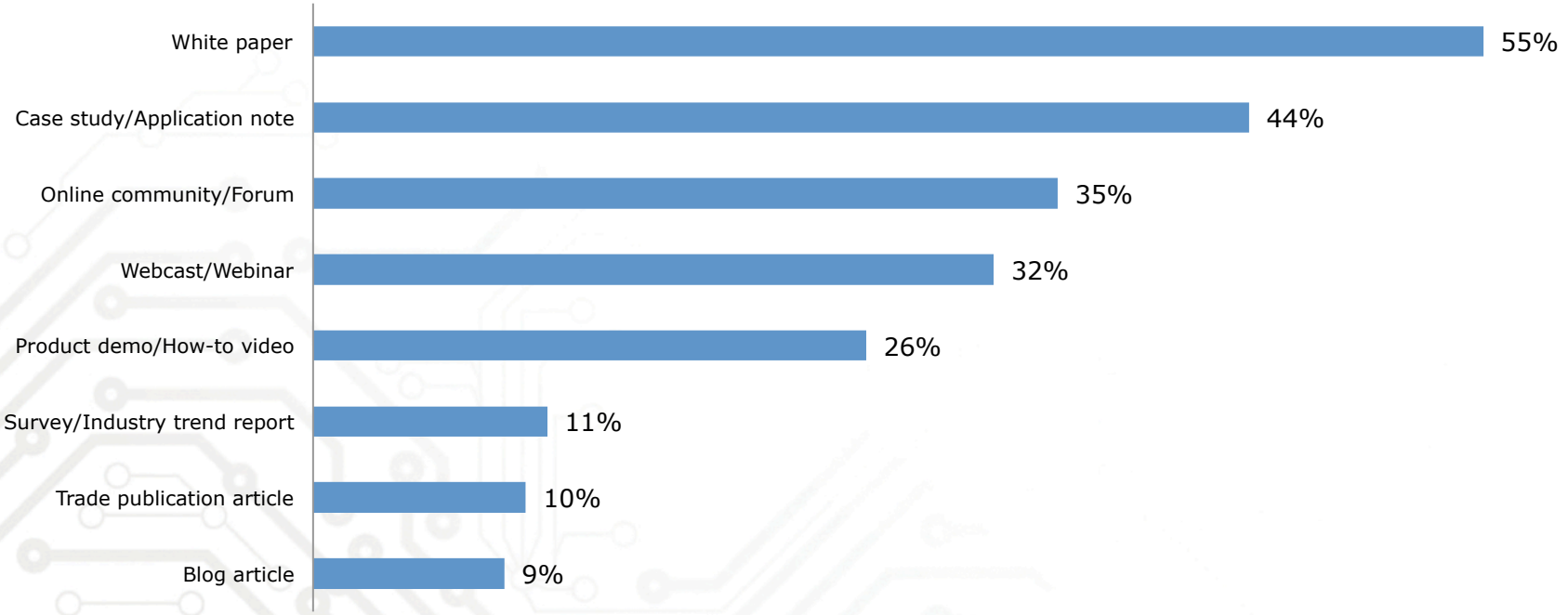
Engineers in Belgium and Germany+Austria are most persistent in their searches. Not one Belgian engineer who responded stops on page one, and 9% and 8% respectively go more than 10 pages deep, the two highest percentages by region.



Total n =240, Netherlands = 60, France = 48, Belgium = 43, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 23, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: When searching for information on a topic using a search engine, how many pages of results are you willing to view before you select one or start your search over?

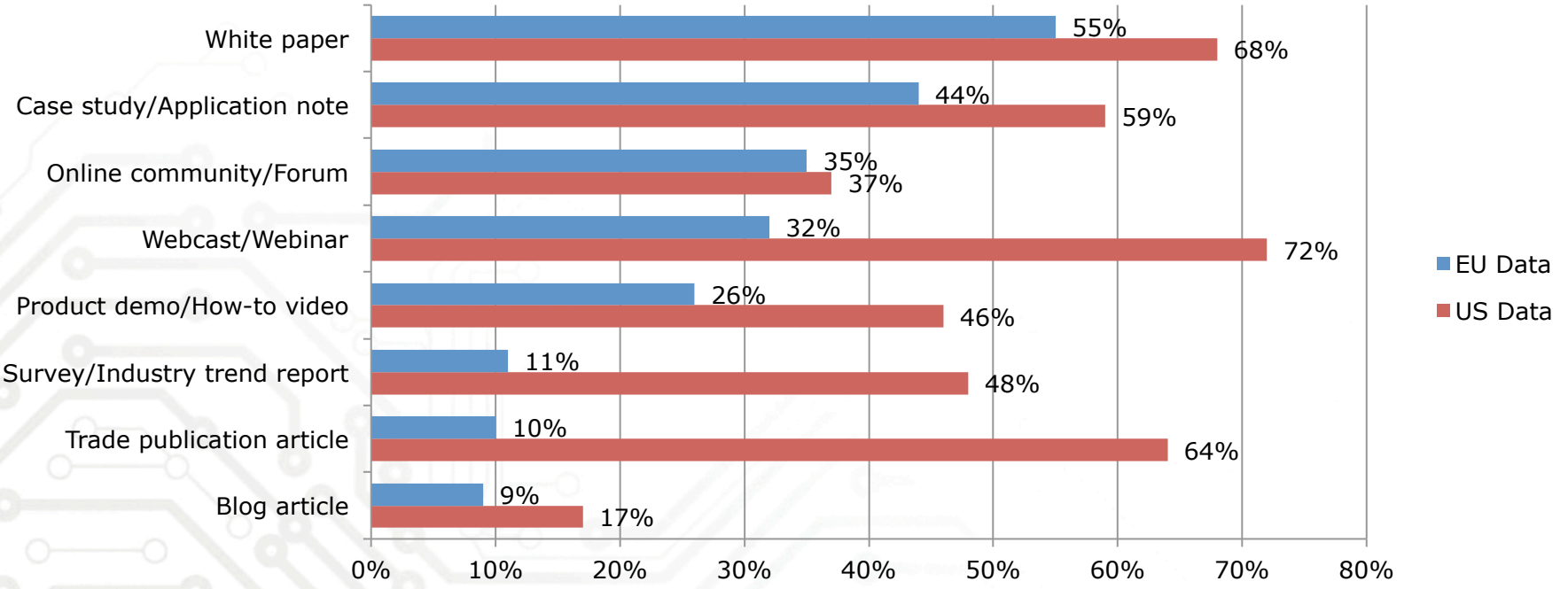
Engineers in Europe greatly value white papers and case studies and are willing to complete vendors' lead forms to access them. They are least likely to complete forms for a survey/industry report, trade publication or blog article.



n = 236 Respondents were offered to select multiple answers

Q: Which of the following content types are you more likely to provide basic contact information for (e.g., first name, last name and email address) in order to access the following content related to your job?

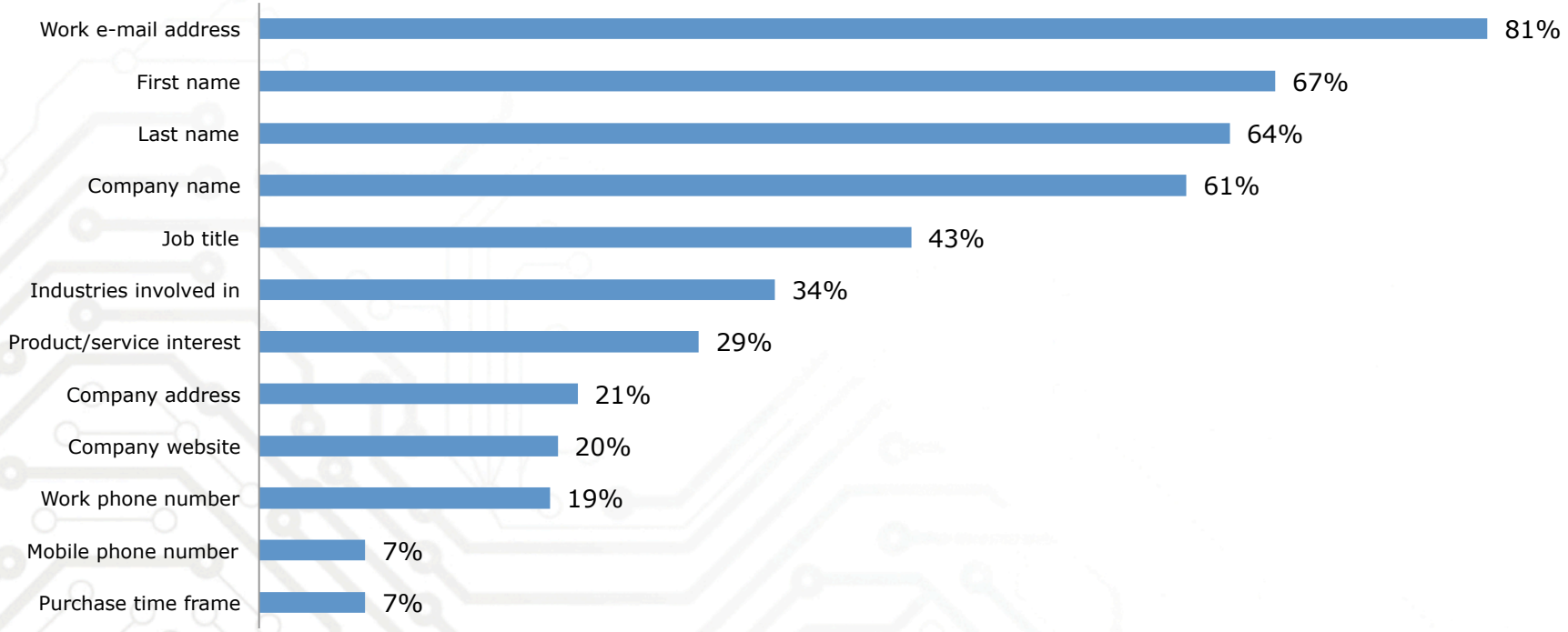
Overall, engineers in the U.S. are much more likely to complete a lead form for information than their peers in Europe. Some of the more notable differences by content type include webinars, survey/industry trend reports, and trade publication articles.



EU = 236, US = 750 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2014 Study* Respondents were offered to select multiple answers

Q: Which of the following content types are you more likely to provide basic contact information for (e.g., first name, last name and email address) in order to access the following content related to your job?

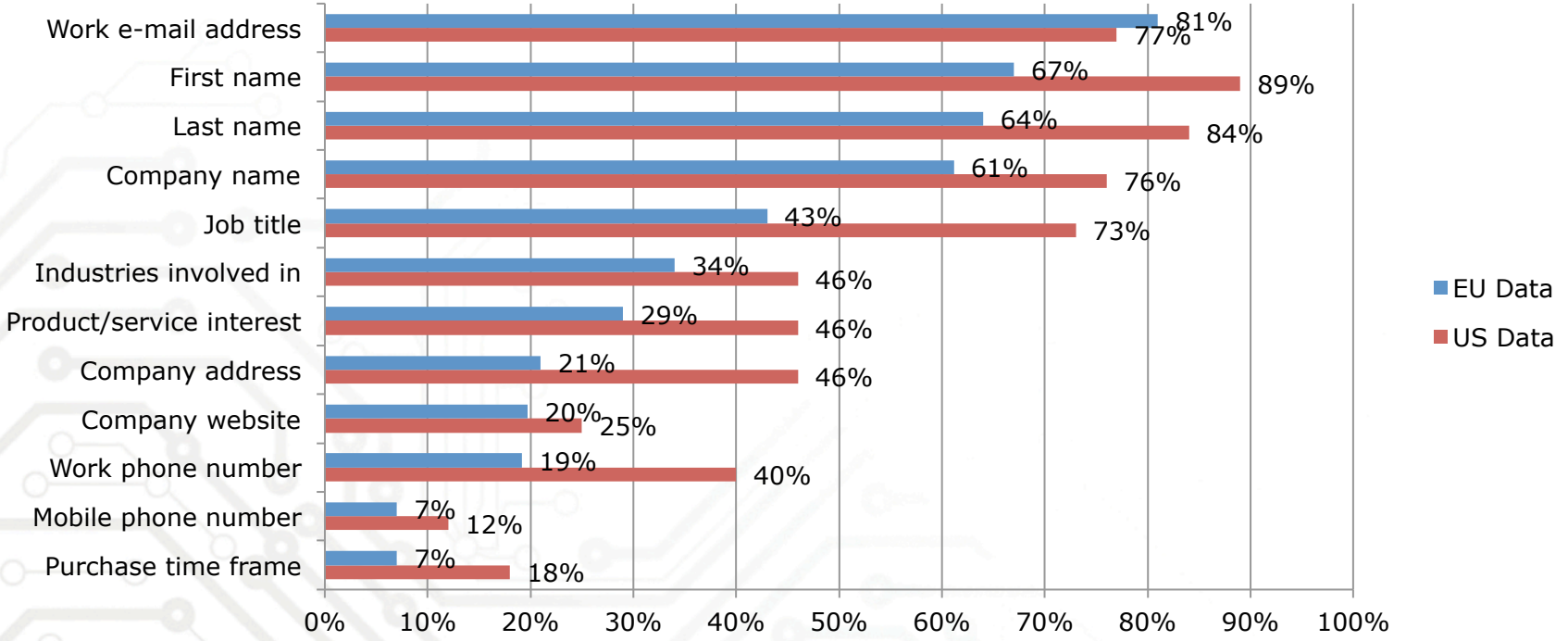
Most engineers in Europe (81%) are likely to provide work email address on a lead form. This is followed by first name (67%), last name (64%) and company name (61%). The fields they are least likely to complete are company address (21%), company website (20%), phone numbers for work (19%) and mobile (7%) and purchase time frame (7%).



Respondents were offered to select multiple answers n = 237

Q: When completing a lead form, which of the following fields are you most likely to complete in order to access online content?

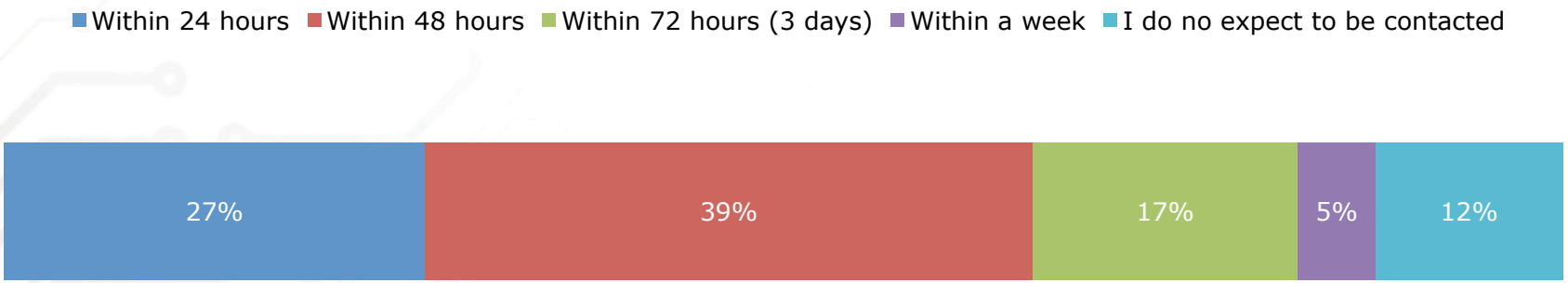
U.S. engineers are more willing to complete fields on a lead form than their peers in Europe with the exception of work email. Some of the more notable differences between engineers in the U.S. and EU, respectively, by lead form field include first name (89% vs. 67%), job title (73% vs. 43%), company address (46% vs. 21%), and work phone number (40% vs. 19%).



EU = 237, US = 750 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2014 Study* Respondents were offered to select multiple answers

Q: When completing a lead form, which of the following fields are you most likely to complete in order to access online content?

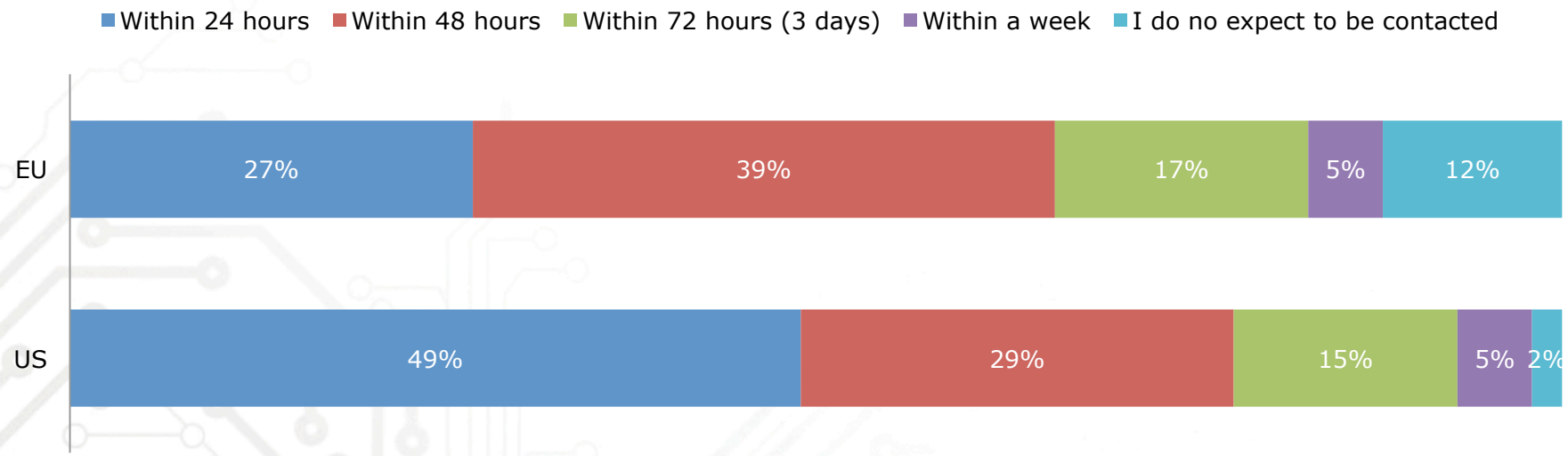
Engineers in the EU expect vendors to say thank you in a timely manner when they complete a lead form on their website, with nearly 70% saying they expect a thank you within 48 hours.



n = 241

Q: After completing a form on a vendor's website, how soon do you expect to be contacted by the company to thank you for your interest?

Engineers in the U.S. are more impatient than those in the EU, with nearly 49% expecting a thank you from a vendor within 24 hours compared to 27% in Europe.

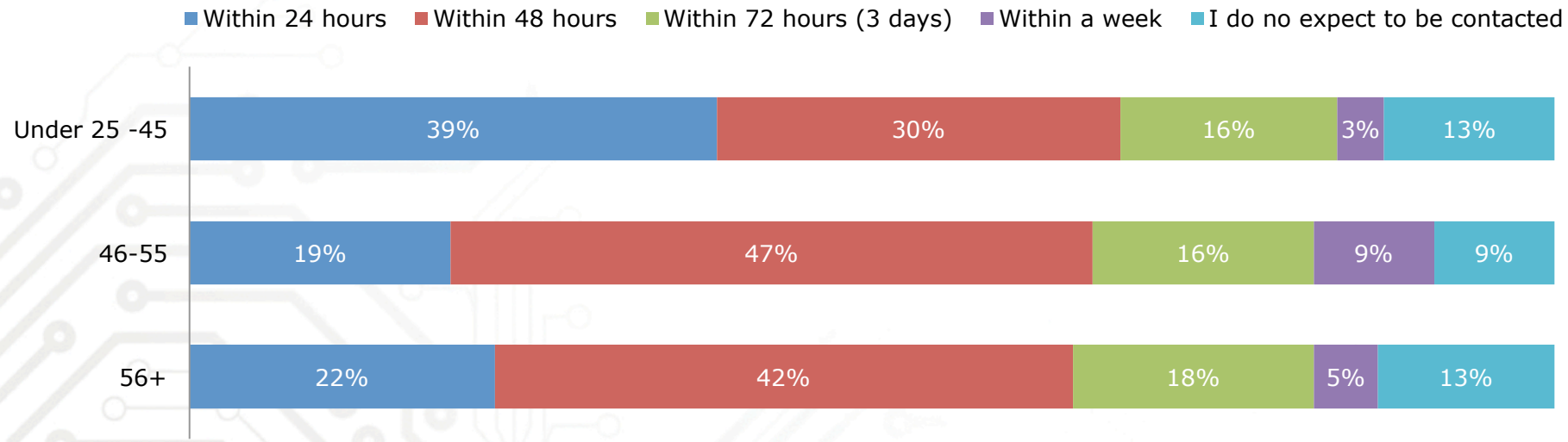


EU = 241, US = 65

US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2016 Study*

Q: After completing a form on a vendor's website, how soon do you expect to be contacted by the company to thank you for your interest?

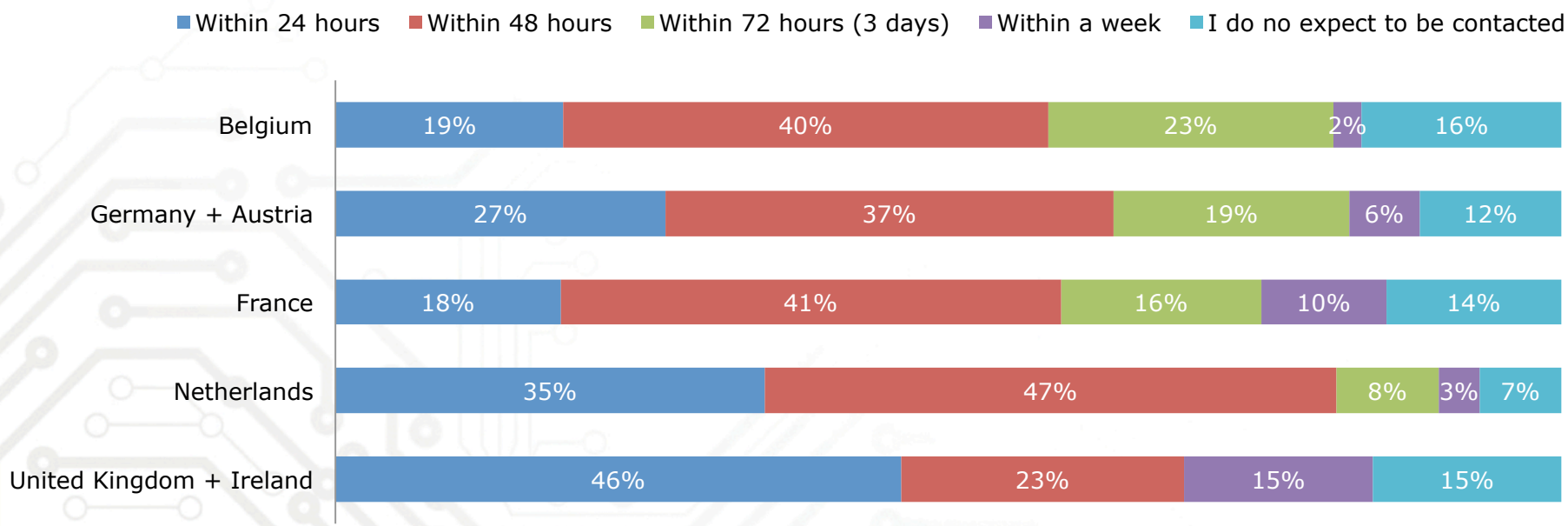
Younger engineers are more impatient than their older peers, with nearly 40% expecting a thank you from a vendor within 24 hours compared to 19% and 22% for the older groups.



Total n = 241, Under 25-45 = 87, 46-55 = 70, 56+ = 84

Q: After completing a form on a vendor's website, how soon do you expect to be contacted by the company to thank you for your interest?

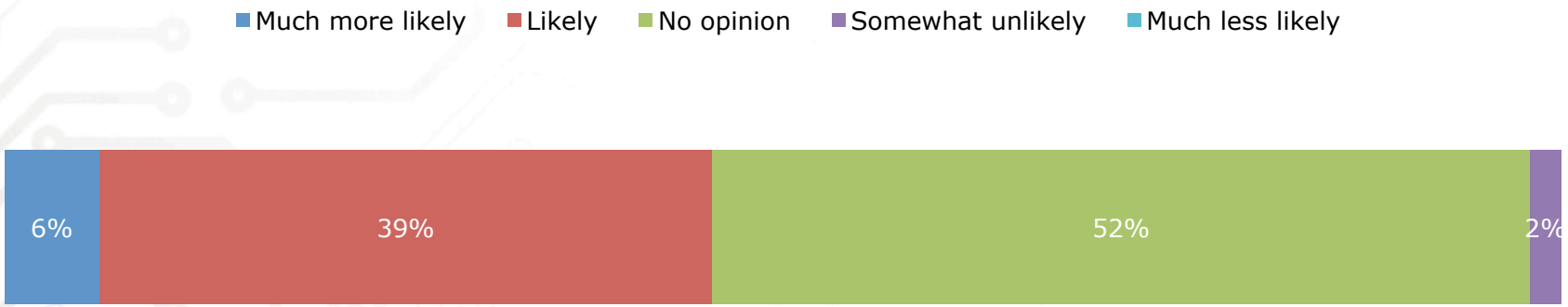
Similarly, engineers in the UK+Ireland (46%) and the Netherlands (35%) expect a thank you from a vendor within 24 hours, more than the other regions.



Total n =241, Netherlands = 60, France = 48, Belgium = 43, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 24, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: After completing a form on a vendor's website, how soon do you expect to be contacted by the company to thank you for your interest?

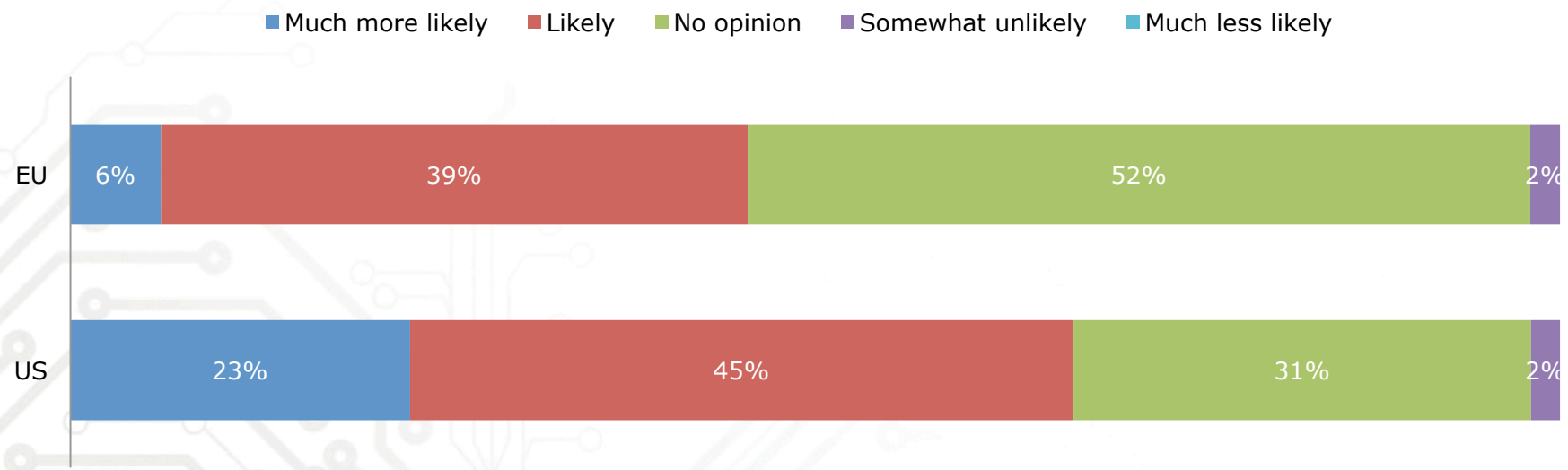
Engineers in Europe are divided in their likelihood to do business with a company that thanks them for their interest and provides further information. The largest group (52%) say they have no opinion, but a slightly smaller group (45%) say they are likely or much more likely. Only 2% said they are unlikely.



n = 241

Q: After you've completed a lead form on a vendor's website, how much more likely are you to do business with them if they thank you for your interest and offer further related resources?

The vast majority (68%) of engineers in the U.S. are likely or much more likely to do business with companies that thank them for their interest vs. less than half (45%) in Europe.

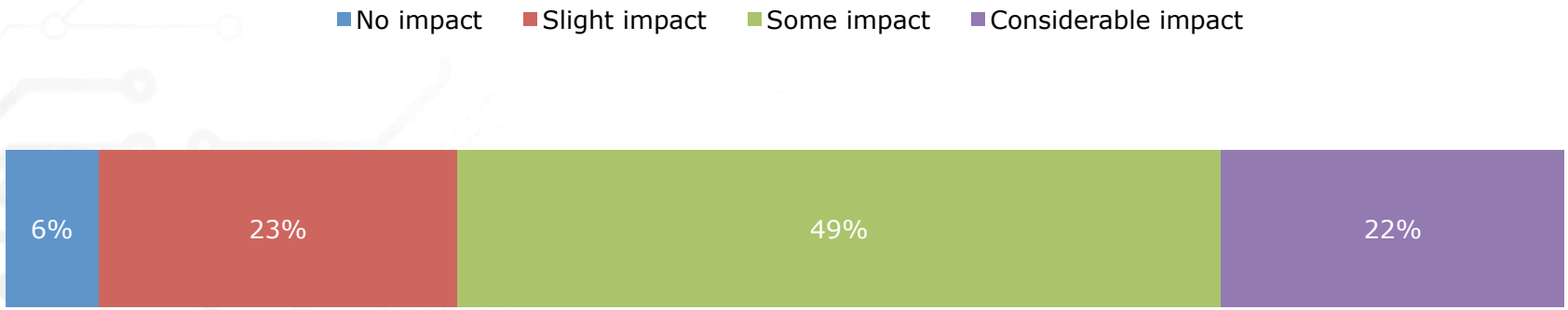


EU = 241, US = 65

US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2016 Study*

Q: After you've completed a lead form on a vendor's website, how much more likely are you to do business with them if they thank you for your interest and offer further related resources?

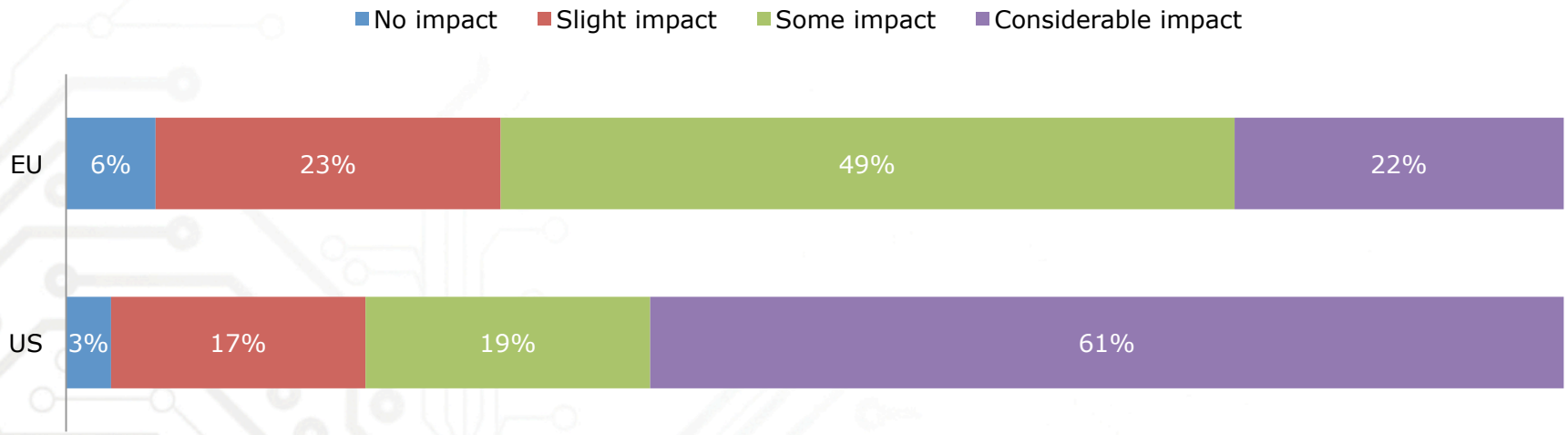
A company's website impacts engineers' perceptions of them as a credible, technically competent vendor, with over 70% saying it has some or considerable impact.



n = 240

Q: What impact does a company's website have on your perception of them as a credible, technically competent vendor?

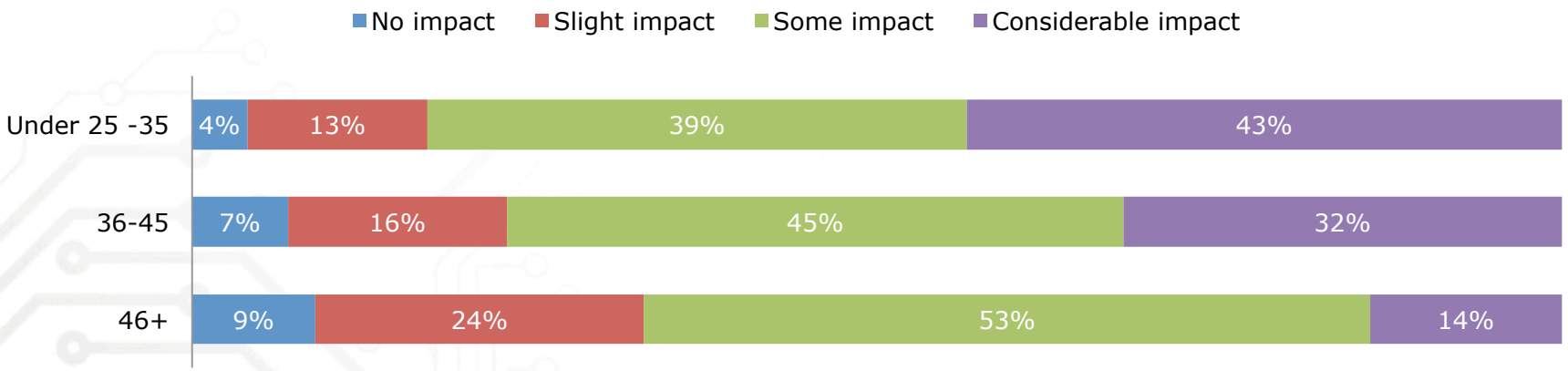
A company's website has greater impact on the perceptions of engineers in the U.S. than in Europe, with 61% in the U.S. saying it has considerable impact vs. only 22% in Europe.



EU = 240, US = 64 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2016 Study*

Q: What impact does a company's website have on your perception of them as a credible, technically competent vendor?

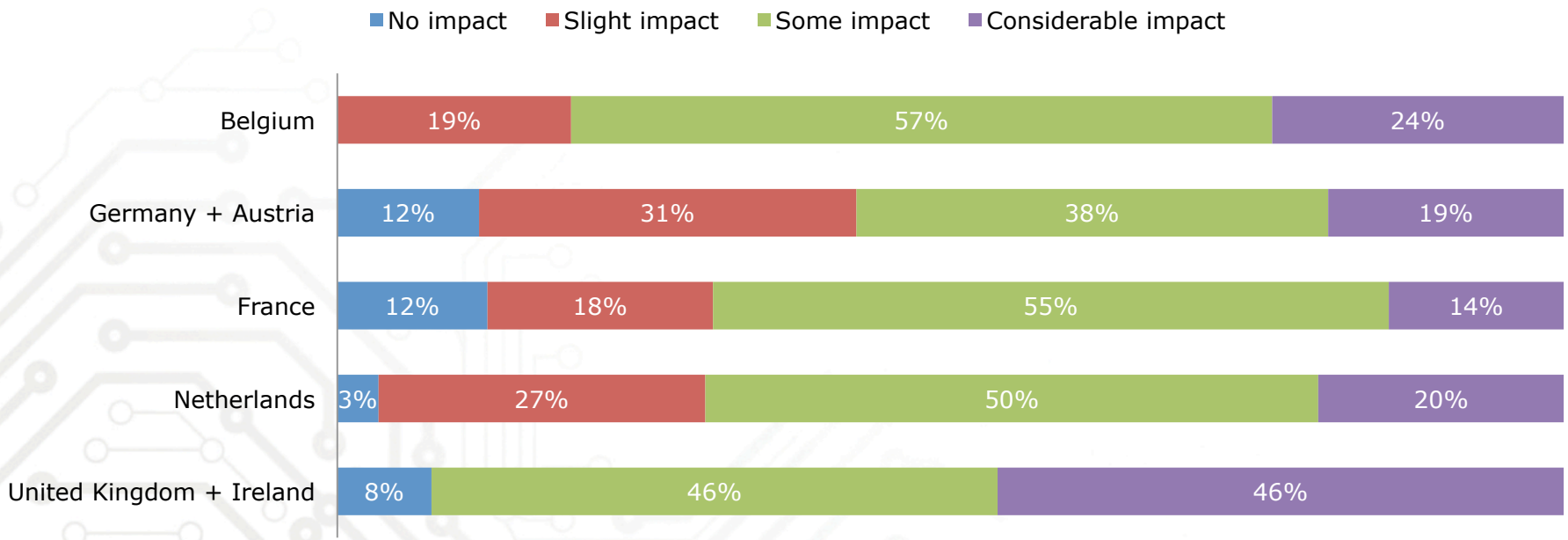
A company's website has much greater impact on the perceptions of younger engineers, with 43% saying it has considerable impact vs. only 32% of the middle age group and 14% for the oldest.



Total n = 240, Under 25-45 = 86, 46-55 = 70, 56+ = 84

Q: What impact does a company's website have on your perception of them as a credible, technically competent vendor?

Similarly, a company's website has much greater impact on the perceptions of engineers in the UK+Ireland, with 46% saying it has considerable impact vs. only 27% on average across all regions.

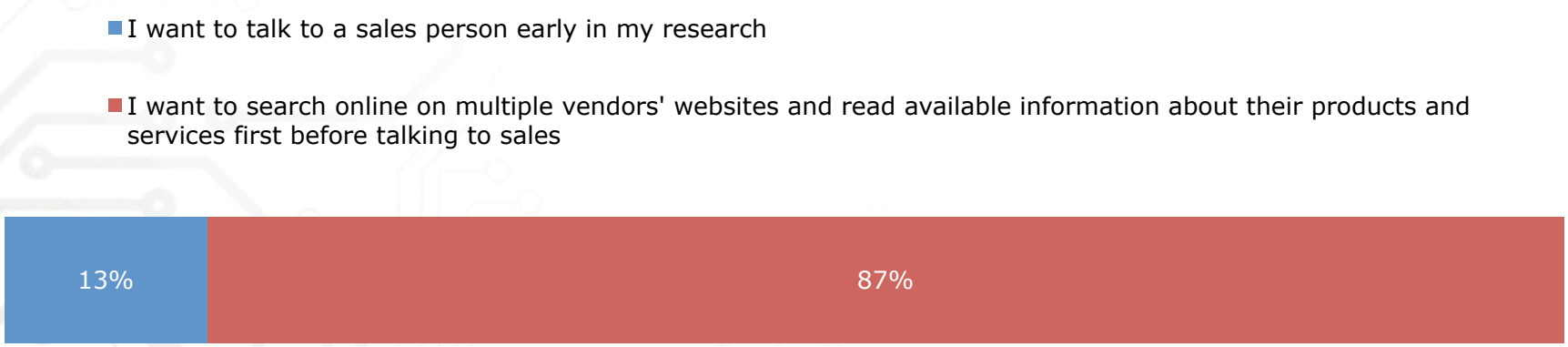


Total n =240, Netherlands = 60, France = 48, Belgium = 43, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 23, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: What impact does a company's website have on your perception of them as a credible, technically competent vendor?

Section 3:
The Engineer's Buyer Journey

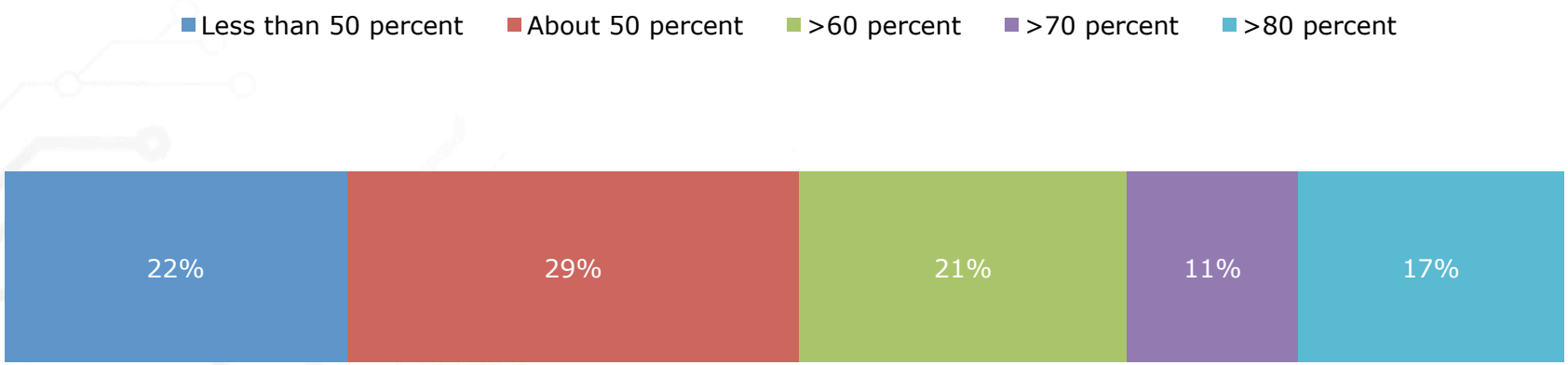
Engineers in Europe are very clear about their buying process preference: 87% prefer to search online on vendor websites and read available information before talking to sales vs. only 13% who want to talk to sales early in their research.



n = 241

Q: When you are in the buying process for a significant purchase of a product or service for work, in moving through the research, consideration, and decision stage, which best describes your preference?

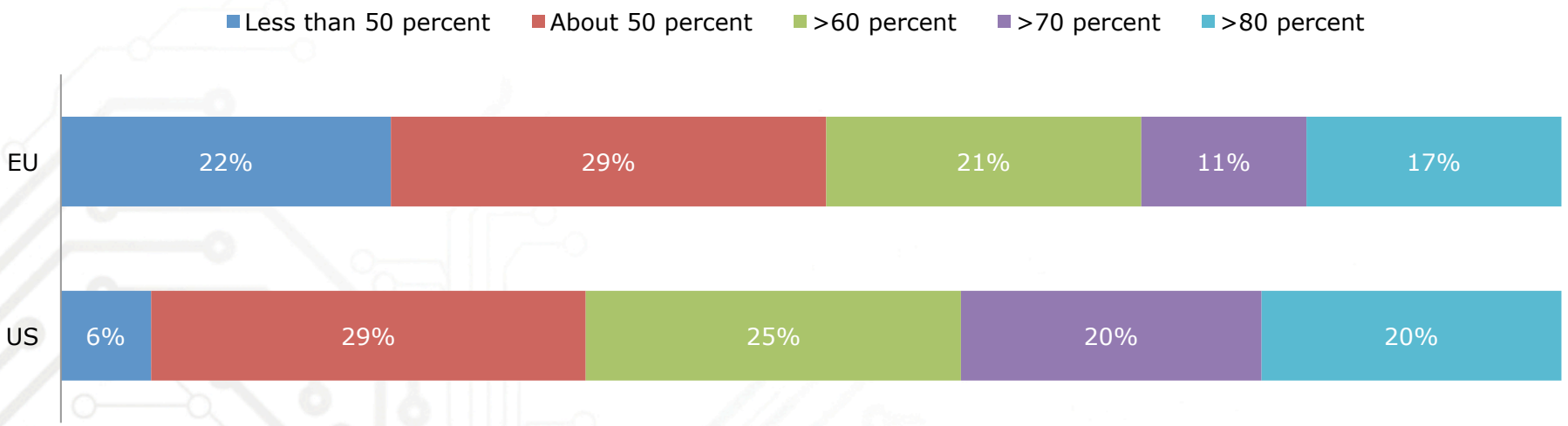
The majority of the buying process for engineers in Europe occurs online, with nearly thirty percent saying about 50% occurs online, and nearly fifty percent indicating over 60% occurs online.



n = 240

Q: In thinking about your purchase decision, what percentage of this process occurs online before communicating directly with the vendor company (e.g., visits to their website, email communication, attending a webinar, etc.)?

Even more of the engineer's buying process occurs online in the U.S. compared to Europe, with nearly sixty-five percent saying over 60% occurs online compared to about 50% saying this in Europe.

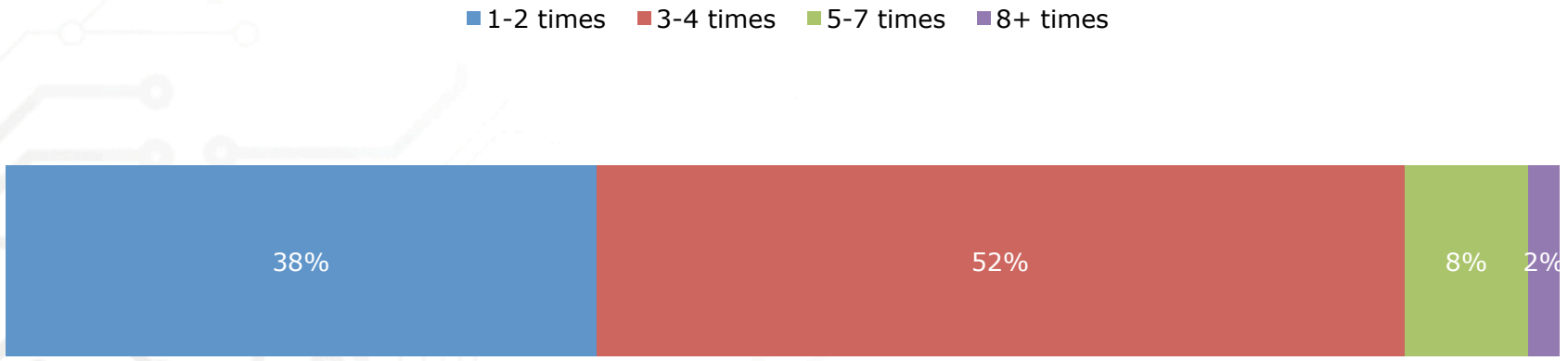


EU = 240, US = 65

US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2016 Study*

Q: In thinking about your purchase decision, what percentage of this process occurs online before communicating directly with the vendor company (e.g., visits to their website, email communication, attending a webinar, etc.)?

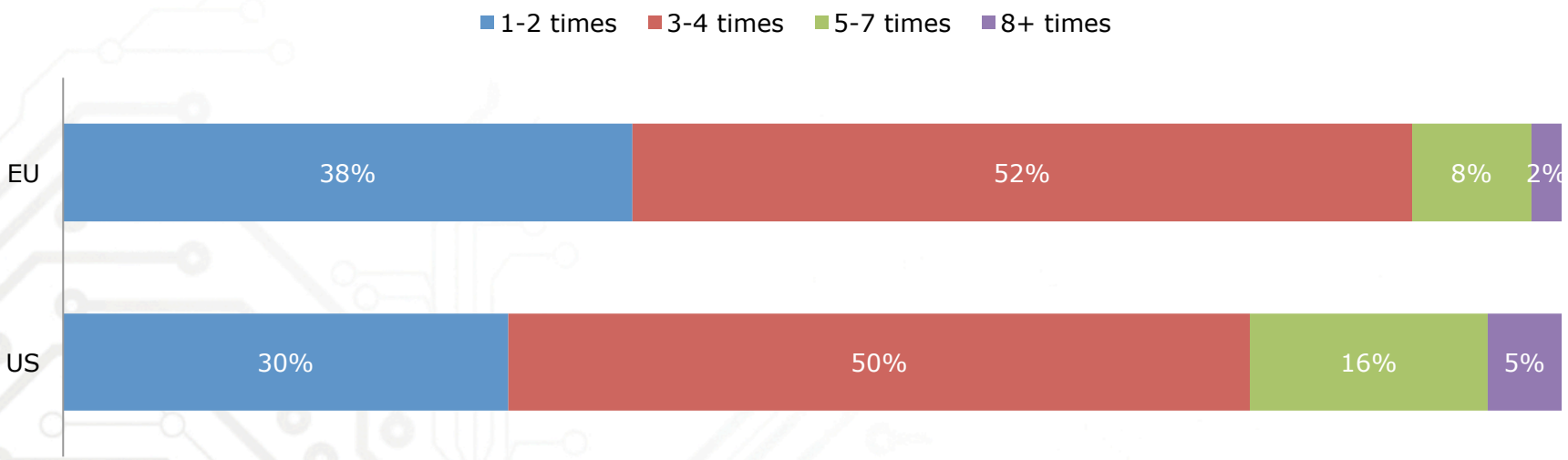
The majority (52%) of engineers in Europe indicate they have 3-4 interactions with a vendor before communicating directly with them. The second largest group (38%) have only 1-2 interactions.



n = 238

Q: In thinking about your purchase decision process for a significant product or service for work, how many interactions do you typically have with the vendor before communicating directly with the company (e.g., visits to their website, email communication, visiting their trade show booth, attending a webinar, etc.)?

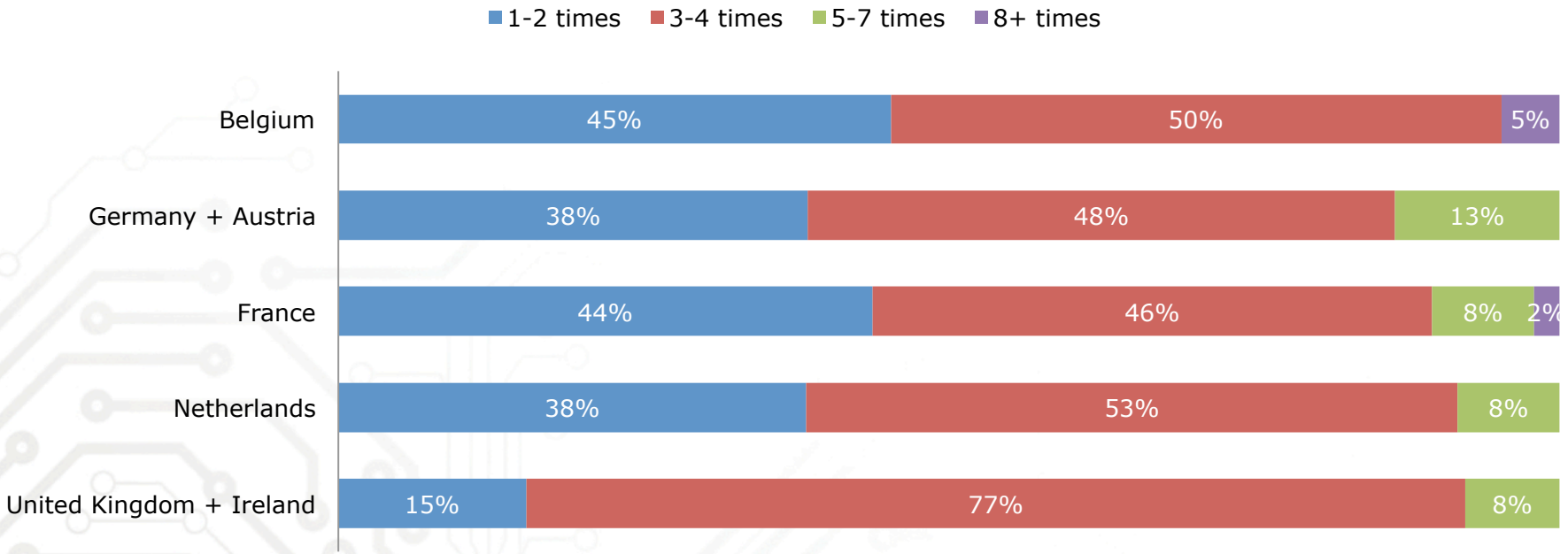
About the same percent of engineers in the U.S. (50%) and Europe (52%) indicate they have 3-4 interactions with a vendor before communicating directly with them. However, double the number in the U.S. (16%) vs. Europe (8%) say they have 5-7 interactions before talking directly with the company.



EU = 238, US = 64 US Data from *Smart Marketing for Engineers 2016 Study*

Q: In thinking about your purchase decision process for a significant product or service for work, how many interactions do you typically have with the vendor before communicating directly with the company (e.g., visits to their website, email communication, visiting their trade show booth, attending a webinar, etc.)?

The UK+Ireland have the largest group of engineers (77%) who have 3-4 interactions before interacting directly with a vendor, much higher than the average across all regions (52%).



Total n =238, Netherlands = 60, France = 47, Belgium = 42, Germany+Austria = 53, Other = 23, United Kingdom+Ireland = 12

Q: In thinking about your purchase decision process for a significant product or service for work, how many interactions do you typically have with the vendor before communicating directly with the company (e.g., visits to their website, email communication, visiting their trade show booth, attending a webinar, etc.)?

APPENDIX

Introduction & Methodology

Introduction

Marketers in Europe who are responsible for generating awareness and demand from technical audiences continue to contend with the shift toward online and content marketing and how to implement this approach effectively. To drive marketing ROI, you need to know where and how to shift your resources by understanding the changing behaviors of your prospects, such as the types and sources of content they most value, their online and search preferences, what percent of their buying process occurs online, and when sales should engage.

With this research, TREW Marketing and Elektor International Media (EIM) sought to learn from engineers and scientists in the UK and Europe in industries such as manufacturing, consumer electronics, aerospace/defense and automotive. Additionally, we were interested in the differences between engineers in the U.S. vs Europe as well as among countries and different age groups within Europe.

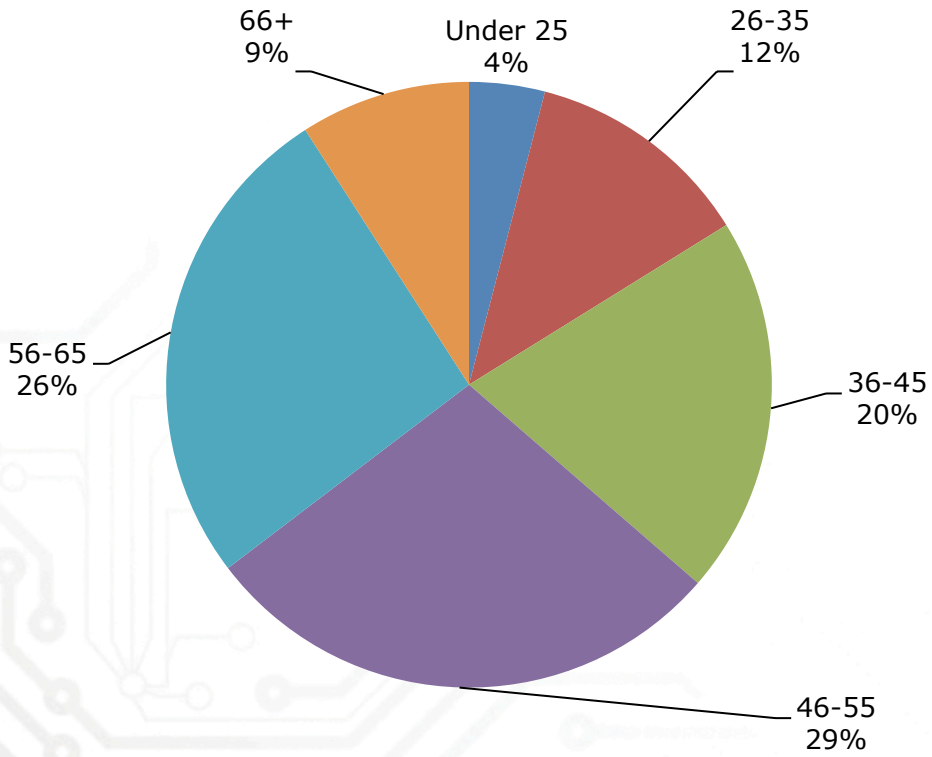
Methodology & Sample

Survey recipients were chosen from Elektor and TREW Marketing databases. Respondents were sent an email from the respective companies asking to participate in an 8-9 minute survey, with a link to the online survey questionnaire. The survey was further promoted via company publications, social media, partners, and websites.

- Data was collected from January-May 2017
- Incentive: respondents were entered into a drawing and offered the choice of a €50,00 voucher to use on the Elektor online store or a signed book, *Smart Marketing for Engineers: An Inbound Marketing Guide to Reaching Technical Audiences* by Rebecca Geier
- The survey was targeted to technical professionals only. A total of 241 respondents completed the survey.

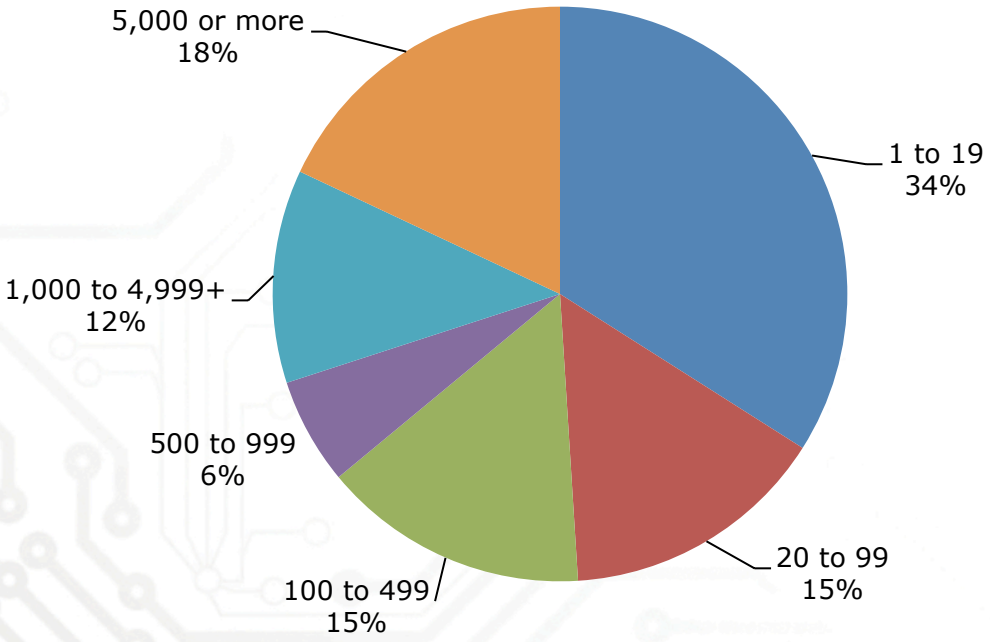
Respondents Profile

Which of the following ranges includes your current age?



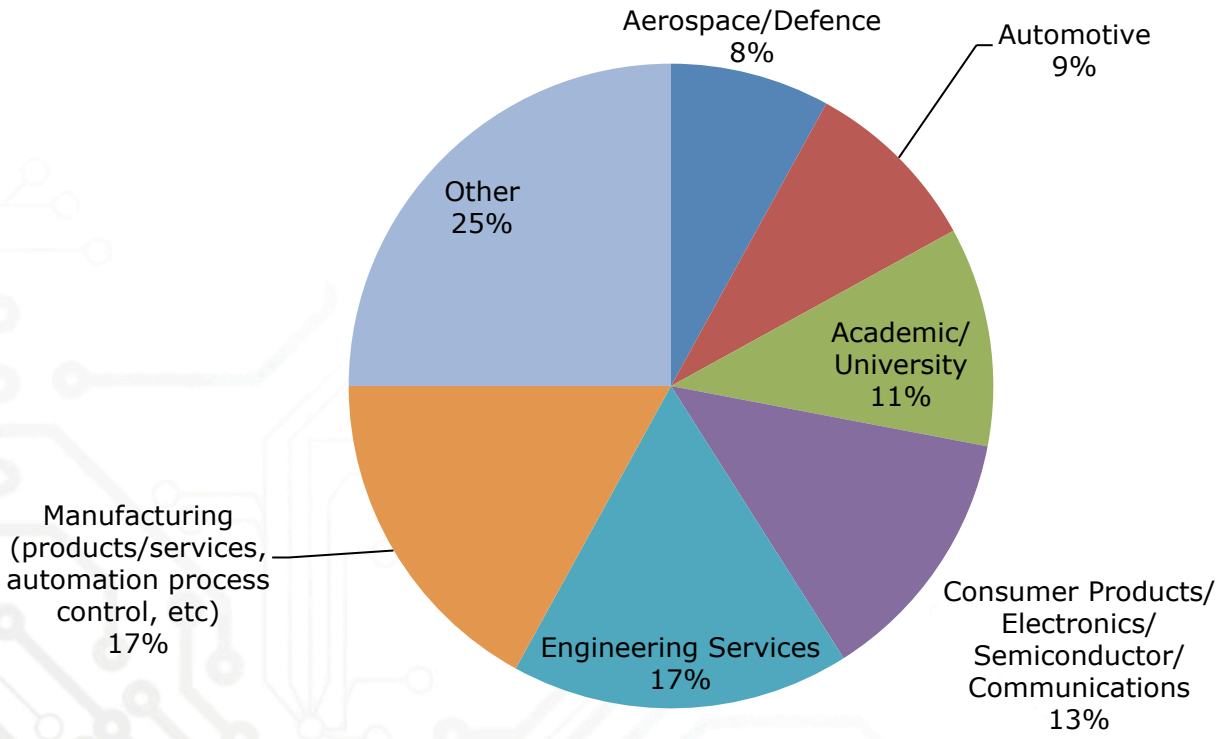
n = 241

Approximately how many people work at your company (including all locations)?



n = 241

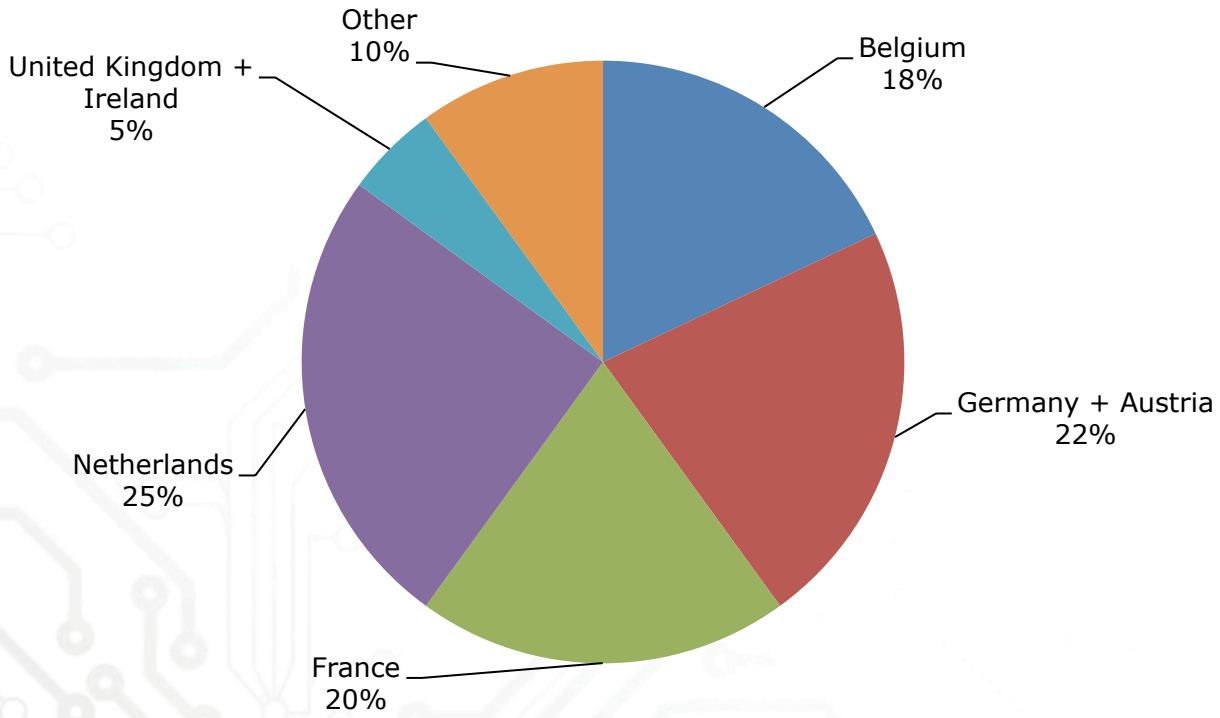
What is your company's primary industry?



Other: Software, 6%; Scientific and Measuring Equipment, 6%; Medical Devices/Equipment, 5%; Energy, 4%; Government, 2%; Chemicals, 1%; Food and Beverage, 0.5%; Pharmaceutical, 0.5%

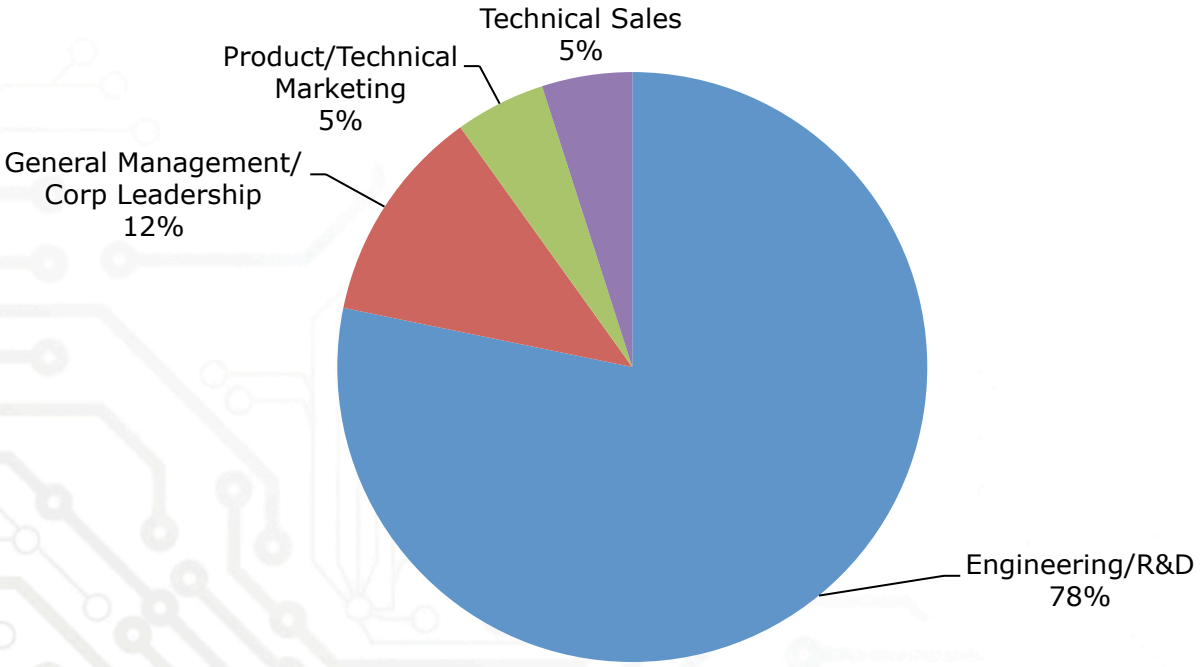
n = 241

What country or region do you work in?



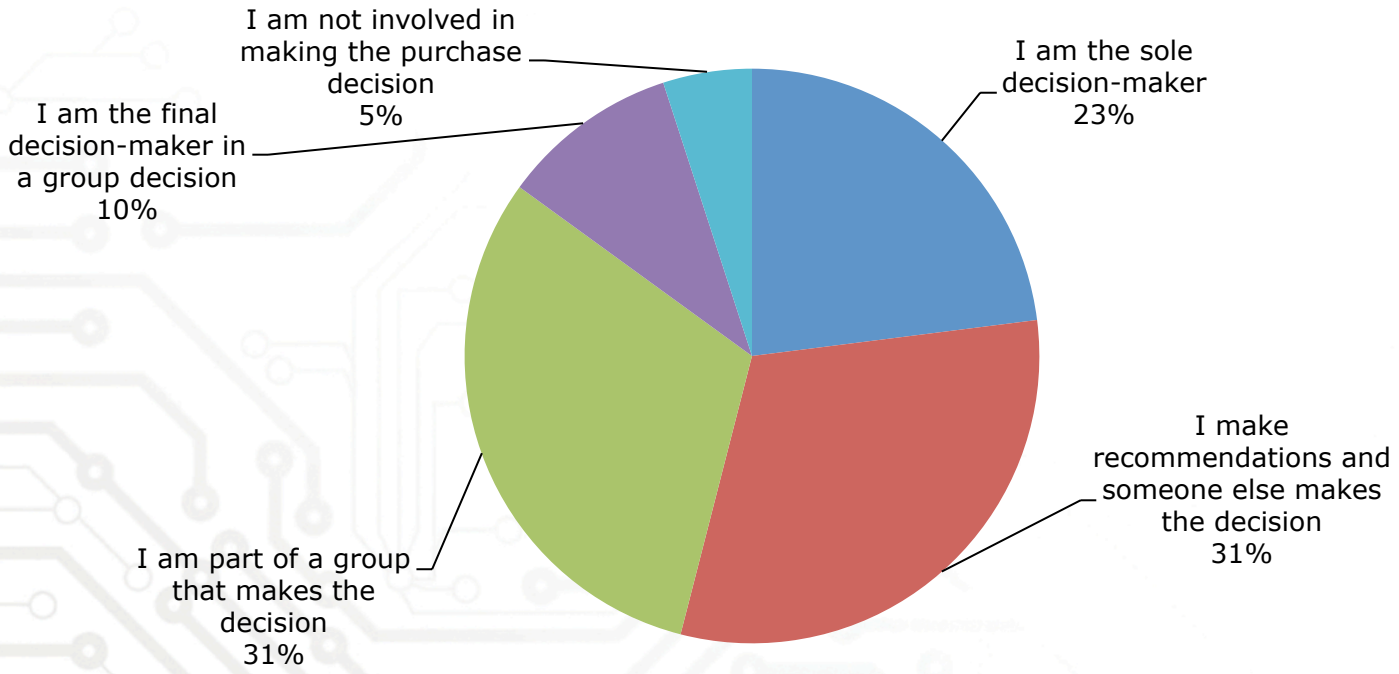
Other: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain. and Sweden
n = 241

What is your primary job function?



n = 241

Which of the following statements best describes your role in purchasing significant products or services for your lab, department or organization?



n = 241