



Northern Ireland
Assembly

All Party Group on Ageing and Older People

The Cost of Living Crisis and Older People

7 September 2022, Room 30, Parliament Buildings



Action for Warm Homes

The Extent of Fuel Poverty in Northern Ireland

Deep Dive into LucidTalk Poll Results

What is Fuel Poverty?

Definition:

“A household is in fuel poverty if, in order to maintain a satisfactory level of heating throughout the home, the occupants would have to spend more than **10%** of their income on all household fuel use.”

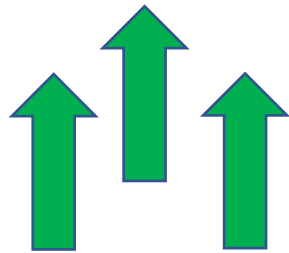
Department for Communities



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Fuel Poverty-Causal Factors

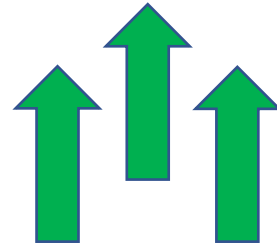
**High
Energy Prices**



**Reduce the
Energy
Required**

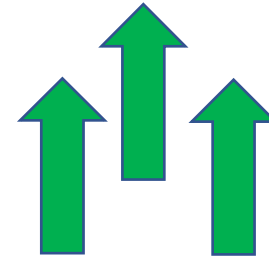
To minimise the impact of the
energy price
Switch & Save

**Energy
Inefficiency**



**Increase the
Energy Efficiency**

**Low
Income**



**Increase
Income**

e.g. Benefit Entitlement
Checks
Well paid jobs
Living wage



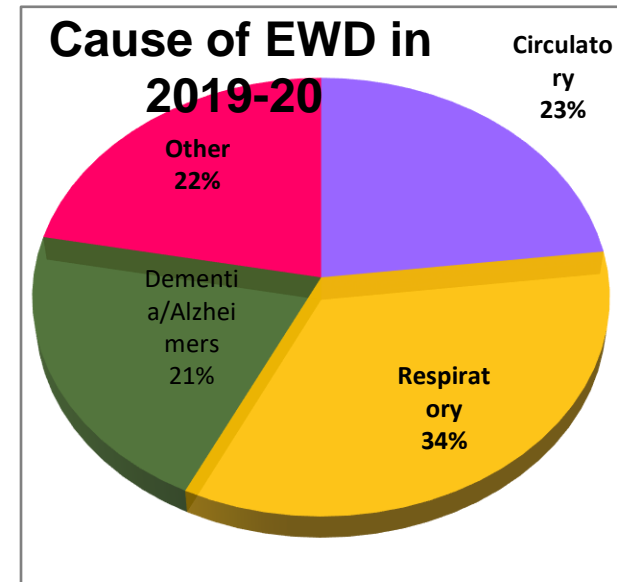
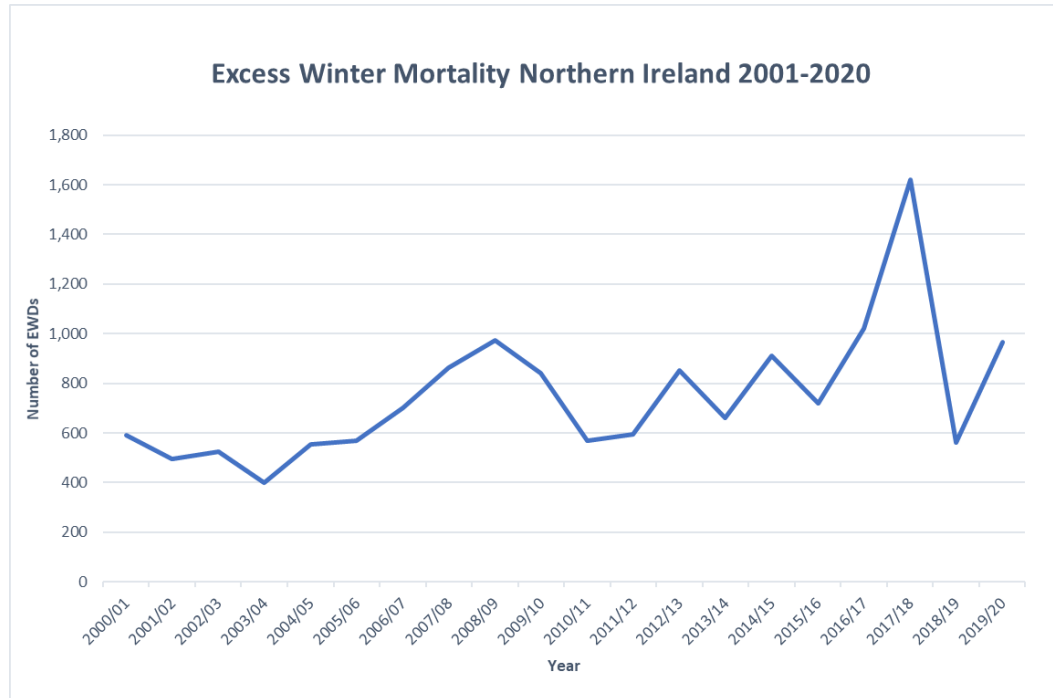
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Fuel Poverty and older households

- **Pre-payment meters and accessibility issues:** Can often face broader difficulties vending for fuels particularly in gas pre-payment meters who can only vend if they physically go to a shop with a PayPoint and top up to a maximum of £49.00.
- **Digital Exclusion:** Households with limited access to the internet face an energy cost premium because they are not able to access the best deals or they are missing out on programmes that are only accessible to those that are online.
- **Higher reluctance to accept new technologies:** Older households are often slower to transition to new heating technologies as these often require a significant behavioural change aspect. This can expose households to higher energy costs.



Excess Winter Deaths



910 Excess winter deaths in 2018-2019 across Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA) 2020

In 2019/20, 60.0% of the estimated excess winter deaths involved people aged 75 and over.



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Cold Homes and Health

- EWDs are almost **three times higher in the coldest quarter of housing** than in the warmest quarter.
- We know that **deaths from cardiovascular diseases are directly linked to exposure to excessively low indoor temperatures** for long periods of time.
- There is also increasing evidence to show that **Children living in cold homes are more than twice as likely to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems** than children living in warm homes.
- Exposure to **cold can increase the level of minor illnesses such as colds and flu** and exacerbates existing conditions such as arthritis and rheumatism.



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Fuel Poverty in Northern Ireland

Fuel Poverty Statistics

House Condition Survey	2011	House Condition Survey	2016
Northern Ireland	42%	Northern Ireland	22%
Scotland	32.7%	Scotland	35%
Wales	26.0%	Wales	23%
England	18.4%	England	11.6%

*NIHE House Condition Surveys 2011 & 2016**

Figures are likely higher due to the impacts of Covid-19 and wholesale energy price rises.



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Methodology

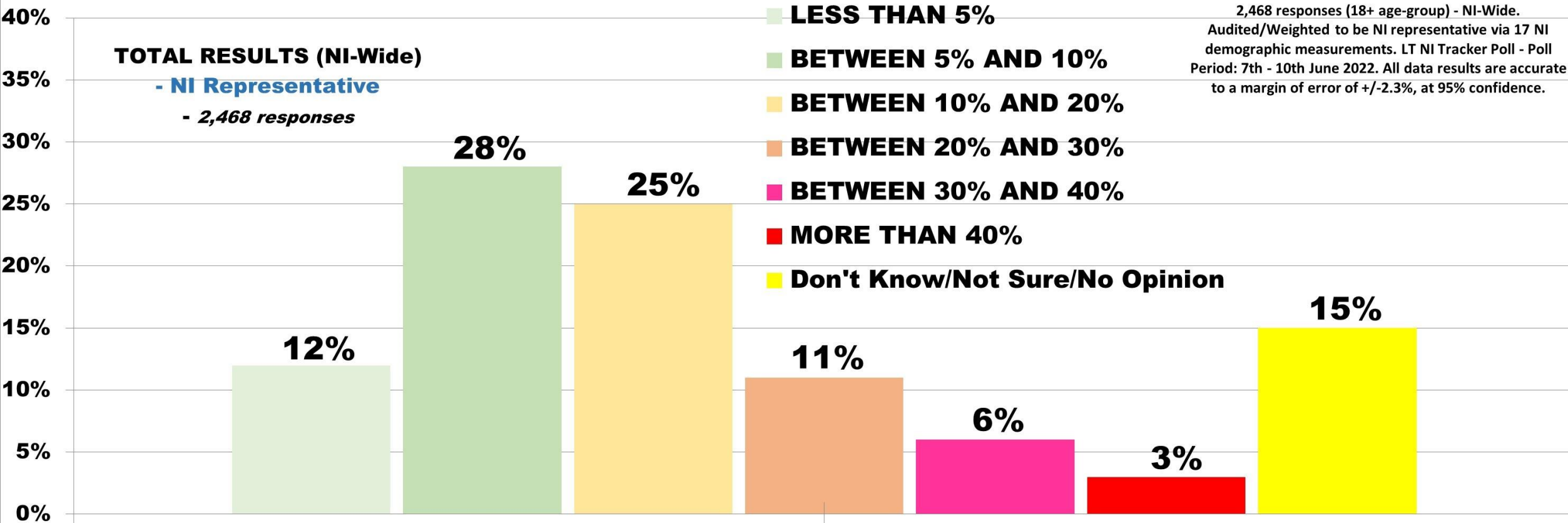
- Polling was carried out by Belfast based polling and market research company LucidTalk.
- The Poll presented **10 questions** for respondents designed to capture information on the impact of rising energy prices and the ongoing cost of living crisis for households in NI.
- The project was carried out online for a period of **4 days from 7th to 10th June 2022**.
- The project targeted the established Northern Ireland (NI) LucidTalk online Opinion Panel (14,000+ members) which is balanced by gender, age group, area of residence, and community background, in order to be demographically representative of Northern Ireland.
- **2,527 full responses were received**, and a data auditing process was carried out to ensure all completed poll-surveys were genuine 'one-person, one-vote' responses. This resulted in 2,468 responses being considered in terms of the final base dataset results.
- In excess of 800 unedited qualitative comments were also received.





LUCIDTALK NORTHERN IRELAND(NI) Poll-Project: June 2022 - re. 'Energy issues' for NATIONAL ENERGY ACTION - NI. Poll Period: 7th to 10th June 2022. 2,468 responses - final balanced/weighted NI Representative sample.

POLL QUESTION 1: What proportion of your household income do you spend on heating (oil or gas) and electricity?



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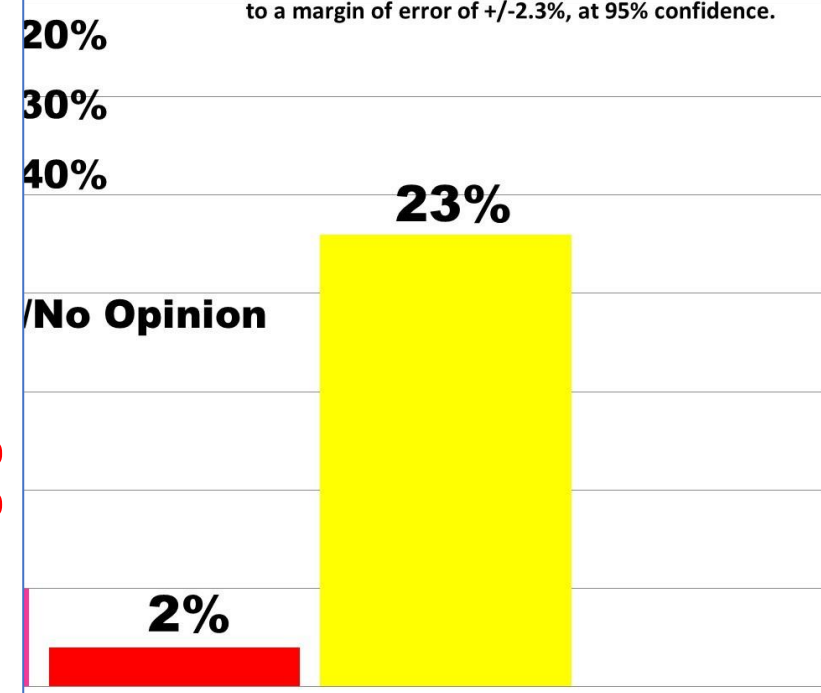
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%

TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide)
- 65+ Years Age-Group Only

■ LESS THAN 5%
■ BETWEEN 5% AND 10%

2,468 responses (18+ age-group) - NI-Wide. Audited/Weighted to be NI representative via 17 NI demographic measurements. LT NI Tracker Poll - Poll Period: 7th - 10th June 2022. All data results are accurate to a margin of error of +/-2.3%, at 95% confidence.

Fuel Poverty Rate in 65+ demographic: 43%

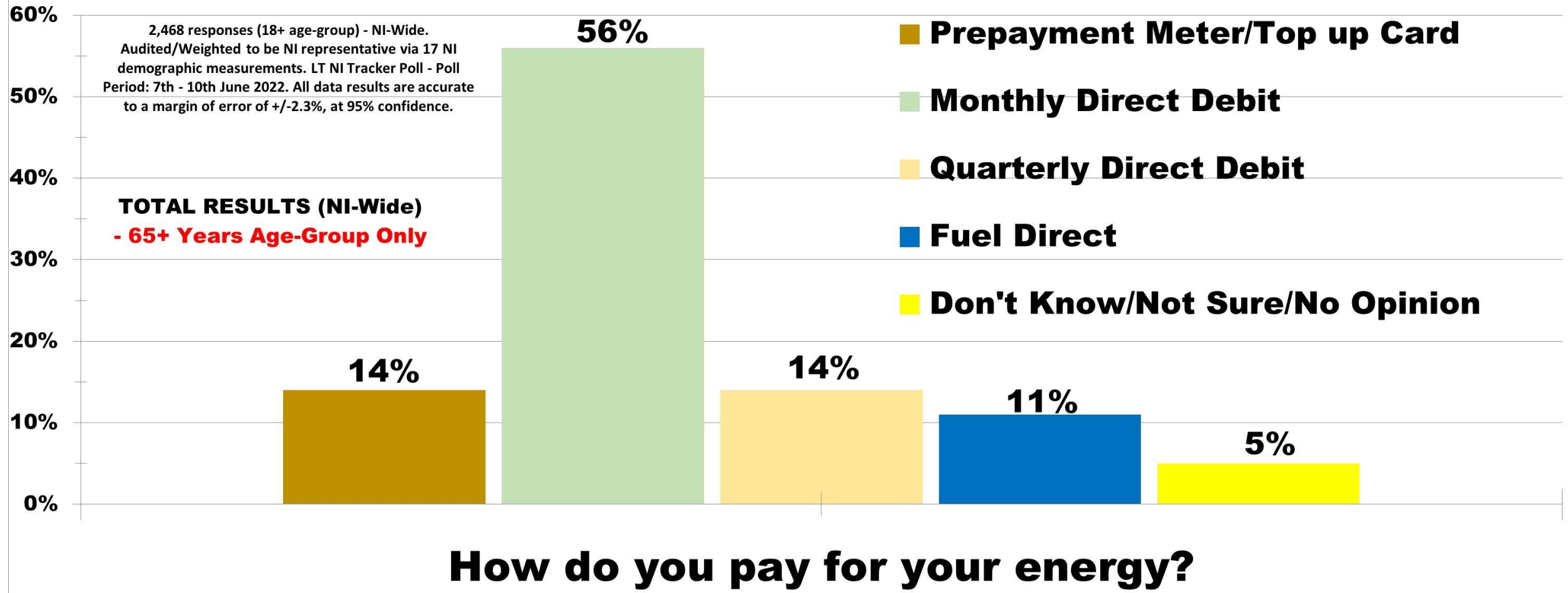


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POLL QUESTION 2: How do you pay for your energy?

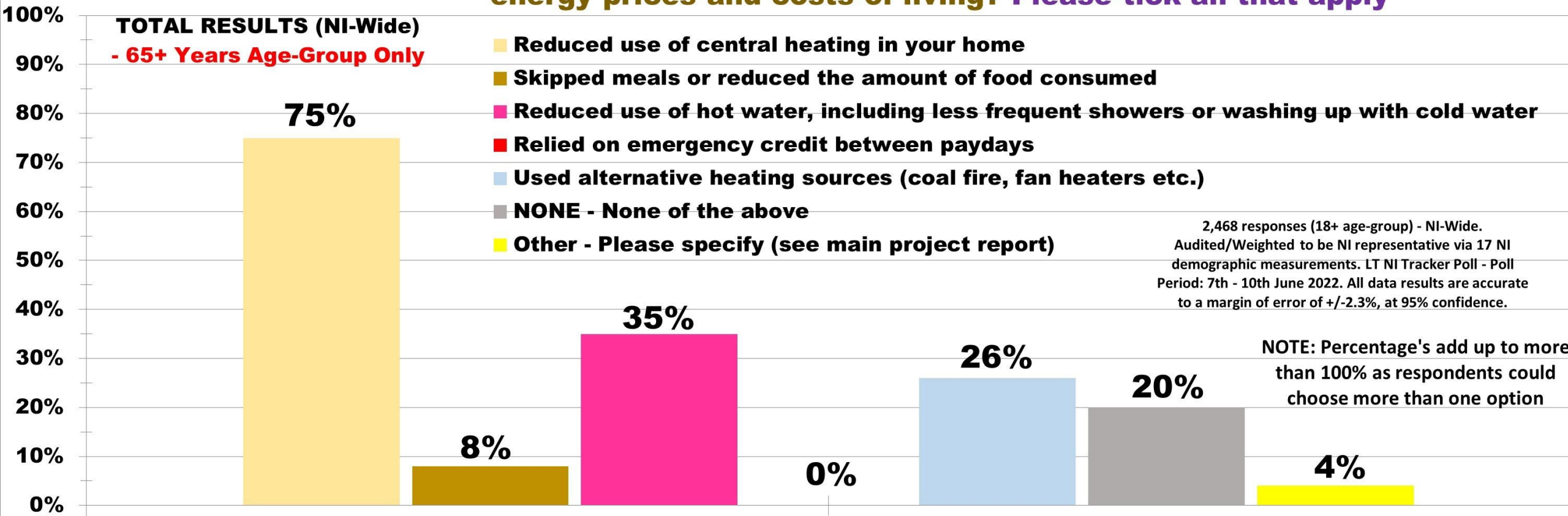




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POLL QUESTION 3: Have members of your household adopted any of the following behaviours due to the rising energy prices and costs of living? Please tick all that apply



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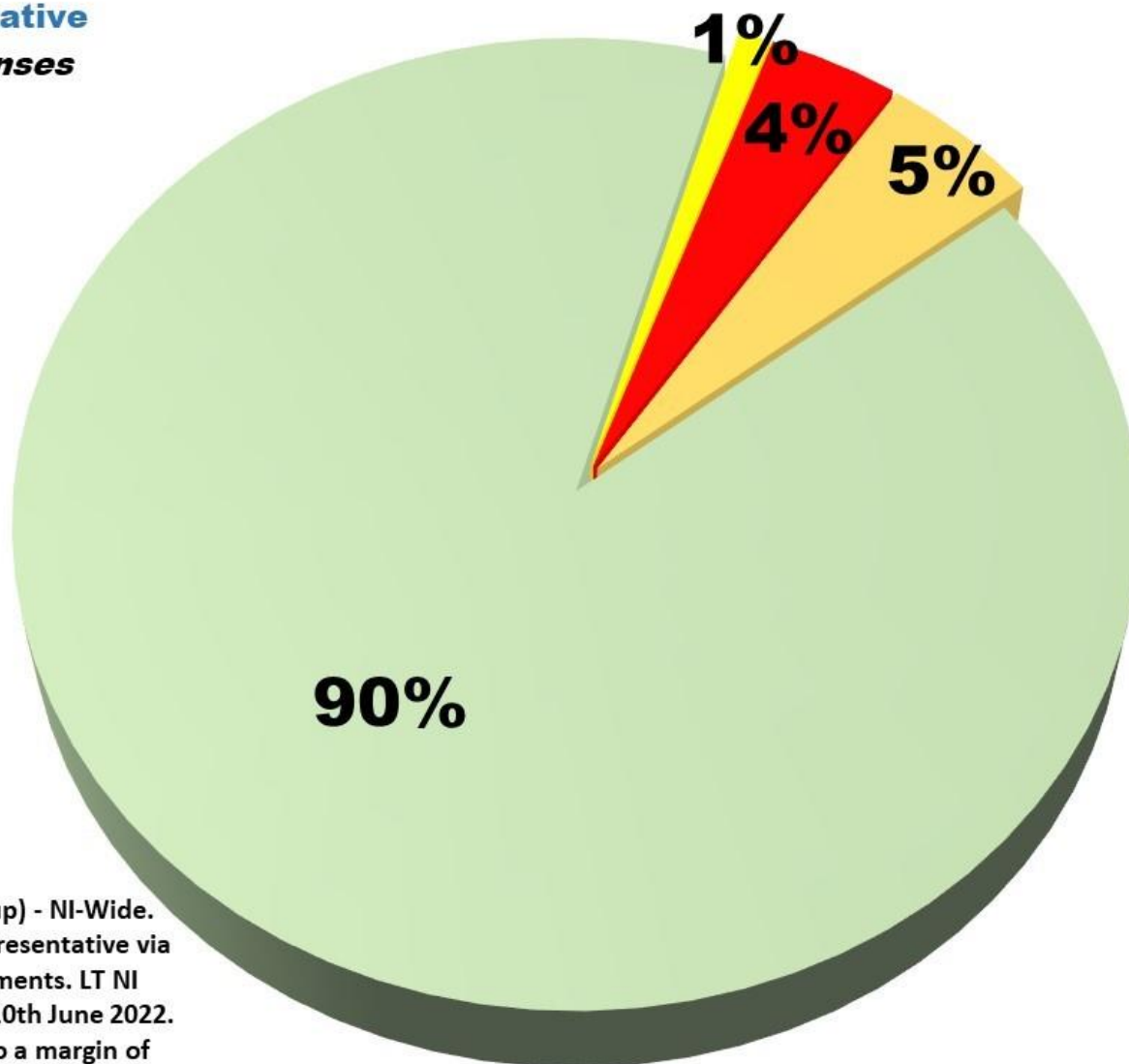
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POLL QUESTION 4: Are you currently in, or have you at any time in the past 18 months, been in debt to your energy supplier?



TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide)

- NI Representative
- 2,468 responses



- Yes, currently in debt
- Yes, have been in debt at some point in the past 18 months
- No
- Don't Know/Not Sure/No Opinion

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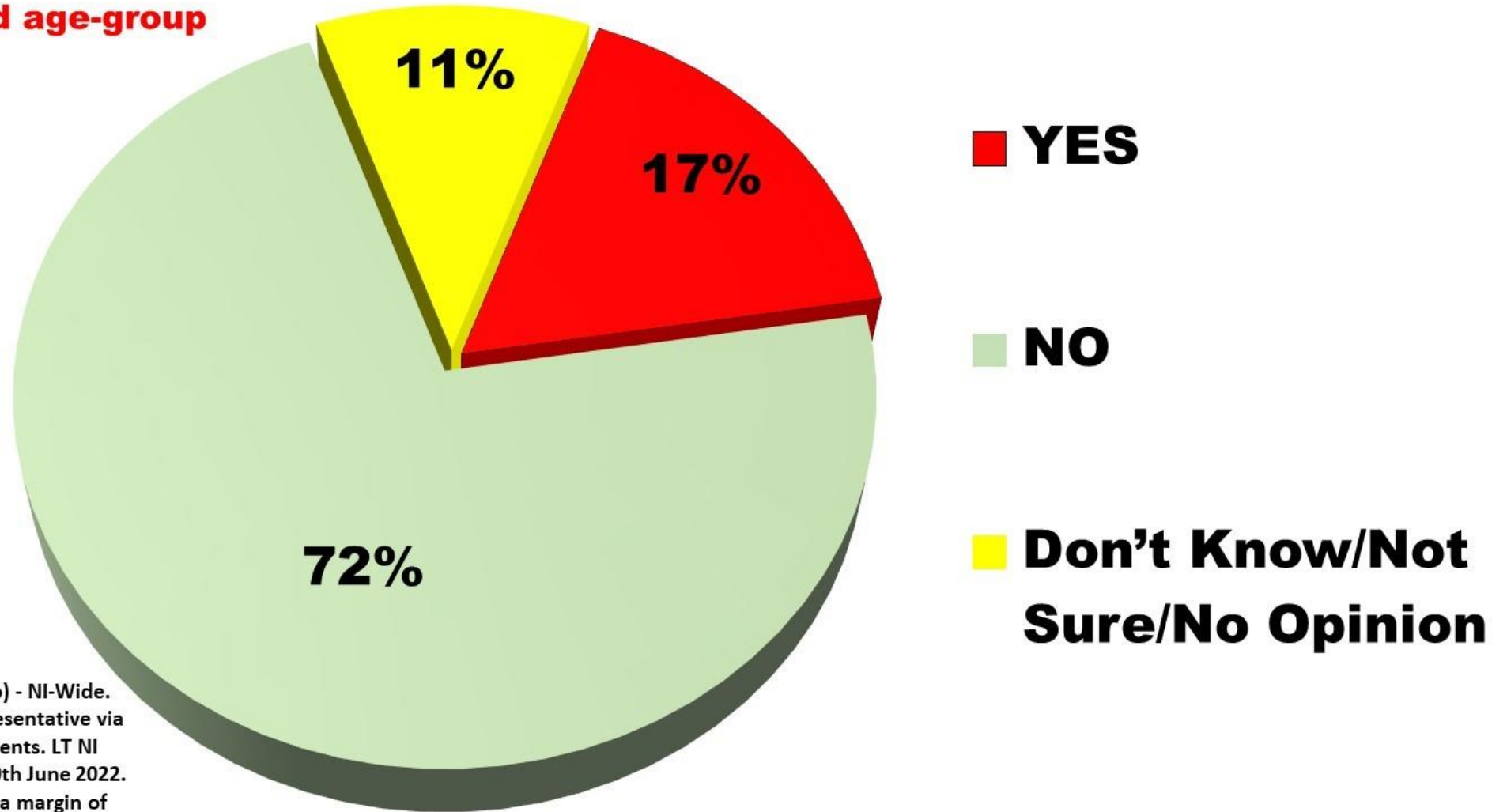


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POLL QUESTION 5: Has your health and wellbeing, or another member of your household's health, and wellbeing, been impacted by the rising energy prices and cost of living?



TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide) **- 65+ years old age-group**



2,468 responses (18+ age-group) - NI-Wide. Audited/Weighted to be NI representative via 17 NI demographic measurements. LT NI Tracker Poll - Poll Period: 7th - 10th June 2022. All data results are accurate to a margin of error of +/-2.3%, at 95% confidence.

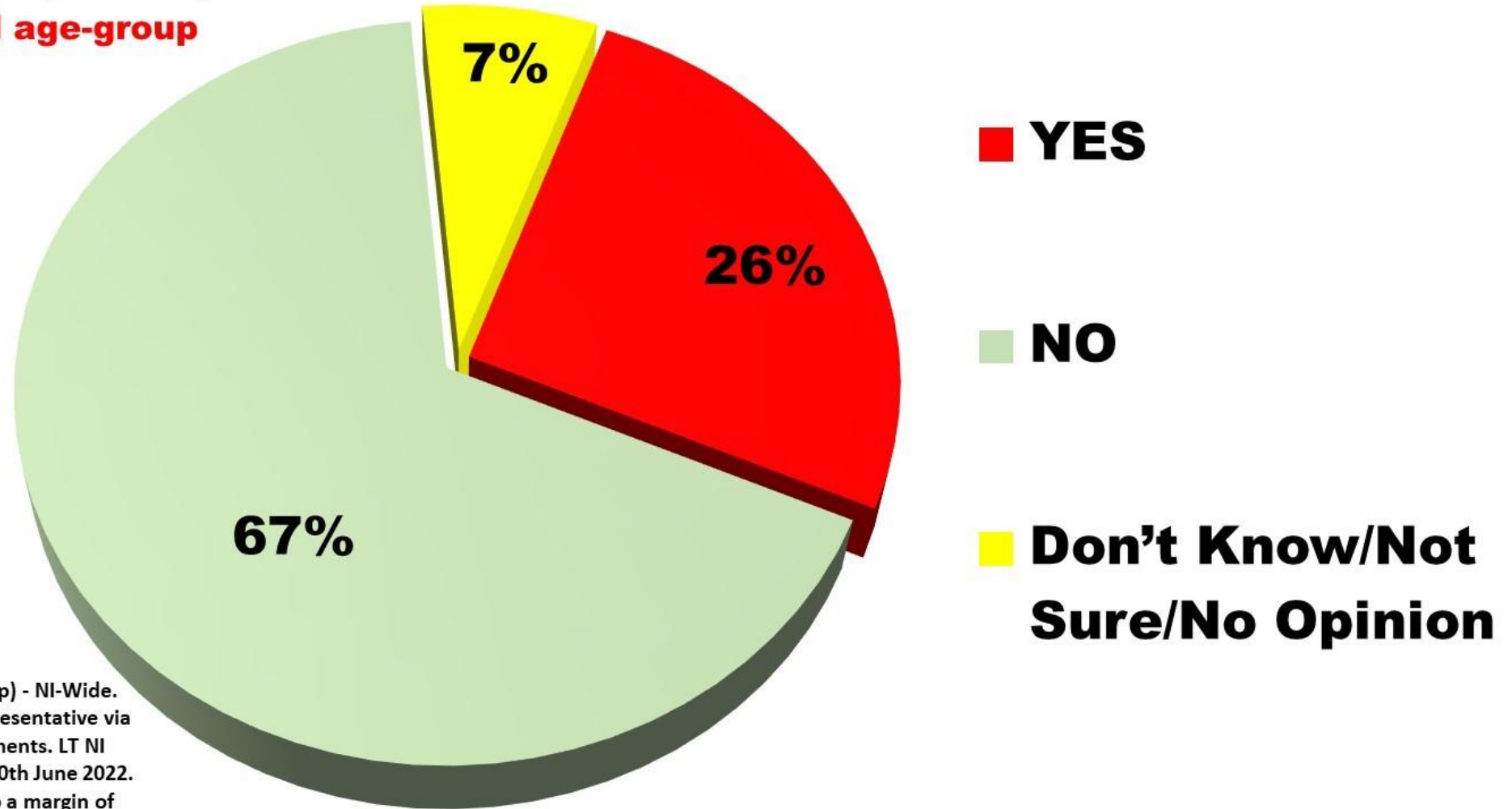


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POLL QUESTION 6: Has your quality of life, or another member of your household's quality of life, been impacted by the rising energy prices and the cost of living?



TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide)
- 65+ years old age-group



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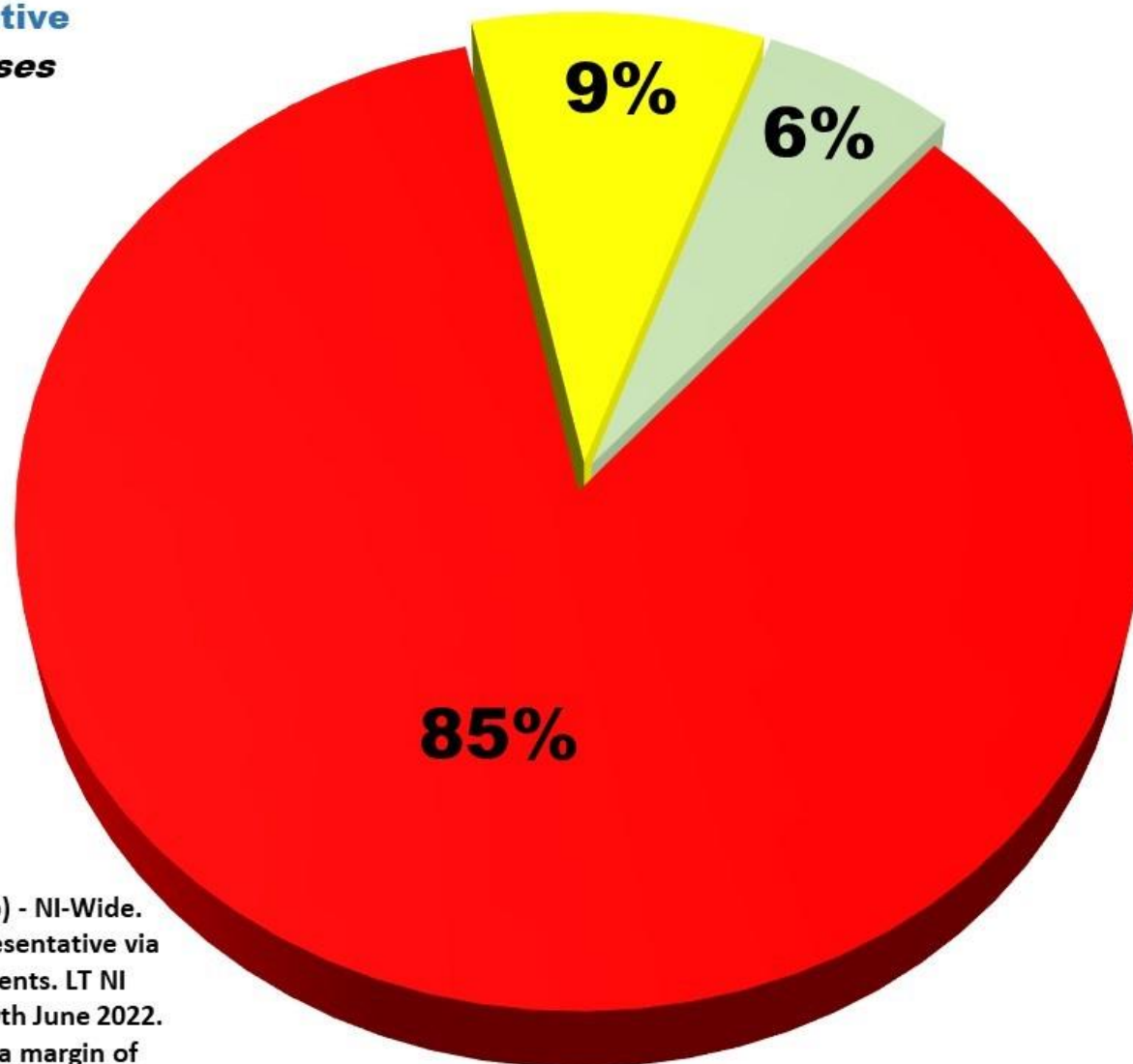


POLL QUESTION 7: Do you believe politicians in Northern Ireland are doing enough to address the cost-of-living crisis?

TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide)

- NI Representative

- 2,468 responses



■ YES

■ NO

■ Don't Know/Not
Sure/No Opinion

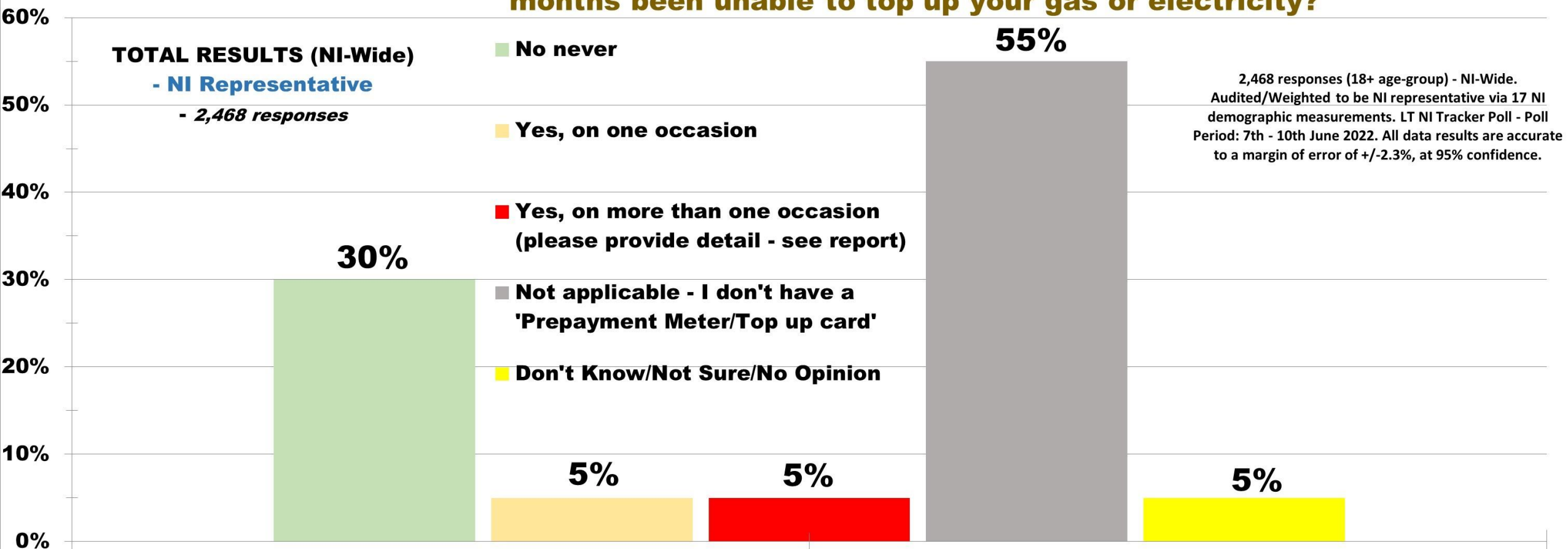
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POLL QUESTION 8: If you have a Prepayment Meter/Top up card, have you at any point in the last 18 months been unable to top up your gas or electricity?



TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide)

- NI Representative

- 2,468 responses

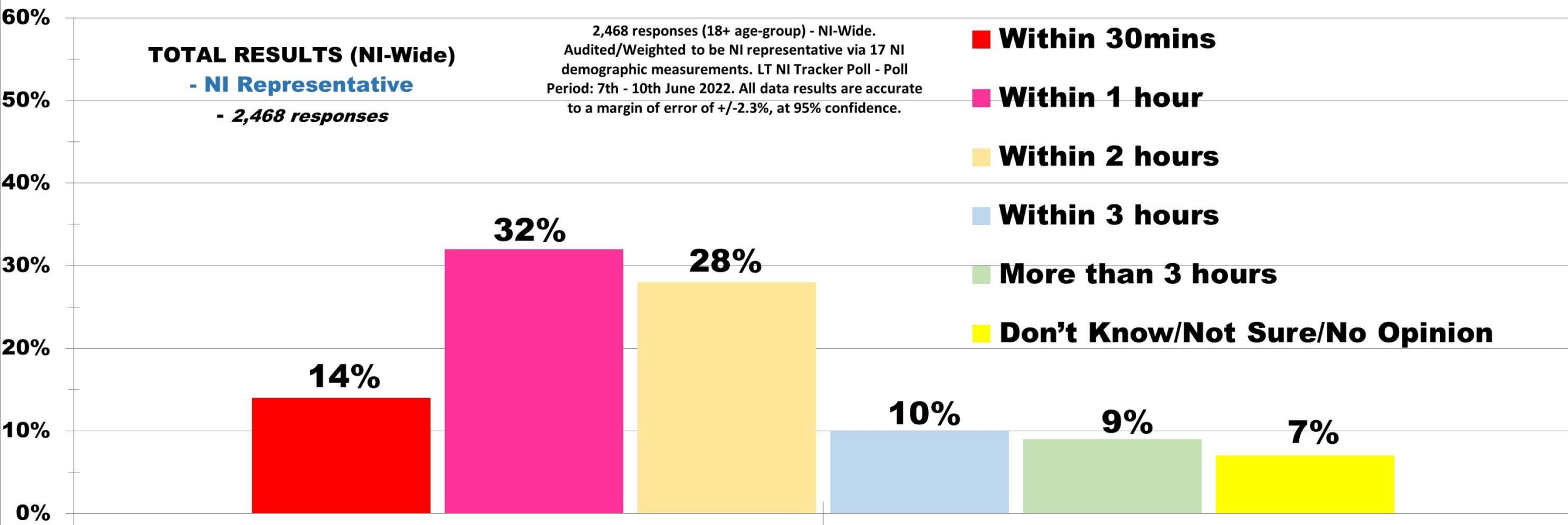
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POLL QUESTION 9: How quickly does your house cool down when the heating has been switched off?



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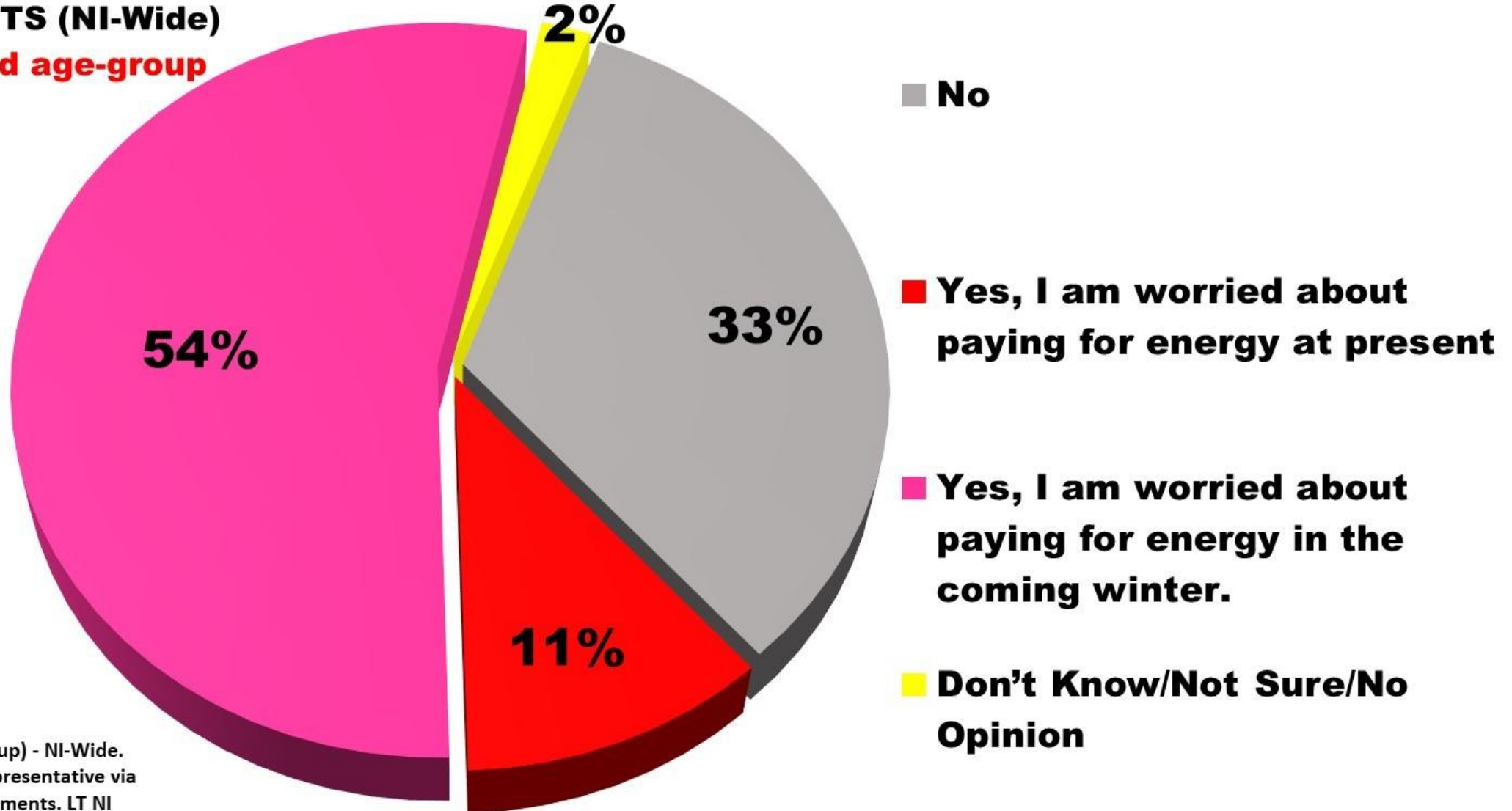


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POLL QUESTION 10: Are you worried about paying for your energy costs?



TOTAL RESULTS (NI-Wide) - 65+ years old age-group



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10

RECOMMENDATIONS TO TACKLE THE ENERGY CRISIS IN NORTHERN IRELAND



Action for Warm Homes

NEA's 10 Recommendations to Tackle the Energy Crisis

Before the assembly election NEA outlined our key asks which we believe will assist in easing the pressures on vulnerable households in Northern Ireland, both in the short and longer term.

Available online: <https://nea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NEA-A4-Leaflet.pdf>

A Manifesto for
Warmth



Fuel Poverty Coalition's Manifesto for Warmth

Outlines 7 key asks help eradicate Fuel Poverty in Northern Ireland.

Energy Efficiency is the number one priority to enable everyone to reduce their use of carbon fuels.

Available online: <https://fuelpovertyni.org/wp-content/uploads/FPC-Manifesto-for-Warmth-2021.pdf>

Northern Ireland

FUEL POVERTY ACTION GUIDE

A practical guide to help MPs, MLAs, local councillors, health professionals and advice workers answer queries on energy bills, heating, home insulation and energy efficiency.

3rd Edition, October 2021

Fuel Poverty Action Guide

- Our Fuel Poverty Action Guide is designed to be a practical and easy to use document that will help your team navigate pathways to support householders and members of your community who have concerns about paying bills and keeping their homes warm.
- This guide aims to bring that information and advice together for accessibility and convenience.
- It can be downloaded from:
<https://www.nea.org.uk/publications/fuel-poverty-action-guide-edition-3/>

Thank You





Action for Warm Homes
Northern Ireland

CONTACT NEA NI

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