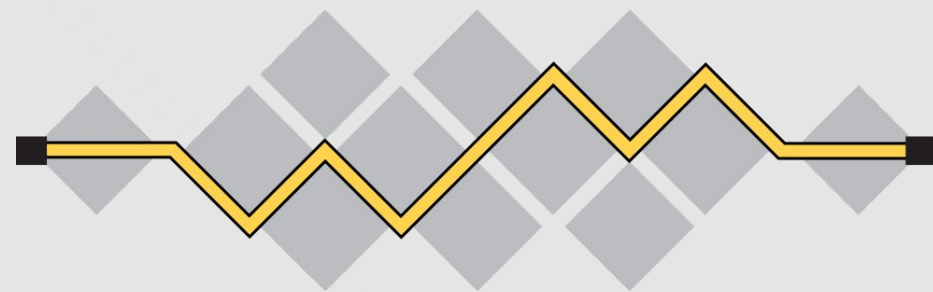




IETF Community Survey

Conducted May 2021



I E T F[®]

Making the Internet work better

Joint survey from the IESG and IETF LLC

Threefold purpose

1



Demographics

A current size and demographic breakdown of the IETF community.

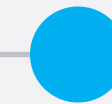
2



Planning data

Data on IETF community views that can be used by IETF leadership in planning how to address the major strategic challenges facing the IETF.

3



Change over time

The first step in a time series of data that can be used to assess the natural changes affecting the IETF and the effectiveness of major programs, organisational changes and leadership actions.

Aim of broad, representative response

Key design principles

01 Wide distribution
Sent to every subscriber to an IETF list, even if idle for years - 56,000 addresses in total.

02 Simple to respond
Careful language, “No opinion” options and only one mandatory question.

03 Actionable and direct
Questions focused on specific issues, No free text answers, no questions about perceptions of change.

04 Repeatable and relevant
Don’t ask questions that could be better answered otherwise and prioritise questions that can be repeated each year.

Conducted over May 2021
Responses

2032 valid responses

from 56,000 addresses

giving a margin of error of +/- 2.13%

WARNING! *The respondents to this survey were self-selected not randomly chosen and the details of the population are not well enough known to determine if this sample is truly representative.*

Key findings

Organisation

The IETF mostly delivers its mission and principles

Quality and relevance of RFCs good, focus of work is acceptable, consensus strong, ability to share views is acceptable

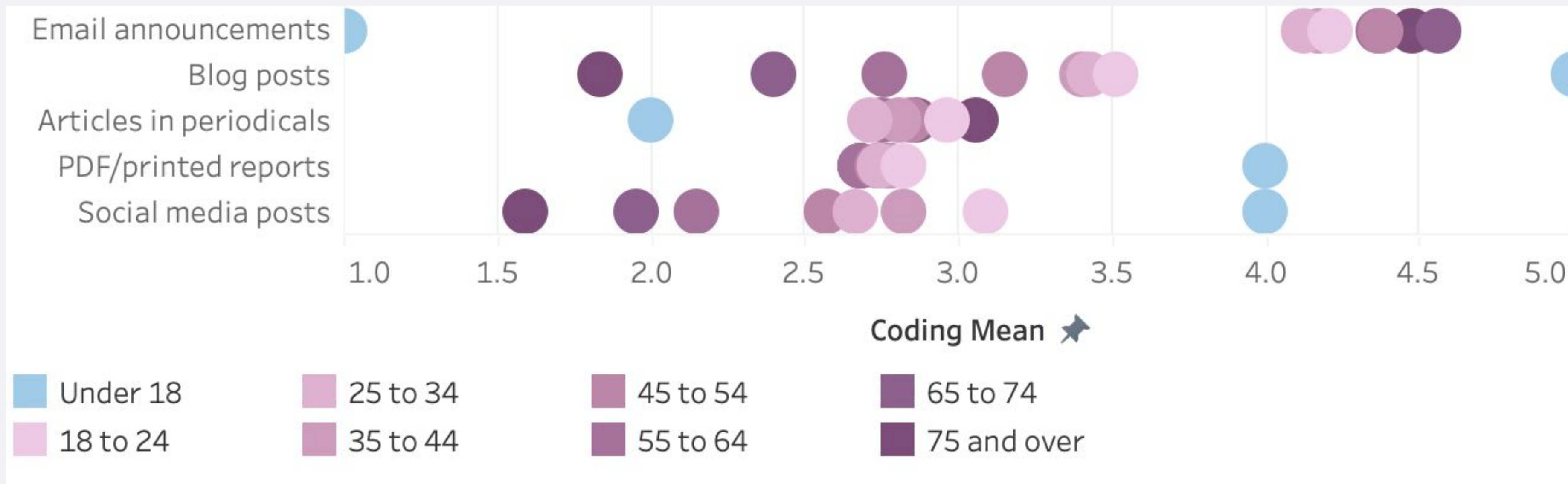
IETF processes are mostly acceptable

Processes are acceptable effective, as are ease of finding information, understanding it and its quality. The standout exception is the slowness of the entire IETF process

The IETF has an issue with mass communication

Bootstrapping problem - not enough know about ietf-announce and the content puts others off. Preferences around communication vary strongly with age.

Q22. How do you prefer to be informed of IETF activities? Coding mean (higher is more), cross tabulated with age



Coding mean calculated using Strongly preferred = 5 ... Strongly not preferred = 1.

Key findings

People

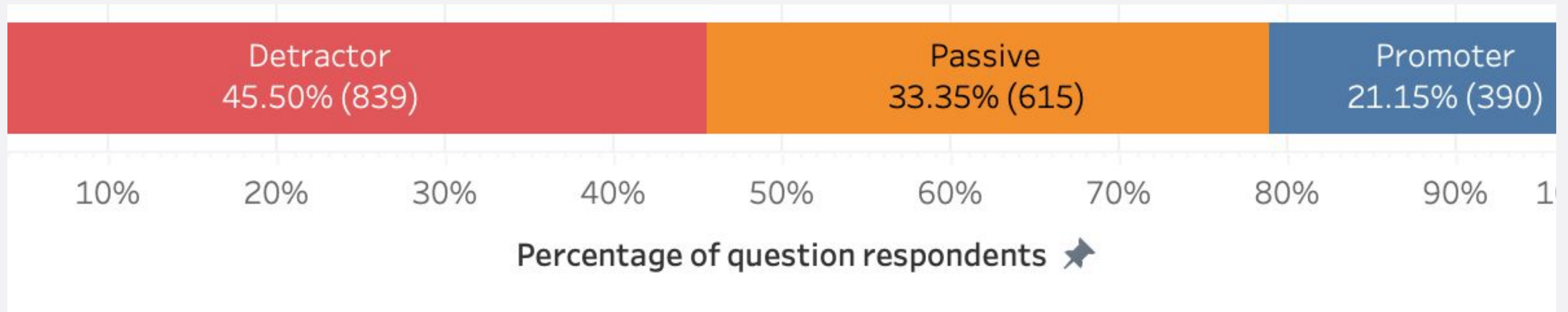
The IETF has a sense of community, but only just and not one that people can recommend

An acceptable number feel part of the community, feel treated the same as the rest of the community, feel that the IETF communicates with them well, and that community behaviour is acceptable, contributions are valued and that WGs are a good use of time. However, the NPS score is very low.

The IETF has a big problem with gender, a smaller problem with regionality but no problem with age

Females make up ~10.7% of the IETF community, are disproportionately deterred by the culture of the IETF, less likely to feel treated the same as the rest of the community as males, less likely to feel their contributions are valued and that the behaviour of other participants is acceptable.

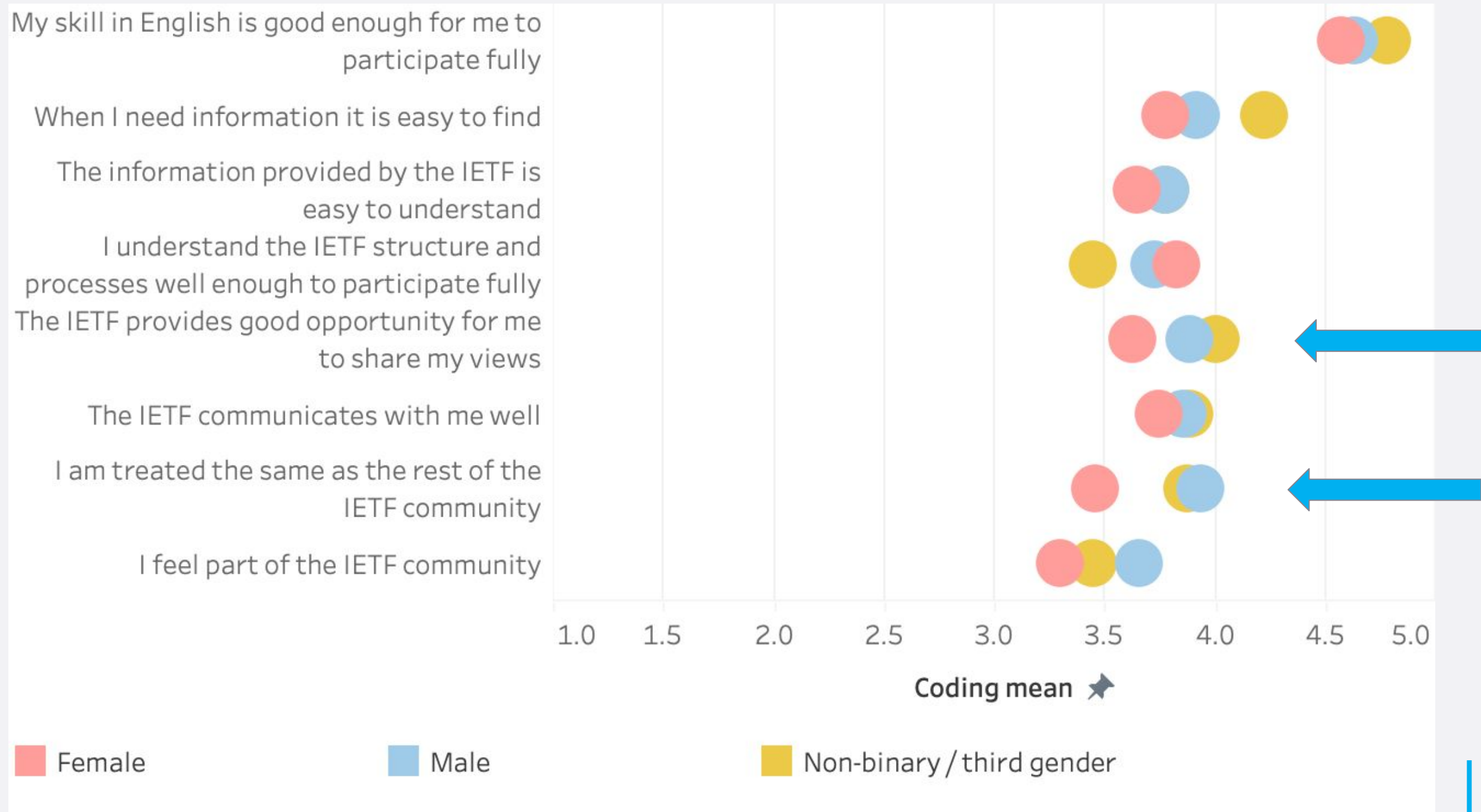
Q26. How likely are you to recommend IETF participation to a friend or colleague?



Uses standard NPS (Net Promoter Score) scoring - the question is asked on a scale of 0-10 and the result calculated as 0-6 for detractor, 7-8 for passive and 9-10 for promoter

Q26. How true are the following statements ...?

Coding mean (higher is more), cross tabulated with gender

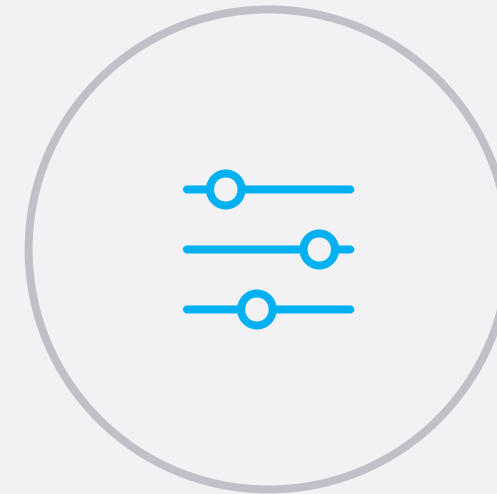


Key findings

Participation



The principle of people participating for the benefit of the Internet is true but not the strongest factor



The foundations of people participating as individuals is very complex and only partly supported

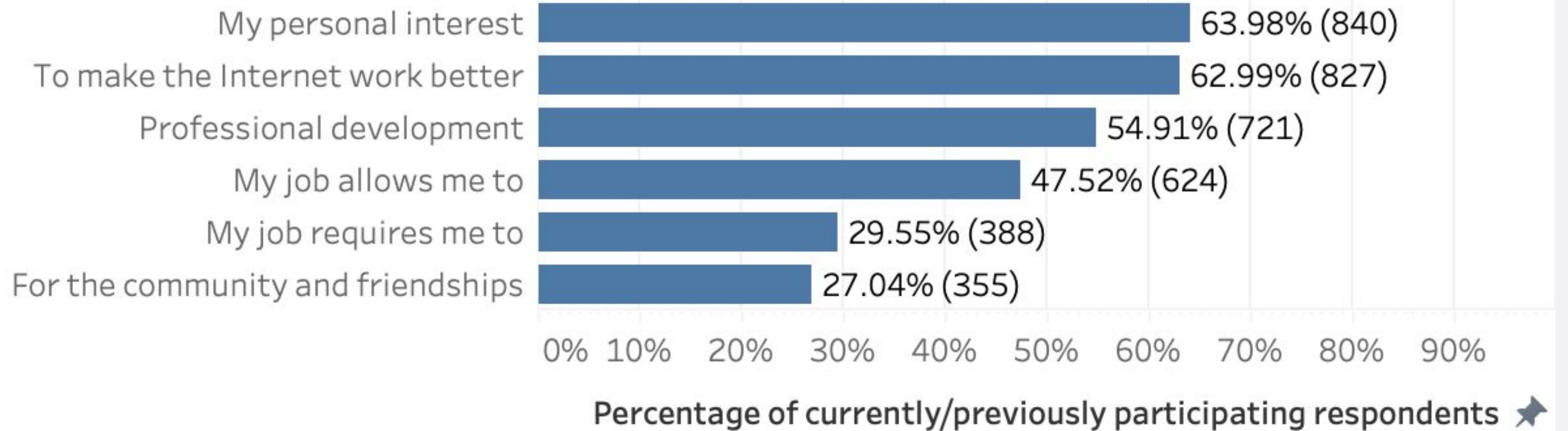


Support for new modes of participation is limited and age dependent



The two pillars of email and English have very strong support

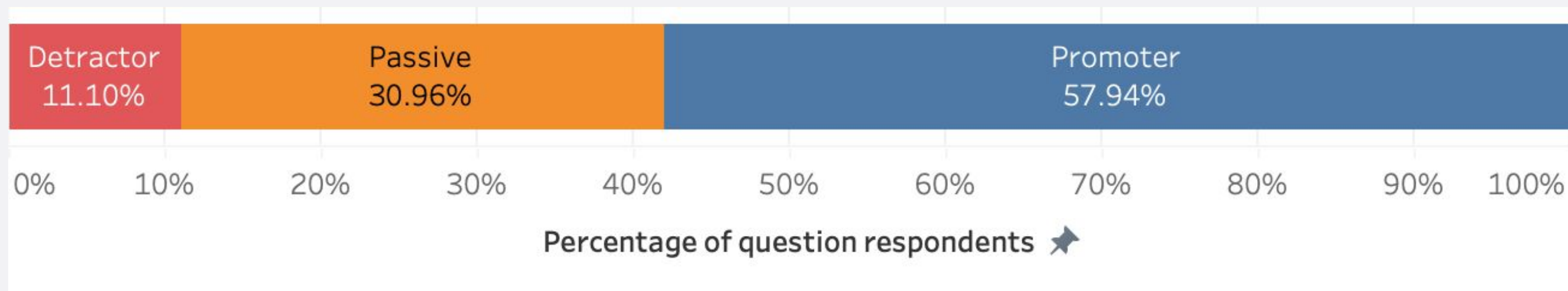
Q12. Why [do/did] you participate in the IETF? (check all that apply)



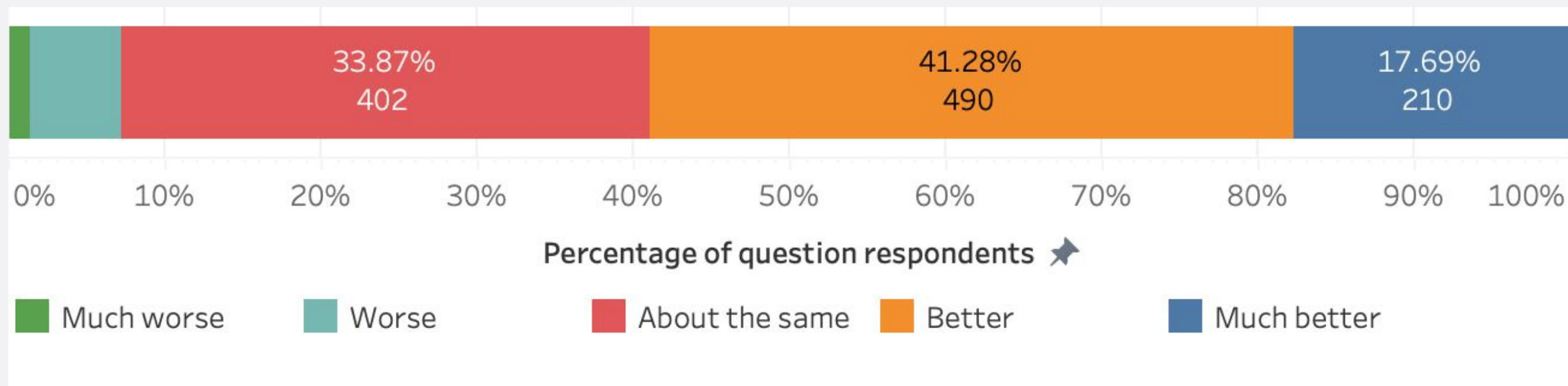
Key findings - Wider environment

IETF is a very important part of a well connected ecosystem

Q28. How important is the IETF for the development of the Internet?



Q30. How well do you think the IETF compares to other standards settings organisations?



44% of respondents participate in one or more other standards setting organisations

Next steps

- The results of this survey will be used by the IESG and IETF LLC over the next year as they plan and carry out their work. In particular, the survey will be regularly referenced in decision making to ensure a data-driven approach is taken that emphasises addressing areas that the evidence shows are high priority concerns reducing time spent on those the evidence shows are not actually concerns.
- One action that has already been taken is to add a sign-up link to ietf-announce to the mailing list welcome email.
- This survey will be repeated annually, with some adjustments, in order to build up a time series of data and to see whether the high priority concerns are being addressed. It is likely that some cleaning up of mailing lists will be undertaken before then, leading to a small total population and more accurate results.



**Thank you to all those who
took part in this survey.**

**Please raise any questions
or feedback on the
admin-discuss@ietf.org
mailing list.**

