

# Increase to hybrid hours will make interpreter shortage worse, not better

Final report of a survey of all accredited Official Languages freelance interpreters

April 25, 2023



aiic

Canada

# Methodology

- All accredited Official Languages freelance interpreters in Canada were invited to participate in this online survey.
- International Association of Conference Interpreters – Canada (AIIC-Canada) conducted the survey after the Translation Bureau announced that freelancers would be required to work 50% more hours in the booth, thereby increasing exposure to sound from remote participants which has been injuring interpreters since the start the pandemic and hybrid Parliament
- 82% responded to the survey, of which almost half (49%) have worked on the Hill during the pandemic
- Vast majority (95%) of freelancers who work in Parliament are represented
- Online survey in the field April 14 - 21

# Background

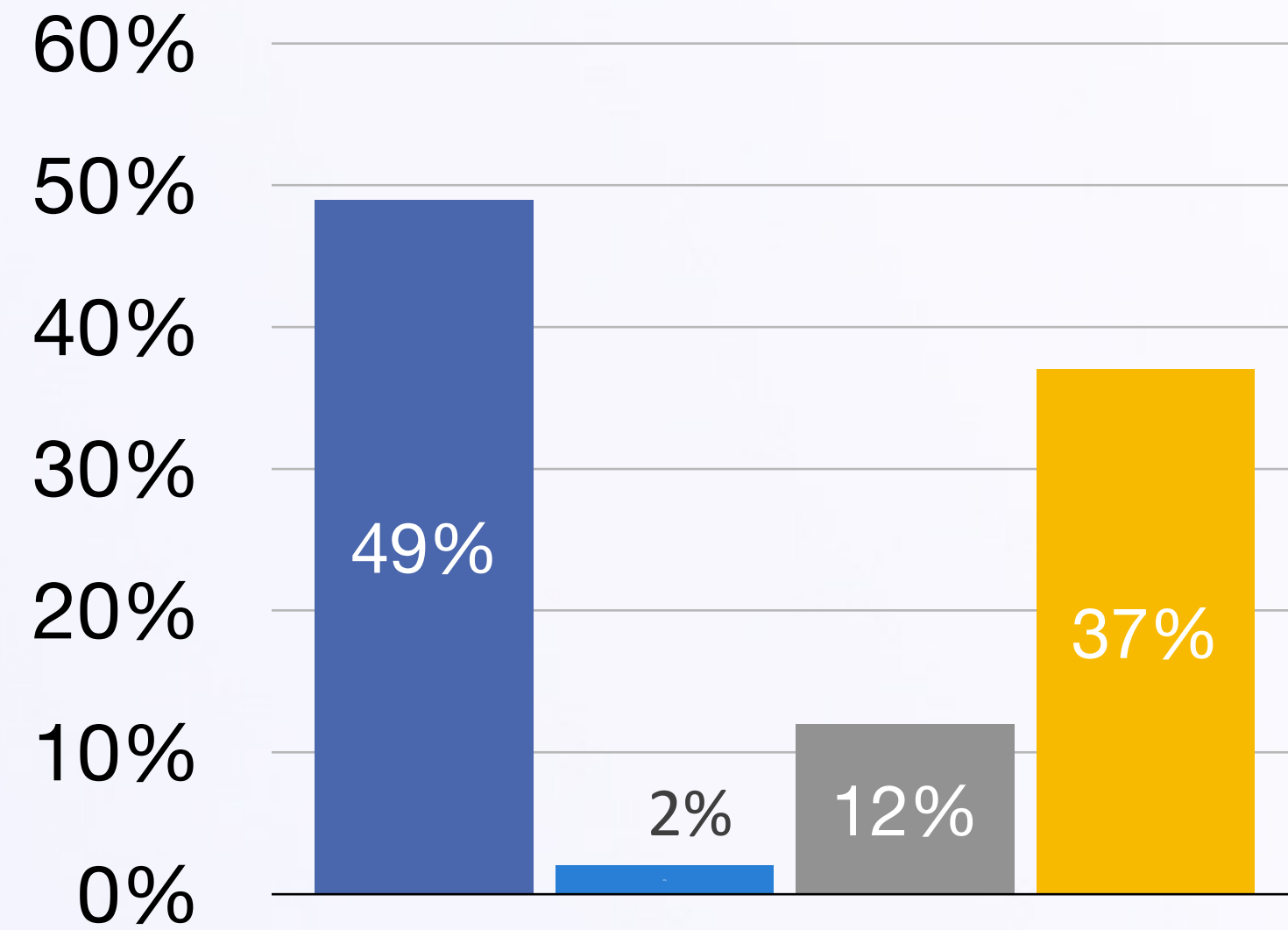
- Sound from remote participants is suspected to be the cause of the debilitating auditory injuries interpreters have suffered since the beginning of the pandemic
- Injuries and an unwillingness to work in potentially dangerous conditions have worsened the already acute shortage of qualified freelancers available to work on the Hill
- To address the shortage the Translation Bureau wants to increase exposure by 50% to the digitally compressed sound of remote speakers that has caused so many injuries
- The survey reveals that the vast majority of freelance interpreters who have worked in hybrid Parliament during the pandemic are unlikely to make themselves available to work on the Hill if these new procurement rules are imposed on them

# New procurement rules will make the interpreter shortage worse

If a 50% increase in exposure to sound from remote participants is required of freelancers starting in September:

- Eight-in-ten (81%) are unlikely to increase their availability to work in Parliament
- Two thirds(65%) are likely to decrease their availability to work in Parliament
- Seven-in-ten (69%) are unlikely to maintain their current availability to work in Parliament
- Almost nine-in-ten (87%) freelancers who have never worked on the Hill but planned to do so will change their minds

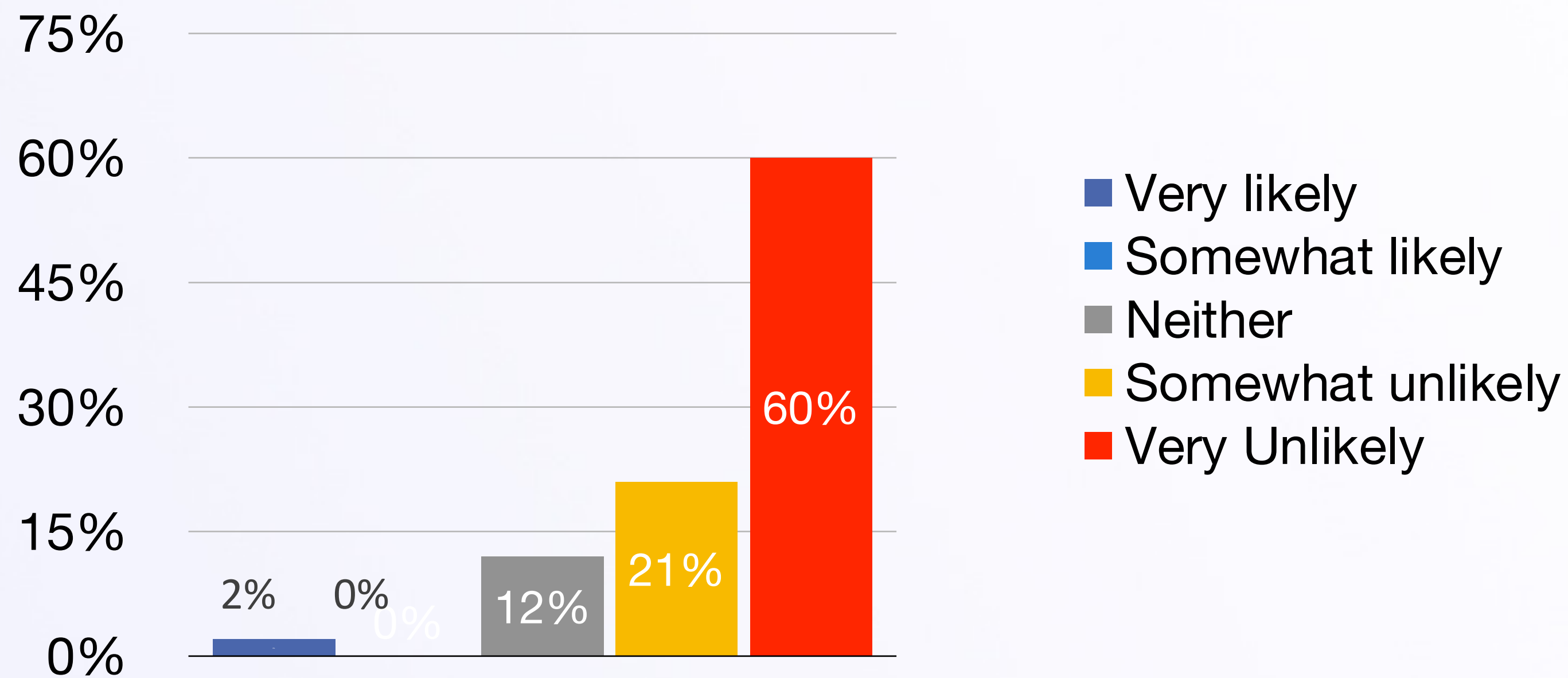
## Which statement best describes your work situation?



<b>Respondents</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Worked in hybrid Parliament</b>	52
<b>Never worked in Parliament but look forward to</b>	2
<b>Never worked in Parliament and will not under extended hours</b>	13
<b>Government conferences only</b>	40

- I have worked in virtual/ hybrid parliament when assignment hours were reduced hours to protect interpreters.
- I have never yet worked in parliament, but I look forward to doing so this fall.
- I looked forward to working in Parliament for the first time until I learned that reduced hours to protect interpreters' auditory health will be abandoned.
- I work only in Conferences.

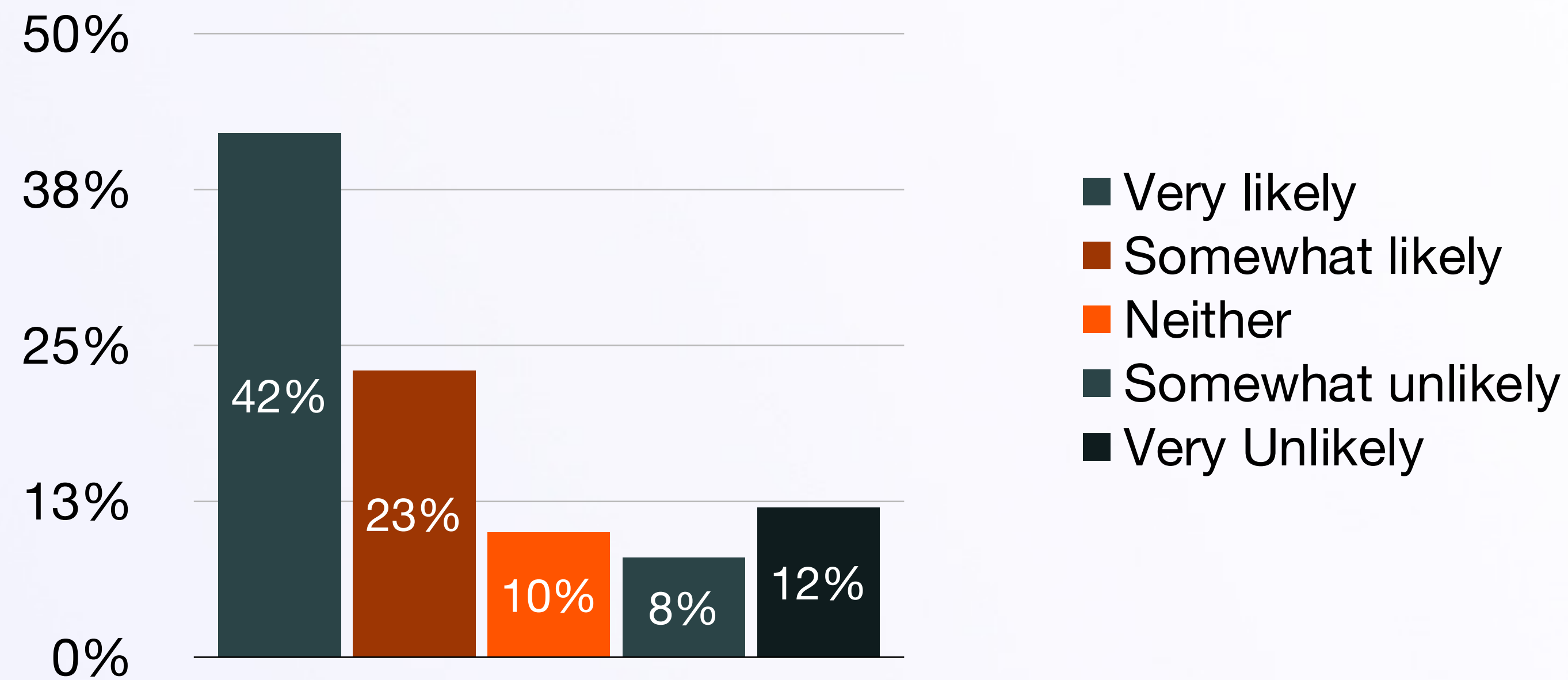
If the TB proceeds to increase hybrid parliament assignment hours by 50% with no real limits to exposure to compressed/digitally manipulated sound from remote participants **how likely are you to increase your availability to work in Parliament?**



Respondents*	52
Very likely	1
Somewhat likely	0
Neither	6
Somewhat unlikely	11
Very unlikely	31
Skipped Q	3

\*only those who have worked in hybrid Parliament during the pandemic.

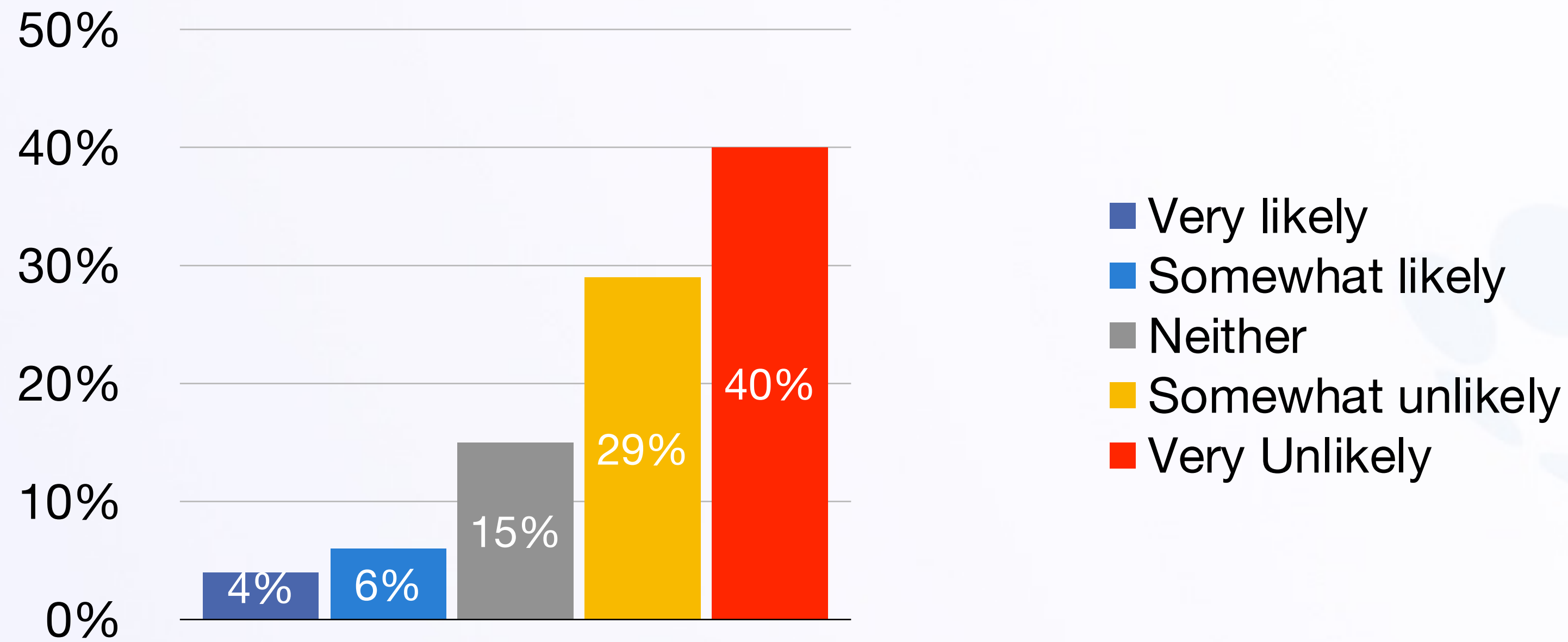
If the TB proceeds to increase hybrid parliament assignment hours by 50% with no real limits to exposure to compressed/digitally manipulated sound from remote participants **how likely are you to decrease your availability to work in Parliament?**



Respondents*	52
Very likely	22
Somewhat likely	12
Neither	5
Somewhat unlikely	4
Very unlikely	6
Skipped Q	3

\*only those who have worked in hybrid Parliament during the pandemic.

If the TB proceeds to increase hybrid parliament assignment hours by 50% with no real limits to exposure to compressed/digitally manipulated sound from remote participants **how likely are you to maintain your current availability to work in Parliament?**



<b>Respondents*</b>	<b>52</b>
Very likely	2
Somewhat likely	3
Neither	8
Somewhat unlikely	15
Very unlikely	21
Skipped Q	3

\*only those who have worked in hybrid Parliament during the pandemic.