

Exploring the R3 Needs and Opportunities of Female Hunters, Sport Shooters, and Archers



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EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

This research explored female participation in hunting, sport shooting, and archery: their needs, interests, preferences, and constraints. Building on the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model as it relates to women, the project will help determine how to retain female participants by providing the preferred next steps depending on where they are in the Model. In this way, the results can be used to help recruit more female hunters, sport shooters, and archers, as well as to reduce churn.

This study was conducted under a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by Responsive Management in partnership with the California Waterfowl Association (CWA), Christine Thomas, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department. As part of the project, partnerships were arranged with multiple other state fish and wildlife agencies across the nation for the study.

The overall project entailed surveys and focus groups. The survey portion of the study was directed at four groups:

1. Women hunters.
2. Women sport shooters.
3. Women archery participants (only including non-hunting archers).
4. Women participants in recruitment, retention, and reactivation programs, collectively referred to as R3 programs.

The post-survey focus groups were conducted virtually with sportswomen. All of the methods are fully detailed in the body of the report. A brief summary of the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model and the highlights of the research follow.

OUTDOOR RECREATION ADOPTION MODEL (ORAM)

As mentioned above, this study builds on the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model (hereinafter ORAM or the Model) specifically as it relates to women (the Model is further explained and visually depicted in Appendix A). The project will help determine how to retain female participants by providing the preferred next steps depending on where they are in the Model.

People go through stages when they become recreation participants. The first three stages of the ORAM (awareness, interest, and trial activity) are addressed by recruitment efforts. These initial stages lead to the next stages: the decision to continue, continuing participation with social support, and then continuing participation without social support. These continuation stages are addressed by retention efforts. Individuals who do not continue to participate are referred to as lapsed participants—the final stages of the ORAM. These lapsed stages are addressed by reactivation efforts.

Identifying the motivations, experiences, constraints, and characteristics of other important R3 components among women specifically, rather than among participants in general who are

traditionally a predominantly male population, is vital to making R3 efforts targeting women more successful.

REASONS FOR HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING

As indicated in the ORAM, recruitment efforts address awareness, interest, and trial in outdoor recreation activities. A primary component of potential participants' interest in and trial of an activity is motivation—reasons why they would be prompted to try an activity. Recruitment (as well as retention and reactivation) efforts benefit from an understanding of the most important reasons women hunters, sport shooters, and non-hunting archers (hereinafter archers) participate.

In the surveys for this study, women hunters, sport shooters, and archers were all presented with a series of potential reasons for participating in their respective activities and were asked to rate the importance of each on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important, as a reason they participate.

Each activity had one or two reasons that clearly stand out above the rest with higher mean (average) ratings among survey respondents (shown in the following table). These top ranked reasons differed across the activities, with more personal or basic needs for hunting, a purely practical need for sport shooting, and more recreational reasons for archery.

Most Important Reasons for Participation Among Women Hunters, Sport Shooters, and Archers

Activity	Reason	Mean Importance Rating (0 to 10 scale)
Hunting	To be in nature	8.6
	For food	8.2
Sport Shooting	To become more comfortable with firearms	8.2
Archery	For the challenge	7.9
	For the sport or recreation	7.7

Each activity resulted in several additional reasons with a mean rating of 7.0 or higher, and there are some similarities in reasons across the activities even if the exact ranking order and overall mean ratings differ. These additional reasons include (but are not limited to) to be with family, to be in nature, for the challenge, and for the sport or recreation, as well as practical reasons, such as obtaining food, becoming more comfortable with the equipment, and training for self-defense. There are notably more reasons, as well as more variation in reasons, with a rating of 7.0 or higher among women sport shooters and archers in contrast to the women hunters. All reasons to participate with a mean importance rating of 7.0 or higher for each sport are shown in the following table.

Reasons for Participation With a Mean Importance Rating of 7.0 or Higher Among Women Hunters, Sport Shooters, and Archers

Hunting	Sport Shooting	Archery
To be in nature	To become more comfortable with firearms	For the challenge
For food	For the sport or recreation	For the sport recreation
To be with family	To be with family	To be in nature
For solitude or relaxation	To be in nature	To improve focus or concentration
	To train for self-defense	To become more comfortable with a bow and arrow
	For the challenge	To improve physical coordination
		For solitude or relaxation

The full analysis in the body of this report also examines the differences in reasons for hunting/sport shooting between new hunters/shooters and established hunters/shooters.

FEELINGS ASSOCIATED WITH HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING AND THEIR EFFECTS ON PARTICIPATION

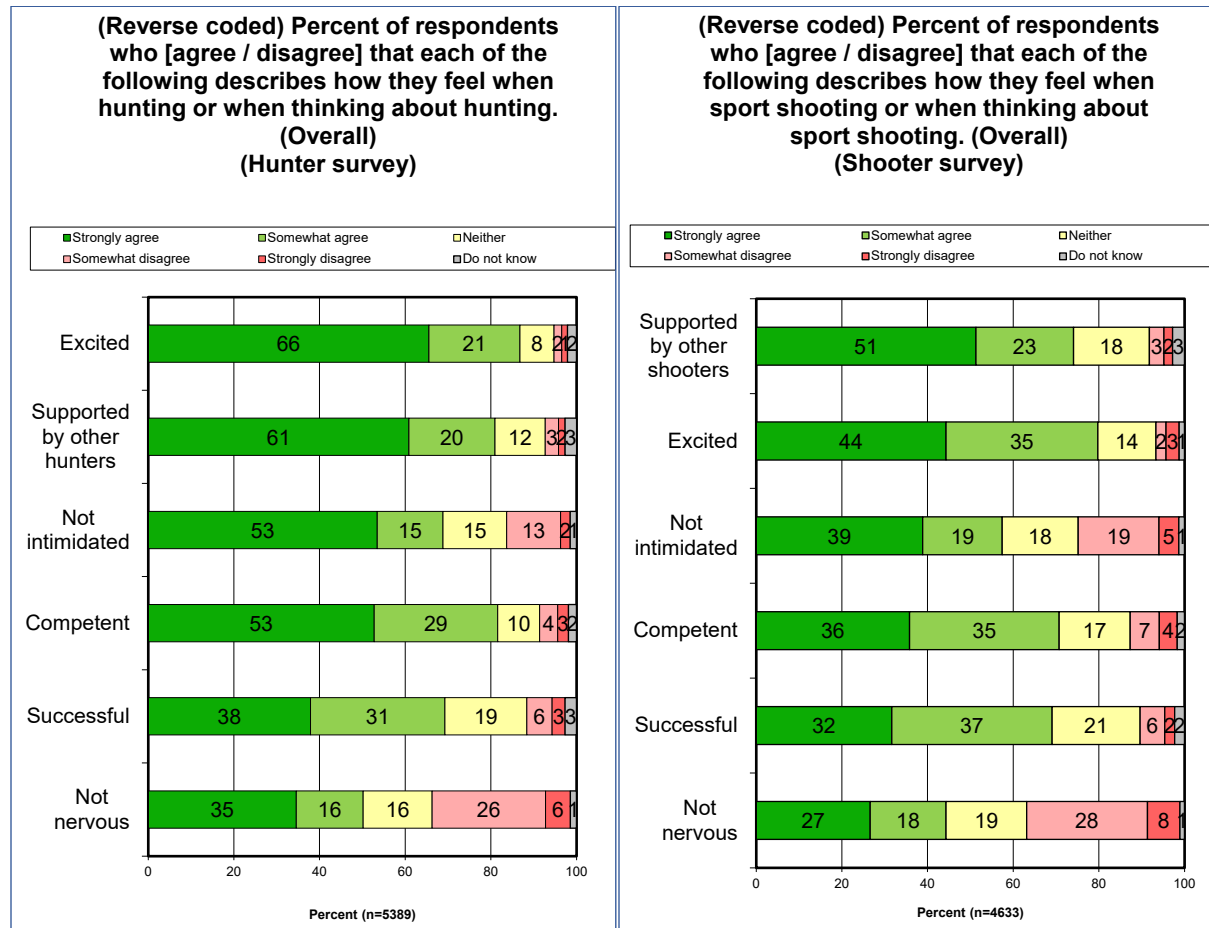
In the ORAM, recruitment efforts are followed by participants’ decision to continue (or not), which directly impacts retention. A potentially important component of deciding to continue may be a participant’s mental outlook or thoughts and feelings related to the activity. The way an activity makes a participant feel will undoubtedly influence whether or not the participant decides to continue the activity.

Feelings that may influence the decision to continue to participate were explored in the surveys through questions about specific feelings, four of which are positive (i.e., excited, supported, competent, and successful) and two of which are negative (i.e., nervous and intimidated). Hunters and sport shooters were asked if they agreed or disagreed that each word described how they feel when hunting/shooting or when thinking about going hunting/shooting. The negative feelings were then reverse coded for direct agreement level comparisons.

Overall, feelings of excitement about hunting and sport shooting are higher than feelings of competence, success, not being nervous, and not being intimidated.

In general, there is no problem generating feelings of excitement and feelings of being supported by other hunters/shooters. Excitement and being supported by others are the top two feelings among both women hunters and women sport shooters (see the following two

graphs showing the levels of agreement with experiencing specific feelings in relation to their participation).



In a middle tier are feelings of not being intimidated, of competency, and of success. At the very bottom of the ranking is a feeling of nervousness—approximately a third of women hunters and of sport shooters give a response indicating that they feel nervous. In particular, feelings of intimidation and nervousness need to be addressed while competence and feelings of success could be further bolstered.

In another survey question, women hunters and sport shooters were asked how comfortable they were with hunting/shooting alone or without an experienced hunter/shooter. A slight majority (52%) of women hunters are comfortable with doing so, which means almost half are not. Likewise, 43% of women sport shooters are not comfortable participating alone. Comparing currently active hunters to those who are not currently active indicates that those who are not currently active are more likely to feel uncomfortable participating alone. The same is true for those who are new to the activity; they are more likely to feel uncomfortable participating alone.

Focus group results also indicate that women hunters and sport shooters are very excited about their activities and participation but that feelings of success, as well as feelings of comfort and confidence in the field tend to be lower. The focus group exploration indicates that women hunters/shooters believe their confidence in their sport is related to multiple factors, including the following:

- Self-motivation or personality (e.g., perseverance).
- Practice and experience.
- A mentor and/or network for guidance and support (but balanced with autonomy).
- Physical access to land or places to hunt being available only through a male hunting partner or mentor.
- The ability to hunt independently balanced with the need for physical assistance in moving harvested game.
- Awareness of and access to weapons of appropriate weight and size for women.

In summary, R3 efforts should focus on building feelings of competency, confidence, success, and autonomy to encourage the decision to continue to hunt/shoot. Efforts should also seek to reduce any feelings of intimidation and nervousness.

MENTORING AND SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING

In the ORAM, retention efforts are examined through the consideration of continued participation with support and continued participation without support. Many hunting participation studies have shown that mentorship and support is important to continued participation and success in the activity. Several related key factors emerged in the results of this study on women's participation in hunting and sport shooting:

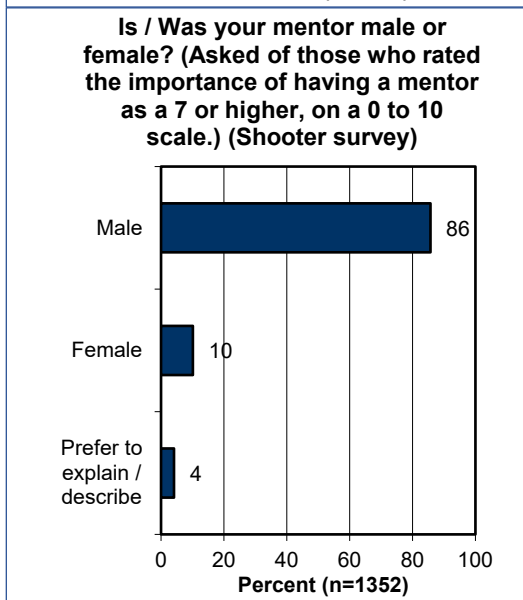
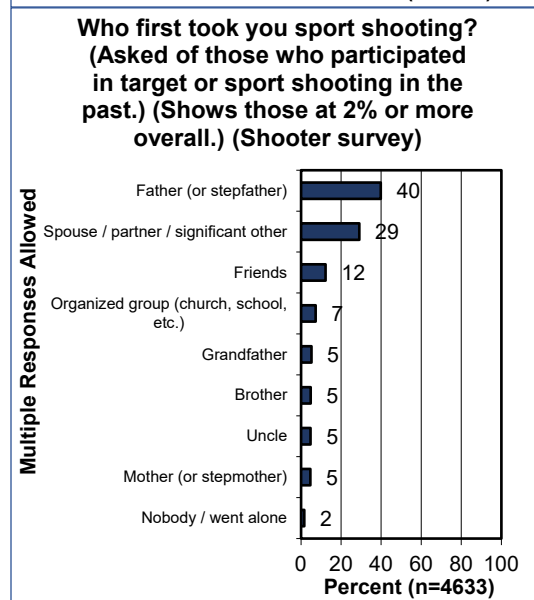
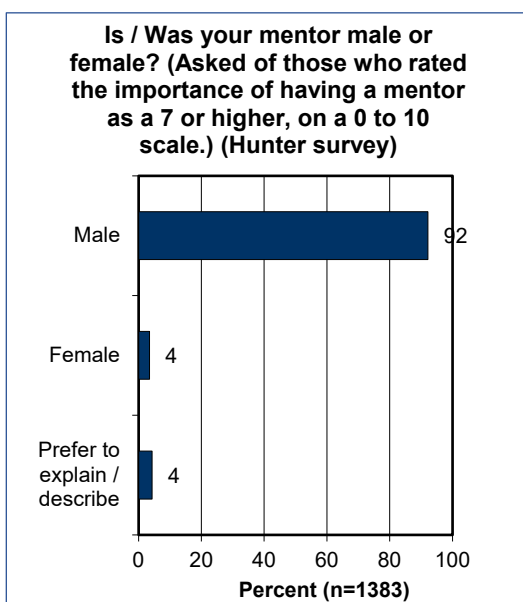
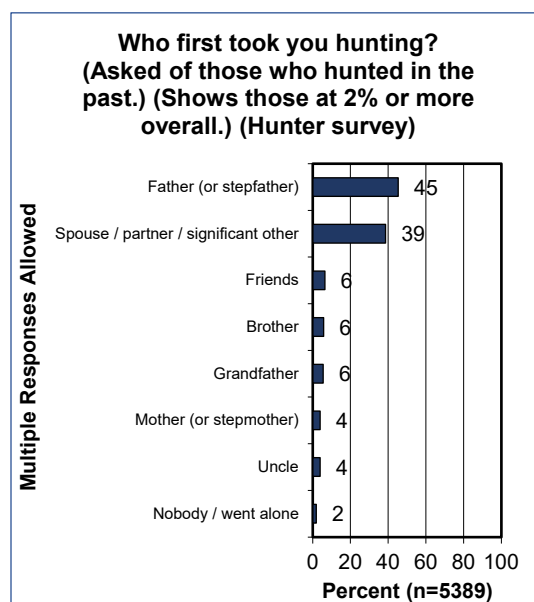
- A mentor or support from other experienced hunters/shooters is very important to maintaining or increasing participation (retention efforts).
- Most women's mentors are important male figures in their lives.
- Introduction to hunting or sport shooting at a younger age is important to retention efforts.
- Recruitment efforts should more often start with hunting (rather than sport shooting).

Having a mentor or some type of support from other experienced participants is very important to continued participation. In the surveys, women hunters, sport shooters, and archers were presented with a series of items and were asked to rate how important each has been in helping them maintain or increase their hunting/shooting/archery participation, on a scale of 0 to 10. Most of the top-rated items for each group are related to having a mentor or support from an experienced participant.

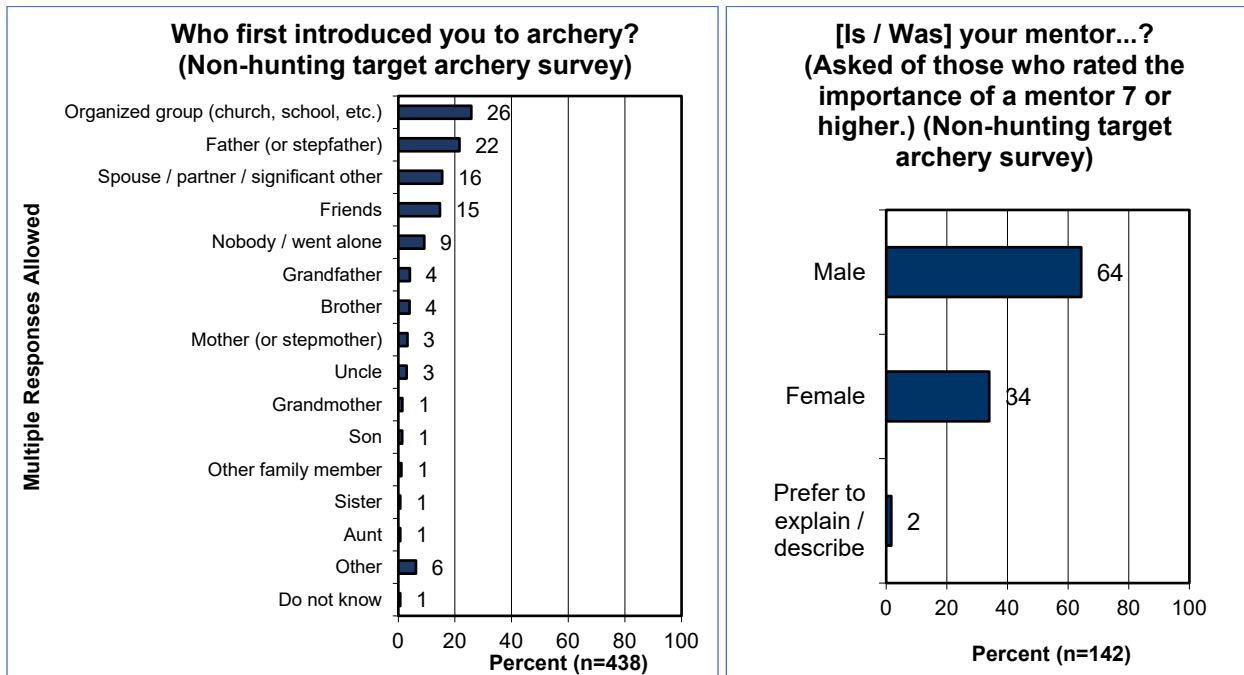
For hunters, two of the top three items relate to mentoring (having experienced hunters to hunt with and having a hunting mentor to answer questions and give advice), and seven of the top eight relate to mentoring and having help or guidance. Results among women sport

shooters and archers are similar. Although the top item among sport shooters is being able to defend oneself if necessary, the next top four items relate to having help and guidance and other experienced shooters to shoot with. The top four items for archery among women archers are all related to having help, guidance, or a mentor.

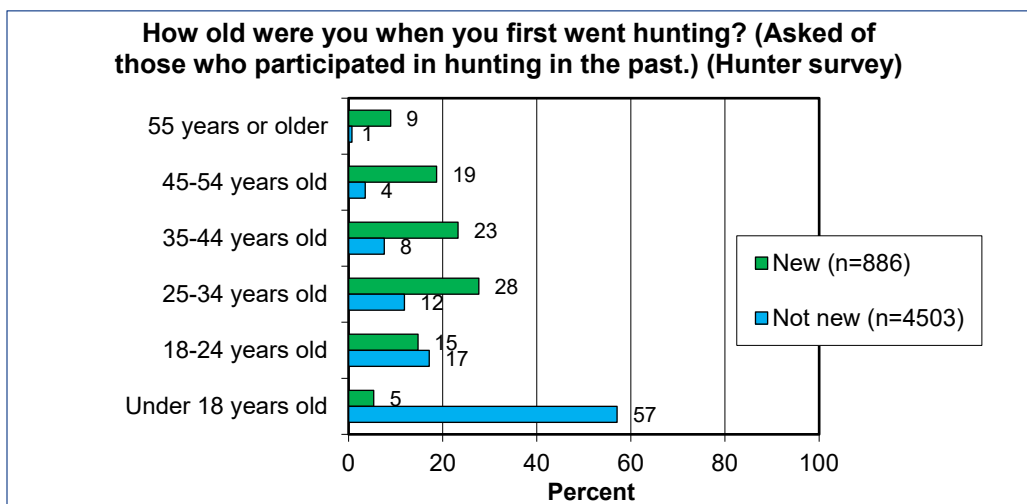
Clearly, having a mentor or an experienced participant for support is crucial to continued participation. The survey explored who those mentors are for our women participants and found that mentors are typically male, with fathers and spouses being the top-named mentors by far. Although this makes intuitive sense given that the majority of the hunting population is male, it is still a valid finding for understanding how women are recruited and retained in the ORAM. The survey results regarding mentors are shown in the graphs that follow, demonstrating that mentors are predominantly male and usually a father or spouse.



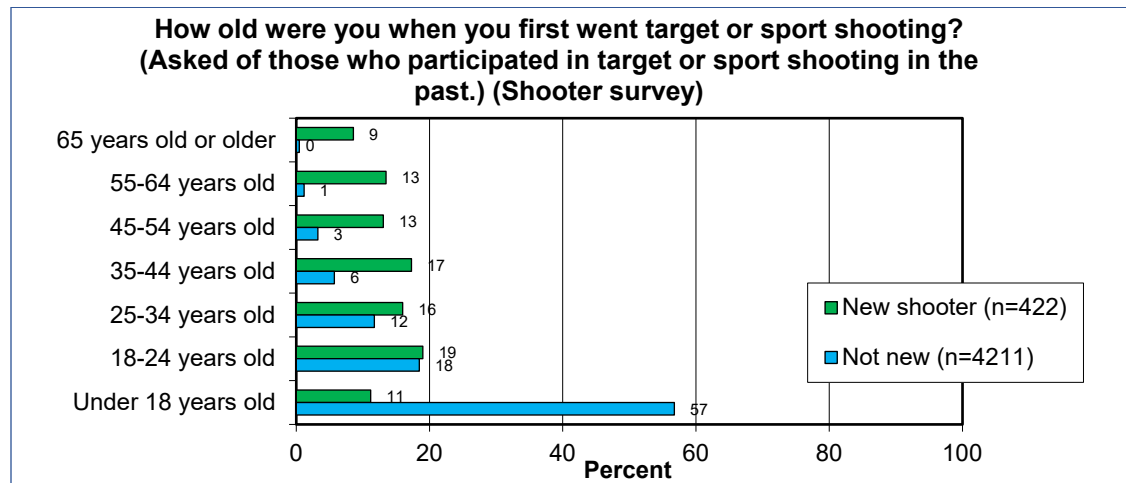
Women archers, however, differ slightly. While the majority of those who had a mentor for their archery still had a male mentor, they are more likely than are women hunters and women sport shooters to have had a female mentor, with about a third (34%) having had a female mentor. Moreover, archers were the only group for which a father or spouse is not the top response for who introduced them to the activity. For women archers, an organized group, such as a church or school group, is the most common source of introduction to archery.



Starting at a younger age is important to retention efforts. Many new women hunters started hunting later in their lives, compared to established hunters. Among new hunters, half of them (51%) started at the age of 35 or later, and an overwhelming majority (79%) started at 25 or later. For established hunters, 57% started before the age of 18.



The same is true of women sport shooters, with 52% of new shooters starting at the age of 35 or later, and 68% starting at 25 or later. For established shooters, 57% started before the age of 18.



Recruitment efforts should start with hunting. A large majority of those who participated in both hunting and shooting activities and who specifically participated in hunting first (84%) agree that it is an important reason they later participated in sport shooting and/or archery. While participation in sport shooting also seems to spur hunting and archery participation, it does not do so to the same degree that hunting works toward recruitment: 69% who participated in sport shooting first agree that sport shooting is an important reason they later participated in hunting and/or archery.

It is worth noting that the focus groups revealed an interesting relationship with mentorship for women. While it is clear through the survey results and the focus group discussions that many women had a mentor and that mentor was typically male, focus group discussion regarding whether the women themselves would be willing to mentor other hunters or shooters revealed hesitancy and disinterest in doing so. There are likely various reasons for this reluctance, such as a potential lack of confidence as well as the explicitly expressed concern that they would have to share their hunting land or area with someone else. This finding is an interesting juxtaposition that although women hunters and shooters clearly benefit from, value, and acknowledge their mentors, they themselves do not want to be mentors. R3 efforts will need to recognize this issue and determine an effective way to address it in order to further advance recruitment of new female participants by, ideally, developing current female participants into willing and effective mentors.

CONSTRAINTS TO HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION

Understanding constraints to participation is critical to all steps in the ORAM, particularly to retention and reactivation. The surveys of women hunters, sport shooters, and archers all asked about constraints to participation in their respective activities, first in an open-ended manner in which the respondents could name anything that came to mind, followed by asking them to rate the importance of a series of specific potential constraints.

Survey results indicated that the top constraint to both hunting and shooting participation among women hunters and shooters is lack of time. Constraints related to time are consistently the most commonly cited or top-rated obstacles to participation, including lack of time in general, work obligations, and family obligations.

While time constraints are the top constraints in both the open-ended question (meaning they are top-of-mind when unprompted) and the rated series of specific potential constraints for women hunters and sport shooters, women archers differed in that time is not the top most common constraint—it is second to Covid specifically in the open-ended question and has a lower mean rating of importance than access issues, other interests, and costs among the items in the series of potential constraints.

Other top constraints to participation identified in the surveys among women hunters, sport shooters, and archers alike are access and health issues.

Most Important Constraints to Participation Among Women Hunters, Sport Shooters, and Archers

Activity	Top Constraints Named (Open-Ended Responses)	Top Constraints by Mean Importance Rating (Series of Potential Constraints)
Hunting	Lack of time Health issues Access Safety concerns / crowding / intimidation / harassment	Time: Too busy with work obligations (4.4) Too busy with family obligations (4.3) Not enough access or places to hunt (3.7) Have other interests that are more important (3.3)
Sport Shooting	Lack of time Ammo cost/availability Access Health Covid	Have other interests that are more important (4.3) Time: Too busy with family obligations (5.2) Too busy with work obligations (4.6) Costs associated with sport shooting (4.4) Not enough access or places to sport shoot (4.3) No one to go shooting with (4.0)

Activity	Top Constraints Named (Open-Ended Responses)	Top Constraints by Mean Importance Rating (Series of Potential Constraints)
Archery	Covid Lack of time	Not enough access or places for archery (6.7) Have other interests that are more important (5.9) Costs associated with sport shooting (5.9) Time: Too busy with work obligations (5.6) Too busy with family obligations (5.3) Do not own or have access to a bow (5.1) Not sure how to get back into archery (5.0)

In research on hunting and sport shooting participation, lack of access, like lack of time, is often found to be a common constraint to participation. In this study, access issues are consistently among the top constraints for women hunters and shooters. While the surveys for this project did not explore the access issues in-depth, the focus groups did examine access issues enough to learn that there are both physical and psychological aspects of access for women. In what may be a more unique nuance for women specifically, focus group participants explained how, for some of them, access—particularly hunting access—is tied to their male hunting partner or mentor through personal connections and/or agreements. In such cases, hunting independently is more difficult because they feel that they have lost their access without having their male partner or mentor present. While this is clearly a physical access issue, further discussion also revealed that being unable to access hunting land or areas without their male partners is also a psychological constraint, as it negatively impacts their confidence with regard to being able to hunt on their own. It is also worth noting that more or better access is also among the top-ranked incentives in the surveys for encouraging participation among women hunters and sport shooters.

Following time constraints and access issues, health and Covid specifically are somewhat common constraints to participation for women hunters and sport shooters. As noted in the preceding table, Covid is the most commonly named constraint to participation among women archers in the open-ended question.

Hunters in particular mentioned safety concerns when asked about constraints in an open-ended manner. Safety-related responses included general safety concerns and crowding but also issues of intimidation and harassment. Likewise, safety was also mentioned in the focus groups in terms of general safety around other hunters and shooters but also in terms of being a woman alone in the field, at risk of being bothered or harassed by unknown male hunters who have weapons. As one female hunter in the focus groups pointed out, if there are unethical hunters out there who will disregard hunting laws and regulations by poaching or

shooting from a vehicle, it seems logical that they are also likely to behave unethically toward a female hunting alone in the woods.

Finally, cost is more commonly identified as a constraint among women sport shooters and archers than among women hunters. Cost, as well as availability of ammunition, ranked particularly high as a constraint among sport shooters. Cost and availability of ammunition were also described as constraints during the focus groups with women hunters and shooters.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING

To explore retention and reactivation factors, survey respondents were asked about what would potentially encourage them to participate or to participate more in their respective activities. Top-ranked encouragements or incentives among women hunters and sport shooters include being asked by a child to go or being invited by a friend, more or better access, knowing they will feel comfortable or welcome while participating, and having a program they know is conducted safely and in a controlled manner.

Most Effective Encouragements to Increase Participation Among Women Hunters and Sport Shooters

Activity	Encouragement	Mean Effectiveness Rating (0 to 10 scale)
Hunting	Having a child you care about ask to go hunting	6.3
	Better access to hunting areas	6.2
	Hunting offered as part of vacation package	5.6
Sport Shooting	Being invited to go by a friend	6.9
	Having a program you know is conducted safely and in a controlled manner	6.8
	Better access to shooting areas or ranges	6.7
	Knowing you will feel comfortable or welcome while shooting	6.6
	A free shooting skills seminar	6.5

As mentioned previously, a survey of known R3 program participants (across multiple programs) was also conducted, and it, as well, asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of potential encouragements or incentives to participate or to participate more in their respective activities. R3 program participants have higher ratings of the perceived effectiveness of potential encouragements in general. The following table lists all encouragements with a mean rating of 8.0 or higher among the R3 program participants.

Most Effective Encouragements to Increase Participation Among Women R3 Program Participants

Activity	Encouragement	Mean Effectiveness Rating (0 to 10 scale)
Hunting	Knowing you will feel comfortable or welcome while hunting	8.7
	Having [program / event] that you know is conducted safely and in a controlled manner	8.6
	Being invited to go by a friend	8.4
	Having [program / event] that will allow or teach you to clean and prepare your harvest yourself	8.2
	A free hunting skills seminar	8.1
	Being able to take a hunting class nearby	8.1
	Better access to hunting areas	8.0
	Being able to take a hunting class for a reasonable cost	8.0
Sport Shooting	Having [program / event] that you know is conducted safely and in a controlled manner	9.2
	Knowing you will feel comfortable or welcome while shooting	9.1
	Being able to take a shooting class or lessons at a range nearby	8.8
	Being able to take a shooting class or lessons at a range for a reasonable cost	8.7
	Programs for certain groups so that you could shoot with your own peer group, such as a women-only program	8.6
	A free shooting skills seminar	8.6
	Being invited to go by a friend	8.5
	Programs that provide equipment that you may not personally own	8.5
	Better access to shooting areas or ranges	8.5
	Having [program / event] or service that will teach you the proper cleaning and assembling of your firearm and/or bow	8.5
	Having [program / event] or service that will help you assemble or breakdown your firearm and/or bow	8.3
	Knowing that you will not feel pressure to shoot with a firearm you are not comfortable with	8.3
	Knowing in advance what to expect at the shooting range or site	8.2
	Going shooting as part of a group, such as a social or work group	8.1

While R3 program participants' top-rated encouragements include the same top-rated items as women hunters and sport shooters overall (i.e., being asked or invited, better access, and feeling comfortable and safe), there are also some additional highly rated items among program participants, particularly those that involve learning specific skills and handling equipment, reasonable costs, and going with peers or other social groups.

R3 PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

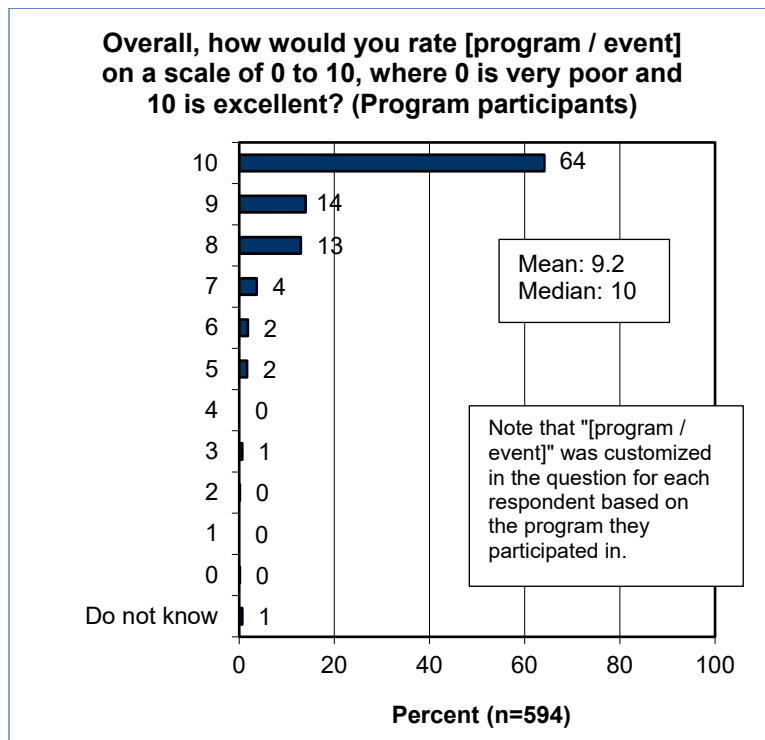
About a third of women hunters and a third of women sport shooters have participated in a program designed to teach hunting, shooting, or other similar outdoor skills. When asked to consider future R3 program participation, both hunters and shooters are somewhat split on their preference for a co-ed program or a women-only program, suggesting that there is likely a market for both types of programs and that one type of program may not meet the needs of the majority of potential participants.

The aforementioned survey of known R3 program participants (across multiple programs) asked them about the activity or activities of interest that inspired them to participate in the R3 program. A majority of participants (64%) took part in an R3 program because of their interest in hunting, 52% did so because of their interest in sport shooting, and 41% did so because of their interest in archery. (Participants could select more than one activity of interest.) As with crossover participation results among hunters and shooters, this finding supports the recommendation that recruitment efforts should more often start with hunting (recall that a large majority of those who participated in both hunting and shooting activities and who specifically participated in hunting first agree that it is an important reason they later participated in sport shooting and/or archery.)

The R3 programs had some success in recruitment and retention. After participating in the R3 program:

- 47% of participants consider themselves to be a hunter (compared to 32% before the program), 40% consider themselves a sport shooter (up from 24%), and 25% consider themselves an archer (up from 13%).
- 63% of participants have gone sport shooting, 44% have hunted with firearms, 33% have gone target archery shooting, and 17% have bowhunted.
- 66% of hunting program participants have purchased a hunting license since taking the program, while another 18% intend to.

Additionally, the R3 programs are highly rated by participants. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very poor and 10 is excellent, participants' mean rating of the most recent R3 program in which they participated is 9.2 and the median is 10 (64% of participants gave the top rating of 10, excellent) (see the graph on the following page).



The most highly rated aspects of the R3 programs are the instructors' knowledge and experience. In both an open-ended question and ratings of specific aspects of the programs, the top responses are related to the instructors. In the open-ended question, the top response is knowledgeable instructors (32% stated this), while the top-rated aspects are the instructor's experience (mean of 9.5 on a 0 to 10 scale), instructor's knowledge (9.5), instructor's ability to demonstrate (9.3), and instructor's ability to explain (9.3).

Other valued aspects of the program in response to the open-ended question are the supportive environment (24% stated this), the increase in skills or comfort level (22%), the variety of classes or activities (19%), and that the program was for women only (18%).

ASPECTS OF R3 PROGRAMS AND CONTINUED PARTICIPATION

For recruitment and retention purposes, R3 programs should consider incorporating the following to meet the needs of new and potential women hunters, sport shooters, and archers:

- Market the programs beyond current licensed hunters.
- Offer on-going, repeat, or series programs to advance skills, build confidence in skills, and establish social support and connections for continued participation.
- Provide guidance or assistance to participants in obtaining the appropriate equipment.
- Provide access or information on access to hunting and shooting lands, areas, and opportunities.

Increased marketing of the available R3 programs for women is important for increasing awareness and interest in the recruitment stage. R3 program participants most commonly learned about the program through word-of-mouth (44% stated this), while 32% learned of it online. Focus group participants also mentioned this, discussing how little information is seen and heard about R3 programs for women even though they are already participating in the associated activities. Focus group participants made direct suggestions to increase marketing of R3 programs, pointing out that the information on R3 programs is typically sent via email only to those who already have a hunting license, making it unlikely to reach those who may have an interest but do not know how or where to pursue their interest. With the most common source of information on R3 programs being word-of-mouth and existing marketing being directed toward licensed hunters, it is important to consider marketing the available programs beyond these two avenues for a broader reach as part of the recruitment phase.

Having R3 programs available for true first-timers is important to further enhance recruitment efforts, yet offering repeat or series programs to foster advancement of skills and confidence will contribute to retention efforts through continuation with support.

The majority of R3 program participants have previously participated in hunting or shooting activities. Only about a quarter of program participants surveyed had not previously participated in hunting or shooting activities. This indicates that many R3 program participants are receiving an introduction to the sport prior to the program—this is good for the late recruitment stage and retention stage of the ORAM, but it highlights the need to have programs available for true first-timers to further enhance recruitment efforts.

Nonetheless, many R3 program participants are repeat participants (53% have taken the program before) or have at least previously participated in another R3 program (37% have taken another hunting, shooting, or archery program prior to their most recent program). Results of the program participants' survey provide several reasons repeat or series programs could help with retention:

- The top constraint to participation among hunting program participants who have not hunted with firearms since taking the R3 program (after the well-established lack of time constraint) is feeling that they are still not ready (26% gave this response).
- When program participants (hunting and shooting) rated specific aspects of the program in which they most recently participated, the two items with the lowest ratings are time provided to practice skills and the program's ability to prepare them to participate on their own. (Note both still enjoy a relatively high mean rating of 8.1, but this is lower than the mean rating for all other program aspects asked about in the survey.)
- In an open-ended question, program participants were asked if anything could have been done differently in the program to better prepare them to hunt/shoot on their own. The top response is that nothing more was needed or they are satisfied. Otherwise, the top responses are related to continued training, practice, and additional lessons or meetings: more hands on or mentored experiences (hunting participants), advanced follow-up lessons (hunting), more practice time (shooting), and more programs or meetings (shooting).

- Program participants were also asked if there is anything they need now to help them hunt on their own. Again, the top response is no/nothing. Otherwise, the top responses are hands on or mentored training (hunting), more practice time (shooting), and more courses or meetings (shooting).
- Finally, program participants who have gone hunting/shooting since the program were asked if there are any other factors associated with the program that have been important to why they continue to participate. The top response is nothing. Otherwise, the top factors named are their increased confidence or comfort level, connection with other female shooters, and the personal instruction or experience. These are all factors established and developed through participation in the R3 program, some of which may require repeat experiences or sessions to more effectively establish confidence and comfort in the field.

Providing assistance with acquiring equipment through R3 programs could enhance retention efforts for continuation with support:

- Although it was not among the top constraints to participation among hunting/shooting program participants who have not participated since taking the R3 program, lack of gun or equipment was among a second tier of reasons, cited by 17% of those who have not hunted and 14% of those who have not gone shooting since their respective programs.
- Among target archery program participants who have not gone archery shooting since the program, the top reason is lack of bow or equipment (27% stated this), a more common constraint than even lack of time for archery program participants.
- When asked if there is anything they need now to help them shoot on their own, information on guns and equipment is the third most common need named (12% stated this) among shooting program participants.
- A lack of access to and knowledge of equipment is also an issue that was discussed by focus group participants, who feel that finding the right equipment for their size or strength is difficult. Compounding this difficulty were some reported experiences with men who seem to enjoy the discomfort or difficulty women have with larger or heavier equipment designed for men.

Providing access or information on access to hunting and shooting lands, areas, and opportunities could also enhance retention efforts:

- Recall that access issues are consistently among the top constraints for both the open-ended and series of potential constraints questions for all women hunters and shooters (not just R3 program participants).
- Access issues were also mentioned by focus group participants who feel limited to access through their male hunting partners.
- Recall that among all women hunters and sport shooters in the surveys, more or better access is among the top-named and top-ranked incentives to potentially encourage participation in their respective activities.
- When asked if there is anything they need now to help them hunt/shoot on their own, access to or information on hunting lands is the second most common need named

among hunting program participants and a place to shoot was the fourth most common need named by shooting program participants.

SUMMARY

It is clear that successful R3 efforts are not quite a “one size fits all” for women hunters, sport shooters, and archers, neither across the activities nor within each activity. There is variation in reasons for participation, constraints, encouragements, and even preferences for the types of programs. However, there are several key points and recommendations in this overview that may help increase the effectiveness of R3 efforts targeting women.

- Recruitment efforts should try to introduce women at a younger age and possibly introduce them to hunting first.
- Recruitment efforts should include awareness marketing to reach those who may not know how or where to get started.
- Recruitment and retention efforts should prioritize mentoring and social support. This may include R3 programs that are on-going or a series of lessons rather than a “one and done” approach. Continuation with support appears to require continued social and instructional support that women are not necessarily receiving outside of R3 programs to the degree that are desired or needed.
- Recruitment, retention, and reactivation efforts should focus on building and advancing skills, confidence, and autonomy among women, but again, for R3 programs this appears to require multiple sessions rather than a single session.
- Recruitment and retention efforts should provide guidance or assistance with obtaining appropriate equipment.
- Recruitment and retention efforts should provide access or information on access to hunting and shooting lands, areas, and opportunities.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the encouraging trends amid the overall decline in hunting participation has been the entry in recent years of many new female¹ hunters and sport shooters (both firearm shooters and archers). However, the churn rate among female participants is higher² than the rate among participants overall, suggesting that specialized techniques are needed not only to retain and reactivate females, but also to recruit them in larger overall numbers. (These efforts to recruit, retain, and reactivate are referred to as R3 efforts.)

This research explored female participation in hunting, sport shooting, and archery: their needs, interests, preferences, and constraints. The data collection builds on the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model specifically as it relates to women (the Model is explained in Appendix A). The project will help determine how to retain female participants by providing the preferred next steps depending on where they are in the Model. The project will also gain insight into crossover participation. The results can be used to help recruit more female hunters, sport shooters, and archers, as well as to reduce churn.

This study was conducted under a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) by Responsive Management in partnership with the California Waterfowl Association (CWA), Christine Thomas, the National Wild Turkey Federation, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department. In addition, partnerships were arranged with multiple other state fish and wildlife agencies across the nation for the study. The study's purpose was to better understand participation among women in hunting and recreational sport shooting with both firearms and archery.

The overall project entailed surveys and focus groups. The methodology for the surveys and the focus groups is presented in the next section.

¹ The National Sporting Goods Association, in a recent report, *Sports Participation in 2016—Shooting Sports*, found that hunting participation by women grew from 2.7 million in 2007 to 3.7 million in 2016, a rate of growth higher than that of men. Furthermore, the same study found that women made up 13% of all hunters in 2007 but 20% in 2016. Additionally, a study of sport shooting conducted by Responsive Management and the National Shooting Sports Foundation, *Sport Shooting Participation in the United States in 2018*, found that new shooters (initiated into the sport within the previous 5 years) were more likely to be women than were established shooters—47% of new shooters were female, compared to 22% of established sport shooters. (In this context, sport shooters refers to any target or sport shooting.)

² This higher churn rate among females was highlighted in a report by Southwick Associates, *2015 Hunter Churn & Lifestyle Summary Report*, produced for the National Shooting Sports Foundation. The report found that churn, defined for the study as the percentage of the current year's license purchasers who will *not* renew their hunting license the following year, was at 25% for males but 37% for females.

CHAPTER 1. METHODOLOGY

This chapter first discusses the survey methods, followed by the focus group methods. The chapter also includes an explanation of the presentation of the results.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey portion of the study was directed at four groups:

1. Women hunters.
2. Women sport shooters.
3. Women archery participants (only including non-hunting archers).
4. Women participants in recruitment, retention, and reactivation programs, collectively referred to as R3 programs.

DESIGN OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

Responsive Management and the CWA developed the survey questionnaires for these five groups. Hunters and sport shooters were surveyed using a multi-modal effort (telephone and online questionnaires), archery participants were surveyed using an online questionnaire, and program participants were surveyed using an online questionnaire. Therefore, Responsive Management developed four survey questionnaires:

- A telephone survey questionnaire and an online survey questionnaire for the survey of hunters and sport shooters (with different paths depending on the activity).
- An online questionnaire of women shooters who are not hunters.
- An online survey questionnaire for archers.
- An online questionnaire for R3 program participants. The online questionnaire for R3 program participants was tailored to each R3 program, with questions specific to that program; therefore, this online questionnaire had multiple versions with the same core questions.

The telephone questionnaire was coded for integration with Responsive Management's computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) process. An important aspect of the CATI process is that the computer controls which questions are asked and allows for immediate data entry, but the telephone surveys are administered by live interviewers with experience conducting surveys on natural resources and outdoor recreation—particularly hunting and sport shooting. The online questionnaires were coded in an online survey platform. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the questionnaires to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic in the surveys. Additionally, the questionnaires included proprietary error checkers and internal quality control checks to help ensure that the data obtained were of high quality.

SURVEY SAMPLES

Surveying the four groups listed above required four primary samples (referred to as “primary” because two of the samples were composed of multiple subsamples):

- A sample of women hunting license holders, used for the hunter sample and a portion of the sport shooter sample. This primary sample was composed of 19 statewide subsamples, as explained further in this section.

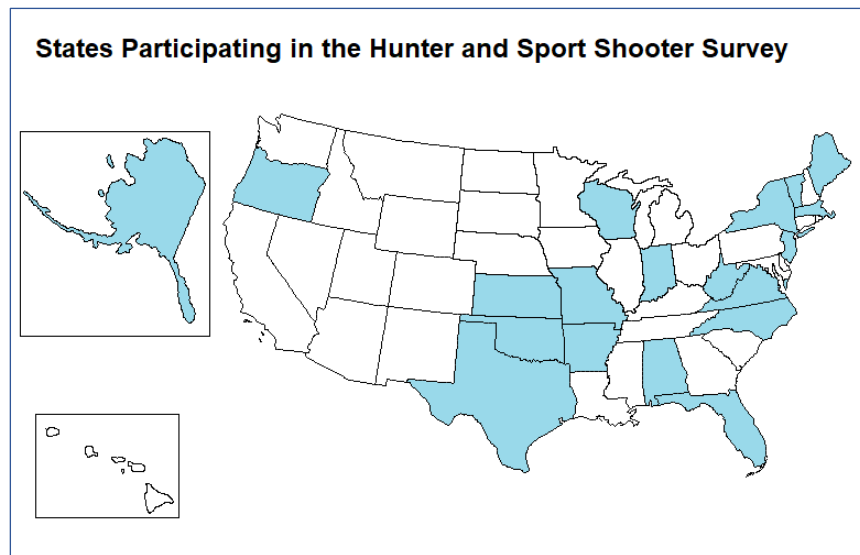
- An online sample of women sport shooters. This ensured that the total sport shooter sample was not composed solely of those who also hunted. This sample and the shooter portion of the hunting license holder sample were combined in the data analysis to make the entire sport shooter sample.
- An online sample of women archery participants. Although some other archery participants were surveyed through the other samples, those other archery participants were not added to this sample; rather, this sample was analyzed and presented on its own.
- A sample of women participants in state and non-government organization R3 programs. Note that this was not a sample provided to the research team; rather, the agencies and organizations contacted the R3 program participants, and the research team did not possess the contacts’ names or other personal information at any time.

Women Hunting License Holders

The sample of women hunting license holders consisted of state samples that were put together to be representative of the United States as a whole—including states in each of the four main regions of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). There were 2 states in the West Region, 5 states in the Midwest Region, 5 states in the Northeast Region, and 7 states in the Southeast Region, for 19 states in all. A tabulation and map of the states included in the survey are shown below.

States Participating in the Hunter and Sport Shooter Survey

West Region	Midwest Region	Northeast Region	Southeast Region
Alaska	Indiana	Maine	Alabama
Oregon	Kansas	Massachusetts	Arkansas
	Missouri	New Jersey	Florida
	Oklahoma	New York	North Carolina
	Wisconsin	Vermont	Texas
			Virginia
			West Virginia



Responsive Management contacted every state fish and wildlife agency to try to obtain a licensed hunter sample. In the end, 19 states participated, and confidentiality agreements were made between Responsive Management and each participating state that required one. The participating states' fish and wildlife agencies then provided samples of licensed hunters for use in the survey. Note that the licensed hunter samples were used for this survey and then deleted from Responsive Management's database system upon completion of the project. Responsive Management does not maintain license databases in its system.

For all the states except Alaska, the state database contained hunter names and either a telephone number or an email address or both. Alaska's database contained names only without telephone numbers or email addresses. For that database, Responsive Management performed a reverse lookup to assign telephone numbers to the names. Responsive Management also de-duplicated the state samples provided (i.e., a hunter with multiple licenses was put into the sample only once so as to have the same chance of being selected in the random sampling as any other hunter) and drew the probability-based random survey samples from the de-duplicated lists.

This sample of hunting license holders was utilized to obtain completed surveys with hunters and sport shooters. In the survey, once the respondent was reached, the survey path (hunter or sport shooter) and consequently the sample into which the respondent was assigned was determined by the participation questions. Those who had hunted but had not done sport shooting were put into the hunter path (i.e., the hunter sample), while those who had done sport shooting but not hunting were put into the sport shooter path (sport shooter sample). Those who had both hunted and done sport shooting were randomly assigned into one of the paths, with subsequent weighting to account for this separation of people who could be in either the hunter sample or the sport shooter sample. Additionally, a screener ensured that respondents were at least 18 years old and female.

The hunter sample was stratified by AFWA region, with a goal of at least 900 hunter surveys in each region. Weighting was then applied in the data analysis stage to account for size of hunter populations in each state, within each region, and within the United States as a whole so that each region sample was representative of that region and the overall sample was representative of the United States as a whole. (See the next subsection for the sport shooter survey goal.)

As part of this effort, a few respondents were encountered who had neither hunted nor gone sport shooting (despite being in the license database). Although not mentioned above as one of the four samples that were targeted for the surveying effort, these people were asked some questions in the survey, such as questions about what might make them more interested in hunting or shooting, and some of the survey reporting includes this group. Note that they were kept separate and reported on their own. (The reasons that they were in the license database but had neither hunted nor gone sport shooting are various. For instance, some may have purchased a license intending to hunt but did not do so, while some may have purchased a hunting license to access a wildlife management area for some activity other than hunting.)

Women Sport Shooters Online Sample

The sample of hunting license holders that was just discussed included some sport shooters, so part of the sample for sport shooters comes from the sample of hunting license holders, as explained above. However, this portion of the sample would generally not include sport shooters who did not have a hunting license (i.e., would not have been in the samples provided by the state wildlife agencies). Therefore, the sport shooter sample was supplemented by online surveying from a sample obtained from Marketing Systems Group (MSG), a company that specializes in providing scientifically valid samples for surveys.

The final sample of sport shooters, therefore, consisted of both sport shooters who hunted and sport shooters who did not hunt, with weighting applied to ensure that these proportions were representative of the states, regions, and the United States as a whole. Note that the sport shooter sample was screened to ensure that respondents were at least 18 years old and female. This sample was not stratified, however, with a goal of 400 sport shooter surveys nationally.

Women Archery Participants Online Sample

An online sample of women archery participants was obtained from MSG. The sample was screened to ensure that respondents were at least 18 years old, female, had participated in target archery within the past 10 years, and had *not* hunted within the past 10 years. As indicated above, this sample was kept separate in the analysis and reporting, even though some archery participants were encountered in the survey of hunters and sport shooters. This sample was not stratified; it had a goal of 400 archery participant surveys nationally.

R3 Program Participants

For this portion of the surveying effort, state agencies or organizations involved in the survey sent email invitations to their R3 program participants (no samples were provided to Responsive Management). In all, six states and three non-governmental organizations participated in this part of the surveying effort. The table on the following page shows the states and organizations, along with the constituent state programs that were involved.

Although an attempt was made to obtain surveys from every participant of the R3 programs (essentially a census rather than a sampling of the R3 participants), the stated goal was to obtain at least 400 completed surveys from R3 program participants.

State Agency or Organization	Program Name (or Description)
Arizona Game and Fish Department	Becoming an Outdoors Woman
	Women's Javelina Hunt
	Women's Learn to Hunt Program
	Women's Shotgun League
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife	Other miscellaneous adult programs
	Becoming an Outdoors Woman
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Learn to Hunt
	Becoming an Outdoors Woman
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Hunter Education
	Angler Education
	Archery Education
	Outdoor Skills
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	Becoming an Outdoors Woman Workshop
	Becoming an Outdoors Woman Hunt
	Beyond BOW opportunities or events
	Texas Outdoors Woman Network (TOWN)
	Other Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) program or event (e.g., Wild Outdoor Women, Rockport Women's Programs)
Georgia Wildlife Federation	Academics Afield
	Artemis Georgia
	Becoming an Outdoors Woman (Georgia)
	Field to Fork
	Ladies Give It a Shot
National Wild Turkey Federation	Women's Hunt and Learn
	Women in the Outdoors
National Wildlife Federation	Artemis
Pheasants Forever / Quail Forever	Learn to Hunt
	Learn to Shoot
	Women, Wine and Wild Game Social Events

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

This project entailed administering four separate surveying efforts.

- The multi-modal survey of hunters and sport shooters using the sample of women hunting license holders.
- An online survey of women sport shooters to supplement the multi-modal survey above.
- An online survey of women archery participants.
- Online surveys of women participants in state and non-government organization R3 programs. This was actually a series of surveys, with each set of surveys tailored to the state/organization sending out the survey invitations.

Multi-Modal Survey of Hunters and Sport Shooters

This survey consisted of both a telephone survey effort and a closed online survey effort. In this context, "closed" means that a person surfing the internet could not access the survey; only those specifically invited and contacted could complete the online survey.

From the randomized pulled samples based on the license databases, respondents without an email address were contacted by telephone. Those with an email address were contacted by email. Nonrespondents to the email invitation to participate in the survey were sent reminder emails, and some of those who did not respond to the reminders were put into the telephone sample if a number was available. Attempting to make contact in multiple modes allowed hunters and sport shooters to respond in the way most convenient to them.

For the telephone phase, telephone interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time, using interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted surveys about hunting and sport shooting. A five-callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times of the day. The telephone phase of the survey was from August 23 through September 6, 2021.

For quality control, Survey Center Managers monitored the interviews in real time and provided feedback to the interviewers. To further ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Methods of instruction included lecture and role-playing. The Survey Center Managers and other professional staff conducted briefings with the interviewers prior to the administration of this survey. Interviewers were instructed on type of study, study goals and objectives, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points and qualifiers for participation, interviewer instructions within the survey questionnaire, reading of the survey questions, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey questionnaire.

For the online survey phase, email invitations to take the survey were sent to everyone in the online sample. The dates of the emails varied depending on the state being surveyed, with all of them being sent in June and July 2021. An example of this initial email invitation is shown on the following page. Reminder emails were sent to nonrespondents approximately 8 days after the first invitation and then 8 days after that first reminder (up to two email reminders were sent, for a total of three emails), and an example of that email follows as well. The online survey was open from June to September 2021.

Dear [contact("first name")] [contact("last name")],

We are conducting a study among women hunters under [a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service \(USFWS\)](#), in partnership with the [California Waterfowl Association](#) (CWA) and multiple state fish and wildlife agencies across the nation.

The goal of this study is to better understand participation and interest in hunting and recreational target or sport shooting among women. The results of this study will help develop and improve hunting and sport shooting programs and opportunities specifically for women in the U.S. We would like to hear from you even if you have not participated recently or have never participated in the activities.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

(or copy and paste this link into a browser: [[invite\(survey link\)](#)])

Please consider responding to this survey by July 7.

You are one of only a small number of hunting license holders in your state randomly chosen to participate in this study. To ensure that results truly represent women who have obtained a hunting license, it is important that we hear from you. Your answers will be kept completely confidential and will not be associated with your name or license in any way.

Thank you in advance for your time and participation in this study. We hope to provide women with the programs and opportunities they need to support their hunting and sport shooting activities.

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, is conducting this survey in partnership with CWA under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant. If you have questions or need assistance with this survey, please contact Responsive Management at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Sincerely,
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
California Waterfowl Association
Responsive Management

Dear [contact("first name")] [contact("last name")],

Just a reminder that we are conducting a study among women hunters under [a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service \(USFWS\)](#), in partnership with the [California Waterfowl Association \(CWA\)](#) and multiple state fish and wildlife agencies across the nation, **and we would like your input!**

The goal of this study is to better understand participation and interest in hunting and recreational target or sport shooting among women. The results of this study will help develop and improve hunting and sport shooting programs and opportunities specifically for women in the U.S. We would like to hear from you even if you have not participated recently or have never participated in the activities.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

(or copy and paste this link into a browser: [[invite\(survey link\)](#)])

Please consider responding to this survey by July 17.

You are one of only a small number of hunting license holders in your state randomly chosen to participate in this study. To ensure that results truly represent women who have obtained a hunting license, it is important that we hear from you. Your answers will be kept completely confidential and will not be associated with your name or license in any way.

Thank you in advance for your time and participation in this study. We hope to provide women with the programs and opportunities they need to support their hunting and sport shooting activities.

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, is conducting this survey in partnership with CWA under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant. If you have questions or need assistance with this survey, please contact Responsive Management at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Sincerely,
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
California Waterfowl Association
Responsive Management

Online Survey of Sport Shooters

The sport shooters in this sample were contacted by an initial email with follow-up reminder emails. This part of the overall survey effort was active from October 11 through October 23, 2021.

Online Survey of Archery Participants

The archery participants in this sample were contacted by an initial email with follow-up reminder emails. This part of the overall survey effort was active in December 2021.

Online Surveys of Participants in R3 Programs

The list of states and non-governmental organizations that participated in this survey effort was previously presented; six states and three organizations were involved. Each state or organization sent its own email invitation to the survey (only those specifically invited to participate in the survey could take it; people surfing the internet could not happen upon the survey and take it). While the language of each email was slightly different depending on the state or organization, each invitation included information about the project and about Responsive Management as the administer of the survey, a link to the survey, and a link to technical support for the survey at Responsive Management. This part of the overall survey effort was active from July 26 through November 10, 2021.

An example of the email sent by Texas Parks and Wildlife for this portion of the survey effort is shown on the following page, sent to participants in its Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program.

Information That Applies to All the Various Surveying Efforts

After both the telephone and online surveys were obtained for all portions of this surveying effort, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness. Additionally, the survey codes included proprietary error checkers and other quality control checks within the survey instruments.

Responsive Management obtained 5,389 completed questionnaires in the hunting survey, 4,633 completed questionnaires in the sport shooting survey, 438 completed questionnaires in the archery participant survey, and 594 completed questionnaires in the R3 program participant survey.



Dear OUTDOOR WOMAN,

Our records indicate that you have participated in one of the women's hunting, sport shooting, or outdoor programs through Texas Parks & Wildlife. We are working with Responsive Management on a study being conducted under a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address the needs, interests, preferences, and constraints specific to female hunters, shooters, and archers.

If you have participated in one of our programs—such as Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW), Texas Outdoor Women's Network (TOWN), and more—your opinions are extremely valuable to the research. Your answers to this survey will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name or other personal information in any way.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

or visit <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6423255/TX>.

Please consider responding as soon as possible.

If you need technical assistance with completing the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your willingness to participate and share your experiences with us.

Sincerely,

Heidi Lyn Rao
TPWD Hunter Education Specialist
TPWD Outdoor Woman Coordinator
Heidi.Rao@tpwd.texas.gov



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

[contact us](#)
[update email account](#)
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You are receiving this message at Email Address because you have done business with and/or signed up to receive email updates from [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#). Did someone forward this email to you? [Subscribe now](#) -- it's free!

ANALYSES OF SURVEY DATA

Responsive Management used IBM SPSS Statistics as well as proprietary software that it developed in the quantitative data analyses. Other elements of the analyses are detailed below.

The data obtained included many open-ended comments in response to questions. (Open-ended means that no answer set is provided to respondents, and they can respond with anything that comes to mind.) For these results, analysts reviewed the comments and categorized the responses into broad categories, based on the verbatim responses.

The hunter and sport shooter data were also analyzed through a breakdown of the samples into constituent groups, based on their participation in hunting and sport shooting. This breakdown facilitates analysis by the respondent's place within the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model. Activity participants were categorized as follows:

- Currently active participant: a person who has participated within the previous 2 years. These individuals would be targeted with retention efforts.
- Recently active participant: a person who has participated within the previous 5 years, but not in the past 2 years. These individuals would be targeted with retention efforts (as well as reactivation efforts to some degree).
- Short-term lapsed participant: a person who has participated within the previous 10 years, but not in the past 5 years. People in this group would be targeted with retention efforts (as well as reactivation efforts to some degree).
- Long-term lapsed participant: a person who has participated at some point in their life but not within the previous 10 years. These people would be targeted with reactivation efforts (and recruitment efforts to some degree if they never really considered themselves participants).
- Non-participant: a person who has never participated. These people would be targeted with recruitment efforts. Although not specifically one of the primary groups for surveying, some non-participants were encountered, and the results among this small number of people was analyzed and reported. (Note that these were not non-participants that might be found in a survey of the general population; they specifically were non-respondents who were otherwise in state agency hunting license databases for whatever reasons.)

Other data runs were conducted on those who started hunting or sport shooting within the past 5 years. In those analyses, they are referred to as *new hunters* and *new sport shooters*. This was determined through questions that asked the respondent's age when first hunting or sport shooting and the respondent's current age. The 5-year timeframe is the shortest that has enough sample for statistically valid results for most crosstabulations.

FOCUS GROUP METHODS

The project included two post-survey focus groups with sportswomen. These were conducted virtually.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Responsive Management prepared an initial draft of the discussion guide and provided it to the study partners for input and suggestions. The guide included questions assessing basic attitudes toward and opinions on hunting, sport shooting, and archery. The purpose of the discussion guide is to help keep the discussion on topic and to ensure that all topics are covered.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT RECRUITING

Responsive Management recruited participants for the focus groups. Typical recruiting procedures call for a multi-modal approach, including an initial email or mailing to prospective participants as well as telephone recruiting. Potential participants were contacted and screened, as necessary, using a standardized questionnaire that determined whether the potential participant met the established guidelines set for the group. Recruited participants were then informed of the focus group date and time and were sent confirmation materials.

FOCUS GROUP LOCATIONS

The focus groups were conducted online through Zoom video conferencing to ensure the widest possible range of participants and perspectives. While the focus groups were not conducted at on-site locations, the recruiting screener for the groups ensured representation from the major AFWA regions of the country (Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and West).

NUMBER OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Most qualitative techniques, such as the focus groups in this study, call for small sample sizes. The conclusions rest on face validity and rely on the depth of analysis rather than breadth of analysis. Focus group research, like all qualitative research, sacrifices reliability, or the ability to replicate results, for the sake of increased validity. For this study, 7 to 10 individuals were recruited for each group. The groups were composed of residents from all regions of the country. Each group also had representation from a reasonable range of ages and ethnicities.

FOCUS GROUP MODERATING

A Responsive Management moderator led each group, as unobtrusively as possible, through the discussion guide and looked for new insights into participants' opinions on the topics. The focus groups were moderated, as mentioned above, using a discussion guide. An experienced, trained moderator from Responsive Management conducted each 1½- to 2-hour group, keeping the discussion within design parameters using the discussion guide without exerting a strong influence on the discussion content. The focus groups were recorded for further analysis.

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

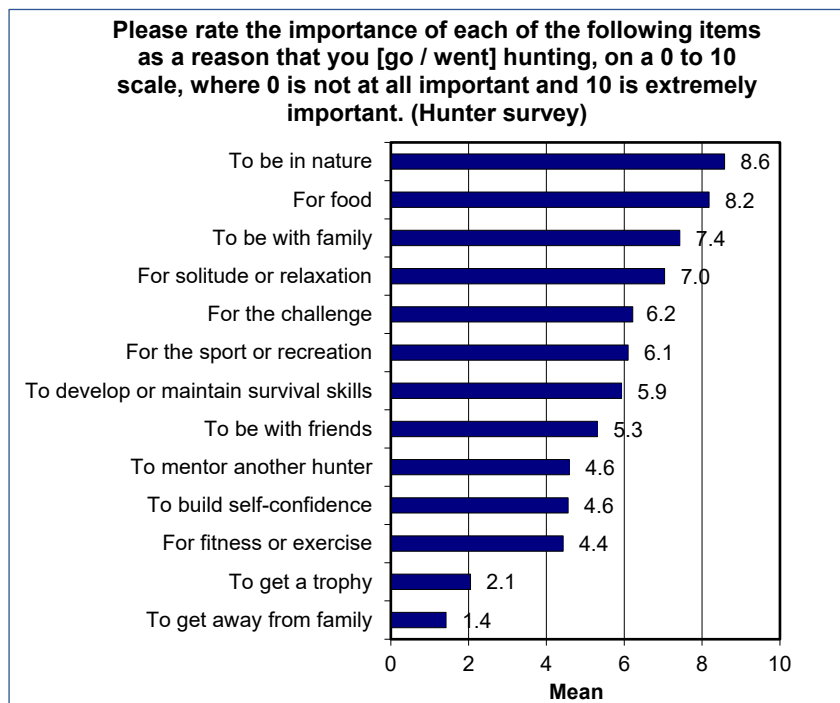
Responsive Management fully interpreted the focus group findings. Analyses of the qualitative data was performed in three iterations: 1) the actual focus group observation, 2) review of recordings and selected transcripts by other researchers, and 3) the development of findings. The findings of these focus groups informed and were incorporated into the overall results in the Executive Overview.

CHAPTER 2. WOMEN’S HUNTER SURVEY RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the survey of women hunters from license databases (as explained in Chapter 1) of 19 states that participated in the survey. The states are a good representation of the United States as a whole, and the national graphs for each question are shown first, followed by the regional graphs. Note that this selection of states is being used as a proxy for the region as a whole, which worked well for three of the four regions. The West Region, however, is represented by only two states: Oregon and Alaska. For this reason, the regional results should be used with this in mind.

REASONS FOR HUNTING

Hunters were presented with a series of 13 potential reasons for hunting, and they were asked to rate the importance of each, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. Four reasons stand out above the rest: to be in nature (mean rating of 8.6), for food (8.2), to be with family (7.4), and for solitude or relaxation (7.0). The full series is shown in the graph, along with a tabulation of the regional results.

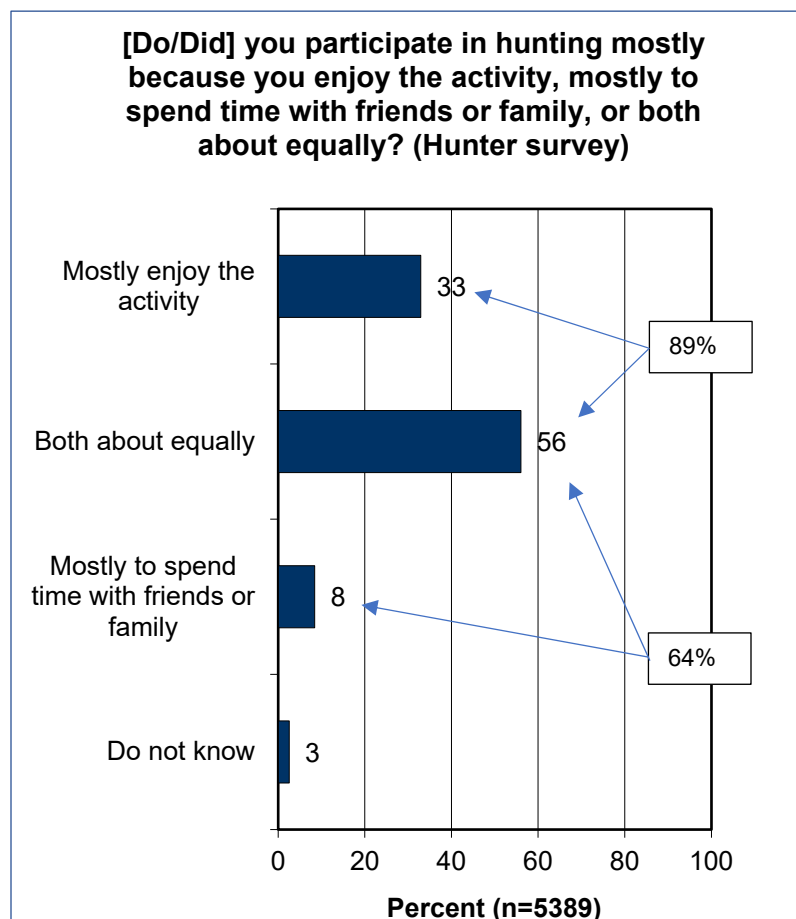


Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [go / went] hunting, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Mean ratings) (Hunter survey)

Motivation	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West	Overall
To be in nature	8.8	8.7	8.7	8.1	8.6
For food	8.4	7.9	8.2	8.8	8.2
To be with family	7.0	7.3	7.2	8.5	7.4
For solitude or relaxation	7.4	7.0	7.2	6.6	7.0
For the challenge	6.4	6.5	6.7	4.9	6.2
For the sport or recreation	6.7	6.2	5.7	5.6	6.1
To develop or maintain survival skills	5.7	6.0	5.5	6.6	5.9
To be with friends	4.9	5.4	4.7	6.0	5.3
To mentor another hunter	4.9	4.4	4.2	5.1	4.6
To build self-confidence	4.9	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.6
For fitness or exercise	4.6	4.2	4.2	5.1	4.4
To get a trophy	1.9	2.2	2.6	1.5	2.1
To get away from family	1.5	1.4	1.7	1.2	1.4

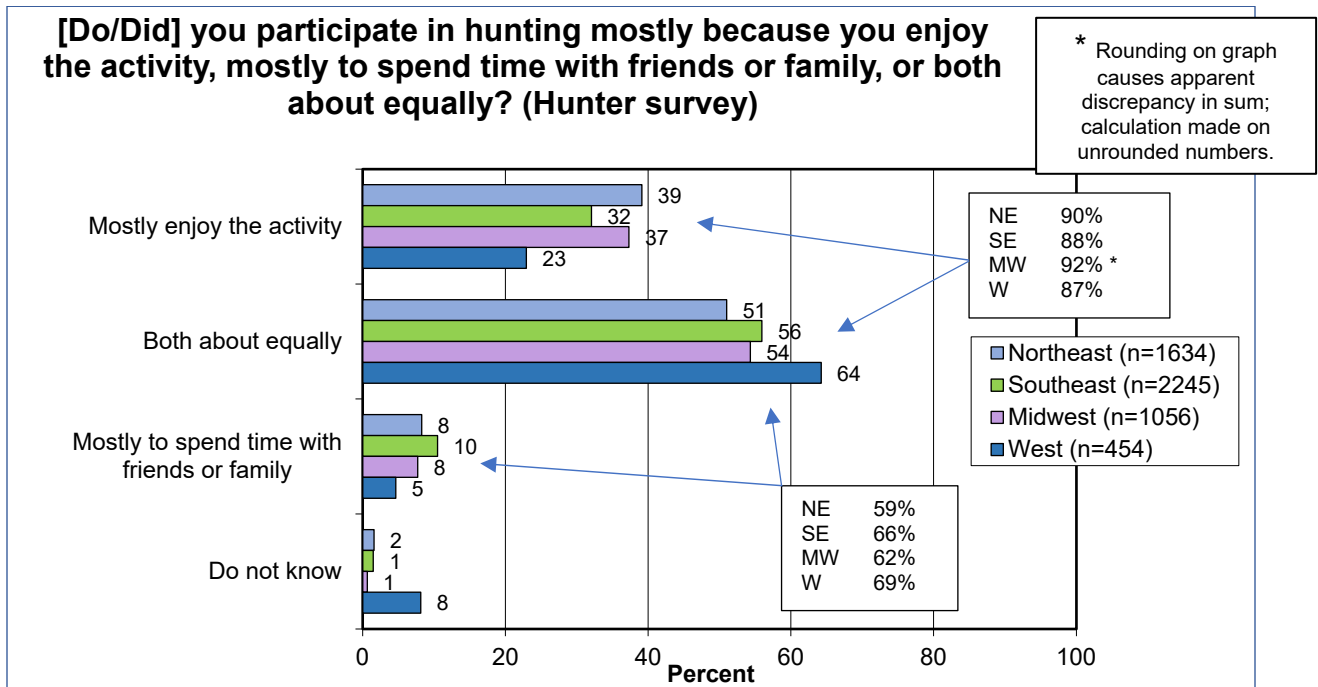
Of interest is how new hunters responded on this series of questions. New women hunters (defined as those who started within the past 5 years), compared to those who are not new, give more weight to hunting for the challenge, hunting for food, and to be with friends. On the other hand, they give less importance to mentoring another hunter and to being with family.

Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [go / went] hunting, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Mean ratings) (Hunter survey)			
Motivation	New	Not new	Overall
To be in nature	8.6	8.6	8.6
For food	8.6	8.1	8.2
To be with family	6.9	7.5	7.4
For solitude or relaxation	7.0	7.1	7.0
For the challenge	6.8	6.2	6.2
For the sport or recreation	6.4	6.1	6.1
To develop or maintain survival skills	6.1	5.9	5.9
To be with friends	5.7	5.3	5.3
To mentor another hunter	3.1	4.8	4.6
To build self-confidence	5.6	4.4	4.6
For fitness or exercise	4.5	4.4	4.4
To get a trophy	2.1	2.0	2.1
To get away from family	1.4	1.4	1.4

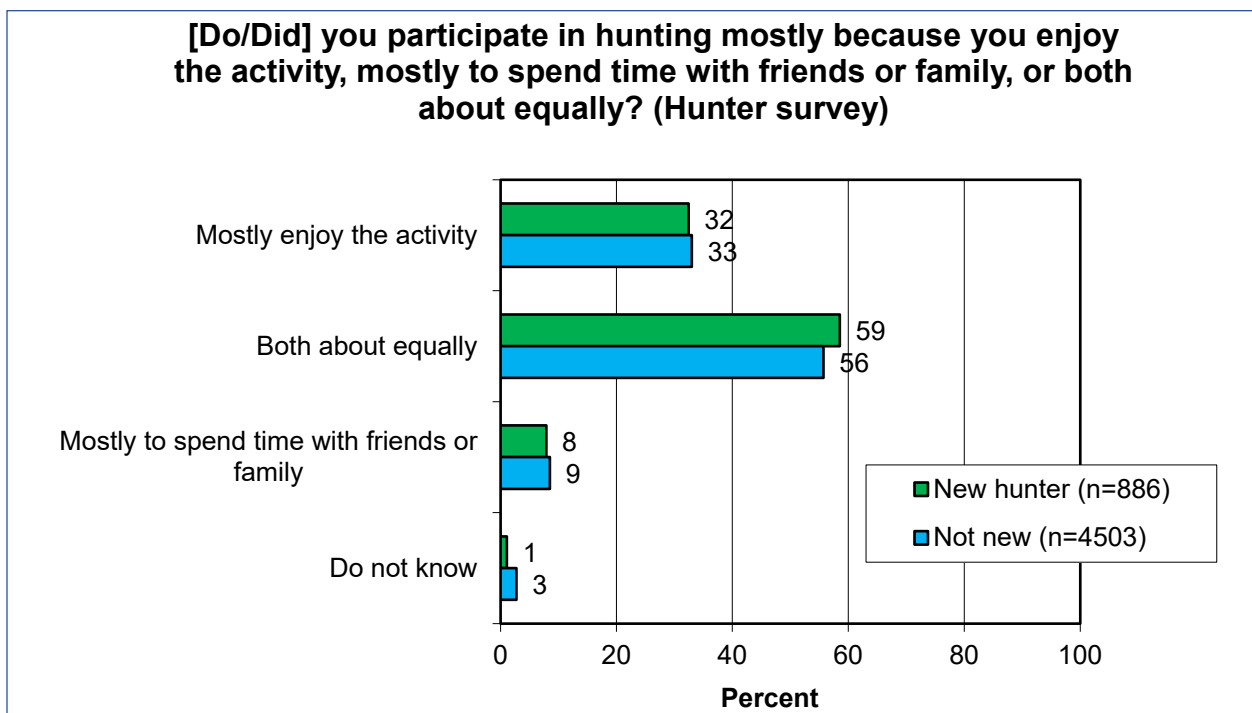


One question asked if hunters went hunting for their *own enjoyment* with the activity or if they did so to *spend time with friends or family*. While friends and family are important (being with family was the third ranked reason overall that women went hunting, as reported above), the simple enjoyment of hunting is more important: 33% did so mostly because they enjoy the activity, compared to only 8% who do so mostly to spend time with friends and family. However, the majority of female hunters go hunting for both about equally—because they enjoy it and to spend time with friends and family. In looking at sums: 89% said mostly enjoy or both; 64% said mostly to spend time with friends and family or both.

The regional results for this question about enjoyment of the activity versus spending time with family are shown below.



The researchers examined new women hunters on this question to see if they were different than established hunters; however, the analysis found almost no difference in new hunters and established hunters. Again, new hunters are defined as those who started within the past 5 years.



FEELINGS ASSOCIATED WITH HUNTING, AND THEIR EFFECTS ON PARTICIPATION

Obviously, the feelings that hunting engenders helps determine if women continue to hunt. For this reason, the survey examined this aspect through questions about feelings, four of which are positive (excited, supported, competent, and successful) and two of which are negative (nervous and intimidated). Hunters were asked if they agreed or disagreed that the word described how they feel when hunting or when thinking about going hunting.

Because two of the feelings are negative, they were reverse coded for the purposes of analysis, because the survey sought to examine which feelings might need to be addressed by R3 efforts. For the feelings of nervous and intimidated, the agrees and disagrees were switched so that all feelings could be compared from the same baseline, and the label was switched to *not nervous* and *not intimidated* (the accompanying table further explains this).

	Percent in the survey who indicated feeling intimidated when hunting or thinking about hunting	Percent shown in the graph as feeling not intimidated when hunting or thinking about hunting	Percent in the survey who indicated feeling nervous when hunting or thinking about hunting	Percent shown in the graph as feeling not nervous when hunting or thinking about hunting
Strongly agree	2	53	6	35
Somewhat agree	13	15	26	16
Neither	15	15	16	16
Somewhat disagree	15	13	16	26
Strongly disagree	53	2	35	6
Do not know	1	1	1	1

Strongly agree is switched with strongly disagree, and somewhat agree is switched with somewhat disagree.
 “Neither” and “Do not know” are the same in the survey and the graph.

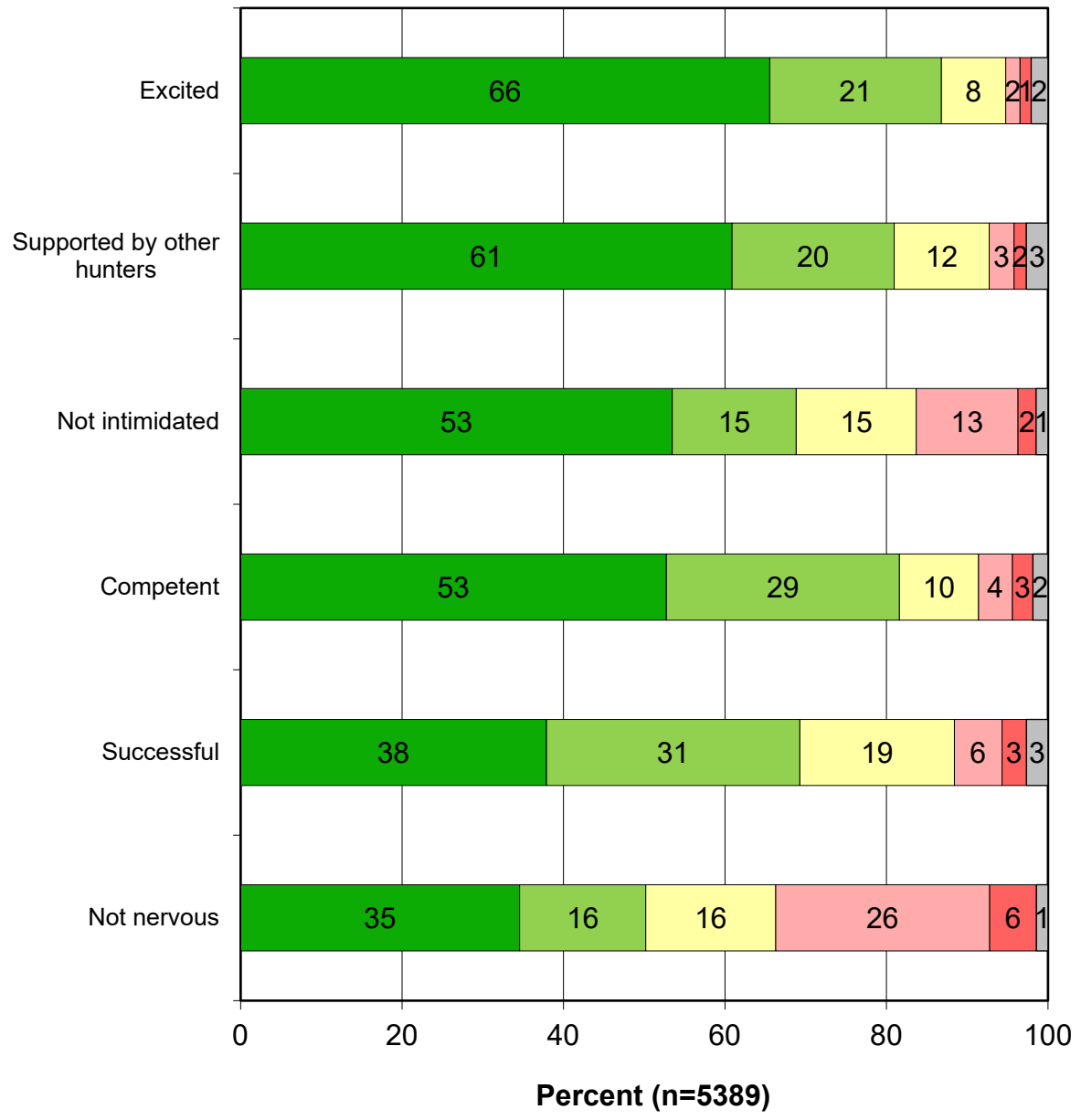
In the results overall, which are ranked by strongly agree, there is no problem generating feelings of excitement and feelings of being supported by other hunters, as more than 60% of women hunters strongly agree (and over 80% *strongly* or *somewhat* agree).

In a middle tier are feelings of not being intimidated, of competency, and of success—some R3 efforts may need to address those. In particular, feelings of intimidation need to be addressed: while 69% of women hunters respond as being not intimidated, with 53% strongly feeling that way, there are 15% in the red on the graph, meaning that they feel intimidated.

At the very bottom of the ranking is a feeling of nervousness. Only 50% are responding as being not nervous, while approximately a third of women hunters (32%) give a response indicating that they feel nervous. This nervousness is the most problematic issue for R3 efforts to address vis-à-vis women hunters’ feelings. (The regional graphs for this follow the overall graph.)

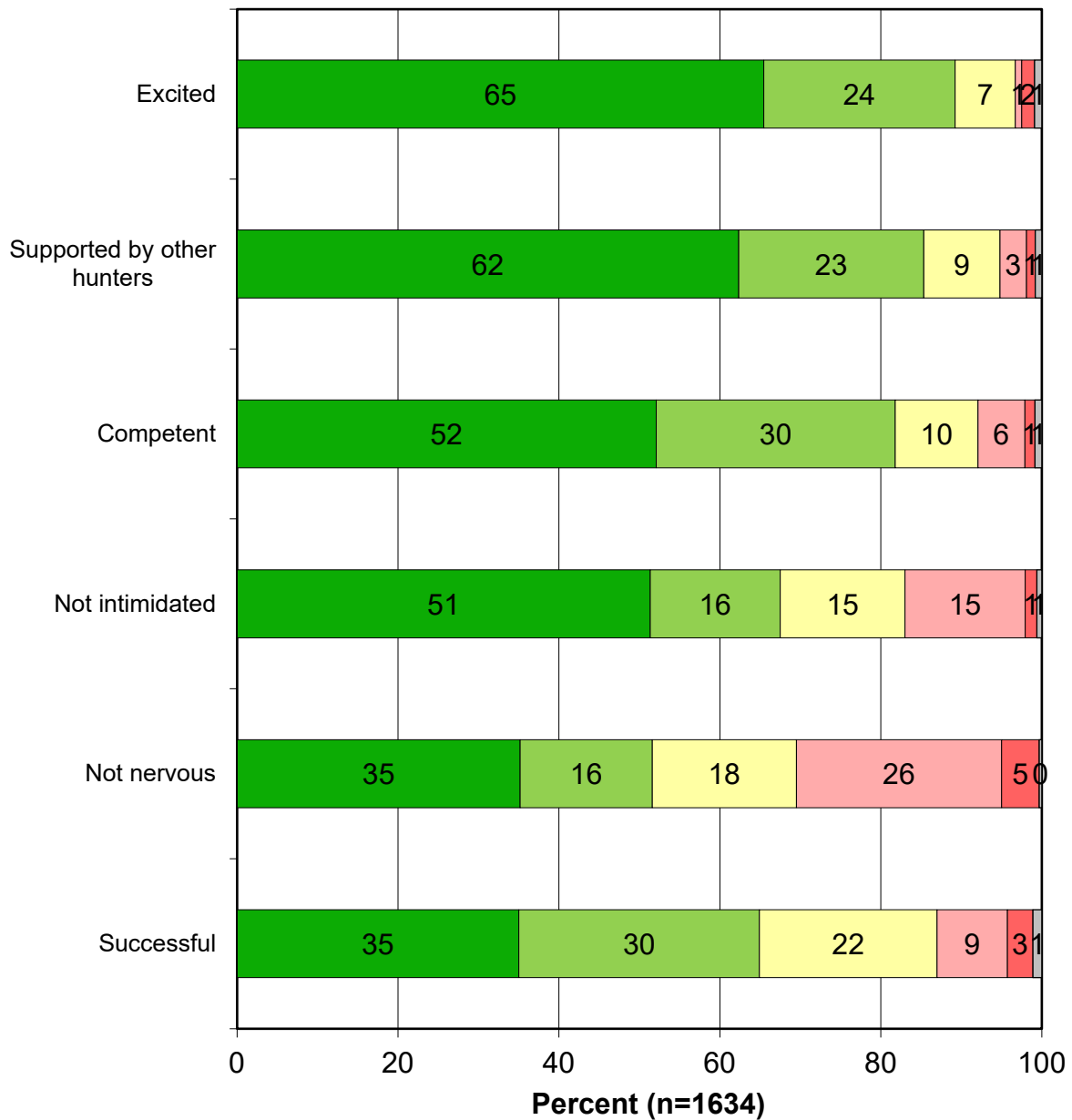
(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting. (Overall) (Hunter survey)

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know

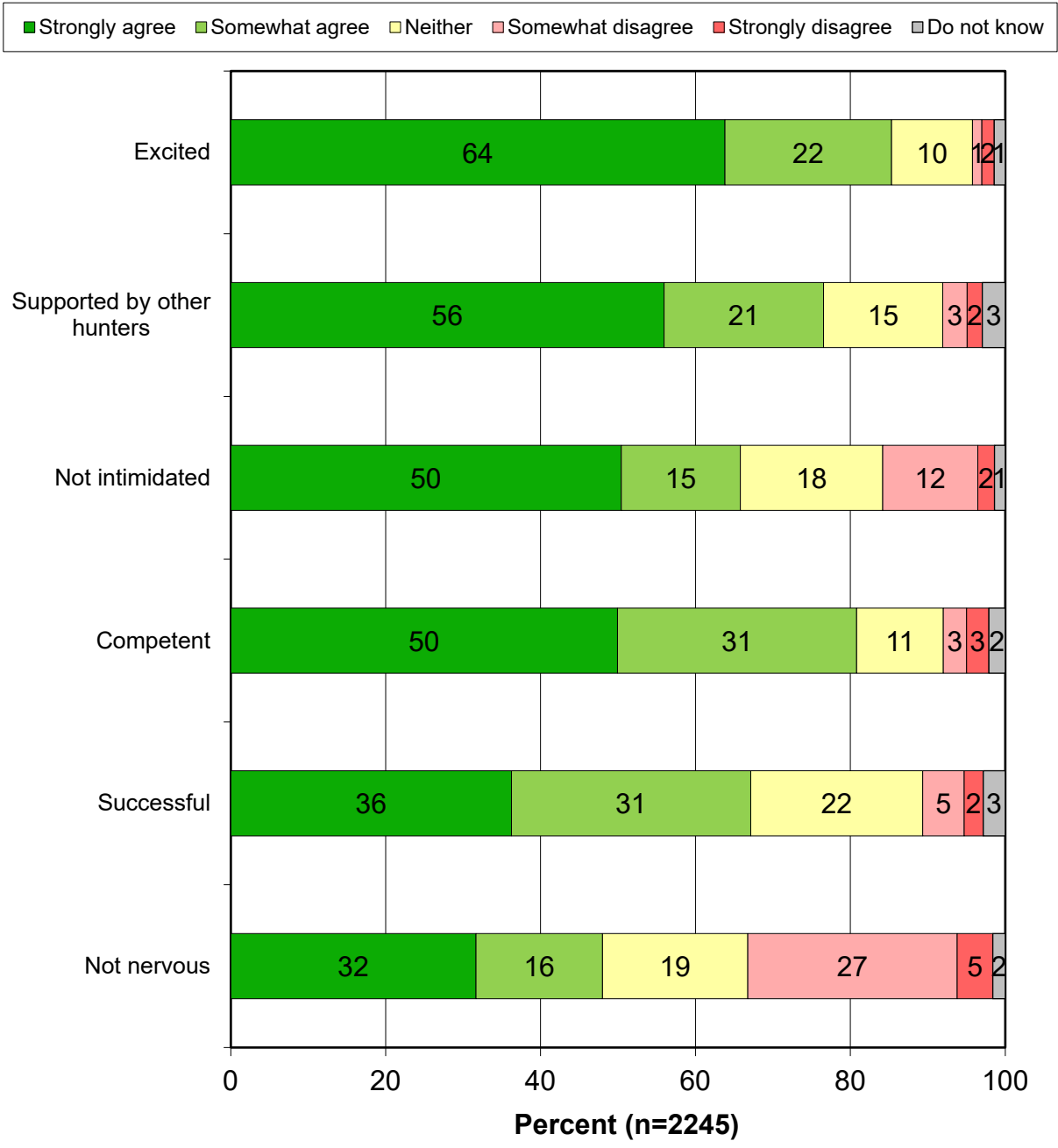


(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting. (Northeast) (Hunter survey)

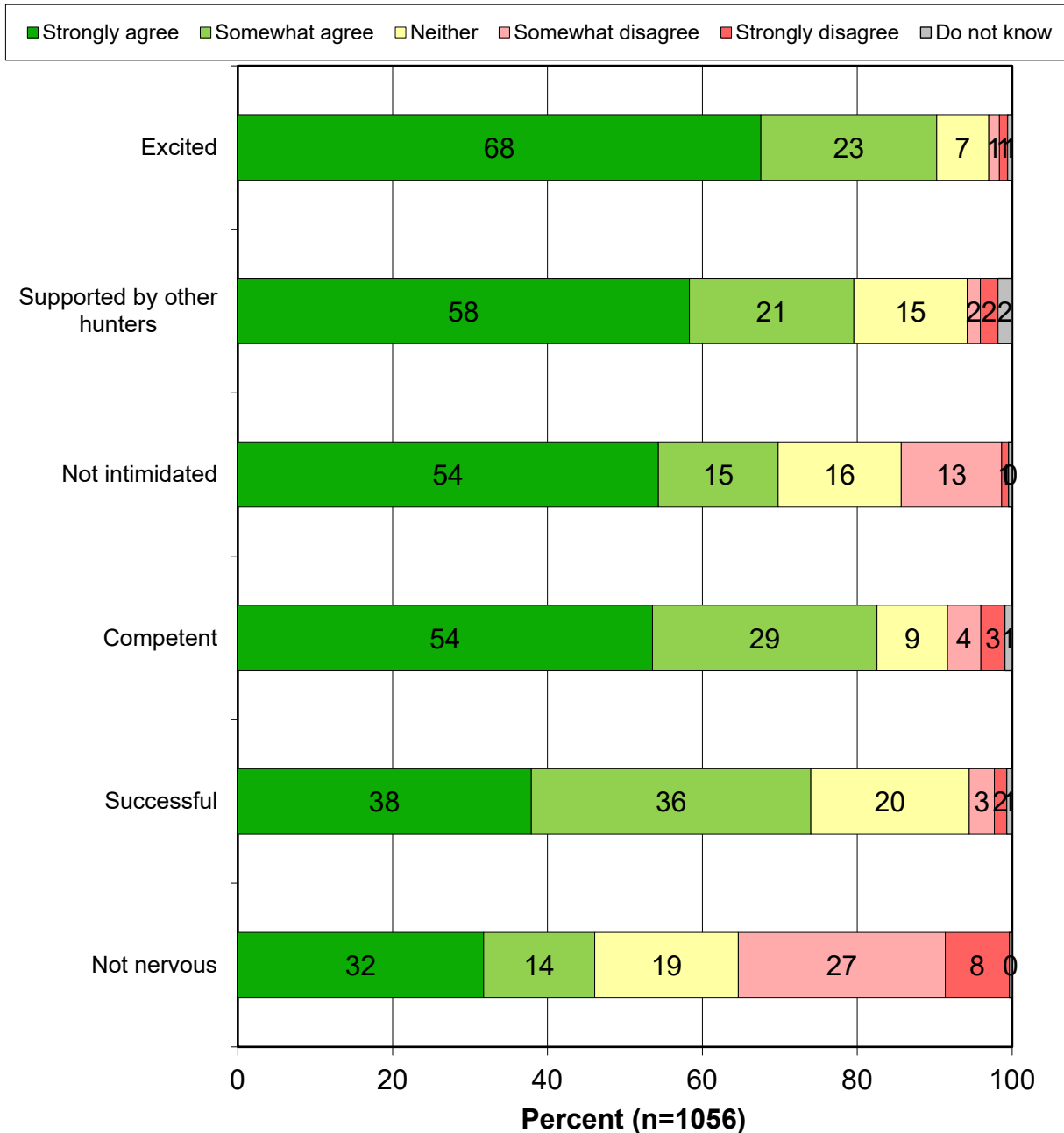
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know



(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting. (Southeast) (Hunter survey)

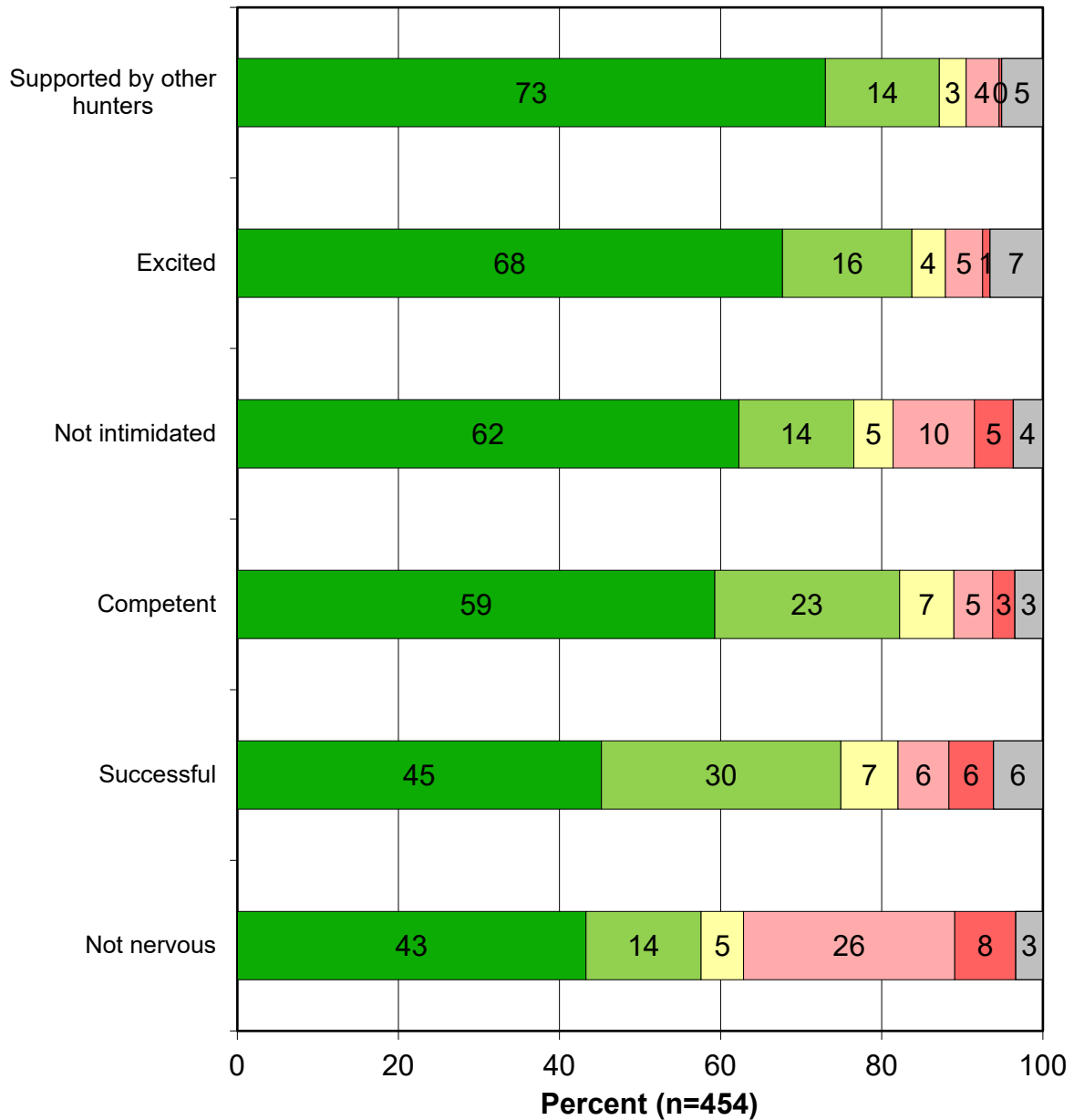


**(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting. (Midwest)
(Hunter survey)**

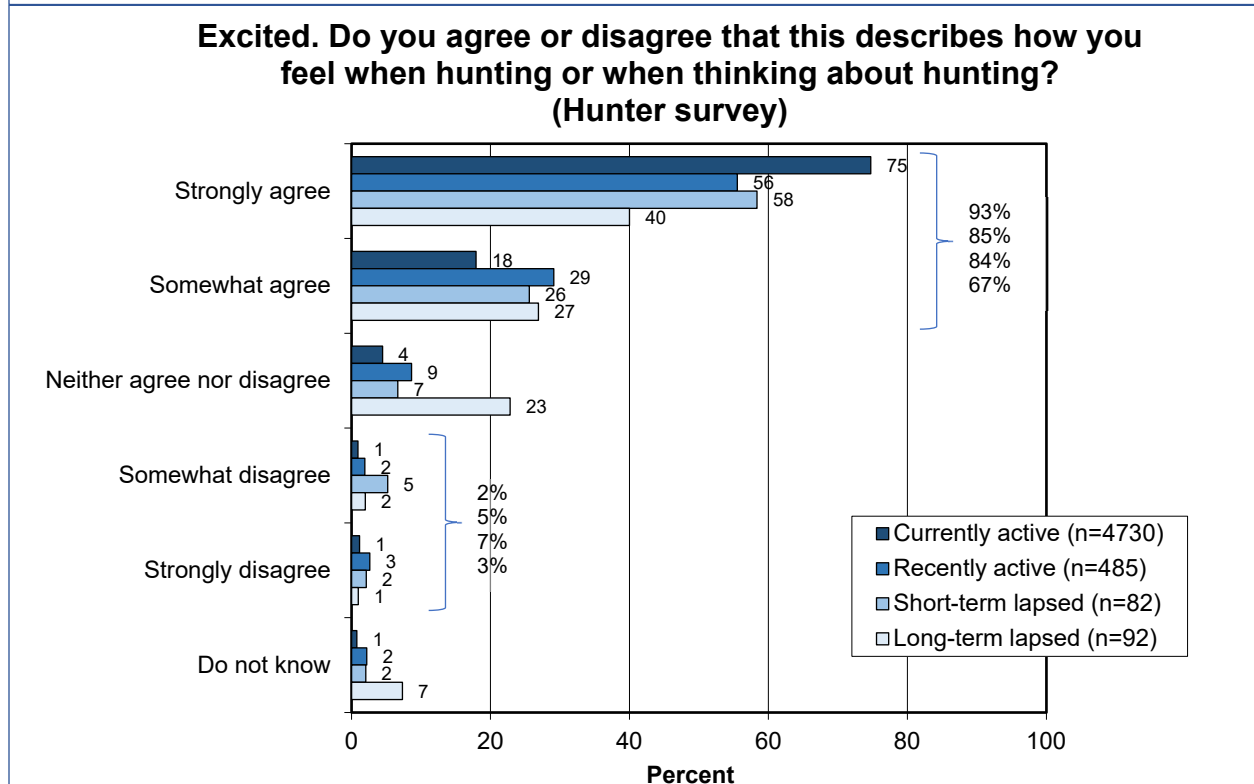
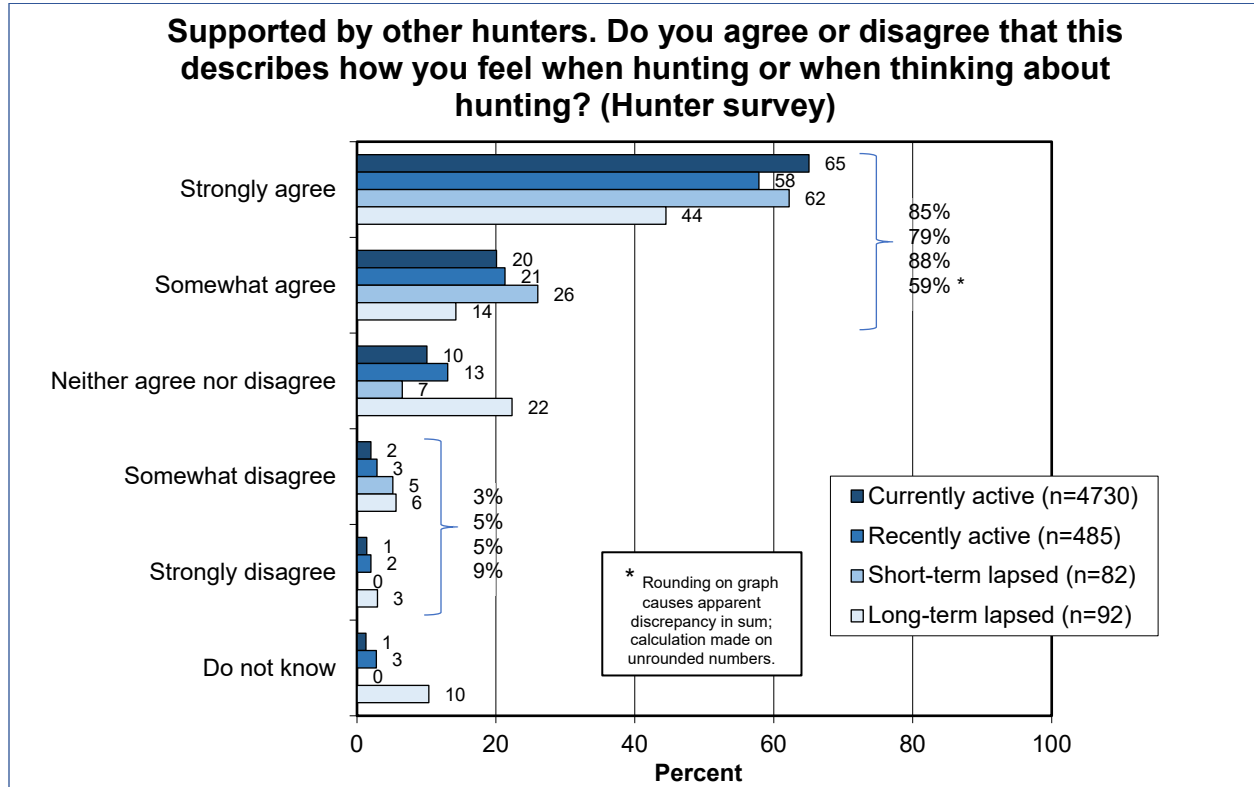


(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting. (West) (Hunter survey)

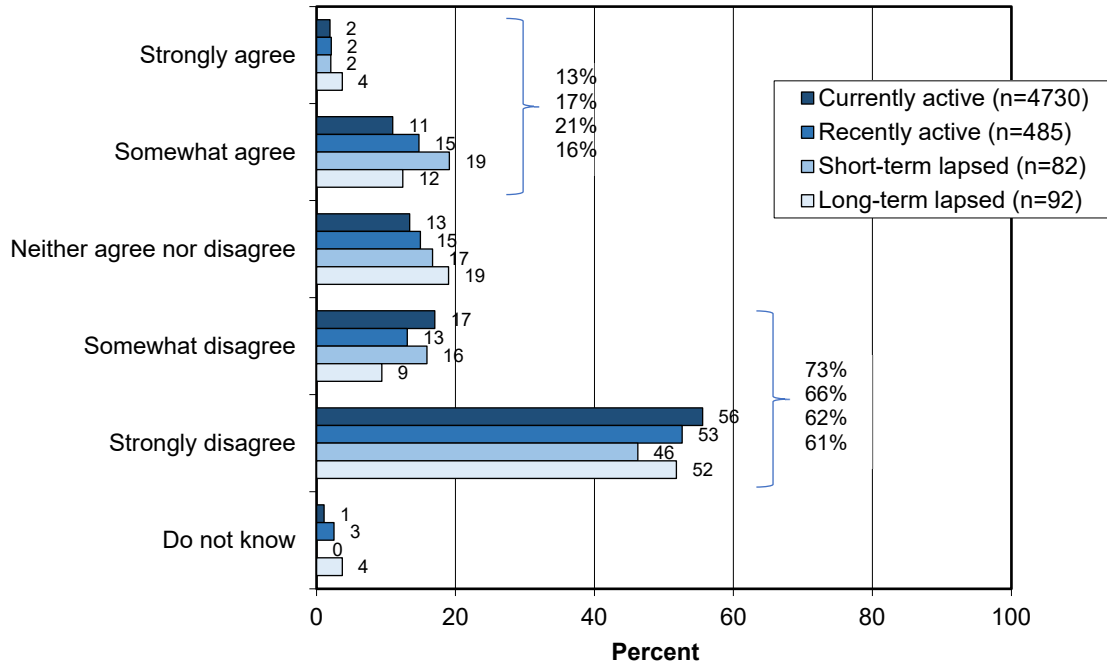
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know



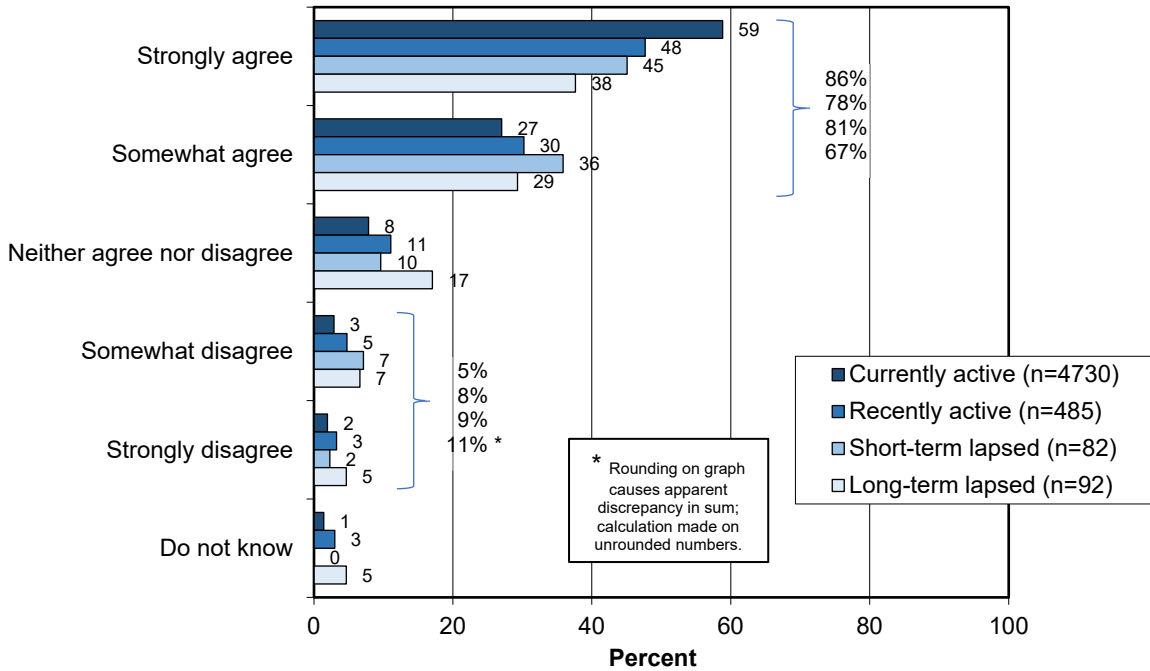
This series of questions was examined in more detail according to participation level. Currently active hunters are more likely than their counterparts to feel supported by others, excited, competent, and successful. They are slightly less likely to feel nervous or intimidated.



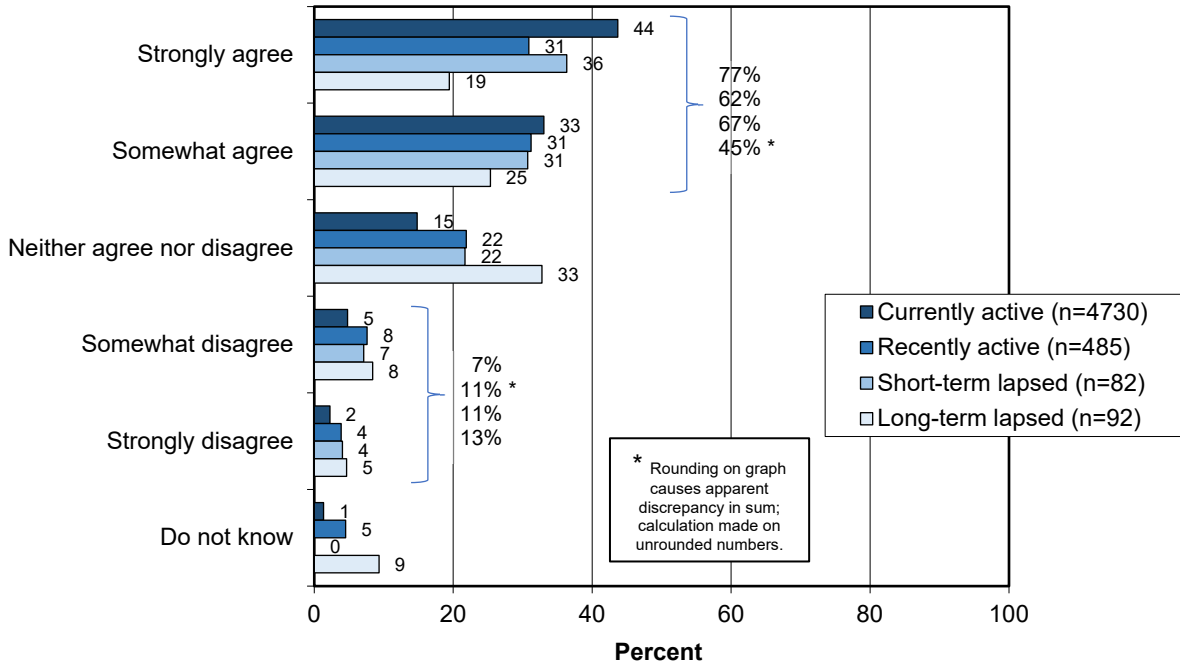
**Intimidated. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting?
(Hunter survey)**



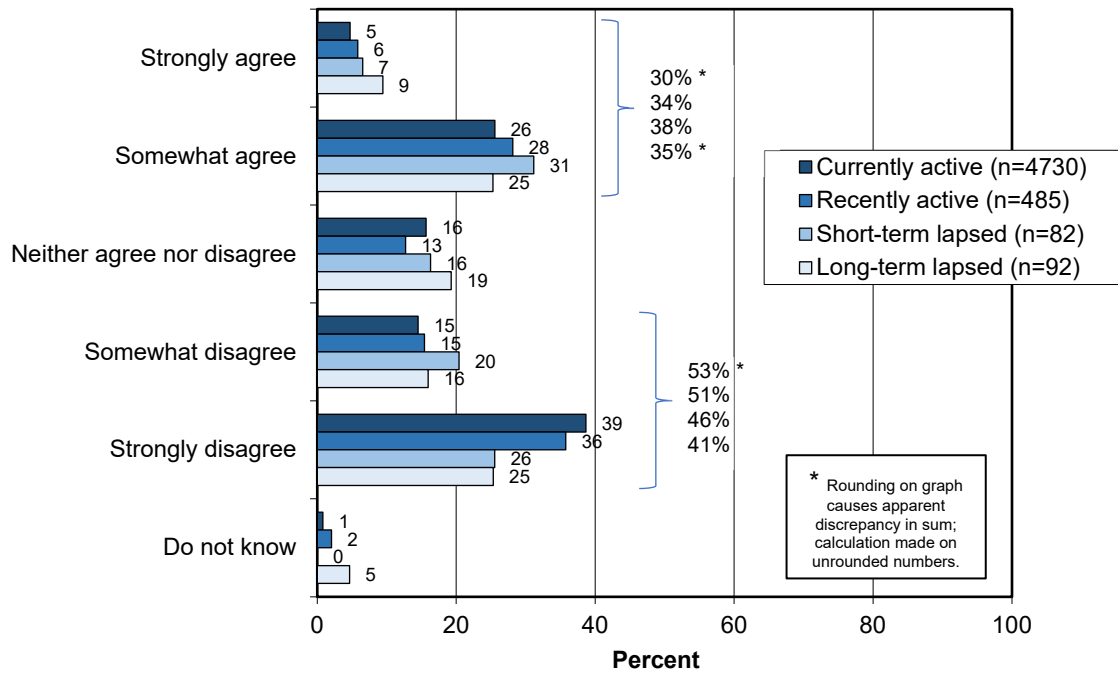
**Competent. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting?
(Hunter survey)**



Successful. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting? (Hunter survey)



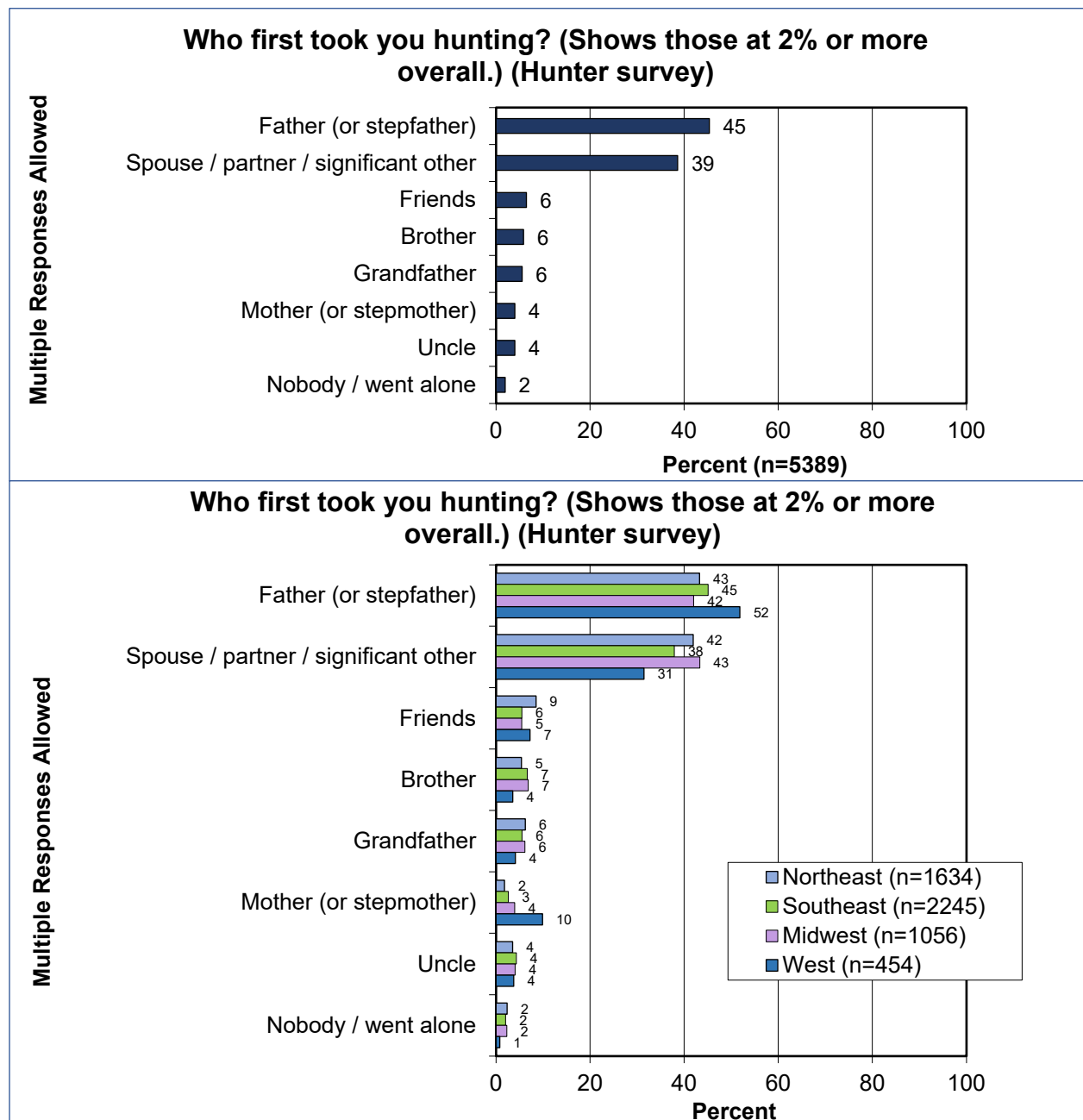
Nervous. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when hunting or when thinking about hunting? (Hunter survey)



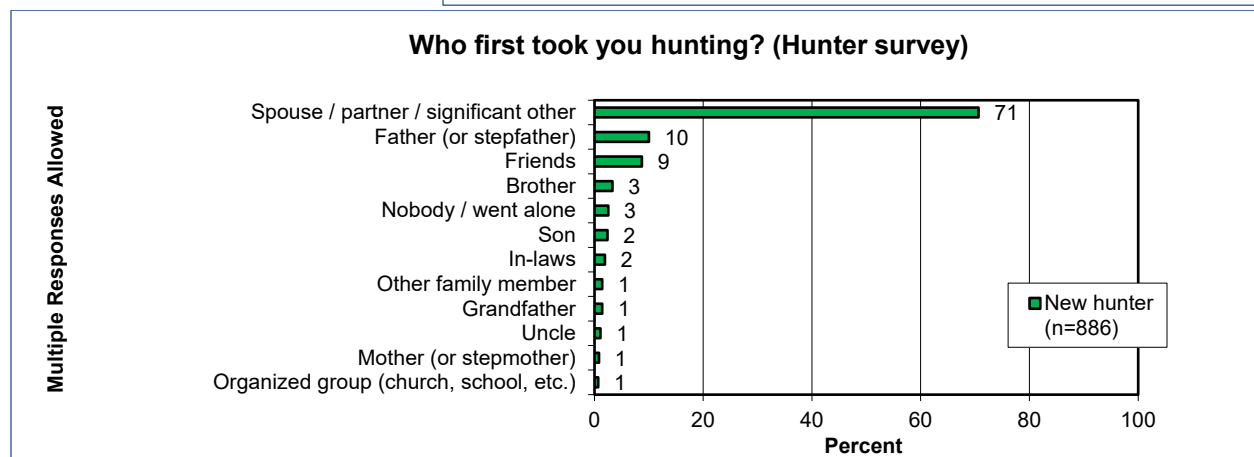
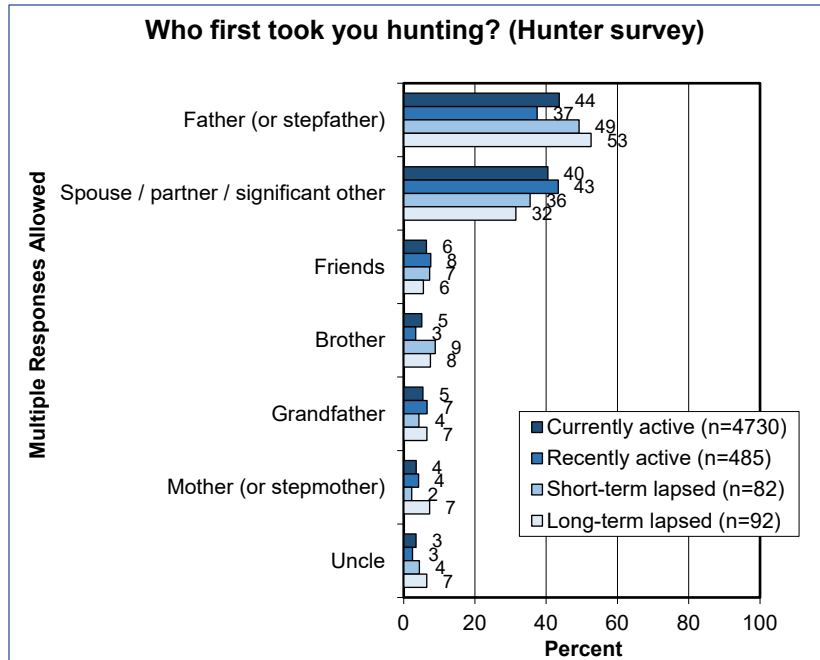
MENTORING AND SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED HUNTING

This section starts by looking at who took female hunters on their first hunting trips, then examines their experiences on those initial hunting trips. The section also looks at support that has been given to female hunters, as well as reasons that they have continued to hunt.

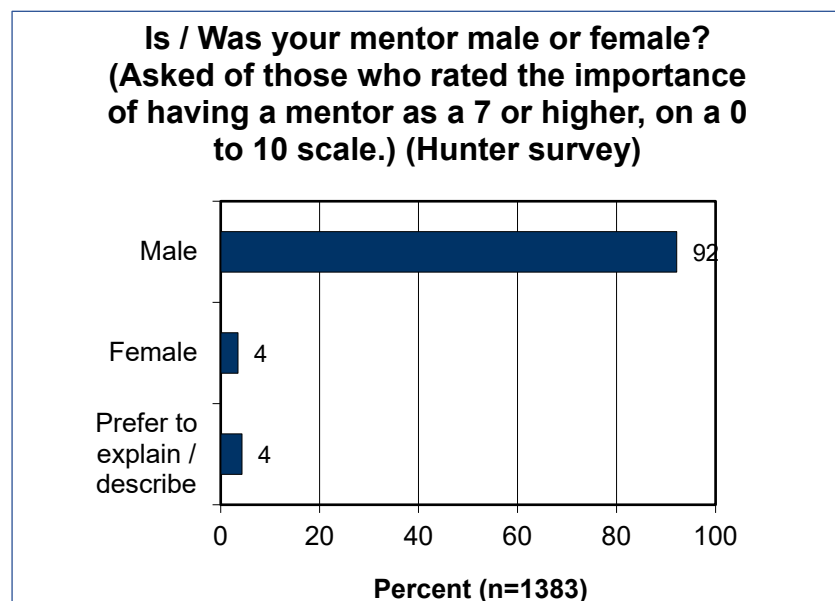
Women hunters most commonly first hunted with their father or spouse—the top mentors by far. Smaller percentages first went with others as shown in the graph; of note is that 4% first went with their mother. (For legibility, the graphs do not show those at 1% or less, which includes in-laws, sisters, sons, aunts, grandmothers, daughters, nephews, and nieces, as well as organized groups.)

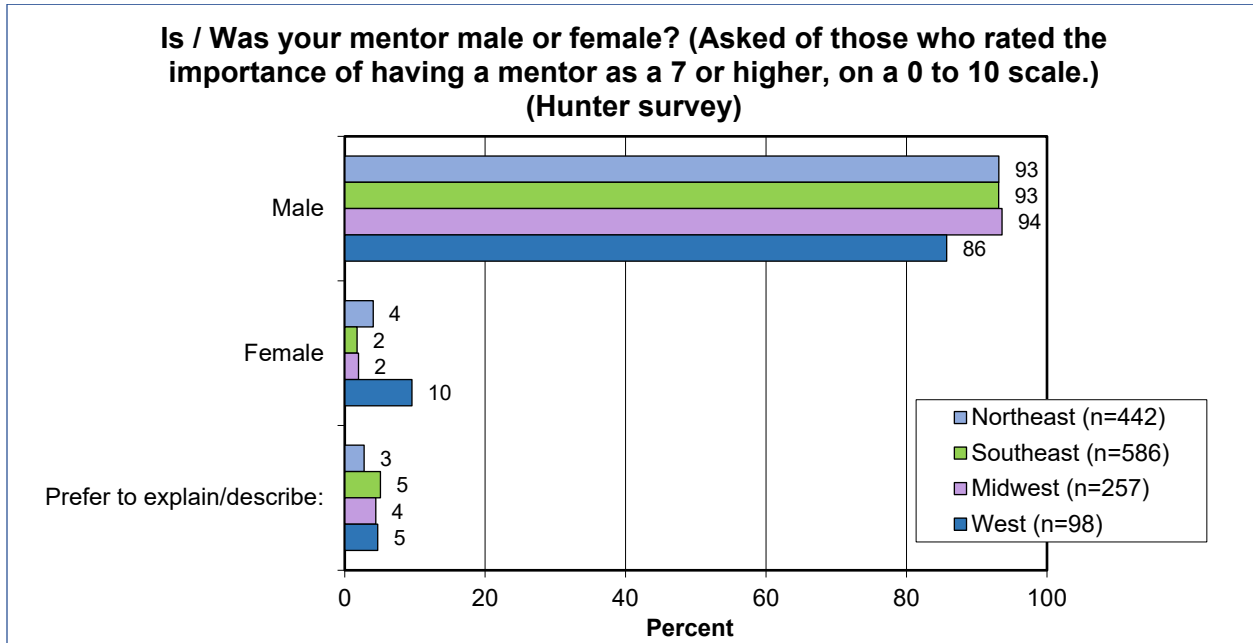


Crosstabulations run on this question reveal that currently active and recently active were more often first taken hunting by their spouse, compared to both groups of lapsed hunters. Another crosstabulation shows that 71% of new women hunters (started within the past 5 years) were first taken by their spouse.

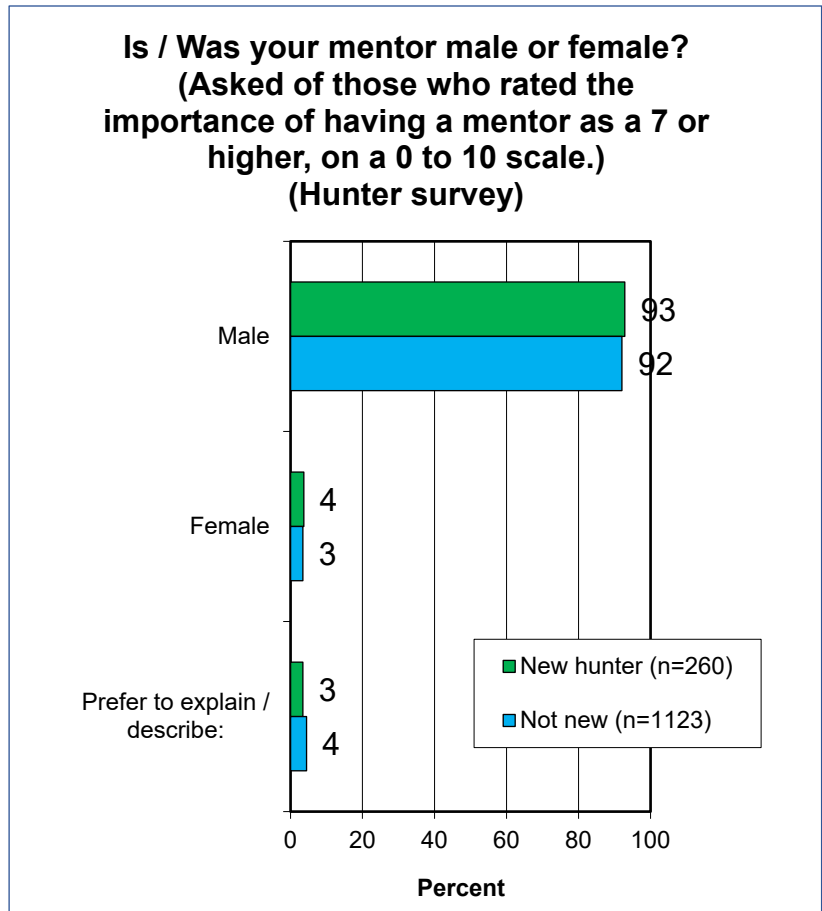


Most mentors to women hunters are male. Those who gave a high rating to the importance of having a hunting mentor to answer questions and give advice were asked in follow up if their mentor was a male or female: 92% indicated that their mentor was male, while 4% indicated that their mentor was female (the remaining did not select either, generally because hunters of both genders mentored them).

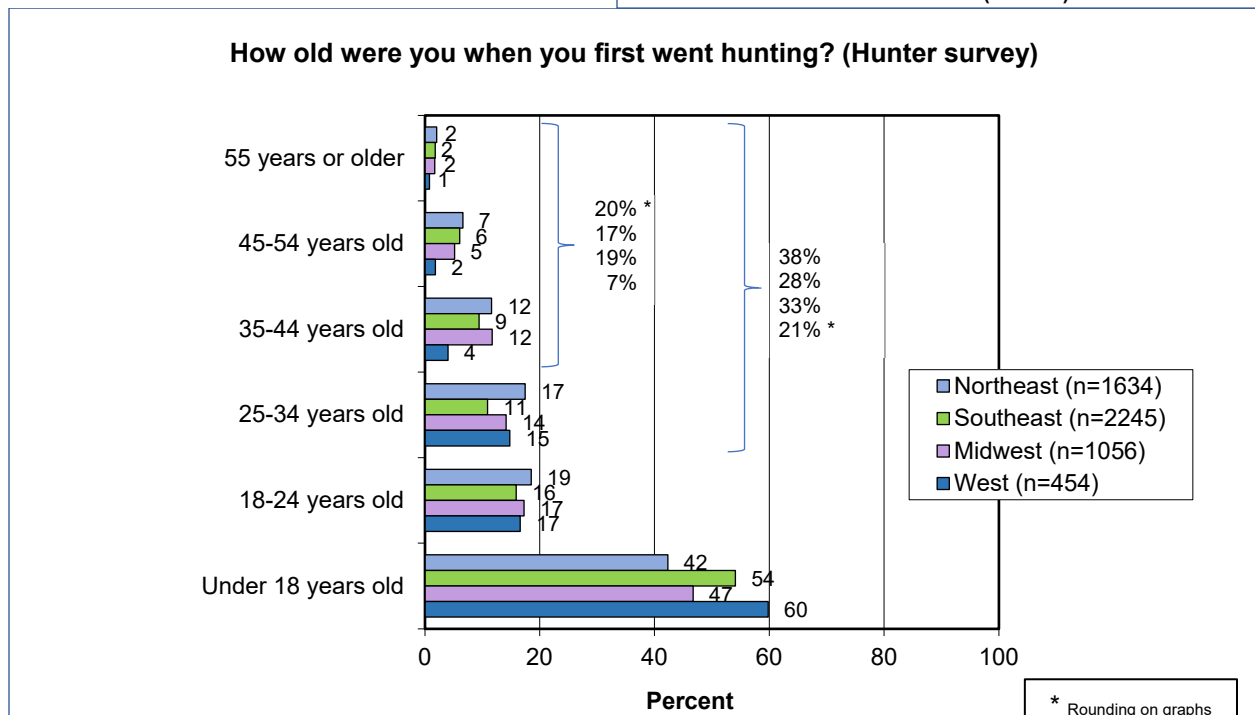
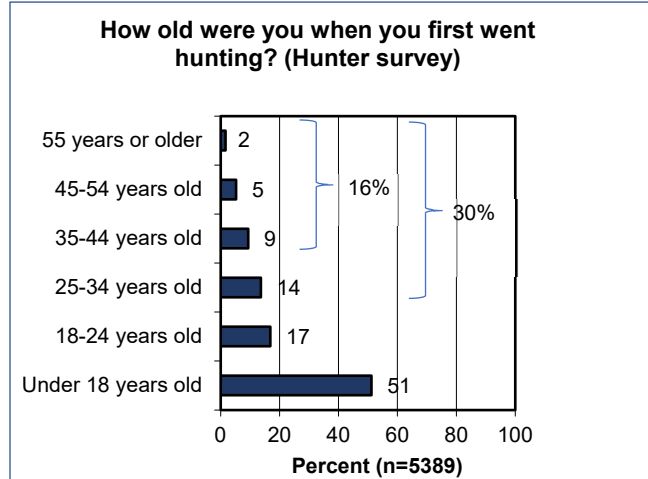




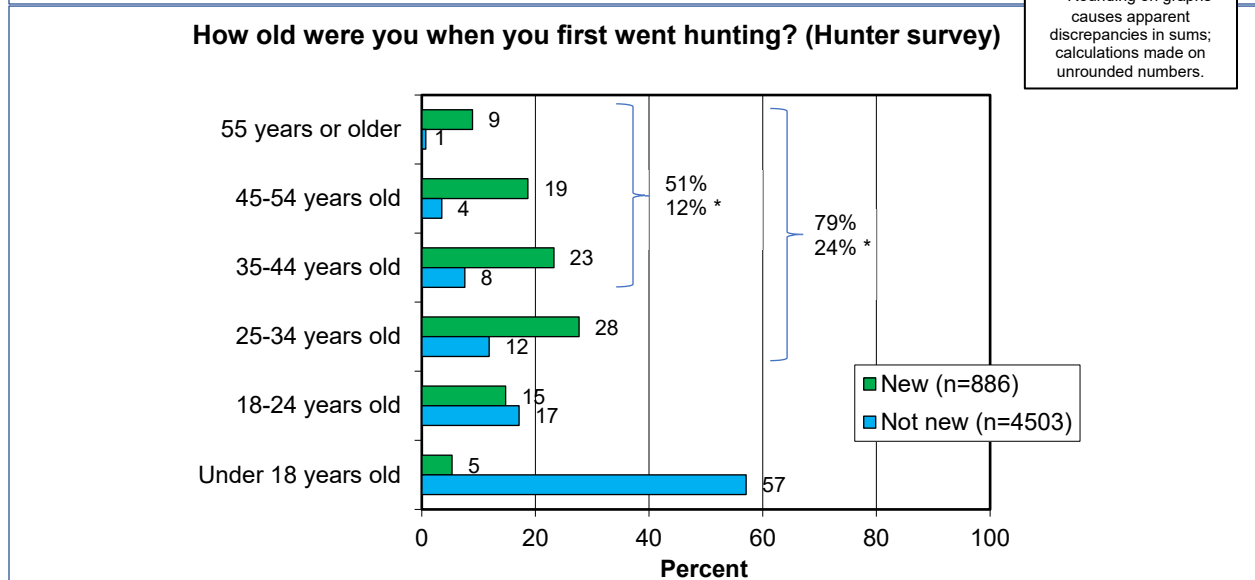
Conjecture was that perhaps there would be a difference between new women hunters and established women hunters, but the analysis found almost no discernable difference.

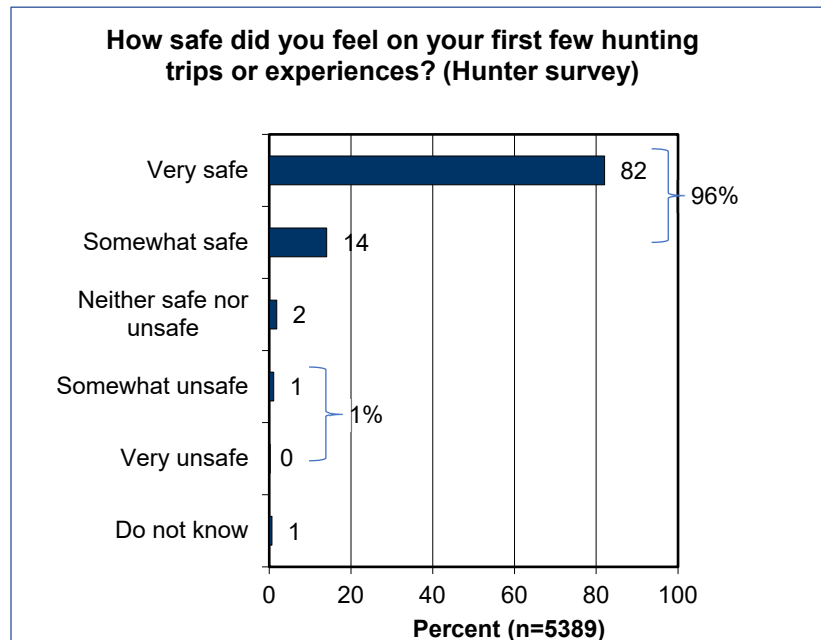


The age of initiation into hunting also plays a part in the likelihood to continue hunting. The first graph shows the baseline data on age of initiation overall and regionally. Of more interest is the crosstabulation by being new/not new to hunting. Many new hunters started hunting rather later in their lives, compared to the established hunters. Indeed, half of them (51%) started at the age of 35 or later, and an overwhelming majority (79%) started at 25 or later.



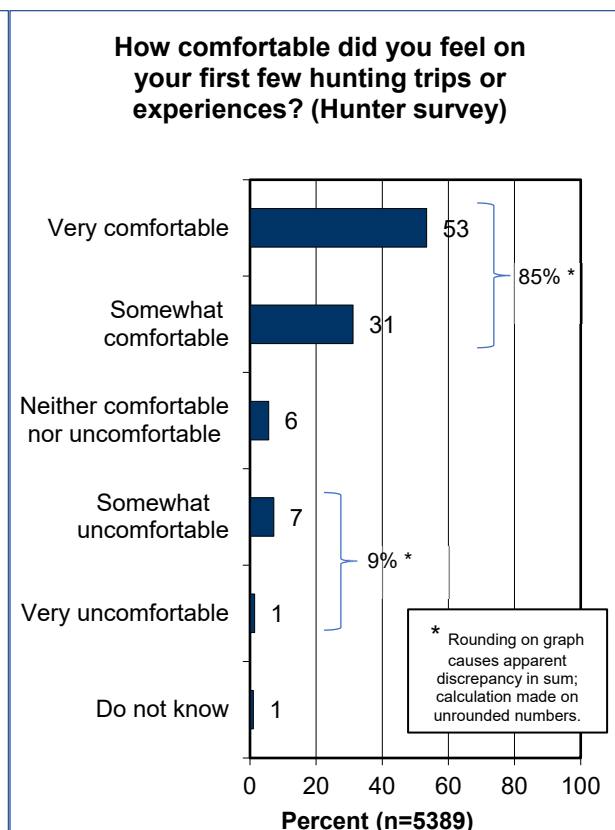
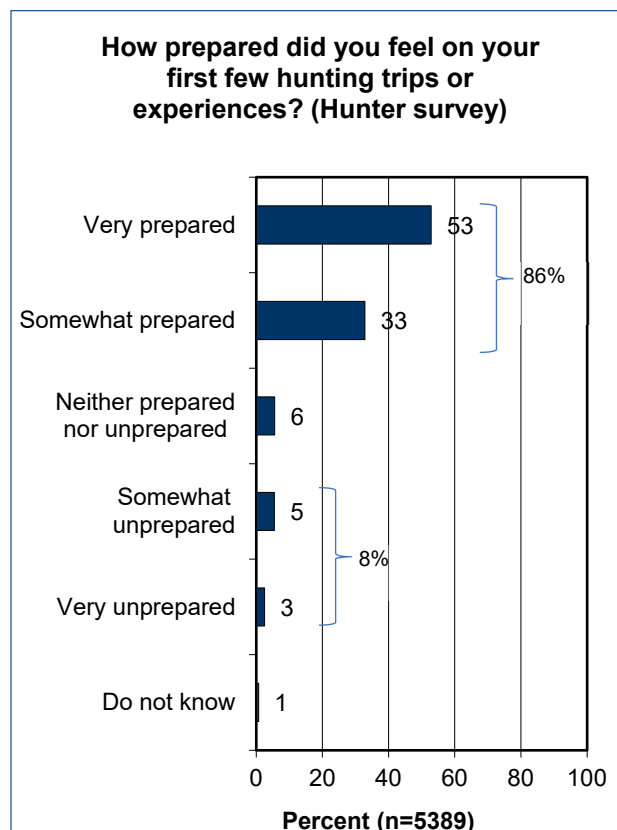
* Rounding on graphs causes apparent discrepancies in sums; calculations made on unrounded numbers.

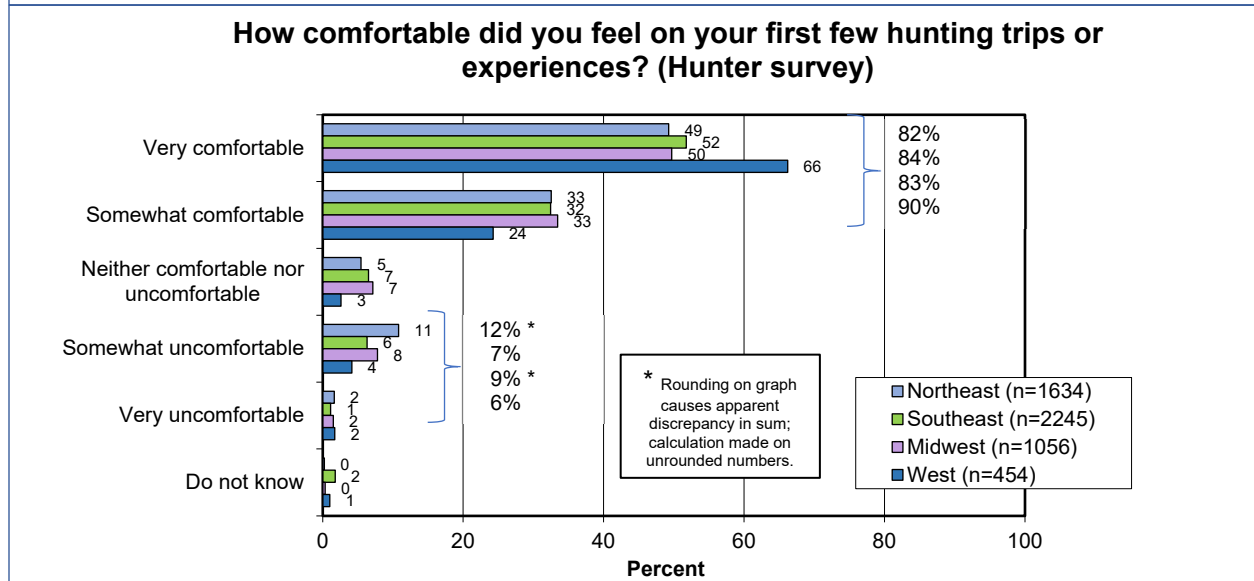
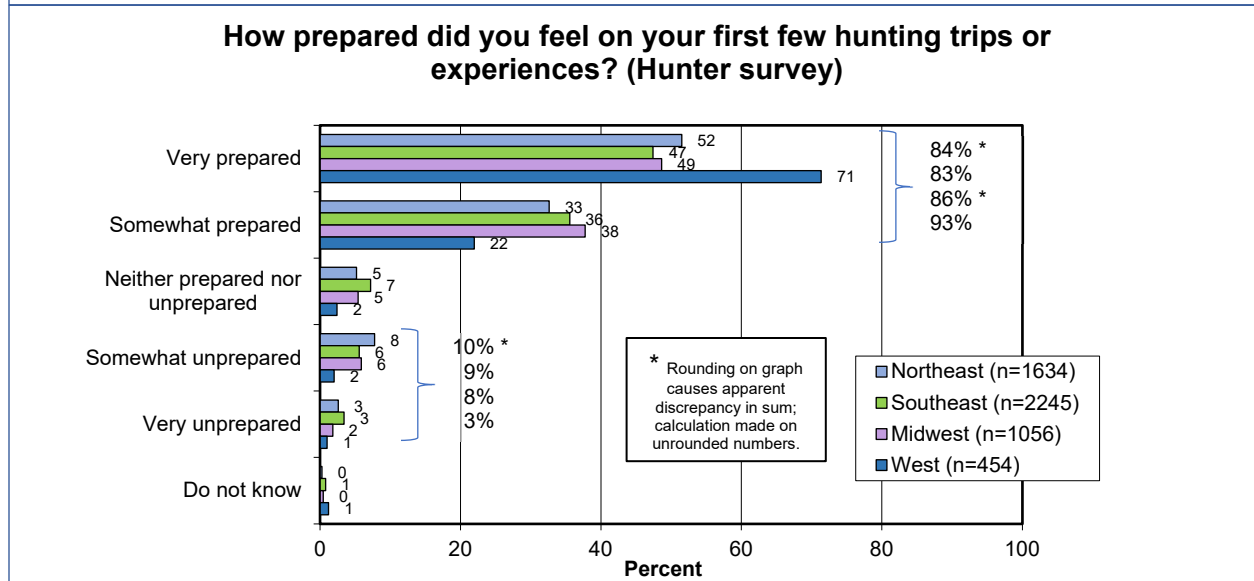
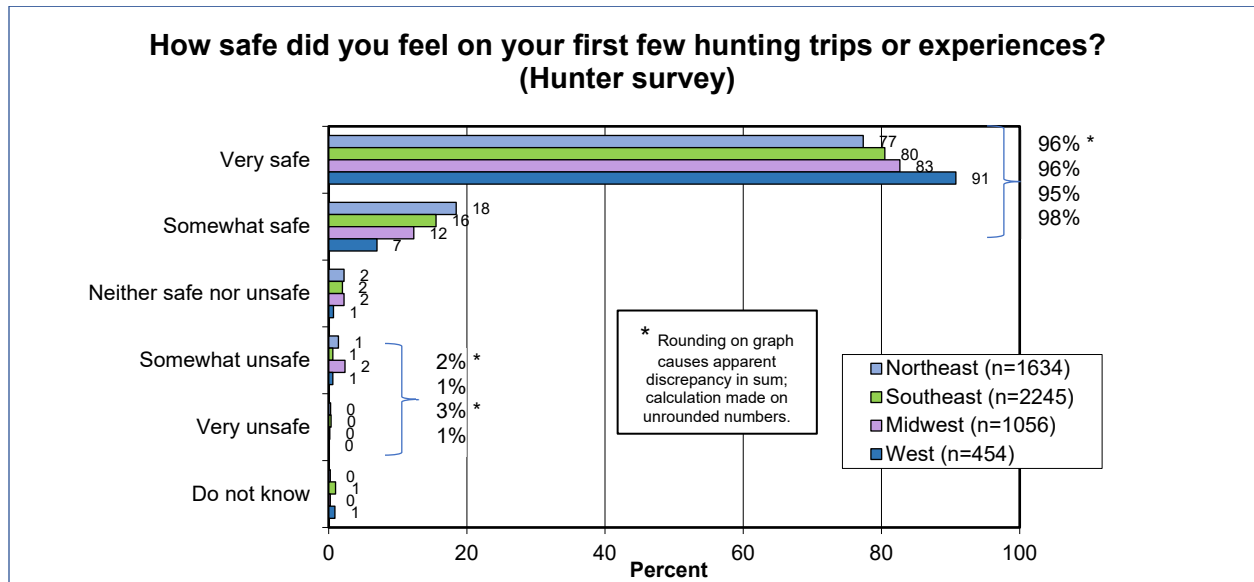




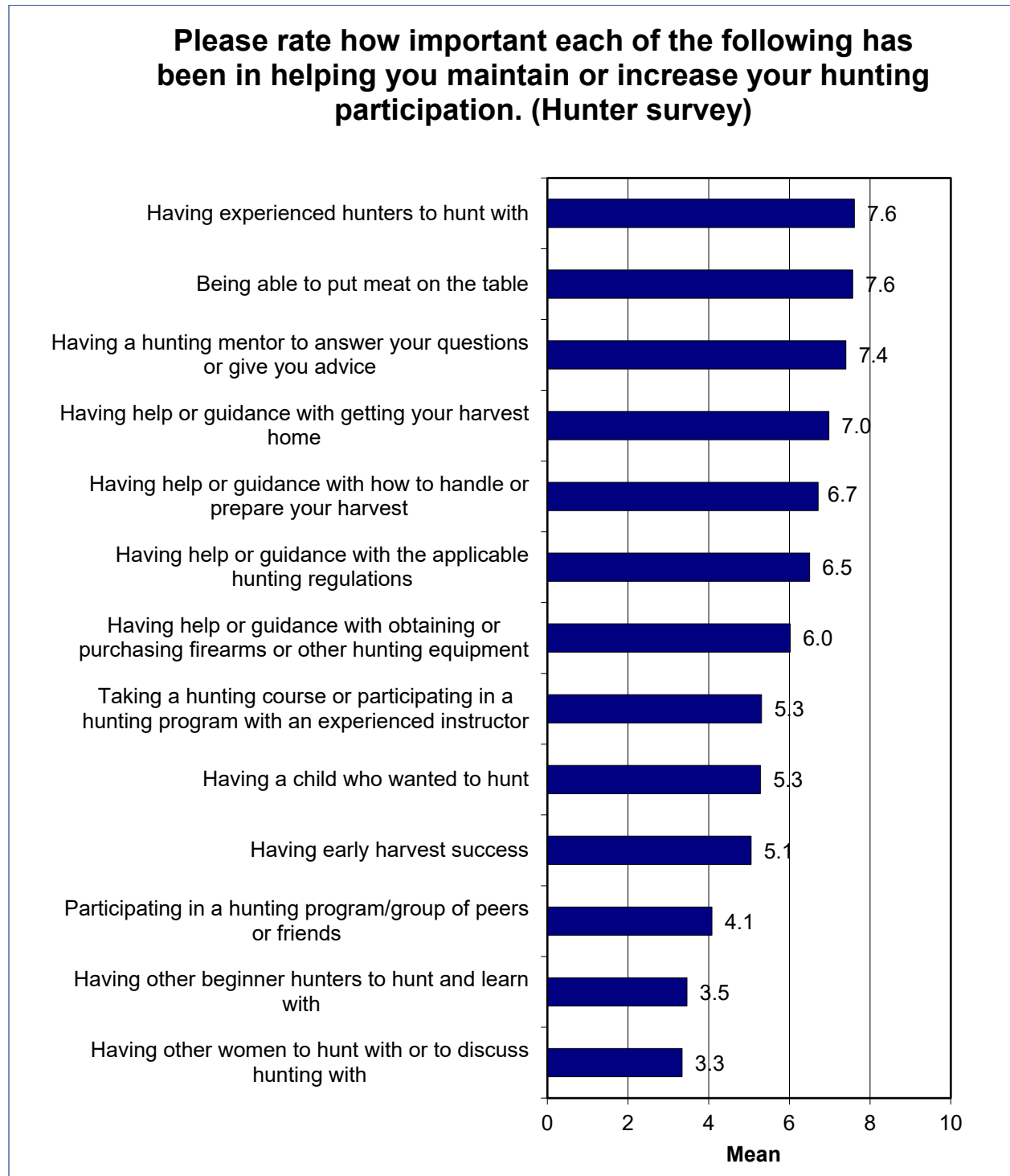
Three questions examined those initial hunting experiences, asking women hunters to indicate their level of being comfortable, safe, and prepared during those first hunts. Overall results are presented first, suggesting that safety is not an issue, as the vast majority of women hunters indicated feeling *very safe* (82%), with most of the remaining feeling *somewhat safe* (14%) rather than unsafe (*very* and *somewhat* unsafe sum to only 1%).

On the other hand, the feeling of being prepared and the level of comfort are not rated as highly. Although the majority of women hunters felt very prepared and very comfortable (53% for both), considerable percentages were only at the *somewhat* level (about a third for each), and 8% felt *very* or *somewhat* unprepared, while 9% felt *very* or *somewhat* uncomfortable. The regional results are shown on the following page. West Region respondents felt particularly safe, prepared, and comfortable.



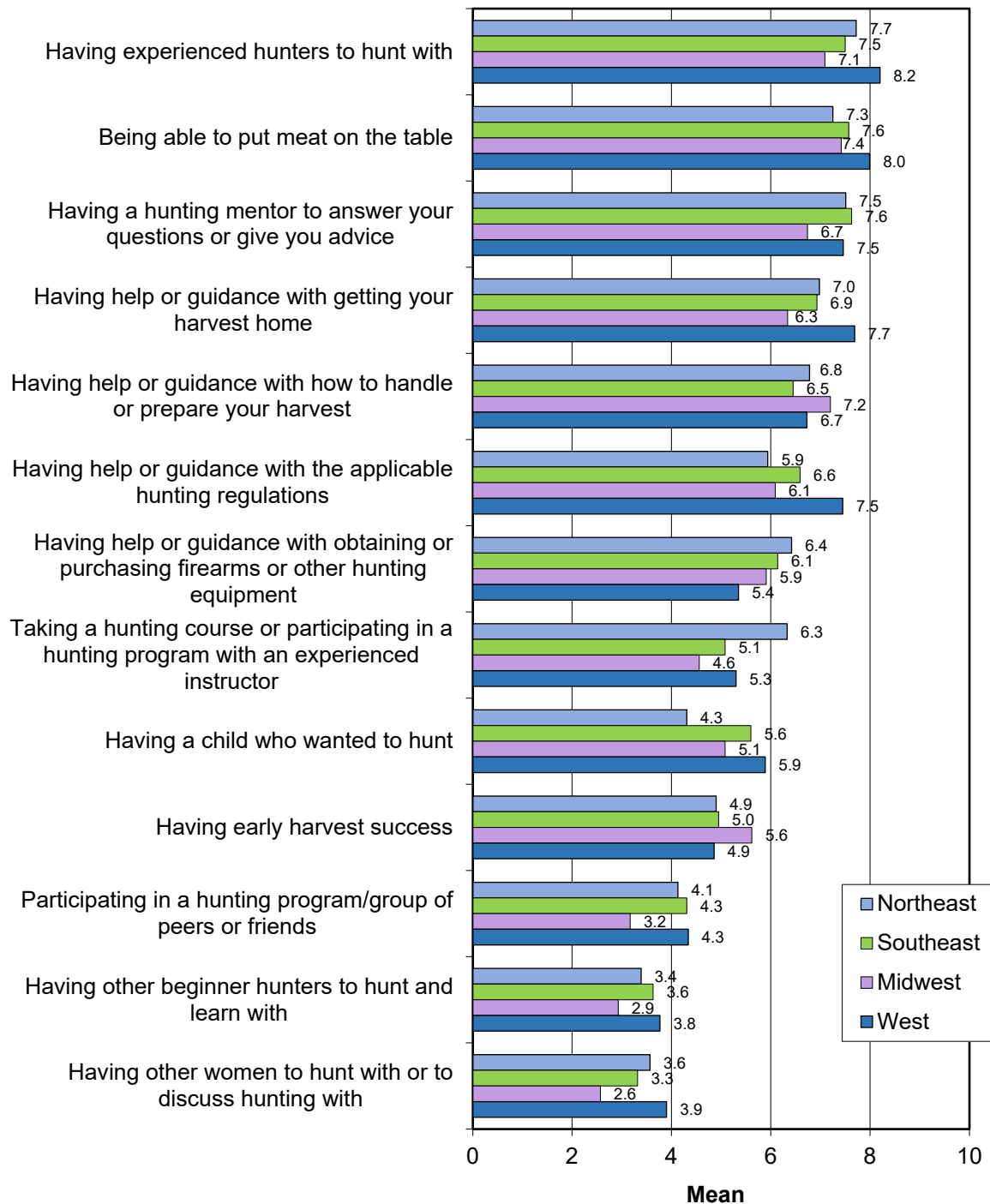


Women hunters were presented with a series of 13 items and were asked to rate how important each has been in helping them maintain or increase their hunting participation, on a scale of 0 to 10. At the top are three items, two that relate to mentoring (having experienced hunters to hunt with and having a hunting mentor to answer questions and give advice) and the other that relates to food (being able to put meat on the table). The next two down relate to handling and preparing the harvest.



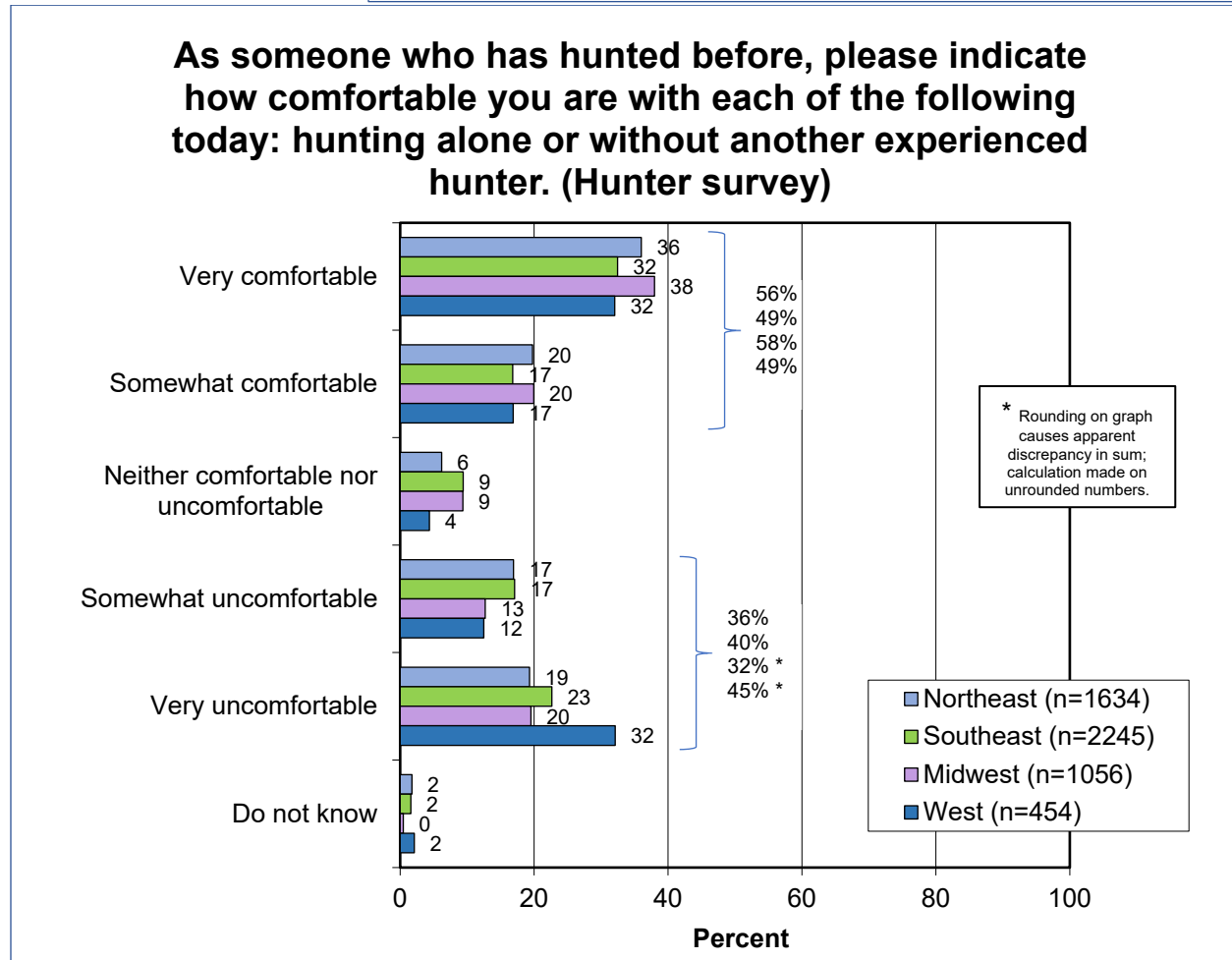
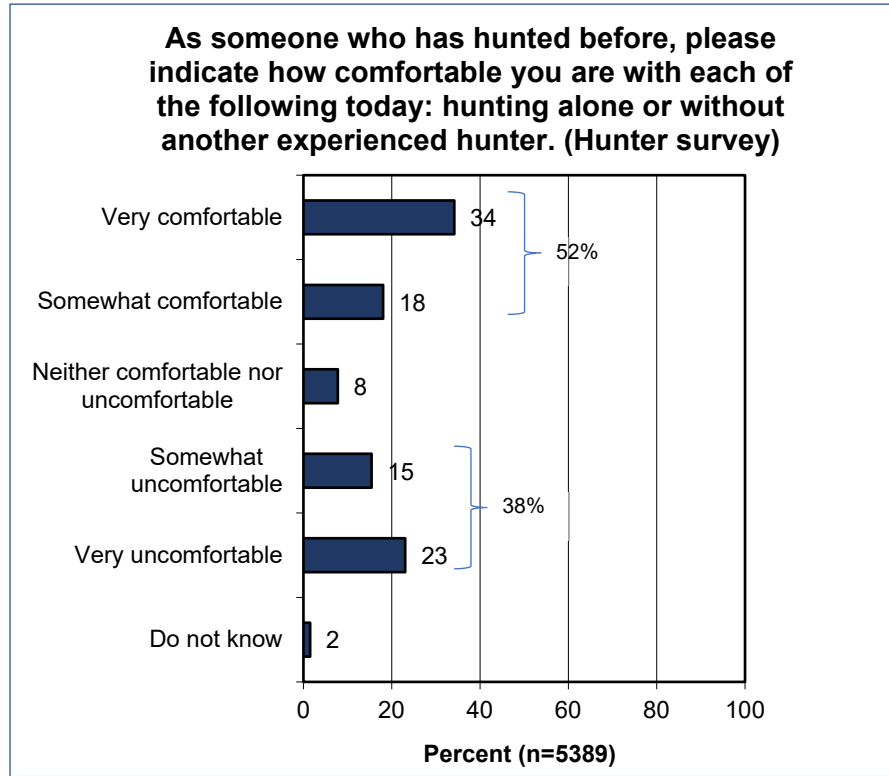
Question used a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important.

Please rate how important each of the following has been in helping you maintain or increase your hunting participation. (Hunter survey)

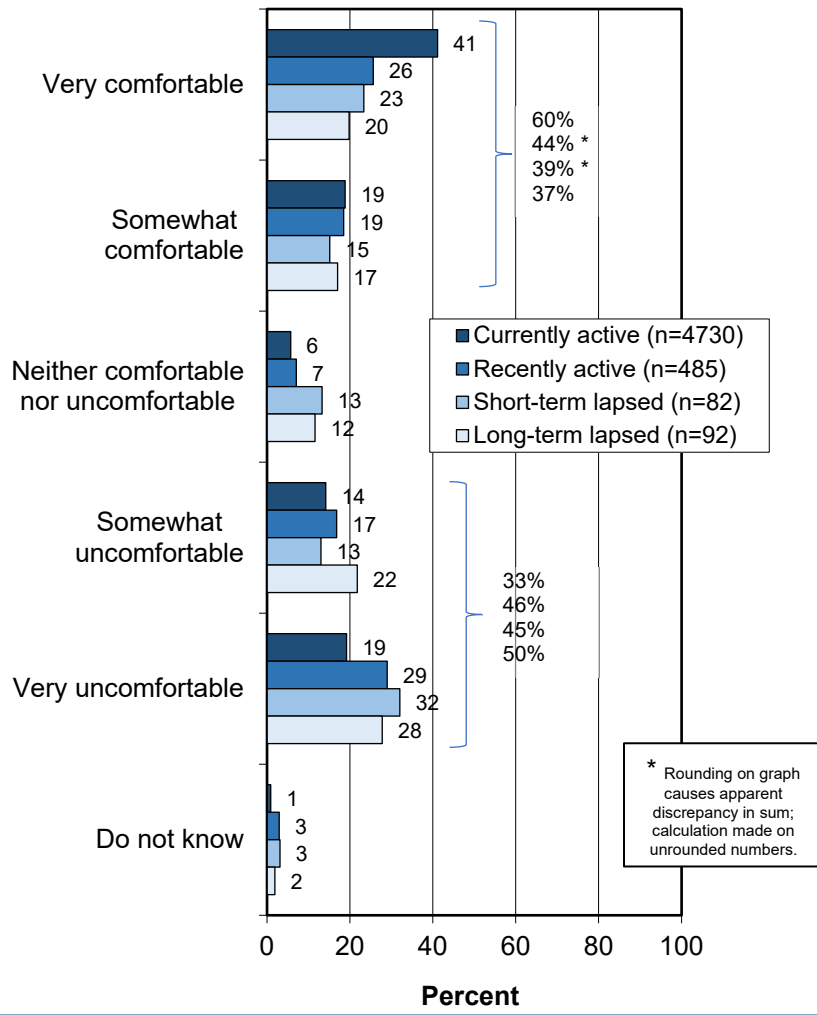


Question used a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important.

One question asked about how comfortable respondents were with hunting alone or without an experienced hunter, and the slight majority (52%) are comfortable with doing so; however, 38% are uncomfortable doing so. Regional results are included as well.

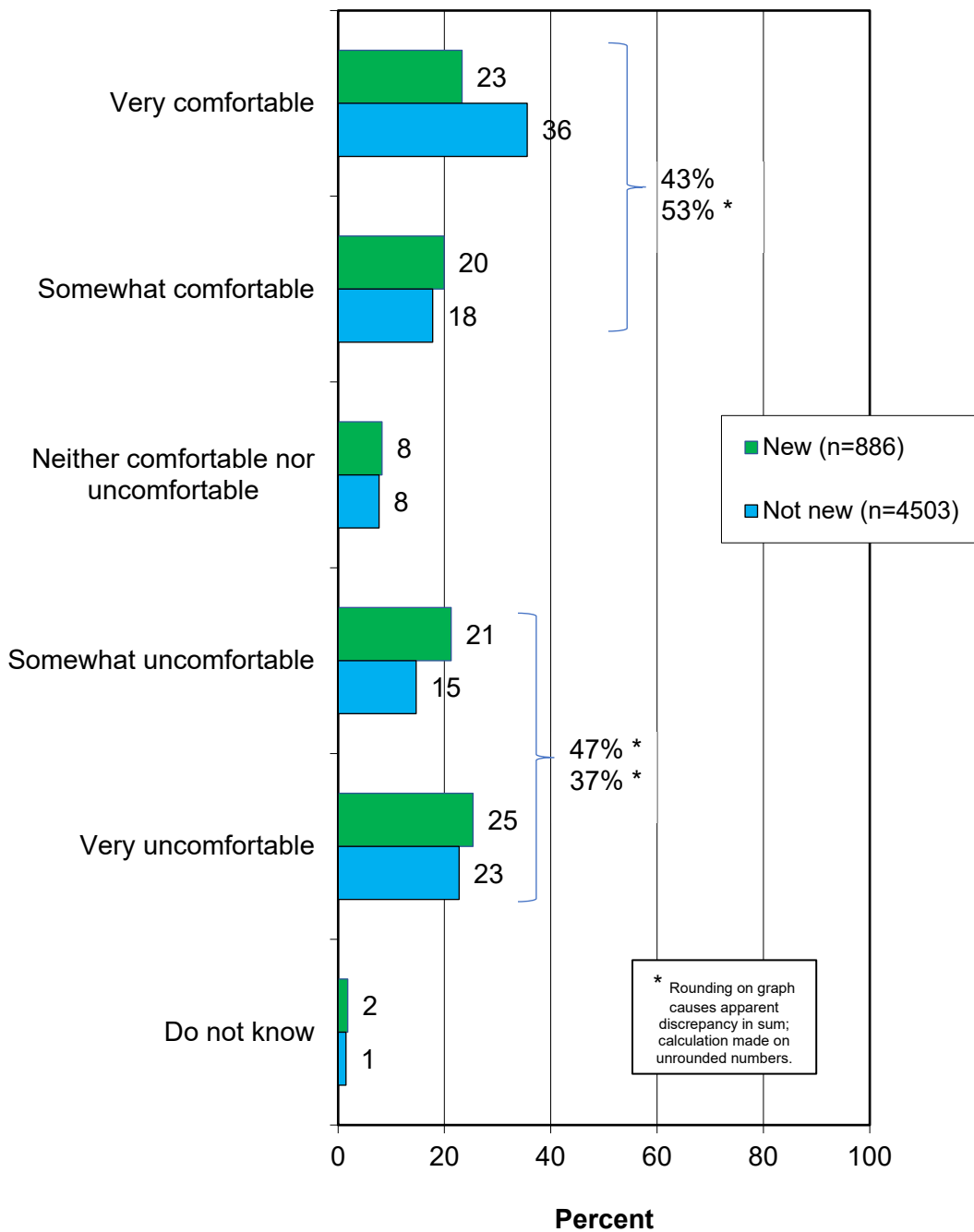


As someone who has hunted before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: hunting alone or without another experienced hunter. (Hunter survey)

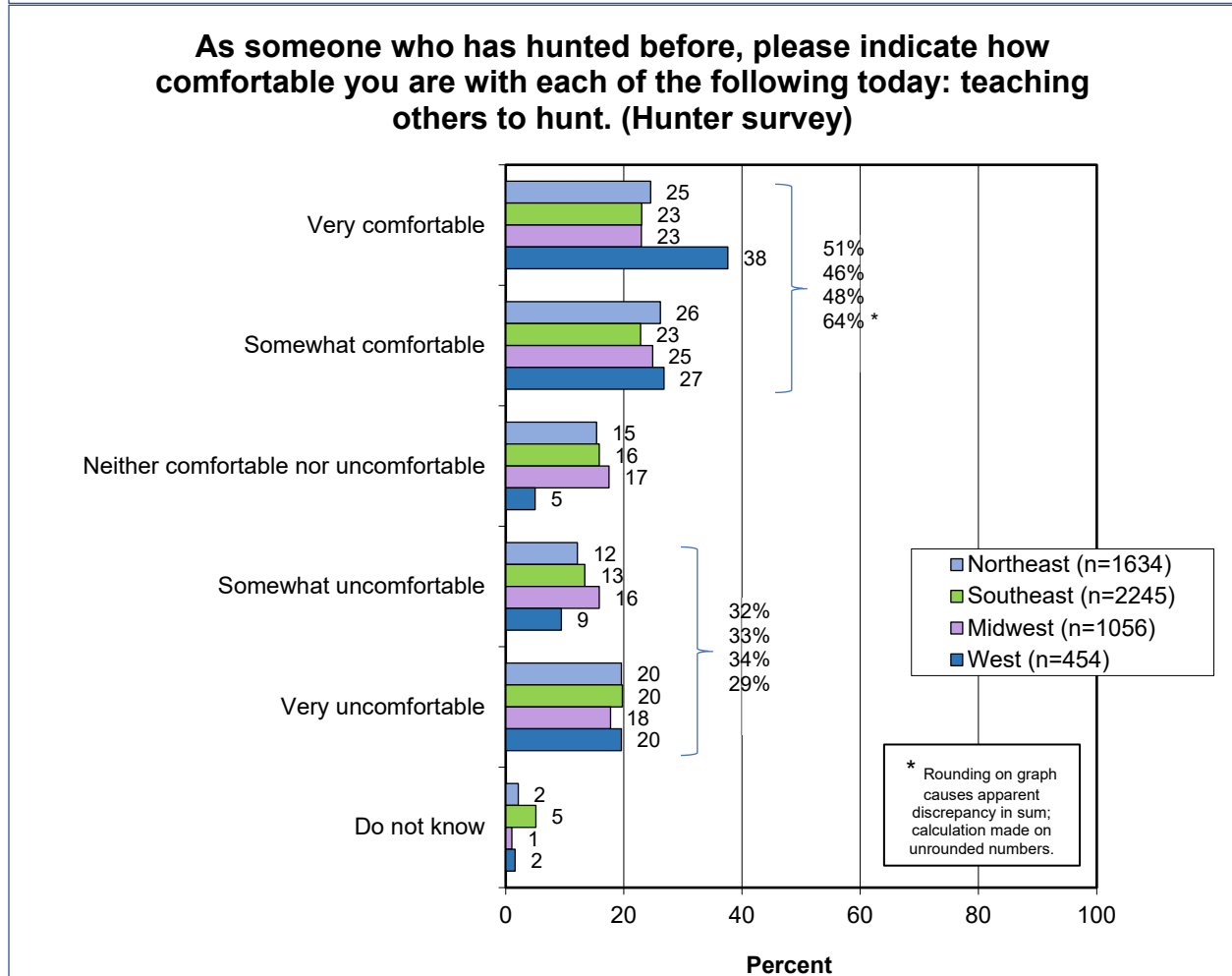
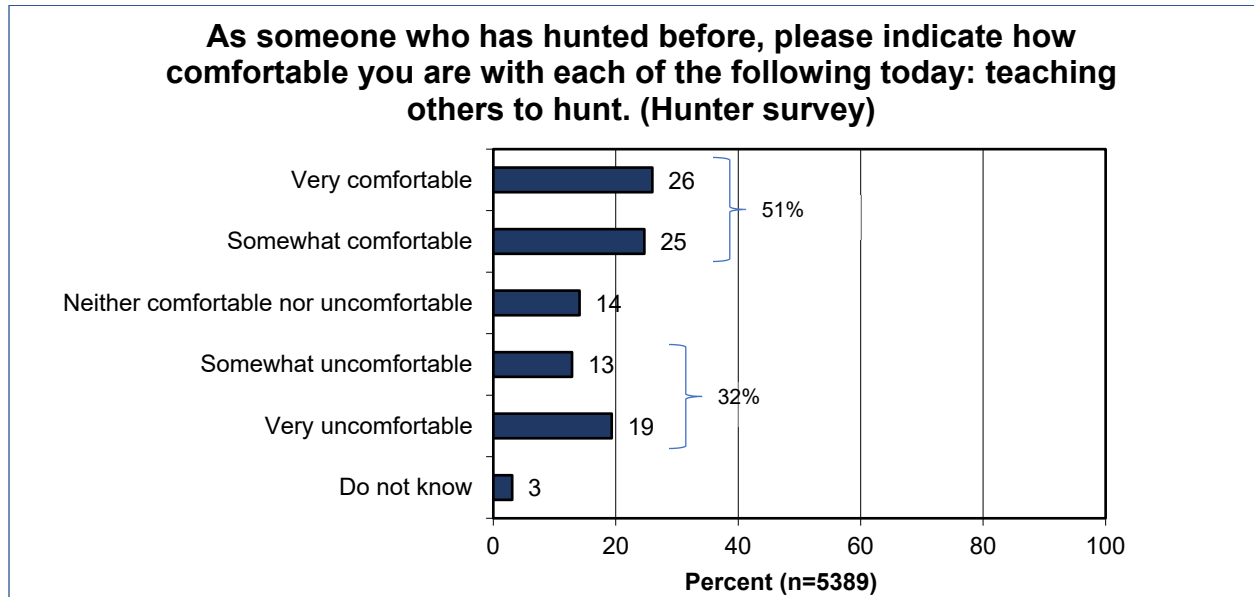


More important than the overall results are the results of crosstabulations on this question. The comfort level is higher among currently active hunters compared to their less active counterparts. This holds true when looking at new women hunters: the new hunters have less comfort than established hunters (as shown on the following page).

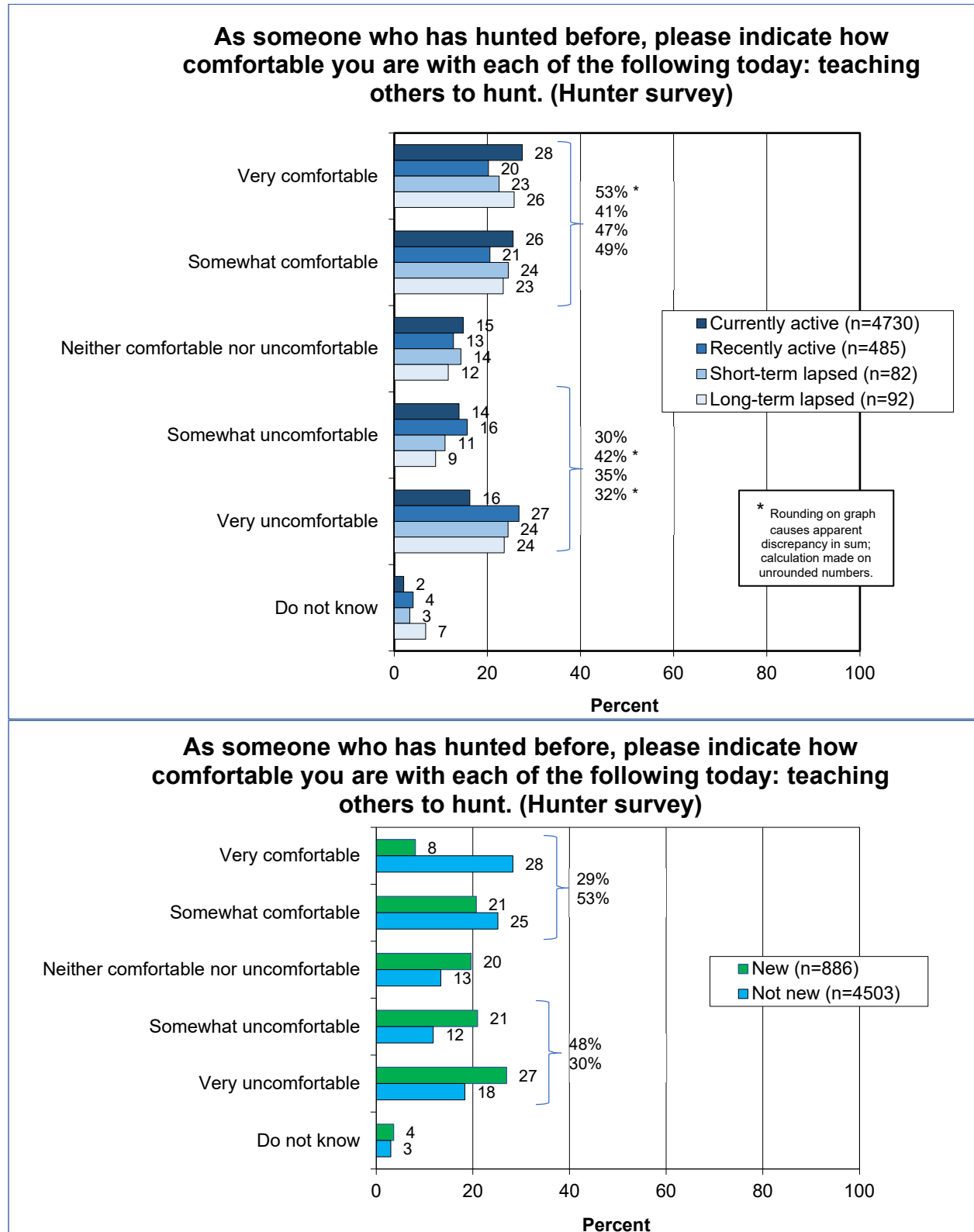
As someone who has hunted before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: hunting alone or without another experienced hunter. (Hunter survey)



The final question examined in this section asked about how comfortable respondents were with teaching others to hunt. The slight majority indicate being comfortable teaching others to hunt: 51% are comfortable. On the other hand, 32% are uncomfortable doing so.

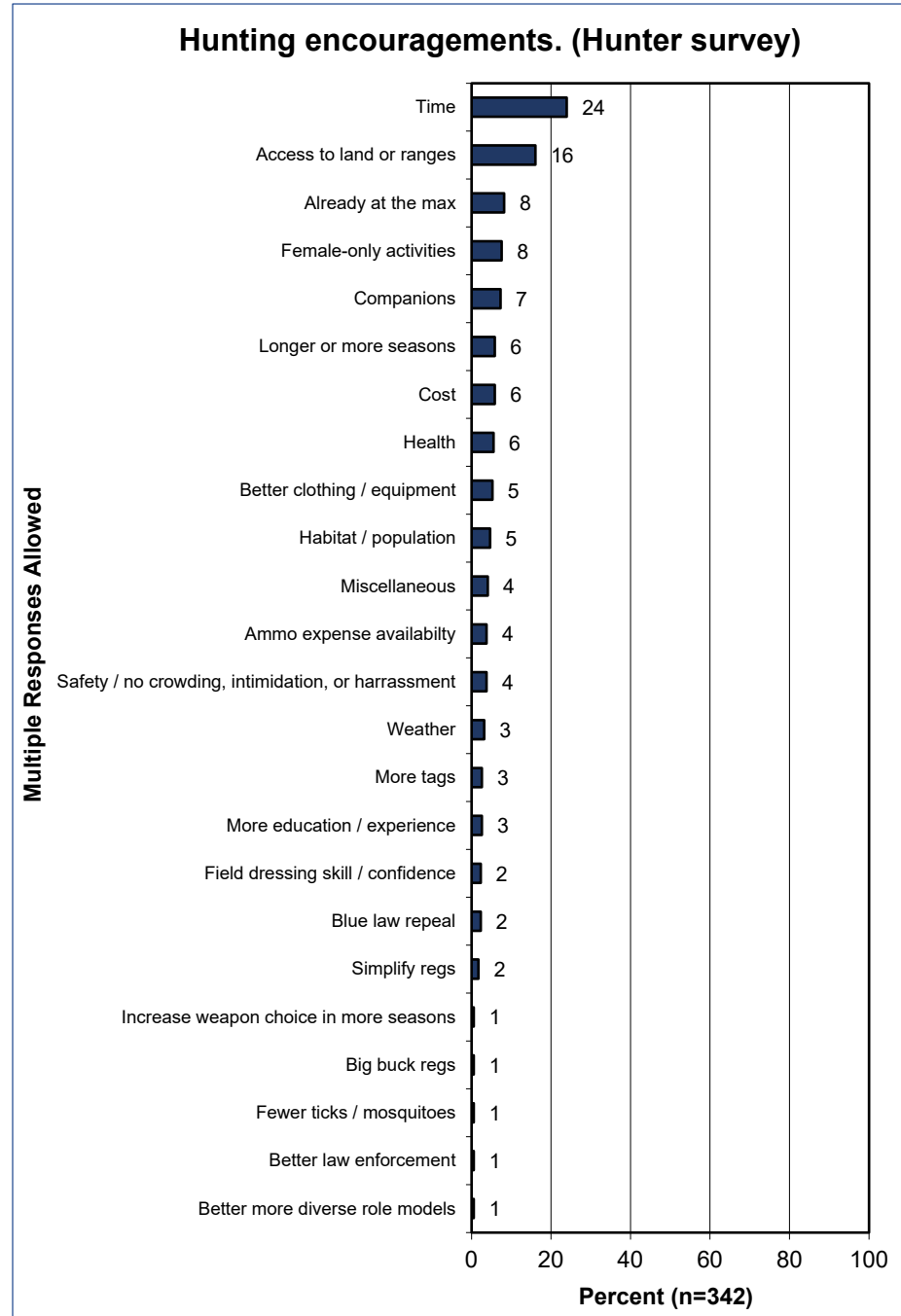


The comfort level is highest among currently active hunters, although the difference is not large. There is, on the other hand, a big difference when looking at new versus not new hunters, with the latter being the most comfortable.



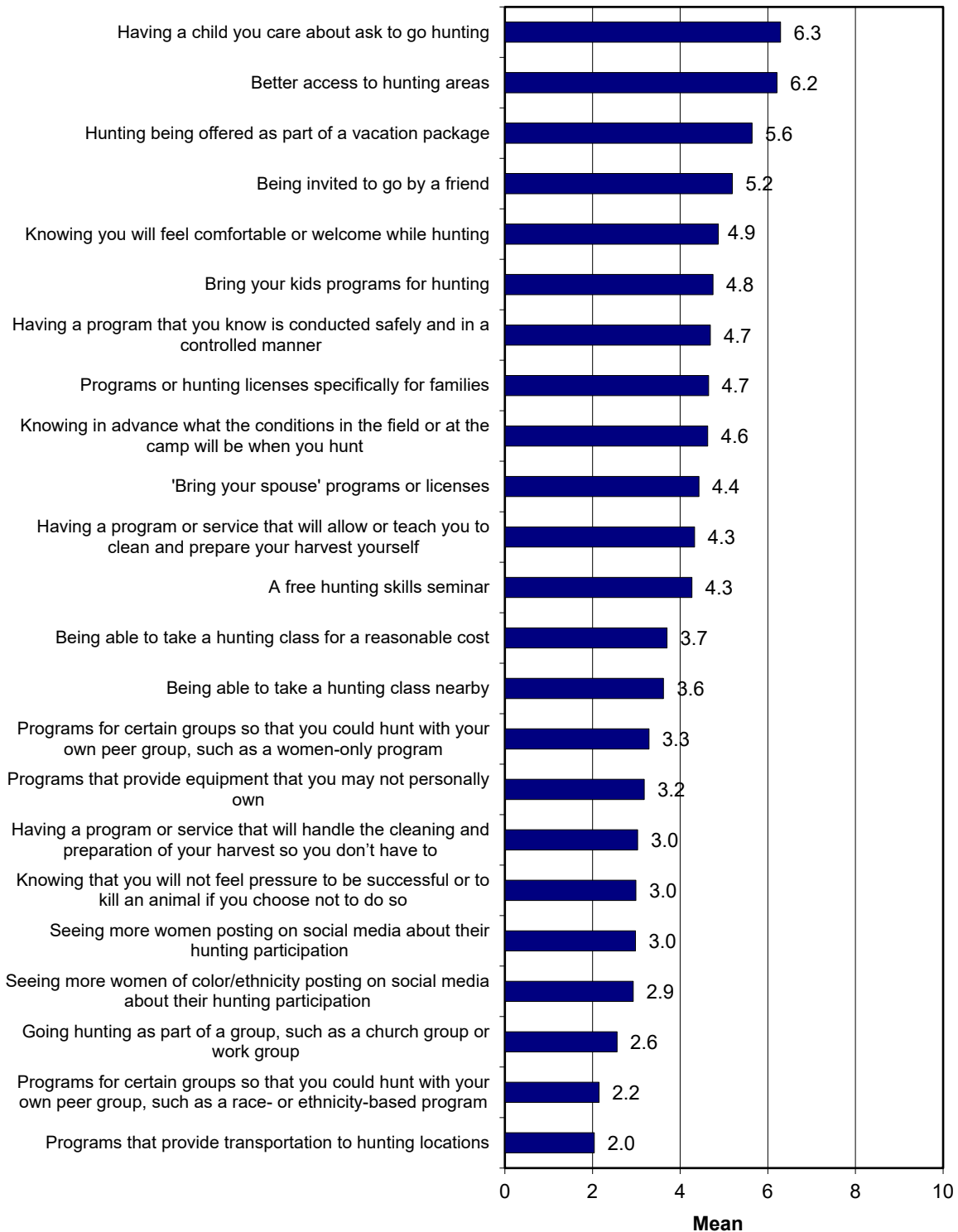
ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN HUNTING

Survey respondents were asked to name any items that would encourage them to hunt or hunt more often, in an open-ended question. The encouragements cited most often are having more time and having access to land for hunting. Also of some importance are female-only activities and having companions to go with. The graph shows the full listing of things that were mentioned in this open-ended question.

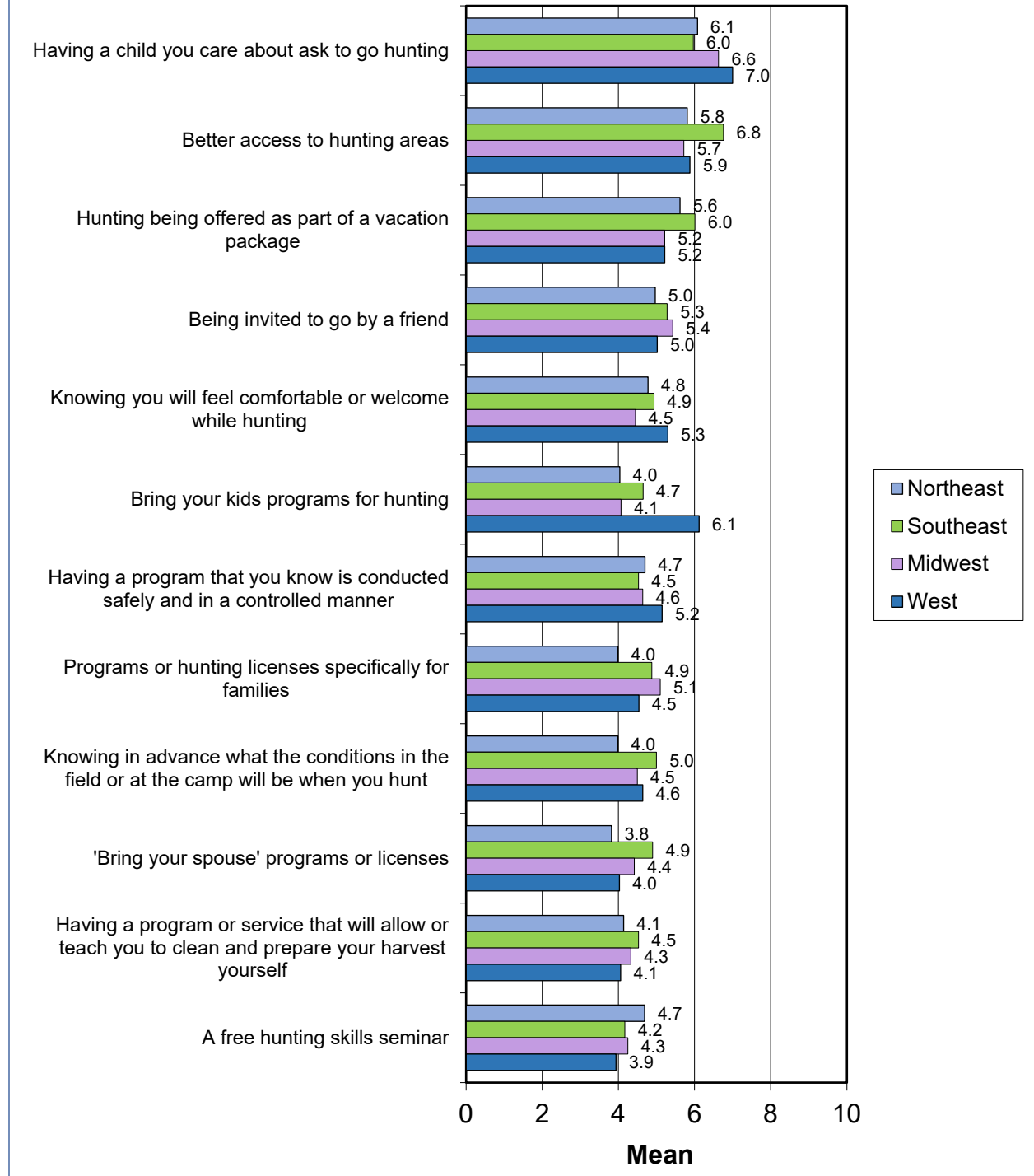


The survey posed a series of 24 potential encouragements for people to hunt or hunt more often, and each survey respondent was randomly assigned 8 of the items and was asked to rate the effectiveness of each as an encouragement to hunt, on a scale of 0 to 10. Four of the encouragements are in the top tier among women hunters/potential hunters: having a child they care about ask to go hunting (mean rating of 6.3), better access (6.2), having hunting offered as part of a vacation package (5.6), and being invited by a friend (5.2). All other mean ratings are below the midpoint of 5.0. Because each graph requires a full page, the results start on the following page, including the regional results.

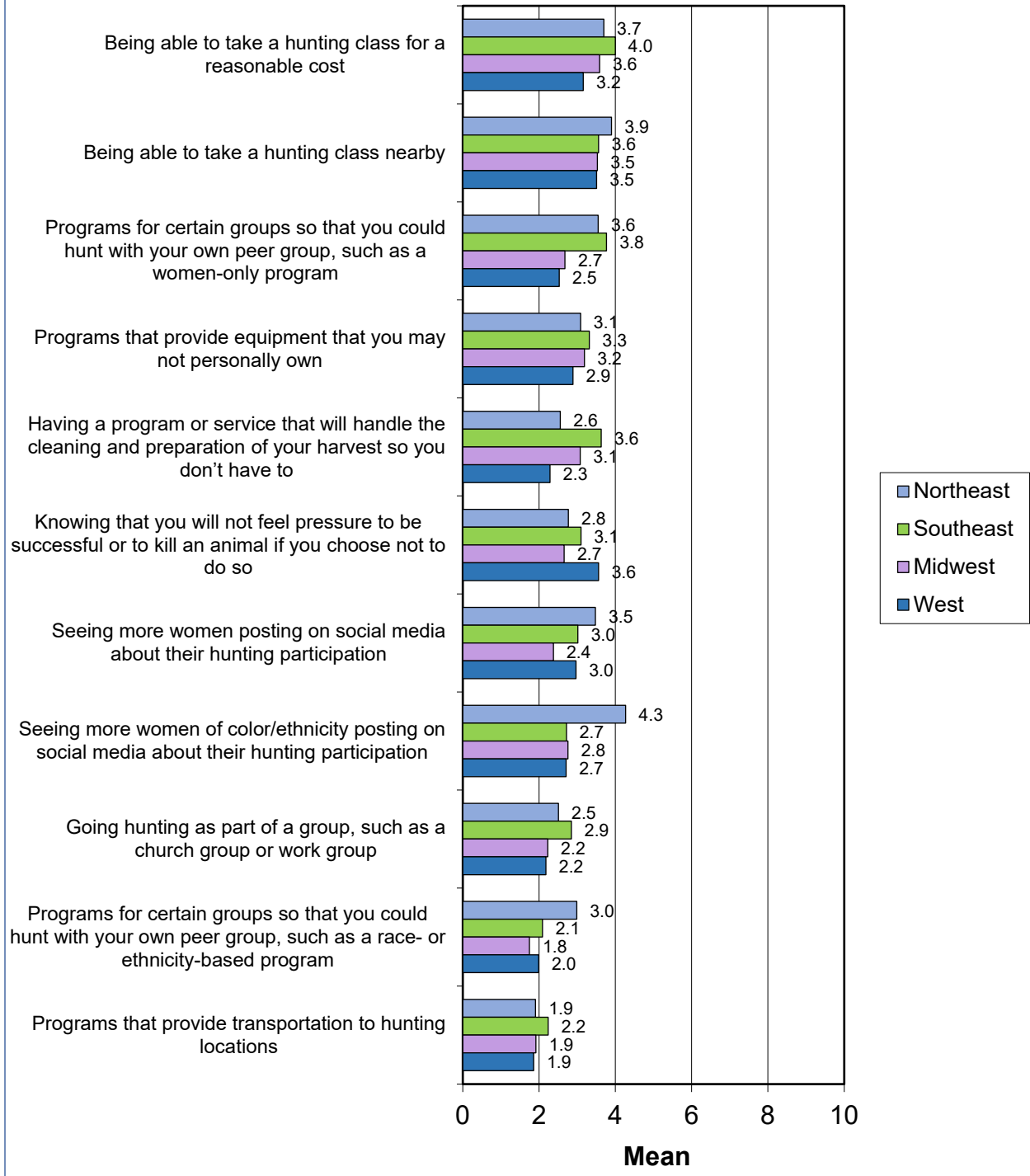
For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to hunt more often or hunt again, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all effective and 10 is extremely effective. (Hunter survey)



For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to hunt more often or hunt again. (Part 1) (Hunter survey)

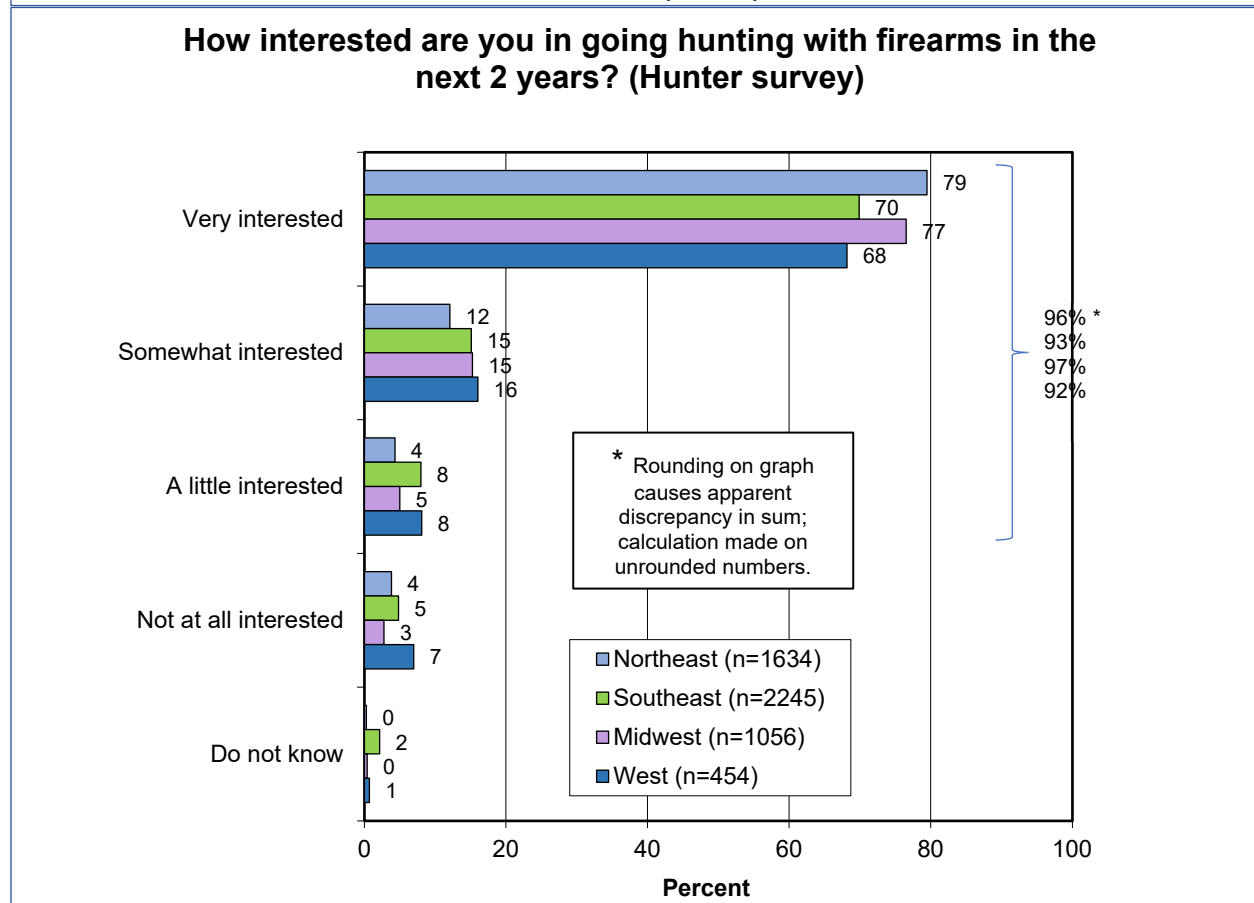
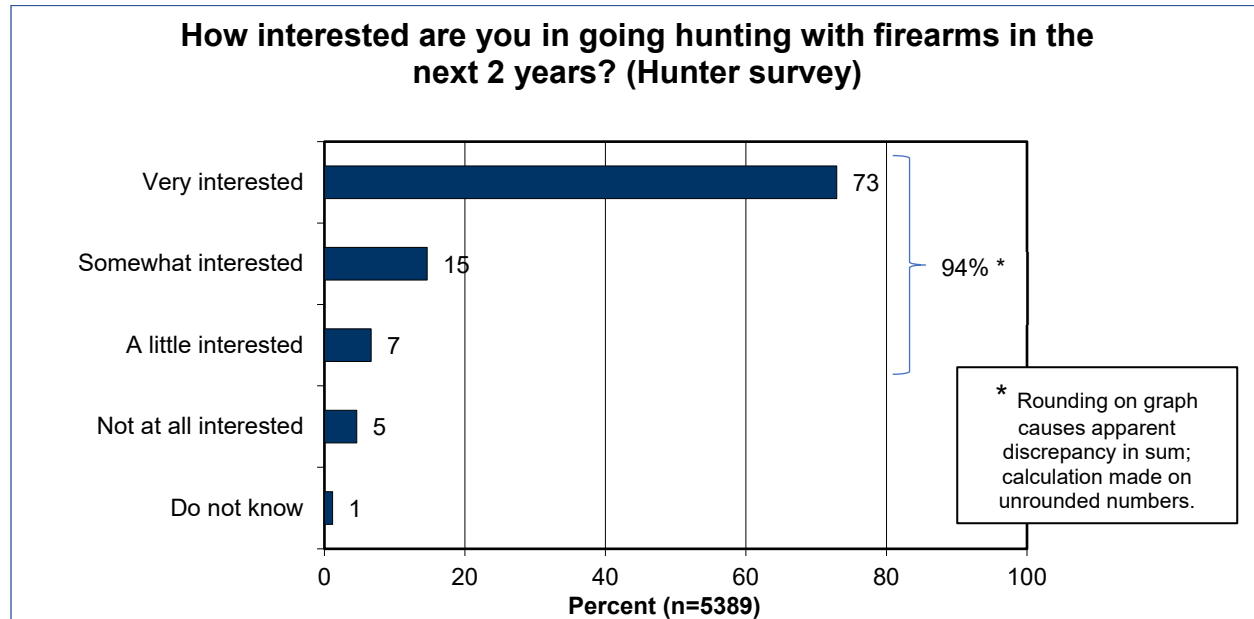


For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to hunt more often or hunt again. (Part 2) (Hunter survey)

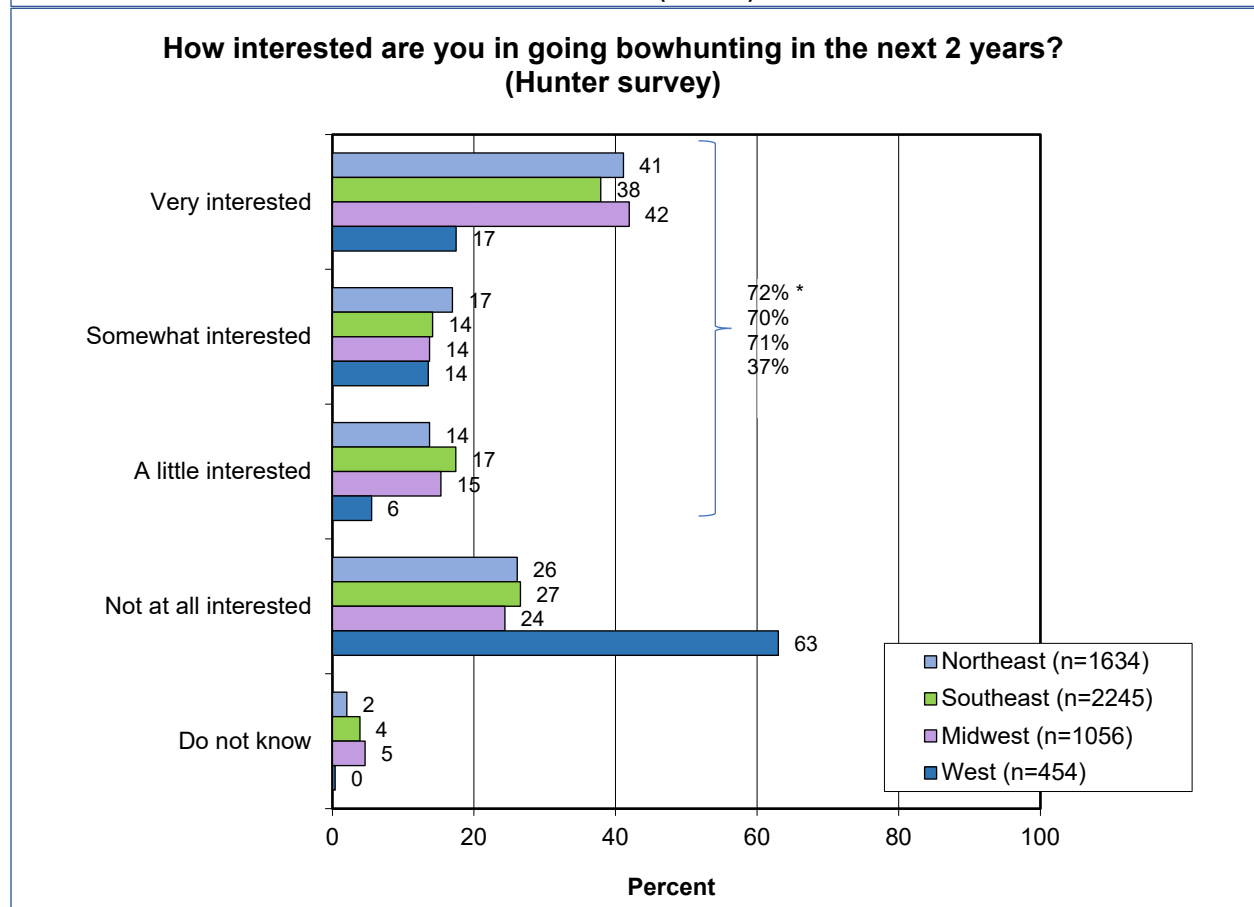
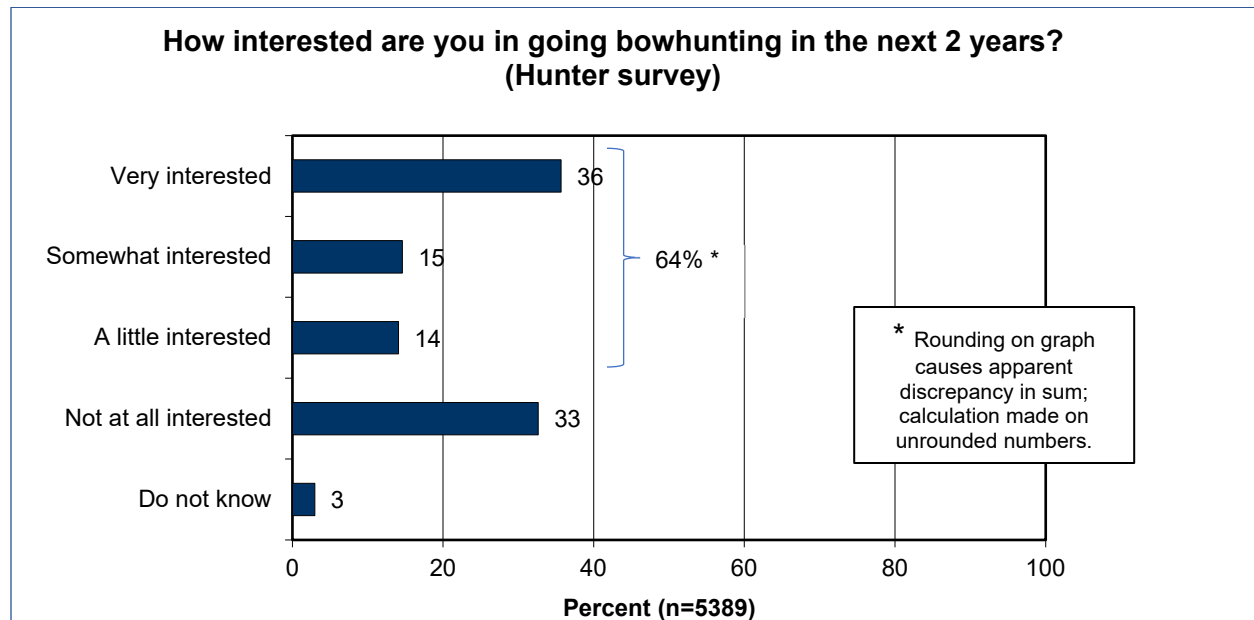


INTEREST IN HUNTING AND CROSSOVER ACTIVITIES

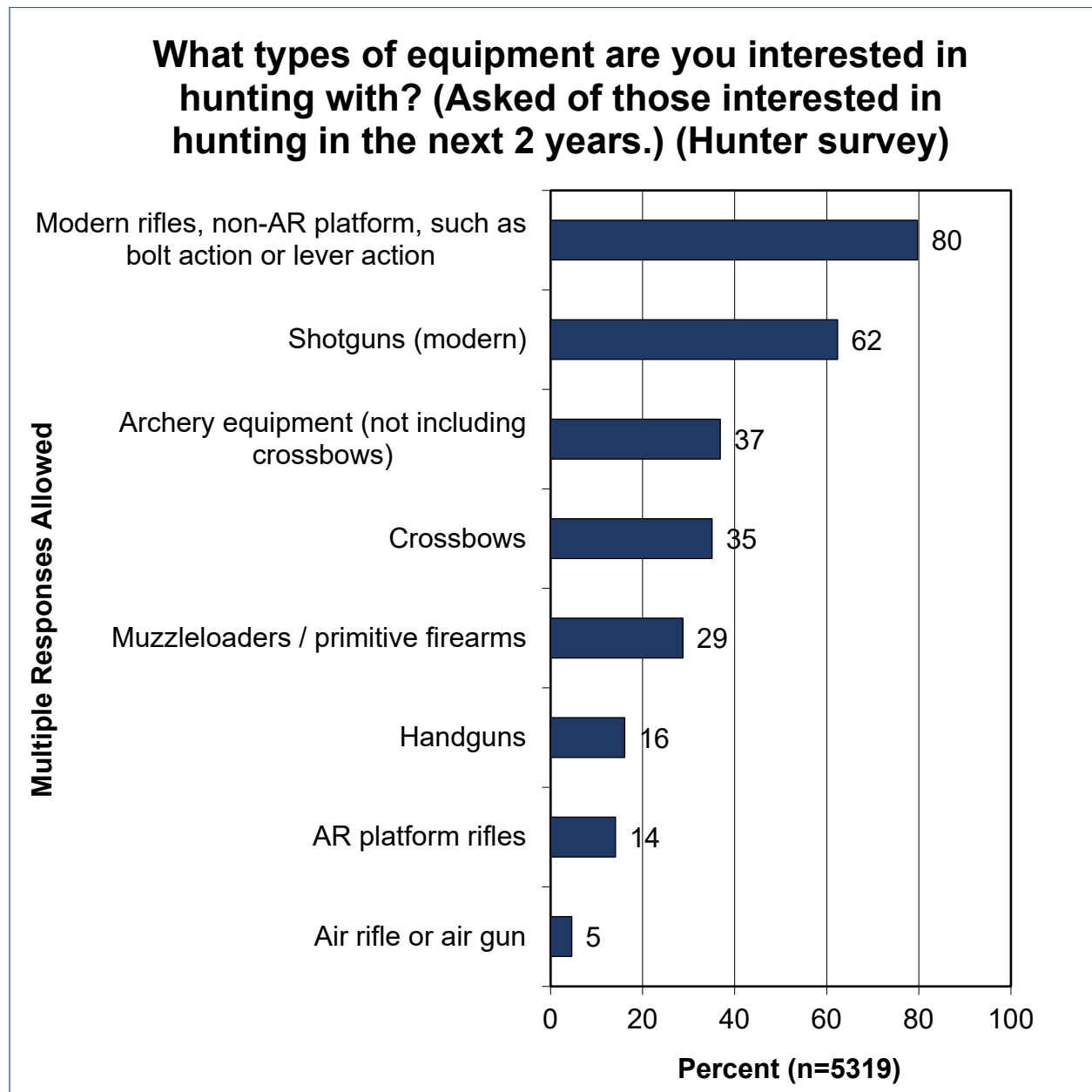
Among women hunters, an overwhelming majority express interest in hunting in the future, including 73% who are very interested. The regions are not markedly different from one another.



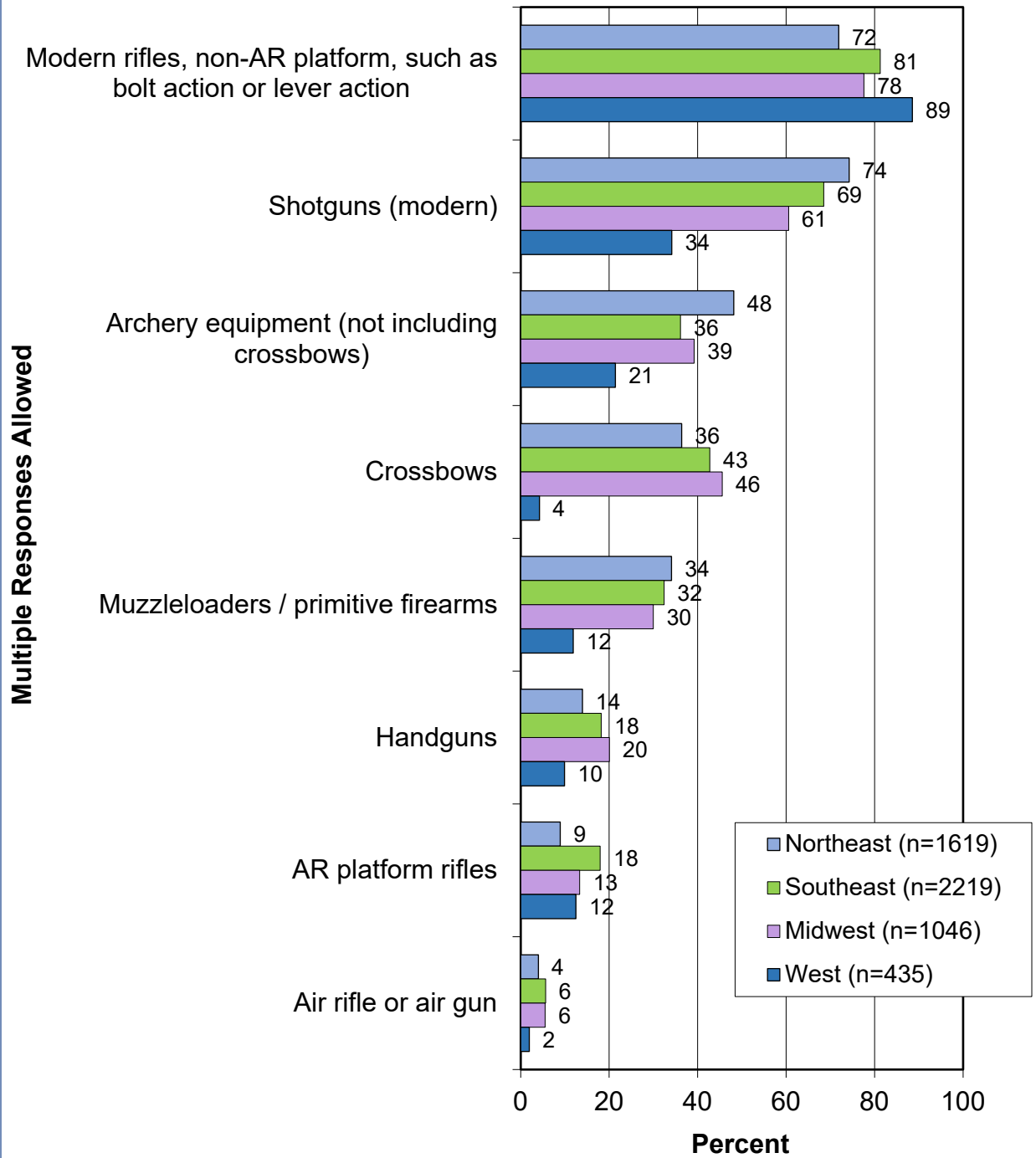
Interest in bowhunting is somewhat lower than interest in hunting with firearms, although a robust percentage of women hunters are interested: 64% express some interest, with about half of that portion (36%) being *very* interested.



Rifles and shotguns (modern, not primitive) are the types of equipment with the greatest interest among hunters (those who previously indicated being at least a little interested in going hunting with either firearms or with archery): for each, a majority are interested. Lower down in interest is archery equipment (including crossbows) and muzzleloaders, with little interest in handguns, AR platform rifles, or air guns for hunting. Regional results are shown, as well.

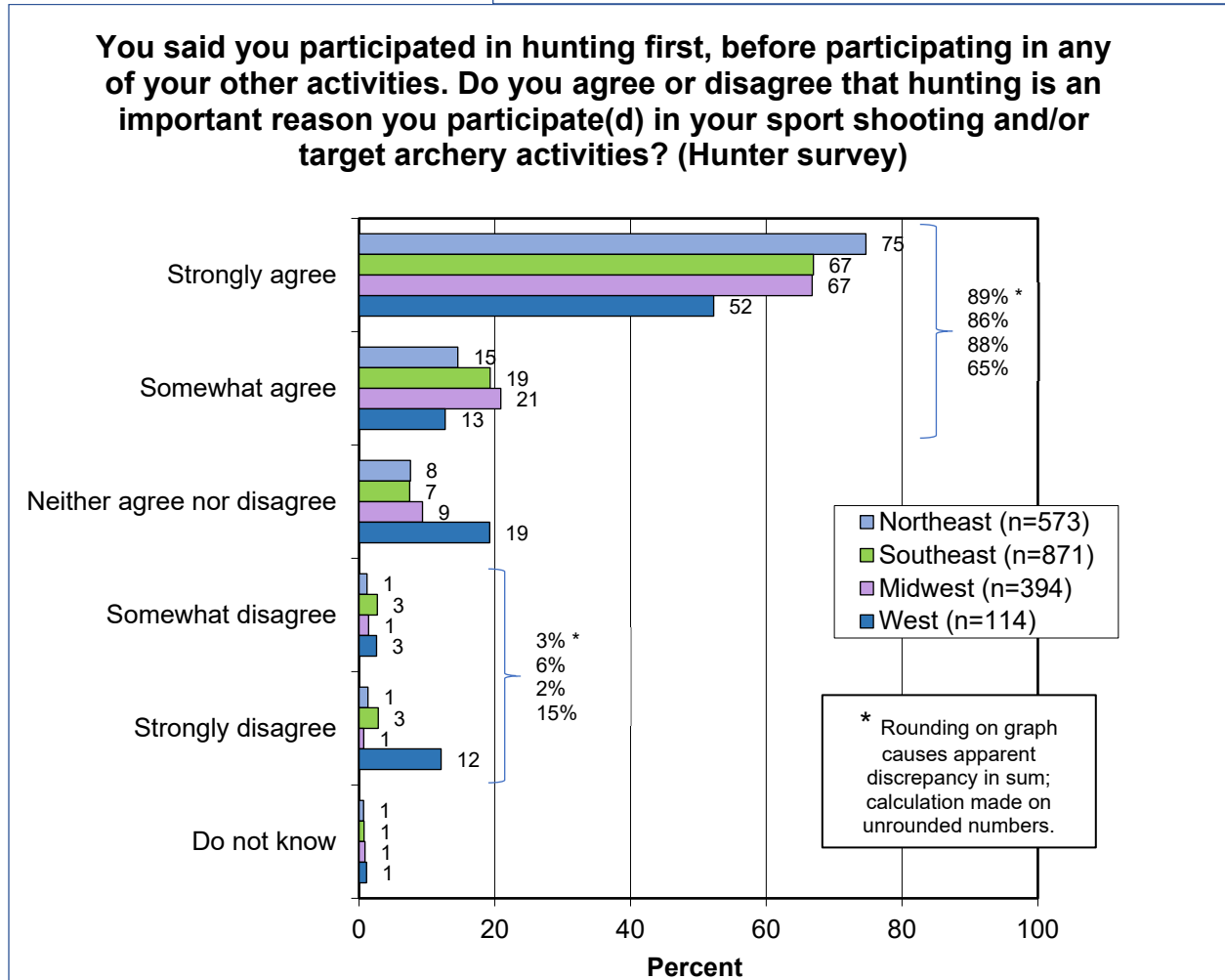


What types of equipment are you interested in hunting with? (Asked of those interested in hunting in the next 2 years.) (Hunter survey)

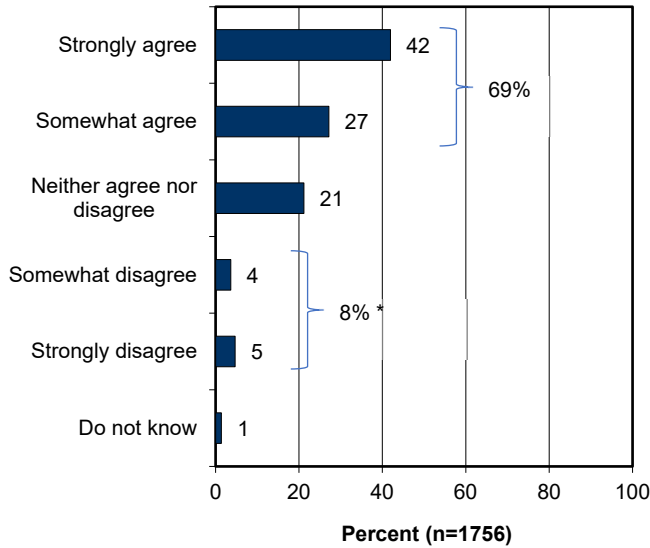


CROSSOVER PARTICIPATION

Hunting appears to have a recruitment benefit for sport shooting and archery participation, as 84% of those who participated in hunting first agree that it is an important reason they later did those other activities. This compares to 6% who disagree. In the regions, *strong* agreement is highest in the Northeast Region.



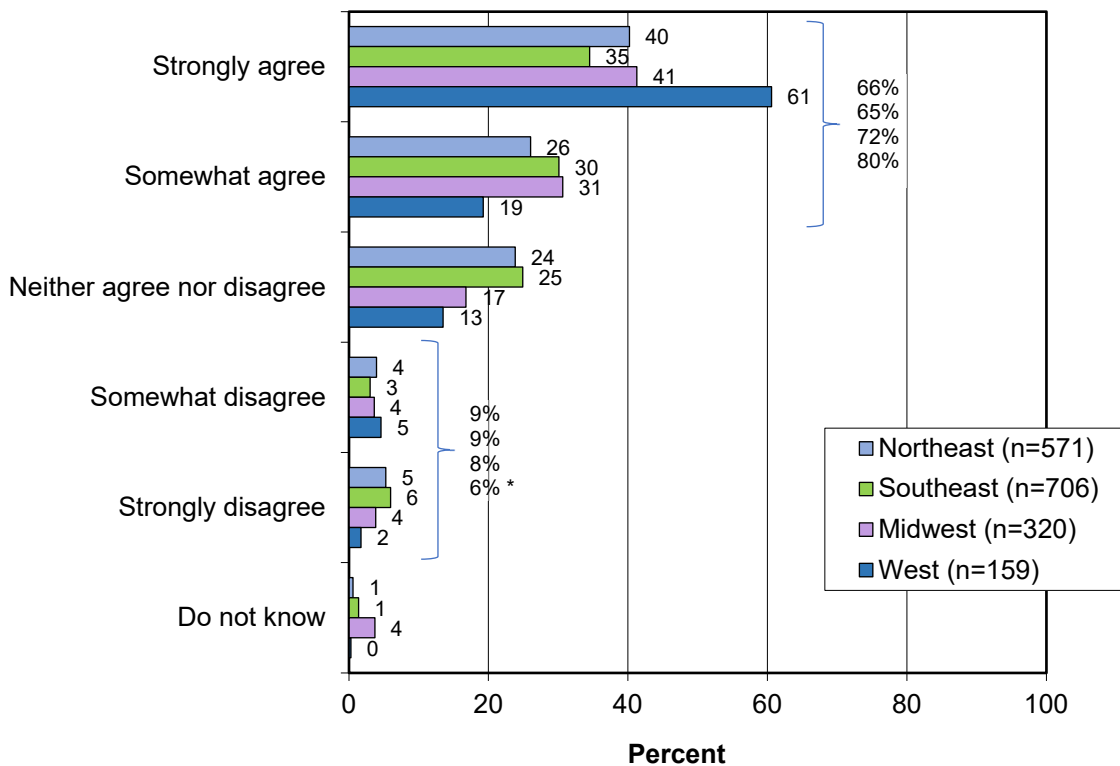
You said you participated in sport shooting first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that sport shooting is an important reason you participate(d) in your hunting and/or target archery activities? (Hunter survey)



While participation in sport shooting also seems to spur hunting and archery recruitment, it does not do so to the degree that hunting works toward recruitment. Nonetheless, more than two thirds of sport shooters later went hunting or did archery. That percentage is highest in the West and Midwest Regions.

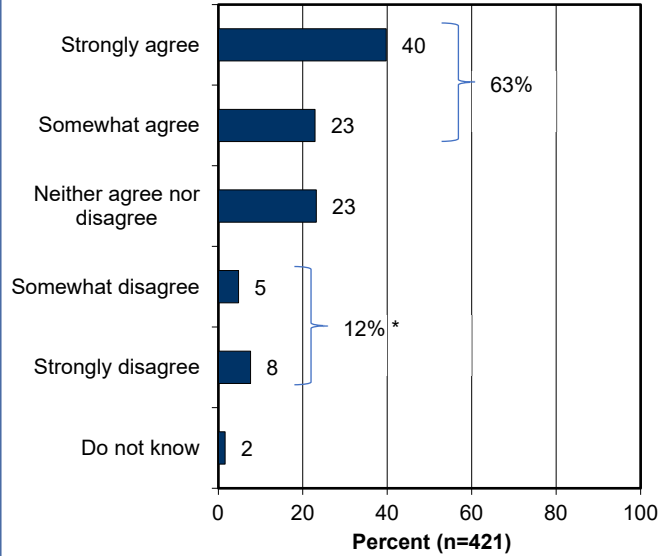
* Rounding on graphs causes apparent discrepancy in sums; calculations made on unrounded numbers.

You said you participated in sport shooting first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that sport shooting is an important reason you participate(d) in your hunting and/or target archery activities? (Hunter survey)



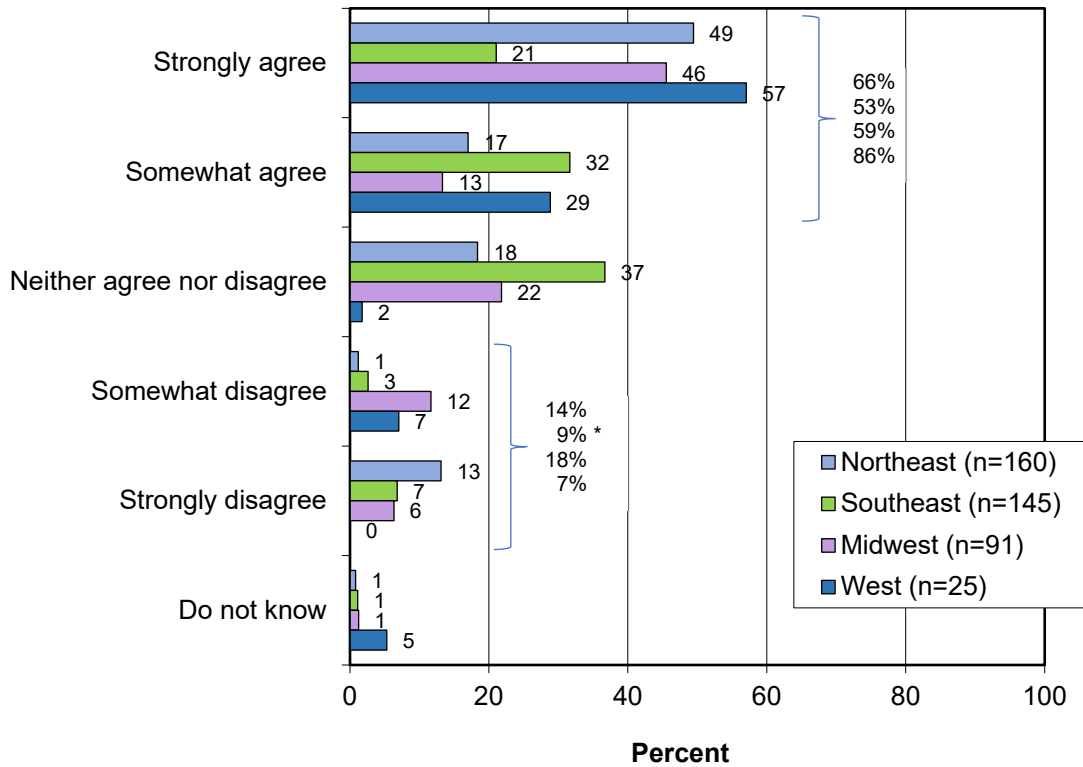
Likewise, about two thirds of archers later went hunting or sport shooting, and this percentage is highest in the West Region.

You said you participated in target archery first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that target archery is an important reason you participate(d) in your hunting and/or sport shooting activities? (Hunter survey)



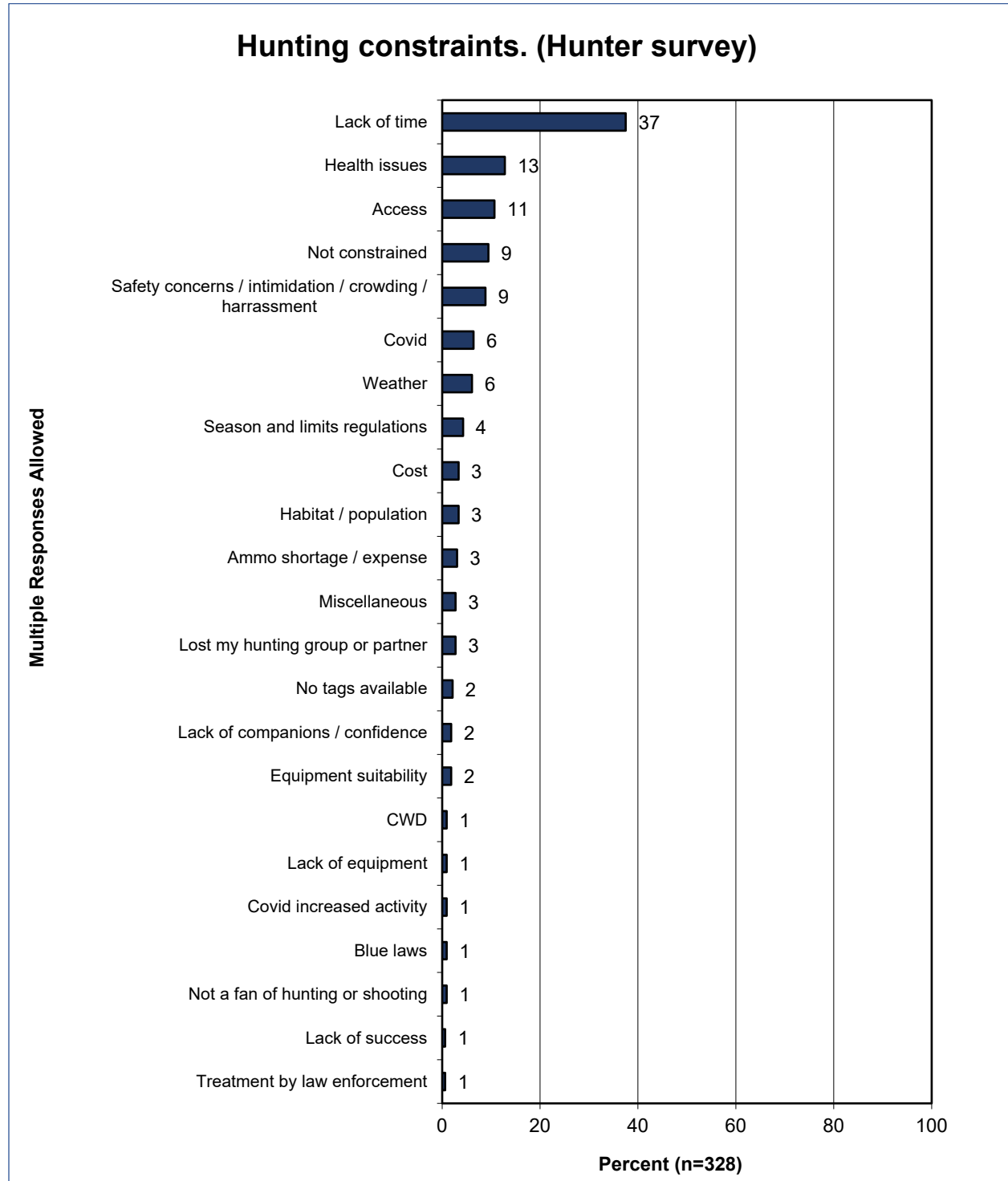
* Rounding on graphs causes apparent discrepancy in sums; calculations made on unrounded numbers.

You said you participated in target archery first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that target archery is an important reason you participate(d) in your hunting and/or sport shooting activities? (Hunter survey)



CONSTRAINTS TO HUNTING PARTICIPATION

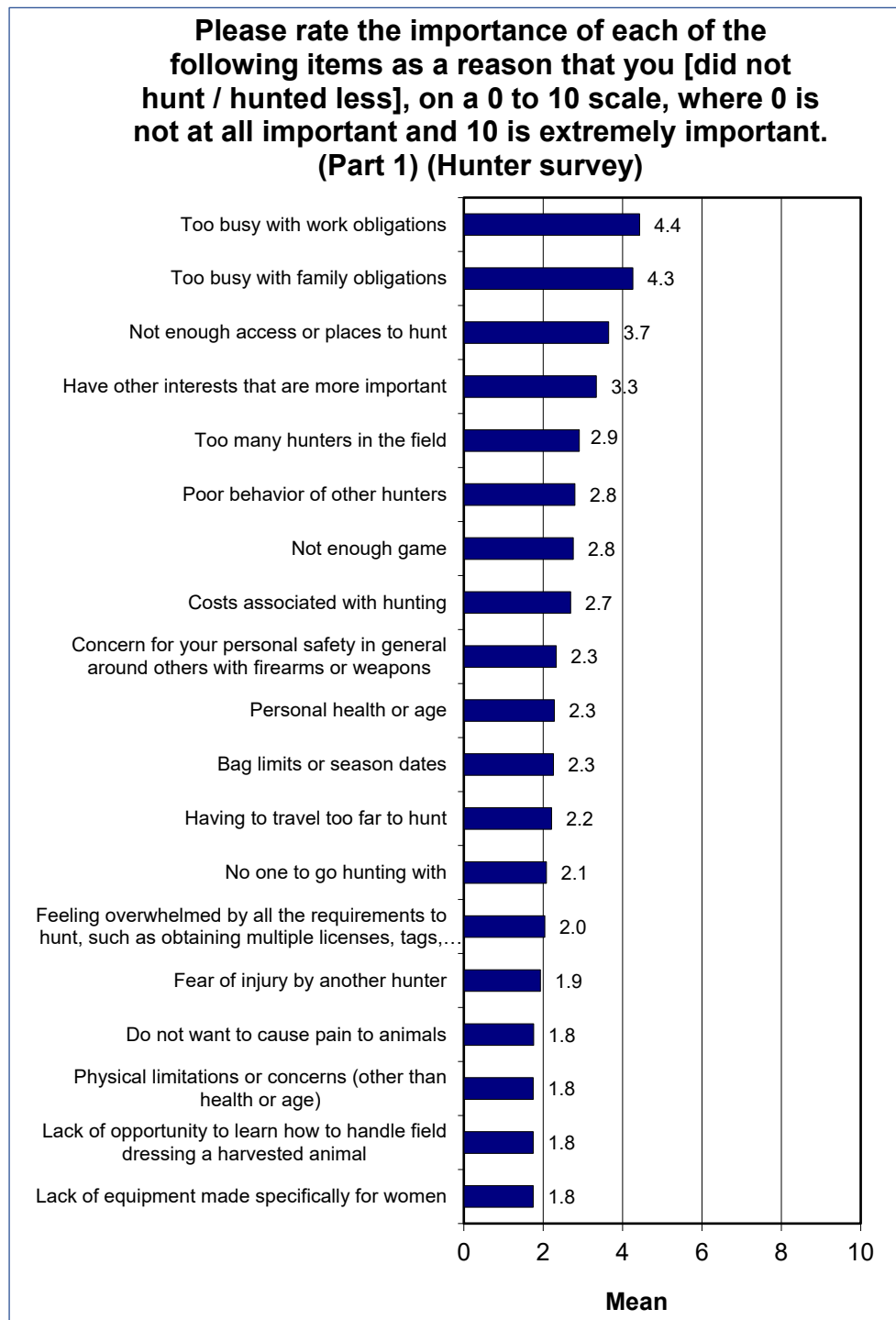
Respondents in the hunting survey were asked to name constraints to their hunting participation, in an open-ended question. The top response is lack of time—by far the top response. Also of importance as constraints are health issues, access problems, and safety concerns/intimidation/crowding/harassment. The graph shows the full listing.



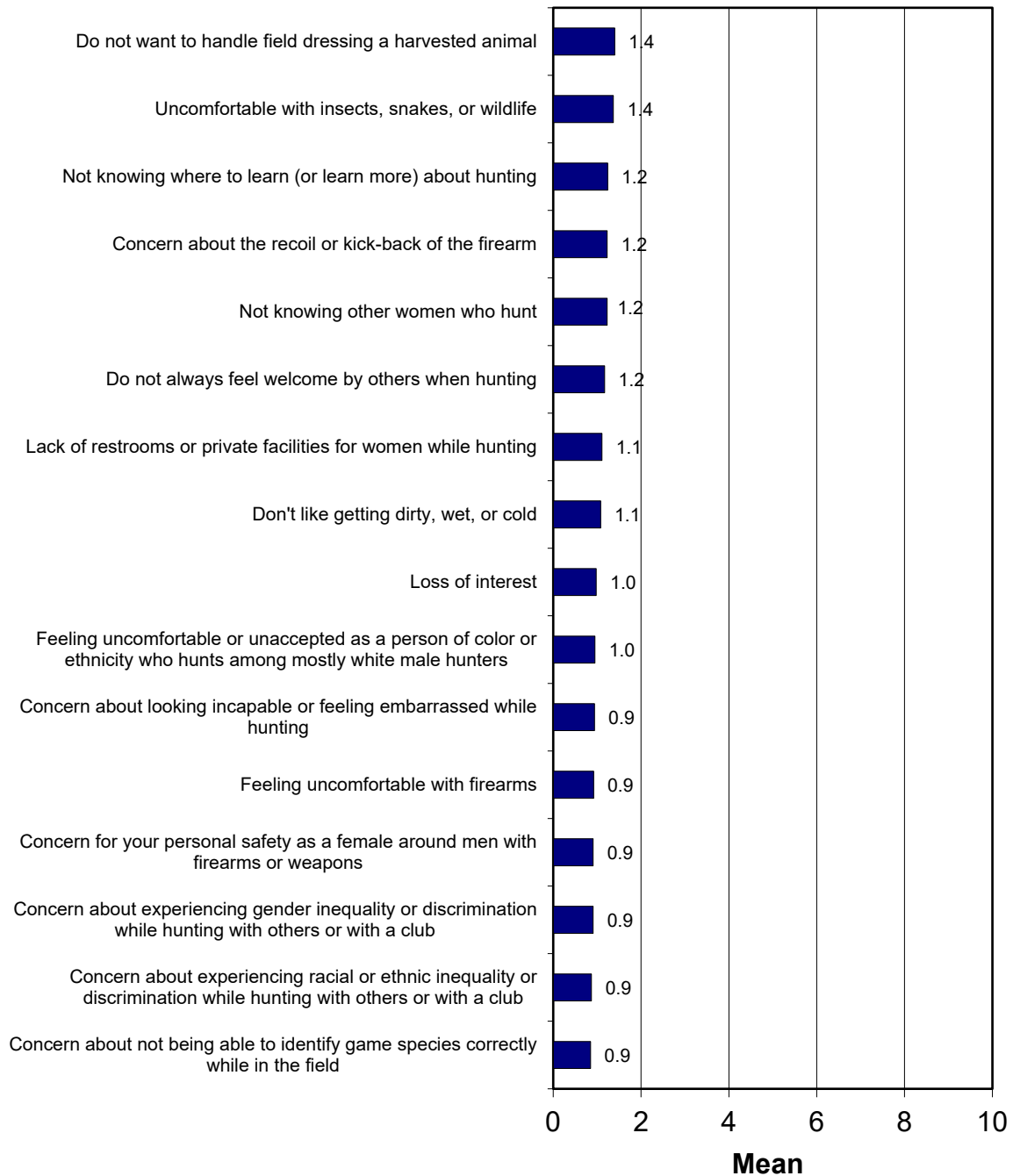
The following is a series of 54 potential constraints to hunting participation. To reduce the survey length and minimize fatigue, all survey respondents were randomly assigned 15 of the potential constraints and were asked to rate the importance of each as a reason they do not hunt or hunt less, on a scale of 0 to 10. Note that none of the constraints had a mean rating above the midpoint of 5. Lack of time is the biggest constraint, as the top tier is made up of work obligations (mean rating of 4.4) and family obligations (4.3).

A second tier consists of those with mean ratings of 2.7 to 3.7. Access is an issue, along with the associated reason of crowding. Other interests, poor behavior of other hunters, lack of game, and costs round out the second tier. All other reasons have mean ratings below 2.5. Following the graphs is a tabulation of regional results.

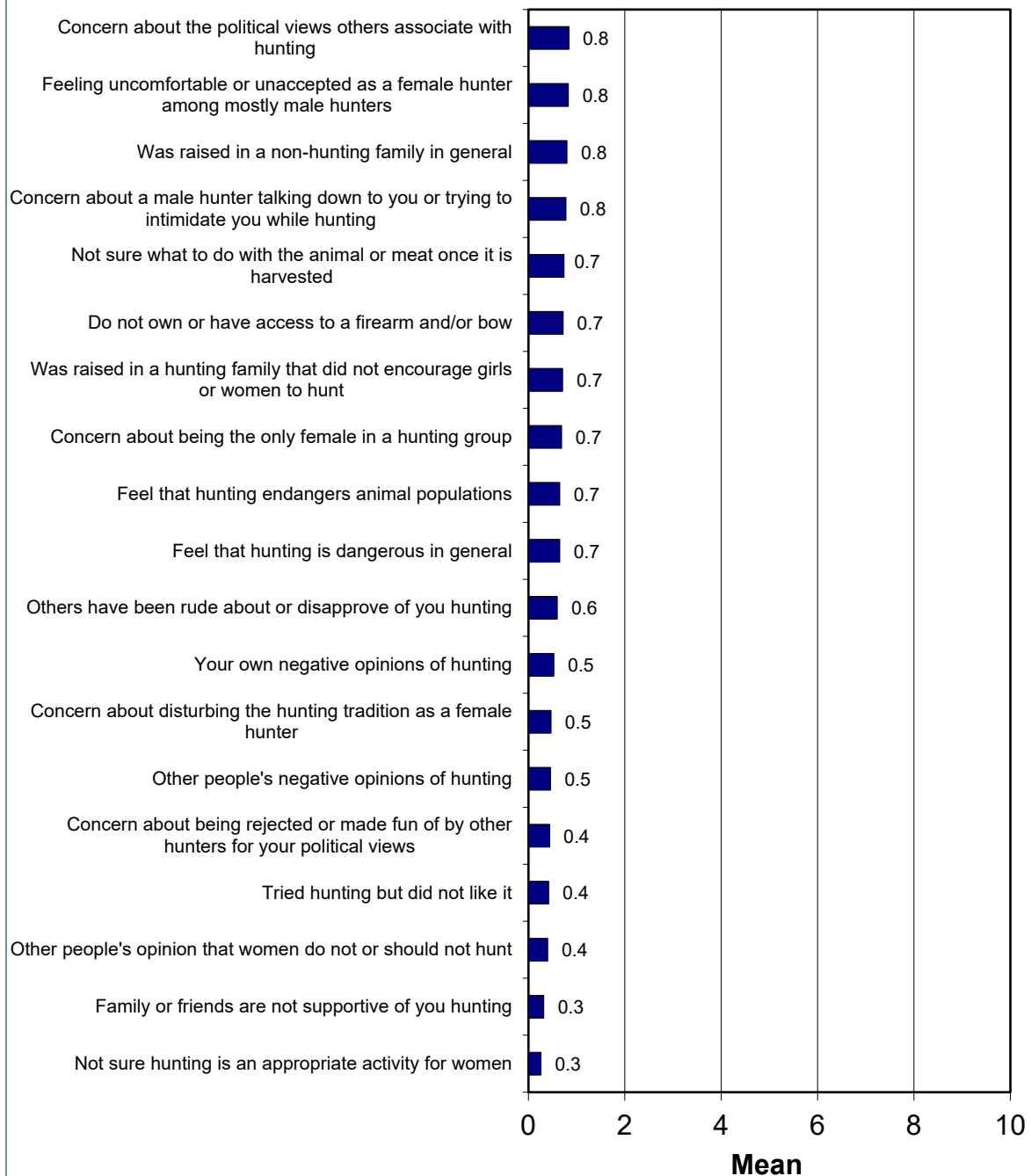
(Truncated item is "Feeling overwhelmed by all the requirements to hunt, such as obtaining multiple licenses, tags, and certifications as well as equipment and gear.")



**Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not hunt / hunted less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important.
(Part 2) (Hunter survey)**



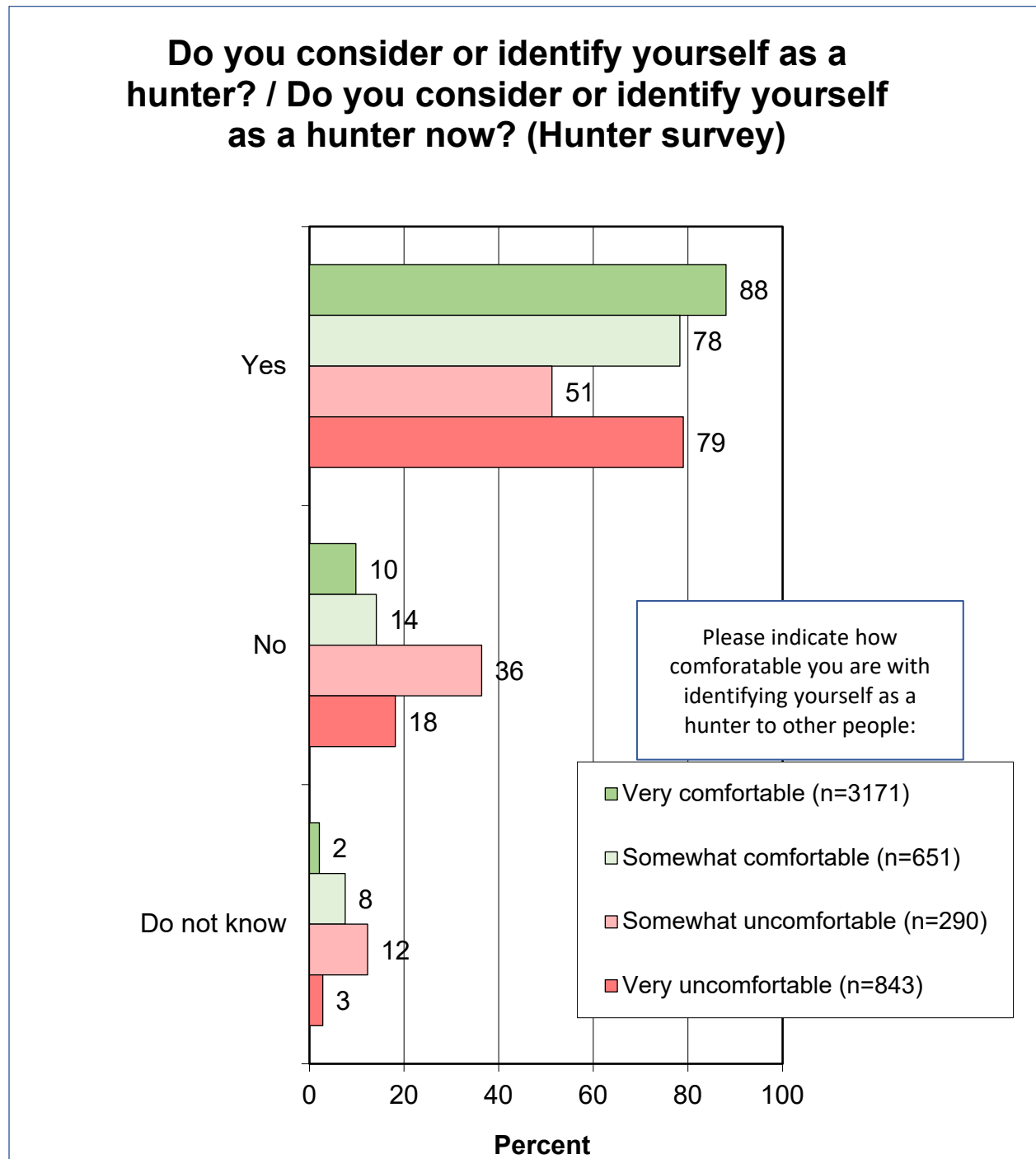
**Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not hunt / hunted less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important.
(Part 3) (Hunter survey)**



Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not hunt / hunted less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Values are means) (Hunter survey)					
Constraint	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West	Overall
Too busy with work obligations	4.6	4.5	5.1	3.4	4.4
Too busy with family obligations	4.5	4.2	4.9	3.7	4.3
Not enough access or places to hunt	3.7	4.2	3.5	2.7	3.7
Have other interests that are more important	2.8	3.8	3.5	2.9	3.3
Too many hunters in the field	3.0	2.7	2.7	3.4	2.9
Poor behavior of other hunters	2.8	2.8	2.6	3.1	2.8
Not enough game	2.7	2.6	2.7	3.7	2.8
Costs associated with hunting	2.4	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7
Concern for your personal safety in general around others with firearms or weapons	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.4	2.3
Personal health or age	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.9	2.3
Bag limits or season dates	2.8	1.8	1.9	2.8	2.3
Having to travel too far to hunt	2.2	2.3	1.9	2.3	2.2
No one to go hunting with	2.4	2.3	1.6	1.7	2.1
Feeling overwhelmed by all the requirements to hunt, such as obtaining multiple licenses, tags, and certifications as well as equipment and gear	1.7	2.2	1.7	2.5	2.0
Fear of injury by another hunter	2.3	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.9
Do not want to cause pain to animals	1.7	1.7	2.3	1.5	1.8
Physical limitations or concerns (other than health or age)	1.6	1.5	1.7	2.7	1.8
Lack of opportunity to learn how to handle field dressing a harvested animal	1.7	1.9	1.2	1.9	1.8
Lack of equipment made specifically for women	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.3	1.8
Do not want to handle field dressing a harvested animal	1.7	1.1	1.3	1.7	1.4
Uncomfortable with insects, snakes, or wildlife	1.2	1.6	1.2	1.3	1.4
Not knowing where to learn (or learn more) about hunting	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.2
Concern about the recoil or kick-back of the firearm	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.2
Not knowing other women who hunt	0.9	1.3	0.8	1.9	1.2
Do not always feel welcome by others when hunting	1.2	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.2
Lack of restrooms or private facilities for women while hunting	1.2	1.4	0.9	0.7	1.1
Don't like getting dirty, wet, or cold	1.3	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.1
Loss of interest	1.2	0.8	0.9	1.3	1.0
Feeling uncomfortable or unaccepted as a person of color or ethnicity who hunts among mostly white male hunters	1.2	0.9	0.8	1.0	1.0
Concern about looking incapable or feeling embarrassed while hunting	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9
Feeling uncomfortable with firearms	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9
Concern for your personal safety as a female around men with firearms or weapons	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9
Concern about experiencing gender inequality or discrimination while hunting with others or with a club	1.4	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.9
Concern about experiencing racial or ethnic inequality or discrimination while hunting with others or with a club	1.5	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.9
Concern about not being able to identify game species correctly while in the field	0.9	0.8	1.1	0.7	0.9

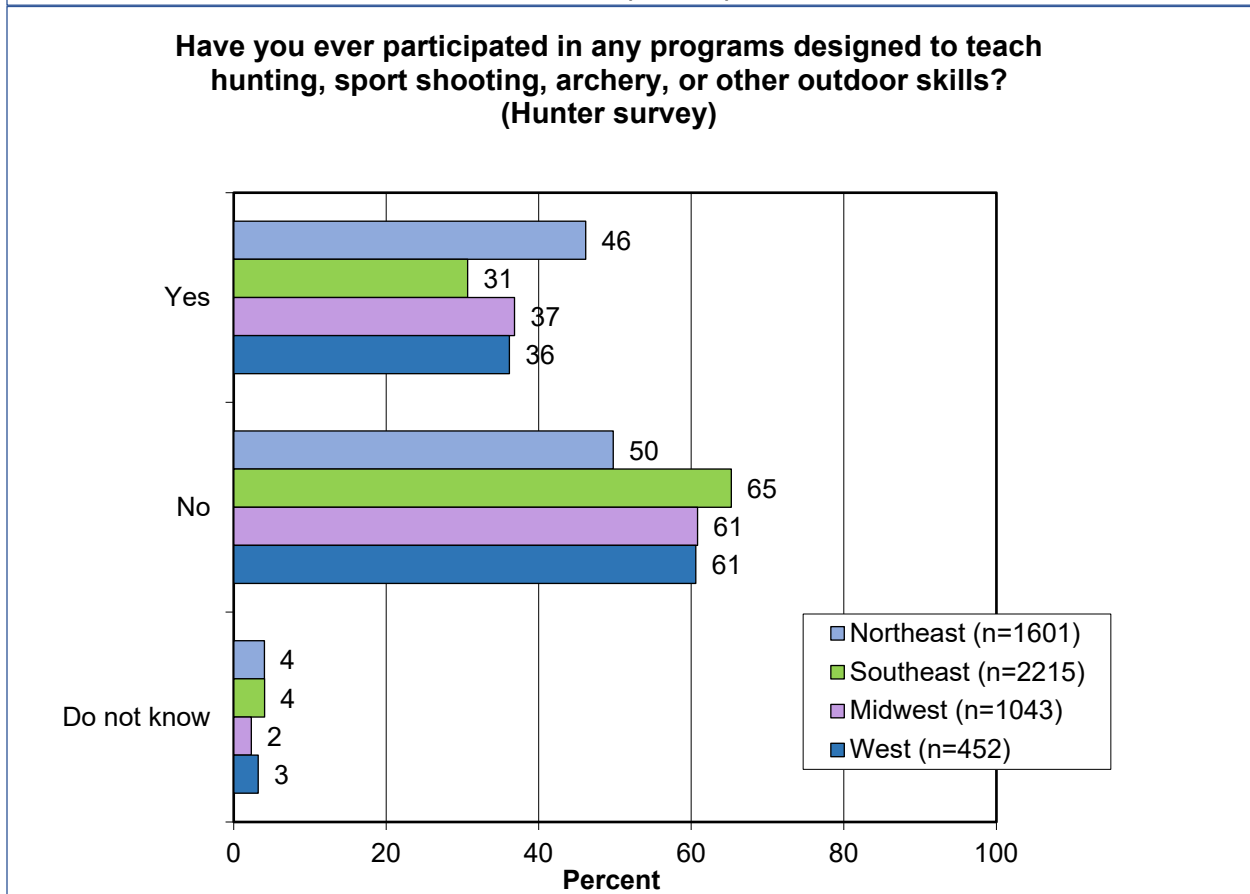
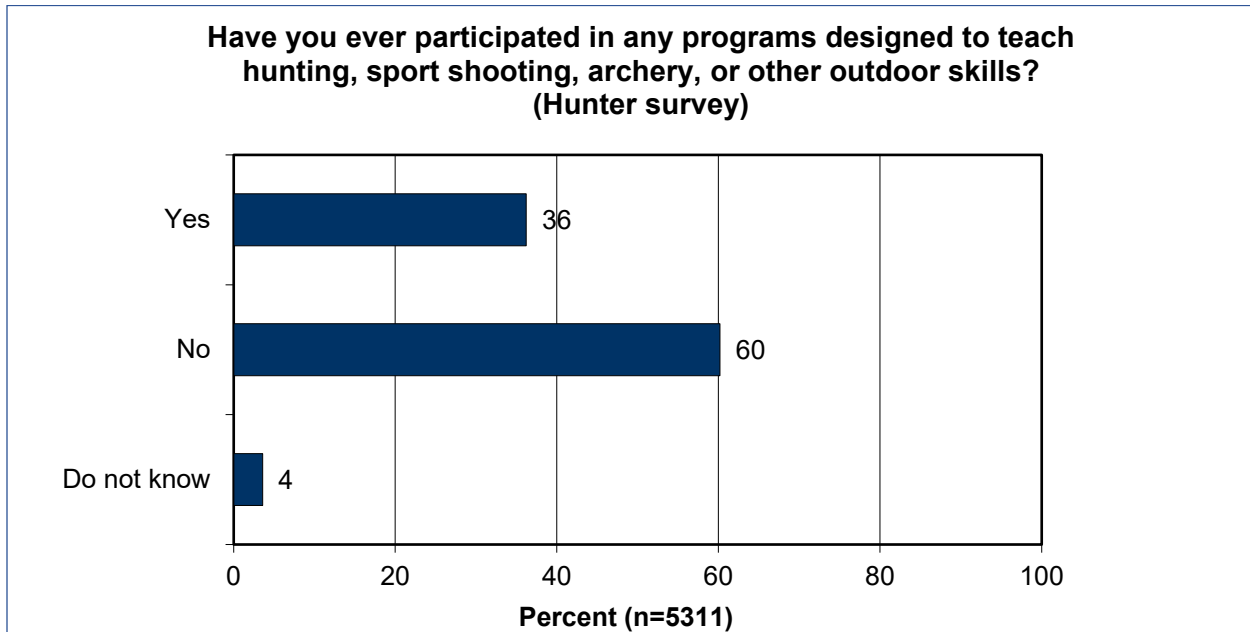
Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not hunt / hunted less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Values are means) (Hunter survey)					
Constraint	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West	Overall
Concern about the political views others associate with hunting	1.4	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.8
Feeling uncomfortable or unaccepted as a female hunter among mostly male hunters	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8
Was raised in a non-hunting family in general	1.0	0.7	1.1	0.5	0.8
Concern about a male hunter talking down to you or trying to intimidate you while hunting	1.1	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.8
Not sure what to do with the animal or meat once it is harvested	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.7
Do not own or have access to a firearm and/or bow	0.9	0.6	0.9	0.5	0.7
Was raised in a hunting family that did not encourage girls or women to hunt	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7
Concern about being the only female in a hunting group	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.7
Feel that hunting endangers animal populations	0.4	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.7
Feel that hunting is dangerous in general	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7
Others have been rude about or disapprove of you hunting	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.6
Your own negative opinions of hunting	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.5
Concern about disturbing the hunting tradition as a female hunter	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.5
Other people's negative opinions of hunting	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.5
Concern about being rejected or made fun of by other hunters for your political views	0.8	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4
Tried hunting but did not like it	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.4
Other people's opinion that women do not or should not hunt	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4
Family or friends are not supportive of you hunting	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Not sure hunting is an appropriate activity for women	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.3
Too busy with work obligations	4.6	4.5	5.1	3.4	4.4
Too busy with family obligations	4.5	4.2	4.9	3.7	4.3
Not enough access or places to hunt	3.7	4.2	3.5	2.7	3.7
Have other interests that are more important	2.8	3.8	3.5	2.9	3.3
Too many hunters in the field	3.0	2.7	2.7	3.4	2.9
Poor behavior of other hunters	2.8	2.8	2.6	3.1	2.8
Not enough game	2.7	2.6	2.7	3.7	2.8
Costs associated with hunting	2.4	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7
Concern for your personal safety in general around others with firearms or weapons	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.4	2.3
Personal health or age	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.9	2.3
Bag limits or season dates	2.8	1.8	1.9	2.8	2.3
Having to travel too far to hunt	2.2	2.3	1.9	2.3	2.2
No one to go hunting with	2.4	2.3	1.6	1.7	2.1

A final constraint was explored: namely, whether women feel comfortable identifying as a hunter. The accompanying graph shows two questions crosstabulated. One question asks if respondents consider or identify themselves as hunters, and the second question asks how comfortable they are with identifying themselves as hunters to other people. Of interest is that 79% of those who are *very uncomfortable* with identifying themselves as hunters to other people nonetheless identify as hunters. This could act as a constraint to participation among those who identify as hunters.

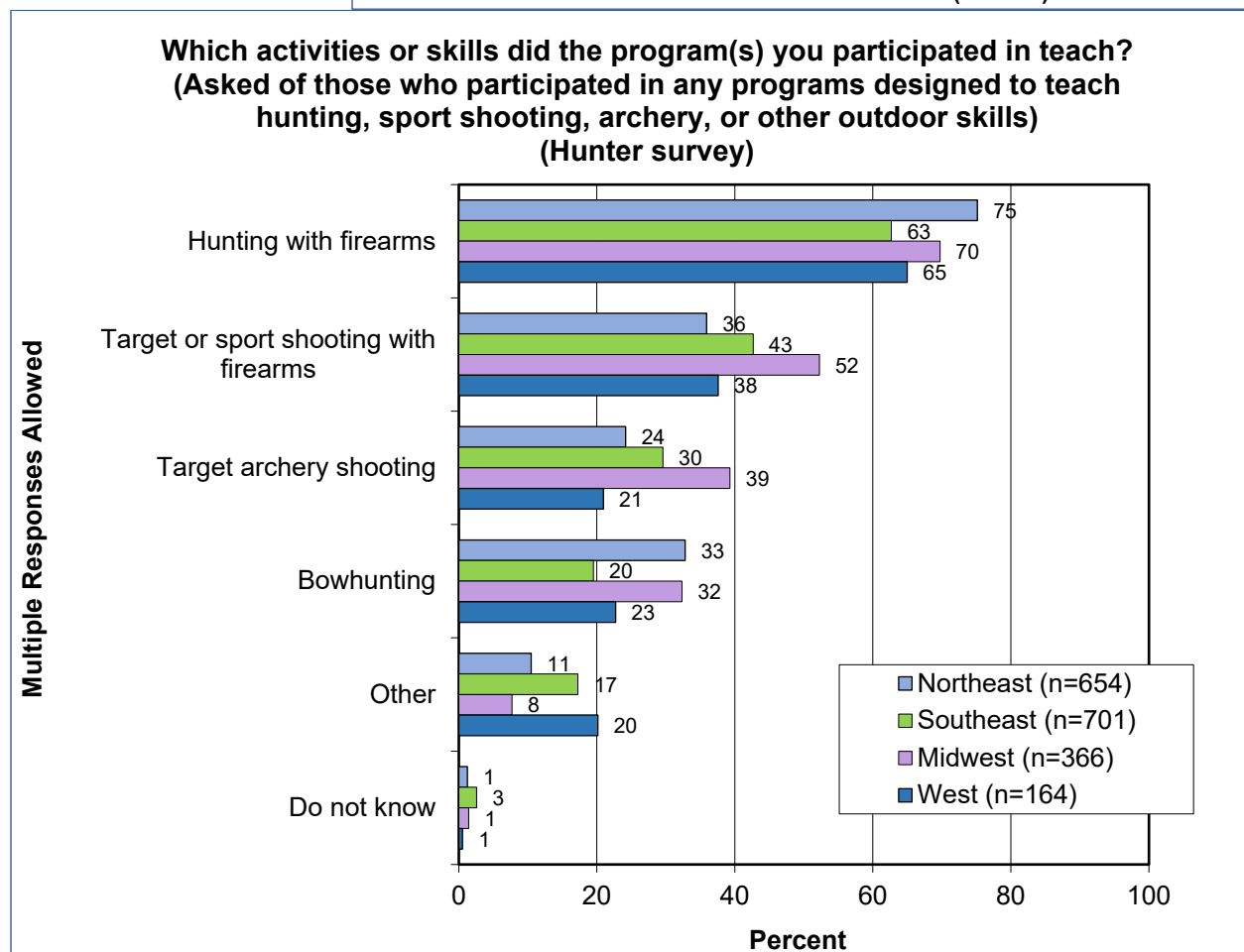
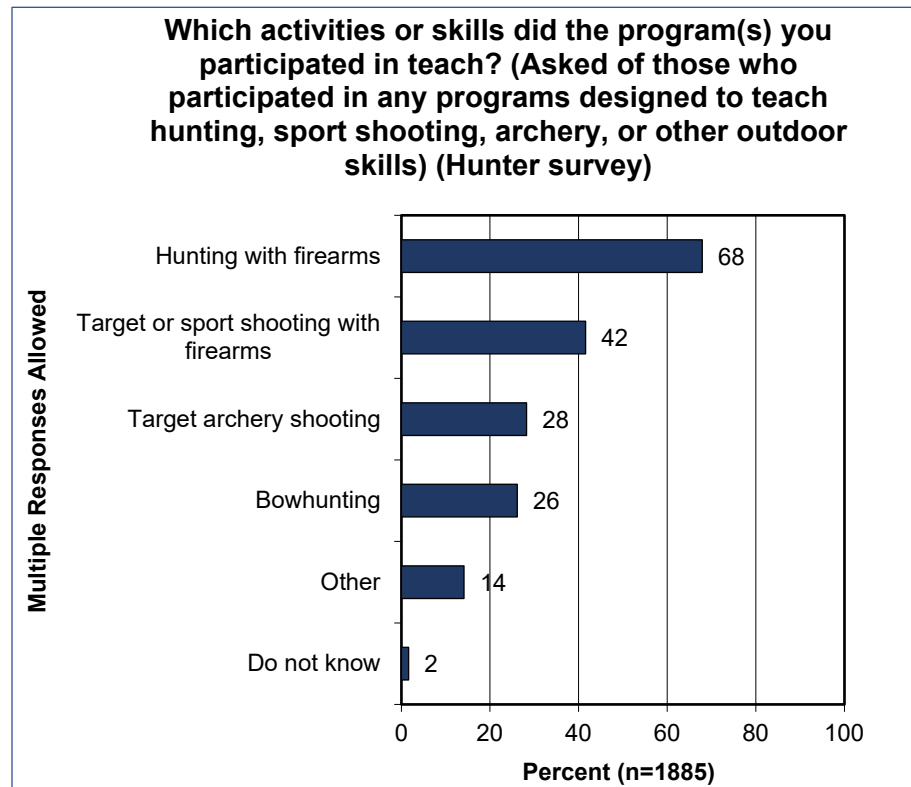


PARTICIPATION IN R3 PROGRAMS

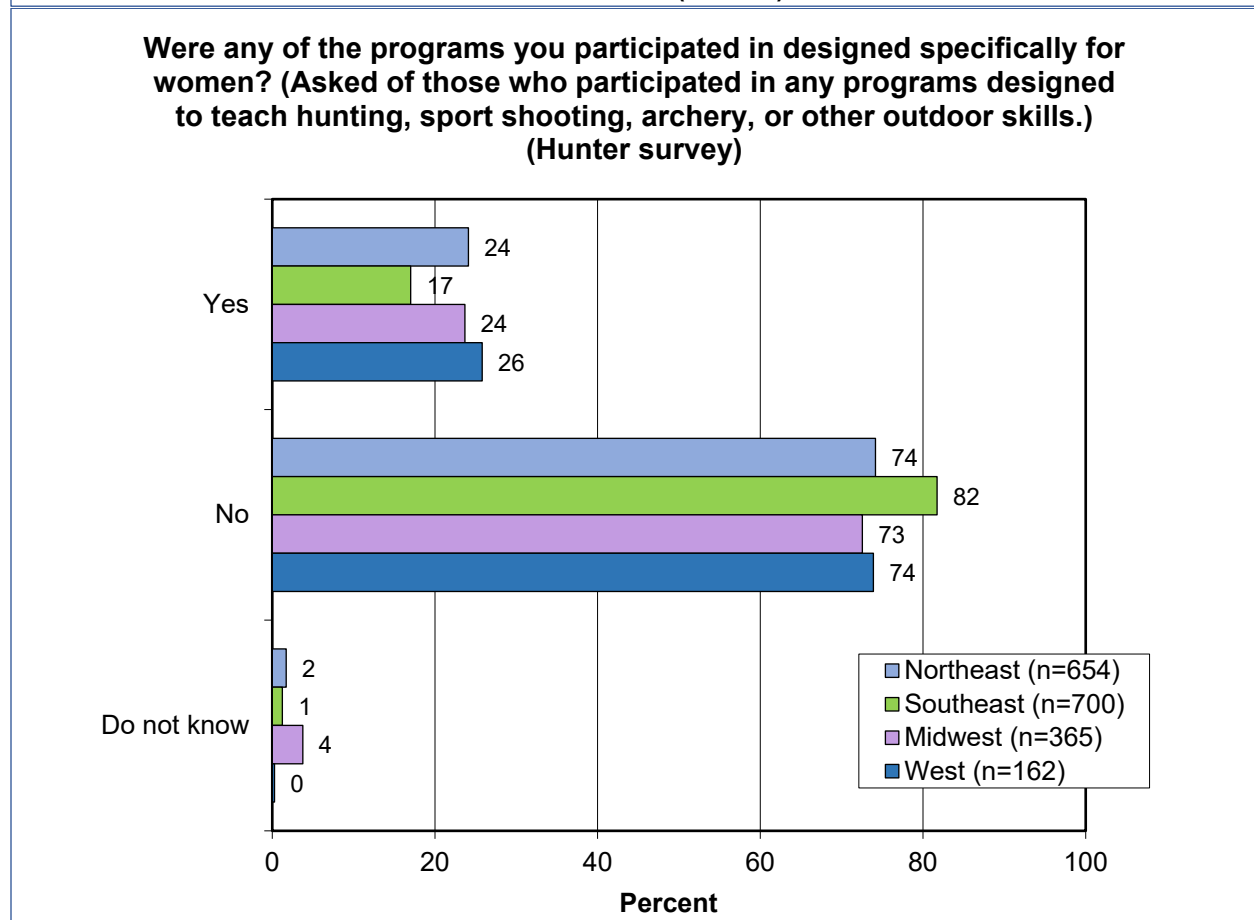
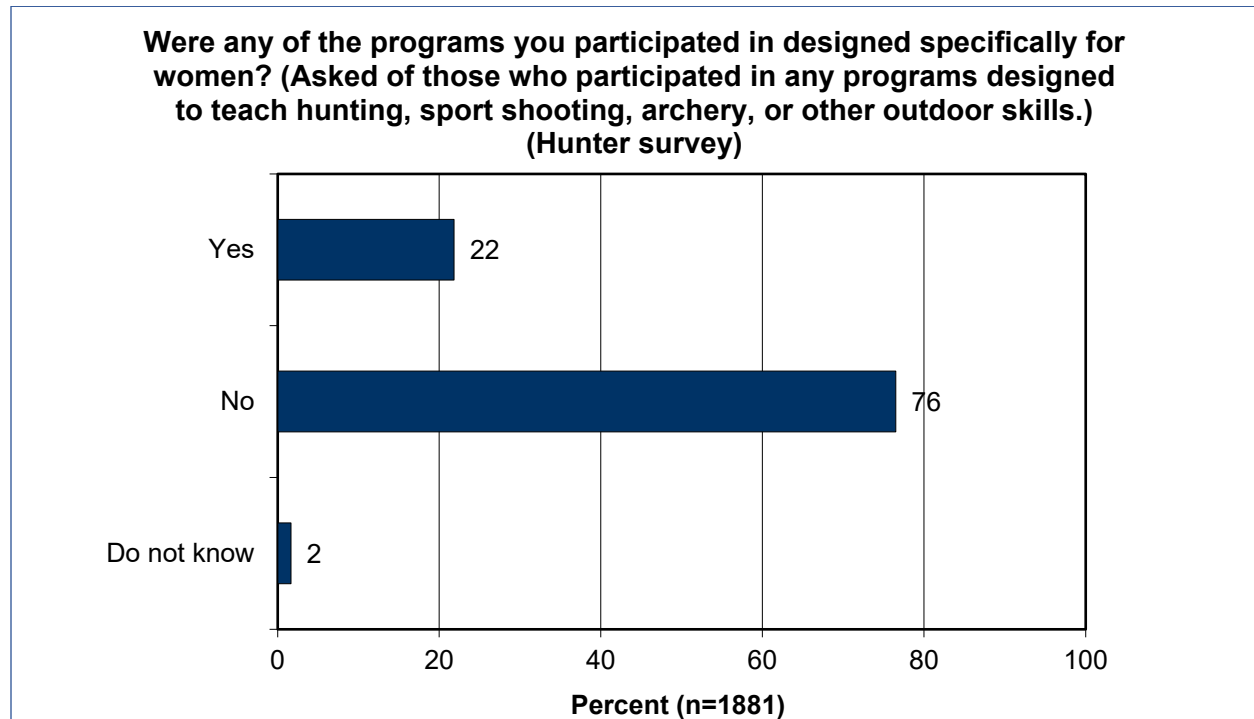
About a third of women hunters in the survey (36%) have participated in a program designed to teach outdoor recreation skills. Women hunters from the Northeast Region have a particularly high rate of participation in such programs.



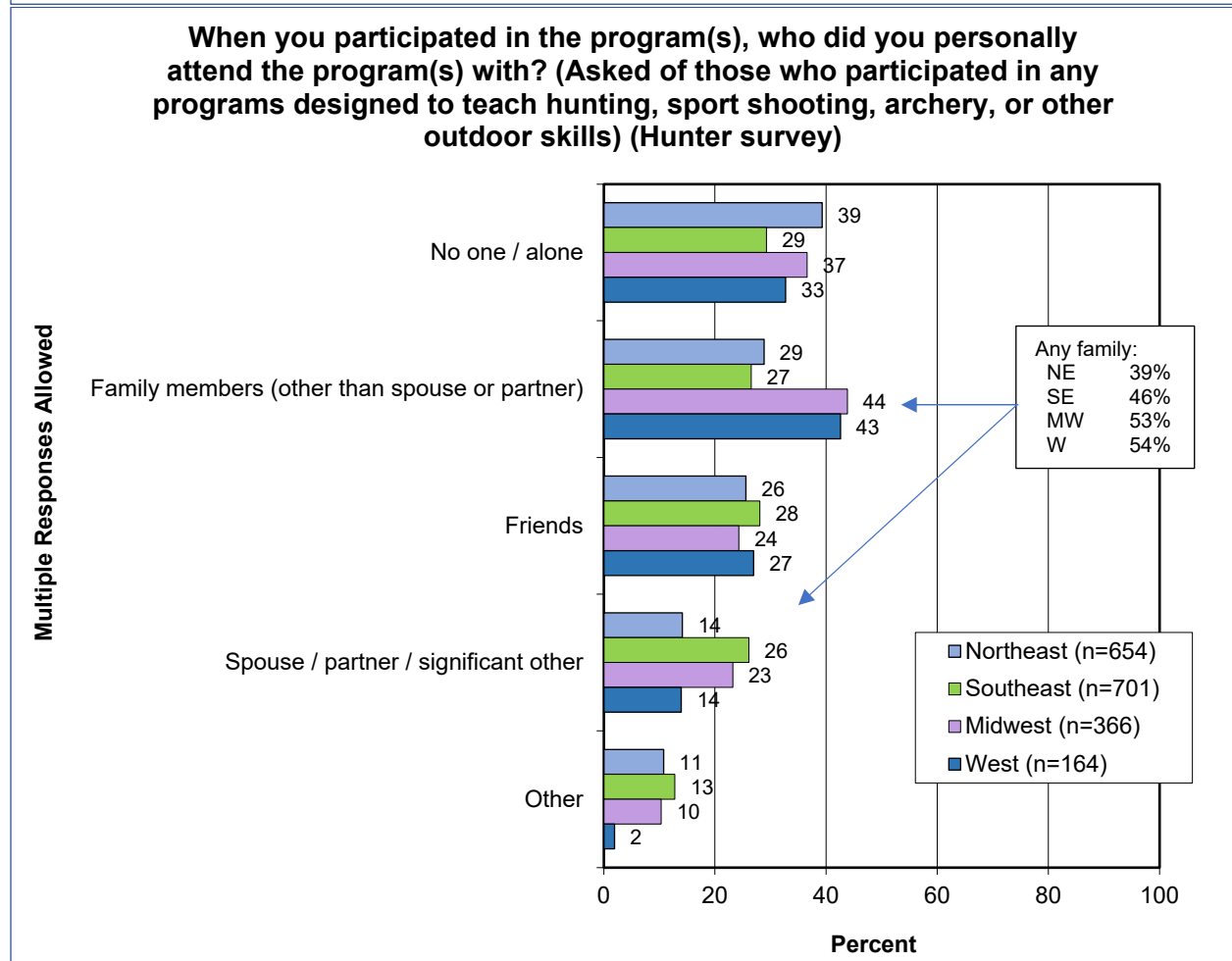
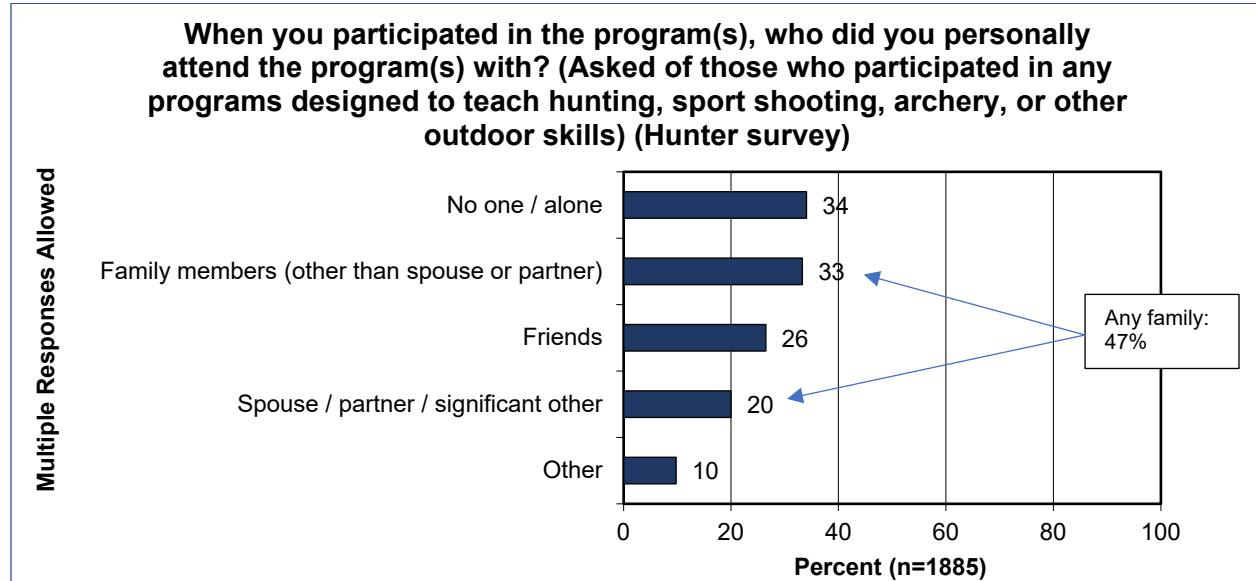
Among those who participated in a program, over two thirds (68%) said the program taught hunting with firearms, while 42% participated in a program that taught sport shooting for firearms. With about a quarter each are target archery shooting (28%) and bowhunting (26%). Sport shooting and target archery participation were markedly higher in the Midwest.



About a quarter of program participants said the program (or one of their programs) was designed specifically for women. This percentage is lowest in the Southeast Region.

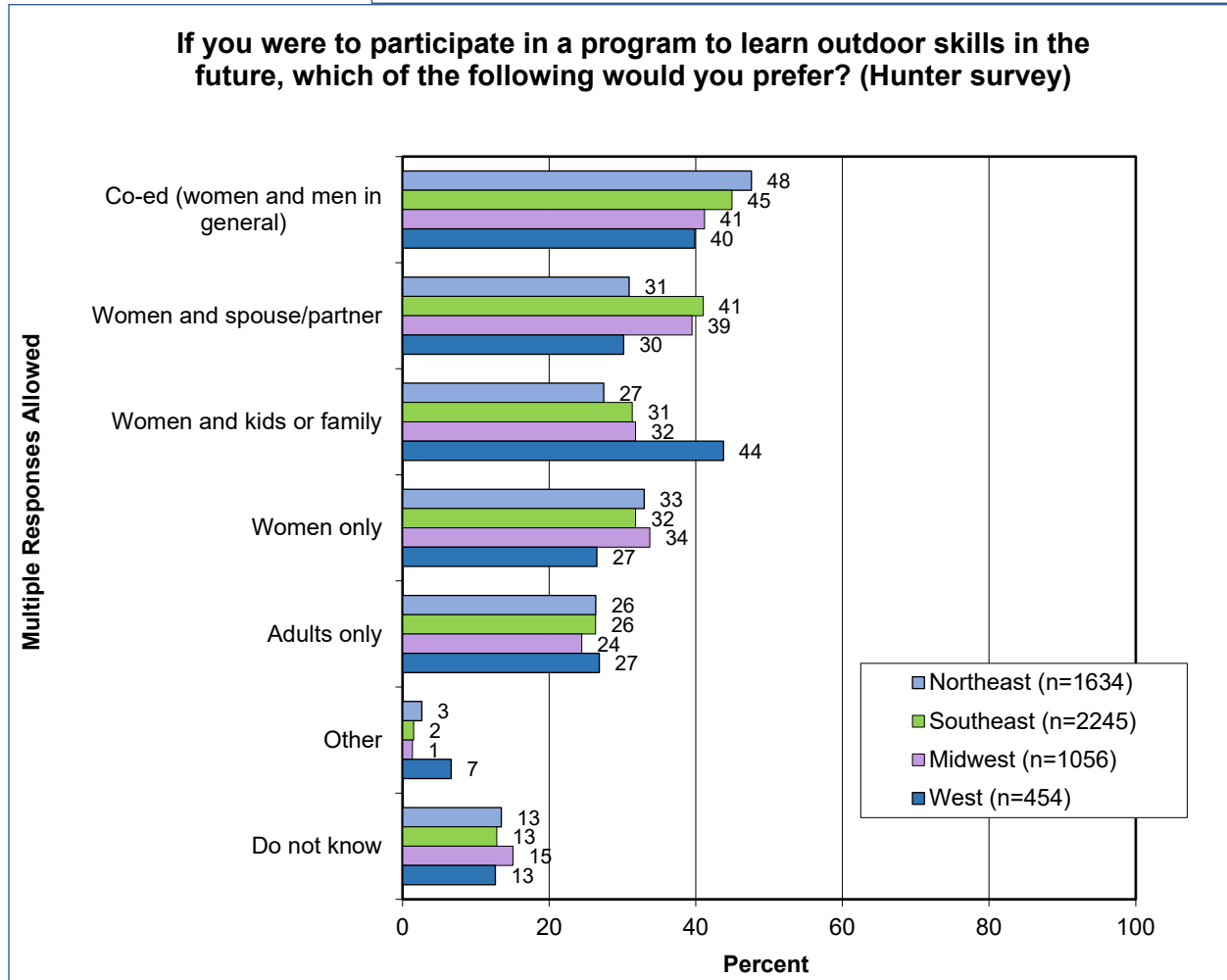
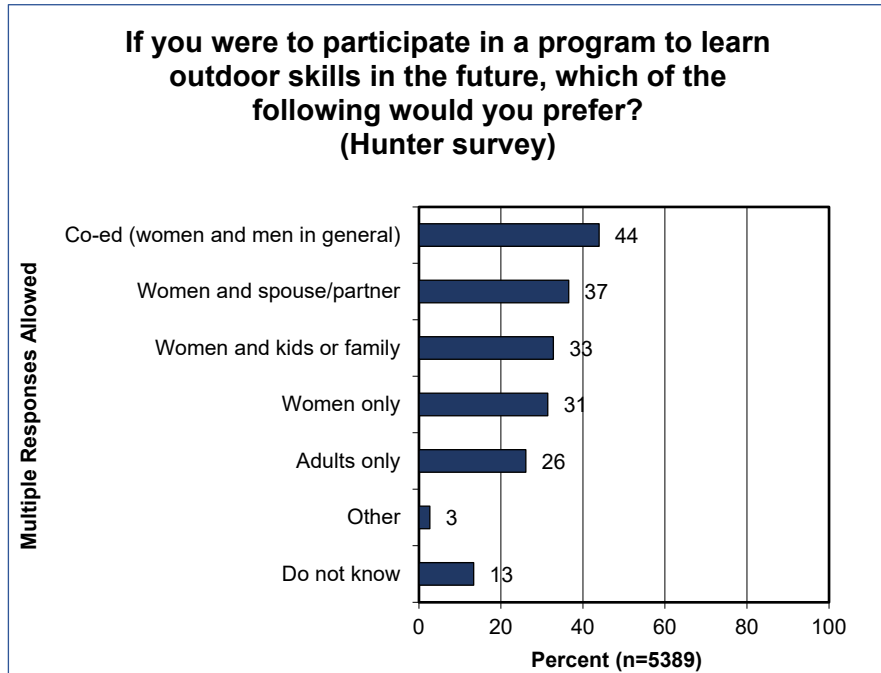


About a third of program attendees were alone when they attended. Otherwise, the attendees most commonly go with family members (47% with either spouse or family). About a quarter go with friends. Regional results are shown as well. Note that “any family” is not simply the sum of the two responses because hunters can name both.



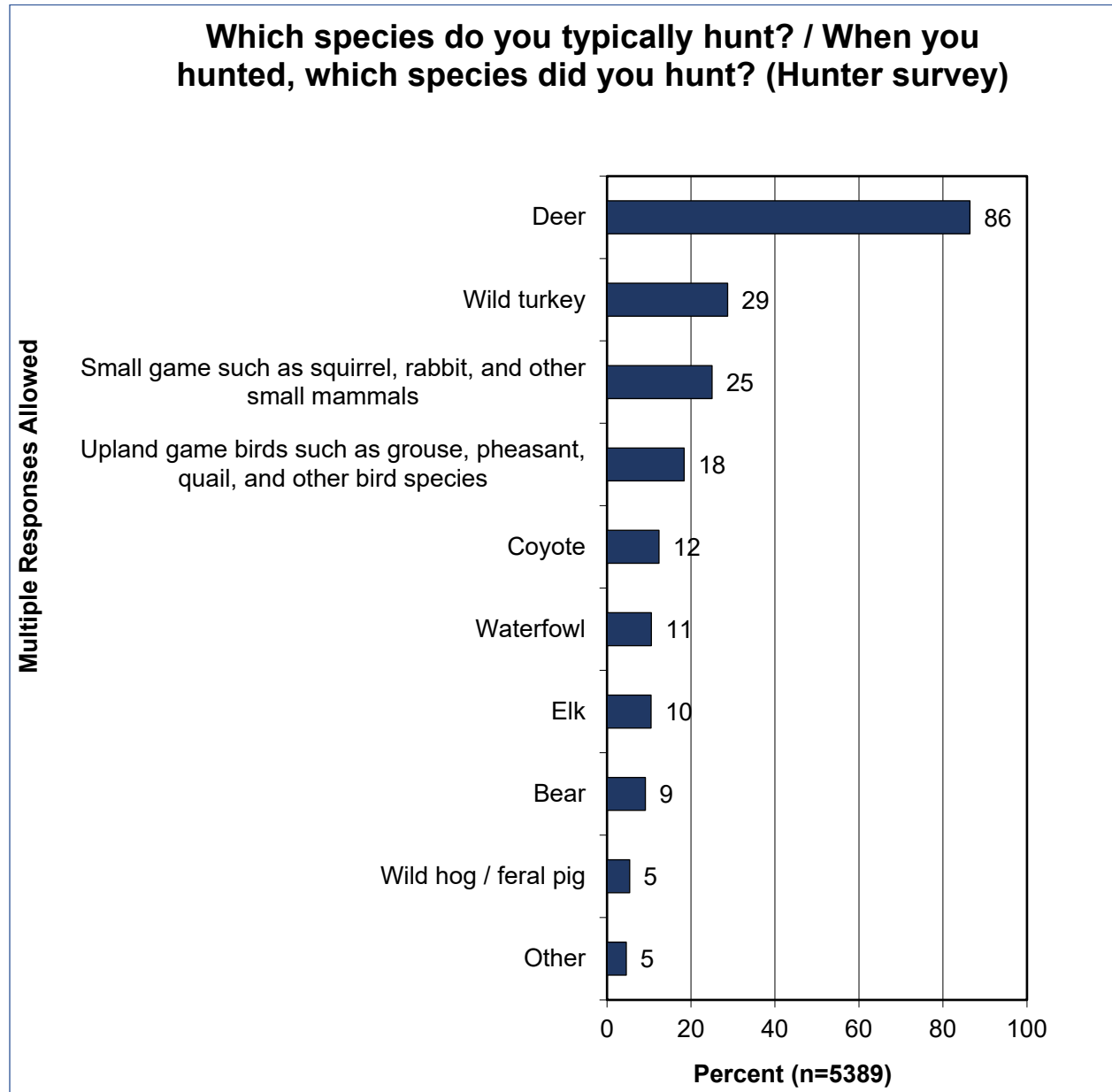
FUTURE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Women hunters were asked their preferences for any future program. Among the results, 44% would prefer co-ed courses, while 31% would prefer women-only courses. Other popular choices are women with spouse/partner and women with kids. About a quarter want specifically adults only. Regional results are included.



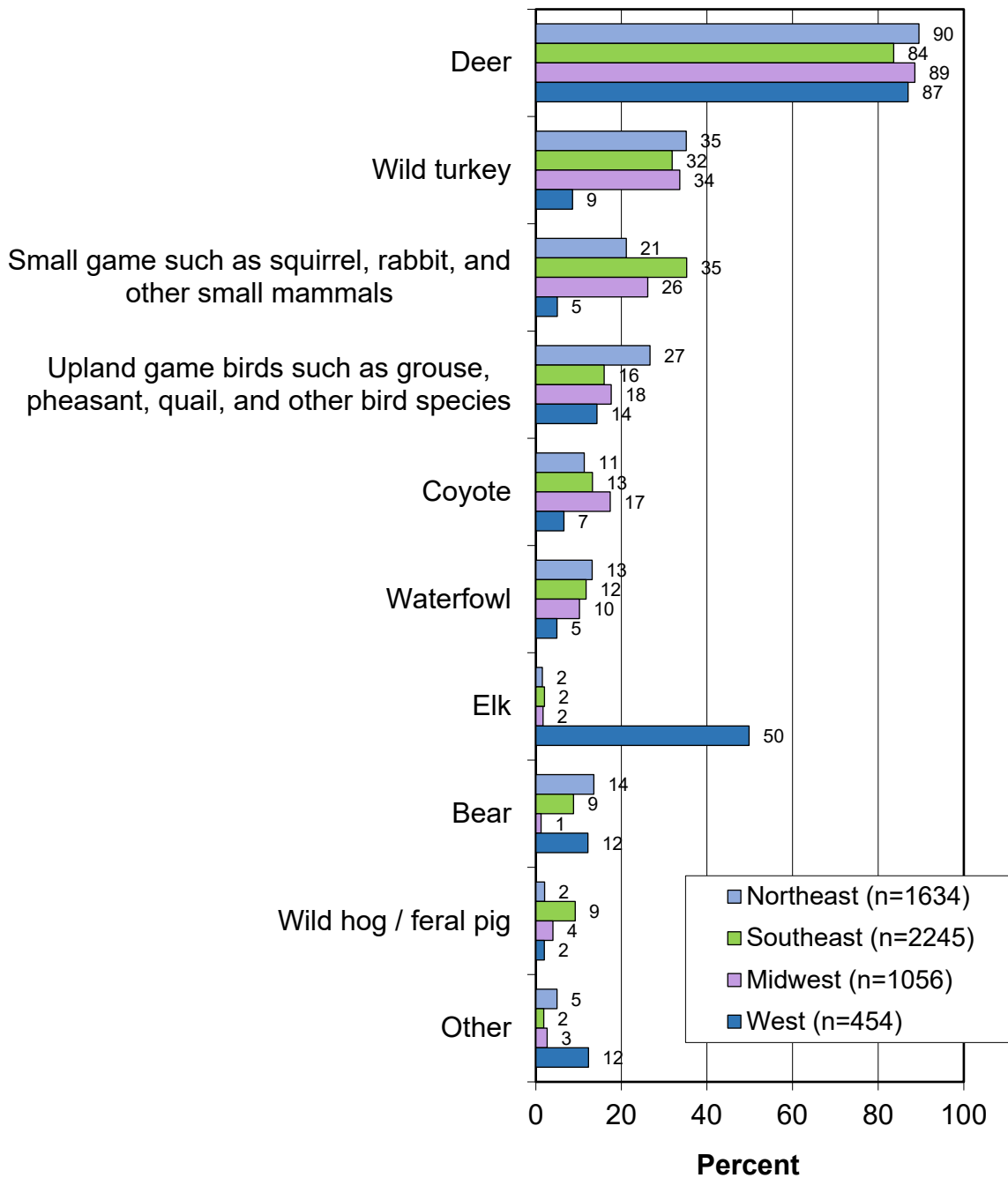
CHARACTERISTICS OF HUNTING PARTICIPATION

By far, deer is the most hunted species: 86% of women hunters hunt deer. Three other species or species group form a second tier: wild turkey (29% hunt it), small game (25%), and upland game birds (18%). Elk also is commonly hunted in the West Region.

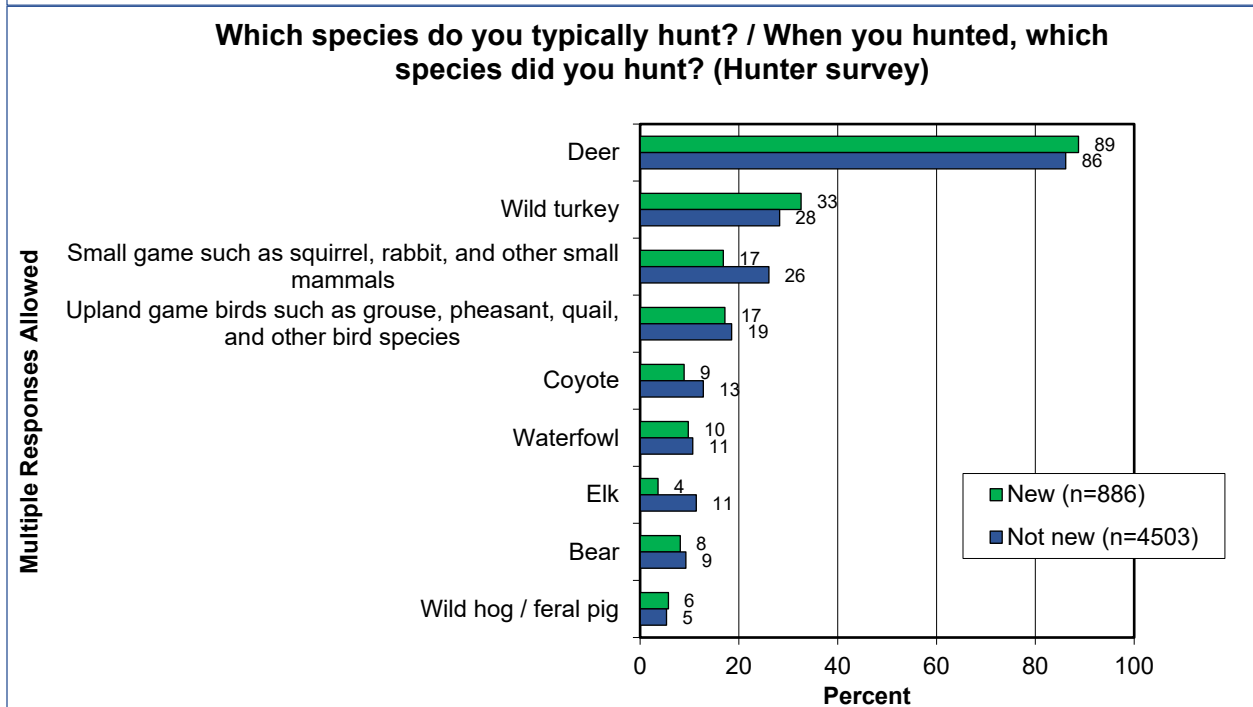
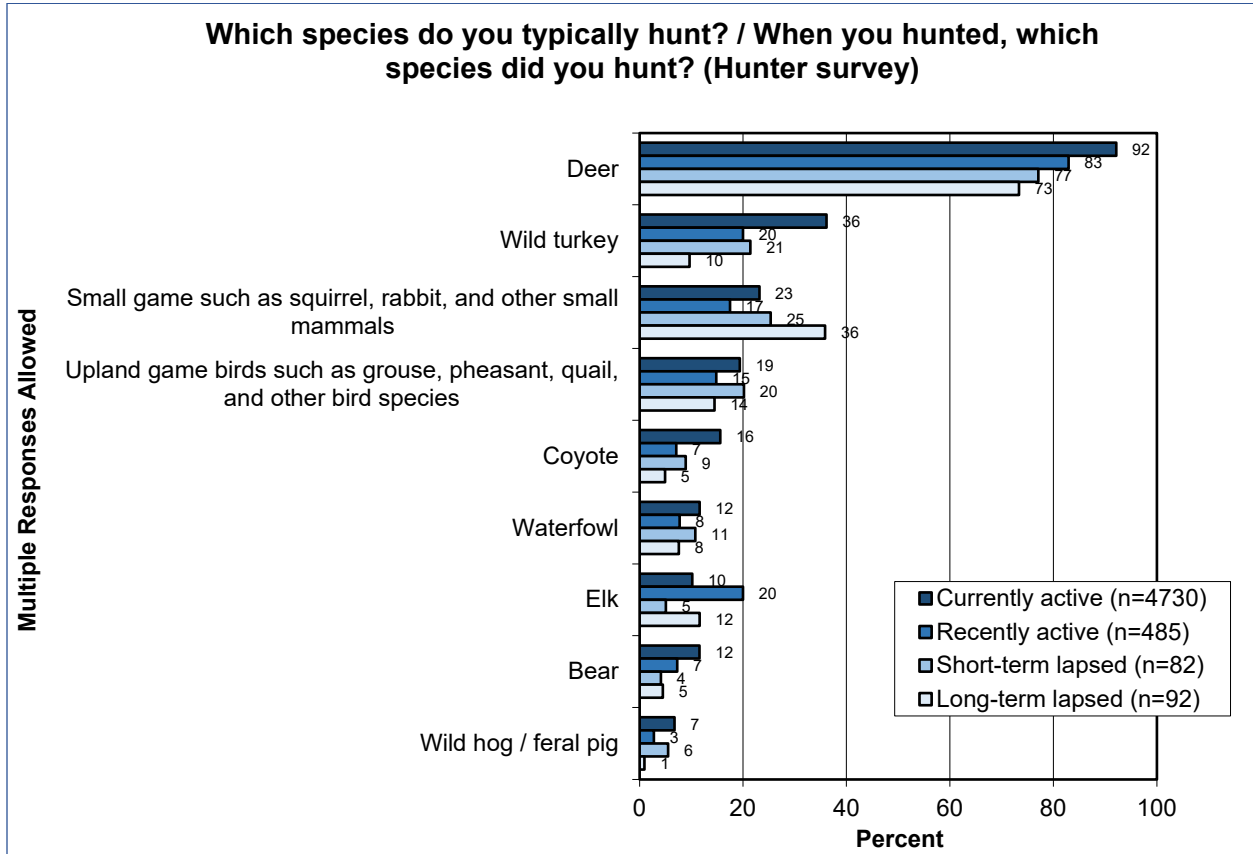


Which species do you typically hunt? / When you hunted, which species did you hunt? (Hunter survey)

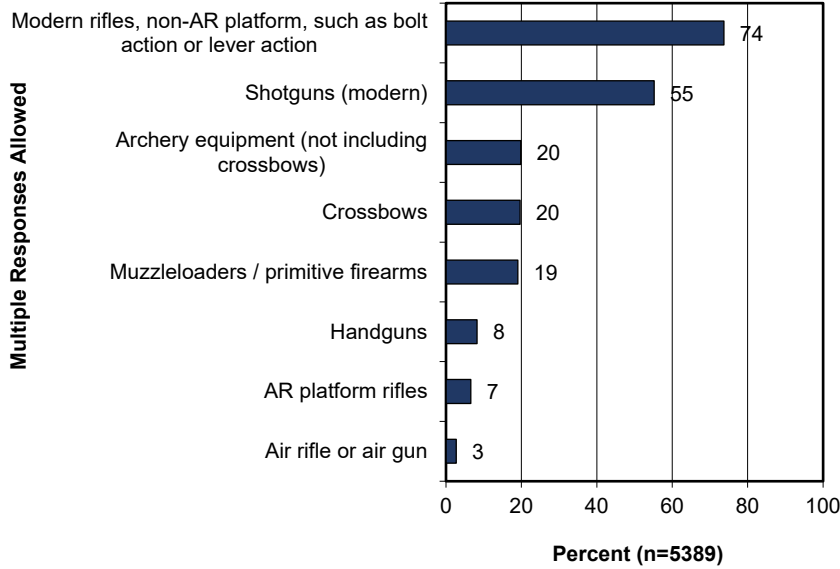
Multiple Responses Allowed



Currently active hunters have the highest rate of hunting deer and wild turkey. Lapsed hunters, meanwhile, have a relatively high rate of hunting small game. New hunters, on the other hand, are not greatly different from their counterparts.

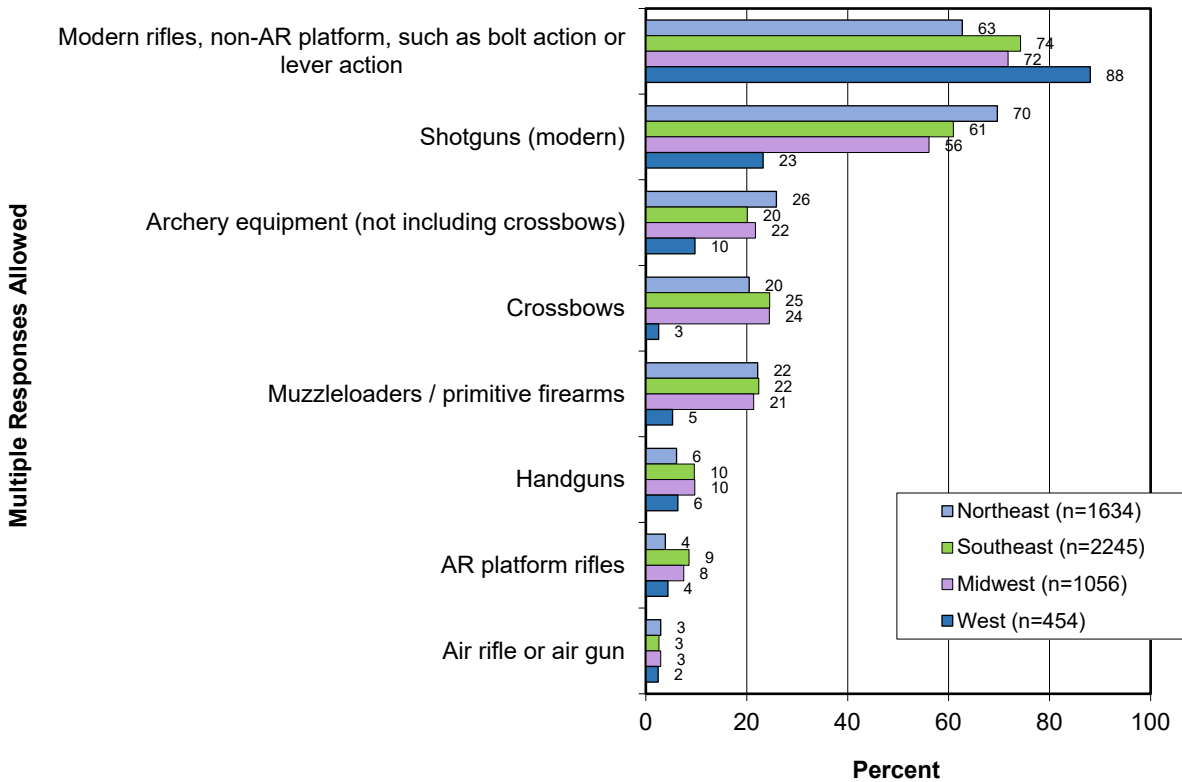


What types of firearms or equipment do you hunt with? / When you hunted, what types of firearms or equipment did you hunt with? (Hunter survey)

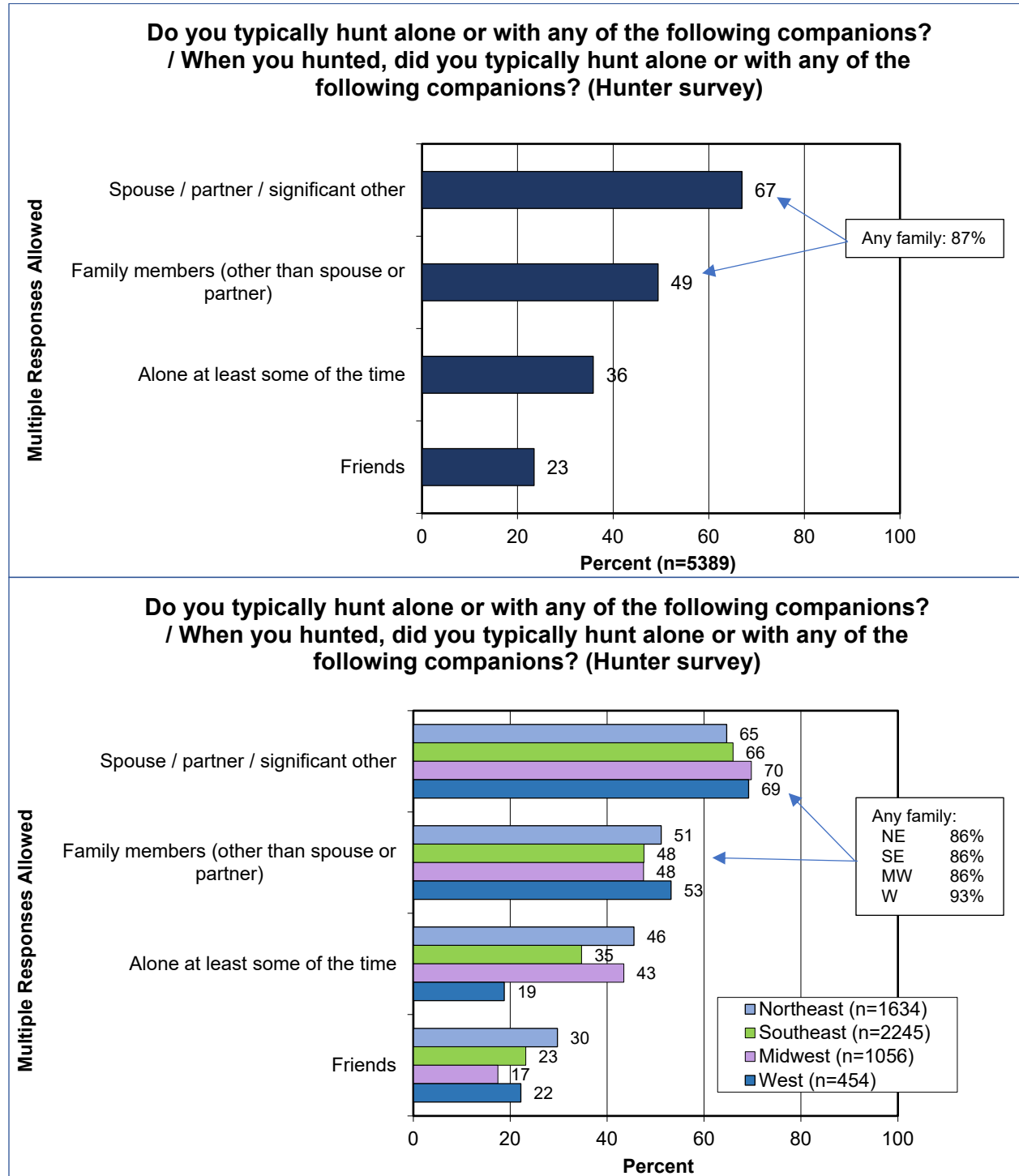


Women hunters most frequently use modern rifles (non-AR platform) (74% of hunters use this type) and shotguns (55%) when hunting. Modern rifle use is particularly high in the West Region, and shotgun use is markedly lower in that region.

What types of firearms or equipment do you hunt with? / When you hunted, what types of firearms or equipment did you hunt with? (Hunter survey)

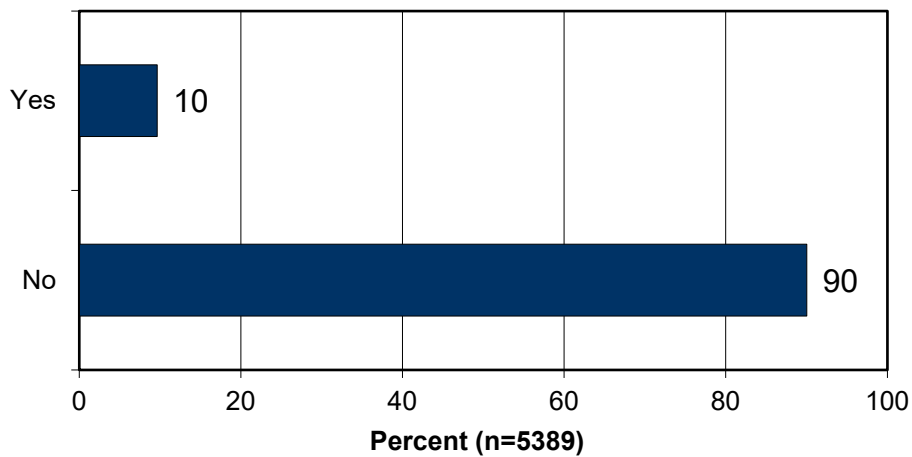


Two thirds of women hunters (67%) typically hunt with their spouse or significant other, while 49% hunt with other family members. Just over a third (36%) hunt alone at least part of the time. In total, 87% hunt with family. Women hunters in the West Region are the least likely to hunt alone. Note that “any family” is not simply the sum of the two responses because hunters can name both.

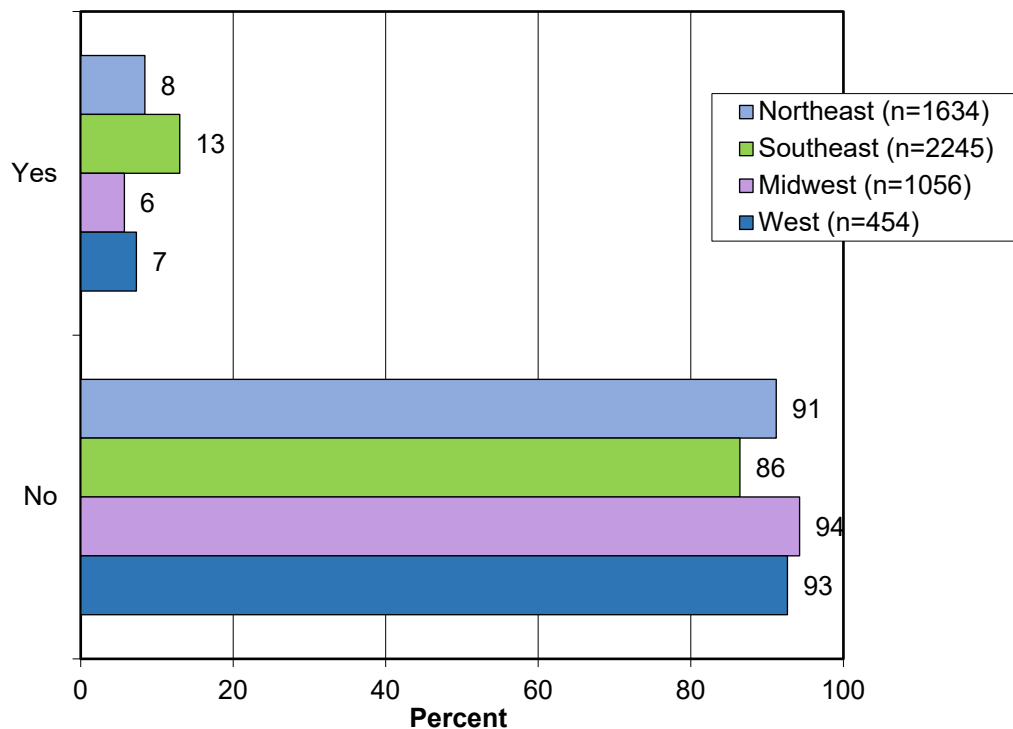


Overall, 10% of women hunters are or were part of a hunting club or organization, with Southeast Region hunters having the highest rate of being in a hunting club.

**Are you part of a hunting club or organization that hunts? /
When you hunted, were you part of a hunting club or
organization that hunts? (Hunter survey)**



**Are you part of a hunting club or organization that hunts? /
When you hunted, were you part of a hunting club or
organization that hunts? (Hunter survey)**

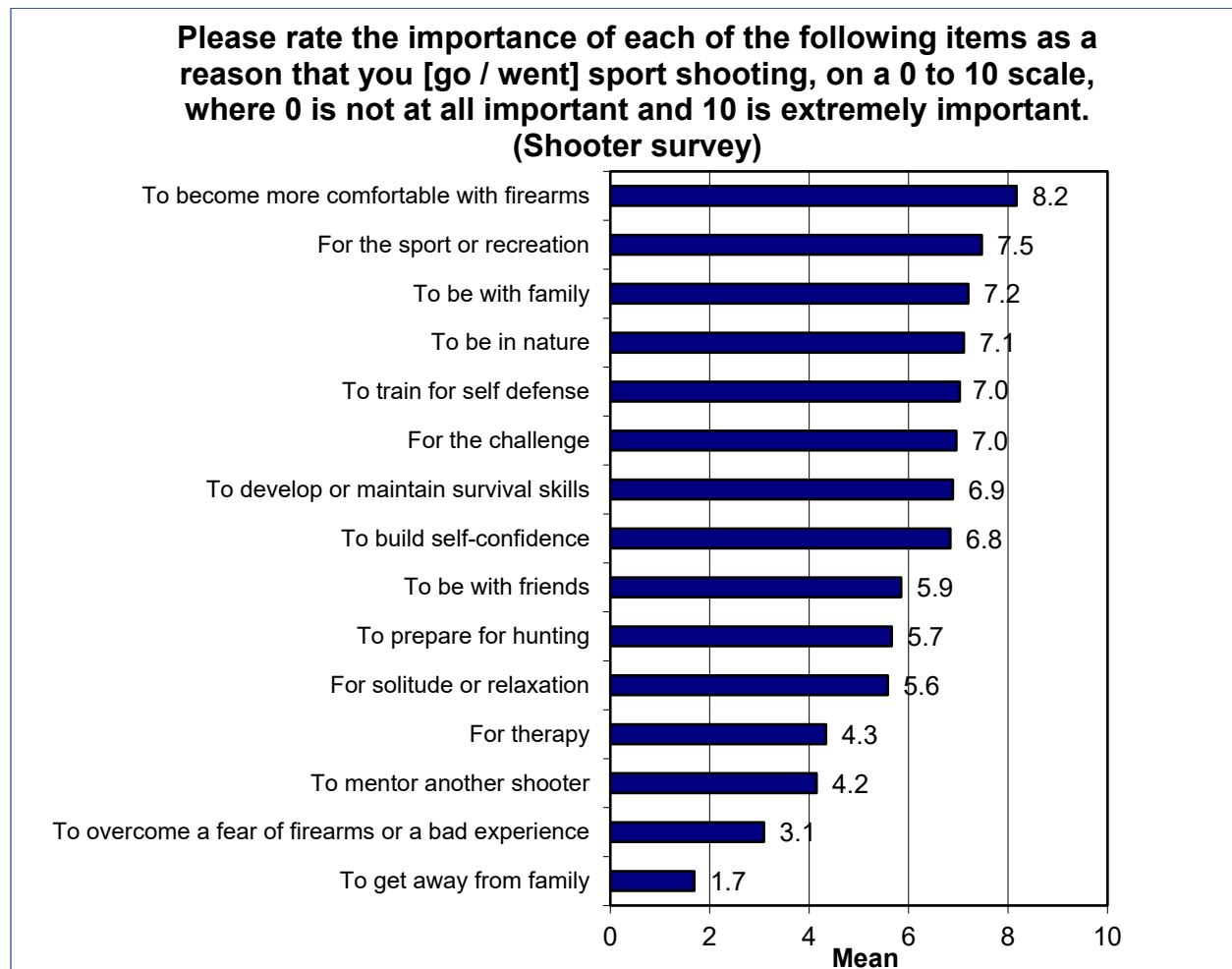


CHAPTER 3. WOMEN’S R3 SPORT SHOOTER SURVEY RESULTS (FIREARMS)

This chapter discusses the survey of sport shooters, which had many similar questions to the hunter portion of the survey. The sample consisted of hunting license holders and women who participate in sport shooting, including non-hunting shooters. The results are based on the 19 states that participated in the survey (as fully detailed in Chapter 1), so the regional results do not include every state in each region but rather representative states for that region. This should be kept in mind when examining the regional results.

REASONS FOR SPORT SHOOTING

Sport shooters were presented with a series of 15 potential reasons for shooting, and they were asked to rate the importance of each as a reason they went shooting, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. One reason is alone at the top: to become more comfortable with firearms. After that are several reasons in a second tier that run the gamut: for sport or for the challenge, to be with family, to be in nature, for self defense training, to develop survival skills, and to build self-confidence. The full series is shown below, and a tabulation on the following page shows regional results.



Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [go / went] sport shooting, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Mean ratings) (Shooter survey)					
Motivation	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West	Overall
To become more comfortable with firearms	8.3	8.3	8.4	7.8	8.2
For the sport or recreation	7.6	7.6	7.2	7.4	7.5
To be with family	7.1	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.2
To be in nature	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.3	7.1
To train for self defense	7.0	7.3	7.7	6.3	7.0
For the challenge	6.8	7.1	7.3	6.7	7.0
To develop or maintain survival skills	6.6	7.0	6.6	7.2	6.9
To build self-confidence	6.7	6.8	7.0	6.9	6.8
To be with friends	5.6	5.7	6.2	6.1	5.9
To prepare for hunting	6.5	5.6	6.0	4.9	5.7
For solitude or relaxation	5.3	5.8	5.9	5.4	5.6
For therapy	4.3	4.2	4.6	4.4	4.3
To mentor another shooter	4.0	4.6	4.9	3.3	4.2
To overcome a fear of firearms or a bad experience	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.1
To get away from family	1.6	1.5	1.5	2.2	1.7

New women shooters place less importance on being with family, for the challenge, to prepare for hunting, for relaxation, or for therapy. They place more importance on sport shooting to be with friends and to mentor another shooter.

Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [go / went] target or sport shooting, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Mean ratings) (Shooter survey)			
Motivation	New	Not new	Overall
To become more comfortable with firearms	8.1	8.2	8.2
For the sport or recreation	7.3	7.5	7.5
To be with family	6.7	7.3	7.2
To be in nature	6.7	7.2	7.1
To train for self defense	7.1	7.0	7.0
For the challenge	6.4	7.1	7.0
To develop or maintain survival skills	6.6	6.9	6.9
To build self-confidence	6.6	6.9	6.8
To be with friends	6.7	5.8	5.9
To prepare for hunting	4.8	5.8	5.7
For solitude or relaxation	5.1	5.7	5.6
For therapy	3.8	4.4	4.3
To mentor another shooter	4.6	4.1	4.2

FEELINGS ASSOCIATED WITH SPORT SHOOTING

The shooter survey examined feelings that sport shooting produces in the participant, four of which are positive (excited, supported, competent, and successful) and two of which are negative (nervous and intimidated). The survey asked sport shooters if they agreed or disagreed that the word described how they feel when sport shooting or when thinking about going shooting.

Because two of the feelings are negative, they were reverse coded for the purposes of analysis. For the feelings of being nervous and intimidated, the agrees and disagrees were switched so that all feelings could be compared from the same baseline, and the label was switched to *not nervous* and *not intimidated* (please see the analogous hunting section for a full explanation of reverse coding). The results in the graphs that follow are ranked by *strongly agree*.

The overall results show that being supported by others is the top feeling when women in the survey went sport shooting. A majority (51%) in the overall results *strongly agree*. Feelings of excitement are robust as well—the second item in the overall results.

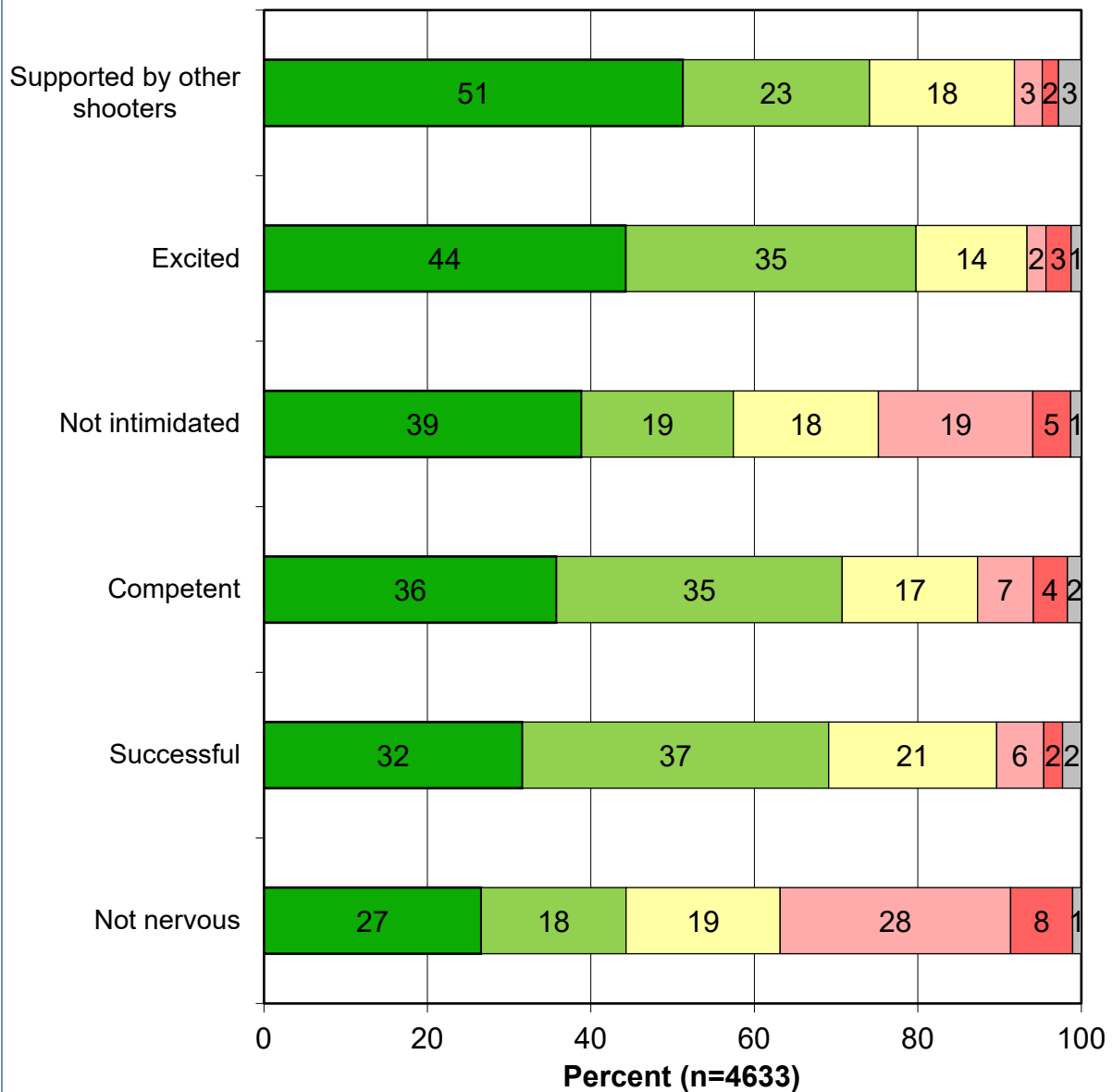
There are three feelings in a middle tier: being not intimidated, feeling of competency, and feeling successful have about a third each of women strongly agreeing with that feeling, and a majority who strongly or somewhat agree that they have those feelings.

On the other hand, nervousness is an issue. Only about a quarter strongly agree that they are not nervous, and less than half strongly or somewhat agree that they are not nervous. In fact, the most disagreement is that women are not nervous (about a third disagree) and not intimidated (about a quarter disagree).

The regional graphs for this follow the overall graph.

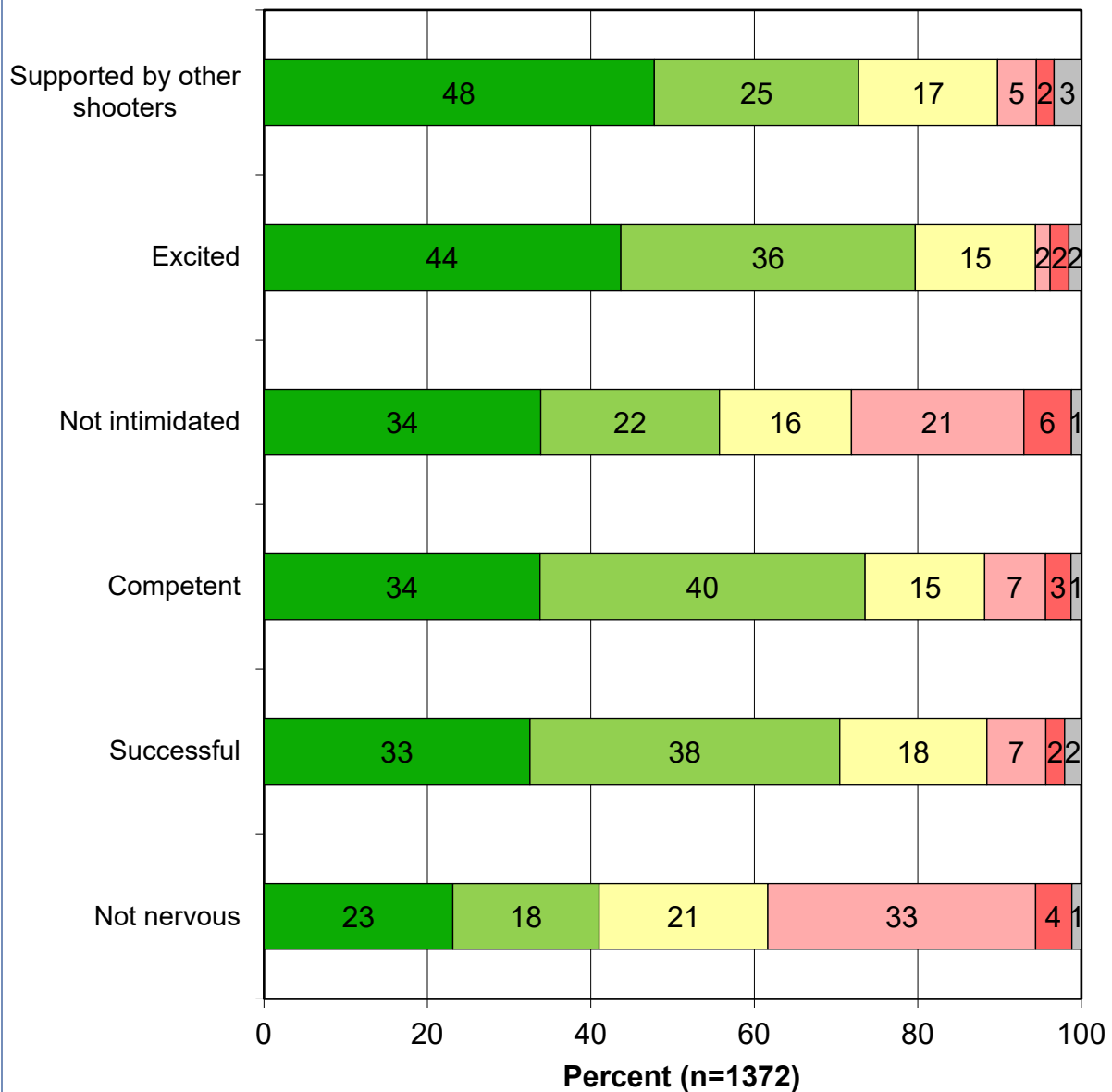
(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting. (Overall) (Shooter survey)

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know



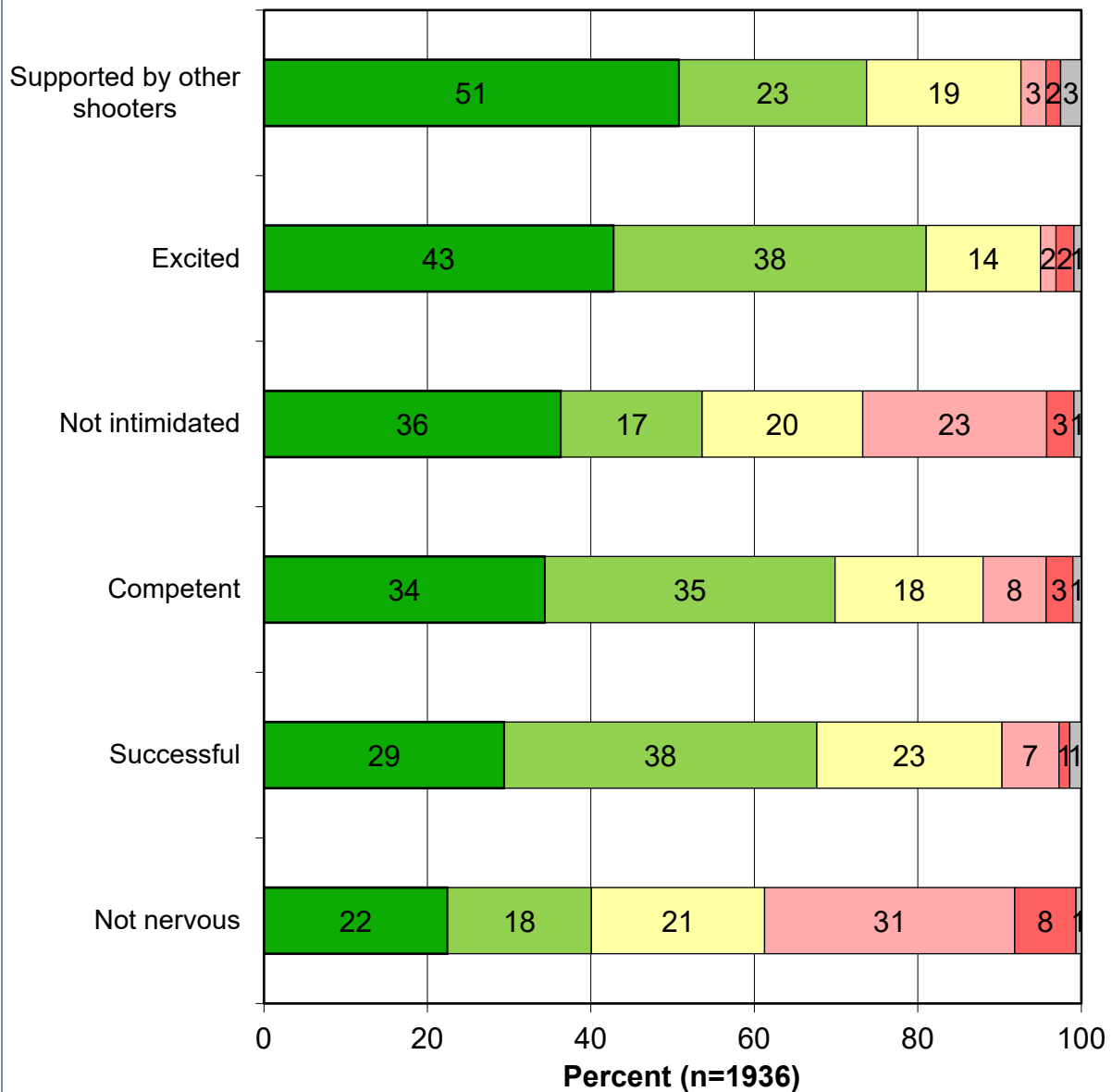
(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting. (Northeast) (Shooter survey)

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know



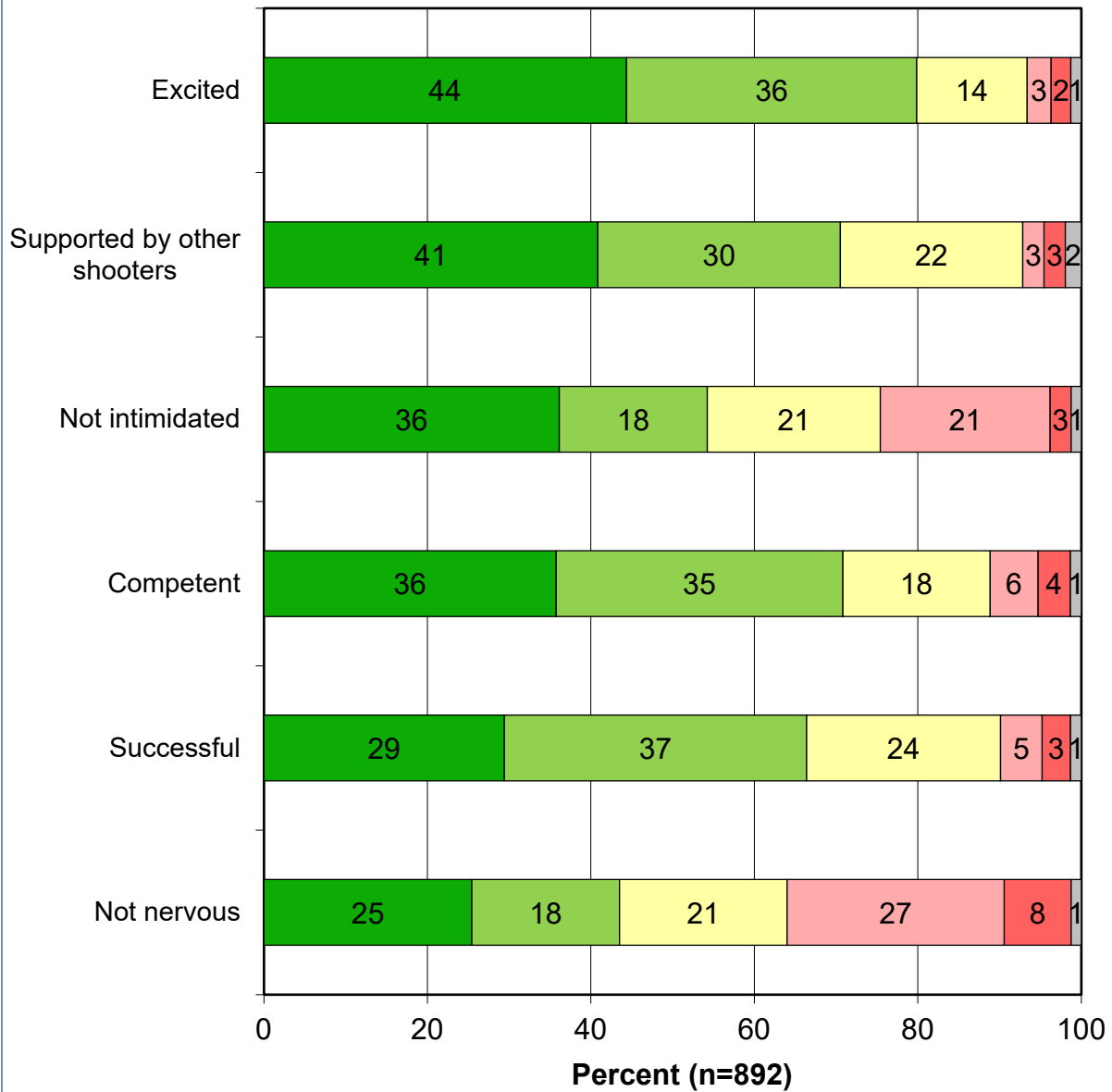
(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting. (Southeast) (Shooter survey)

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Do not know



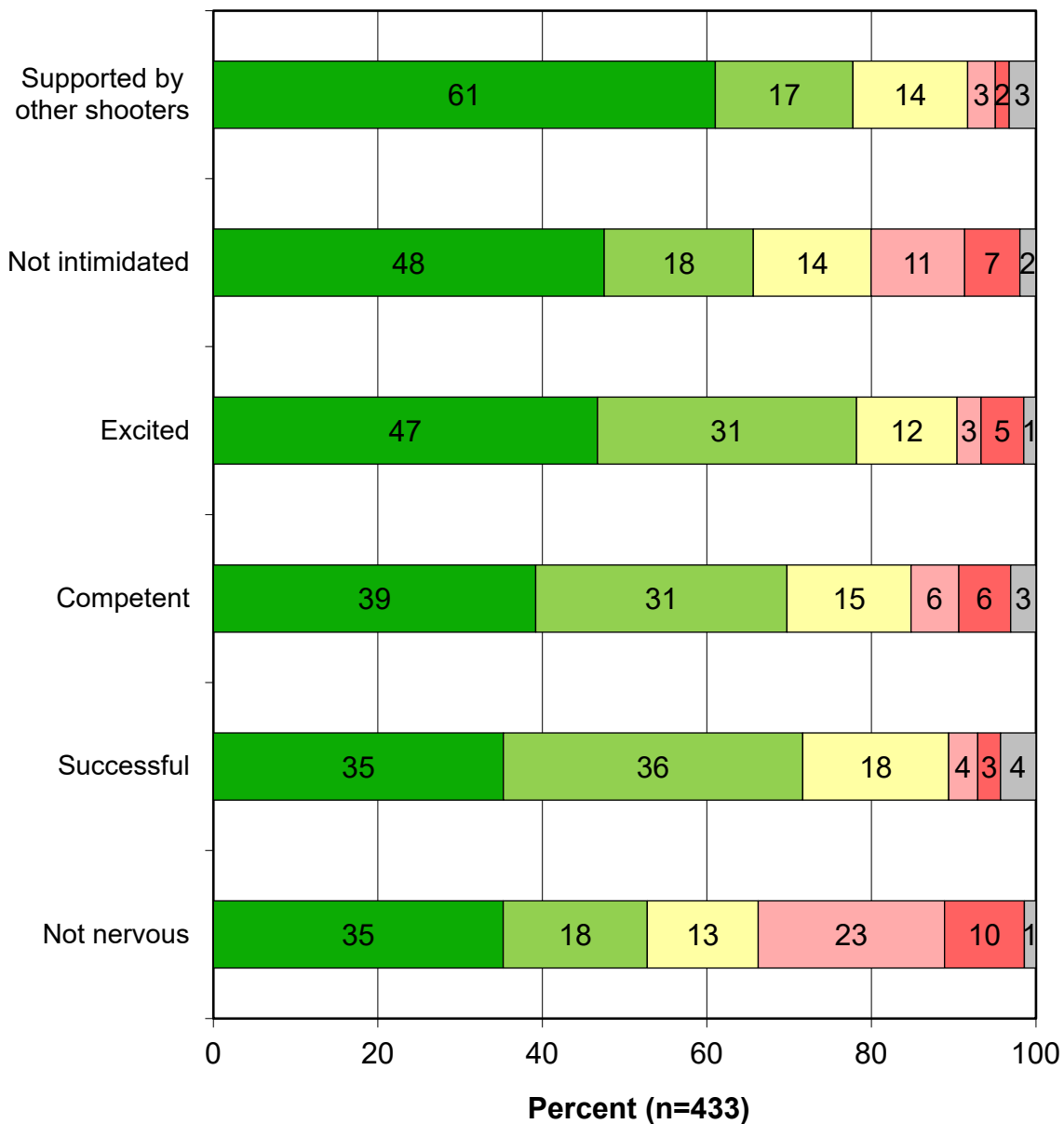
(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting. (Midwest) (Shooter survey)

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know

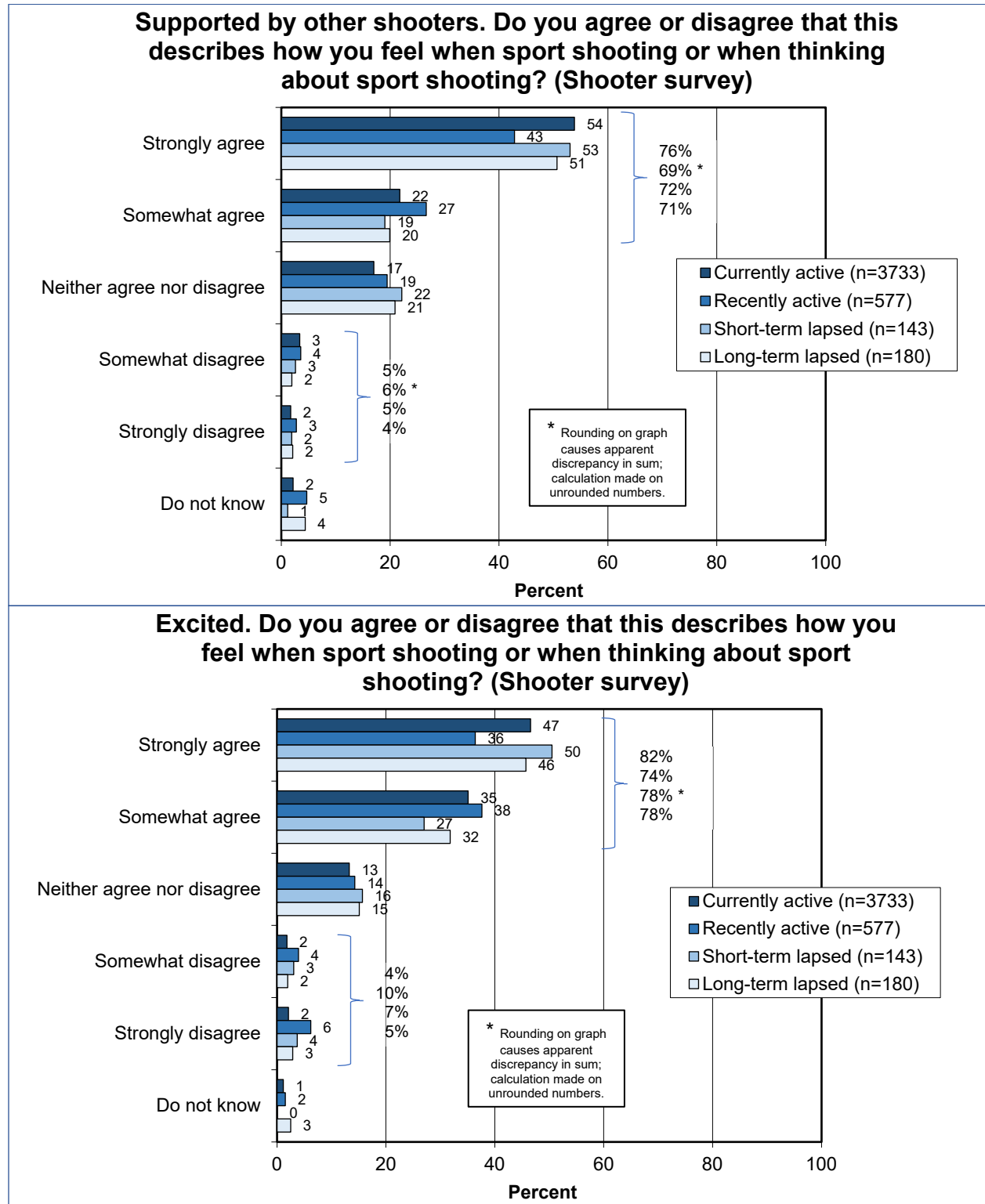


(Reverse coded) Percent of respondents who [agree / disagree] that each of the following describes how they feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting. (West) (Shooter survey)

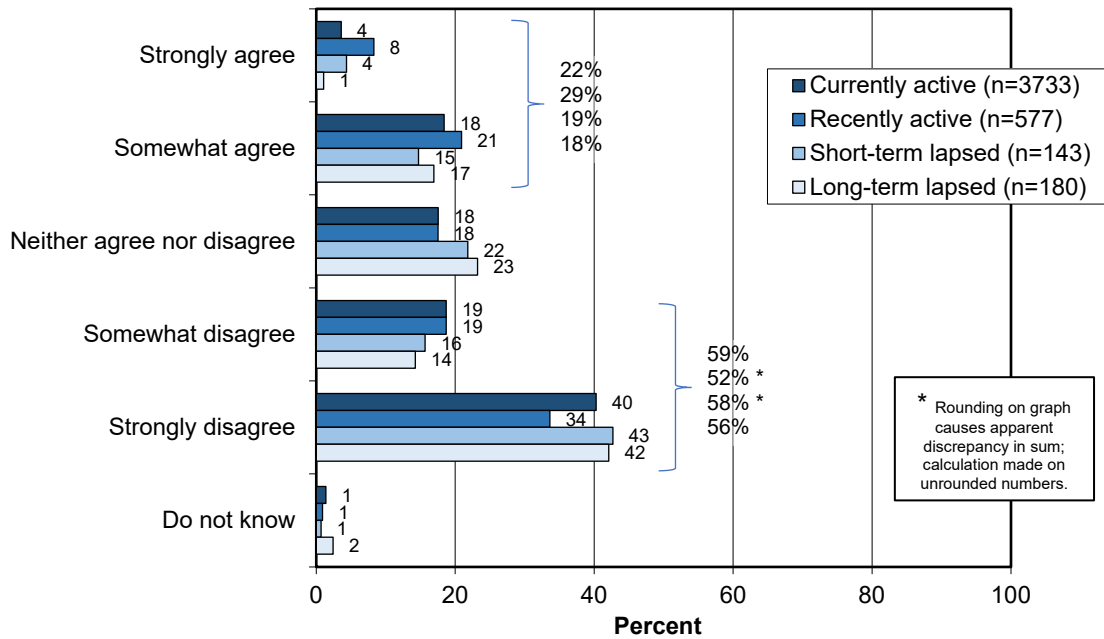
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Neither
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Do not know



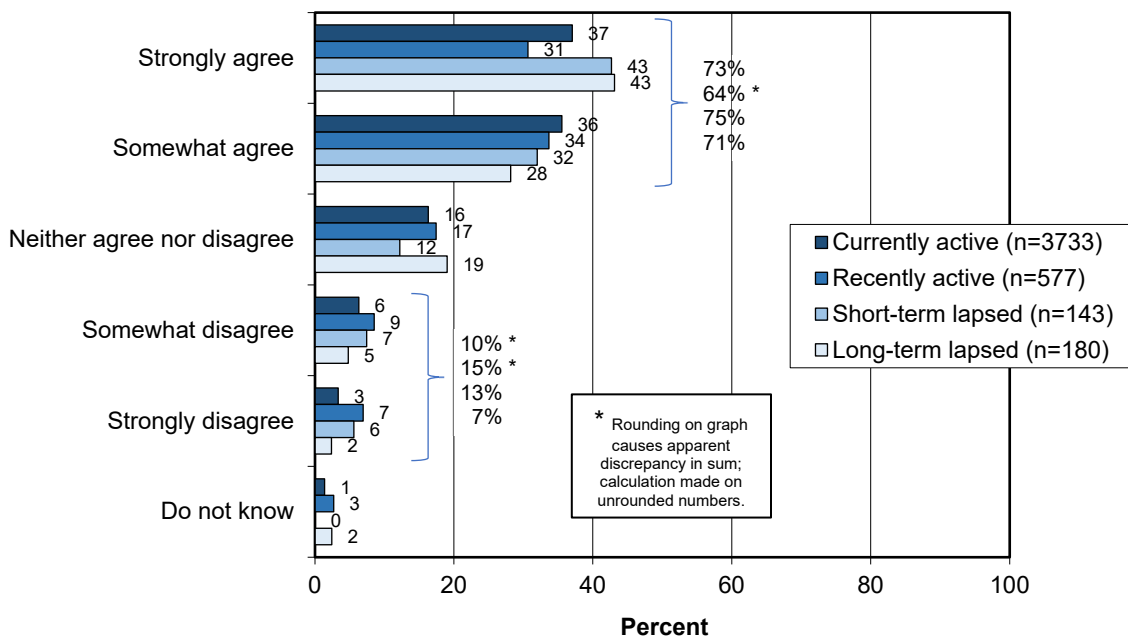
Currently active women shooters tend to feel more supported and excited than do their counterparts who are less active. However, the rest of the crosstabulations for this series show no systematic differences.



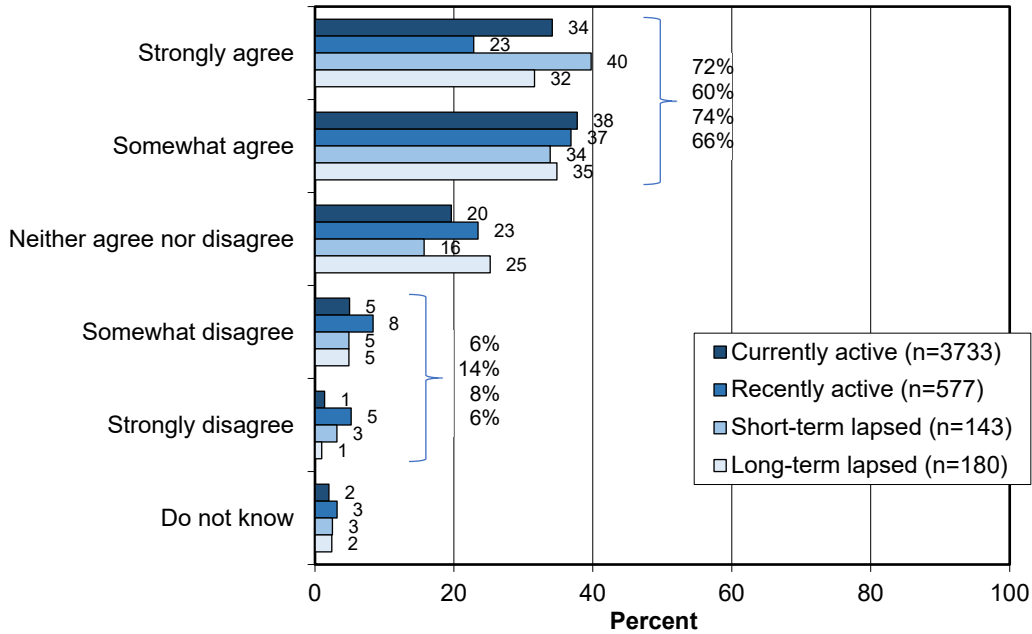
Intimidated. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting? (Shooter survey)



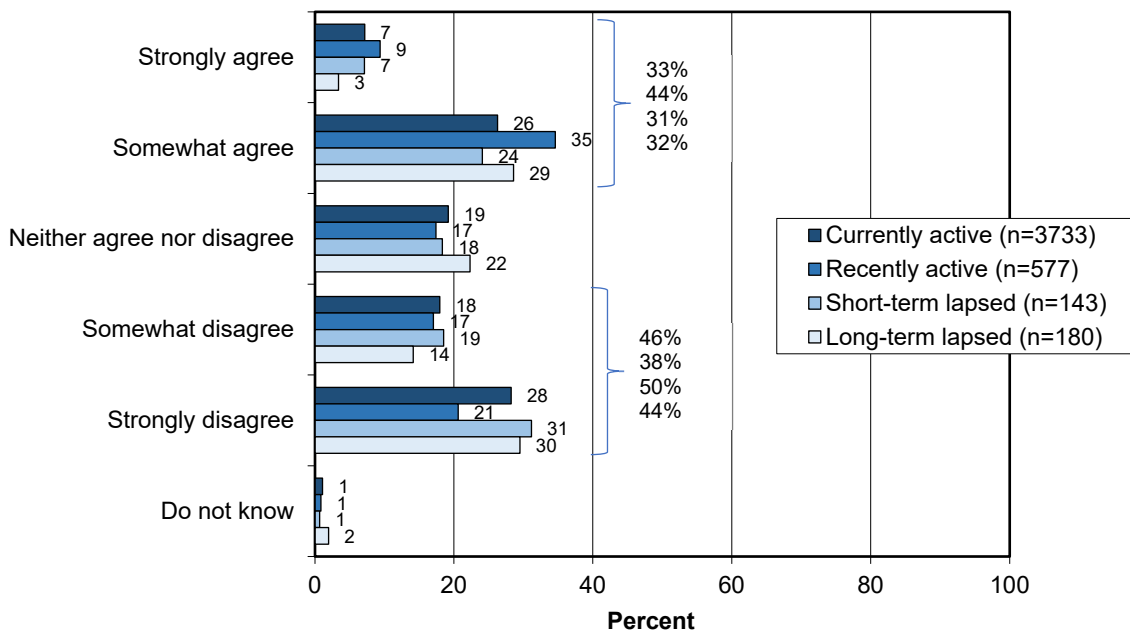
Competent. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting? (Shooter survey)



Successful. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting? (Shooter survey)

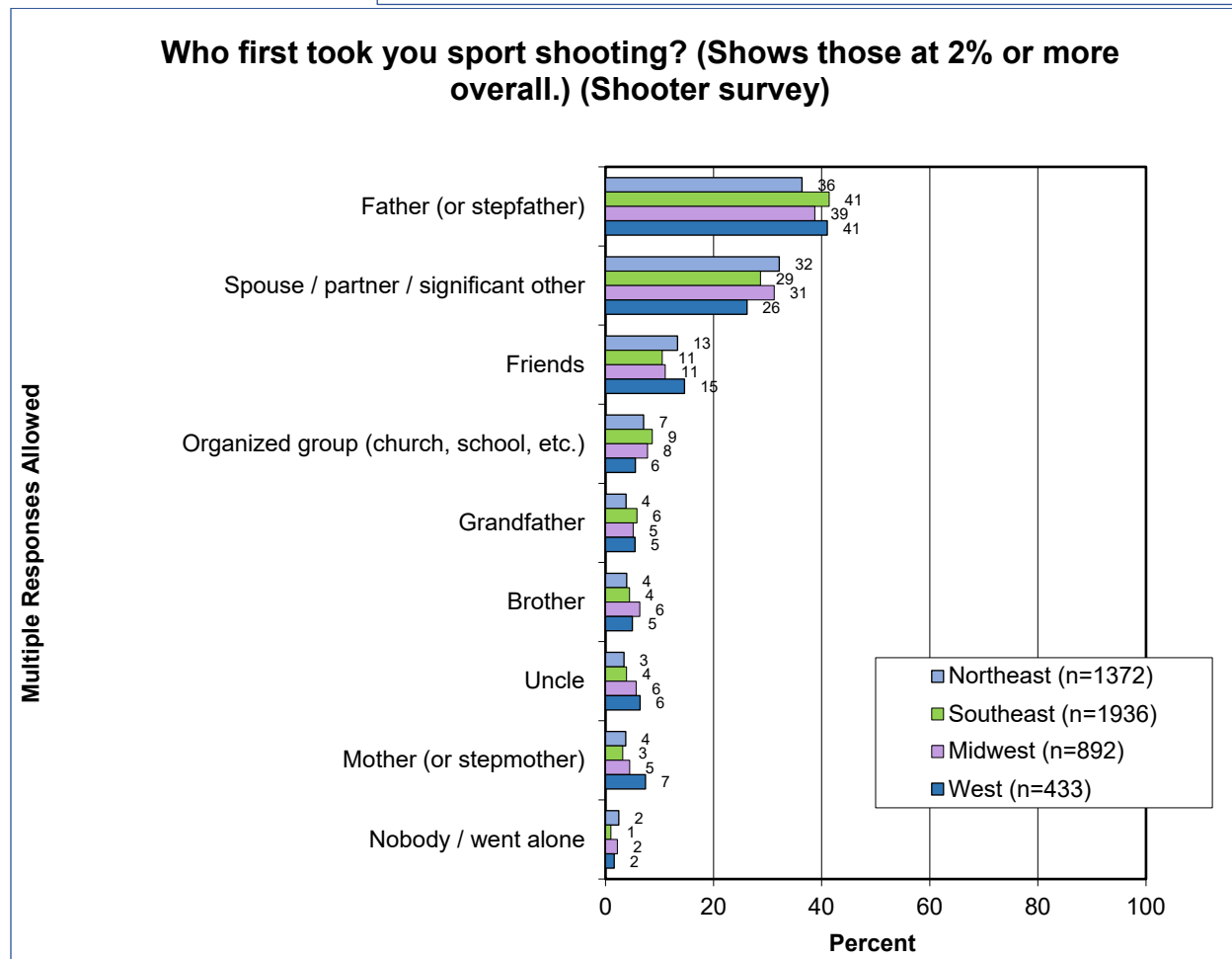
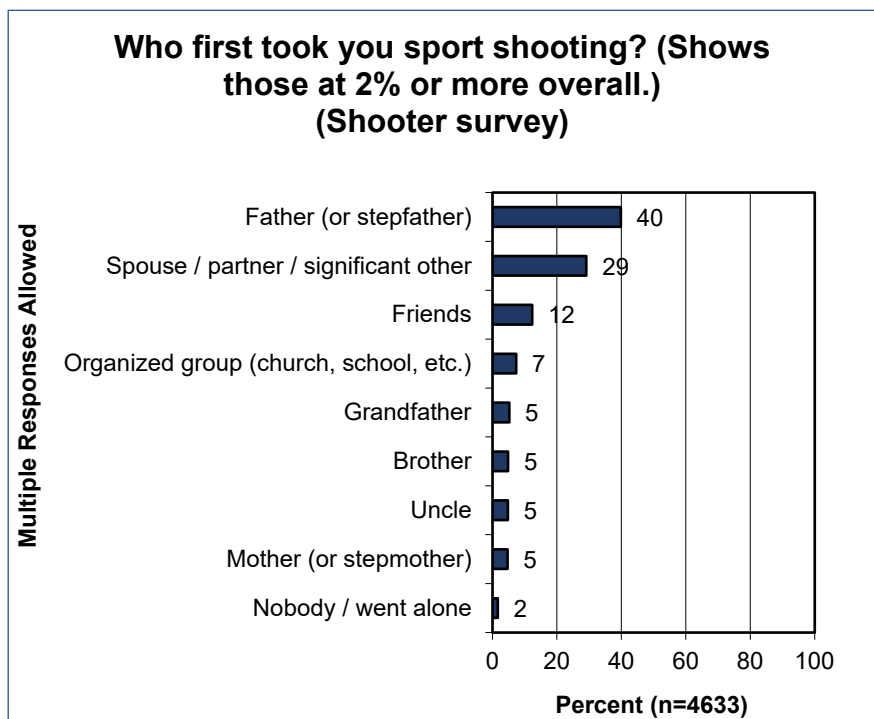


Nervous. Do you agree or disagree that this describes how you feel when sport shooting or when thinking about sport shooting? (Shooter survey)

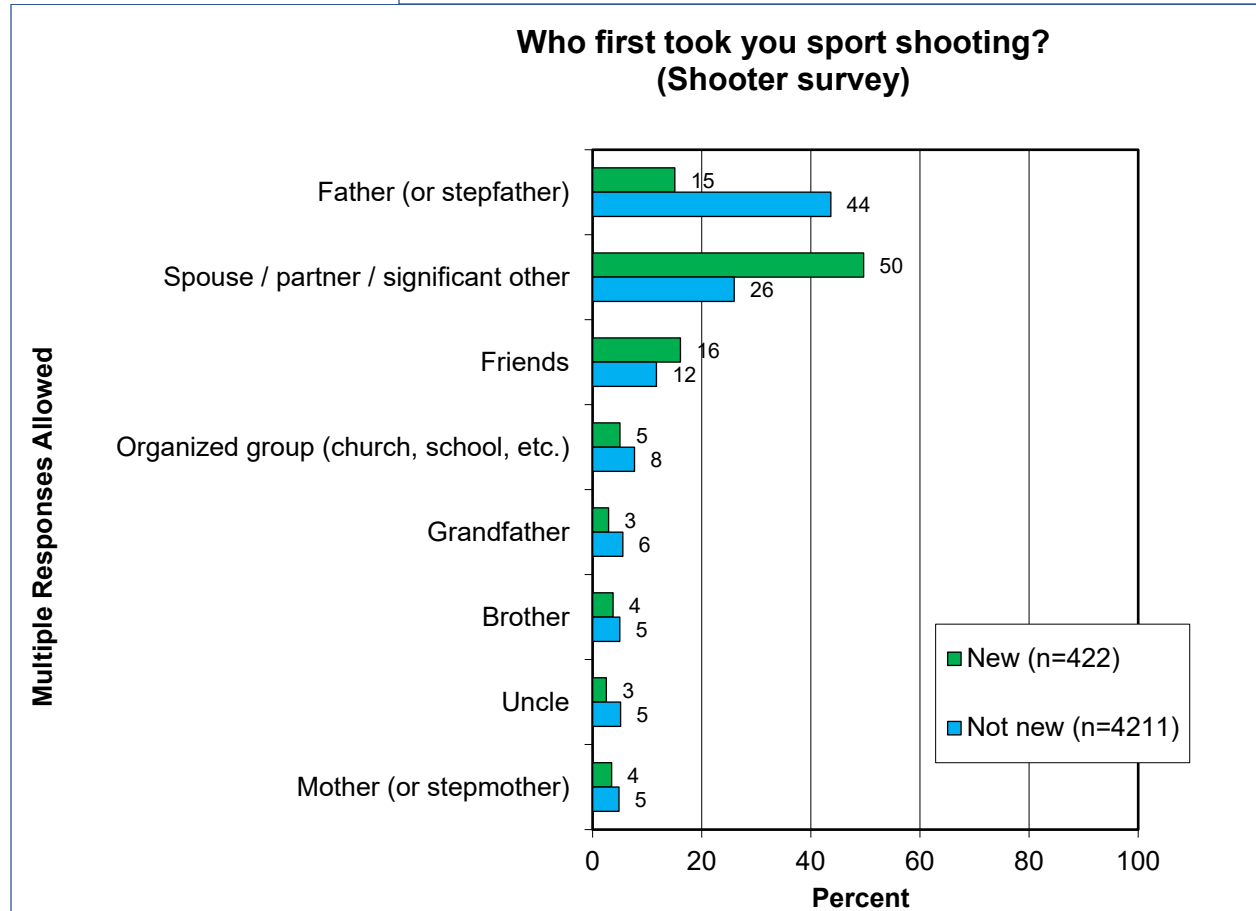
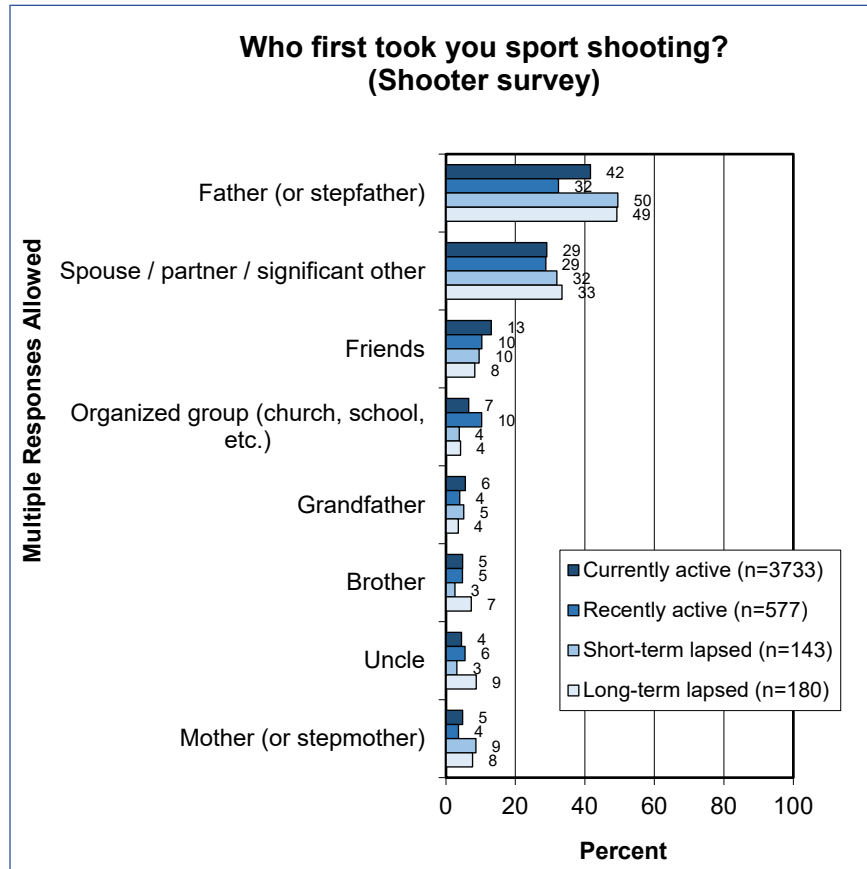


MENTORING AND SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED SPORT SHOOTING

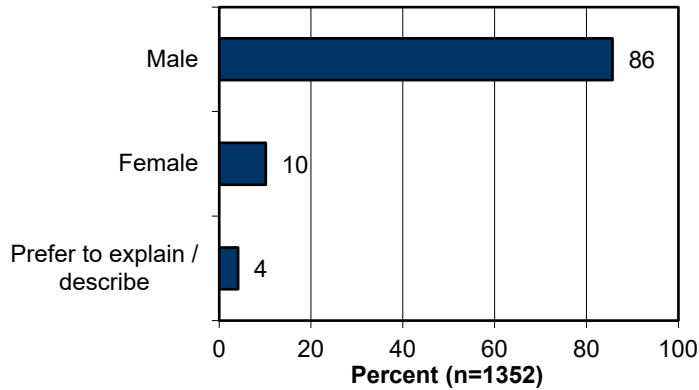
Fathers and spouses are the most common mentors, by far. Friends are also of some importance as mentors. All other responses are given by less than 10%. Regional results are fairly consistent across the regions.



Crosstabulations run on this question show little marked differences according to participation level. On the other hand, new shooters were more often taken by their spouse, compared to established shooters.

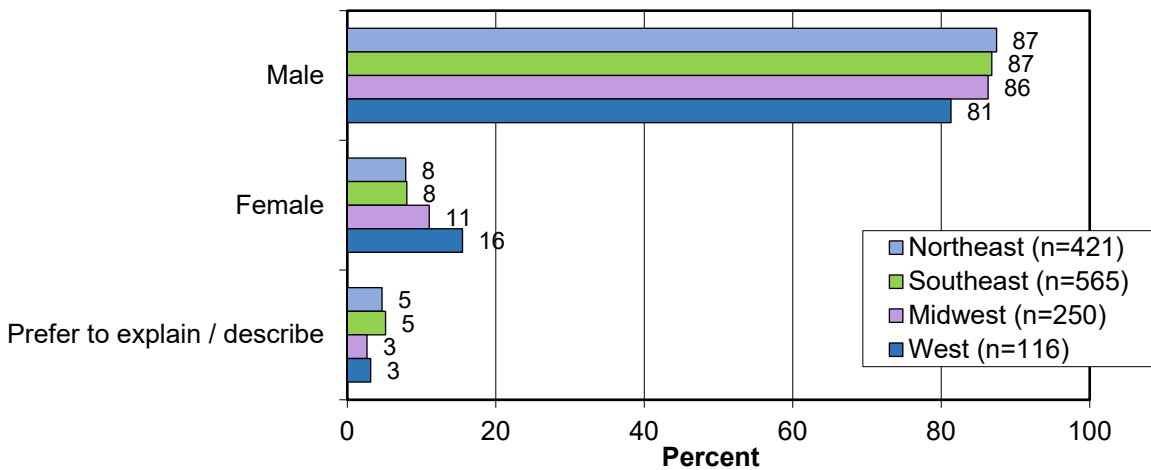


Is / Was your mentor male or female? (Asked of those who rated the importance of having a mentor as a 7 or higher, on a 0 to 10 scale.) (Shooter survey)

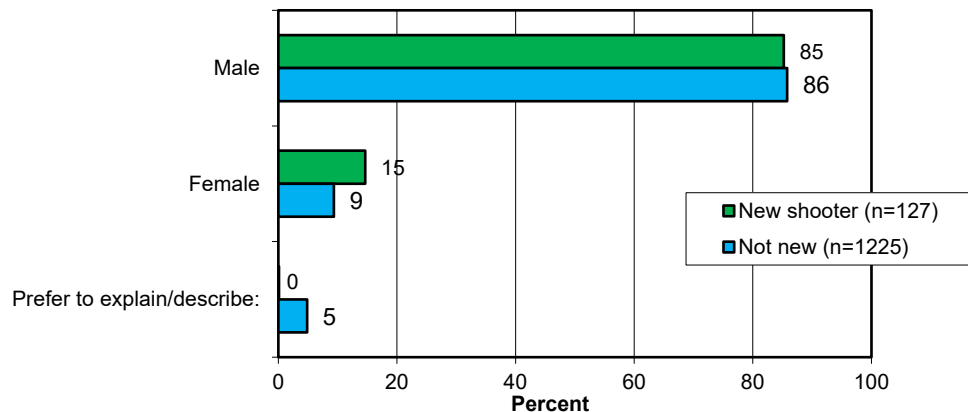


The overwhelming majority of female sport shooters' mentors are male (86% overall). This holds true across the regions, where from 81% to 87% of female sport shooters say that their mentors were male. The West Region has the highest proportion of female hunters who say that their mentor was female—16% did so. There is little difference between new shooters and established shooters on this question.

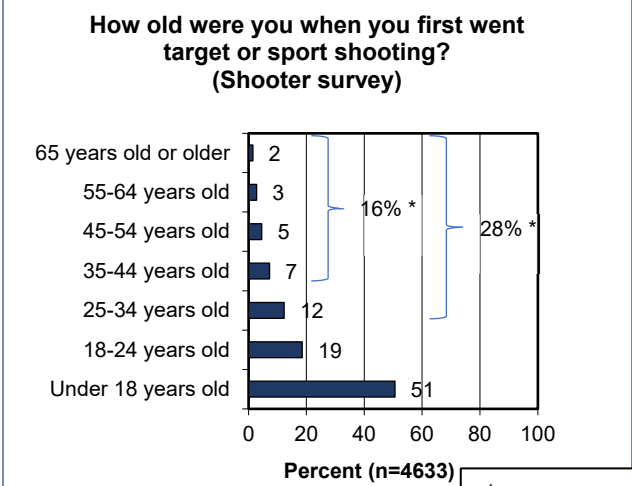
Is / Was your mentor male or female? (Asked of those who rated the importance of having a mentor as a 7 or higher, on a 0 to 10 scale.) (Shooter survey)



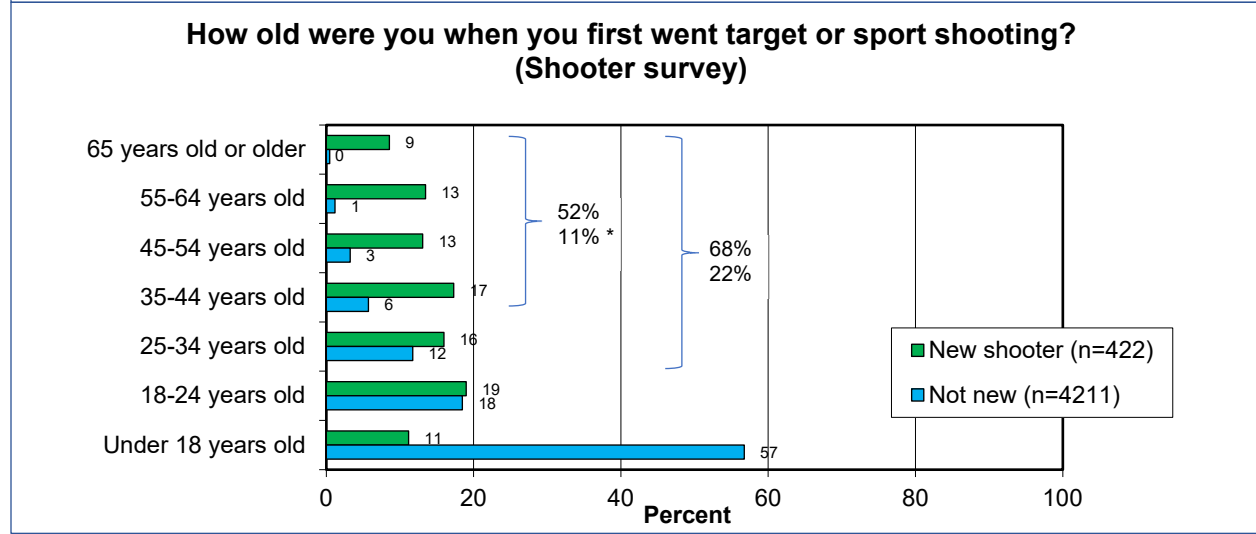
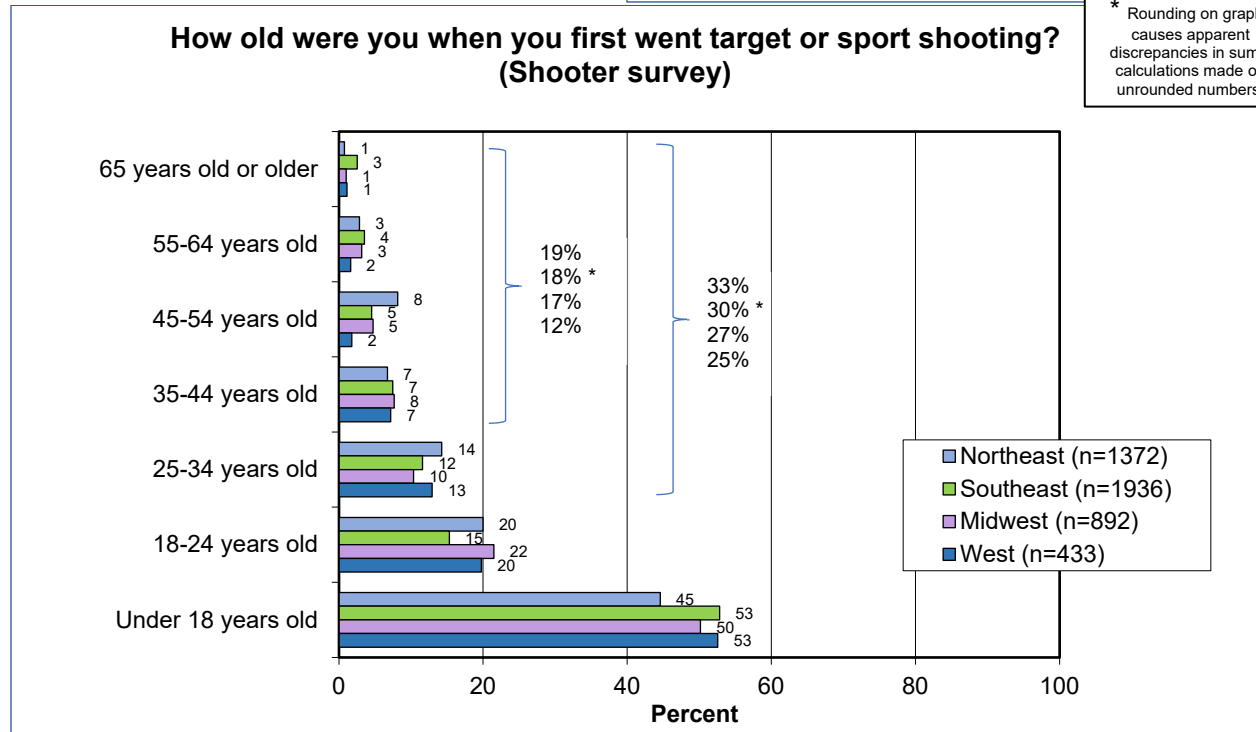
Is / Was your mentor male or female? (Asked of those who rated the importance of having a mentor as a 7 or higher, on a 0 to 10 scale.) (Shooter survey)



The same analyses run on the hunter data were conducted for the shooter data, including the age of initiation into sport shooting, which factors into the likelihood to continue sport shooting. The baseline data on age of initiation overall and regionally are shown, followed by the crosstabulation by being new/not new to sport shooting. Many new shooters started shooting rather later in their lives, compared to the established shooters, with 52% starting at the age of 35 or later, and 68% starting at 25 or later.

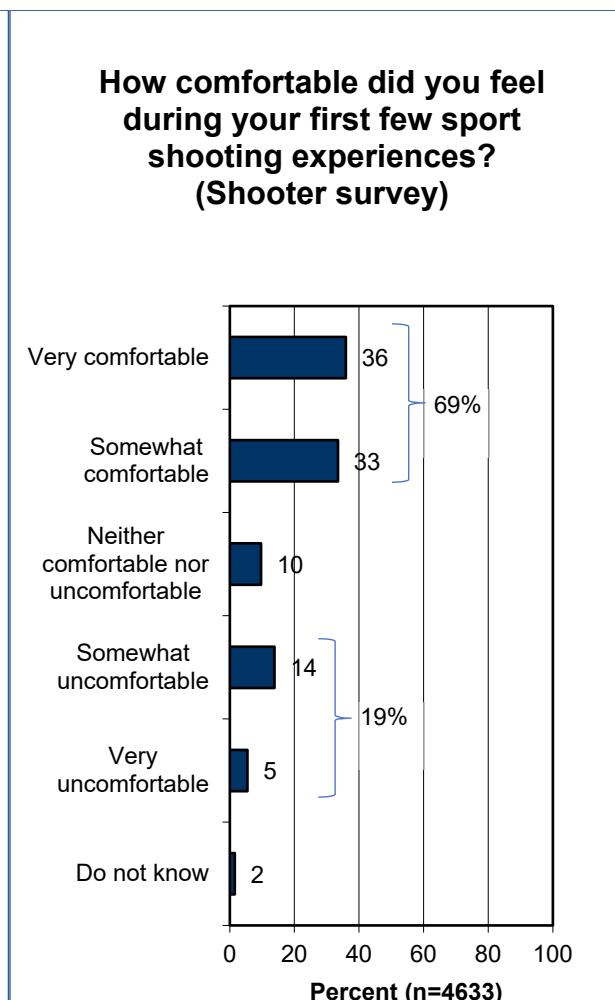
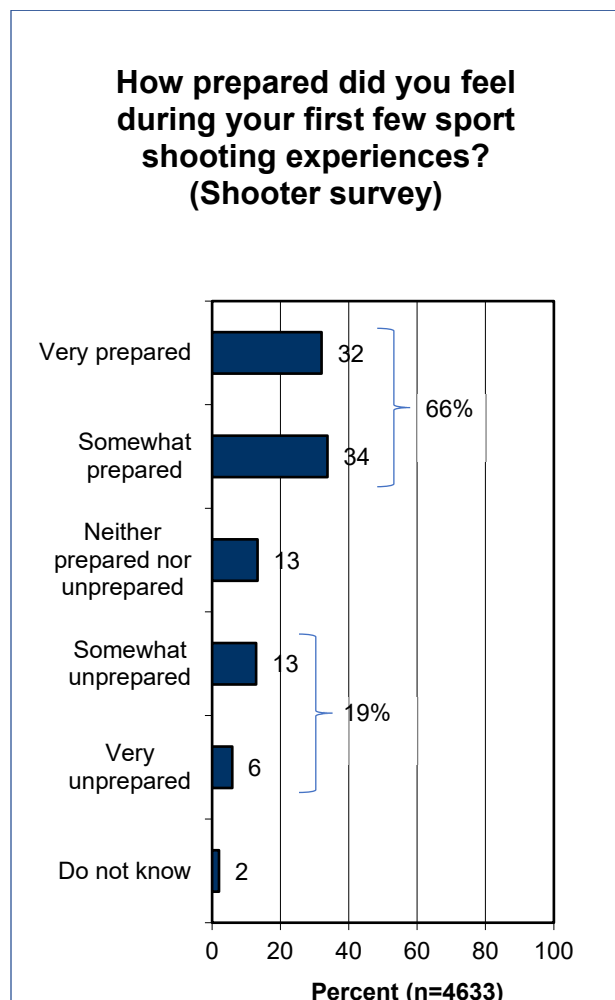
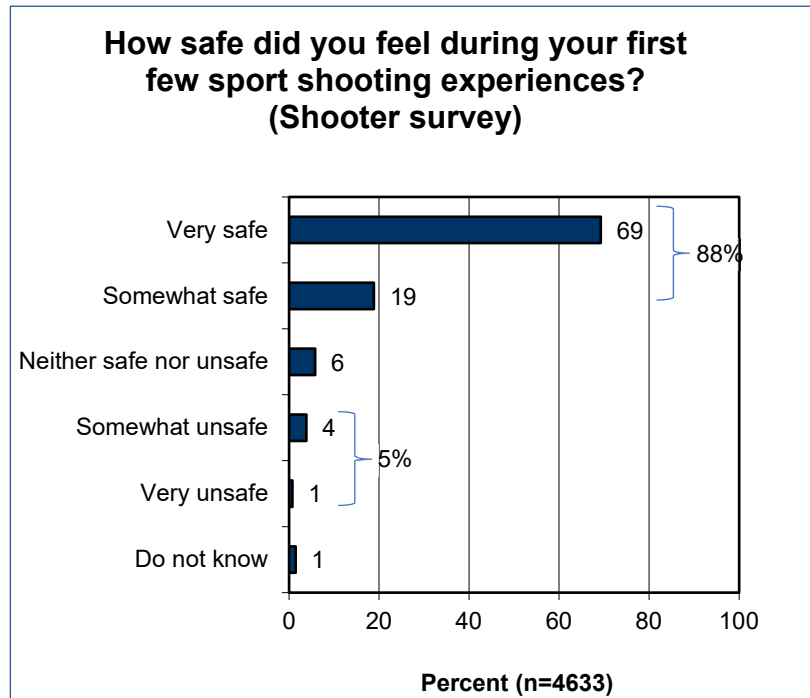


* Rounding on graphs causes apparent discrepancies in sums; calculations made on unrounded numbers.

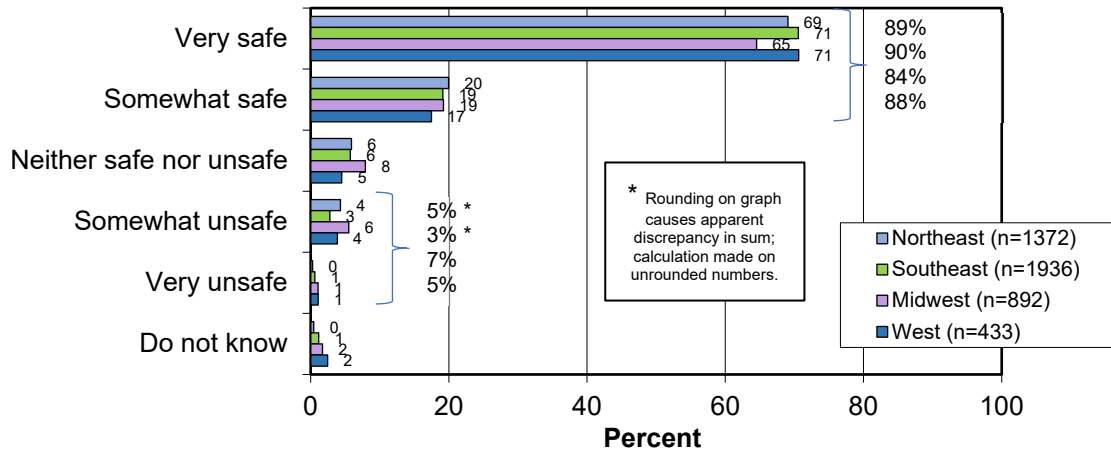


Of the three feelings that were gauged in the survey, feelings of being safe were not problematic, as 88% of women sport shooters indicated feeling safe during their first few sport shooting experiences.

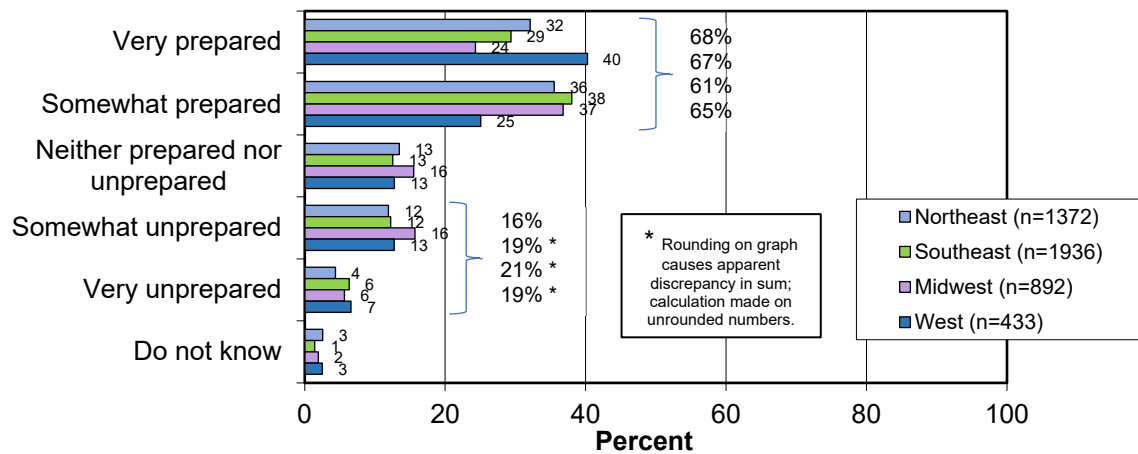
However, feelings of being prepared and comfortable were not quite as prevalent: only about two thirds of women sport shooters said that they felt prepared or comfortable. Regional results are shown on the following page.



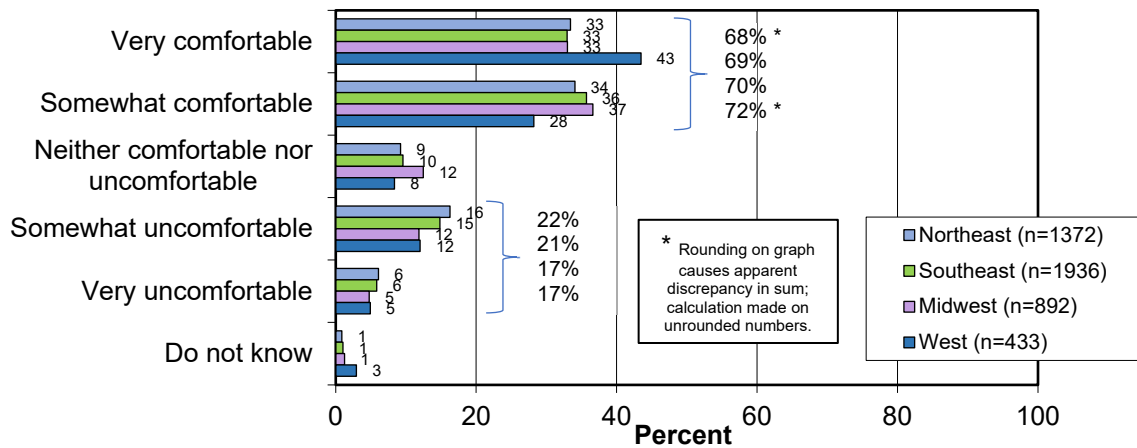
How safe did you feel during your first few sport shooting experiences? (Shooter survey)



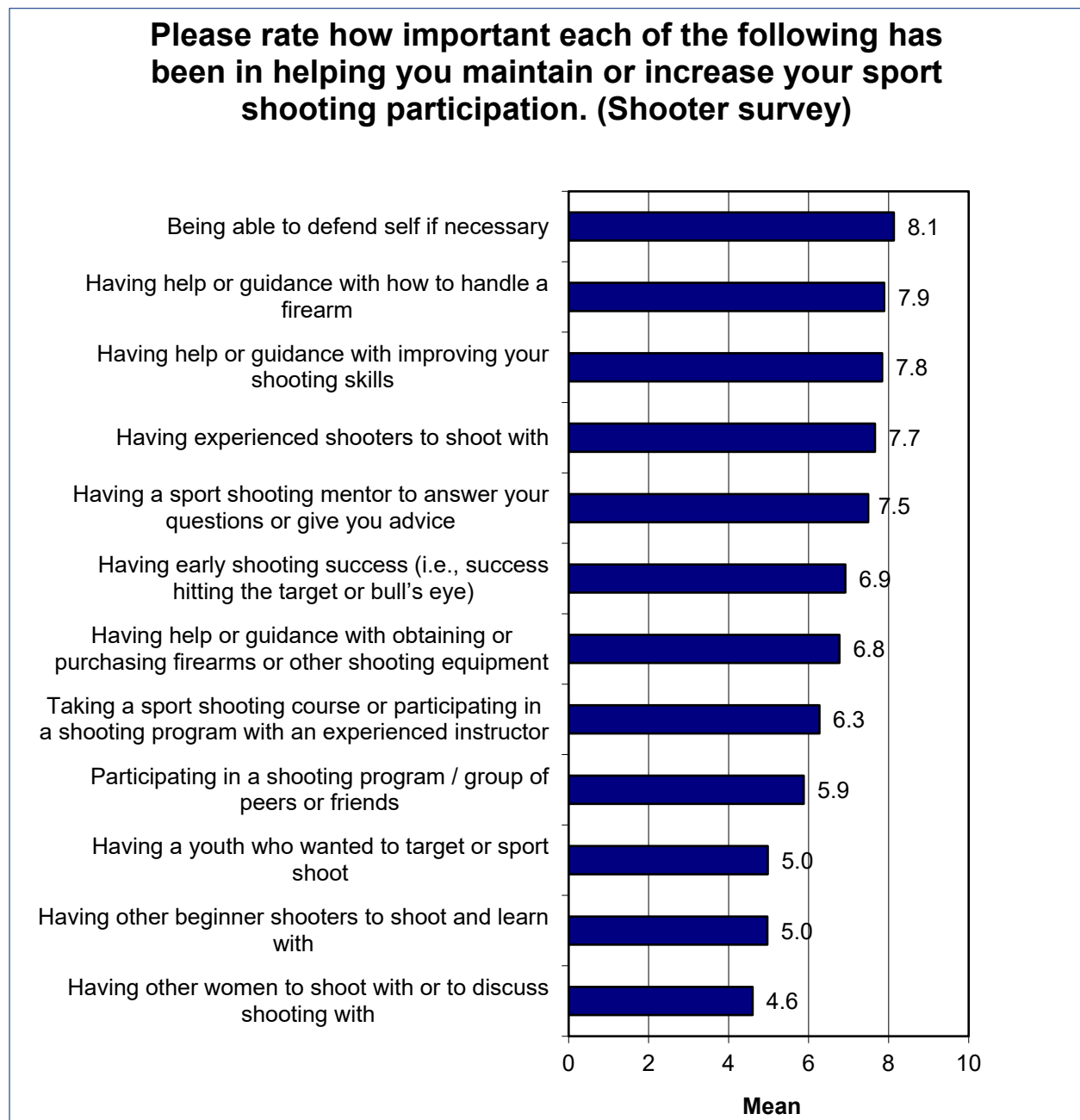
How prepared did you feel during your first few sport shooting experiences? (Shooter survey)



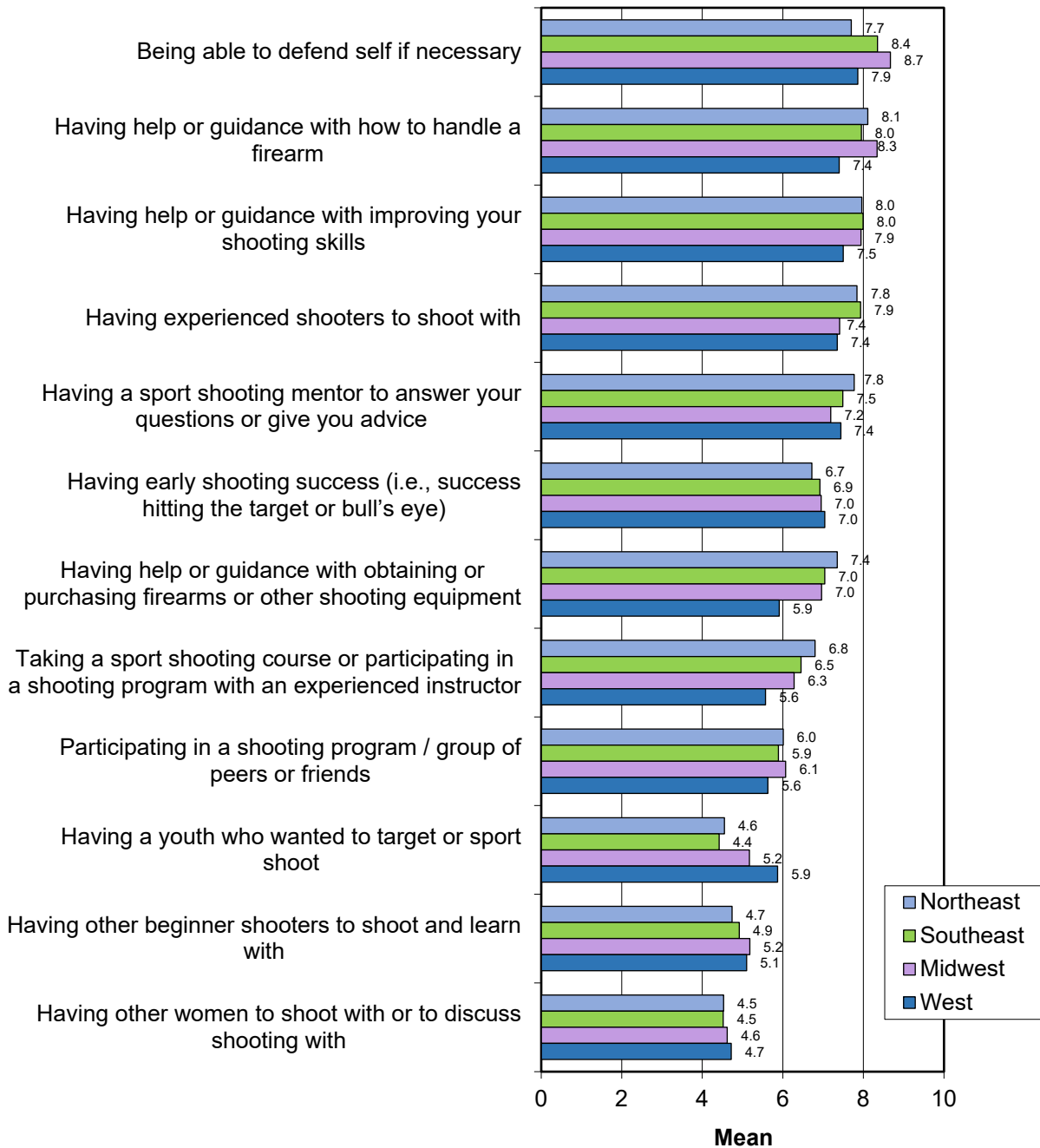
How comfortable did you feel during your first few sport shooting experiences? (Shooter survey)



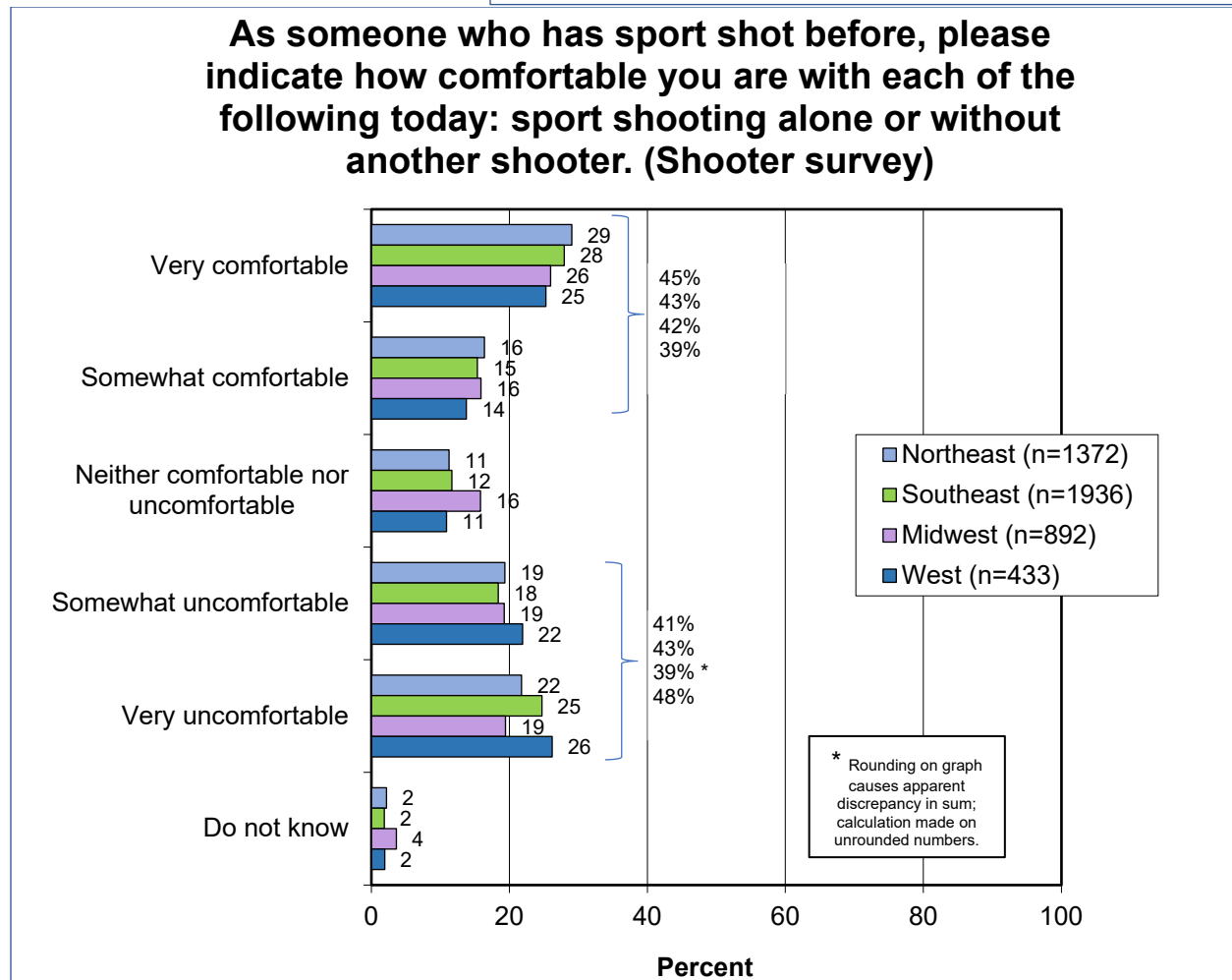
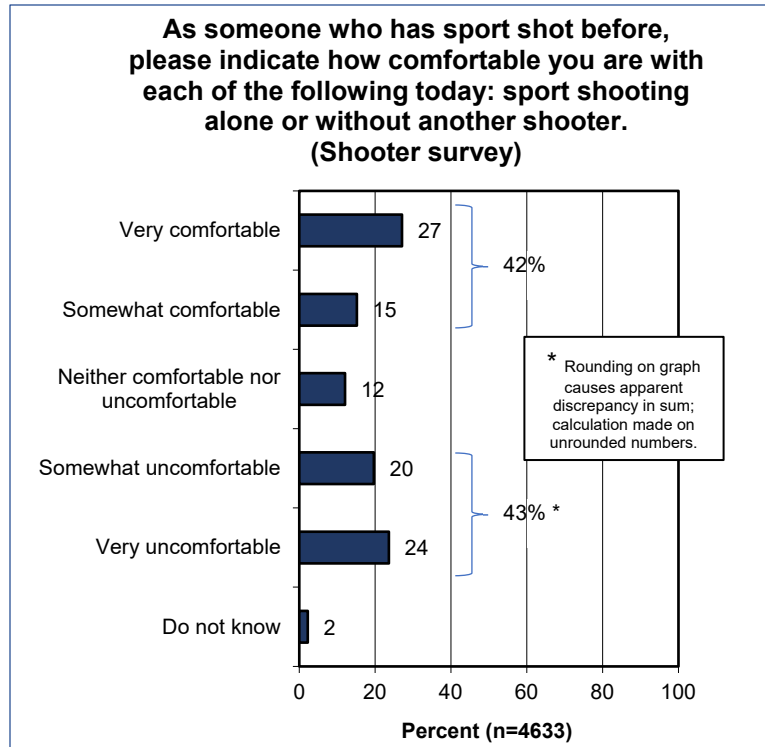
Shooters were presented with a series of 12 items and were asked to rate how important each has been in helping them maintain or increase their sport shooting participation, on a scale of 0 to 10. Five items are in the top tier with mean ratings of 7.5 or more: being able to defend oneself if necessary (mean rating of 8.1), having help with how to hand a firearm (7.9), having help with improving shooting skills (7.8), having experienced shooters to shoot with (7.7), and having a sport shooting mentor of which to ask questions (7.5). Regional results are on the following page.



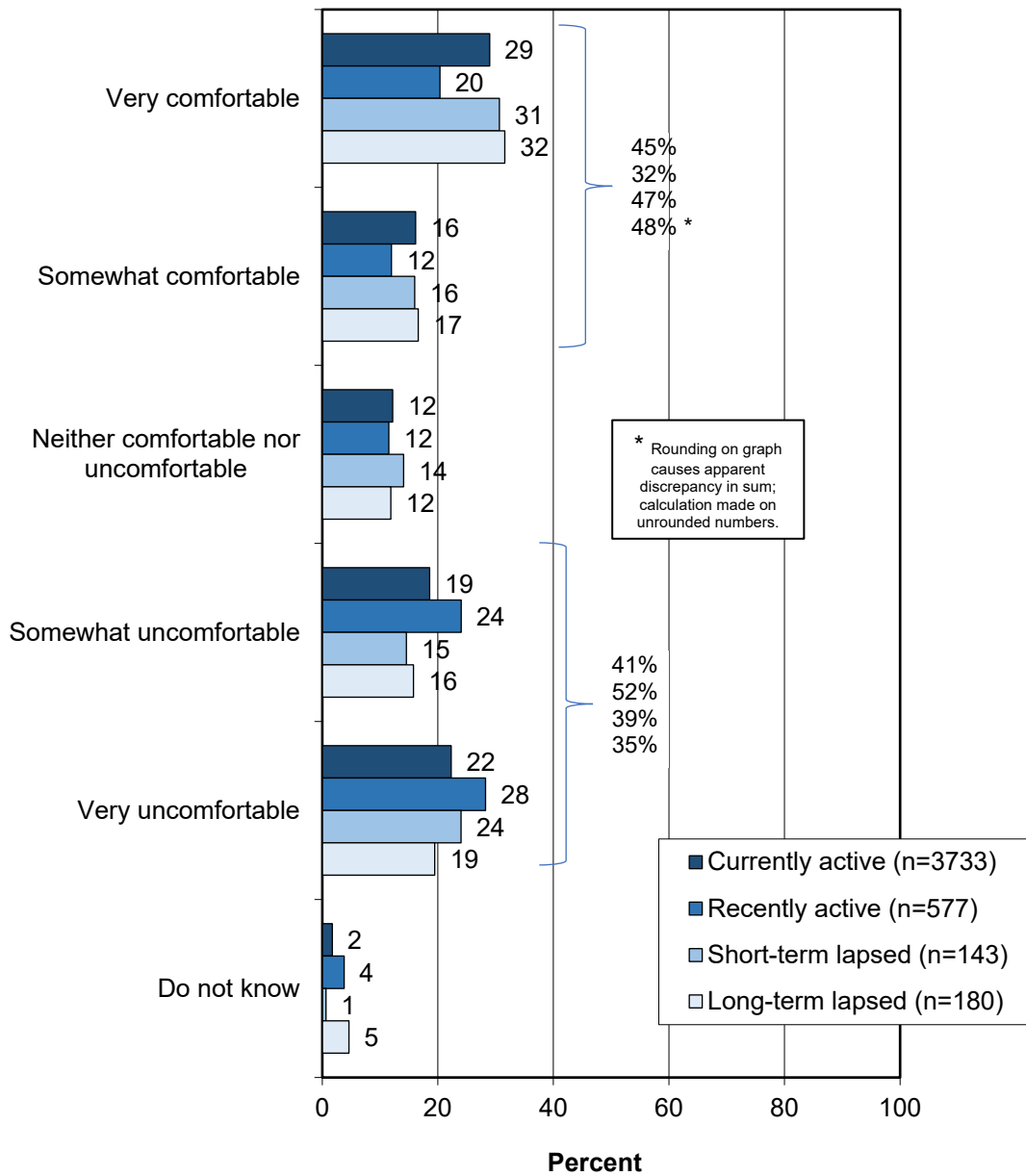
Please rate how important each of the following has been in helping you maintain or increase your sport shooting participation. (Shooter survey)



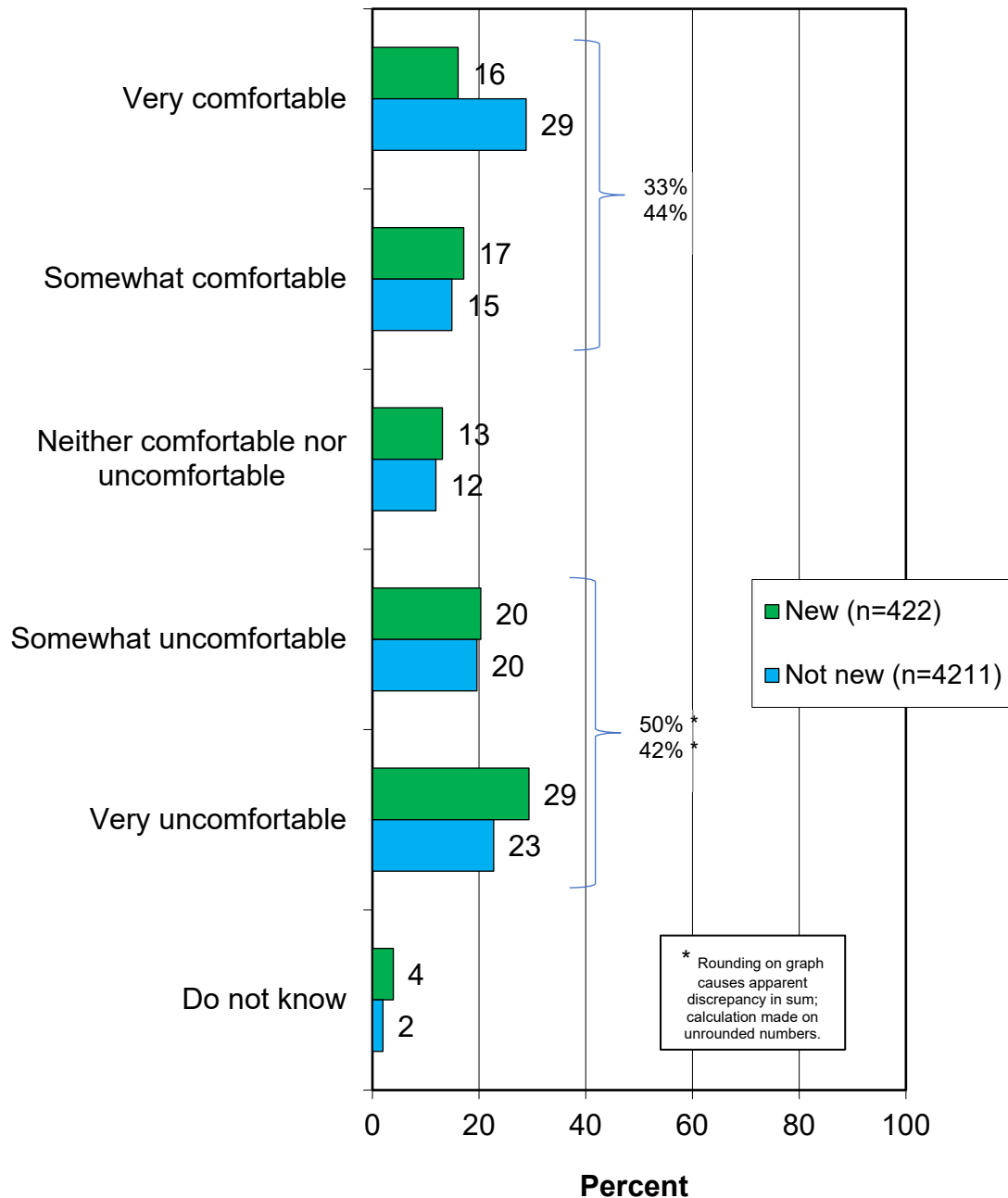
Women sport shooters are about evenly split, with 42% saying that they are comfortable with shooting alone and 43% saying that they are uncomfortable doing so. This holds true regionally (as shown in the accompanying graph) as well as in the crosstabulation by participation level: even currently active women sport shooters are split (45% of currently active shooters are comfortable, but 41% are uncomfortable—see graph on the following page). Another graph shows new sport shooters, who are also split: 33% are comfortable, while 50% are uncomfortable.



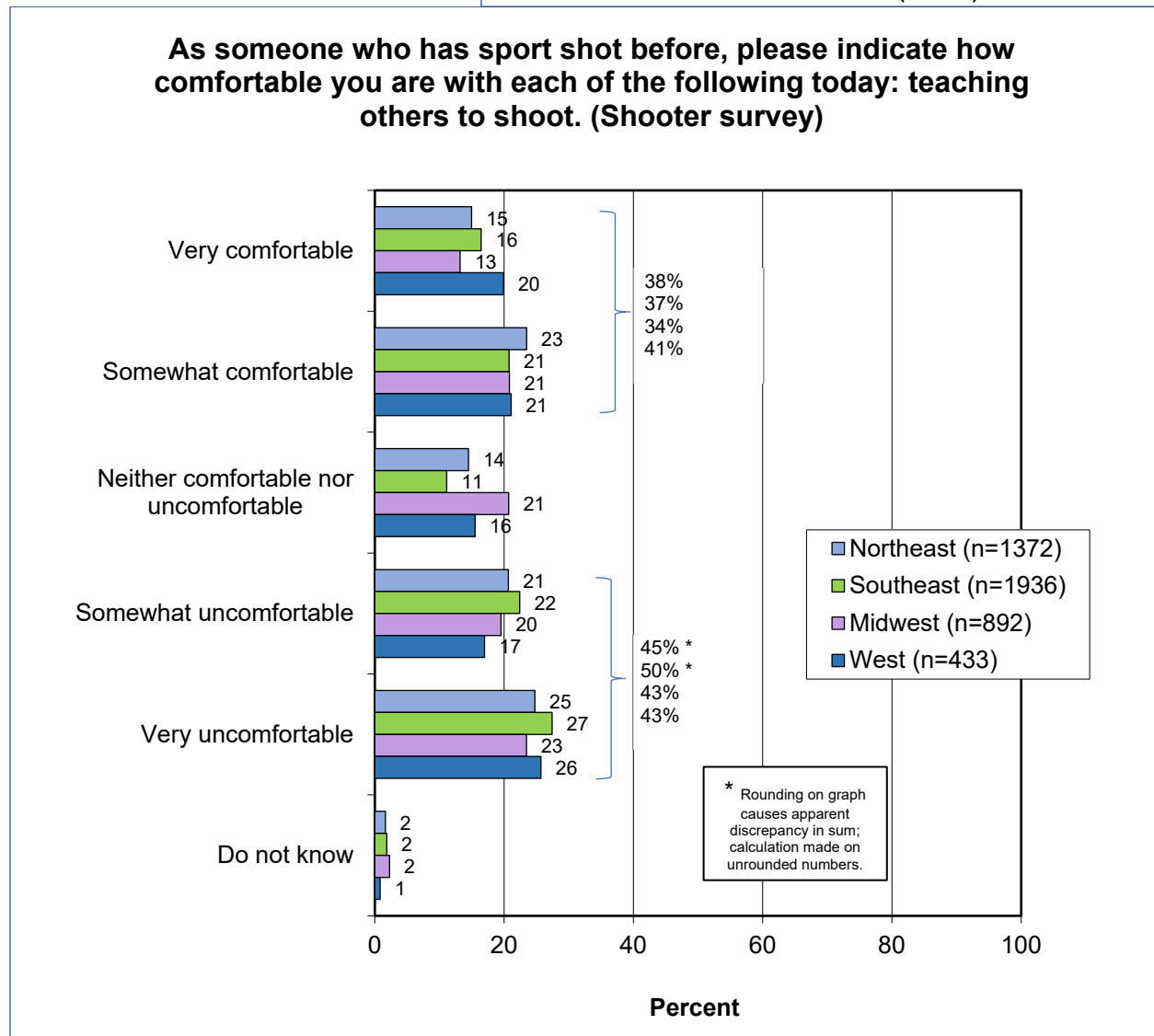
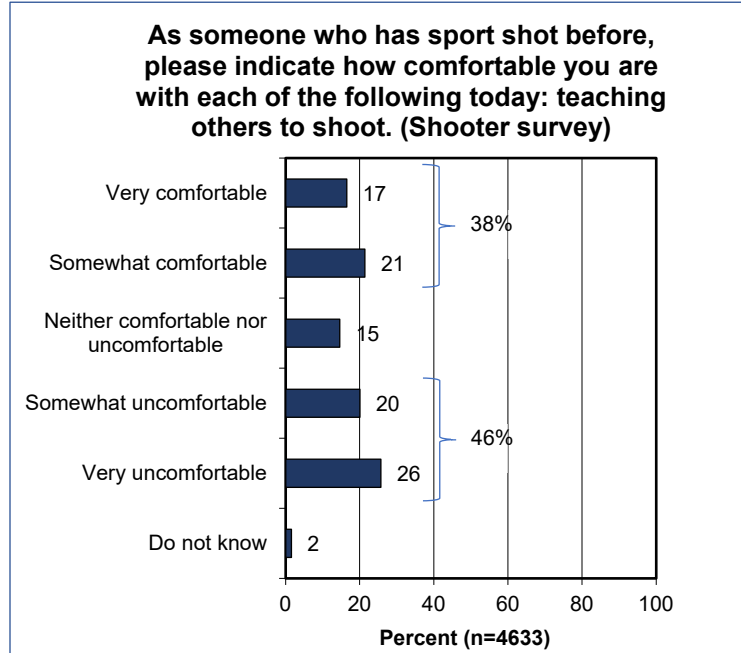
As someone who has sport shot before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: sport shooting alone or without another shooter. (Shooter survey)

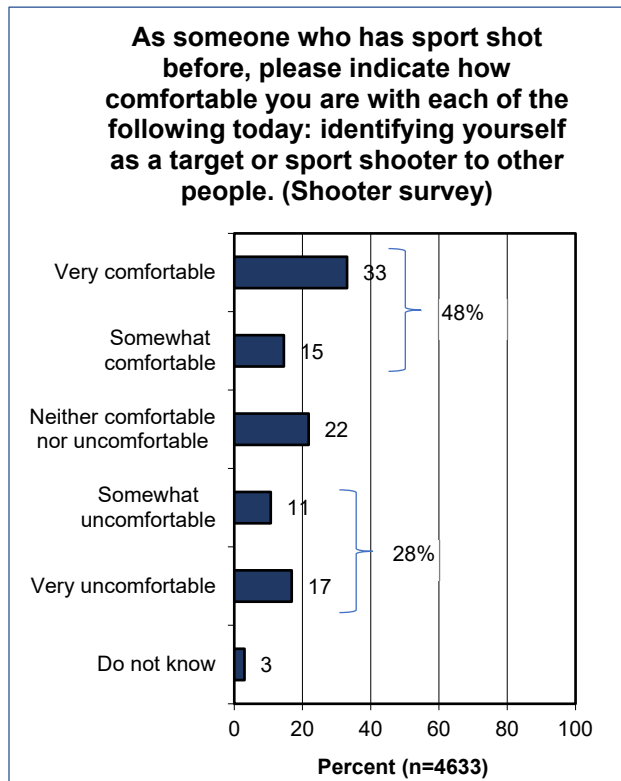
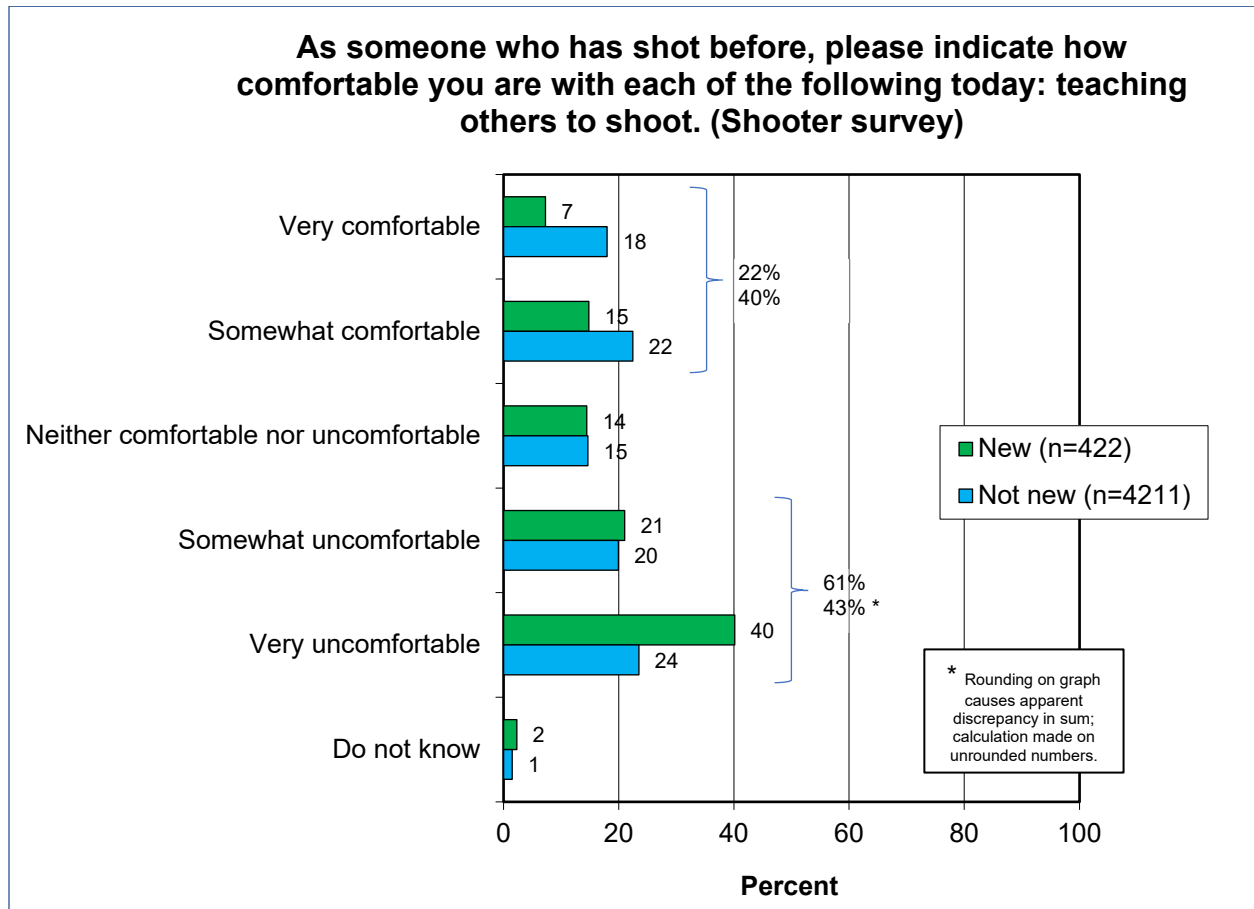


As someone who has shot before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: sport shooting alone or without another shooter. (Shooter survey)



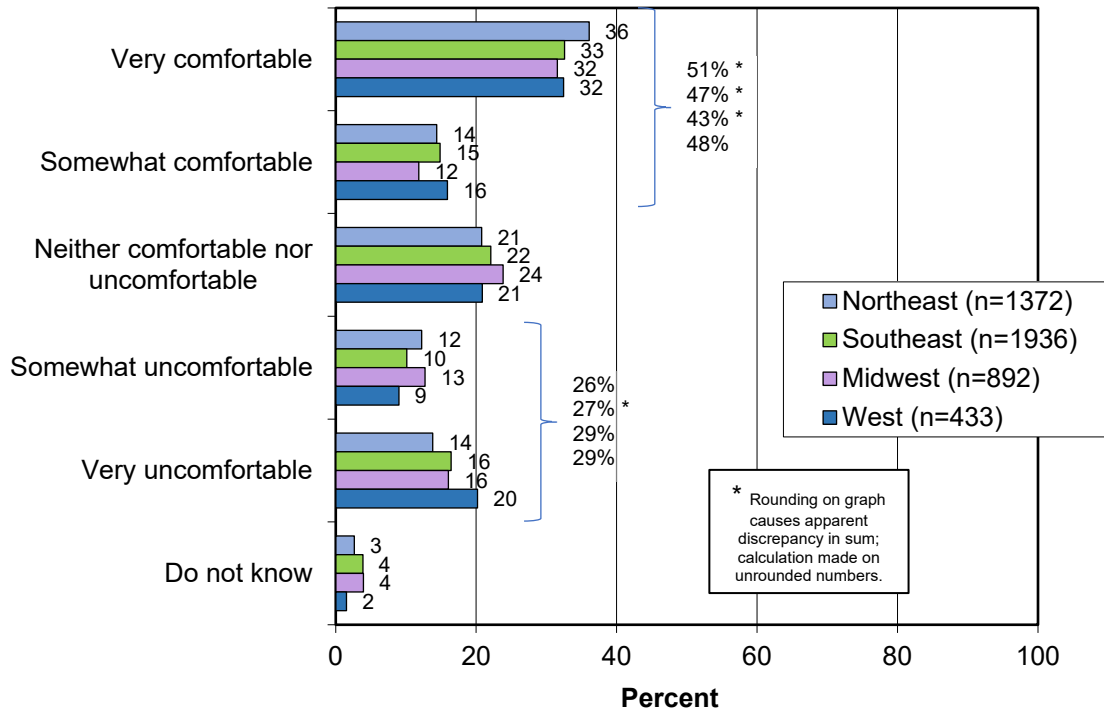
The survey then asked two other questions relating to comfort levels while women shooters are participating in sport shooting. The first question is whether they feel comfortable teaching others to shoot, on which the sample is divided: 38% are comfortable, but 46% are uncomfortable teaching others to shoot. The regional graph is shown as well. Not surprisingly, new sport shooters are reticent to teach others: only 22% feel comfortable teaching others to shoot, compared to 61% who are uncomfortable.



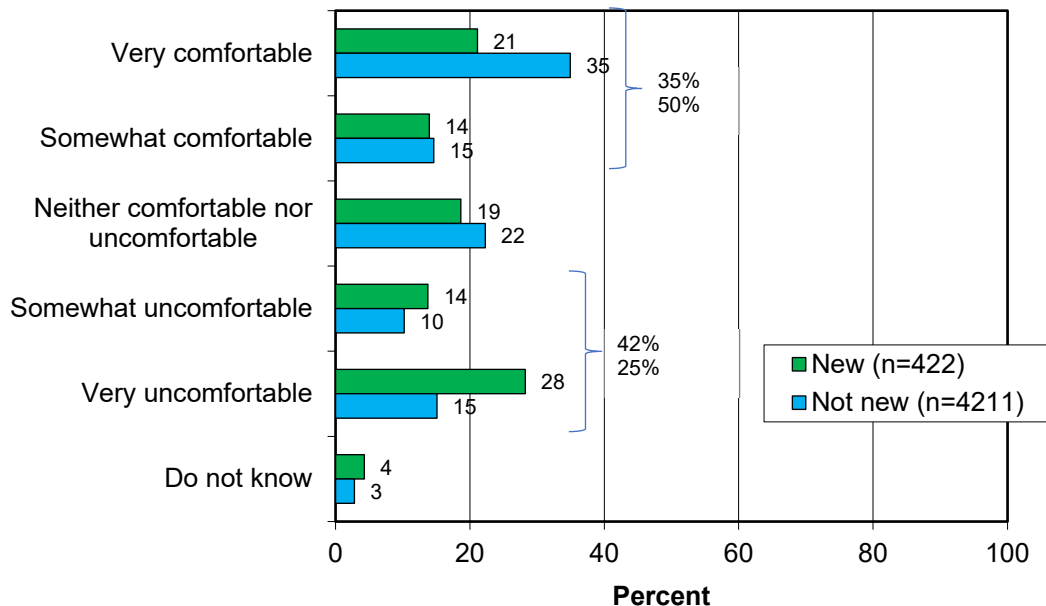


The second of the two aforementioned questions about comfort asked if sport shooters felt comfortable identifying themselves as sport shooters. The percentage responding that they are comfortable (48%) greatly exceeds the percentage being uncomfortable (28%), although that latter is still a considerable group that is experiencing a possible constraint to participation. Following the regional graph is a graph that shows how new women sport shooters respond. New shooters' results are somewhat reversed to those above, with women feeling comfortable (35%) being exceeded by those feeling uncomfortable (42%).

As someone who has sport shot before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: identifying yourself as a target or sport shooter to other people. (Shooter survey)



As someone who has shot before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: identifying yourself as a target or sport shooter to other people. (Shooter survey)



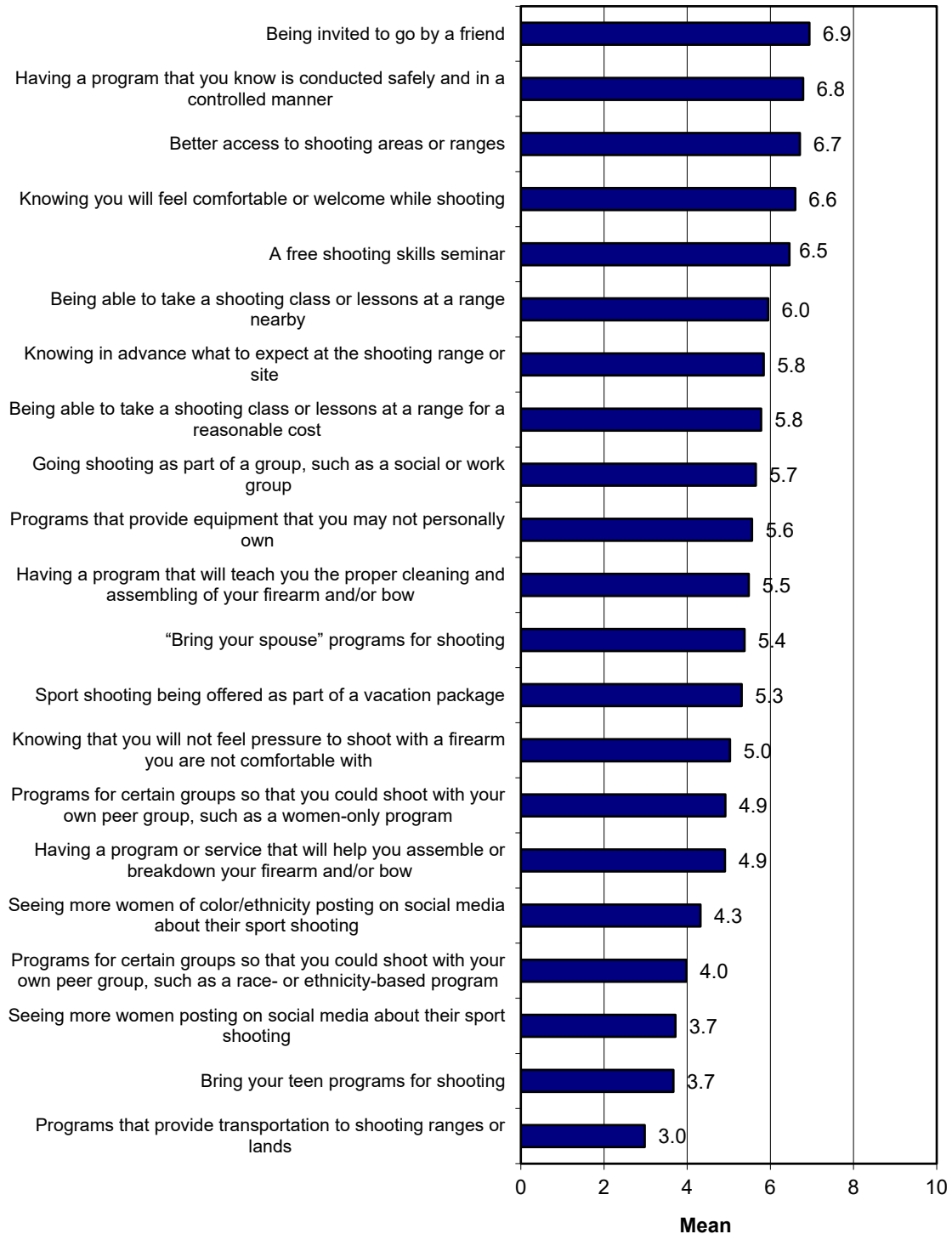
ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORT SHOOTING

The graph on the following page shows a series of 21 potential encouragements for people to sport shoot or shoot more often. Each survey respondent was randomly assigned 8 of the items and was asked to rate the effectiveness of each as an encouragement to shoot, on a scale of 0 to 10.

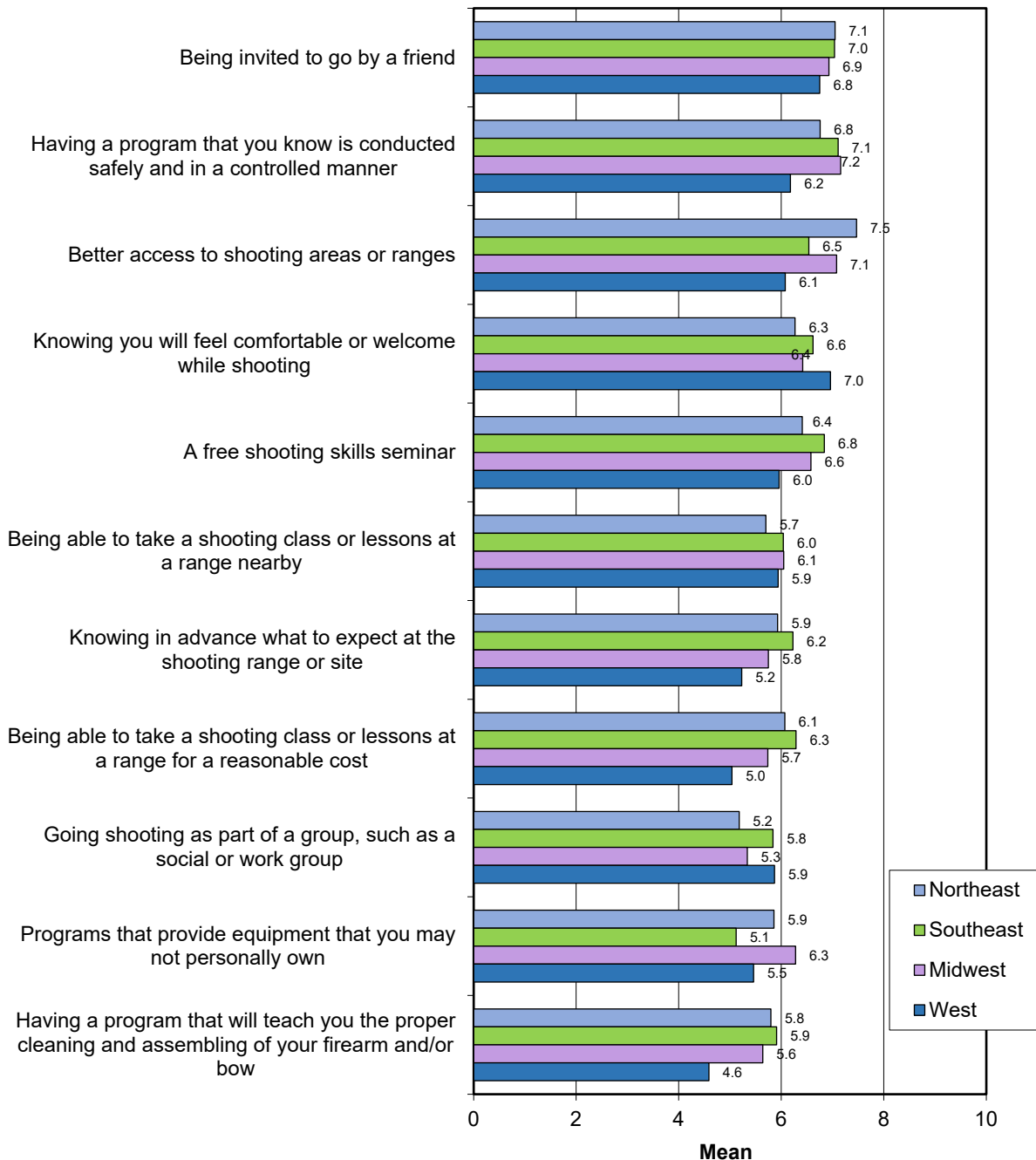
Five items make up the top tier, all with mean ratings of 6.5 or higher. These top-rated encouragements are being invited to go by a friend (6.9), having a program that is safe and controlled (6.8), better access (6.7), knowing they will feel comfortable or welcome while shooting (6.6), and a free shooting skills seminar (6.5). All other mean ratings are below these top-rated encouragements.

Because the graph needs a full page for legibility, it is shown on its own on the next page. The regional results follow the overall graph on subsequent pages.

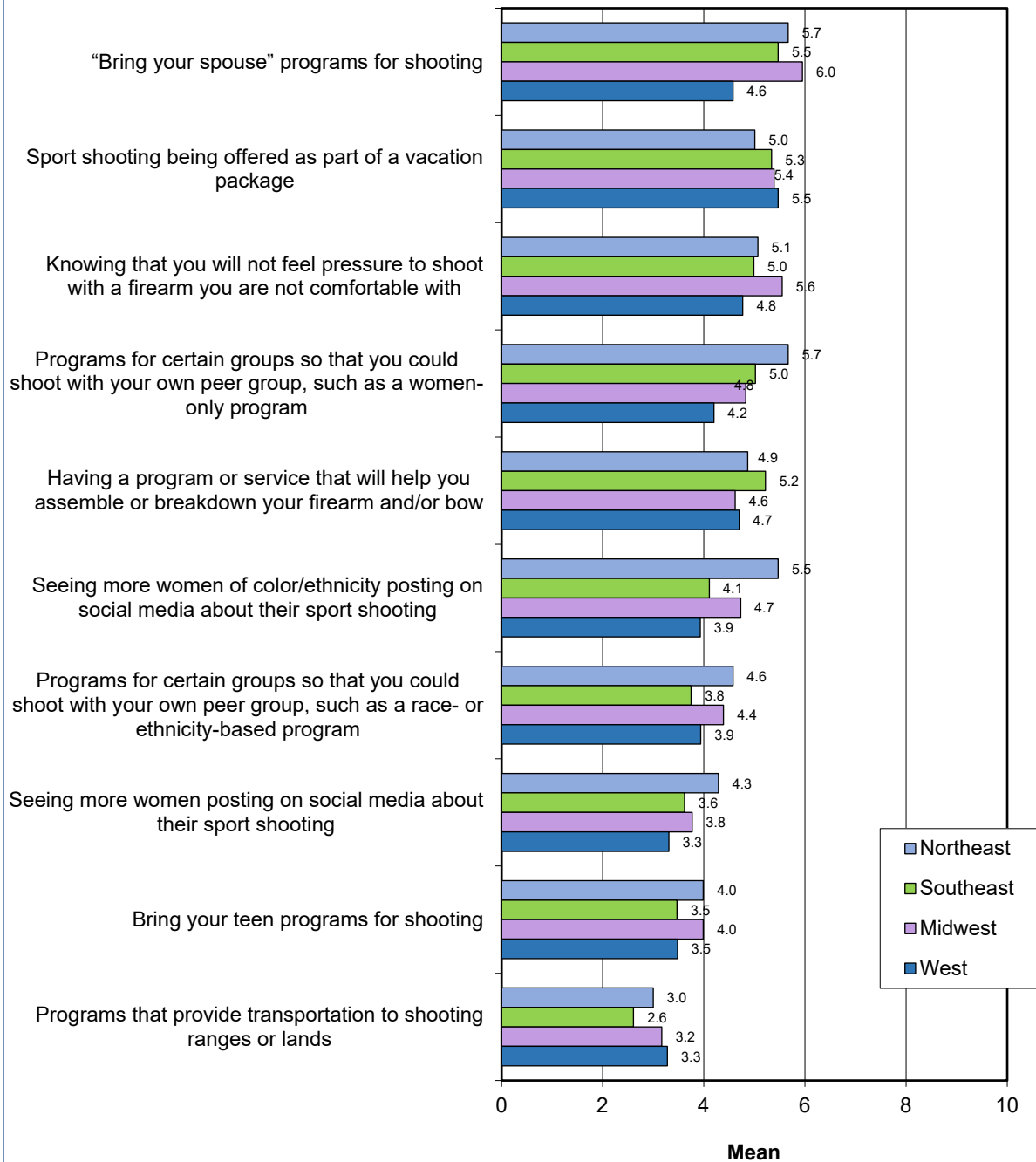
For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to shoot more often or shoot again, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all effective and 10 is extremely effective. (Shooter survey)



**For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to shoot more often or shoot again, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all effective and 10 is extremely effective.
(Part 1) (Shooter survey)**

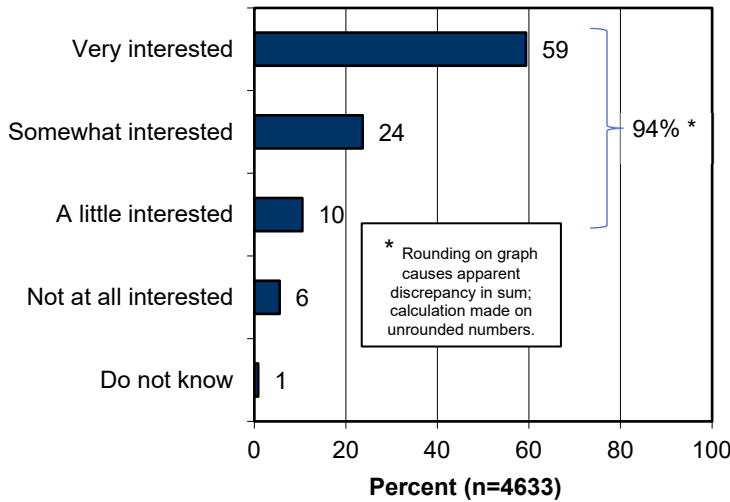


**For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to shoot more often or shoot again, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all effective and 10 is extremely effective.
(Part 2) (Shooter survey)**



INTEREST IN SPORT SHOOTING AND CROSSOVER ACTIVITIES

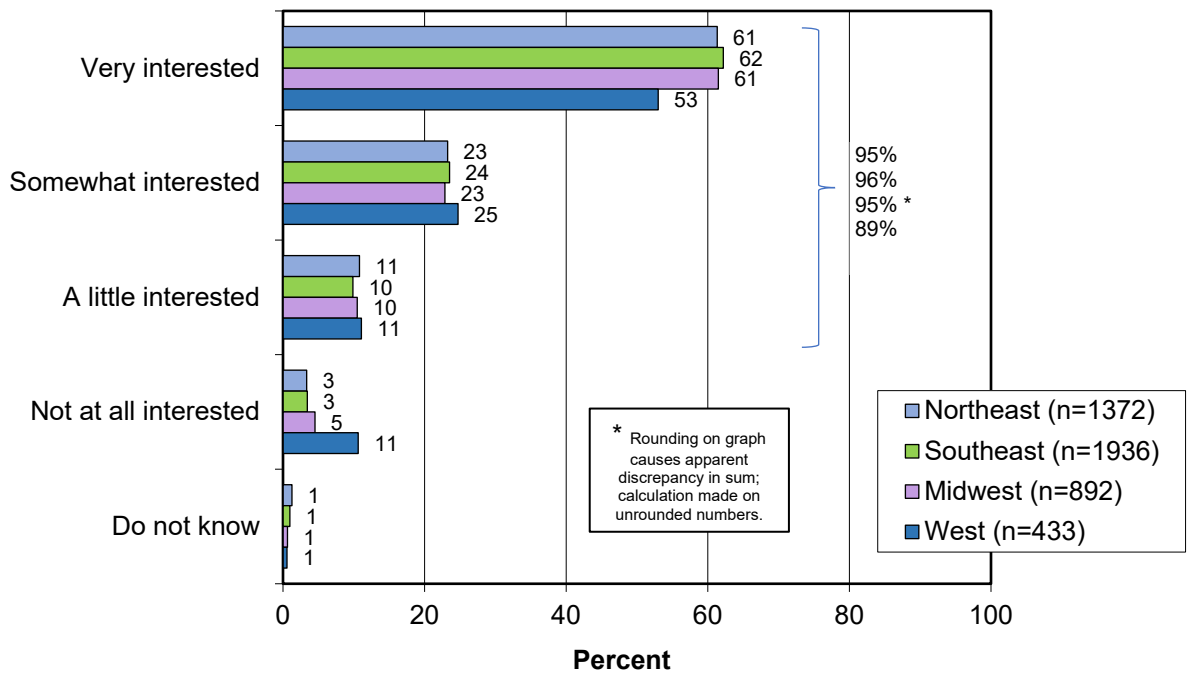
How interested are you in going target or sport shooting for recreation with firearms in the next 2 years? (Shooter survey)



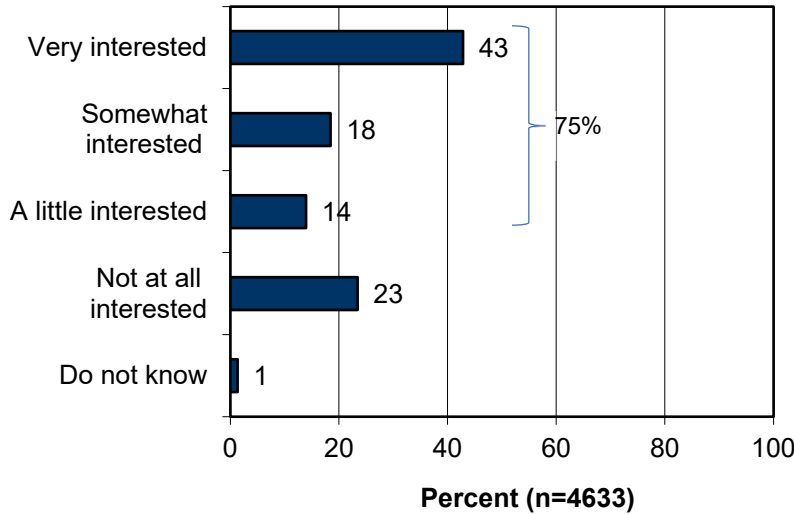
Interest in sport shooting is fairly robust: 94% of women sport shooters express some interest, including 59% who are very interested.

West Region respondents show the least interest, although their interest is still quite high. Otherwise, the regions are not greatly different from one another.

How interested are you in going target or sport shooting for recreation with firearms in the next 2 years? (Shooter survey)

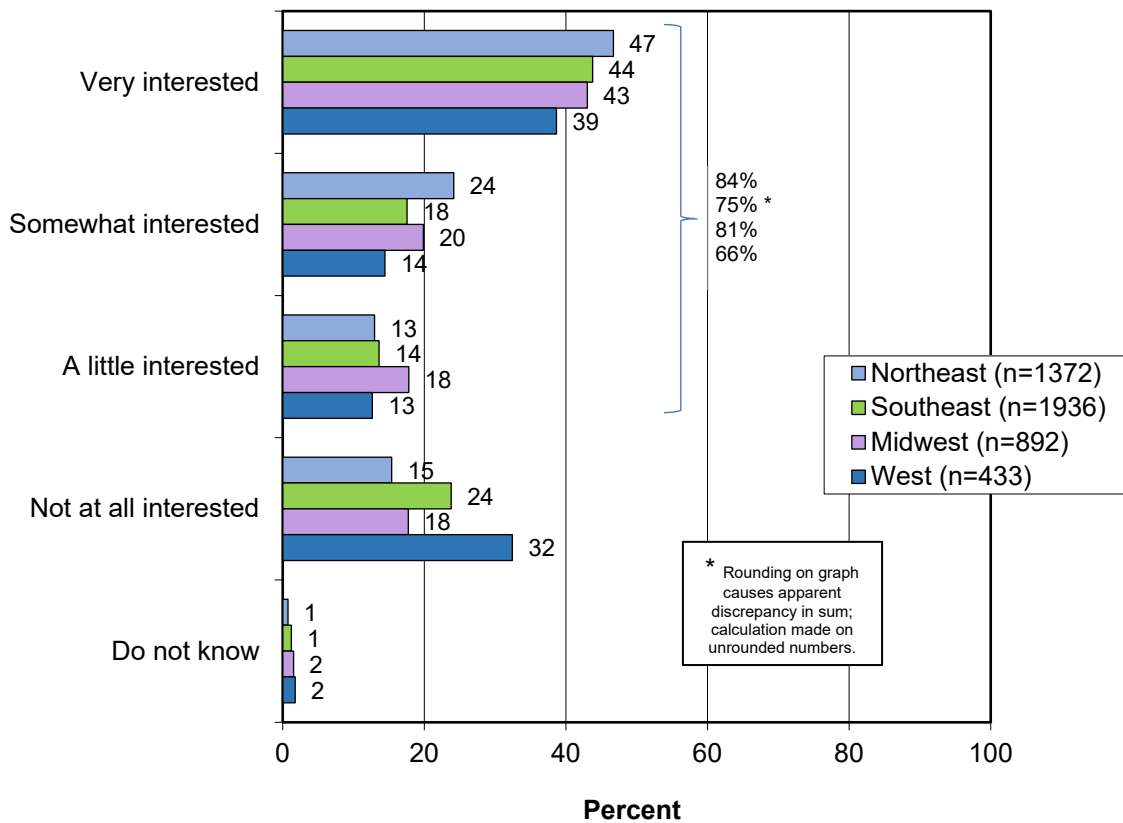


**How interested are you in going hunting with firearms in the next 2 years?
(Shooter survey)**

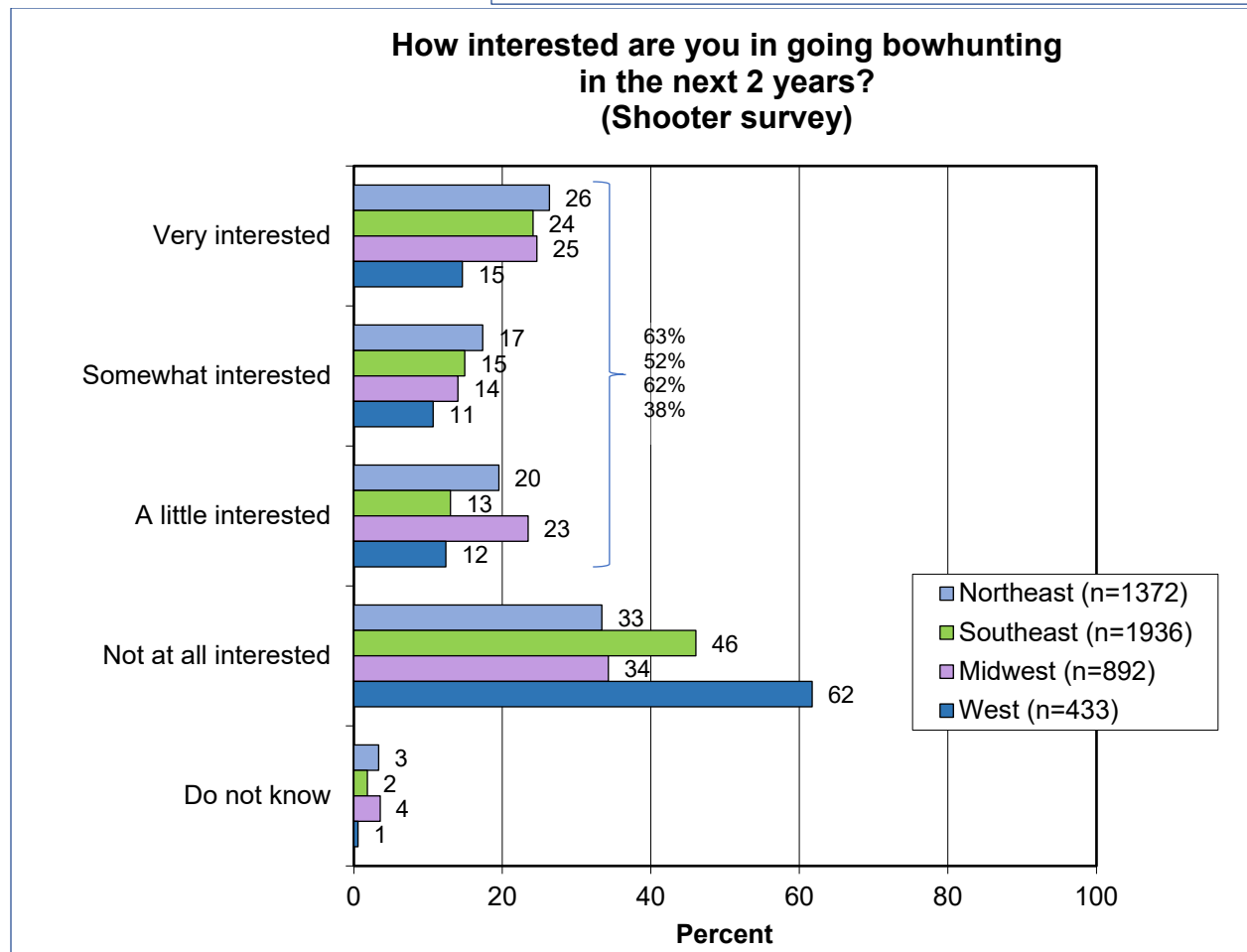
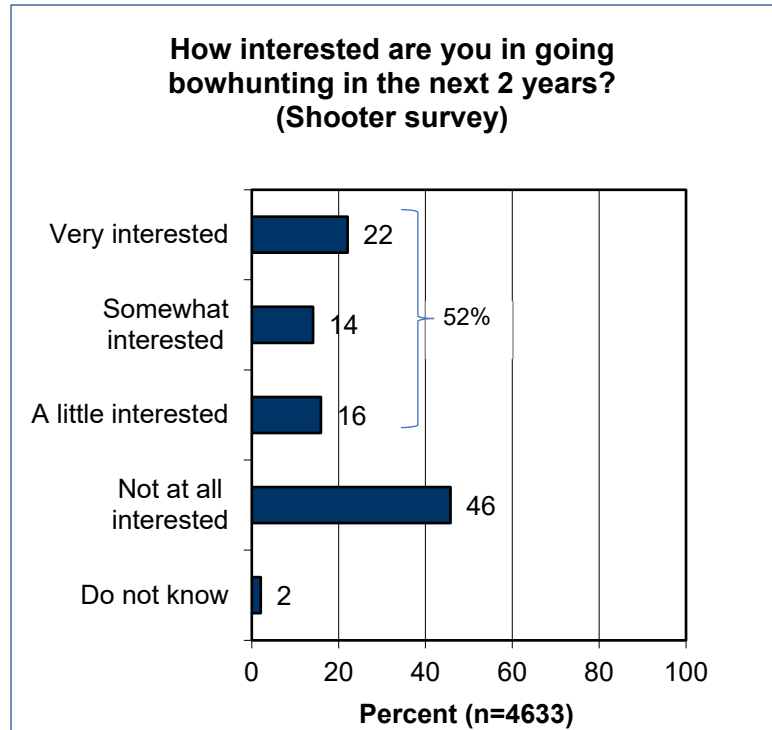


Among women sport shooters, interest in hunting with firearms is less than the interest in sport shooting, although three quarters express some interest. Interest is highest in the Northeast Region.

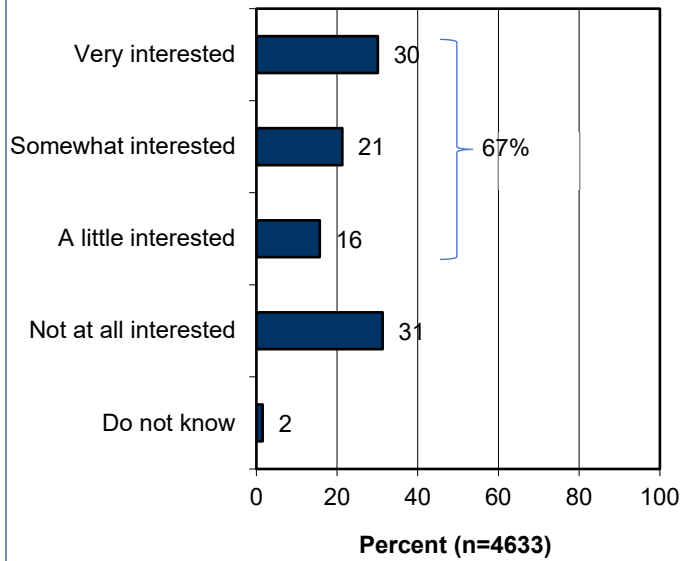
**How interested are you in going hunting with firearms in the next 2 years?
(Shooter survey)**



Only about half of women sport shooters express interest in going bowhunting, and only about a quarter are very interested. Interest is particularly low in the West Region.

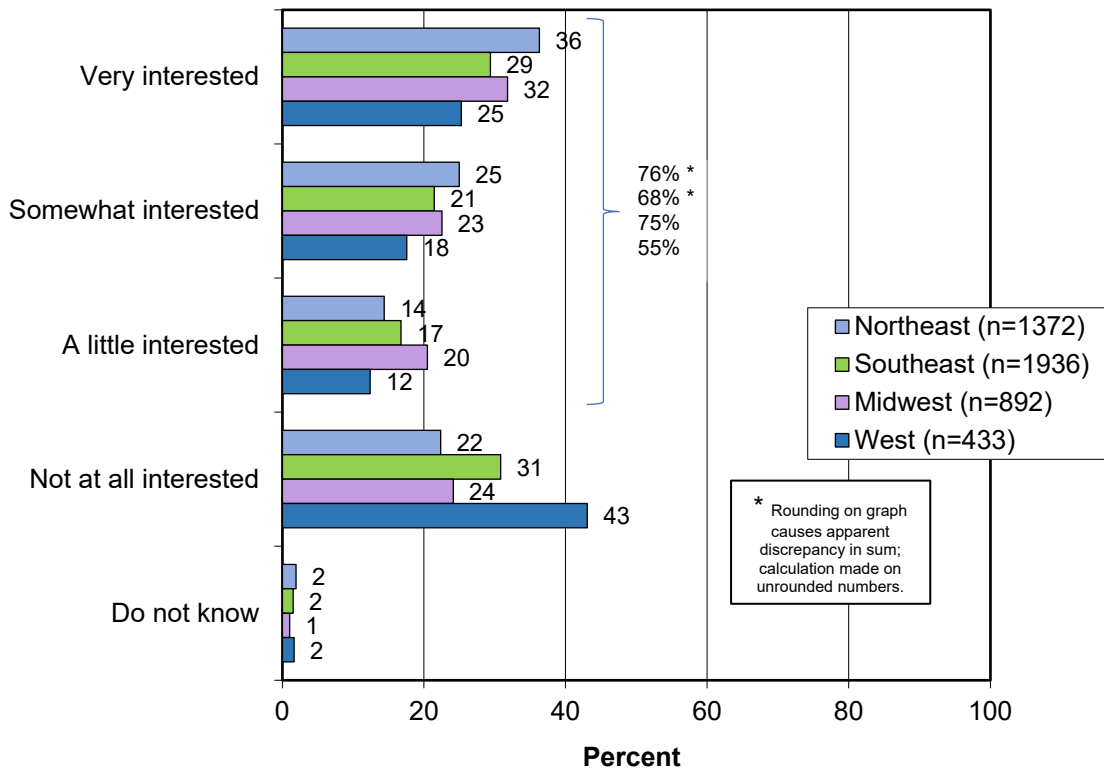


How interested are you in going target archery shooting in the next 2 years? (Shooter survey)

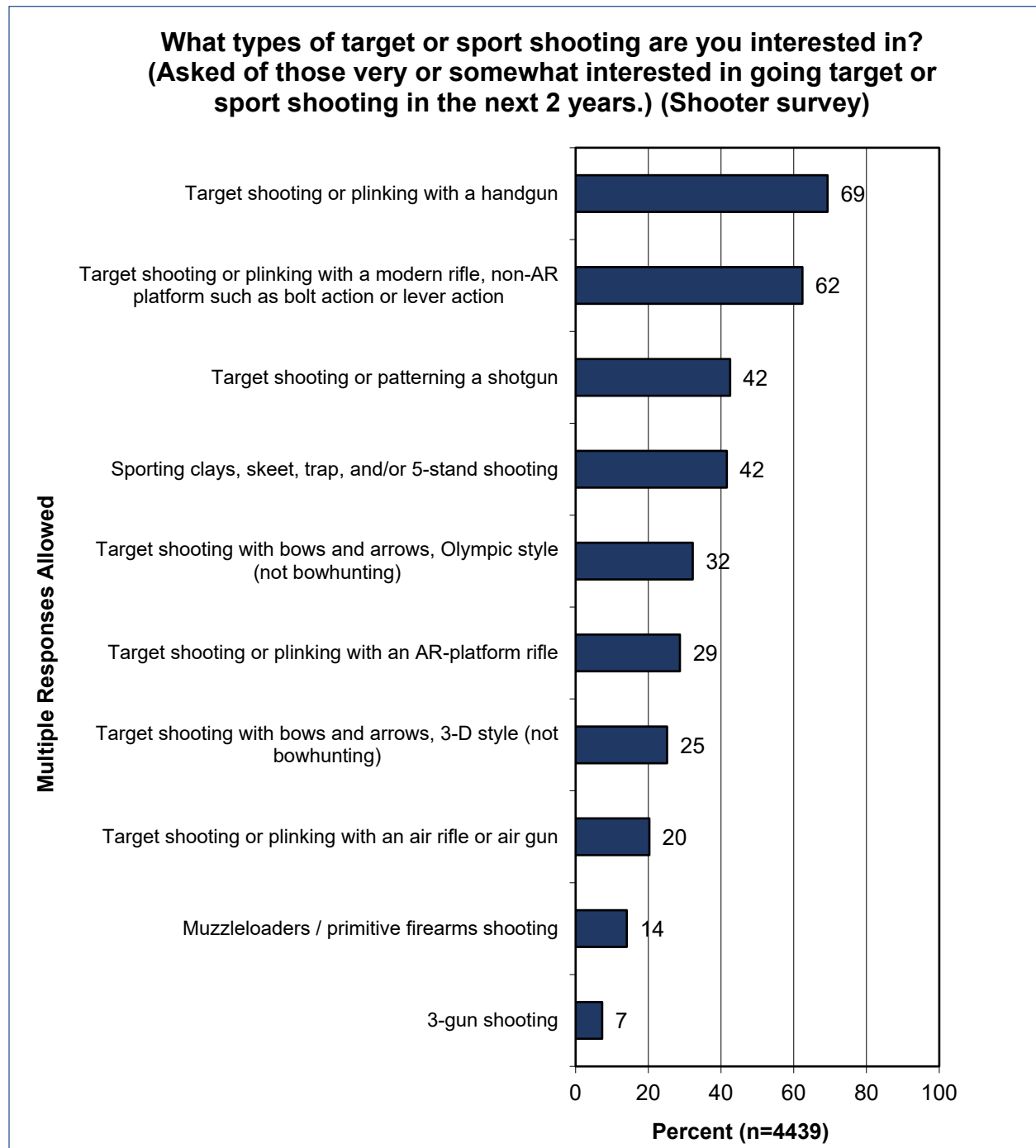


Two thirds of women sport shooters are interested in going target archery shooting, with about a third being very interested. The Northeast and Midwest Region show the greatest interest.

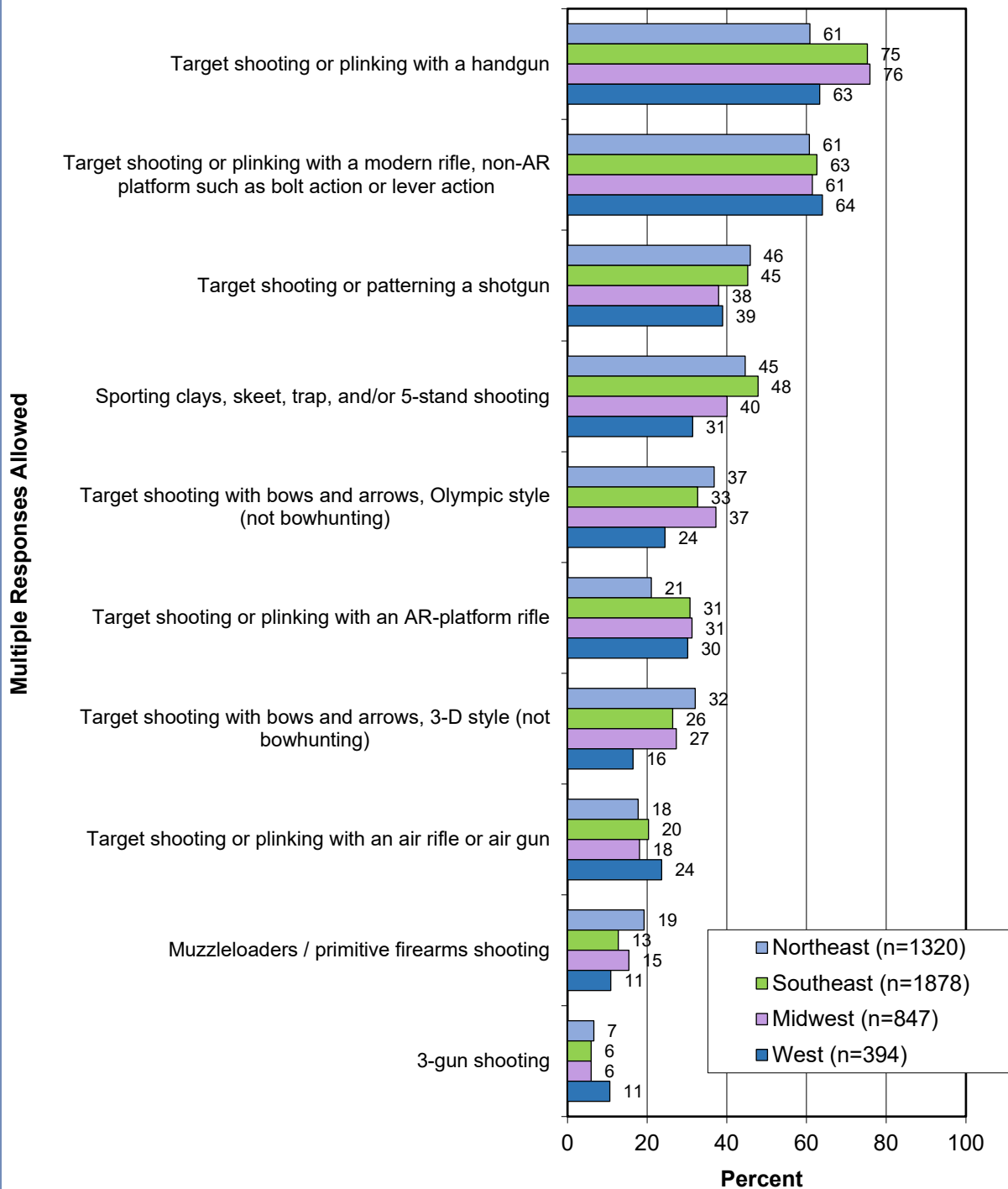
How interested are you in going target archery shooting in the next 2 years? (Shooter survey)



Target shooting with a handgun and target shooting with a rifle are the types of shooting for which women express the most interest (among those *very* or *somewhat* interested in going sport shooting). For these activities, about two thirds are interested. Two other activities are in a second tier: target shooting with a shotgun and participating in sporting clays: both have 42% of respondents on this question expressing interest. The graph shows the full list; note that this is among those who were *very* or *somewhat* interested in going sport shooting in general in a previous survey question. In the regional results, Southeast and Midwest Region respondents show particularly high interest in shooting a handgun.

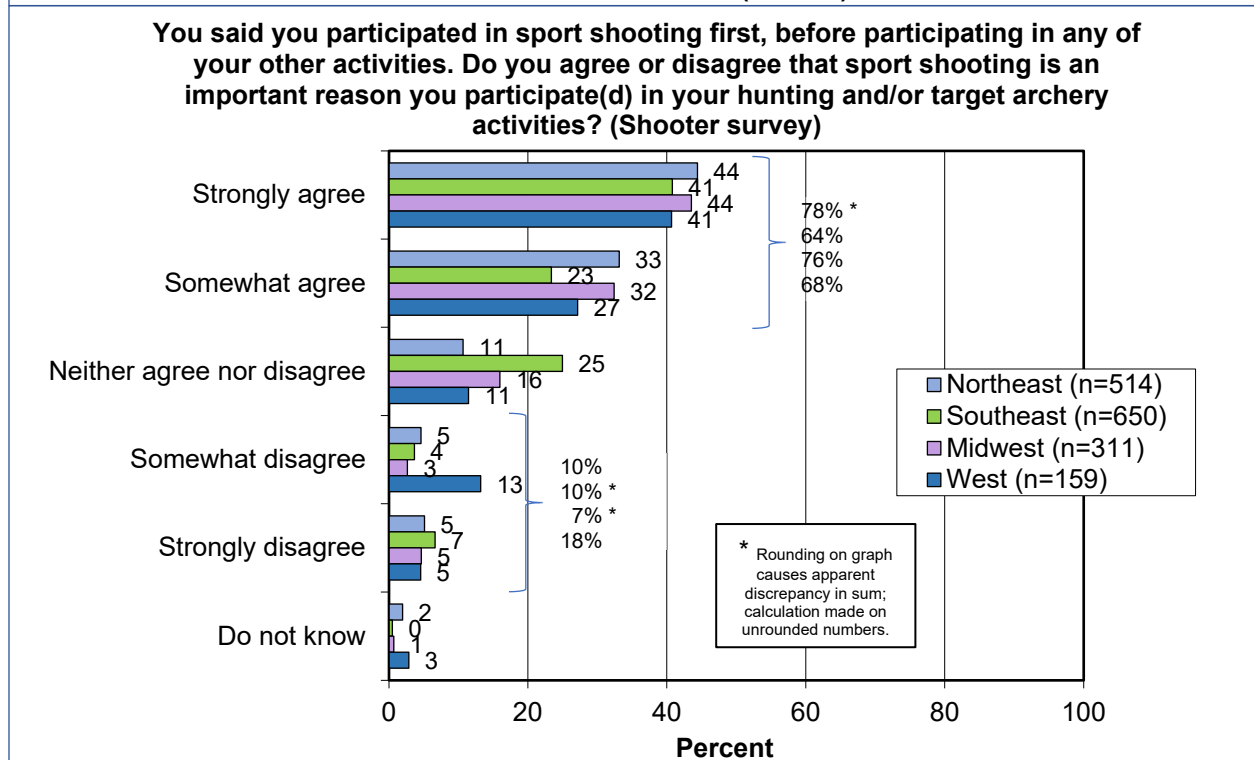
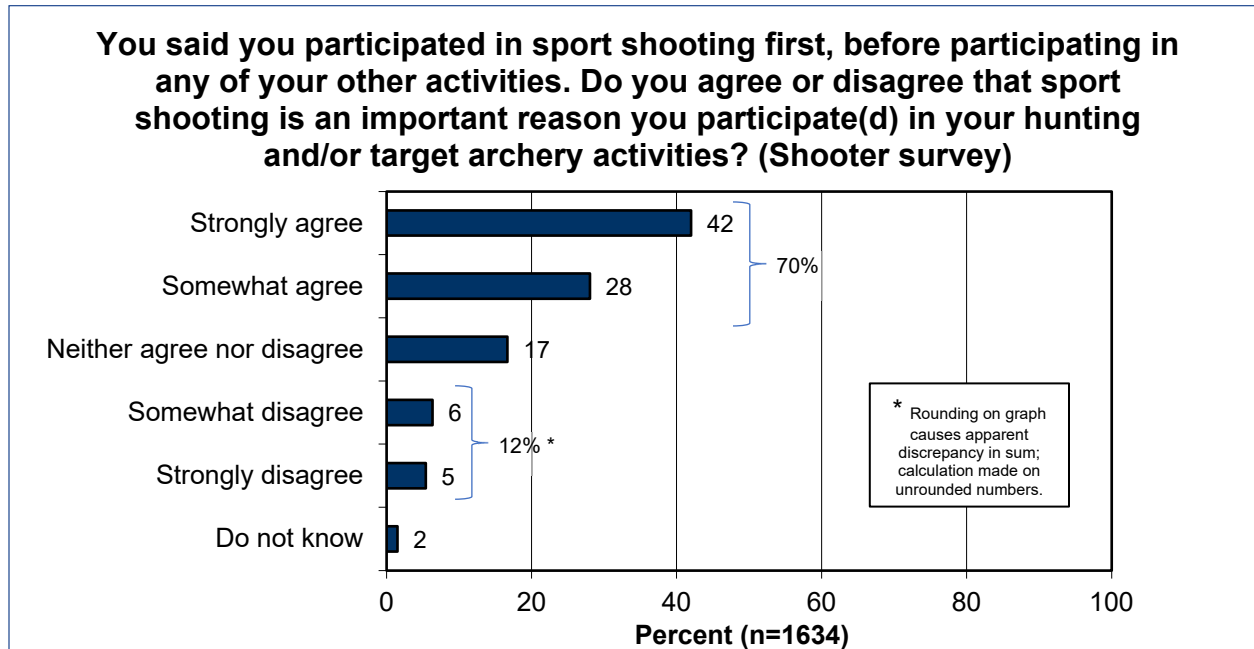


**What types of target or sport shooting are you interested in?
 (Asked of those very or somewhat interested in going target or
 sport shooting in the next 2 years.) (Shooter survey)**

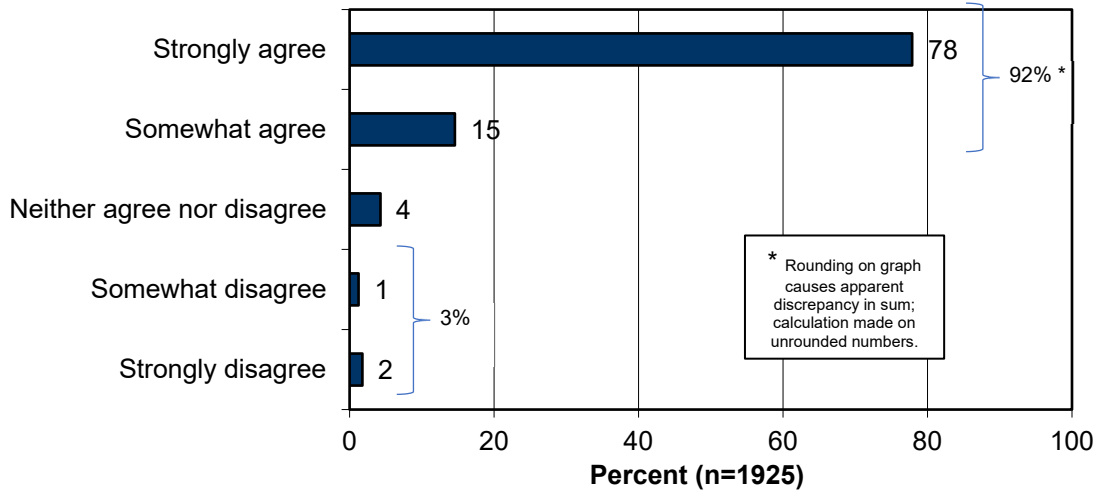


CROSSOVER PARTICIPATION

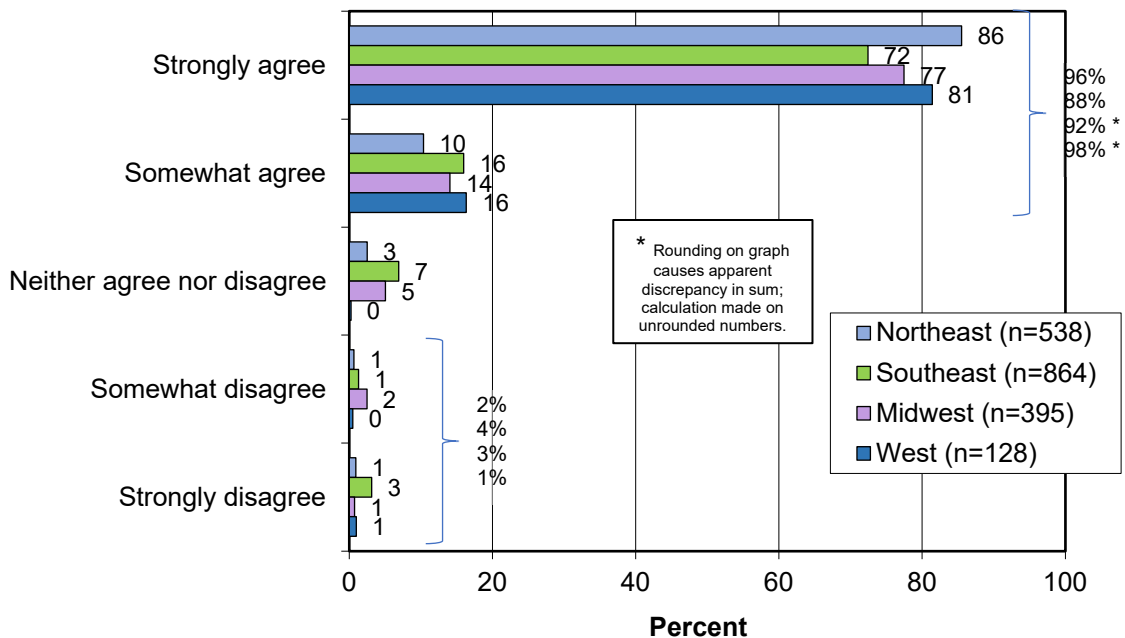
Sport shooting prompts participation in other activities, as 70% who went sport shooting first indicated that their shooting experiences were a reason they later went hunting or target archery shooting. However, hunting being a prompt for other activities is even greater: 92% who went hunting first say that their hunting is a reason for doing the other activities (as shown on the following page). The results among those who went archery shooting first are presented, as well; archery does not act as quite the encouragement in crossover participation that sport shooting with firearms or hunting do (only 58% agreed).



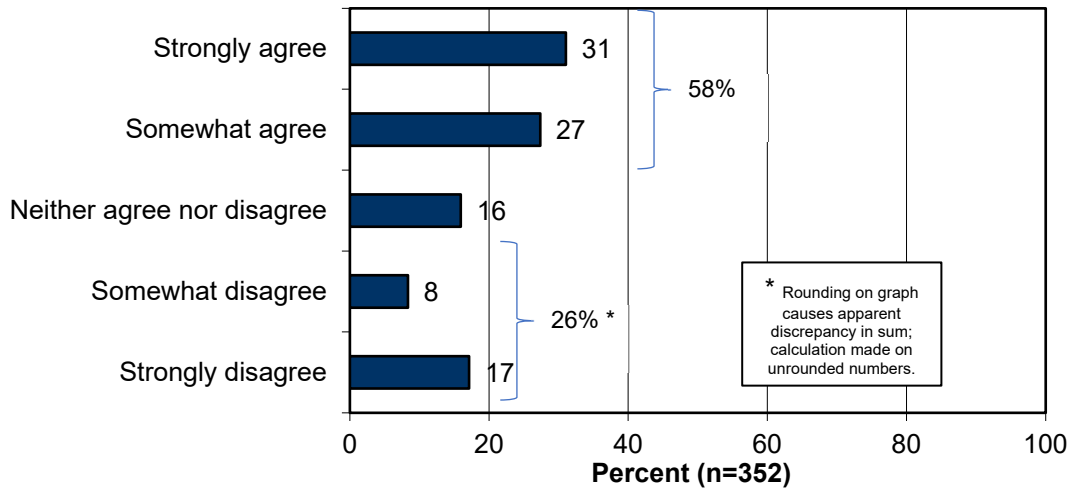
You said you participated in hunting first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that hunting is an important reason you participate(d) in your sport shooting and/or target archery activities? (Shooter survey)



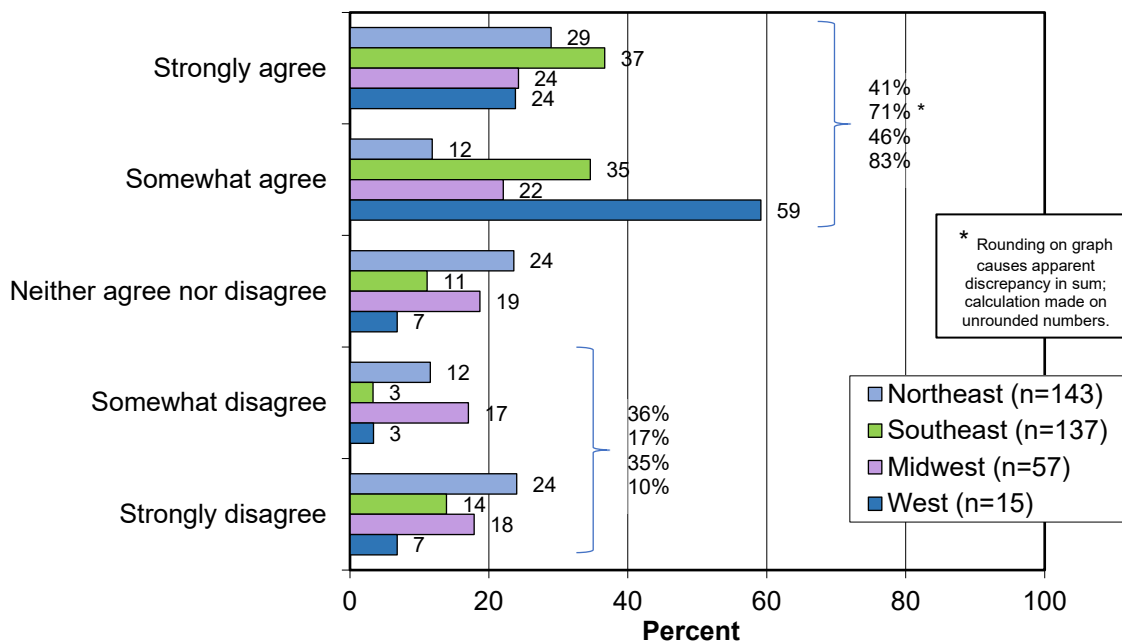
You said you participated in hunting first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that hunting is an important reason you participate(d) in your sport shooting and/or target archery activities? (Shooter survey)



You said you participated in target archery first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that target archery is an important reason you participate(d) in your hunting and/or sport shooting activities? (Shooter survey)

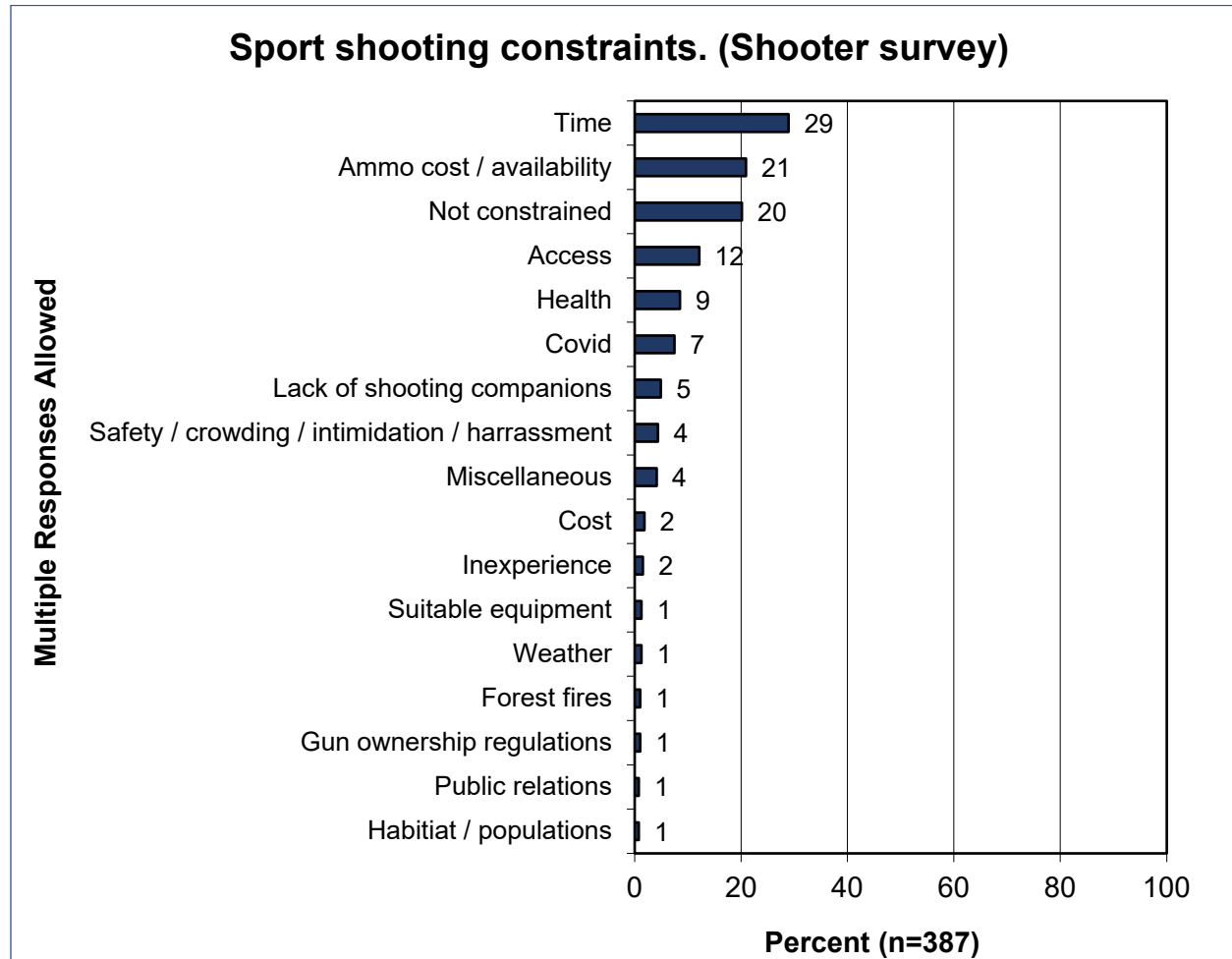


You said you participated in target archery first, before participating in any of your other activities. Do you agree or disagree that target archery is an important reason you participate(d) in your hunting and/or sport shooting activities? (Shooter survey)



CONSTRAINTS TO SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION

In an open-ended question, the top constraints that were mentioned related to a lack of time, cost and availability of ammunition, access, health, and Covid. The graph shows the full listing for women sport shooters overall.

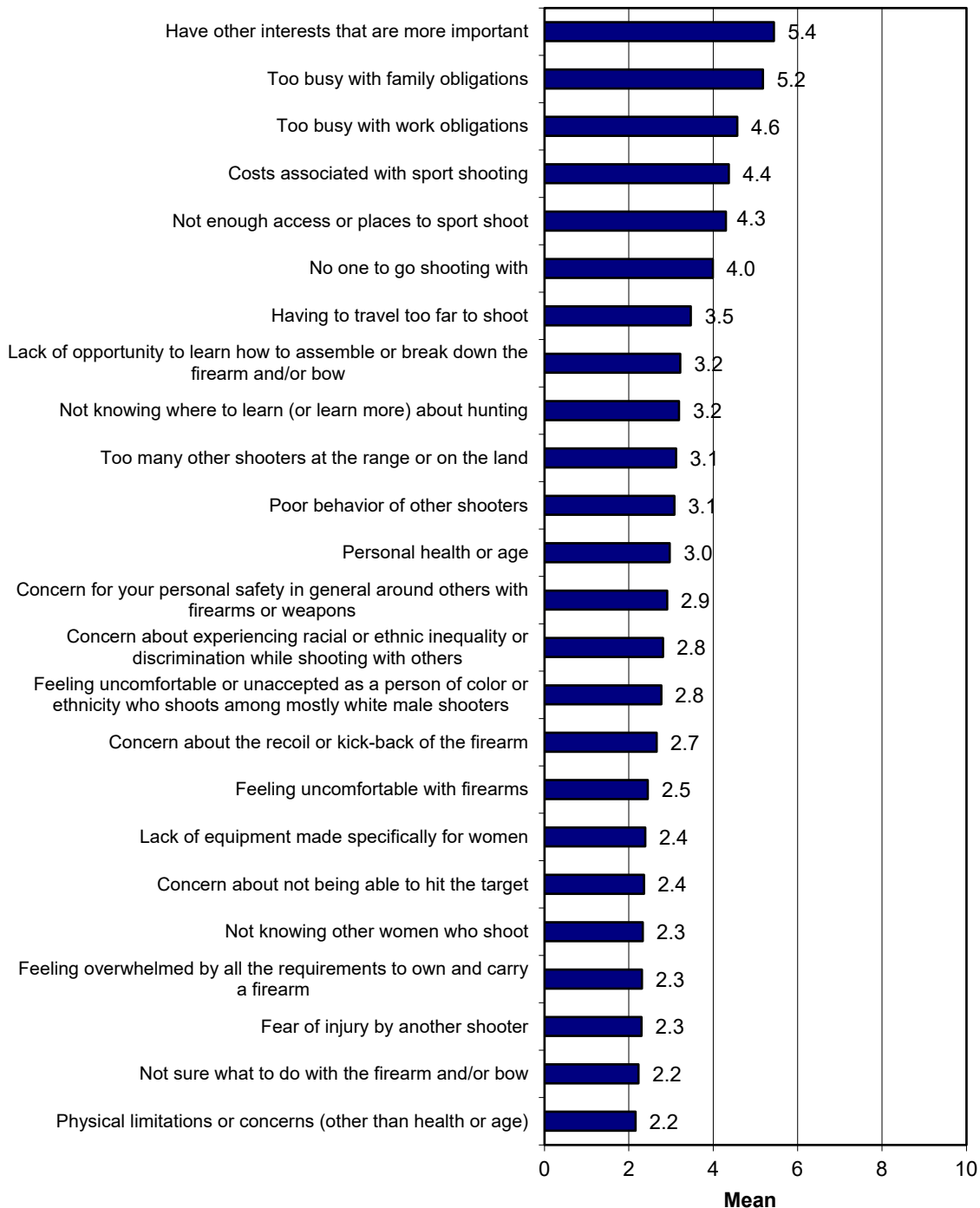


After the open-ended question, the survey asked about 48 potential constraints to shooting participation. To reduce the survey length and minimize fatigue, all survey respondents were randomly assigned 15 of the potential constraints and were asked to rate the importance of each as a reason they do not shoot or shoot less, on a scale of 0 to 10. Only two of the constraints had a mean rating above the midpoint of 5: having other interests (5.4) and being too busy with family obligations (5.2).

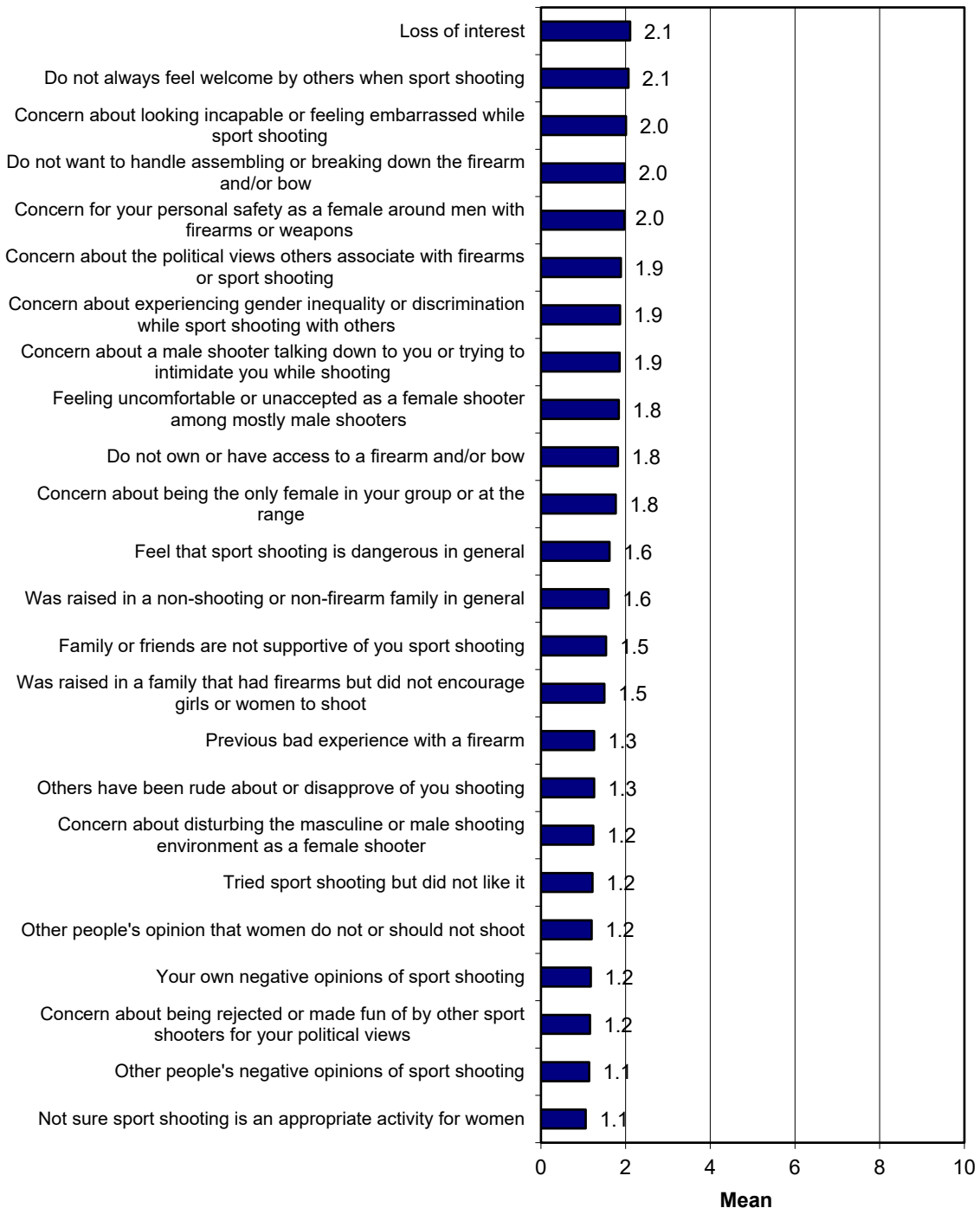
Below that top tier are four more reasons in a second tier: too busy with work obligations (4.6), costs associated with shooting (4.4), not enough access (4.3), and no one to go with (4.0). All other reasons are well below that.

The regional results are tabulated following the overall results (in two graphs because of the length of the list of possible constraints). Because the graph requires a full page for legibility, the graphs begin on the following page.

Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not hunt / hunted less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Part 1) (Shooter survey)



Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not hunt / hunted less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Part 2) (Shooter survey)



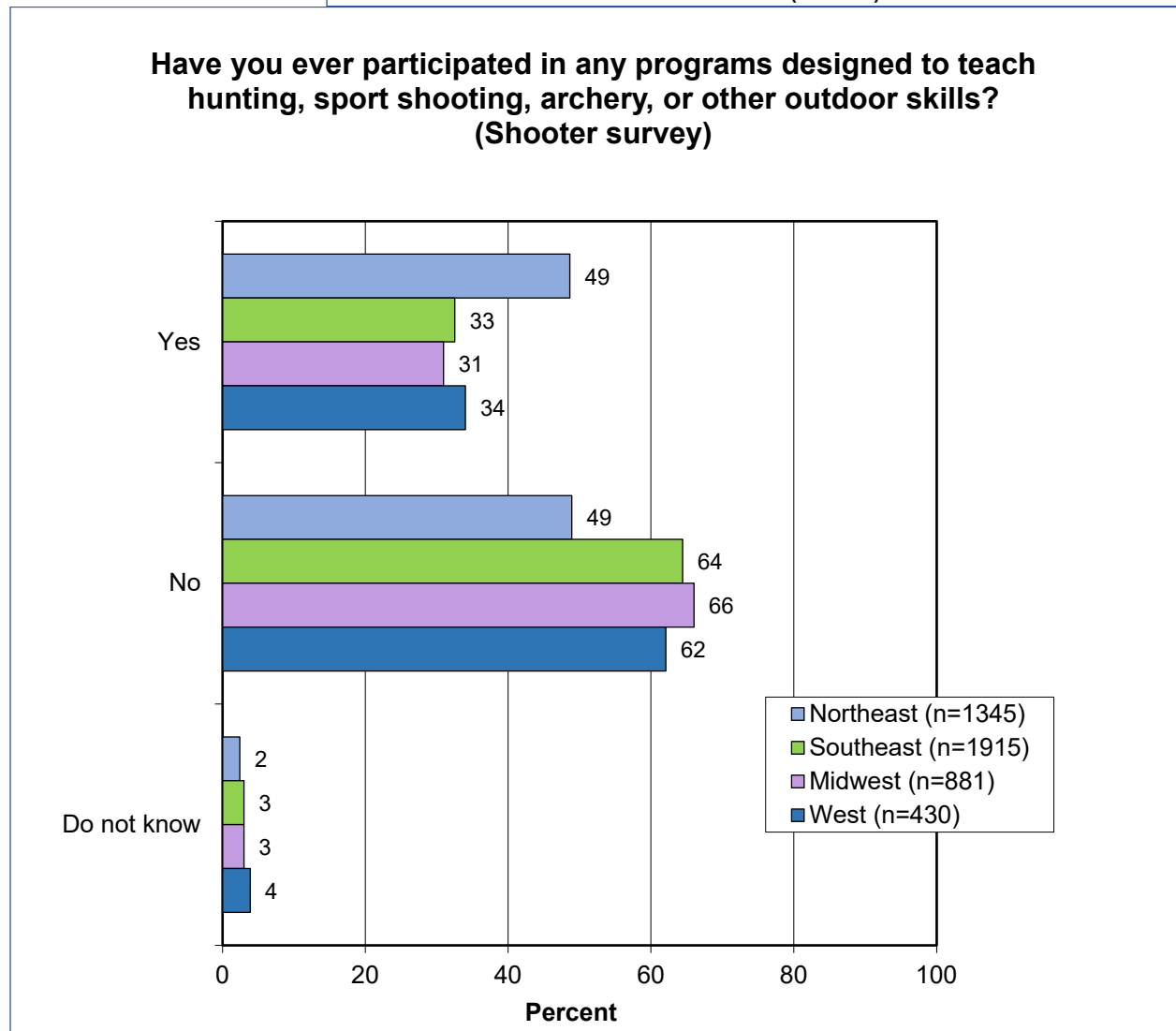
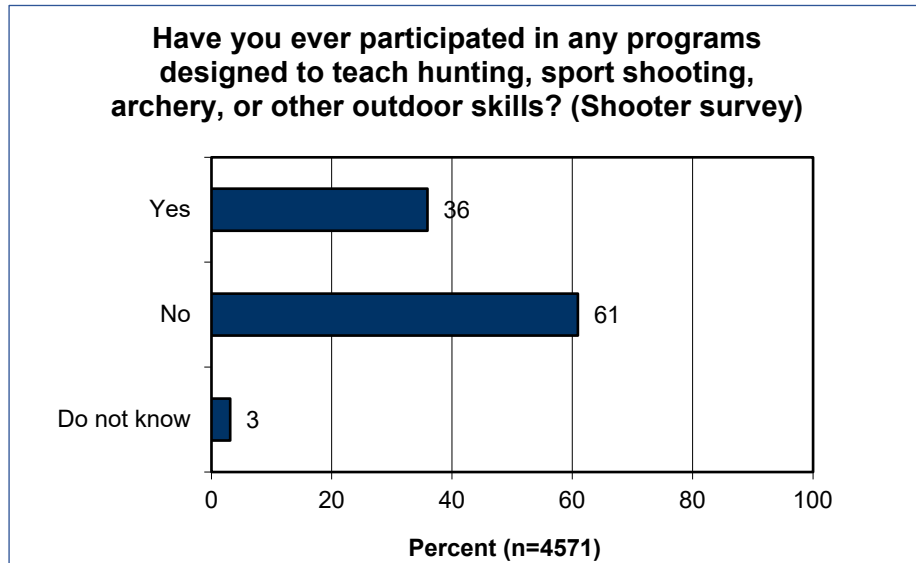
Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not go sport shooting / shot less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Values are means) (Shooter survey)					
Constraint	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West	Overall
Have other interests that are more important	5.0	5.3	5.8	5.7	5.4
Too busy with family obligations	5.5	5.7	5.3	4.0	5.2
Too busy with work obligations	5.3	5.0	4.7	3.3	4.6
Costs associated with sport shooting	4.1	4.6	4.9	3.9	4.4
Not enough access or places to sport shoot	4.9	4.1	4.5	4.0	4.3
No one to go shooting with	4.3	3.7	3.7	4.4	4.0
Having to travel too far to shoot	4.2	3.3	3.1	3.5	3.5
Lack of opportunity to learn how to assemble or break down the firearm and/or bow	2.8	2.9	2.9	4.1	3.2
Not knowing where to learn (or learn more) about hunting	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.6	3.2
Too many other shooters at the range or on the land	2.6	3.0	3.7	3.2	3.1
Poor behavior of other shooters	3.5	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.1
Personal health or age	2.7	2.1	3.6	3.8	3.0
Concern for your personal safety in general around others with firearms or weapons	3.1	2.6	2.3	3.7	2.9
Concern about experiencing racial or ethnic inequality or discrimination while shooting with others*	3.7	2.3	3.6	3.1	2.8
Feeling uncomfortable or unaccepted as a person of color or ethnicity who shoots among mostly white male shooters	3.8	2.0	4.2	3.2	2.8
Concern about the recoil or kick-back of the firearm	2.1	2.5	3.3	3.0	2.7
Feeling uncomfortable with firearms	2.2	2.6	3.1	2.0	2.5
Lack of equipment made specifically for women	2.3	2.6	2.6	2.1	2.4
Concern about not being able to hit the target	2.1	2.0	3.0	2.6	2.4
Not knowing other women who shoot	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3
Feeling overwhelmed by all the requirements to own and carry a firearm	2.5	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.3
Fear of injury by another shooter	2.4	2.1	2.4	2.5	2.3
Not sure what to do with the firearm and/or bow	2.4	2.0	2.4	2.2	2.2
Physical limitations or concerns (other than health or age)	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.2
Loss of interest	1.7	1.7	2.5	2.7	2.1
Do not always feel welcome by others when sport shooting	2.6	2.1	2.0	1.7	2.1
Concern about looking incapable or feeling embarrassed while sport shooting	2.0	2.2	2.4	1.4	2.0
Do not want to handle assembling or breaking down the firearm and/or bow	2.1	1.6	1.8	2.4	2.0
Concern for your personal safety as a female around men with firearms or weapons	2.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0
Concern about the political views others associate with firearms or sport shooting	2.1	1.6	2.0	2.2	1.9

Please rate the importance of each of the following items as a reason that you [did not go sport shooting / shot less], on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (Values are means) (Shooter survey)					
Constraint	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West	Overall
Concern about experiencing gender inequality or discrimination while sport shooting with others	2.8	1.5	1.9	1.8	1.9
Concern about a male shooter talking down to you or trying to intimidate you while shooting	2.3	1.6	2.0	1.7	1.9
Feeling uncomfortable or unaccepted as a female shooter among mostly male shooters	2.4	1.5	2.4	1.5	1.8
Do not own or have access to a firearm and/or bow	2.3	1.4	1.8	2.1	1.8
Concern about being the only female in your group or at the range	2.3	1.6	1.4	1.7	1.8
Feel that sport shooting is dangerous in general	1.7	0.9	2.3	2.0	1.6
Was raised in a non-shooting or non-firearm family in general	1.7	1.8	1.4	1.5	1.6
Family or friends are not supportive of you sport shooting	1.8	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5
Was raised in a family that had firearms but did not encourage girls or women to shoot	1.8	1.4	1.0	1.7	1.5
Previous bad experience with a firearm	0.7	1.0	1.0	2.2	1.3
Others have been rude about or disapprove of you shooting	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.5	1.3
Concern about disturbing the masculine or male shooting environment as a female shooter	1.3	0.8	1.5	1.6	1.2
Tried sport shooting but did not like it	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.8	1.2
Other people's opinion that women do not or should not shoot	1.4	0.8	1.2	1.5	1.2
Your own negative opinions of sport shooting	1.1	1.0	1.5	1.2	1.2
Concern about being rejected or made fun of by other sport shooters for your political views	1.3	0.8	1.5	1.3	1.2
Other people's negative opinions of sport shooting	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.7	1.1
Not sure sport shooting is an appropriate activity for women	1.1	1.0	0.7	1.4	1.1

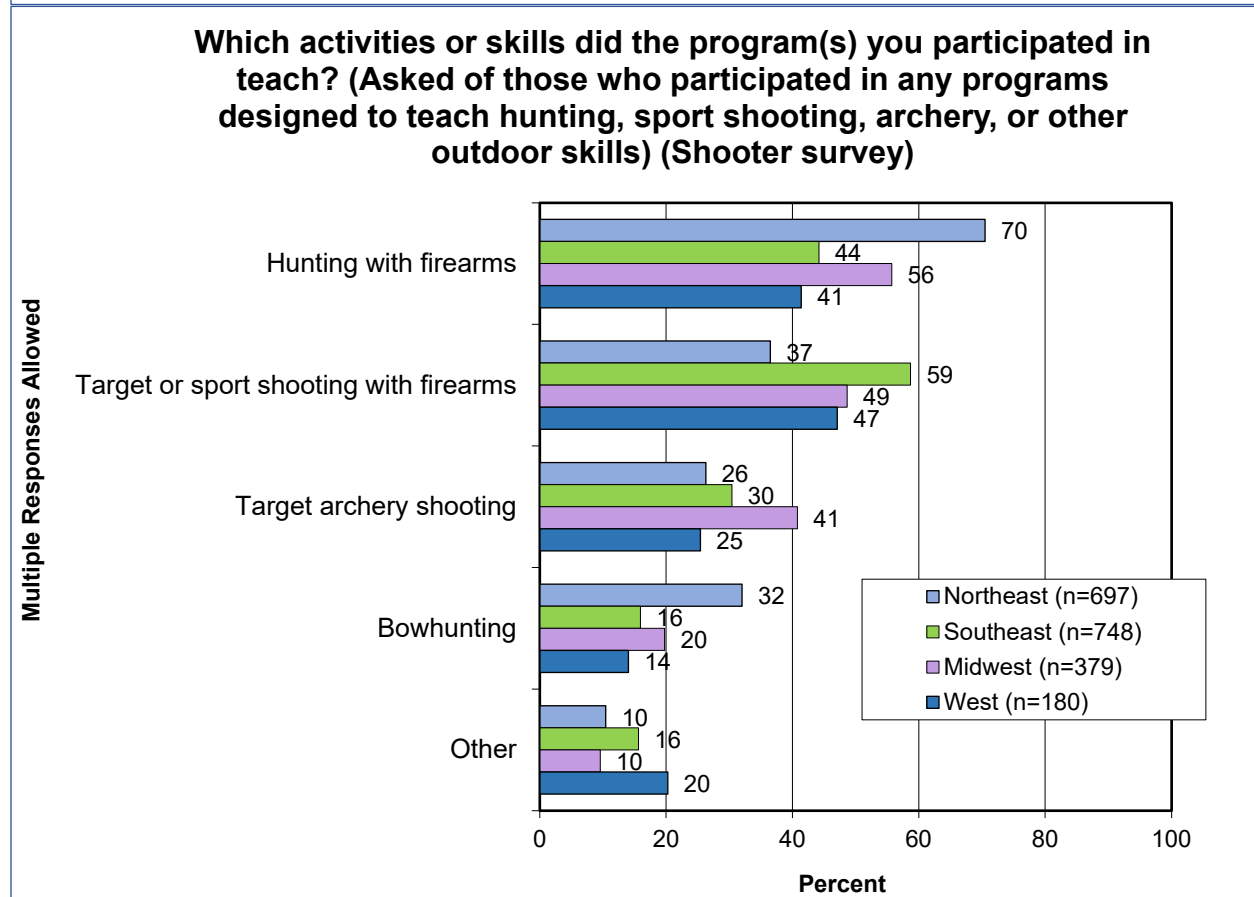
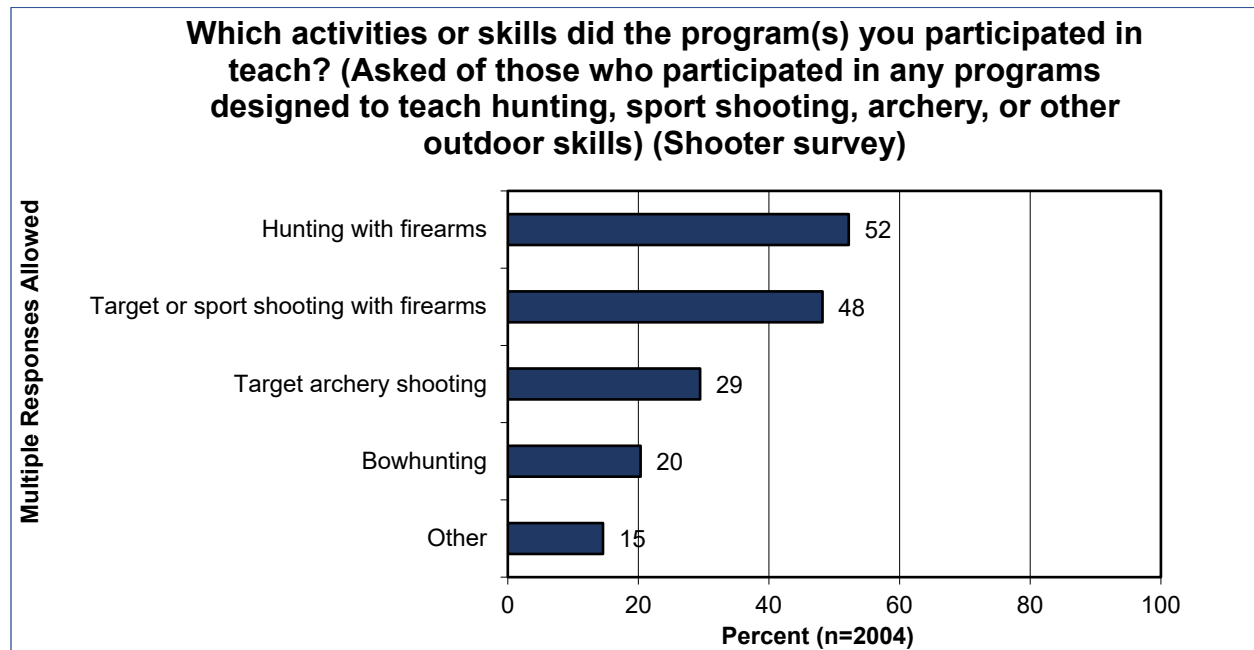
* Asked of any respondent who selected a non-white ethnic selection.

PARTICIPATION IN R3 PROGRAMS

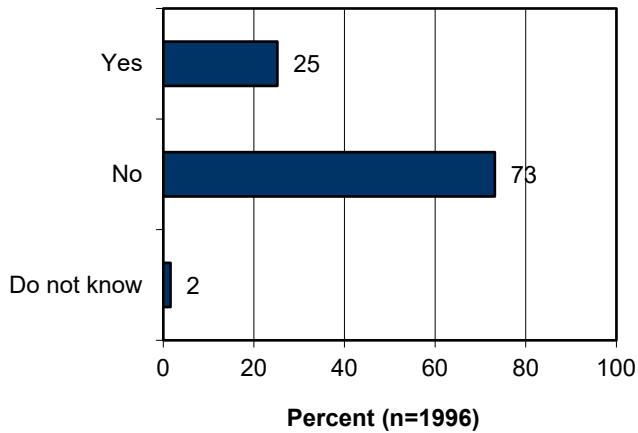
Just over a third of respondents to the survey had participated in a program that taught hunting, sport shooting, archery, or other outdoor skills. The rate was highest among women from the Northeast Region.



Firearms skills predominated over archery skills in these programs that were taken by respondents. Of those who took programs, 52% took a program that taught hunting skills, and 48% took one that taught firearm shooting skills. This compares to only 29% saying that the program taught archery skills, and only 20% who said the same about bowhunting. Regional results are shown as well.

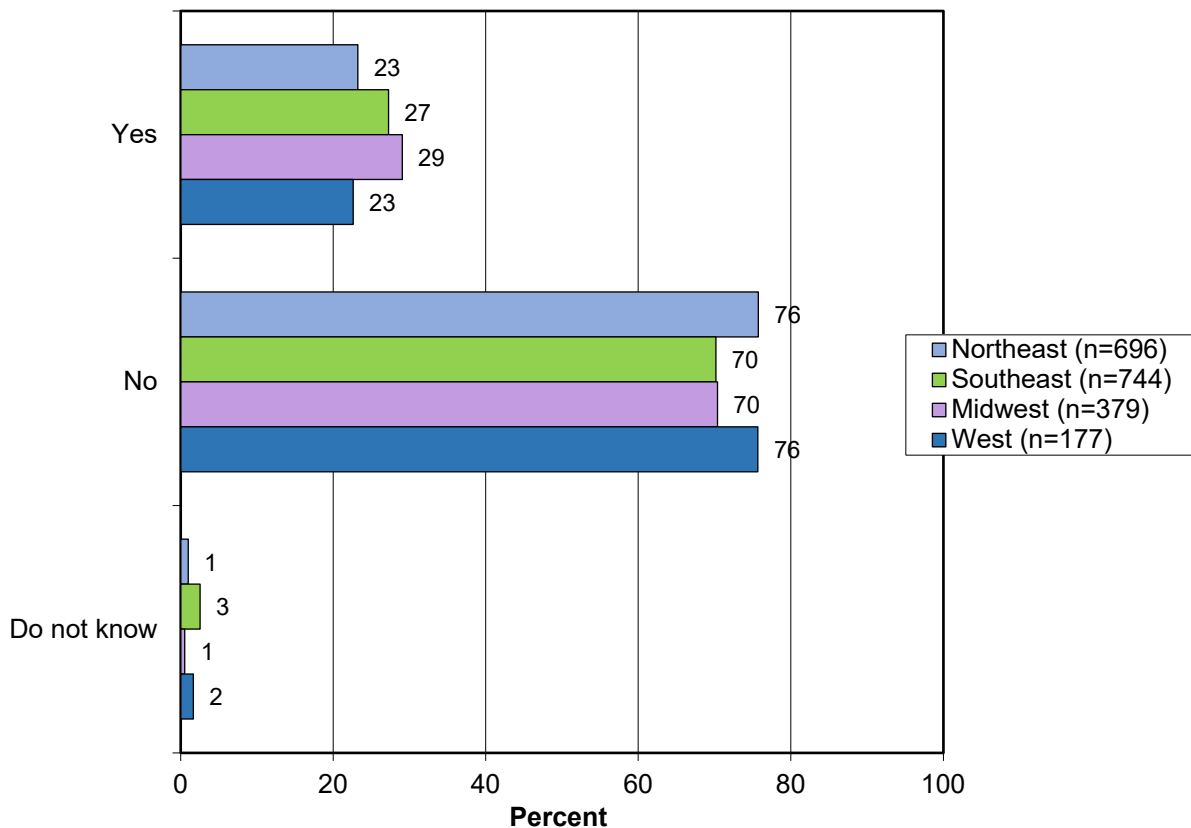


Were any of the programs you participated in designed specifically for women? (Asked of those who participated in any programs designed to teach hunting, sport shooting, archery, or other outdoor skills.) (Shooter survey)

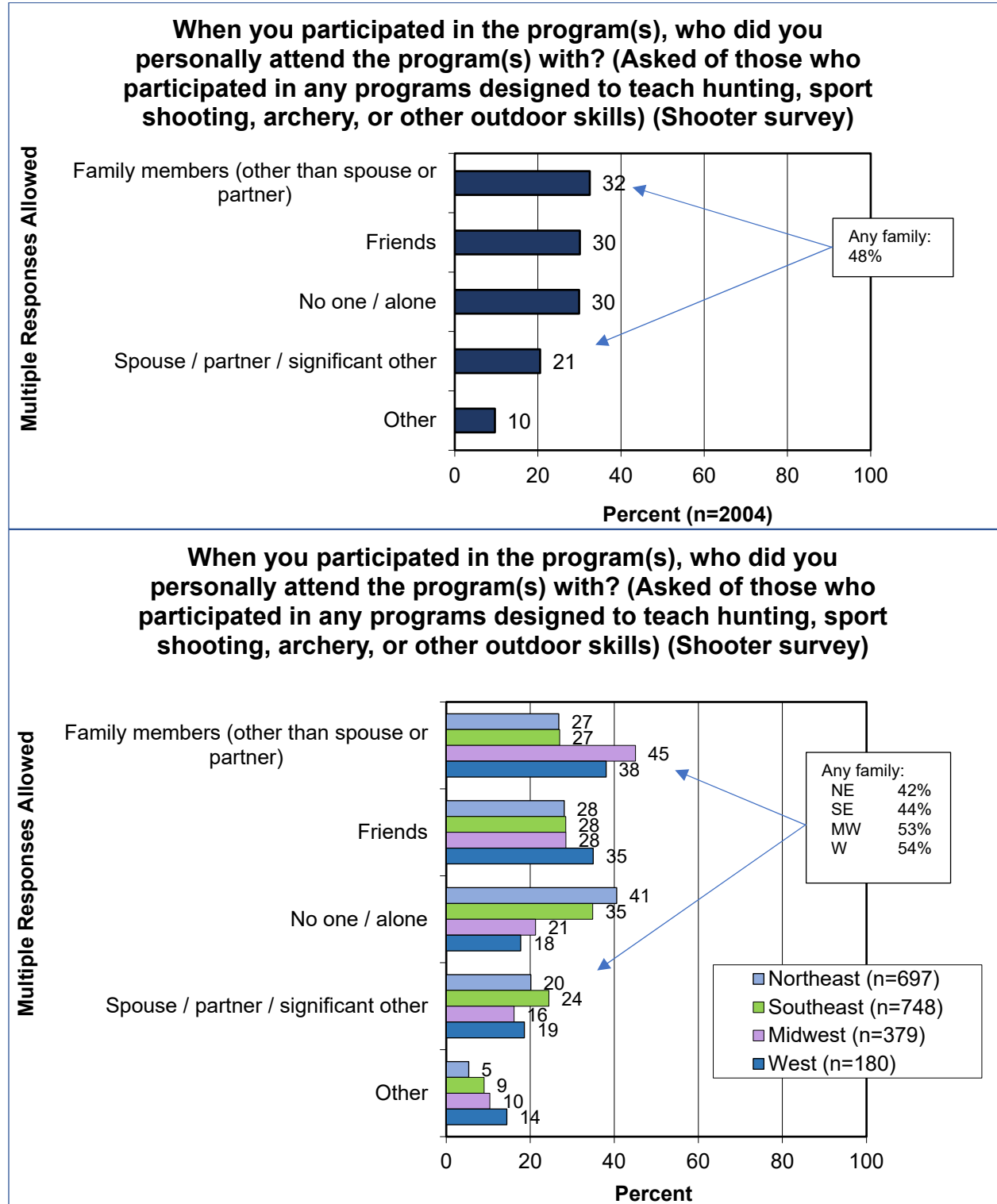


A quarter of those who participated in a program indicated that the program was specifically designed for women, and this holds fairly consistently across the regions.

Were any of the programs you participated in designed specifically for women? (Asked of those who participated in any programs designed to teach hunting, sport shooting, archery, or other outdoor skills.) (Shooter survey)

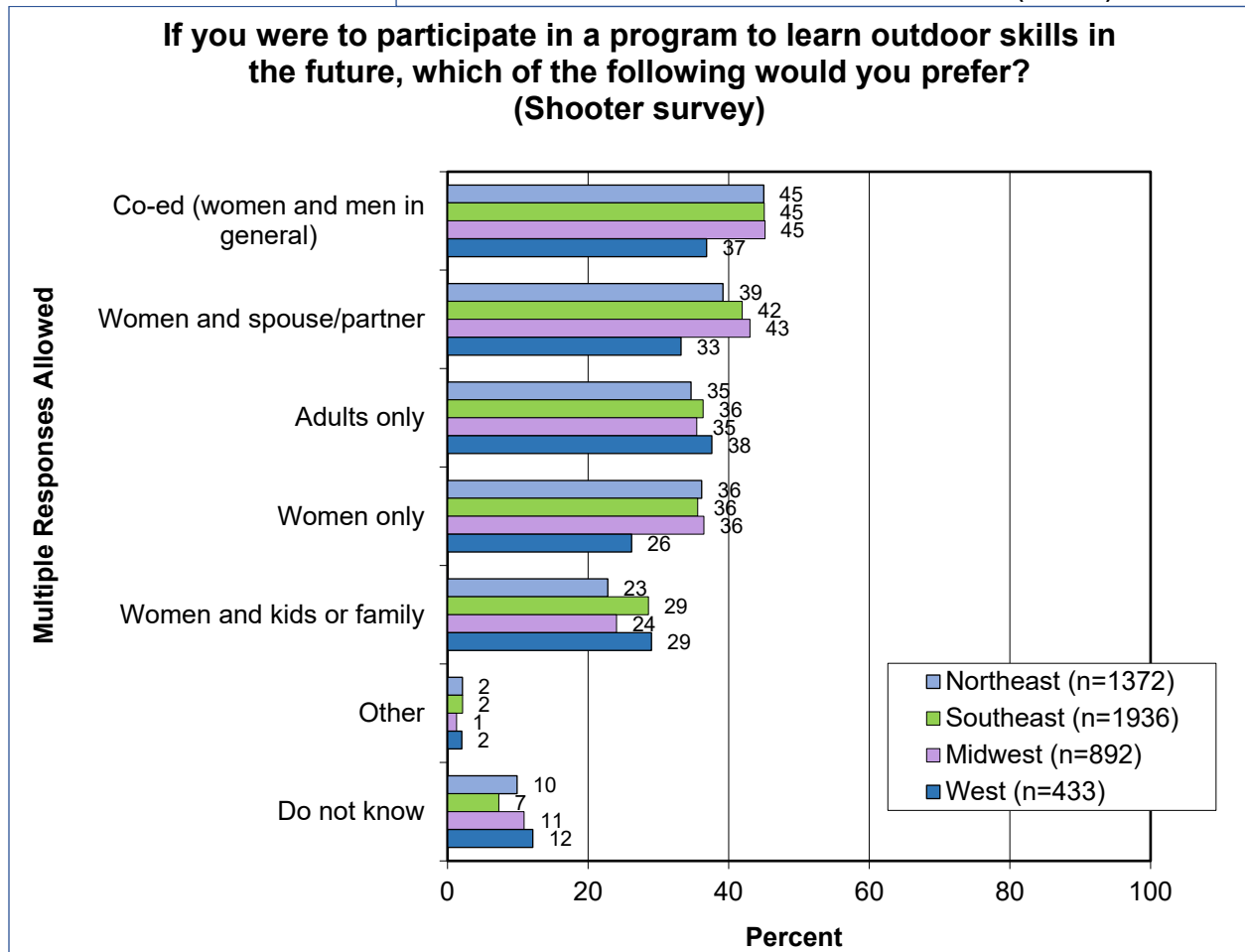
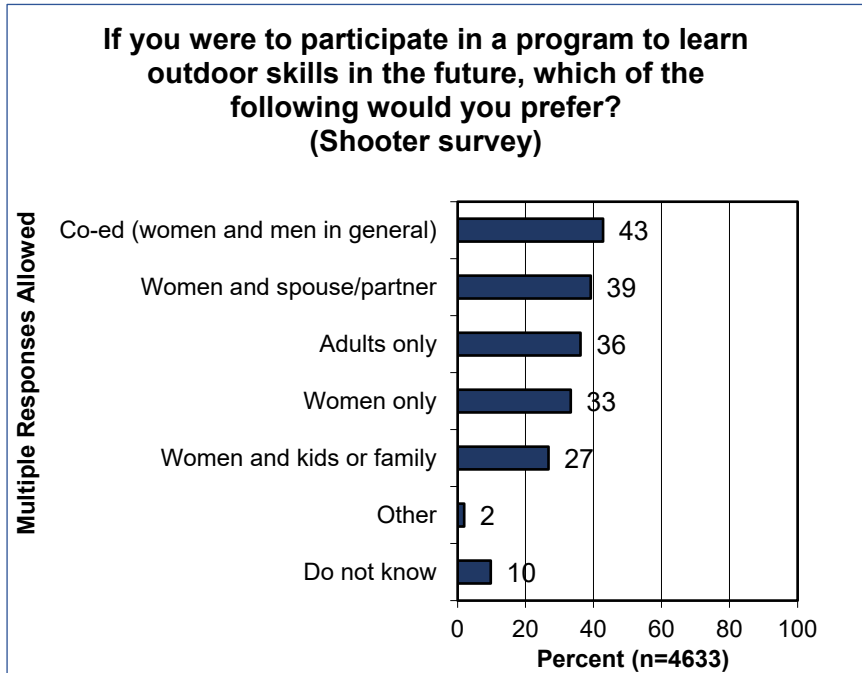


Just less than a third of sport shooters in the survey indicate that they went to a program alone. Just under half went with family. Family was particularly high in the Midwest and West Regions, as shown in the regional graph. The percentage for “any family” is not the sum of the two responses because sport shooters can name both.



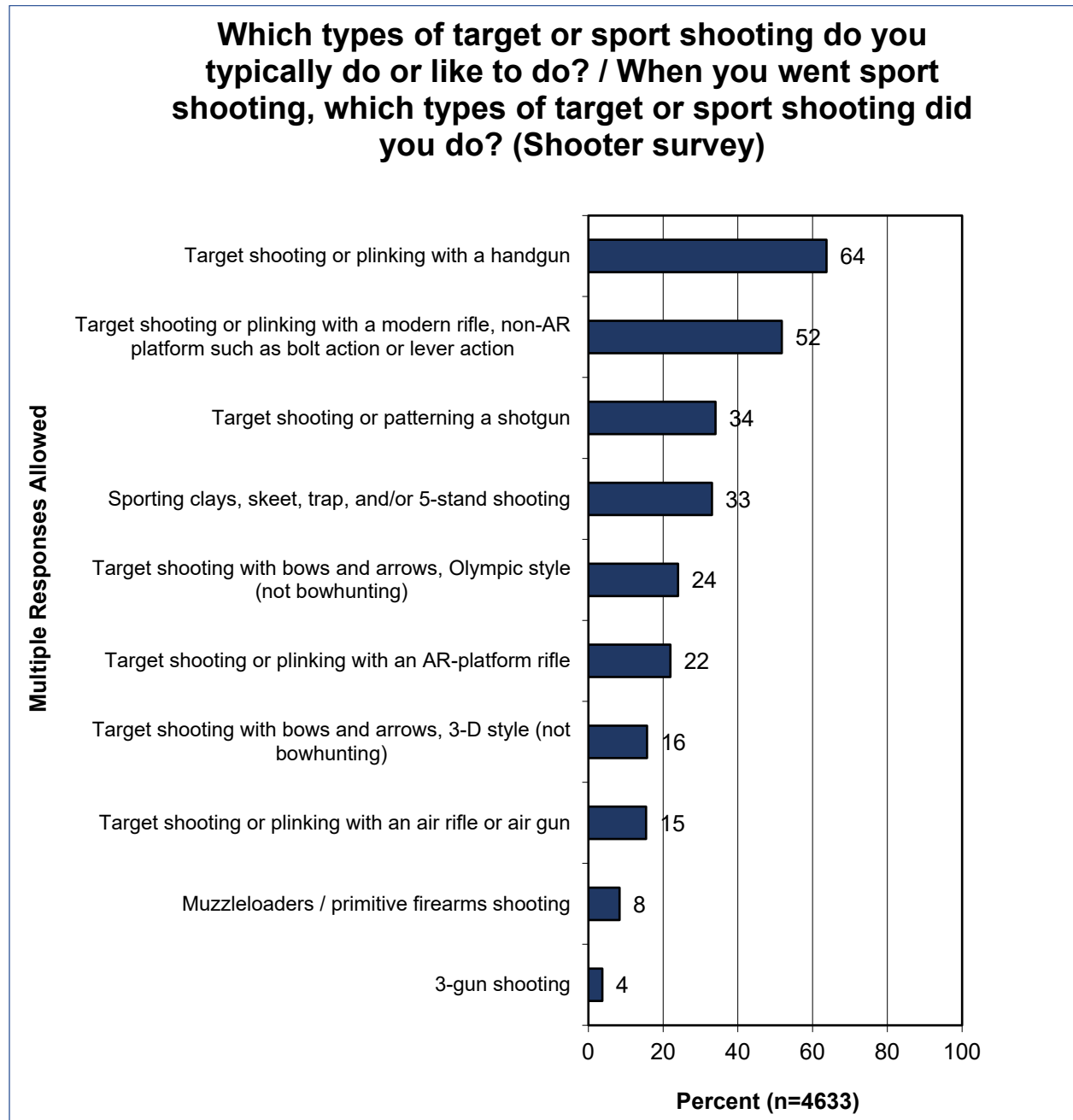
FUTURE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The split between the desire for co-ed programs or women-only programs is close: 43% specifically selected the co-ed response, but 33% selected the women only response. A substantial percentage (39%) would like a spouse program, and about a third (36%) want a program restricted to adults only. The regional results are presented, as well.

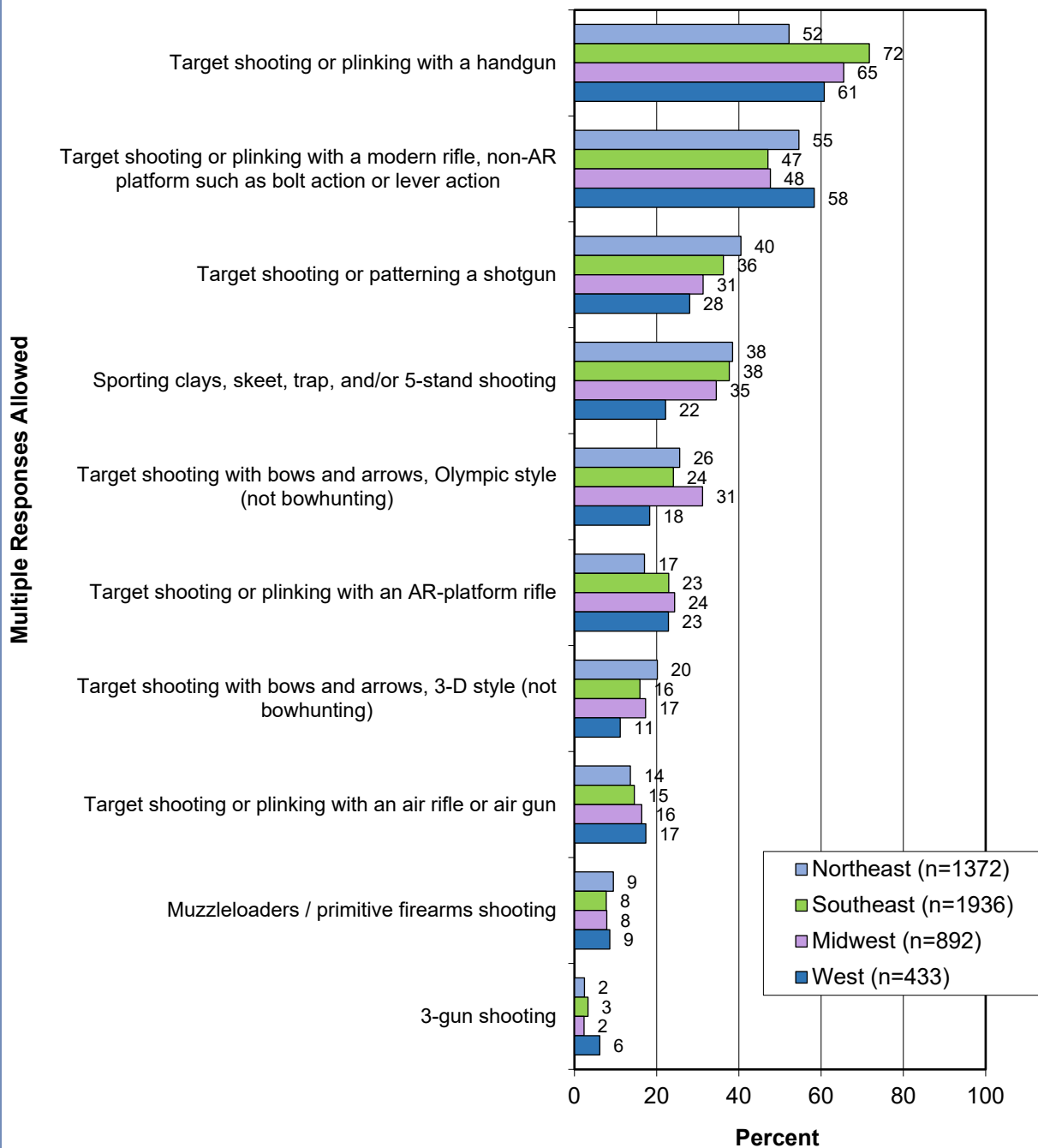


CHARACTERISTICS OF SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION

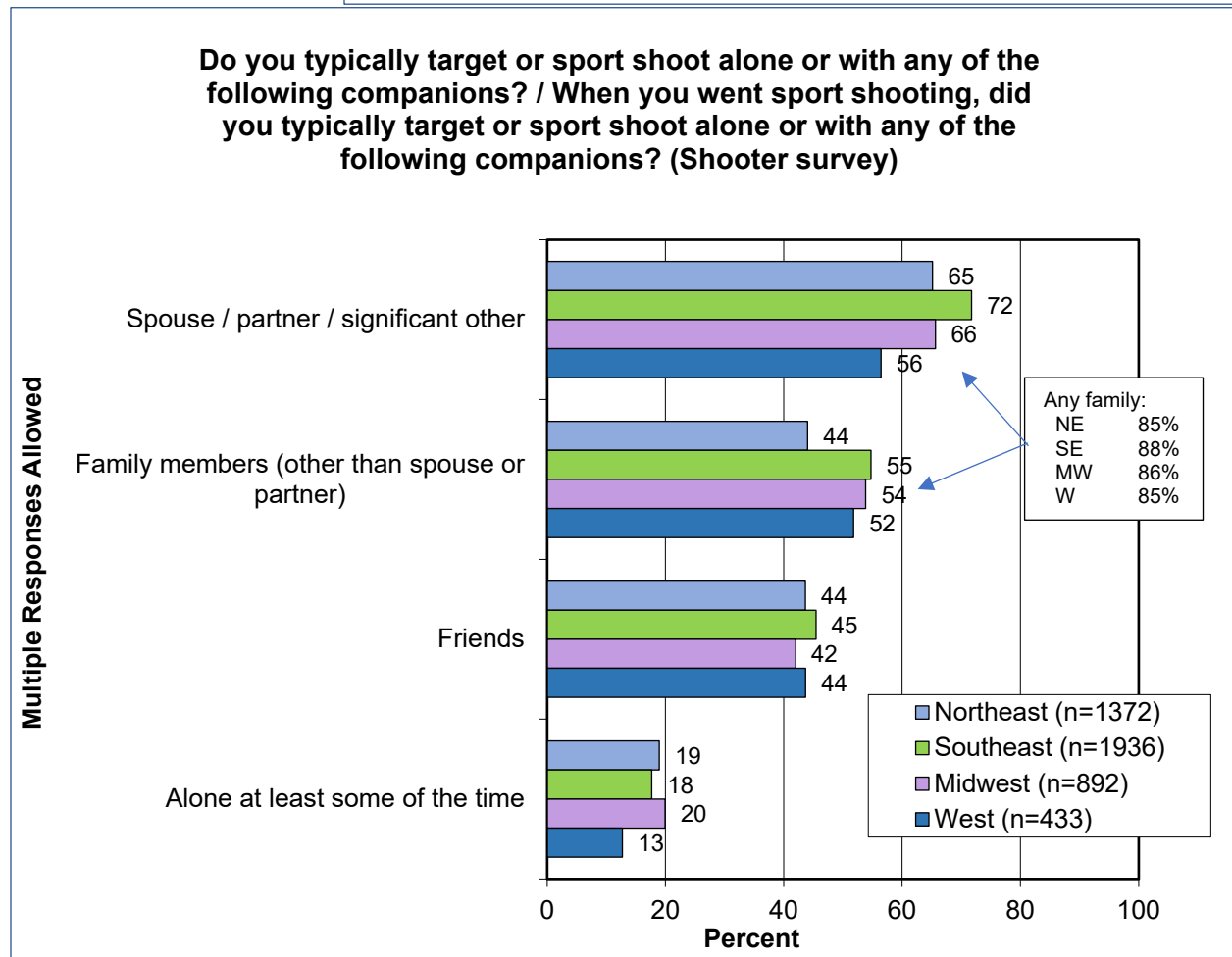
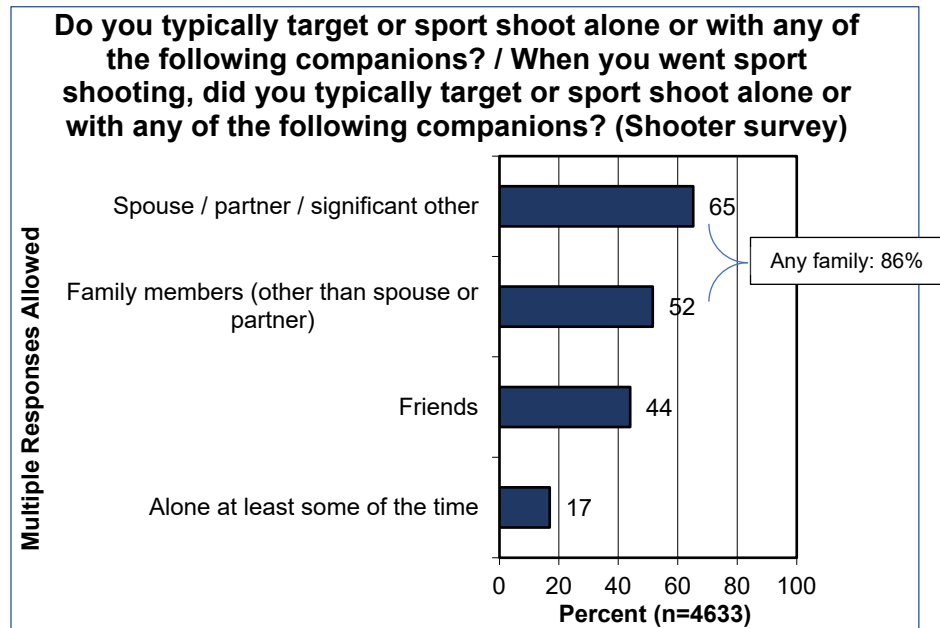
Target handgun shooting and target rifle shooting are the most prominent shooting activities among women in the shooting survey. A majority do or did these activities. Meanwhile, about a third do/did shotgun shooting and/or clay sports. Regional results are on the following page; of note is that Northeast Region women have a markedly lower rate of handgun shooting, compared to women from the other regions.

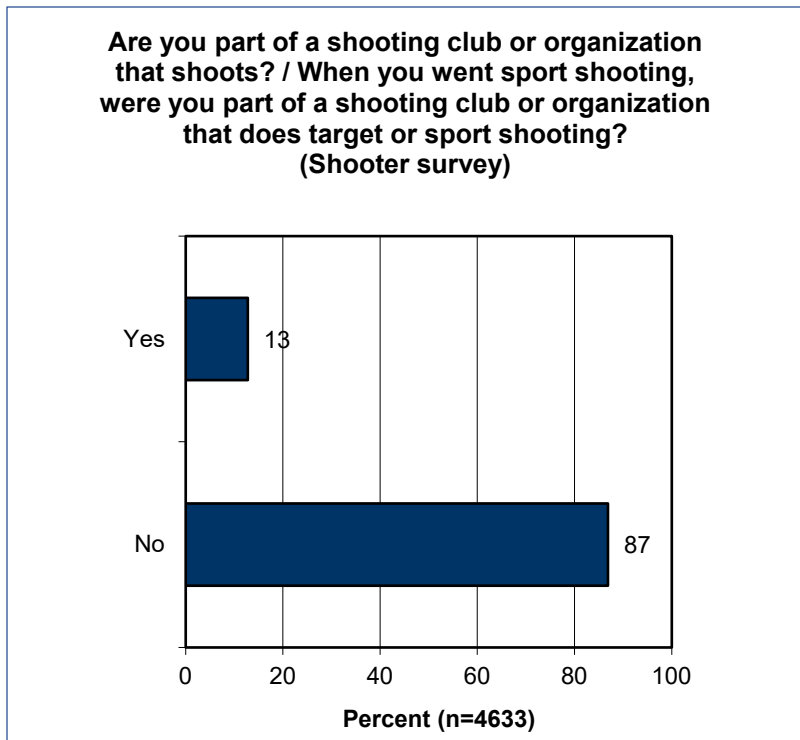


Which types of target or sport shooting do you typically do or like to do? / When you went sport shooting, which types of target or sport shooting did you do? (Shooter survey)

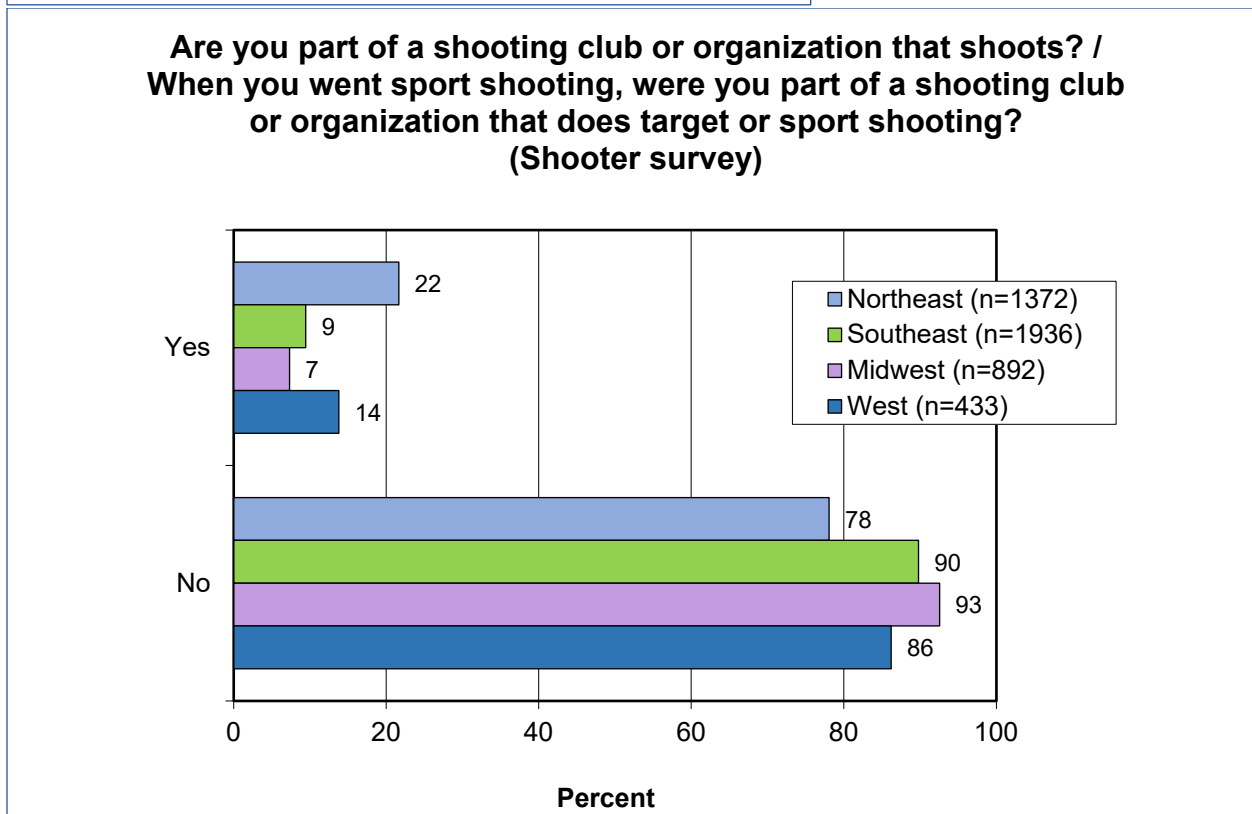


Spouses and family members are the most popular shooting companions among women: 65% go or went when they did go shooting with their spouse, and 52% went with other family members. In total, 86% went with family. Regional results are included.





Overall, 13% of women in the survey indicated membership in a shooting club. This rate was highest in the Northeast Region.

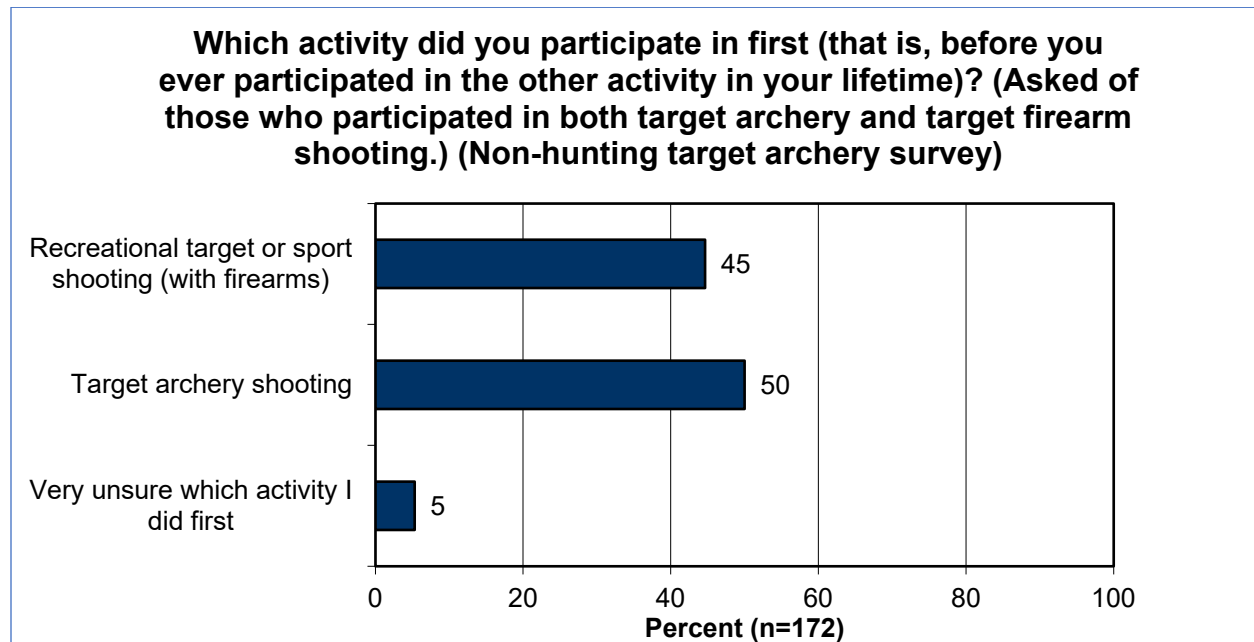


CHAPTER 4. WOMEN'S R3 TARGET ARCHERY SURVEY RESULTS

This chapter discusses the survey of women who participated in target archery shooting. An online sample of women archery participants was screened to ensure that respondents were at least 18 years old, female, had participated in target archery within the past 10 years, and had *not* hunted within the past 10 years. Although some archery participants were encountered in the previously discussed hunter and sport shooter surveys, this sample was kept separate in the surveying, analysis, and reporting. This survey has similar themes and questions as the one conducted for hunters and sport shooters, but this is a different survey that was tailored to target archery participants. The survey was administered through an online questionnaire. Overall, 438 women target archery participants completed the survey.

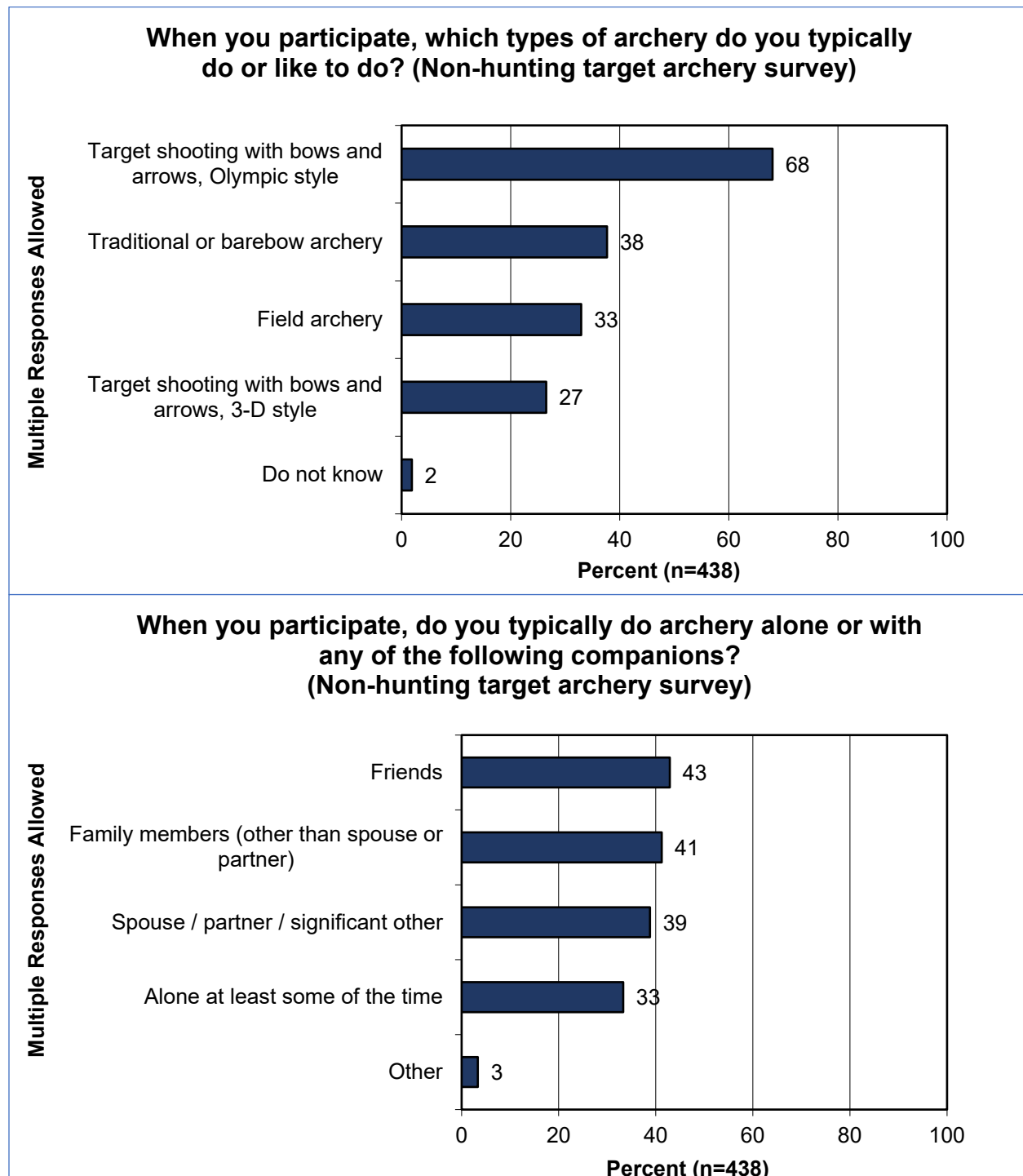
INITIAL TARGET ARCHERY AND SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION

Among those who participated in both target archery and sport shooting with firearms, 50% participated in target archery first and 45% participated in sport shooting with firearms first.

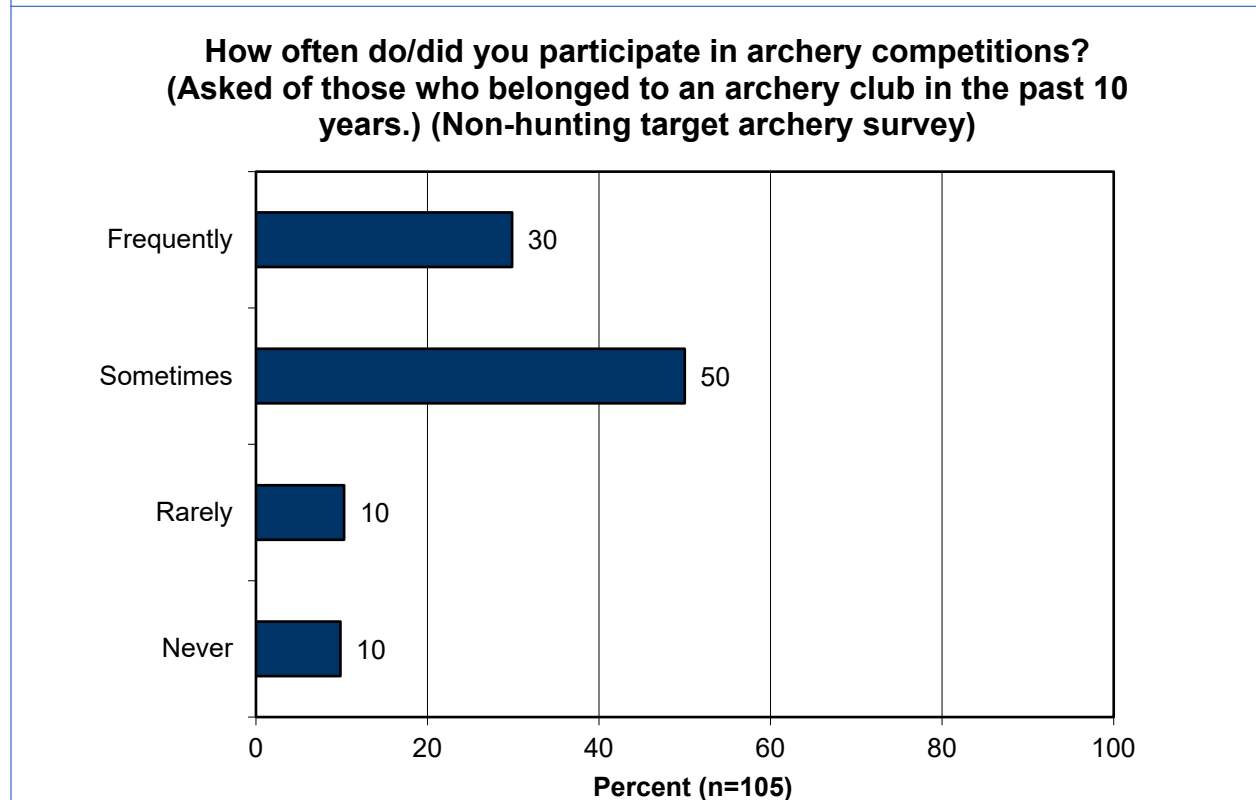
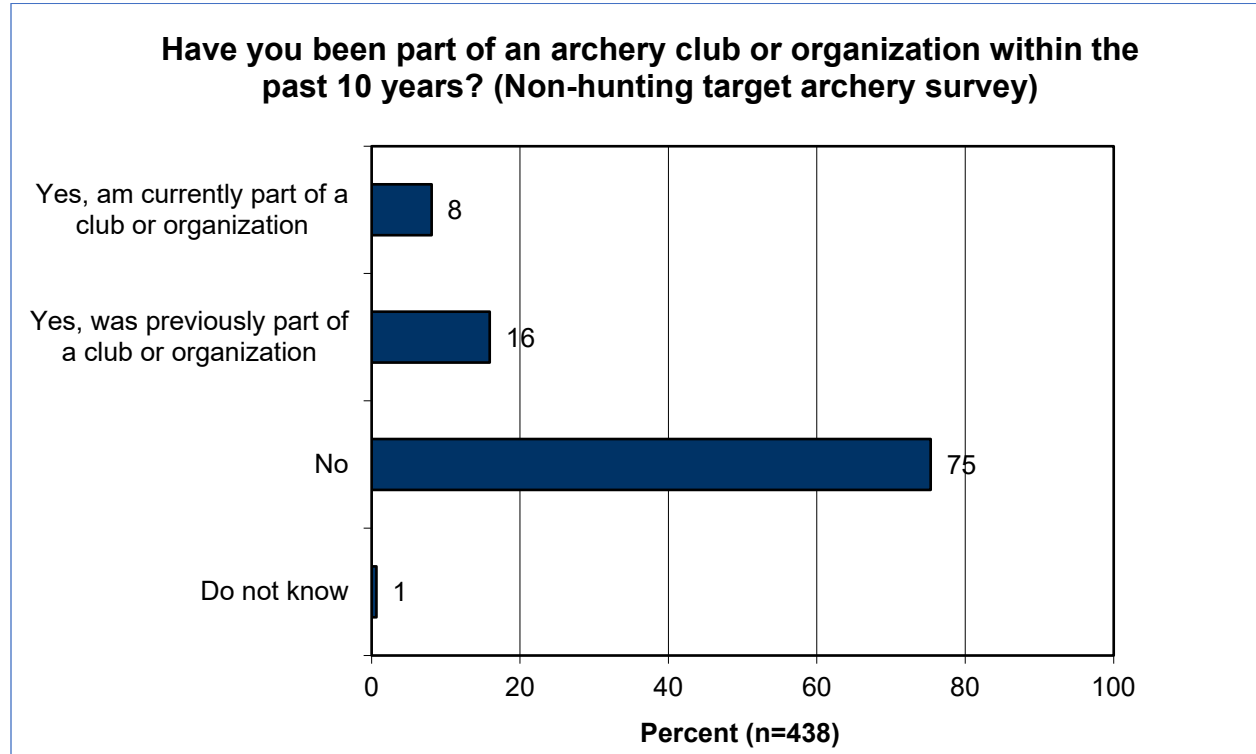


CHARACTERISTICS OF TARGET ARCHERY PARTICIPATION

Over two thirds of archers (68%) typically target shoot with bows and arrows, Olympic style, while 38% do traditional or barebow archery, 33% do field archery, and 27% target shoot with bows and arrows, 3-D style. Also, 43% of archers typically shoot with friends, 41% do so with family members other than a spouse, 39% do so with a spouse or partner, and 33% do so alone at least part of the time.

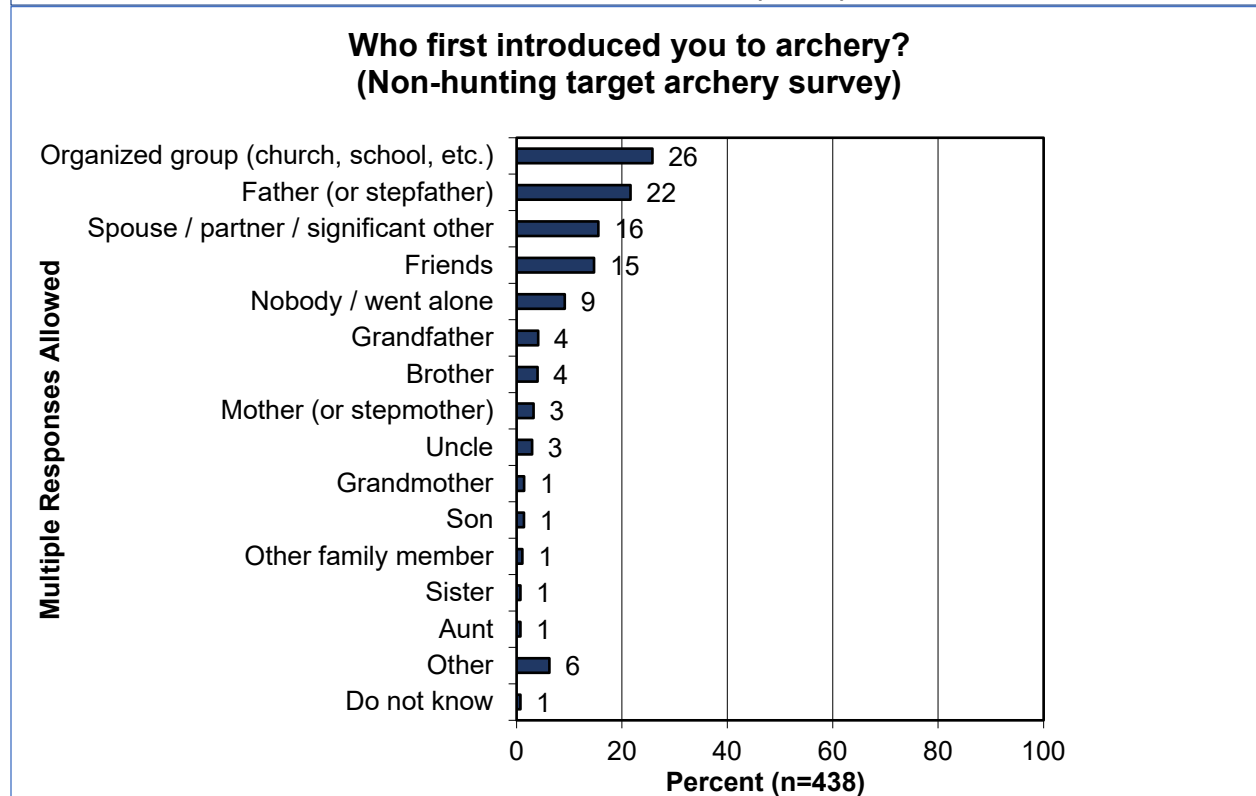
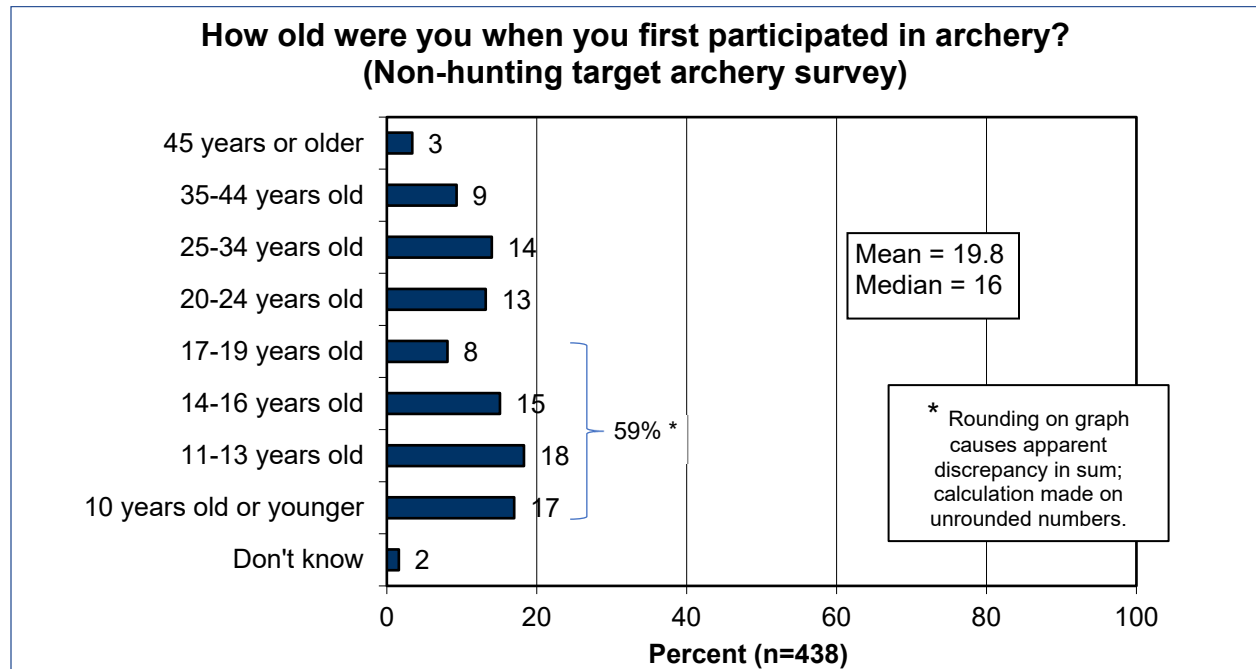


Three fourths of archers (75%) have not been part of an archery club with the past 10 years, while 8% are currently in a club and 16% were previously. Among those who currently belong or formerly belonged to a club, 30% frequently participate(d) in archery competitions, 50% do/did sometimes, 10% do/did rarely, and 10% do not or did not in the past 10 years.

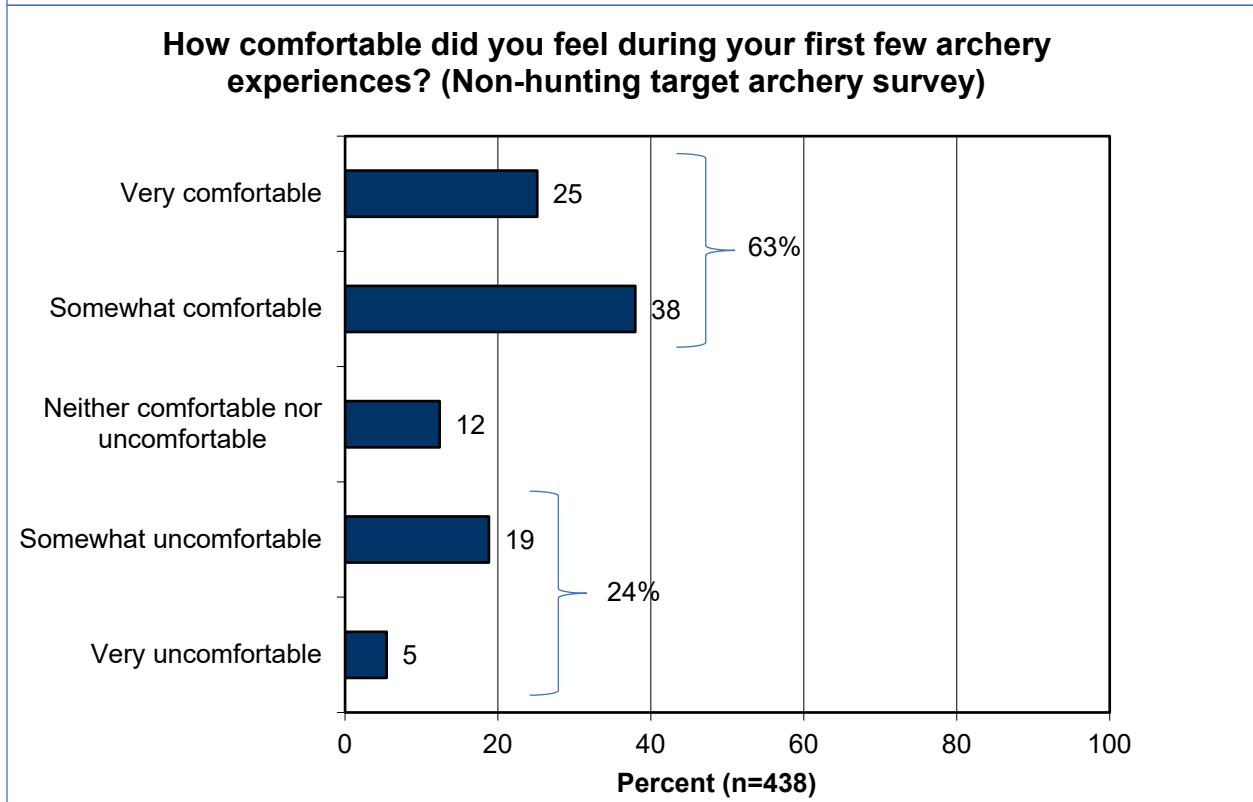
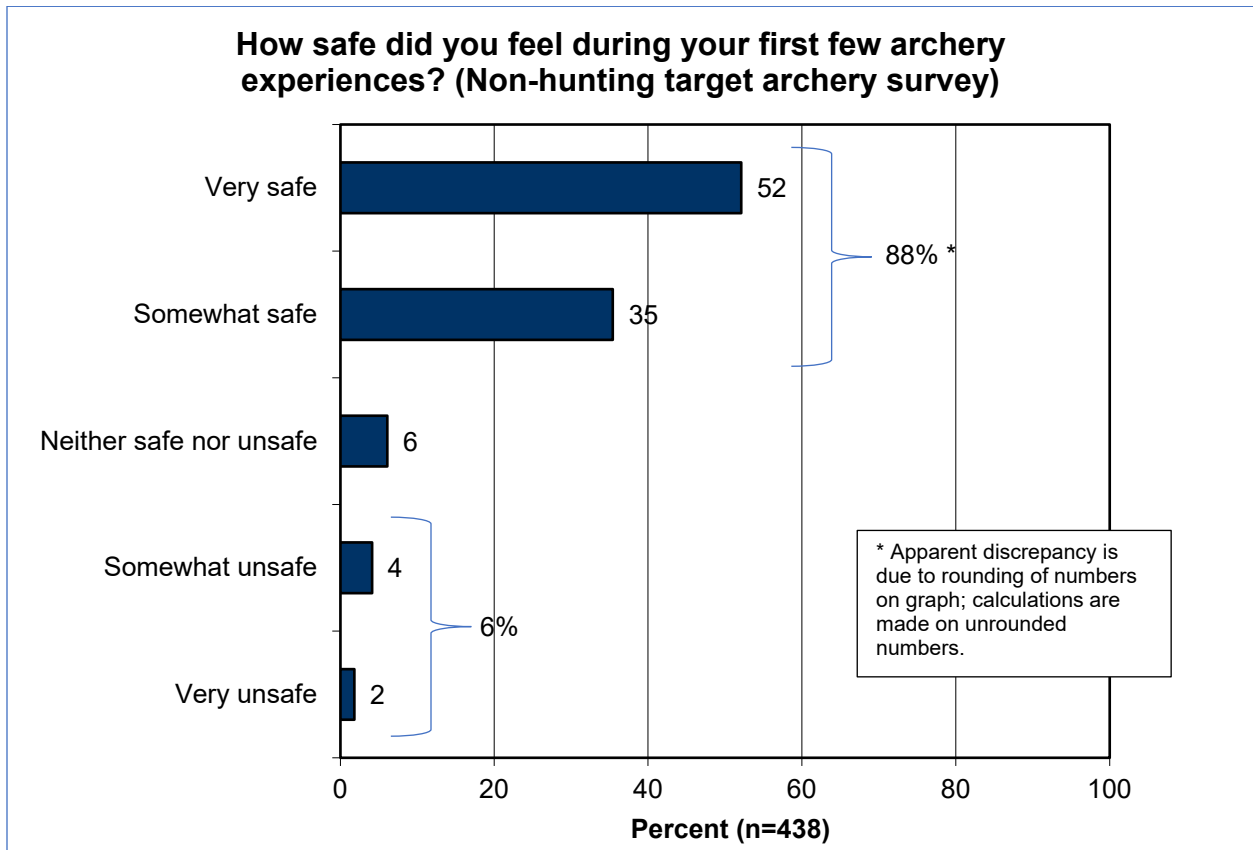


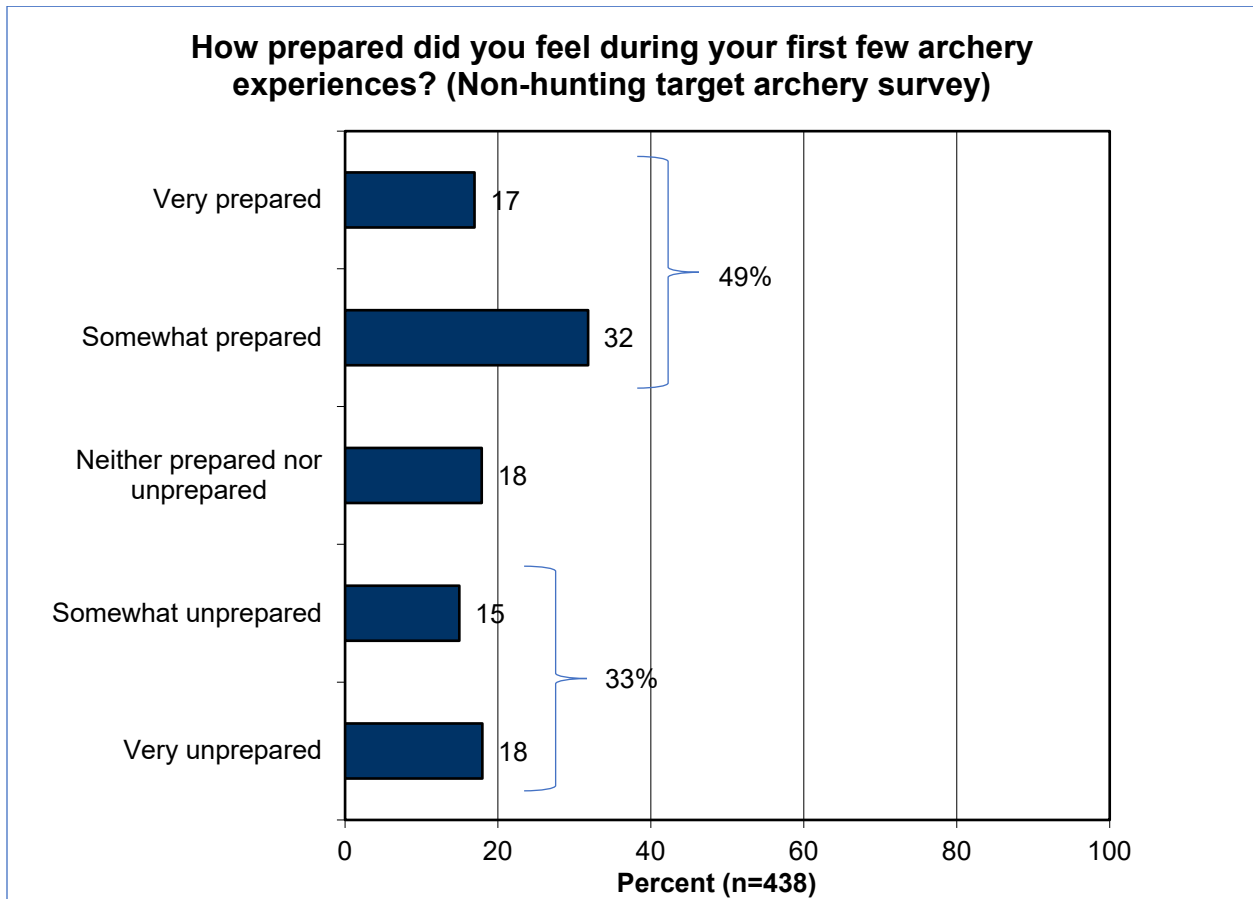
INITIAL TARGET ARCHERY PARTICIPATION

Women target archery participants generally started young, with a majority (59%) first participating under the age of 20; the mean starting age is 19.8 and the median is 16. Archers were most commonly introduced to the sport by an organized group, such as a church or school group (26% stated this), by a father or stepfather (22%), by a spouse or partner (16%), or by friends (15%). The full list is shown.



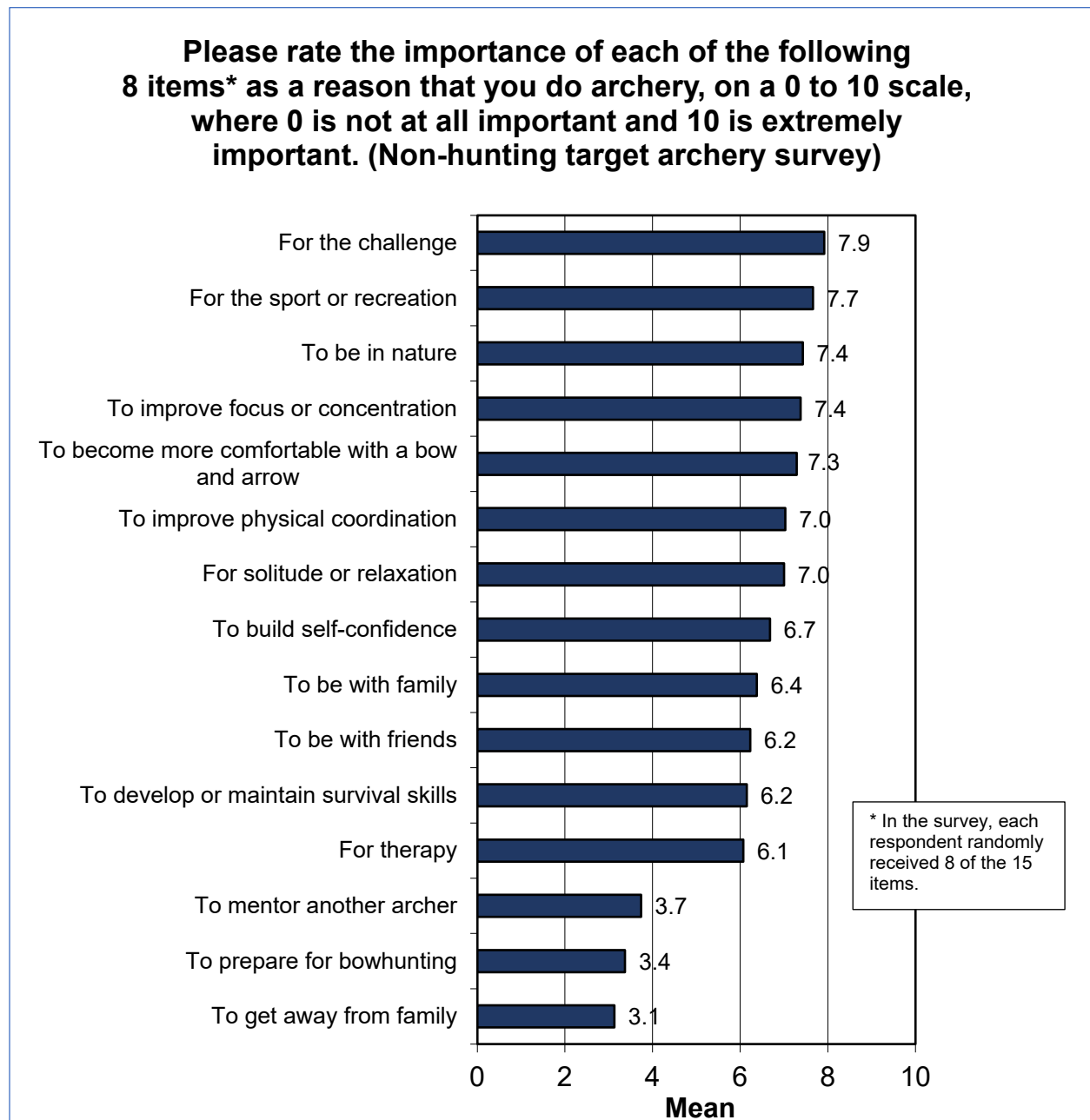
Most archers (88%) felt safe during their initial archery experiences. However, percentages are substantially lower reflecting those who felt comfortable (63%) or prepared (49%).





REASONS FOR TARGET ARCHERY PARTICIPATION

The survey presented a series of 15 potential reasons for participating in archery and asked respondents to rate the importance of each, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. (To shorten the survey and minimize fatigue, each respondent was randomly assigned 8 of the 15 items.) The top reasons, with mean ratings above 7, are for the challenge, for the sport or recreation, to be in nature, to improve focus or concentration, and to become more comfortable with a bow and arrow. The bottom tier of importance, with mean ratings below 4, are to get away from family, to prepare for bowhunting, and to mentor another archer.



CONSTRAINTS TO TARGET ARCHERY PARTICIPATION

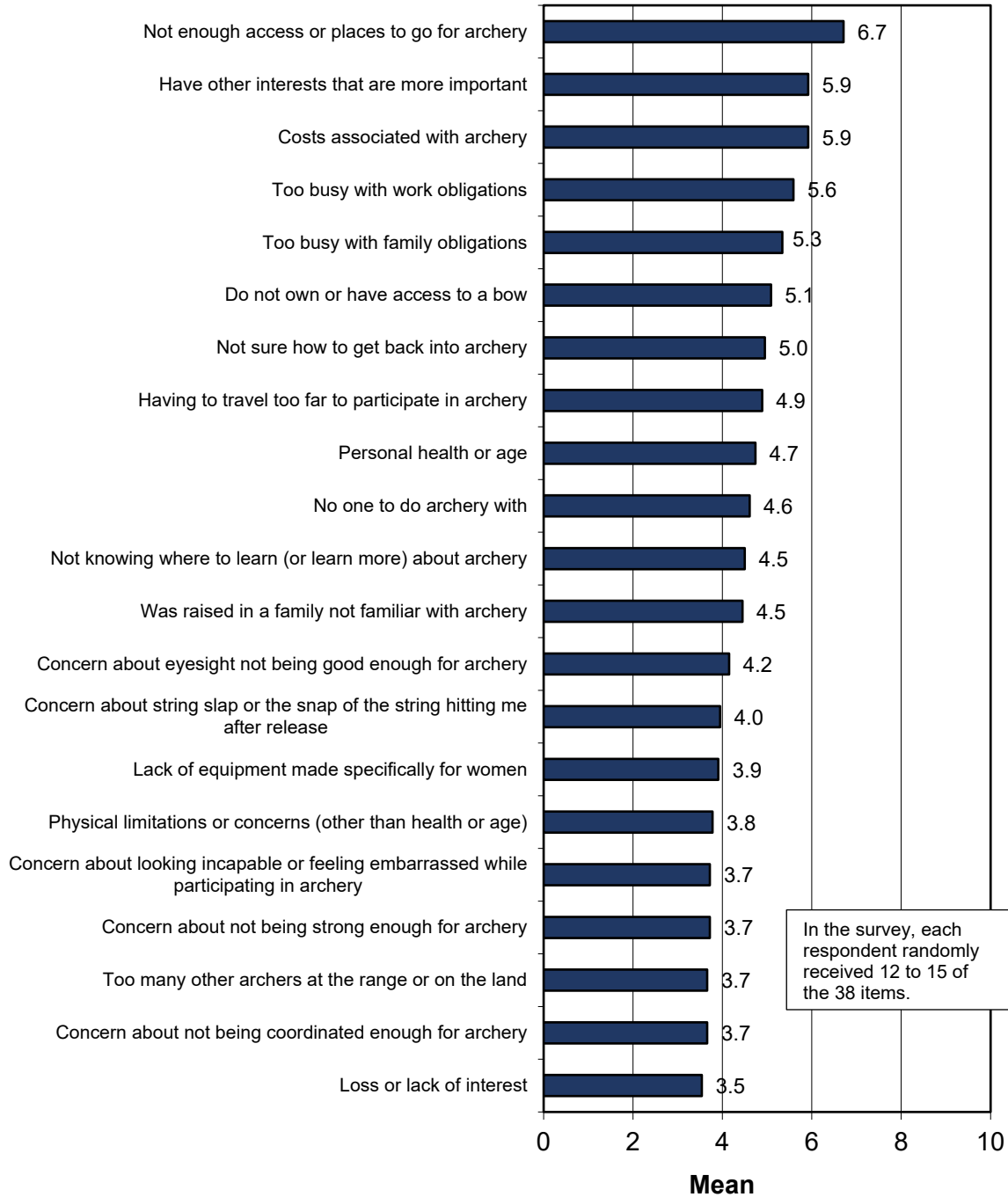
In an open-ended question, archers were asked to name any constraints to their target archery participation in recent years. The top responses are COVID (25% stated this) and lack of time (22%). Meanwhile, 10% said that nothing caused them to participate less.



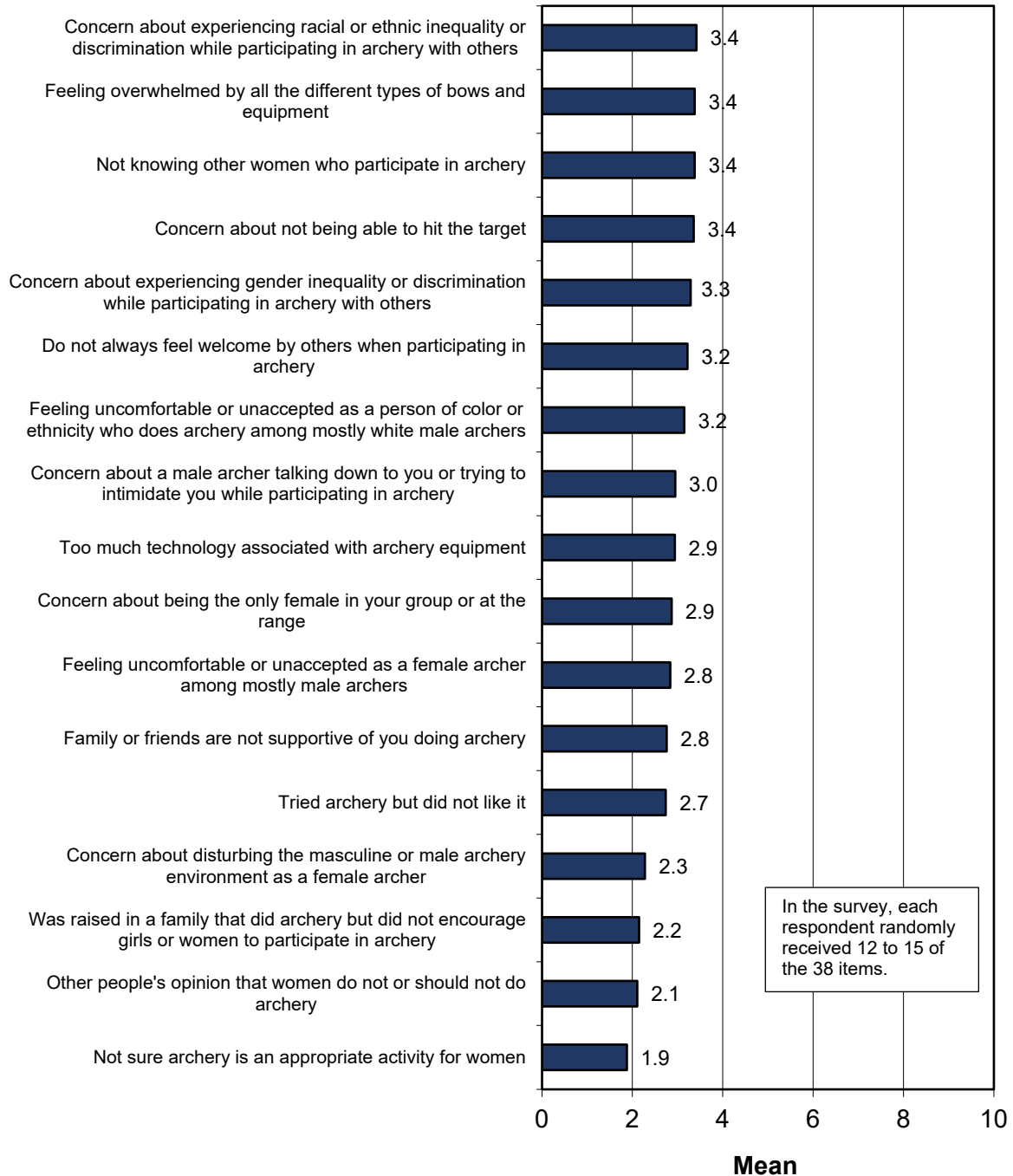
Next, archers were presented with a list of potential constraints and were asked to rate the importance of each in reducing their archery participation, on a scale of 0 to 10. (The entire list consisted of 38 constraints; to avoid an onerously lengthy survey, each archer was randomly assigned 12 to 15 of the items. Also note that some items only applied to certain respondents; e.g., only short-term lapsed archers were presented with “not sure how to get back into archery.”)

The top item is lack of access (mean rating of 6.7), followed by having other interests that are more important (5.9), costs associated with archery (5.9), work obligations (5.6), family obligations (5.3), lack of a bow (5.1), and not being sure how to get back into archery (5.0). All other constraints have a mean rating below the midpoint of 5, which suggests that archers in general do not have substantial obstacles to participating in the activity. The lowest rated constraints relate to societal pressures against women participating in target archery. The full list of results is shown on the next two pages.

**Please rate the importance of each of the following as a reason that you did not participate in archery, did not participate in archery as much as you would have liked, or participated in archery less in recent years, on a 0 to 10 scale:
(Non-hunting target archery survey) (Part 1)**

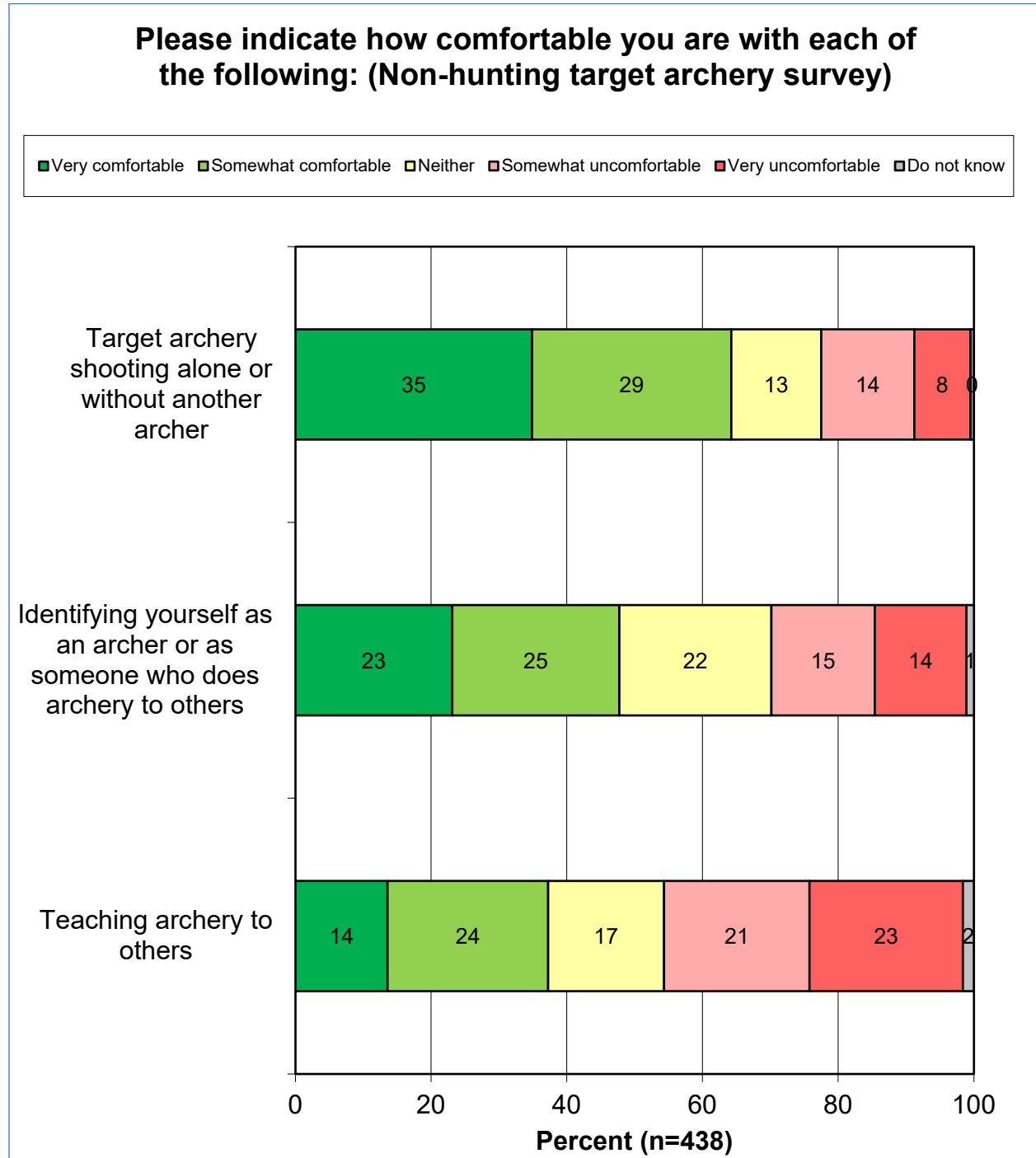


**Please rate the importance of each of the following as a reason that you did not participate in archery, did not participate in archery as much as you would have liked, or participated in archery less in recent years, on a 0 to 10 scale:
(Non-hunting target archery survey) (Part 2)**



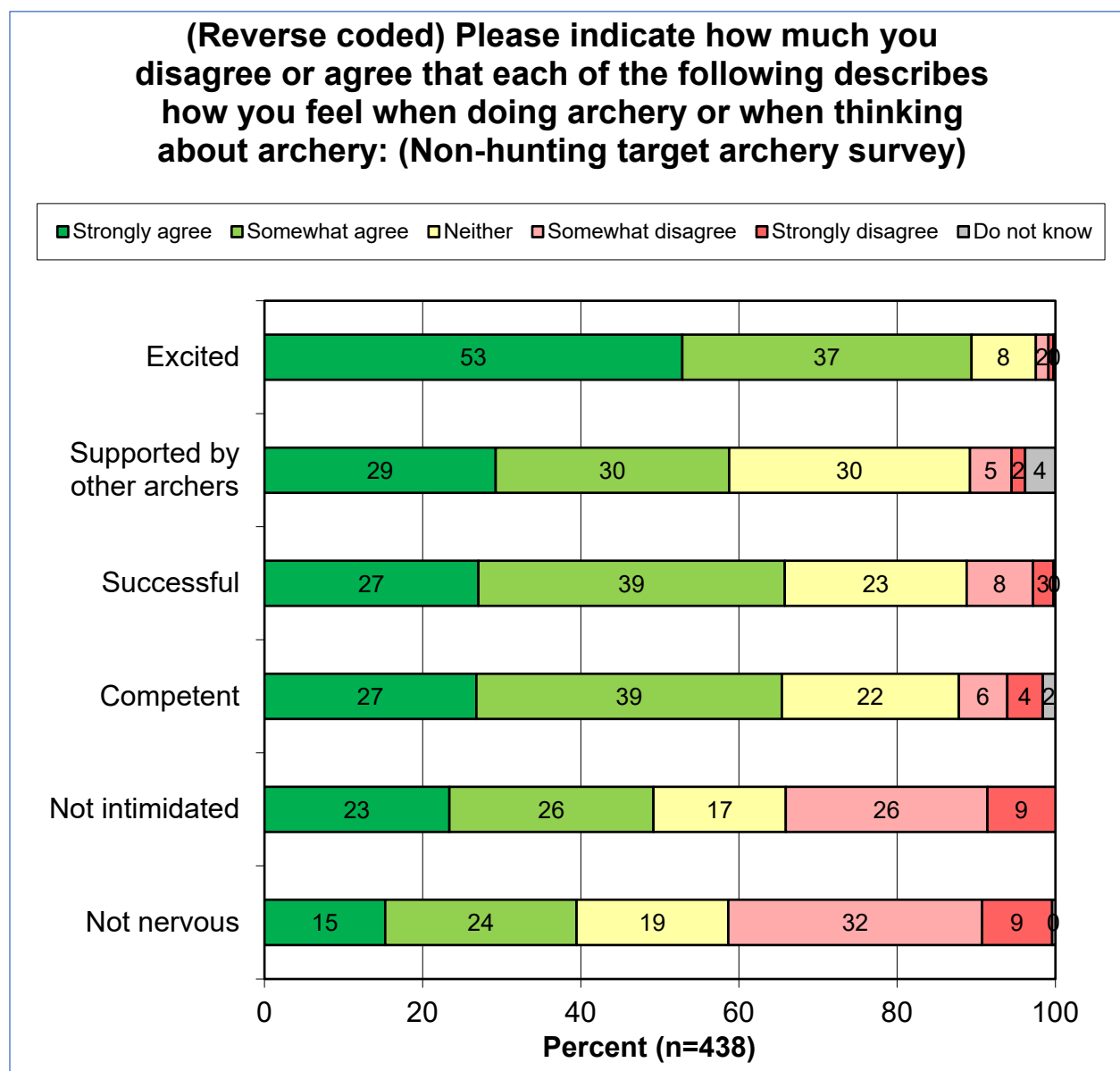
ARCHERY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Archers were asked about their comfort level with three aspects of target archery participation. About two thirds of archers (64%) are comfortable shooting alone, and 48% are comfortable identifying themselves as an archer to others. On the other hand, there is slightly more discomfort (44%) than comfort (37%, summed on unrounded numbers) in teaching archery to others.



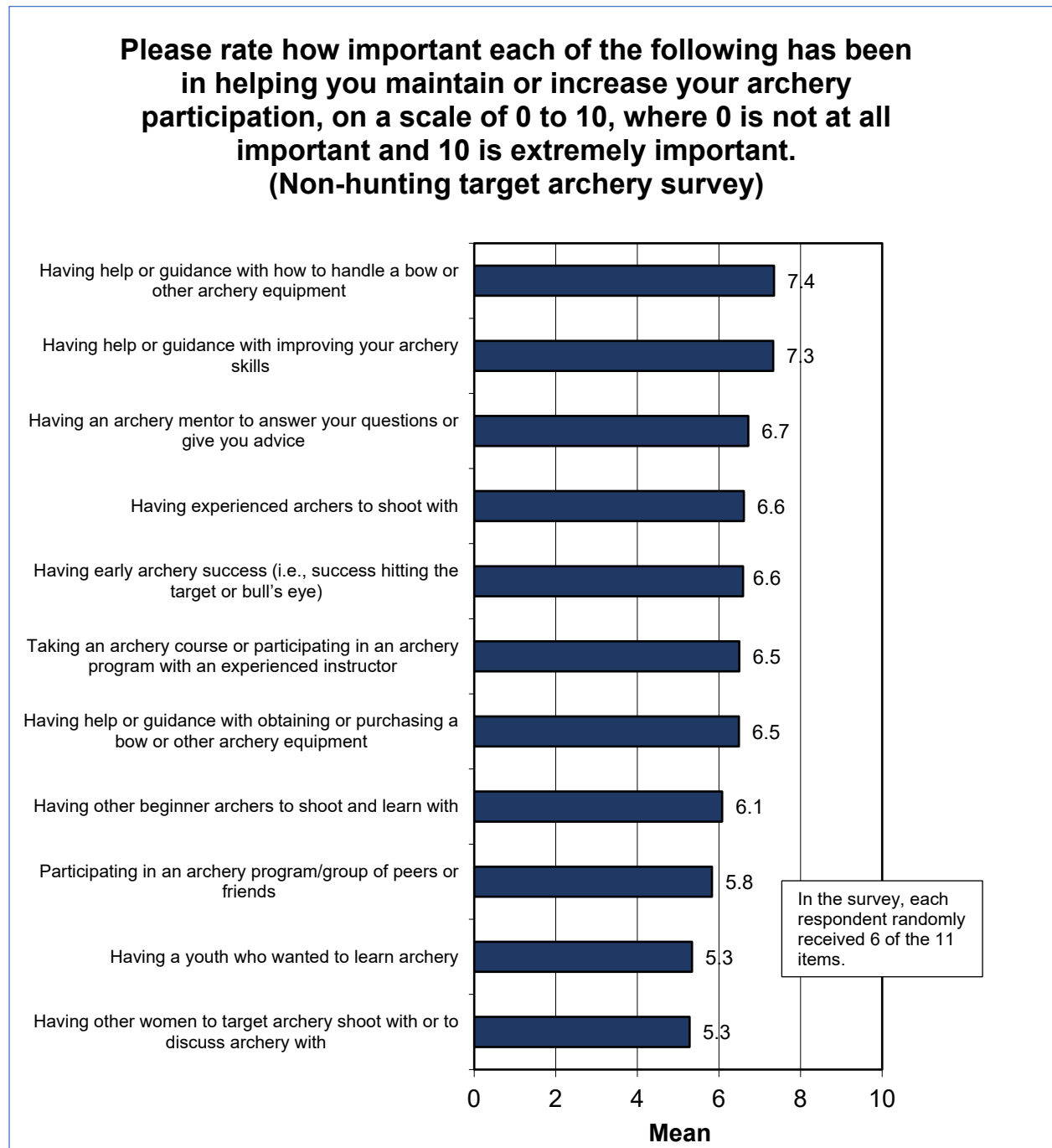
Next, archers were asked if they agree or disagree with six descriptions of how they feel when participating in or thinking about target archery. Note that two of the feelings are negative (intimidated and nervous), so they were reverse coded in the results to allow for direct comparisons to the positive feelings in the series (Chapter 2 describes this approach in detail).

Most archers (89%, summed on unrounded numbers) strongly or moderately agree that they feel excited by archery. In a middle tier are feelings of being successful (66% agree), competent (65%, summed on unrounded numbers), and supported by other archers (59%). On the other hand, while about half of archers feel not intimidated (49%), a substantial percentage feel intimidated (34%, summed on unrounded numbers). Furthermore, slightly more archers feel nervous (41%) than not nervous (39%). These two negative feelings will need to be considered in R3 efforts. Results are shown below in descending order of strongly agree percentages.

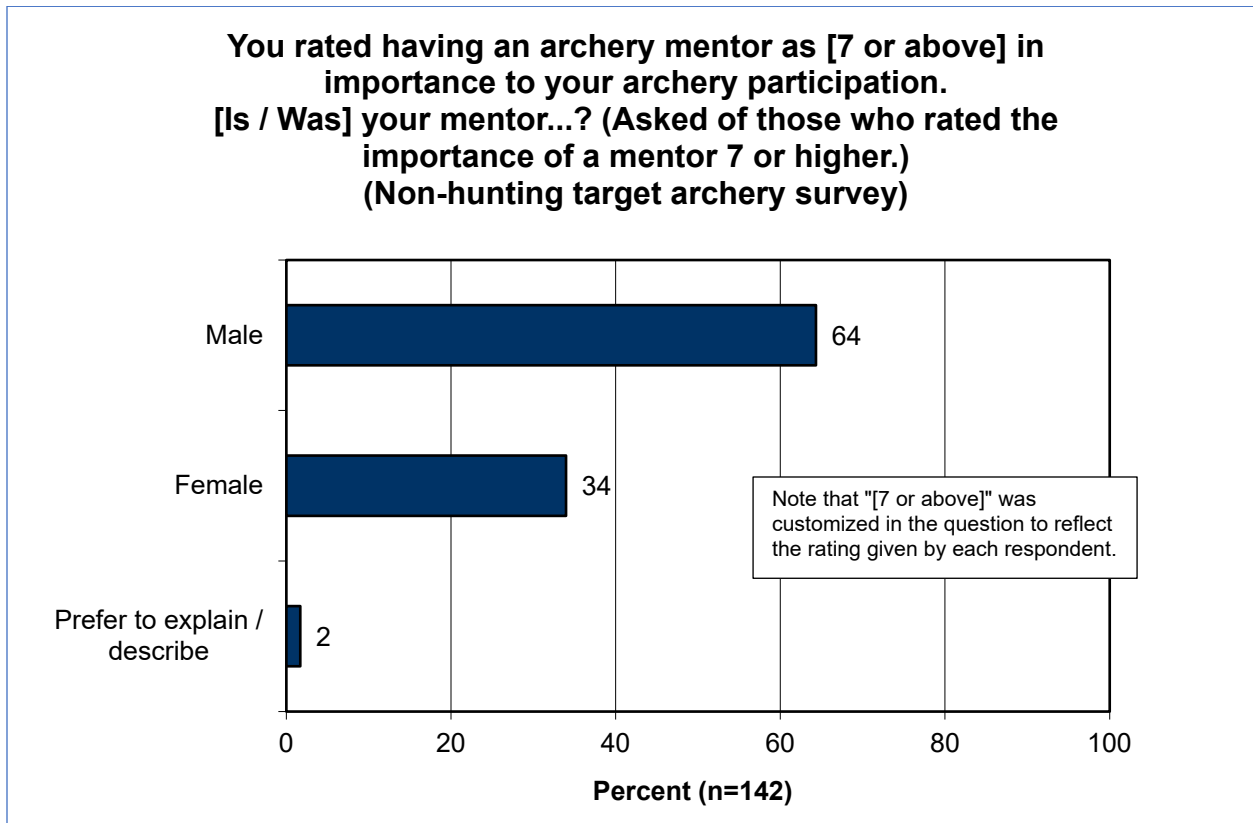


SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED ARCHERY PARTICIPATION

Archers rated a series of factors regarding their importance in helping them maintain or increase their archery participation, on a scale of 0 to 10. The top factors related to receiving assistance: having help with handling a bow or equipment (mean rating of 7.4) and having help improving their archery skills (7.3). A second tier, with mean ratings from 6.5 to 6.7, include having a mentor, having experienced archers to shoot with, having early archery success, taking an archery course, and having help obtaining a bow or equipment.

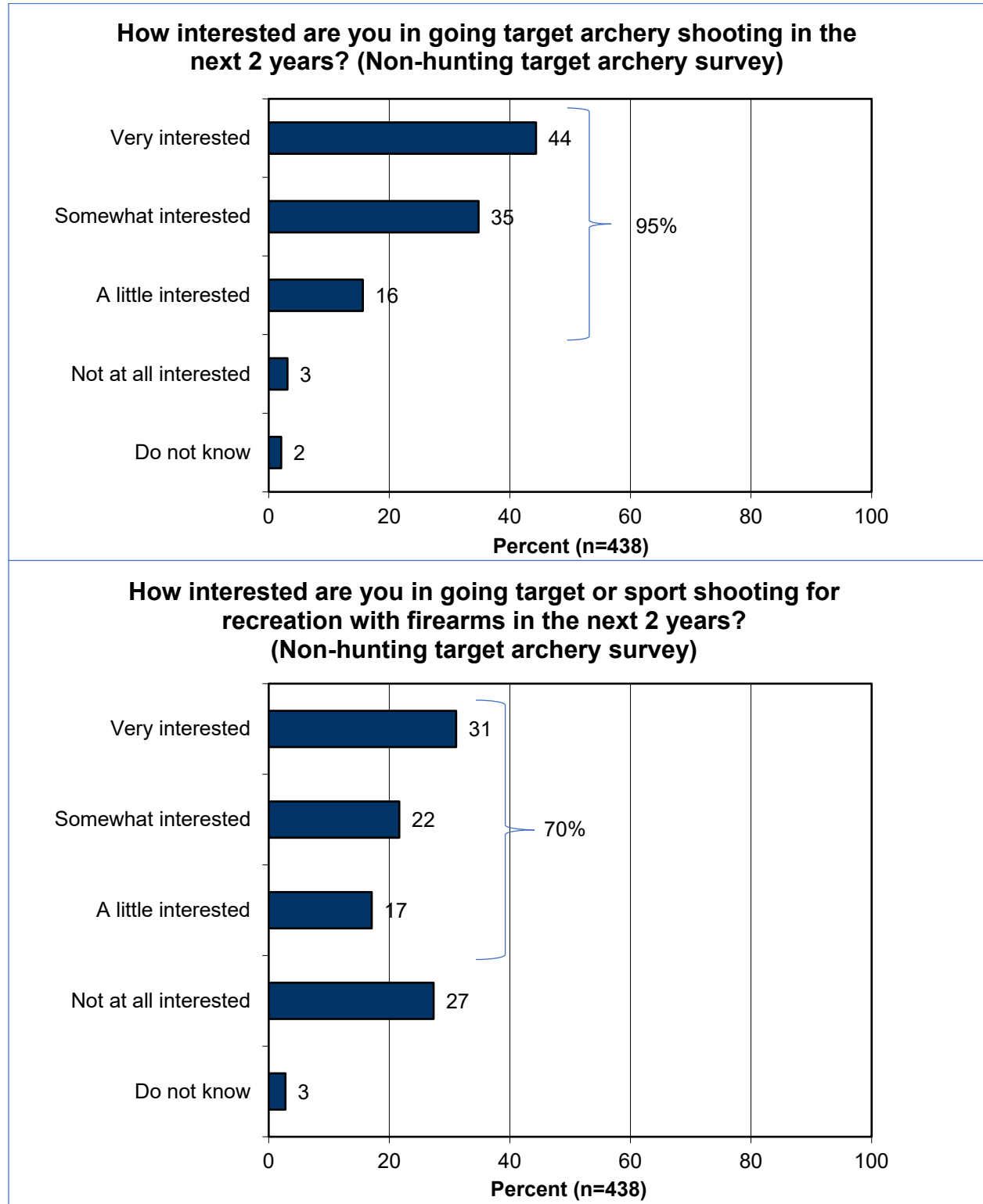


Among those who rated having a mentor as 7 or higher in the preceding series, about two thirds said the mentor was male and about a third said the mentor was female.

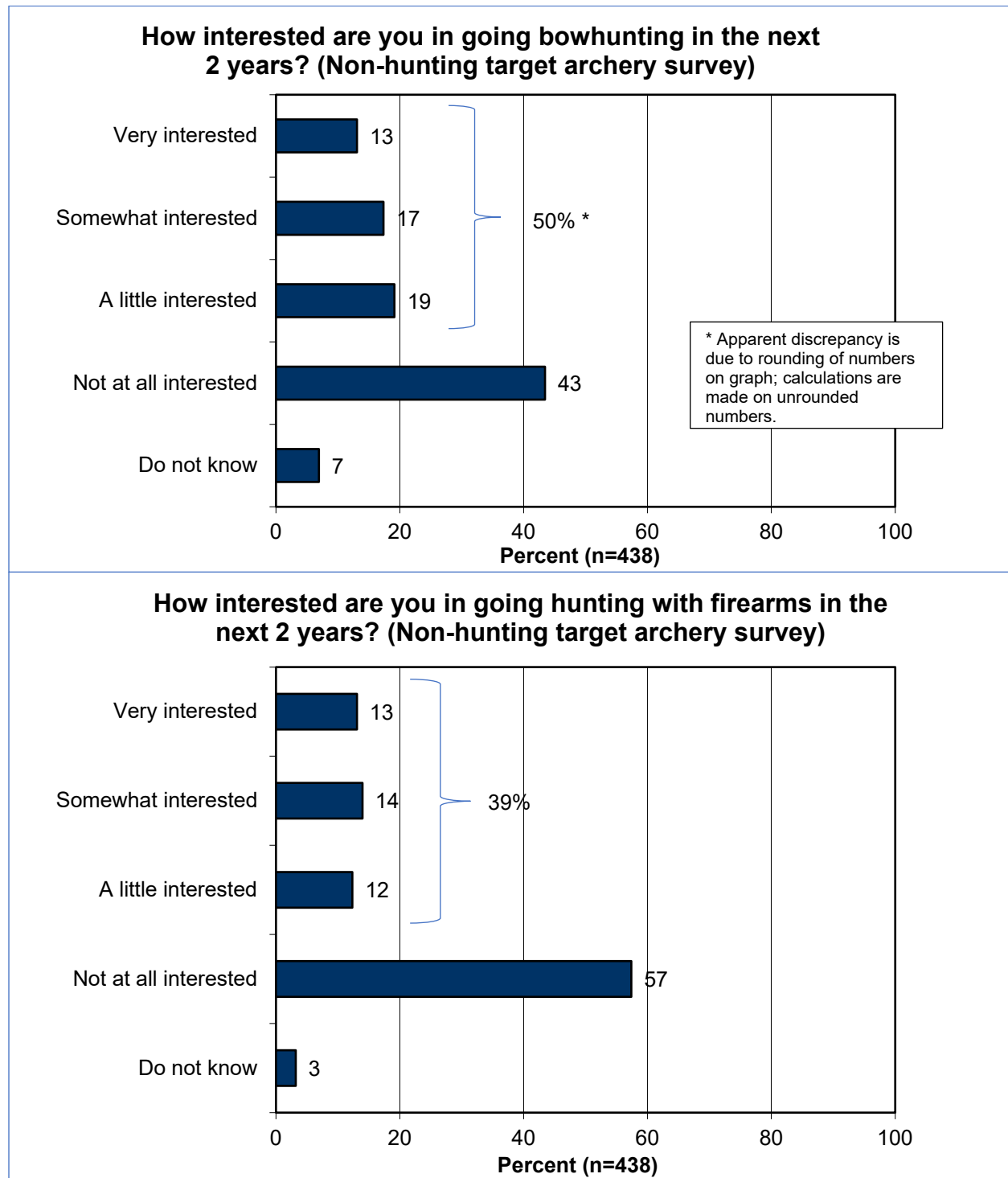


INTEREST IN FUTURE TARGET ARCHERY, SPORT SHOOTING, AND HUNTING PARTICIPATION

Most archers (95%) are interested in continuing their participation in target archery over the next 2 years, while 70% are interested in sport shooting with firearms.

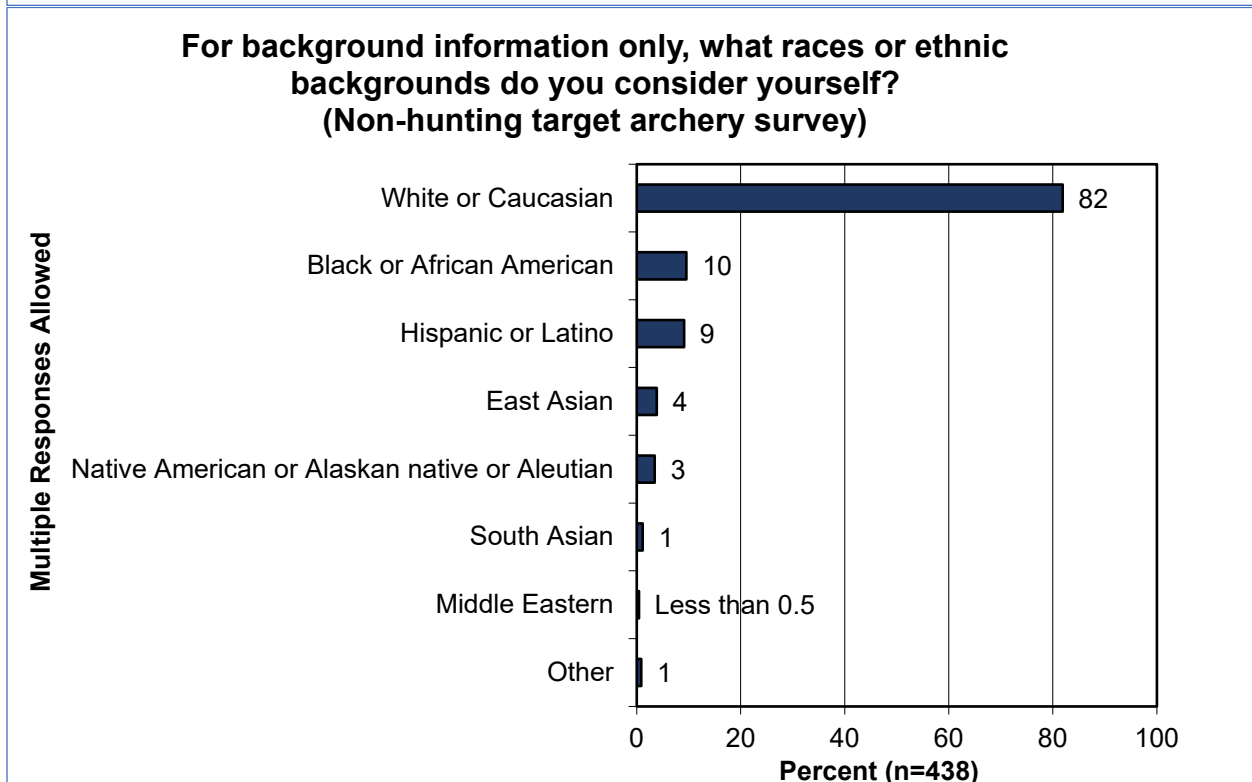
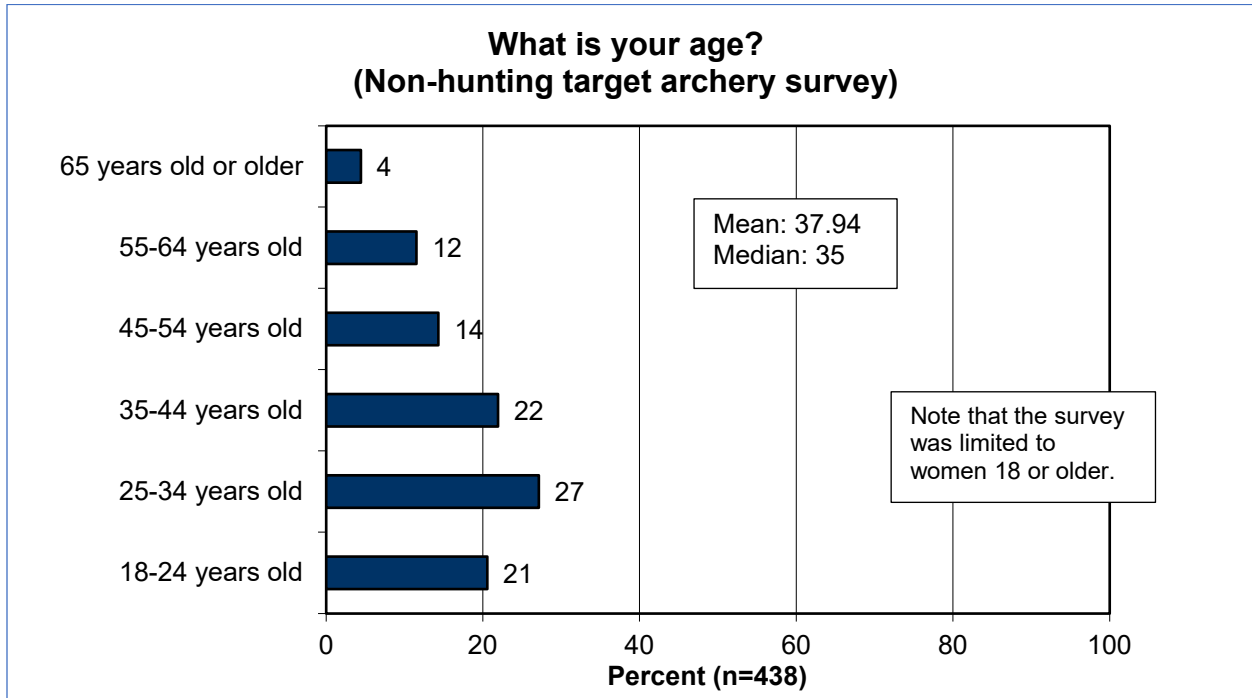


Half of archers (50%) are interested in bowhunting over the next 2 years, and 39% are interested in hunting with firearms. These are notable findings; recall that this survey was limited to women who had participated in target archery over the past 10 years but had *not* gone hunting in any form during that time. Therefore, women who participate in target archery may prove to be a fruitful demographic group for hunting recruitment or reactivation efforts.

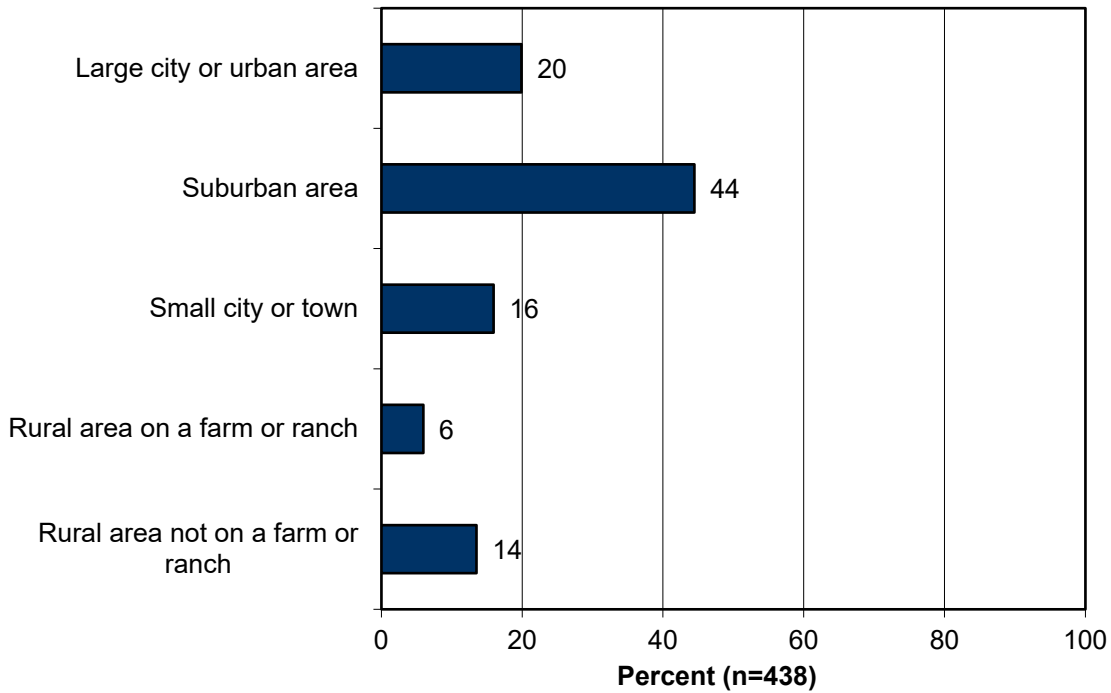


DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TARGET ARCHERY PARTICIPANTS

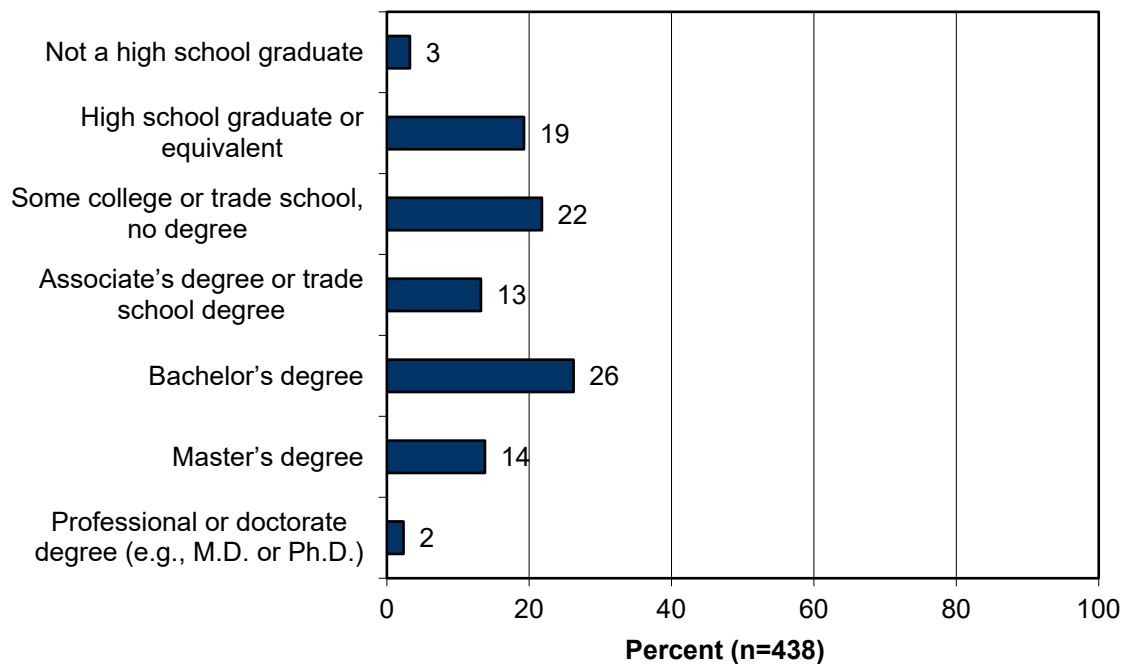
The following demographic characteristics of target archery participants were collected: age, ethnicity, type of residential area (urban-rural continuum), and education level.



Which of the following do you consider your place of residence to be? (Non-hunting target archery survey)



What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Non-hunting target archery survey)



CHAPTER 5. WOMEN’S R3 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SURVEY RESULTS

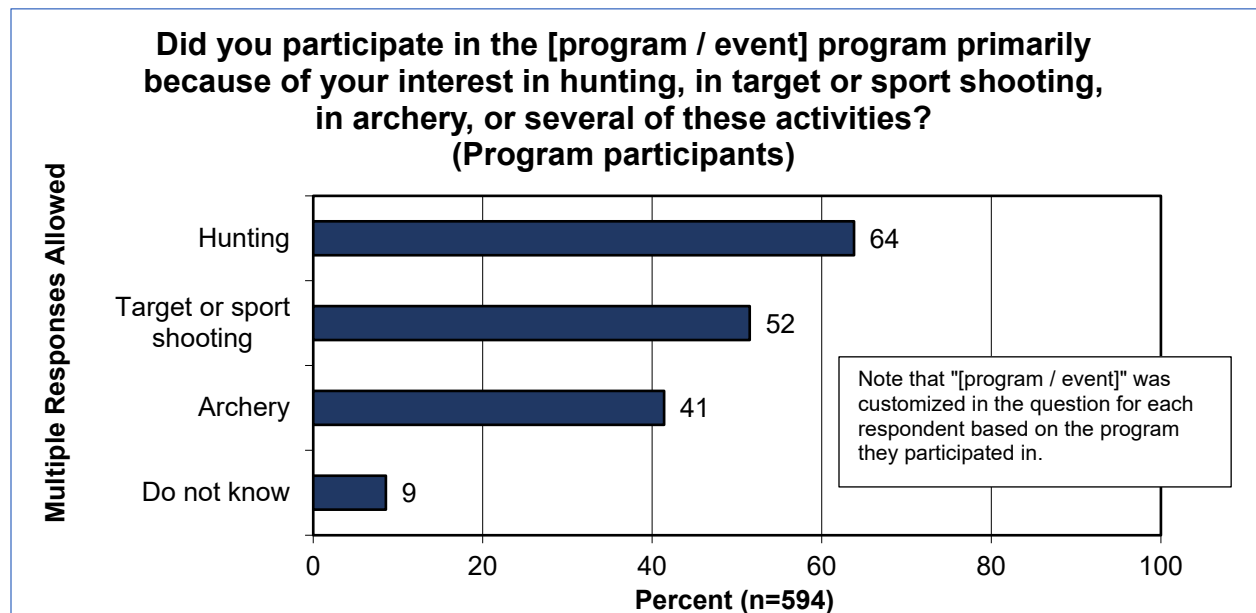
This chapter discusses the survey of women who participated in an R3 program related to hunting with firearms, bowhunting, sport shooting with firearms, and/or target archery. In all, six states and three non-governmental organizations participated in this aspect of the study effort, representing a total of 28 programs. The state agencies and organizations involved in this survey sent email invitations to their R3 program participants (no samples were provided to the research team). An attempt was made to obtain surveys from every participant of the R3 programs (i.e., an attempt at a census rather than a sample). Overall, 594 program participants completed this survey.

Although the survey addresses the same themes and outdoor recreation activities as the other surveys covered in this report, this survey is unique to R3 program participants and has questions tailored to their experiences and attitudes regarding the programs.

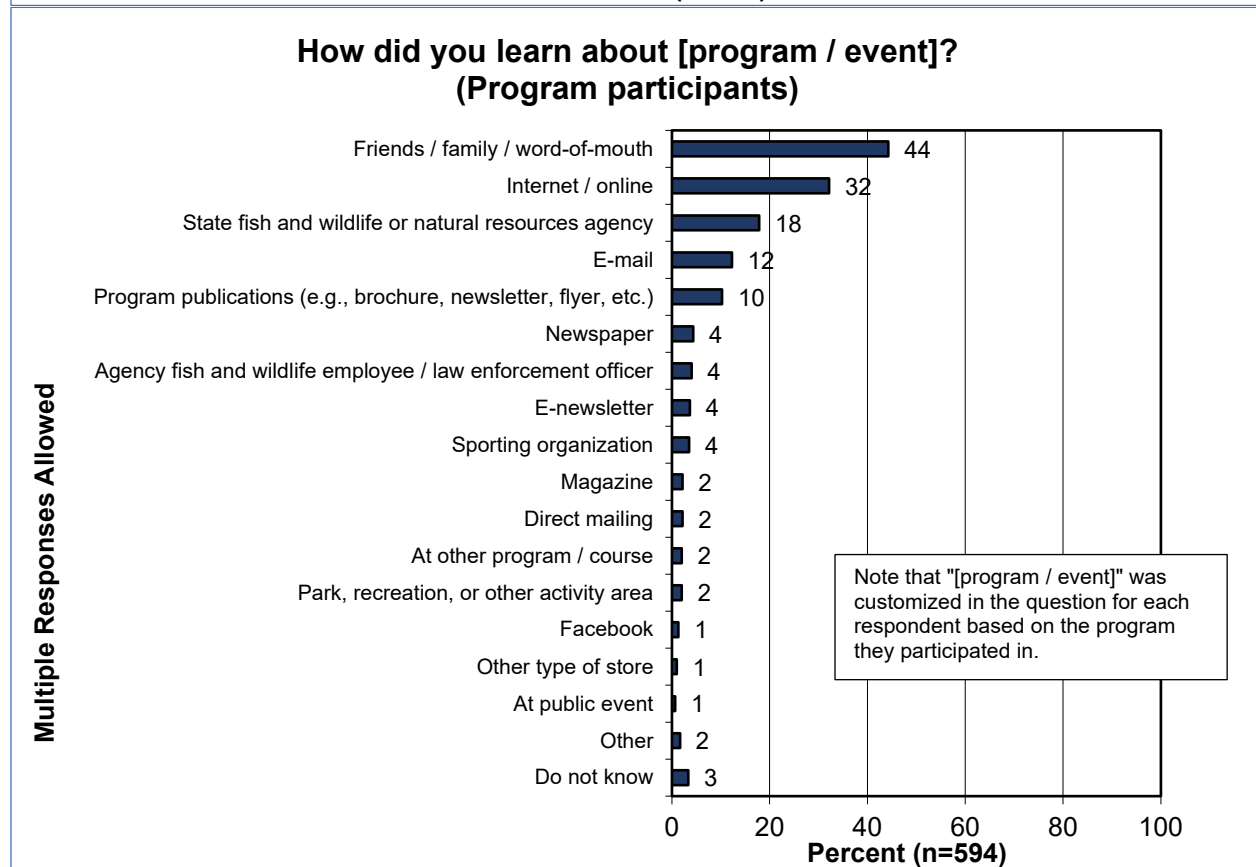
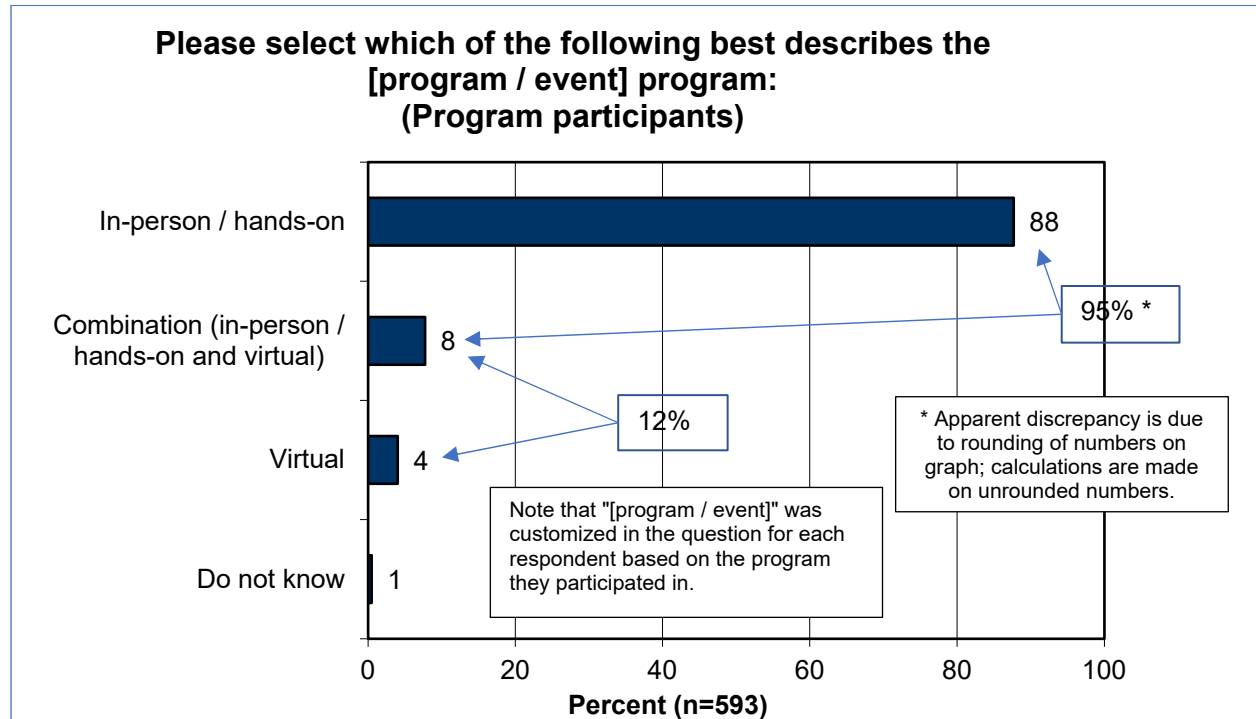
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Participants were asked about the activity or activities of interest that inspired them to take the R3 program. The response to this question directed much of the subsequent survey that each participant received with respect to questions that are specific to hunting with firearms, bowhunting, sport shooting with firearms, or target archery. (This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.) On the other hand, much of the survey applied to all participants.

As shown below, 64% of participants took part in an R3 program because of their interest in hunting, 52% did so due to their interest in sport shooting, and 41% did so due to their interest in archery. Participants could select more than one activity of interest, and 9% did not know which response to give.

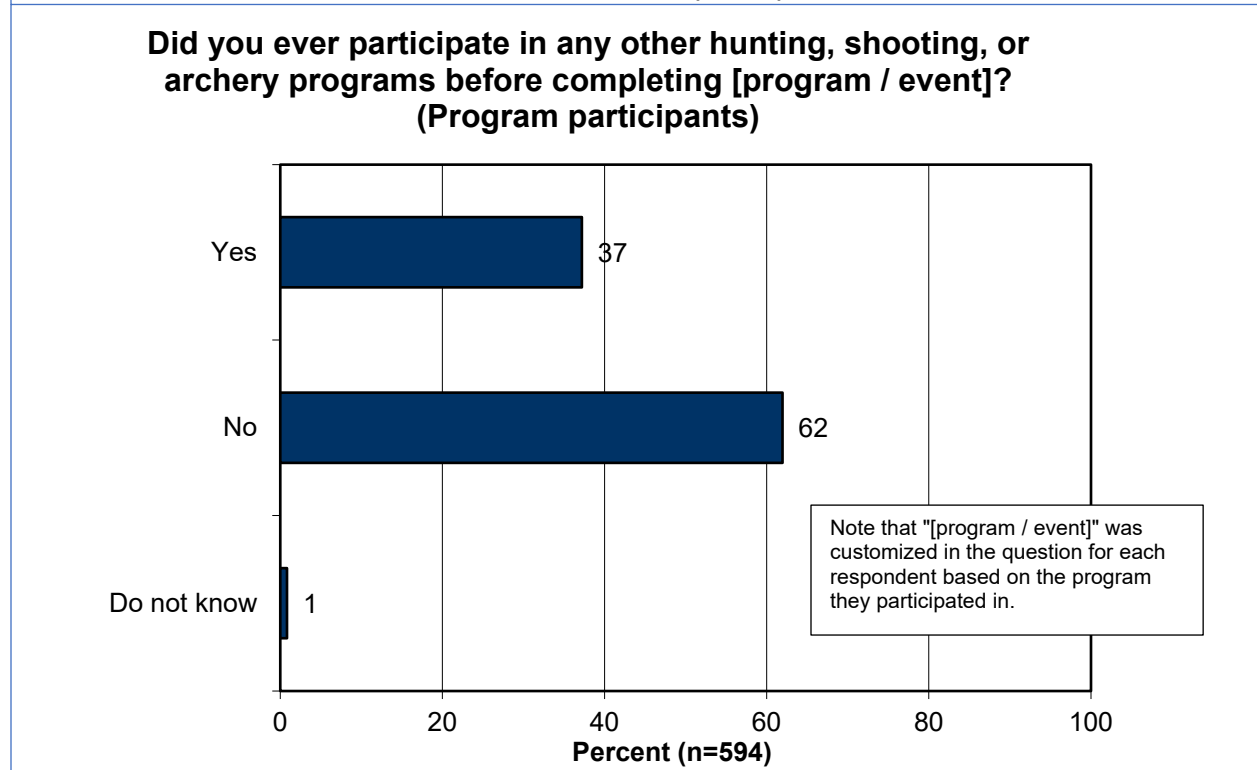
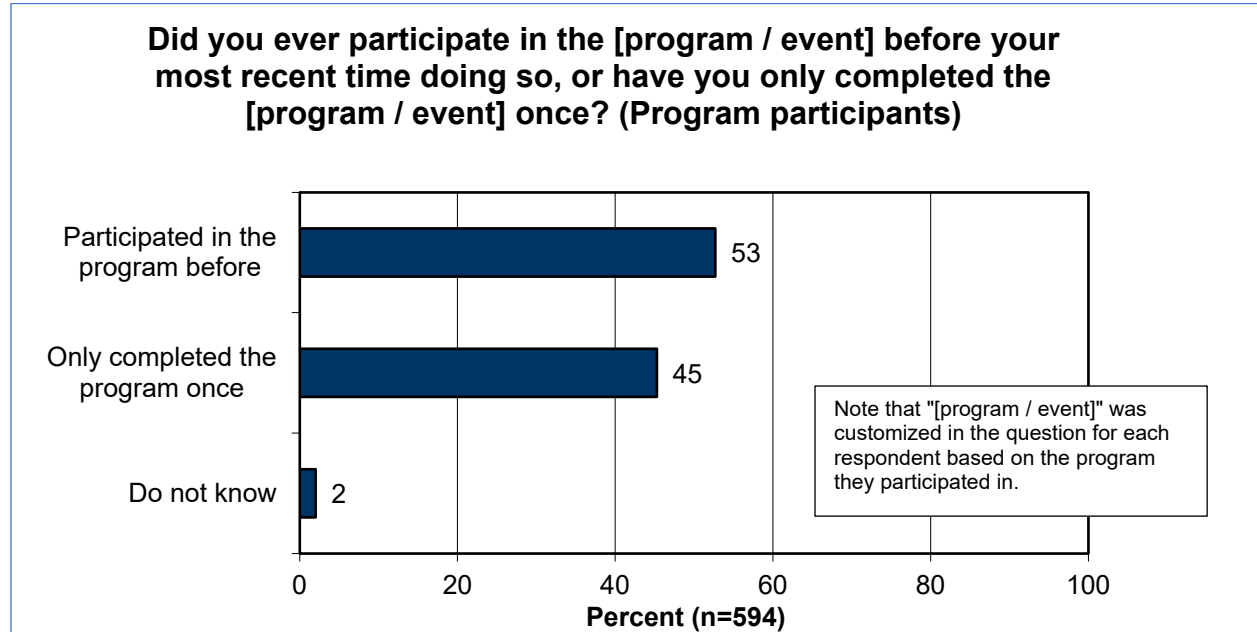


Most of the R3 programs (95%) were in-person or hands-on, while 12% had a virtual element; 88% were exclusively in-person, and 4% were exclusively virtual. Participants most commonly learned about the program through word-of-mouth (44% stated this), while 32% learned of it online. The full list is shown.

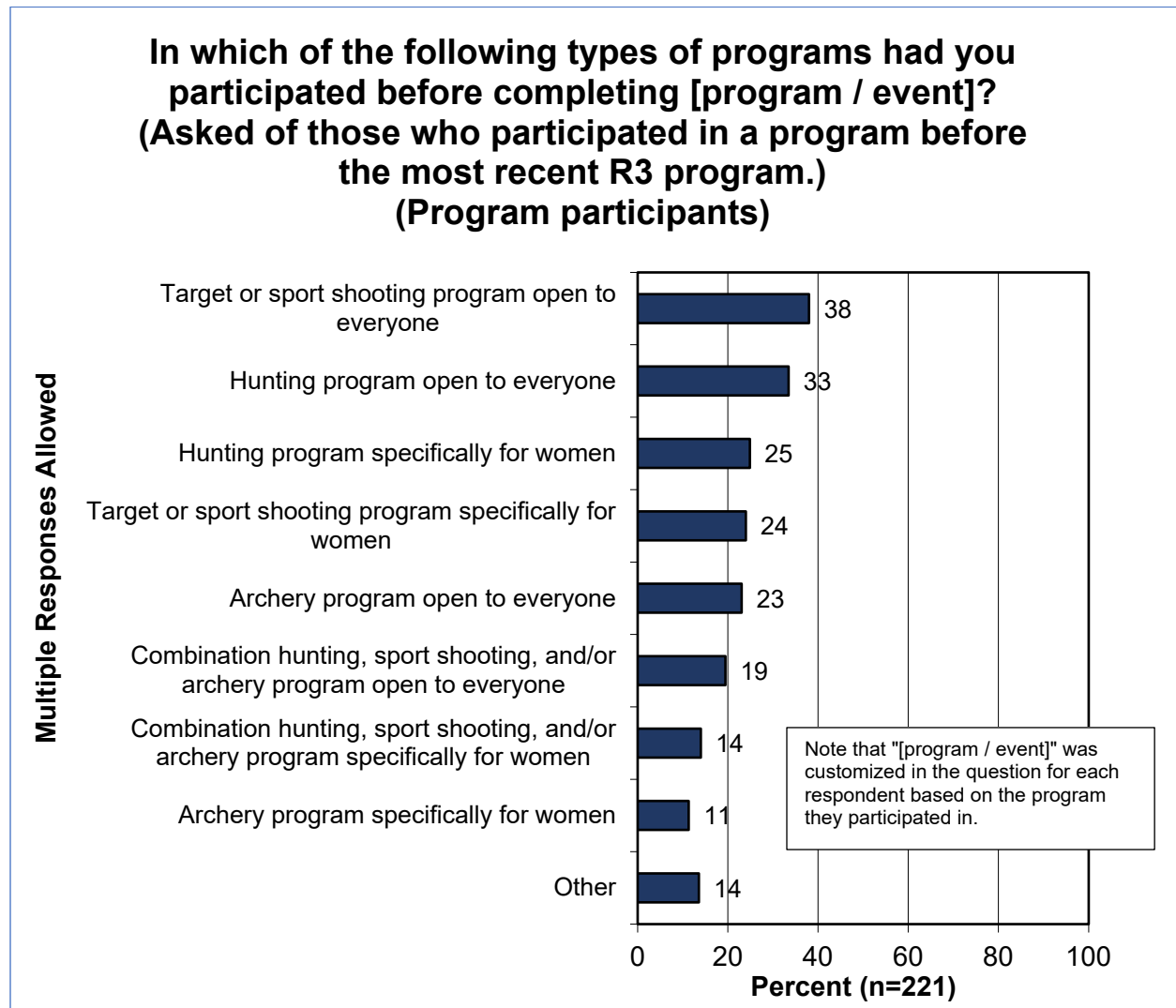


PRIOR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

A slight majority of participants (53%) had taken the program before, while 45% took it for the first time. Over a third of participants (37%) had taken another hunting, shooting, or archery program before completing their most recent R3 program.

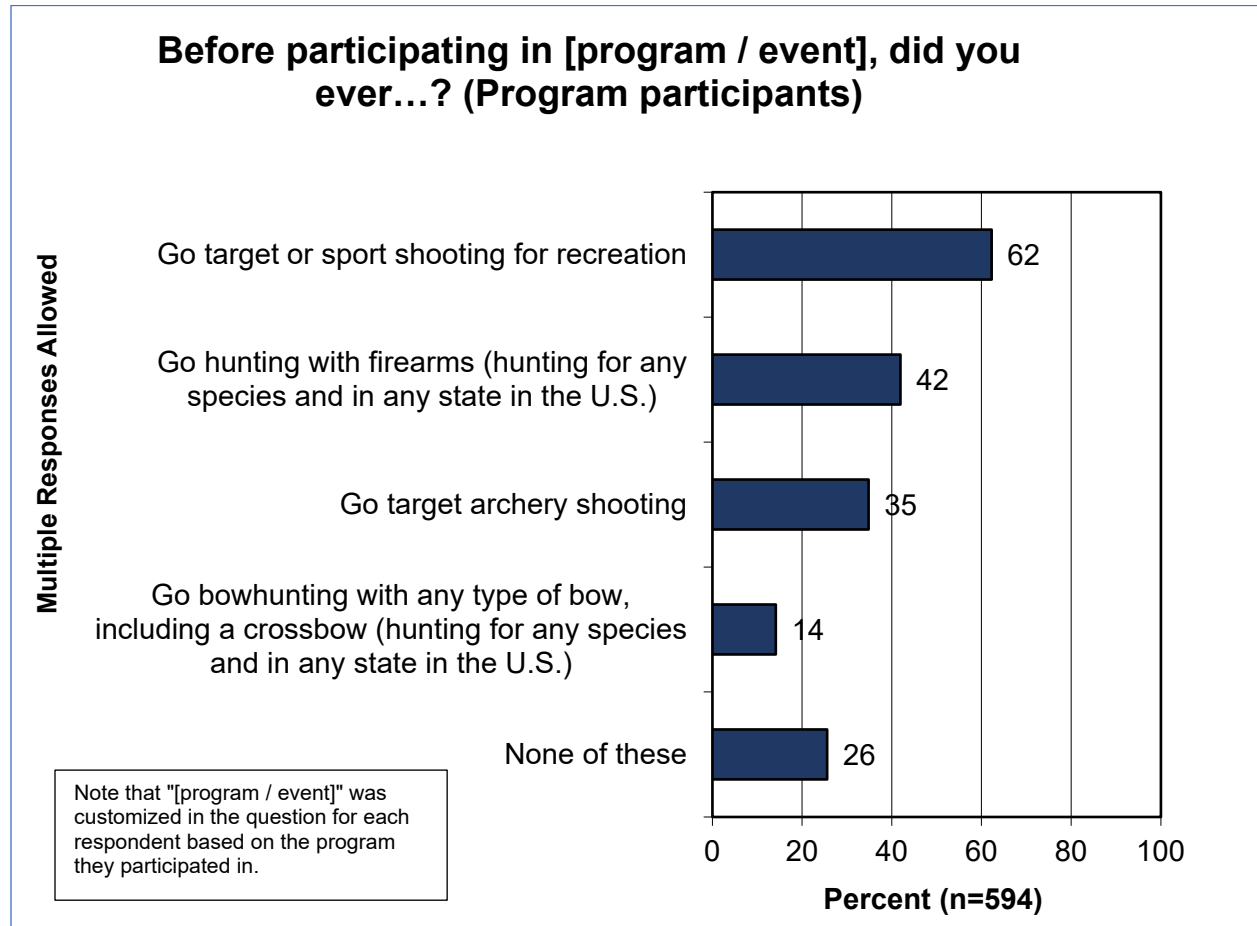


Among those who participated in a program before the most recent one, the most common program types were a sport shooting program open to everyone (38% stated this) and a hunting program open to everyone (33%).

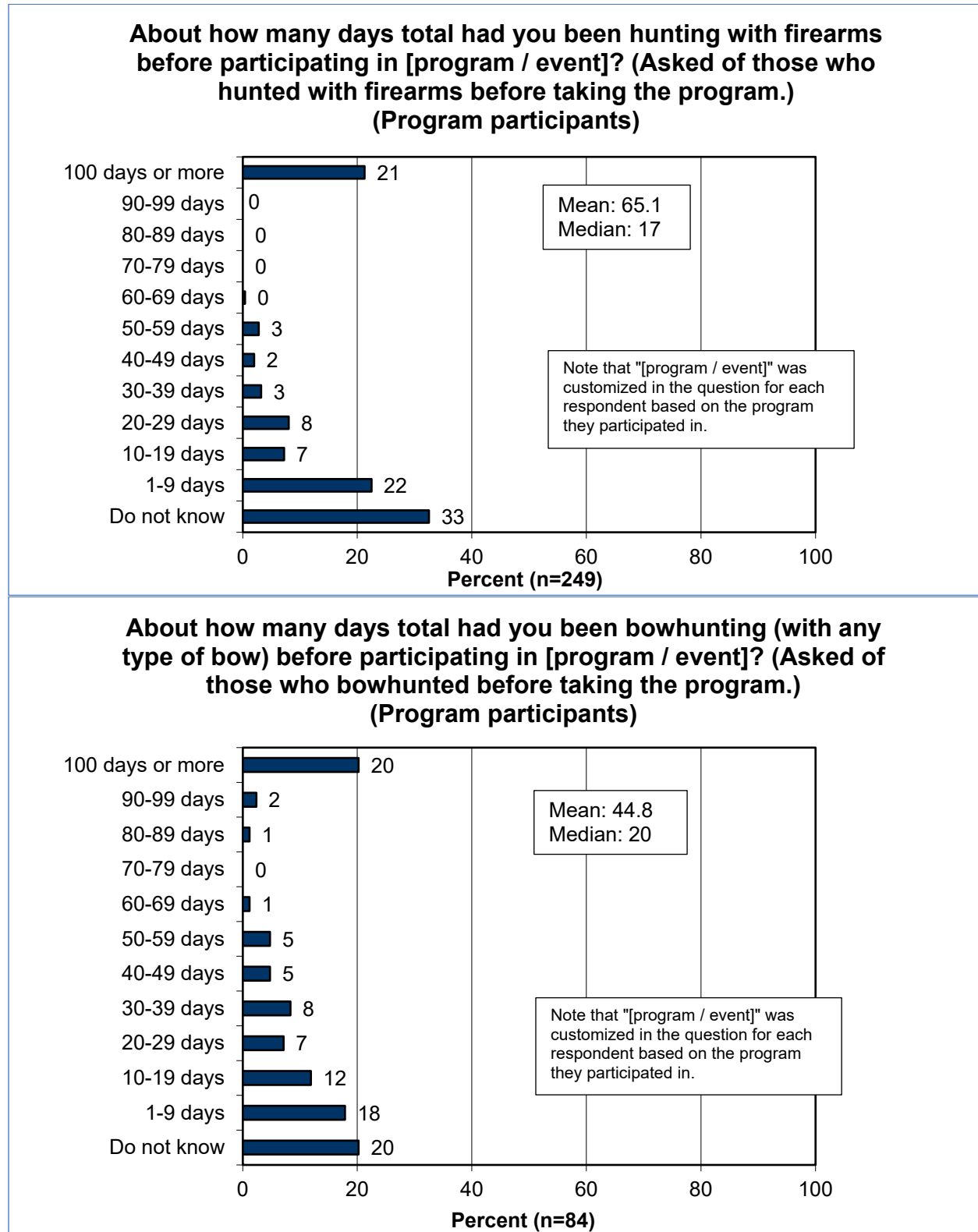


HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION BEFORE THE PROGRAM

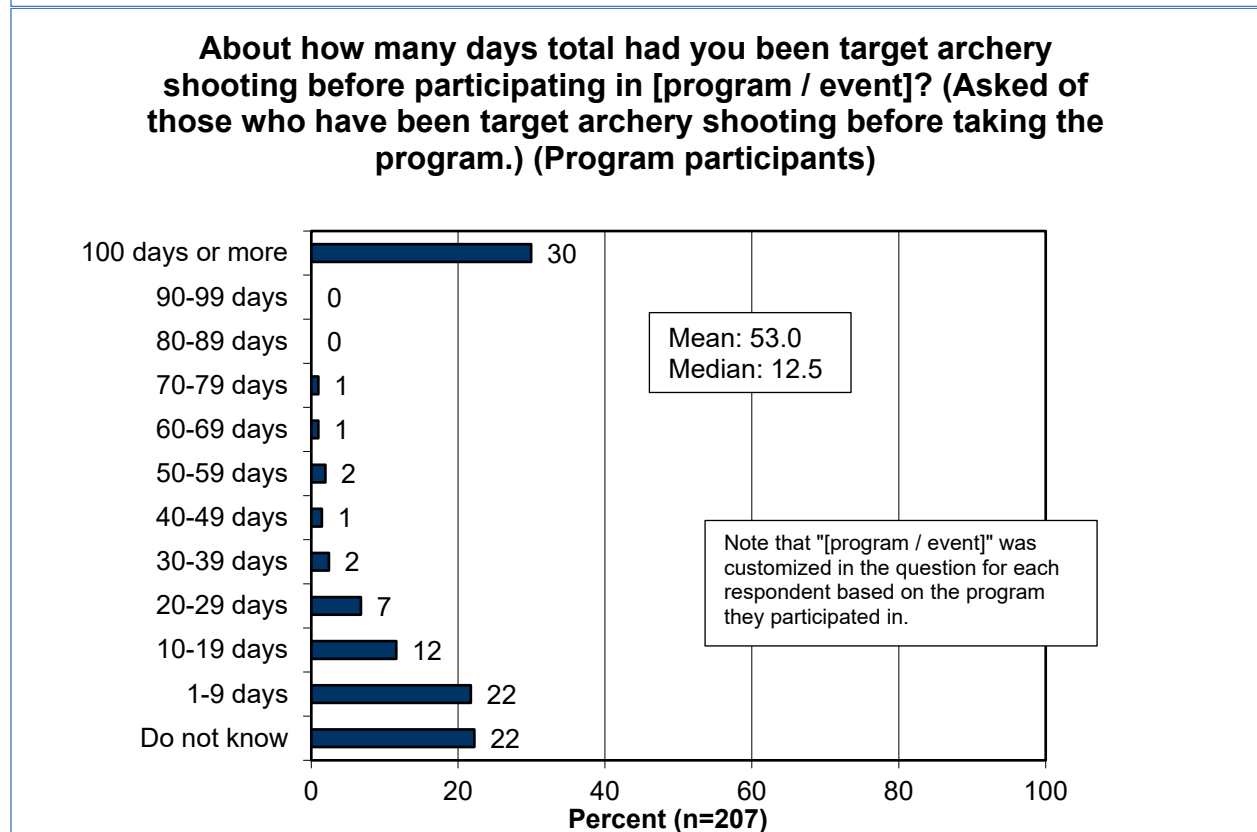
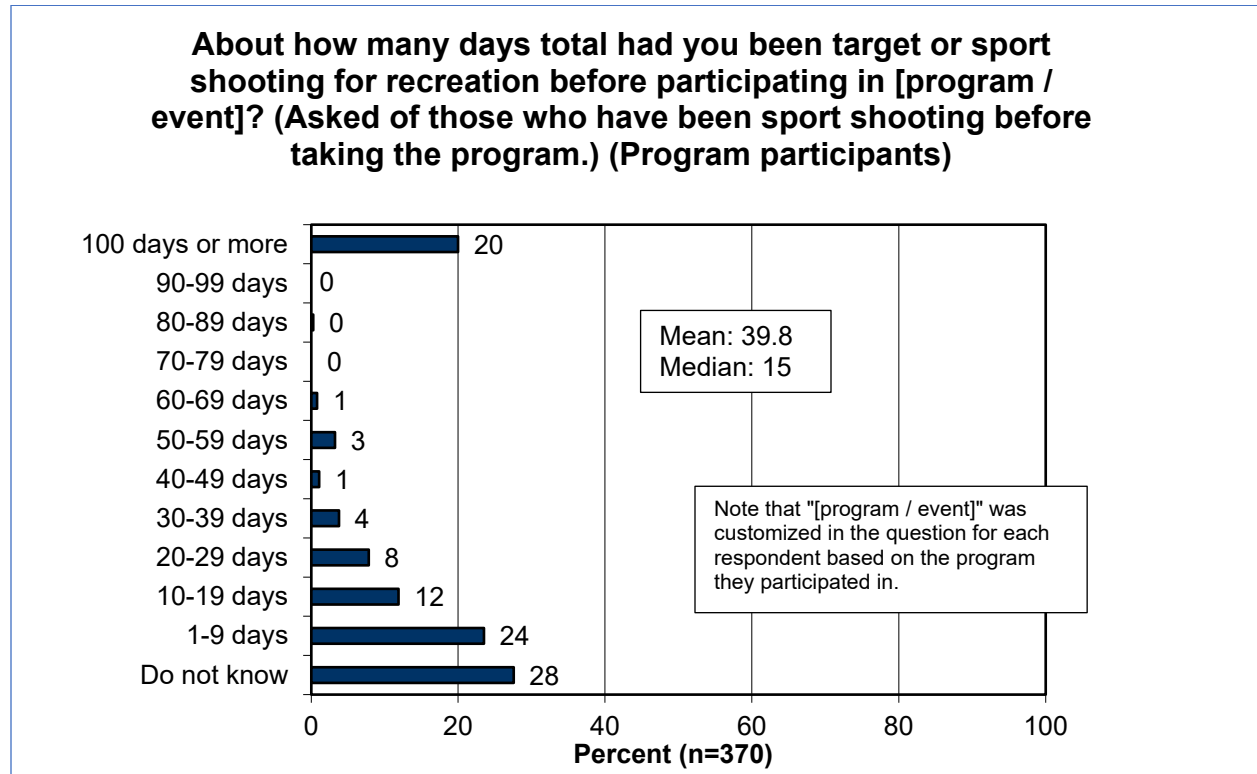
Many participants were active in outdoor recreation before taking the R3 program: 62% had gone sport shooting, 42% had hunted with firearms, 35% had gone target archery shooting, and 14% had bowhunted. About a quarter (26%) had not participated in any of those activities.



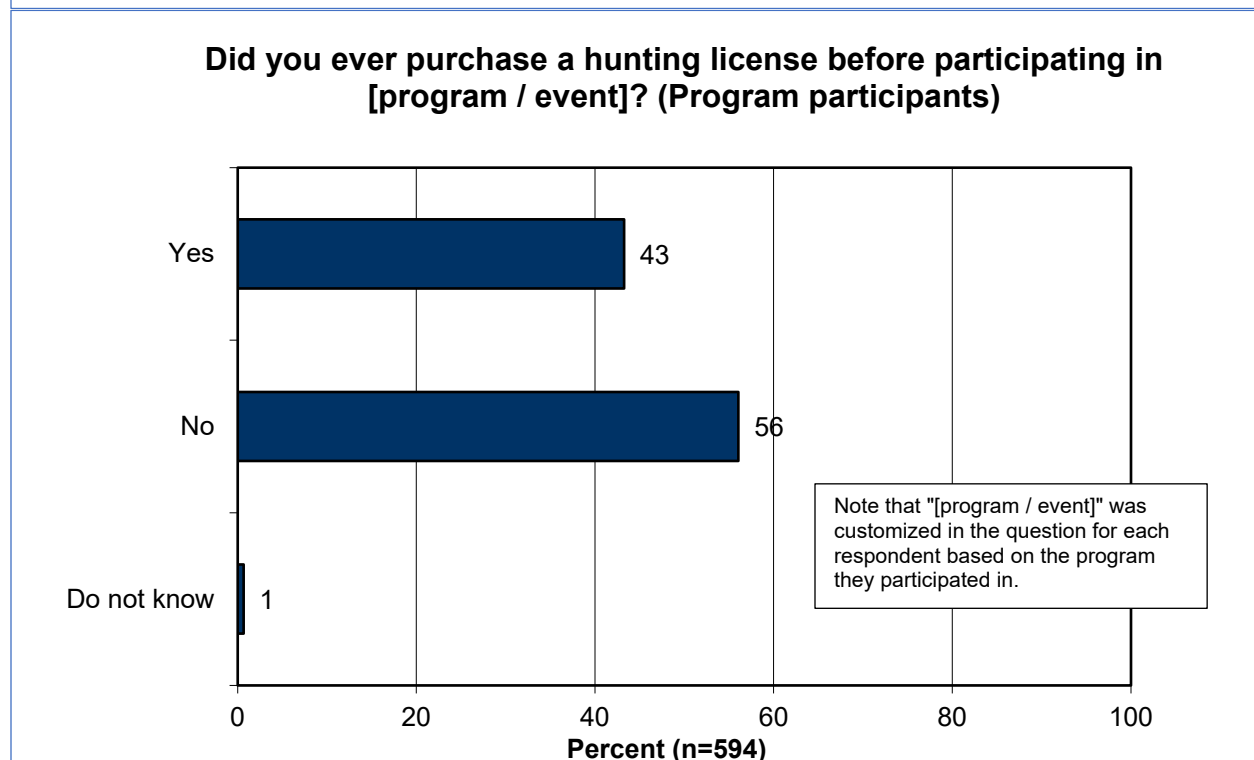
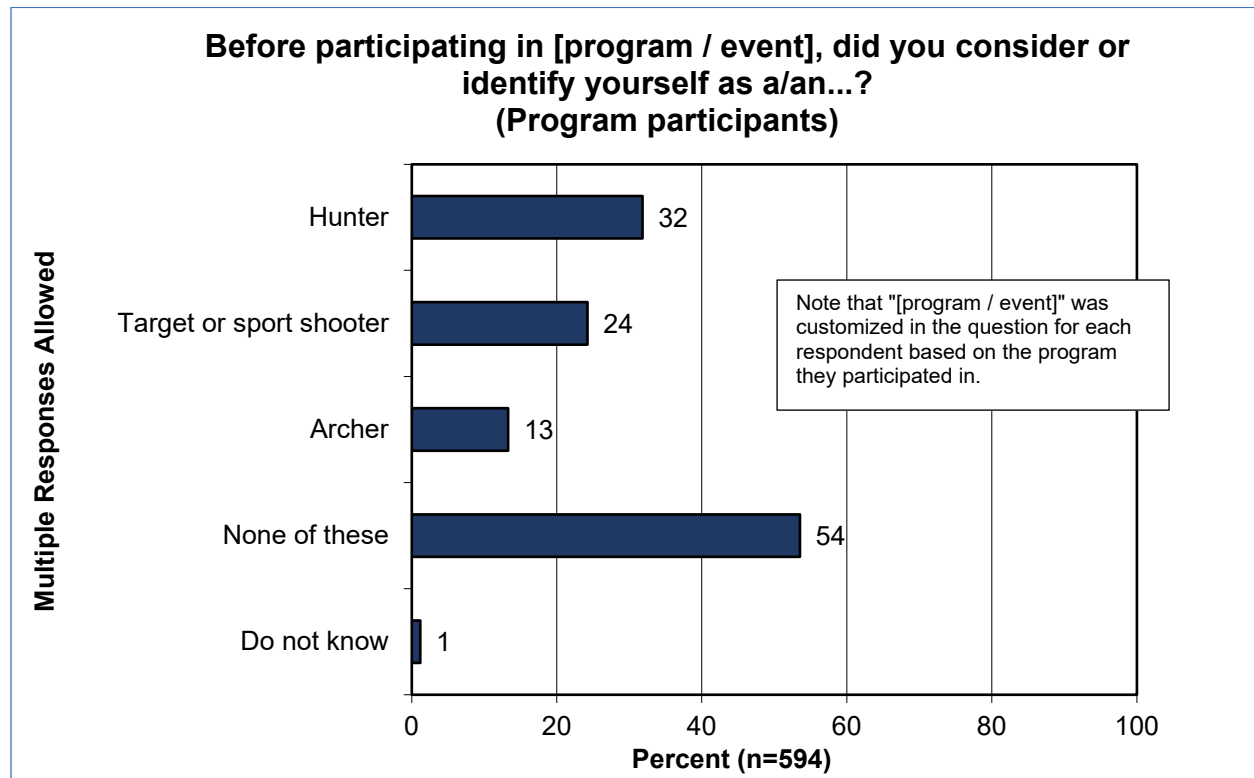
Among those who had hunted with firearms before taking the R3 program, the mean days of participation before the program was 65.1 and the median was 17 (21% had hunted 100 days or more, which inflated the mean). For the same question on bowhunting, the mean was 44.8 days and the median was 20 days.



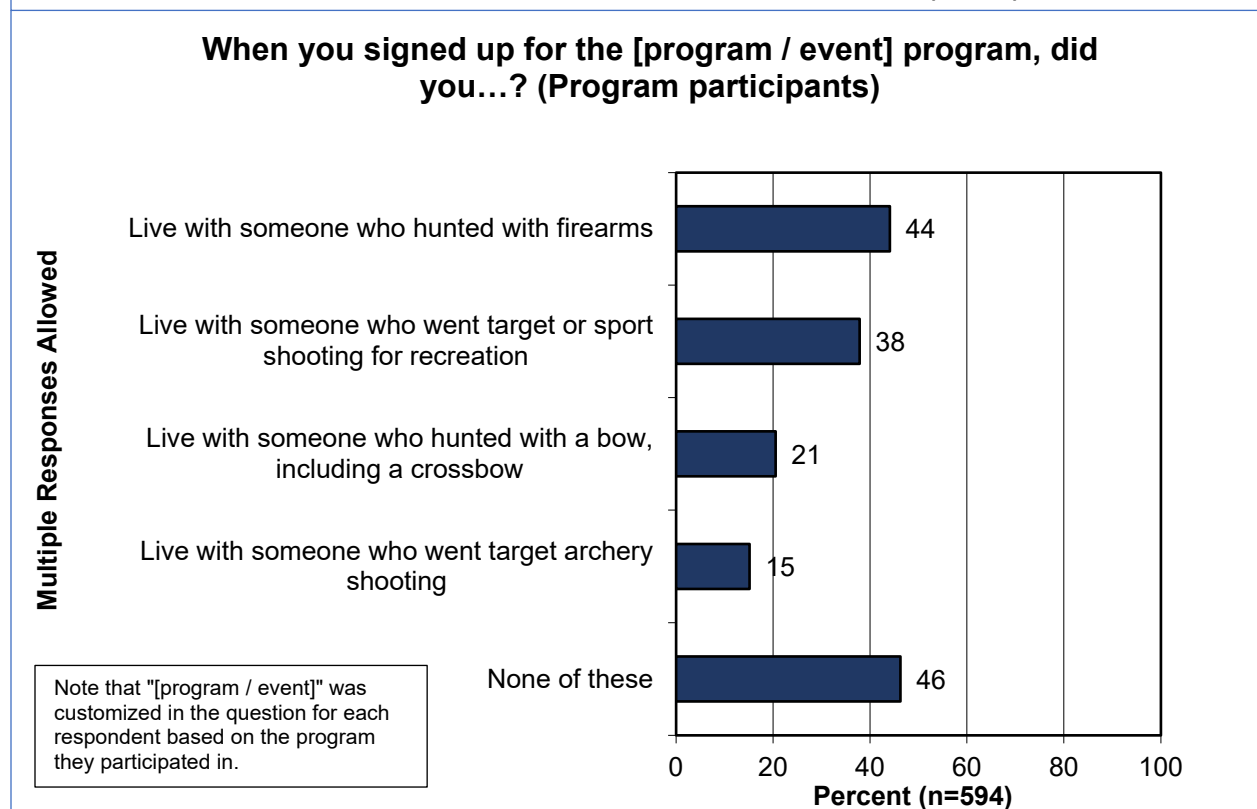
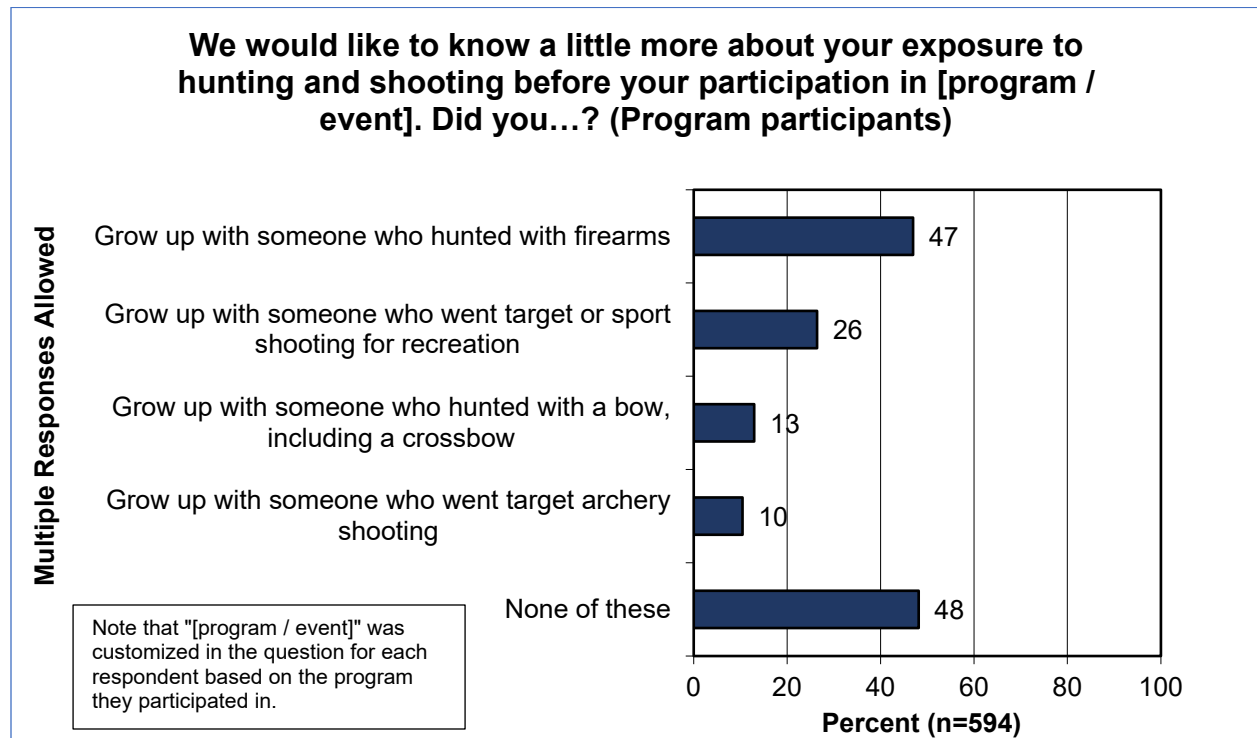
Among those who had gone sport shooting before taking the R3 program, the mean days of participation before the program was 39.8 and the median was 15 days. For target archery, the mean was 53.0 days and the median was 12.5 days.



Before the R3 program, 32% of participants considered themselves to be a hunter, 24% considered themselves a sport shooter, and 13% considered themselves an archer. Conversely, a majority (54%) did not identify as any of those recreationists. Also, nearly half of participants (43%) had purchased a hunting license at some time before the program, compared to 56% who had not.

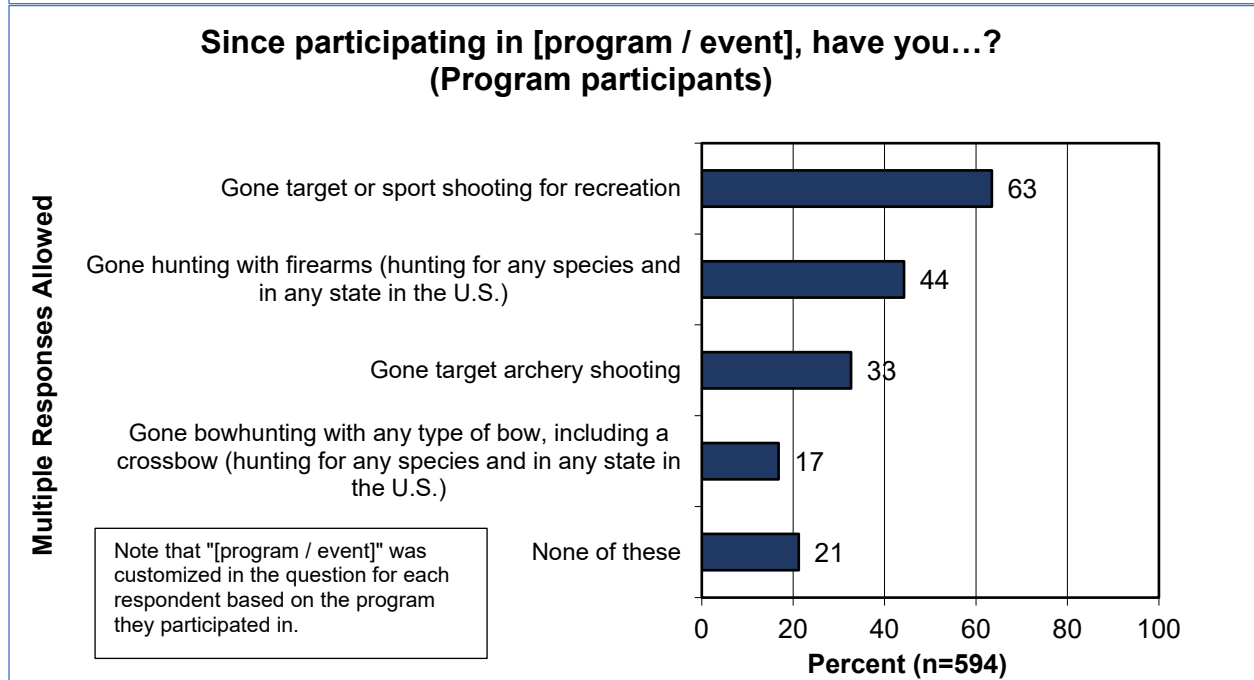
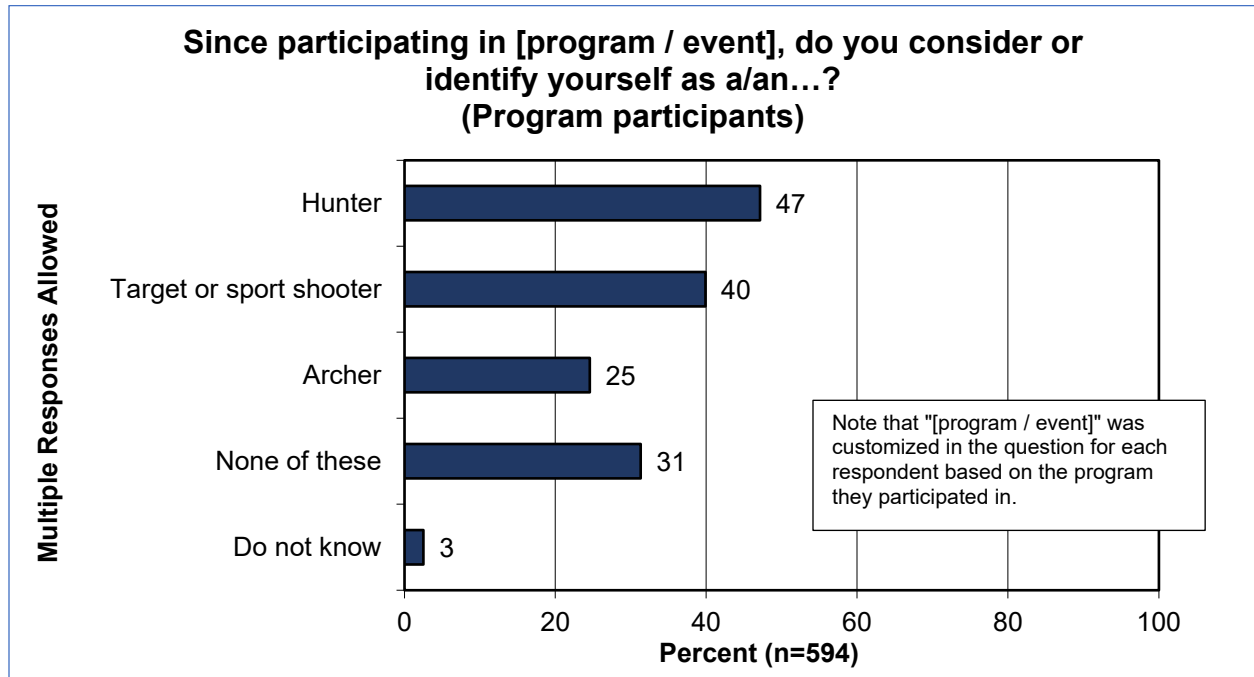


Looking at the backgrounds of program participants, 47% grew up with a firearms hunter, 26% grew up with a sport shooter, 13% grew up with a bowhunter, and 10% grew up with a target archery shooter. At the time of signing up for the R3 program, 44% lived with a firearms hunter, 38% lived with a sport shooter, 21% lived with a bowhunter, and 15% lived with a target archery shooter.



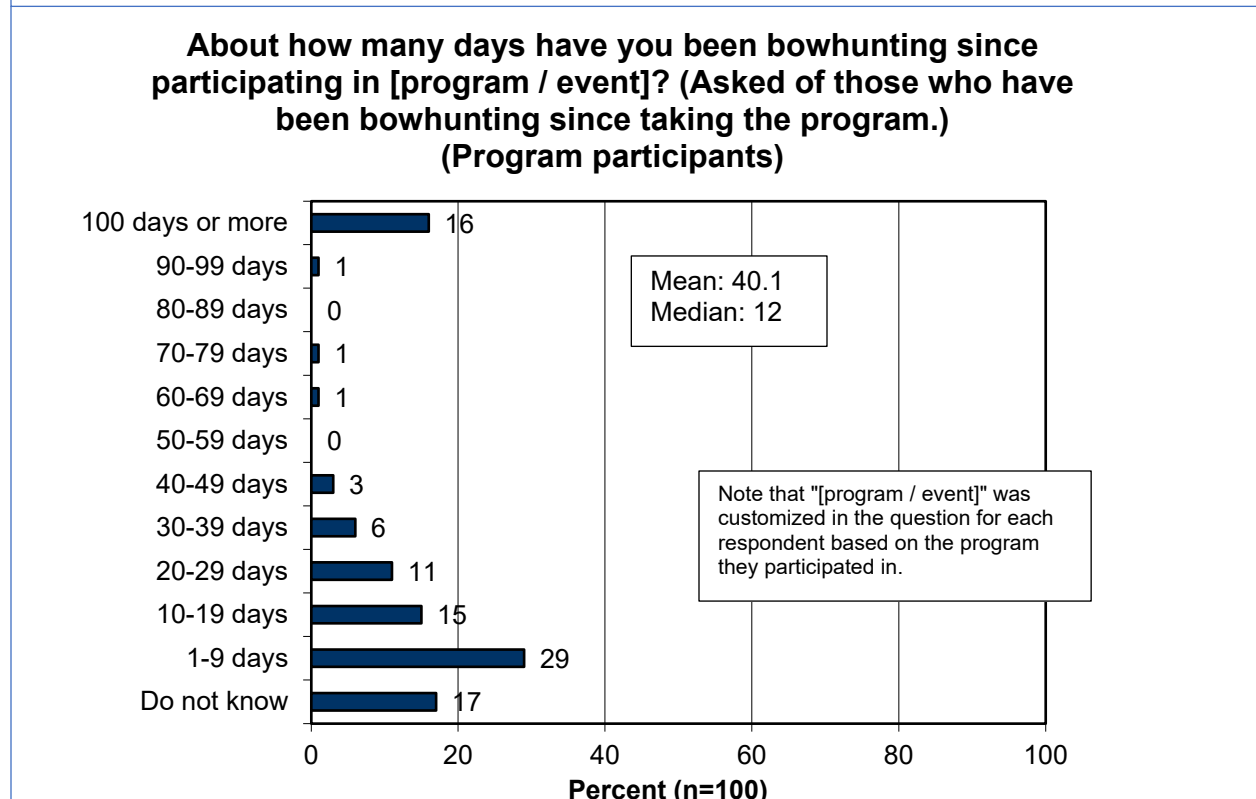
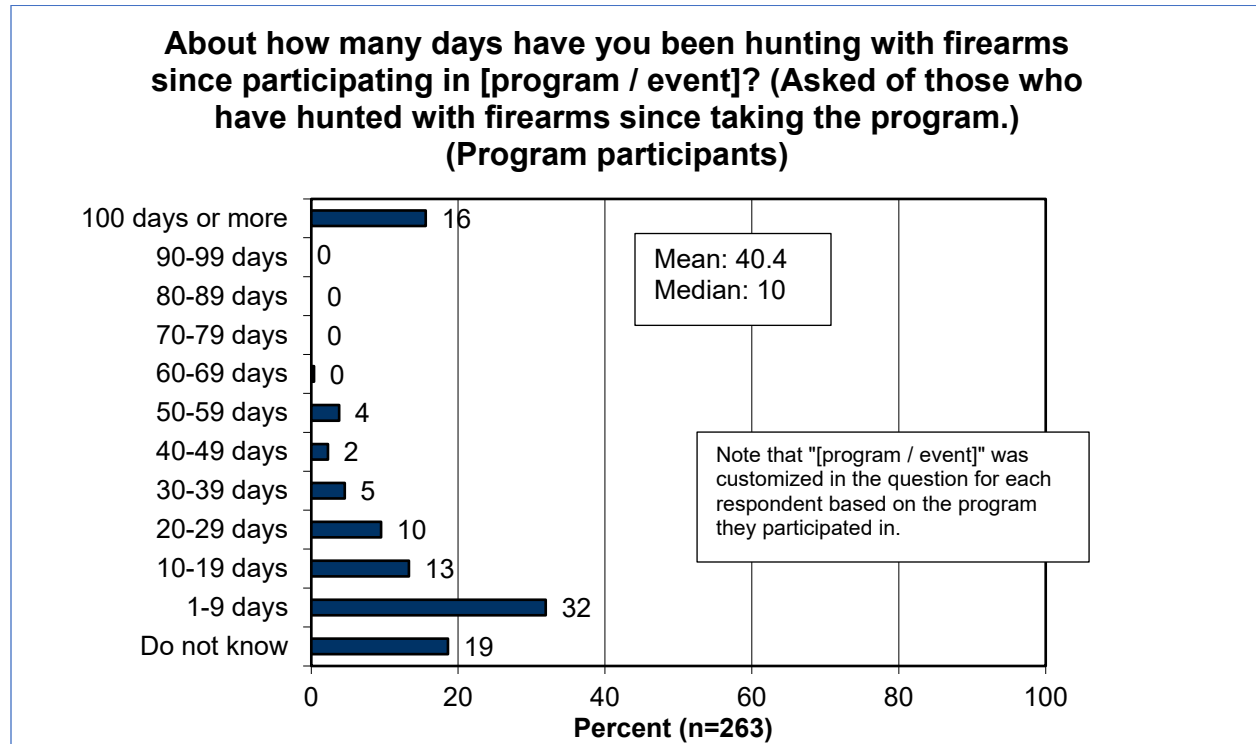
HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING PARTICIPATION AFTER THE PROGRAM

The R3 programs had success in getting participants to self-identify as recreationists. After participating in the R3 program, 47% of participants consider themselves to be a hunter (compared to 32% before the program), 40% consider themselves a sport shooter (up from 24%), and 25% consider themselves an archer (up from 13%). After the program, 63% of participants have gone sport shooting, 44% have hunted with firearms, 33% have gone target archery shooting, and 17% have bowhunted.



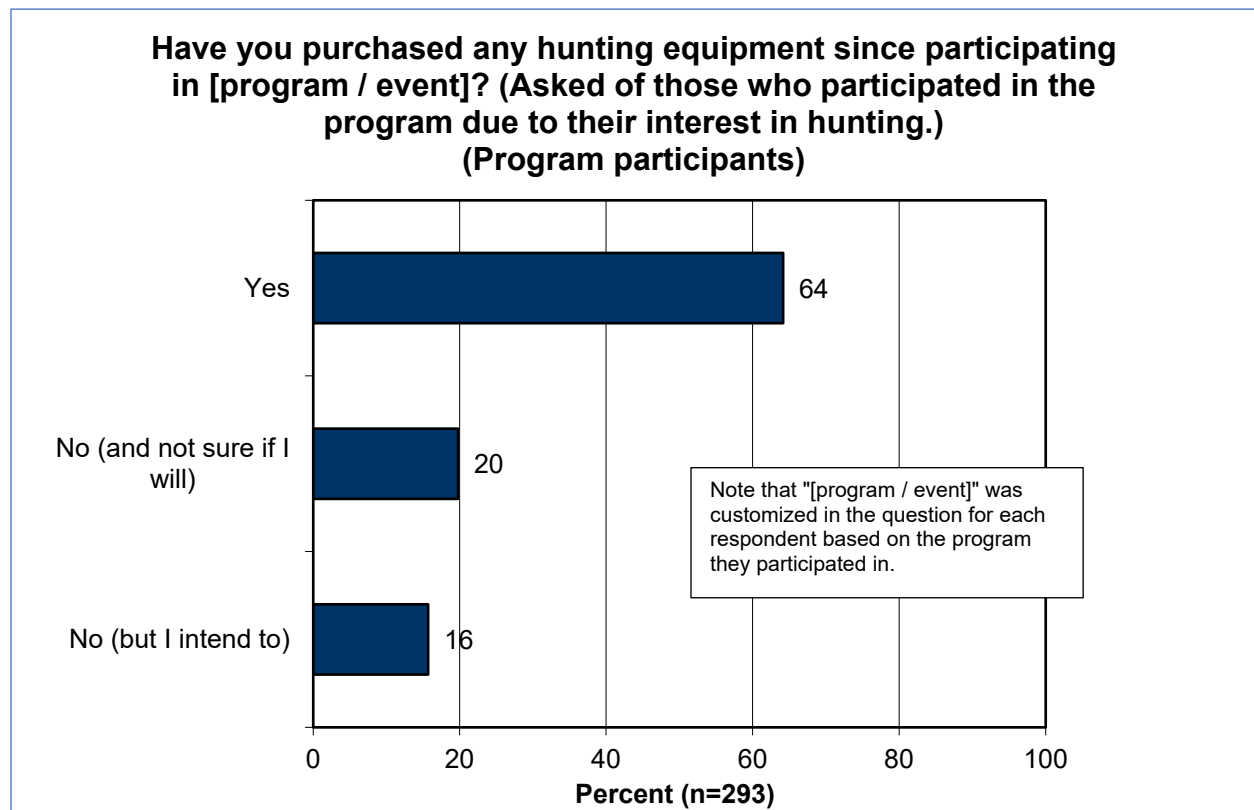
HUNTING AFTER THE PROGRAM

Among those who hunted with firearms after taking the R3 program, the mean days of hunting is 40.4 and the median is 10. Similarly, among those who bowhunted, the mean is 40.1 days and the median is 12 days.

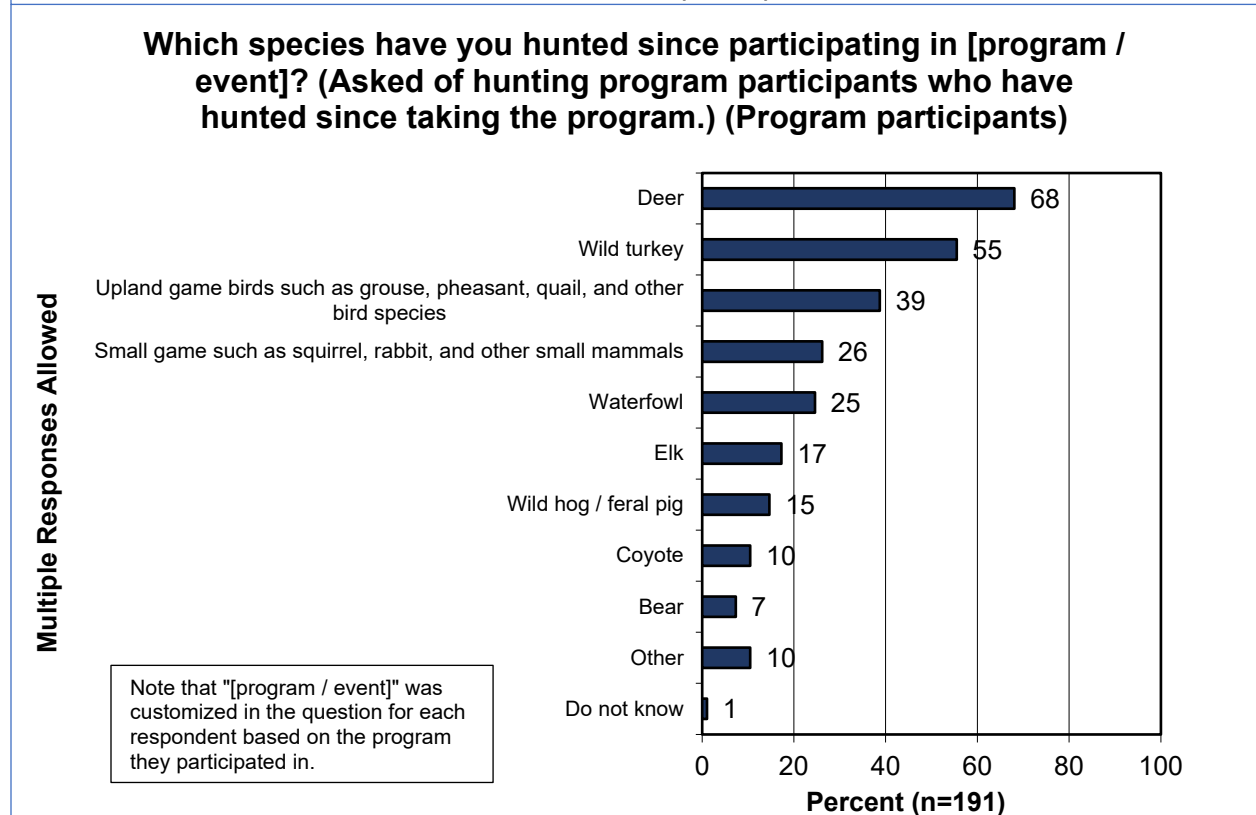
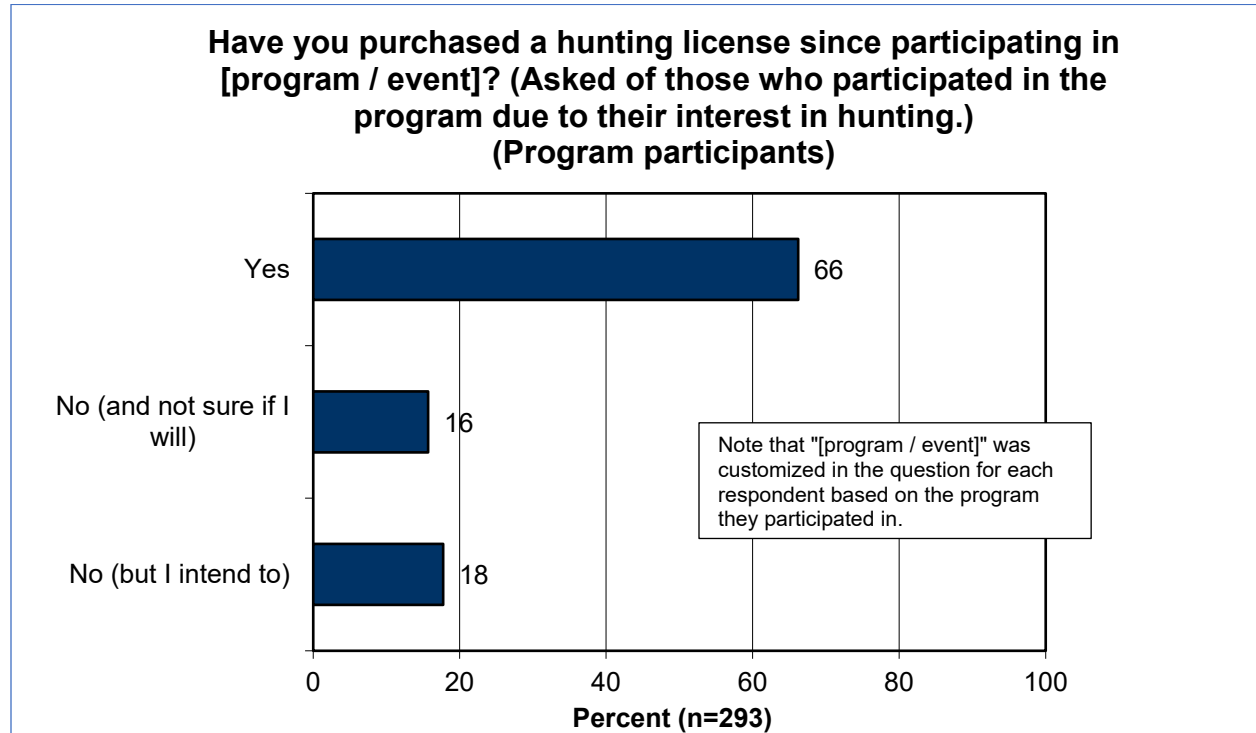


At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked if they took the R3 program due to an interest in hunting, sport shooting with firearms, and/or target archery. Those who indicated an interest in hunting but not the other activities were put into the hunter path of the survey, meaning they received various questions specific to hunting. There were also participants who indicated an interest in hunting along with one or both of the other options, as well as those who answered “do not know” to the question. Those latter groups were randomly assigned to one of the survey paths (hunting, sport shooting, or target archery). For brevity, participants assigned to the hunter path are referred to as “hunting program participants” in the narrative, and the designation “(Asked of those who participated in the program due to their interest in hunting.)” is shown on the graphs. The same approach was used for those in the sport shooting and target archery paths.

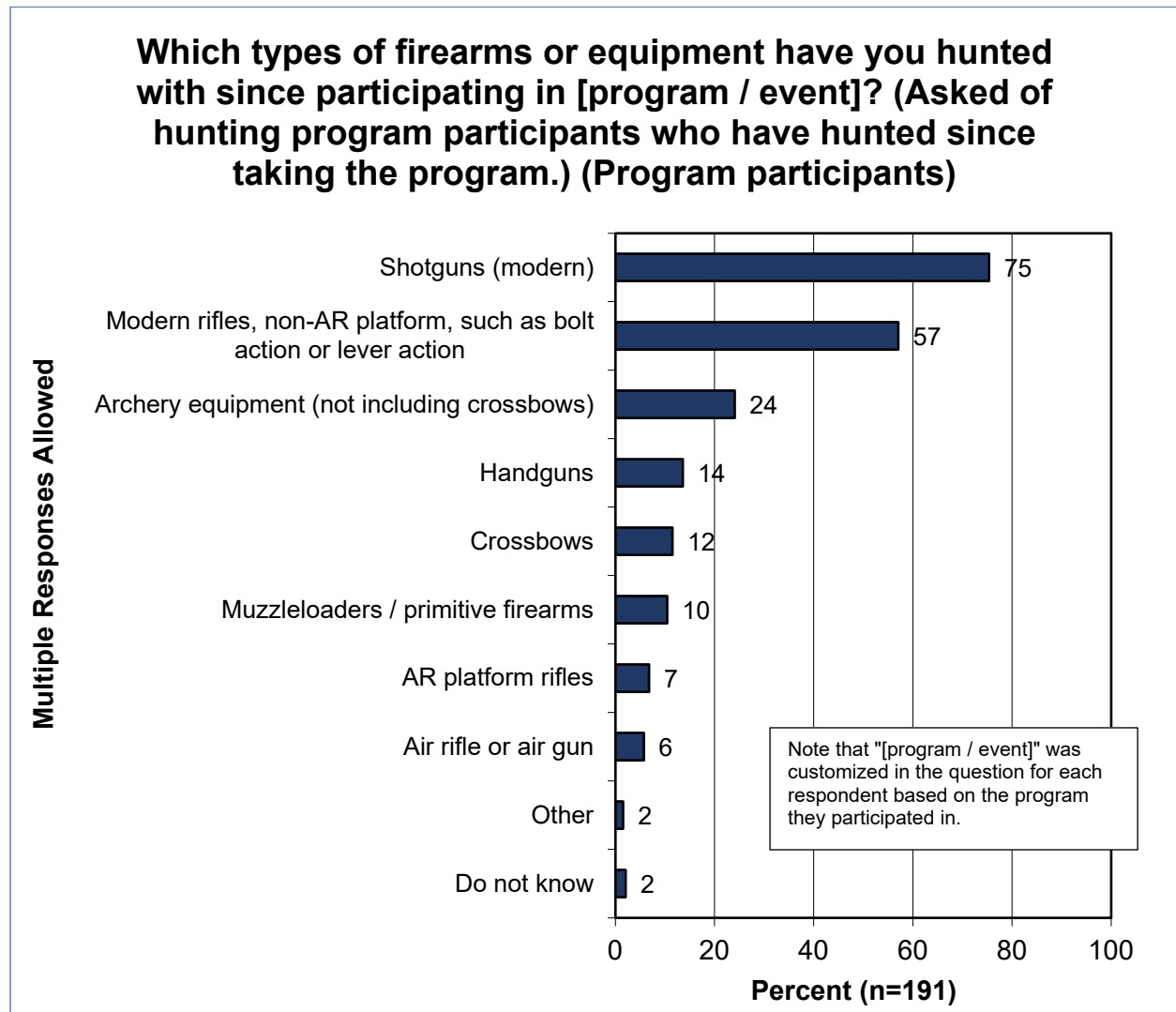
As shown below, nearly two thirds of hunting program participants (64%) have purchased hunting equipment since participating in the R3 program, and 16% have not but intend to. On the other hand, 20% have not and are not sure if they will.



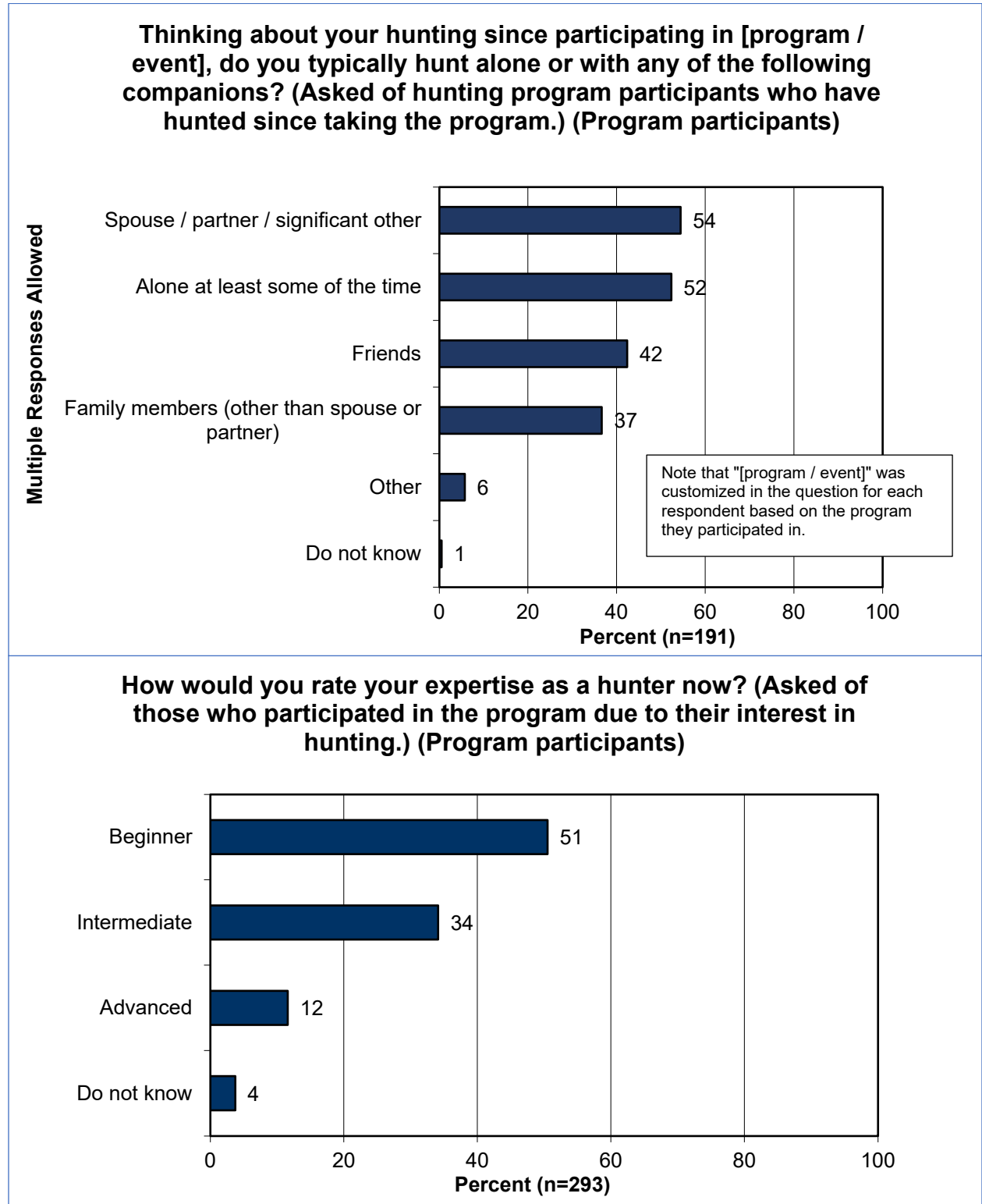
Two thirds of hunting program participants (66%) have purchased a hunting license since taking the program, while another 18% intend to; 16% have not and are not sure if they will. Among hunting program participants who have hunted after the program, the most hunted species were deer (68% of the group hunted this), wild turkey (55%), upland game birds (39%), small game (26%), and waterfowl (25%).



Among hunting program participants who hunted after taking the program, the firearms most commonly used for hunting were shotguns (75% of the group hunted with this), modern rifles (non-AR) (57%), and archery equipment (not including crossbows) (24%).

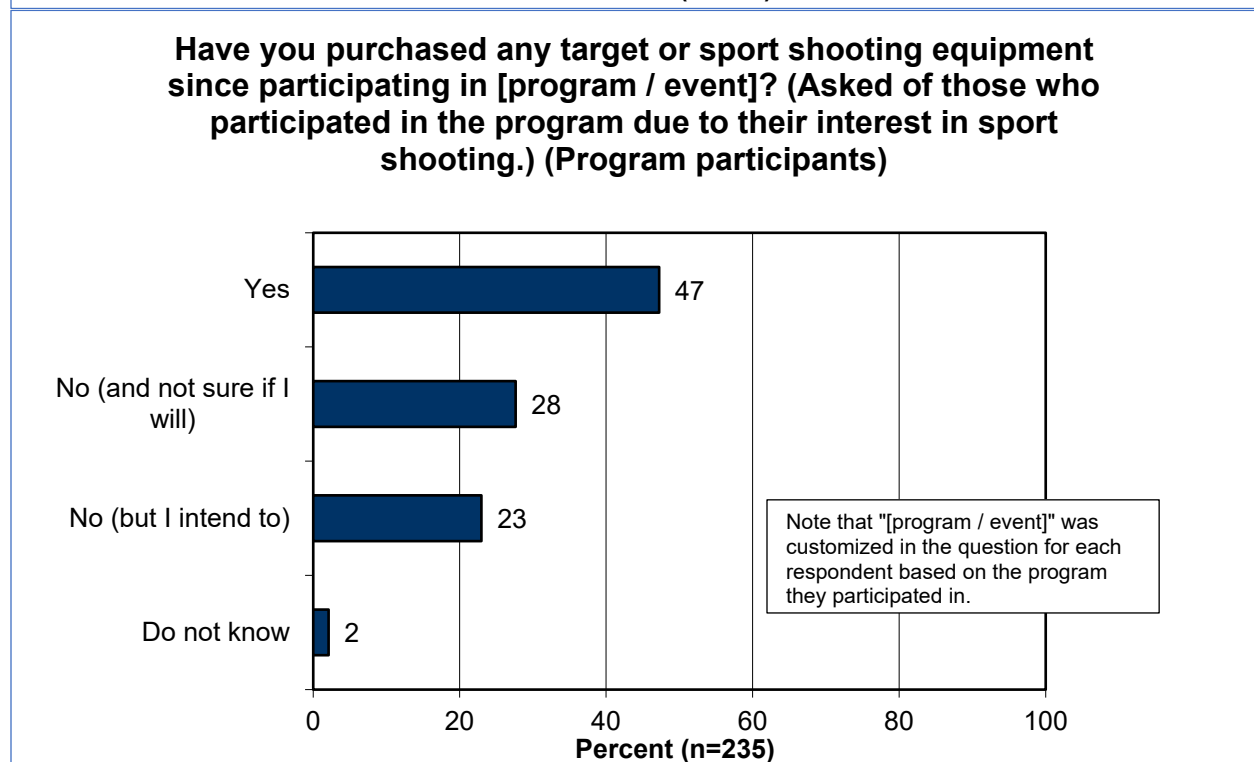
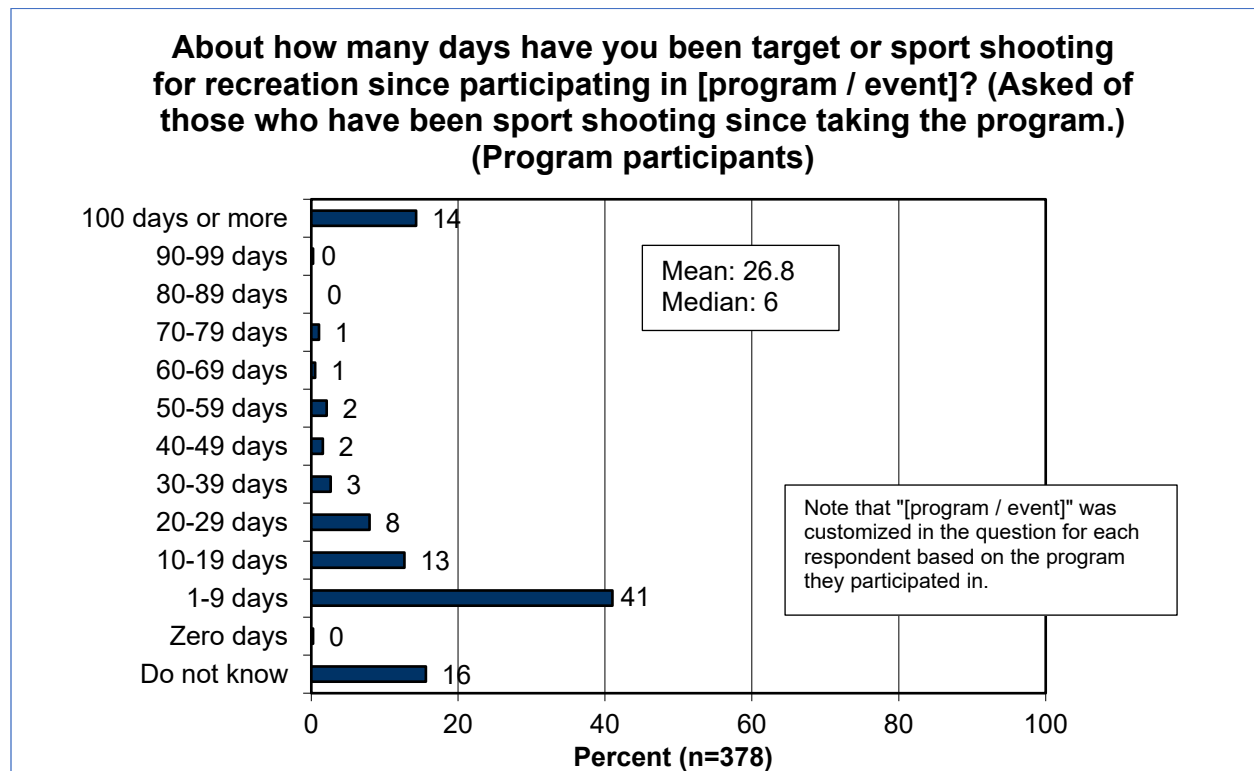


Among hunting program participants who hunted after taking the program, 54% hunted with their spouse or partner, 52% hunted alone at least some of the time, 42% hunted with friends, and 37% hunted with a family member other than their spouse. Following the program, 51% of hunting program participants consider themselves to be a beginner, 34% consider themselves intermediate, and 12% consider themselves advanced.

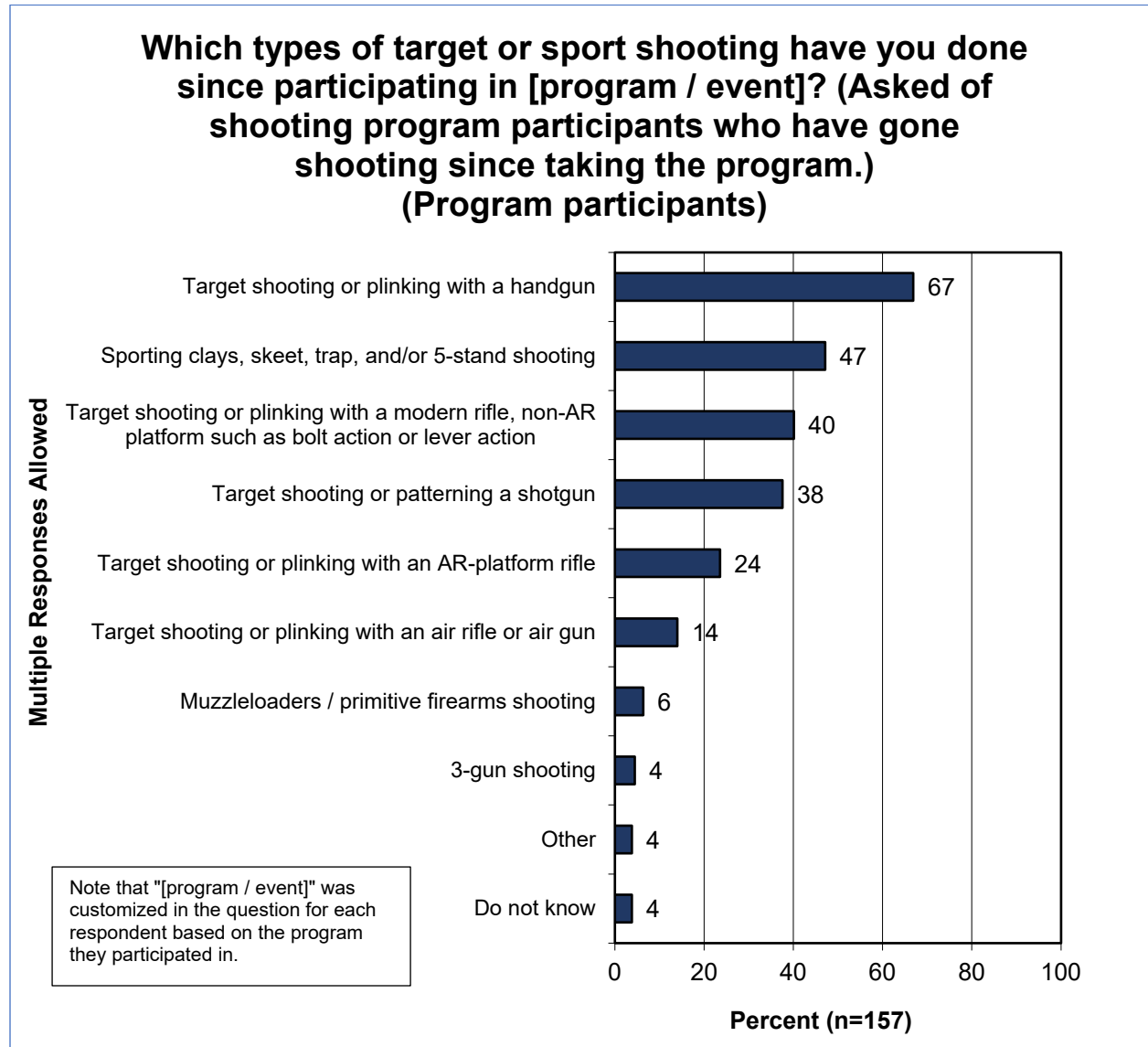


SPORT SHOOTING AFTER THE PROGRAM (FIREARMS)

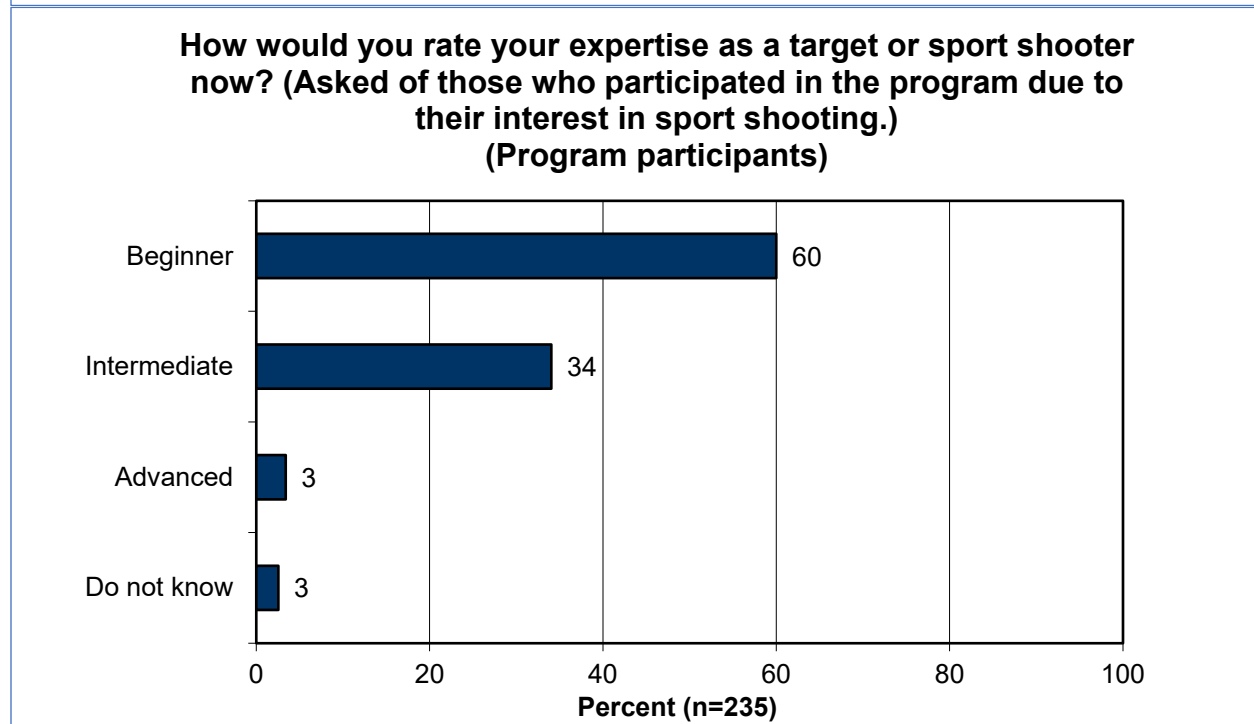
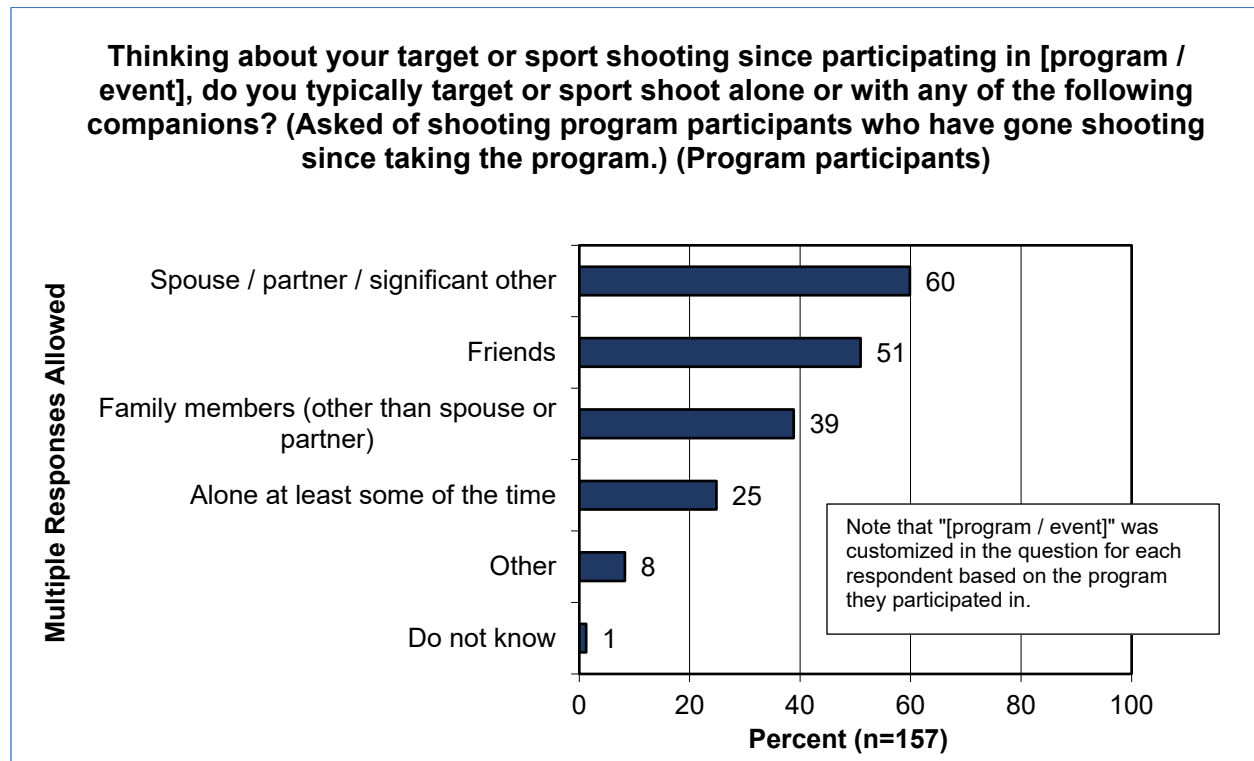
Among those who went sport shooting after taking the R3 program, the mean days of shooting is 26.8 and the median is 6. Among sport shooting program participants, 47% purchased shooting equipment since taking the program, 23% have not but intend to, and 28% have not and are not sure if they will.



Among shooting program participants who have gone shooting since taking the program, the most common types of shooting were target shooting or plinking with a handgun (67% of the group did this); sporting clays, skeet, trap, and/or 5-stand shooting (47%); target shooting or plinking with a non-AR modern rifle (40%), and target shooting or patterning a shotgun (38%).

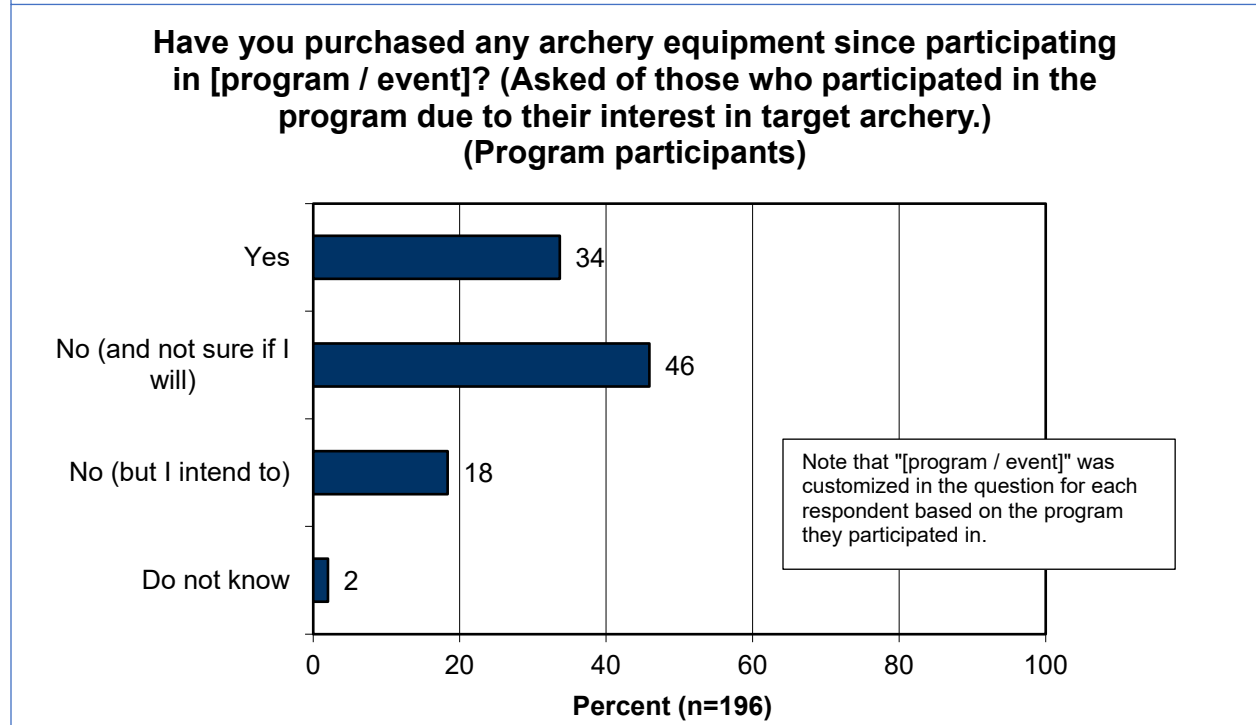
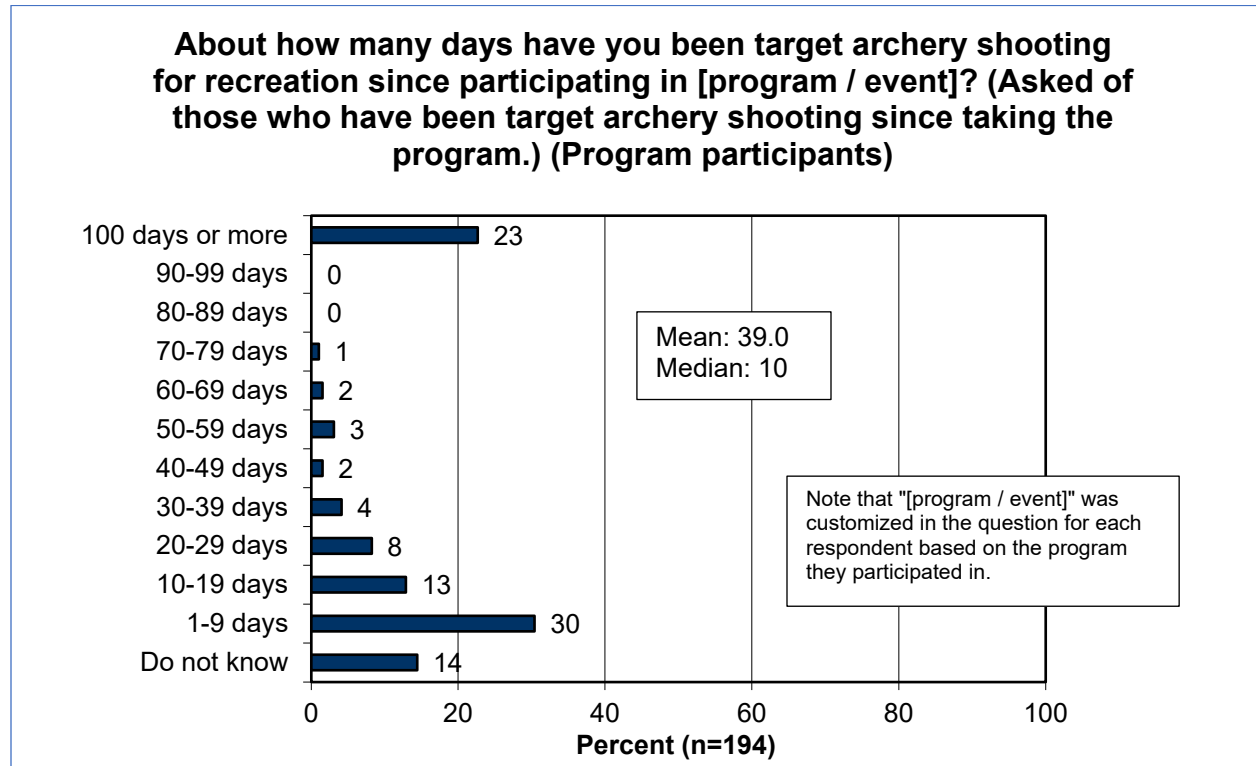


Among shooting program participants who have gone shooting since taking the program, 60% shot with their spouse or partner, 51% shot with friends, 39% shot with a family member other than their spouse, and 25% shot alone at least some of the time. Since taking the program, 60% of shooting program participants consider themselves to be a beginner, 34% consider themselves intermediate, and just 3% consider themselves advanced.

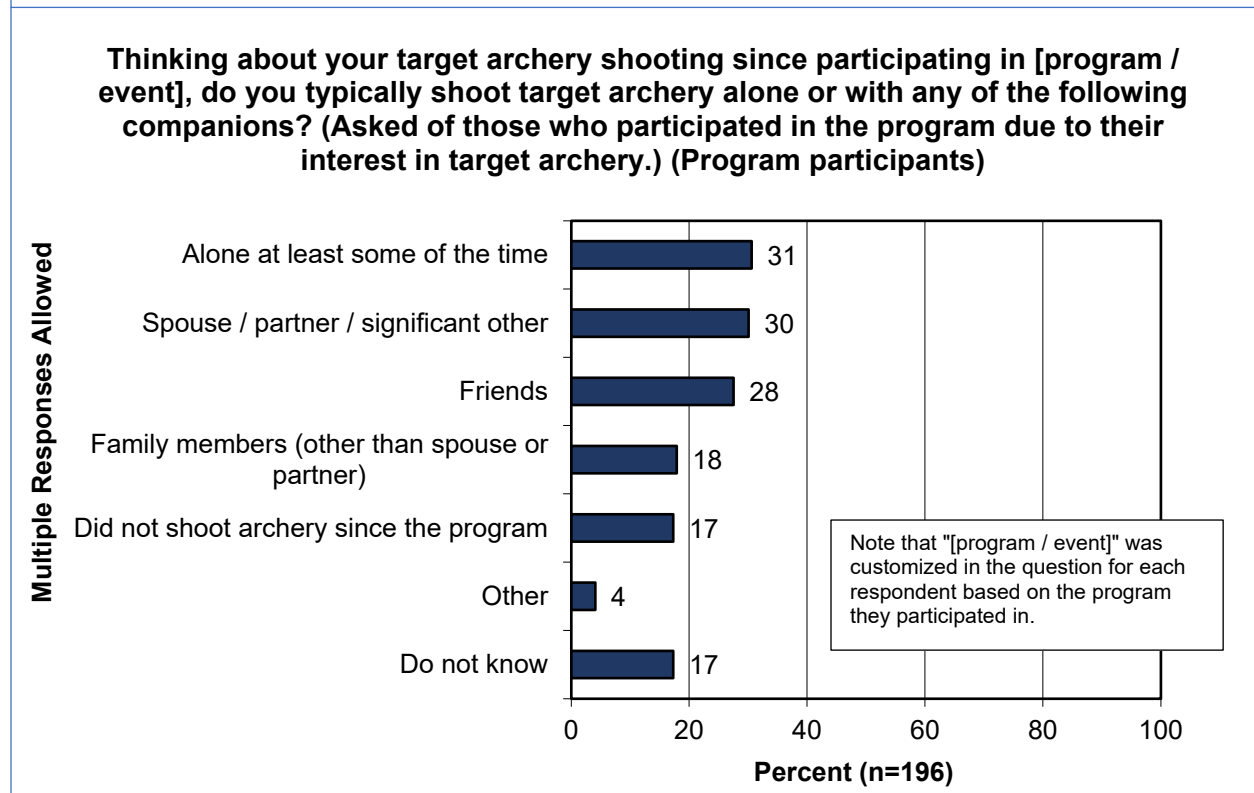
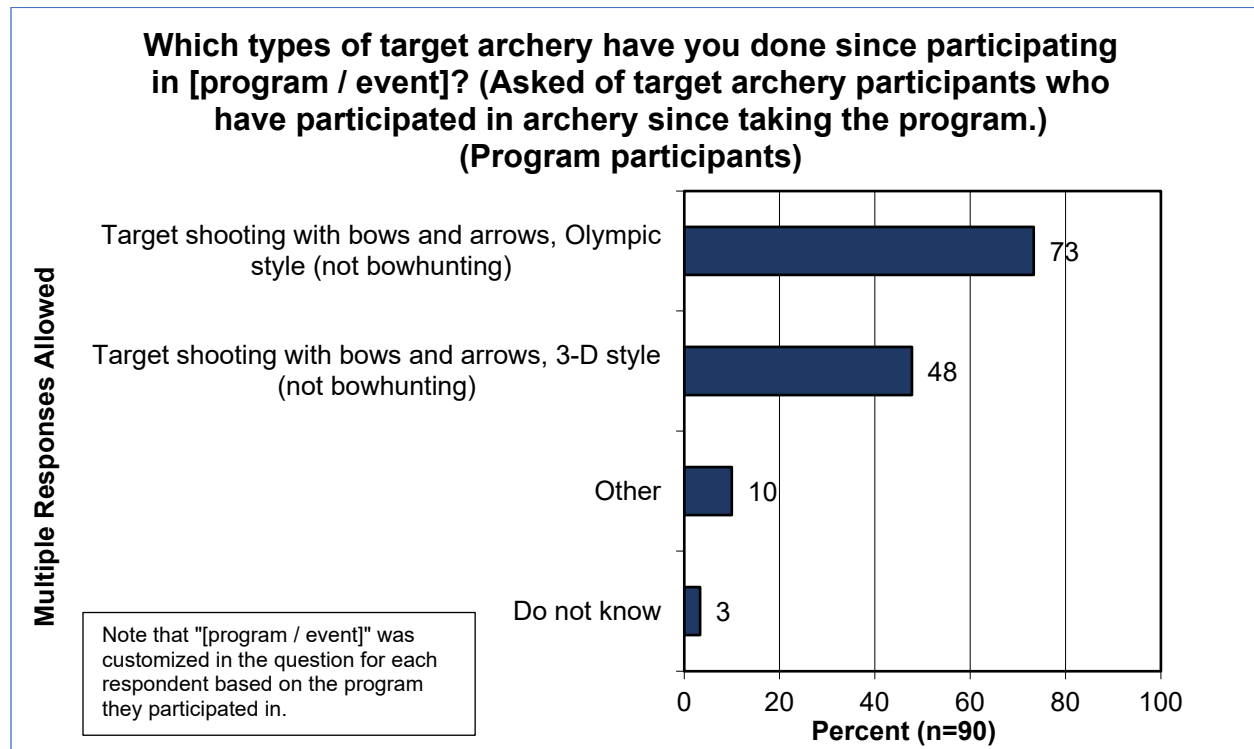


TARGET ARCHERY AFTER THE PROGRAM

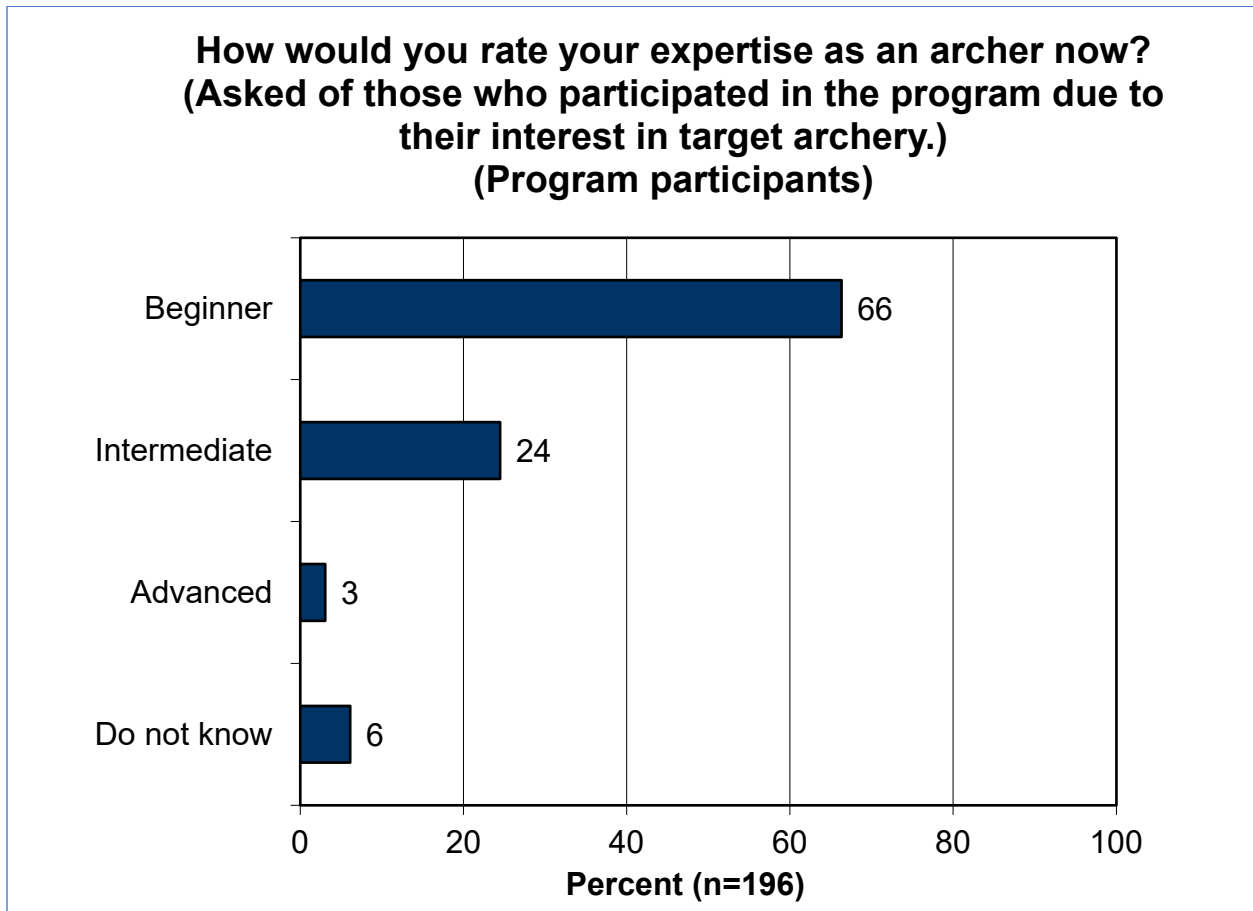
Among all participants who went target archery shooting after taking the R3 program, the mean days of shooting is 39.0 and the median is 10. Among target archery program participants, 34% have purchased archery equipment since taking the program, 18% have not but intend to, and 46% have not and are not sure if they will. (Although the sample sizes are very similar for these last two questions, the questions went to different groups.)



Among target archery program participants who have gone archery shooting since taking the program, 73% shot Olympic style and 48% did 3-D shooting. Among archery program participants, 31% shot alone at least part of the time, 30% shot with a spouse for partner, 28% shot with friends, and 18% shot with family other than their spouse since taking the program; meanwhile, 17% did not shoot archery.

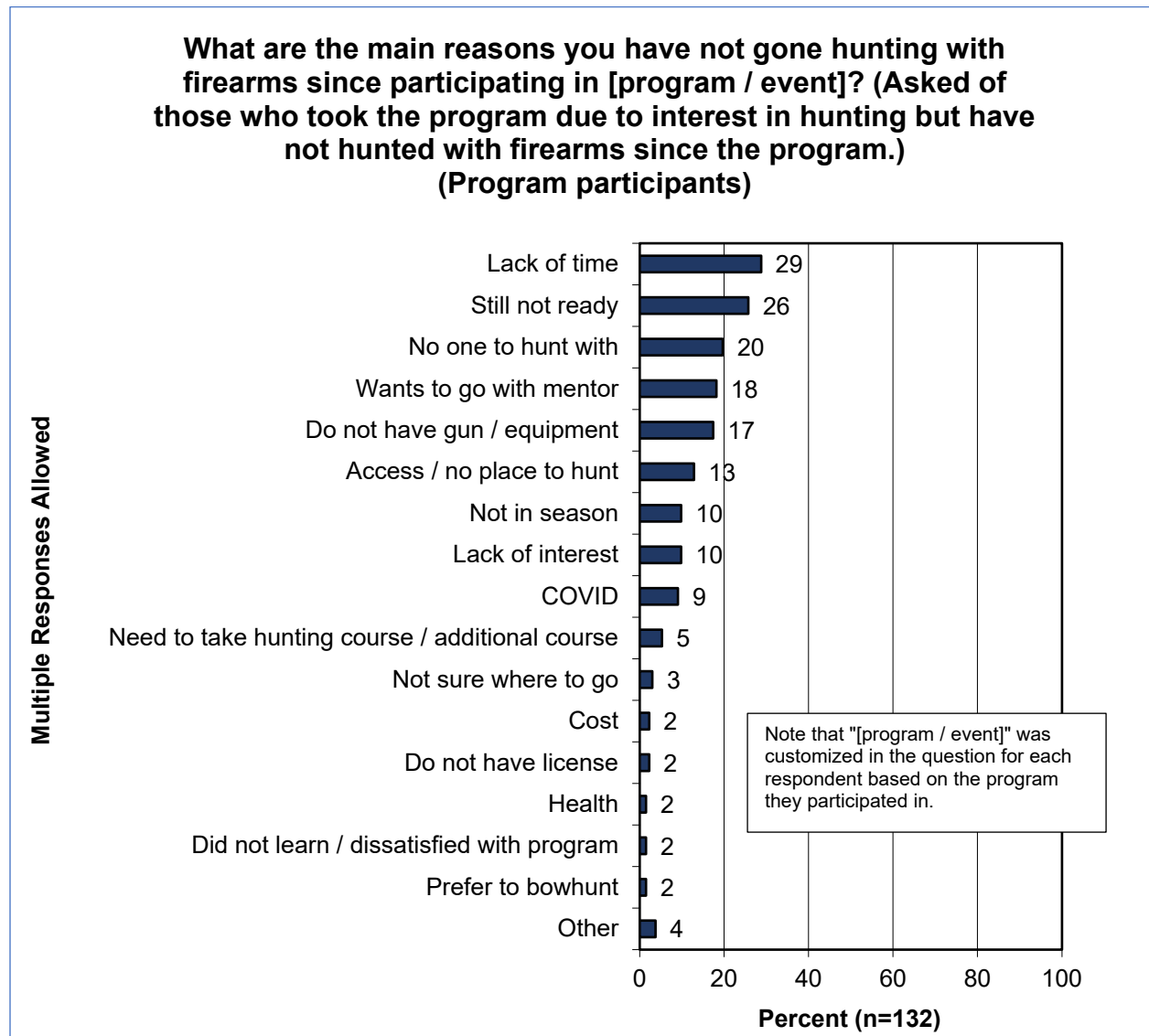


Since taking the program, 66% of target archery program participants consider themselves to be a beginner, 24% consider themselves intermediate, and 3% consider themselves advanced.

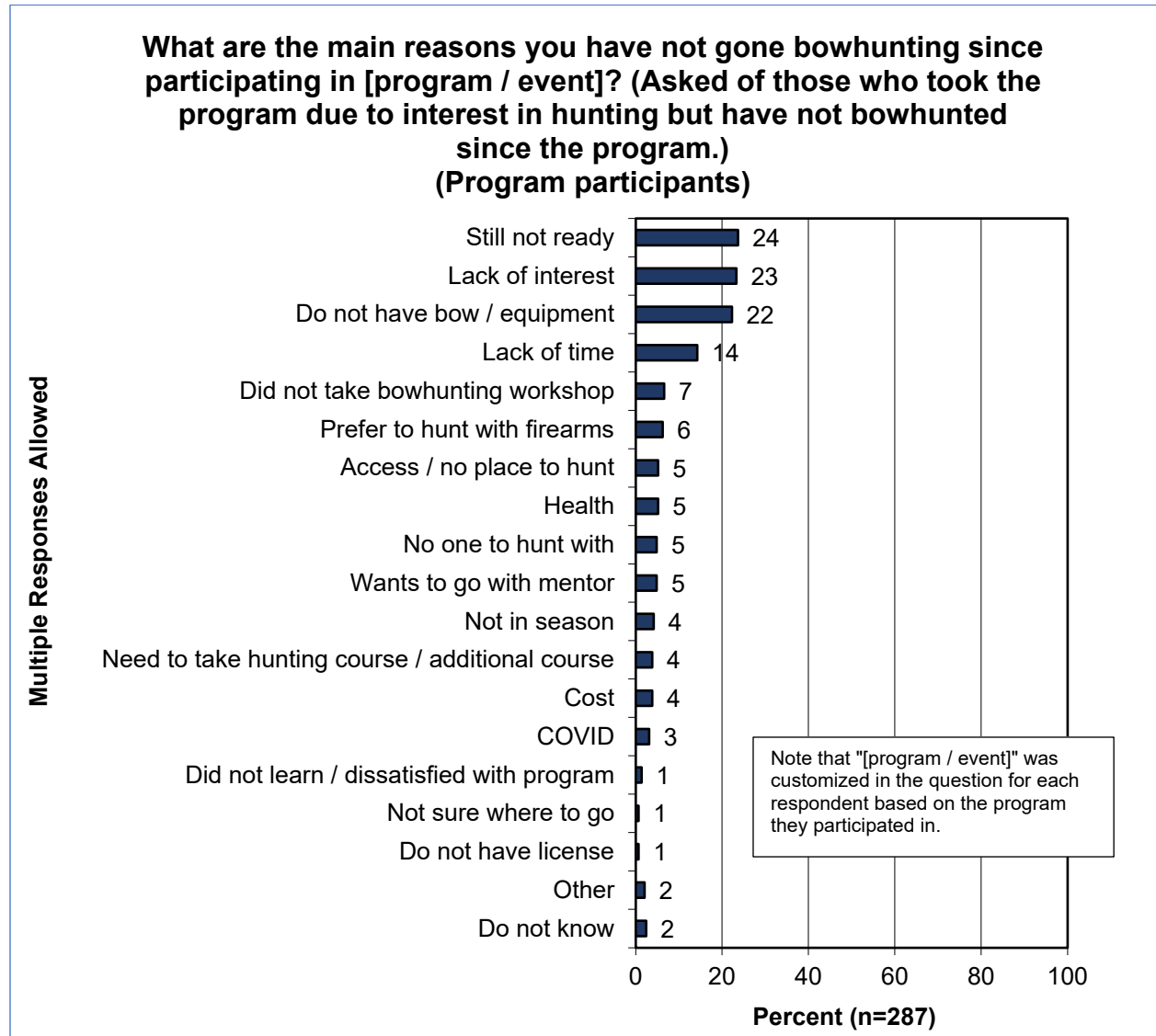


REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING AFTER THE PROGRAM

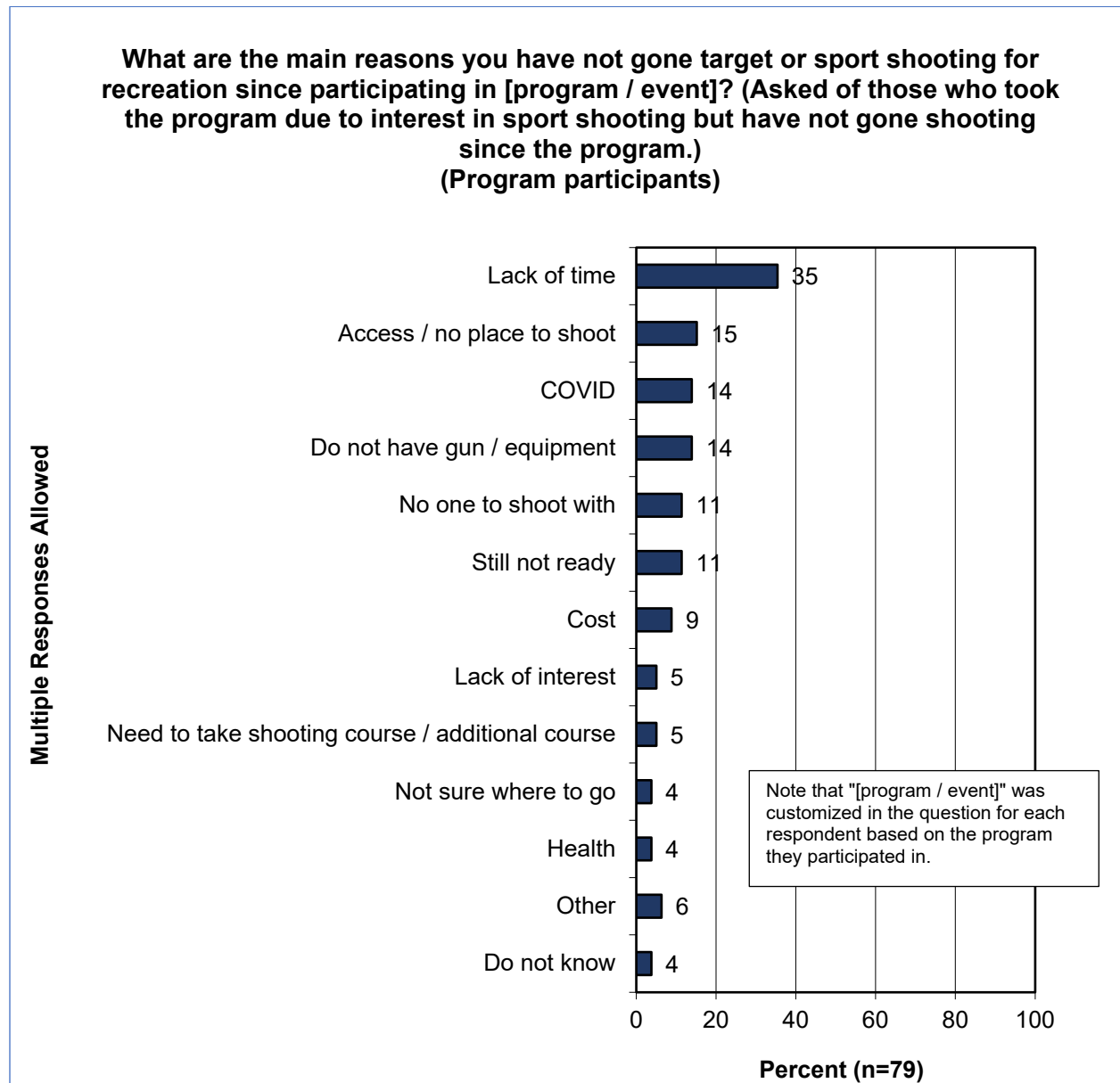
Among hunting program participants who have not hunted with firearms since taking the R3 program, the top reasons are lack of time (29% of the group stated this) and the feeling that they are still not ready (26%). A second tier of reasons includes no one to hunt with (20%), wanting to go with a mentor (18%), and lack of gun or equipment (17%). The full list is shown.



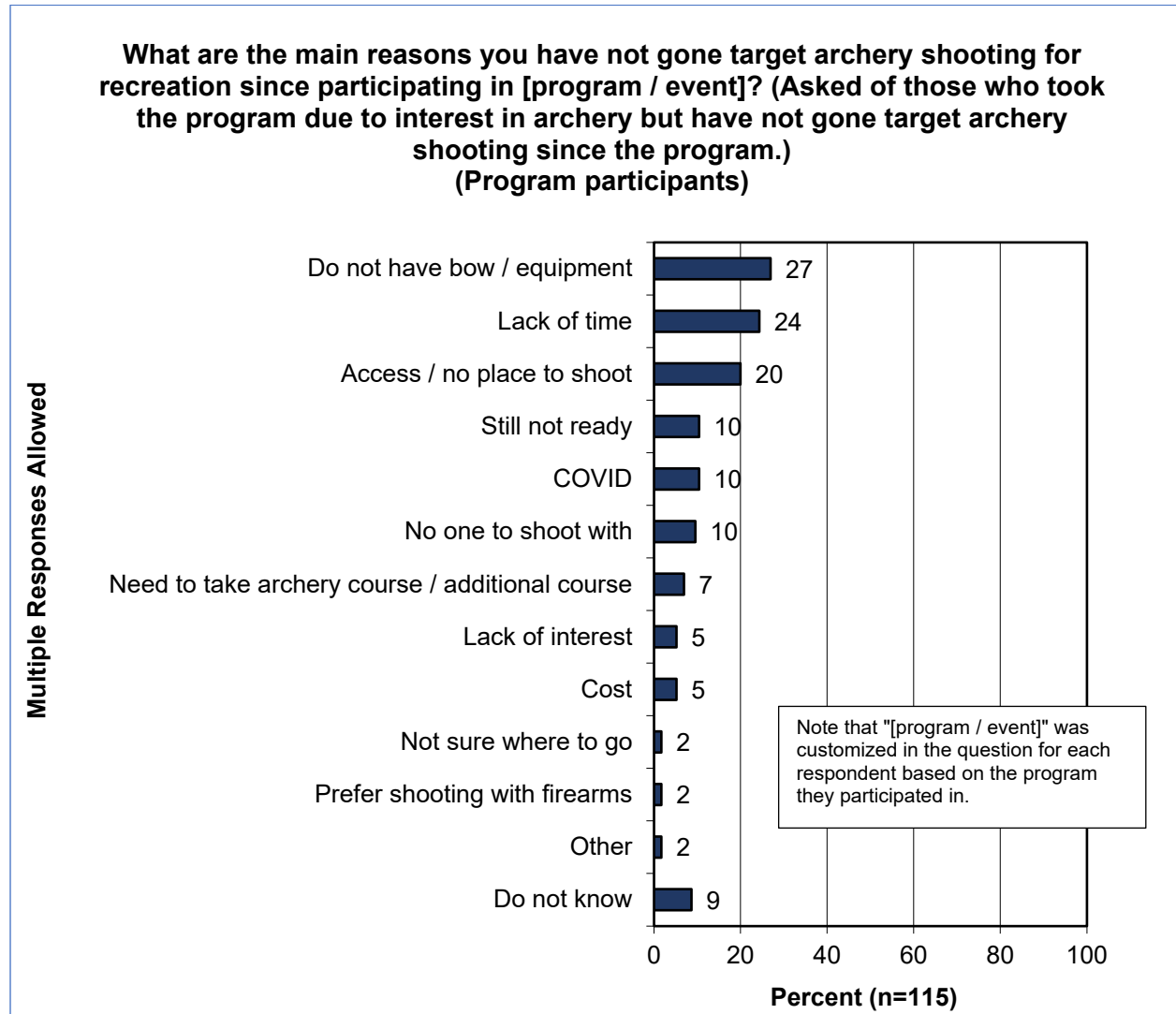
Among hunting program participants who have not bowhunted since the program, the top reasons are the feeling that they are still not ready (24% stated this), lack of interest (23%), and lack of bow or equipment (22%).



Among sport shooting program participants who have not gone shooting since the program, the top reason is lack of time (35% stated this). A second tier of reasons includes lack of access (15%), COVID (14%), and lack of gun or equipment (14%).

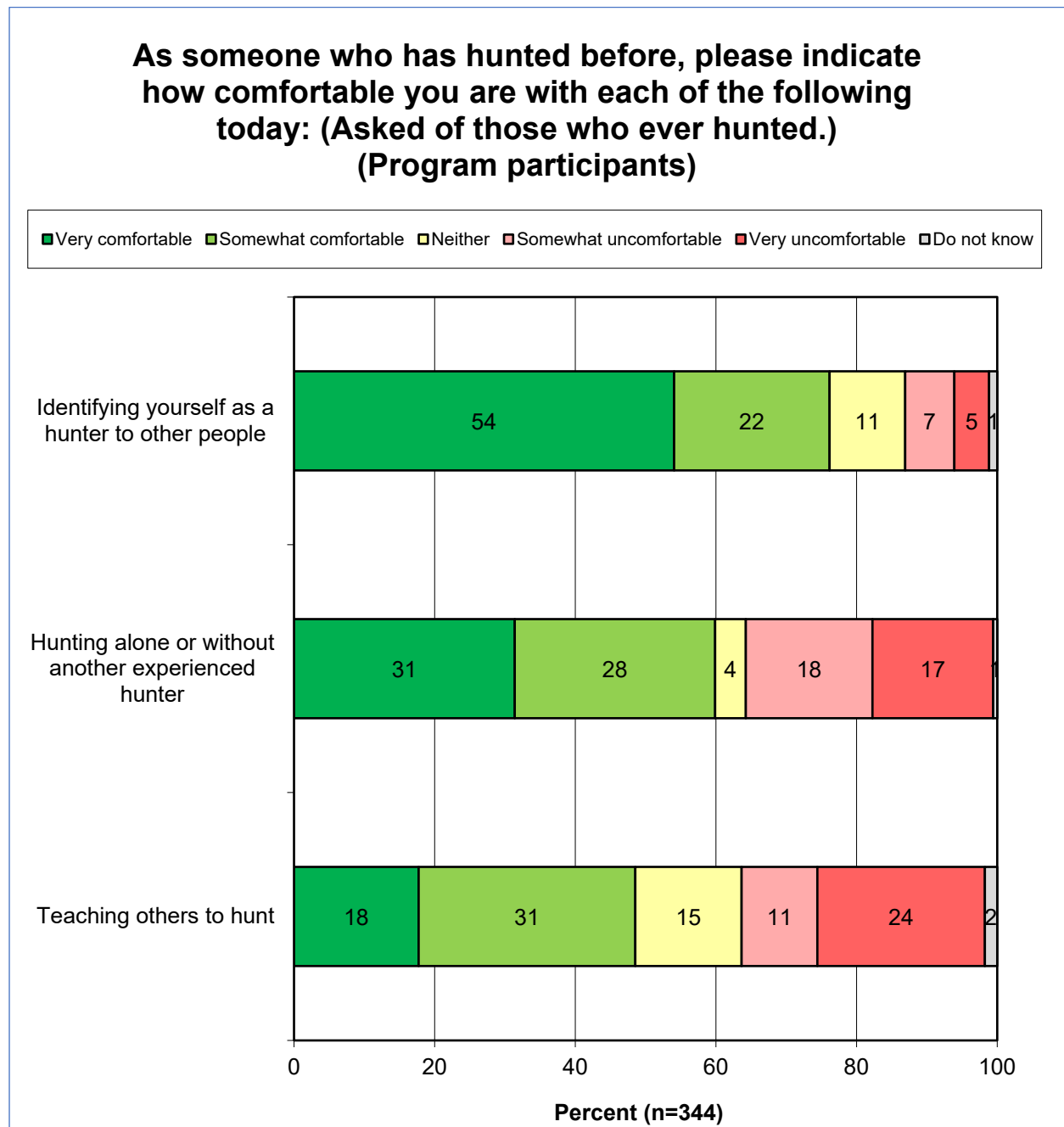


Among target archery program participants who have not gone archery shooting since the program, the top reasons are lack of bow or equipment (27% stated this), lack of time (24%), and lack of access (20%).



COMFORT LEVELS WITH HUNTING

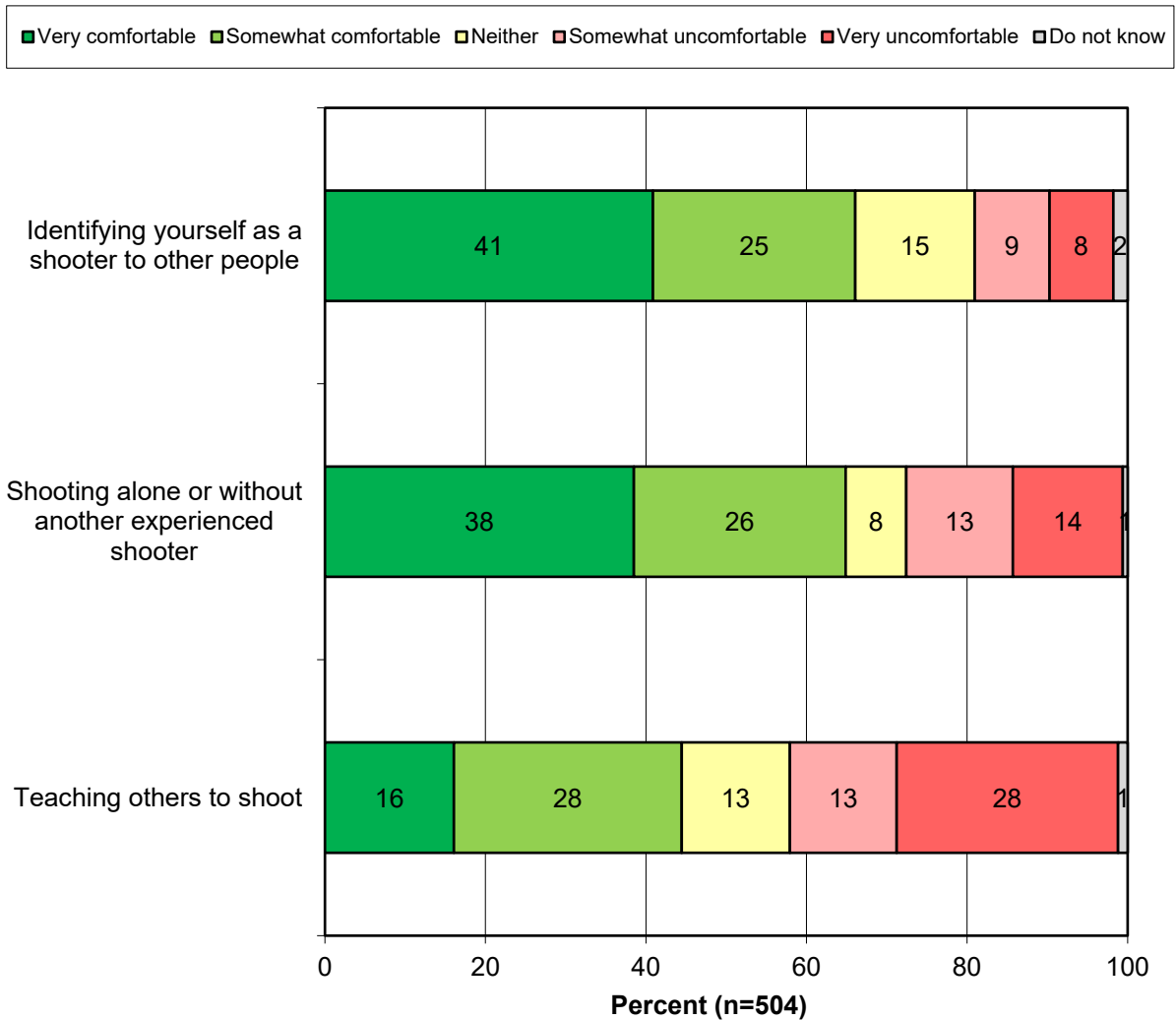
The survey included a series of three questions to participants who had ever hunted regarding their comfort level with aspects of hunting. Over two thirds of hunters (76%) are comfortable identifying themselves as a hunter to other people (54% are very comfortable), 60% (summed on unrounded numbers) are comfortable hunting alone or without a mentor (31% are very comfortable), and 49% are comfortable teaching others to hunt (18% are very comfortable).



COMFORT LEVELS WITH SPORT SHOOTING

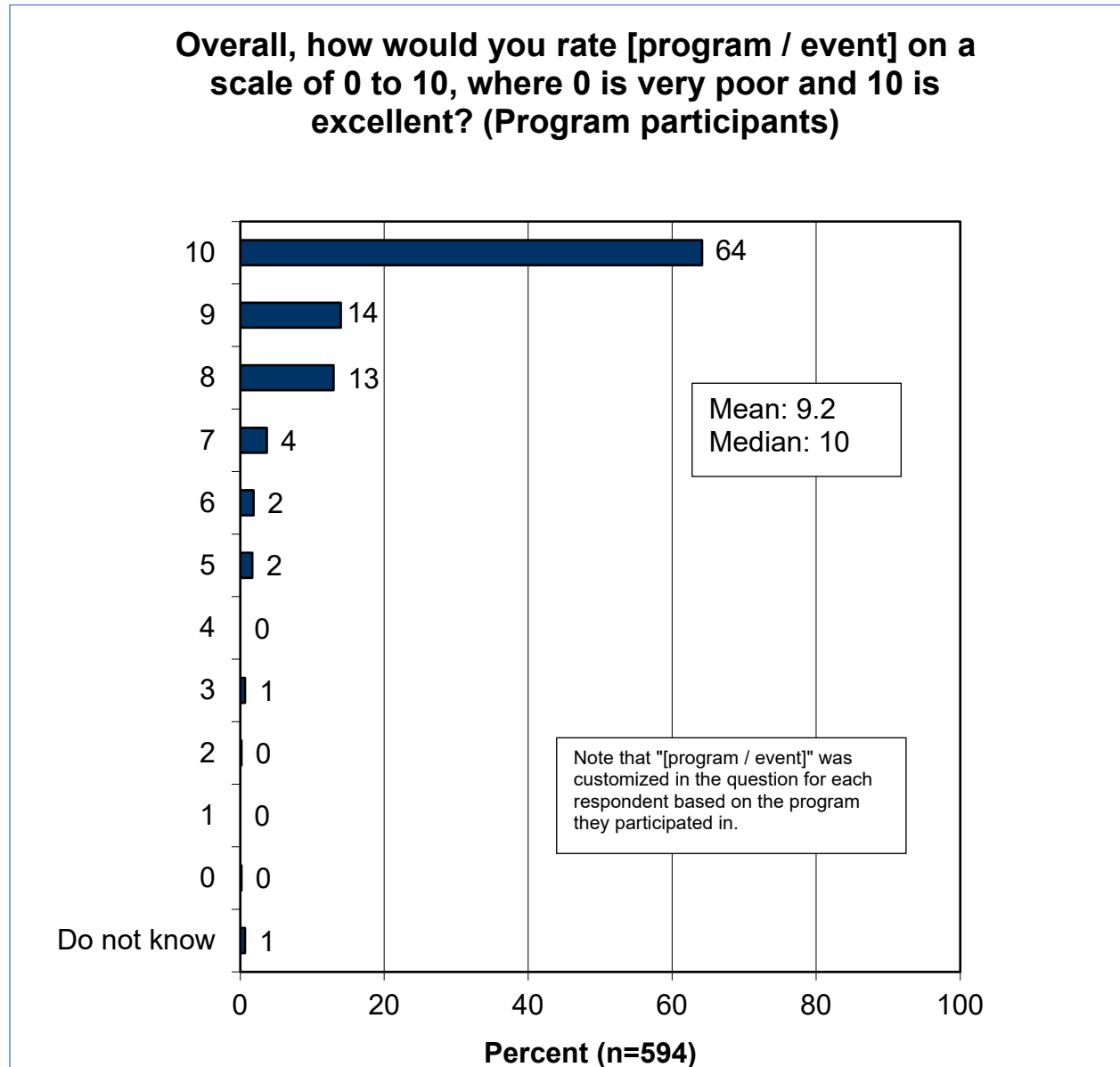
An equivalent series was given to participants who had ever gone sport shooting, either with firearms or archery equipment. Two thirds of shooters (66%) are comfortable identifying themselves as a shooter to other people (41% are very comfortable), 65% (summed on unrounded numbers) are comfortable shooting alone or without a mentor (38% are very comfortable), and 44% are comfortable teaching others to shoot (16% are very comfortable).

As someone who has been sport shooting before, please indicate how comfortable you are with each of the following today: (Asked of those who ever went sport shooting.) (Program participants)

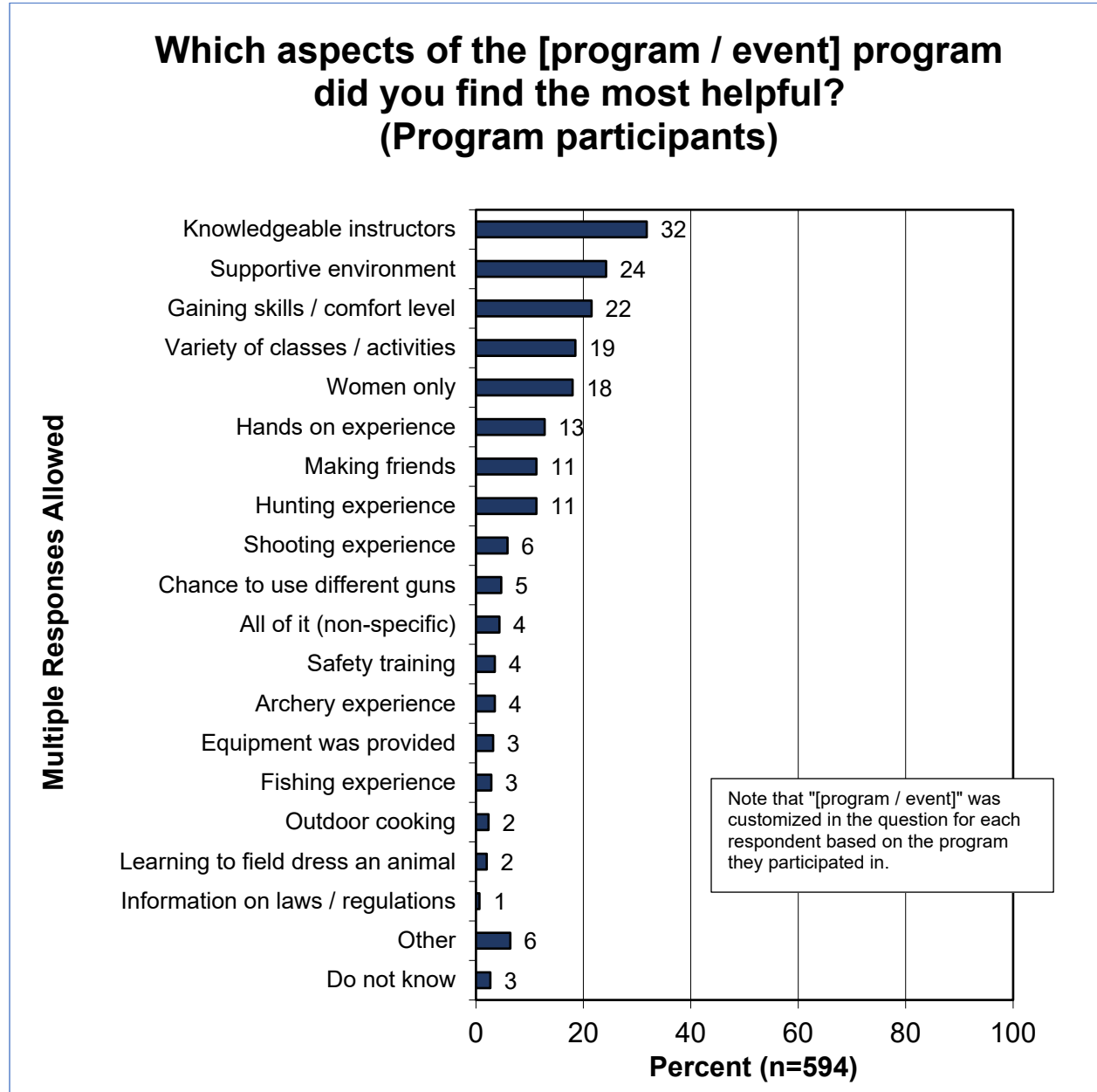


RATING OF THE PROGRAM

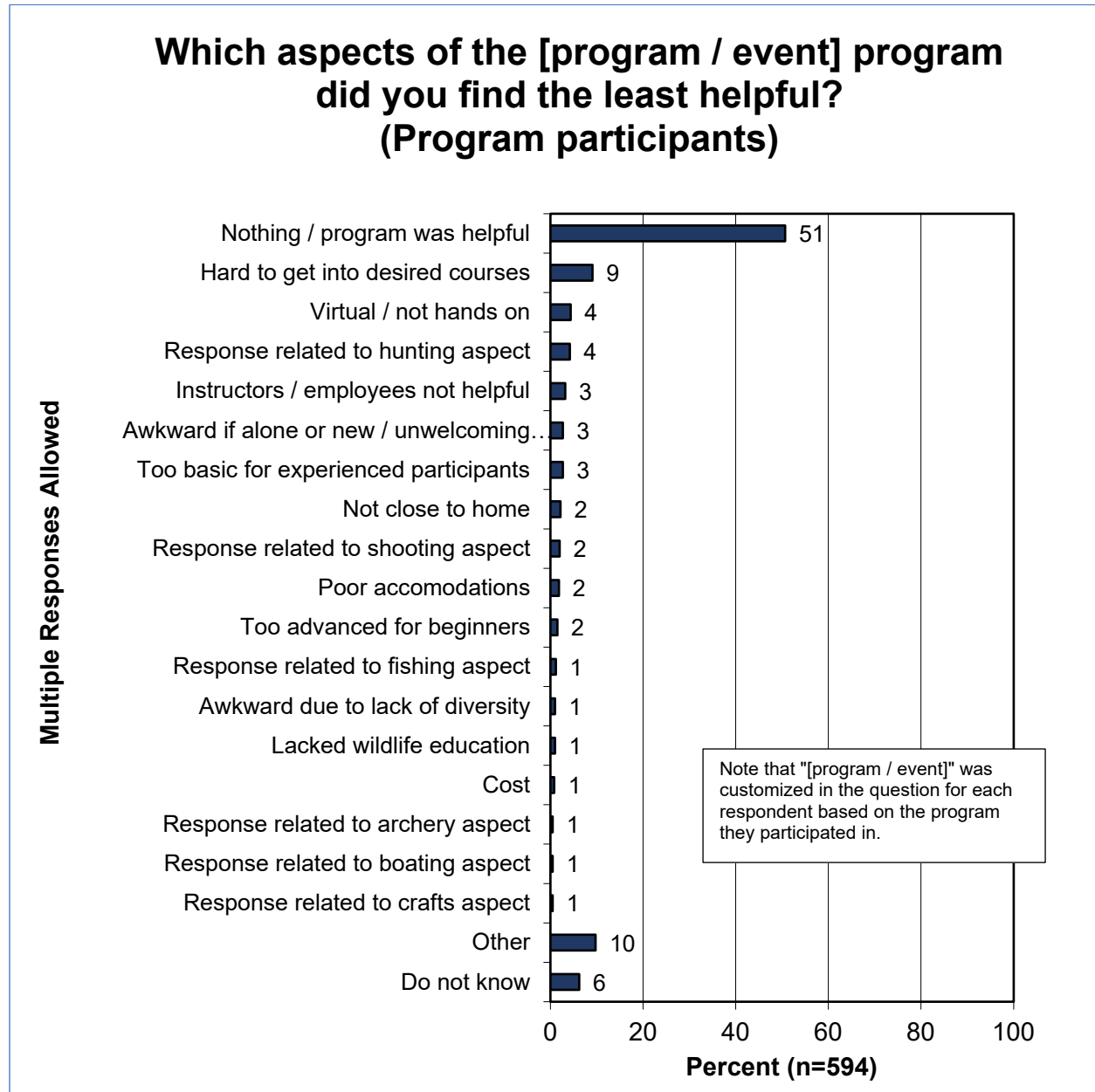
The R3 programs are highly rated by participants. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is very poor and 10 is excellent, the mean rating by participants is 9.2 and the median is 10 (64% of participants gave the top rating).



Participants were asked to name the most helpful aspects of the program, in an open-ended question. The top responses are knowledgeable instructors (32% stated this), the supportive environment (24%), the increase in skills or comfort level (22%), the variety of classes or activities (19%), and that the program was for women only (18%).

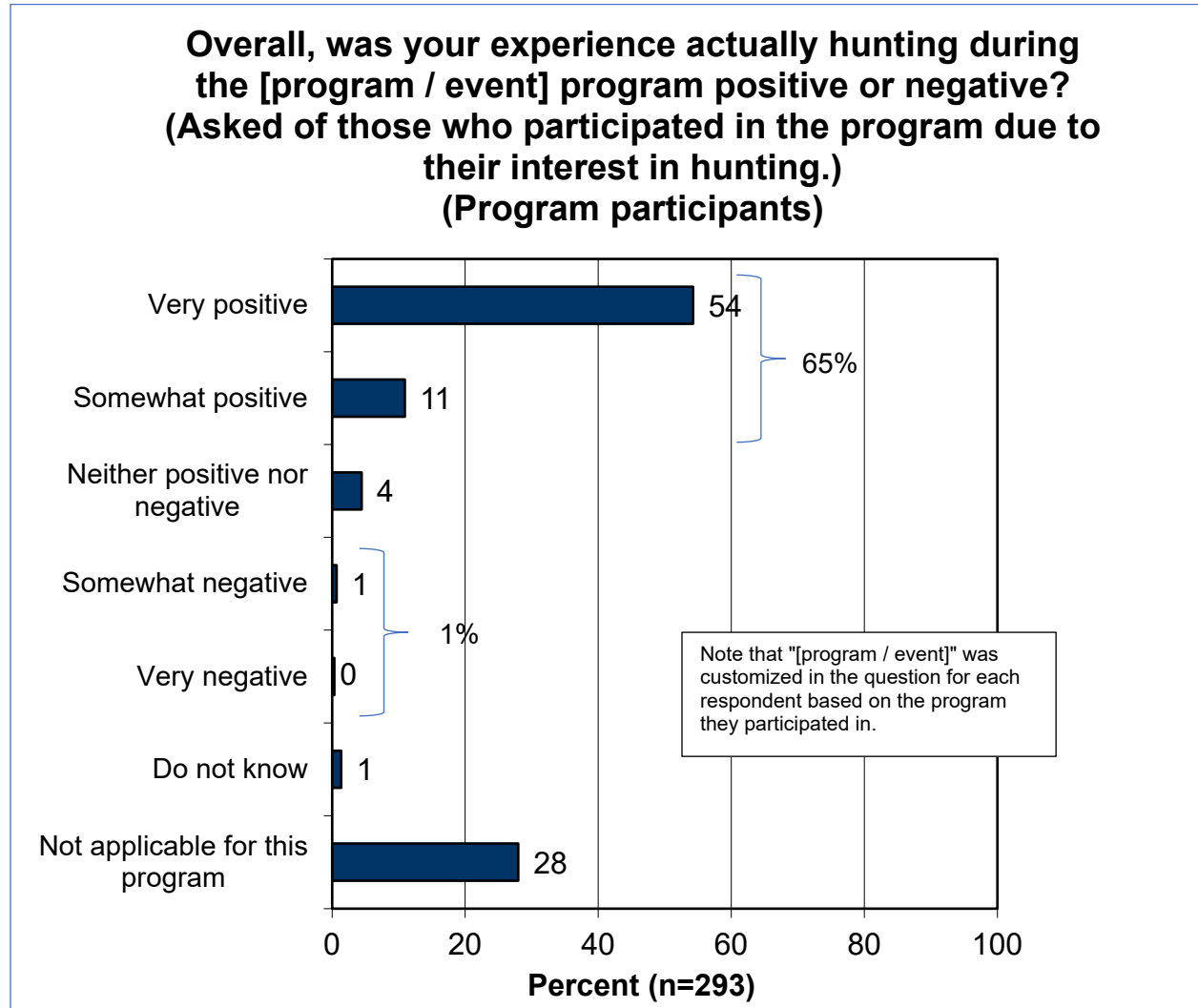


When asked to name the least helpful aspects of the program, a slight majority of participants (51%) had no criticisms or said that the program was helpful. Otherwise, the top response is that it was hard to get into their desired courses (9%). All other responses were given by less than 5% of participants.



HUNTING PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

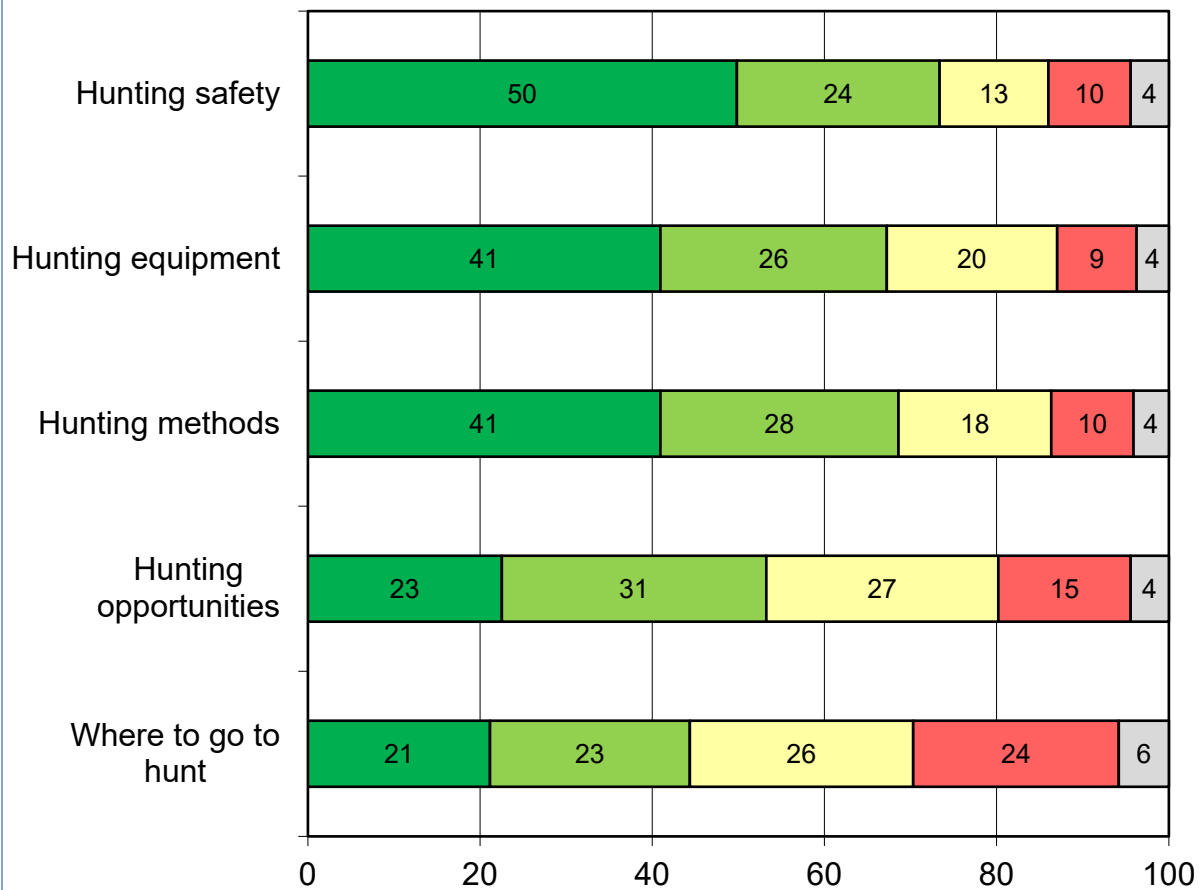
Nearly two thirds of hunting program participants (65%) said that the experience actually hunting during the R3 program was a positive experience (54% said it was very positive), whereas only 1% said it was negative. A substantial percentage (28%) said that the question is not applicable to their program.



Hunting program participants were asked if the program increased their knowledge about five aspects of hunting a great deal, a moderate amount, a little, or not at all. In the top tier are hunting safety (50% said their knowledge of hunting safety increased a great deal and 24% said it did a moderate amount), hunting methods (41% a great deal; 28% a moderate amount), and hunting equipment (41% a great deal; 26 a moderate amount). In the bottom tier are hunting opportunities (23% a great deal; 31% a moderate amount) and where to go to hunt (21% a great deal; 23% a moderate amount).

How much would you say the [program / event] program increased your knowledge about each of the following? (Asked of those who participated in the program due to their interest in hunting.) (Program participants)

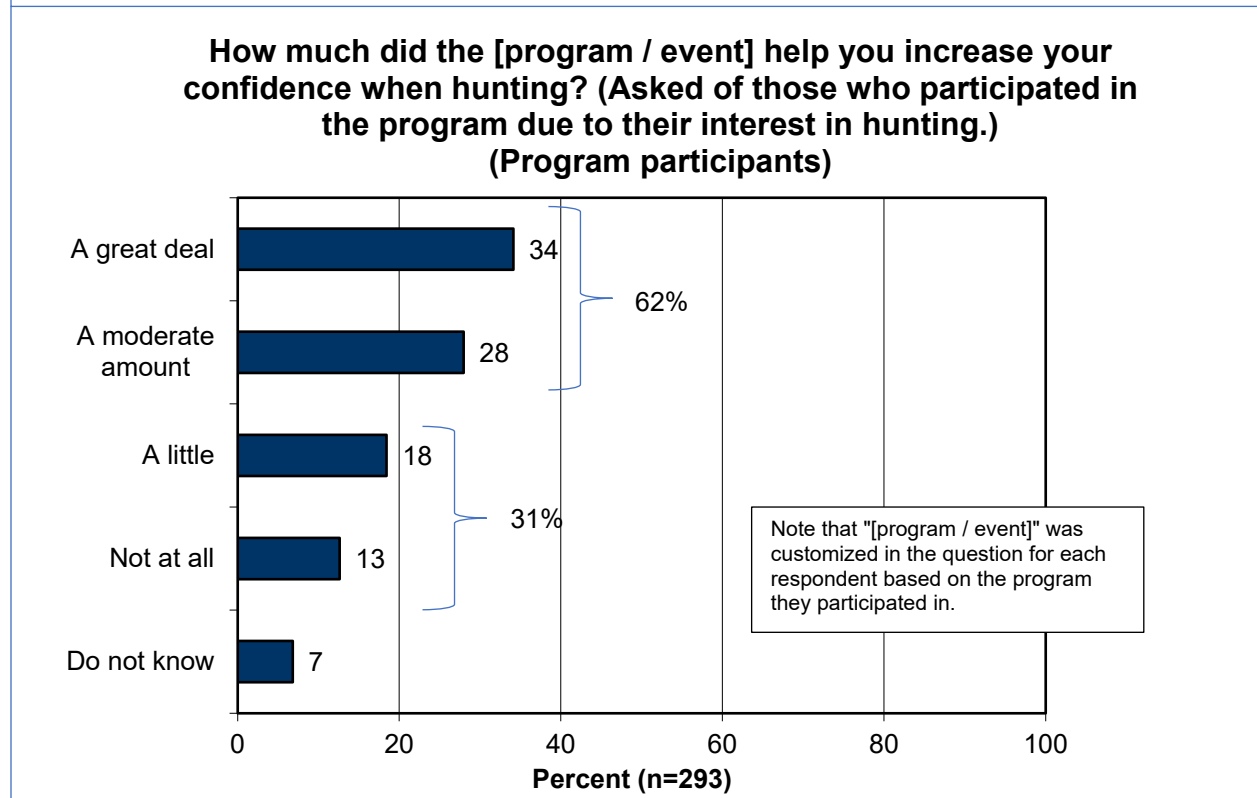
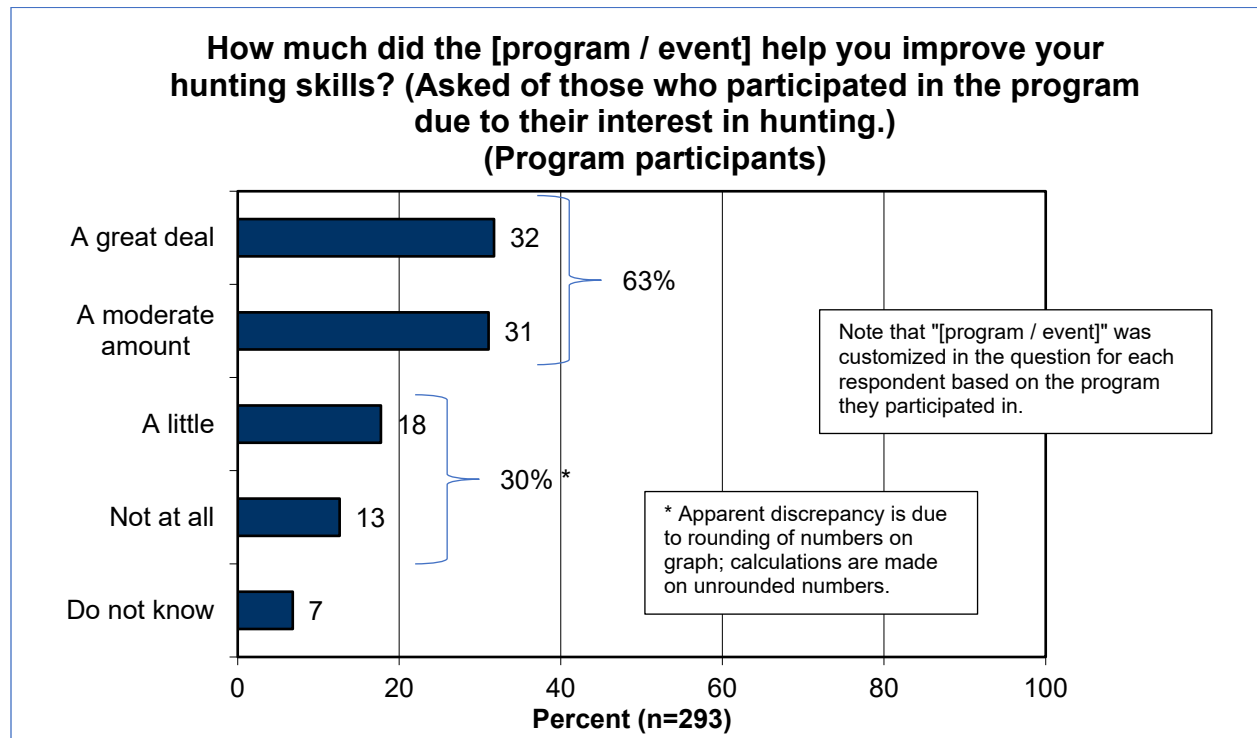
■ A great deal ■ A moderate amount ■ A little ■ Not at all ■ Do not know



Note that "[program / event]" was customized in the question for each respondent based on the program they participated in.

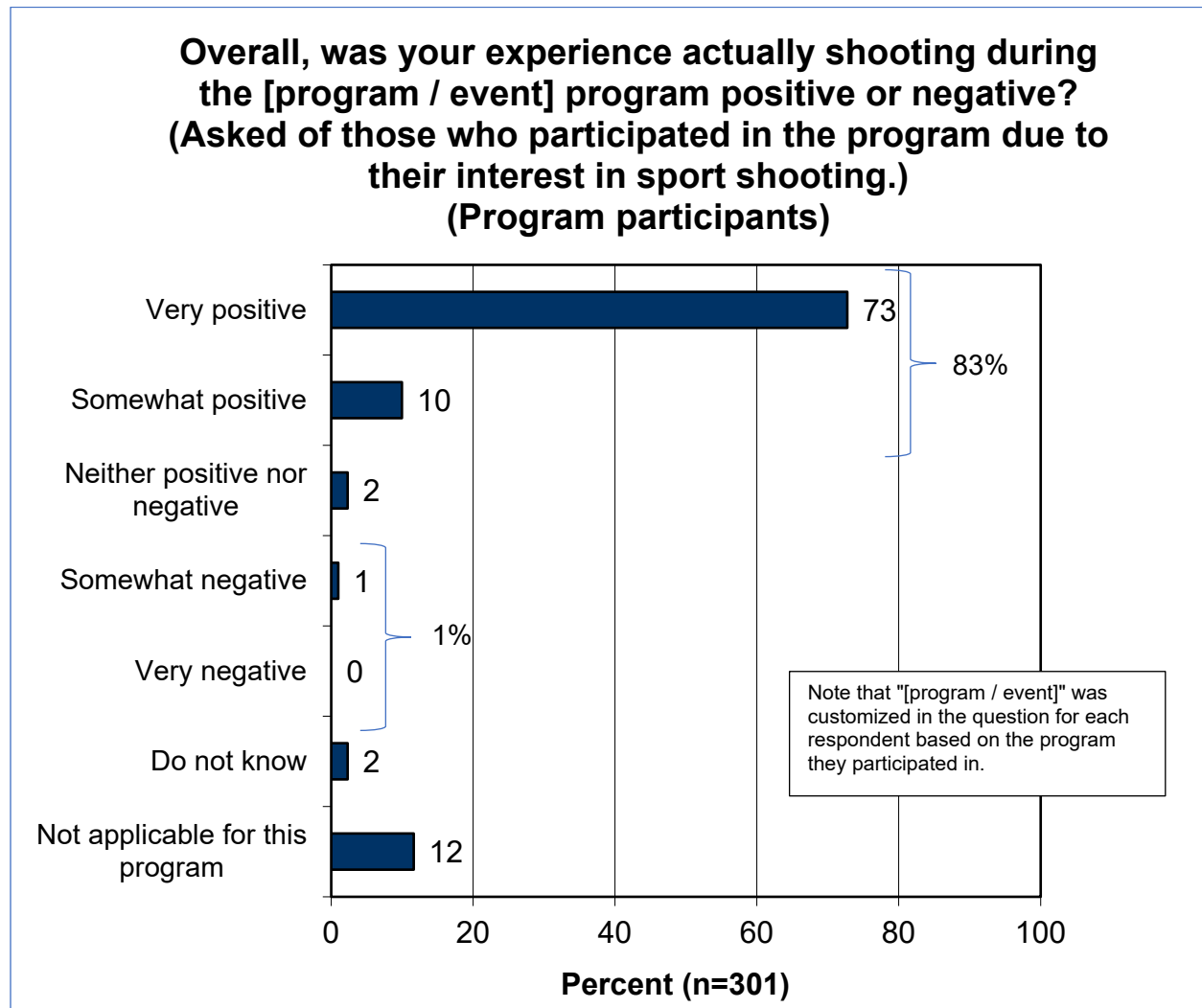
Percent (n=293)

A majority of hunting program participants (63%) said the program increased their hunting skills a great deal (32%) or a moderate amount (31%), the top half of the scale, while 30% (summed on unrounded numbers) said it increased their skills a little (18%) or not at all (13%). Likewise, 62% said it increased their confidence while hunting a great deal (34%) or a moderate amount (28%), while 31% said it increased their confidence a little (18%) or not at all (13%).



SPORT SHOOTING PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

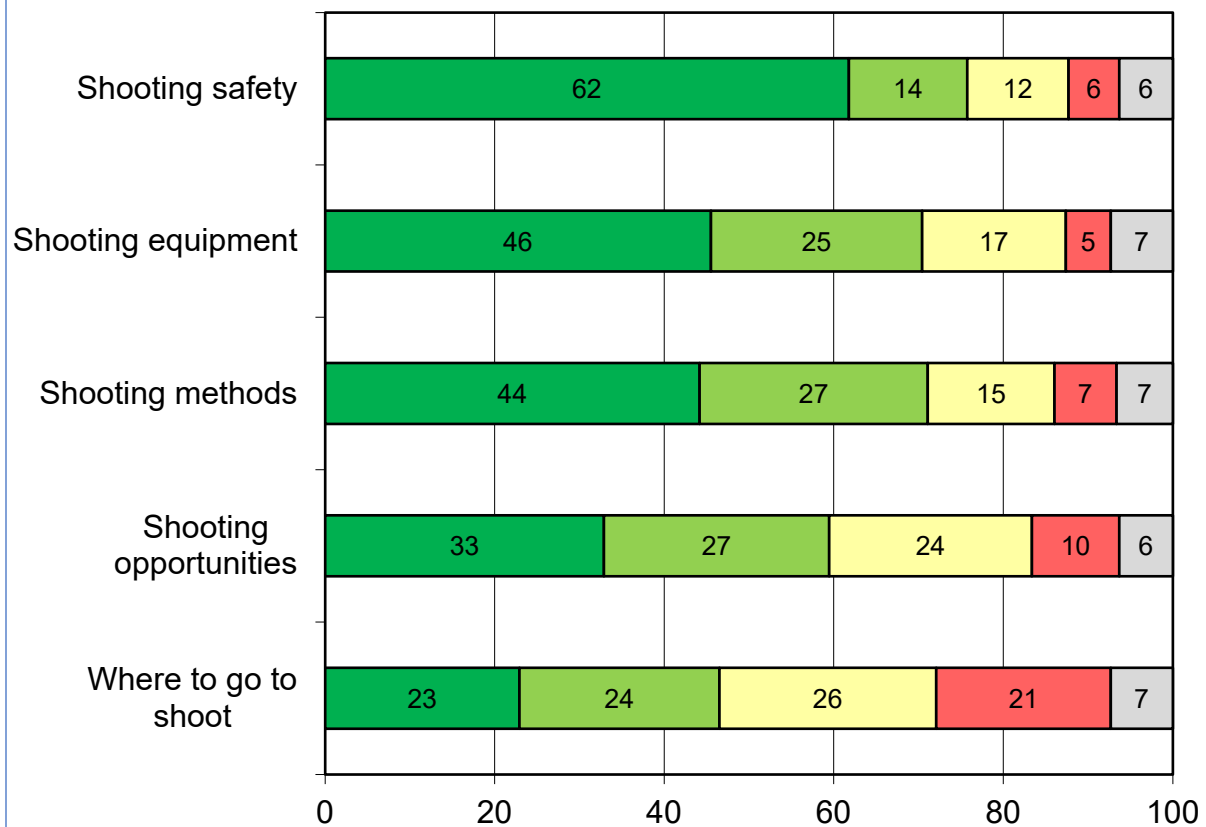
The vast majority of shooting program participants (83%) said that the experience actually shooting during the program was a positive experience (73% said it was very positive), while just 1% said it was negative; 12% said that the question is not applicable to their program.



Shooting program participants were asked if the program increased their knowledge about five aspects of shooting. The top result is shooting safety: 62% said their knowledge increased a great deal and 14% said it did a moderate amount. In a second tier are shooting equipment (46% a great deal; 25% a moderate amount) and shooting methods (44% a great deal; 27% a moderate amount). At the bottom are shooting opportunities (33% a great deal; 27% a moderate amount) and where to go to shoot (23% a great deal; 24% a moderate amount).

How much would you say the [program / event] program increased your knowledge about each of the following? (Asked of those who participated in the program due to their interest in sport shooting.) (Program participants)

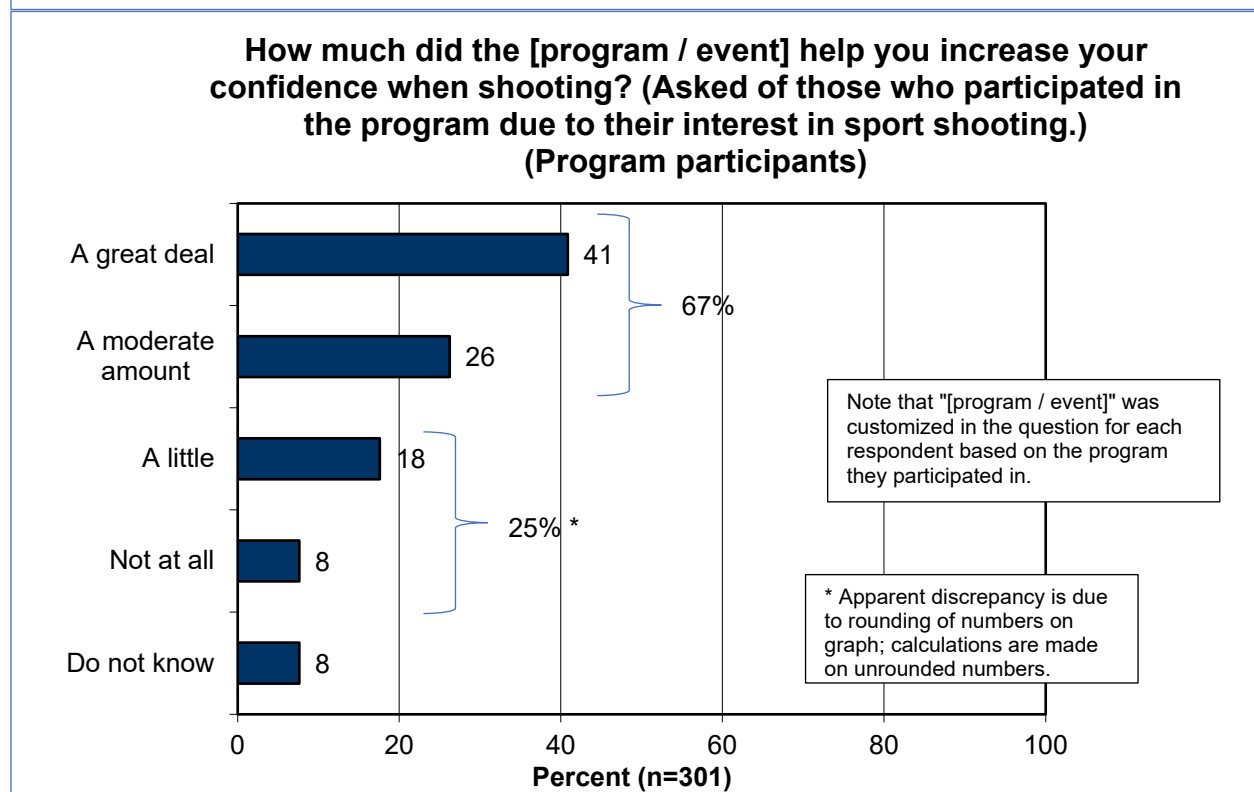
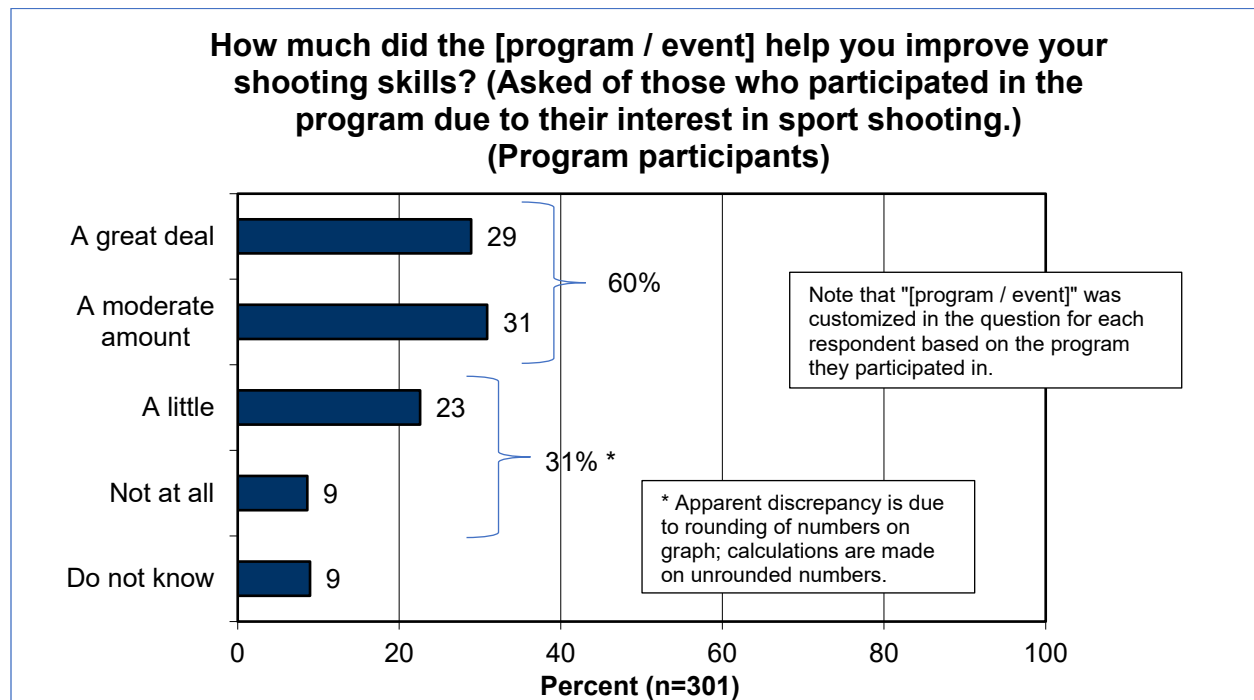
■ A great deal ■ A moderate amount ■ A little ■ Not at all ■ Do not know



Note that "[program / event]" was customized in the question for each respondent based on the program they participated in.

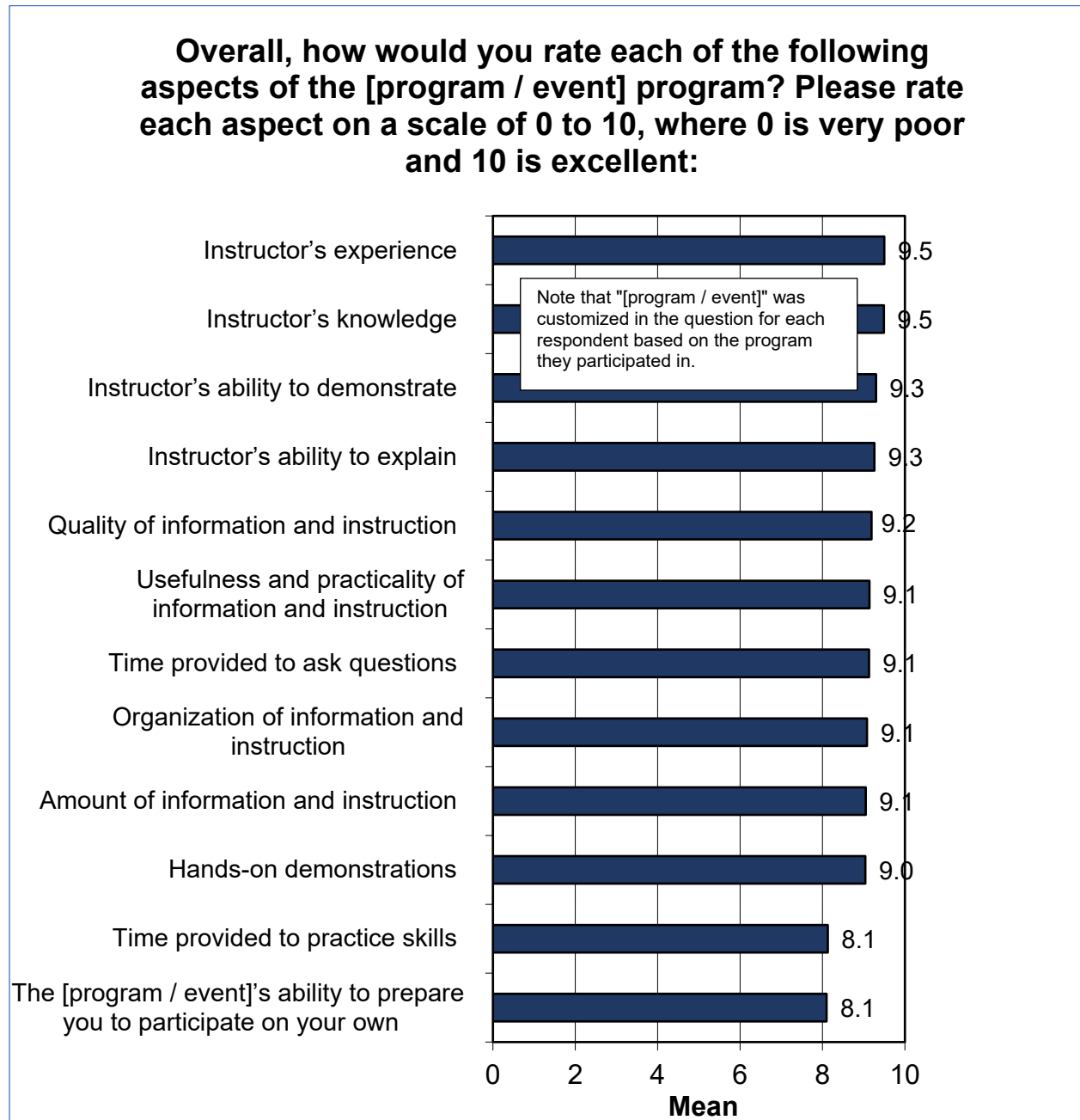
Percent (n=301)

A majority of shooting program participants (60%) said the program increased their shooting skills a great deal (29%) or a moderate amount (31%), the top half of the scale, while 31% (summed on unrounded numbers) said it increased their skills a little (23%) or not at all (9%). Also, 67% said it increased their confidence when shooting a great deal (41%) or a moderate amount (26%), while 25% (summed on unrounded numbers) said it increased their confidence a little (18%) or not at all (8%).



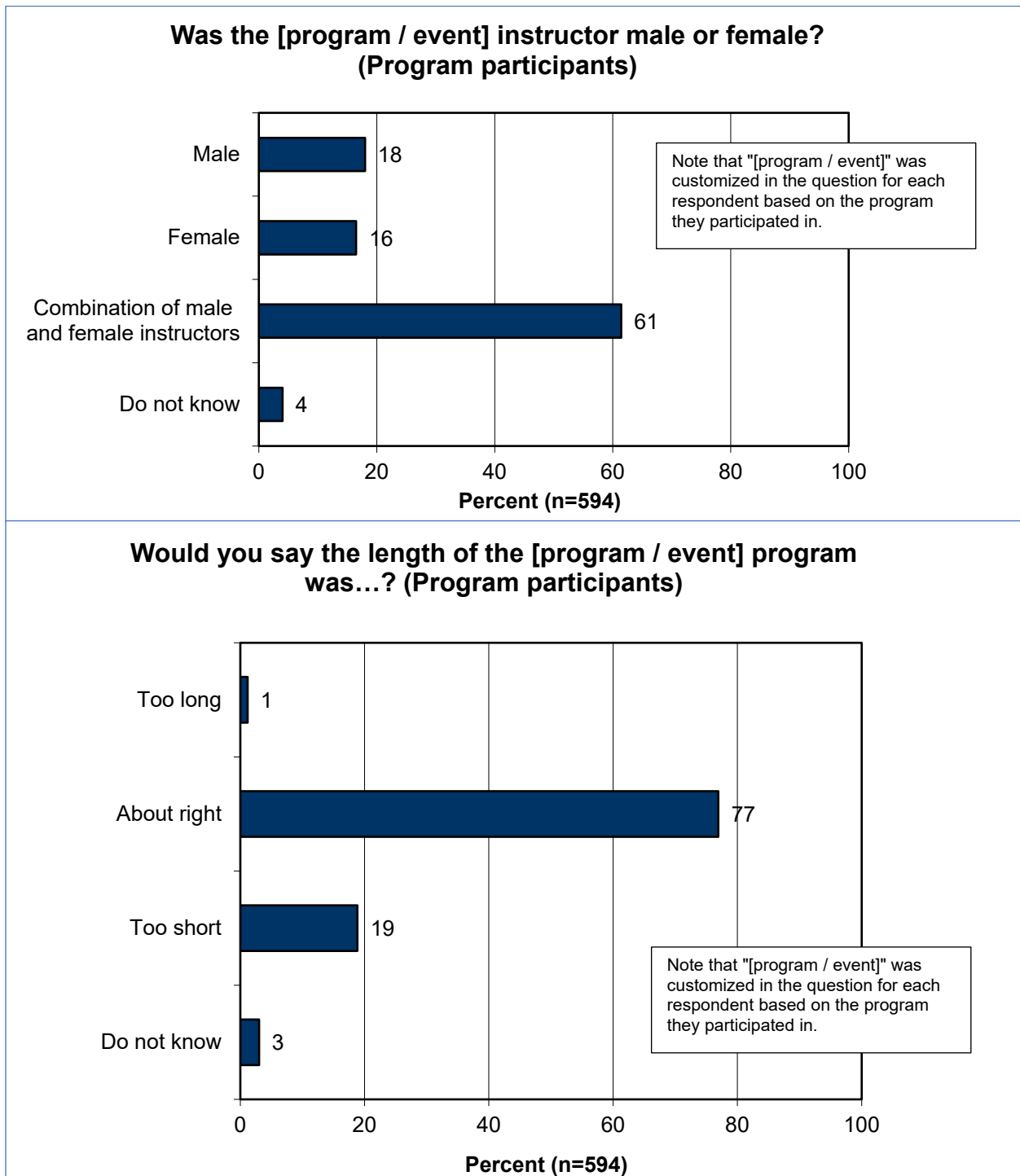
RATINGS OF PROGRAM ASPECTS

Participants were asked to rate a series of 12 aspects of the R3 program, on a scale of 0 to 10. The top-rated aspects are the instructor’s experience and the instructor’s knowledge, both with mean ratings of 9.5. All other program aspects have mean ratings of 9.0 or higher, with two exceptions (both with mean ratings of 8.1): time provided to practice skills and the program’s ability to prepare them to participate on their own. The full list is shown.

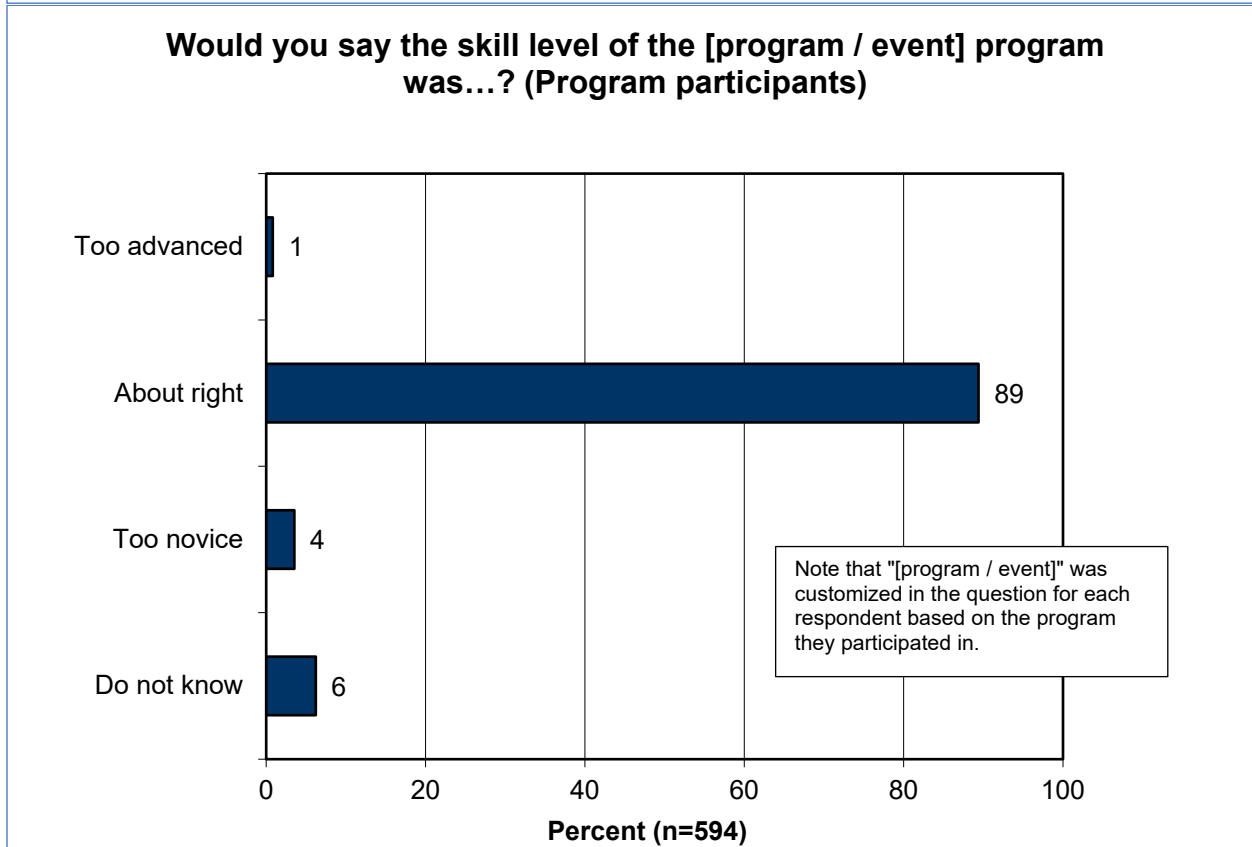
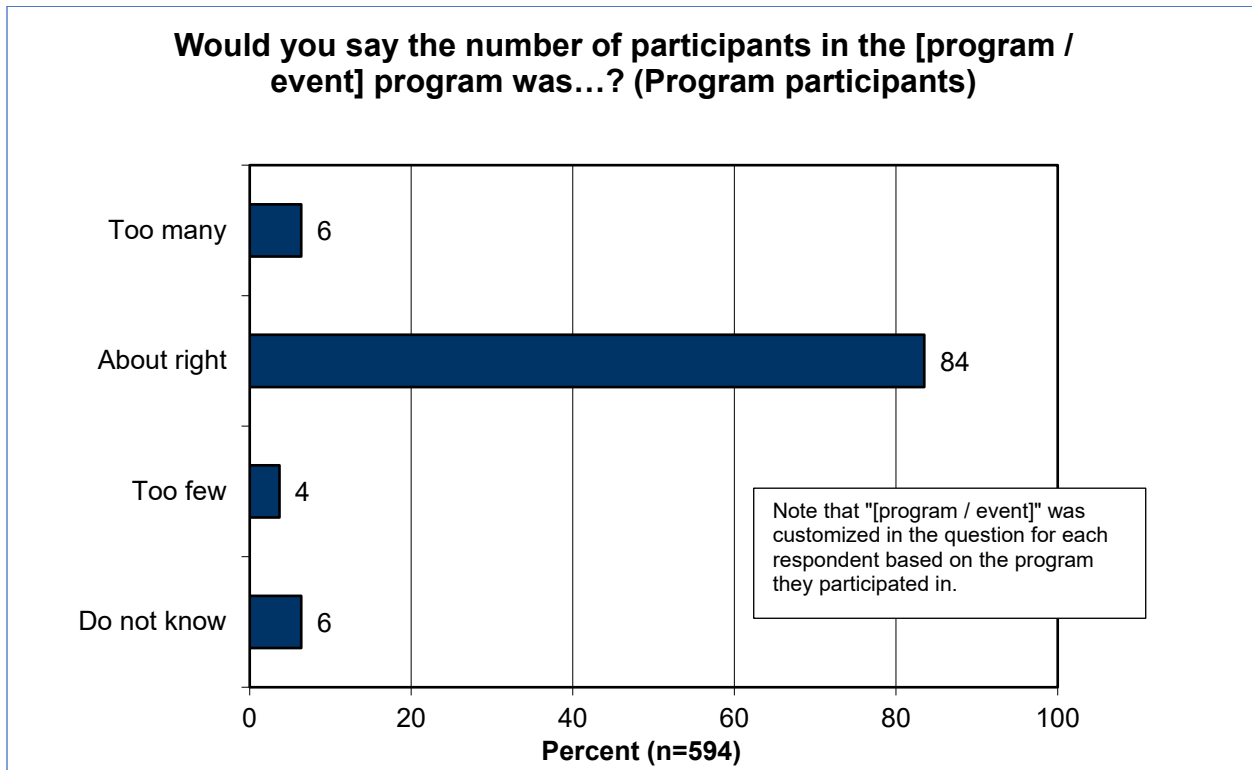


ADDITIONAL ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

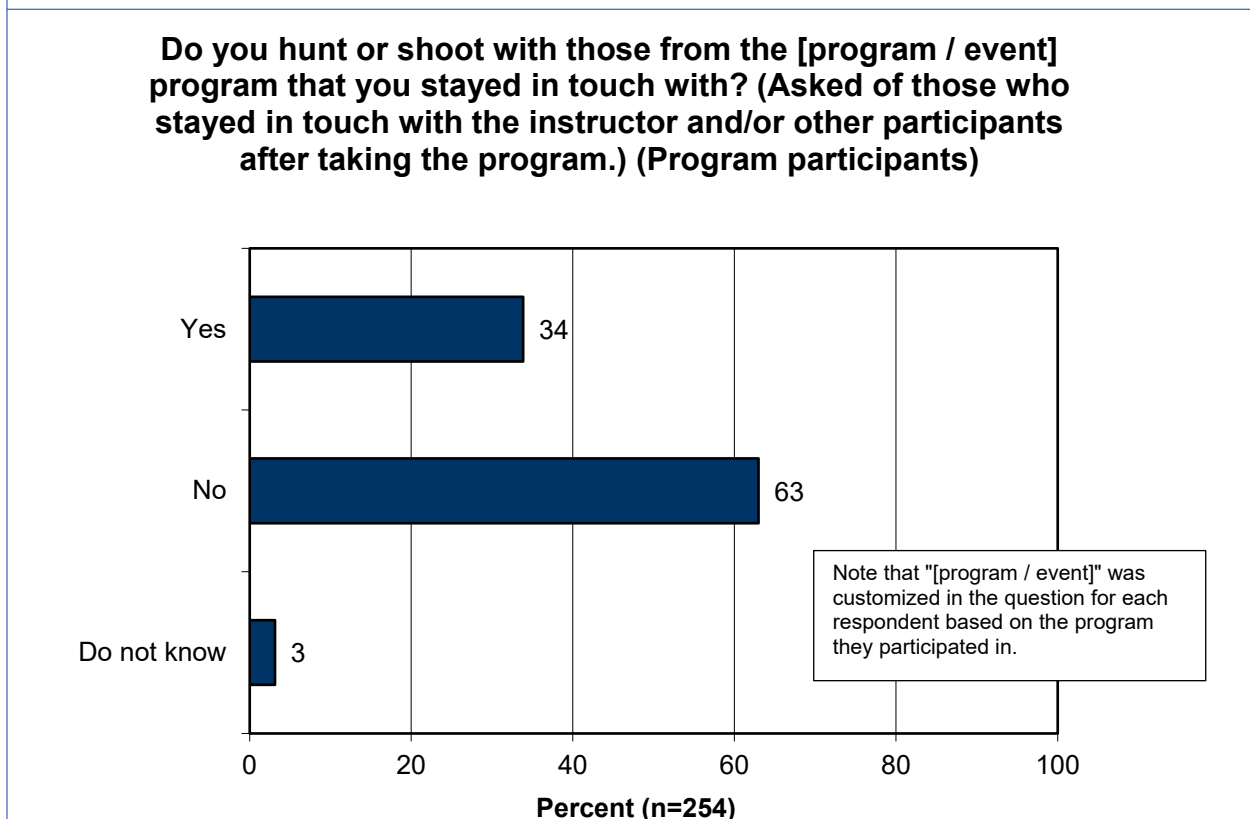
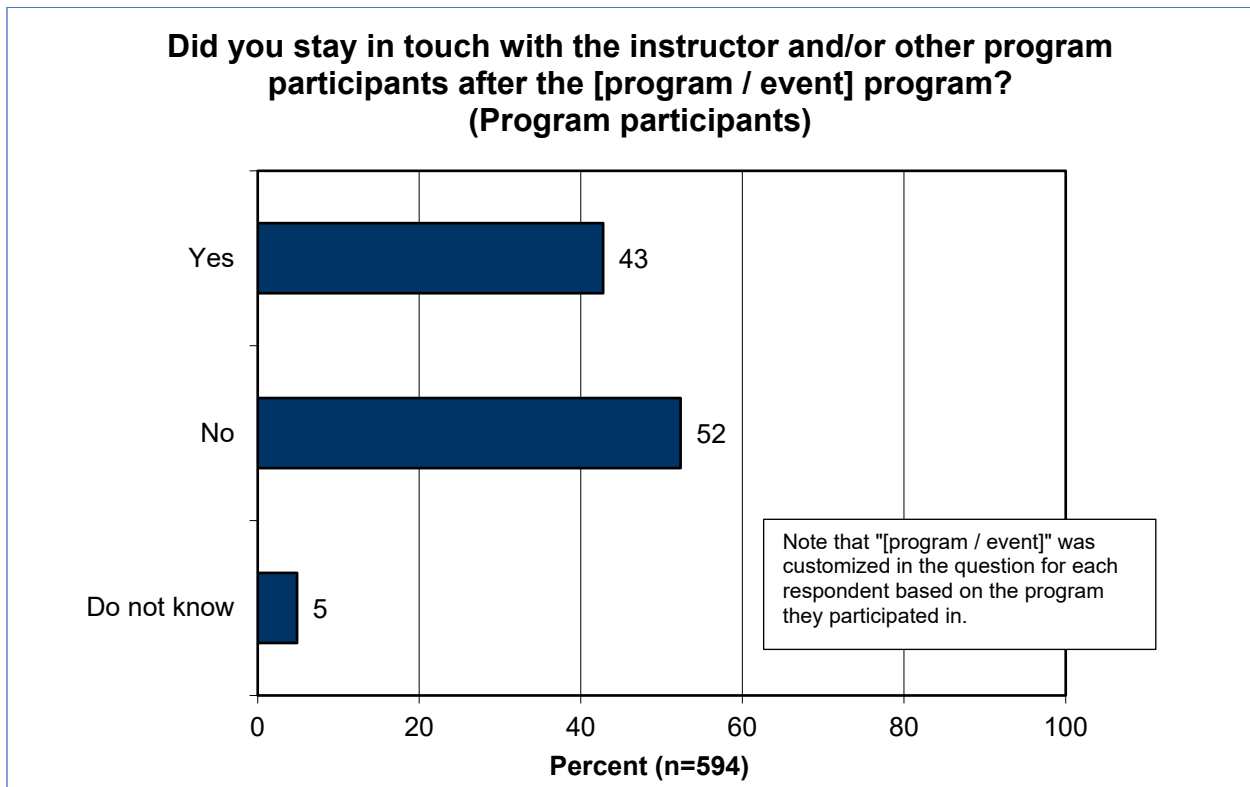
A majority of participants (61%) said that their program featured a combination of male and female instructors, while 18% had a male instructor and 16% had a female instructor. Over three fourths of participants (77%) said the length of the program was about right and 19% said it was too short.



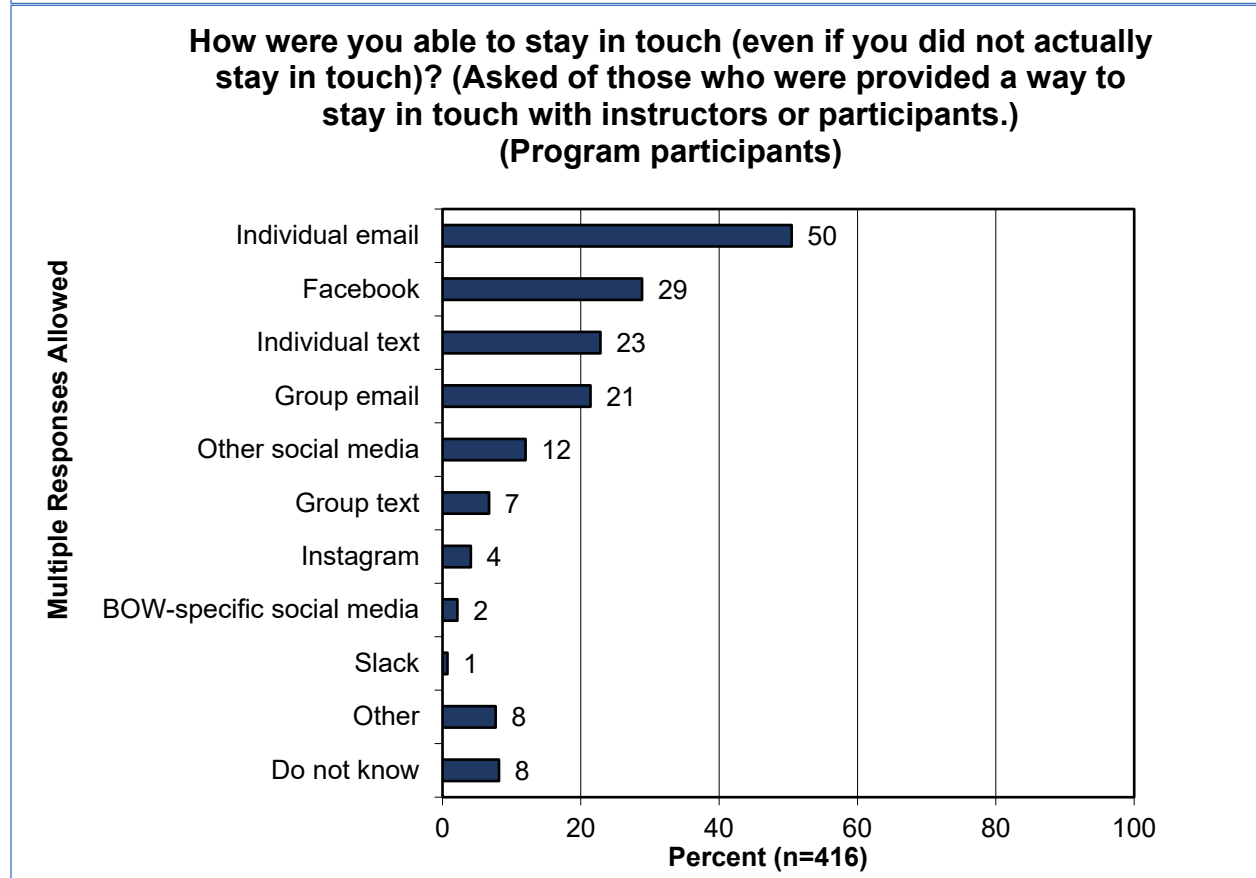
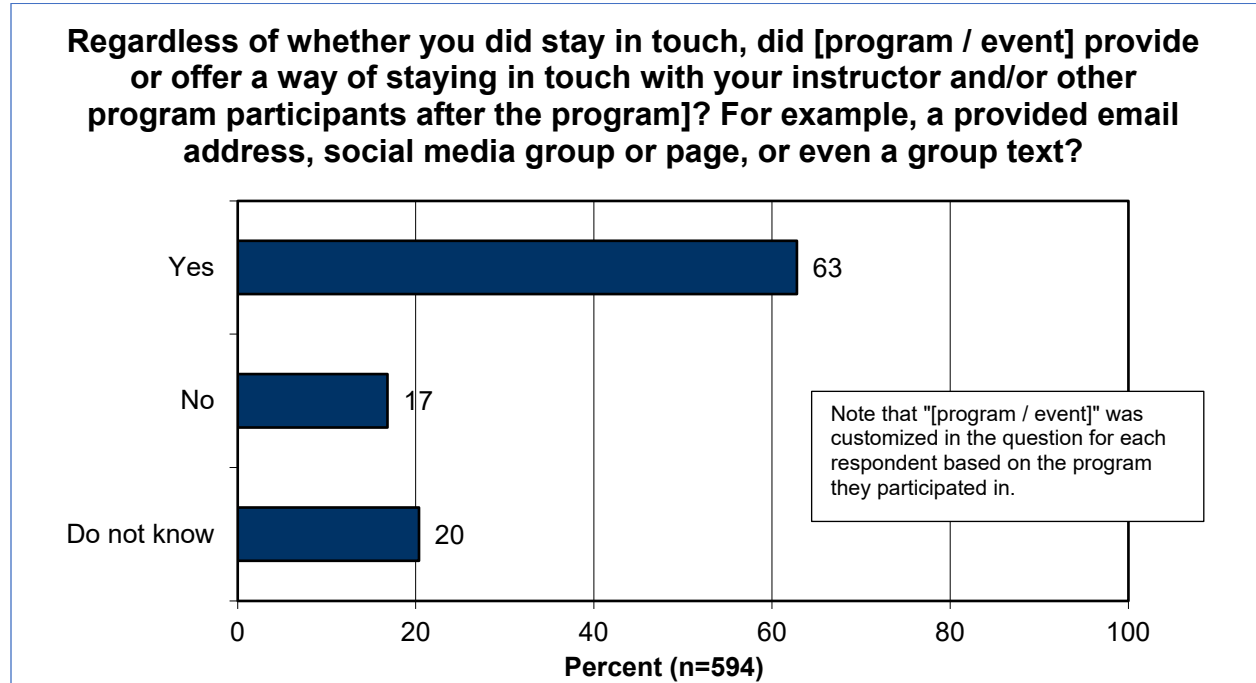
Most participants (84%) say the number of women in the program was about right, and 89% say the skill level was about right.



Nearly half of participants (43%) stayed in touch with the instructor and/or other participants after the program, while 52% did not. Among those who stayed in touch with someone from the program, 34% went hunting or shooting with them.

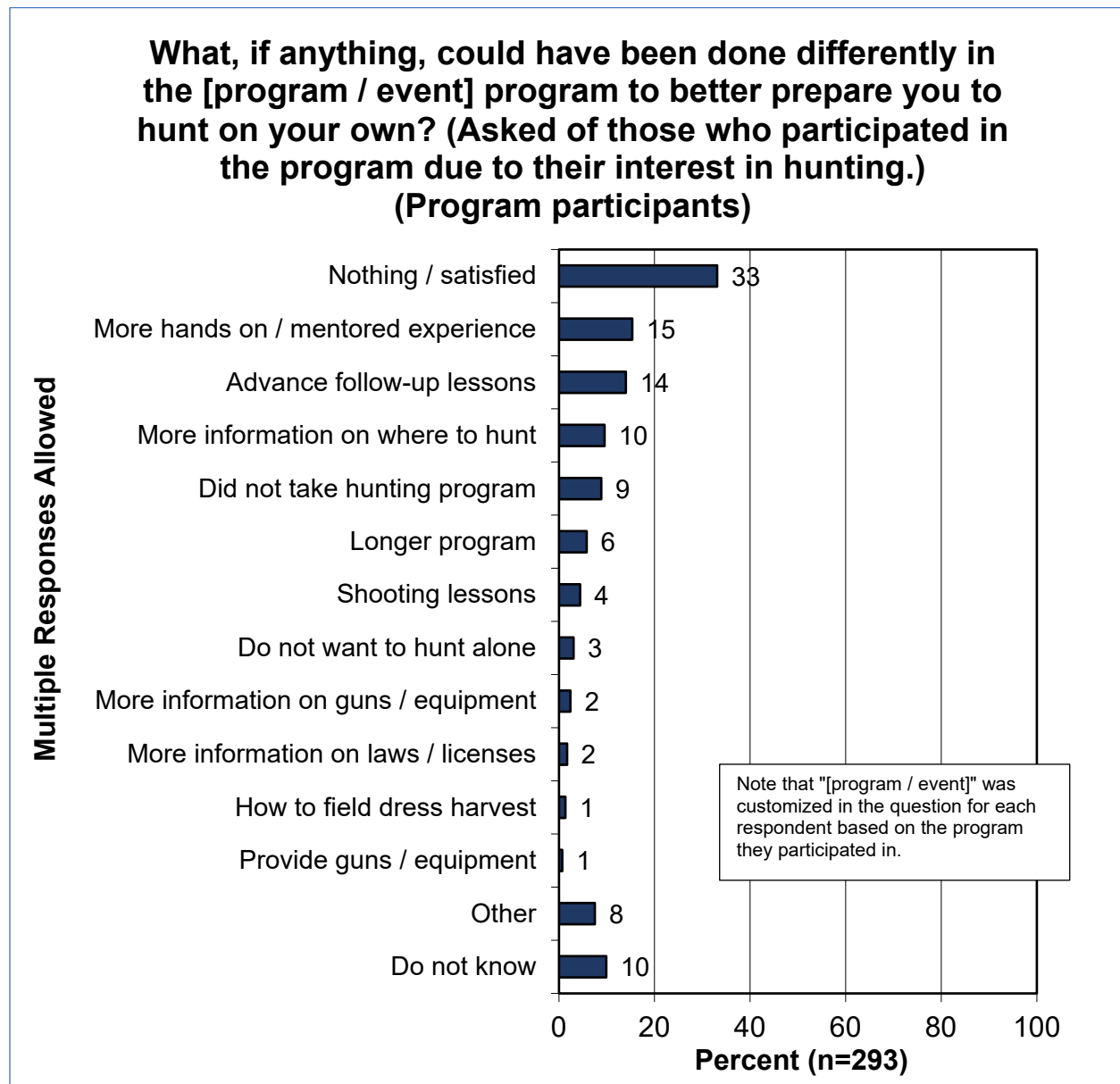


A majority of participants (63%) said the R3 program provide a way of staying in touch with the instructor and/or other participants, regardless of whether they stayed in touch. The most common means of staying in touch, among those who were provided one or more contact methods, include individual emails, Facebook, individual texts, and a group email.

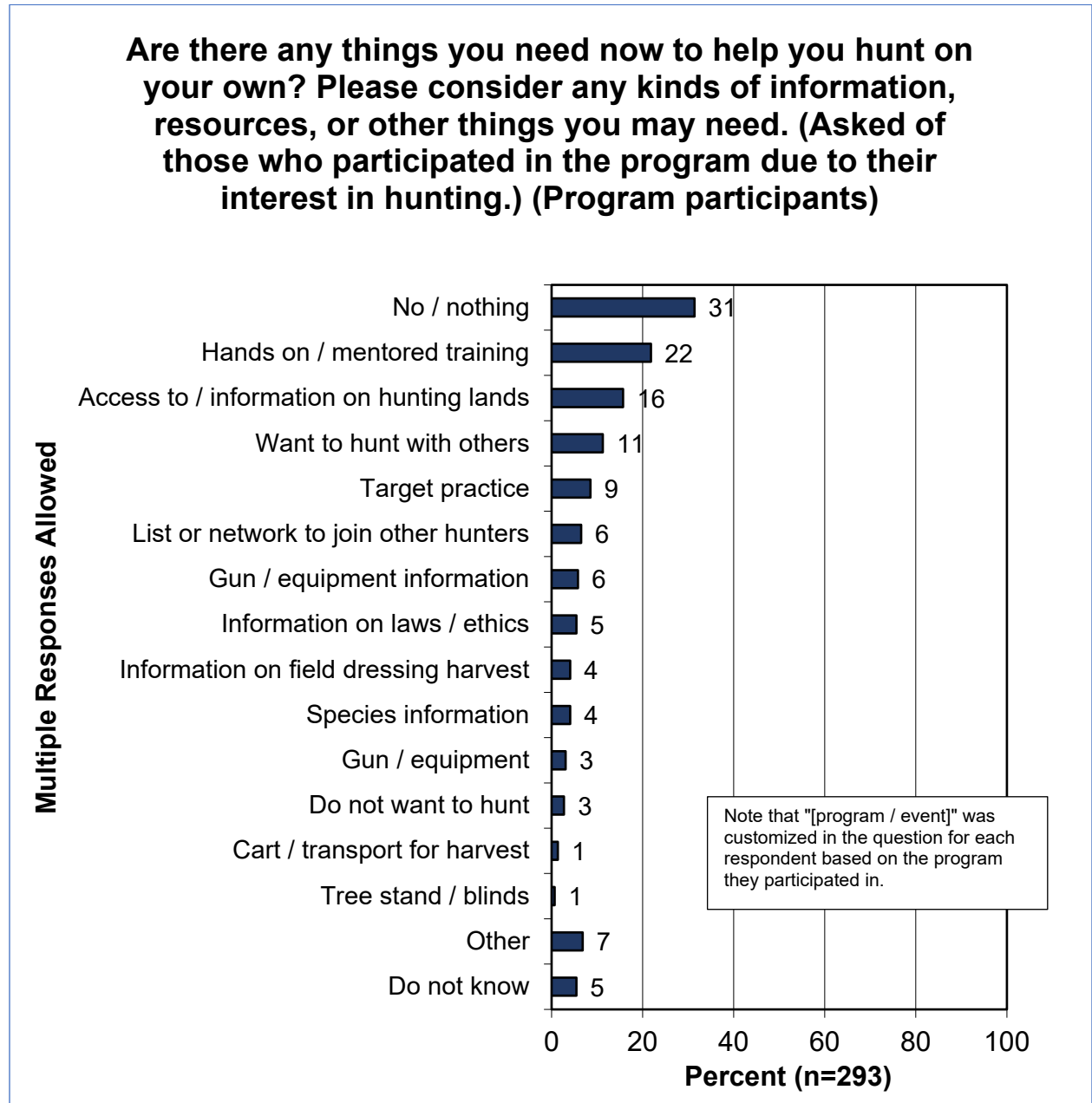


PROGRAM AND HUNTING EXPERIENCE

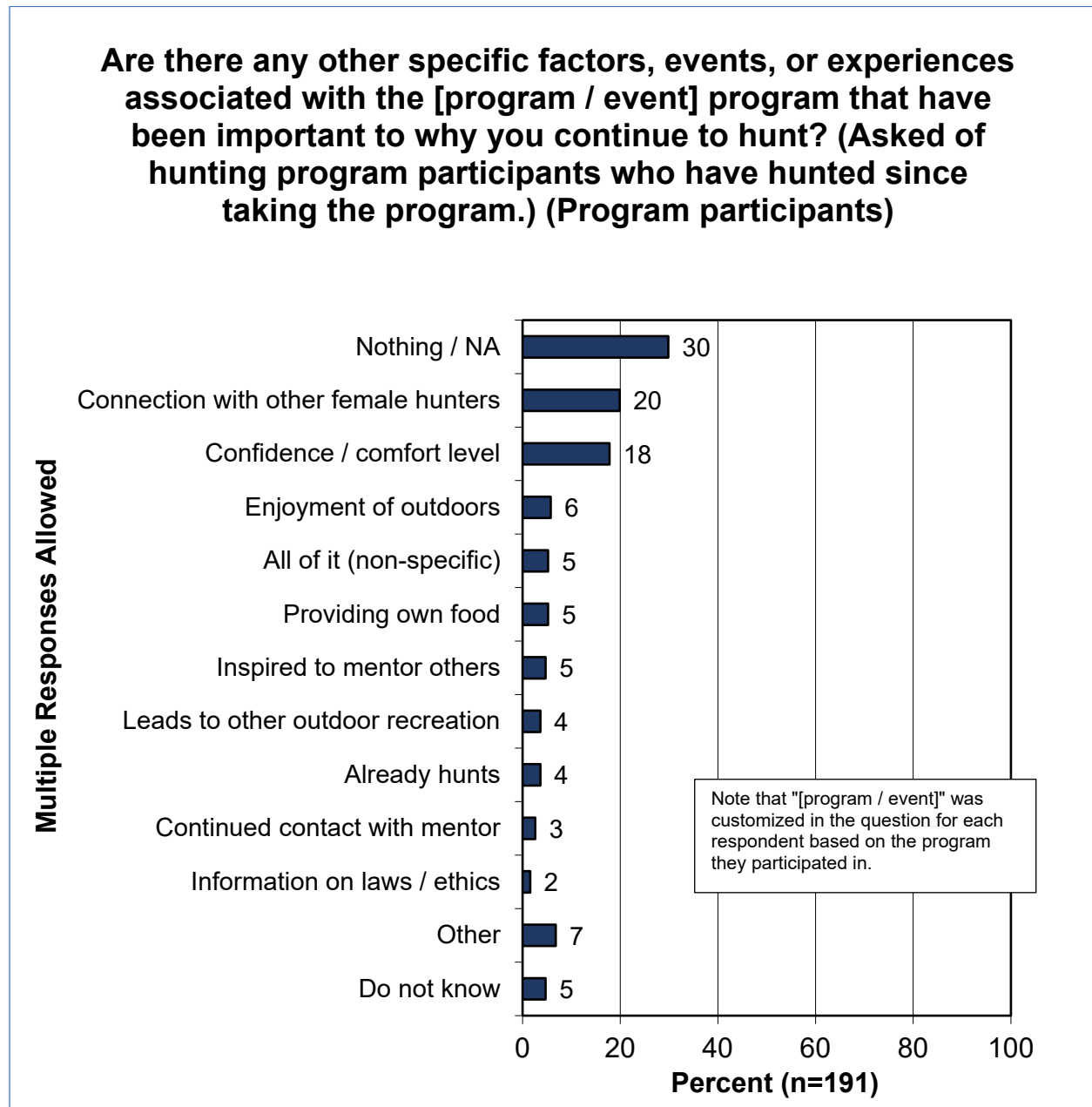
In an open-ended question, hunting program participants were asked if anything could have been done differently in the program to better prepare them to hunt on their own. The top response is that nothing more was needed or they are satisfied (33% stated this). Otherwise, the top responses are more hands on or mentored experiences, advanced follow-up lessons, and more information on where to hunt.



Hunting program participants were asked if there is anything they need now to help them hunt on their own. The top responses is no/nothing (31% stated this); otherwise, the top responses are hands on or mentored training (22%), access to or information on hunting lands (16%), and that they want to hunt with others (11%).

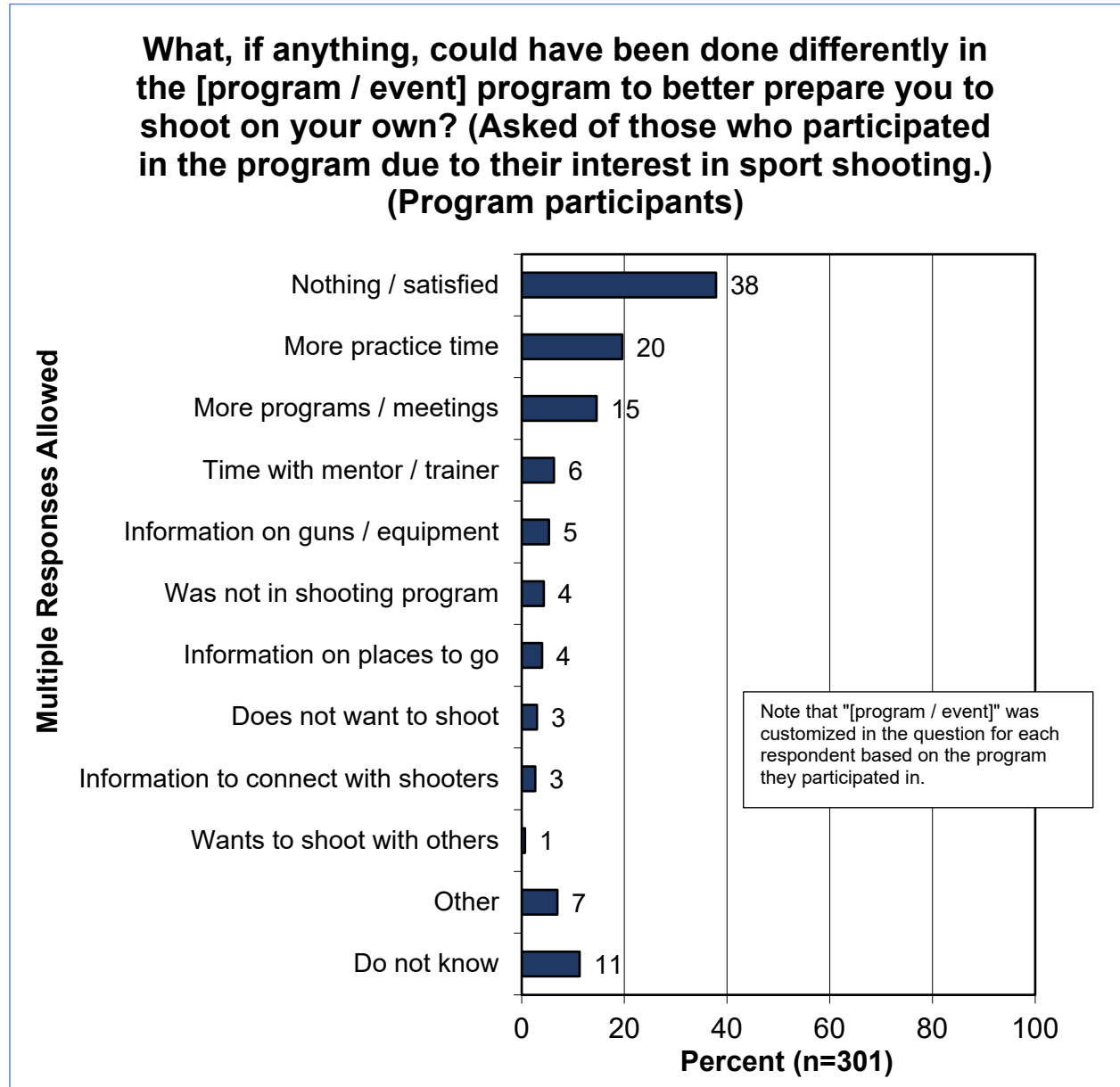


Hunting program participants who have hunted since the program were asked if there are any other factors associated with the program that have been important to why they continue to hunt, in an open-ended question. The top response is nothing (30% stated this); otherwise, 20% said the connection with other female hunters and 18% said their increased confidence or comfort level are important factors.

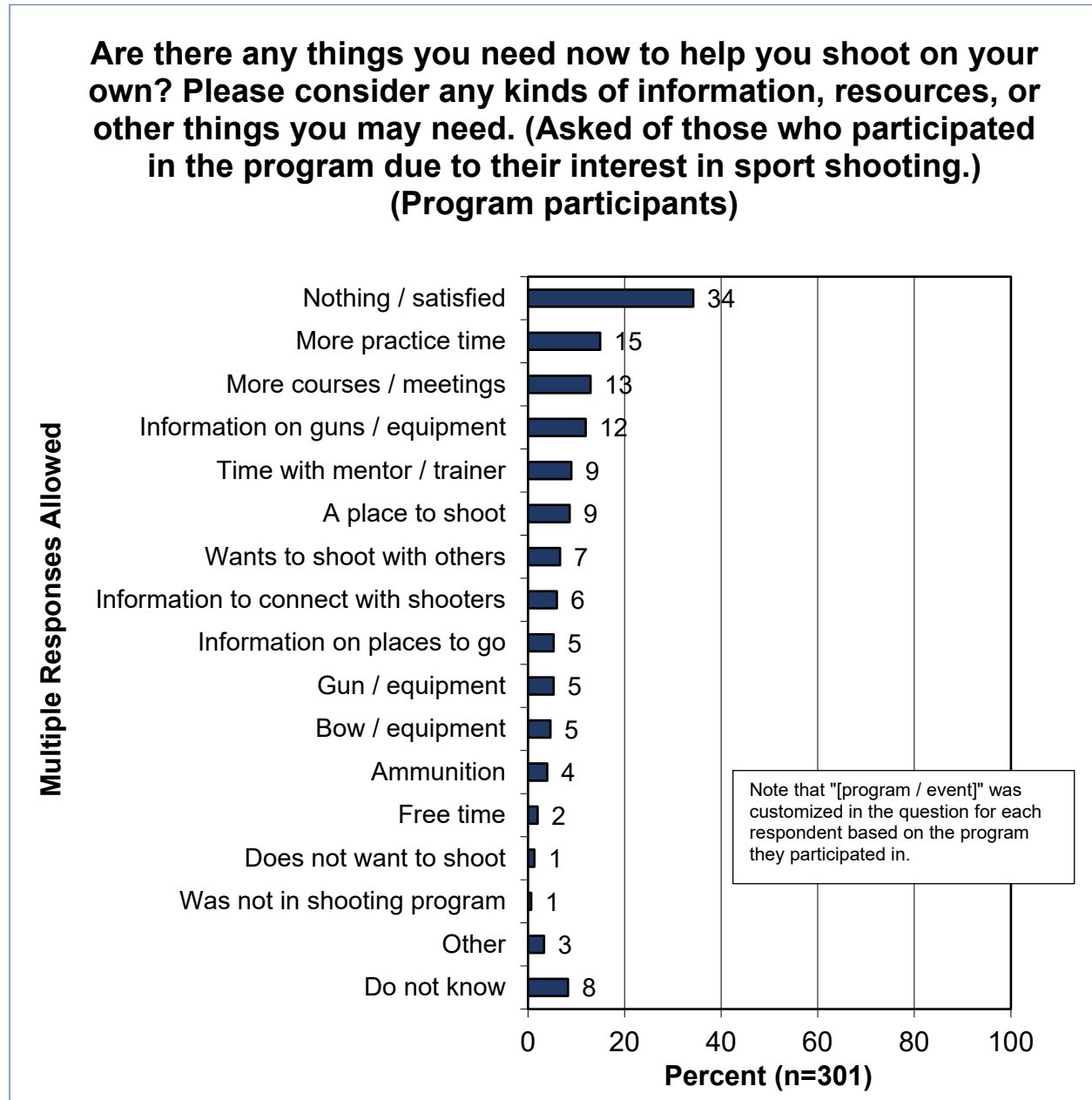


PROGRAM AND SPORT SHOOTING EXPERIENCE

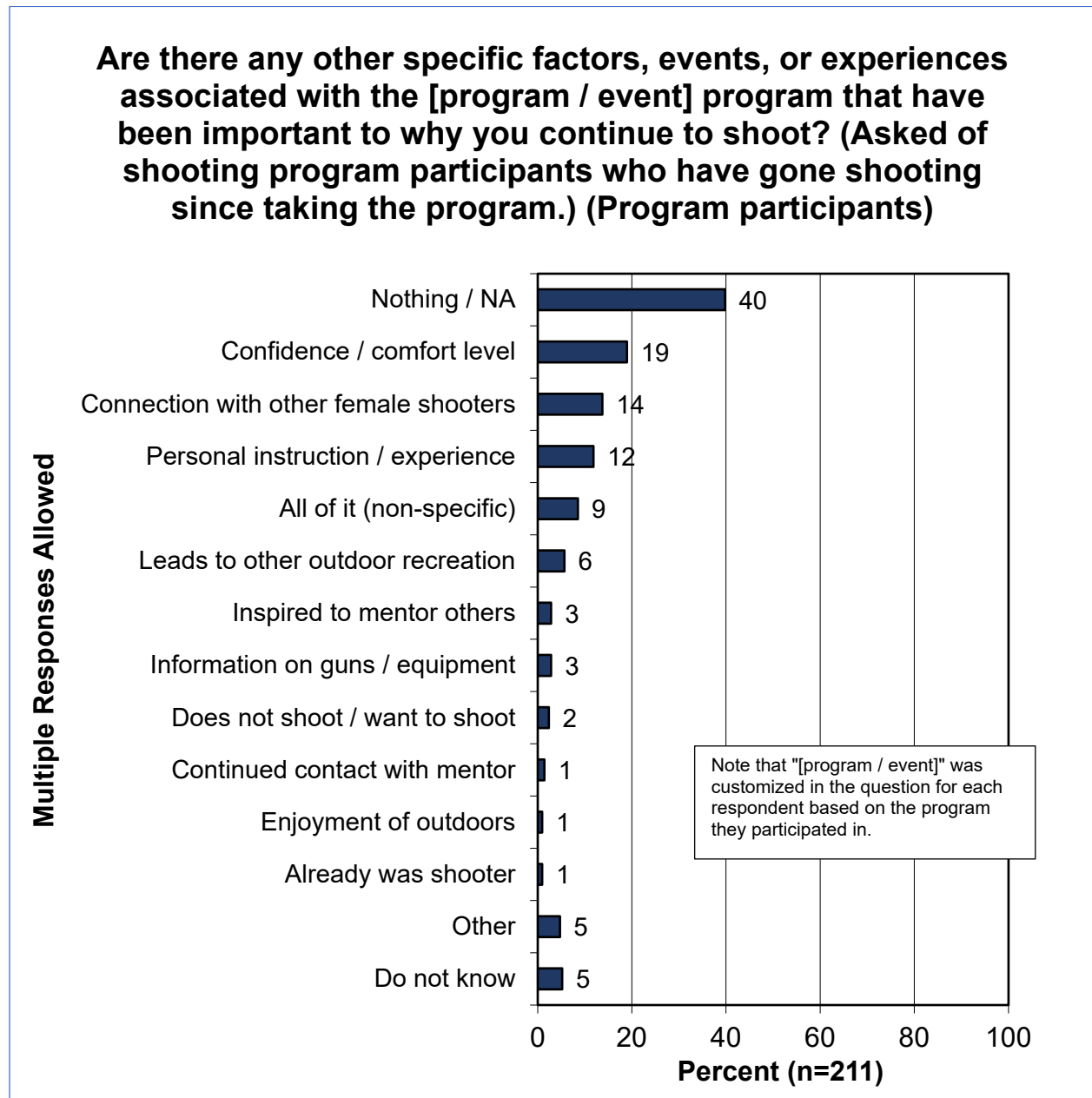
Shooting program participants were asked if anything could have been done differently in the program to better prepare them to shoot on their own. The top response is that nothing more was needed or they are satisfied (38% stated this). Otherwise, the top responses are more practice time (20%) and more programs or meetings (15%).



Shooting program participants were asked if there is anything they need now to help them shoot on their own. The top response is nothing or they are satisfied (34% stated this); otherwise, the top responses are more practice time (15%), more courses or meetings (13%), and information on guns and equipment (12%).



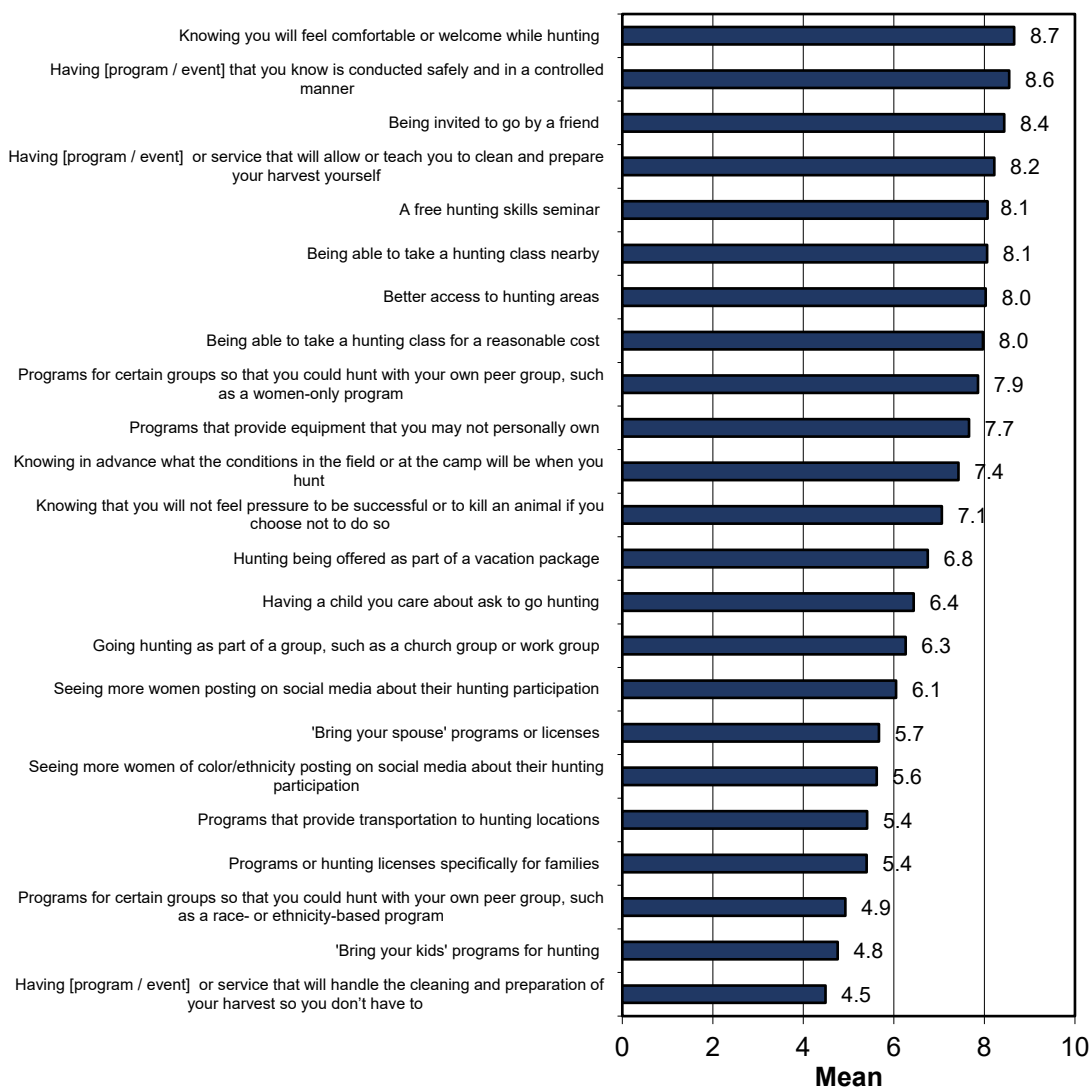
Shooting program participants who have gone shooting since the program were asked if there are any other factors associated with the program that have been important to why they continue to shoot. The top response is nothing (40% stated this); otherwise, 19% said their increased confidence or comfort level, 14% said the connection with other female shooters, and 12% said the personal instruction or experience are important factors.



ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN HUNTING

Hunting program participants were presented with a series of 23 potential encouragements to go hunting and were asked to rate the effectiveness of each, on a scale of 0 to 10. The top-rated encouragements, with mean ratings above 8, are knowing they will feel comfortable or welcome while hunting, knowing the program is conducted safely and in a controlled manner, being invited by a friend, having the program teach how to clean their harvest, a free hunting skills seminar, and having a hunting class nearby. At the bottom, with mean ratings below the midpoint of 5, are having the program clean the harvest for them, having a “bring your kids” hunting program, and having the program for certain peer groups, such as a race- or ethnicity-based program. The full list is shown.

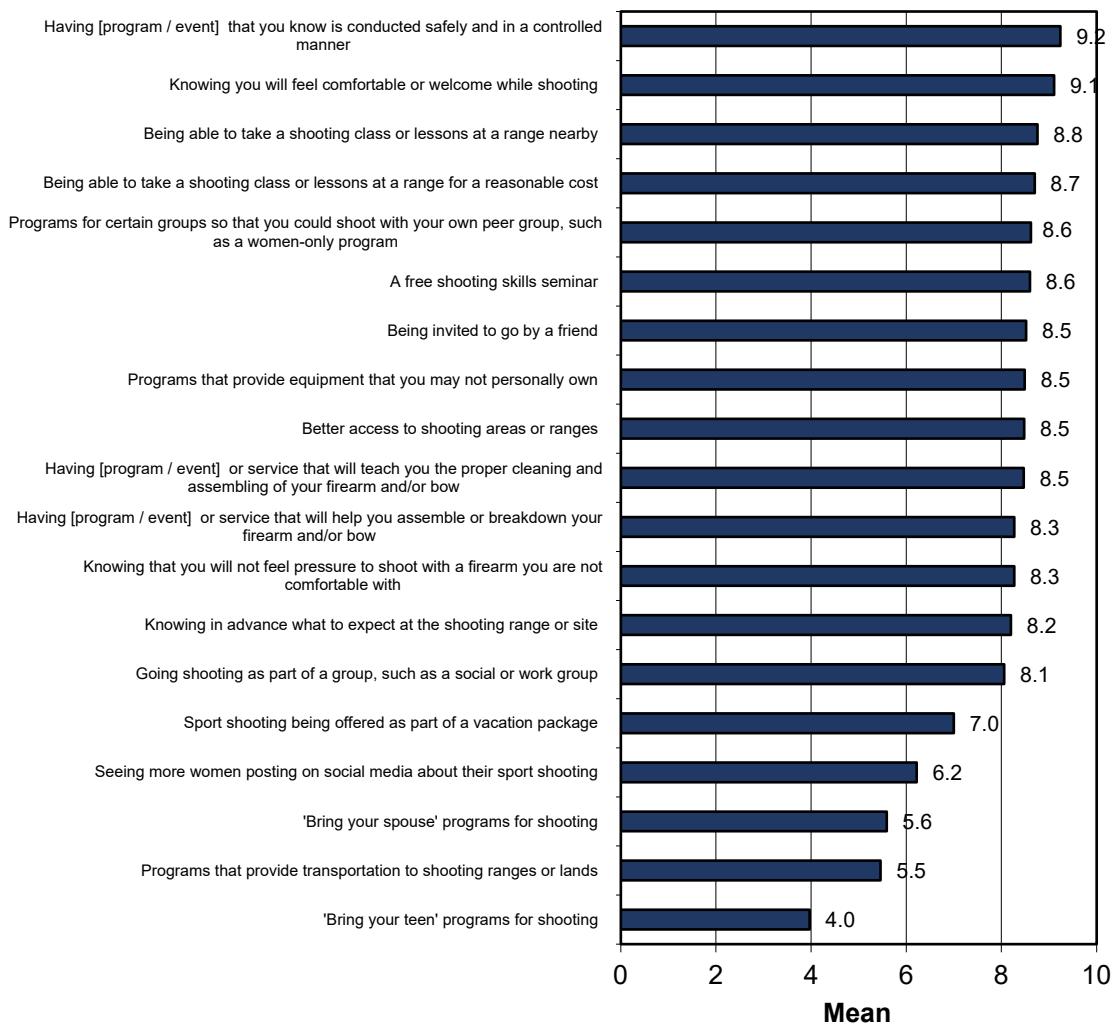
For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to go hunting, on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not effective at all and 10 is extremely effective: (Asked of those who participated in the program due to their interest in hunting.) (Program participants)



ENCOURAGEMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORT SHOOTING

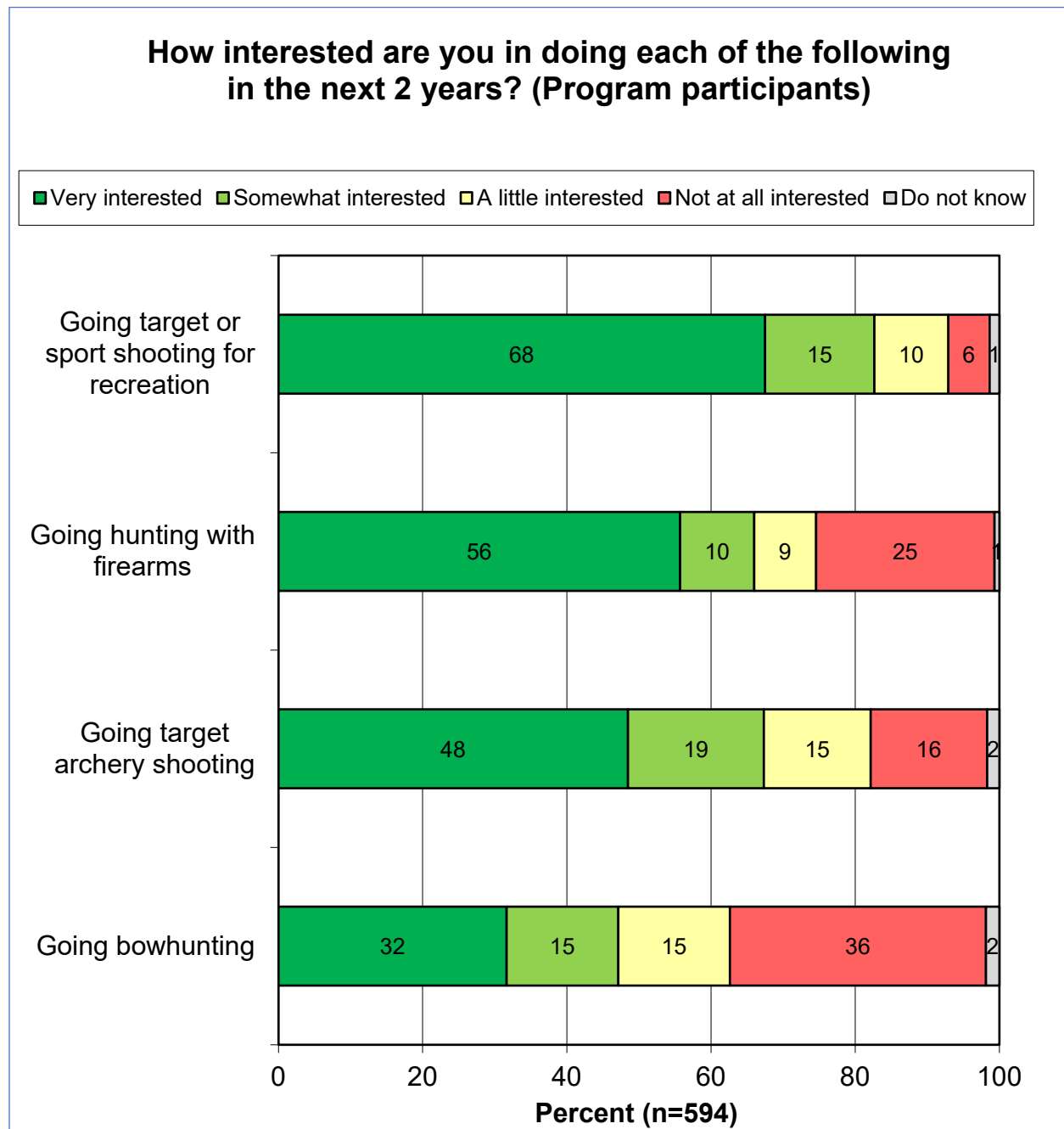
As with the hunter group, sport shooting participants were asked to rate the effectiveness of a series of 19 potential encouragements to go sport shooting (firearms or archery), on a scale of 0 to 10. Most items were highly rated, with 14 of the 19 receiving mean ratings above 8; the top items are knowing the program is conducted safely and in a controlled manner, knowing they will feel comfortable or welcome while shooting, having shooting lessons at a nearby range, and having shooting lessons at a range for a reasonable cost. Rated at the bottom are “bring your teen” programs for shooting, programs that provide transportation to shooting locations, and “bring your spouse” programs for shooting.

For each item, please rate how effective it would be at encouraging you to go sport shooting (including archery shooting), on a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 is not effective at all and 10 is extremely effective: (Asked of those who participated in the program due to their interest in sport shooting.) (Program participants)

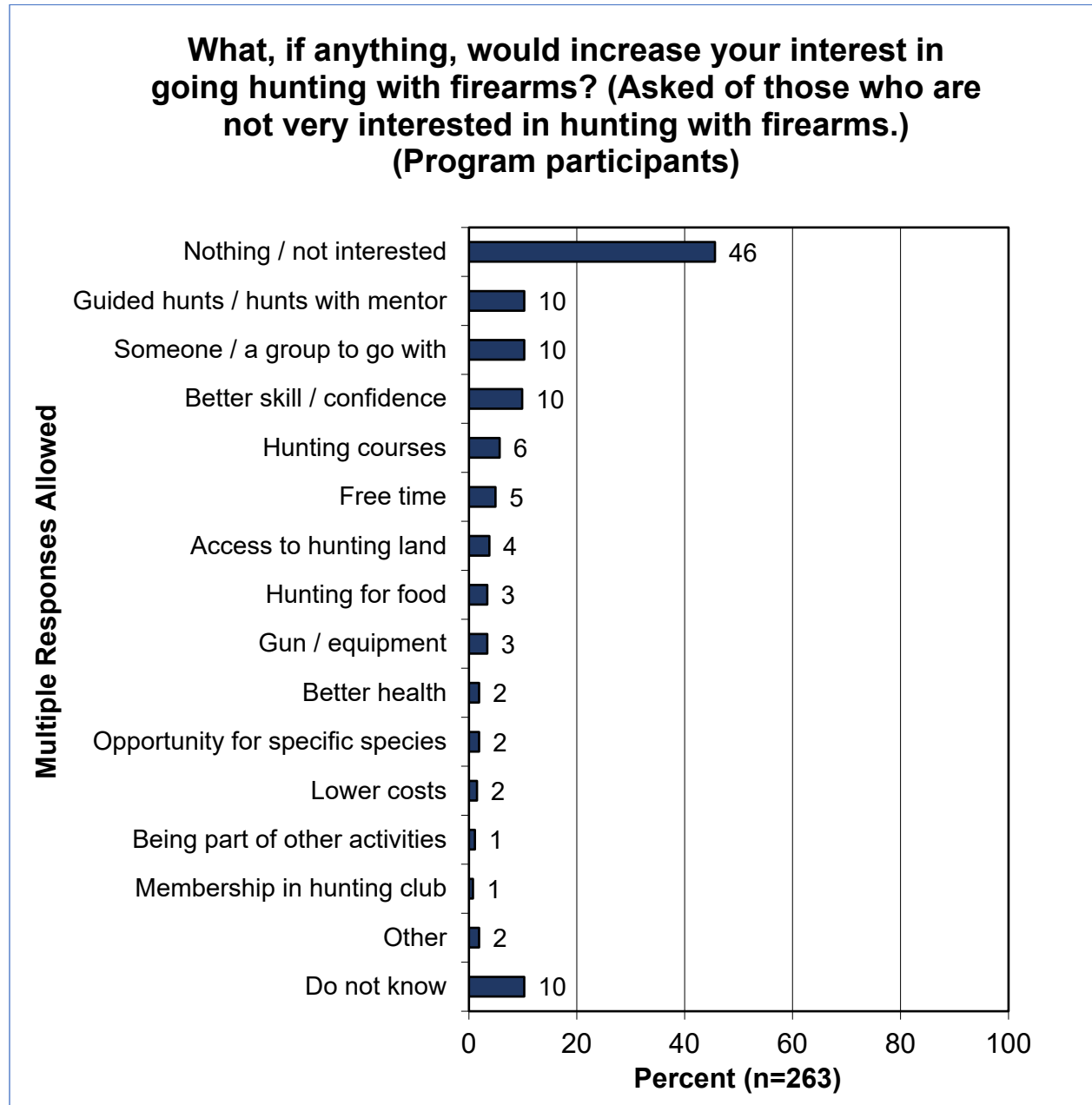


INTEREST IN HUNTING AND SPORT SHOOTING IN THE FUTURE

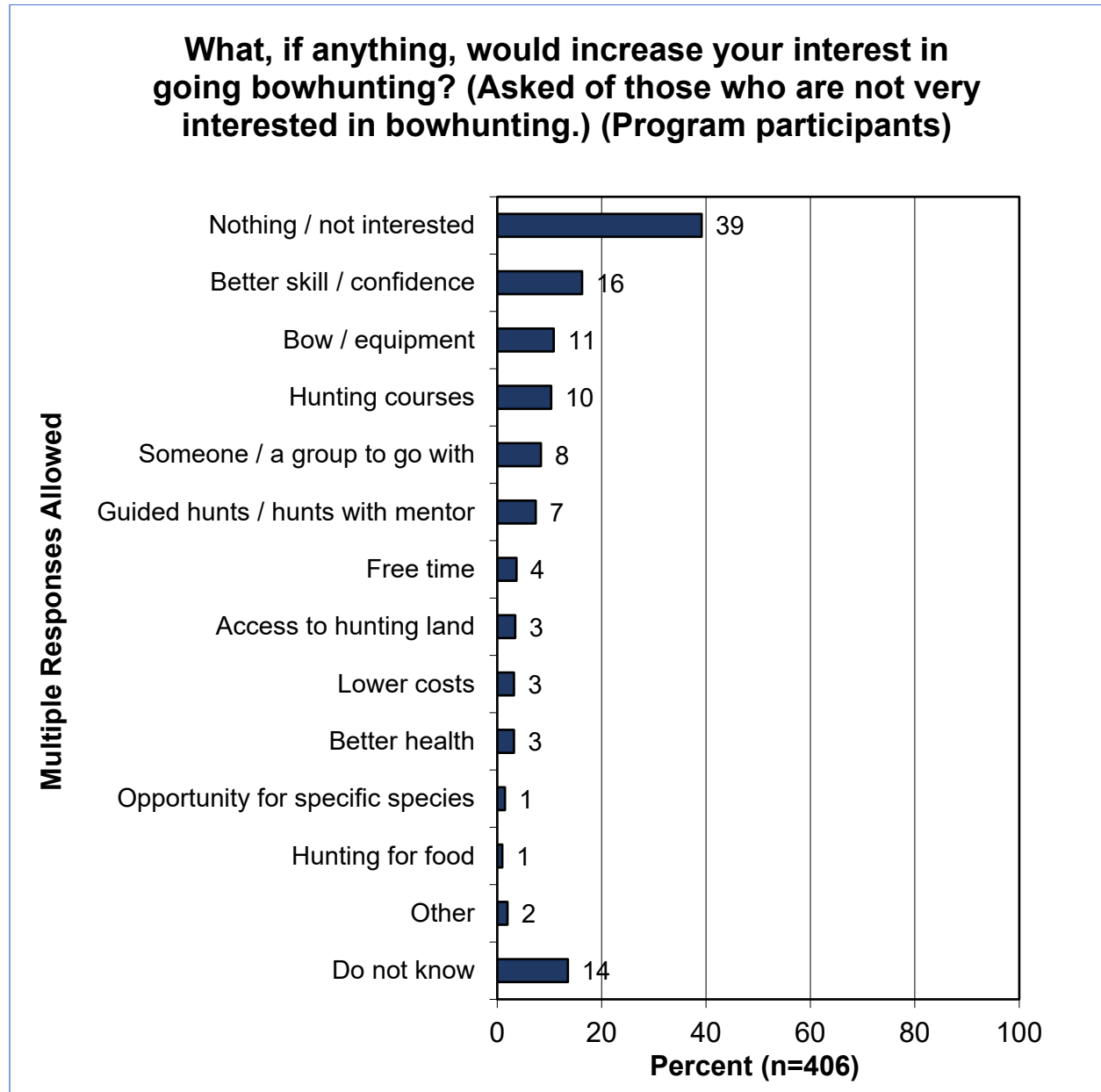
Participants were asked about their interest in participating in the four outdoor recreation activities that are the subject of this survey (in the next 2 years). Most participants (83%) are interested in going sport shooting (68% are very interested), 67% are interested in target archery (48% are very interested), 66% are interested in hunting with firearms (56% are very interested), and 47% are interested in bowhunting (32% are very interested).



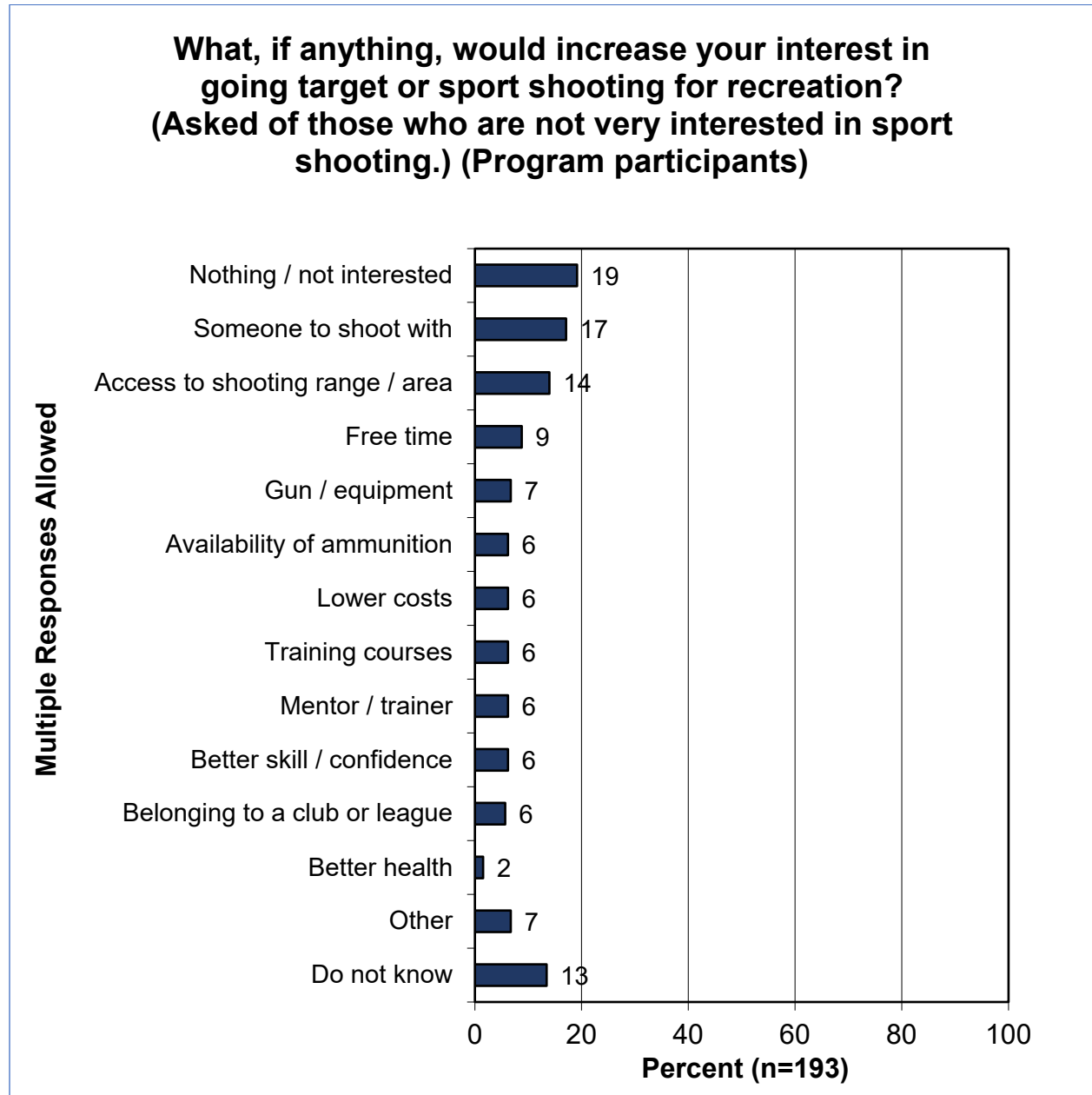
About half of those who are not very interested in hunting with firearms (46%) said nothing would increase their interest. Otherwise, the top potential incentives, each with 10% of the group stating it, are guided hunts or hunts with a mentor, someone or a group to go with, and better skill or confidence.



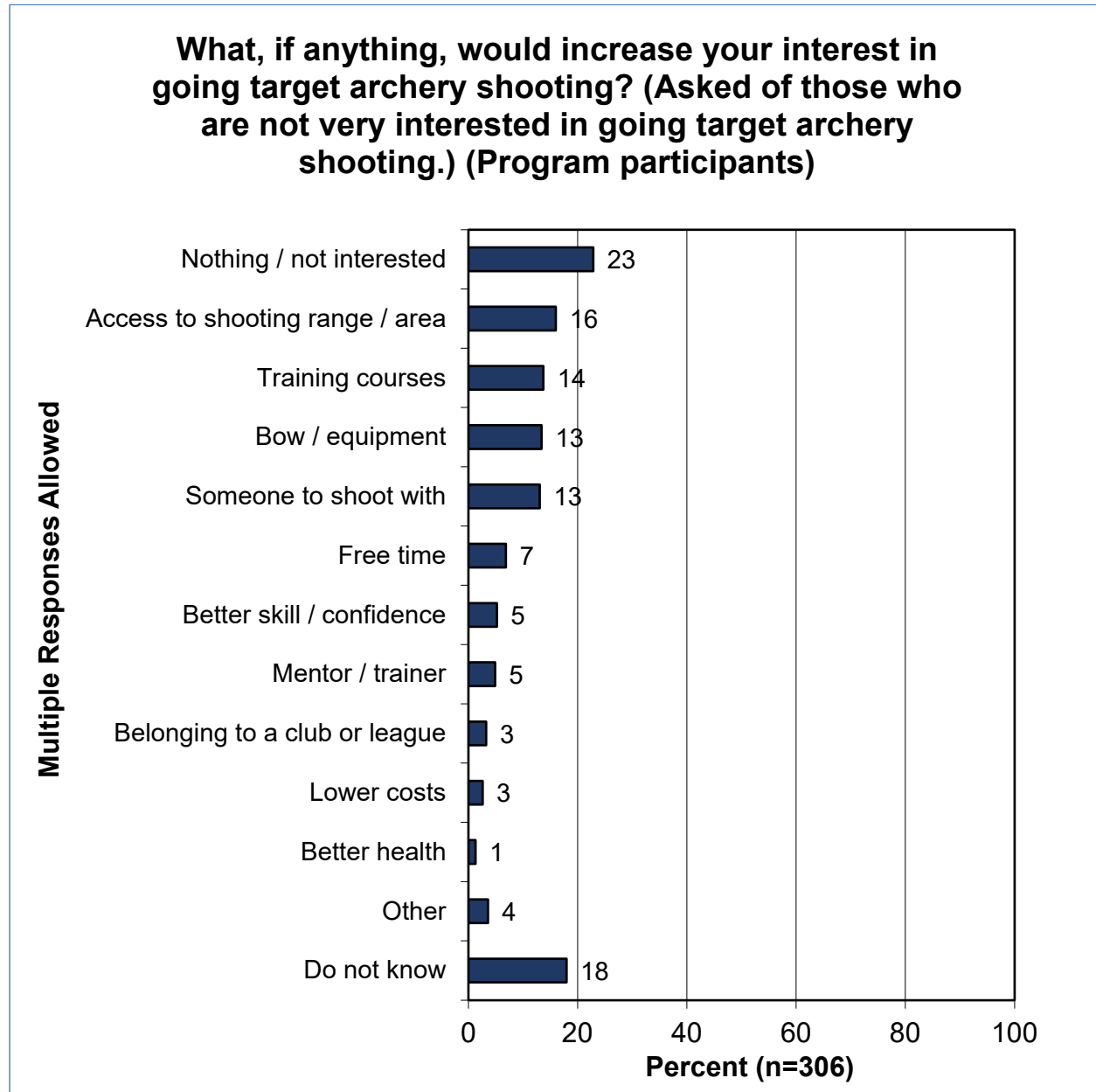
Among those who are not very interested in bowhunting, 39% said nothing would increase their interest. Otherwise, the top potential incentives are better skill or confidence (16% stated this), having a bow or equipment (11%), and hunting courses (10%).



Among those who are not very interested in sport shooting, 19% said nothing would increase their interest, whereas 17% said someone to shoot with and 14% said access to a shooting range or area would increase their interest.

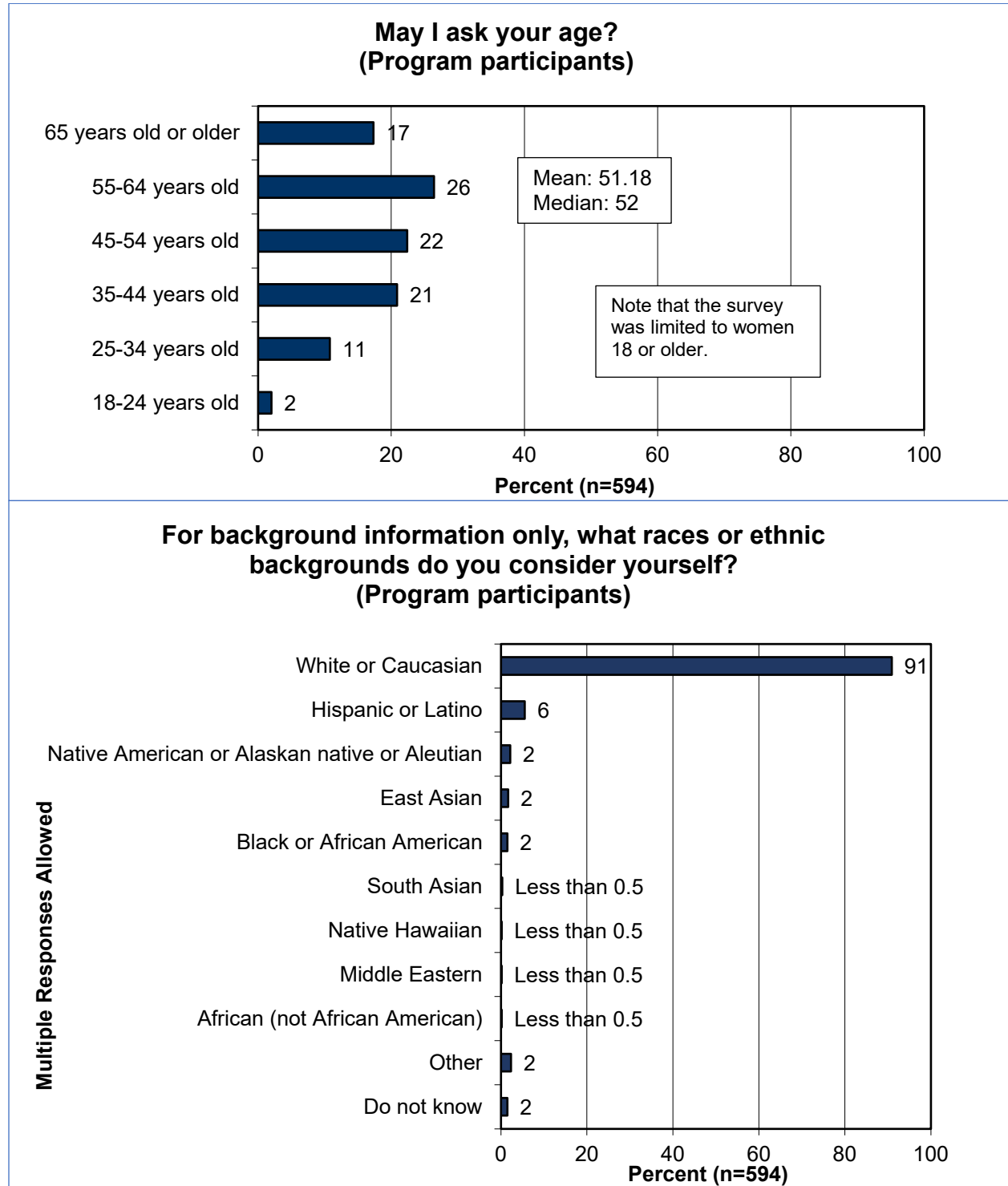


Among those who are not very interested in target archery, 23% said nothing would increase their interest. Otherwise, the top potential incentives are access to a shooting range or area (16% stated this), training courses (14%), a bow or equipment (13%), and someone to shoot with (13%).

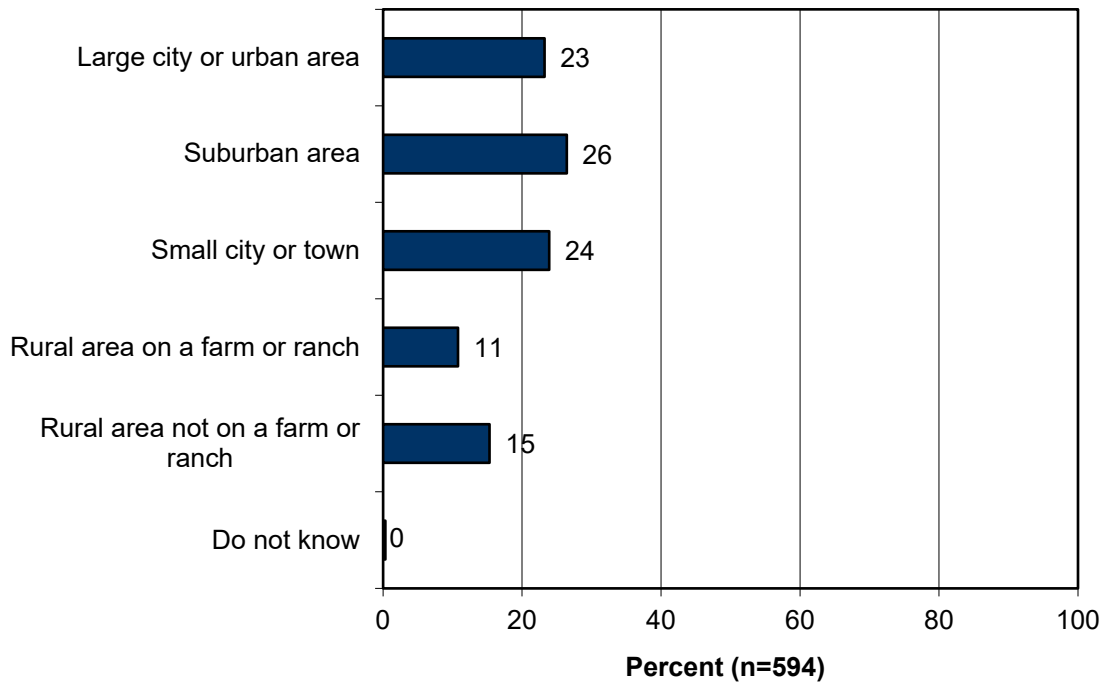


DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF R3 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

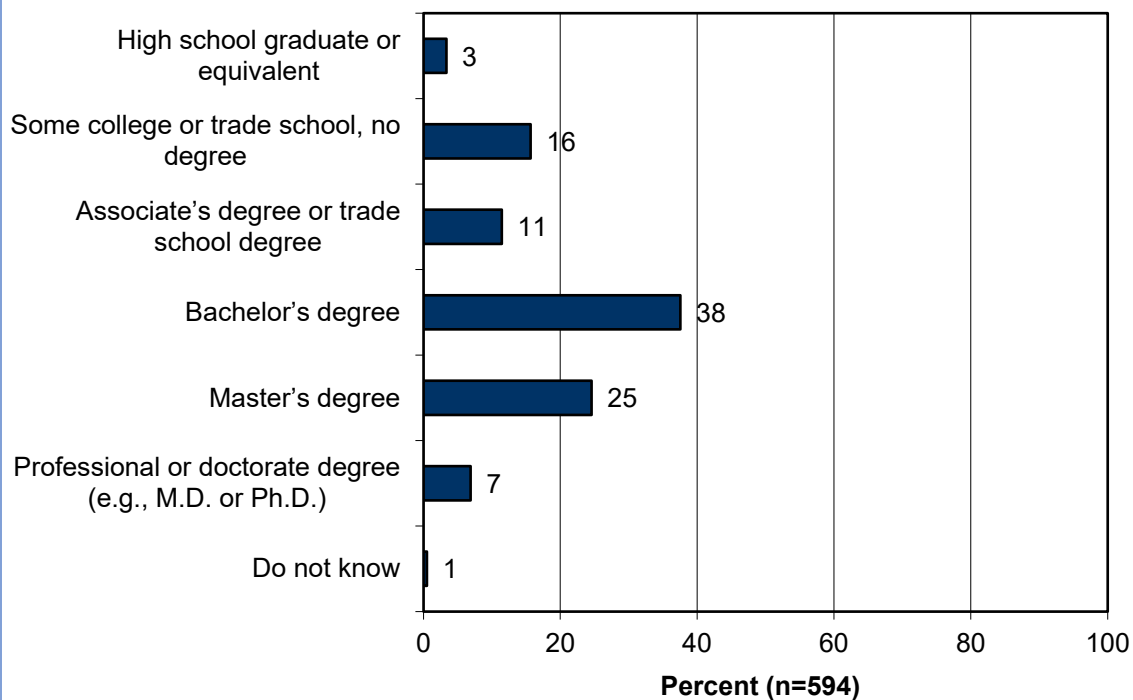
The following demographic characteristics of women’s R3 program participants were collected: age, ethnicity, type of residential area (urban-rural continuum), and education level.



Which of the following do you consider your place of residence to be? (Program participants)



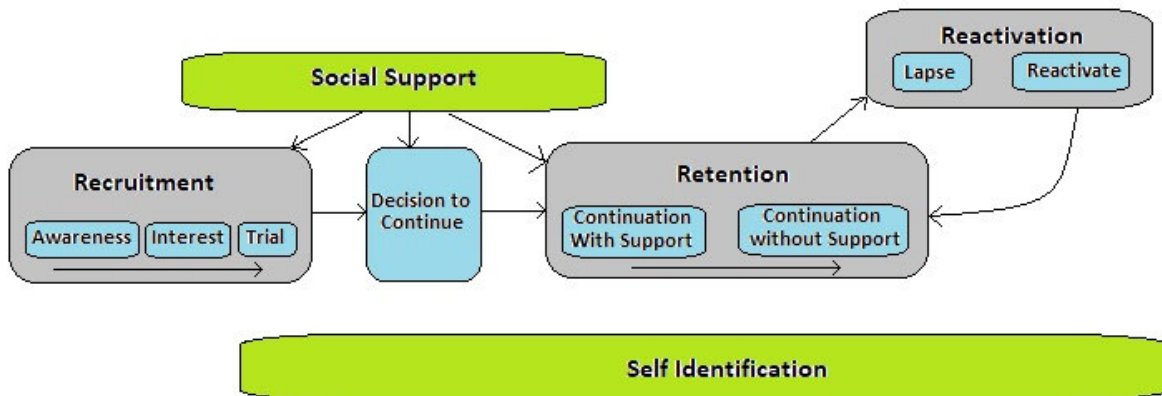
What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Program participants)



APPENDIX A: THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ADOPTION MODEL

People go through stages when they become recreation participants. The first three stages of the ORAM (awareness, interest, and trial activity) are addressed by recruitment efforts (see the figure below). These initial stages lead to the next stages: the decision to continue, continuing participation with social support, and then continuing participation without social support. These continuation stages are addressed by retention efforts. Individuals who do not continue to participate are referred to as lapsed participants—the final stages of the ORAM. Lapsing may be further divided into individuals who are short-term lapsed and those who are long-term lapsed. These lapsed stages are addressed by reactivation efforts. Note that not all participants go through all the stages—the model is not meant to be strictly linear from beginning to end but contains loops—as some people move through the continuation stages into the lapsed stages and then back into the continuation stages (if they become reactivated), and some (ideally) stop at the continuation without support stage. The ORAM is reproduced below. The model was recreated based on the figure in Appendix A of *AFWA President's Task Force on Angler R3* published in 2018.

Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model (ORAM)



Many agencies and organizations use the model to plan and implement R3 activities. The ORAM can be considered in the evaluation of programs and efforts, as it allows a state to assess where a program or effort falls in the model and whether the state's entire suite of R3 programs and efforts address all groups of anglers represented by the model.

ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

Responsive Management is an internationally recognized survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Our mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies, businesses, and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public. Focusing only on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, Responsive Management has conducted telephone, mail, and online surveys, as well as multi-modal surveys, on-site intercepts, focus groups, public meetings, personal interviews, needs assessments, program evaluations, marketing and communication plans, and other forms of human dimensions research measuring how people relate to the natural world for more than 30 years. Utilizing our in-house, full-service survey facilities with 75 professional interviewers, we have conducted studies in all 50 states and 15 countries worldwide, totaling more than 1,000 human dimensions projects *only* on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

Responsive Management has conducted research for every state fish and wildlife agency and every federal natural resource agency, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Coast Guard, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Additionally, we have also provided research for all the major conservation NGOs including the Archery Trade Association, the American Sportfishing Association, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Dallas Safari Club, Ducks Unlimited, Environmental Defense Fund, the Izaak Walton League of America, the National Rifle Association, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the National Wildlife Federation, the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, the Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, and the Wildlife Management Institute.

Other nonprofit and NGO clients include the American Museum of Natural History, the BoatUS Foundation, the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, and the Ocean Conservancy. As well, Responsive Management conducts market research and product testing for numerous outdoor recreation manufacturers and industry leaders, such as Winchester Ammunition, Vista Outdoor (whose brands include Federal Premium, CamelBak, Bushnell, Primos, and more), Trijicon, Yamaha, and others. Responsive Management also provides data collection for the nation's top universities, including Auburn University, Clemson University, Colorado State University, Duke University, George Mason University, Michigan State University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University, Oregon State University, Penn State University, Rutgers University, Stanford University, Texas Tech, University of California-Davis, University of Florida, University of Montana, University of New Hampshire, University of Southern California, Virginia Tech, West Virginia University, Yale University, and many more.

Our research has been upheld in U.S. Courts, used in peer-reviewed journals, and presented at major wildlife and natural resource conferences around the world. Responsive Management's research has also been featured in many of the nation's top media, including *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, CNN, National Public Radio, and on the front pages of *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*.

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