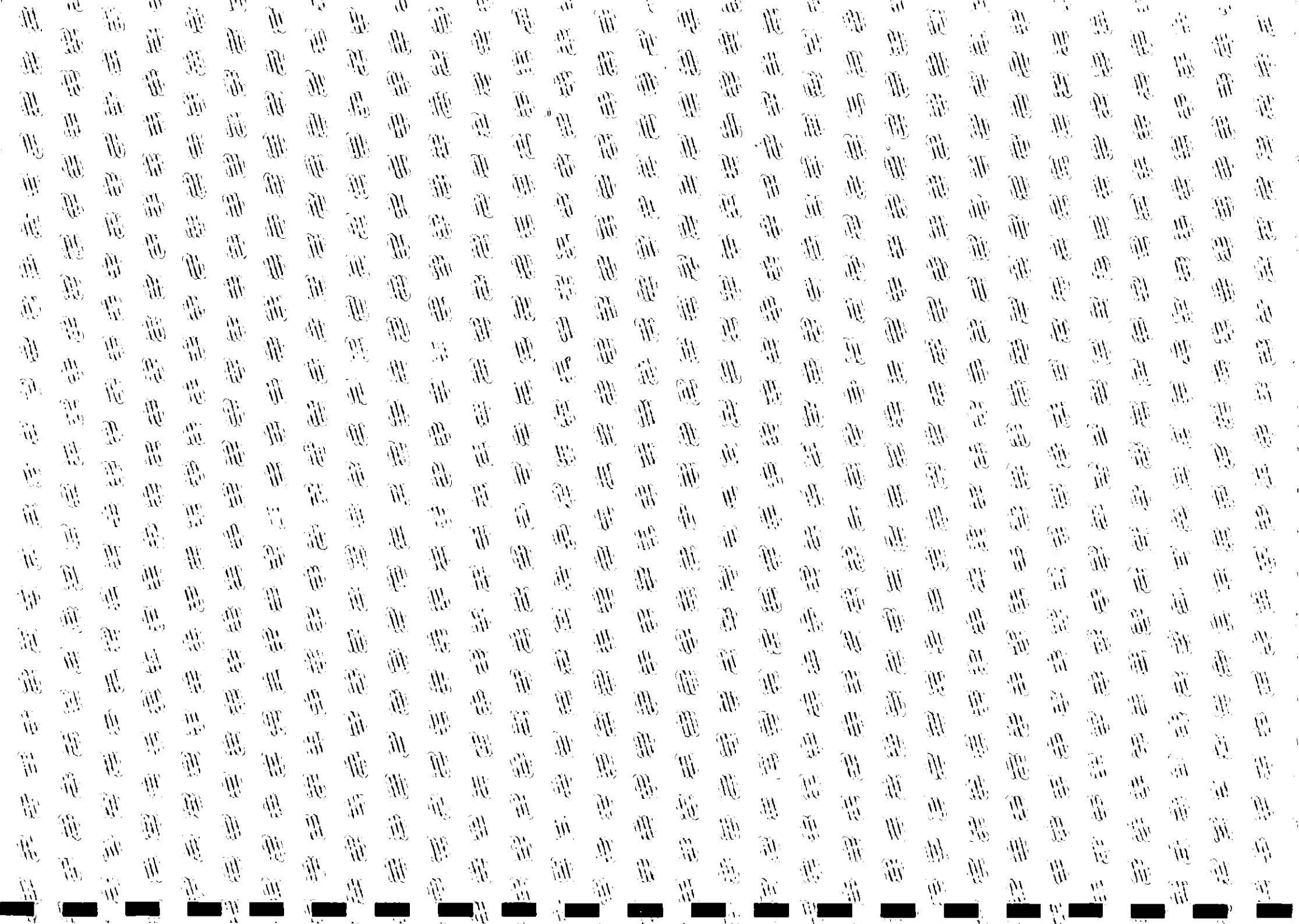




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*resourceful professional compatible*

research





Dental Health Foundation  
Ireland

# **Dental Health Foundation**

## **Presentation of Survey Results**

### **Drury Research**

#### **31/10/00**

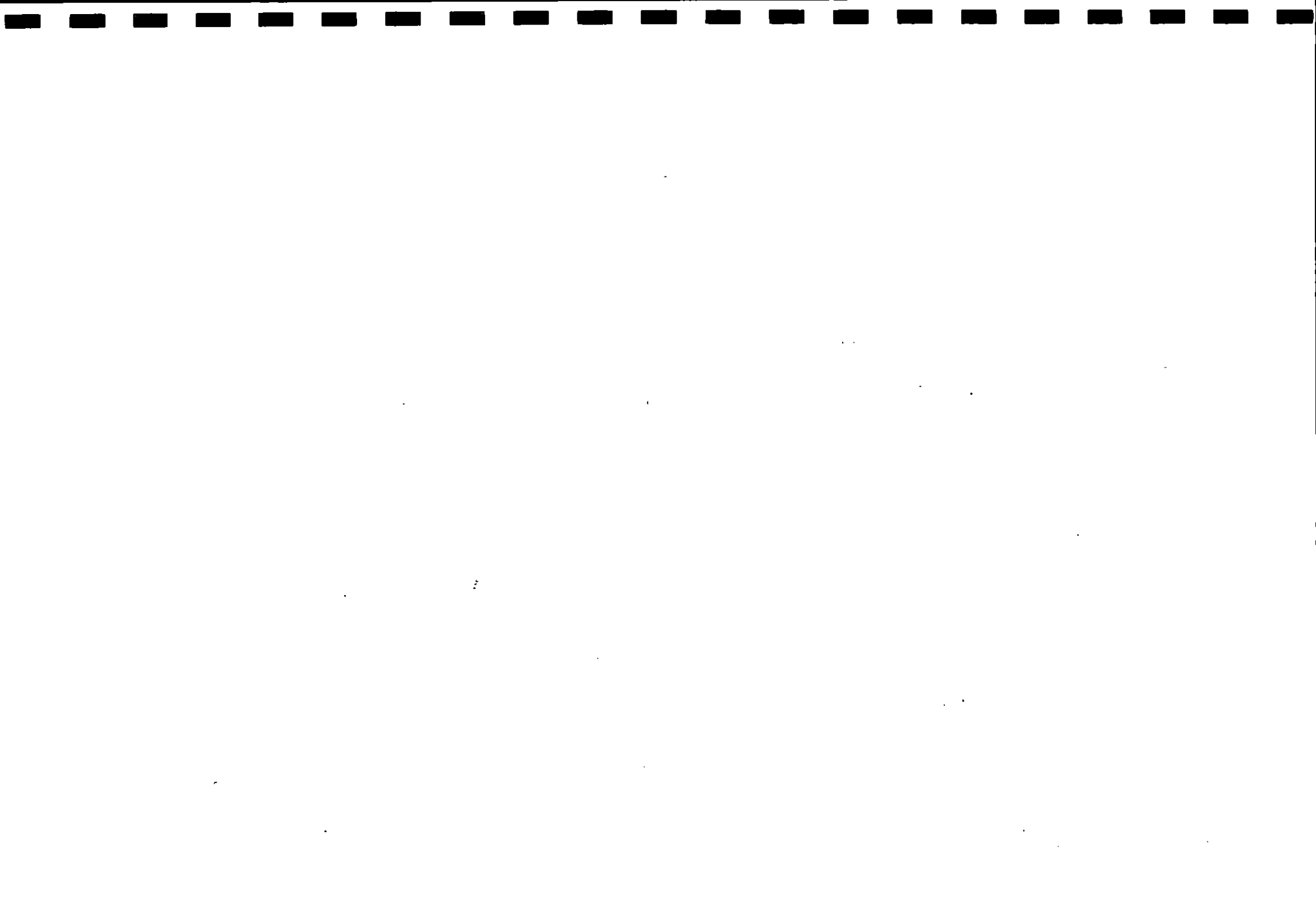


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# Introduction

- This survey questionnaire was included on Lansdowne Omnibus survey of 1,180 adults aged 15+
- Fieldwork took place between September 26th and October 6th, 2000 at 60 sampling points nationally
- The sample was random, but quota controlled by sex, status, class, region and area to ensure representation of the adult population





# Introduction

- The questionnaire was designed by Drury Research with input from the DHF and other interested parties
- Key learning from a previous phase of qualitative research in July 2000 were also considered and incorporated into the questionnaire design
- Where appropriate reference is made to this phase of the research in this presentation.



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# Main Findings

## Survey Highlights

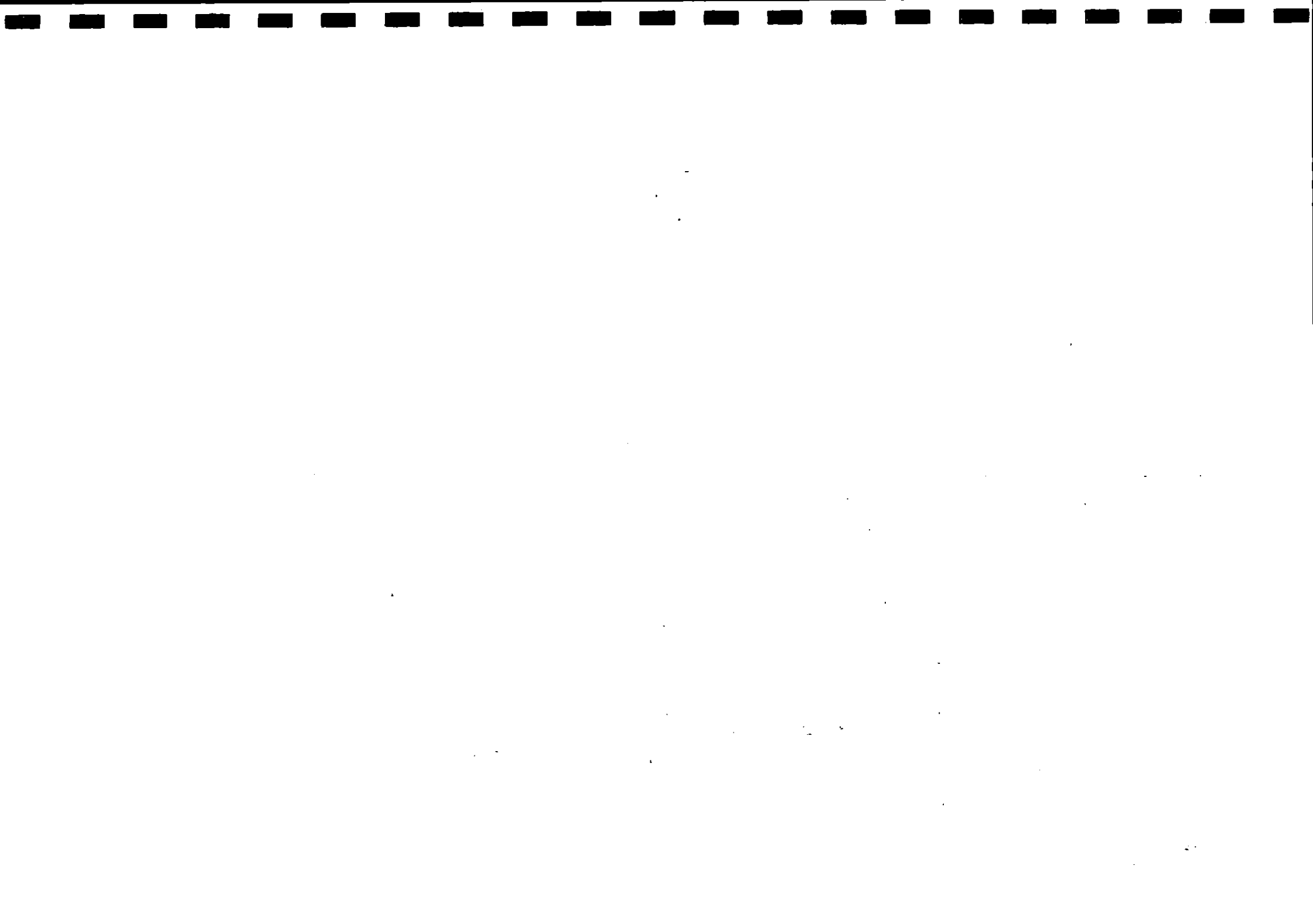


# Fluoride in Water

- When it comes to people's general concerns, fluoride in water is not a high level concern
  - less than a quarter or 23% overall are very concerned, a further 22% fairly concerned
- However, over half of those surveyed (50%) were very concerned about water pollution
- If water fluoridation were to be presented in the light of a water pollutant, then it could potentially be a much higher level concern.





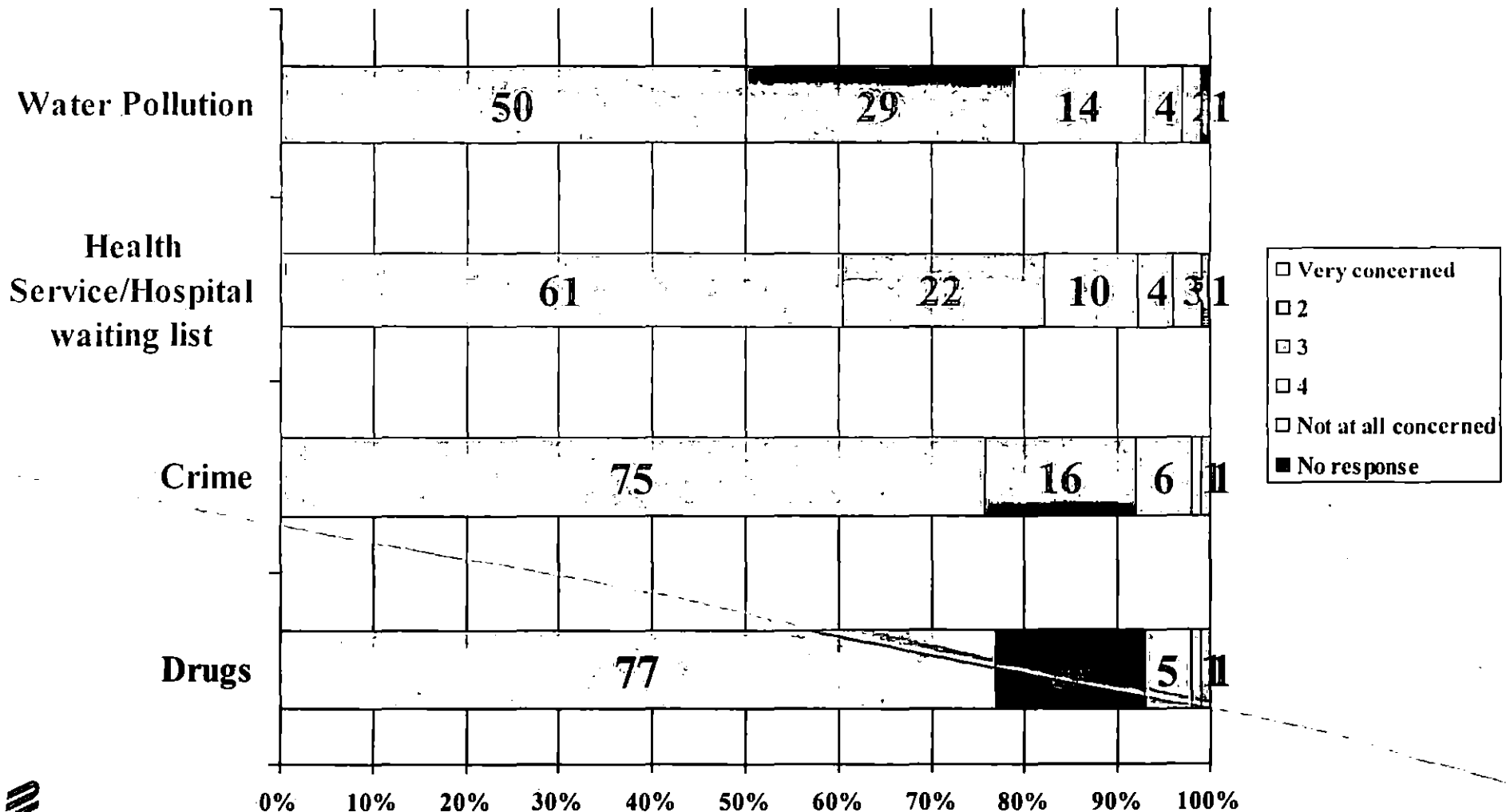


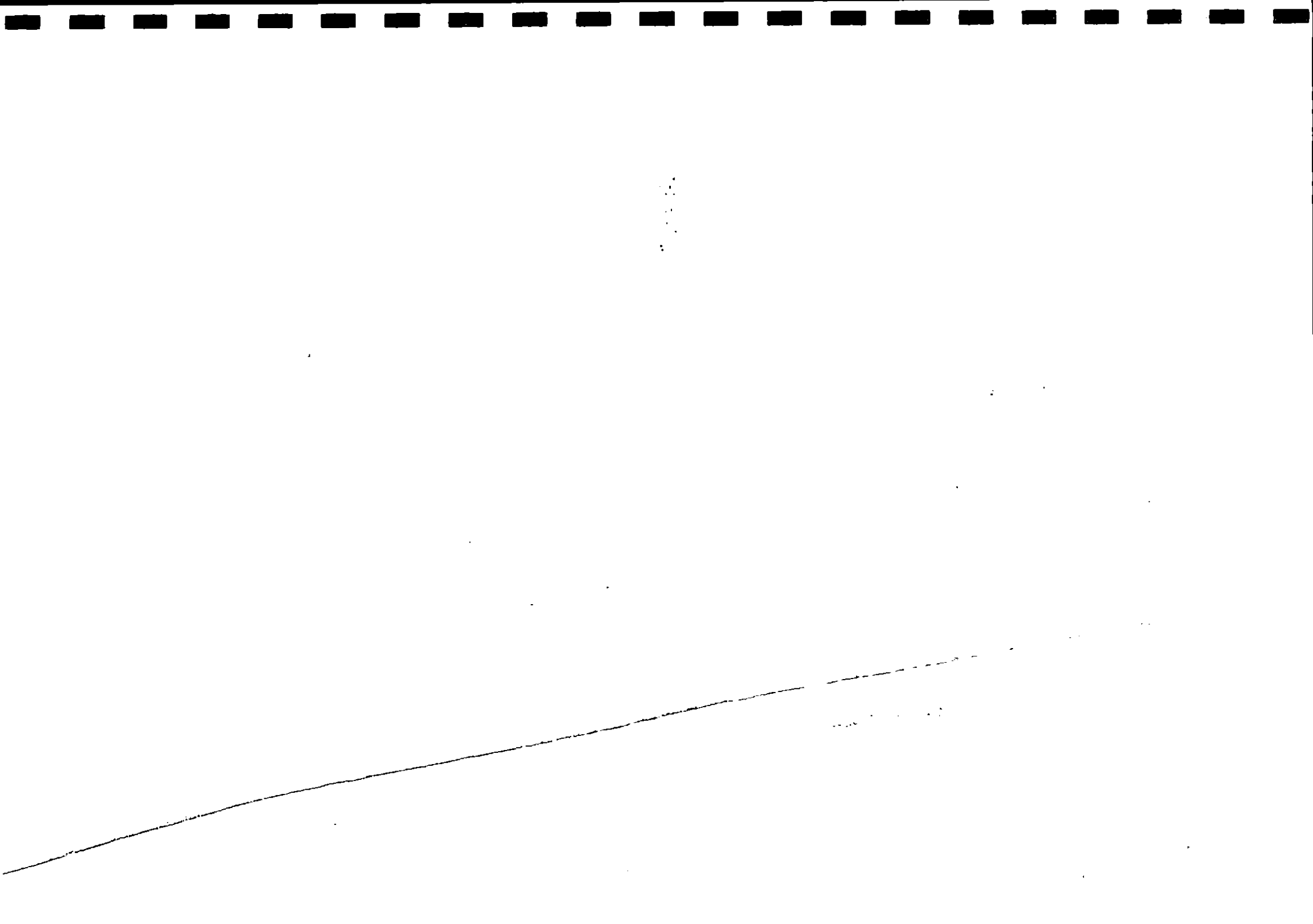
# Issues of Concern



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*Q1 For each of the following issues I read out please tell me your level of concern, on a scale of 1 to 5*



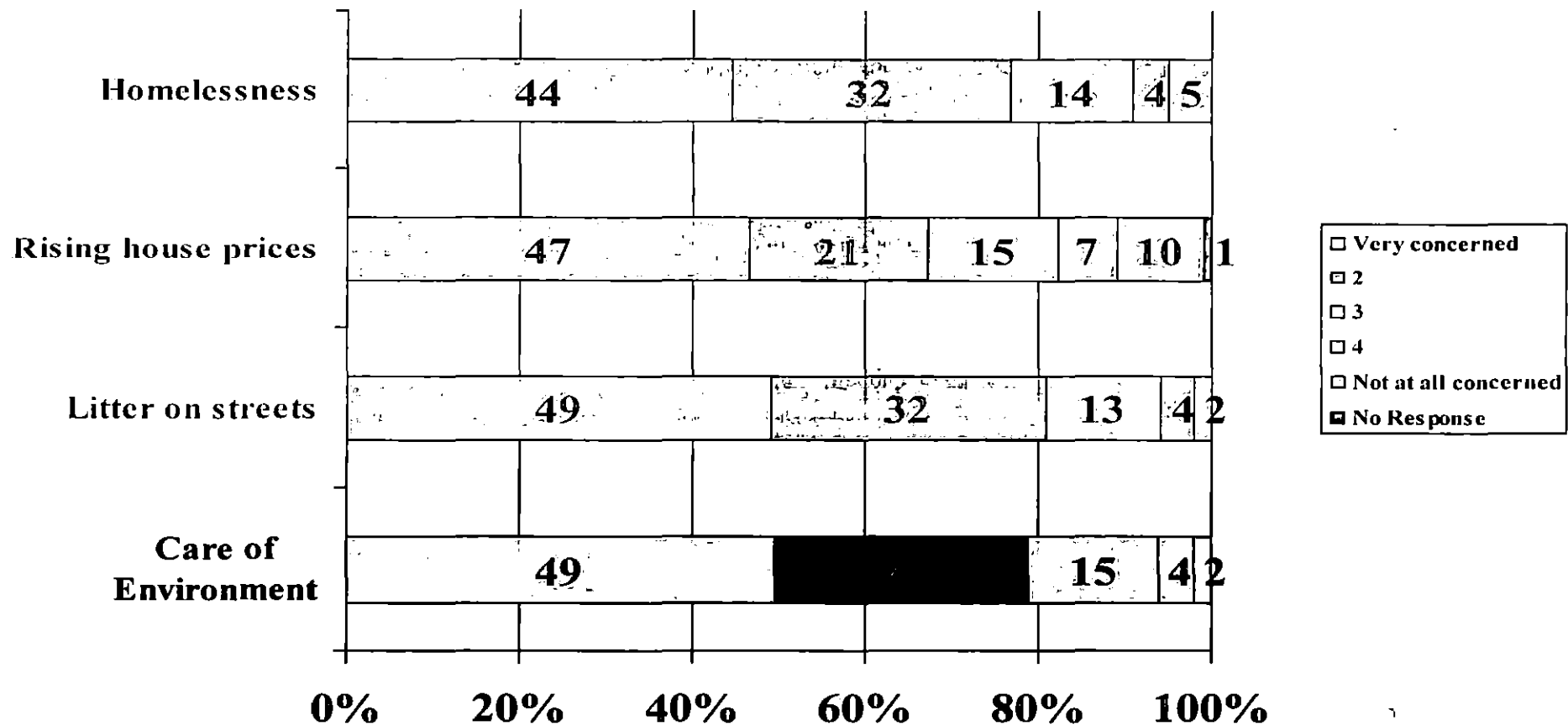


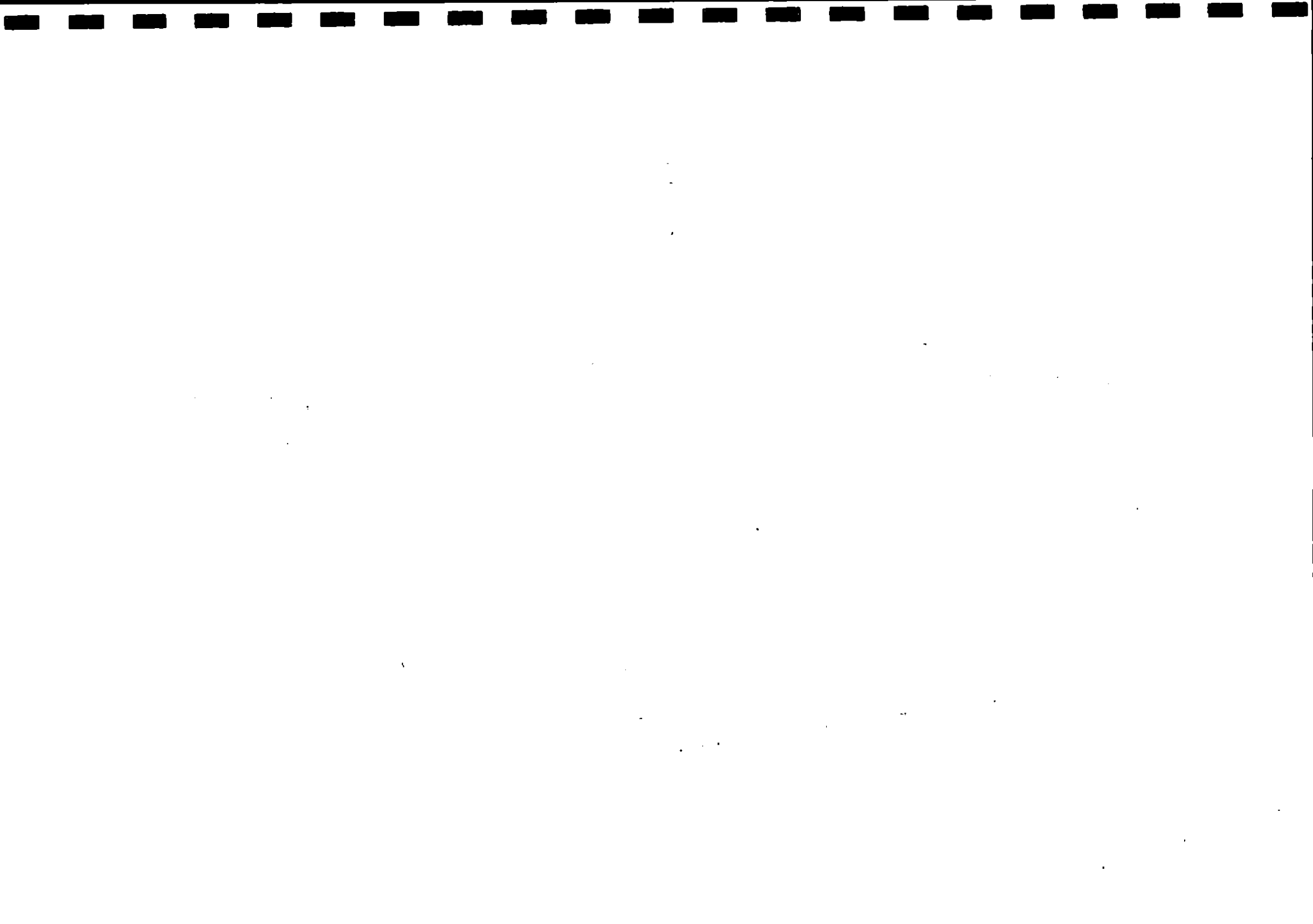


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# Issues of Concern

*Q1 For each of the following issues I read out please tell me your level of concern, on a scale of 1 to 5*



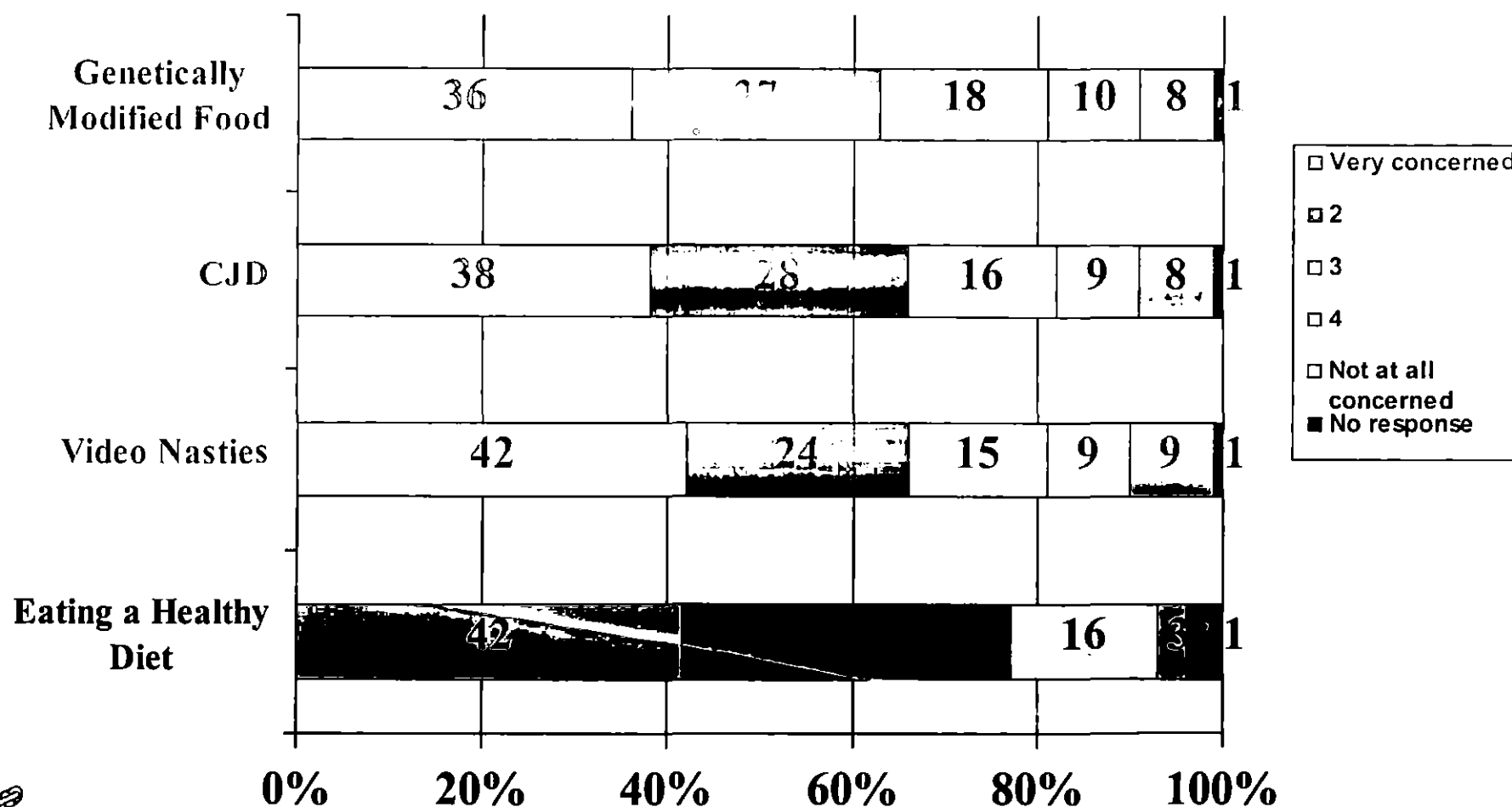


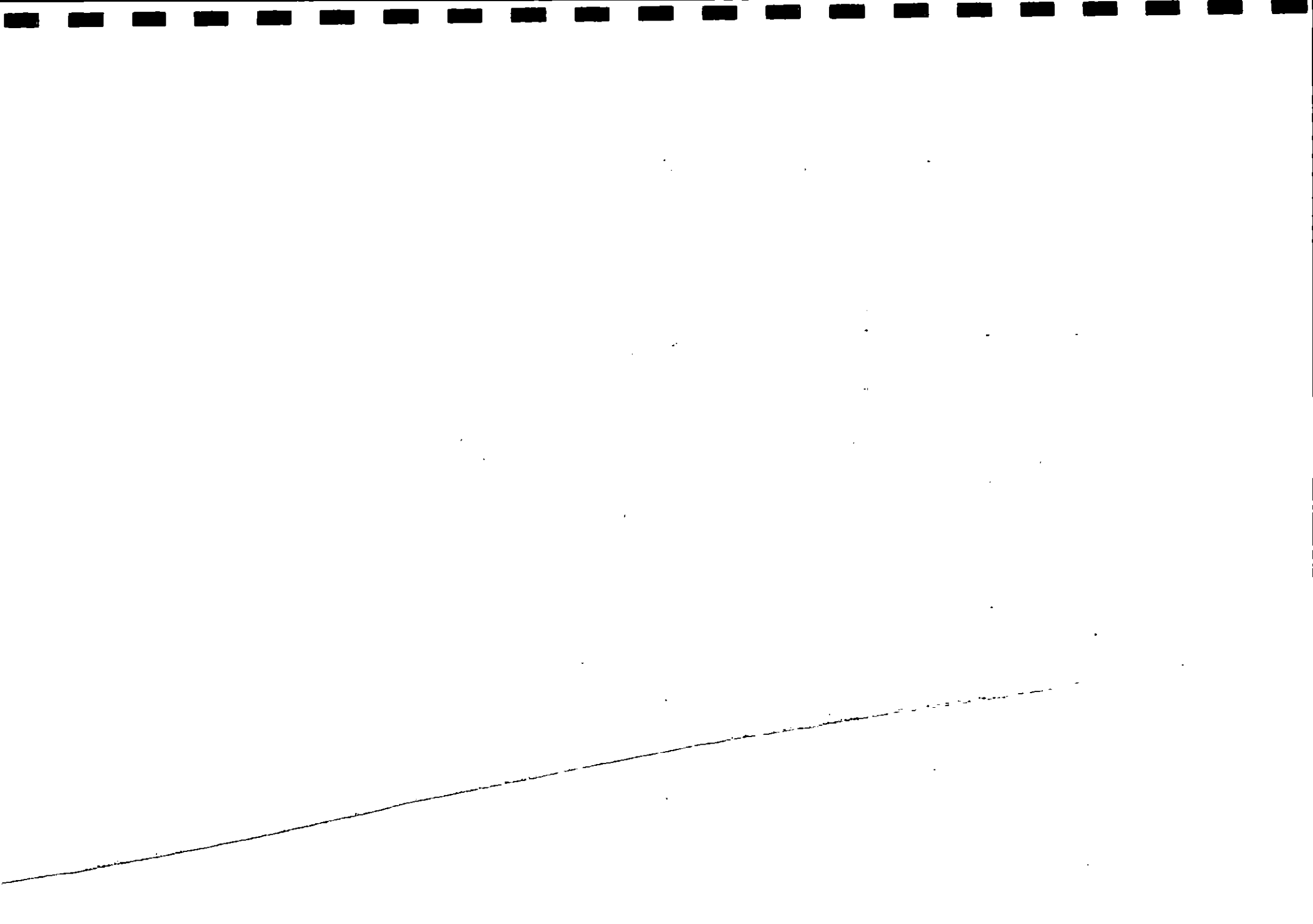


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# Issues of Concern

*Q1 For each of the following issues I read out  
please tell me your level of concern, on a scale of 1 to 5*



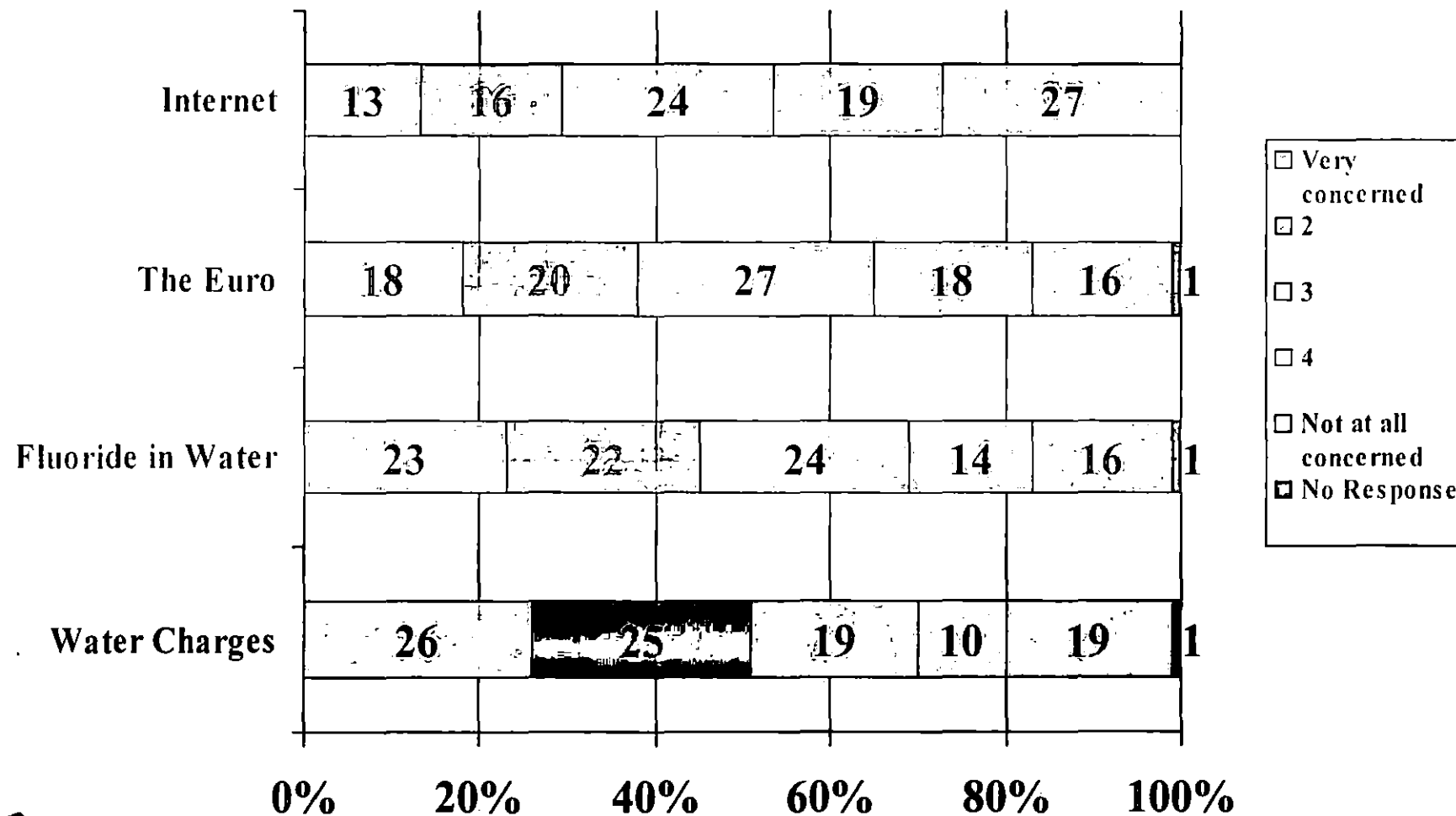




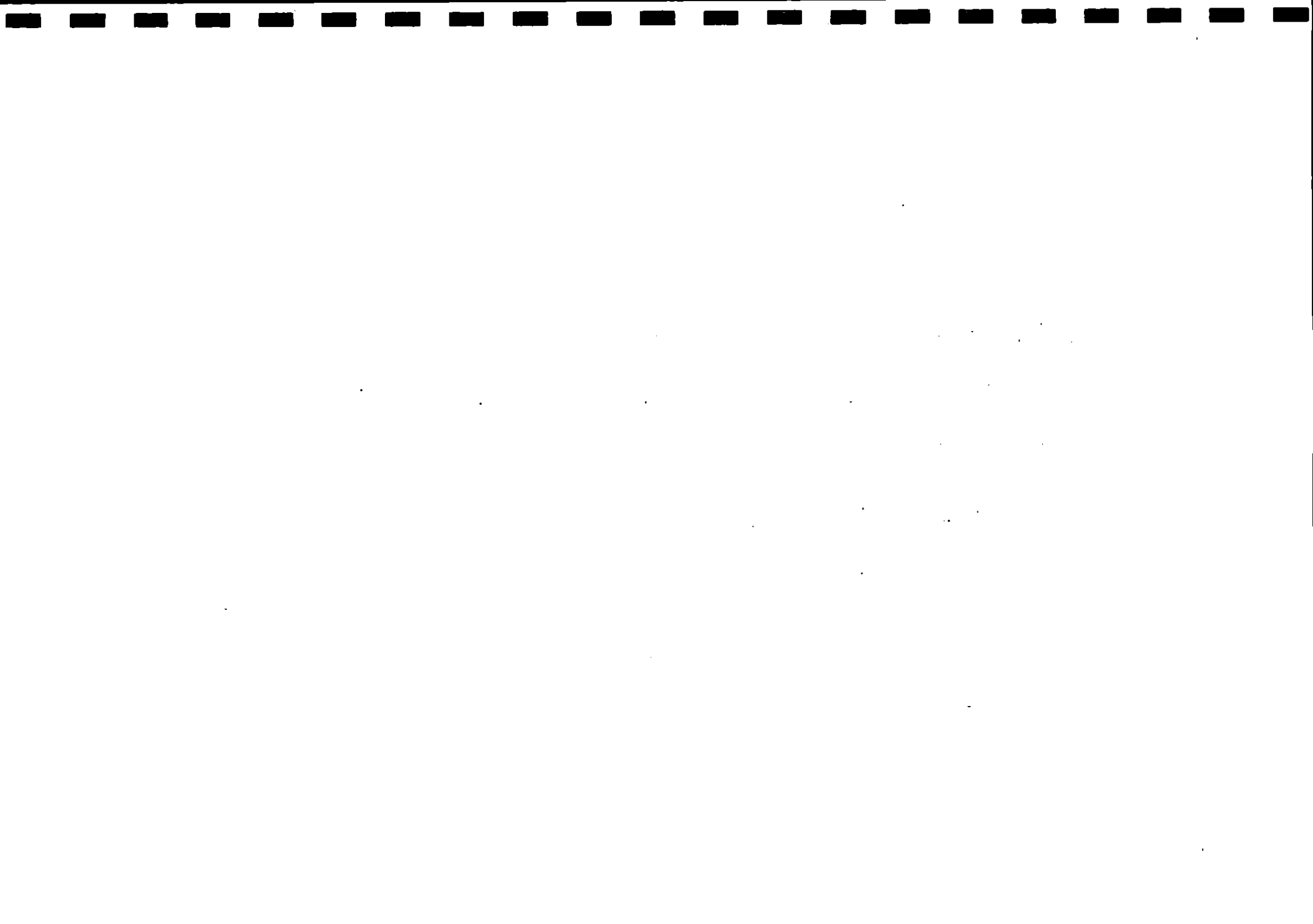
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# Issues of Concern

*Q1 For each of the following issues I read out please tell me your level of concern, on a scale of 1 to 5*



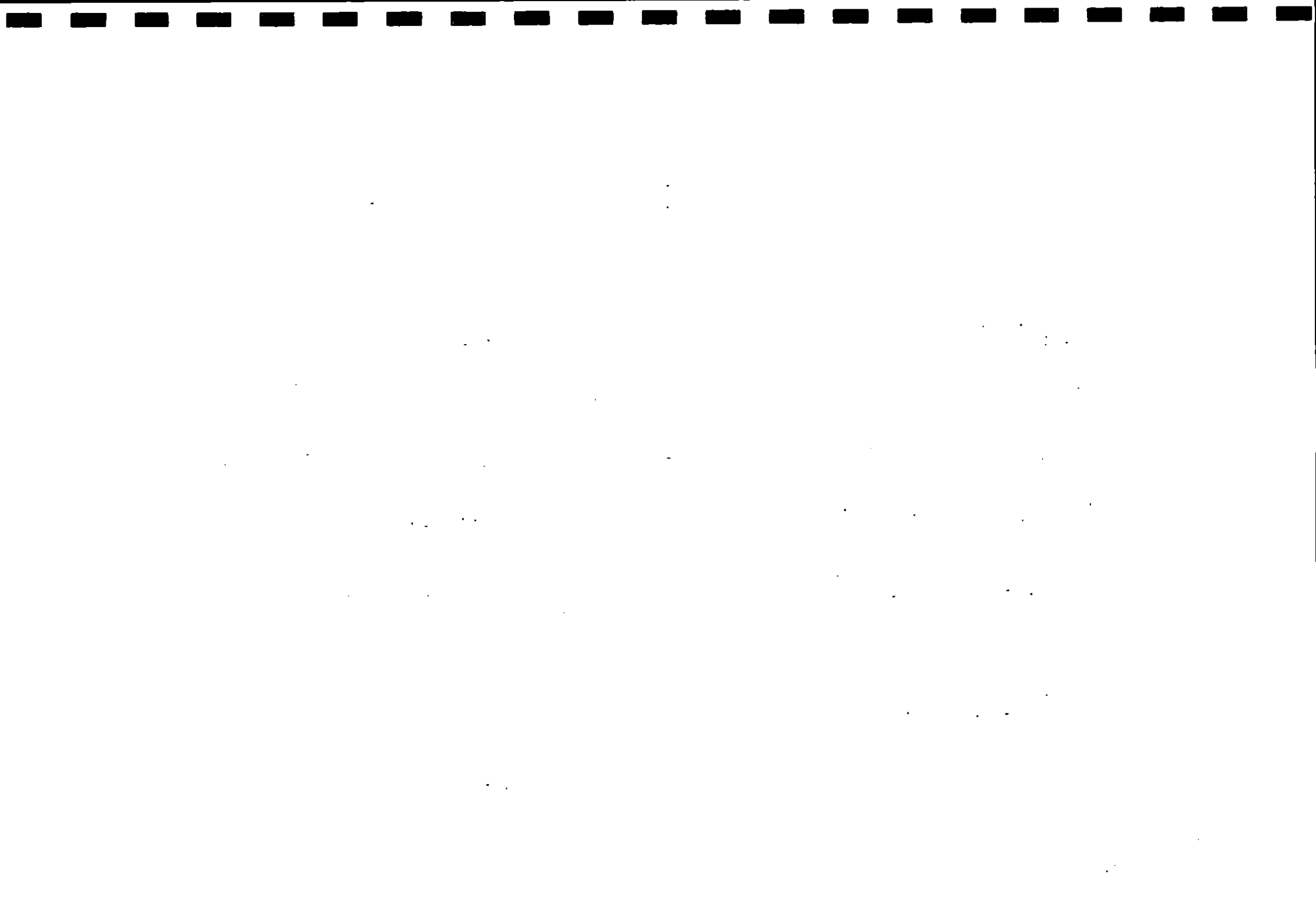






# Care of the Environment

- Married females (56%) are more inclined to be very concerned about caring for the environment
  - higher proportions of 35-49 (53%) and 50-64 (55%) year olds also
  - higher social classes and those with children in the household
  - regionally, those in Connaught/Ulster (65%) are very concerned





# Care of the Environment

- There is also a high correlation between concern for the care of the environment and concern about the level of fluoride in water
- Two thirds (66%) of those who are concerned about the level of fluoride in water are concerned about the environment
- This suggests, as with the qualitative research, that many people see water fluoridation as an environmental issue



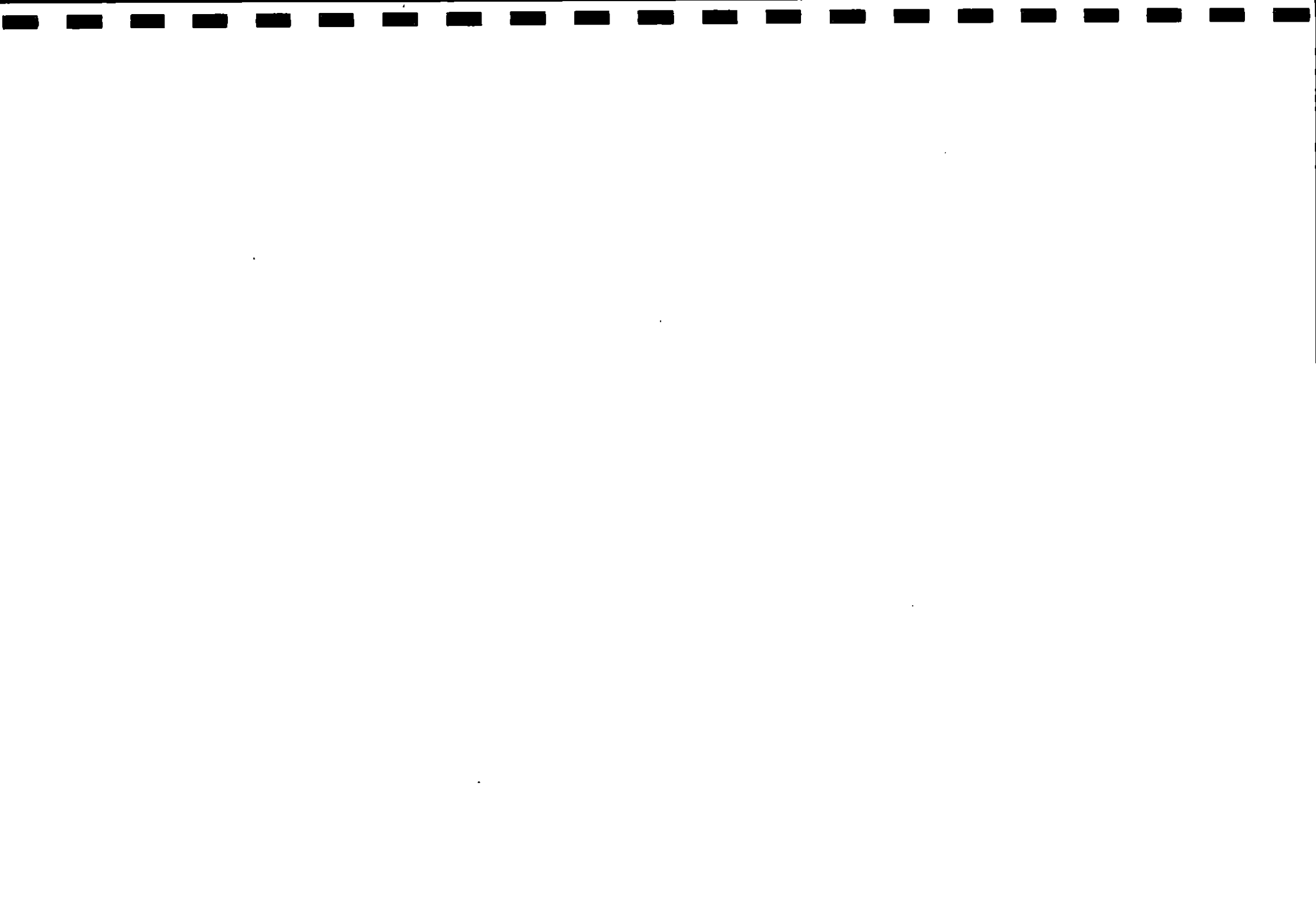
# Water Pollution & Litter

- Water pollution as an issue was of greater concern to;
  - those in Connaught/Ulster (69%)
  - those in rural areas generally (61%)
  - those generally concerned about fluoride in water (66%)
- Those most concerned about litter are;
  - those in Connaught/Ulster (63%)
  - rural dwellers generally (57%)
  - those concerned about fluoride in water (63%)



# Fluoride in Water

- Overall 35-64 year olds are most concerned
  - 27% of the 35-49 age group
  - 26% of 50-64 age group
- Higher income groups, rural dwellers and farmers also appeared more concerned than the average
  - 27% of ABC1s
  - 27% of farmers
  - 26% of those in Leinster outside Dublin
  - 29% of those in Connaught/Ulster
  - 32% of rural dwellers generally



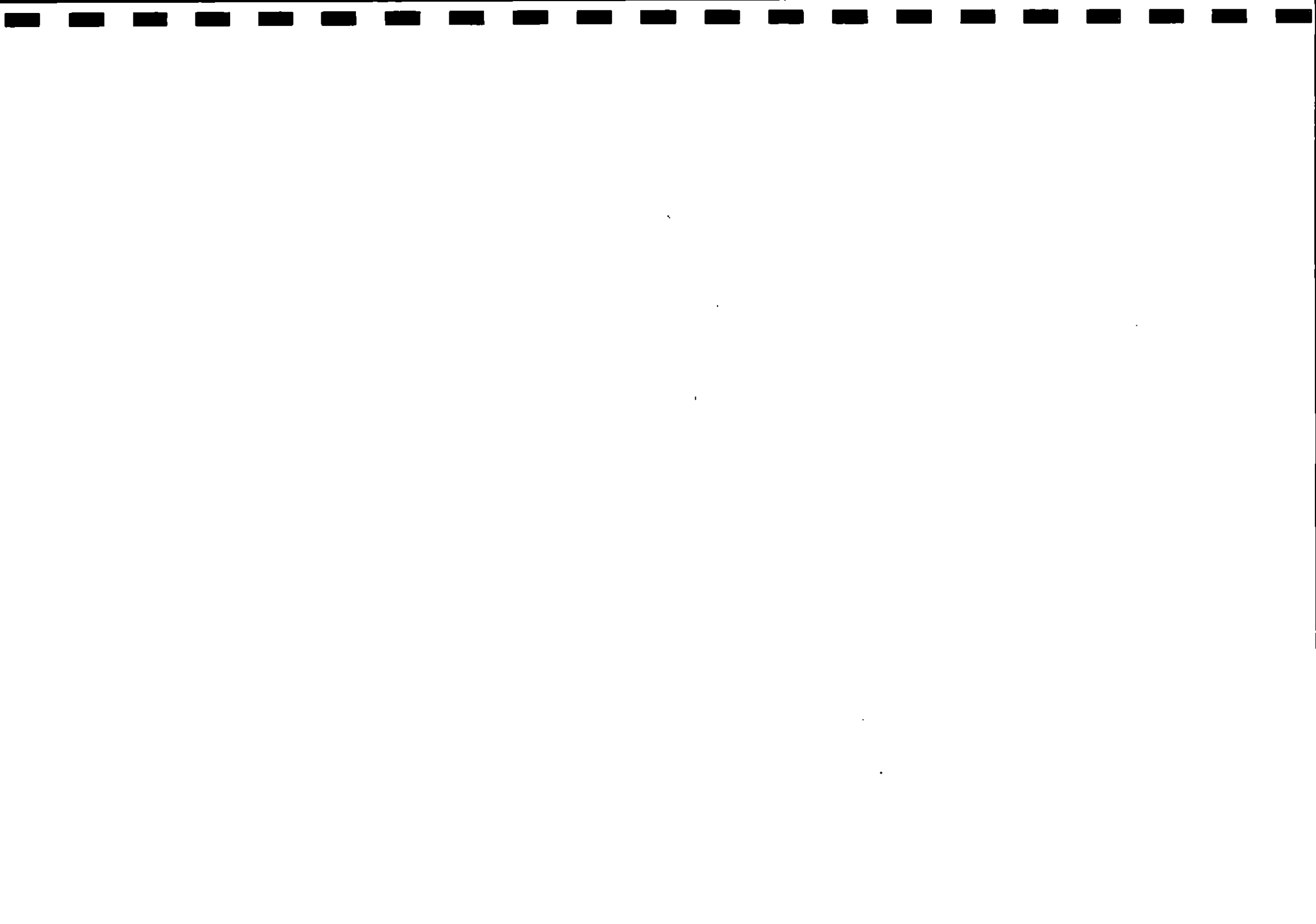


# Fluoride in Water

- Almost a third of those (29%) of those whose domestic water contains fluoride are very concerned
- Concern is slightly higher for;
  - those who sometimes use fluoride toothpaste (29%)very concerned
  - those who have heard of the DHF - 32%
- Overall, the Euro (27%), the Internet (24%) and fluoride in water (24%) had the highest ambivalence scores.





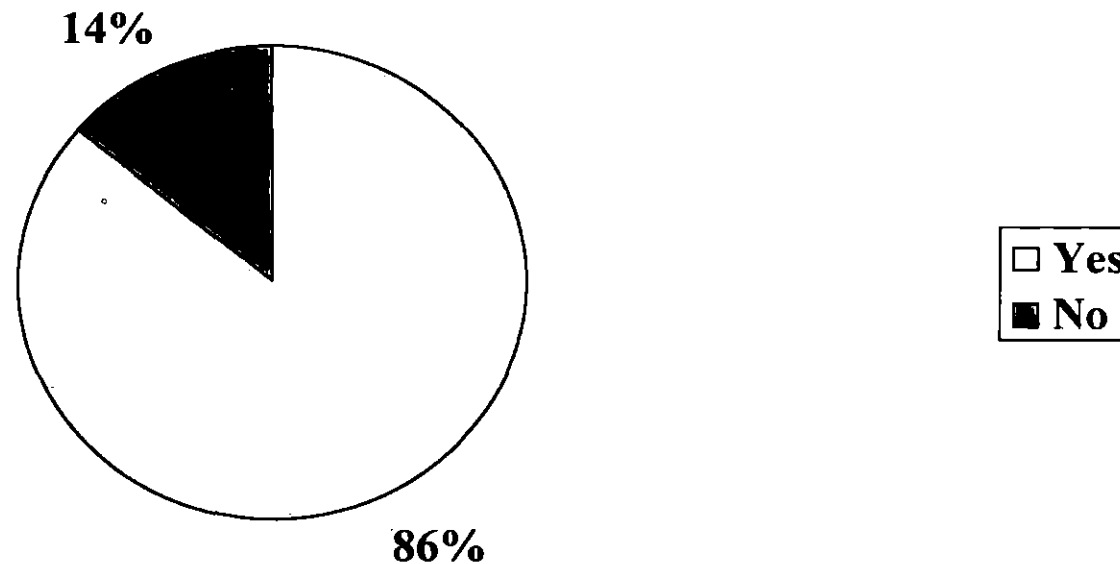


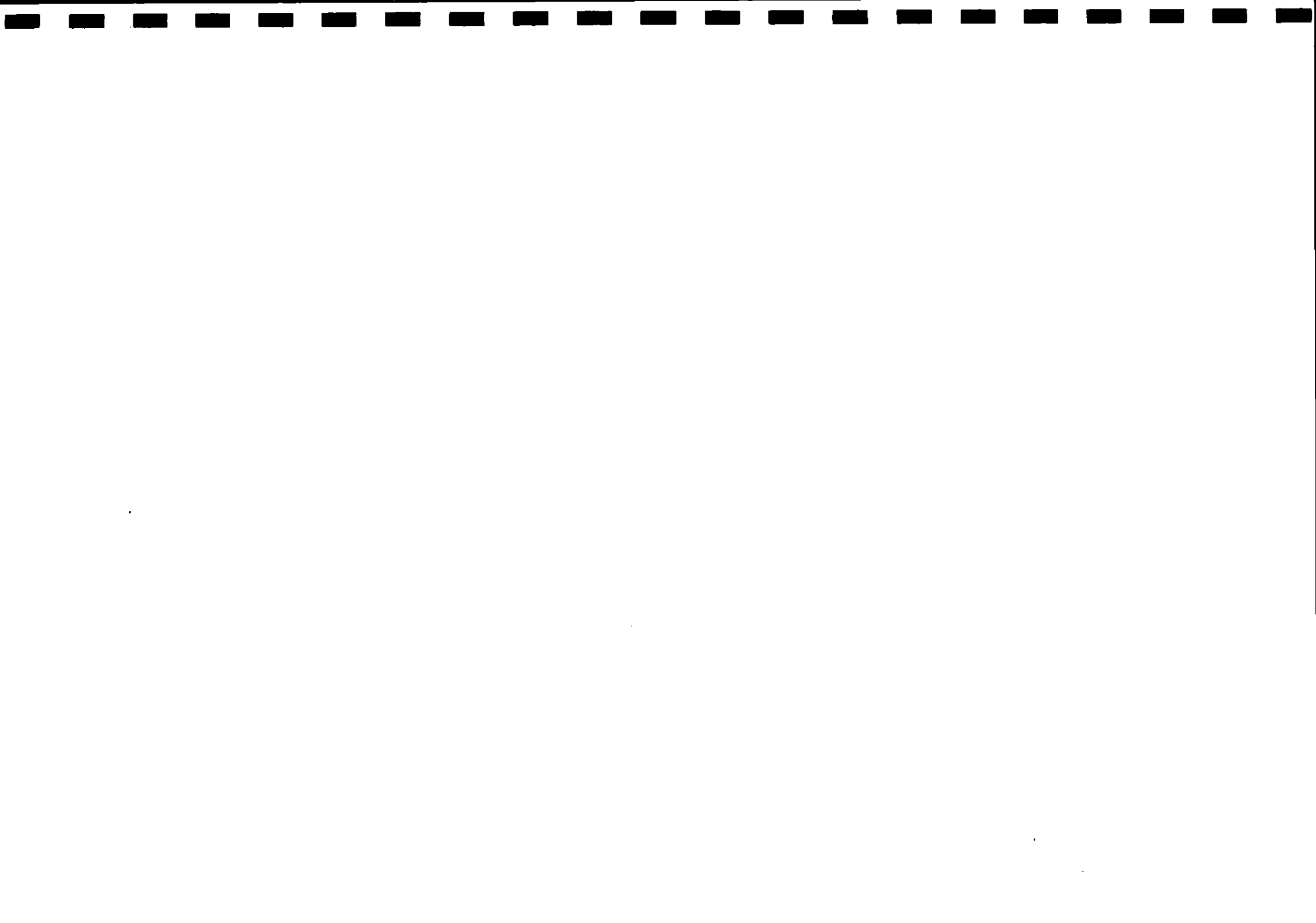


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# Awareness of Fluoride

*Q2 Have you ever heard of the substance fluoride?*



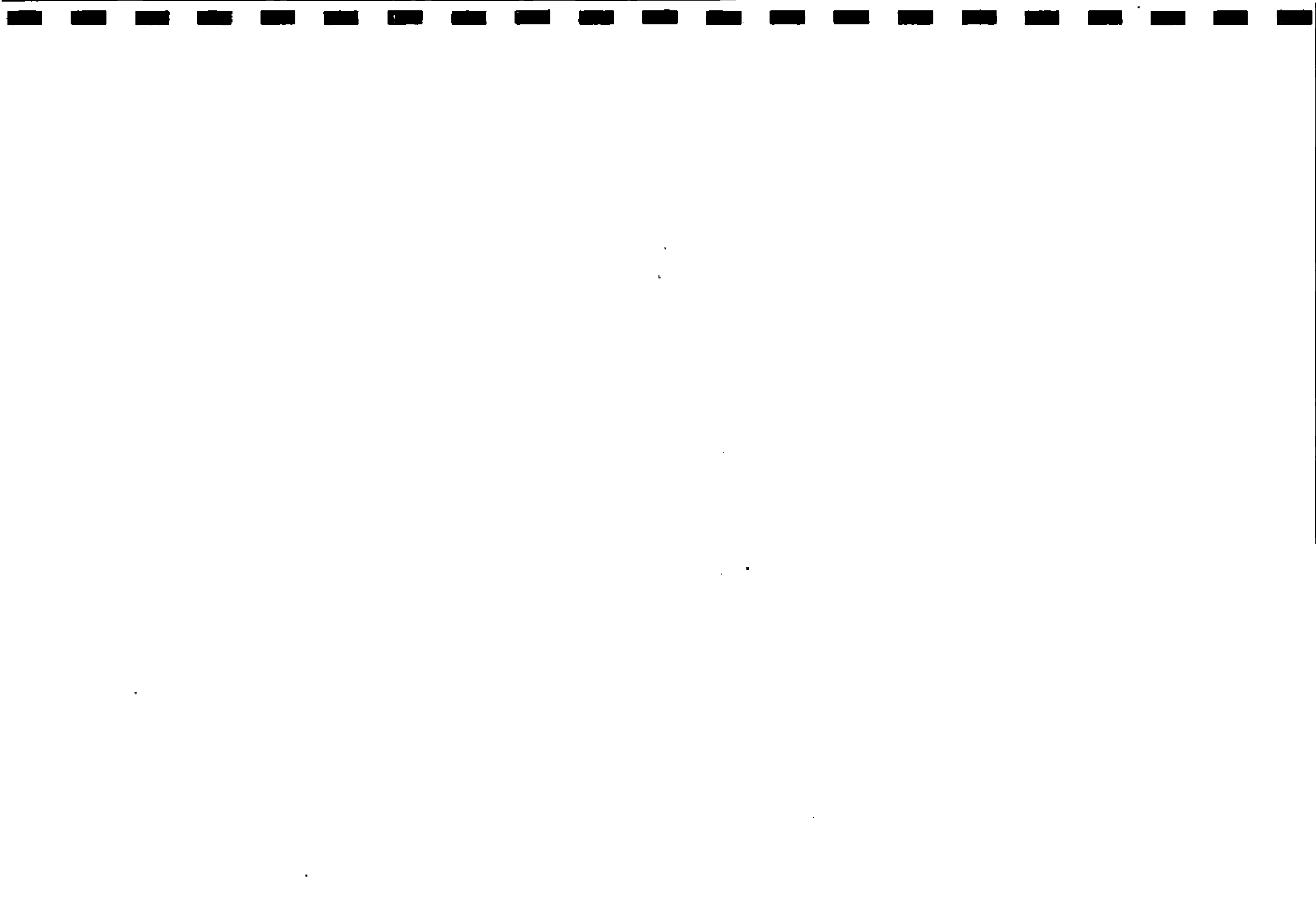




# Knowledge of Fluoride

- 86% have heard of fluoride
- 14% have not
- 90% of 25-34 year olds
- 93% of ABC1s
- 90% of those with children v 84% of those without
- Rest of Leinster 91% aware of fluoride
- 88% rural dwellers generally
- 95% of those whose domestic water contains fluoride
- 93% of those who always use fluoride toothpaste
- 89% of those who sometimes use fluoride toothpaste
- 95% of those who have heard of the DHF

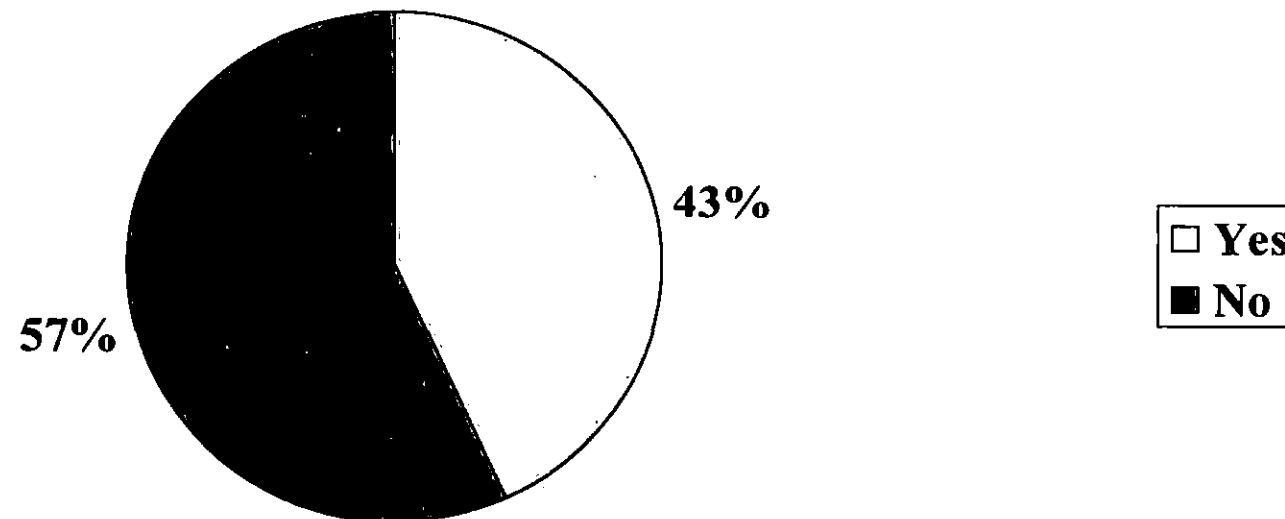






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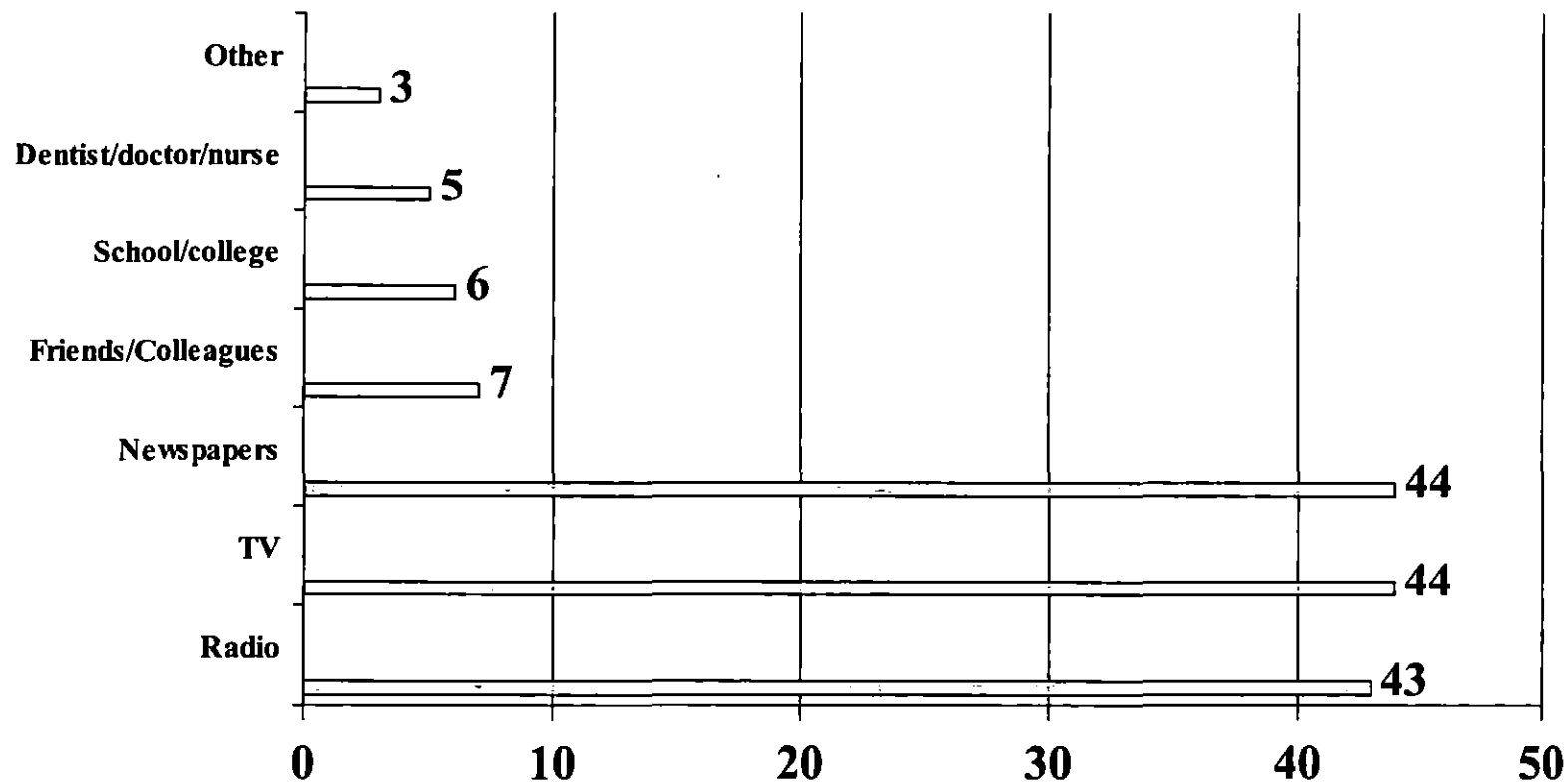
*Q3 Have you seen or heard anything recently,  
that is, in the past 12 months, about fluoride  
in water?*





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## *Q4 Where have you heard about fluoride in water?*





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*Have you seen/heard anything in the past 12 months  
about fluoride in water?*

- Married men & women 50% respectively have higher knowledge of recent coverage
- 35-49 year olds (50%)
- 50-64 year olds (48%)
- ABC1 49%
- Those with kids in the household 49%
- Connaught/Ulster 52%





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*Have you seen/heard anything in the past 12 months  
about fluoride in water?*

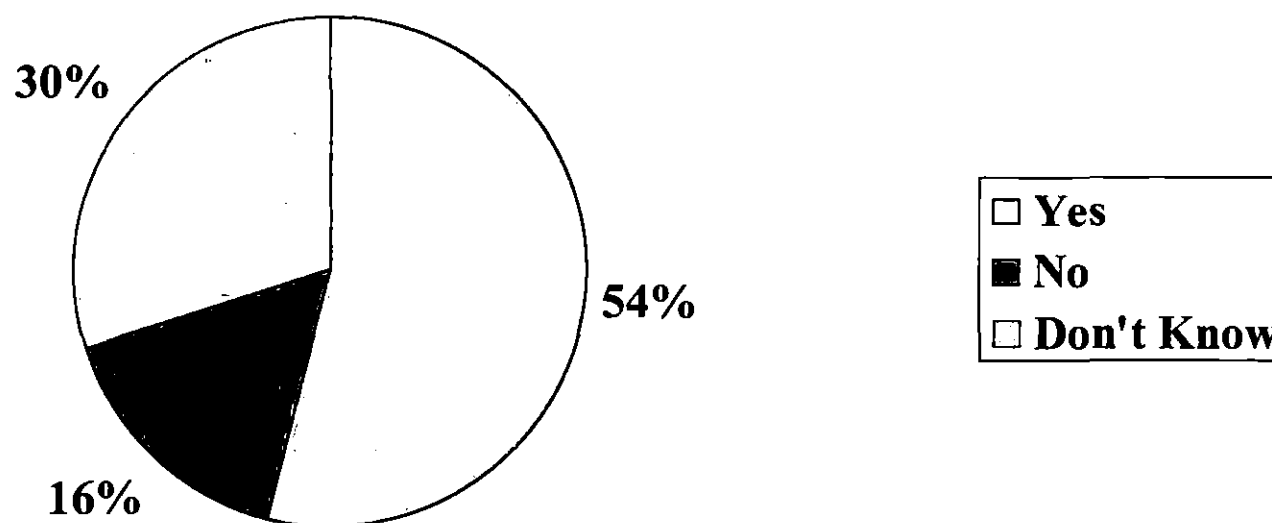
- 54% of those whose domestic water contains fluoride
- 53% of those who are very/fairly concerned about fluoride
- 50% of those who always use a fluoride toothpaste
- 67% of those who have heard of the DHF

# Whether Domestic Water Contains Fluoride



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*Q5 As far as you know, does your domestic  
water supply contain Fluoride?*





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# Whether Domestic Water Contains Fluoride

- 63% in Dublin claim their water contains fluoride
- 51% in Rest of Leinster
- 49% in Munster
- 48% in Connaught
- 67% of ABC1s
- 57% of those with kids





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# Whether Domestic Water Contains Fluoride

- 62% of those who are very/fairly concerned about the level of fluoride in water claim that their domestic water contains fluoride
- 68% of those aware of the DHF say that their domestic supply has fluoride



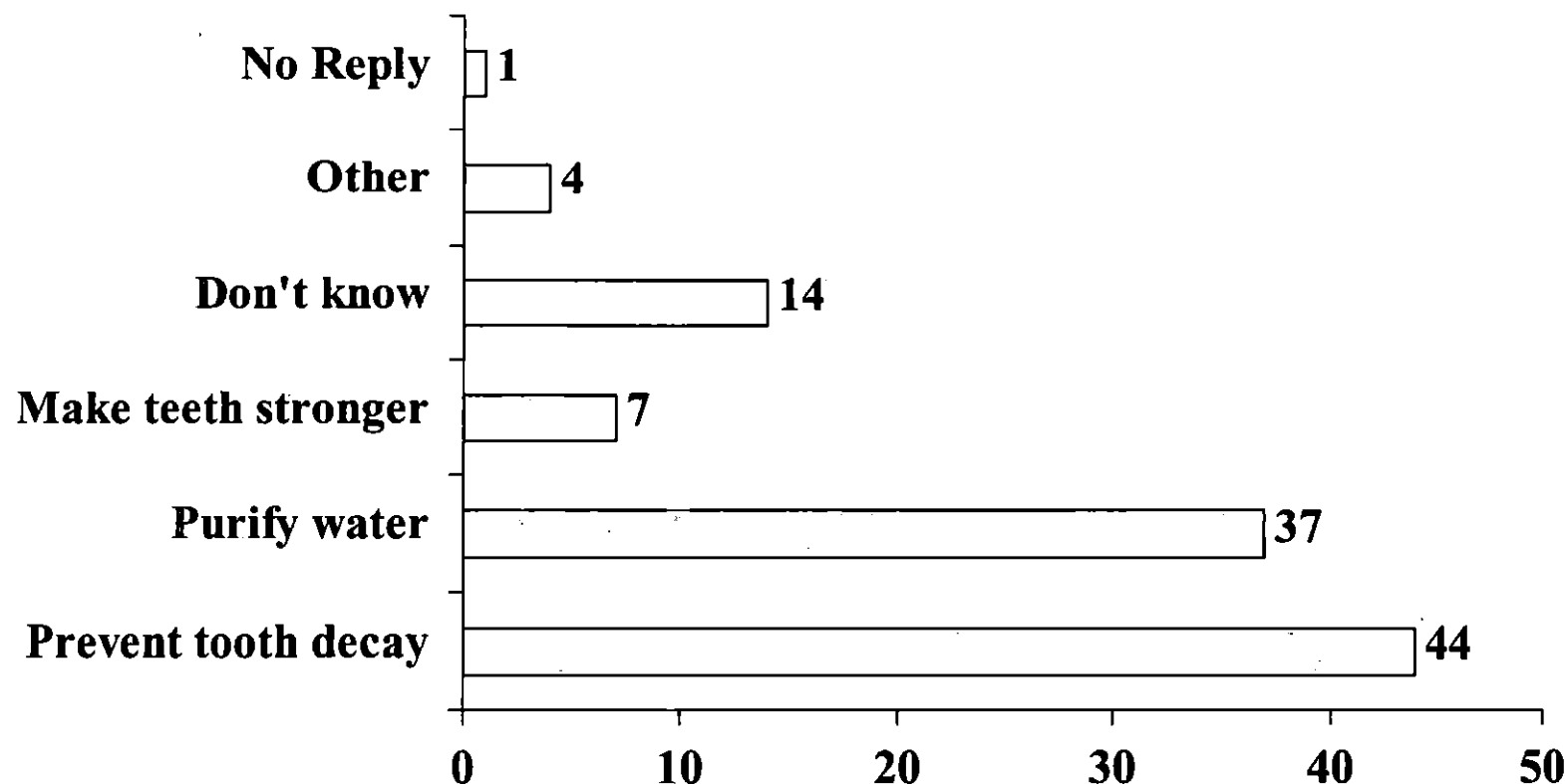
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# Purpose of Fluoride

*Q6 To the best of your knowledge, what is the purpose of adding fluoride to drinking water*







# Purpose of Fluoride

- The purpose of fluoride in water is confused between dental health and water purification
- This is consistent with the qualitative research findings
- However, a more direct correlation is made between fluoride in toothpaste and dental health
- However, there are still one in five almost who do not understand its purpose.



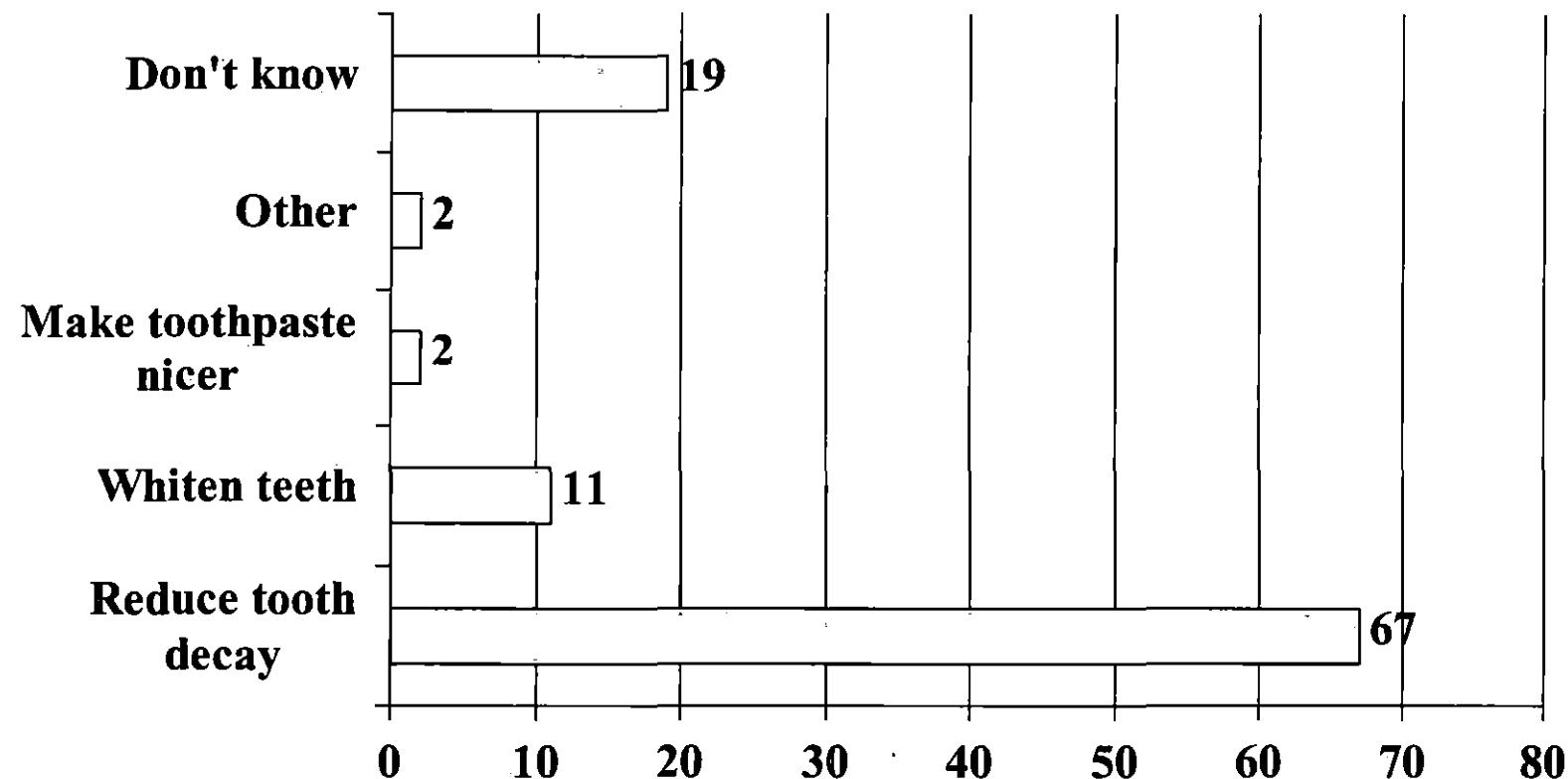




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# Purpose of Fluoride

*Q7 What do you think is the purpose of adding fluoride to toothpaste?*





# Purpose of Fluoride

- In Dublin, 56% say it's to prevent tooth decay
- 46% of urban dwellers generally understand fluoride is there to prevent tooth decay
- Of those who are very/fairly concerned about the level of fluoride, as many as 42% say to prevent tooth decay, as 41% who say to purify the water
- More people, 54%, whose domestic supply contains fluoride understand that it's to prevent tooth decay v 37% whose water doesn't contain fluoride



# Purpose of Fluoride

- Of those who always use fluoride toothpaste, 47% understand that it's to prevent tooth decay
- 53% of ABC1s understand fluoride's purpose in water v 39% of C2DEs
- 51% of those who had heard of the DHF v 42% who haven't understood the purpose of fluoride in water



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# Why have Fluoride?

## WATER

Prevent	
tooth decay	44%
Purify water	37%
Build enamel	7%
Don't know	14%
Other/no reply	5%

## TOOTHPASTE

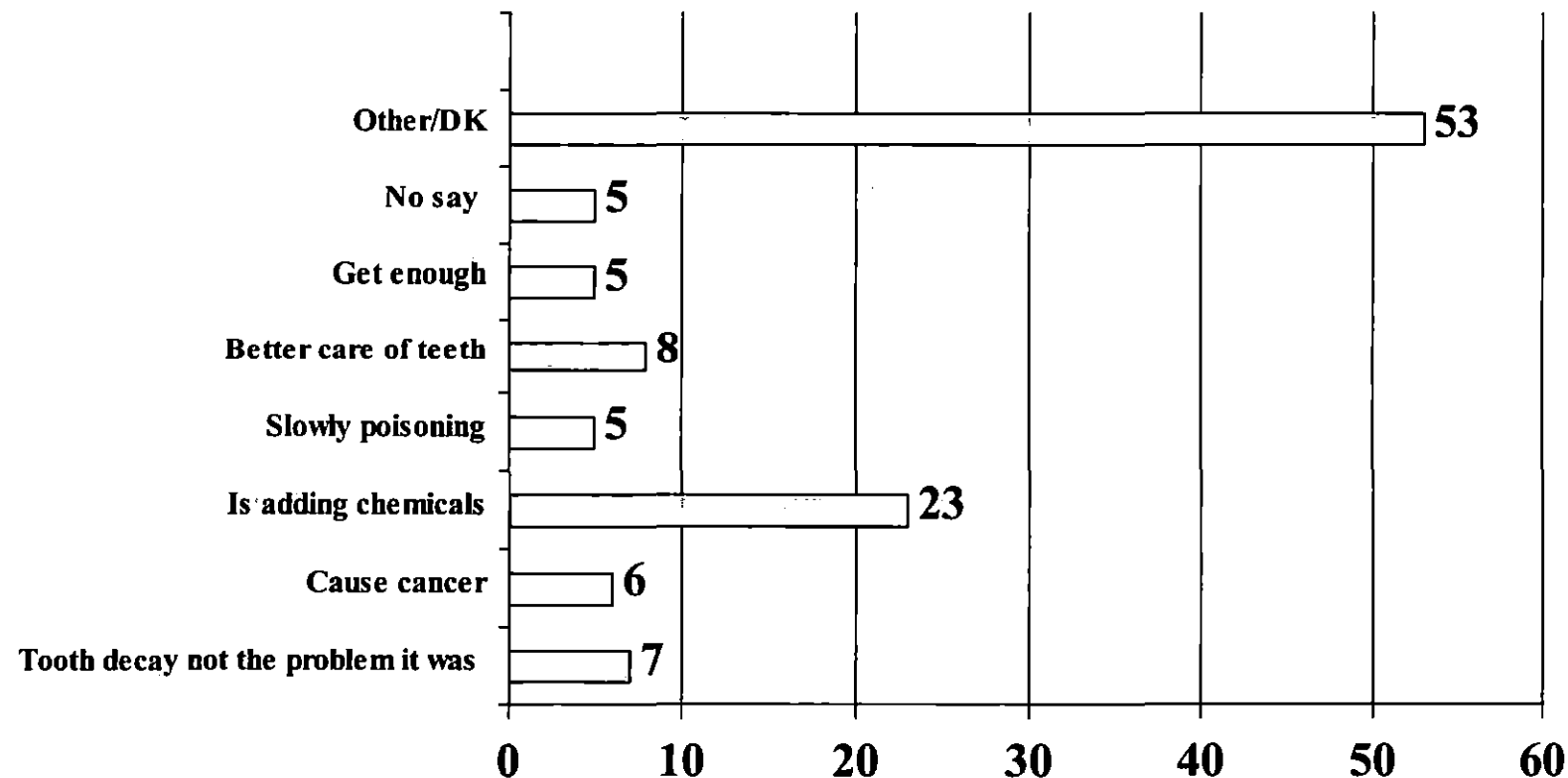
Reduce	
tooth decay	67%
Whiten teeth	11%
Make taste	
nicer	2%
Other/don't	
know/no reply	21%

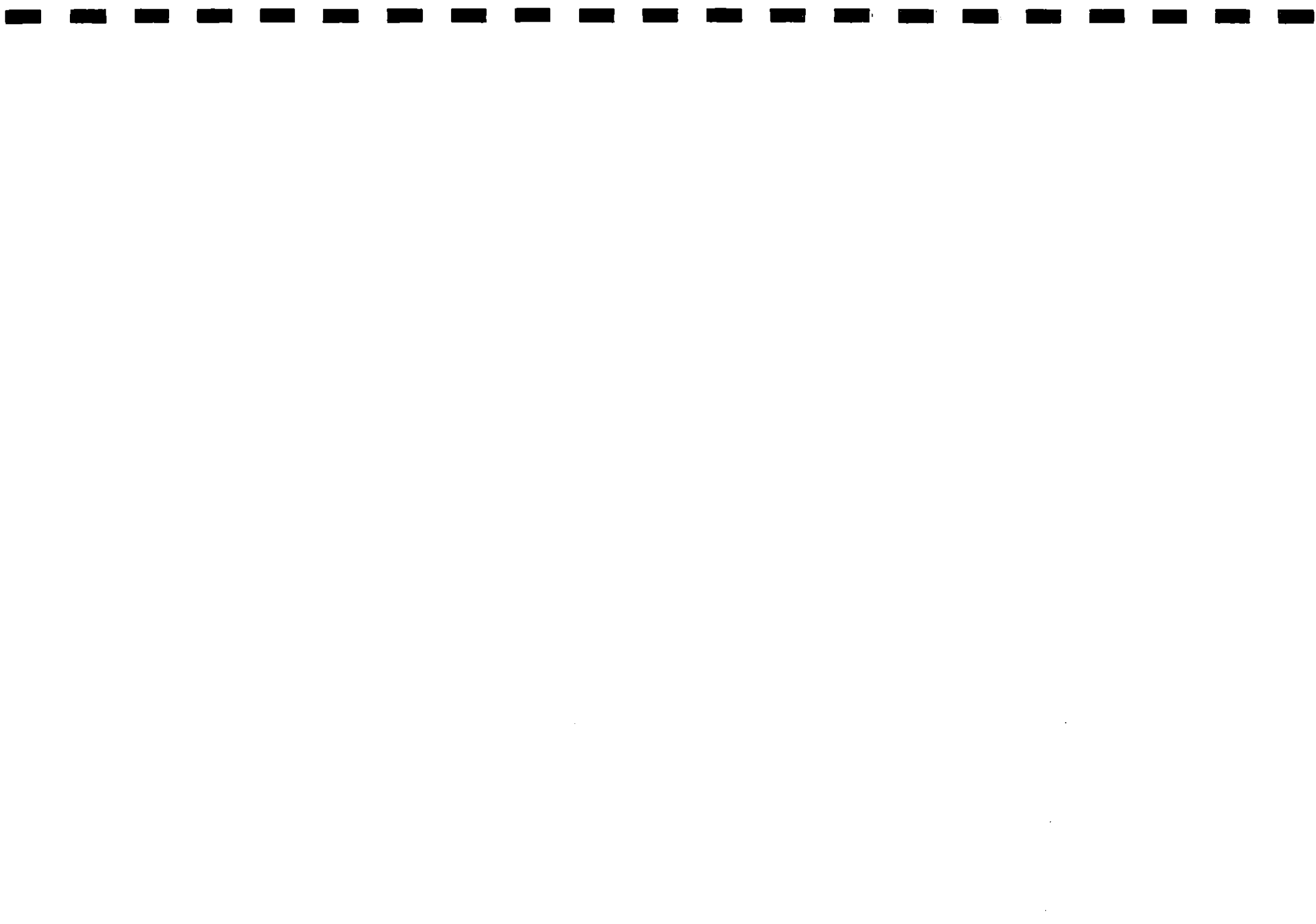


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# Fluoride in Water

*Q14 Can you think of any reasons why fluoride should not be present in drinking water?*







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# Attitudes to Fluoride in Water

General Population

Those Concerned  
About Fluoride in Water

Fluoride in  
water can cause  
lead poisoning

18%

27%

Putting fluoride  
in water is not  
natural

62%

71%

We can get too  
much fluoride  
nowadays

51%

64%

Fluoride in water  
can cause cancer

16%

22%



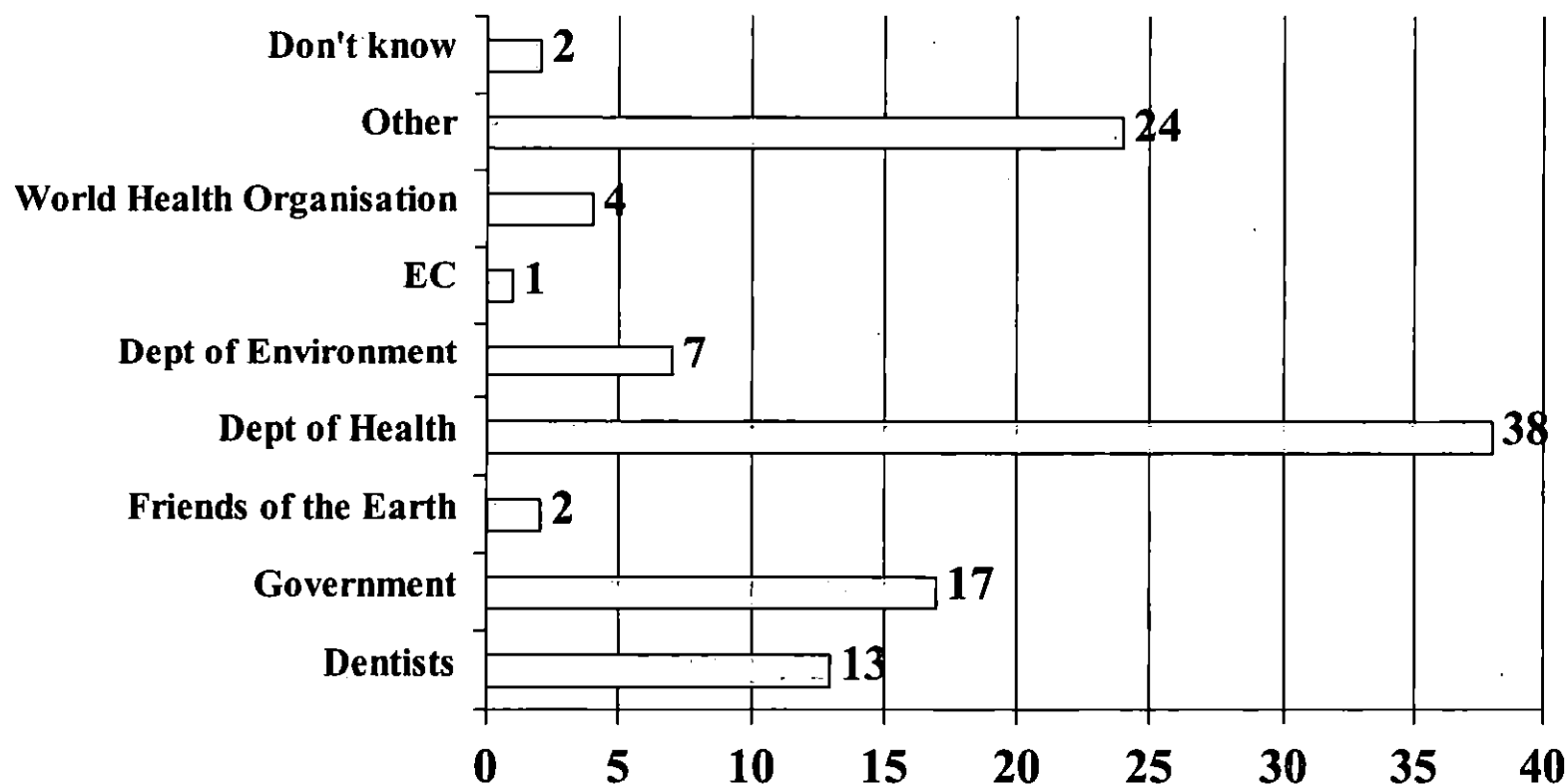
Drury Research



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# Fluoride in Water

*Q15 Who should decide whether drinking water has fluoride in it or not?*



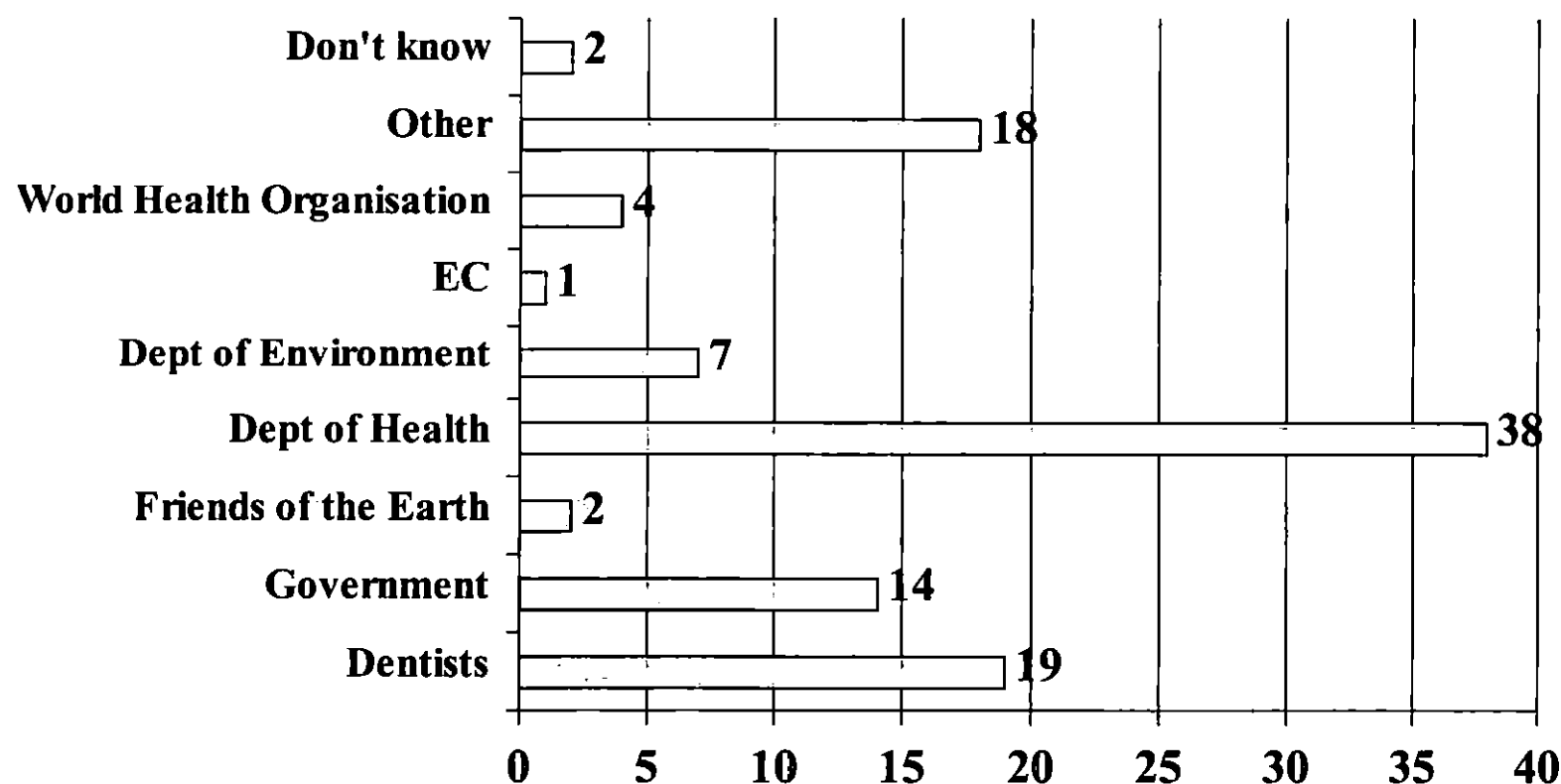




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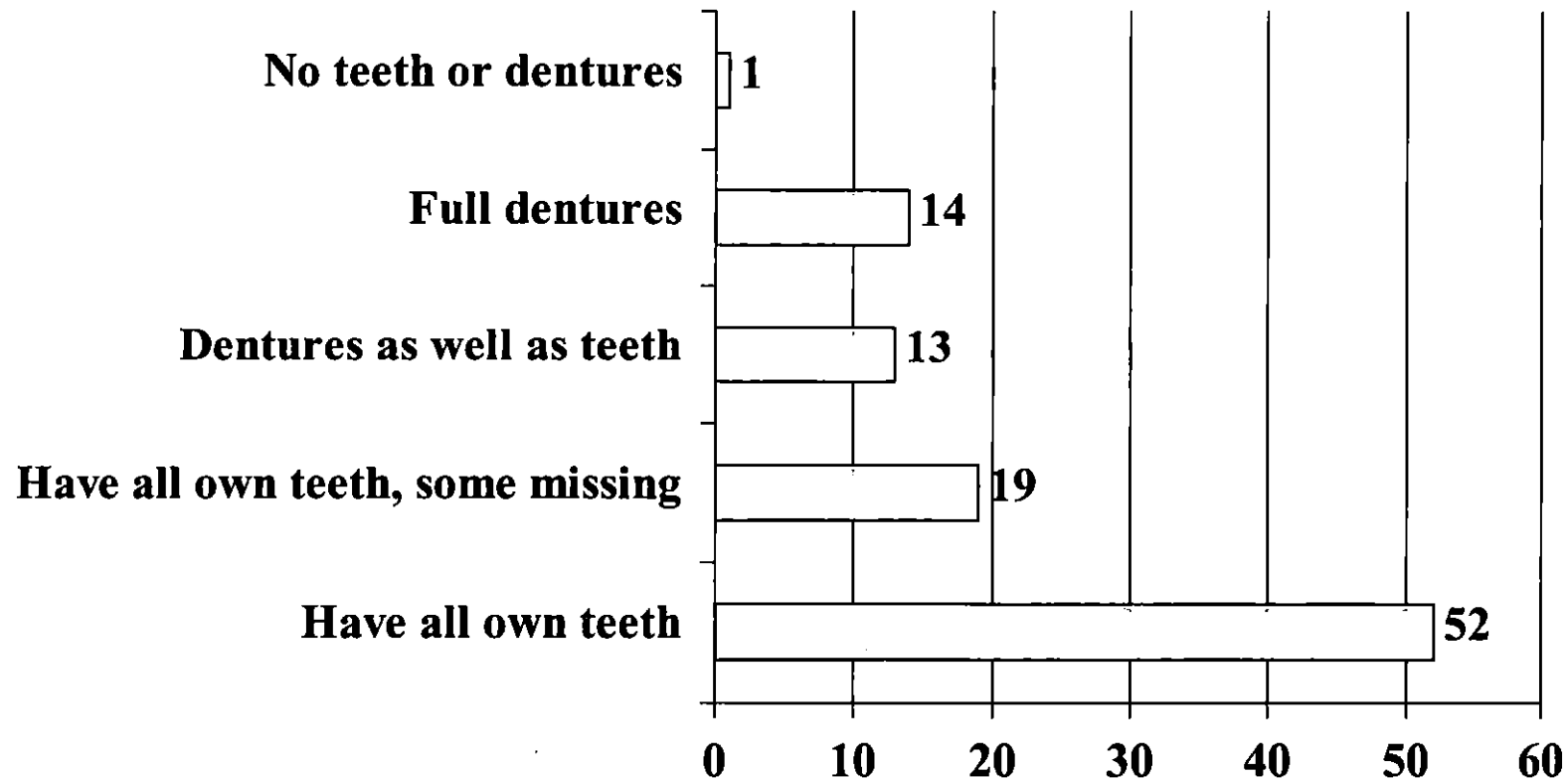
# Fluoride in Water

*Q16 Who would you most trust to supply information about fluoride in water to you?*



# Dental Health

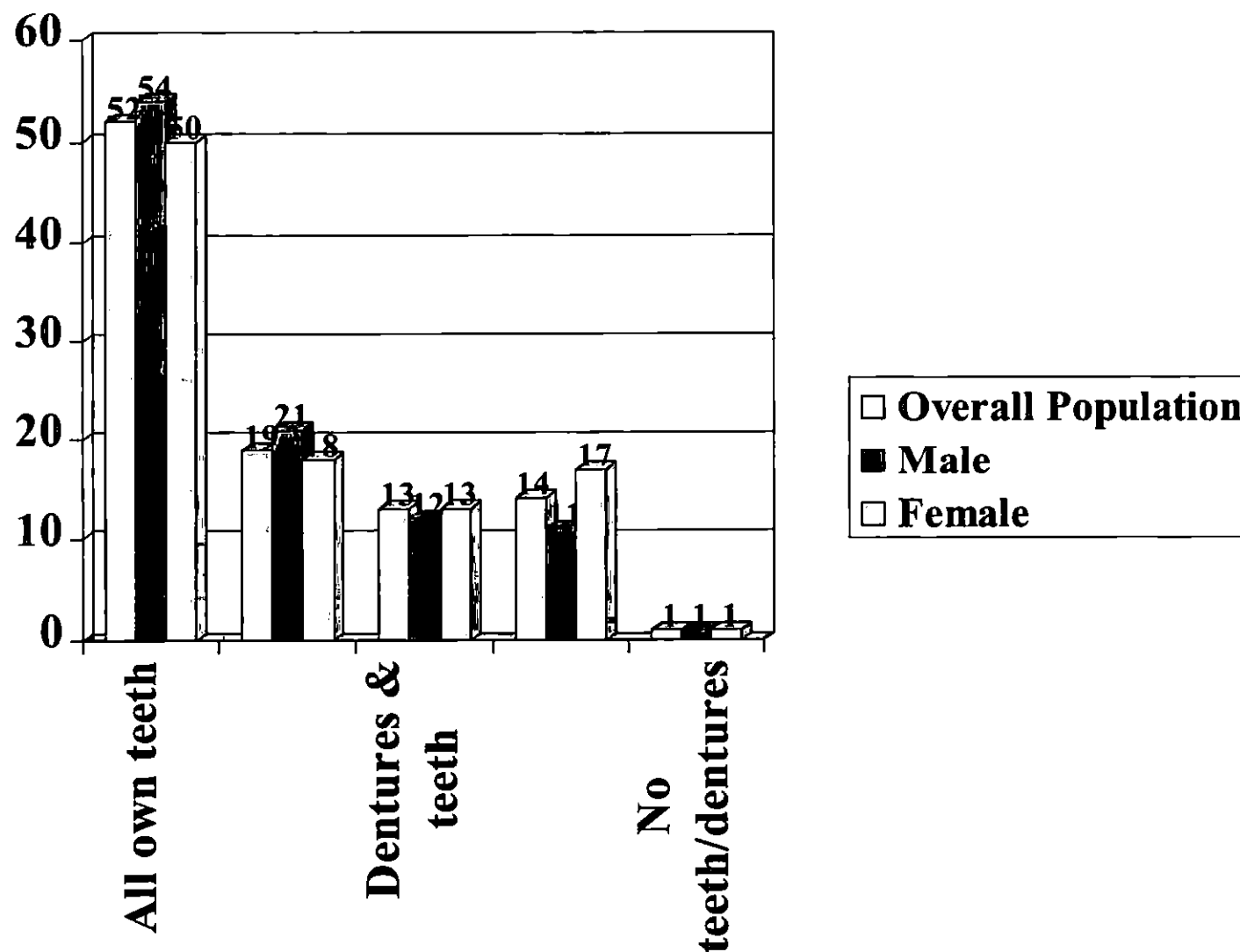
*Q8 Which description best describes you?*





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# Dental Health by Sex





# Dental Health by Age

	Overall pop	15-24	25-34	35-49	50-64
Own teeth	52%	91%	73%	51%	18%
Teeth missing	19%	8%	21%	29%	20%
Dentures & teeth	13%	1%	4%	12%	32%
Full dentures	14%		1%	7%	28%
Neither	1%		1%	2%	

- By the time the age reaches 50-64 almost 1/3 (32%) have some dentures and over 1 in five (28%) have full dentures.
- Over 9 in 10 of 15-24 year olds have all their own teeth



# Dental Health by Class

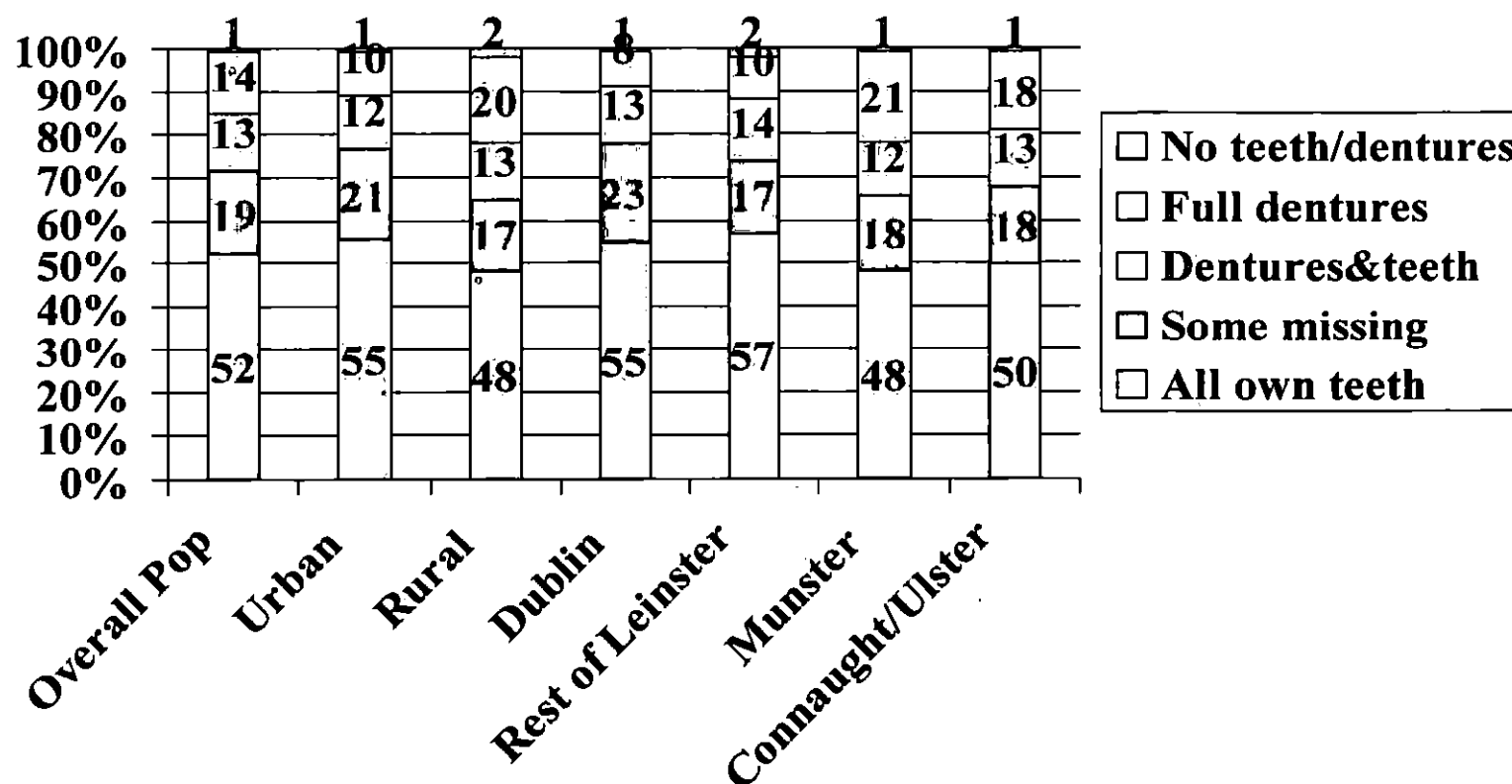
	Overall	ABC1	C2DE	F
Own teeth	52%	63%	48%	38%
Teeth missing	19%	18%	21%	16%
Dentures & teet	13%	9%	14%	17%
Full dentures	14%	9%	15%	27%
Neither	1%	1%	2%	2%

- Lower social classes, but particularly farmers have poorer dental health than the average across the population in general



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# Dental Health by Region

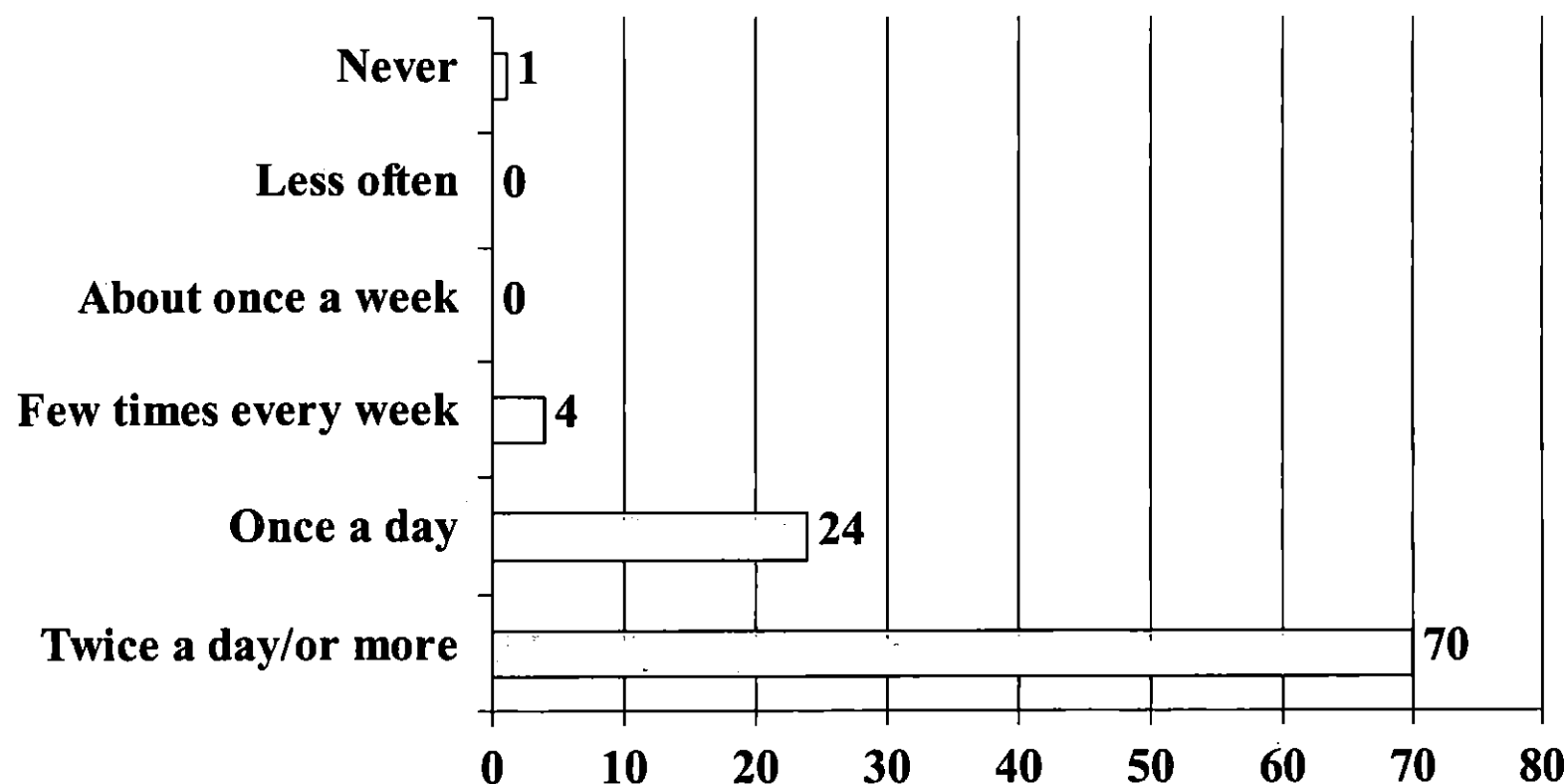




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# Frequency of Brushing Teeth

*Q9 How often do you actually brush your teeth?*

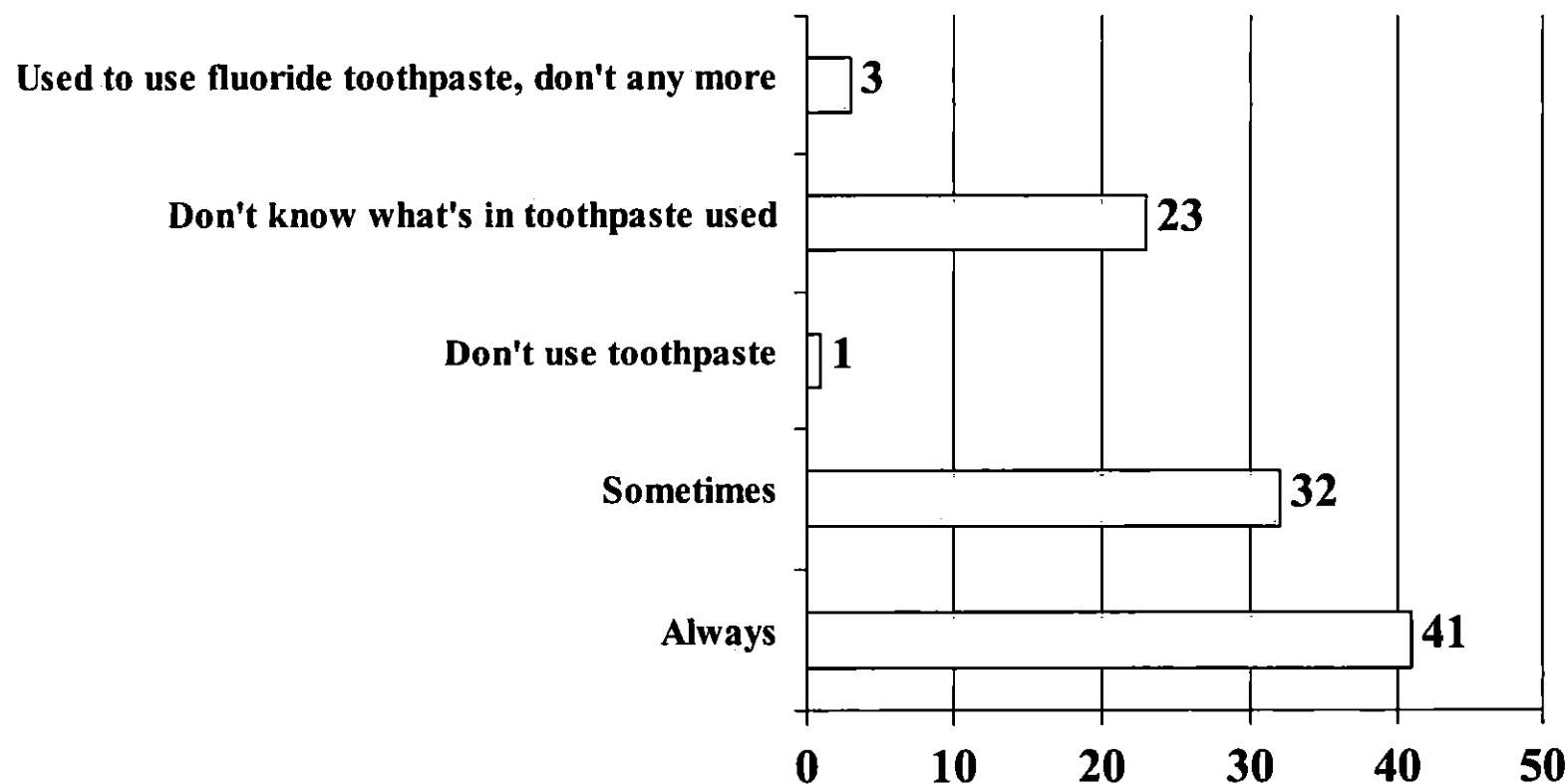




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# Toothbrushing

*Q10 Do you use fluoride toothpaste?*

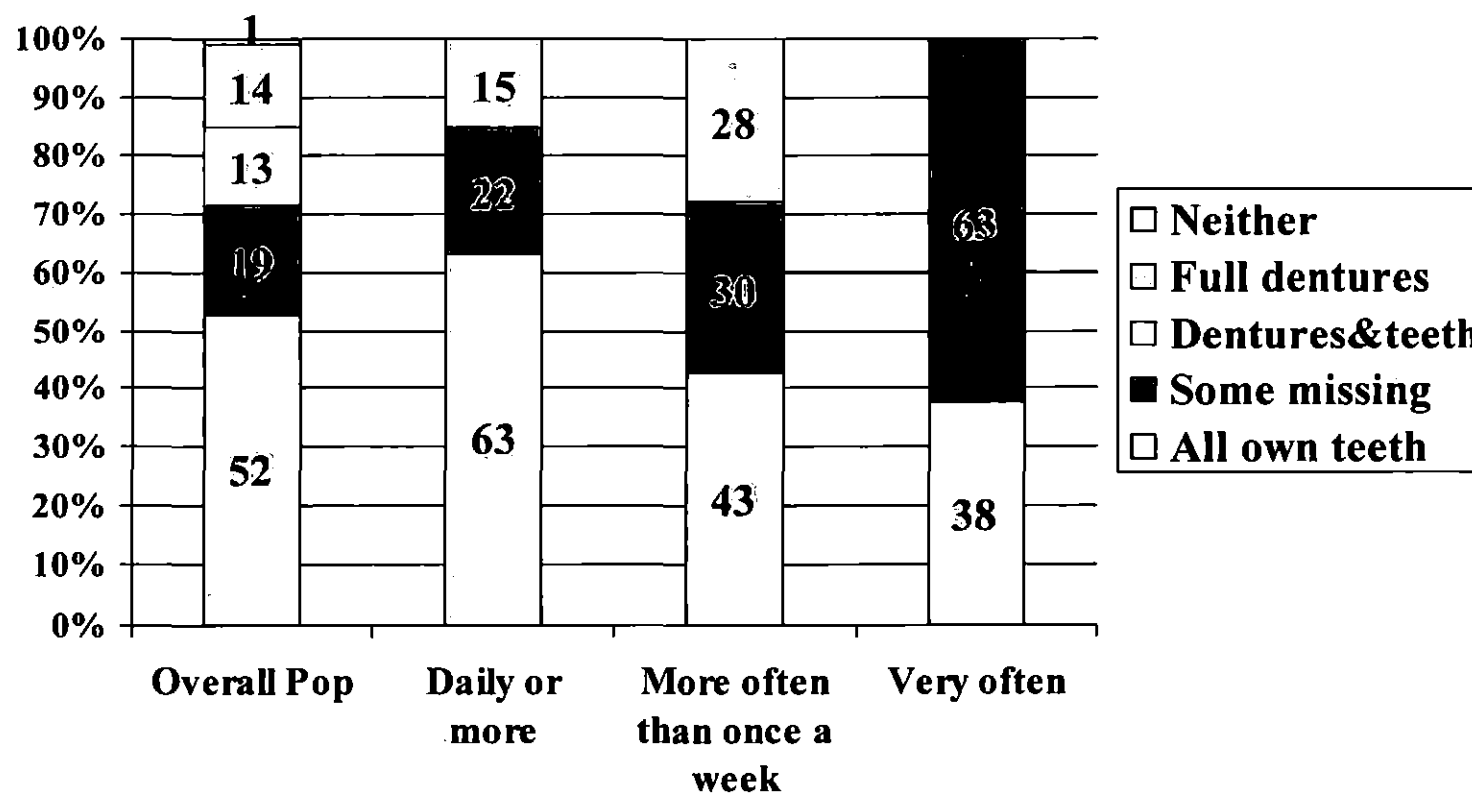






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# Dental Health by Frequency of Toothbrushing

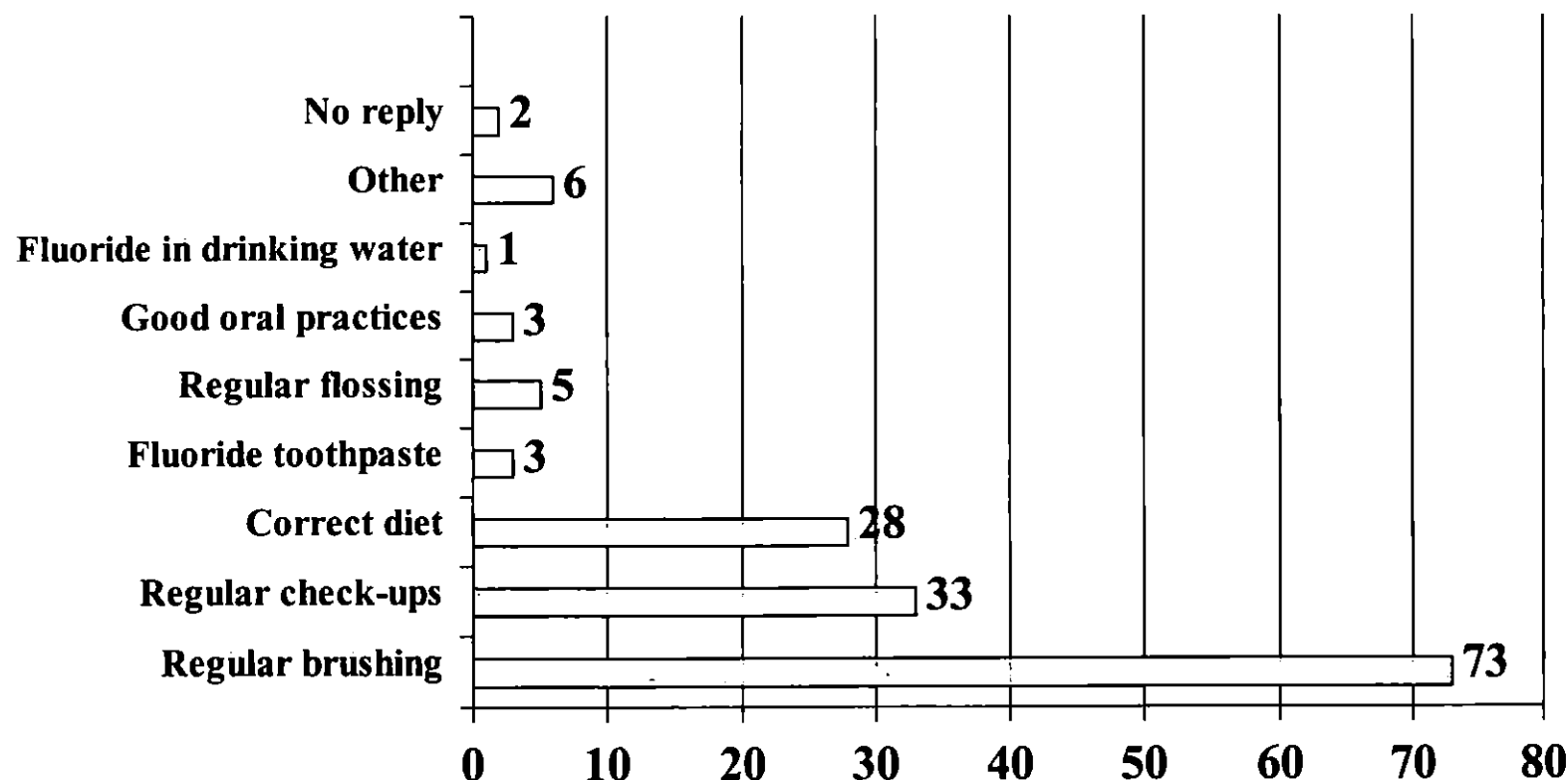




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# Dental Health

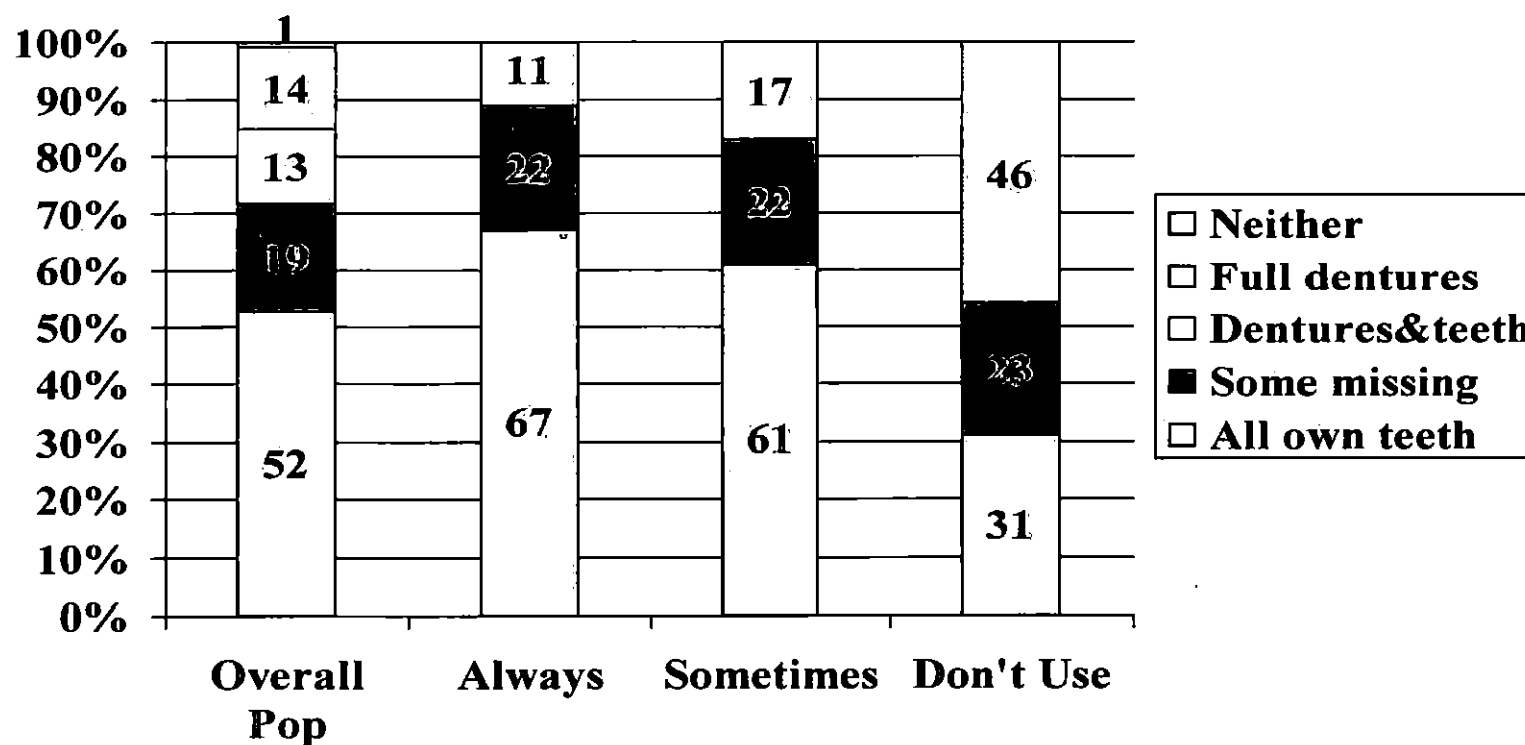
*Q13 What would you suggest as the best ways to help prevent tooth decay?*





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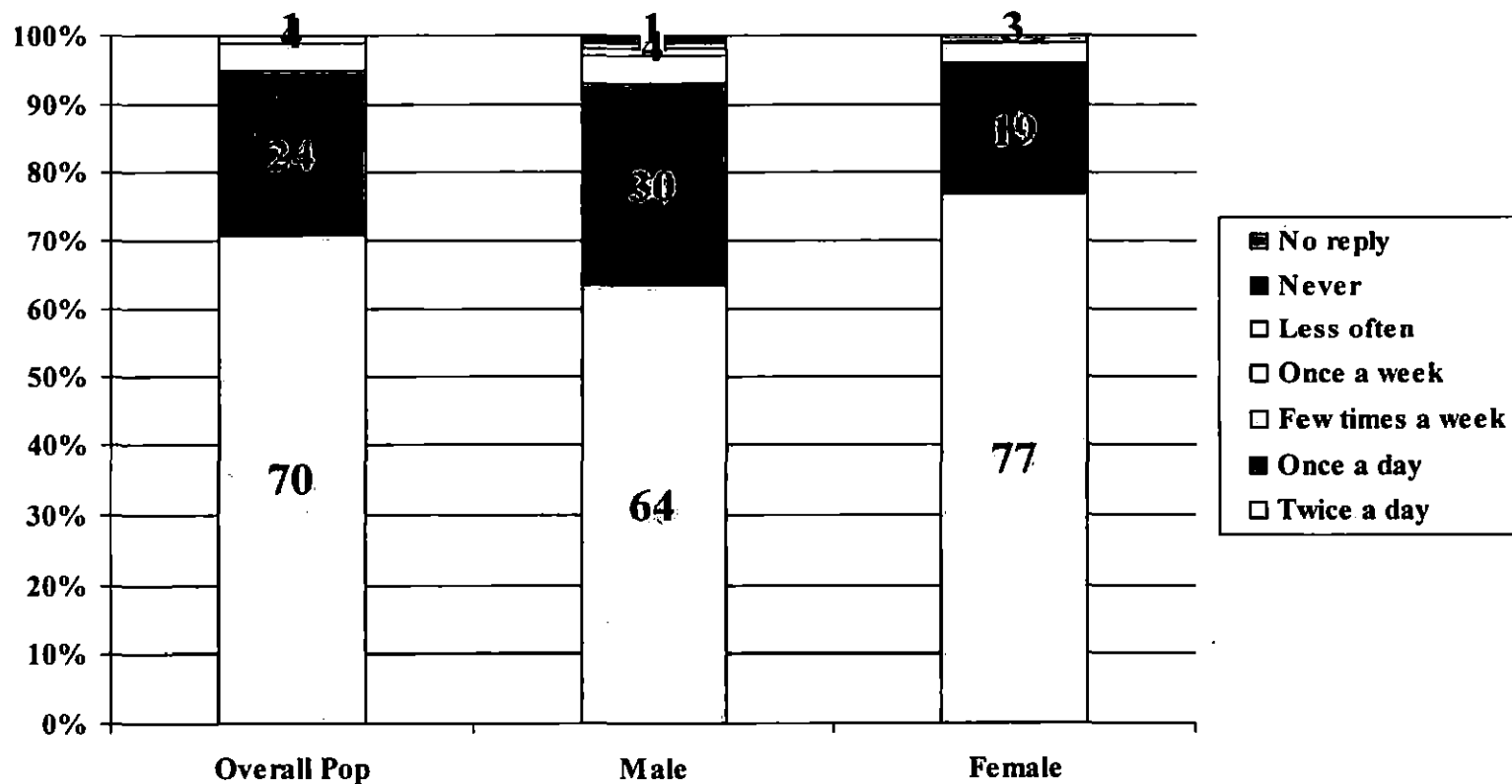
# Dental Health by Usage of Fluoride Toothpaste





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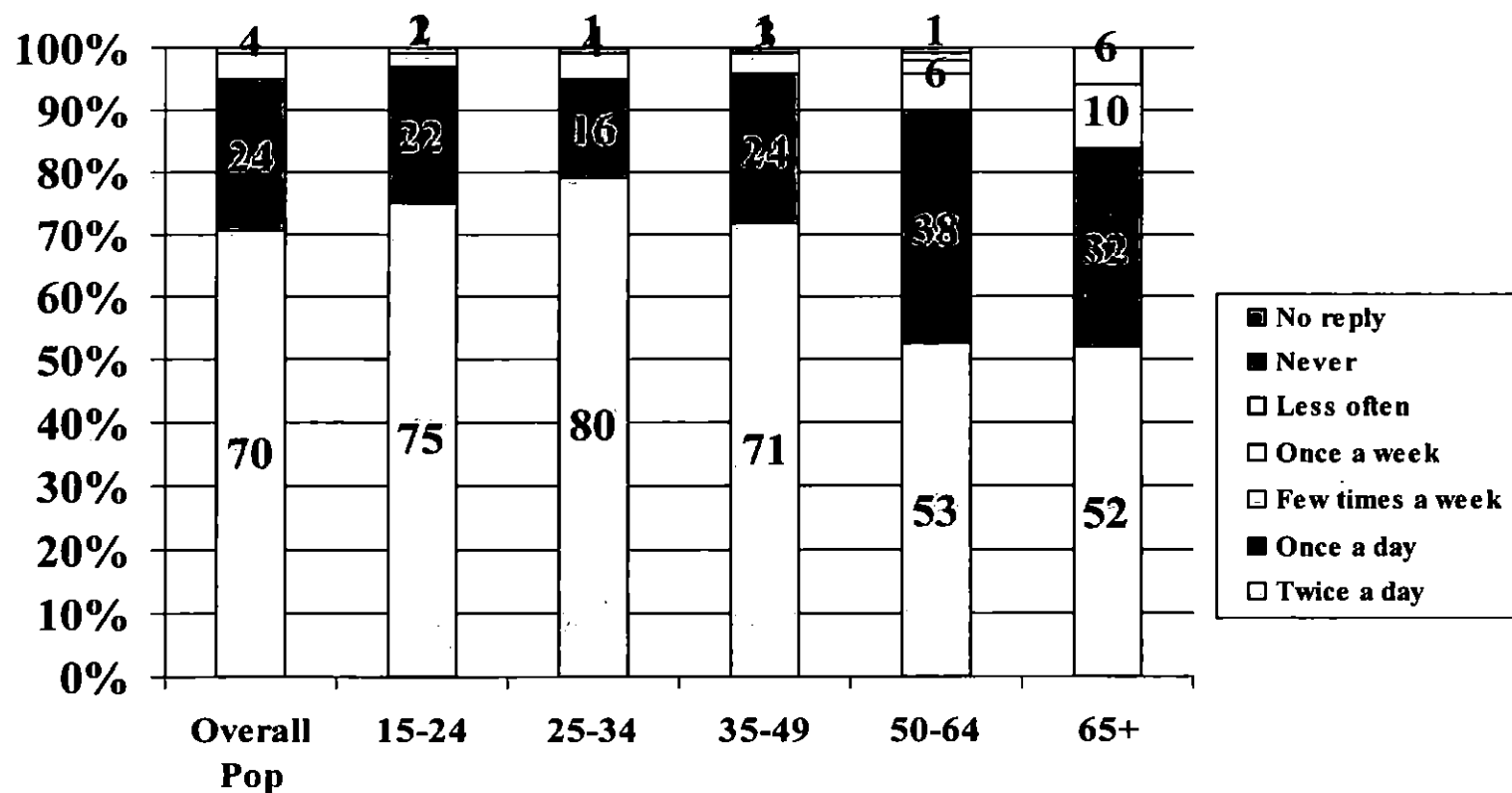
# Frequency of Toothbrushing by Sex & Age





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# Frequency of Toothbrushing by Age





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# Frequency of Toothbrushing by Class

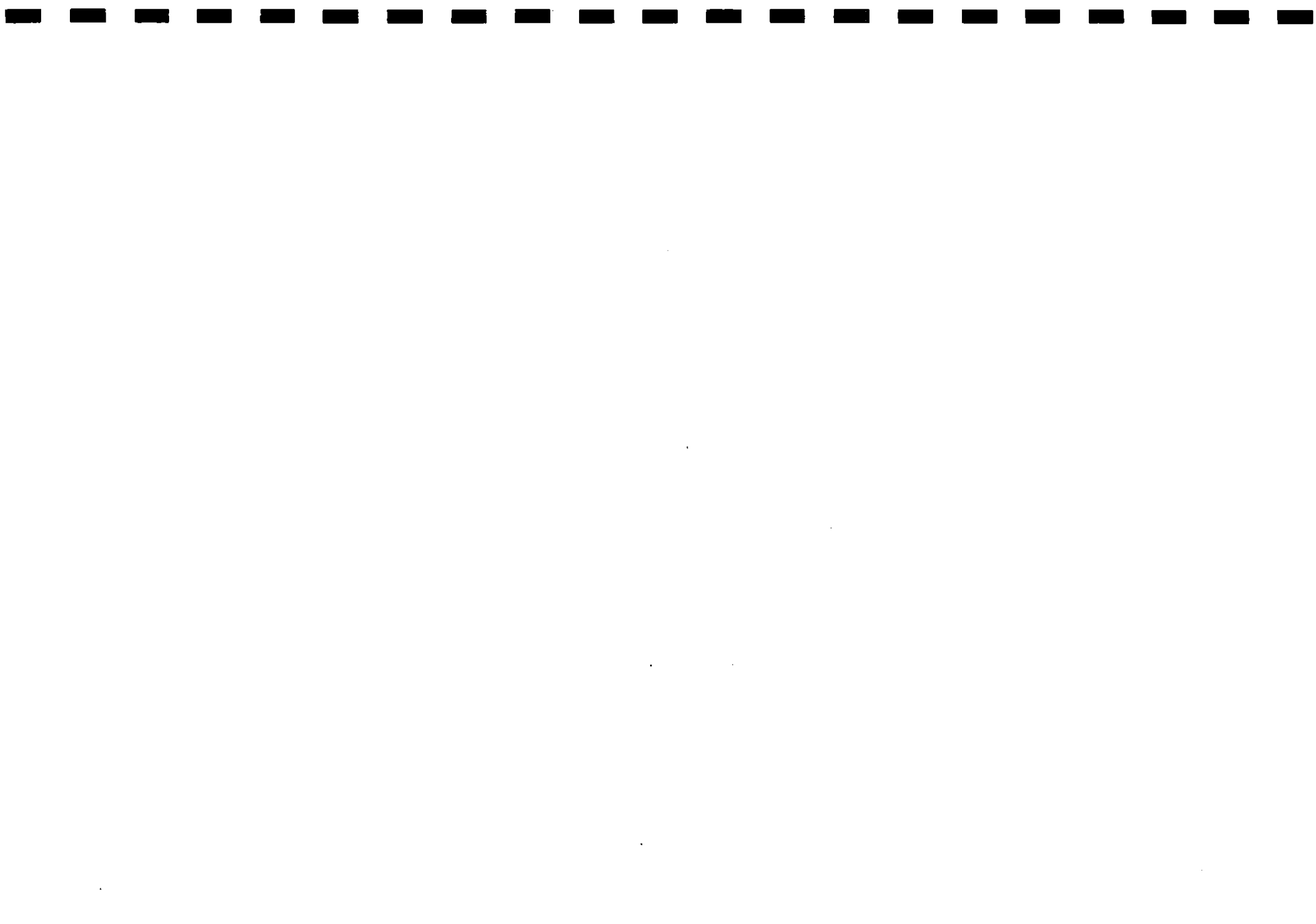
	Twice a	Once a d	A few times a	Once a w	Less of	Never
Overall	70%	24%	4%			1%
ABC1	84%	13%	3%			1%
C2DE	64%	30%	3%	1%		1%

- Farmers are less frequent toothbrushers
- ABC1 being most frequent



# Toothbrushing

- Those who always use a fluoride toothpaste (82%) brush their teeth more often, i.e. twice a day or more, as do those who are aware of the DHF (79%)
- There is no correlation between usage of fluoride toothpaste and those who are concerned about the levels of fluoride in water
  - indicating that the connection is not between the substance in water and toothpaste
  - consistent with the qualitative research findings



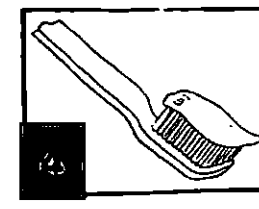
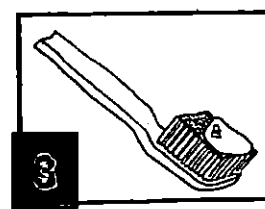
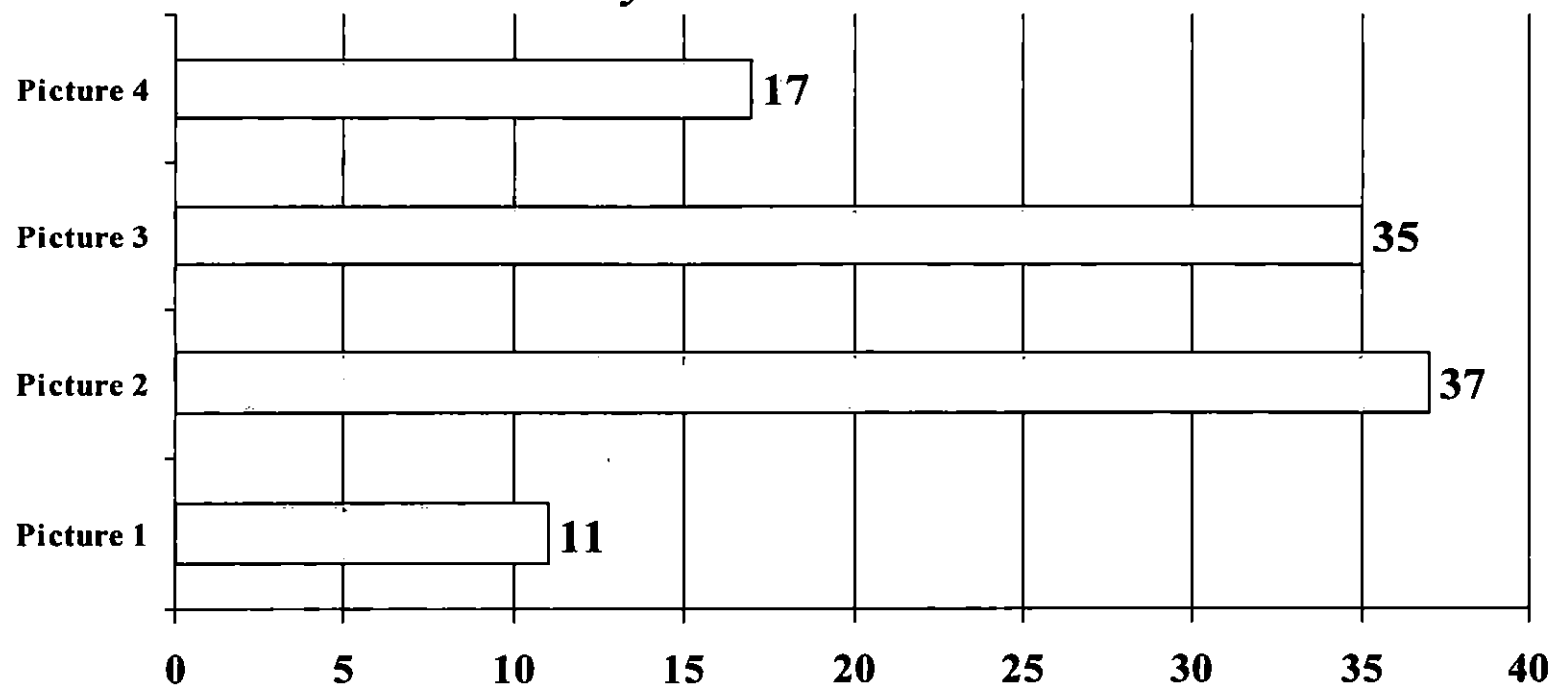




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# Toothbrushing

*Q11 Which picture is closest to the amount of toothpaste you normally use when you are brushing your teeth?*

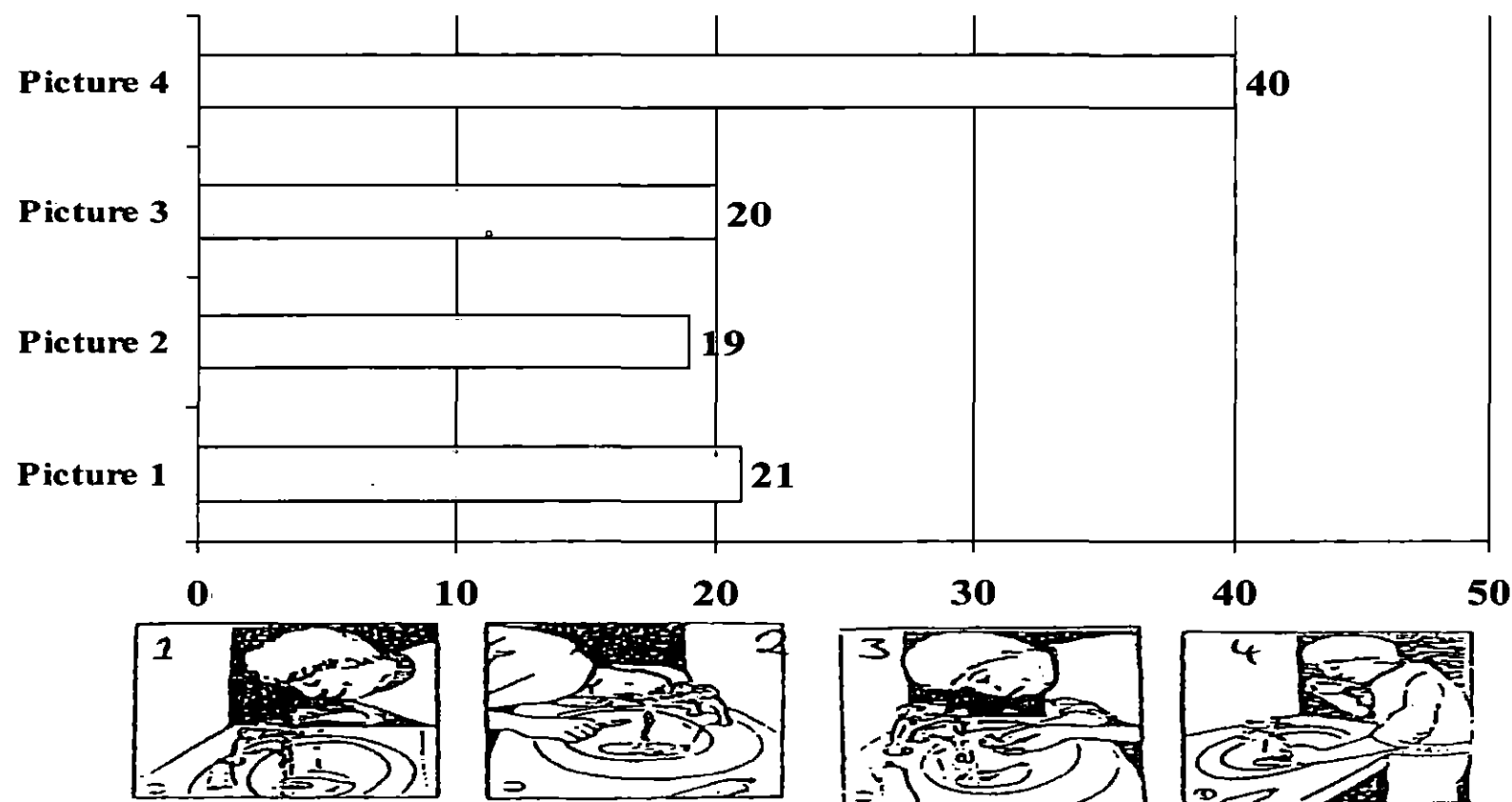


# Toothbrushing



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*Q12 Which of these pictures best illustrates how you rinse your mouth out after brushing your teeth?*





# Usage of Toothpaste

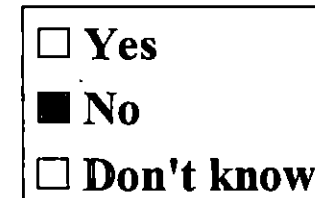
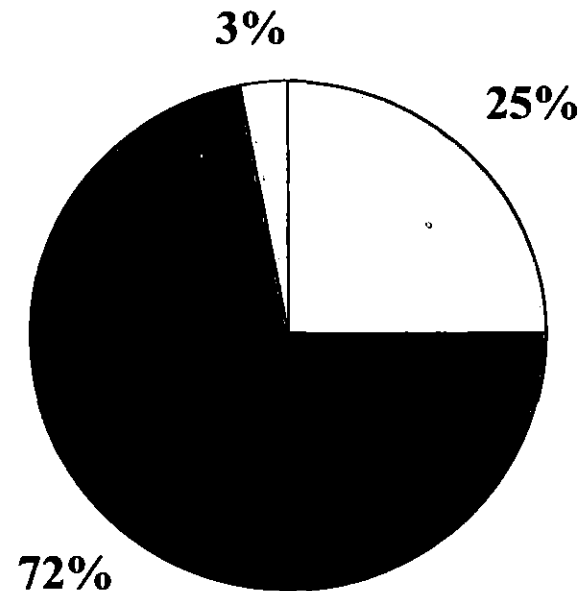
- Appears that all ages, sex, social classes are using too much toothpaste
- No differences by groups or regions/class as to how best to prevent tooth decay
- 15-24 year olds (25%) & farmers (24%) are most likely to trust dentists



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# Awareness of the DHF

*Q17 Have you ever heard of the Dental Health Foundation?*

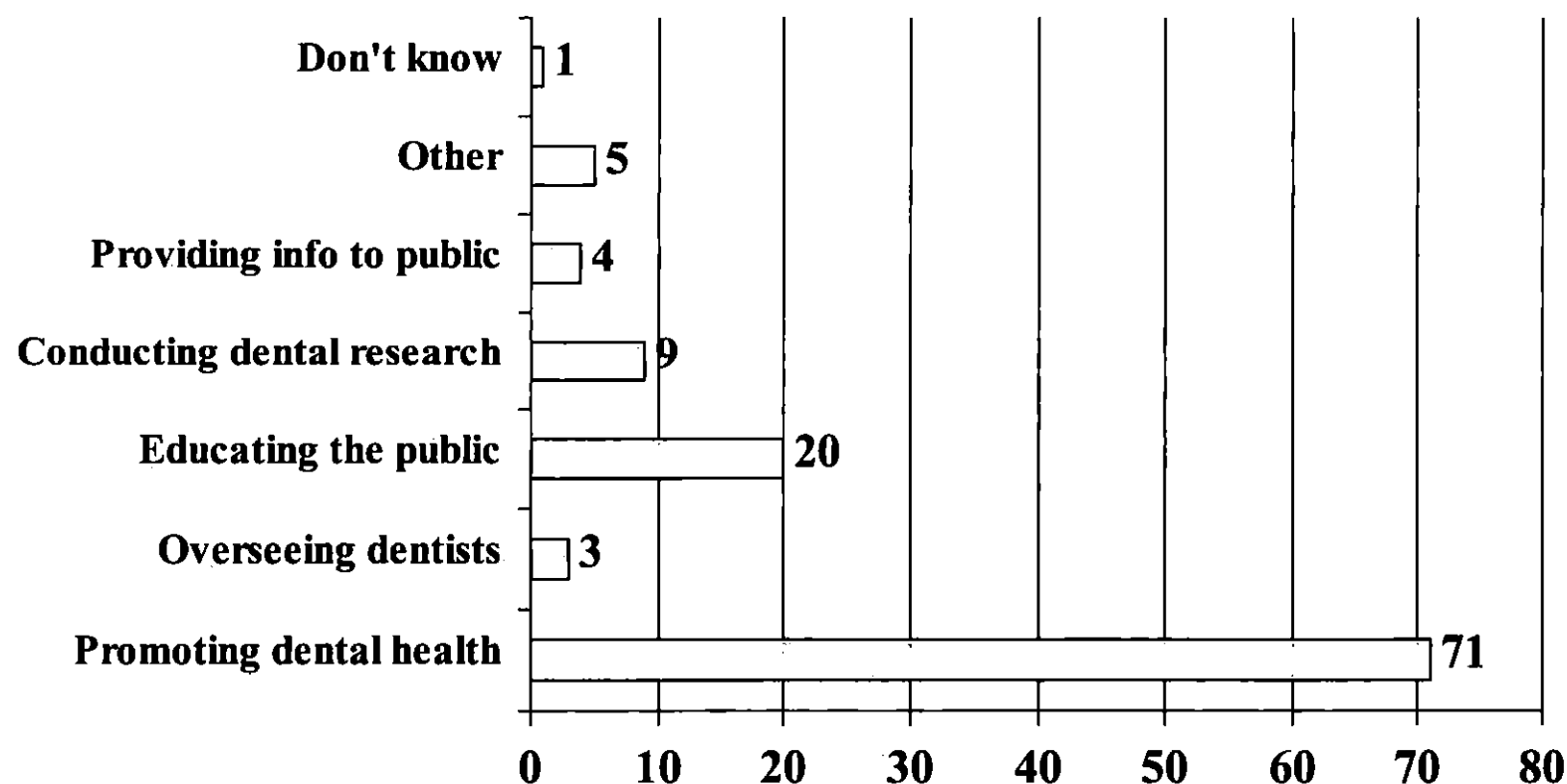




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# Awareness of the DHF

*Q18 What do you think its main role is?*





# Awareness of the DHF

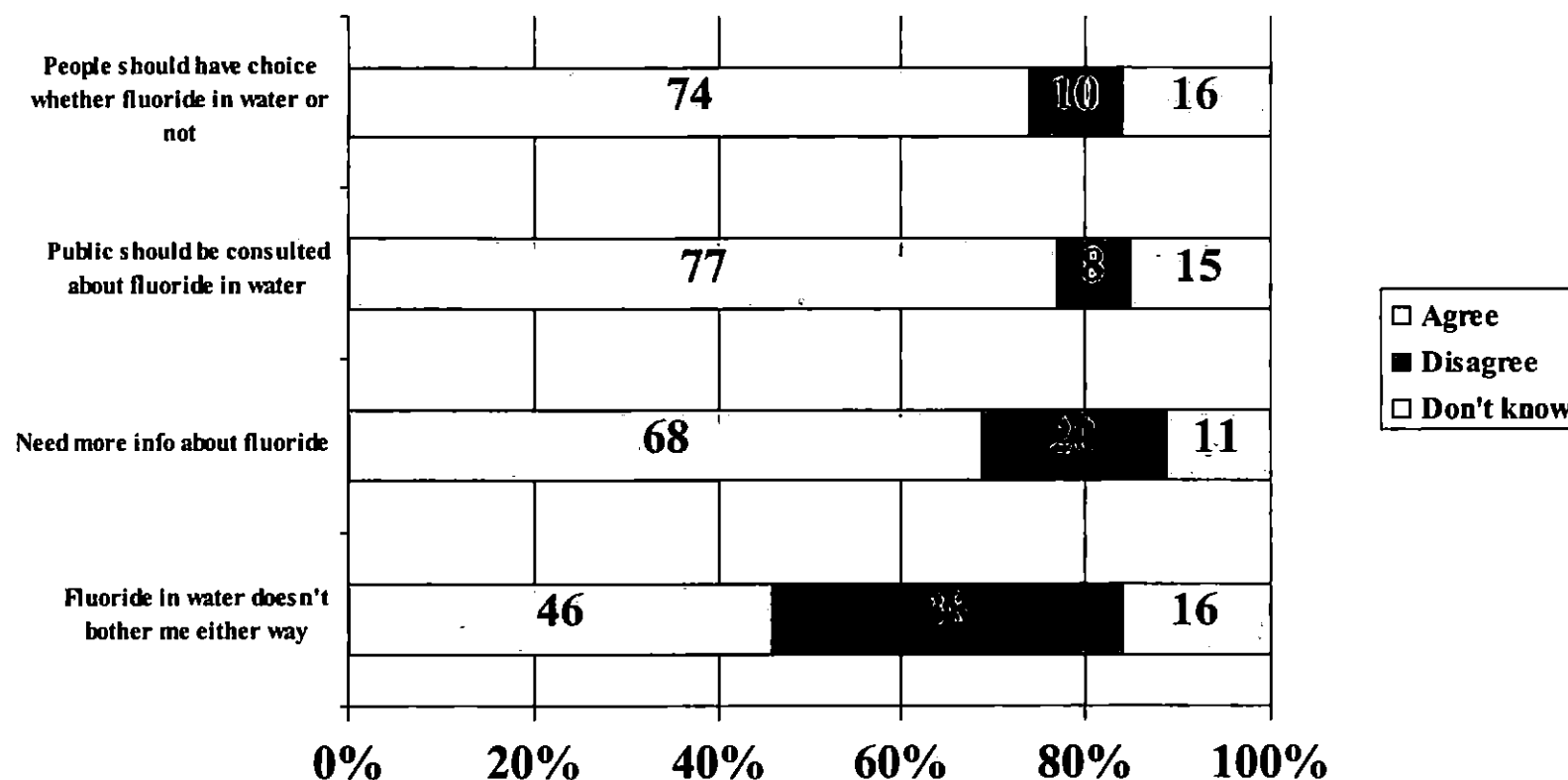
- Awareness of the DHF low overall (25%), consistent with the findings in the focus groups
- It is highest in the following groups;
  - ABC1 social class (30%)
  - 35-49 year olds (34%)
  - Those with kids (30%)
  - Those concerned about fluoride in water (32%)
  - Rest of Leinster (32%)
  - Connaught/Ulster (32%)



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# Attitudes to Fluoride

*Q19 Do you agree or disagree with these statements?*

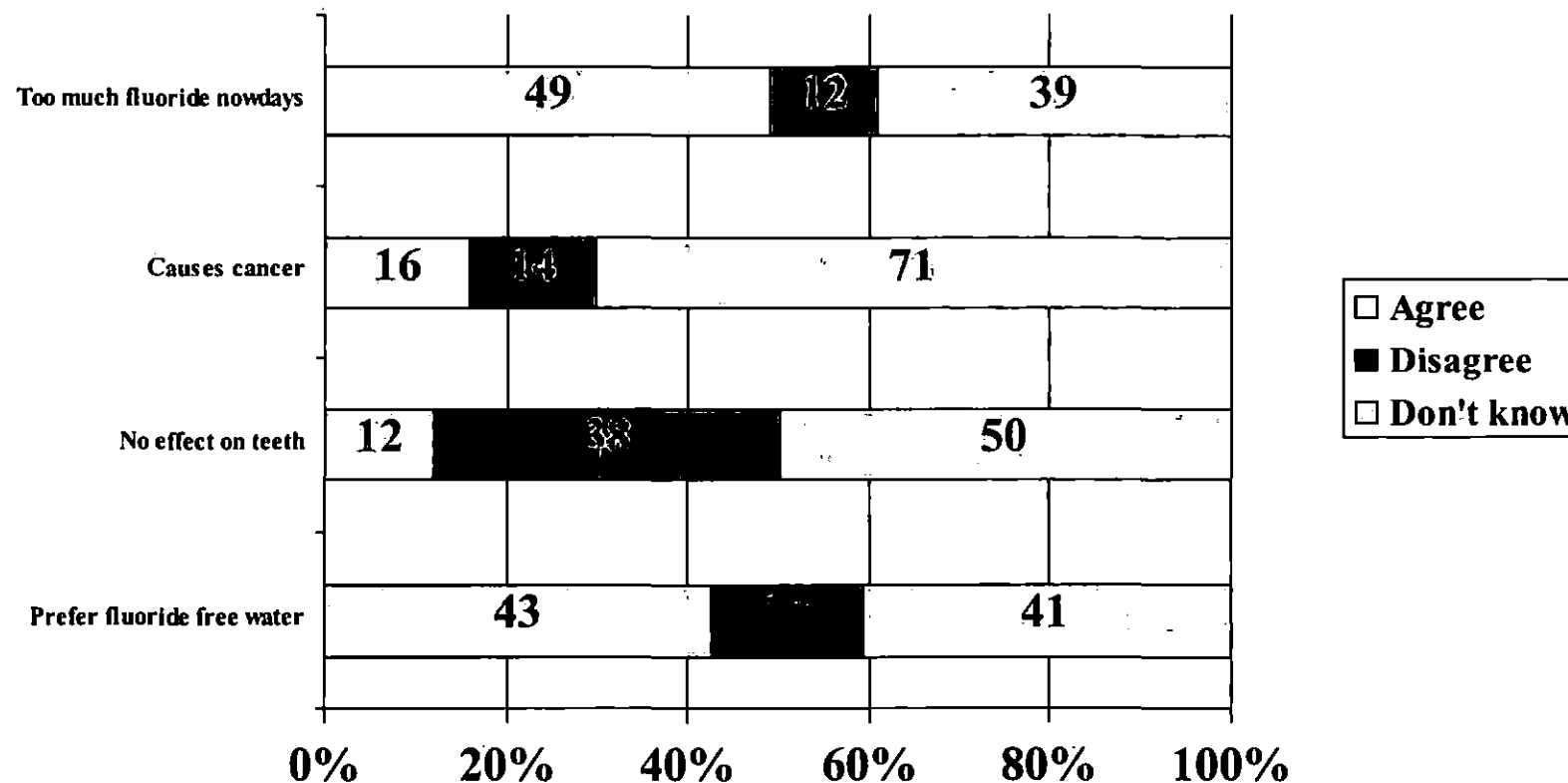




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# Attitudes to Fluoride

*Q19 Do you agree or disagree with these statements?*



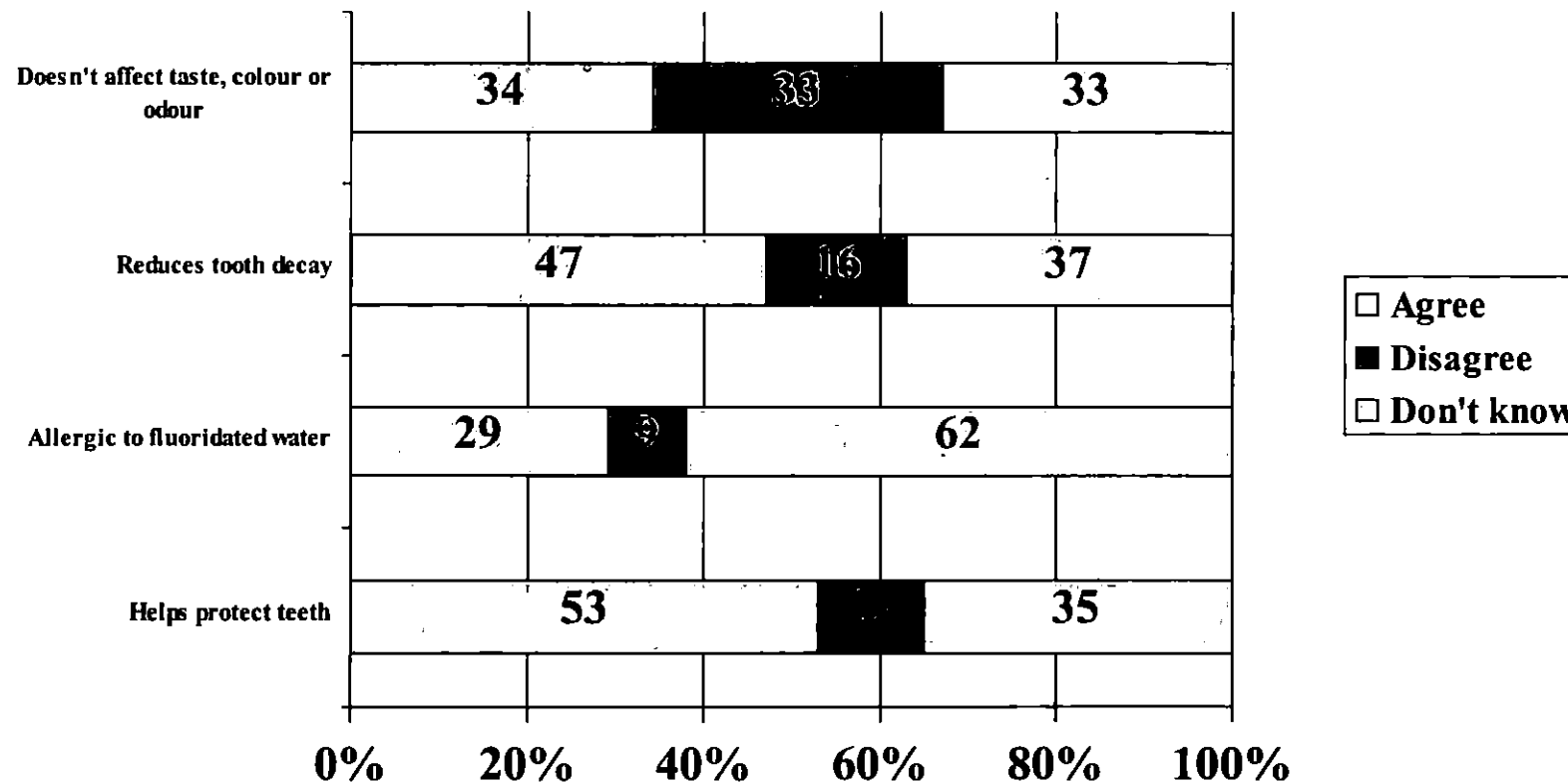




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# Attitudes to Fluoride

*Q19 Do you agree or disagree with these statements?*

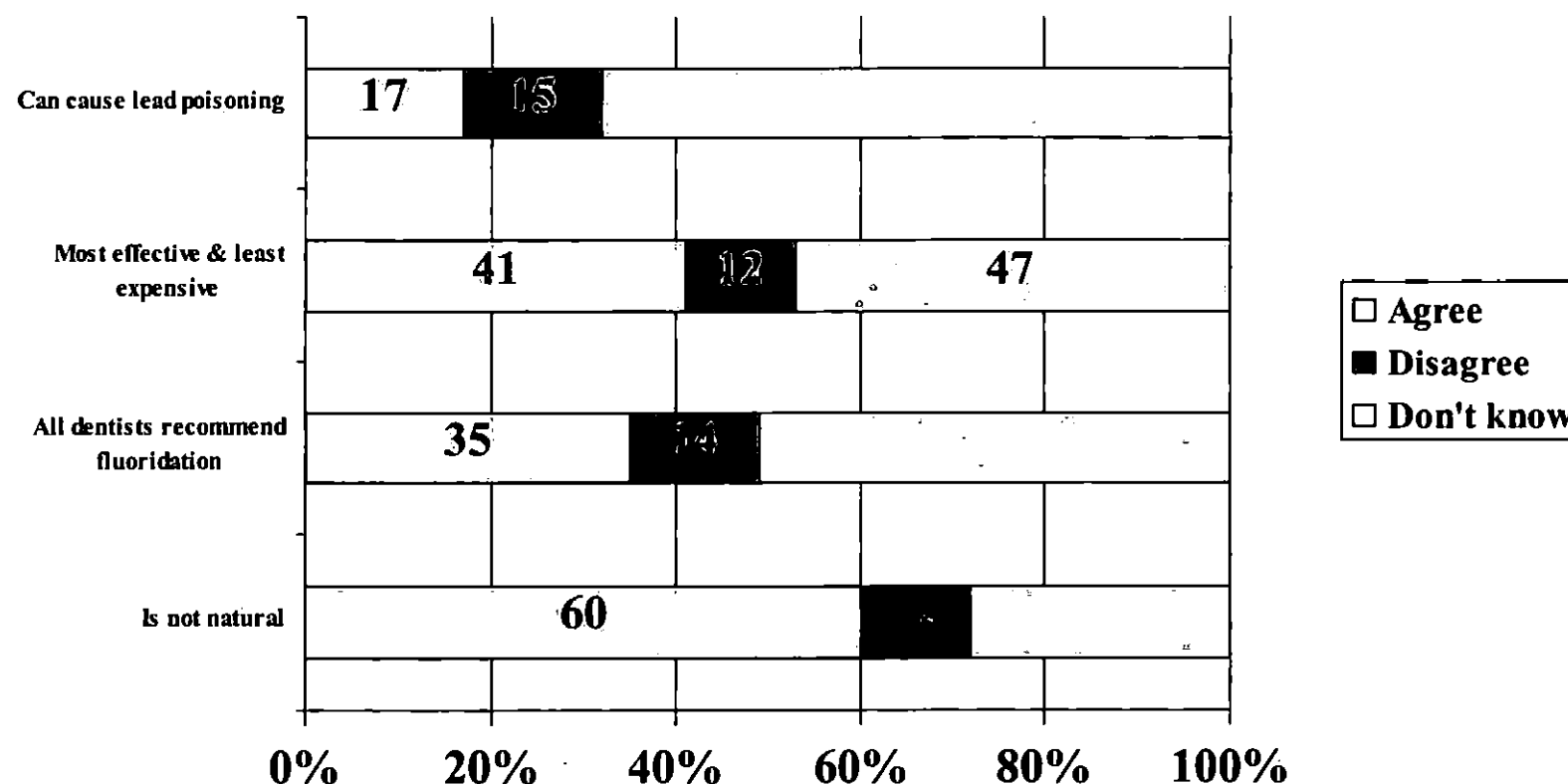




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# Attitudes to Fluoride

*Q19 Do you agree or disagree with these statements?*





# Attitudes to Fluoride

- We can get too much fluoride nowadays, 51% generally, but 64% of those concerned about fluoride in water
- 89% of those concerned about fluoride feel the public should be consulted v 80% overall
- Need more info. 81% of those concerned v 71% generally
- 18% overall, but 27% of those who are concerned about fluoride believe it can lead to lead poisoning



# Attitudes to Fluoride

- Cancer causing fluoride 16% overall, 22% of those concerned about fluoride
- Preference for fluoride free water 44% overall v 53% for those concerned about fluoride in water
- 64% of those concerned believe we can get too much fluoride nowadays v 51% overall



# Conclusions

- Overall, findings consistent with qualitative research
- There is now a robust body of data suggesting that people have higher level concerns other than fluoride in water on the surface



# Conclusions

- There is an indication in the arguments against fluoridation, that the public is playing back the anti-campaign messages
- This is evident in the attitude statements also and the wish to be consulted and for more information that has been expressed in both this and the qualitative research



# Conclusions

- In the absence of very strong opinion about water fluoridation there is potential for a persuasive campaign to be orchestrated
- Indications are that those who have concerns about fluoride in water play back the anti-campaign



# Conclusions

- In the main the issue and information regarding fluoride in water is seen to be the remit of the Department of Health&Children
- However, there is an environmental dimension to this issue that has the potential to be emotive
- Water quality and purification is linked in the public mind to fluoridation.





# Conclusions

- Awareness of the DHF is low, however, it appears best in households with children and amongst those who are concerned about fluoride in water
- Connaught/Ulster as a region appears to have higher proportions of those concerned about environmental issues generally and water fluoridation.



# Recommendations

- Educate people regarding fluoridation of water and its purpose
- Consider presenting a more balanced debate than what is currently in the public domain
- Consider the potential for negatives around the overall ingestion of fluoride via dental products in addition to water

# Recommendations

- Consider both the environmental and dental health perspectives especially as the issue of water purity is an emotive environmental one and a higher level concern generally that has the potential to be ‘whipped up’ by the anti-fluoridation campaign
- Consider schools for households with children as a route to transmitting key messages regarding fluoride.

