

ATREUS

ATREUS SURVEY  
LEADERSHIP **PLUS**

**LEADERSHIP+**

Preserving supply chains as well as employee retention and recruitment as the primary focus of the companies



The Global  
Interim Management Group

PRESERVING SUPPLY CHAINS AS WELL AS EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT AS THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF THE COMPANIES

Dear readers,



Advancing digitization and the corona pandemic have brought on completely new challenges. More than ever we are looking for and need reliable, solid values and clear goals. Companies are made aware that „business as usual“ is a risky manoeuvre. Change is no longer an abstract concept. It is taking place. This also applies to leadership and the challenges that business leaders face.

In January 2022 we continued with the survey called “Leadership+ – Everything changed?;” which was initially carried out for the first time in January 2021. and once again a survey was conducted about current trends. The results of the study make abundantly clear that a new understanding of leadership is finding its way into companies. The acceptance of the new and unknown is there, the urge for change can be felt. We are pleased that with our Leadership+ study we can provide exclusive insights into the operational challenges and culture-changing leadership and management tasks in Germany’s companies that are expected in the coming weeks and months.

Your Executive Board

**RAINER NAGEL,**  
Managing Partner & CEO

**DR. HARALD LINNÉ,**  
Managing Partner & CEO

**DR. CHRISTIAN FRANK,**  
Partner &  
Member of the Executive Board,  
Head of the Machinery &  
Plant Engineering Solution Group

**UWE GEHRMANN,**  
Partner &  
Member of the Executive Board

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## The Survey Parameters

- + **Period of the survey:** January and February 2022
- + **Method:** Online-Poll using questionnaires with closed and open questions
- + In January and February 2022, Atreus launched the second Leadership+ study wherein **1,032 top executives** took part, including managing directors, board members, supervisory boards and interim managers from various industries



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## Key-Messages

### **Preserving supply chains as well as employee retention and recruitment as the primary focus of the companies**

When it started two years ago, the corona pandemic triggered a helplessness in the German companies. Although consequences of the crisis continue to this day, it has at the same time helped executives as well as employees to learn completely new skills. The majority of those responsible have realized that the biggest challenges in 2022 will be maintaining and securing the supply chains, the development of a sustainable and at the same time digital business model as well as a corresponding corporate culture and a culture of innovation. Both are very much geared towards the managerial staff and their abilities.

### **Multiple Drivers of Change**

The majority of those who took the survey cite their greatest management challenge in 2022 as retaining the right employees, winning them over and to raise enthusiasm about the company. According to the study participants, the establishment of a hybrid working model in combination with open communication, regular workshops and events as well as new bonus and participation systems are named as instruments for employee motivation. Adapting or expanding the corporate culture and digitizing business models and processes are just as challenging as employee retention and recruitment. Although the pandemic is currently often cited as the main reason for restructuring, it is just one driver of change among many: digitization, sustainability, climate change – external factors have never had so much influence on corporate development. This market dynamic dominates day-to-day business and requires a high level of willingness to adapt from all employees.

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## Key-Messages

### **Positioning as an attractive employer**

Almost all the study participants agree on the greatest personal challenges in 2022: The change in management culture through digitization and dealing with “distance leadership”. Needless to say, it is here to stay. However, as positive effects and lessons learned from the crisis, they unanimously note that working in the home and mobile office works very well. Flexibility has increased and the majority of employees are very open to a new work culture. In addition, it will be extremely important to position oneself as an attractive employer, to ensure closer involvement of experts and top performers, to present perspectives and integrate stronger training measures.

### **Expandable ESG-Endeavors**

With regard to the topic of sustainability, the opinions expressed of those surveyed differ to a certain extent from each other. While 43 percent of managers attach great importance to this future topic, 34 percent see it as only a medium priority in the company. A full 63 percent of those surveyed have not yet set up an ESG program, although those who do (37%) have defined clear and measurable goals (e.g., CO<sub>2</sub> neutrality, lower electricity and water consumption, etc.). Only 28 percent have installed a “Head of Sustainability” so far. On the other hand, 72 percent define ESG as an additional responsibility. According to the survey participants, the reasons for a non-existent ESG program are the lack of resources and fundamentals as well as different priorities at the moment. Nevertheless, the topic of “corporate carbon neutrality” is very much there – most companies are planning net-zero emissions for the years 2030 to 2040.

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*»The results of the study show a significantly new understanding of leadership that is finding its way into companies. The acceptance of the new and unknown is very much there and the urge for change can be felt. Trust, empathy and autonomy determine the new togetherness – and that's a good thing. If you want to hold your ground in the competition and keep and attract new prospects, you need a new mindset and a profound cultural transformation.«*

**Rainer Nagel,**

Managing Partner and CEO, Atreus

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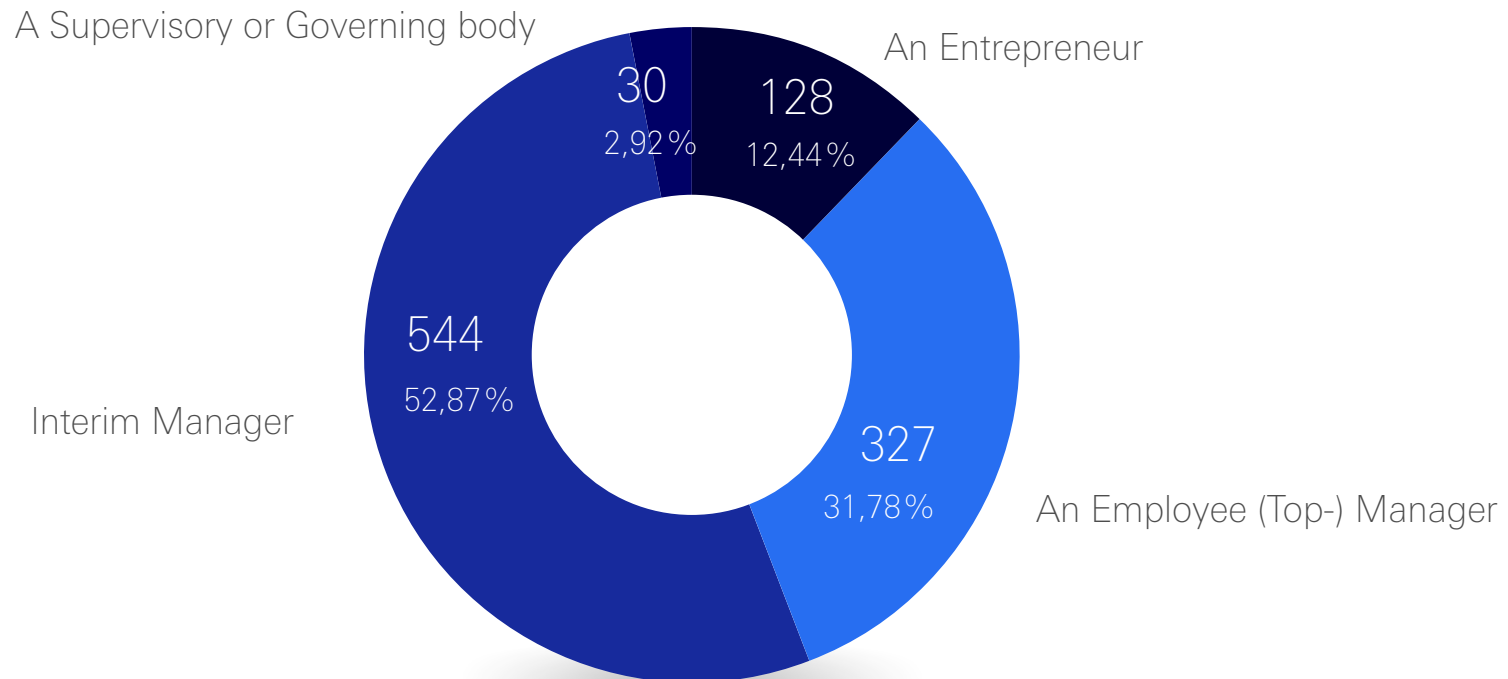
*»Although the pandemic is currently considered to be the main cause for restructuring, it is just one driver of change amongst many: Digitization, sustainability, climate change – external factors have never had so much influence on company development. This market dynamic dominates day-to-day business and demands a high willingness to adapt on part of all the employees.«*

**Dr. Harald Linné,**

Managing Partner and CEO, Atreus

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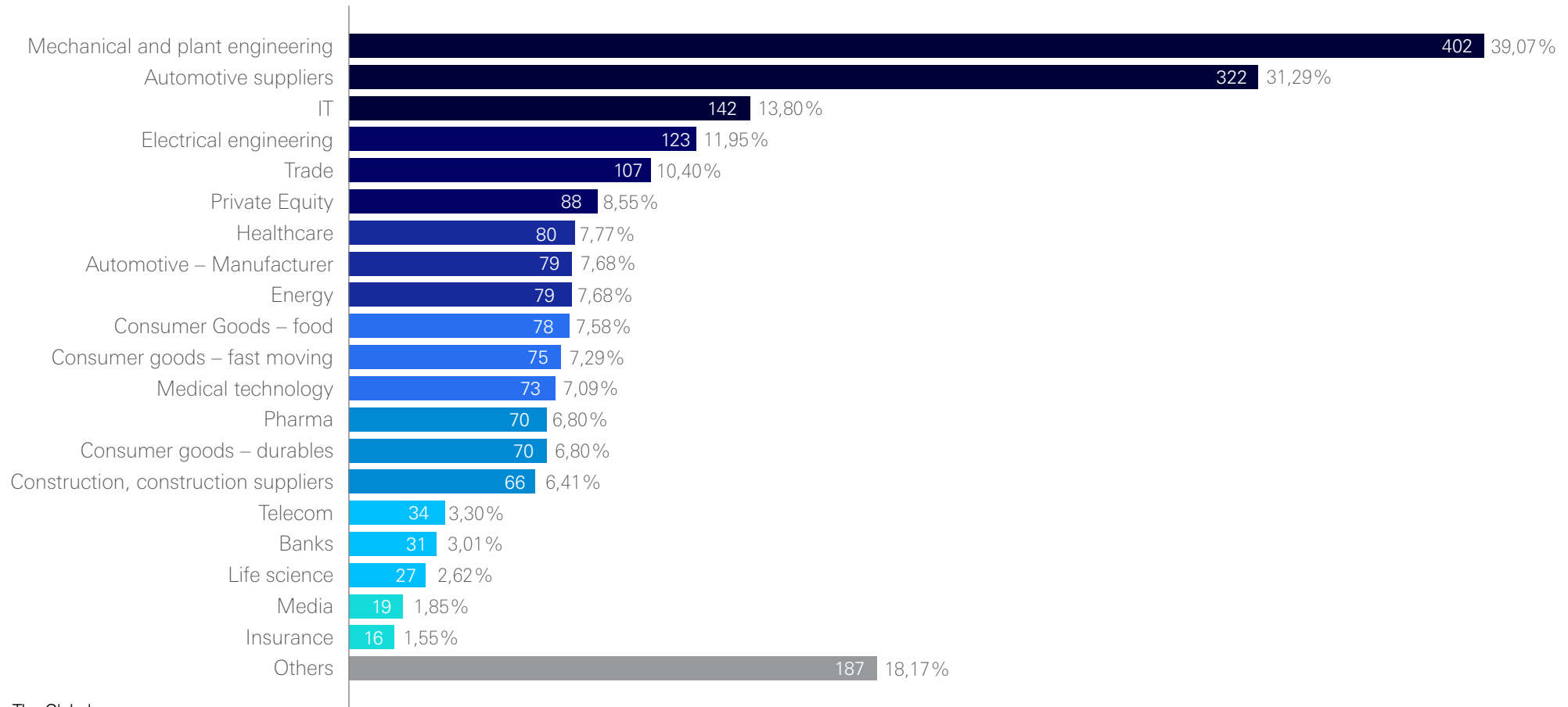
Are you ...





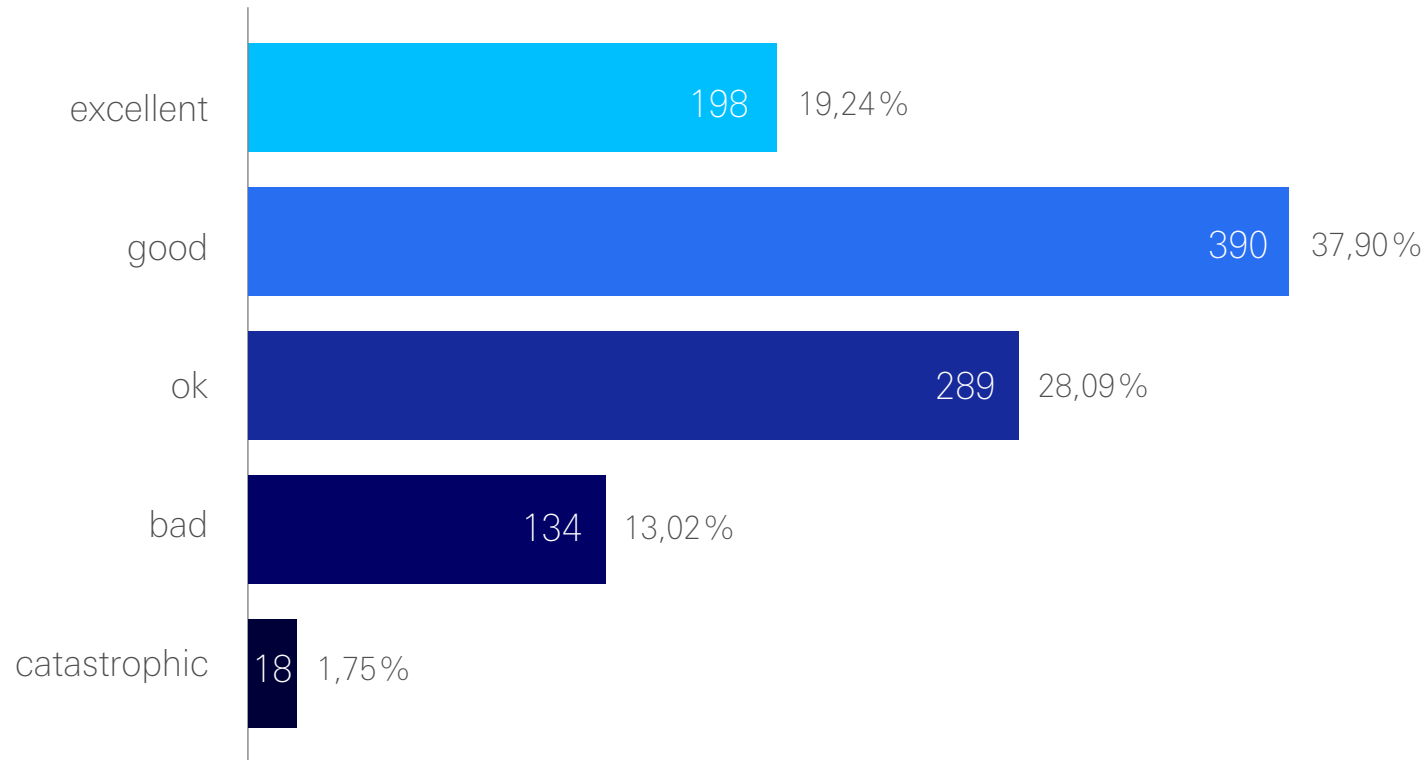
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## In which sectors do you mainly work?



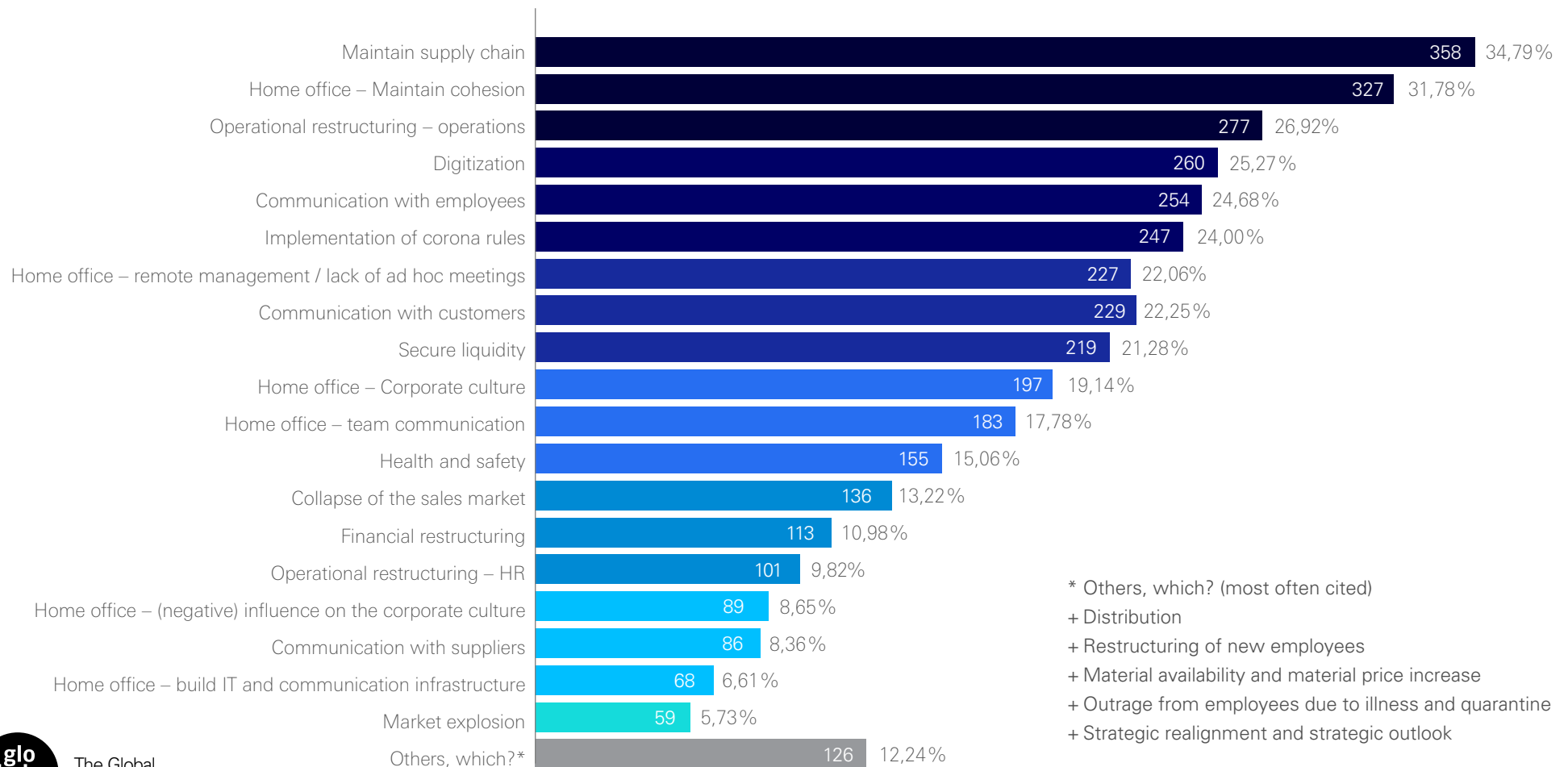
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How did the year 2021 turn out for the company, for which you worked for the most part?

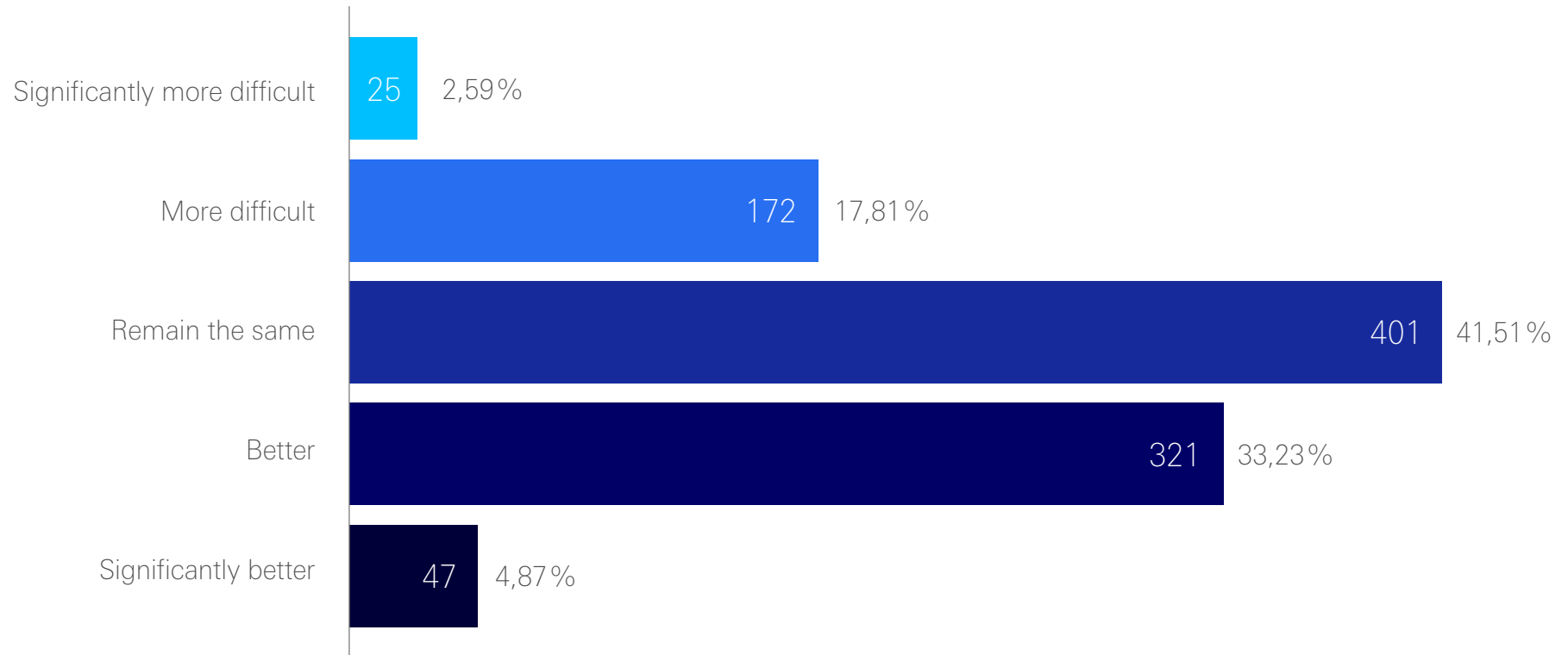


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## What were your greatest Leadership-challenges?

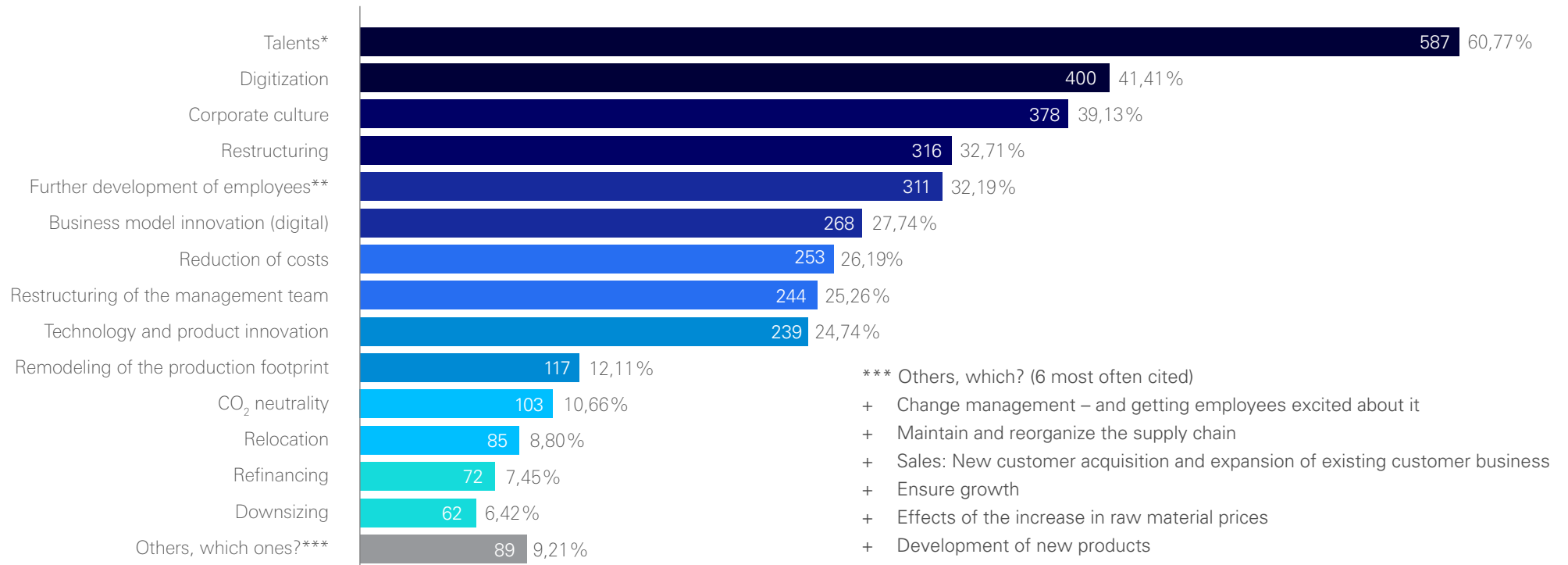


What are your expectations for 2022 compared to 2021? It is going to be...



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## What do you see as the greatest leadership challenge in your company for 2022?



\* Retain, attract and inspire the right people to be a part of the company. The Global

\*\* Advancement, staff training to keep up with both the progressive digitization as well as adjust to the changed way of working.

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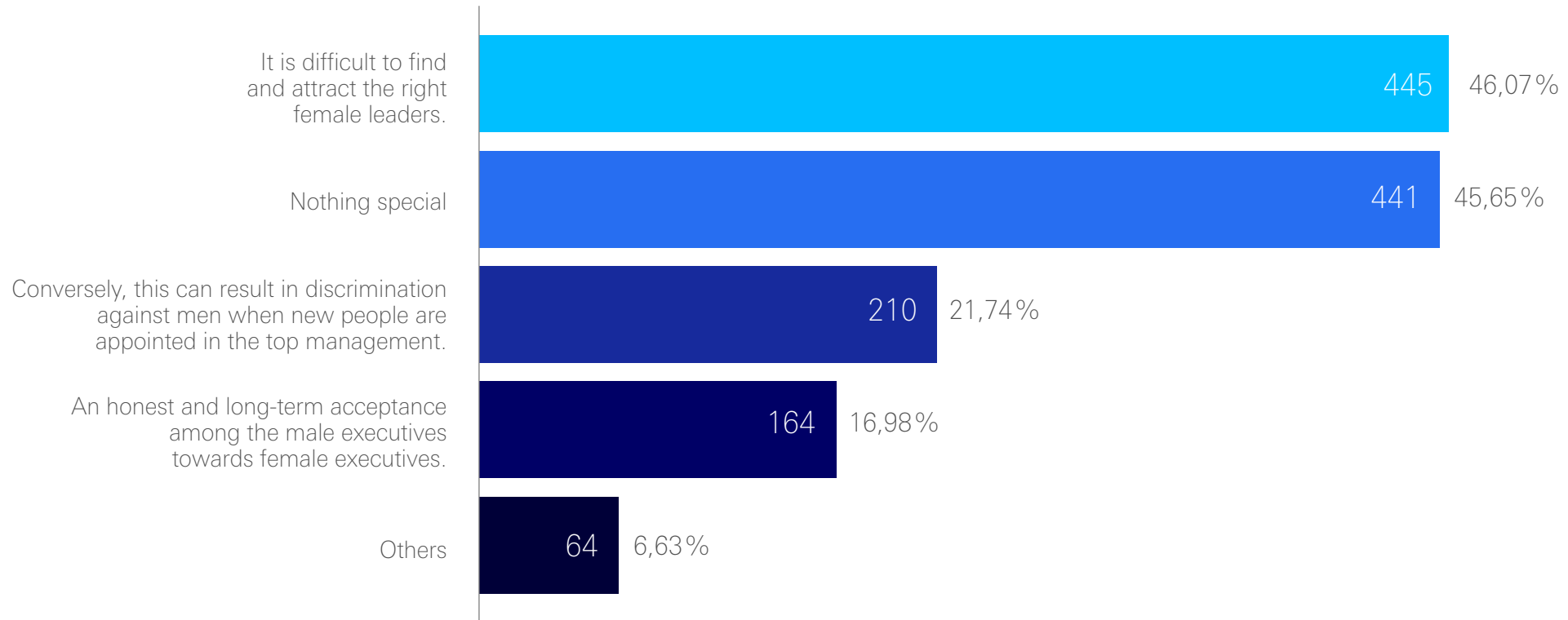
### Open Question:

Home office or hybrid working environments will also decide the „New Normal“ next year. Which new tools for employee motivation do you plan to use?

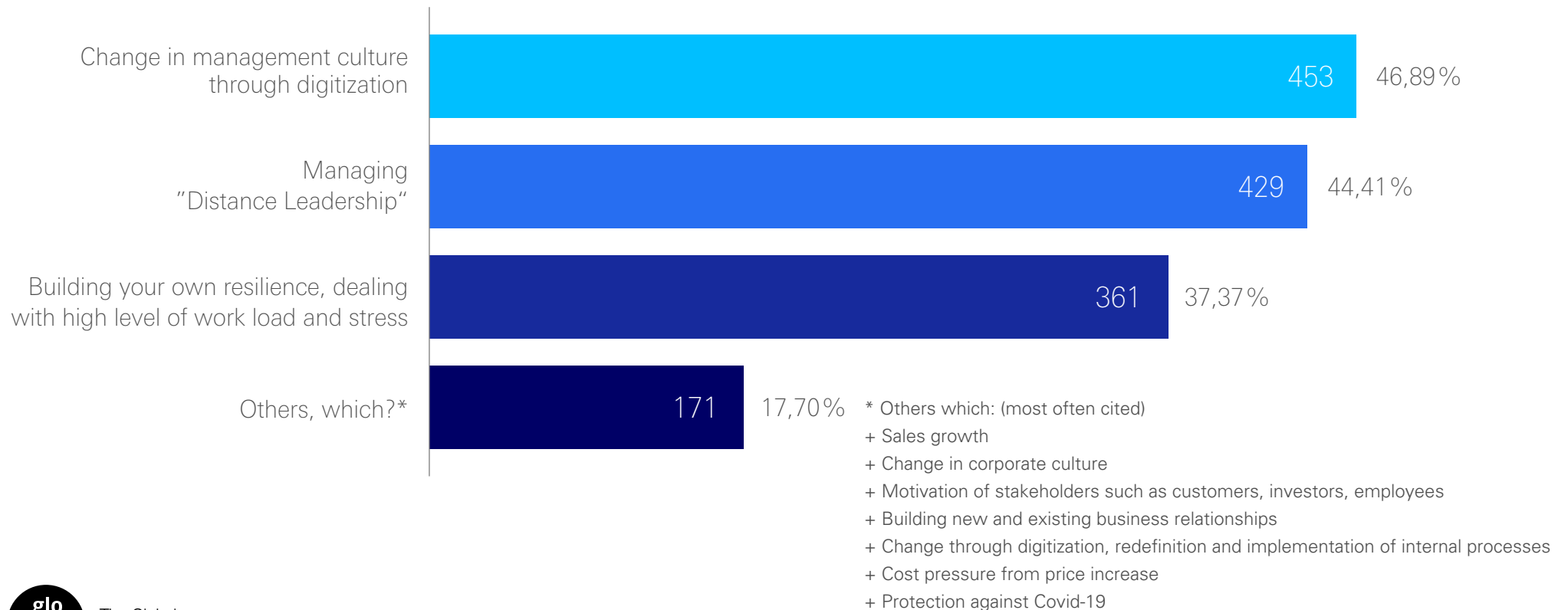
Most frequently mentioned answers

- + Flexible working hours in the home office and on site in the office
- + Specific attendance days in the office
- + Team building measures through events such as offsite events
- + Incentives for positive contributions
- + None
- + Transparent communication, appreciation, respect, put trust in the corporate culture
- + Delegation of responsibility to employees
- + Increased frequency of informal digital meetings
- + Hybrid team development through leadership with goals and OKRs

## How do you estimate the challenges arising from the women's quota in your organisation?



## What do you see as your greatest challenge in 2022?





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Open Question:  
What are your positive takeaways from the Corona crisis?

Most frequent answers

- + Home office: No measurable loss of performance due to home office
- + Efficiency has nothing to do with the place of work – more efficient work through digitization and home office
- + Importance of digitization
- + Changes are possible at high speed
- + Employee development and motivation during the crisis stronger than expected
- + There is always a solution
- + Positive cohesion in the team: In crisis, teams grow together and surpass themselves
- + Distant leadership works surprisingly well

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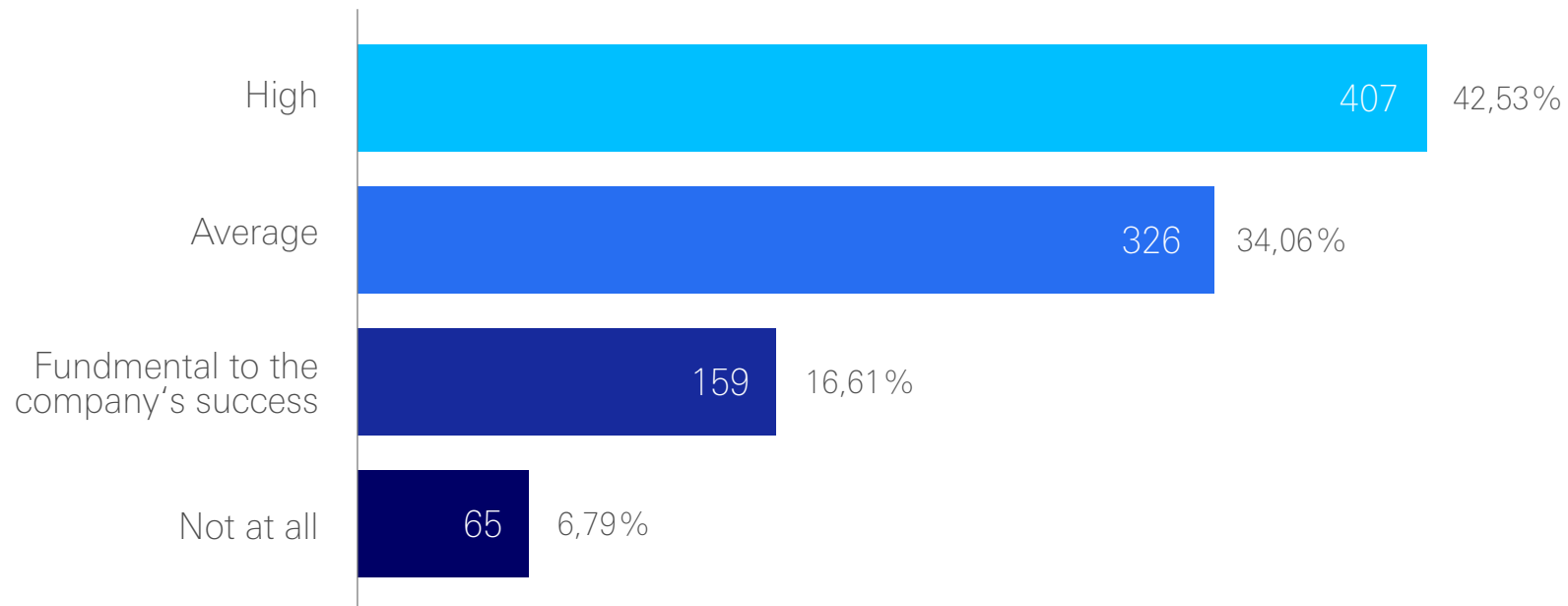
### Open Question:

The pandemic has made many jobs “interchangeable”.  
Identifying with the employer has been challenging in some cases.  
What measures do you take to keep the managers/employees employed and motivated in your company?

#### Most frequent answers

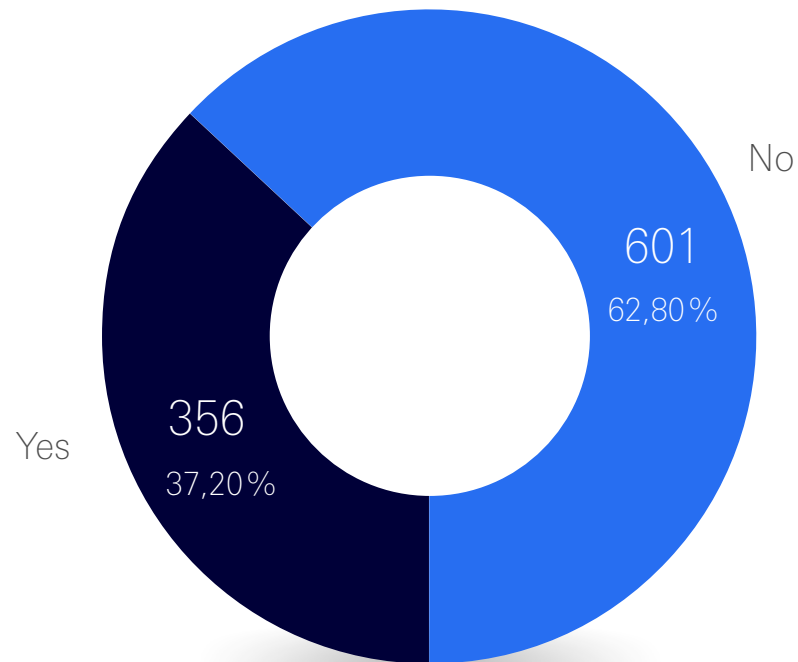
- + Face-to-face meetings and team events where possible
- + Regular virtual “get-togethers” – deliberately without addressing the business issues
- + Show trust and appreciation towards employees
- + Increasing number of employees and feedback talks
- + Salary adjustments and bonuses
- + Stronger identification through involvement in decision-making processes
- + Flexible working hours model

## What is the importance of sustainability in your organisation?

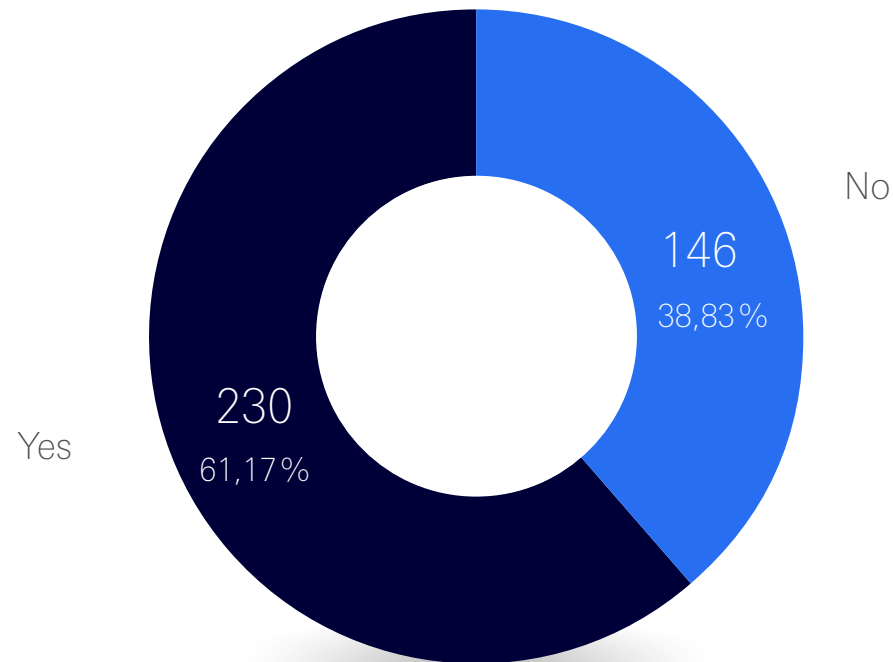


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Have you set up an ESG program in your company?



Do you have clear and measurable goals defined for your ESG program in your organisation?



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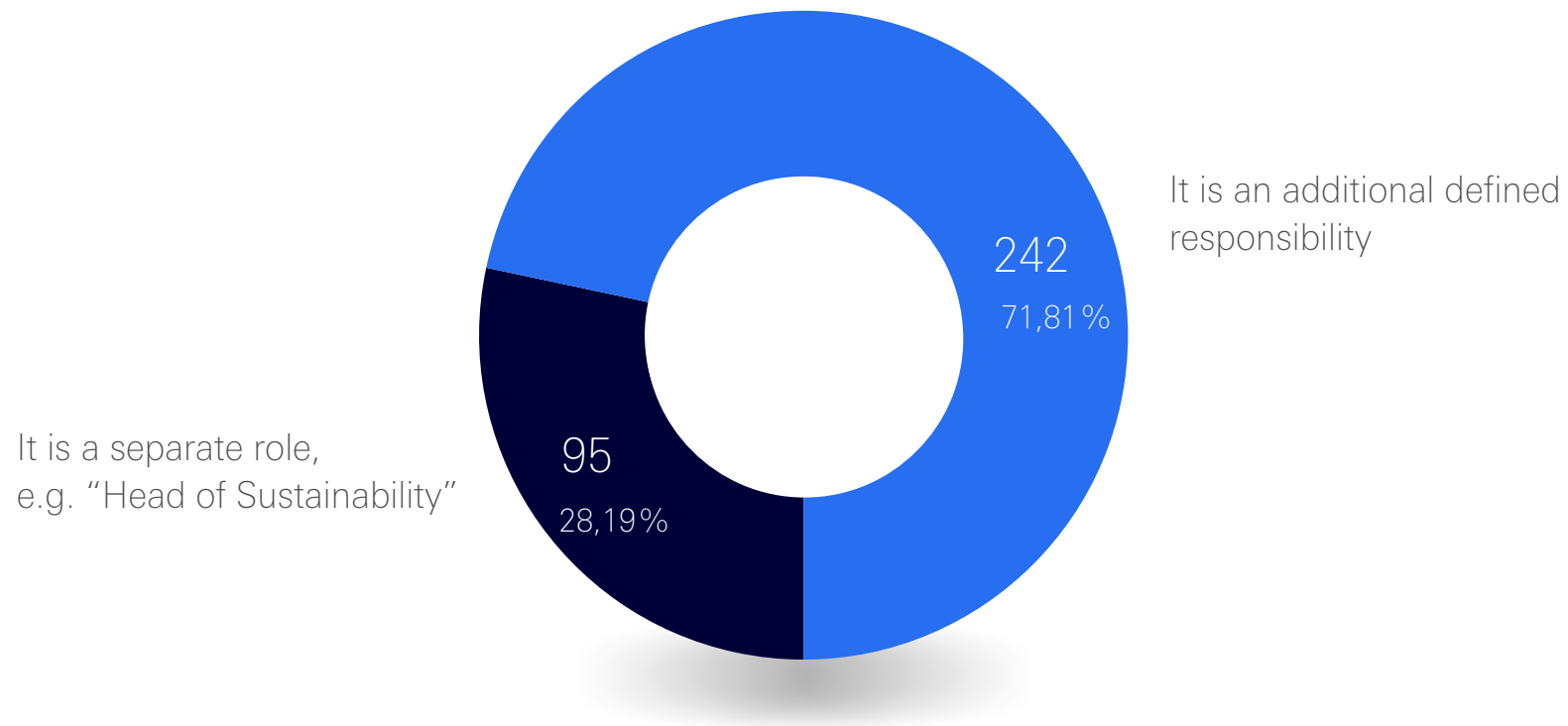
Open Question:  
What clear and measurable goals do you have defined for your ESG program?

Most frequent answers

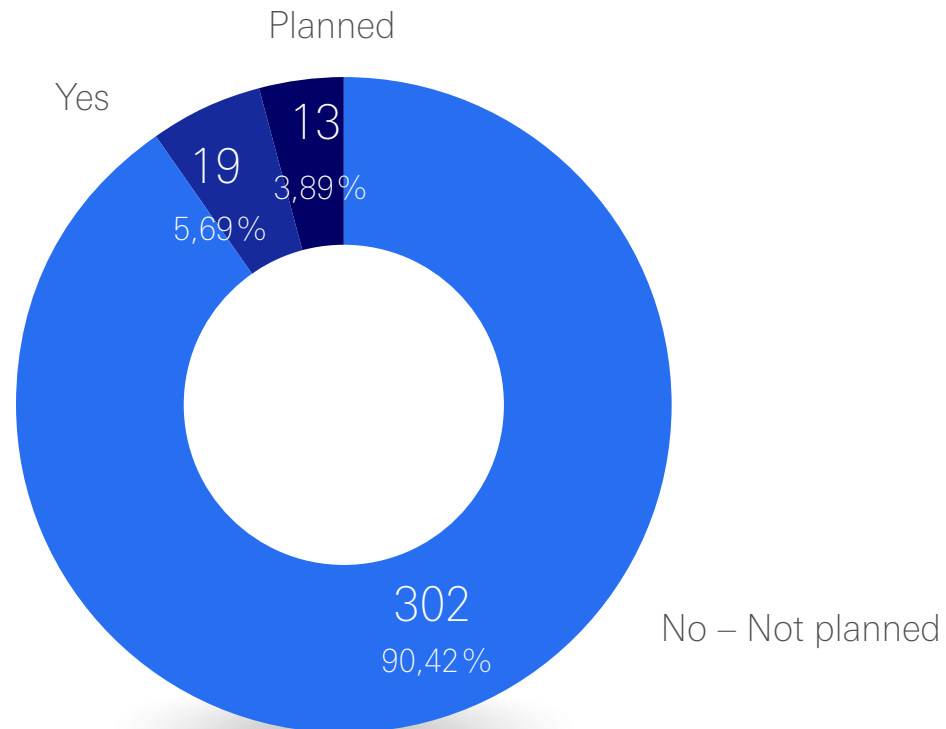
- + CO<sub>2</sub> reduction
- + Energy saving
- + Drive sustainability
- + Reducing the amount of waste
- + Carbon neutrality

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## How is accountability defined for your ESG program?



Are you hiring an Interim Manager for this?



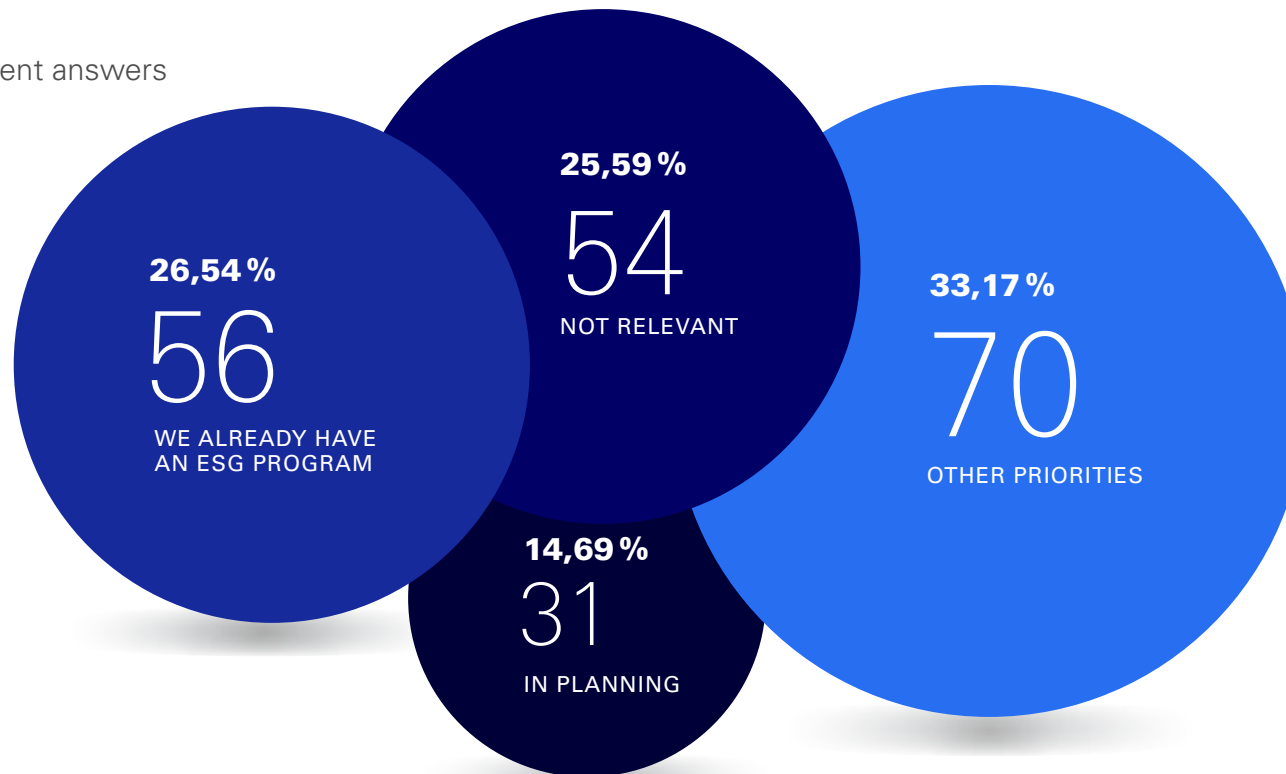


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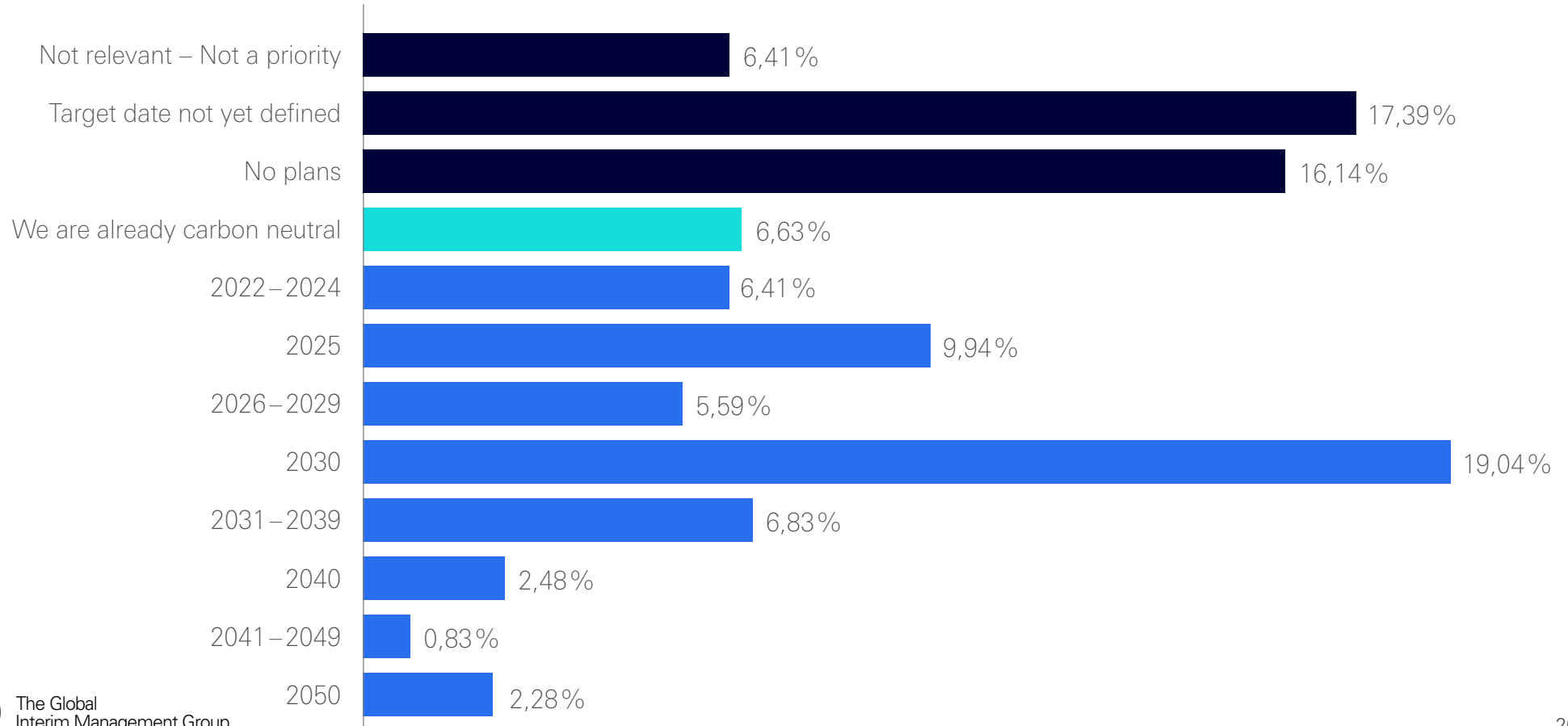
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Open Question:  
Why haven't you set up an ESG program in your organisation?

4 most frequent answers



Open Question:  
By when does your organisation plan to be carbon-neutral?



This survey was created by Atreus GmbH  
in January and February 2022.

### Disclaimer

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