



VOICE OF THE
STUDENTS
STUDY ABROAD 2024

Welcome!

We are thrilled to present **this 2024 Study Abroad Student Survey**, the third edition in our ongoing effort to illuminate shifting perceptions, needs, and interests within this vital aspect of higher education. As the world continues rapidly transforming, these student perspectives can inform policies, pedagogies, and programs to nurture more inclusive, meaningful study abroad experiences.

Our survey findings reveal **continued strong demand** for the perspective-shifting journey of international education. This resurgent student enthusiasm stands poised to reshape study abroad to be more accessible, integrated, and impactful. We invite you to reflect on these findings—where barriers persist in cost, safety, credit transfer, and beyond and where technology, creativity, and reimagined approaches could break down divisions.

Collaborating across institutions and organizations, we can fulfill study abroad's promise to **positively shape lives**. We can craft intentionally designed adventures abroad that speak to every curious student hoping to grow and connect across cultures.

Please enjoy this glimpse into the future of study abroad through the eyes of **tomorrow's global citizens**. And we welcome the chance to shape it together.



INTRODUCTION

- **While study abroad demand continues** its post-pandemic rebound, there is an opportunity for the industry to address lingering student concerns around program affordability, health and safety perceptions, and accessibility for students of all backgrounds and all fields of study.
- **As study abroad offices** look to address ongoing student concerns around affordability and accessibility, while reigniting study abroad demand, they have a tremendous opportunity to leverage technology to create more inclusive programs.
- **For example, offices could** provide virtual advising to high school students and incoming college freshmen to promote early interest in and selection of study abroad programs. Automating mundane financial aid and credit transfer workflows can reduce barriers for students.



- **Expanding virtual programs** and lower-cost domestic study away programs provides alternatives to traditional study abroad. And continuous travel risk monitoring gives all stakeholders transparency into evolving safety and security scenarios.
- **By creatively utilizing solutions** to improve access, engagement, and safety, study abroad offices can fulfill their mission of shaping globally-minded citizens, while future-proofing their institutions for a new era of international education.
- **As a trusted partner** to higher education institutions, Terra Dotta will continue innovating solutions that make international experiences more inclusive, integrated, and safe. This includes capabilities that streamline financial aid processes, provide transparency into safety and security risks, facilitate credit transfer, and allow for hybrid learning models.

By working together to break down barriers, we can fulfill study abroad's immense potential for positively shaping lives and nurturing global citizens.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **High Interest in Study Abroad:** The majority the college students surveyed expressed interest in or plan to study abroad, indicating strong demand for international educational experiences.
- **Preferred Destinations:** Europe stands out as the most sought-after destination for students planning a semester abroad, underscoring the allure of European cultural and academic offerings.
- **Funding Sources:** Financial aid is the principal method by which most students plan to fund their study abroad experiences, highlighting the critical role of financial support in facilitating these opportunities.
- **Cost Concerns:** The barriers preventing students from pursuing study abroad programs include cost (43%) and family responsibilities (19%). These factors underscore the need for more accessible financial planning and support systems.
- **Safety and Parental Concerns:** General safety concerns, worries from parents, and geopolitical issues are also prominent factors that might deter students from participating in study abroad programs.



INTEREST IN STUDY ABROAD REMAINS CONSISTENTLY HIGH

UP TO

73%

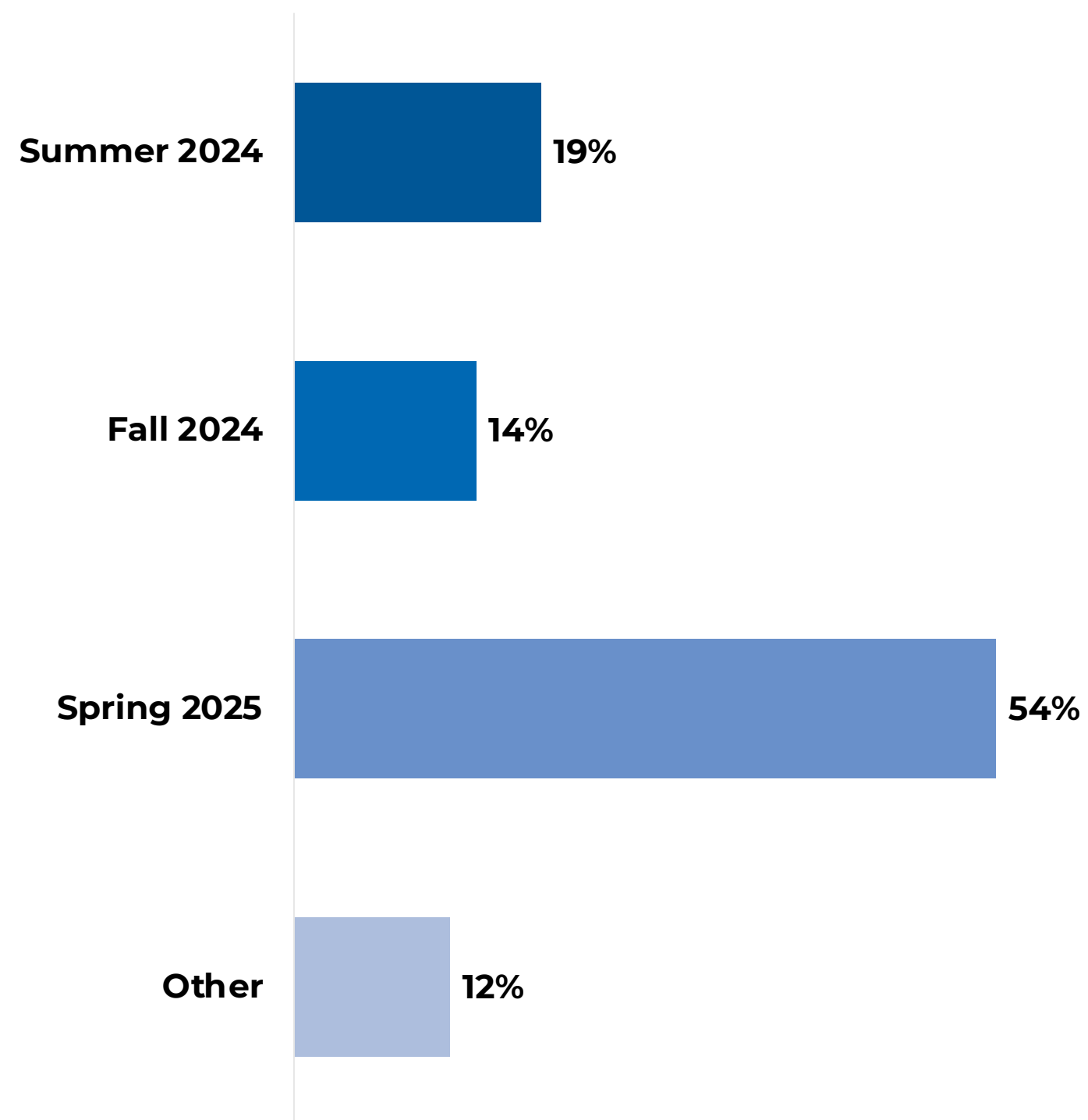
OF STUDENTS SURVEYED HOPE OR PLAN TO STUDY ABROAD.

Students indicating interest in, or plans to study abroad



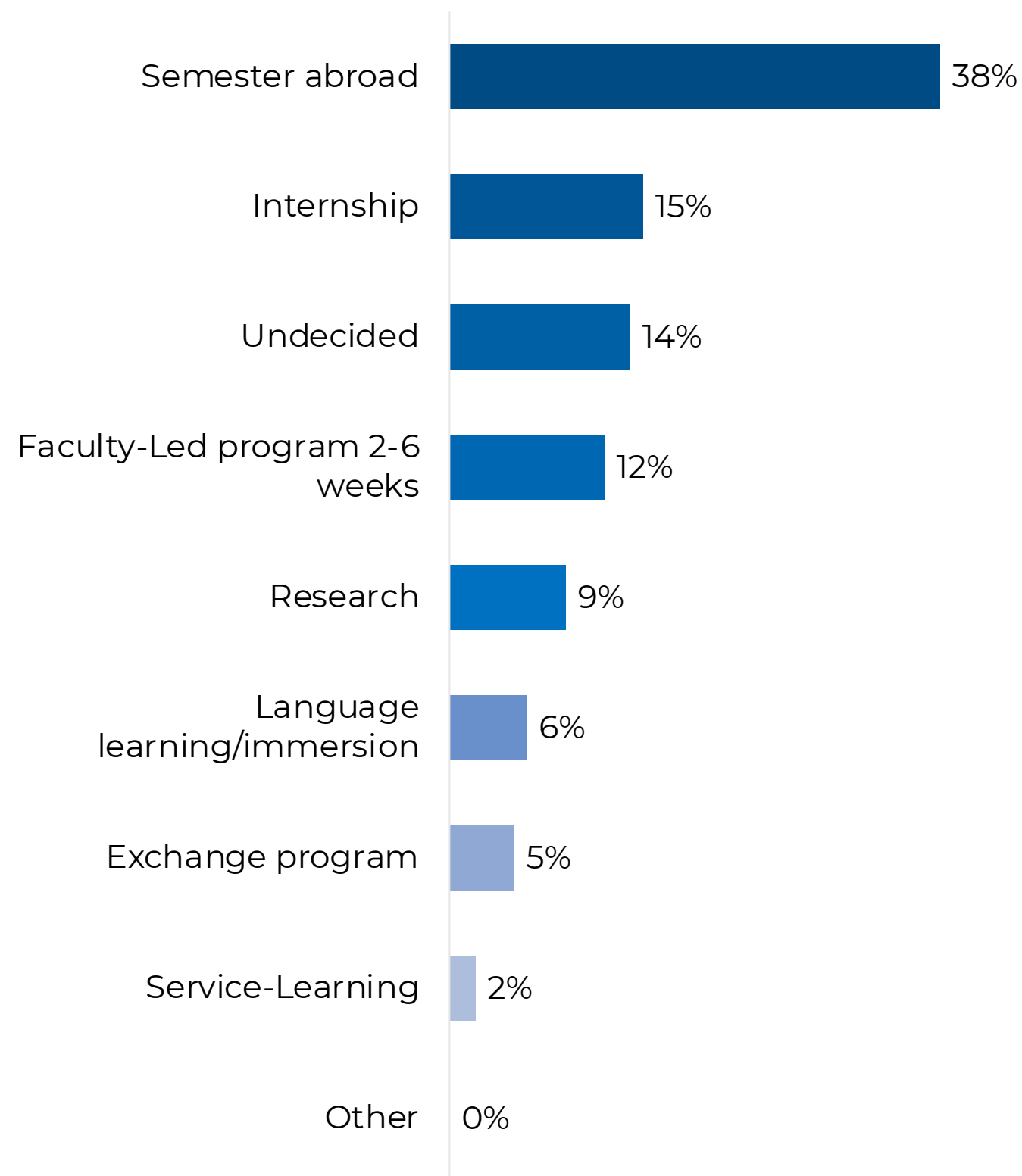
MOST STUDENTS PLAN TO STUDY ABROAD IN 2025

In what timeframe are you hoping
or planning to Study Abroad?

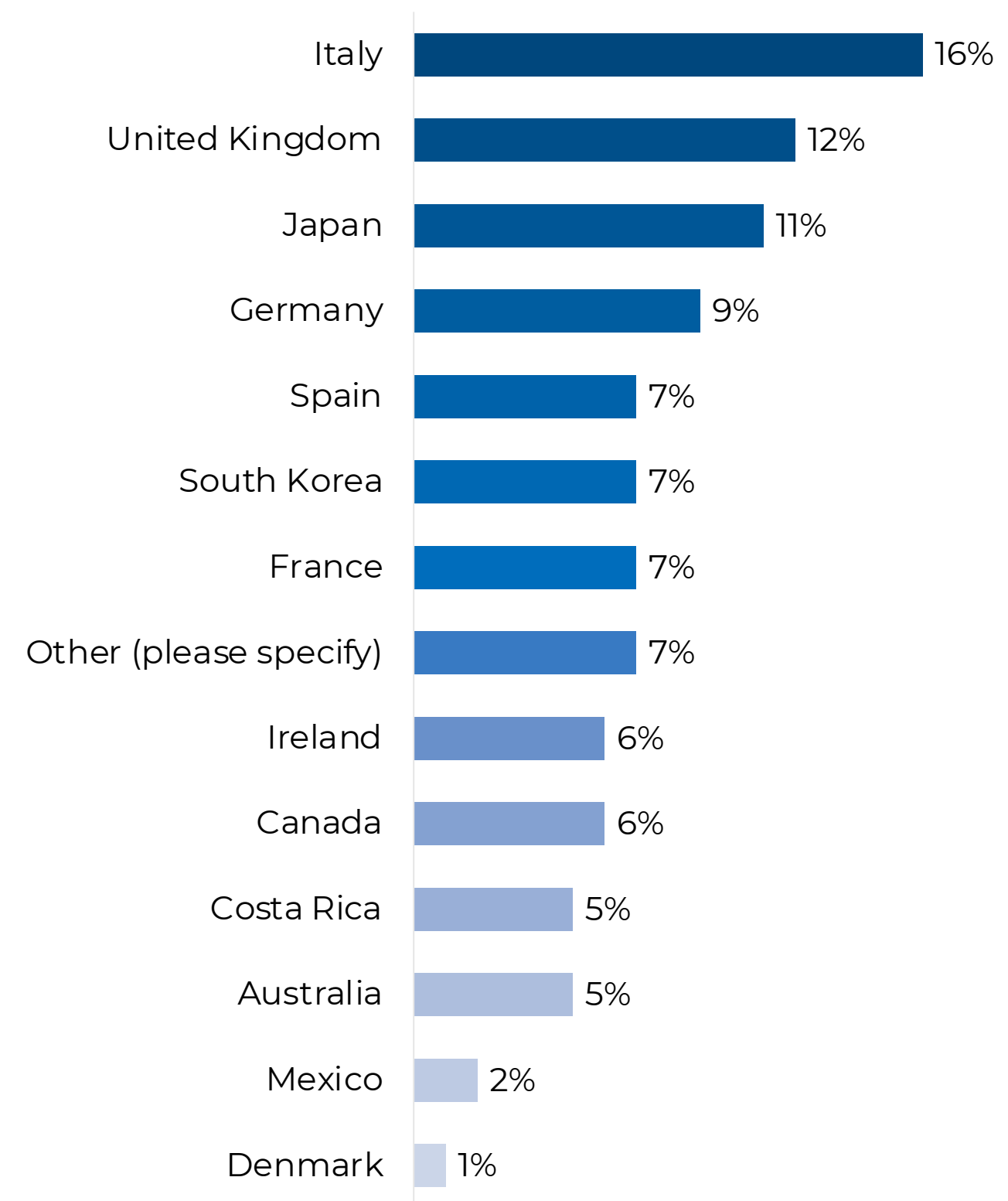


A SEMESTER IN EUROPE IS MOST POPULAR AMONG STUDENTS

What kind of Study Abroad experience are you planning?



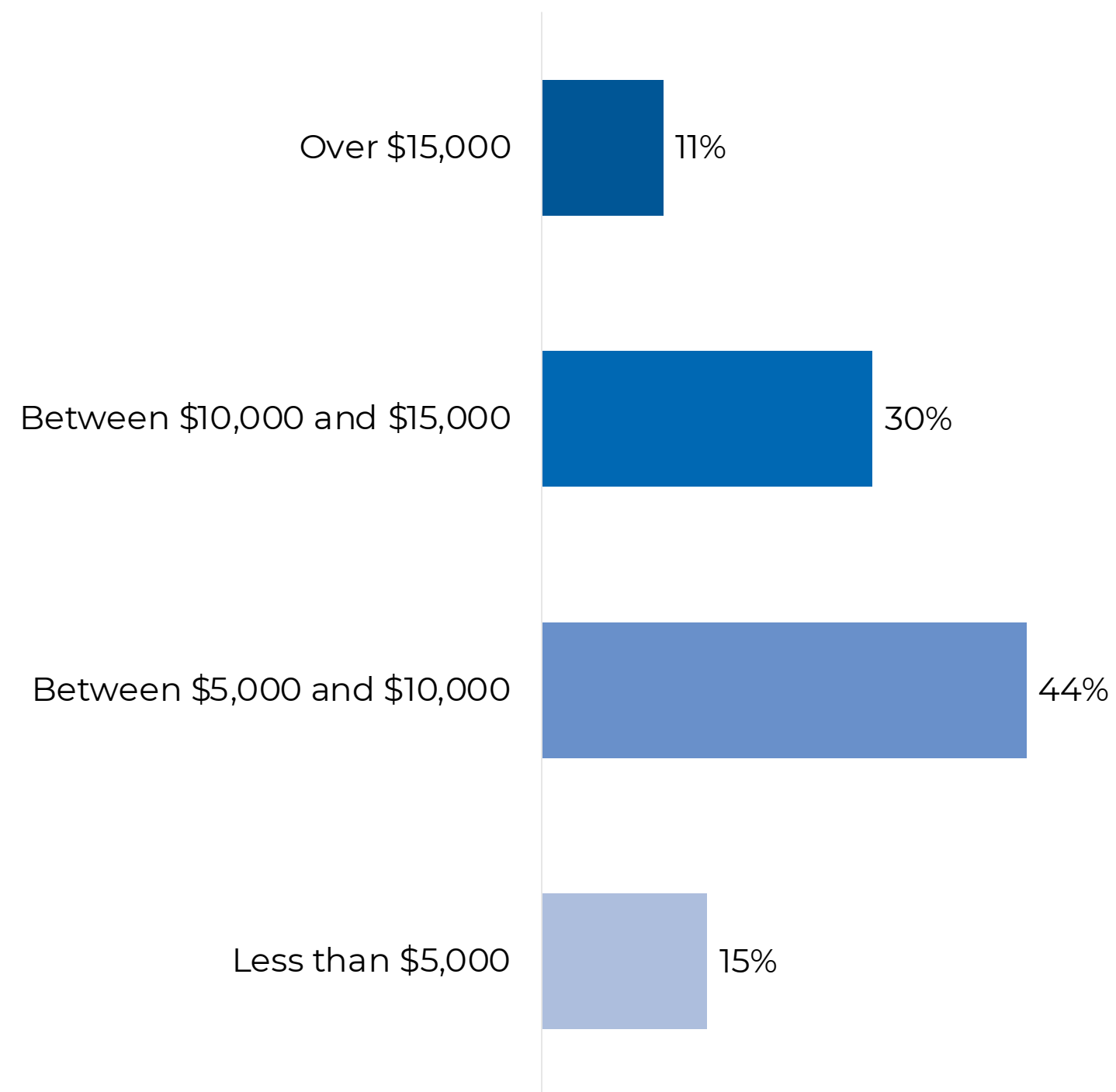
In what country are you planning to study abroad?



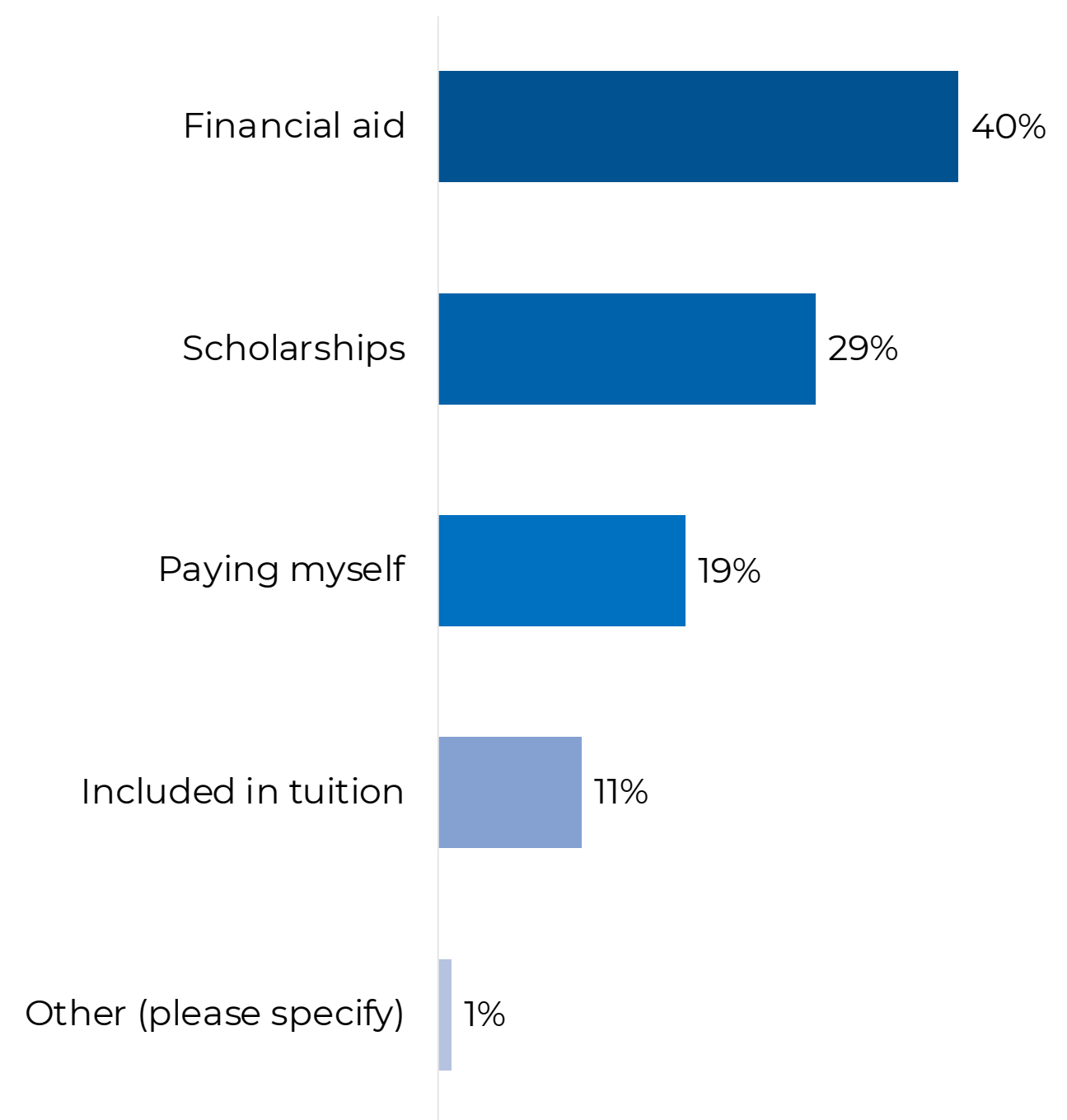
Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

MOST STUDENTS PLAN TO FUND STUDY ABROAD WITH FINANCIAL AID

When you consider the tuition, housing, airfare, and other expenses, how much is your study abroad program going to cost/did it cost you?



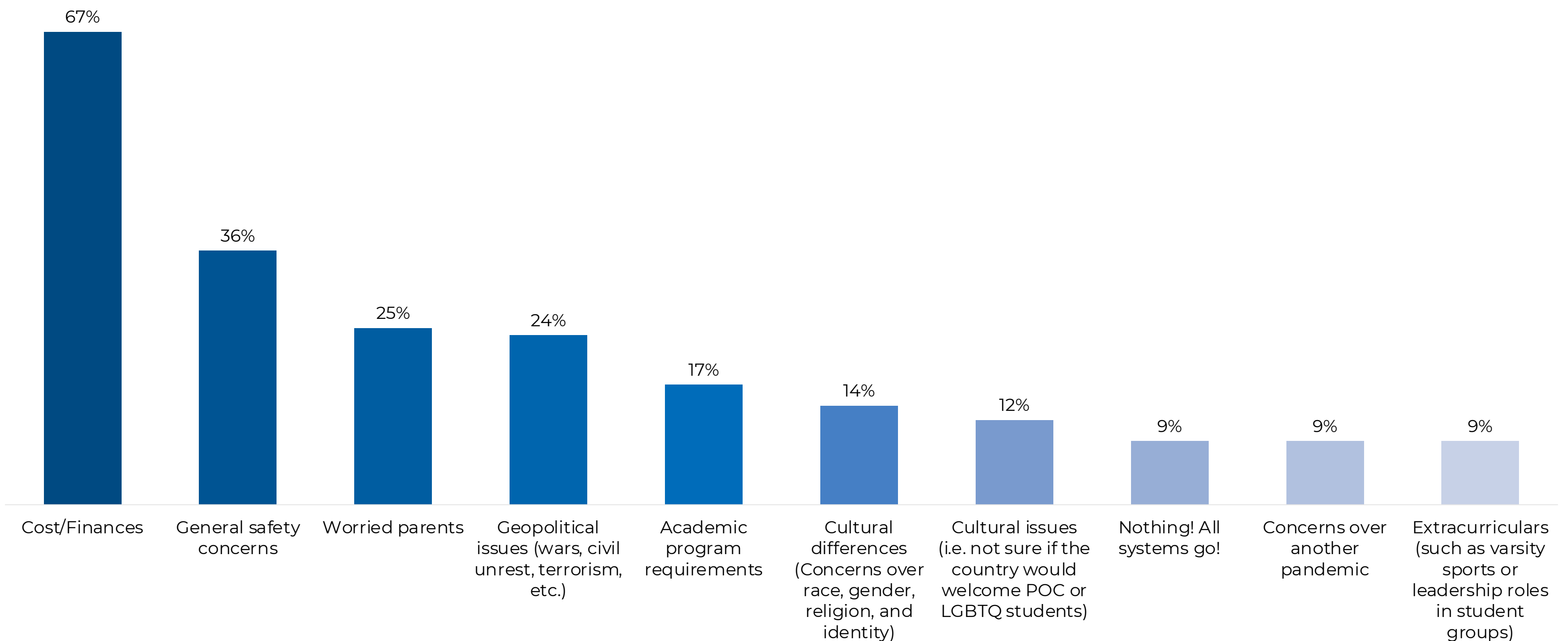
How did you/do you plan to pay for your study abroad experience?



Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

COST AND GENERAL SAFETY ARE THE TOP STUDY ABROAD CONCERNS

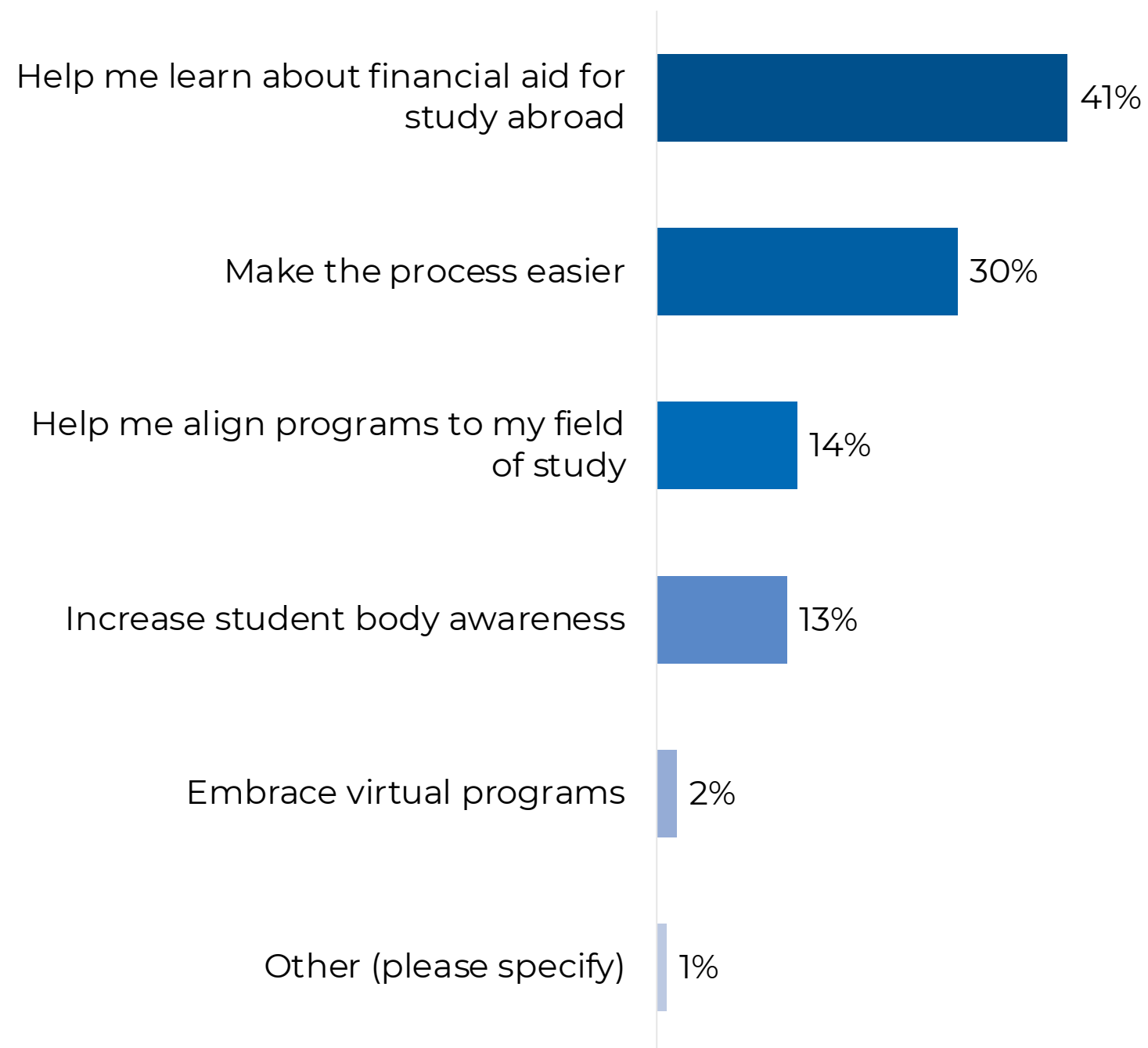
Generally speaking, what would prevent you from traveling for Study Abroad?



Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

FINANCIAL AID EDUCATION CAN MAKE PROGRAMS MORE ACCESSIBLE

What is the top action your institution could do to make Study Abroad experiences accessible to more people?



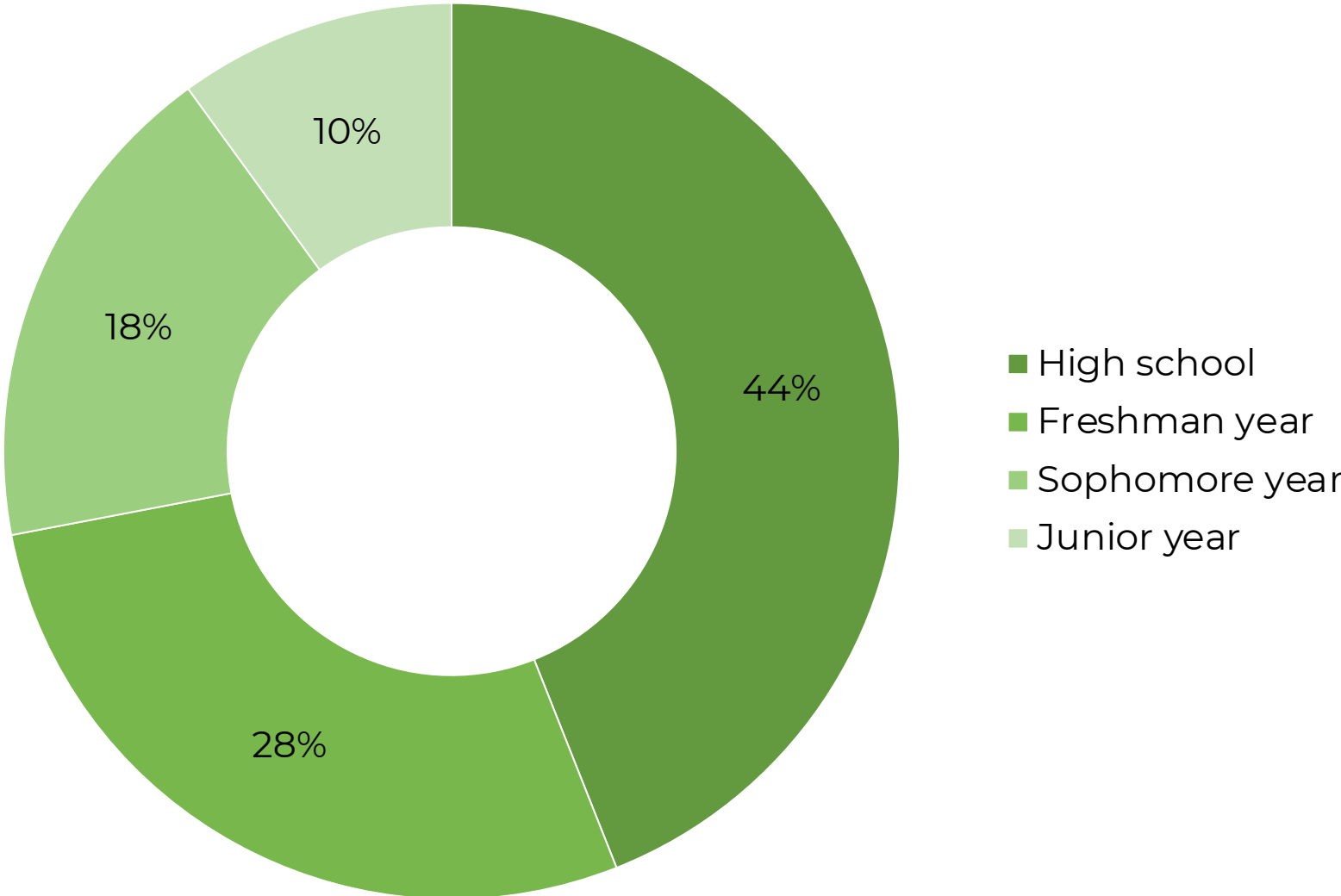
LEARNING ABOUT STUDY ABROAD

- Students start exploring study abroad opportunities early, with nearly half recalling **initial interest in high school**. By freshman year of college, over a quarter were already curious about study abroad. This points to an opportunity for greater outreach through school partnerships and campus visits.
- When looking into study abroad options, **university-led information sessions stand out as the most common resource** students utilize, though school websites, online program listings, and direct advising also play a major role. With social media acting as an initial exposure for 15% of respondents, platforms like Instagram could provide another means to inspire prospective study abroad participants.
- Across all stages, from early awareness-building to advising on program selection, **students desire more robust guidance and tools**. Half directly ask for access to dedicated study abroad offices and peer mentors, while many want crowdsourced reviews and database-driven program recommendations tailored to specific majors or goals. As information empowerment continues rising across higher education, study abroad resources must keep pace.

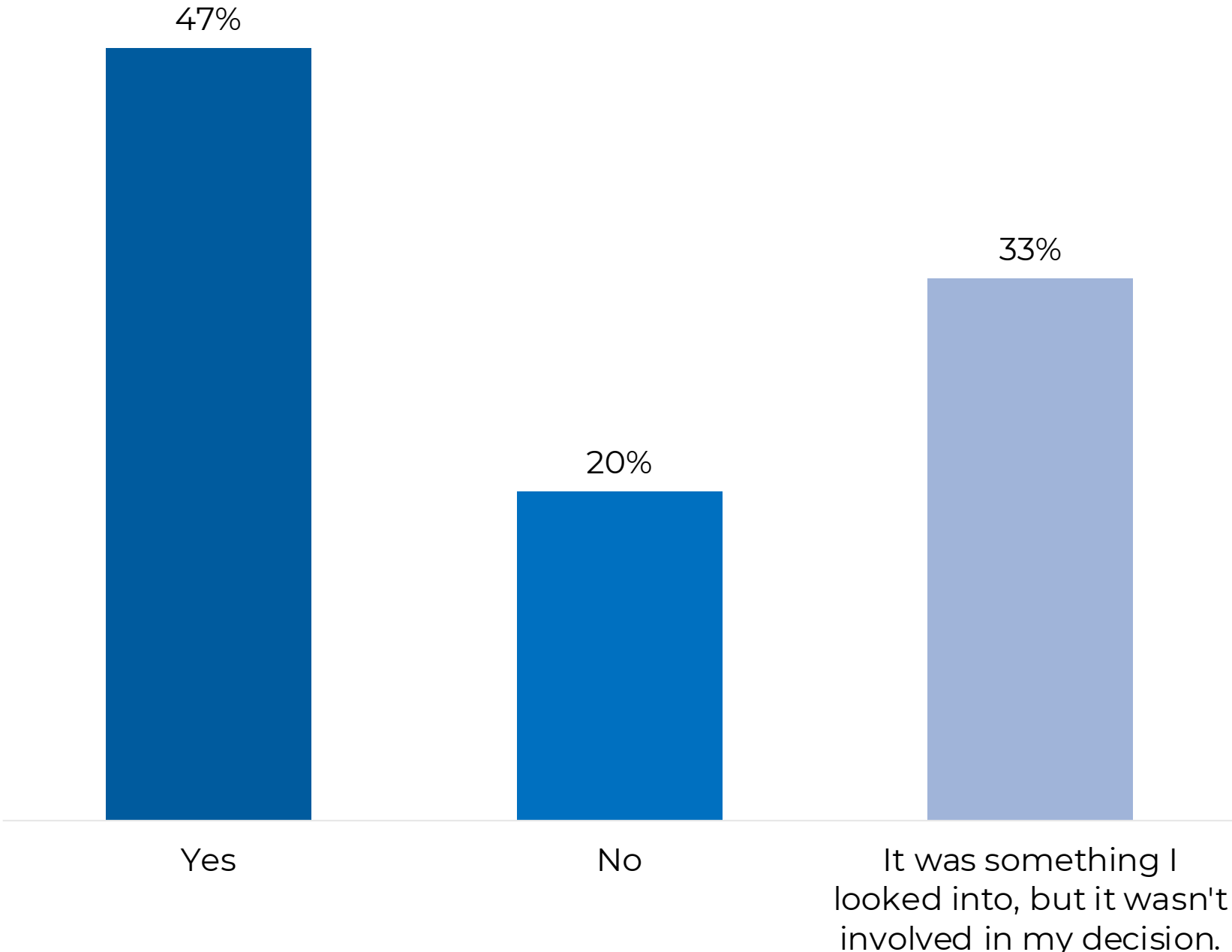


STUDY ABROAD INTEREST STARTS IN HIGH SCHOOL, AND PLAYS A ROLE IN POST-SECONDARY SELECTION

When did you first get interested in study abroad programs?



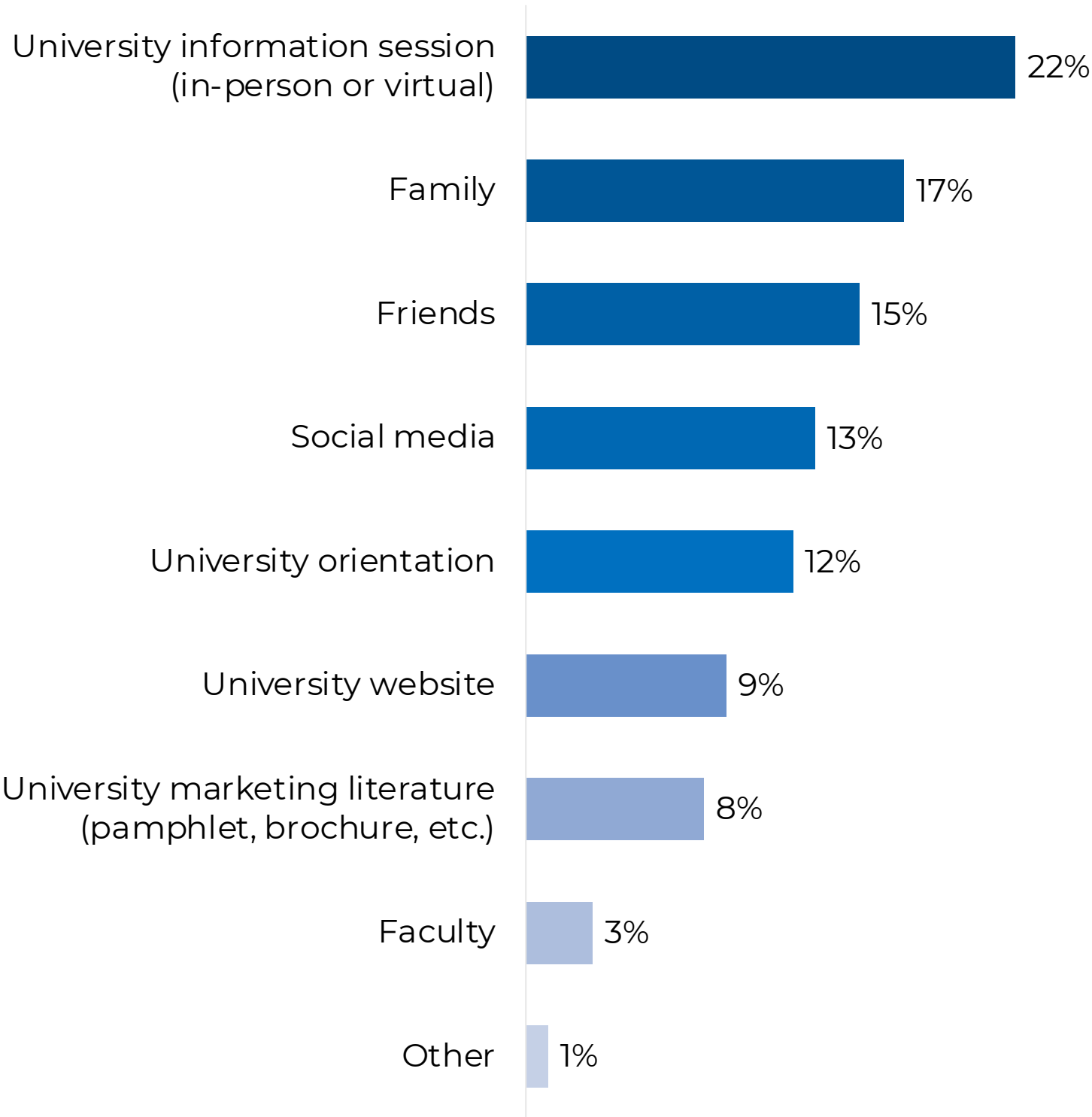
When looking at colleges and universities, did an institution's Study Abroad programs and/or support play a role in your decision to attend?



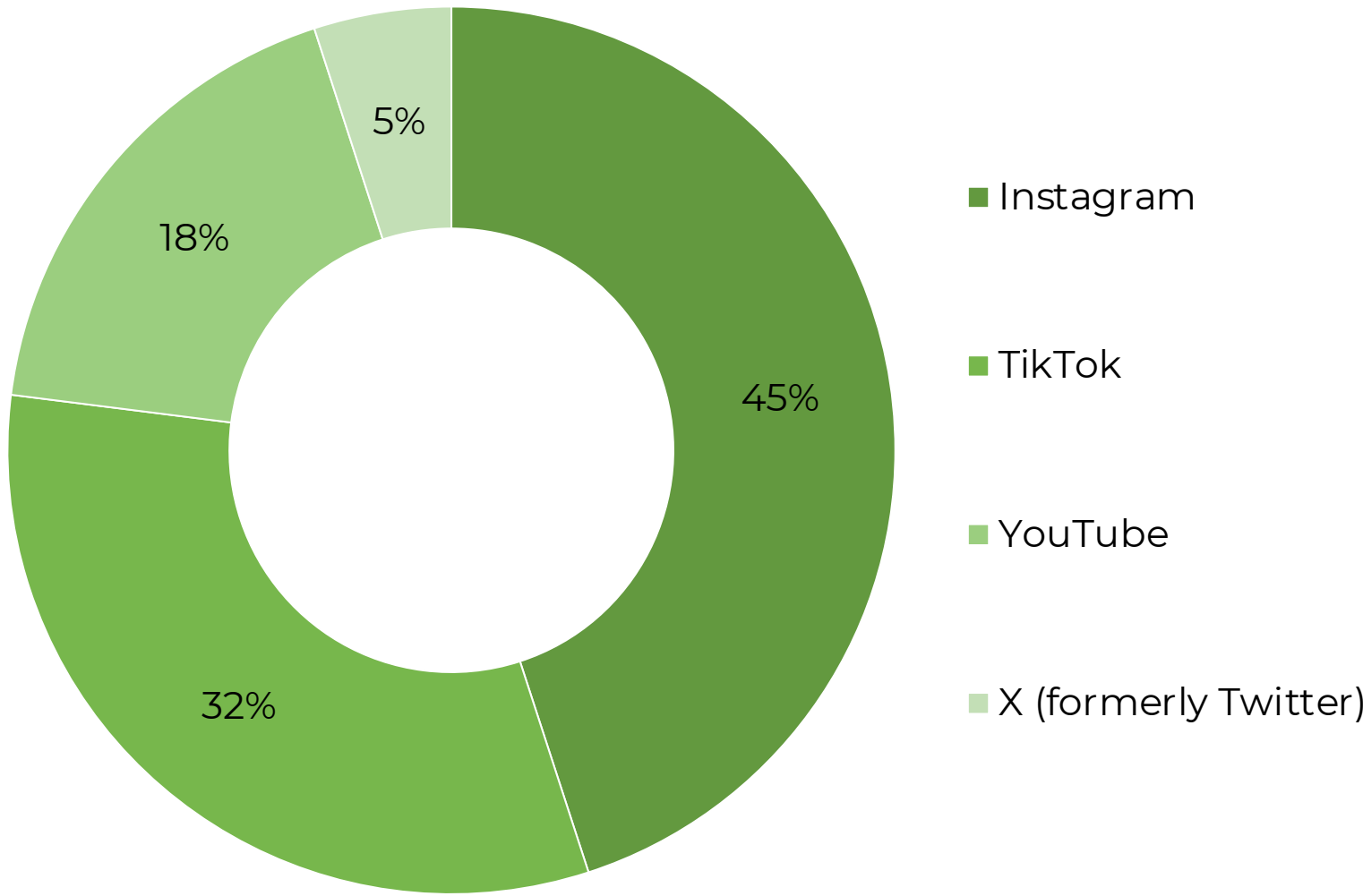
Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION SESSIONS BUILD INTEREST IN STUDY ABROAD. WHEN IT COMES TO SOCIAL MEDIA, INSTAGRAM IS THE MOST POPULAR.

How did you first learn about the idea of Study Abroad as a possibility?



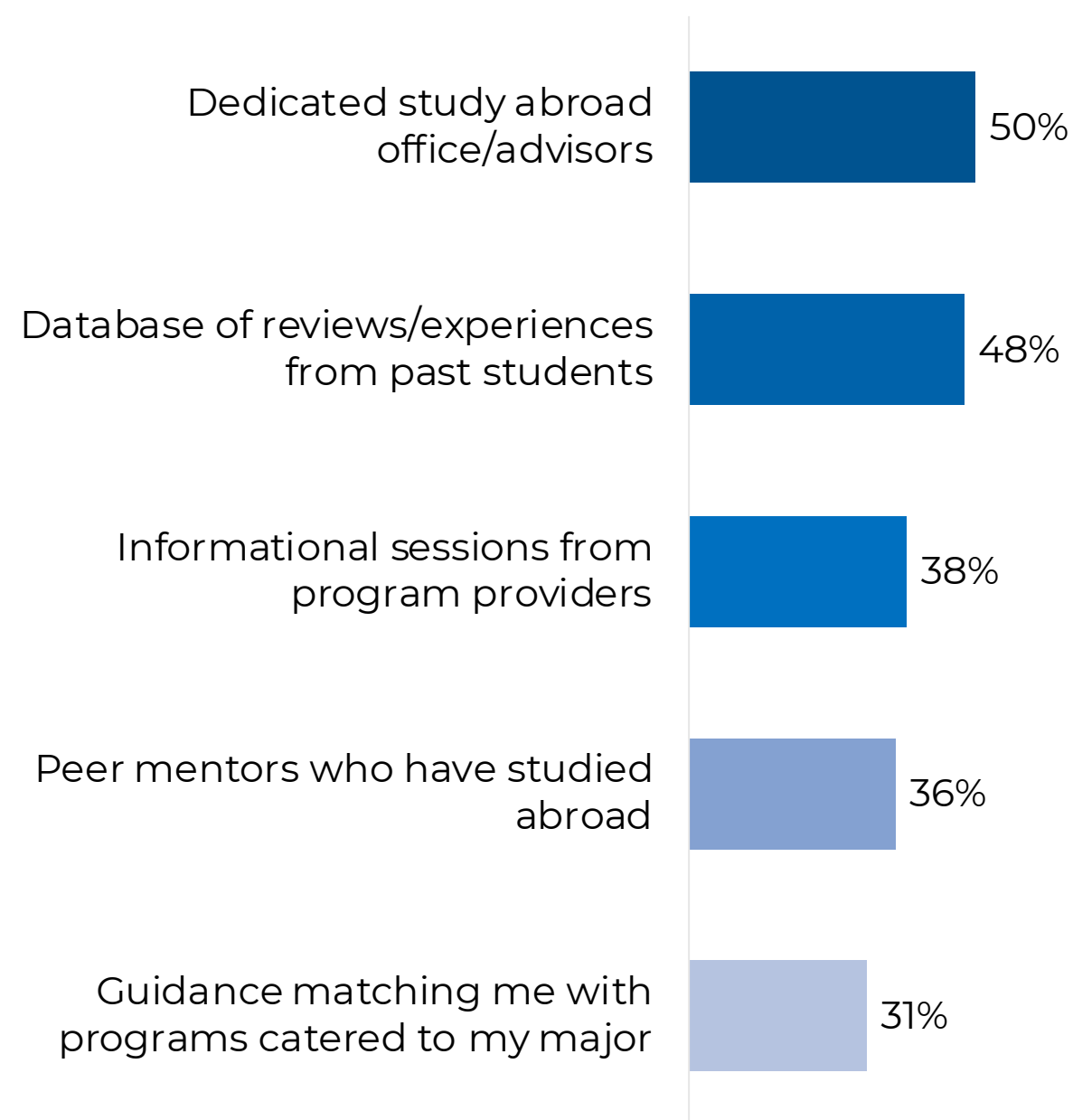
Which Social Media network did you learn about Study Abroad?



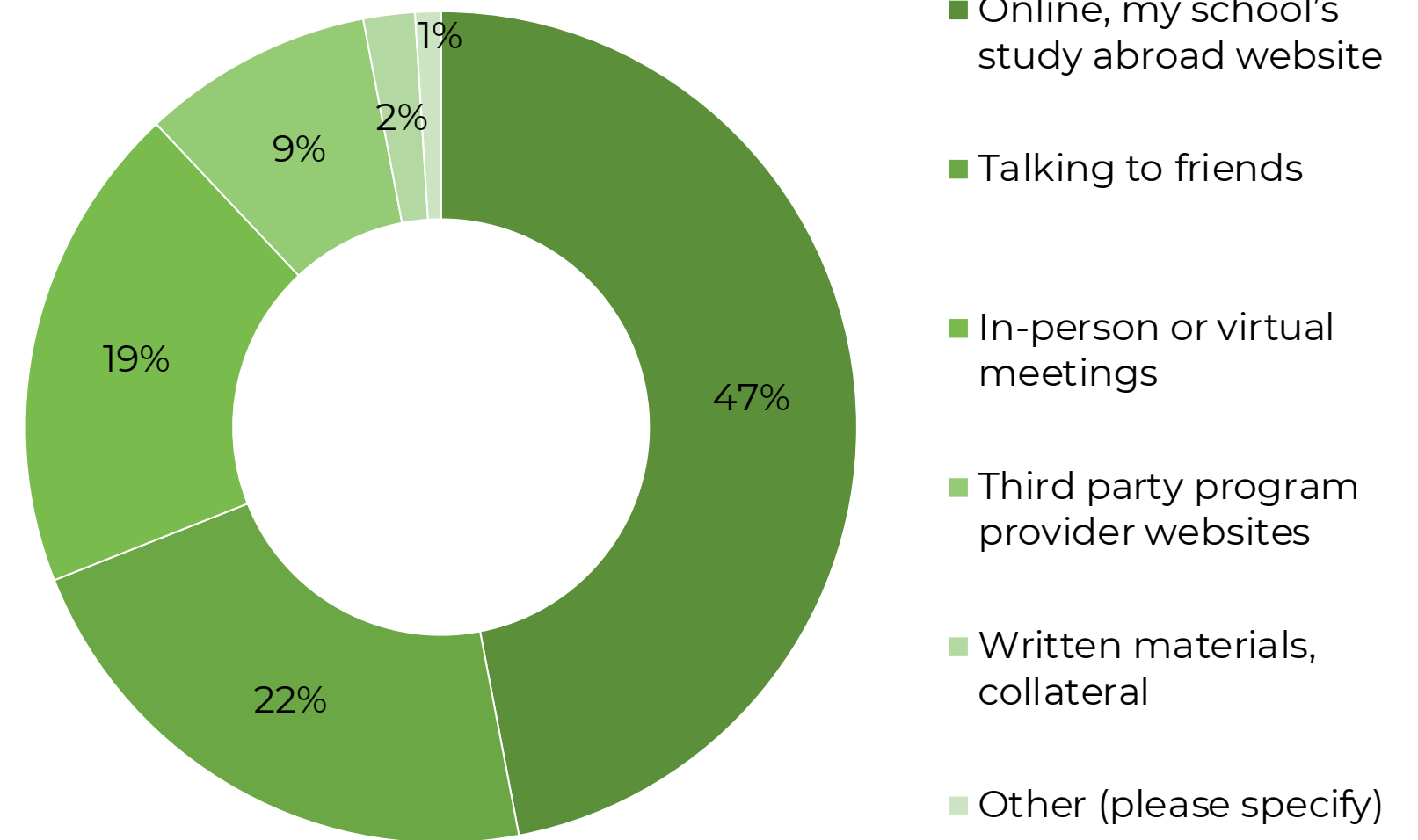
Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

STUDENTS WANT MORE RESOURCES TO LEARN ABOUT STUDY ABROAD

What additional resources would be most useful to have from your home university when selecting a program? (Please select all that apply.)



Where do you find most of the information about your institution's study abroad programs?

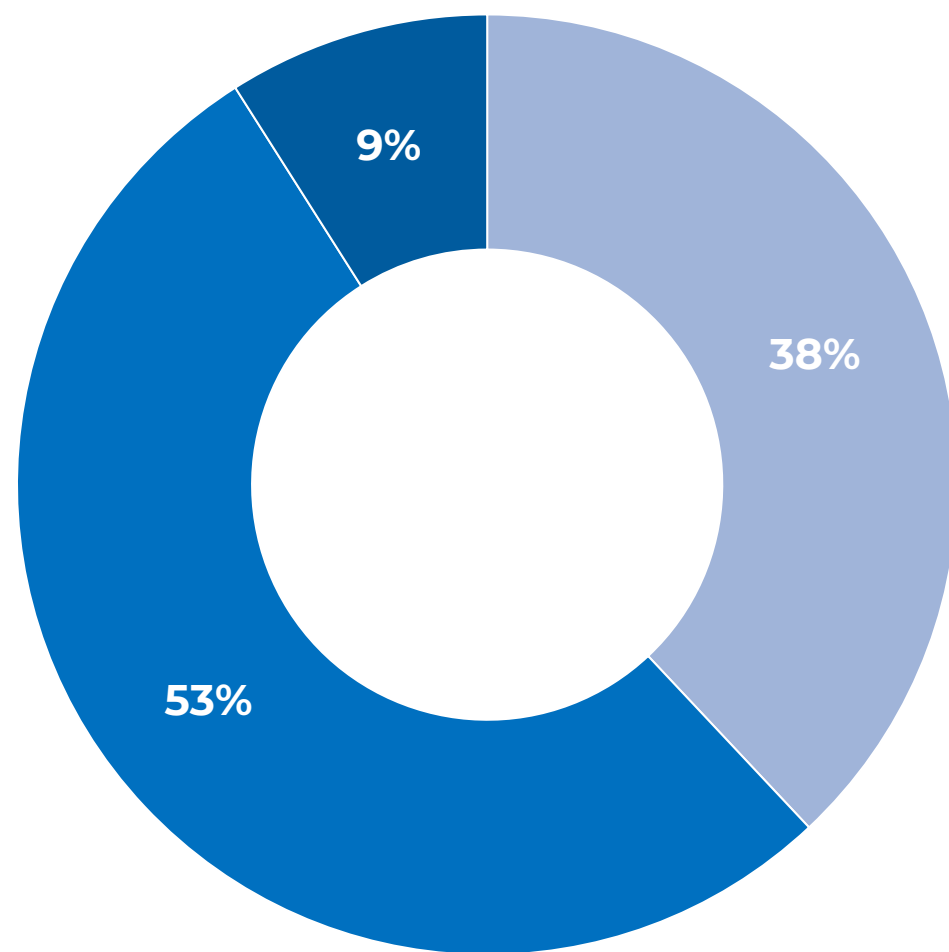


Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

STUDENTS COULD BE MORE INFORMED ABOUT STUDY ABROAD DETAILS

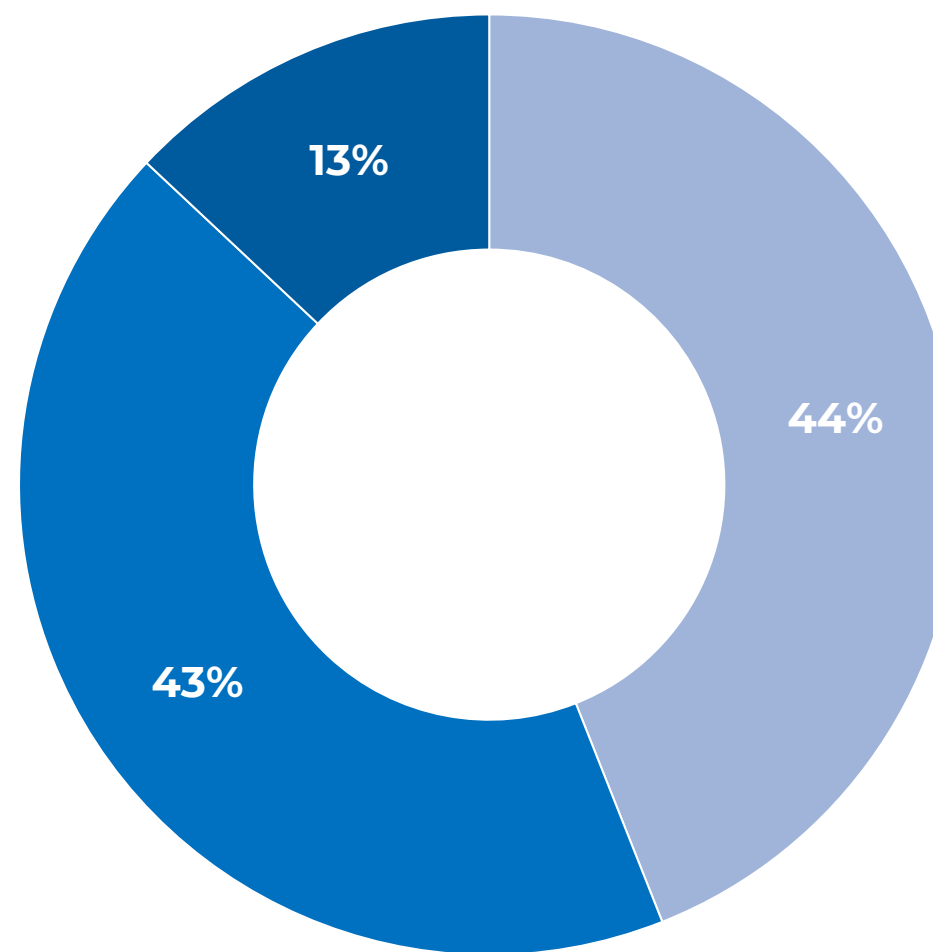
Q: Do you feel fully informed by your university about...

...transferring credits.



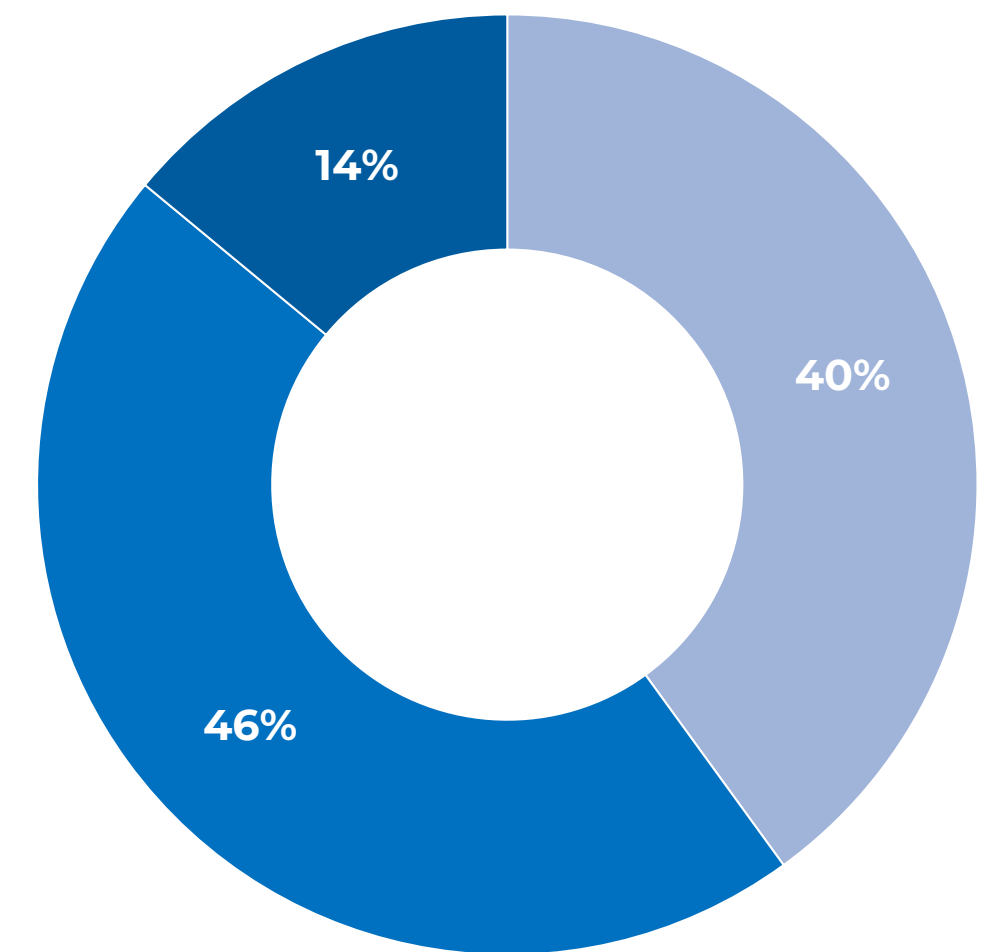
- Yes, completely informed
- Somewhat informed
- No, I lacked details

...fulfilling requirements to make sure time spent abroad will align with your individual degree and major requirements.



- Yes, completely informed
- Somewhat informed
- No, I lacked details

...managing tuition/financial aid.



- Yes, completely informed
- Somewhat informed
- No, I lacked details

Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

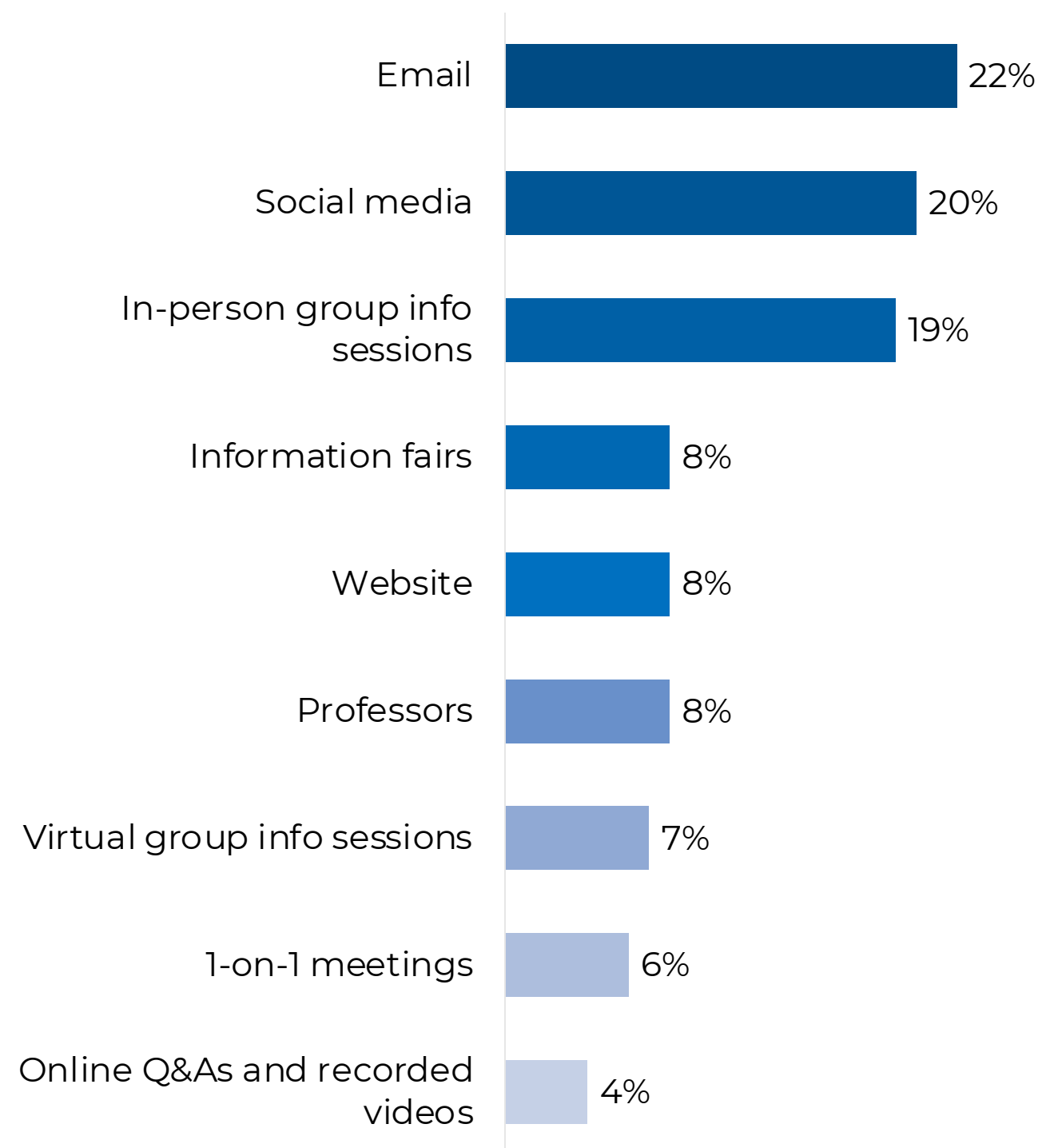
COMMUNICATION

- When it comes to receiving information about study abroad programs and staying engaged with study abroad offices, students show **a strong preference for email communications** above all other methods.
- Nearly a quarter of respondents also indicate in-person group info sessions as a top choice for promotion. This points to the power of personalized email outreach combined with **on-campus events to spread awareness**.
- On an ongoing basis, email remains the dominant contact method students want to leverage with study abroad offices. However, almost half are still **enthusiastic about some element of in-person support**—whether full-time or simply having the option for face-to-face advising.
- With two-thirds interested in text messaging for regular updates as well, **students value multi-channel engagement** throughout the study abroad journey.

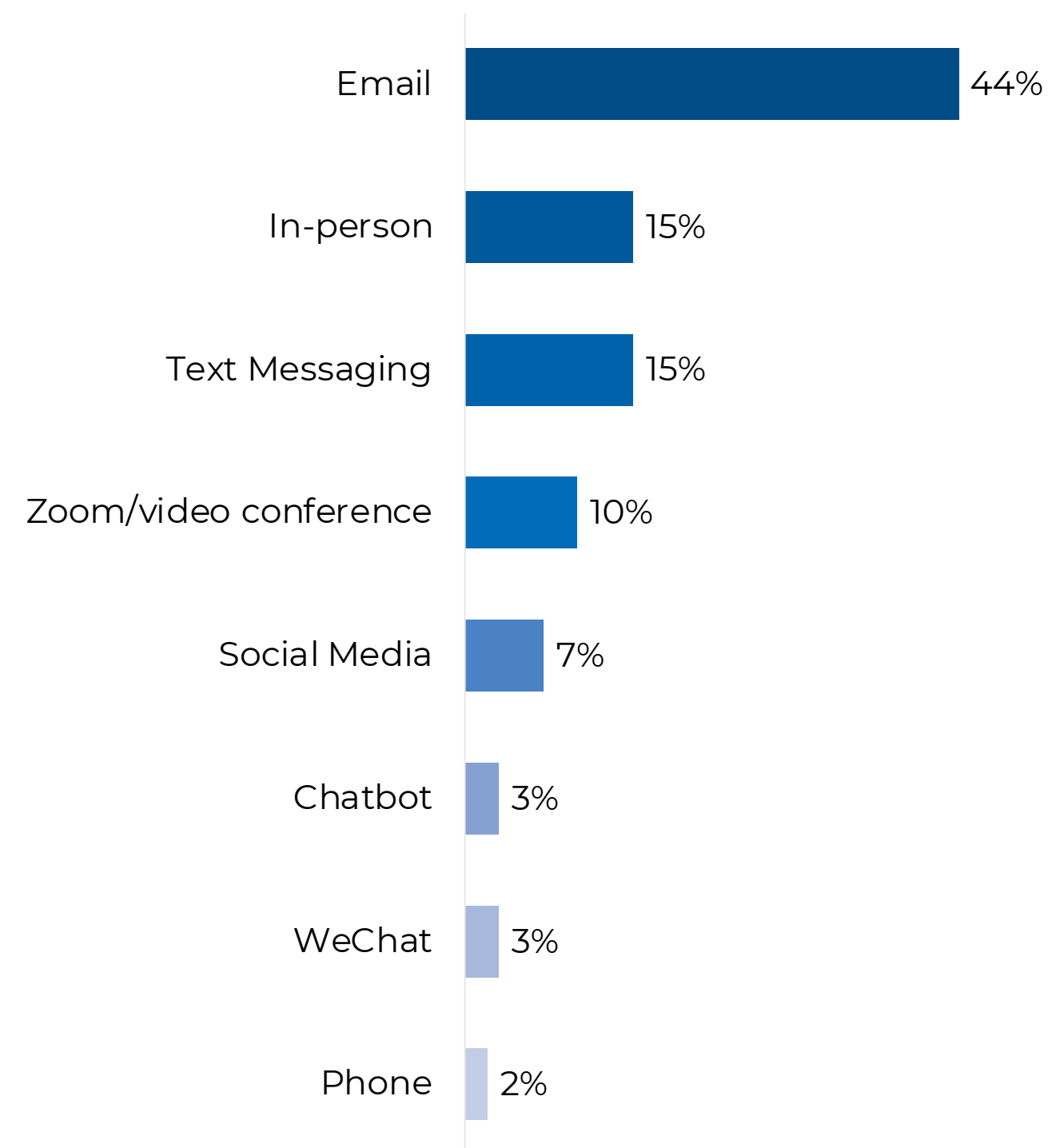


STUDENTS WANT COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND IN-PERSON

What is the best way for your college to PROMOTE Study Abroad program ideas, options, and availability?



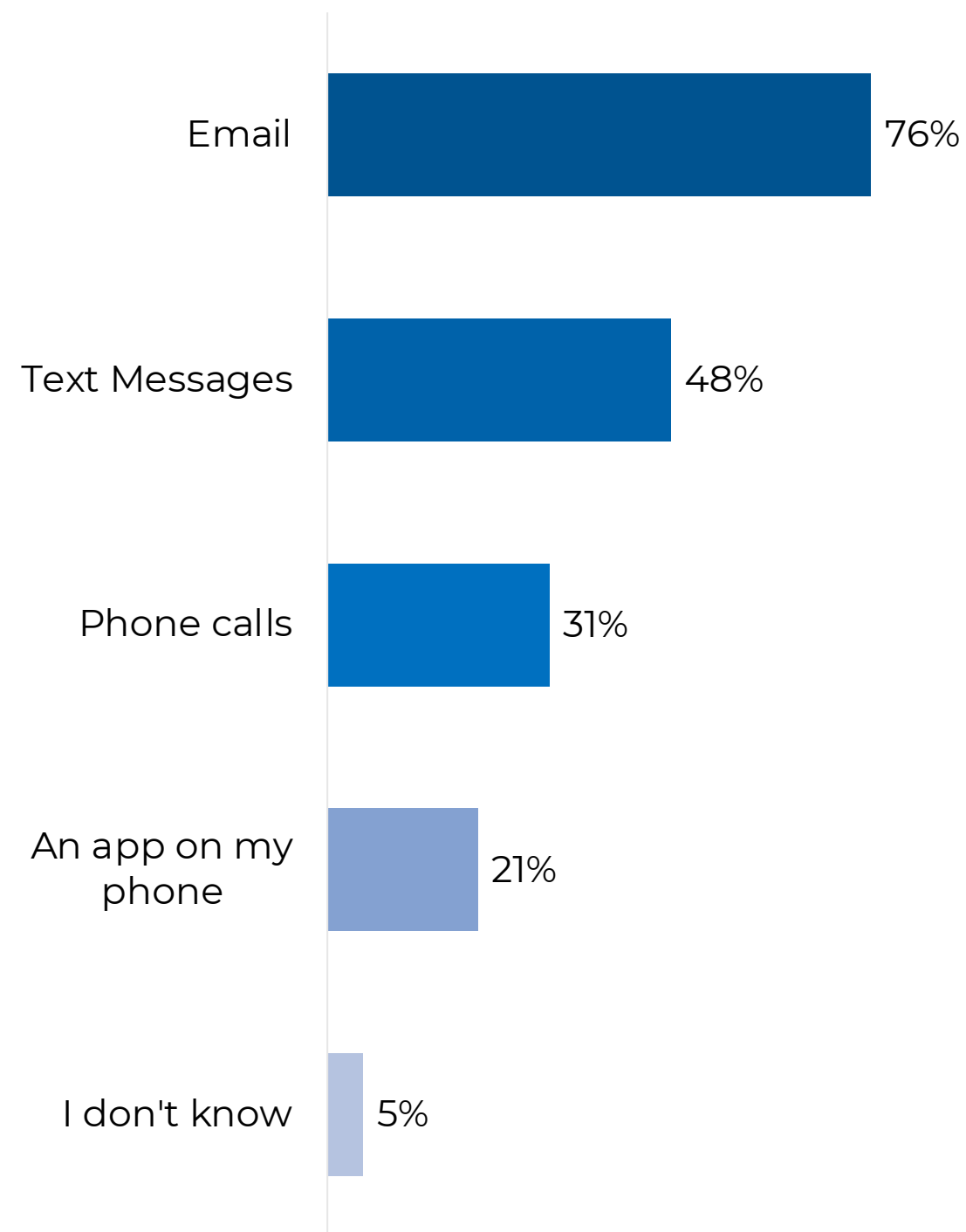
What is your preferred mode for ONGOING communication with your Study Abroad office?



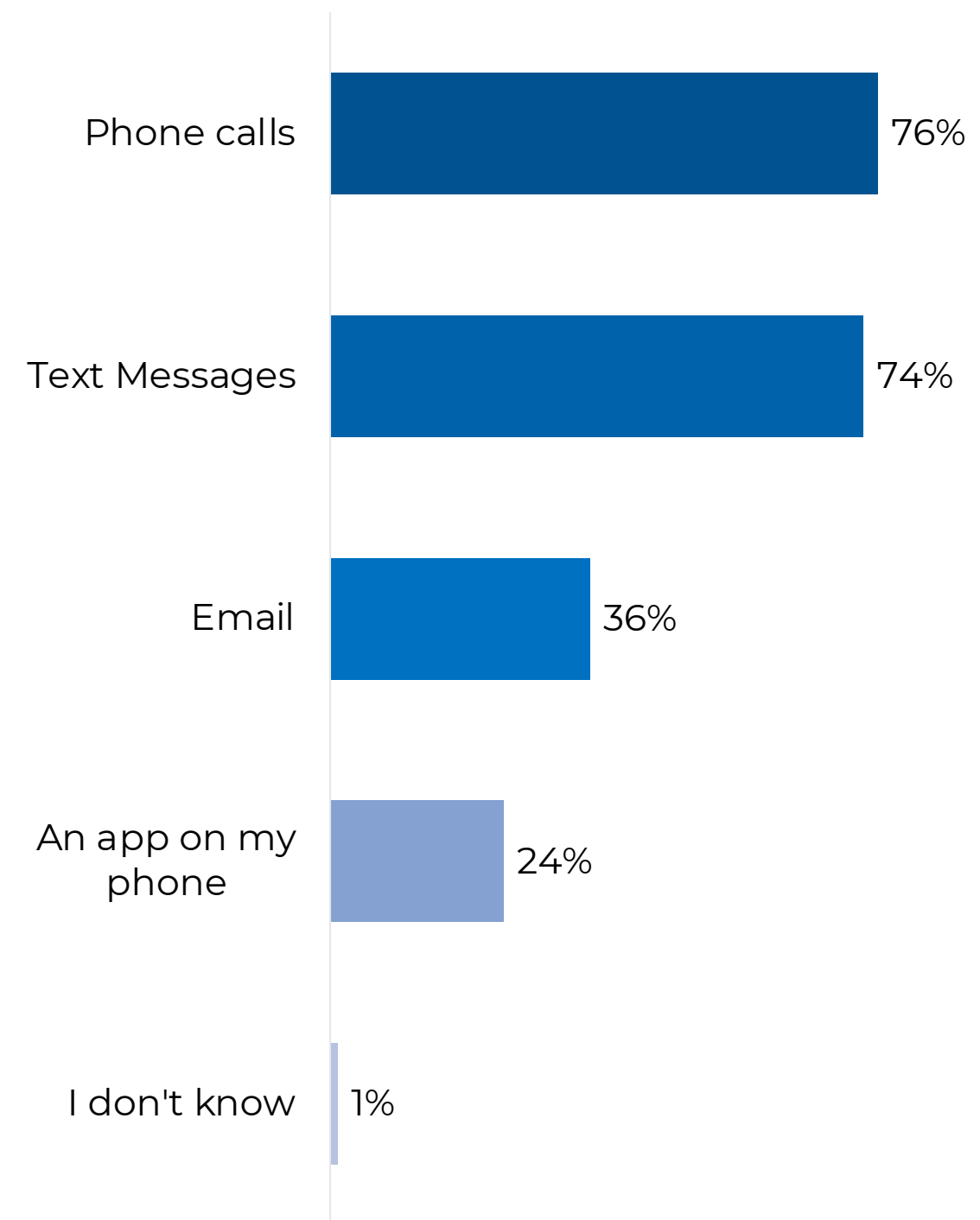
Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

COMMUNICATION WHILE ABROAD: EMAIL, PHONE CALLS, TEXT MESSAGES

**How will your SCHOOL keep in touch with you while you are abroad?
(Please select all that apply.)**



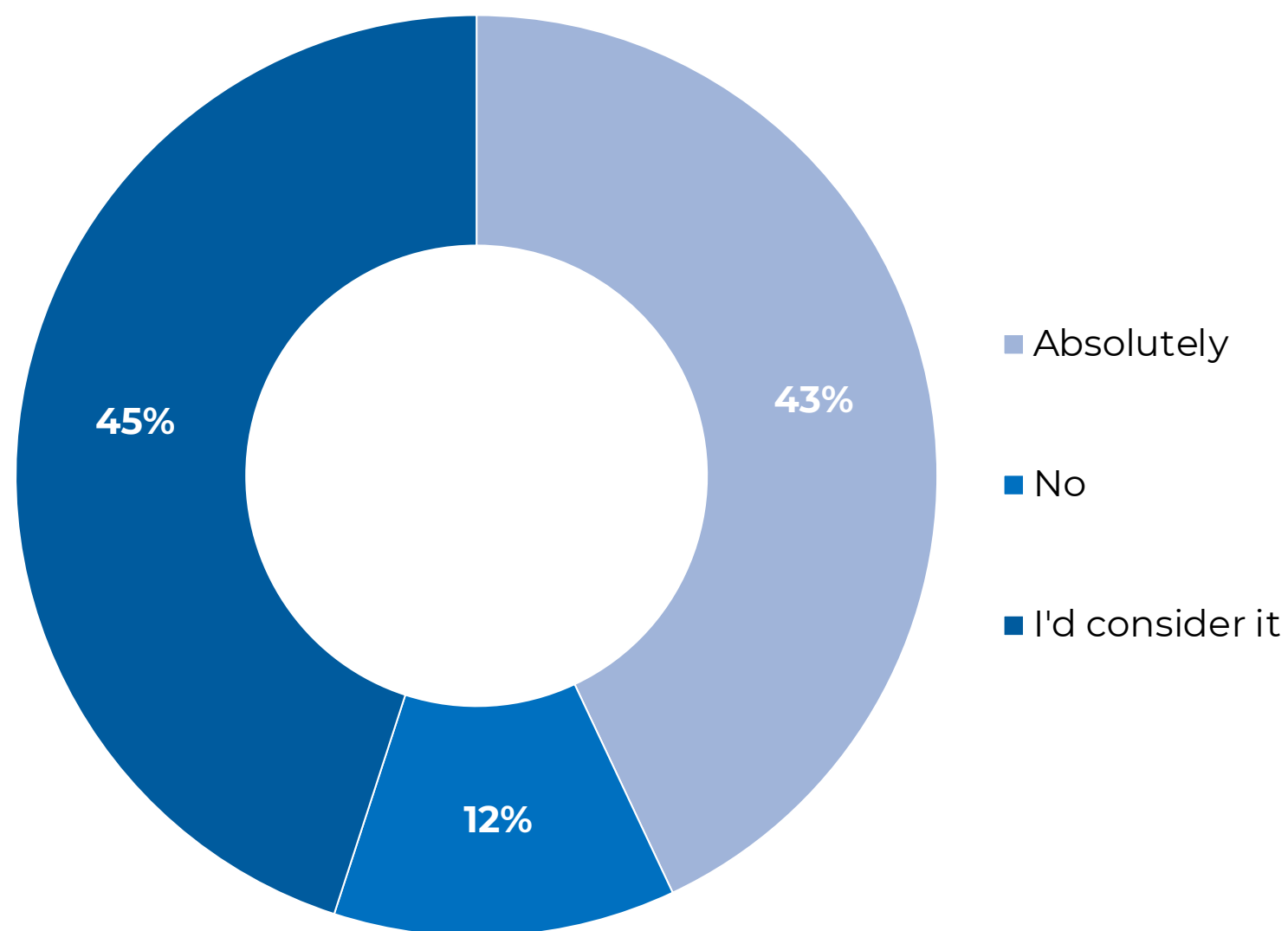
**How will your PARENTS keep in touch with you while you are abroad?
(Please select all that apply.)**



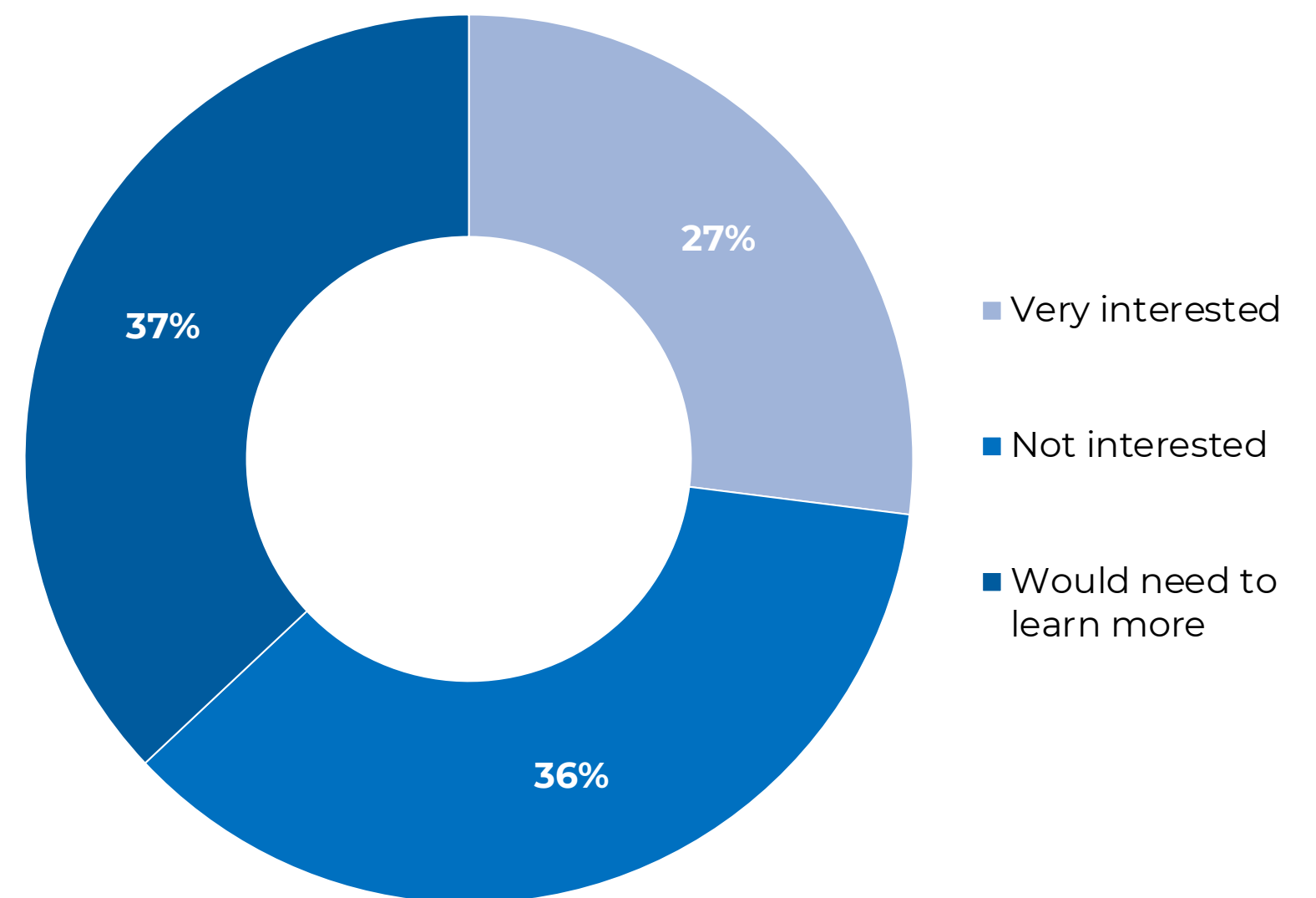
Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS: INTEREST IN STUDY AWAY AND VIRTUAL OPTIONS CONTINUES

How interested are you in institution-sponsored domestic travel programs as a replacement for international travel? (Often called, Study Away.)



How interested are you in taking part in a virtual international experience instead of traveling?



Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

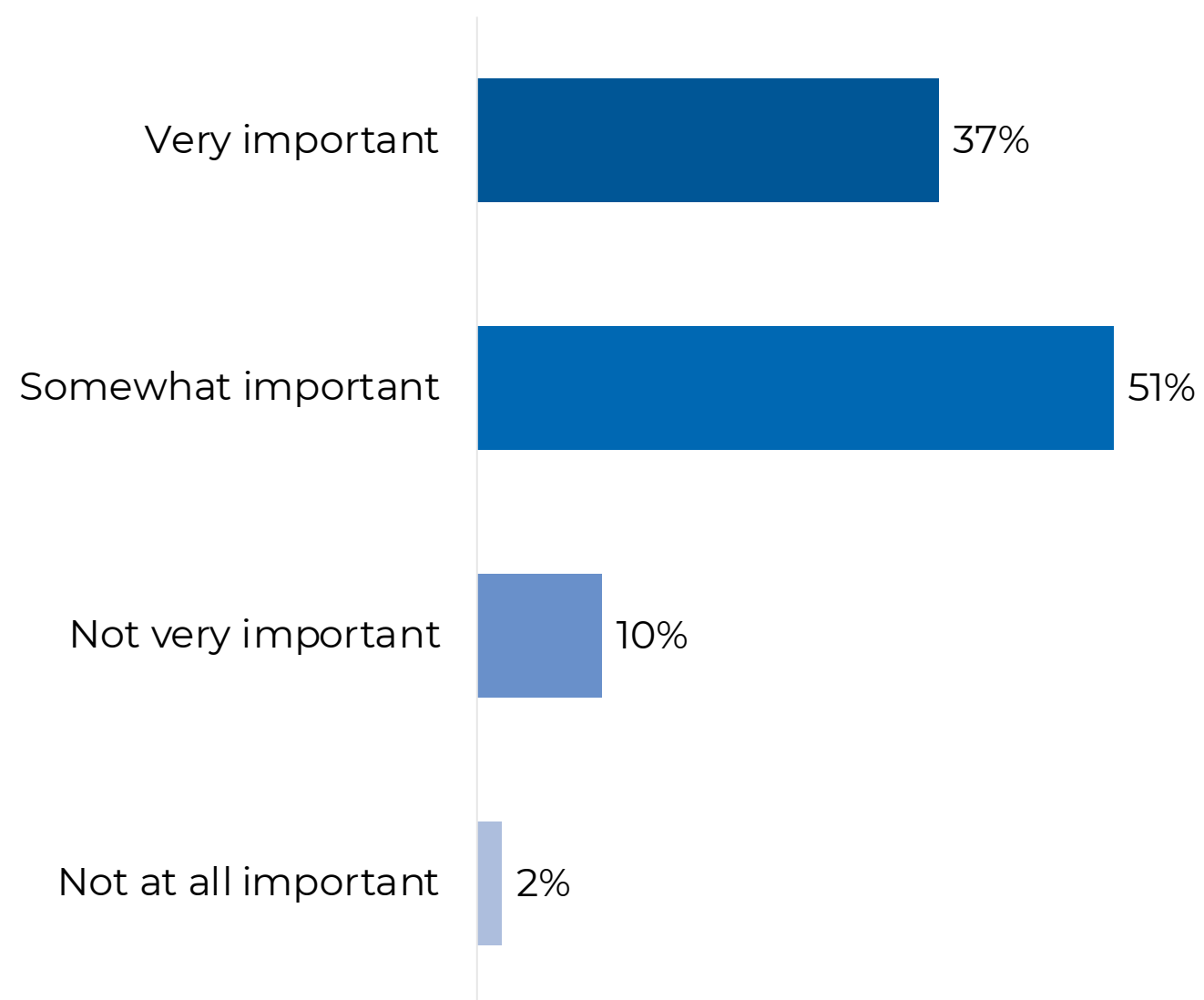
PERSPECTIVES FROM THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ABROAD

- Beyond exploring new places, students see immense value in how study abroad can expand perspectives and foster growth.
- Reflecting on anticipated lessons gathered overseas, **adaptability and problem-solving** lead the pack.
- 90% of students believe study abroad is important for personal and professional growth.
- With students saying study abroad will impact their worldview, exposing them to different global assumptions and beliefs, the programs show immense **promise for building more thoughtful, compassionate citizens**.
- As students challenge preconceptions, they gain insight that diverse viewpoints stem from varied cultural lenses—not ignorance. This sparks meaningful perspectives to apply in local communities and beyond.



ALMOST 90% SAY STUDY ABROAD IS IMPORTANT FOR PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

How important do you think studying abroad is for your personal and professional development?



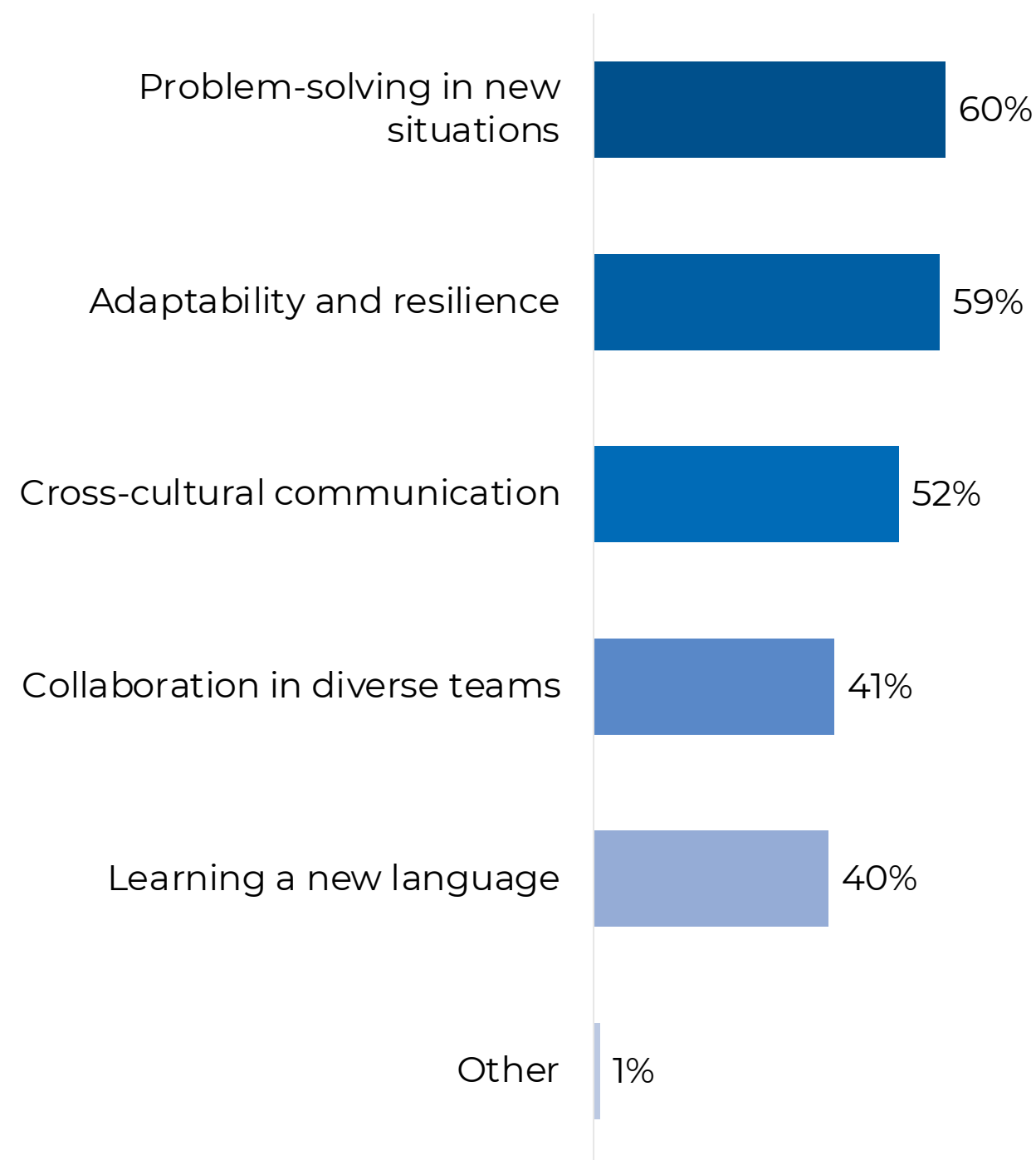
Every young adult should experience study abroad to step out of their comfort zone. Immersing in a new culture expands your mindset far more than just strengthening language skills.

– SURVEY PARTICIPANT

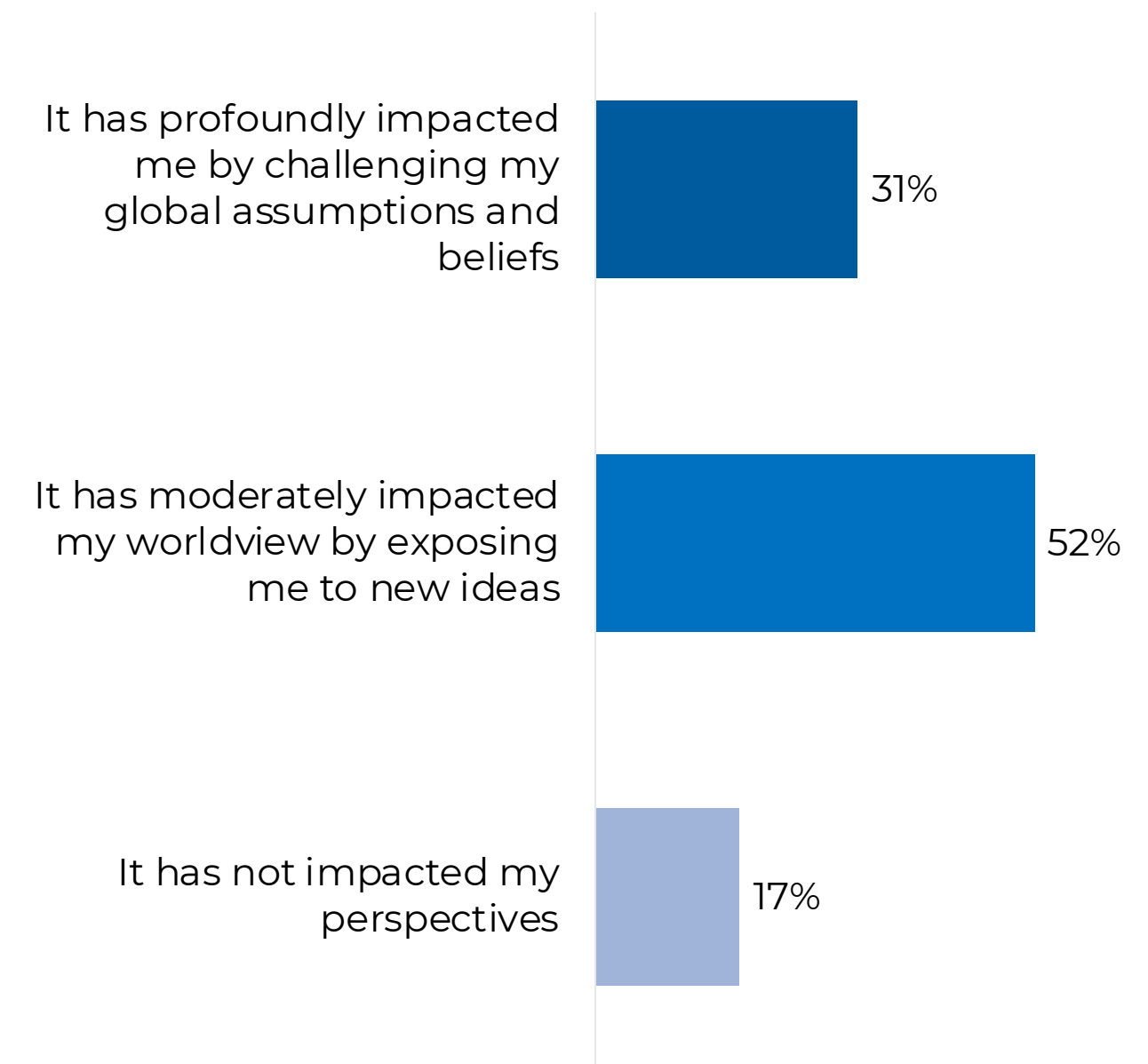
Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

PROBLEM SOLVING, ADAPTABILITY AND CHANGED WORLDVIEW

What skills or lessons learned abroad will be most relevant to your future career? (Please select all that apply.)



How has your experience abroad changed your worldview?



Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

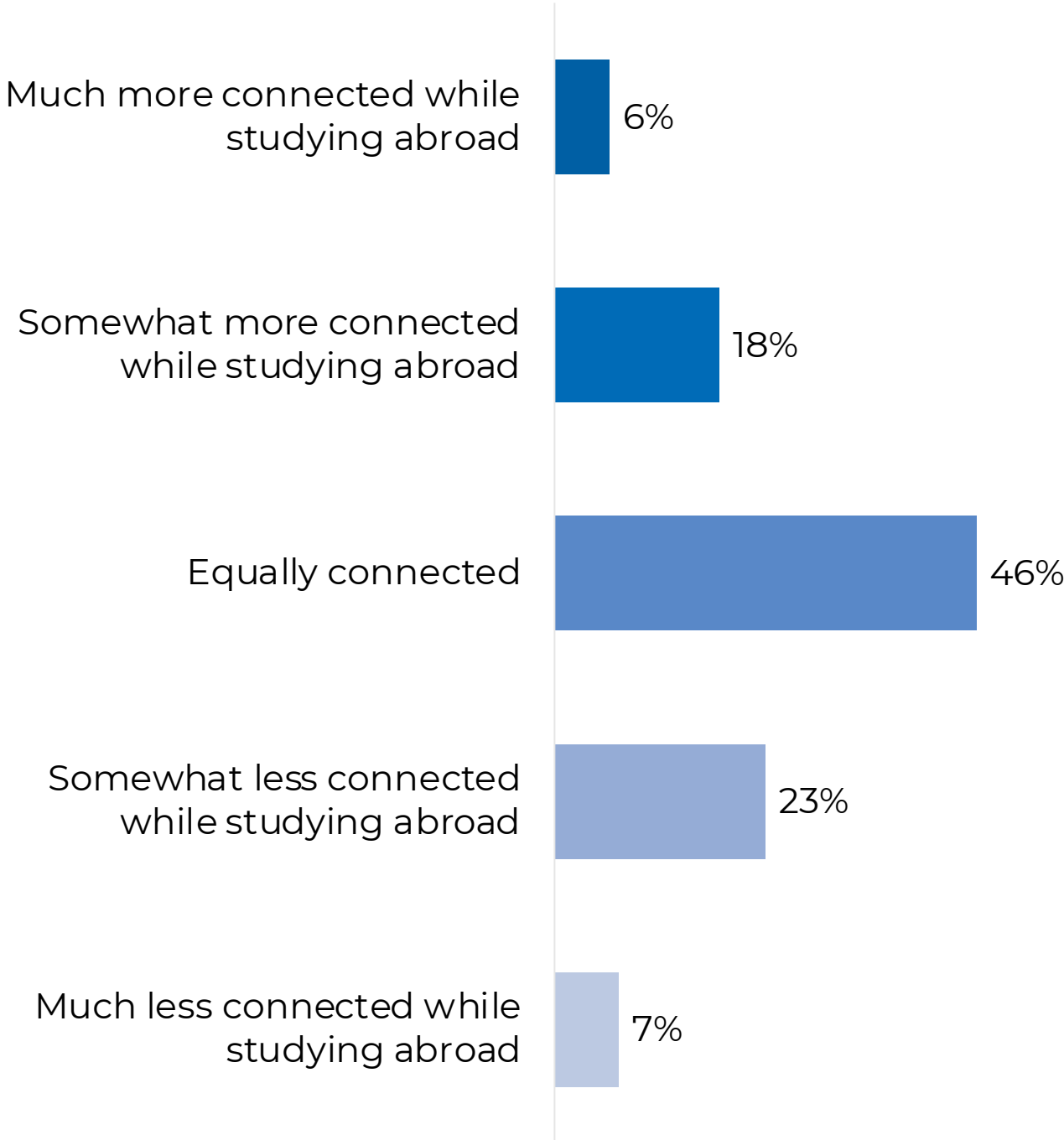
STUDENTS' STUDY ABROAD COMMUNITY IMMERSION



Studying abroad in Japan absolutely changed my life. I met my first girlfriend, learned the language, and developed my interpersonal skills immensely.

– SURVEY PARTICIPANT

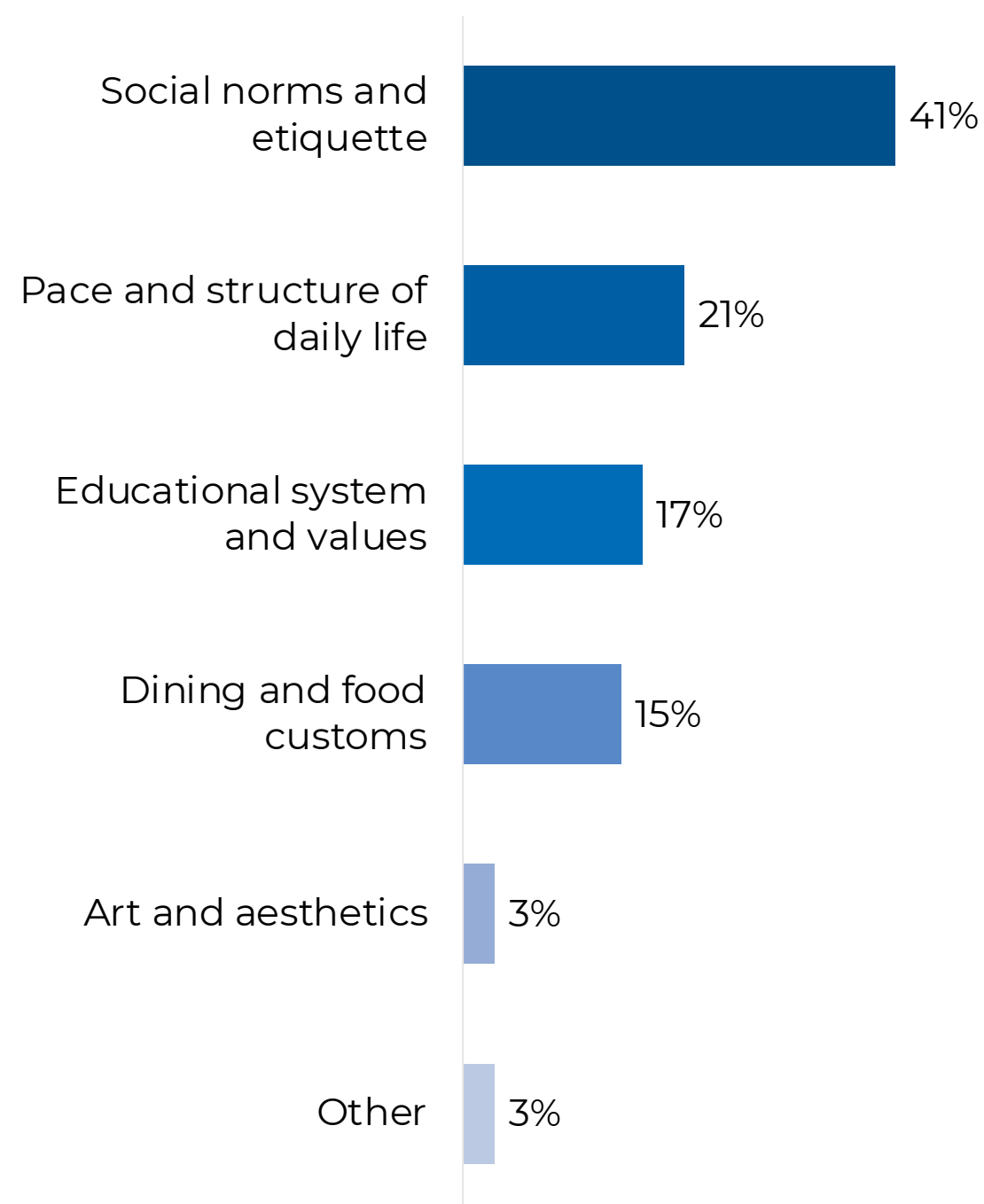
How connected did you feel to the local community abroad compared to at home?



Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

CULTURAL SURPRISES? SOCIAL NORMS AND PACE OF LIFE

What surprised you most about cultural differences abroad?



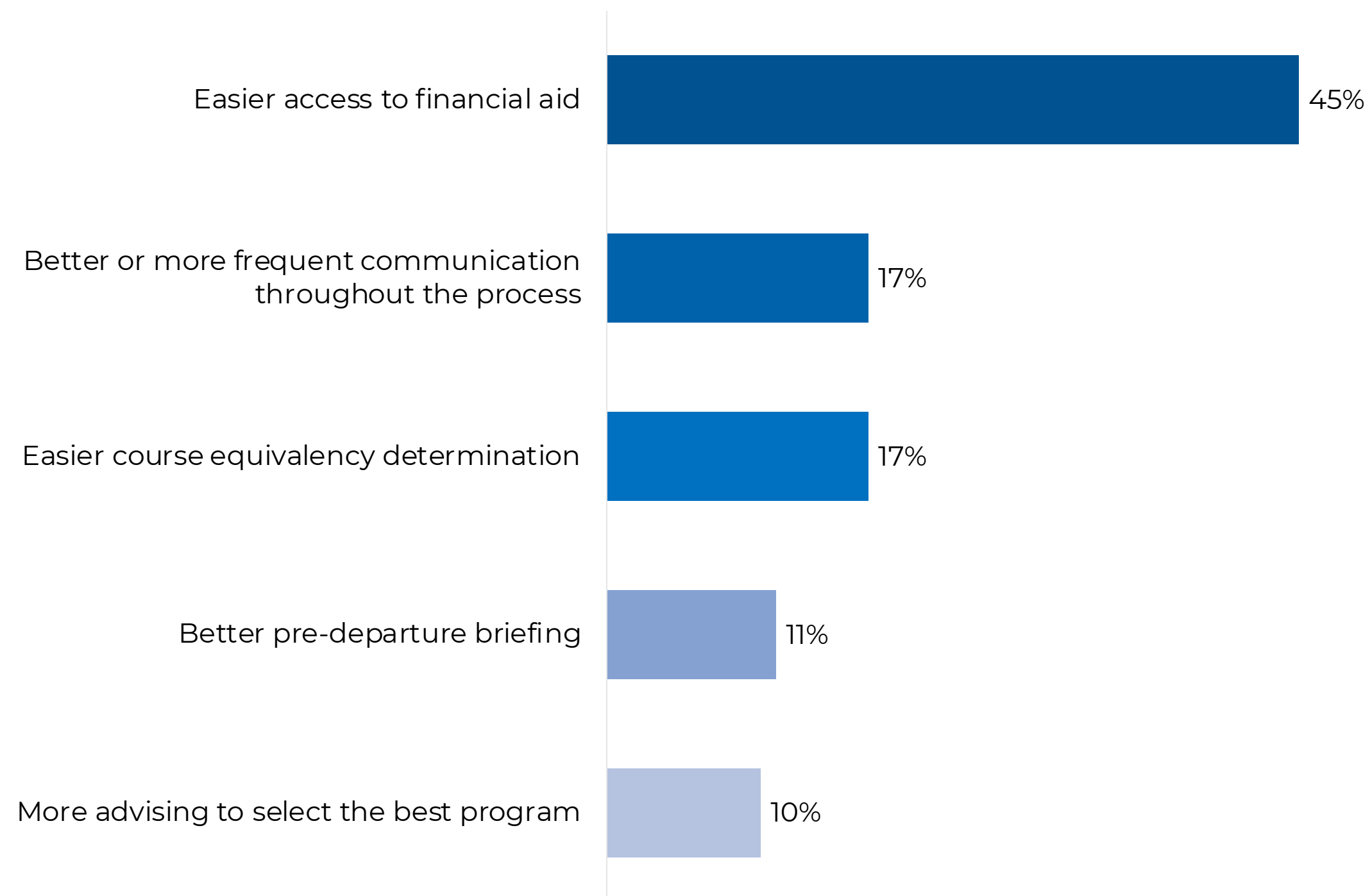
Beginning cultural education earlier would help Americans better understand and accept our melting pot society.

– SURVEY PARTICIPANT

Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

ADVICE FOR INSTITUTIONS

If you could give one piece of advice to your home university to improve the experience for study abroad students in the future, what would it be?



Source: Terra Dotta, Study Abroad Survey 2024. Base: 258 College Students

CONCLUSION

- The 2024 Voice of the Student Study Abroad Survey reveals a heartening resurgence in demand and opportunity to make these perspective-changing experiences more inclusive. While lingering barriers around affordability, safety, and accessibility must still be addressed, study abroad offices are well-positioned to lead the charge. By leveraging innovations in technology—automating scholarships, allowing virtual exchanges, and monitoring risks in real-time—obstacles can be tackled.
- As a trusted partner, Terra Dotta is eager to support study abroad offices with software capabilities that drive engagement, streamline processes, and provide transparency. By working creatively together, we can nurture globally-minded citizens and promote cross-cultural exchange through international immersion.
- The student voices heard in this survey resoundingly reaffirm study abroad's immense potential for shaping worldviews when doors are opened wide. On the horizon is a future where curiosity, courage, and community are the only passports required for traversing borders, boundaries, and preconceived notions.



APPENDIX

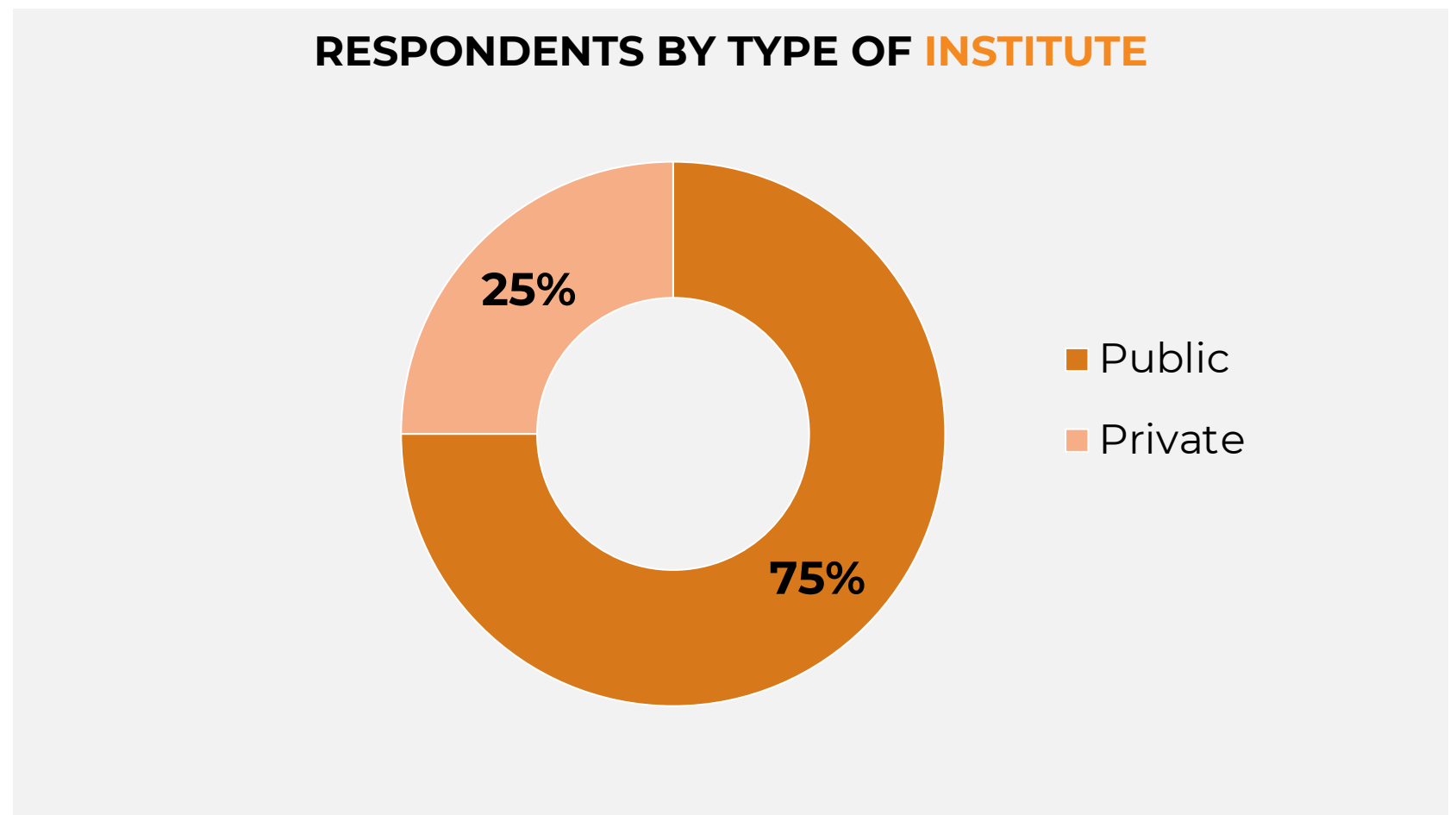
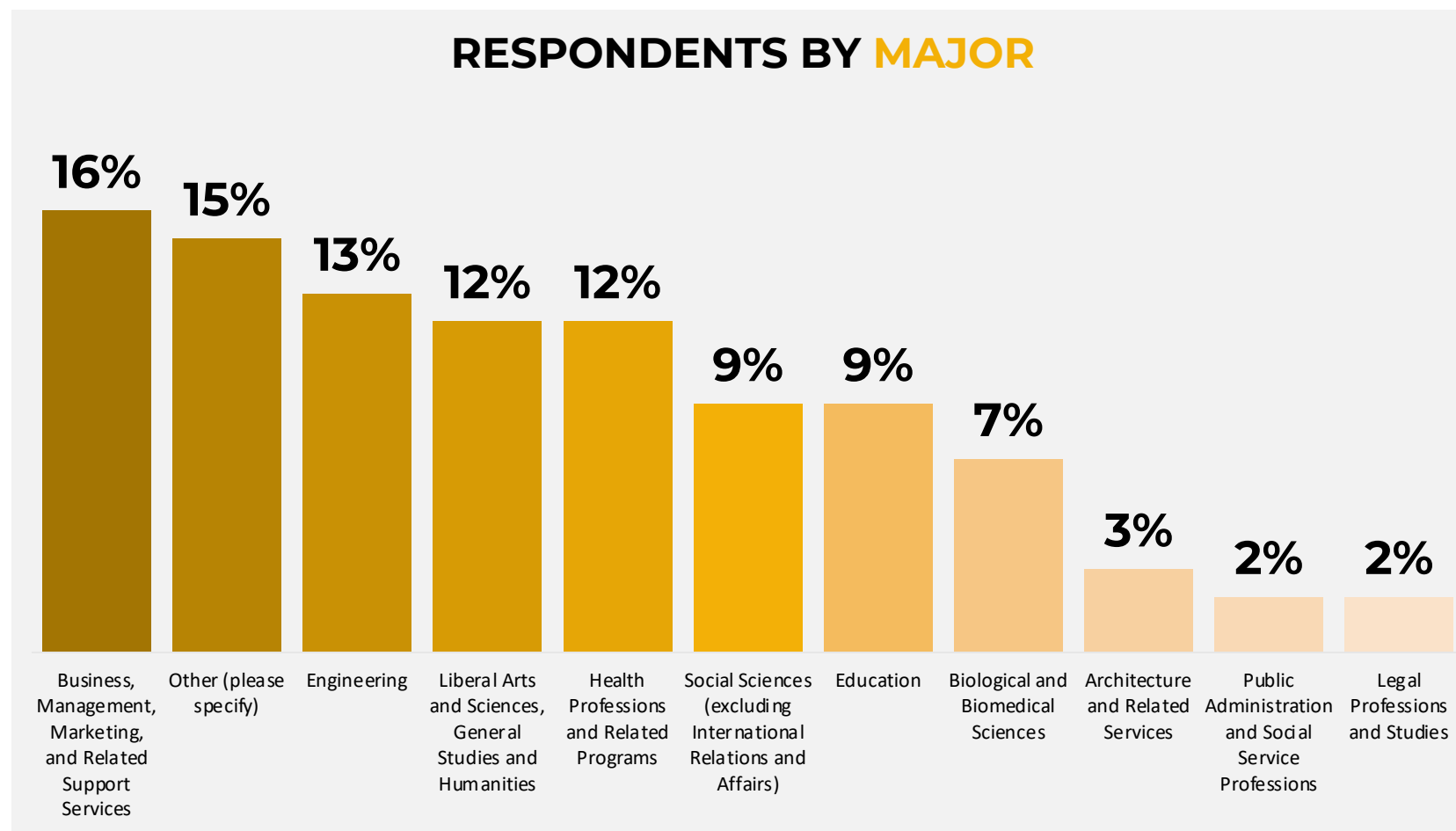
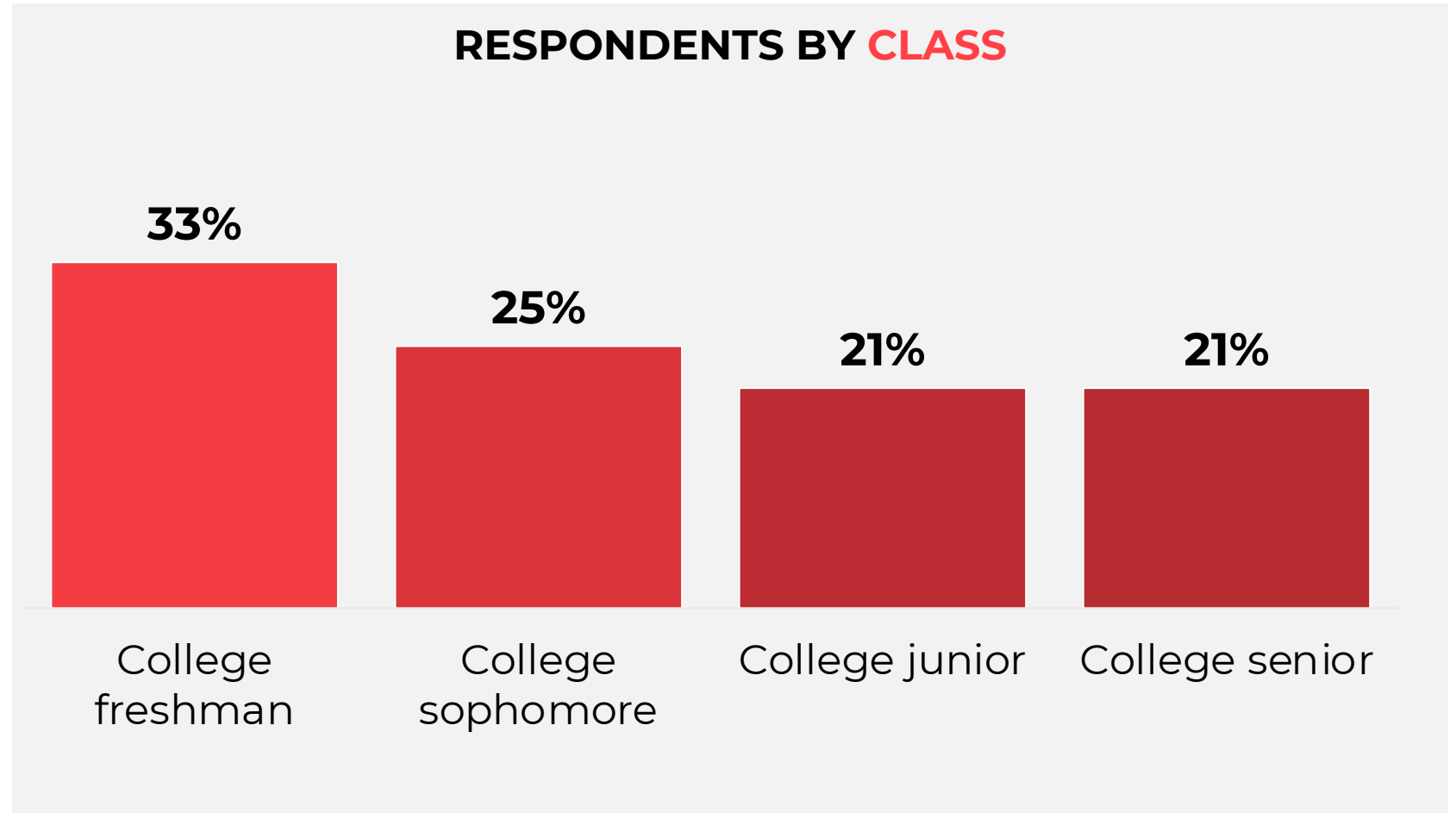
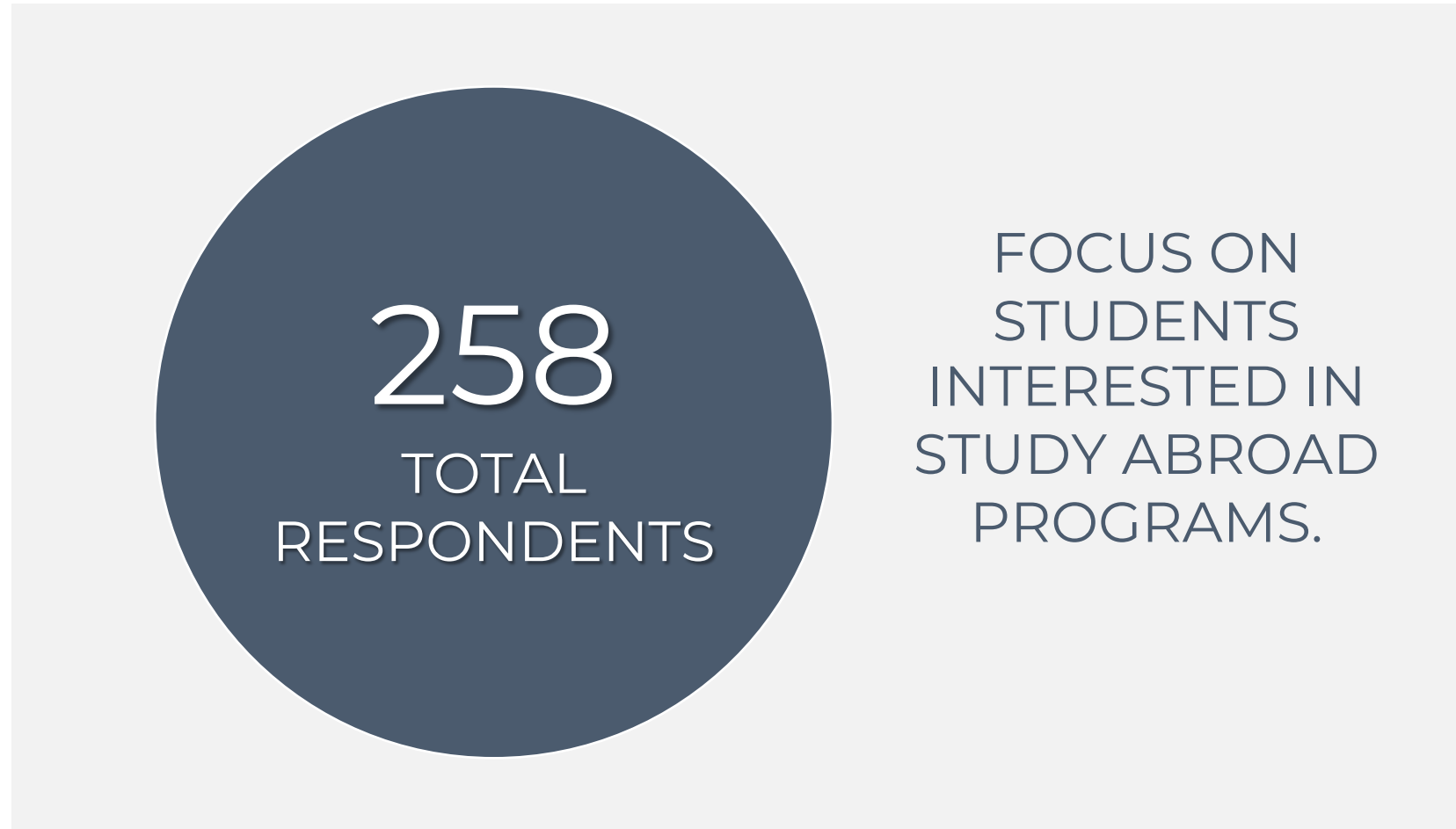
METHODOLOGY

Objective: To better understand students' current perspectives on study abroad, Terra Dotta commissioned a survey of over 250 U.S. college students. This is the third edition of the Study Abroad Survey: The Voice of the Student.

Method: Data collection was conducted online (via an online panel) among college students in the US. Respondents were required to be enrolled at a public or private institute.

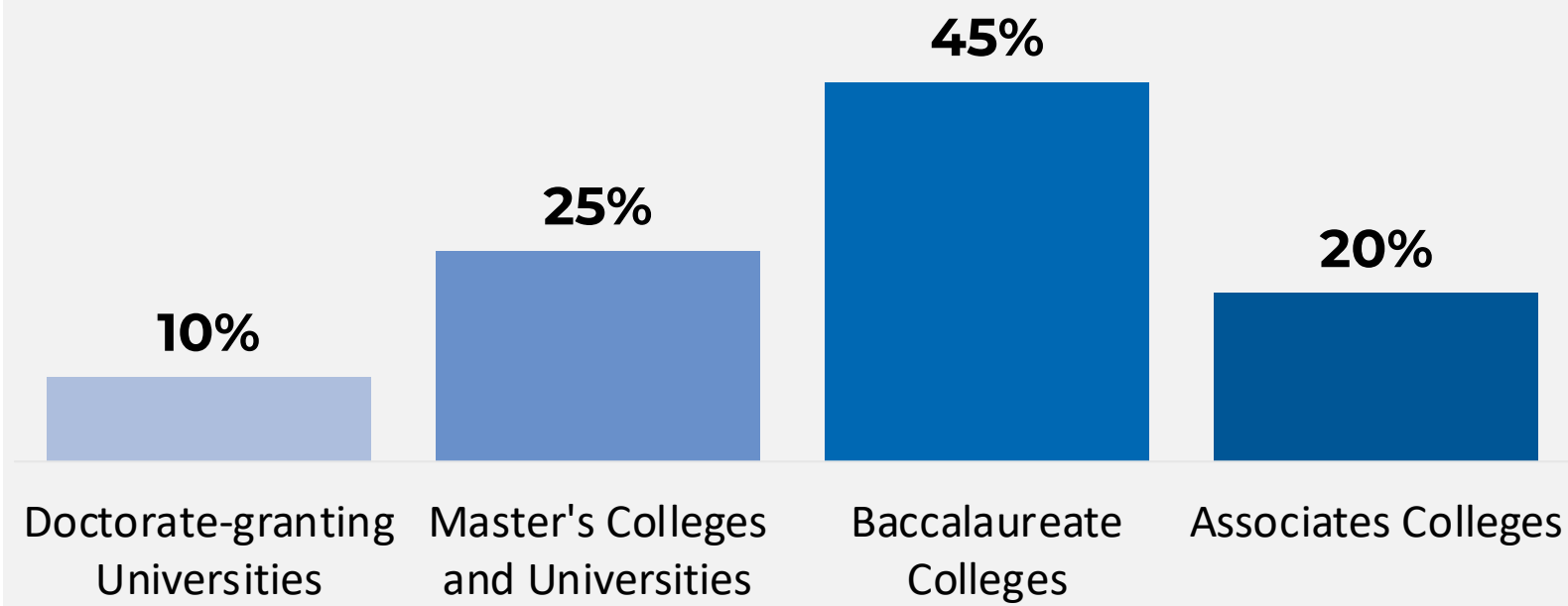
Quota and Questionnaire: There were 258 survey responses conducted from 1/30/24–2/12/24. The survey took about 5 minutes, on average, to complete.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

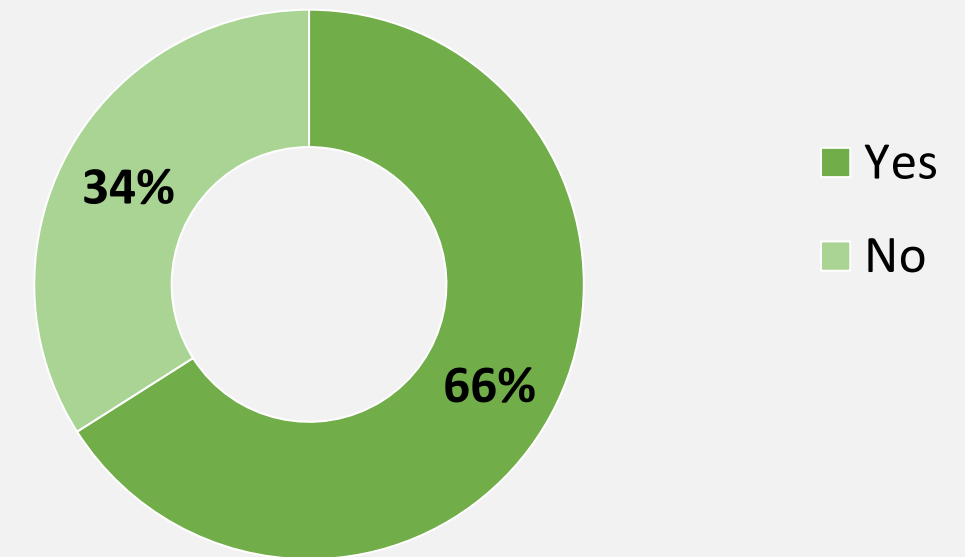


RESPONDENT PROFILE

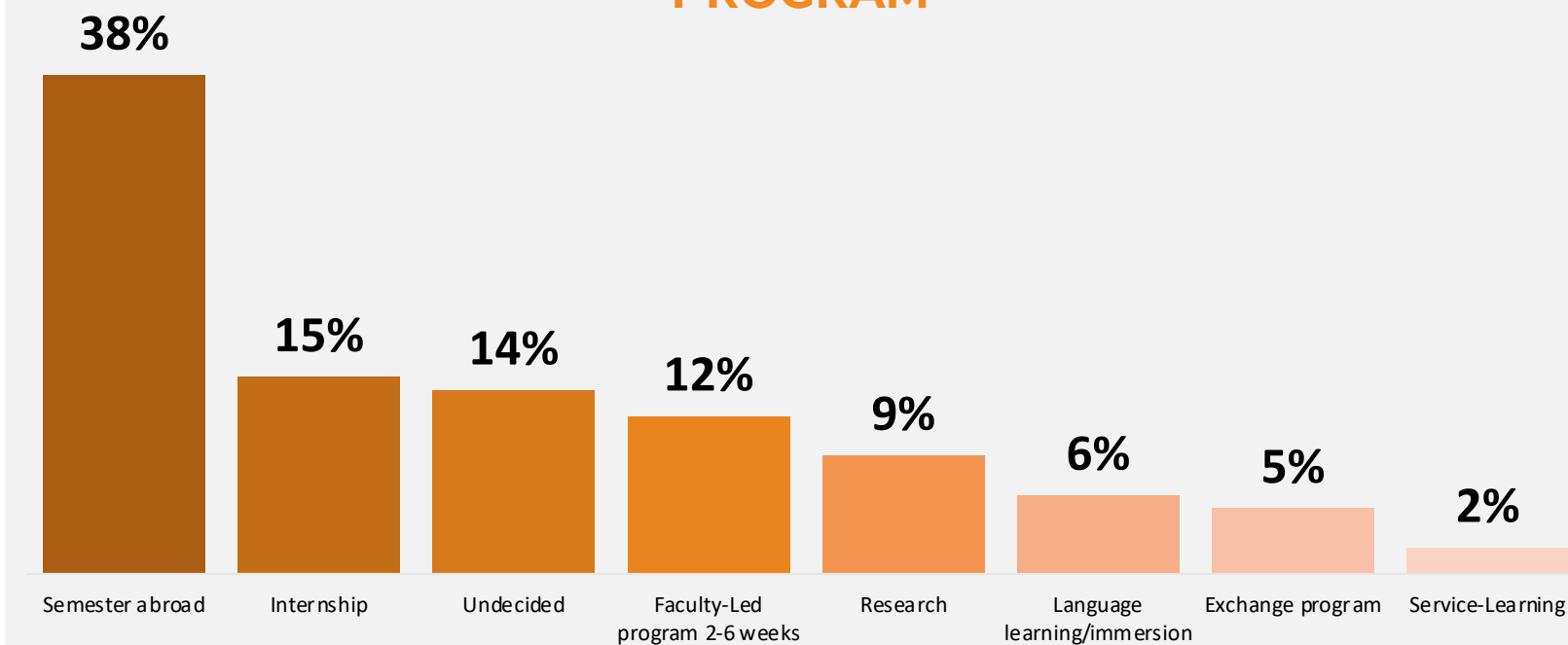
RESPONDENTS BY INSTITUTION



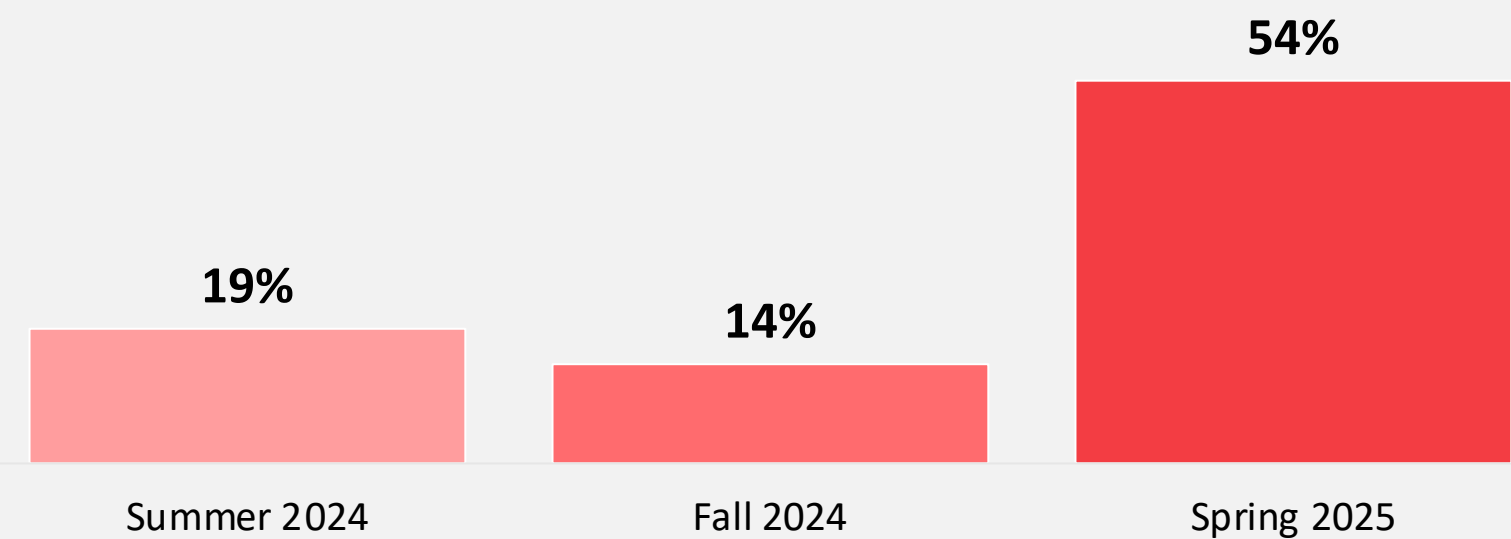
RESPONDENTS BY PLANNING TO STUDY ABROAD



RESPONDENTS BY TYPE OF STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM



RESPONDENTS BY DATE OF STUDY ABROAD



TERRA DOTTA FOR **GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT**

Our cloud-based, modular solutions encompass outgoing study abroad, incoming international student and scholar services (ISSS), student engagement, global engagement dashboards, and travel risk management—including our award-winning AlertTraveler® mobile application.

Offering a seamless user experience, the platform serves as a hub for institutions' global experience programs, pulling in relevant cross-campus student data to enable advanced global engagement analytics.



See for yourself.

We invite you to learn how Terra Dotta can help you achieve your global engagement objectives. Reach us online or contact your Terra Dotta representative.

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