

Responsive Management™



DEER HUNTING AND HARVEST MANAGEMENT IN VERMONT

Conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department

by Responsive Management

2014

DEER HUNTING AND HARVEST MANAGEMENT IN VERMONT

2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

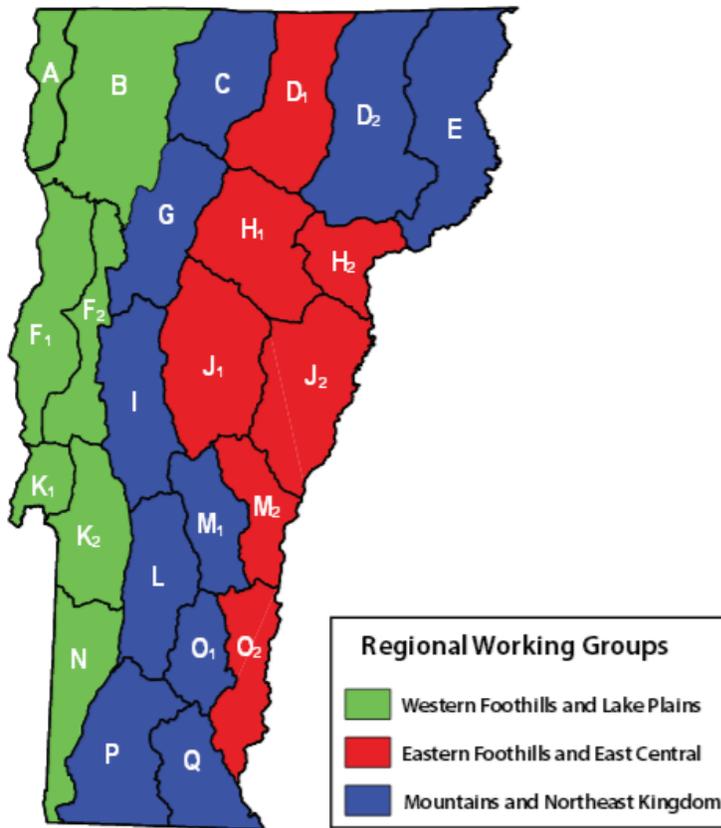
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (the Department) to determine hunters' opinions on and attitudes toward deer management strategies, specifically as they relate to hunting and harvest regulations. The ultimate purpose of this project is to help the Department develop a comprehensive evaluation of deer hunting and harvest regulations, thereby assisting the Department in developing the most effective deer management strategies and hunting regulations to best meet the needs of its diverse constituents.

The study entailed a telephone survey of licensed hunters in Vermont, including both residents and nonresidents. The sample of licensed hunters in Vermont, age 16 and older, was provided by the Department. The following types of license holders were included in the survey (note that a nonresident permanent license is very rare and did not occur during this survey):

- Resident hunting
- Resident combination
- Resident permanent
- Nonresident hunting
- Nonresident combination

The scope and scale of this survey required analysis of the results to show representative data not only at the statewide level but also at the regional level. As part of its Comprehensive Deer Management Review Plan, the Department has divided the state into three regional working groups, as shown in the following map. These regional working groups represent the needs of 24 individual Wildlife Management Units (WMUs), which are denoted by the boundary lines in the map.



Initially, Responsive Management collected approximately 300 completed interviews using a random sample of all licensed Vermont deer hunters across the state and including nonresident deer hunters; this sample was not stratified in any way. The proportions of deer hunters by region in this random sample resulted in a generally even distribution of hunting participation among the three geographic regions in the state; therefore, it was not necessary to stratify the sample for the remainder of survey administration nor to weight results for this study.

Responsive Management contacted 1,546 licensed hunters; those who did not hunt deer in 2013 were skipped out of the survey. Ultimately a total of 1,217 completed interviews with deer hunters were obtained, with the following regional distribution:

- Eastern Foothills and East Central, n = 398 (hereafter referred to as the Eastern region)
- Mountains and Northeast Kingdom, n = 417 (hereafter referred to as the Mountains region)
- Western Foothills and Lake Plains, n = 370 (hereafter referred to as the Western region)

The regional totals do not add up to 1,217 because 3% of the responses could not be geographically located by the region/WMU most often hunted by the respondent.

The Department was interested in evaluating certain towns that are not typical of the geographic regions in which they are located; the towns that differ are Enosburg, Bakersfield, Waterville, Cambridge, Underhill, and Jericho. However, only 29 of the 1,217 respondents identified these locations during the survey. Because the sampling error would be 18% for any crosstabulations performed for this subgroup, this analysis could not be conducted.

DEER HUNTING PARTICIPATION

Throughout this report, survey responses will be presented on a statewide basis (single-bar graphs) followed by a regional basis (3-bar graphs). Crosstabulations by license type or resident/nonresident status have been included on certain questions. Resident combination licenses are the most common type, both statewide and within each region (43% of Vermont deer hunters have this type of license).

Survey questions regarding deer hunting participation revealed the following:

- Aside from deer, Vermont deer hunters most often hunted black bear (12% of deer hunters did this), ruffed grouse (6%), and rabbit/hare (6%). These percentages are comparable within each of the three regions.
- Vermont deer hunters hunted a total of 11.4 mean days in 2013.
 - The Mountains region showed a slightly higher average of 12.0 days per hunter.
 - Deer hunters with a resident combination license hunted the most days in 2013, with an average of 13.2 days per hunter, followed by resident hunting license holders (11.0 days), resident permanent license holders (9.9 days), and non-resident hunters (7.6 days).
- An overwhelming majority of deer hunters hunted during rifle season (95%), followed by muzzleloader season (39%) and archery season (30%), with little regional variation.

- A substantially higher percentage of Vermont deer hunters who are residents (42%) hunted deer during muzzleloader season than did nonresidents (16%).
 - A markedly higher percentage of Vermont deer hunters who are residents (31%) hunted deer during archery season than did nonresidents (20%).
- In all, 19% of deer hunters harvested a deer in 2013.
- Hunters in the Western region most often harvested a deer (22% did), followed by the Eastern region (21%) and the Mountains region (15%).
 - Deer hunters with a resident combination license most often harvested a deer (23% did), followed by resident hunting license holders (17%), resident permanent license holders (15%), and non-resident hunters (13%).
- About half (49%) of respondents hunted on private land only, while 14% hunted on public land only and 37% hunted on both public and private land.
- The Mountains region had a slightly higher percentage who hunted on public land only (18%).
 - Of those who hunted deer on private land only, 59% hunted with permission on private land that was posted as closed to hunting.
- Of the 14 counties in Vermont, deer hunters most often hunted in Rutland County in 2013 (10% of deer hunters hunted in this county).
- There was a nearly even distribution among the regions most often hunted by residents of Vermont in 2013; however, nonresidents most often hunted deer in the Mountains region (46% hunted there), while only 16% of nonresidents most often hunted in the Western region.
- About one-quarter (24%) of Vermont deer hunters also hunted deer in another state, with little regional variation.
- Of those who hunted deer outside of Vermont, respondents most often gave the reason that there was a lack of deer in Vermont or better hunting elsewhere (32%

stated this as the reason for hunting outside the state). Deer hunters in the Mountains region who hunted outside the state most often gave the reason that they live or own land in another state (31%).

DEER HUNTING SATISFACTION

- In general, 34% of respondents were *very satisfied* and another 34% were *somewhat satisfied* with their deer hunting experiences in Vermont during 2013. This is in contrast to the 14% who were *very dissatisfied* and 15% who were *somewhat dissatisfied*. In looking at sums, 68% of deer hunters were satisfied with their experiences and 29% were dissatisfied, with the remaining 3% giving a neutral response. There was little regional variation.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked to rate the importance of six factors to their hunting experience on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important. The results show that harvesting a deer is not crucial to most hunters' enjoyment of the experience. Again, there was little regional variation. In descending order of their mean ratings, the results are:
 - Just going deer hunting, regardless of whether they harvest a deer (average rating of 8.66 out of 10.00)
 - The amount of buck sign in the woods (6.81)
 - Harvesting an older, larger-antlered buck (6.64)
 - Harvesting a buck, regardless of the size of the antlers (5.67)
 - Harvesting a deer, regardless of the age or sex (5.57)
 - Harvesting more than one buck each year (3.81)

DEER HUNTING MANAGEMENT AND REGULATIONS

Natural Lures

- About one-fifth (18%) of Vermont deer hunters used natural urine-based lures while deer hunting in 2013.
 - Deer hunters in the Western region were the most likely to use natural urine-based lures (22% used them), while hunters in the Eastern region were the least likely (14%).

- Respondents were informed that natural urine-based lures may increase the risk of infectious diseases being introduced to Vermont's deer herd. In light of this information, 36% of respondents would *strongly support* and 18% would *moderately support* a ban on these lures (combined support of 54% for a ban). Conversely, 15% would *strongly oppose* and 10% would *moderately oppose* such a ban (combined opposition of 25%). These percentages were generally consistent between the regions.

Regional Approach to Deer Management

- Deer hunters were asked if they would support or oppose a regional approach to deer management, meaning regulations may differ from one region or area to another. One-third (34%) of respondents *strongly support* and one-fourth (24%) *moderately support* this idea, for overall support of 58%. Conversely, 22% *strongly oppose* and 11% *moderately oppose* a regional approach to deer management (combined opposition of 33%). These percentages were consistent among the regions.

- Respondents were informed that there are observed differences in deer densities, climate, and numbers of hunters in the different regions of the state. Knowing this resulted in a slight increase in support of a regional approach, as 39% of respondents *strongly support* and 26% *moderately support* a regional approach to deer management, for overall support of 65%. Opposition decreased slightly when deer hunters were given the information about regions, as 16% *strongly oppose* and 10% *moderately oppose* such an approach (combined opposition of 26%). There was little regional variation.

- Regarding antler-point restrictions, 61% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (38% *strongly support* this).
- Regarding antlerless or antlered buck bag limits, 63% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (37% *strongly support* this).
 - Mountains region hunters have the most total support for a regional approach to this regulation (67%).
- Regarding the lengths of deer hunting seasons, 57% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (32% *strongly support* this).
 - Mountains region hunters have the most total support for a regional approach to this regulation (63%) and Western region hunters have the least support (53%).
- Regarding the timing of the deer hunting seasons, 48% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (26% *strongly support* this).
 - Mountains region hunters have the most total support for a regional approach to this regulation (51%) and Eastern region hunters have the least support (46%).
- For all the regulations discussed above, permanent license holders are less supportive of management at the regional level than are non-permanent license holders.

Archery Season

- Deer hunters were almost evenly divided on making archery season longer. Slightly more hunters oppose the idea (47%, with 31% who *strongly oppose*) than support it (43%, with 26% who *strongly support*).
 - The concept of a longer archery season has the most support in the Western region (48%; 30% *strong support*) and the least support in the Eastern region (40%; 24% *strong support*).
 - Interestingly, permanent license holders are much more opposed to a longer archery season (48% *strongly oppose* this) than are non-permanent license holders (28% *strongly oppose* this).

- Nearly two-thirds (62%) of Vermont deer hunters oppose legalizing crossbows for all hunters during archery season (48% *strongly oppose* this).
 - Opposition is strongest in the Eastern region, with 66% opposing the change (50% *strongly oppose* this).

- In contrast, nearly two-thirds (63%) of Vermont deer hunters support legalizing crossbows for older hunters during archery season (39% *strongly support* this). There was little regional variation.
 - Support for this change was slightly greater among non-permanent license holders (64%) than among permanent license holders (59%).
 - Of those who support making it legal for older hunters to hunt deer with crossbows during archery season, the mean suggested age for allowing this activity is 58 years old, with little regional variation.

- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Vermont deer hunters oppose legalizing crossbows for all hunters during all deer hunting seasons (52% *strongly oppose* this).
 - The most opposition occurs in the Eastern region (71%, with 58% who *strongly oppose* this) and the least occurs in the Western region (57%, with 44% who *strongly oppose*).

As discussed earlier, 30% of Vermont deer hunters hunted deer during archery season in 2013. Crosstabulations were performed to observe differences in attitudes or opinions between those who hunted during archery season (archery hunters) and those who hunted, but not during archery season (non-archery hunters).

- In rating the importance of different factors to their general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, archery hunters gave higher mean ratings than non-archery hunters to “the amount of buck sign in the woods” (mean rating of 7.16 out of 10.00, compared to 6.66 from non-archery hunters), “harvesting an older, larger-antlered buck” (7.04, compared to 6.47), “harvesting a deer, regardless of age or sex” (6.08, compared to 5.35), and “harvesting more than one buck each year” (4.46, compared to 3.53).

- Archery hunters were substantially more supportive than non-archery hunters for making archery season longer; 48% of archery hunters *strongly support* the change, compared to only 18% of non-archery hunters.
- When asked about making crossbow use legal for all hunters during archery season, 27% of archery hunters *strongly support* the idea, compared to 17% of non-archery hunters. Nonetheless, majorities of both groups oppose the change (55% of archery hunters and 65% of non-archery hunters).
- Archery hunters have slightly more total support (65%) than non-archery hunters (61%) for making it legal for older hunters to use crossbows during archery season.
- About one-quarter (27%) of archery hunters *strongly support* making crossbows legal for all hunters during all seasons, compared to 16% of non-archery hunters. However, majorities of both groups oppose the change (58% of archery hunters and 67% of non-archery hunters).

Hunting during archery season was highest among hunters with a resident combination license (39% with this license type participated) or a non-resident combination license (38%).

Rifle Season

- Vermont deer hunters were asked if they would support or oppose moving rifle season so that it would start one week later, but still include Thanksgiving and still be 16 days in length. There was slightly more opposition (47%) than support (43%) for this, but note that 33% of respondents *strongly oppose* the change.
 - This concept had the most overall support in the Western region (48%) and the least overall support in the Eastern region (39%).
 - A greater percentage of permanent license holders (54%) than non-permanent license holders (46%) opposed this concept.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked, if the Department thought an adjustment to rifle season would allow more bucks to participate in breeding, if they would support or oppose moving rifle season so that it would start one week later, but still include Thanksgiving and still be 16 days in length. A majority of 59% would support the adjustment, compared to 35% who would oppose it.
 - This concept had the most overall support in the Western region (63%) and the least overall support in the Mountains region (54%).
 - Only 46% of permanent license holders would support the adjustment.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked if they would support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of rifle season in the Mountains region only. Respondents were nearly evenly divided, with 48% supporting the extension and 44% opposing it. There was little regional variation.
 - Only 32% of permanent license holders would support the extension.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked, if shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, if they would support or oppose reducing rifle season by 7 days at the end of the season in these areas only. A majority (58%) of respondents oppose the suggestion, with 39% who *strongly oppose* it. There was little regional variation.

As discussed earlier, an overwhelming majority (95%) of Vermont deer hunters hunted deer during rifle season in 2013. Crosstabulations were performed to observe differences in attitudes and opinions between those who hunted during rifle season (rifle hunters) and those who hunted, but not during rifle season (non-rifle hunters).

- In rating the importance of different factors to their general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, rifle hunters gave higher mean ratings than non-rifle hunters to “harvesting an older, larger-antlered buck” (mean rating of 6.66 out of 10.00, compared to 6.21 from non-rifle hunters) and “harvesting a deer, regardless of age or sex” (5.60, compared to 5.13).

- In contrast, rifle hunters gave lower mean ratings than non-rifle hunters to the importance of “harvesting a buck, regardless of the size of the antlers” (5.65, compared to 6.00 from non-rifle hunters) and “harvesting more than one buck each year” (3.78, compared to 4.31).
- Notably, rifle hunters had less total support (42%) than non-rifle hunters (64%) for moving rifle deer season so that it starts one week later, but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length.
- If the Department thought an adjustment to rifle season would allow more bucks to participate in breeding, total support among rifle hunters increased (57%) but was still less than total support among non-rifle hunters (69%) for moving rifle season so that it would start one week later, but still include Thanksgiving and still be 16 days in length.
- When asked if they would support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of rifle season in the Mountains region only, there was little difference between rifle hunters (47% support) and non-rifle hunters (48% support).
- Vermont deer hunters were asked, if shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, if they would support or oppose reducing rifle season by 7 days at the end of the season in these areas only. Rifle hunters had markedly less support (29%) than non-rifle hunters (46%) for this suggestion.

Muzzleloader Season

- Over half (55%) of deer hunters said they *typically* hunt deer during muzzleloader season (not to be confused with the 39% who *actually* hunted deer during muzzleloader season in 2013).
 - Western region hunters are the most likely to hunt during muzzleloader season (60% do this) and Mountains region hunters are the least likely (51%).

- In general, those who hunt deer during muzzleloader season are evenly divided regarding the importance of obtaining an antlerless deer tag during the lottery in muzzleloader season. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important, the mean rating is 5.36.
 - The mean rating of importance is highest in the Western region (6.00) and lowest in the Eastern region (4.78).
- Vermont deer hunters are also evenly divided over having an additional muzzleloader deer season that occurs prior to the November rifle season; 47% support the idea and 47% oppose it, with little regional variation.
 - Only 33% of permanent license holders support the idea.

As discussed earlier, 39% of Vermont deer hunters hunted deer during muzzleloader season in 2013. Crosstabulations were performed to observe differences in attitudes and opinions between those who hunted during muzzleloader season in 2013 (muzzleloader hunters) and those who hunted, but not during muzzleloader season in 2013 (non-muzzleloader hunters).

- In rating the importance of different factors to their general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, muzzleloader hunters gave higher mean ratings than non-muzzleloader hunters to “the amount of buck sign in the woods” (mean rating of 7.03 out of 10.00, compared to 6.66 from non-muzzleloader hunters), “harvesting a deer, regardless of age or sex” (5.83, compared to 5.41), and “harvesting more than one buck each year” (4.31, compared to 3.49).
- Of those who hunted deer during muzzleloader season in 2013, 96% said they *typically* hunt deer during muzzleloader season.
- In rating the importance of obtaining an antlerless deer tag during the lottery for muzzleloader season, muzzleloader hunters gave a mean rating of 5.67 out of 10.00, compared to the mean rating of 4.71 from non-muzzleloader hunters.

- Muzzleloader hunters are more likely to *strongly support* (37%) an additional muzzleloader season that occurs prior to the November rifle season, compared to 25% of non-muzzleloader hunters.

Antler-Point Restrictions

- Three-quarters (75%) of Vermont deer hunters support antler-point restrictions in the area where they most often hunt; 53% indicated *strong support*. There was little regional variation and little difference between permanent and non-permanent license holders.
- Vermont deer hunters expressed more opposition than support for the following strategies suggested as a way to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed. In order of percent opposed to the strategy, the results are:
 - Allowing the harvest of spike-antlered bucks during the muzzleloader season (59% of deer hunters statewide oppose this)
 - Providing a limited number of tags through a lottery by WMU that would allow the tag holder to harvest spike-antlered bucks in that WMU (54%)
 - Exempting older deer hunters, age 65 or older, from the restriction (53%)
 - Allowing the harvest of spike-antlered bucks during archery season (53%)
- Vermont deer hunters, if informed that the Department believed increasing the antler-point restriction was necessary to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the population, were more likely to support (53%) than oppose (41%) the change, even if it meant they might harvest fewer bucks. There was little regional variation.
 - Support was higher among non-permanent license holders (55%) than among permanent license holders (45%).
- Vermont deer hunters expressed more opposition than support for the following strategies suggested as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased. In order of percent opposed to the strategy, the results are:

- Allowing the harvest of spike-antlered bucks by any hunter in any season (61% of deer hunters statewide oppose this)
 - Allowing the harvest of any buck, including bucks that do not meet the antler-point restriction criteria, during the muzzleloader season (57%)
 - Providing a limited number of tags through a lottery by WMU that would allow the tag holder to harvest any buck, including bucks that do not meet the antler-point restriction criteria, in that WMU (53%)
 - Exempting older deer hunters, age 65 or older, from the restriction (50%)
 - Allowing the harvest of any buck, including bucks that do not meet the antler-point restriction criteria, during archery season (50%)
- If the Department was concerned about the potential long-term impacts of the current antler-point restriction in shifting harvest onto larger bucks and leaving smaller antlered bucks surviving to breed, Vermont deer hunters expressed more support for (55%) than opposition to (37%) changing the antler-point restriction. There was little regional variation.
- Vermont deer hunters were presented with four suggested changes to statewide bag limits. In order of support for the change, the results are:
- Reducing the annual firearm and muzzleloader bag limit statewide from 3 to 2 deer, 1 of which may be a buck (65% support this)
 - Reducing the annual firearm and muzzleloader bag limit statewide from 2 bucks to 1 (55%)
 - Reducing the overall annual bag limit statewide of antlered bucks from 2 to 1 for all seasons combined (52%)
 - Reducing the annual firearm and muzzleloader bag limit statewide from 3 to 1 deer (42%)

Managing the Buck Population

- Vermont deer hunters expressed overwhelming support (72%) for management efforts, regardless of the strategy or method used, to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the WMU or area they most often hunt deer. There was little regional variation.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked to rate how important a series of objectives should be to the Department for managing the buck populations, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. In descending order of the mean ratings, the results are (with little regional variation):
 - Managing the buck population for the opportunity to harvest any buck (6.88)
 - Managing the buck population for older age bucks (6.81)
 - Of those who rated the importance of managing the buck population for older bucks a 7 or higher, 45% said an older buck should be 3-1/2 years old, the most frequently selected choice.
 - Managing the buck population for having many antler points (6.16)
 - Of those who rated the importance of managing the buck population for having many antler points a 7 or higher, 53% said bucks should have 4 antler points, the most frequently selected choice.
 - Managing the buck population for heavyweight bucks (6.15)
 - Of those who rated the importance of managing the buck population for heavyweight bucks a 7 or higher, 45% said a heavyweight buck should be 175 pounds, the most frequently selected choice.

- Overall, buck management is personally important to Vermont deer hunters, who gave the issue a mean rating of 7.84 out of 10.00; 40% of respondents rated the importance of buck management a 10.
 - Deer hunters in the Eastern region gave a mean rating of 8.02, compared to 7.81 in the Mountains region and 7.61 in the Western region.

CHARACTERISTICS OF VERMONT DEER HUNTERS

- The highest percentage of Vermont deer hunters live in Chittenden County (13% of respondents live there), followed by Rutland County (11%) and Franklin County (10%).

- Vermont deer hunters are most likely to reside in a small city or town (35% live in this type of area) or a rural area not on a farm or ranch (32%), with little regional variation.

- The mean age of Vermont deer hunters is 49.90 years old, with little regional variation (note that only hunters age 16 or older were given the survey).

- The overwhelming majority (92%) of Vermont deer hunters are male, with little regional variation.

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (the Department) to determine hunters' opinions on and attitudes toward deer management strategies, specifically as they relate to hunting and harvest regulations. The study entailed a telephone survey of licensed hunters in Vermont, including both residents and nonresidents. This survey was conducted to assess hunters' attitudes toward hunting regulations and deer population dynamics, hunter satisfaction with hunting opportunities and deer management, and hunters' opinions on potential management alternatives.

The ultimate purpose of this project is to help the Department develop a comprehensive evaluation of deer hunting and harvest regulations, thereby assisting the Department in developing the most effective deer management strategies and hunting regulations to best meet the needs of its diverse constituents. Specific aspects of the research methodology are discussed below.

USE OF TELEPHONES FOR THE SURVEY

For the survey, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the almost universal ownership of telephones (both landlines and cell phones were called). Additionally, telephone surveys, relative to mail or Internet surveys, allow for more scientific sampling and data collection, provide higher quality data, obtain higher response rates, are more timely, and are more cost-effective. Telephone surveys also have fewer negative effects on the environment than do mail surveys because of reduced use of paper and reduced energy consumption for delivering and returning the questionnaires.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

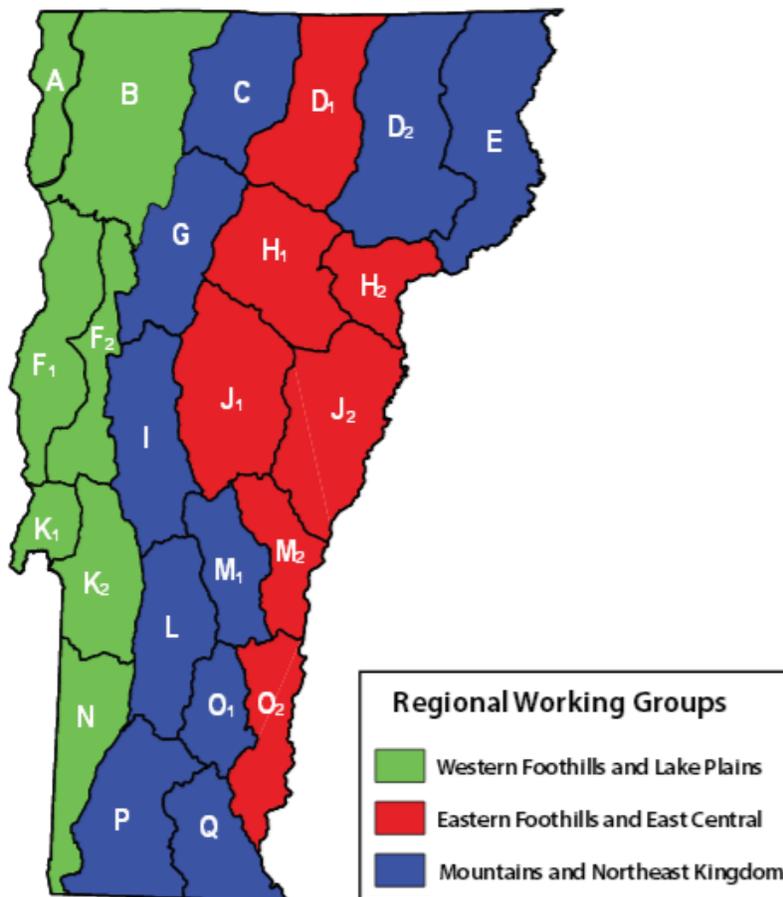
The telephone survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the Department, based on the research team's familiarity with outdoor recreation, wildlife, and hunting. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the questionnaire to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic in the survey.

SURVEY SAMPLE

The sample of licensed hunters in Vermont, residents and nonresidents age 16 and older, was provided by the Department. The following types of license holders were included in the survey (note that a nonresident permanent license is very rare and did not occur during this survey):

- Resident hunting
- Resident combination
- Resident permanent
- Nonresident hunting
- Nonresident combination

The scope and scale of this survey required analysis of the results to show representative data not only at the statewide level but also at the regional level. As part of its Comprehensive Deer Management Review Plan, the Department has divided the state into three regional working groups, as shown in the map below. These regional working groups represent the needs of 24 individual Wildlife Management Units (WMUs), which are denoted by the boundary lines in the map.



Initially, Responsive Management collected approximately 300 completed interviews using a random sample of all licensed Vermont deer hunters across the state and including nonresident deer hunters; this sample was not stratified in any way. This initial survey was conducted to provide an understanding of where deer hunters hunted in the state during 2013, as well as the proportions of deer hunters by license type, and to determine if stratification by geographic region or license type would be necessary to obtain adequate representation, particularly by region. The proportions of deer hunters by region in this random sample resulted in a generally even distribution of hunting participation among the three geographic regions in the state; therefore, it was not necessary to stratify the sample for the remainder of survey administration nor to weight results for this study.

A key element of this survey was to determine the WMU most often hunted by the respondent in 2013. In cases where respondents did not know the WMU, they were asked to name the county, town, and any identifying landmarks in the area they most often hunted. Responsive Management analysts used these additional responses to locate the appropriate WMU most often hunted by the respondent, when possible. This additional research and WMU categorization resulted in a reduction of the “Don’t know” response to just 3% of the total responses, which is acceptable for these analyses.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING FACILITIES

A central polling site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the interviews and data collection. Responsive Management maintains its own in-house telephone interviewing facilities. These facilities are staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subjects of outdoor recreation and natural resources.

To 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 a project briefing 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.

INTERVIEWING DATES AND TIMES

Telephone surveying times are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time. 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 survey was conducted in March 2014.

TELEPHONE SURVEY DATA COLLECTION AND QUALITY CONTROL

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language (QPL). The survey data were entered into the computer as each interview was being conducted, eliminating manual data entry after the completion of the survey and the concomitant data entry errors that may occur with manual data entry. The survey questionnaire was programmed so that QPL branched, coded, and substituted phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection.

The Survey Center Managers and statisticians monitored the data collection, including monitoring of the actual telephone interviews without the interviewers' knowledge, to evaluate the performance of each interviewer and ensure the integrity of the data. The survey questionnaire itself contains error checkers and computation statements to ensure quality and consistent data. After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness.

Responsive Management contacted 1,546 licensed hunters; those who did not hunt deer in 2013 were skipped out of the survey. Ultimately a total of 1,217 completed interviews with deer hunters were obtained, with the following regional distribution:

- Eastern Foothills and East Central, n = 398 (hereafter referred to as the Eastern region)
- Mountains and Northeast Kingdom, n = 417 (hereafter referred to as the Mountains region)
- Western Foothills and Lake Plains, n = 370 (hereafter referred to as the Western region)

The regional totals do not add up to 1,217 because 3% of the responses could not be geographically located by the region/WMU most often hunted by the respondent. The total sample size on some questions is less than 1,217 because the survey asked some questions only of specific respondents in the survey. In particular, this was done when a follow-up question did not apply to some respondents. For instance, only those who hunted deer on private land were asked follow-up questions related to deer hunting on private land.

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management. As previously discussed, it was not necessary to weight the results to obtain adequate representation by region.

On questions that asked respondents to provide a number (e.g., number of days hunted), the graph shows ranges of numbers rather than the precise numbers. Nonetheless, in the survey each respondent provided a precise number, and the dataset includes this precise number, even if the graph only shows ranges of numbers. Note that the calculation of means and medians used the precise numbers that the respondents provided.

Crosstabulations were run on many questions, including crosstabulations by region. Other crosstabulations were run, as appropriate, as part of the analysis. These crosstabulations are indicated on the graphs and include license type and resident/nonresident comparisons.

The Department was interested in evaluating certain towns that are not typical of the geographic regions in which they are located; the towns that differ are Enosburg, Bakersfield, Waterville,

Cambridge, Underhill, and Jericho. However, only 29 of the 1,217 respondents identified these locations during the survey. Because the sampling error would be 18% for any crosstabulations performed for this subgroup, this analysis could not be conducted.

SAMPLING ERROR

Throughout this report, findings of the telephone survey are reported at a 95% confidence interval. For the entire sample of 1,546, the sampling error is at most plus or minus 2.47 percentage points. This means that if the survey were conducted 100 times on different samples that were selected in the same way, the findings of 95 out of the 100 surveys would fall within plus or minus 2.47 percentage points of each other. Sampling error was calculated using the formula described below, with a sample size of 1,546 and a licensed hunter population size of 81,652.

Sampling Error Equation

$$B = \left(\sqrt{\frac{N_p(.25) - .25}{N_s}} \right) (1.96)$$

Where: B = maximum sampling error (as decimal)
 N_p = population size (i.e., total number who could be surveyed)
 N_s = sample size (i.e., total number of respondents surveyed)

Derived from formula: p. 206 in Dillman, D. A. 2000. *Mail and Internet Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, NY.

Note: This is a simplified version of the formula that calculates the maximum sampling error using a 50:50 split (the most conservative calculation because a 50:50 split would give maximum variation).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRESENTATION OF RESULTS IN THE REPORT

In examining the results, it is important to be aware that the questionnaire included several types of questions:

- Open-ended questions are those in which no answer set is read to the respondents; rather, they can respond with anything that comes to mind from the question.
- Closed-ended questions have an answer set from which to choose.
- Single or multiple response questions: Some questions allow only a single response, while other questions allow respondents to give more than one response or choose all that apply. Those that allow more than a single response are indicated on the graphs with the label, “Multiple Responses Allowed.”
- Scaled questions: Many closed-ended questions (but not all) are in a scale, such as excellent-good-fair-poor.
- Series questions: Many questions are part of a series, and the results are primarily intended to be examined relative to the other questions in that series (although results of the questions individually can also be valuable). Typically, results of all questions in a series are shown together.

Some graphs show an average, either the mean or median (or both). The mean is simply the sum of all numbers divided by the number of respondents. Because outliers (extremely high or low numbers relative to most of the other responses) may skew the mean, the median may be shown. The median is the number at which half the sample is above and the other half is below. In other words, a median of 60 means that half the sample gave an answer of more than 60 and the other half gave an answer of less than 60.

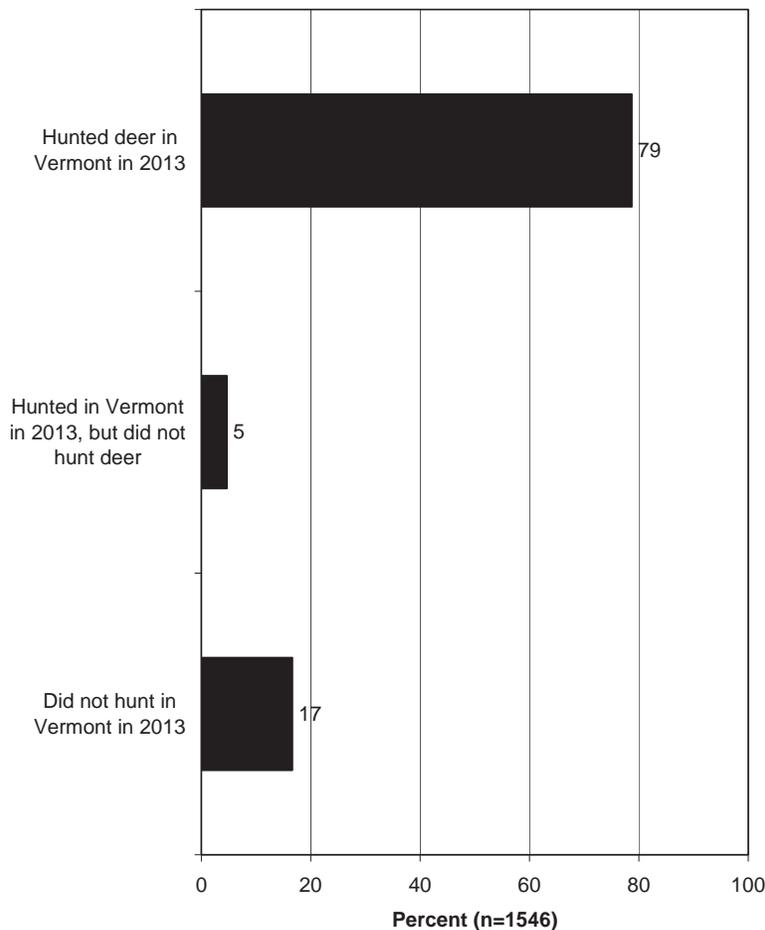
Most graphs show results rounded to the nearest integer; however, all data are stored in decimal format, and all calculations are performed on unrounded numbers. For this reason, some results may not sum to exactly 100% because of this rounding on the graphs. Additionally, rounding may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when “strongly support” and “moderately support” are summed to determine the total percentage in support).

DEER HUNTING PARTICIPATION

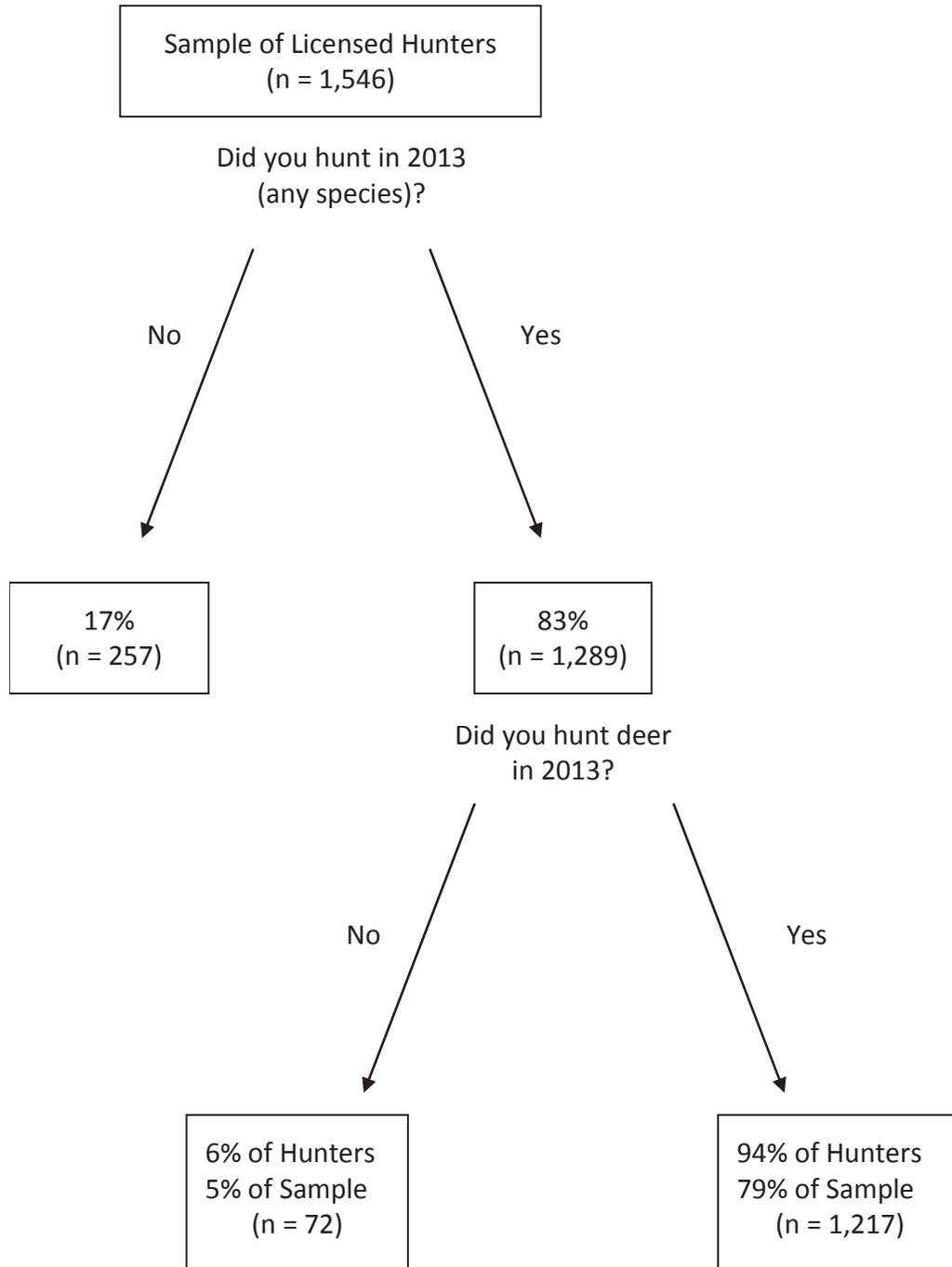
This section discusses the portions of the survey related to hunters' participation in and satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont during 2013. Throughout this report, survey responses will be presented on a statewide basis (single-bar graphs) followed by a regional basis (3-bar graphs). Crosstabulations by license type or resident/nonresident status have been included on certain questions.

To determine eligibility for this survey, Responsive Management contacted 1,546 licensed hunters in Vermont; only those who hunted deer in Vermont during 2013 were given the complete survey. As shown below, 79% of those contacted had hunted deer in 2013.

Survey eligibility among licensed hunters.

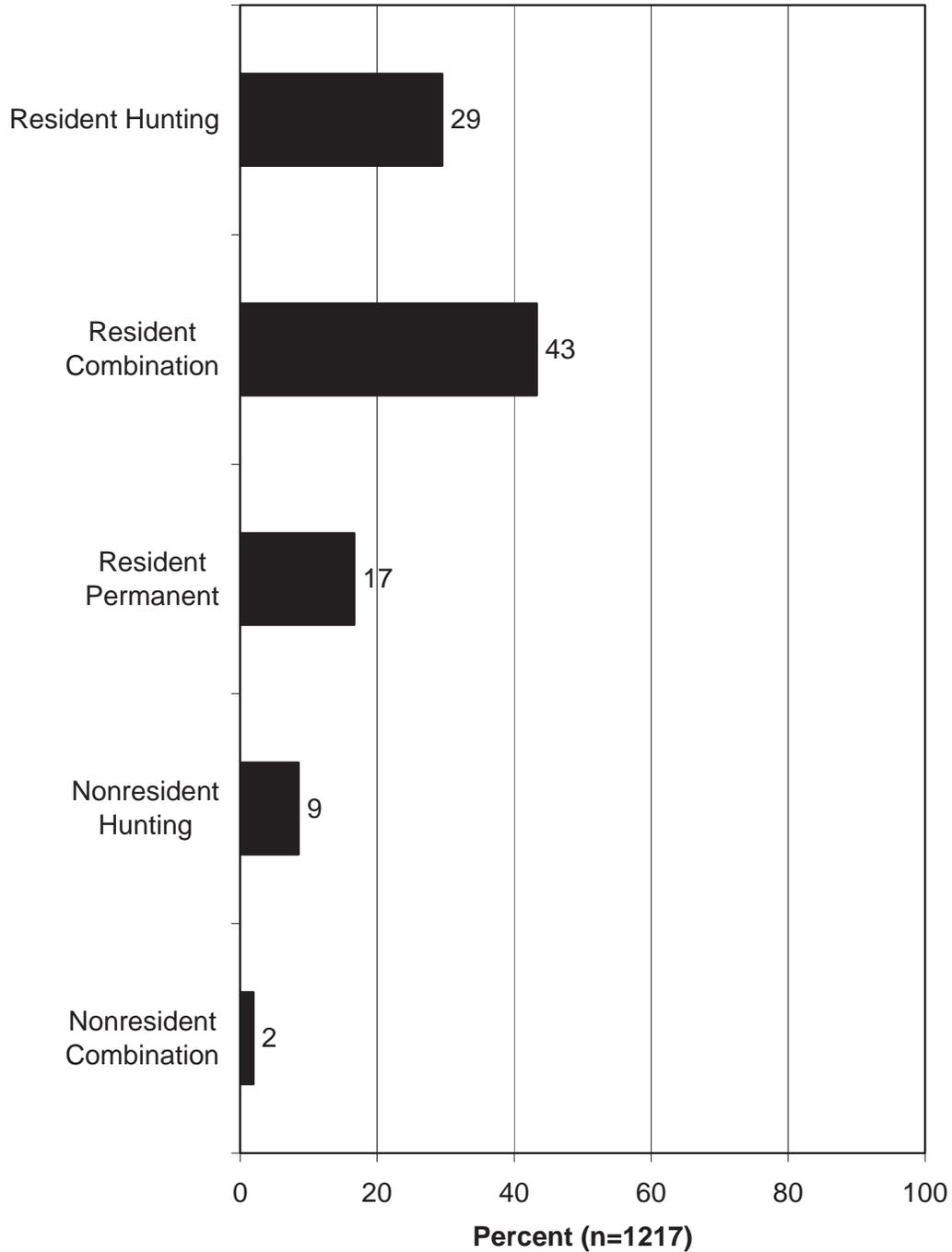


The schematic below shows another way of looking at this.

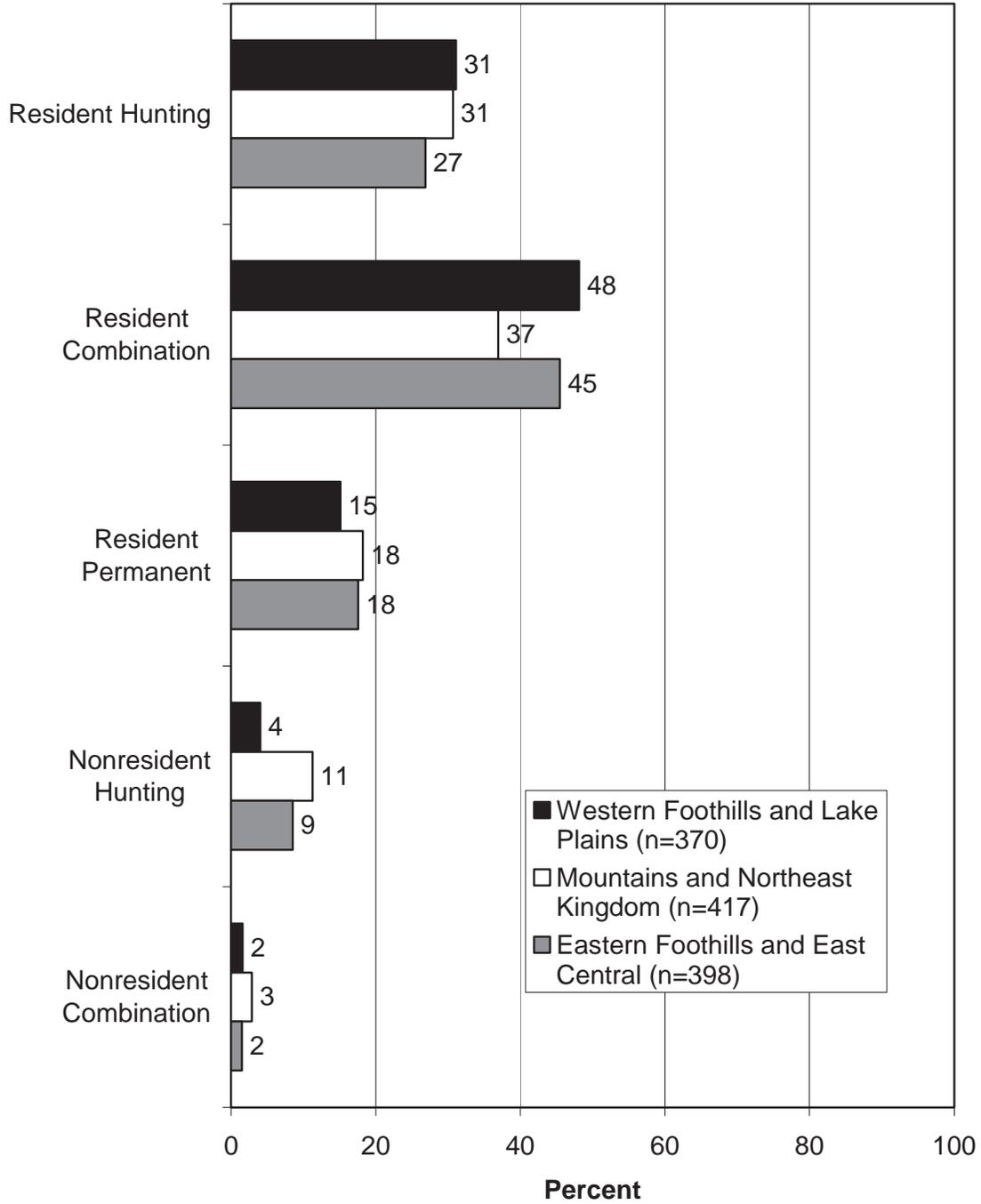


The graphs below and on the next page show that resident combination licenses are the most common type, both statewide and within each region.

Q4. License type.



Q4. License type.

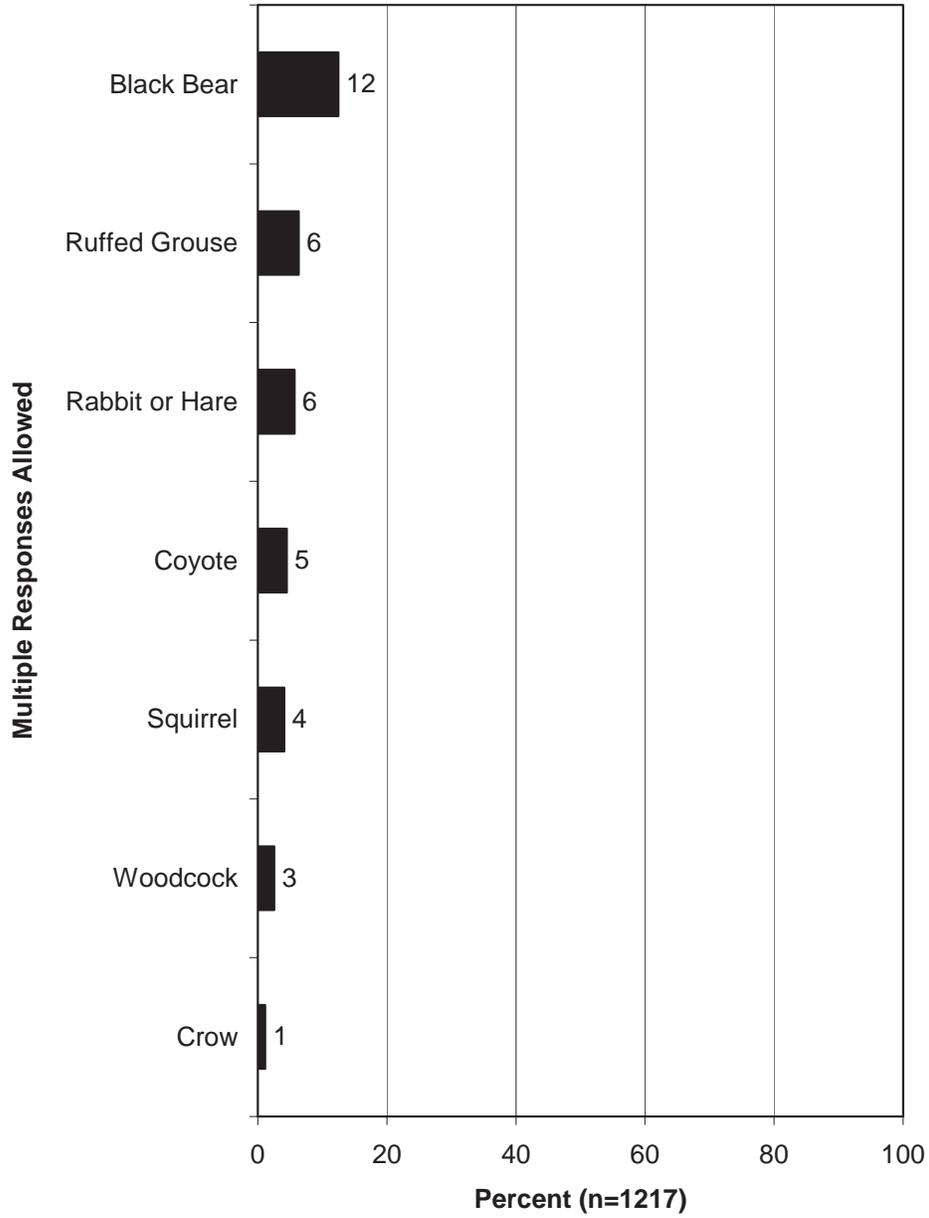


Survey questions regarding deer hunting participation revealed the following:

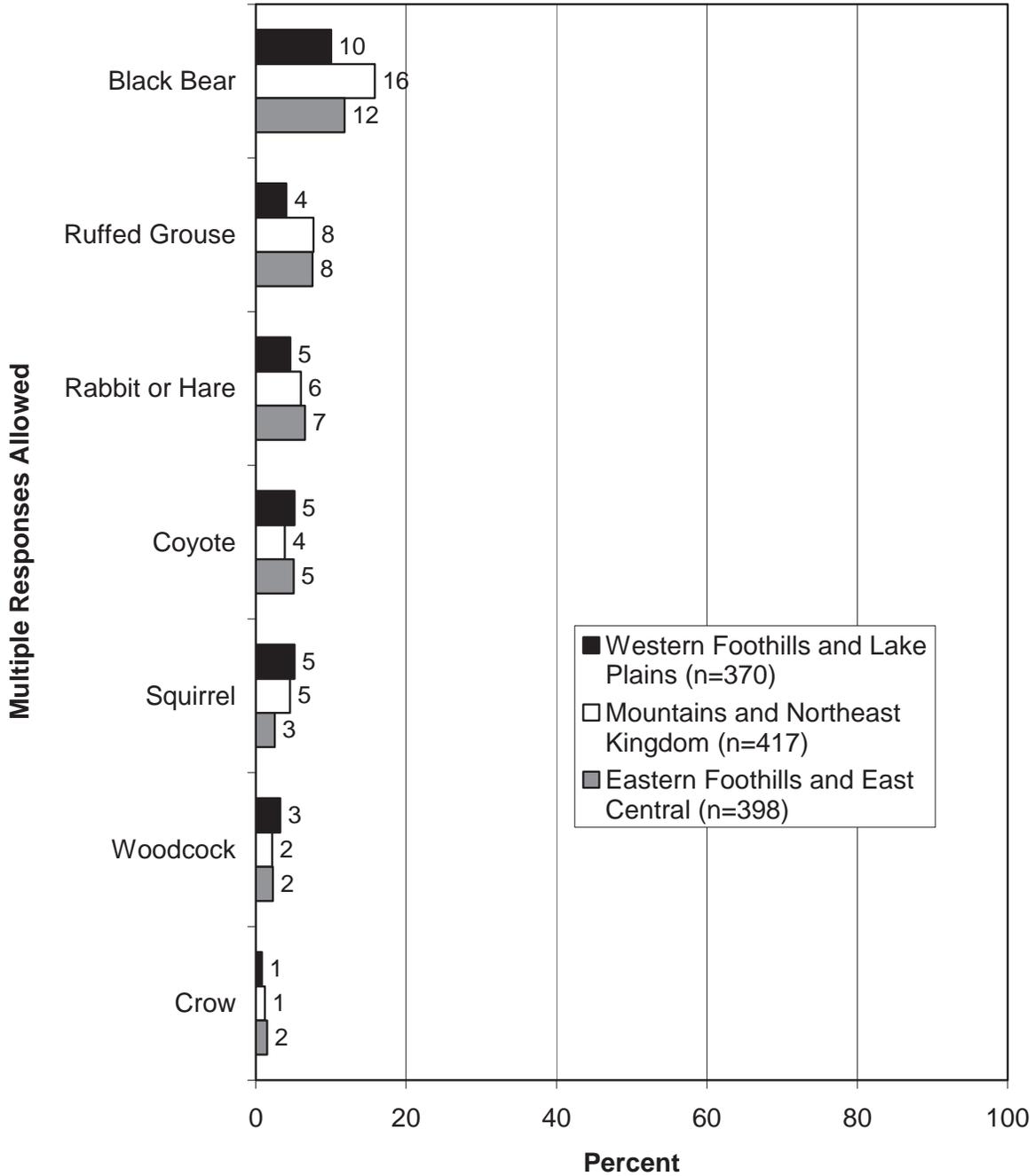
- Aside from deer, Vermont deer hunters most often hunted black bear (12% of deer hunters did this), ruffed grouse (6%), and rabbit/hare (6%). These percentages are comparable within each of the three regions.
- Vermont deer hunters hunted a total of 11.4 mean days in 2013.
 - The Mountains region showed a slightly higher average of 12.0 days per hunter.
 - Deer hunters with a resident combination license hunted the most days in 2013, with an average of 13.2 days per hunter, followed by resident hunting license holders (11.0 days), resident permanent license holders (9.9 days), and non-resident hunters (7.6 days).
- An overwhelming majority of deer hunters hunted during rifle season (95%), followed by muzzleloader season (39%) and archery season (30%), with little regional variation.
 - A substantially higher percentage of Vermont deer hunters who are residents (42%) hunted deer during muzzleloader season than did nonresidents (16%).
 - A markedly higher percentage of Vermont deer hunters who are residents (31%) hunted deer during archery season than did nonresidents (20%).
- In all, 19% of deer hunters harvested a deer in 2013.
 - Hunters in the Western region most often harvested a deer (22% did), followed by the Eastern region (21%) and the Mountains region (15%).
 - Deer hunters with a resident combination license most often harvested a deer (23% did), followed by resident hunting license holders (17%), resident permanent license holders (15%), and non-resident hunters (13%).
- About half (49%) of respondents hunted on private land only, while 14% hunted on public land only and 37% hunted on both public and private land.
 - The Mountains region had a slightly higher percentage who hunted on public land only (18%).

- Of those who hunted deer on private land only, 59% hunted with permission on private land that was posted as closed to hunting.
- Of the 14 counties in Vermont, deer hunters most often hunted in Rutland County in 2013 (10% of deer hunters hunted in this county).
- There was a nearly even distribution among the regions most often hunted by residents of Vermont in 2013; however, nonresidents most often hunted deer in the Mountains region (46% hunted there), while only 16% of nonresidents most often hunted in the Western region.
- About one-quarter (24%) of Vermont deer hunters also hunted deer in another state, with little regional variation.
 - Of those who hunted deer outside of Vermont, respondents most often gave the reason that there was a lack of deer in Vermont or better hunting elsewhere (32% stated this as the reason for hunting outside the state). Deer hunters in the Mountains region who hunted outside the state most often gave the reason that they live or own land in another state (31%).

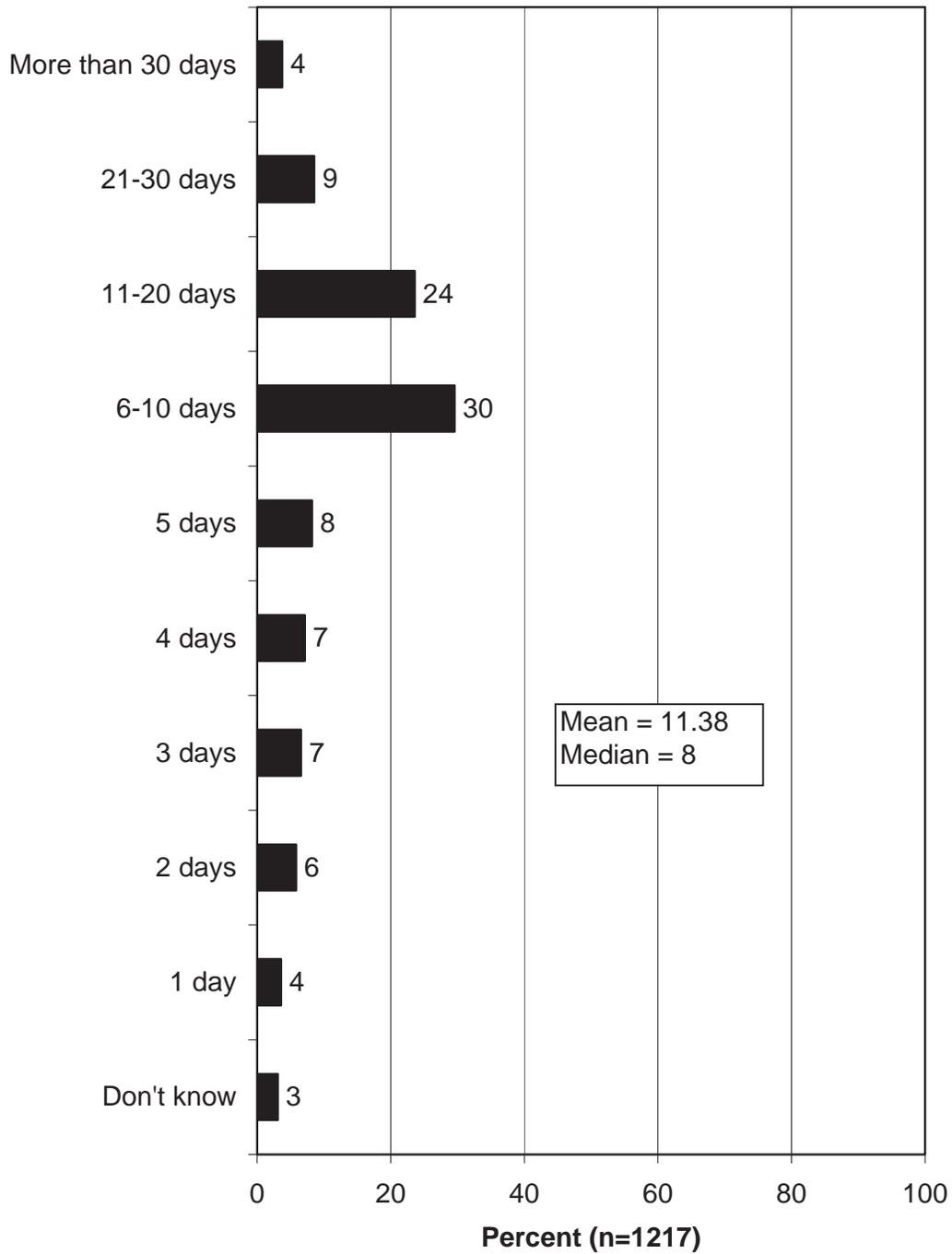
Q14. Which of the following species did you hunt in Vermont in 2013?



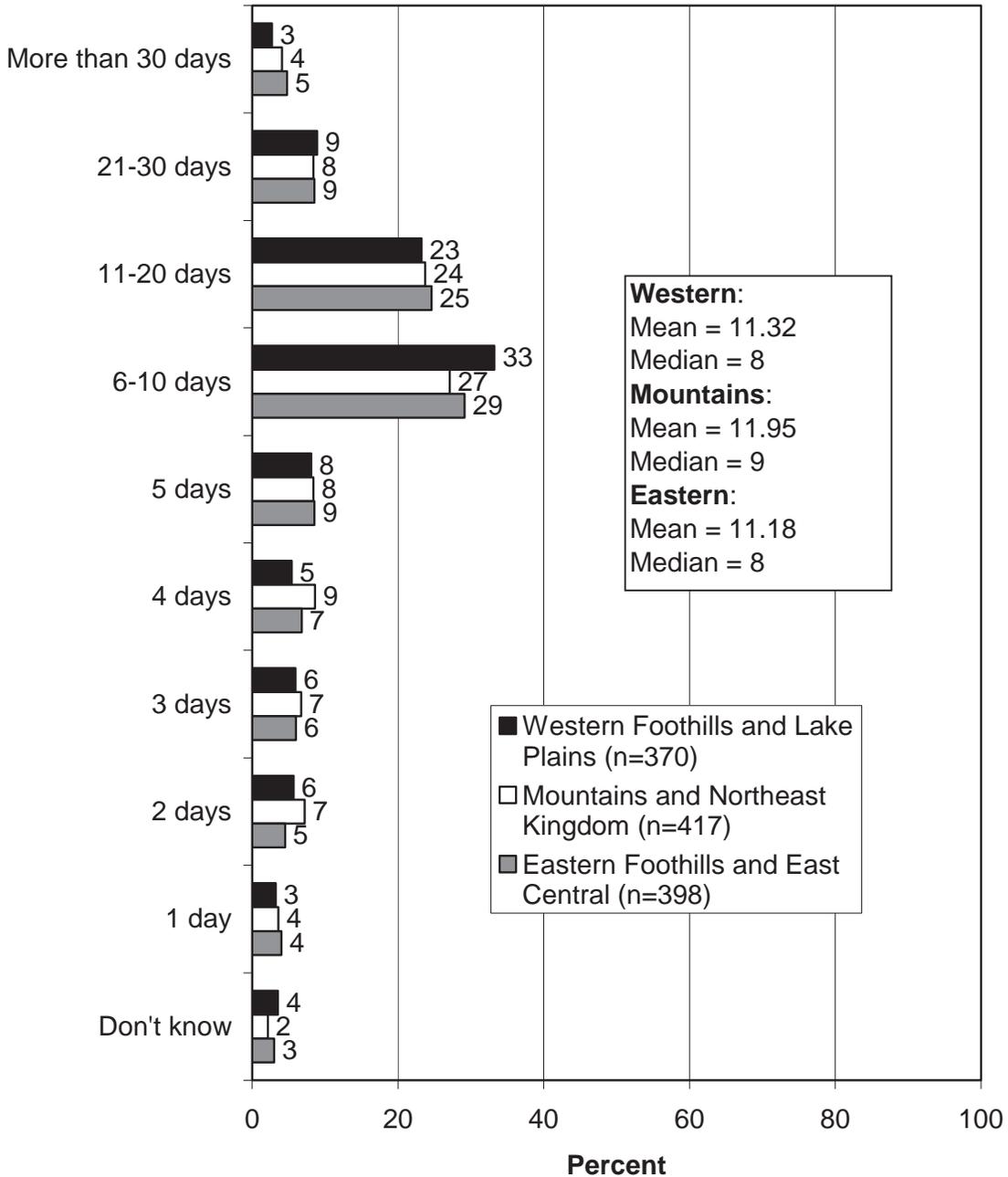
Q14. Which of the following species did you hunt in Vermont in 2013?



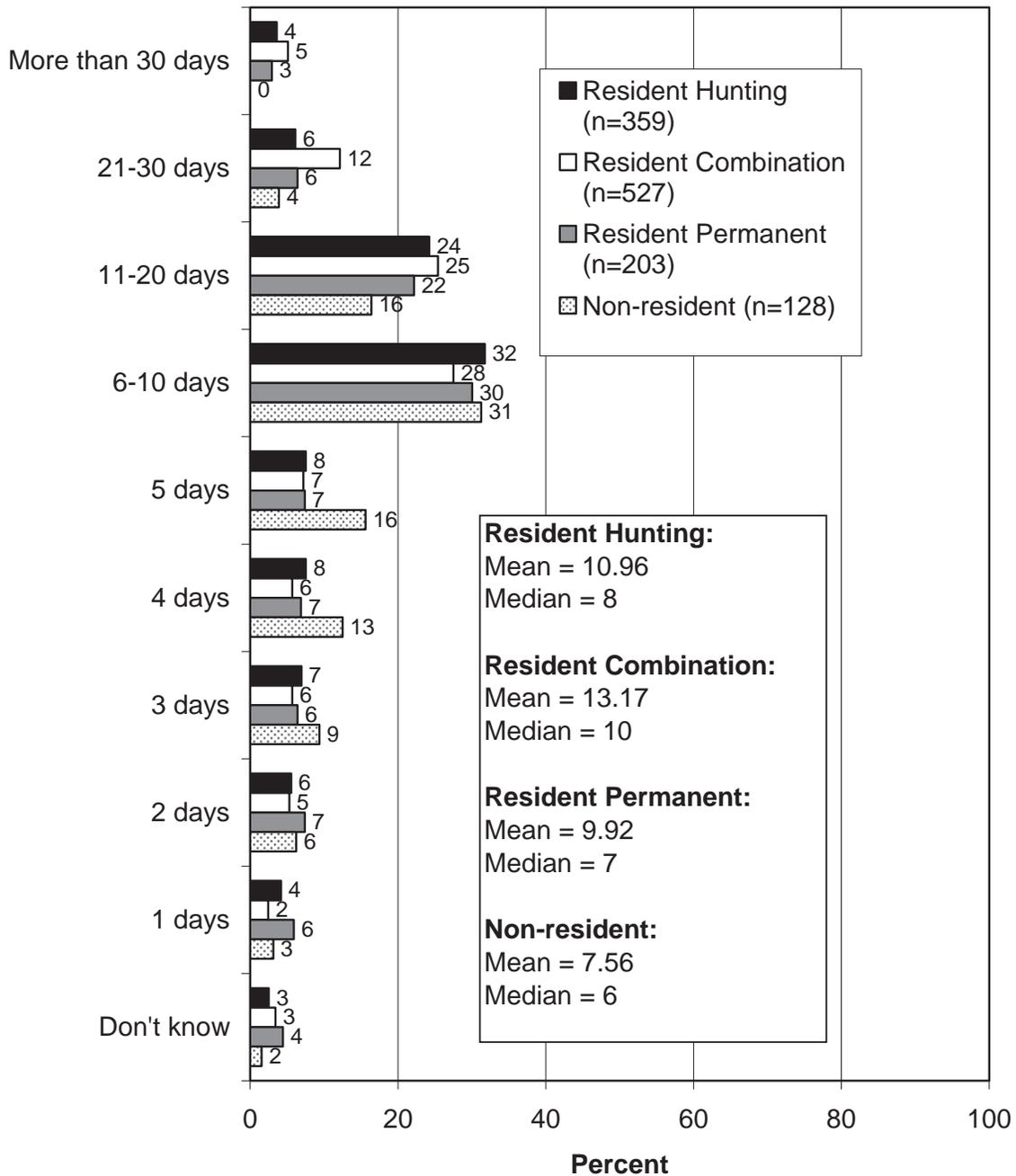
Q18. Approximately how many days total did you hunt deer in Vermont in 2013?



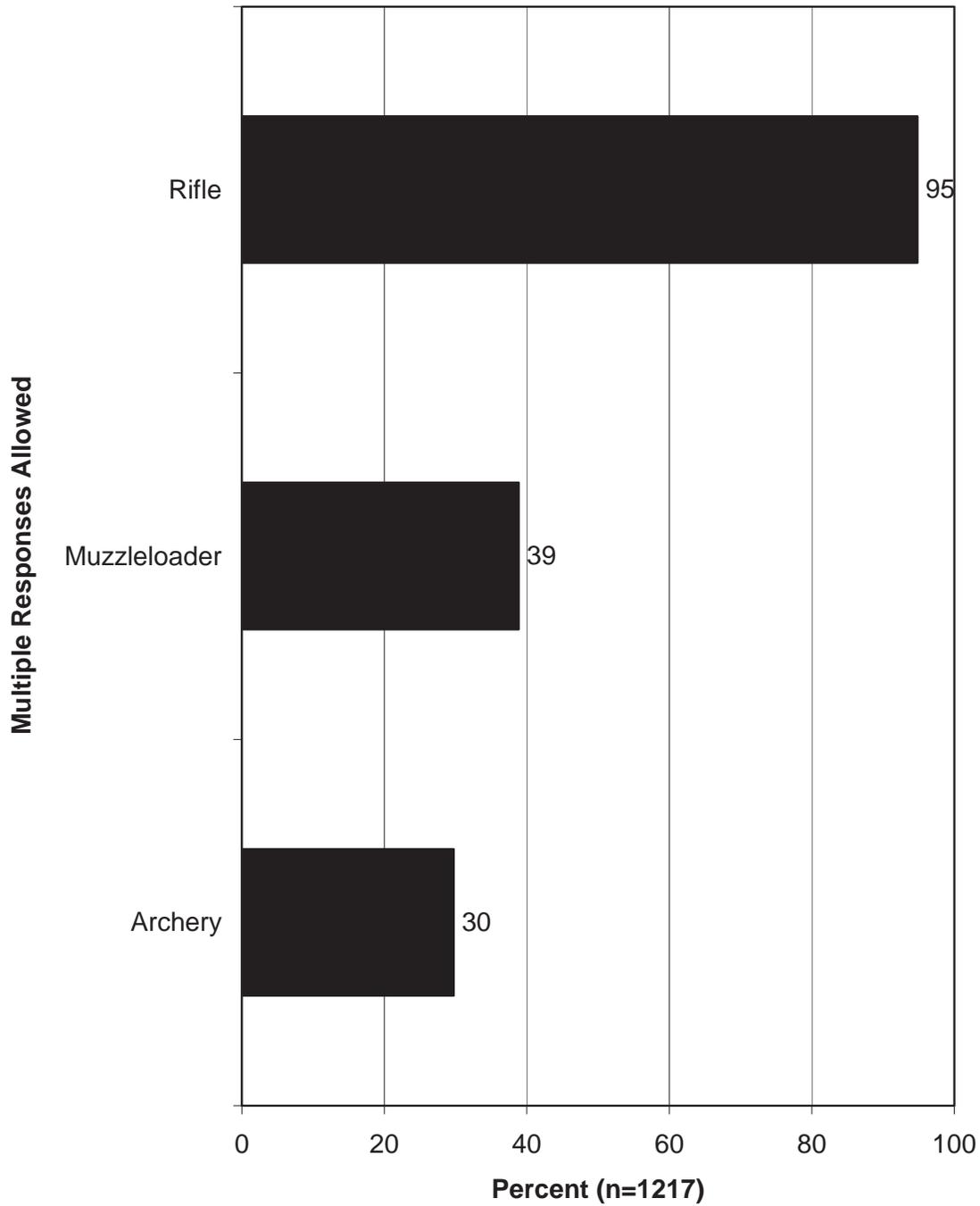
Q18. Approximately how many days total did you hunt deer in Vermont in 2013?



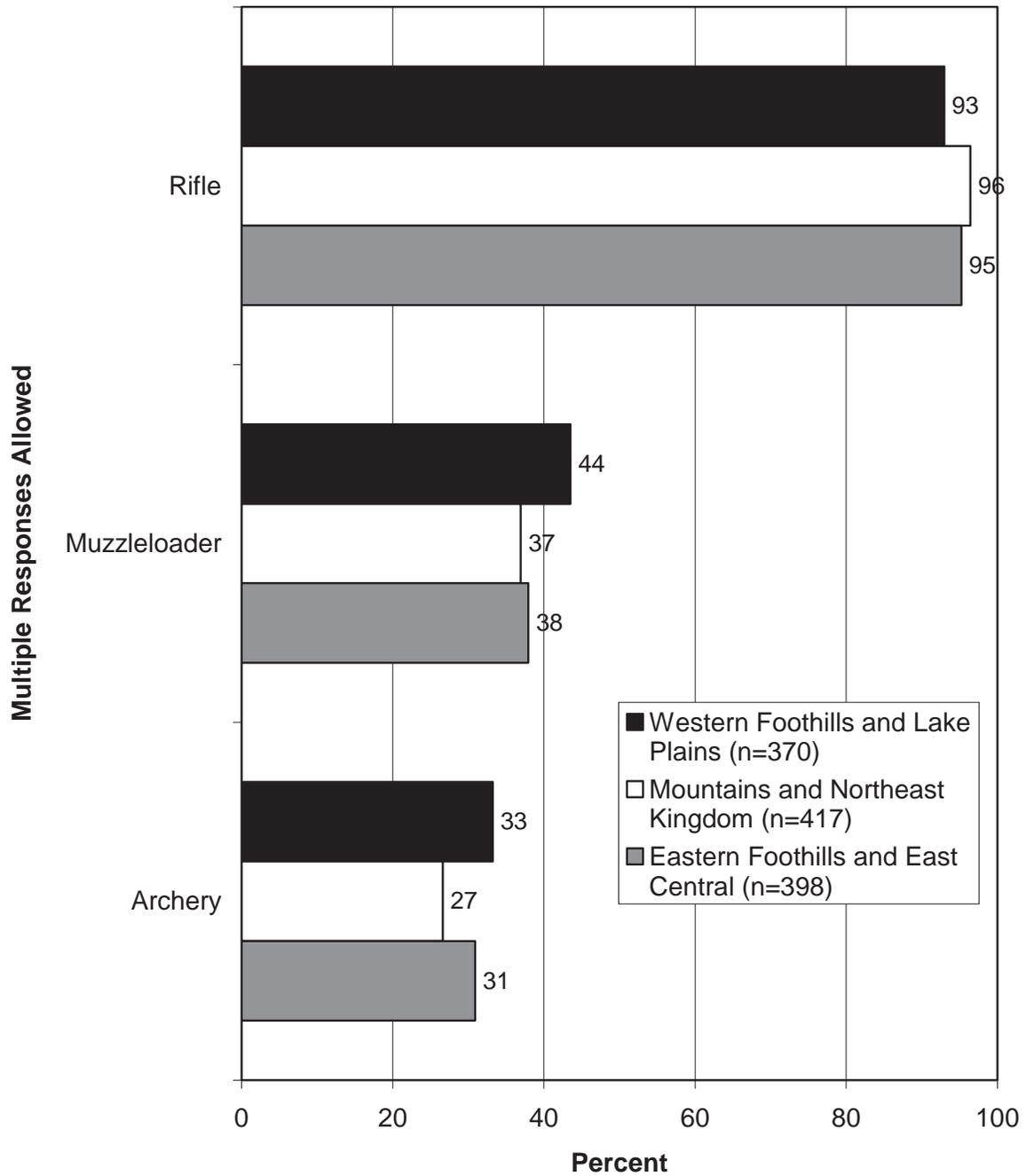
Q18. Approximately how many days total did you hunt deer in Vermont in 2013?



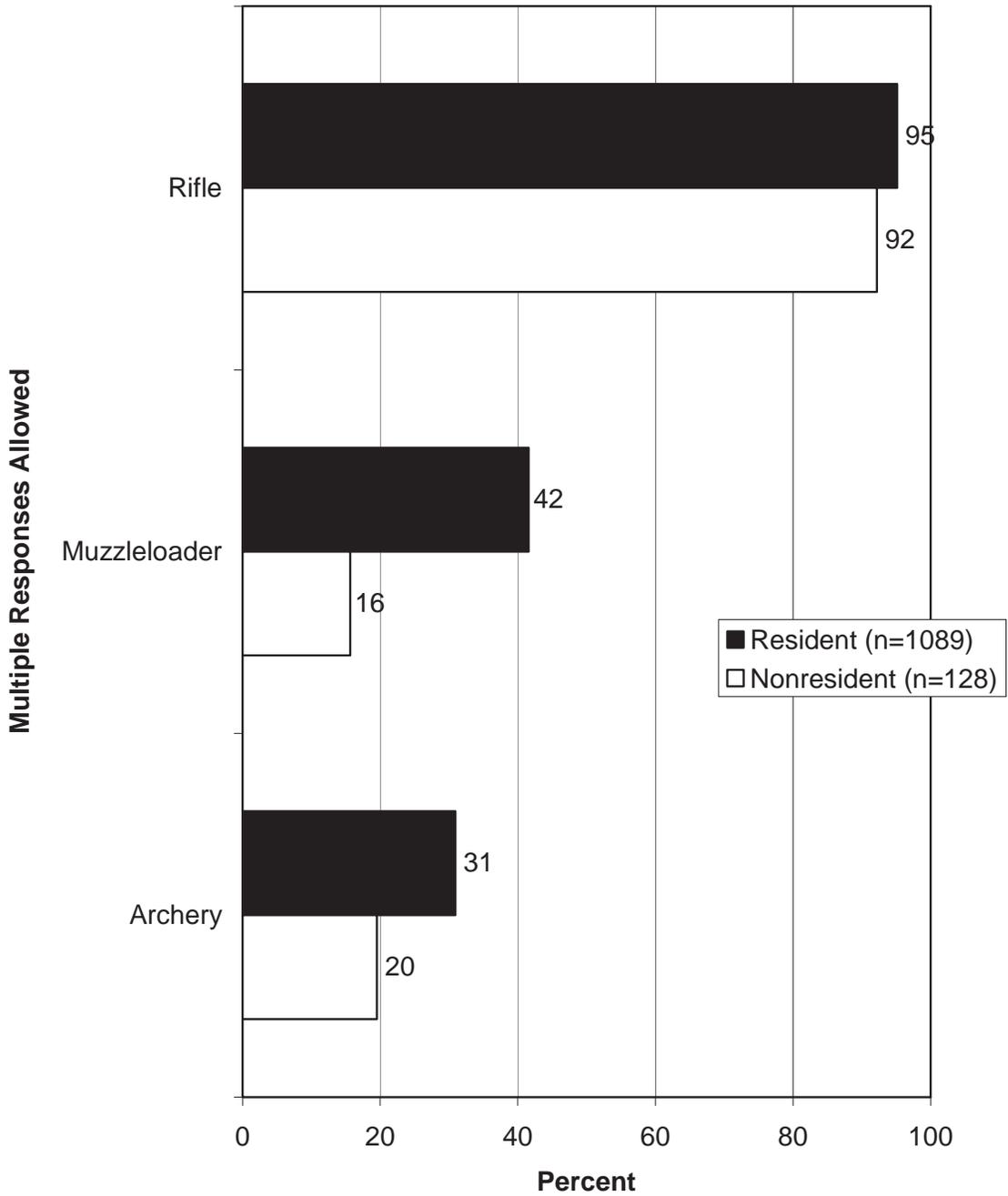
Q23. During which of the following deer seasons did you hunt deer in Vermont in 2013?



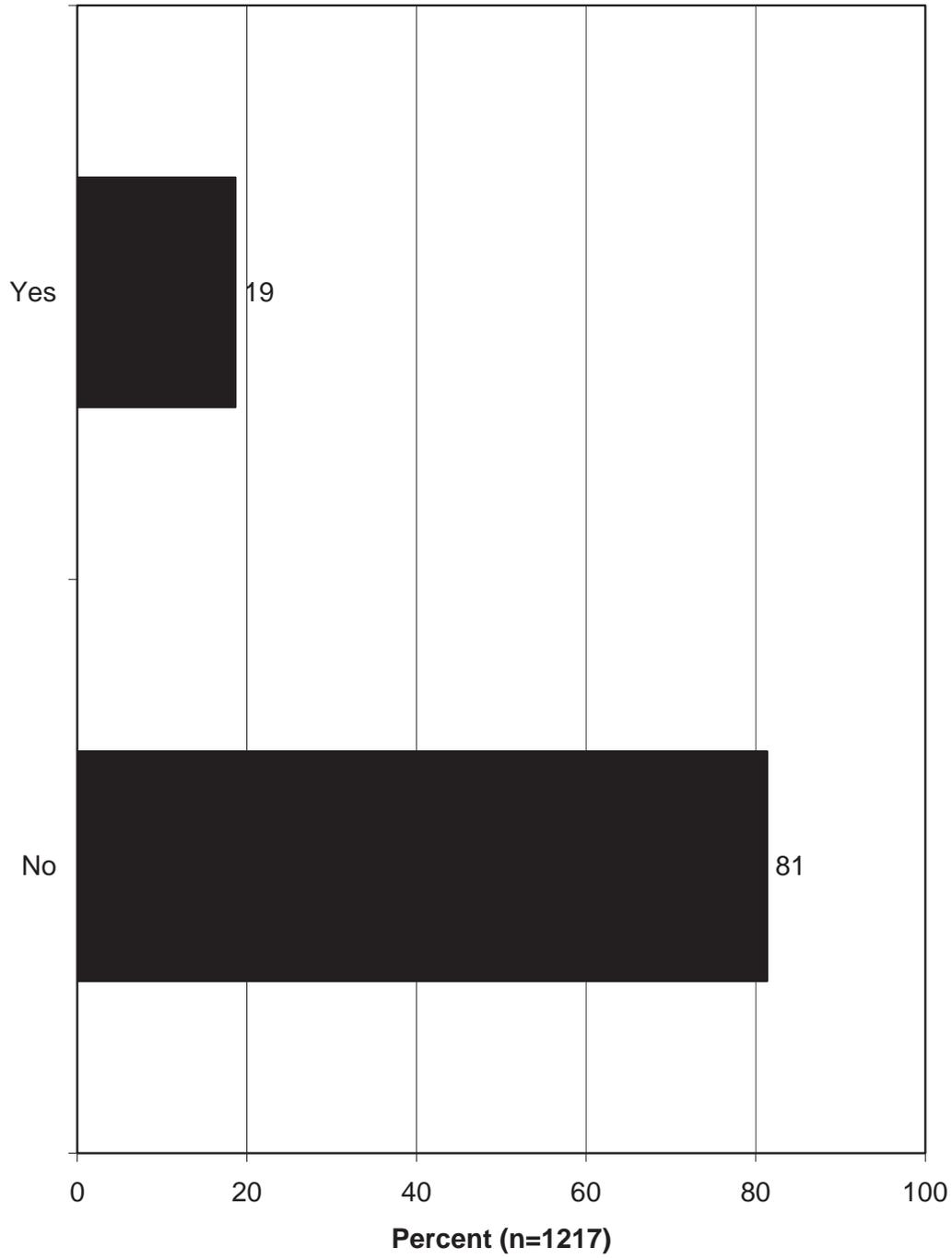
Q23. During which of the following deer seasons did you hunt deer in Vermont in 2013?



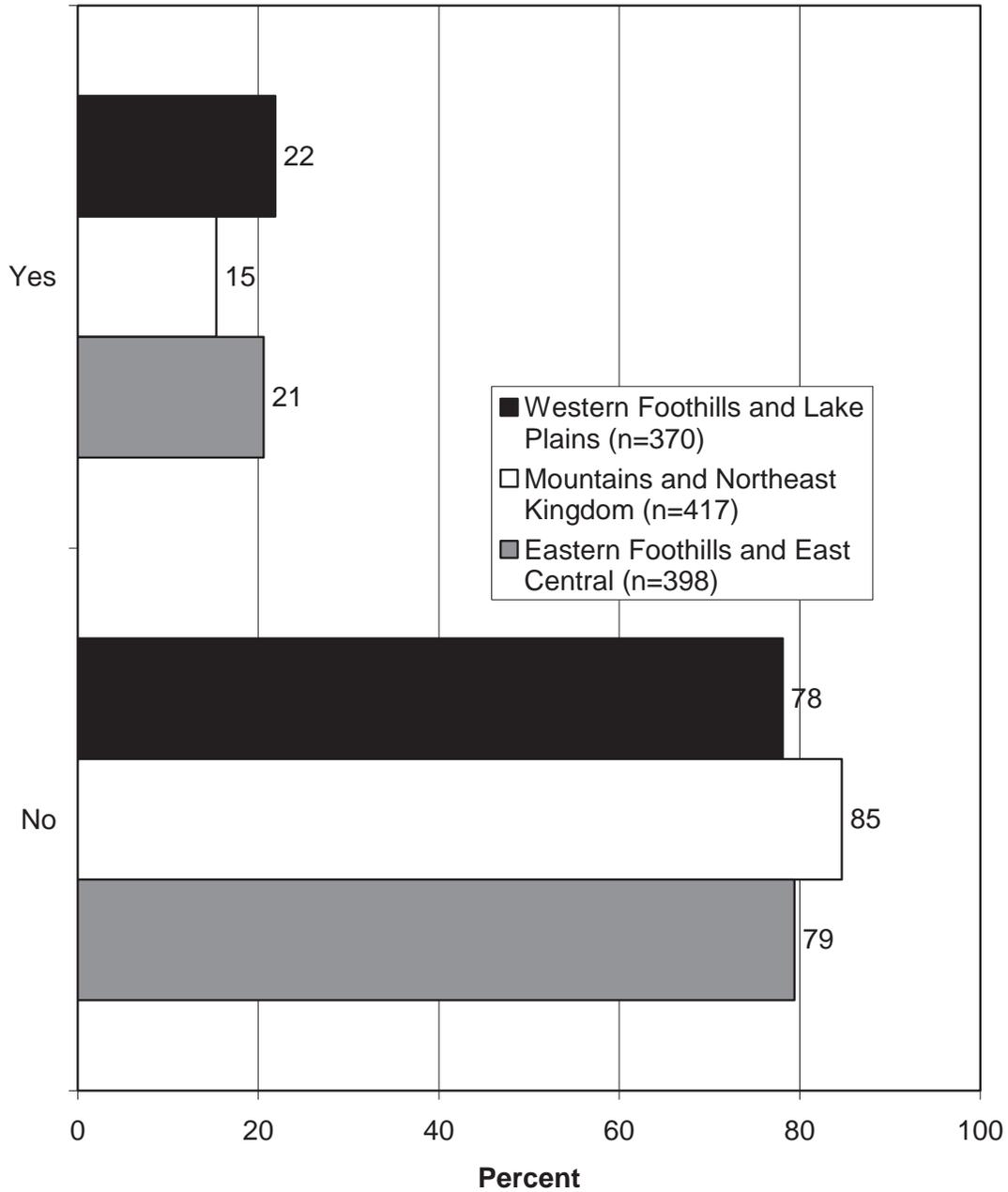
Q23. During which of the following deer seasons did you hunt deer in Vermont in 2013?



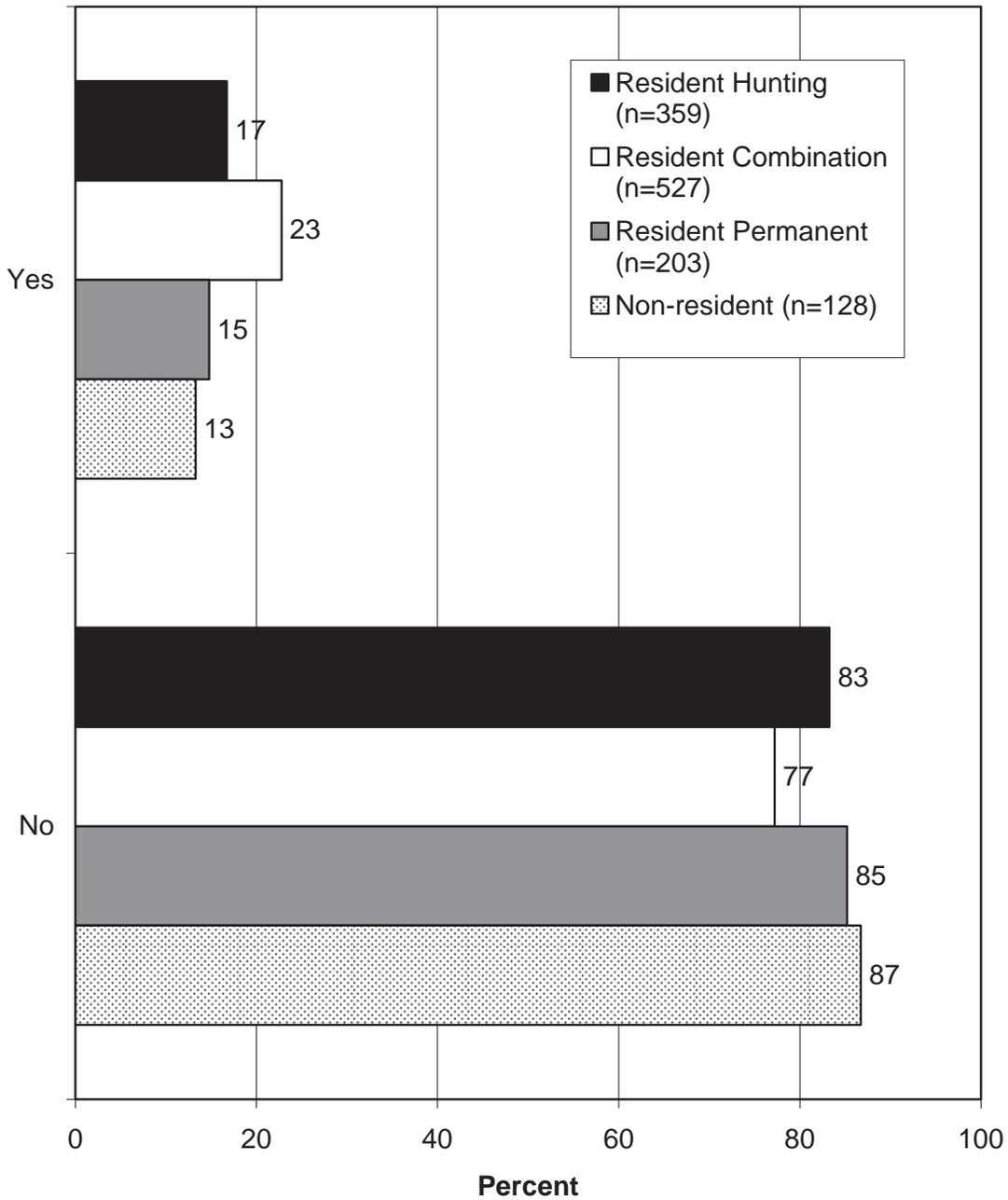
Q24. Did you harvest a deer during any deer season in Vermont in 2013?



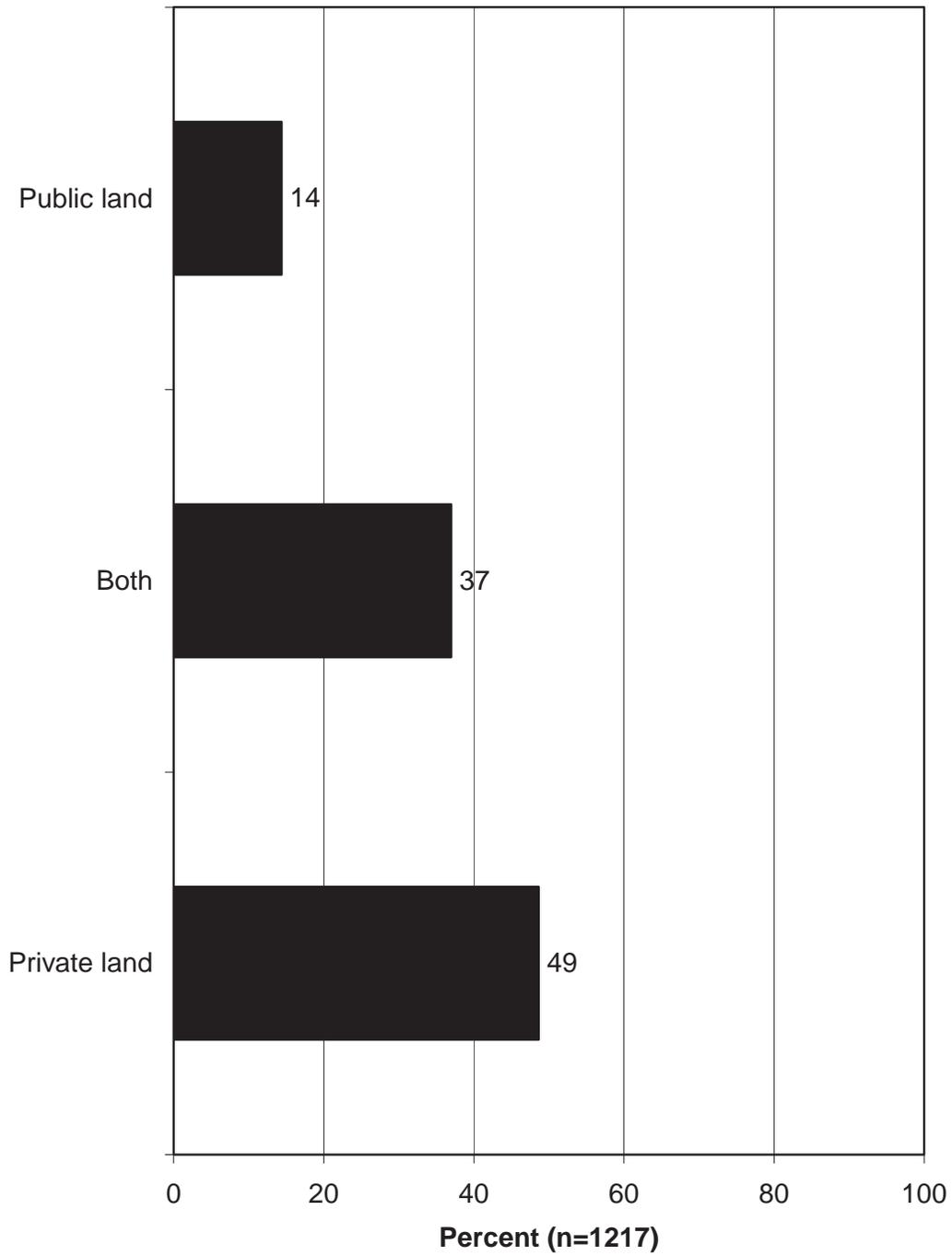
Q24. Did you harvest a deer during any deer season in Vermont in 2013?



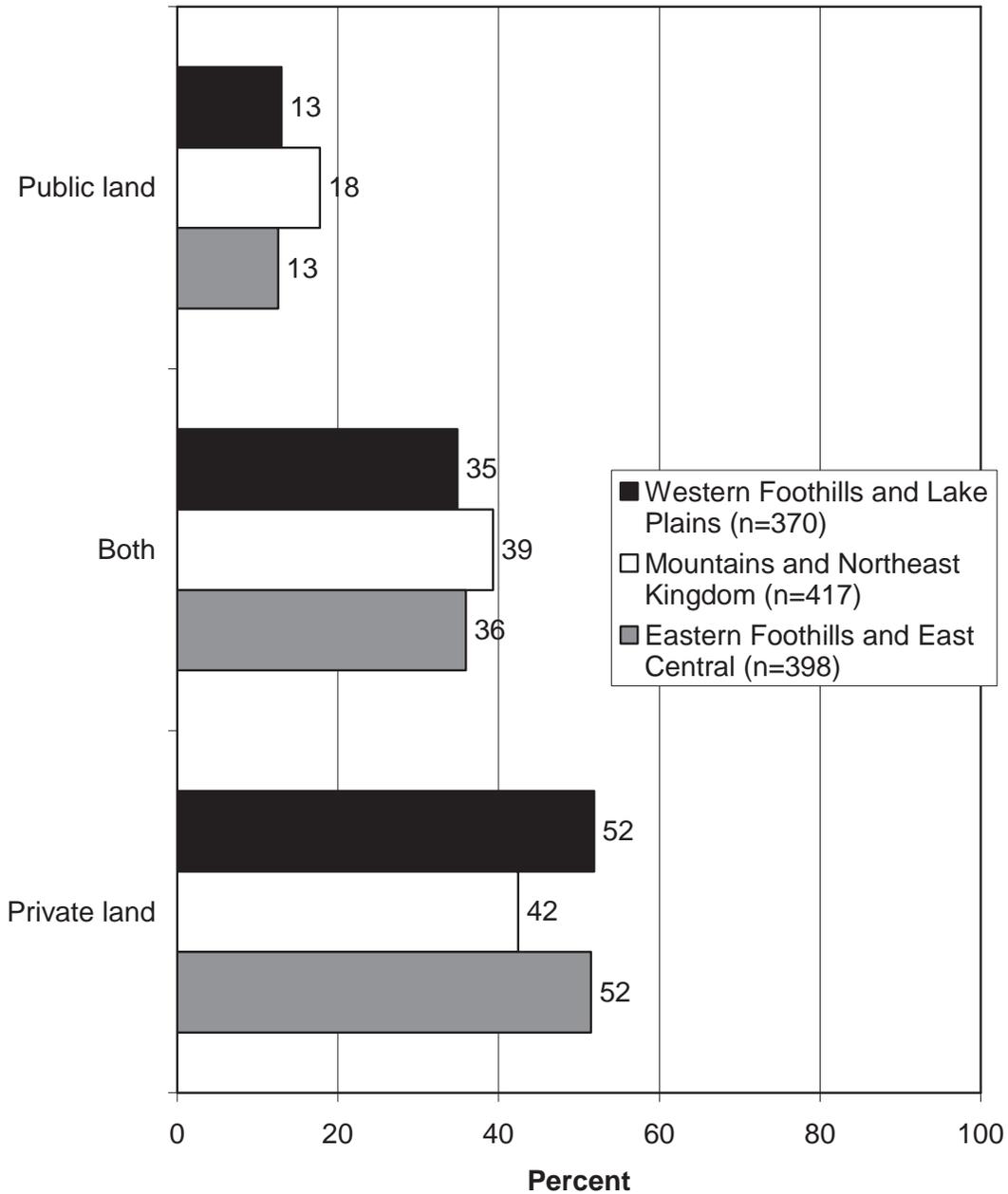
Q24. Did you harvest a deer during any deer season in Vermont in 2013?



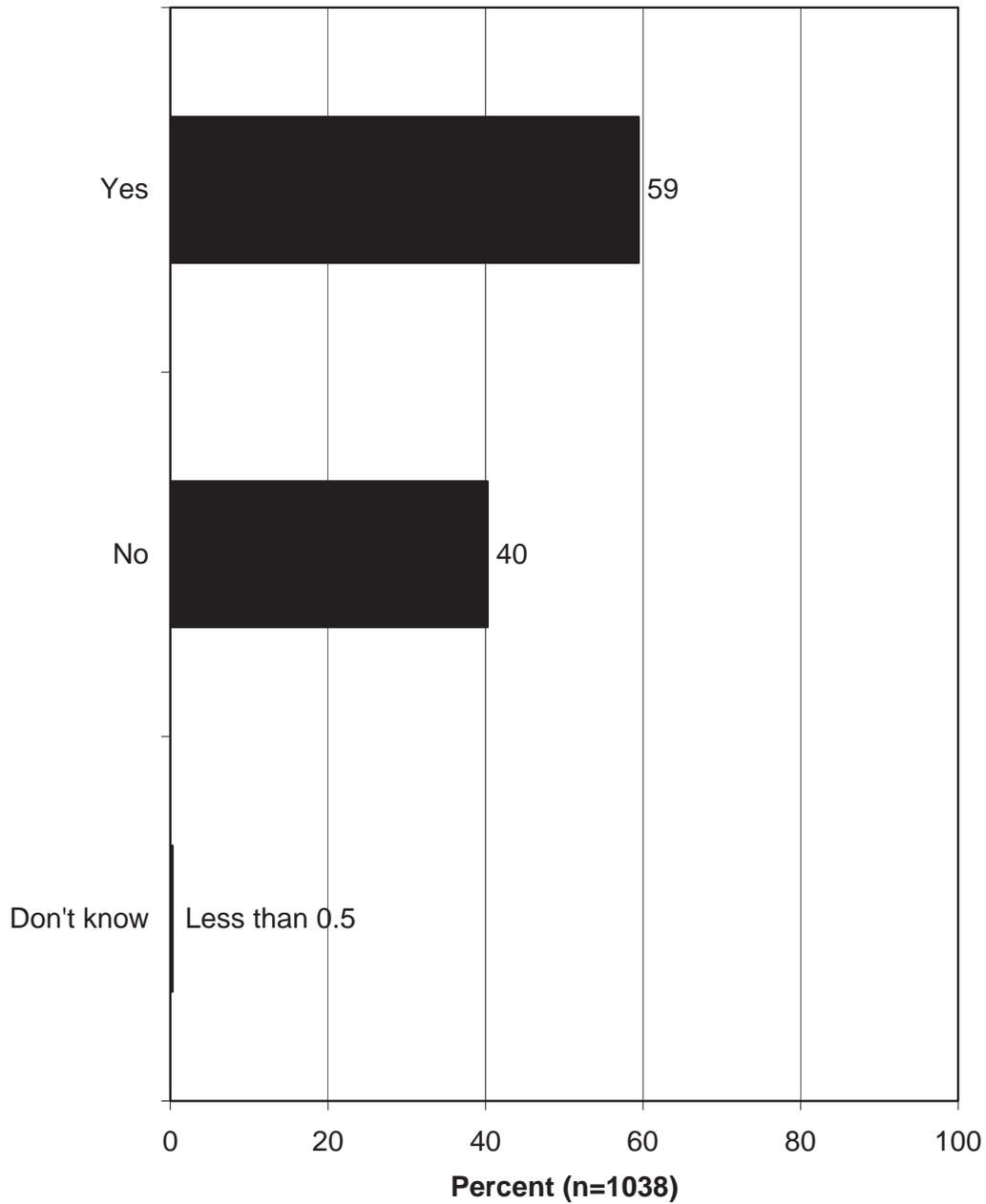
Q25. Did you hunt deer on public land, private land, or both?



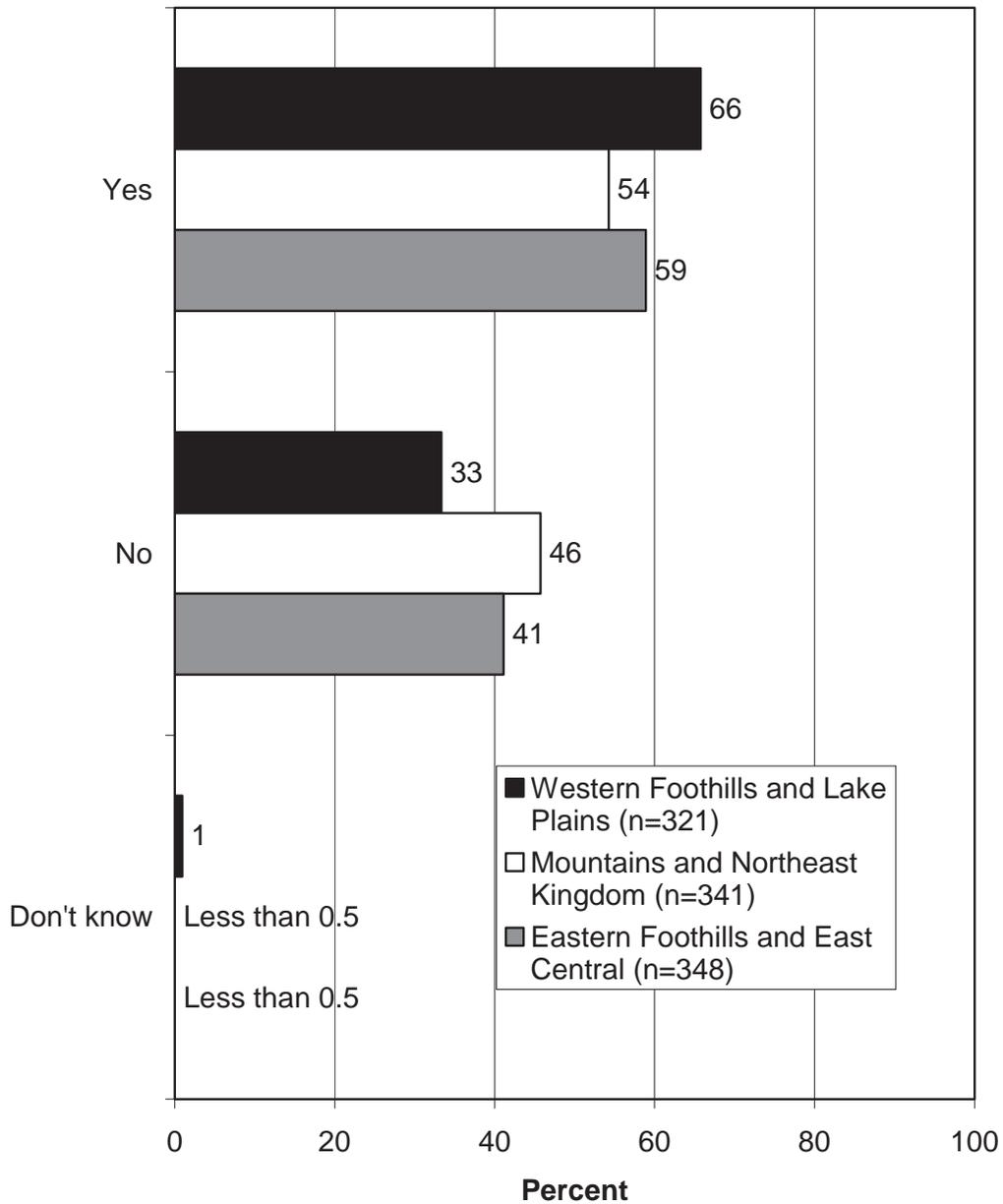
Q25. Did you hunt deer on public land, private land, or both?



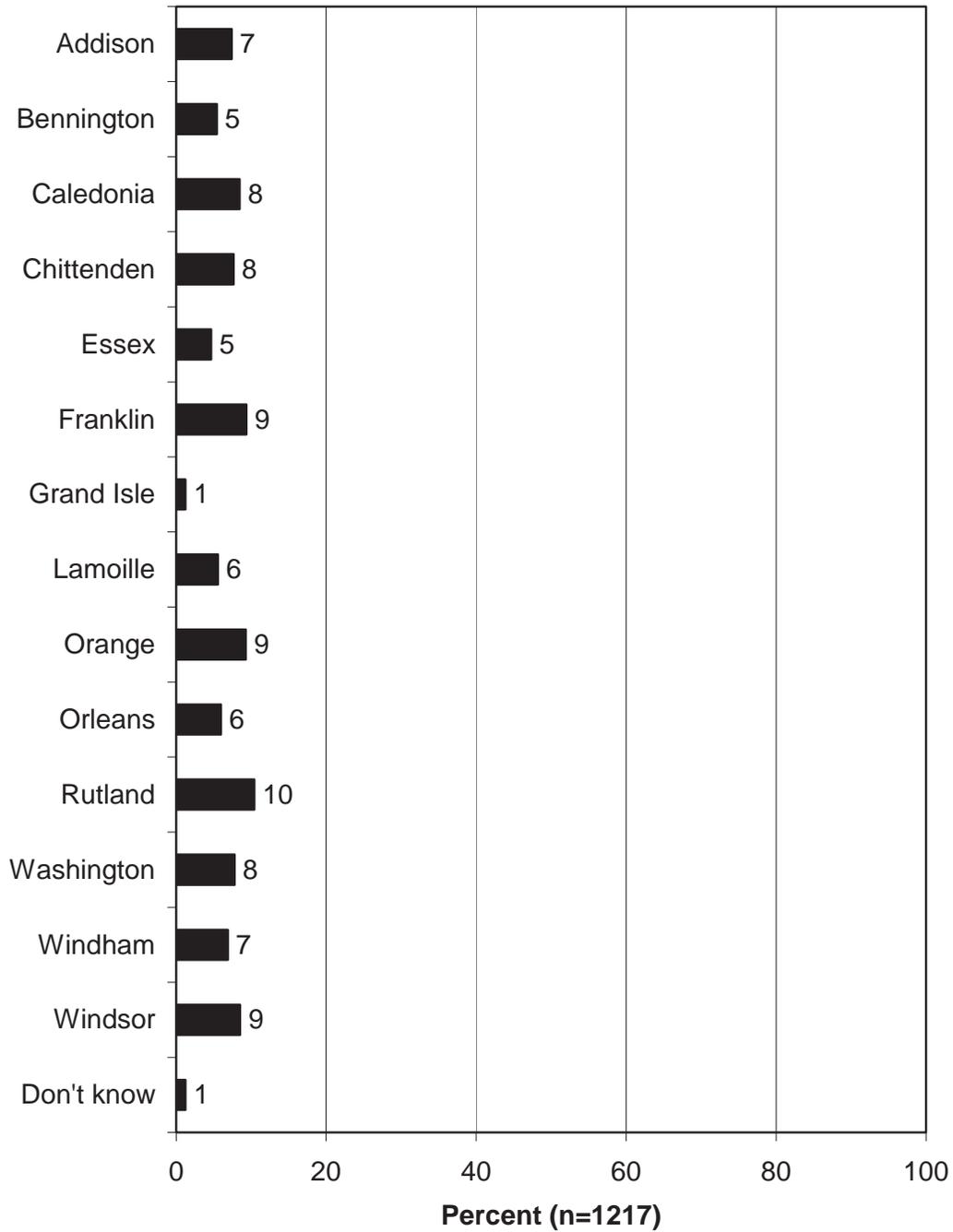
Q26. Did you hunt deer, with permission, on private land that was posted as closed to hunting? (Asked of those who hunted deer on private land in Vermont in 2013.)



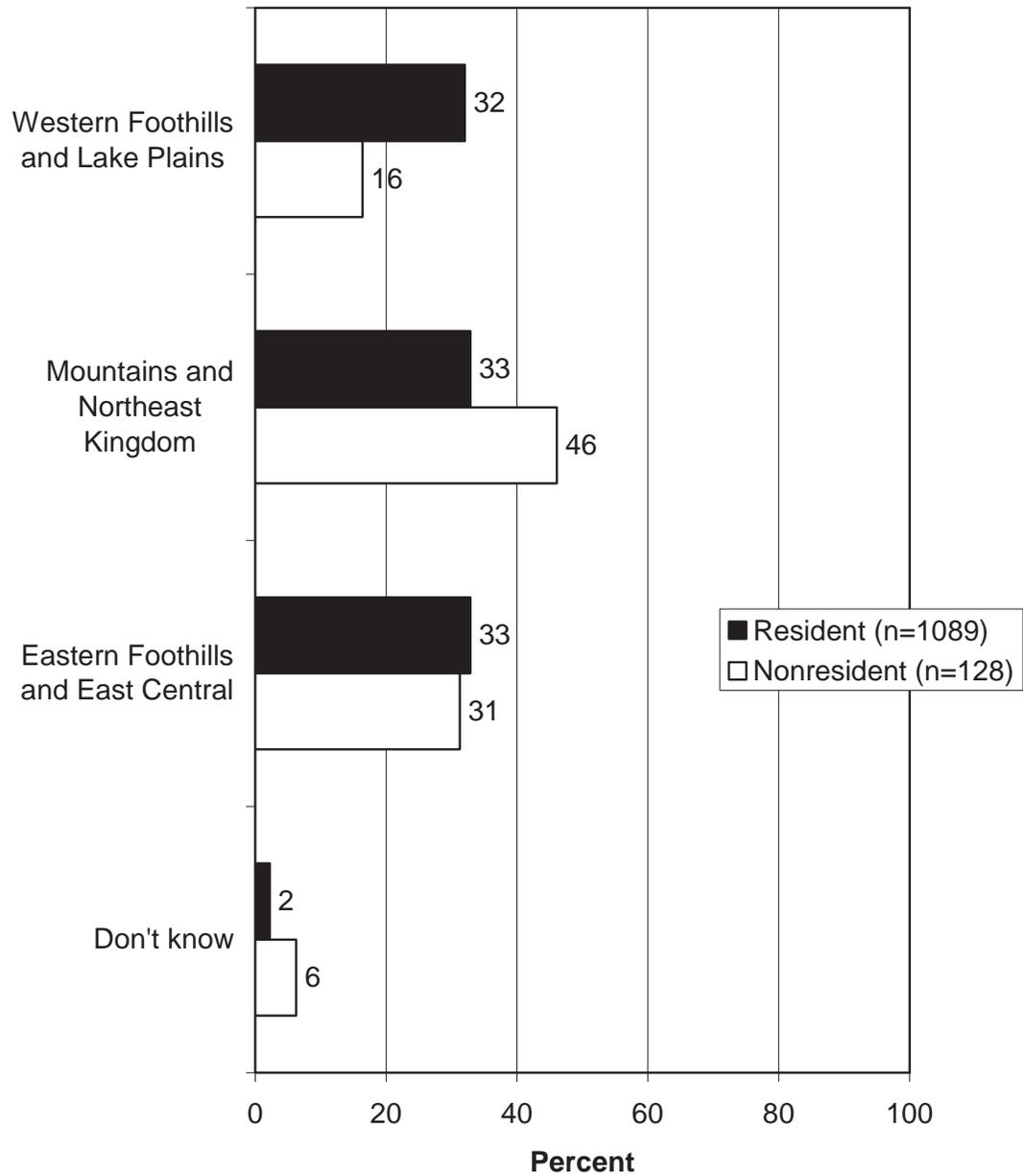
Q26. Did you hunt deer, with permission, on private land that was posted as closed to hunting? (Asked of those who hunted deer on private land in Vermont in 2013.)



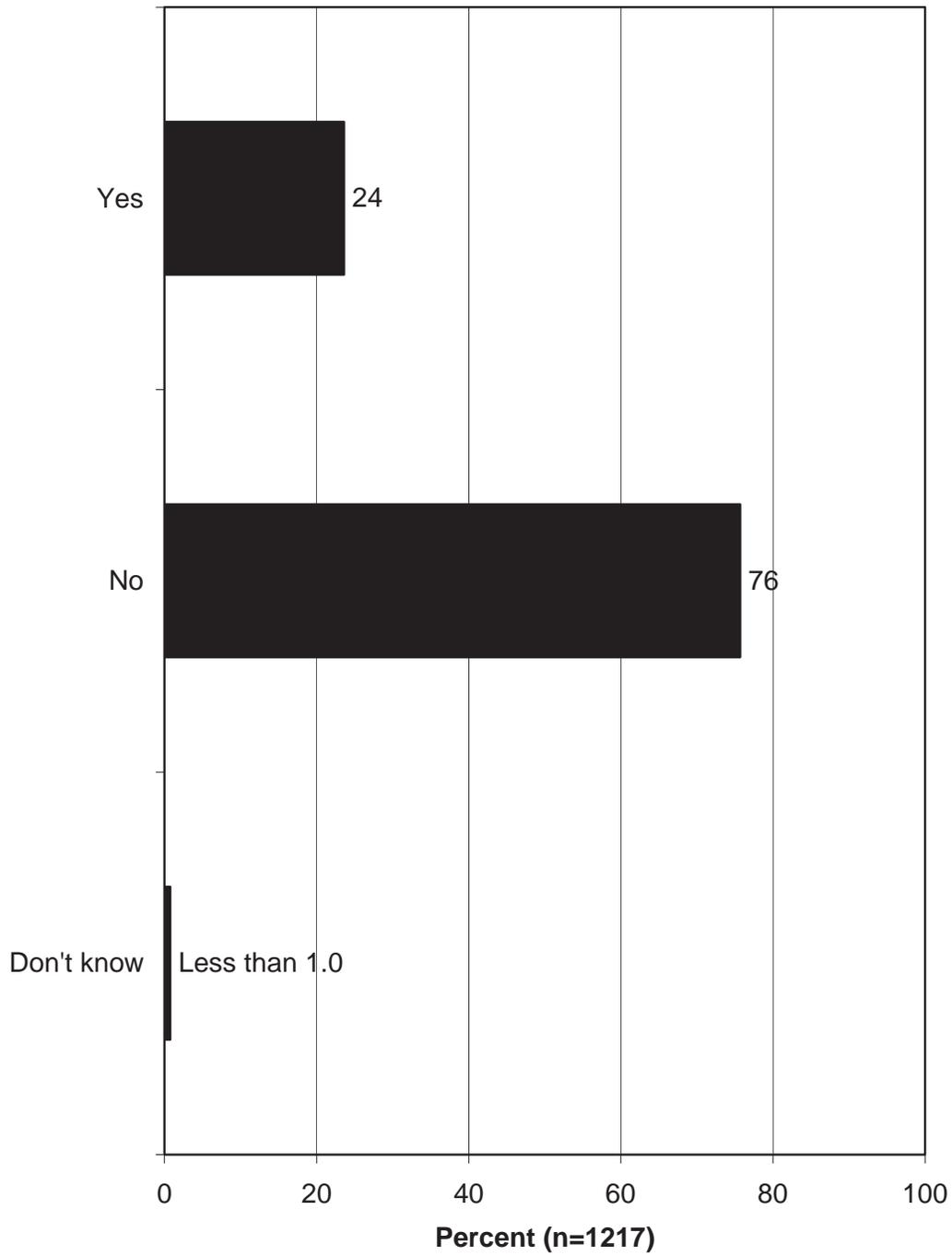
Q27. Regardless of whether you hunted on public or private land, in what one county in Vermont did you deer hunt most often in 2013?



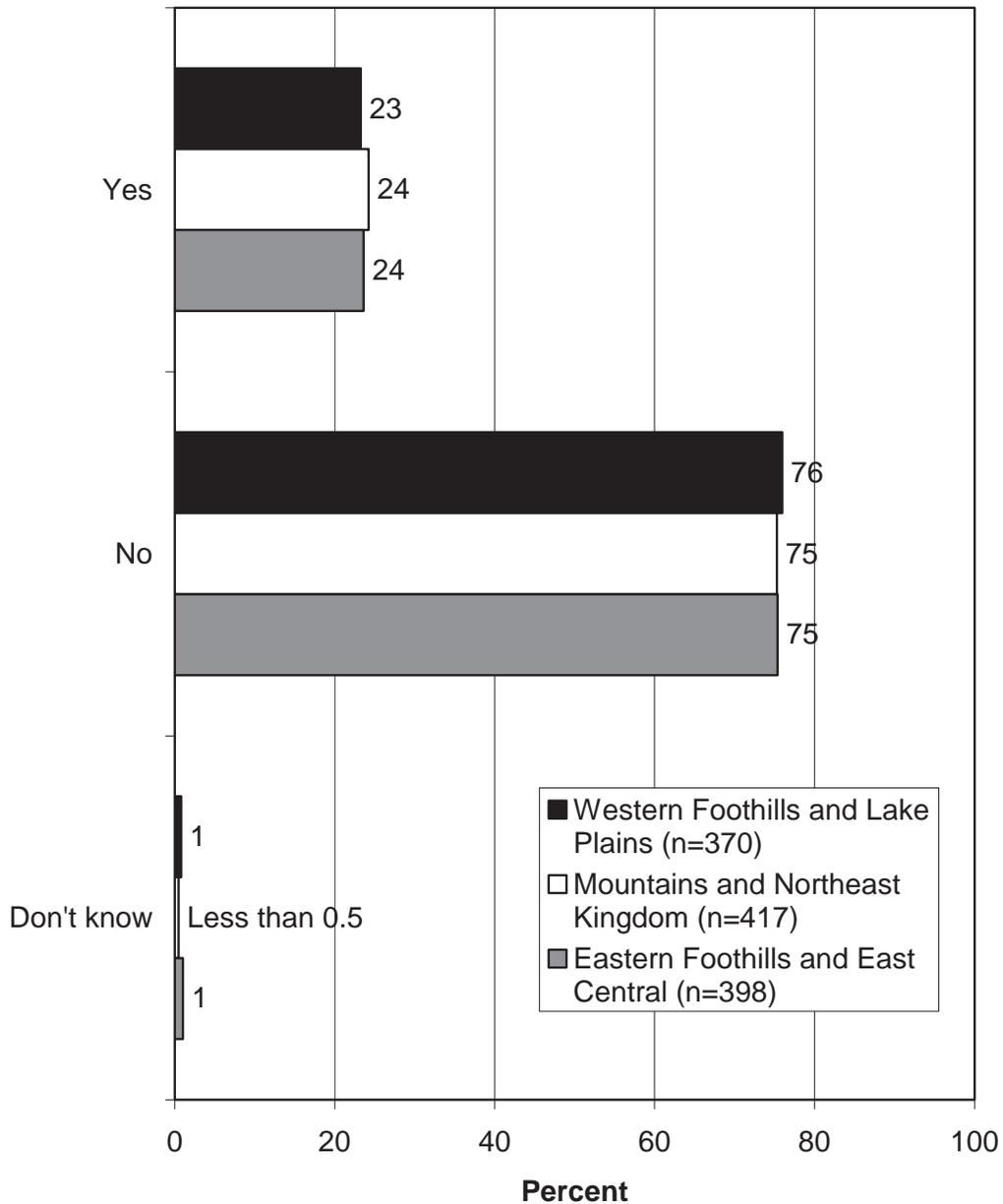
Region most often hunted by deer hunter in 2013.



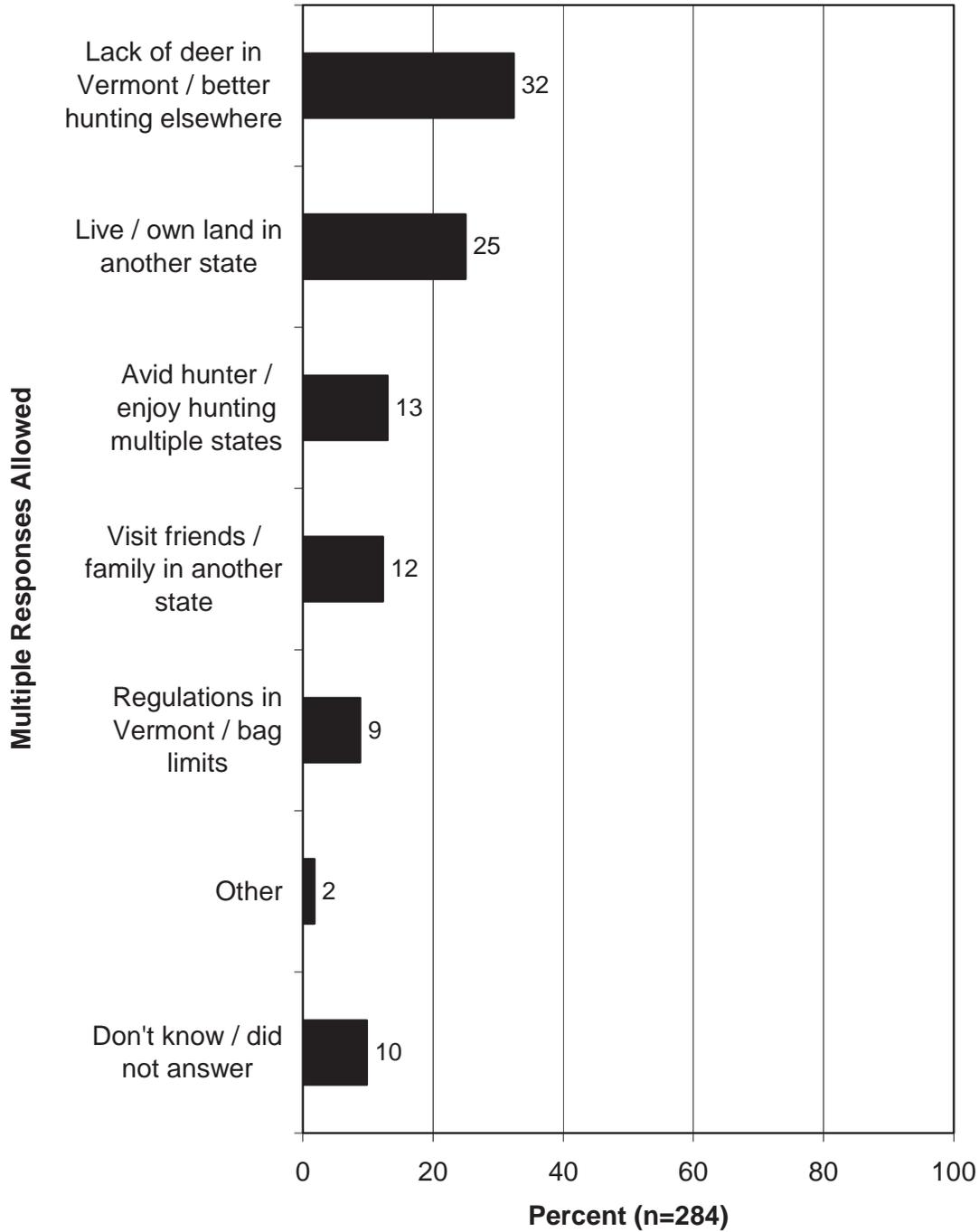
Q112. Did you hunt deer in a state other than Vermont during the 2013 season?



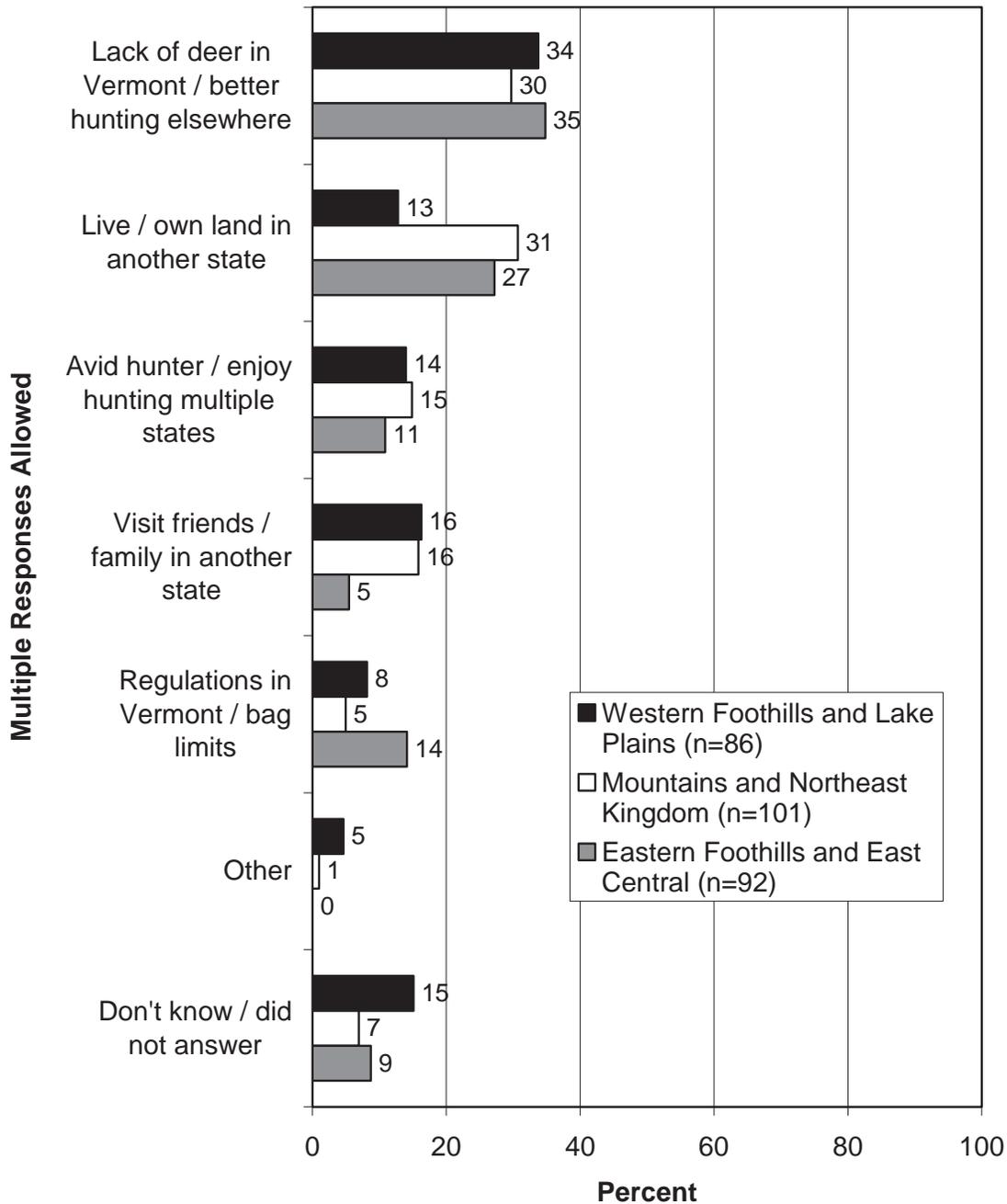
Q112. Did you hunt deer in a state other than Vermont during the 2013 season?



Q113. What are the reasons you hunted deer in a state other than Vermont?



Q113. What are the reasons you hunted deer in a state other than Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted deer in a state other than Vermont.)

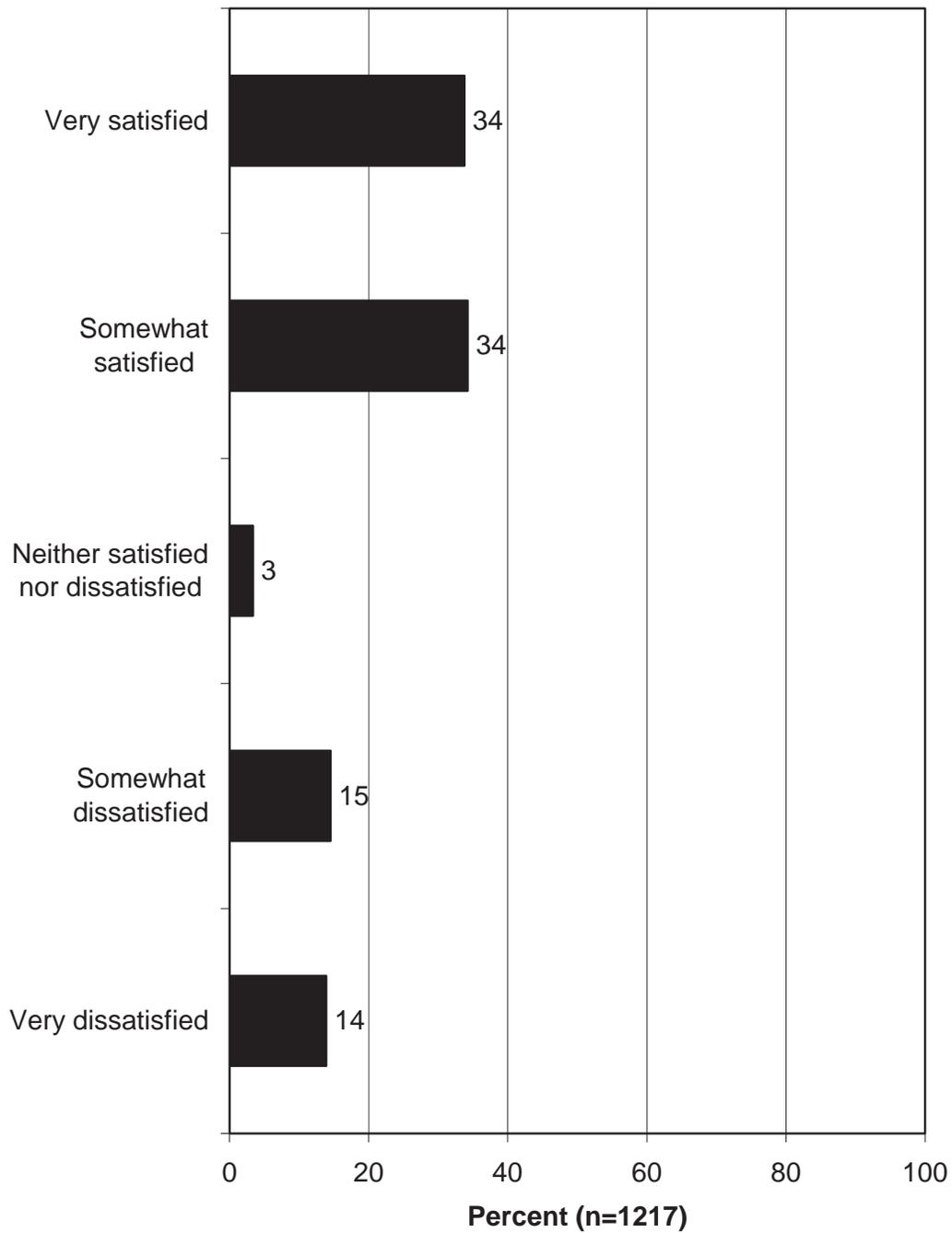


DEER HUNTING SATISFACTION

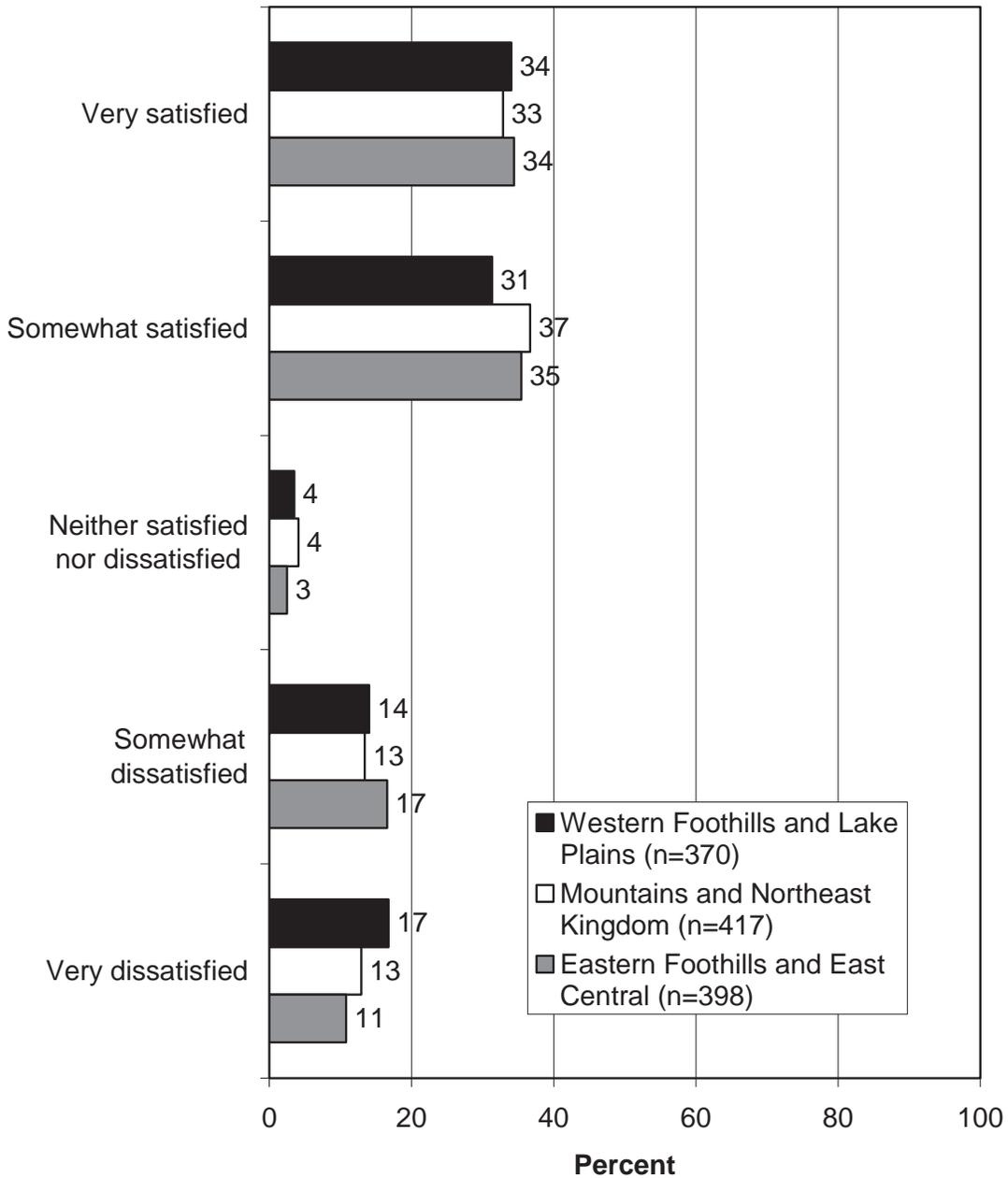
- In general, 34% of respondents were *very satisfied* and another 34% were *somewhat satisfied* with their deer hunting experiences in Vermont during 2013. This is in contrast to the 14% who were *very dissatisfied* and 15% who were *somewhat dissatisfied*. In looking at sums, 68% of deer hunters were satisfied with their experiences and 29% were dissatisfied, with the remaining 3% giving a neutral response. There was little regional variation.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked to rate the importance of six factors to their hunting experience on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important. The results show that harvesting a deer is not crucial to most hunters' enjoyment of the experience. Again, there was little regional variation. In descending order of their mean ratings, the results are:
 - Just going deer hunting, regardless of whether they harvest a deer (average rating of 8.66 out of 10.00)
 - The amount of buck sign in the woods (6.81)
 - Harvesting an older, larger-antlered buck (6.64)
 - Harvesting a buck, regardless of the size of the antlers (5.67)
 - Harvesting a deer, regardless of the age or sex (5.57)
 - Harvesting more than one buck each year (3.81)

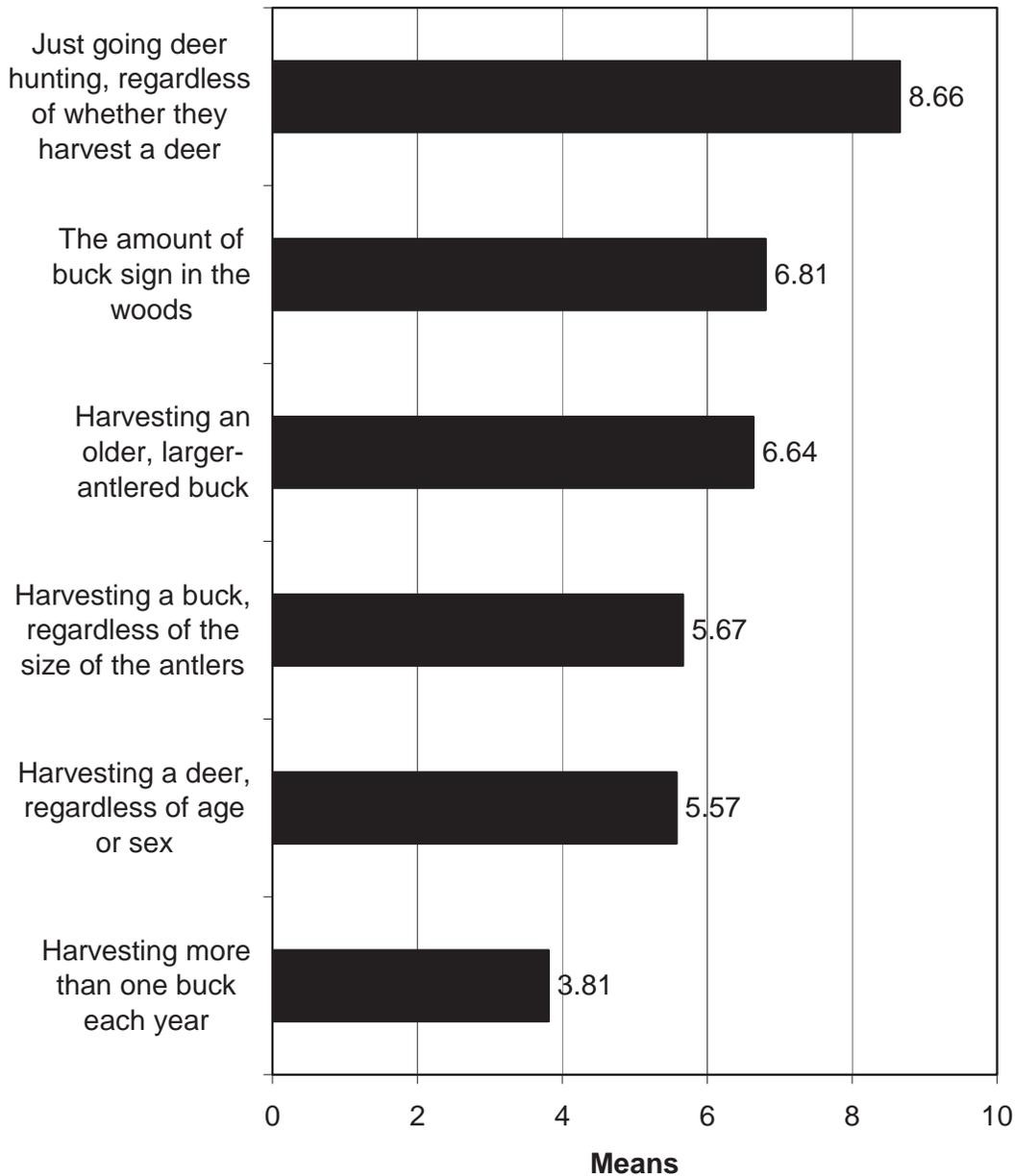
Q33. In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your deer hunting experiences in Vermont during the 2013 season?



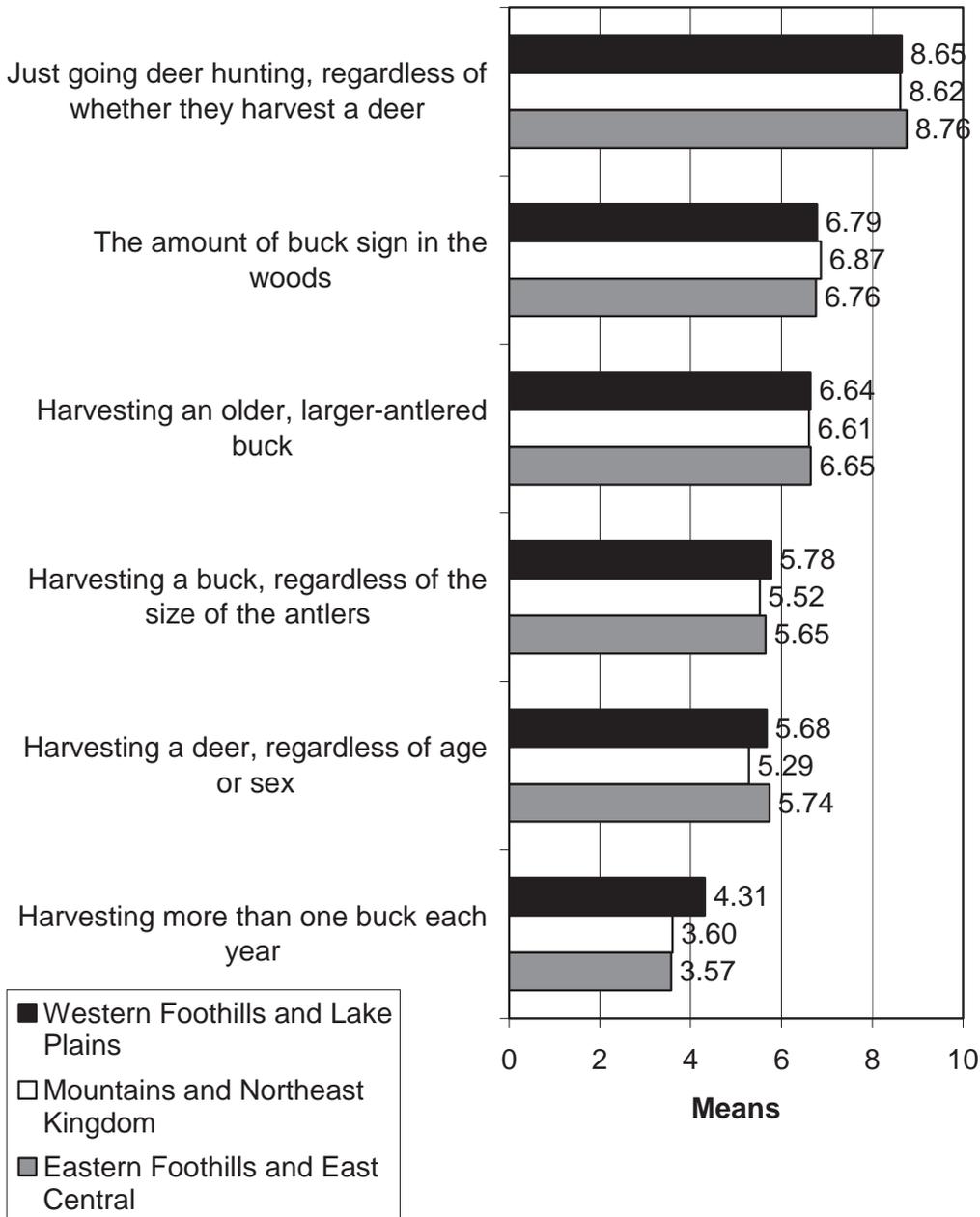
Q33. In general, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your deer hunting experiences in Vermont during the 2013 season?



Q36-Q41. Mean rated importance of each of the following to respondents' general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important:



Q36-Q41. Mean rated importance of each of the following to respondents' general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important:



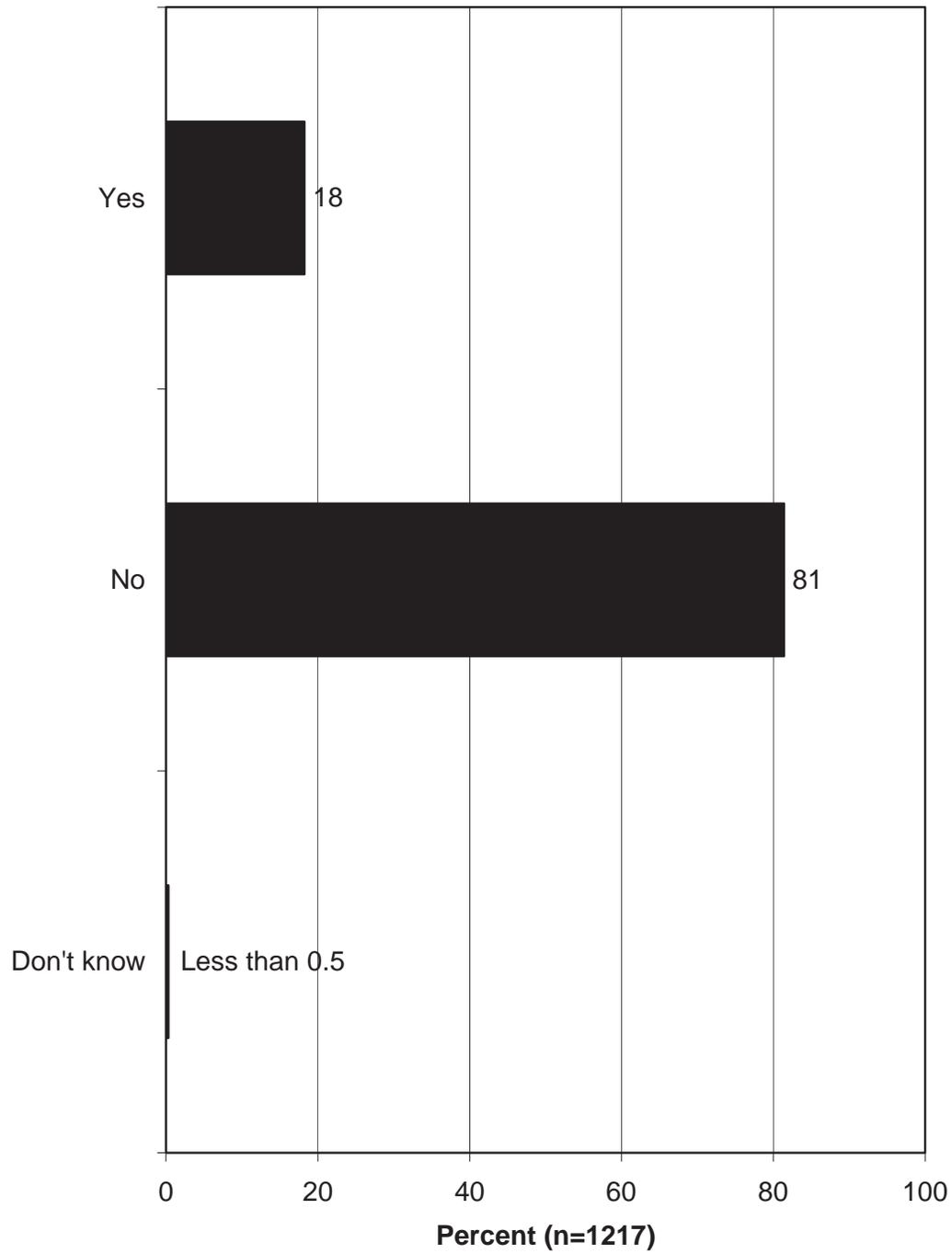
DEER HUNTING MANAGEMENT AND REGULATIONS

NATURAL LURES

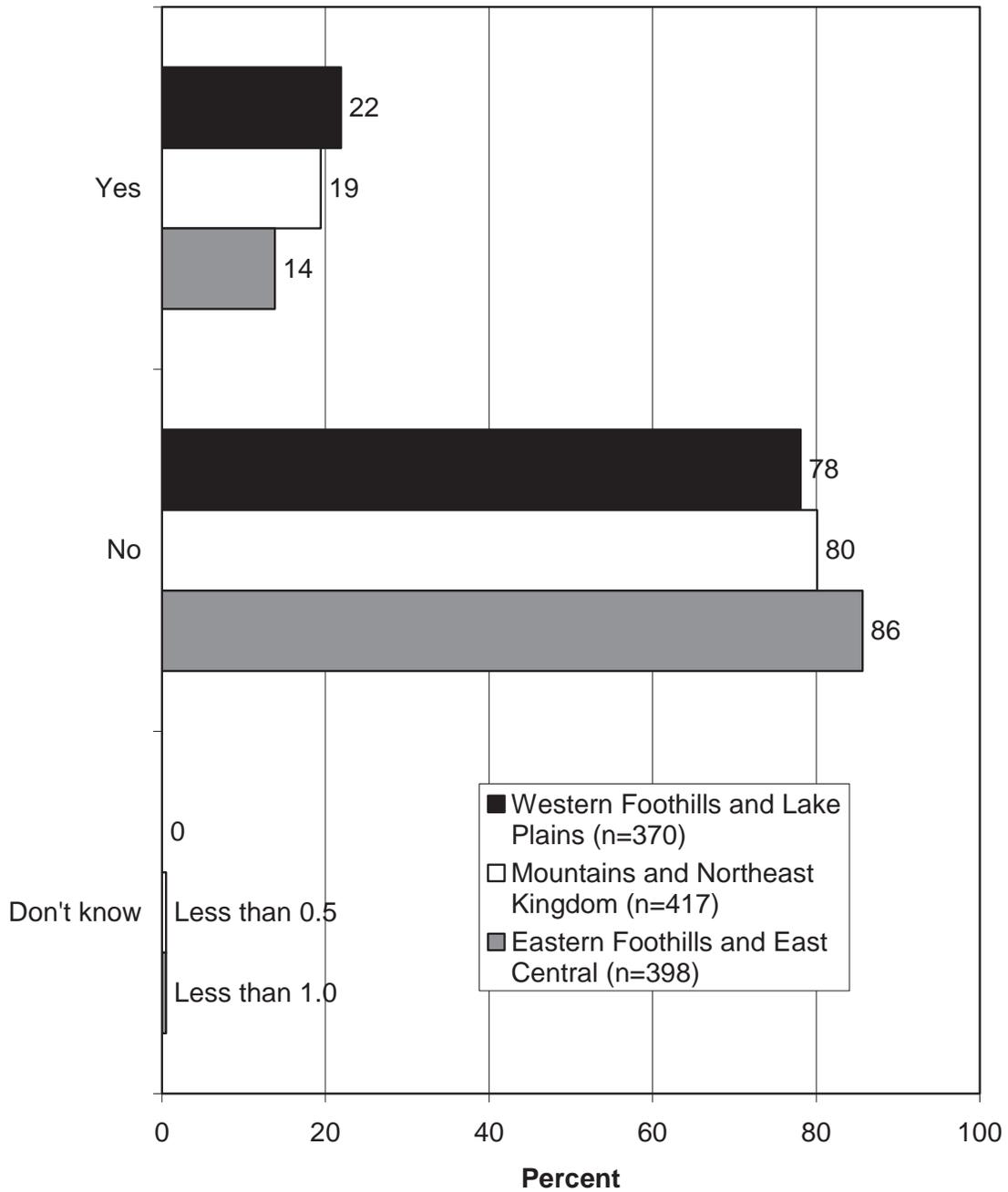
- About one-fifth (18%) of Vermont deer hunters used natural urine-based lures while deer hunting in 2013.
 - Deer hunters in the Western region were the most likely to use natural urine-based lures (22% used them), while hunters in the Eastern region were the least likely (14%).

- Respondents were informed that natural urine-based lures may increase the risk of infectious diseases being introduced to Vermont's deer herd. In light of this information, 36% of respondents would *strongly support* and 18% would *moderately support* a ban on these lures (combined support of 54% for a ban). Conversely, 15% would *strongly oppose* and 10% would *moderately oppose* such a ban (combined opposition of 25%). These percentages were generally consistent between the regions.

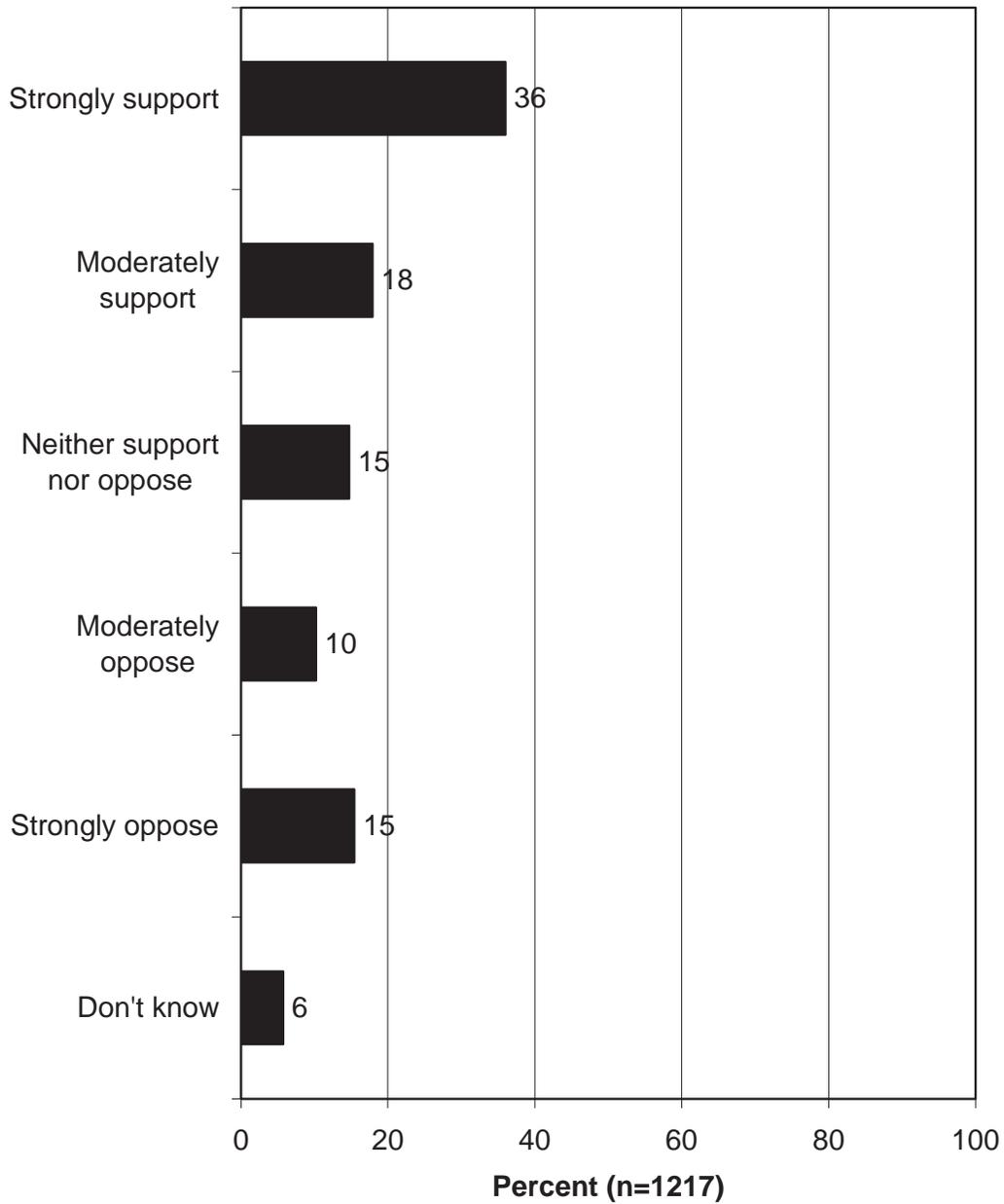
Q42. Did you use natural urine-based lures while deer hunting in Vermont in 2013?



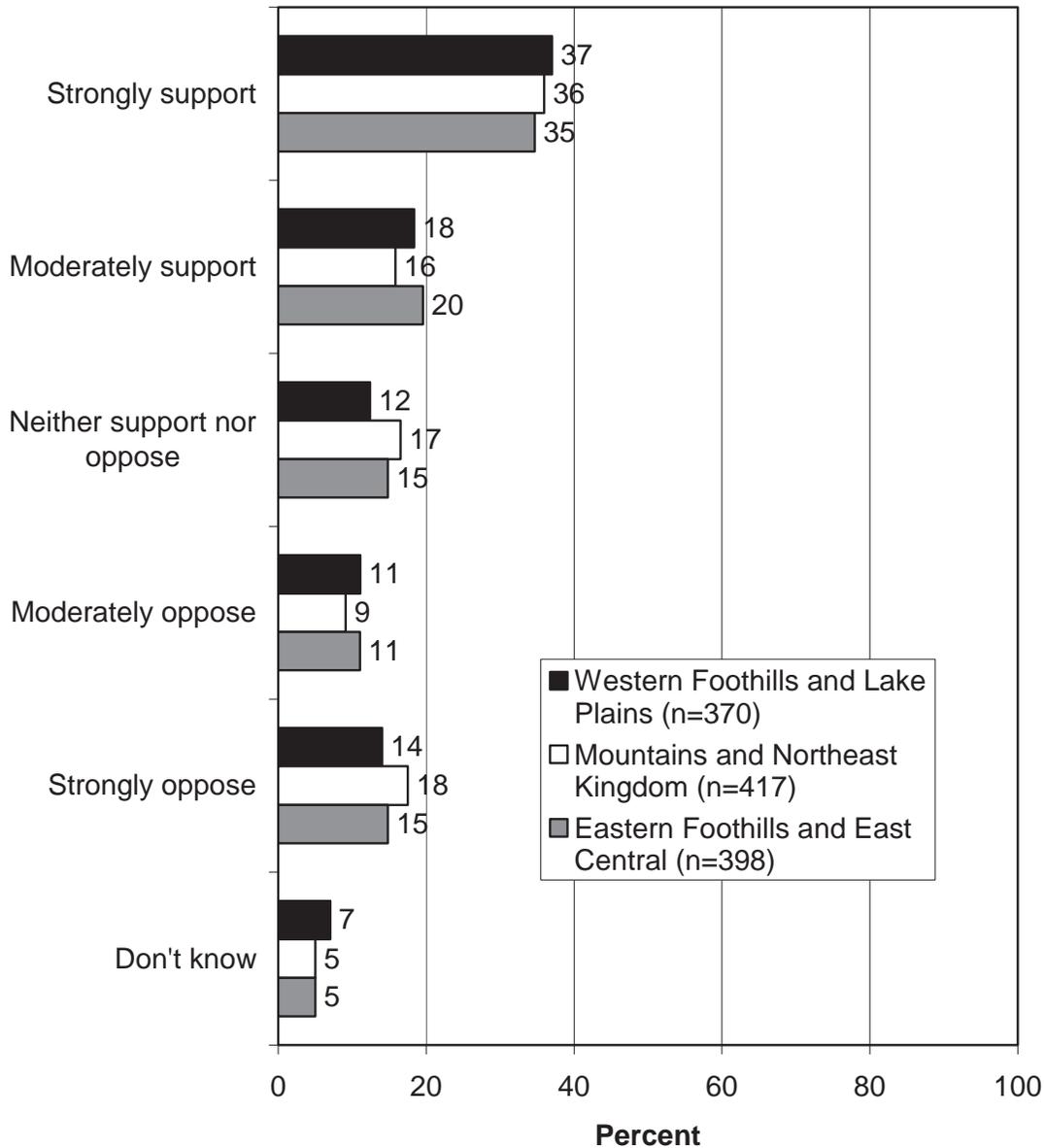
Q42. Did you use natural urine-based lures while deer hunting in Vermont in 2013?



Q43. Natural urine-based lures may increase the risk for infectious diseases being introduced into Vermont's deer herd. Knowing this, would you support or oppose regulations that ban their use while deer hunting in Vermont?



Q43. Natural urine-based lures may increase the risk for infectious diseases being introduced into Vermont's deer herd. Knowing this, would you support or oppose regulations that ban their use while deer hunting in Vermont?



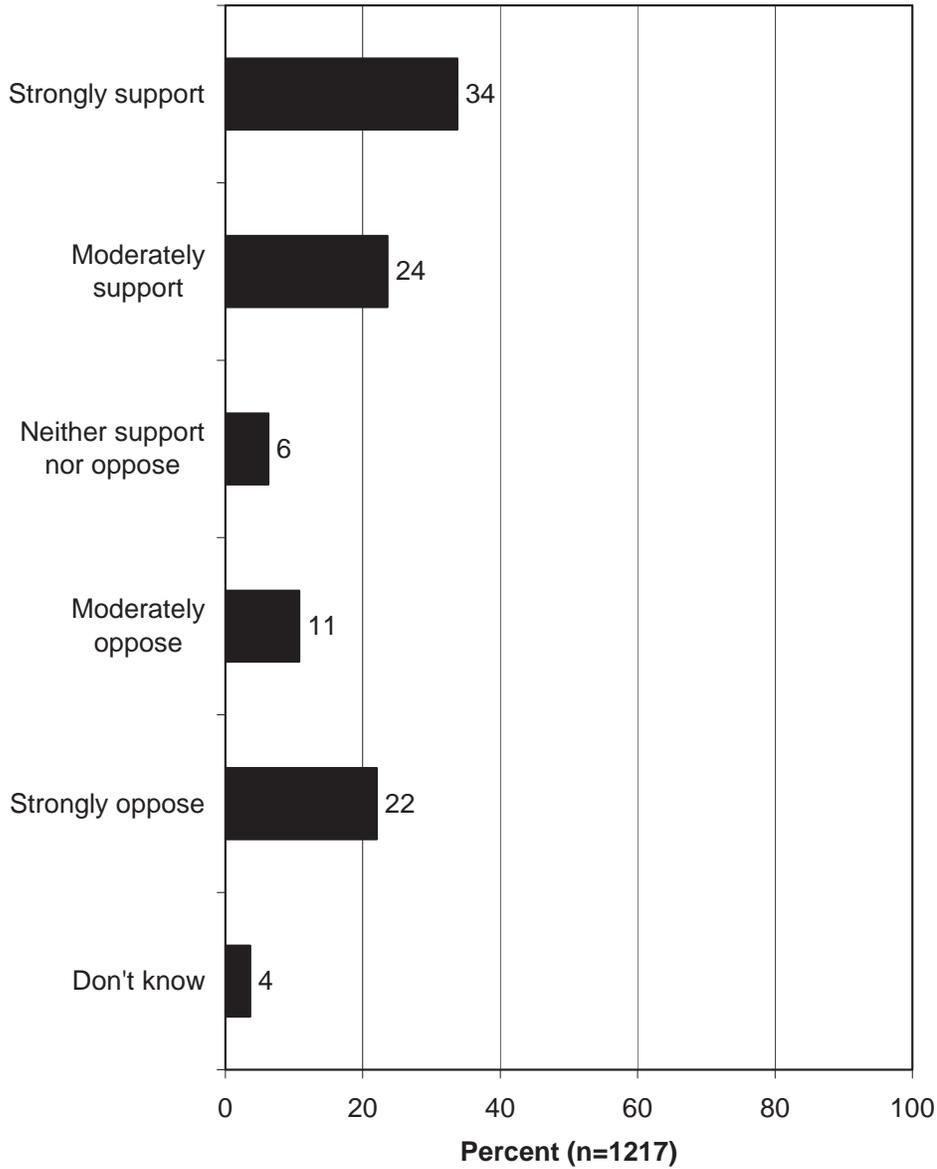
REGIONAL APPROACH TO DEER MANAGEMENT

- Deer hunters were asked if they would support or oppose a regional approach to deer management, meaning regulations may differ from one region or area to another. One-third (34%) of respondents *strongly support* and one-fourth (24%) *moderately support* this idea, for overall support of 58%. Conversely, 22% *strongly oppose* and 11% *moderately oppose* a regional approach to deer management (combined opposition of 33%). These percentages were consistent among the regions.
- Respondents were informed that there are observed differences in deer densities, climate, and numbers of hunters in the different regions of the state. Knowing this resulted in a slight increase in support of a regional approach, as 39% of respondents *strongly support* and 26% *moderately support* a regional approach to deer management, for overall support of 65%. Opposition decreased slightly when deer hunters were given the information about regions, as 16% *strongly oppose* and 10% *moderately oppose* such an approach (combined opposition of 26%). There was little regional variation.
- Regarding antler-point restrictions, 61% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (38% *strongly support* this).
- Regarding antlerless or antlered buck bag limits, 63% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (37% *strongly support* this).
 - Mountains region hunters have the most total support for a regional approach to this regulation (67%).
- Regarding the lengths of deer hunting seasons, 57% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (32% *strongly support* this).
 - Mountains region hunters have the most total support for a regional approach to this regulation (63%) and Western region hunters have the least support (53%).

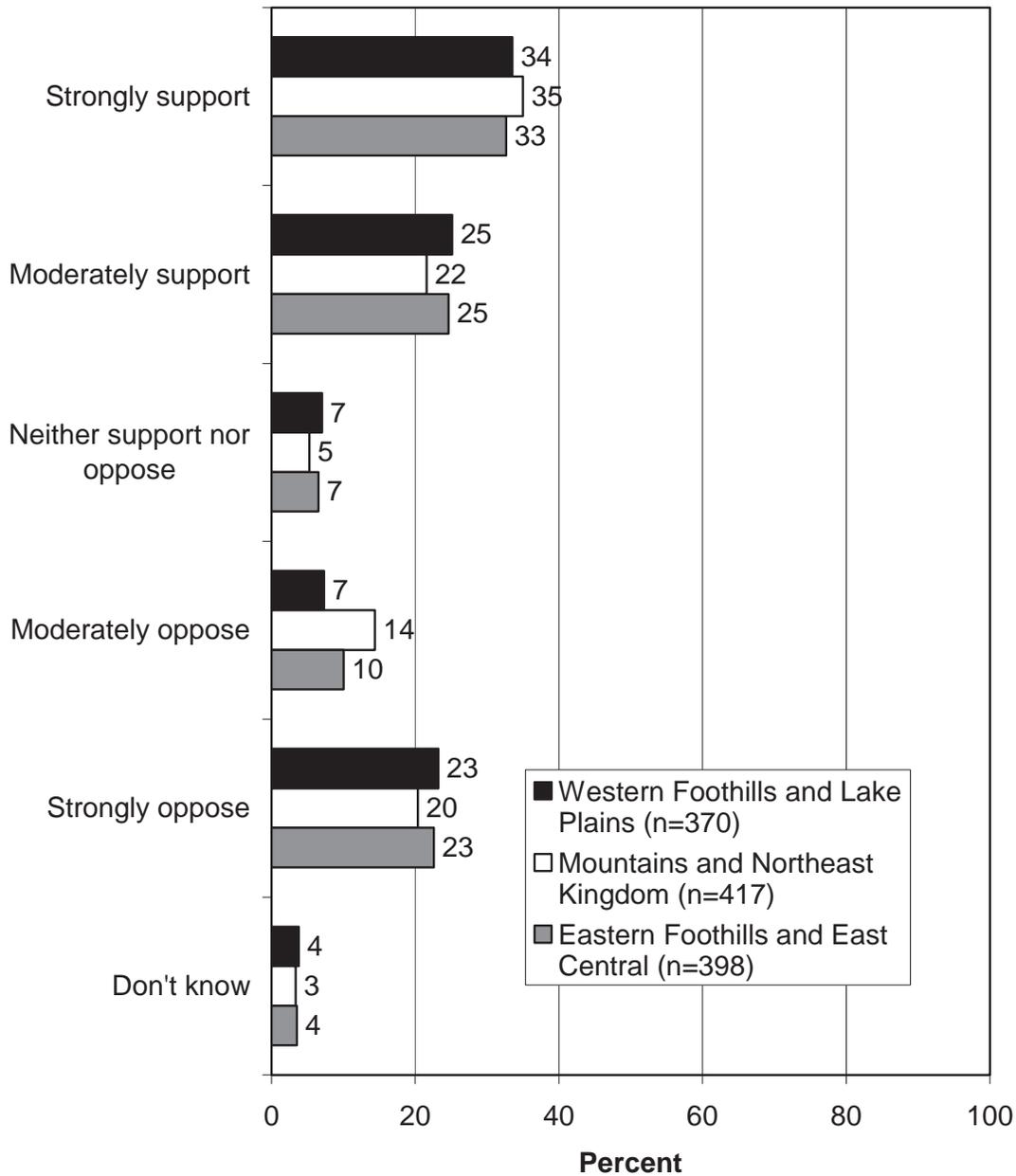
- Regarding the timing of the deer hunting seasons, 48% of Vermont deer hunters support a regional approach to the regulation (26% *strongly support* this).
 - Mountains region hunters have the most total support for a regional approach to this regulation (51%) and Eastern region hunters have the least support (46%).

- For all the regulations discussed above, permanent license holders are less supportive of management at the regional level than are non-permanent license holders (only the crosstabulation for *strong* and *moderate support* has been shown).

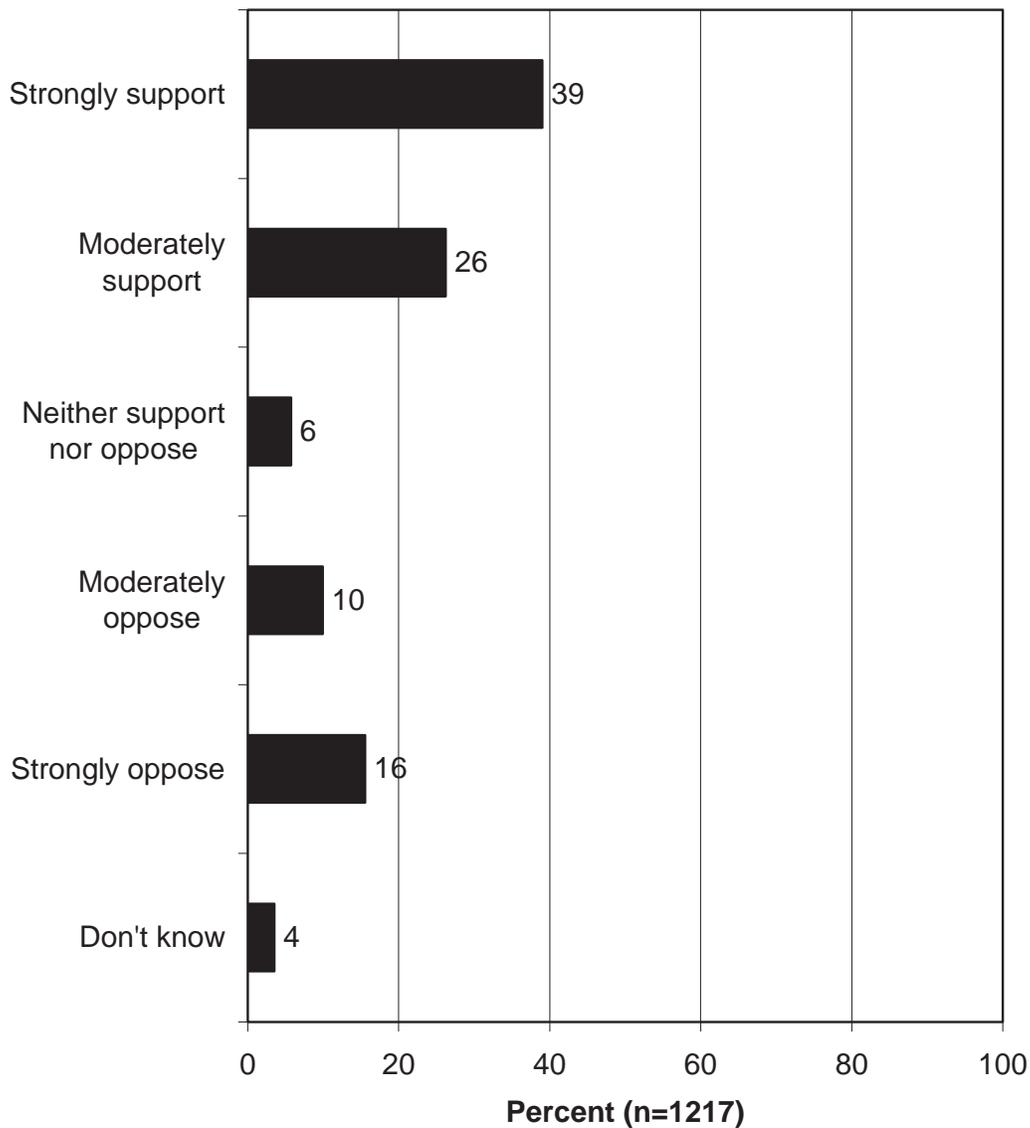
Q45. In general, would you support or oppose a regional approach to deer management, meaning deer hunting regulations may differ from one area of Vermont to another?



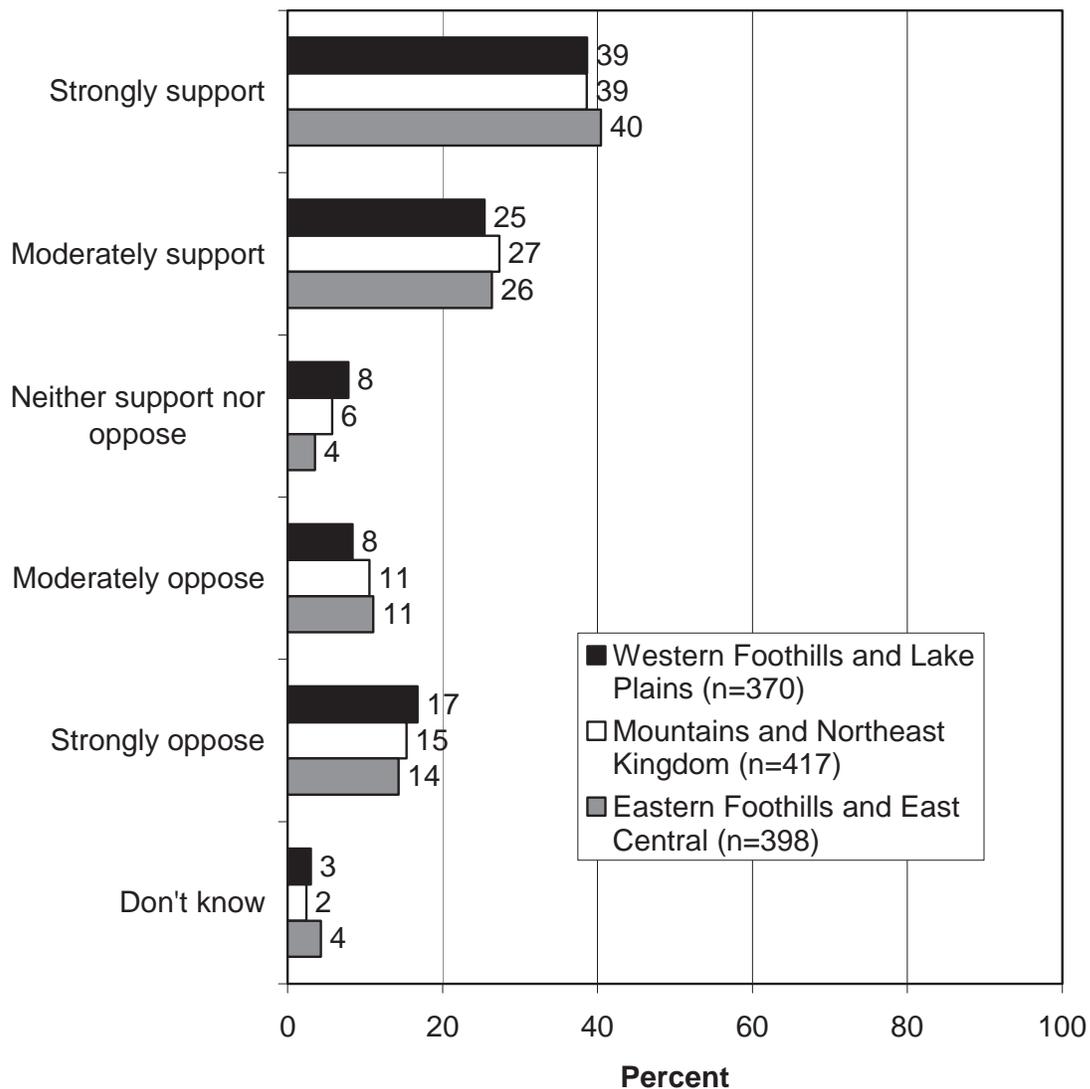
Q45. In general, would you support or oppose a regional approach to deer management, meaning deer hunting regulations may differ from one area of Vermont to another?



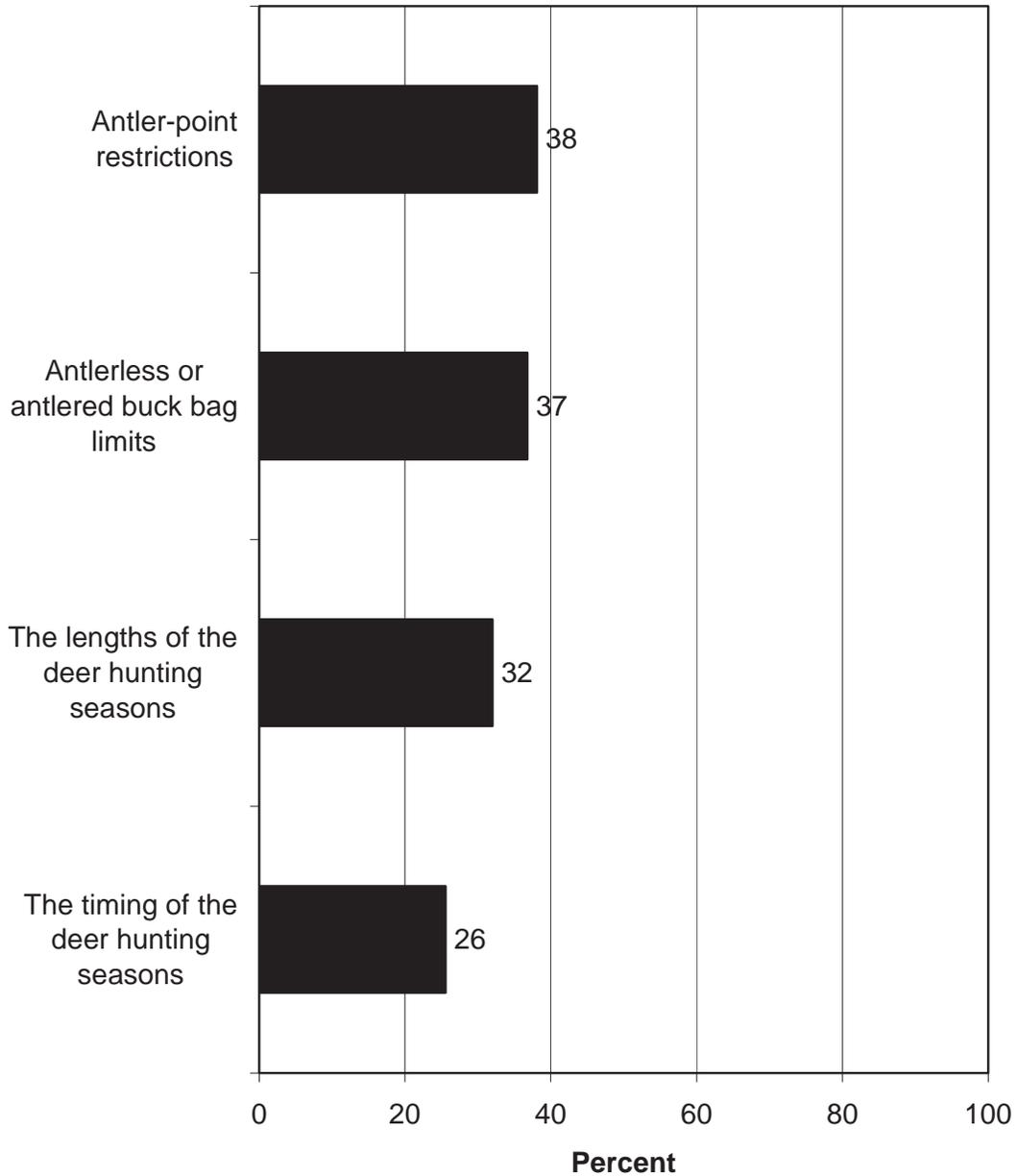
Q46. Currently, there are observed differences in deer densities, climate, and hunter numbers in different regions of the state. Knowing this, would you support or oppose a regional approach to deer management, meaning deer hunting regulations may differ from one area of Vermont to another based on local differences in habitat, climate, and hunting conditions?



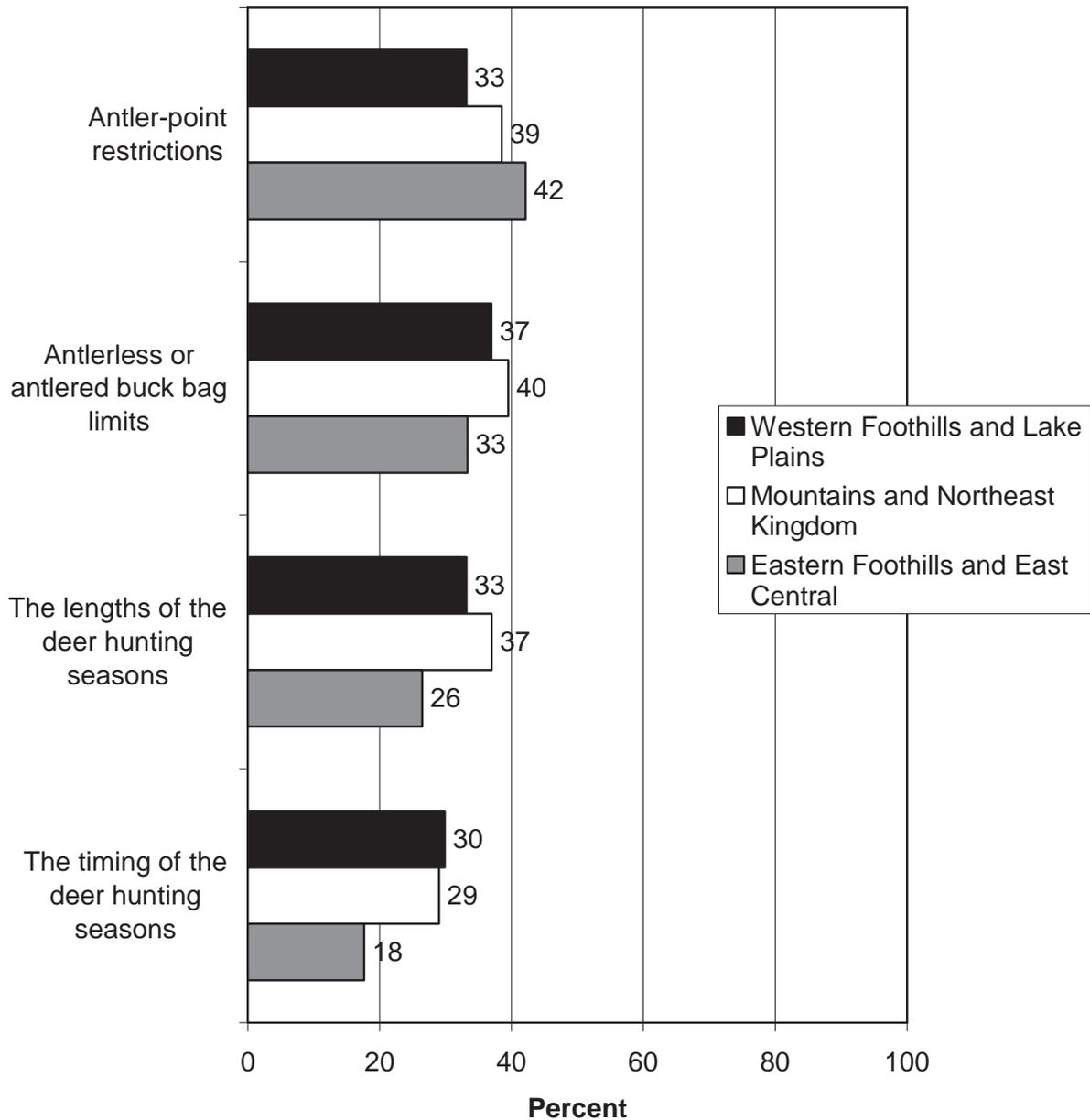
Q46. Currently, there are observed differences in deer densities, climate, and hunter numbers in different regions of the state. Knowing this, would you support or oppose a regional approach to deer management, meaning deer hunting regulations may differ from one area of Vermont to another based on local differences in habitat, climate, and hunting conditions?



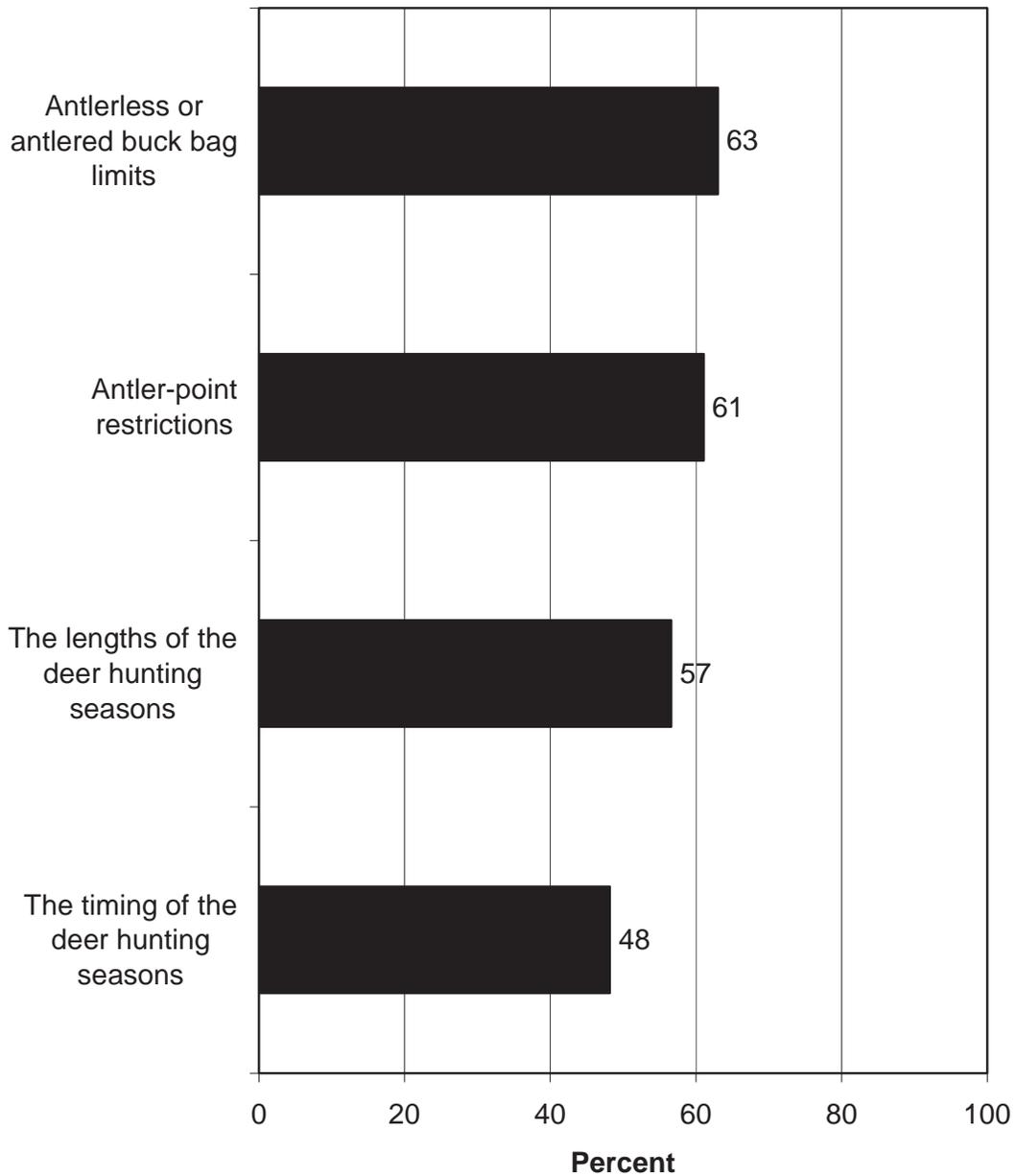
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly support implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



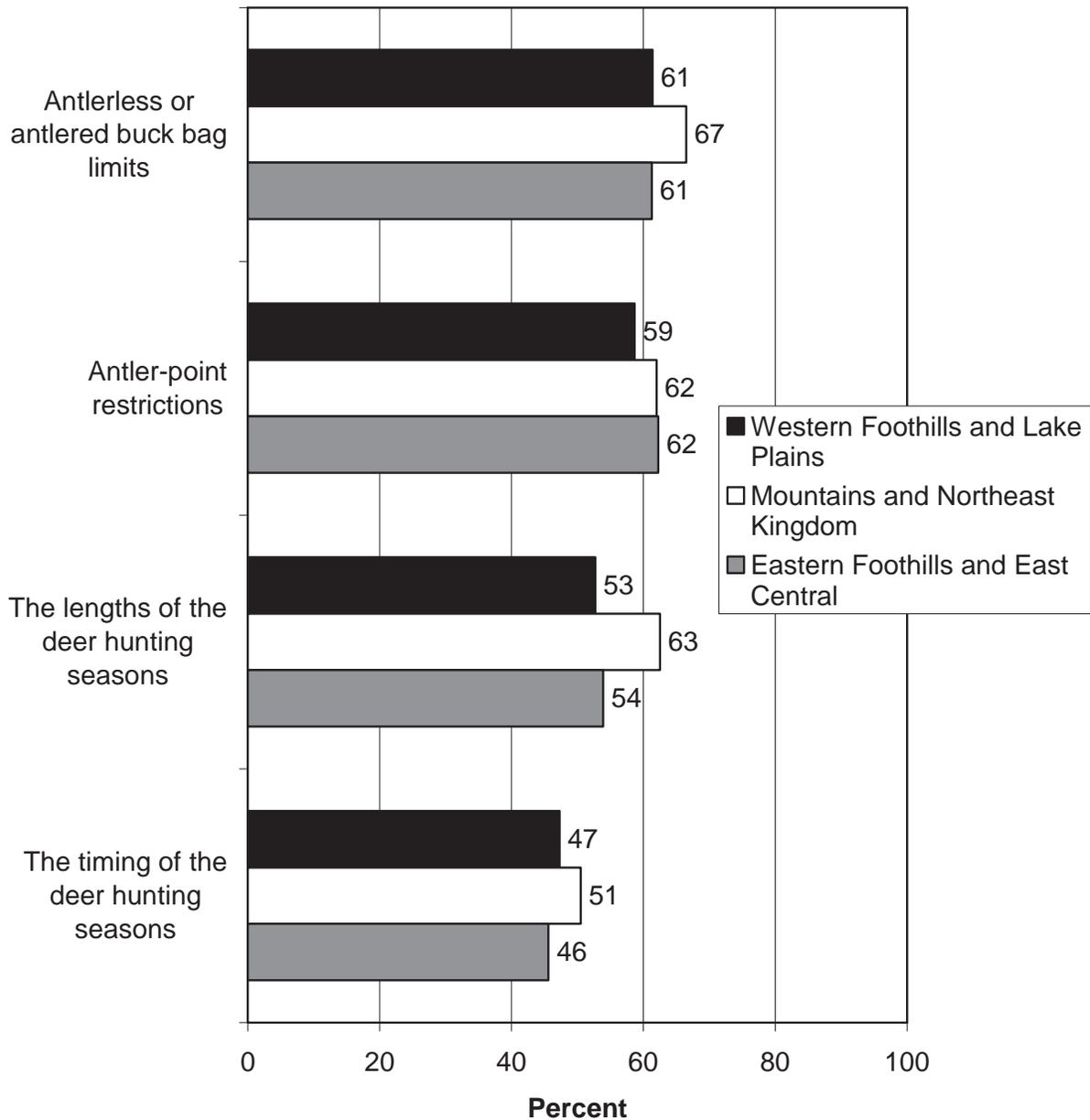
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly support implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



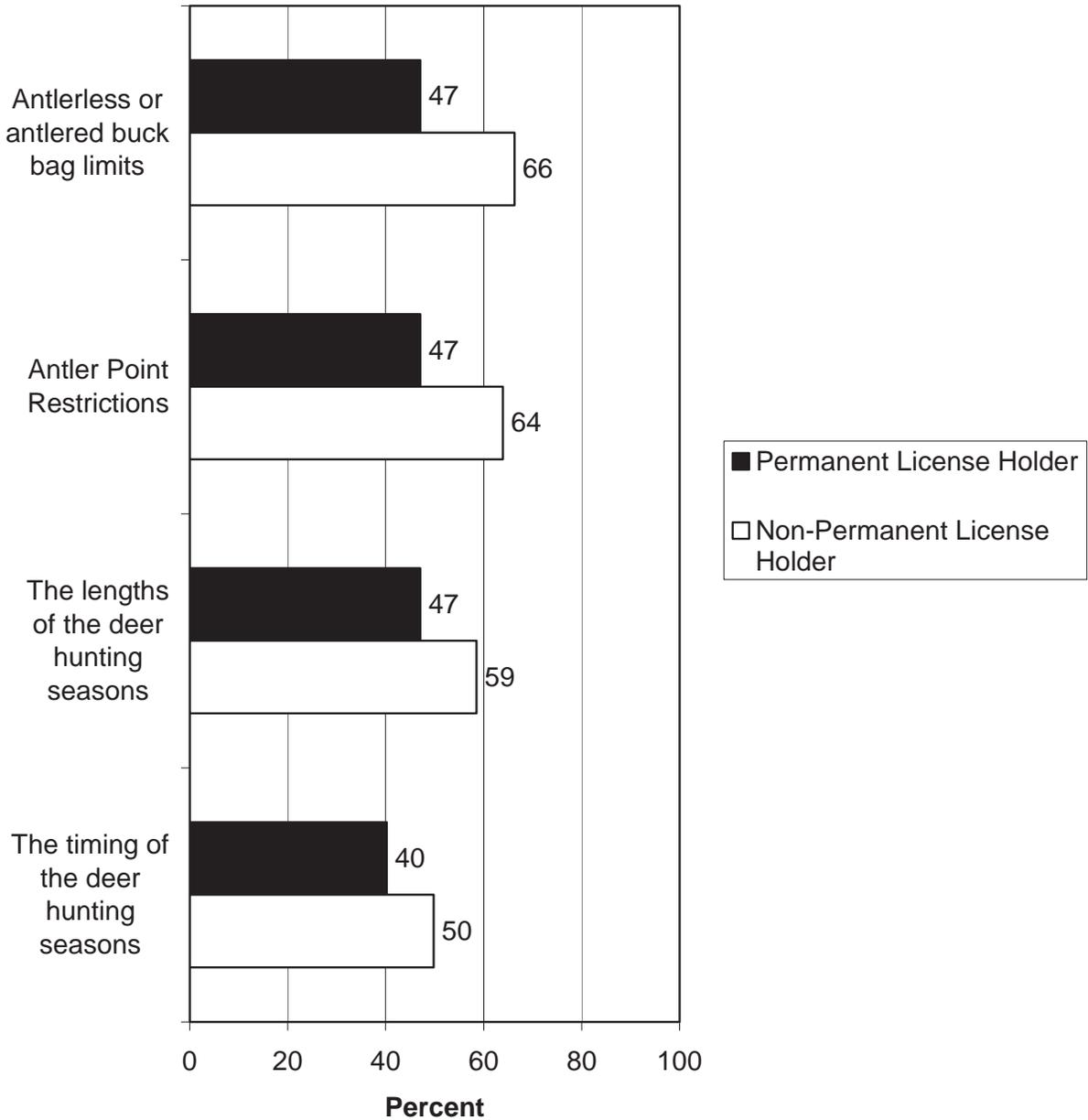
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



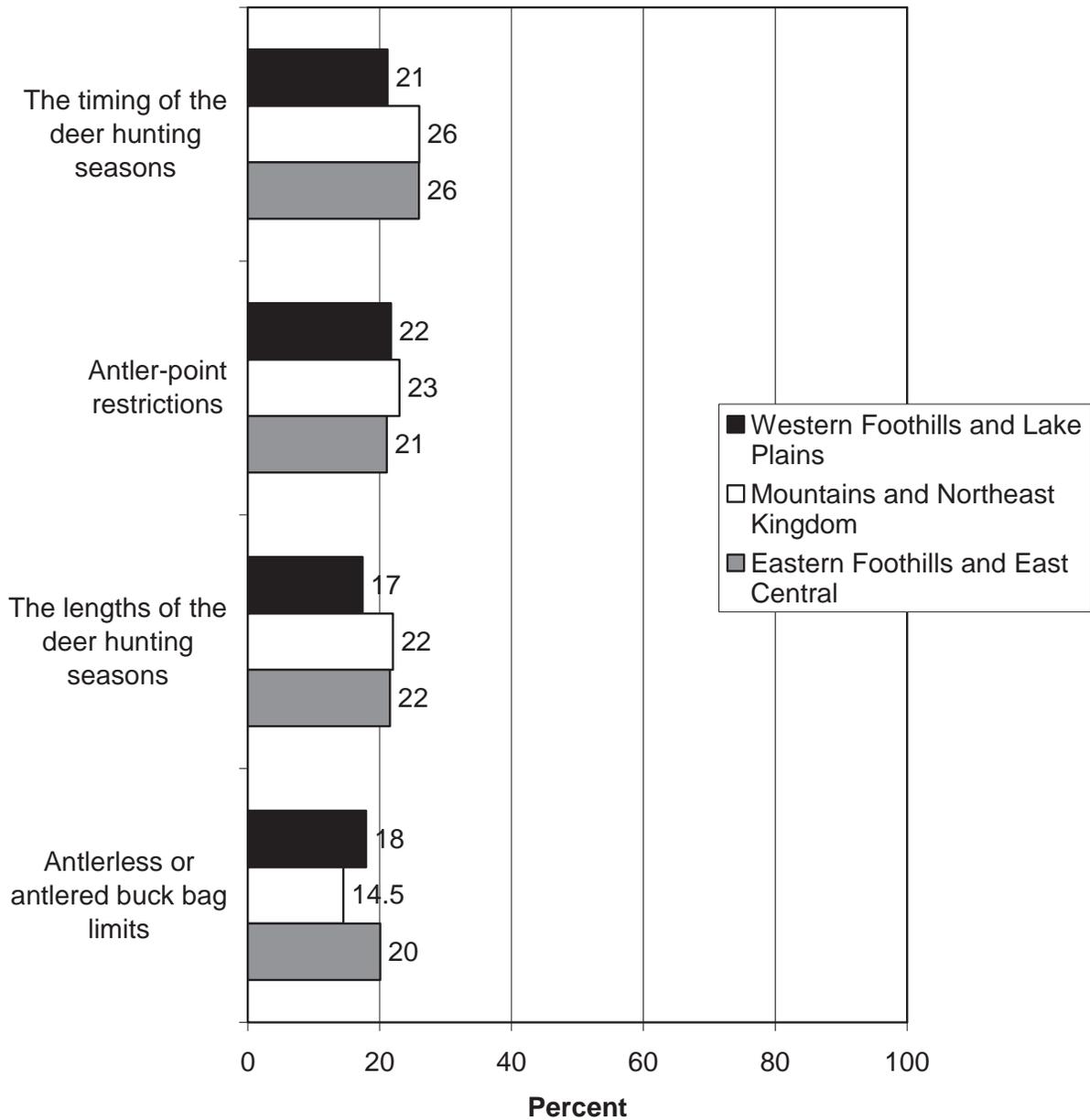
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



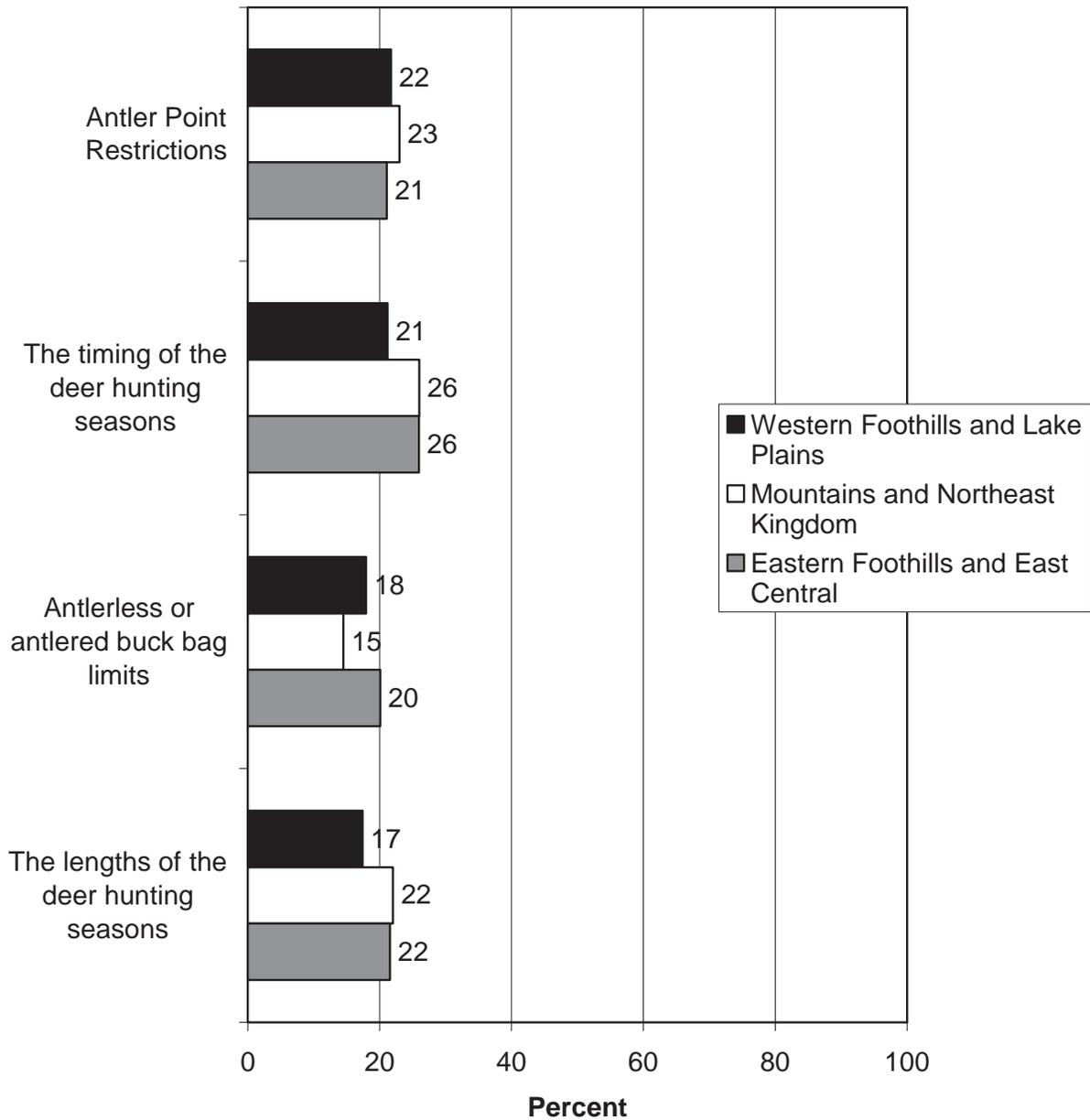
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



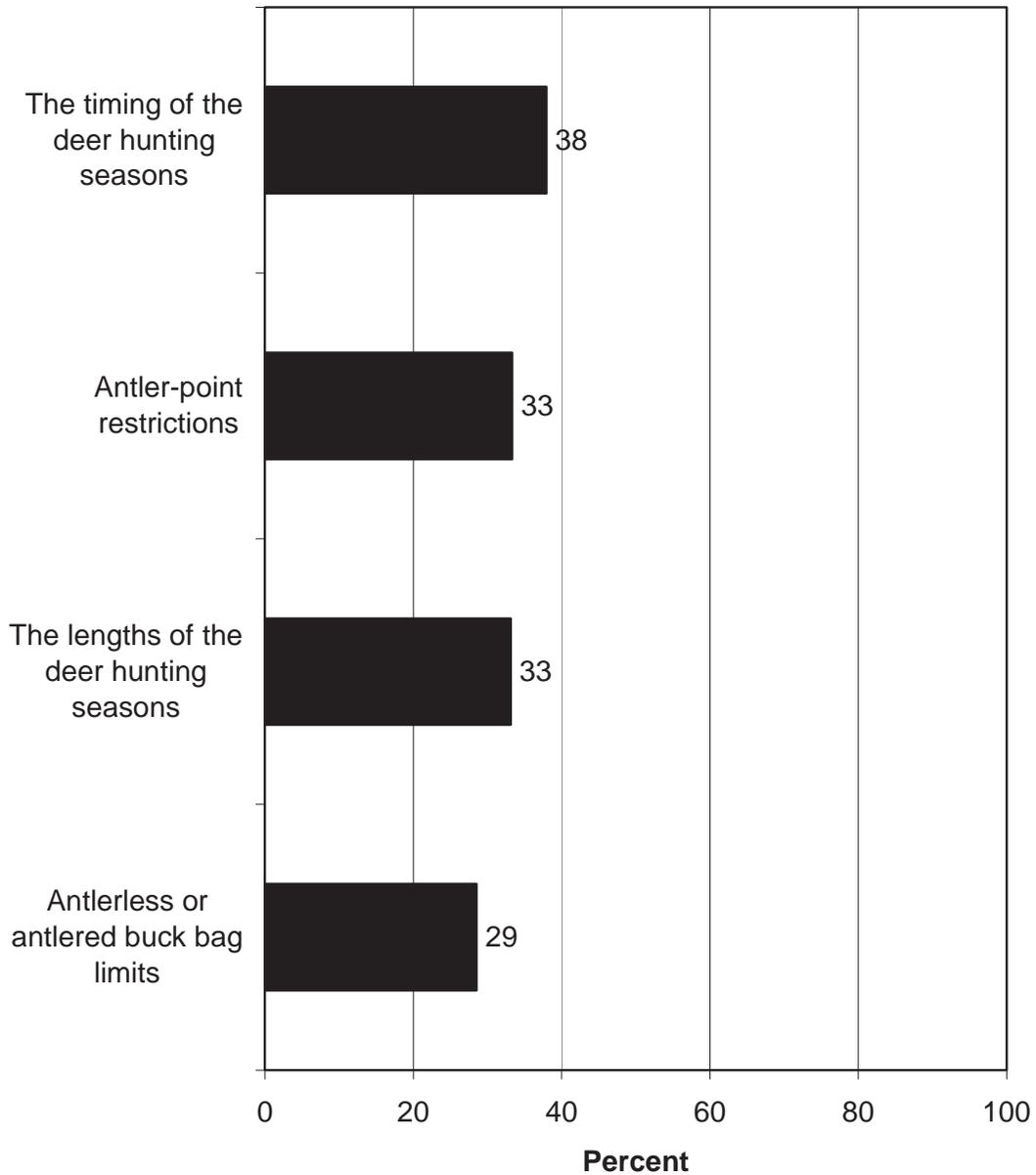
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



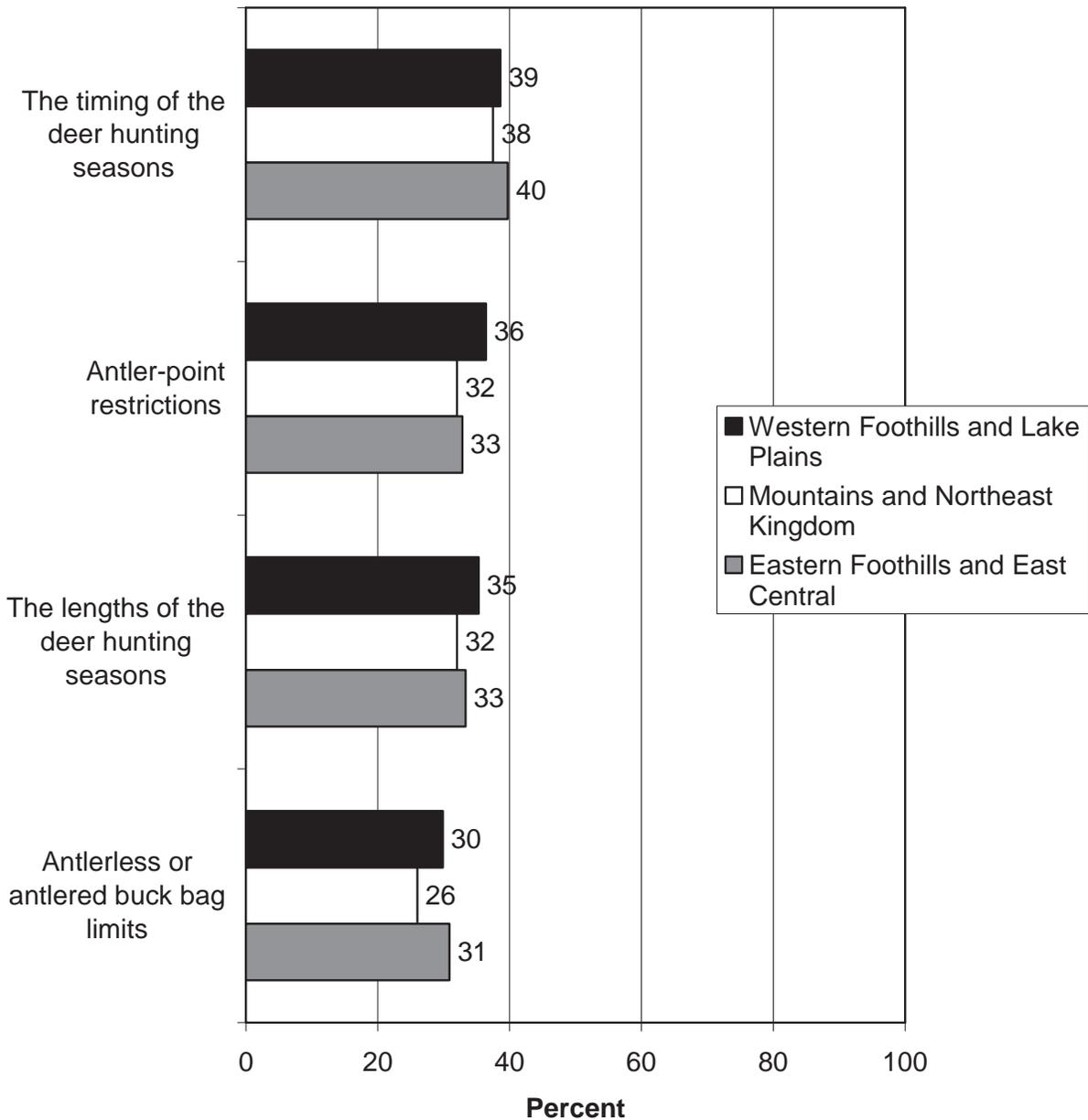
Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



Q50-Q53. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose implementing each of the following types of regulations on a regional level in Vermont:



ARCHERY SEASON

- Deer hunters were almost evenly divided on making archery season longer. Slightly more hunters oppose the idea (47%, with 31% who *strongly oppose*) than support it (43%, with 26% who *strongly support*).
 - The concept of a longer archery season has the most support in the Western region (48%; 30% *strong support*) and the least support in the Eastern region (40%; 24% *strong support*).
 - Interestingly, permanent license holders are much more opposed to a longer archery season (48% *strongly oppose* this) than are non-permanent license holders (28% *strongly oppose* this).

- Nearly two-thirds (62%) of Vermont deer hunters oppose legalizing crossbows for all hunters during archery season (48% *strongly oppose* this).
 - Opposition is strongest in the Eastern region, with 66% opposing the change (50% *strongly oppose* this).

- In contrast, nearly two-thirds (63%) of Vermont deer hunters support legalizing crossbows for older hunters during archery season (39% *strongly support* this). There was little regional variation.
 - Support for this change was slightly greater among non-permanent license holders (64%) than among permanent license holders (59%).
 - Of those who support making it legal for older hunters to hunt deer with crossbows during archery season, the mean suggested age for allowing this activity is 58 years old, with little regional variation.

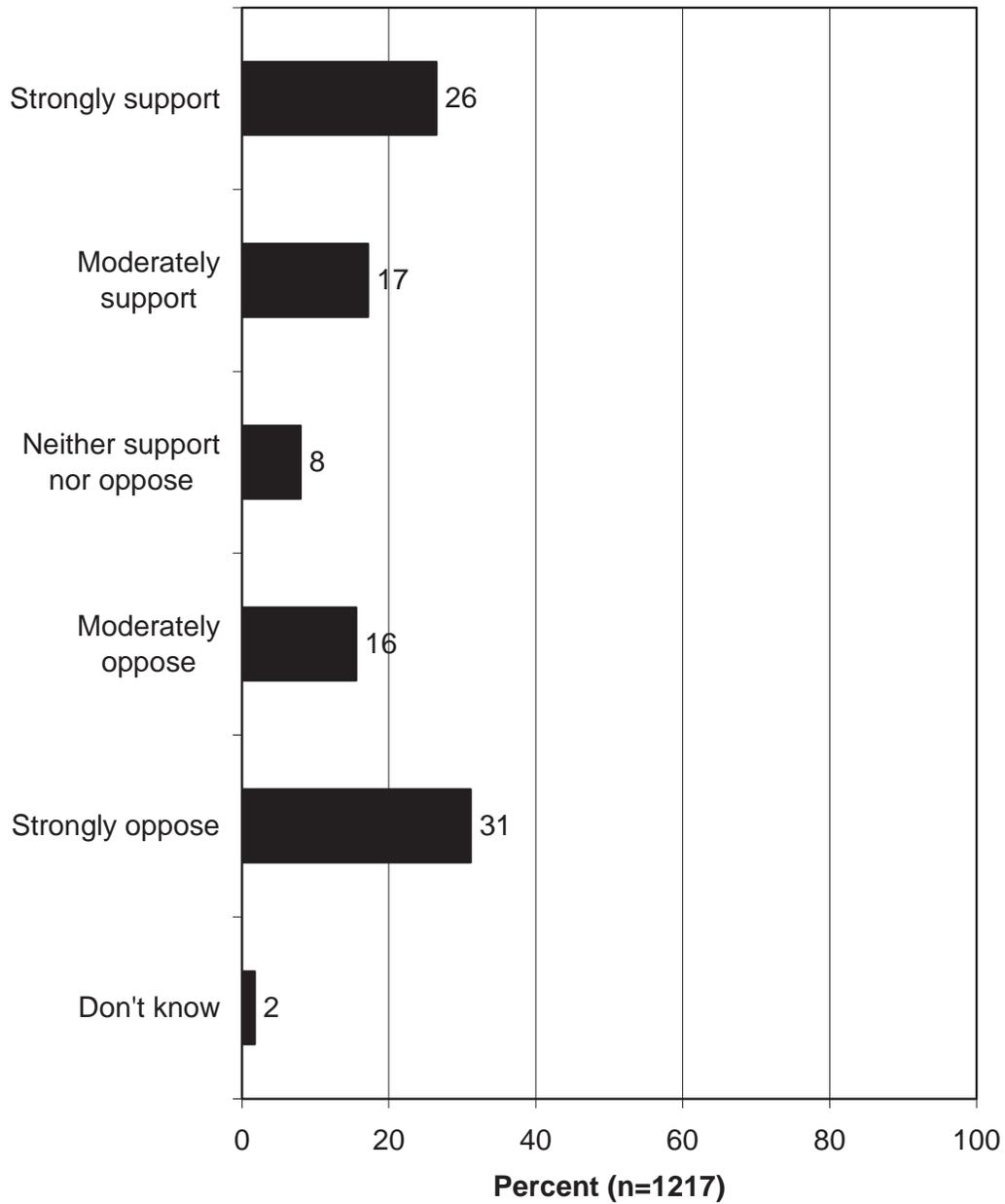
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Vermont deer hunters oppose legalizing crossbows for all hunters during all deer hunting seasons (52% *strongly oppose* this).
 - The most opposition occurs in the Eastern region (71%, with 58% who *strongly oppose* this) and the least occurs in the Western region (57%, with 44% who *strongly oppose*).

As discussed earlier, 30% of Vermont deer hunters hunted deer during archery season in 2013. Crosstabulations were performed to observe differences in attitudes or opinions between those who hunted during archery season (archery hunters) and those who hunted, but not during archery season (non-archery hunters).

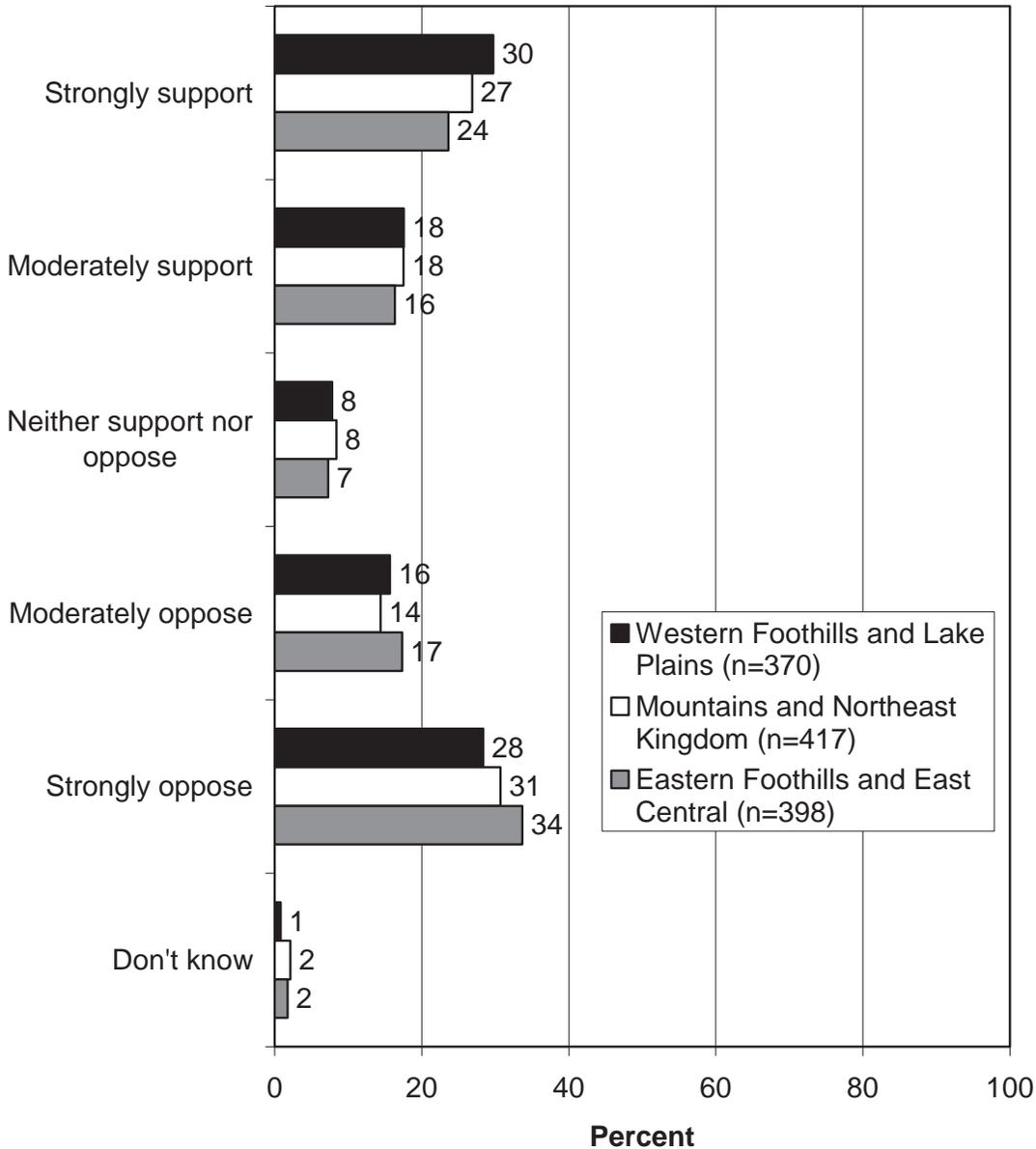
- In rating the importance of different factors to their general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, archery hunters gave higher mean ratings than non-archery hunters to “the amount of buck sign in the woods” (mean rating of 7.16 out of 10.00, compared to 6.66 from non-archery hunters), “harvesting an older, larger-antlered buck” (7.04, compared to 6.47), “harvesting a deer, regardless of age or sex” (6.08, compared to 5.35), and “harvesting more than one buck each year” (4.46, compared to 3.53).
- Archery hunters were substantially more supportive than non-archery hunters for making archery season longer; 48% of archery hunters *strongly support* the change, compared to only 18% of non-archery hunters.
- When asked about making crossbow use legal for all hunters during archery season, 27% of archery hunters *strongly support* the idea, compared to 17% of non-archery hunters. Nonetheless, majorities of both groups oppose the change (55% of archery hunters and 65% of non-archery hunters).
- Archery hunters have slightly more total support (65%) than non-archery hunters (61%) for making it legal for older hunters only to use crossbows during archery season.
- About one-quarter (27%) of archery hunters *strongly support* making crossbows legal for all hunters during all seasons, compared to 16% of non-archery hunters. However, majorities of both groups oppose the change (58% of archery hunters and 67% of non-archery hunters).

Hunting during archery season was highest among hunters with a resident combination license (39% with this license type participated) or a non-resident combination license (38%).

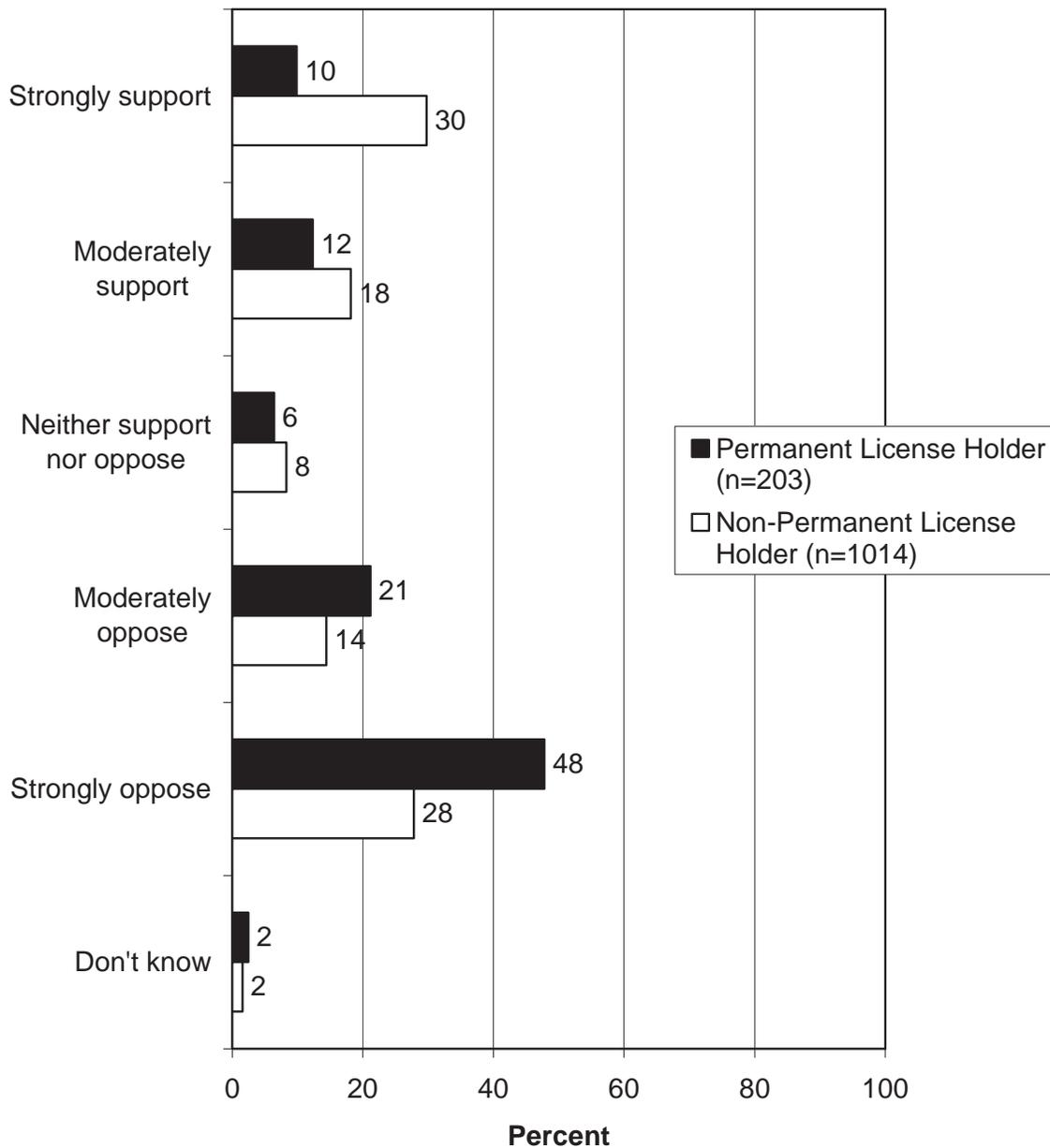
Q55. Currently the archery season is 23 days in October and 9 days that occur at the same time as muzzleloader season in December. Would you support or oppose making the archery deer season longer?



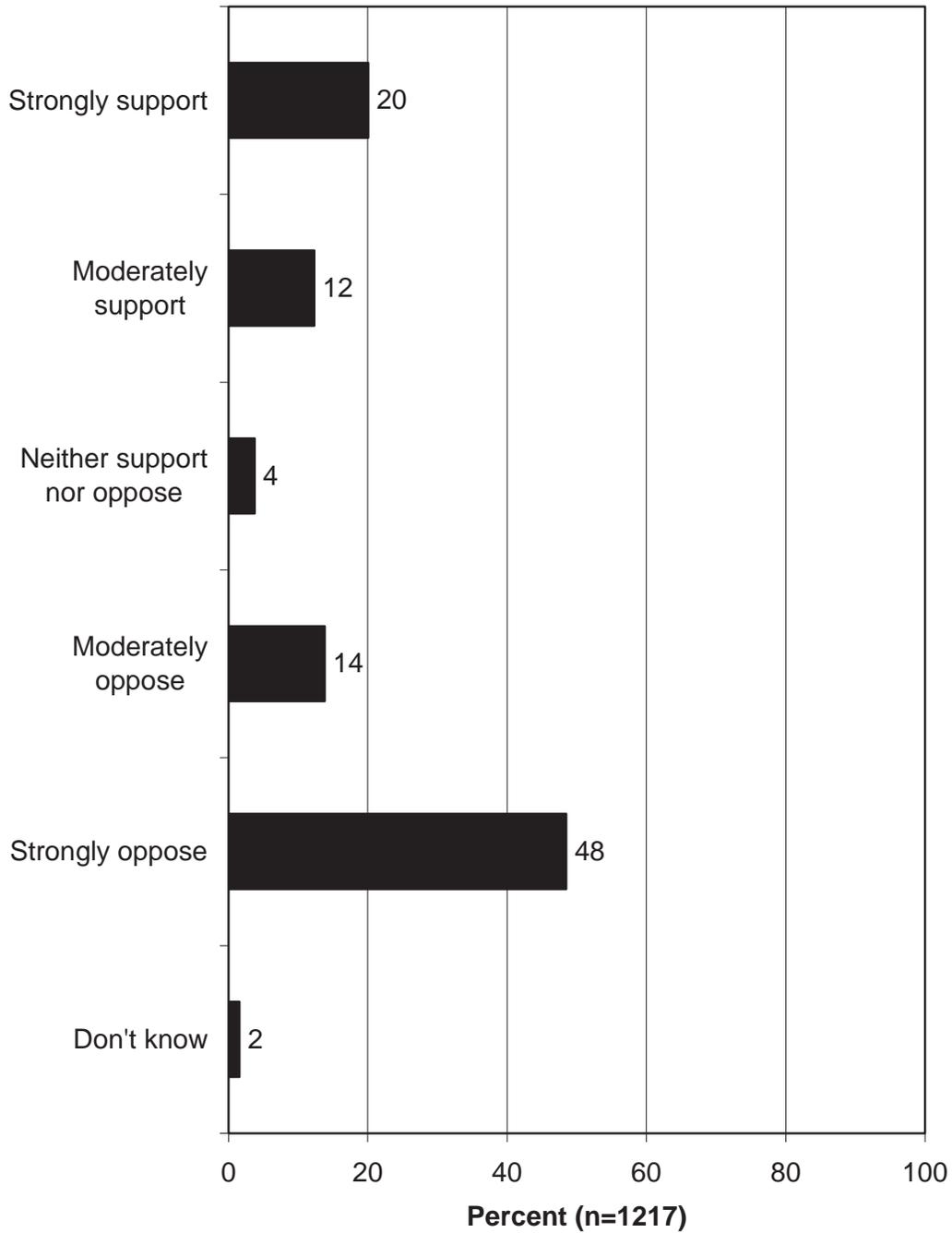
Q55. Currently the archery season is 23 days in October and 9 days that occur at the same time as muzzleloader season in December. Would you support or oppose making the archery deer season longer?



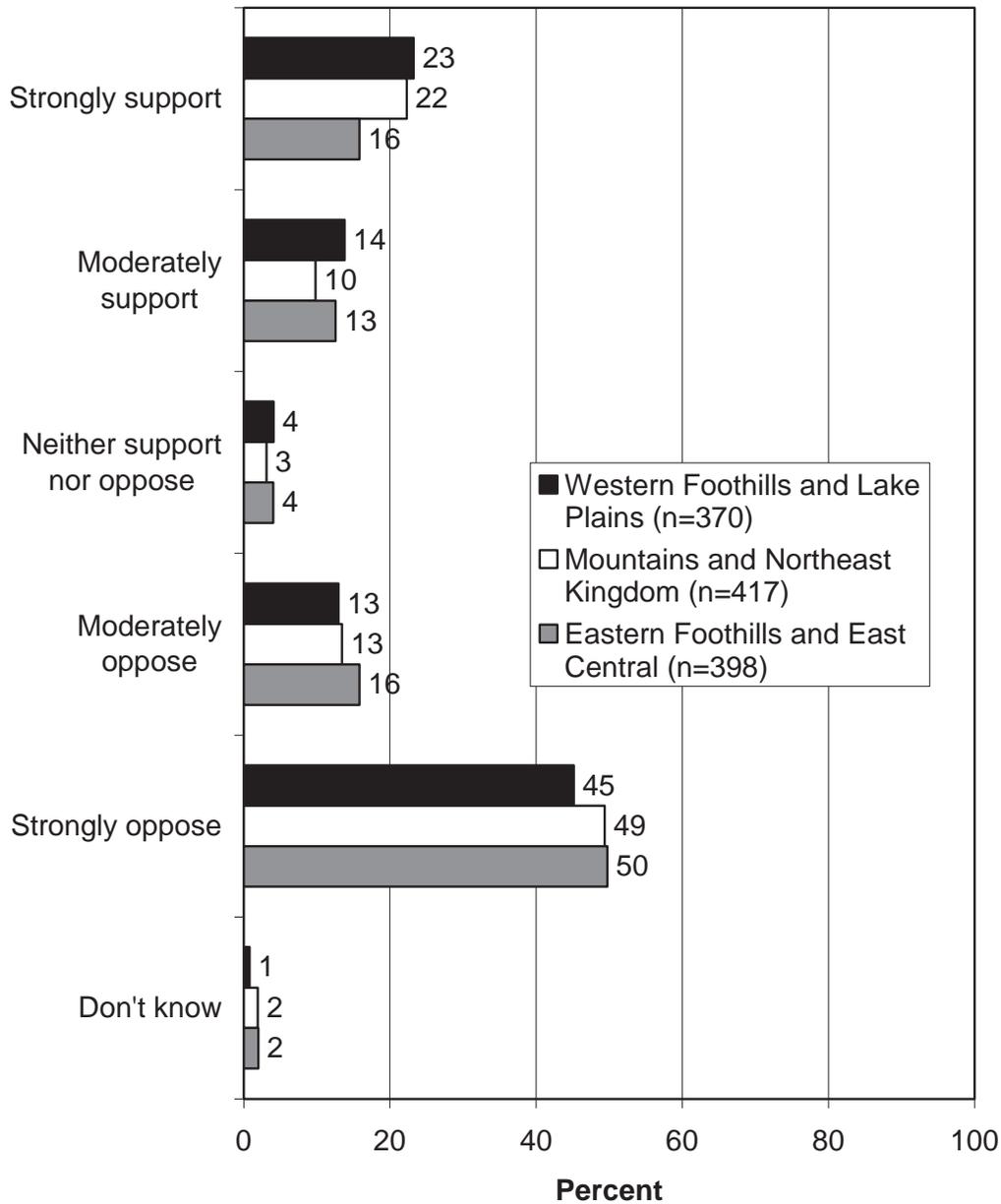
Q55. Currently the archery season is 23 days in October and 9 days that occur at the same time as muzzleloader season in December. Would you support or oppose making the archery deer season longer?



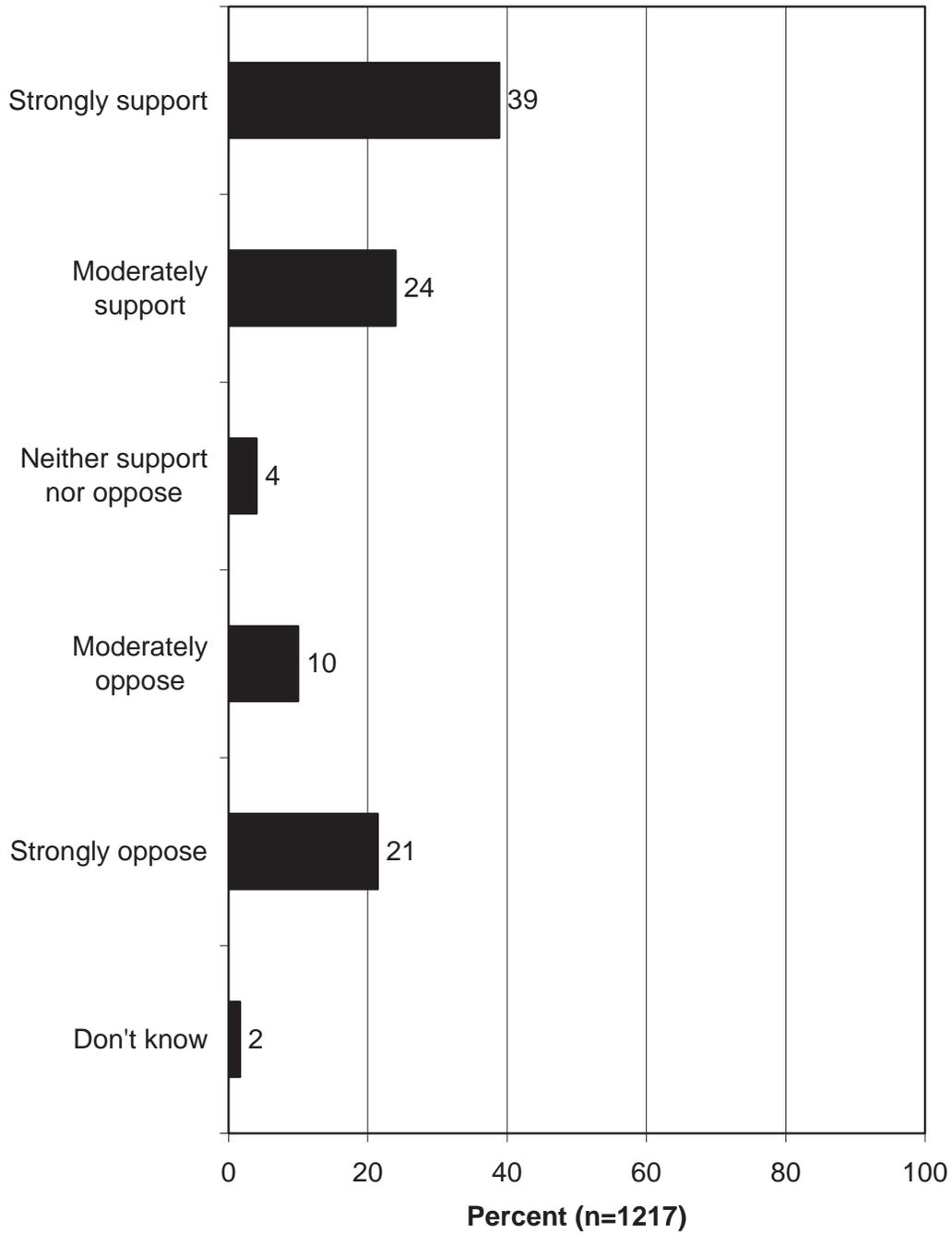
Q58. Would you support or oppose making it legal for all hunters to use crossbows to hunt during the archery deer seasons?



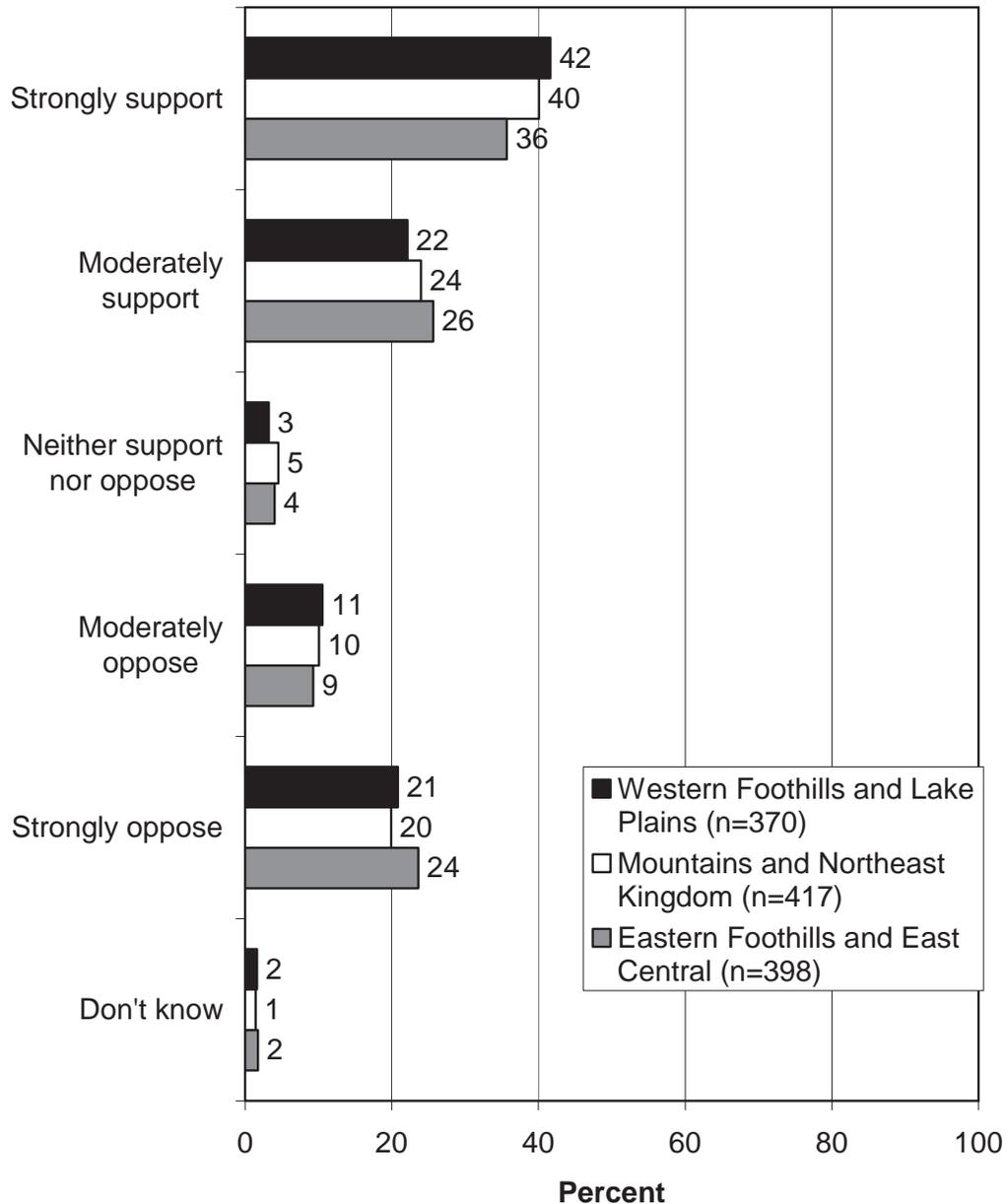
Q58. Would you support or oppose making it legal for all hunters to use crossbows to hunt during the archery deer seasons?



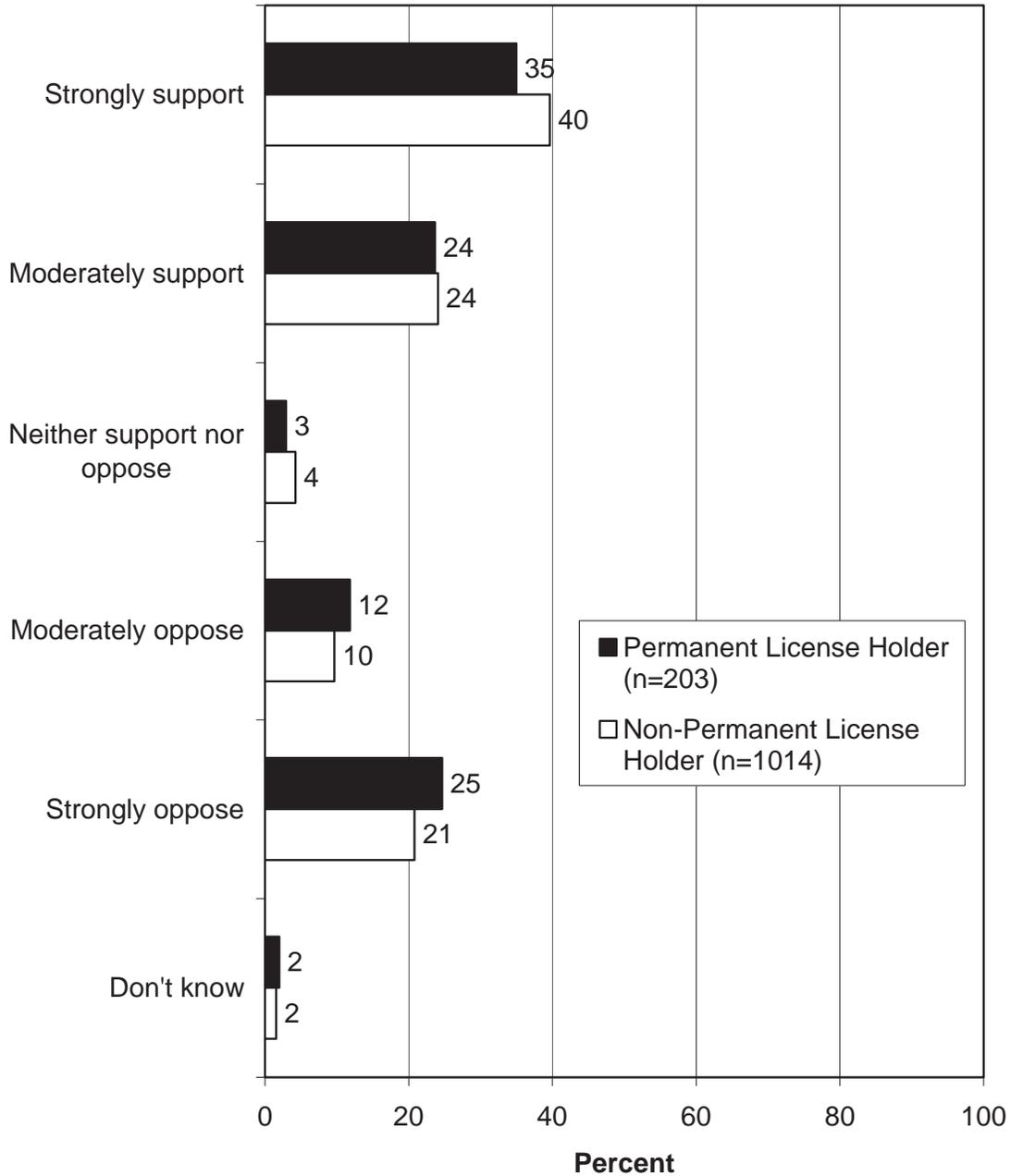
Q59. Would you support or oppose making it legal for older adult hunters only to use crossbows to hunt deer during archery deer seasons?



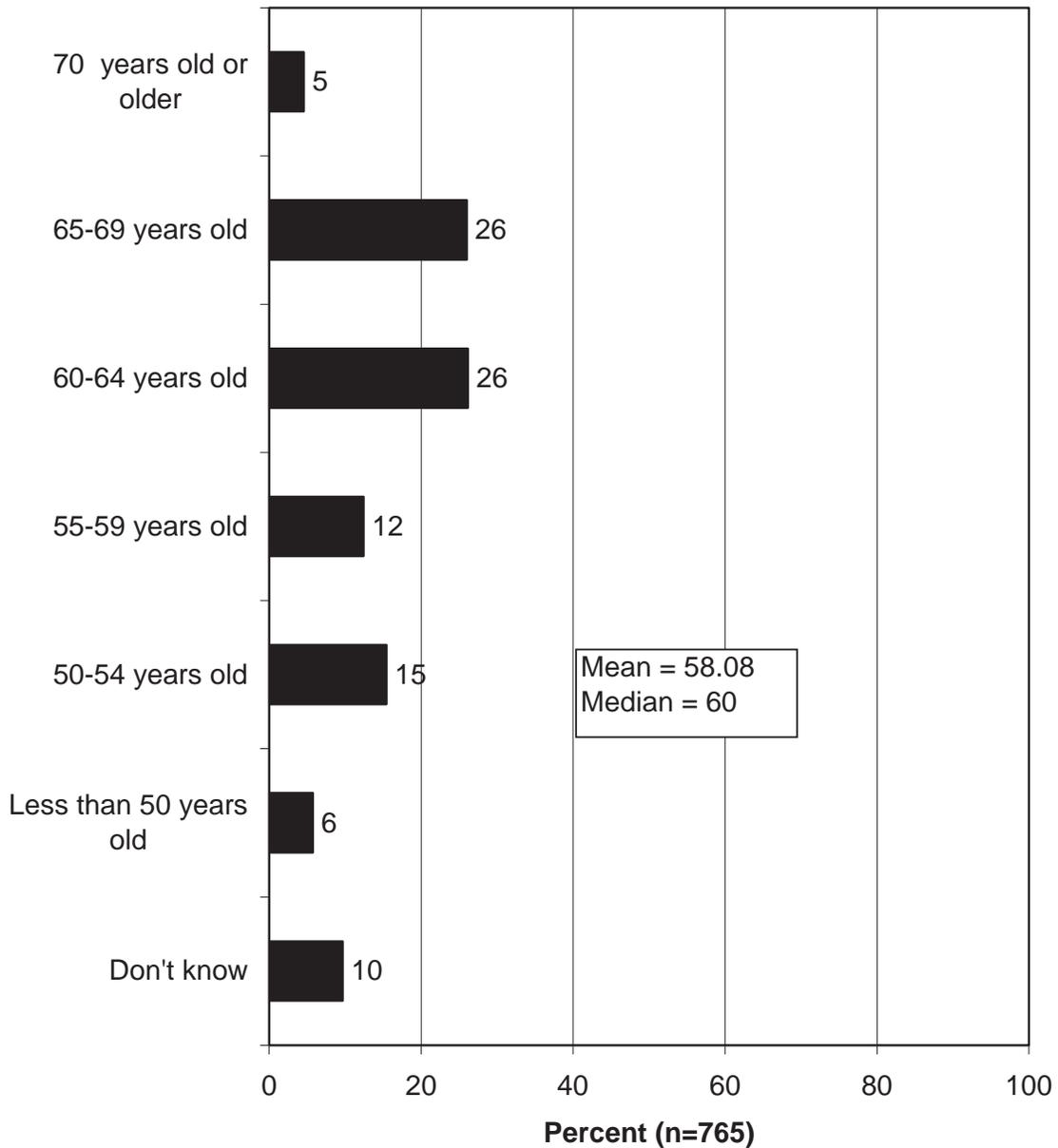
Q59. Would you support or oppose making it legal for older adult hunters only to use crossbows to hunt deer during archery deer seasons?



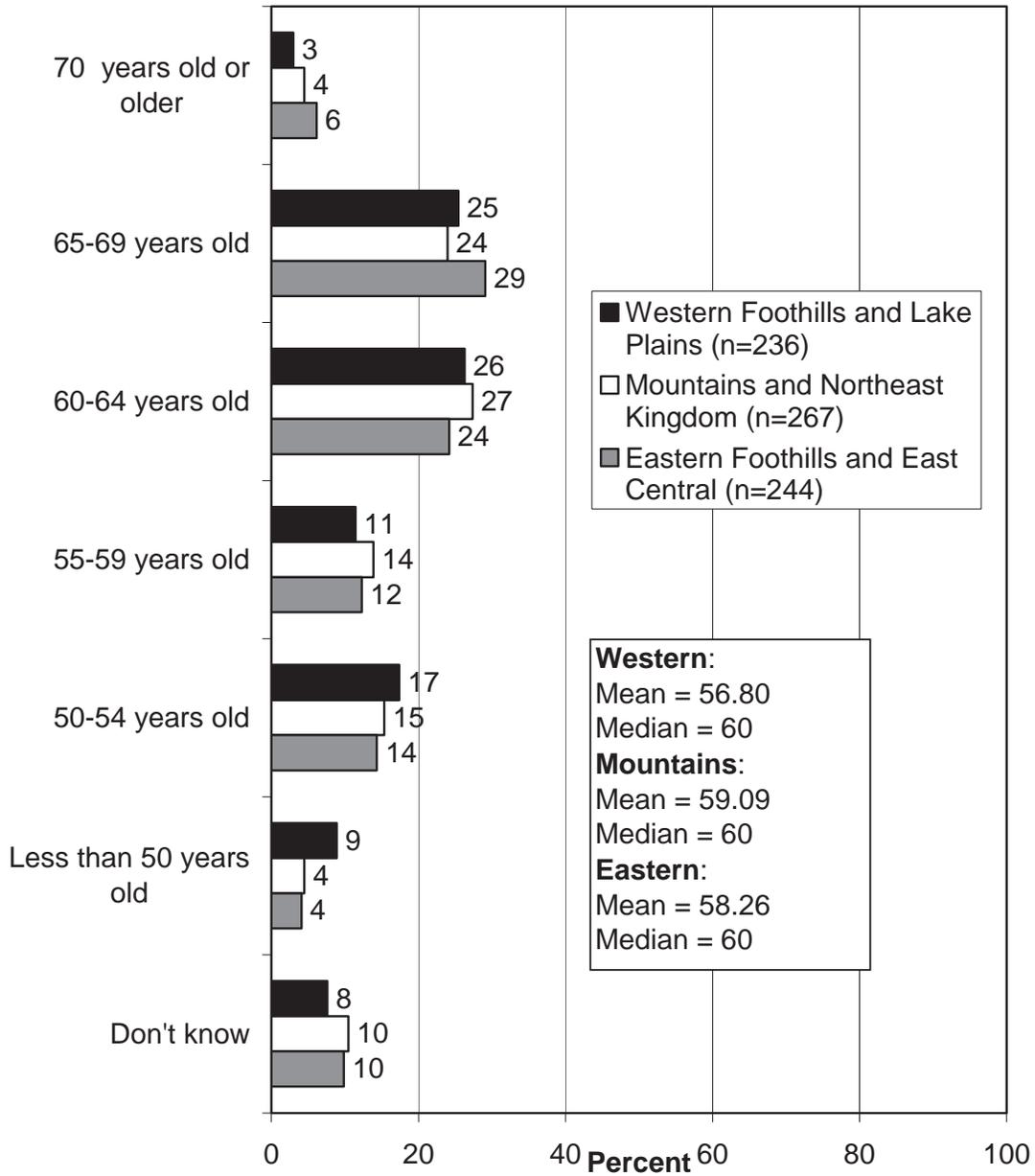
Q59. Would you support or oppose making it legal for older adult hunters only to use crossbows to hunt deer during archery deer seasons?



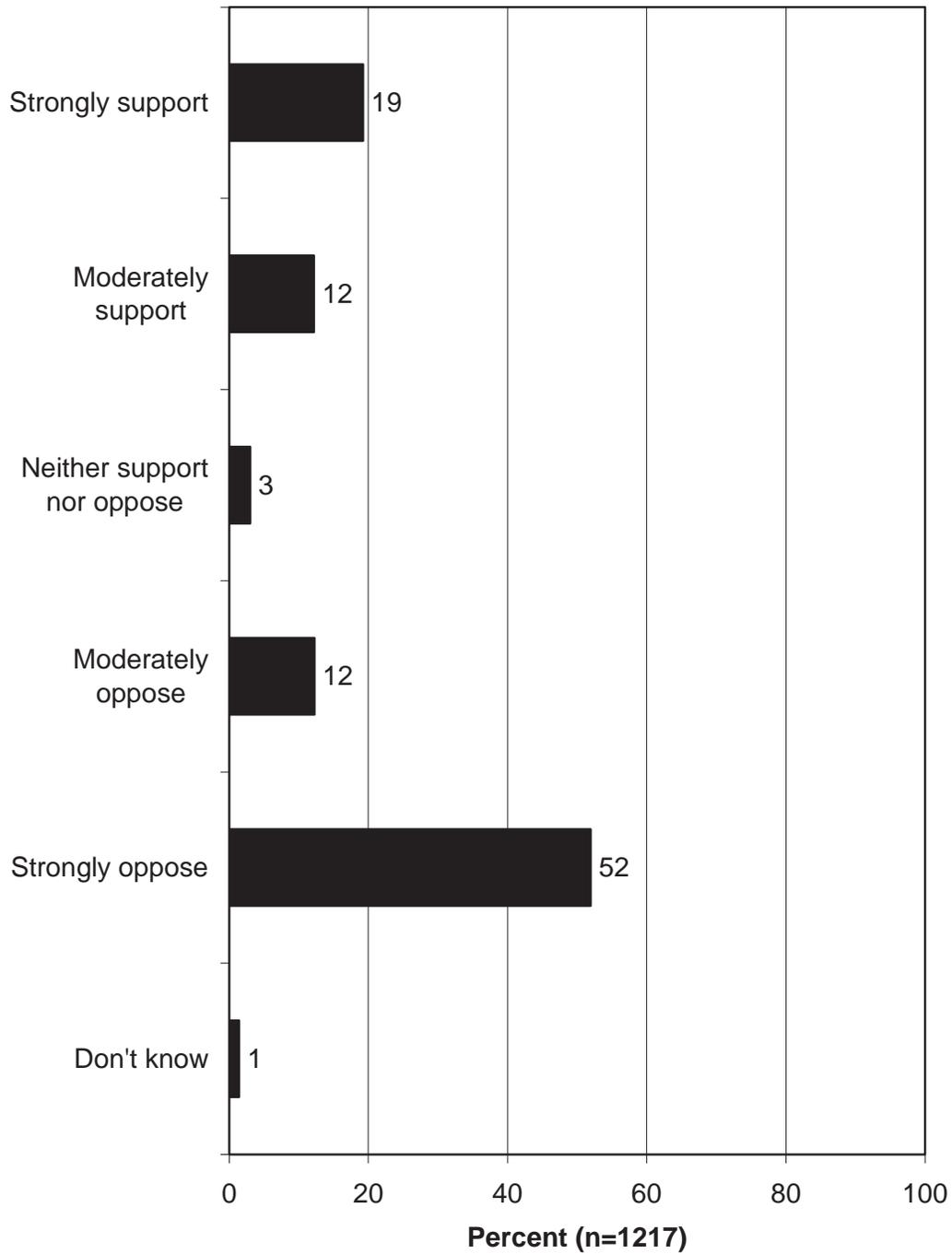
Q60. At what age do you think older adult hunters should be able to start legally hunting deer with a crossbow during the archery deer seasons? (Asked of those who support making it legal for older hunters only to hunt deer with a crossbow during archery deer seasons.)



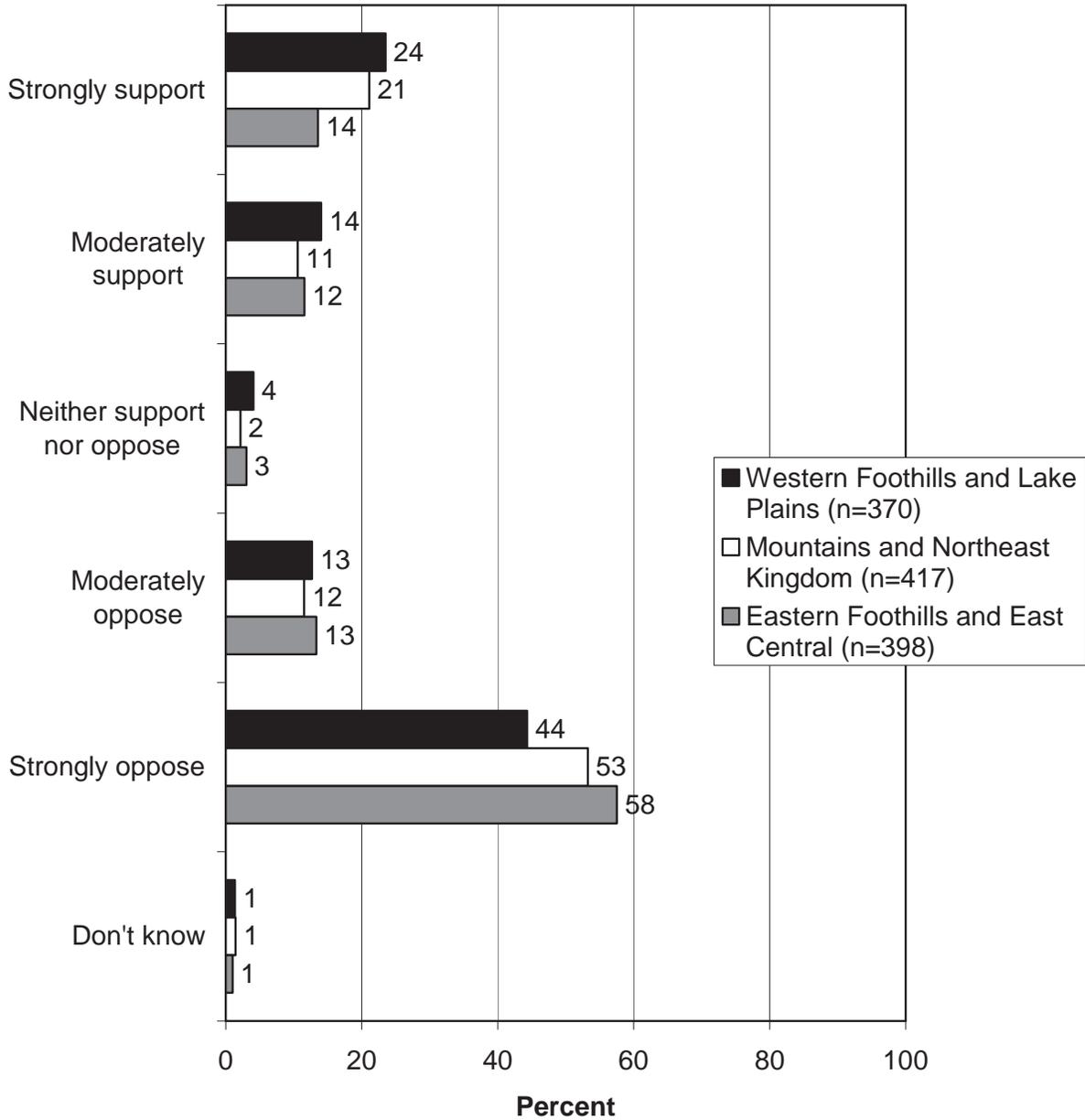
Q60. At what age do you think older adult hunters should be able to start legally hunting deer with a crossbow during the archery deer seasons? (Asked of those who support making it legal for older hunters only to hunt deer with a crossbow during archery deer seasons.)



Q61. Would you support or oppose making it legal for all hunters to use crossbows during all deer hunting seasons?

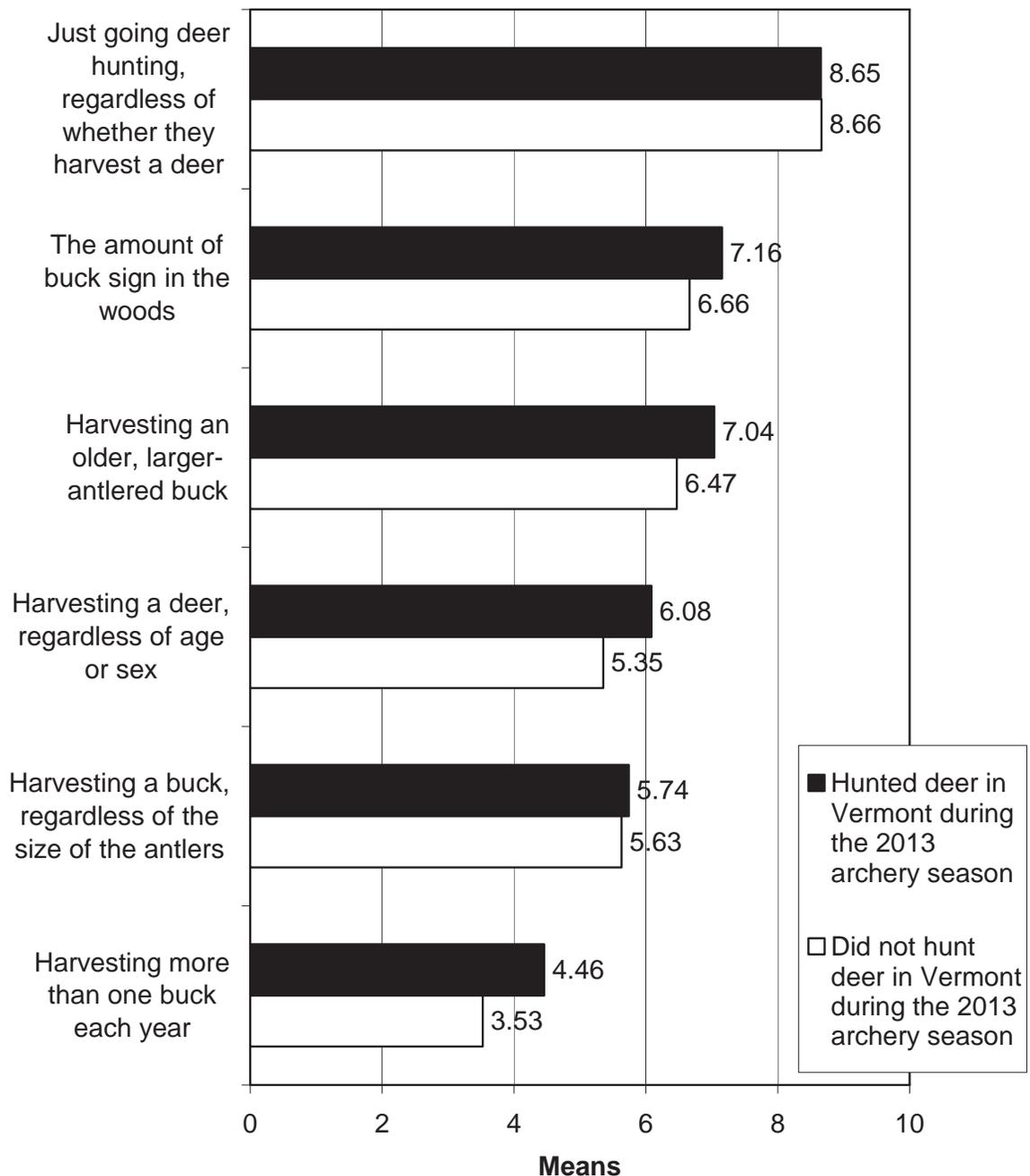


Q61. Would you support or oppose making it legal for all hunters to use crossbows during all deer hunting seasons?

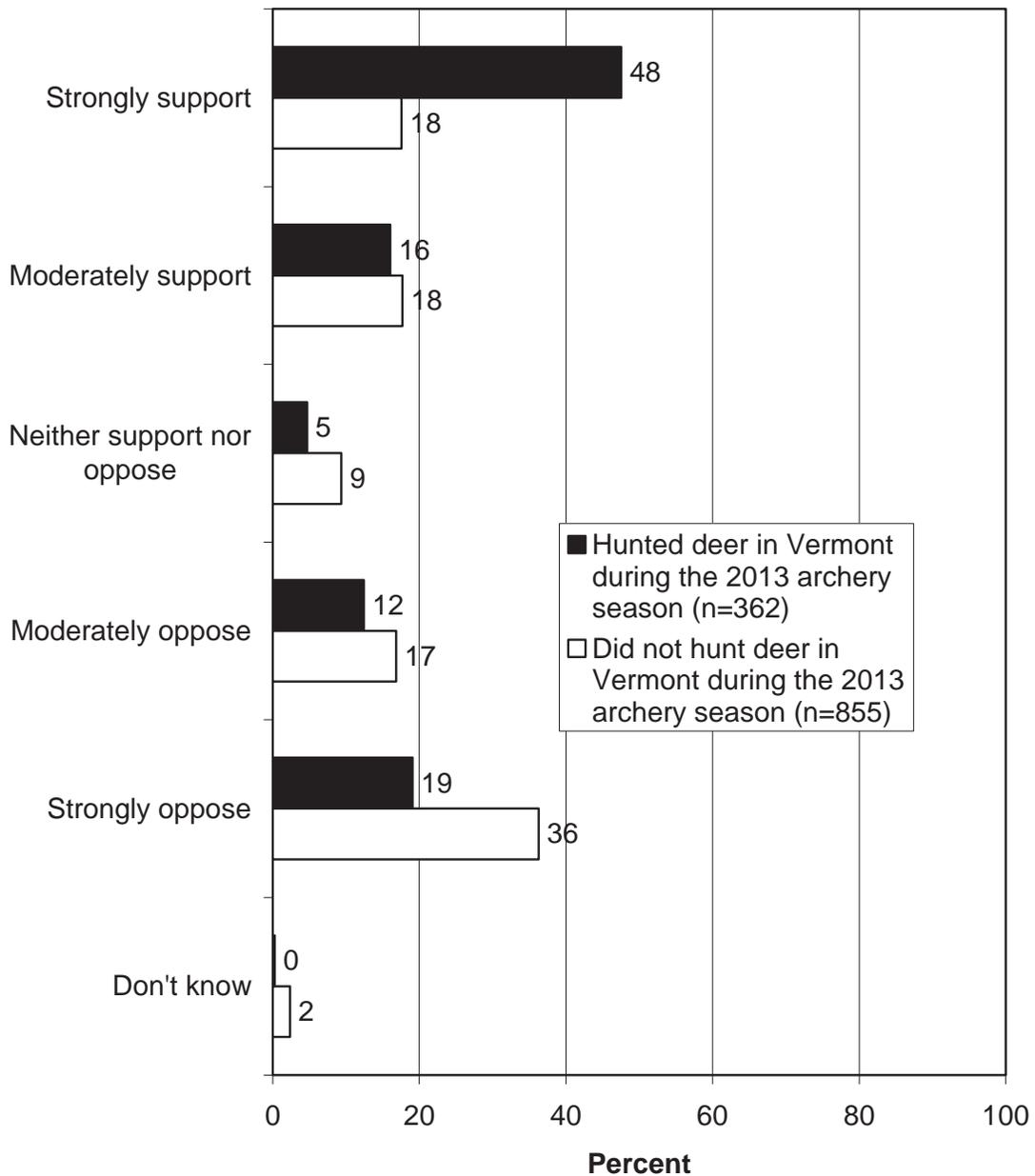


The following six graphs show crosstabulations comparing archery hunters to non-archery hunters.

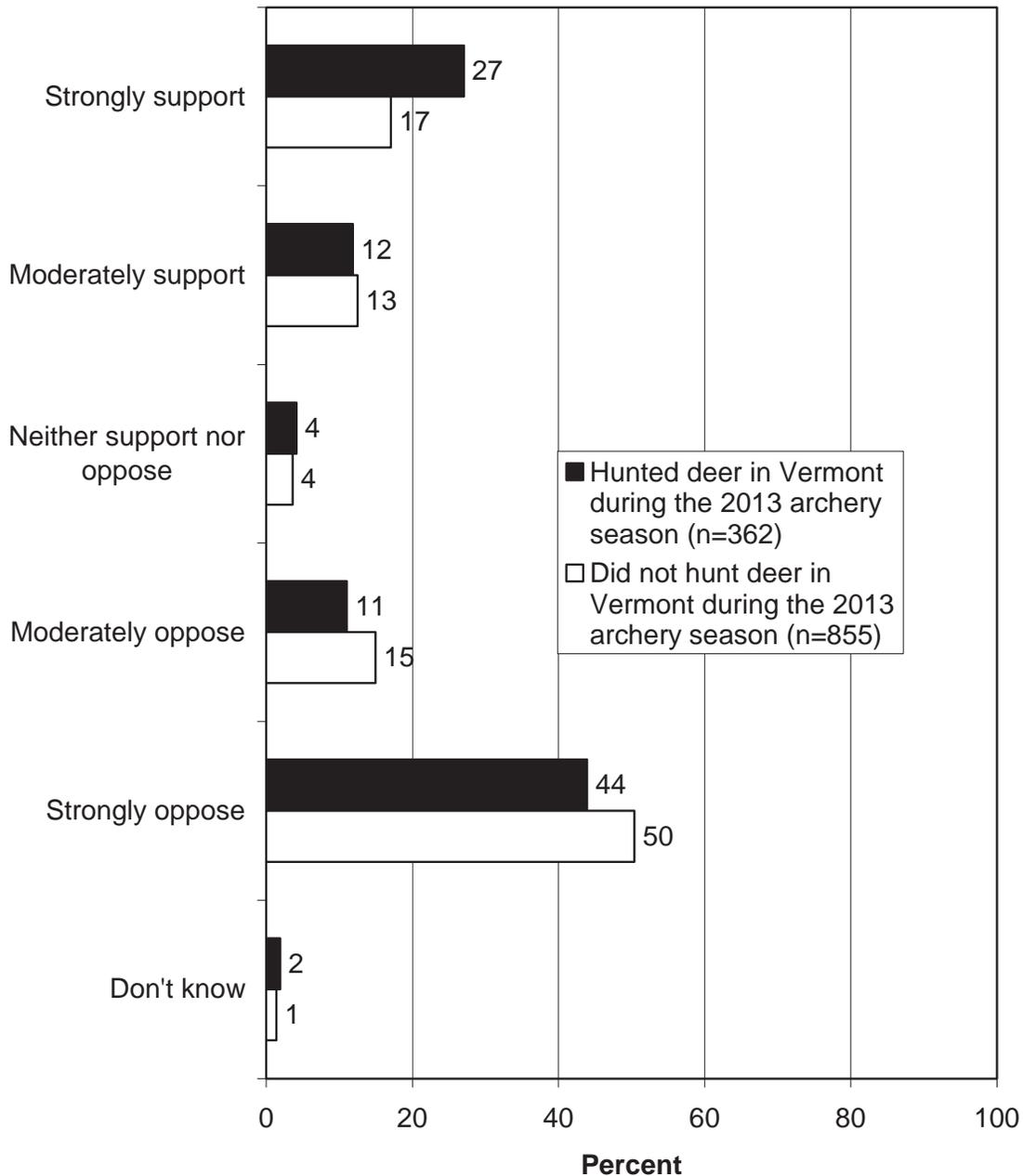
Q36-Q41. Mean rated importance of each of the following to respondents' general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10:



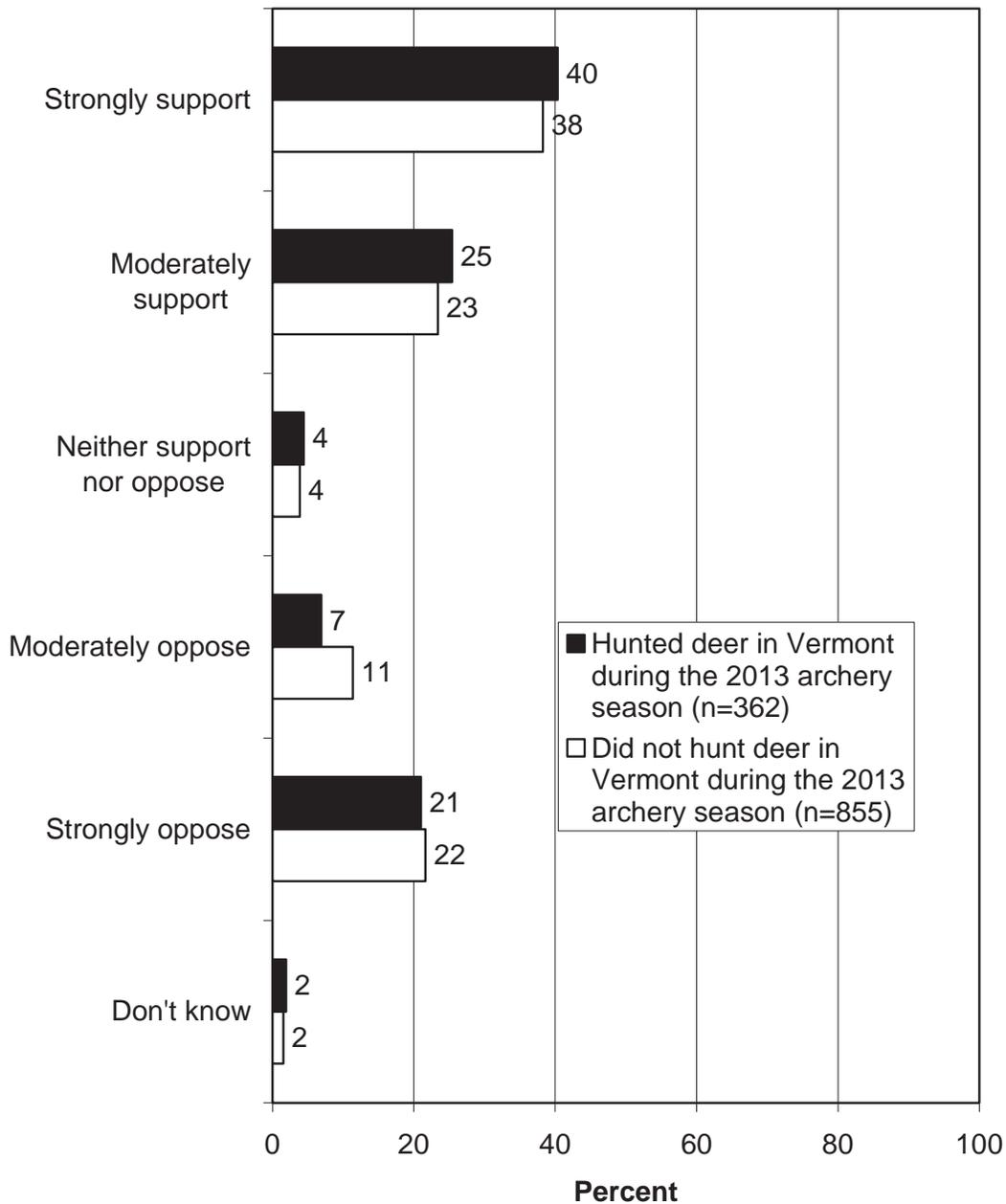
Q55. Currently the archery season is 23 days in October and 9 days that occur at the same time as muzzleloader season in December. Would you support or oppose making the archery deer season longer?



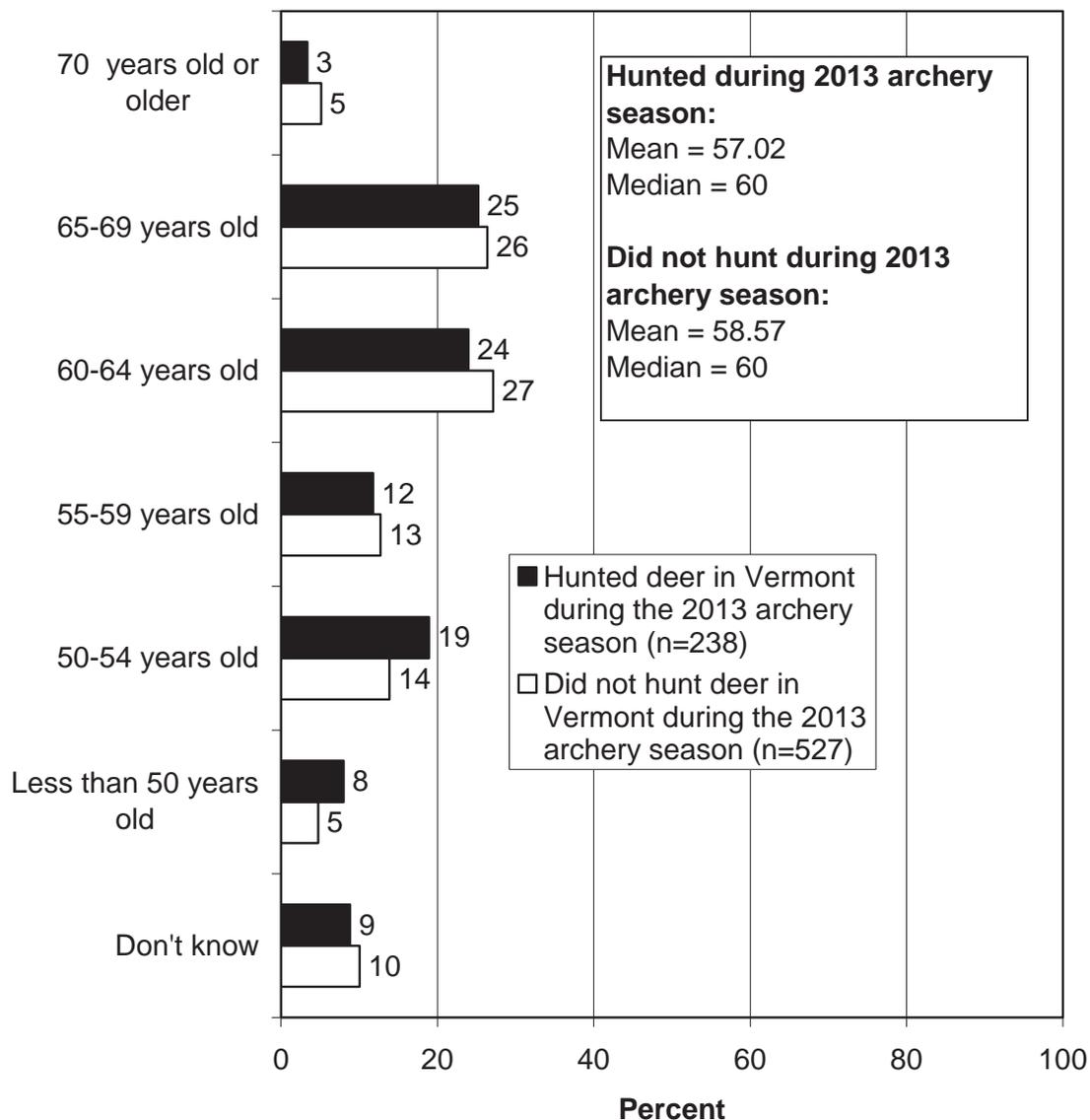
Q58. Would you support or oppose making it legal for all hunters to use crossbows to hunt during the archery deer seasons?



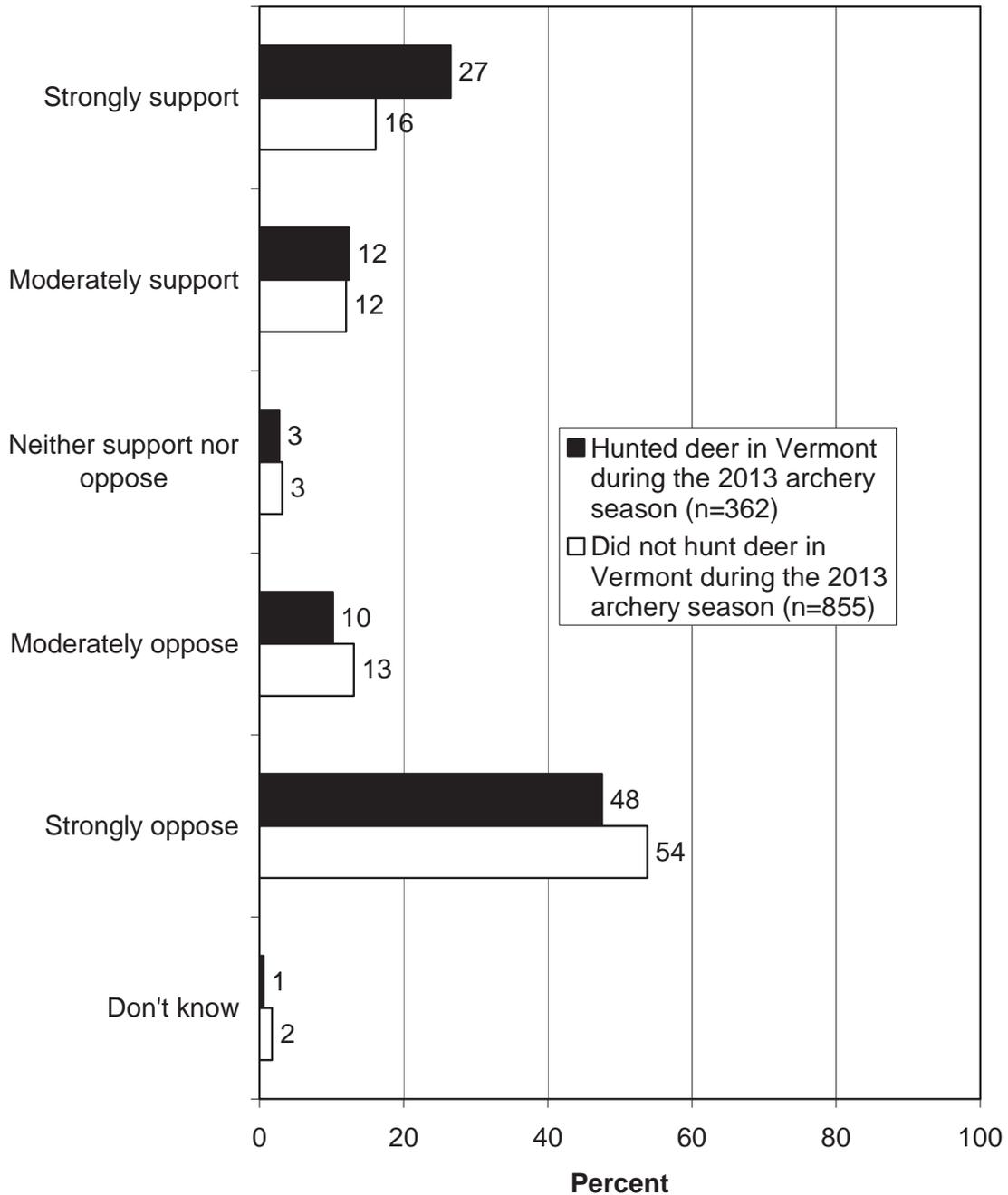
Q59. Would you support or oppose making it legal for older adult hunters only to use crossbows to hunt deer during archery deer seasons?



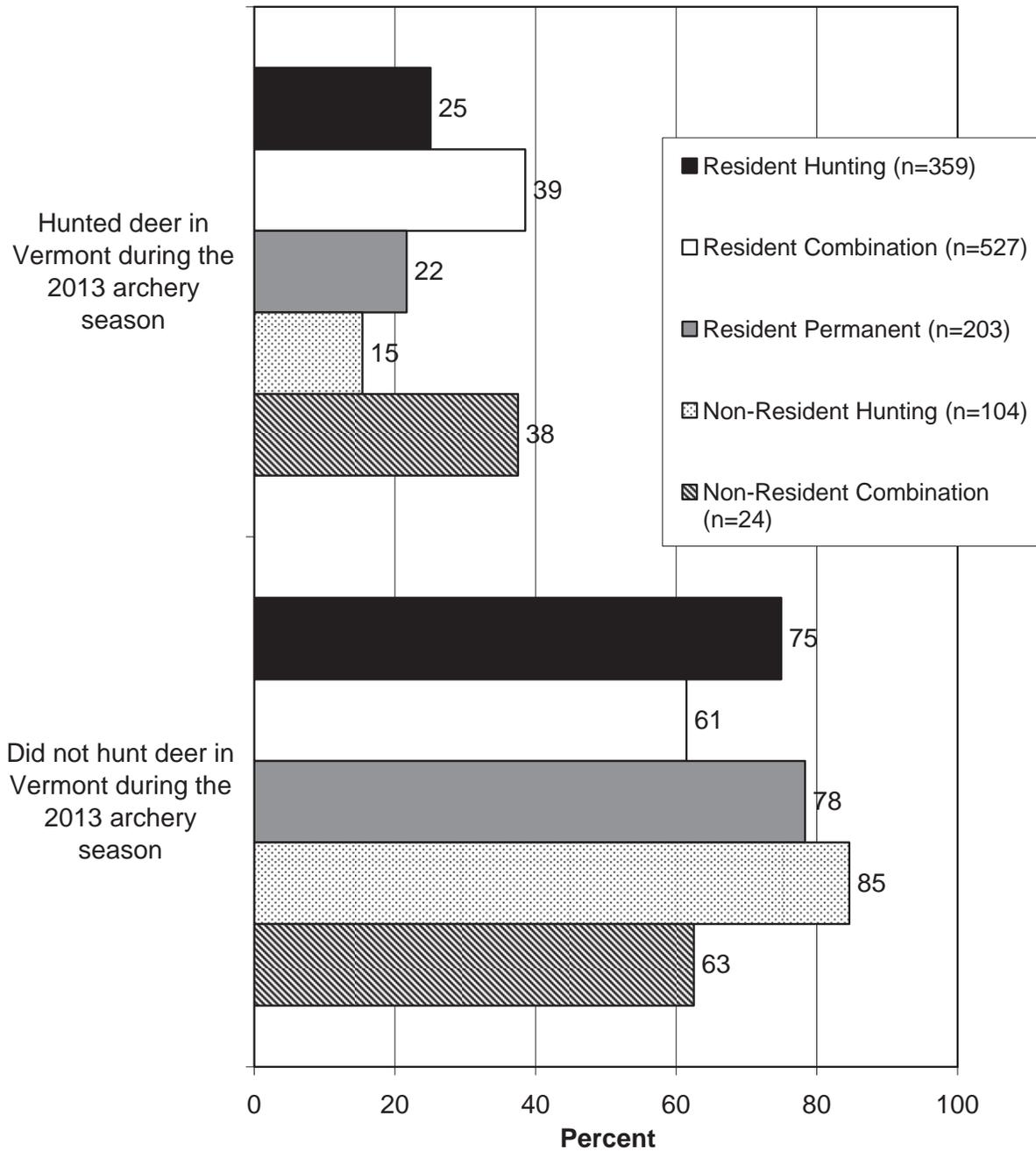
Q60. At what age do you think older adult hunters should be able to start legally hunting deer with a crossbow during the archery deer seasons? (Asked of those who support making it legal for older hunters only to hunt deer with a crossbow during archery deer seasons.)



Q61. What if crossbows were made legal for all hunters during all deer hunting seasons?



Archery season participation.



RIFLE SEASON

- Vermont deer hunters were asked if they would support or oppose moving rifle season so that it would start one week later, but still include Thanksgiving and still be 16 days in length. There was slightly more opposition (47%) than support (43%) for this, but note that 33% of respondents *strongly oppose* the change.
 - This concept had the most overall support in the Western region (48%) and the least overall support in the Eastern region (39%).
 - A greater percentage of permanent license holders (54%) than non-permanent license holders (46%) opposed this concept.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked, if the Department thought an adjustment to rifle season would allow more bucks to participate in breeding, if they would support or oppose moving rifle season so that it would start one week later, but still include Thanksgiving and still be 16 days in length. A majority of 59% would support the adjustment, compared to 35% who would oppose it.
 - This concept had the most overall support in the Western region (63%) and the least overall support in the Mountains region (54%).
 - Only 46% of permanent license holders would support the adjustment.

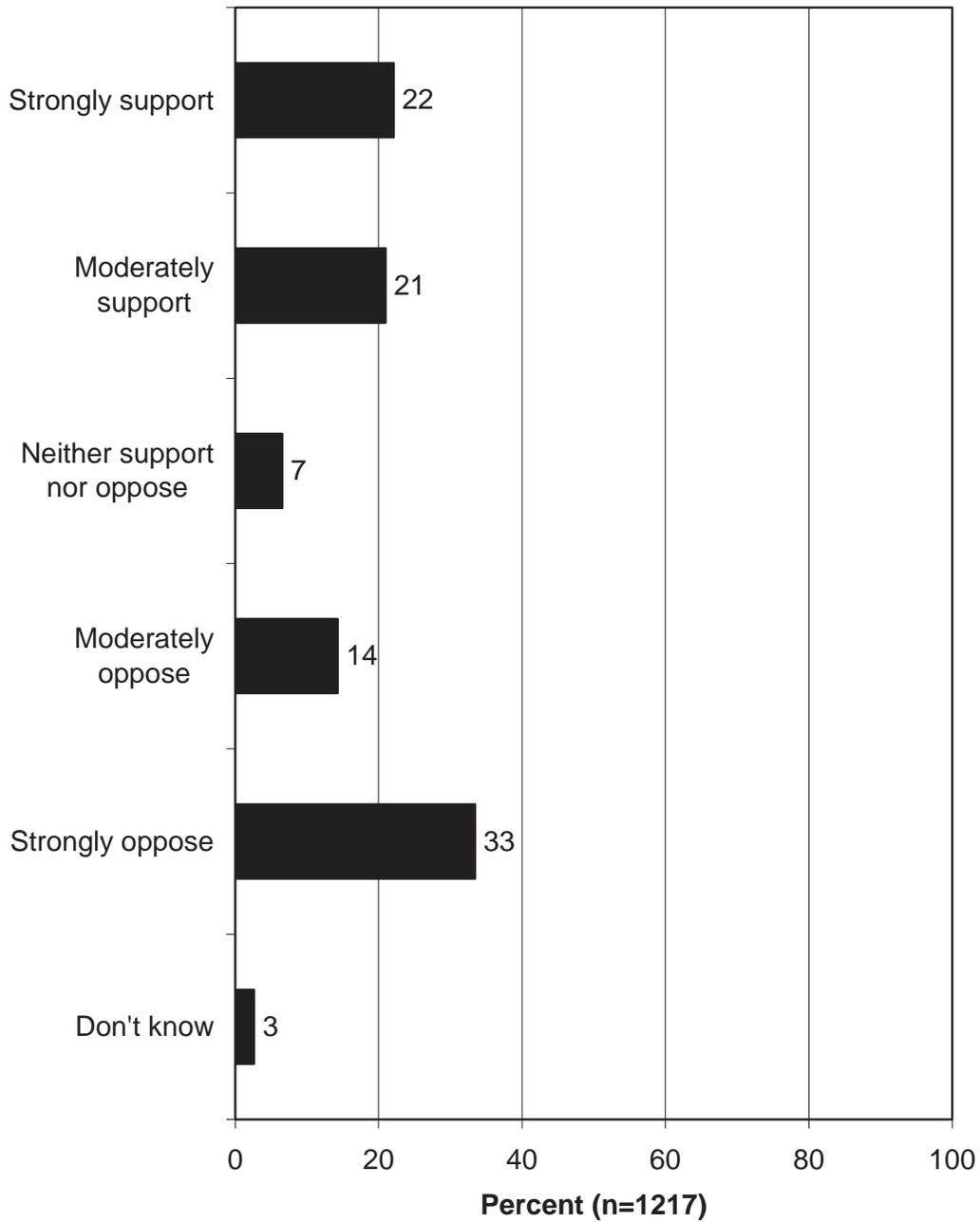
- Vermont deer hunters were asked if they would support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of rifle season in the Mountains region only. Respondents were nearly evenly divided, with 48% supporting the extension and 44% opposing it. There was little regional variation.
 - Only 32% of permanent license holders would support the extension.

- Vermont deer hunters were asked, if shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, if they would support or oppose reducing rifle season by 7 days at the end of the season in these areas only. A majority (58%) of respondents oppose the suggestion, with 39% who *strongly oppose* it. There was little regional variation.

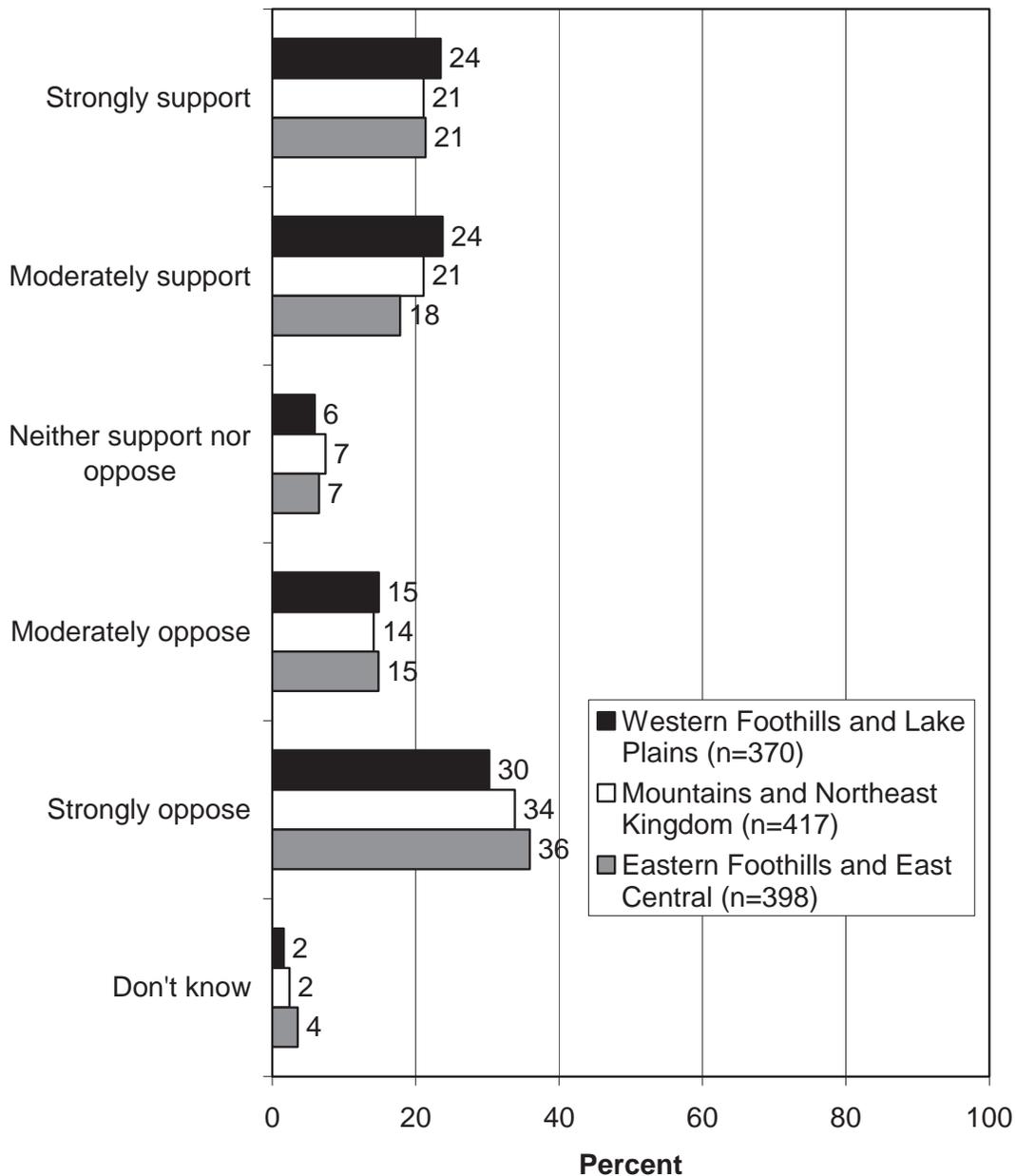
As discussed earlier, an overwhelming majority (95%) of Vermont deer hunters hunted deer during rifle season in 2013. Nonetheless, crosstabulations were performed to observe differences in attitudes and opinions between those who hunted during rifle season (rifle hunters) and those who hunted, but not during rifle season (non-rifle hunters).

- In rating the importance of different factors to their general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, rifle hunters gave higher mean ratings than non-rifle hunters to “harvesting an older, larger-antlered buck” (mean rating of 6.66 out of 10.00, compared to 6.21 from non-rifle hunters) and “harvesting a deer, regardless of age or sex” (5.60, compared to 5.13).
- In contrast, rifle hunters gave lower mean ratings than non-rifle hunters to the importance of “harvesting a buck, regardless of the size of the antlers” (5.65, compared to 6.00 from non-rifle hunters) and “harvesting more than one buck each year” (3.78, compared to 4.31).
- Notably, rifle hunters had less total support (42%) than non-rifle hunters (64%) for moving rifle deer season so that it starts one week later, but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length.
- If the Department thought an adjustment to rifle season would allow more bucks to participate in breeding, total support among rifle hunters increased (57%) but was still less than total support among non-rifle hunters (69%) for moving rifle season so that it would start one week later, but still include Thanksgiving and still be 16 days in length.
- When asked if they would support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of rifle season in the Mountains region only, there was little difference between rifle hunters (47% support) and non-rifle hunters (48% support).
- Vermont deer hunters were asked, if shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, if they would support or oppose reducing rifle season by 7 days at the end of the season in these areas only. Rifle hunters had markedly less support (29%) than non-rifle hunters (46%) for this suggestion.

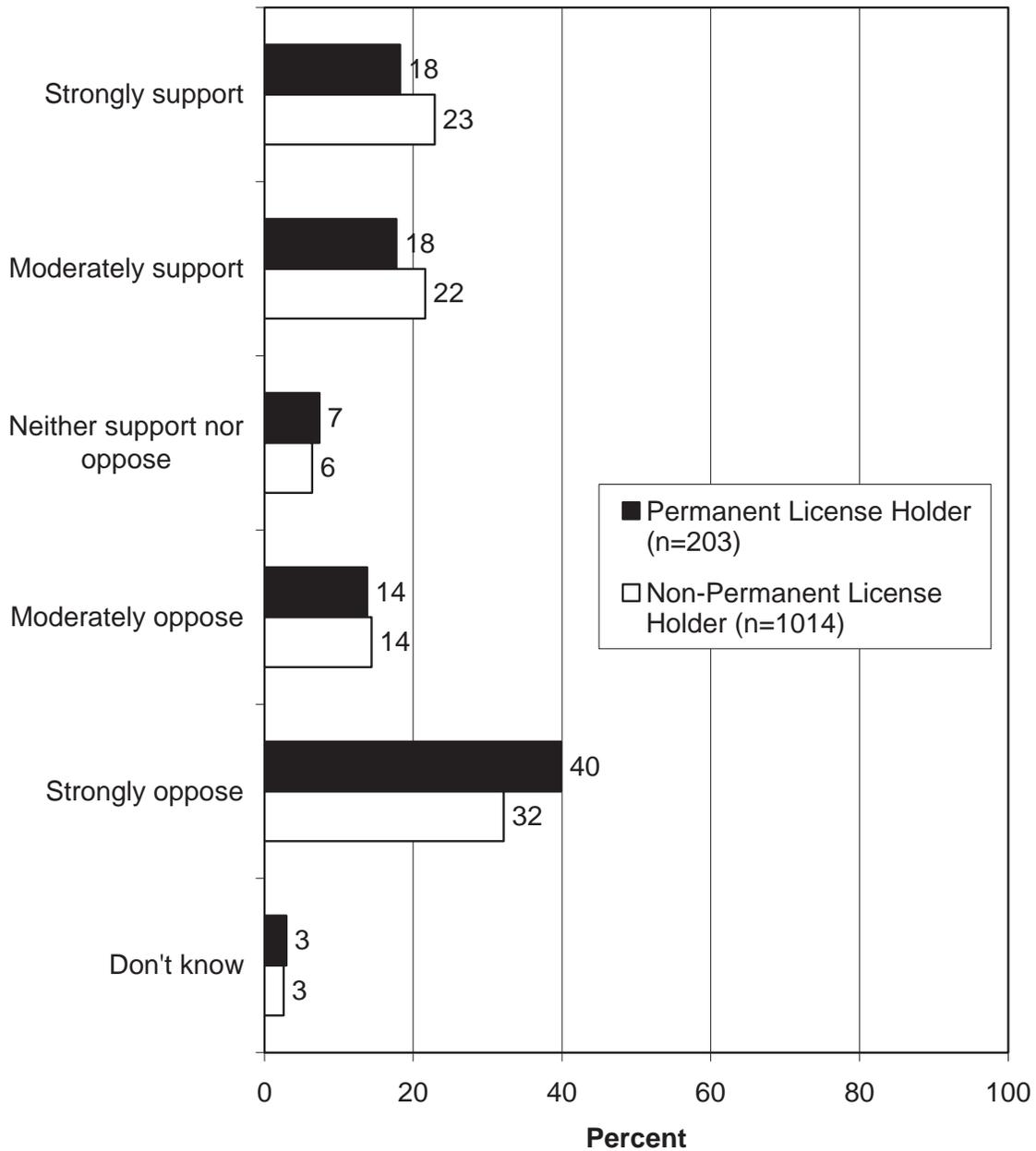
Q62. Would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



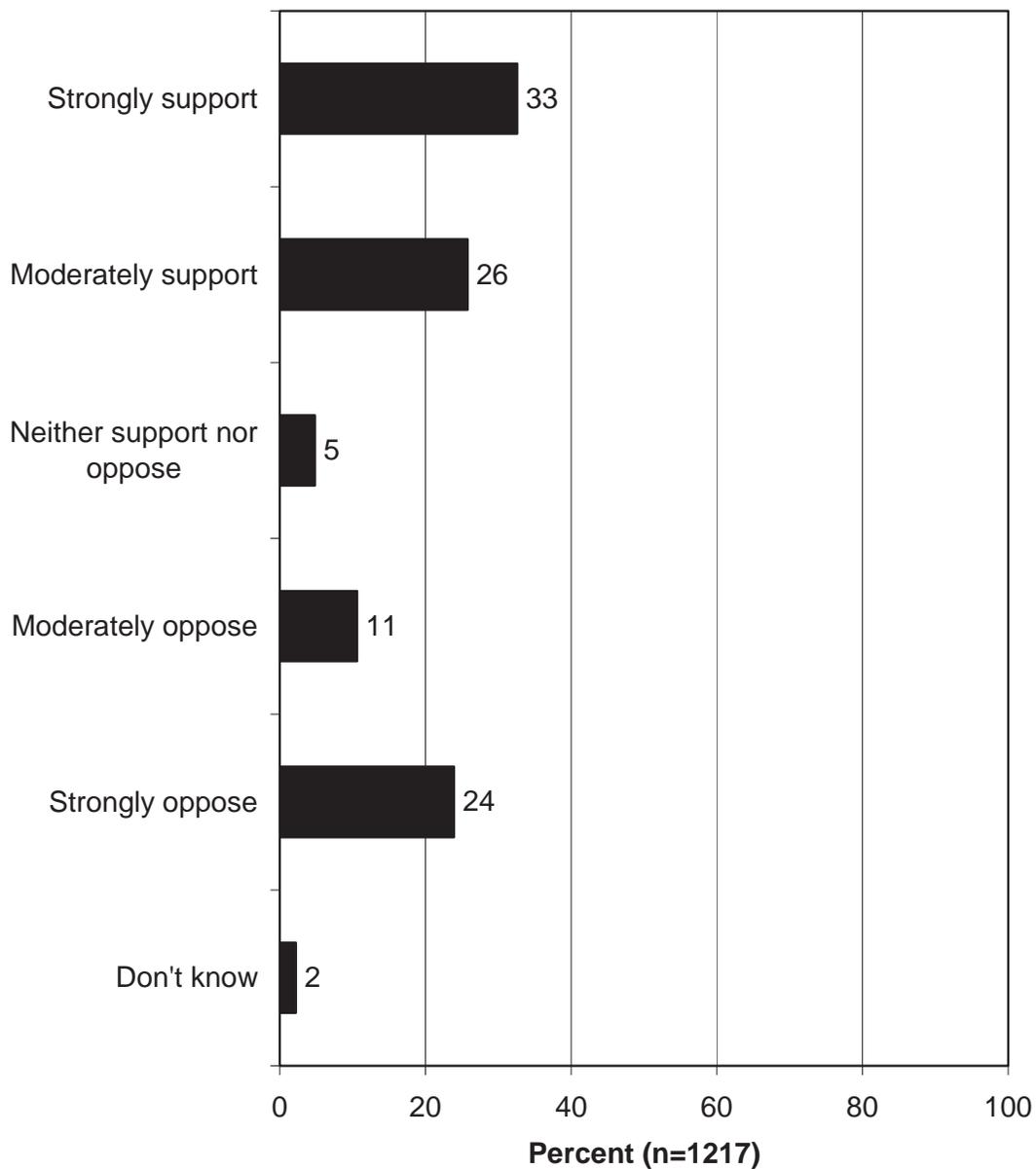
Q62. Would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



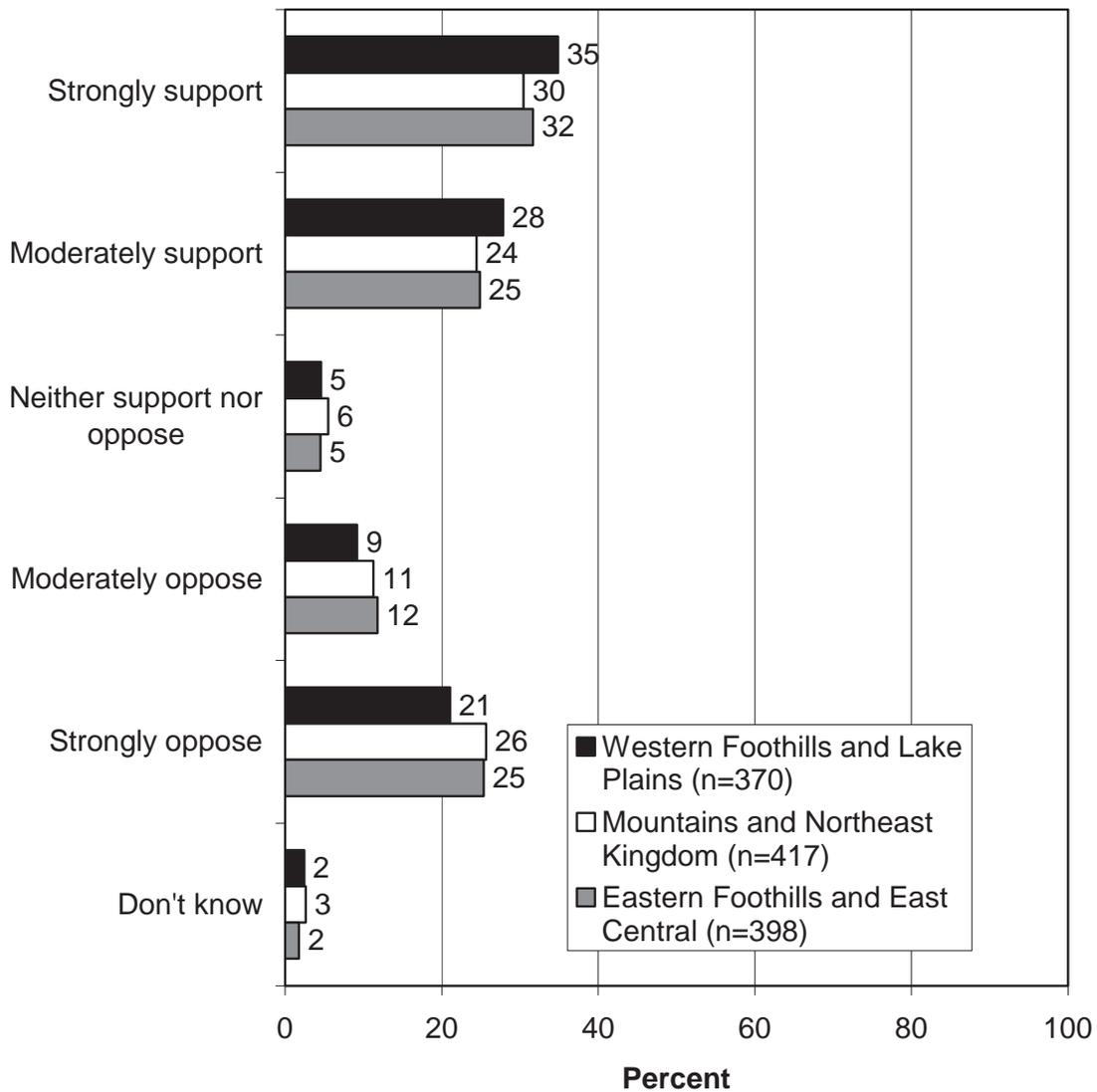
Q62. Would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



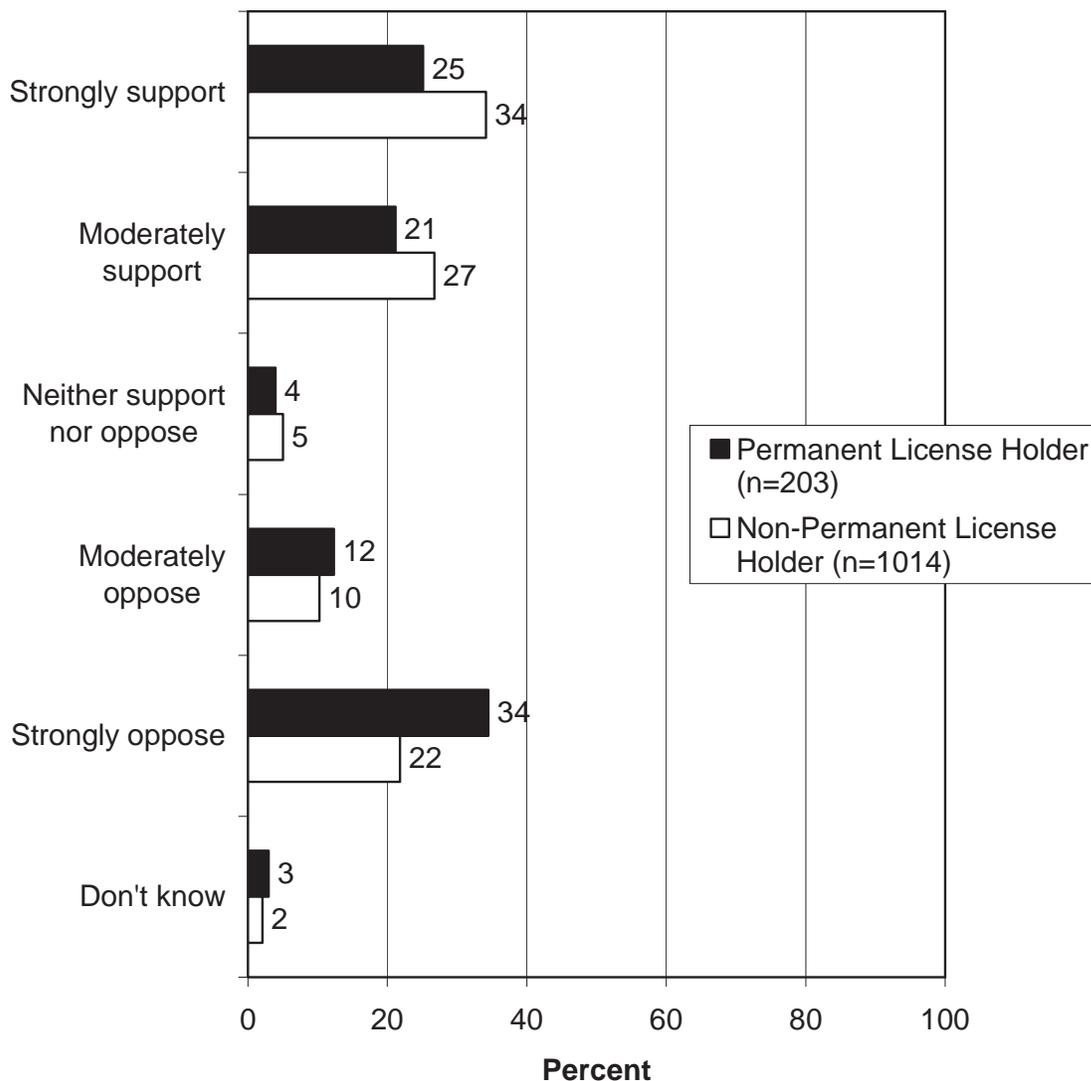
Q63. If the Department thought the timing of the current rifle season could be adjusted to allow more bucks to more fully participate in breeding, would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



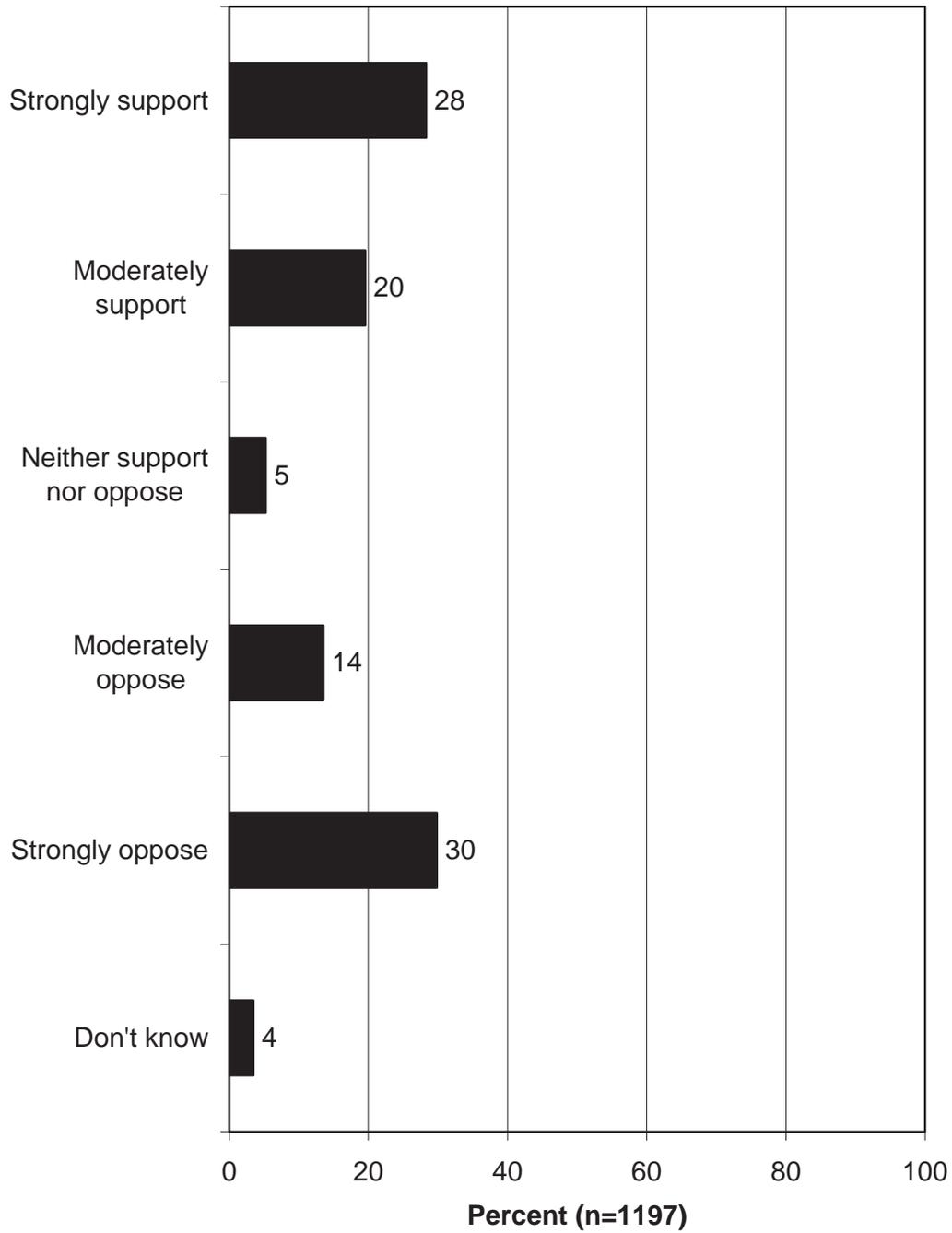
Q63. If the Department thought the timing of the current rifle season could be adjusted to allow more bucks to more fully participate in breeding, would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



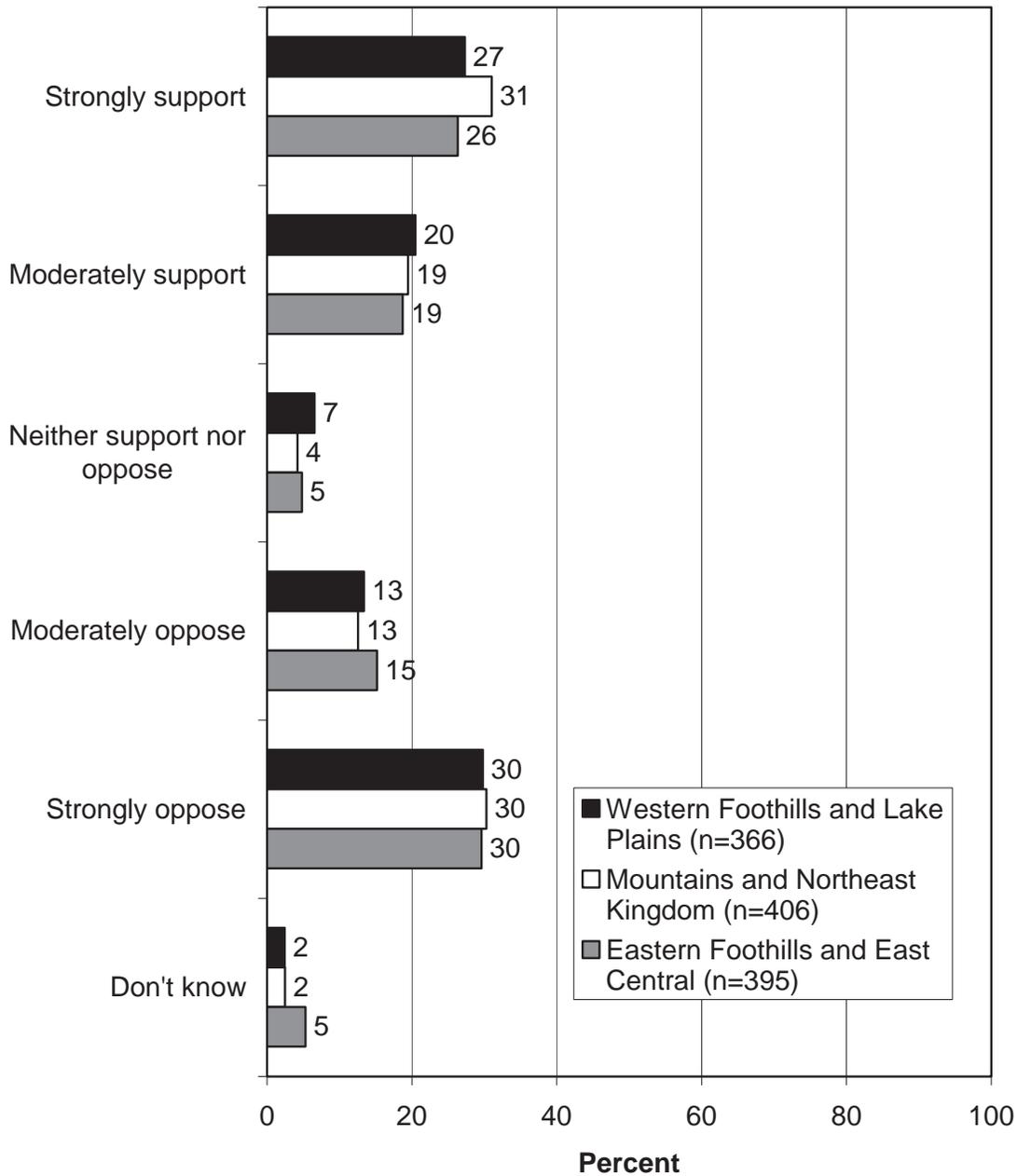
Q63. If the Department thought the timing of the current rifle season could be adjusted to allow more bucks to more fully participate in breeding, would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



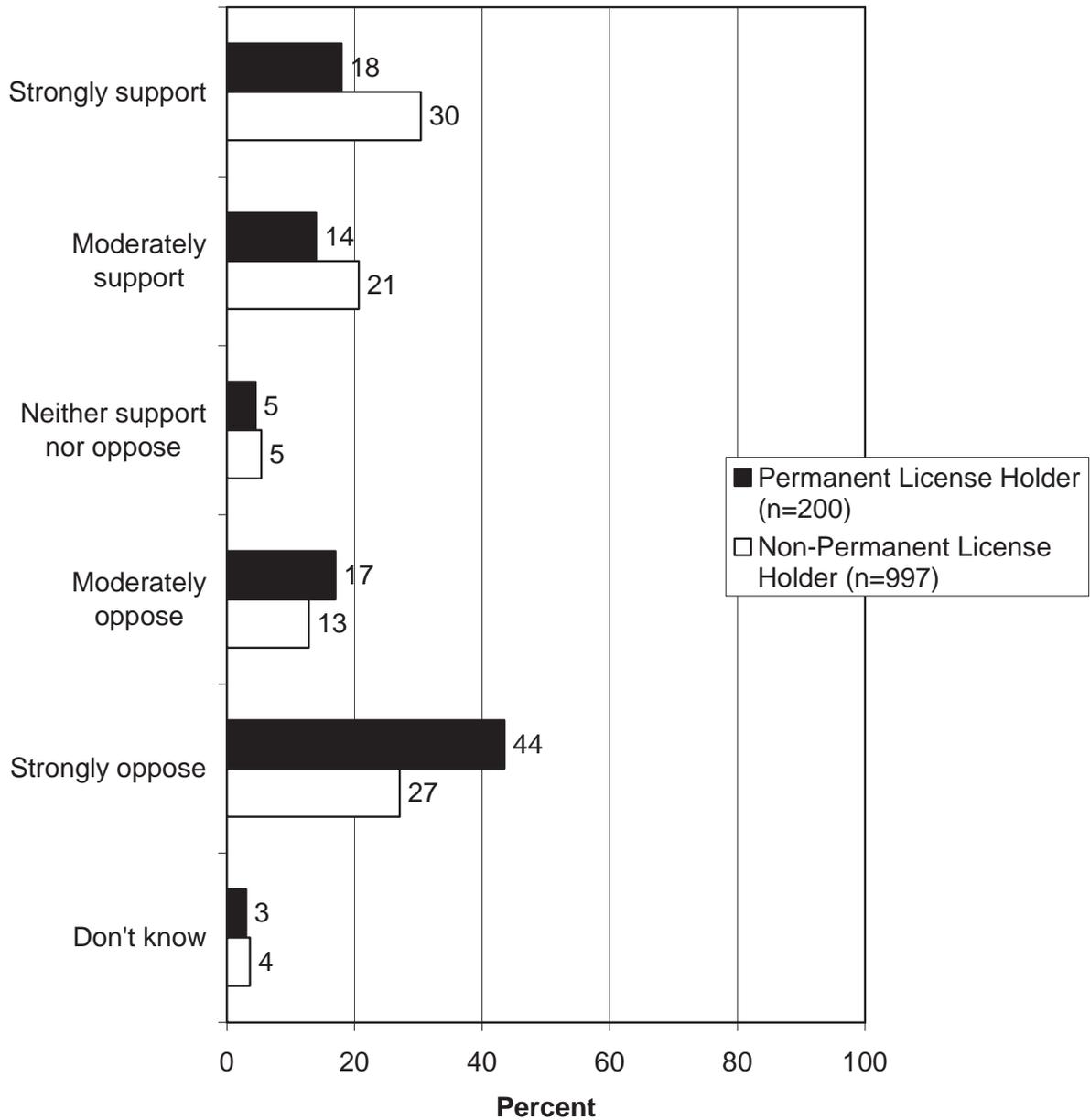
Q66. Would you support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of the rifle deer season in the Green Mountains and the Northeast Kingdom area only?



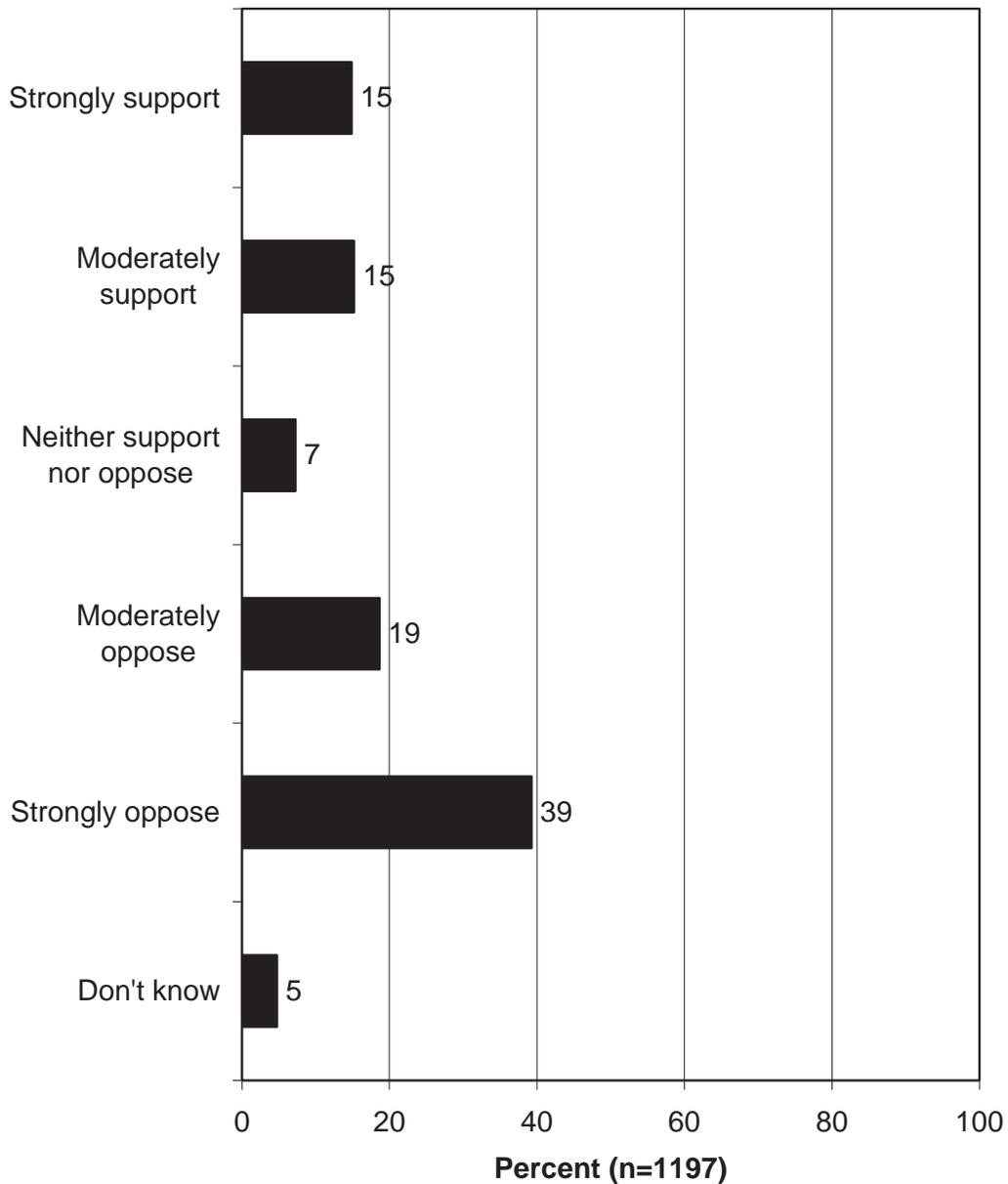
Q66. Would you support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of the rifle deer season in the Green Mountains and the Northeast Kingdom area only?



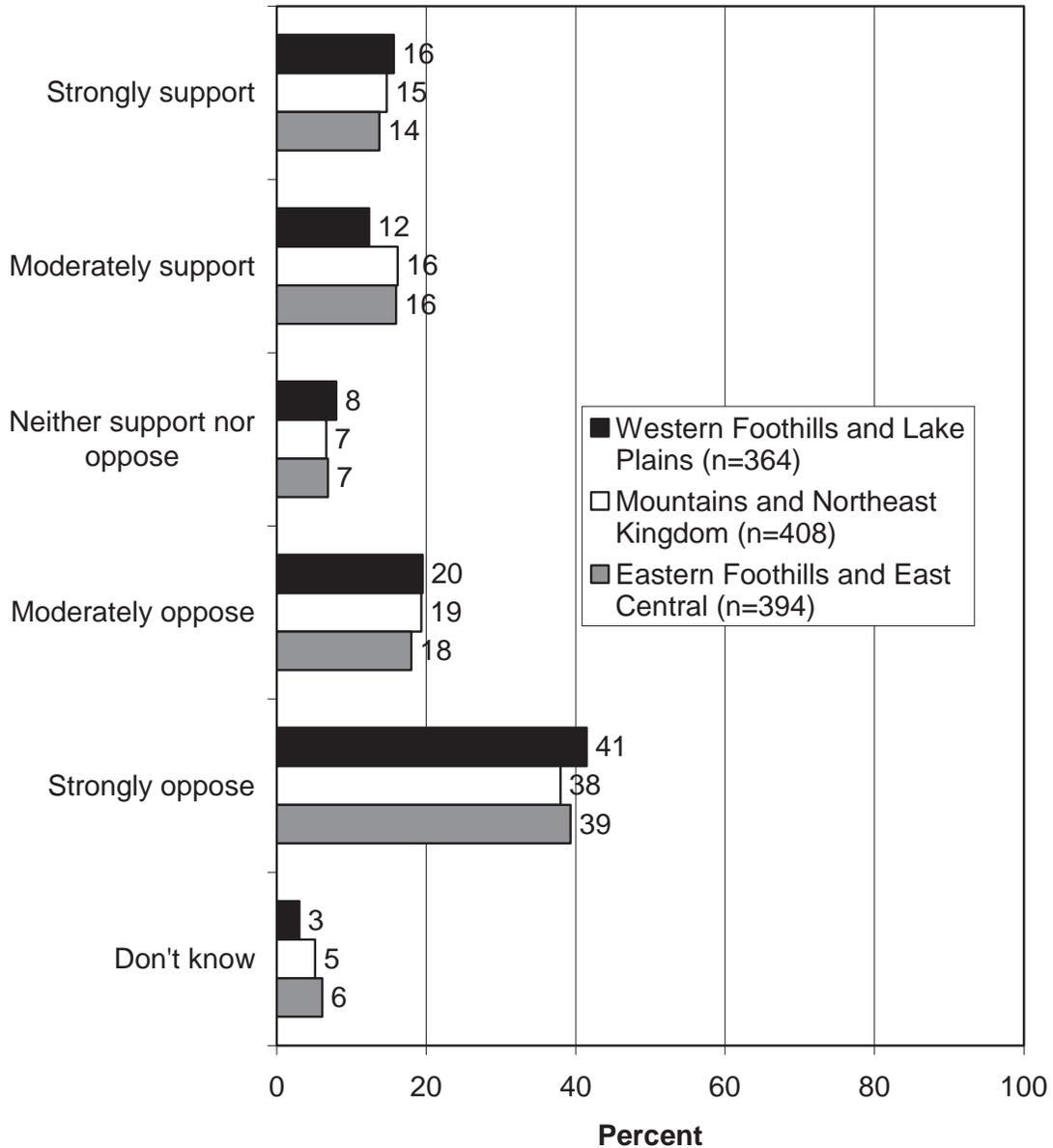
Q66. Would you support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of the rifle deer season in the Green Mountains and the Northeast Kingdom area only?



Q68. If shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, would you support or oppose reducing the rifle deer season by removing 7 days from the end of the season in these areas only?

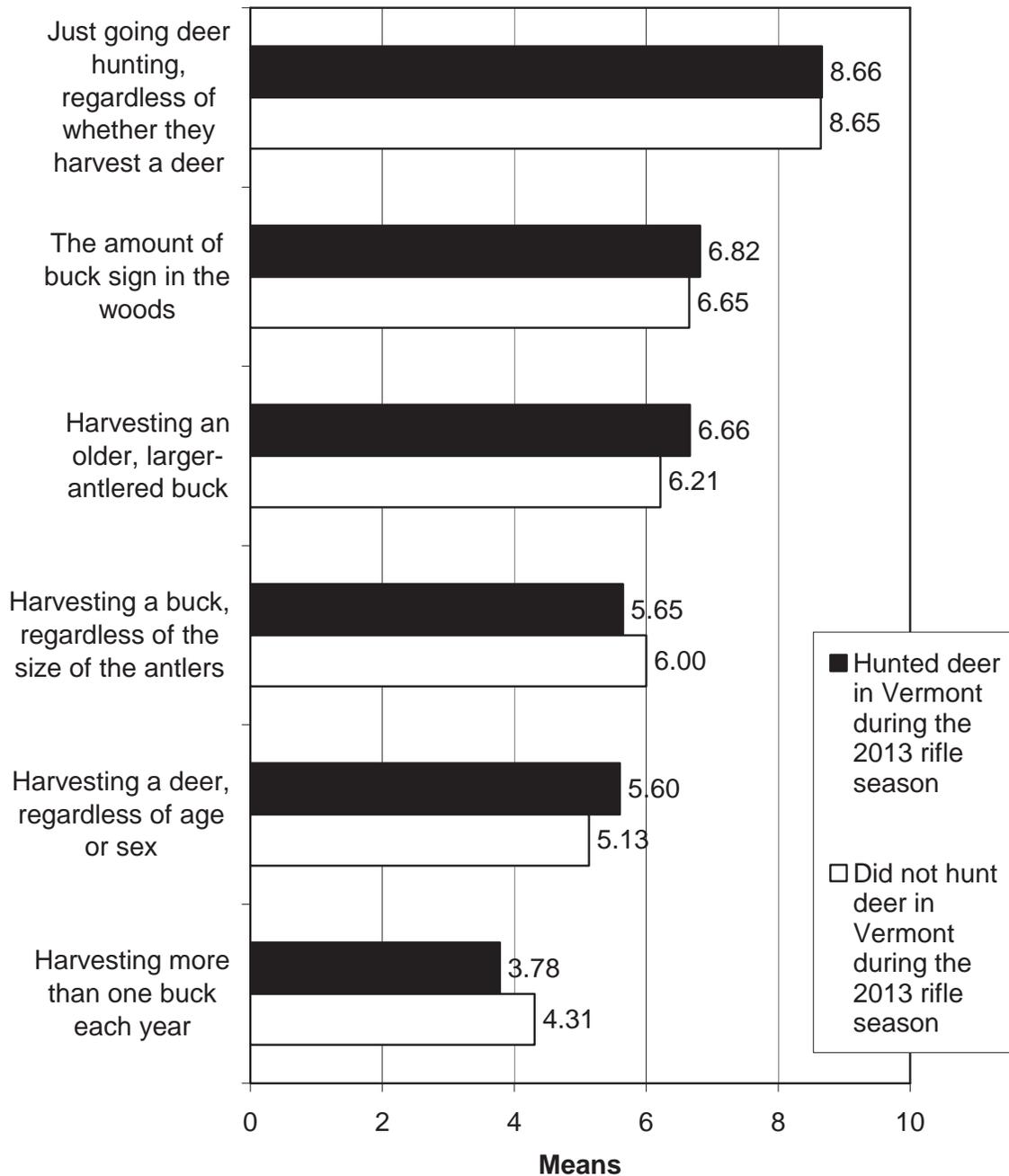


Q68. If shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, would you support or oppose reducing the rifle deer season by removing 7 days from the end of the season in these areas only?

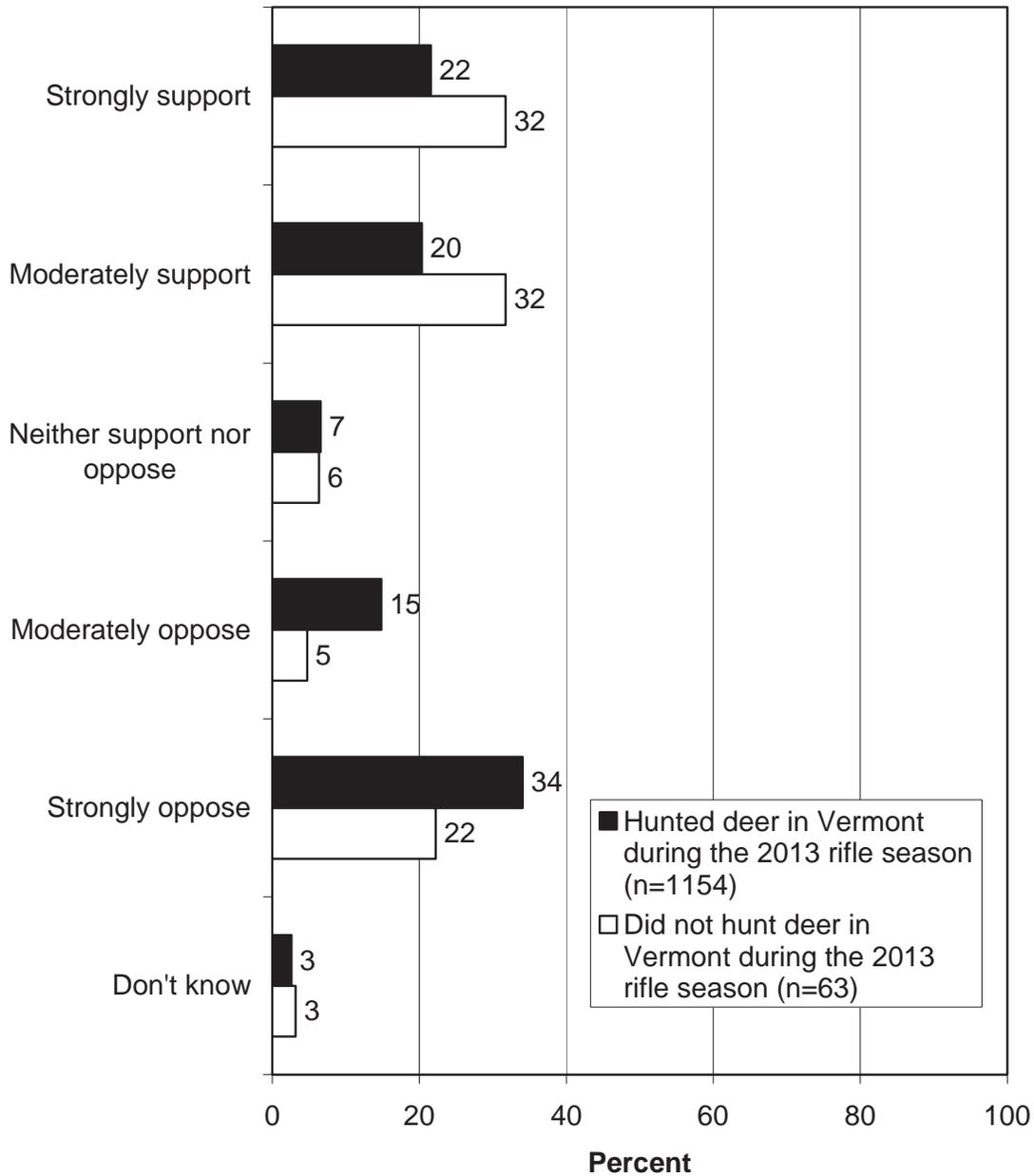


The next five graphs show crosstabulations comparing rifle hunters to non-rifle hunters.

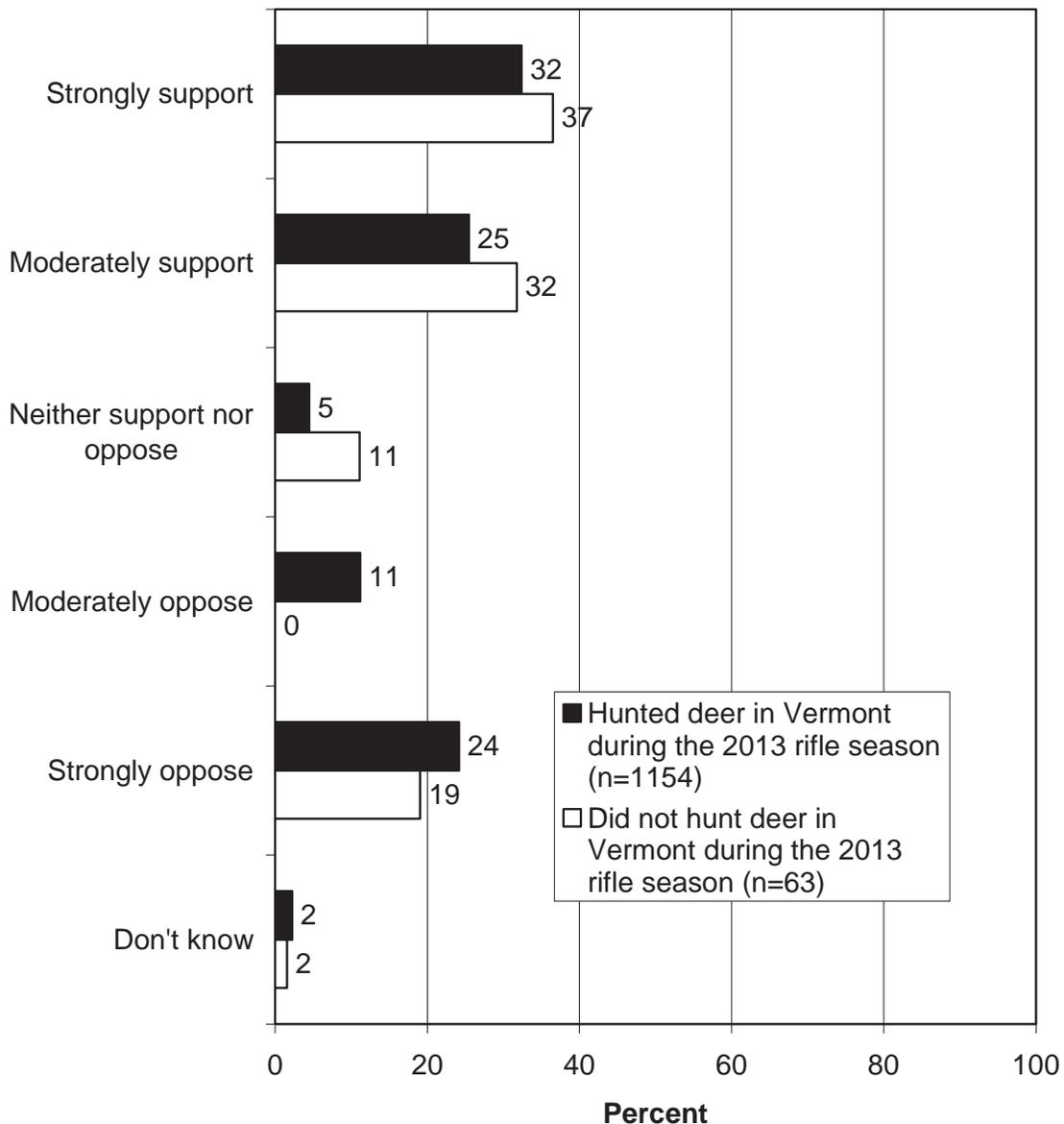
Q36-Q41. Mean rated importance of each of the following to respondents' general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10:



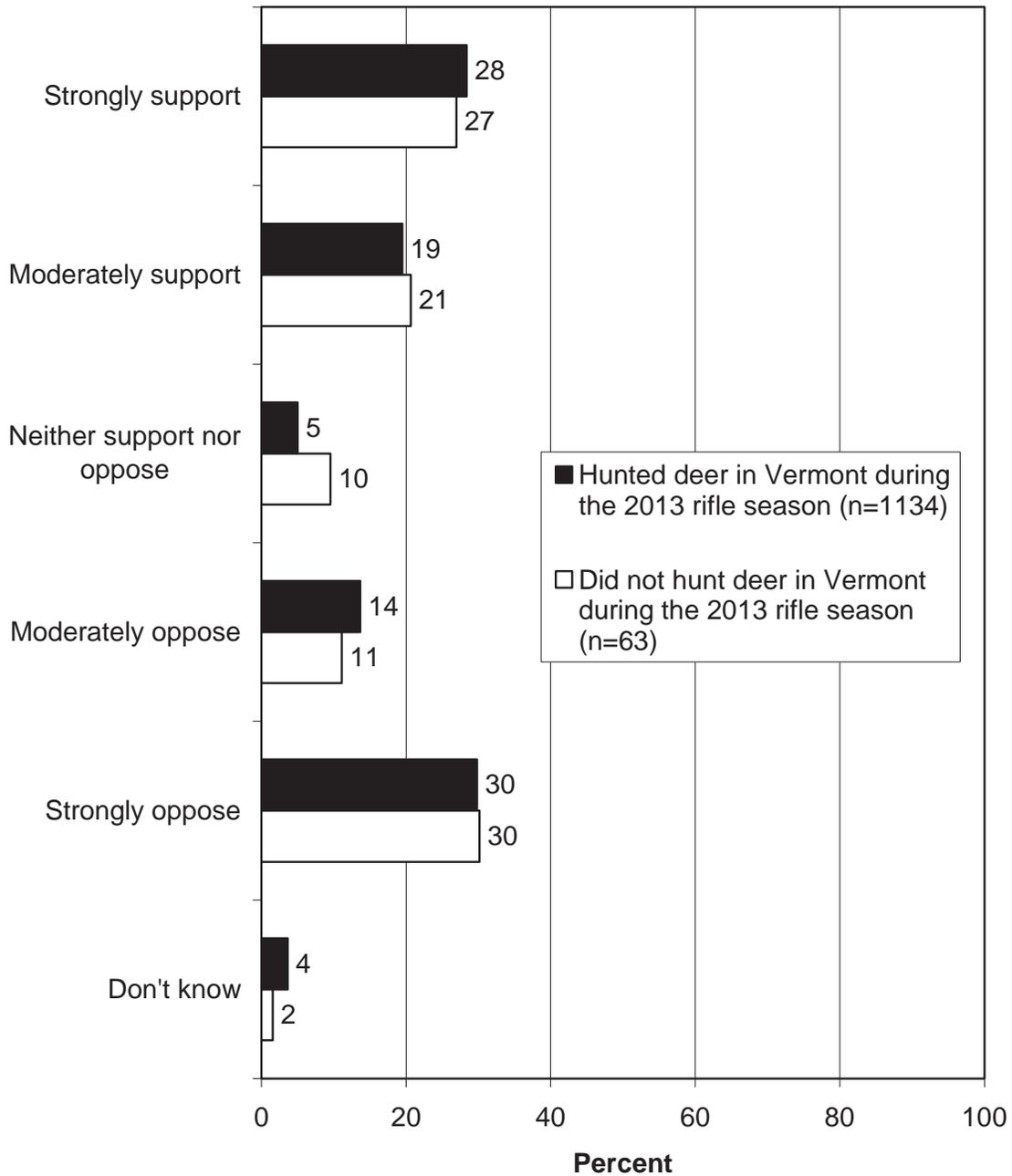
Q62. Would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



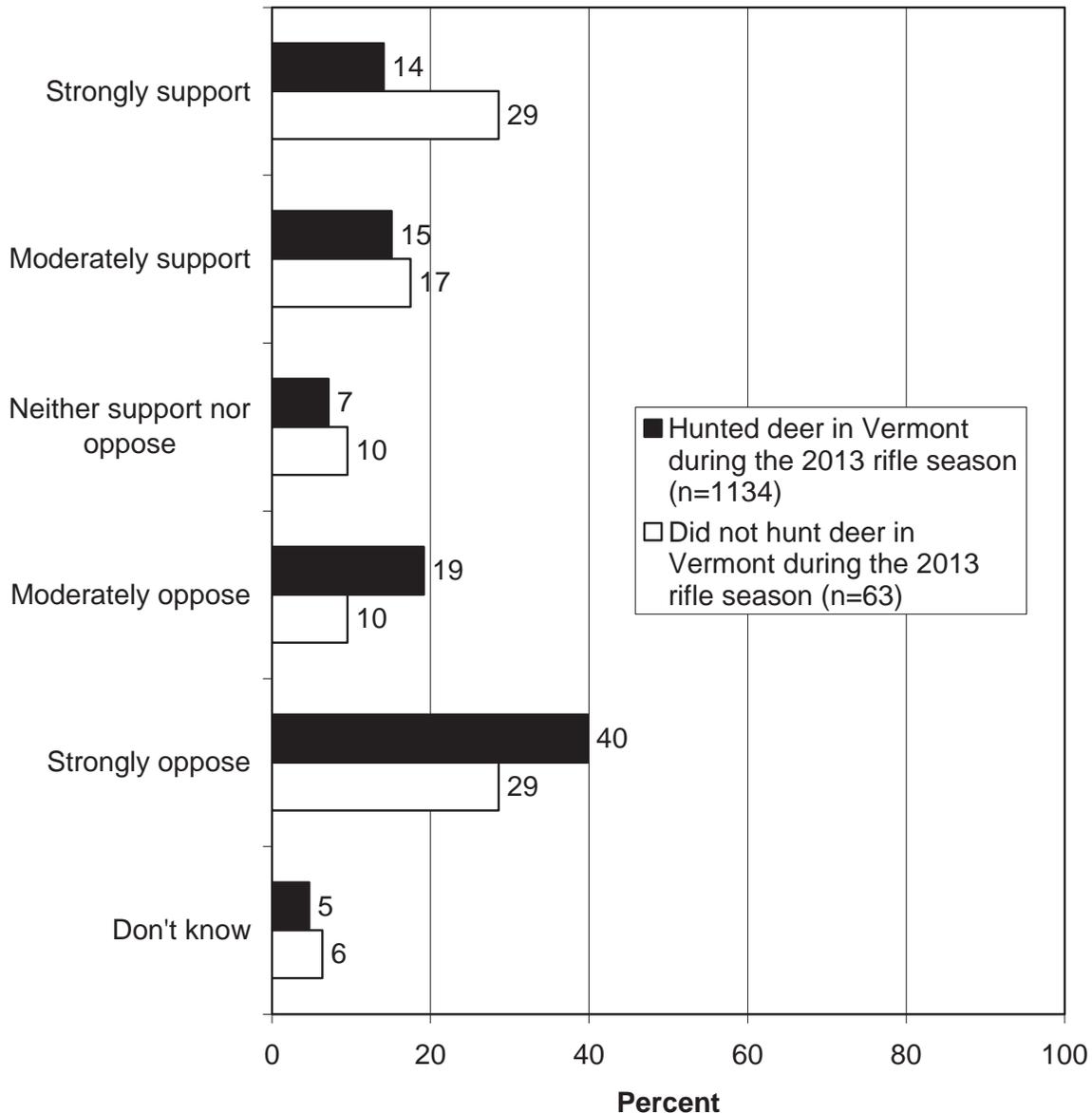
Q63. If the Department thought the timing of the current rifle season could be adjusted to allow more bucks to more fully participate in breeding, would you support or oppose moving the rifle deer season so that it starts one week later but still includes Thanksgiving and is still 16 days in length?



Q66. Would you support or oppose adding 7 days to the end of the rifle deer season in the Green Mountains and the Northeast Kingdom area only?



Q68. If shortening the length of the season in the Champlain and Connecticut River Valley areas would reduce the number of bucks being harvested, would you support or oppose reducing the rifle deer season by removing 7 days from the end of the season in these areas only?



MUZZLELOADER SEASON

- Over half (55%) of deer hunters said they *typically* hunt deer during muzzleloader season (not to be confused with the 39% who *actually* hunted deer during muzzleloader season in 2013).
 - Western region hunters are the most likely to hunt during muzzleloader season (60% do this) and Mountains region hunters are the least likely (51%).
 - Hunters with a resident combination license most often hunted deer during the 2013 muzzleloader season (47% did this), followed by those with a resident permanent license (43%) and those with a resident hunting license (33%).
- In general, those who hunt deer during muzzleloader season are evenly divided regarding the importance of obtaining an antlerless deer tag during the lottery in muzzleloader season. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important, the mean rating is 5.36.
 - The mean rating of importance is highest in the Western region (6.00) and lowest in the Eastern region (4.78).
- Vermont deer hunters are also evenly divided over having an additional muzzleloader deer season that occurs prior to the November rifle season; 47% support the idea and 47% oppose it, with little regional variation.
 - Only 33% of permanent license holders support the idea.

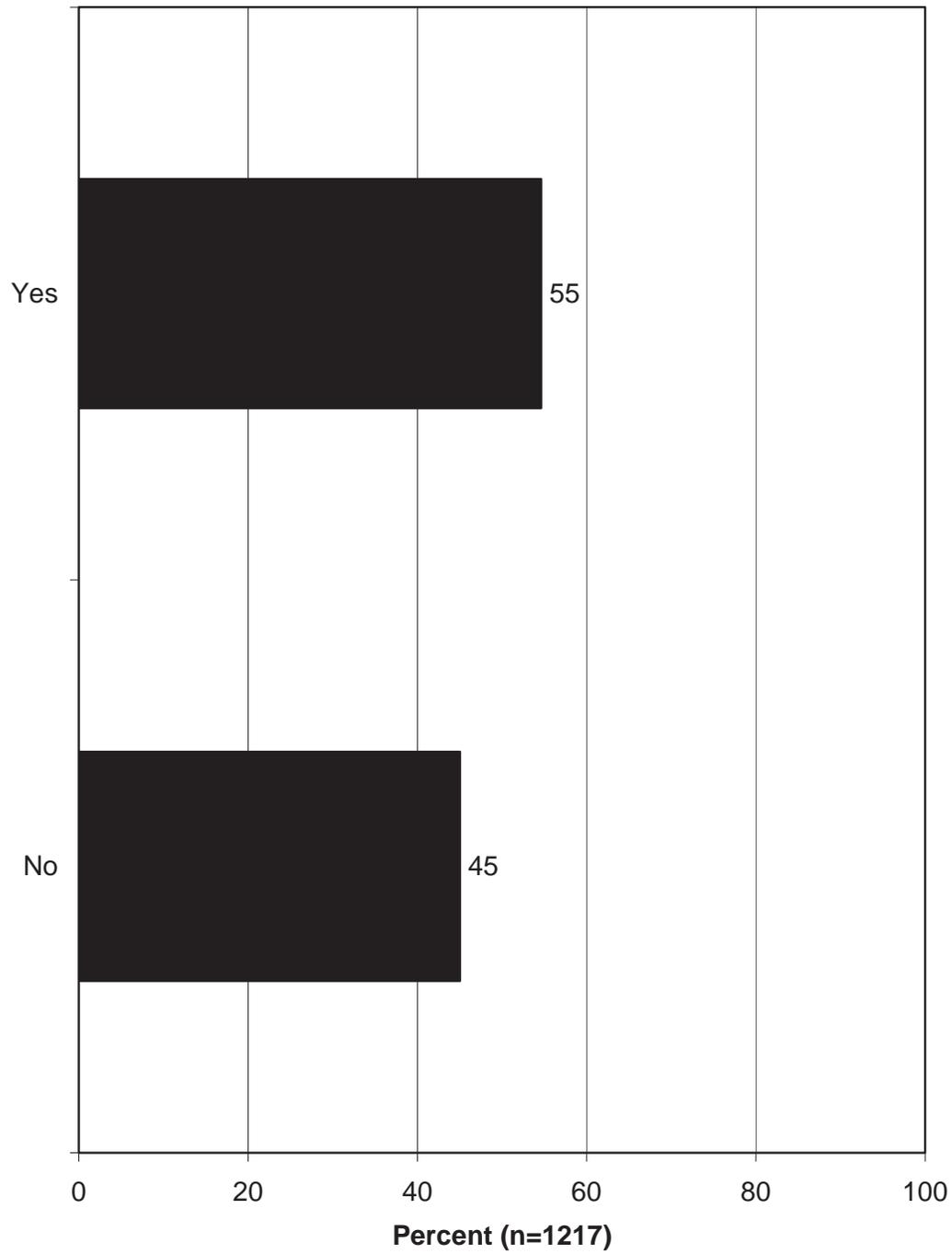
As discussed earlier, 39% of Vermont deer hunters hunted deer during muzzleloader season in 2013. Crosstabulations were performed to observe differences in attitudes and opinions between those who hunted during muzzleloader season in 2013 (muzzleloader hunters) and those who hunted, but not during muzzleloader season in 2013 (non-muzzleloader hunters).

- In rating the importance of different factors to their general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, muzzleloader hunters gave higher mean ratings than non-muzzleloader hunters to “the amount of buck sign in the woods” (mean rating of 7.03 out of 10.00, compared to 6.66 from non-muzzleloader hunters), “harvesting a deer, regardless of age

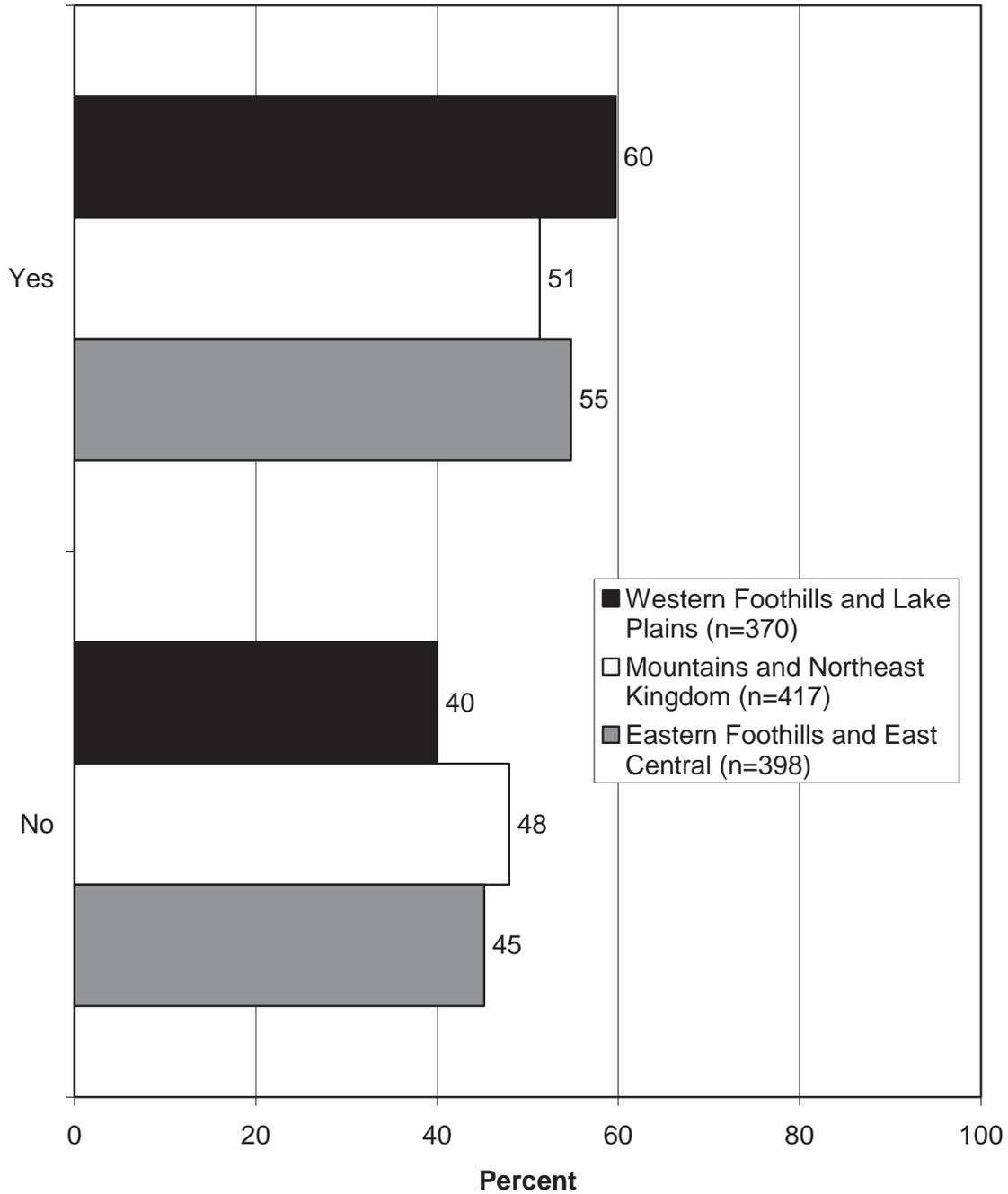
or sex” (5.83, compared to 5.41), and “harvesting more than one buck each year” (4.31, compared to 3.49).

- Of those who hunted deer during muzzleloader season in 2013, 96% said they *typically* hunt deer during muzzleloader season.
- In rating the importance of obtaining an antlerless deer tag during the lottery for muzzleloader season, muzzleloader hunters gave a mean rating of 5.67 out of 10.00, compared to the mean rating of 4.71 from non-muzzleloader hunters.
- Muzzleloader hunters are more likely to *strongly support* (37%) an additional muzzleloader season that occurs prior to the November rifle season, compared to 25% of non-muzzleloader hunters.

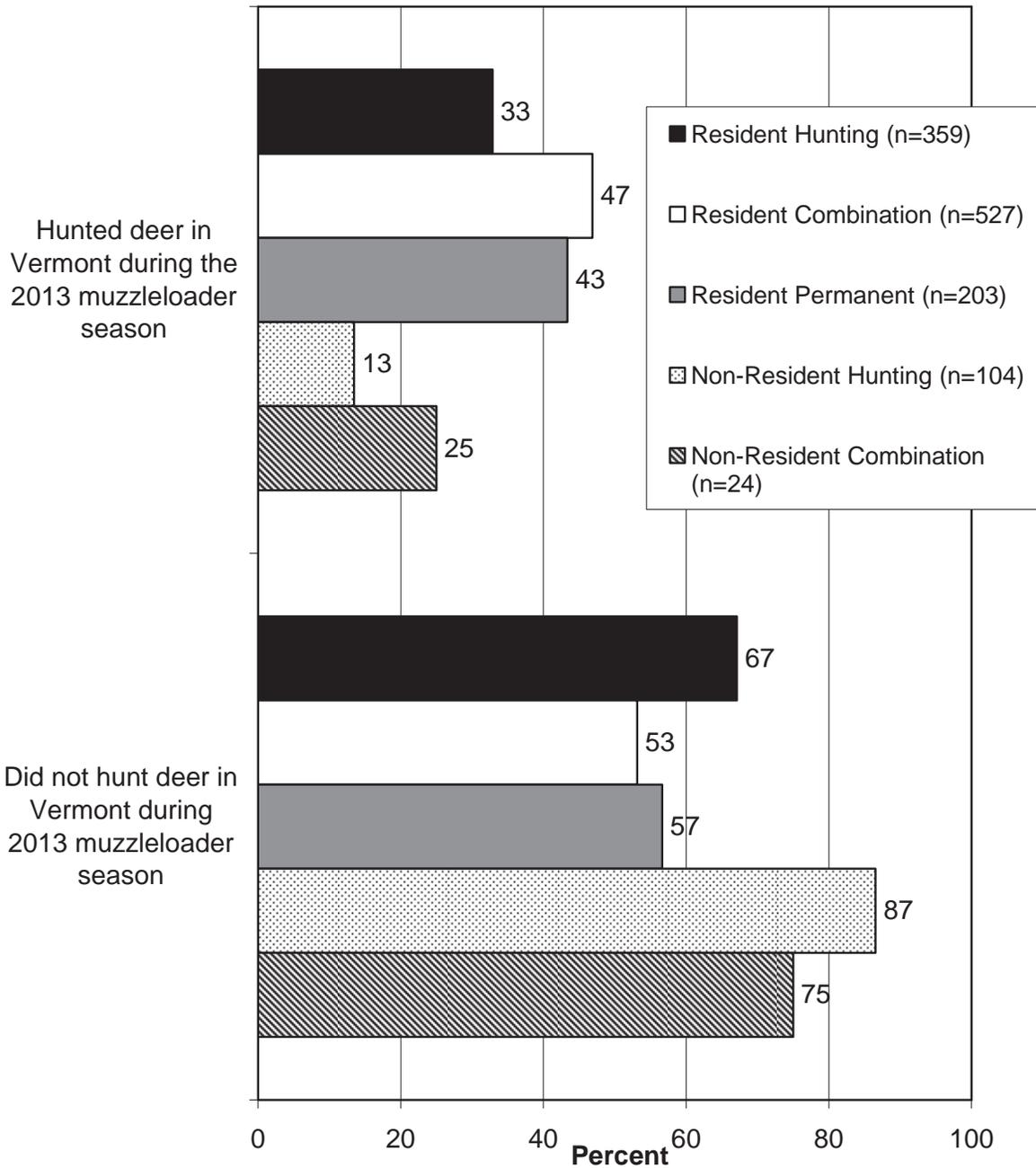
Q70. Do you typically hunt deer during the muzzleloader deer season?



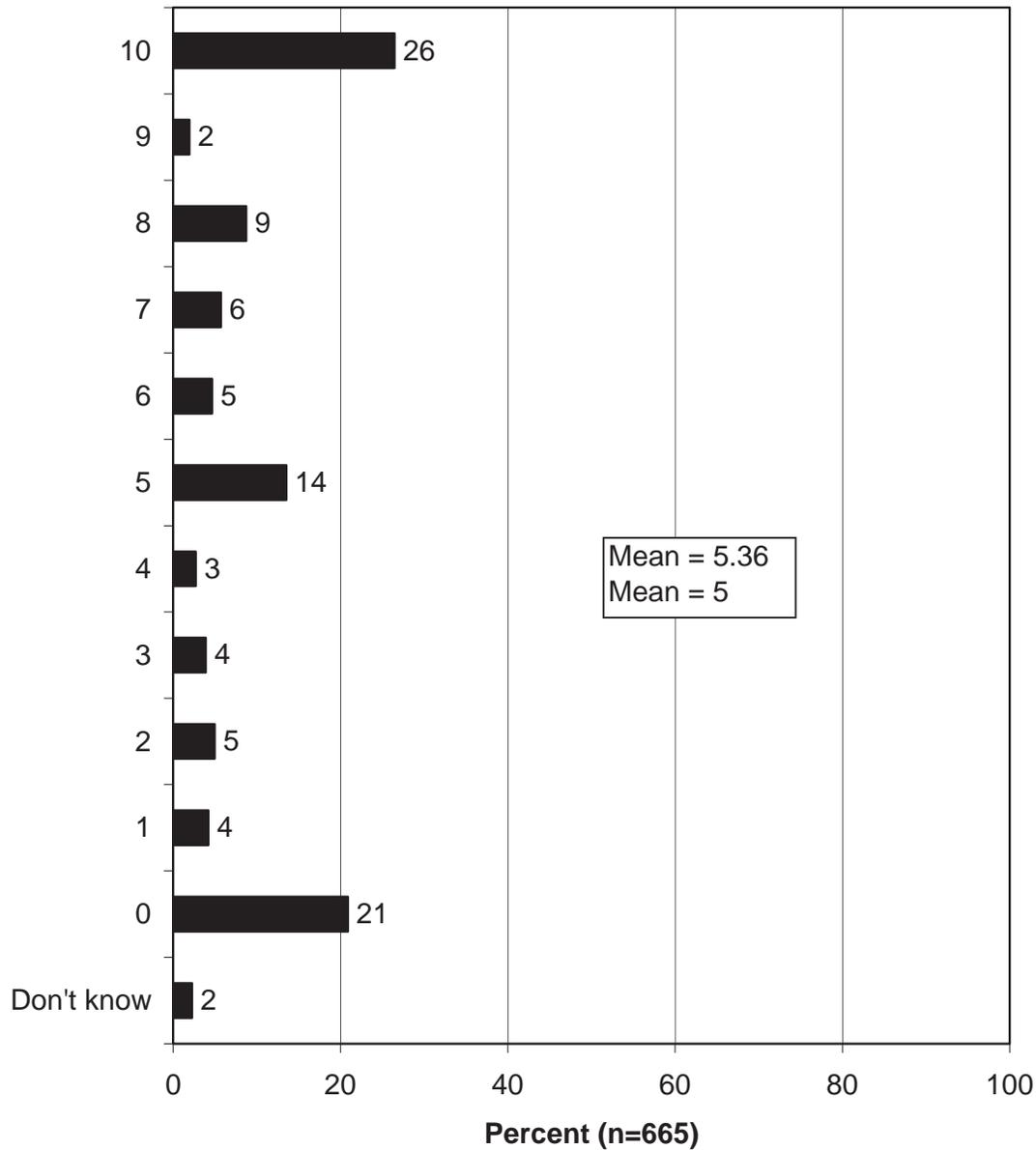
Q70. Do you typically hunt deer during the muzzleloader deer season?



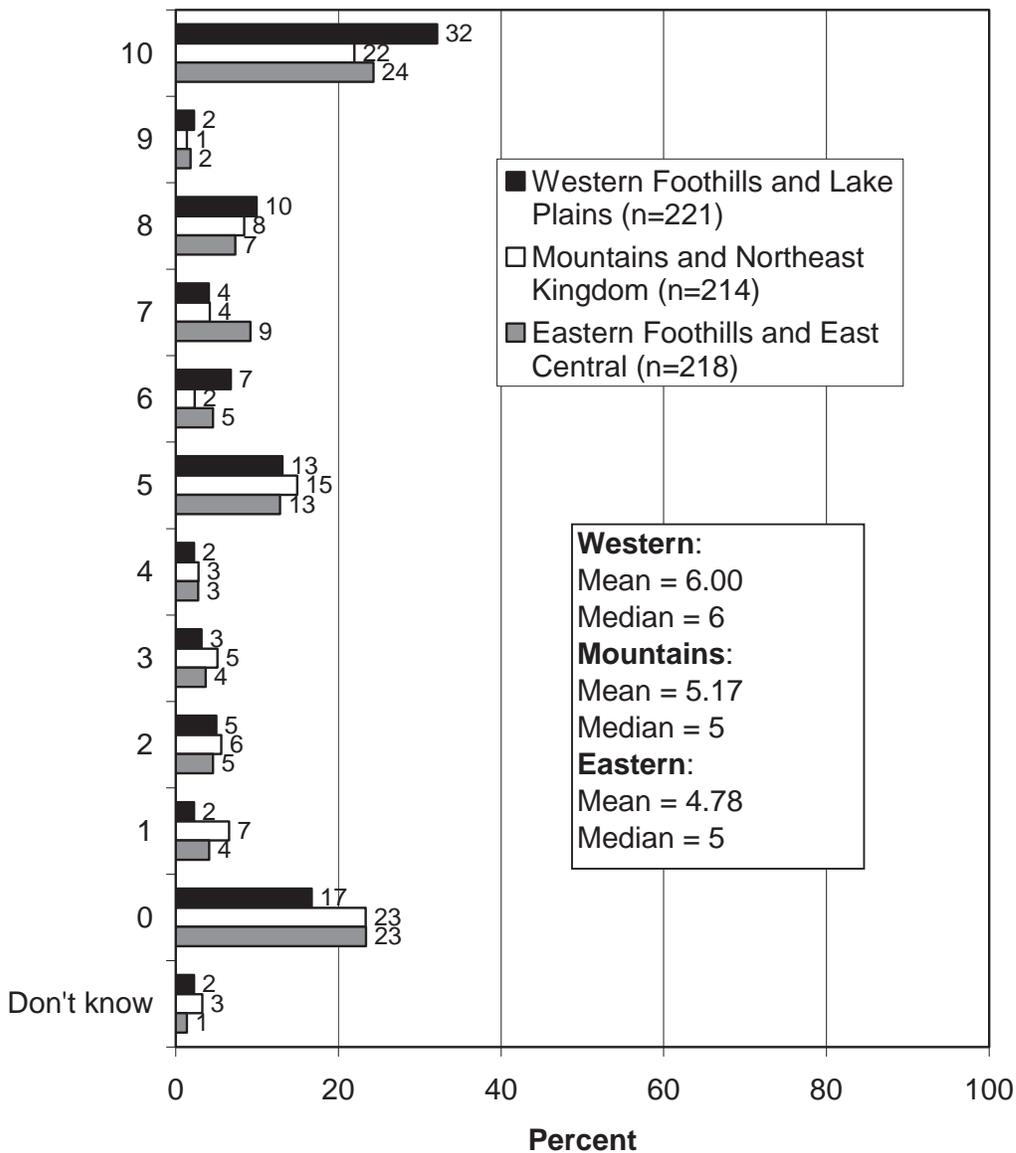
Muzzleloader season participation.



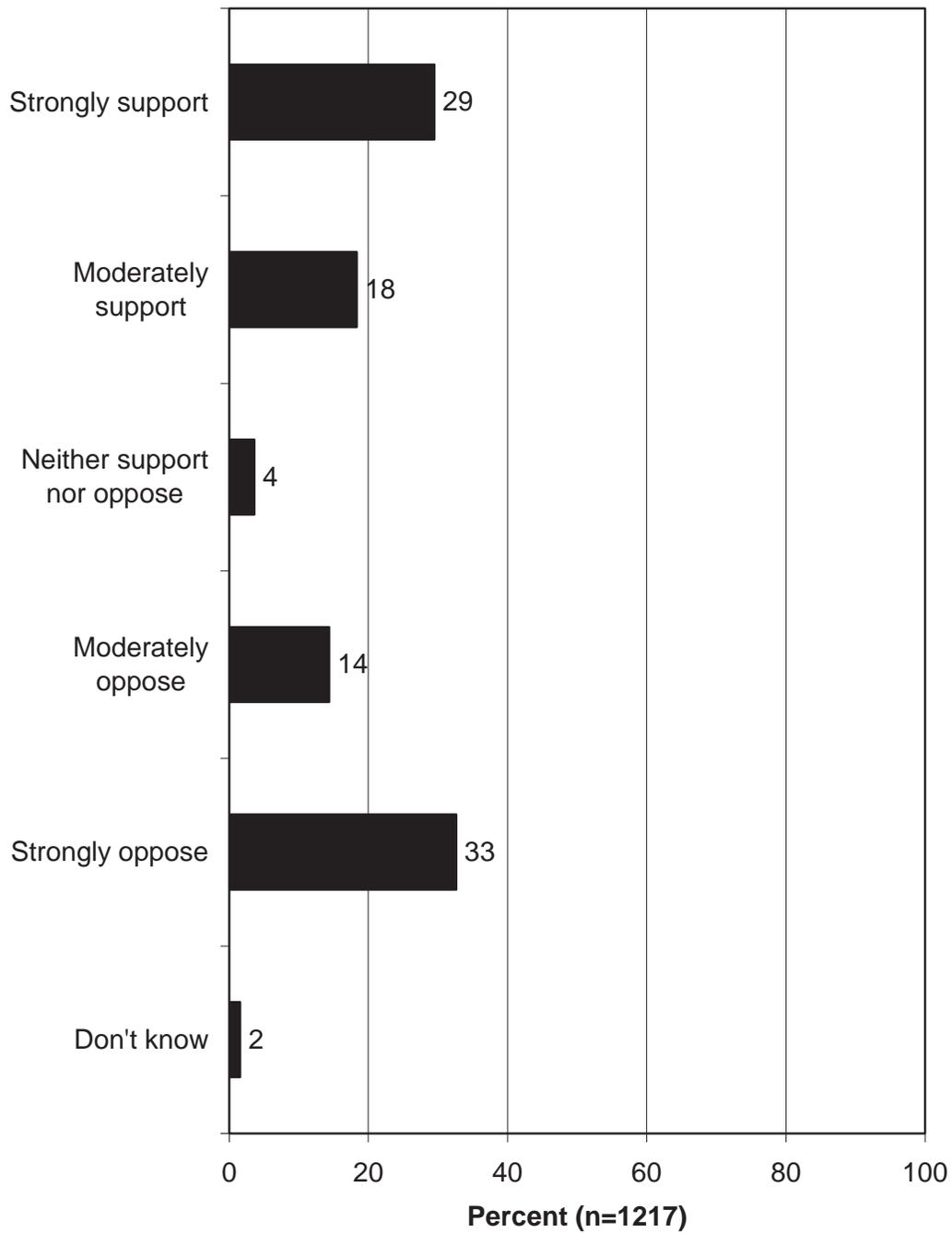
Q71. How important is it to you to obtain an antlerless deer tag through the lottery for the muzzleloader season, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important? (Asked of those who typically hunt deer during the muzzleloader deer season.)



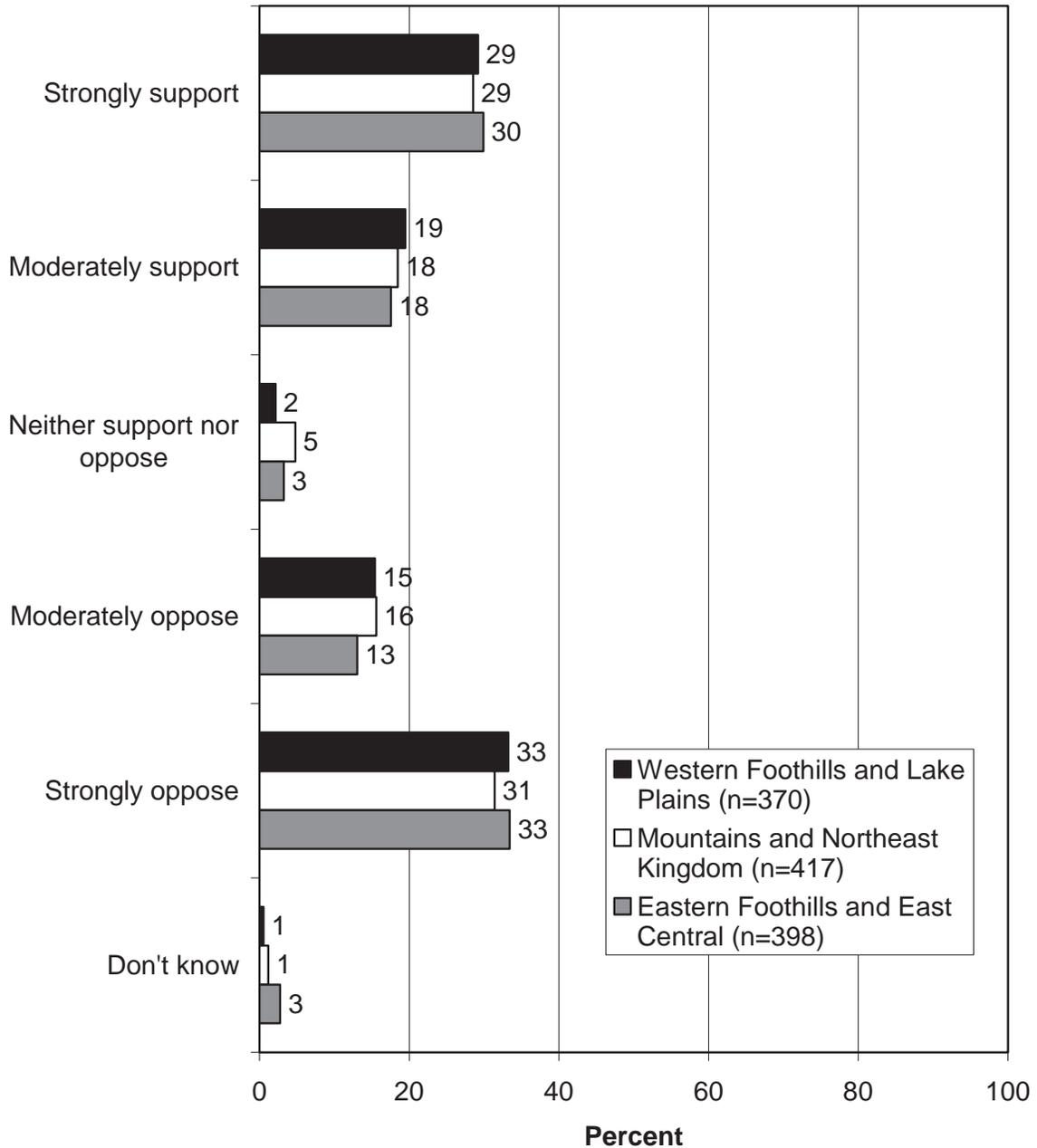
Q71. How important is it to you to obtain an antlerless deer tag through the lottery for the muzzleloader season, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important? (Asked of those who typically hunt deer during the muzzleloader deer season.)



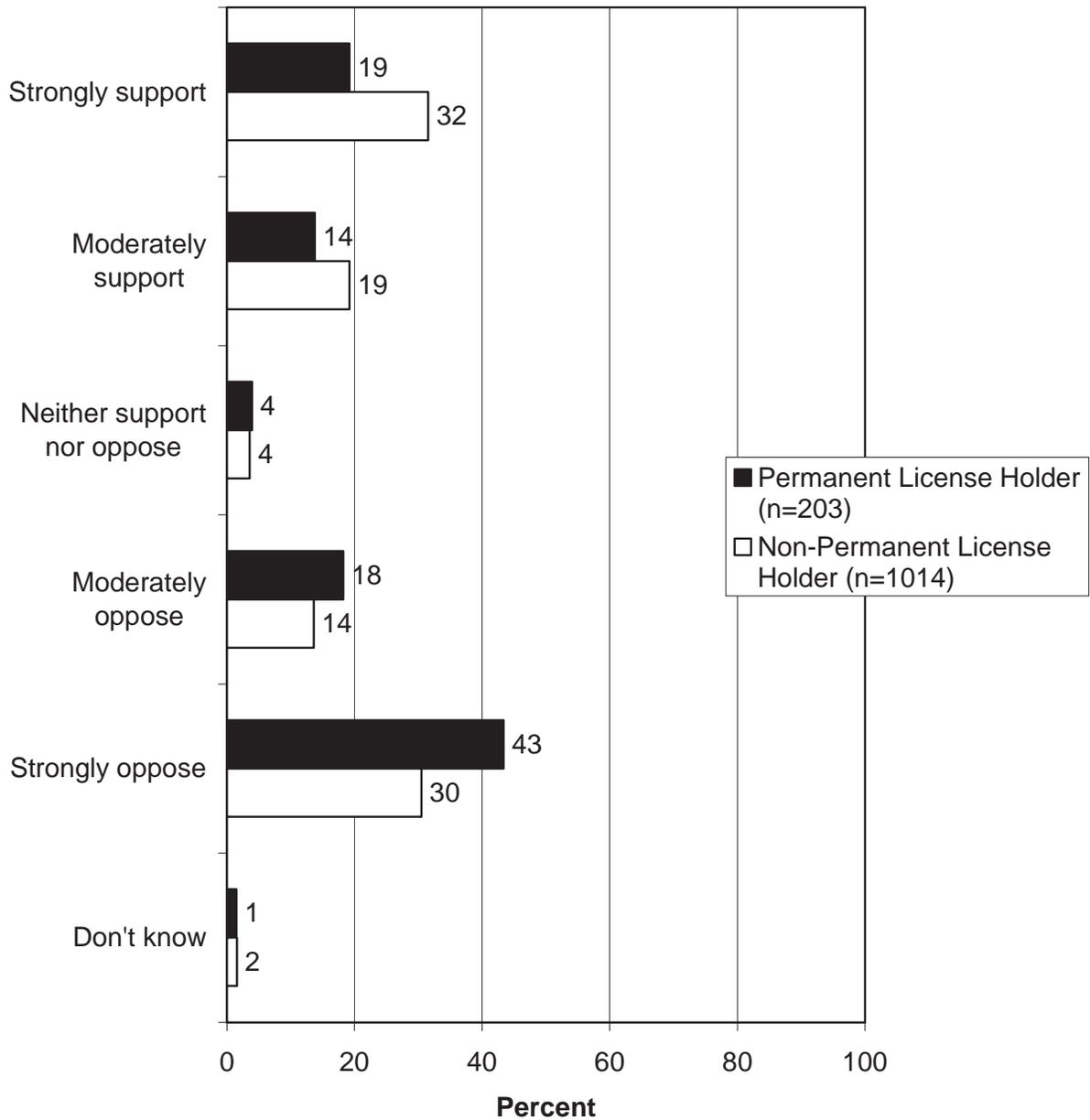
Q73. Would you support or oppose an additional muzzleloader deer season that occurs prior to the November rifle season?



Q73. Would you support or oppose an additional muzzleloader deer season that occurs prior to the November rifle season?

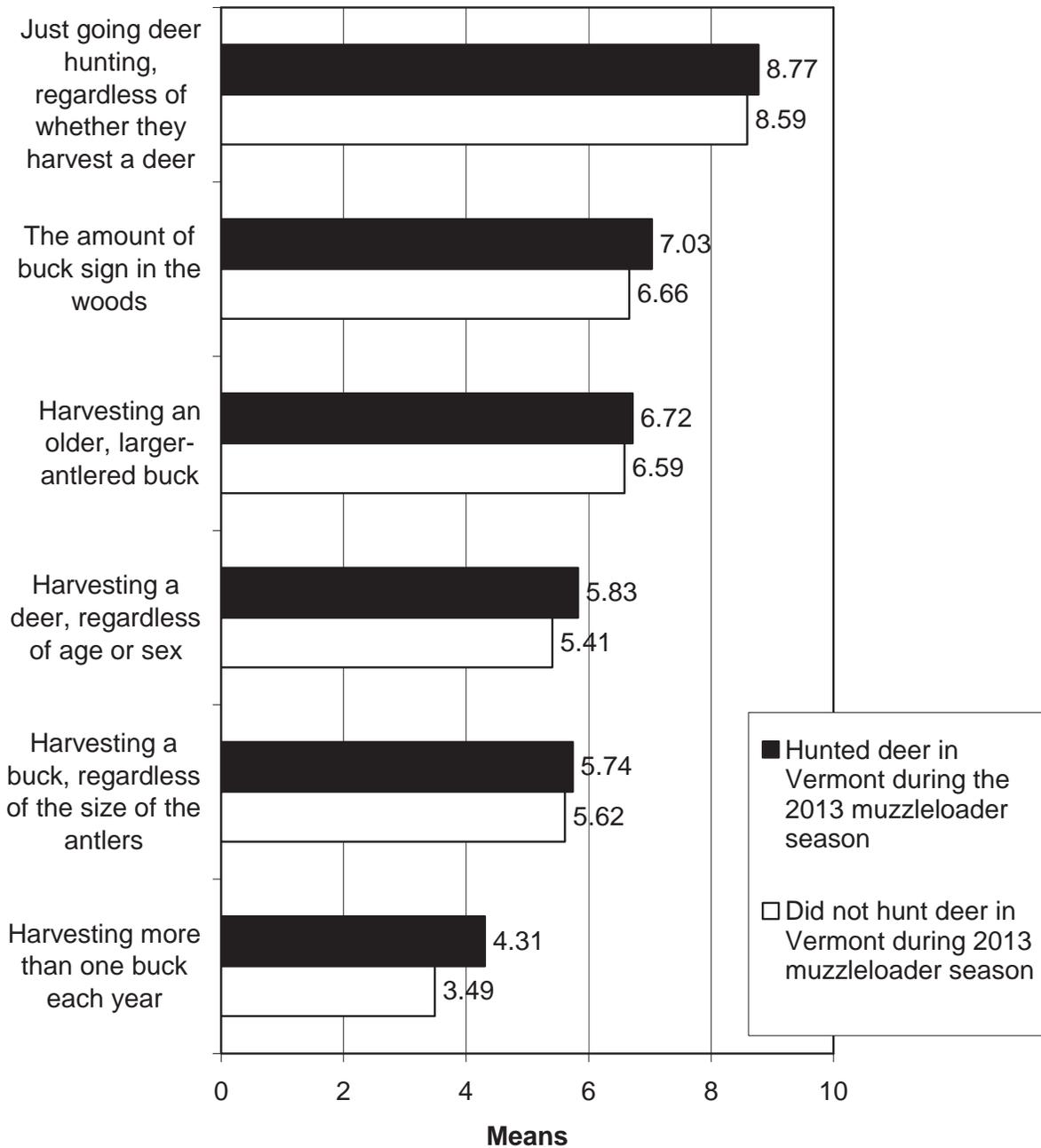


Q73. Would you support or oppose an additional muzzleloader deer season that occurs prior to the November rifle season?

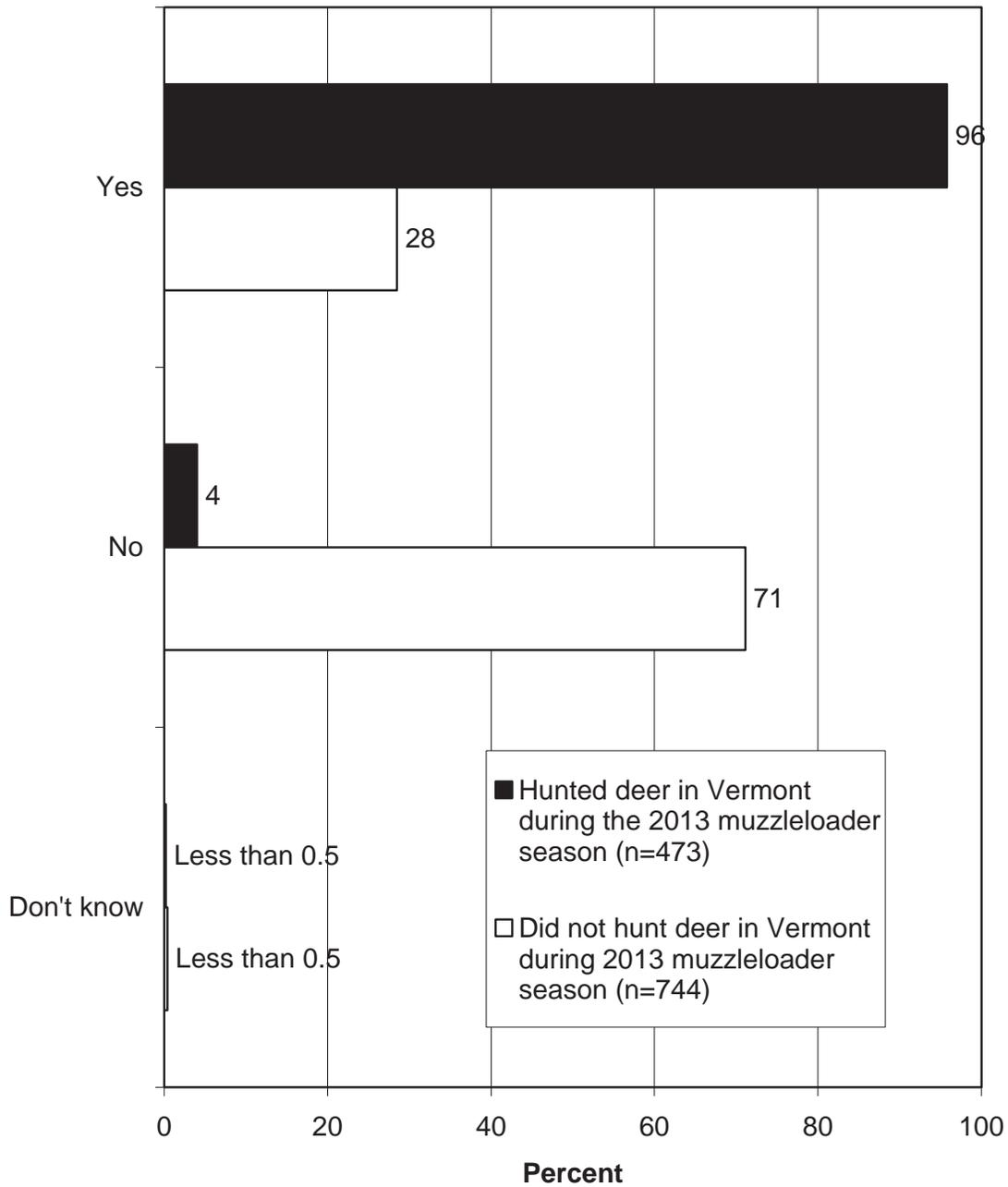


The next four graphs show crosstabulations comparing muzzleloader hunters with non-muzzleloader hunters.

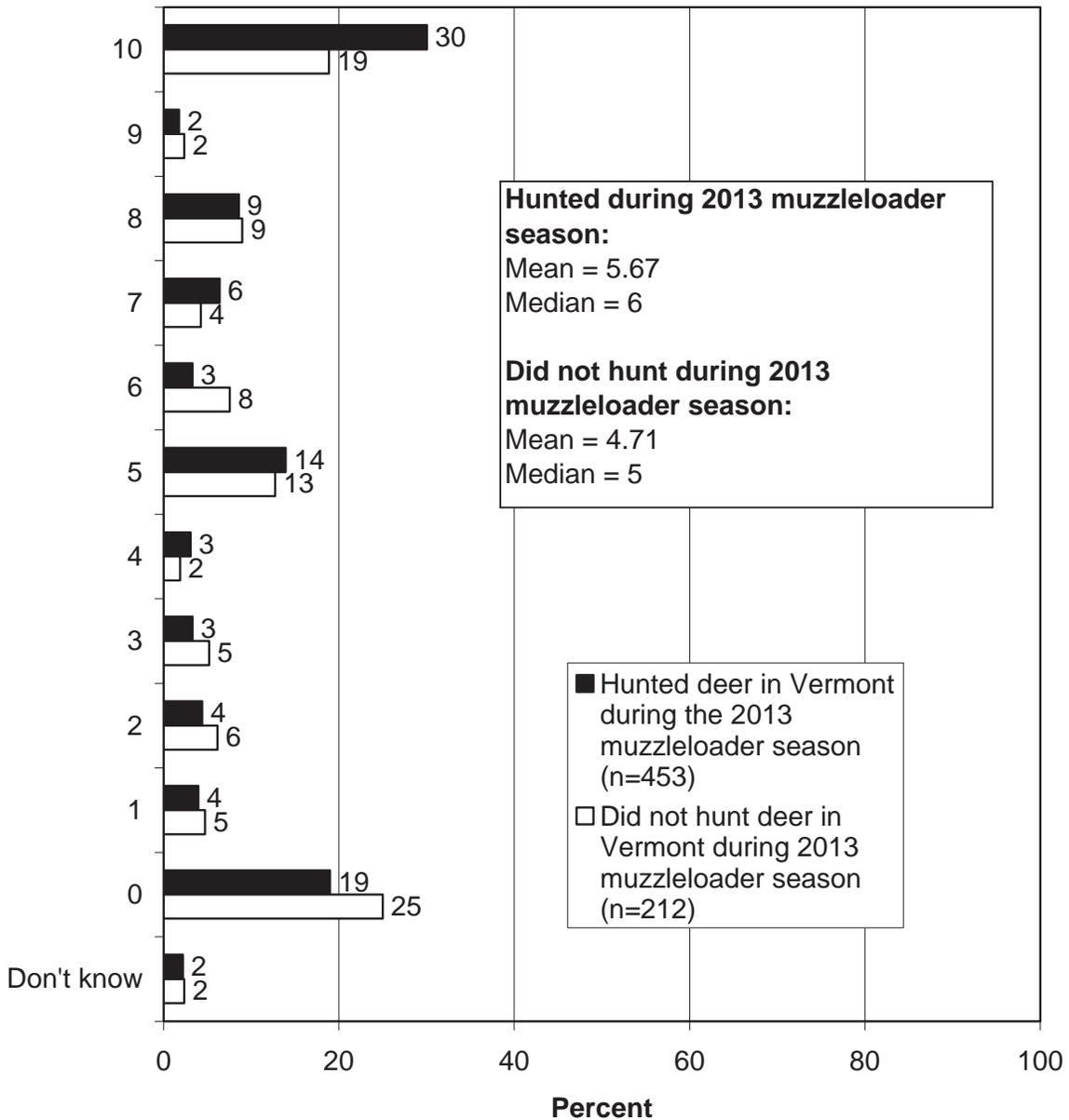
Q36-Q41. Mean rated importance of each of the following to respondents' general satisfaction with deer hunting in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10:



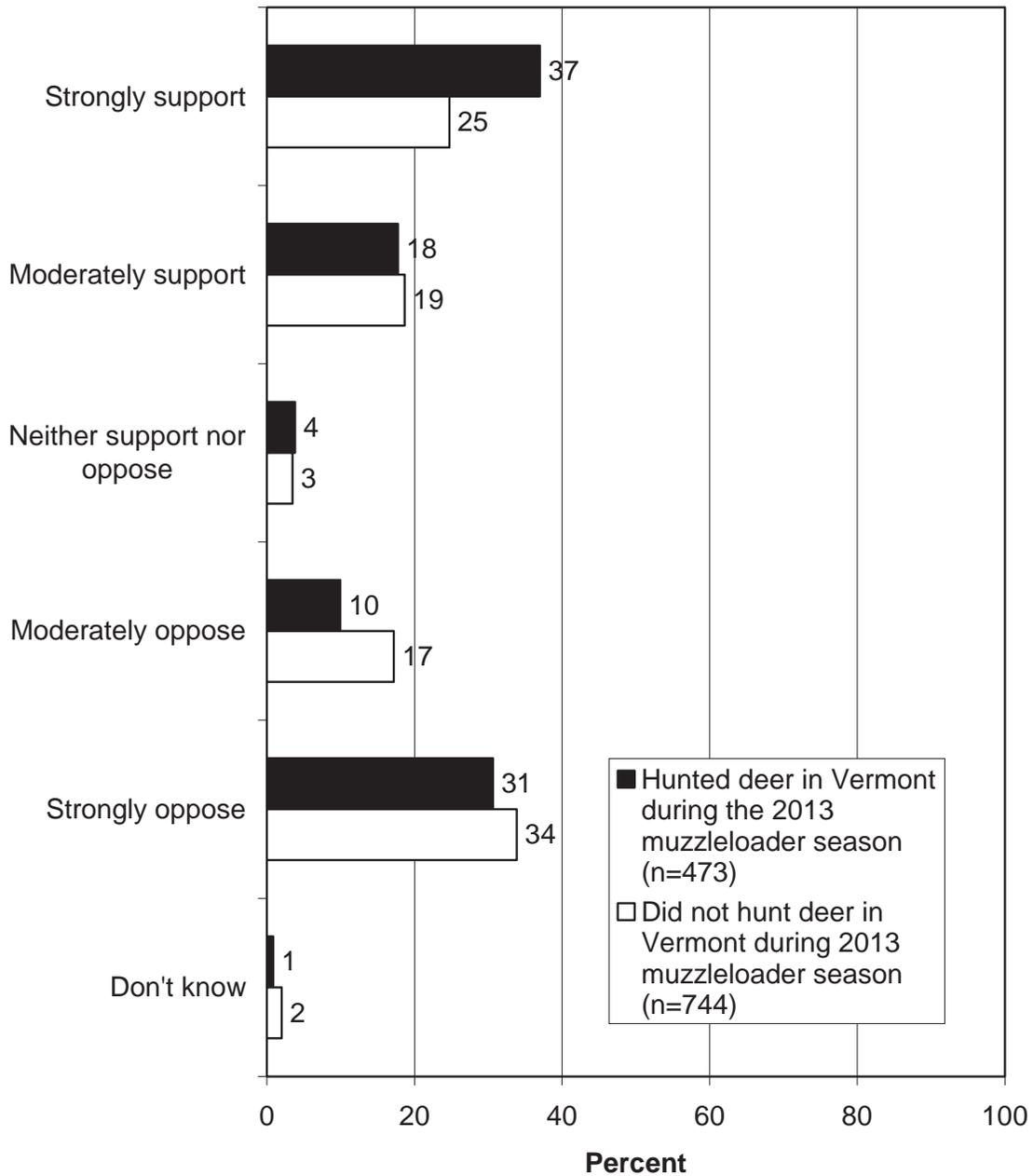
Q70. Do you typically hunt deer during the muzzleloader deer season?



Q71. How important is it to you to obtain an antlerless deer tag through the lottery for the muzzleloader season, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important? (Asked of those who typically hunt deer during the muzzleloader deer season.)



Q73. Would you support or oppose an additional muzzleloader deer season that occurs prior to the November rifle season?

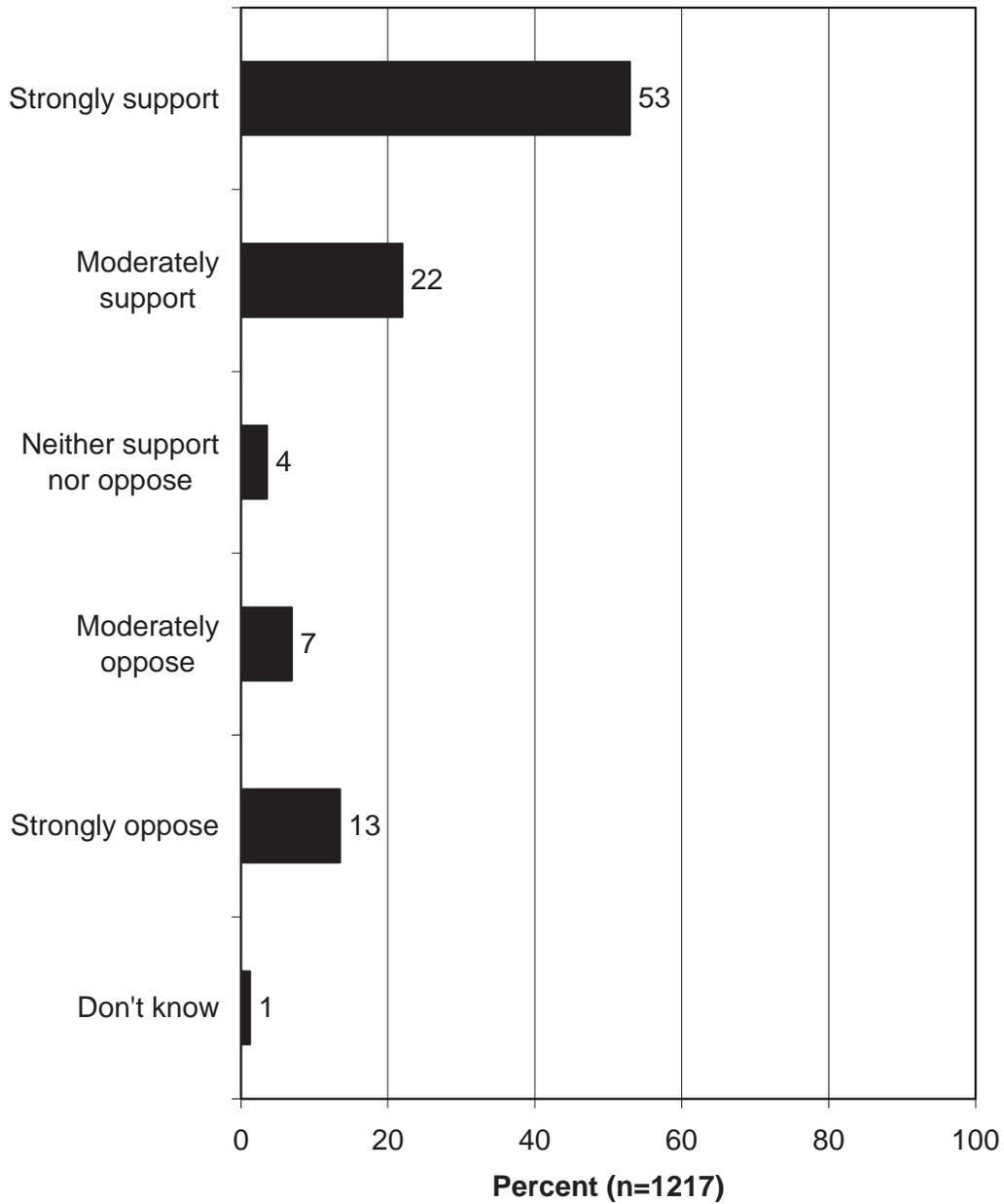


ANTLER-POINT RESTRICTIONS

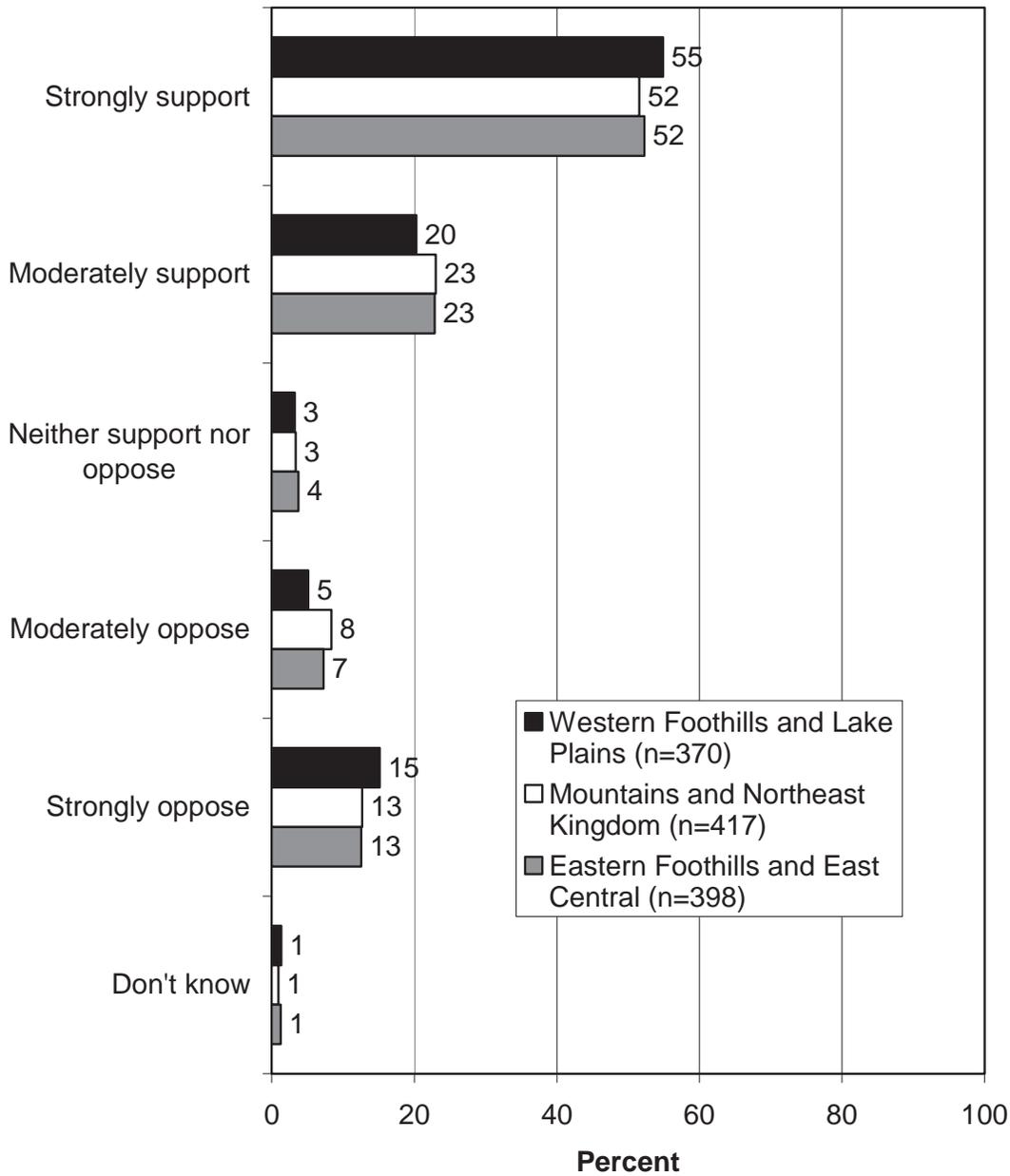
- Three-quarters (75%) of Vermont deer hunters support antler-point restrictions in the area where they most often hunt; 53% indicated *strong support*. There was little regional variation and little difference between permanent and non-permanent license holders.
- Vermont deer hunters expressed more opposition than support for the following strategies suggested as a way to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed. In order of percent opposed to the strategy, the results are:
 - Allowing the harvest of spike-antlered bucks during the muzzleloader season (59% of deer hunters statewide oppose this)
 - Providing a limited number of tags through a lottery by WMU that would allow the tag holder to harvest spike-antlered bucks in that WMU (54%)
 - Exempting older deer hunters, age 65 or older, from the restriction (53%)
 - Allowing the harvest of spike-antlered bucks during archery season (53%)
- Vermont deer hunters, if informed that the Department believed increasing the antler-point restriction was necessary to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the population, were more likely to support (53%) than oppose (41%) the change, even if it meant they might harvest fewer bucks. There was little regional variation.
 - Support was higher among non-permanent license holders (55%) than among permanent license holders (45%).
- Vermont deer hunters expressed more opposition than support for the following strategies suggested as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased. In order of percent opposed to the strategy, the results are:
 - Allowing the harvest of spike-antlered bucks by any hunter in any season (61% of deer hunters statewide oppose this)
 - Allowing the harvest of any buck, including bucks that do not meet the antler-point restriction criteria, during the muzzleloader season (57%)

- Providing a limited number of tags through a lottery by WMU that would allow the tag holder to harvest any buck, including bucks that do not meet the antler-point restriction criteria, in that WMU (53%)
 - Exempting older deer hunters, age 65 or older, from the restriction (50%)
 - Allowing the harvest of any buck, including bucks that do not meet the antler-point restriction criteria, during archery season (50%)
- If the Department was concerned about the potential long-term impacts of the current antler-point restriction in shifting harvest onto larger bucks and leaving smaller antlered bucks surviving to breed, Vermont deer hunters expressed more support for (55%) than opposition to (37%) changing the antler-point restriction. There was little regional variation.
- Vermont deer hunters were presented with four suggested changes to statewide bag limits. In order of support for the change, the results are:
- Reducing the annual firearm and muzzleloader bag limit statewide from 3 to 2 deer, 1 of which may be a buck (65% support this)
 - Reducing the annual firearm and muzzleloader bag limit statewide from 2 bucks to 1 (55%)
 - Reducing the overall annual bag limit statewide of antlered bucks from 2 to 1 for all seasons combined (52%)
 - Reducing the annual firearm and muzzleloader bag limit statewide from 3 to 1 deer (42%)

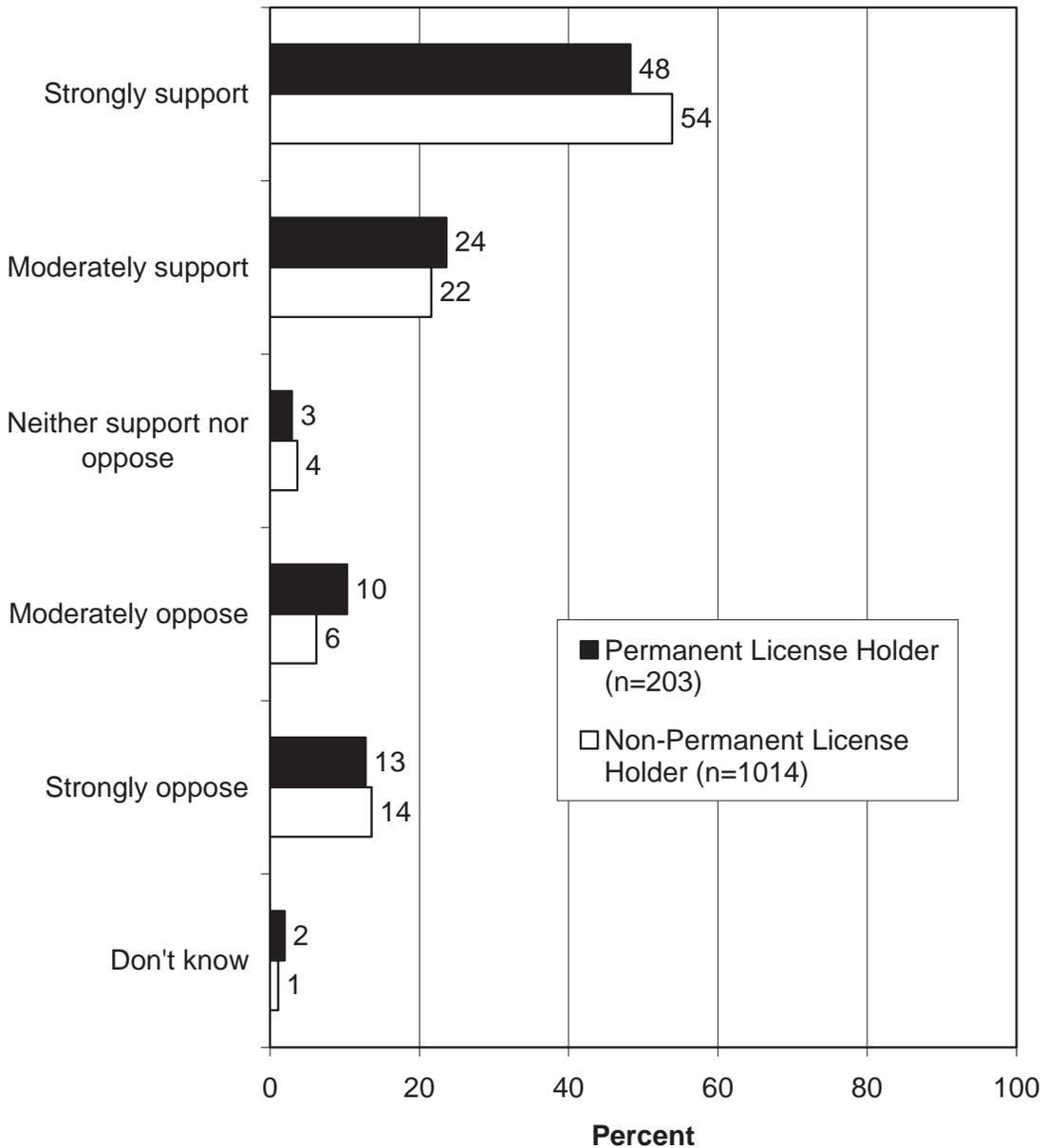
Q75. Thinking about the WMU, town, or area where you said you hunt deer most often and your hunting experiences there, do you support or oppose the current antler-point restriction specifically for the area?



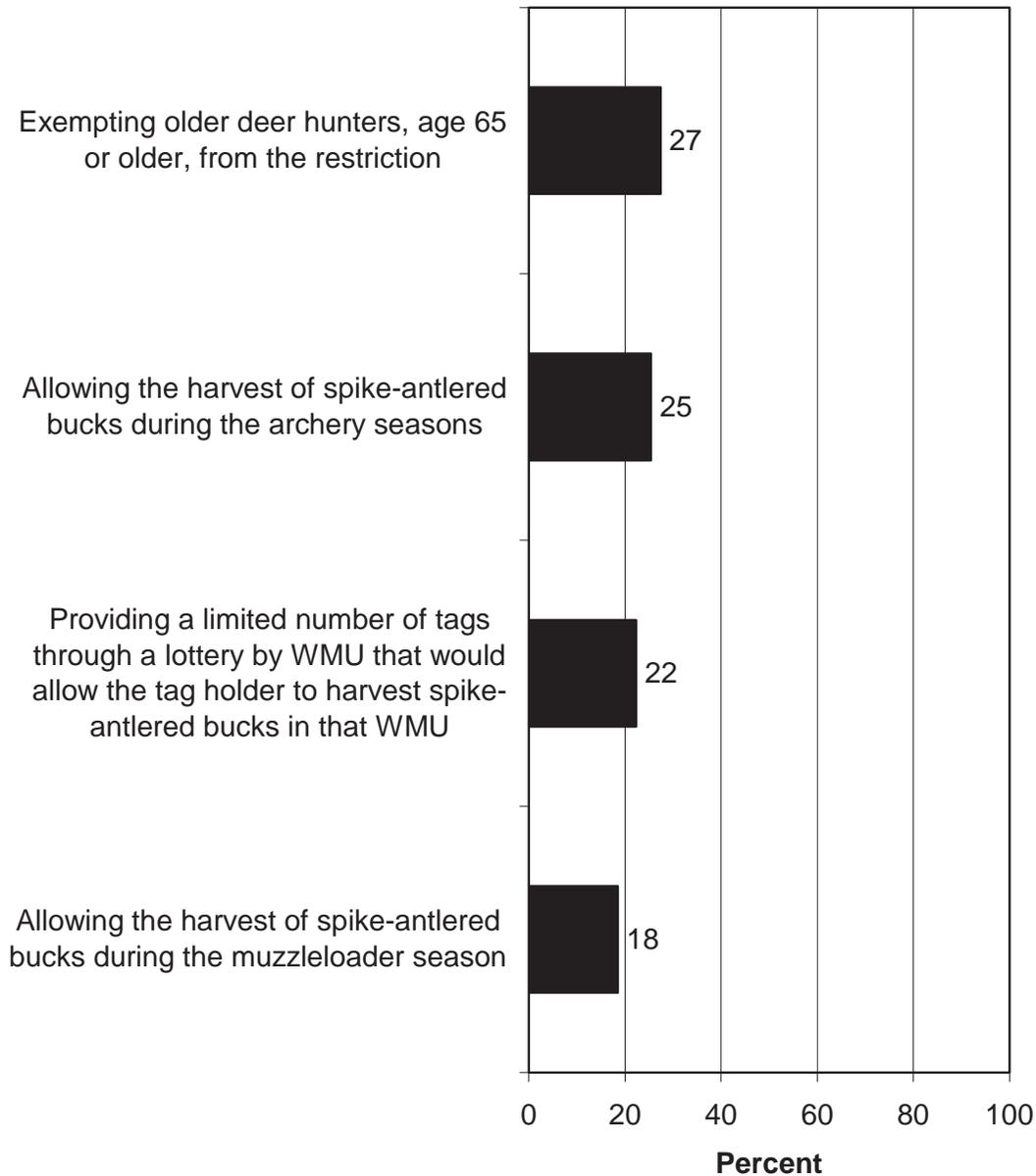
Q75. Thinking about the WMU, town, or area where you said you hunt deer most often and your hunting experiences there, do you support or oppose the current antler-point restriction specifically for the area?



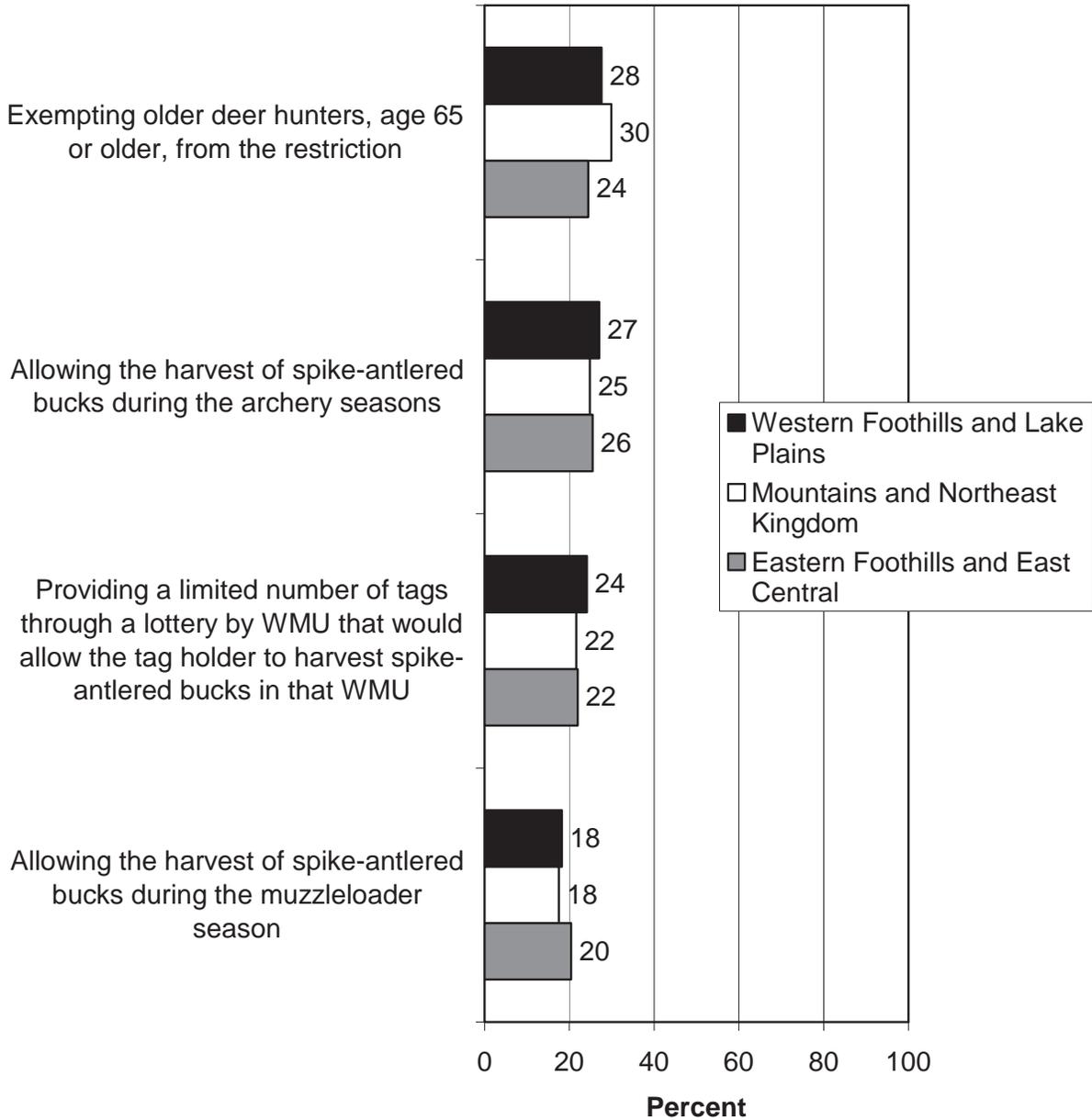
Q75. Thinking about the WMU, town, or area where you said you hunt deer most often and your hunting experiences there, do you support or oppose the current antler-point restriction specifically for the area?



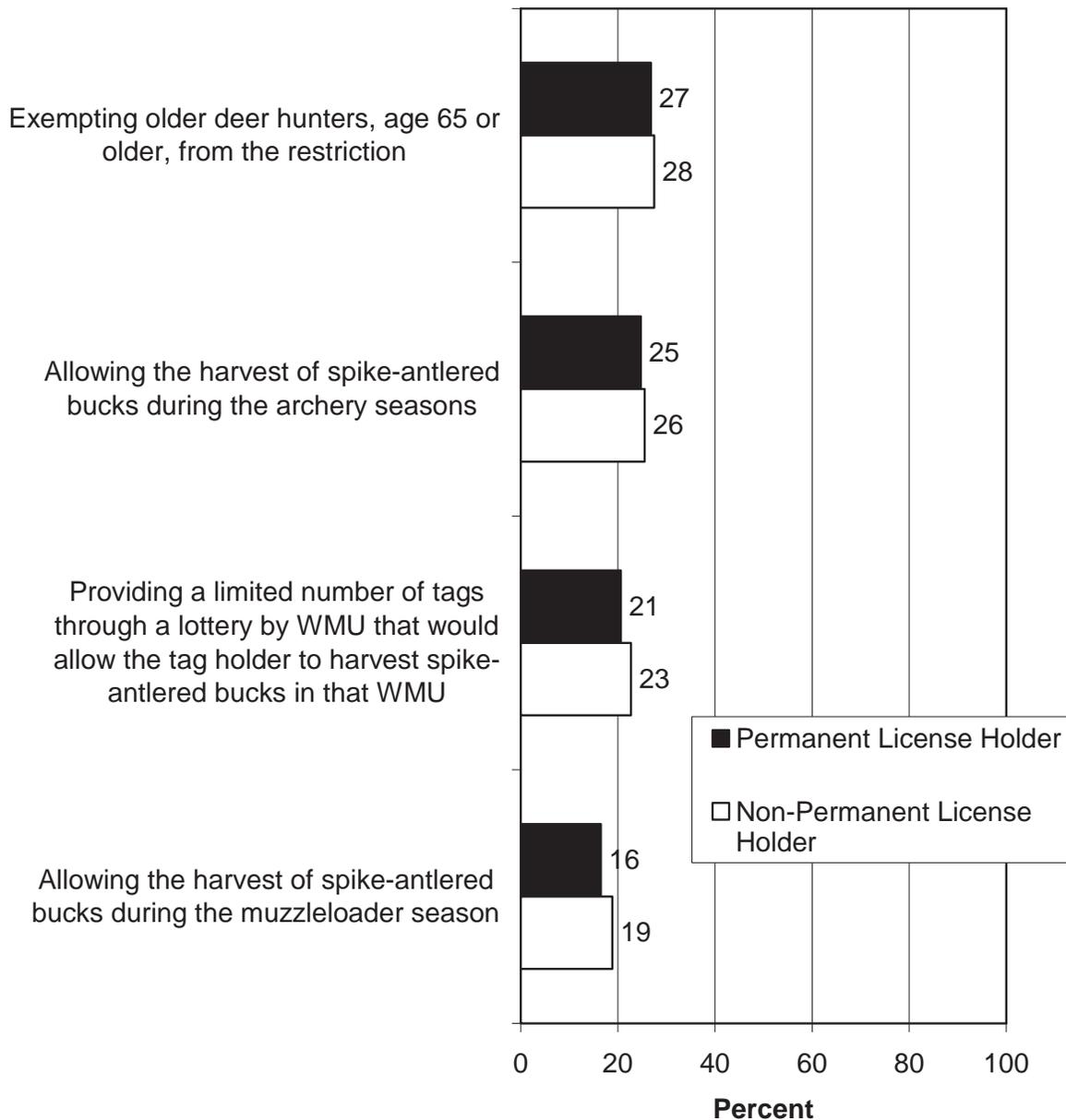
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



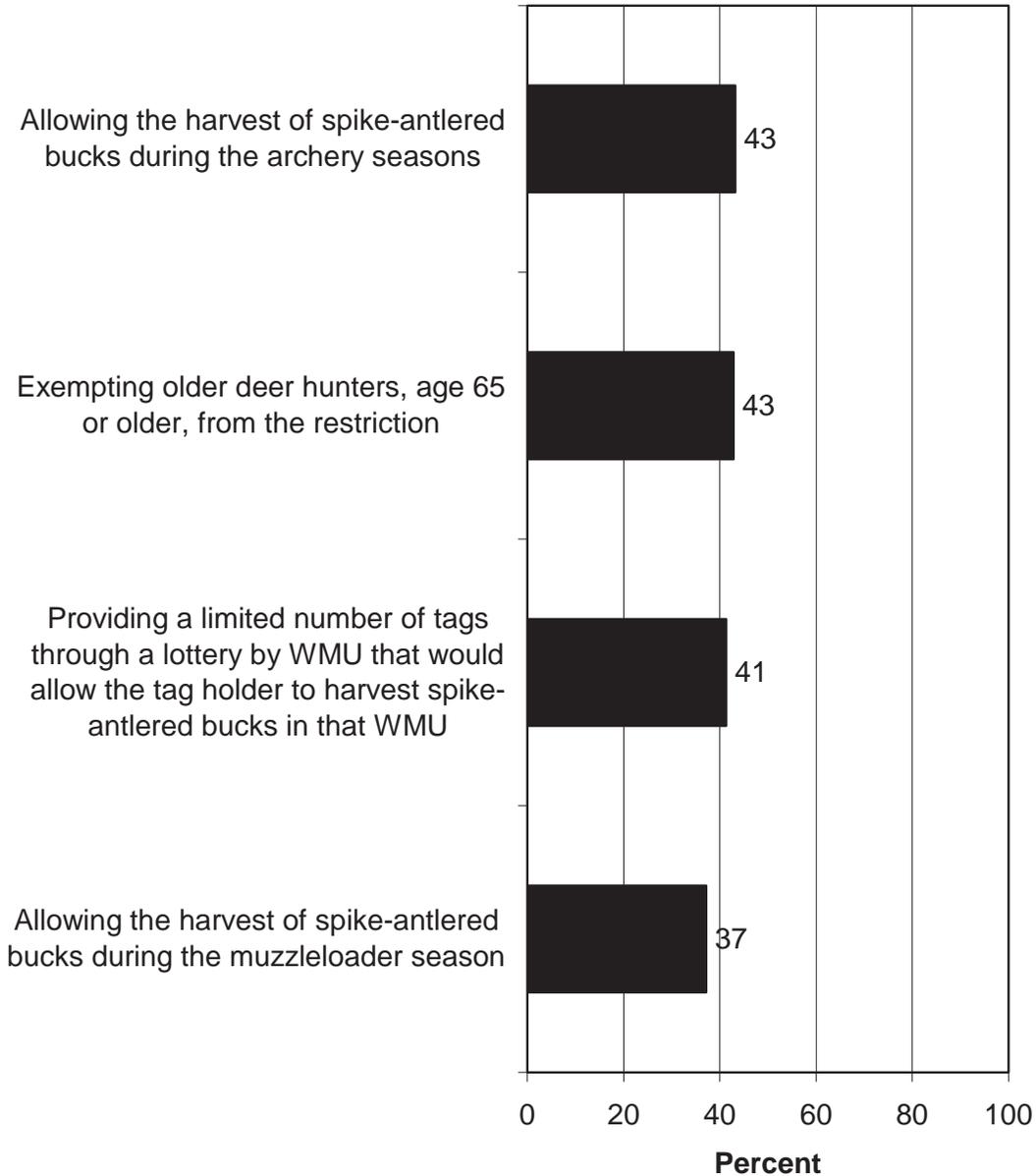
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



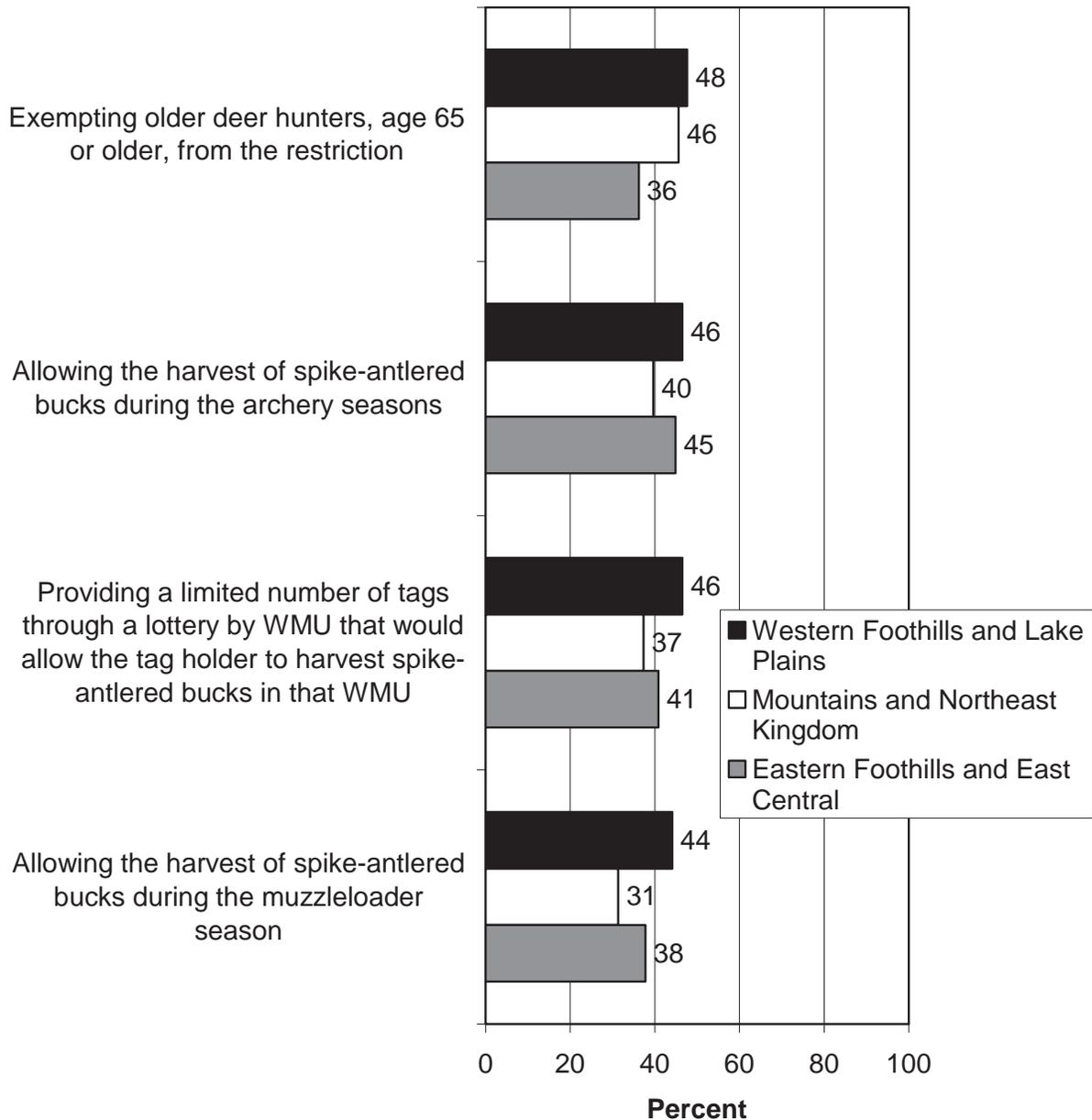
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



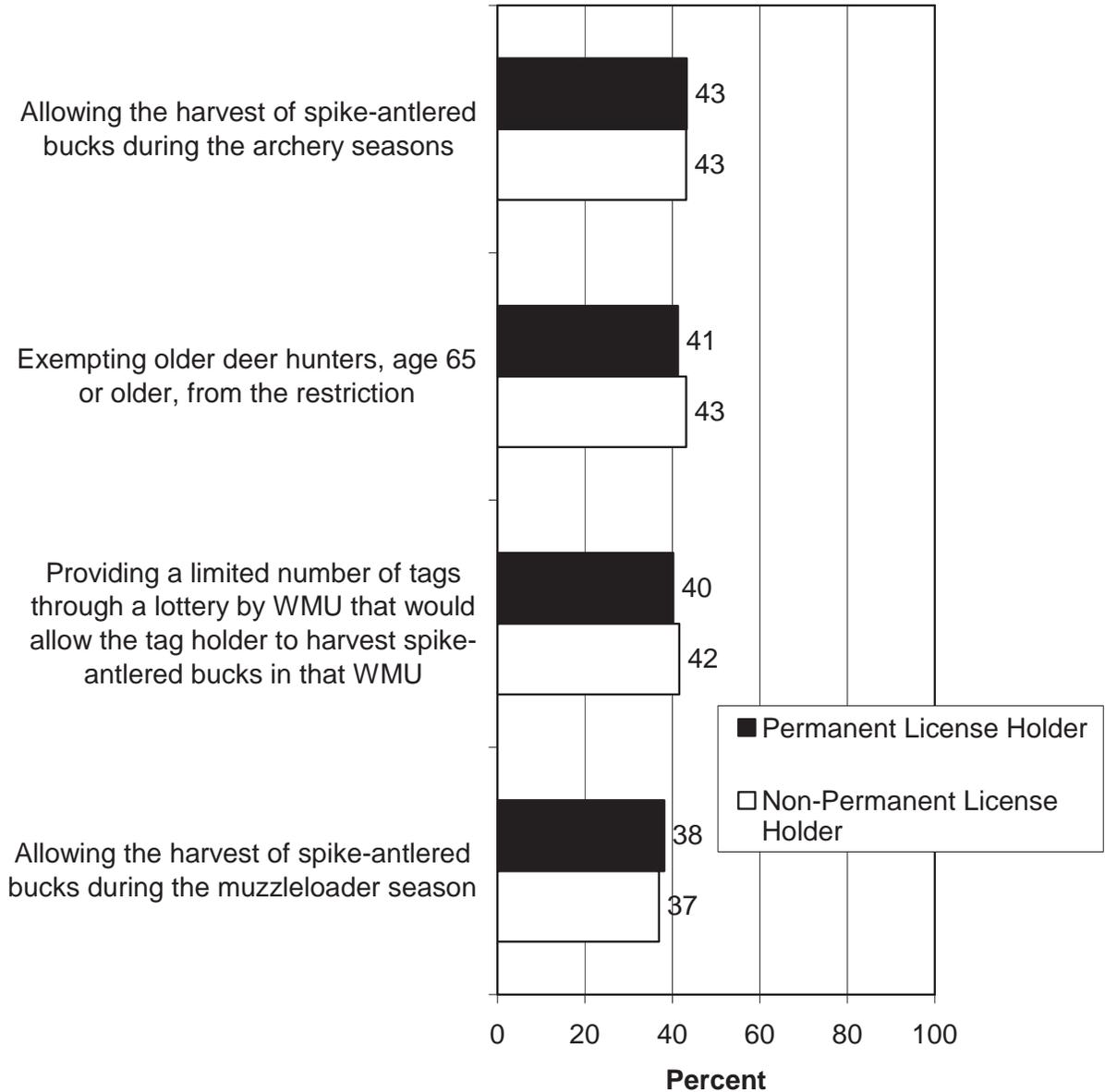
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



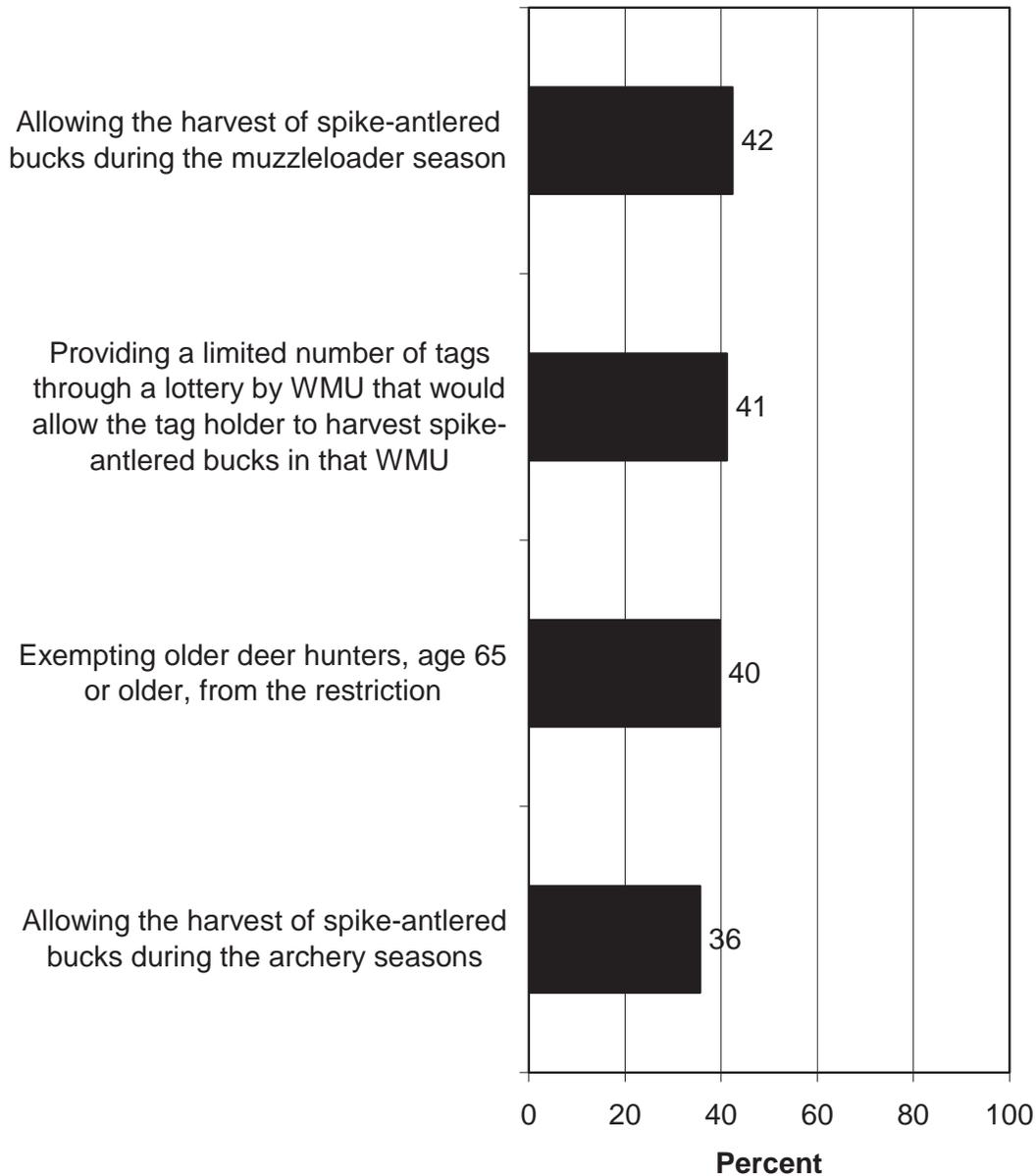
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



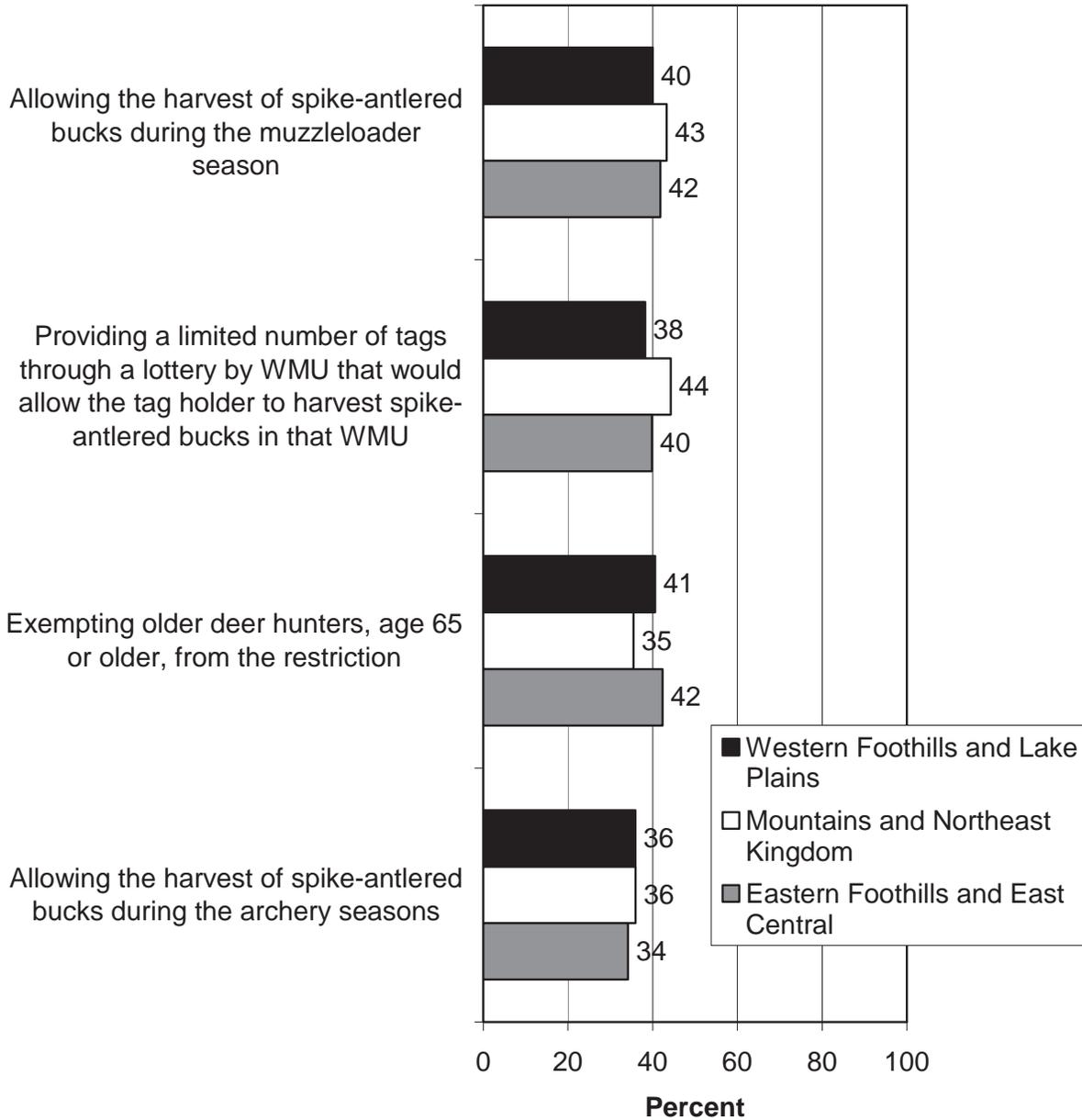
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



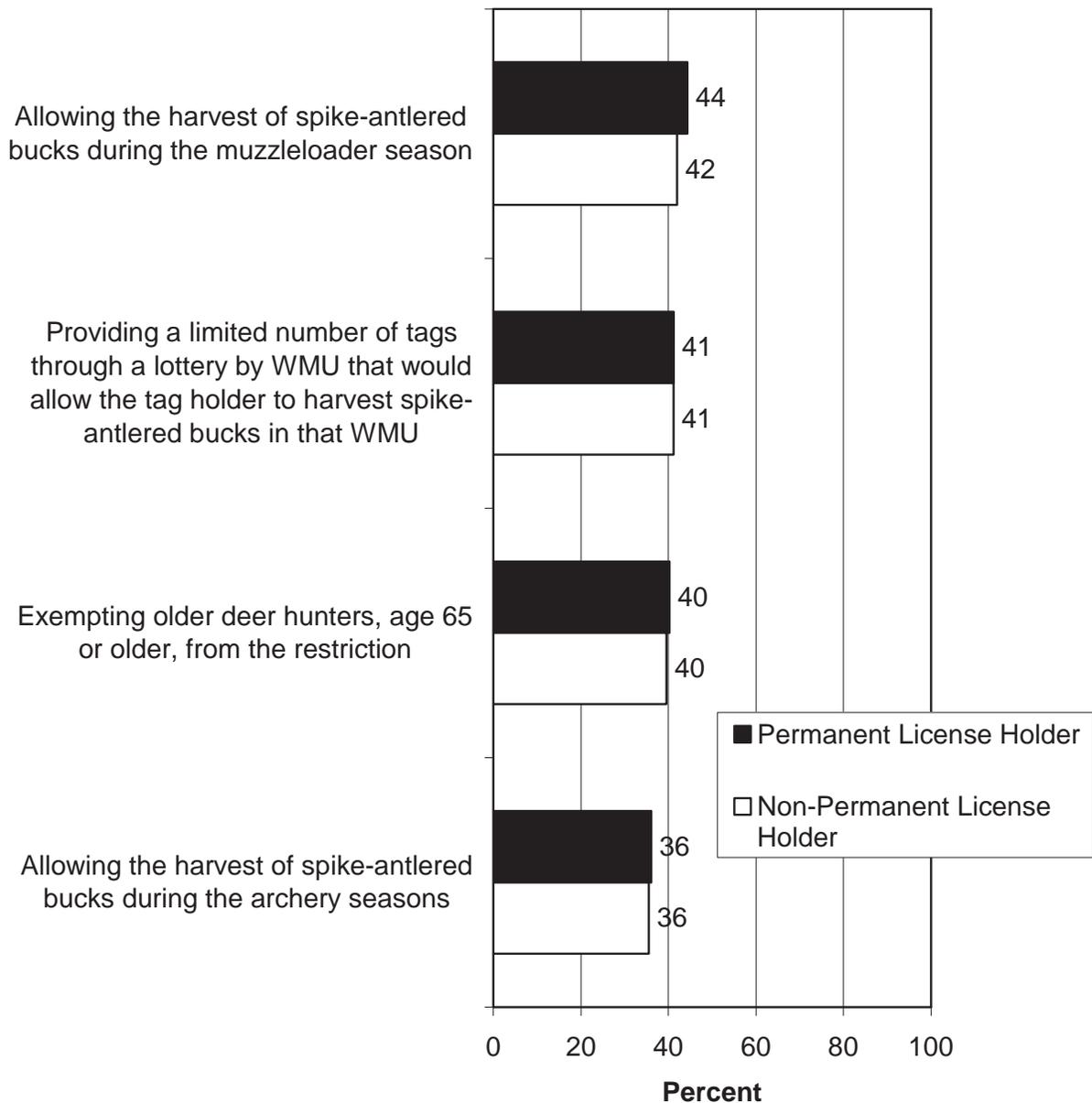
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



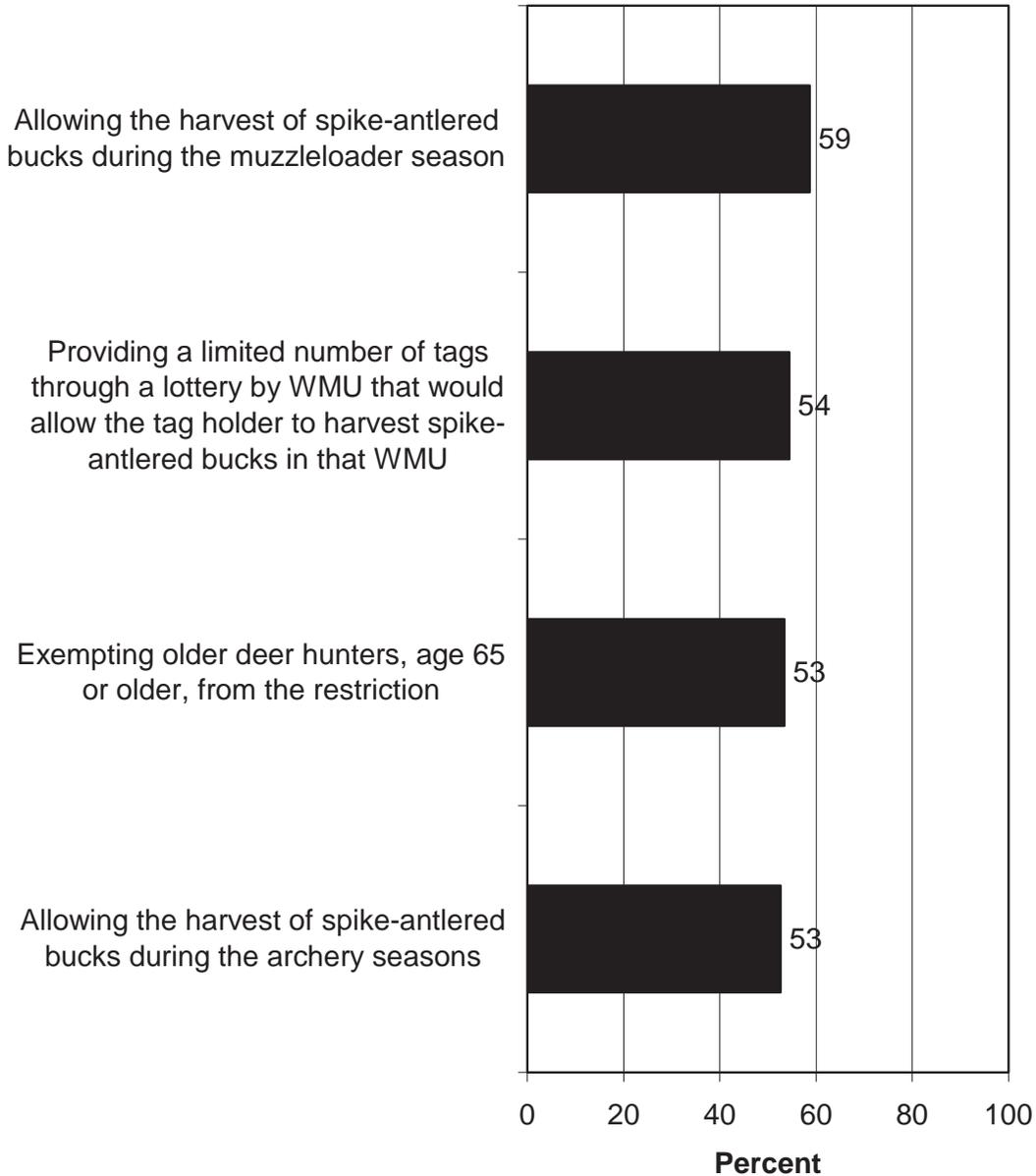
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



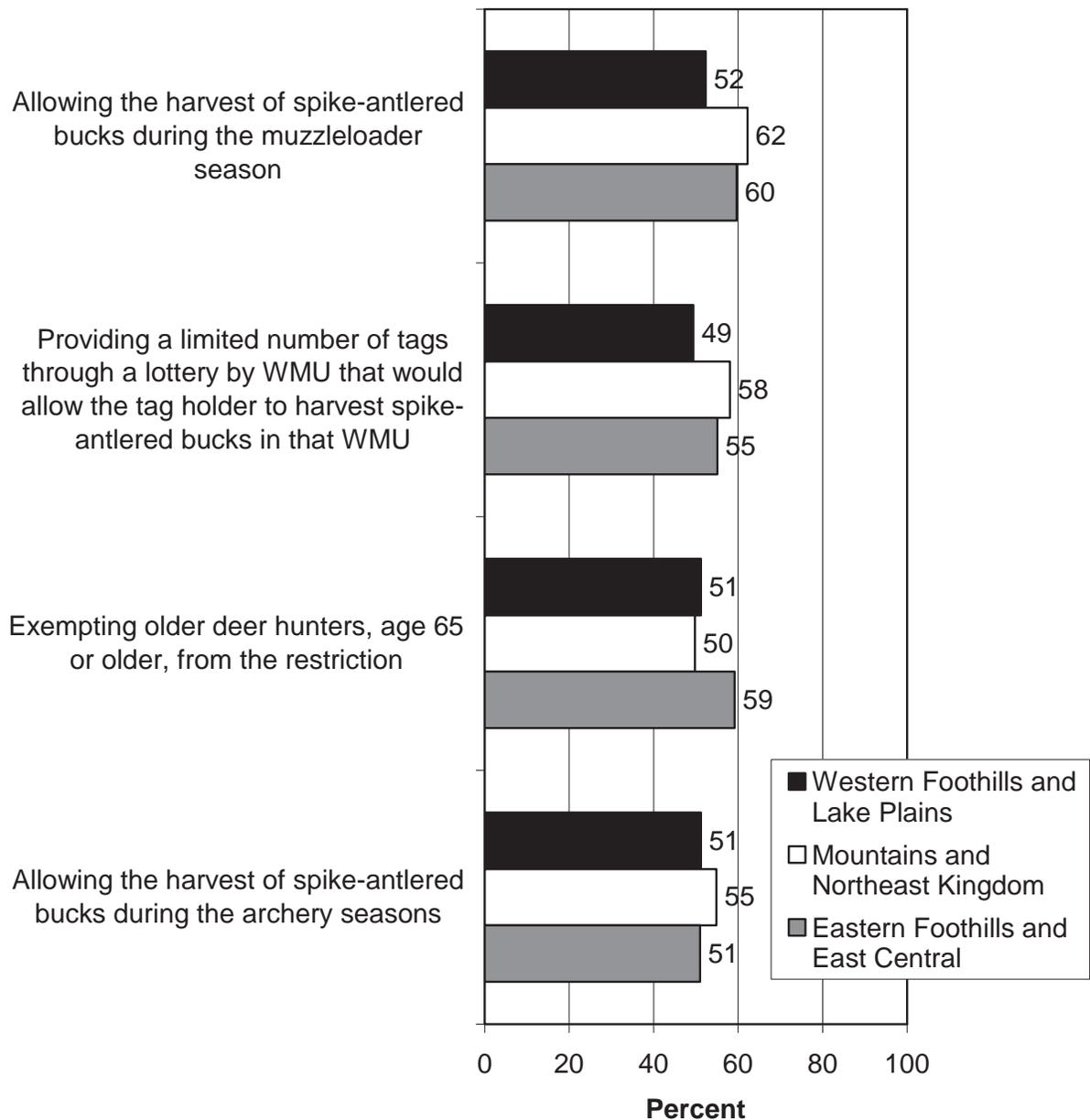
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



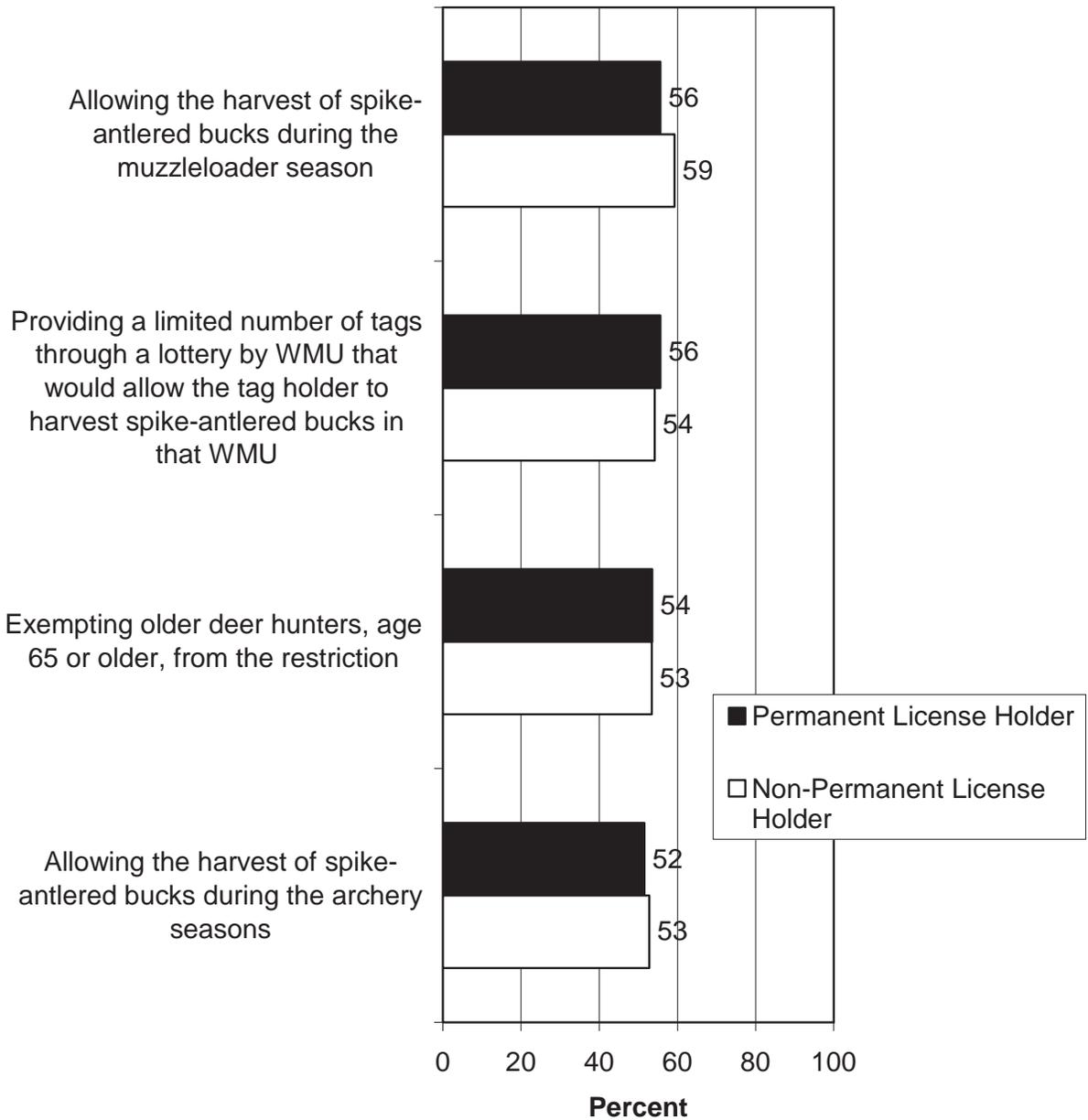
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



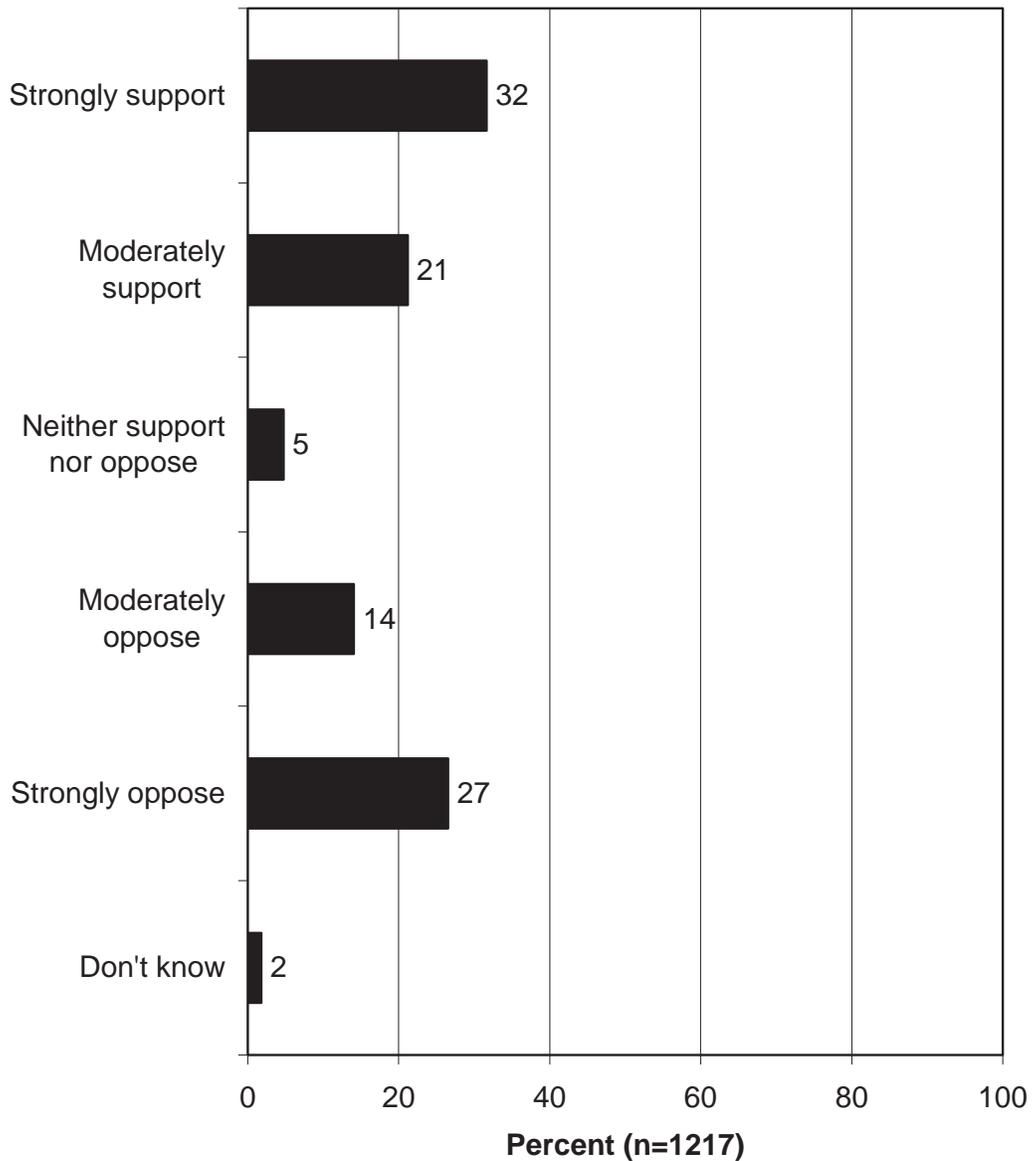
Q79-Q82. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose each of the following strategies to harvest a portion of spike-antlered bucks, if the current statewide antler-point restriction is not changed:



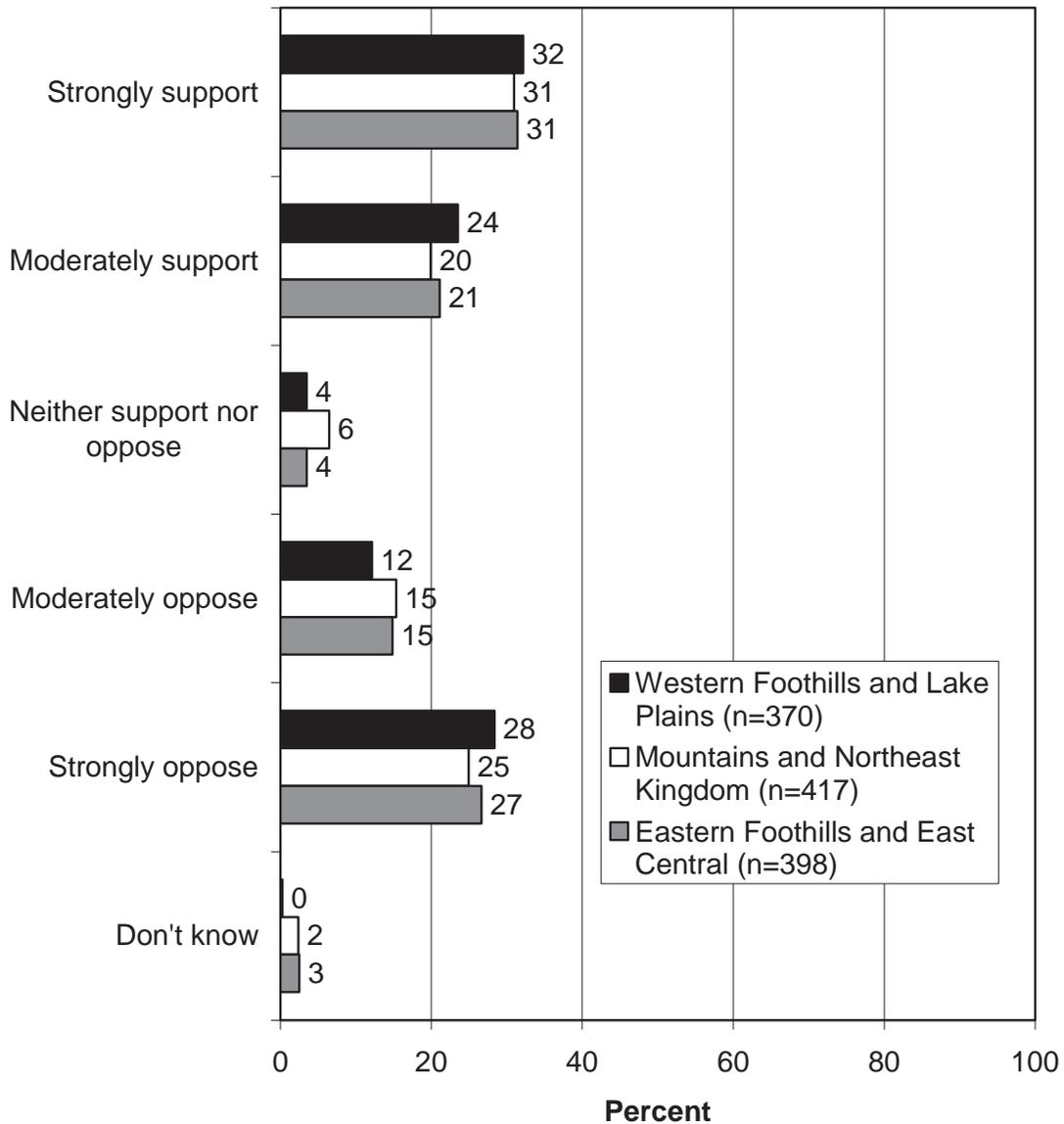
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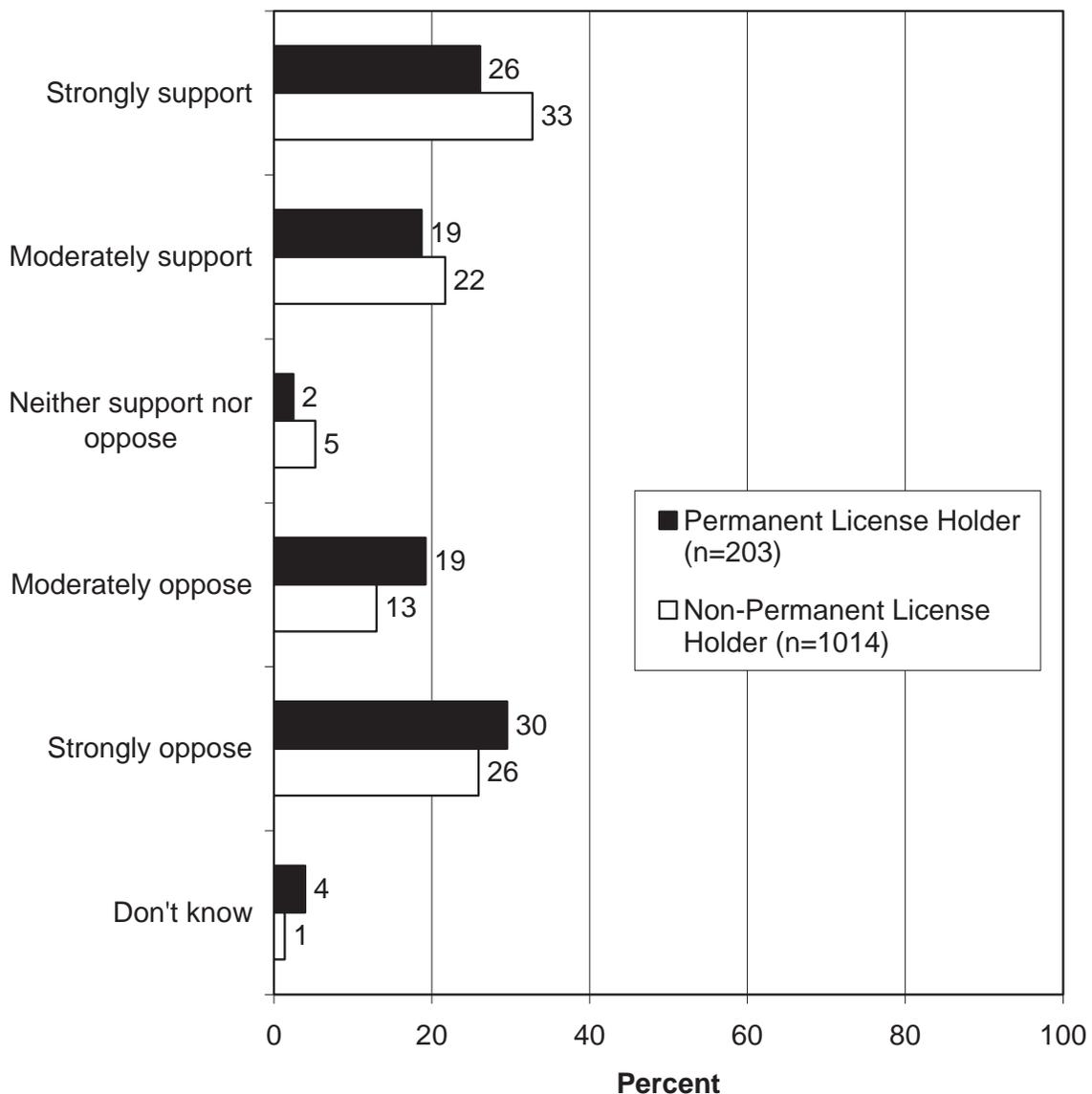
Q83. If the Department believed that increasing the antler-point restriction was necessary to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the population in some regions of the state, would you support or oppose increasing the antler-point restriction, even if it meant you might harvest fewer bucks?



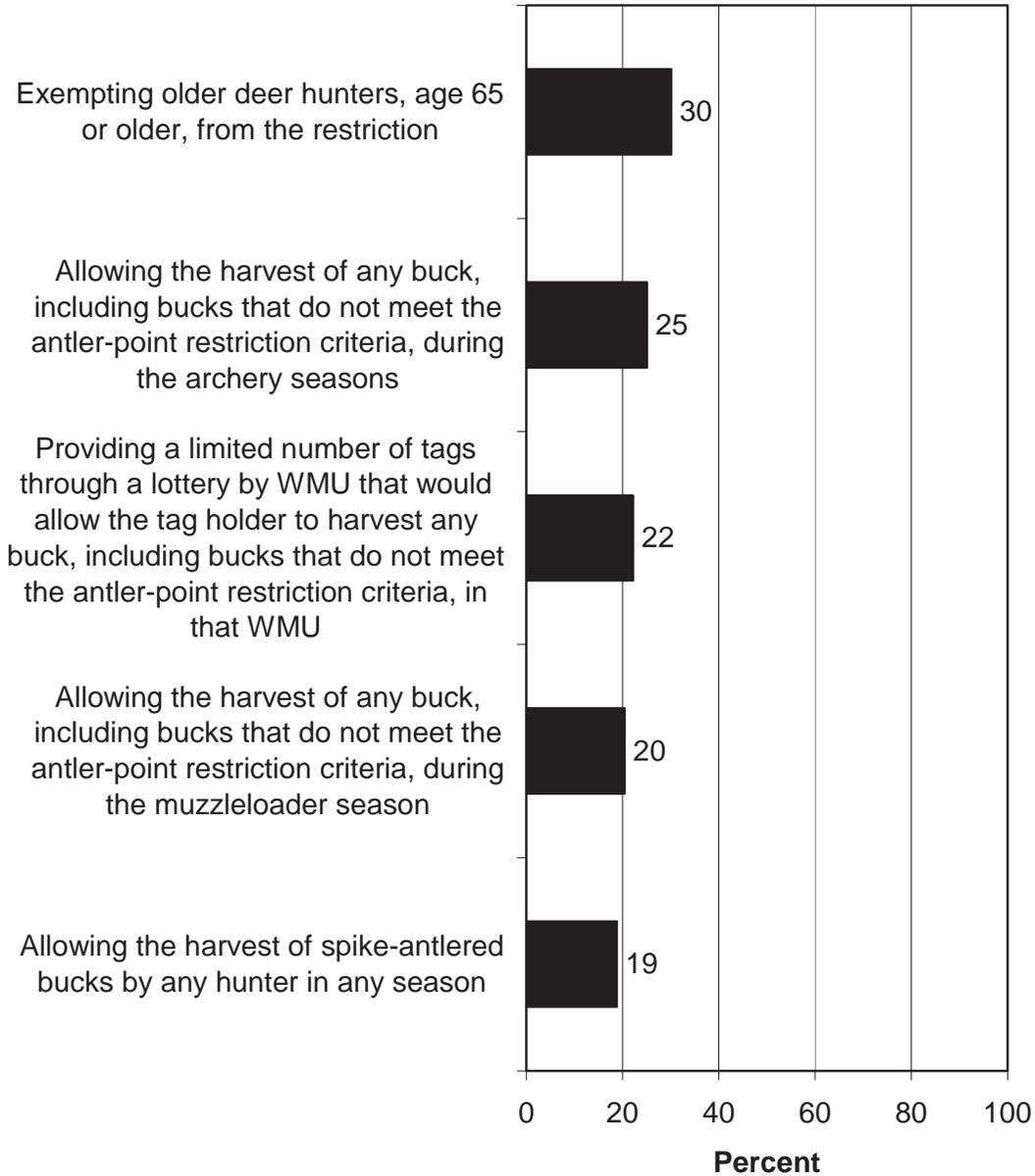
Q83. If the Department believed that increasing the antler point restriction was necessary to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the population in some regions of the state, would you support or oppose increasing the antler-point restriction, even if it meant you might harvest fewer bucks?



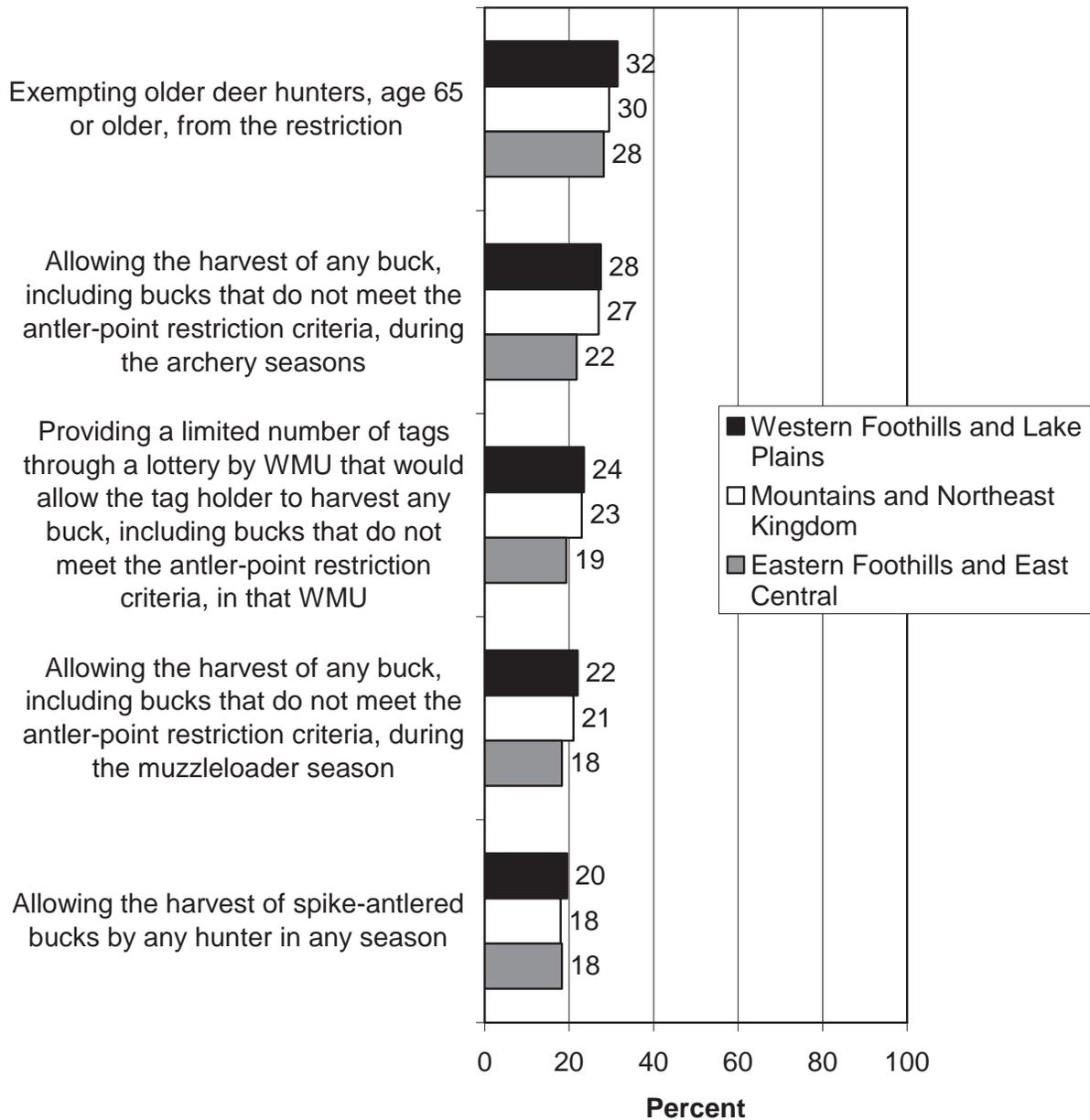
Q83. If the Department believed that increasing the antler-point restriction was necessary to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the population in some regions of the state, would you support or oppose increasing the antler-point restriction, even if it meant you might harvest fewer bucks?



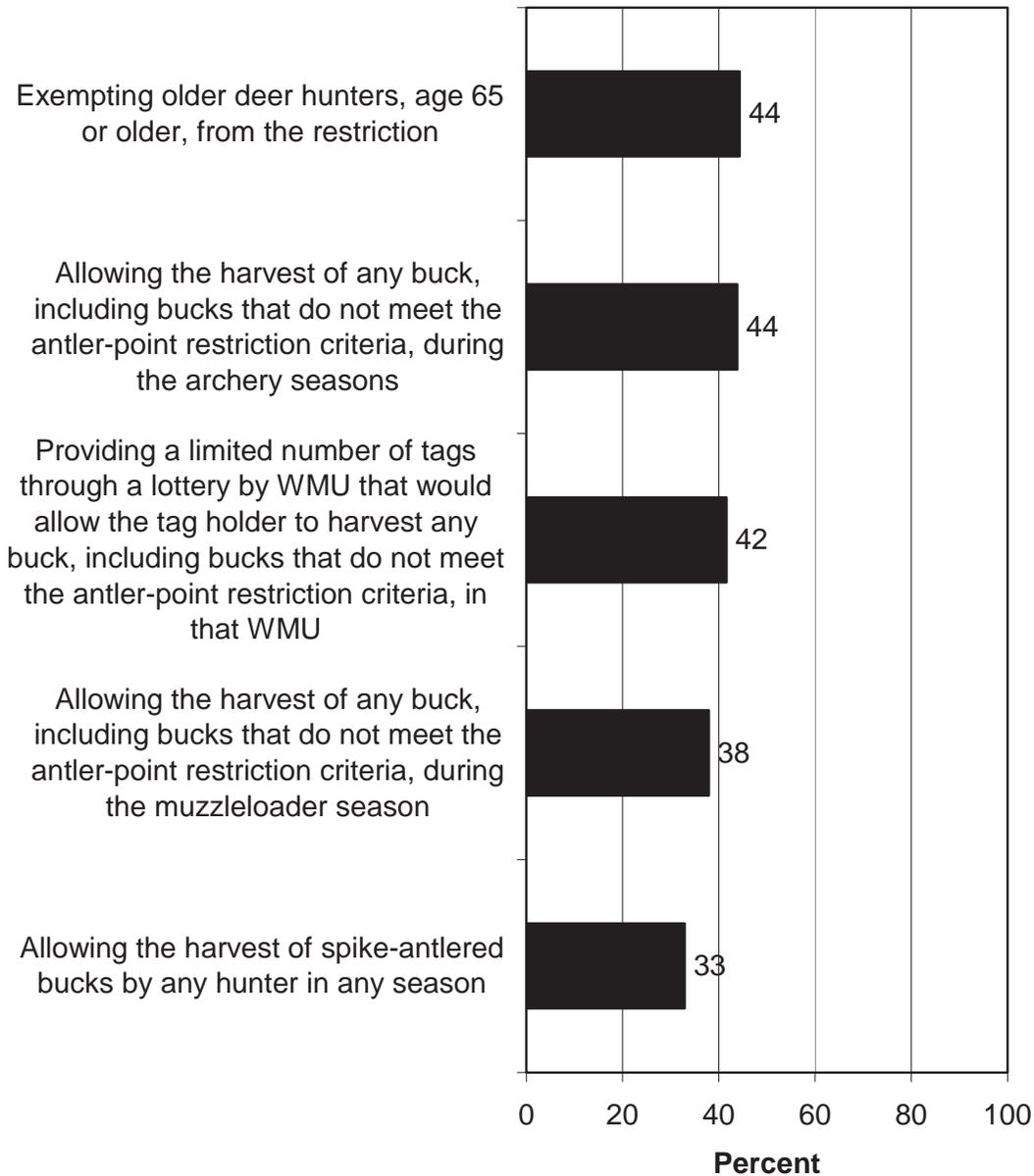
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



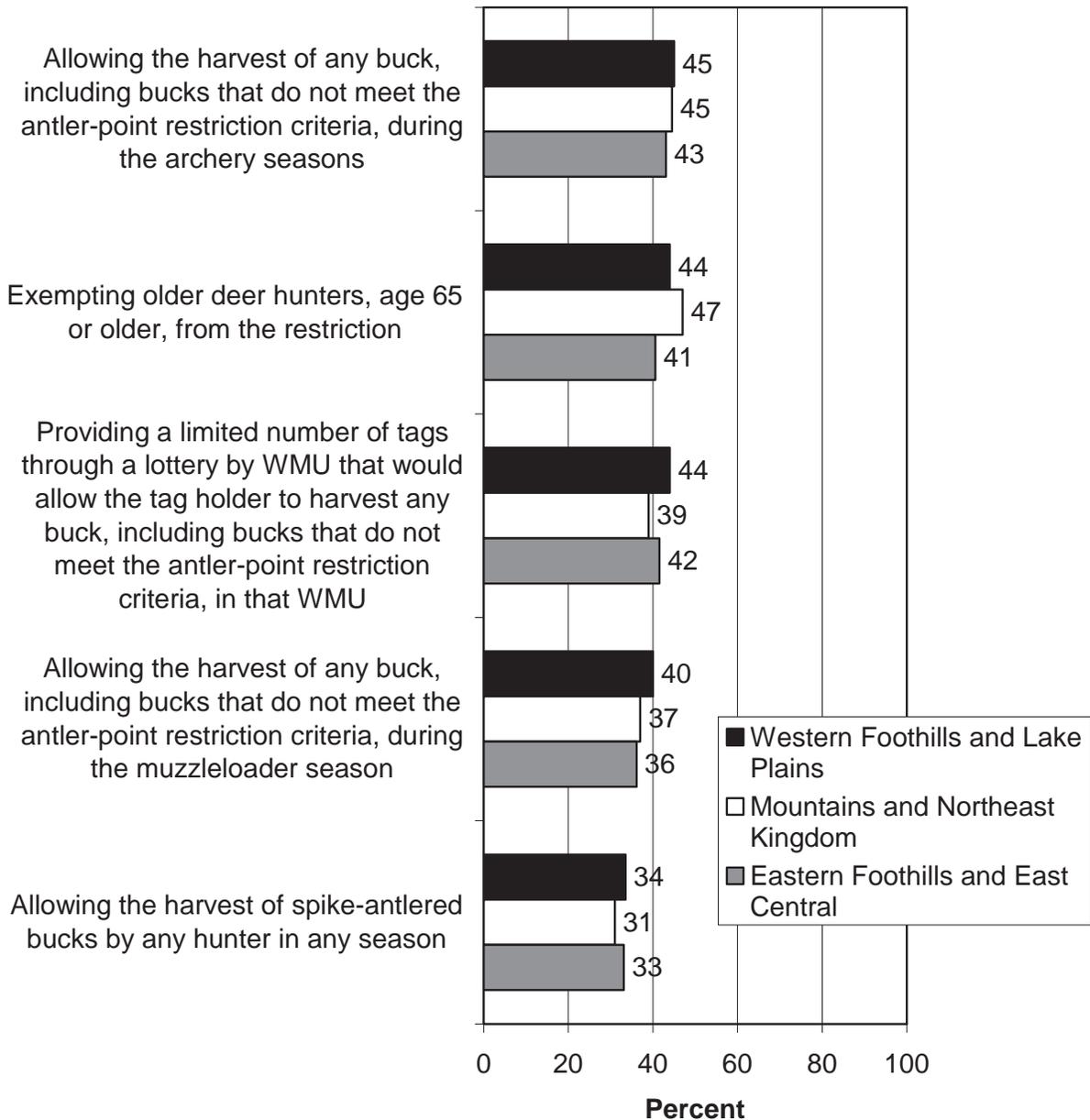
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



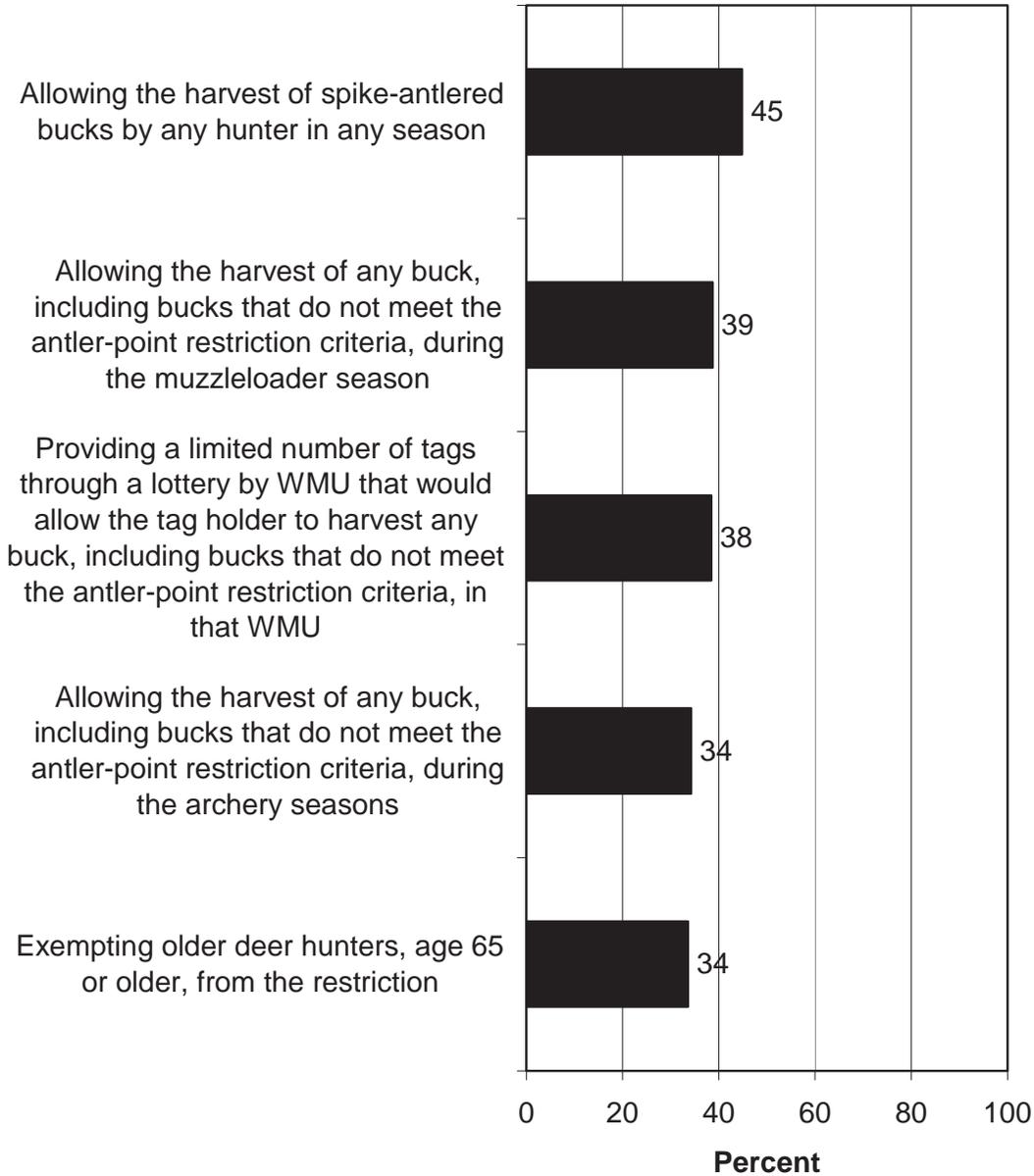
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



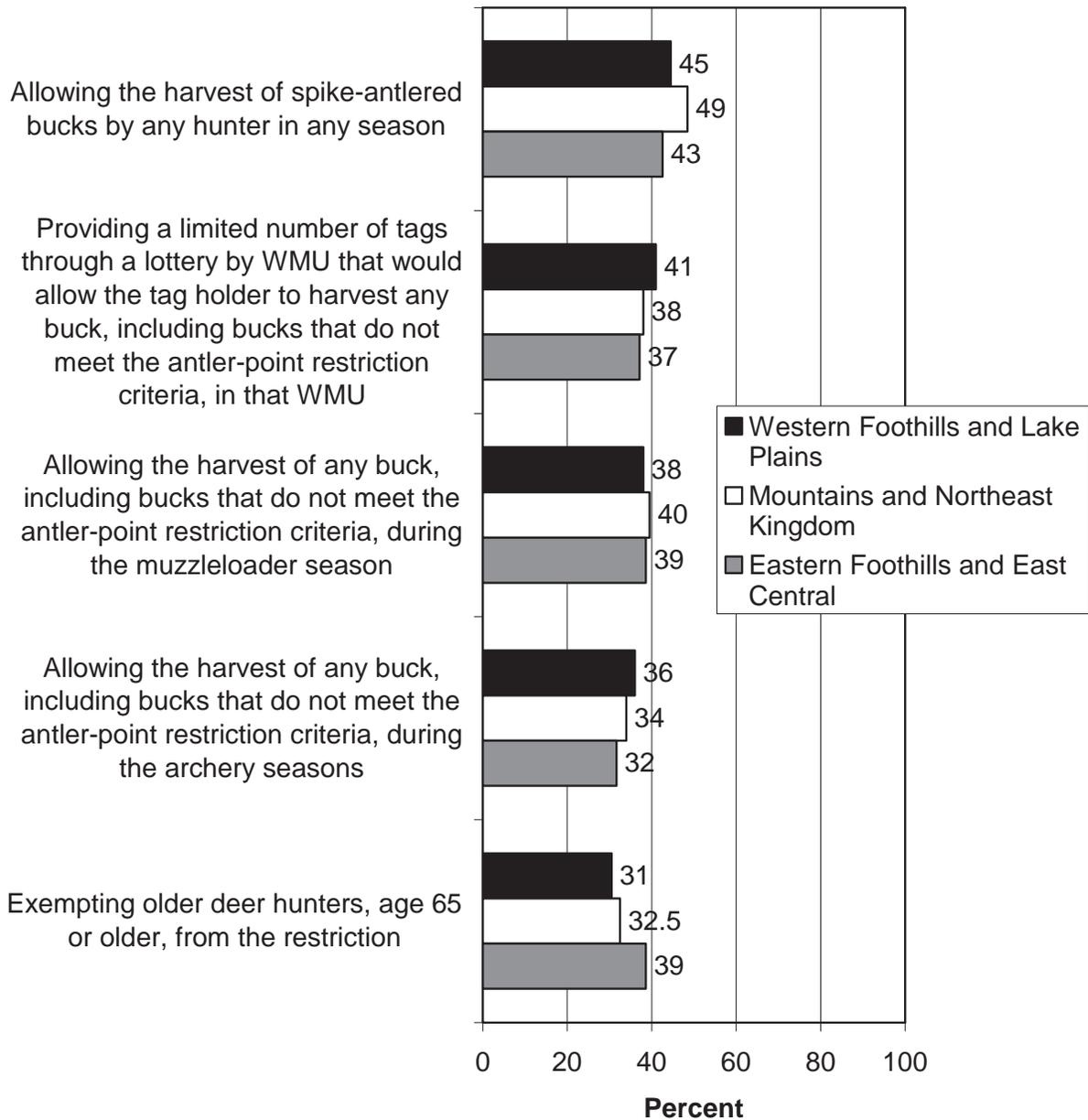
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



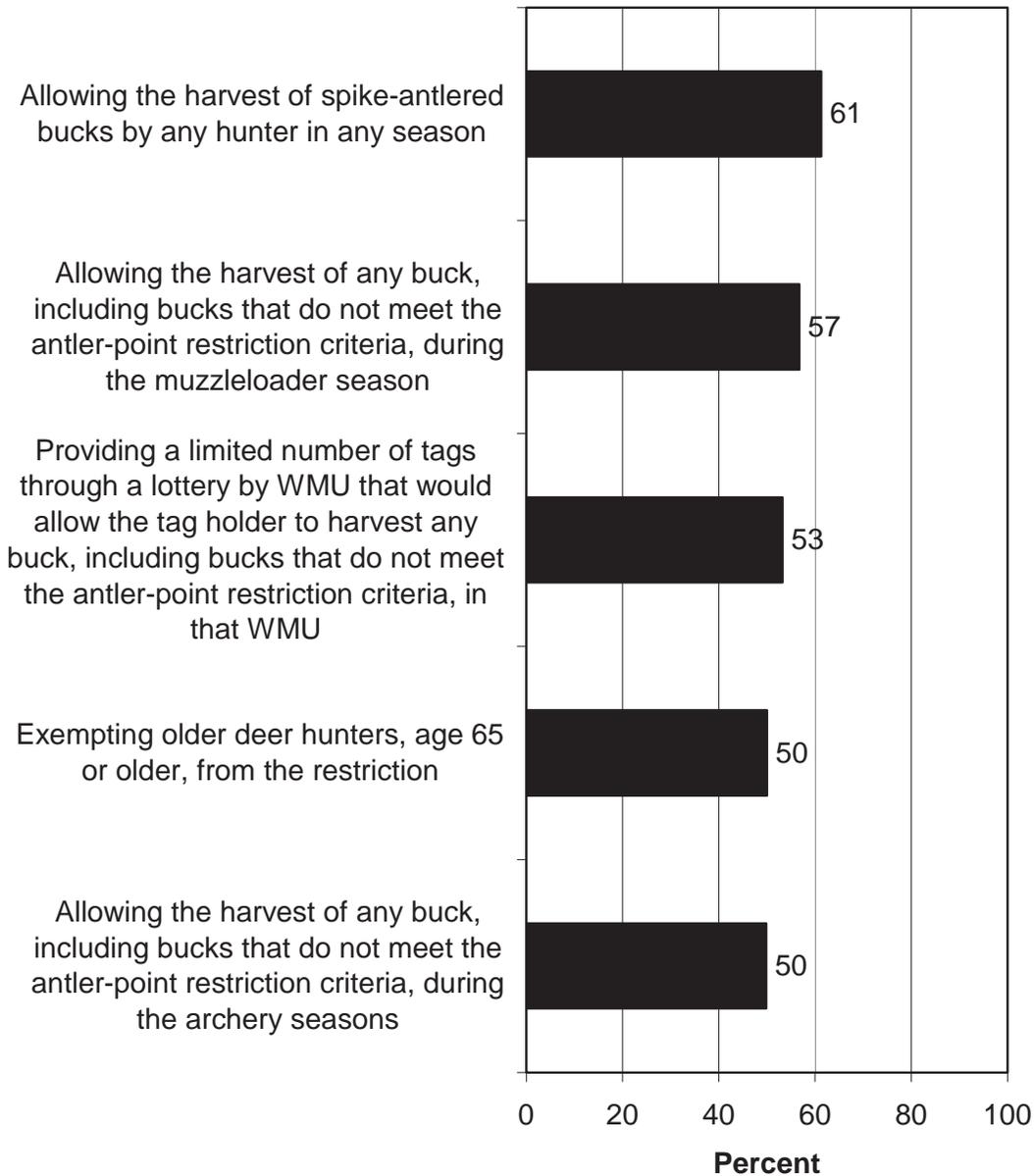
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



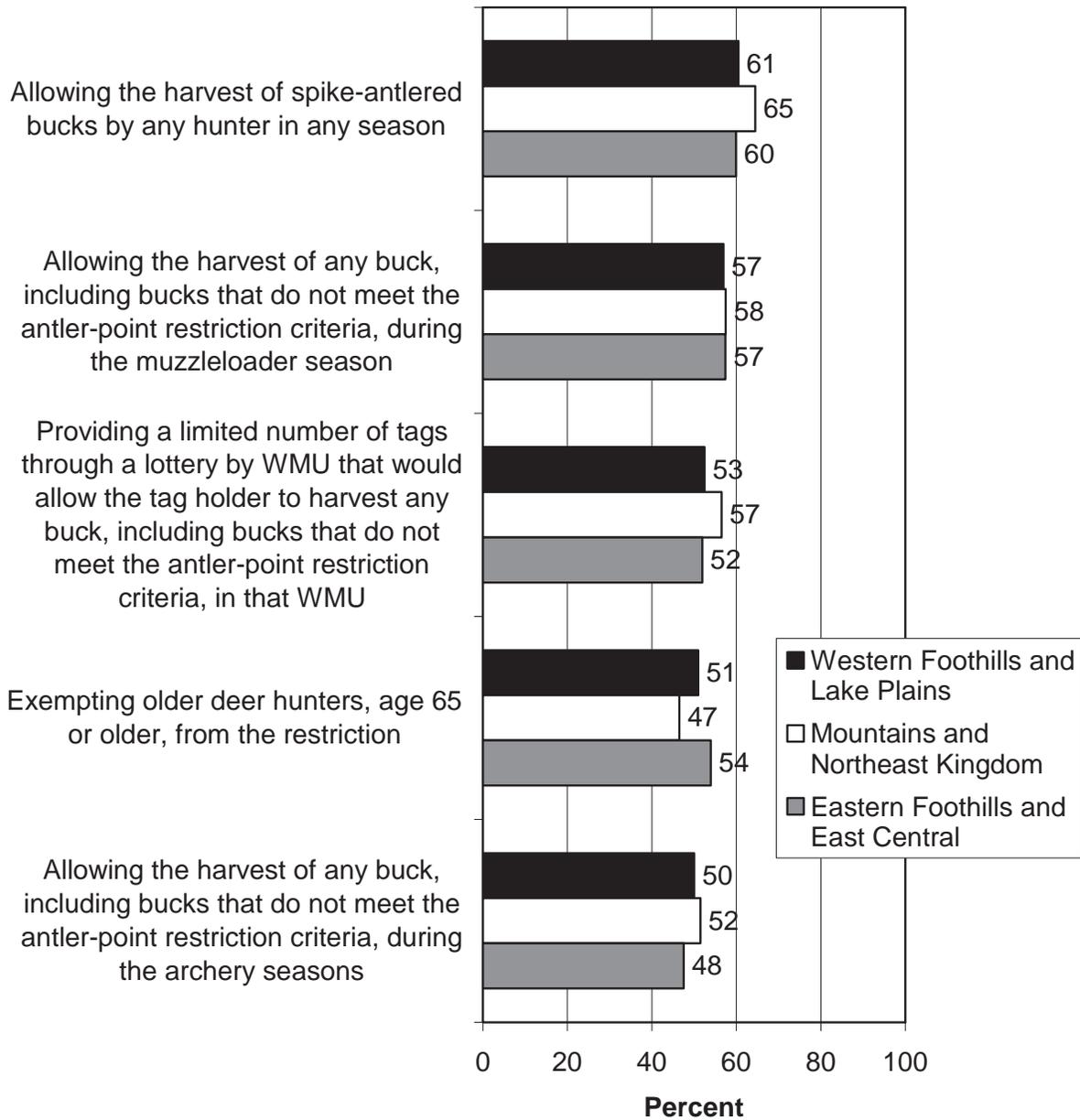
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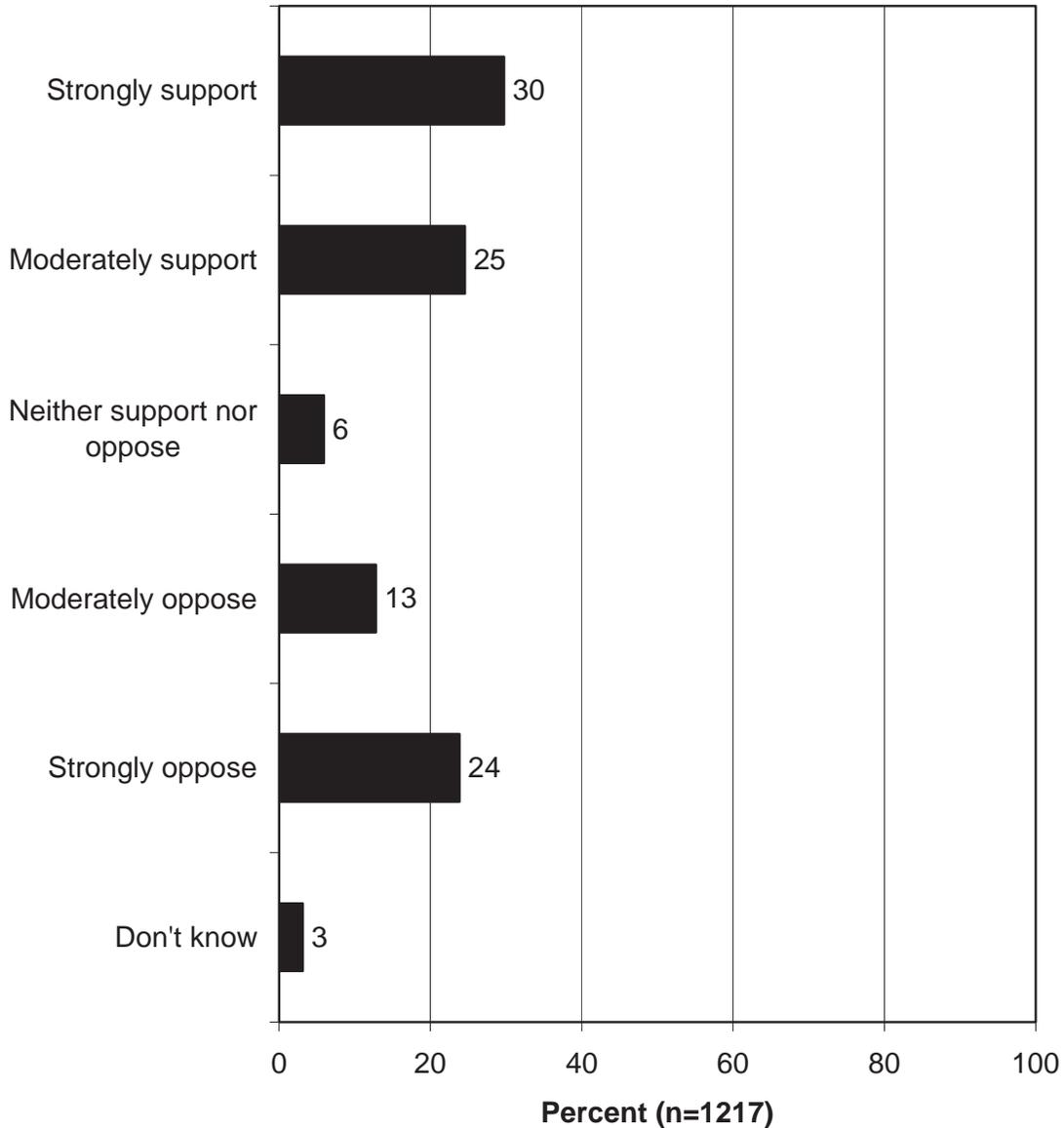
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



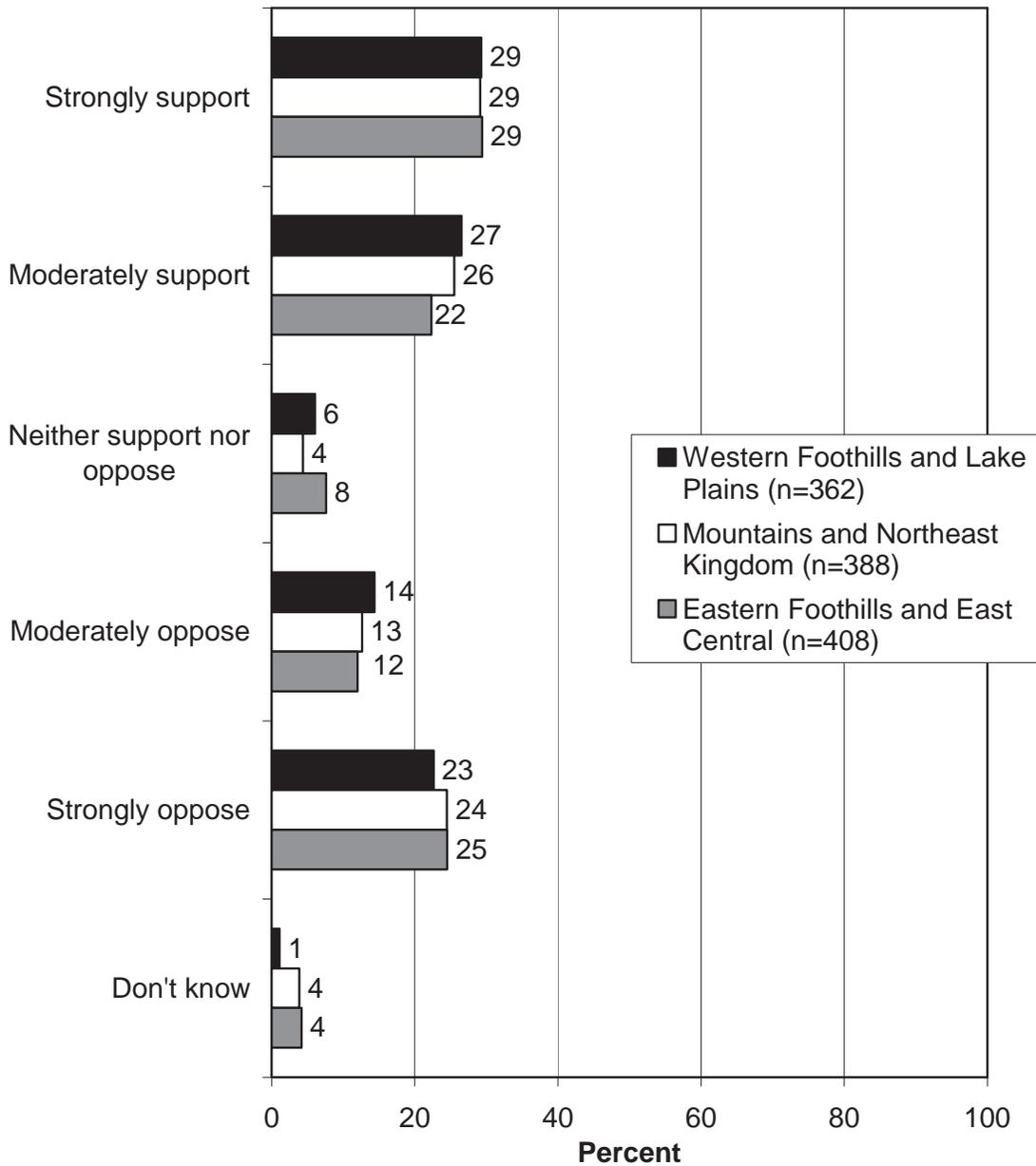
Q86-Q90. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose each of the following strategies as a way to harvest some of the smaller-antlered bucks if the antler-point restriction was increased:



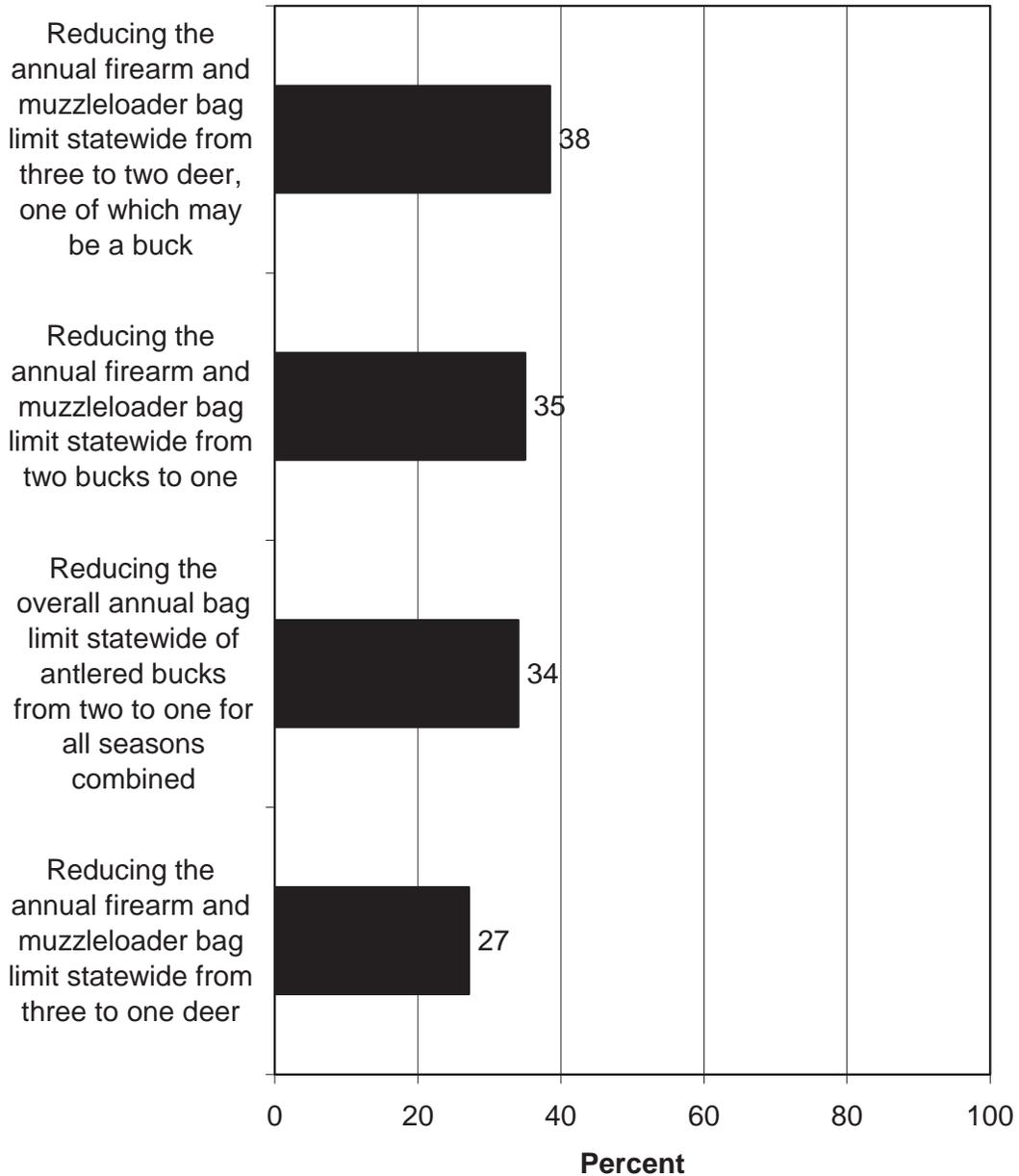
Q92. If the Department was concerned about the potential long-term impacts of the current antler-point restriction from shifting harvest onto larger bucks and leaving smaller antlered bucks surviving to breed, would you support or oppose changing the current antler-point restriction?



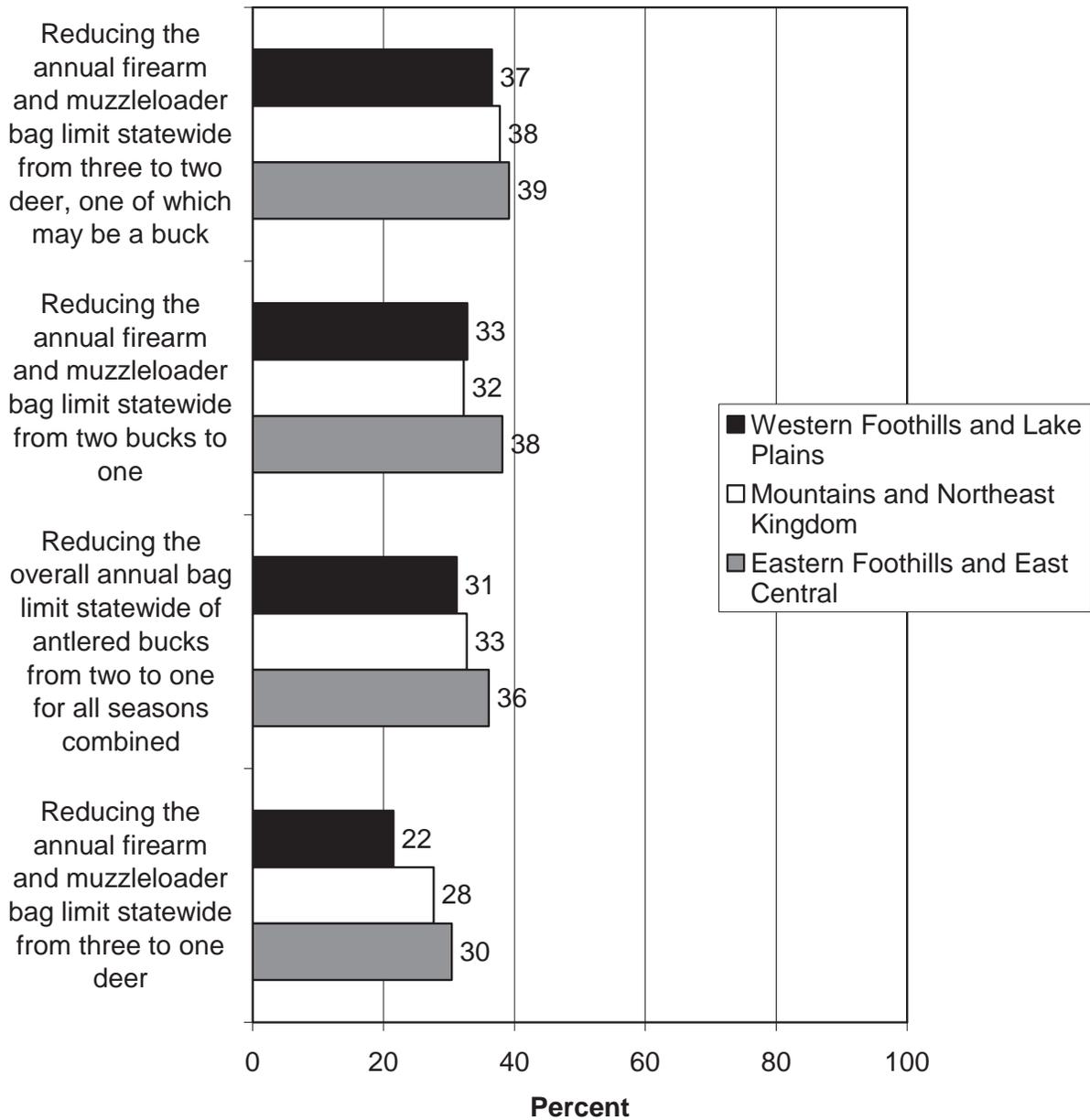
Q92. If the Department was concerned about the potential long-term impacts of the current antler-point restriction from shifting harvest onto larger bucks and leaving smaller antlered bucks surviving to breed, would you support or oppose changing the current antler-point restriction?



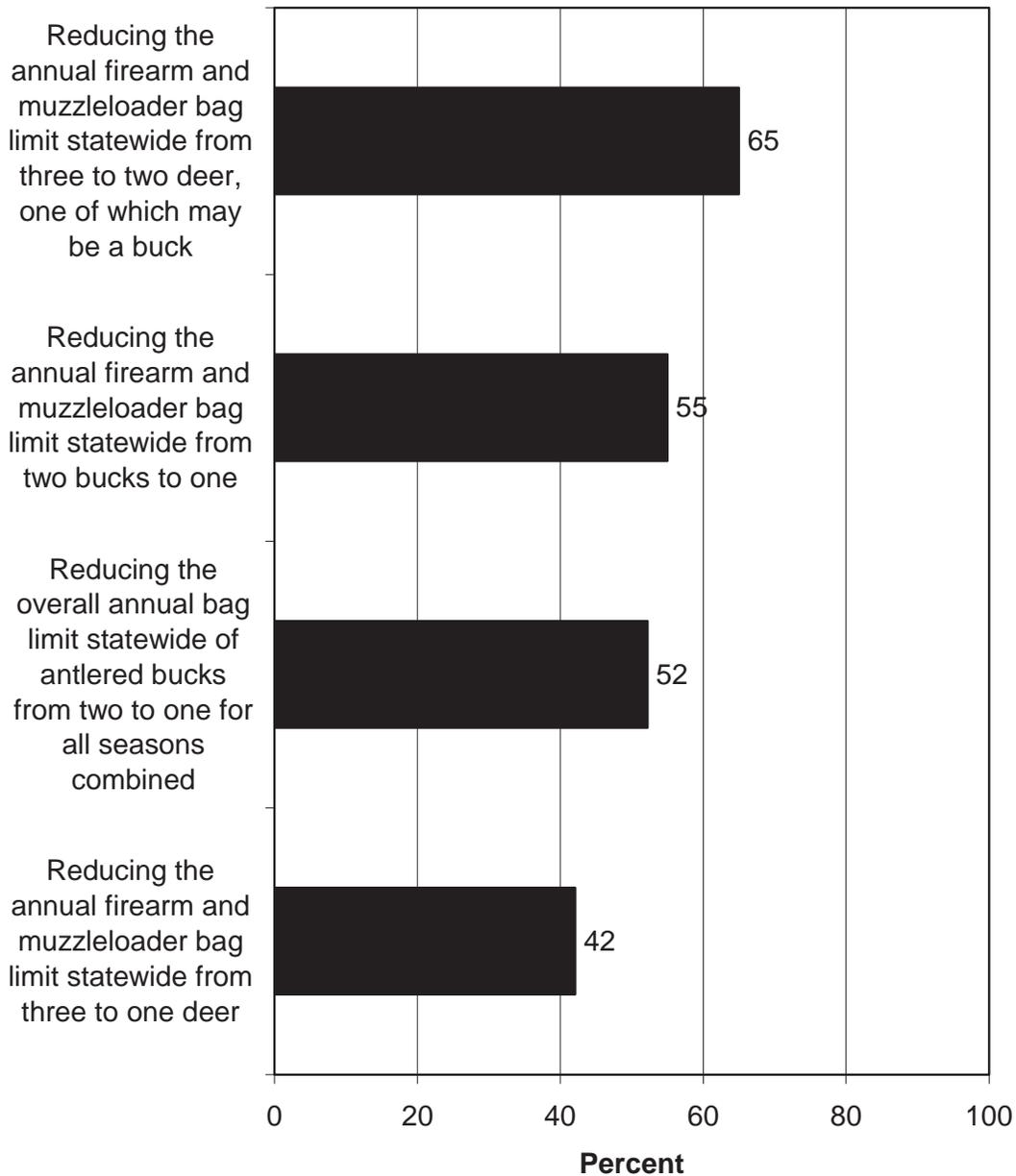
Q96-Q99. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following changes to statewide bag limits:



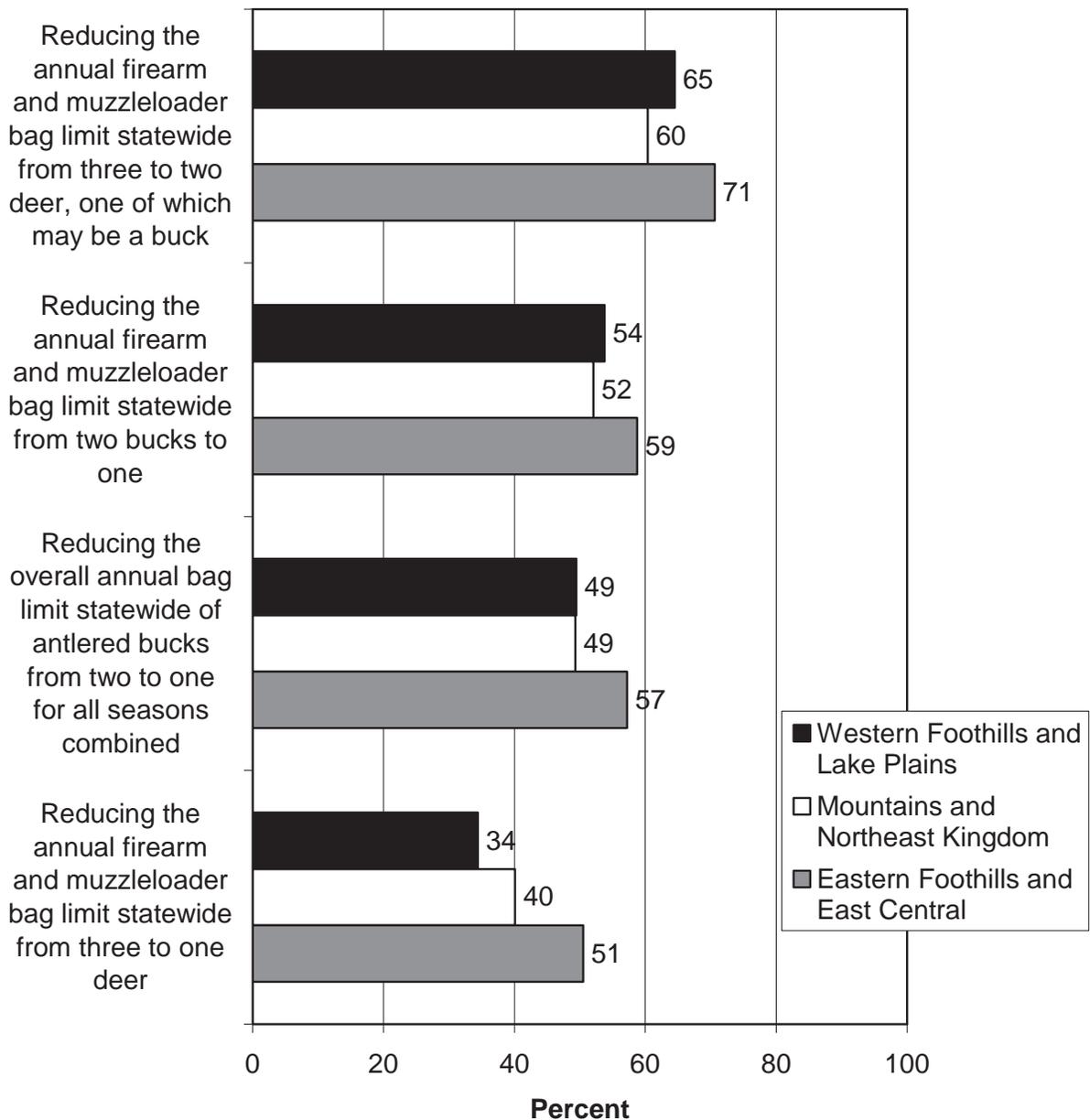
Q96-Q99. Percent of respondents who would strongly support each of the following changes to statewide bag limits:



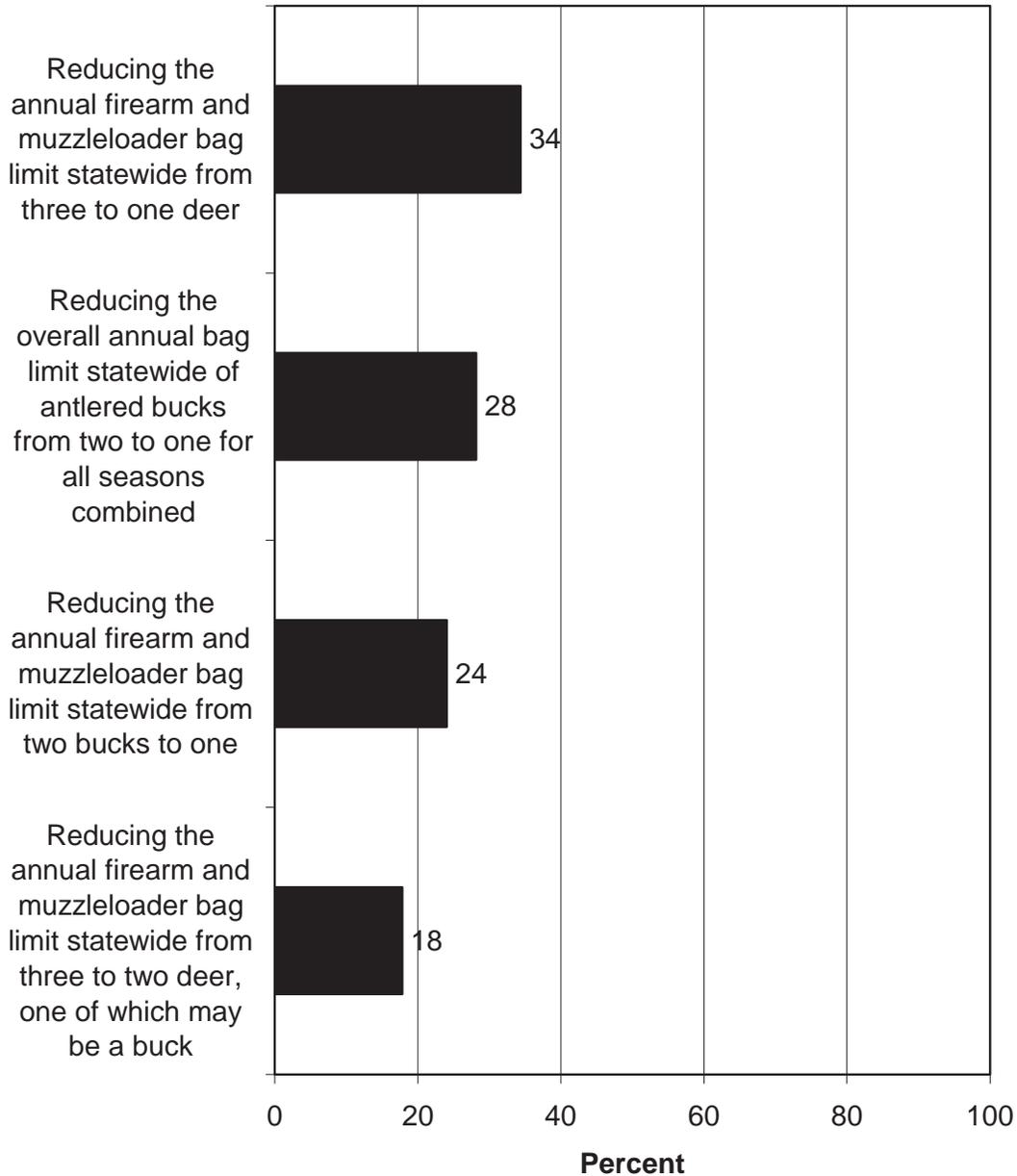
Q96-Q99. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following changes to statewide bag limits:



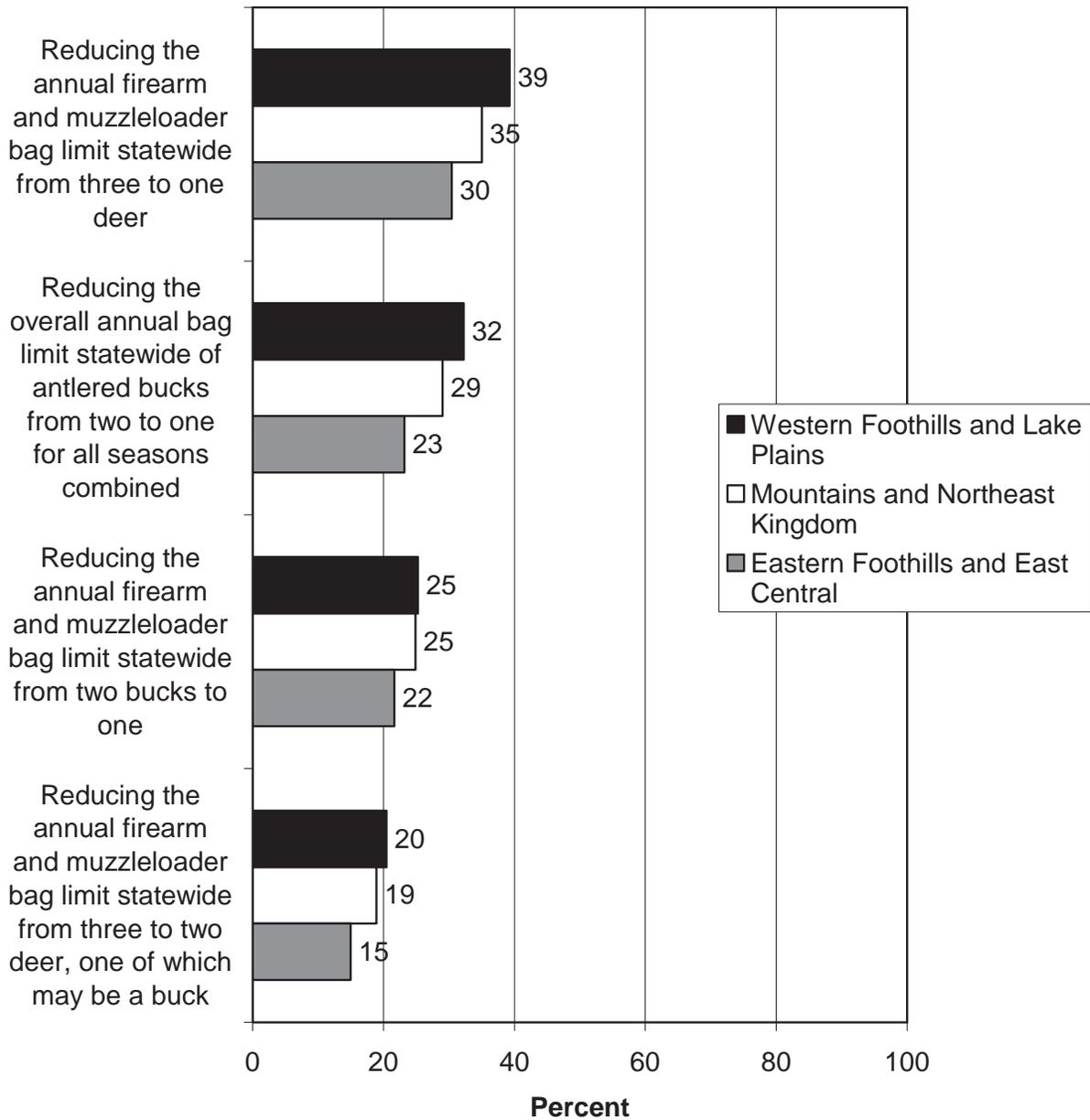
Q96-Q99. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately support each of the following changes to statewide bag limits:



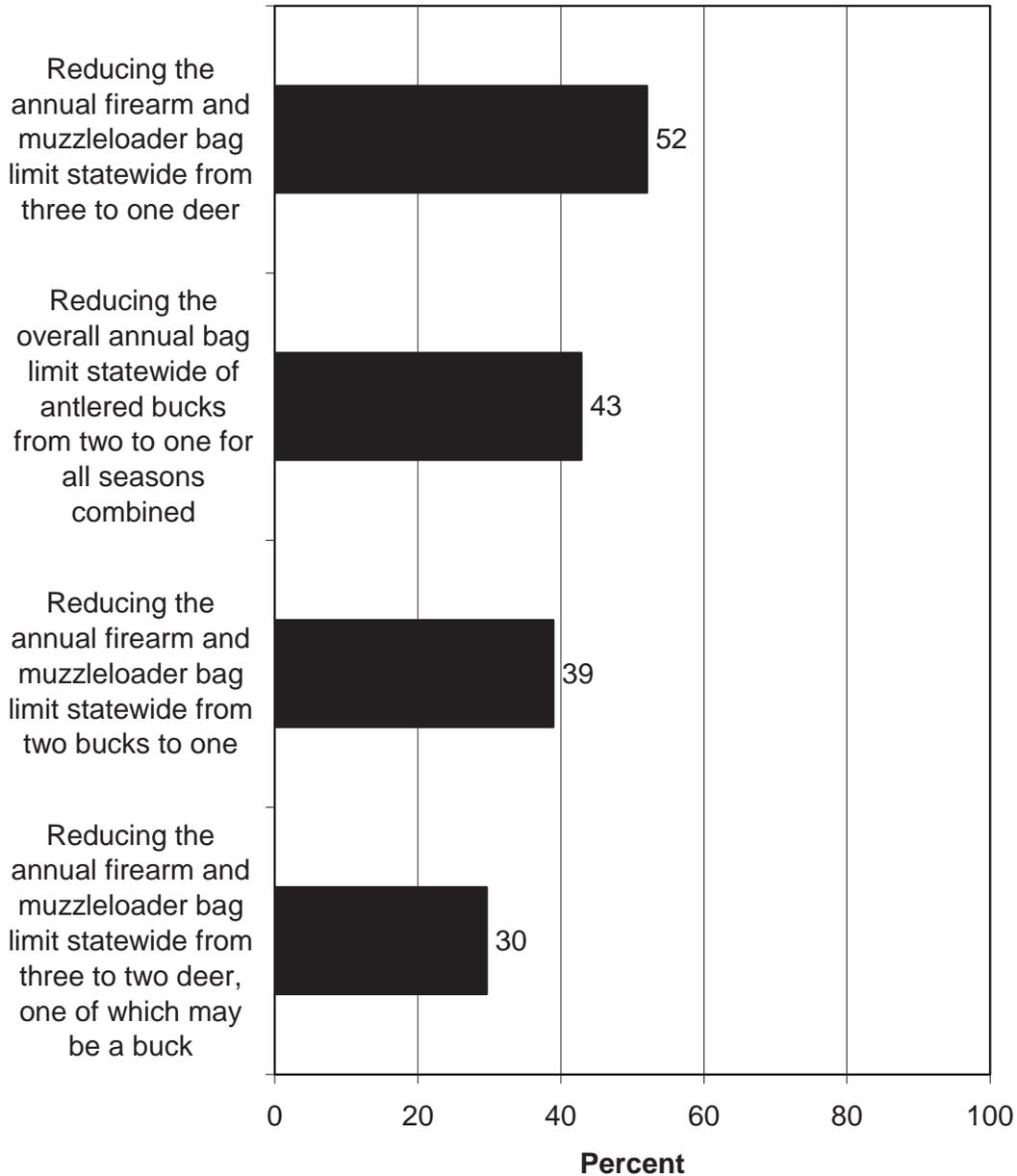
Q96-Q99. Percent of respondents who would strongly oppose each of the following changes to statewide bag limits:



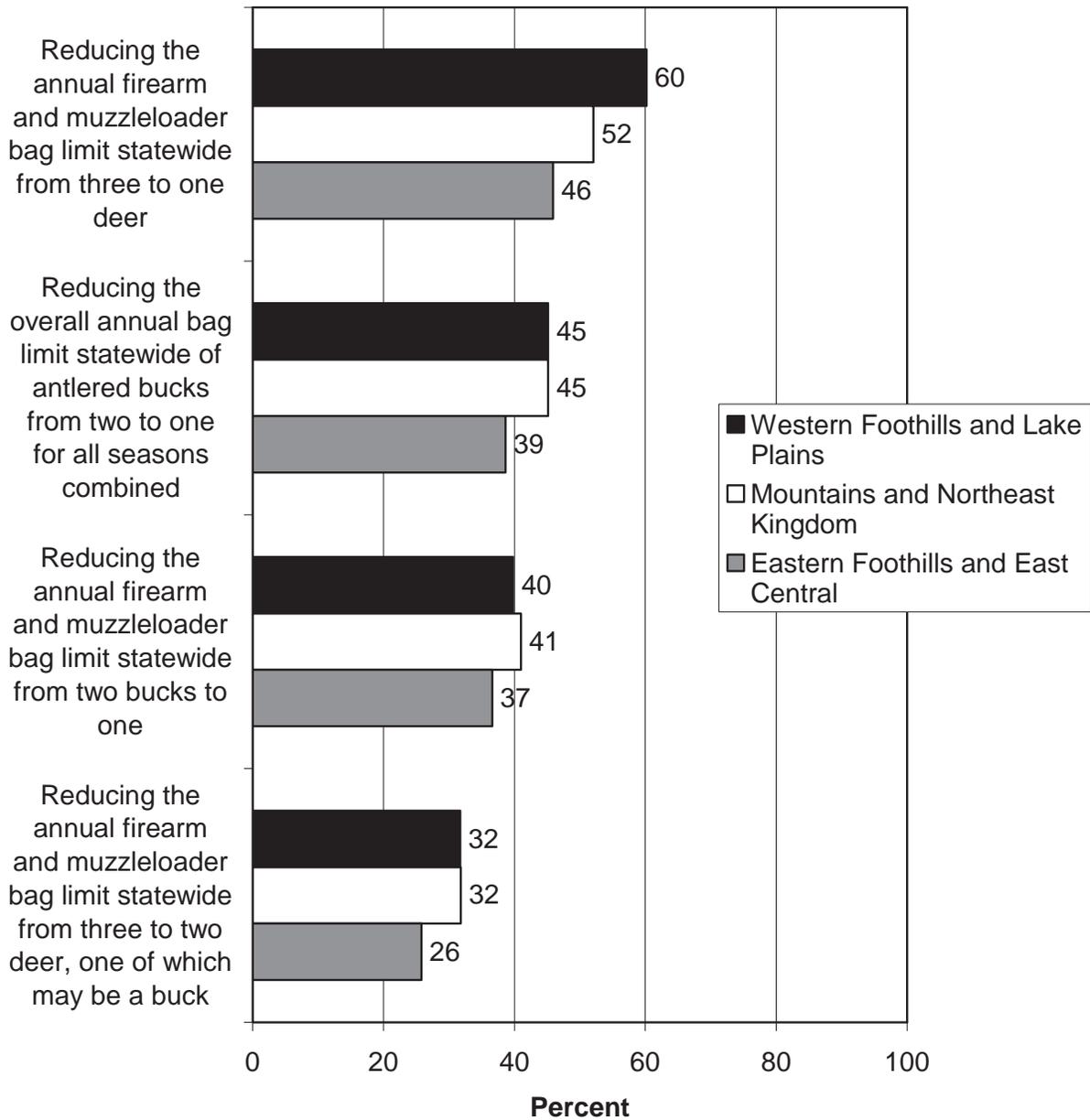
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Q96-Q99. Percent of respondents who would strongly or moderately oppose each of the following changes to statewide bag limits:



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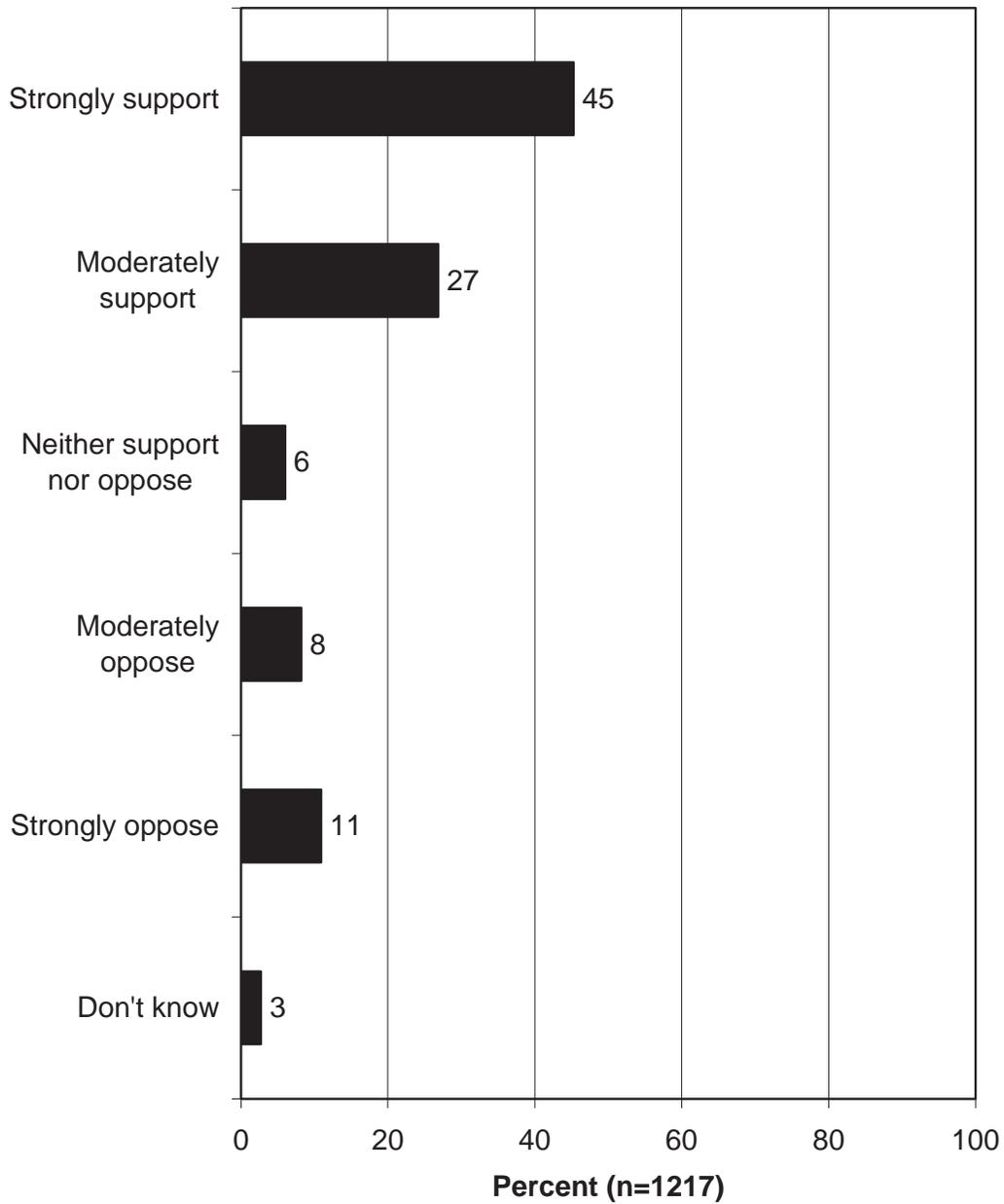
MANAGING THE BUCK POPULATION

- Vermont deer hunters expressed overwhelming support (72%) for management efforts, regardless of the strategy or method used, to increase the number of older, larger bucks in the WMU or area they most often hunt deer. There was little regional variation.

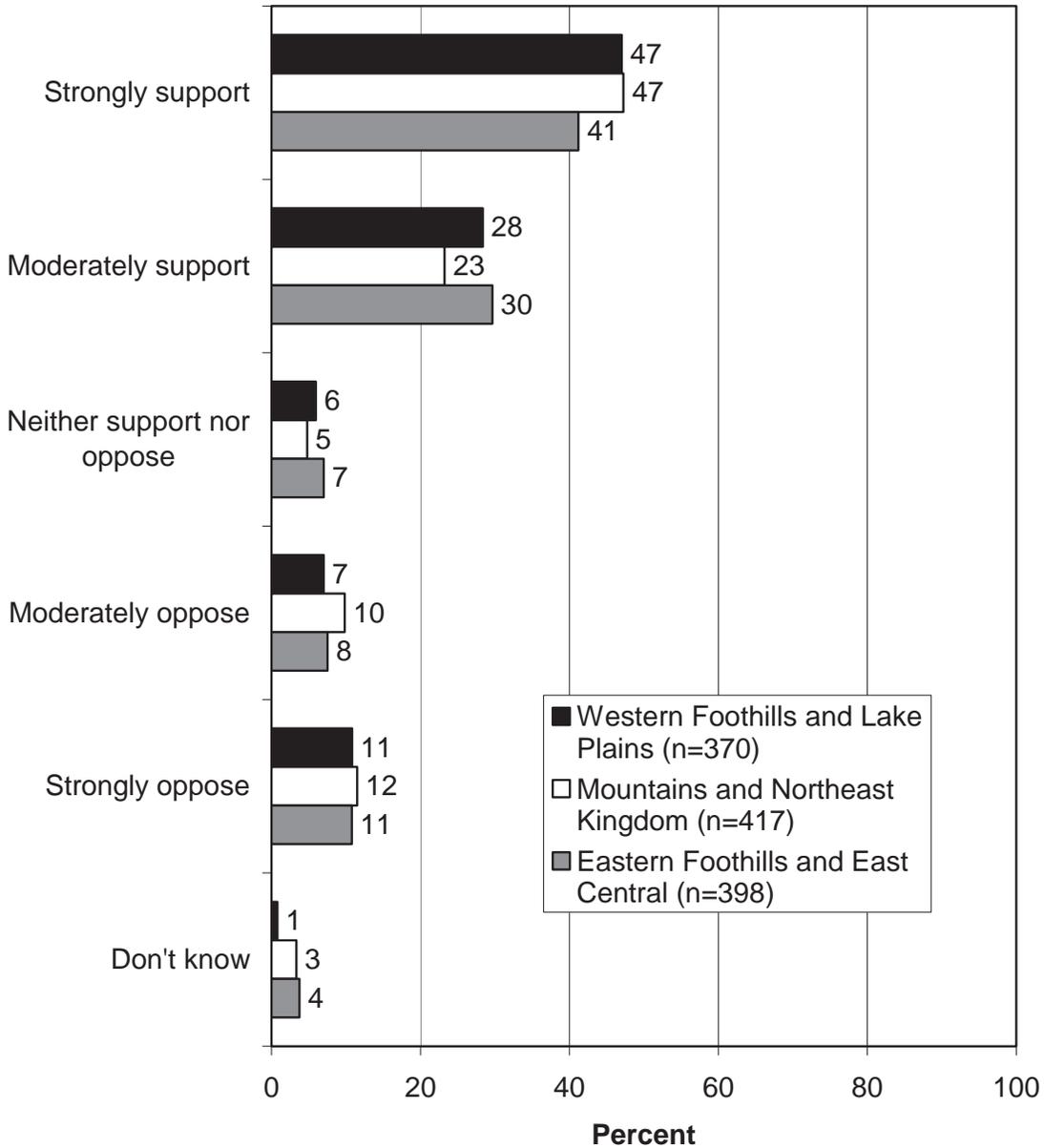
- Vermont deer hunters were asked to rate how important a series of objectives should be to the Department for managing the buck populations, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important. In descending order of the mean ratings, the results are (with little regional variation):
 - Managing the buck population for the opportunity to harvest any buck (6.88)
 - Managing the buck population for older age bucks (6.81)
 - Of those who rated the importance of managing the buck population for older bucks a 7 or higher, 45% said an older buck should be 3-1/2 years old, the most frequently selected choice.
 - Managing the buck population for having many antler points (6.16)
 - Of those who rated the importance of managing the buck population for having many antler points a 7 or higher, 53% said bucks should have 4 antler points, the most frequently selected choice.
 - Managing the buck population for heavyweight bucks (6.15)
 - Of those who rated the importance of managing the buck population for heavyweight bucks a 7 or higher, 45% said a heavyweight buck should be 175 pounds, the most frequently selected choice.

- Overall, buck management is personally important to Vermont deer hunters, who gave the issue a mean rating of 7.84 out of 10.00; 40% of respondents rated the importance of buck management a 10.
 - Deer hunters in the Eastern region gave a mean rating of 8.02, compared to 7.81 in the Mountains region and 7.61 in the Western region.

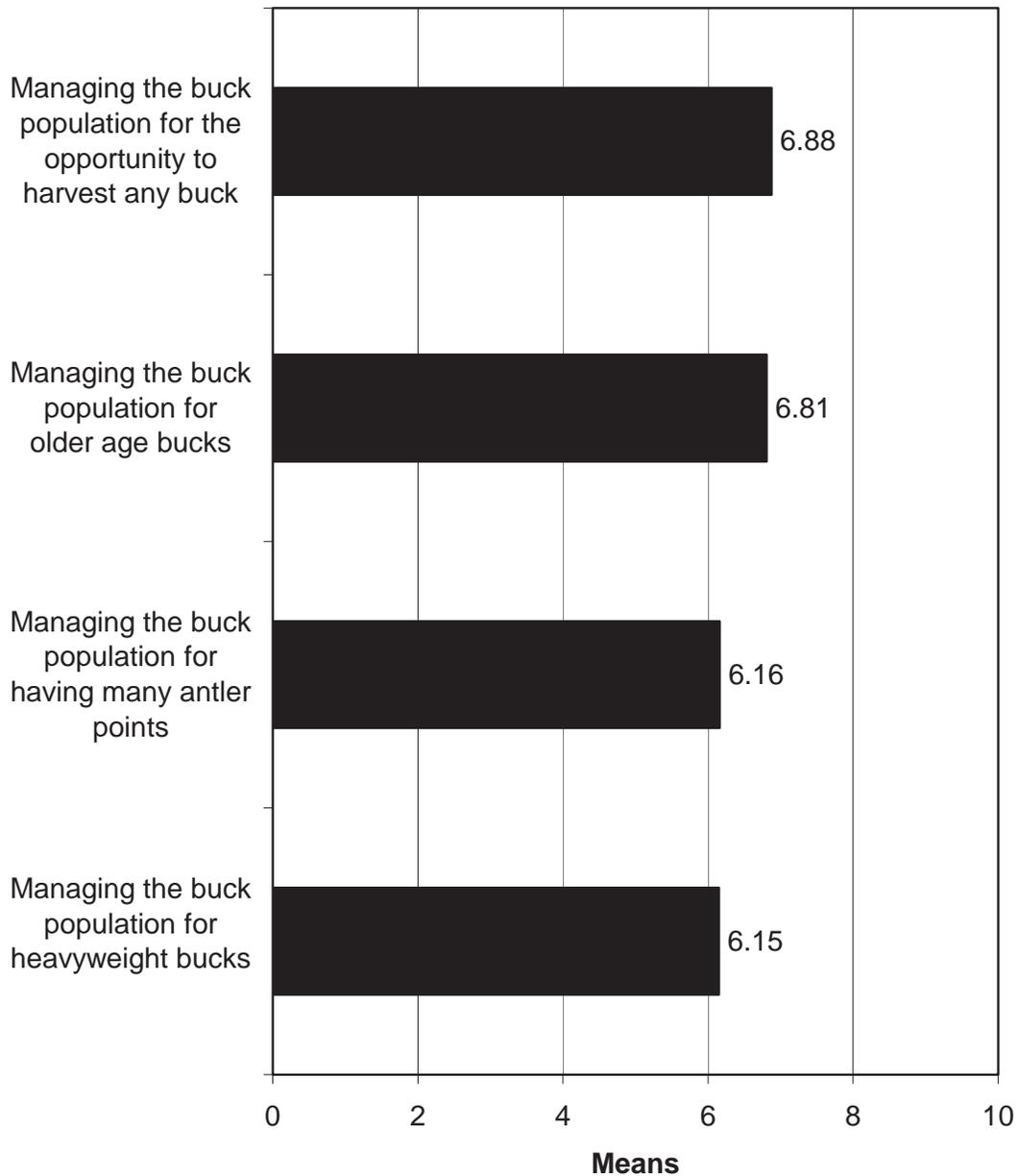
Q100. Regardless of the strategy or method used, do you support or oppose management specifically in the WMU or area you hunt deer most often to increase the number of older, larger bucks?



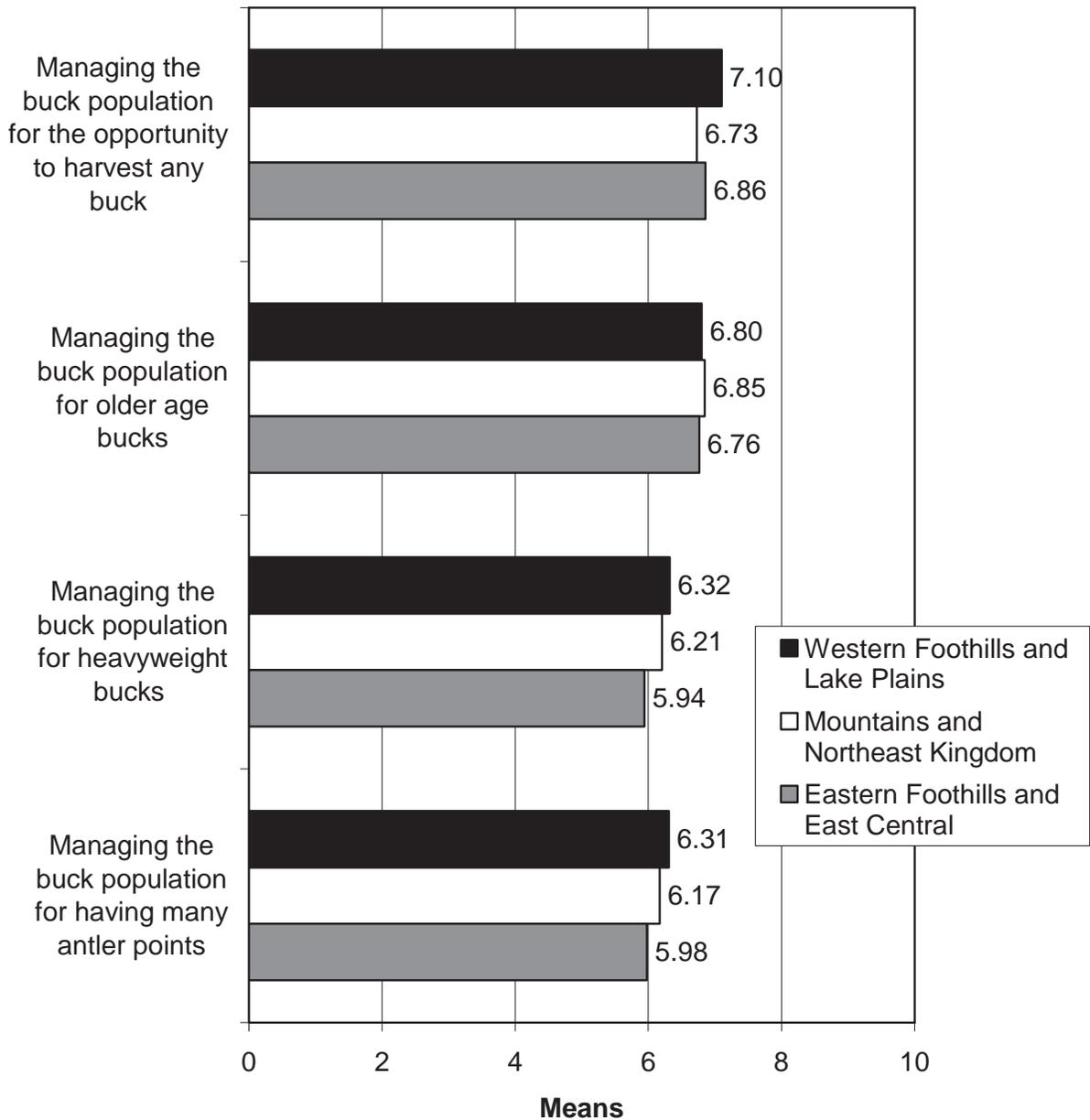
Q100. Regardless of the strategy or method used, do you support or oppose management specifically in the WMU or area you hunt deer most often to increase the number of older, larger bucks?



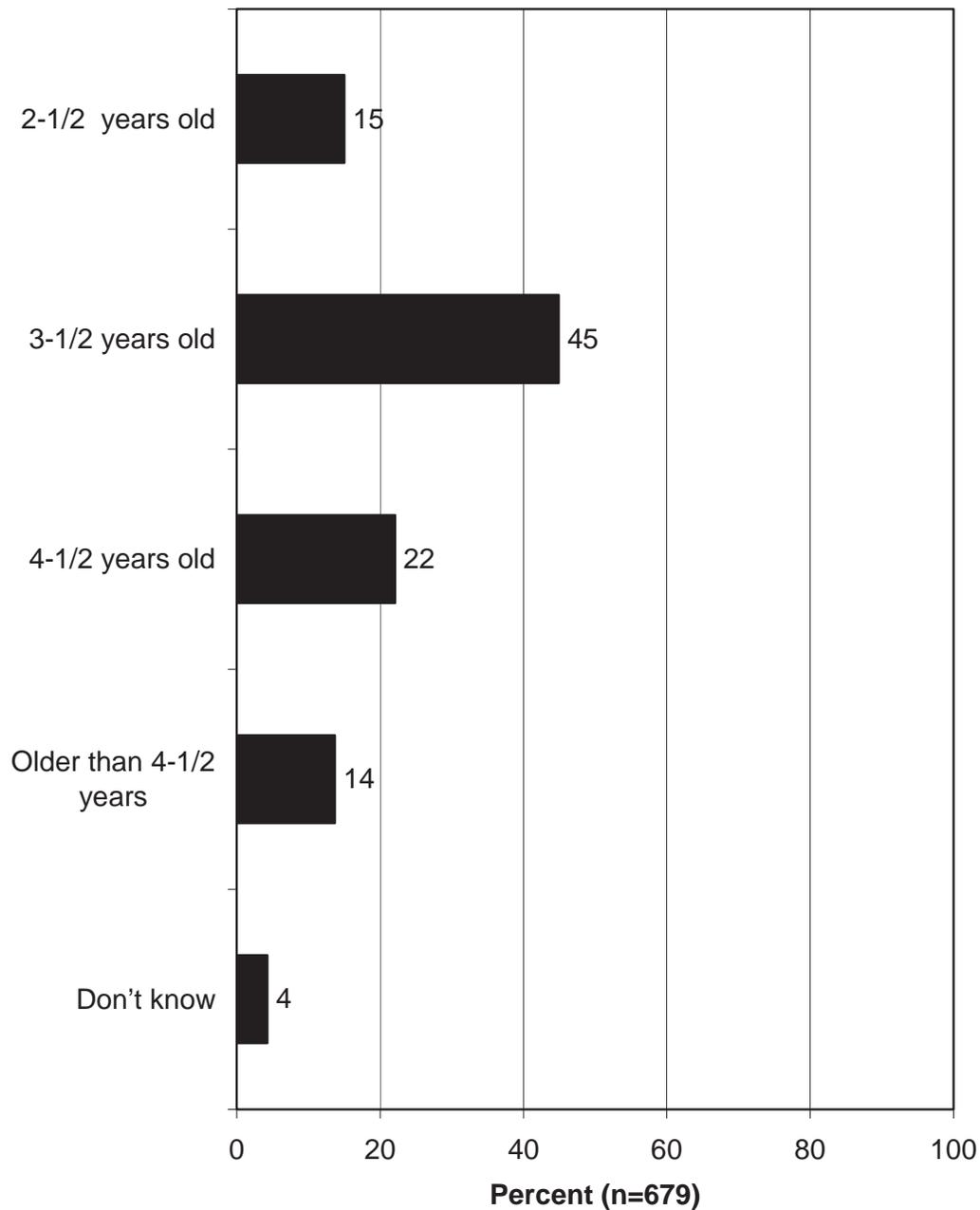
Q103-Q109. Mean rated importance respondents think each of the following should be to the Department for managing the buck populations in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important:



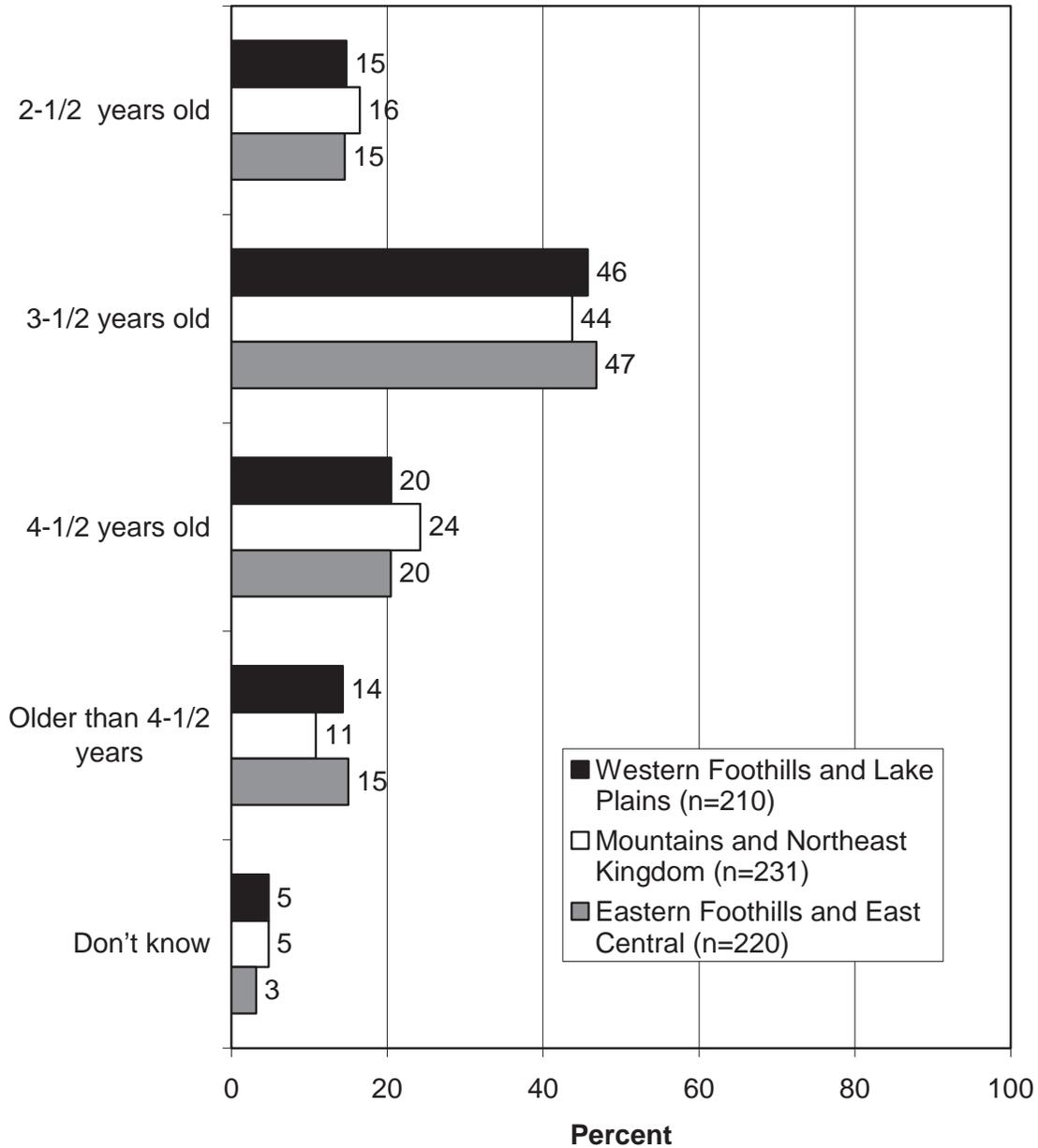
Q103-Q109. Mean rated importance respondents think each of the following should be to the Department for managing the buck populations in Vermont, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important:



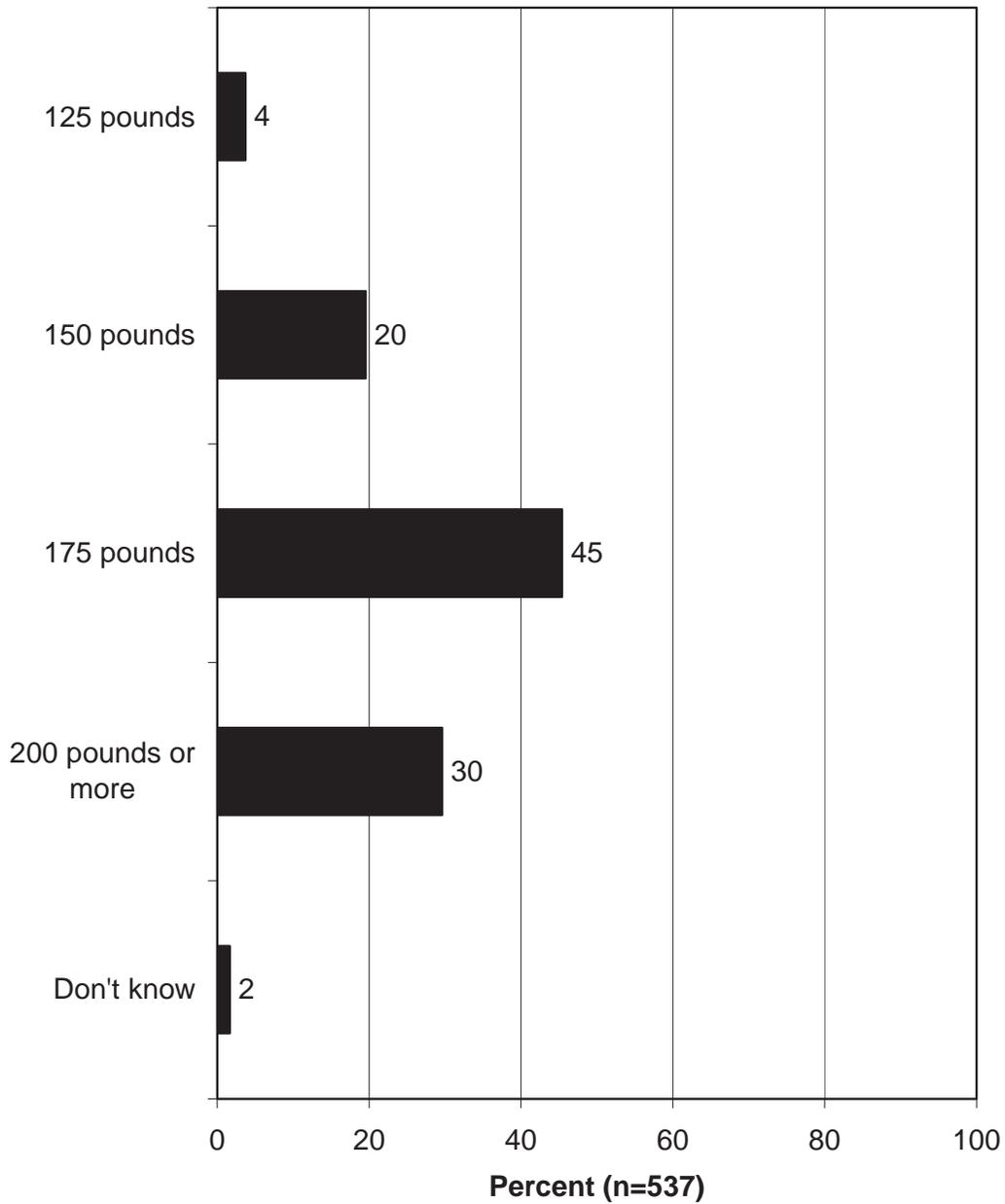
Q104. What age do you think an older buck should be? Would you say...? (Asked of those who rated managing the buck population for older bucks as a 7 or higher for the Department.) (Only these choices were presented.)



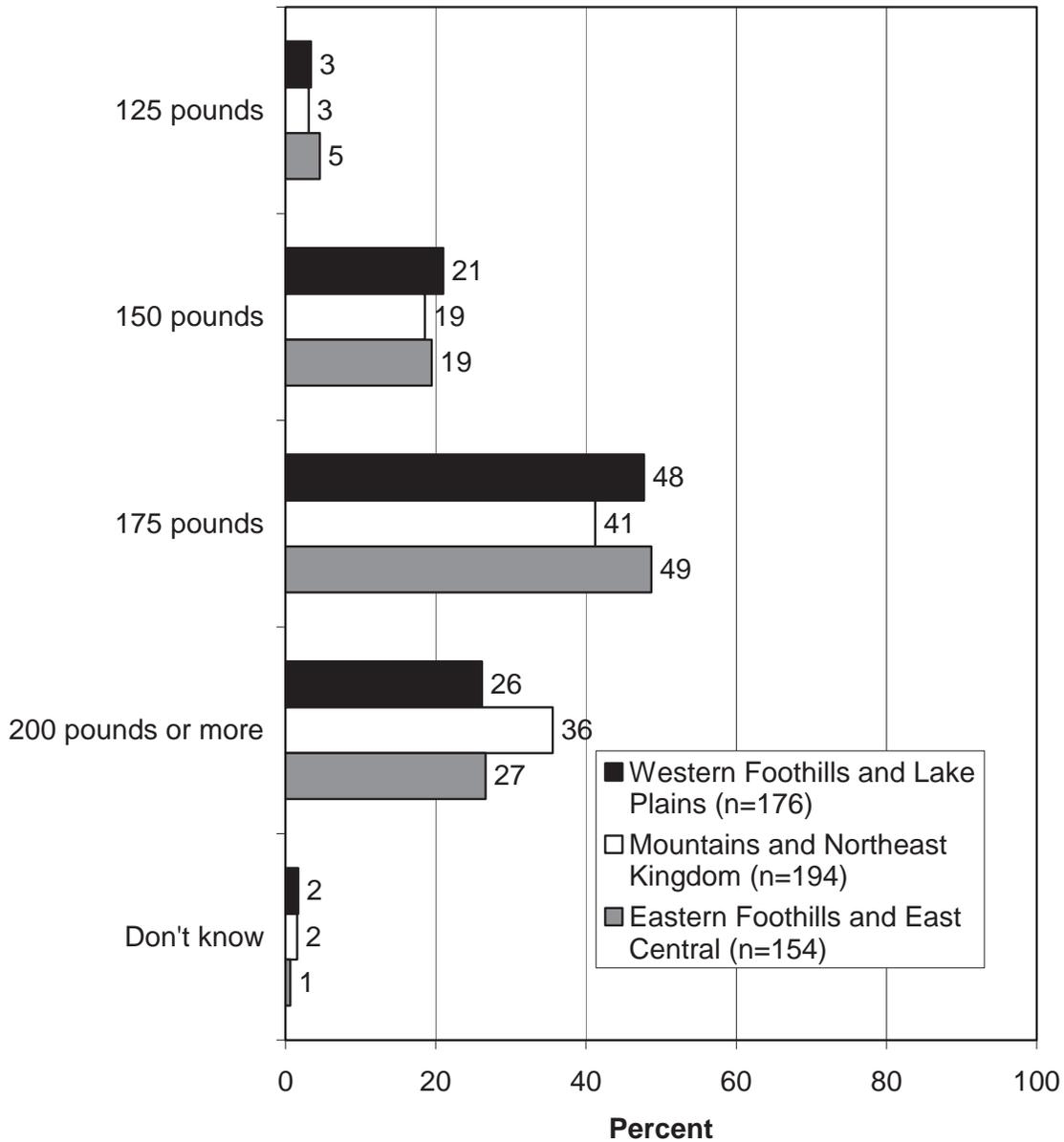
Q104. What age do you think an older buck should be? Would you say...? (Asked of those who rated managing the buck population for older bucks as a 7 or higher for the Department.) (Only these choices were presented.)



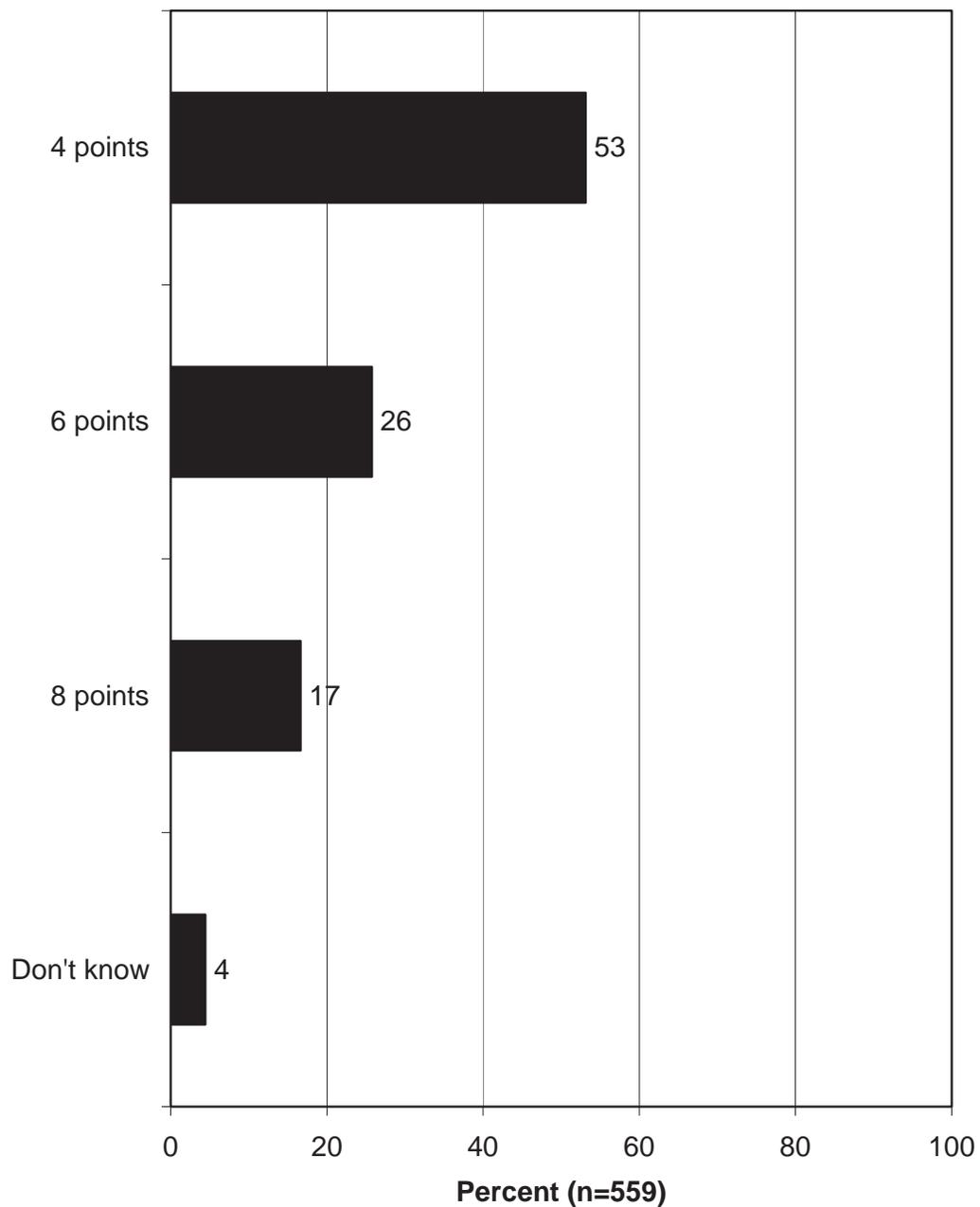
Q106. What approximate weight do you think a heavyweight buck should be? (Asked of those who rated managing the buck population for heavyweight bucks as a 7 or higher for the Department.) (Only these choices were presented.)



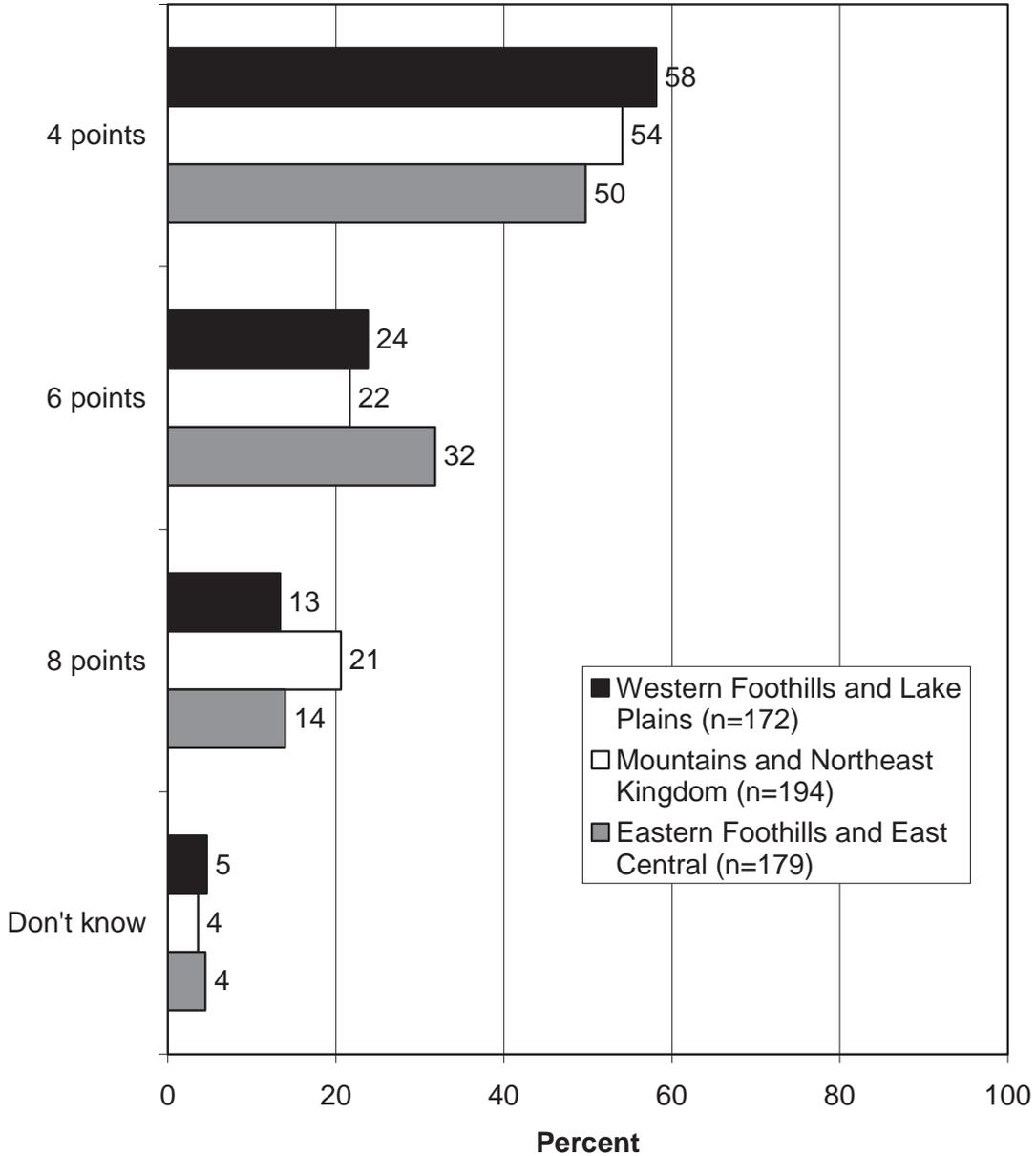
Q106. What approximate weight do you think a heavyweight buck should be? (Asked of those who rated managing the buck population for heavyweight bucks as a 7 or higher for the Department.) (Only these choices were presented.)



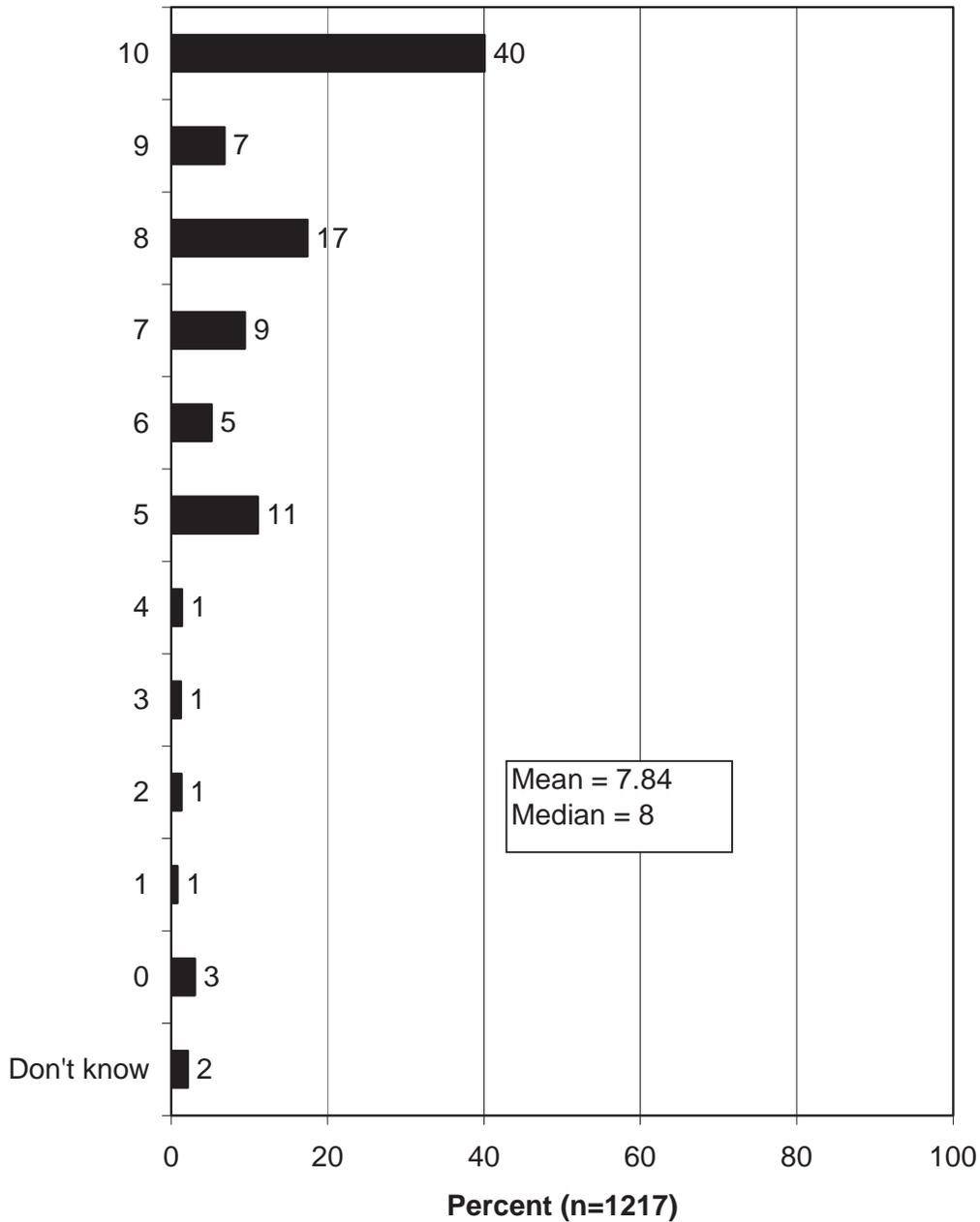
Q108. How many points do you think a buck should have? (Asked of those who rated managing the buck population for having many antler points as a 7 or higher for the Department.) (Only these choices were presented.)



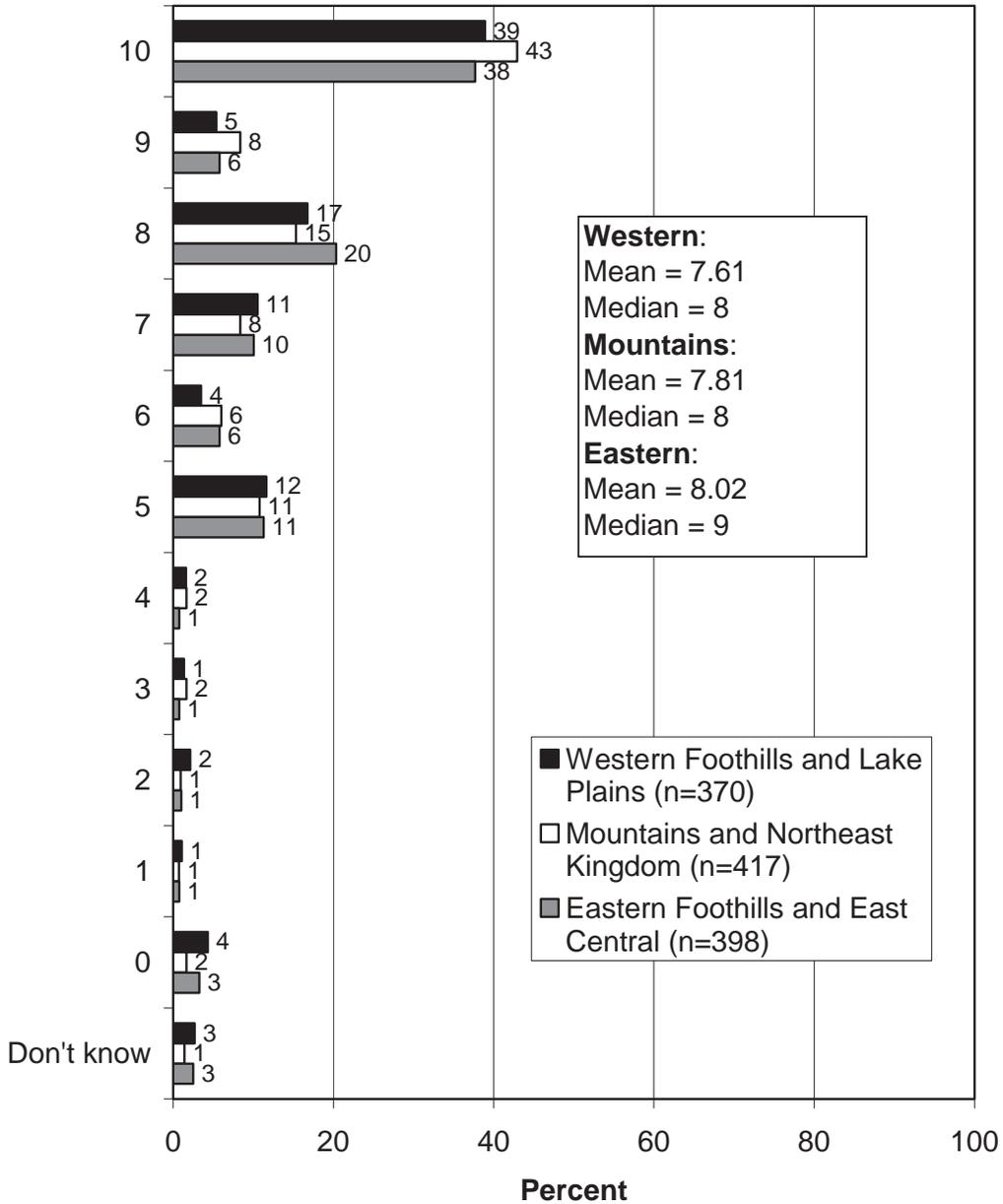
Q108. How many points do you think a buck should have? (Asked of those who rated managing the buck population for having many antler points as a 7 or higher for the Department.) (Only these choices were presented.)



Q110. Overall, how important is buck management to you personally, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important?



Q110. Overall, how important is buck management to you personally, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not at all important and 10 being extremely important?



CHARACTERISTICS OF VERMONT DEER HUNTERS

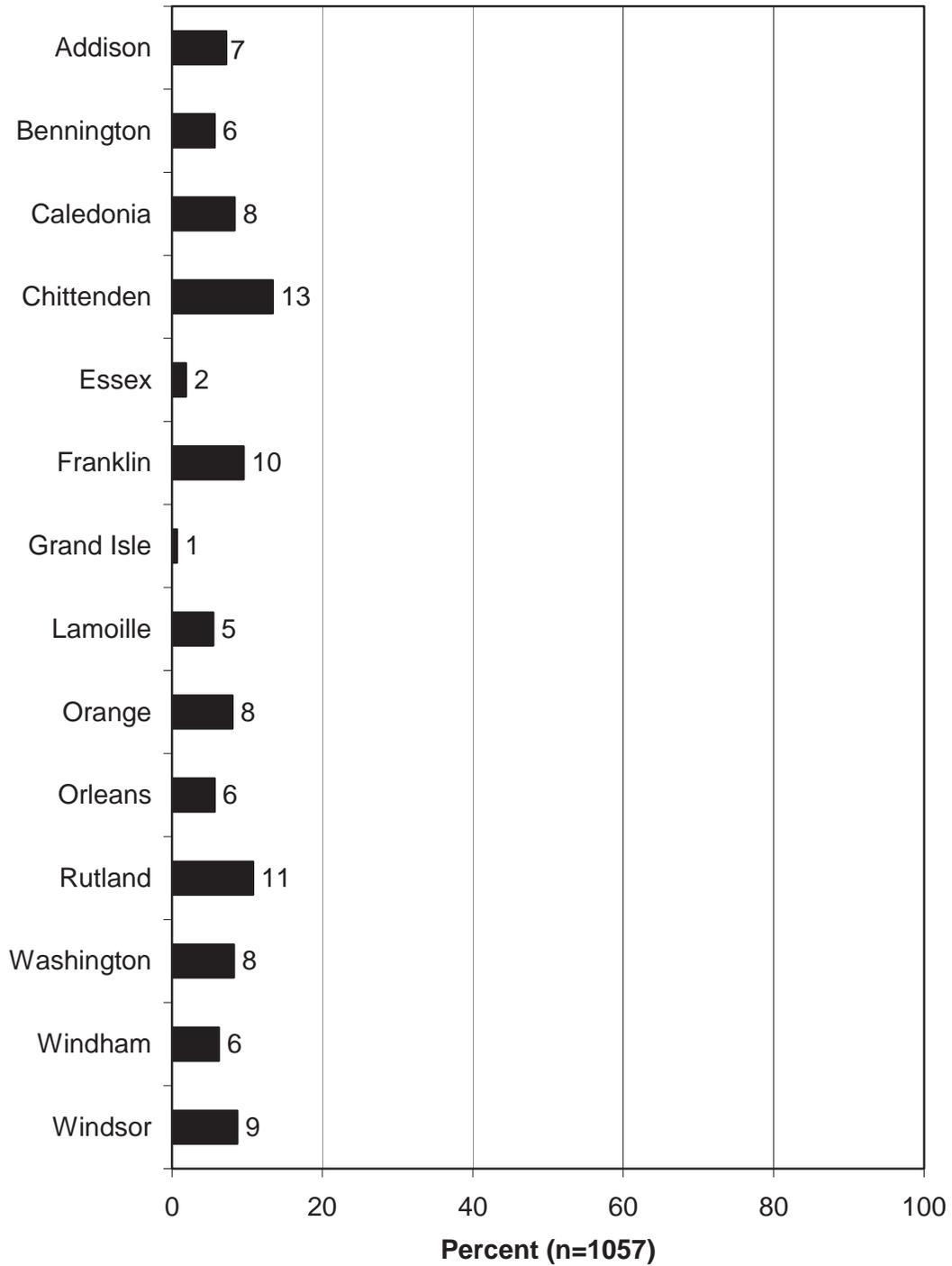
- The highest percentage of Vermont deer hunters live in Chittenden County (13% of respondents live there), followed by Rutland County (11%) and Franklin County (10%). There were substantial regional variations.

- Vermont deer hunters are most likely to reside in a small city or town (35% live in this type of area) or a rural area not on a farm or ranch (32%), with little regional variation.

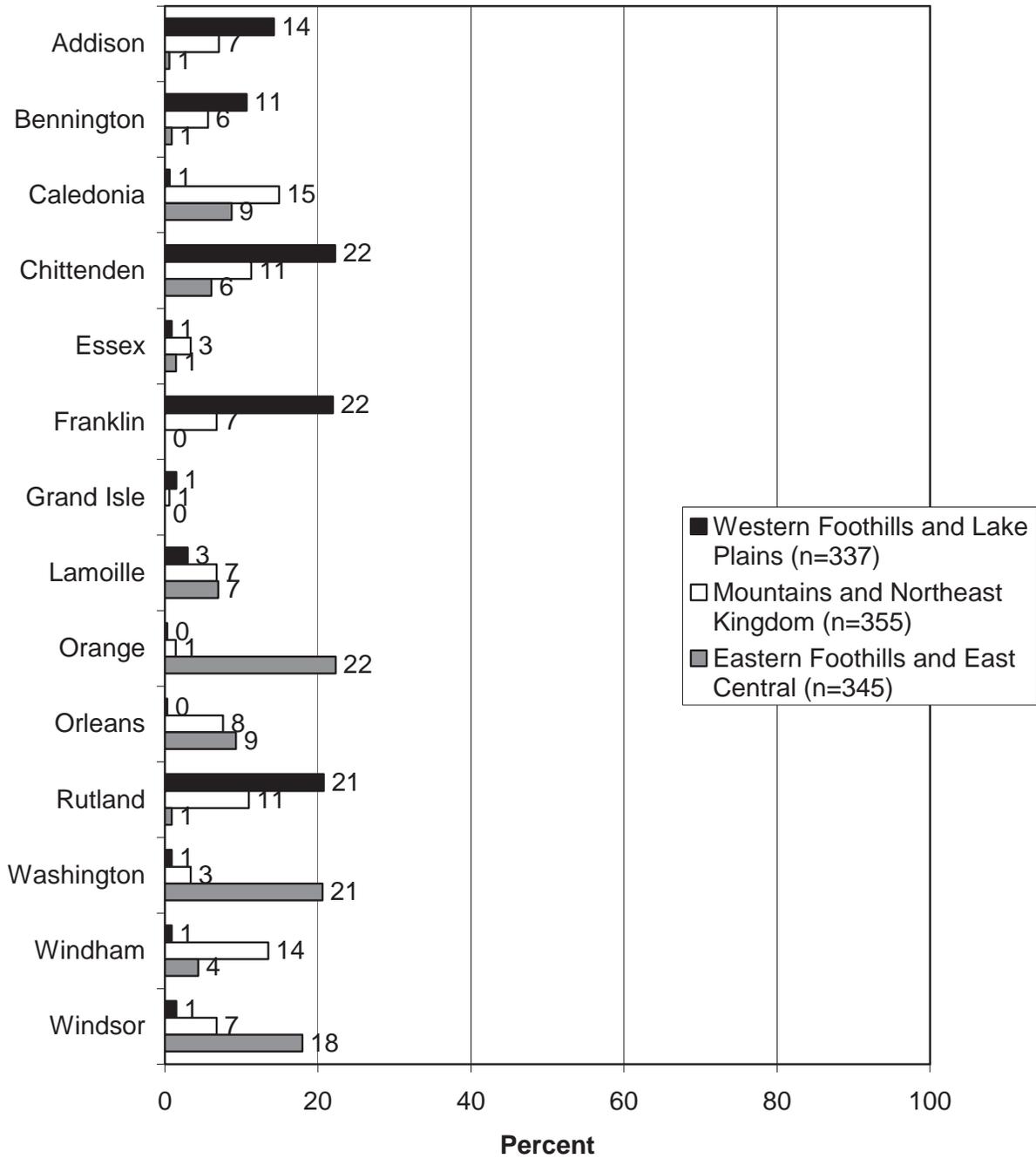
- The mean age of Vermont deer hunters is 49.90 years old, with little regional variation (note that only hunters age 16 or older were given the survey).

- The overwhelming majority (92%) of Vermont deer hunters are male, with little regional variation.

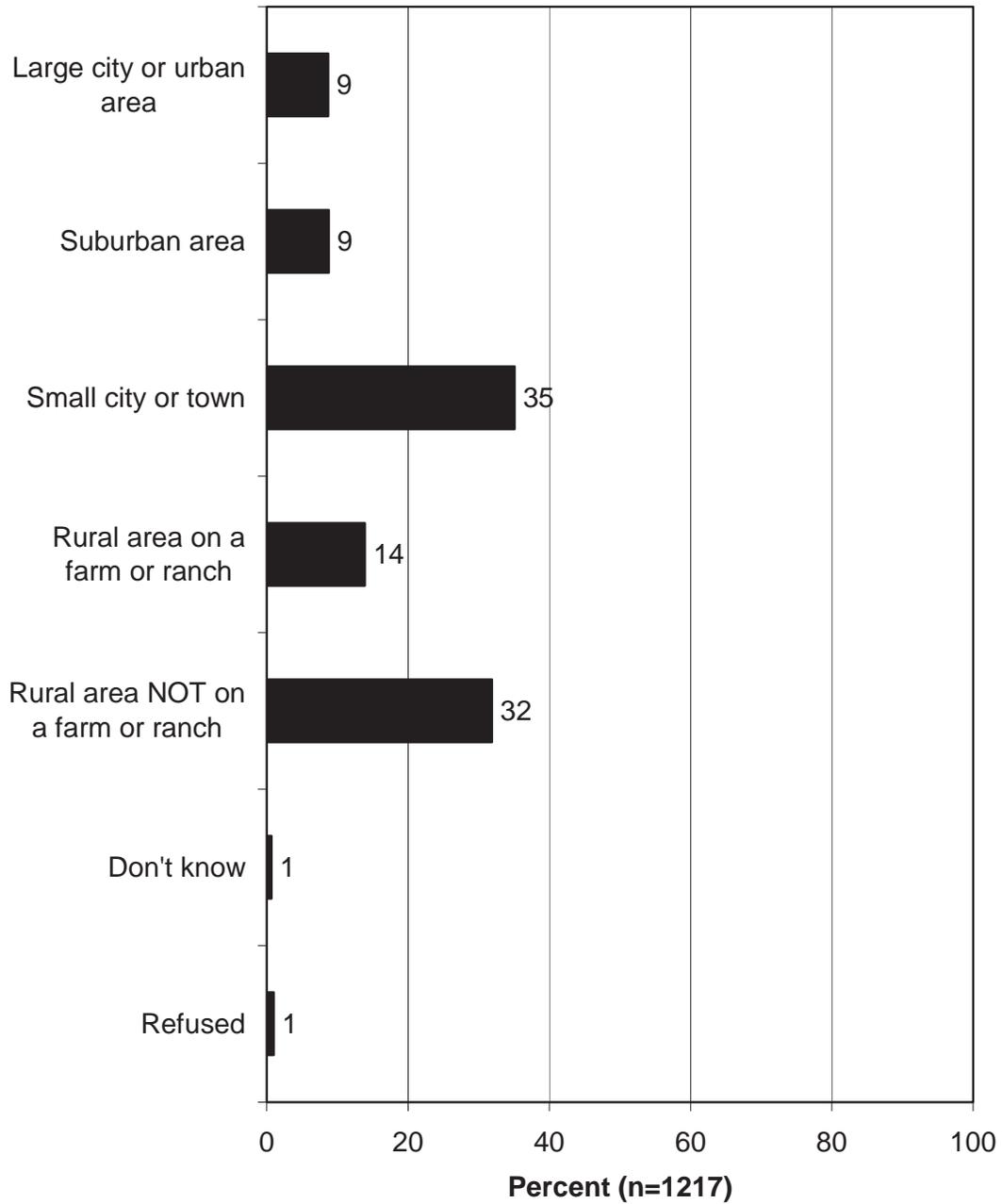
Q114. In which county do you live in Vermont?



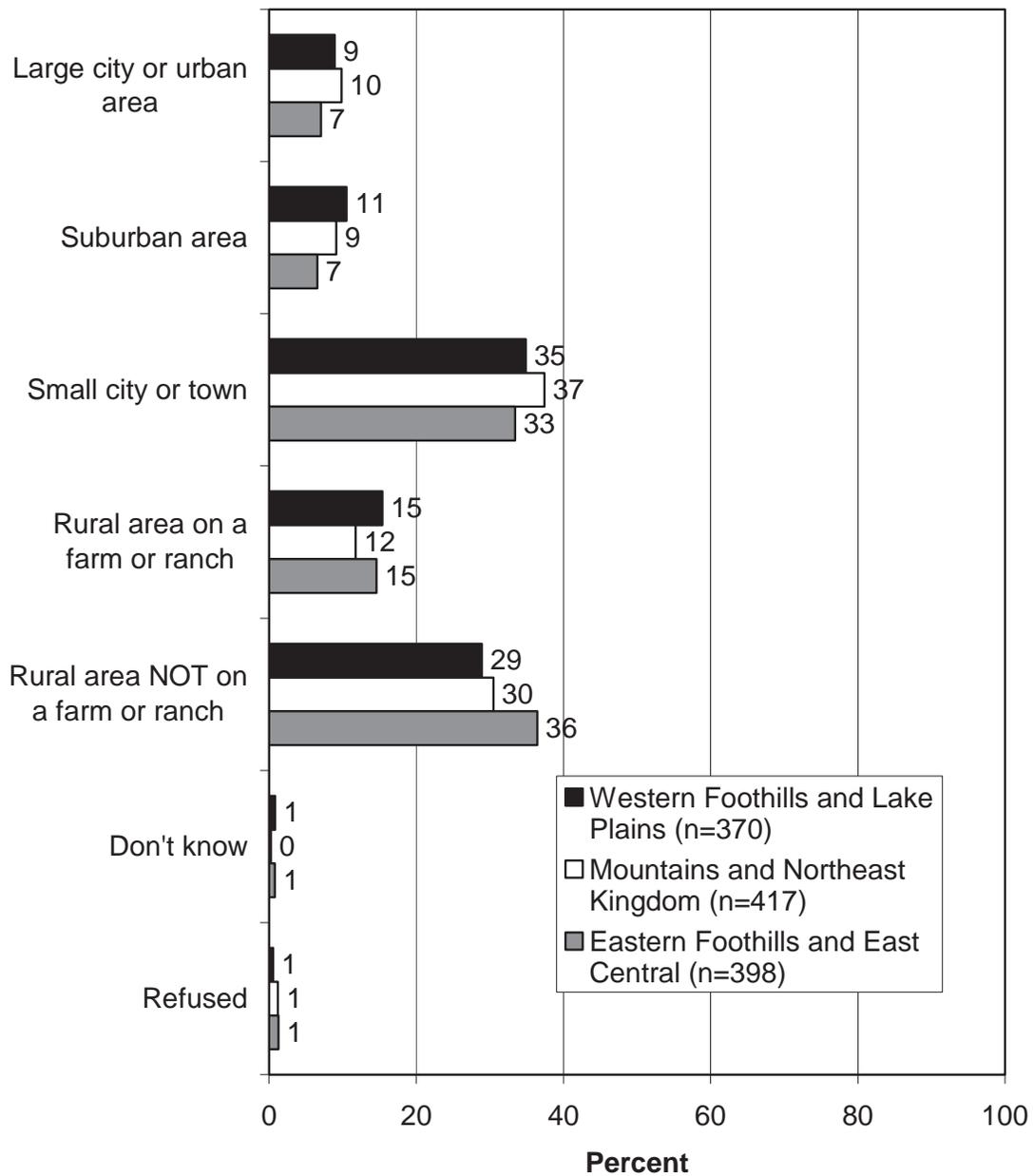
Q114. In which county do you live in Vermont?



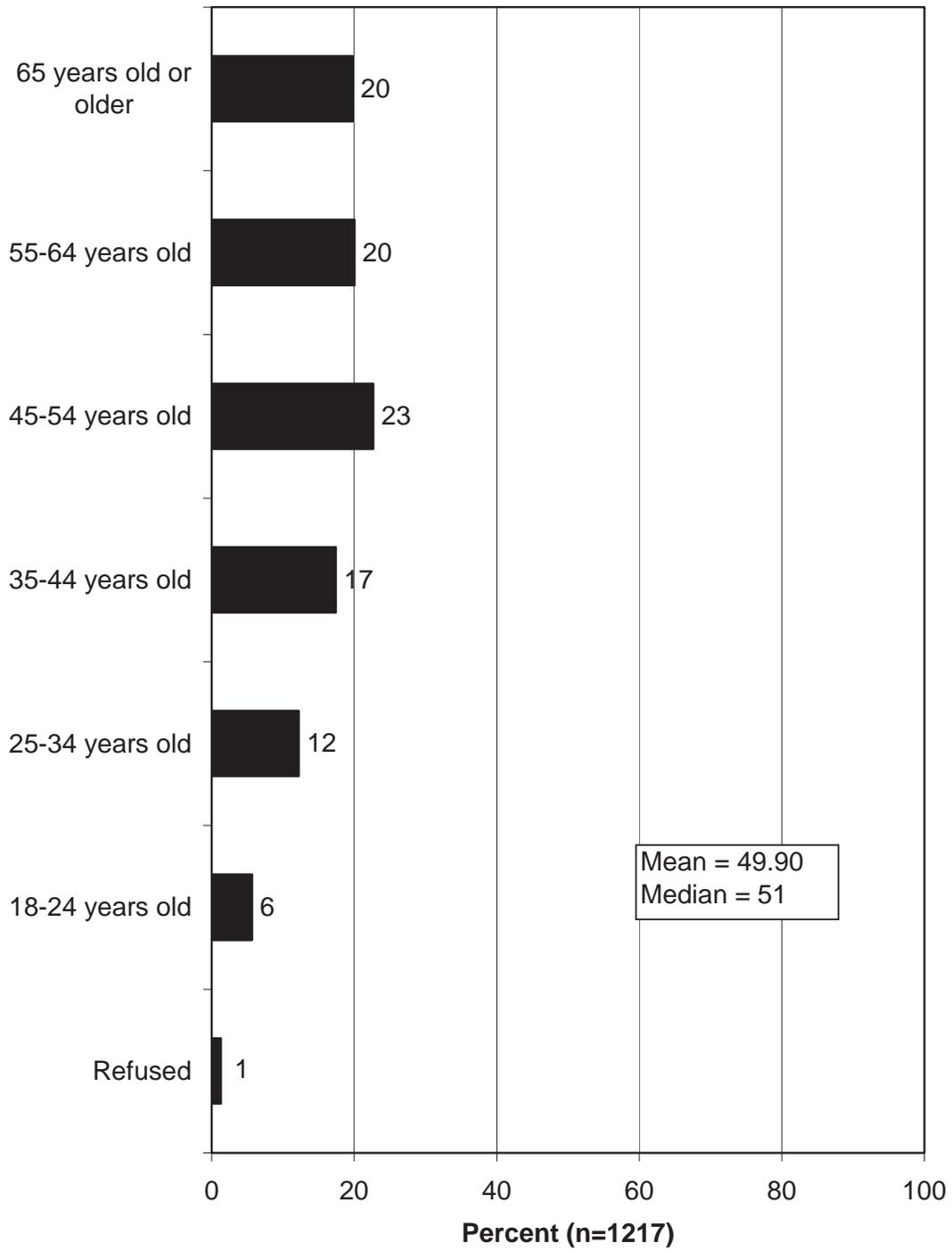
Q116. Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?



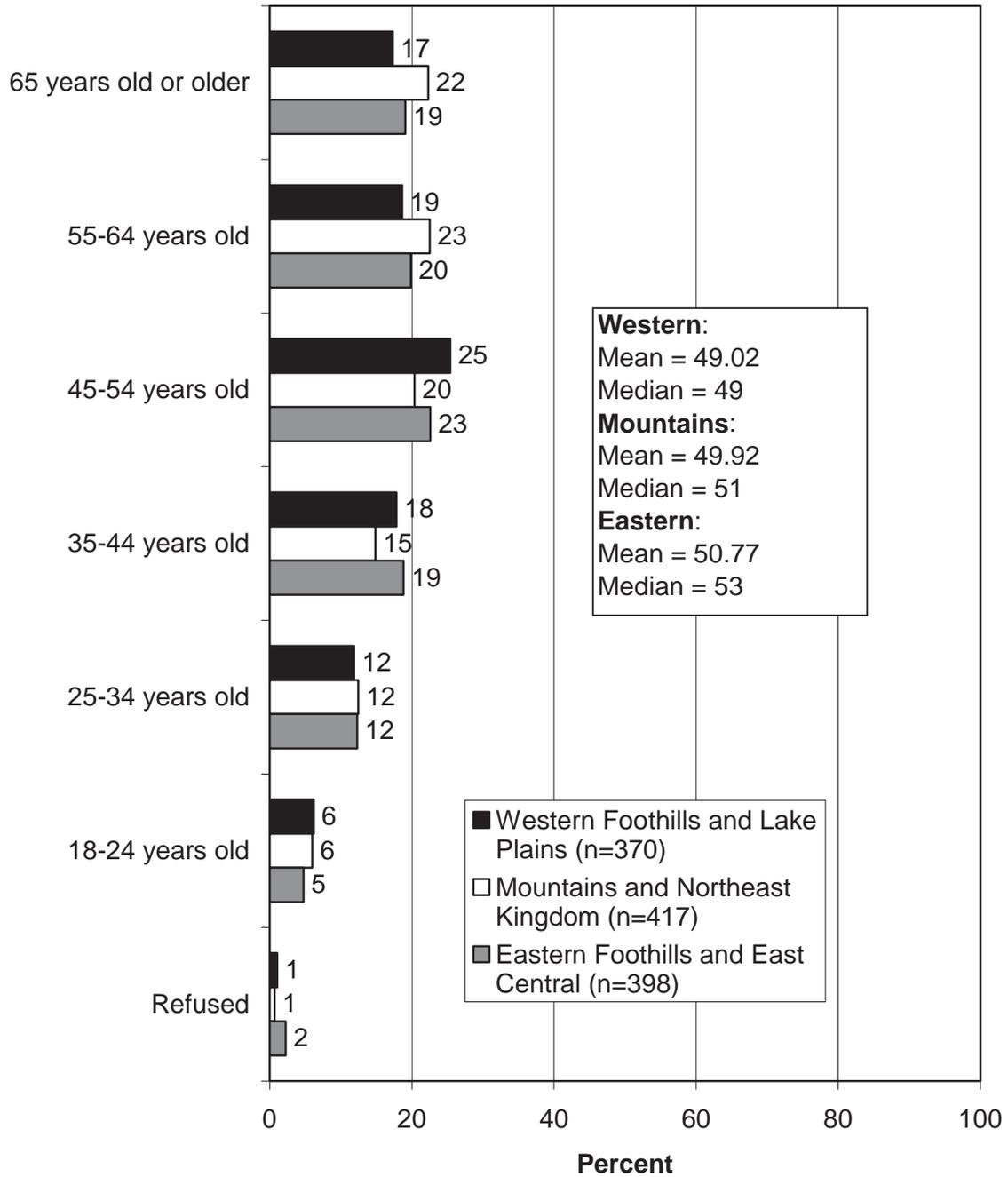
Q116. Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?



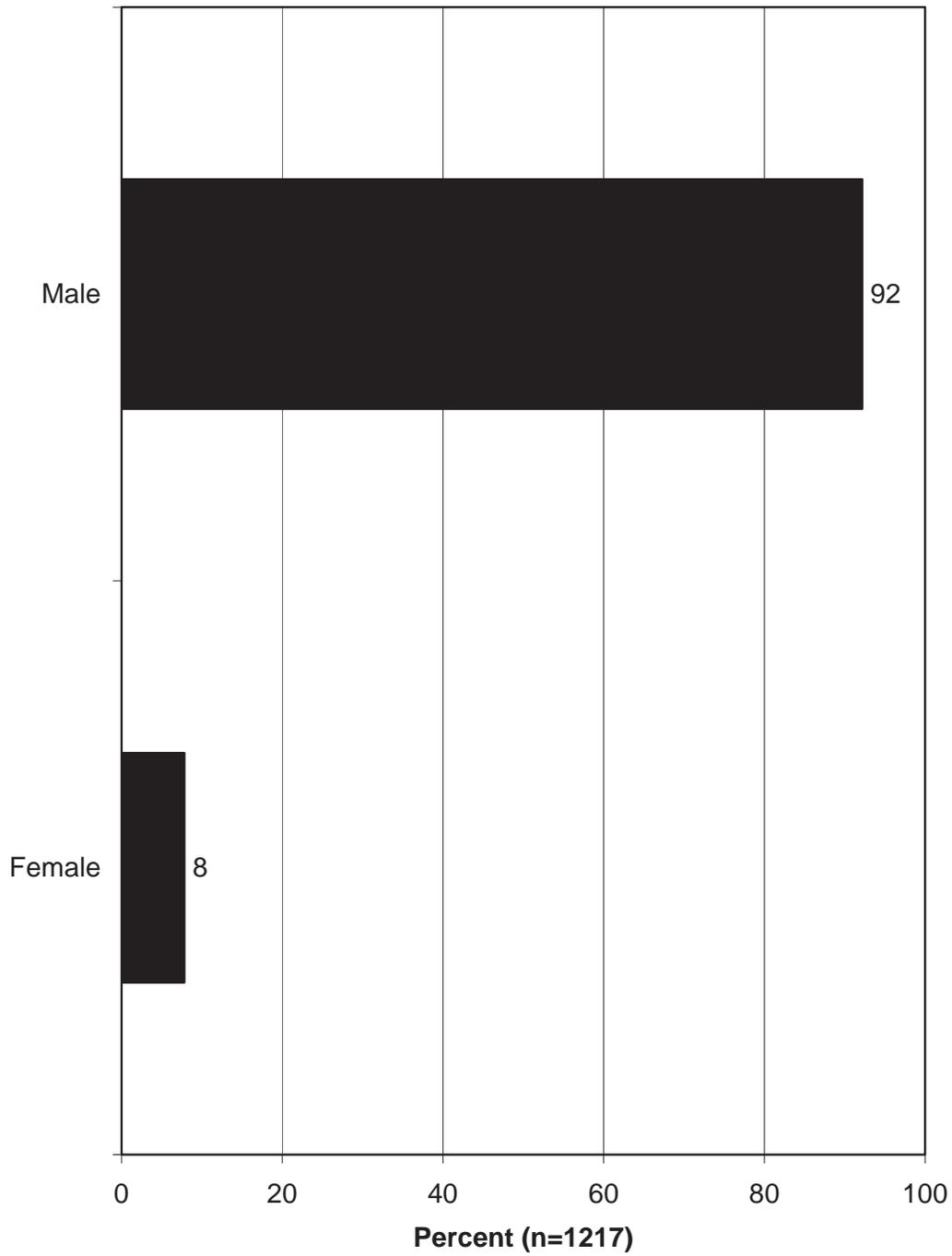
Q117. Respondent's age.



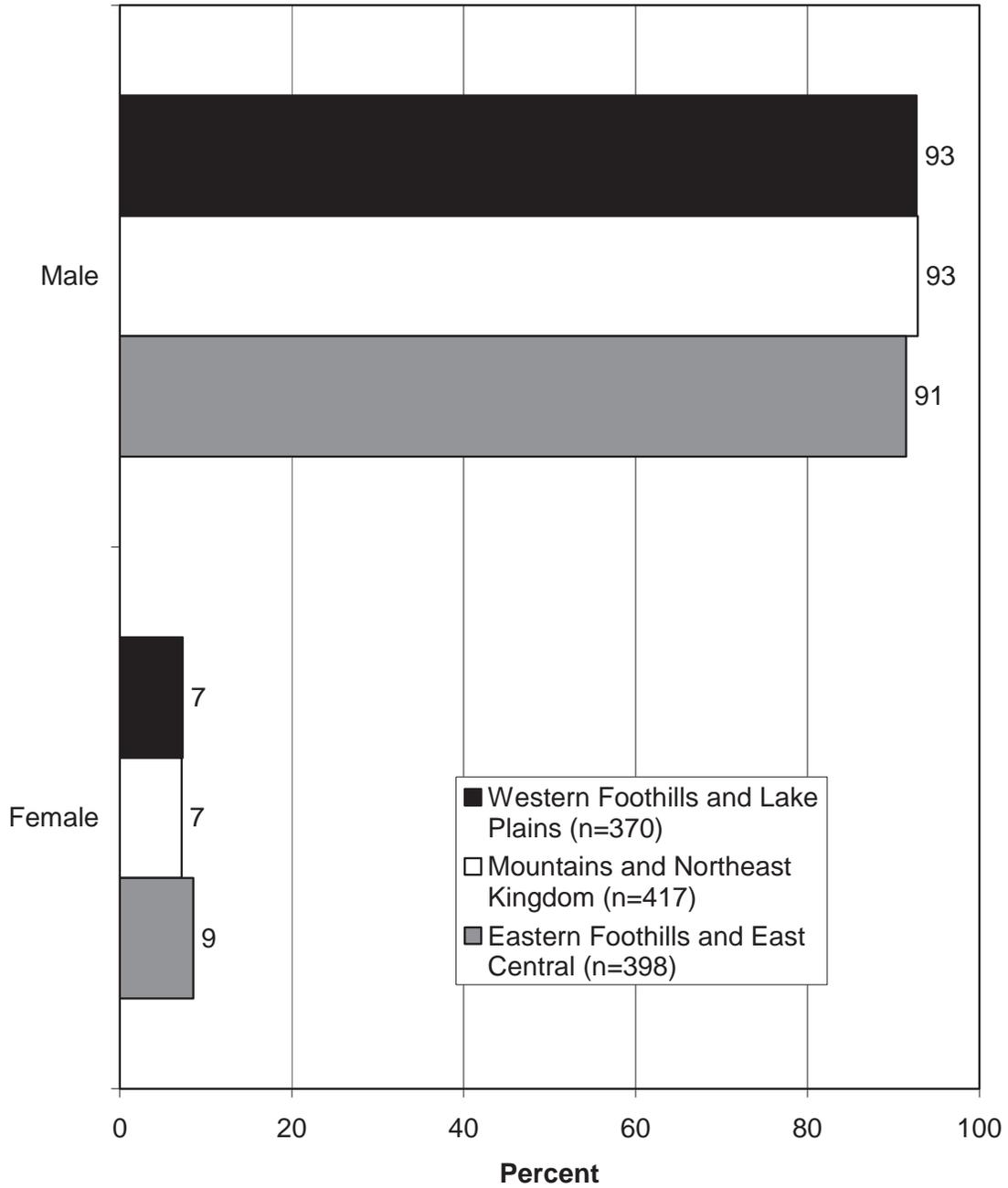
Q117. Respondent's age.



Q123. Respondent's gender (observed by interviewer, not asked).



Q123. Respondent's gender (observed by interviewer, not asked).



ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

Responsive Management is an internationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Our mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public.

Utilizing our in-house, full-service telephone, mail, and web-based survey center with 50 professional interviewers, we have conducted more than 1,000 telephone surveys, mail surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups, as well as numerous marketing and communication plans, needs assessments, and program evaluations.

Clients include the federal natural resource and land management agencies, most state fish and wildlife agencies, state departments of natural resources, environmental protection agencies, state park agencies, tourism boards, most of the major conservation and sportsmen's organizations, and numerous private businesses. Responsive Management also collects attitude and opinion data for many of the nation's top universities.

Specializing in research on public attitudes toward natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, Responsive Management has completed a wide range of projects during the past 22 years, including dozens of studies of hunters, anglers, wildlife viewers, boaters, park visitors, historic site visitors, hikers, birdwatchers, campers, and rock climbers. Responsive Management has conducted studies on endangered species; waterfowl and wetlands; and the reintroduction of large predators such as wolves, grizzly bears, and the Florida panther.

Responsive Management has assisted with research on numerous natural resource ballot initiatives and referenda and has helped agencies and organizations find alternative funding and increase their membership and donations. Additionally, Responsive Management has conducted major organizational and programmatic needs assessments to assist natural resource agencies and organizations in developing more effective programs based on a solid foundation of fact.

Responsive Management has conducted research on public attitudes toward natural resources and outdoor recreation in almost every state in the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Responsive Management has also conducted focus groups and personal interviews with residents of the African countries of Algeria, Cameroon, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Responsive Management routinely conducts surveys in Spanish and has conducted surveys in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese and has completed numerous studies with specific target audiences, including Hispanics; African-Americans; Asians; women; children; senior citizens; urban, suburban, and rural residents; large landowners; and farmers.

Responsive Management's research has been upheld in U.S. District Courts; used in peer-reviewed journals; and presented at major natural resource, fish and wildlife, and outdoor recreation conferences across the world. Company research has been featured in most of the nation's major media, including CNN, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and on the front pages of *USA Today* and *The Washington Post*. Responsive Management's research has also been highlighted in *Newsweek* magazine.

Visit the Responsive Management website at:

www.responsivemanagement.com