



# **Workplace Pulse Quarterly Survey: Pre-employment screening**

November 2010

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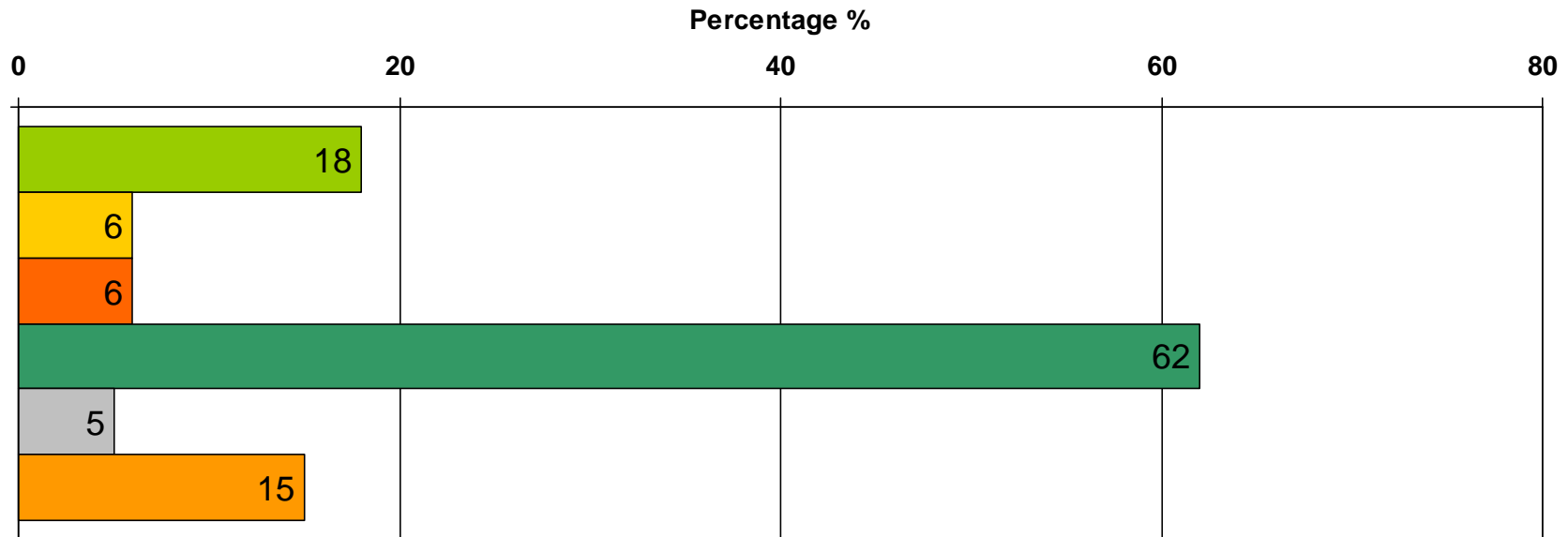
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## About the survey:

- WorkPro's fourth quarterly Workplace Pulse survey was conducted in November 2010, among a sample of 1,943 job candidates.
- The purpose of the research was to gauge Australian employees / candidates' understanding and attitudes towards pre-employment screening methods used by employers today.
- The research focuses primarily on police-checks (criminal history checks) and online social media searches which are becoming more prominent features of recruiters and employers' pre-employment screening toolkits.

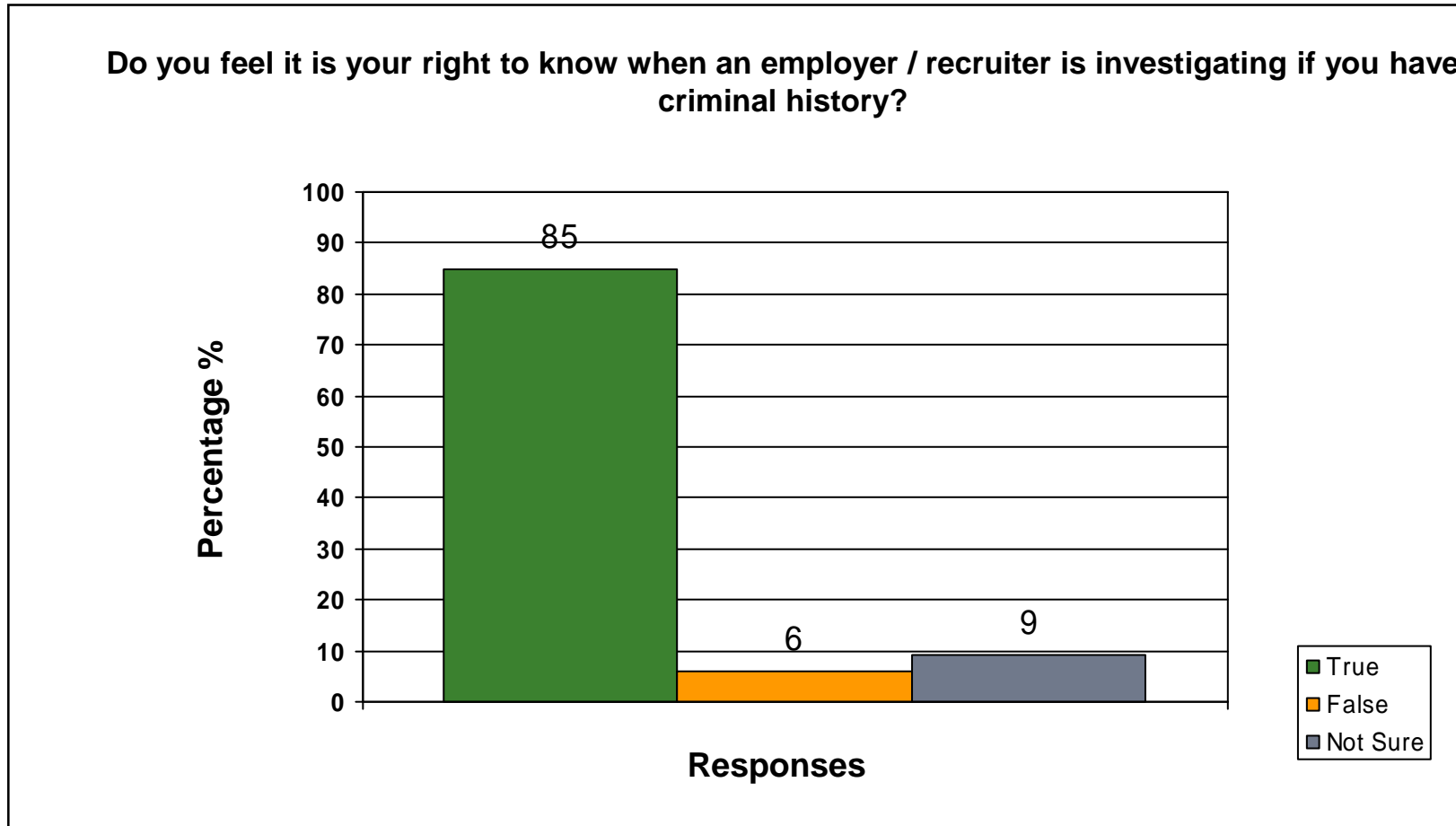
The survey found that almost half (44%) of candidates are under the wrong impression when it comes to what information is disclosed to employers during a police check, with almost 20% saying only jail term offences are reported. However, the majority of candidates (62%) do understand that 'any' charges against an individual are reported in an employment-related police check.

**What do you believe is the most likely information provided to an employee / recruiter from a police check?**

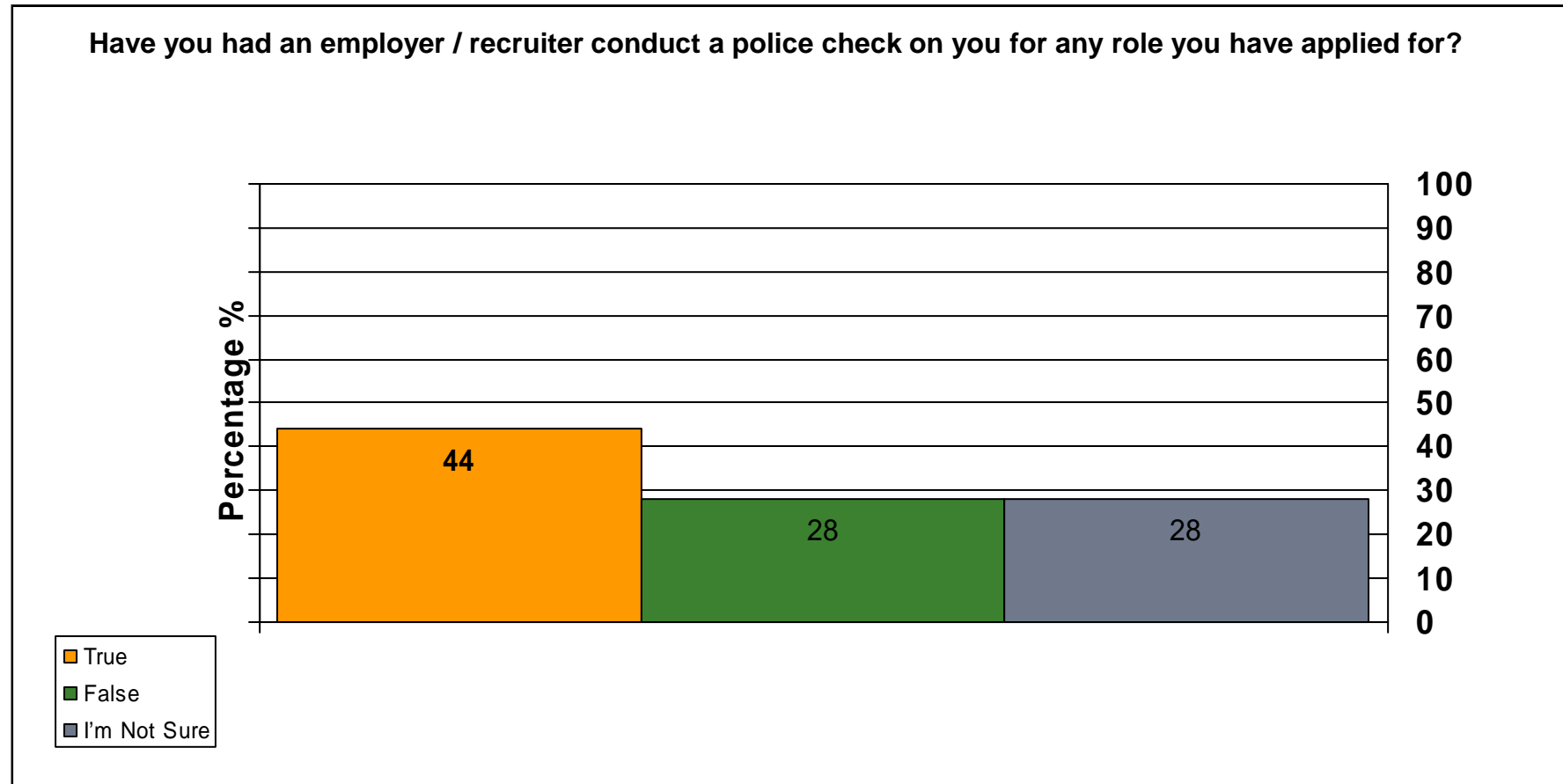


- Jail Term offences only
- Driving offences, speeding fines and parking tickets
- Restraining orders
- Any charges made by police against the individual
- None of the above
- Not sure

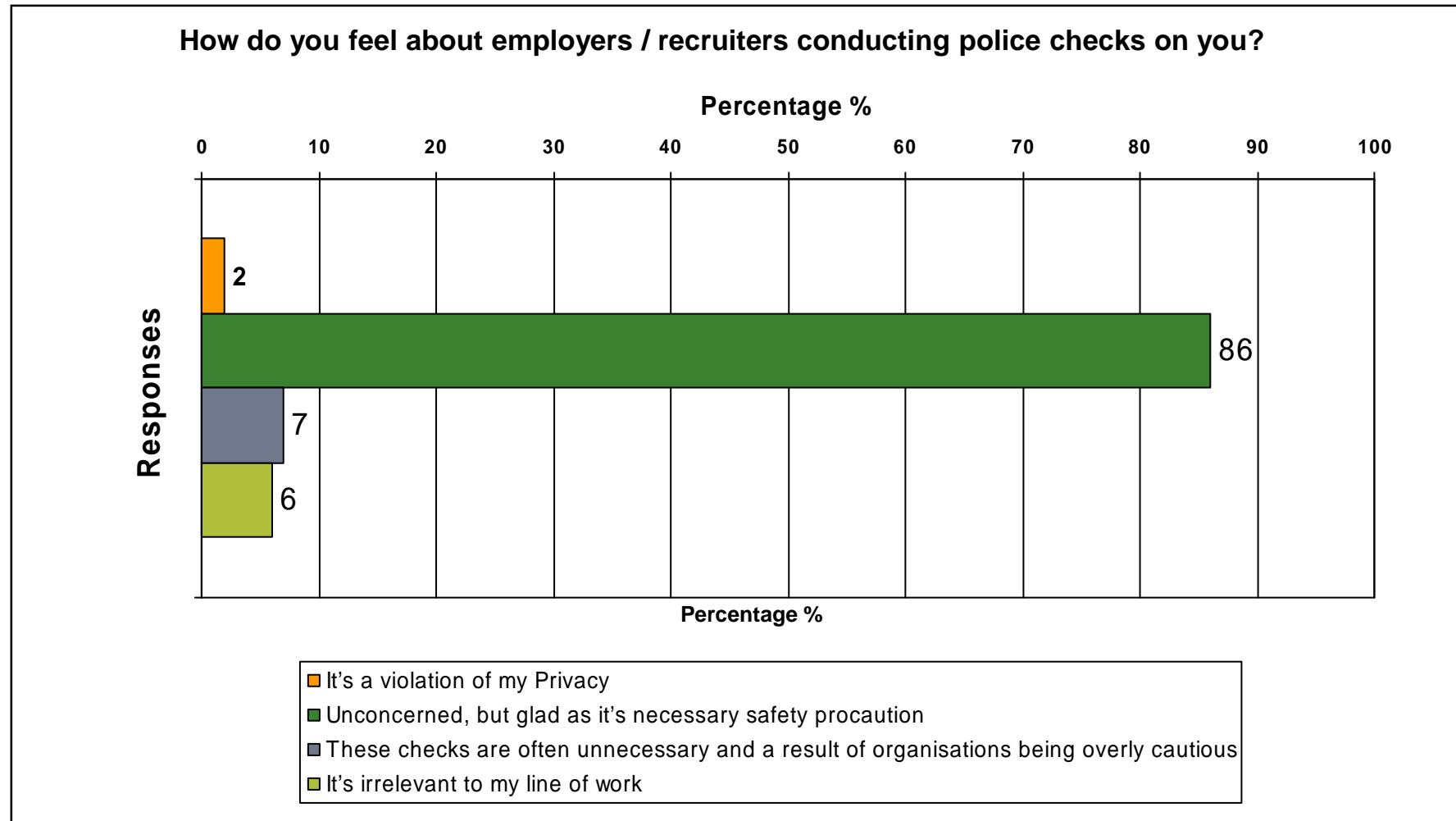
Candidates expect to be notified by their employer/ recruiter if they are the subject of a police check. Overall, 85% of people believe it is their right to know when an employer is investigating their criminal record.



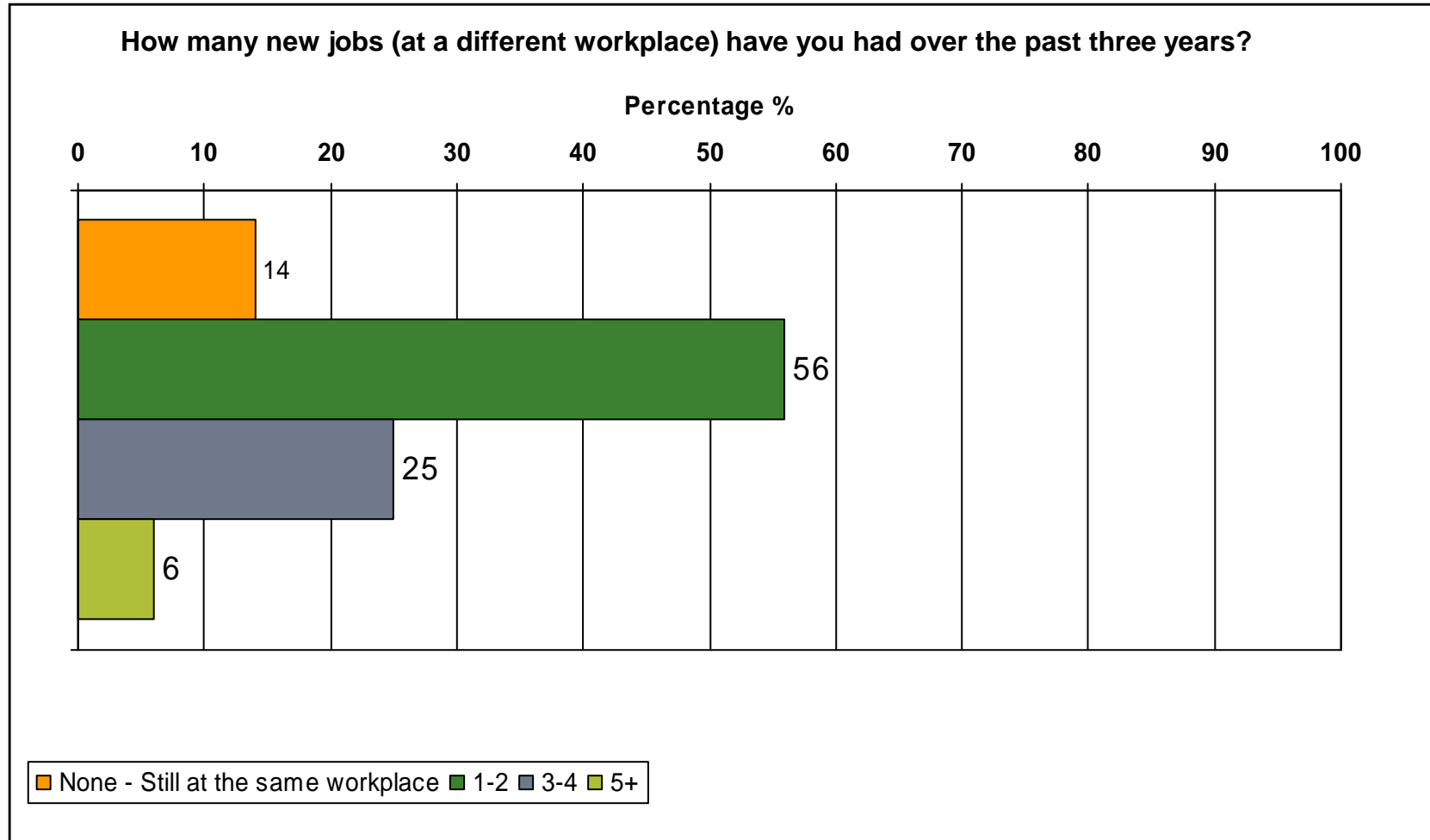
Almost half (44%) of candidates were able to confirm that their employer has conducted a police check on them at some stage, while 28% say they have not, and a further 28% of candidates were unsure.



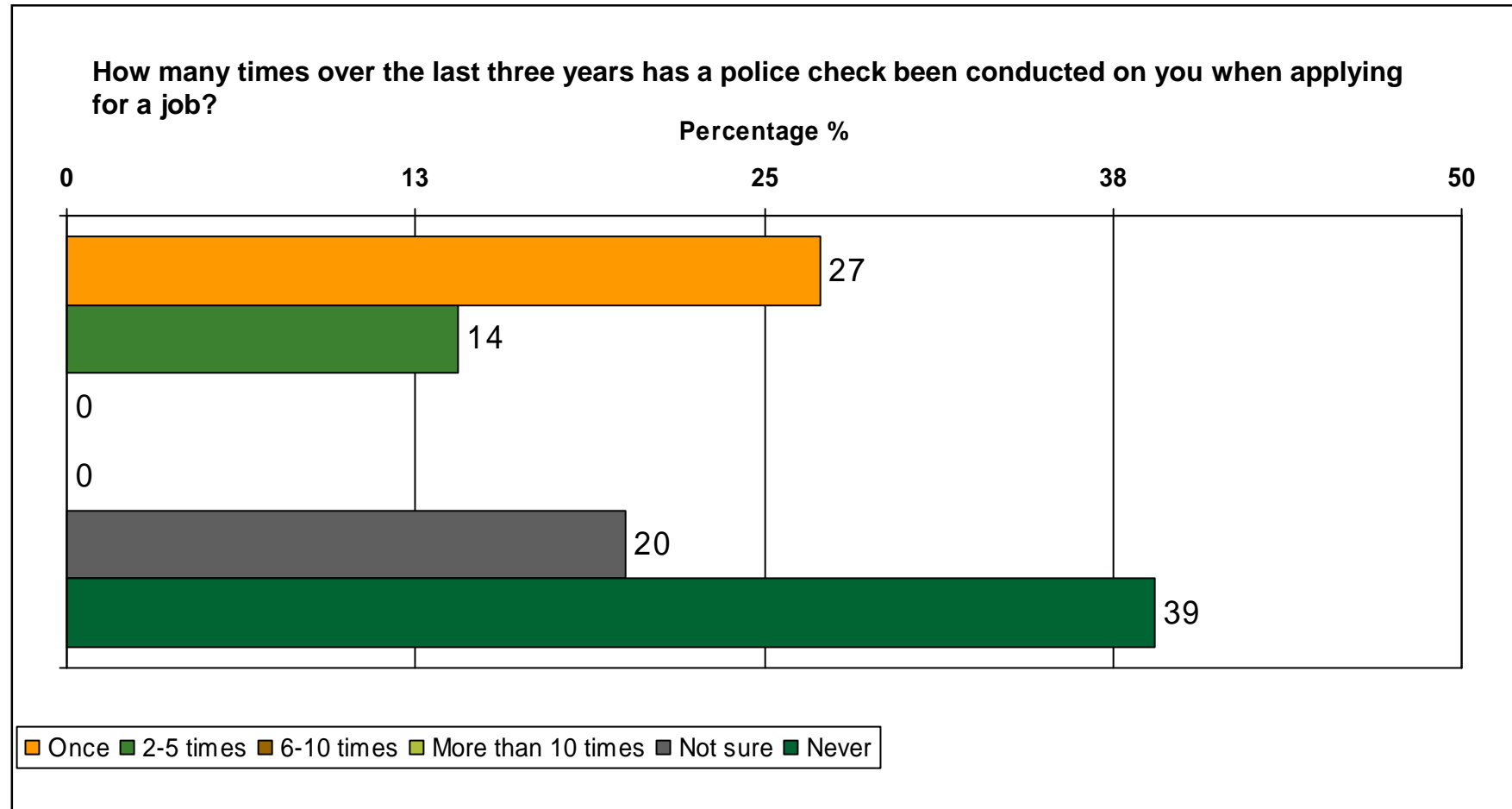
Most candidates (86%) feel police checks are a necessary safety precaution and are unconcerned about being checked, with only 2% of participants concerned that it violates their privacy.



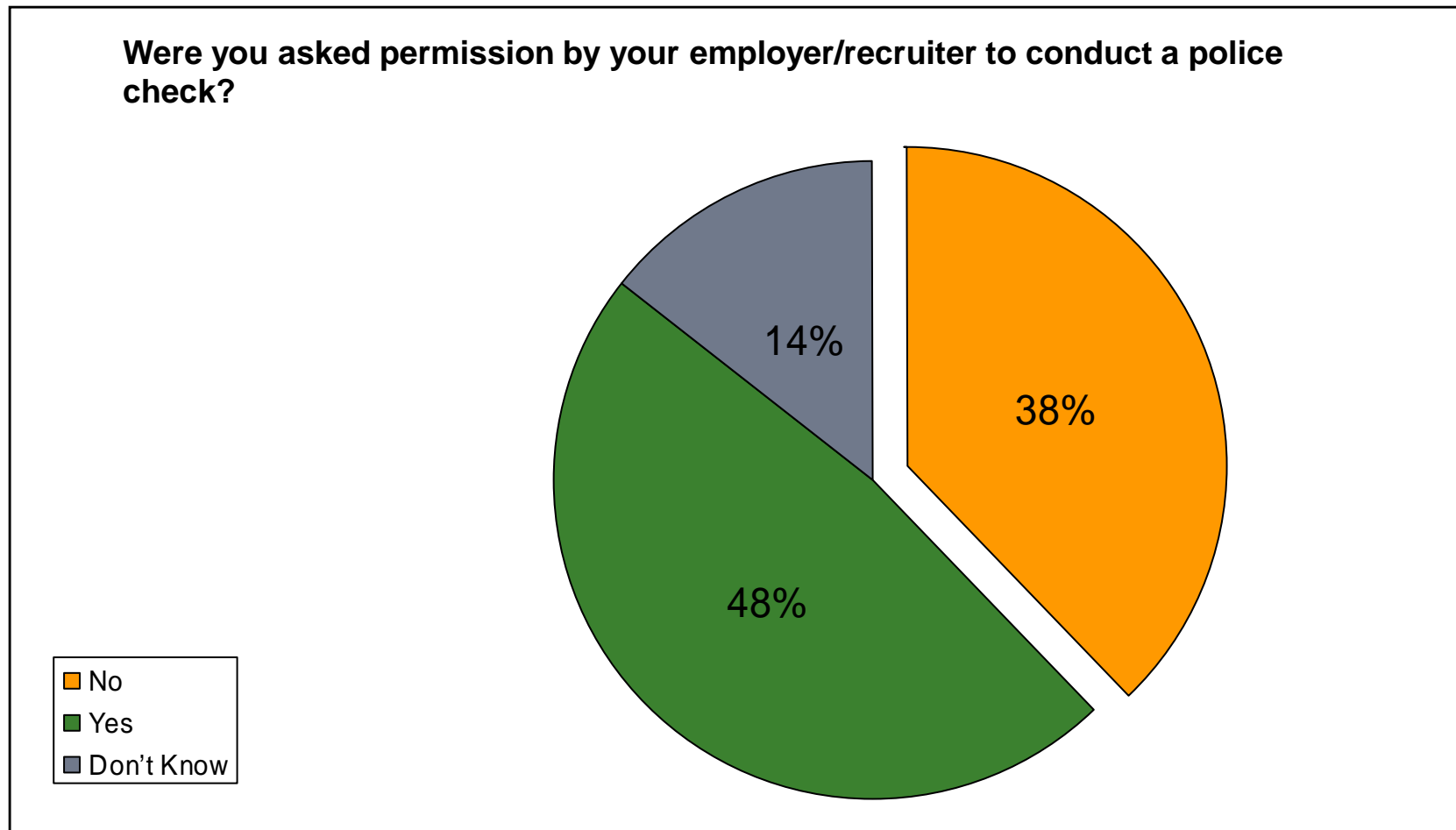
The majority of participants have had between 1-2 jobs over the past three years (56%) while only 13% have remained in the same job. 25% of people have moved between 3-4 different jobs while 6% have held five or more jobs over this time.



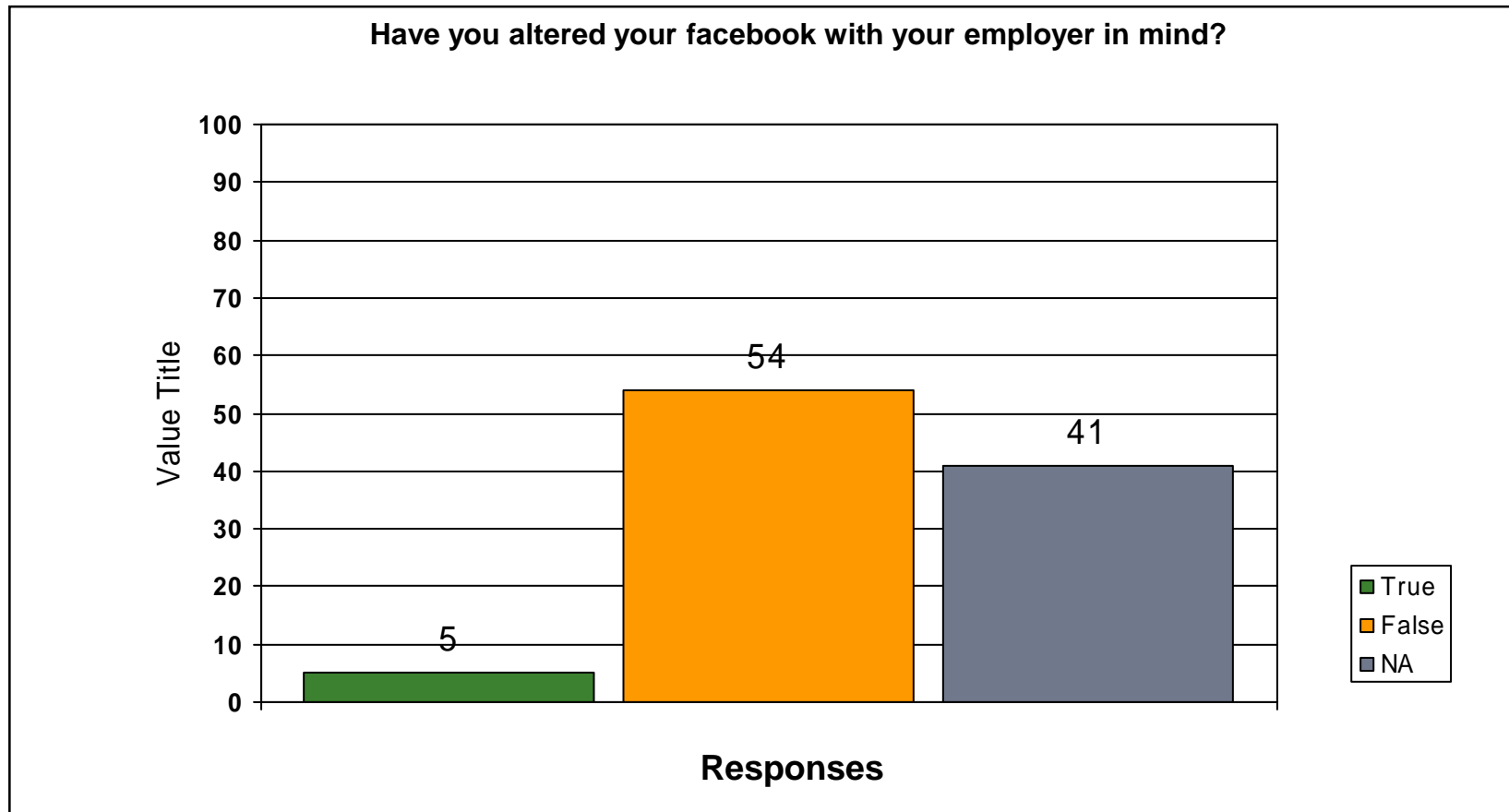
39% of candidates have never had a police check conducted on them upon applying for a new role, while 41% say they have had their criminal history checked at least once over the last three years and 20% were unsure.



While most people (48%) had been asked permission by their employer to conduct a police check, over one third (38%) say they were not informed, while a degree of uncertainty remains with 14% who were unsure.



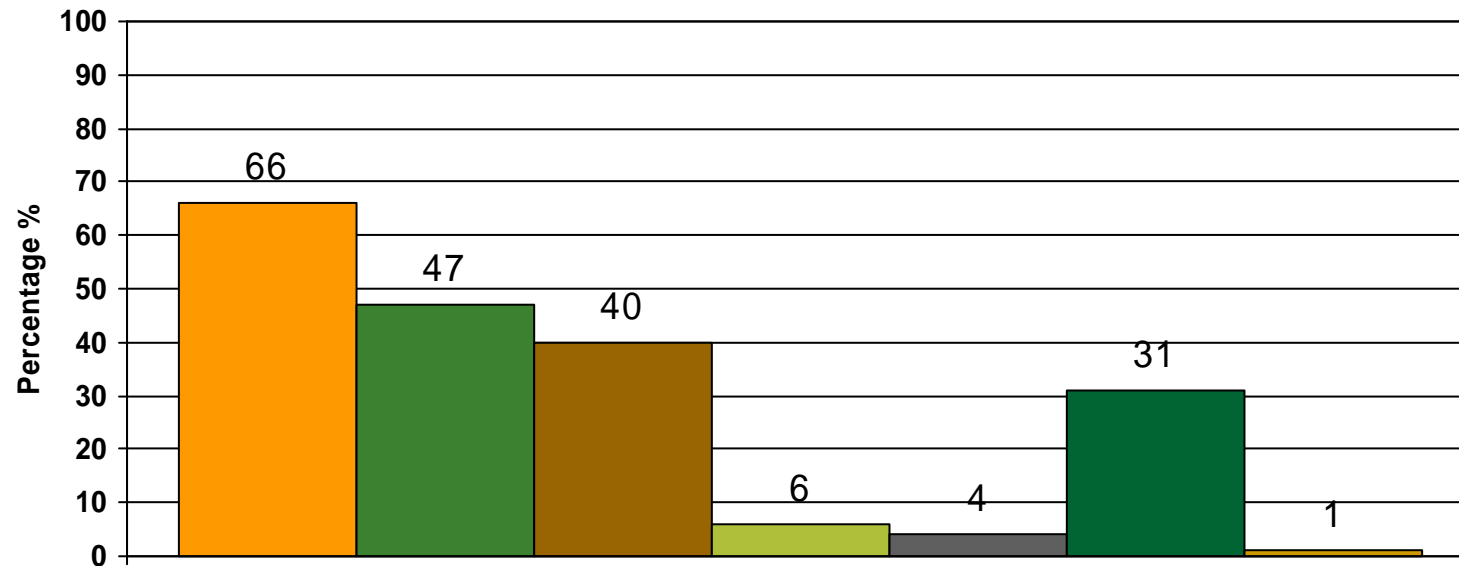
Employment opportunities aren't getting in the way of an honest Facebook page for 54% of candidates who said they haven't ever changed their Facebook settings with their employer in mind. Only 5% of surveyed participants have changed their Facebook profile with employment outcomes in mind.



Employees feel comfortable with recruiters/employers undertaking traditional, non-invasive forms of reference checking such as to verify employment history(34%), criminal history (24%) and residency status (21%). However, when it came to Facebook, only 2% of respondents were comfortable with employers checking their 'profile page' and a further 3% felt comfortable knowing their employer was scanning them using a Google search.

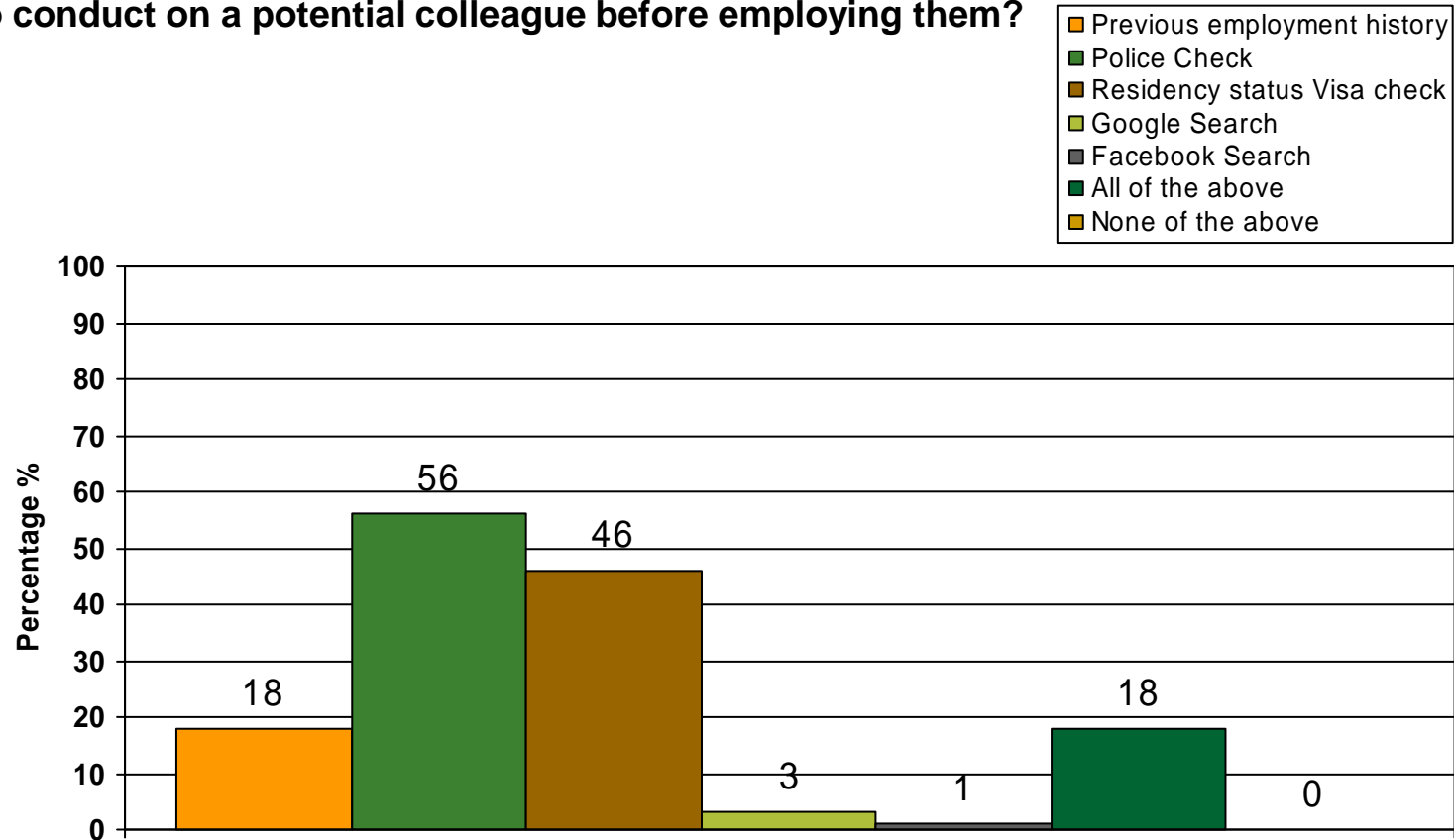
**Which of the following would you feel comfortable with your employer/recruiter using to screen you prior to your employing you?**

- Reference Check (employment history)
- Criminal history checks
- Residency status visa checks
- Google Search
- Facebook Search
- All of the above
- None of the above



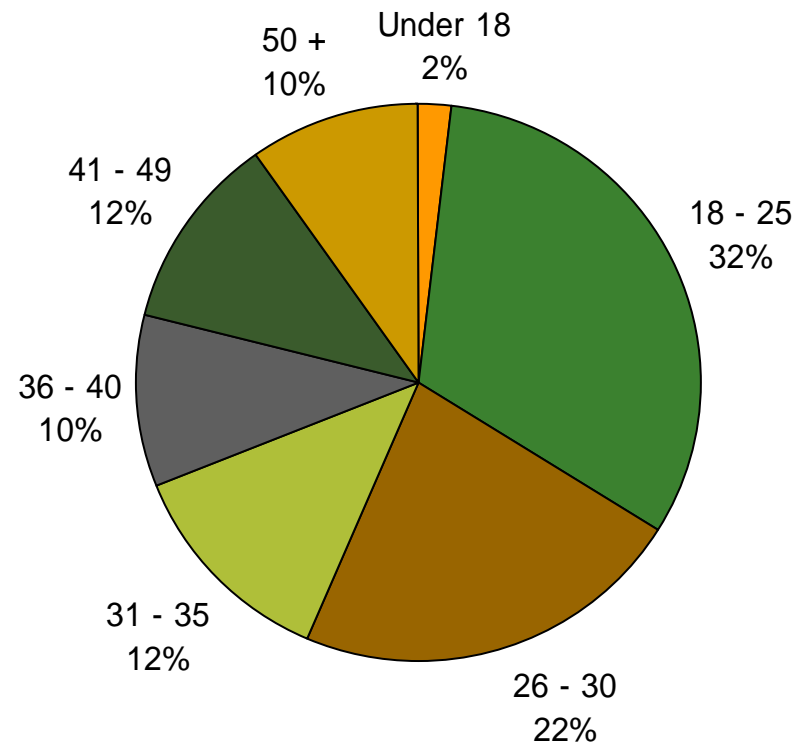
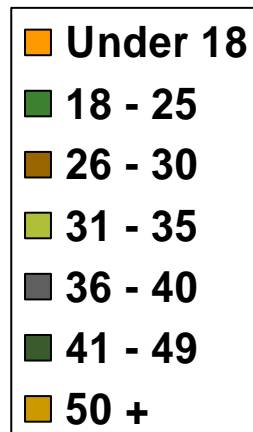
Candidates generally expect the same level of screening is undertaken on their colleagues as themselves. Most candidates maintain that Facebook and Google are not acceptable screening measures, not even for potential colleagues. However, there was a slightly higher expectation that police checks and Visa checks are carried out on incoming staff.

**What do you think is a reasonable level of screening for an employer/recruiter to conduct on a potential colleague before employing them?**



A large proportion of respondents to this survey fit the Gen Y demographic cohort, with 54% of respondents aged between 18-30. 22% were between 31-40, 12% between 41-49 and 10% who were 55+.

## Respondents age range



Survey participants represent a variety of industry sectors. The majority have worked in Administration and Office support roles (17%), Call Centre / Customer service work (15%) and Manufacturing work (17%) at some time in the past three years.

**Industry sectors that surveyed participants had worked in over the past three years:**

- Healthcare/medical
- Banking and Finance
- Manufacturing or Stores Work
- Engineering/Construction
- Call Centre / Customer Service
- Transport, including truck driving, courier and aviation
- Information and Communication Technology
- Administration and Office Support
- Other / None

