

THE STATE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING IN EUROPE:

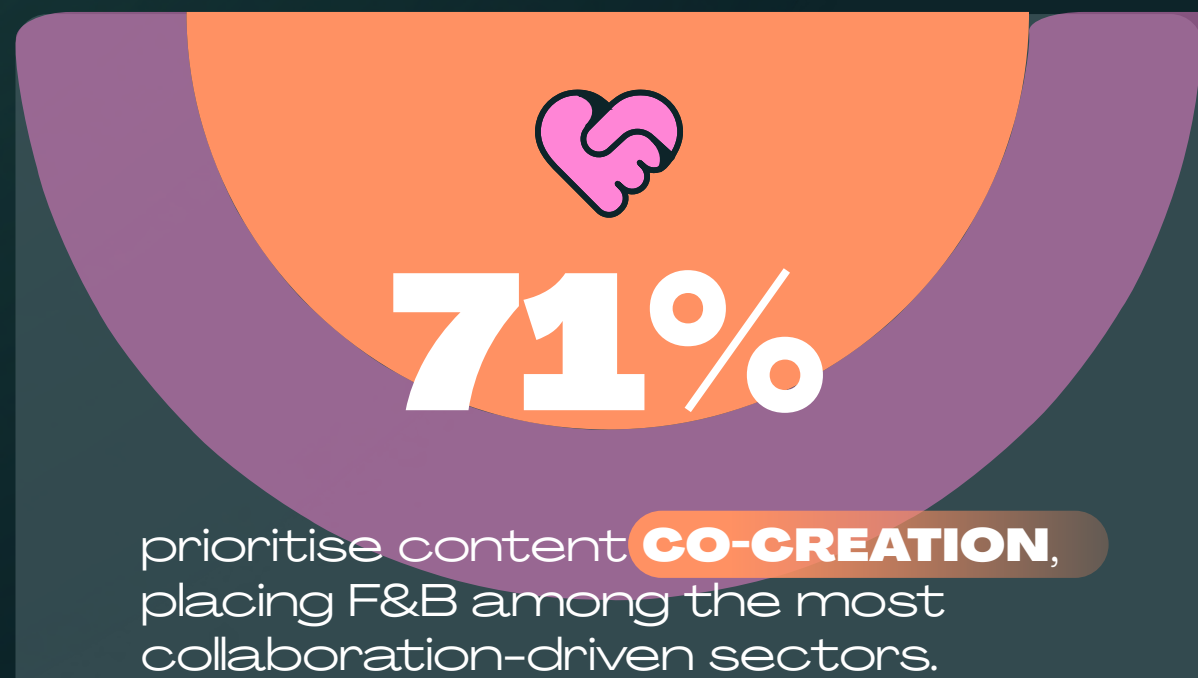
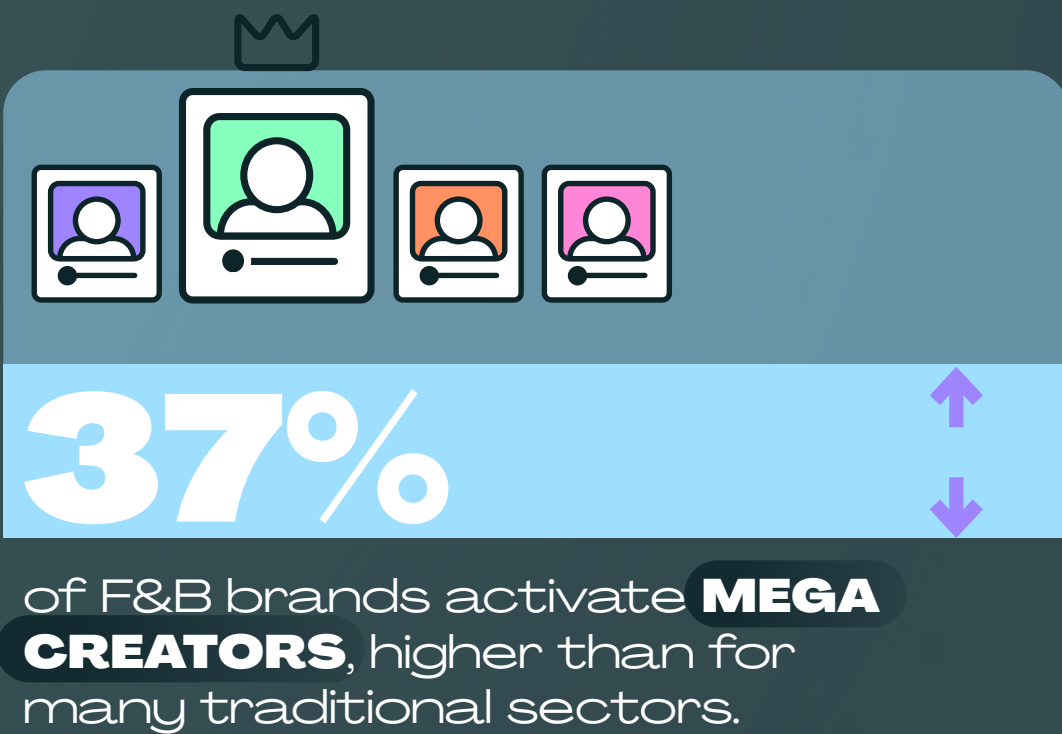
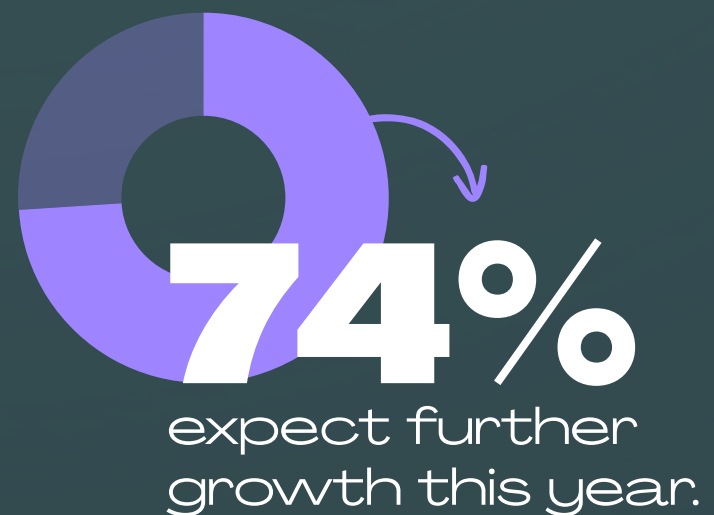
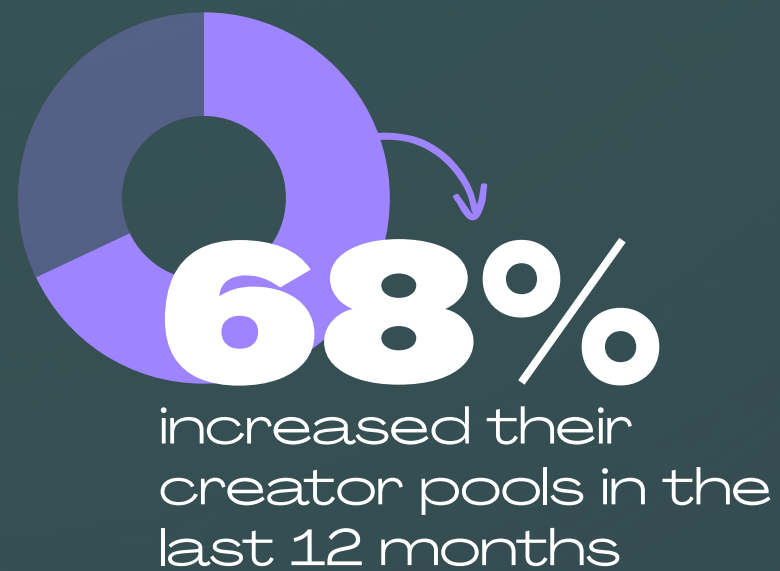
FOOD & BEVERAGE

The European Benchmark for Influence

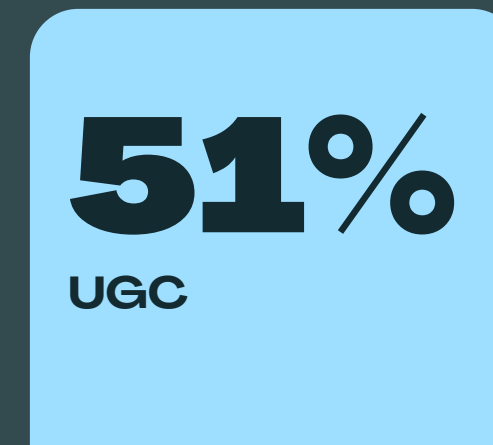
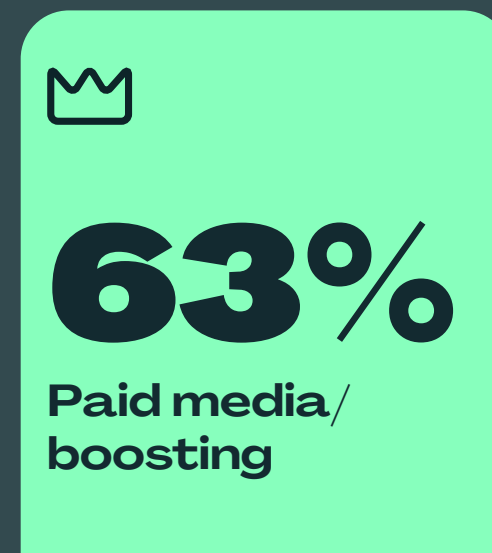


F&B: SNAPSHOT OF INFLUENCE STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

CREATOR PROGRAMMES ARE SCALING

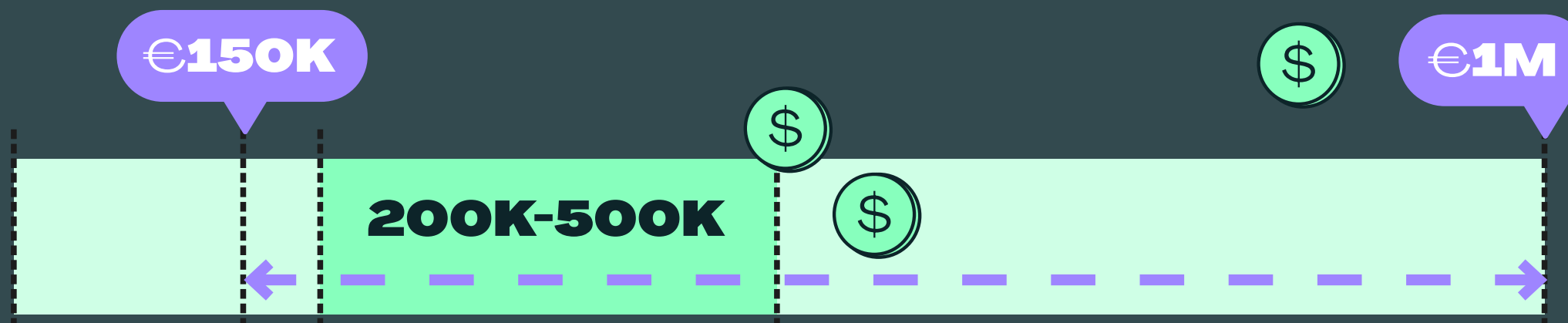


TOP 3 INVESTMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2026



BUDGETS REFLECT MATURITY

Nearly half of brands invest between **€150K and €1M**, with a strong over-index in the €200K–€500K range.



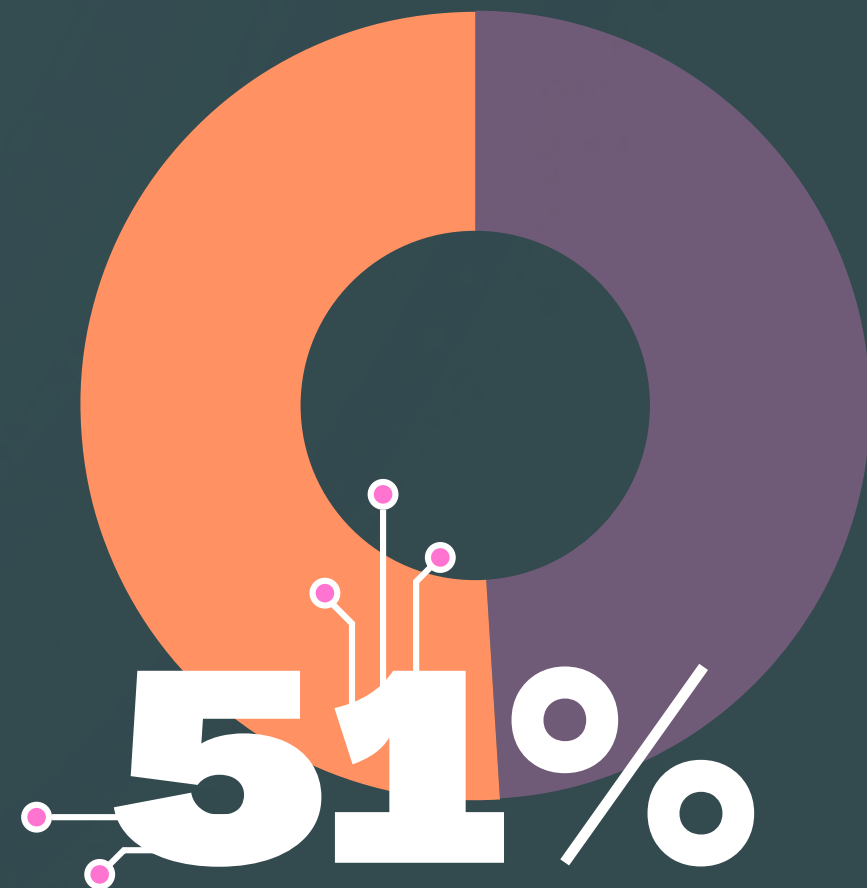
F&B: SNAPSHOT OF INFLUENCE STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

F&B BRANDS PRIORITISE AUDIENCE INTERESTS

more than other sectors when selecting KOLs.

51%

TECHNOLOGY, EFFICIENCY & FUTURE LEVERS



NOMINATE INCREASED USE OF AI AND AUTOMATION as key opportunities for 2026.

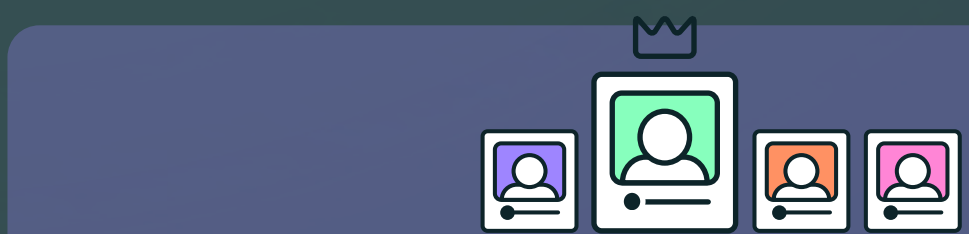
MEDIA MIX INTEGRATION & ORGANISATIONAL ALIGNMENT

49%

of F&B brands integrate influence with **PR AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES**, reflecting the importance of trust and reputation to the sector.

60%

of F&B brands nominate **DEEPER INTEGRATION** of influence into the marketing mix as a key opportunity for 2026.



49%

operate **AMBASSADOR PROGRAMMES**, putting F&B among the top sectors for long-term partnerships.

ETHICS, REGULATION & RESPONSIBILITY



ensure KOLs comply with corporate values,



insist they follow advertising regulations, making the sector one of the strictest overall.



THE STATE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING IN EUROPE:

FOOD & BEVERAGE

The European Benchmark for Influence



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



METHODOLOGY



**FROM EXPANSION TO ACCELERATION:
CREATOR POOLS ON THE RISE.**



**ACTIVATING PROFILES: BALANCING
REACH, CREDIBILITY AND RELATABILITY**



**INVESTING WITH INTENT: BUDGET
LEVELS, GROWTH AND PRIORITIES**



**FROM INTEGRATION TO RESPONSIBILITY:
SHAPING THE FUTURE OF INFLUENCE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Food & Beverage is one of the most mature and fastest-scaling sectors in influencer marketing. Anchored in everyday consumption and lifestyle, brands approach creator partnerships with a high level of structure, consistency and responsibility. In 2026, influencer marketing will be a core growth channel for European F&B brands, closely integrated with PR, communications and brand campaigns.

Creator programmes are expanding steadily. Nearly half of brands work with 11–49 creators annually, and growth remains strong: 40% increased their creator pools over the past 12 months, and more than half expect further expansion this year. This reflects a clear shift toward always-on strategies built around stable creator ecosystems.

Budgets confirm this maturity. Nearly half of F&B brands invest between €150K and €1M, with a strong concentration in the €200K–€500K range. Strategically, the sector prioritises content co-creation, long-term partnerships and paid amplification, while applying some of the strictest ethical and regulatory standards.

Looking ahead, F&B brands see opportunities in deeper integration of influence within the marketing mix, UGC and AI-driven efficiency, shaping a future that is both scalable and trust-led.



“The biggest opportunity is moving influencer marketing from one-off activations to true brand building. Integrating content creation into paid media gives us scale and performance, while always-on partnerships build consistency and trust.” F&B Global Digital Brand Manager, Spain, budget spend €200K - €500.

METHODOLOGY

This analysis is based on data from **The State of Influencer Marketing in Europe 2025**, a quantitative study conducted by Kolsquare in partnership with NewtonX across seven European markets.

The analysis draws exclusively on 35 brand-side respondents operating within the Food & Beverage industry, representing 9% of the total brand respondents. Participants were senior decision-makers (including CMOs, Heads of Influence, and Social Media Managers) with at least two years' experience in influencer marketing and direct responsibility for strategy, budget, or partner selection.

Data was collected via an online survey between September and October 2025 using verified professional sampling.

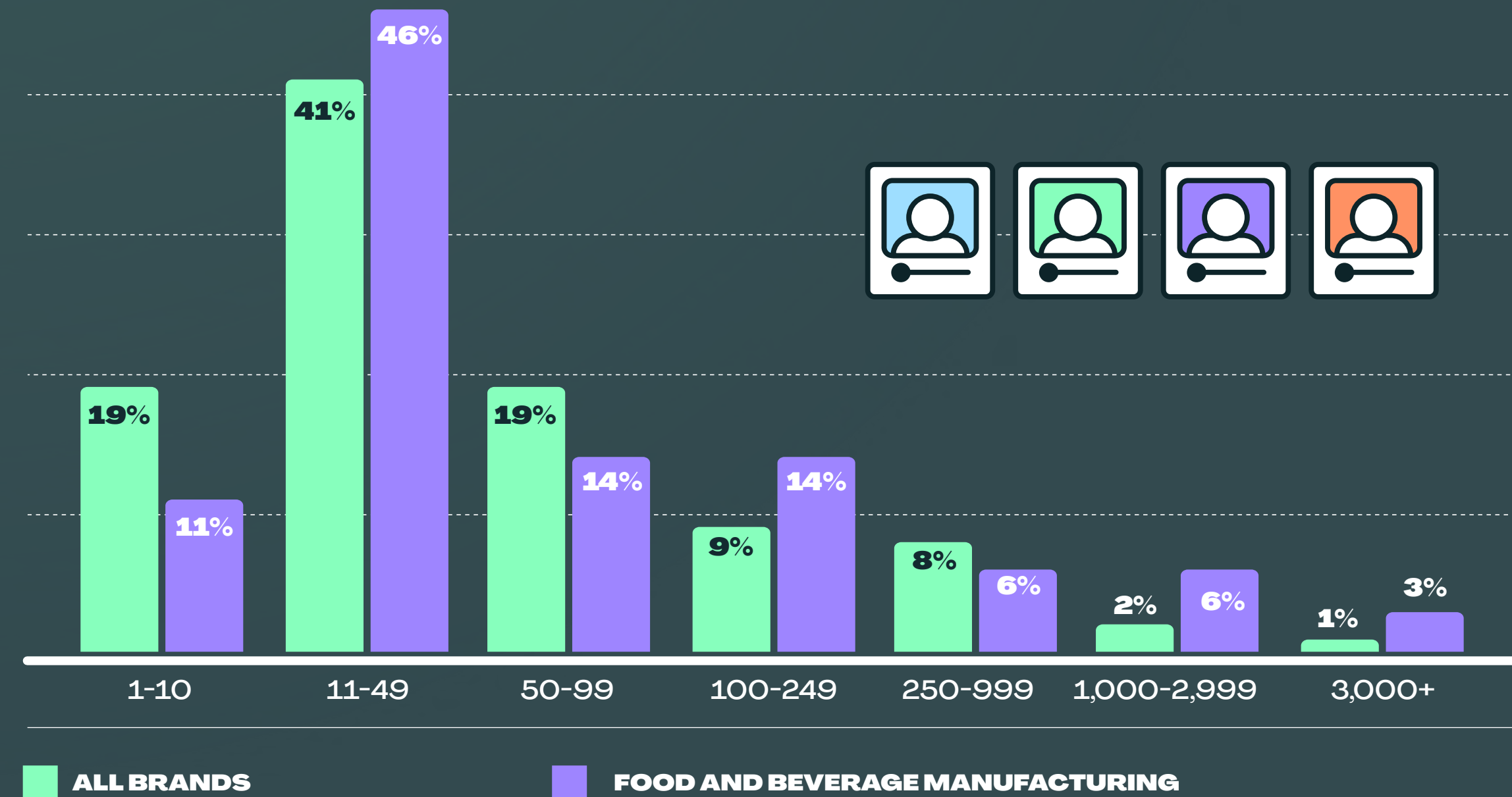
Note on data: Due to the limited sample size, the insights in this report offer a directional overview rather than a comprehensive sector analysis.



1 FROM EXPANSION TO ACCELERATION: CREATOR POOLS ON THE RISE

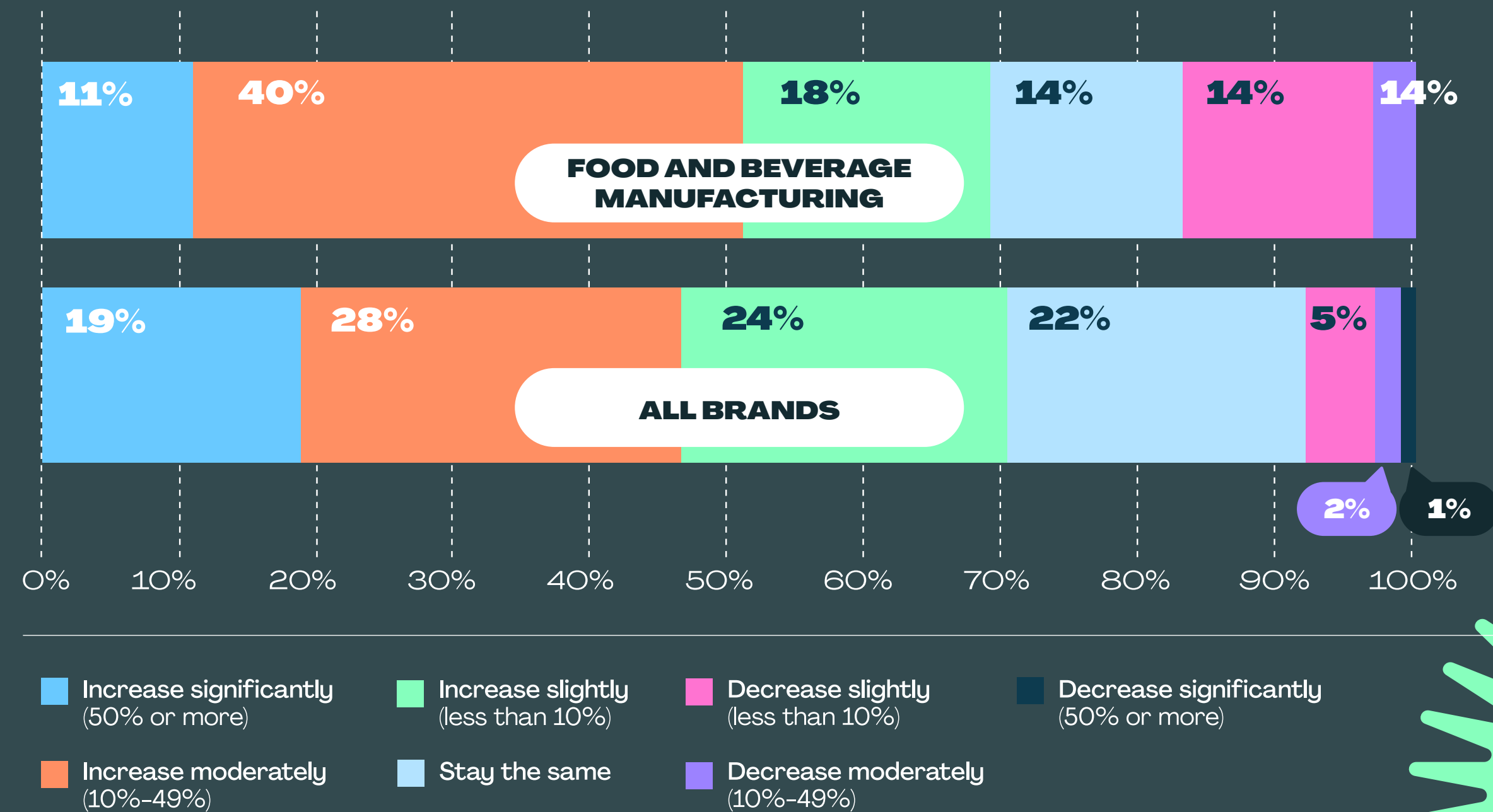
While most European F&B brands operate with moderate creator pools, 15% activate more than 250 creators annually, including 9% who activate an impressive 1,000+ creators. This reflects structured, recurring programmes rather than occasional activations. Influencer marketing in this sector is designed for consistency and sustained presence.

Approximately how many influencers do you work with annually?



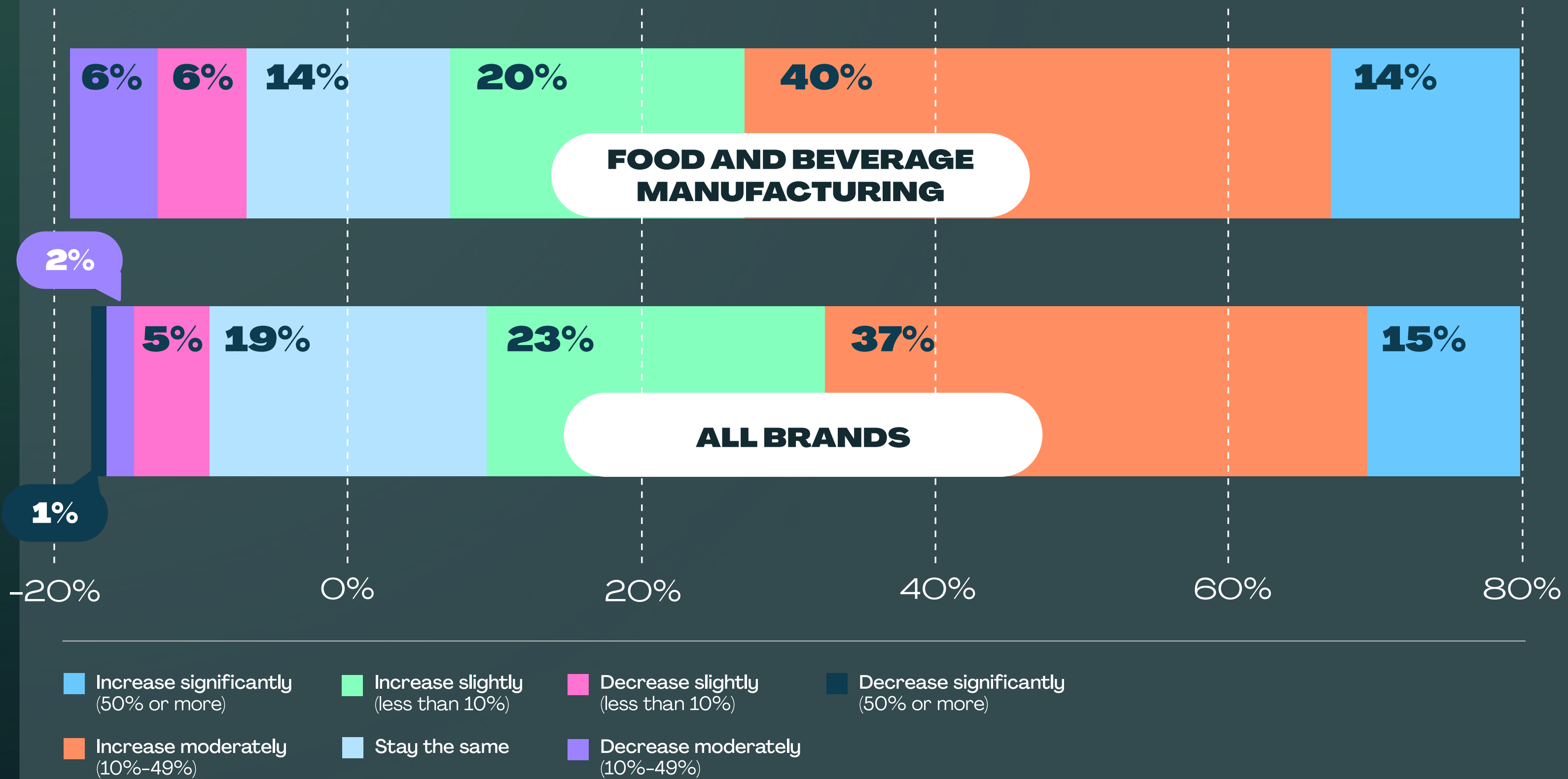
Growth momentum is strong across the sector. Over the past 12 months, more than half of brands expanded their creator pools, with a notable share reporting significant increases. This upward trend is set to continue. Expectations for the year ahead confirm influencer marketing as a long-term growth channel for F&B.

How has the number of influencers you activate changed in the last 12 months?



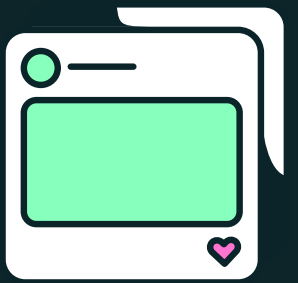
1 FROM EXPANSION TO ACCELERATION: CREATOR POOLS ON THE RISE

How do you expect the number of influencers you activate to change in the next 12 months?



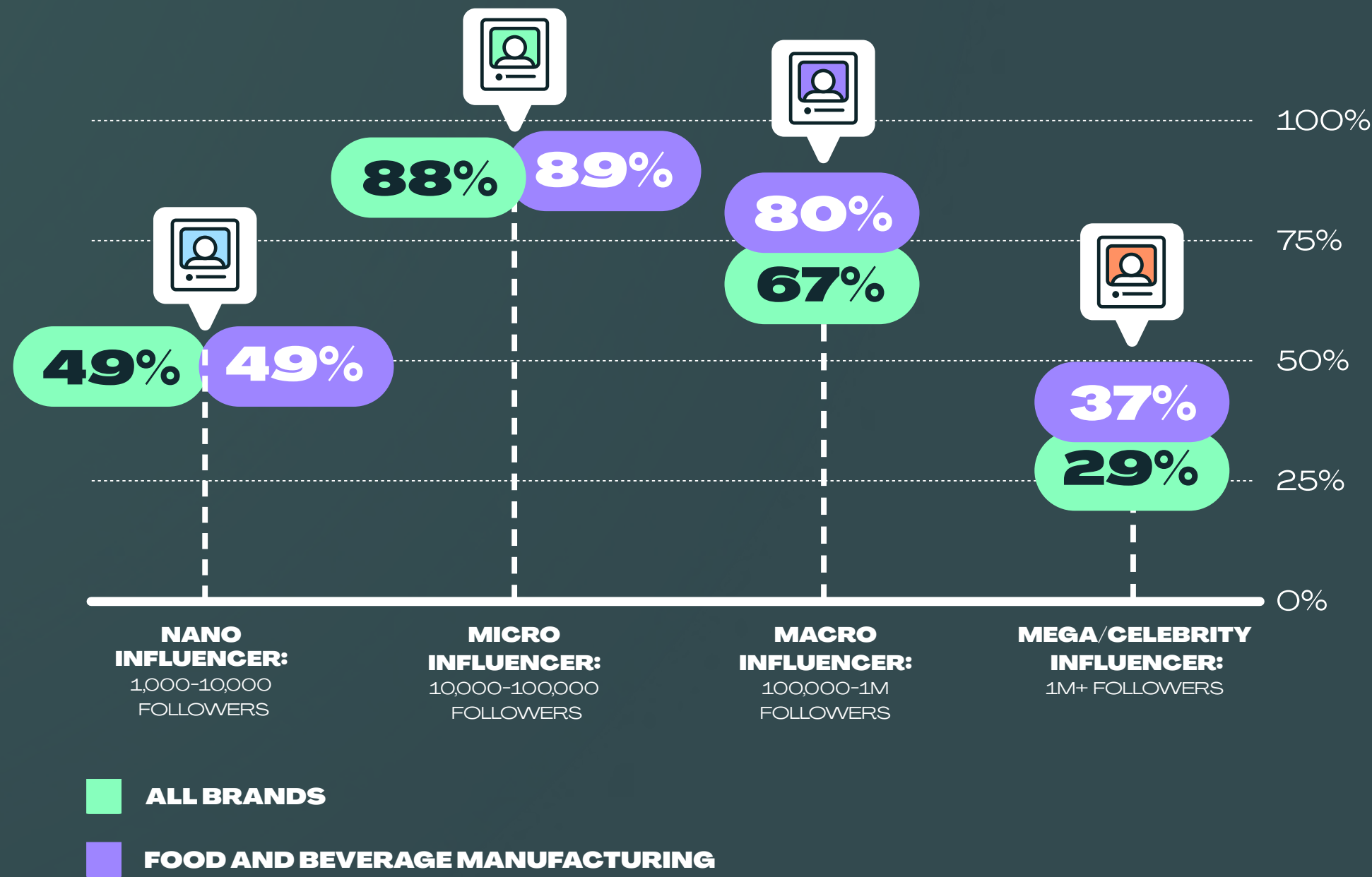
“There is a fatigue among consumers and a stronger understanding of brand’s tactics. By using AI, deeper integration [of influence into the mix] and new platforms the industry will adapt and develop stronger strategies.” F&B Marketing Director, France, budget spend €25K - €50K.

2 ACTIVATING PROFILES: BALANCING REACH, CREDIBILITY AND RELATABILITY



Which types of influencers do you work with?

F&B brands favour a scalable and credible mix of creator profiles. Micro and macro creators dominate, offering reach with relatability. Nano creators play a supporting role, while mega creators are activated selectively for visibility spikes. The strategy balances trust-driven influence with moments of high-impact reach.



“Like many emerging capabilities, influencers/creator marketing will develop from a siloed activity led by PR on top of marketing campaigns into planned core activities led by brand teams.”
F&B Media Lead, UK, budget spend £500K - £1M

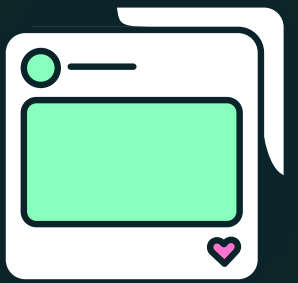
Creator selection in F&B is driven by trust and contextual relevance. Authenticity, content style and audience interests rank highest, reflecting the importance of lifestyle fit. Engagement matters more than pure reach, though follower count still plays a role.

Which of the following are the most important criteria when selecting an influencer to work with? Please select up to 5.

Number of followers	Engagement rate	Platform (i.e., where they have followers)	Success of previous campaigns	Audience demographics
38%	48%	24%	27%	49%
43%	40%	29%	17%	46%
35%	59%	20%	45%	50%
49%	57%	14%	51%	57%

Ethical conduct and transparency/integrity	Influencer's content style	Prior experience with the influencer	Audience interests	Authenticity: the influencer already knows and likes the brand
49%	57%	14%	51%	57%

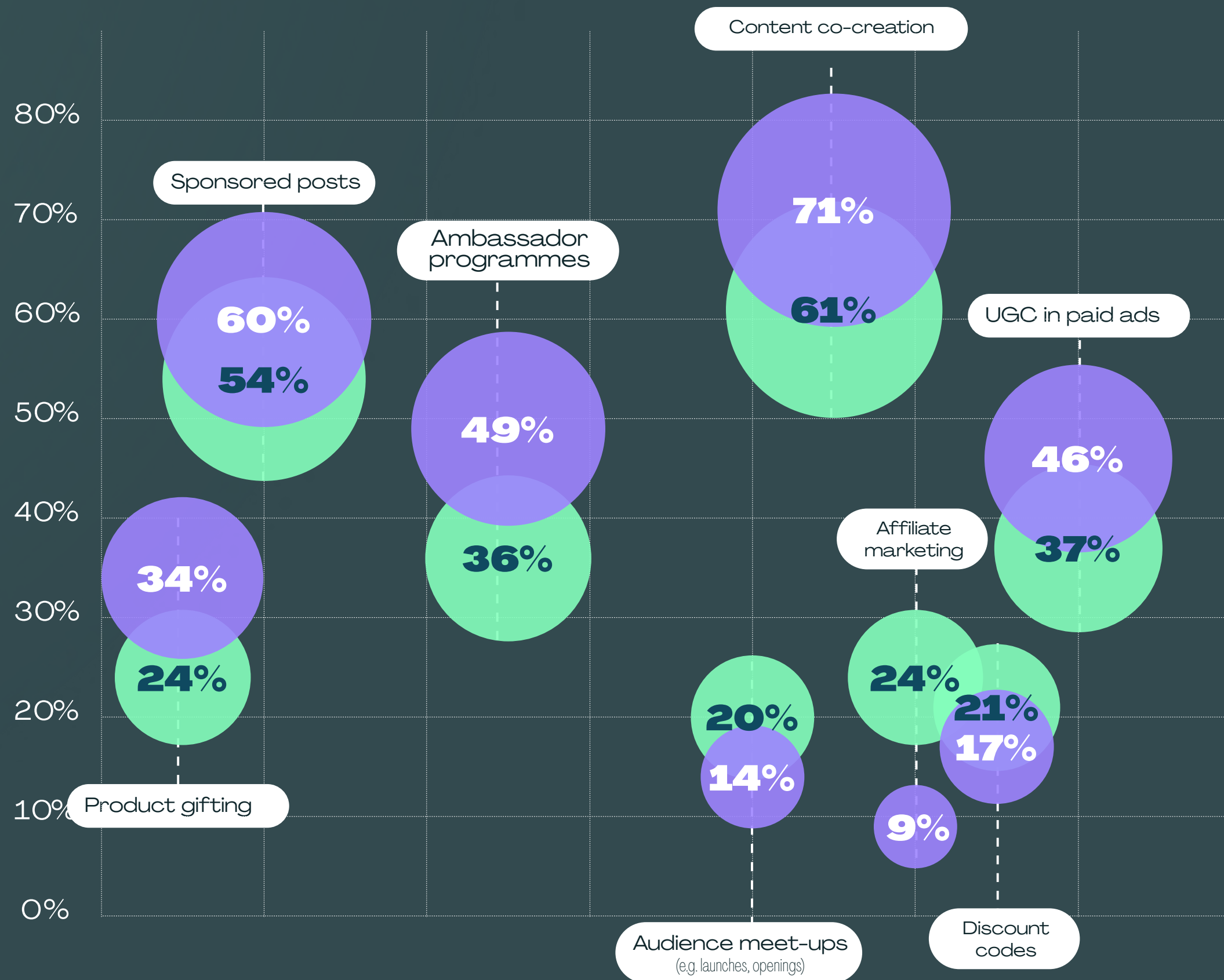
2 ACTIVATING PROFILES: BALANCING REACH, CREDIBILITY AND RELATABILITY



F&B brands lean into content co-creation more than most other sectors. Sponsored posts, events and ambassador programmes reinforce long-term collaboration models. Short-term tactics play a secondary role. Overall, F&B brands prioritise depth, continuity and creative alignment over volume-driven activations.

■ ALL BRANDS
■ FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING

In which of the following ways does your company use influencer marketing?



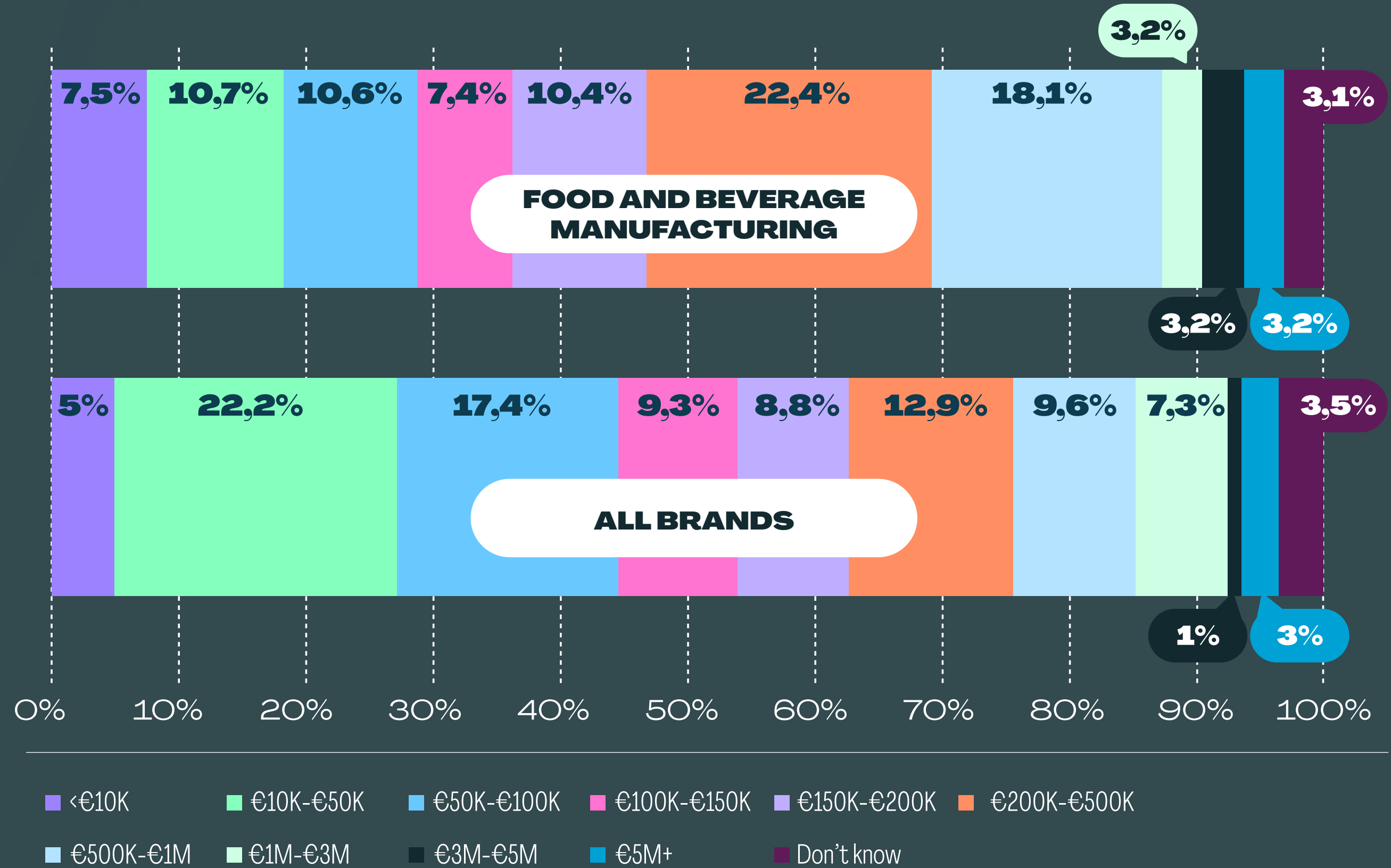
“We want to use the right form of content that is native to the platforms it is advertised on, but used in a longer period of time to get the most out of the partnership and build long-term brand awareness.” F&B Global Manager Digital Marketing, Netherlands, budget spend €150K - €200K.

3 INVESTING WITH INTENT: BUDGET LEVELS, GROWTH AND PRIORITIES

Influencer marketing investment by European F&B brands is firmly anchored in the mid-to-high range. Entry-level budgets are rare, while the €200K–€500K segment is particularly strong. This signals structured, recurring investment rather than experimental spend. Influencer marketing is clearly budgeted as a strategic pillar.



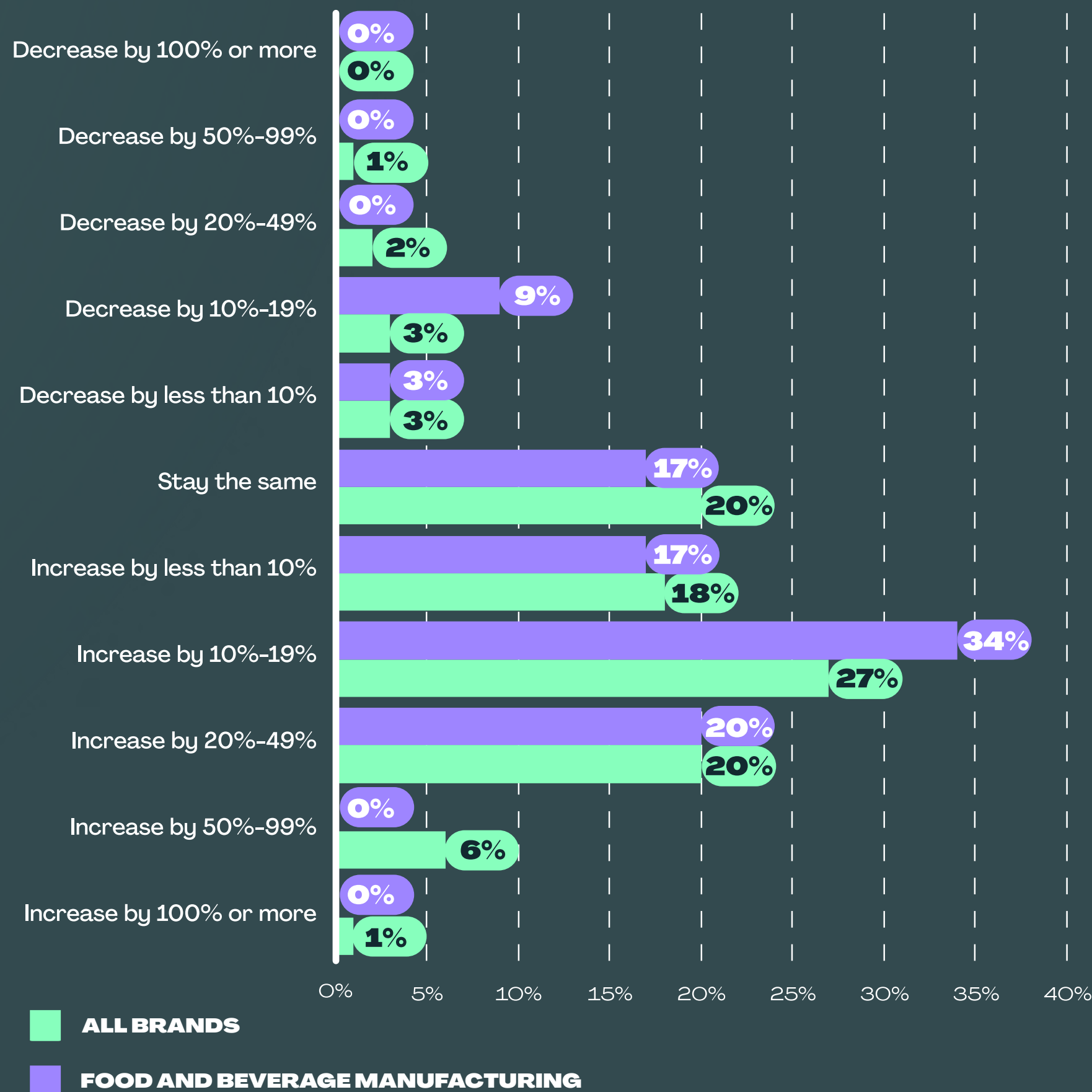
Which of the following best describes how much your company spent on influencer marketing in the last fiscal year?



3 INVESTING WITH INTENT: BUDGET LEVELS, GROWTH AND PRIORITIES

Confidence remains high going into 2026. More than 70% of brands expect their influencer budgets to increase, primarily within the 10–49% range. Stable budgets remain common, while declines are marginal.

How do you expect the amount your company spends on influencer marketing to change over the next 12 months?



3

INVESTING WITH INTENT: BUDGET LEVELS, GROWTH AND PRIORITIES

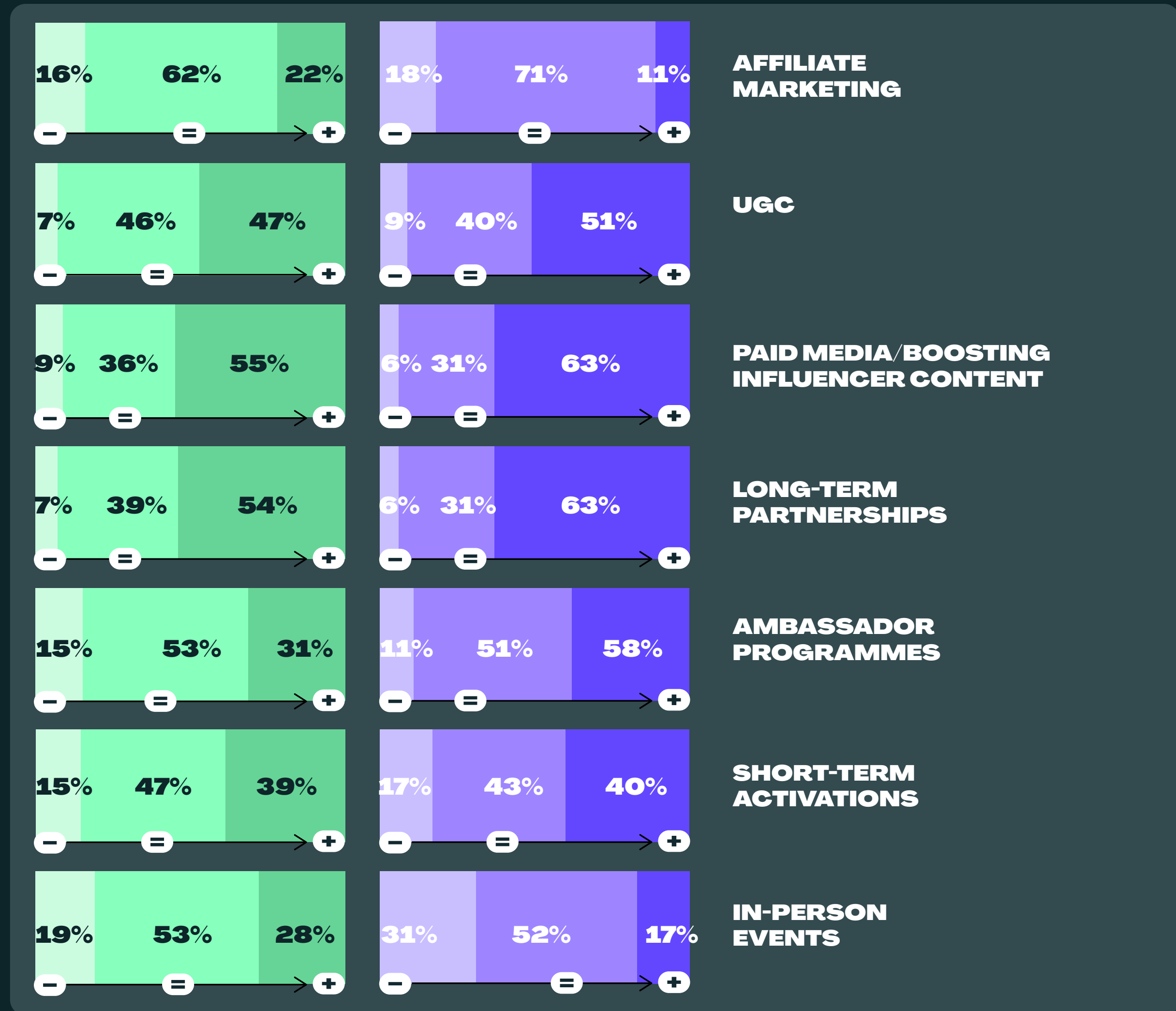


Future investment is shifting toward scalable and performance-oriented levers. Long-term partnerships and paid amplification lead priorities, followed closely by UGC. In contrast, short-term activations, affiliate marketing and in-person events are losing momentum.

“Deeper integration of influence into paid media and demand for authentic & values-driven collabs will build proximity to our consumers, while of course benefiting the scale of paid media.” F&B Marketing Manager (Team Lead), Nordics, budget spend €75K-€100K.

In the next 12 months, how do you expect your company’s influencer marketing budget allocation to change across the following areas?

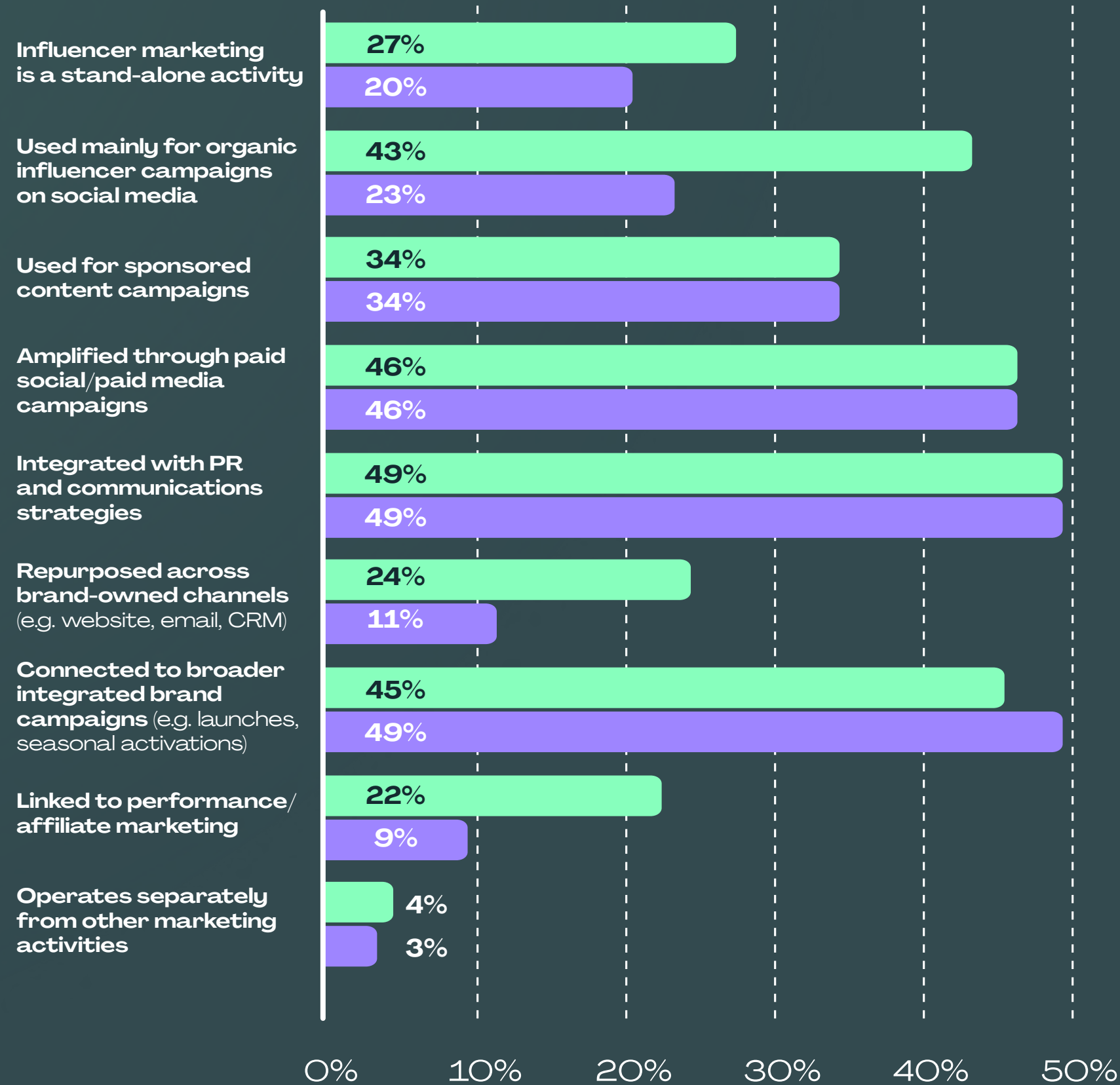
- ALL BRANDS
- FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING
- INVEST LESS
- = NO CHANGE
- + INVEST MORE



4 FROM INTEGRATION TO RESPONSIBILITY: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF INFLUENCE

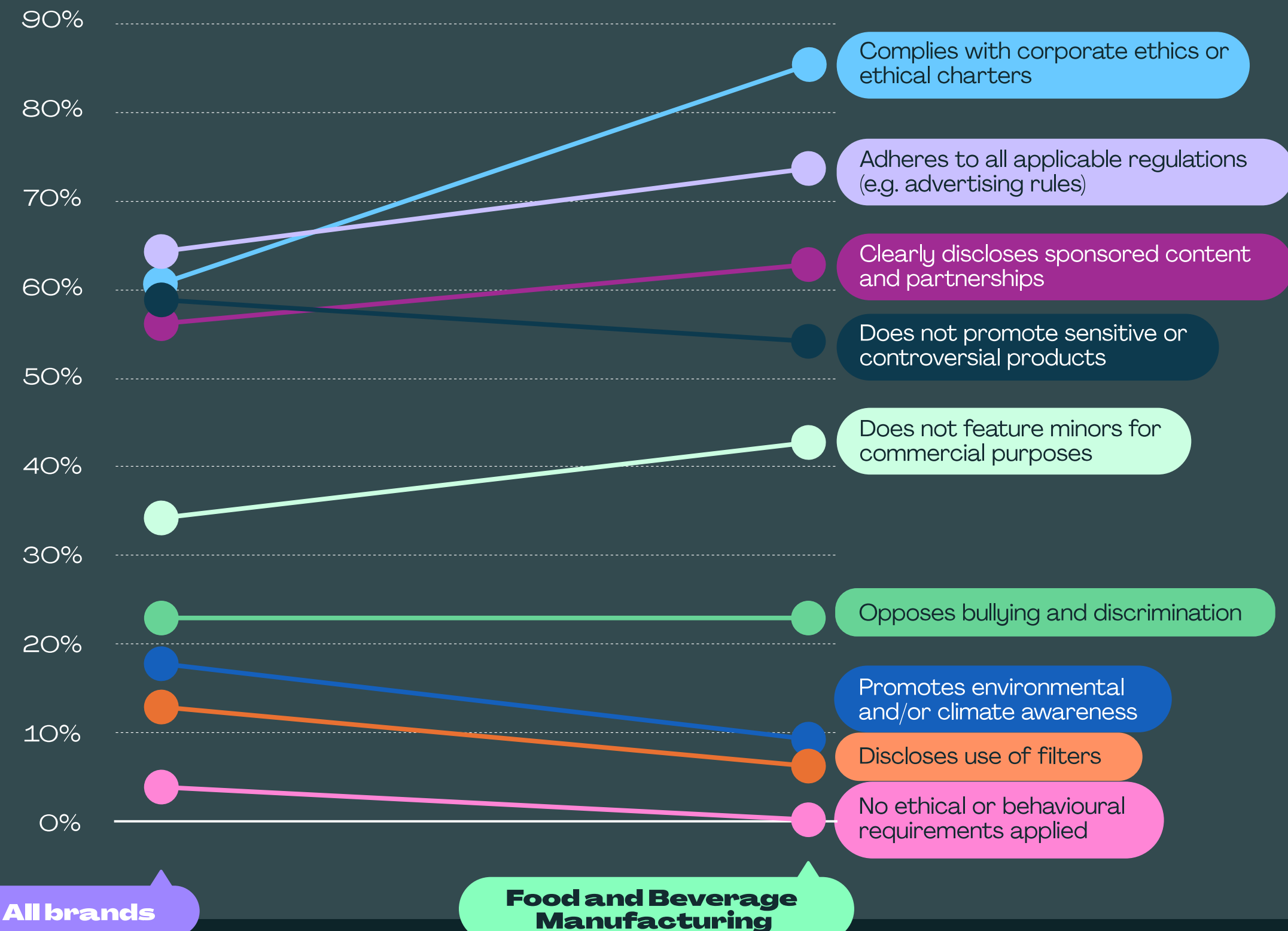
How is influencer marketing integrated into your company's overall marketing mix?

Influencer marketing is closely tied to PR, communications and integrated brand campaigns for F&B brands. Standalone influencer strategies remain limited. Influence operates as a supporting engine for brand reputation and storytelling.



F&B brands apply some of the strictest rules to influencers across all sectors. Alignment with corporate values, regulatory compliance and clear disclosure are non-negotiable. Brands are particularly cautious around minors and sensitive topics.

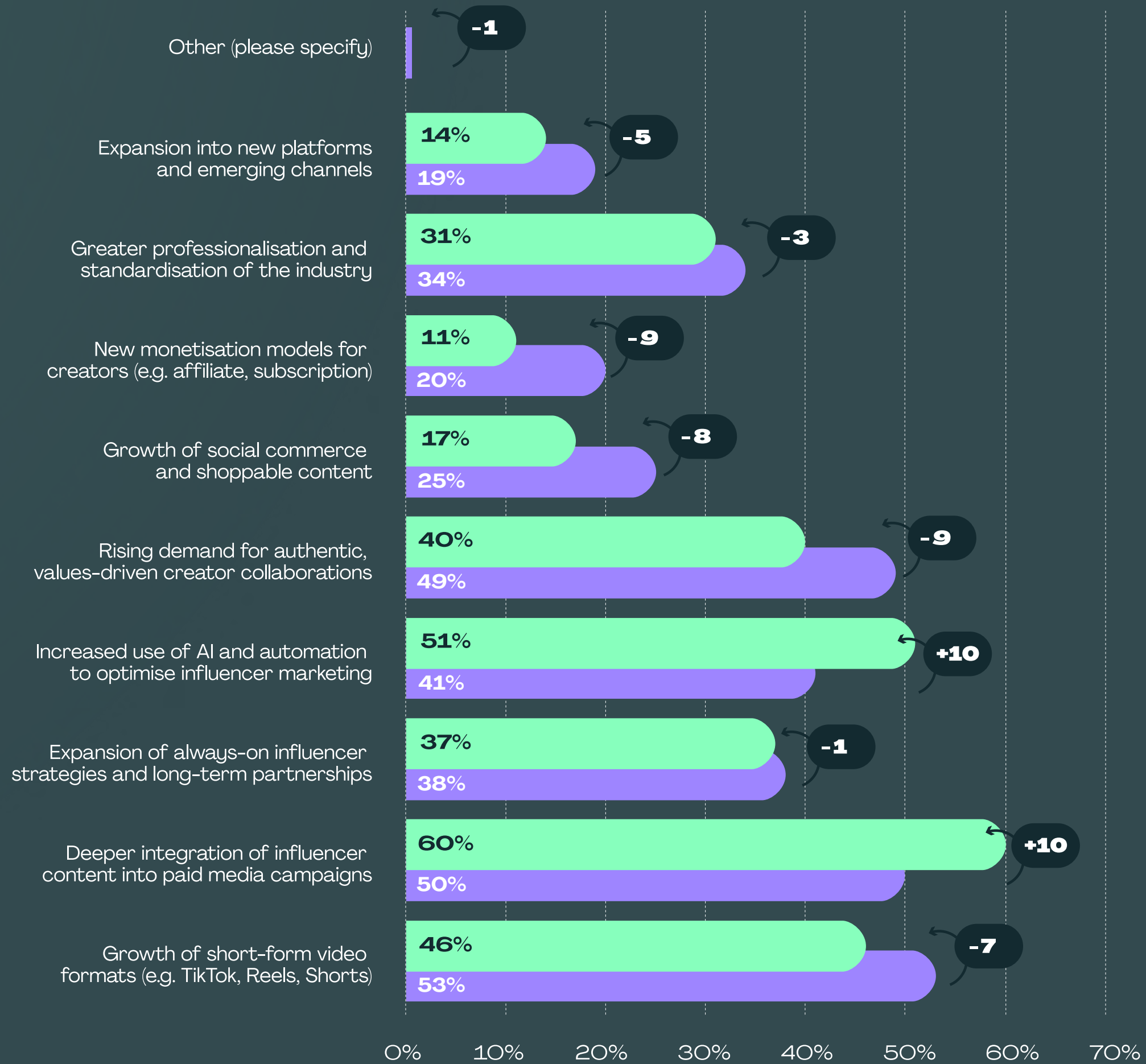
What, if any, of the following ethical or behavioral conditions do you apply to influencers you partner with?



4 FROM INTEGRATION TO RESPONSIBILITY: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF INFLUENCE

Which developments do you expect to shape the future of influencer marketing in the coming years?

Looking ahead, the F&B sector sees opportunity in smarter, more integrated influencer strategies, increased use of AI and automation, and the continued rise of short-form video. Authentic, values-driven content remains key. The future points to influence that is more efficient, more accountable and more embedded.



■ ALL BRANDS
 ■ FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING



ABOUT kolsquare

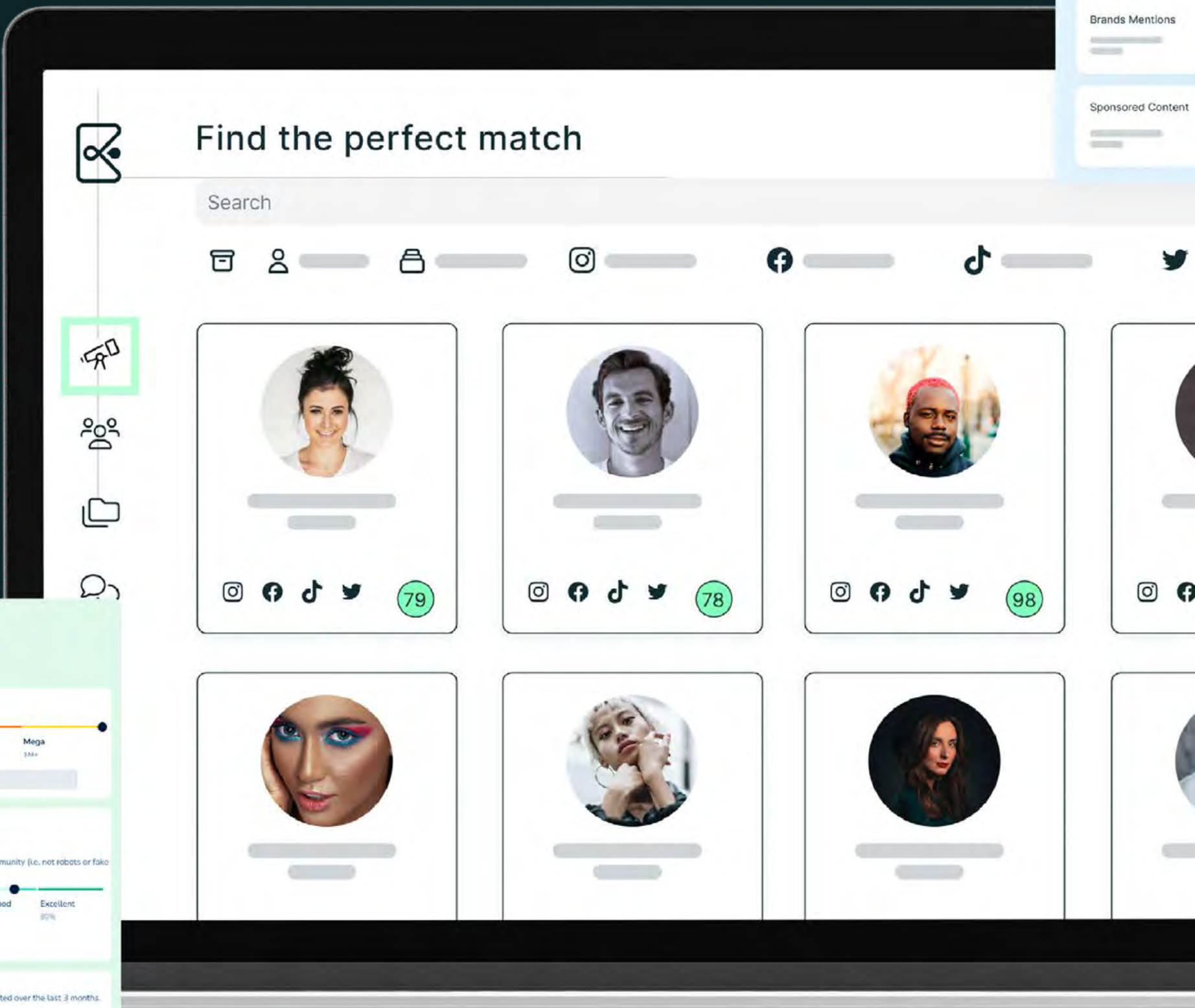
Kolsquare is Europe's leading Influencer Marketing platform, a data-driven solution that allows brands to scale their KOL Marketing strategies and implement authentic partnerships with KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders).

Kolsquare's technology enables marketing professionals to easily identify the best Content Creators' profiles by filtering their content and audience, and to build and manage their campaigns from A to Z, including measuring results and benchmarking performance against competitors.

Kolsquare has built a thriving global community of influencer marketing experts, and offers hundreds of customers (Coca-Cola, Netflix, Sony Music, Publicis, Sézane, Sephora,, Lush, Hermès...) the latest Big Data, AI and Machine Learning technologies to drive inspiring partnerships, tapping into an exhaustive network of KOLs with more than 5,000 followers in 180 countries on Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), Facebook, YouTube and SnapChat.

As a Certified B Corporation, Kolsquare has been pioneering Responsible Influence by championing transparency, ethical practices, and meaningful collaborations to inspire change.

Since October 2024, Kolsquare has become part of the Team.Blue group, one of the largest private tech companies in Europe, and a leading digital enabler for businesses and entrepreneurs across Europe. Team.Blue brings together over 60 successful brands in web hosting, domains, e-commerce, online compliance, lead generation, application solutions, and social media.



Filter by

Profile Instagram Platform

Community size

Nano 1-999 Micro 1K-9.9K Macro 10K-99.9K Mega 100K+

Min Max

Credibility score

Credibility score

It represents the percentage of real people within a KOL's community (i.e. not robots or fake followers)

Bad 0% Mediocre 20% Good 40% Very good 60% Excellent 80%

70% X

Reets

The results will display the profiles with the averages calculated over the last 3 months.

Engagement rate (%)	Min	Max
Estimated cost	Min	Max
Volume of likes	Min	Max
Volume of plays (impressions)	Min	Max
Estimated reach	Min	Max

REQUEST A DEMO →



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