



The Ethnic Communities of New Zealand

**Understanding their media consumption habits,
language preferences and communication choices**

Prepared by  Nielsen | October 2025

This research was commissioned by the
Ministry for Ethnic Communities, New Zealand



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Executive Summary

Media consumption habits

- Majority of respondents from Continental European and Middle East, Latin America and Africa (MELAA) are heavy users of **television (TV)** and the **internet**. **Internet** usage is highest among Asians overall, while Indians show a greater preference for traditional media including **TV, daily newspapers and magazines**
- **Facebook** is the most-used app for Continental European and MELAA, however its dominance is less pronounced among Asians, who show a greater preference for **Instagram** and **WhatsApp**
- News from **mobile apps and websites** is the most trustworthy source for all Ethnic Communities. This is followed by traditional media like **TV, radio, and daily newspapers**

Language and cultural consideration

- While consuming the news in their native language is important to all Ethnic Communities, Asians and MELAA communities find it significantly harder to access than Continental Europeans, who are largely satisfied
- **Social media** is the primary channel for Asians and MELAA to find native-language information, while Asians also prefer to look for information on government websites
- The preferred style varies by community. Continental Europeans favor **direct and factual** communication, Asians prefer an **action-driven tone**, and MELAA communities value **empathetic and inclusive** messaging
- **Timeliness and cultural tailoring** are major concerns for Asians, while MELAA specifically feel that **religious and spiritual beliefs** are often overlooked in government communications

Government communication

- Government communications are perceived as moderately effective. Key barriers are language issues and a **lack of cultural sensitivity**, particularly for Asian and MELAA communities
- **Timeliness and regular updates** across multiple channels are the most important factors for building trust during a crisis
- **Natural disasters and public health emergencies** are the top two situations where all communities seek government information, however Continental European communities also place a high priority on receiving information about **national security threats**
- **TV** is a highly rated choice for receiving critical information across all Ethnic Communities. However, preferences for other channels vary; Asians and MELAA also favour **social media**, while Continental Europeans show a stronger preference for **official government websites**.



Research Design

Sample Profile

Background and objective

The Ministry for Ethnic Communities sought to:

- Enhance their **digital engagement** and,
- Improve government **outreach** to Ethnic Communities across New Zealand

The core objective of the study aimed to understand how Ethnic Communities in New Zealand **consume media**, which sources they **trust**, their **language preferences**, and how the government can **effectively communicate** with them, particularly in emergencies.

With this in mind, the research explored:



Media consumption habits
Assess the current usage, preferences and expressed trust levels of various media platforms among Ethnic Communities



Communications
Assess how Ethnic Communities currently perceive the effectiveness and cultural adequacy of government communications



Language and cultural considerations
Establish the linguistic diversity of the audience and their needs for accessing information



Recommendations
Identify the most effective channels and formats for reaching Ethnic Communities and recommendations for government agencies

Research approach

To provide an insightful coverage a multi-mode solution is considered to obtain market coverage, while also adding a layer of nuanced understanding and insight:

Syndicated

Using **Consumer and Media Insights (CMI)** which is a comprehensive view of the New Zealand population across all areas of daily life: demographics, attitudes, activities, media usage, and product purchases.

Sample base n=10,000

Quantitative

Bespoke quantitative market-based study covering Asian, Continental European, Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African, audiences in New Zealand to address topics not already covered through in CMI

Sample base n=573

Qualitative

Moderated in-depth interviews were conducted to uncover the nuanced areas of the project which might not be apparent from the quantitative data streams

Sample base n=6

Research design - quantitative

The sample that was recruited and collected by Nielsen sought to provide more detail around the nature of communications, needs and touchpoints for the Ethnic Community groups in New Zealand.



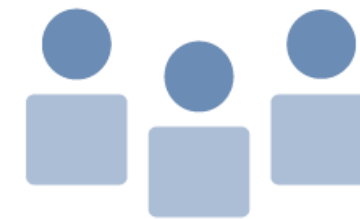
Survey design

- Nielsen conducted a **10–12-minute online** survey targeting **n=573**
- The questionnaire was developed in collaboration with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, to cover ethnic media, communication preferences, community touchpoints, perceptions of government, needs.



Respondents

- Nielsen surveyed respondents using a link which was shared with panel via our trusted third-party sample providers, re-contacted respondents from the last two years of Consumer and Media Insights respondents.



Audience

- Sample was collected amongst those who are 18+ in New Zealand
- Estimated feasible audience: Asian = 76%, Continental European = 10%, Middle Eastern, Latin American or African (MELAA) 14%
- The audience was collected through the multi-modal approach and weighted back to the New Zealand Ethnic Community population using reference from Ministry for Ethnic Communities.

Research design and sample profile - qualitative

N=6 online interviews were conducted from 16-22 July 2025, across the following dimensions:

IDI	GENDER	AGE	ETHNICITY	BIRTH PLACE	TRANSLATING FOR
1	Female	34 years	Latin American	Peru	Mother
2	Male	25 years	Indian	New Zealand	Mother, Grandparent
3	Non-binary	35 years	Italian	Italy	Friend
4	Male	22 years	French	France	Partner
5	Female	42 years	African	Africa	Daughter
6	Male	25 years	Chinese	New Zealand	Parents, Uncle and Aunty



All Residents:

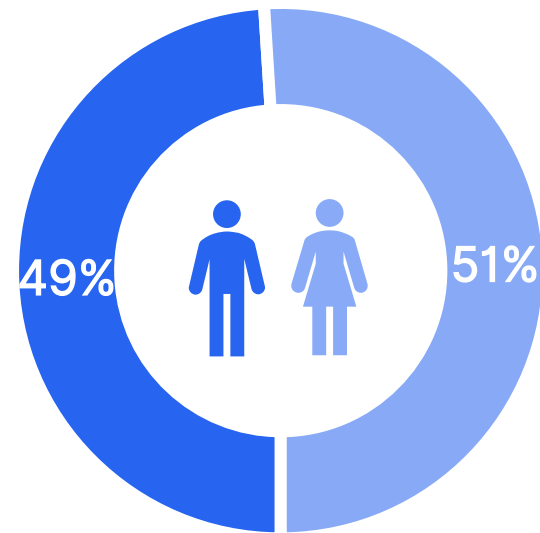
- Live in metropolitan and regional areas of New Zealand
- Mix of:
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Ethnicities
- English speakers from Non-English speaking backgrounds
 - Residents speak English but have access to Non-English speakers in their household, family, friendship groups or close community, that they can speak on behalf of with respect to communication needs and preferences

Each interview was conducted via Zoom for 20 mins in duration. Residents were paid a monetary incentive for their time.

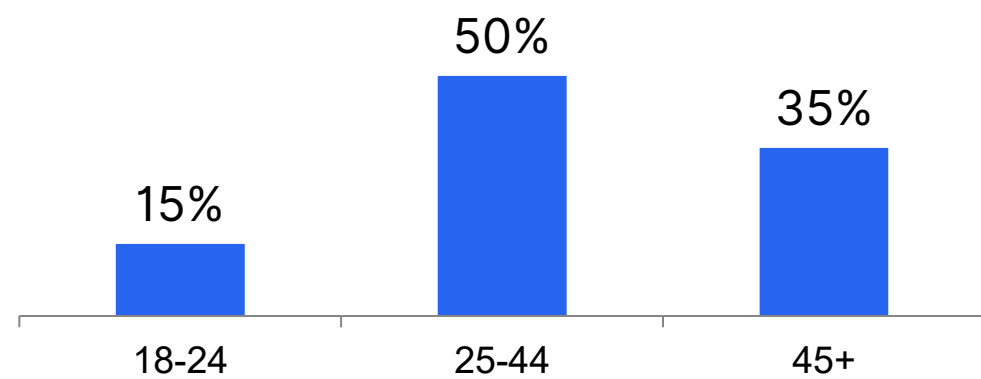
Respondent profile – quantitative

Gender, Age and Location profiles.

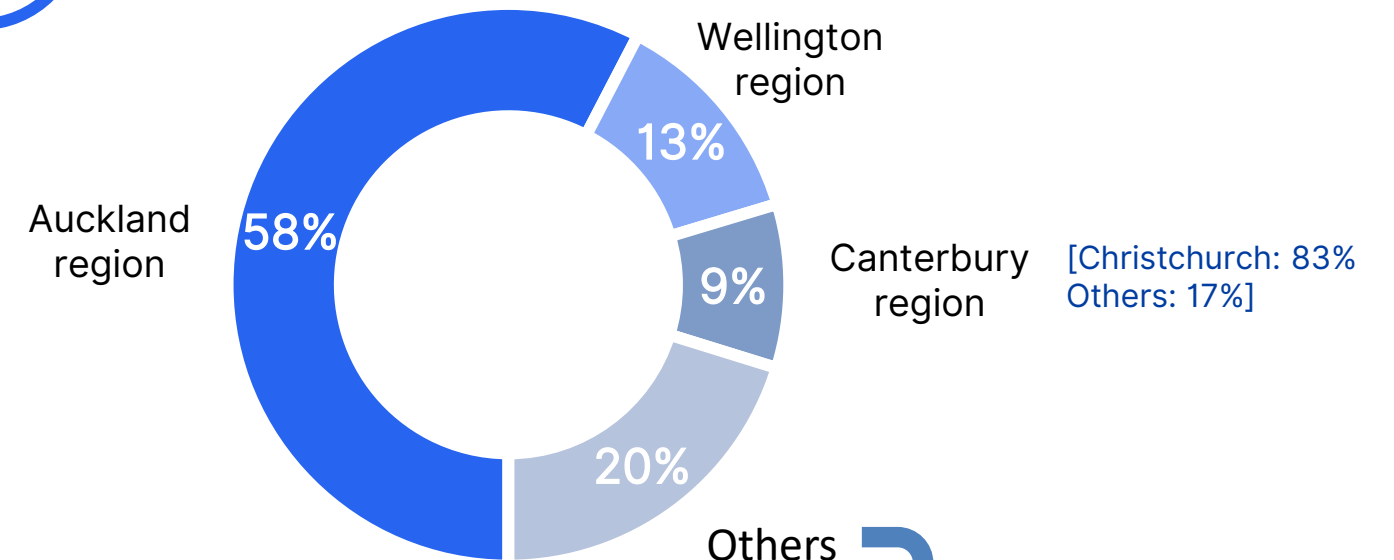
Gender



Age



Location



Others

Waikato region	5%
Bay Of Plenty region	4%
Northland region	3%
Otago region	4%
Southland region	1%
Taranaki region	2%
Manawatū-Whanganui region	1%
Nelson region	1%
Marlborough region	1%
Hawke's Bay, Gisborne, West Coast region	1%

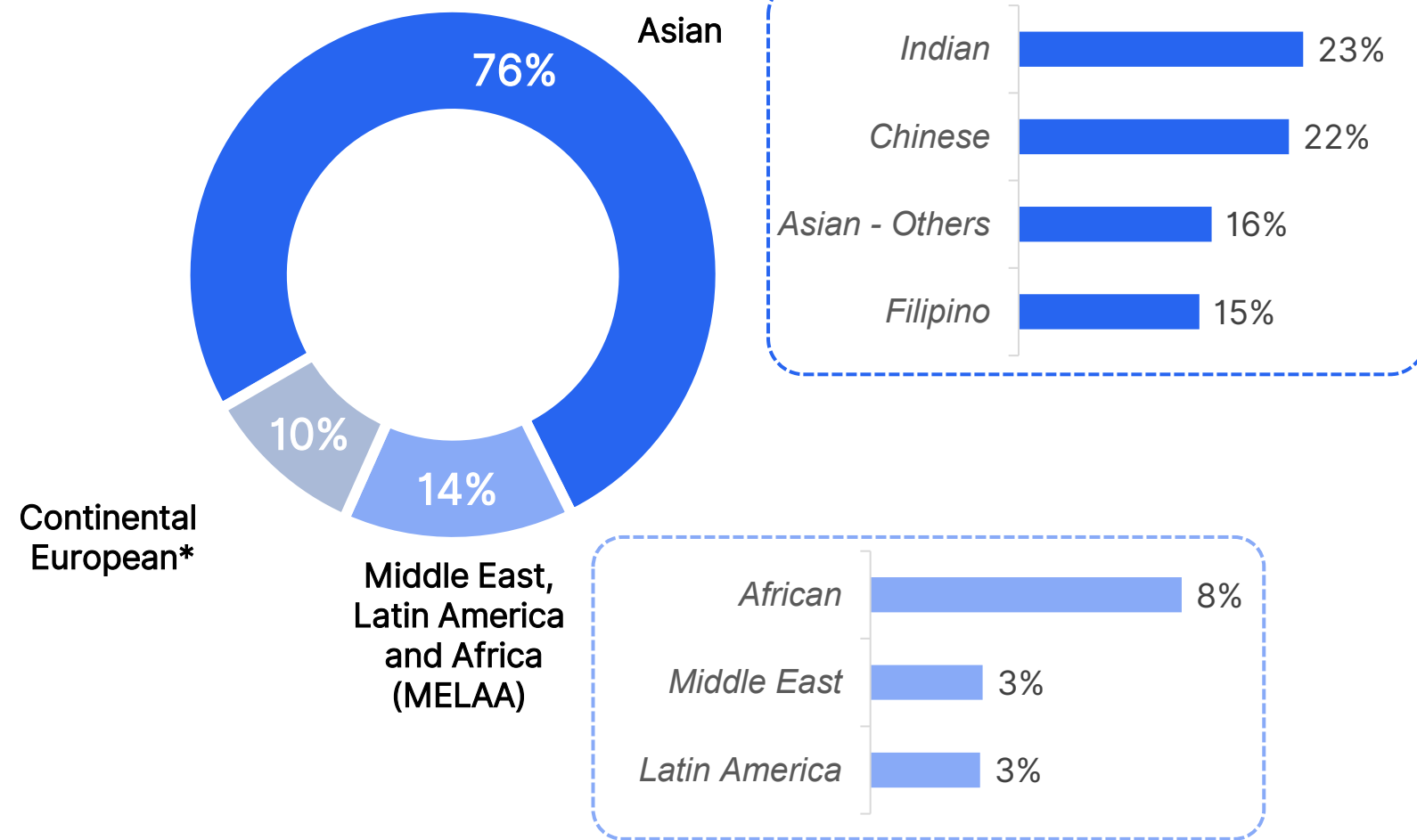
QAge: What is your age?
 QGender: Which gender do you most closely identify with?
 Qlocation: Where do you live?
 Base n: 573

Respondent profile – quantitative

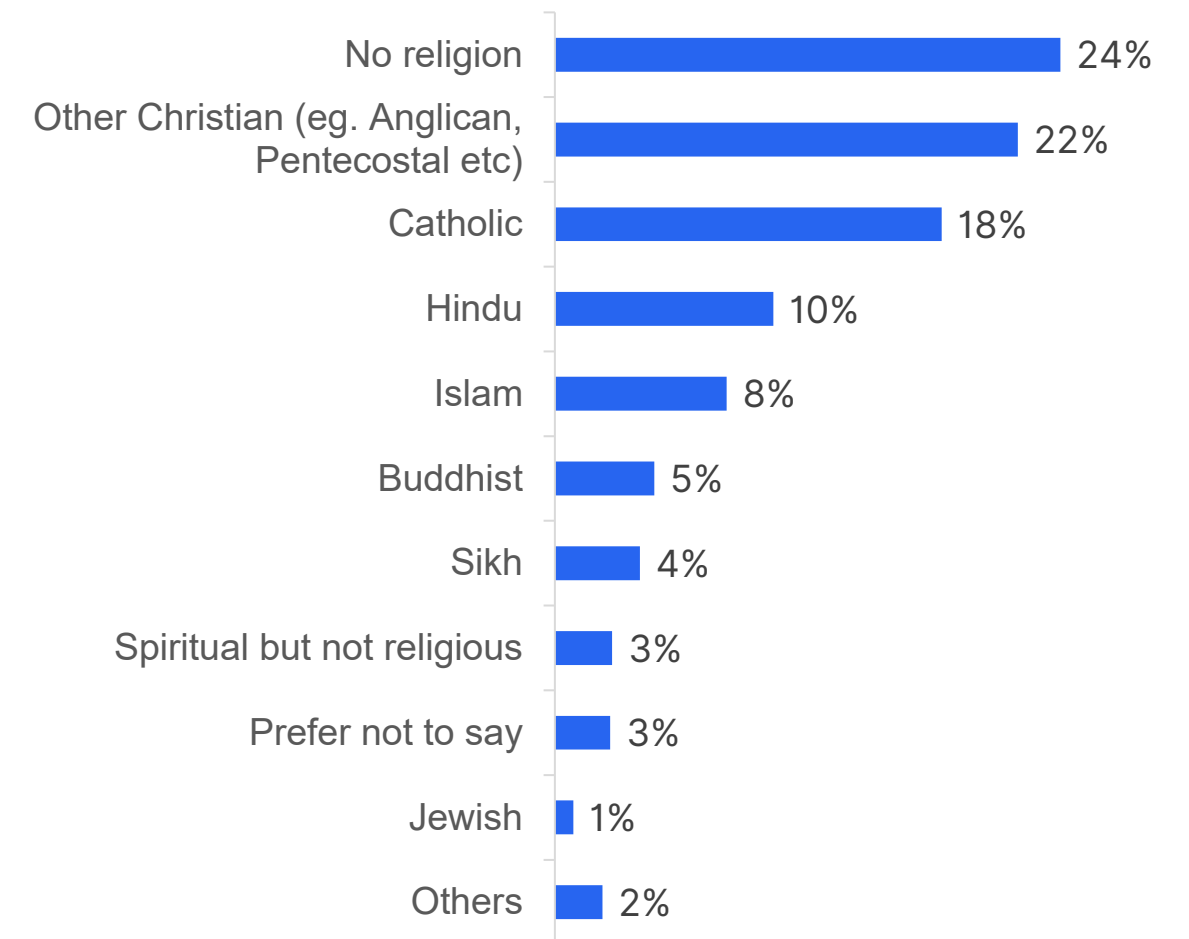
Ethnicity Communities and religious profiles.



Ethnicity



Religion



Note: *Continental European ethnicity break up not included in the questionnaire

Qethnicity: Which ethnic community do you identify yourself with?
 Qreligion: What is your faith or religion?
 Base n: 573

Respondent profile – quantitative

Migration, occupation and income profiles.

Migration

I was born overseas and migrated to New Zealand



12%

I was born in New Zealand, but at least one of my parents migrated here

3%

My family has lived in New Zealand for multiple generations

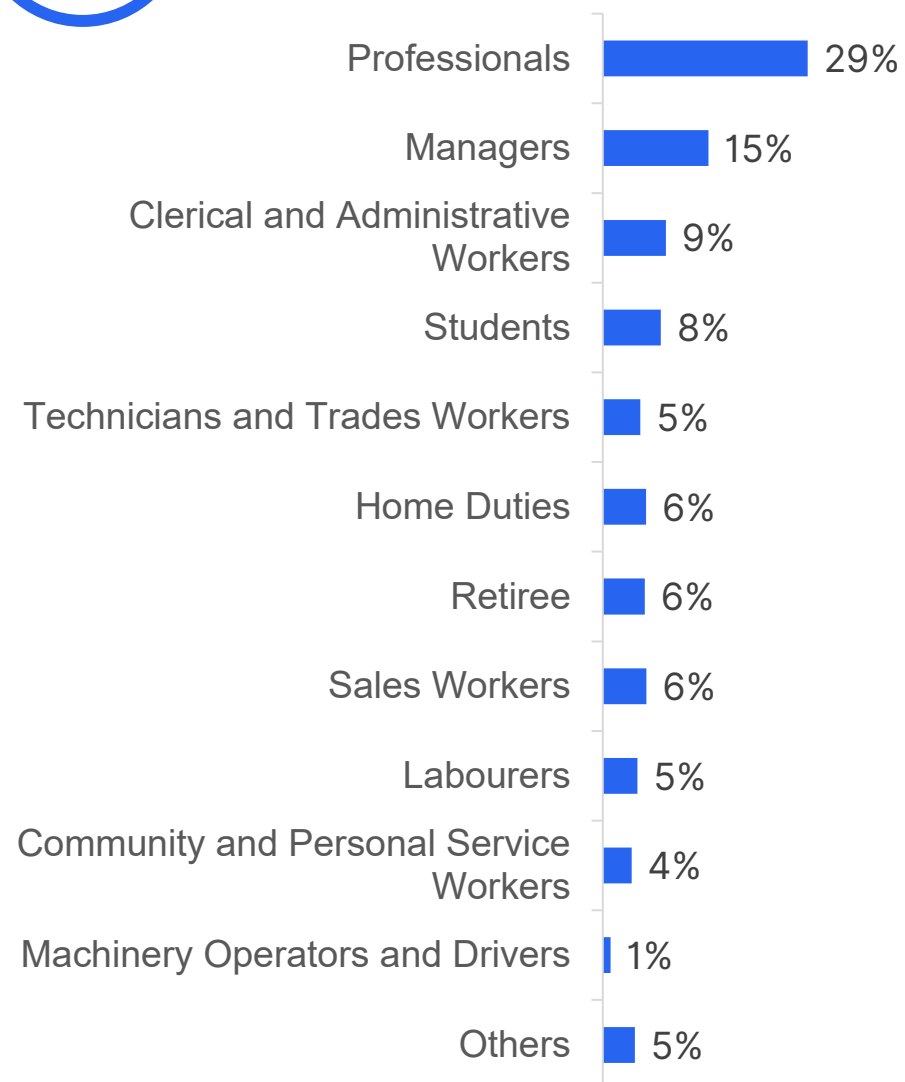
3%

Others – mainly student visa or work visa

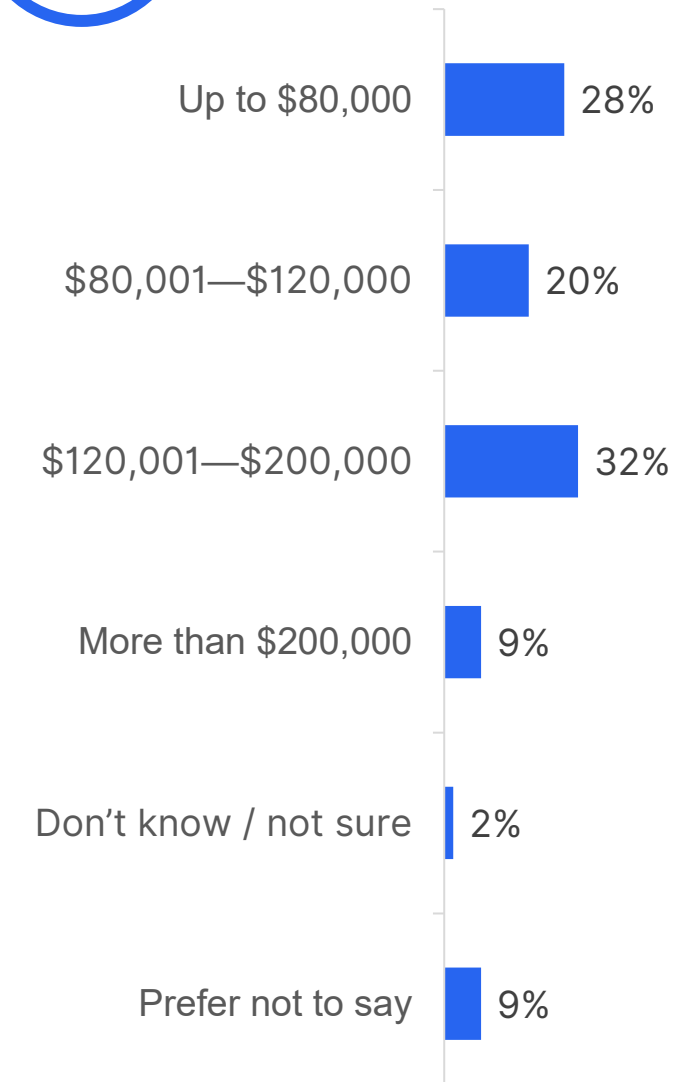
1%

I came to New Zealand as a refugee or through a humanitarian visa

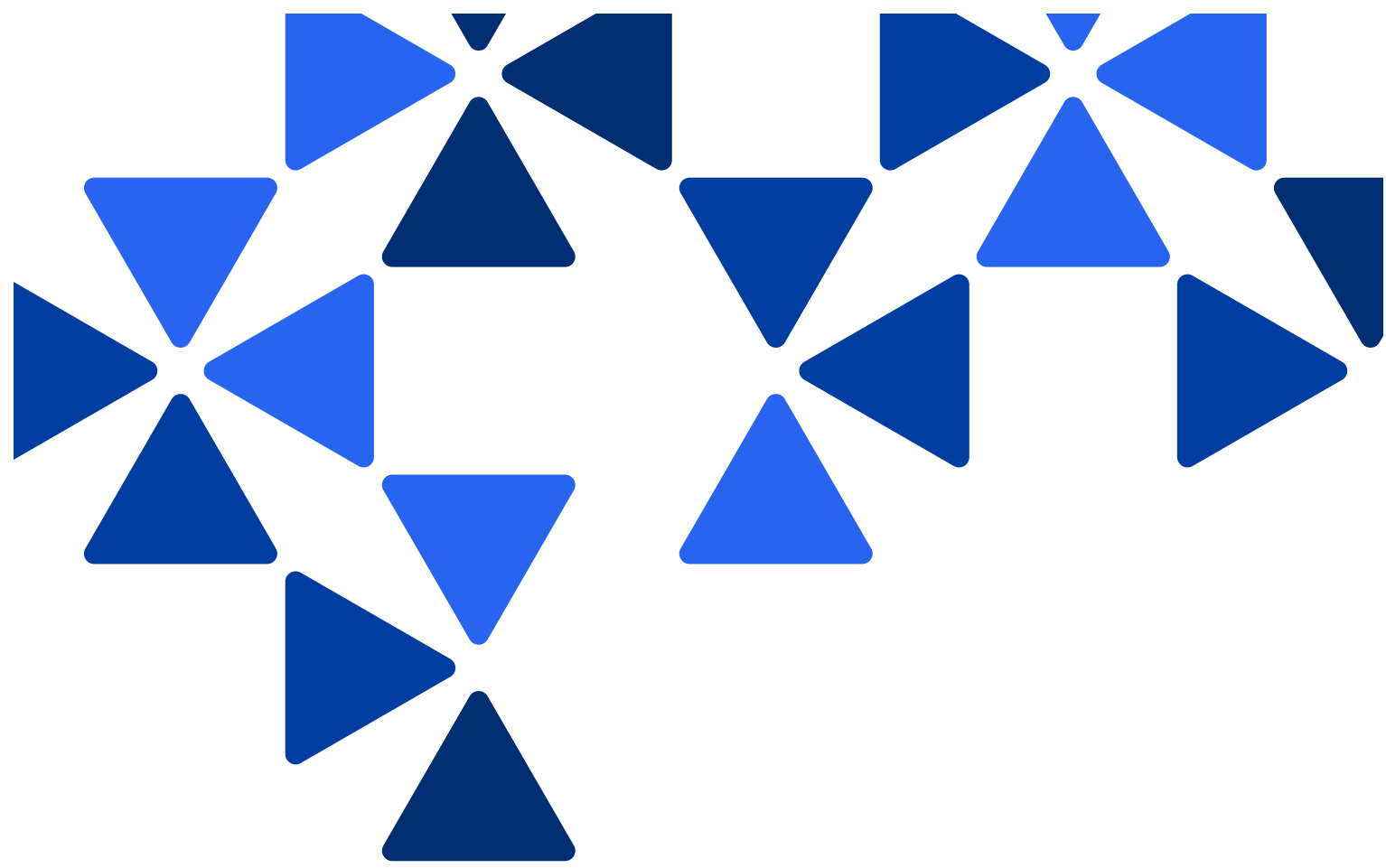
Occupation



Income



QMigration: Which of the following best describes your or your family's migration journey to New Zealand?
 QIncome: What is your total household annual income before taxes? Consider all income earners in household.
 QOccupation: Which of the following best describes your occupation?
 Base n: 573

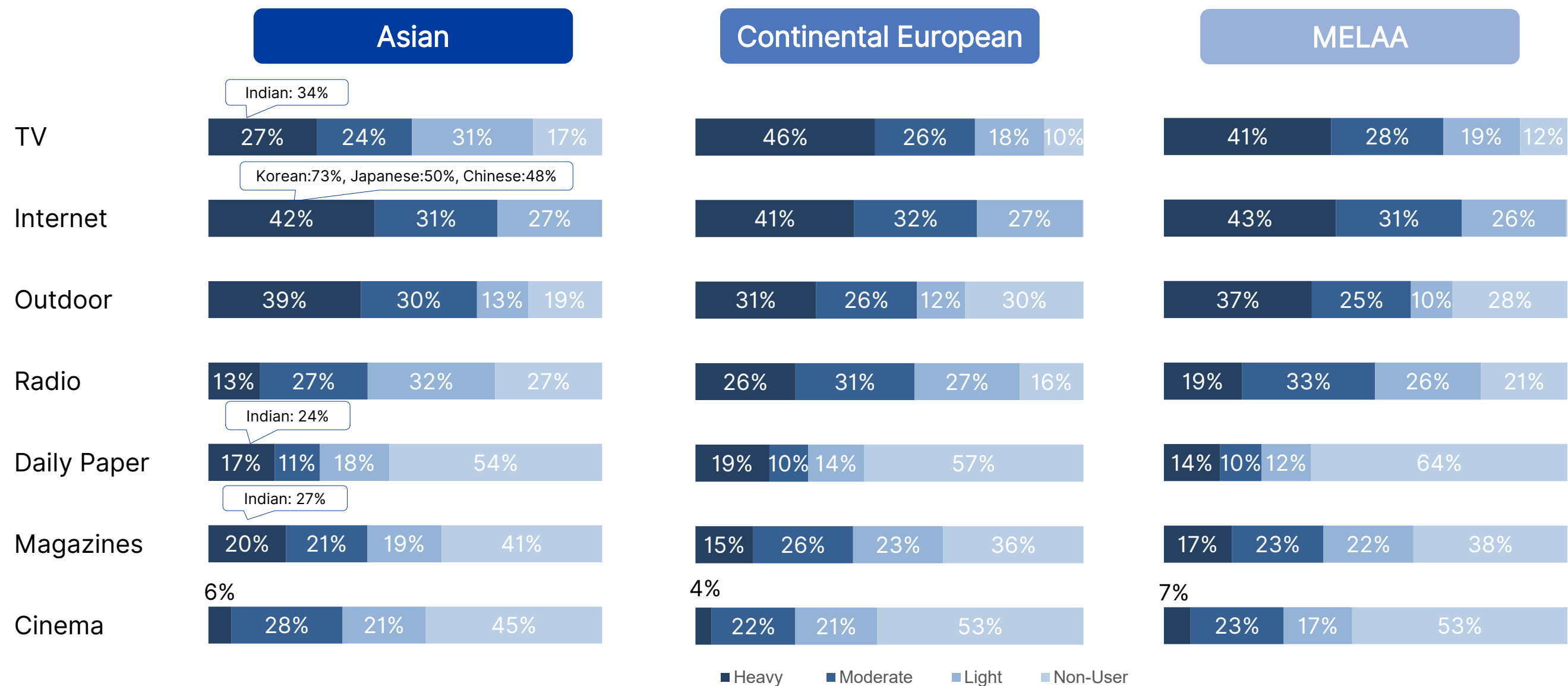


Media Consumption Habits

More than two thirds of Continental European and MELAA communities are heavy users of television and internet

Internet usage leads in media consumption for Asians, followed by outdoor media. Indians show a greater preference for traditional media, such as TV, daily newspapers, and magazines. Across Ethnic Community groups, the highest proportion of people are not engaged with daily newspapers, magazines and cinema.

Consumption of media - By Ethnicity



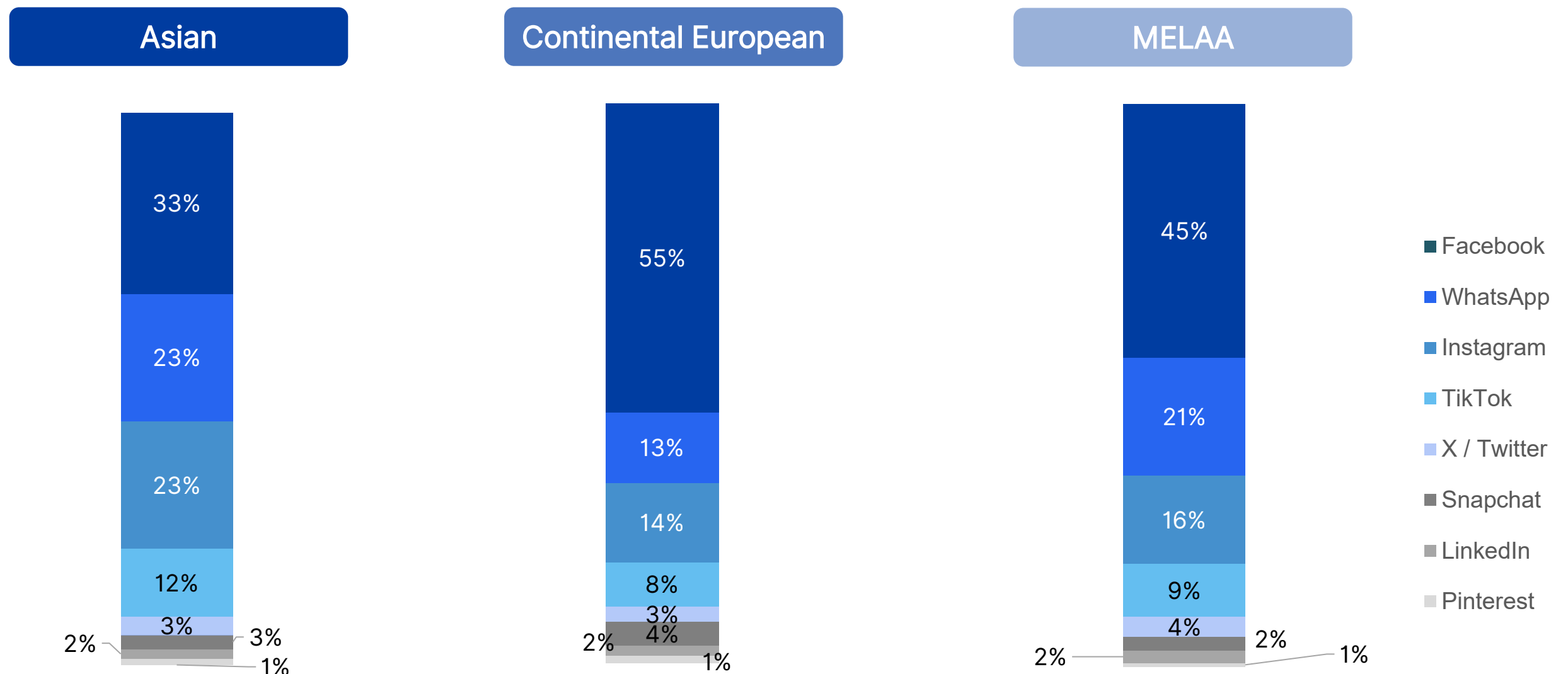
TV (H: 23 hrs+, M: 14-23 hrs, L: up to 14 hrs), Daily Paper (H: 4+ p/w, M: 2/3 p/w, L: 1 p/w), Magazines (H: 4+, M: 2-3, L: 1), Radio (H: 20 hrs+, M: 7-20 hrs, L: up to 7hrs), Internet (H: 35 hrs+ p/w, M: 14-35 hrs p/w, L: up to 14 hrs p/w), Cinema (H: 5+ L6M, M: 2-4 P6M, L: 1 L6M), Outdoor (H/M/L based on opportunity to see ads due to commuting, travel and retail behaviours)

Source: Nielsen CMI Q1 23 - Q4 24 : CMI Nielsen NZ

Facebook is the most often used app for Continental European and MELAA, followed by WhatsApp and Instagram

Among Asians, Facebook is the most frequently used application, although its dominance is not as pronounced as it is with the other two groups. Instagram and WhatsApp are used more by Asians than by their counterparts from Continental Europe and MELAA. Notably, a significant 57% of Koreans report that Instagram is the app they most often use.

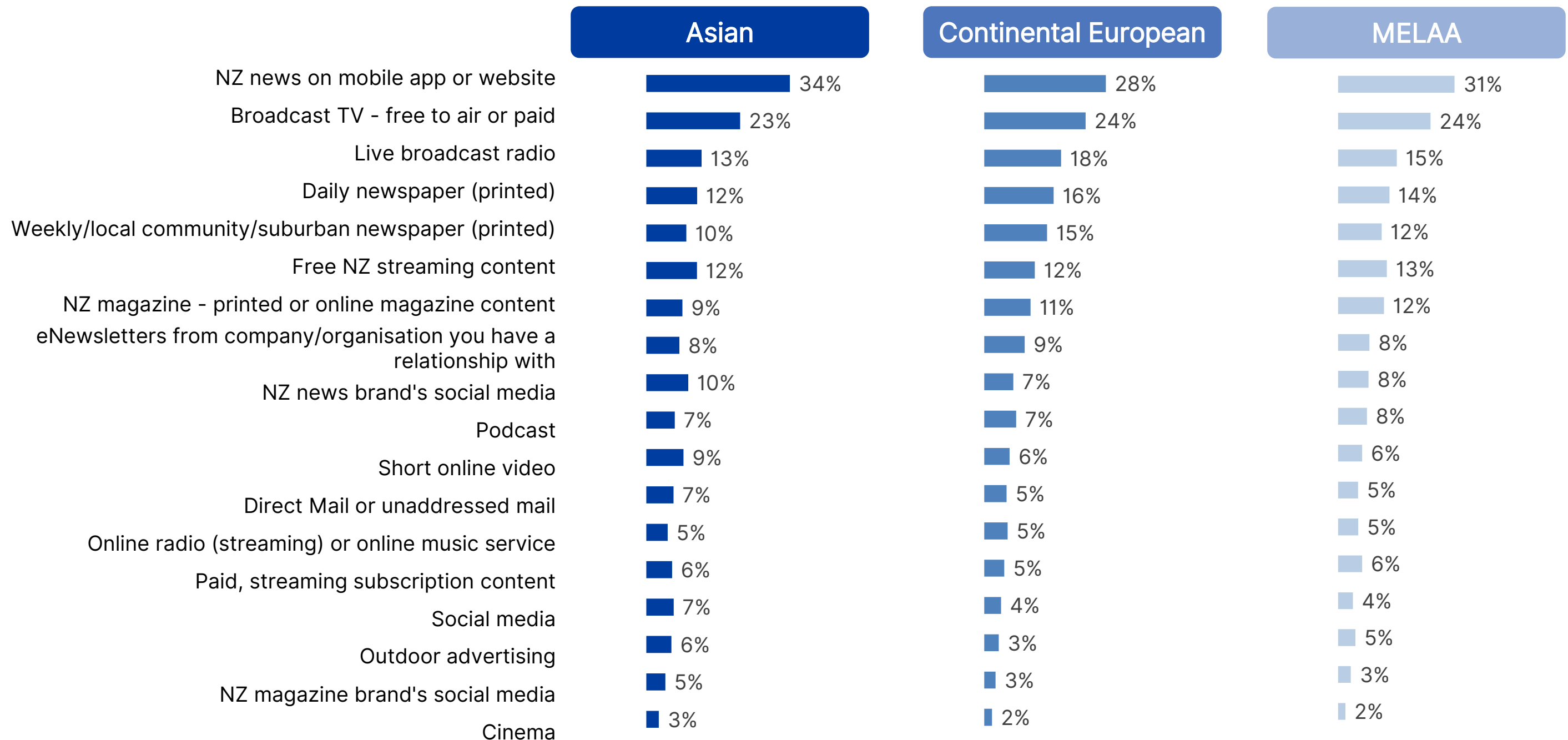
Most often used app - By Ethnicity



News on mobile apps or websites are the most trustworthy source for finding information across ethnicities

App/website is followed by traditional media like TV, Radio and Daily newspaper. The order of preference largely remains the same across the three Ethnic Community groups.

Trustworthy sources for finding information By Ethnicity



Context of media habits and touchpoints

While Ethnic Communities use a range of sources for their news and information, including social media, text messages, email, radio and letters in the post, there are some nuances around how and why they use these:

Social media and **text messages** are the most commonly used channels for news and information.

Letters and **emails** are highly valued because they allow time for careful translation, can be referred to multiple times and are seen as more trustworthy and formal than social media.

Scams are an area of concern, and many are taking measures to protect those they translate for:

- **Monitoring** social media feeds

“They struggle with trying to discern what is legitimate and fake ads with ulterior motives on social media. I’ll tell them that doesn’t look right. I try to look over their shoulder, but it’s difficult at their age to figure these things out.” (Male, 25, Chinese)

- **Avoiding** certain channels (e.g. phone calls in their native language that do not seem legitimate)

Radio and **podcasts** are less popular by comparison, as some do not watch free-to-air TV at all. Indeed, some **actively avoid** certain types of media (e.g. Italian TV or print media) to avoid potential exposure to negative content.

Preferred media channels listed in order of most to least often mentioned by Residents:



Social media and messenger services: Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, X, Reddit



Text messages: Far-reaching, especially important in emergencies



Emails: Direct, secure, more legitimate than mass communication



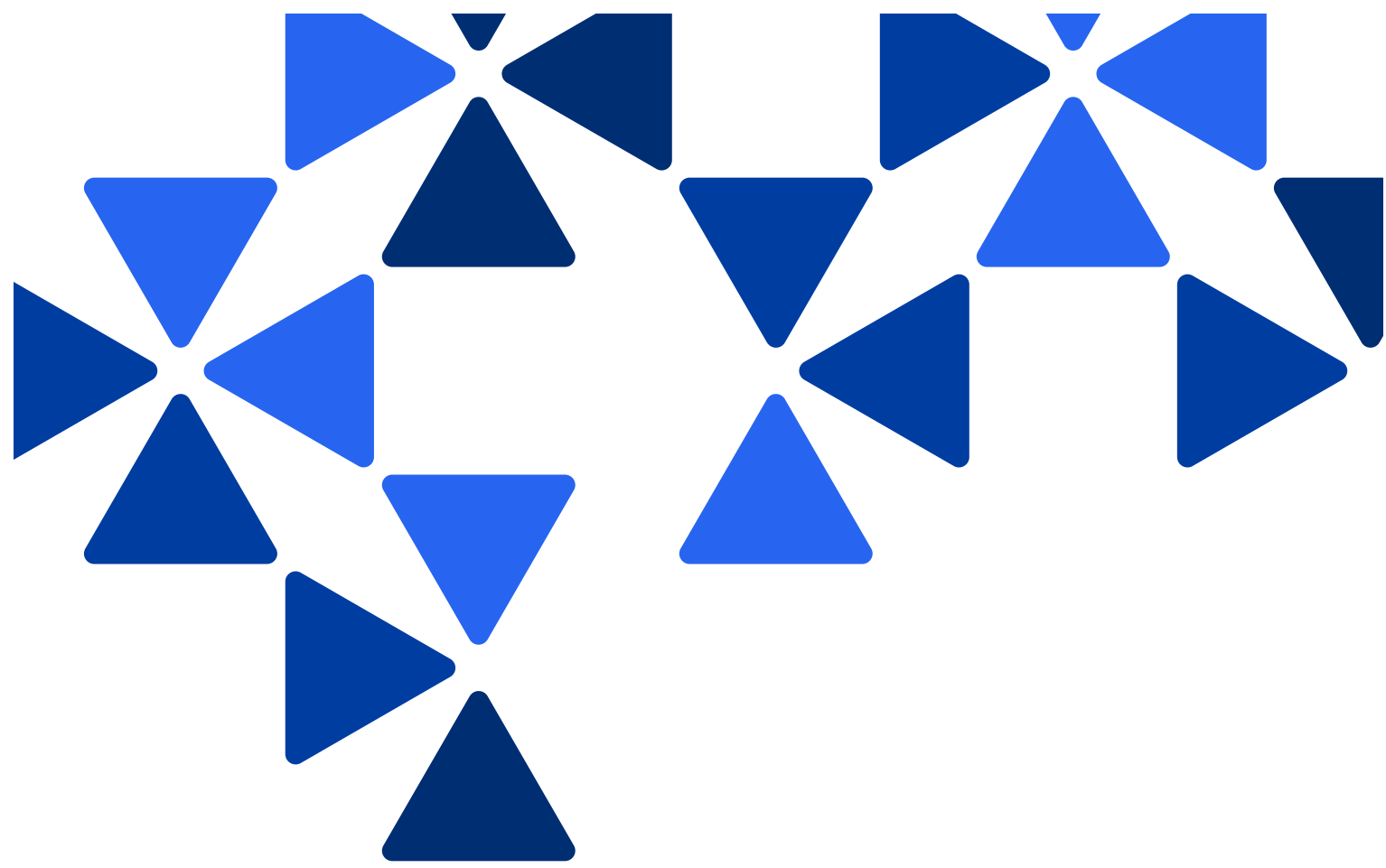
Direct mail: Letters in the post create an impression of legitimacy and importance



Radio: Less commonly used, although still a source of news for some



Podcasts: Less commonly used, may be a potential avenue for news and information



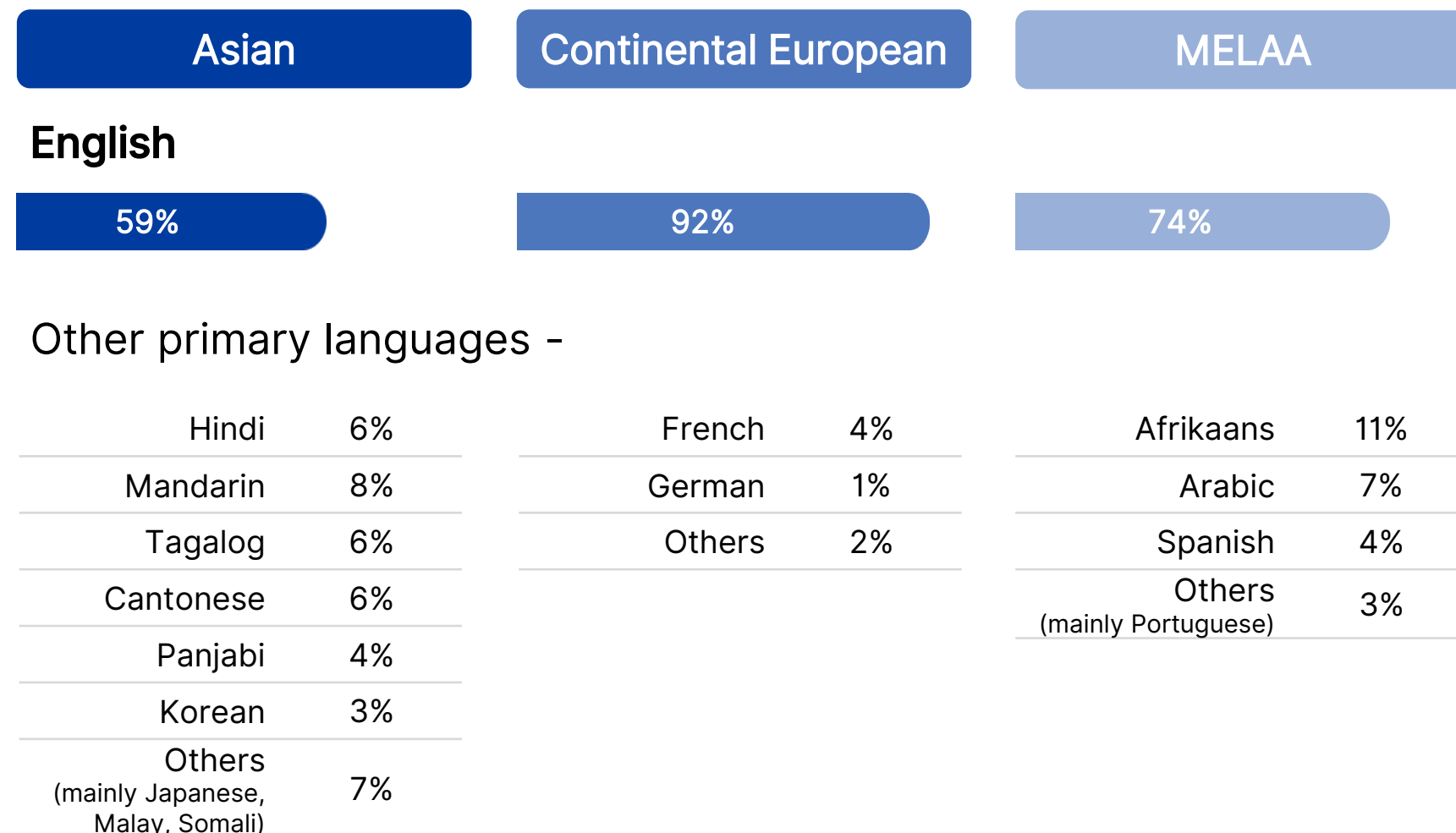
Language and Cultural Considerations

Asians prefer to consume news and information in their respective native languages rather than in English

While three in four MELAA have a preference for consuming content in English, many others still favour their native languages.

Primary language for news and information consumption

By Ethnicity

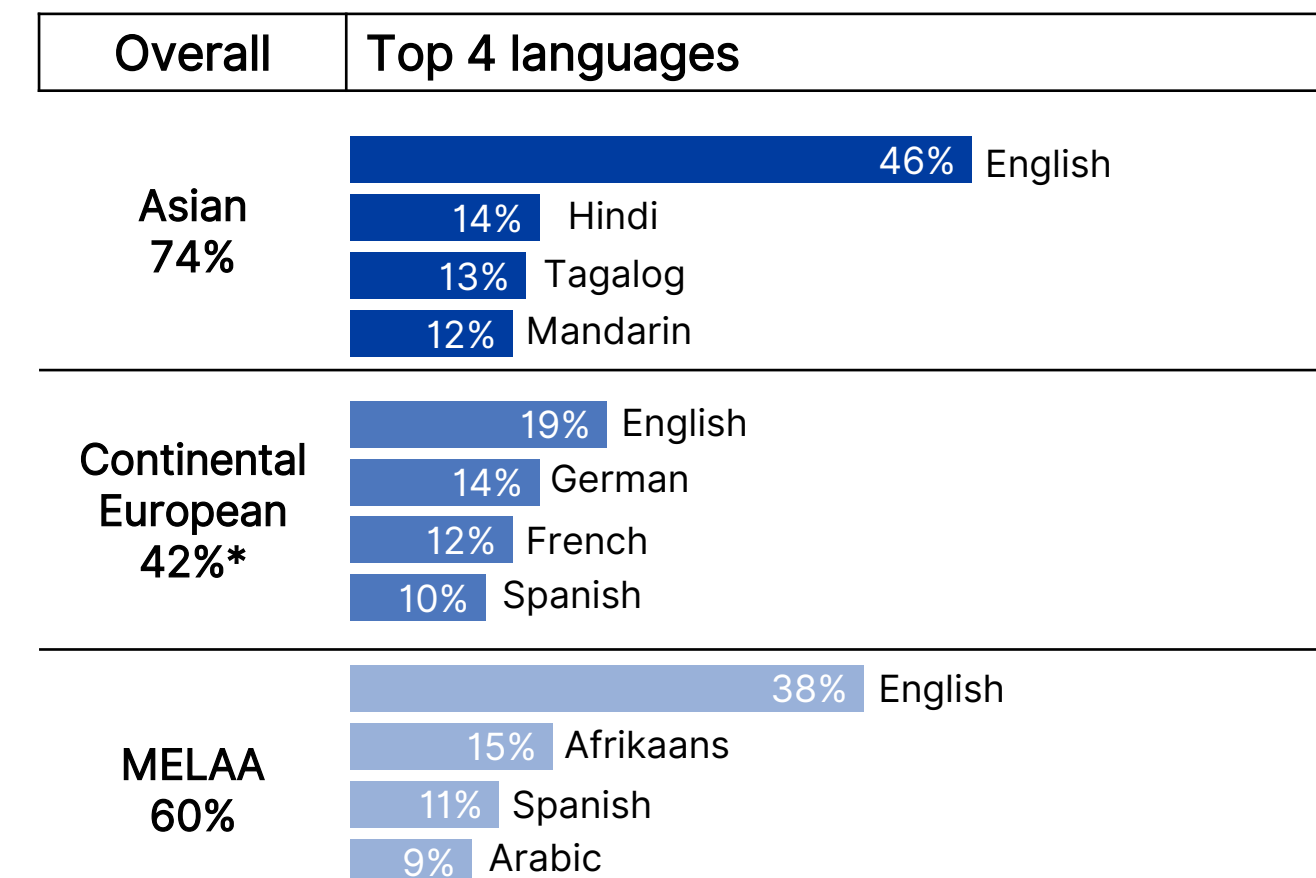


QLP1: What is your primary language for consuming news and information? Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)
 QLP2: Do you regularly consume news or information in languages other than your primary language? Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)
 QLP3: Which other languages do you use for consuming news/information? Base n: 395 (Asian: 323, Continental European: 24, MELAA: 48)

Overall, **69%** of Ethnic Communities consume news or information in languages other than their primary language



Secondary language for news and information consumption - By Ethnicity



*Low base < 30 use with caution

Communication: Language

When communicating in English, it should be basic to make it easier for whom it's a second language and for those translating for relatives and friends, as information that is converted into different languages is often difficult to find.

What Works

- **Basic English (Plain English):** Use simple English, slow speech and enunciate clearly to aid understanding without being condescending
- **Colloquial translation over literal translation:** Explain concepts in a culturally familiar way
- **Native language options:** Provide information in multiple languages (e.g. Hindi, Spanish, Chinese) especially for key services like healthcare, voting and emergencies

The more difficult part is interpreting words we don't use in the every day. The easiest message you can send is a simple message with simple words. (Female, 42, African)

One thing that makes a huge difference is trying to translate things not in a one-to-one translation but finding ways to explain it that makes sense with the colloquialisms of that language. In a dental context, there's no specific word for root canal in Hindi. Finding slang or colloquial terms in the root language that translates the essence of what you're trying to say if there's no direct translation. (Male, 25, Indian)

Something simple, something easy to read in terms of the size of the text and laid out in layman's terms. (Male 25, Chinese)

We have a lot of ways of saying things in Italian, which I can't really translate word by word, so it's finding more colourful ways of saying things without having no sense at all. (Non-binary, 35, Italian)

What Doesn't Work

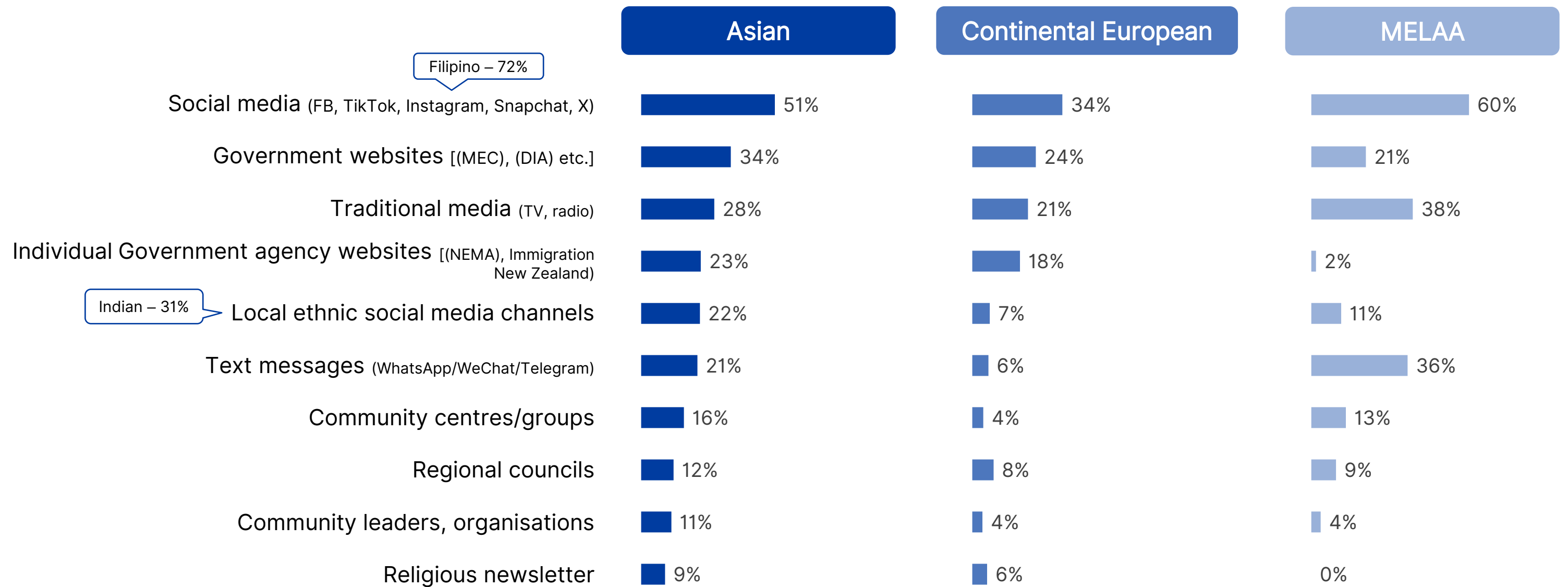
- **Untranslatable words:** Some English words are difficult to translate, highlighting the need for basic English
- **Literal translations** that don't convey meaning properly due to a lack of equivalent words
- **Untranslatable phrases (idioms):** Some English phrases don't make sense in other languages
- **English-only communication** can leave older generations dependent and confused
- **Untranslated government documents** particularly during COVID where alert level changes were not understood

Asian and MELAA communities use social media most often to find information in their native languages

Traditional media is also a preferred source for Asians and MELAA, while Asians also look for information in government websites.

Sources to find government information in languages other than English

By Ethnicity



QLP5: Where do you typically go to find government information in languages other than English?
Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Others – Asian: 7%, Continental Europe: 30%, MELAA: 9%

Native language

Given the valuable nature of the social touchpoints, the role of messaging in native languages should do more than translate words, it should be clearly structured to reflect cultural understanding to feel relevant and trustworthy.

Many of the same rules apply to native language messaging as with communicating in English, with some minor adjustments:

- Use **everyday vocabulary** for clarity, simplicity and impact
- **Avoid literal translations** and convey intended meaning using culturally appropriate language (e.g. using colloquial terms in the native language if a direct translation does not exist)
- Apply **elements of native culture** to make it easier to absorb (e.g. Italian friendliness, passion)
- A **warm, empathetic** and **respectful** tone is preferred across communities and the formality level should match the context
- Be mindful that **tone** and **phrasing** in one language may not translate well (e.g. Humour in English may sound condescending in another language)
- **Infographics** and simple visuals are universally helpful across languages
- **Pre-educate communities** about the types of alerts they might receive (e.g. weather alerts) to reduce fear or confusion
- Deliver the message via **trusted media sources** (e.g. WhatsApp) to improve reception and sharing
- Native language communications reduce dependency on family members, giving the recipient more **independence** and **confidence** in understanding and acting on the message

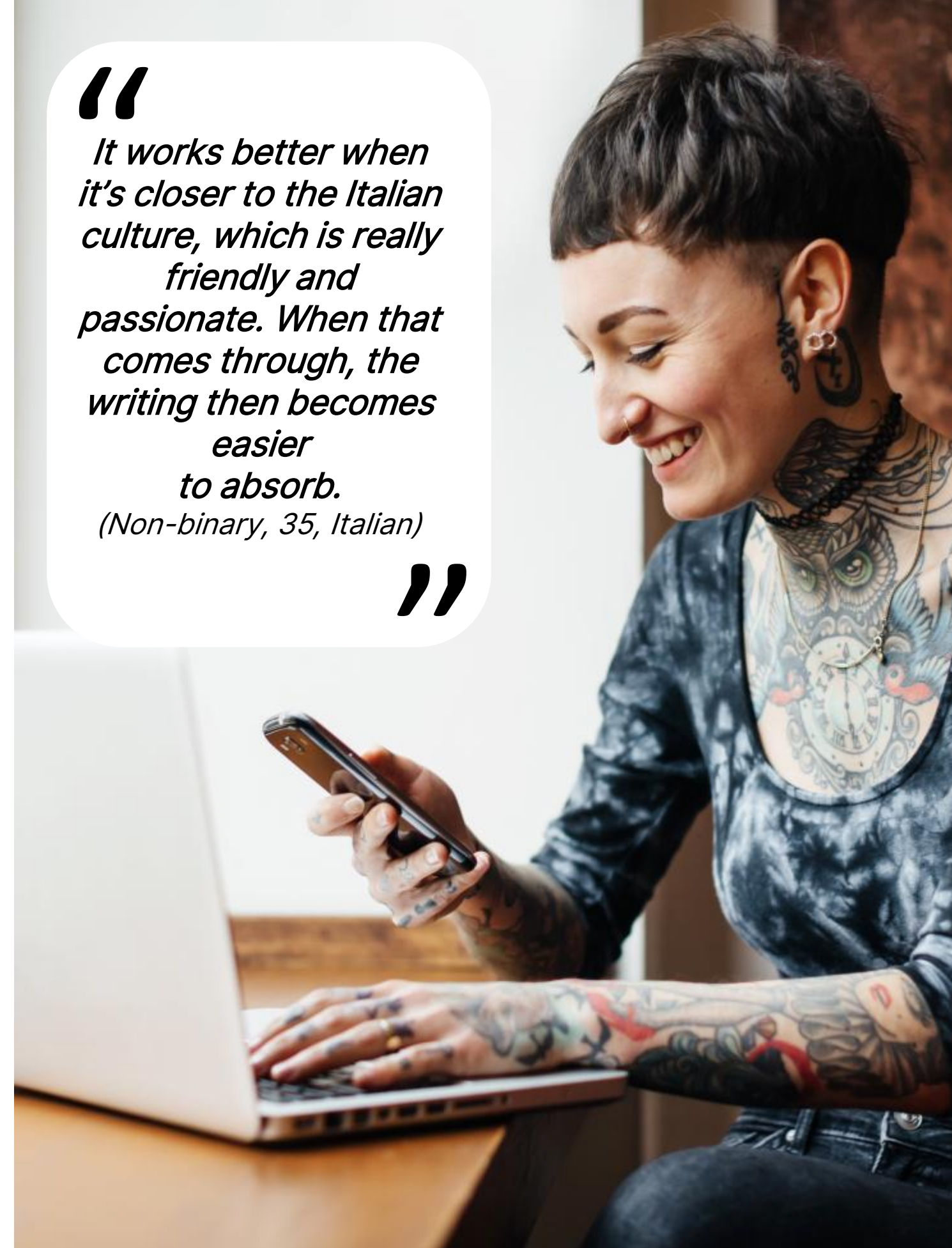
Source: Nielsen Qualitative Interviews n=6, 16-22 July, 2025

“

It works better when it's closer to the Italian culture, which is really friendly and passionate. When that comes through, the writing then becomes easier to absorb.

(Non-binary, 35, Italian)

”

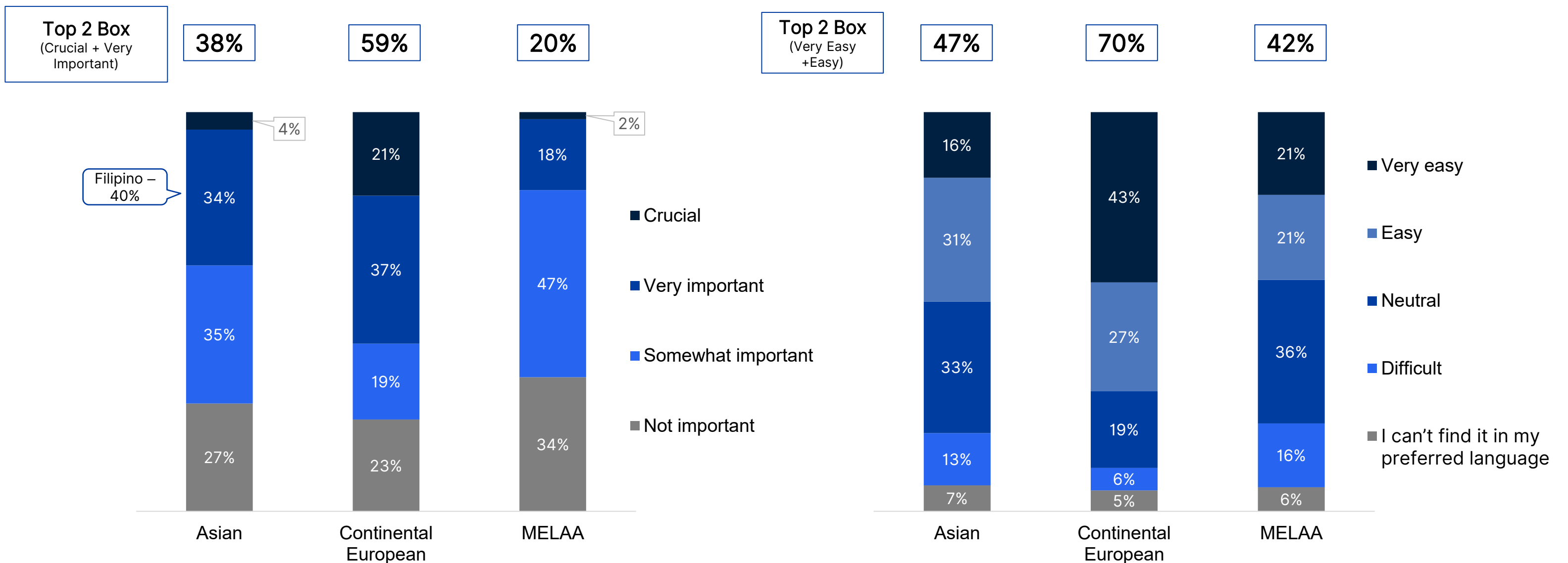


Continental European and Asian ethnic groups deem it important to get government information in their native language

Continental European communities deem their native language requirements as critical and appear to have this need well met, with 70% finding it easy to locate government information in their preferred native language. For Asian and MELAA Ethnic Communities, accessibility appears harder by comparison.

Importance of finding government information in native language - By Ethnicity

Accessibility of finding government information in native language - By Ethnicity

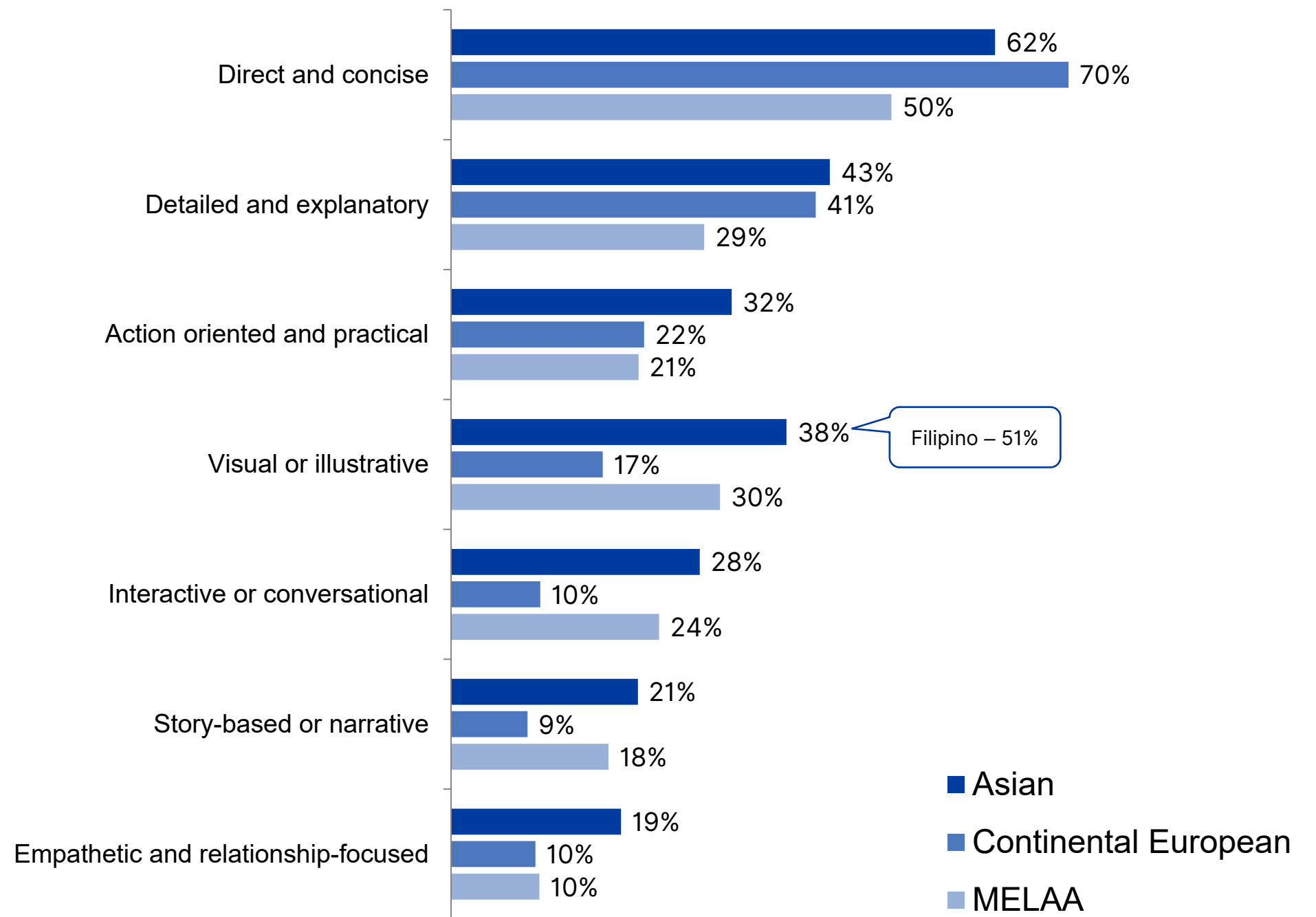


QLP4: On a scale of 1 to 5, how important it is for you to access government information in your native language?
 QLP6: How easy is it for you to find government information in your preferred language(s)?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Preferred communication style for receiving government information

Three quarters of Continental Europeans prefer direct and concise style of communication

Asians and MELAA also favour communication styles that are detailed and explanatory and visual or illustrative (the latter being higher among Filipinos).



Communication: Style

Communication style should be simple, direct and factual.

What Works



What Doesn't Work

- **Simple:** Offer simple, straightforward information to clarify the message and reduce the potential for confusion
- **Direct:** Clear, concise information that gets straight to the point: Explain the subject and why the communication is being sent
- **Factual:** Information based on fact, not emotion

- **Wordy content:** Long, wordy content is often ignored as it is too difficult to understand
- **Small text:** Dense information in small text is difficult to see and absorb, especially for the older generation
- **Complex information:** Avoid complex or complicated communication
- **Metaphors:** Can create confusion when not familiar to the person's native culture
- **Emotive language:** Keep it unemotional

I'm quite instructional with the information, not emotional. To the point and direct, because I'm just relaying information to my mother. It's nothing personal to me so there's no feelings that would accompany what I'm translating, especially if it's from the government. (Female, 34, Latin American)

Explain it well so we know what is happening next. Explain what is the subject of the mail. Even if it takes more words to explain it, the more it is explained, the more it's easily understandable for us. (Male, 22, French)

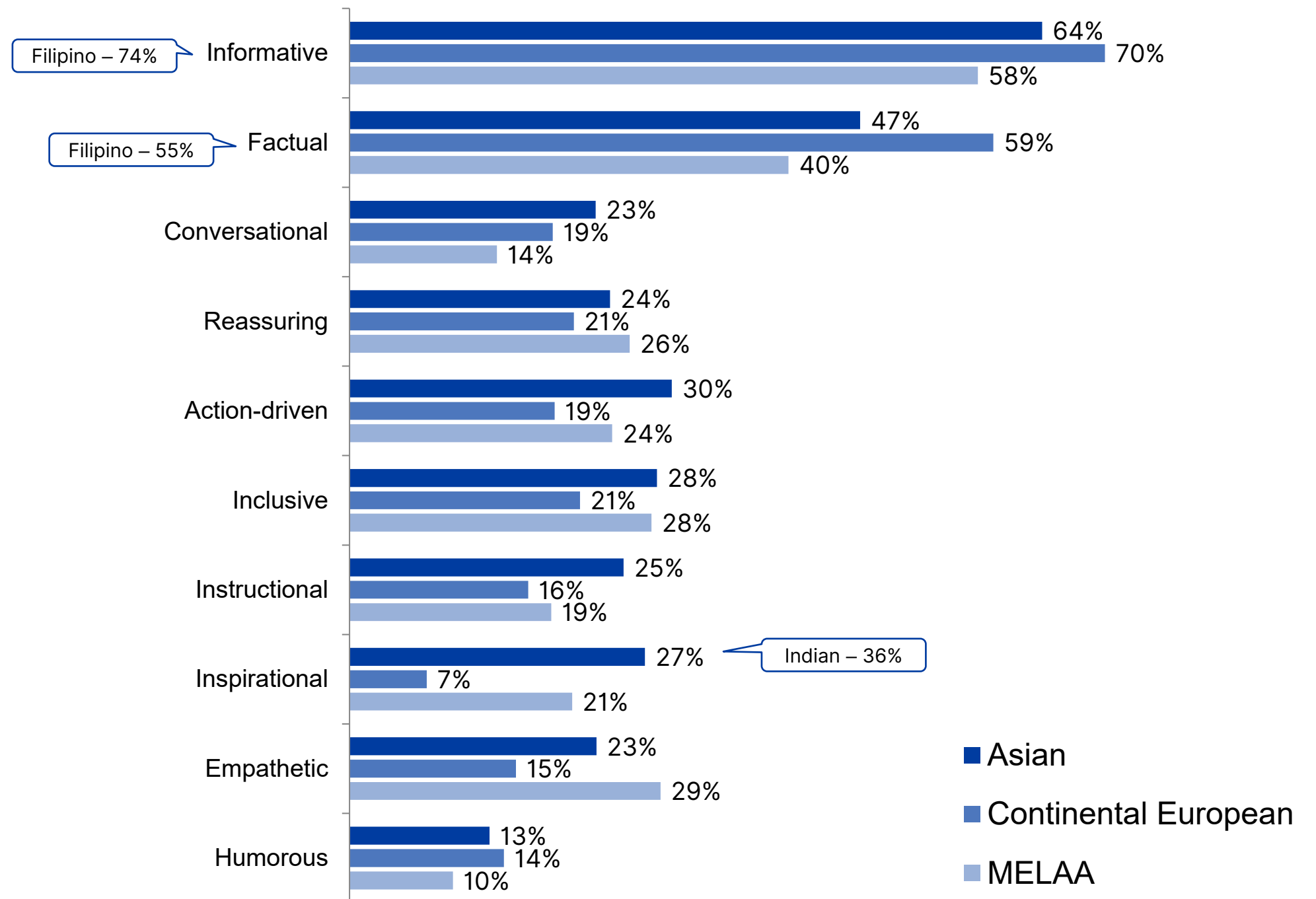
If it's something that's a wee bit longer or perhaps really in-depth, very wordy, people kind of don't take the time to even look at it. (Male, 25, Indian)

Coming from an immigrant background, something that's easy to understand, that puts things in simple terms, nothing too complicated. (Male, 25, Chinese)

Preferred communication tone for receiving government information

Continental Europeans usually prefer an informative and factual tone of communication

Other than an informative and factual tone, Asians also like an action driven tone of communication while MELAA groups have a high preference for empathetic and inclusive qualities.



Communication: Tone

Communication tone should be informative and helpful, while also being empathetic, warm and respectful.

What Works

- **Informative:** Focus on logical, actionable information (e.g. Explain the background, why they are receiving the message, what to do next)
- **Helpful:** State that government is here to help
- **Empathetic:** Coming from a place of understanding and wanting to connect
- **Warm:** Friendly and approachable
- **Respectful:** Communication that is considerate of others' feelings and perspectives, avoiding language that is dismissive or condescending

The friend I translate for is so structural. So, definitely logical and clear cut information - no metaphors and stuff like that. (Non-binary, 35, Italian)

Something that's warm, empathetic and comes from a place of "We want to help". I find that makes a really big difference. Keep it simple and keep it friendly. (Male, 25, Indian)

What Doesn't Work

- **Humour:** Can be lost in translation and may create the impression of condescension
- **Tonal mismatches:** Avoid tones that could be misinterpreted as sarcastic, cold or casual tones that do not match the context
- **Overly formal or informal:** Formality should be adapted to the type of message (e.g. formal tone for legal matters, informal tone for community events)
- **Lack of empathy:** Being too factual or clinical during sensitive situations like a natural disaster response

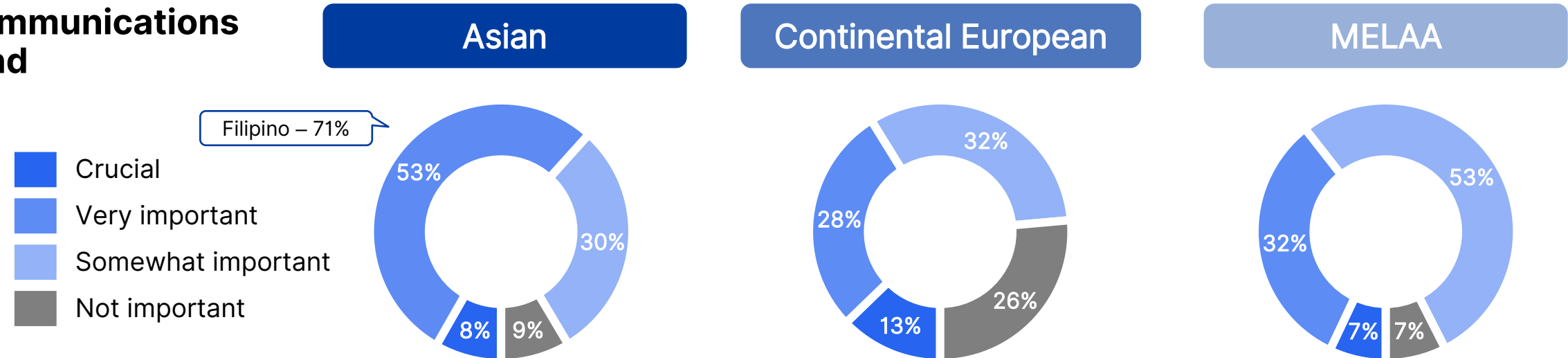
A lot of Kiwi messaging is pretty humorous. It can get lost in translation or come across as condescending. If my mum doesn't quite get the humour she might think "Are they trying to make fun of me? Am I missing something?". (Male, 25, Indian)

It's from the government, so shouldn't be humorous. It should be more formal but not too complex. (Male, 25, Chinese)

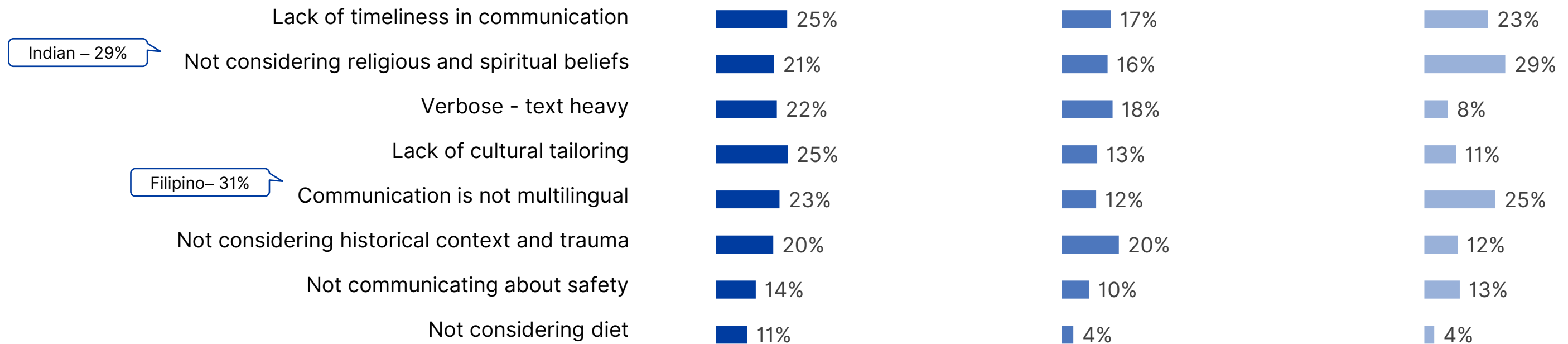
Nearly six in ten Asians want government communications to be culturally respectful

However, one in four Asians feel a lack of timeliness and cultural tailoring is often overlooked in government communications. In contrast, MELAA groups have highlighted ‘not considering religious and spiritual beliefs’ as a concern.

Importance of government communications respecting cultural background



Cultural aspects that are often overlooked in government communications



QCPC3: How important is it that government communications respect your cultural background?
 QCPC4: Are there any cultural considerations you feel are often overlooked in government communications?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Others – Asian: 7%, Continental Europe: 31%, MELAA: 18%

Communication: Cultural Preferences

In addition to providing timely and culturally nuanced communication, another bridge to understanding could come from sharing local cultural context to Ethnic Communities. To ensure an understanding of NZ practices and customs ('what' and 'why') and apply elements of native culture to make the information contextually relevant.

What Works

- **New Zealand cultural context:** Provide local cultural context to ensure understanding of local practices and customs for diverse cultural backgrounds
- Explain **why** the message is being communicated
- Apply **elements of native culture** to make it easier to absorb (e.g. Italian friendliness, passion)
- **If messaging is in a native language**, it is important to apply the correct tone (e.g. using formal Hindi in legal documents or using informal language in an email)

We took the weather alert message way too seriously. I don't know if there was some people who died during this. If there was another message before saying that weather alerts happen sometimes, that would have been perfect for us. (Male, 22, French)

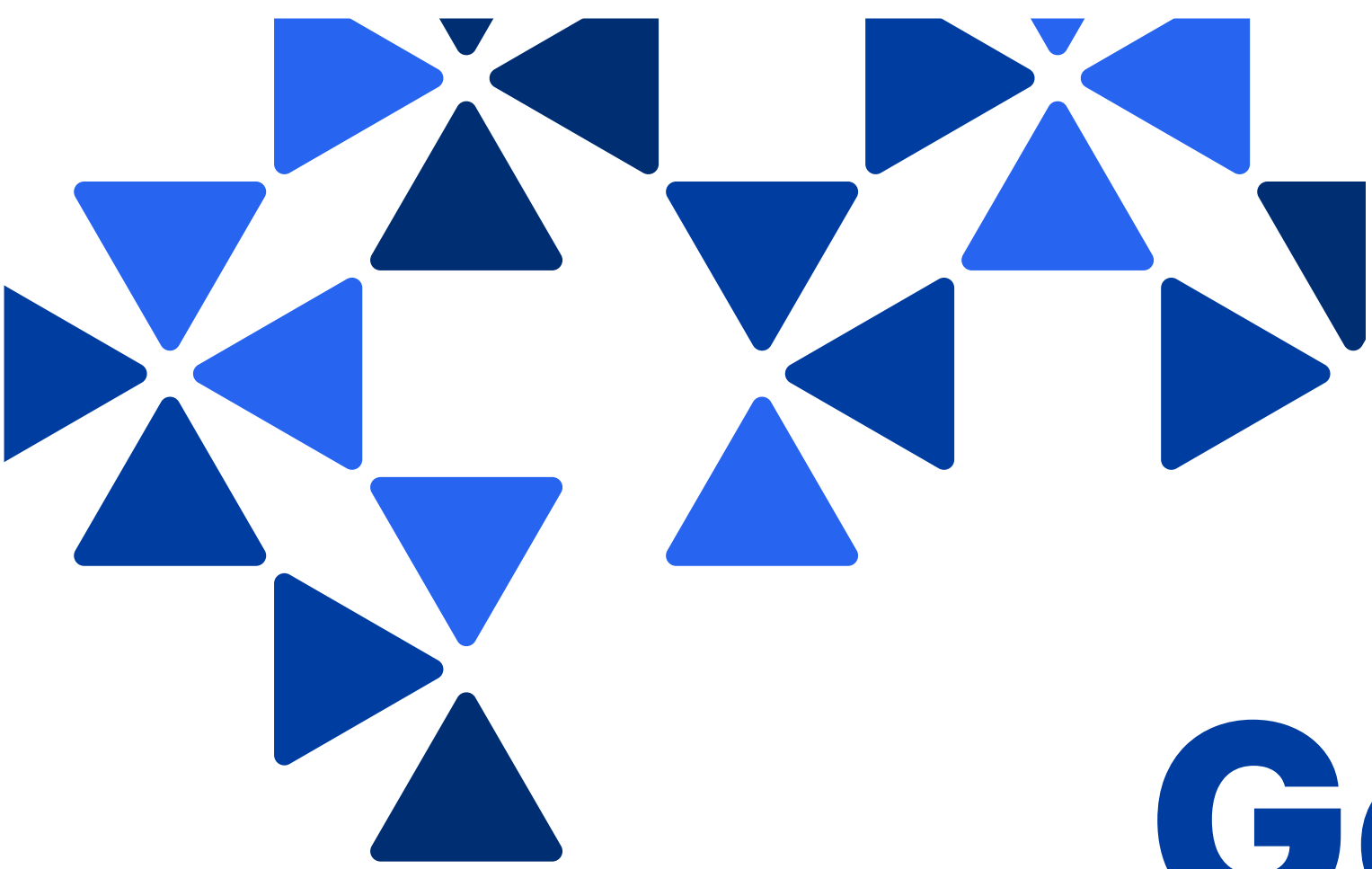
Whether it's formal or informal, Hindi changes the context of the way you view the communication. If it was a legal document but there were informal Hindi terms that would seem inappropriate, like something's amiss. If it was a general email the inverse is true. If it was informal, it would feel strange and sort of cold. (Male, 25, Indian)

When we receive voting letters from the government I don't think it's communicated why we need to vote and why it's important, so I have translated those for my mother and filled in the information gaps. (Female, 34, Latin American)

Don't assume everyone understands cultural context in NZ, especially when it comes to the way things are run on a day-to-day basis. It might be very different in another country. (Female, 34, Latin American)

What Doesn't Work

- **Lack of New Zealand cultural context:** Without this context, individuals from diverse backgrounds may not understand local practices and customs (e.g. the "Why" behind a voting letter~ what it is, the purpose of it and why they are receiving a letter)
- Lack of awareness of the **native culture**
- Using contextually **inappropriate tone** when using native languages



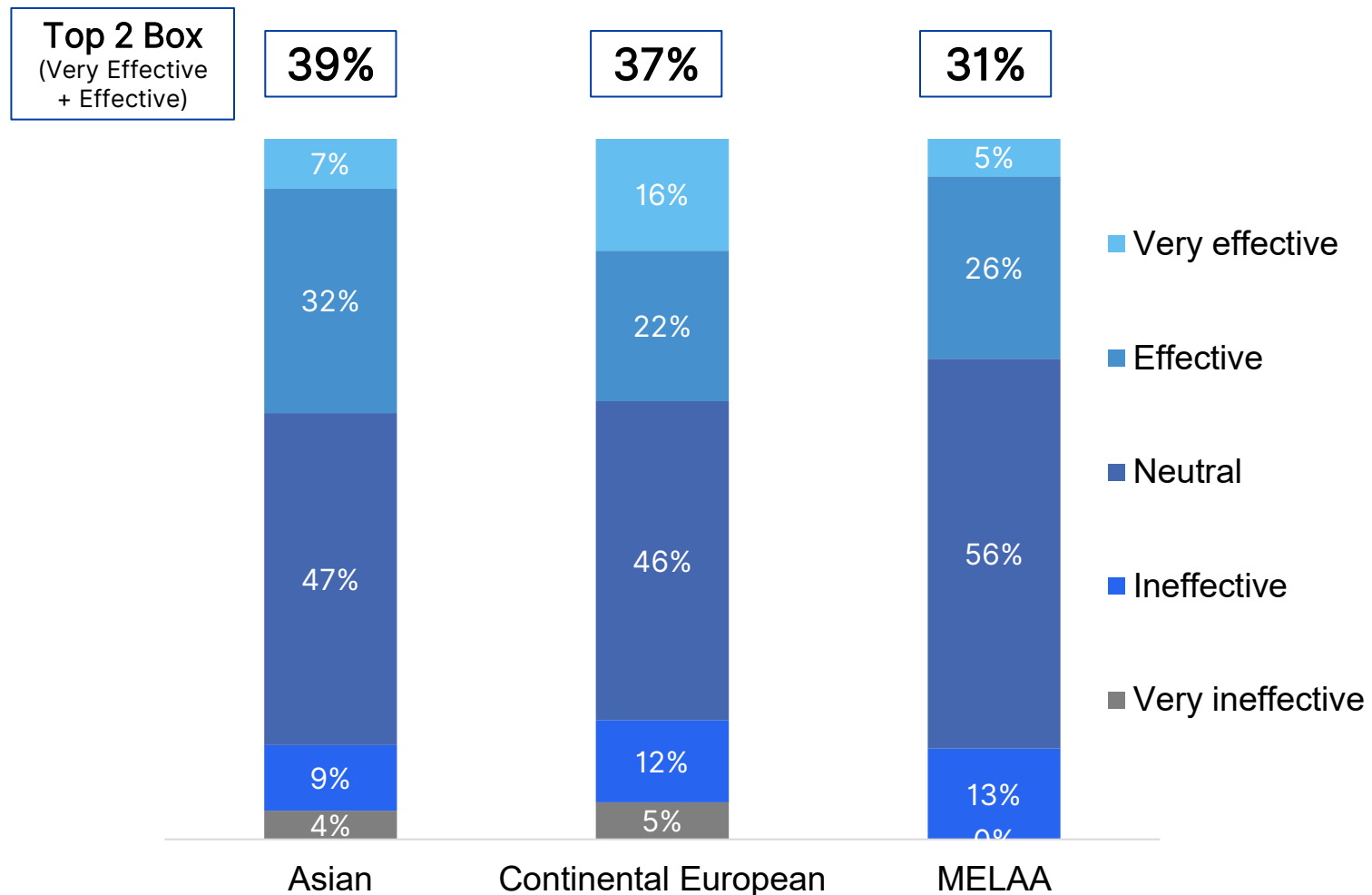
Government Communications

Approximately four in ten Asians find government communications effective

While Asian and Continental European ethnic groups believe the government's communication is effective, results for MELAA indicate that improvements can be made, with six in ten respondents remaining neutral in their assessment.



Effectiveness of government communications with Ethnic Communities - By Ethnicity



At least 39% Asians and Continental Europeans agree that government agencies consider their cultural background while communicating important information. An opportunity exists to lift this sentiment with the MELAA community by increasing cultural nuances even more so.

Do government agencies consider cultural background when communicating important information?

By Ethnicity

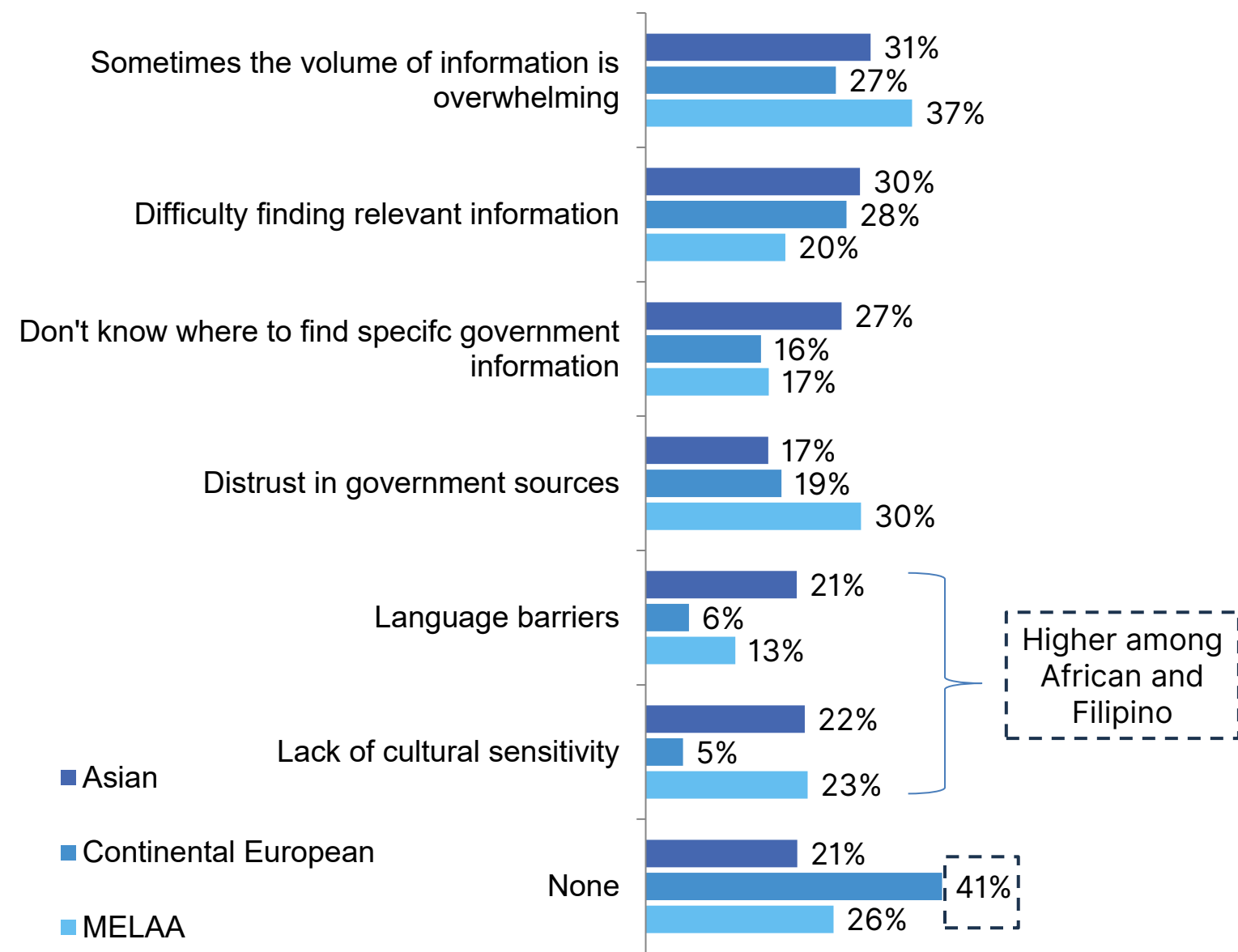
	Asian	Continental European	MELAA
Yes	39%	46%	30%
No	26%	24%	35%
Sometimes	35%	30%	35%

QPGC1: How would you rate the effectiveness of government communications with your Ethnic Community?
 QPGC2: Do you feel that government agencies adequately consider your cultural background when communicating important information?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

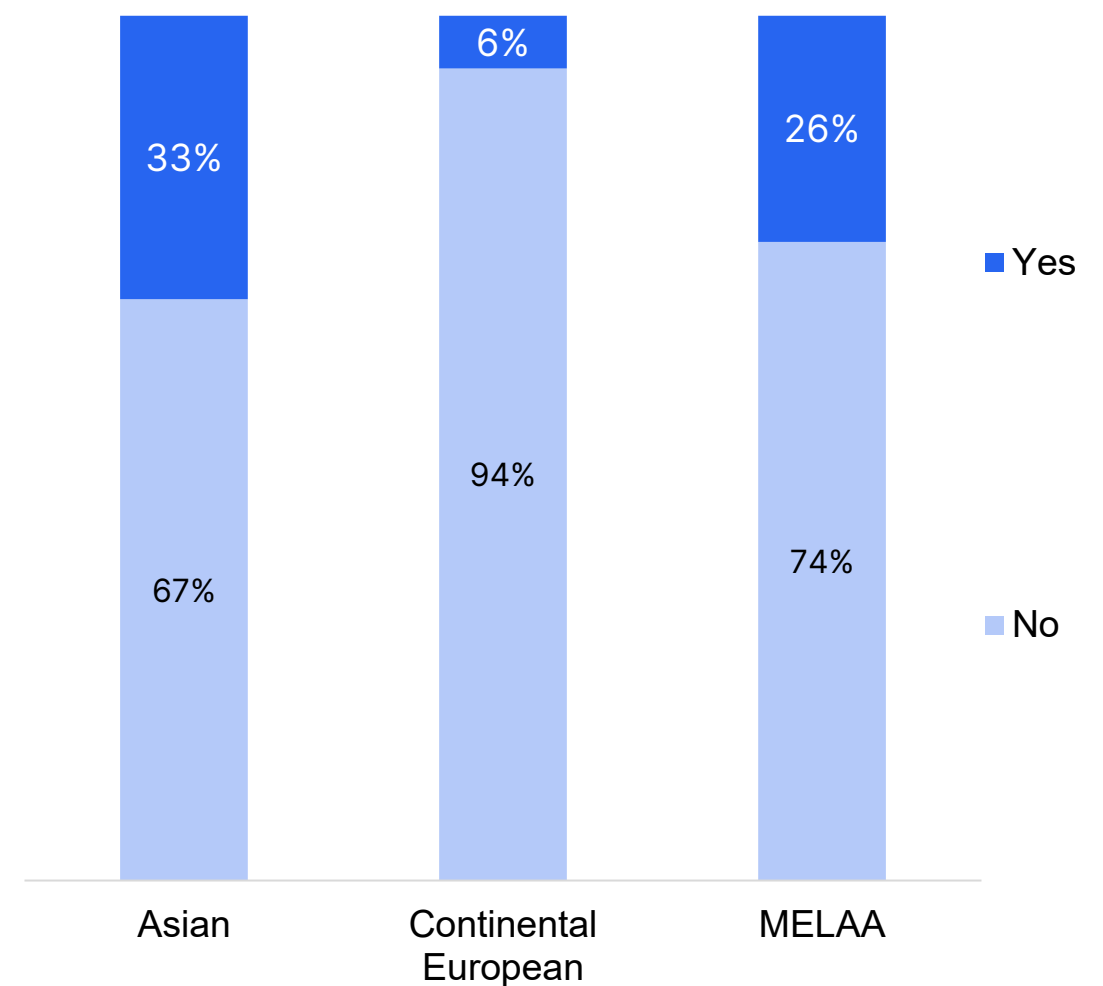
Access to government information is less challenging for Continental European communities

While all groups felt that the volume of information was sometimes overwhelming, language barriers and a lack of cultural sensitivity appears to be a challenge among the Asian and MELAA communities, of note for Filipino and African speaking peoples. In these instances, translation tools are being used to bridge this gap, especially by Asian and MELAA communities.

Barriers to accessing government information - By Ethnicity



Usage of translation software or AI to understand government information - By Ethnicity



QPGC3: What are the main barriers you face in accessing government information?
 QLP7: Do you use any translation software or AI to understand government information?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Challenges to receiving government communication include delays, limited access, language barriers, and cultural insensitivity

Close to nine in ten people, could not recall any challenges faced while receiving government communication during past crises.

Themes (Challenges experienced while receiving government communications during past crises)	% Responses	Verbatim
Timeliness and Access Gaps	3%	<i>Sometimes communication is a bit late ~ "Flooding in Auckland airport, communication was poor"; Did not receive the most recent Tsunami alert on 30 July 2025 ~ "yes, when they sent emergency alerts about storms AFTER the time they mentioned it was passing by"</i>
Language and Clarity Barriers	2%	<i>"Yes, I don't always have the vocabulary they use, and even though I'm reading or listen to what they said, it sounds like gibberish to me"; use of complicated language ~ "Mixed language in statements, i.e. Māori and English"; too much text and complex wording ~ "Again, English-language communication should be in English only."</i>
Trust and Cultural Insensitivity	2%	<i>Insufficient cultural sensitivity ~ "Government messaging is very biased to the govt of the day, Withholding facts, one dimensional approach, perception that politicians don't always tell the truth"</i>
Other/Unclassified	6%	-
Don't Recall / None	87%	--

Open ended responses are analyzed and grouped into the themes

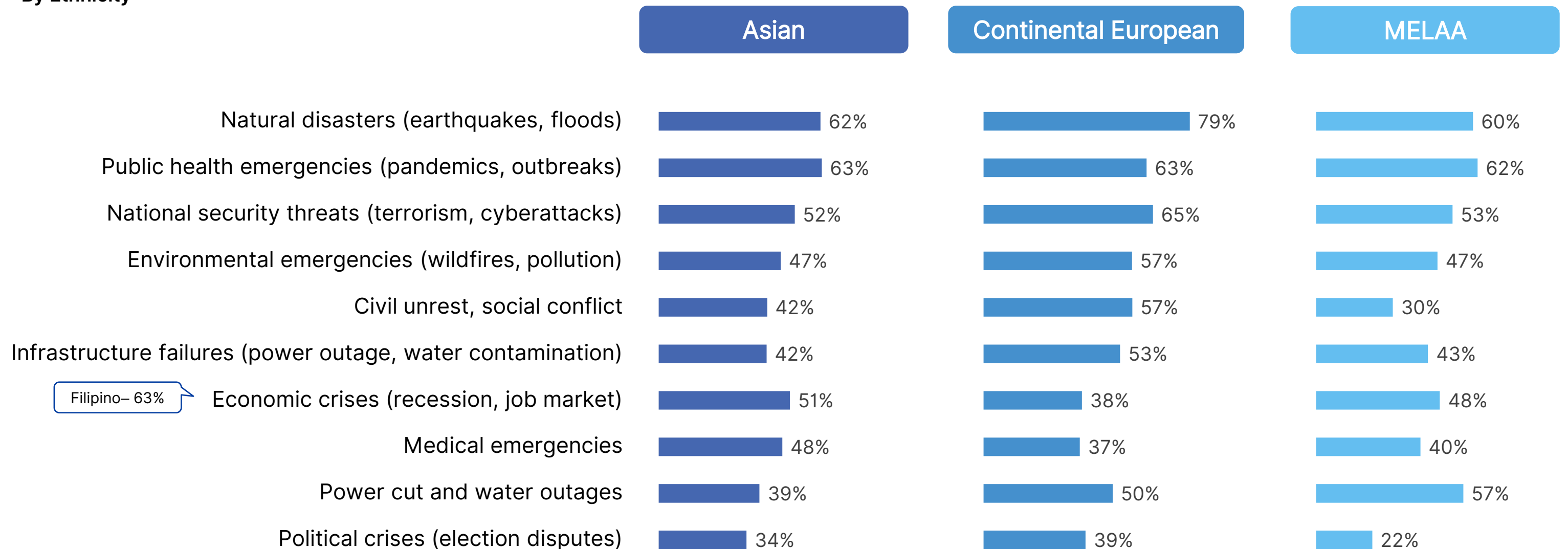
QPGC7 Have you experienced any challenges while receiving or understanding government communications during past crises? If yes, please explain. By government, we mean the central Government, not local Councils. Base n:573

Natural disasters and public health emergencies are the top two situations requiring government information

Continental European communities deem it important to receive information on national security threats, when compared to their Asian and MELAA counterparts.

Types of crises when Ethnic Communities seek government information

By Ethnicity



QPGC4: During which types of situations/ crises would you actively seek information from government sources?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Emergency situations

Timeliness is key in emergency situations, which reinforces the importance of making information immediate, trustworthy and accessible.

During emergency situations such as natural disasters and health emergencies, the **trusted source** narrows to government agencies, the police force and community organisations

The preferred **channel** changes from a variety of sources to one. The emergency **text messages** that are sent out to all New Zealand residents by the government

- Text messages allow Residents to **identify key words** (e.g. flood, fire), **triage information** and respond appropriately
- While some appreciate phone calls during emergency situations, one resident suggested they may not be appropriate due to unreliable phone networks or comprehension difficulties

The **tone** shifts to more **formal, firm** and **directive** to help convey the urgency of the message

- **Concise, to the point** information is crucial here (rather than long text messages) and life-threatening information should be listed first



“ In emergencies use texts because the network is getting flooded with calls, so a phone call may not be so reliable. A text is pretty simple, it’s just words. Communication should be formal but with a pretty firm tone, so it’s like ‘Yes, pay attention, this is important’.
(Male, 25, Indian)

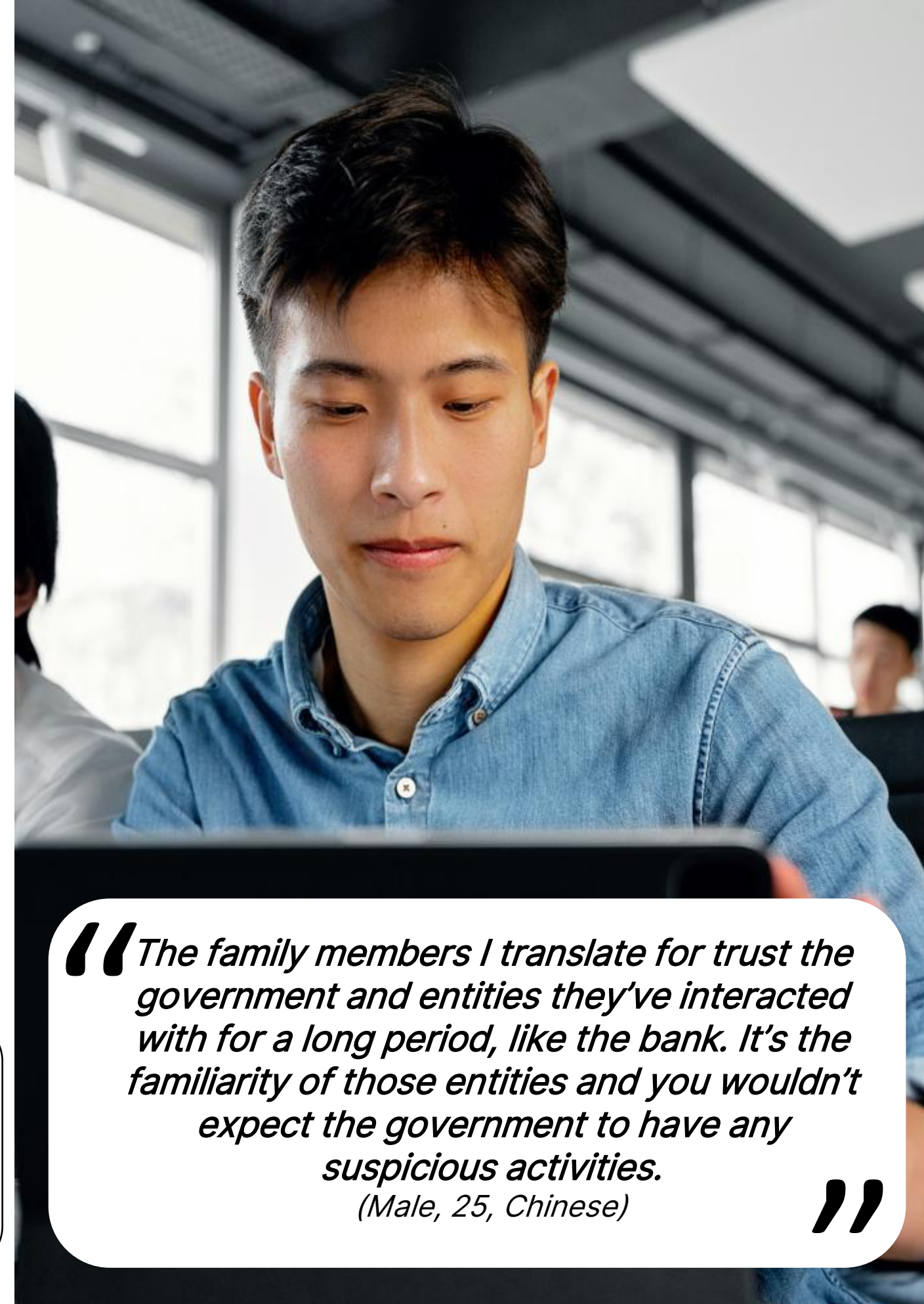
Trusted Sources

Trusted sources include Government departments, health professionals and community group leaders.

- **New Zealand Government:** Government agencies are very trusted (particularly credible during emergencies) as they are familiar, governed by law and communicate on matters of importance
- Entities they've interacted with over a **long period of time** (e.g. Banks)
- **Healthcare Providers:** The regular GP, medical centre, vax clinic
- **Small local businesses:** Trusted as they show care and connection
- **Bilingual staff:** Trusted and valuable during complex or sensitive situations where clarification is important
- **Educational institutions** (e.g. universities, schools)
- **Community groups and religious leaders**
- **Less trusted sources** include social media (unvetted influencers, unverified information shared on WhatsApp) and companies that regularly send advertisements (seen as having ulterior motives)

We trust the NZ government, if it was a government-based group that's well known we would find that trustworthy. They don't seem corrupt. They don't send ads like other places do, so we trust that if they're sending something it's for a reason. (Female, 34, Latin American)

Small businesses that put in an effort to reach the community, like Hindi youth groups and food stores that do communications in other languages. Religious or community groups are also a really good way to disseminate information. (Male, 25, Indian)

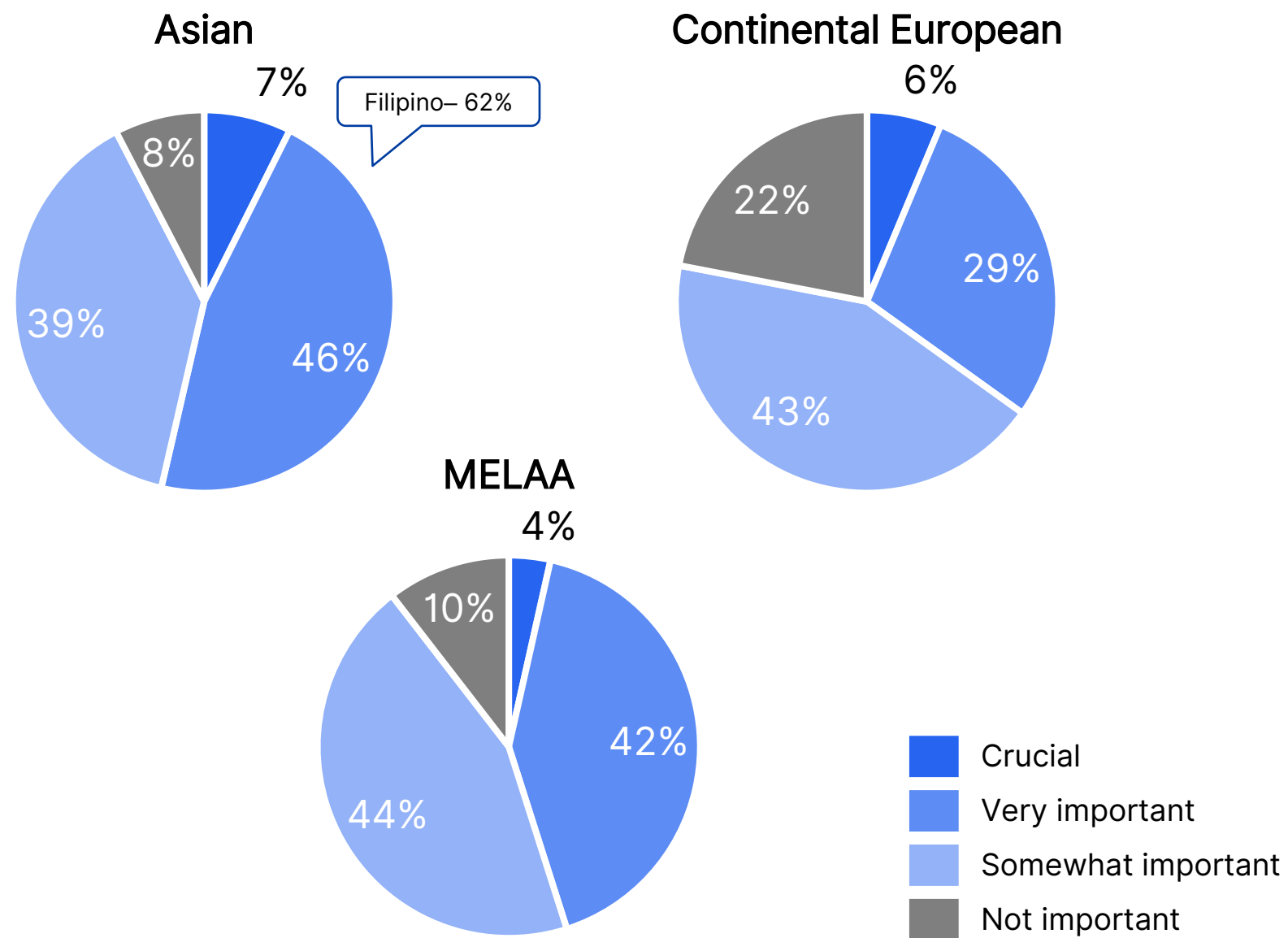


***“The family members I translate for trust the government and entities they've interacted with for a long period, like the bank. It's the familiarity of those entities and you wouldn't expect the government to have any suspicious activities.
(Male, 25, Chinese)”***

More than half of Asians and MELAA consider collaborating with community leaders as important

The importance of community leader collaboration is lower among the Continental European community (~22%).

Importance of collaboration with community leaders - By Ethnicity



Filipino- 62%



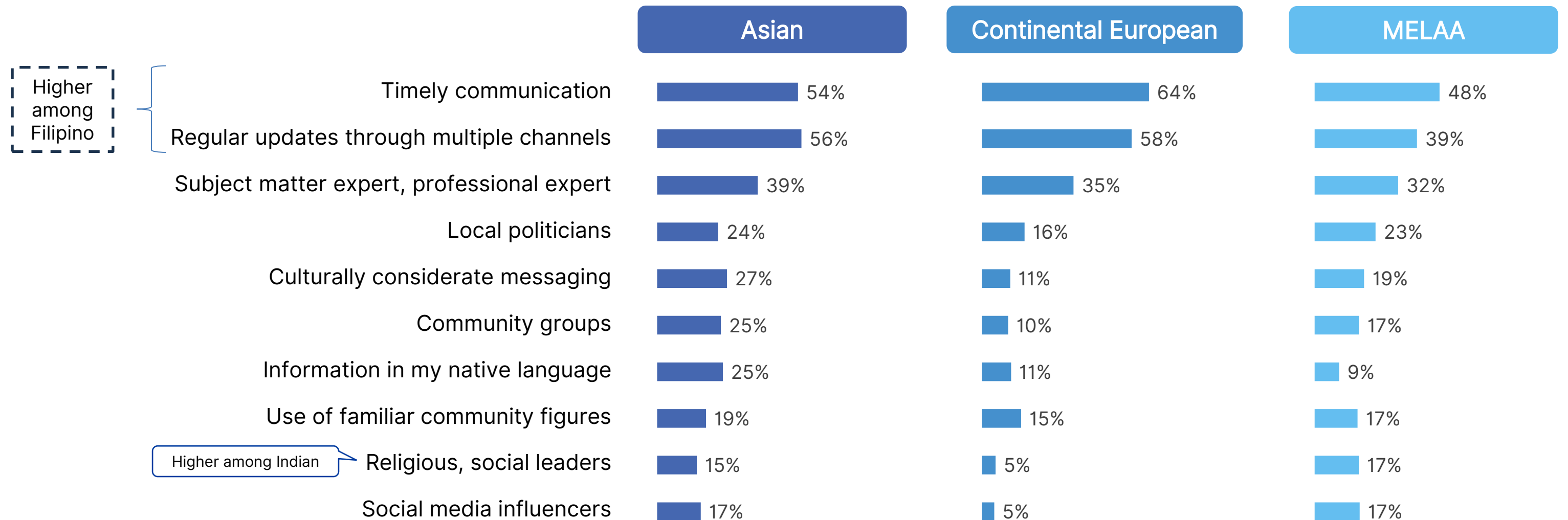
QBPC3: How important is it for government agencies to collaborate with community leaders or organisations when communicating with your ethnic group?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Timeliness is a key factor in increasing trust in government communication

Regular updates through multiple channels about a crisis is also an important criteria across Ethnic Communities.

Trust in government communication during a crisis would be increased by

By Ethnicity



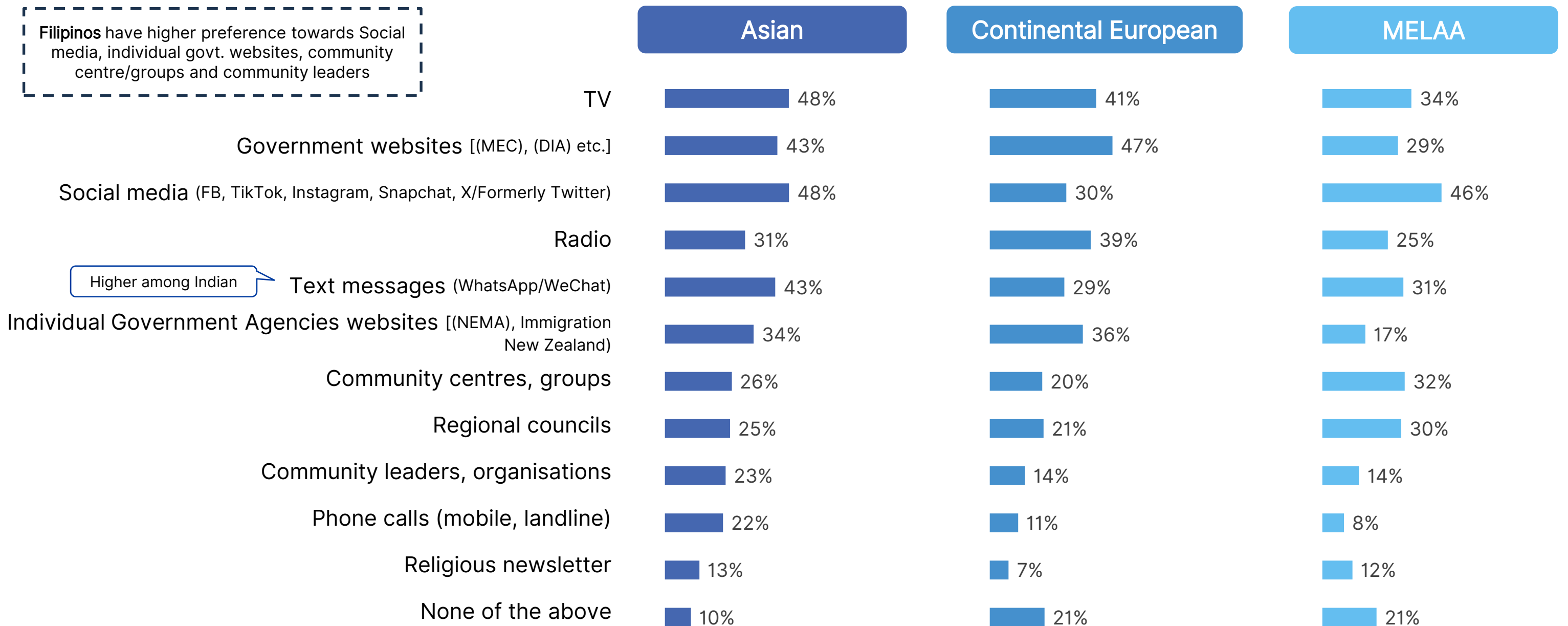
QPGC6: What would increase your trust in government communications during a crisis?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Television is one of the leading choices across Ethnic Communities

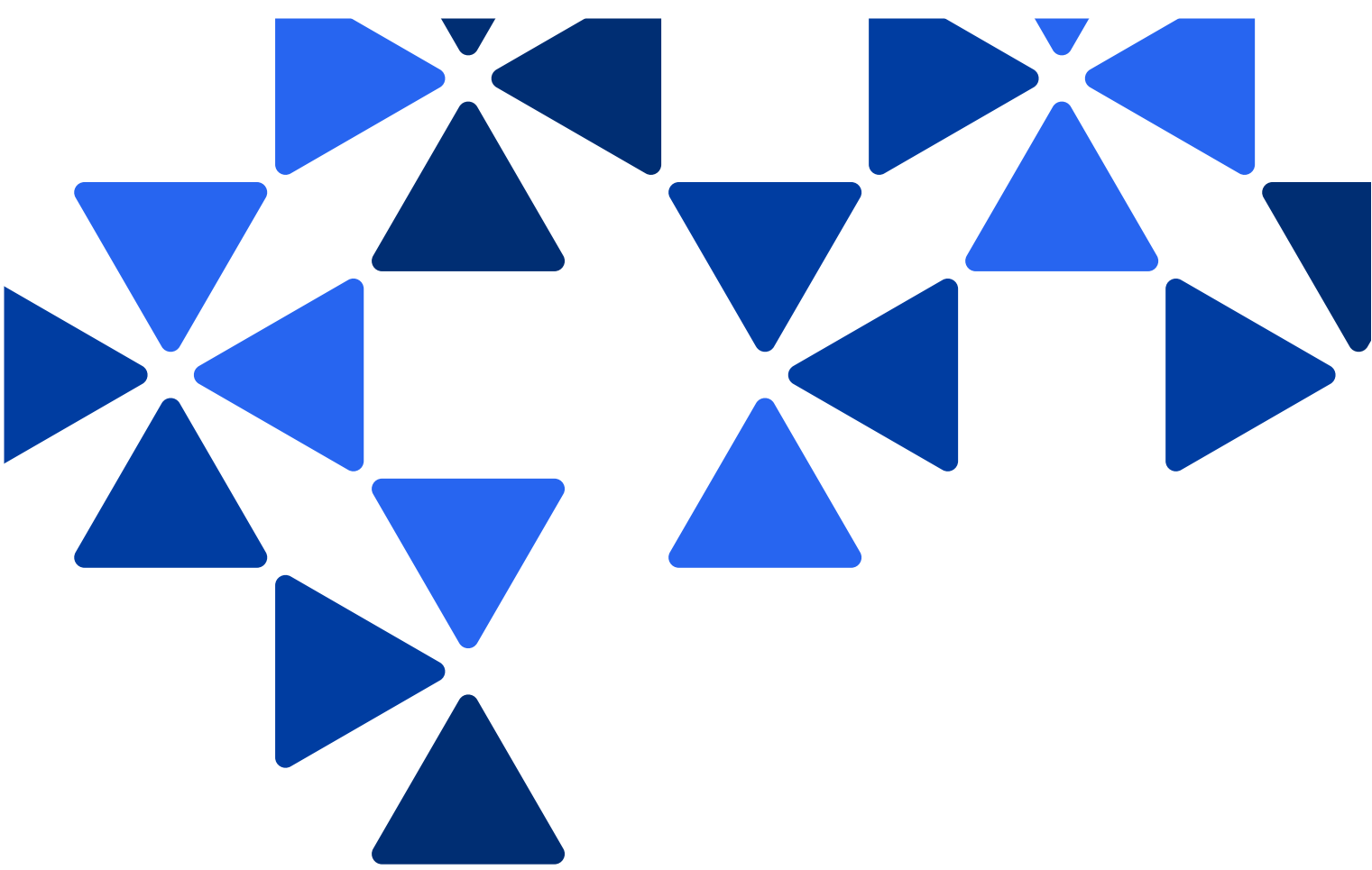
While Asians and MELAA groups also prefer social media, Continental Europeans have a stronger preference for official government websites, such as the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (MEC) or the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), for receiving critical information.

Platforms they would prefer to receive critical government information

By Ethnicity



QPGC5: Where do you prefer to receive critical government information during crises?
Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)



Recommendations

- **Channels and formats used**
 - **Best practices**

Preferred formats

Written communication is generally preferred, as it allows for self-paced translation and provides a record of what has been communicated.

- **Written communication** (e.g. letters, emails, SMS) allows residents to read at their own pace, identify and record important information, and refer anything they are unsure of, to translators or Google Translate
- **Separating out topics** into easily digestible chunks and drawing attention to poignant information with **bright colours** works well

“Having topics separated and if a word is particularly important have it written in red so she could scan the document and know this is the most important thing, let me really understand that and get the bigger picture” (Non-binary, 35, Italian)

- **Larger text** helps cater to the older generation

“My parents are of the older age bracket so their sight is not as good, so if you have lots of little letters and a page full of very useful information but it’s small and dense, they won’t be able to see it” (Male, 25, Chinese)

- Some prefer **printed materials** in their **native language**: Ethnic newspapers or flyers (e.g. Indian grocer handouts) create the feeling of “This is for me” rather than “This is for everyone”

“There was an Indian grocer in Wellington that used to hand out newspapers that were NZ news translated into languages like Punjabi and Hindi. My dad used to read those quite a bit, it was nice to have something in print in a country he didn’t grow up in, that would remind him of his roots.” (Male, 25, Indian)



“ I prefer written over audio because even though my translation for my mother may be person to person, I have something to reference and can be sure I’m communicating the right thing. If it’s audio I might, without realising, add more information or not enough. ”
(Female, 34, Latin American)

Preferred formats (continued)

Digital communication is very helpful, especially short, sharp formats such as short-form videos and infographics with simple, colourful designs.

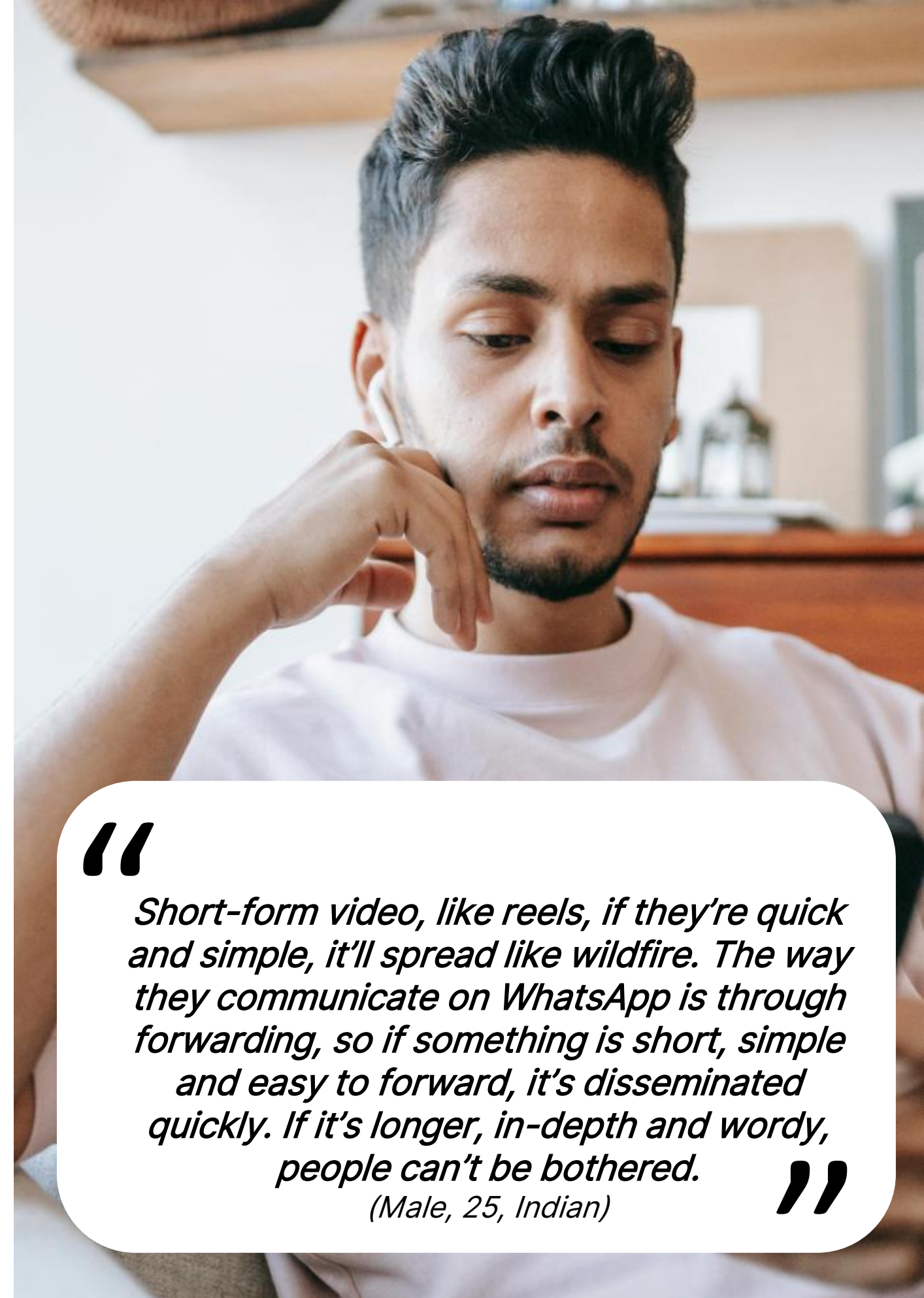
Digital communication: Short-form videos and infographics provide easily digestible content that is more likely to be shared, especially on WhatsApp

- Short videos allow **ease of sharing** and prevents viewers from getting lost in reading long sections of text
- **Infographics** are an effective way to convey information in a manner that is universally understood and should include checklists, icons and simple designs to aid easy comprehension at a glance
- **Subtitles** are a popular way of increasing comprehension while practicing listening and reading in English

While some appreciate a **phone call** when it comes to more urgent government messaging, this may create a barrier for those who are unable to keep up with the pace of speech

- One Resident suggested a phone call from the government in their native language may create the impression of a **scam**

“We don't expect the government to communicate in Chinese, so if someone's calling saying they're from the government but for some reason they're speaking Chinese, it could create suspicion that they're a scammer” (Male, 25, Chinese)



“

Short-form video, like reels, if they're quick and simple, it'll spread like wildfire. The way they communicate on WhatsApp is through forwarding, so if something is short, simple and easy to forward, it's disseminated quickly. If it's longer, in-depth and wordy, people can't be bothered.

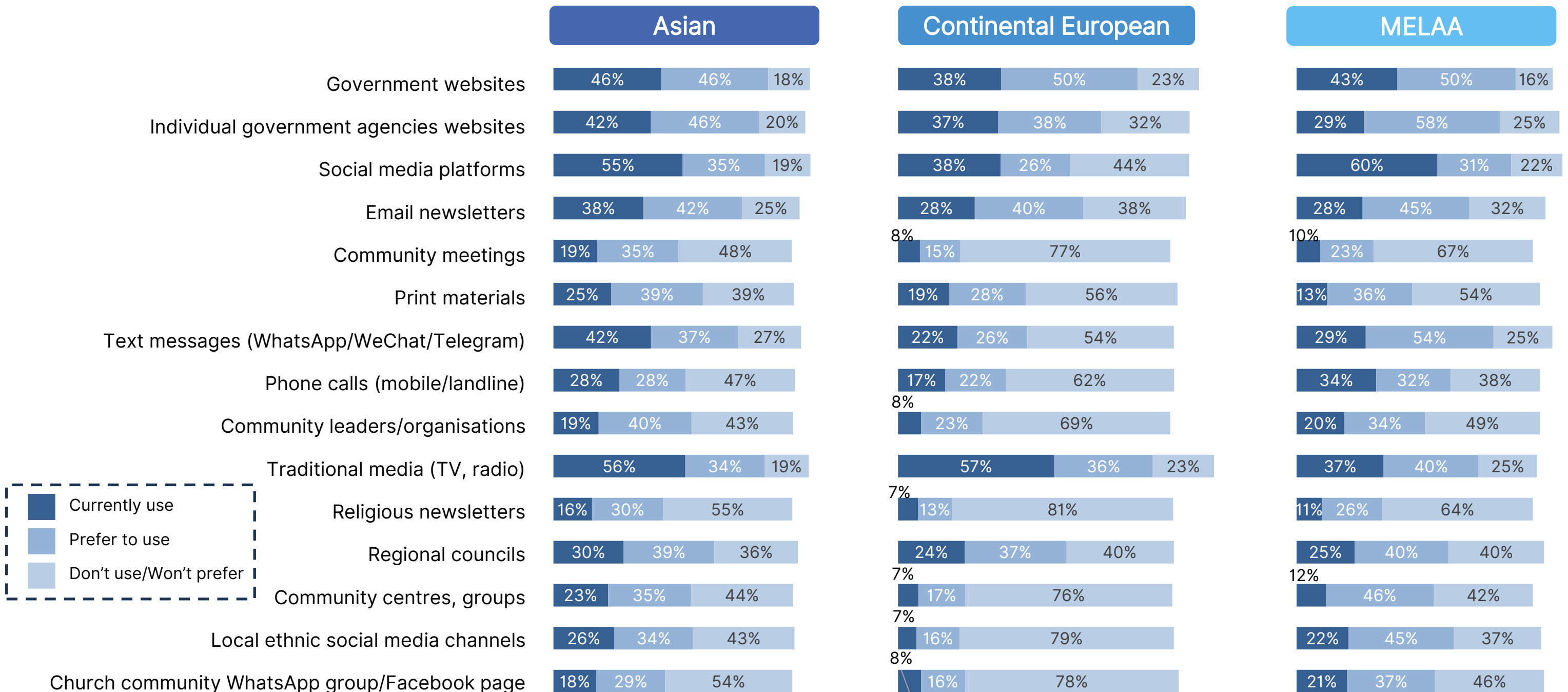
(Male, 25, Indian)

”

Currently Asians and Continental Europeans use traditional media to access government information

Furthermore, Asians and MELAA have a strong preference for social media platforms when seeking information.

Current vs. Preferred Channel Usage for accessing government information - By Ethnicity



QCF1: Which channels/ formats do you typically use or would prefer to use for accessing government information?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

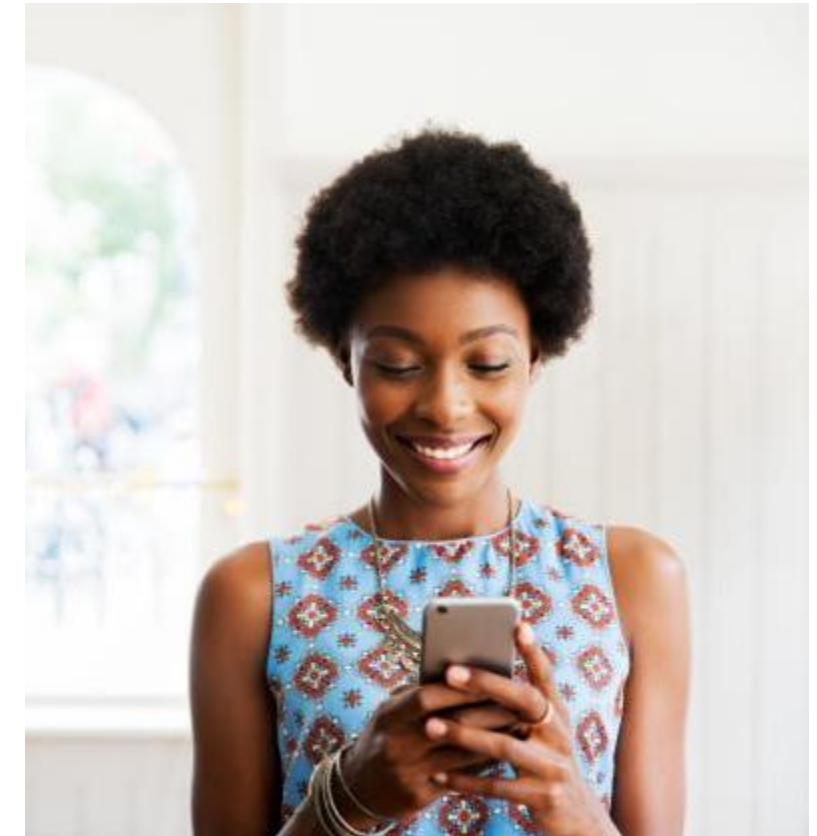
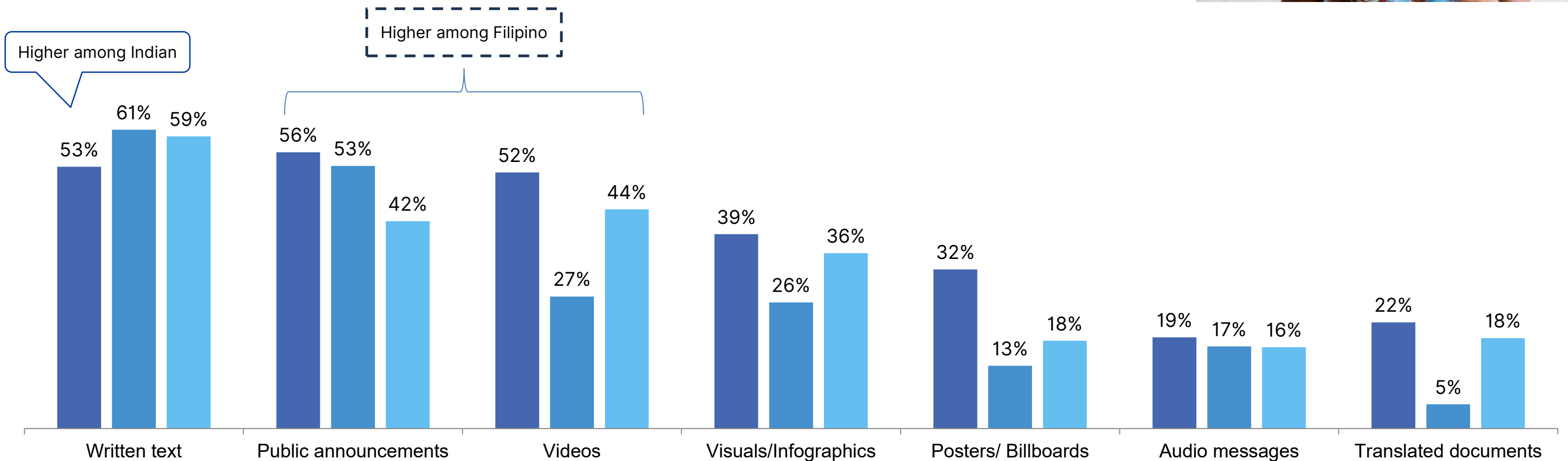
Six in ten Continental Europeans and MELAA groups find written texts as the most effective format

For Asians, public announcements and written text formats are the most effective followed by videos, which is similar to their preference towards visual and illustrative styles of communication.

Most effective formats for understanding government information

By Ethnicity

■ Asian ■ Continental European ■ MELAA



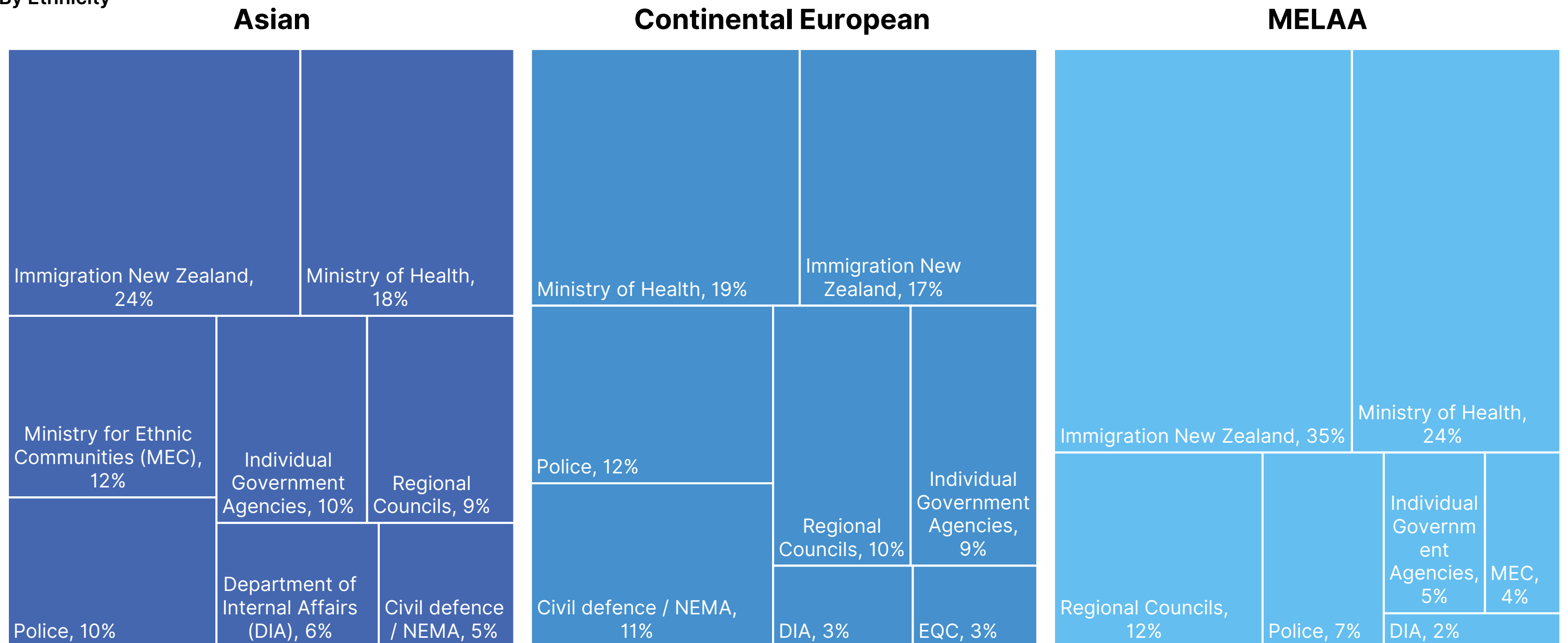
QCF2: Which format do you find most effective for understanding government information?
Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

A quarter of Asians believe Immigration New Zealand communicates effectively with their Ethnic Community groups

12% Asians also feel Ministry for Ethnic Communities effectively communicate with their community. However, to become a more trusted source, they can further tailor their communication tone and style preferences while keeping in mind cultural nuances for each community.

Agency most effective in communicating with Ethnic Community groups

By Ethnicity



QBPC1: Which government agencies do you feel communicate most effectively with your ethnic community?
 Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Government gaps

Residents appreciate communication from the government around their civic duties, however more emphasis should be placed on the “why” behind them.

Not explaining the “Why” behind civic duties and rules



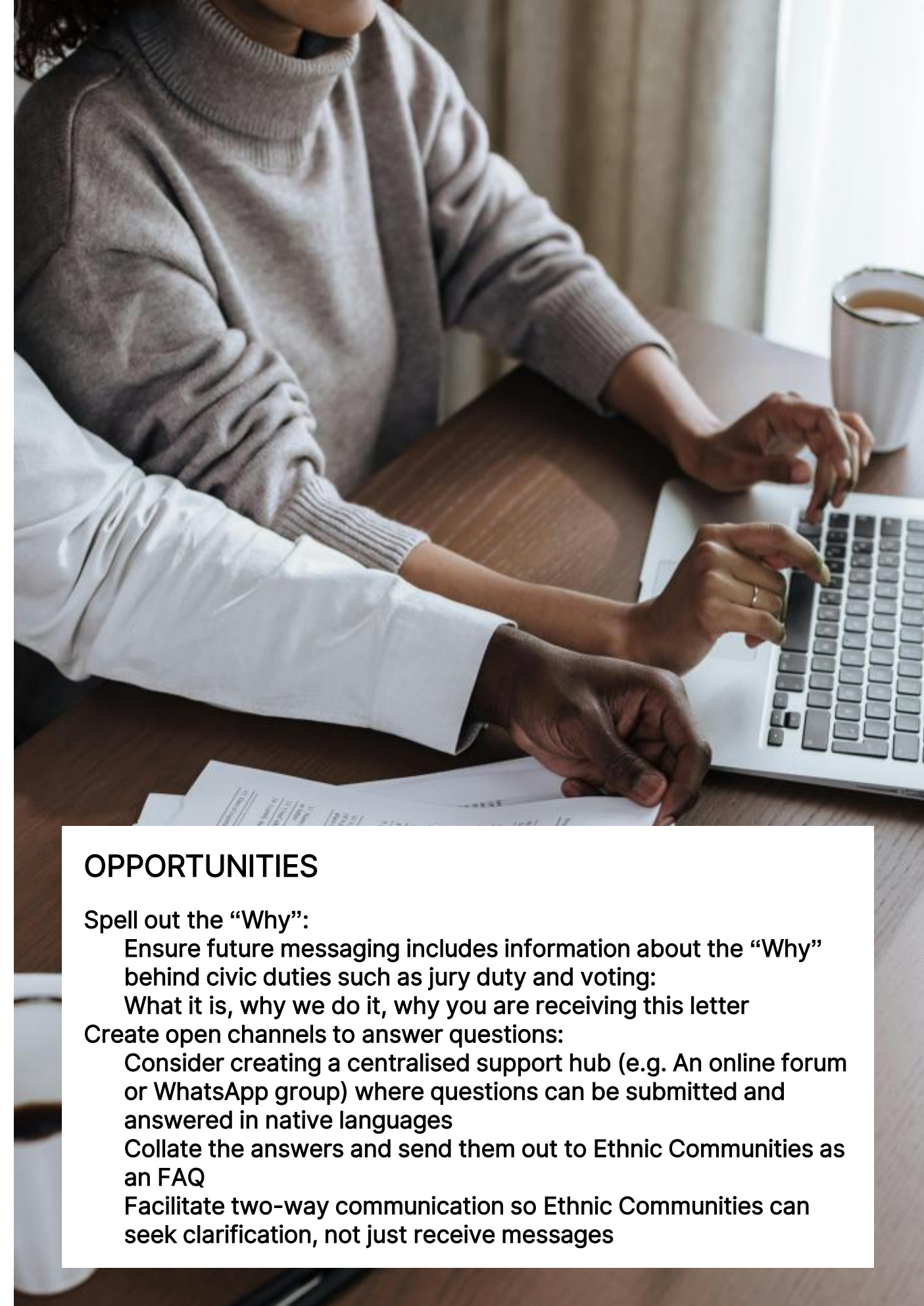
Voting and jury duty: Letters from the government around voting and jury duty fail to explain the “Why” behind these civic duties. Why are they important and why should Residents participate?

- This leads to misunderstanding and places the onus on those translating to explain and fill in the information gaps

“If there is something the NZ government does as standard practice that isn’t standard practice where we’re from, like jury duty, have a brief intro in the jury duty letter of what that is and the purpose, so people who aren’t acclimatised to the culture here have a better understanding of social roles that are compulsory” (Female, 34, Latin American)

- **COVID Comms:** Infographics helped explain the main rules surrounding the pandemic, however further detail on the “Why” behind the rules would have helped with more detailed information like lockdown rule changes

“My grandparents get the gist of things with the infographics: Stay in your bubble at home and isolate, masks, that sort of thing. But the minutiae of the situation is harder for them to understand, because nothing was sent out in Hindi, so they get it that there is a pandemic, and they have to do these small things but when it was levels of lockdown it wasn’t easy for them to understand and know why it was changing. (Male, 25, Indian)



OPPORTUNITIES

Spell out the “Why”:

Ensure future messaging includes information about the “Why” behind civic duties such as jury duty and voting:

What it is, why we do it, why you are receiving this letter

Create open channels to answer questions:

Consider creating a centralised support hub (e.g. An online forum or WhatsApp group) where questions can be submitted and answered in native languages

Collate the answers and send them out to Ethnic Communities as an FAQ

Facilitate two-way communication so Ethnic Communities can seek clarification, not just receive messages

Government gaps (continued)

Residents would benefit from more information on the context and purpose behind communication and extra language supports to reduce language barriers.



Lack of context, especially about weather events

Weather alerts: For the uninitiated, government messaging around weather events like a minor storm may be interpreted as an emergency situation requiring extreme measures

- It is only through experience and time that Residents learn this is a standard message for information purposes

“When we received this weather alert message, first it was scary for us, we didn’t know that we receive it each time there was bad weather. We thought there was a storm happening, we went to the house because we were afraid.” (Male, 22, French)



Lack of language support:

- **Subtitles:** Lack of language support on important broadcasts (e.g. a press conference with the Prime Minister on COVID lockdown rules) where speech is often hurried and circumstances may seem chaotic to the viewer
- **Workplaces, universities:** Lack of language support for those entering the New Zealand workforce or university system

“In the work environment, communication must not be a barrier. If you speak slowly, I can hear you, I can do what is required. But just because you are too fast, I have to fail the interview. You have to start somewhere. They must give us a chance.” (Female, 42, African)



OPPORTUNITIES

Government ‘Starter Pack’

- Invest in services to support new migrants, including cultural induction and access to translated public service resources
- When migrants first arrive in New Zealand, help them understand cultural nuances and what to expect from the government (e.g. They will start to receive information like weather warnings: Here’s what to do, here’s how to interpret those messages)

Introduce extra language supports:

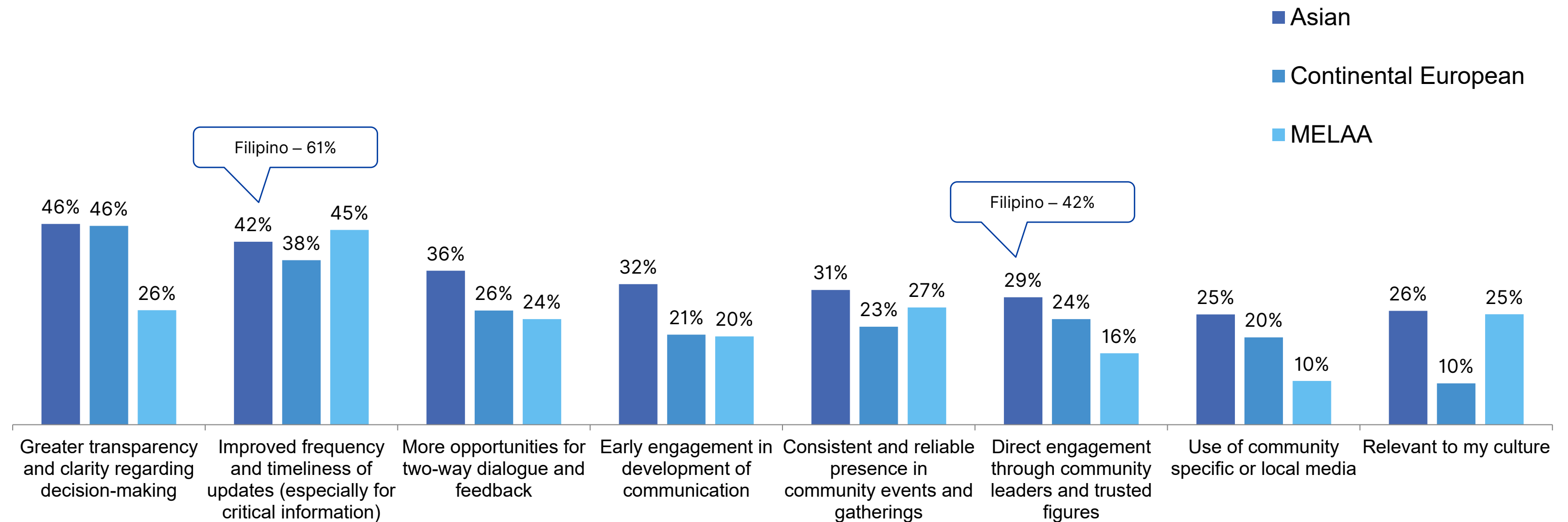
Add subtitles to important information broadcasts to allow Ethnic Communities to hear it, read it and absorb it
Create opportunities for new working adults or university students to volunteer and gain work experience and exposure to the English language to help them integrate into the New Zealand work and study environments.

Almost half of Asians and Continental Europeans suggest government communications should provide more transparency and clarity

Additionally, improving the frequency and timeliness of updates during emergency situations is also a suggestion to improve government communications, which is higher among MELAA and Asian communities.

Suggestions from Ethnic Communities on improving government communication

By Ethnicity



QBPC2: What suggestions do you have for improving government communications with your ethnic community?
Base n: 573 (Asian: 436, Continental European: 57, MELAA: 80)

Positive experiences from multi-channel delivery, tailored outreach and timely communications

While seven in ten respondents couldn't spontaneously cite effective government communication, of those who did, successful strategies included using multiple channels such as social media and TV (8%), and tailoring messages culturally and linguistically (4%).

Themes (Effective government communication which resonated with their Ethnic community)	% Responses	Verbatim
Multi-Channel Information Delivery	8%	<i>"Announcements on Facebook, Billboards, Flyers, E-mail, Emergency alerts during occurrence of strong winds, immunisation on ministry health website, Short Police videos, TV updates during COVID"</i>
Past Effective Communications	7%	<i>"I think consistent announcement was good, detail information from the Covid 19 public health campaign, the 1pm updates during Covid, voting reminders", "Covid times and the Christchurch mosque attack, vaccinations"</i>
General Positive Feedback	6%	<i>"All have been effective, they are fit for purpose", "Good, building bridges", "Yes govt has good policy for immigrants and we like pm approach"</i>
Culturally and Linguistically Tailored Outreach	4%	<i>"Multilingual information releases during covid, it was in all languages", "Yes, during COVID-19, translated info, ethnic media, and trusted community leaders helped my community understand and trust government messages", "I was able to disseminate information based on own language, providing information in the community's native language and have access to translation for better understanding"</i>
Community-Led Engagement	2%	<i>"Appointing leaders from our community to share messages provided by the government, Recruitment of police officers and using our Ethnic people to front the ads. Hold a community consultation meeting, Religious and reasonable, Chinese or Asian police officers on TV and internet"</i>
Don't Recall / None	74%	--

Open ended responses are analyzed and grouped into the themes
 QE1: Can you recall any particularly effective government communication strategies that resonated with your Ethnic community? Base n:573

Government wins

General sentiment towards the government is positive, however recall of communication is low, suggesting it is not resonating, standing out or capturing attention.

Most Residents are unable to recall a time when the Government has communicated effectively, however when prompted, the following examples are offered:

- **Christchurch earthquake:** Keeping residents up to date and informed while offering an empathetic tone
- **Immigration Department:** Offer prompt responses, will send an email to confirm information and encourage Residents to call back if further clarification or information is required

*“If I have any questions, they respond very quick. Let’s say they said something and I didn’t quite get it, I asked them to send me an email then they will. They will always say ‘If you need me to explain more, please don’t hesitate to call’
“(Female, 42, African)*

- **COVID Comms:** A health information pamphlet at a vaccination centre offered in multiple languages, including Chinese

“It was a pamphlet that had multiple languages and there was one in Chinese. From that pamphlet my parents were able to give it a read and get a good grasp of important information.” (Male, 25, Chinese)



“

There was an earthquake in Christchurch. A lot of people passed away and one of them was my aunt, so we did receive a lot of communication from the government. It was empathetic, keeping us in the loop of the investigations they were doing via letters in the post and phone calls.

(Female, 34, Latin American)

”

Best practice

The common threads between best practice case studies provided by respondents include using simple vocabulary, showing empathy and offering language supports.

Residents offer a range of case study examples of best practice when it comes to communicating with Ethnic Communities. The common elements from these case studies include:

- Using **simple vocabulary**
- **Tailoring language** and delivery respectfully to match the listener's English proficiency (e.g. enunciating words, slowing speech)
- Using a **helpful and empathetic tone**
- Acknowledging diverse, lived experiences and the fact that many newcomers may not share assumed local knowledge
 - Explaining **local context** and requirements
- Offering **bilingual staff** to reduce pressure on translators
- Offering **direct access, quick responses** and **multiple platforms** to communicate



“ *With the GP, their communication was effective from the tone that they used, you could tell that they just were trying to be helpful and communicate effectively*
(Female, 34, Latin American) **”**

Summary

Media consumption habits

Key findings

- ❑ Ethnic Communities use a variety of sources for news and information, including electronic broadcast media, internet and social media.
- ❑ Over two-thirds of Continental European and MELAA communities are heavily invested in television and the internet. For Asians, internet usage leads in media consumption, followed by outdoor media.
- ❑ Facebook is the most used app for Continental European and MELAA communities, followed by WhatsApp and Instagram. Among Asians, Facebook is also the most frequently used app, though Instagram and WhatsApp are used more by them than by their counterparts.
- ❑ News mobile apps and websites are considered the most trustworthy sources for information across all ethnicities.

Way forward

- Leverage a multi-channel approach that includes both digital platforms like social media and websites, and traditional formats like emails and letters, to reach diverse Ethnic Communities effectively.
- Tailor the platform strategy to the specific community, for example, by prioritising Facebook for Continental European and MELAA Ethnic Community groups while focusing on Instagram and WhatsApp for Asians



Language and cultural considerations

Key findings

- ❑ Communication should be in basic English to facilitate translation. Also, English is the most frequently opted language for all ethnicities. However, the Asian community also prefers news and information in their native languages like Hindi and Mandarin.
- ❑ Messaging in native languages should go beyond a literal translation and be clearly structured to reflect cultural understanding.
- ❑ A warm, empathetic, and respectful tone is preferred across many communities. Infographics and simple visuals are universally helpful across languages.
- ❑ The preferred communication style for government information is simple, direct, and factual. While Asians also favour a detailed and visual communication style.
- ❑ A significant portion of Asians want government communications to be culturally respectful.

Way forward

- Provide information in both basic English and relevant native languages, to improve comprehension and reduce dependency on translators/AI
- Ensure native language content reflects cultural understanding, uses everyday vocabulary and a respectful tone to feel relevant and trustworthy
- Use infographics and simple visuals to enhance understanding across different languages and cultural backgrounds



Government communications

Key findings

- ❑ Approximately four in ten Asians find government communications effective.
- ❑ Access to government information is less challenging for Continental European communities, but language barriers and a lack of cultural sensitivity are concerns for Asian and MELAA communities, particularly those of Filipino and African descent.
- ❑ During emergencies, timeliness is key. The preferred channel shifts to emergency text messages. The tone for these messages becomes more formal, firm, and directive to convey urgency.
- ❑ For critical government communications, TV is the top choice for Asians and Continental Europeans while social media is also preferred by Asians and MELAA
- ❑ Trusted sources for information include government departments, health professionals, and community group leaders. Timely communication and regular updates across multiple channels are crucial for building trust.

Way forward

- Address language barriers and cultural insensitivity by providing multilingual information and tailoring communication to specific cultural backgrounds, especially for Asian and MELAA communities.
- During emergency situations, utilise the preferred channel like text messages, TV, social media and adopt a formal, firm and directive tone to ensure the message is acted upon promptly.

Recommendations

Channels and formats

- ❑ Written communication (letters, emails, and SMS), is a usually preferred channels. Additionally, Government websites and individual agency websites are also favoured for accessing information across all communities.
- ❑ Additionally, MELAA communities prefer to access information via text messages. While six out of ten Continental Europeans find written texts most effective, for Asians, public announcements and written text are most effective, followed by videos
- ❑ A significant majority of respondents (74%) could not recall effective government communication, but for the minority who could, successful strategies included using multiple channels like social media and TV, and tailoring messages culturally and linguistically.

Government gaps and wins

- ❑ A perceived area for improvement in government communication is explaining the "why" (e.g., civic duties, such as voting, jury duty or weather alerts) of events, not just the "what".
- ❑ Lack of language support, including subtitles on important broadcasts where appropriate.
- ❑ Despite these gaps, the general sentiment towards the government is positive.
- ❑ Examples of successful communication include the empathetic updates during the Christchurch earthquake, the prompt responses from the Immigration Department, and a multi-language health information pamphlet provided during COVID-19.

Best practices for communicating with Ethnic Communities include



- Using simple vocabulary, showing a helpful and empathetic tone, offering bilingual staff, and providing direct access and quick responses across multiple platforms.
- To become an even more effective and trusted source, Ministry for Ethnic Communities can focus on tone, style, and cultural nuance for each community.



Audience Is Everything™

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Glossary

Consumer & Media Insights (CMI)

Nielsen's Consumer and Media Insights (CMI) is a comprehensive solution that offers a deep understanding of the New Zealand market. Based on a survey of 10,000 New Zealanders with four updates per year, it provides a wide range of data including demographics, lifestyle, purchasing behaviours, attitudes, and media habits.

Media Index Definitions (Usage)

Outdoor

Based on the opportunity people have to view outdoor advertising and results are broken into Opp To See Outdoor Adv-Heavy (Q4-Q5), Opp To See Outdoor, Adv-Moderate (Q3), Opp To See Outdoor Adv-Light (Q1-Q2)

Television

Time spent watching television (all formats), both daytime and evening, at home and away from home on an average weekday between Monday - Friday/Saturday/ Sunday.

Internet

Time spent using the internet during an average week, excluding emails, on any device.

Newspaper

Based on the total number of daily newspapers read in the last 7 days. Excludes Sundays, weeklies and community newspapers.

Magazines

Based on the total number of publications a respondent has read within the publishing period i.e. read 2 monthly magazines within the last month and 1 weekly magazine within the last 7 days.

Radio

Claimed time personally spent listening to commercial radio, both daytime and evening, at home and away from home on an average weekday between Monday and Friday, an average Saturday and an average Sunday.

Cinema

Based on the total number of visits to cinemas in the last 6 months.

Public announcement

A public announcement (PA) system is an electronic device for amplifying and distributing sound to a large audience. They are used as a medium for communicating safety information, advertising, and emergency alerts. Unlike a broadcast service, Public announcement systems are typically limited to a specific area.

