

Knowledge, Awareness, and Challenges of External Quality Assessment among Laboratory Medicine Professionals: An Online Survey

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EQAs-PT schemes are of primordial importance to the analytical quality, standardization of methods, and harmonization of results.

Many professionals from the field of laboratory medicine are familiar with EQAs as participation is mandatory for laboratory certification according to the ISO 15189 standard.

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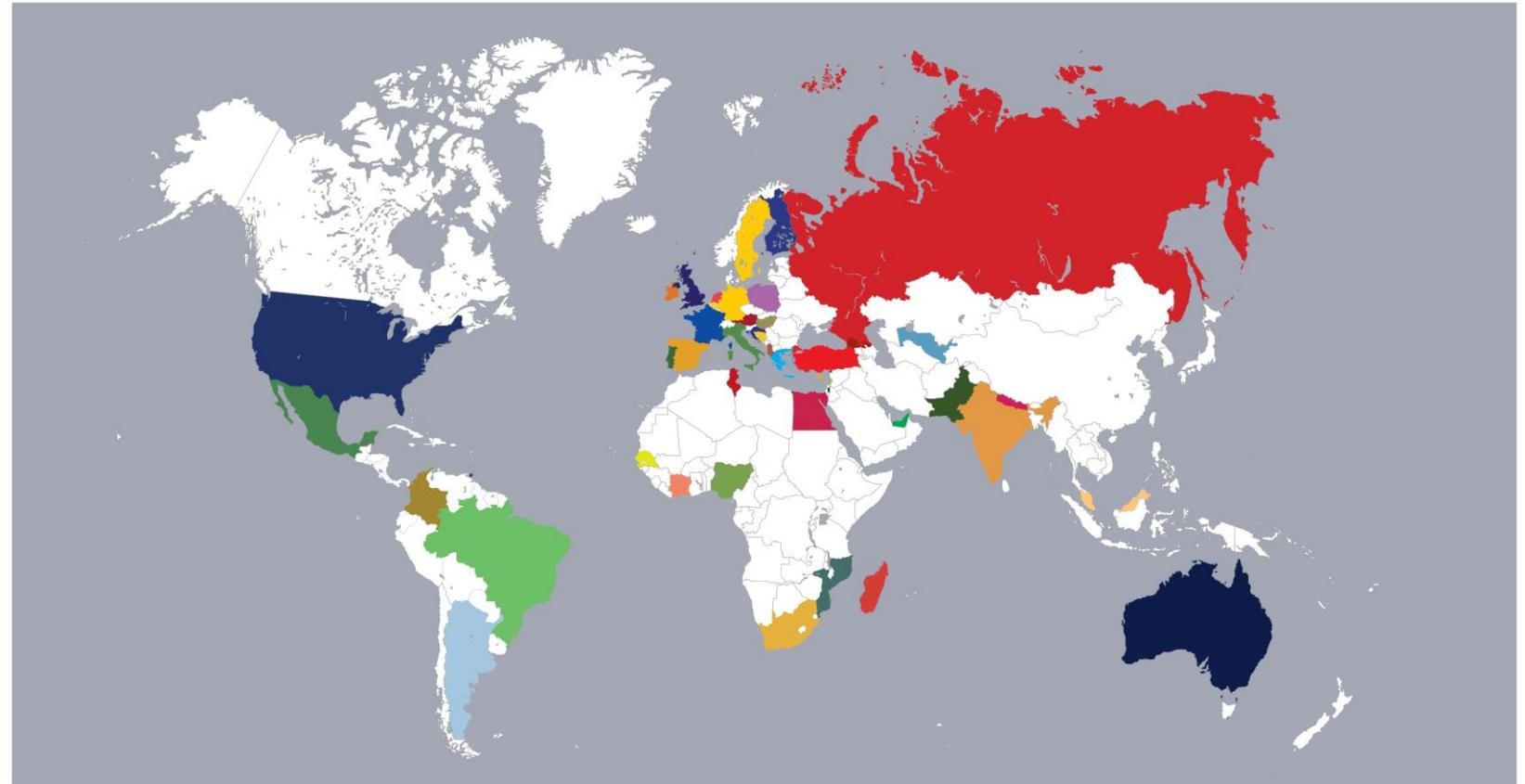
Aim: To assess scientists' familiarity, opinions, and expectations regarding EQA-PT

Methods

- We conducted an online survey consisting of 28 questions, covering demographic and professional data, basic concepts and benefits of EQA-PT, participation and satisfaction with EQA-PT schemes and providers, and educational needs and suggestions for improvement
- The survey was distributed via email, social media, and professional networks to scientists (23-71 years old) working in laboratory medicine

RESULTS:

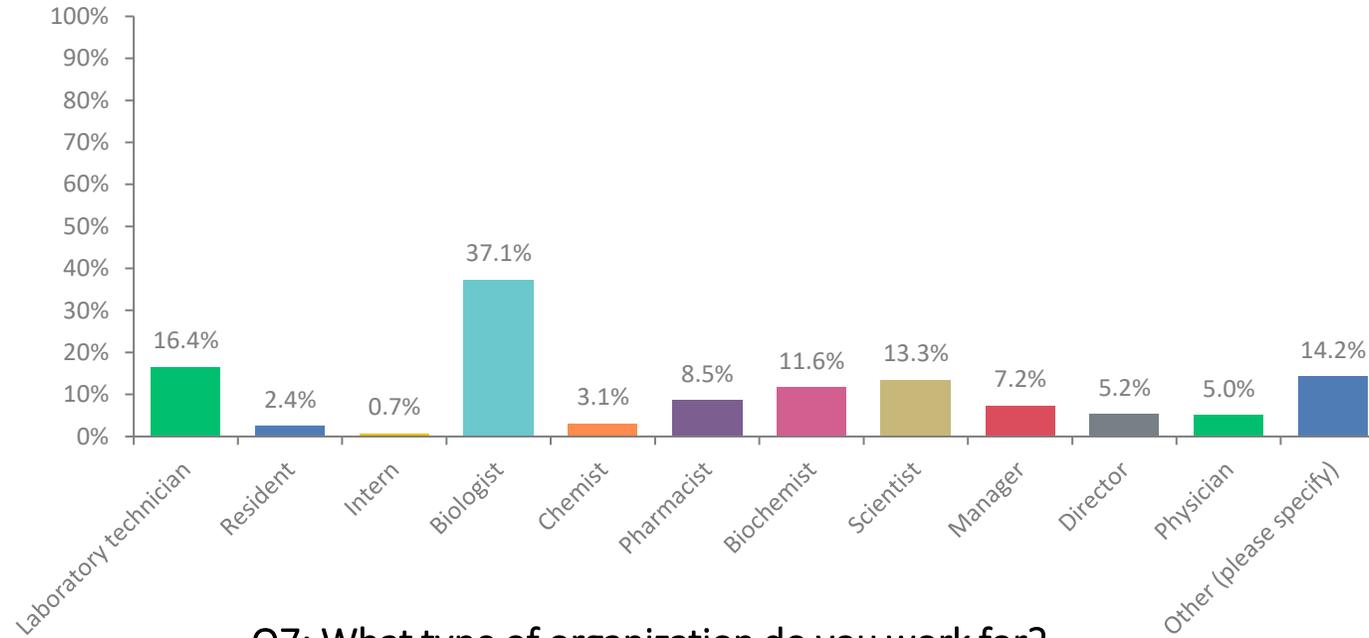
458 responses from 47 countries, mainly from France, United Kingdom, Greece and Austria



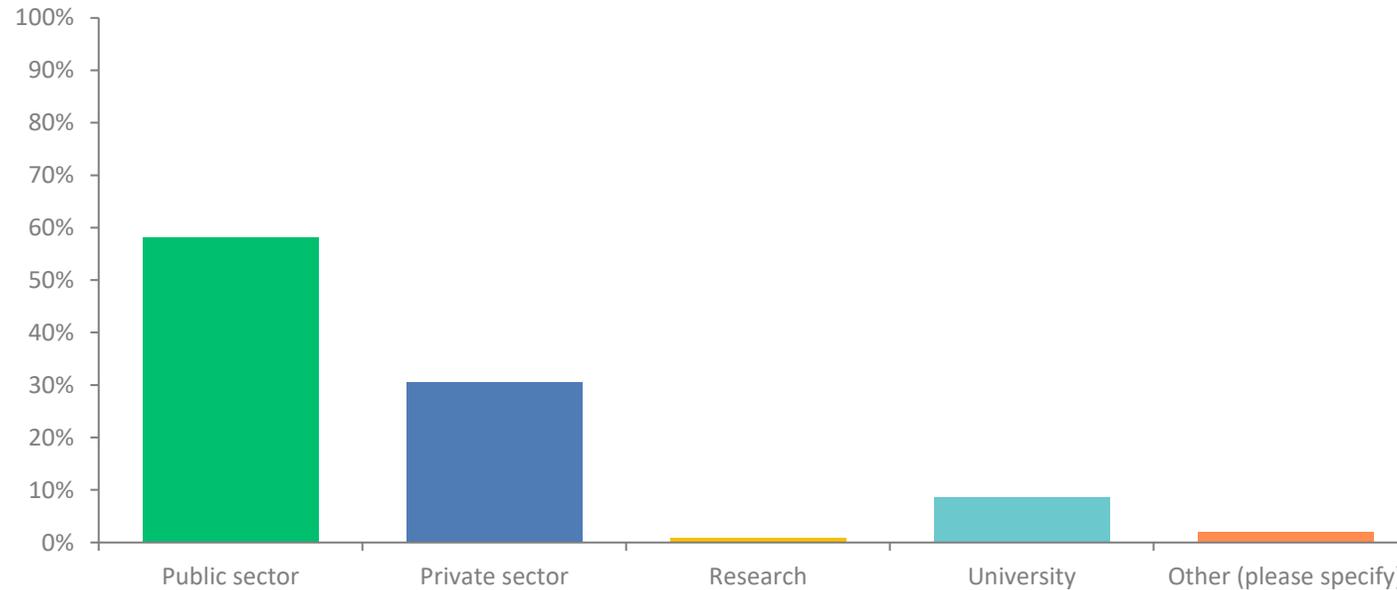
France	157	Italy	10	United Arab Emirates	2	Ivory Coast	1	Brazil	1
Kingdom	62	Pakistan	5	Croatia	2	Uzbekistan	1	Argentina	1
Greece	40	South Africa	4	Senegal	2	Bosnia Herzegovina	1	Georgia	1
Austria	39	Finland	4	Netherlands	2	Australia	1	Trinidad & Tobago	1
Portugal	19	India	3	Cyprus	2	Malta	1	Lebanon	1
Turkey	17	Russia	3	Egypt	1	Singapore	1	Malaysia	1
United States	16	Germany	3	Mexico	1	Madagascar	1	Mozambique	1
Belgium	13	Nigeria	2	Palestine	1	Albania	1		
Ireland	13	Nepal	2	Sweden	1	Hungary	1		
Spain	12	Tunisia	2	Colombia	1	Poland	1		

RESULTS:

Q5: What is your profession?

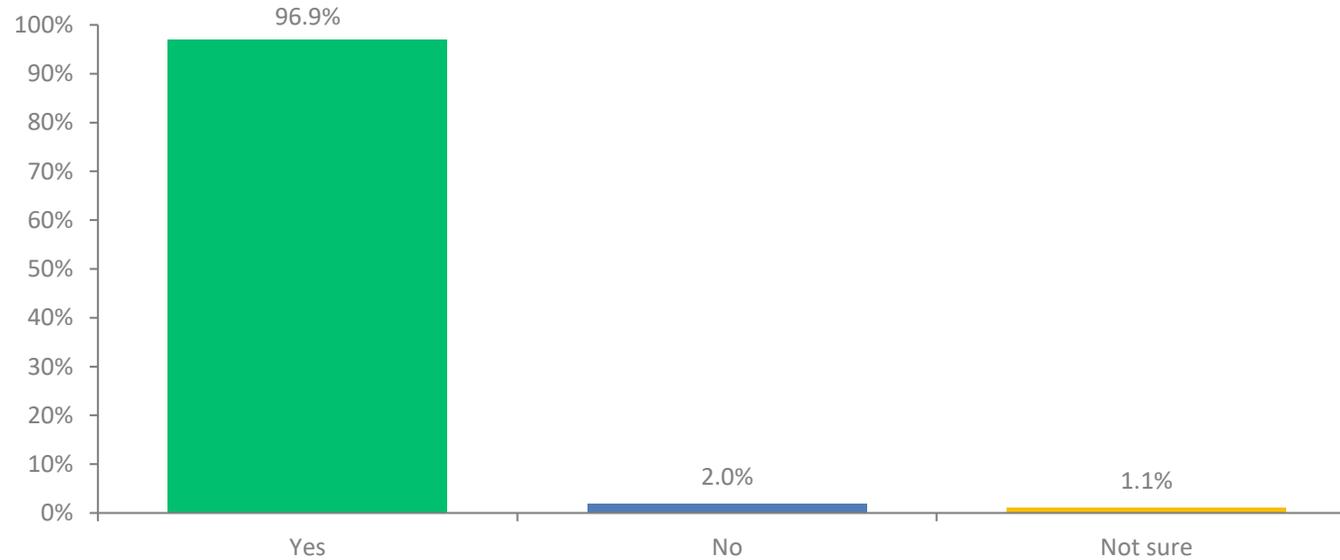


Q7: What type of organization do you work for?

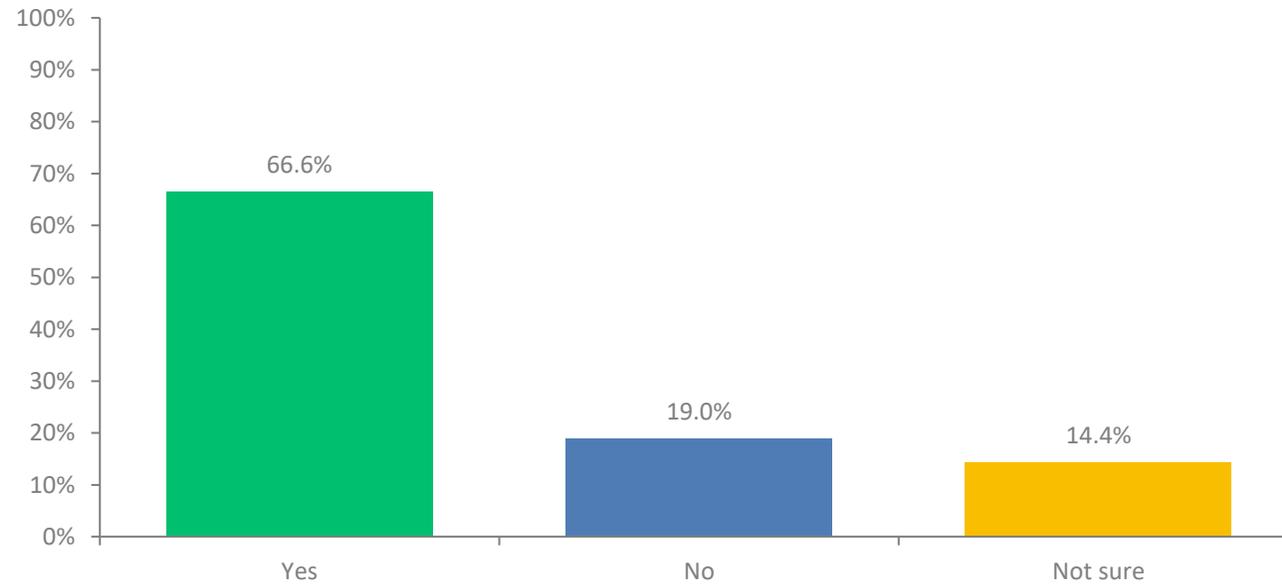


RESULTS:

Q10: Have you heard of External Quality Assessment (EQA)?

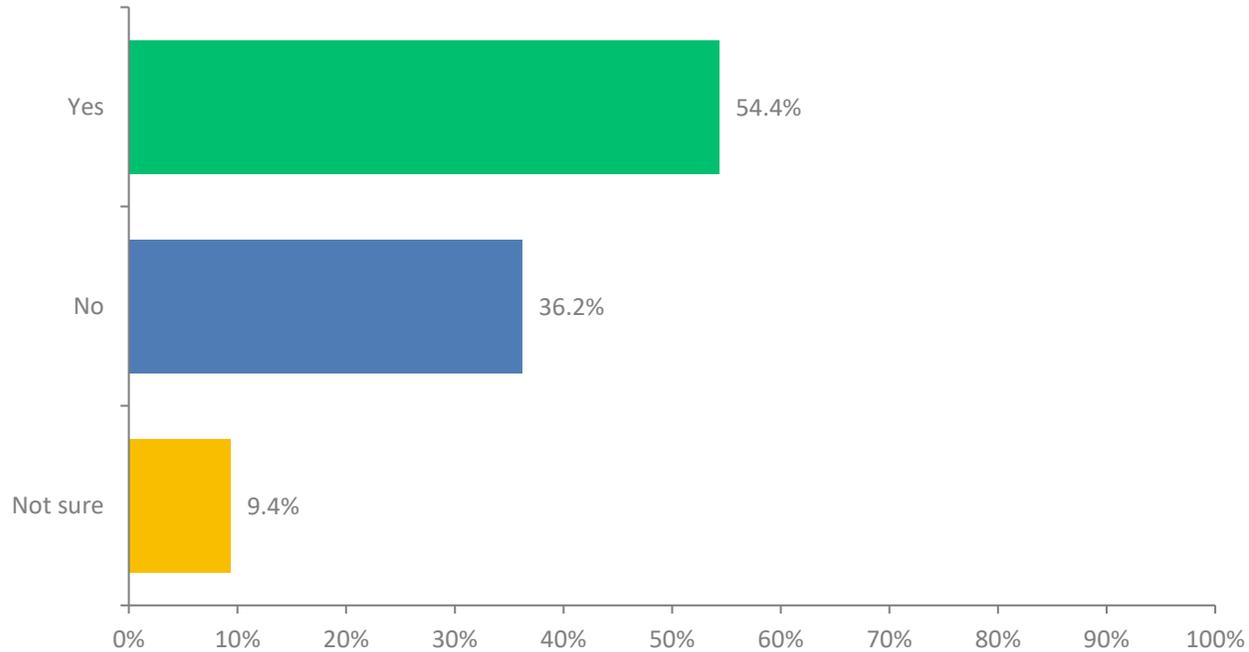


Q11: Do you know what the commutability of control materials means?

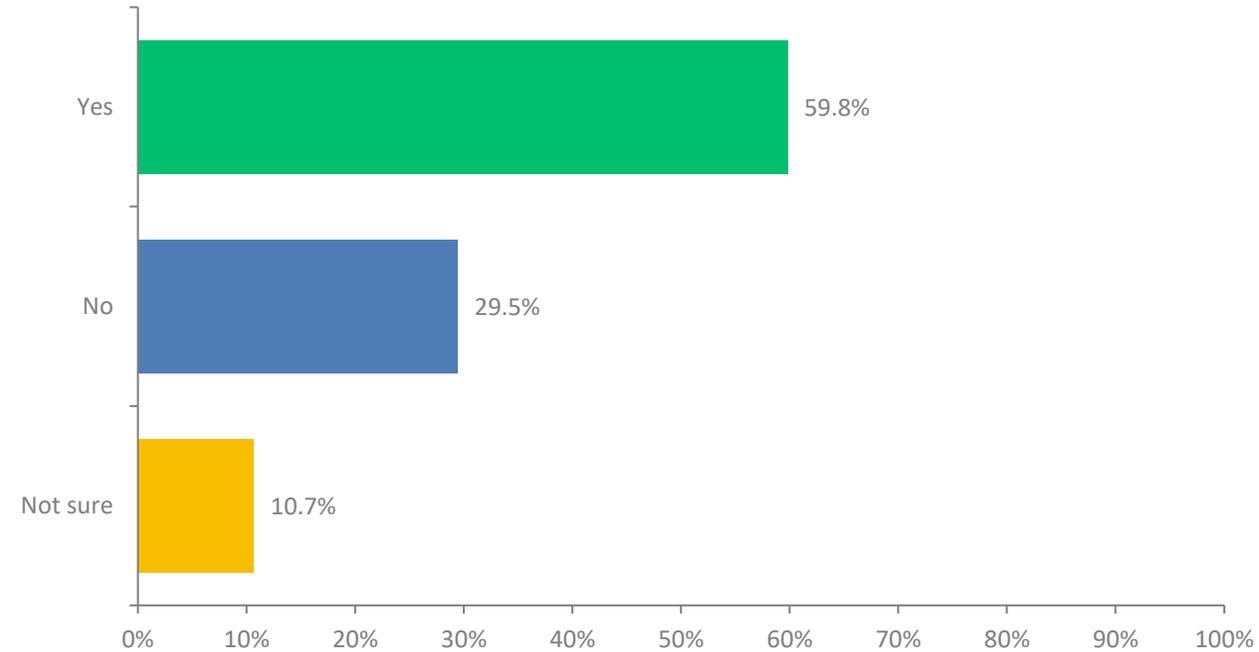


RESULTS:

Q12: Are you familiar with digital EQA and digital samples?

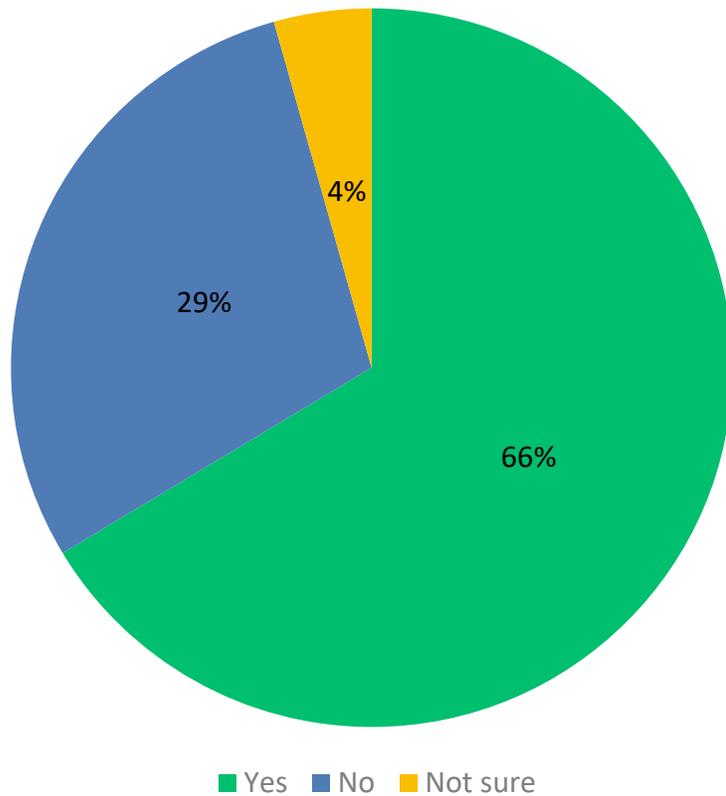


Q13: Are you aware of any educational EQA schemes?

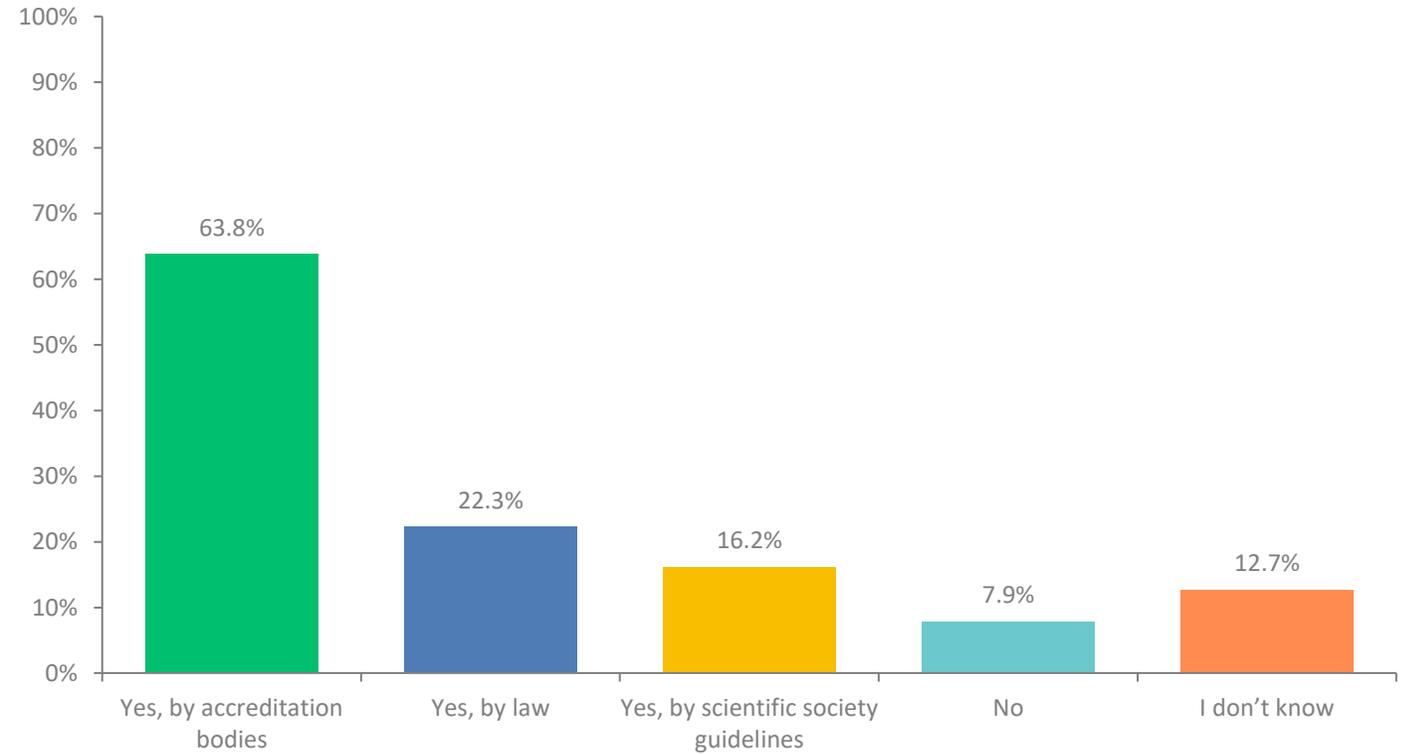


RESULTS:

Q15: Is your laboratory accredited to ISO 15189?



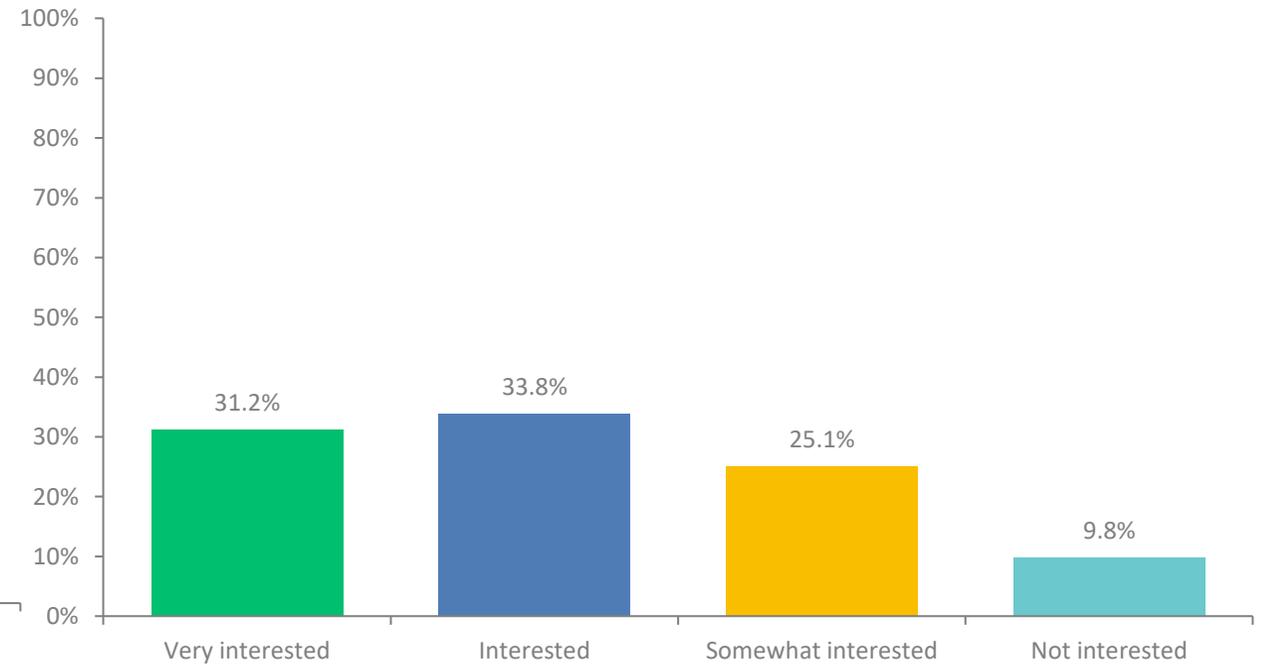
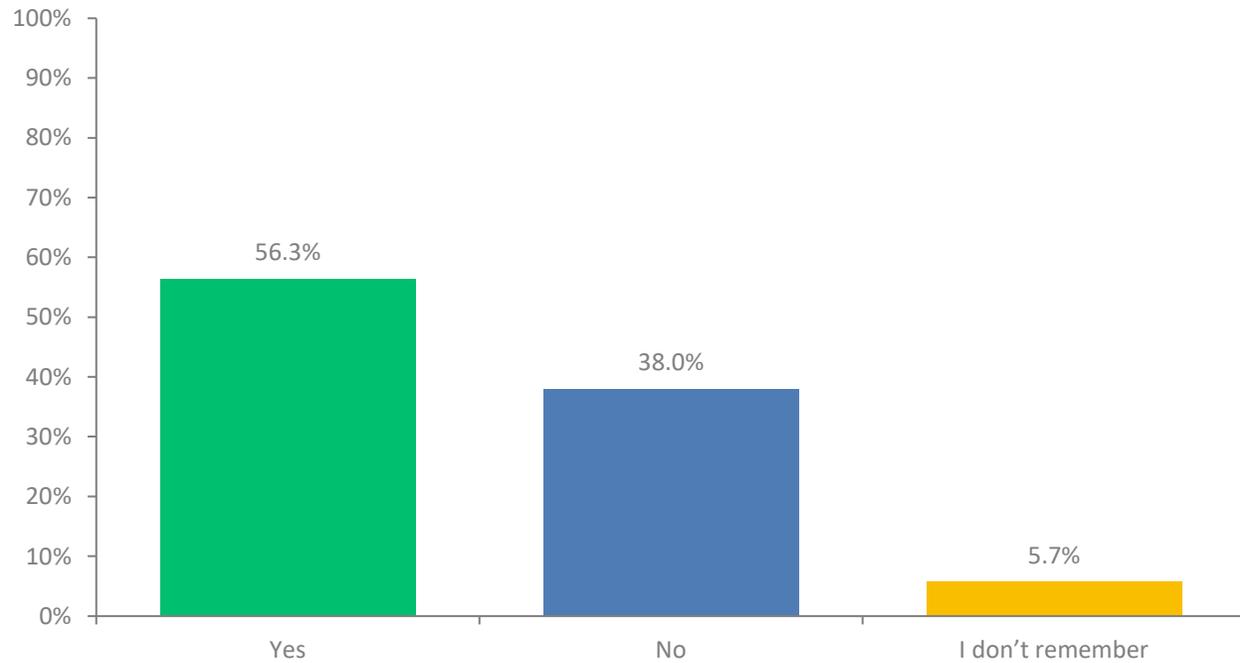
Q16: Is EQA mandatory in your country?



RESULTS:

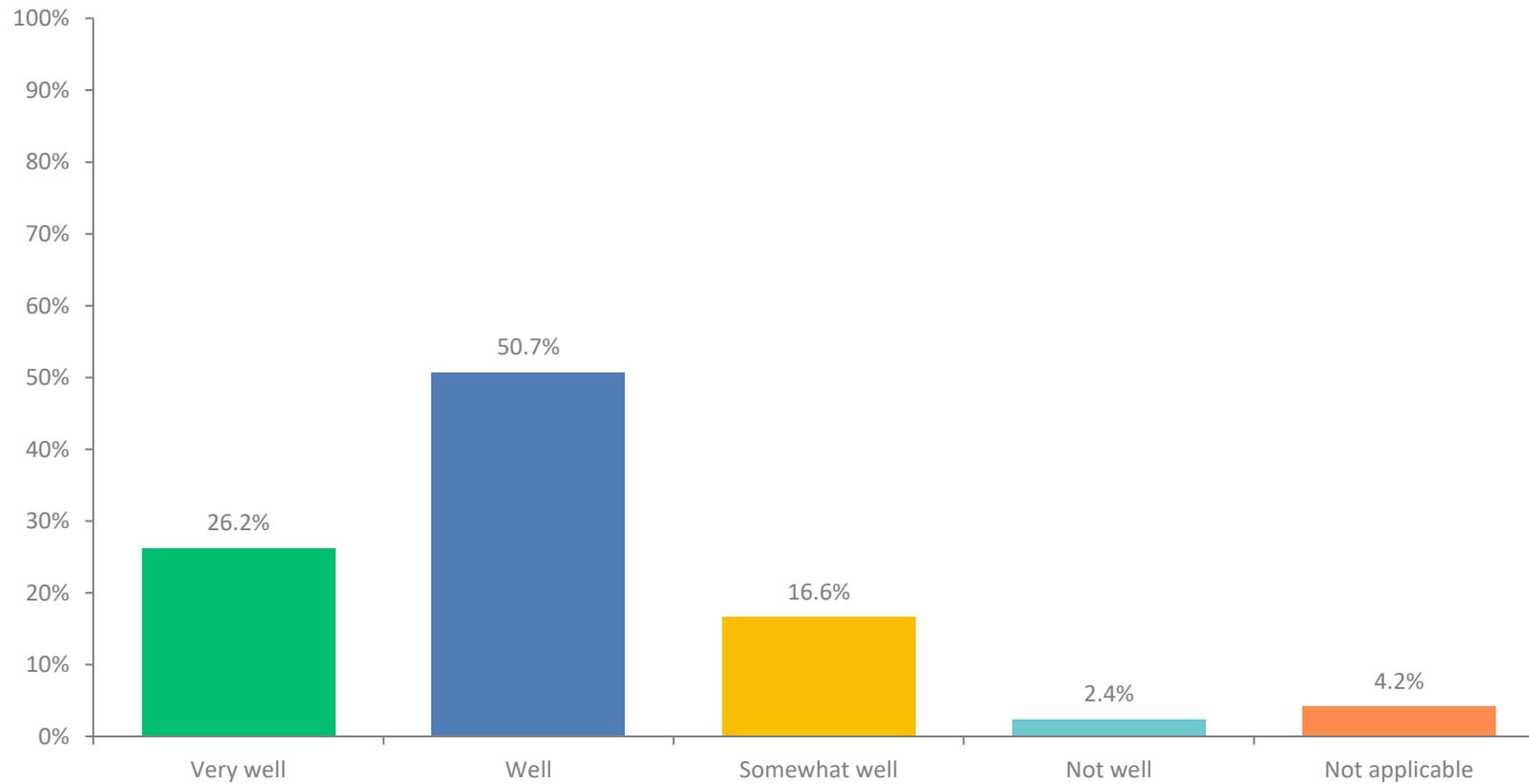
Q18: Have you ever attended any training about EQA (physically or virtually)?

Q19: How interested are you in working with an EQA provider?



RESULTS:

Q20: How well do the existing EQA schemes meet the needs of your laboratory?



RESULTS:

MAIN BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN EQA-PT	MAIN CHALLENGES/DIFFICULTIES WHEN PARTICIPATING IN EQA-PT
Suitable for their laboratory because it checked the quality and accuracy of their results	High cost especially for small laboratories or rare tests
Comparison with other laboratories using similar or different methods or devices	Receiving, preparing, storing, and transporting EQA samples especially from abroad
Necessary for accreditation , as it shows their skill and compliance	Problems with non-commutable or non-representative samples
Helped them learn and improve	Different websites or platforms for results registration, sometimes with language or technical problems, results interpretation, perception of statistics and graphs
Get feedback and advice from experts	Meeting deadlines , scheduling tests, and finding time for EQA

CONCLUSIONS:

- Laboratory medicine scientists have a high level of knowledge and awareness of EQA-PT, but also encounter some obstacles and challenges when taking part in EQA schemes .
- The results may reflect a positive bias because many respondents were contacted through the EFLM, IFCC channels, and EQA providers.
- IFCC, EFLM, EQALM, and other relevant parties collaborate to offer more educational opportunities and resources for laboratory professionals in this area

Thank you

for your attention!!!