



STUDENT  
AFFAIRS  
IRELAND



**IASAS**

International Association of  
Student Affairs and Services



# SDGs & SAS: A Global Picture

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# Context

- SDGs offer an ambitious global social justice framework
- Deeply relational, contextual, and complex
- Contextualises knowledge and knower
- SDGs speak to personal and political agency
- Notions that HE as a ‘meritocracy’ are challenged
- Notions that success is built on ‘inherent attributes’ and ‘neutral skills’ are challenged
- Inclusive of people and all spheres of life

# Literature: SDG in HE context

- SDGs position higher education as a public good
- Learners must acquire SDGs knowledge and skills to impact society
- Higher education as essential element to achieving Agenda 2030
  - Research, Teaching, SAS, Community Engagement
- Impact via individual, structural and agents of social justice
- SAS practitioners support some SDGs more than others
- SAS – SDGs compatibility!

# Methodology

## Questionnaire

- 25 questions + 8 demographic questions
- Personal awareness and opinion
- Higher Education Institution/Organization
- SAS-specific

## Data Collection

- IRC approval from American University of Sharjah
- Qualtrics, online
- Snowball sampling

## Analysis

- 360 respondents (318 valid & usable)
- SPSS used to analyse quantitative data
- Thematic analysis used for qualitative data

## Limitations

- Self-select and self-report
- Snowball sampling (exploratory study)
- Country level comparison not possible, but regional aggregation was
- Purpose is not testing but confidently generating hypotheses

# Participants

Region	Number of Participants
Africa	36
Asia	60
Europe	96
Middle East	10
Oceania	5
North America	92
Latin America and Caribbean	19
TOTAL	318

- 60% 35-54 years of age
- 53% female
- 53 countries
- 64% work at public HEIs, 27% at private HEIs, 7% are part of organization/association
- 36% senior SAS, 25% mid-level, 18% advisors, 21% various.

# RESULTS



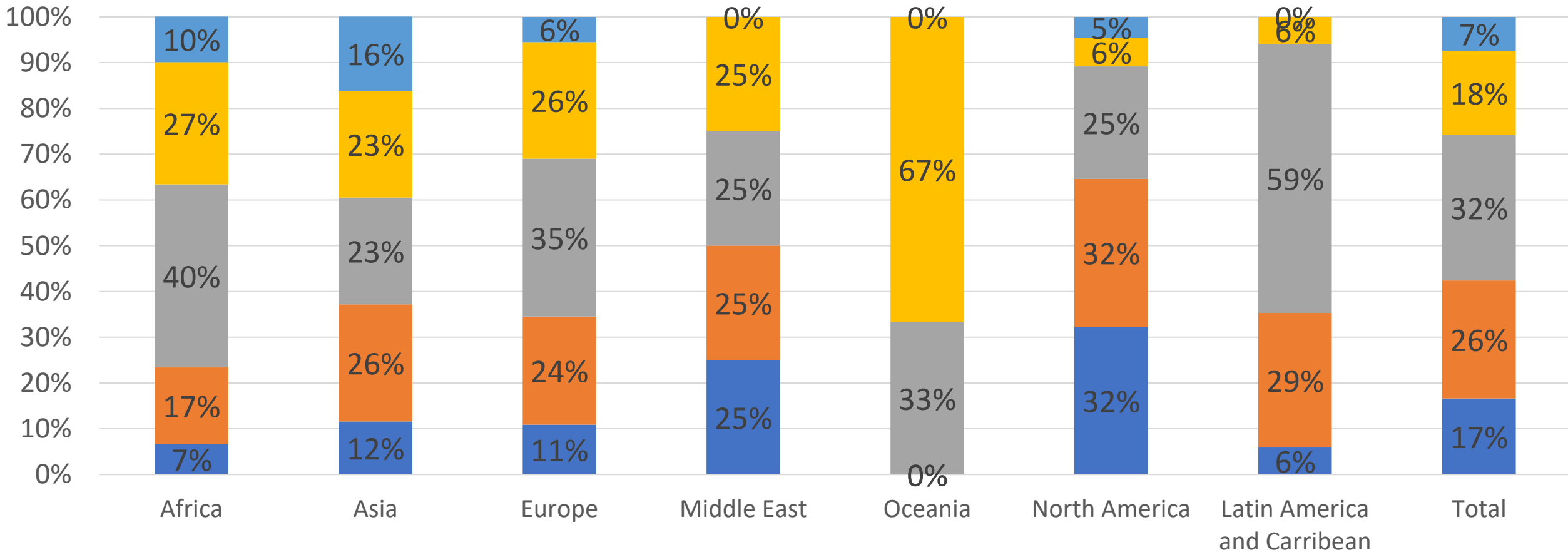
Global Summit 2022



**Table 2: Are you familiar with the SDGs? N=318**

	N	%
Yes	162	50.9%
Somewhat	95	29.9%
No	61	19.2%

## To what extent does your HEI/Organization support the SDGs?

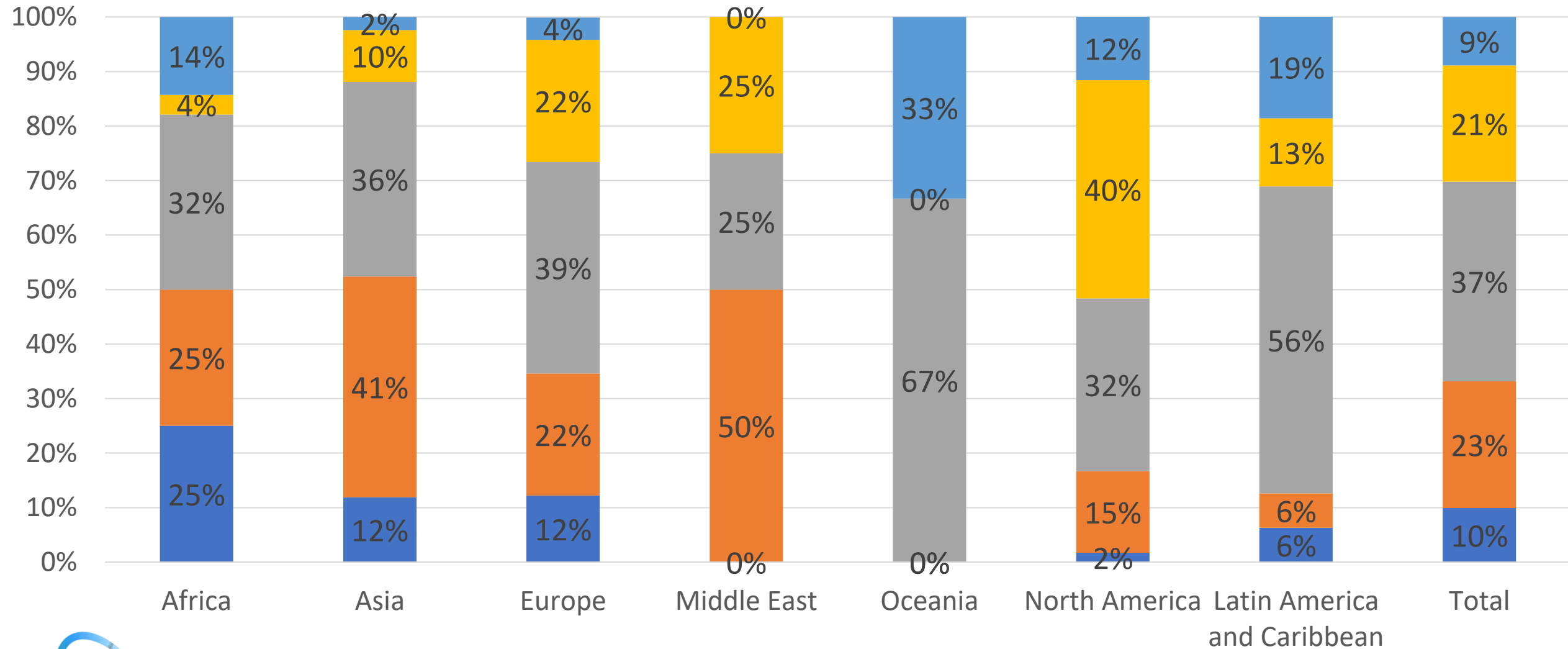


■ Not a Priority   
 ■ Low Priority   
 ■ Medium Priority   
 ■ High Priority   
 ■ Essential



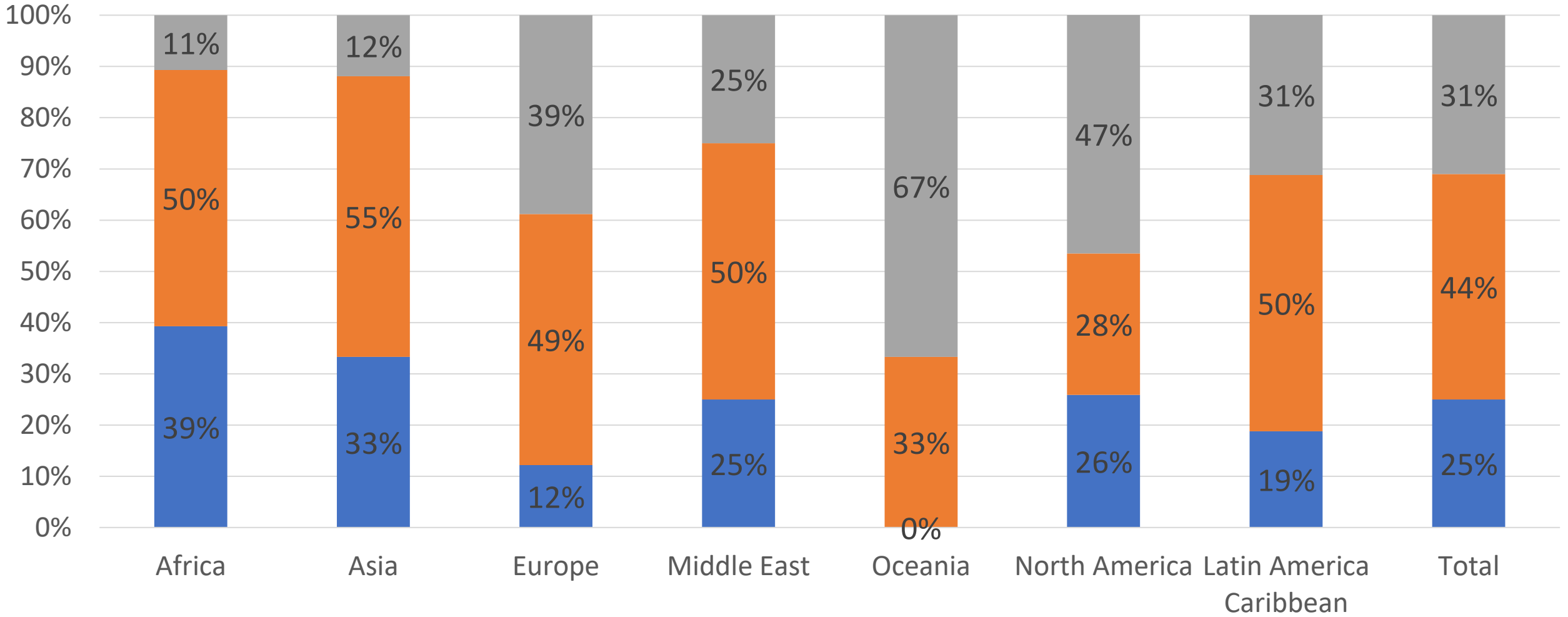


## To what extent are Student Affairs professionals knowledgeable about SDGs?



■ Very Knowledgeable
 ■ Quite a Bit
 ■ Somewhat
 ■ Not at All
 ■ Do Not Know

# Are you using the SDGs to inform your work directly or indirectly with your students?



■ Yes ■ Somewhat ■ No

# Top-Ranked SDGs in SAS Work

- SDG 4 Quality Education 141
- SDG 3 Good Health & Wellbeing 94
- SDG 5 Gender Equality 72
- SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities 66
- SDG 17 Partnerships 61

# PRACTICES



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# Clustered Practices:

- Individual impact – impact on students and staff
- Institutional impact – impact on strategy, structures and processes
- Sustainable impact – students are active agents of social justice

# Summary of Practices for Learning & Development

- Community Engagement Programmes
- Leadership Development Programmes
- Shaping Vision and Guiding Philosophy
  - Food Pantries
  - Emergency Grants
  - Mental Health Counseling
- Partnerships with business, NGOs, and Governmental Agencies
- Partnerships within an Institution and across Institutions

# Specific Practice Examples from Respondents

- Composting, recycling, eliminating use and distribution of plastics and Styrofoam
- Creating centre for gender studies to ensure orientation towards gender equality
- Curriculum includes the sustainable development into the learning programme
- Reduction of the energy consumption in the buildings
- SDGs built into strategic objectives
- Sustainability conference promoting awareness and action towards the SDGs
- Conference/competition on sustainability of electric car or Smart wheelchairs
- Green Campus initiatives
- Courses on the SDGs
- Regional purchasing
- Waste avoidance

# Themed practices

- Environmental sustainability 14
- Research and/or curriculum 9
- Equity 7
- Gender 6
- Energy 6
- Food 4
- Student engagement/access 3
- Financial 3



# Key Questions for Consideration

- How do SDGs inform direct work with students
- How do SDGs inform planning, strategic & organisational work
- How do SDGs inform your life and agency
  
- What are the limitations inherent in the SDGs for application to your work
- What are the obstacles to using SDGs in your work (context, institutional, etc.)

# Conclusion

- SDGs form a meaningful framework
- SDGs inform and infuse curriculum and programmes
- SDGs inform strategy and planning
- More work needed to inform institutional policy and strategy
- More awareness of SAS in a deeply relational world