

▶ **Industry Outlook for 2024:
Merchandise, Gift Cards, and Event Gifting**

December 2023

▶ Survey Overview

- The Incentive Research Foundation (IRF) sponsors regular trending surveys that cover topics of current interest to those in the incentive industry: incentive providers, suppliers to the industry, and corporate incentive merchandise and travel buyers.
- The Gift Card/Merchandise Outlook study has been conducted since 2009, as part of the IRF's industry tracking studies.
- This report summarizes findings from data collected in October 2023.

- ✓ **363 Industry professionals were recruited by an independent research panel company.**
 - 156 North American Respondents
 - 207 European Respondents
- ✓ **39 additional respondents were recruited to participate in the survey by numerous groups and incentive communities to supplement the panelists.**
 - ✓ **Total respondents = 402**
 - ✓ **193 North Americans; 209 Europeans**

74%

Corporate (e.g., Buyer, Planner, Sales, HR)

- **Up from 67% in 2022**
 - **North America 78%**
 - **Europe 70%**

16%

Third Party (e.g., Incentive Company, Travel Agency, Consultant)

- **Down from 33% in 2022**
 - **North America 16%**
 - **Europe 16%**

10%

Industry Supplier*

- **Up from < 1% in 2022**
 - **North America 6%**
 - **Europe 14%**

► Geographical Representation

Country	Total N	Percent
United States (North America)	151	38%
United Kingdom (Europe)	46	11%
Canada (North America)	42	10%
Italy (Europe)	39	10%
Sweden (Europe)	39	10%
France (Europe)	31	8%
Germany (Europe)	29	7%
Spain (Europe)	25	6%

► Methodology Considerations

Audience

- The study retained a similar country scope to 2022, including the same major North American and European countries.
- The 193 North Americans came from both panel sources and volunteer efforts. The panel company contributed 156 respondents, while an additional 37 were recruited through volunteer lists sourced within the industry.
- All respondents indicated some level of responsibility for gift card and/or merchandise incentive programs and affirmed they could confidently answer questions about non-cash incentive programs, including spend questions.

Weighting and Segmentation

- Weighting has not been applied to the data to control for variances in response counts across the stakeholder groups. Totals reported are serve as a base across all survey respondents.
- The extremely small supplier sample from 2022 prohibited separate analysis by this segment. For consistency in tracking data, the supplier segment has not been segmented for 2023 but is counted in overall totals.
- North American and European results are presented separately.

▶ Client Sectors (Client Side)

Sector	North American Distribution				European Distribution		
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Services	21%	22%	23%	18%	26%	23%	23%
Banking/Financial/Insurance	18%	16%	11%	15%	10%	10%	7%
IT/Technology	16%	14%	26%	14%	21%	18%	28%
Manufacturing/Industrial	11%	13%	14%	15%	20%	20%	14%
Pharmaceutical/Healthcare	7%	4%	3%	9%	6%	5%	4%
Retail/Wholesale trade	7%	15%	14%	24%	15%	13%	15%
Automotive	6%	5%	1%	0%	2%	5%	0%

► Client Sectors (Supplier Side)

Sector	North American Distribution				European Distribution		
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Services	37%	53%	63%	48%	16%	38%	47%
Banking/Financial/Insurance	32%	39%	39%	43%	30%	20%	23%
IT/Technology	32%	33%	46%	43%	16%	35%	27%
Manufacturing/Industrial	32%	39%	32%	38%	22%	25%	31%
Pharmaceutical/Healthcare	26%	26%	29%	26%	9%	9%	18%
Retail/Wholesale trade	26%	38%	29%	50%	21%	19%	24%
Automotive	26%	35%	29%	27%	22%	12%	21%

► Company Revenue

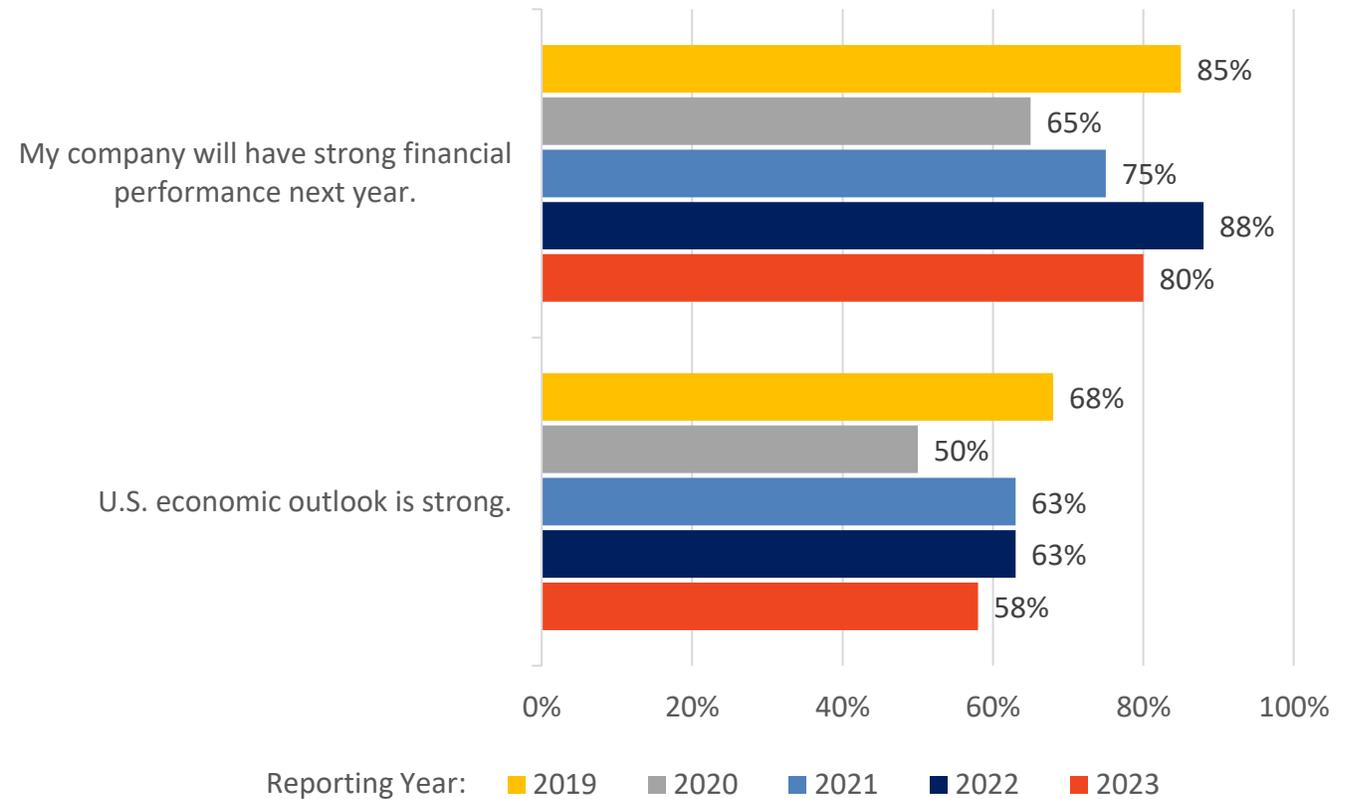
	North American Distribution			European Distribution*		
	Total	Corporate	Third Party	Total	Corporate	Third Party
Less than \$1 million	7%	7%	7%	6%	7%	3%
Between \$1 million and \$4.9 million	17%	13%	33%	18%	18%	21%
Between \$5 million and 9.9 million	18%	17%	20%	23%	20%	24%
Between \$10 million and \$99.9 million	25%	26%	23%	25%	22%	33%
Between \$100 million and \$1 billion	21%	22%	17%	22%	26%	15%
Over \$1 billion	13%	15%	0%	5%	6%	3%



General Program Outlook

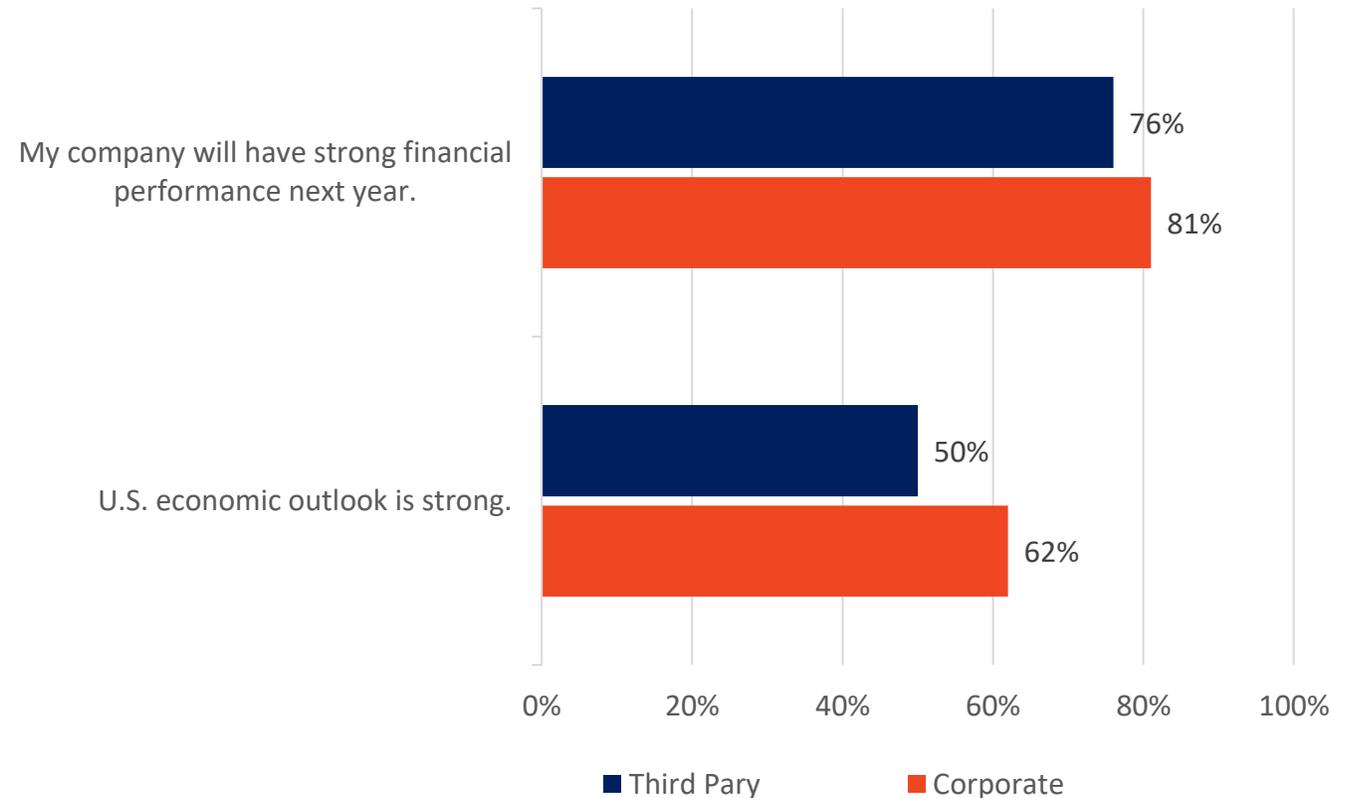
▶ North American General Financial Outlook

- Though declining from the 2023, North American respondents display a mostly positive financial outlook for 2024.
 - 80% expect their company to have a strong financial performance, down 8% from last year
 - 58% believe the US economic outlook is strong, down 5% from last year



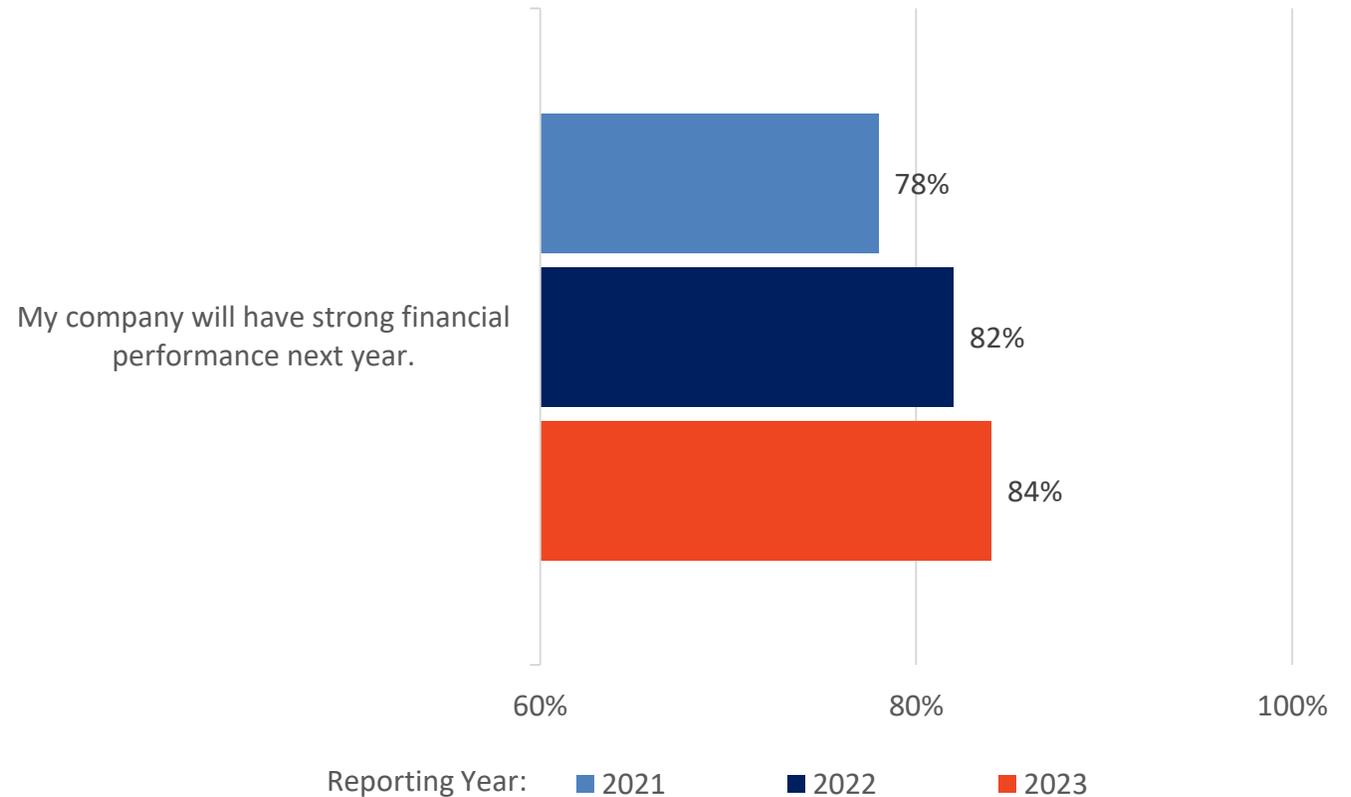
▶ North American Financial Outlook for 2024 by Audience

- Corporate respondents have a more positive economic outlook for 2024 in comparison to third party entities.
 - Corporate respondents are 5% more likely to believe their company will have a strong financial year in 2024.
 - Corporate respondents are 12% more likely to have a positive view of the US economy.



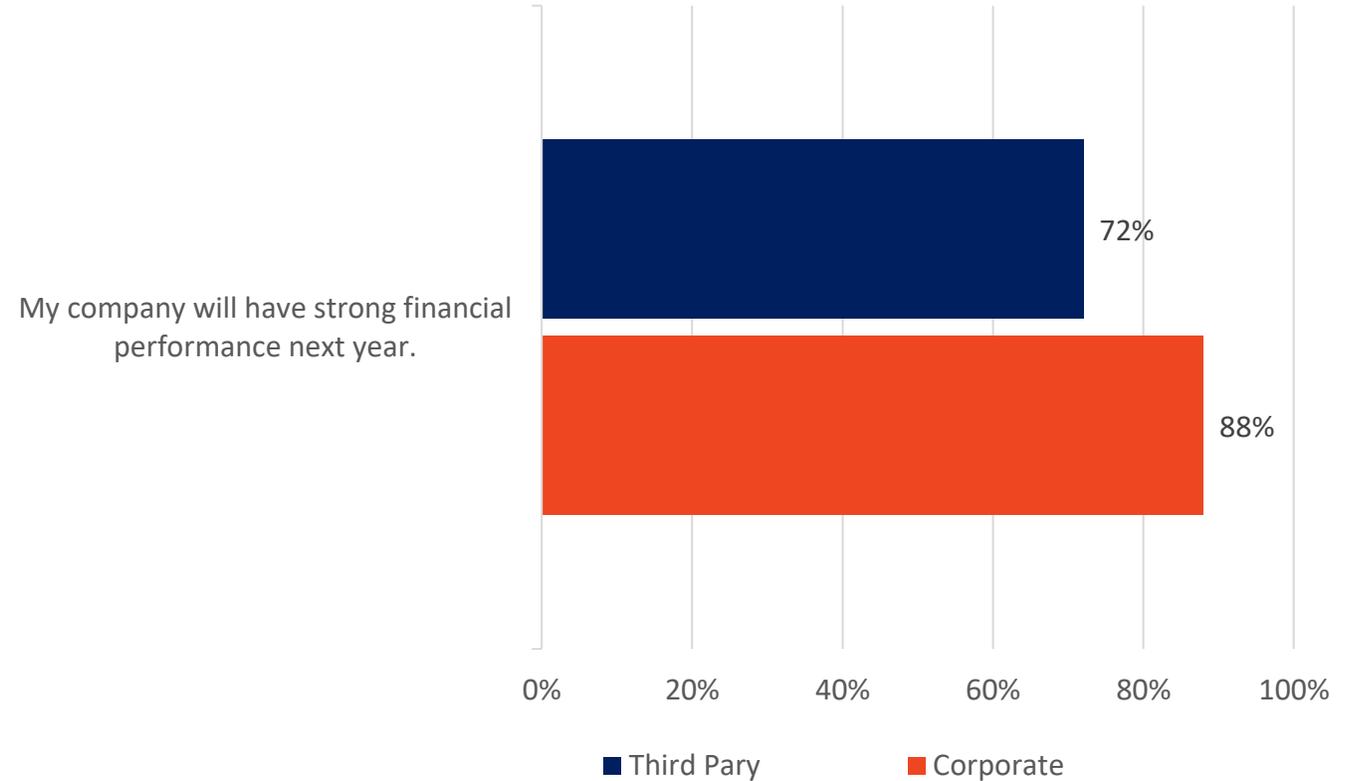
▶ European General Financial Outlook

- European respondents continue to have increasing expectations for their 2024 financial performance.
 - Positive expectations for the upcoming year maintain a consistent 4% year-over-year growth since 2021.
- Company financial expectations in Europe have surpassed North American expectations.



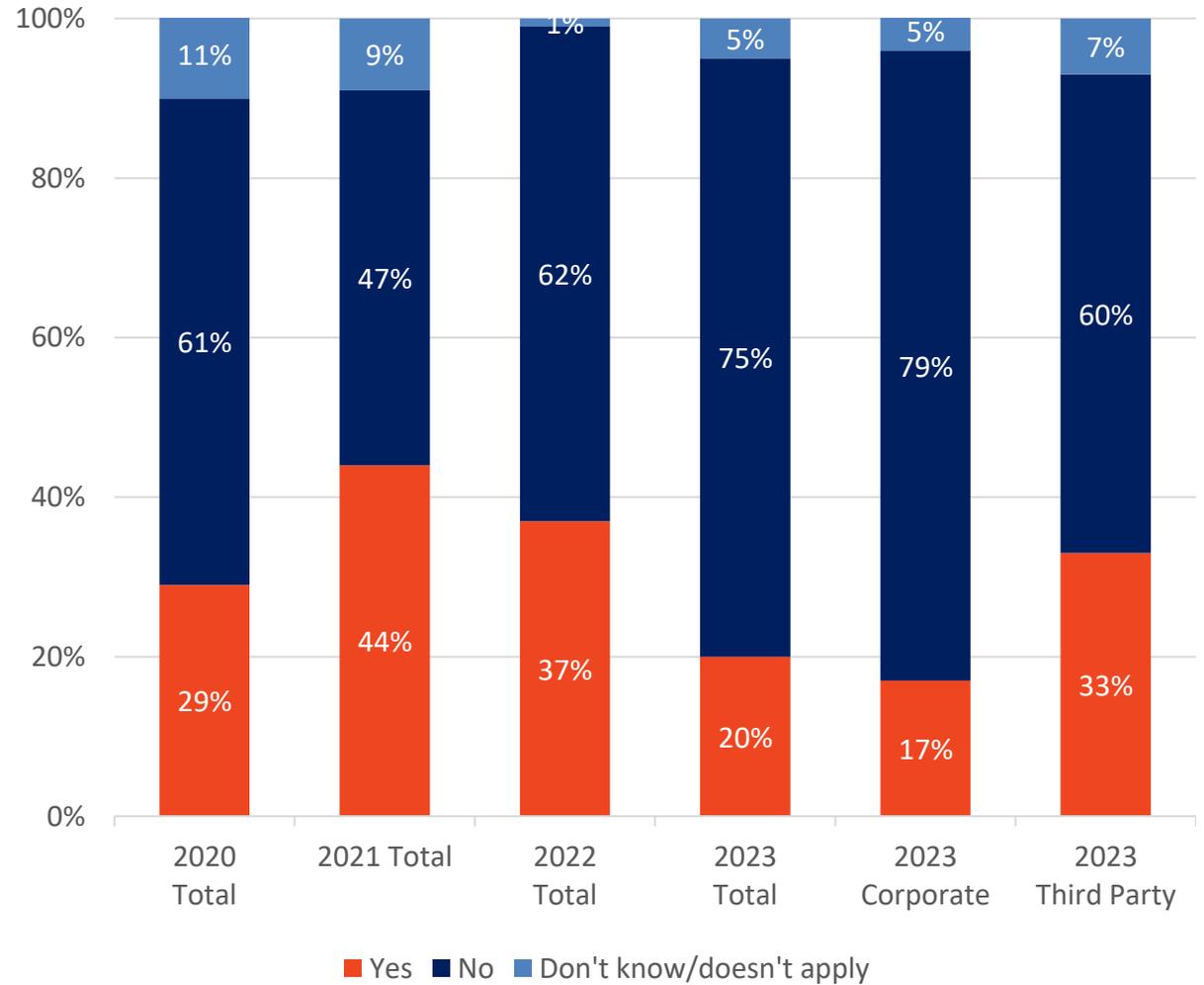
▶ European Financial Outlook for 2024 by Audience

- Similar to North American results, European corporations have a higher expectations for 2024 financial performance than third party entities.
 - While the positive outlook for corporations in Europe has risen 8% year-over-year, it has dropped 12% for third party respondents.



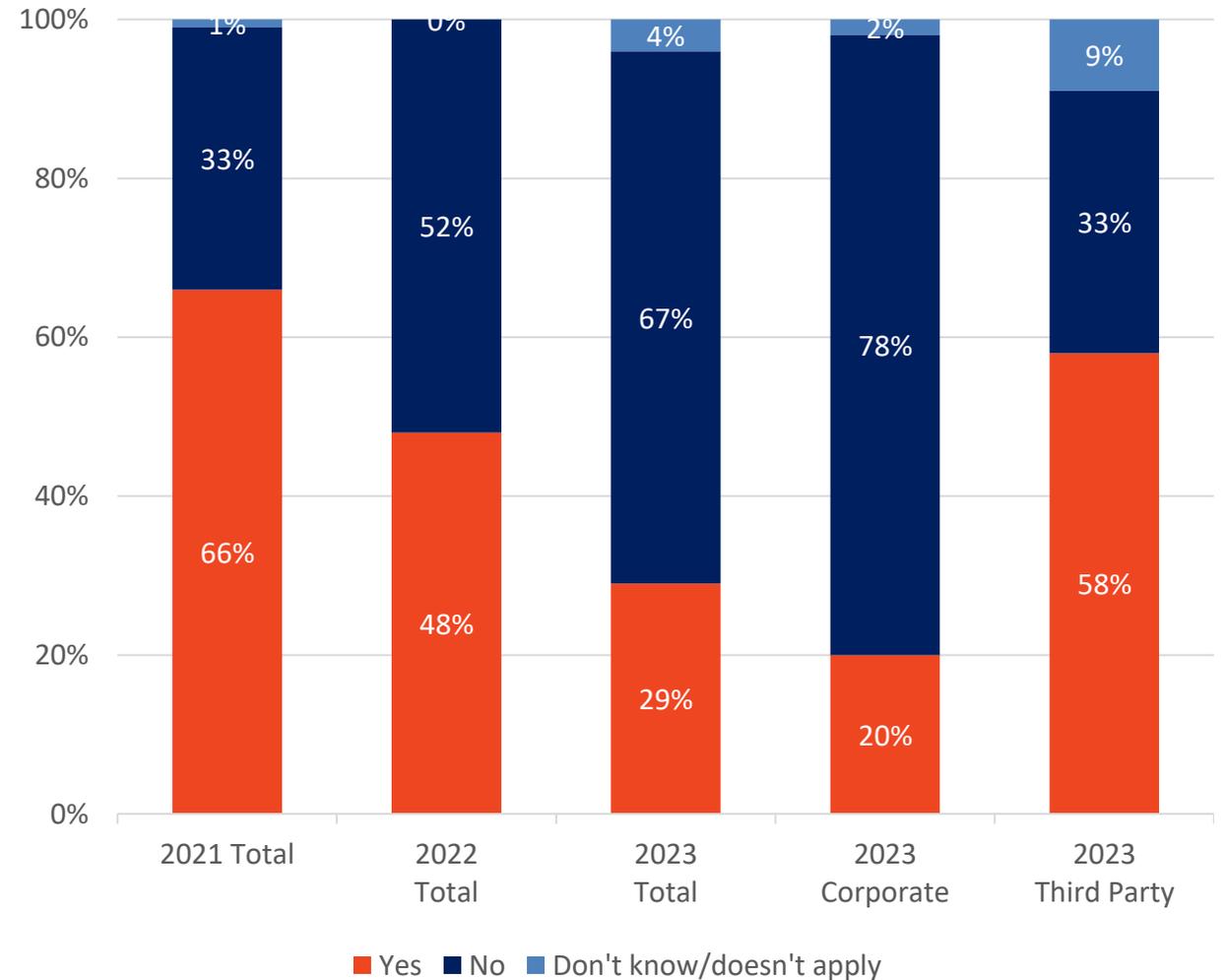
▶ North American Merchandise/Gift Card Program Retention

- North American merchandise/gift card program cancellations continued to decline in 2023.
 - Total program cancellations dropped 17% from 2022 to 2023.
 - Corporate cancellations dropped 18% from 2022 to 2023.
 - Third party cancellations dropped 10% from 2022 to 2023.
- Third party respondents canceled merchandise/gift card programs at nearly double the rate of corporations in 2023.



▶ European Merchandise/Gift Card Program Retention

- Similar to North America, European merchandise/gift card programs cancellations continued to decline in 2023.
 - Total program cancellations dropped 19% from 2022 to 2023.
 - Corporate cancellations dropped 20% from 2022 to 2023.
 - Third party cancellations declined a slight 2% from 2022 to 2023.
- Third party respondents canceled merchandise/gift card programs at nearly triple the rate of corporations in 2023.





Factors Impacting Gift Card/Merchandise Rewards

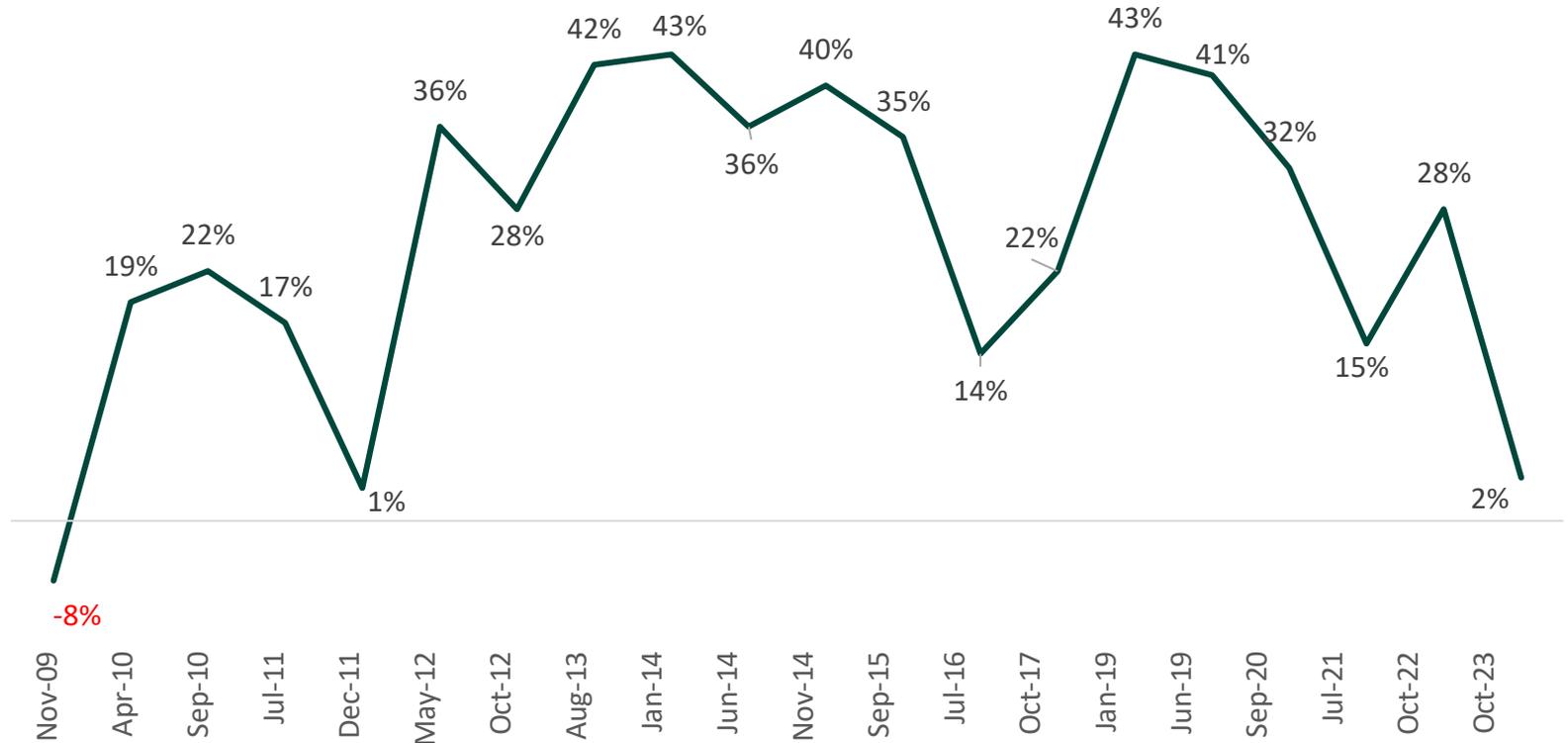
▶ Economic Impact On North American Non-Cash Reward Programs



2024 North American Net Optimism Index

-26% from Fall of 2022

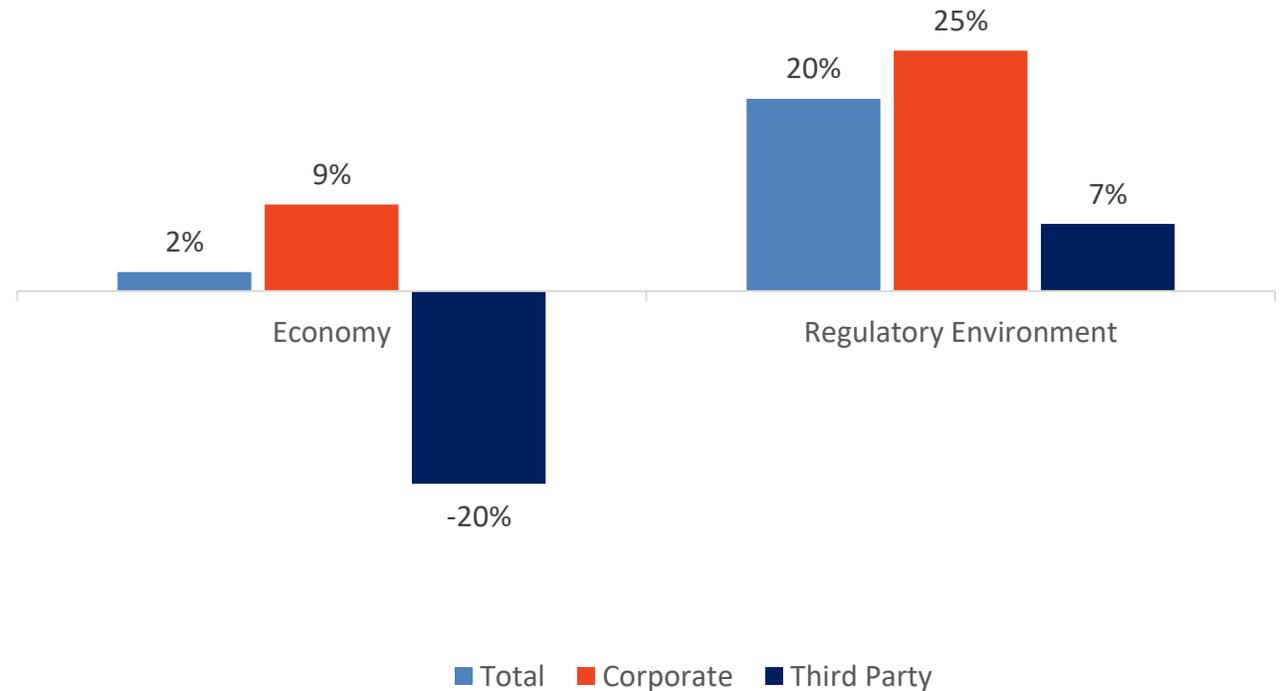
- North American optimism for the impact of the economy on non-cash programs has declined significantly over the last year
 - The net optimism index of 2% for 2024 is the lowest mark recorded since 2011.
 - The -26% year-over-year difference is the most drastic decline on record.



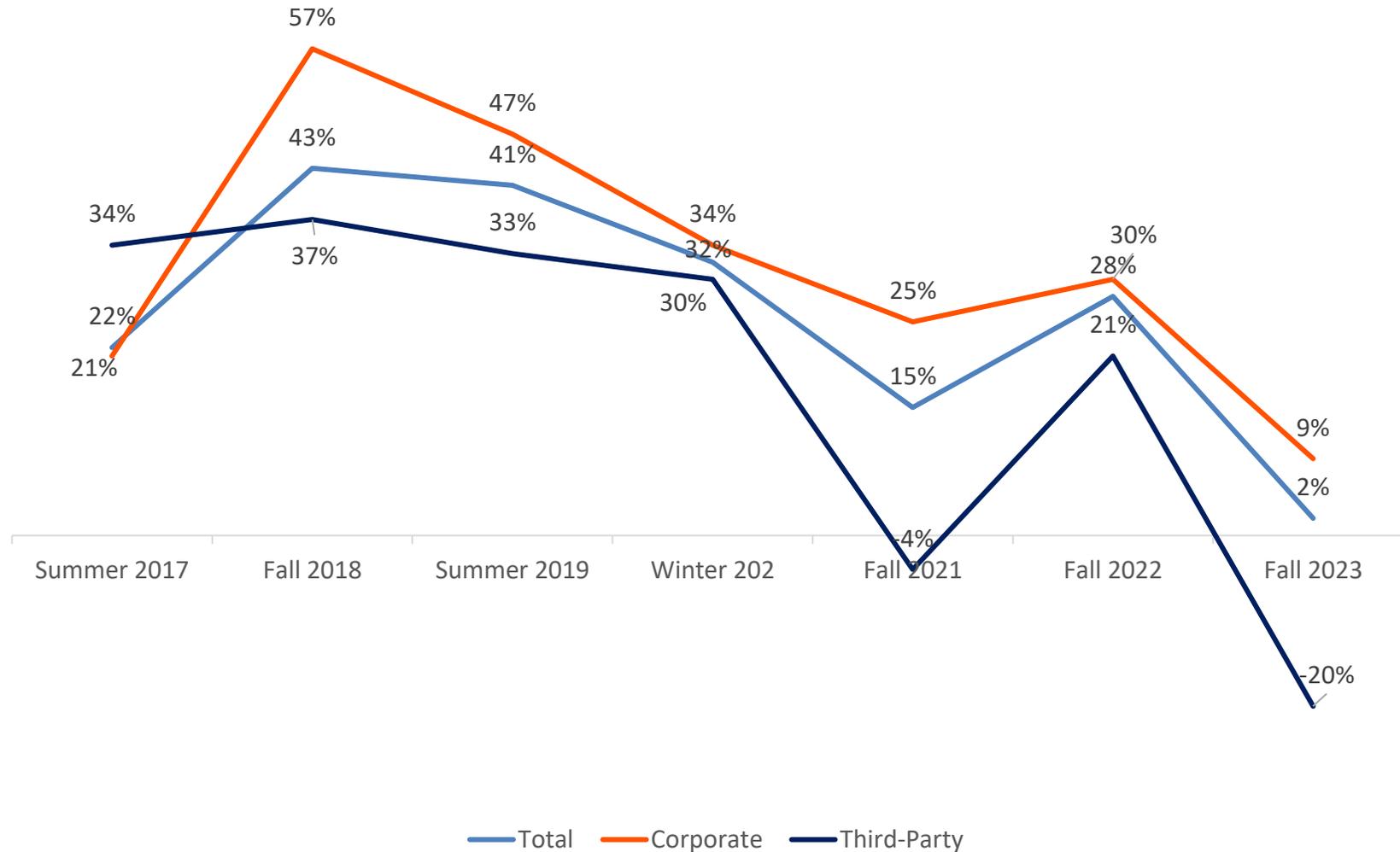
In the coming year, what impact will the economy have on your/your clients' non-cash reward and recognition program planning and execution: The economy
Net Optimism Score= % positive about the economy- % negative about the economy

► Impact on North American Non-Cash Reward Programs

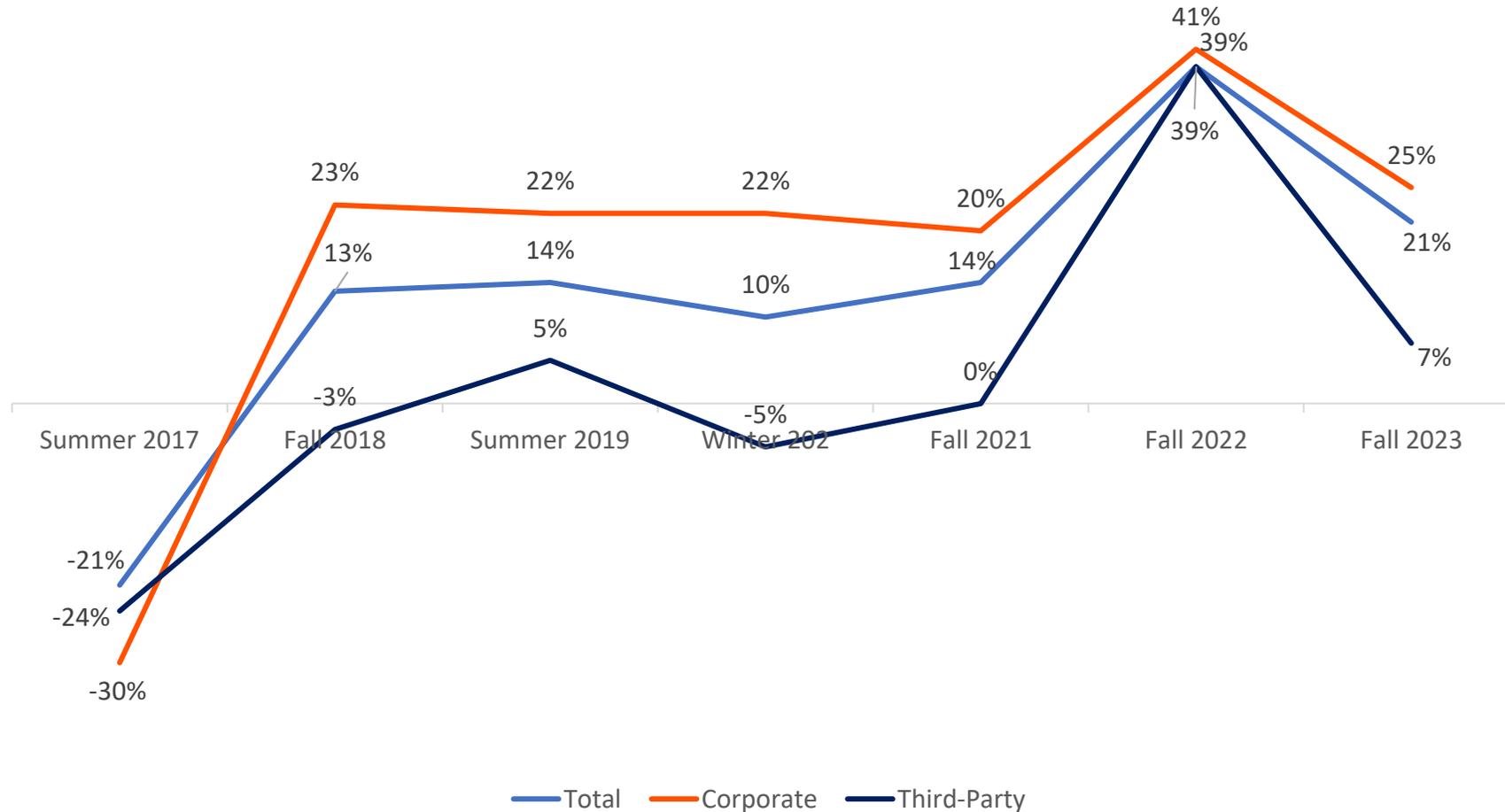
- The gap between North American corporate and third party optimism towards economic and regulatory environment on non-cash reward programs continues to broaden.
 - Corporate net economic impact optimism dropped 21% from 2022 to 2023, while third party economic impact optimism decreased by 41%.
 - Net optimism for regulatory environment impact declined 16% for corporations and 32% for third party respondents.
- A large discrepancy exists between corporate and third party optimism for 2024.



▶ Economic Impact On North American Non-Cash Reward Programs

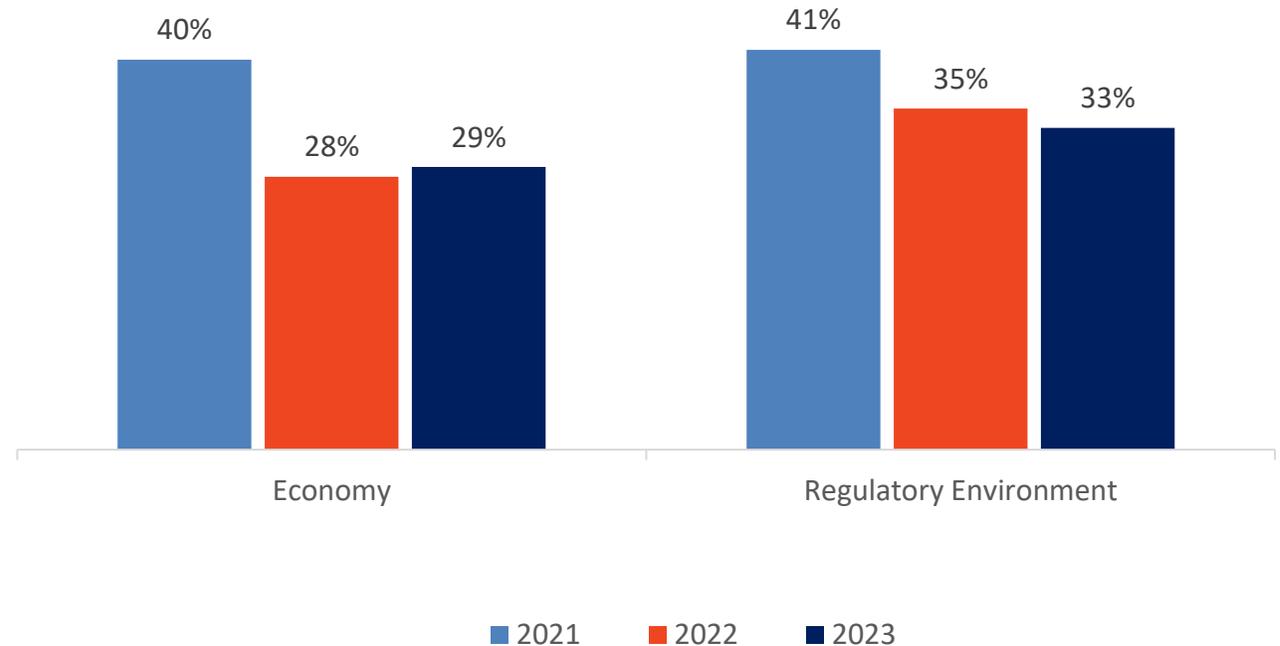


▶ Regulatory Environment Impact On North American Non-Cash Reward Programs



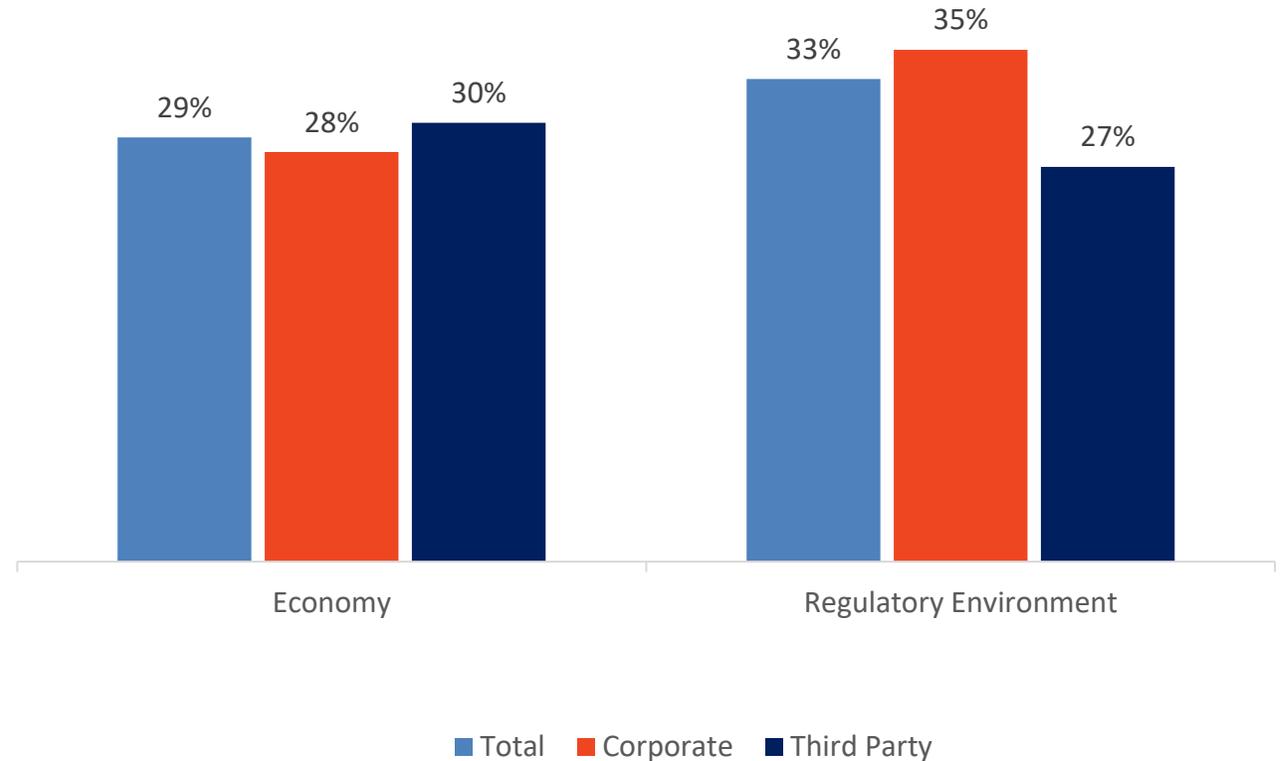
► Impact on European Non-Cash Reward Programs

- European optimism towards both economic and regulatory environment impact on non-cash reward programs remains relatively consistent.
 - The slight increase in economic net optimism (+1%) and the slight decrease in regulatory environment net optimism (-2%) is statistically insignificant.
- European respondents have a more positive outlook for both the economic and regulatory impact on recognition programs.
 - European net economic optimism scored 27% higher compared to North Americans.
 - European net regulatory environment optimism also scored 13% higher.



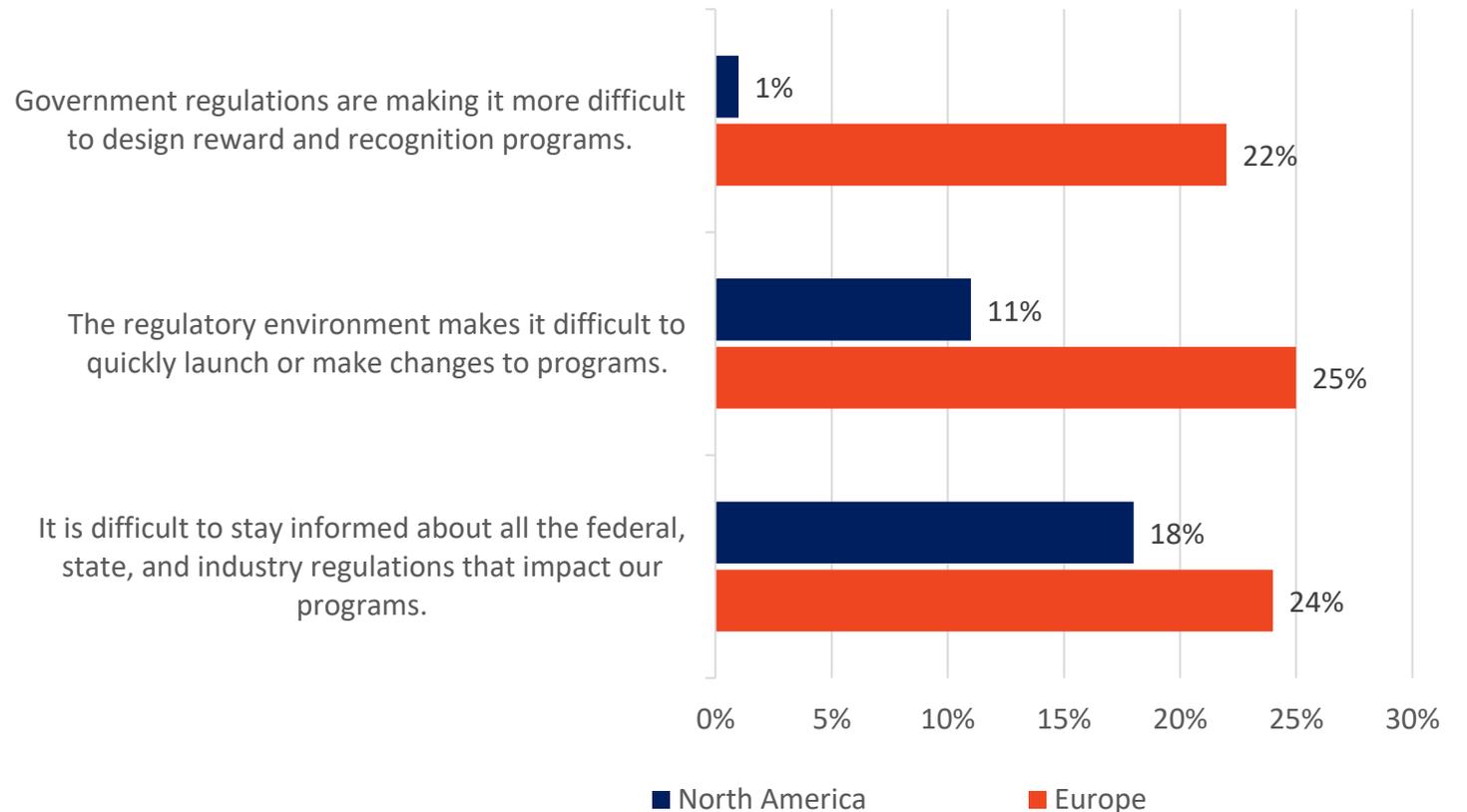
► Impact on European Non-Cash Reward Programs

- Corporate and third party respondents in Europe have similar optimism regarding the impact of the economy on non-cash reward programs.
 - Among corporate respondents, 54% feel the economy will have a positive impact, while 26% believe the economy will have a negative impact on non-cash reward programs.
 - 48% of third party respondents feel the economy will have a positive impact, while only 18% feel the economy will have a negative impact on non-cash reward programs.
- European corporate respondents have a slightly higher net optimism score regarding the regulatory environment's impact on non-cash reward programs than third party respondents.



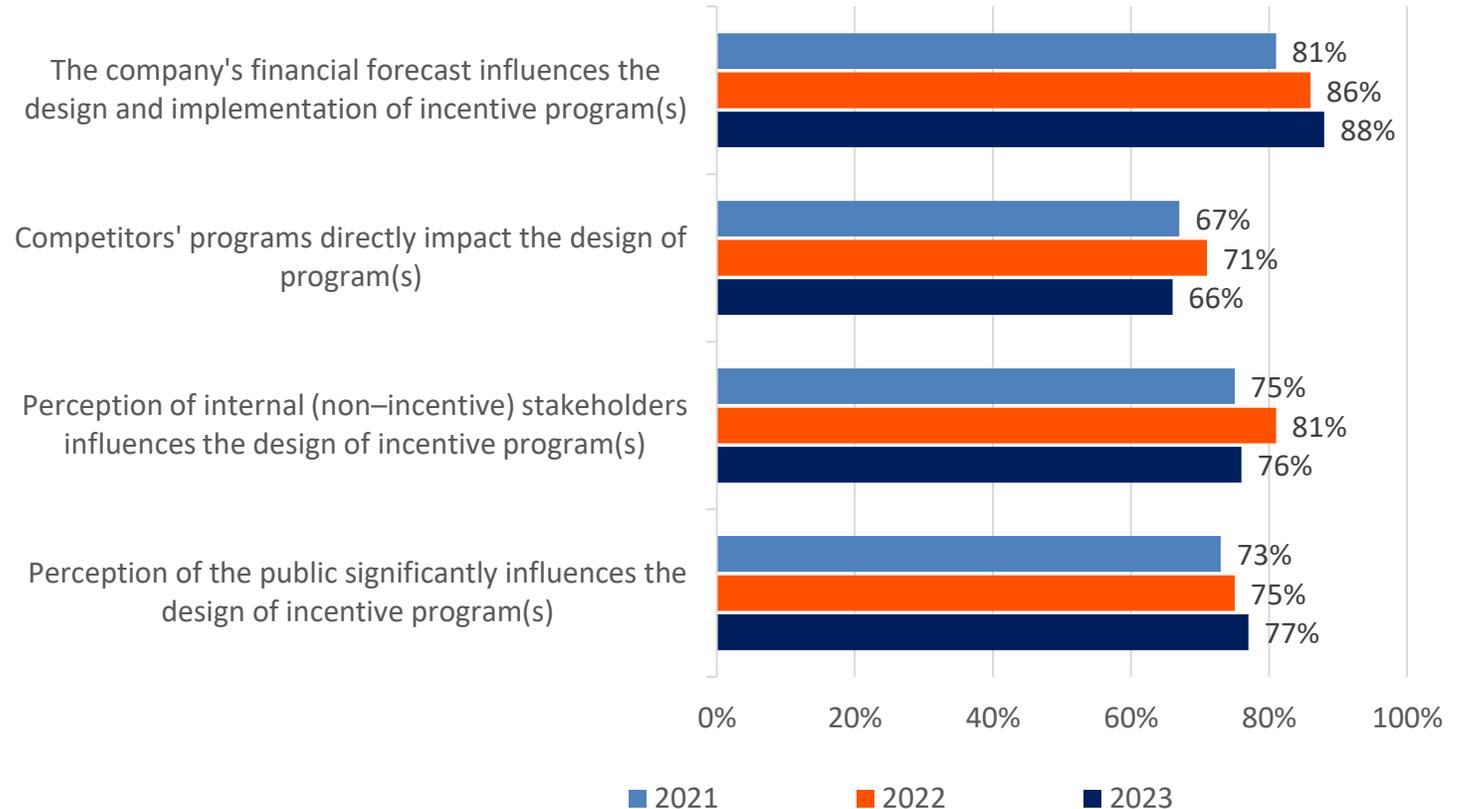
▶ Regulation Issues Influencing Non-Cash Reward Programs

- North American respondents experience less challenges navigating regulations in order to implement non-cash reward programs.
 - 59% of Europeans believe government regulations make it more difficult to design programs, compared to 44% of North Americans.
 - 61% of Europeans believe the regulatory environment makes it difficult to quickly launch or make changes to programs, compared to 48% of North Americans.
- Both regions share similar perspectives regarding the challenges in staying informed on regulations that impact non-cash reward programs.



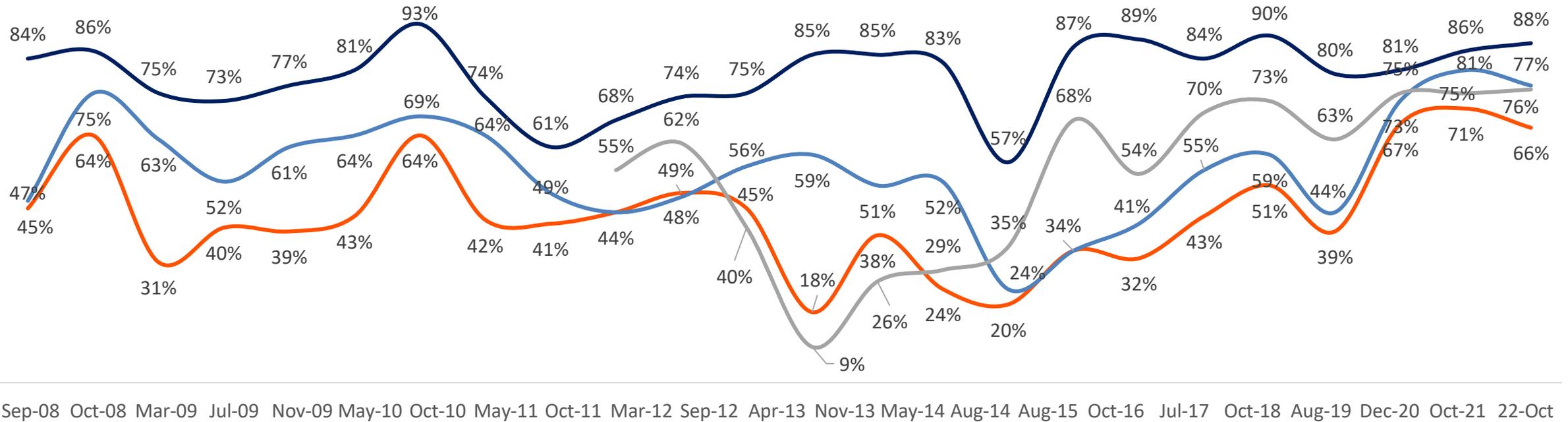
▶ North American Considerations for Non-Cash Reward Program Design

- With 88% of respondents indicating its importance, a company's financial forecast remains the most prominent consideration for North Americans when designing non-cash reward programs.
- Year-over-year changes in North American considerations are minimal.
 - Most notably, both competitors' programs and perception of internal stakeholders dropped by 5% from 2022 to 2023.



▶ North American Considerations for Non-Cash Reward Program Design

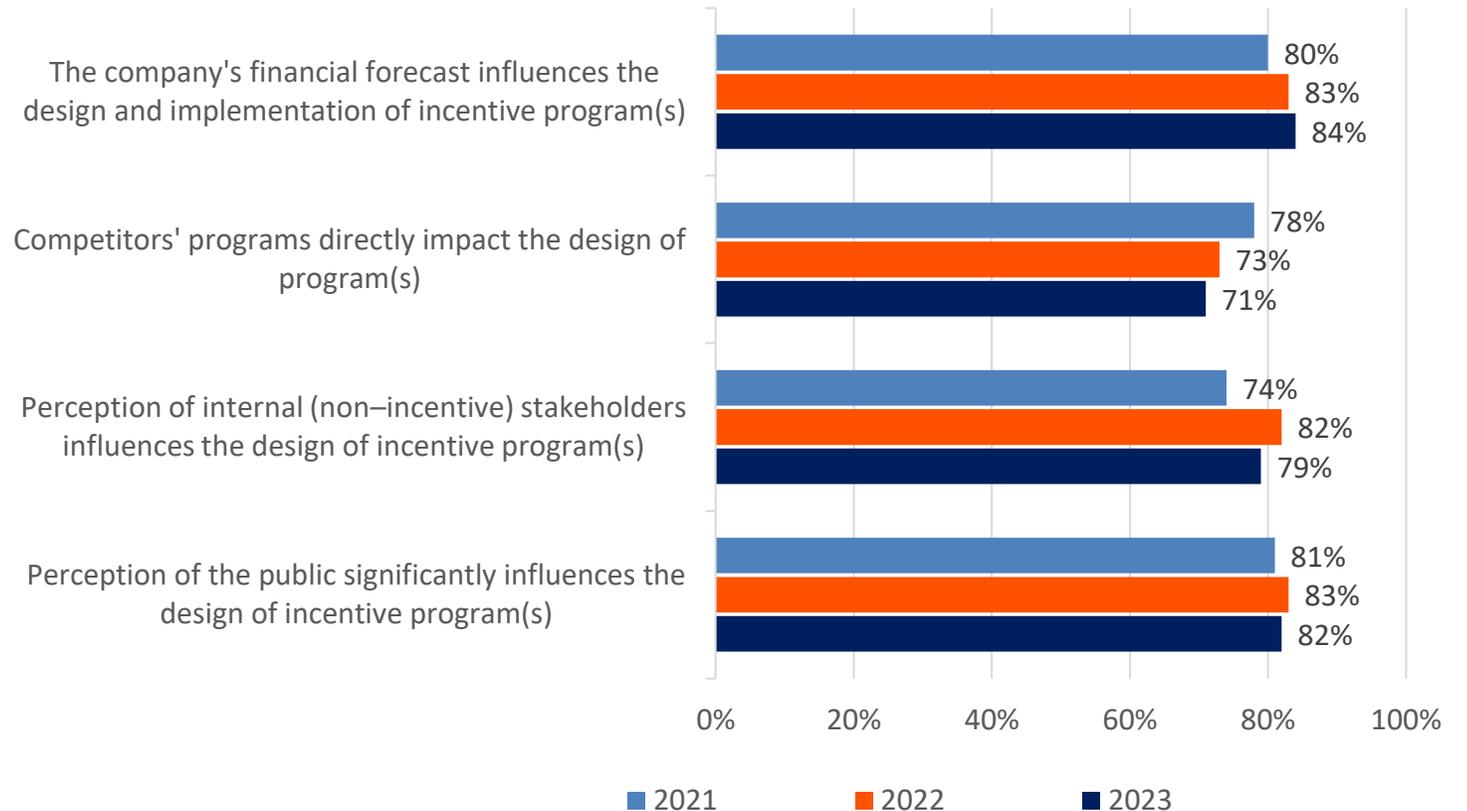
- While the financial forecast has always been the most important consideration in designing North American programs, the importance of internal stakeholders, the public, and competitor programs has trended upward in importance over the past several years.



- My company's financial forecast influences the design and implementation of incentive programs
- Our competitors' programs directly impact the design of our incentive program(s)
- Perception of the public significantly influences the design of our incentive program(s)
- Perception of internal (non-incentive) stakeholders significantly influences the design of our incentive program(s)

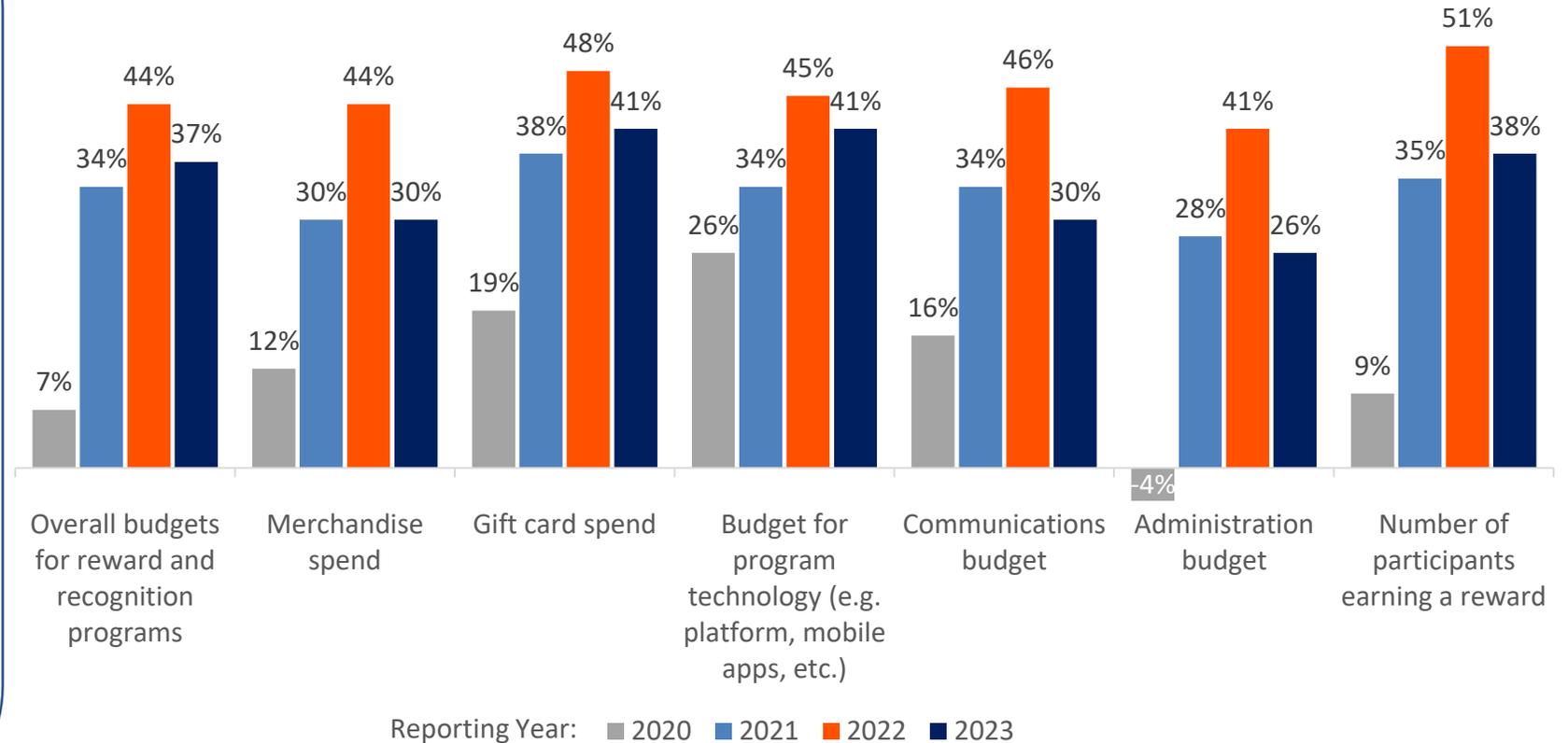
▶ European Considerations for Non-Cash Reward Program Design

- European considerations for non-cash reward program design are similar to North American respondents, with financial forecasts, public perception, and perception of internal stakeholders all being an important consideration among more than 75% of the European respondents.
- While still a strong consideration competitor's programs are weighed less heavily than other factors in Europe.



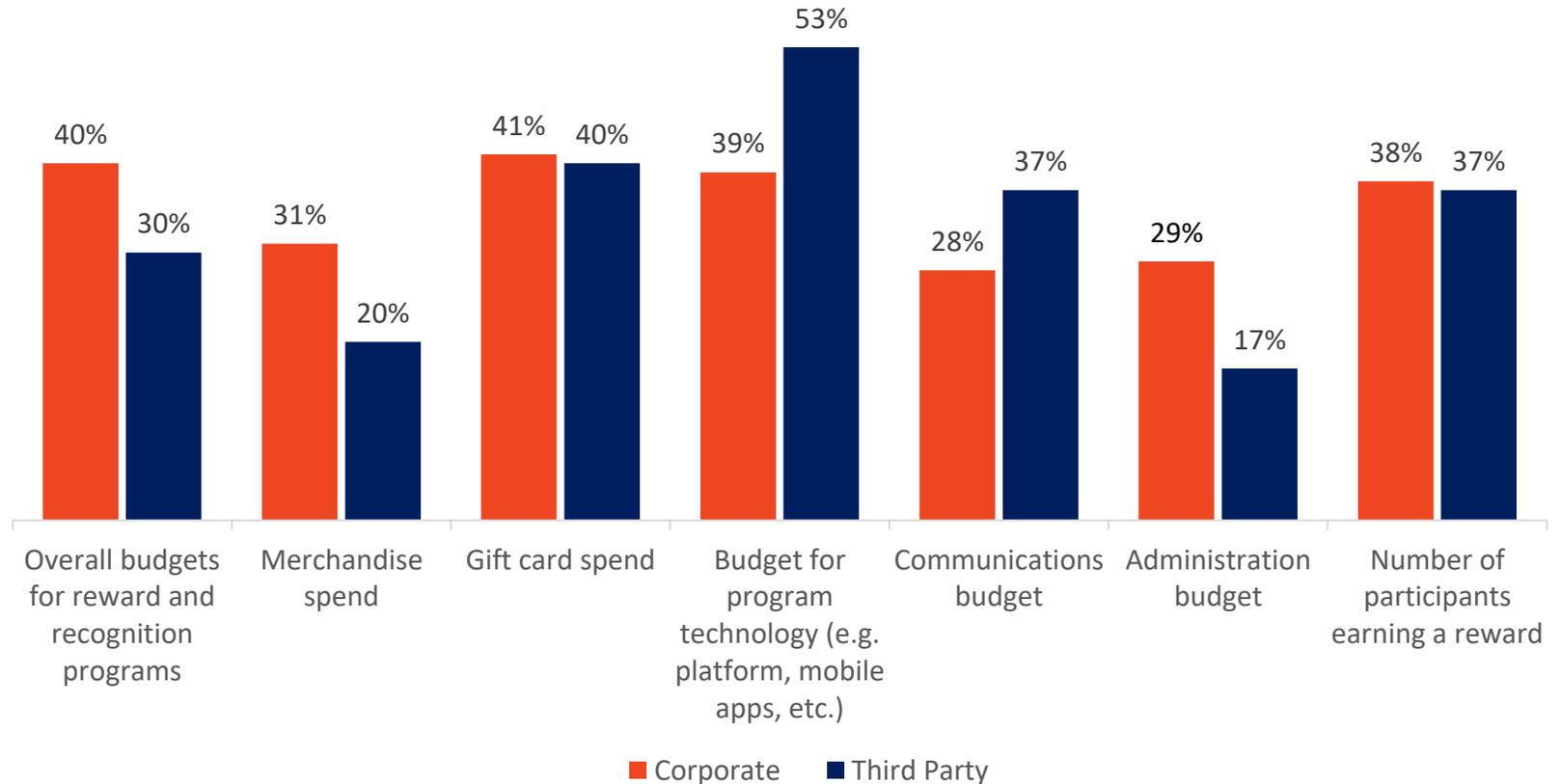
▶ North American Anticipated Net Change in Non-Cash Rewards Budgets

- Non-cash rewards budgets are expected to show a net increase across all categories, continuing the trend over recent years.
- Budget increases are expected at a lower rate than in 2023, and more comparable to changes expected for 2022.



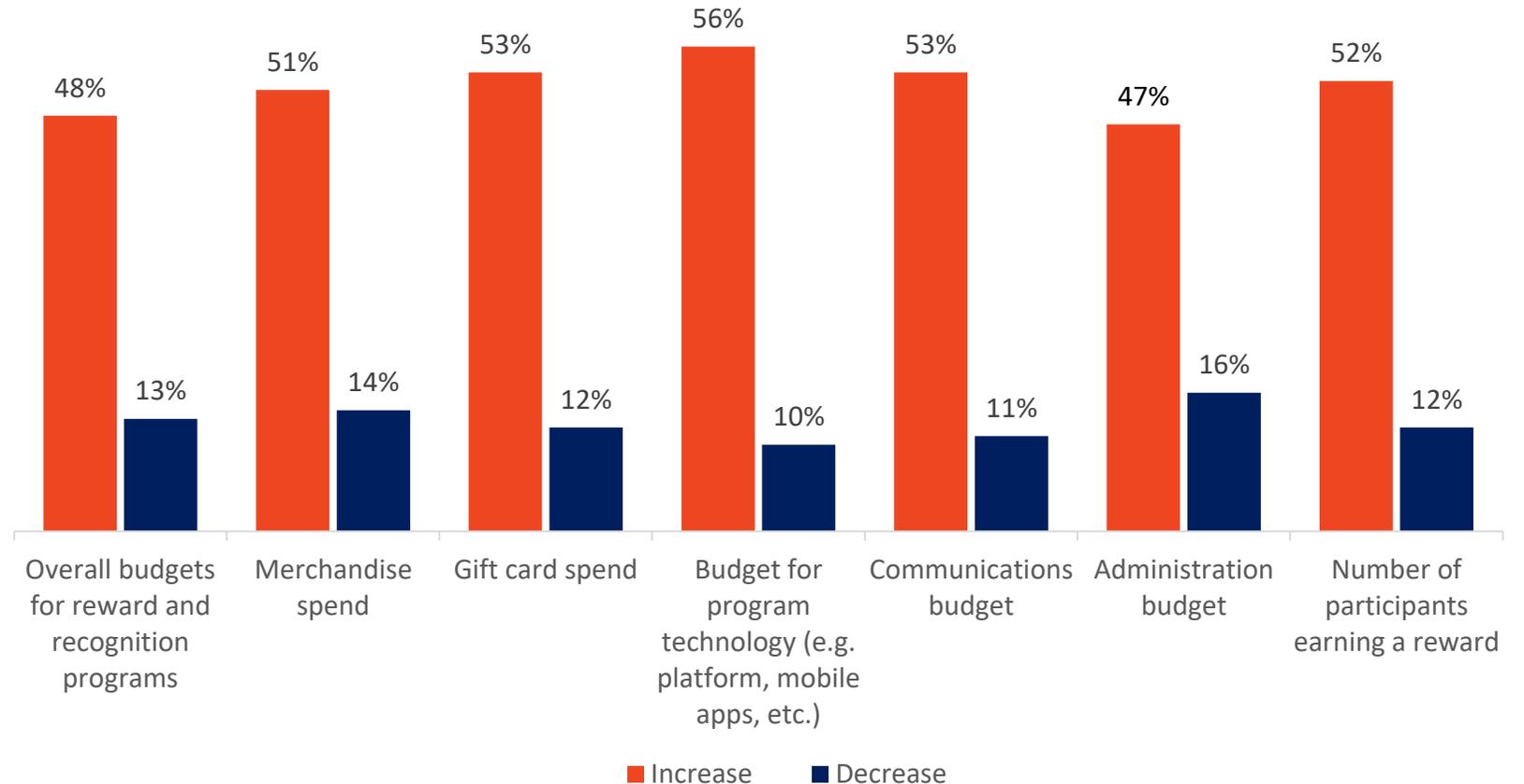
▶ North American Anticipated Net Change in Non-Cash Rewards Budgets

- North American corporations expect to see greater overall budget increases in comparison to third parties.
 - 50% of third party respondents expect overall budget increases, while 20% expect a decrease.
 - 52% of corporations expect increases, while 12% expect decreases.
- Third parties expect greater budget increases in technology and communications.
- Corporations expect greater increases in merchandise and administration budgets.



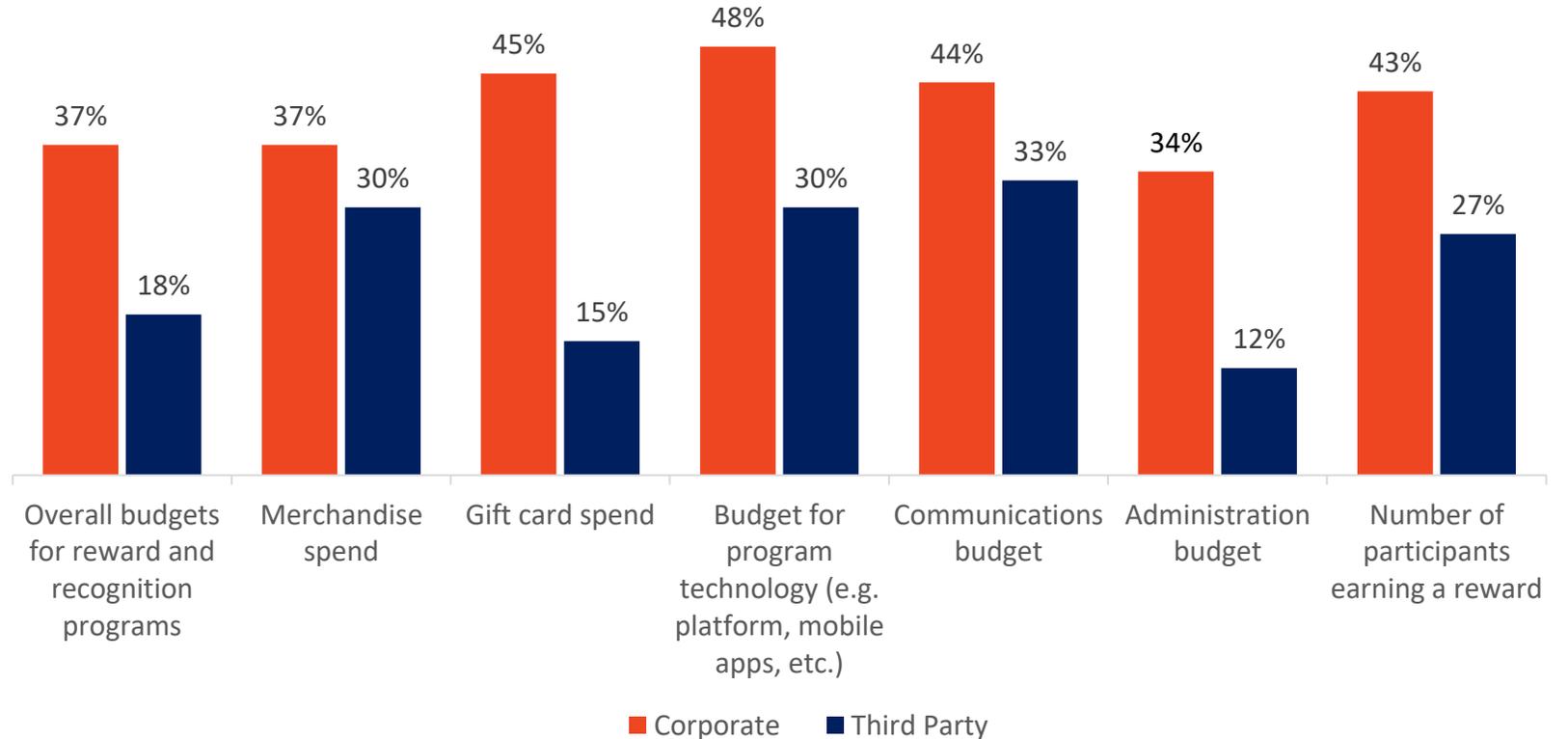
▶ European Anticipated Net Change in Non-Cash Rewards Budgets

- Just under half of European respondents anticipate an overall increase in their non-cash reward budgets, while 13% anticipate a decrease.
- Though little variance exists across categories, technology budgets are expected to have the greatest increase in 2024.



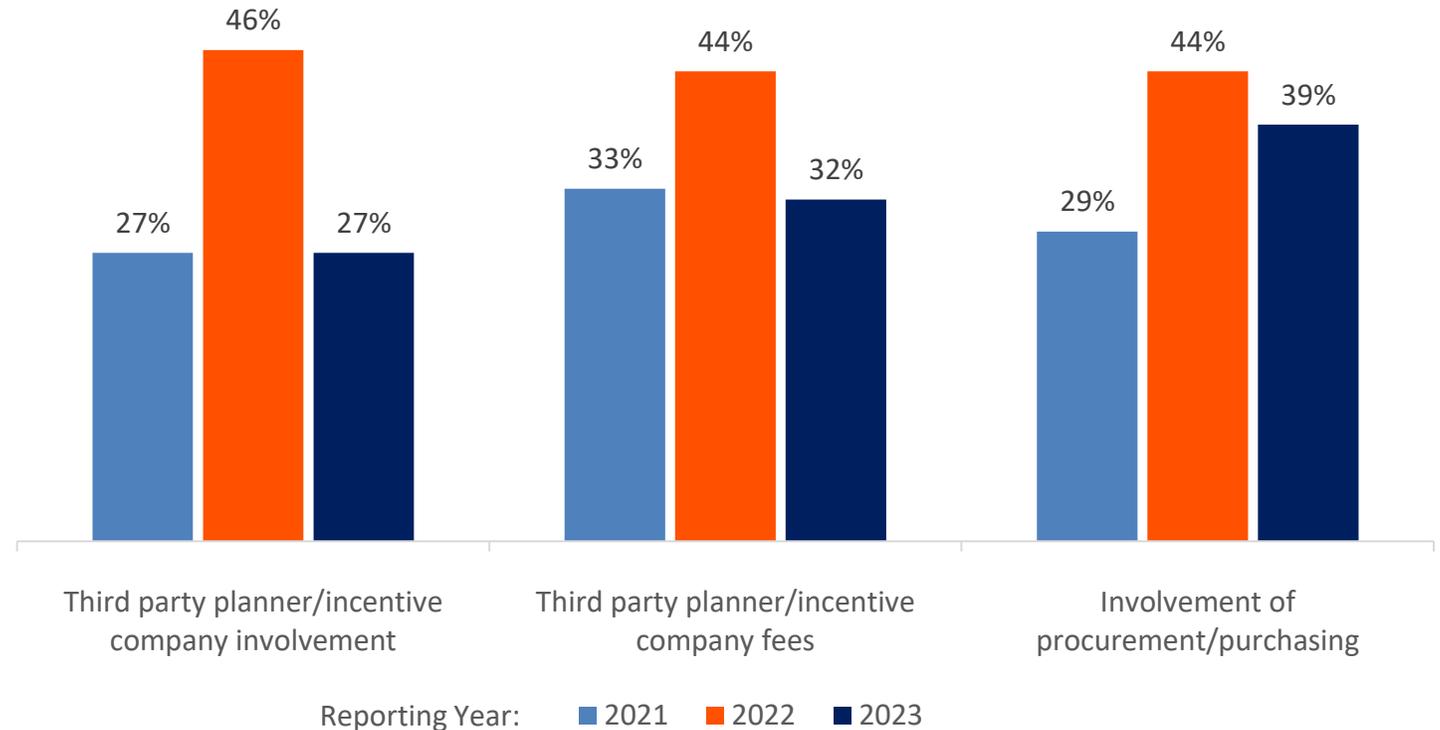
▶ European Anticipated Net Change in Non-Cash Rewards Budgets

- Similar to North America, more European corporations expect to see overall budget increases (+19%) in comparison to third parties.
 - 36% of third parties anticipate a budget increase next year, compared to 18% who expect a decrease
 - 51% of corporate respondents anticipate a budget increase with 14% expecting a decrease.
- European corporations expect greater budget increases in all categories, most notably gift card spend and administration budgets.



▶ North American Anticipated Net Change in Non-Cash Rewards Partners

- In North America, continued growth for non-cash rewards partners is expected in 2024.
- Involvement of procurement/purchasing partners is expecting the highest growth in 2024.
- The rate of growth for third party incentive company usage is more closely aligned to 2022 projections than 2023 projections.

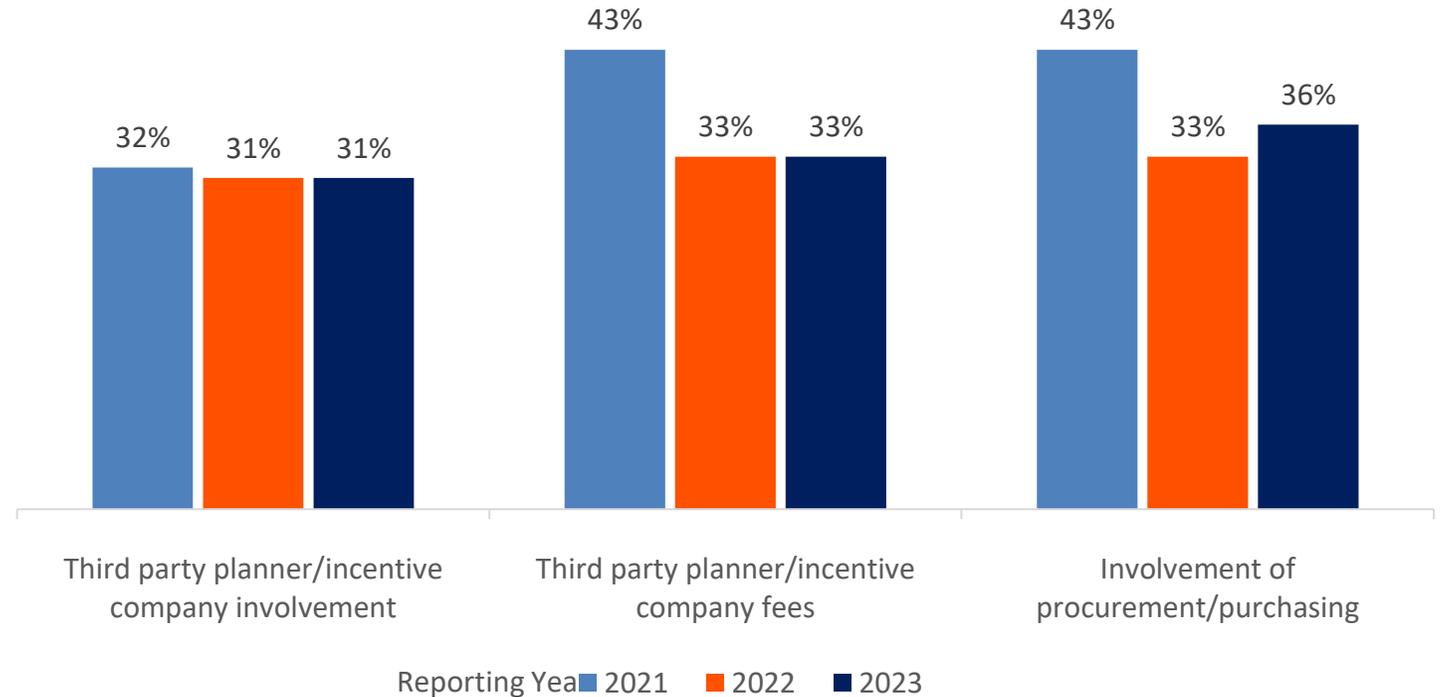


In the coming year, do your/your clients generally anticipate the following program elements will increase, decrease, or remain unchanged?

Net change= % Increase- % Decrease

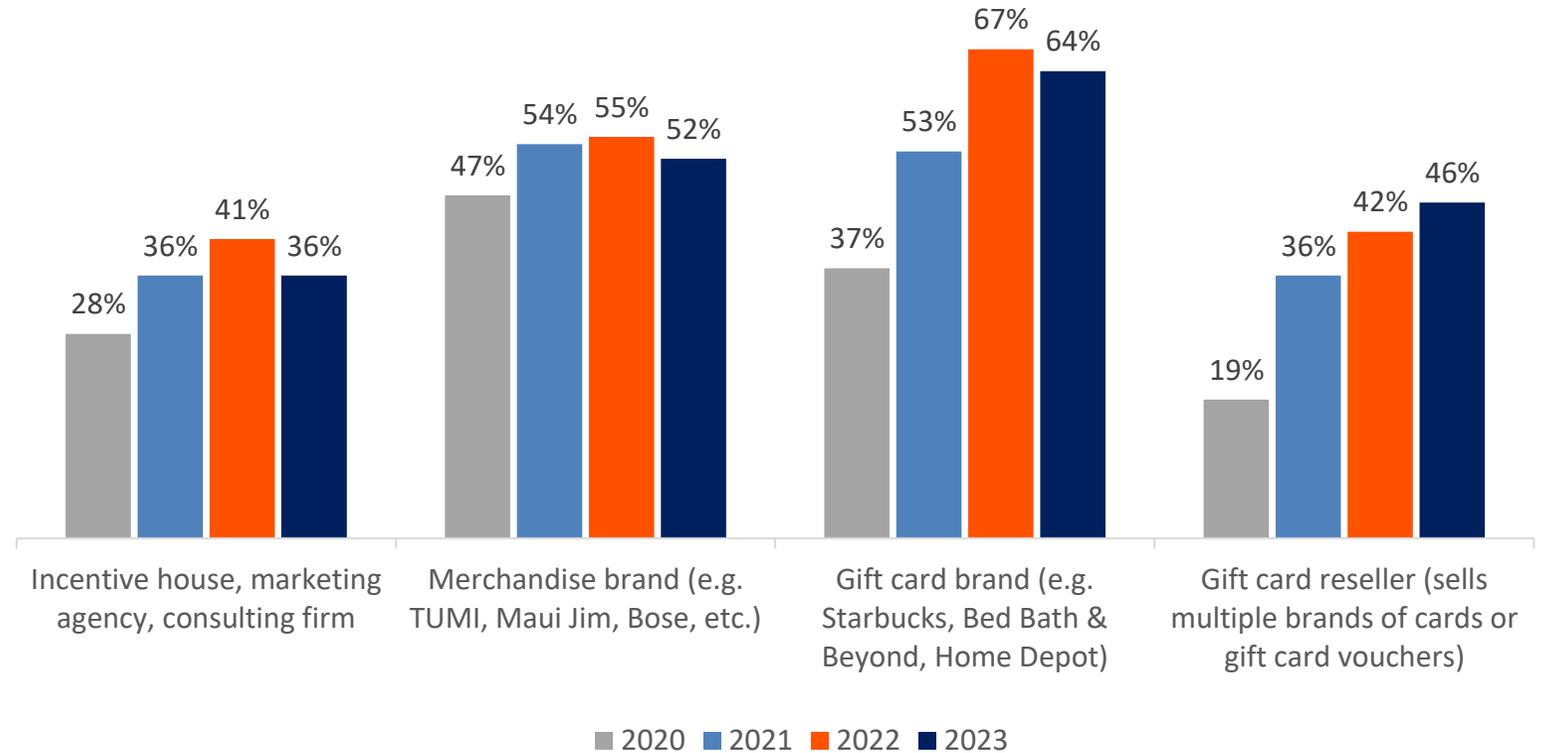
▶ European Anticipated Net Change in Non-Cash Rewards Partners

- Similar to North America, continued growth for European non-cash rewards partners is expected in 2024.
- Reward partner usage in 2024 is expected to maintain a similar growth rate as in 2023.



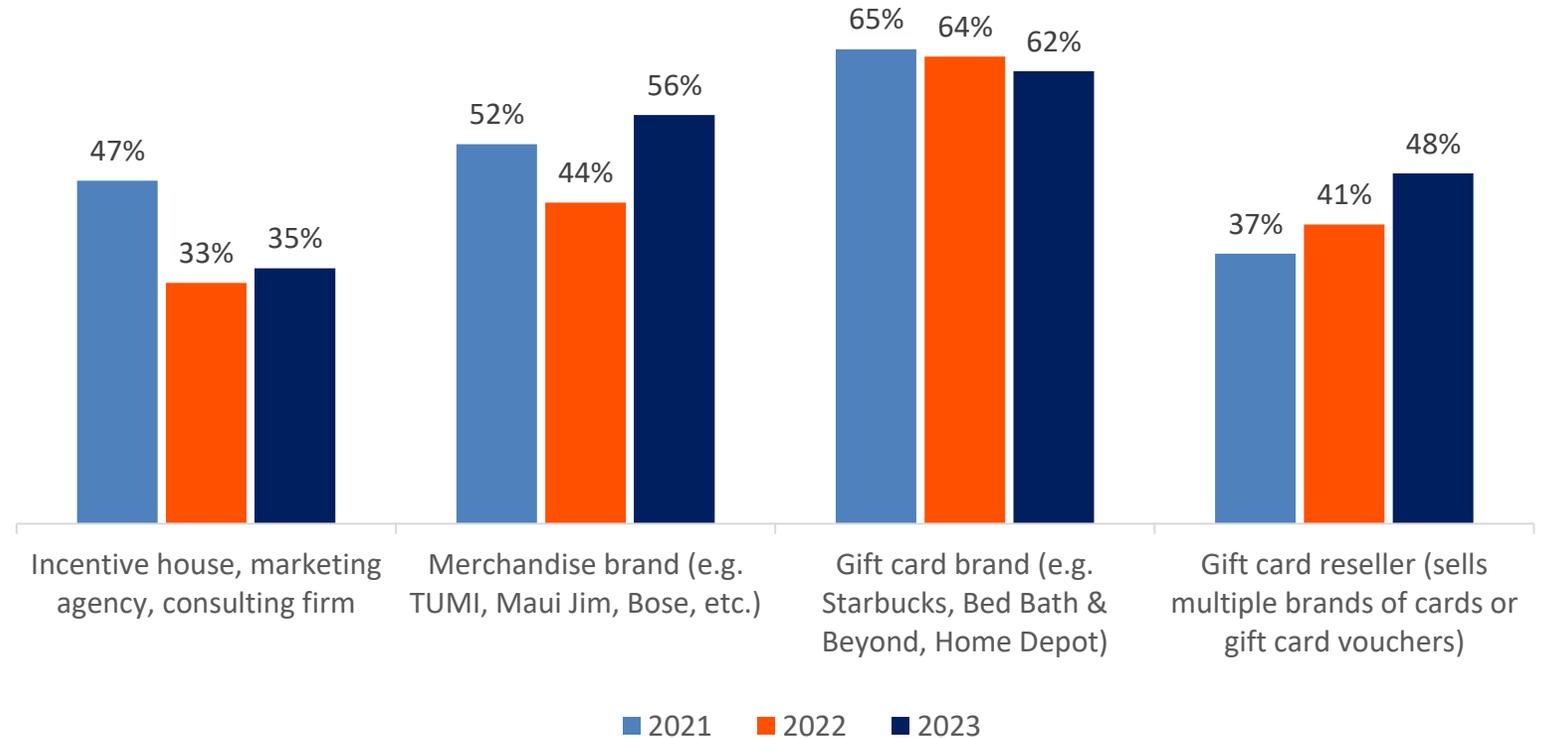
▶ North American Direct Use of Partnerships for Non-Cash Reward Programs

- North American respondents had similar partnerships for non-cash reward programs in 2023 when compared to the previous year.
- While gift card brands remain the most prominent partnership, only gift card resellers experienced a growth (+4%) over the past year.



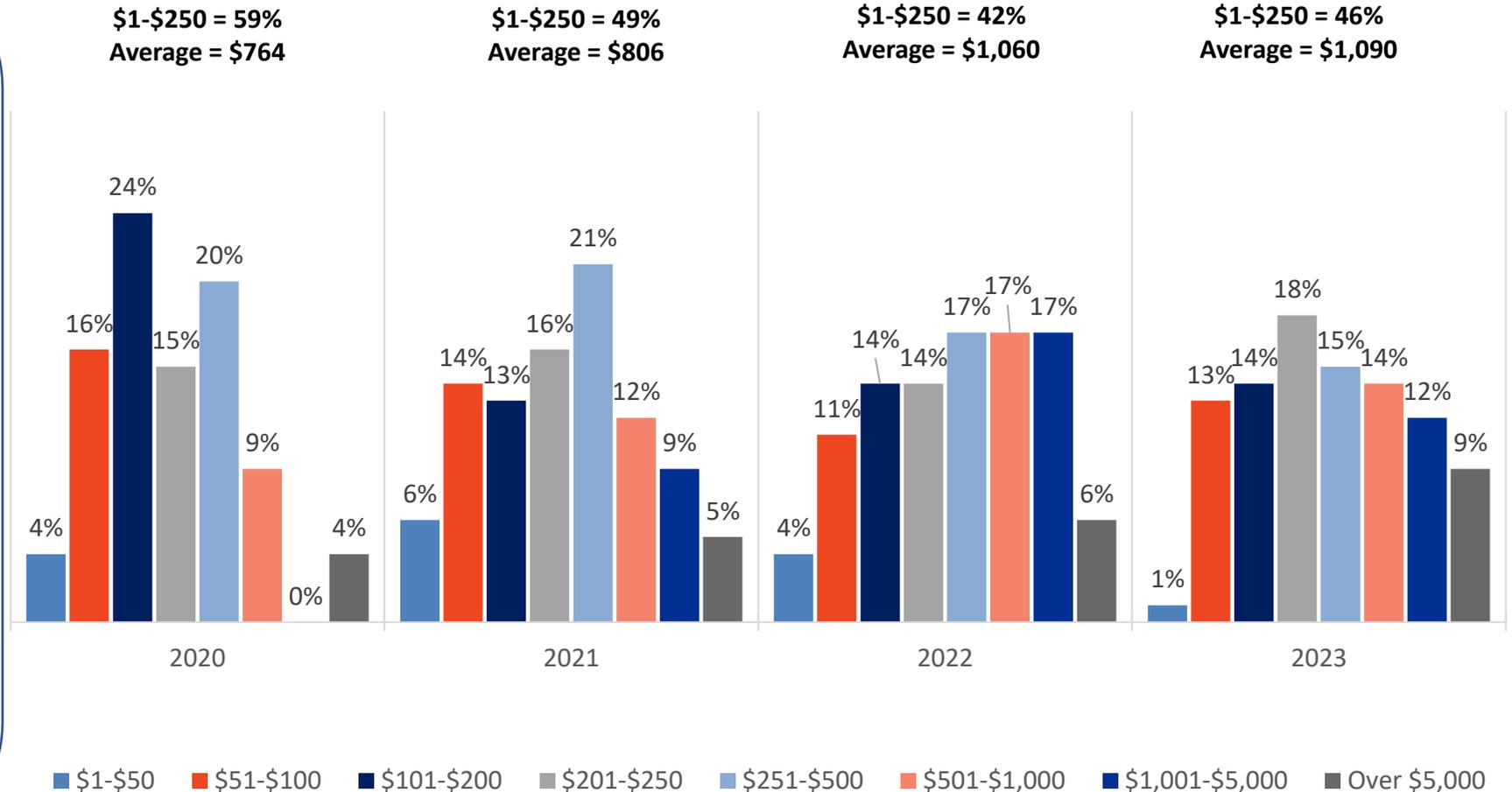
▶ European Direct Use of Partnerships for Non-Cash Reward Programs

- Europeans report more variance in working partnerships for non-cash reward programs in 2023, compared to 2022.
 - Merchandise brands (+12%) and gift card resellers (+7%) display the most significant increases
- With only a slight decrease in partnerships since 2022, gift card brands remain the most frequently used partner for Europeans.

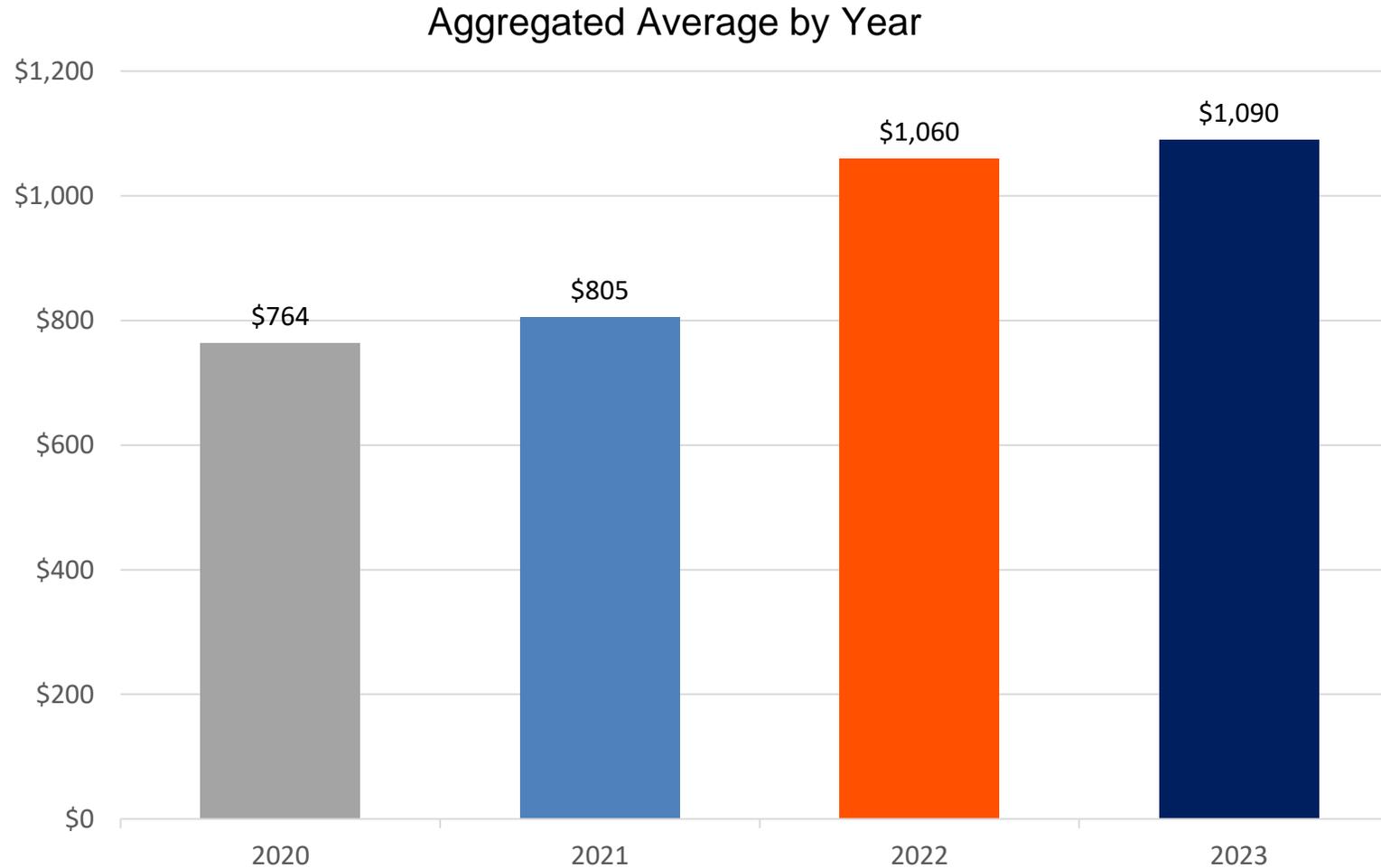


North American Average Per-Person Spend – Non-Cash Reward & Recognition Programs

- In North American, the average per-person spend on non-cash reward and recognition programs continues to increase (+\$30 per-person).
 - This is driven primarily by the decrease in \$1 - \$50 average spends (-3%) and the increase in \$201 - \$250 (+4%) and over \$5,000 (+3%) average spends.
- As a result of a reduction in average spends from \$251 to \$5,000, per-person spend has reduced in year-over-year growth rate.

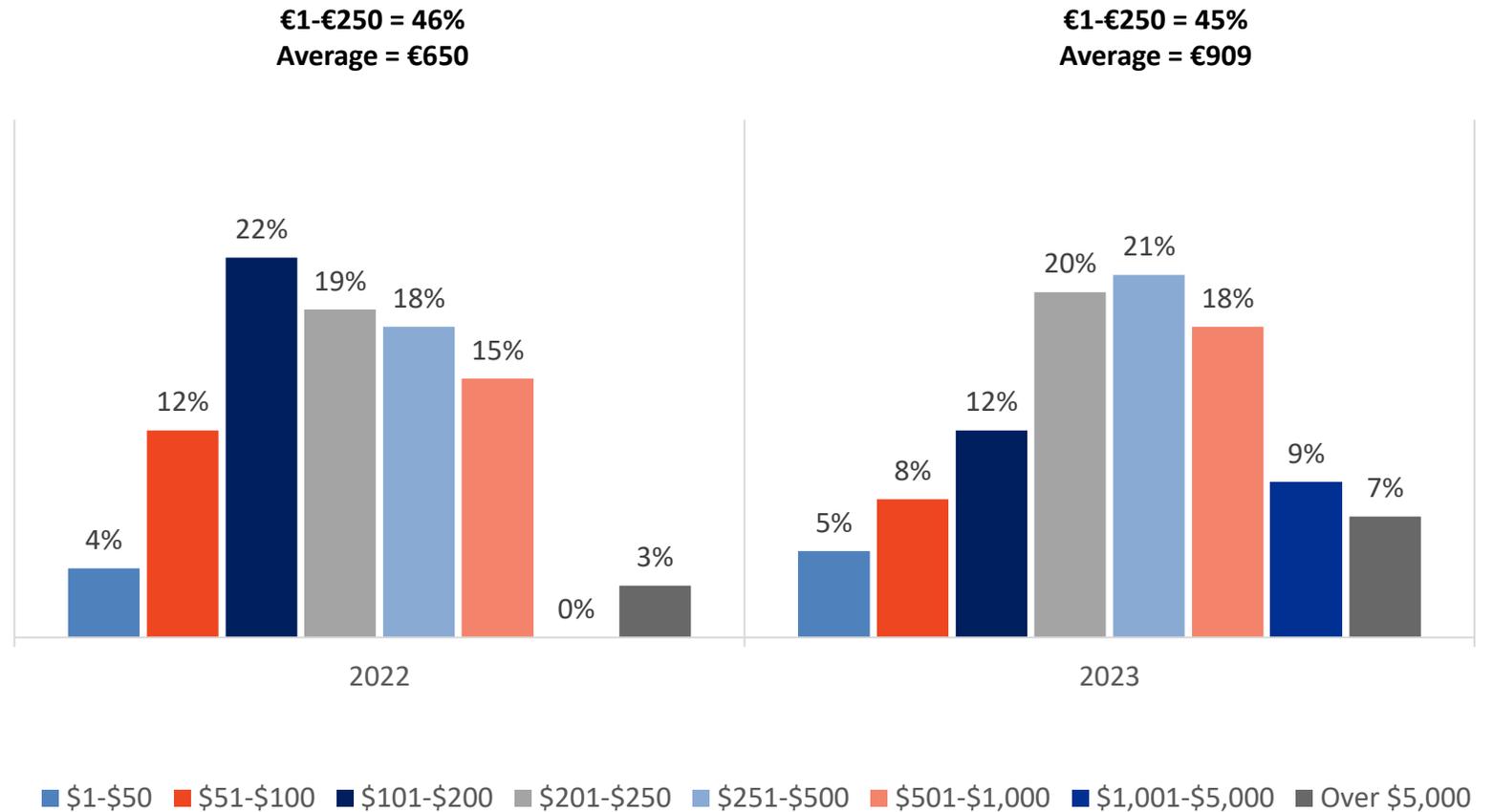


North American Average Per-Person Spend – Non-Cash Reward & Recognition Programs



European Average Per-Person Spend – Non-Cash Reward & Recognition Programs

- The European average per-person spend on non-cash reward and recognition programs increased significantly (+ €359 per-person) from 2022 to 2023.
 - This is driven primarily by the increase in average spends over €200.
- While increasing at a more dramatic rate, the average per-person spend on non-cash rewards programs in Europe is still slightly lower than in North American.

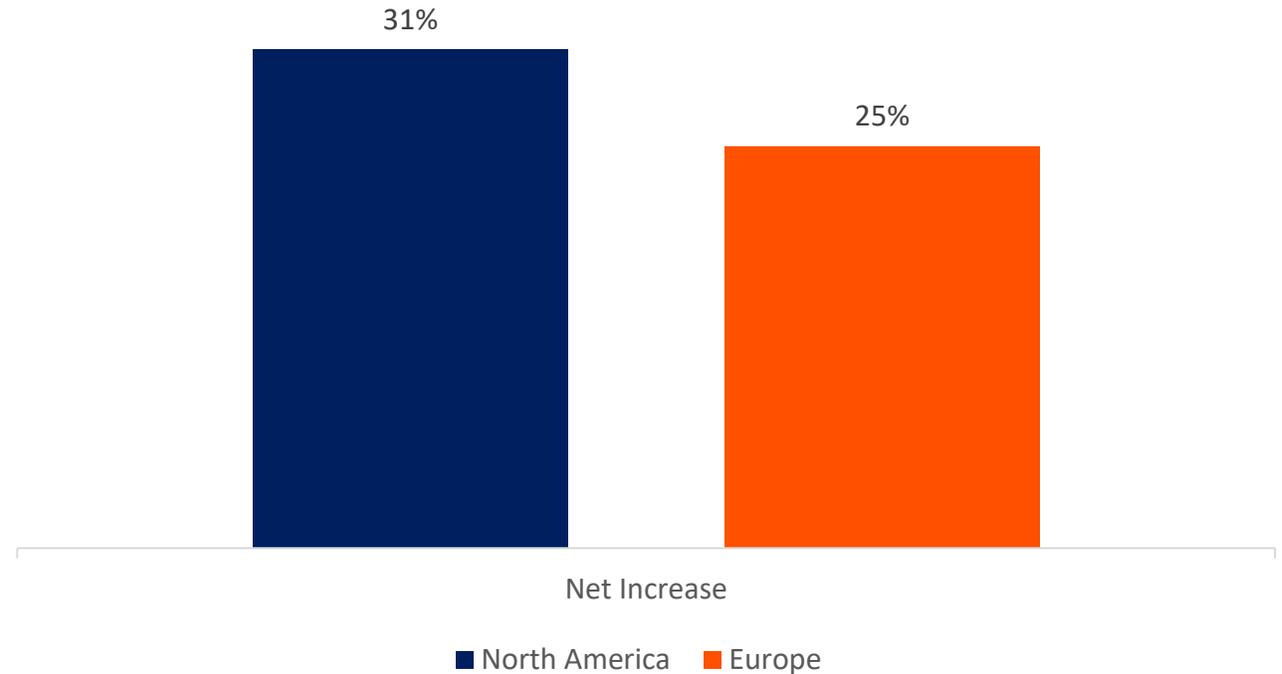




Non-Cash Reward & Recognition: Merchandise

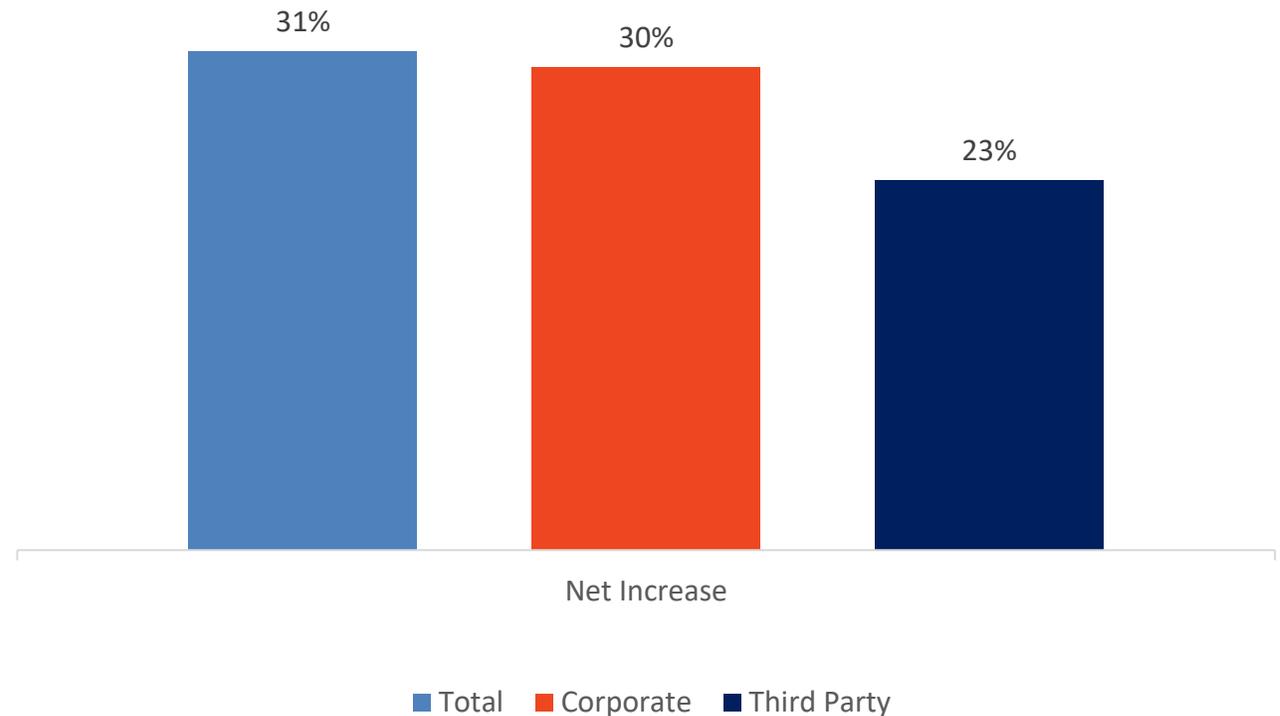
► Growth in Merchandise Rewards – Net Increase for 2024

- North American and European respondents expect similar net increases on merchandise rewards in 2024.
- While Europeans expects similar increases in 2024 (+25%) to 2023 (+24%), North Americans are predicting a less drastic increase in merchandise rewards compared to last year (+31% to +45%, respectively).



▶ North American Growth in Merchandise Rewards – Net Increase for 2024

- North American corporations expect to spur more of the merchandise reward growth in comparison to third parties.
- While merchandise rewards are expected to increase in 2024, growth rates have declined from last year's predictions (+45% total, +46% corporate, and +38% third party anticipated growth for 2023).

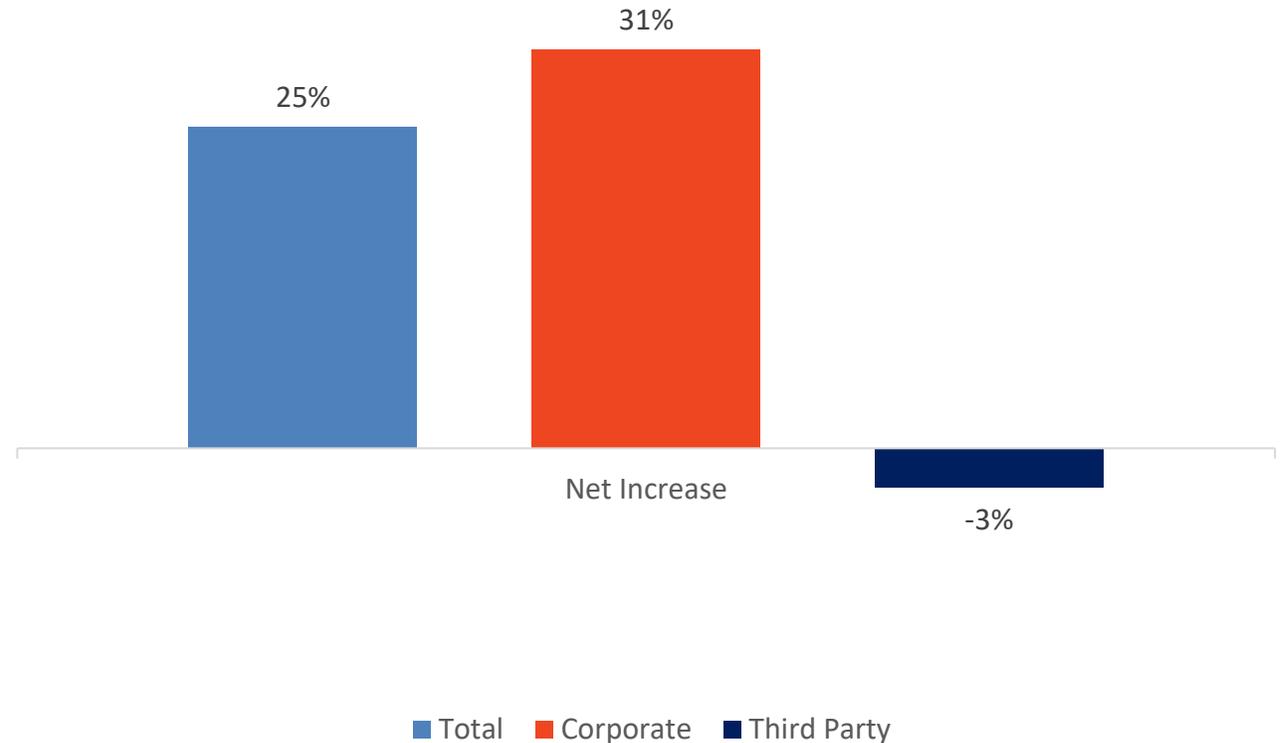


In the coming year, do your/your clients generally anticipate the use of merchandise rewards will increase, decrease, or remain unchanged?

Net increase= % who plan to increase budget - % who plan to decrease budget

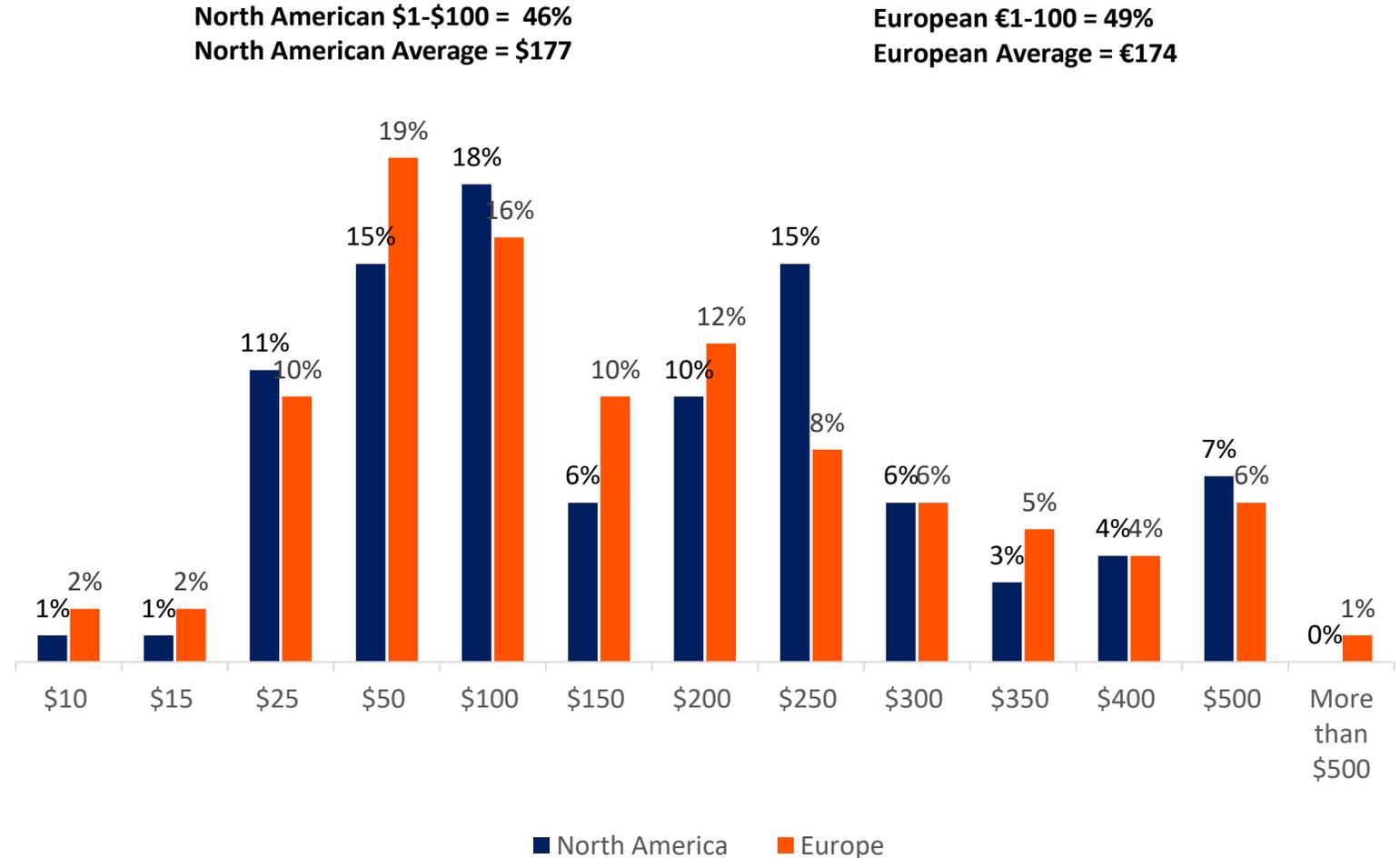
▶ European Growth in Merchandise Rewards – Net Increase for 2024

- While overall, European respondents expect to see growth in merchandise rewards for 2024, third party entities anticipate a reduction.
 - This is a significant variation from the previous year as both corporate and third party respondents expected similar increases in merchandise gifts in 2023 (+23% and +26%, respectively).



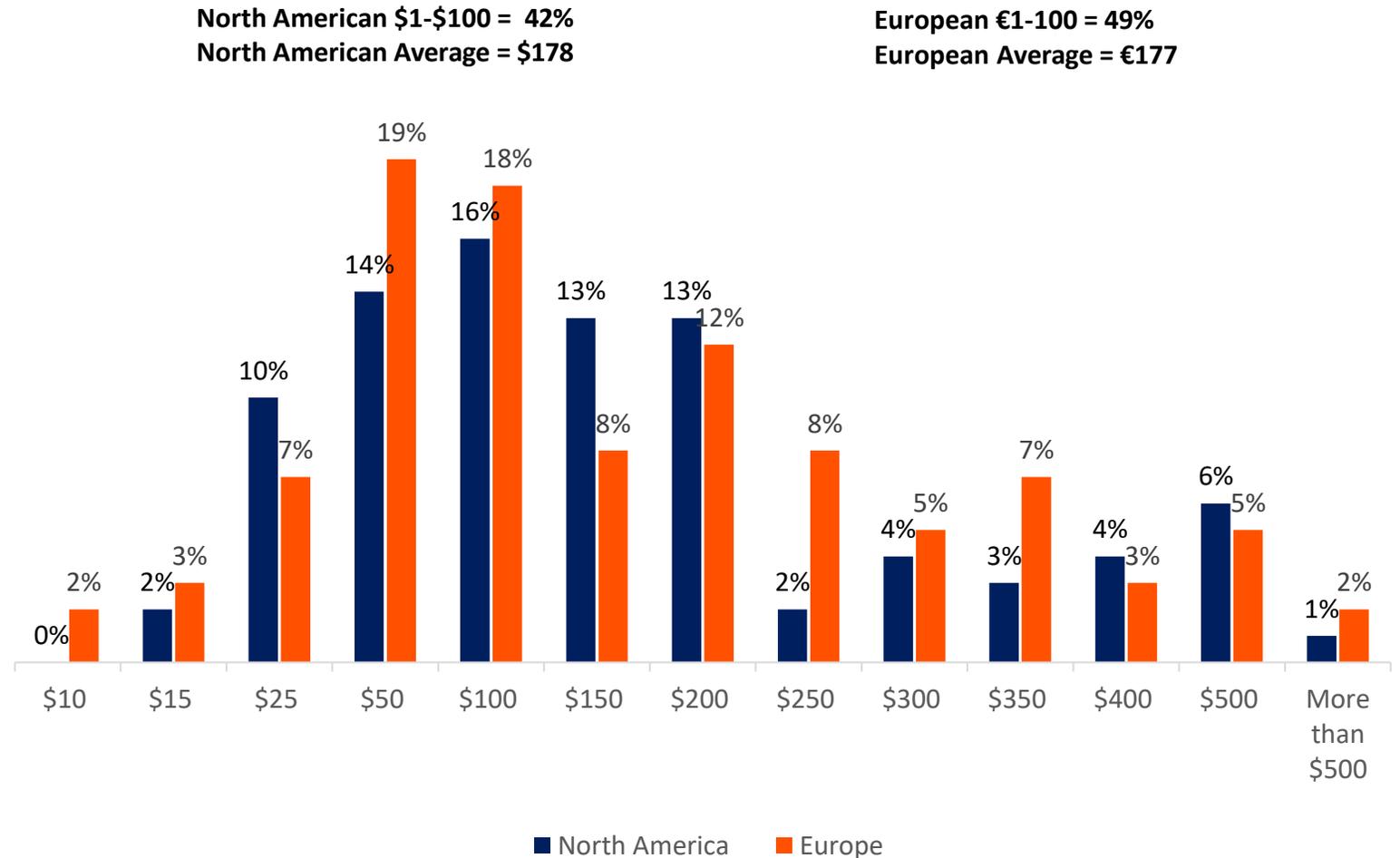
► Overall Merchandise Reward Value

- Europeans are now offering merchandise reward values comparable to North Americans.
 - The average value of a North American merchandise reward has declined from \$191 in 2022 to \$177 this past year.
 - In contrast, the average merchandise reward value has increased from €152 in 2022 to €174 in 2023.
- While the percentage of North American merchandise reward value over \$100 has declined from 64% to 54%, Europeans have noted a slight increase (49% to 51%).



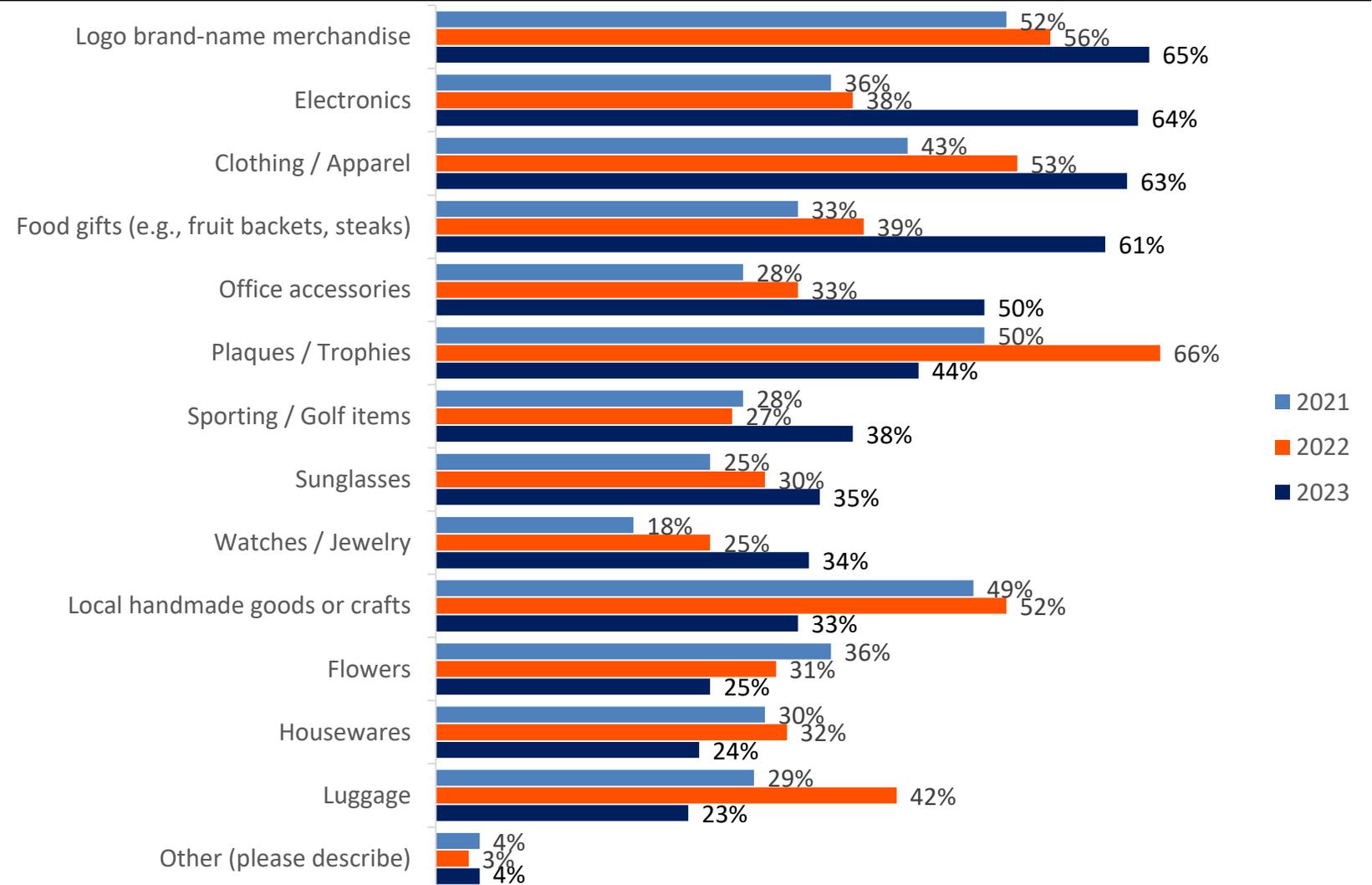
▶ Merchandise Reward for On-Site Gifting Value

- While having a higher percentage at less than 100 €//\$ for on-site gifting values, Europeans now spend comparable average amounts to North Americans.
 - The average value of a merchandise reward for on-site gifting in North America has dropped slightly from \$185 last year, to \$178.
 - Europeans display an increase in the value of merchandise rewards for on-site gifting, from €156 to €177.



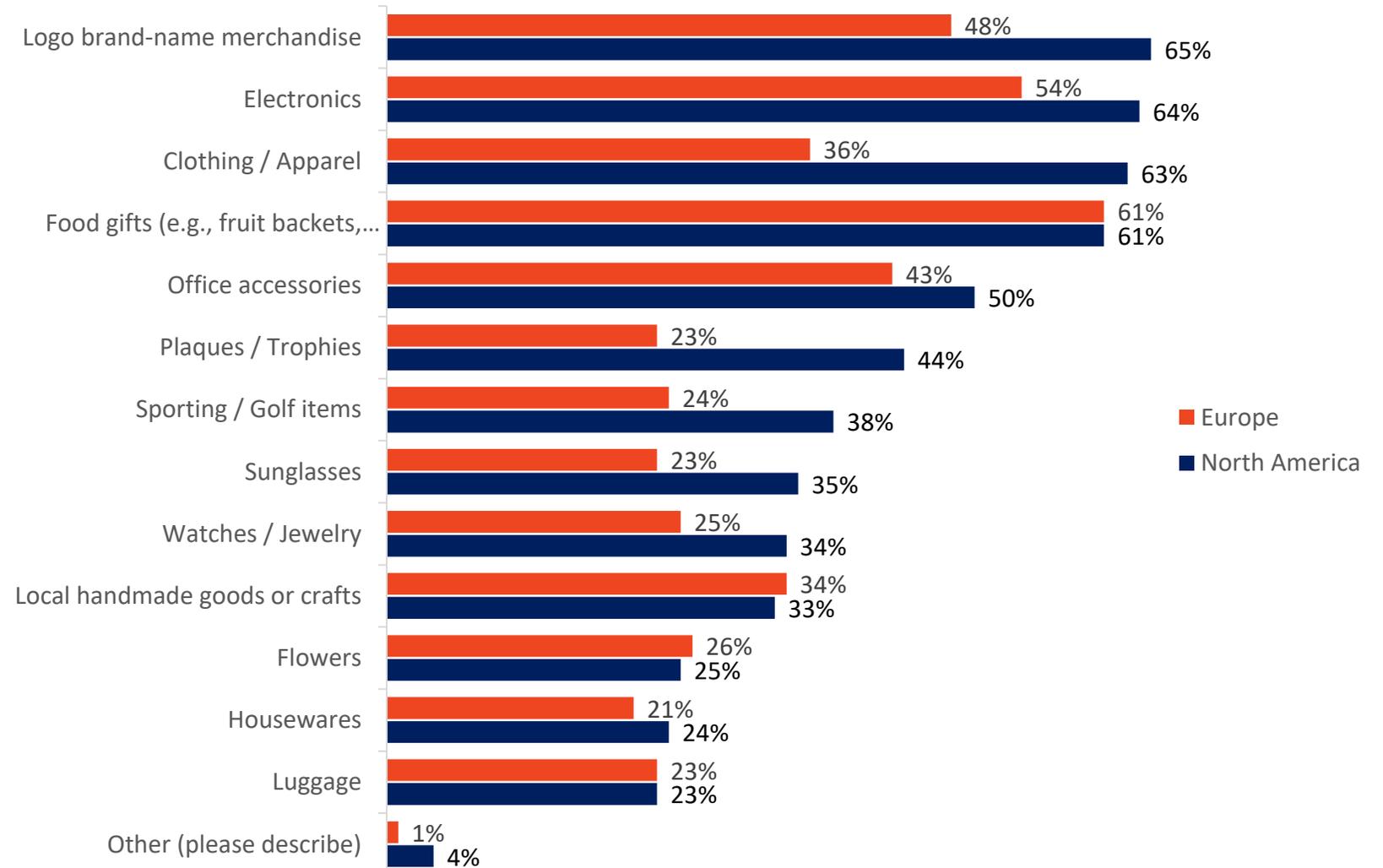
▶ North American Merchandise Rewards Prevalence Trends

- All merchandise categories show an increase year-over-year with the exception of plaques / trophies (-22%), local handmade goods or crafts (-19%), flowers (-6%), housewares, (-8%), and luggage (-19%).
- Logo brand merchandise, electronics, clothing / apparel and food gifts had the highest merchandise prevalence in North America for 2023.
 - Electronics (+26%) and food gifts (+22%) also displayed the largest year-over-year increases.



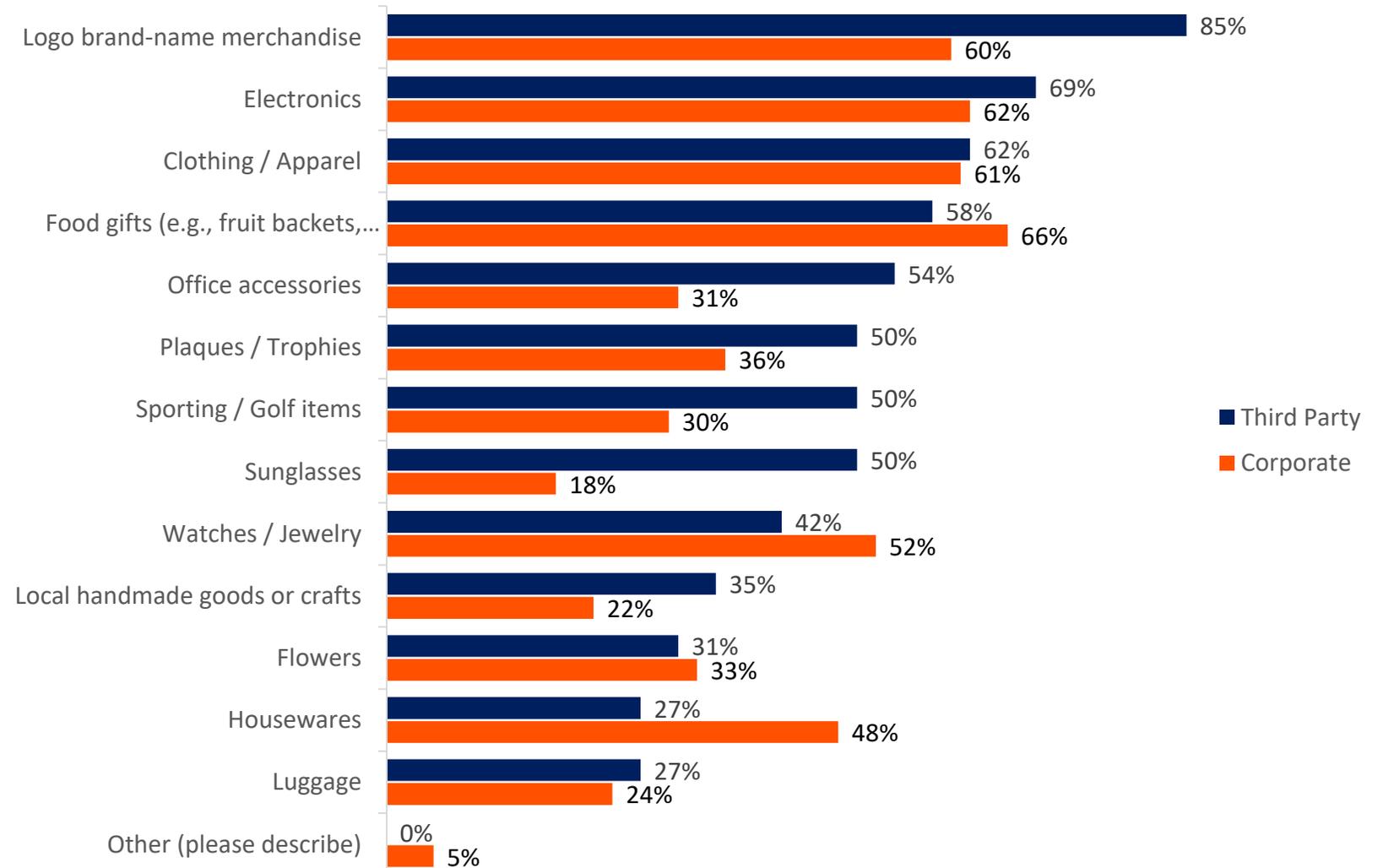
► Merchandise Rewards Prevalence

- North American respondents are far more likely to use a variety of merchandise and gift cards within their reward and recognition programs.
 - Europeans have a similar likelihood of using food gifts, local handmade goods or crafts, flowers, housewares, and luggage.



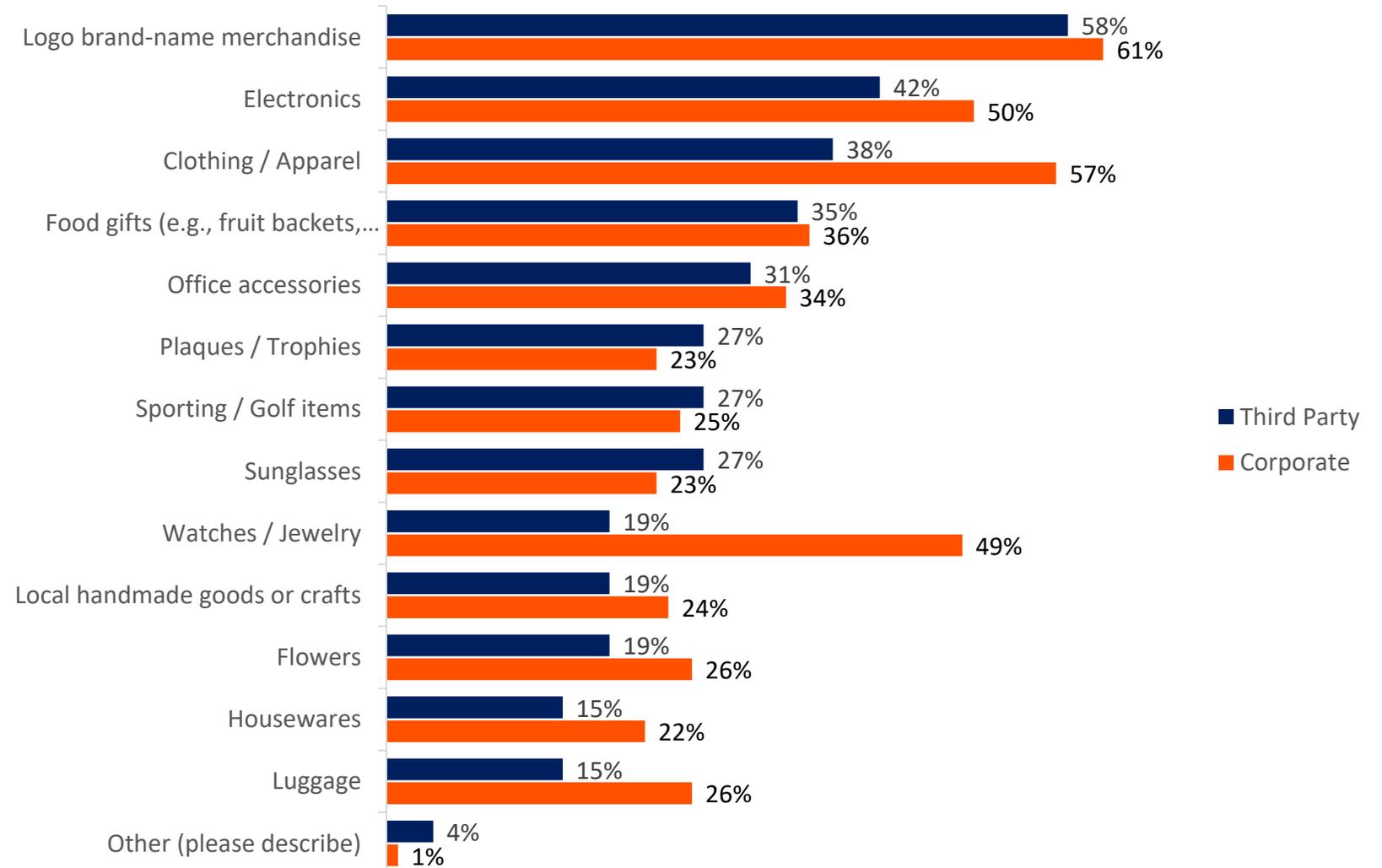
▶ North American Merchandise Rewards Prevalence

- North American third party respondents continue to be more likely to provide variety in merchandise reward offerings.
- Corporate respondents use plaques / trophies and office accessories at a significantly higher rate than third parties.
- Third party respondents have a higher prevalence of providing electronics, sunglasses, sporting goods, watches / jewelry, luggage, and housewares.



▶ European Merchandise Rewards Prevalence

- In Europe, corporations are more likely to provide all types of merchandise rewards and recognitions aside from plaques / trophies, sporting goods, sunglasses, and other, unlisted items.
 - Most prominently, corporations are 30% more likely to provide watches / jewelry, 19% more likely to provide clothing / apparel, and 11% more likely to provide luggage.

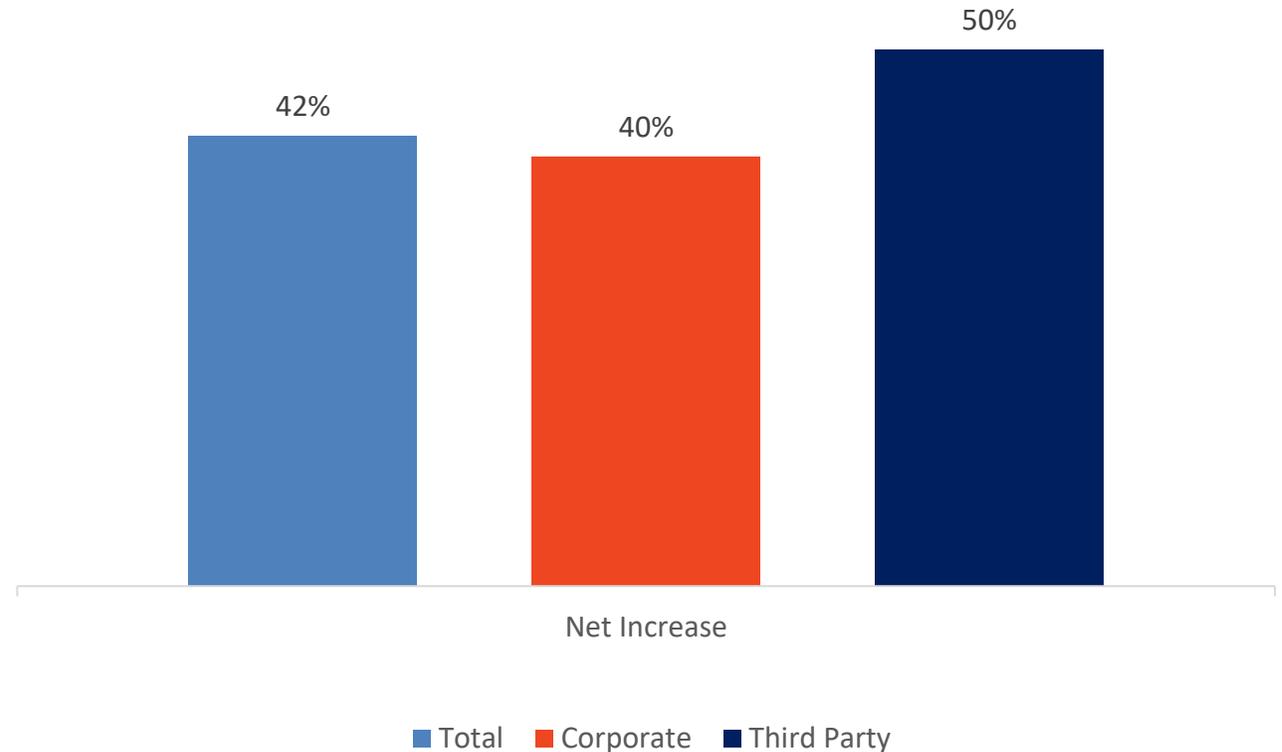




Non-Cash Reward & Recognition: Gift Cards

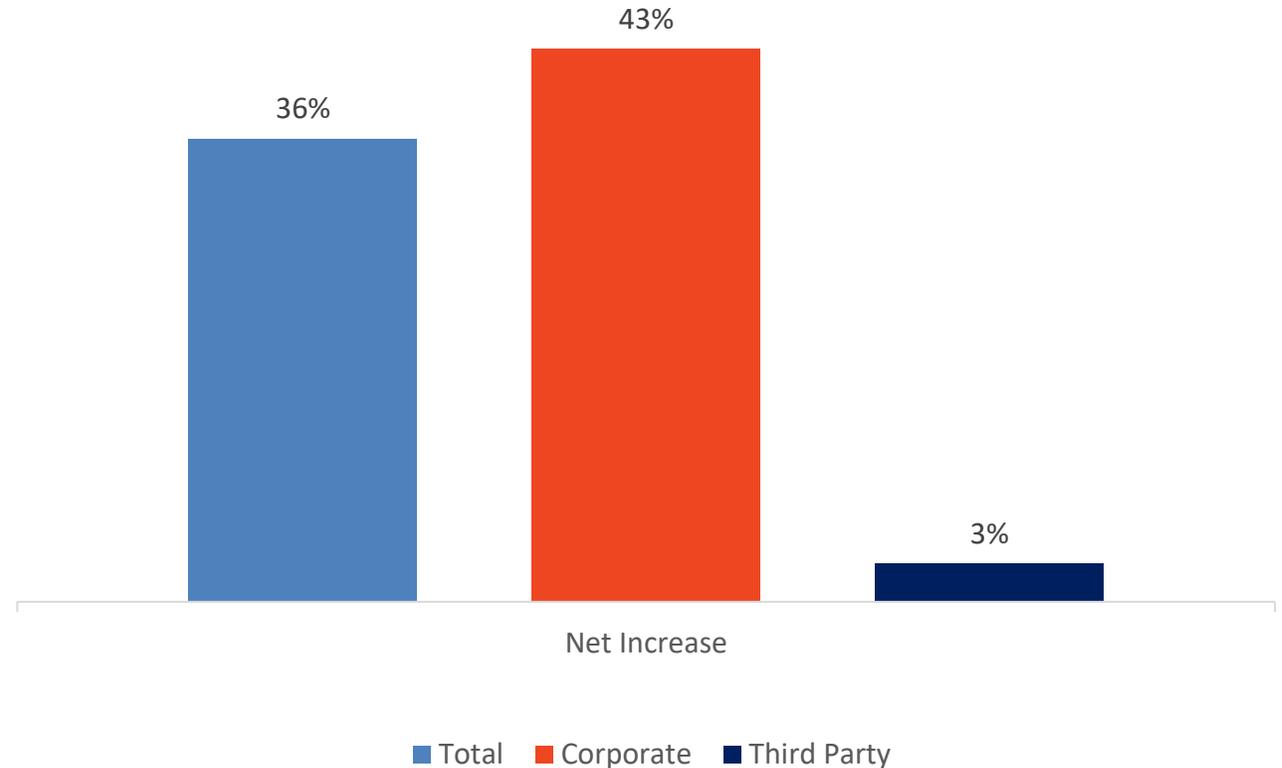
▶ North American Growth in Gift Card Rewards – Net Increase for 2024

- Driven by third party respondents, North Americans expect to see continued growth in gift card rewards for 2024.
 - In total 52% of respondents anticipate an increase in gift card rewards, while only 10% expect a reduction.



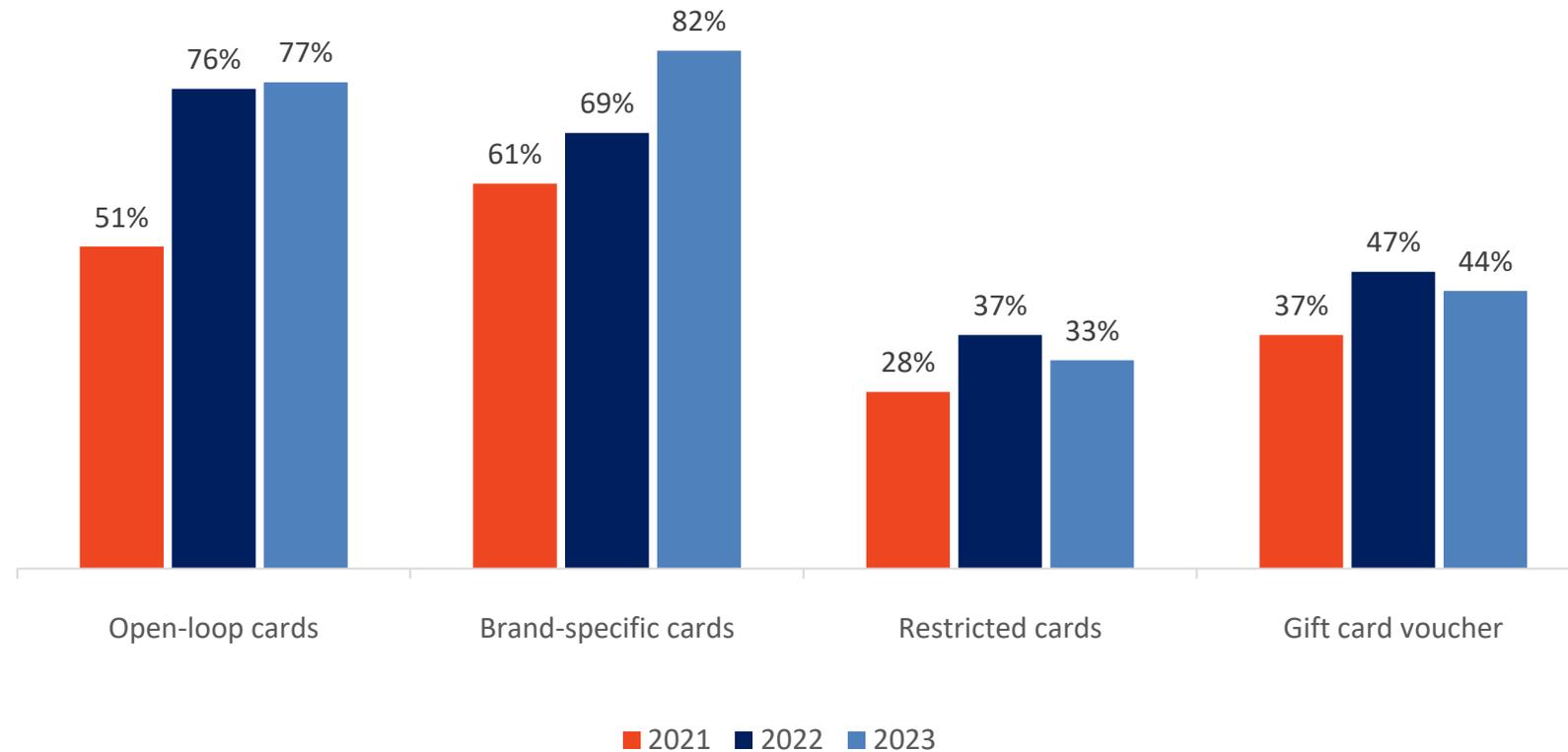
▶ European Growth in Gift Card Rewards – Net Increase for 2024

- Similar to North Americans, European respondents expect to see continued growth in gift card rewards for 2024.
 - Contrary to North America, this growth is driven almost entirely by corporations, as third parties expect little increase in gift card rewards next year.



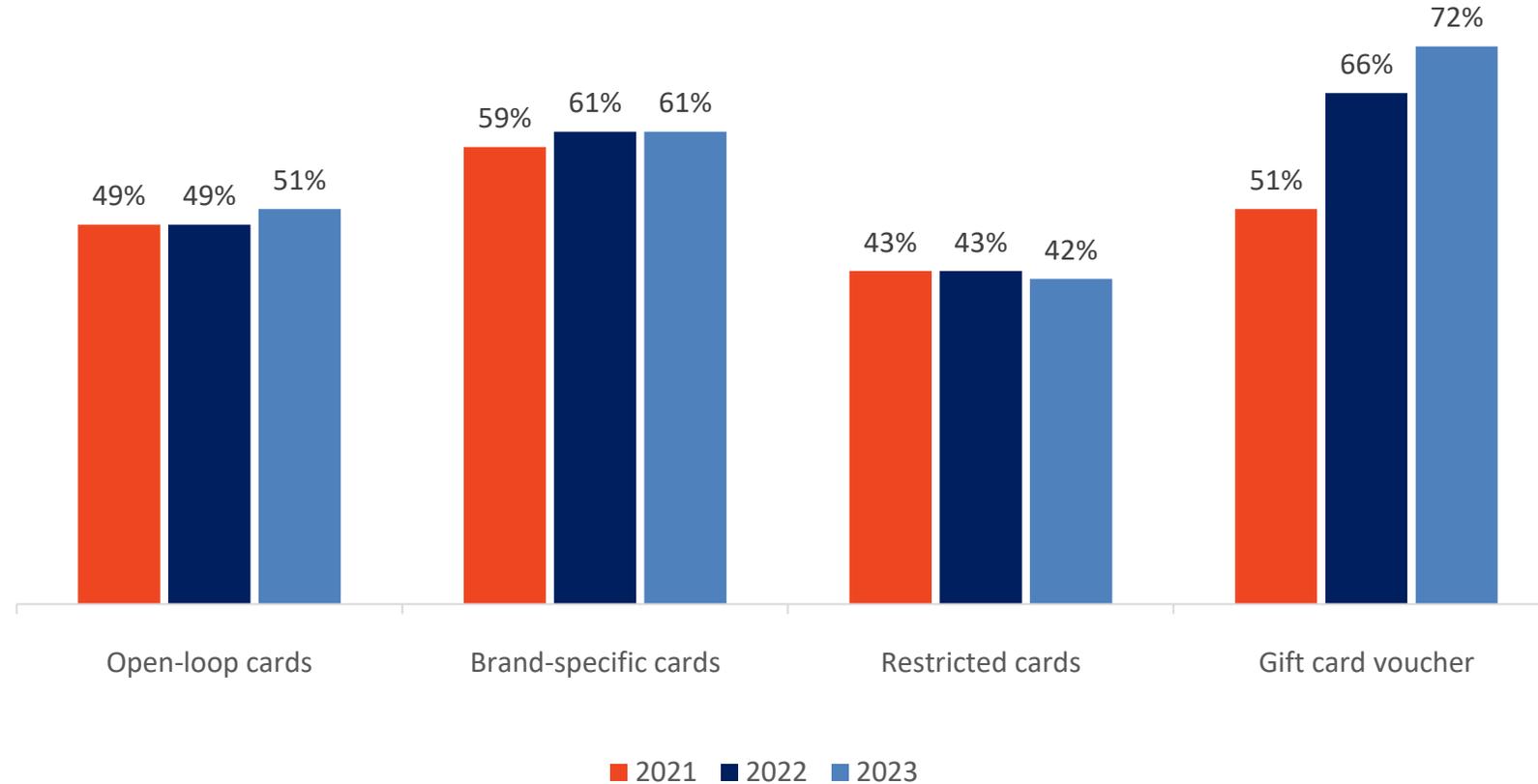
▶ North American Gift Card Types

- Only the use of brand-specific gift cards (+13%) increased in 2023, while open-loop cards, restricted cards, and gift card vouchers displayed reductions or insignificant variation from 2022.



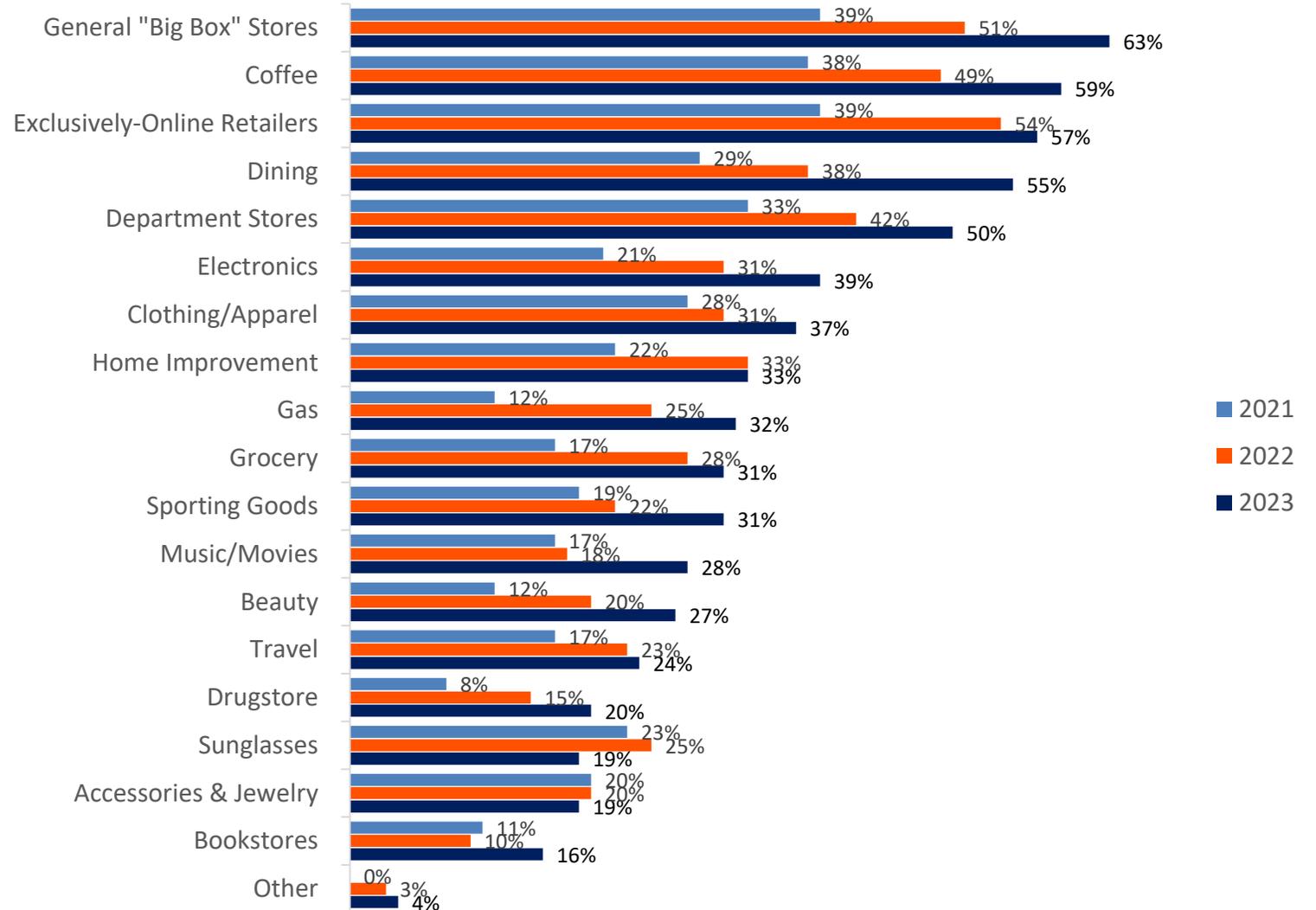
▶ European Gift Card Types

- Europeans exhibited little change in gift card types from 2022 to 2023, with gift card vouchers (+6%) being the most prominent.
- Europeans were much more likely to use gift card vouchers and less likely to use open-loop or brand-specific cards in comparison to North Americans.



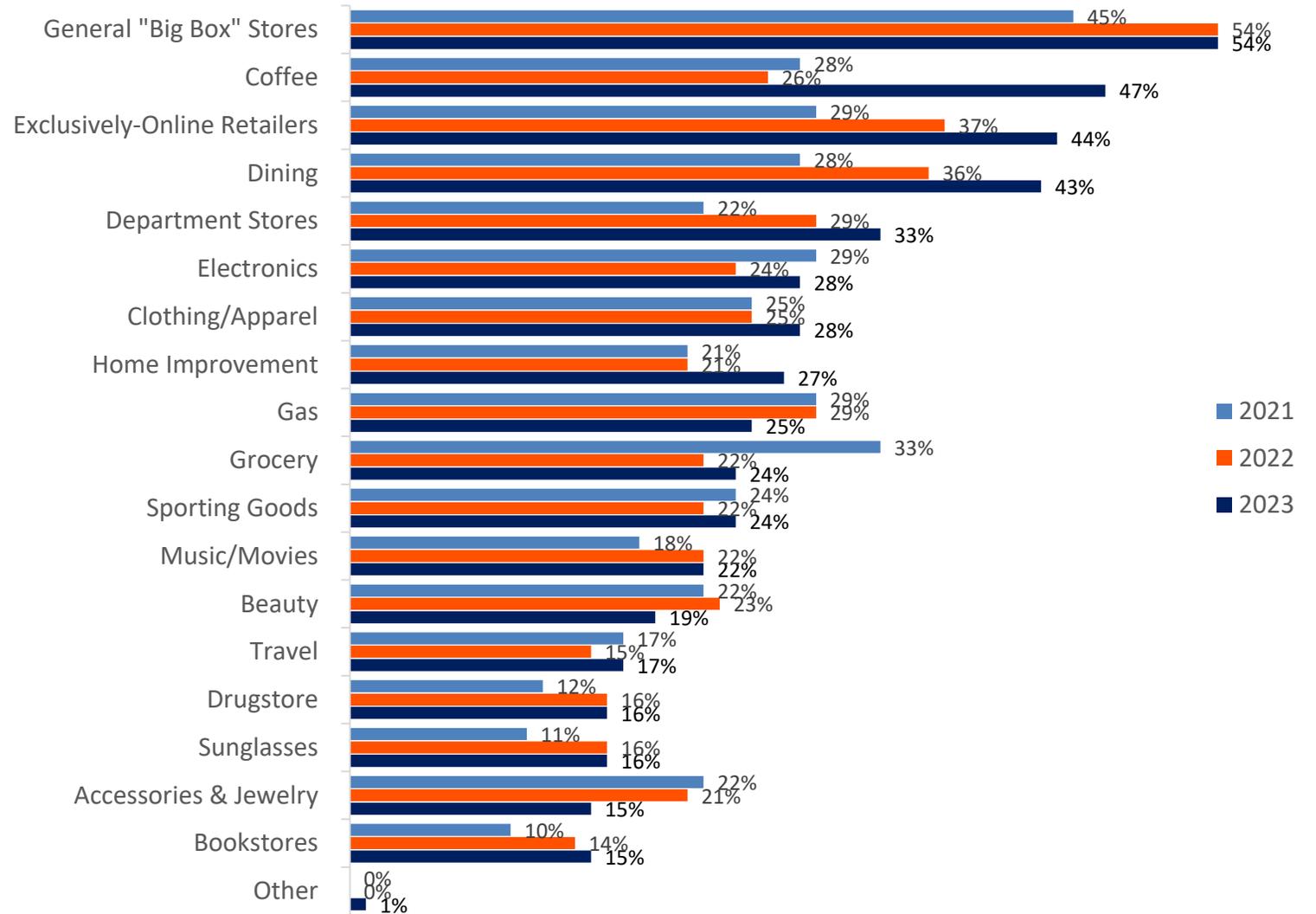
▶ North American Brand Specific Merchant Types

- In North America, gift card use continues to increase in both volume and range of options available to recipients in non-cash rewards programs.
 - Respondents exhibited continued growth in nearly all brand specific gift card merchants over 2022.
 - Sunglasses (-6%) and accessories and jewelry (-1%) exist as slight exceptions.
- General “Big Box” stores and coffee surpass exclusively-online retailers as the most prominent brand specific gift card merchant types.



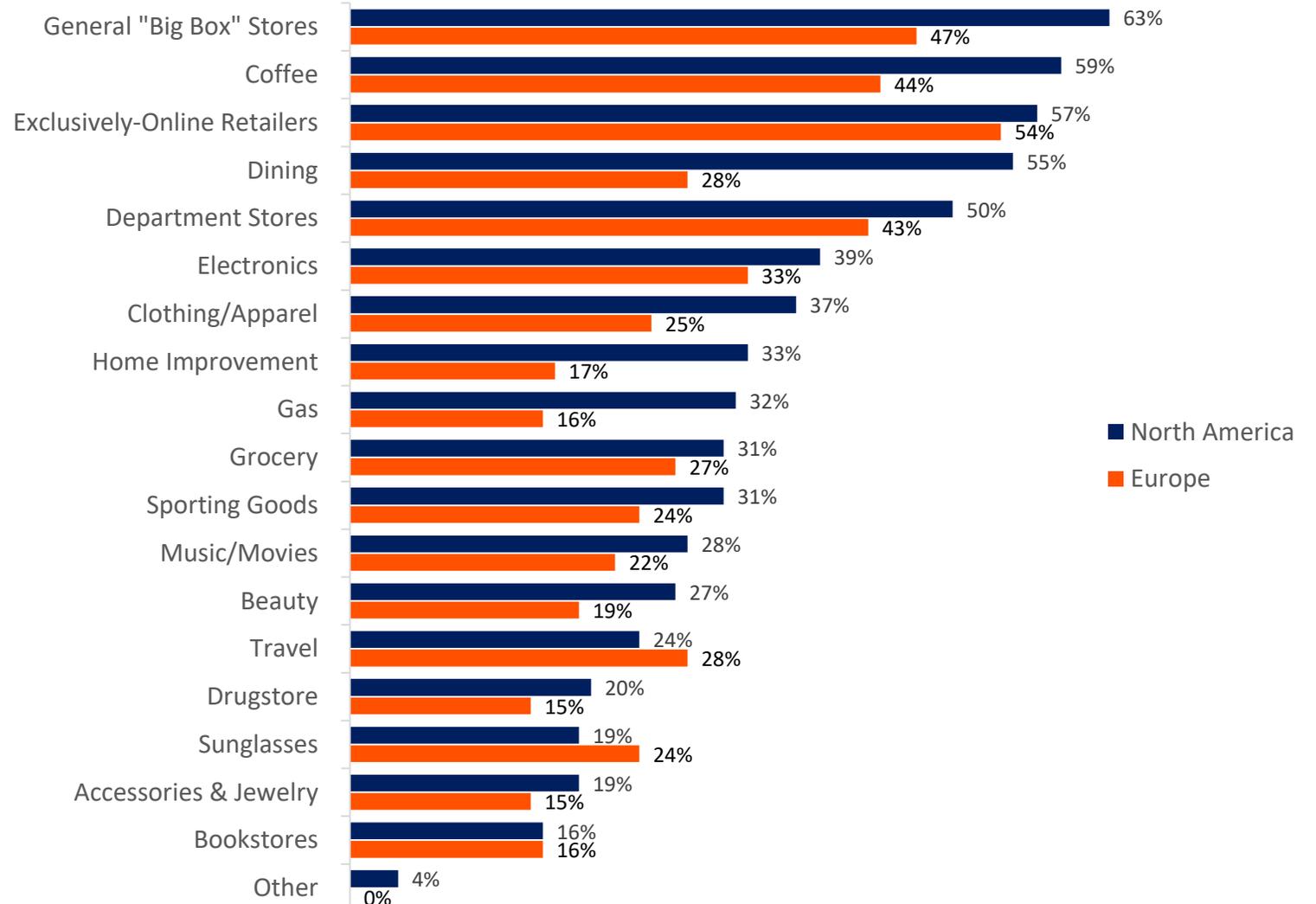
▶ European Brand Specific Merchant Types

- Similar to North America, Europeans reported growth in most brand specific gift card merchants from 2022 to 2023.
 - Sunglasses (-6%), beauty (-4%), and clothing/apparel (-4%) exist as slight exceptions.
- Exclusively online retailers remained the most common merchant type used for branded gift cards in Europe, maintaining the 2022 rate of use.
- Coffee gift cards, and department cards continued to show growth, ranking as the 2nd and 3rd most frequent gift card categories in Europe.



► Brand Specific Merchant Types

- In 2023, North Americans were more likely to utilize dining, gas, home improvement, general “Big Box” stores, coffee, clothing / apparel, and beauty merchants for branded gift cards in non-cash rewards programs.
- European respondents displayed only slightly greater frequencies with travel (+4%) and accessories and jewelry (+5%) when compared to North American respondents.

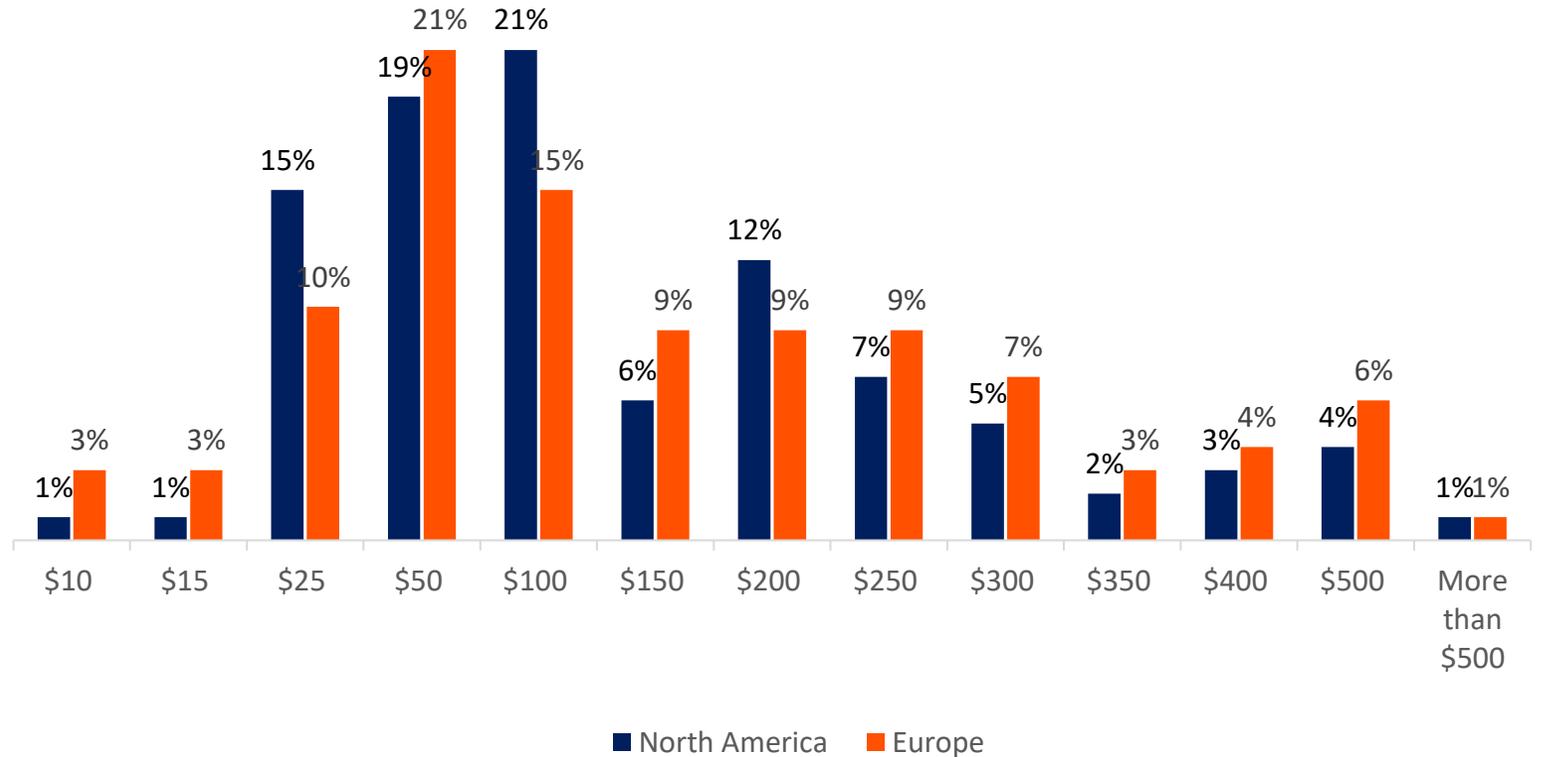


▶ Average Gift Card Denomination

- While the North American average gift card denomination has remained stagnant (\$153 in 2022 to \$152 in 2023), Europe has seen a significant increase (€134 to €161).
- The median gift card amount for both North Americans and Europeans has remained equivalent.
- North American and European average gift card denominations are relatively similar, with the largest variations occurring between \$25 and \$100.

North America \$1-\$100: 57%
North American Median: \$100
North America Average: \$152

European €1-€100 : 52%
European Median: €100
Euros European Average: €161

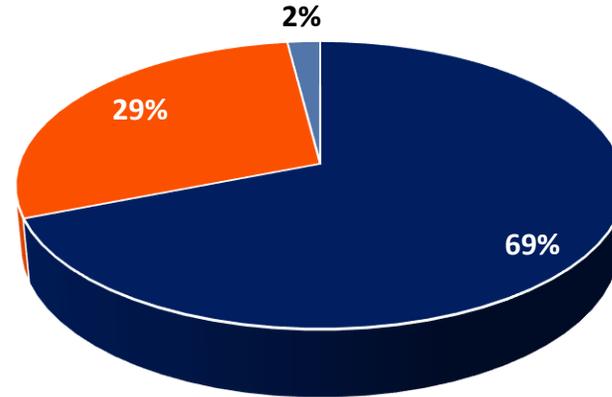


▶ Local Retail Sourcing for Gift Cards

- Local retail sourcing for gift cards in North America has decreased slightly (-5%) from 74% in 2022.
- Similarly, local retail sourcing for gift cards in Europe dropped 5% from 2022 to 2023.

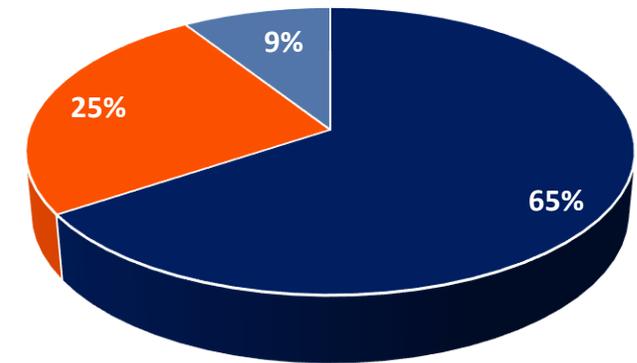
Purchasing at Local Retailers

North America



■ Yes ■ No ■ Not Sure

Europe



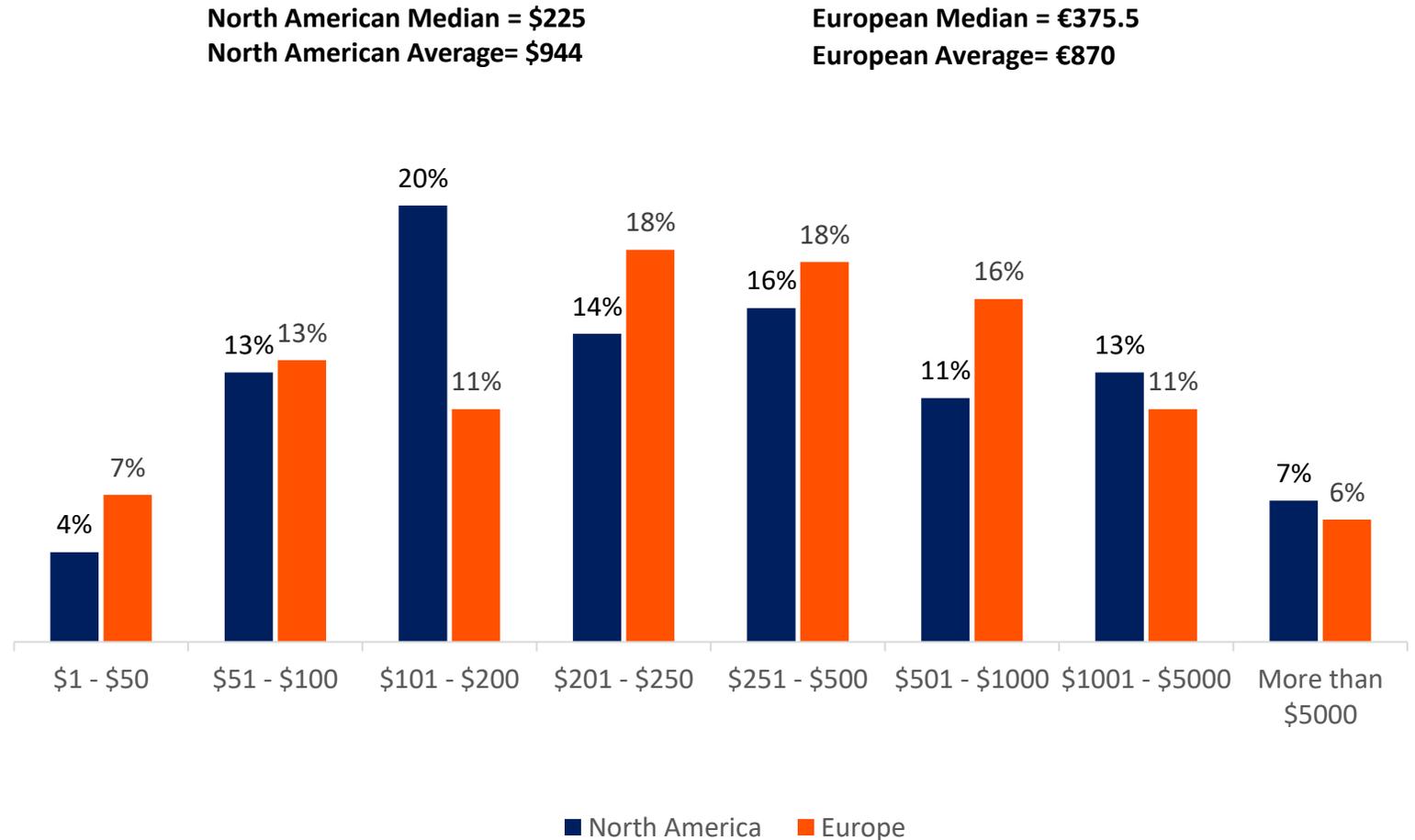
■ Yes ■ No ■ Not Sure



Event Gifting

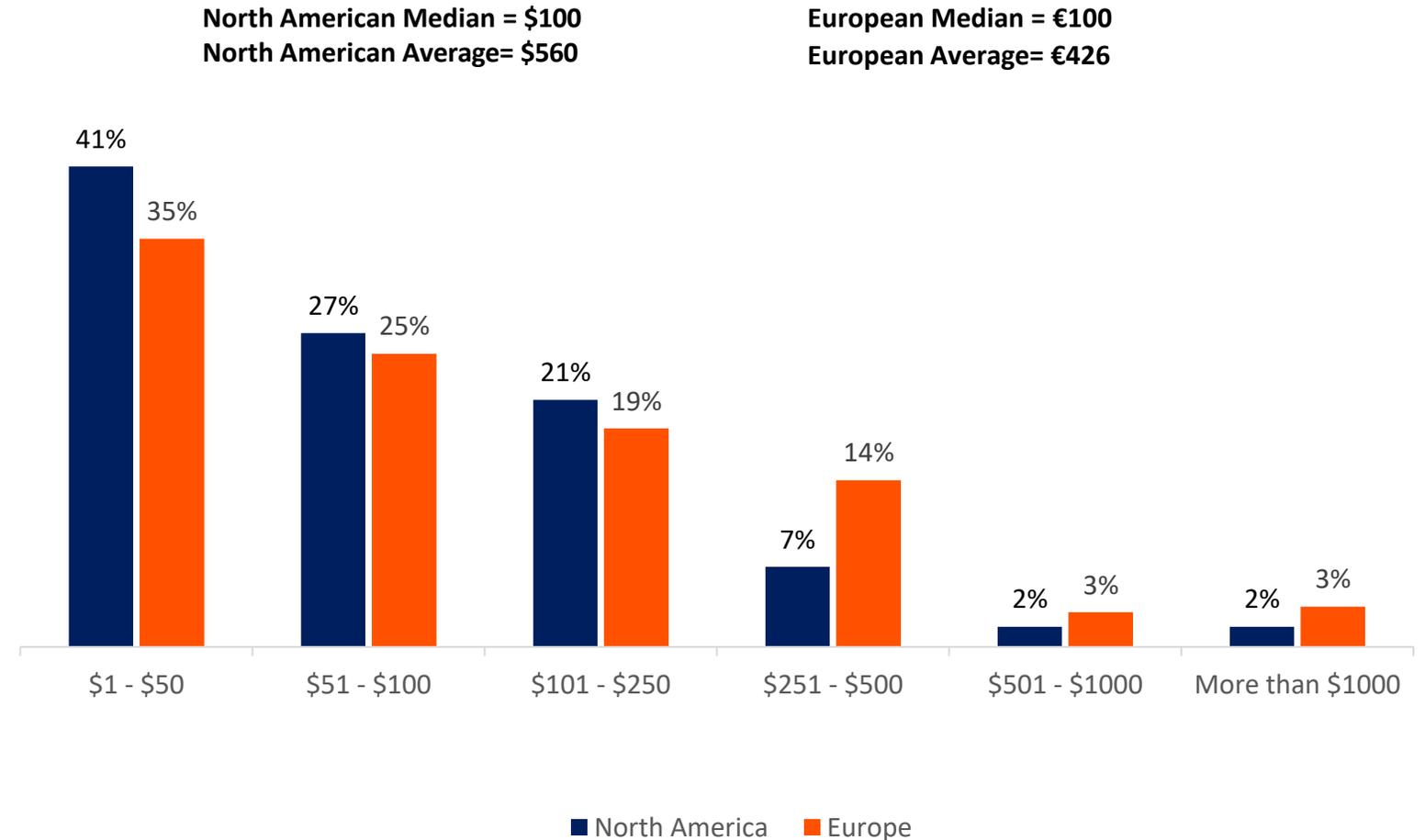
▶ Average Per-Person Spend – Event Gifts

- Both North American and European respondents display significant increases in average annual spend per-person for event gifts in 2023 over 2022 (+ \$94 and €270, respectively).
- On average, North Americans spend more per-person for event gifts, while Europeans have the greater median value.
- The discrepancies in these figures suggest that Europeans have a less drastic range in spending when compared to North Americans.



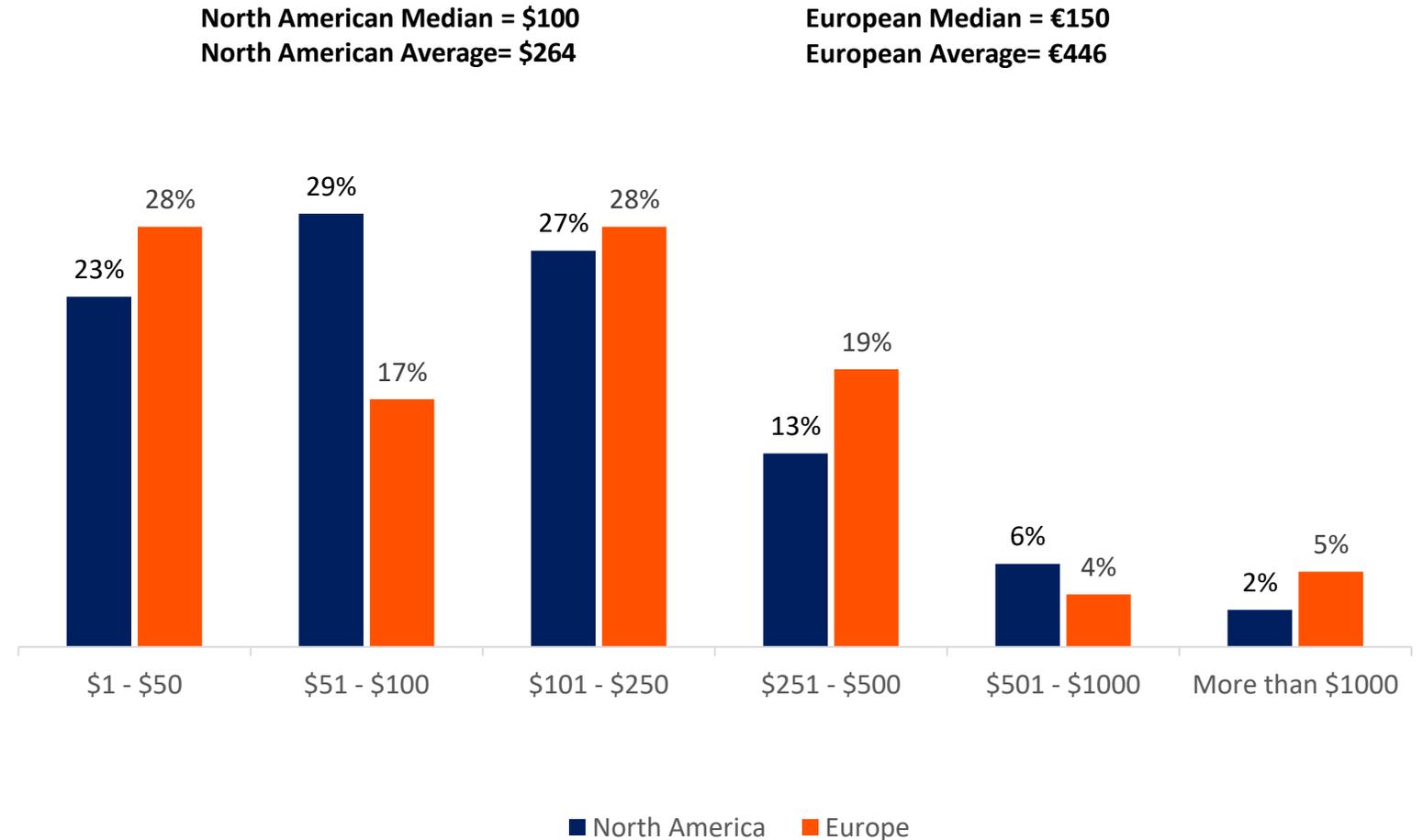
▶ Average Per-Attendee Spend – Event Gifts

- While the median event gift spend per-attendee (\$100) has remained constant in North America since 2022, average spend has over doubled (\$263 to \$560).
- Similarly, European average spend has increase from €221 in 2022 to €426 in 2023.
- Year-over-year figures continue to rise for both regions.



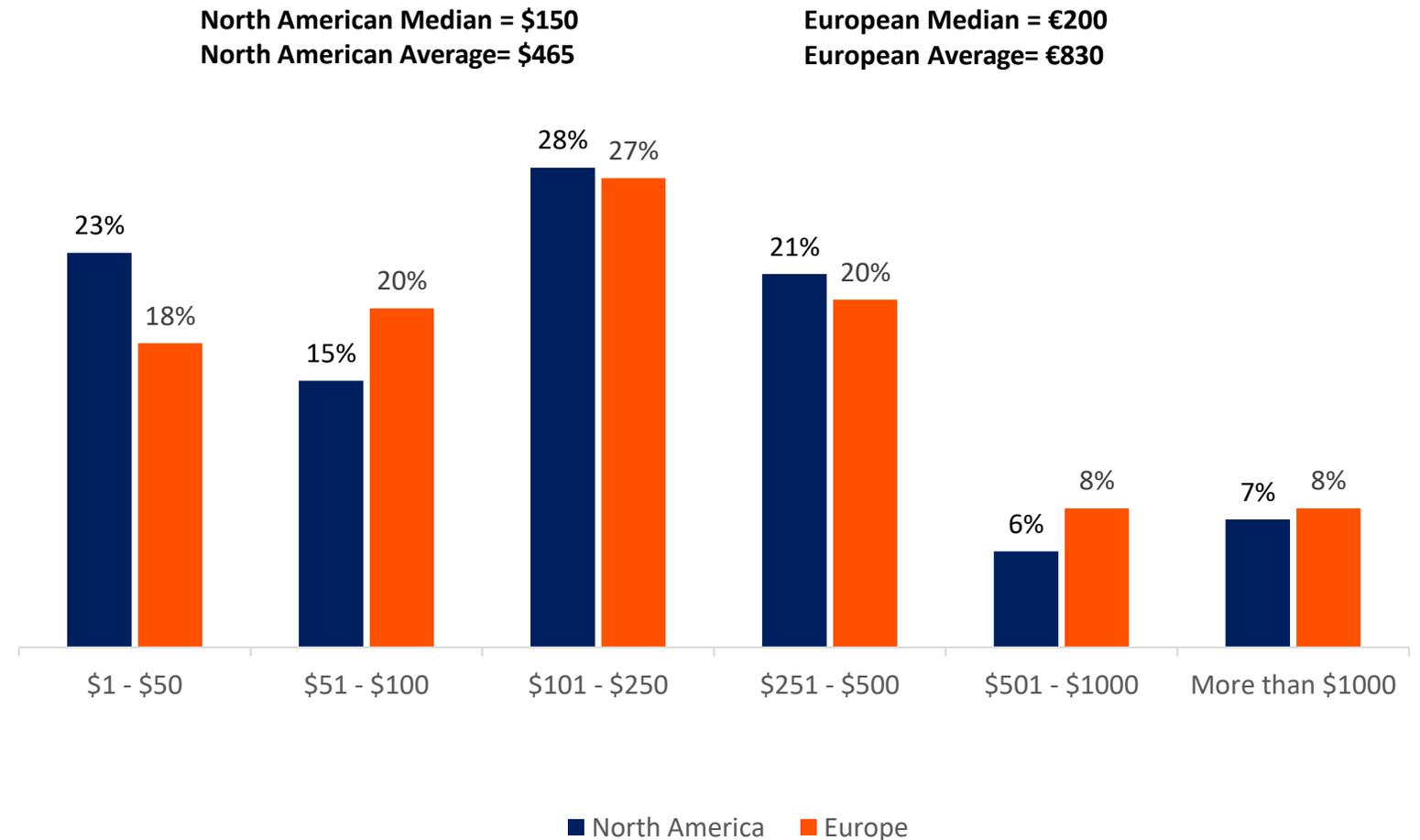
▶ Average Per-Speaker Spend – Event Gifts

- In North America, the median and average per-speaker spend on event gifts have remained relatively constant from 2022 to 2023.
- In contrast, the median per-speaker spend on event gifts increased from €100 to €150 in Europe, and the average spend rose from €221 to €446 from 2022 to 2023.
- In general, European respondents spend more on gifts for speakers than North Americans.



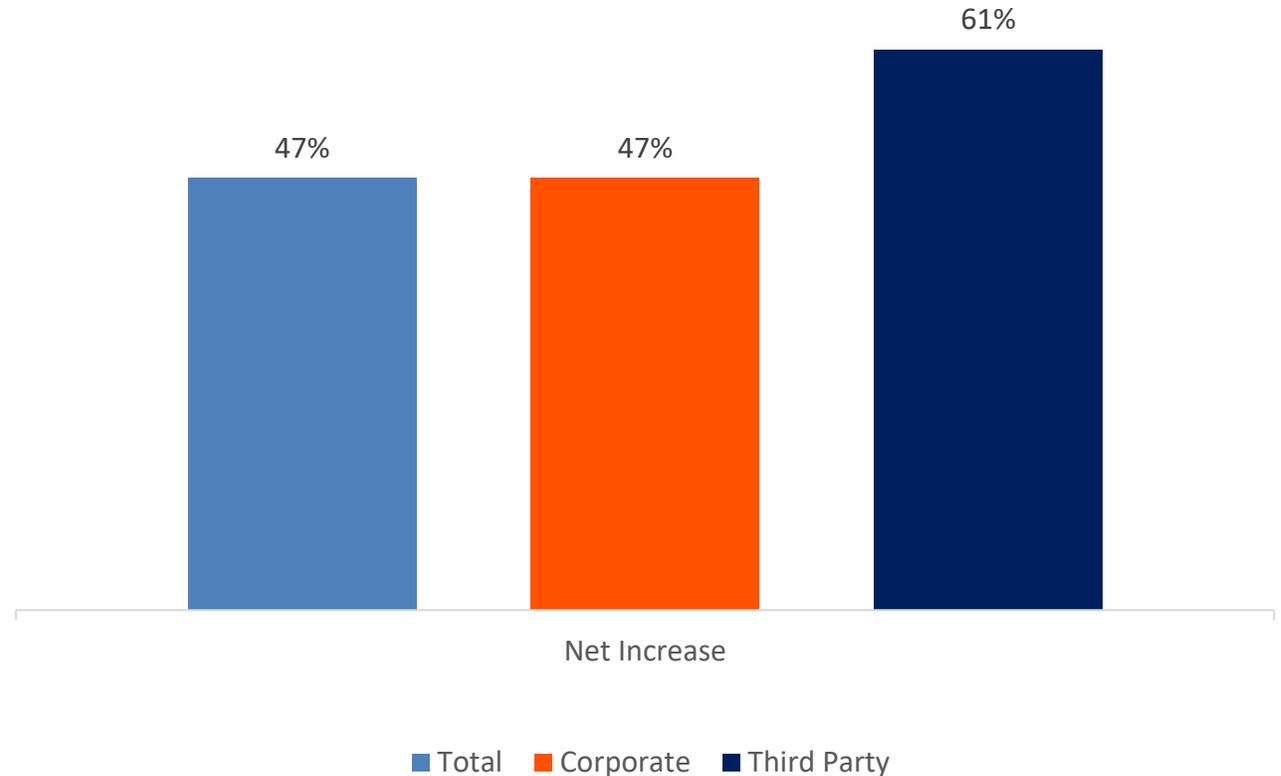
▶ Average Per-VIP Spend – Event Gifts

- While the median spend on VIP event gifts has remained constant, average spending has increased significantly in North America from \$291 in 2022 to \$465 in 2023.
- Europeans reported increases in both median spend (€120 to €200) and average spend (€563 to €830) over the same time period.
- Notably, the extreme variance between average and median VIP gift spending in Europe is due to a few large gifts well over €1000.
 - The comparison of median spend on VIP event gifts between North America and Europe provides a better representation of the industry.



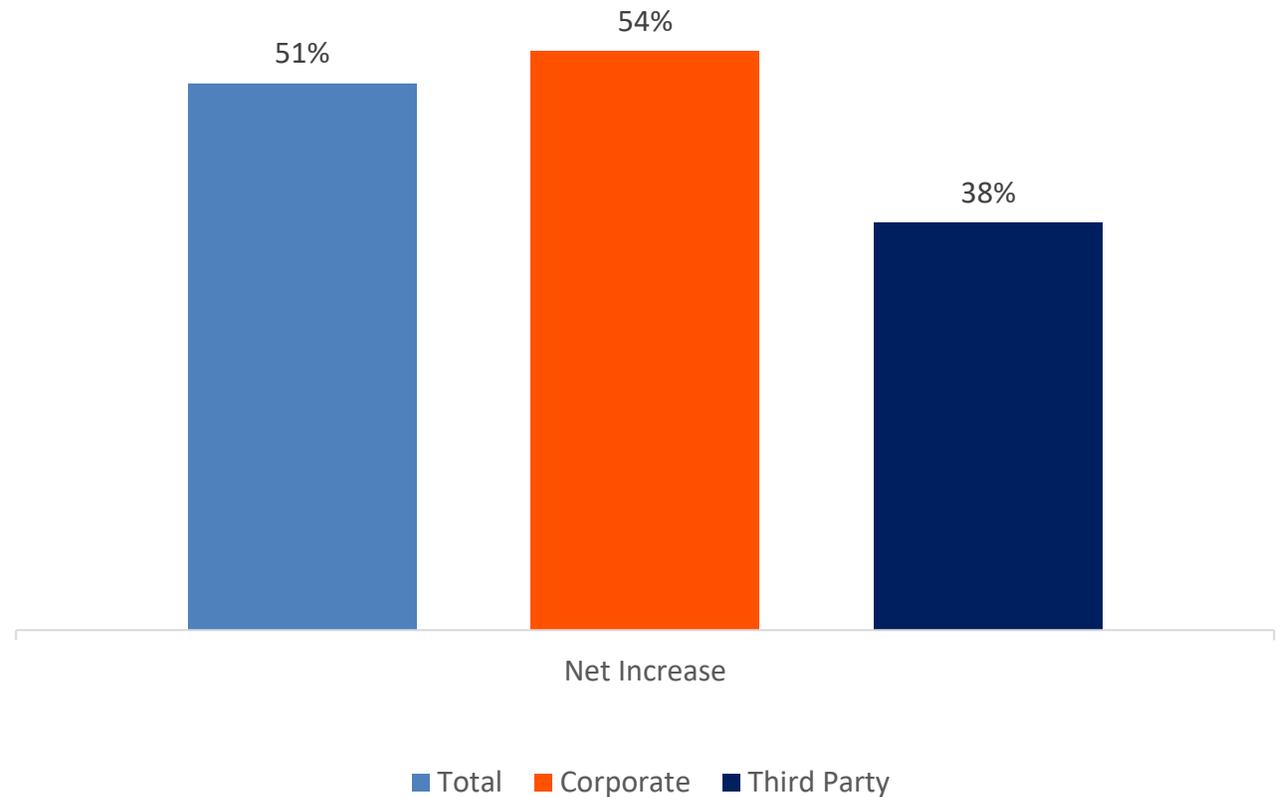
▶ North American Growth in Event Gifting Spend - Net Increase for 2024

- In North America, year-over-year increases in event gifting spend is expected to continue into 2024.
 - 55% of respondents plan to increase their budgets, while only 7% expect a decrease.
- Third party respondents expect the greatest changes as the net increase has grown from an expected 46% for 2023 to 61% next year.



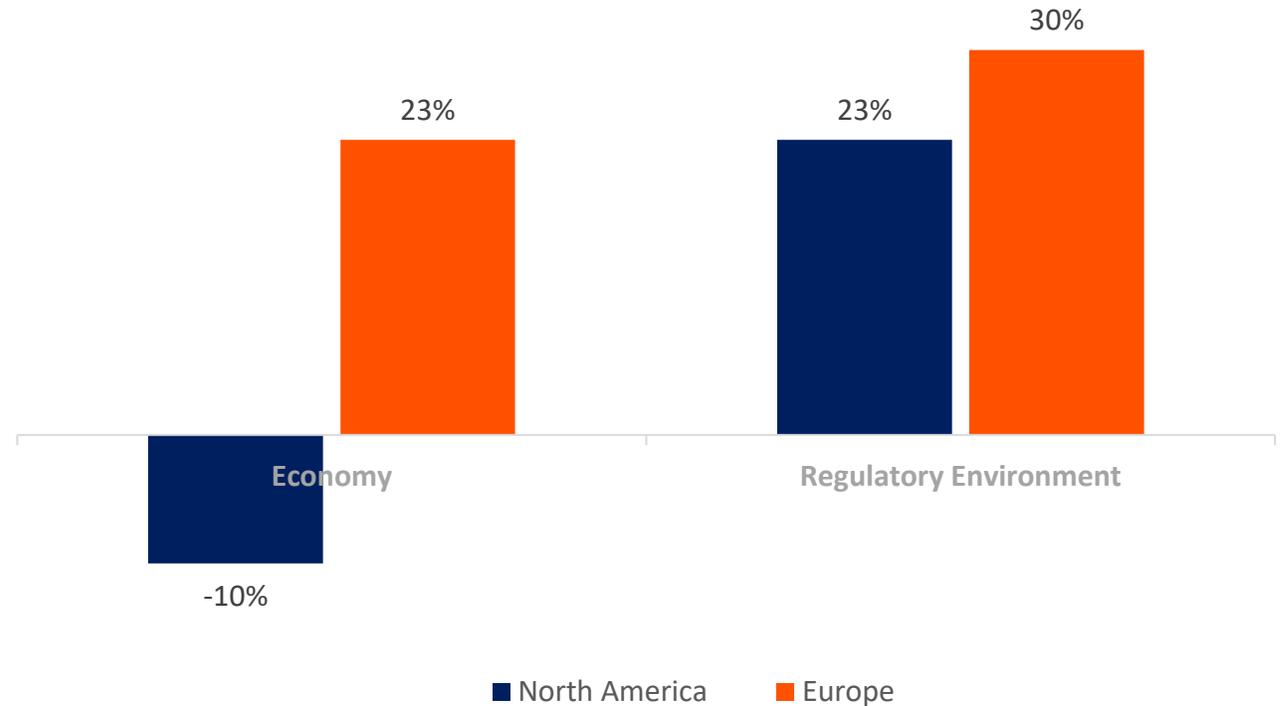
▶ European Growth in Event Gifting Spend - Net Increase for 2024

- In Europe, year-over-year increases in event gifting spend is also expected to continue into 2024.
 - 56% of respondents plan spending increases, while only 5% plan to decrease.
- Conversely to North America, budget increase in Europe are driven more by corporate companies than third parties.



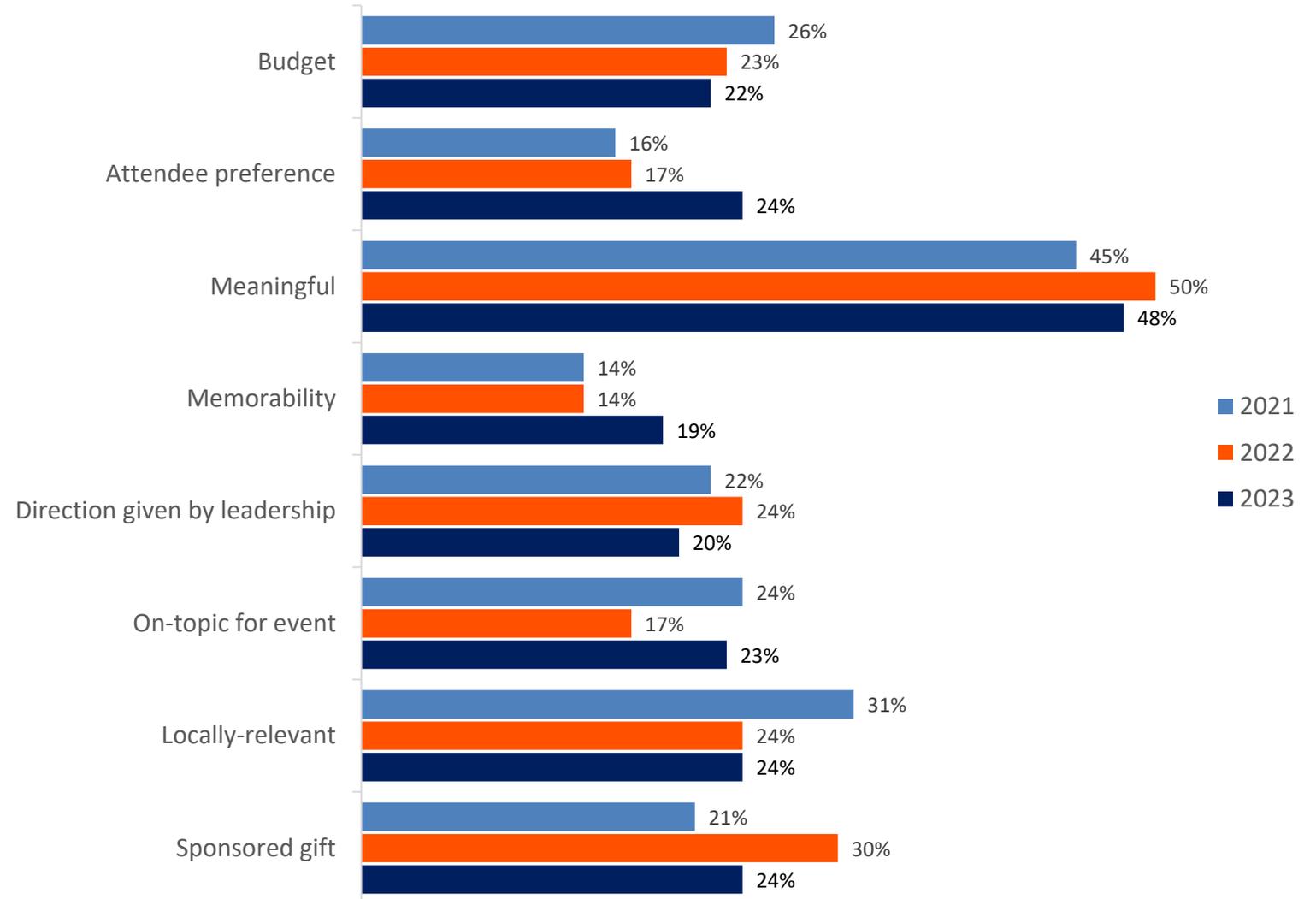
► Impact on Event Gifting Spend

- In a drastic shift from the 2023 responses (+22%), North Americans expect the economy to have a negative impact on event gift spend in 2024.
- Conversely, the European prediction of a positive economic impact on event gifting spend increased 4% over last year's projections.
- Though dropping from their 2023 expectations, both North Americans (43% to 23%) and Europeans (34% to 30%) expect the regulatory environment to have a positive impact in 2024.



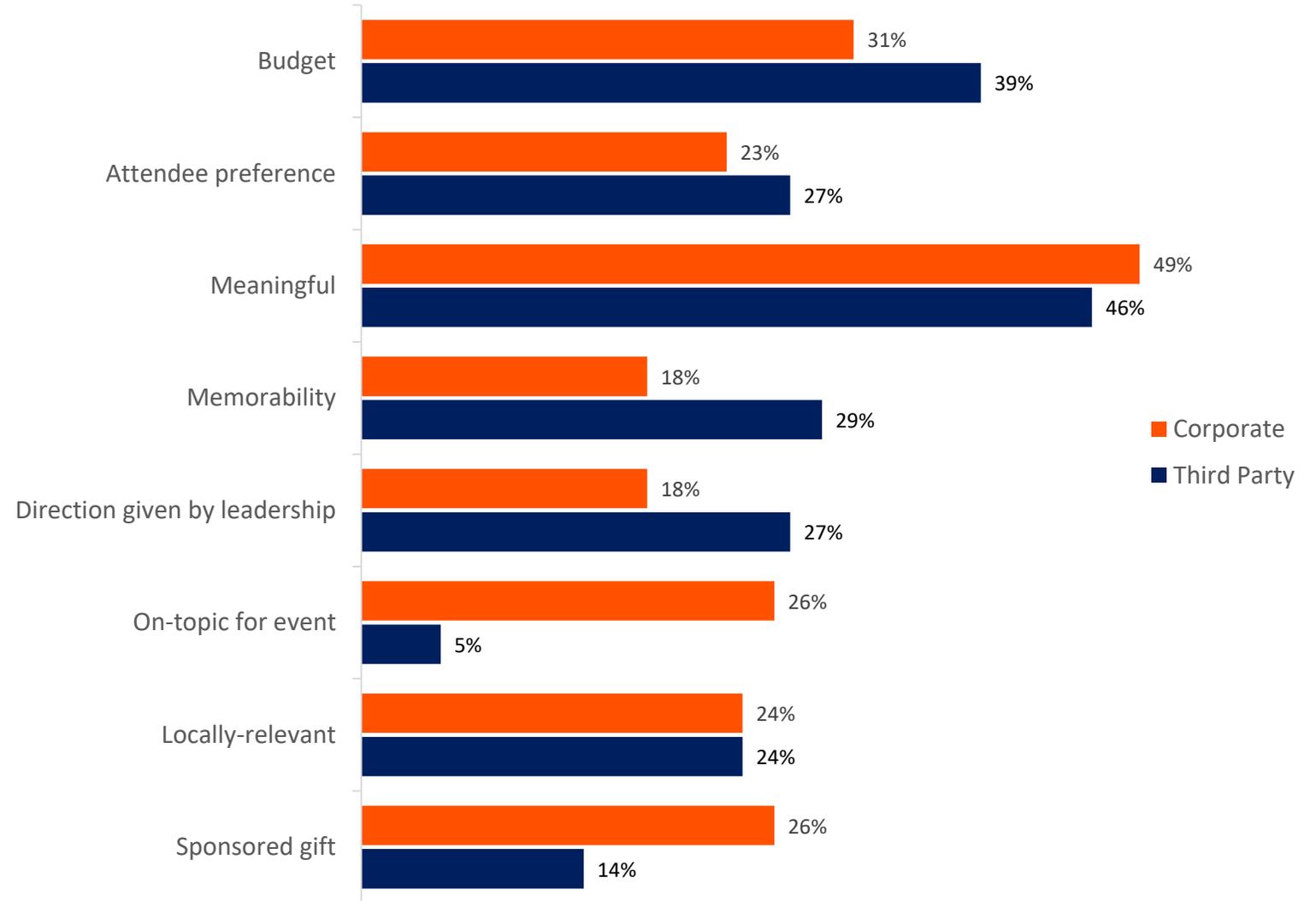
▶ North American Considerations When Selecting Event Gifts

- While providing a meaningful gift remains the top priority for North Americans, attendee preference (+7%) and providing an on-topic gift for the event (+6%) display the largest increases in relevance since 2022.
- Sponsorships (-6%) and direction given by leadership (-4%) experienced the largest declines from 2022 to 2023.



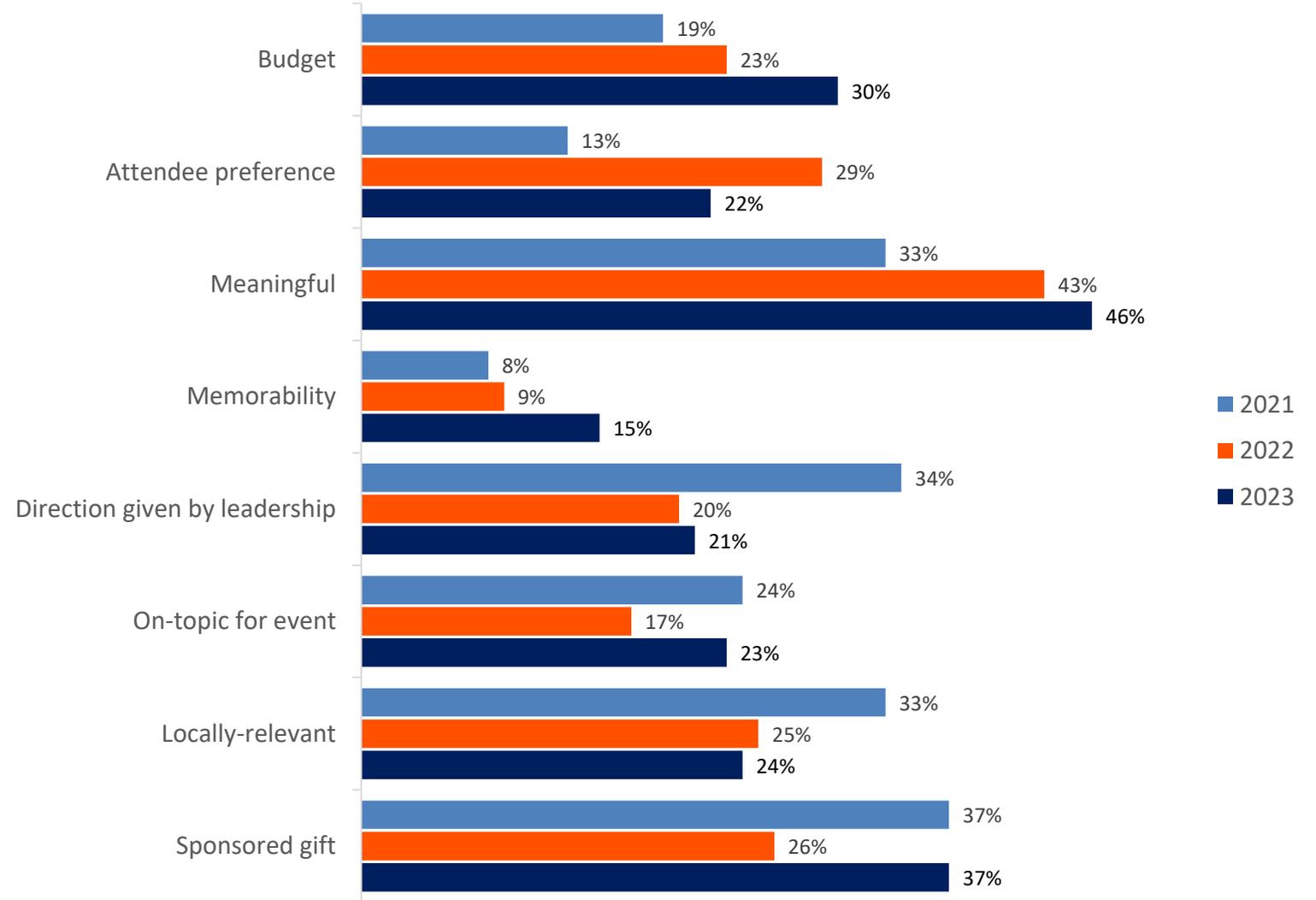
▶ North American Considerations When Selecting Event Gifts

- Corporate respondents are more likely to consider a wide variety of reasons in selecting event gifts when compared to third party respondents.
- Third parties are more likely than corporate respondents to identify budget, attendee preference, memorability, and direction given by leadership as priorities when selecting event gifts.
- Conversely, corporate respondents are more likely than third party respondents to identify the event topic and sponsored gifts as priorities.



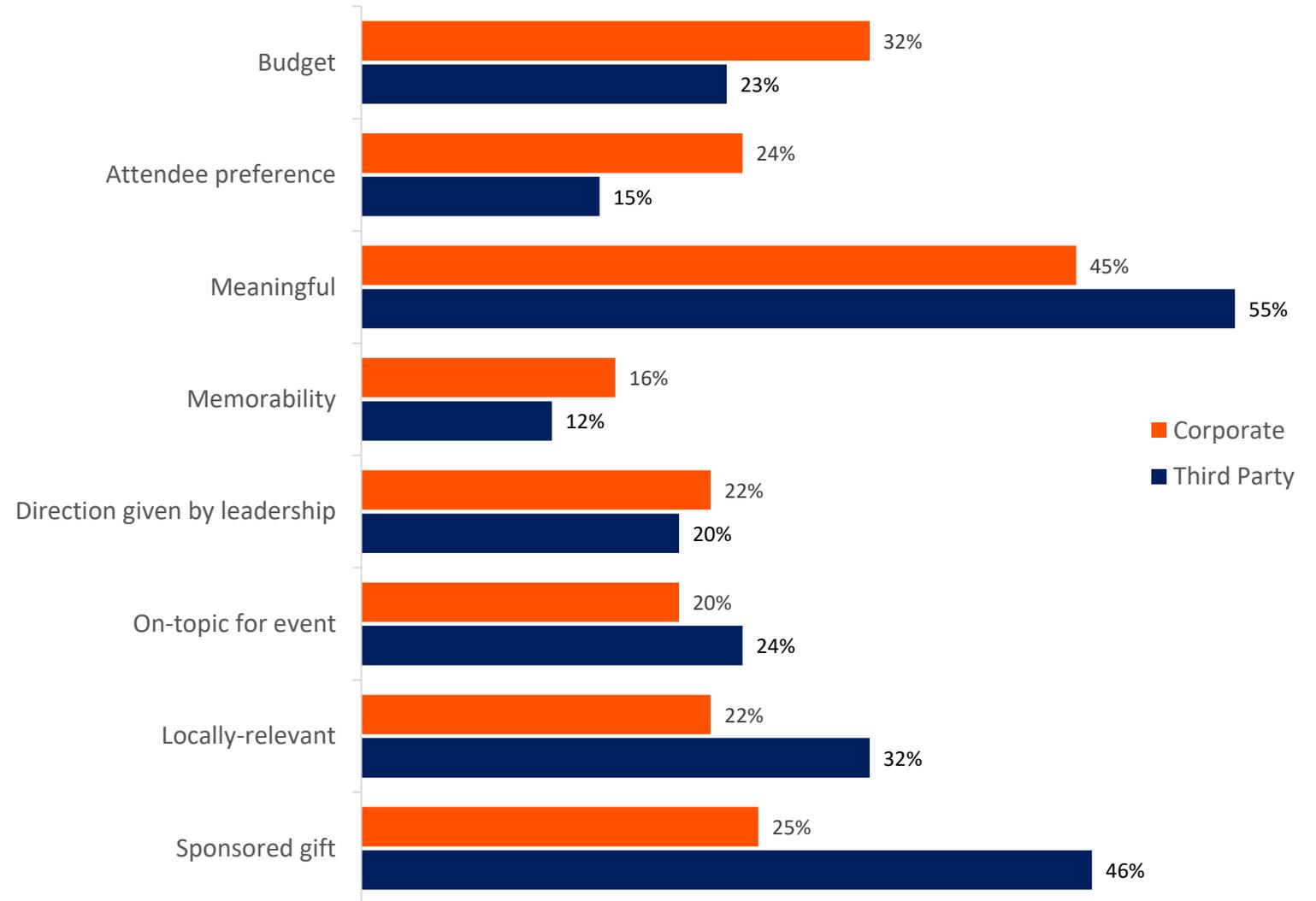
▶ European Considerations When Selecting Event Gifts

- Similar to North Americans, Europeans place priority on providing a meaningful gift.
- The greatest year-over-year increases in European selection criteria are sponsorships (+11%) and budget (+7%).
- Attendee preference (-7%) displays the largest decline in priority for Europeans from 2022 to 2023.



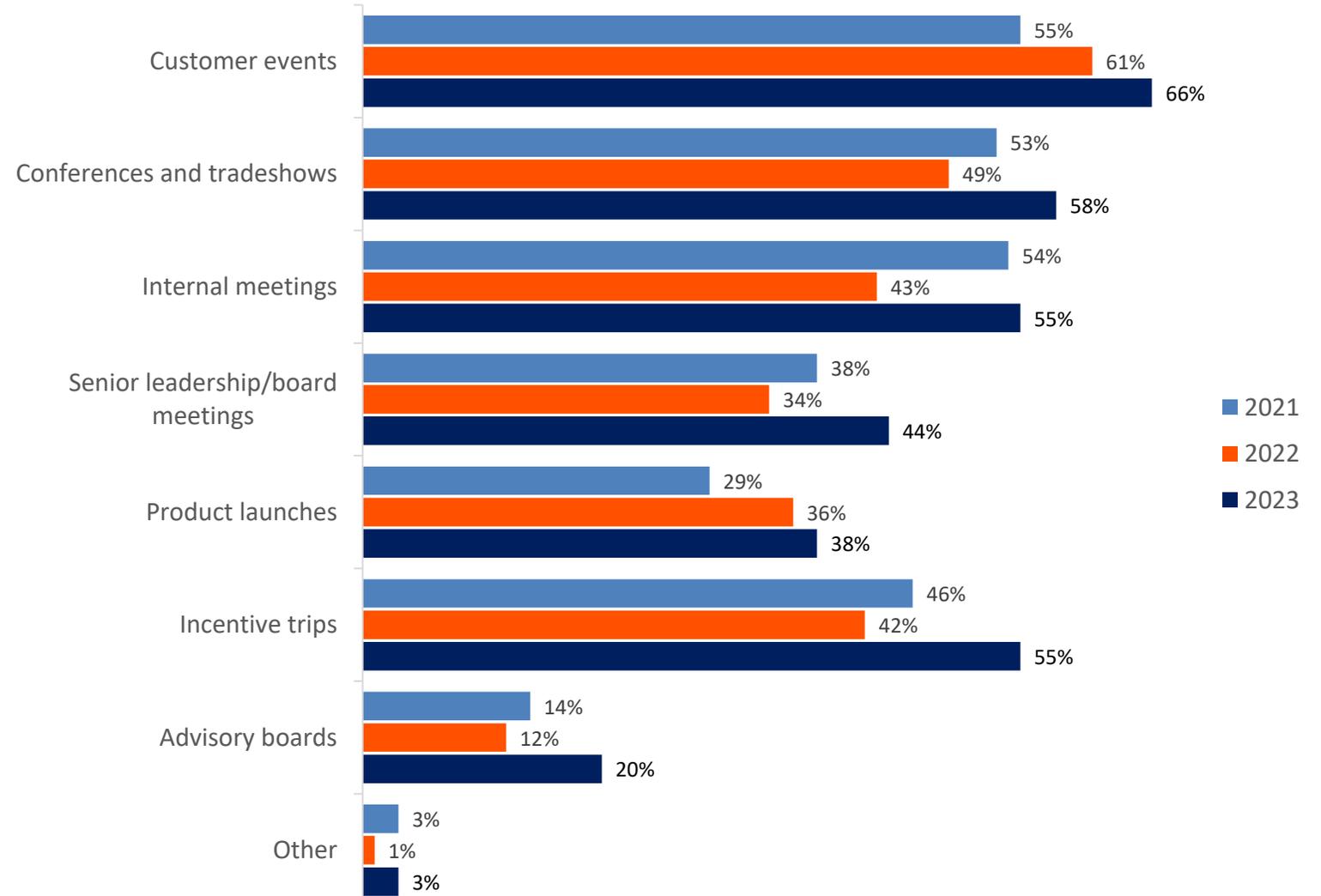
▶ European Considerations When Selecting Event Gifts

- Similar to North America, European third parties are more likely to be driven by specific priorities when selecting event gifts.
- Third party respondents are more likely to identify meaningful, local-relevance and sponsorships as priorities when selecting event gifts.
- Conversely, corporate respondents are more likely to identify budget and attendee preference as priorities when selecting event gifts.



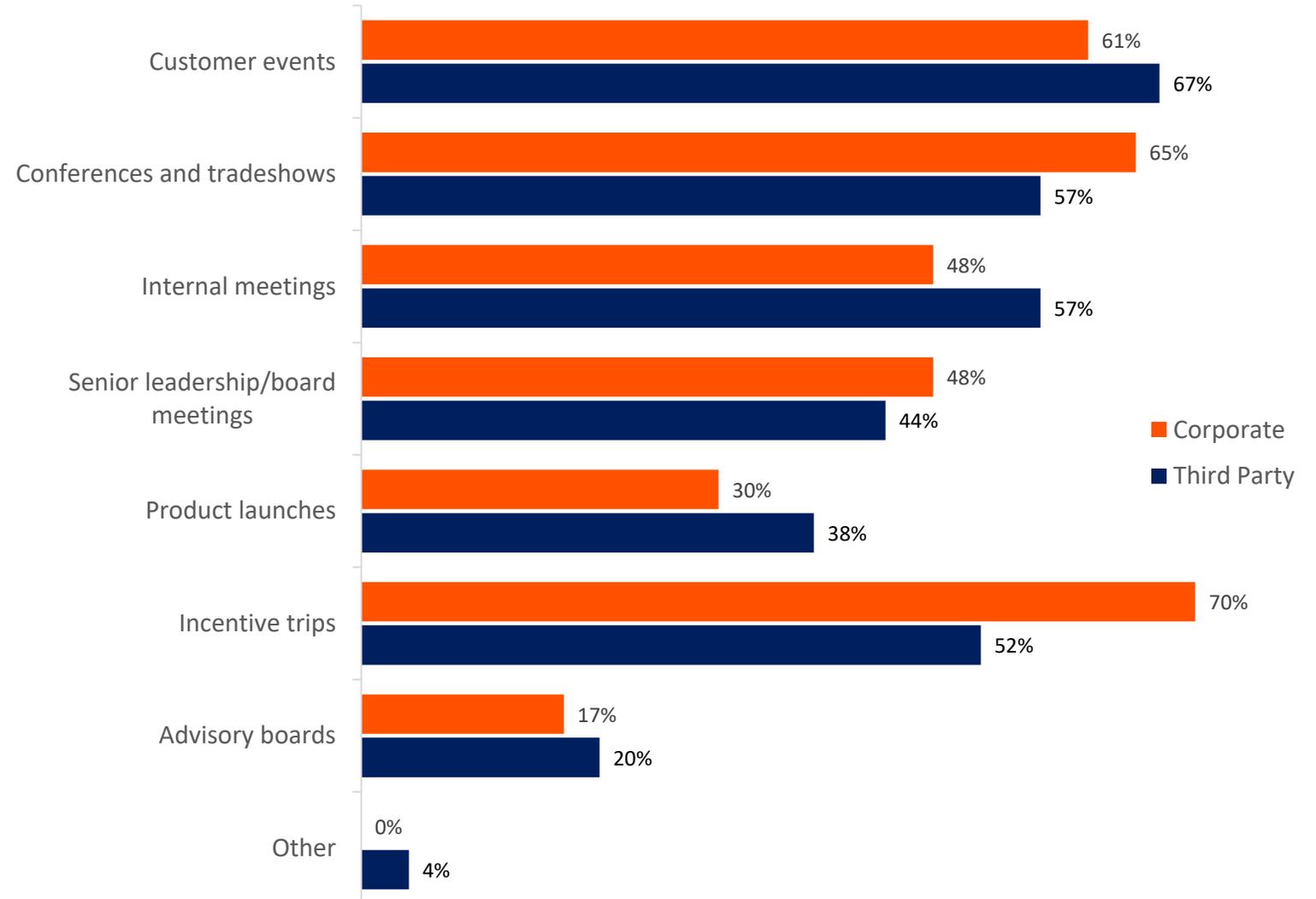
▶ North American Event Gifting – Event Types

- Event gifting has increased at all North American event types from 2022 to 2023.
- While customer events remain the most likely for gift giving, incentives trips (+13%), internal meetings (+12%), and senior leadership/board meetings (+10%) have seen the greatest year-over-year increases.



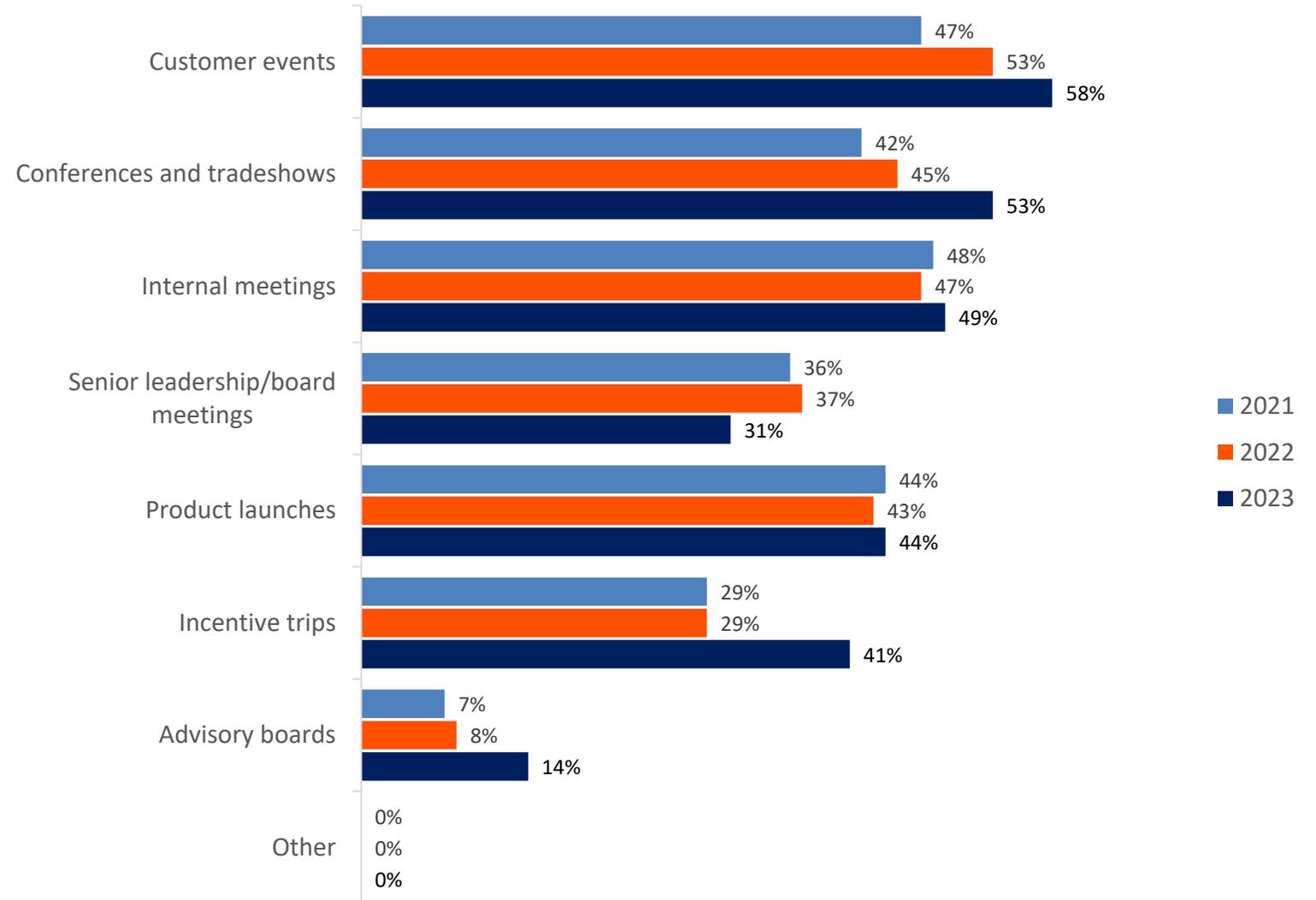
▶ North American Event Gifting – Event Types

- Third party respondents are more likely to provide attendee gifts than corporate respondents during customer events, internal meetings, and product launches.
- Conversely, corporate respondents are more likely to provide attendee gifts during conferences and tradeshow and incentive trips.



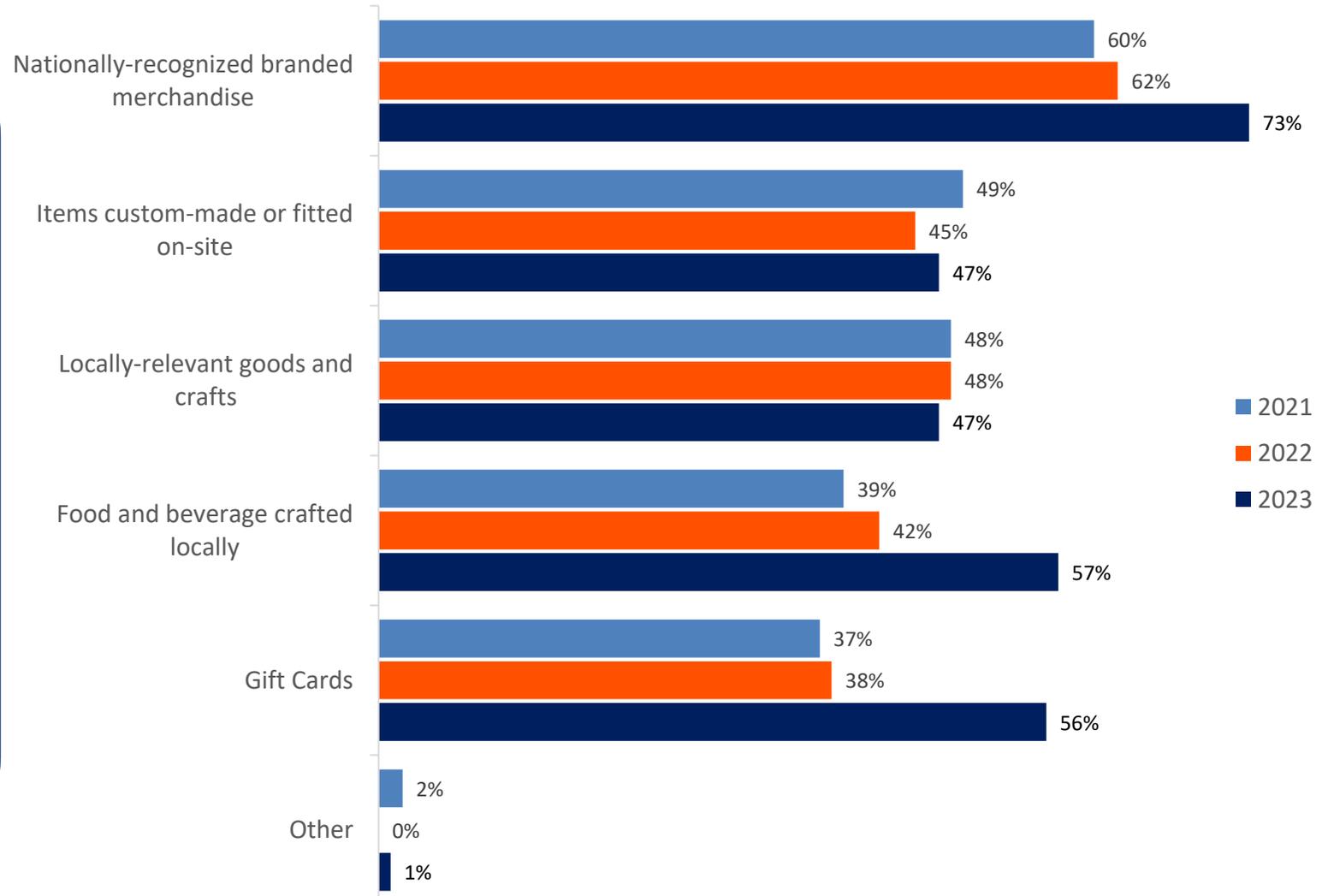
▶ European Event Gifting – Event Types

- While gift giving has increased in most meeting types for Europeans, incentive trips (+12%), conferences and tradeshow (+8%), and advisory boards (+6%) are of most significance.
- Only senior leadership/board meetings have decreased (-6%) from 2022 to 2023.
- North American and European respondents provide gifts and similar types of events.



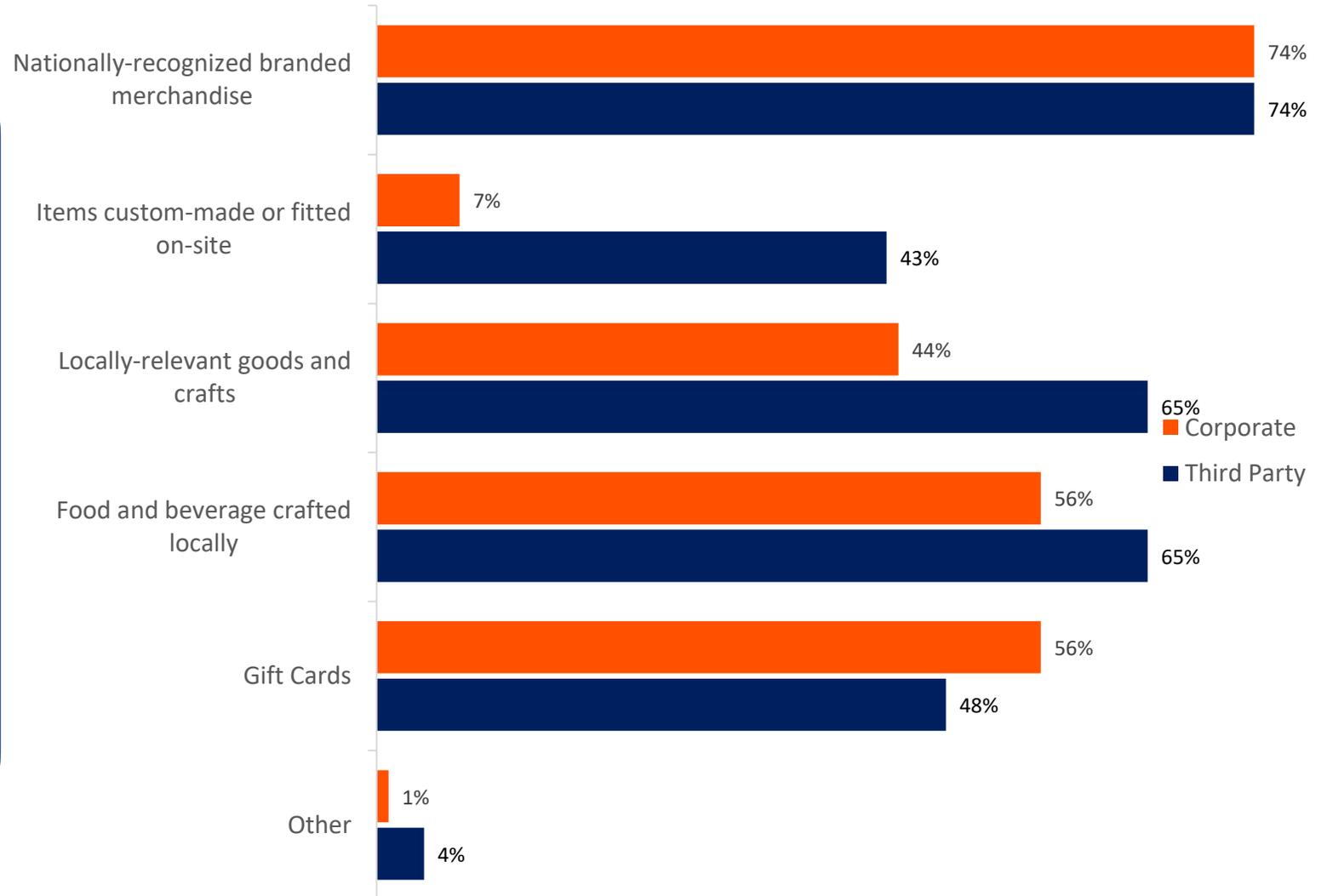
▶ North American Event Gifting – Gift Types

- In North America, nationally-recognized branded merchandise is the most common gift as nearly 3/4 of all respondents indicate use of this gift type at their events.
- The most significant fluctuations in event gift types from 2022 to 2023 are nationally-recognized branded merchandise (+11%), local food and beverage (+15%), and gift cards (+18%).
- Variation in gift giving continues to rise as significant reductions were not present in any of the categories.



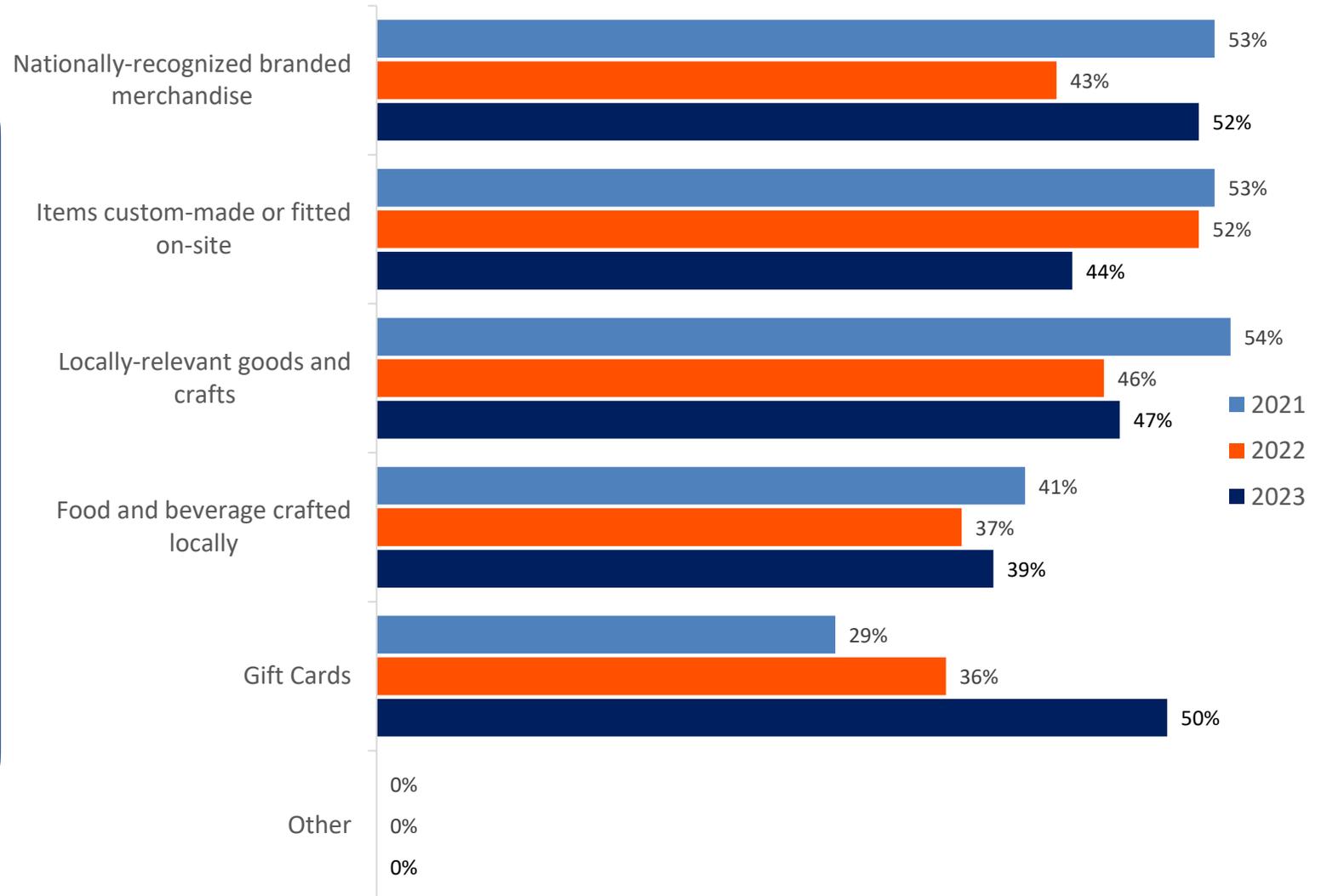
▶ North American Event Gifting – Gift Types

- Third party respondents are much more likely to provide items custom-made or fitted on-site (+36%) and more likely to gift locally-relevant goods and crafts (+21%), as well as food and beverage crafted locally (+9%) in comparison to corporate respondents.
- Corporate respondents have a higher rate of use in only gift cards (+8%) when compared to third parties.
- Nationally-recognized branded merchandise is most common for both corporate and third party respondents.



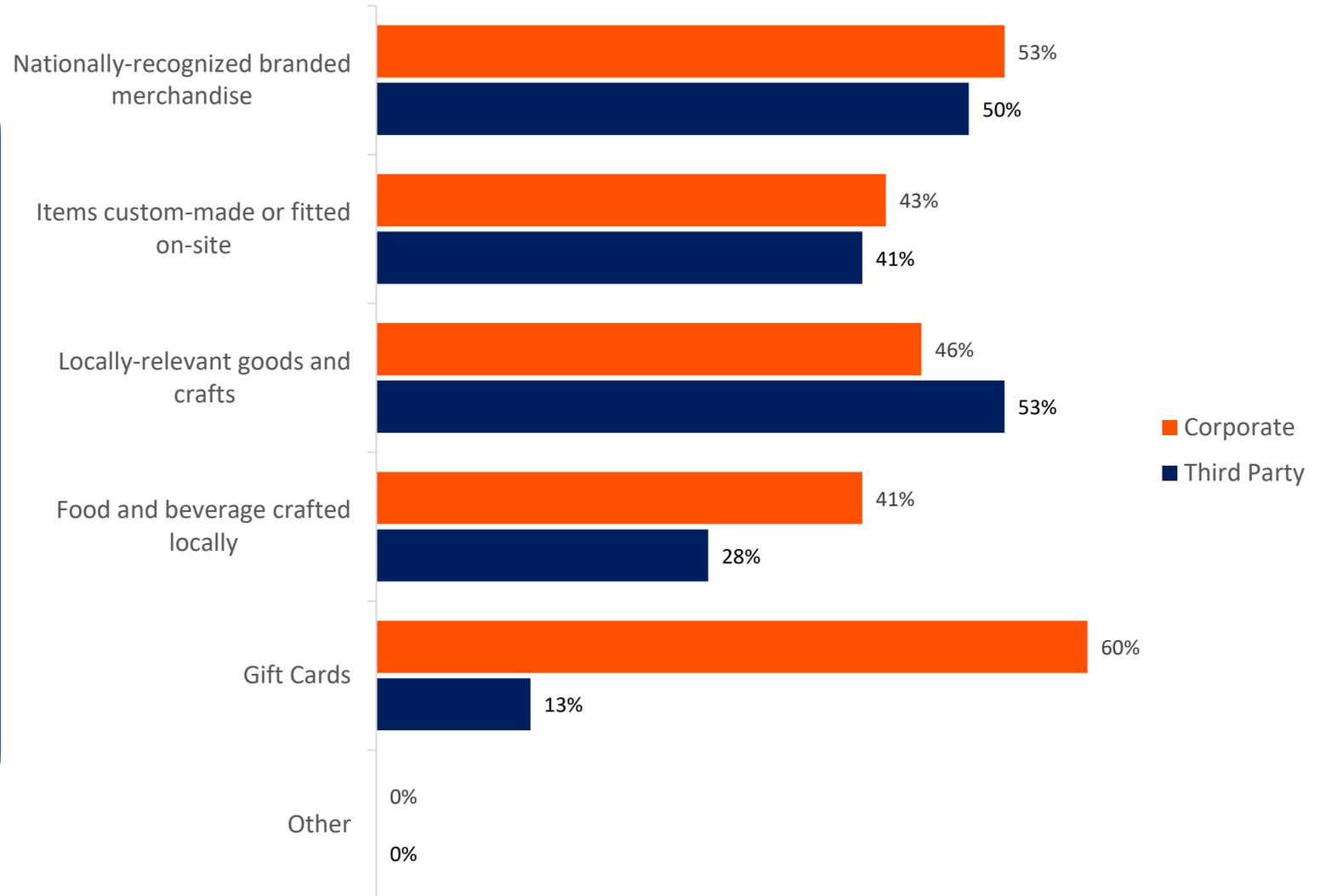
▶ European Event Gifting – Gift Types

- In Europe, nationally-recognized branded merchandise and gift cards are the most prominent event gift type, surpassing both custom-made items and locally-relevant goods and crafts in 2023.
- The most significant fluctuations in gift types from 2022 to 2023 are nationally-recognized branded merchandise (+9%), items custom-made or fitted on-site (-8%), and gift cards (+14%).
 - Gift cards have seen a notable 21% increase since 2021.



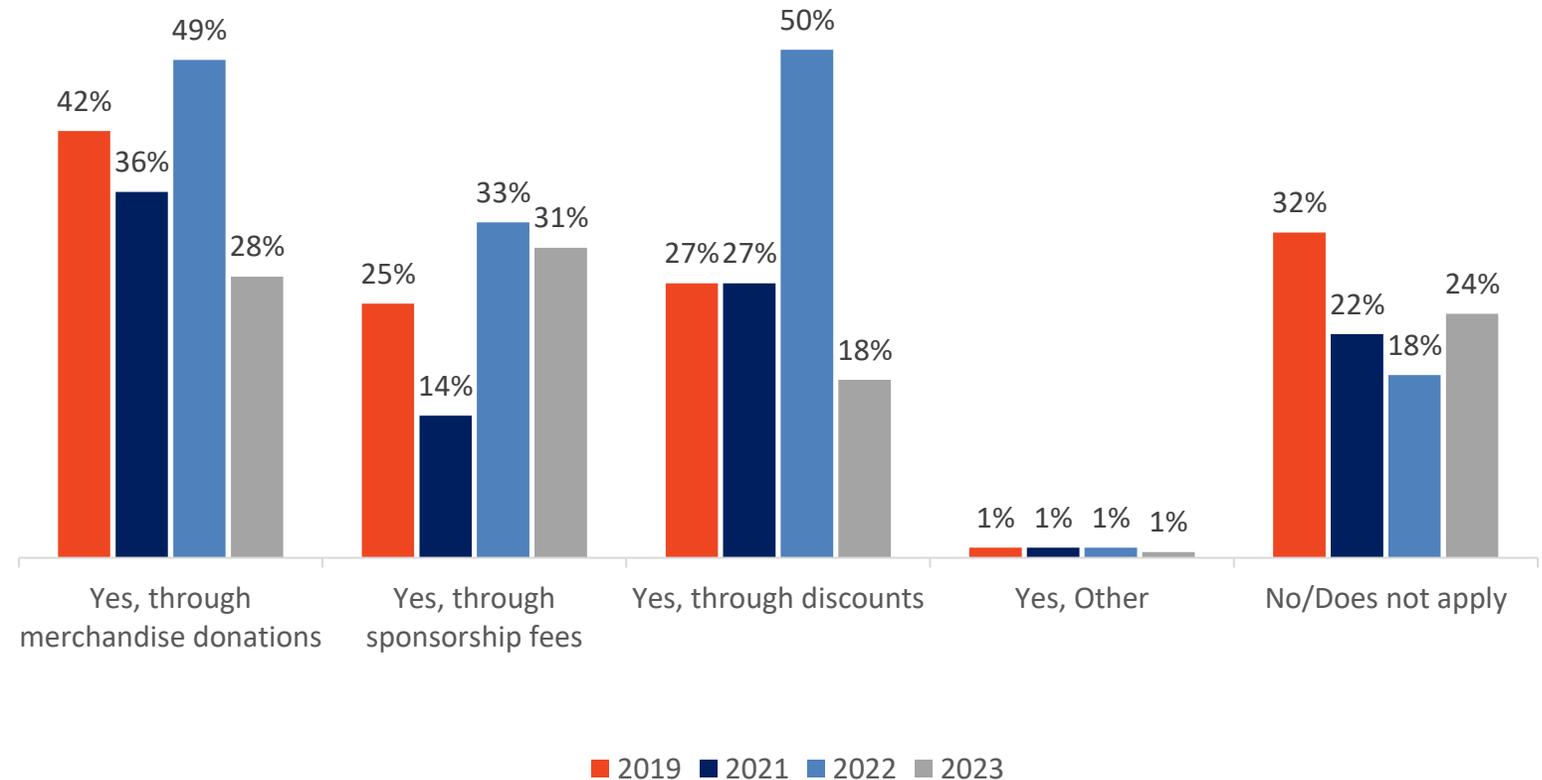
▶ European Event Gifting – Gift Types

- European corporate respondents are much more likely to provide gift cards (+47%) and more likely to provide locally crafted food and beverage (+13%) in comparison to third party entities.
- Third party respondents are only more likely to provide locally-relevant goods and crafts (+7%) than corporate respondents.



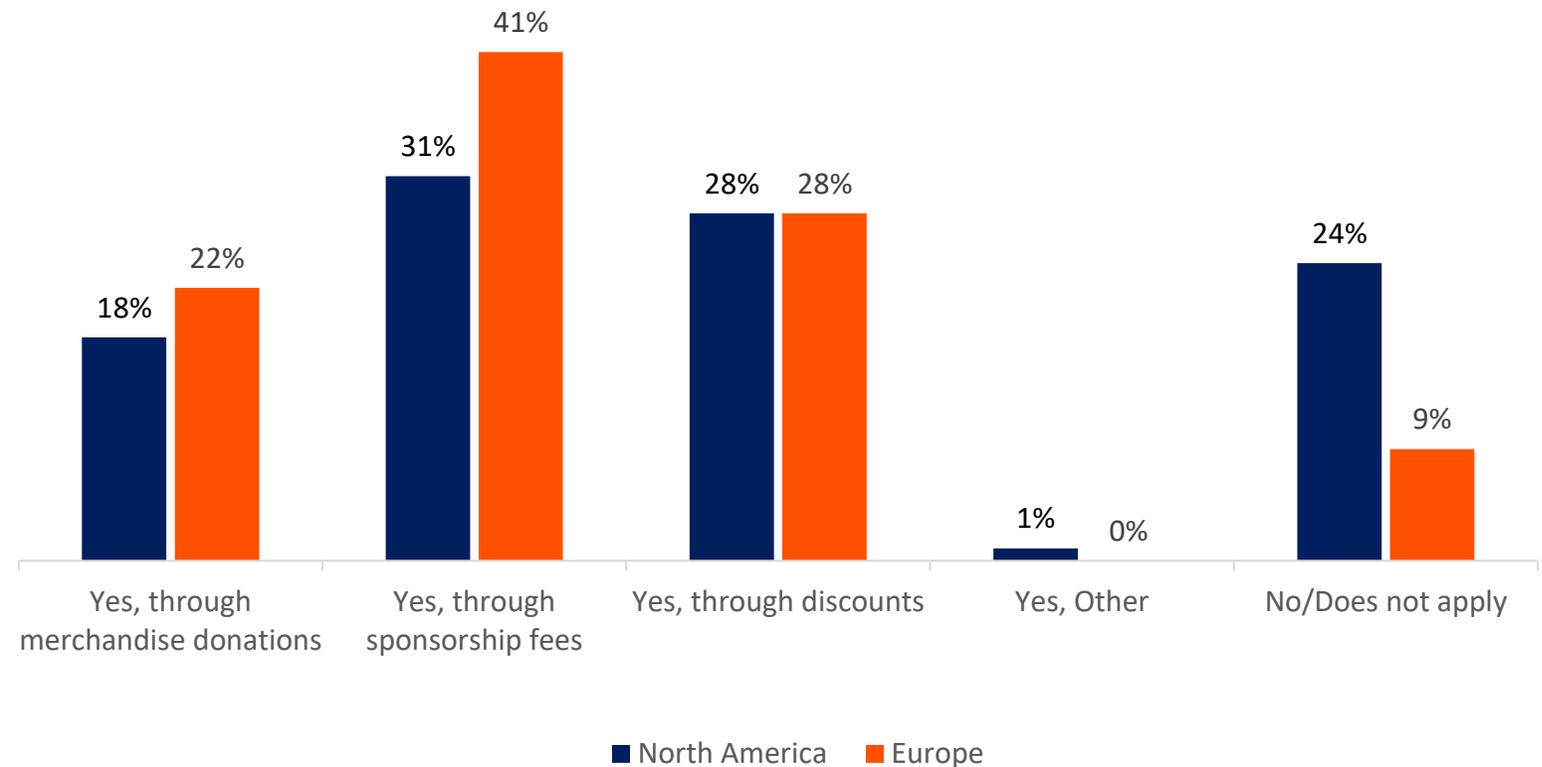
▶ North American Event Gifting – Sponsorships

- In North America, fees have surpassed discounts and merchandise donations as the most common method for covering event gift spending through sponsorships.
 - Event gift cost coverings declined sharply in merchandise donations (-21%) and through discounts (-32%) from 2022 to 2023.
 - Sponsorship fees used to cover event gift costs remained relatively constant from 2022 to 2023.



▶ Event Gifting – Sponsorships

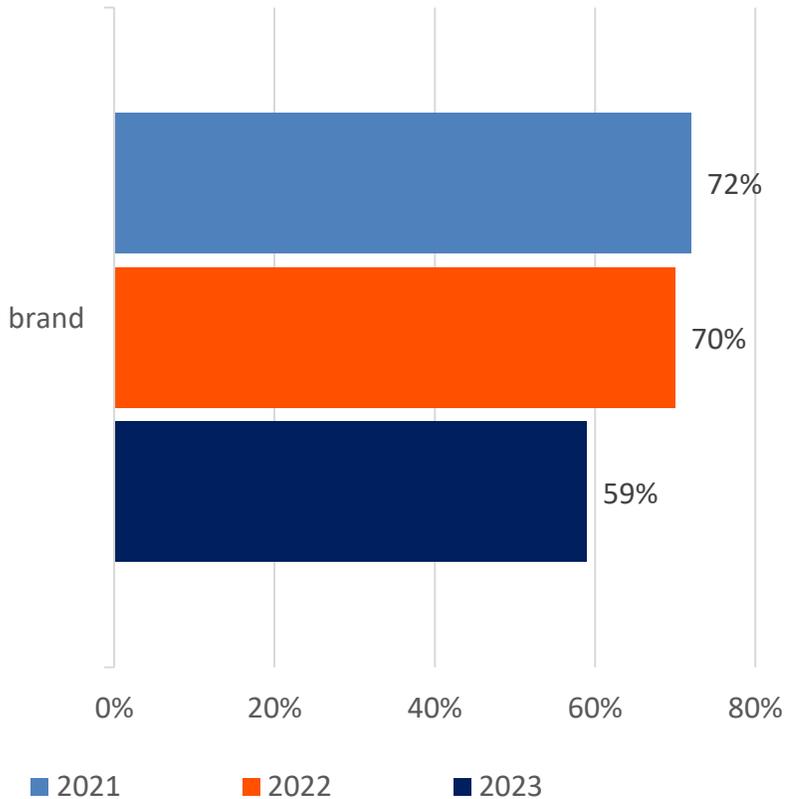
- European respondents are more likely to have sponsorships that cover some of the event gift cost (91%) compared to North Americans (76%).
- European sponsors are more likely to cover event gift costs through sponsorships fees and merchandise donations.



▶ North American Interaction with Brand Representatives

- North American attendee interaction with brand representatives has continued to decline, dropping 18% since 2021.
 - Specifically, third parties are the least likely to invite brand representatives to events, as only 43% have done so in 2023, compared to 61% of corporate respondents.

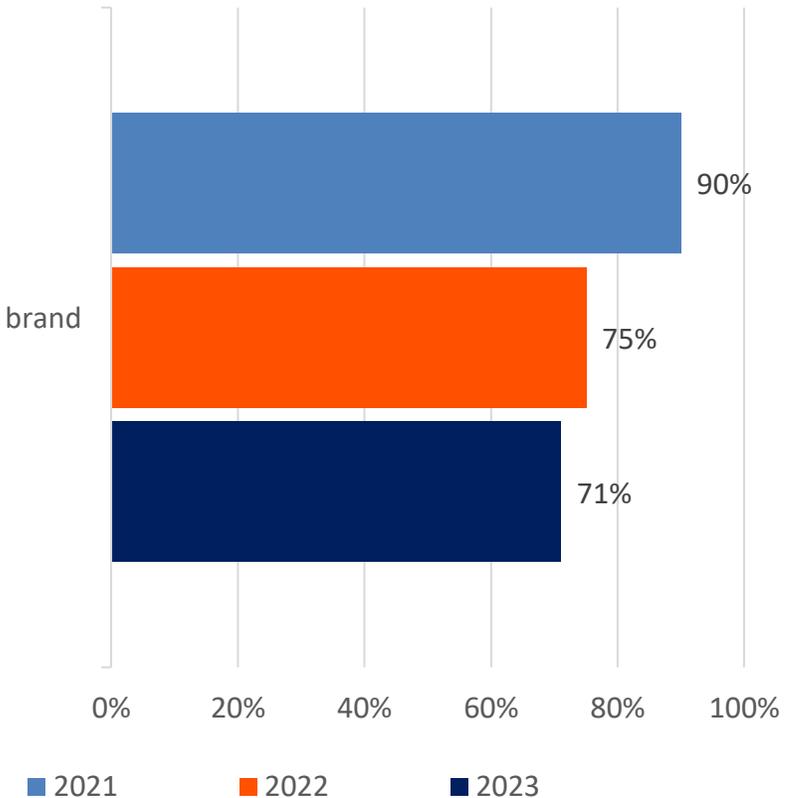
Percent that allow representatives of the brand or gift to engage with attendees



▶ European Interaction with Brand Representatives

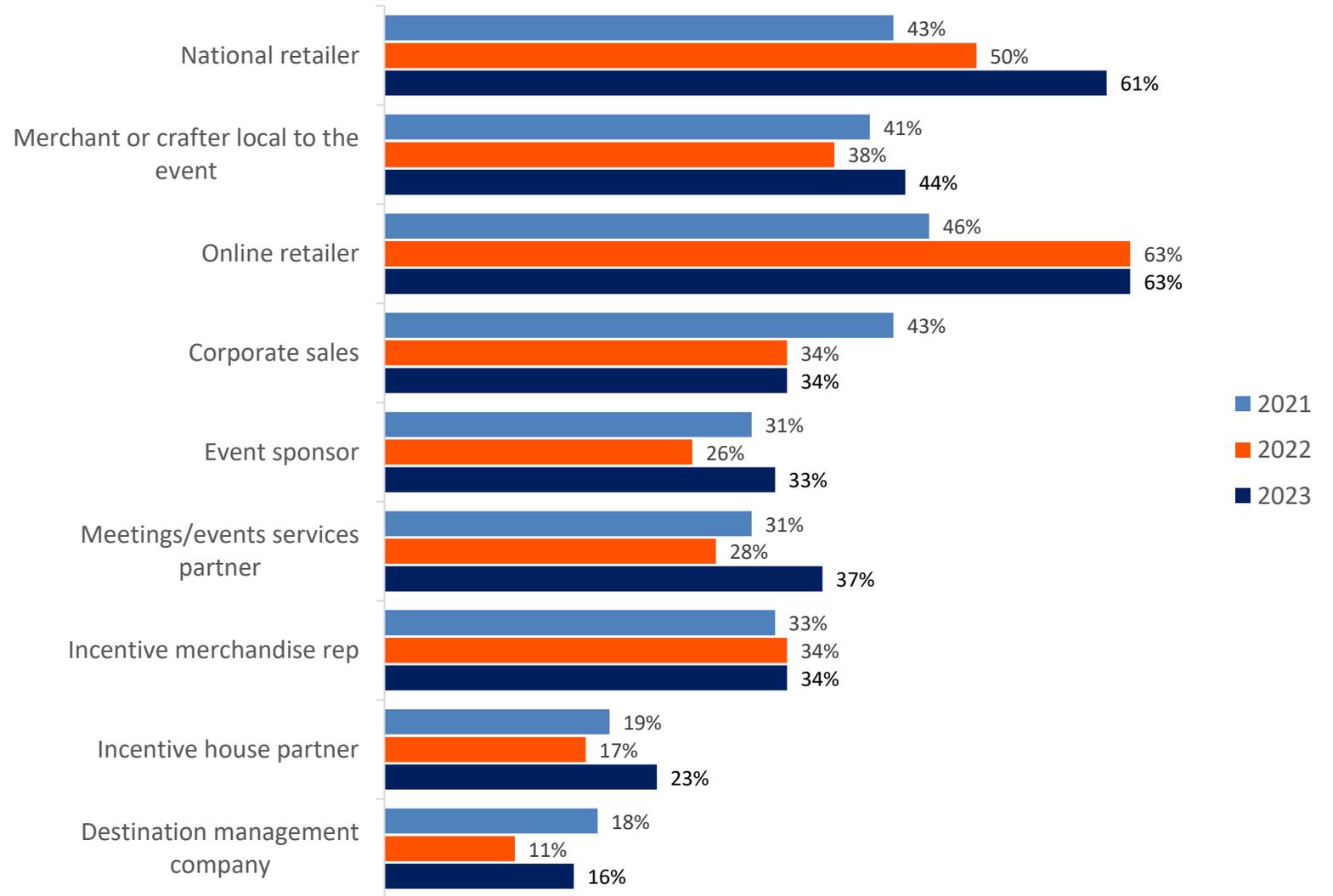
- European attendee interaction with brand representatives has also continued to decline since 2021.
 - The rate of decline is steady year-over-year.
- Conversely to North American respondents, European third parties are more likely to invite brand representatives to events (78%) in comparison to corporate respondents (70%).

Percent that allow representatives of the brand or gift to engage with attendees



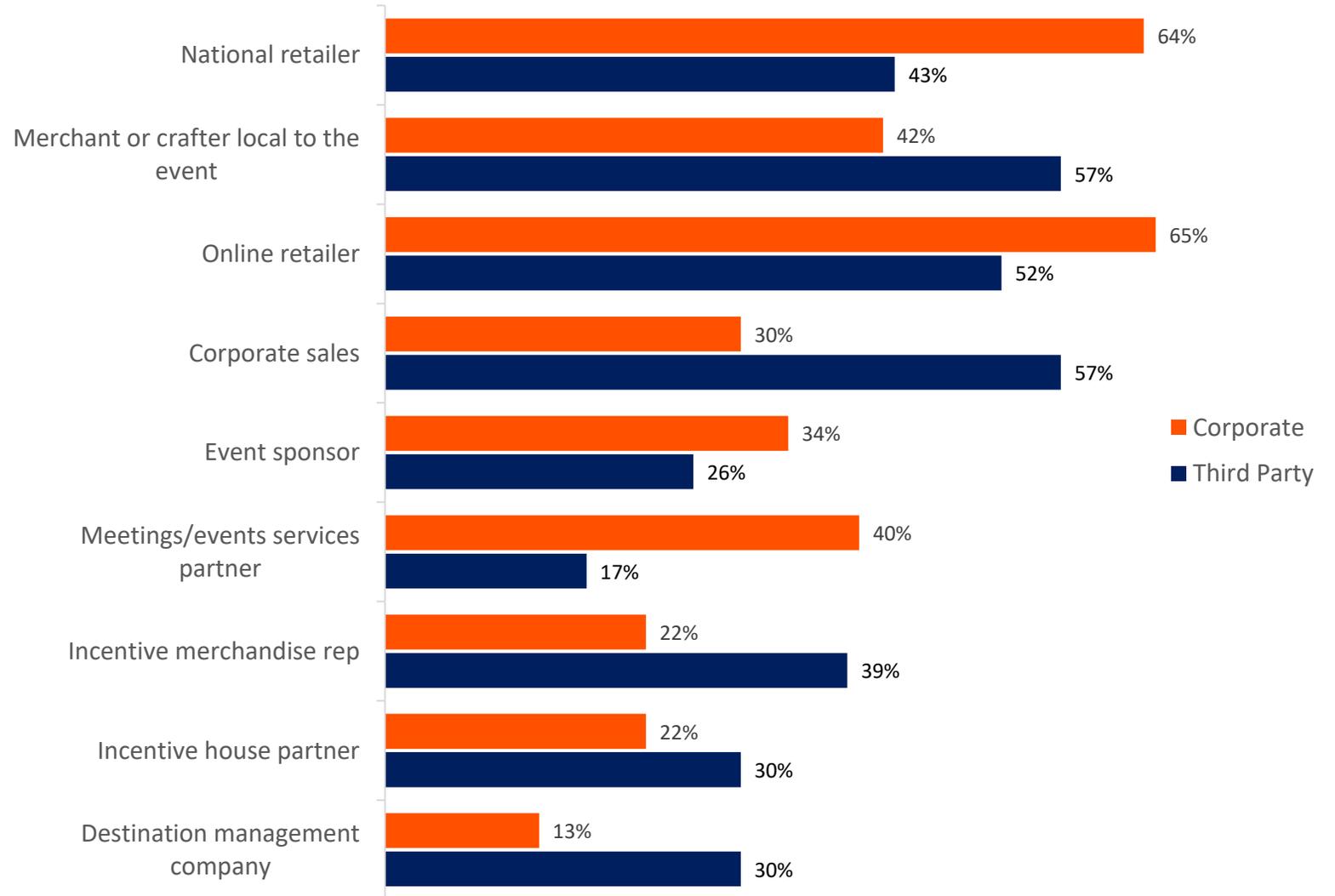
▶ North American Event Gifting – Gift Sources

- Collectively, North American respondents report either increased or sustained use of all event gifting sources from 2022 to 2023.
- While online retailers continue to top North American event gifting sources, national retailers (+11%) and meeting/event service partners (+9%) display the most significant growth.
- With recent increase in event gifting sources, only corporate sales and destination management companies remain below 2019 marks.



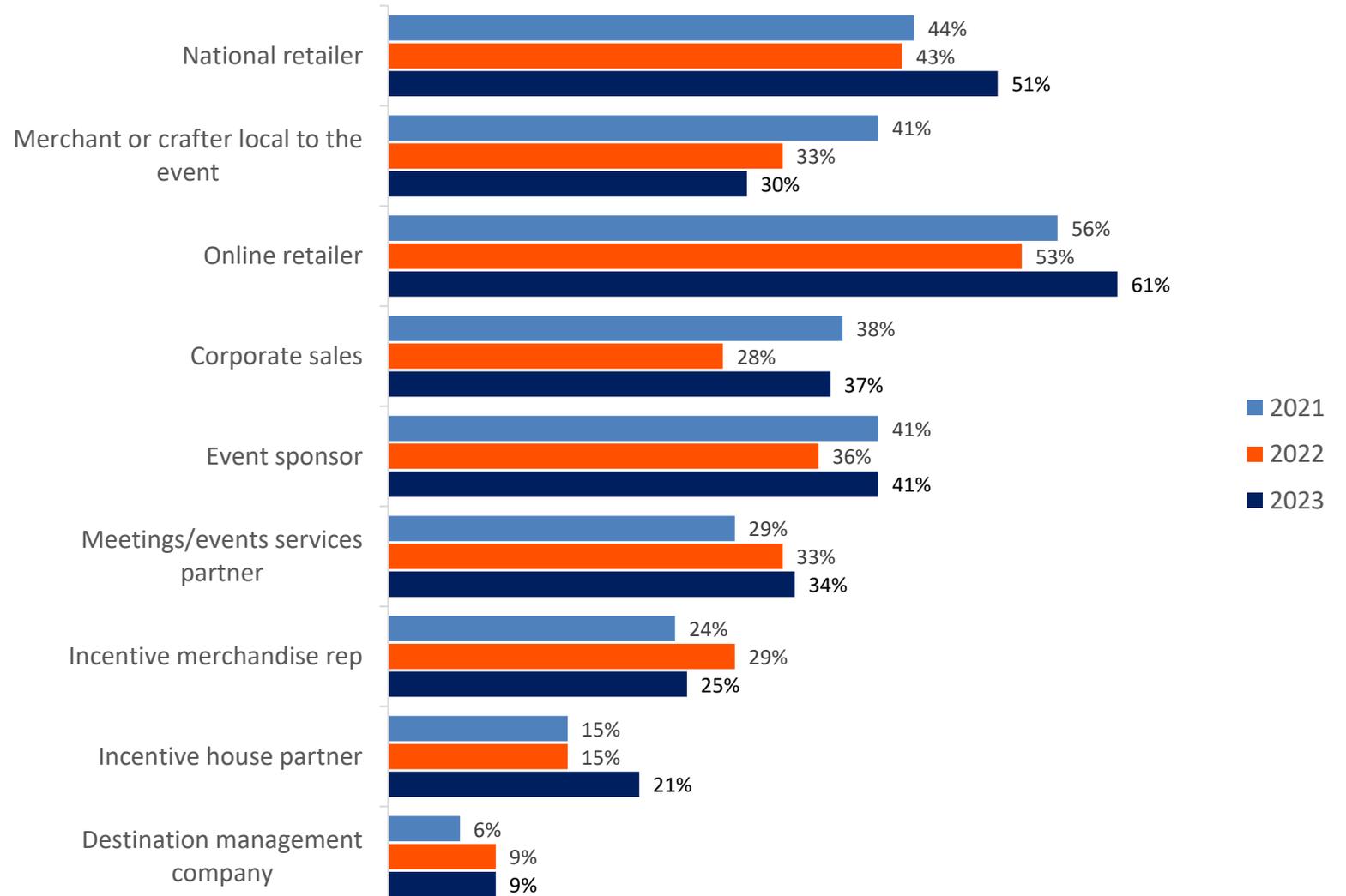
▶ North American Event Gifting – Gift Sources

- While less than in 2022, a disparity for event gift sources between North American corporate and third parties continues to exist.
- Corporate clients are more likely to source gifts from national retailers (+21%) online retailers (+13%), event sponsors (+8%) and meeting/event service partners (+23%) in comparison to third parties.
- Third parties are more likely to source gifts from local merchants/crafters (+15%), corporate sales (+27%), incentive merchandise reps (+17%), incentive house partners (+18%) and destination management companies (+17%) in comparison to corporate clients.



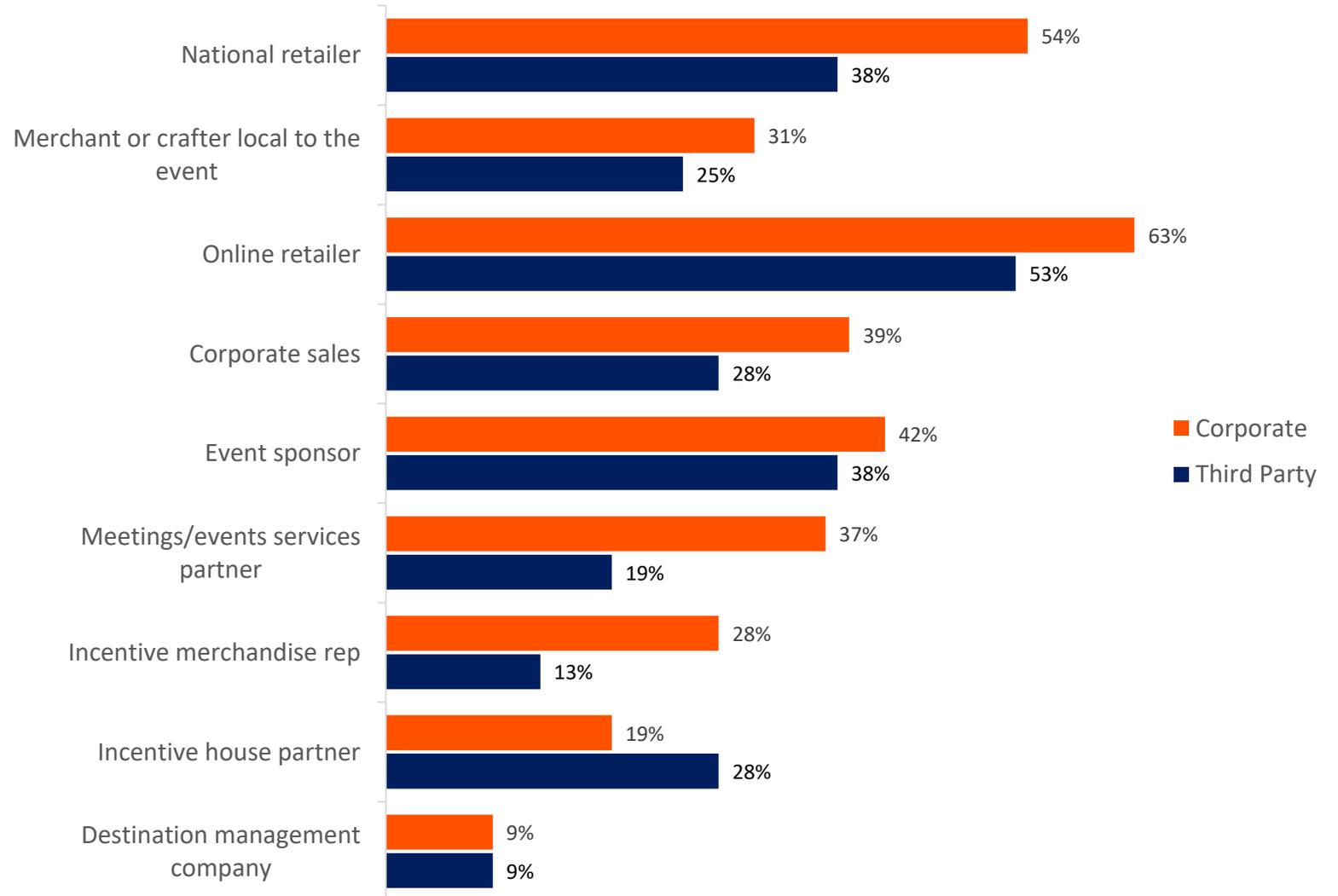
▶ European Event Gifting – Gift Sources

- Similar to North Americans, Europeans continue to most commonly source gifts from online retailers.
- Corporate sales (+9%), national retailers (+8%), and online retailers (+8%) display the most significant increase from 2022 to 2023.
- Local merchants/crafters continue a slight decline, displaying the most significant drop from 2021 (-11%).



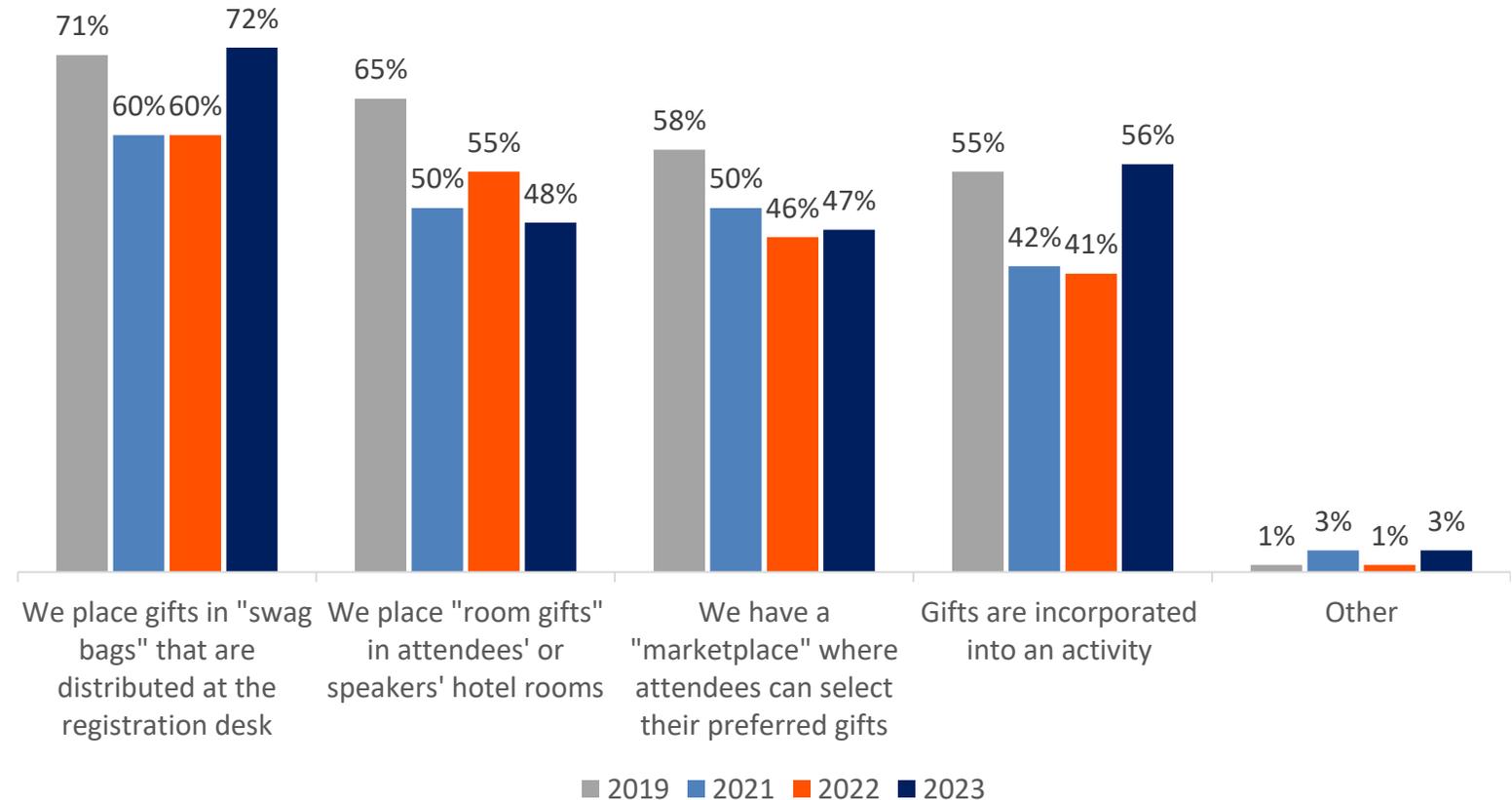
▶ European Event Gifting – Gift Sources

- Though there is less variance between corporations and third parties for event gift sourcing in Europe than in North America, some differences still exist.
- Like North Americans, European corporate respondents are most likely to source event gifts from online retailers and national retailers
- European third parties are most likely to source event gifts from online retailers, while also relying heavily on national retailers and event sponsors.



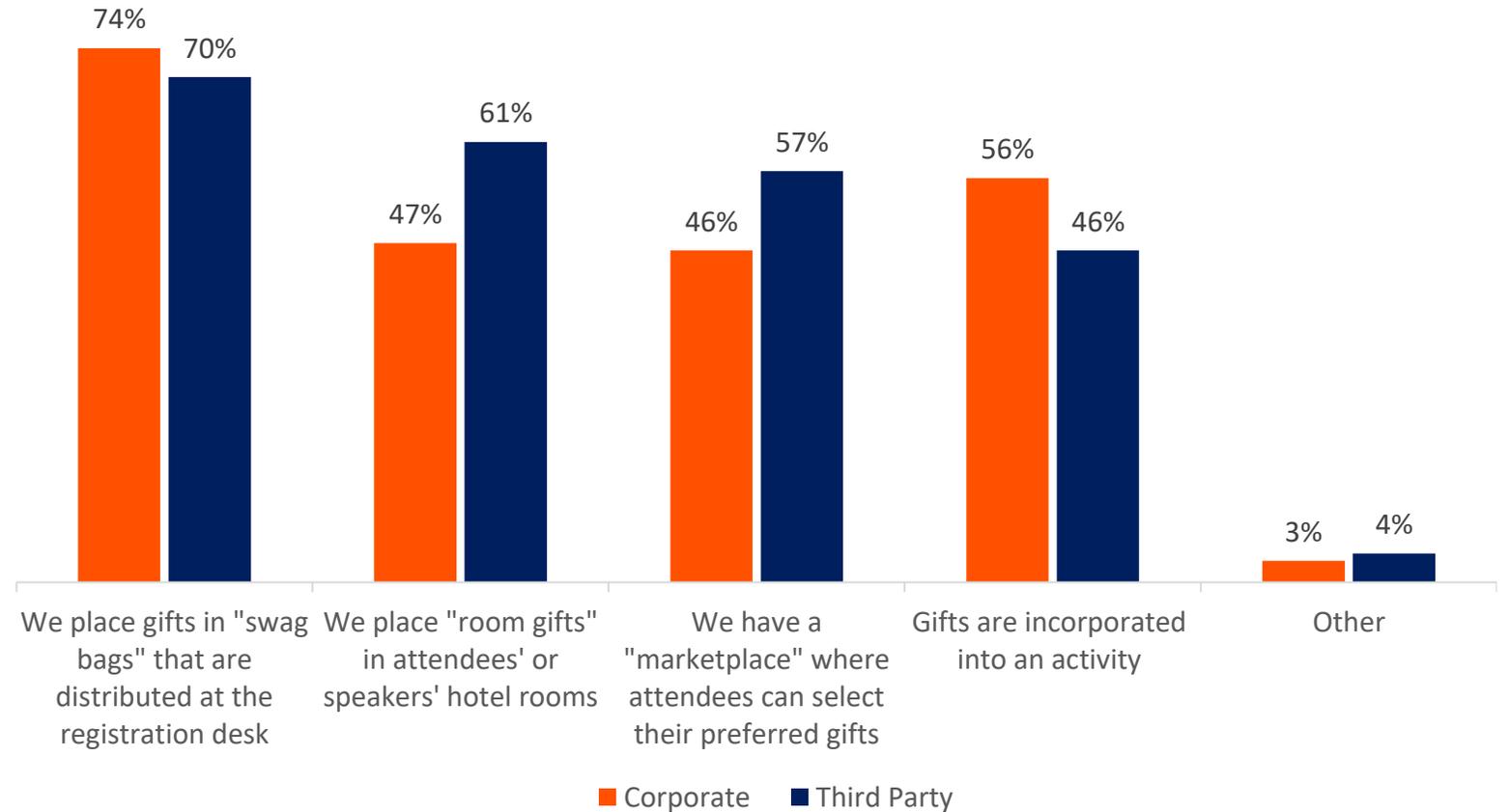
▶ North American Event Gift Distribution

- In North America "swag bags" (+12%) and gifts incorporated into activities (+15%) display the greatest increase of event gift distributions since 2022, returning near 2019 numbers.
 - The timeline of these adjustments can be correlated to a continued subsiding of the Covid-19 pandemic, as the methods of personal interaction are becoming common once more.



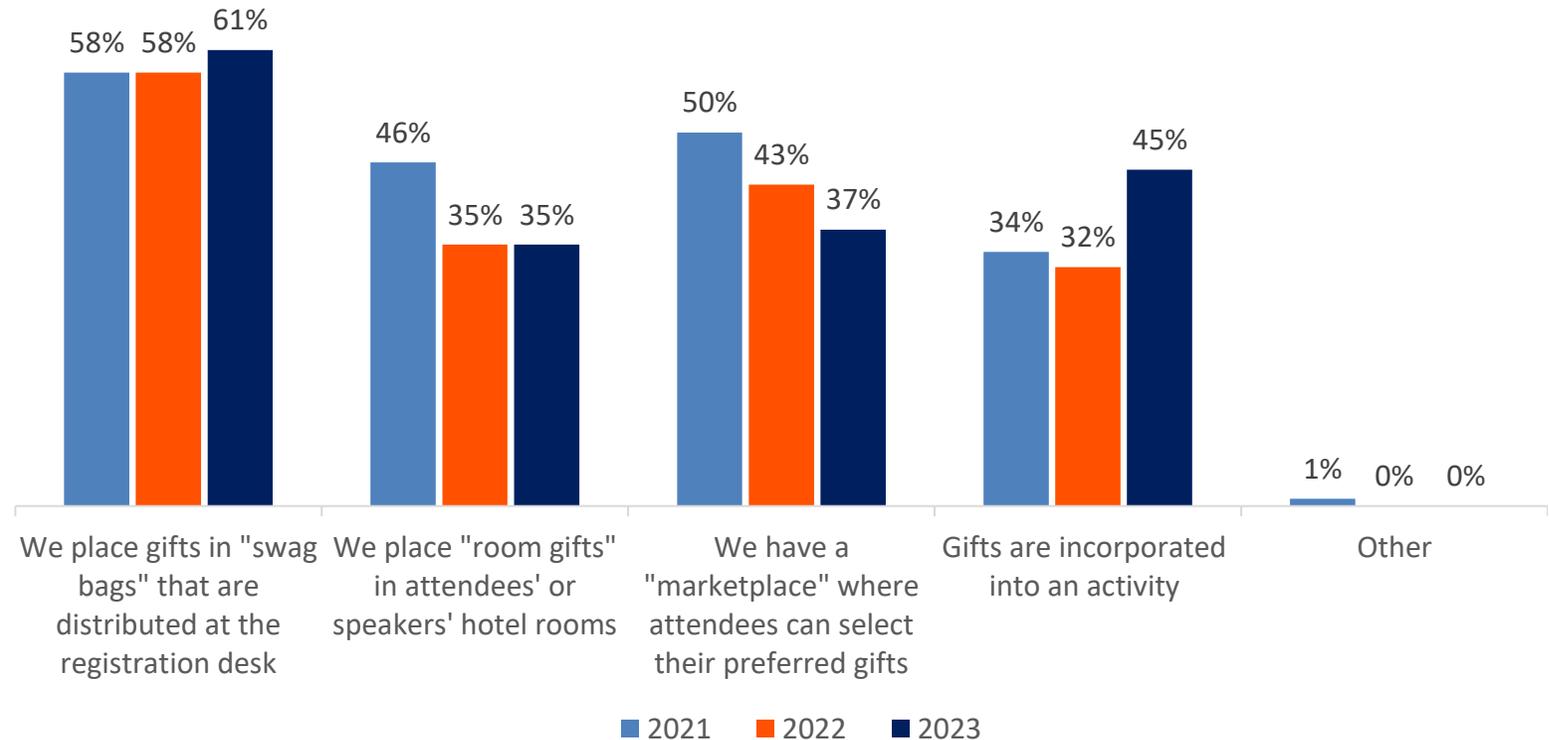
▶ North American Event Gift Distribution

- The most popular means of distributing event gifts for corporate and third party respondents is "swag bags" given at the registration desk.
- Corporate respondents are more likely to incorporate gifts as part of an activity, while third party respondents are more likely to have a marketplace where attendees can select their preferred gifts or place "room gifts" in attendees' or speakers' hotel rooms.



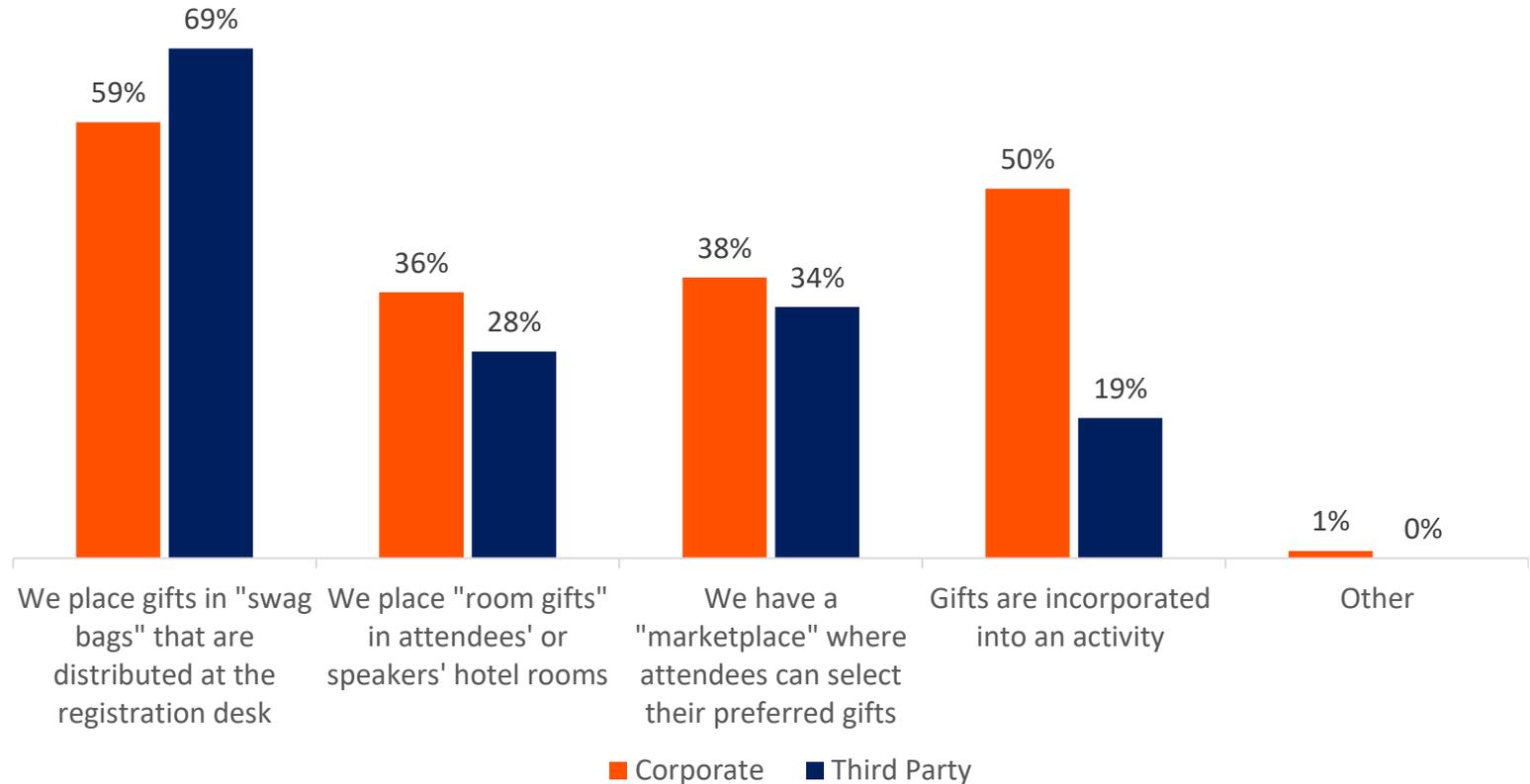
▶ European Event Gift Distribution

- Similar to North America, in Europe “swag bags” given at the registration desk remain the most popular means of distributing event gifts, followed by gifts that are incorporated into an activity.
- Gifts incorporated into activities have seen the greatest increase in popularity from 2022 to 2023 (+13%).
- Contrary to North America, the use of “swag bags” in Europe have displayed minimal increase (+3%), while there has been a slight decline in ‘marketplaces’ (-6%).



▶ European Event Gift Distribution

- Similar to North America, the most popular means of distributing event gifts for European corporate and third party respondents is “swag bags”.
- In Europe corporate respondents are more likely to incorporate gifts as part of an activity or “room gifts”, while third party respondents are more likely to use "swag bags".



▶ Thank You to Our Research Advocacy Partners

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