



# MERICS CHINA FORECAST 2026

## Annual survey of experts and observers

Poll of 766 people conducted online, October-November 2025



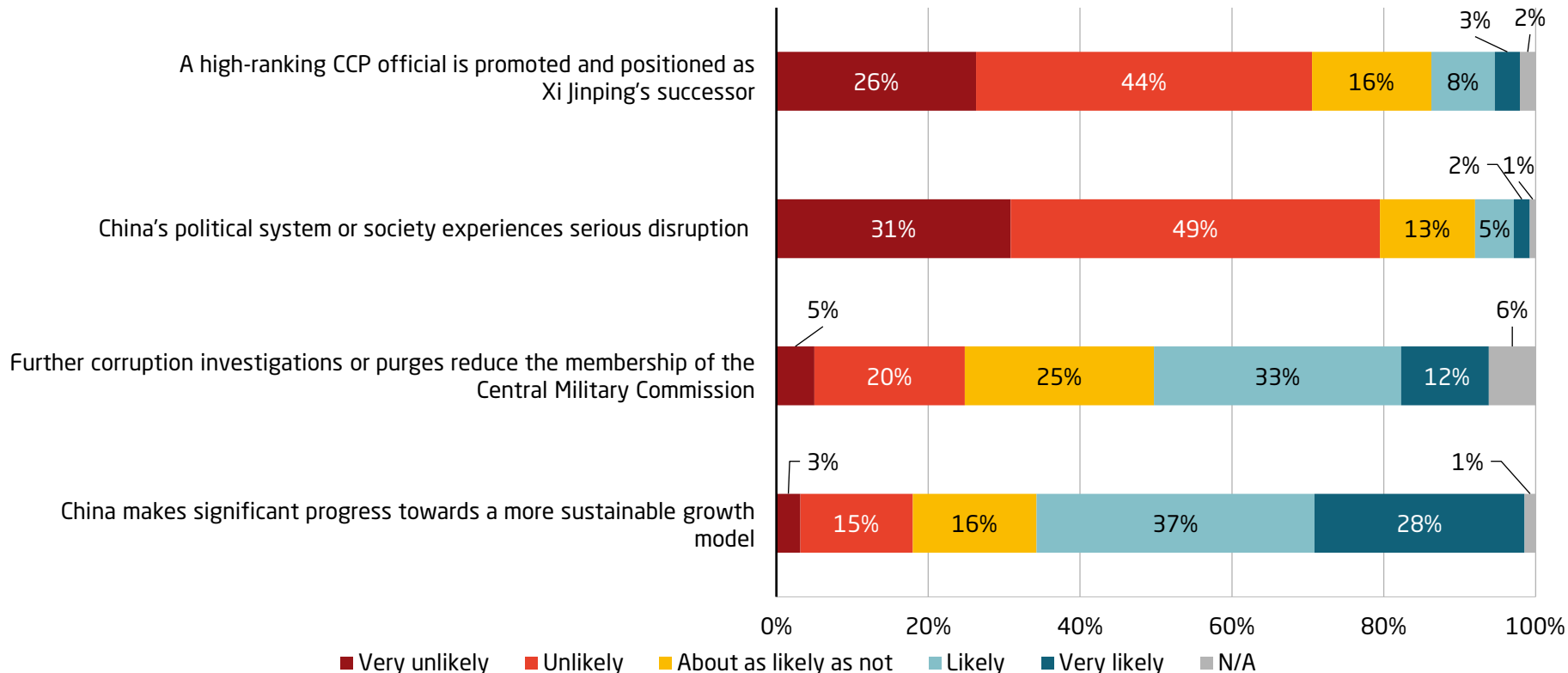
# Part 1: China's political, economic and technological development

# Xi Jinping expected to make progress with his internal agenda



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Q1: How do you rate the likelihood of the following domestic events occurring in China 2026

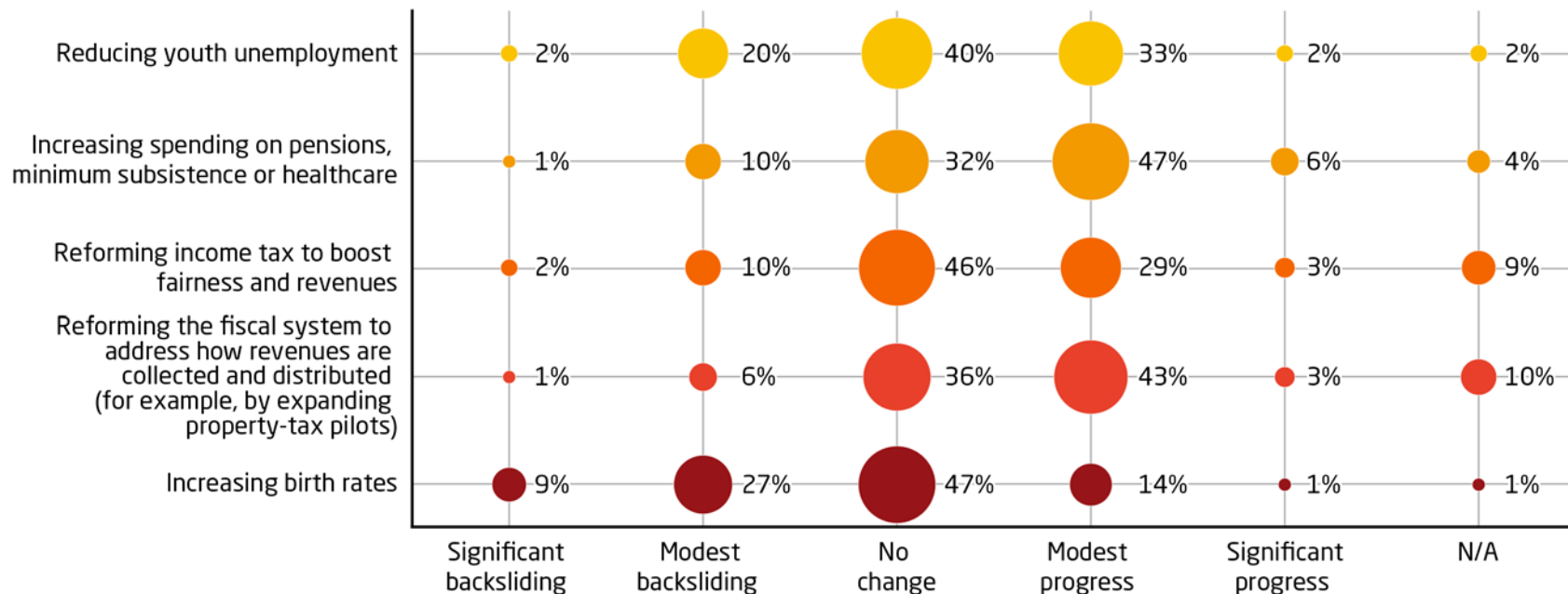


# Only modest progress expected on key social reforms



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Q2: Over the next 12 months, how much progress do you expect China to make in the following areas?

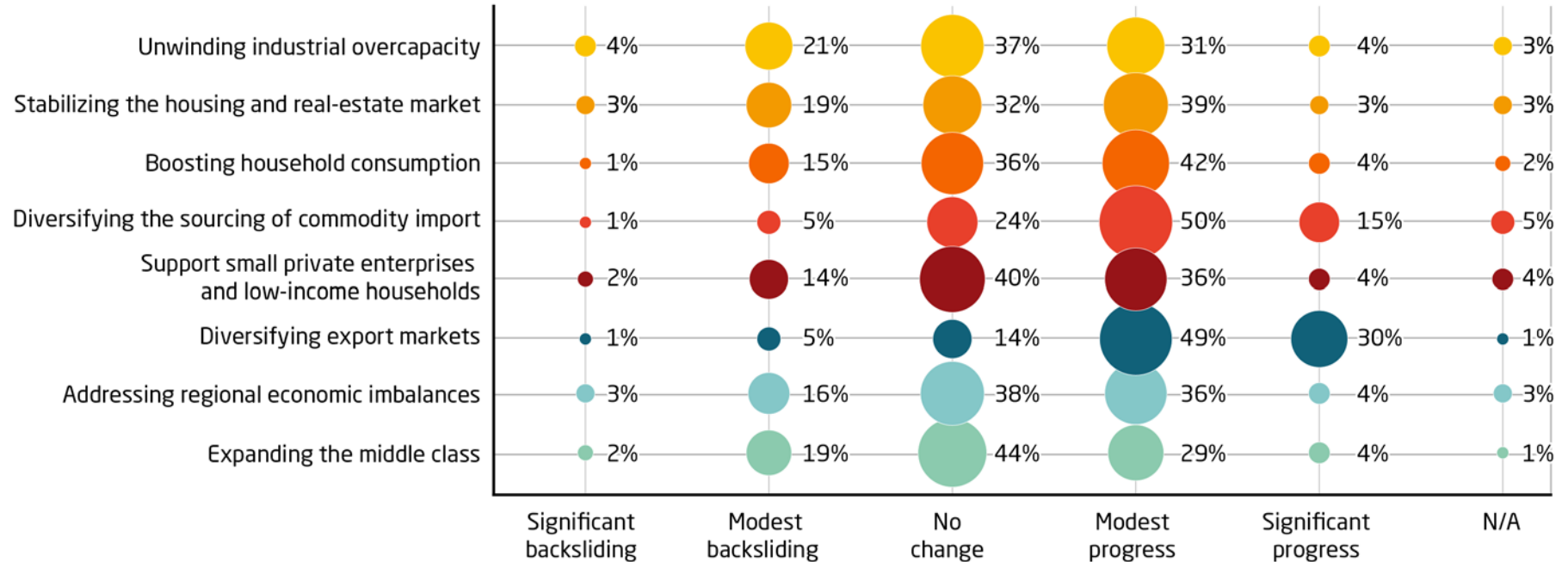


# Some progress expected on economic reforms



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Q3: How much progress do you expect China to make on the following economic challenges?

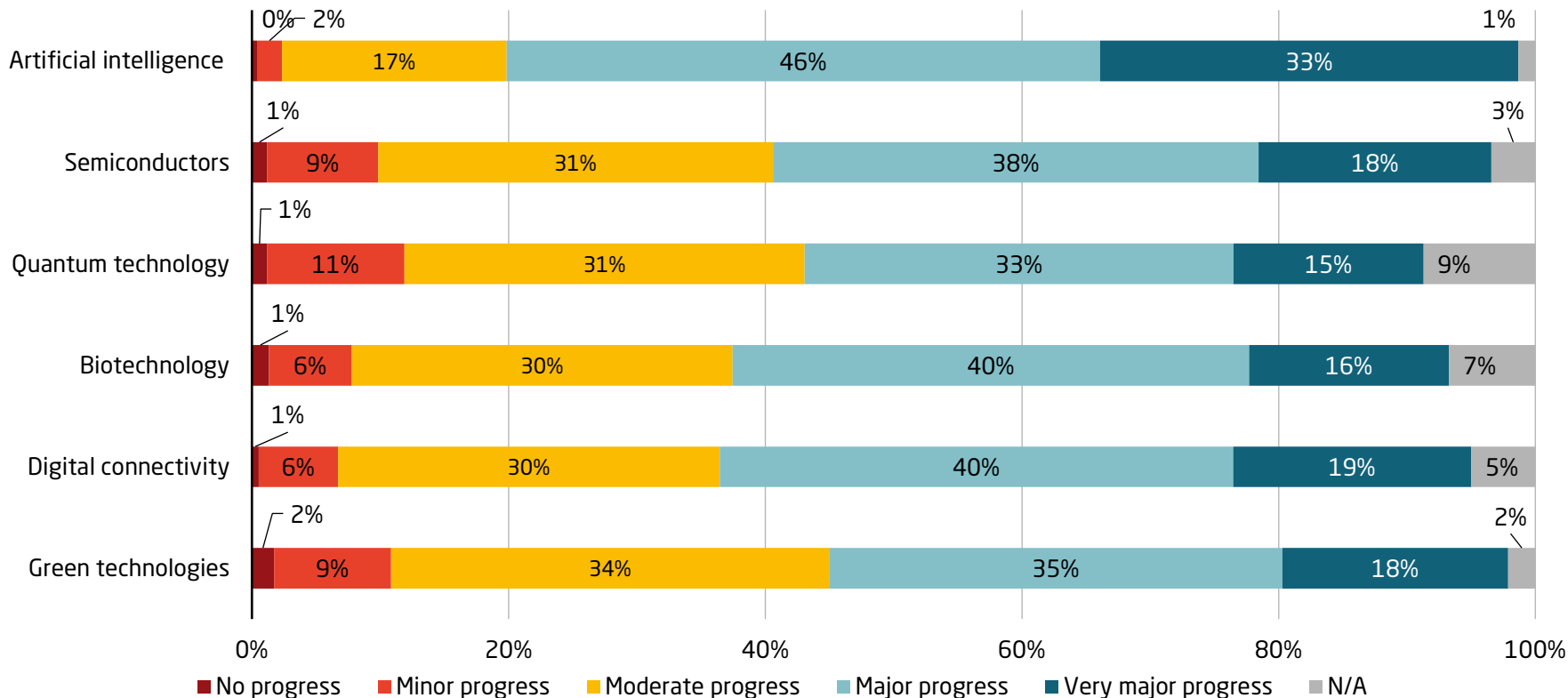


# Major strides expected in AI and other science and tech areas



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Q4: In which of the following areas of science and technology do you expect China to make progress in 2026?





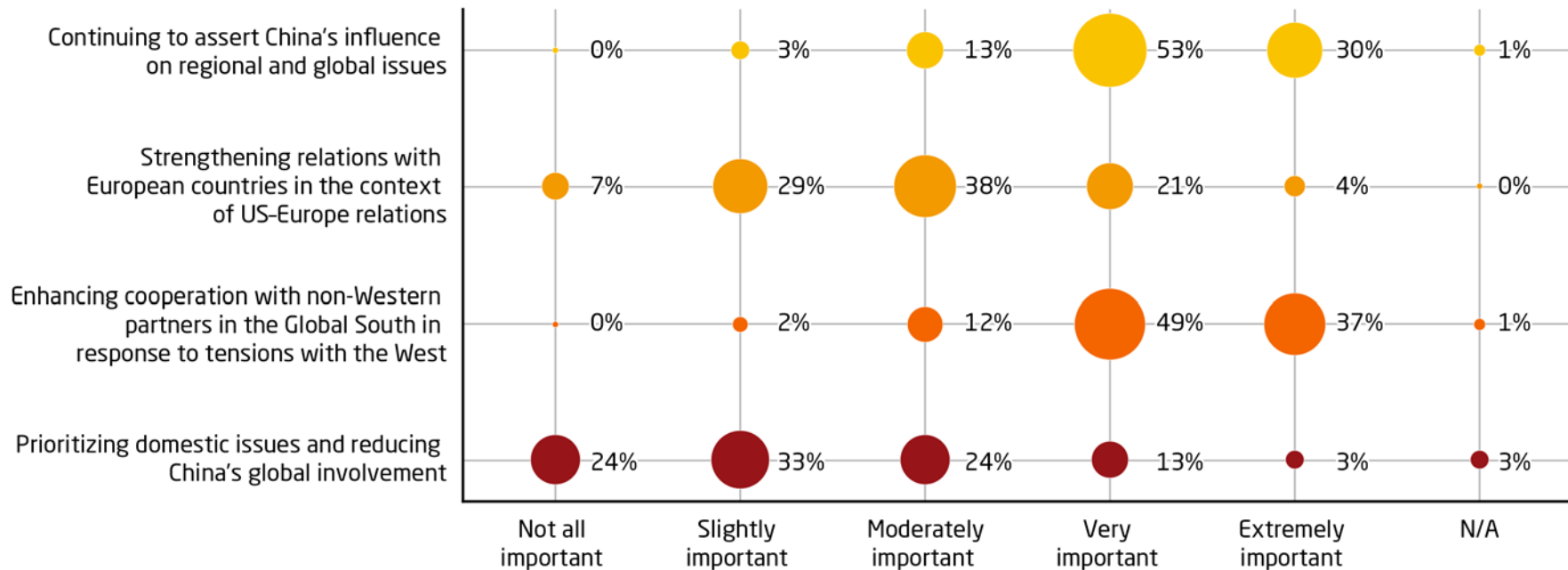
## Part 2: China's foreign policy and EU-China relations

# China expected to double down on its foreign policy agenda



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Q5: In your view, how important will the following issues be in China's foreign policy in 2026?

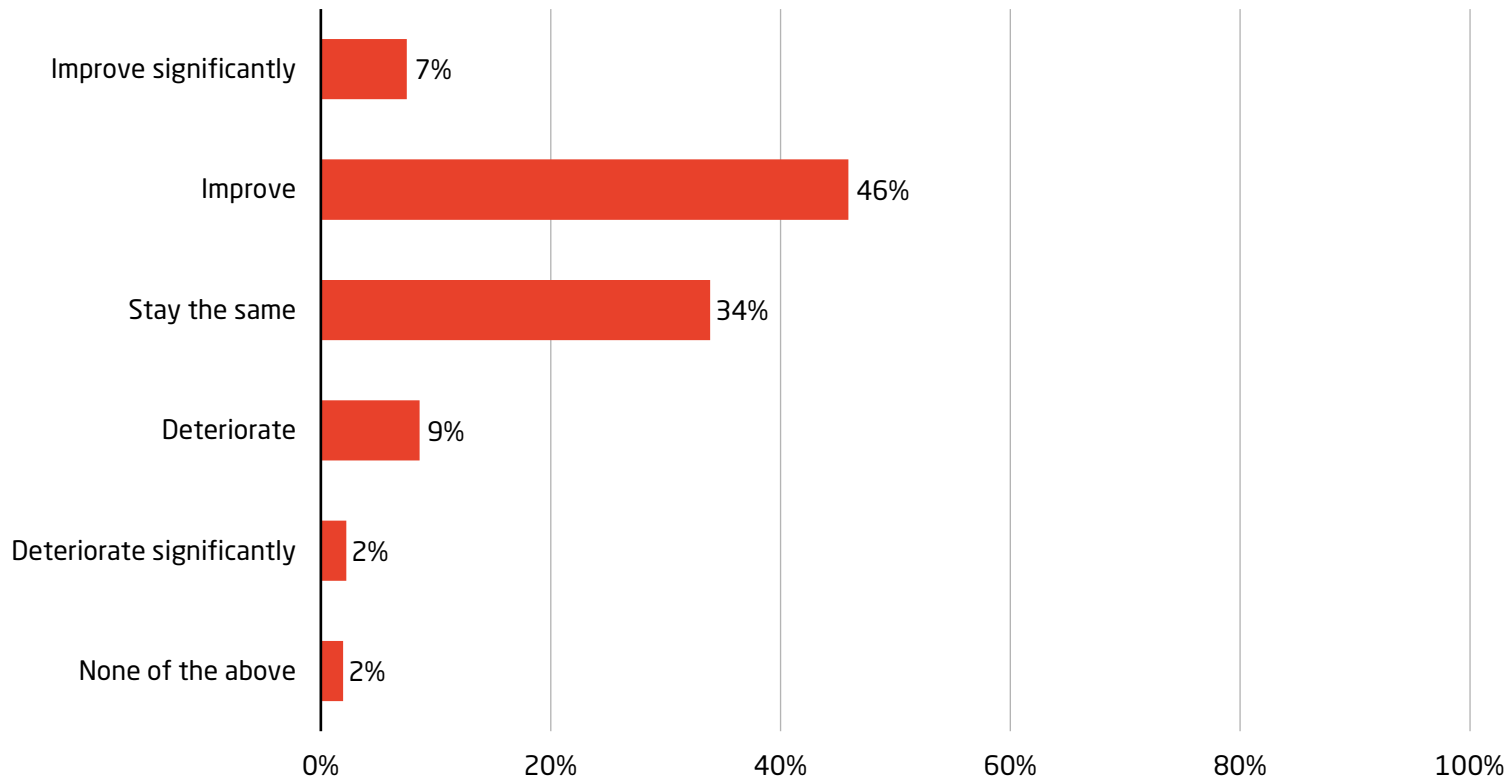


# Public perceptions of China widely expected to improve

Q6: Surveys indicate that public perceptions of China improved across much of the world in 2025. How do you expect them to develop in 2026?



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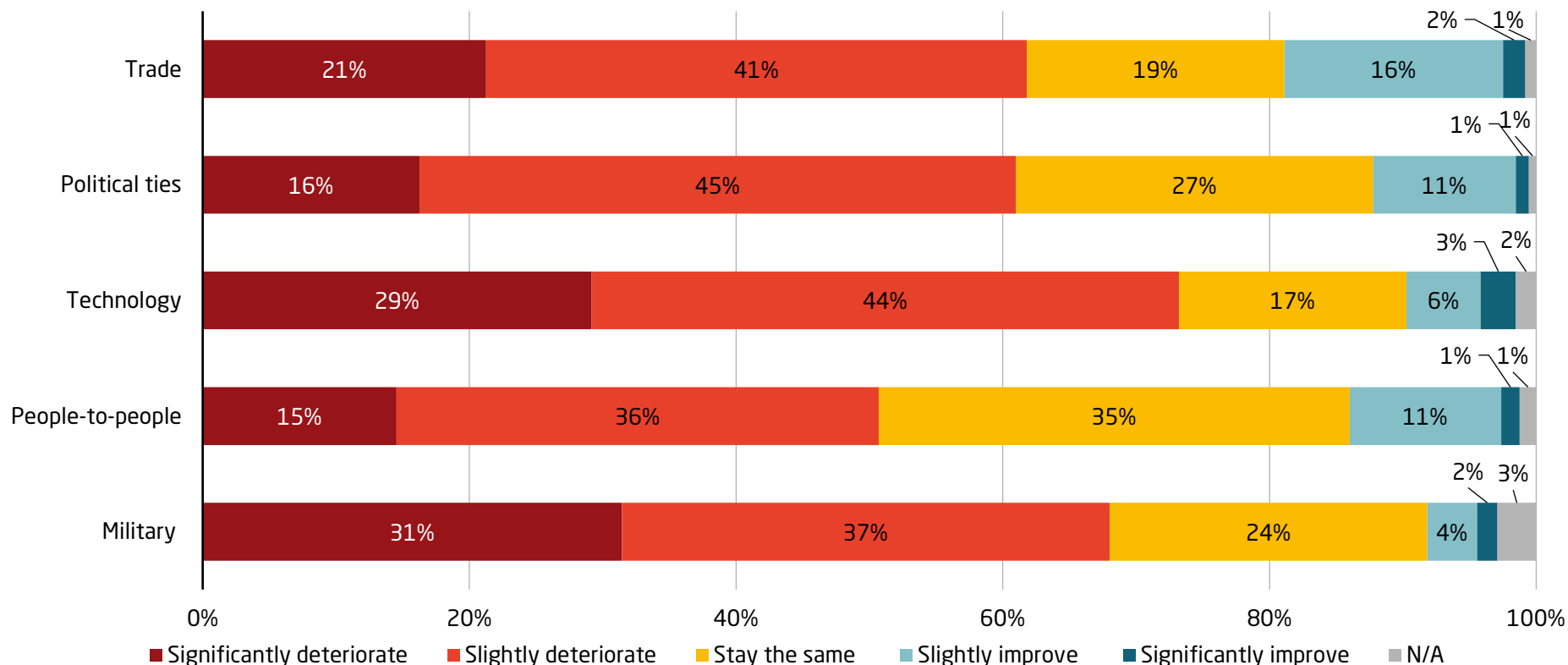


# US-China relations are seen worsening in tech, trade and beyond



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Q7: How do you expect China-US relations in the following areas to develop in 2026?

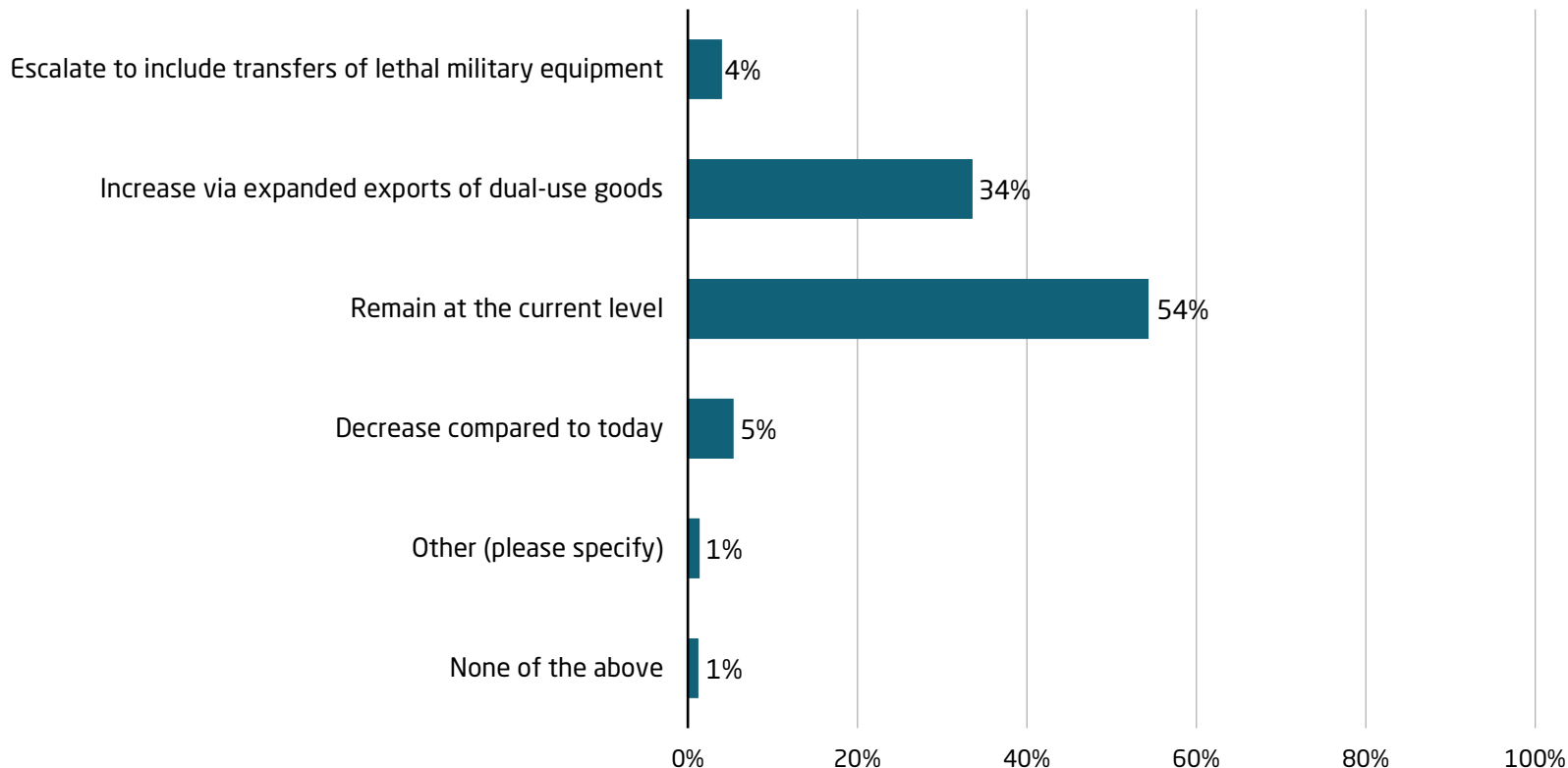


# China expected to stand firmly by Russia's side



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Q8: How do you expect China's support for Russia's war in Ukraine to change in 2026?

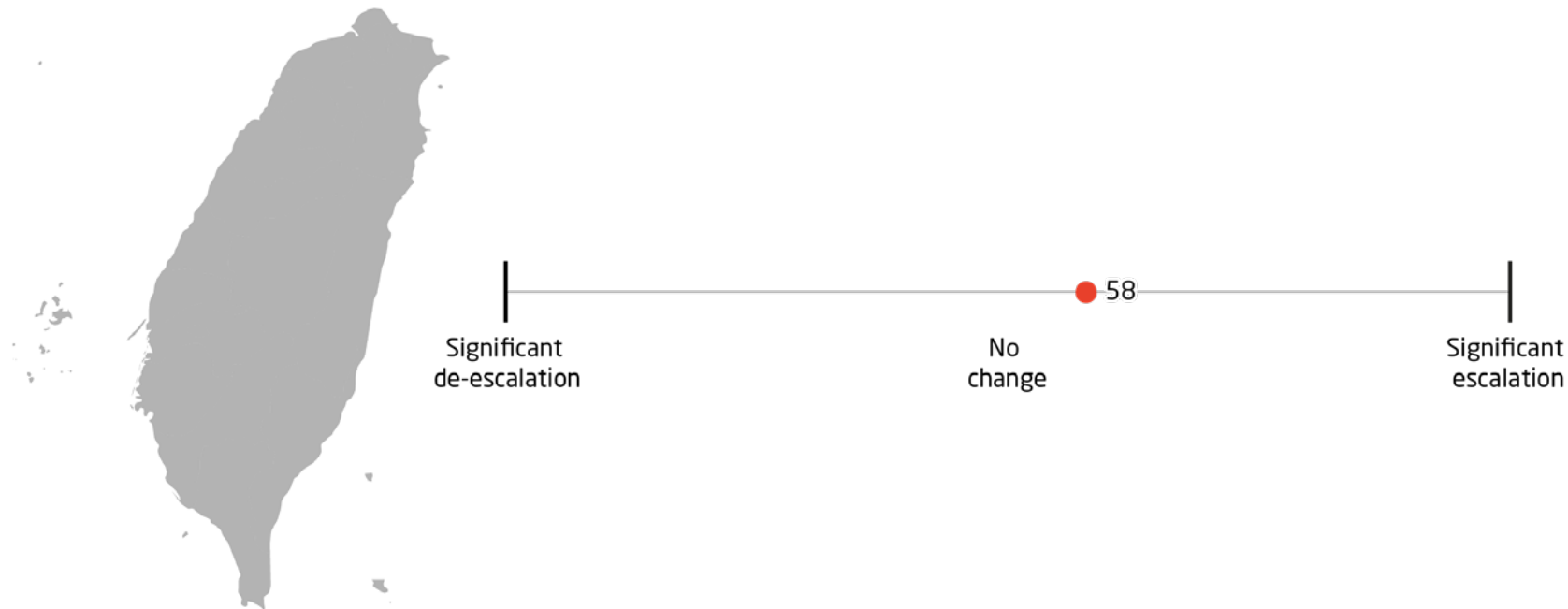


# China-Taiwan tensions anticipated to remain largely unchanged



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Q9: How do you expect relations across the Taiwan Strait to change in 2026?



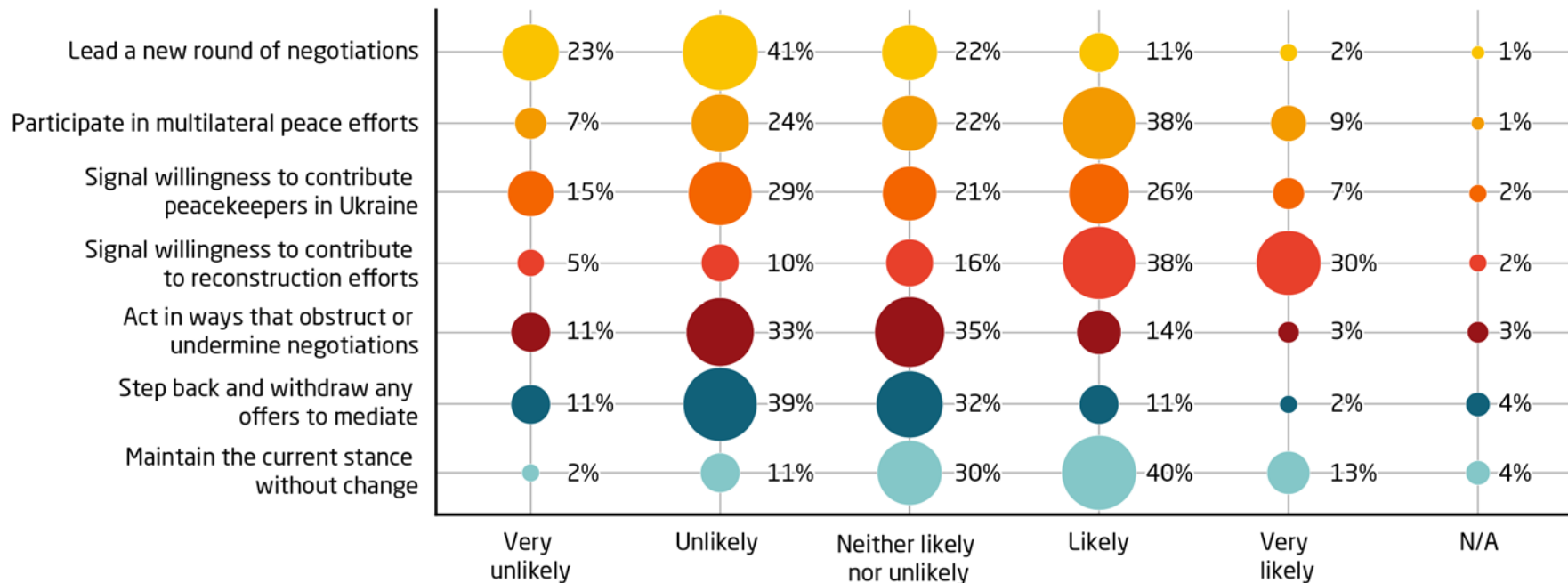
This question was asked with a range from 0 for significant de-escalation and 100 for significant escalation. 58 is the scale mean.

# China expected to tread carefully in Ukraine peace efforts



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Q10: If a peace process for Ukraine takes form in 2026, how likely is it that China will take the following actions?

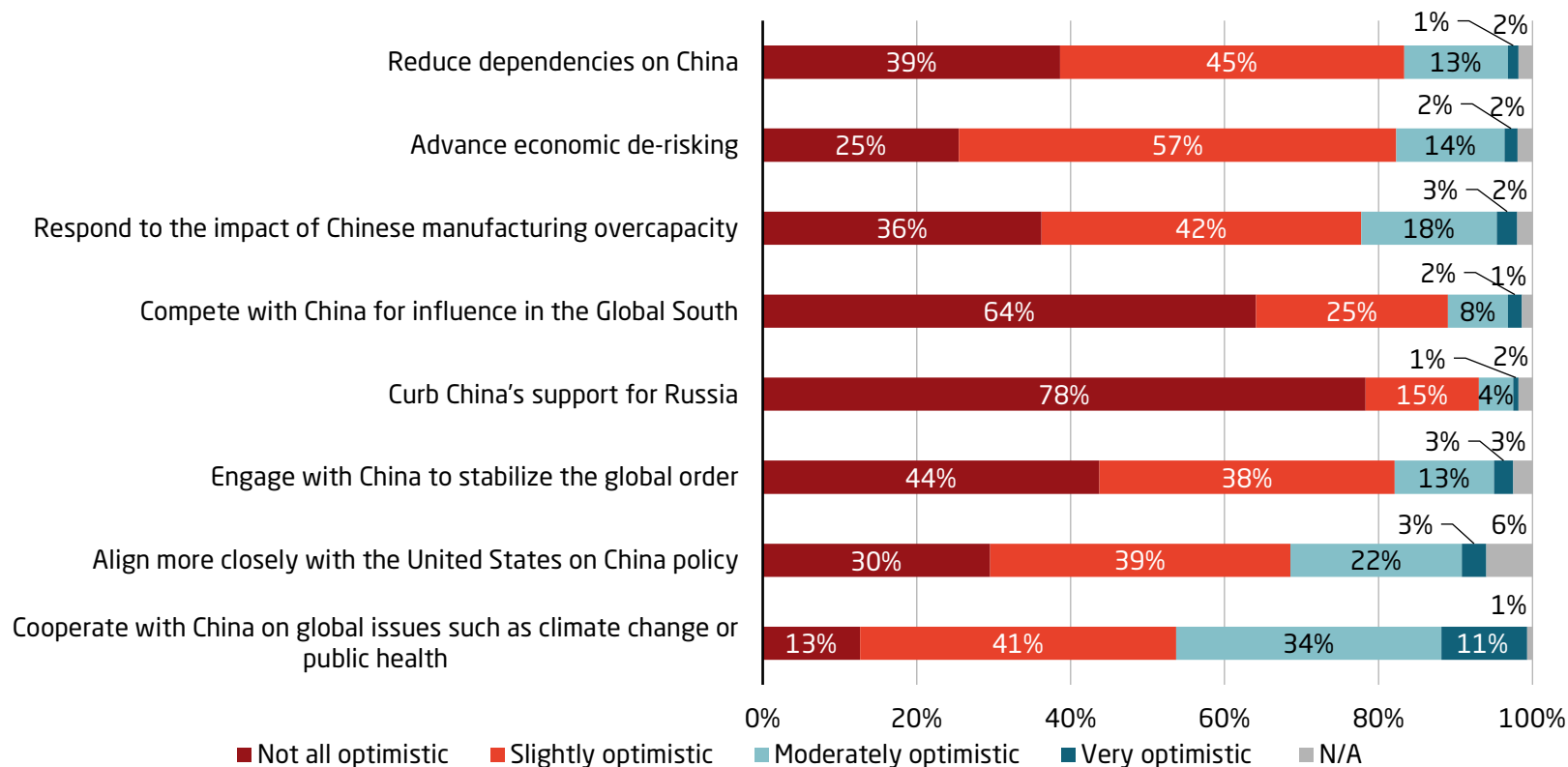


# De-risking? Pessimistic views on EU's ability to respond to China



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Q11: How optimistic are you about the EU's ability to make progress on the following issues in 2026?



# Part 3: Overview of respondents who gave their views

Number of participants: 699 respondents on that question

Europe (79.26%), US (6.58%), China (3.58%), Rest of the world (10.58%)

# About the survey

Age, education and affiliation of respondents



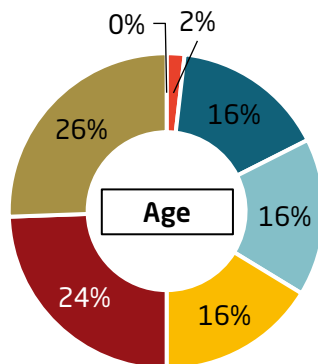
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Number of  
participants

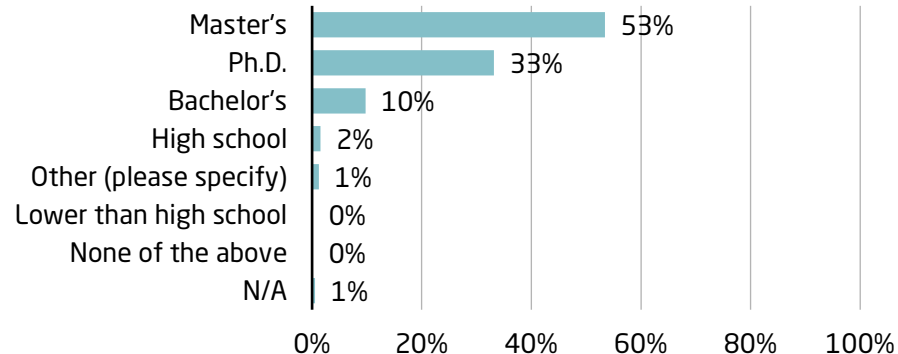


766

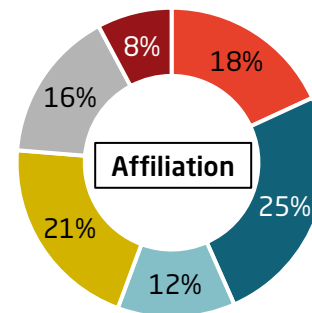
- Under 18
- 18-24
- 45-54
- 35-44
- 25-34
- 55-64
- 65+



Education



- Public sector
- Academia
- Think tank
- Company
- Other
- Media





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Read the results and analysis of the  
MERICS China Forecast online:

