

MBCC 2026

STATE OF BEER

REPORT



**FOR THE 15TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, MIKKELLER
IS BRINGING TOGETHER SOME OF THE WORLD'S
BEST BREWERIES FOR OUR ANNUAL BEER
FESTIVAL, MIKKELLER BEER CELEBRATION
COPENHAGEN / MBCC.**

**TWO DAYS DEDICATED TO EXPLORING AND
APPRECIATING EXCEPTIONAL BEER.**

MIKKELLER BEER CELEBRATION COPENHAGEN



The conception of the festival came way back when we hosted the 1st anniversary of our original beer bar on Viktoriagade, where we invited a few friends from the brewing industry to stop by and bring some of their beer. What started as a simple birthday gathering quickly evolved into a full-fledged beer festival, and the rest is history.

Mikkeller Beer Celebration is not only a Copenhagen event. In the past years, the festival has been held in Beijing, Tokyo, and the Faroe Islands. Rumour has it, there are more to come.

What makes MBCC different from a lot of other beer festivals is first and foremost our “free bar ” concept. At MBCC you just grab your glass and are free to roam around and taste all the goodies. If you just started to dip your toes into the wonderful world of craft beer then MBCC is the perfect event for you to taste a ton of different beer styles and really explore what beer can be. However, it ’s also a pure paradise for all the beer geeks out there, as MBCC gives you access to some really top shelf beers you normally wouldn’t be able to get your hands on - not to mention the insane one-off brews made only for MBCC.

STATE OF BEER REPORT

We've surveyed the participating breweries to capture their insights on the industry and the latest beer trends.

With this report, we wanted to get the perspective from the industry. What is the mood like? What are the challenges? Opportunities? What trends do they see on the horizon?

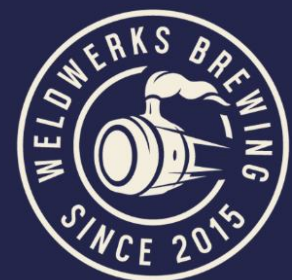
It's not meant to be a scientific paper and probably wouldn't pass a formal peer review process but when some of the world's best breweries speak, it's worth listening. Their insights offer a unique snapshot of where beer stands in 2026 – and where it might be headed next.



BREWERIES PARTICIPATING AT MBCC 2026



//BRAVOURE.



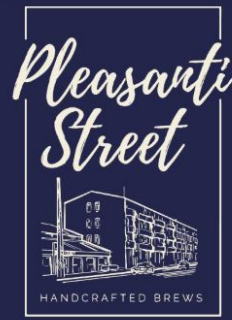
BERRYLAND



FUNKY FLUID



-Puhaste-



AMAGER
BRYGHUS



Human
Robot



北平
机器

OUTER
RANGE
BREWING CO.



ÖLÖGY
BREWING CO.



samata



SOMA



Willibald



PART I

MOOD IS... CONFUSING?

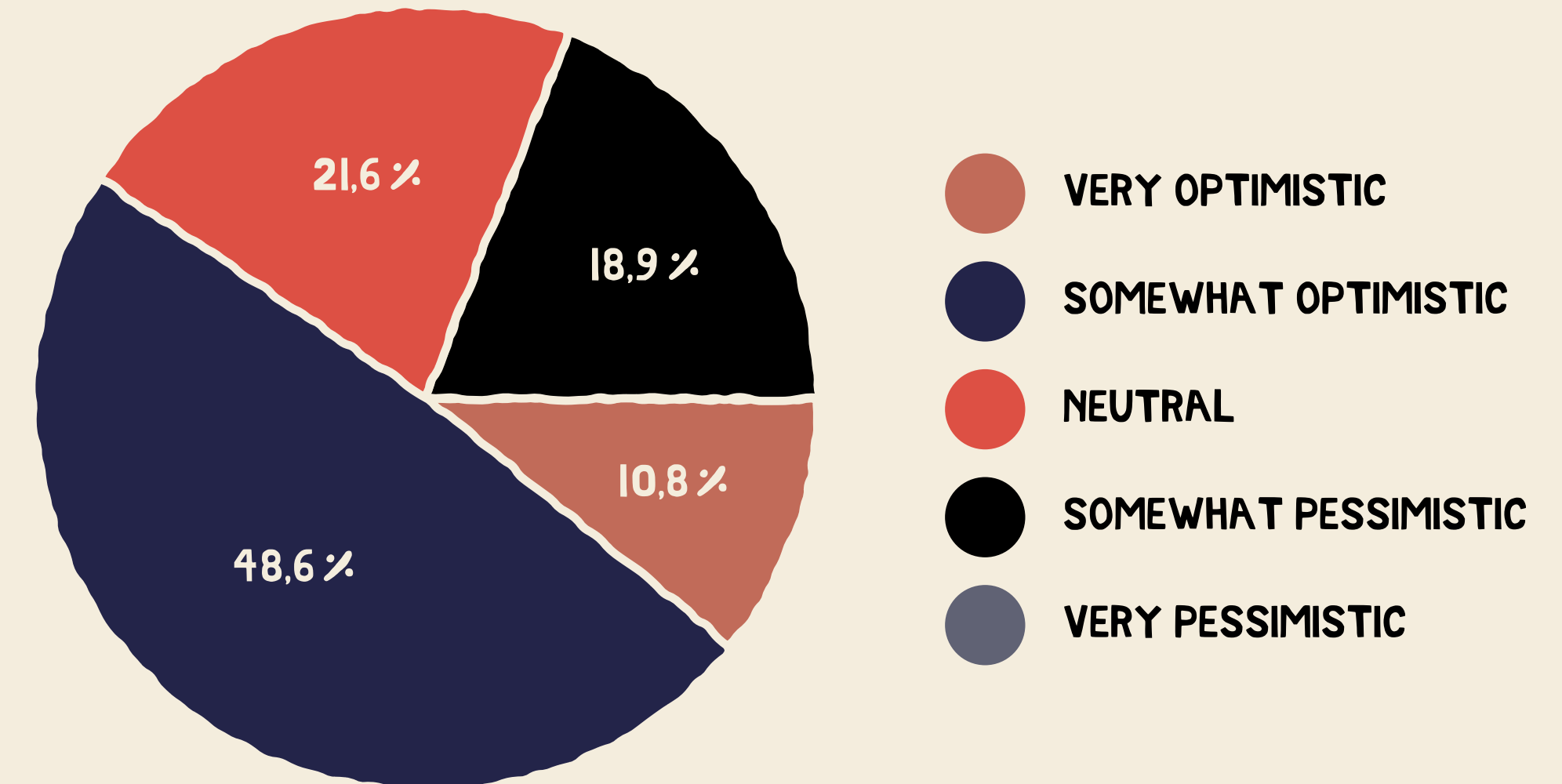
MOOD IS... CONFUSING?

Shifting consumer preferences. Rising input prices. Inflation, tariffs, economic instability, labour shortages, climate pressure, a crowded market. There's no shortage of things to worry about if you're running a craft brewery in 2026. And yet, the mood in the industry isn't as straightforward as you might expect.

Last year, 71% of breweries described themselves as very or somewhat optimistic, while 25% leaned pessimistic. This year, optimism has dropped to 59.9%. But here's the twist: pessimism has also dropped to just 18.9%. Instead, the big change is in the middle. The share of breweries feeling "neutral" has jumped from 3.6% to 21.6%.

The industry is less optimistic, but also less pessimistic. So the breweries aren't necessarily expecting things to get worse. They're just less confident about what happens next. The mood is confusing.

ARE YOU OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC ON BEHALF OF THE CRAFT BEER SCENE?



That uncertainty mirrors the broader economy. Across much of the Western world, consumer sentiment is under pressure. Energy prices remain volatile, tariffs and geopolitical tensions are back on the agenda, and talk of recession keeps resurfacing.

There's a growing sense that things are falling apart, that we are moving from one crisis to the next without quite landing back on stable ground.

And yet, at the same time, the hard data doesn't fully match the mood. Many businesses are still performing. Employment remains relatively strong. Most people are still doing well. It's a phenomenon some have started calling the vibecession. There is a recession of vibes. It's just not showing in the numbers.

That said, some pressures are very real. When asked about their biggest challenges, a majority of the breweries (56.8%) point to rising input costs: water, energy, transport, packaging as their biggest challenge.

75.7% report that their production costs have increased over the past year. Affordability is becoming a defining issue, not just for consumers, but for breweries as well.

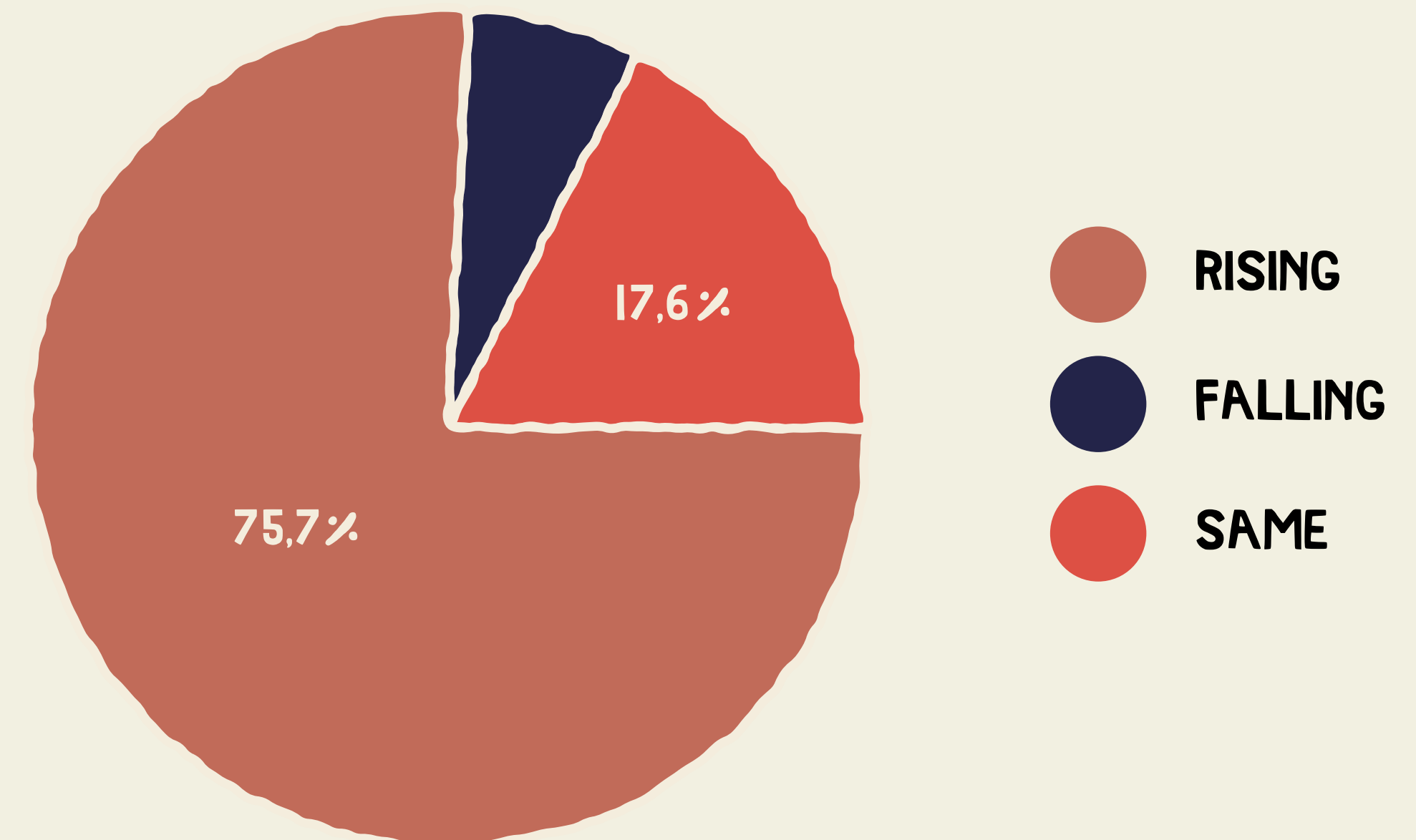
So where does that leave the craft beer industry?

Not in crisis.

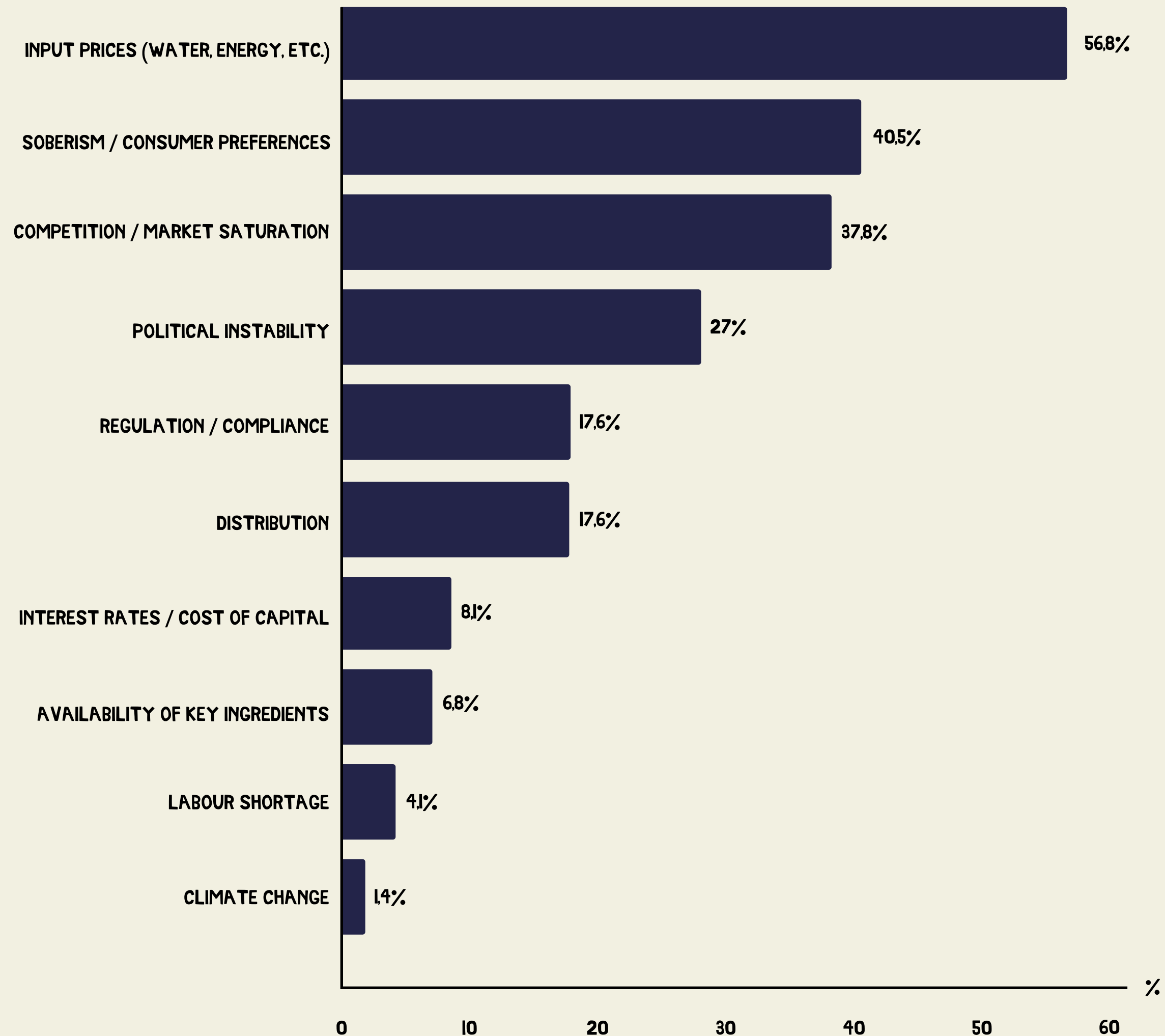
Not in boom.

But somewhere in between. Waiting for clarity.

WHAT IS THE TREND IN PRODUCTION COSTS IN THE PAST YEAR?



WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR YOUR BREWERY?



"THE MOOD IN THE BEER INDUSTRY IS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC, BUT MUCH MORE GROUNDED THAN IN PAST YEARS. WHILE COSTS ARE RISING AND THE MARKET FEELS CROWDED, BREWERIES THAT PRIORITIZE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE BOTH IN THE GLASS AND IN THE TAPROOM ARE CONTINUING TO STAND OUT AND BUILD LOYALTY. CONSUMERS ARE DRINKING MORE INTENTIONALLY, FAVORING PLACES THAT OFFER A MEMORABLE ATMOSPHERE, STRONG HOSPITALITY, AND A CLEAR BRAND IDENTITY. IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, SUCCESS COMES FROM CREATING CONNECTIONS AND EXPERIENCE, NOT JUST PRODUCING GREAT BEER."

- Corey Artanis
VP, Director of Brewing and Blending in 3 Sons Brewing Co.

PART 2

DRINKABILITY IS IN

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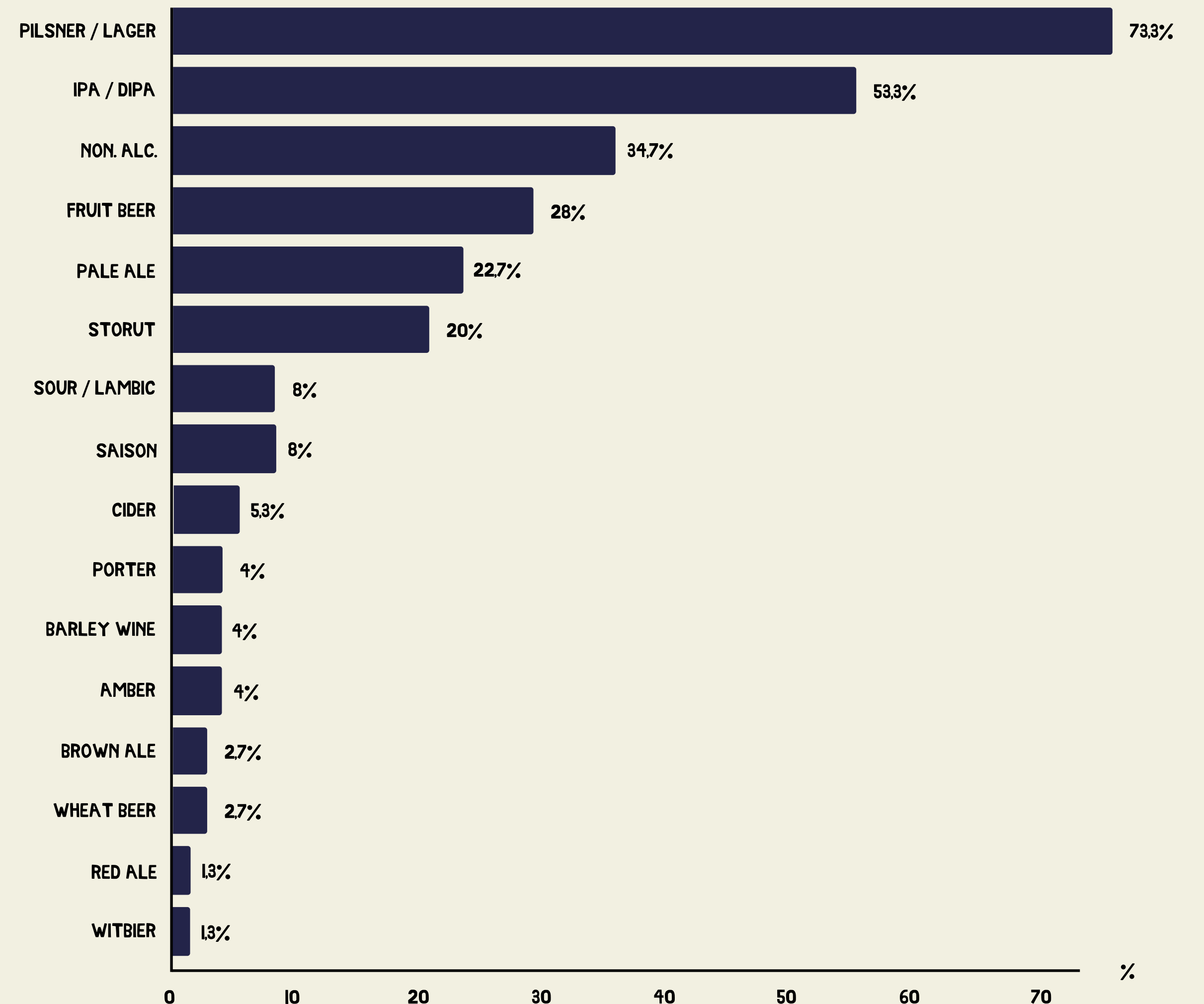
This year's beer trends are, in many ways, a continuation of last year: pilsners and lagers, fruit beers and IPAs are leading the way.

73% report selling more pilsners and lagers than five years ago, and 80% expect that growth to continue over the next five.

Meanwhile, more "challenging" styles are losing a bit of ground. After last year's surprising Guinness frenzy, stouts seem to be cooling off: 30% expect to sell less, while only 16% expect to sell more. Sours are following a similar pattern.

If we were to summarise this prediction into a trend, it would be this: Drinkability is in.

WHICH OF THESE BEER TYPES ARE YOU SELLING MORE OF NOW COMPARED TO 5 YEARS AGO?



"DRINKABILITY HAS IN RECENT YEARS BECOME A CLEAR TREND IN THE BEER INDUSTRY, EVIDENT IN THE GROWING NUMBER OF CORE-RANGE BEERS FROM BREWERIES WITH RELATIVELY LOW OR NO ALCOHOL. THESE BEERS ALSO TEND TO SHARE COMMON STYLES SUCH AS PILSNERS OR IPAS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT MORE AND MORE CONSUMERS ARE SEEKING EASY-DRINKING ALTERNATIVES WHEN PURCHASING BEER."

- Brian Lindberg
MENYs øl-laug



After years of boundary-pushing experimentation, the pendulum is swinging back towards the fresh, easygoing and drinkable styles. The craft beer scene has spent decades chasing intensity with more hops, more adjuncts, more everything. This hops fundamentalism has produced some amazing beers... but let's be honest, it also got a little gimmicky.

Now, things are simplifying.

There's a growing sense of fatigue with beers that feel like a project. Drinkers are looking for something easier, beers you don't have to analyze before you enjoy. Less friction, more flow.

Meanwhile, the beer geeks are also coming to appreciate the craft of a good pilsner. A great pilsner leaves nowhere to hide. No heavy hops, no barrel aging, no pastry tricks, just balance, precision, and technique. That's part of what's driving a renewed respect for traditional styles and refined craftsmanship.

You can see this shift reflected across the festival this year. At least its reflected in the official MBCC: The Big Bad Pils - a West Coast Pilsner that brings together the best of both worlds, lager drinkability with a sharp, hoppy edge.

PART 3

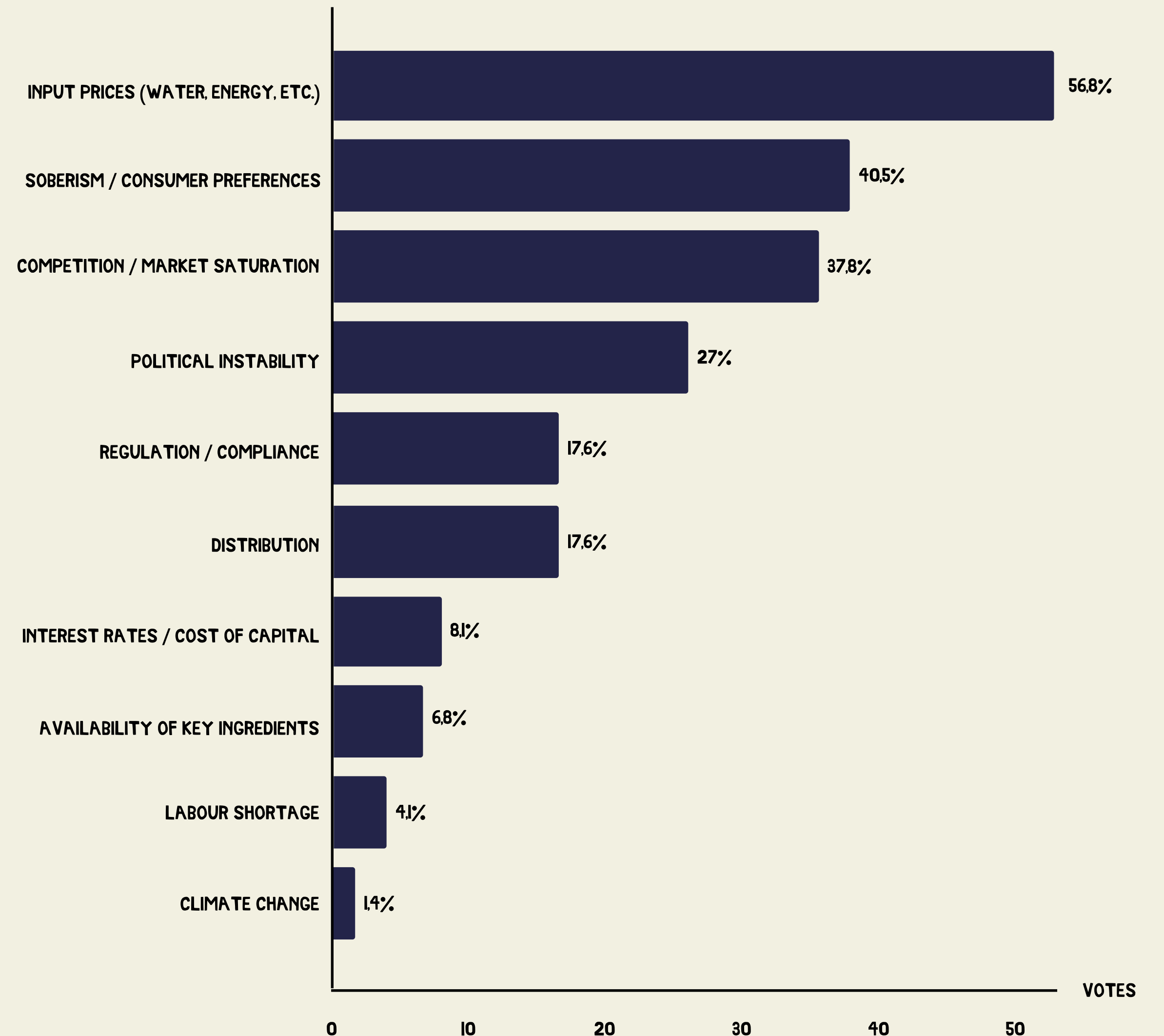
SOBRIETY IS REAL

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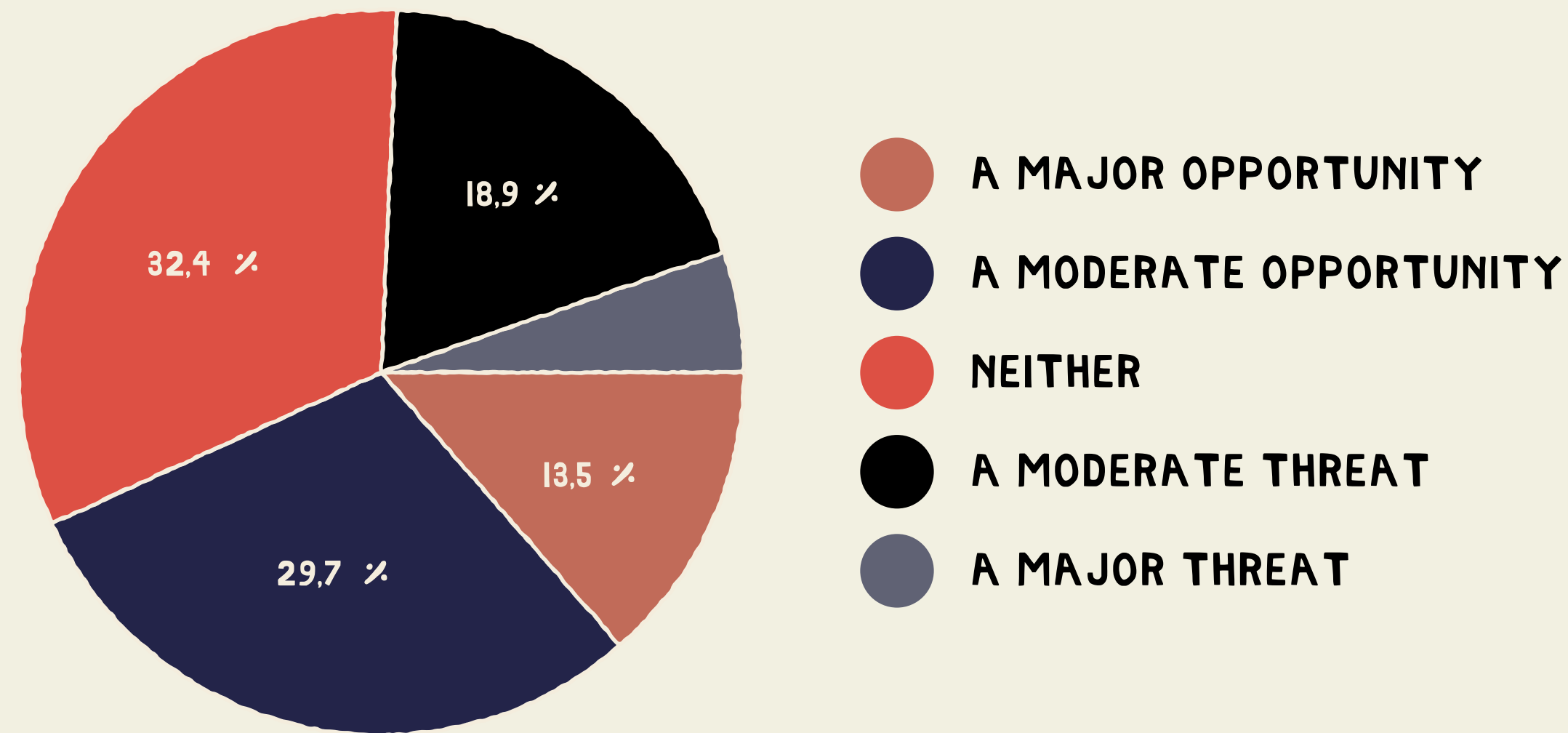
For years, the conversation around craft beer has been about market saturation; too many breweries, too many beers, too much supply. But maybe it's time to shift the focus. Because the real question right now isn't how much beer we can make. It's how much people actually want to drink.

In recent years, we've seen the rise of the "sober curious" movement, driven largely by changing habits among Millennials and Gen Z. Across most Western countries, younger consumers are actively cutting back on alcohol. Not quitting entirely but drinking more moderately and consciously. Gen Z, in particular, consumes significantly less beer and wine than previous generations by some estimates, around one-third less.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR YOUR BREWERY?



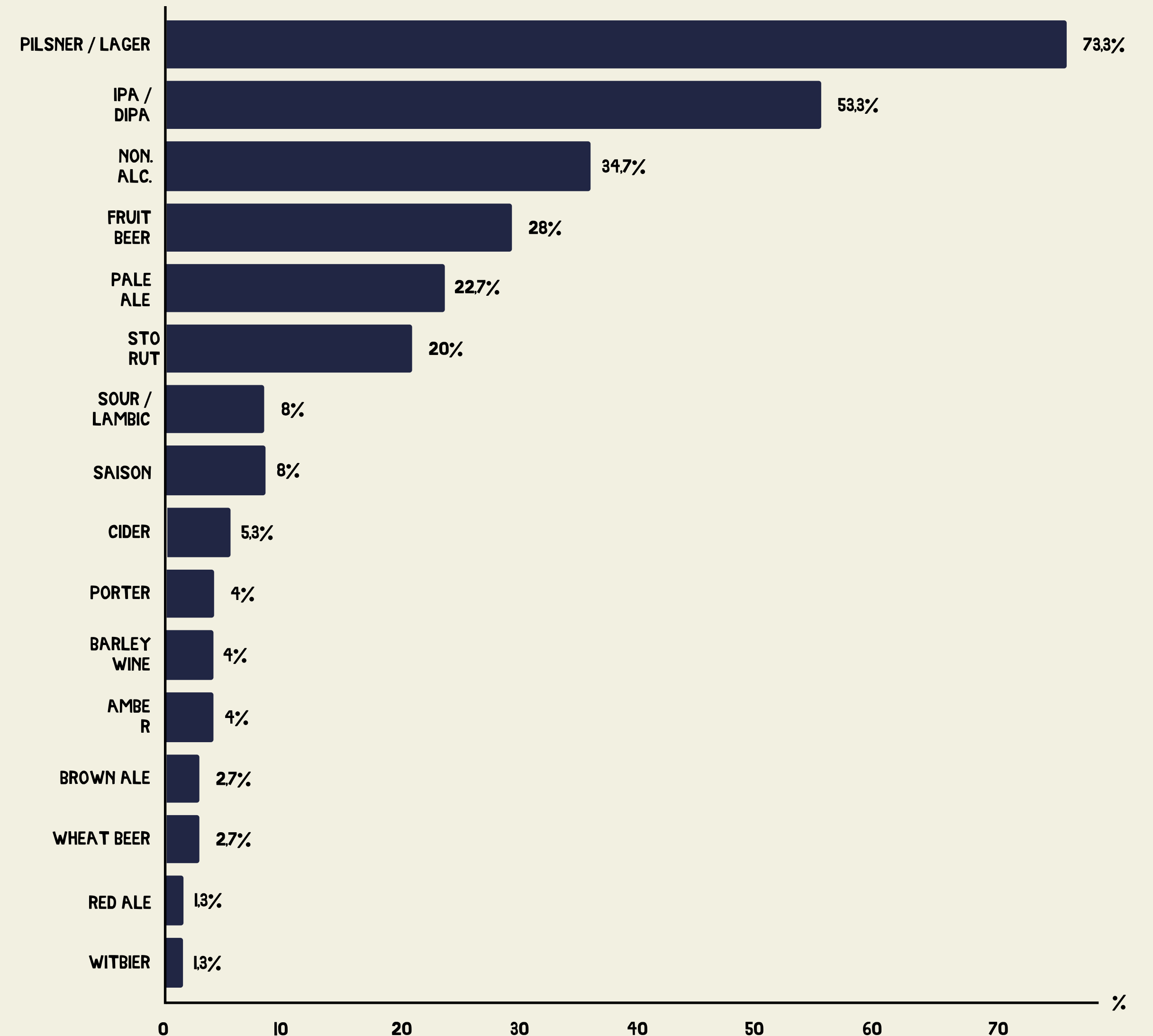
HOW DO YOU VIEW THE RISE OF ALCOHOL MODERATION AND DEMAND FOR LOW- / NO-ALCOHOL ALTERNATIVES IN RELATION TO YOUR BREWERY'S FUTURE?



The reasons are both cultural and personal. Health and mental wellbeing play a big role. But there's also a broader lifestyle shift: younger people are going out less, partying less, and spending more time alone, at home. Less excess. More control.

In many ways, that's a good thing. But it's also a challenge for the industry. Around 40% of the breweries we surveyed see "soberism" as one of their main challenges. And 24.3% view alcohol moderation as a direct threat to their business.

WHICH OF THESE BEER TYPES ARE YOU SELLING MORE OF NOW COMPARED TO 5 YEARS AGO?

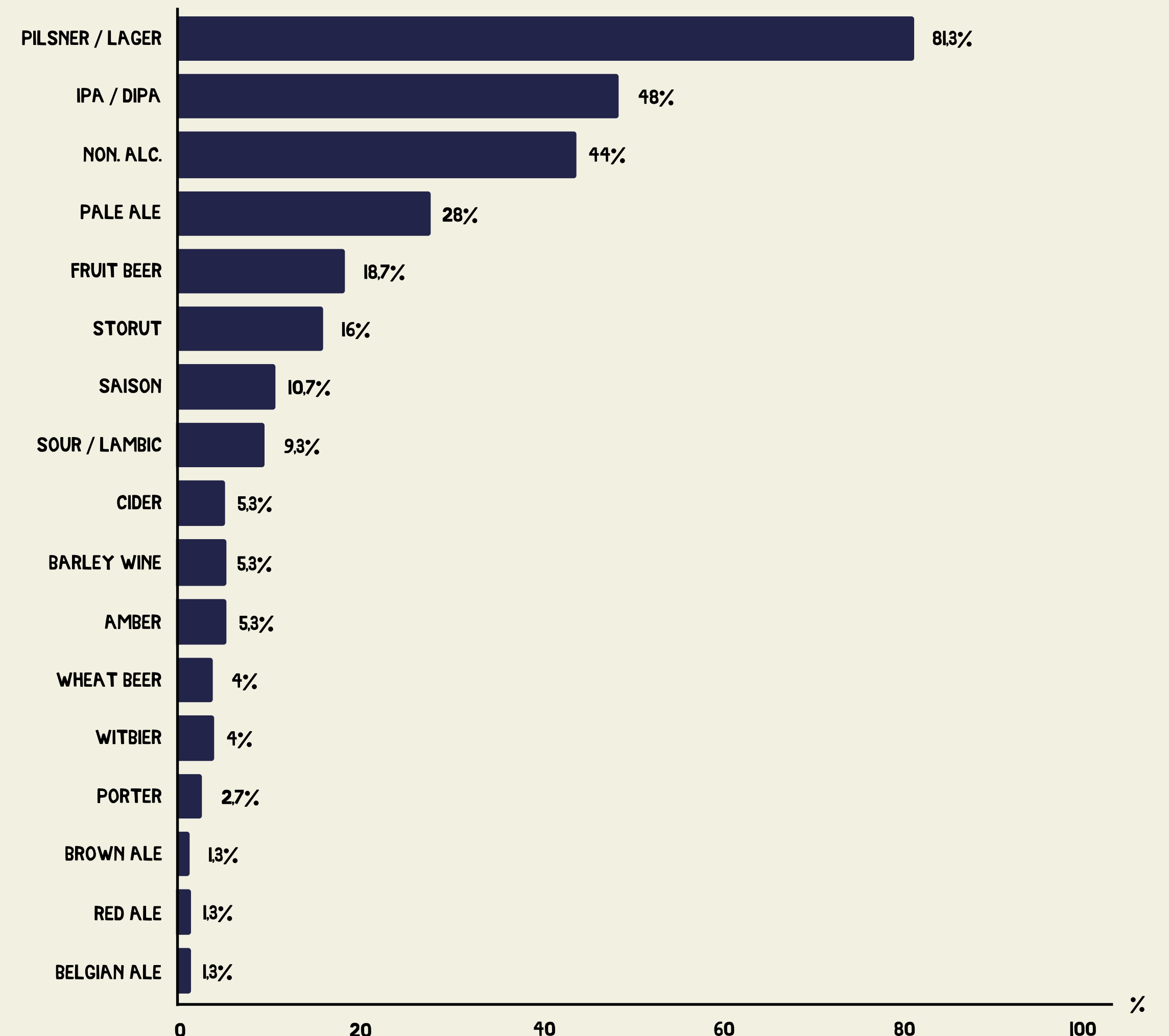


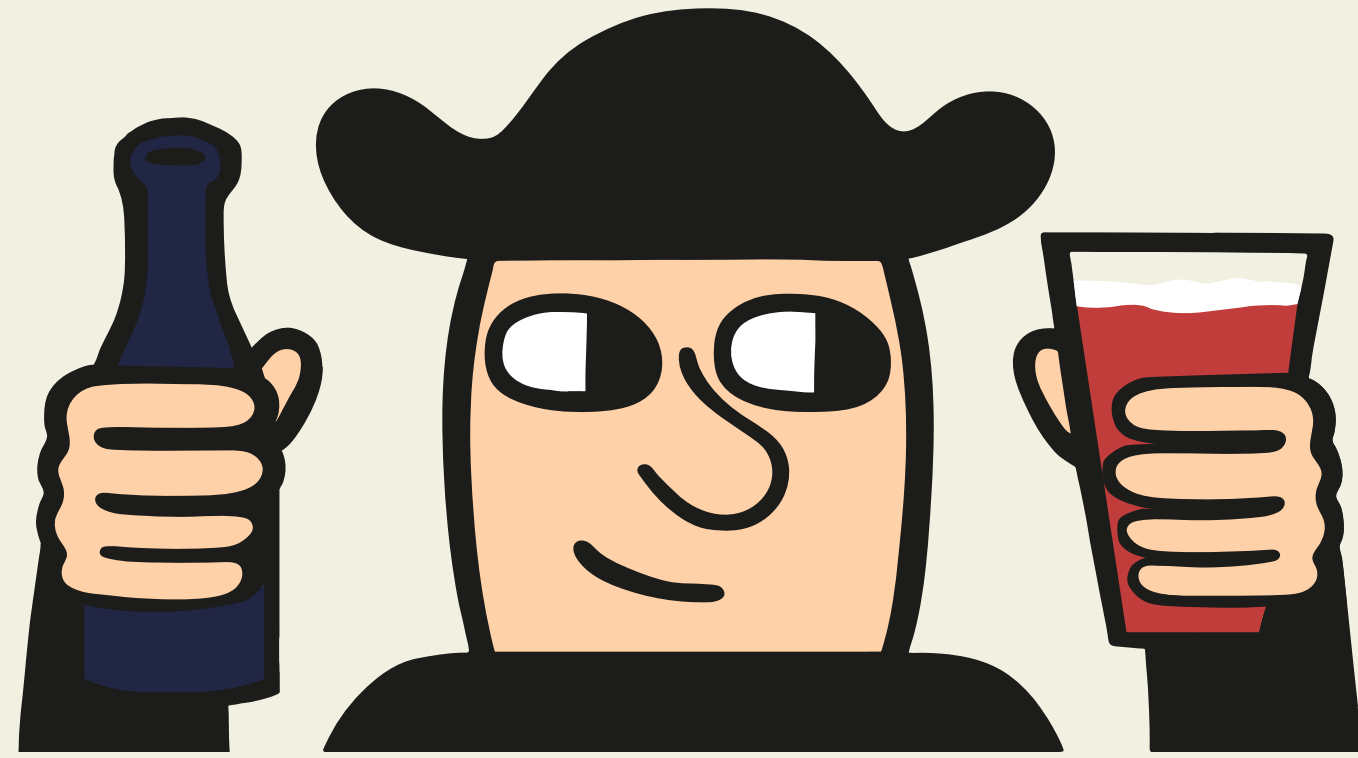
But that's only half the story. Because just as many see opportunity. In fact, 45.9% of breweries view this trend as a positive development, closely tied to the rapid rise of non-alcoholic beer. 33.8% say they're selling more non-alcoholic beer today than five years ago. And 43.2% expect that growth to continue over the next five.

"WE DON'T SEE THE OVERALL INDUSTRY-WIDE DECLINING BEER SALES AND SEEMINGLY LARGER INTEREST IN SOBRIETY AS A THREAT. BECAUSE, AT DANKHOUSE WE CONTINUE TO SEE YEAR OVER YEAR GROWTH. WE SEE IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE TO INNOVATE AND DEVELOP NEW PRODUCTS TO BRING MORE EXCITEMENT AND INTRIGUE BACK INTO THE ALCOHOL INDUSTRY. WHILE THERE MAY SEEM TO BE AN OVERALL LACK OF INTEREST IN BEER, I DON'T THINK THAT NECESSARILY MEANS PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO REMAIN SOBER. THEY ARE JUST WAITING FOR THE NEXT THING TO GRAB THEIR INTERESTS AND MAKE THE INDUSTRY MORE EXCITING. WE HAVEN'T EVEN GIVEN ANY CONSIDERATION TO THE NON-ALCOHOLIC MARKET, BECAUSE WE DON'T SEE THAT AS A THREAT. WE'RE LOOKING MORE TOWARDS LOWER ALCOHOL BEVERAGES THAT CAN GAIN SOME INTEREST FROM THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS. WE THINK THERE IS A MASSIVE OPPORTUNITY TO BRING THEM BACK INTO THE ALCOHOL INDUSTRY."

- Josh Lange
Co-founder and brewer at DankHouse Brewing Co.

WHAT BEER TYPE DO YOU EXPECT TO TREND IN THE COMING FIVE YEARS?





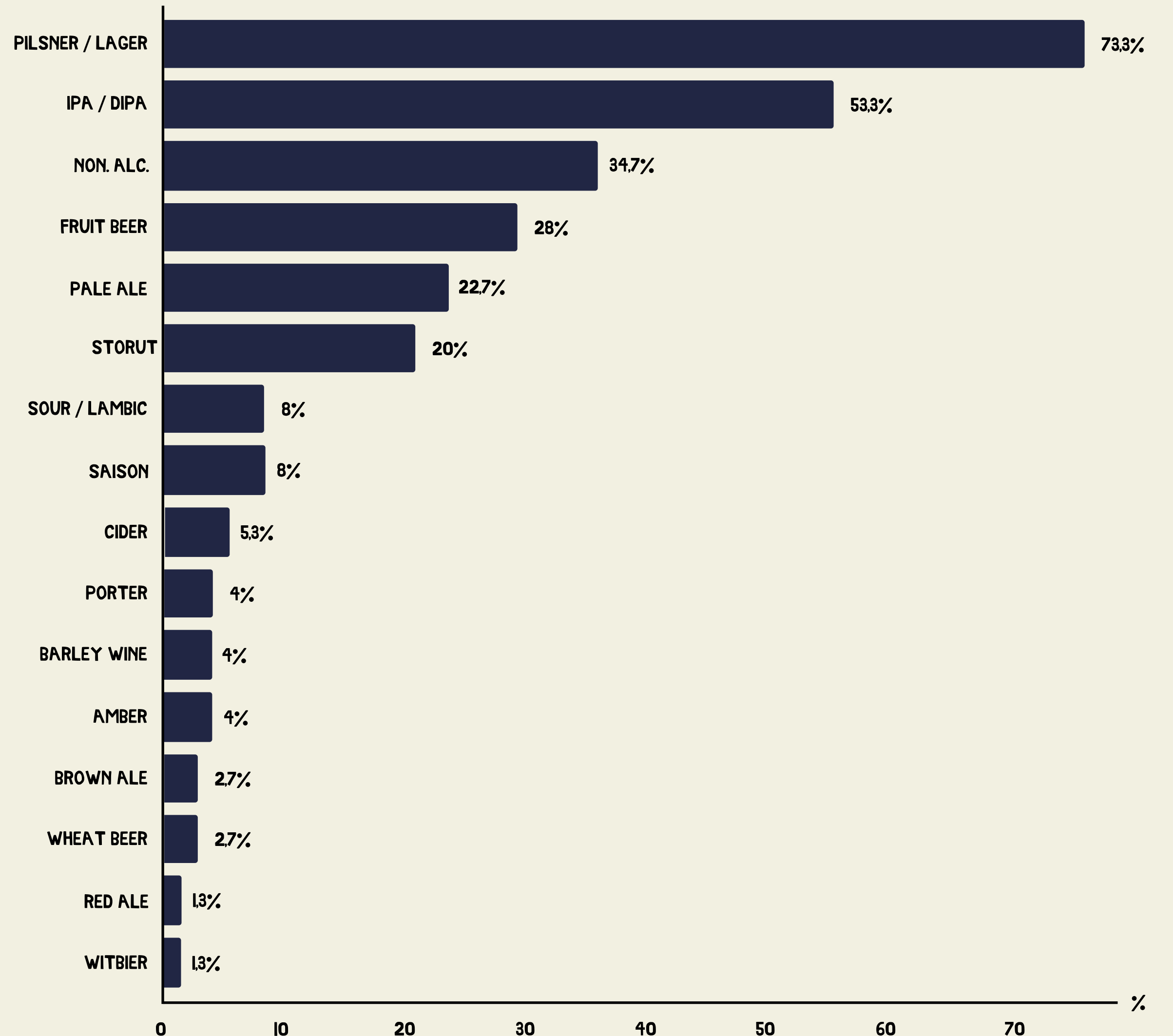
Of course, people rarely go out to chuck eight non-alcoholic beers in a row. That's not the point. The real opportunity lies in the new competition.

As non-alcoholic beer improves (and more people acquire the taste) it starts competing not just with beer, but with soft drinks, juices, and even energy drinks. With the rise of functional beer, we're even seeing products positioned around focus, recovery, and wellbeing.

Beer is expanding its territory. And for craft breweries, that opens a new door - a chance to reach beyond the traditional beer audience, take market share from the established players, and redefine what beer can be.

Less alcohol doesn't have to mean less opportunity. It might just mean a bigger playing field.

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BEER CELEBRATION
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