



Commission for
Communications Regulation

ComReg

Postal service users

SME study

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RESEARCH
& INSIGHT



A woman with long dark hair, wearing glasses, a black blazer, and a light blue button-down shirt, is sitting at a desk. She is holding a white smartphone to her ear with her right hand and looking down at a laptop screen with her left hand. The background shows a blurred office environment with shelves and binders.

Report Format

- Introduction
- Familiarity with Ceadunas/bulk mail and franking machine
- Post received: Standard Letters
- Post Received: Packages/Parcels
- Sending Post: Packages/Parcels
- Key Highlights



Introduction

Research Methodology: Sampling

- Fieldwork for this study was conducted from April-May 2019.
- Survey data collection was administered via face-to-face interviewing via CAPI (Computer Aided Personal Interviewing). All interviewing was administered at the respondent's office – 500 respondents were interviewed in total.
- At data processing stage 10 surveys were removed from the data set as they did not match quality control criteria (a standard process in order to ensure the quality of utility estimation).
- All interviews were conducted with the person responsible for postal decision making within the selection/management of postal selection/management of postal and related services in their organisation.
 - ❖ **A nationally representative sample of 490 SMEs with 1-249 employees was conducted**, with enhanced representation of larger s i.e. a higher proportion of interviews were conducted with larger SMEs to fully understand postal decision making within larger companies. The sample was then weighted to be reflective of all Irish SMEs by size and region.
 - ❖ The weighted sample composition was modelled upon universe estimates derived from a combination of leading organisation directory sources: The Irish Times, Business & Finance Top 500 companies in Ireland, Bill Moss and Data Ireland, as well as industry representative groups and CSO estimates.



Research Methodology: Weighting

- The margin of error on the total sample of 490 is +/-4.5% pts.
- Significance testing to 95% confidence level has been applied to the data and is highlighted throughout this presentation. (Green highlighting = significantly **higher result** versus the total sample, red highlighting = significantly **lower result** than the total sample).
 - ❖ Commentary detailing 'higher' or 'lower' identifies findings that are significantly higher or lower versus the total sample.



Sample Size & Population Density

	No. of Interviews	Weighting applied
Total	490	100%
Employees		
Under 10 employees	220	92%
11 – 49 employees	194	6%
50-249 employees	76	1%
Region		
Dublin	144	32%
Rest of Leinster	136	24%
Munster	125	26%
Conn/Ulster	85	17%



Source: CSO, Census 2011



1

Base sizes on each chart refer to the unweighted base i.e. the raw number of interviews as significance testing is based on the raw number of interviews. The charted data refers to the weighted percentages as this is the percentage representative of all SMEs which fall into that category.

2

Some sample sizes have been identified as a small base size. These have been asterisked throughout the report. A small base size is 50 responses or less, this includes both the main sample and sub-samples.

3

Responses to all survey questions have been included.

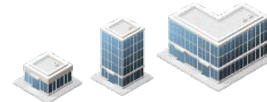
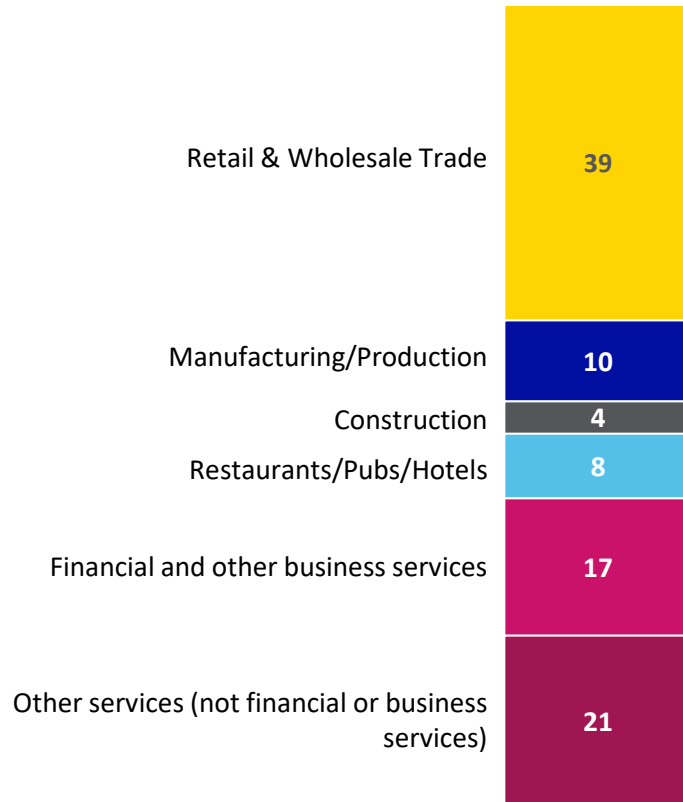
4

In some cases percentages will not add up to 100%, due to multi-coded responses where a respondent selected more than one response or due to rounding if +/- 1% of 100%.



Industry Sector

%



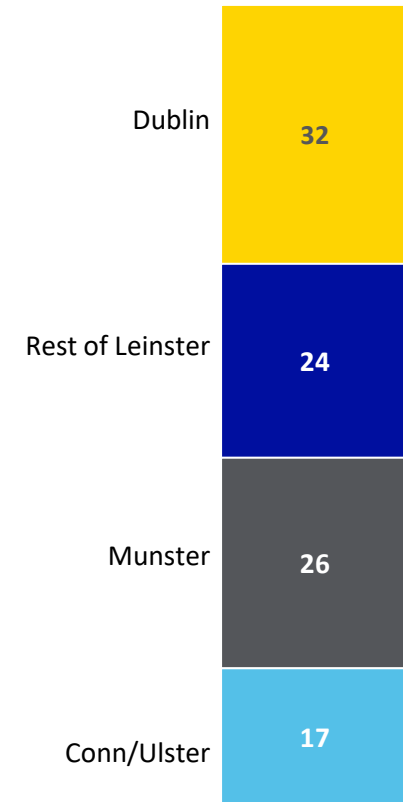
No. of employees

%



Region

%





Familiarity with Ceadunas/bulk mail and franking machine

Incidence of Ceadunas/bulk mail within SME x business size and region



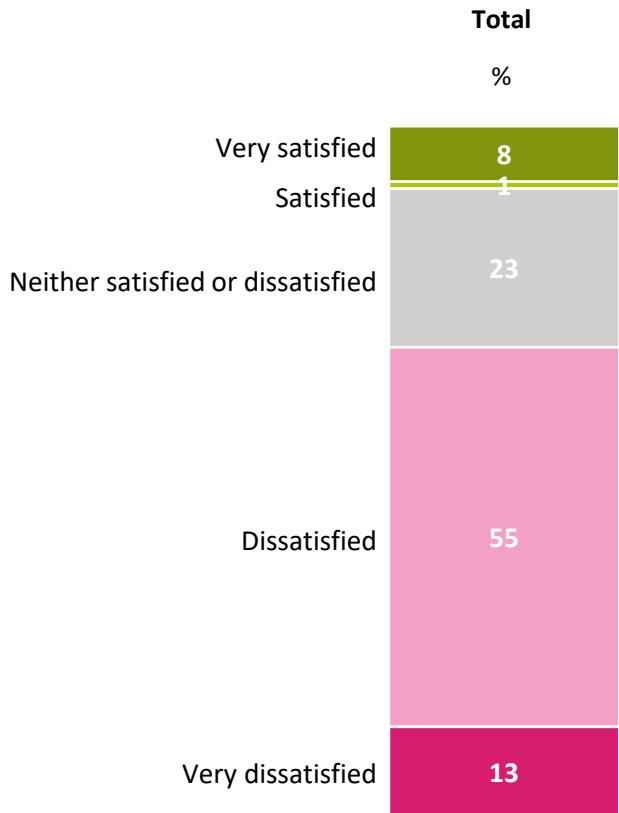
Base: All businesses 490



Just 6% of SMEs have Ceadunas, higher in medium and larger SMEs.

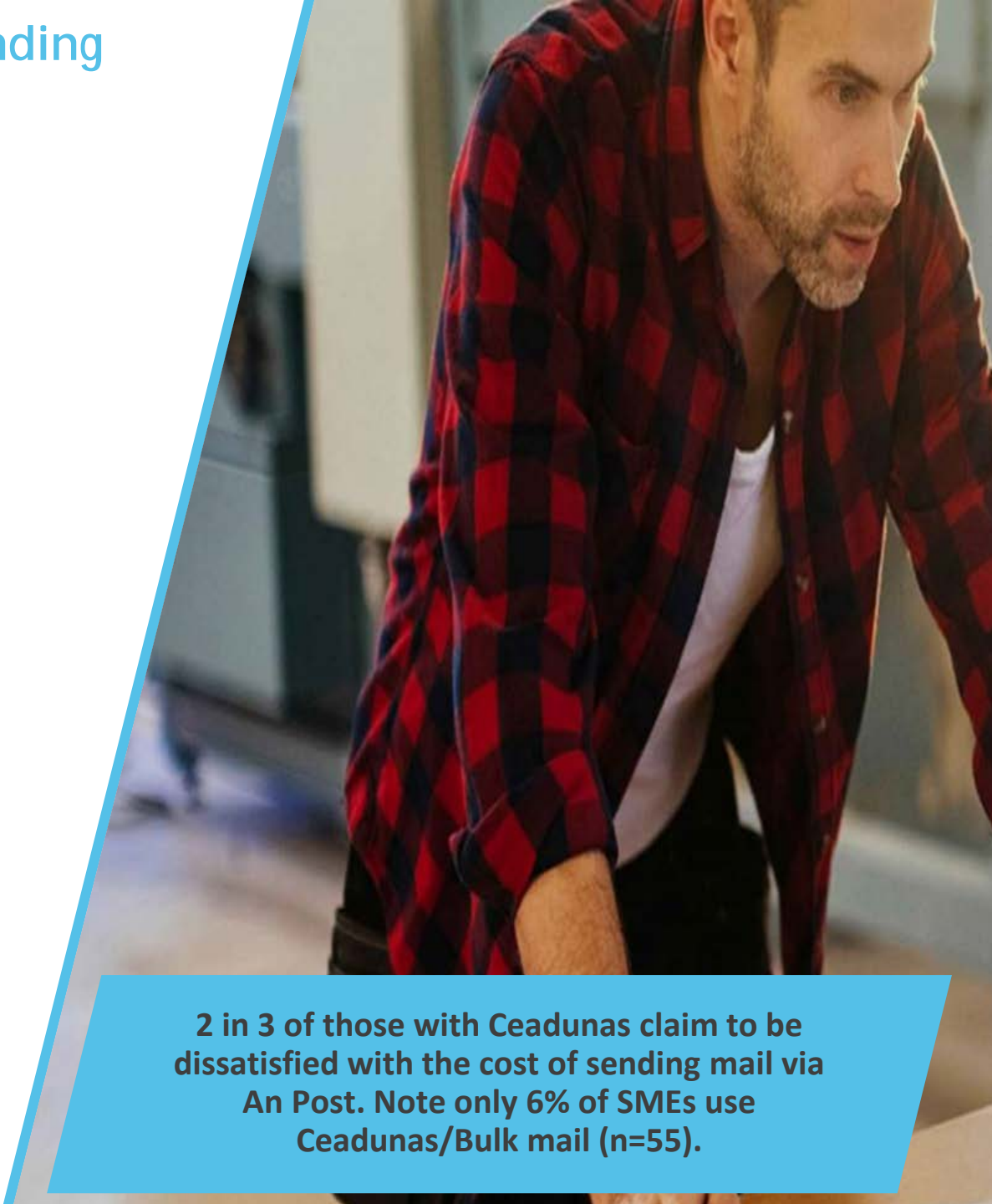
Satisfaction with the cost of sending Ceadunas/bulk mail via An Post

Base: All with Ceadunas/Bulk Mail - 55



Any Satisfied	9%
Any Dissatisfied	68%

Q.9bi How satisfied are you with the cost of sending Ceadunas/bulk mail via An Post?



2 in 3 of those with Ceadunas claim to be dissatisfied with the cost of sending mail via An Post. Note only 6% of SMEs use Ceadunas/Bulk mail (n=55).

Incidence of franking machine within SMEs x business size and region

Base: All businesses 490



Region



No. of employed in your organisation

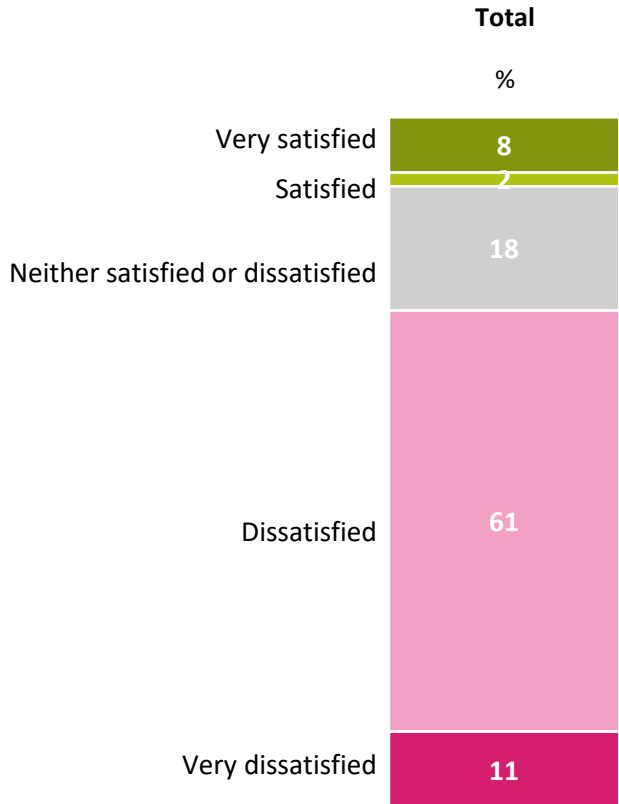


Just 6% of SMEs have a franking machine. Mainly driven by larger businesses.



Satisfaction with the cost of sending meter mail via An Post

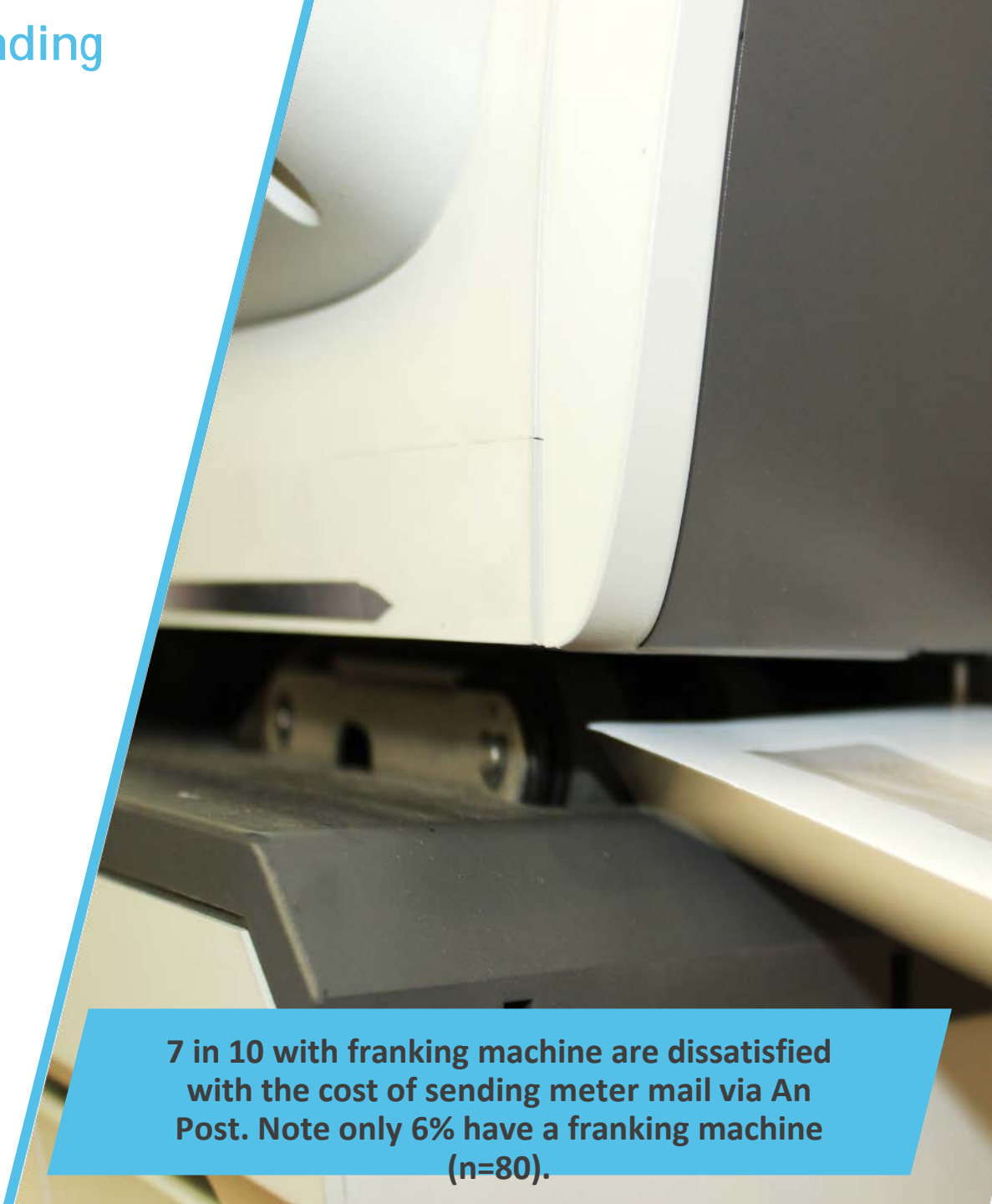
Base: All with franking machine - 80



Any Satisfied	10%
Any Dissatisfied	72%

Q.9bi How satisfied are you with the cost of sending meter mail via An Post?

7 in 10 with franking machine are dissatisfied with the cost of sending meter mail via An Post. Note only 6% have a franking machine (n=80).



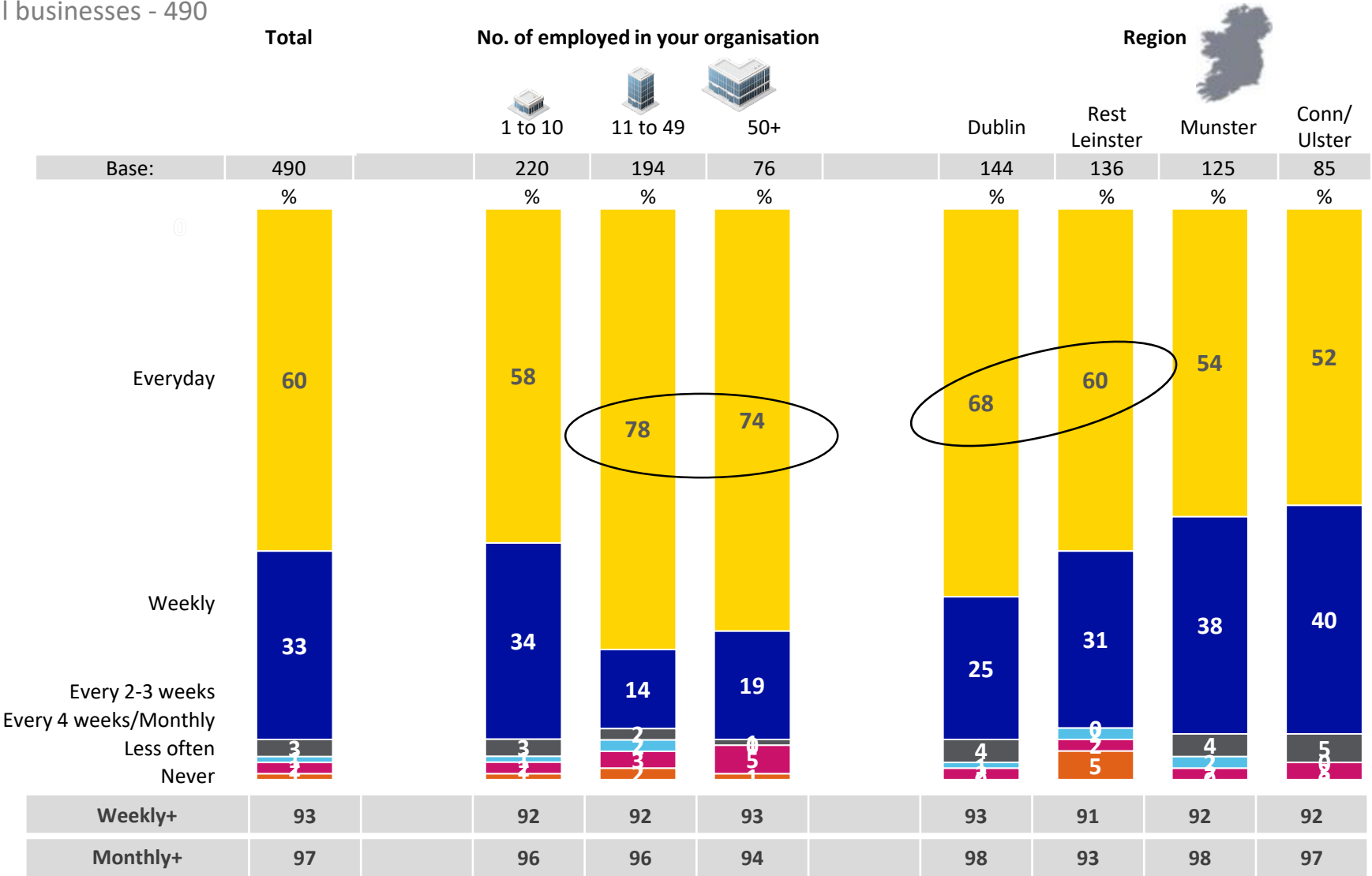


Post received: Standard Letters

Frequency of receiving standard letter post x business size and region



Base: All businesses - 490



Medium and Larger companies claim to receive standard letter mail most frequently. Dublin and Rest of Leinster based companies claim higher everyday frequency, while weekly+ is more evenly spread across regions.

Q3a - Thinking specifically about the business post that your company/organisation receives, on average how frequently does your organisation receive standard letters?

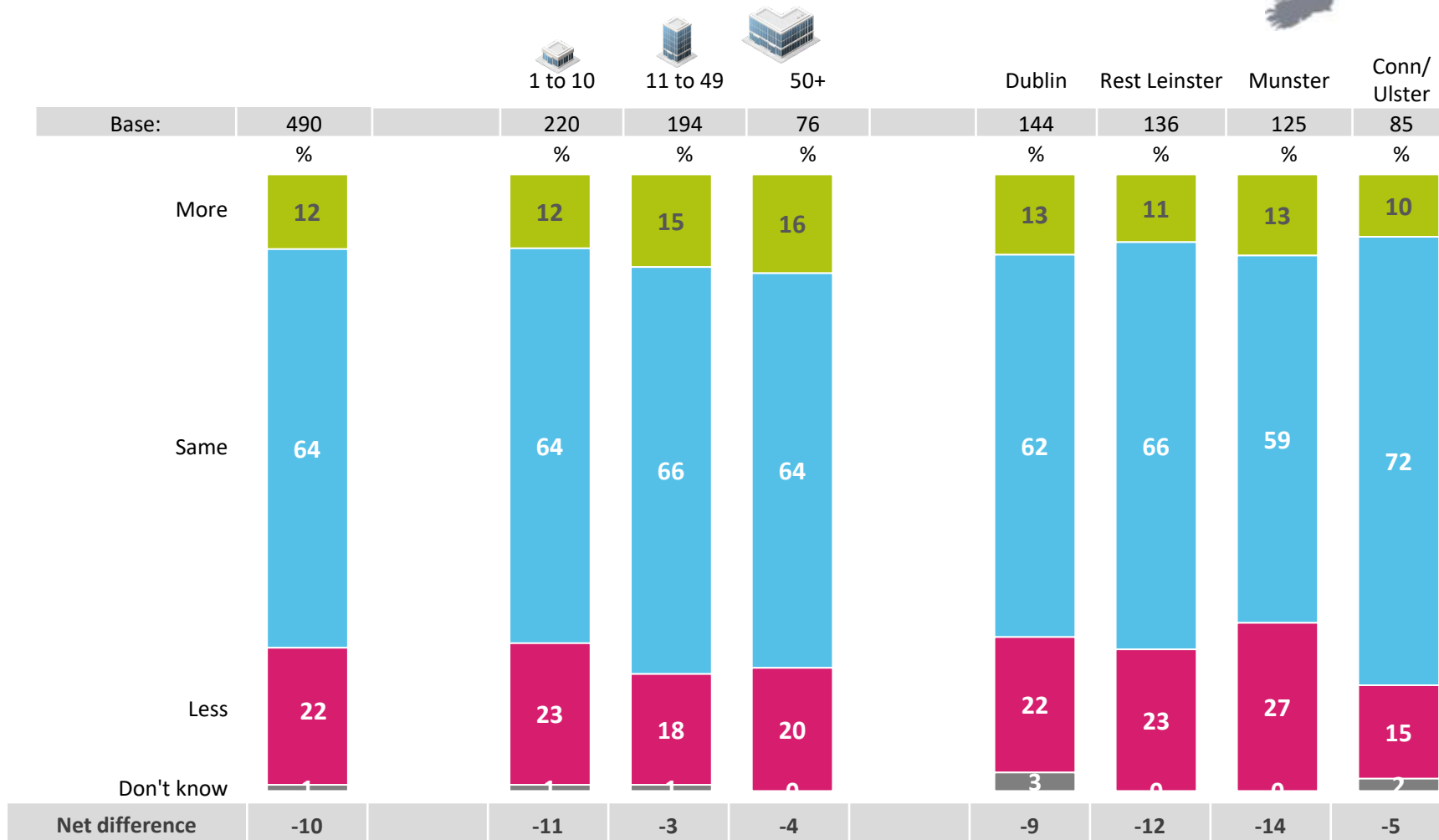
Frequency of receiving standard letter mail versus previous year x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490

Total

No. of employed in your organisation

Region



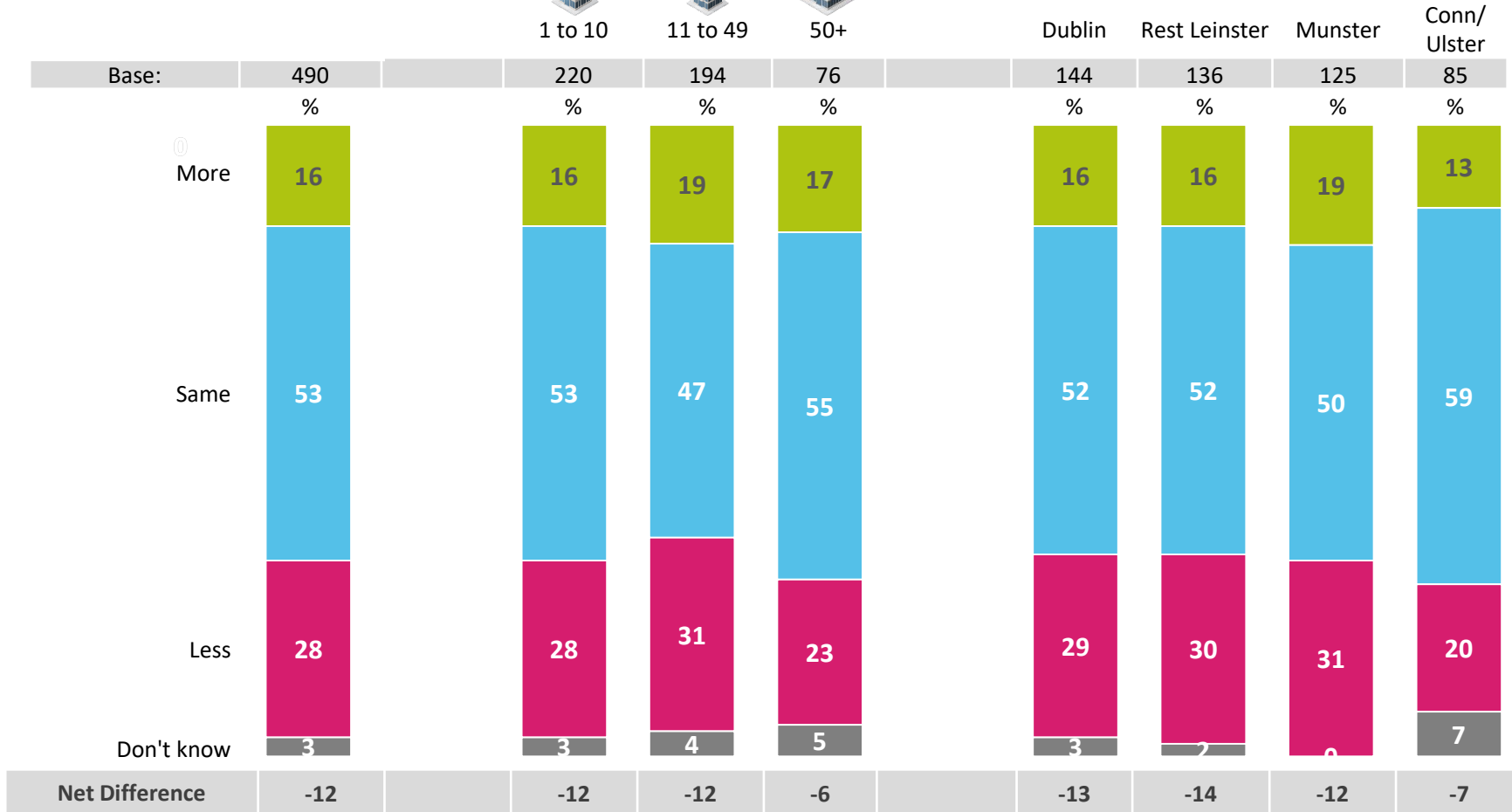
The majority (64%) of SMEs claim to be receiving the same amount of standard letter mail versus the previous year, while 1 in 5 claim to be receiving less. However, net difference indicates a declining trend.

Frequency of receiving standard letter mail versus 3 years ago x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490 **Total**

No. of employed in your organisation

Region



Net difference indicated a decline in receipt of standard mail across all business sizes and regions.

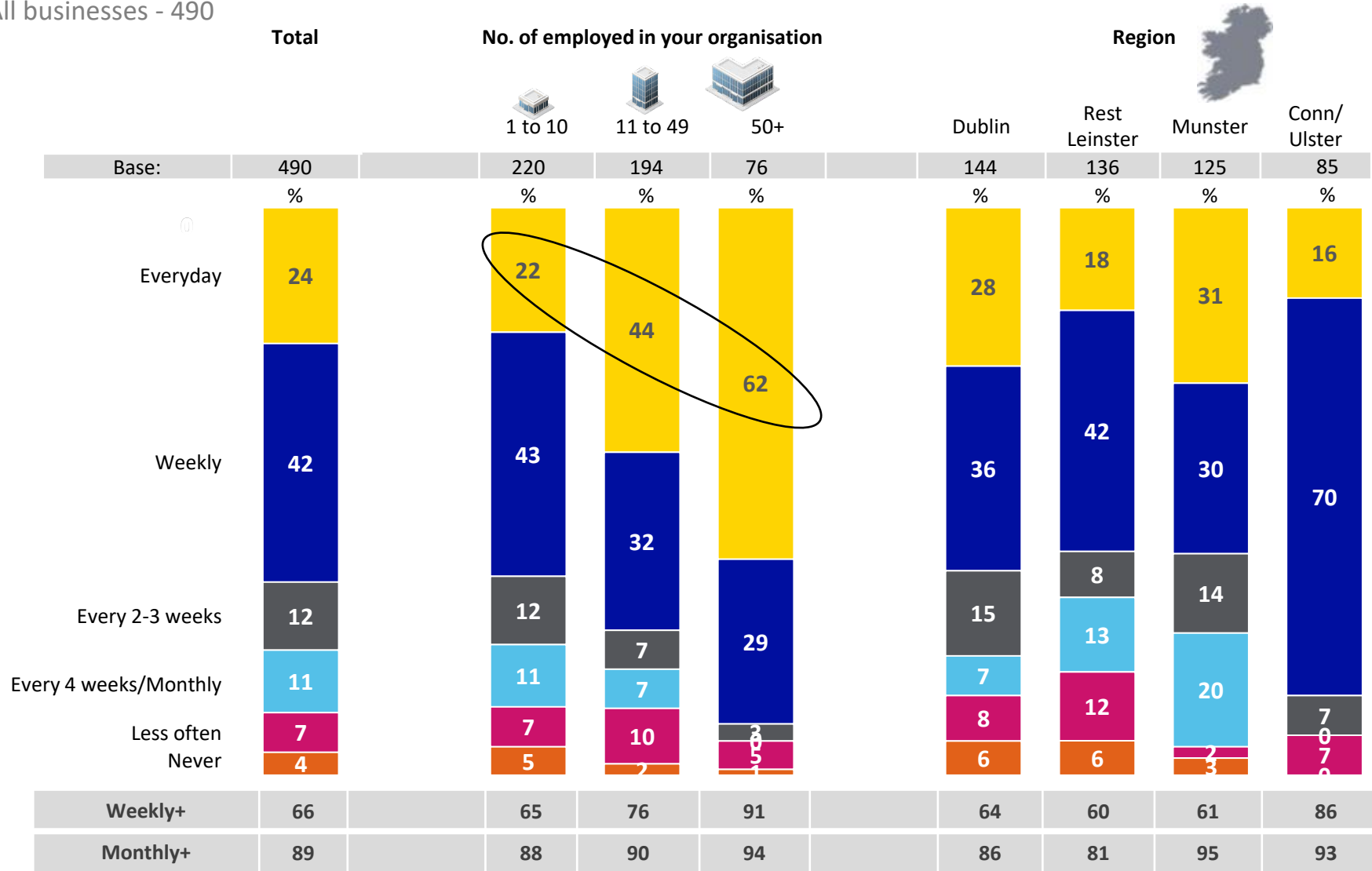


Sending Post: Standard Letters

Frequency of sending standard letter post x business size and region



Base: All businesses - 490



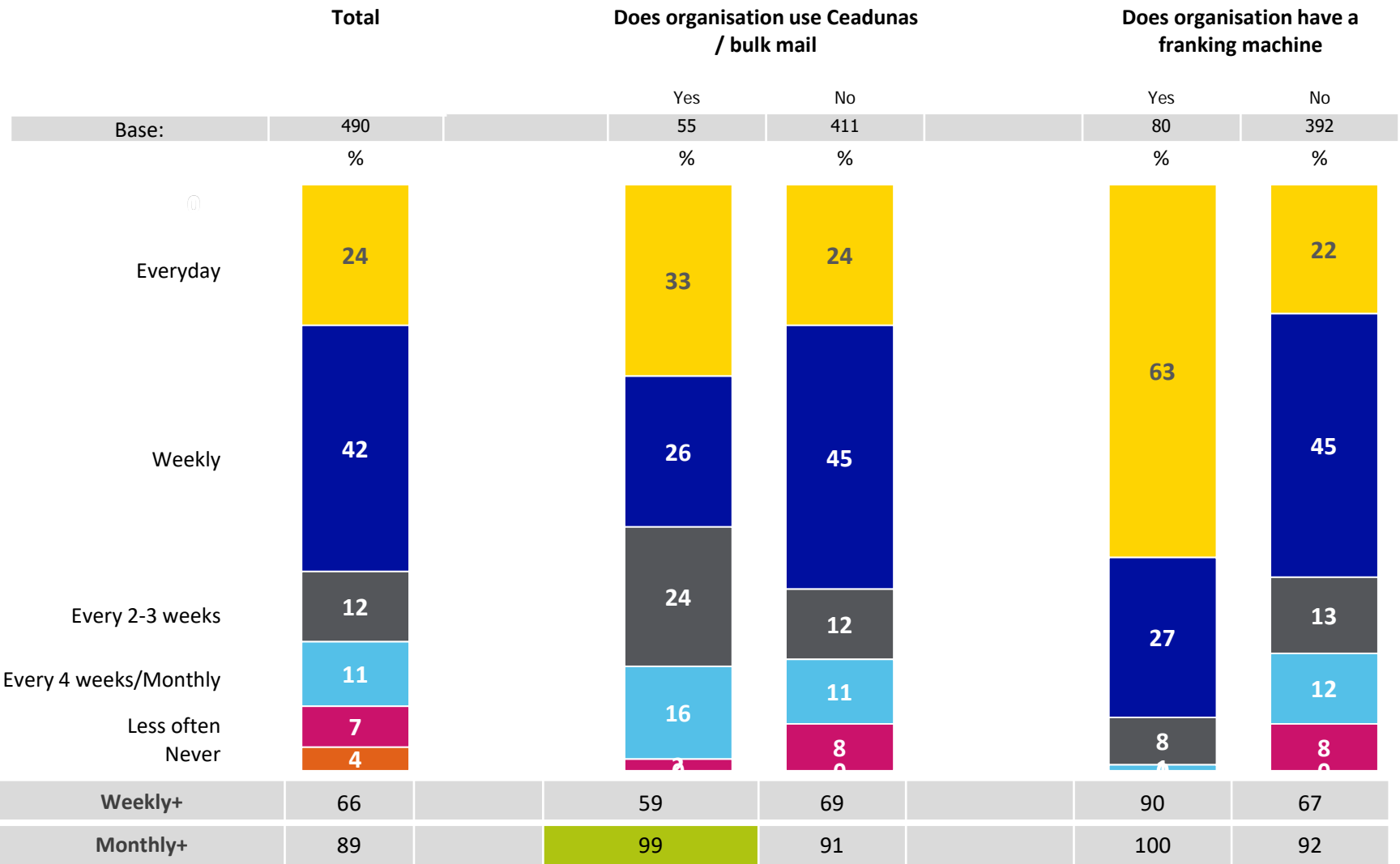
1 in 4 organisations claim to send standard letter post on a daily basis, while 2 in 3 send at least weekly. Larger companies are the most frequent daily senders of standard mail.

Q8a - Thinking specifically about the business post that your company / organisation sends on average how frequently does your organisation send a standard letter either via An Post or any courier service?

Frequency of sending standard letter post x Ceadunas and Franking Machine



Base: All businesses - 490

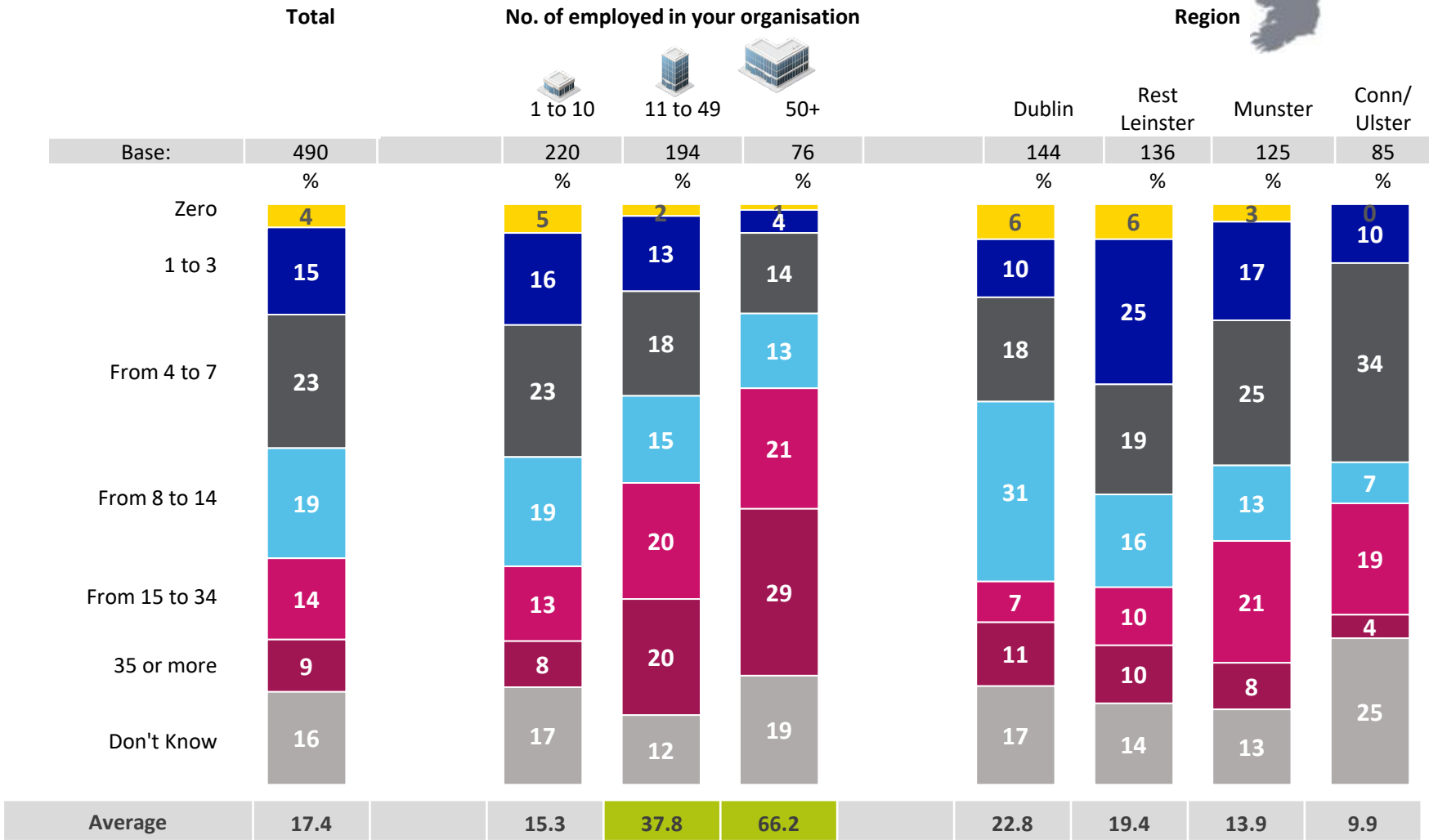


Organisations with Ceadunas and franking machines send mail most frequently.

Q8a - Thinking specifically about the business post that your company / organisation sends on average how frequently does your organisation send a standard letter either via An Post or any courier service?

Average number of standard letters sent per week x business size and region

Base: All businesses 490

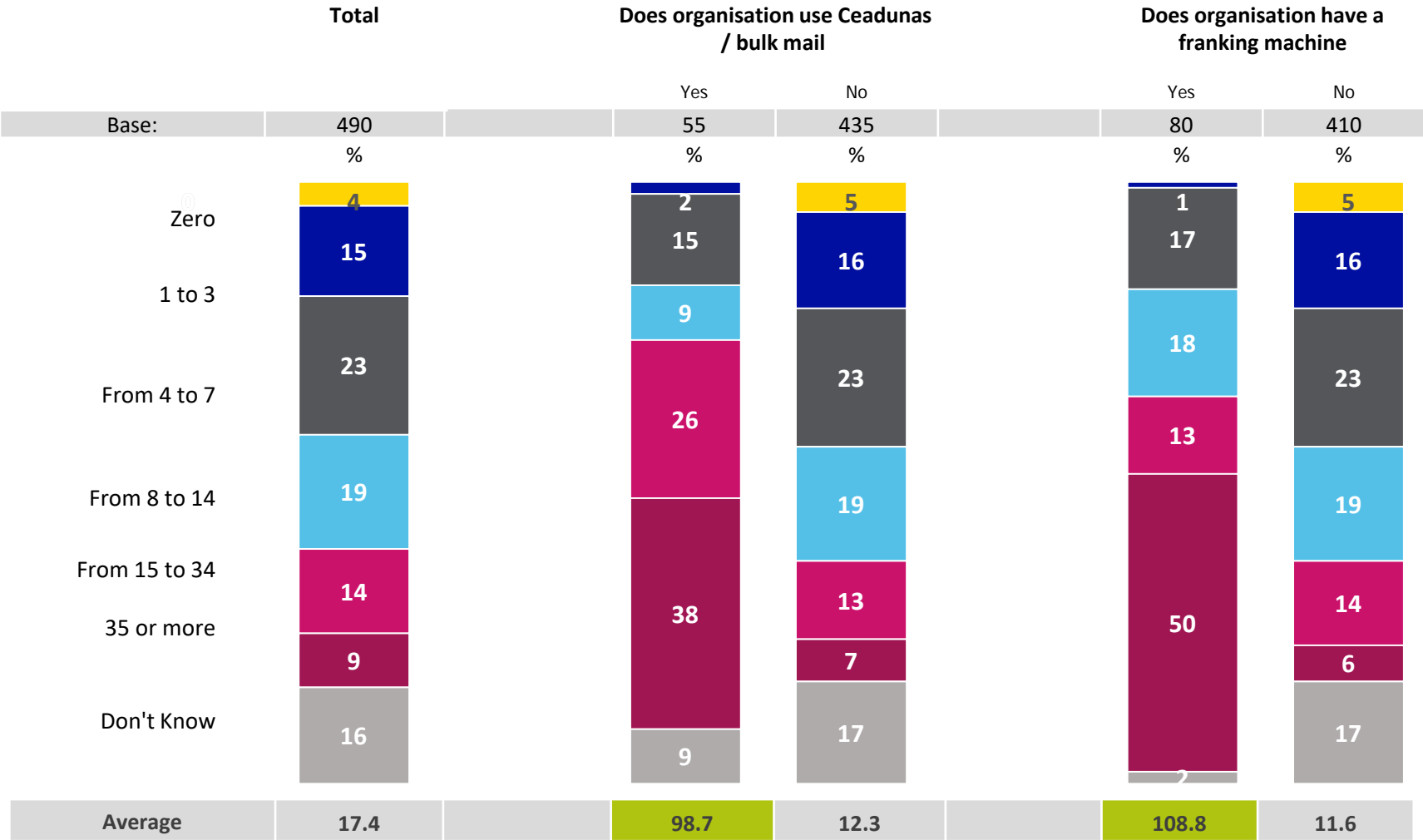


Organisations send an average of 17 standard letters per week, with larger companies sending more.

Q8b On average how many standard letters does your organisation send during a typical week (Mthly * 4) ?

Average number of standard letters sent per week x ceadunas and franking machine

Base: All businesses - 490

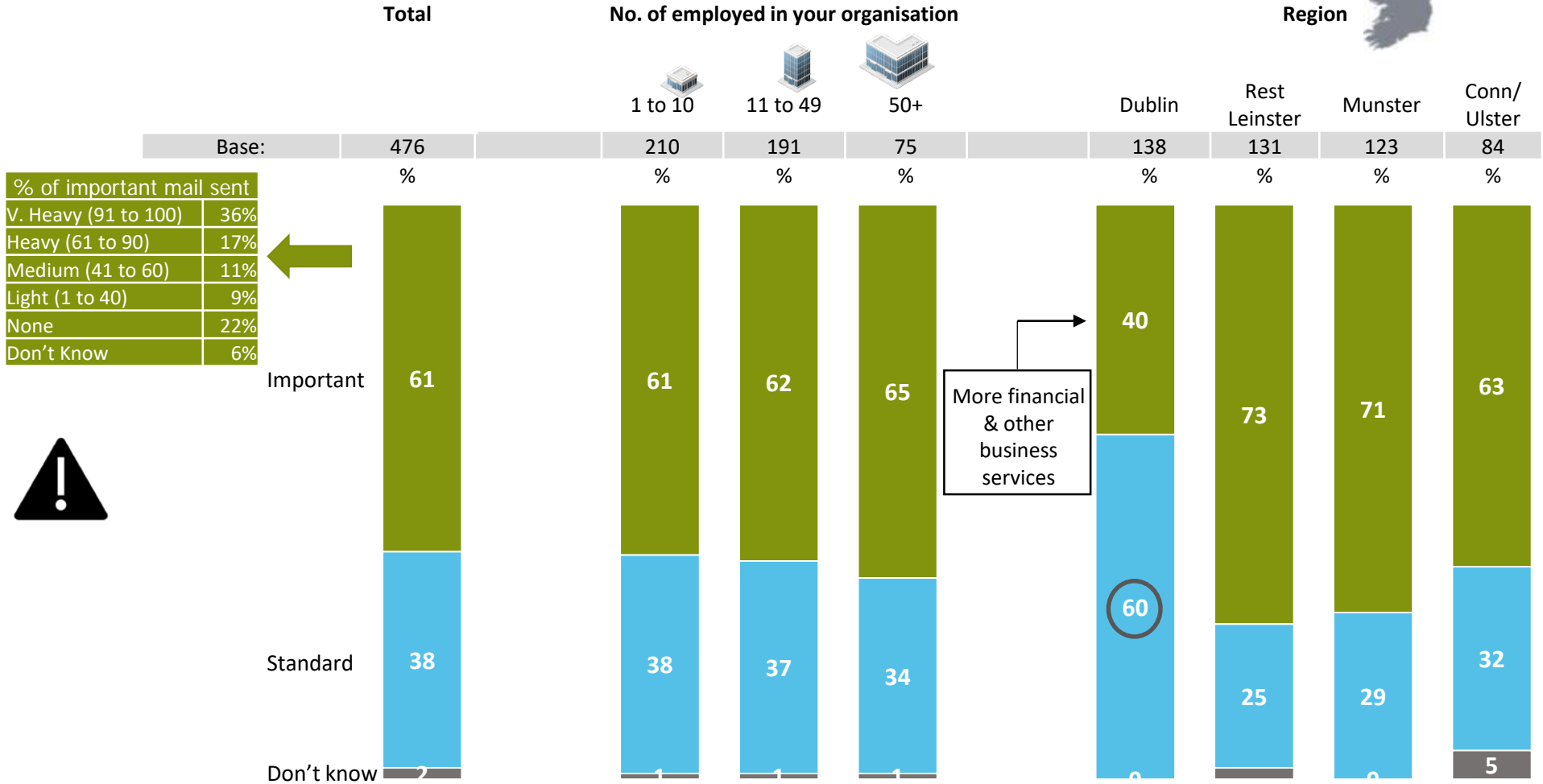


The average number of letters sent by SMEs with Ceadunas or a franking machine is c.100 per week.

Q8b On average how many standard letters does your organisation send during a typical week (Mthly * 4) ?

Proportion of important & standard mail x business size and region

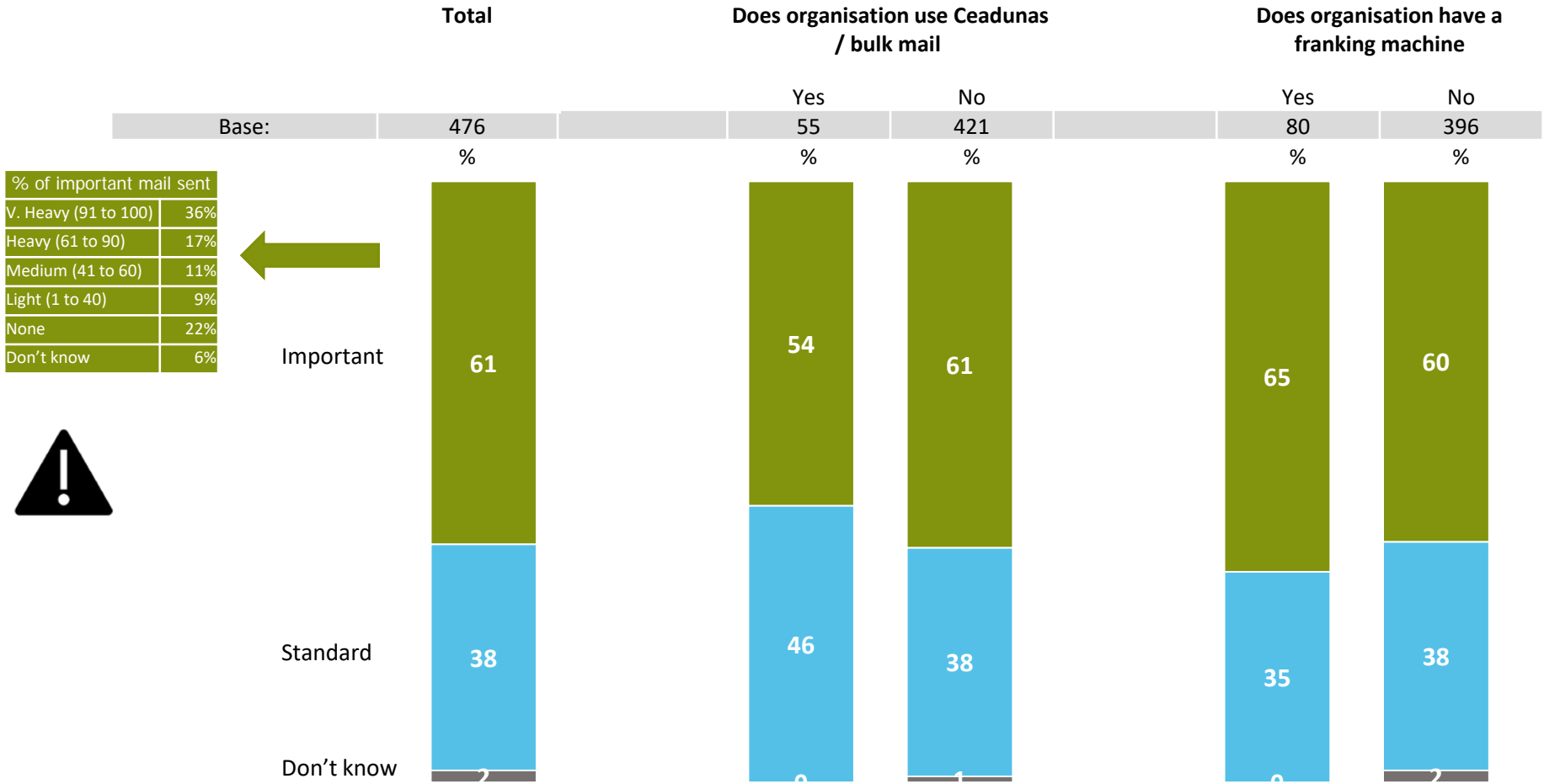
Base: All who send standard mail - 476



SMEs claim 61% of all mail sent is important, while 38% is standard. Dublin based SMEs claim to send the highest proportion of standard mail.

Proportion of important x ceadunas and franking machines

Base: All who send standard mail - 476

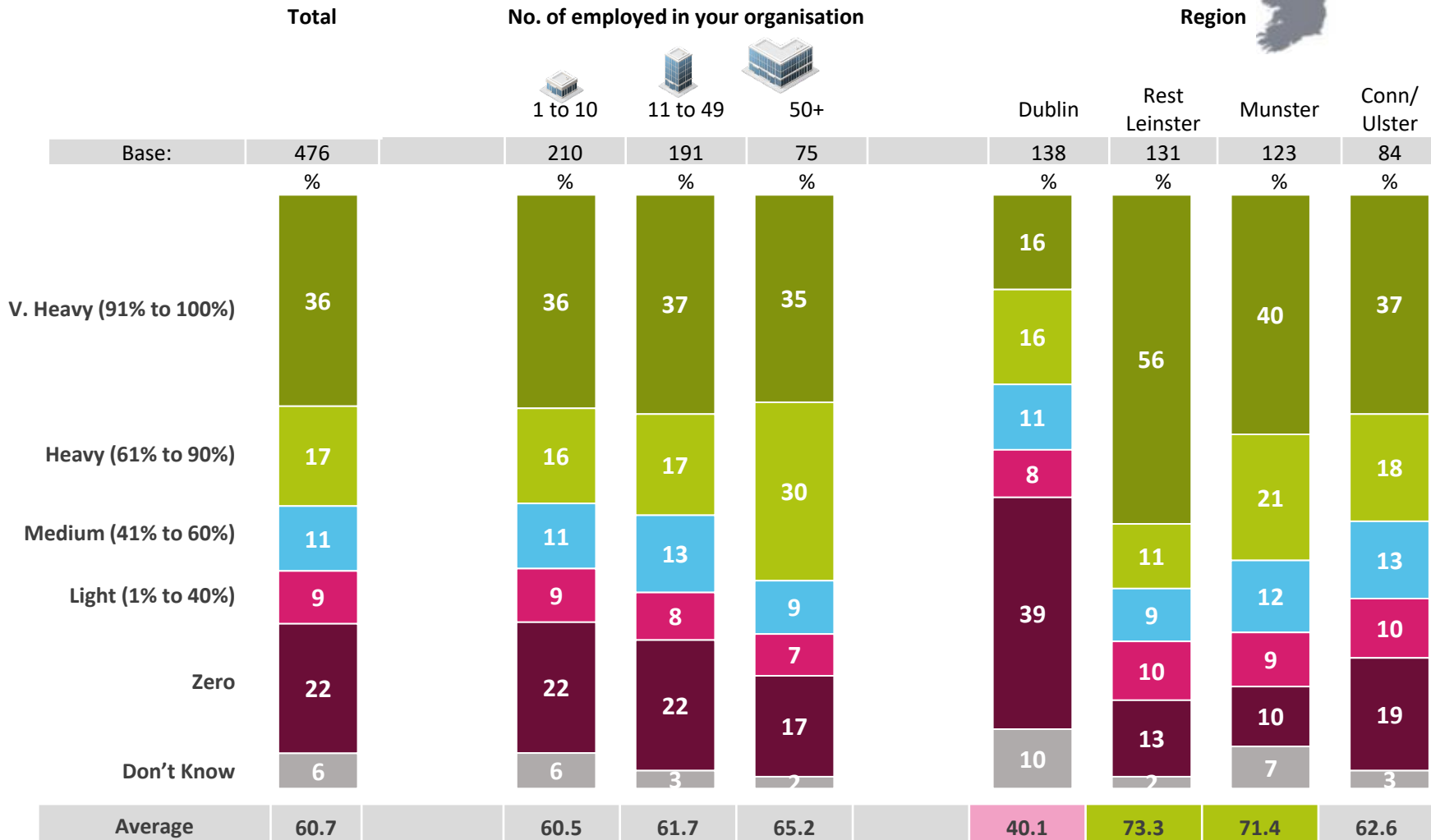


No significant variation in proportion of important mail being sent by those with or without ceadunas or franking machines.

Defining heavy, medium and light senders of important mail x business size and region



Base: All who send standard letters - 476



Organisations based in ROI and Munster regions claim to send the highest proportion of important mail. No significant differences by business size.

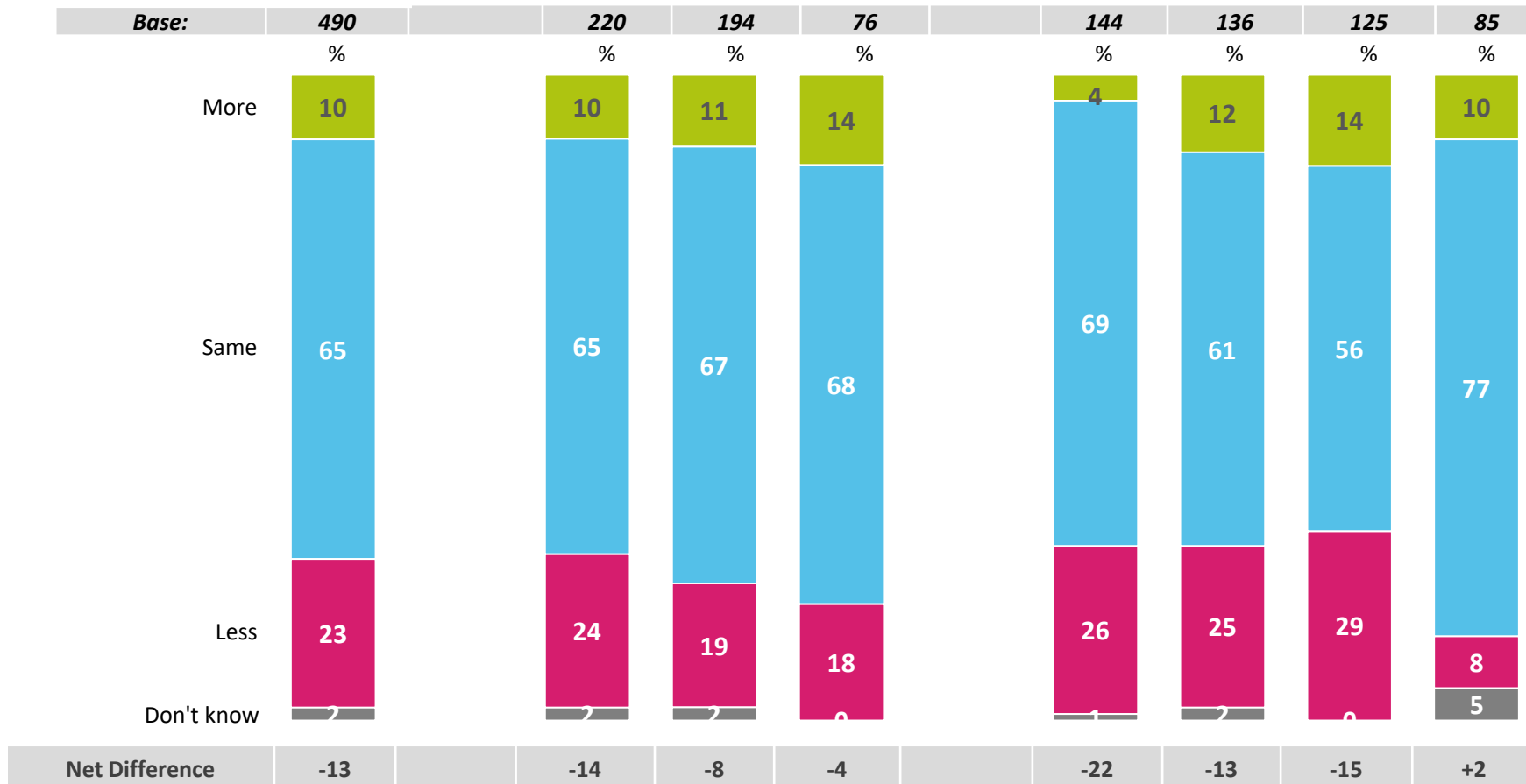
Q10 - what percentage would you consider to be important mail e.g. any invoices, cheques, Government/tax documents

Frequency of sending standard letter mail versus previous year x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490 **Total**

No. of employed in your organisation

Region



1 in 4 SMEs claim to be sending less standard letters versus previous year levels.



Q11a Letter - For a standard letter, please tell me if your organisation is sending more, less or about the same compared to this time last year?

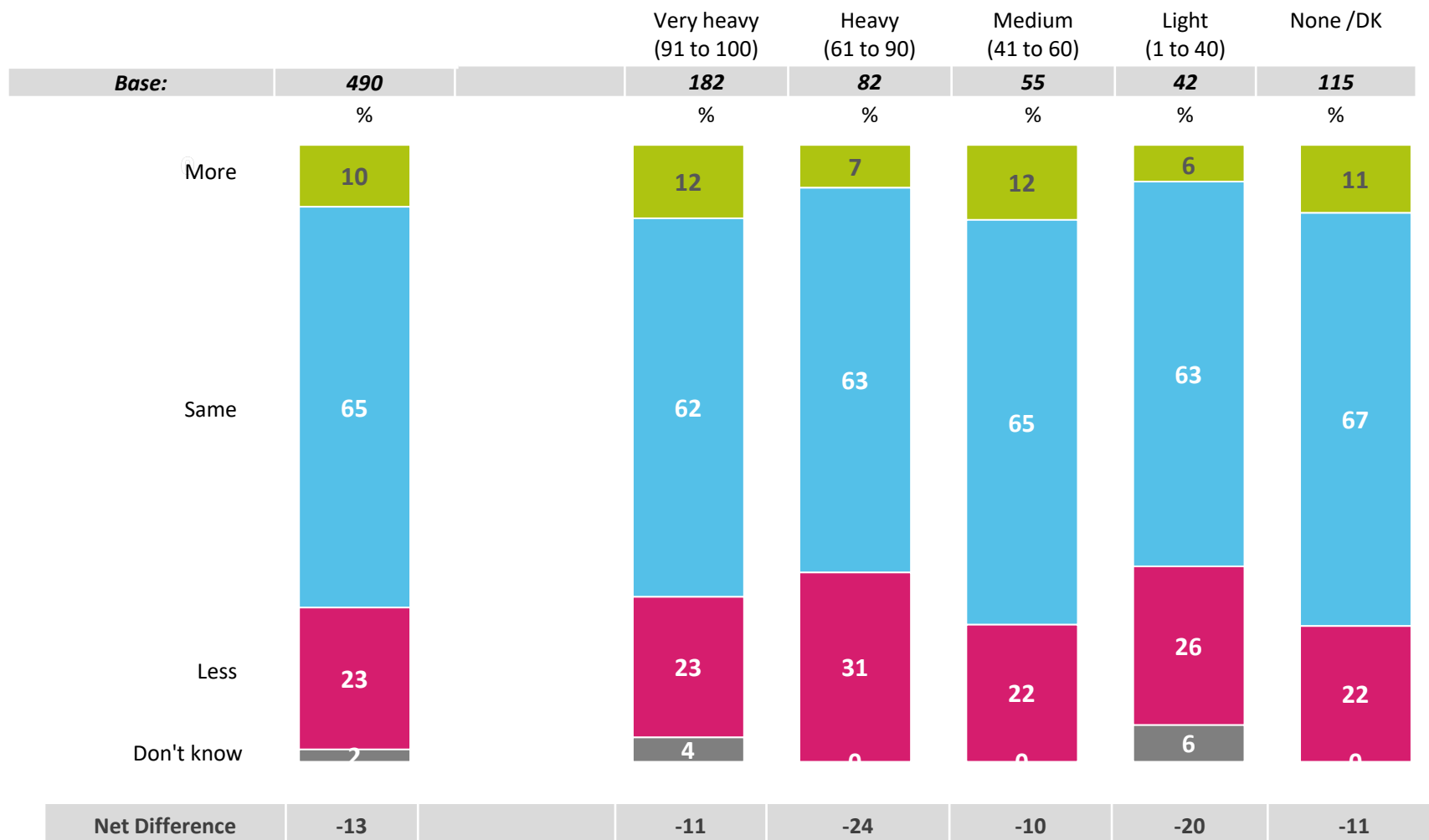
Frequency of sending standard letter mail x importance of mail



Base: All businesses - 490

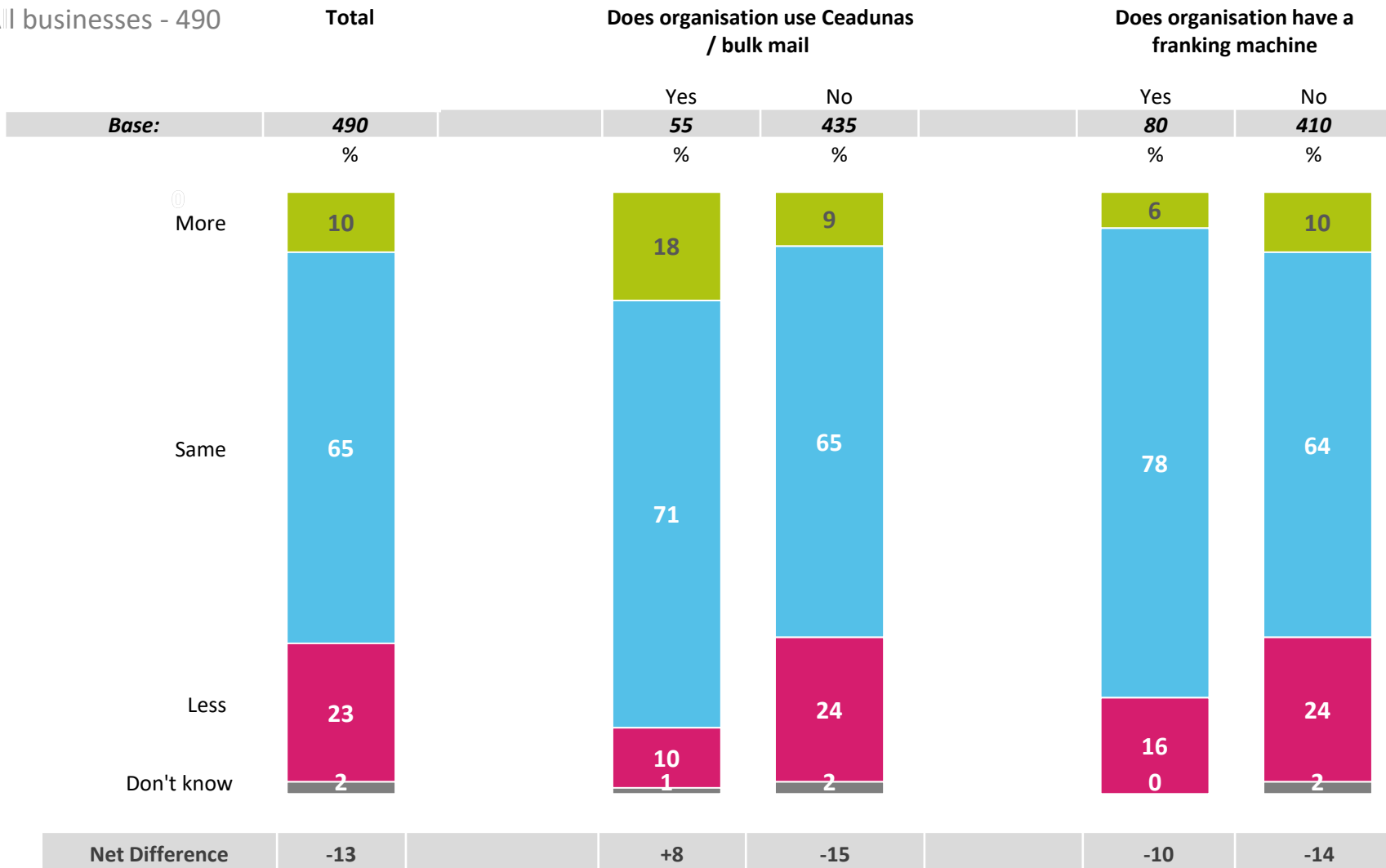
Total

Percentage would you consider to be important mail e.g. any invoices, cheques, Government/tax documents



Frequency of sending standard letter mail versus previous year x ceadunas and franking machines

Base: All businesses - 490



1 in 5 SMEs with Ceadunas claim to be sending more standard mail versus last year, while those with a franking machine claim to be sending less.

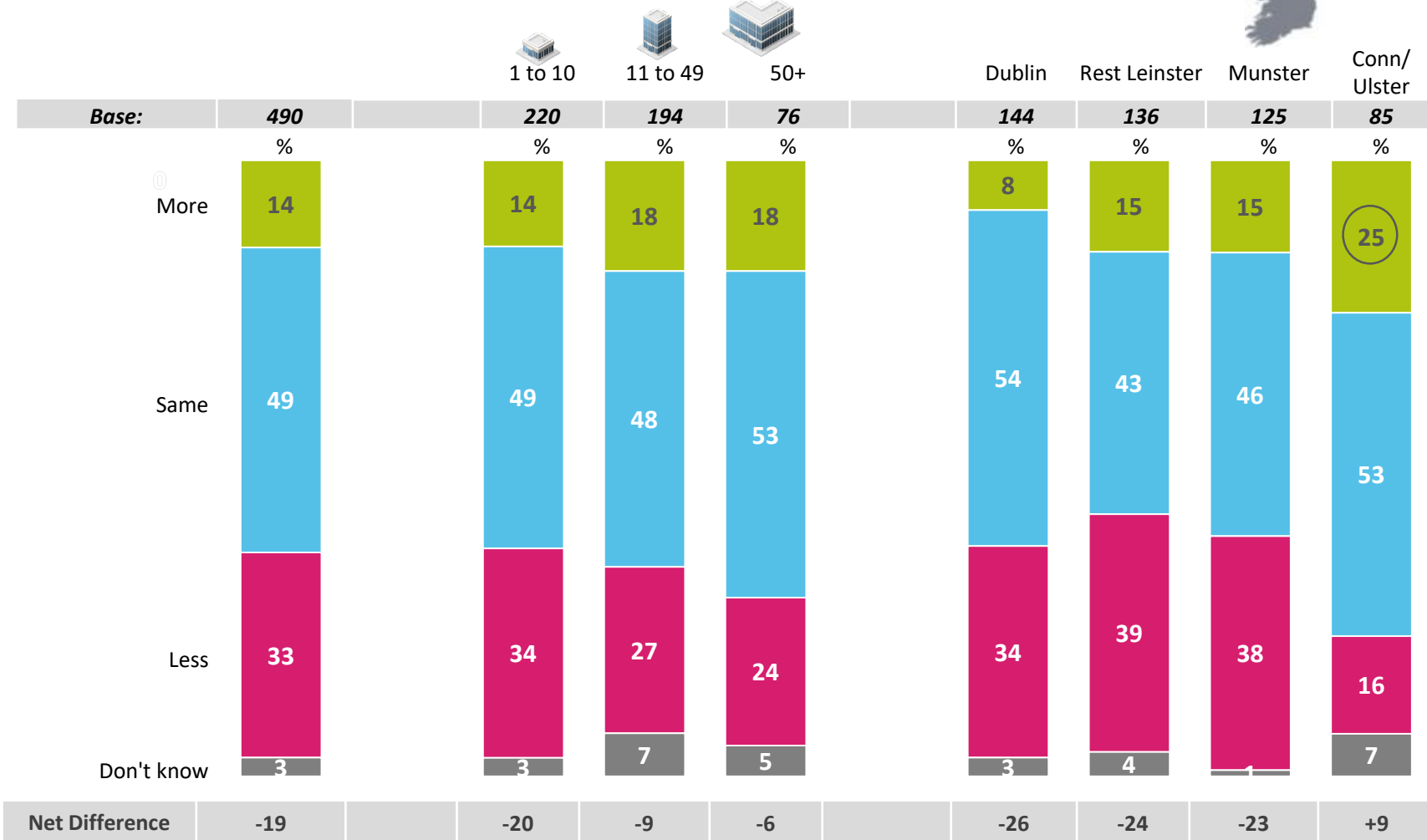
Q11aLetter - For a standard letter, please tell me if your organisation is sending more, less or about the same compared to this time last year?

Frequency of sending standard letter mail versus 3 years ago x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490 **Total**

No. of employed in your organisation

Region



1 in 3 SMEs claim to be sending less mail versus 3 years ago. 1 in 4 organization based in Conn/Ulster claim to be sending more. Net difference indicates a decline overall.

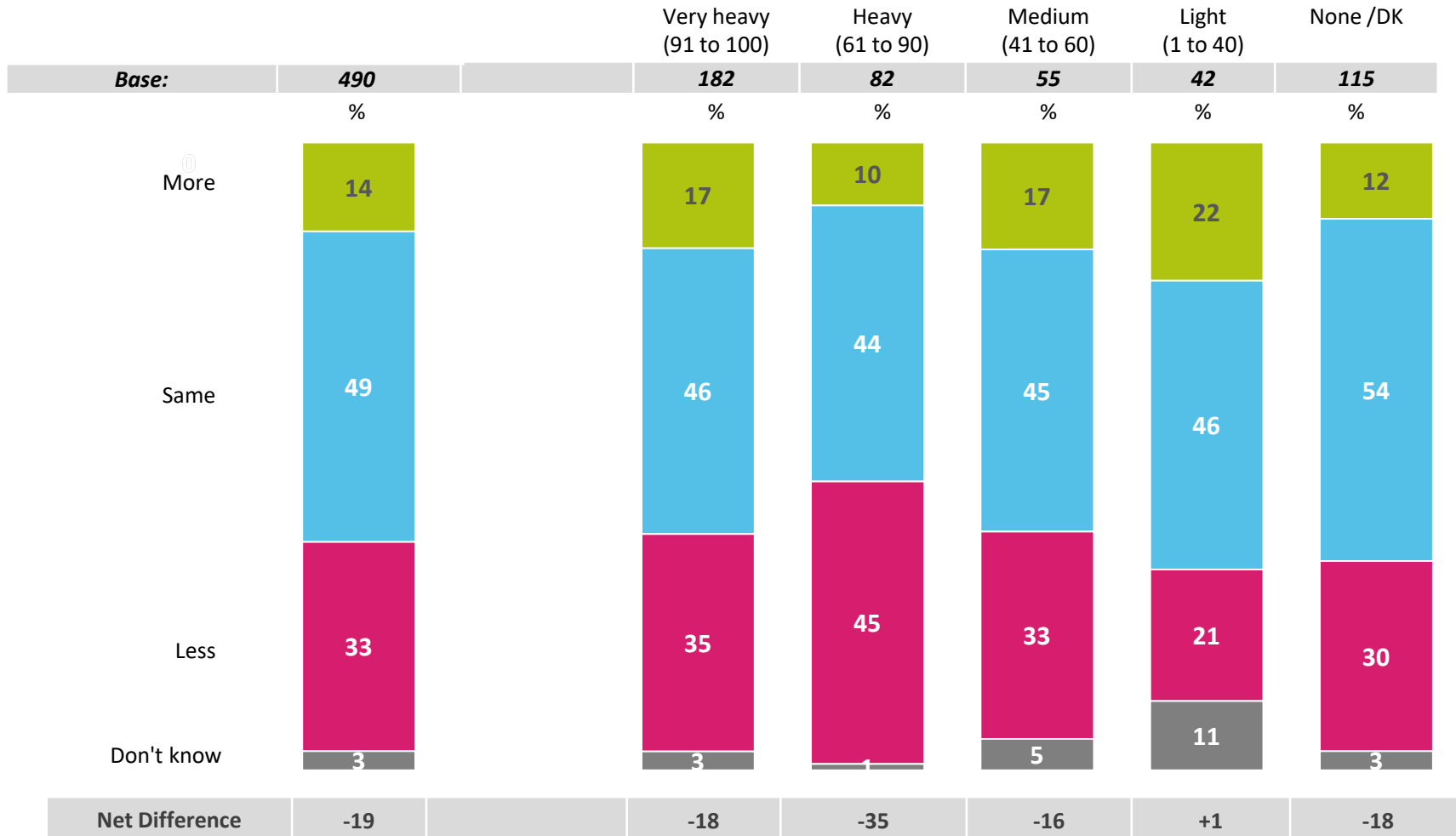
Q11aLetter - For a standard letter, please tell me if your organisation is sending more, less or about the same compared to this time 3 years ago?

Frequency of sending standard letter mail versus 3 years ago x importance of mail

Base: All businesses - 490

Total

Percentage would you consider to be important mail e.g. any invoices, cheques, Government/tax documents



Q11a Letter - For a standard letter, please tell me if your organisation is sending more, less or about the same compared to this time 3 years ago?

Frequency of sending standard letter mail versus 3 years ago x ceadunas and franking machines

Base: All businesses - 490



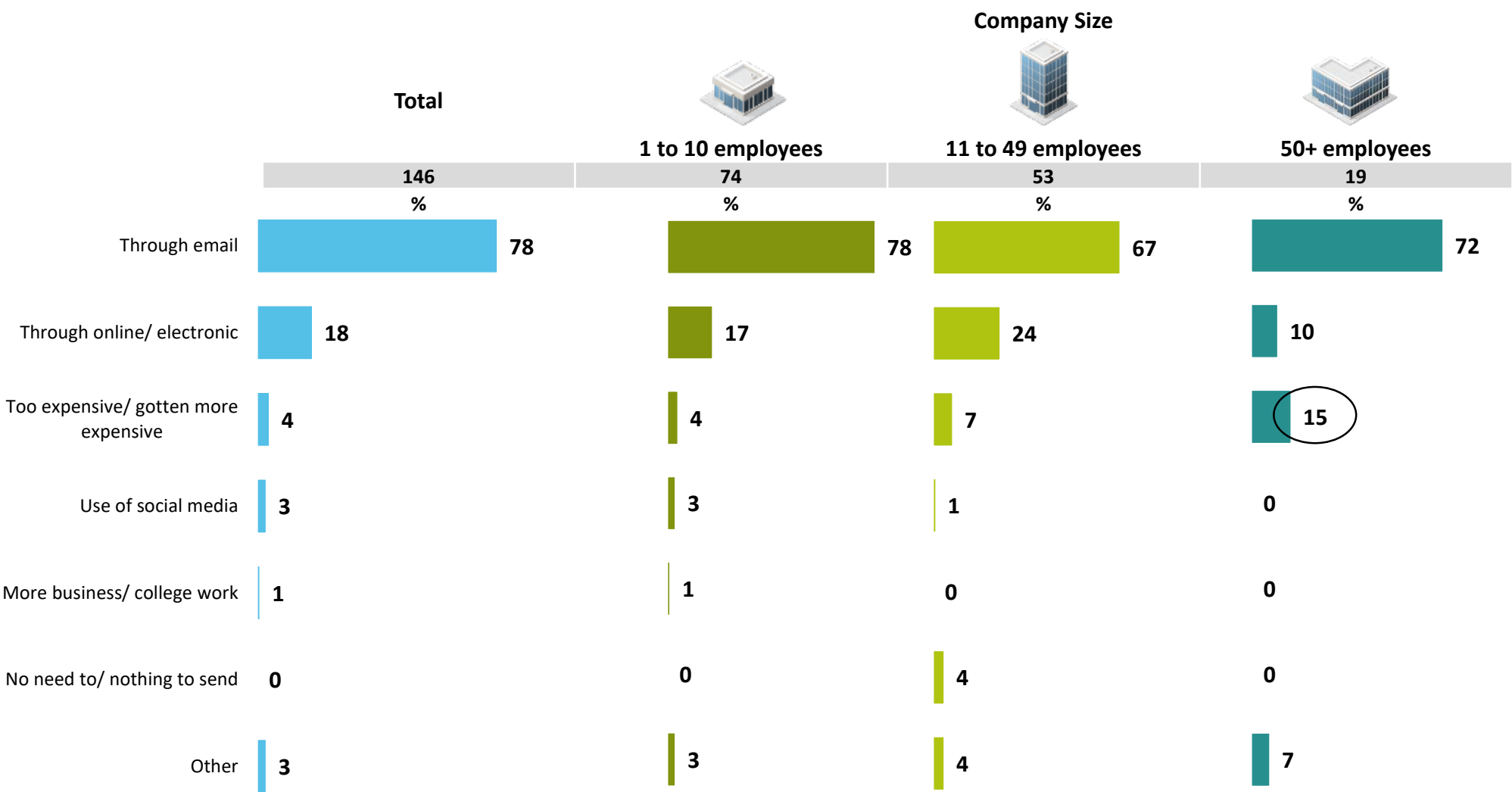
1 in 3 SMEs with Ceadunas and a similar number with a franking machine claim to be sending more mail versus three years ago.



Q11a Letter - For a standard letter, please tell me if your organisation is sending more, less or about the same compared to this time 3 years ago?

Rationale for sending less standard letter post versus 3 years ago x business size

Base: Sending less mail versus 3 years ago



Technology is the main reason for sending less mail versus three years ago. Just 4% referenced cost – mainly larger SMEs (ie those sending the most mail).

Rationale for sending less standard letter post versus 3 years ago x business size

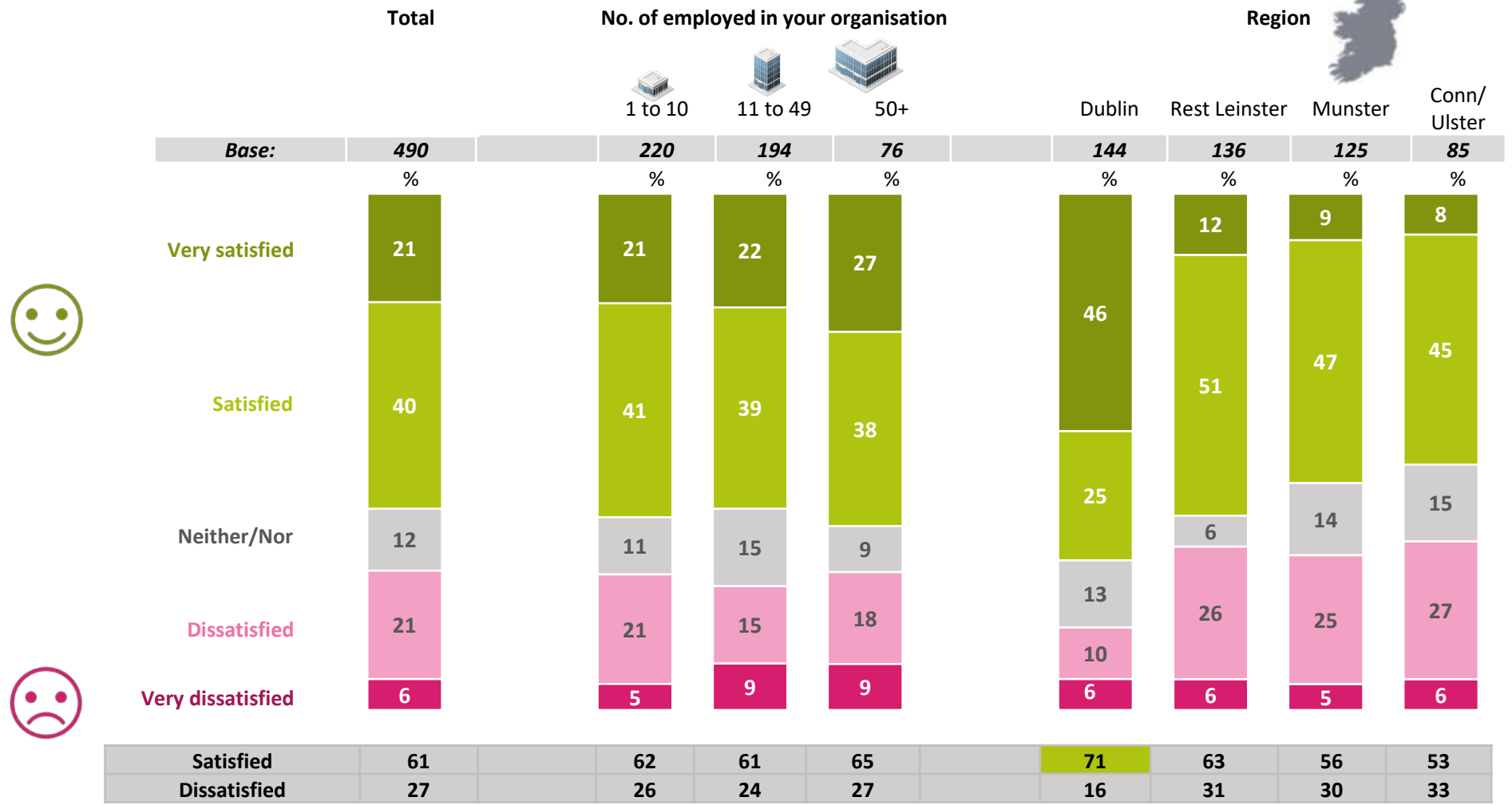
Base: Sending less mail versus 3 years ago



Organisations claiming cost as a factor in sending less mail is higher among those with a franking machine.

Satisfaction with the cost of sending standard letter post x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490



2 in 3 SMEs claim to be satisfied with the cost of sending standard mail. Dublin based SMEs claim the highest level of satisfaction. This satisfaction level contrasting with bulk/meter mail high cost dissatisfaction levels. Most likely the latter are expecting greater savings for the volume they send.



Q11 - Now thinking about when you send standard letter post with An Post, how satisfied are you with the following? - Cost



Post Received: Packages/Parcels

Frequency of receiving packages/parcels x business size and region



Base: All businesses - 490

Total

No. of employed in your organisation

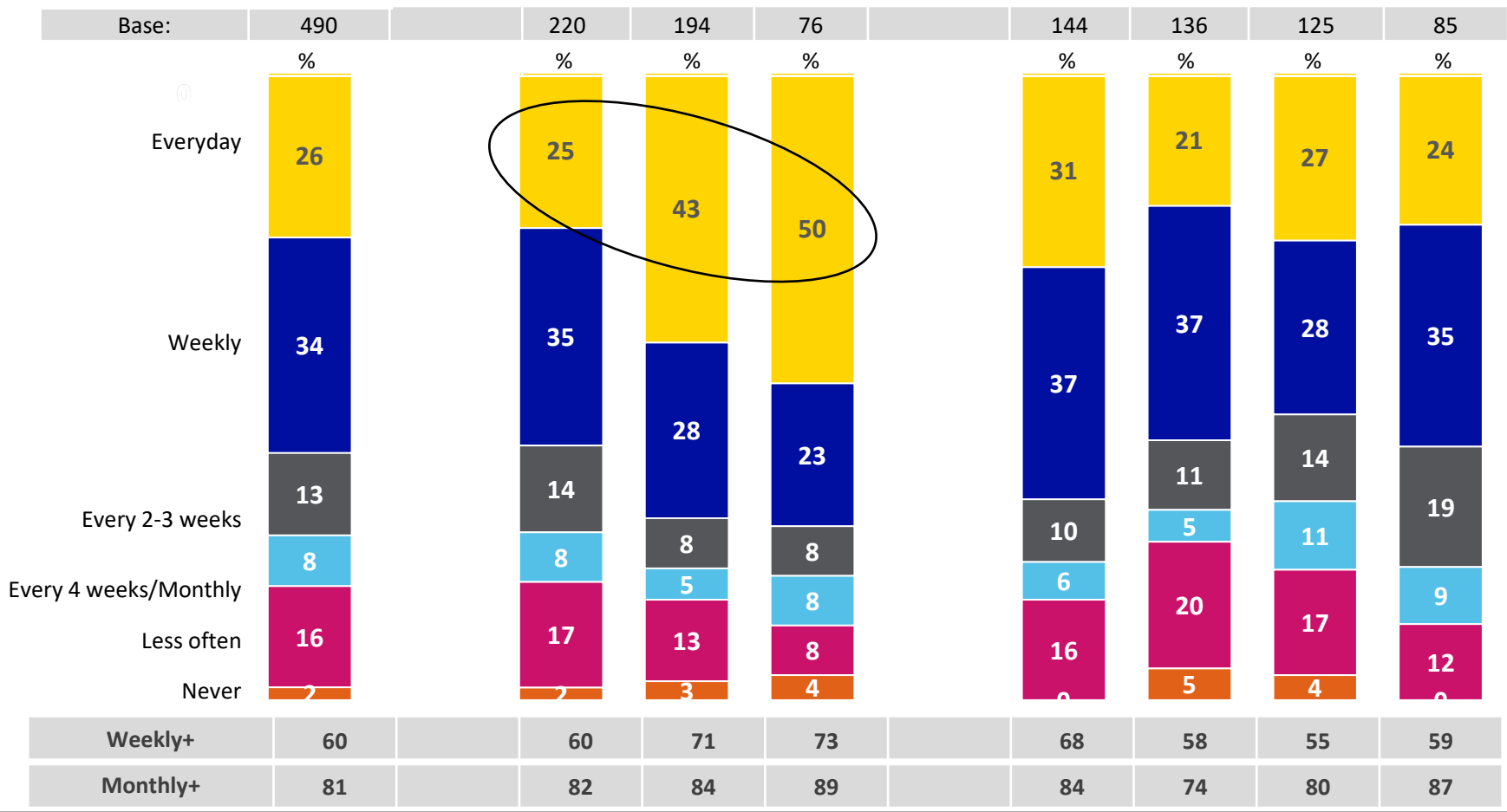


1 to 10 11 to 49 50+

Region



Dublin Rest Leinster Munster Conn/Ulster



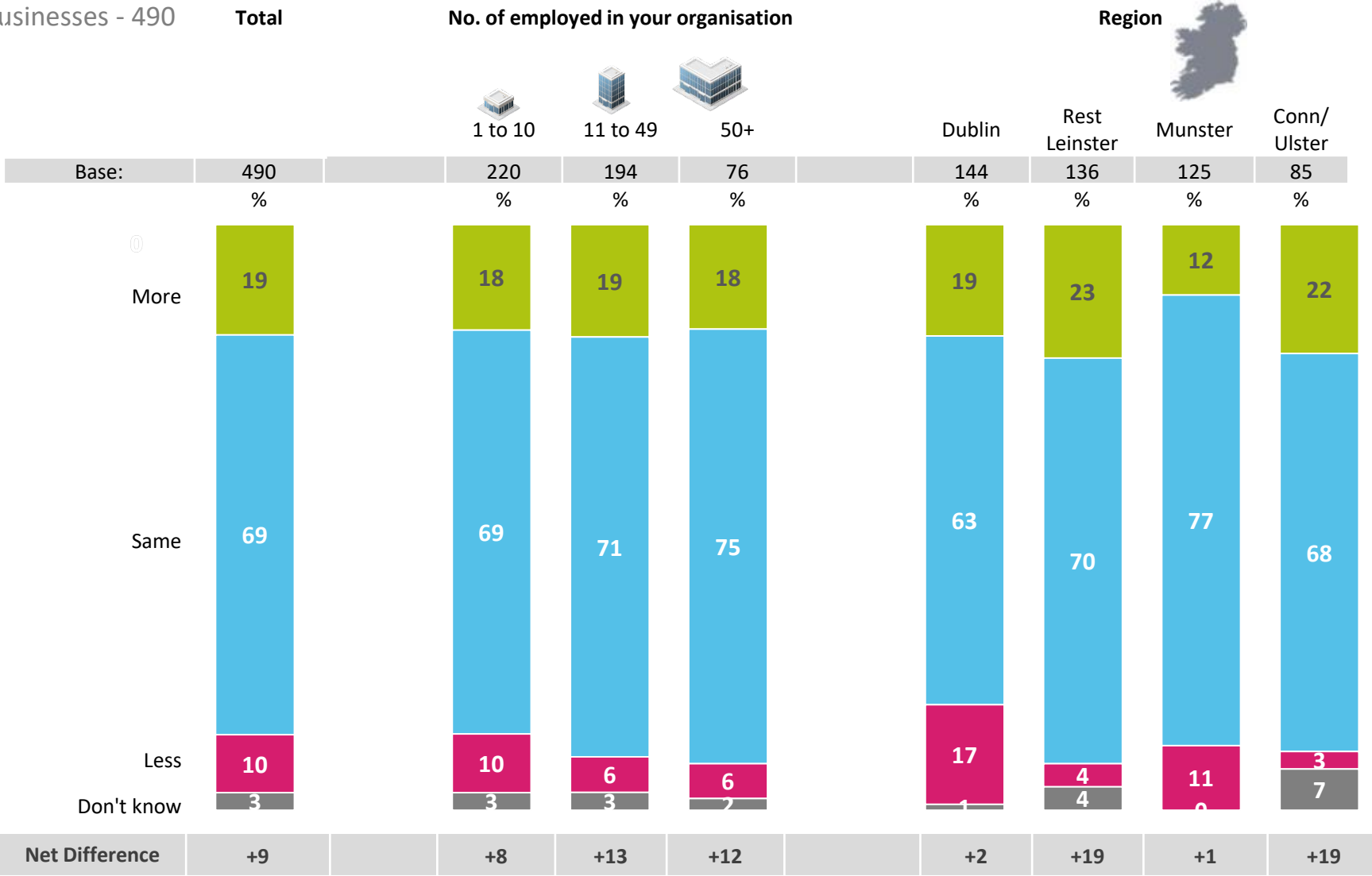
Larger companies claim to be receiving packages/parcels most frequently. Dublin SMEs also receive more parcels on an everyday basis.



Q3b - Thinking specifically about the business post that your company/organisation receives, on average how frequently does your organisation receive packet/parcel?

Frequency of receiving packages/parcels versus previous year x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490



Overall net difference indicates an increase in businesses receiving packages/parcels. 1 in 5 claim to be receiving more packages/parcels than the previous year.

Q4Parcel - For a packet/parcel, please tell me if your organisation is receiving more, less or about the same compared to this time last year?

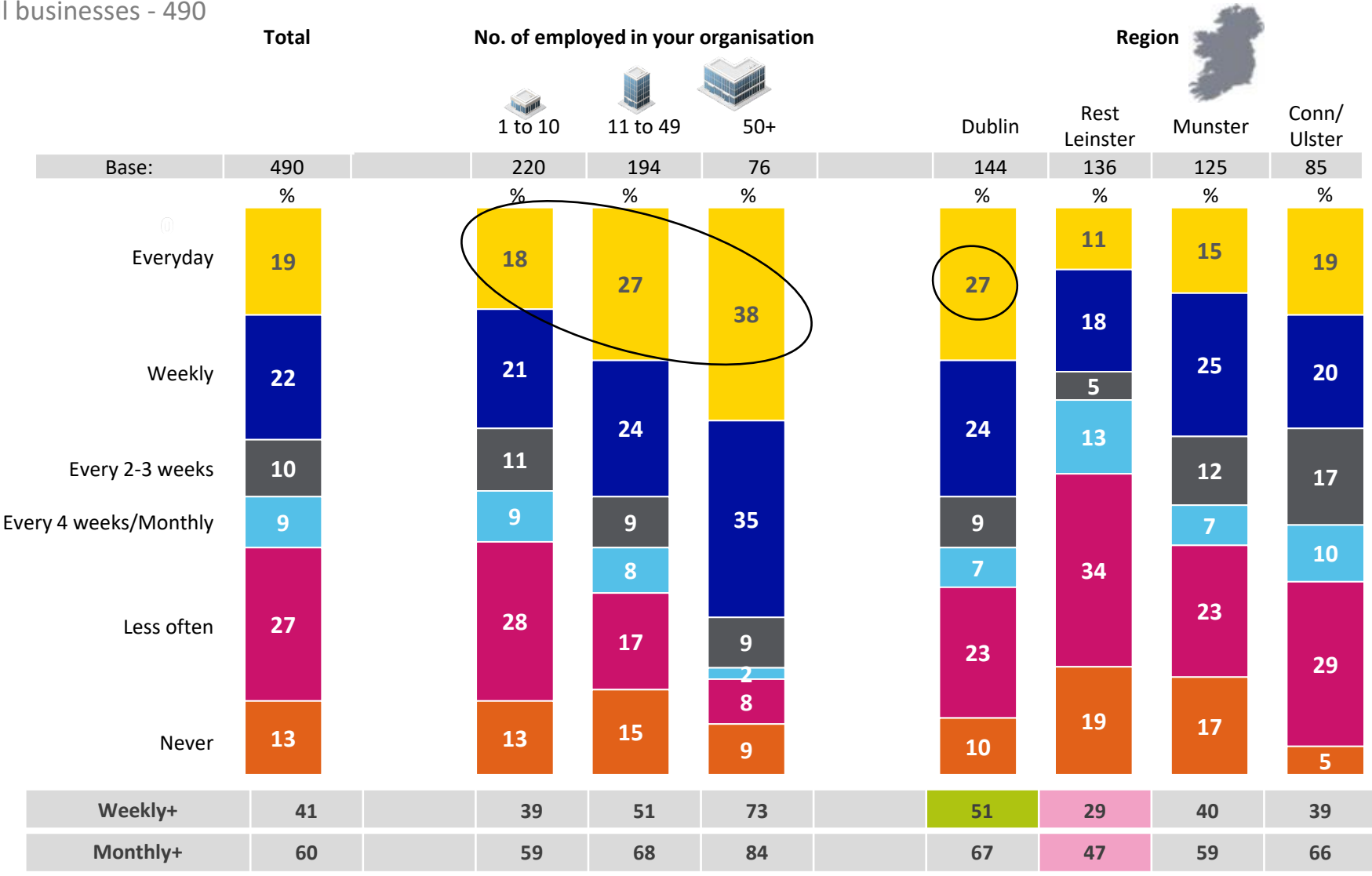


Sending Post: Packages/Parcels

Frequency of sending packages/parcels x business size and region



Base: All businesses - 490

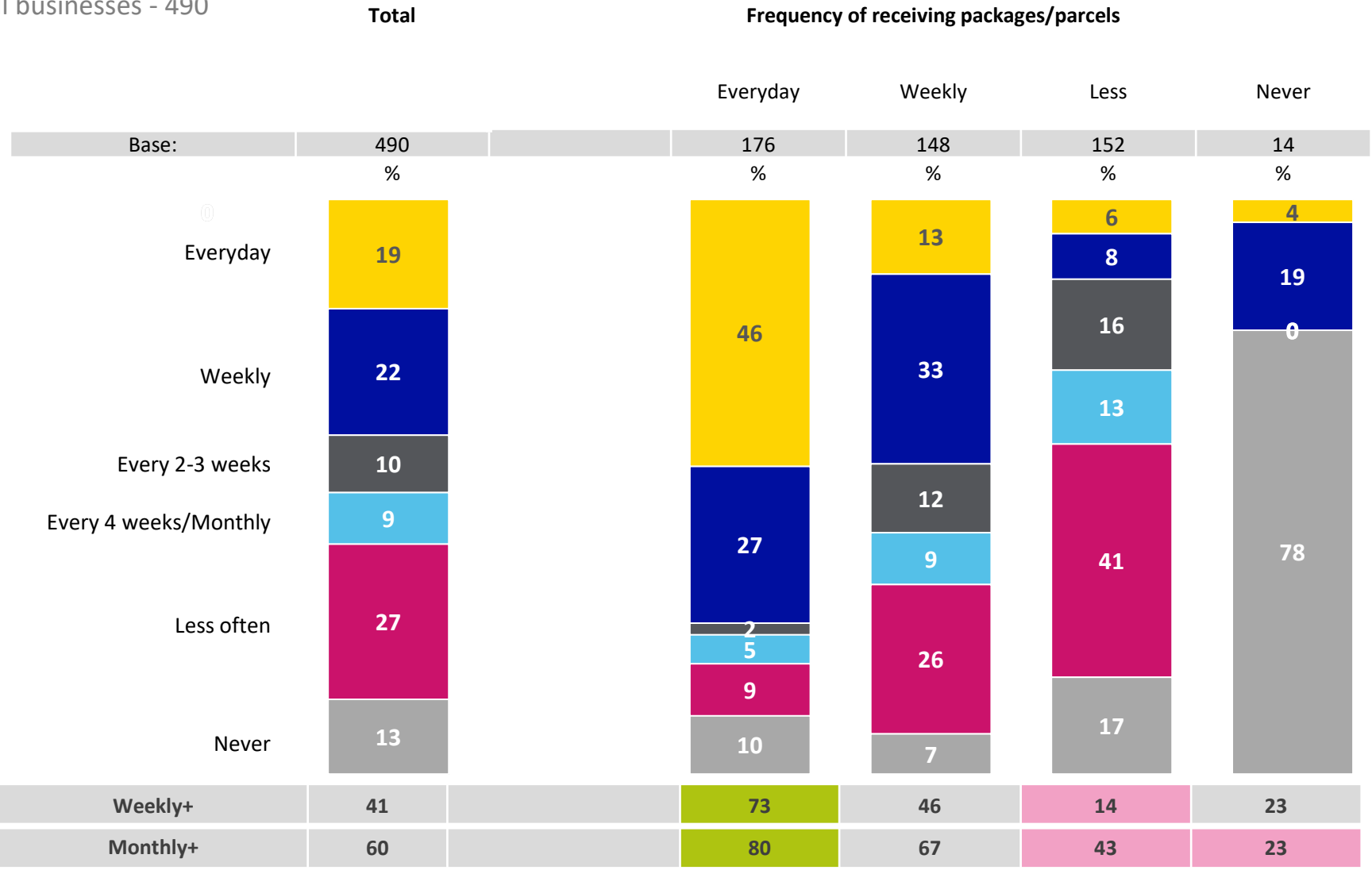


2 in 5 SMEs claim to send parcels/packages on a weekly+ basis, higher among larger SMEs and those based in Dublin.

Q8b - Thinking specifically about the business post that your company / organisation sends on average how frequently does your organisation send a packet/parcel either via An Post or any courier service?

Frequency of sending packages/parcels x frequency of receiving packages/parcels

Base: All businesses - 490

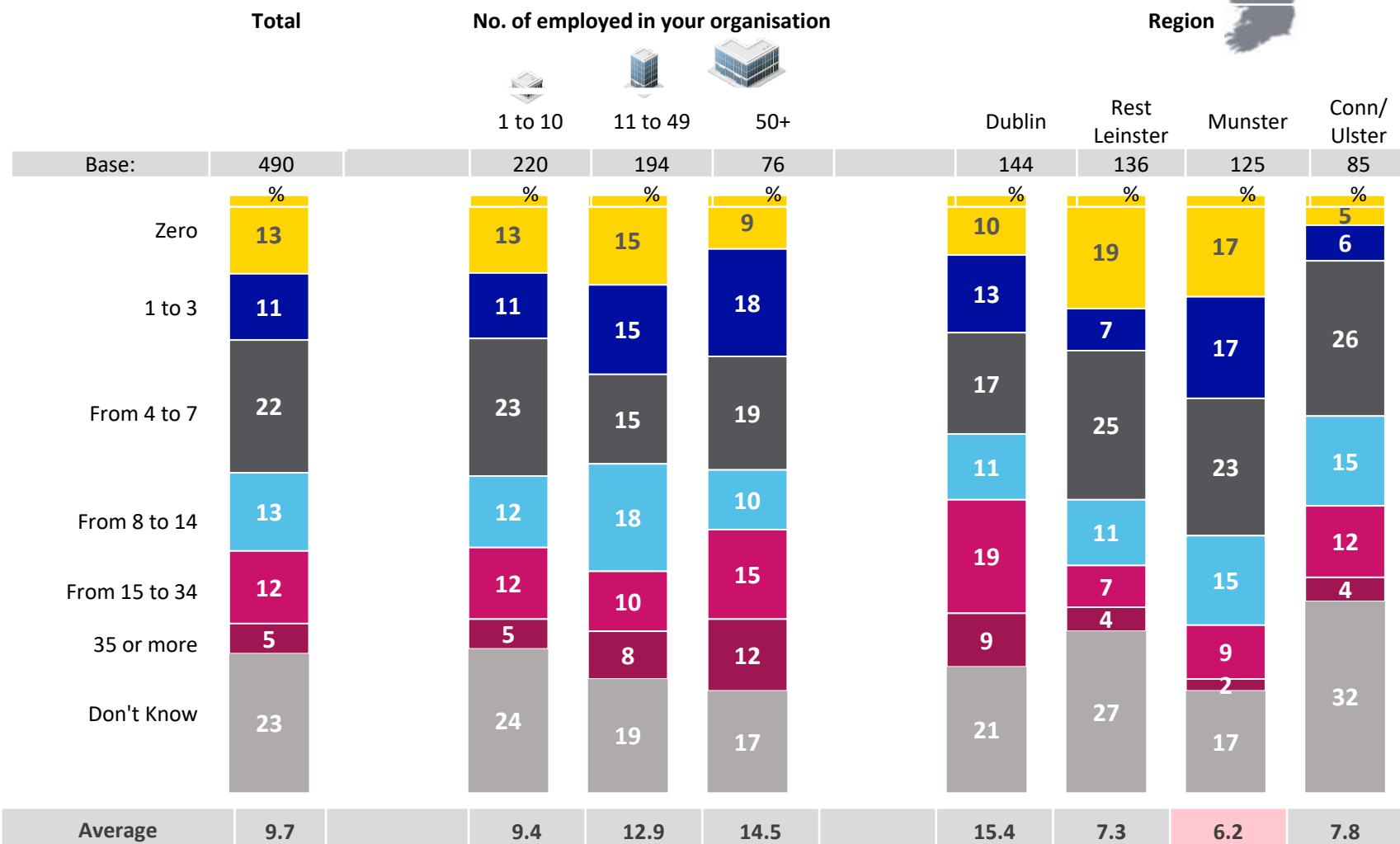


SMEs who send packages/parcels most frequently are also the most frequent receivers of packages/parcels.

Q8b - Thinking specifically about the business post that your company / organisation sends on average how frequently does your organisation send a packet/parcel either via An Post or any courier service?

Average number of packages/parcels sent per week x business size and region

Base: All who send standard letters - 476

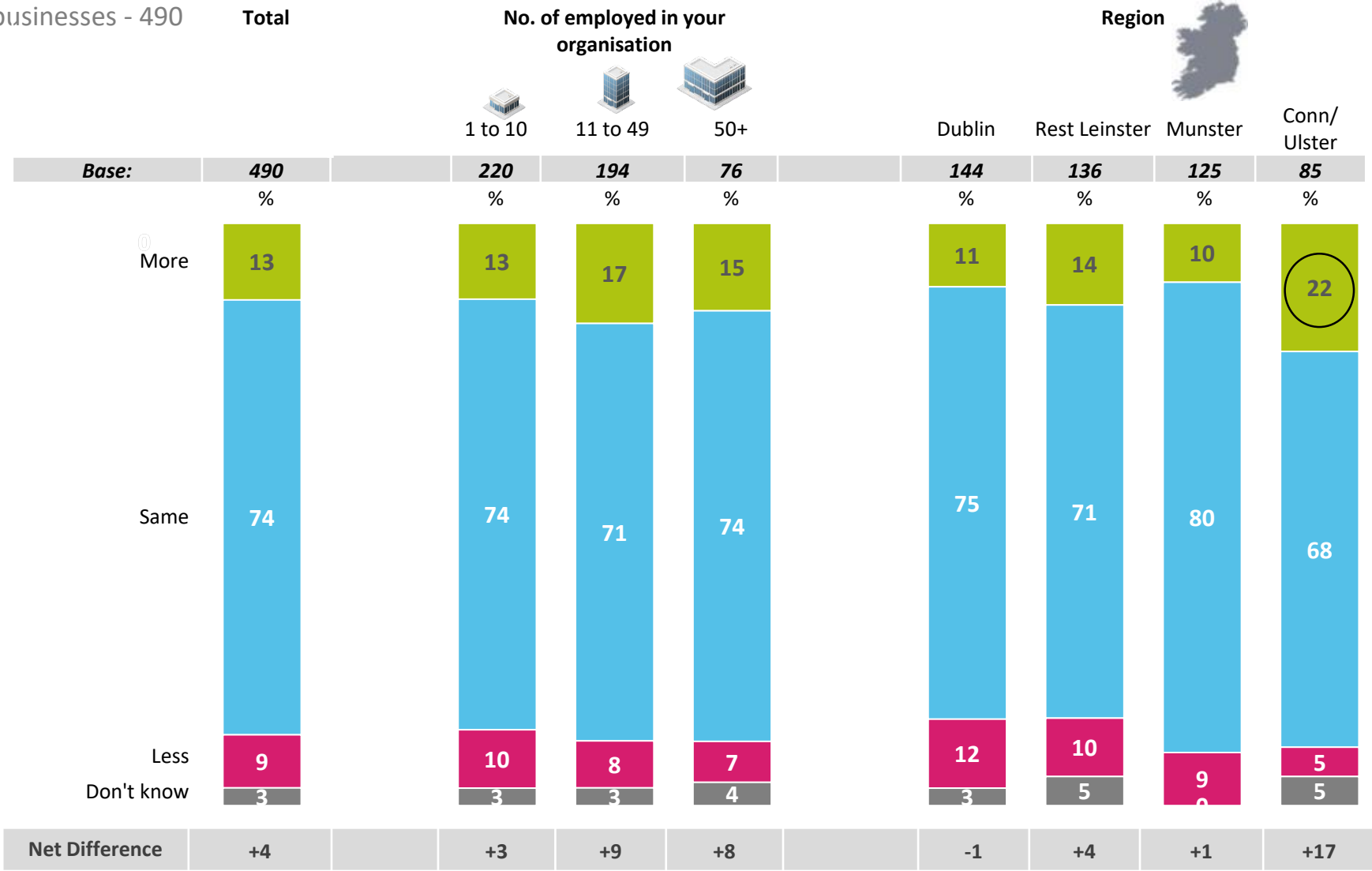


SMEs send an average of 10 packages/parcels per week. The average number of packages/parcels sent by SMEs increases among medium / larger SMEs and those based in Dublin.

Q8b On average how many standard parcels does your organisation send during a typical week (Mthly * 4) ?

Frequency of sending packages/parcels versus previous year x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490

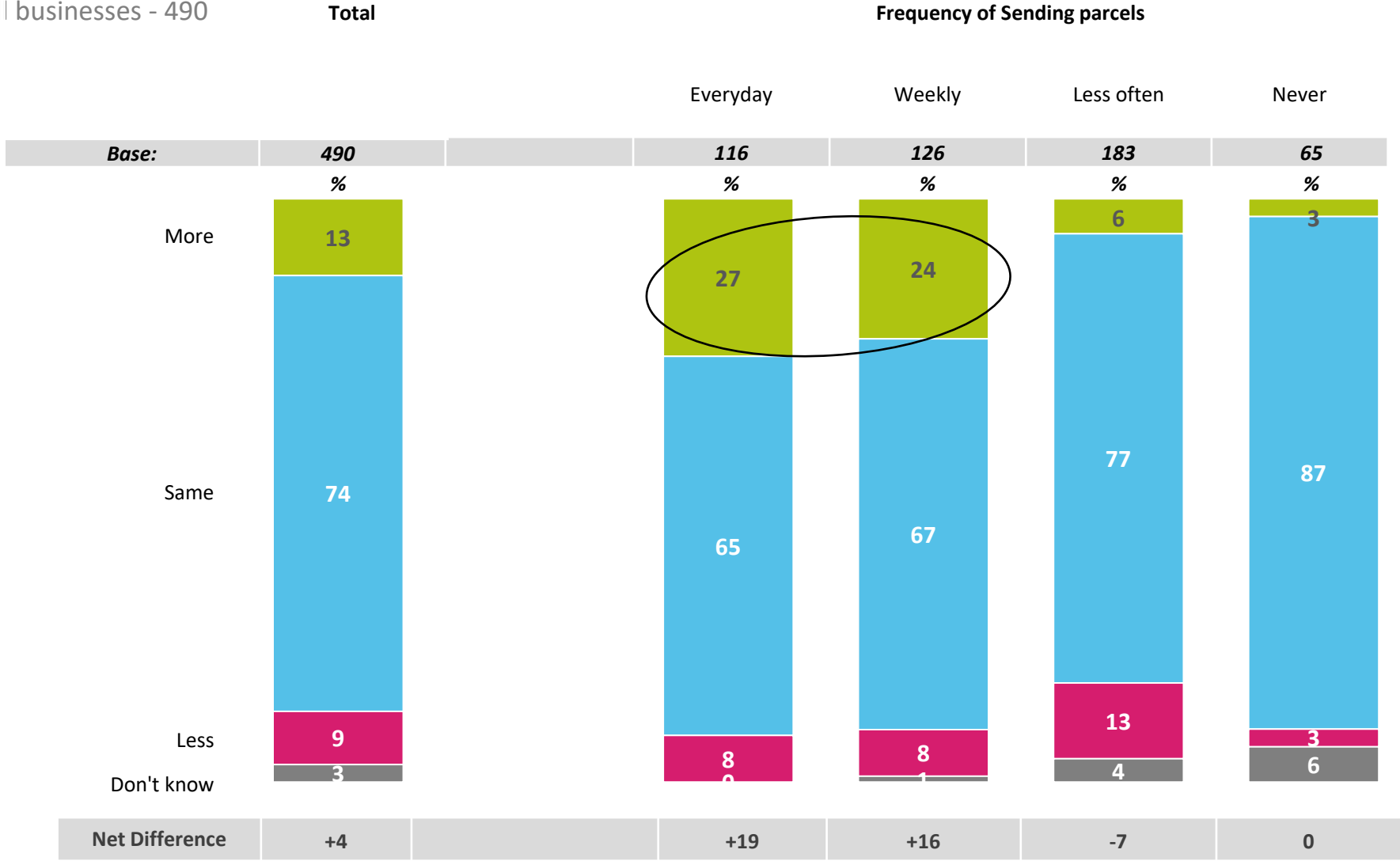


Net difference indicated an increase in the receipt of packages/parcels versus the previous year. 1 in 5 Conn/Ulster SMEs claim to be sending more.

Q4Parcel - For a packet/parcel, please tell me if your organisation is receiving more, less or about the same compared to this time last year?

Frequency of sending packages/parcels versus previous year x business size and region

Base: All businesses - 490



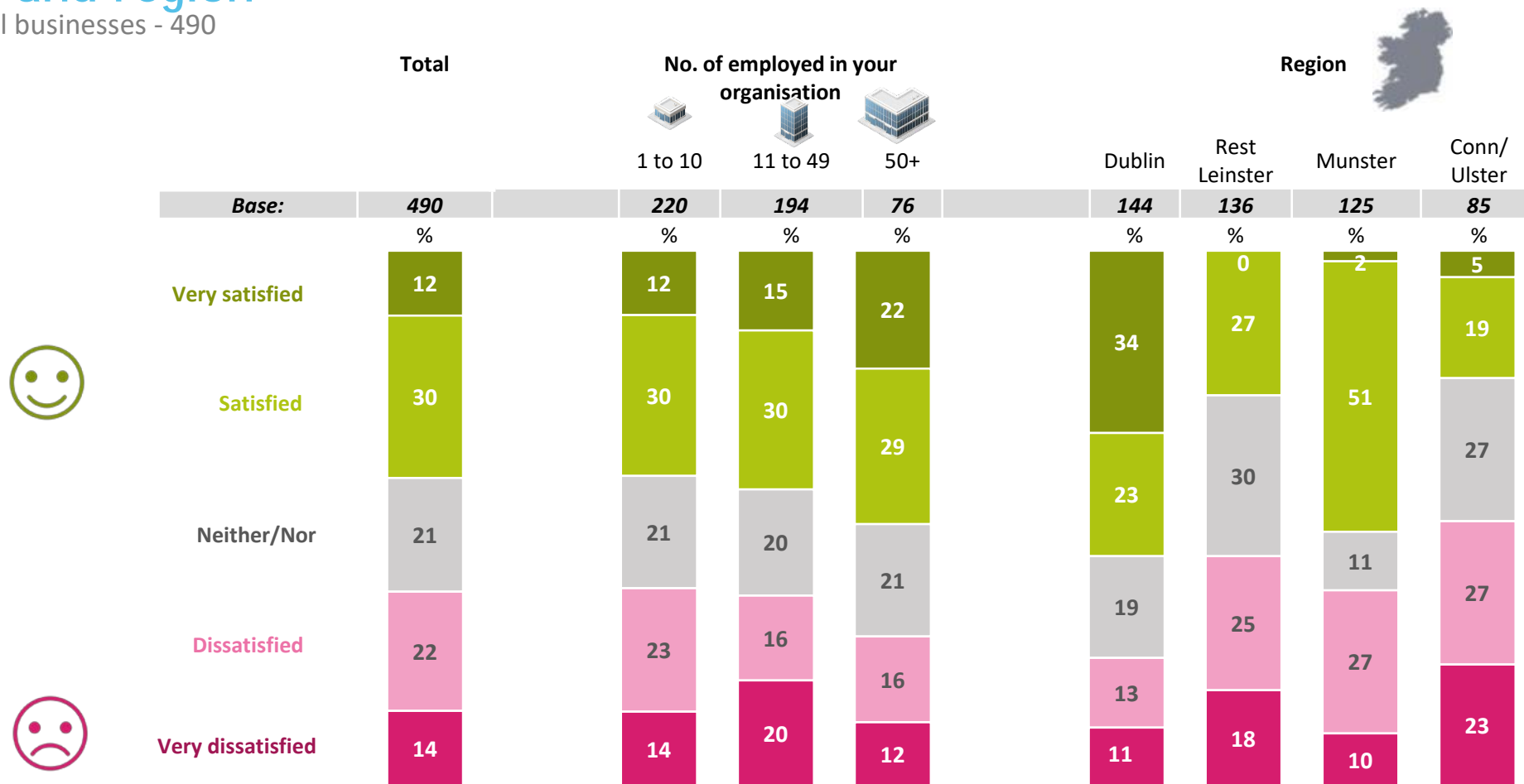
A higher proportion of SMEs who send parcels most frequently also claim to be sending more versus the previous year.

Q11a Parcel - For a packet/parcel, please tell me if your organisation is sending more, less or about the same compared to this time last year?

Satisfaction with the cost of sending parcels/packages x business size and region



Base: All businesses - 490



Satisfied	42		42	45	51		57	27	53	23
Dissatisfied	36		37	36	28		24	43	37	50

Mixed views on the cost of sending packages/parcels as 2 in 5 claim to be satisfied with the cost of sending parcels/packages (Dublin based SMEs claim a higher level of top box satisfaction) and 2 in 5 claim to be dissatisfied.

Q13 - When sending Packet/ Parcel Post up to the size of a shoebox with An Post, how satisfied are you with the following? - Frequency of delivery



Key Highlights

Key Insights Business

Familiarity with Ceadunas/ Bulk mail & franking machine



Just 6% of SMEs have Ceadunas – higher in medium to larger sized companies



6% of SMEs have a franking machine – mainly larger sized companies



Frequency of receiving post



(But on balance SMEs feel it is declining – a decline is indicated across all business sizes & regions)



(And on balance people this is increasing across all businesses sizes & region)

(81% monthly +)

Frequency of sending post



By contrast **66%** of businesses claim to send letters weekly + (higher among larger sized companies) & those with franking machines – on balance organisation are also registering a decline in sending letters especially over the past 3 years



41% claim to send packages/ parcels weekly + (60% monthly +) – higher among larger & Dublin based companies

Cost satisfaction



2 in 3 claim to be satisfied with the cost of sending letters.

- 7 in 10 of those with Ceadunas are dissatisfied with the cost of sending via Ceadunas bulk mail. A similar number (72%) of businesses with a franking machine are dissatisfied with the cost
- 2 in 5 businesses are satisfied with the cost of sending packages/parcels (lower than letters)

Technology, especially email is the main reason for sending less letters. Just 4% referenced cost – mainly larger SME i.e. those who send more letters.



Thank you.



RESEARCH
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Delve Deeper