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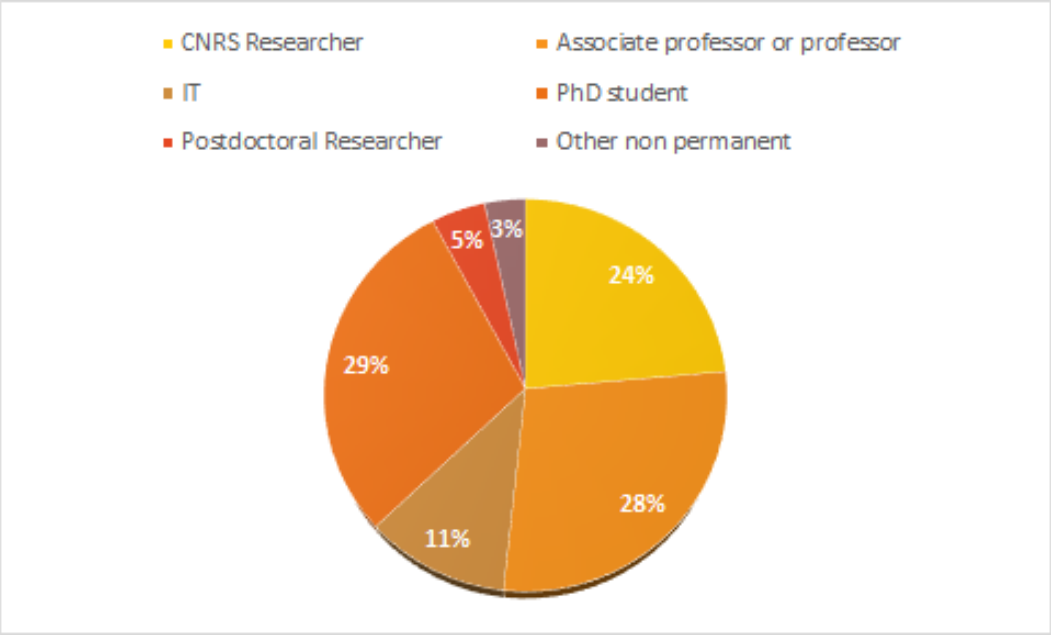
Results of the GHG Emissions Survey Related to Travel

Introduction

The laboratory now has a **charter for travels**, which was presented during the laboratory council on November 12, 2024, and is now available on our website (https://inphyni.univ-cotedazur.fr/sites/vert-linphyni/charte-missions). The objective is to reduce the laboratory's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while maintaining its scientific excellence, in line with the CNRS low-carbon transition plan.

This first version of the charter is **encouraging** but **non-bindin**g. However, it is expected to evolve based on the feedback from all laboratory members. T**o understand everyone's stance** on reducing the carbon footprint of missions, a **survey** was sent to **all laboratory members**. The results are presented below.

What is your position at INPHYNI?

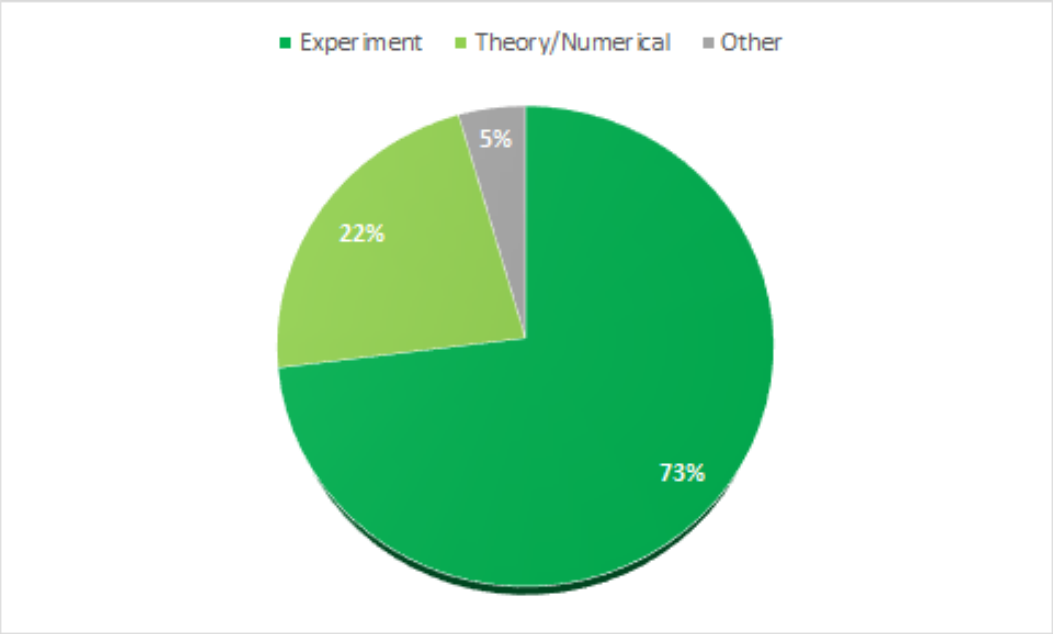


Category	Number of respondents	% in this category
Whole laboratory	89	53 %
CNRS Researchers	21	62 %
Associate professors or professors	25	52 %
IT	10	31 %
PhD students	26	65 %
Postdoctoral researchers	4	31 %

53% of laboratory members responded to the survey.

All categories were well represented, except for **IT staff and postdoctoral researchers**, where less than half responded.

What is your main activity ?



Most **theorists** responded to the survey (**83% response rate** in this category).

Experimentalists were less represented (compared to their total number in the laboratory), but the response rate was still more than 50% (**59% response rate**).

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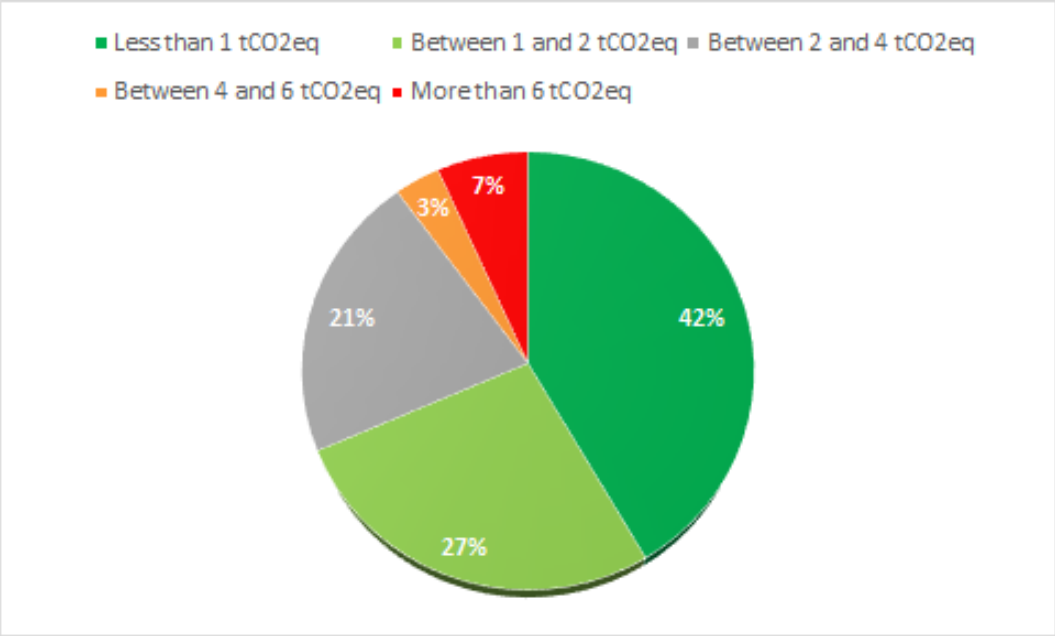
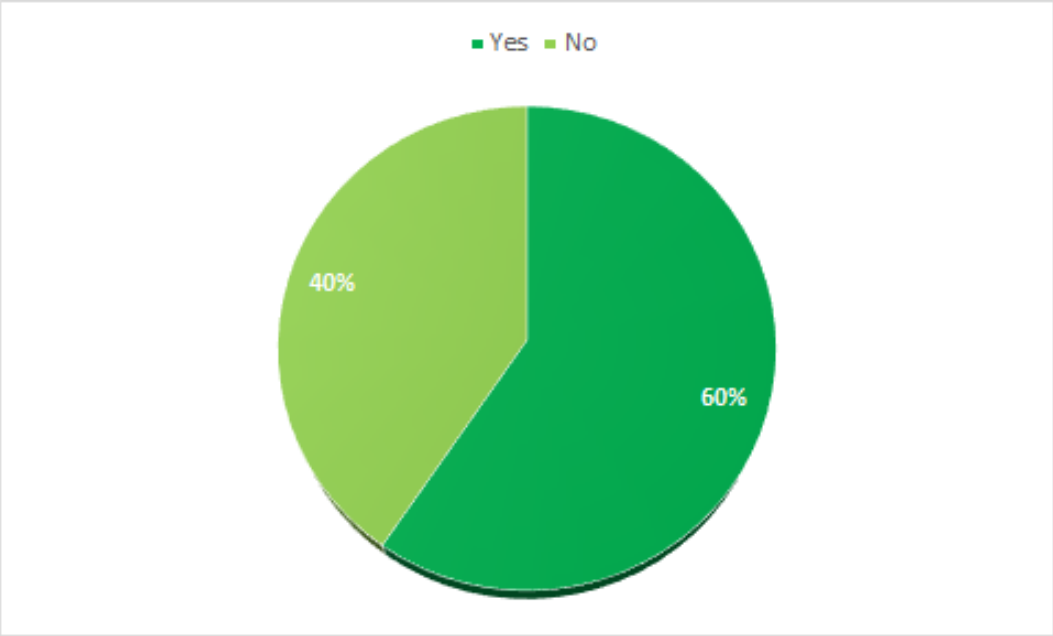
What is your estimate of your annual CO2 emissions due to your professional travels?



A large majority (69%) estimate their annual emissions to be **less than 2 tCO2eq**.

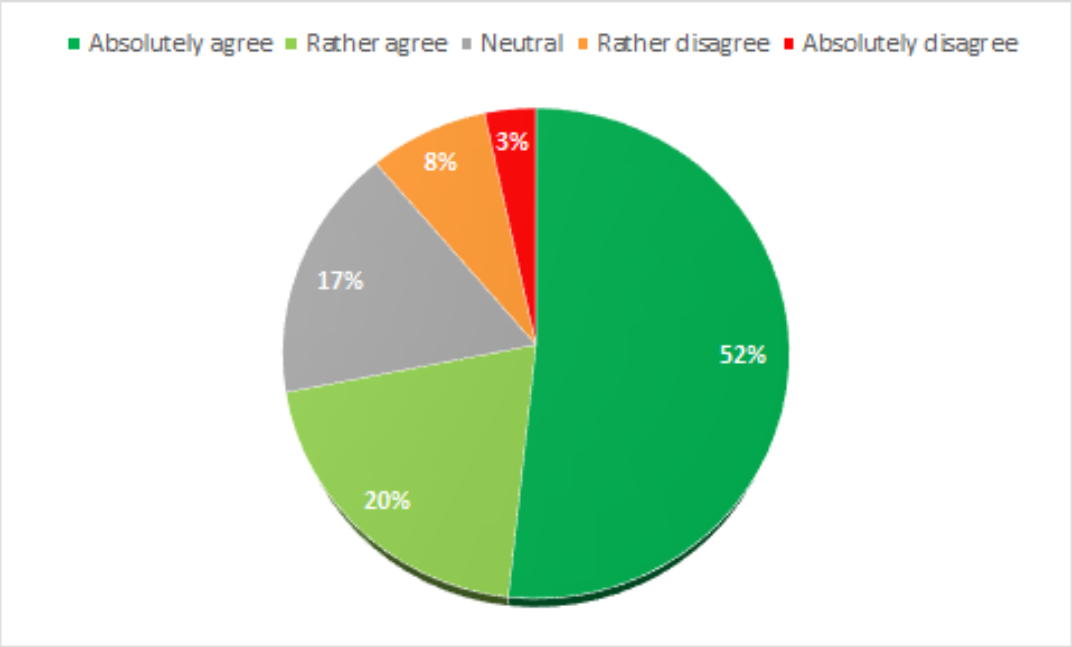
A **small minority** (7%) estimate their emissions to be **more than 6 tCO2eq**, yet they contribute significantly to the laboratory's overall mission-related carbon footprint.

Have you already started, as part of a personal effort to reduce GHG emissions, to reduce the GHG emissions associated with your professional assignments?



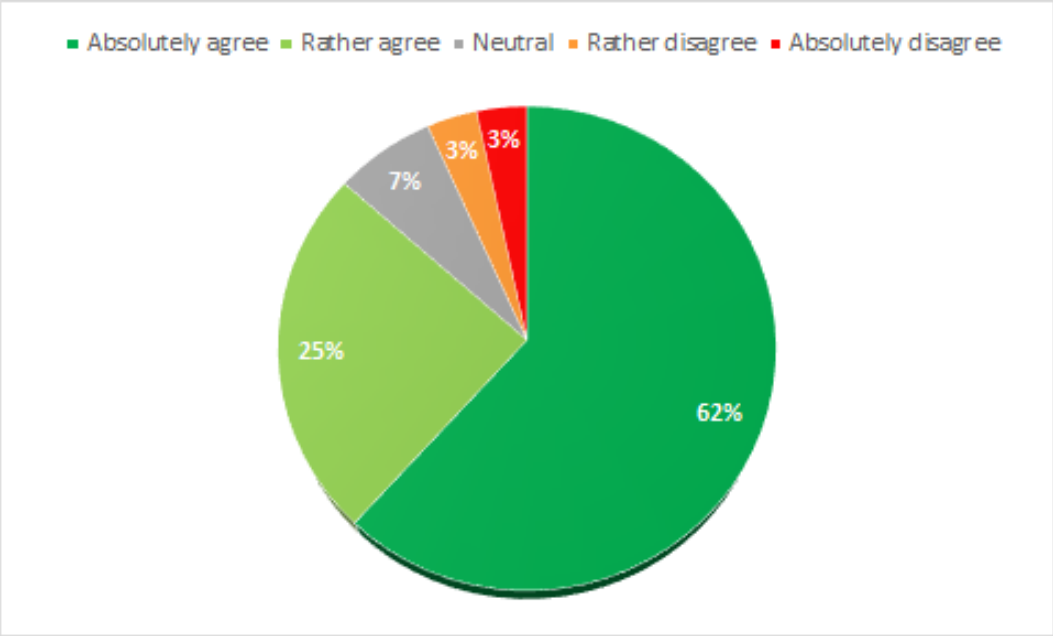
The majority of respondents has already taken **personal steps to reduce their travel-related GHG emissions**.

Do you agree in principle to personally commit to participating in the laboratory's collective effort to reduce GHG emissions, while maintaining scientific activity at the highest level?



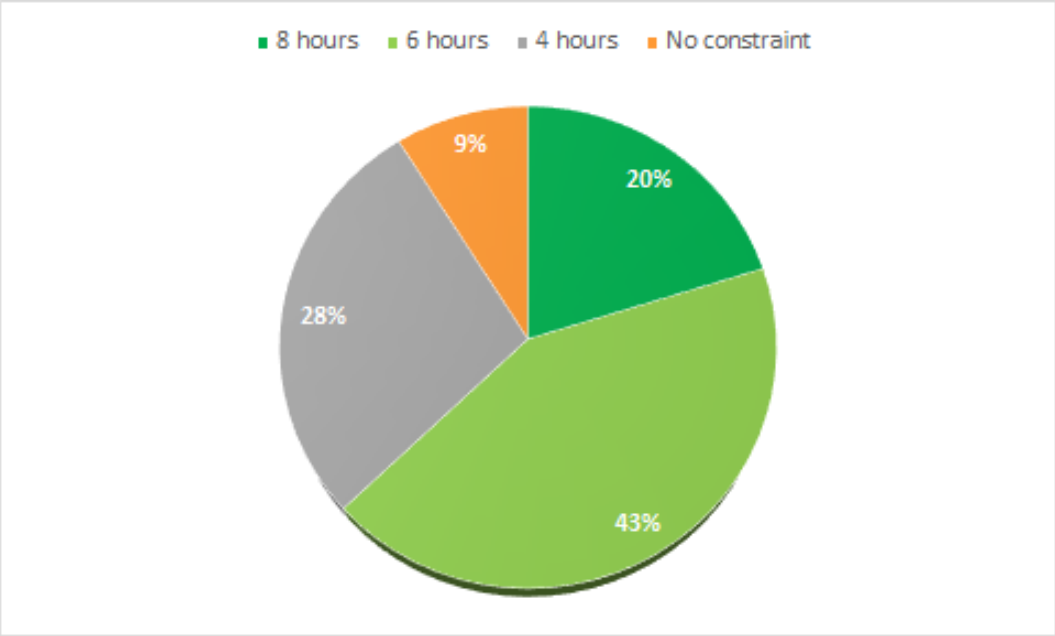
A large majority (72%) agree in principle to **reducing mission-related GHG emissions**.

Laboratory members are encouraged to prioritize train travels over flights when possible.



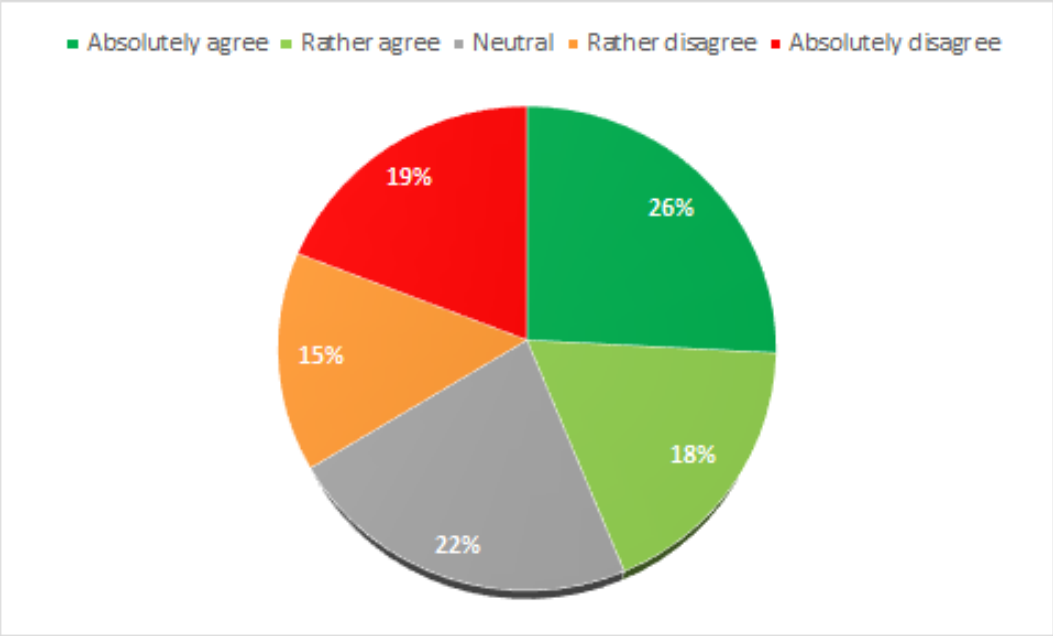
A large majority (87%) agree that t**rain travel should be prioritized as much as possible over flights**.

A trip should be made by train (and not by plane) if the train journey lasts less than:



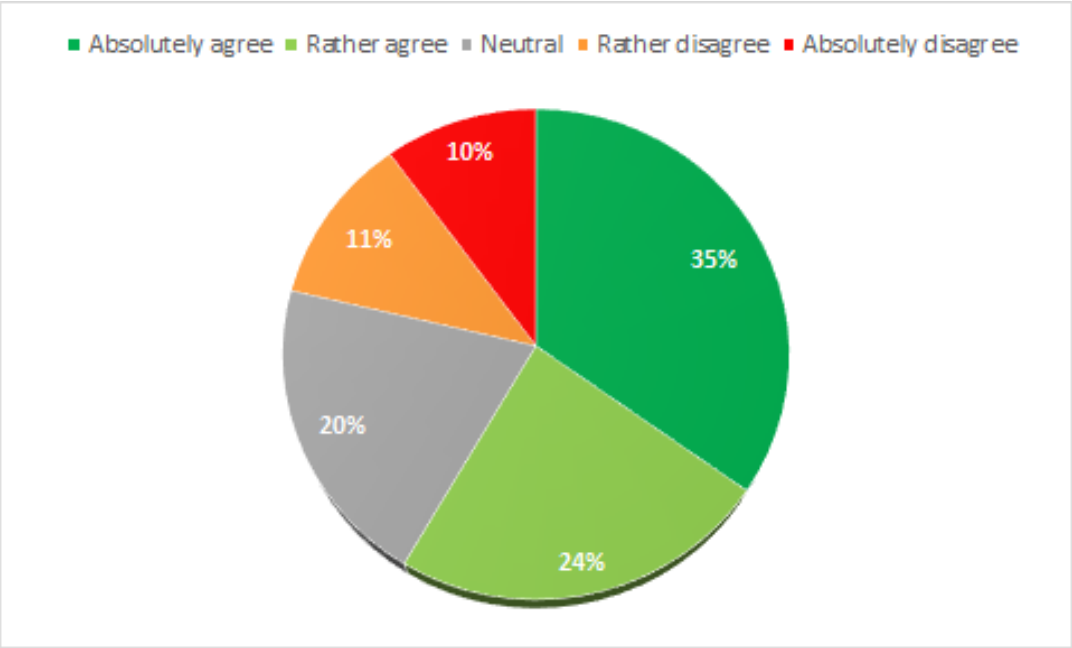
A large majority (63%) agree that travel should be done by train if the journey takes **less than 6 hours, thus in agreement with the charter for travels recommendation**.

For Nice-Paris trips specific to our laboratory, any flight requires justification.



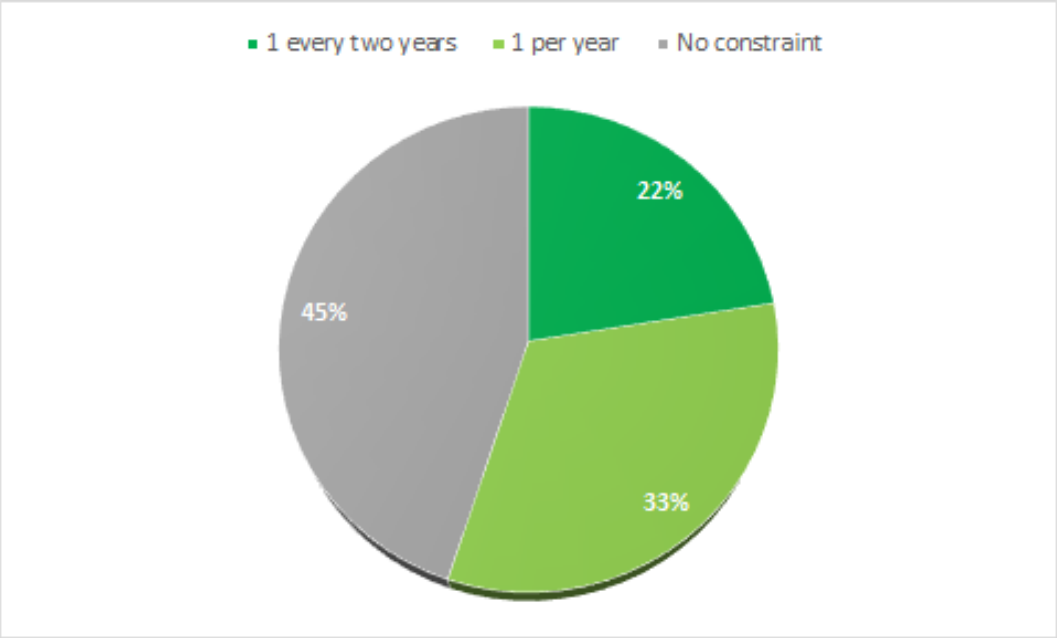
There is no clear consensus on this question (44% agree, 22% neutral, and 34% disagree).

Laboratory members are encouraged to reduce the number of long-haul flights.



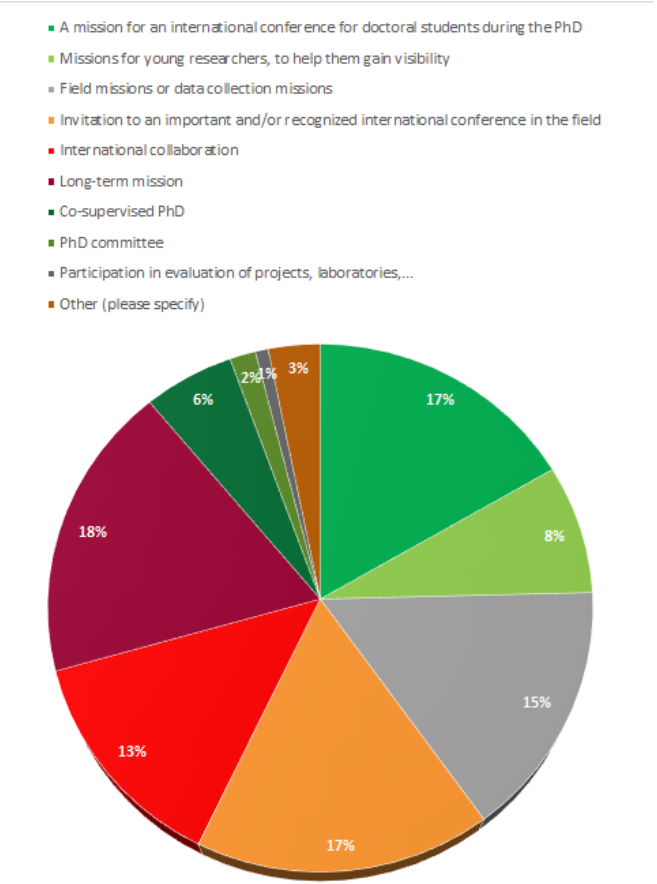
A majority (59%) want to see a reduction in the number of long-haul flights.

The number of long-haul flights without justification should be limited to:



A slight majority (55%) support limiting long-haul flights to fewer than one per year, **thus in agreement with the charter for travels recommendation**. 45% do not support any restrictions.

Certain types of air travel missions (long-haul flights) could be exceptions and would thus be automatically justified to the lab direction. Check the three exceptions that you believe are the most important.



The main justifications for air travel (above 10%) were:

- International mission/conference for doctoral students
- Fieldwork/data collection
- Major and/or well-recognized conference
- International collaboration
- Long-term missions

Other suggestions:

- No constraints
- Scheduling constraints
- Summer schools for young researchers
- Collaboration development for student exchanges between universities

The charter for travels recommends prioritizing the travel of PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. Among the 10 proposals in this survey, **25% of the responses align with this recommendation**.

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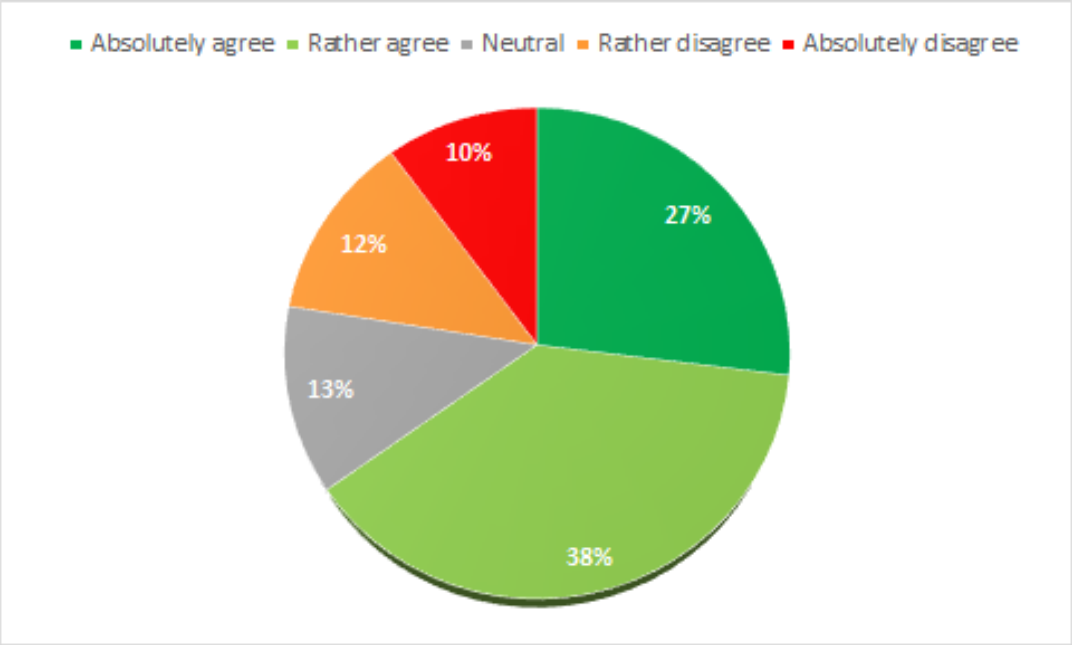
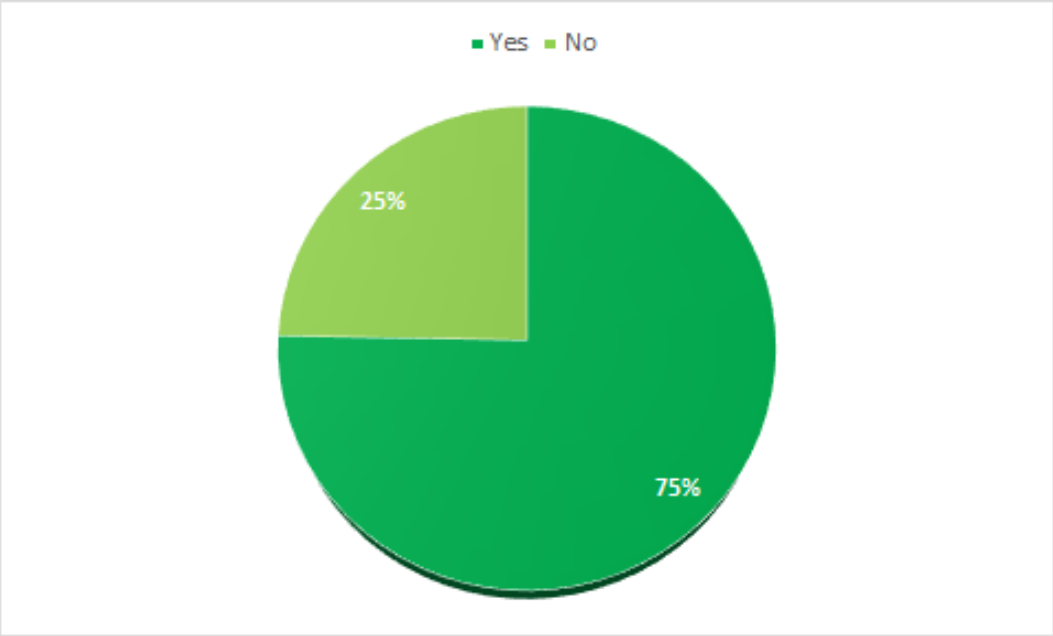
Laboratory members should make maximum use of the video conferencing systems set up at the laboratory to avoid travel for attending conferences, work meetings, or juries.



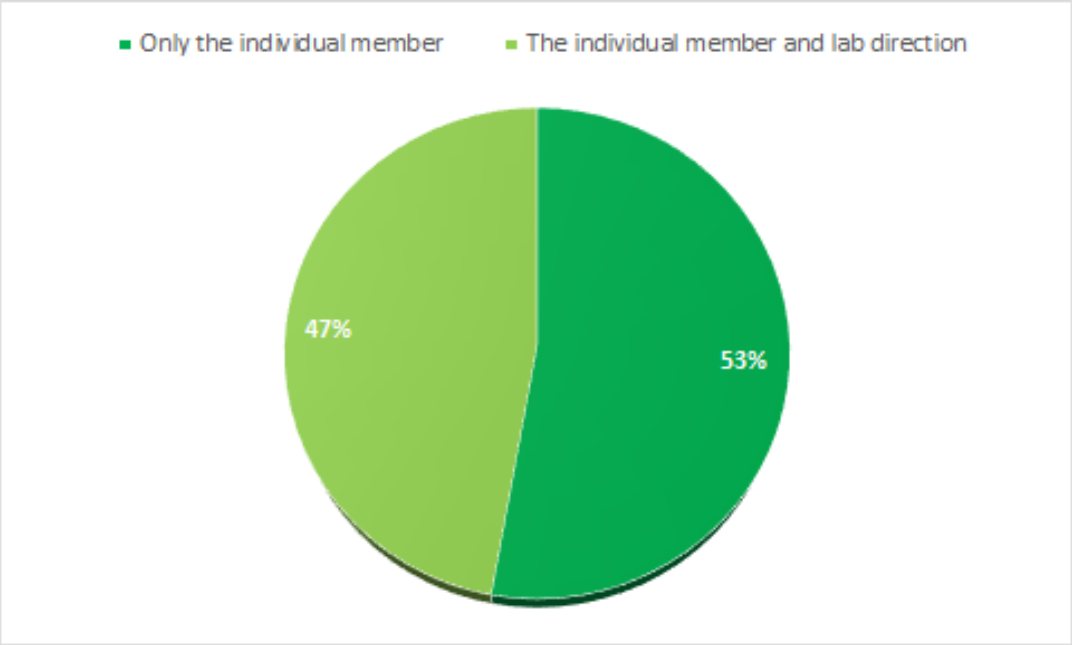
A majority (65%) support **maximizing videoconferencing** to avoid travel, **thus in agreement with the charter for travels recommendation**.

The laboratory should implement a tool for each member to automatically track their GHG emissions related to professional travel.



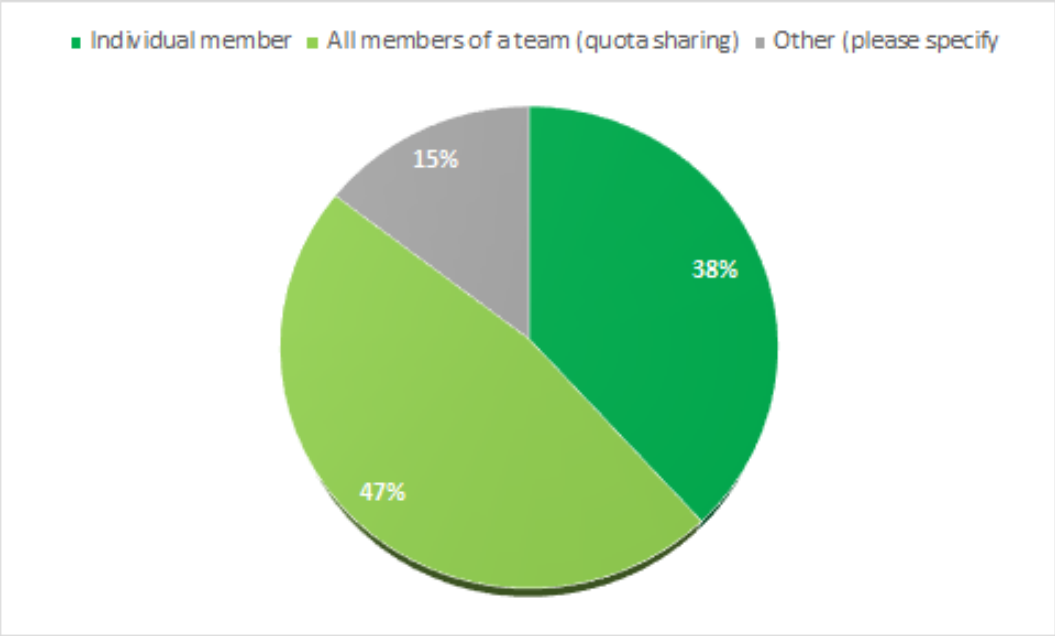
A large majority (75%) support **implementing a tracking tool for their mission-related GHG emissions, thus in agreement with the charter for travels recommendation**.

The annual individual GHG emissions report should be accessible to:



No clear consensus emerged on this question.

If quotas were to be implemented, they should be assigned to:



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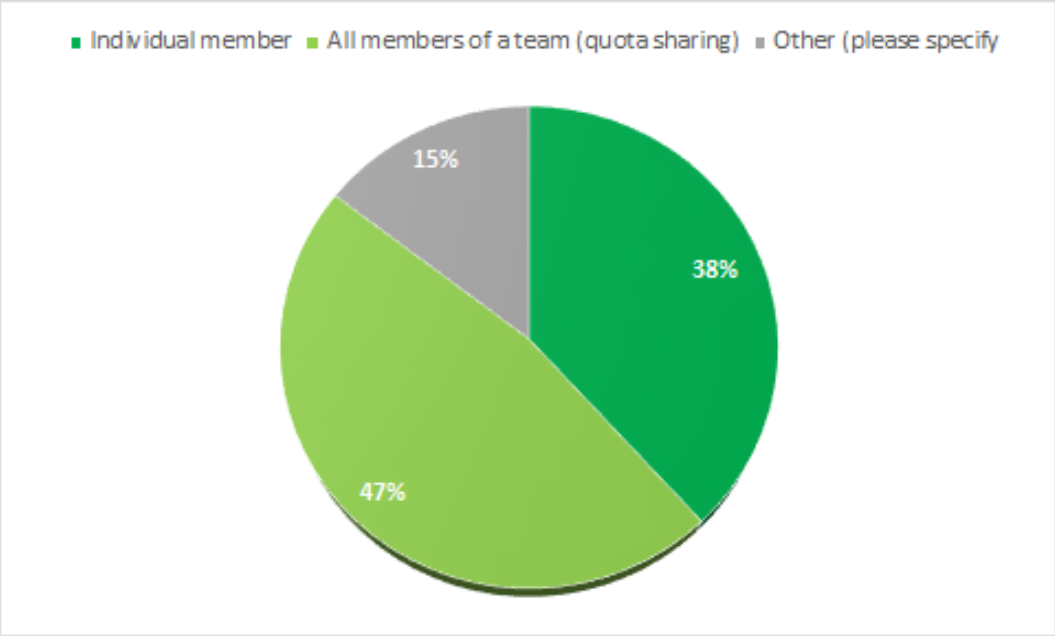

No clear consensus emerged on this question.

Other suggestions:

- No quota
- The entire lab - "carbon commission" to ensure harmonization
- Quota exchange
- All members of the laboratory
- Pooling, but based on the number of people in the team. And prioritize PhD students / young researchers
- Opposed to quotas, but in favor of setting annual laboratory goals, not within a team.

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Additional Comments & Suggestions from Survey Participants

- Some questions are too "grouped." For example, it’s okay for thesis juries to be remote, but not for conferences.
- I believe all of this should be on a voluntary basis and not imposed by management
- To promote greater individual responsibility – against any form of coercion.
- I am not in favor of quotas for PhD students/postdocs.
- I support the use of personal cars for distances under 500 km. Coming from Saint Jeannet, going to the TGV station and parking there is both a time and financial hassle.
- Too many "musts", "encouraging" would be better.
- No need for additional constraints on mission organization. It’s already complicated enough.
- Any unnecessary, high-carbon travel should be eliminated.
- Too short frame (Compensation if price increases due to CO2 reduction). Who decides how?
- It seems important that the first version of the charter be encouraging but not binding.
- For the evaluation of the annual carbon footprint, it’s actually very fluctuating depending on the presence or absence of a long-haul flight.
- What matters is the relative duration of the trip, not its absolute duration. Yes to individual responsibility, no to penny-pinching.
- Justifying a flight instead of a train is easy; it should be mandatory for all flights.
- The quota system should be indicative, a goal to achieve. If we try to impose it, it could alienate people.
- The problem is that train travel is often more expensive than flying. A general lab fund should cover even...

Comparisons Between Different Groups

- **Permanent vs. Non-Permanent Staff:**
  Younger researchers (PhD/postdocs) are more willing to implement changes than IT staff/researchers:
  - Personal commitment to emissions reduction (**83%** vs. 61%)
  - Individual carbon footprint tracking (**87%** vs. 70%)
  - Prioritizing trains (**67%** strongly support vs. 54%)
  - Limiting long-haul flights (**60%** vs. 54%)

- **Theorists vs. Experimentalists:**
  Theorists travel more and support fewer restrictions than experimentalists:
  - Emissions above 2 tCO2eq (**50%** vs. 28%)
  - Willingness to participate in emissions reduction (**55%** vs. 77%)
  - Agreement on reducing long-haul flights (**45%** vs. 60%)
  - Agreement on team-based emissions quotas (**30%** vs. 56%)

Recommendations for the lab head

- Implement a personal carbon footprint tracking tool.
- No strict constraints, but maximize incentives for sustainable behavior.
- A majority of people agree with the different items of the charter. Should we make it more constraining?