

What is GUS?



- Large-scale longitudinal birth and child cohort study involving national samples of children living in Scotland
- Three cohorts:
 - Birth cohort 1: 5217 children, born 2004/05, aged 10.5 months at 1st interview
 - Child cohort: 2859 children, born 2002/03, aged 34.5 months at 1st interview
 - Birth cohort 2: 6127 children, born 2010/11, aged 10.5 months at 1st interview
- Commissioned by the Scottish Government and running since 2005

Ages and stages (so far...)

Child's age	Cohort/Year of data collection		
	Child cohort	Birth Cohort 1	Birth Cohort 2
10 months		2005/06	2010/11
Age 2		2006/07	
Age 3	2005/06	2007/08	2013
Age 4	2006/07	2008/09	
Age 5	2007/08	2009/10	2015
Age 6	2008/09	2010/11	
Age 8		2012/13	
Primary 6 (Age 10)		2015/16	
S1 (Age 12)		2017/18	
S3 (Age 14)		2019/20	
Age 17/18 (S6)		2021-23	
Age 19/20		2025	

Sources of information at each age point

Source of data	Child's age/school stage											
	10mth	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	8yrs	10/P6	12/S1	14/S3	17/S6	20yrs
Main carer interview												
Partner and Teacher questionnaires		Partner						Teacher	Partner	Partner		
Cohort member questionnaire												
Child H&W measurements												
Cognitive assessments												
Admin data - health records												
Admin data – school records			Pre-school	Primary School						Secondary		
Admin data – SQA and post-school												

GUS topic coverage over the years

Household composition

Employment

Income and financial management

Parental demographics

Child health and development

Other household parents

Childcare and pre-school

Parental health

School and Further Education

Anti-social behaviour

Parental support

Parenting and parent-child relationships

Parent and child social networks

Neighbourhood and community

Activities

Food and nutrition

Parental relationships

Housing and accommodation

Technology

Health behaviours

Sweep 11

- Cohort members aged 17-18 years old at the time of data collection
- Fieldwork conducted in two phases: phase 1 between November 2021 and November 2022, and phase 2 between December 2022 and June 2023
- COVID-related restrictions on in-home data collection meant data was collected through a mix of web, telephone and in-home interviewing.
- Data collected from the cohort member (primarily) and a parent/carer; 2649 families participated.
- Where data collection was in-home, objective height & weight and cognitive assessment data was collected
- Follow-up physical activity and GPS study – MRC/CSO SPHSU University of Glasgow, SPACES project (Studying Physical Activity in Children's Environment across Scotland)

Sweep 11 – cohort member reported data

Household relationships	Diet	Relationship with parents
Living arrangements	Sleep	Life satisfaction
Significant life events	General health	Loneliness, fear of failure
Caring responsibilities	Victimisation	Physical activity
Political attitudes	Education	Support
Activities in free time	Post-school destinations	Income
Upsetting relationship episode	Victimisation	Relationship with peers
Social media	Gender identity / sexual orientation	Sexual relationships
Pregnancies	Mental health	Antisocial behaviour
Alcohol, smoking and drugs	Contact with police	Local area

Sweep 11 – parent reported data

Political attitudes and civic participation

Engagement with and attitudes to cohort member's post-school plans

Optimism

Parent and cohort member's relationship

Health and mental health

Employment details

Income and finances

Education

New linked administrative data

- Following sweep 11, new administrative data is available which can be linked to the survey dataset. This includes:
 - **Attainment data** from Scottish Qualifications Authority
 - All qualifications presented for up to August 2025
 - Includes year, course type, subject, grade and SCQF level
 - **School Leaver Destinations data** from Skills Development Scotland
 - Destination at 3 and 9 months after leaving school and at 18th August 2025
 - Destination coding is consistent with Scottish Government reporting (e.g. higher education, further education, training, employment etc)
- Data available via UKDS secure licence

Sweep 12/Age 20 – summary

- Data collection with cohort member only
- Sequential web-CAPI. Fieldwork February to October 2025
- Questionnaire topics include: living arrangements; further and higher education; apprenticeships; employment; health and health behaviours; misogynistic attitudes; partner violence; income and benefits; activities; aspirations; political and social attitudes
- Proposed linkage to Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data
- Survey data available summer 2026.

Accessing GUS data – further information on GUS website

Using GUS data

For researchers and journalists

Topic overview

A wide range of information about children, young people and their families

Data documentation

Birth Cohort 1, 2 and Child Cohort

Accessing GUS data

From the UK Data Service and elsewhere

About us Get data Use data Manage data Deposit data News and events



Home / Data catalogue / Series / Series

Growing Up in Scotland

Abstract FAQ's Resources

Access data

Access data

GN 33437

Growing Up in Scotland, 2005-: Special Licence Access

SN	Study description	Explore online	Select
8366	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 1, Primary 6 Teacher Survey, 2014-2015: Special Licence Access		Login
7432	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 2, Sweeps 1-3, 2011-2015: Special Licence Access		Login
5760	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 1, Sweeps 1-9, 2005-2018: Special Licence Access		Login

GN 33456

Growing Up in Scotland, 2005-: Secure Access

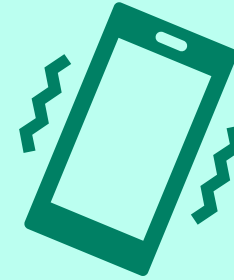
SN	Study description	Explore online	Select
8541	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 2, Early Learning and Childcare Administrative Data, 2013-2015: Secure Access		Login
	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 1, Early Learning and Childcare Administrative Data, 2008-2010: Secure Access		Login
	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 2, Sweep 3, Geography Data, Intermediate Geography and Local Authority, 2015-2016: Secure Access		Login
8541	Growing Up in Scotland: Cohort 2, Sweep 3, Geography Data, Intermediate Geography and Local Authority, 2015-2016: Secure Access		Login

<https://growingupinScotland.org.uk/using-gus-data>

Topics covered today



Education and
beyond



Social media



Political
participation



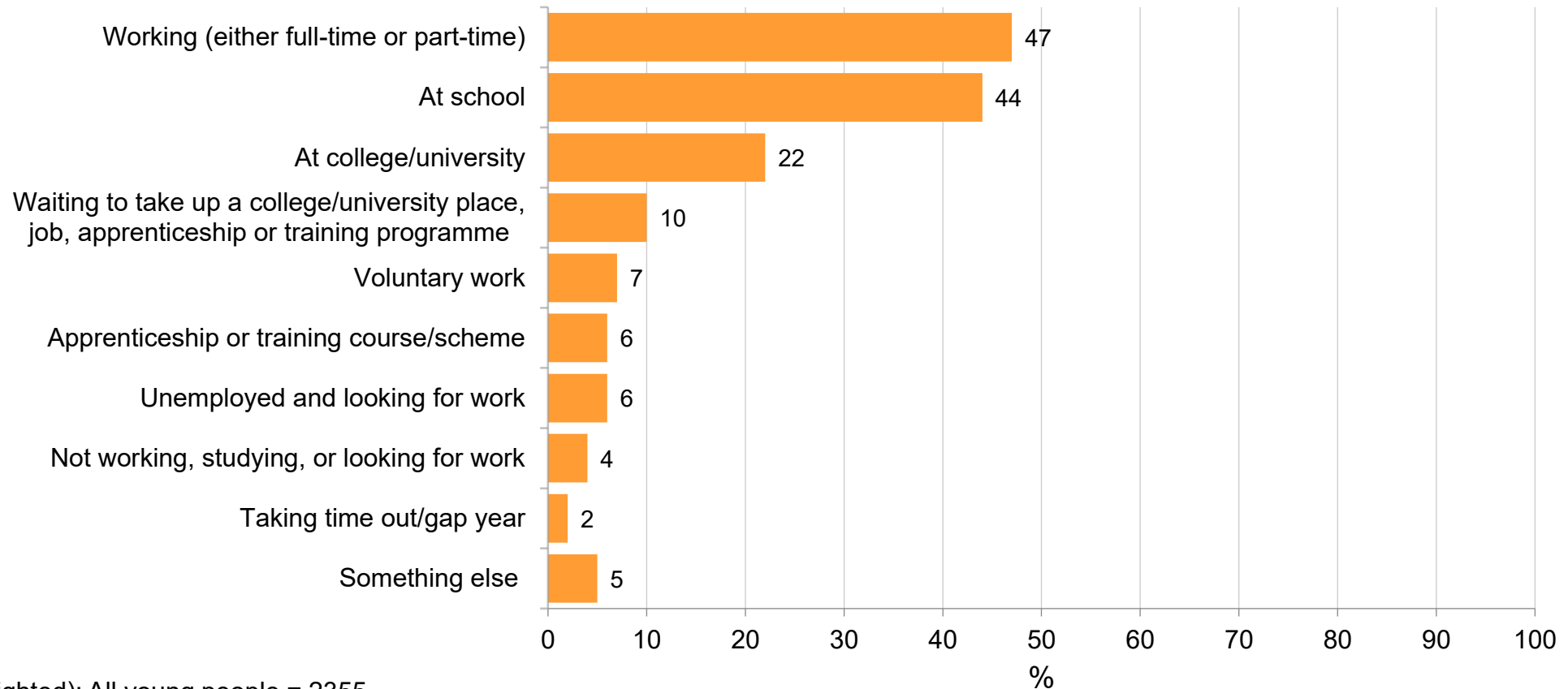
Mental health and life
satisfaction

Education and beyond

Eleanor Holman

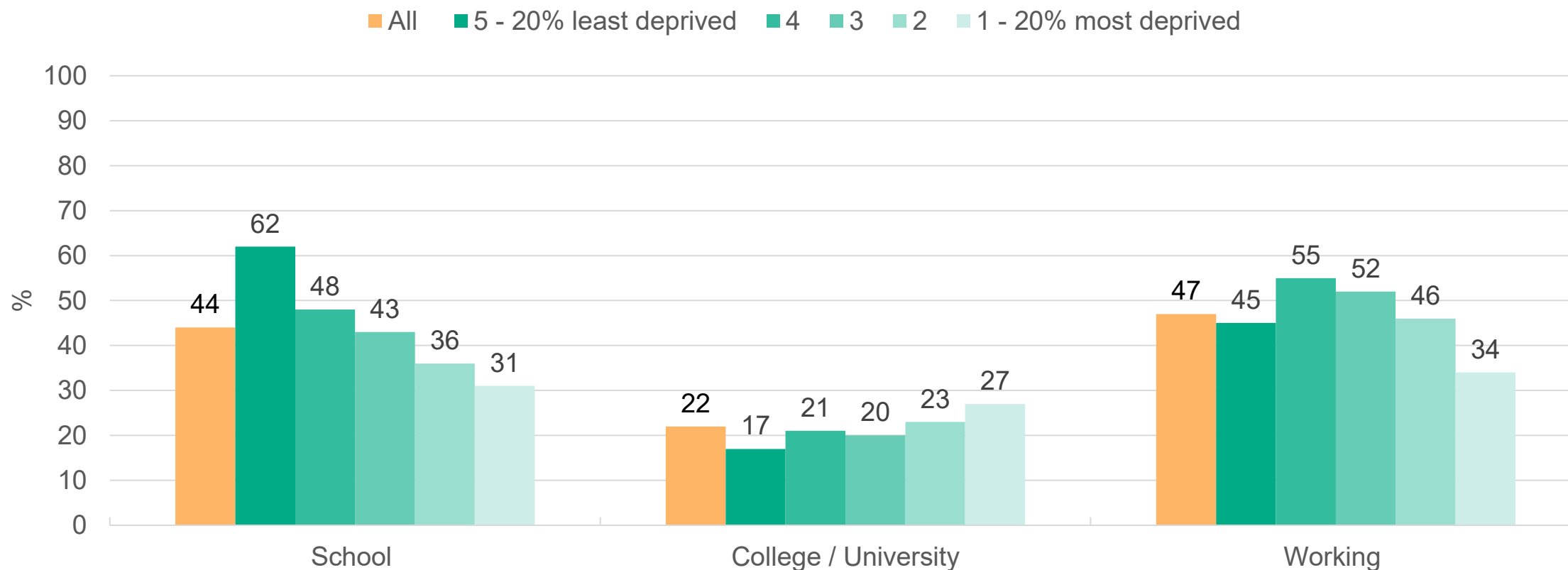
What young people were doing at age 17

Young people were asked which activity best described what they were doing in the last week. Respondents could select all relevant activities.



Bases (unweighted): All young people = 2355.

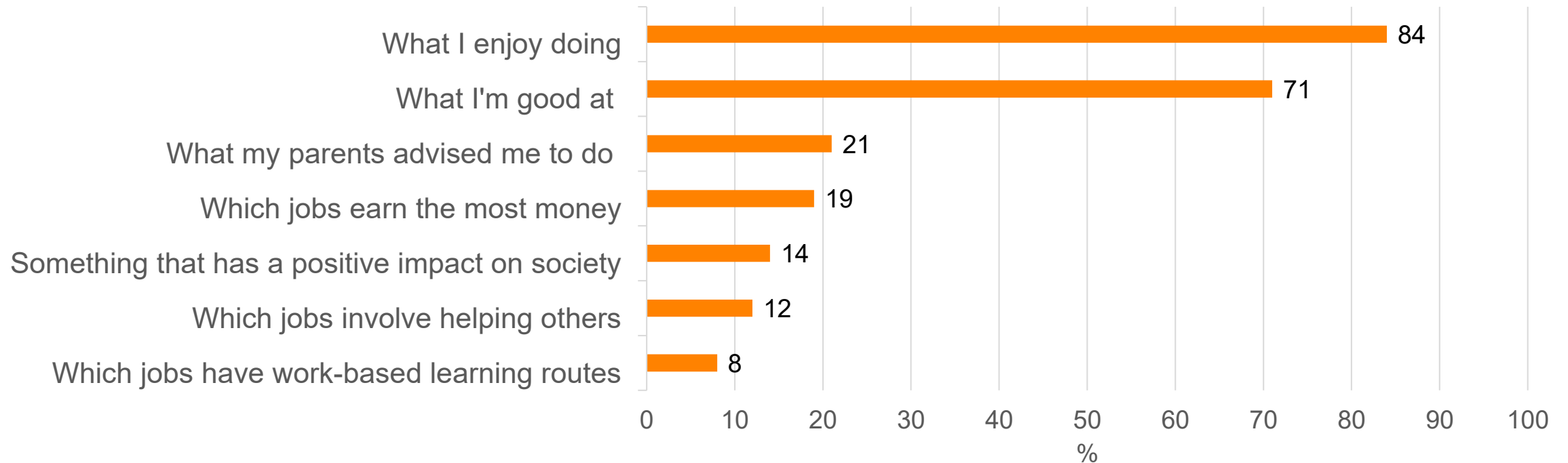
What young people were doing at age 17



Bases (unweighted): Young people in SIMD 1 = 423; 2 = 400; 3 = 385; 4 = 558; 5 = 589.

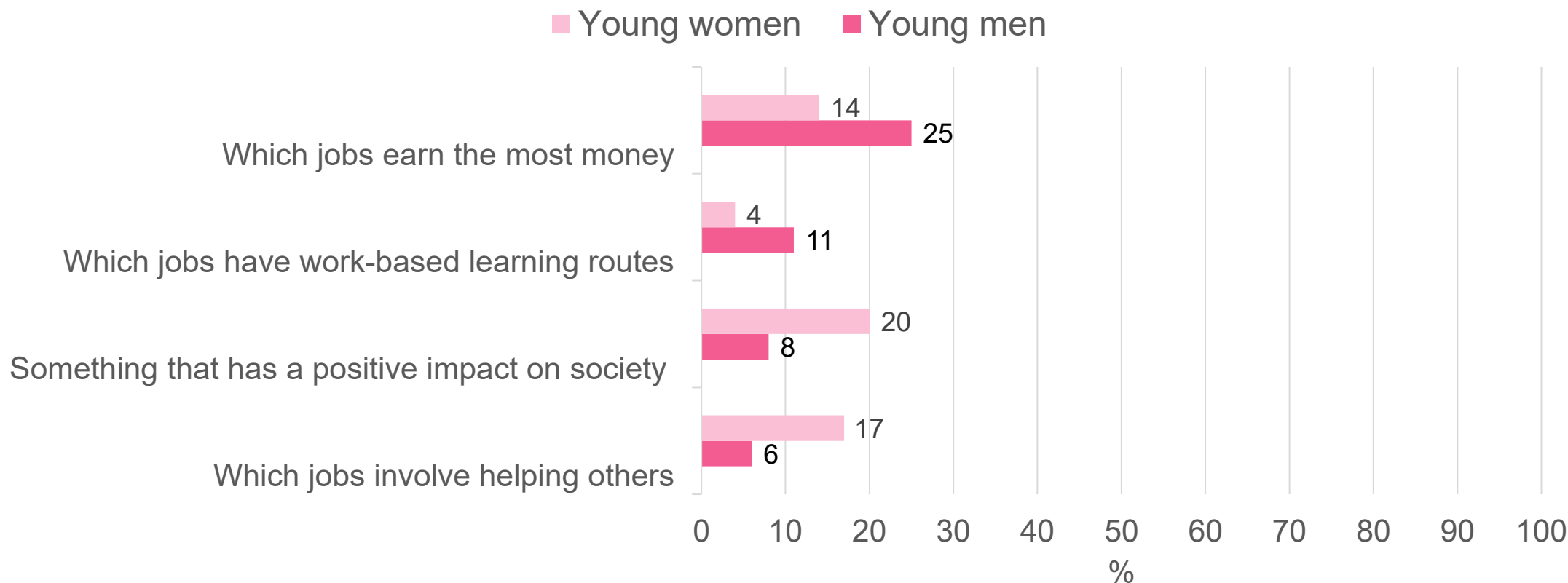
Most important factors when deciding what to do after S4

Young people were asked which of the following were most important when deciding what to do after S4. Respondents could select up to three answers.



Bases (unweighted): All young people = 2349. Chart shows answers to the question: 'Which of these things were most important when deciding what to do after S4?'. Young people could select up to three answers.

Most important factors when deciding what to do after S4

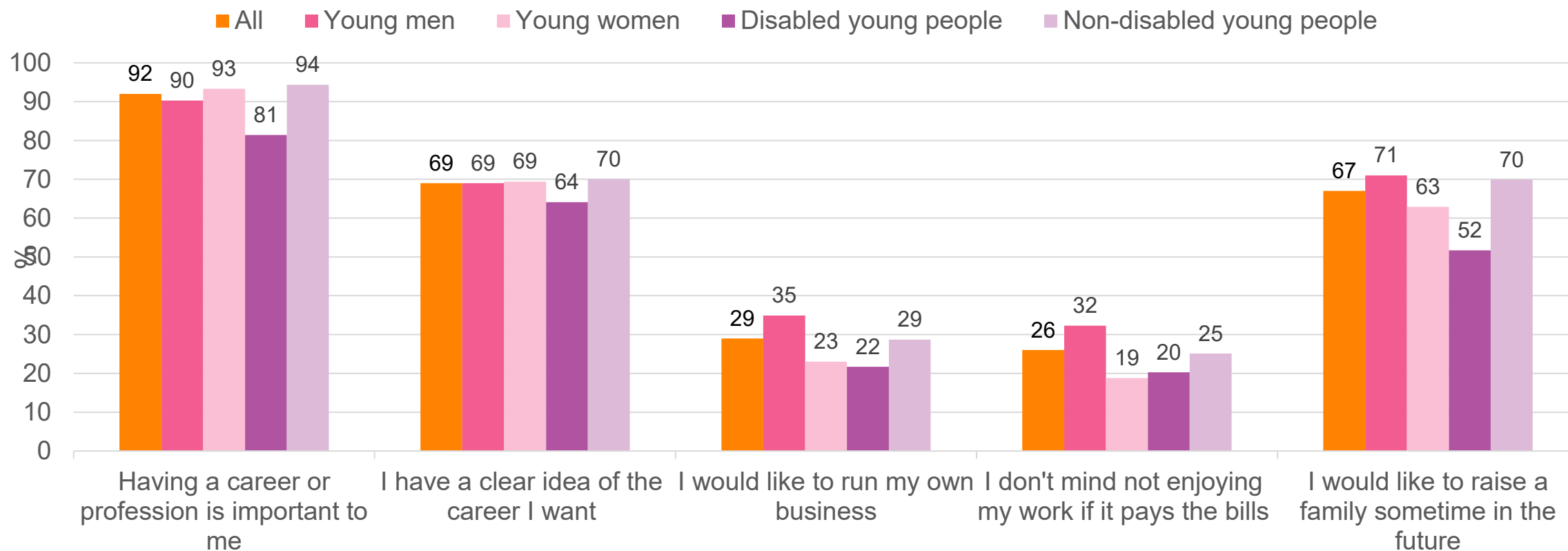


Bases (unweighted): Young men = 1152; young women = 1195. Chart shows answers to the question: 'Which of these things were most important when deciding what to do after S4?'. Young people could select up to three answers.

* Indicates a significant difference between young women and young men.

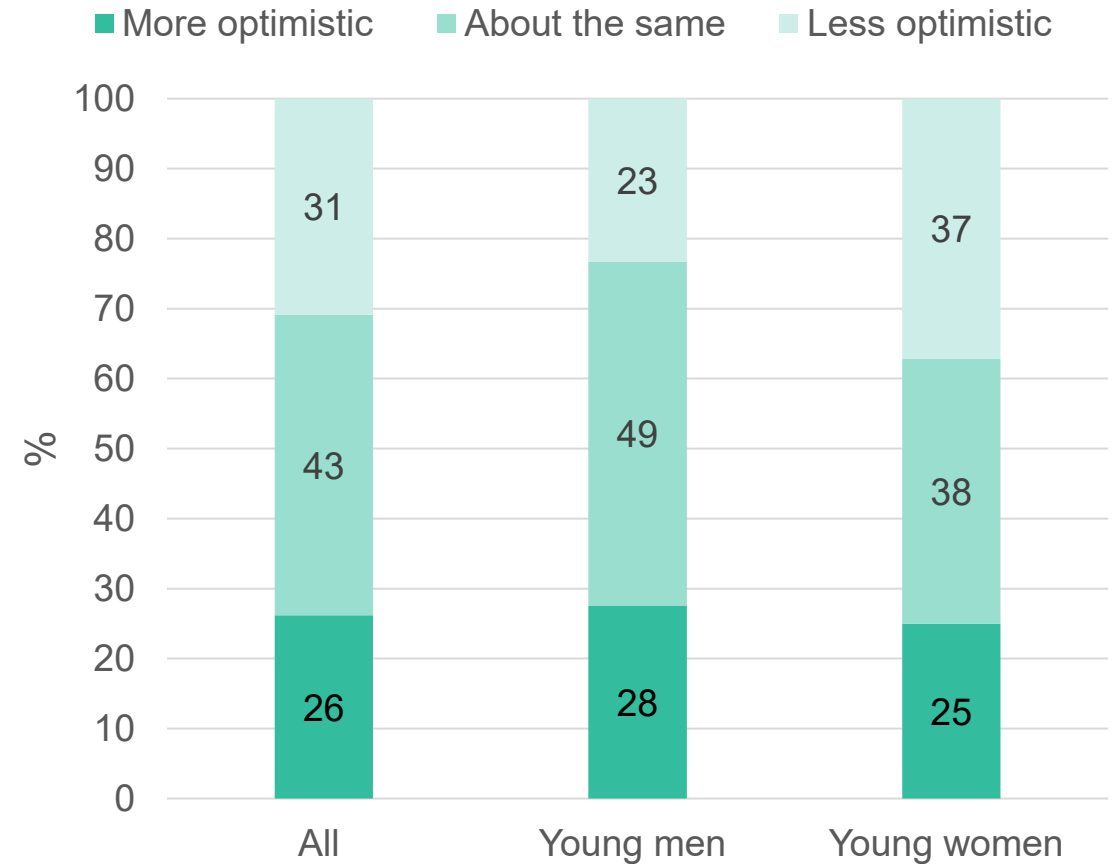
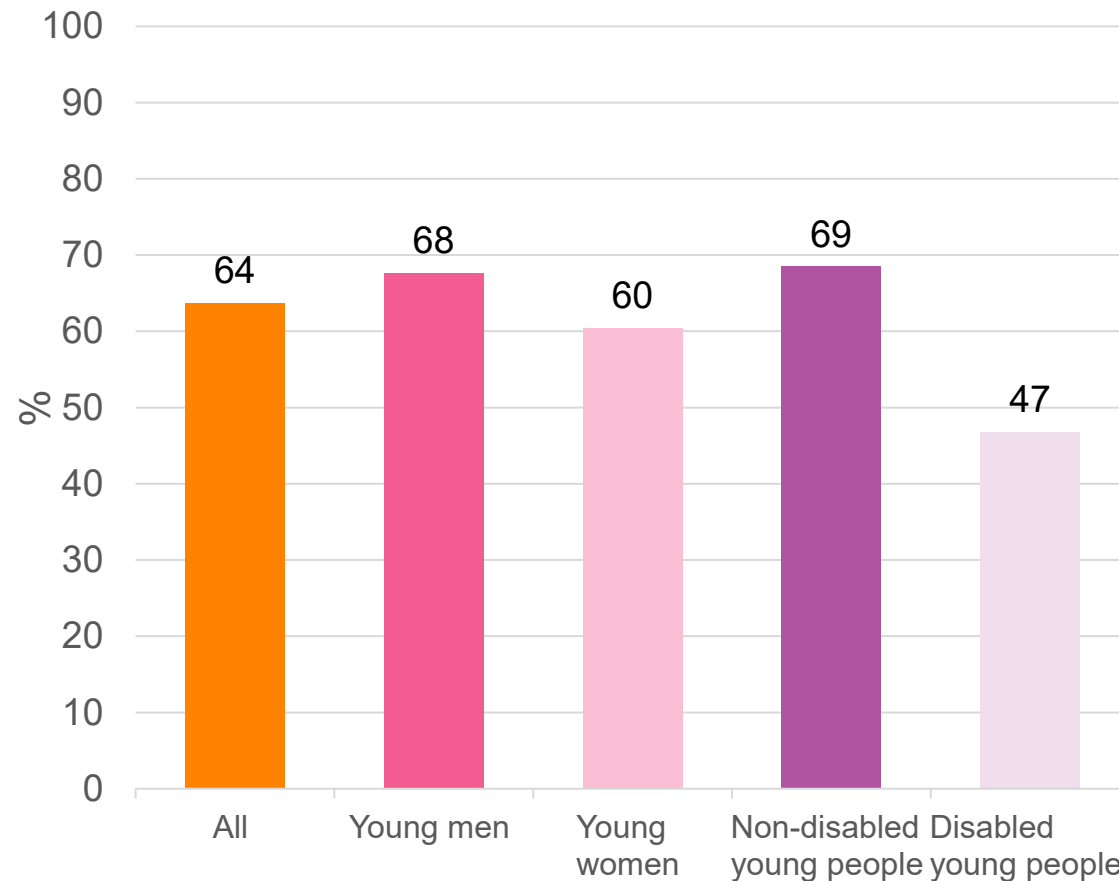
Aspirations and future plans

Those who 'agreed' or 'agreed strongly' that they would like to do these things in the future differed by sex and disability



Bases (unweighted): All young people = varies per item (2348-2351)

Optimism for the future



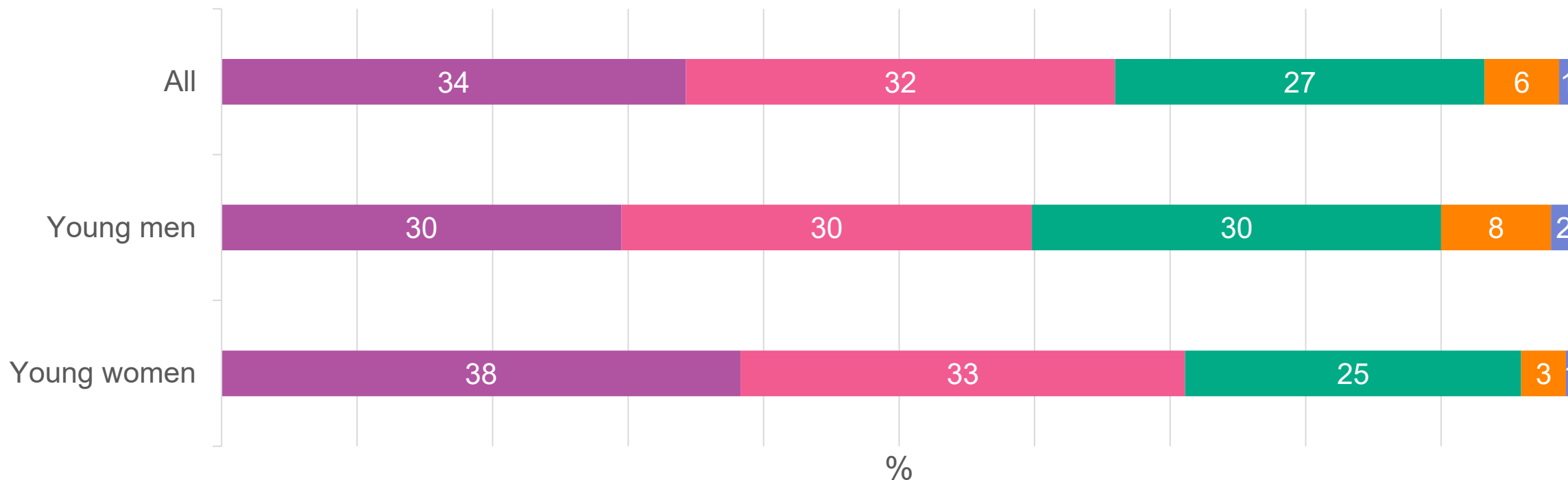
Bases (unweighted): Young men = 851; young women = 1012; disabled young people = 222; non-disabled young people = 1231. Charts show answers to the statement: 'I am usually optimistic about my future' and 'And compared with before the Coronavirus outbreak in March 2020, do you feel...'

Social media

Line Knudsen

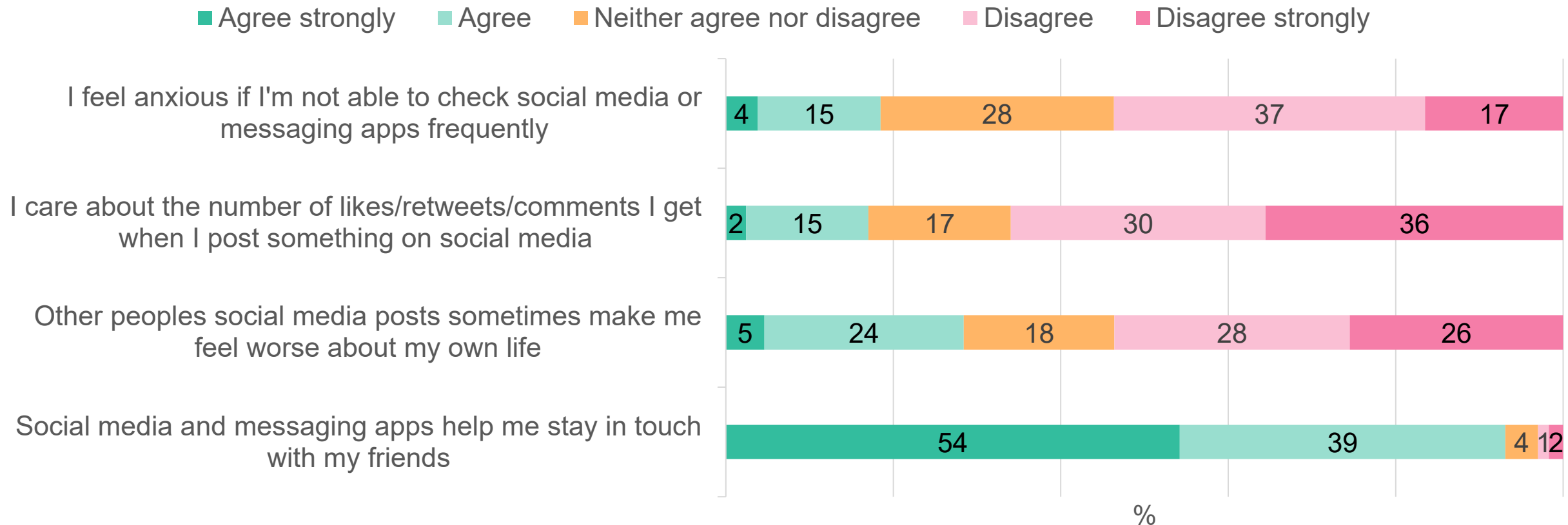
How often do young people check social media or messaging apps on a day where they have school, college or work?

■ At least every half hour ■ At least every hour ■ At least every couple of hours ■ Less often ■ Not at all



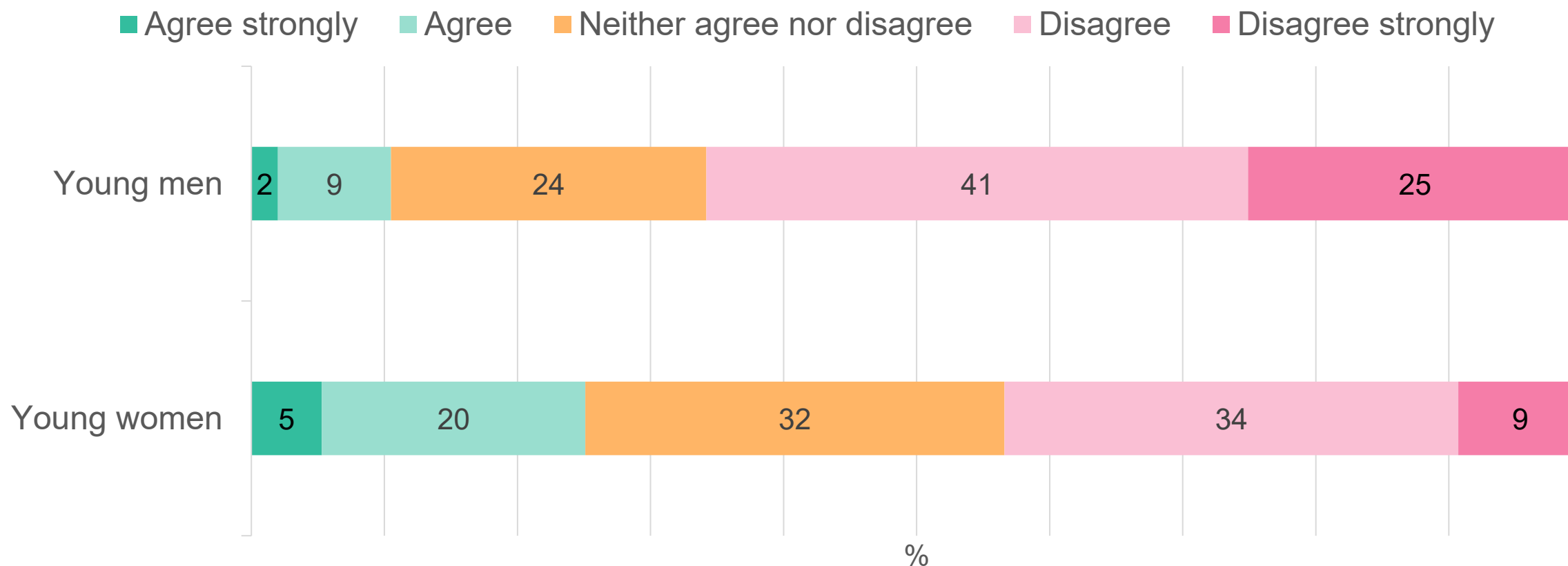
Bases (unweighted): All young people = 1910; Young men = 873; young women = 1033.

Social media and messaging apps help young people stay in touch with friends, but minority also report negative experiences



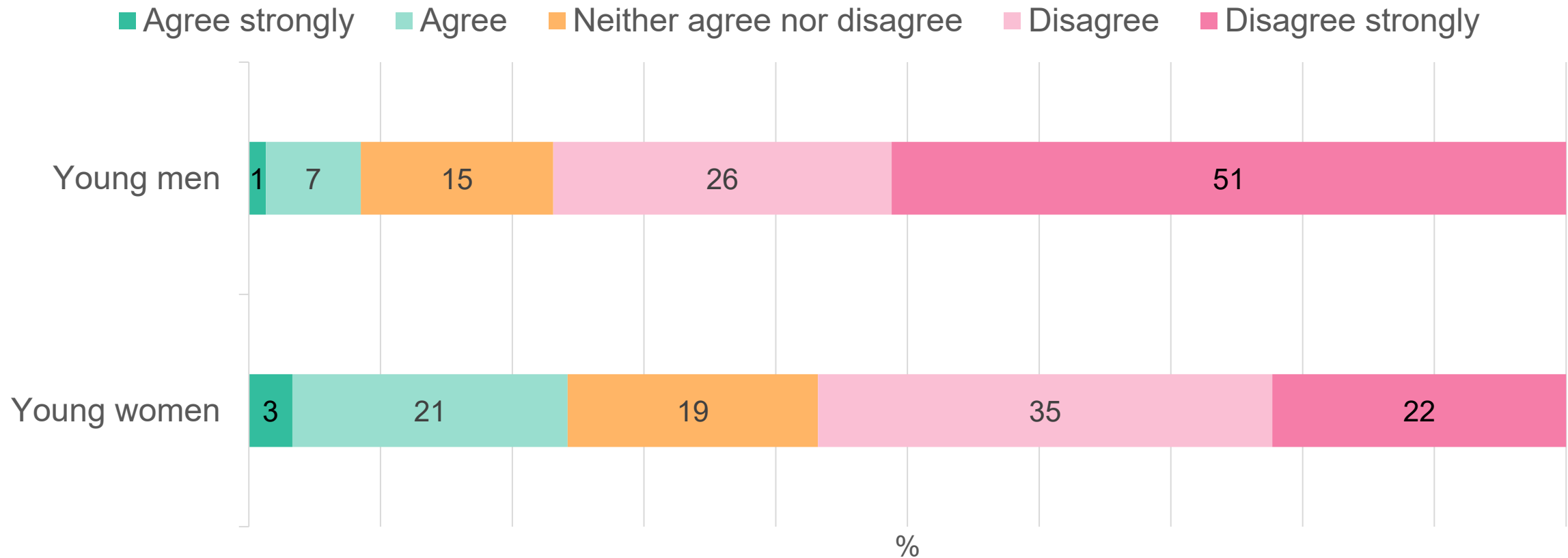
Bases (unweighted): All young people; exact base size varies by question, between 1917 and 1919.

Young women were much more likely than young men to feel anxious when they are unable to check social media or messaging apps regularly



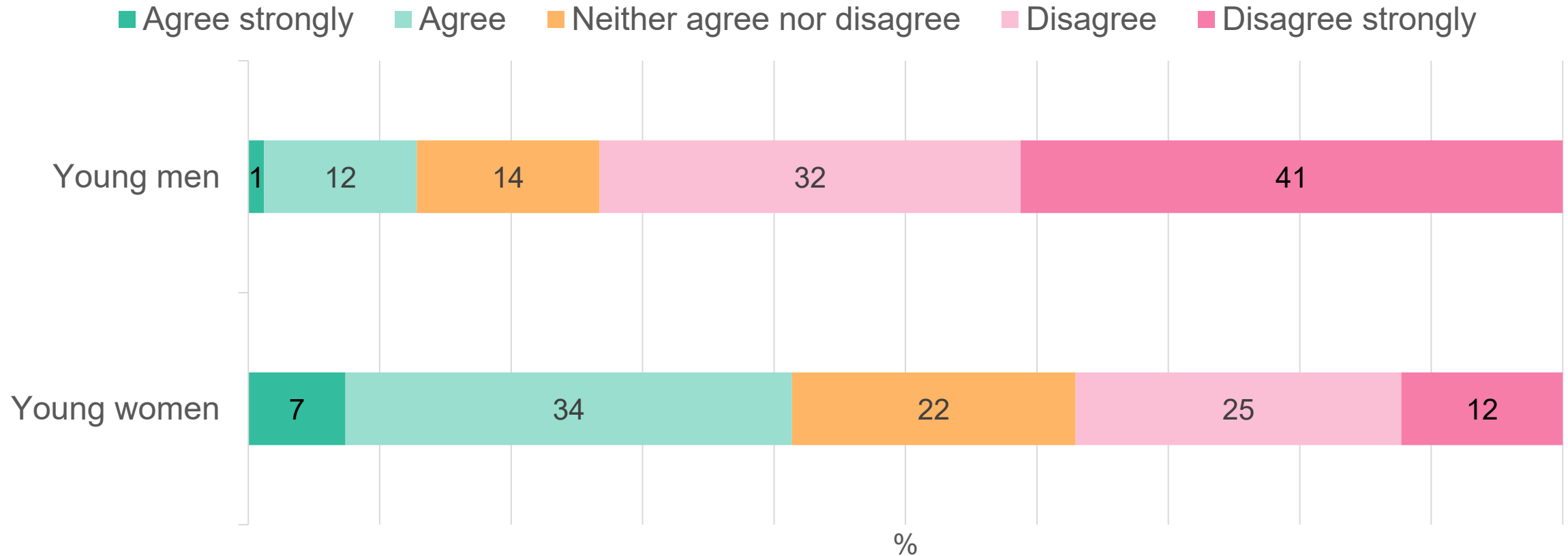
Bases (unweighted): Young men = 879; young women = 1035. Chart shows answers to the statement: 'I feel anxious if I'm not able to check social media or messaging apps regularly'.

...and to care about the number of likes, retweets or comments when they posted something



Bases (unweighted): Young men = 879; young women = 1035. Chart shows answers to the statement: 'I care about the number of likes/retweets/comments I get when I post something on social media'.

...and to say other people's posts made them feel worse about their own life



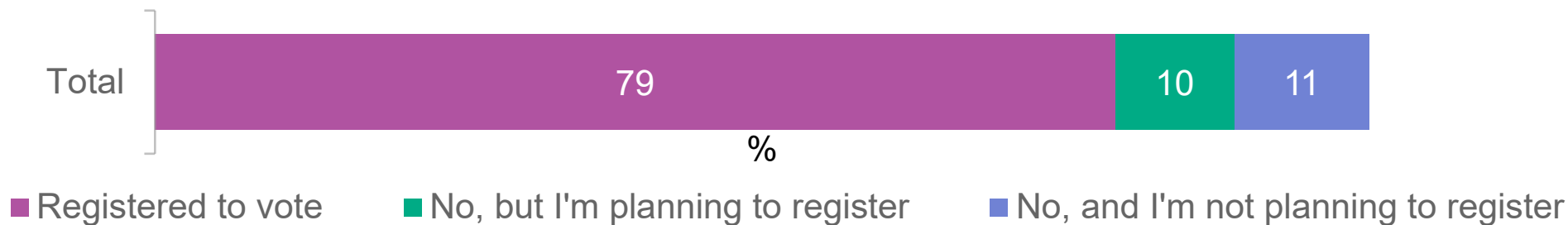
Bases (unweighted): Young men = 877; young women = 1035. Chart shows answers to the statement: 'Other people's social media posts sometimes make me feel worse about my own life'.

Political attitudes and civic participation

Helena Wilson

Civic participation

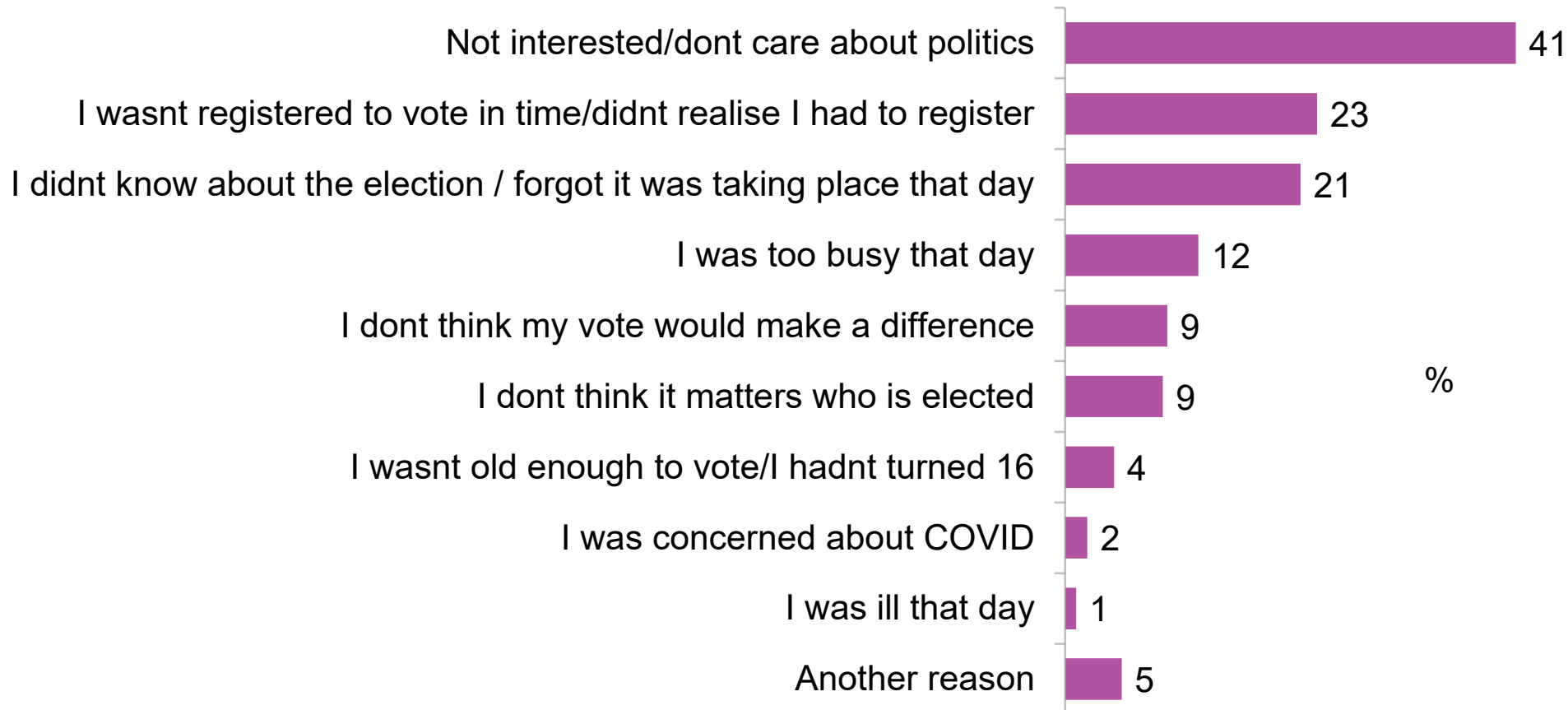
Nearly 80% of young people were registered to vote



Just over half voted in the the Scottish Parliament election in May 2021

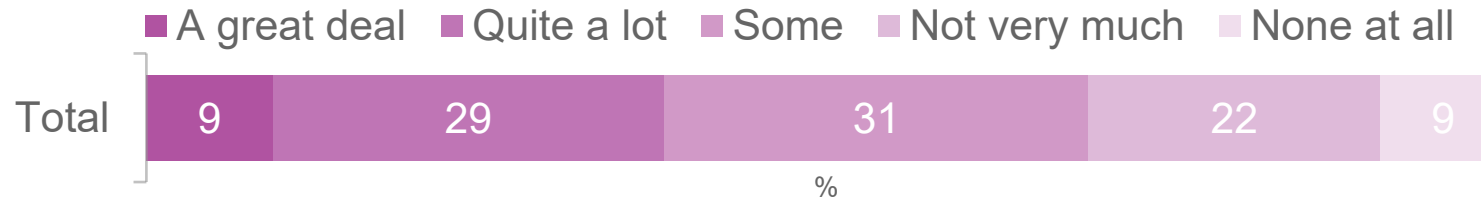


Reasons for not voting in the Scottish Parliament election in May 2021

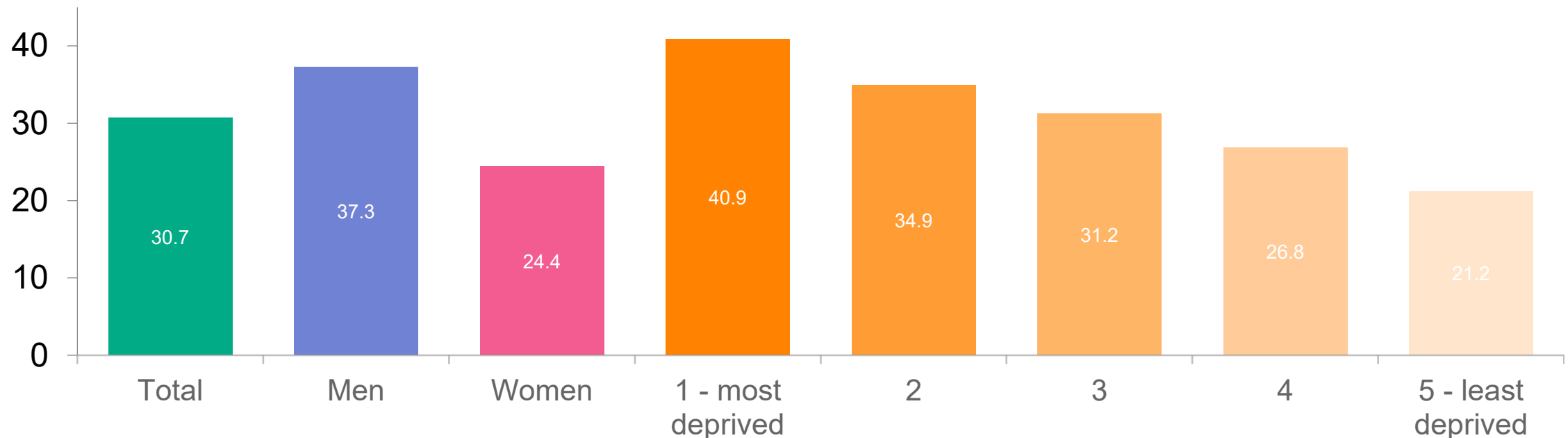


Base (unweighted): All who did not vote in the 2021 Scottish Parliament election (854)

How much of a difference do you think it makes to your own life who wins in the elections to the Scottish Parliament?

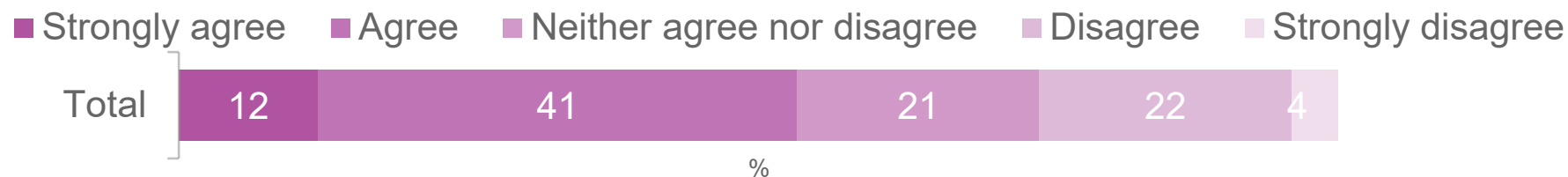


Those who said 'Not very much' or 'None at all' varied by sex and SIMD

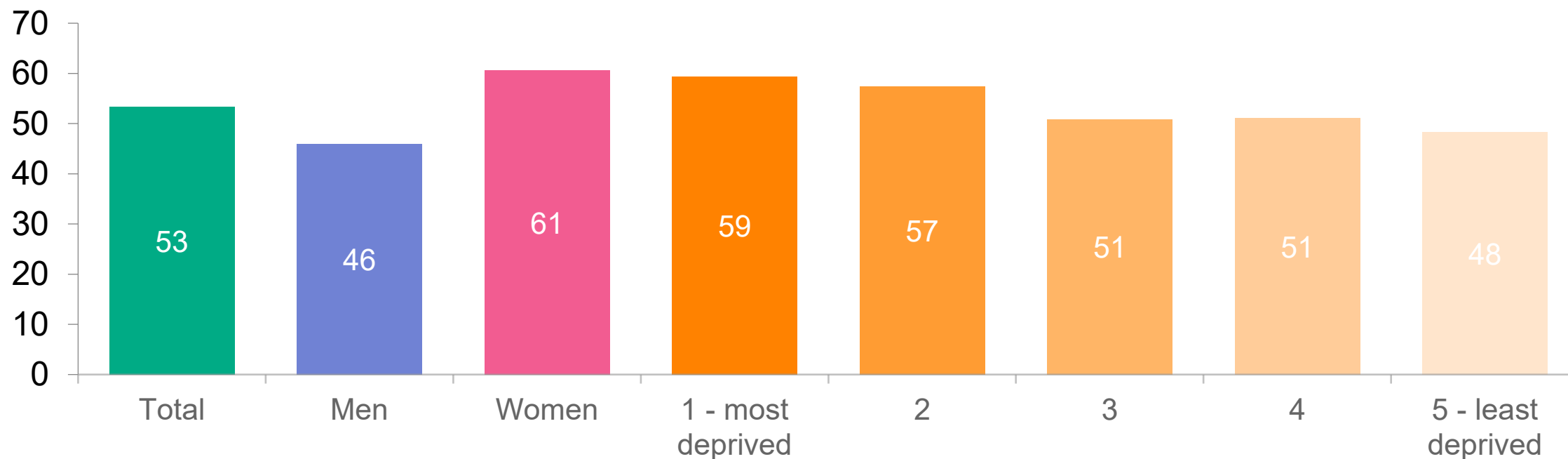


Base (unweighted): All (2348), young men (1153), young women (1193), SIMD 1 (420), 2 (398), 3 (386), 4 (555), 5 (589)

“Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me cannot really make sense of it all”

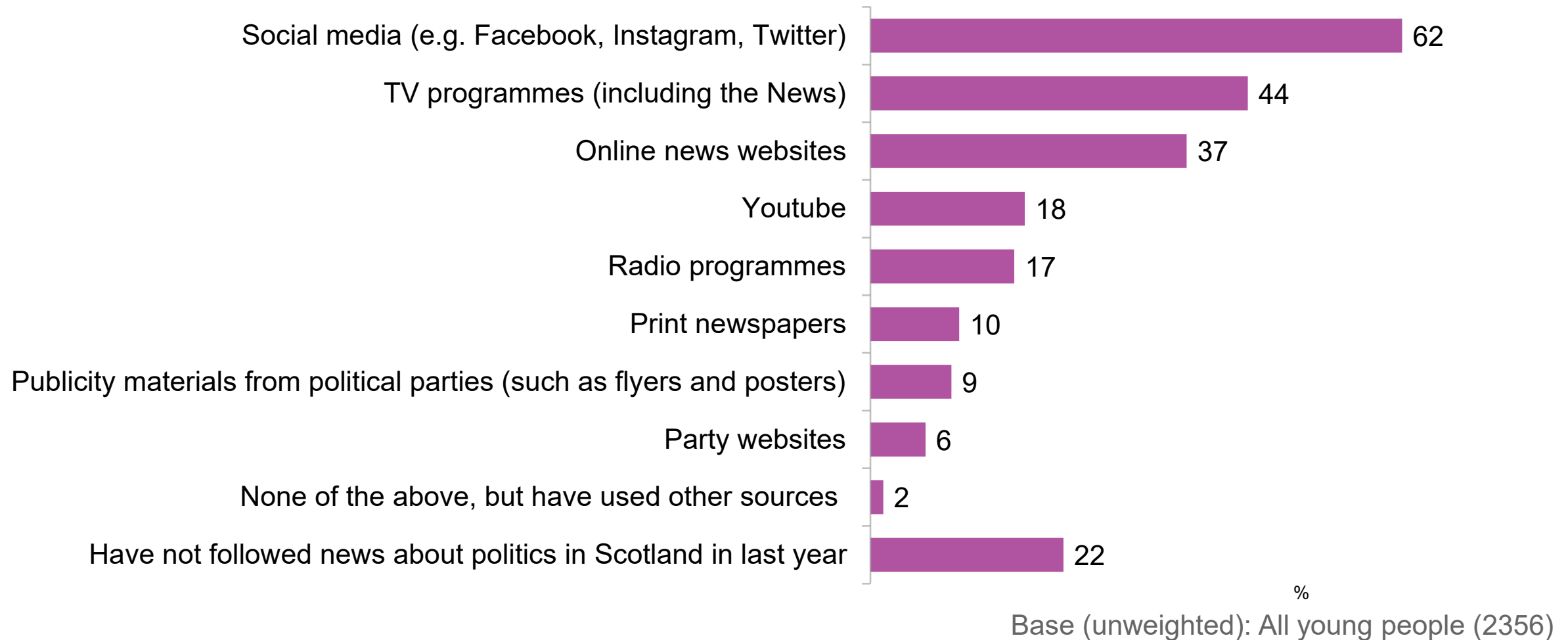


Those who said they ‘Strongly agree’ or ‘Agree’ also varied by sex and SIMD



Base (unweighted): All (2355), young men (1154), young women (1199), SIMD 1 (422), 2 (300), 3 (386), 4 (558), 5 (589)

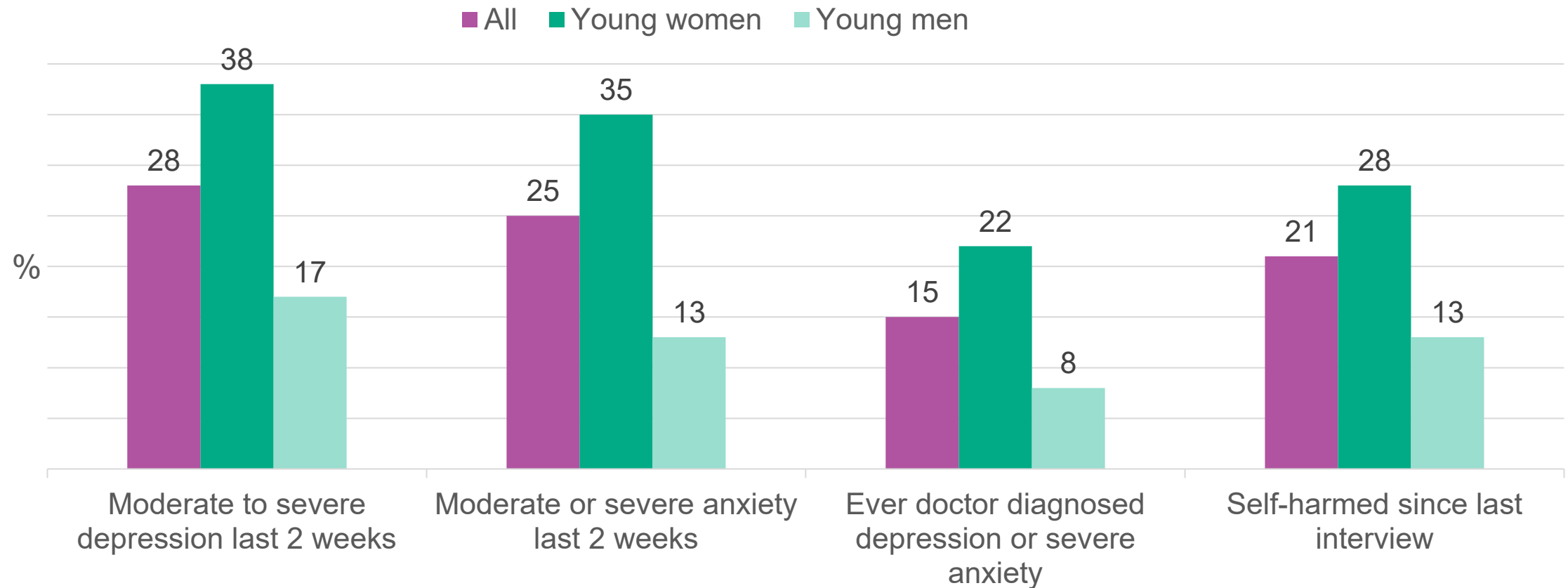
Sources of information young people have used in the last 12 months to follow news about government and politics in Scotland



Mental health and life satisfaction

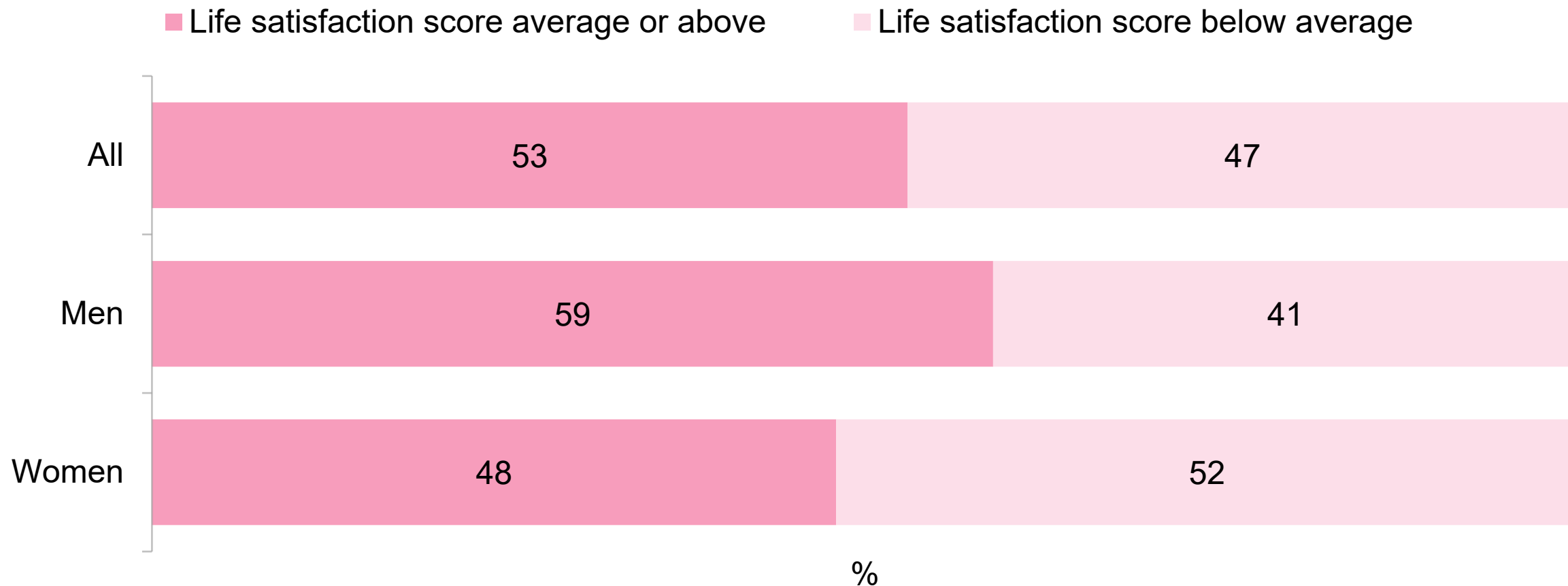
Paul Bradshaw

Across a range of measures, young women were significantly more likely than young men to report poorer mental health



Bases (unweighted): All young people; exact base size varies by question, between 1865 and 1886.

Young women were also more likely than young men to report below average life satisfaction



Bases (unweighted): All young people = 1944; young men = 890; young women = 1049.

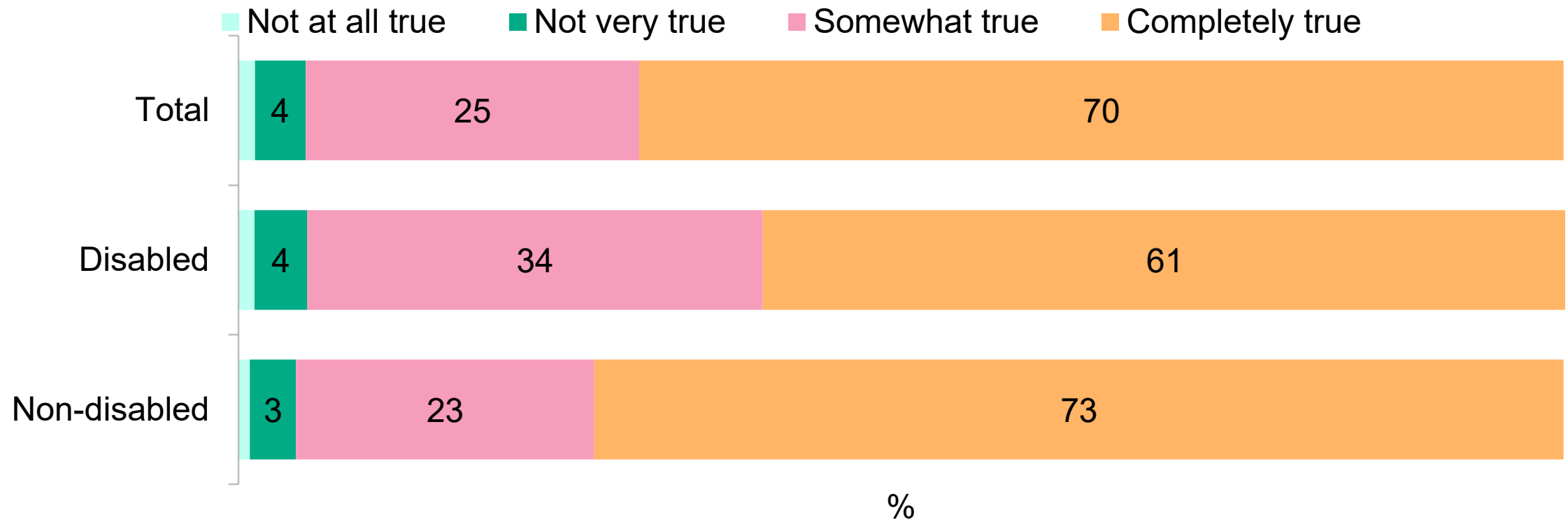
Most young people had done something to support their mental health



Bases (unweighted): All young people = 1888. Chart shows answers to the question: "Since we last spoke to you in [DATE], which of the following, if any, have you done to support your mental health?"

Most young people said there was at least one adult who they trusted and could talk to if they had a problem

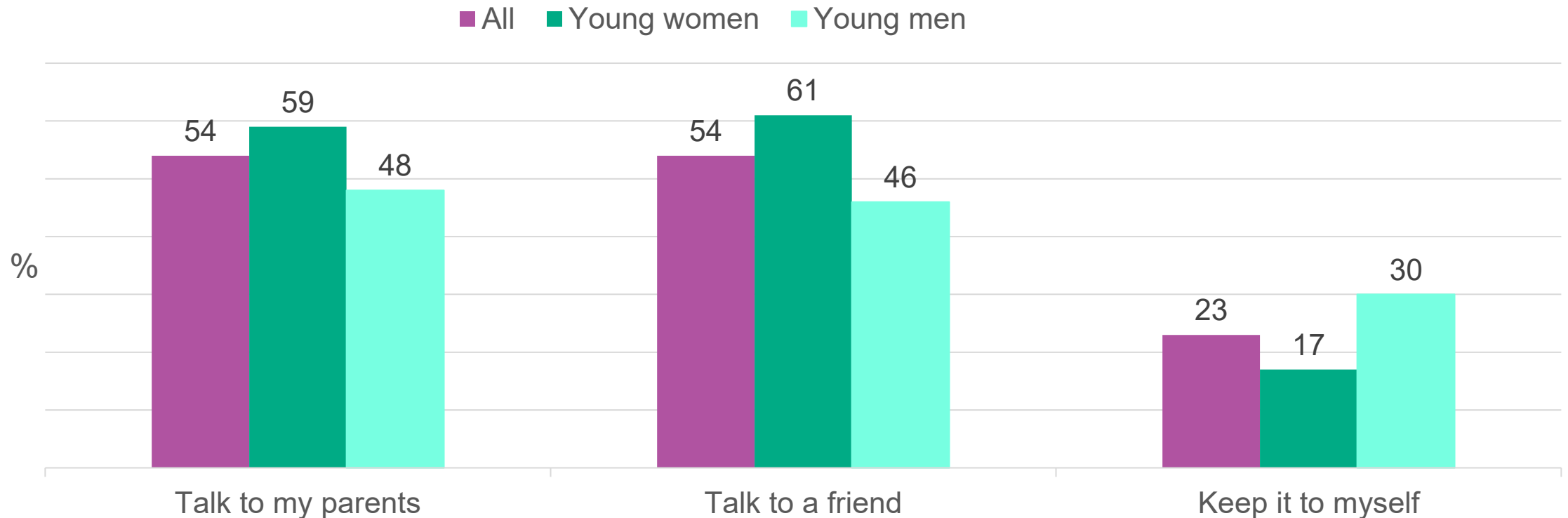
“There is at least one adult that I trust and can talk to if I have a problem”



Bases (unweighted): All young people = 1930; Disabled= 227; Non-disabled = 1261.

Young women were more likely than young men to talk to someone if they were worried about something

“Most people feel worried from time to time. Who do you speak to if you are worried about something?”



Bases (unweighted): All young people = 1929; young men = 883; young women = 1041

Thank you

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