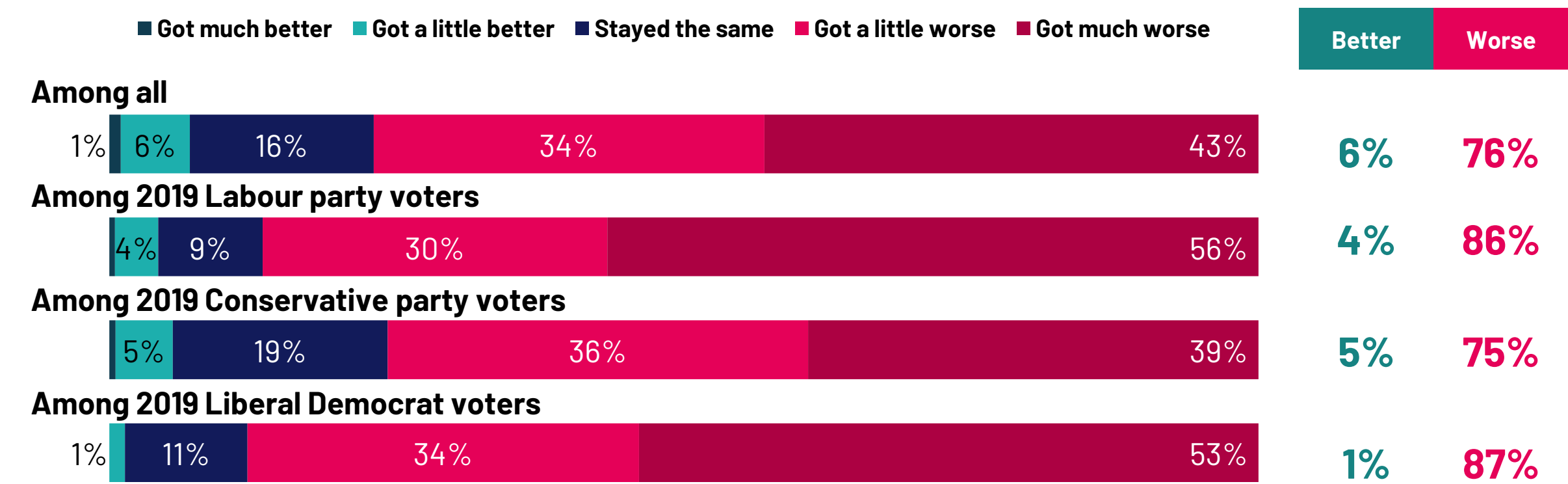


Ipsos UK

Public attitudes on public service performance

Three-quarters of Britons believe public services have deteriorated in the past five years, a view particularly held by 2019 Labour and Lib Dem voters.

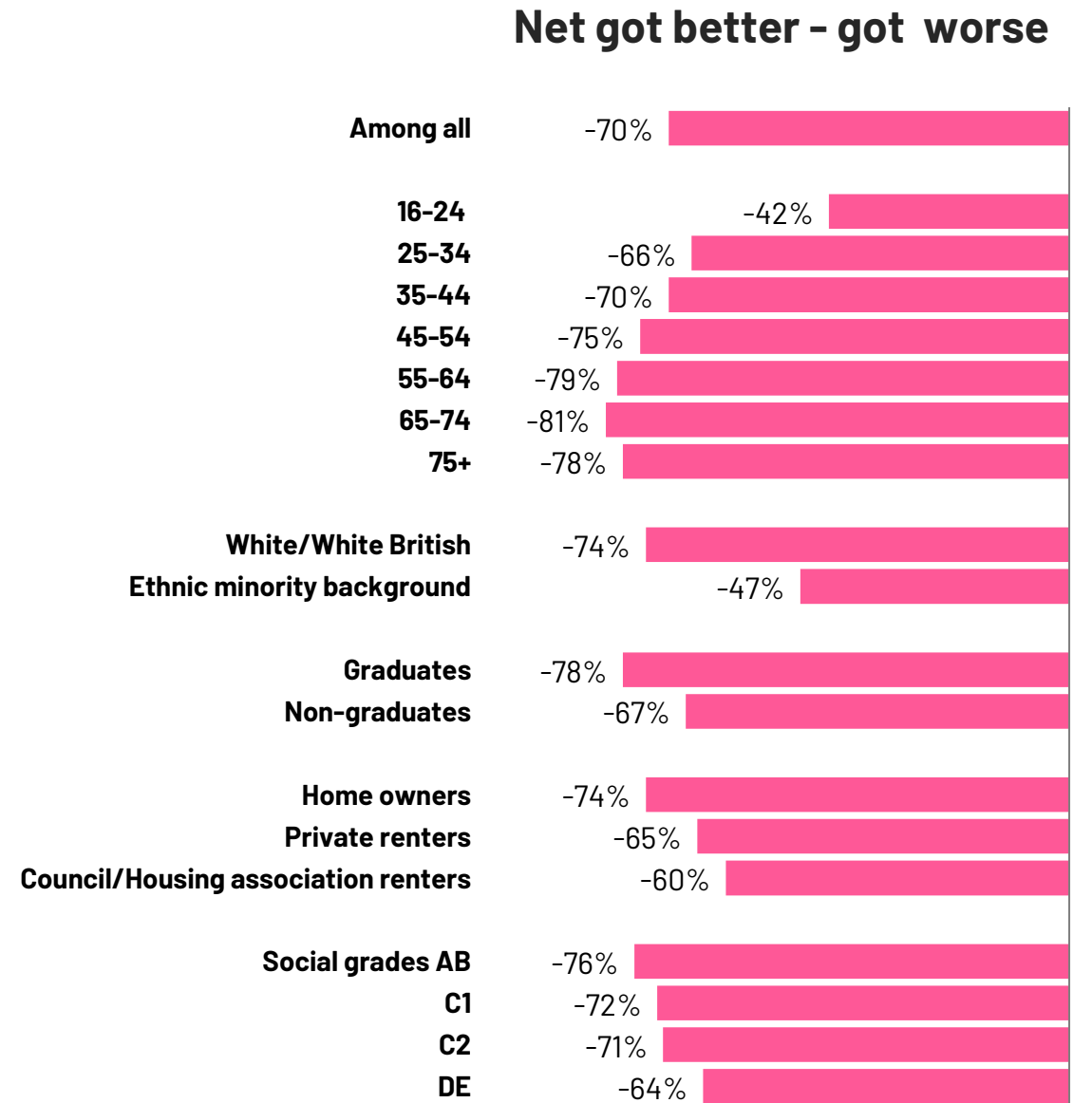
Thinking about public services overall, do you think they have got better or worse in the last five years, or have they stayed the same?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+, 2019 Conservative voters (1,717), Labour voters (1,309), Liberal Democrat voters (433), interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Older, white, graduates, homeowners and people in higher social grades (AB) are particularly more likely to say public services have worsened.

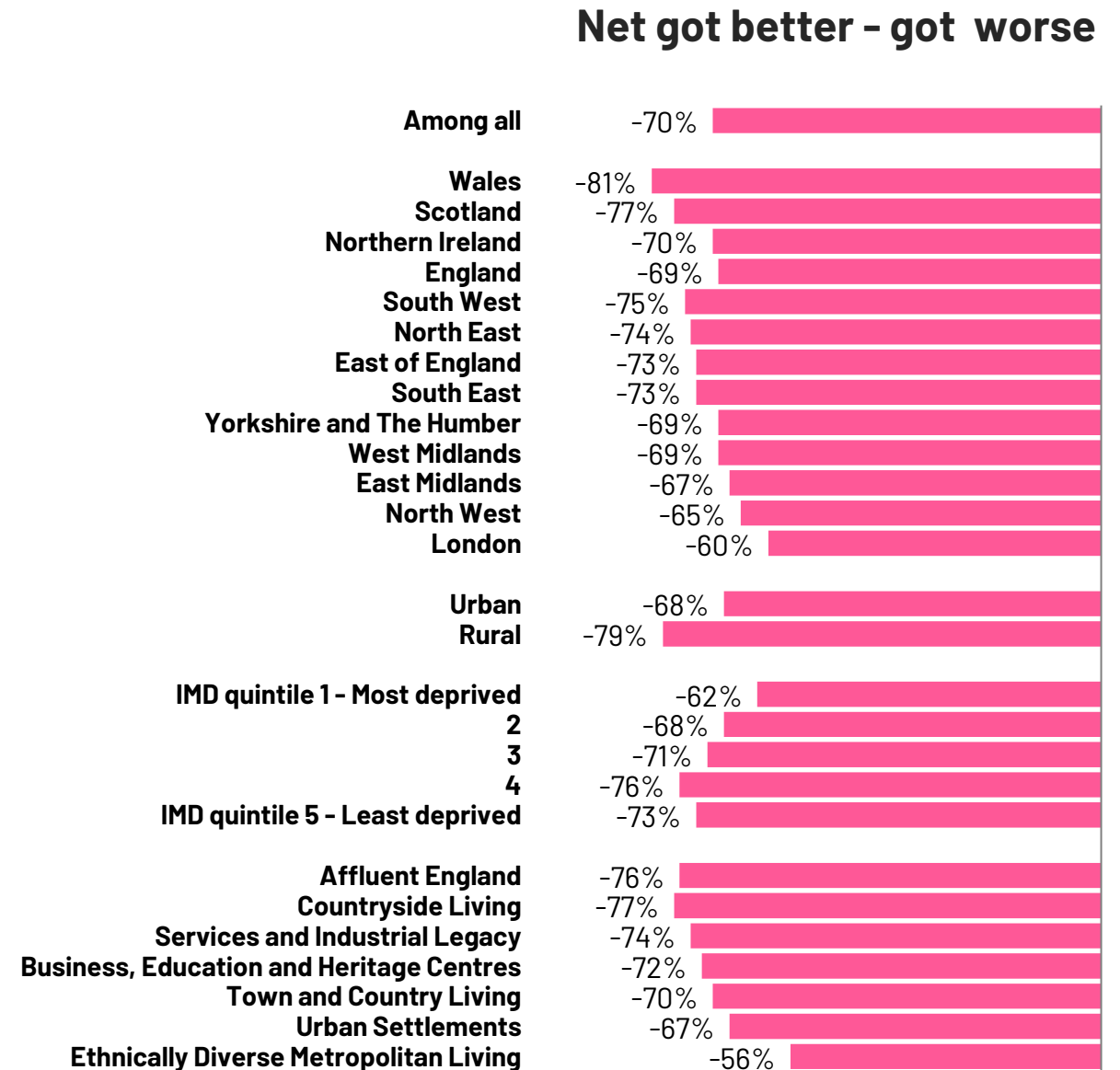
Thinking about public services overall, do you think they have got better or worse in the last five years, or have they stayed the same?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Residents of Scotland, Wales, Northeast and Southern England, rural areas, and less deprived areas are more inclined to report a decline in public services.

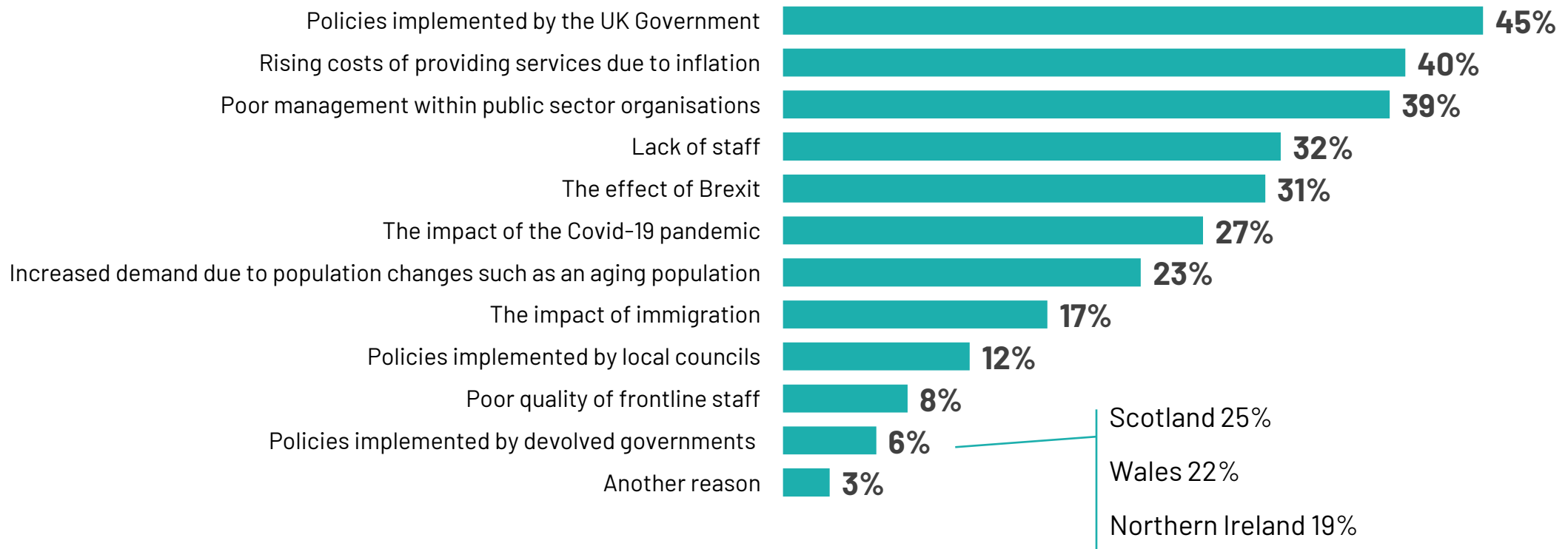
Thinking about public services overall, do you think they have got better or worse in the last five years, or have they stayed the same?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

The deterioration of public services is largely attributed to government policies, inflation, and inadequate public sector management, with 20% to 25% in devolved nations blaming their respective governments.

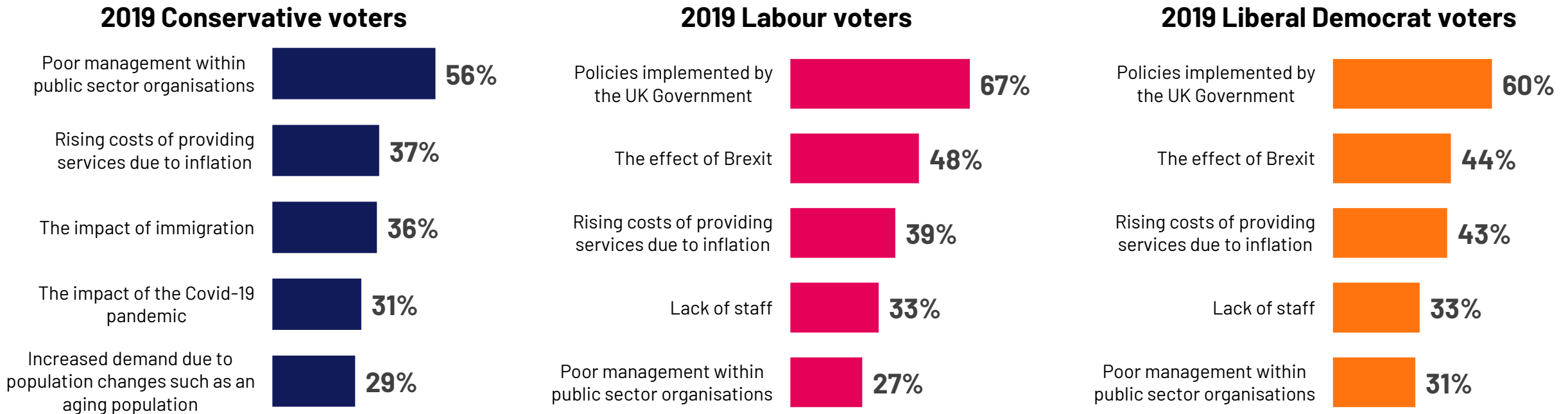
What are the main reasons why you believe public services have worsened?



Base: Those saying public services have got worse in the past five years (4,718), interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Conservative supporters mostly attribute the decline in public services to poor management, while Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters primarily blame the UK Government.

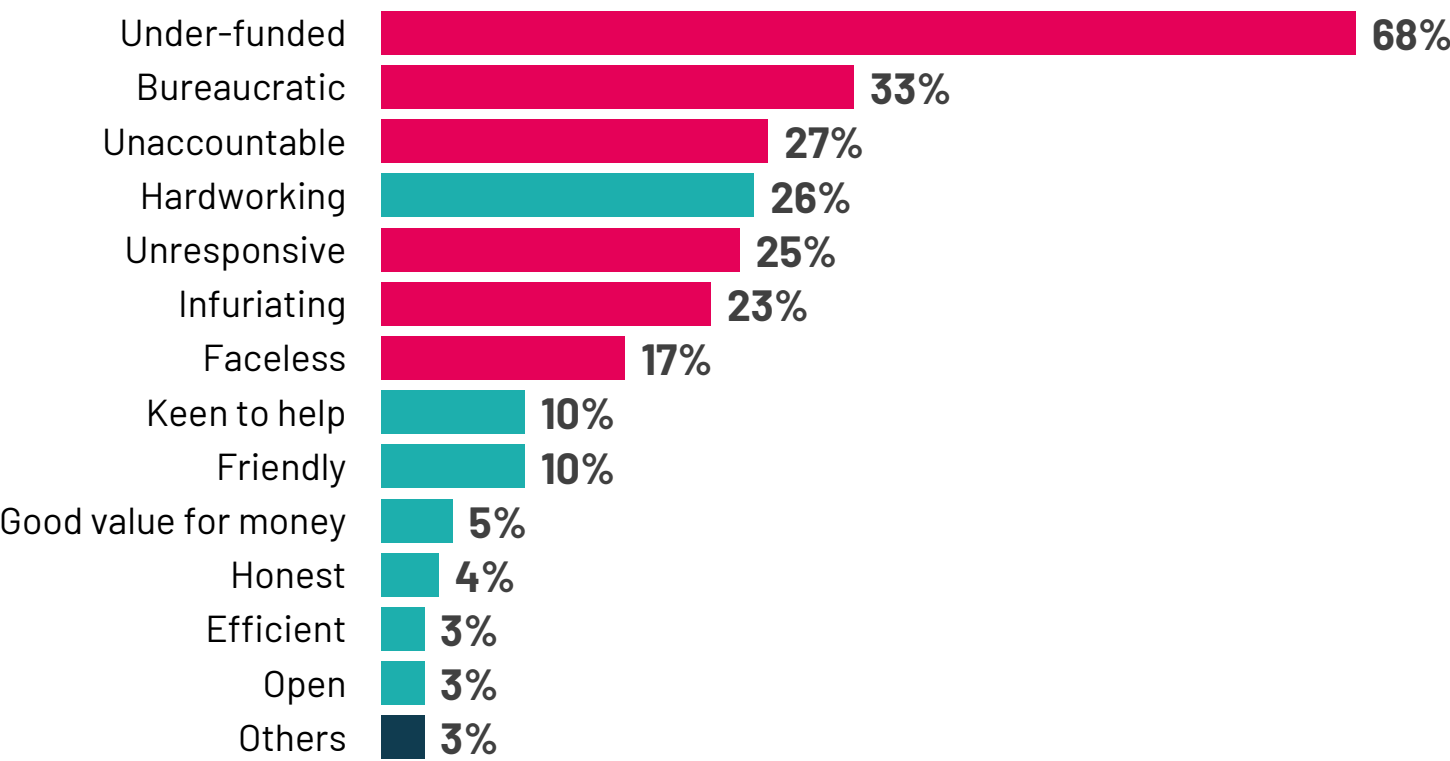
What are the main reasons why you believe public services have worsened?



Base: Those saying public services have got worse in the past five years (2019 Conservative voters 1,334, 2019 Labour voters 1,161, 2019 Liberal Democrat voters 383), interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April – 1st May 2024

The public describes public services as underfunded and bureaucratic, a sentiment consistent with 26 years ago. Positive descriptors are few, unlike in 1998 when Labour was last in power.

The following are a selection of words that people have used to describe public services.
Please select up to 3 words that you think apply



Note different methodology
1998*
69%
34%
18%
34%
18%
20%
22%
31%
37%
15%
14%
23%
9%

Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April – 1st May 2024; 1998 data collected face-to-face via Ipsos’ People Panel; 2016 data collected face-to-face by Ipsos for Deloitte . * Trends should be interpreted as indicative only due to the change in methodology.

Working-age and higher social grade individuals find public services underfunded, while older people use negative descriptors like "bureaucratic" or "unaccountable". Notably, Conservative supporters are more inclined than Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters to characterize public services as underfunded.

The following are a selection of words that people have used to describe public services. Please select up to 3 words that you think apply

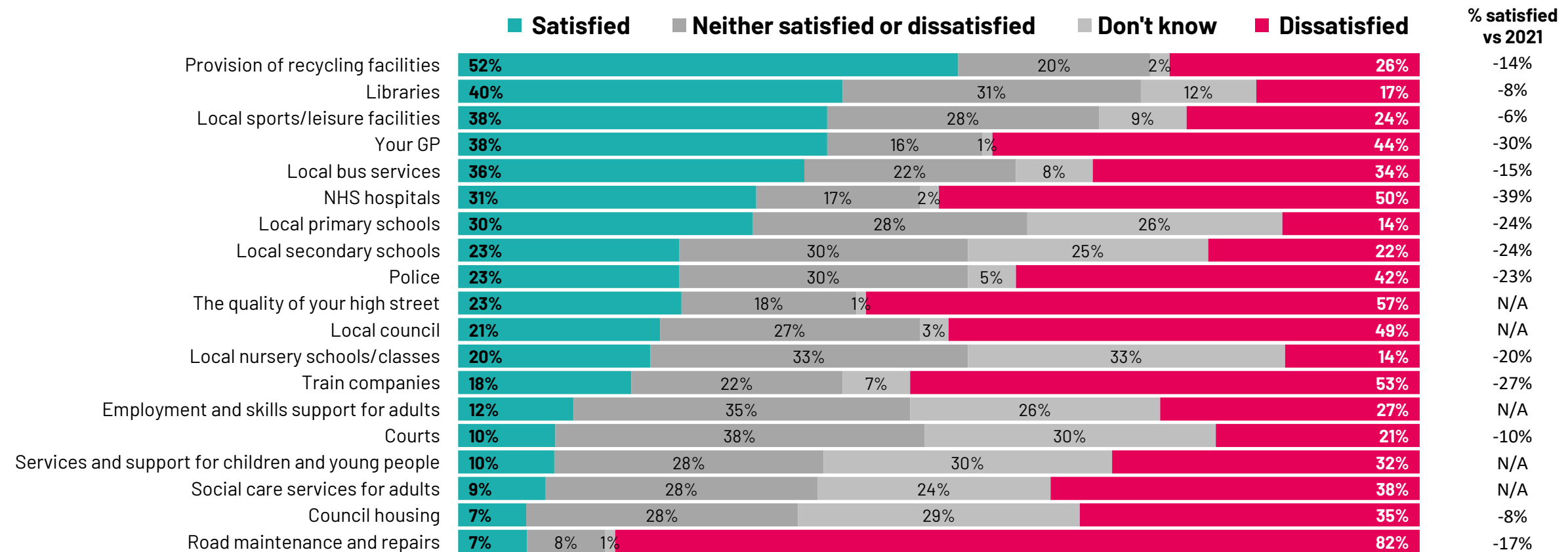
Top 5 words selected

16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	AB	C1	C2	DE	2019 Conservative Party voters	2019 Labour Party voters	2019 Lib Dem Party voters
Under-funded 61%	Under-funded 73%	Under-funded 73%	Under-funded 70%	Under-funded 68%	Under-funded 66%	Under-funded 60%	Under-funded 74%	Under-funded 70%	Under-funded 66%	Under-funded 62%	Under-funded 55%	Under-funded 83%	Under-funded 84%
Hardworking 32%	Hardworking 30%	Bureaucratic 33%	Bureaucratic 38%	Bureaucratic 46%	Bureaucratic 46%	Bureaucratic 42%	Bureaucratic 38%	Bureaucratic 36%	Bureaucratic 29%	Bureaucratic 30%	Bureaucratic 44%	Hardworking 37%	Bureaucratic 42%
Infuriating 26%	Unresponsive 26%	Hardworking 29%	Unaccountable 28%	Unaccountable 32%	Unaccountable 35%	Unaccountable 38%	Hardworking 32%	Unaccountable 28%	Unaccountable 28%	Unaccountable 29%	Unaccountable 41%	Bureaucratic 31%	Hardworking 32%
Unresponsive 25%	Infuriating 25%	Unresponsive 27%	Hardworking 26%	Hardworking 24%	Faceless 26%	Faceless 25%	Unaccountable 27%	Hardworking 25%	Infuriating 25%	Unresponsive 26%	Unresponsive 28%	Unresponsive 23%	Unaccountable 23%
				Unresponsive 24%				Unresponsive 25%					
				Infuriating 24%				Infuriating 25%					
Friendly 20%	Bureaucratic 19%	Unaccountable 26%	Unresponsive 24%		Unresponsive 23%	Unresponsive 23%	Unresponsive 25%		Unresponsive 23%	Hardworking 23%	Infuriating 26%	Infuriating 21%	Unresponsive 20%
	Unaccountable 19%		Infuriating 24%							Infuriating 23%			

Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April – 1st May 2024; 1998 data collected face-to-face via Ipsos’ People Panel; 2016 data collected face-to-face by Ipsos for Deloitte . * Trends should be interpreted as indicative only due to the change in methodology.

Public satisfaction with most public services is low, with recycling the only service with positive ratings from over half of Britons. Many services, especially GPs and hospitals, have declined significantly in satisfaction since 2021. Road maintenance is the lowest-rated service.

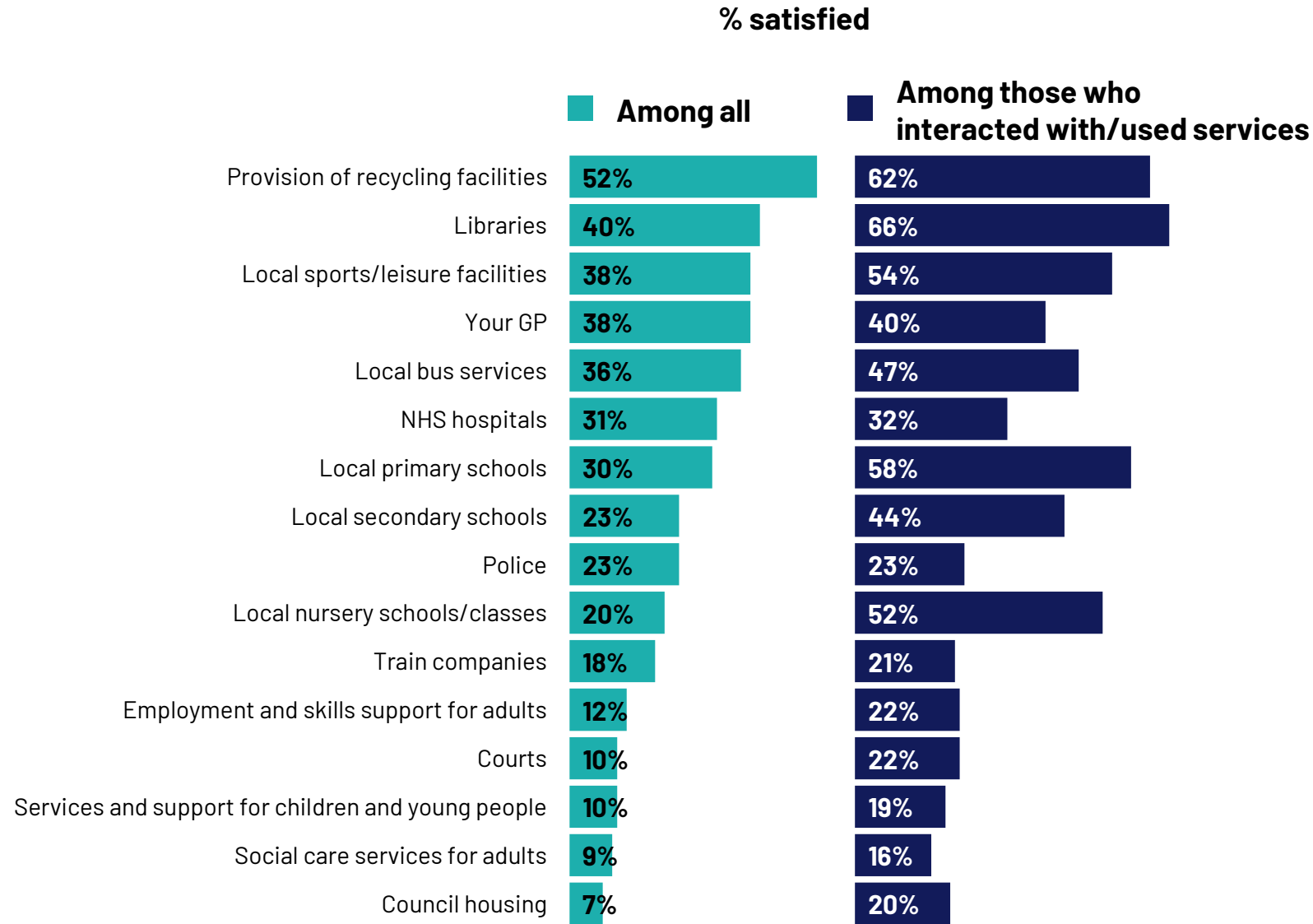
Thinking about each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Service users tend to be more satisfied, particularly with schools, libraries, and leisure facilities. However, this difference is minimal for health services, police, and trains.

Thinking about each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each? Which of these, if any, have you or someone in your household used/interacted with in the last year?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024.

Satisfaction with services, particularly health and education, has also plummeted among users over the past two decades.

Thinking about each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each? Which of these, if any, have you or someone in your household used/interacted with in the last year?

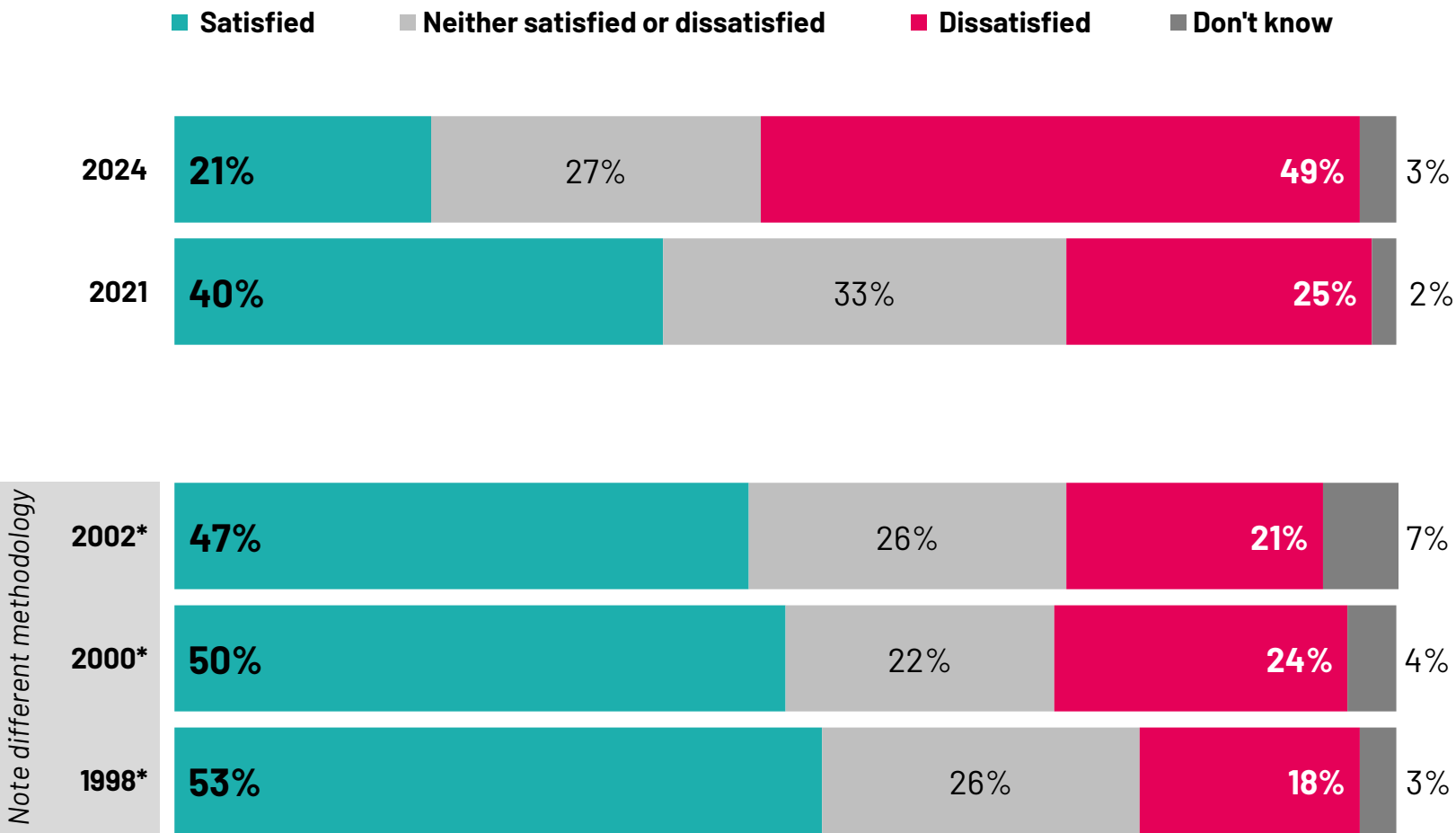
Your GP
Local primary schools
Libraries
Local secondary schools
Local nursery schools/classes
NHS hospitals
Provision of recycling facilities
Local sports/leisure facilities
Council housing
Local bus services
Train companies

Interacted with/used services			
% satisfied			
Note different methodology			
1998*	2000*	2002*	2024
90%	91%	91%	40%
88%	87%	89%	58%
87%	88%	85%	66%
82%	80%	78%	44%
82%	79%	76%	52%
80%	82%	76%	32%
78%	80%	76%	62%
77%	76%	76%	54%
72%	60%	49%	20%
62%	64%	66%	47%
53%	58%	49%	21%

Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ and users of each service (base sizes between 351 and 5,206), interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April – 1st May 2024; 1998-2002 data collected face-to-face via Ipsos' People Panel. * Trends should be interpreted as indicative only due to the change in methodology.

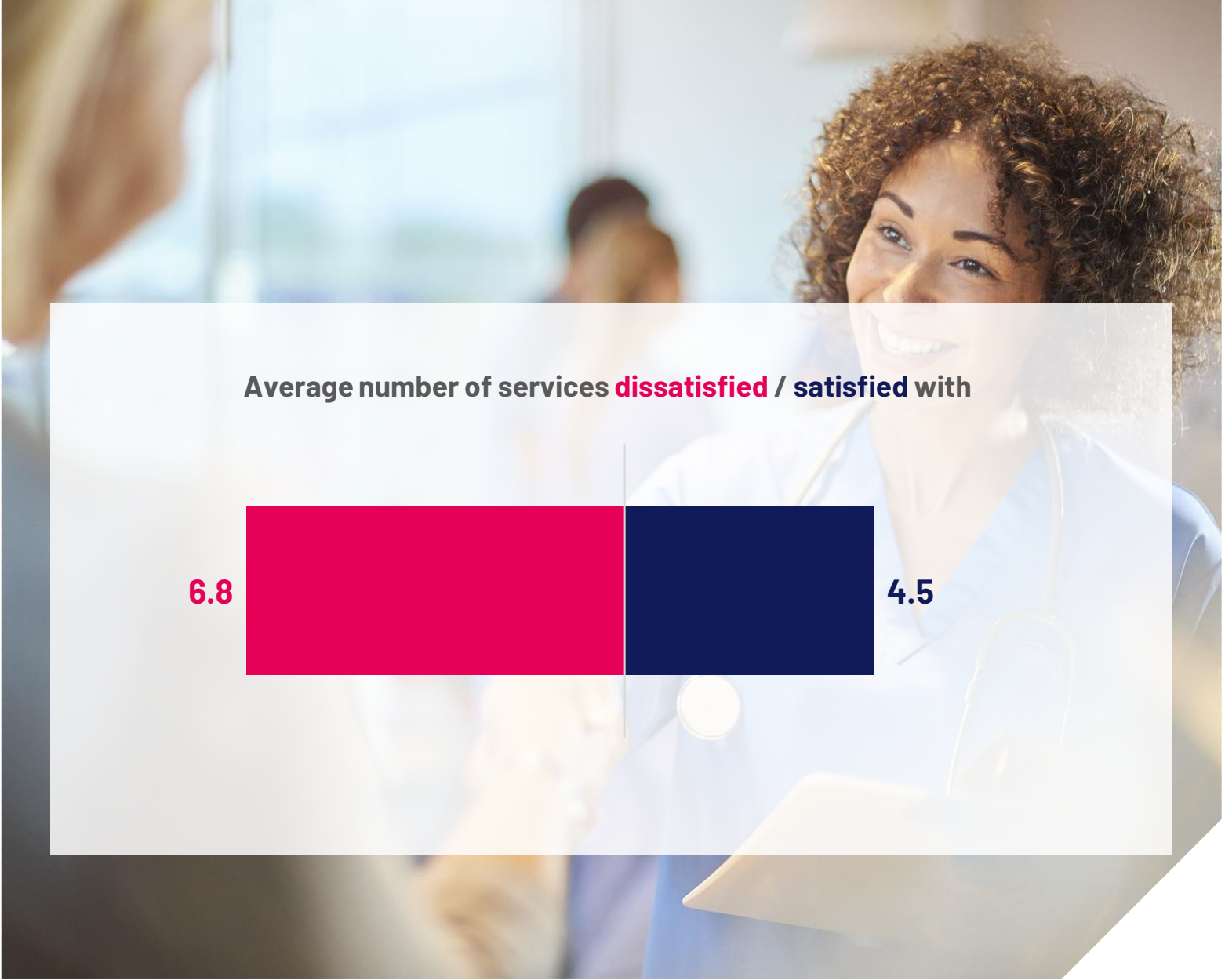
Satisfaction with local councils has also dropped sharply since 2021.

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council runs things?



On average, the public is dissatisfied with nearly 7 out of 19 public services and satisfied with only between 4 and 5.

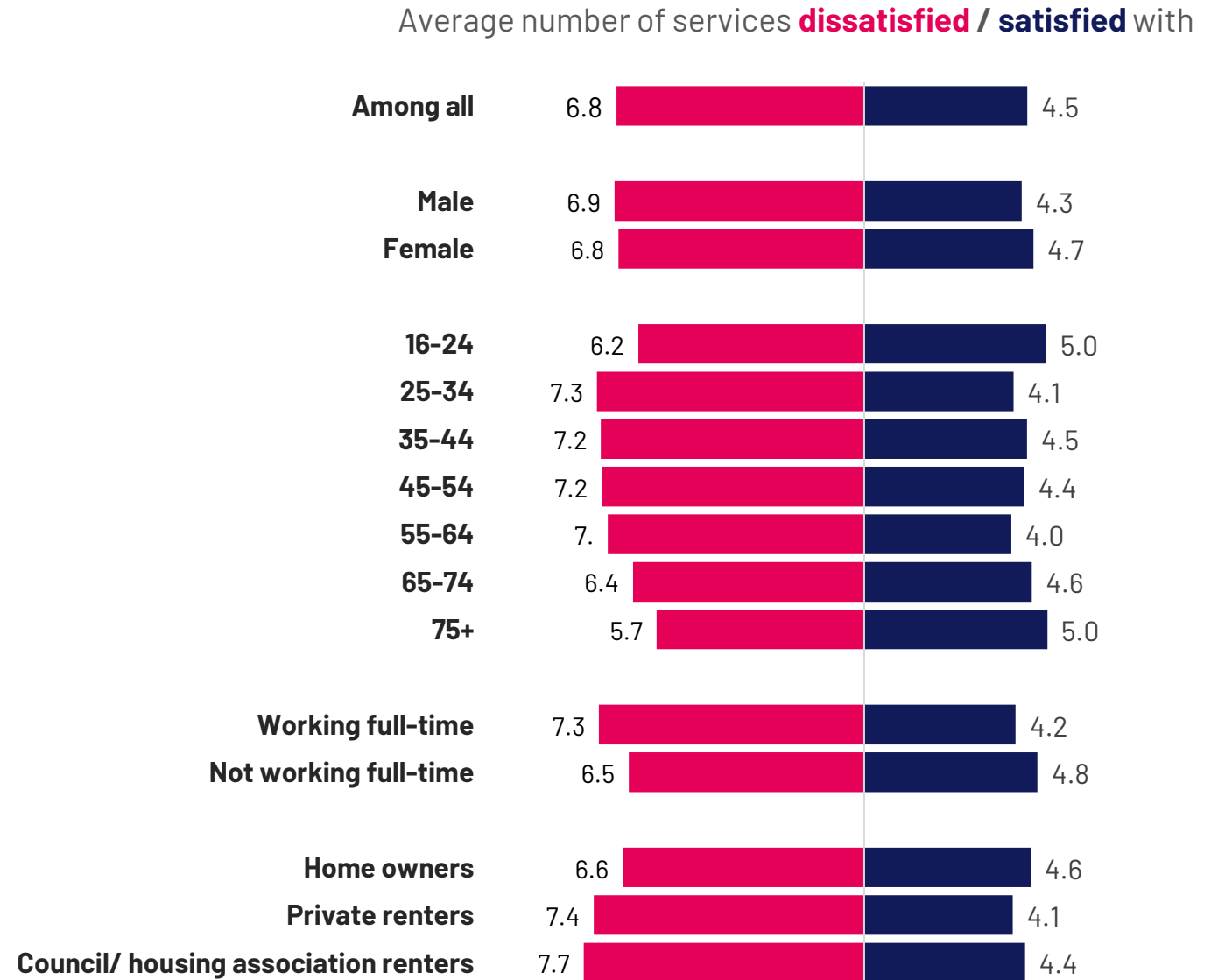
Thinking about each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024.

People of working age and renters are satisfied with fewer services and dissatisfied with more.

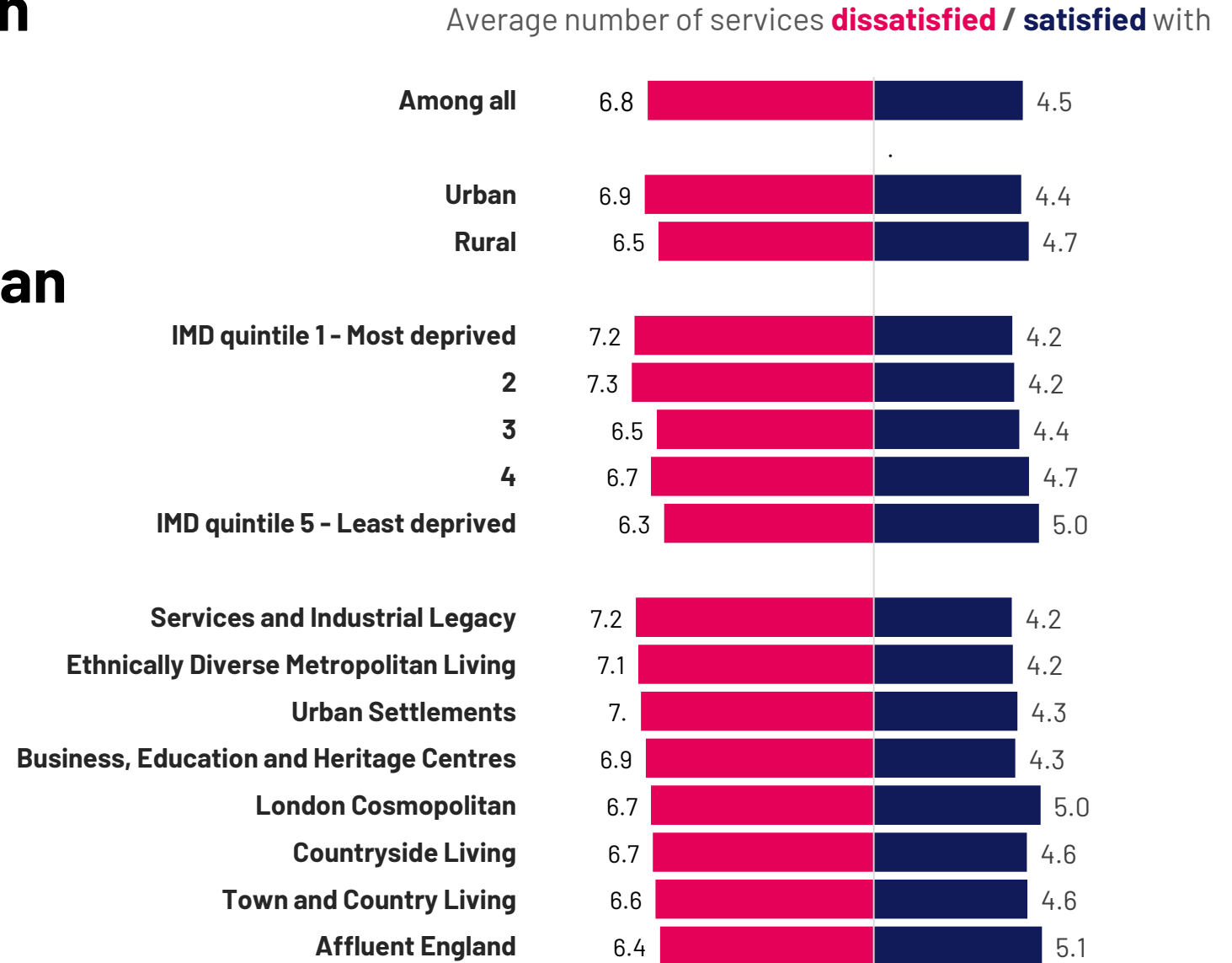
Thinking about each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each?



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Public service dissatisfaction is higher in areas like legacy services and industry areas (such as traditional mining areas), metropolitan and urban settlements, and more deprived areas.

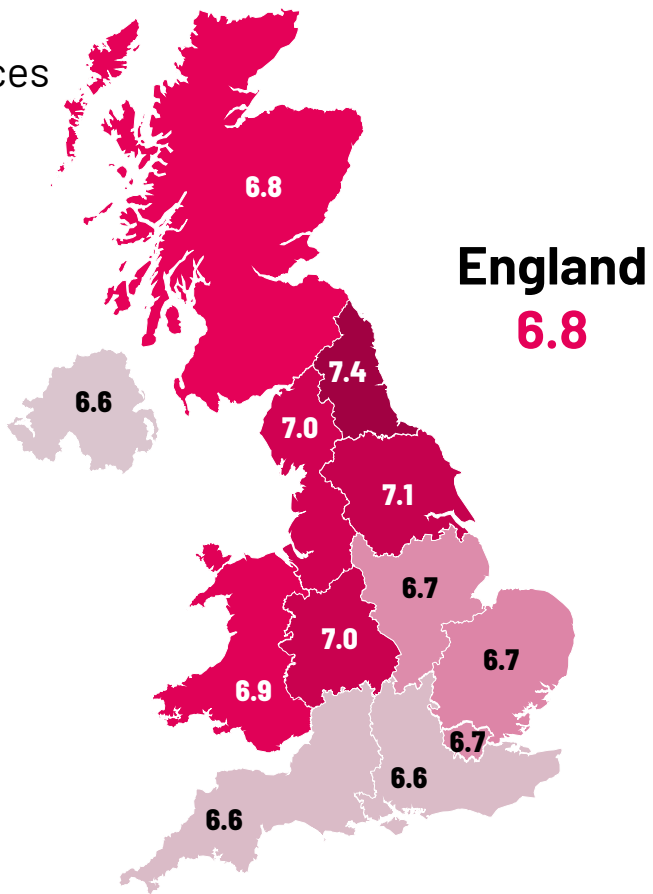
Thinking about each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each?



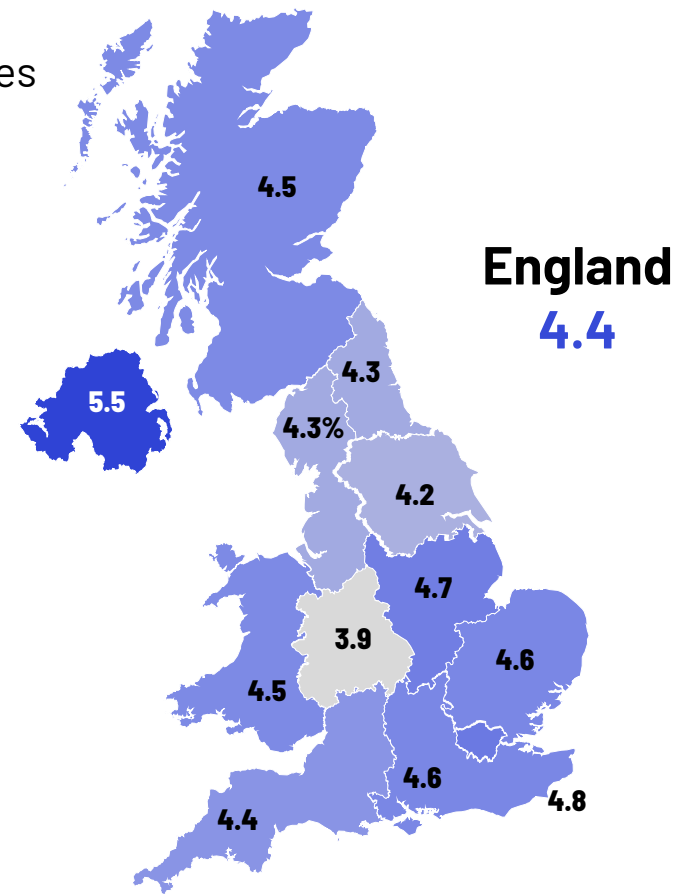
Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

In every region, dissatisfaction outweighs satisfaction with public services, with the gap being larger in the North of England compared to the South.

Number of services **dissatisfied** with



Number of services **satisfied** with

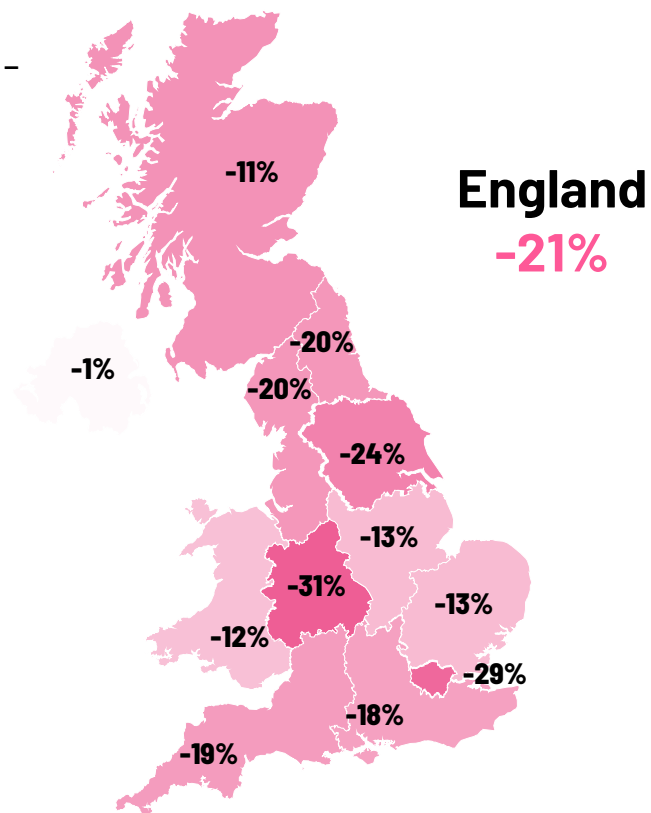


Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

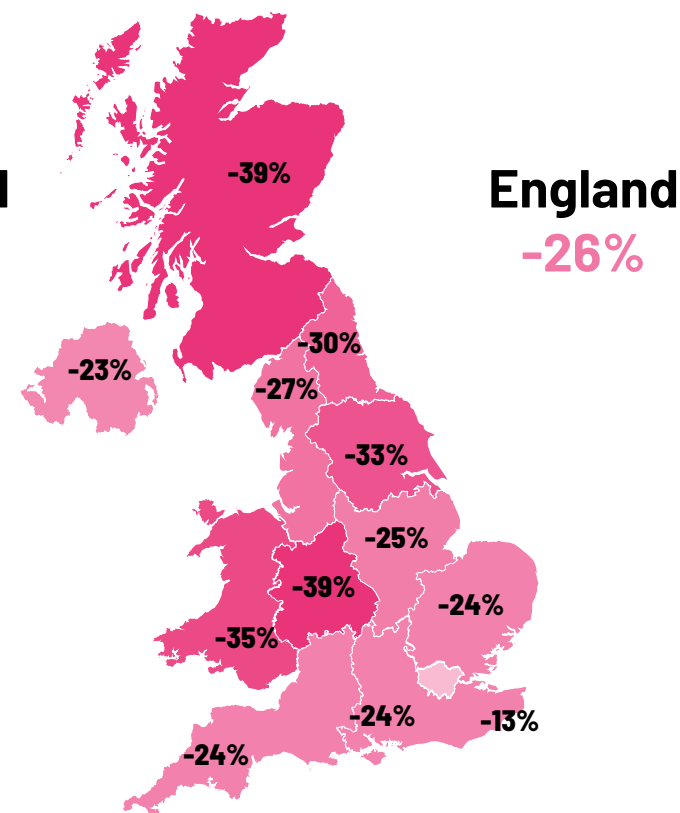
Dissatisfaction with police is highest in the West Midlands and London, while dissatisfaction with local councils is highest in Scotland, Wales, Yorkshire & Humber and the West Midlands.

% net **satisfied** -
dissatisfied

Police



Local council

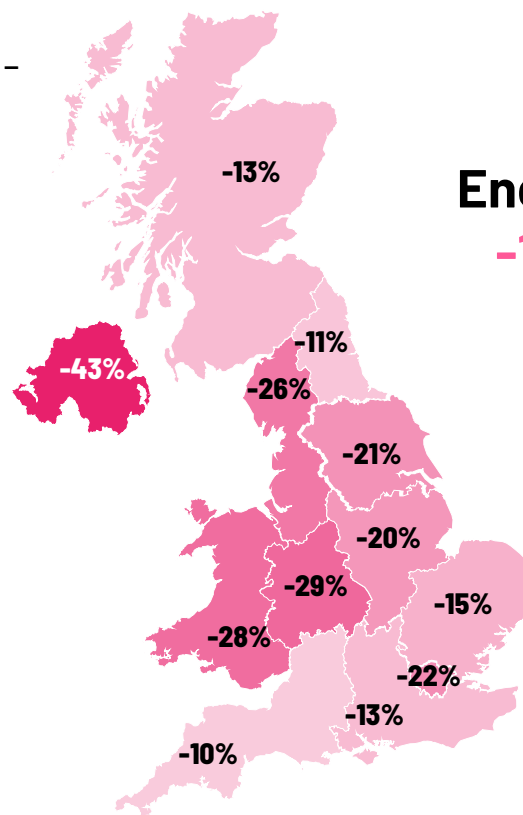


Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Dissatisfaction with hospitals is higher than for GPs across the UK. Northern Ireland reports the highest dissatisfaction for both, followed by Wales and the West Midlands for hospitals. In contrast, the South West and Scotland are the only regions with net satisfaction for GPs.

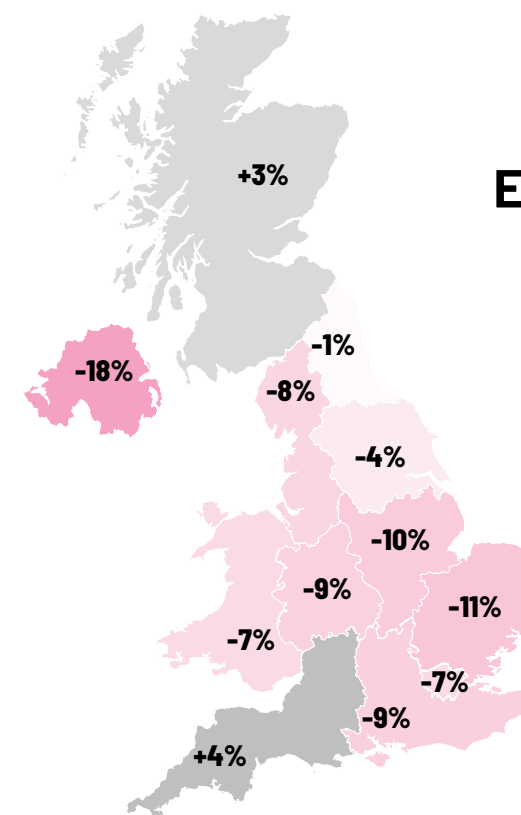
% net **satisfied** -
dissatisfied

**NHS
hospitals**



**England
-19%**

GPs



**England
-7%**

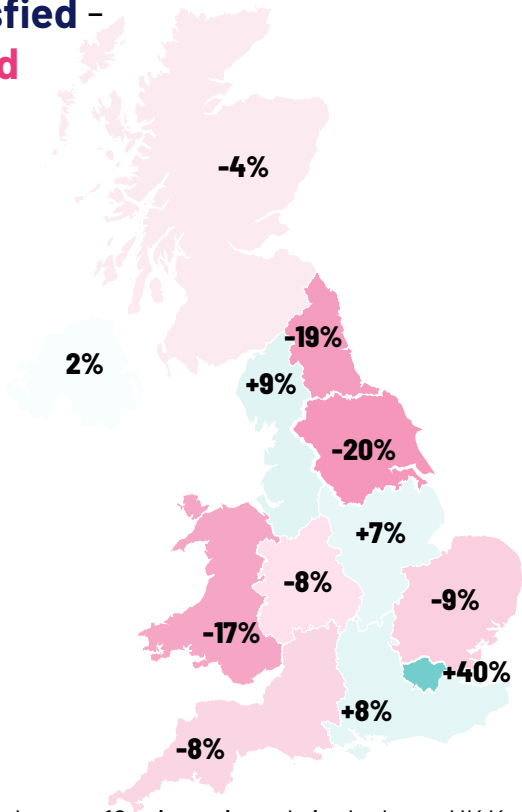
Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Satisfaction with local bus services is lowest in the North East, Yorkshire & Humber, and Wales, while London has the highest satisfaction. Road satisfaction is low across the UK but slightly better in London. Train satisfaction is higher in Scotland and Northern Ireland but still negative.

% net **satisfied** - **dissatisfied**

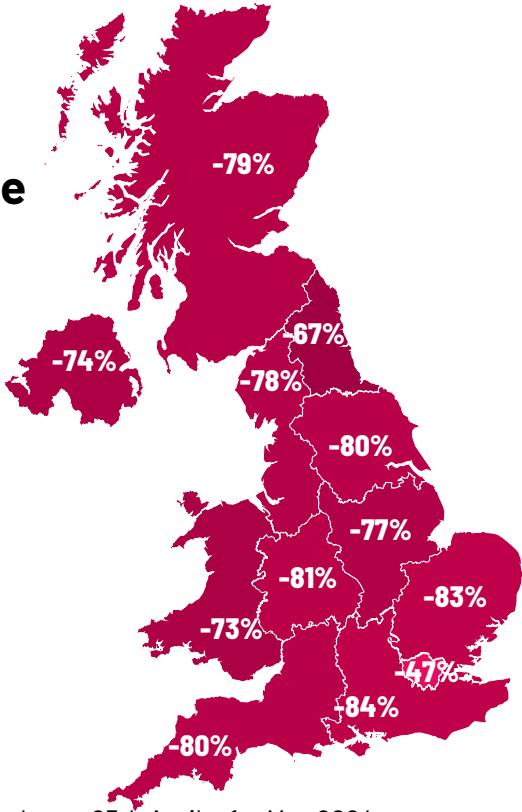
Local bus services

England
4%



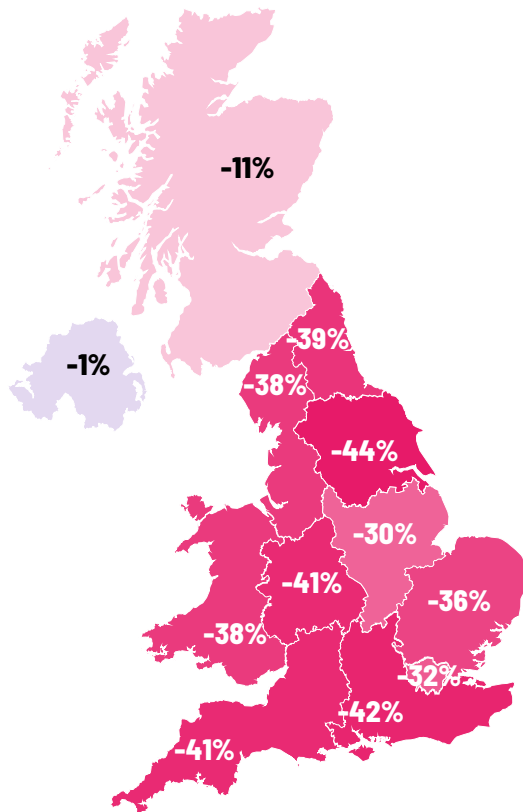
Road maintenance and repairs

England
-75%



Train companies

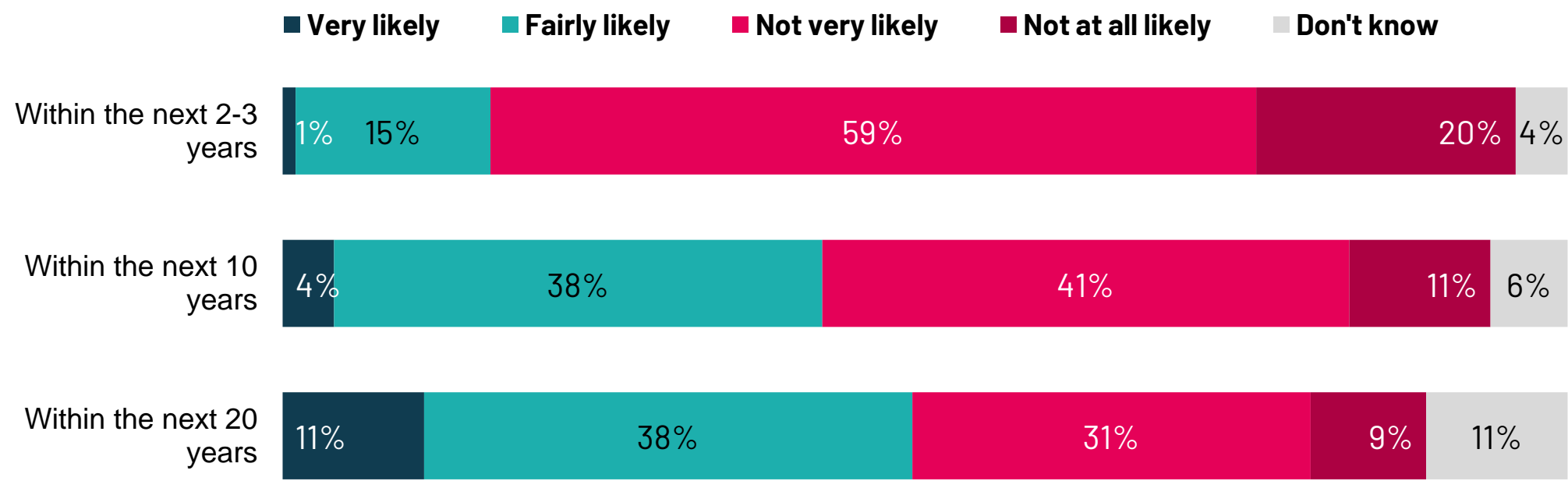
England
-38%



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

The public is pessimistic about the future of public services, with only 1 in 7 believing in improvement within the next 5 years and only half within 20 years. Young people are more optimistic.

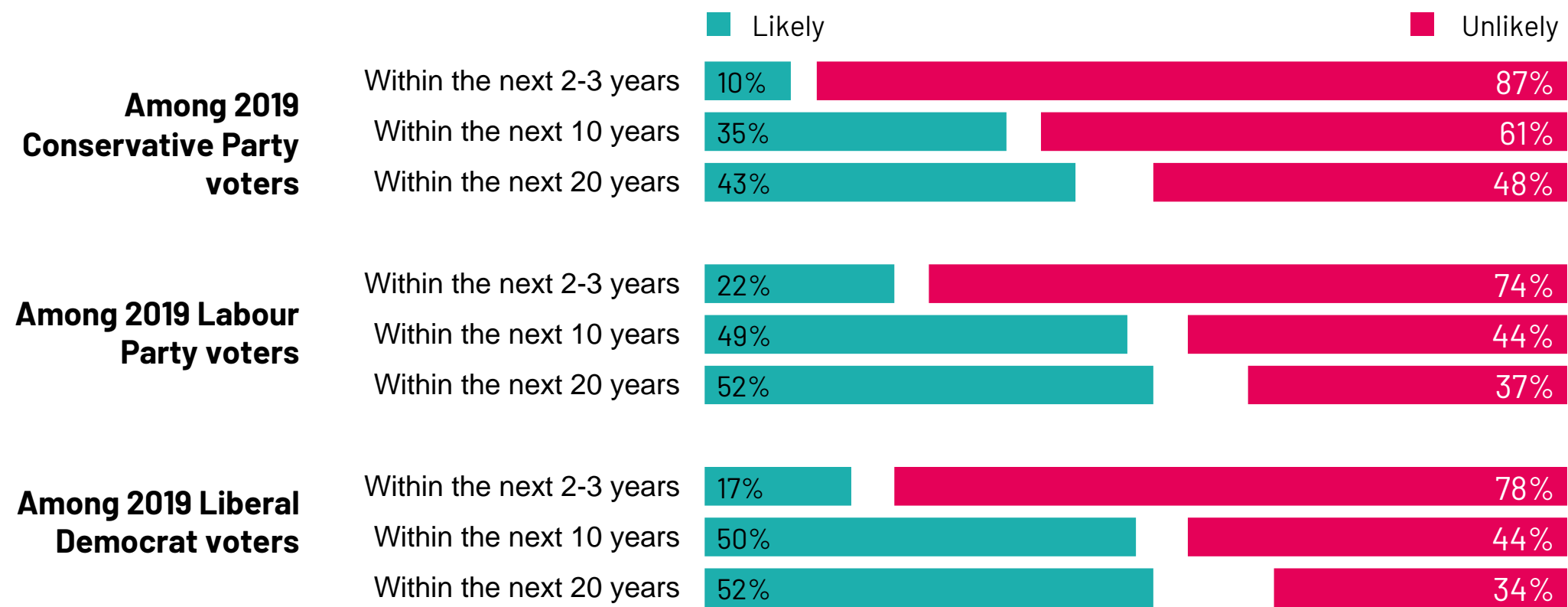
How likely do you believe that public services will see improvement, if at all...



Base: 5,875 UK adults, age 16+ , interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

Labour and Lib Dem voters are more optimistic about improvements in public services within the next ten years, while Conservative voters are divided about improvements within 20 years.

How likely do you believe that public services will see improvement, if at all...



Base: 2019 Conservative voters (1,717), Labour voters (1,309), Liberal Democrat voters (433), interviewed via the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel, Fieldwork dates: 25th April - 1st May 2024

TECHNICAL NOTE

Technical note

This study was conducted on the **Ipsos KnowledgePanel** between 25th April – 1st May 2024. In total 5,875 interviews were achieved with residents across the United Kingdom aged 16+.

The KnowledgePanel is a random probability survey panel. Panellists are recruited via a random probability unclustered address-based sampling method. This means that every household in the UK has a known chance of being selected to join the panel. Letters are sent to selected addresses in the UK (using the Postcode Address File) inviting them to become members of the panel. Members of the public who are digitally excluded are able to register to the KnowledgePanel either by post or by telephone, and are given a tablet, an email address, and basic internet which allows them to complete surveys online.

The sample for this survey was stratified by nation and education. Design weights were applied to correct for unequal probabilities of selection of household members. Calibration weights were also applied to correct for differential response rates using the latest population statistics relevant to the surveyed population to correct for imbalances in the achieved sample. Data was weighted on: nation and region, age, gender, IMD, qualifications, ethnicity, household size.

Sample sizes for analysis

Total respondents	5,875	Wales	542
		Scotland	516
16-24	303	Northern Ireland	576
25-34	476	England	4,241
35-44	797	North East	230
45-54	991	North West	548
55-64	1,382	Yorkshire and The Humber	446
65-74	1,276	East Midlands	410
75+	650	West Midlands	434
		East of England	481
White/White British	5,357	South East	678
Ethnic minority background	447	South West	523
		London	491
Graduates	1,807		
Non-graduates	3,998	Urban	4,402
		Rural	1,473
Home owners	4,562		
Private renters	566	IMD quintile 1 – Most deprived	1,080
Council/Housing association renters	542	2	1,210
		3	1,186
Social grades AB	1,739	4	1,197
C1	2,141	IMD quintile 5 – Least deprived	1,202
C2	873		
DE	625	Affluent England	512
		Business, Education and Heritage Centres	861
2019 Conservative Party voters	1,717	Countryside Living	1,115
2019 Labour Party voters	1,309	Ethnically Diverse Metropolitan Living	334
2019 Liberal Democrat voters	433	London Cosmopolitan	169
		Services and Industrial Legacy	919

ONS Area Classifications

Brief description

Affluent England

Typically live largely in counties in England near to and around London – Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Oxfordshire and Surrey

Business, education and heritage centres

Live within larger cities throughout the UK, with either country and/or regional importance

Countryside living

Characterised by living in rural areas with a low population density and a higher median age compared with the UK as a whole

Ethnically diverse metropolitan living

Tend to live in Inner and Outer London Boroughs. Areas outside London include Birmingham, Leicester, Luton and Slough

London cosmopolitan

Located within 12 Inner London boroughs, characterised by a very high population density and a relatively low median age

Services and industrial Legacy

Predominately in the Central Belt in Scotland, northern England and south Wales – all traditional mining areas

Town and country living

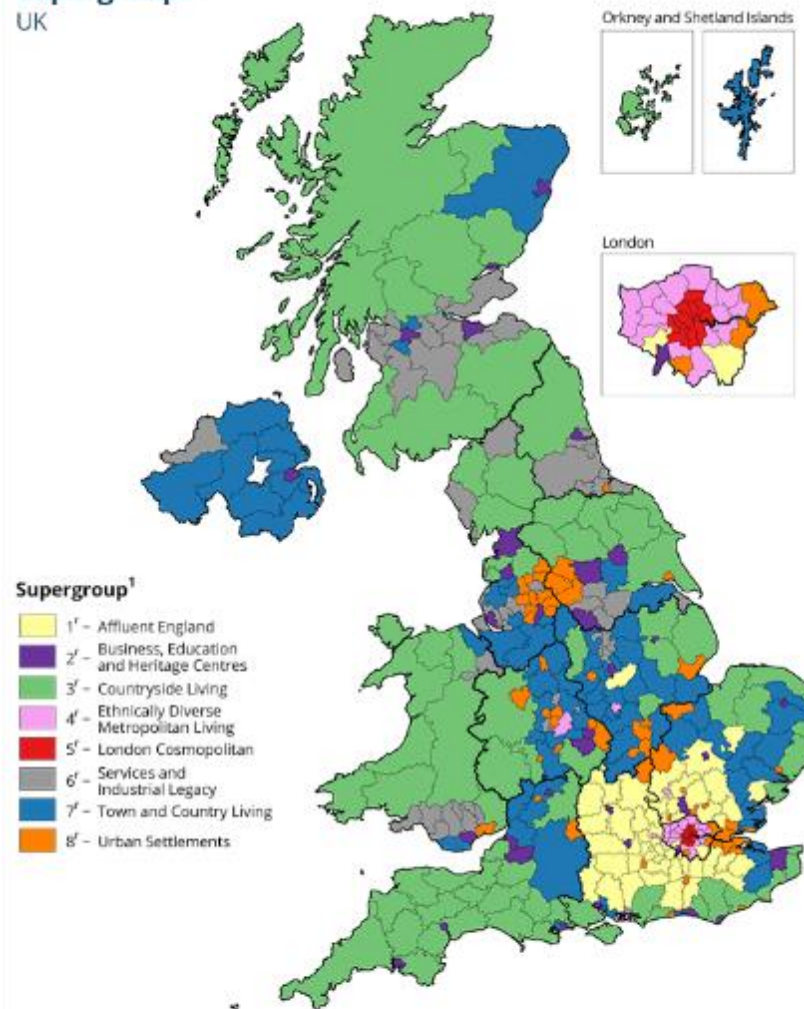
Represented within all countries of the UK and English regions with the exception of the North East and London. The population density is below the UK as a whole

Urban settlements

Confined to the nine English regions and Wales (Newport) only. The areas are characterised by a slightly younger age structure than nationally

2011 Area Classification for Local Authorities: Supergroups

UK



Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0.

Contains OS data © Crown copyright 2017
Contains EPS Intellectual Property © Crown copyright and database right (2017). This information is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3).

1 The superscript (¹) indicates that these are the corrected and revised supergroup clusters.

In this deck some of the data is broken down using the Office for National Statistics Area Classifications – please see the table and map for more details.



May 2024
**Public attitudes on public
service performance**

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