

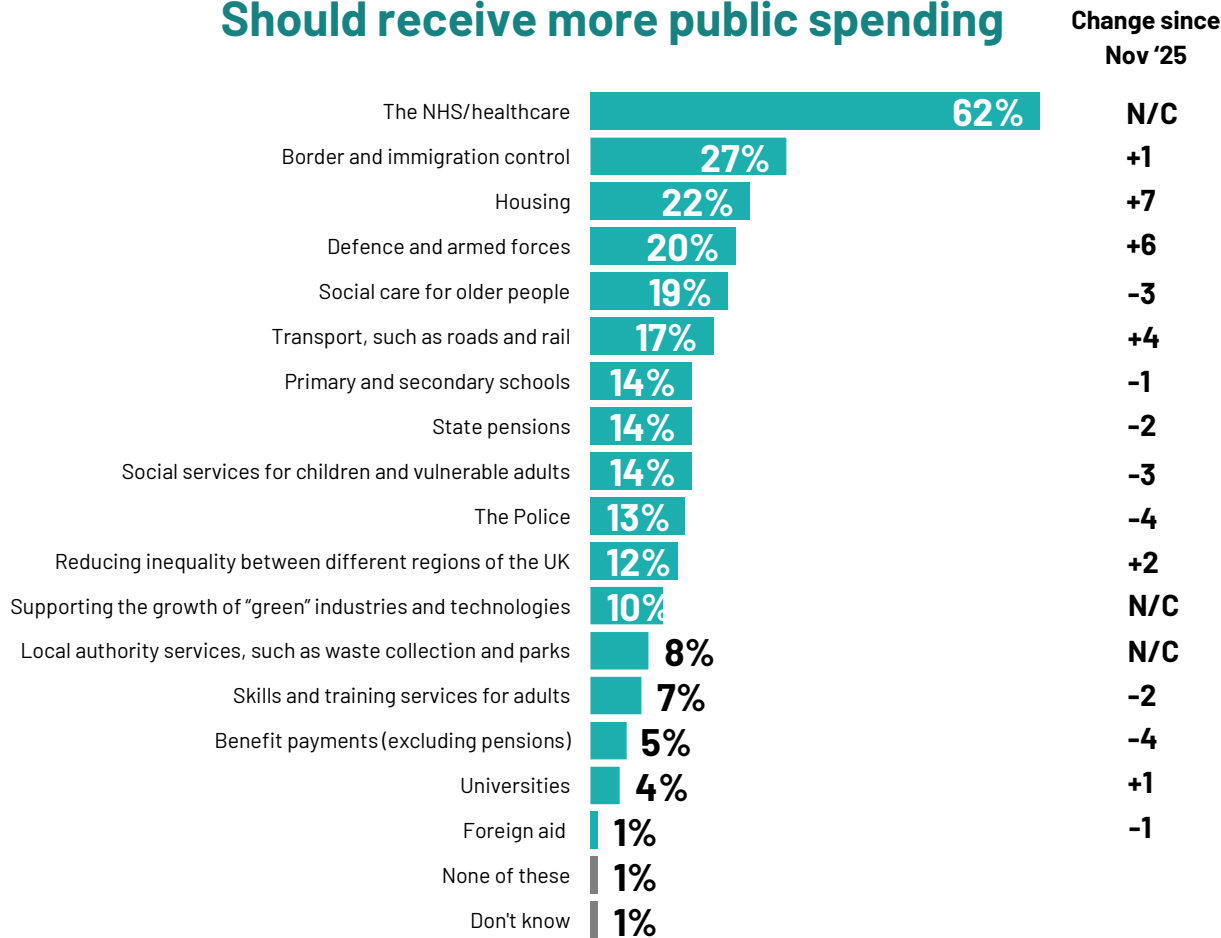
Ipsos in the UK Attitudes towards defence and other public spending

May 2026

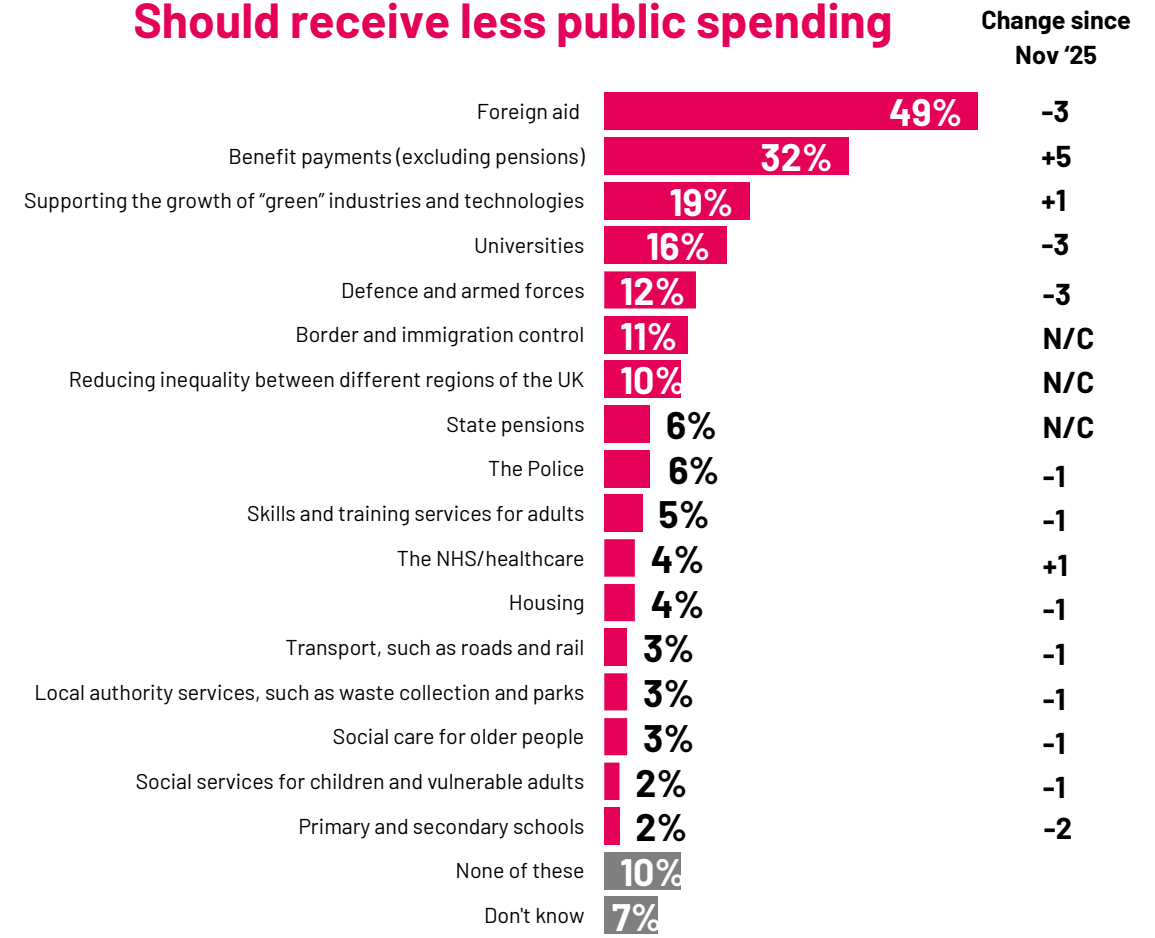
The public continue to think that the NHS and healthcare should be the priority for more public spending, while foreign aid would be their top choice to receive less spending in the future

Which two or three, if any, of the following areas do you think should be prioritised to receive more/ less public spending in the future?

Should receive more public spending



Should receive less public spending



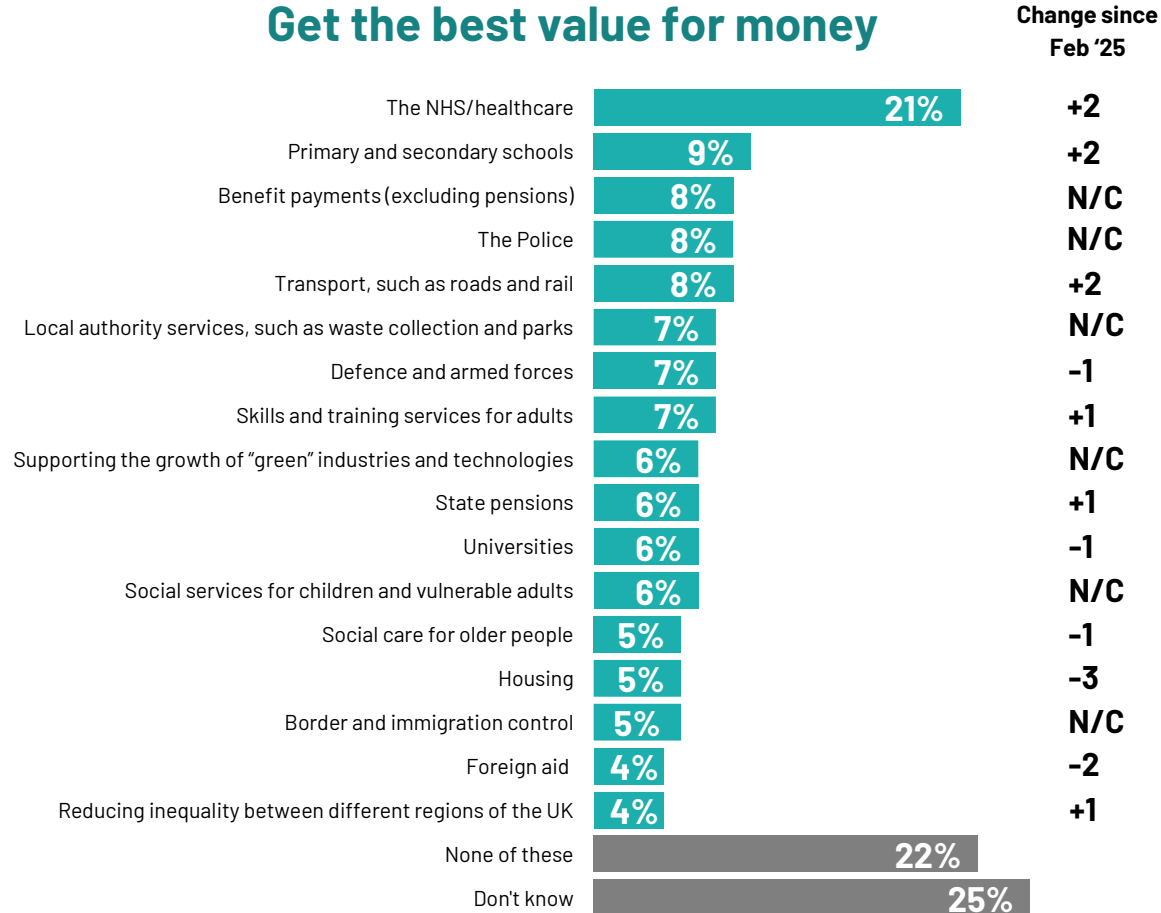
Base: 1,073 Online British adults 18-75, 22-25 May 2026

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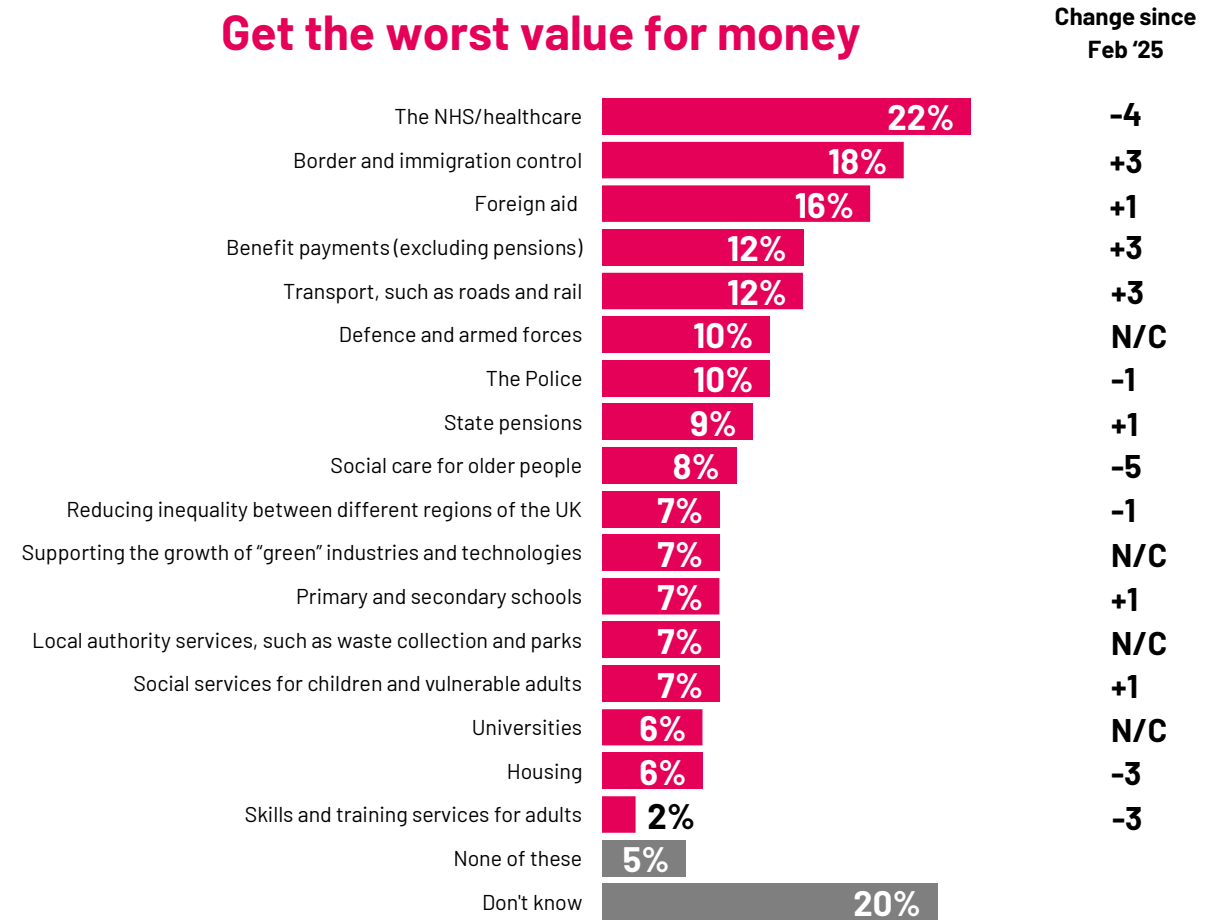
The public think that the NHS and healthcare gets both the best and worst value for money from the public spending they receive

Which two or three, if any, of the following areas do you think get the best/ worst value for money from the public spending that they receive?

Get the best value for money



Get the worst value for money

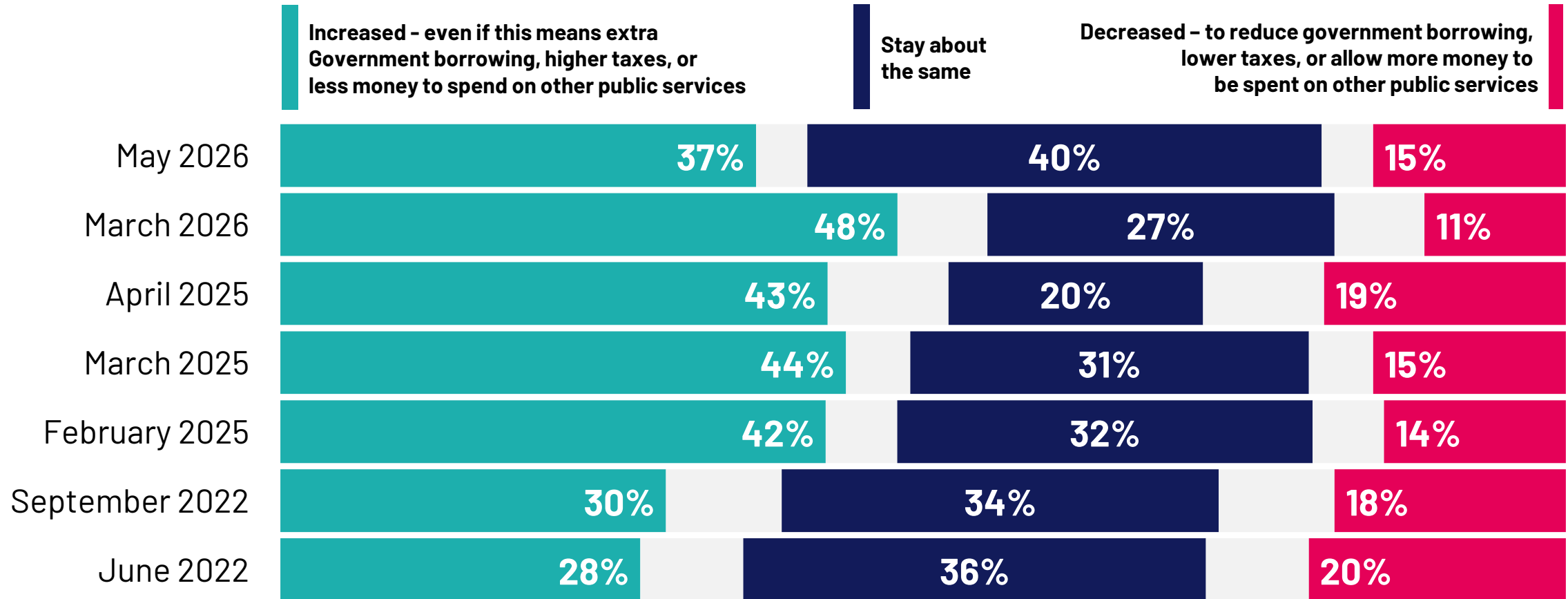


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2 in 5 (40%) Britons think government spending on defence and the Armed Forces should stay the same, with a similar share (37%) saying it should be increased

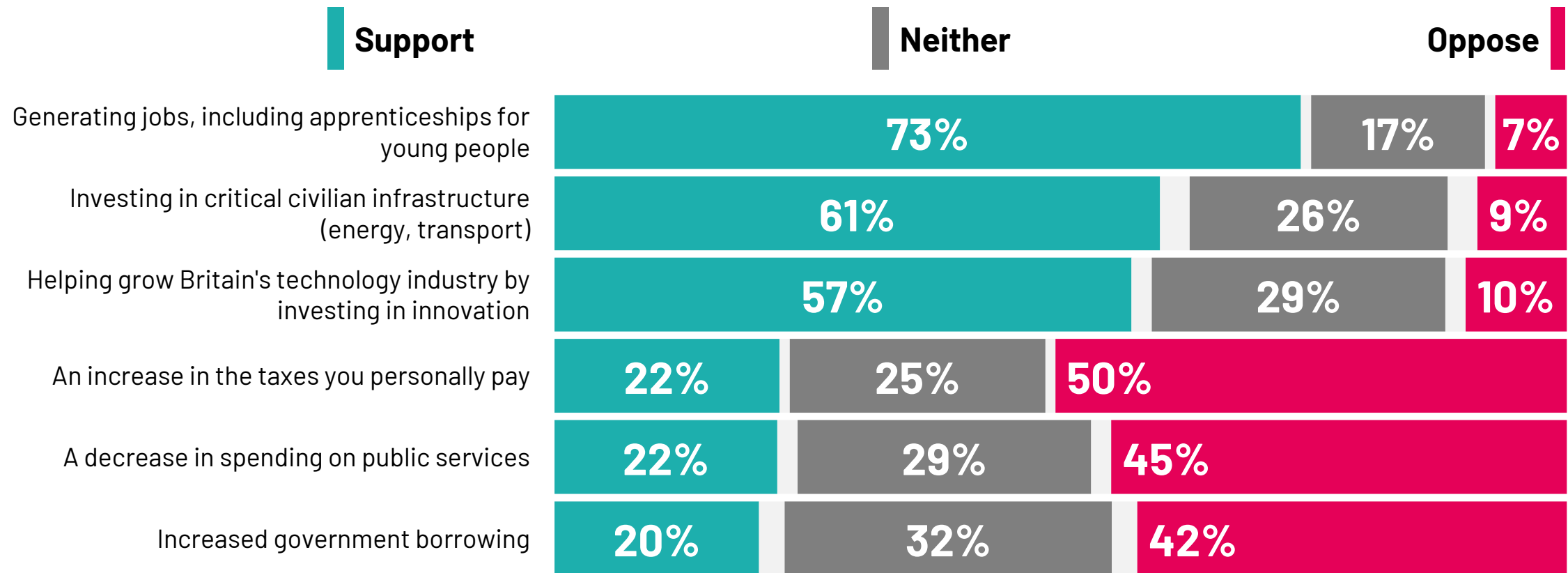
Do you think government spending on defence and the Armed Forces in the UK should be...?



Base: 1,073 Online British adults aged 18-75, 22-25 May 2026

The public are cautious about the tax and spend trade-offs of increasing defence spending, but are receptive to its potential for civilian benefits

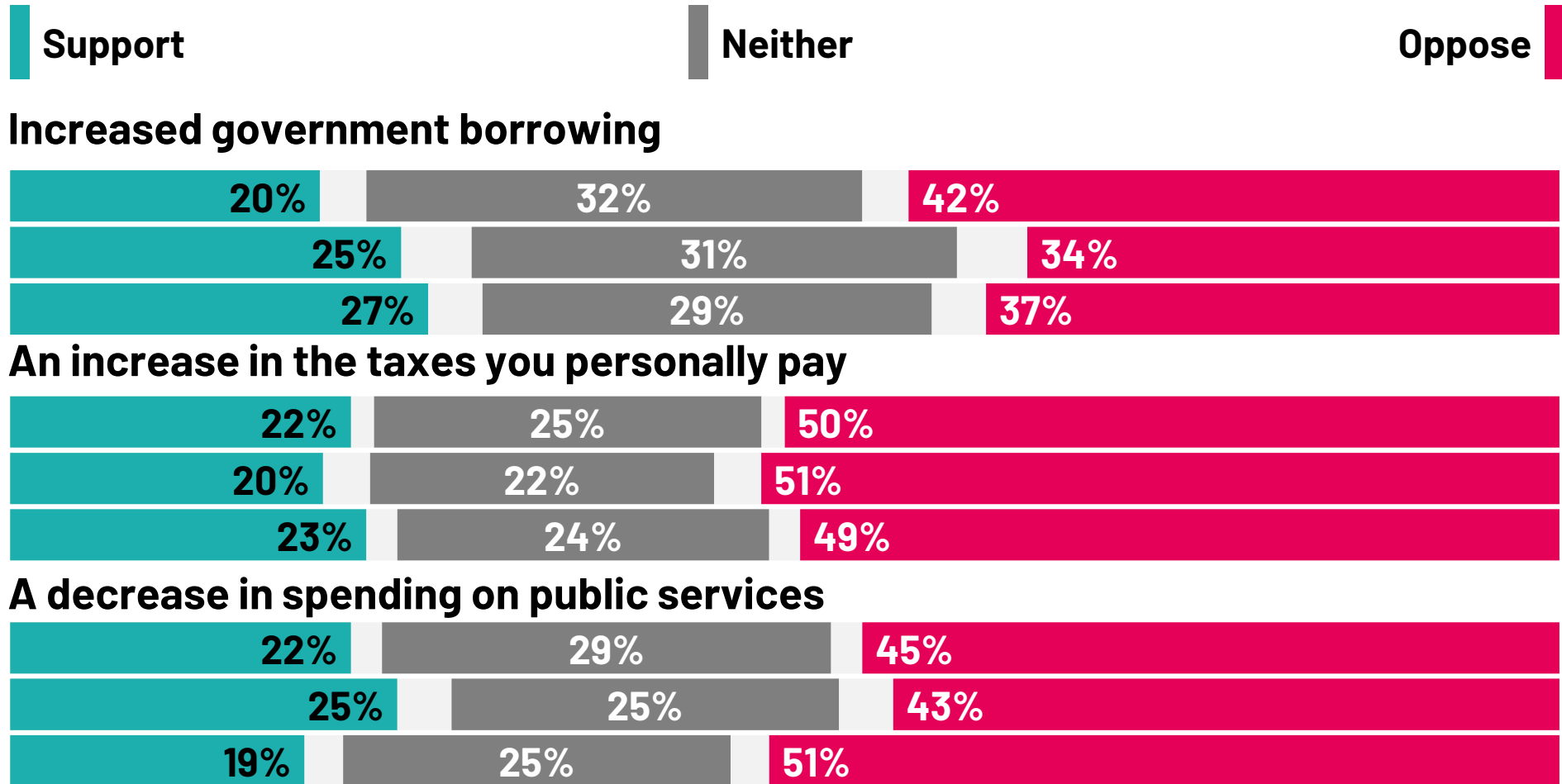
To what extent would you support or oppose increasing spending on defence if it meant each of the following:



Base: 1,073 Online British adults aged 18-75, 22-25 May 2026

Attitudes to defence spending - Trends

To what extent would you support or oppose increasing spending on defence if it meant each of the following:



Base: 1,123 Online British adults aged 18-75, 6-10 March 2026

Amongst those who think defence spending should be increased, their preference for funding it is divided between higher taxes (35%) and cuts to other public services (33%).

You mentioned that you think defence spending should be increased, even if this means extra government borrowing, higher taxes, or less money to spend on public services.

Which of the following do you think should be the main way the government funds additional defence spending?

Higher taxes, even if this means that taxes that I personally pay might go up

35%

Spending less money on other public services, even if this means cuts to services that I personally use

33%

Extra government borrowing, even if this means higher interest rates / inflation

15%

Don't know

8%

1 in 4 (25%) say they would be likely to purchase war bonds in order to facilitate higher defence spending

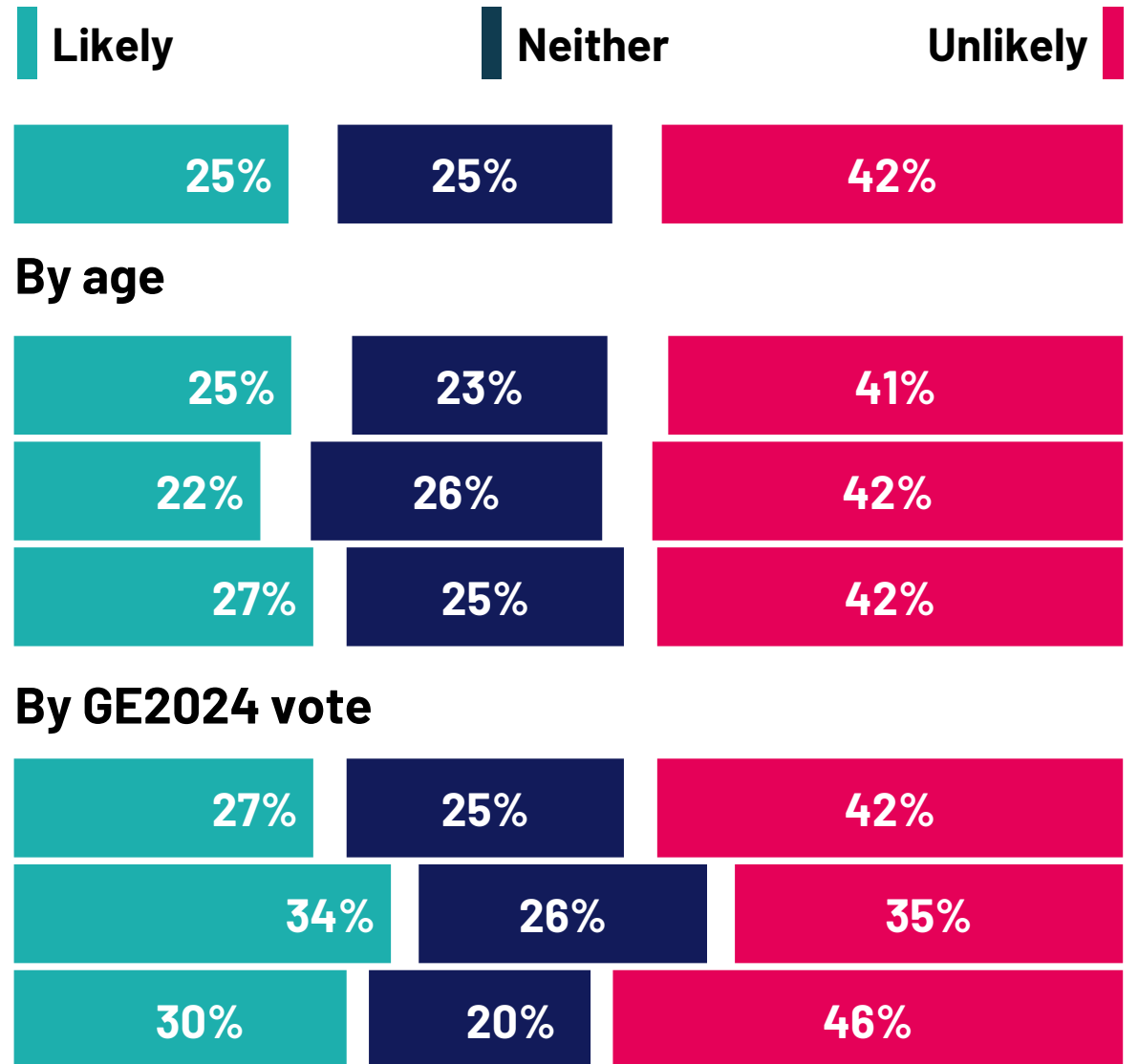
Imagine that the government has decided to increase defence spending through extra government borrowing.

One way of funding additional government borrowing is the creation of “war bonds,” or loans to the government that can be purchased by citizens to the government to help fund the military. In return, the government will pay that money back with interest after a set number of years.

How likely or unlikely would you be to purchase war bonds in order to facilitate higher defence spending?

Base: 1,073 Online British adults aged 18+, including (336) 18-34-year-olds, (395) 35-54s, (342) 55-75s, (325) 2024 Labour voters, (147) 2024 Conservative voters, (117) 2024 Reform UK voters, 22-25 May 2026

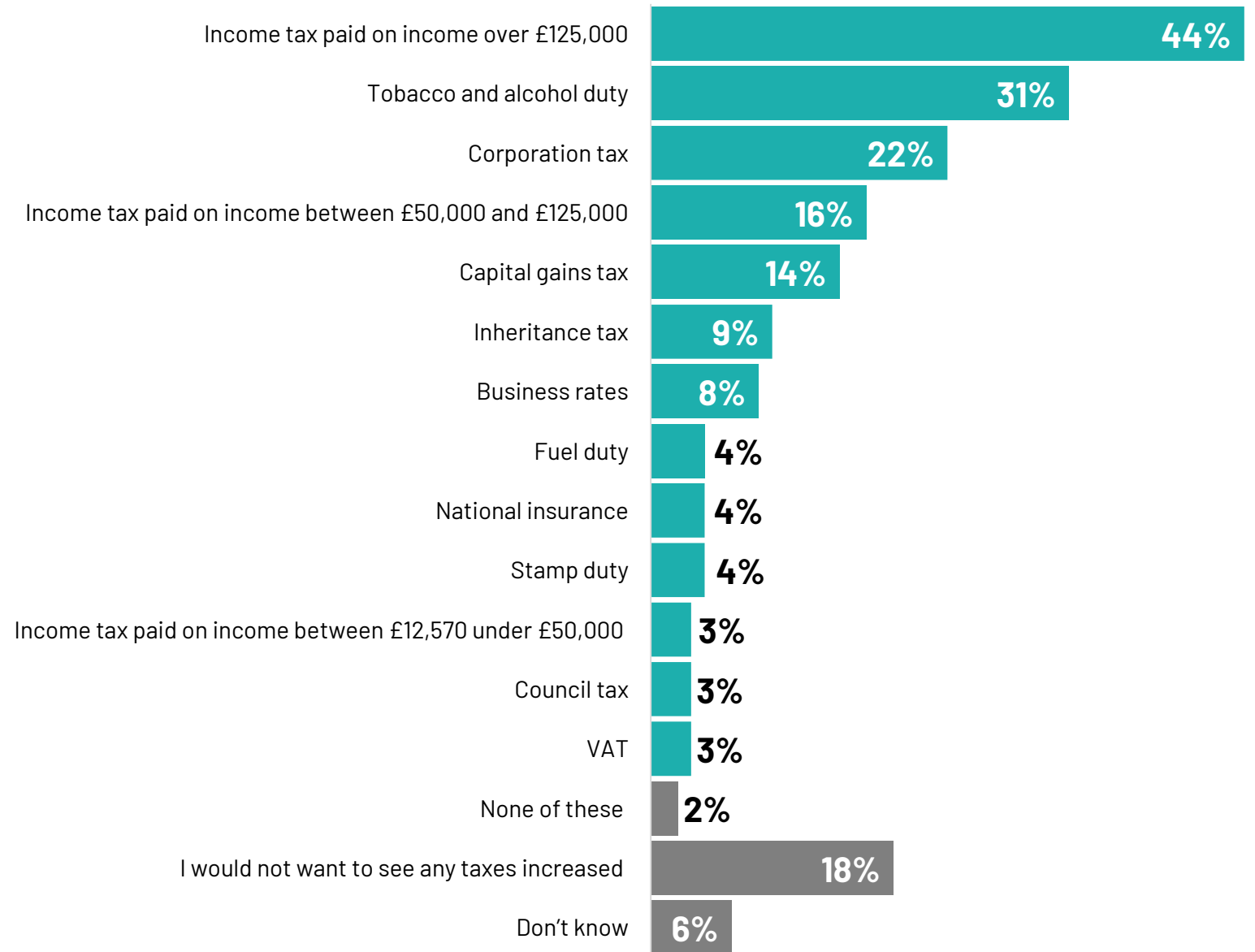
* Note low base size



More than 4 in 10 (44%) would prefer for income tax paid on income over £125k to be increased in order to pay for defence spending, if the government decided to pay for the spending by raising taxes.

Imagine that the government has decided to increase defence spending through raising taxes.

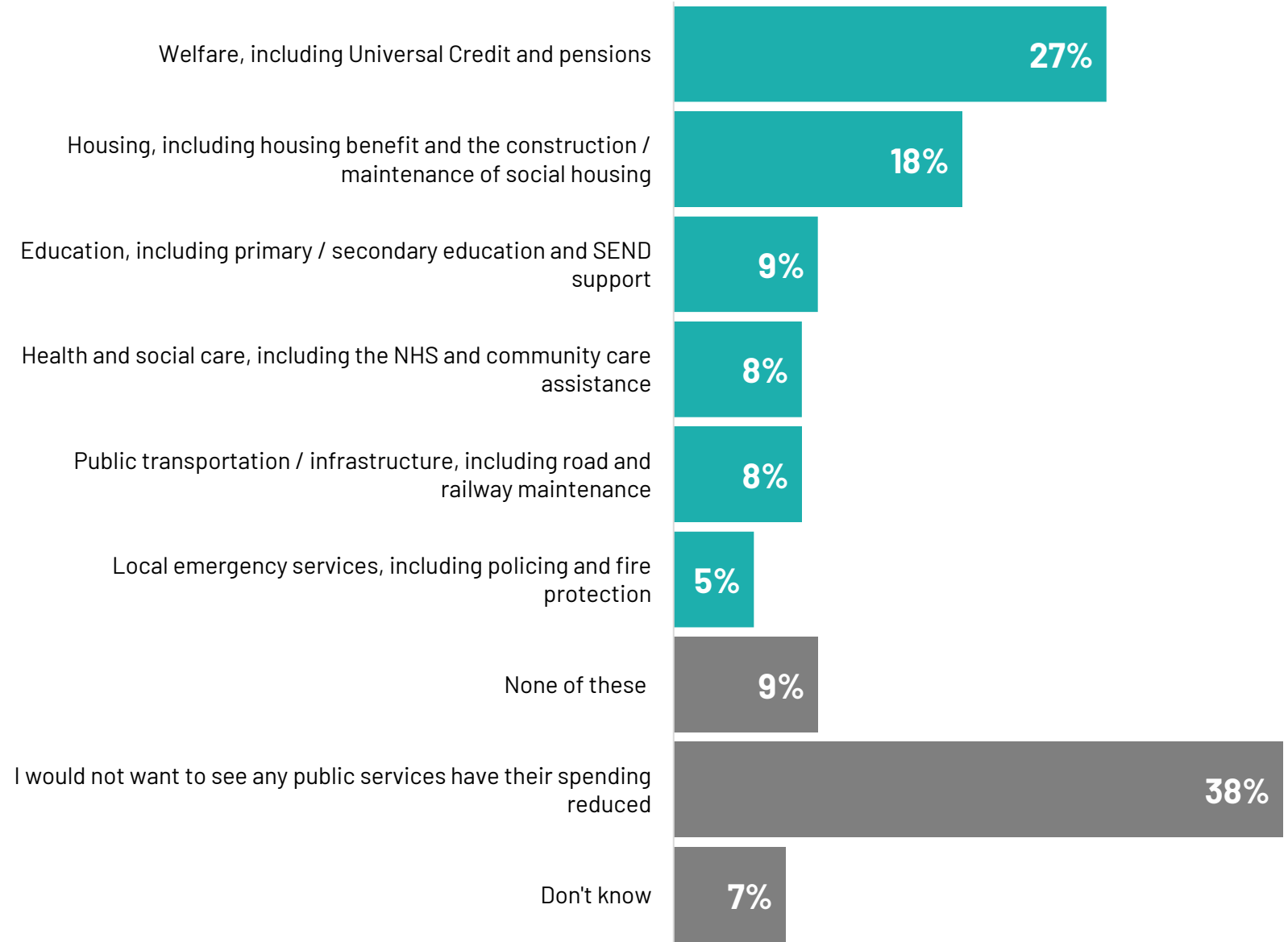
Which, if any, of the following types of tax would you prefer to see increased in this scenario? Please choose up to three from the list below.



Nearly 4 in 10 (38%) say they would not want to see any public services have their spending reduced in order to support increased defence spending.

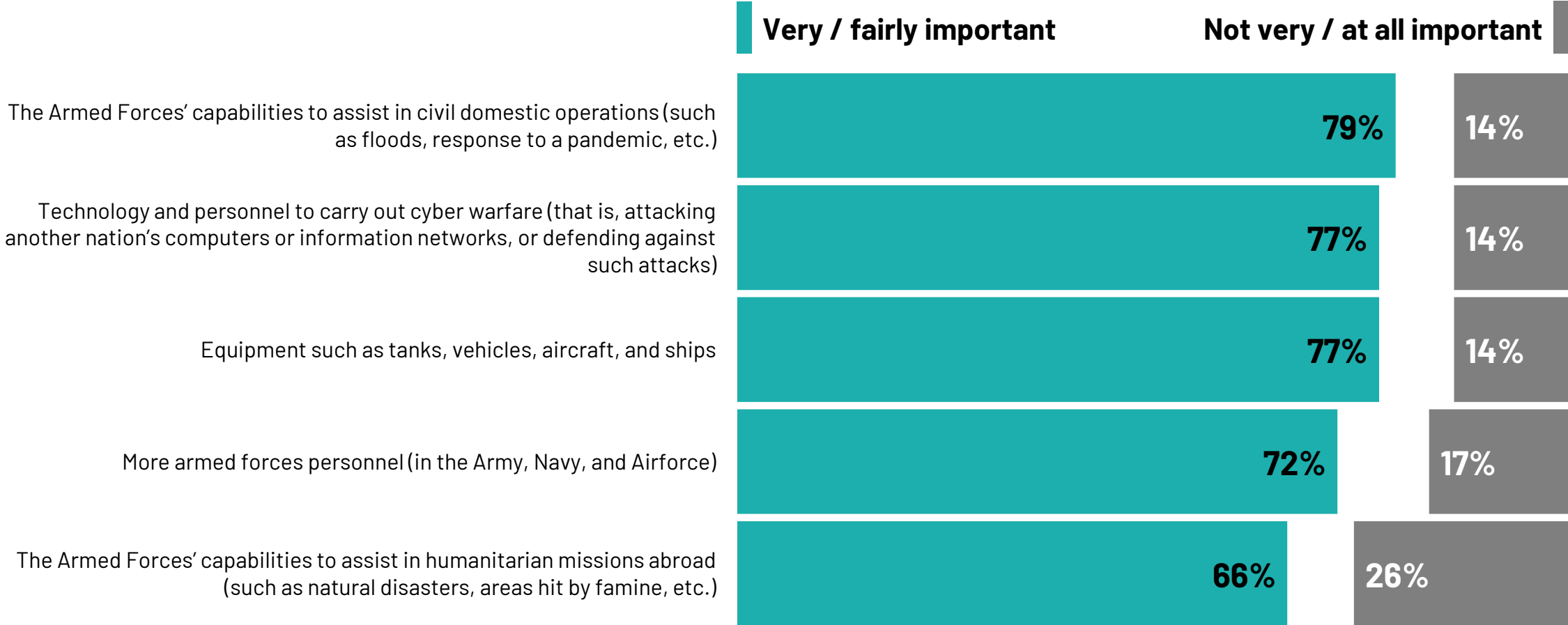
Imagine that the government has decided to increase defence spending through reducing spending on public services.

Which, if any, of the following public services would you prefer to see have their spending reduced? Please choose up to three from the list below.



The majority of the public find all military functions asked about to be important areas for Armed Forces spend

And thinking about what funding for the Armed Forces is spent on, how important, if at all, do you think each of the following are:



Base: 1,073 Online British adults aged 18+, 22-25 May 2026



IPSOS

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