

> Life in Sydney

February 2026



Committee
for
Sydney





Delivered in partnership by:

Committee for Sydney

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We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of our land. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present. We recognise sovereignty was never ceded. This was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

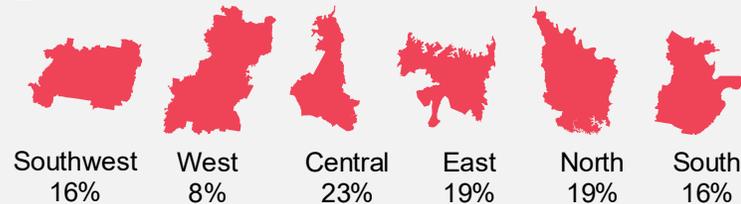


Demographic distribution for the 2026 wave

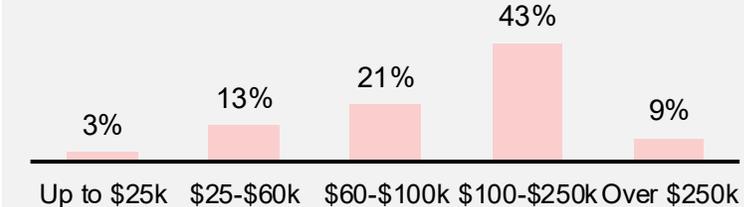
Gender



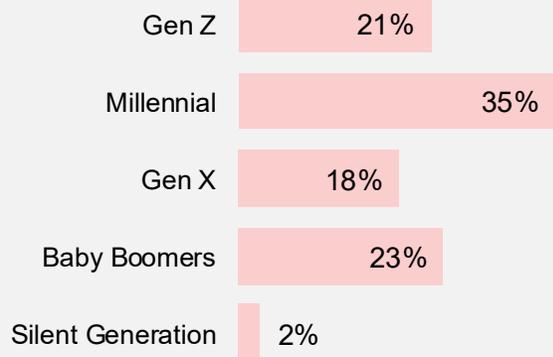
Location



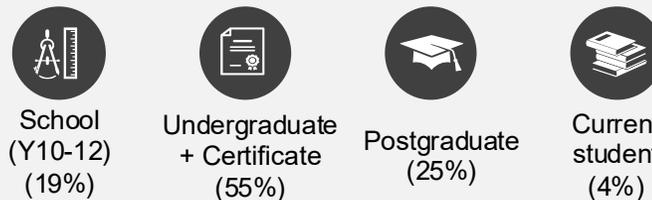
Household income



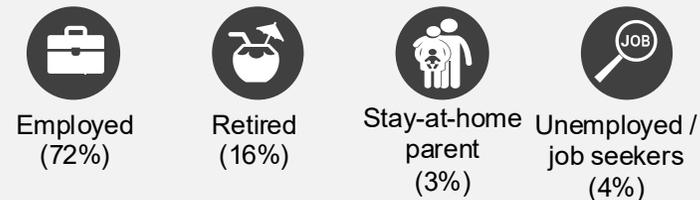
Generation



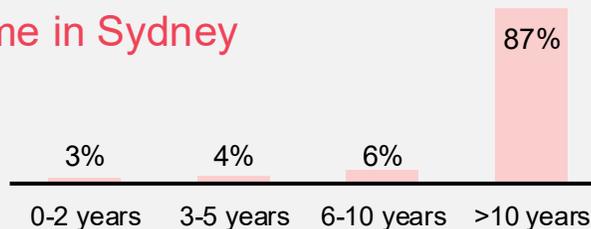
Highest level of education



Occupation



Time in Sydney



Cultural and linguistic diverse



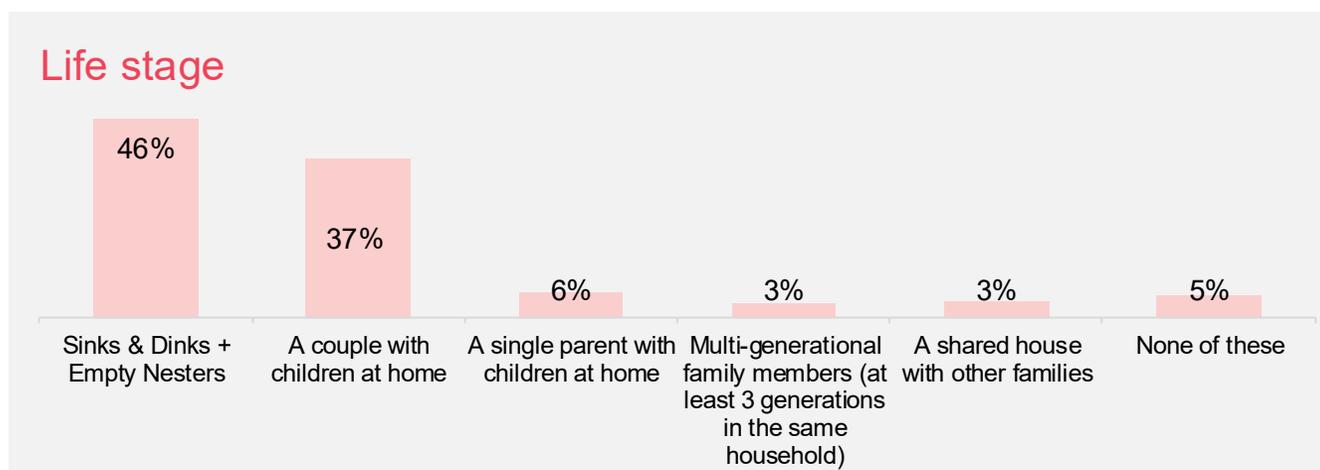
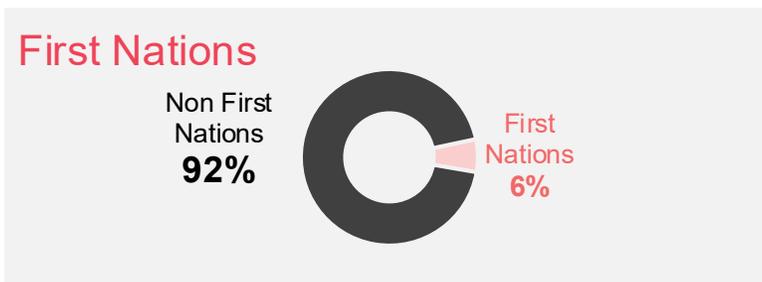
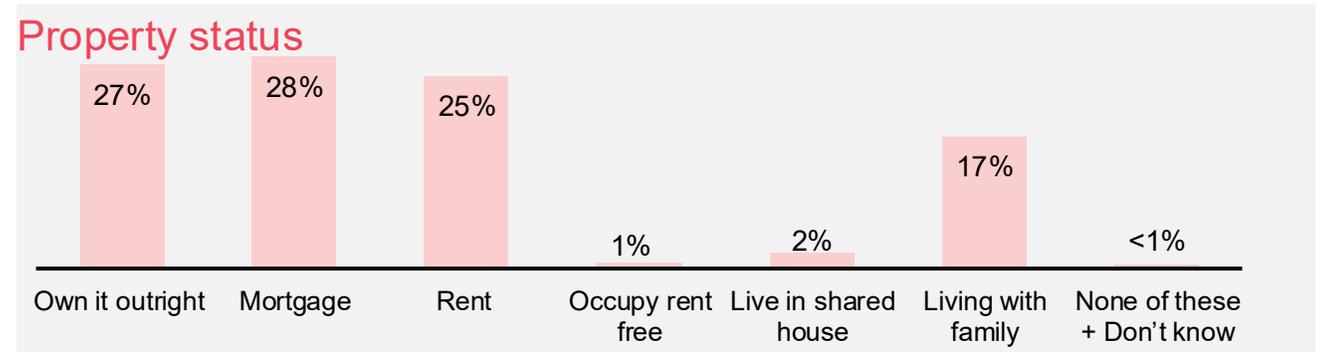
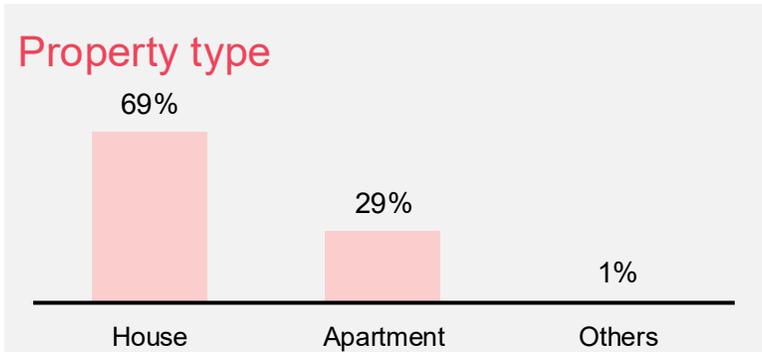
SQ1. What best describes your gender?
 SQ2. In which of the following age groups do you fall under?
 Q25. Do you or your parents mainly speak a language other than English?

SQ3. And what is the postcode of where you live?
 Q29. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
 SQ4. How long have you been living in Sydney?

Q28. What is your approximate annual household income before tax?
 SQ5. Which of the following best describes you?

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

Demographic distribution for the 2026 wave





Life in Sydney 2026

Quality of life



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How satisfied are you with your quality of life in Sydney?



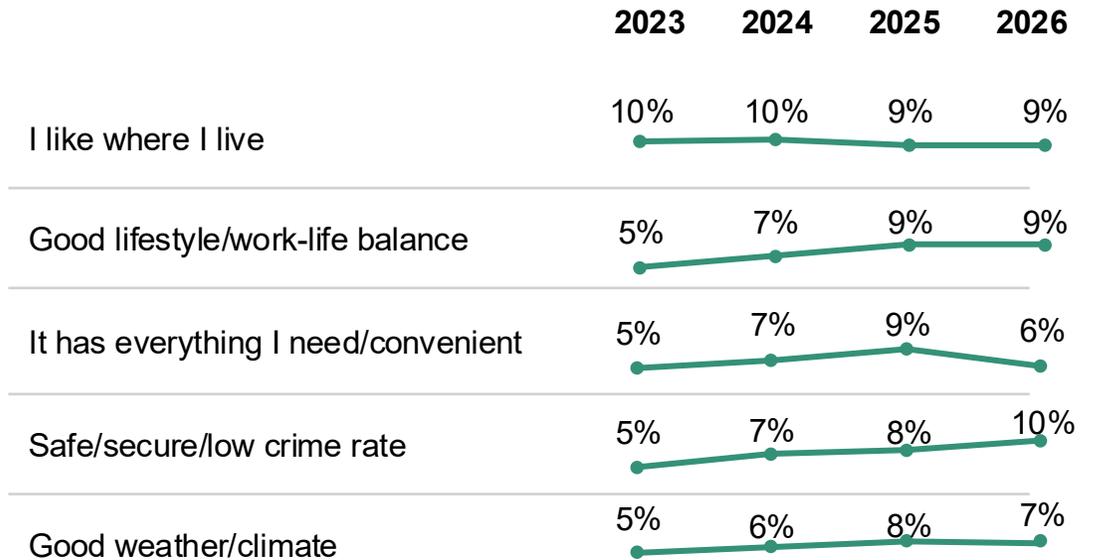
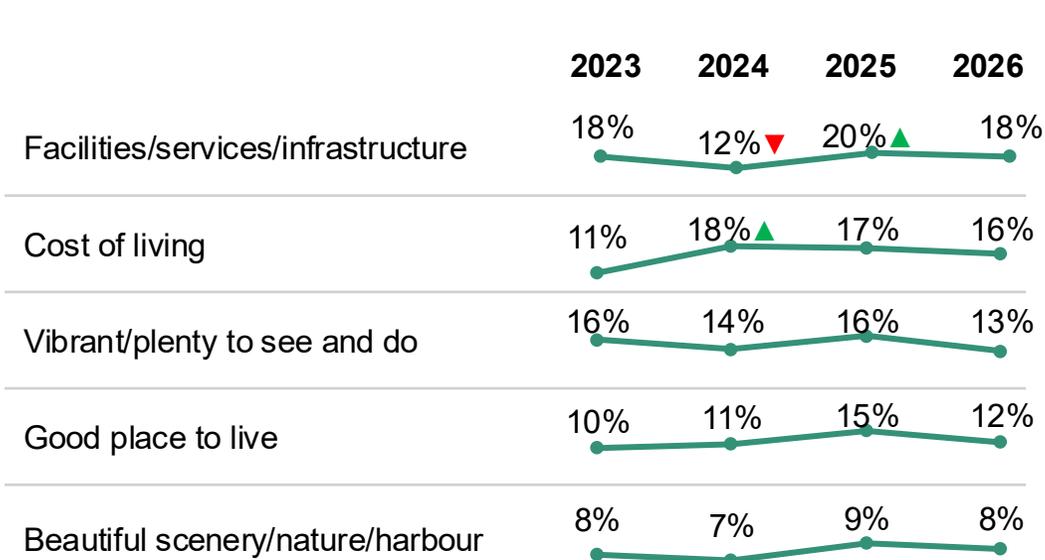
■ Not at all satisfied
 ■ Fairly dissatisfied
 ■ Neither
 ■ Fairly satisfied
 ■ Very satisfied

	Total dissatisfied	Total satisfied
	10%	77%
	10%	76%
	11% ▲	76% ▼
	8%	81% ▲
	10%	74%
	7%	80%

More likely to be satisfied with life in Sydney

-  **86%**
- North**
-  **86%**
- High social support**
-  **84%**
- Homeowners (outright)**

Why are you satisfied with life in Sydney?



Great city to live in, beautiful with lots of things to do and opportunities, but high cost of living

Live near a local beach and find it easy to commute to city any time with variety of options

There is still things to do around the city. But is too expensive and limits outings now



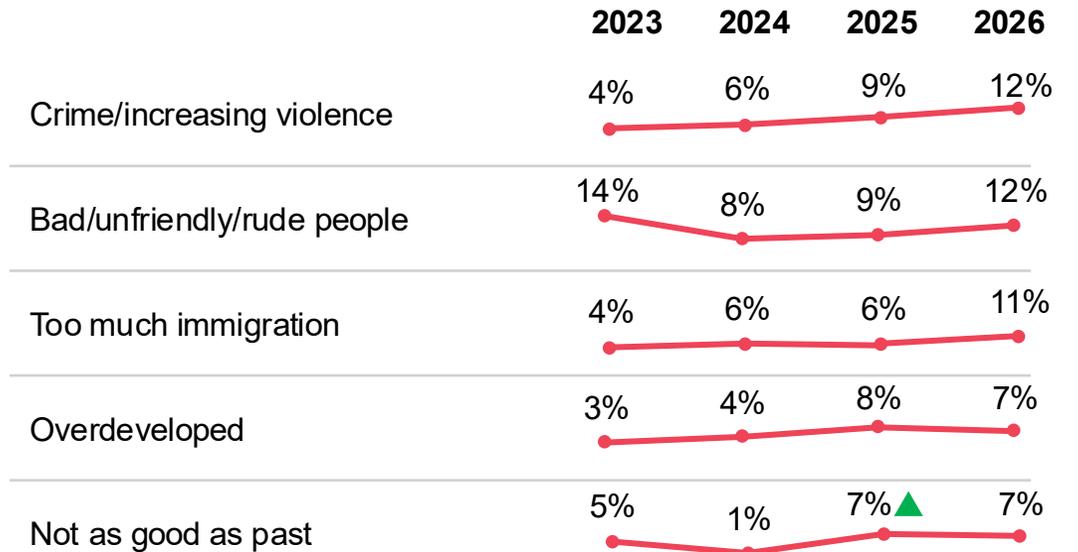
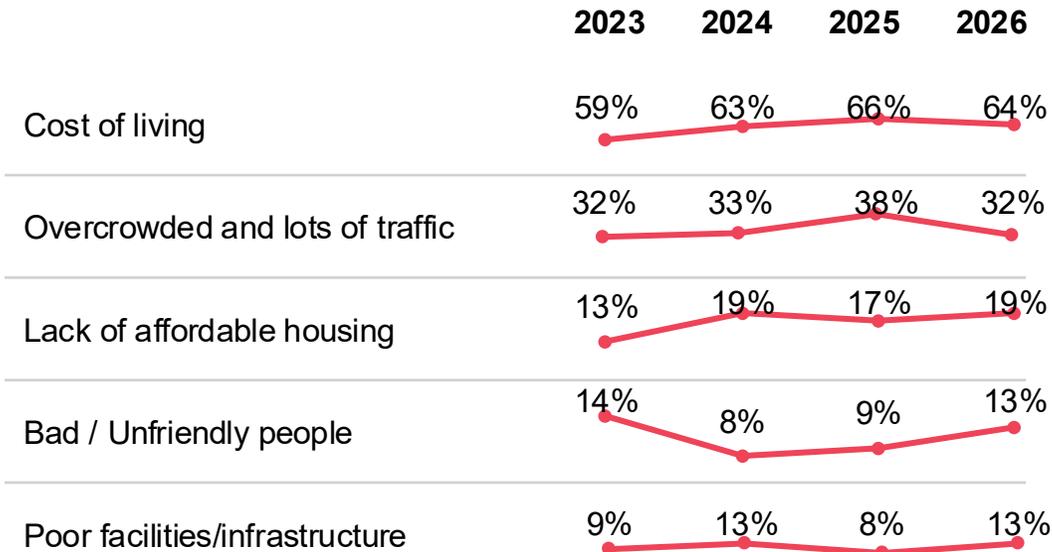
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Q2. Why do you say that?
Base: Sydney 2023 (n=1000), 2024 (n=1035), 2025 (n=1000), 2026 (n=1000)

▲ Significantly higher than previous years
▼ Significantly lower than previous years



Why are you dissatisfied with life in Sydney?



The cost of living is too high we can't afford to do anything

Crime is rising, it is getting over-populated and dirtier, cost of living rising

Sydney used to be a really liveable city, but in the last few years, has deteriorated due to many factors including poor infrastructure, lack of government funding in appropriate areas, too much migration, cost of living



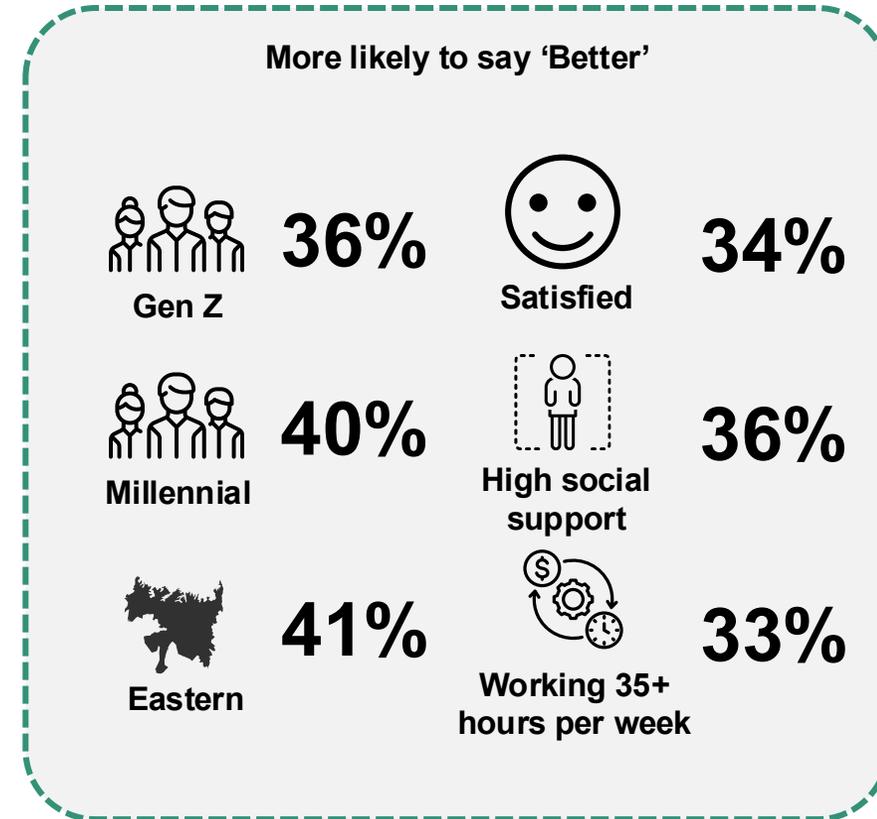
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Q2. Why do you say that?
Base: Sydney 2023 (n=1000), 2024 (n=1035), 2025 (n=1000), 2026 (n=1000)

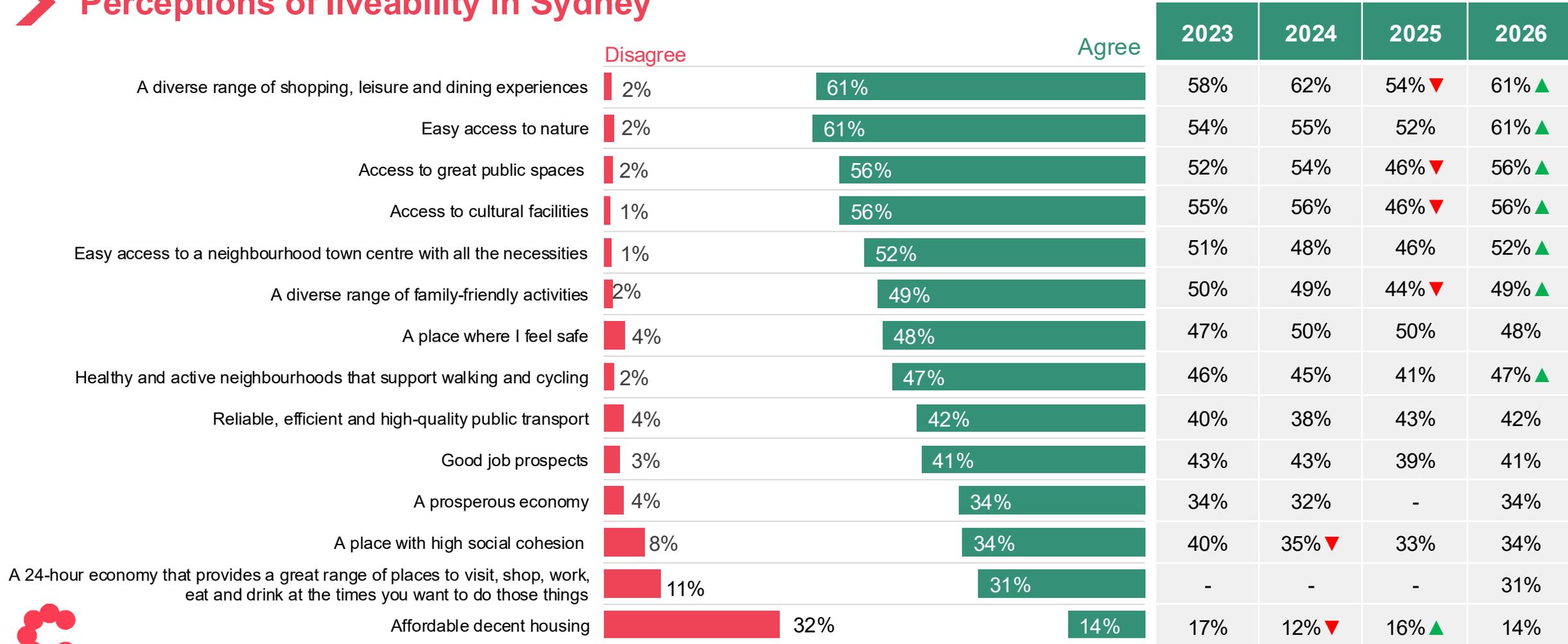
▲ Significantly higher than previous years
▼ Significantly lower than previous years



Do you expect your quality of life in Sydney to be better or worse 12 months from now?



Perceptions of liveability in Sydney



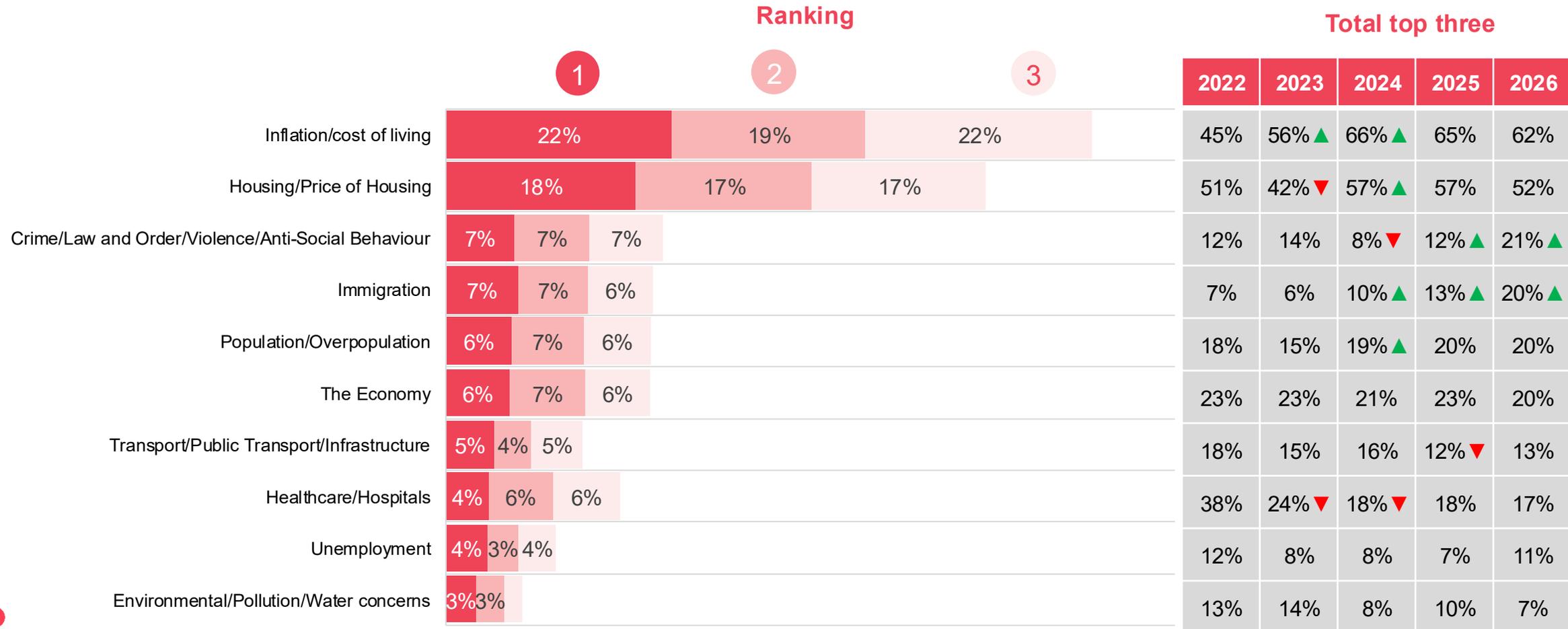
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Q5. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Sydney?
Base: Sydney 2023 (n=1,000), 2024 (n=1035), 2025 (n=1000), 2026 (n=1000)
Note: 'Don't know' responses excluded from the chart for analysis purposes.

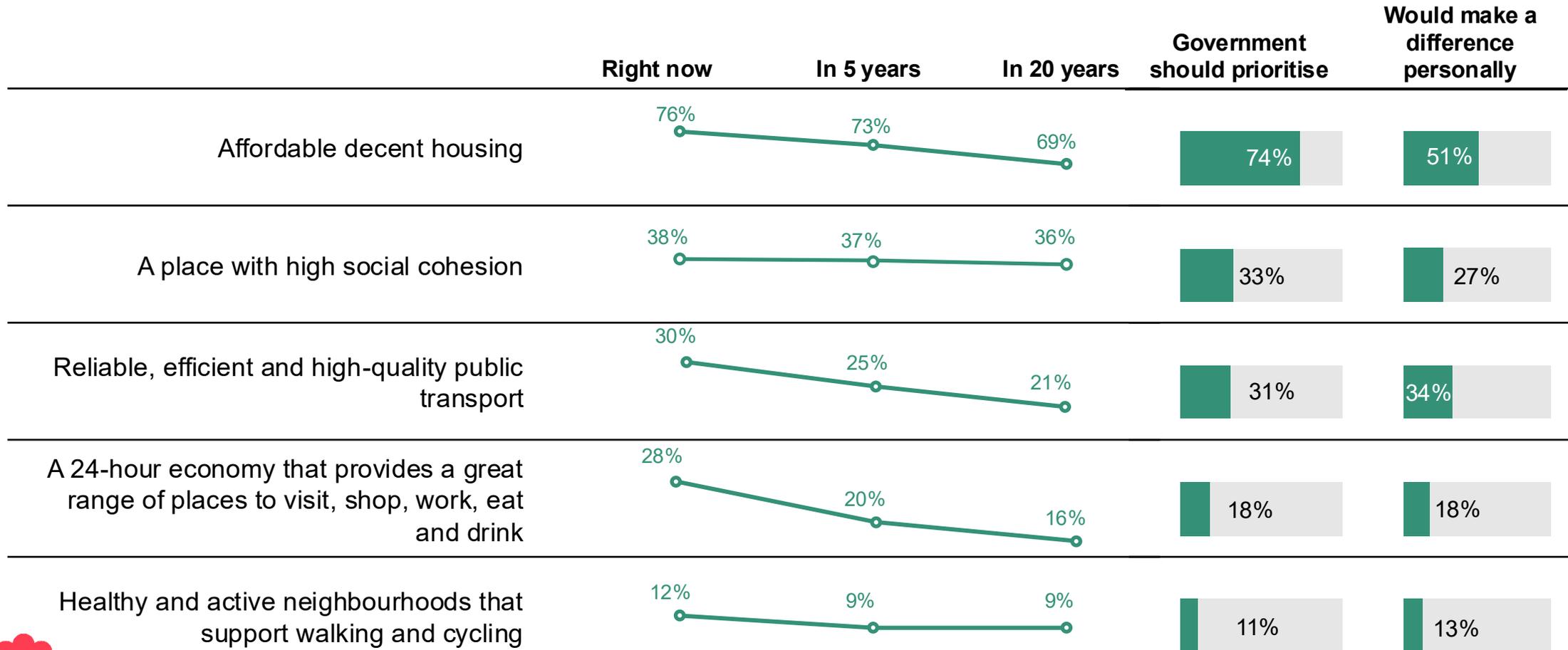
▲ Significantly higher than previous years
▼ Significantly lower than previous years



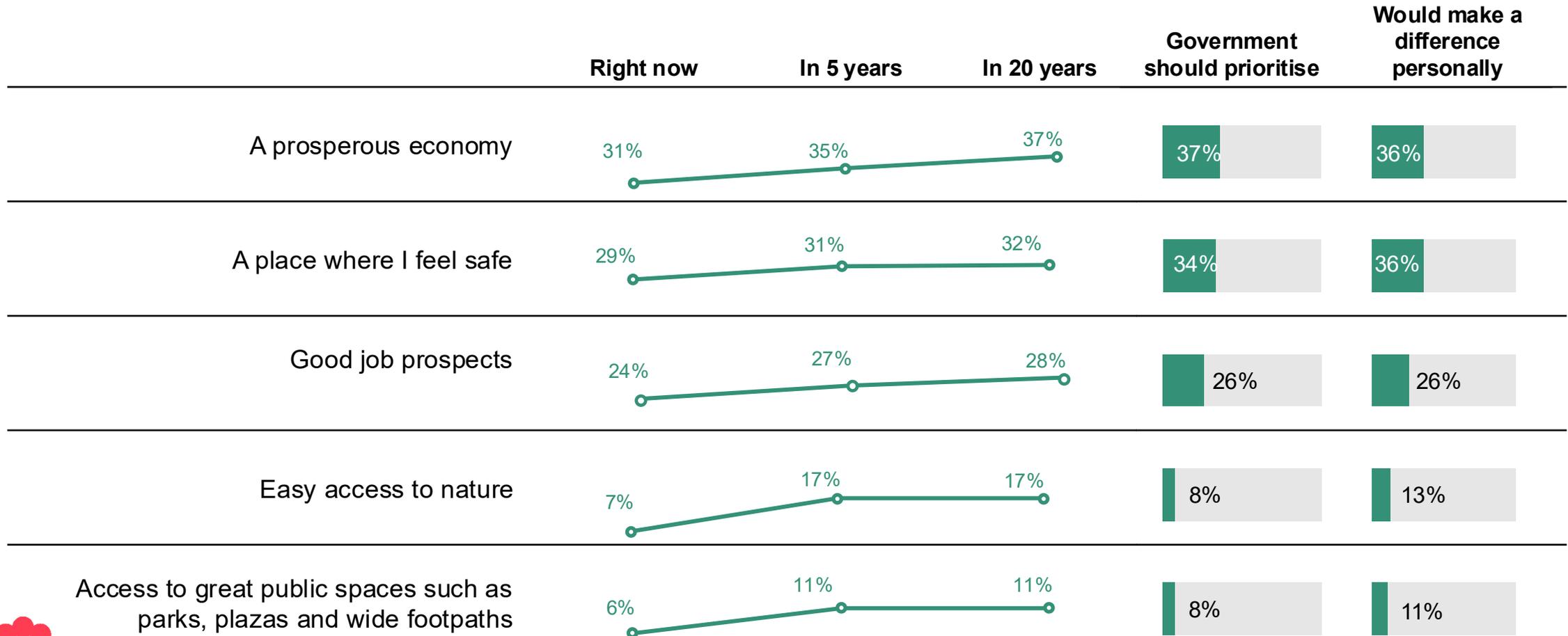
Three most important issues facing Sydney today (%)



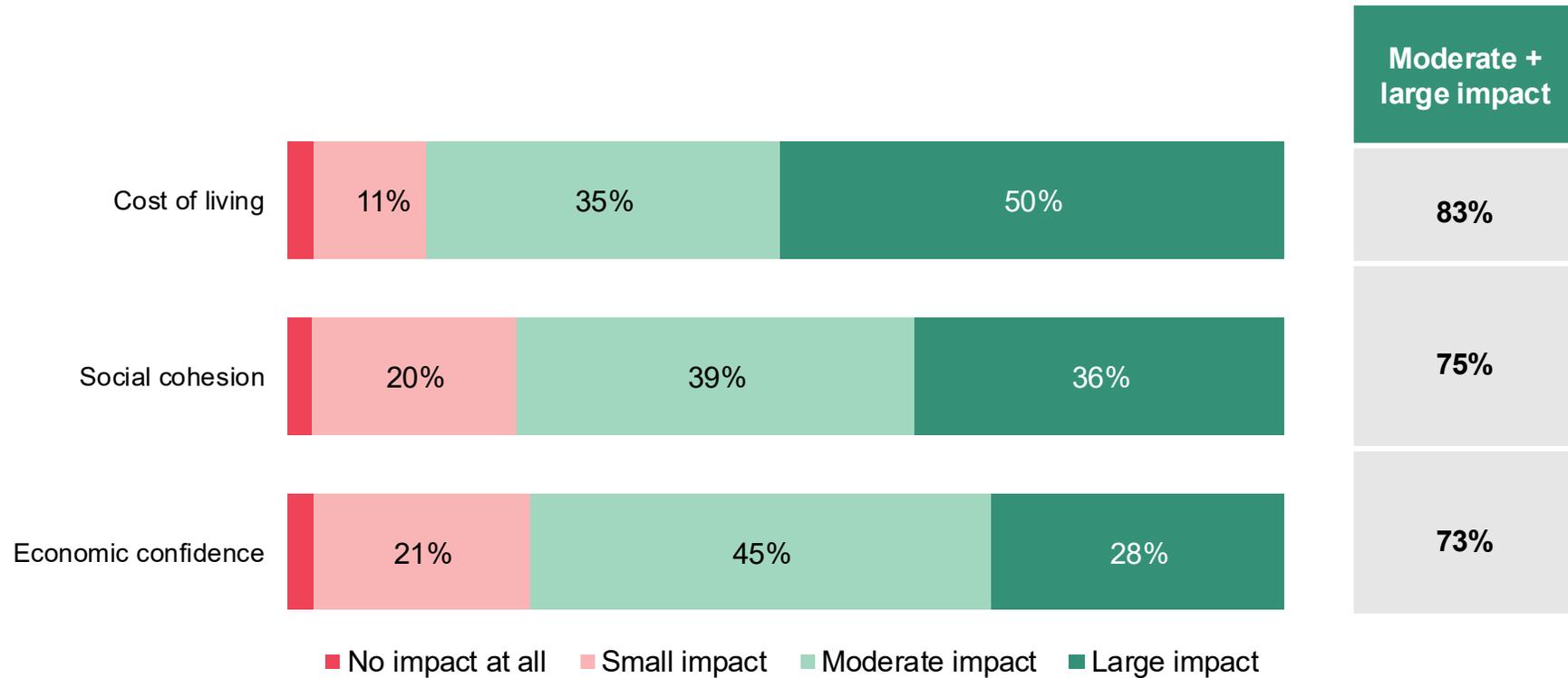
➤ Biggest challenges for Sydney...



➤ Biggest challenges for Sydney...

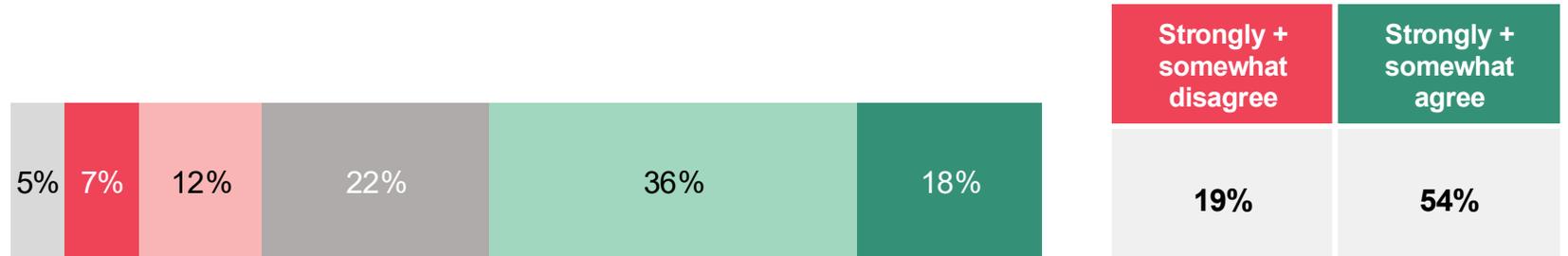


➤ How much do you feel that global instability, for example political and economic disruption, impact the following aspects of life in Sydney?



Quality of life in Sydney

The quality of life in Sydney is on par with the best cities in the world



■ Dont know

■ Neither agree nor disagree

■ Strongly disagree

■ Somewhat agree

■ Somewhat disagree

■ Strongly agree

More likely to say
somewhat + strongly agree



63%

Satisfied



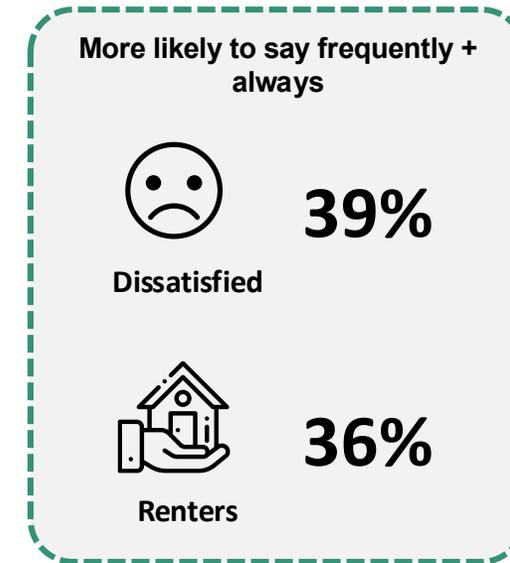
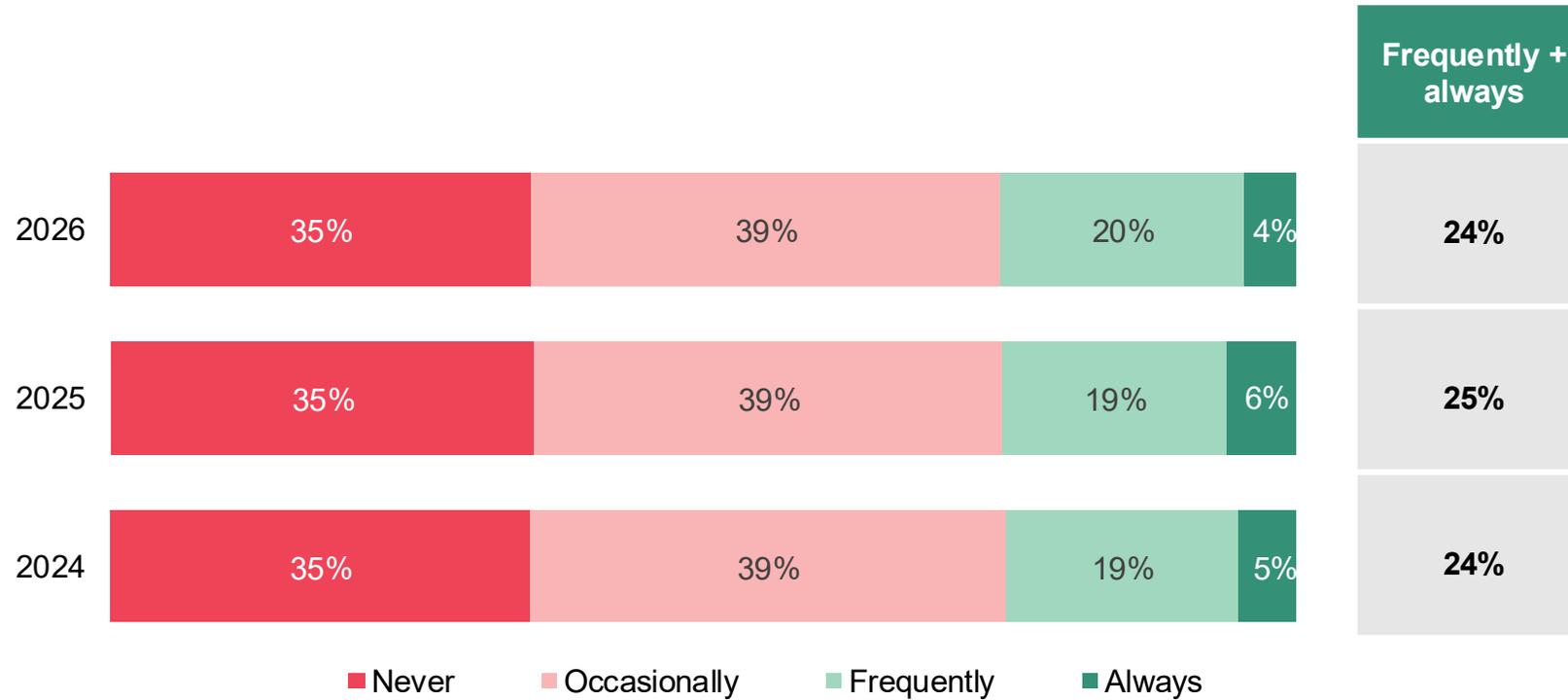
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Cost of living

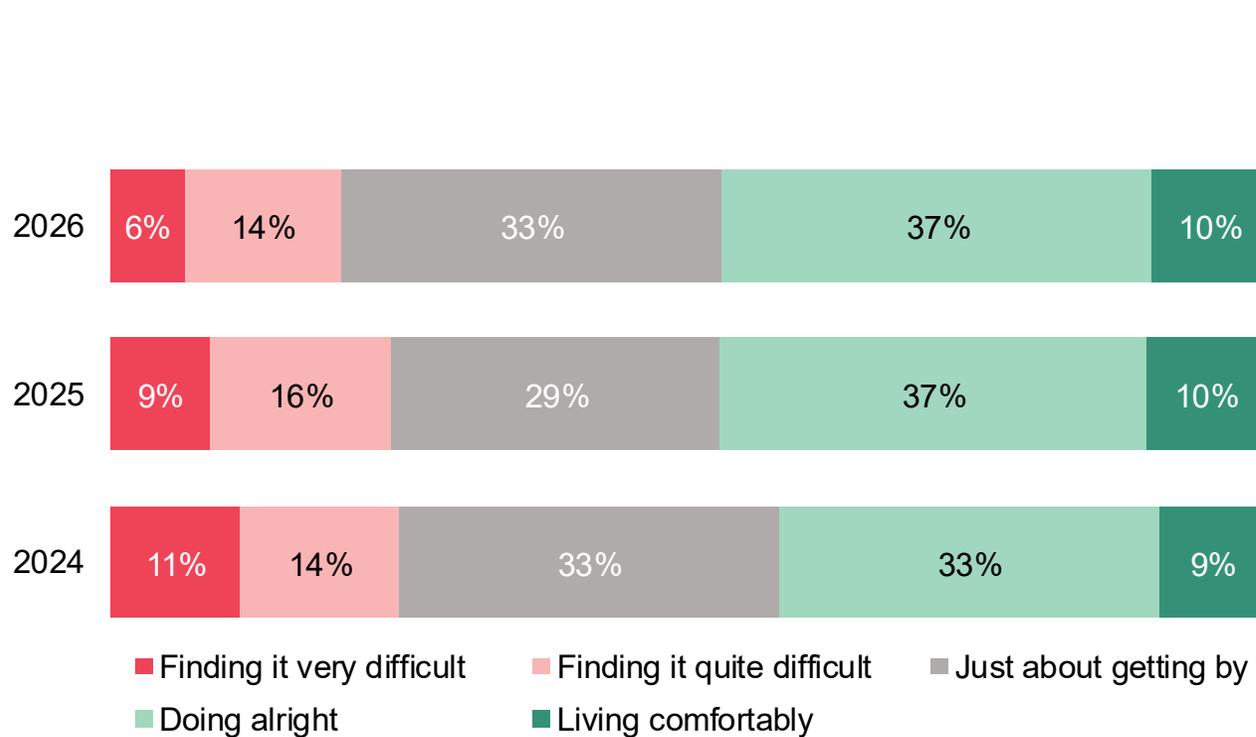


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➤ How often do you go without essentials



➤ How well would you say you are managing financially these days?



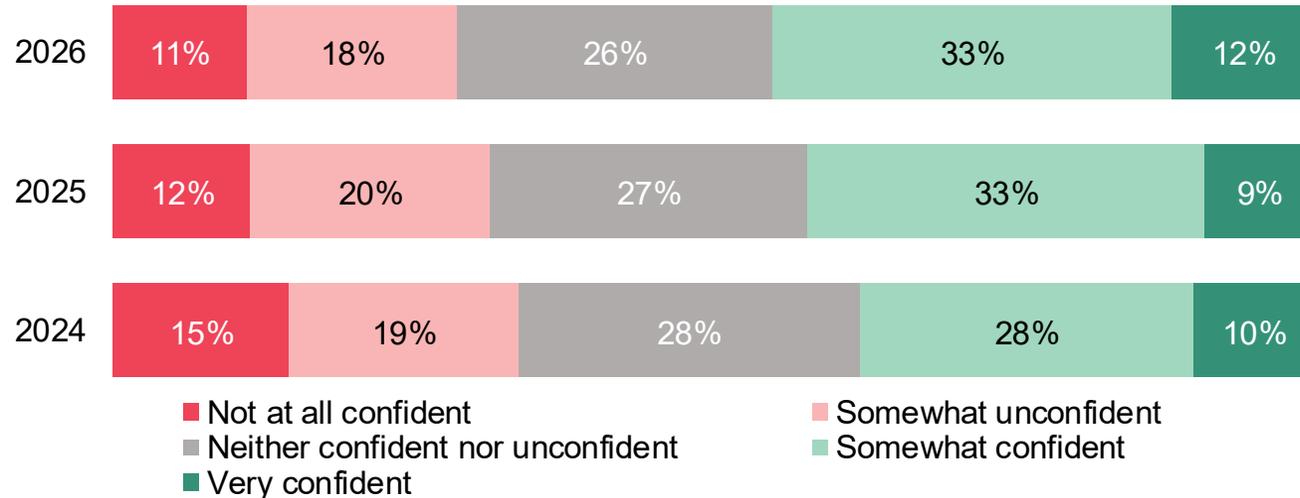
Very + quite difficult	Doing alright + living comfortably
20%	47%
24%	47%
25%	42%

More likely to say very + quite difficult

 **24%**
Women

 **36%**
Renters

➤ How confident are you that you will have the financial means over the next 20 years to support the lifestyle you want to lead?

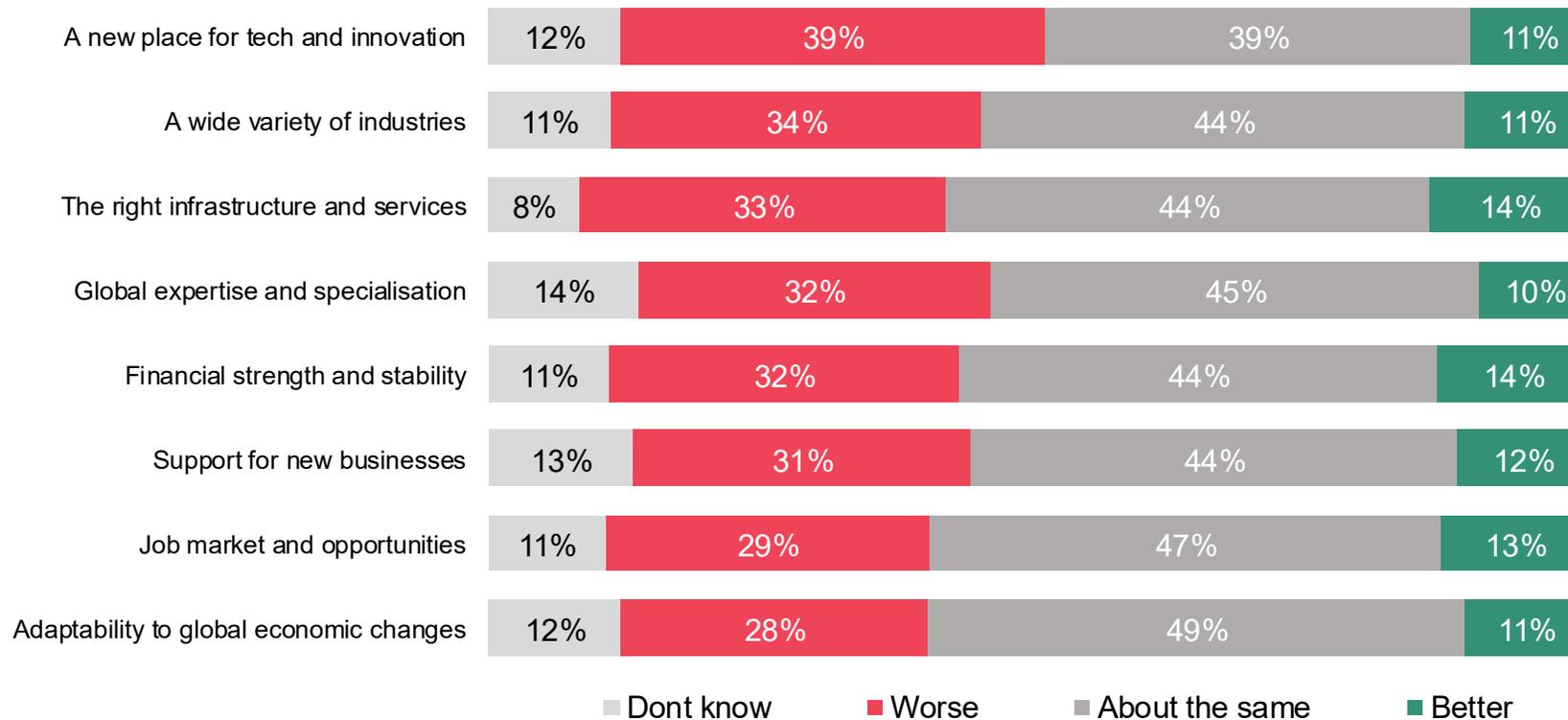


Not at all + somewhat confident	Very + somewhat confident
29%	45%
31%	42%
34%	38%

More likely to say very + somewhat confident

-  **52%**
Men
-  **53%**
Satisfied
-  **61%**
Homeowners (outright)

➤ How do you think Sydney's economy compares to other big global cities like New York, London or Singapore in the following areas..





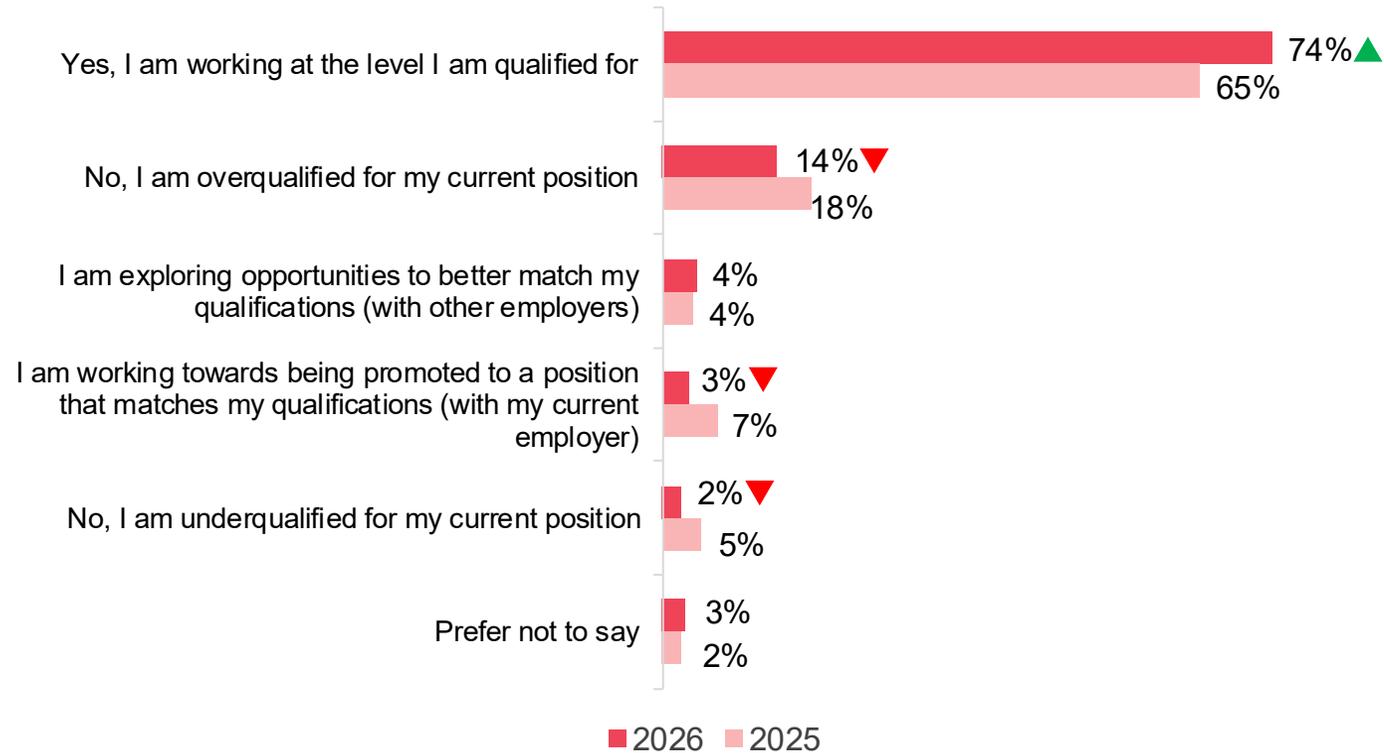
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Underemployment



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➤ Are you currently working at the level that you are qualified to work at?



Thinking about your career over the next 5 years, how likely are you to do each of the following?

More likely to pursue additional qualifications



33%

CALD



64%

Working 35+ hours per week

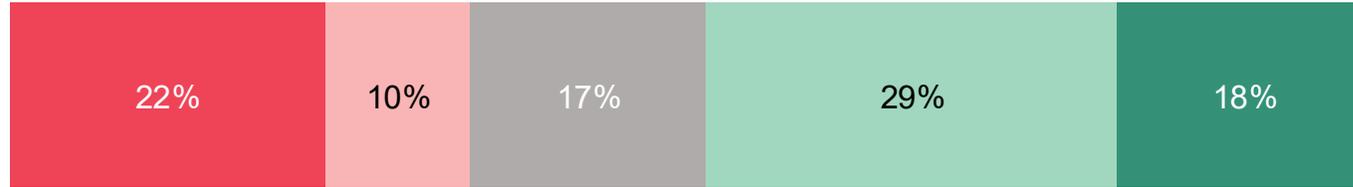
More likely to return to study



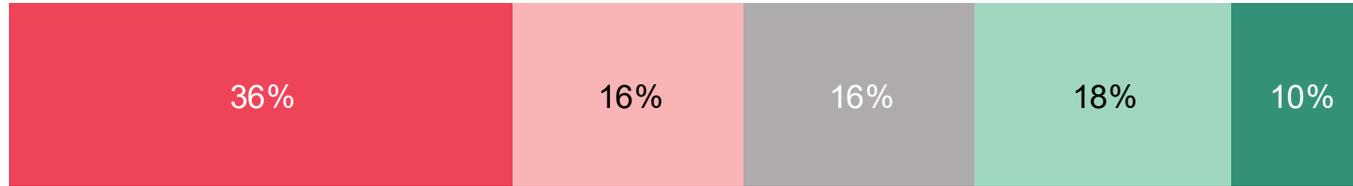
26%

Living with family

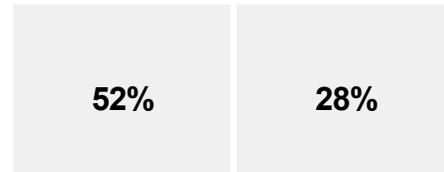
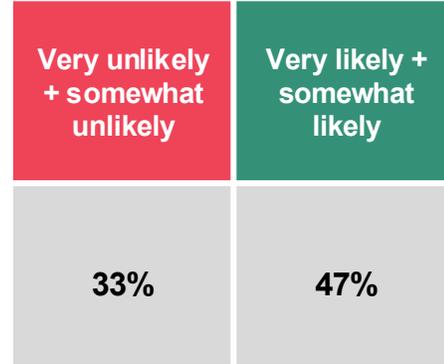
Pursue additional skills training or certification



Return to study for a degree or qualification



■ Very unlikely
 ■ Somewhat unlikely
 ■ Neither likely nor unlikely
■ Somewhat likely
 ■ Very likely



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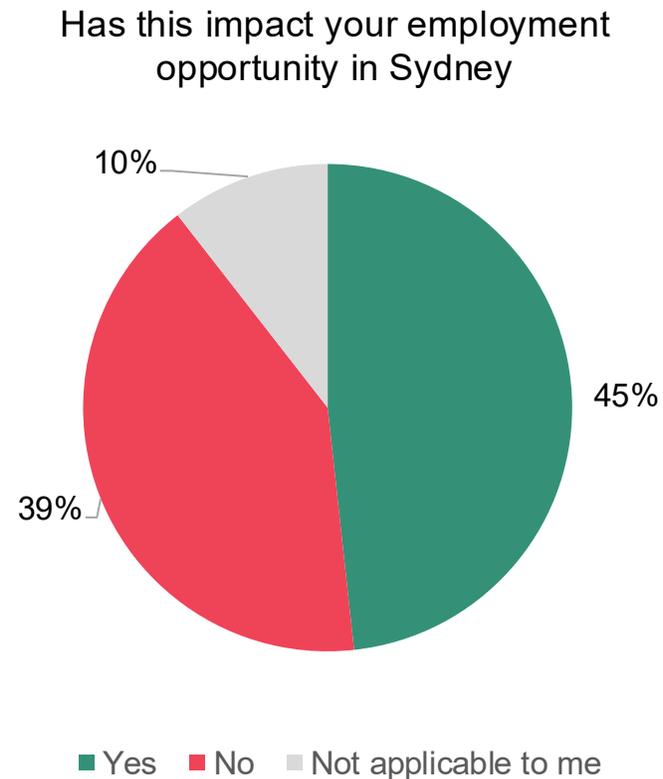
Q152 Thinking about your career over the next 5 years, how likely are you to do each of the following?
 Base: Sydney 2026 (n=2026)
 Note: 'Don't know' responses excluded from the chart for analysis purposes. Data under 3% not labelled. Question added in 2026.



➤ Overseas qualification that hasn't been recognised in Australia and its impact on employment opportunities in Sydney

12%

Claimed to have overseas qualifications that hasn't been recognised in Australia



"I can not get a job that I am interested in and have expertise in, so I end up doing jobs that I don't like for a living."

"Impacted my self-confidence to compete for good jobs."

"I have to go through exams, and I still don't get what I was qualified for."

"Lower pay, menial tasks, repetitive jobs."

"I had to change my qualification to satisfy the existing job requirements."



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Q153 Do you have an overseas qualification, such as diplomas, degrees, or industry qualifications that hasn't been recognised in Australia?

Q154 You mentioned that you have overseas qualification that hasn't been recognised in Australia. Has this impact your employment opportunities in Sydney?

Base: Q153. Sydney 2026 (n=1000), Q154. Sydney 2026 (n=126)





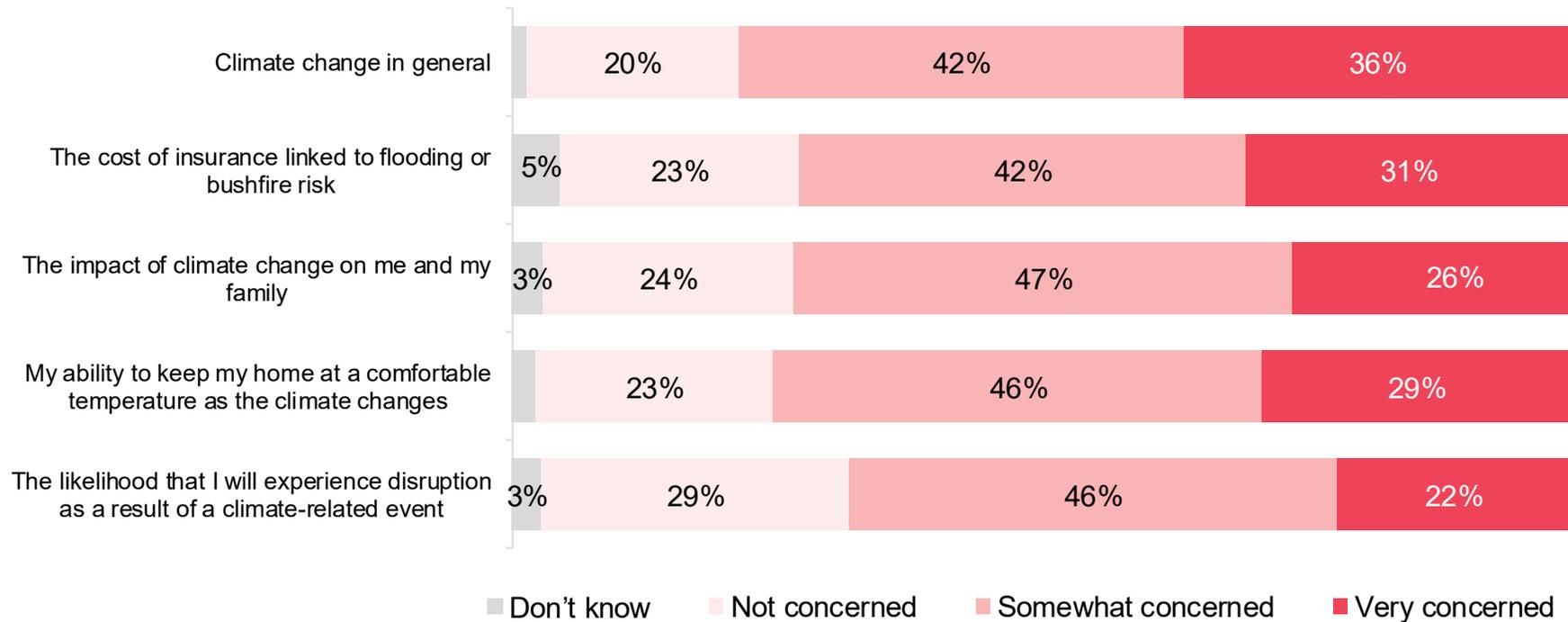
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Climate change and resilience



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➤ How concerned are you about...?



Somewhat + very concerned

	2024	2025	2026
Climate change in general	76%	75%	79%
The cost of insurance linked to flooding or bushfire risk	-	-	73%
The impact of climate change on me and my family	71%	73%	73%
My ability to keep my home at a comfortable temperature as the climate changes	69%	67%	75%▲
The likelihood that I will experience disruption as a result of a climate-related event	-	-	68%



➤ How likely do you think it is that each of the following events will directly impact your household in the next 5 years?

More likely to say no/almost no chance + very slight possibility



Baby Boomers

73%
(Floods)

58%
(Bushfires)



it outright

71%
(Floods)

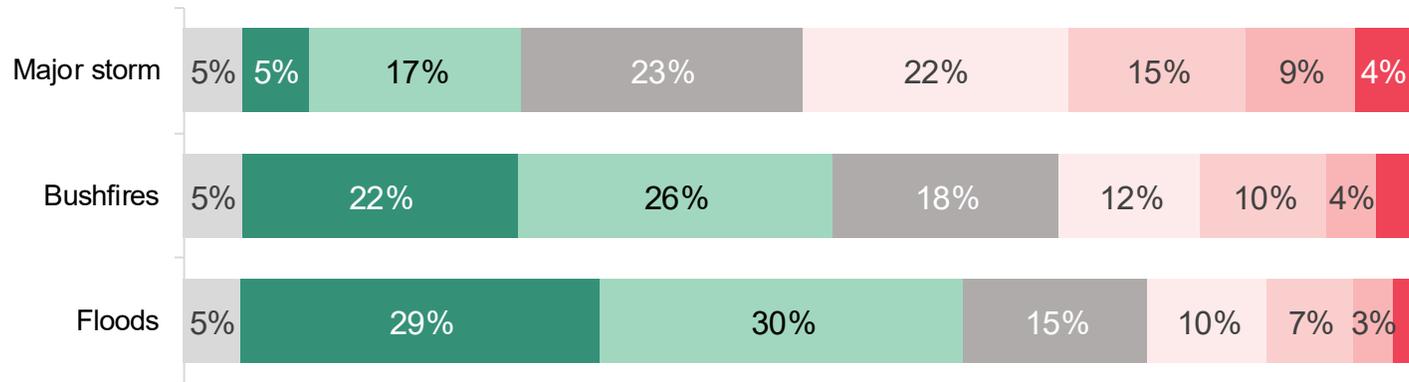
58%
(Bushfires)

More likely to say probable + almost sure + certain



West

42%
(Bushfires)



- Don't know
- No chance, almost no chance (1 in 100)
- Very slight possibility (1 in 10)
- Some possibility (3 in 10)
- Fairly good possibility (5 in 10)
- Probable (7 in 10)
- Almost sure (9 in 10)
- Certain, practically certain (99 in 100)

No chance + very slight possibility	Probable + almost sure + certain
59%	12%
48%	17%
23%	28%



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Q161. How likely do you think it is that each of the following events will directly impact your household in the next 5 years? Data 3% and under not labeled
Base: Sydney 2026 (n=1000)
Note: Data under 3% not labelled.



➤ How prepared do you think your household is for a major hazard event such as flood, bushfire or major storm?

More likely to be slightly + somewhat + very prepared

Men

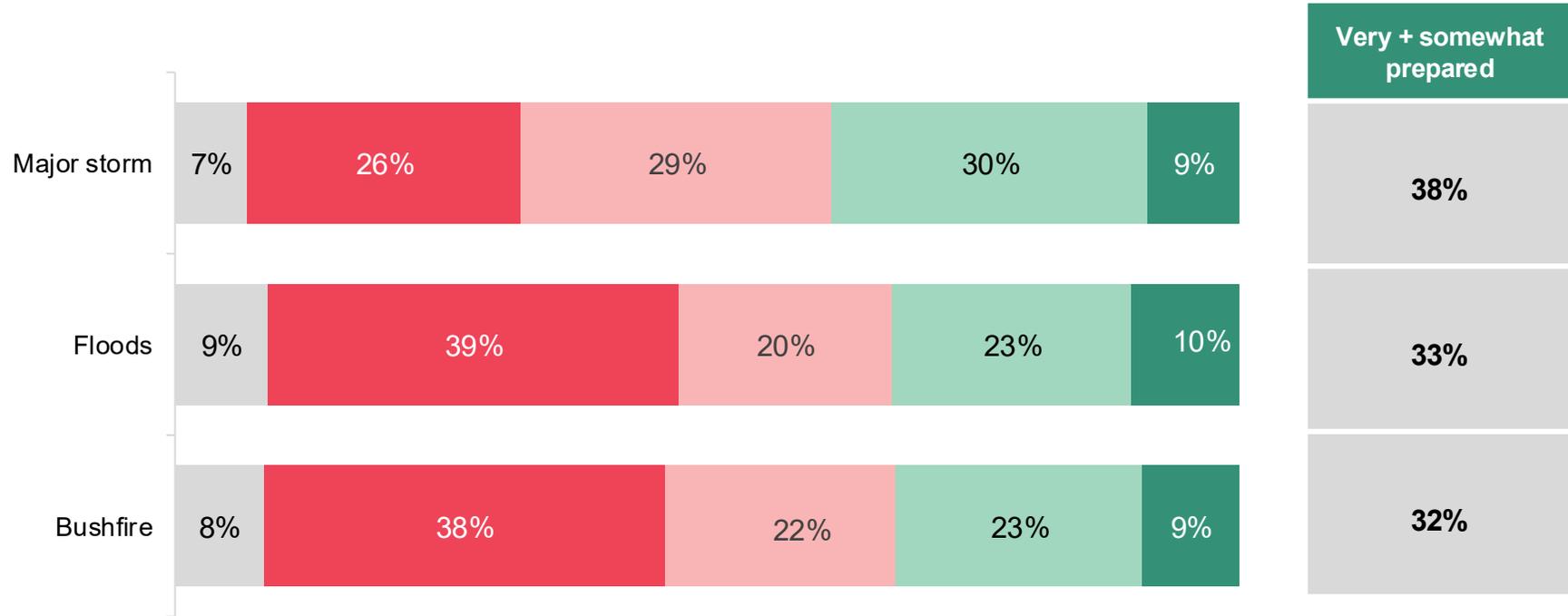
- 58% (Floods)
- 60% (Bushfires)
- 73% (Major storm)

Satisfied

- 58% (Floods)
- 60% (Bushfires)
- 73% (Major storm)

First Nations

- 82% (Floods)



■ Unsure
■ Not at all prepared
■ Slightly prepared
■ Somewhat prepared
■ Very prepared



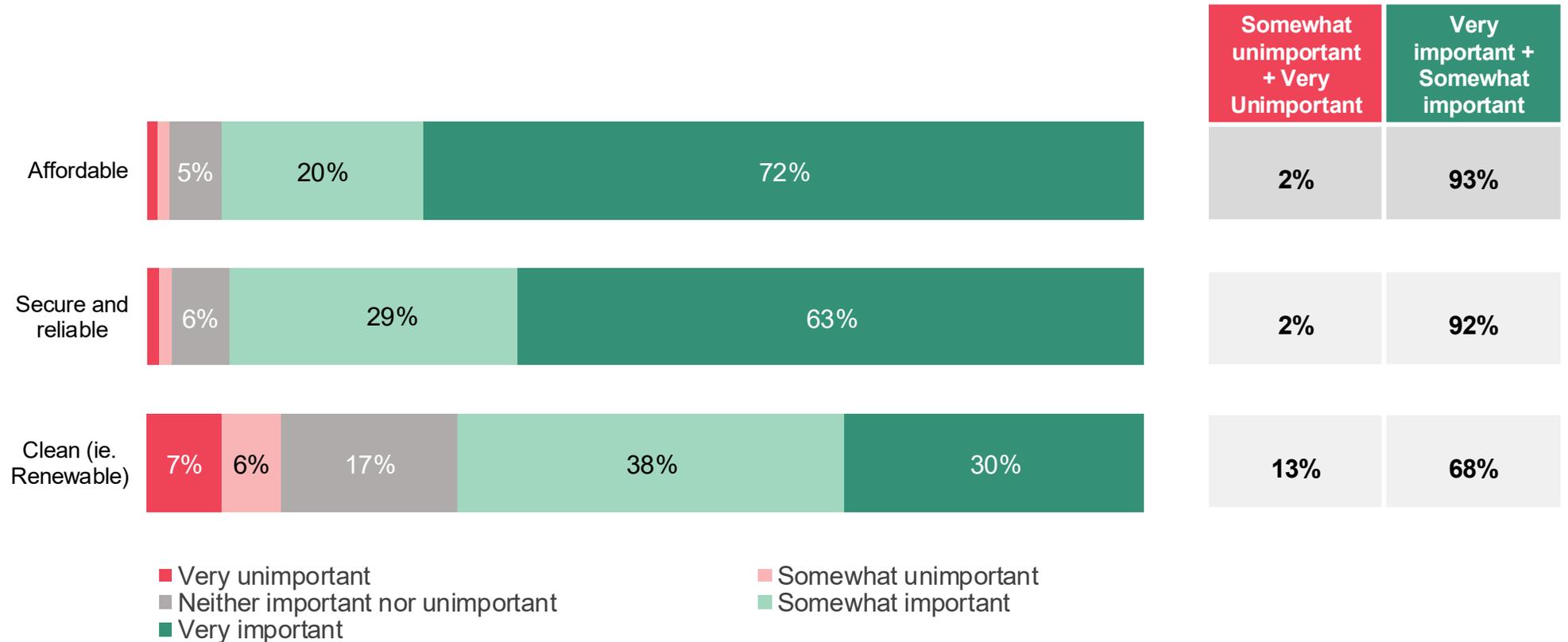
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Energy

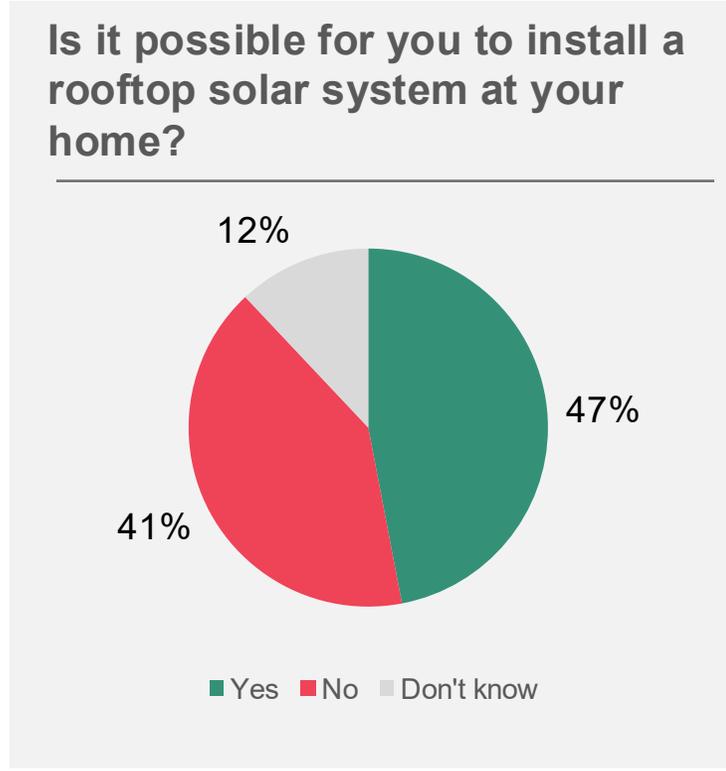
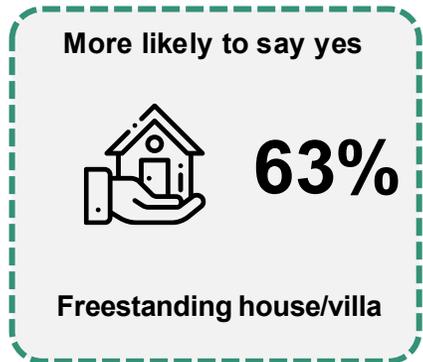


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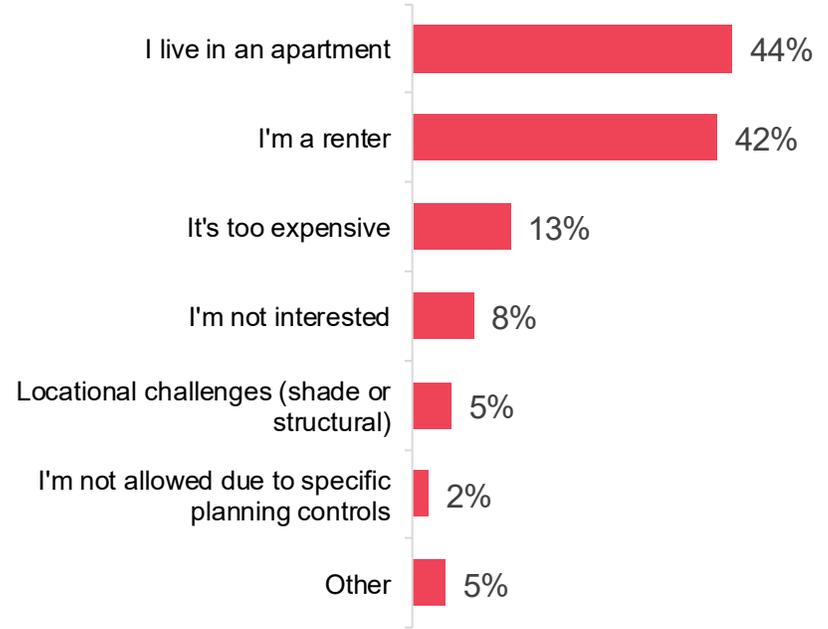
➤ How important is it to you that your energy is:



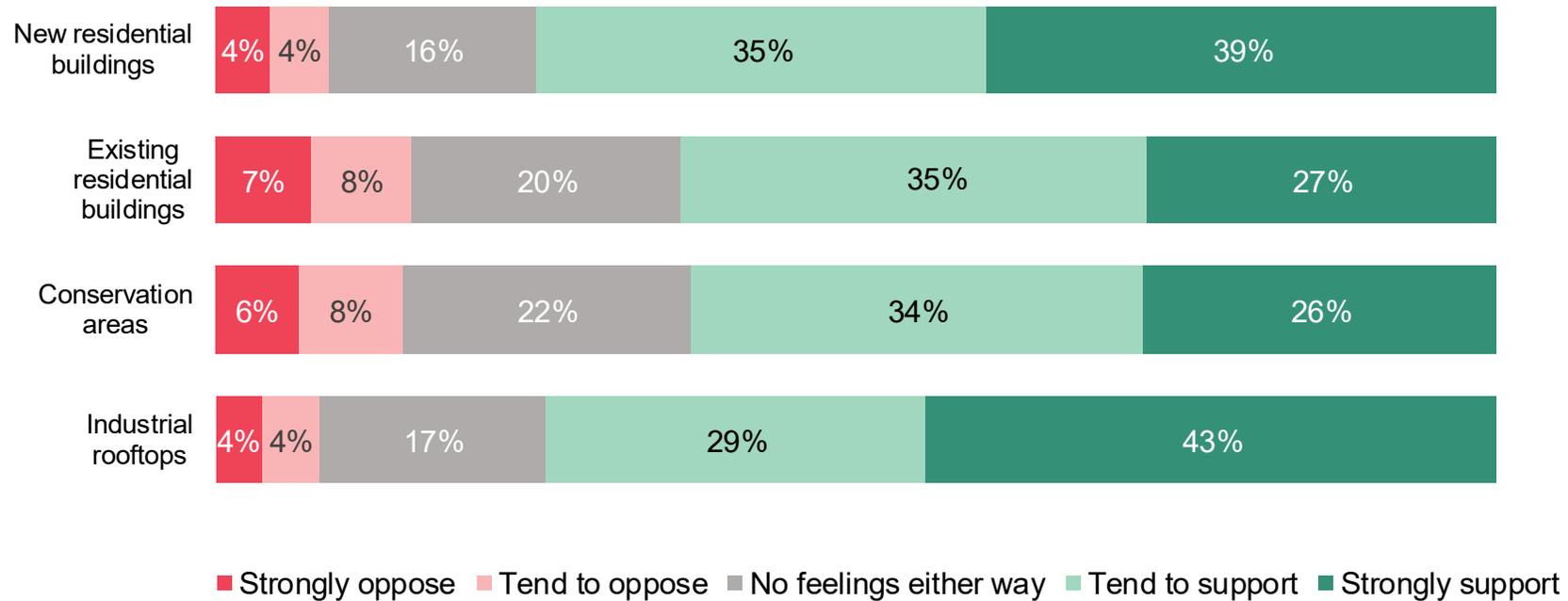
➤ Install a rooftop solar system at your home and reason of not possible for you to install it



Why is it not possible for you to install a rooftop solar system at your home?

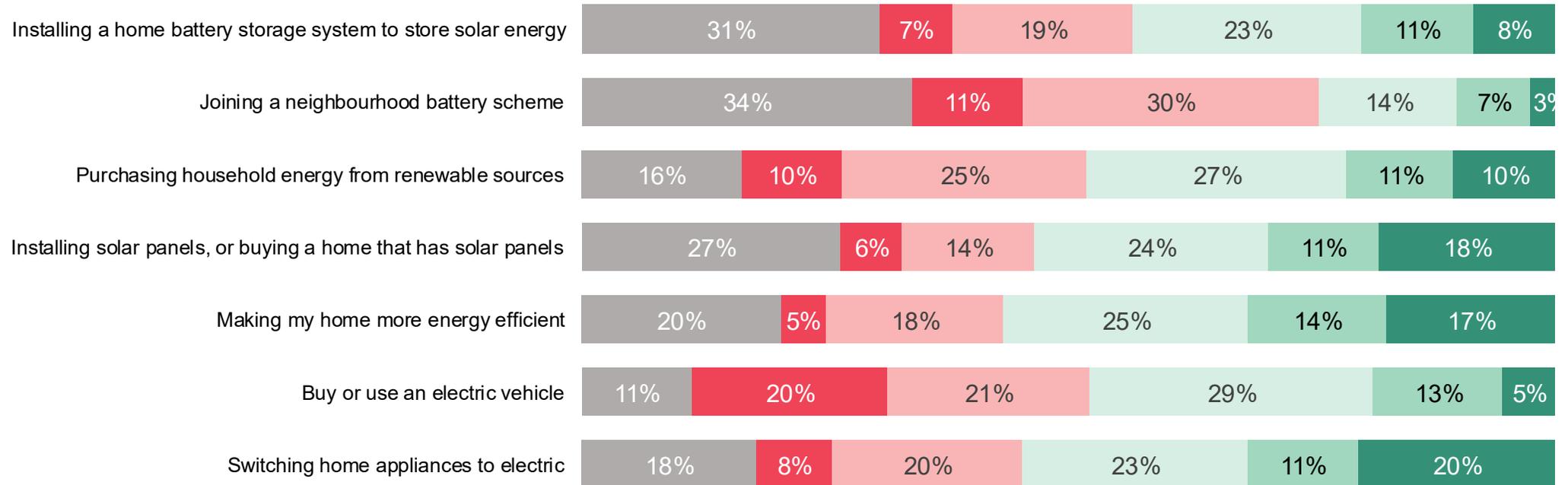


➤ To what extent would you support or oppose mandating solar panels on



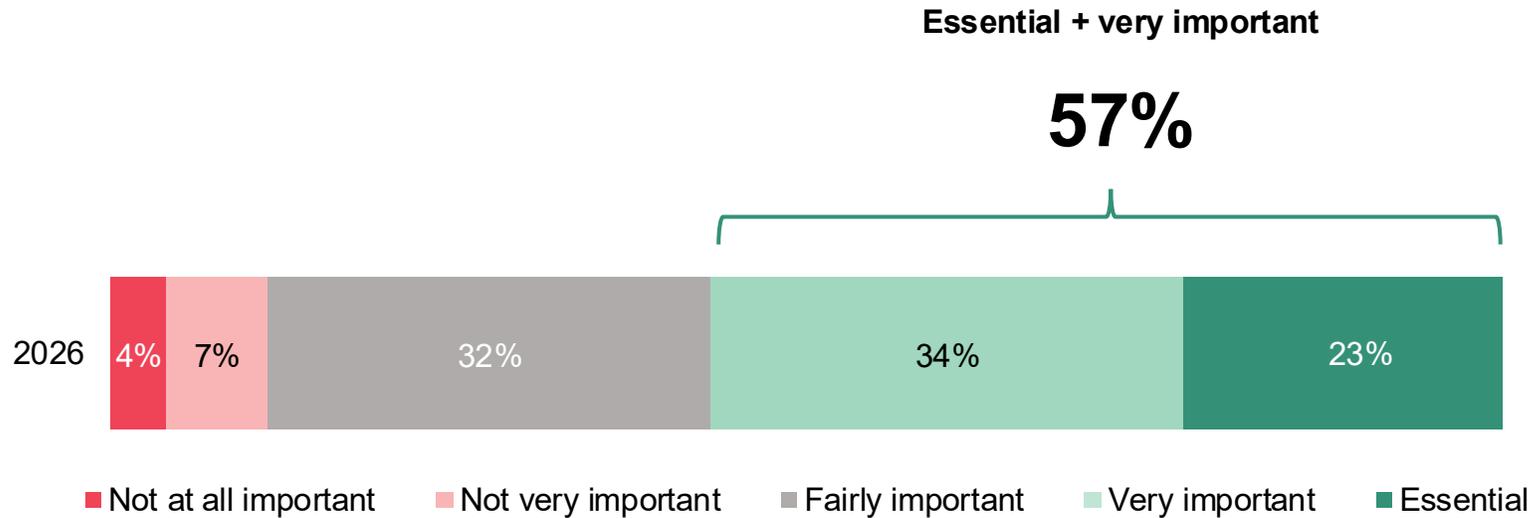
Strongly + tend to oppose	Strongly + Tend to support
9%	73%
15%	62%
14%	60%
8%	72%

Home battery schemes and funding larger neighbourhood-scale batteries



■ Not applicable to me / my household
■ I would not do this
■ I have not considered doing this
■ I have considered doing this
■ I am planning to do this
■ I have done this already

➤ How important do you think it is for governments to encourage Sydney households to install renewable energy capacity (e.g., solar panels and batteries) on their homes?



More likely to think it is essential + very important

- 63%**
 Millennials
- 62%**
 Satisfied
- 66%**
 CALD



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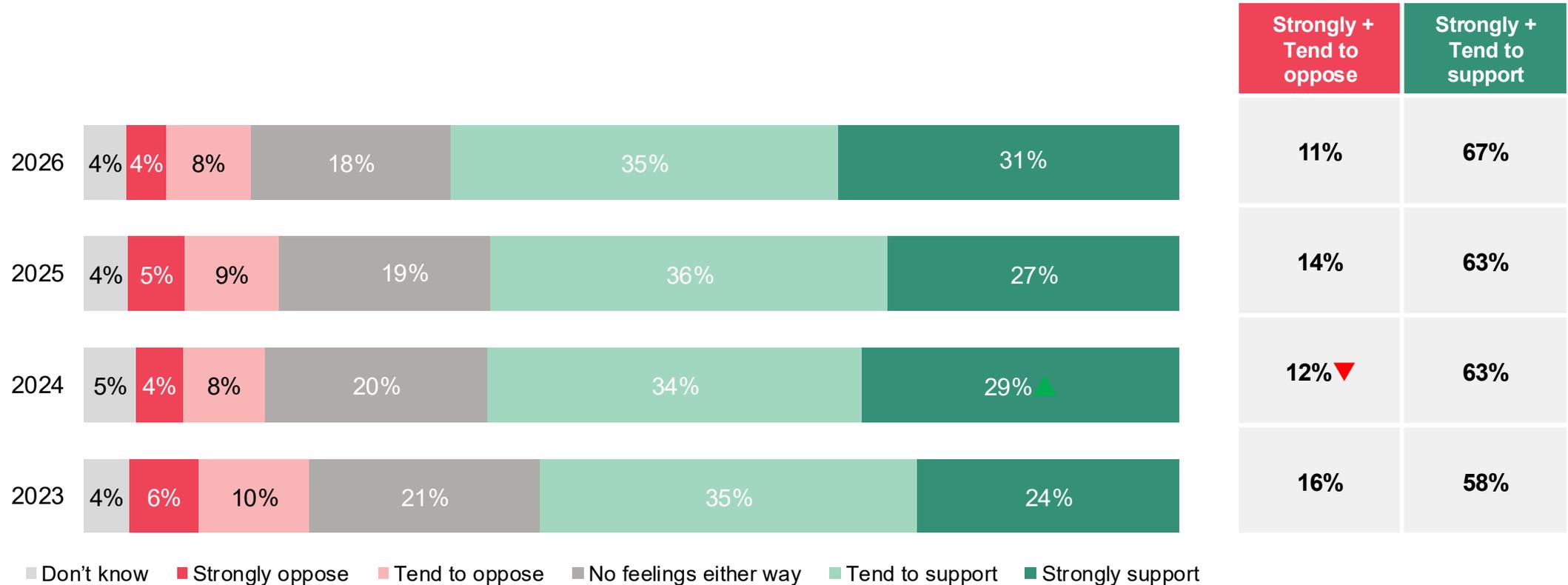
Housing and density



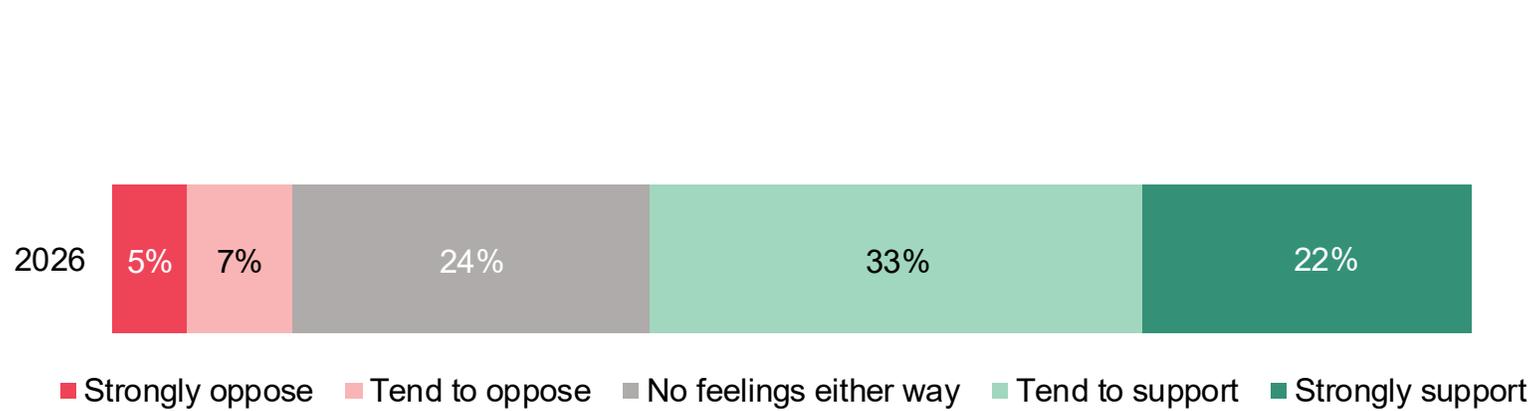
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How much do you support or oppose the building of more homes and apartments to help drive down the cost of housing?



➤ How much do you support the NSW Government buying back flood, bushfire or coastal erosion-affected housing in high-risk areas?



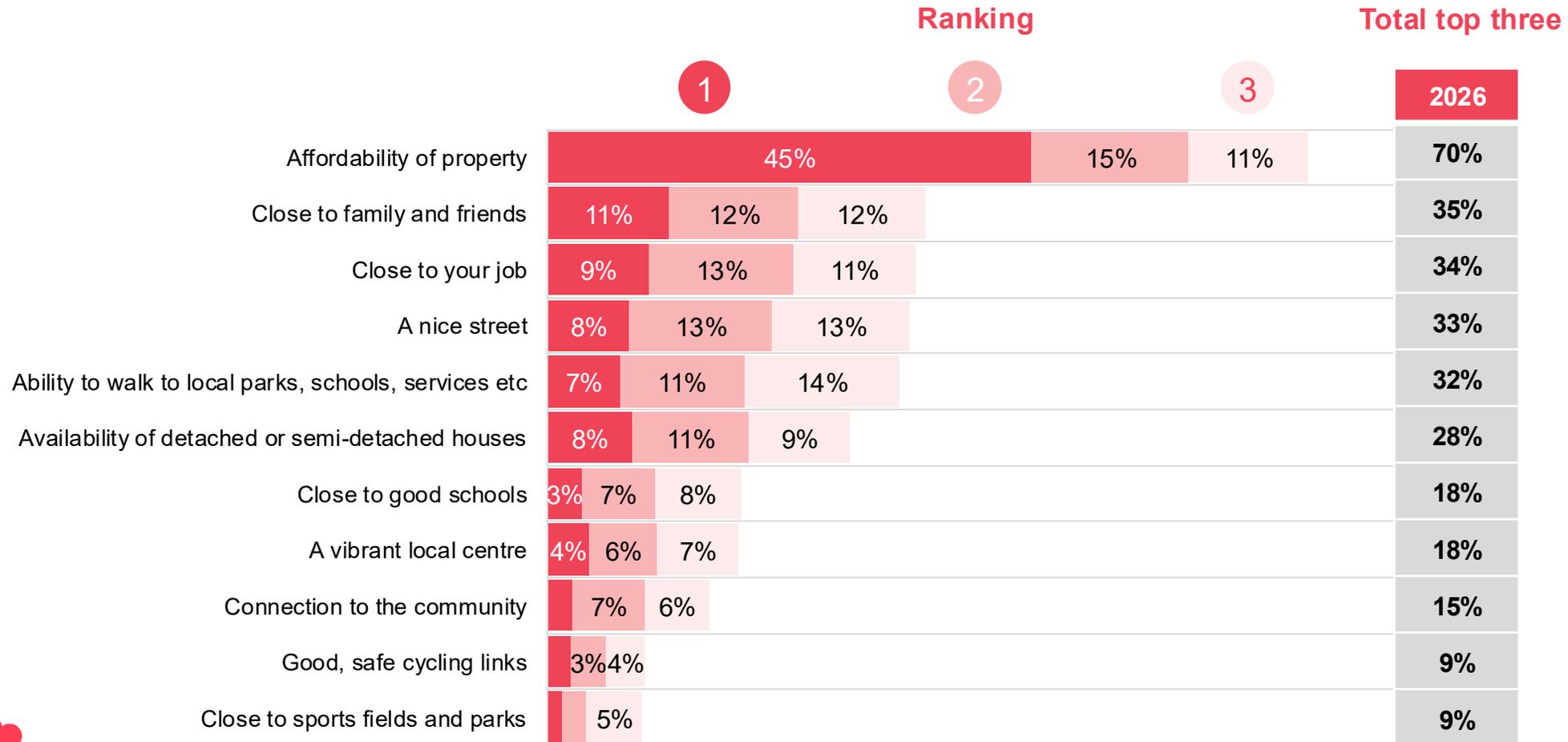
Strongly + Tend to oppose	Strongly + Tend to support
12%	55%

More likely to say strongly + tend to support

 **62%**
 First Nations

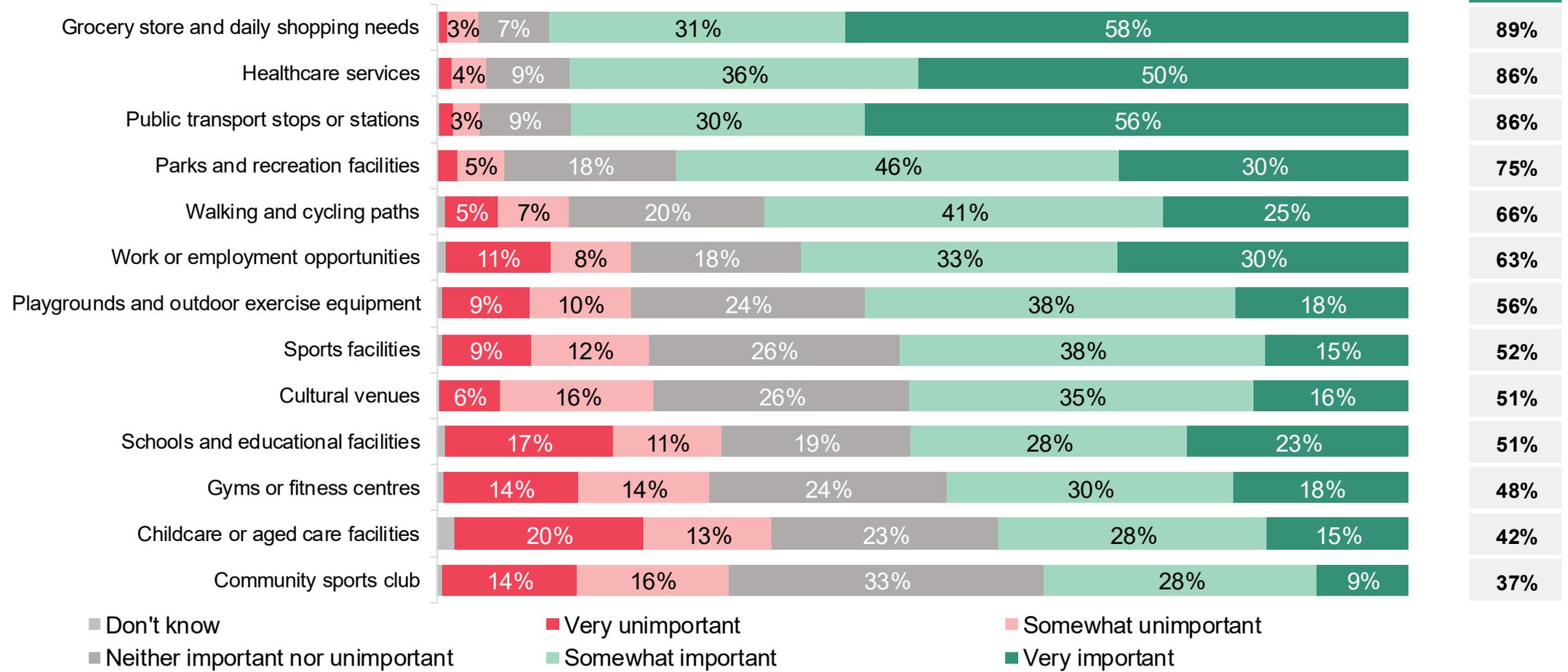
 **56%**
 Gen Z

Neighbourhood preferences

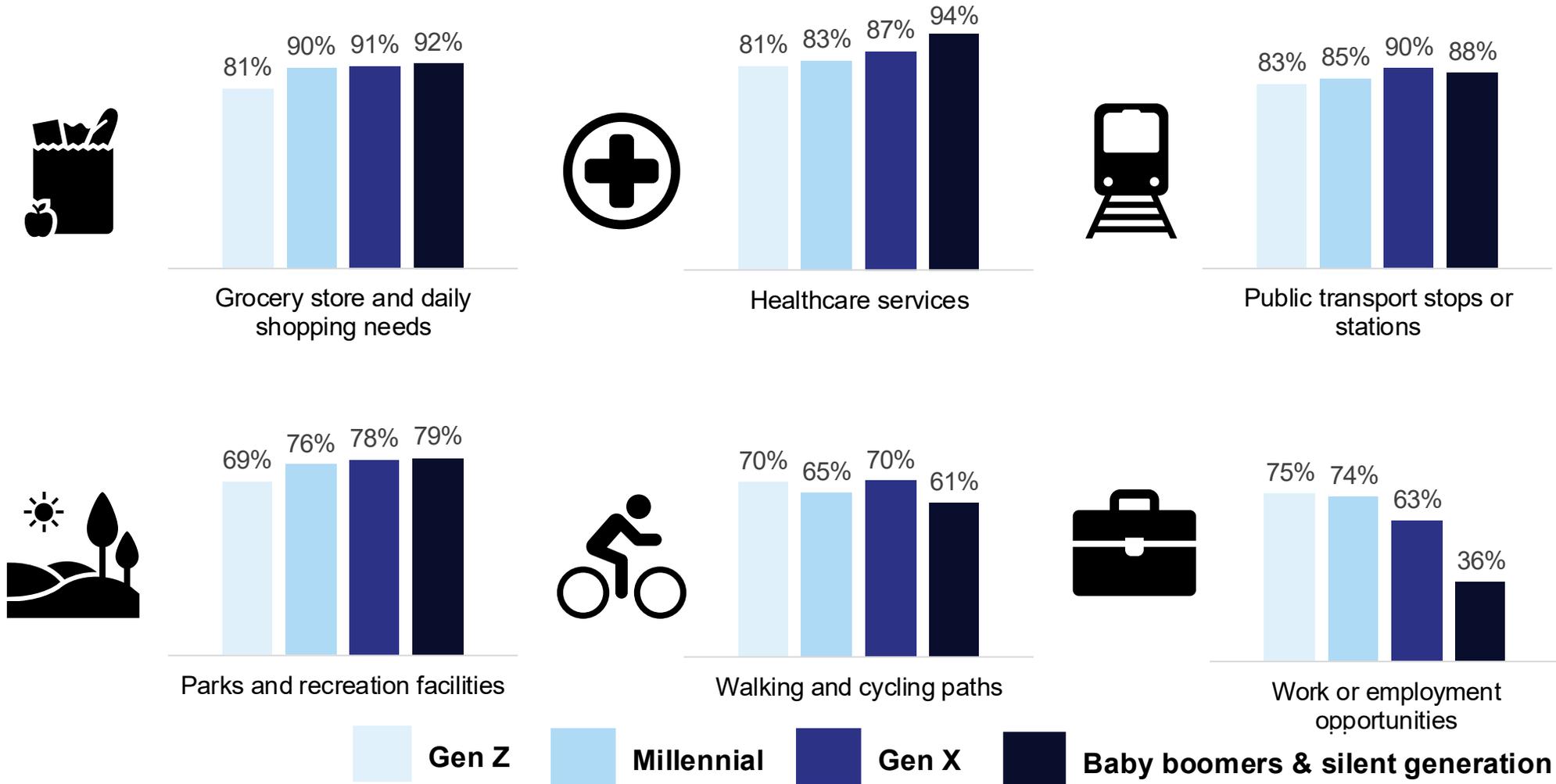


How important is it to you that you can access each of the following within a 15-minute walk or cycle from your home?

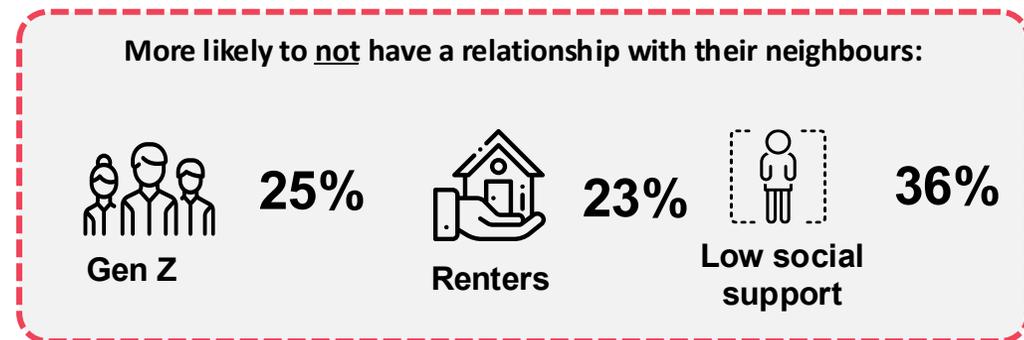
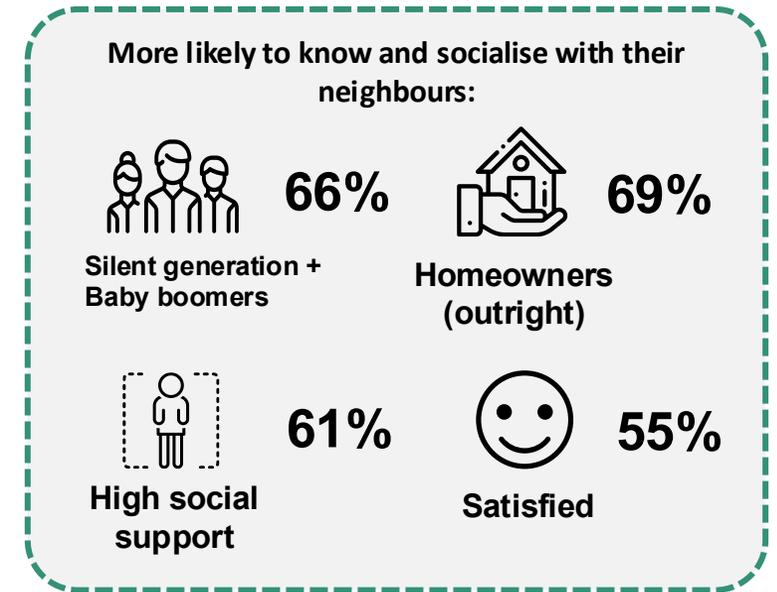
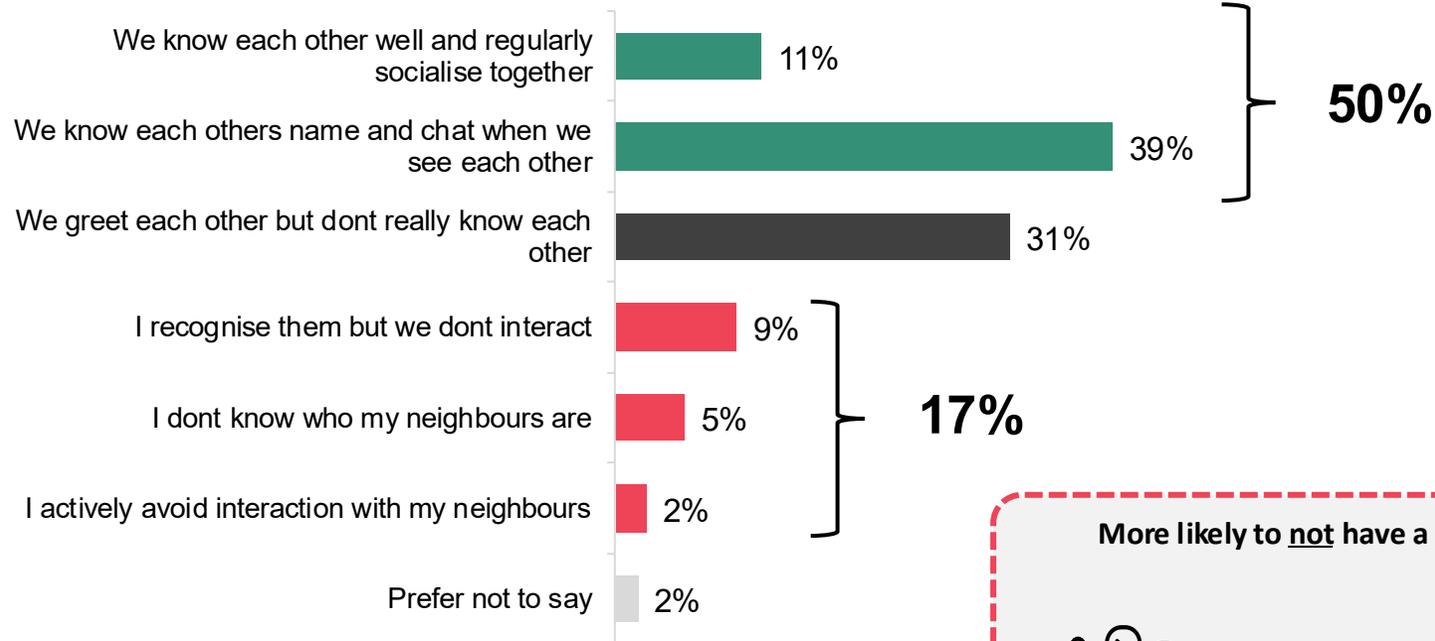
Very + somewhat Important



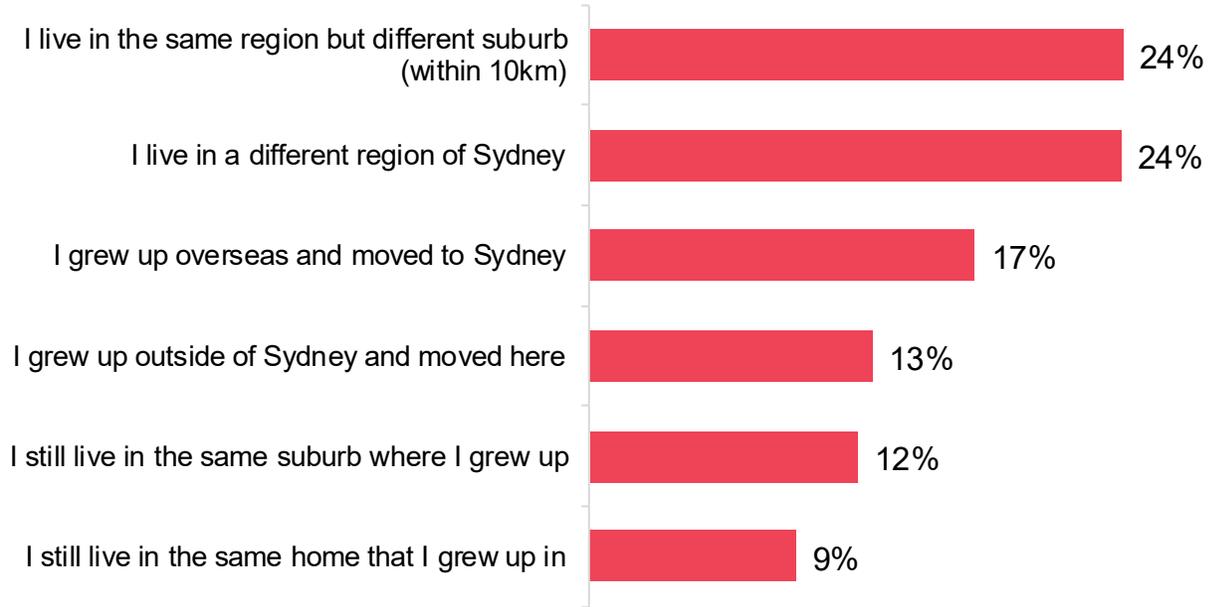
➤ How important is it to you that you can access each of the following within a 15-minute walk or cycle from your home? By generation



Which of the following best describes your relationship with your neighbours?



➤ Which of the following best describes your current living situation, compared to where you grew up?



More likely to live in the same suburb where they grew up



Men

15%



First Nations

25%



Working 35+ hours per week

16%

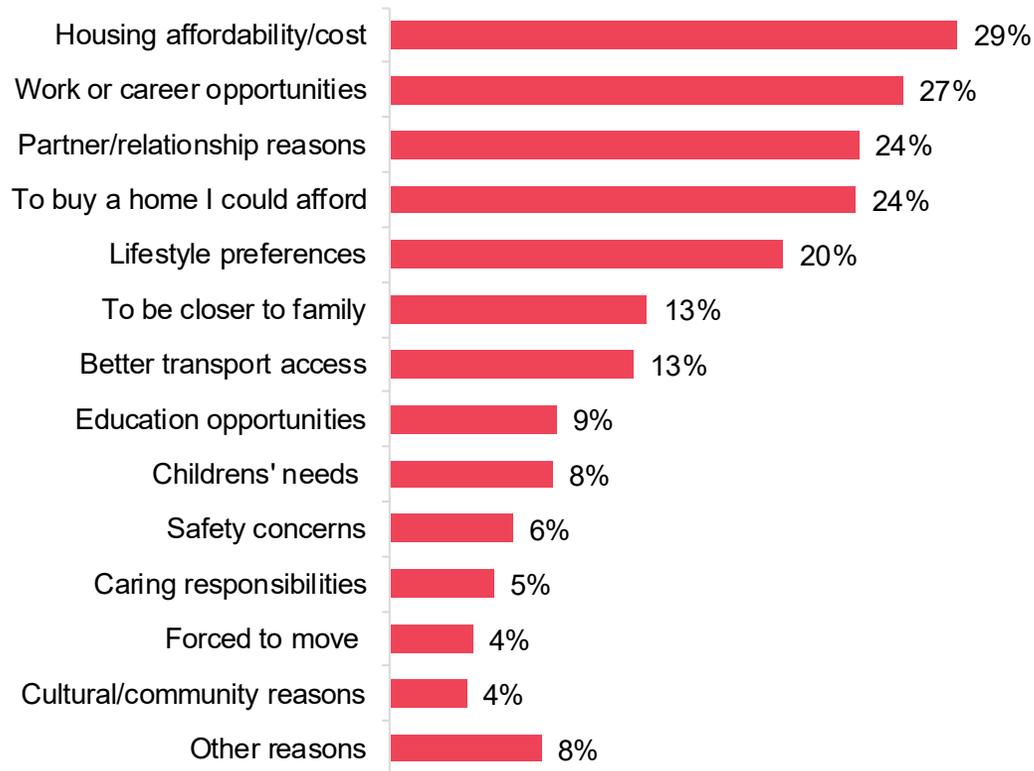


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Q165. Which of the following best describes your current living situation, compared to where you grew up?
Base: Sydney 2026 (n=1000)
Note: Question added in 2026.

➤ What were the reasons you moved away from where you grew up?

Among those who have moved away from where they grew up



"For better suburb."

"Parents wanted to move so I moved with them."

"To be near friends and entertainment."

"People were homophobic and racist in [suburb name redacted]."

"To buy a larger house."



> To what extent do you support or oppose each of these development strategies...



Strongly + Somewhat oppose	Strongly + Somewhat support
11%	71%
19%	56%
17%	57%

■ Don't know
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Somewhat oppose
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Somewhat support
 ■ Strongly support

Do you support or oppose increasing the density of development in each of the following areas of Sydney over the next 10 years

More likely to strongly + somewhat support



Men

51%
(Sydney CBD)



\$100-250K+ income

56%
(Inner-city suburbs)

More likely to strongly + somewhat oppose



Women

40%
(Your suburb)



■ Don't know
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Tend to oppose
■ No feelings either way
 ■ Tend to support
 ■ Strongly support

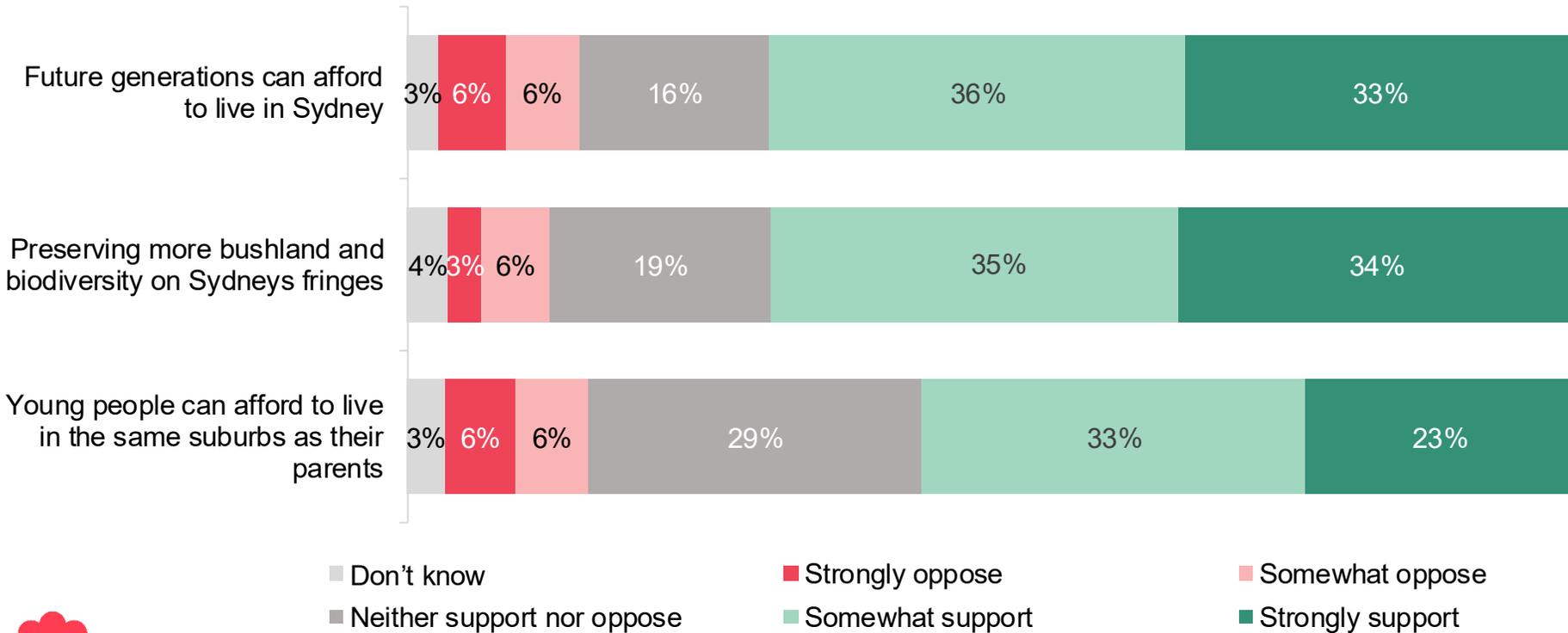
Tend to + strongly support

	2023	2024	2025	2026
Sydney CBD	39%	46%▲	49%	46%
Inner-city suburbs	43%	48%	53%	51%
Satellite centres	47%	57%▲	58%	57%
Outer suburbs	50%	55%	58%	57%
Your suburb	39%	44%	46%	47%

▲ Significantly higher than previous years
▼ Significantly lower than previous years

Q40 To what extent do you support or oppose increasing the density of development in each of the following areas of Sydney over the next 10 years?
 Base: Sydney 2026 (n=1000)
 Note: Data under 3% not labelled.

Do you support or oppose increasing density of development in Sydney if...



Strongly + Somewhat oppose	Strongly + Somewhat support
12%	69%
9%	69%
12%	56%

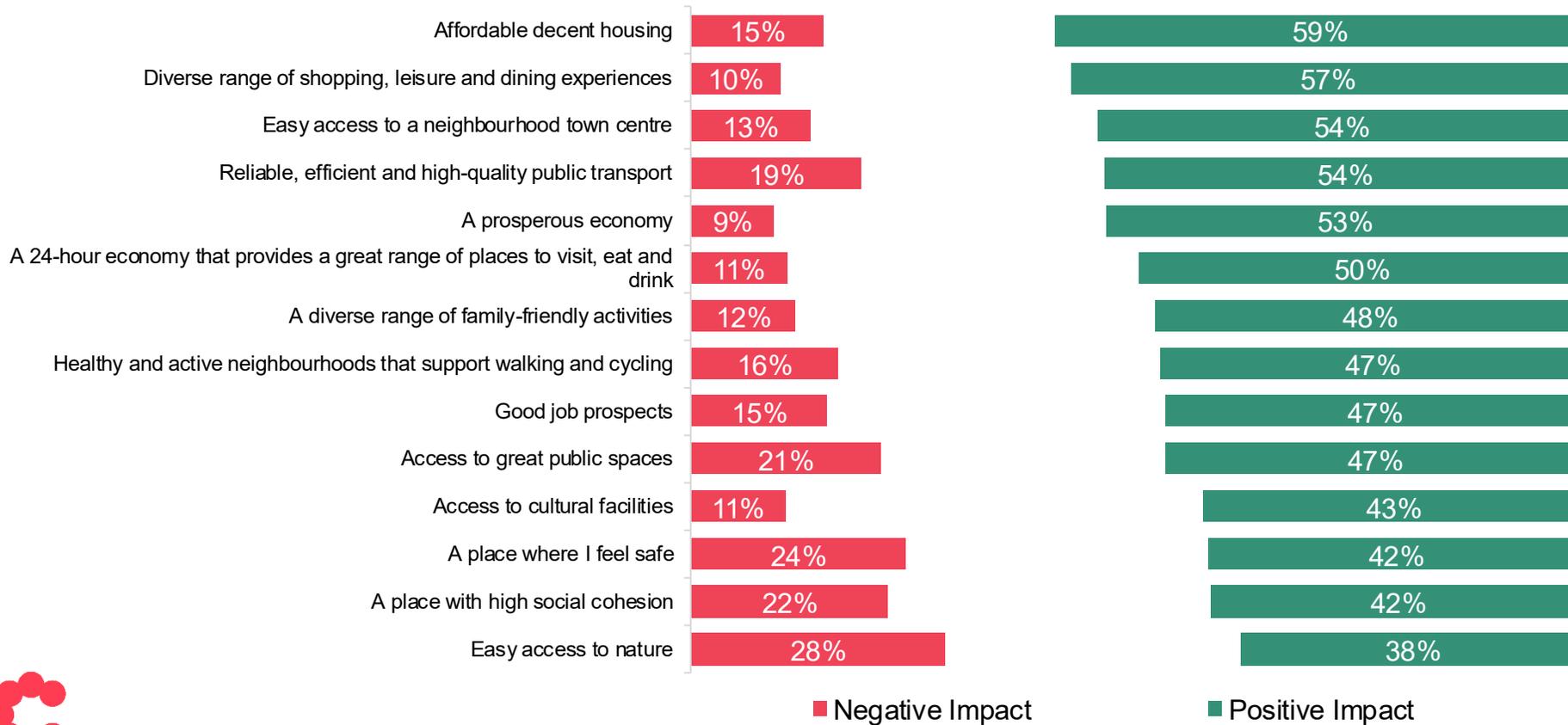


Q117 To what extent do you support or oppose increasing density of development in Sydney if it means
 Base: Sydney 2026 (n=1000)
 Note: Data under 3% not labelled.





Do you think increasing housing density in existing communities has a positive or negative impact on..



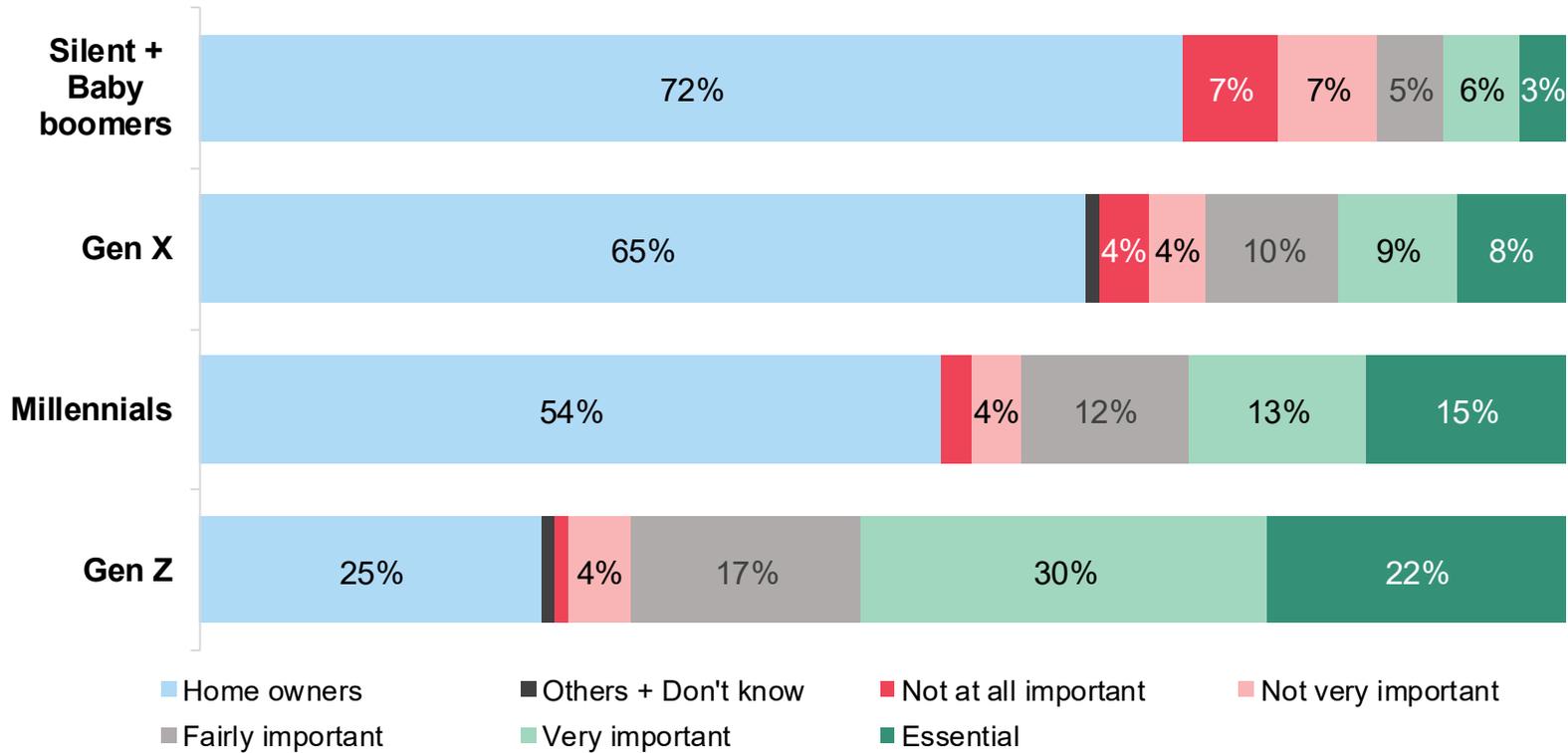
More likely to perceive positive impact

 **41%**
(A place where I feel safe)
Millennials

 **23%**
(A 24-hour economy)
Eastern

 **42%**
(Access to cultural facilities)
Couple with children

➤ How important is it to you that you can own your home one day?

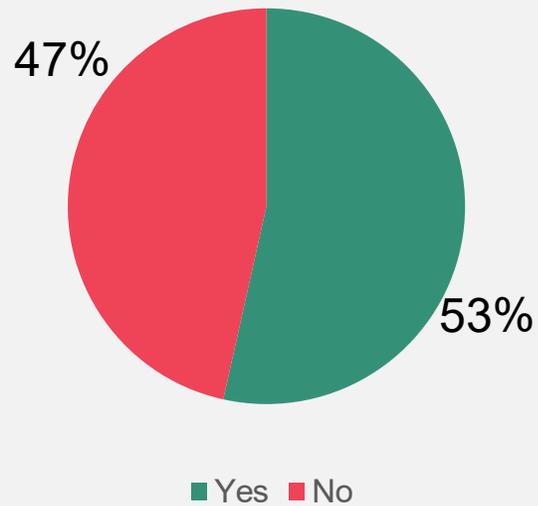


Total Essential + Fairly important + Very important

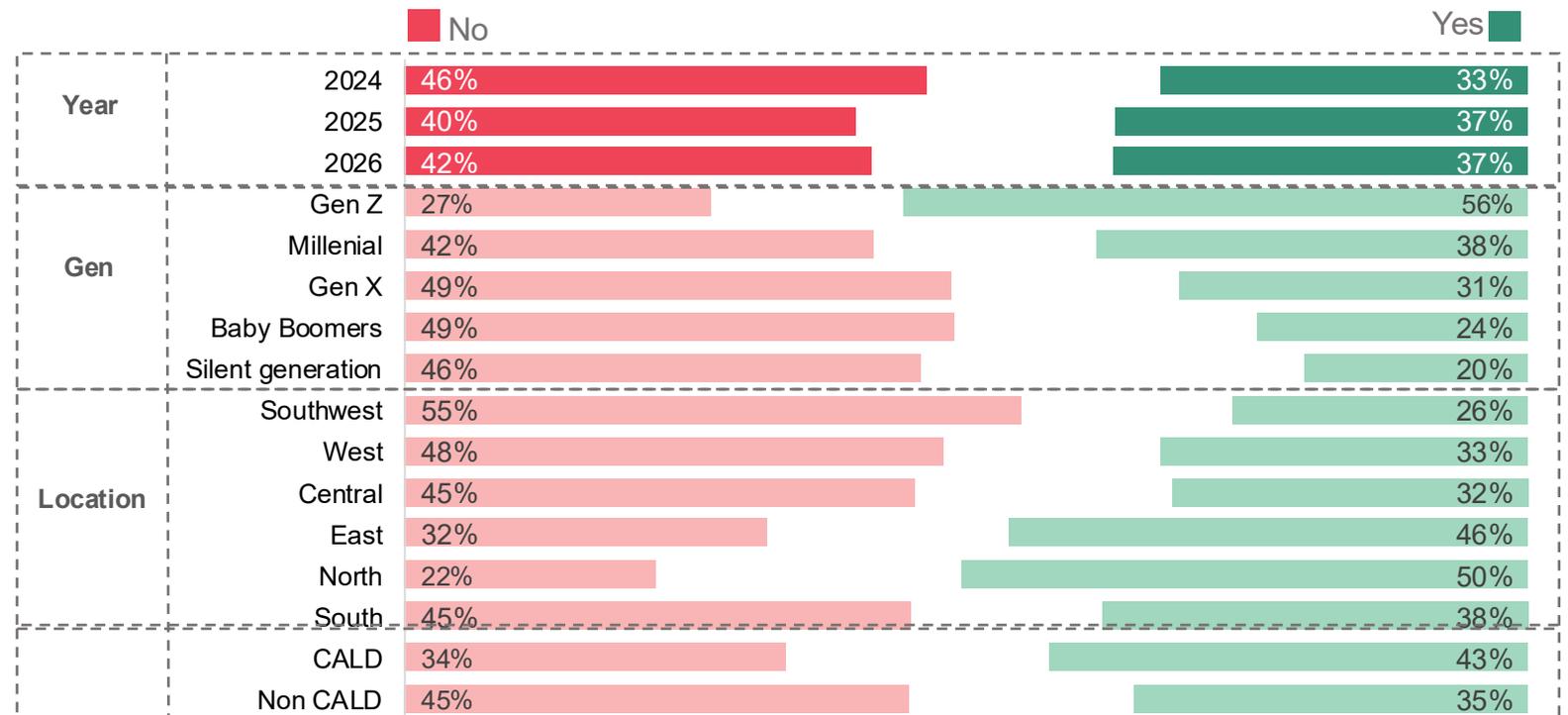
2024	2025	2026
12%	9%	14% ▲
26%	22%	26%
35%	34%	40%
40%	53% ▲	68% ▲

➤ Lived in apartment and consider living in an apartment in the future

Have you ever lived in an apartment?

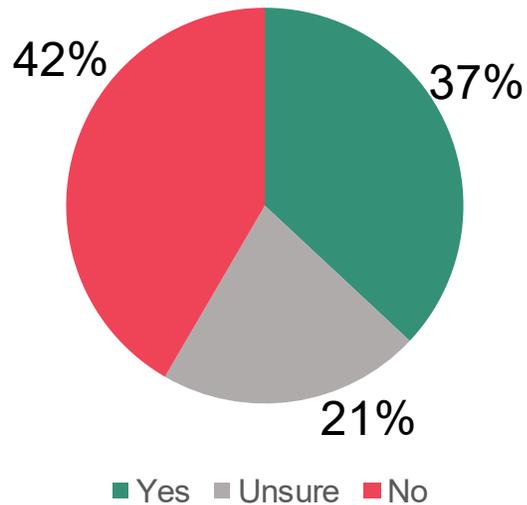


Would you consider living in an apartment in the future?

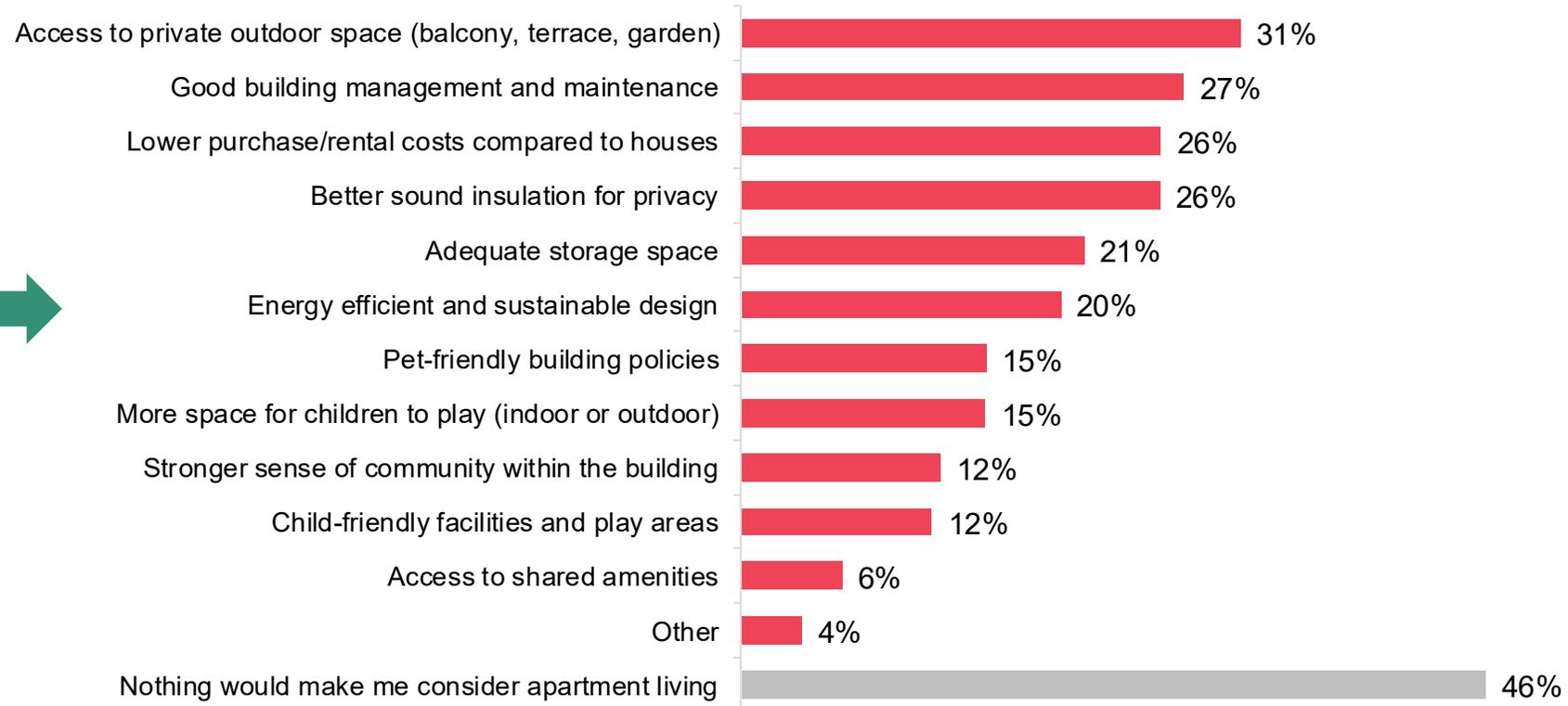


➤ What would convince you to live in an apartment?

Would you consider living in an apartment in the future?



Among those who would not consider living in an apartment





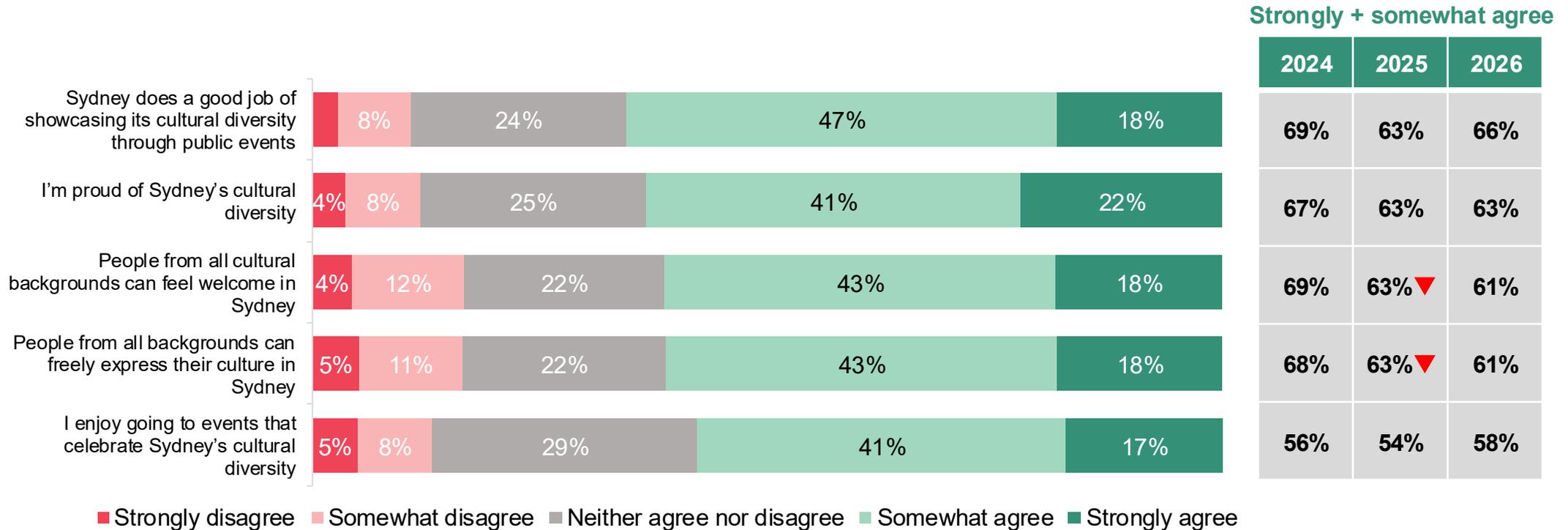
Life in Sydney 2026

Multiculturalism

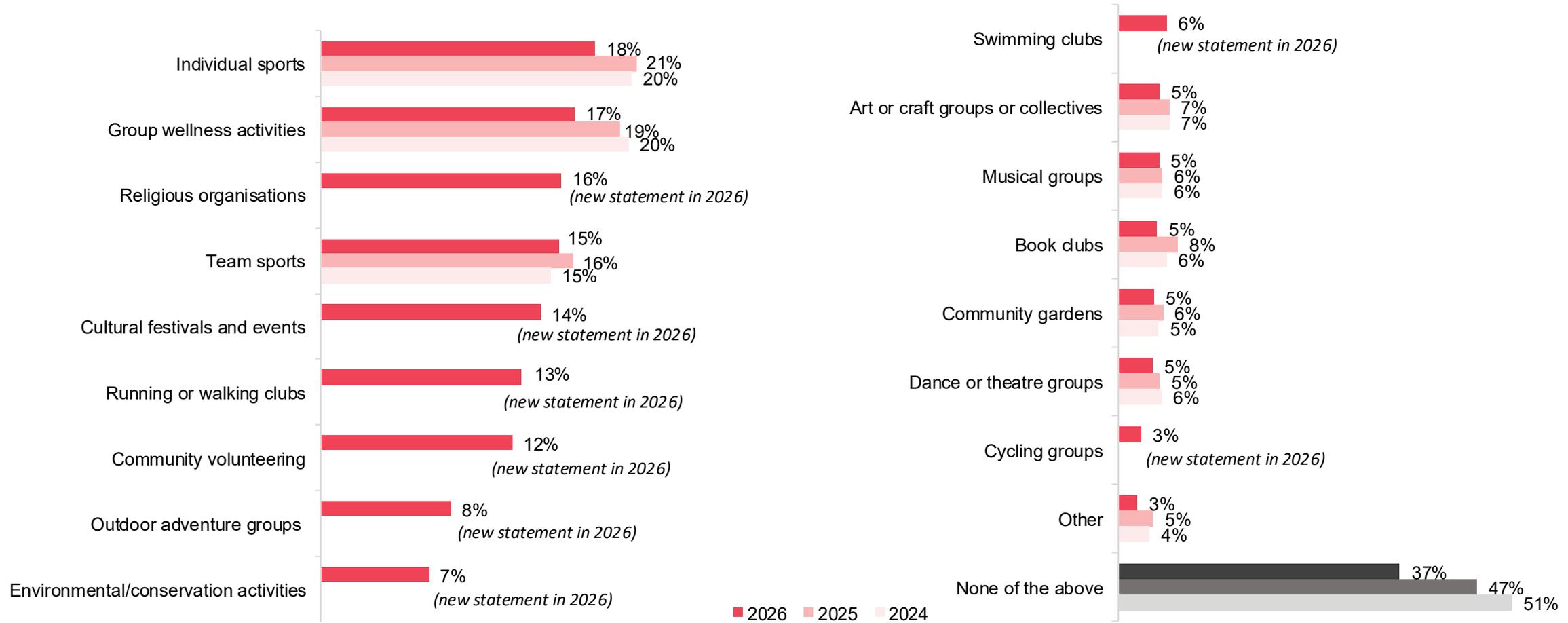


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➤ To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements



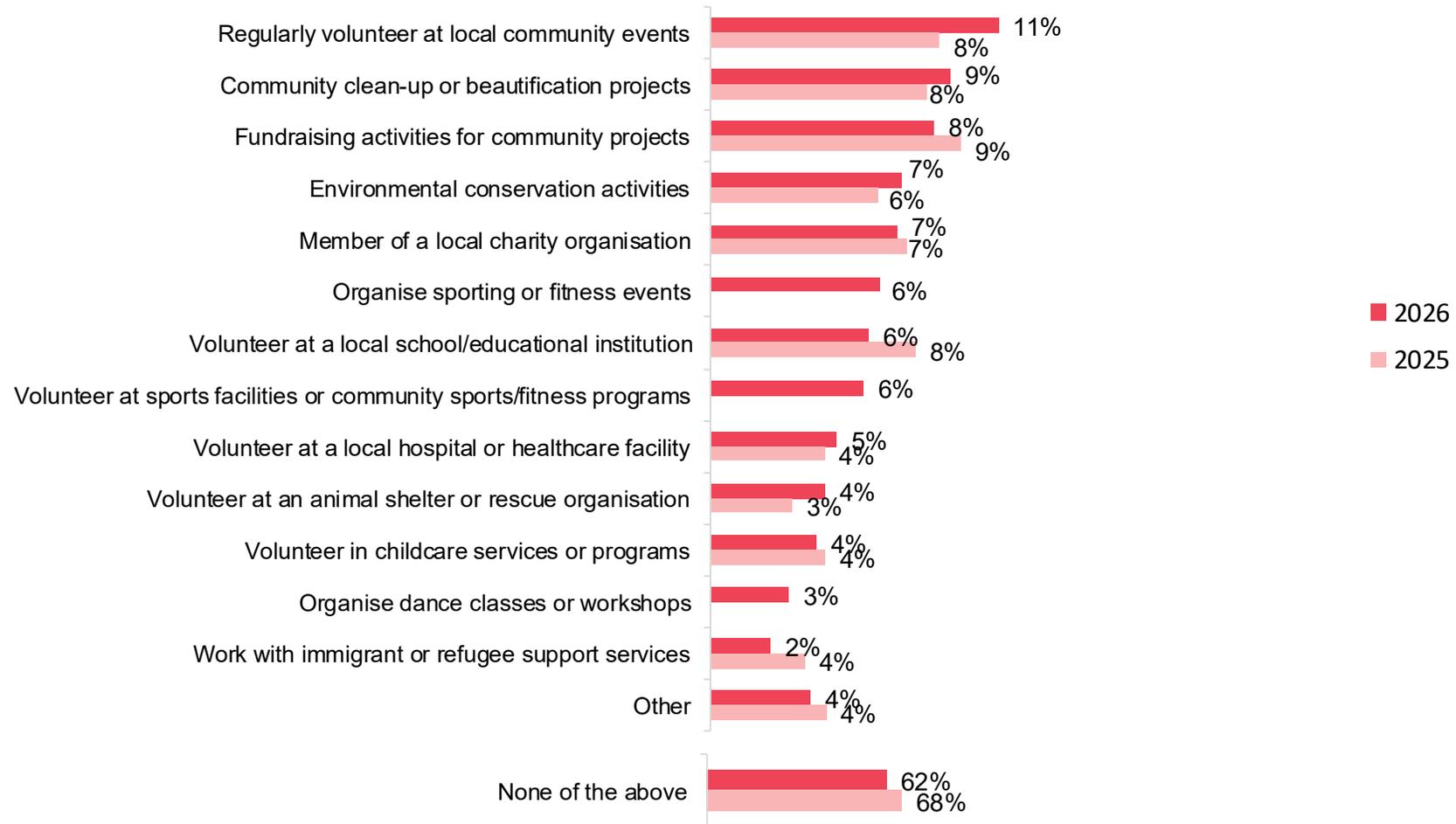
Do you regularly participate in any of the following?



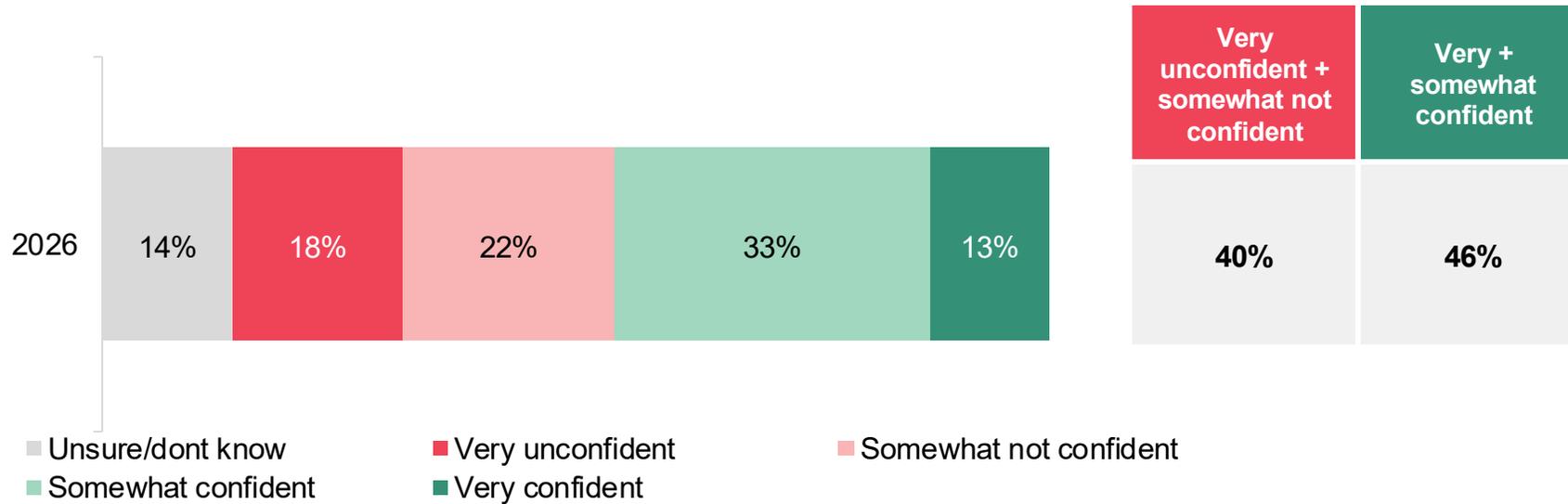
Q114. Do you regularly participate in any of the following? Select any that apply.
 Base: Sydney 2024 (n=1035) 2025 (n=1000), 2026 (n=1000)



Below is a list of ways some people volunteer in their communities. Looking at the list, which of any of these things do you do?



➤ **How confident are you that you know about the traditional owners where you live (e.g. the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Country, language group, or community)?**



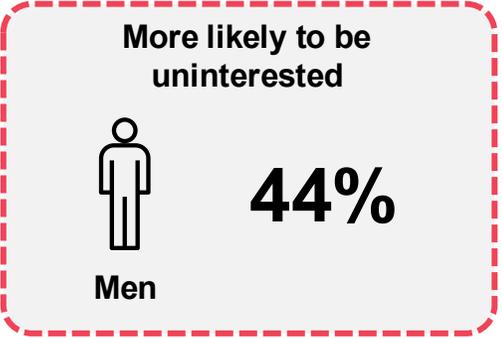
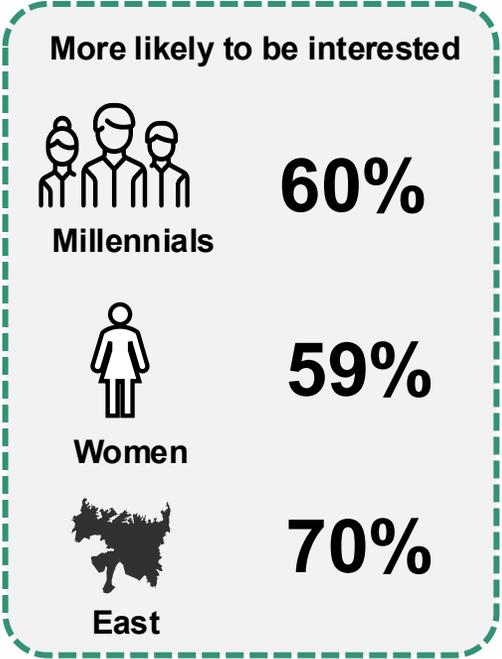
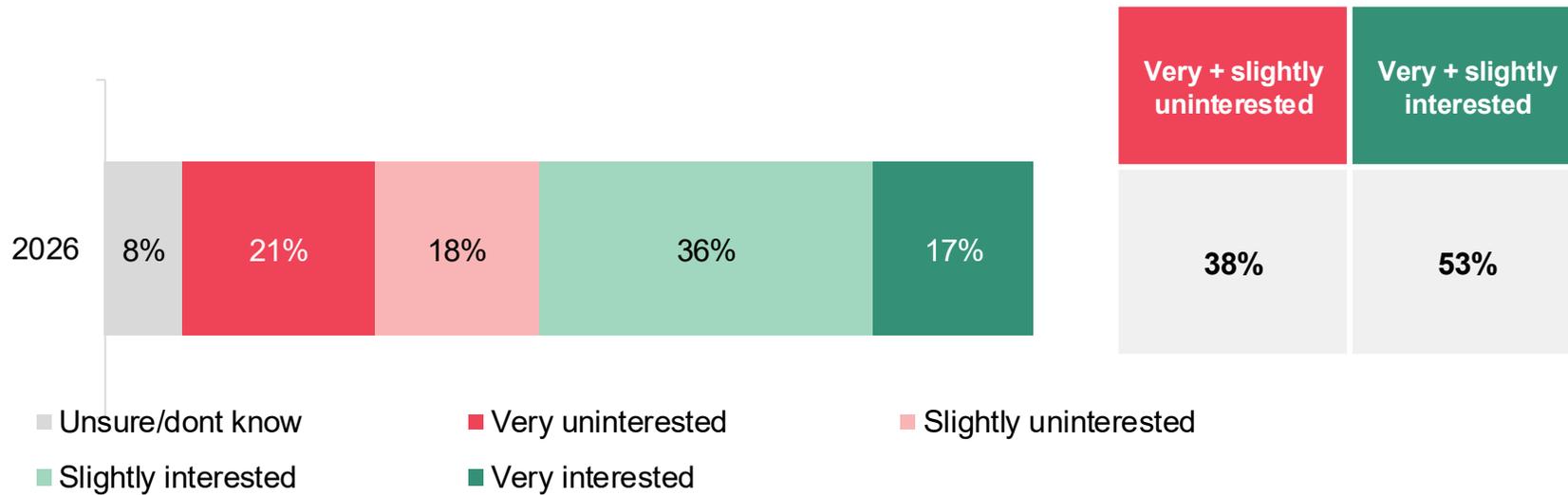
More likely to be very + somewhat confident

52%
Millennials

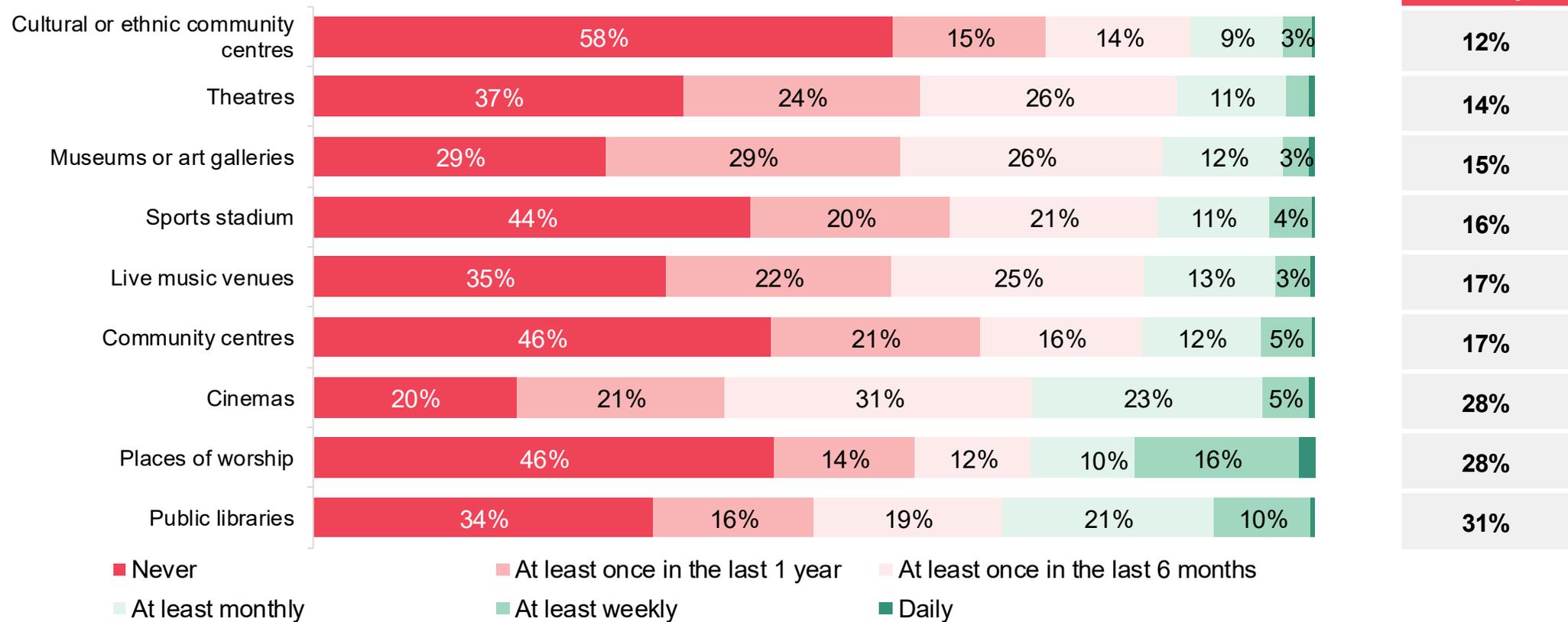
56%
Gen Z

51%
Satisfied

➤ What is your level of interest in Indigenous issues in Australia?

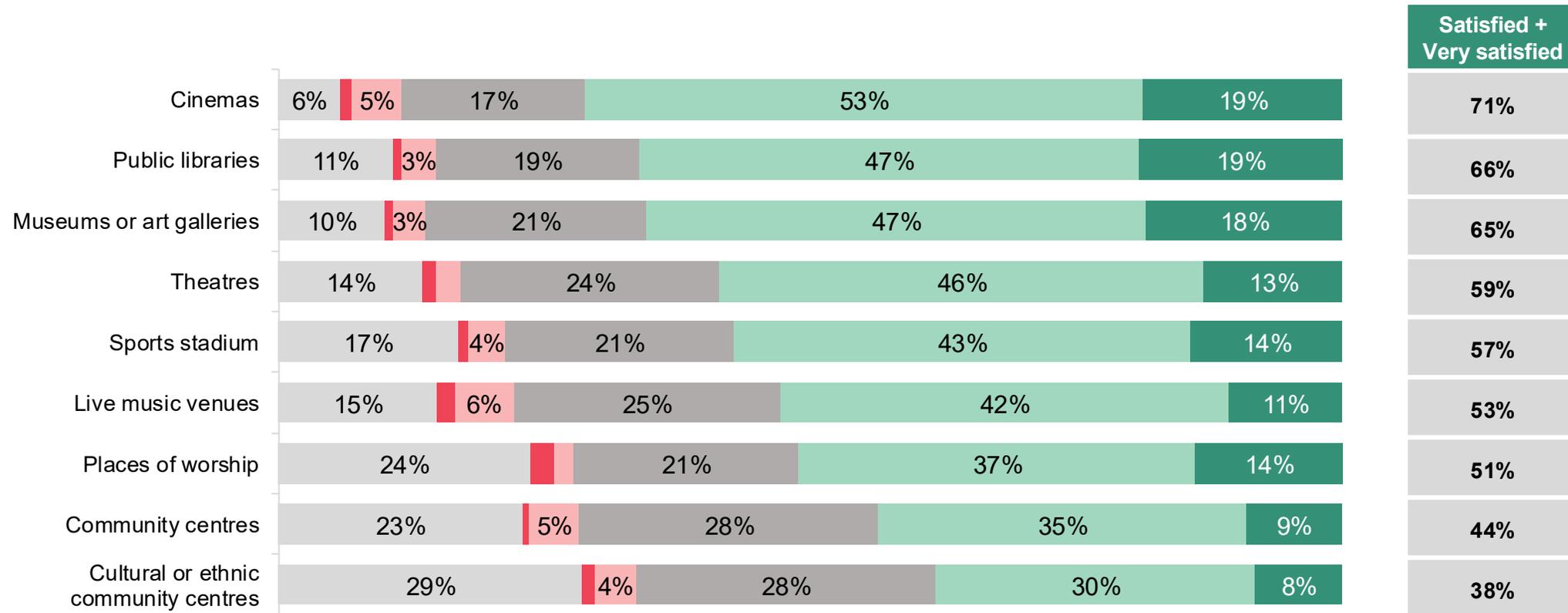


➤ In the past 12 months, how often have you visited the following cultural venues in Sydney?



Q173. In the past 12 months, how often have you visited the following cultural venues in Sydney? Data under 3% not labelled
 Base: Sydney 2026 (n=1000)
 Note: Data under 3% not labelled.

➤ How satisfied are you with the following cultural venues in Sydney?



■ Don't know
 ■ Very unsatisfied
 ■ Unsatisfied
 ■ Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Very satisfied



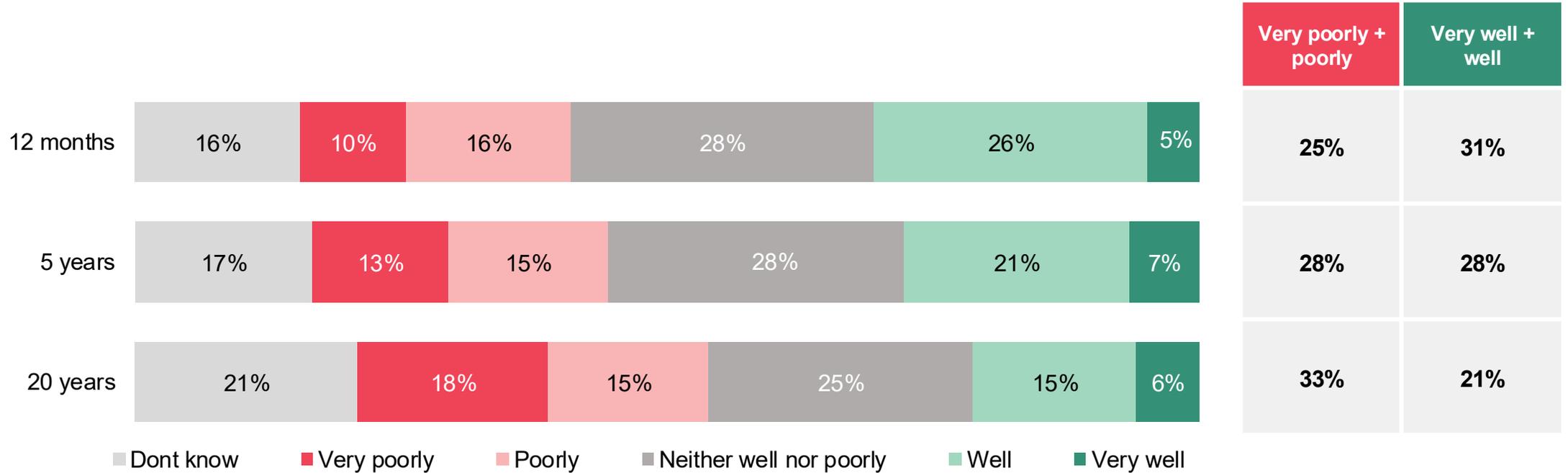
Life in Sydney 2026 Planning



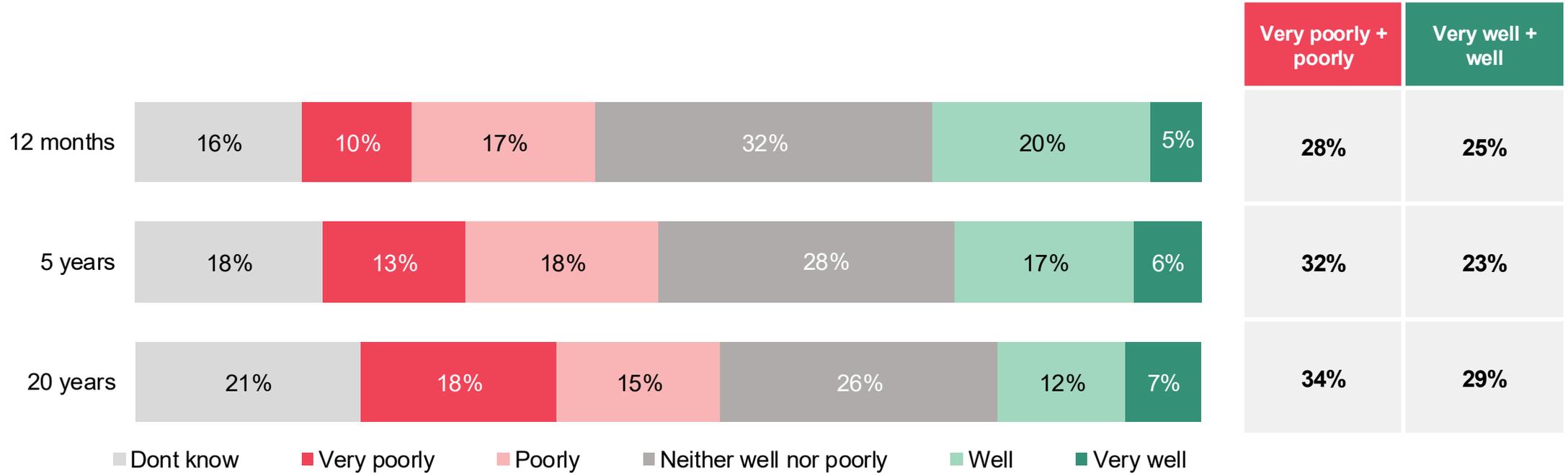
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How well do you understand the plans for how your local area will develop over the next..

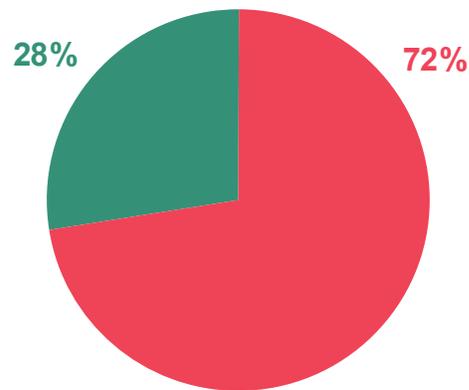


➤ How well do you understand the plans for how Sydney will develop over the next..



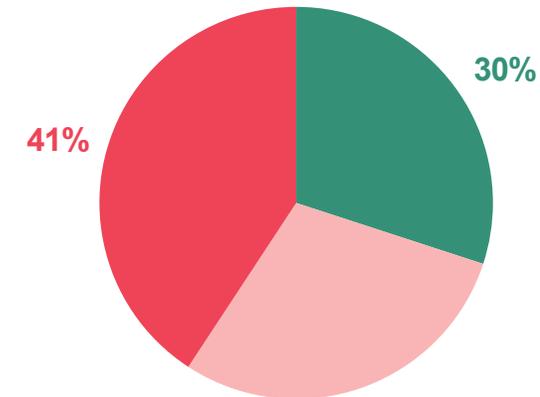
➤ Having a voice and giving feedback in the community

Do you feel that you have a voice in how your local community will develop?



■ Yes ■ No

Have you ever provided feedback or contributed to community engagement sessions on development issues related to your local area?



■ Yes
■ No, but know how to
■ No, and I don't know how to

➔ **38%** ←

Don't have a voice in the community + Don't know how to provide feedback

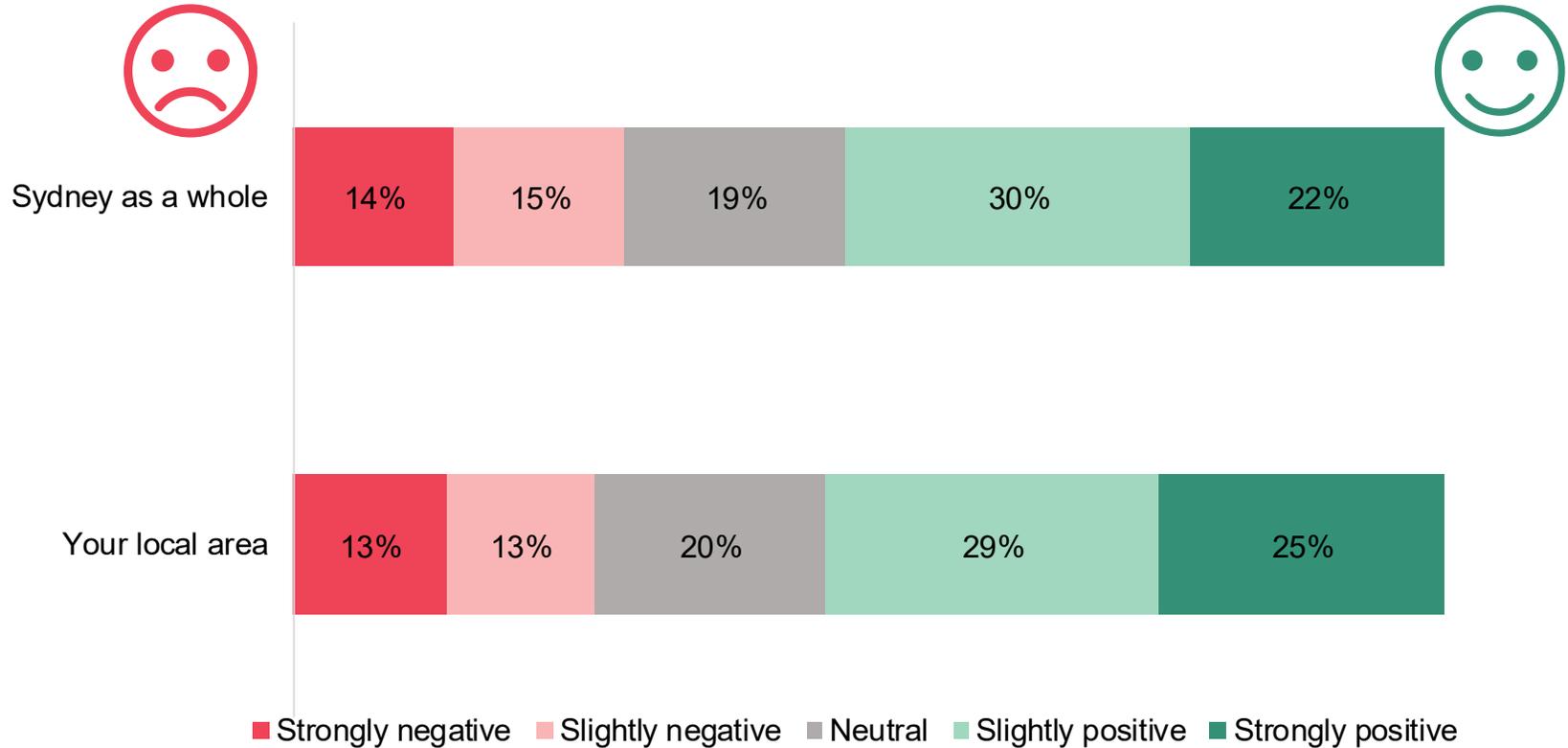
➤ How do you feel about the changes you expect to happen in ... over the next 5 years?

**More likely to feel negative
"Your local area"**

 **36%**
Gen X

"Sydney as a whole"

 **40%**
Gen X





Life in Sydney 2026

Bold leadership



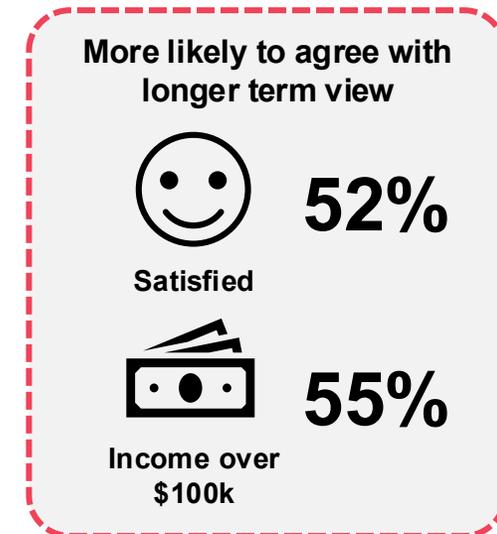
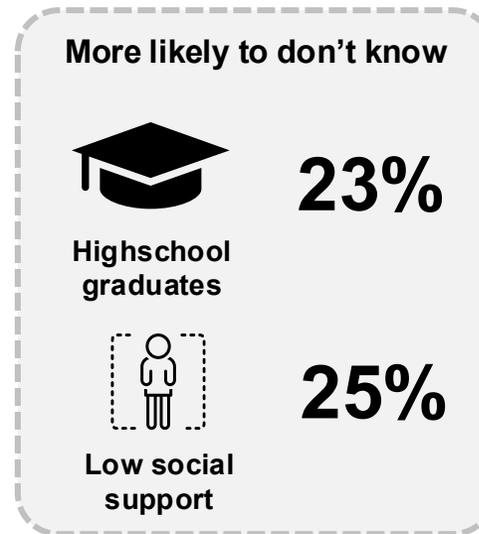
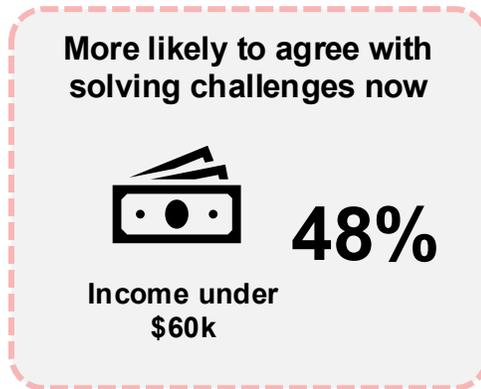
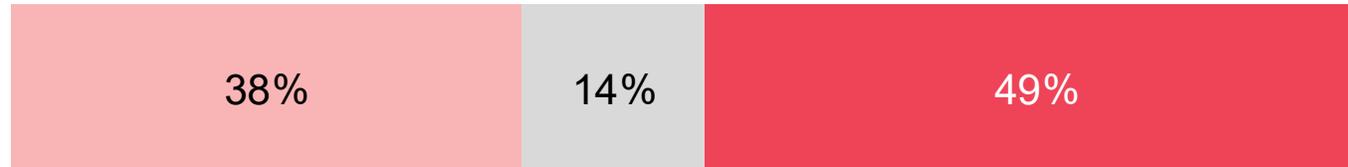
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> Do you think the government should prioritise...

Solving planning challenges that impact Sydney residents **now**

Don't know

A longer-term view to ensure Sydney is liveable in **20 years**

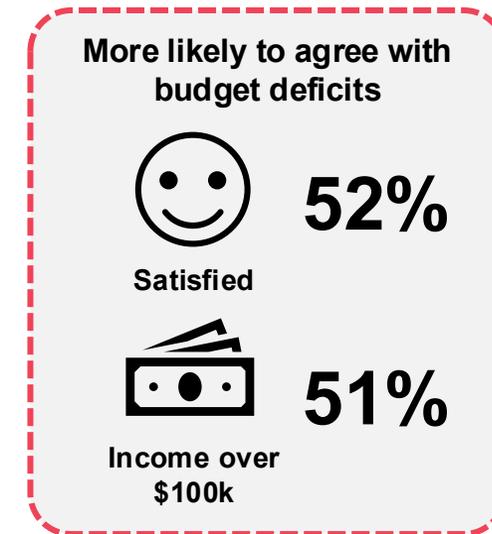
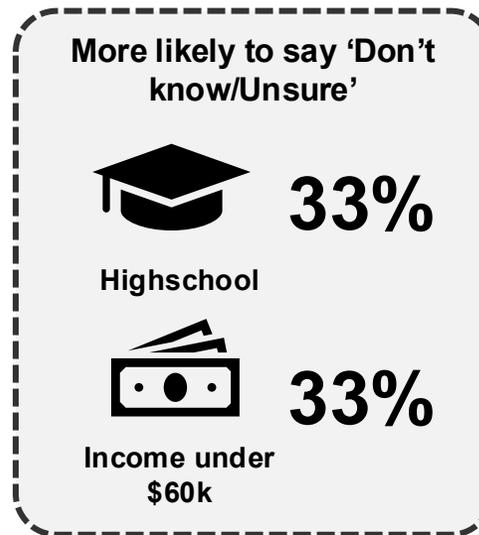
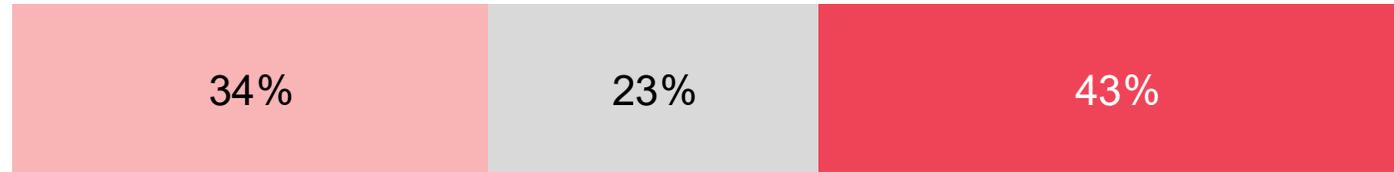


> Do you think the government should prioritise...

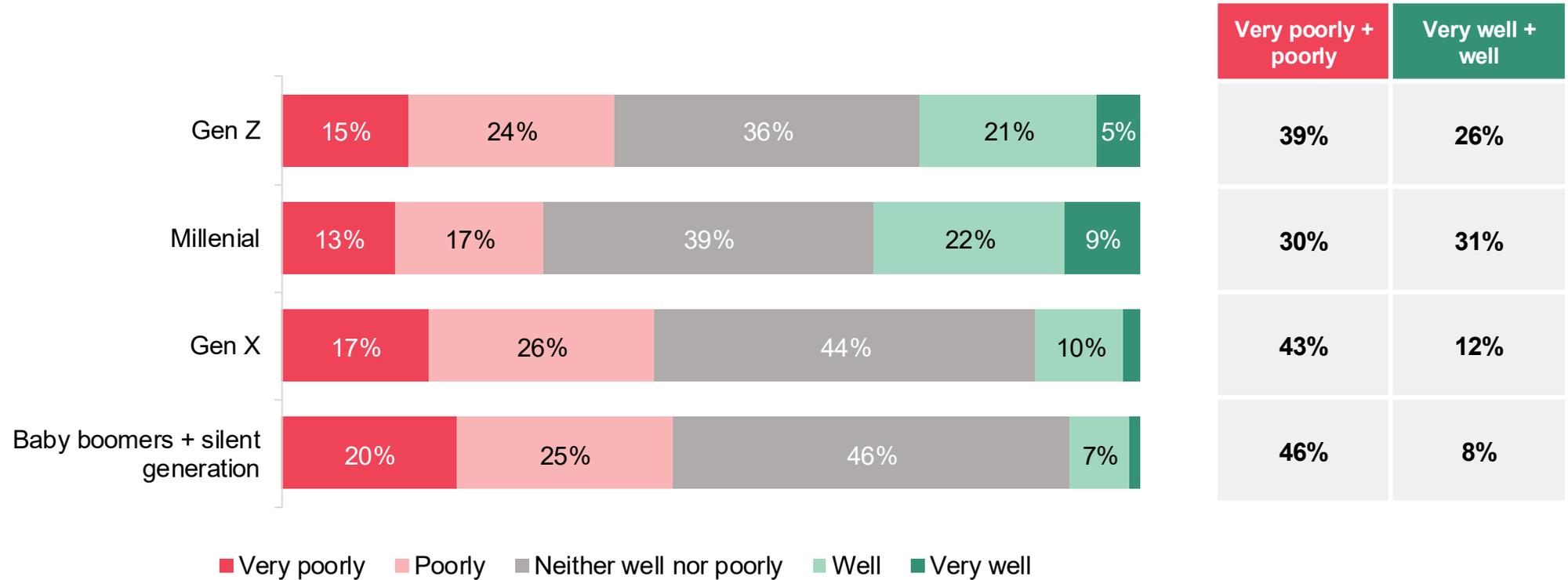
Running budget **surpluses** to reduce the amount of government debt

Don't know

Running budget **deficits** to invest in infrastructure for the future



➤ How well do you feel you understand the plans for how Sydney will change in the next 20 years?





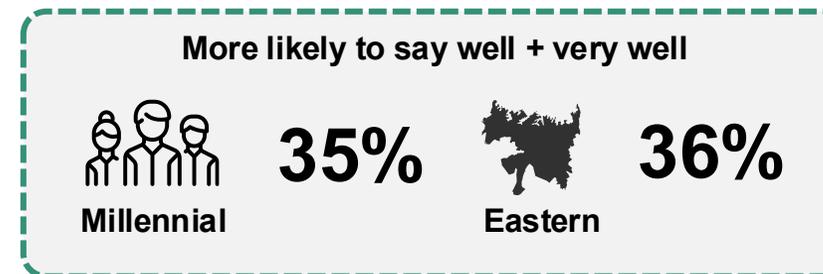
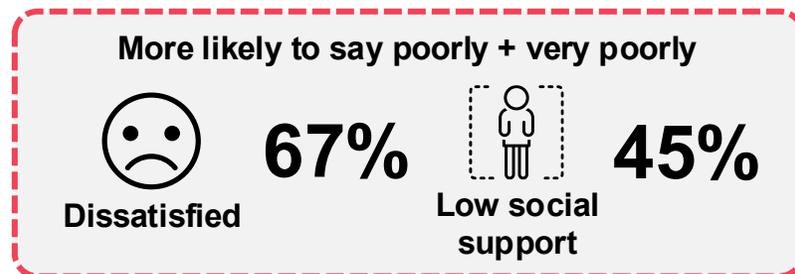
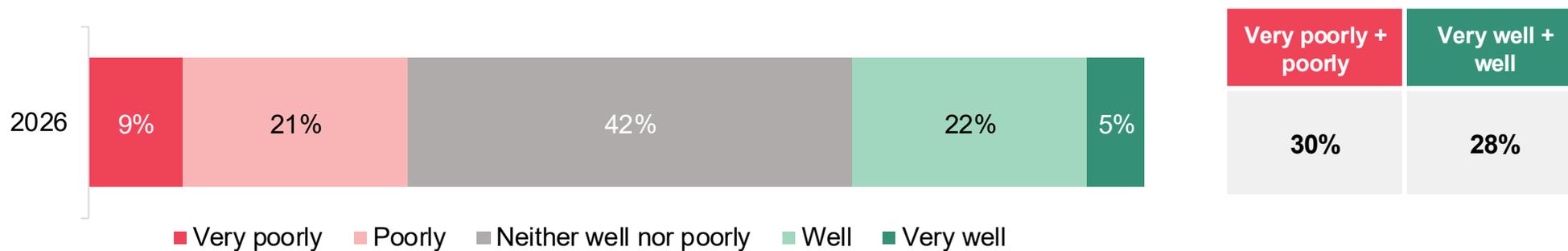
Life in Sydney 2026

Government Policy



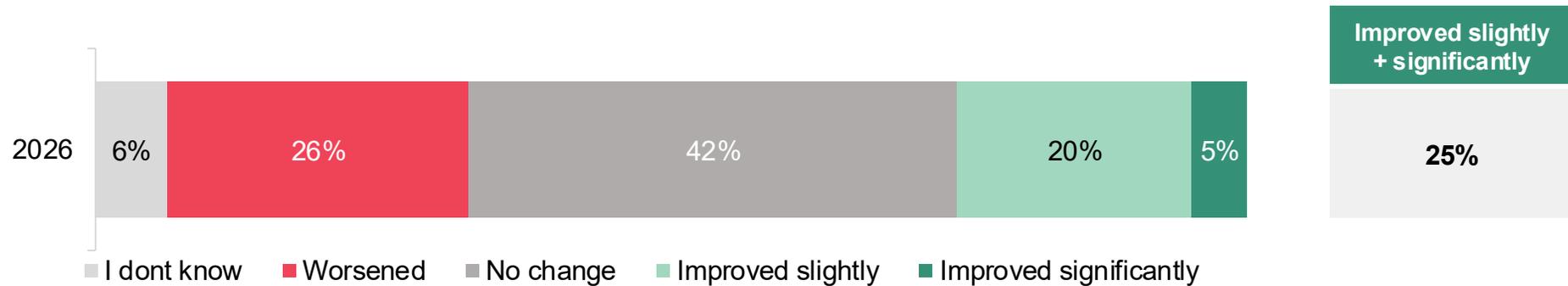
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➤ How well do you think the government is addressing the needs of your community/area?

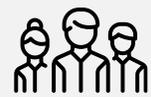




Has your perception of the government's performance changed in the past year?



More likely to say improved slightly + significantly



Millennial

34%



Men

30%



Eastern

35%



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Q185. Has your perception of the government's performance changed in the past year?
Base: Sydney 2026 (n=1000)
Note: Question added in 2026.





Life in Sydney 2026



**Access our previous
Life in Sydney reports.**





Innovation Fund Partners

The Committee's Innovation Fund supports the development of original research to inform and influence Sydney's future.

We are building on our already strong history of shining a light on critical issues shaping our city and developing a suite of actions for a better future.



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