



KING'S
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

KING'S GLOBAL
INSTITUTE
FOR WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP

THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE

KING'S
College
LONDON

Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy

Deepening divides or growing understanding?

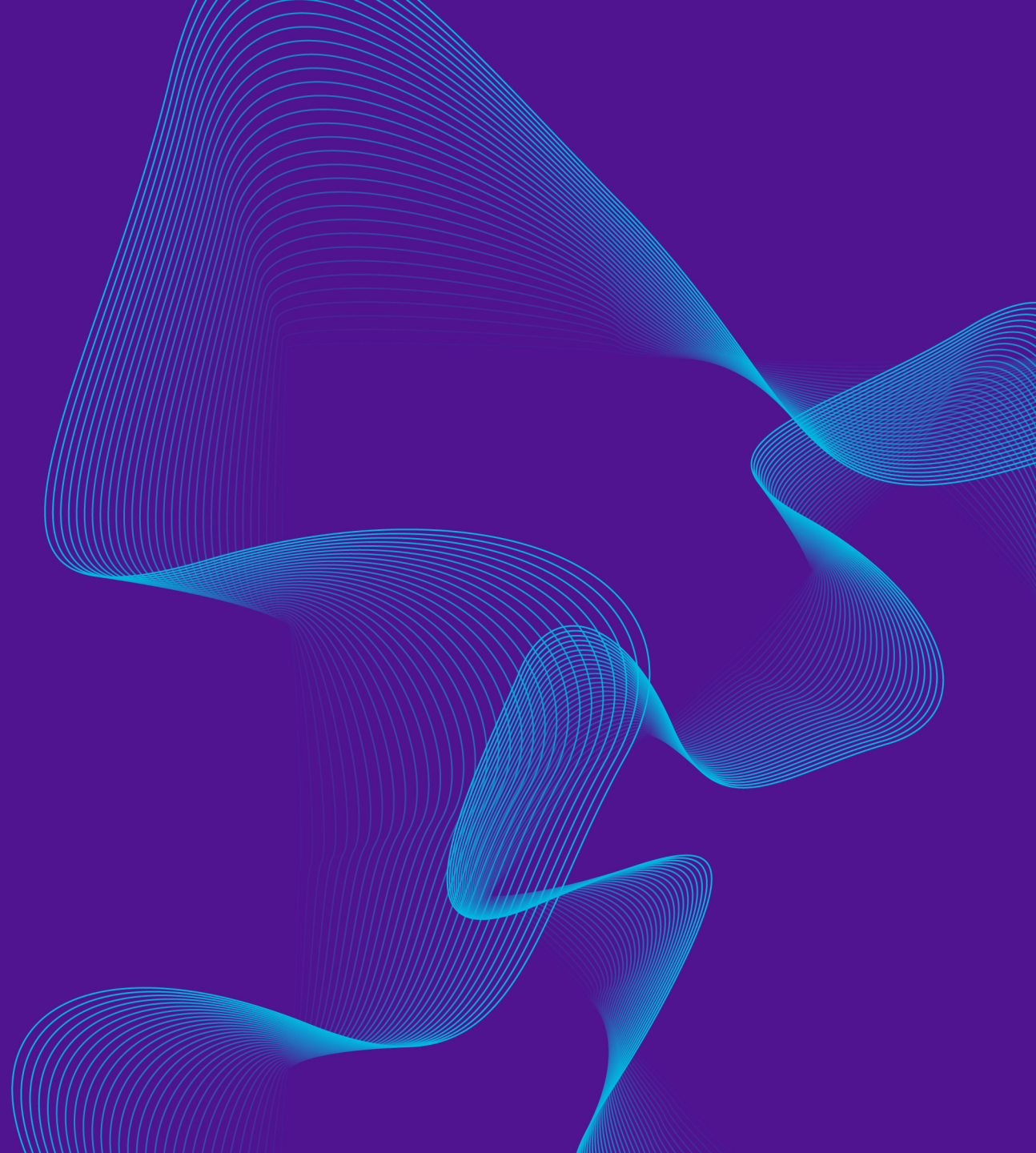
Women, men and gender equality today

Contact: bobby.duffy@kcl.ac.uk | gideon.skinner@ipsos.com | heejung.chung@kcl.ac.uk

November 2025

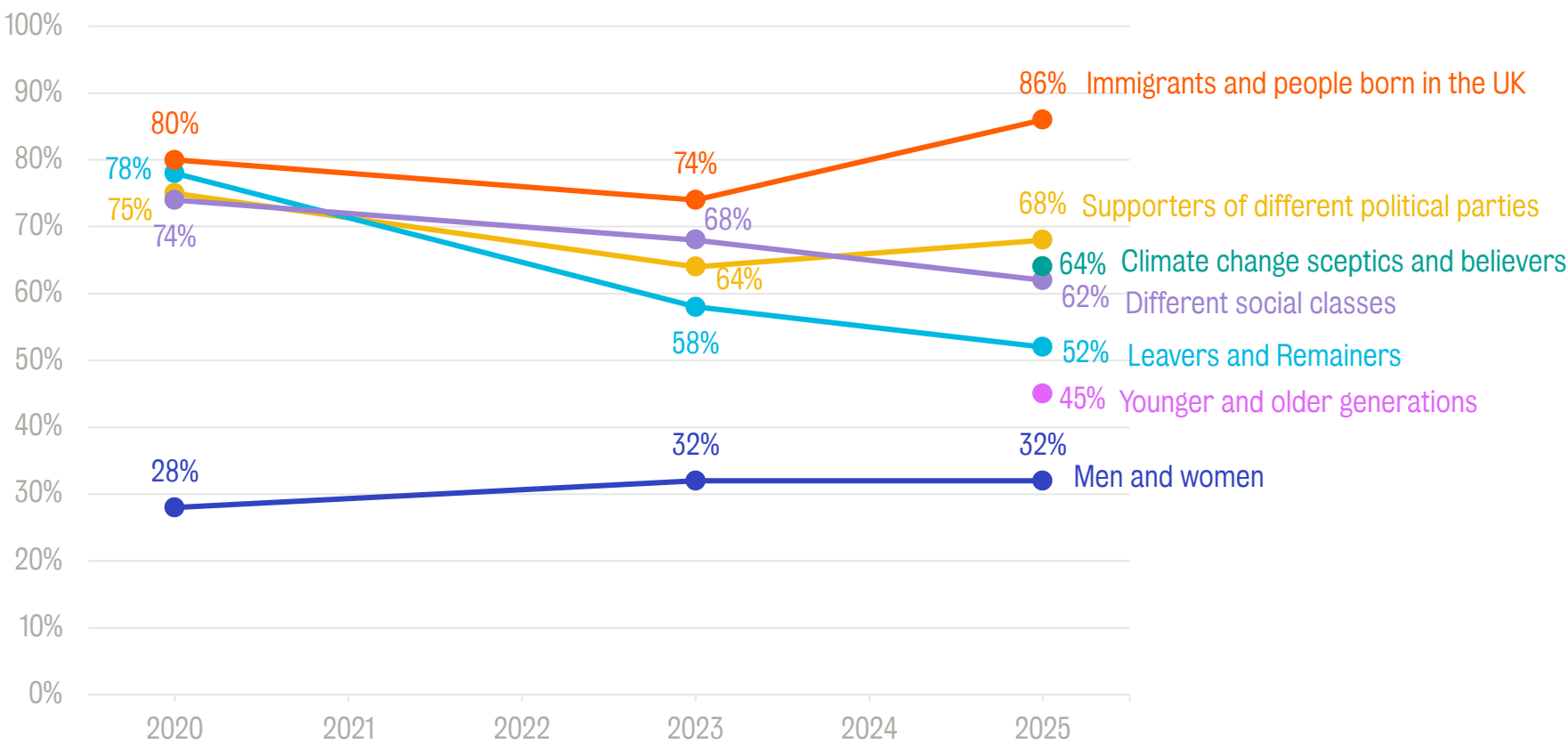
1. Perceptions of division, tension and common ground between women and men

Despite prominent debates about growing gender divides in attitudes, only a third of the public perceive tension between men and women – far less than other social divisions – and most still believe young men and women have more in common than divides them, although young women are notably less convinced



Perceived tension between men and women has changed little over the last five years, and ranks far below tensions between other groups in society

How much tension, if any, would you say there is between the following groups in the UK today?
(% who say a great deal/fair amount)

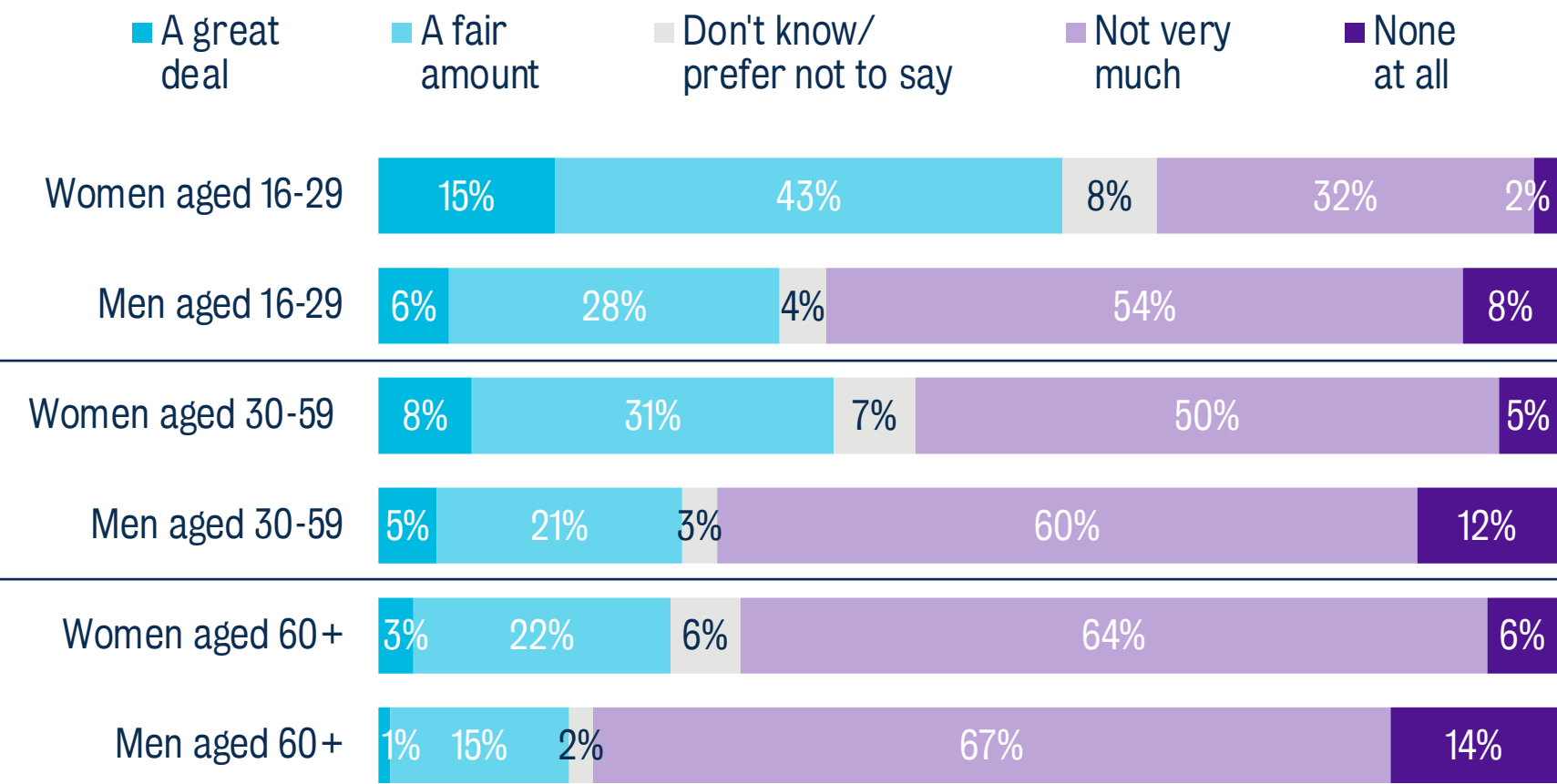


Despite prominent debates about gender divides in recent years, this has not translated into the public seeing gender as a major source of social division.

Around a third of people say there is tension between men and women in the UK today – largely unchanged since 2020 and considerably lower than the share who say the same about other groups, including climate change sceptics and believers and younger and older generations.

But young women stand out as the only group with a majority who feel there is tension between men and women

How much tension, if any, would you say there is between the following groups in the UK today?
Between men and women



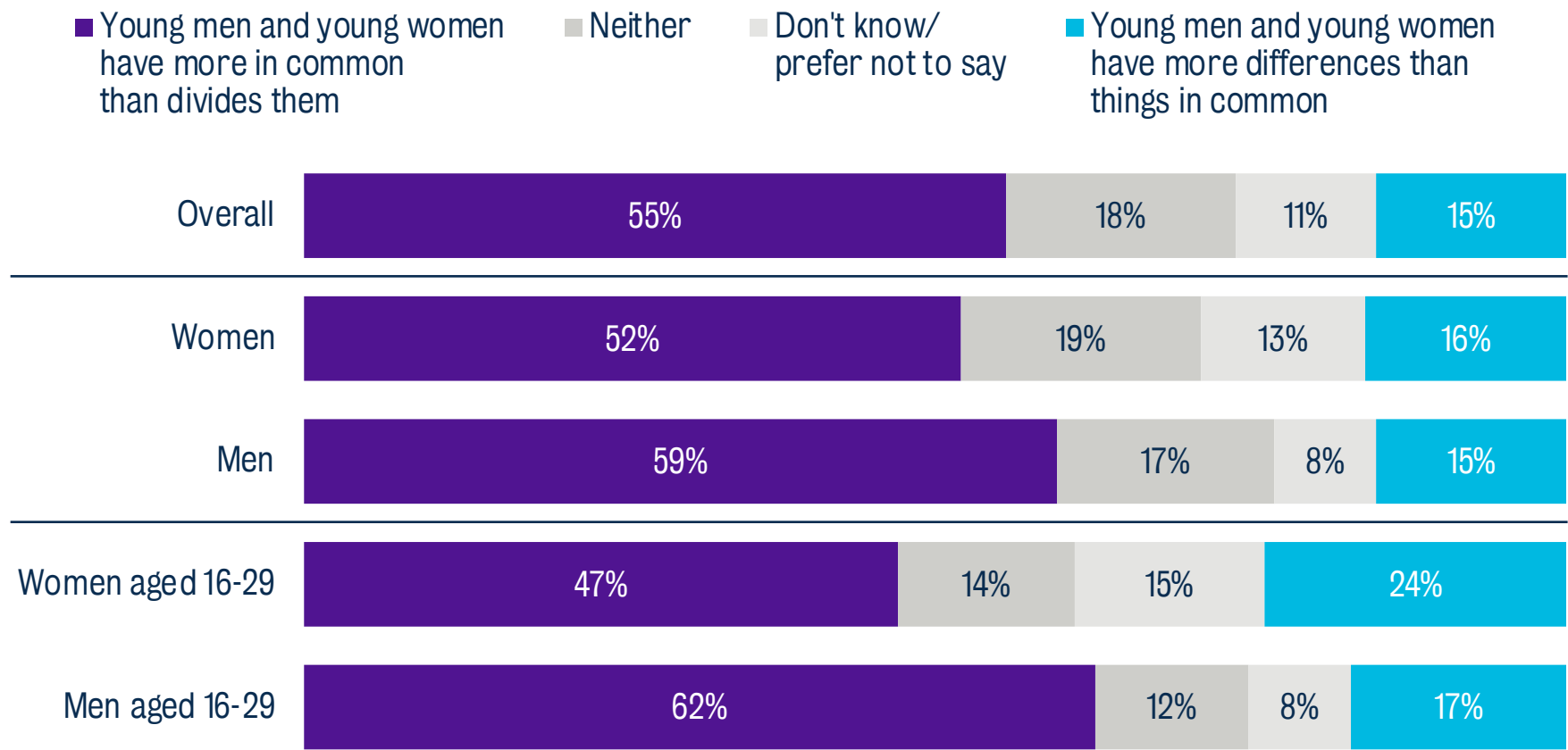
58% of women aged 16 to 29 feel this way – far higher than the 34% of their male counterparts who hold this view. This gap of 24 percentage points is the largest among any group of men and women in the same age category.

And the the share of young women (58%) who sense tension across genders is more than double the proportion of older women (25%) who feel the same.

Overall, women are more likely than men of the same age to sense tension.

A majority of the public say young women and young men have more in common than divides them – but young women are notably less likely than young men to feel this way

Which of the following statements, if any, is closest to your view about young men and young women?



The 15-point gap between young women and young men on this question is greater than the gender divide among older age groups.

For example, among men (59%) and women (52%) aged 30 to 59, there is a seven-point gap in the share who say young men and women have more in common than divides them, and only a four-point gap between men (58%) and women (54%) aged 60+.

2. Disaffection and representation across genders and ages

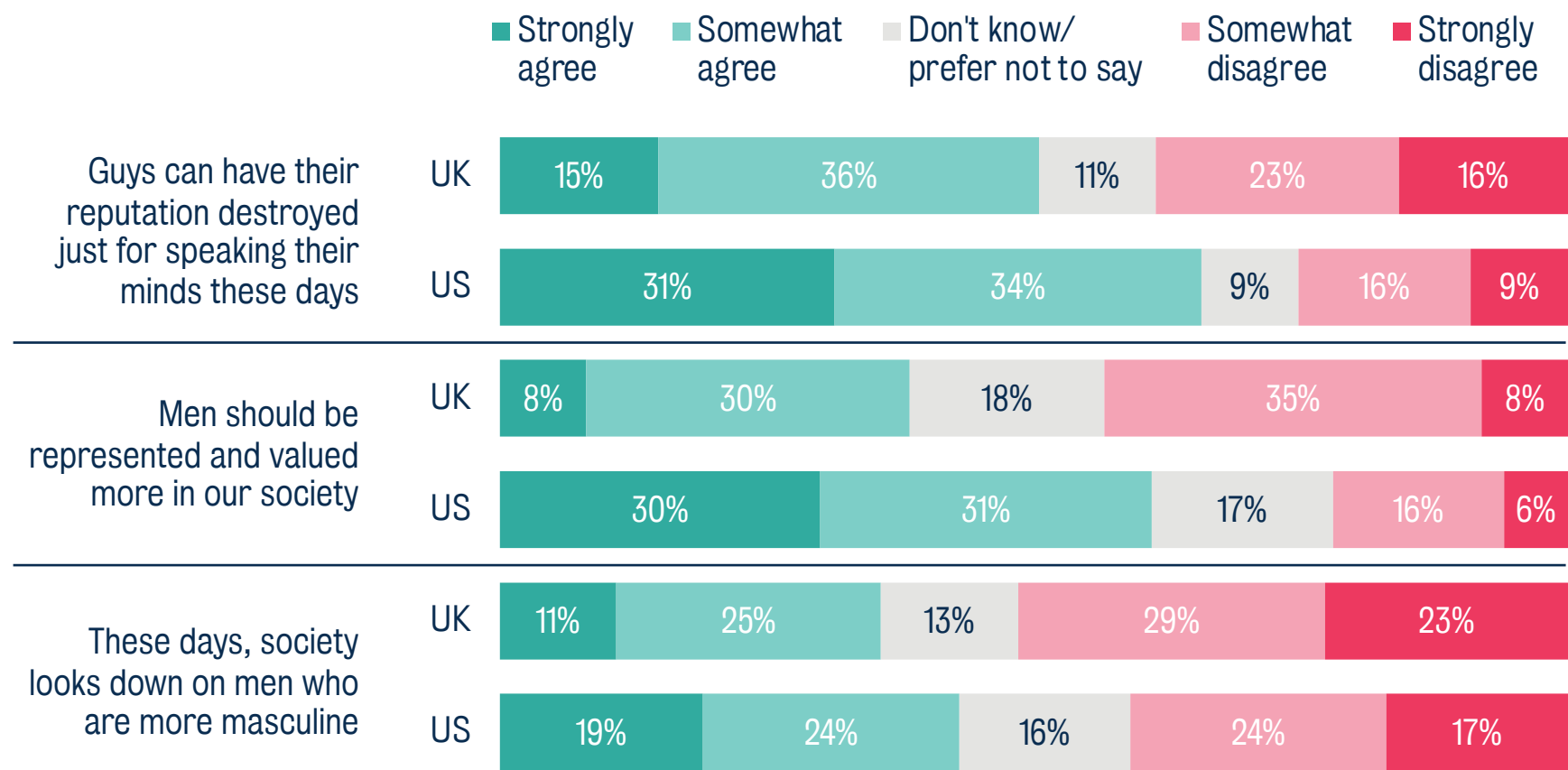
Young men in the UK are significantly less aggrieved than their American counterparts did in 2024, with fewer feeling at risk of being cancelled for speaking their minds and fewer saying men are underrepresented in society.

And among young people in the UK, women are actually *more* likely than men to worry about being cancelled for speaking their minds, while men are much less likely than women to feel they will benefit from generational progress



Compared with young American men surveyed in 2024, young men in the UK today are less likely to feel at risk of being cancelled, as well as less likely to say men are underrepresented in society

For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement
(Responses among men aged 18 to 29)



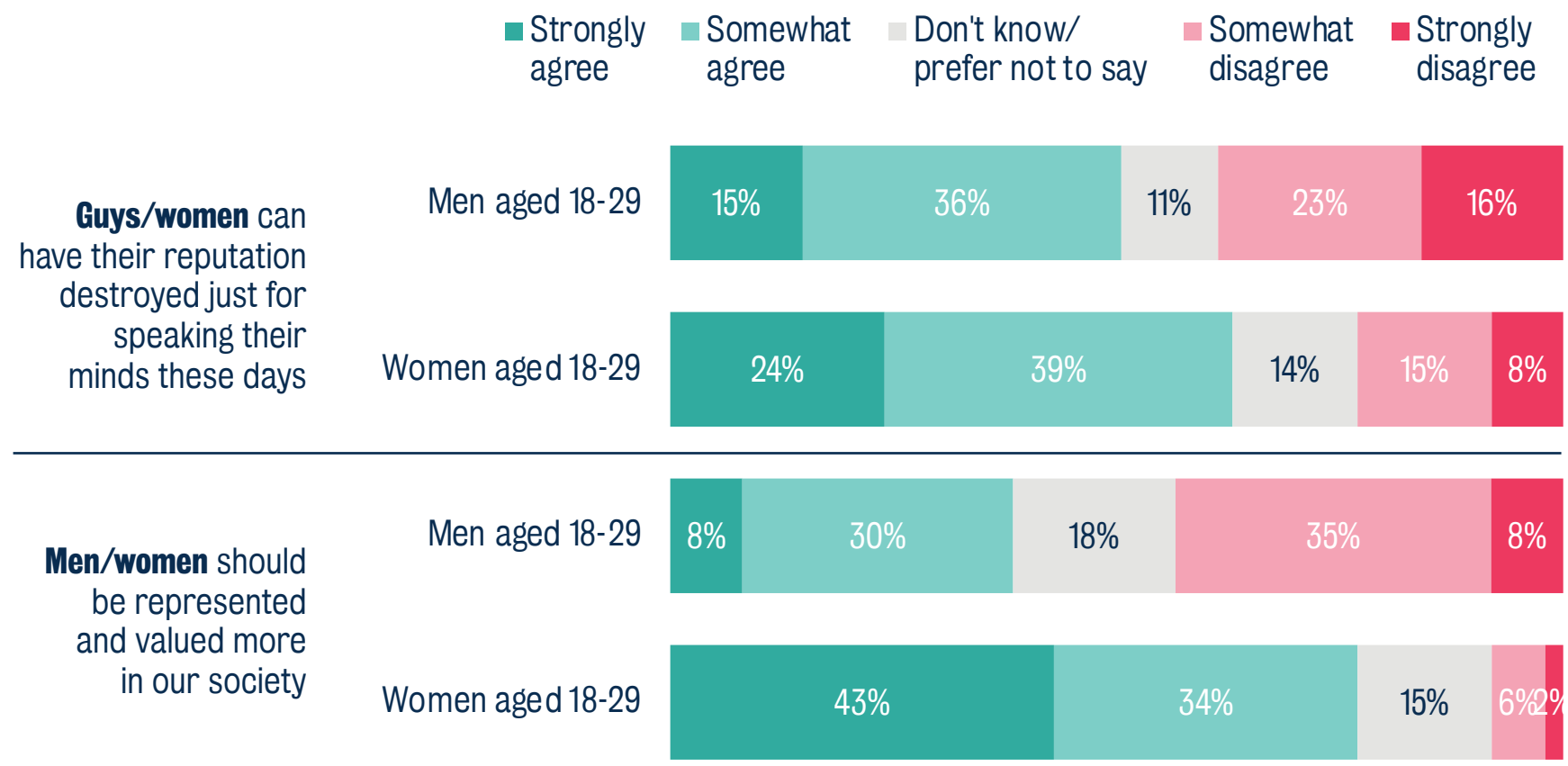
Repeating a set of questions first asked in the US in July 2024 reveals young men in the UK generally feel less aggrieved about their position in society than their American peers did at that time.

In the UK, half (50%) of men aged 18 to 29 say guys can have their reputation destroyed just for speaking their minds. This compares with two-thirds (65%) of the same group in the US, including around three in 10 who *strongly* agreed with this view in 2024.

And there is even more of a gap in agreement that men should be represented and valued more in society (UK 38% vs US 61%), although less of a split on whether more masculine men are looked down on.

Young women are *more* likely than young men to feel those of their gender can have their reputations destroyed just for speaking their minds

For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement
(Responses among women and men aged 18 to 29 in the UK)

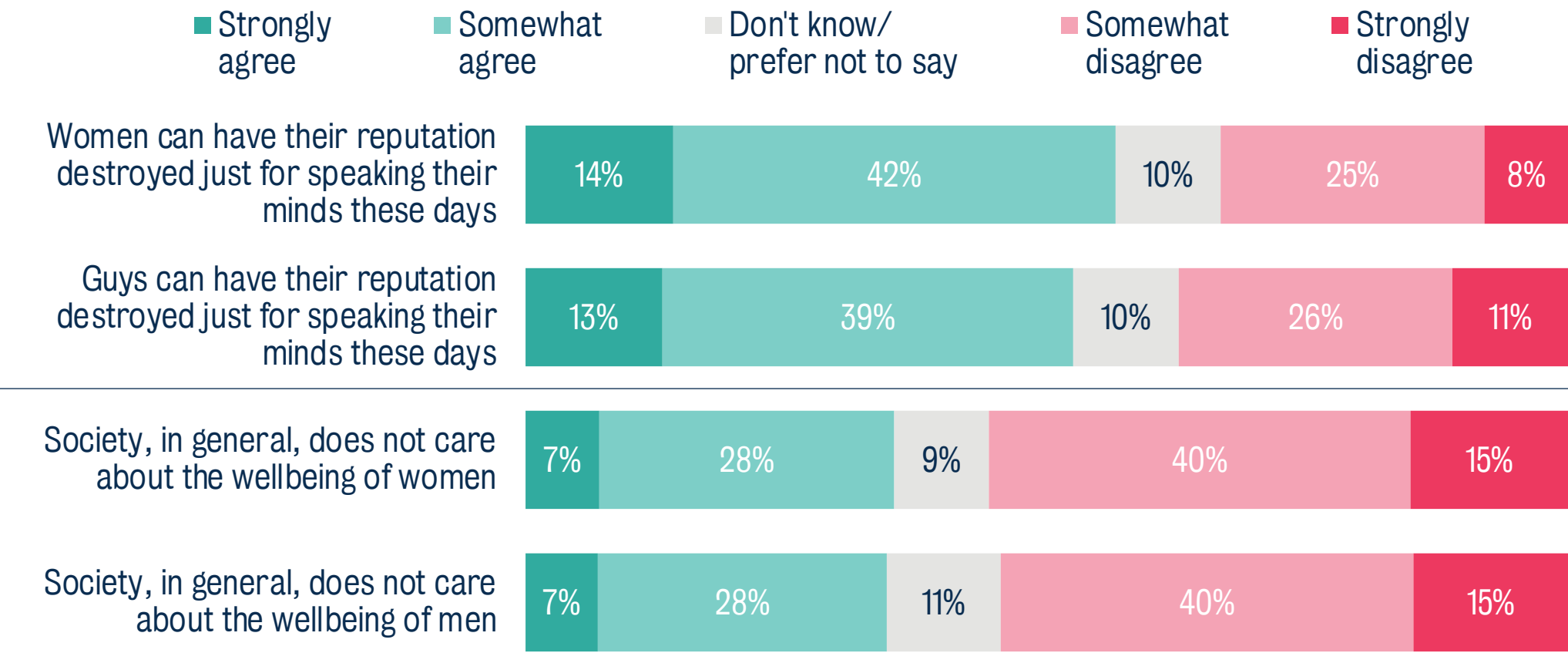


63% of UK women aged 18 to 29 say their gender are at risk of being cancelled in this way – greater than the share of young men (50%) who say the same.

And young women (77%) are twice as likely as young men (38%) to feel their gender should be represented and valued more in society, with four in 10 young women *strongly* agreeing with this view.

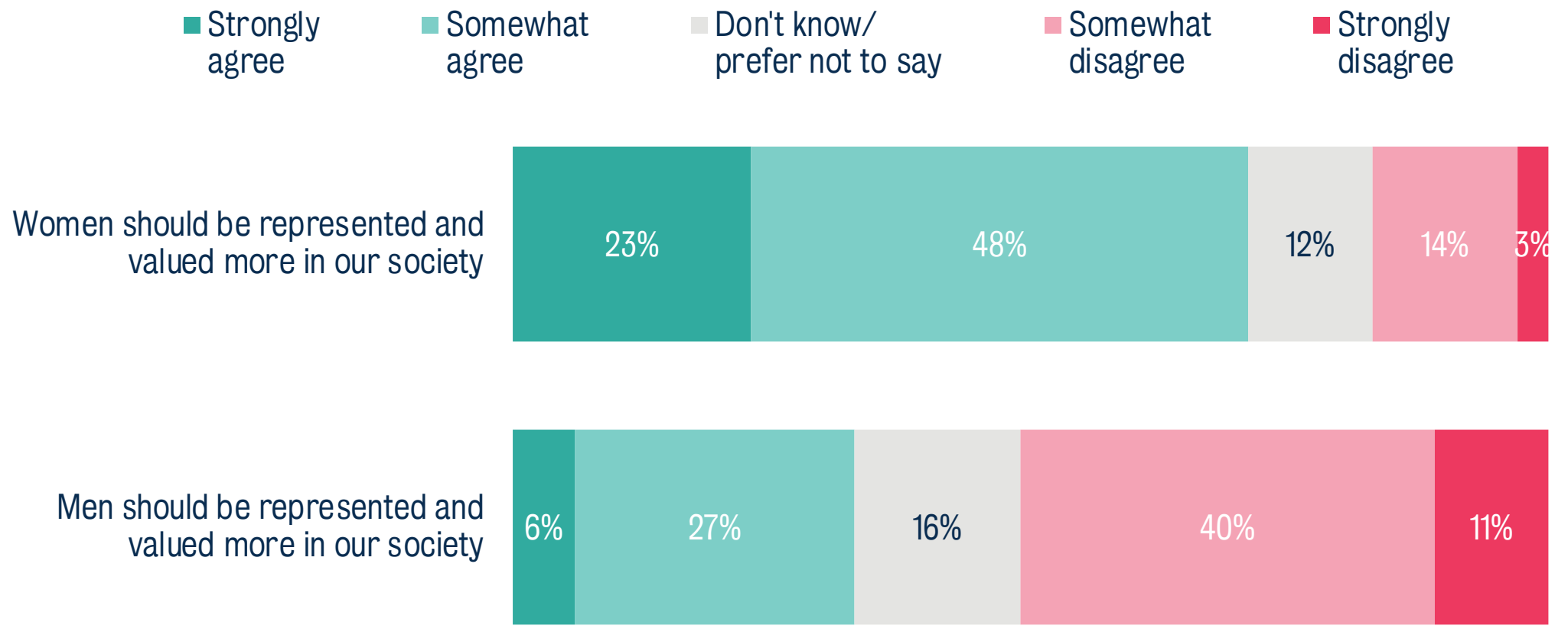
And the UK public overall are just as likely to say women are at risk of being cancelled for speaking their minds as they are to say the same about men, and equally likely to feel society does not care about the wellbeing of either gender

For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement



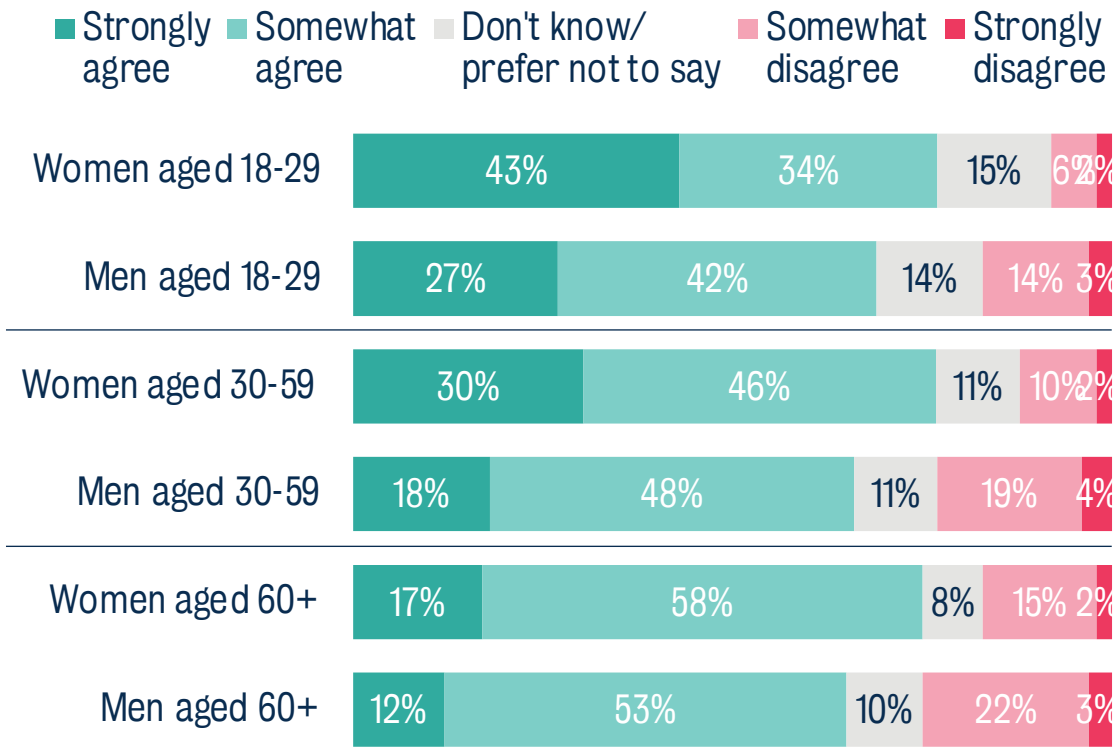
However, there is a much bigger divide in views on which gender should be represented and valued more in society, with the public more than twice as likely to say women (71%) rather than men (33%)

For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement

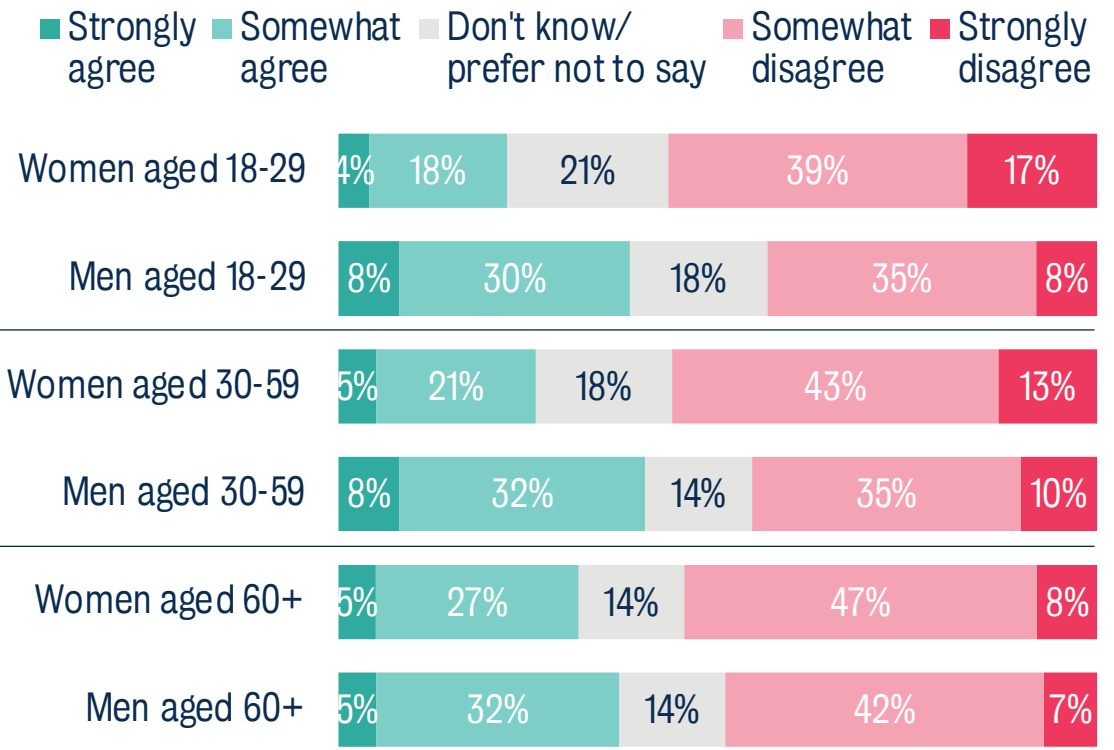


There is consensus across genders that women are underrepresented and undervalued in society, with at least two-thirds of men across all age groups agreeing, even if they feel it less strongly than women

For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement.
Women should be represented and valued more in our society

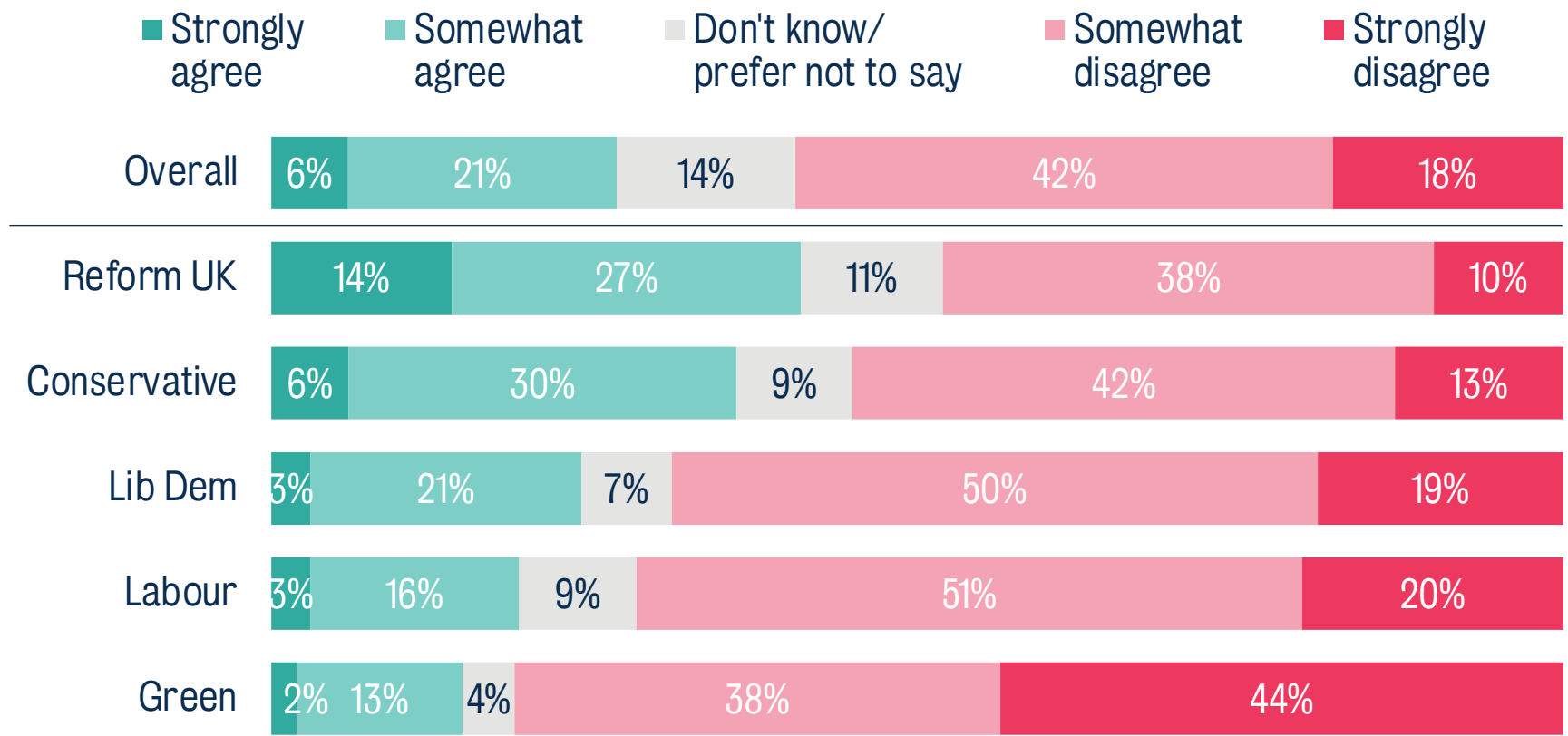


For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement.
Men should be represented and valued more in our society



A quarter of the UK public say society looks down on men who are more masculine, rising to four in 10 among Reform UK supporters – but most people disagree with this view

For each of the following statements, please say whether you generally agree or disagree with that statement.
These days, society looks down on men who are more masculine



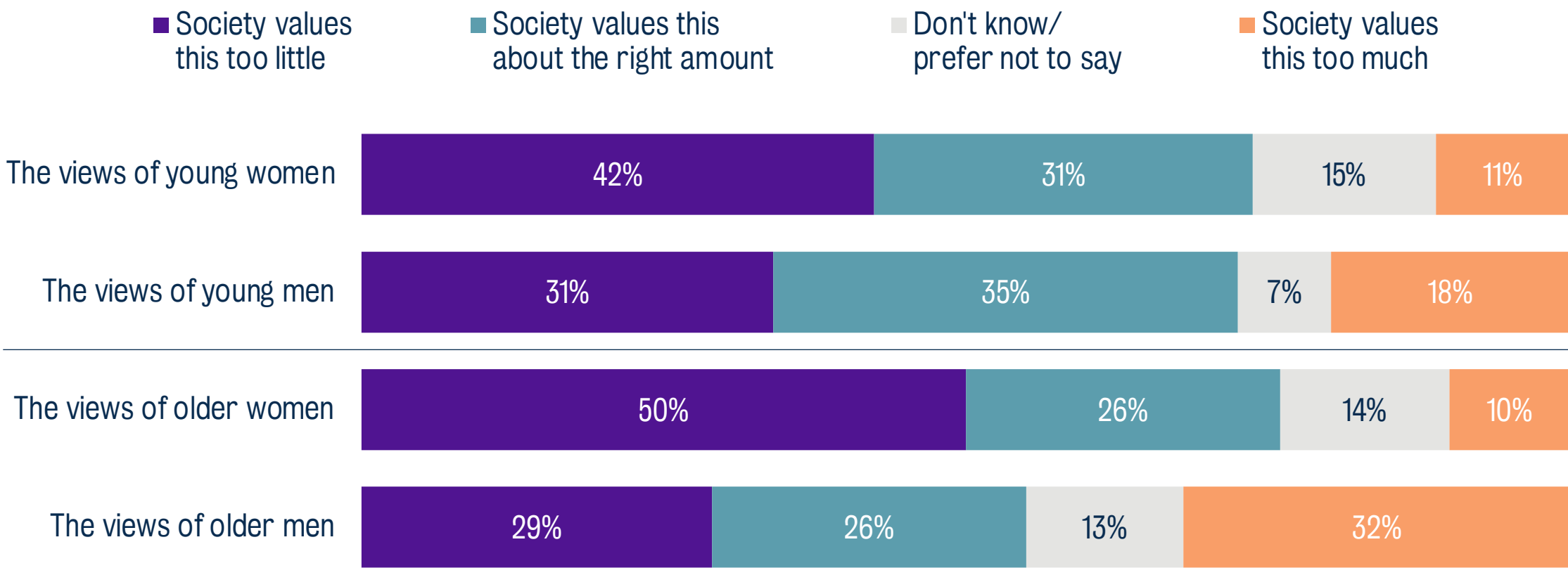
26% of people overall feel this way, though far more – 60% – disagree with this view.

Disagreement is highest among Green Party (82%) supporters, while those who support Reform UK are more evenly split, with 41% agreeing society has a negative view of masculine men, compared with 48% who disagree.

* Figures differ from charts due to rounding.

The public are more likely to say the views of women – both younger and older – are valued too little in society than they are to say the same about men. And the biggest contrast is between the value placed on the views of older men vs older women

Do you think British society today values each of the following too much, too little, or about the right amount?

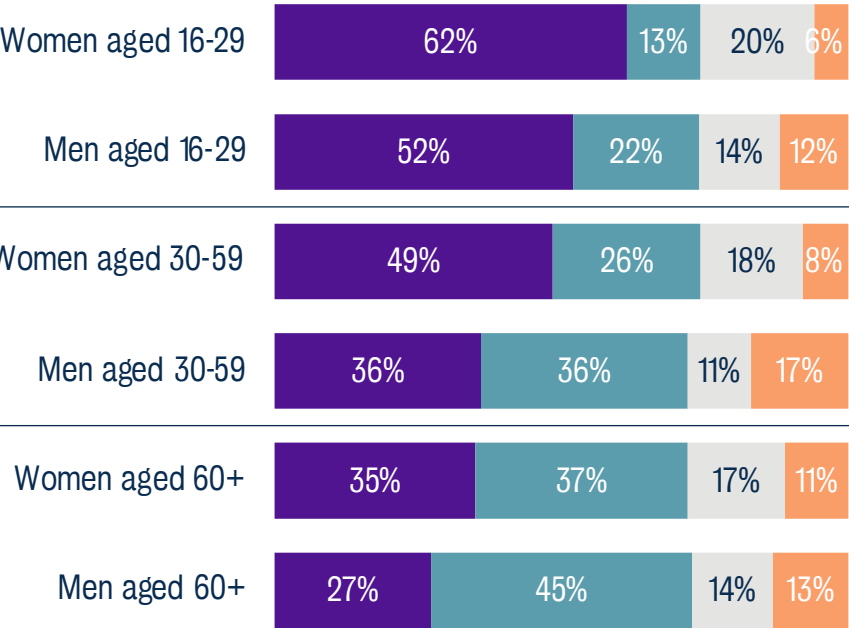


Those aged 16 to 29 have the biggest gender divide in attitudes on how much society values young men's views – but there is much less of a divide on the need to value young women's opinions more

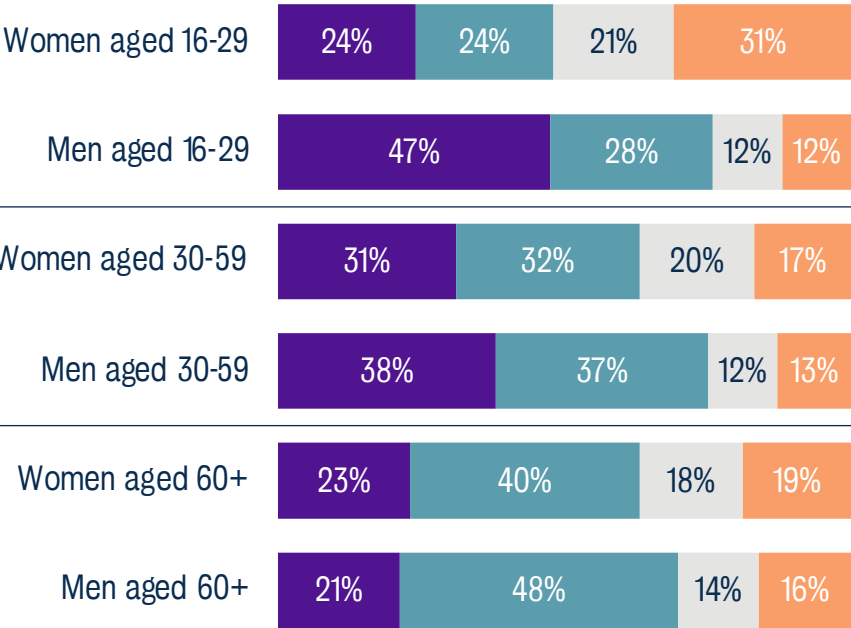
Do you think British society today values each of the following too much, too little, or about the right amount?

■ Society values this too little ■ Society values this about the right amount ■ Don't know/ prefer not to say ■ Society values this too much

The views of young women



The views of young men



Young women (24%) are around half as likely as young men (47%) to feel society values the latter group's views too little. This 23-point gender gap is far greater than that seen among older age groups.

By contrast, there is more consensus across genders on the need to better value young women's views, with majorities of both men and women aged 16 to 29 feeling this way.

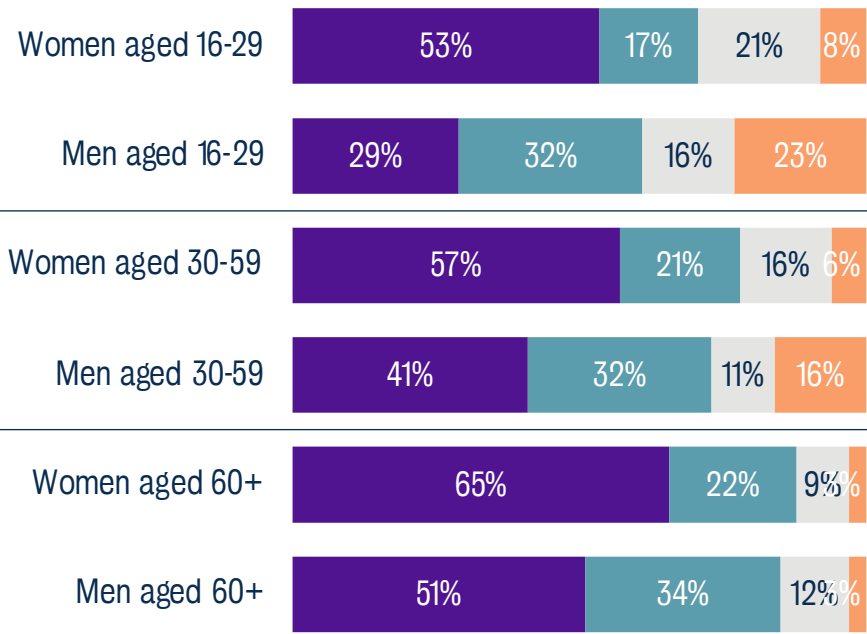
More generally, there is a clear generational split in how people perceive the representation of young men and young women in society, with the oldest age group much less likely to say young people's views are valued too little.

Young men are least likely to say society values the views of older women too little, while young women are least likely to say the same about older men

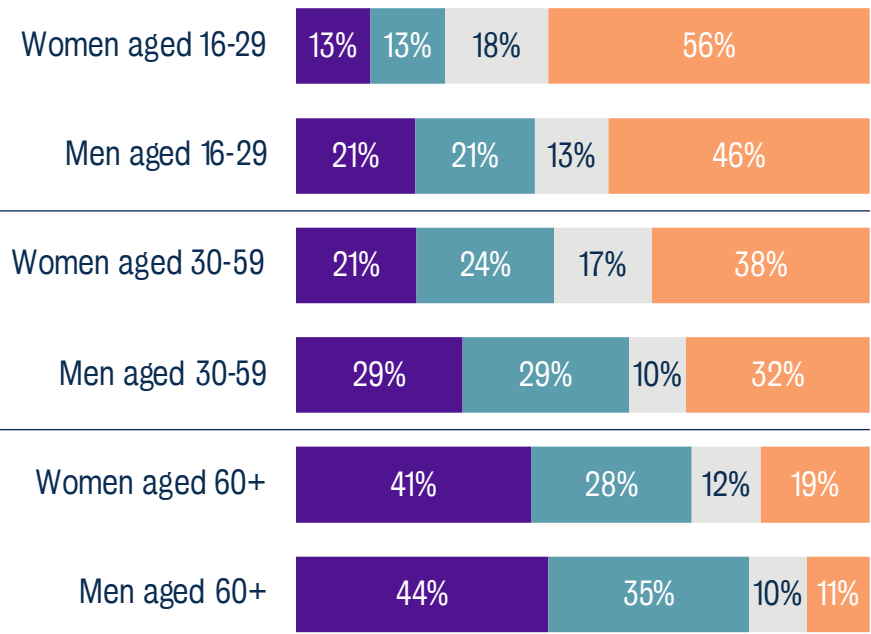
Do you think British society today values each of the following too much, too little, or about the right amount?

■ Society values this too little ■ Society values this about the right amount ■ Don't know/ prefer not to say ■ Society values this too much

The views of older women



The views of older men

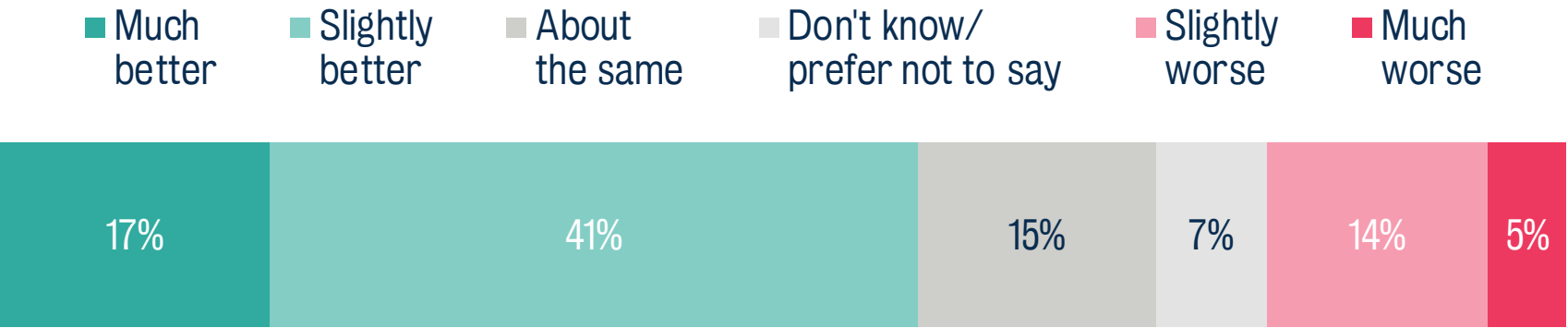


When it comes to whether society values older women’s views too little, the youngest are again most divided by gender, with men aged 16 to 29 least likely to agree.

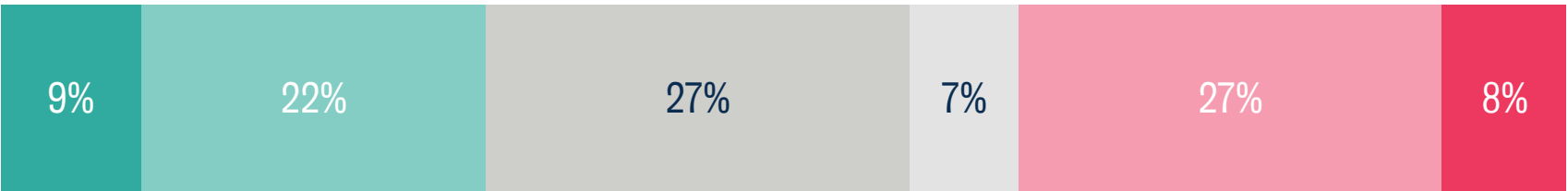
There is less of a gender divide among the young on how much older men’s views are valued today, but young women are least likely to feel this group is undervalued, with 56% saying they are in fact valued too much – the only group where this is the majority view.

The public are twice as likely to say young women, rather than young men, will have had a better life than those from their parents' generation

To what extent, if at all, do you feel that today's young women will have had a better or worse life than women from their parents' generation, or will it be about the same?



To what extent, if at all, do you feel that today's young men will have had a better or worse life than men from their parents' generation, or will it be about the same?

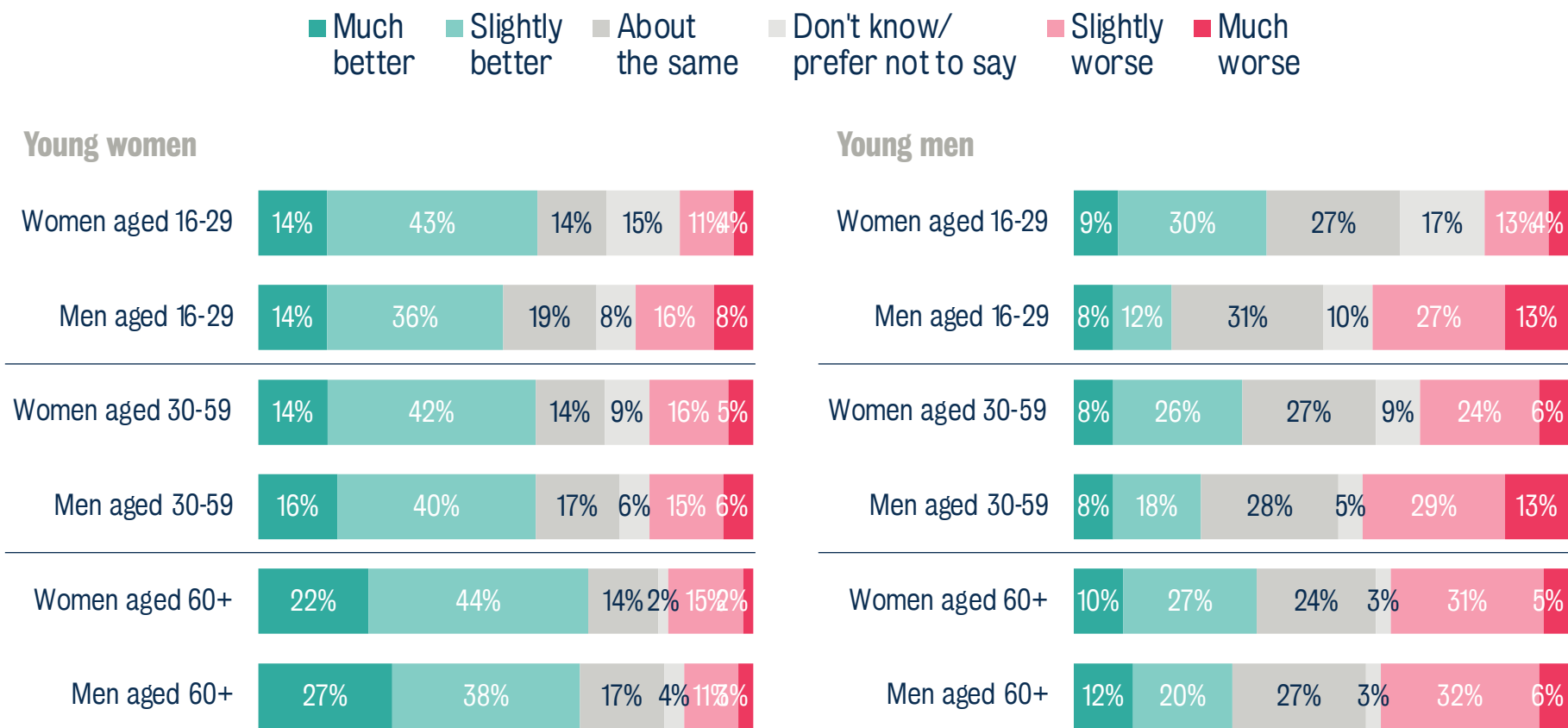


58% of people say young women will end up having a better life than women from their parents' generation, compared with 31% who say the equivalent about young men.

The public are much more divided on young men's fate, with roughly the same proportion (34%) feeling their lives will be worse or about the same (27%).

Young women are far more optimistic than young men that they will benefit from generational progress

To what extent, if at all, do you feel that today's young women/young men will have had a better or worse life than women/men from their parents' generation, or will it be about the same?



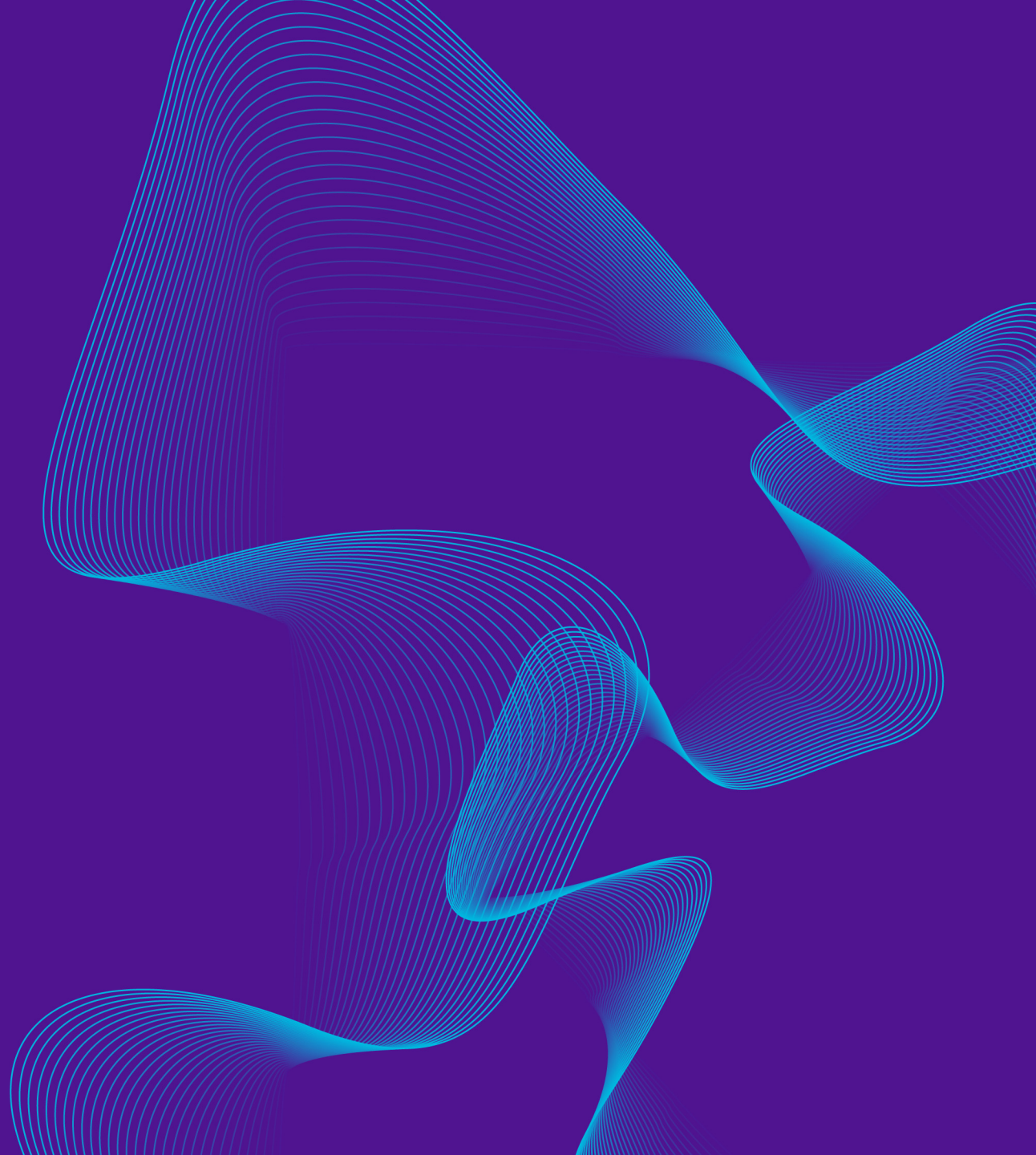
Among those aged 16 to 29, women (57%) are three times more likely than men (20%) to say young people of their gender will end up having a better life than those from their parents' generation.

Across all age groups, there is relatively little divide by gender on whether today's young women will have a better life than women from their parents' generation.

But when it comes to whether the equivalent will be true for today's young men, there is a clear gender divide in opinion between the youngest age group, with young men themselves (20%) around half as likely as young women (39%) to feel today's young men will have a better life.

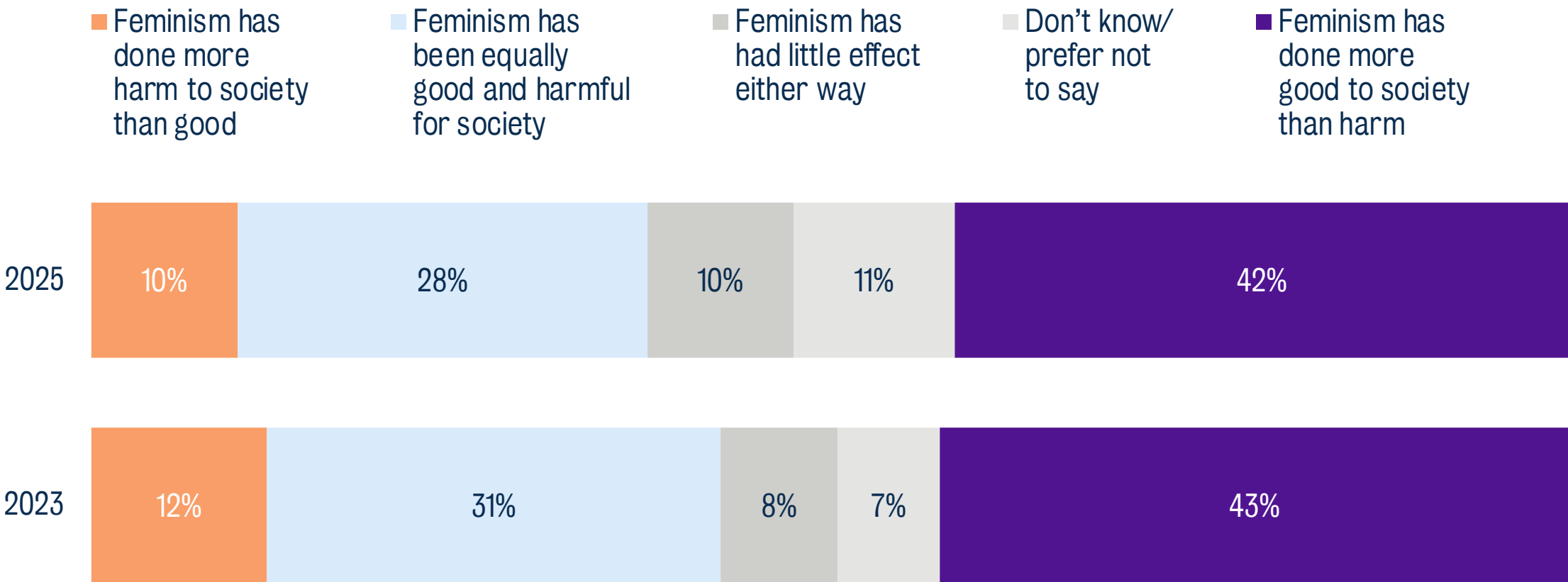
3. Feminism and women's equality

Young men have become more positive about feminism in the last two years, while older men have become more sceptical. At the same time, among the public overall there's been a decline in the belief that women's equality has benefited young people of either gender



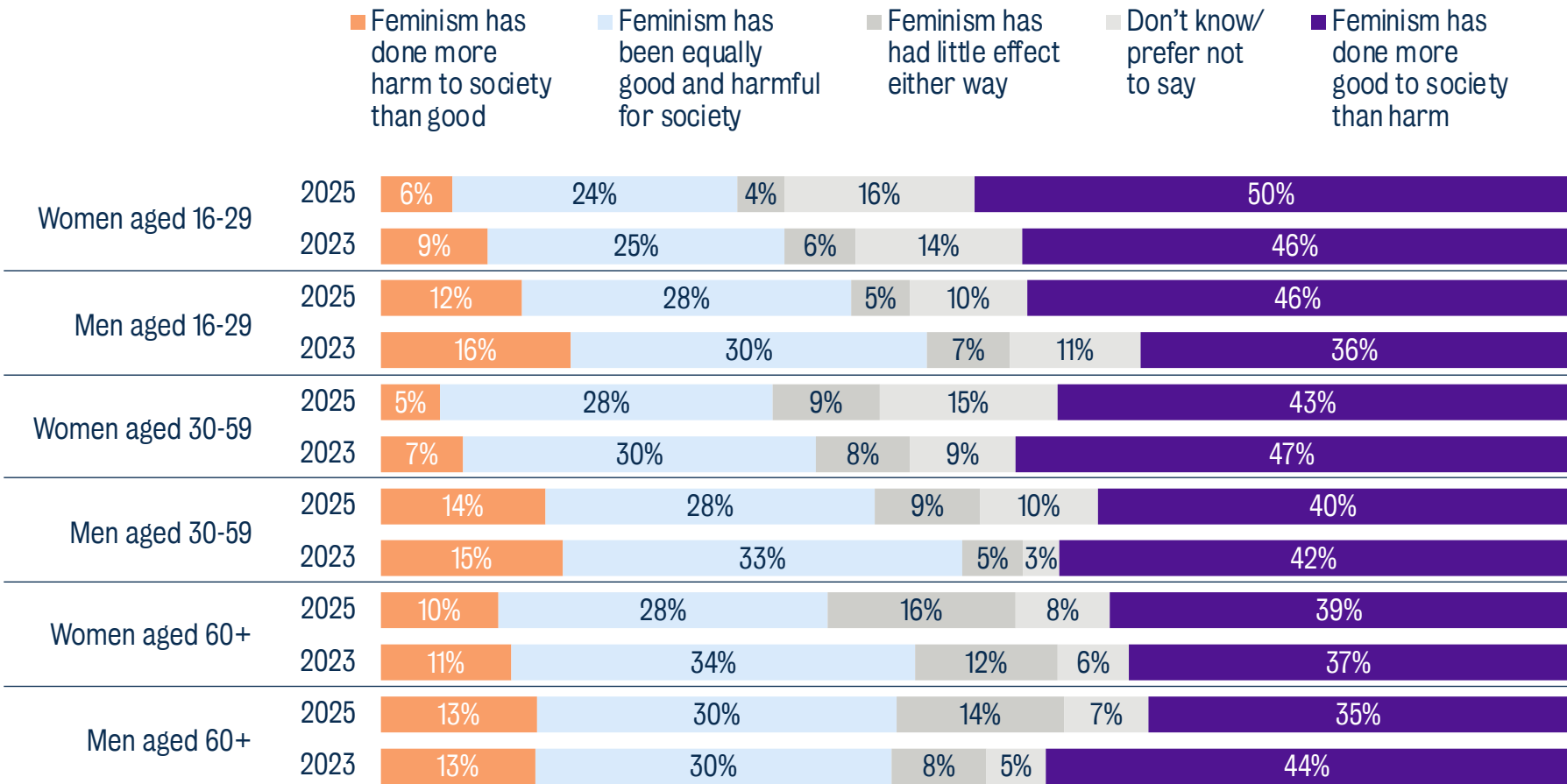
Two in five people say feminism has done more good than harm – but a similar proportion feel it has also had at least some negative impact

Which of the following comes closest to your view about the overall impact of feminism on British society?



Young men have become more positive about the impact of feminism on British society, at the same time as older men have become *less* positive about it

Which of the following comes closest to your view about the overall impact of feminism on British society?



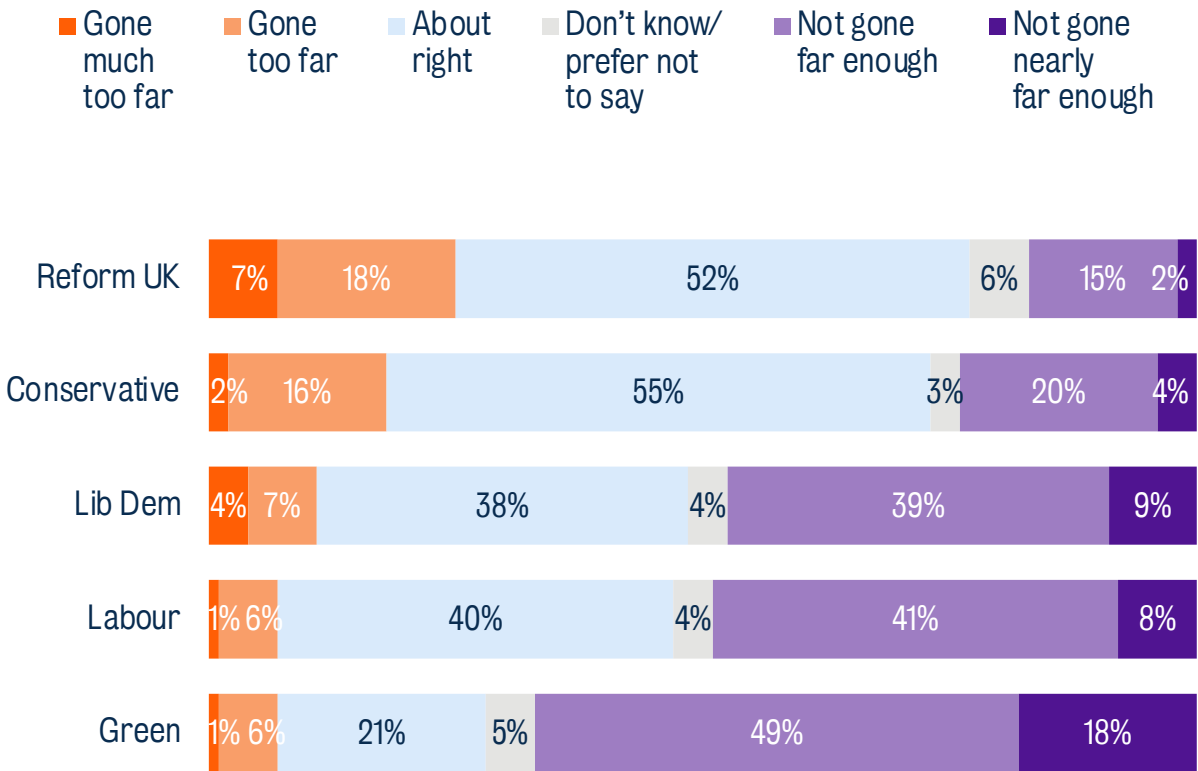
Men's views on the impact of feminism show diverging generational trends, with the most notable shifts occurring at opposite ends of the age spectrum.

46% of young men aged 16 to 29 now say feminism has done more good than harm to society – a 10-point increase from 2023 and just four points below the share of young women who say the same.

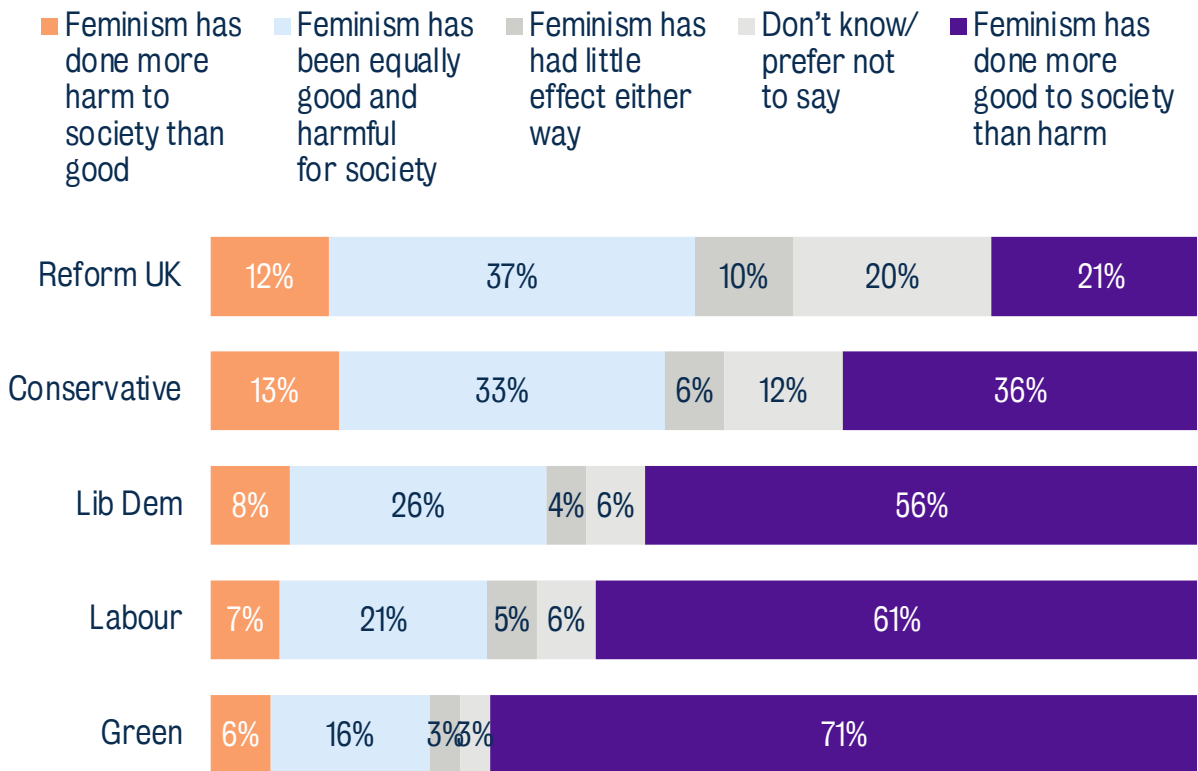
In contrast, older men aged 60 and over have moved in the opposite direction, with 35% of this group now saying feminism has done more good than harm – down from 44% two years ago.

Reform UK supporters are most likely to be sceptical of feminism and women’s equality – although this is still only a minority view – while Green Party supporters stand out as most supportive

In the UK, do you think attempts to give equal opportunities have gone too far or not gone far enough for women, or about right?

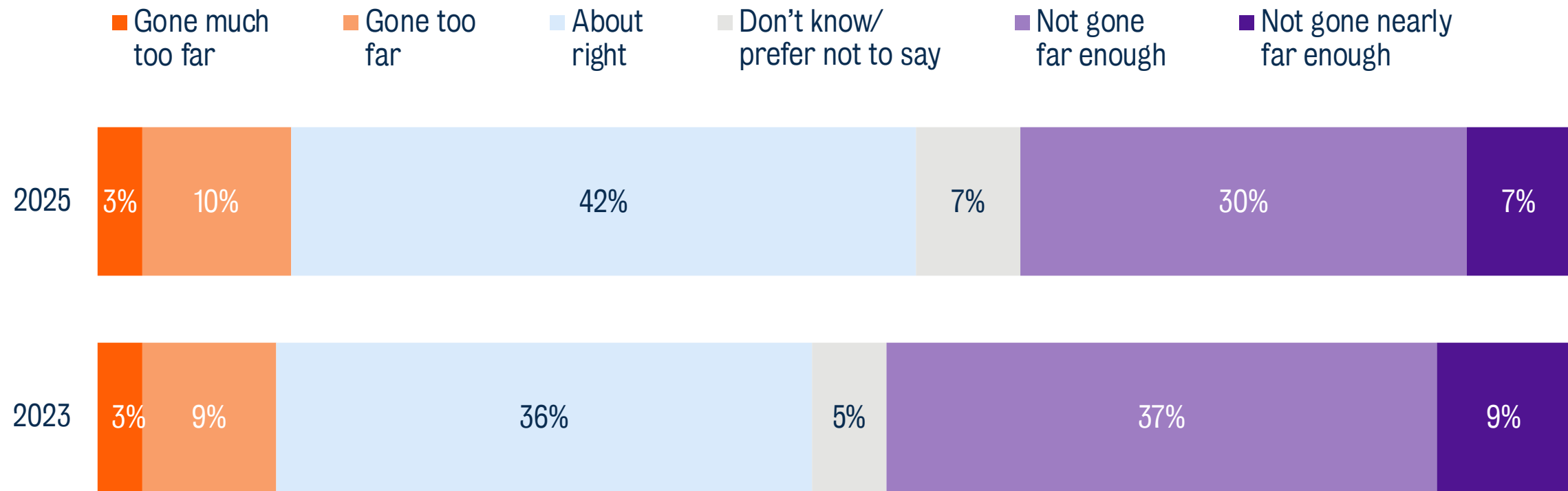


Which of the following comes closest to your view about the overall impact of feminism on British society?



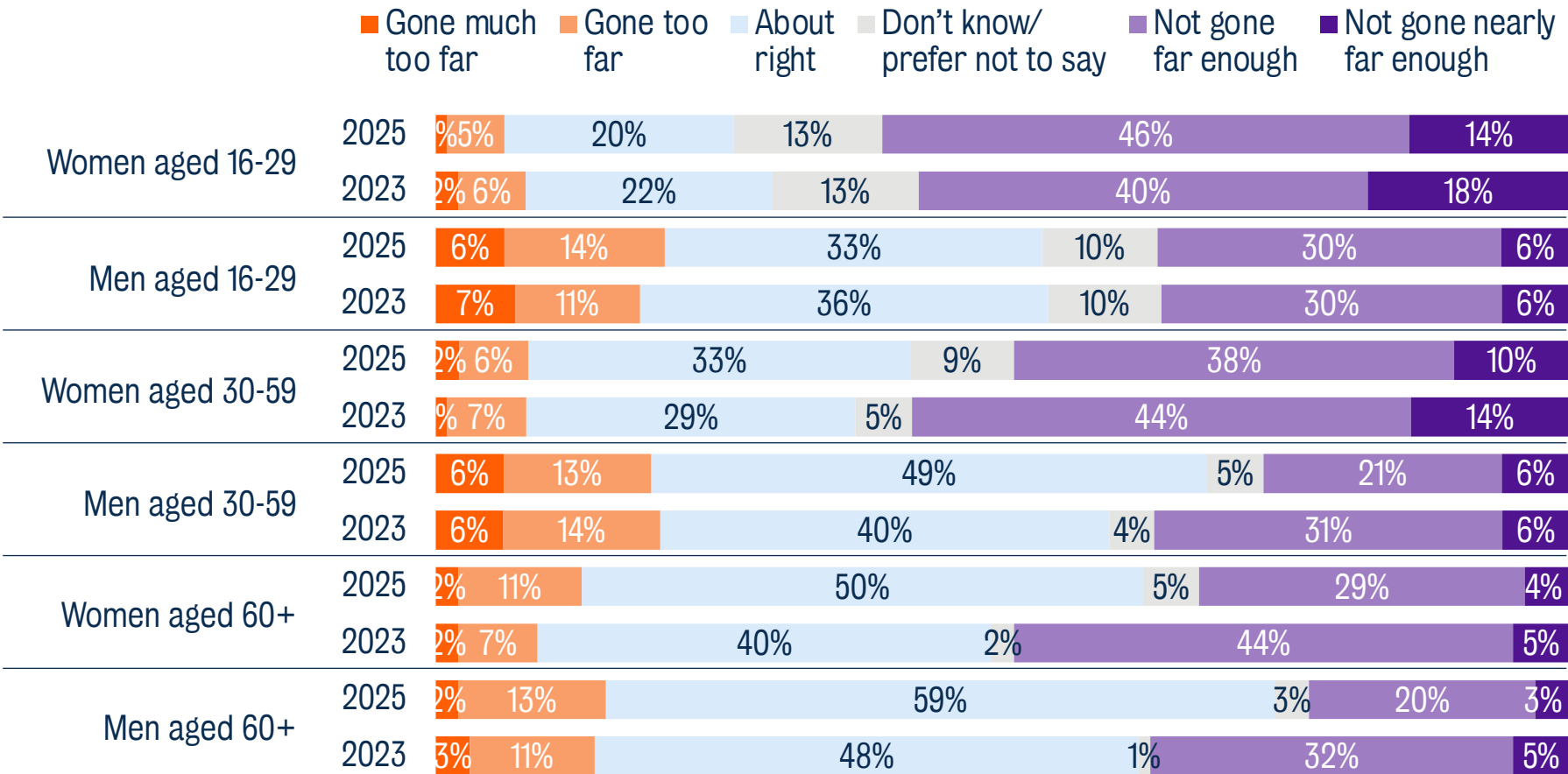
The public have become more likely to say efforts to improve women's equality have gone about the right amount, with fewer now saying they haven't gone far enough

In the UK, do you think attempts to give equal opportunities have gone too far or not gone far enough for women, or about right?



Older women and men have seen the biggest shifts in attitudes towards equal opportunities for women, with fewer now feeling more needs to be done

In the UK, do you think attempts to give equal opportunities have gone too far or not gone far enough for women, or about right?



In 2023, women aged 60+ were relatively evenly split on whether efforts to give women equal opportunities had gone far enough, with 49% saying “not gone far enough” and 40% saying “about right”. By 2025, their views have shifted significantly: half now say efforts are “about right”, while the share believing more needs to be done has fallen to 33% – a 16-point decline.

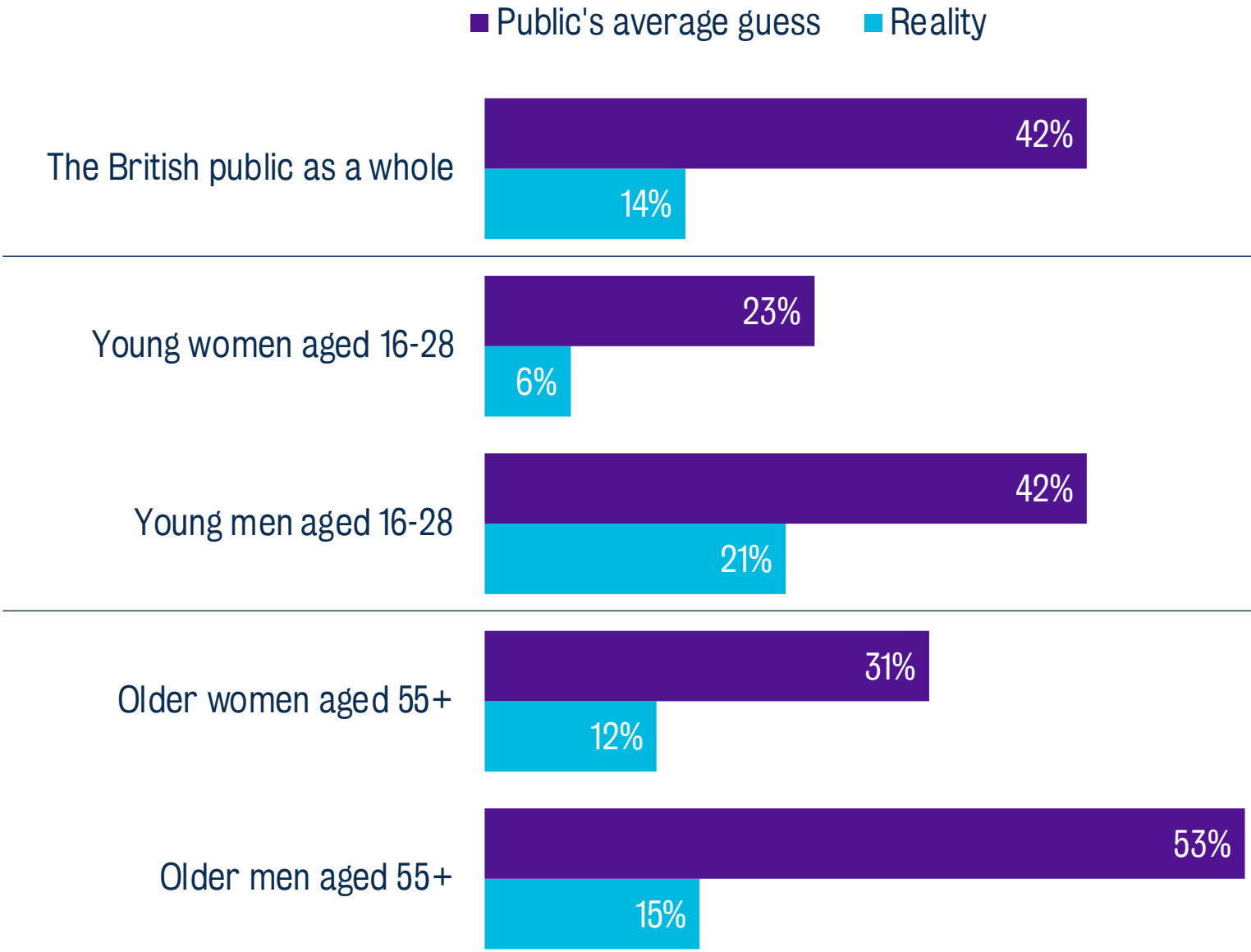
There has been a similarly notable change in views among men aged 60+, while attitudes have shifted in a similar direction among those aged 30 to 59, albeit to a lesser extent.

By contrast, views among the youngest men and women have changed little in the past two years.

The public hugely overestimate how much of the population think equal opportunities for women have gone too far.

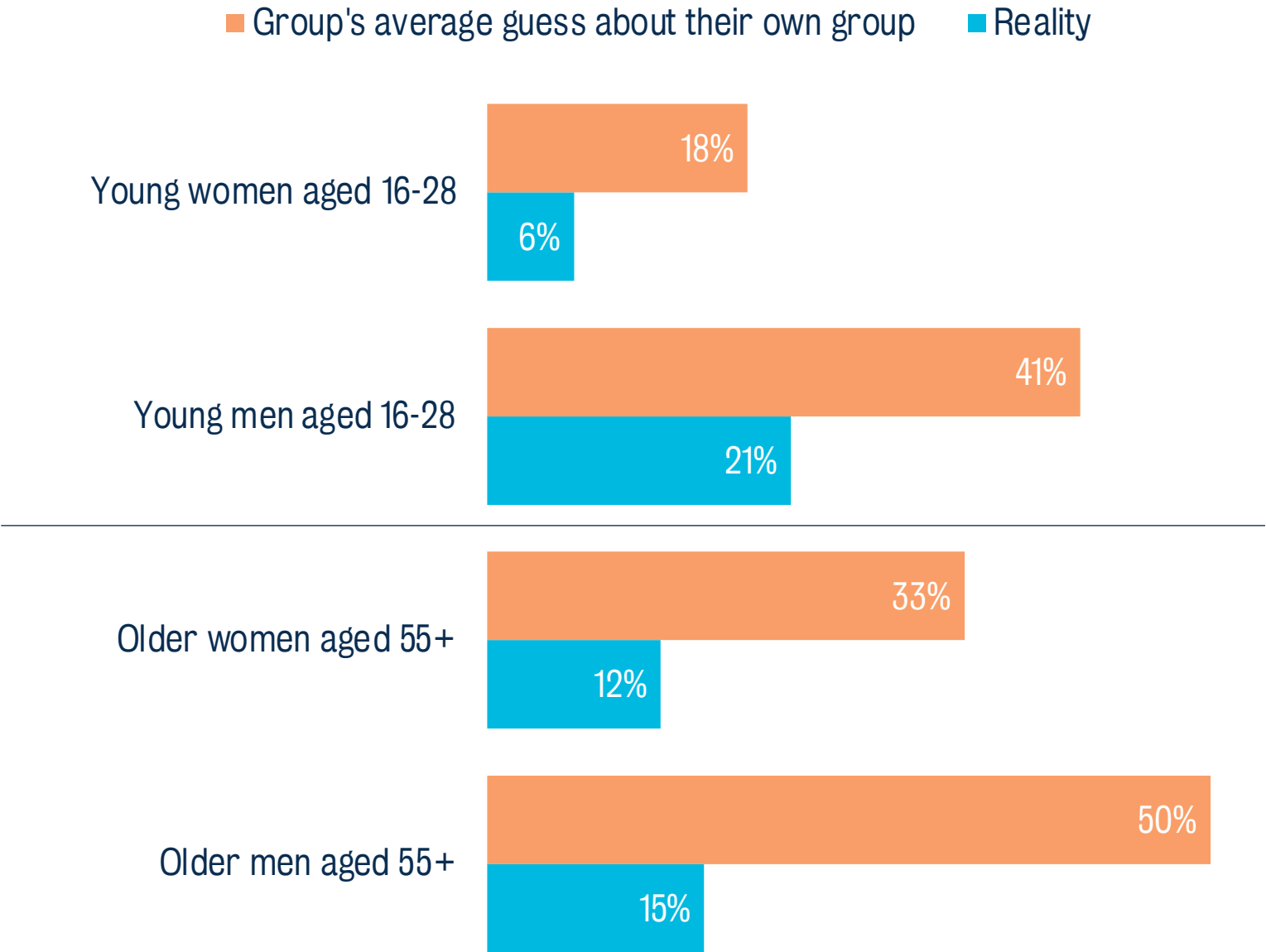
And they are most likely to guess that older men hold this view, when in reality a bigger share of young men agree

Earlier we asked you if attempts to give equal opportunities have gone too far or not gone far enough for women. We have put this question to a representative sample of British adults. On average, what percentage (between 0-100%) of the following groups do you think say that attempts to give equal opportunities for women have gone too far?



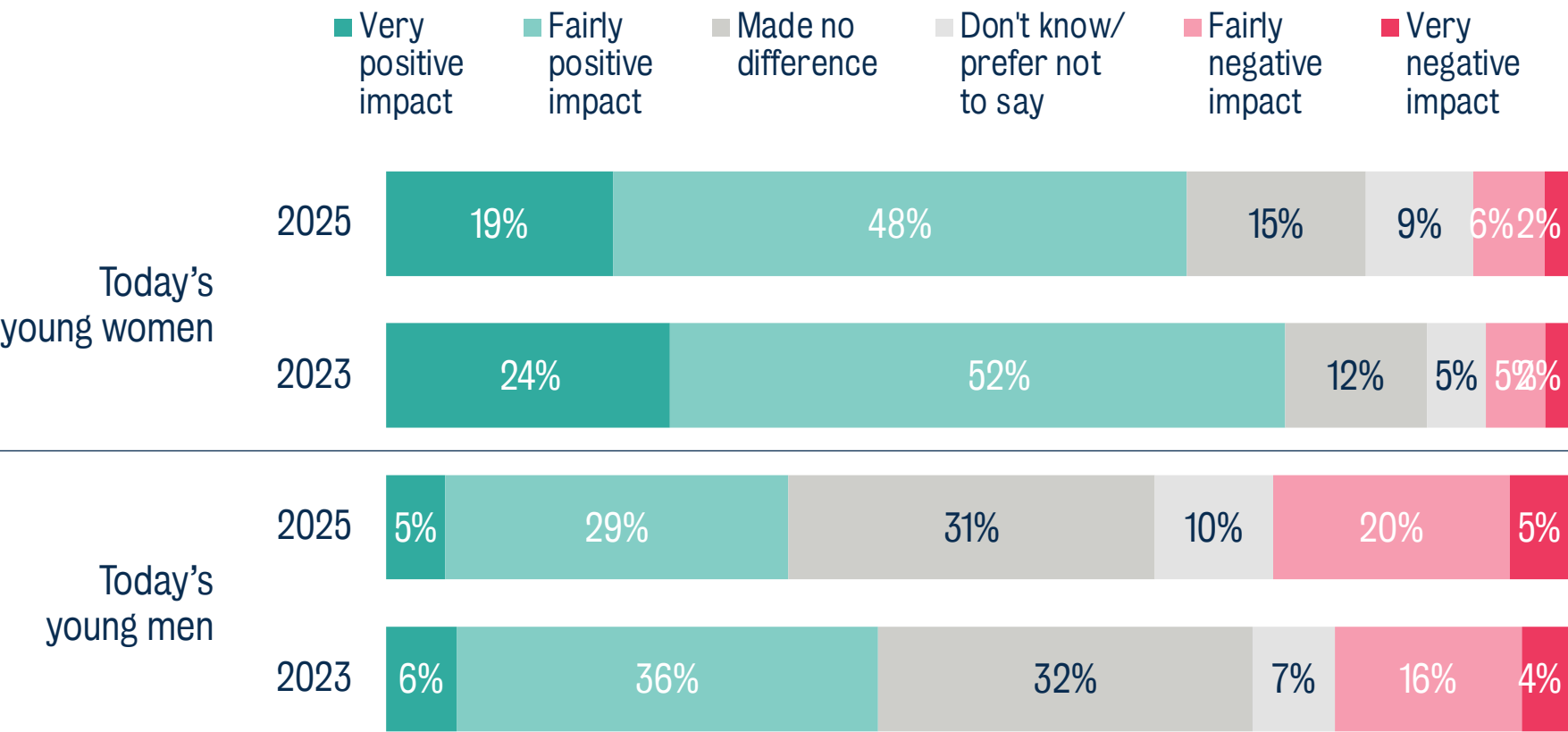
All age and gender groups – but particularly older men – significantly overestimate how many of their own peers believe efforts for women’s equality have gone too far

Earlier we asked you if attempts to give equal opportunities have gone too far or not gone far enough for women. We have put this question to a representative sample of British adults. On average, what percentage (between 0-100%) of the following groups do you think say that attempts to give equal opportunities for women have gone too far?



A clear majority still believe the equal rights movement has been good for young women – even if not quite as strongly as before – but views on impact on young men are more ambivalent

Do you think moves to promote equal rights for women in the last few decades have had a positive or negative impact on each of the following, or have they made no difference?



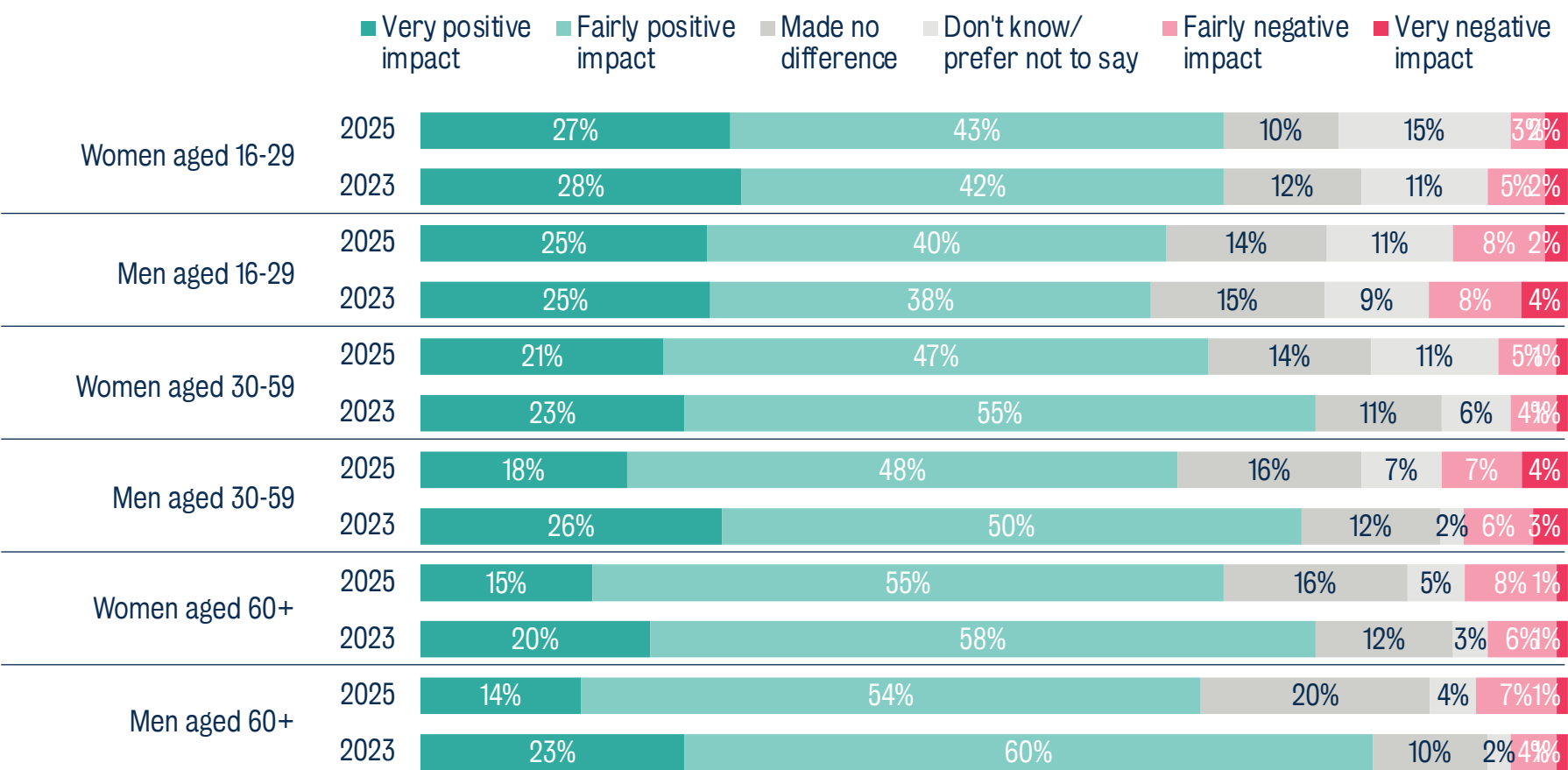
A majority of two-thirds (68%) say moves to promote equal rights for women have had a positive impact on today's young women – but this is down from 76% in 2023.

The share of the public who say the same about the impact on today's young men has also fallen, from 42% to 35%.

* Figures differ from charts due to rounding.

Across all age groups, a majority of both genders feel women's equality has had a positive impact on today's young women – but the share who feel this way has declined among older age groups

Do you think moves to promote equal rights for women in the last few decades have had a positive or negative impact on each of the following, or have they made no difference? **Today's young women**



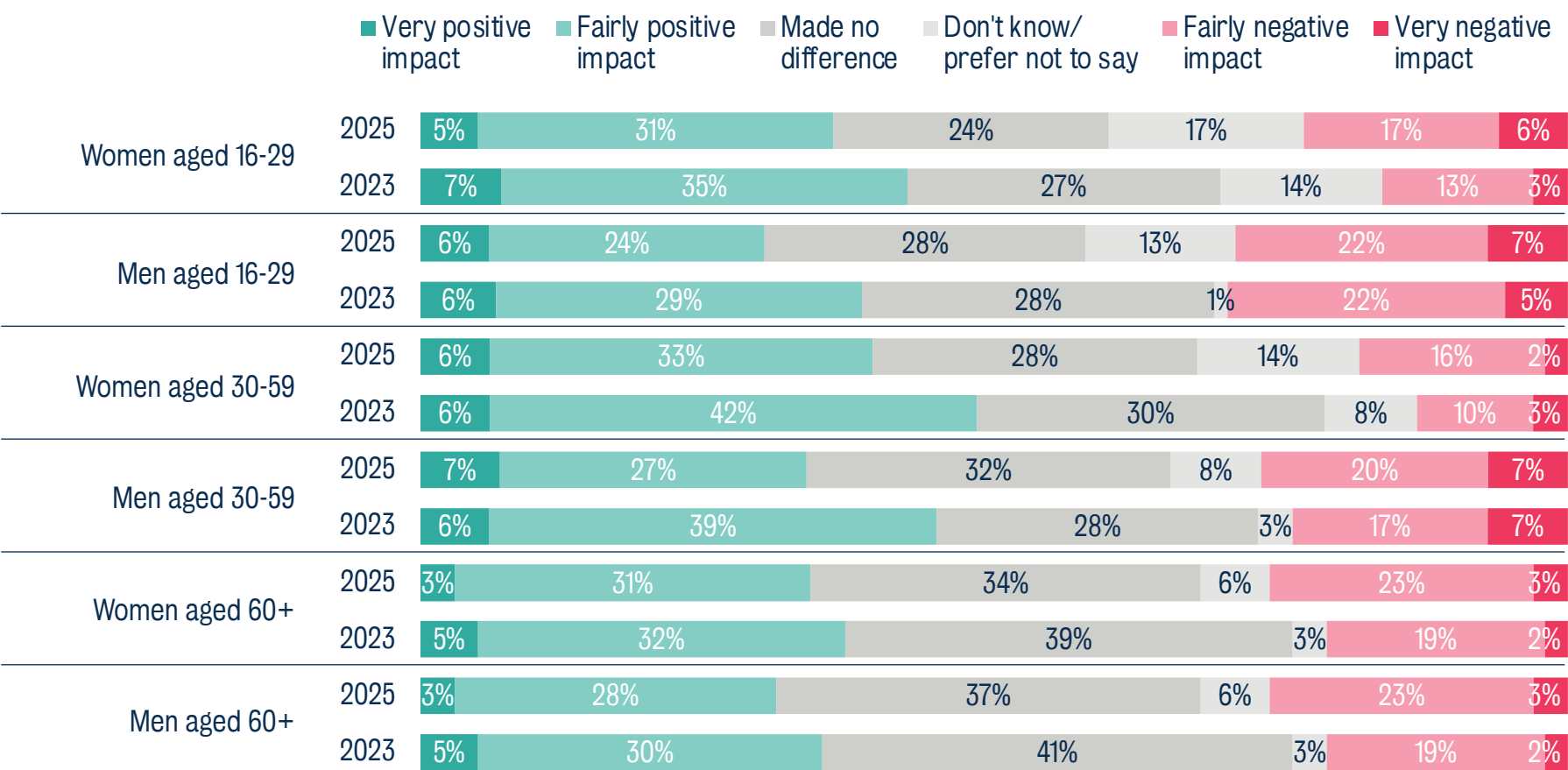
While young people’s views on the impact of women’s rights measures have remained relatively stable over the last two years, there has been a cooling of enthusiasm among middle-aged and older Britons of both genders.

For example, the share of women aged 30 to 59 who see moves to promote equal rights as having a positive impact on today’s young women declined from 78% to 68% between 2023 and 2025.

And over the same period, the equivalent figure among men aged 60+ fell from 83% to 68%.

Among men and women of all ages, there has been a small decline in the share who feel equal rights for women have had a positive impact on today's young men

Do you think moves to promote equal rights for women in the last few decades have had a positive or negative impact on each of the following, or have they made no difference? **Today's young men**



Men aged 30 to 59 have seen the biggest change in views, with 33% now saying equal rights for women have been positive for young men – down from 45% in 2023.

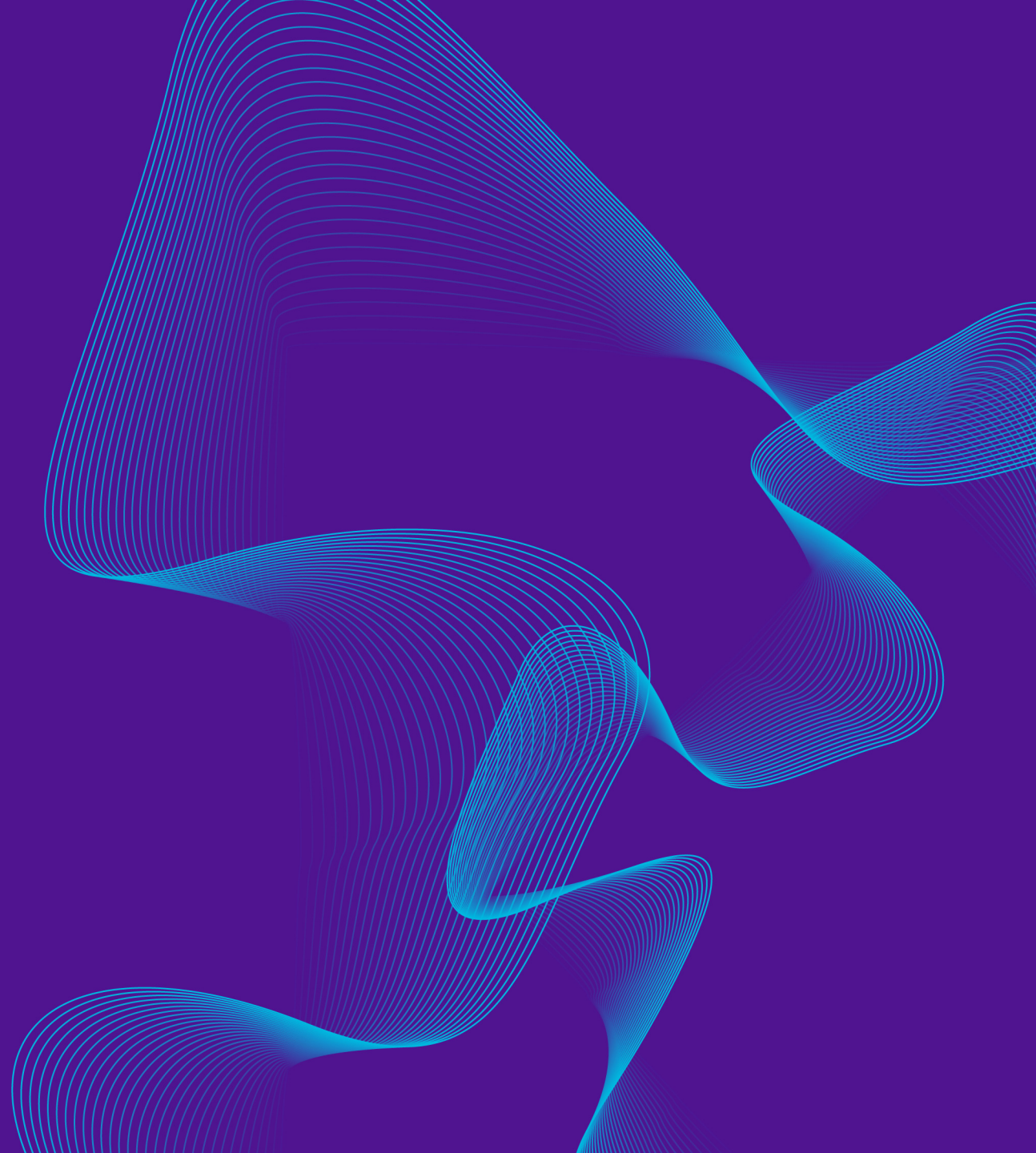
And two years ago, men aged 16 to 29 were much more likely than women the same age to say women's equality had had a negative impact on young men. But now this gender gap in views has reduced, as the share of young women who feel this way has risen from 17% to 23% – even if a greater share still say the impact has been positive (36%).

Overall, it is still the case that nearly all groups think the impact has been more positive than negative – with exception of young men themselves, who are split.

* Figures differ from charts due to rounding.

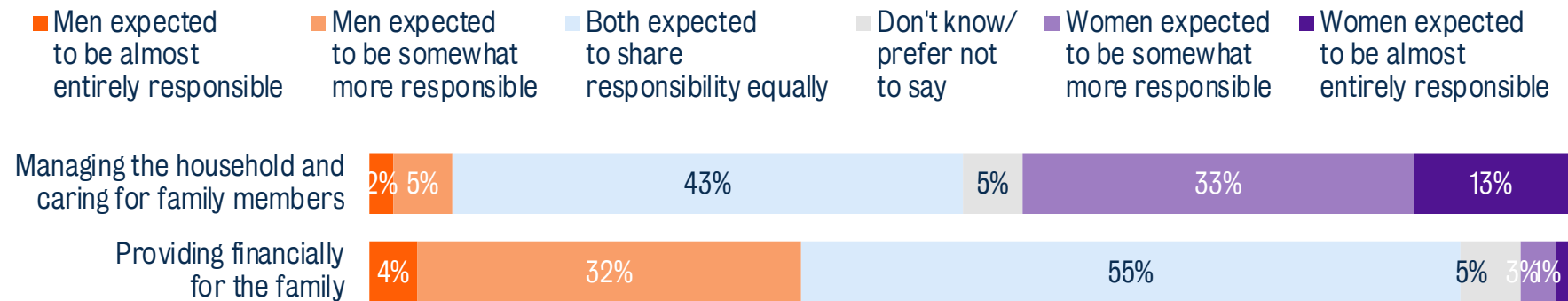
4. Gendered expectations and experiences

Younger women and men – who have grown up with greater equality – are actually more likely than their older counterparts to perceive traditional expectations about gender roles in today's society. But regardless of what is expected, there is much consensus between generations, and between women and men, that responsibilities should ideally be shared equally



Large minorities of the public perceive traditional gender expectations to still be dominant in Britain today, even though most feel responsibilities *should* be shared equally

Thinking about British society today, do you think men or women, if either, are **expected** to hold more responsibility for each of the following?



A third (36%) of people believe men are expected to bear primary responsibility for providing financially for the family, while nearly half (46%) say women are expected to take on the greater share of household management and family care.

However, when asked what *should* be the case, large majorities favour equal sharing of both domestic and financial responsibilities between men and women.

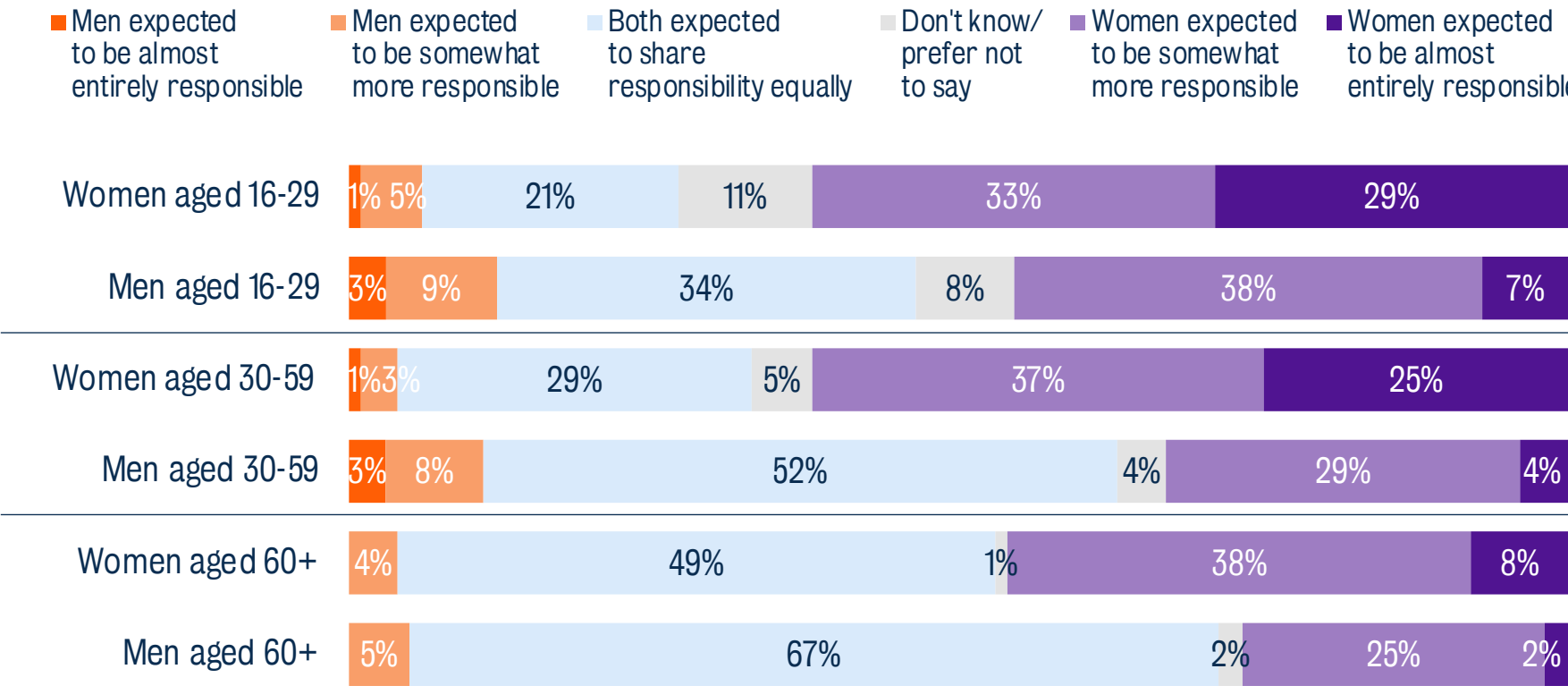
And thinking about your own personal view, do you think men or women, if either, **should** hold more responsibility for each of the following?



Among men, it is the youngest who are most likely to say society expects women to manage the household – although overall women are still much more likely to feel this expectation

Thinking about British society today, do you think men or women, if either, are **expected** to hold more responsibility for each of the following?

Managing the household and caring for family members



45% of young men feel that in society today women are expected to manage the household and care for family – notably higher than the proportion of middle-aged (34%) and older (26%) men who say the same.

But overall, women – particularly younger and middle-aged women – are more likely to feel this expectation.

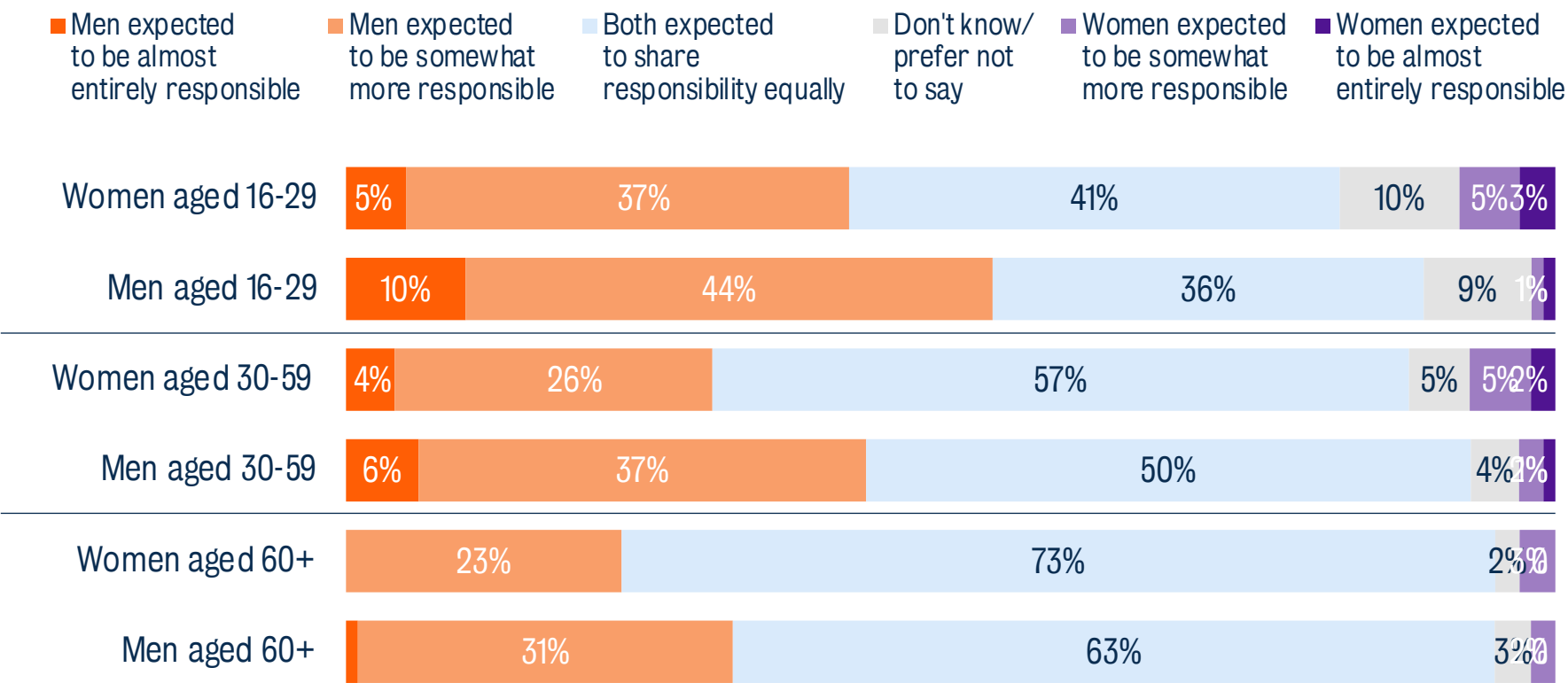
And women as a whole are much more likely than men to say society expects women to be *almost entirely* responsible for managing the household and caring for family members.

But as shown later, people’s perceptions of societal expectations differ significantly from their views on what *should* be the case.

Younger Britons of both genders perceive significantly stronger societal expectations for men to provide financially for their families

Thinking about British society today, do you think men or women, if either, are **expected** to hold more responsibility for each of the following?

Providing financially for the family



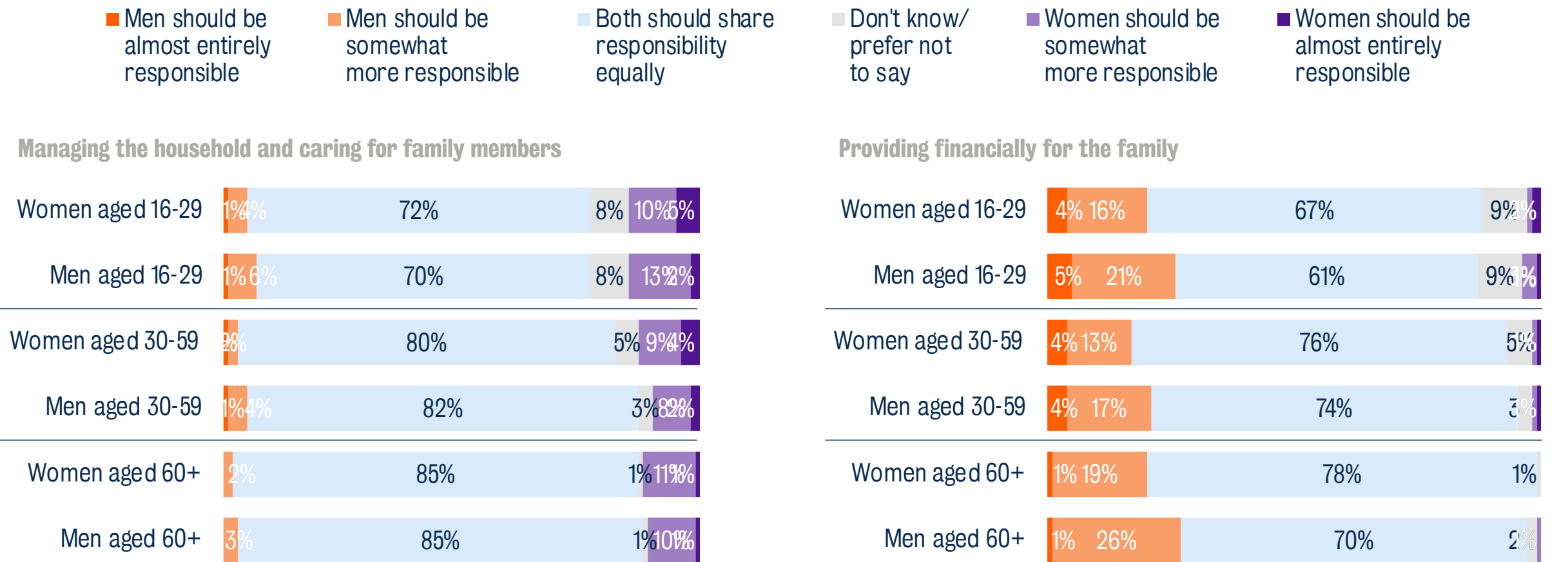
Younger people – who have grown up in an era of greater gender equality – are actually more likely to perceive men as bearing greater responsibility for providing financially.

Among women aged 16 to 29, 42% believe society expects men to provide for the family, compared with 30% of women aged 30-59 and 23% of women aged 60.

Young men show an even more pronounced perception of these expectations: 53% believe men are expected to shoulder greater financial responsibility – higher than the share of middle-aged (44%) and older (32%) men who feel this way.

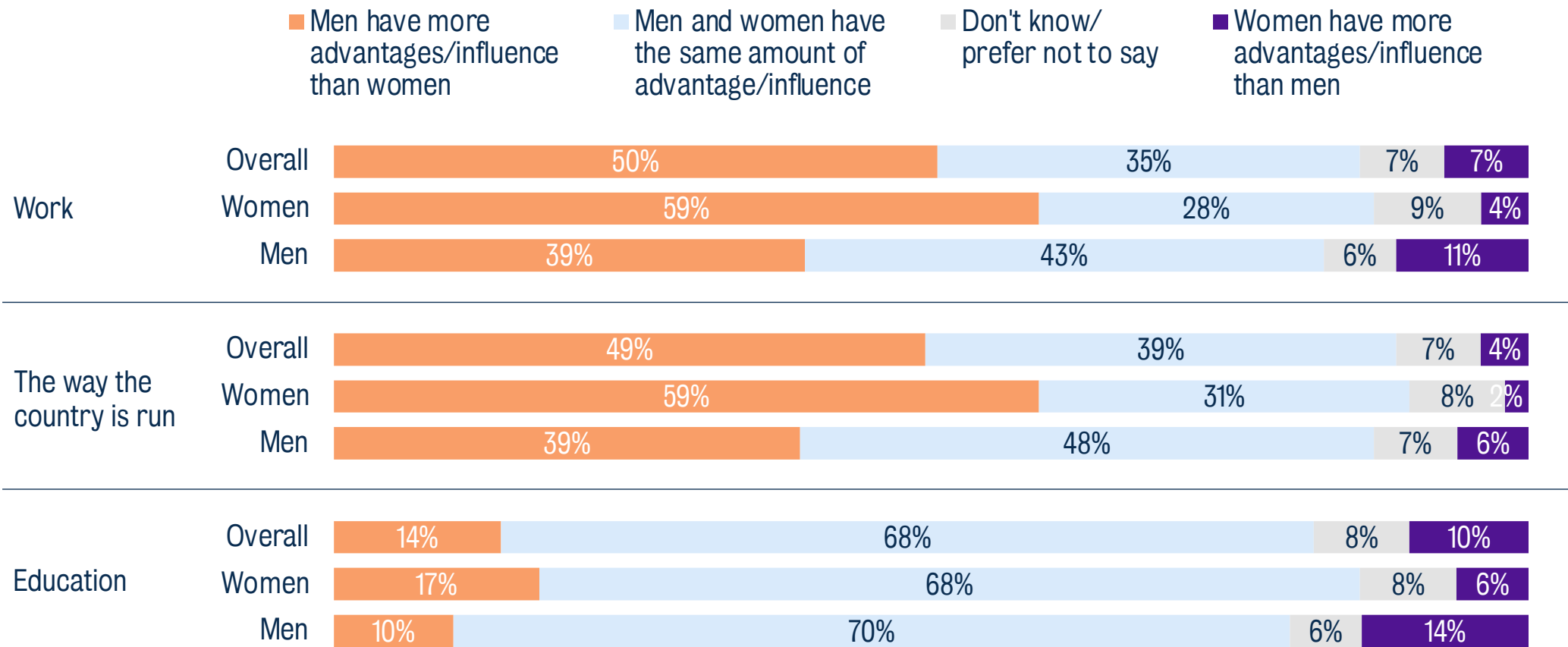
Despite these varying expectations, there is consensus between generations and genders that responsibility *should* be shared equally for managing the household and providing financially

And thinking about your own personal view, do you think men or women, if either, **should** hold more responsibility for each of the following?



Men are less likely than women to feel they have greater advantages in terms of work or influence over how the country is run, while few see either gender as faring better on education

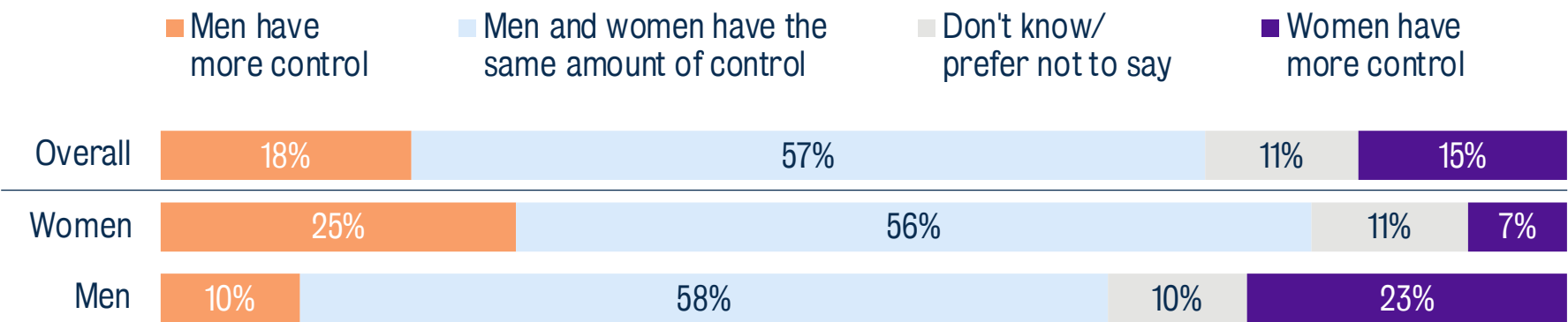
Do you think men or women have more advantages in their lives in each of the following areas, or do you think they have about the same? / Do you think men or women have more influence over the way the country is run, including its laws, policies, and national priorities, or do you think they have about the same?



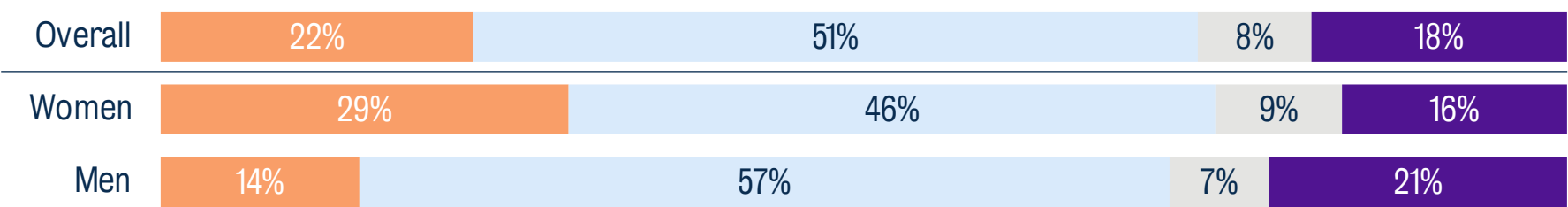
Most people say women and men have the same amount of control over dating/relationships and family life – although each gender is more likely to feel the other has more control than they do

Do you think men or women have more control over what happens in their lives in each of the following areas, or do you think they have about the same?

Dating and relationships



Family life



The public as a whole are most likely to say men and women have the same amount of control over both dating and relationships and family life, with a minority of one in five or fewer choosing one gender over the other.

There is a similar divide in opinion among women and men themselves – though each side is more likely to feel the other gender has greater power than their own.

For example, women are around three times as likely to feel men (25%), rather than women (7%), have more control over dating and relationships.

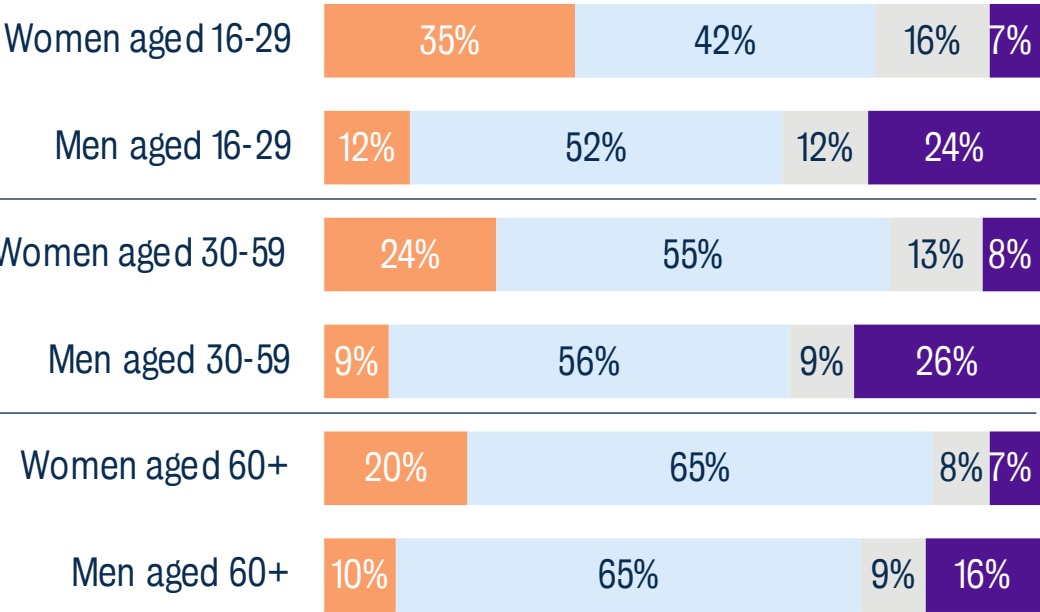
And men are more likely to say women (21%), rather than men (14%), have more control over family life.

Across age groups, there are some differences in views between women and men on who has most control over dating and relationships and family life – but the most common position is typically that both genders have the same amount of control

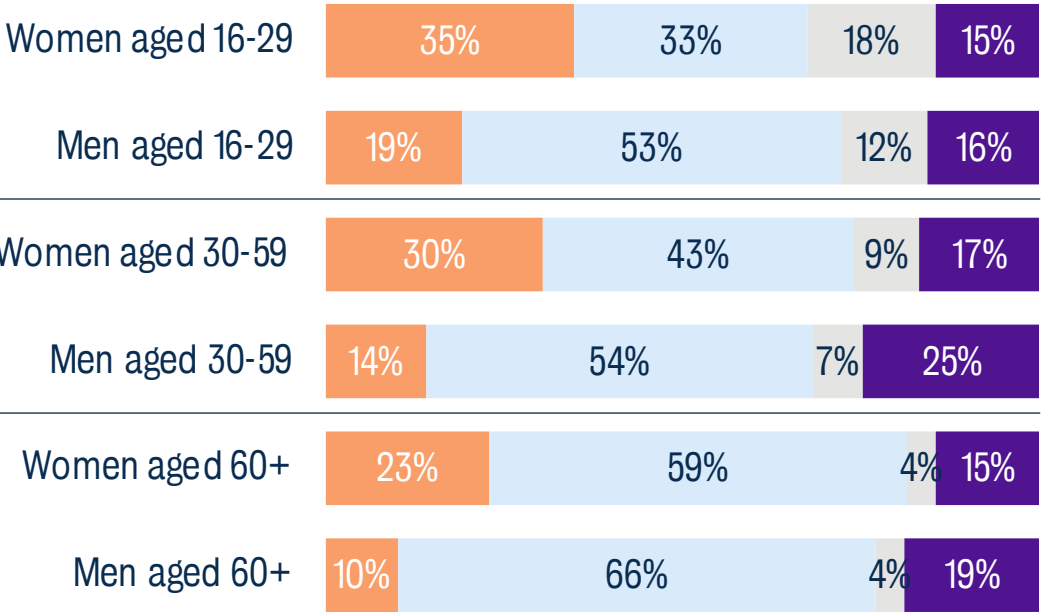
Do you think men or women have more control over what happens in their lives in each of the following areas, or do you think they have about the same?

Men have more control Men and women have the same amount of control Don't know/ prefer not to say Women have more control

Dating and relationships



Family life



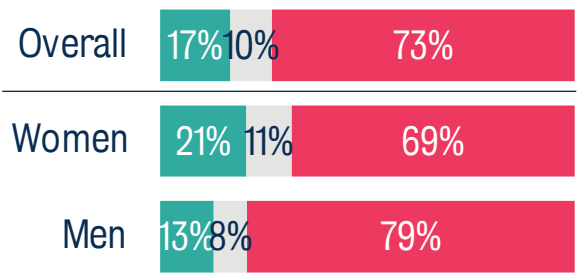
One in five women say they've been denied opportunities at work because of their gender, compared with one in eight men.

Women are also more likely to say they've have had to conform to gendered expectations and been criticised for their views on gender roles

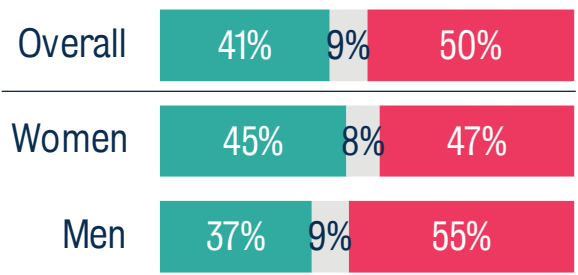
Have you ever experienced any of the following? If not, please say so

Yes Don't know/prefer not to say No, never

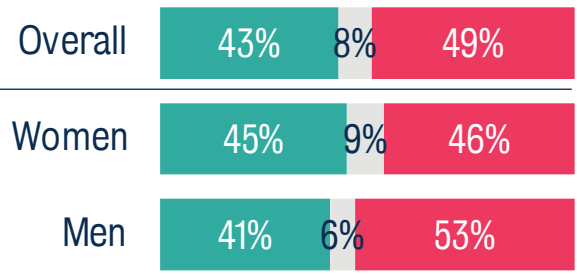
Been denied opportunities at work because of your gender



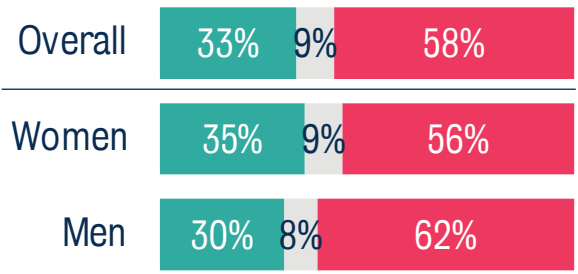
Felt like you had to act in a way that meets other people's expectations of how a man/woman should behave, but that doesn't meet your own beliefs



Felt like you have had to hold back expressing your views on the roles of men and women to avoid offending others



Been criticised by others for expressing your views on the roles of men and women

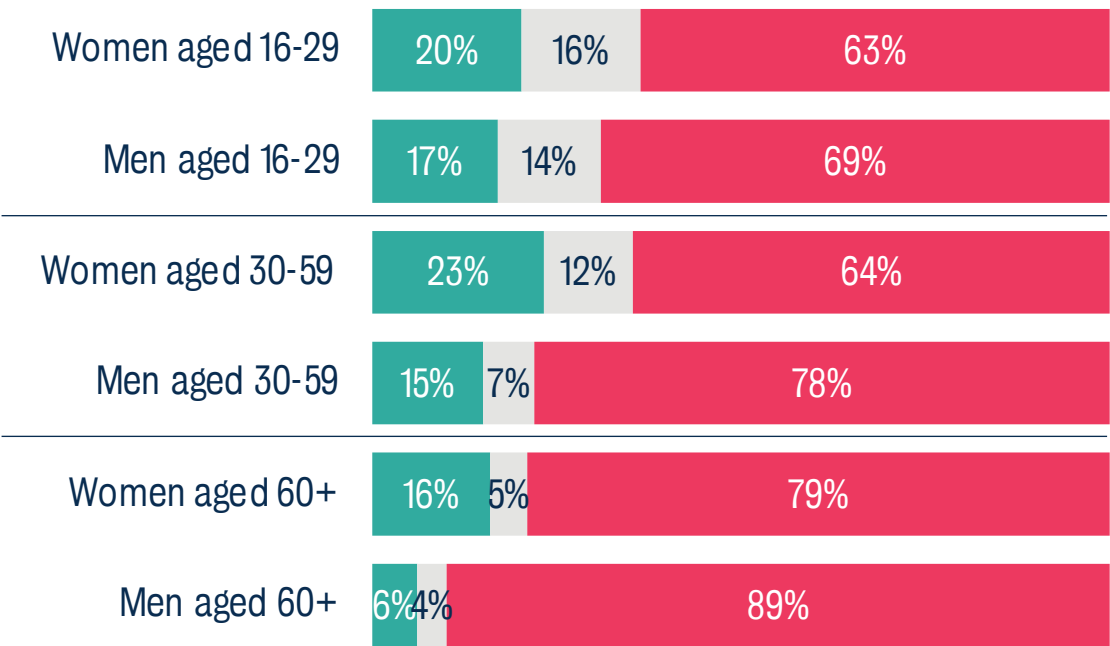


Younger women and men are most likely to report feeling pressure to conform to gender norms

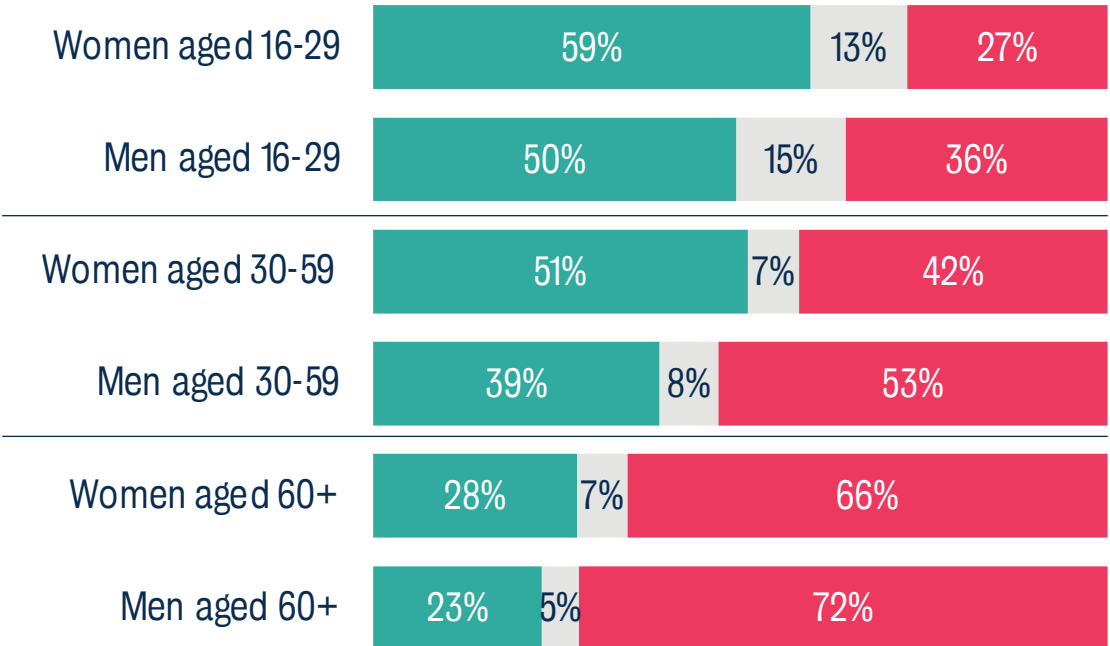
Have you ever experienced any of the following? If not, please say so

■ Yes ■ Don't know/prefer not to say ■ No, never

Been denied opportunities at work because of your gender



Felt like you had to act in a way that meets other people's expectations of how a man/woman should behave, but that doesn't meet your own beliefs

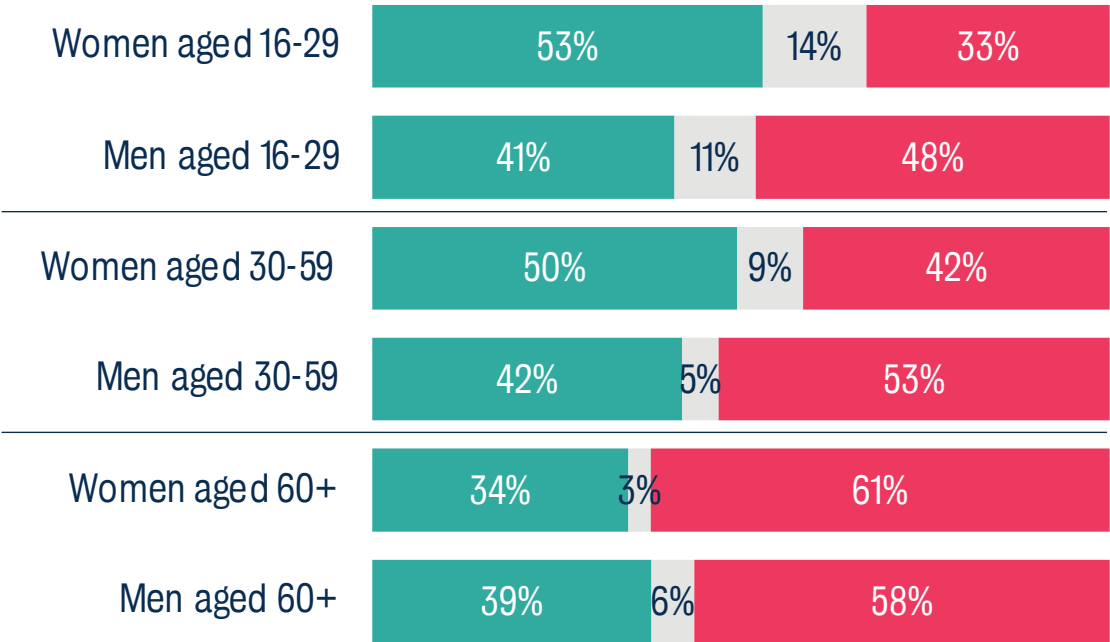


Younger people have the biggest gender divide in experiences of being criticised for their views on the roles of men and women

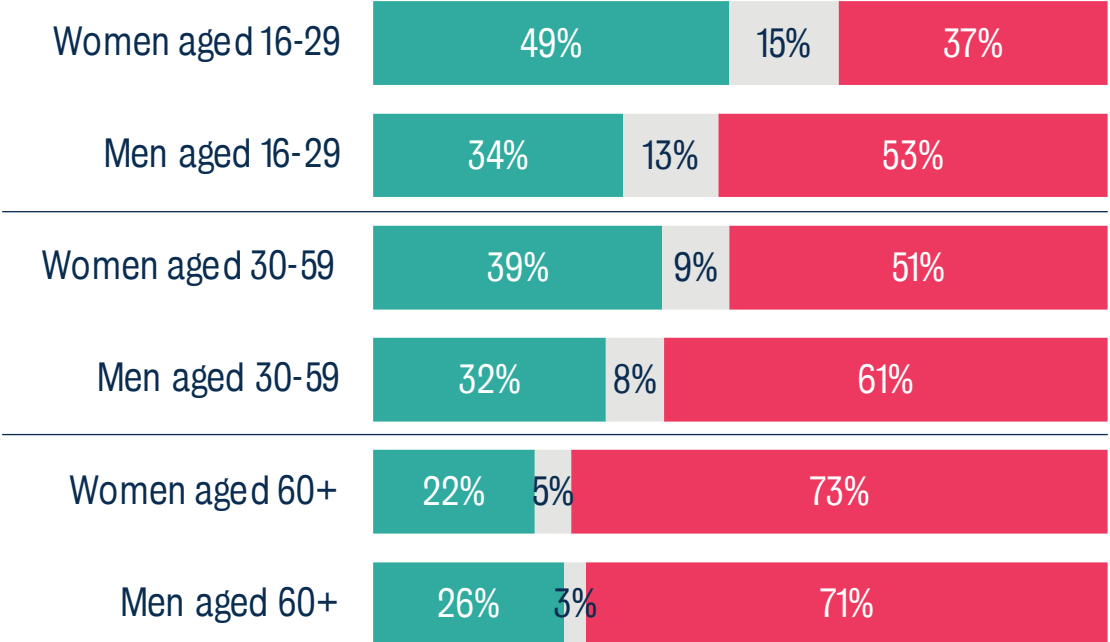
Have you ever experienced any of the following? If not, please say so

■ Yes ■ Don't know/prefer not to say ■ No, never

Felt like you have had to hold back expressing your views on the roles of men and women to avoid offending others

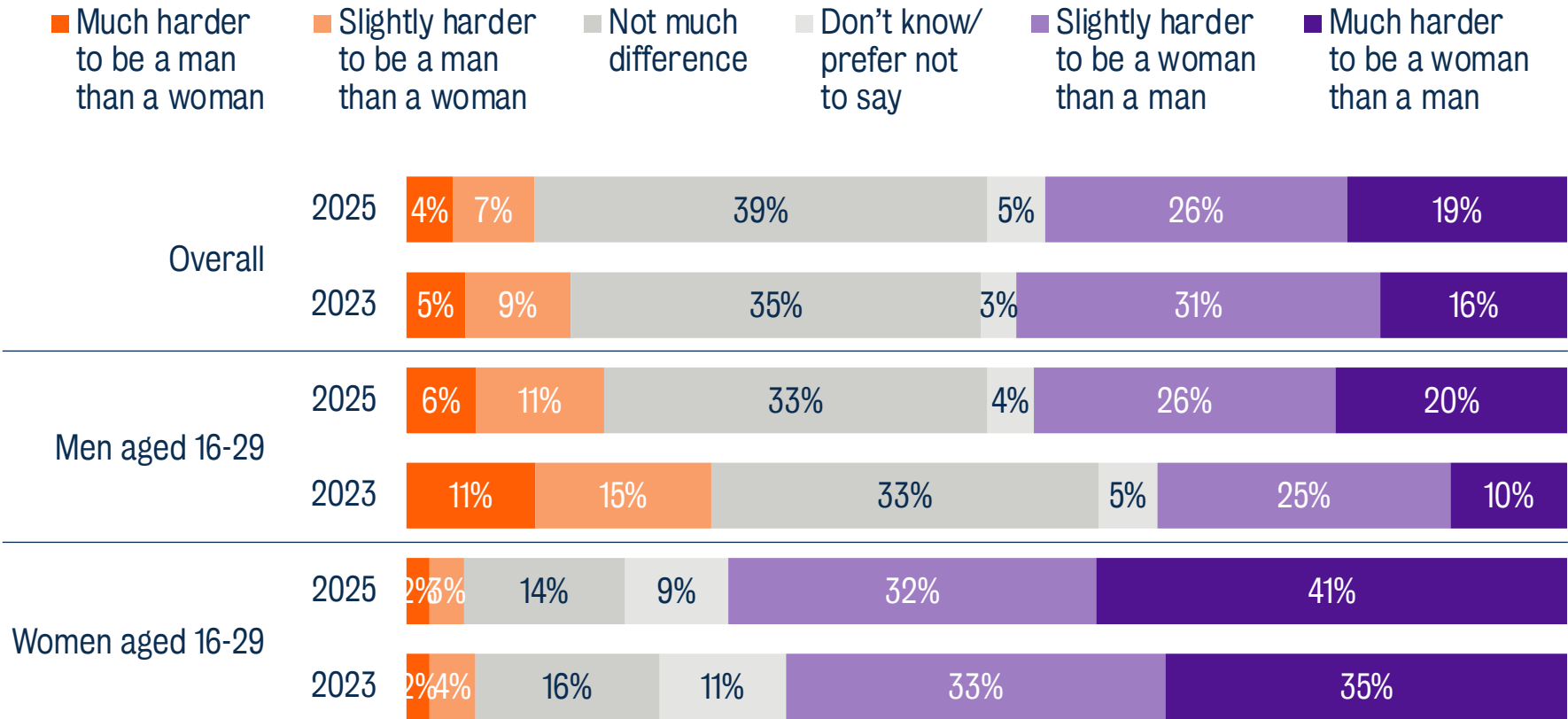


Been criticised by others for expressing your views on the roles of men and women



Over the last two years, young men have become more likely to say it's harder to be a woman in society today

When thinking about society in Britain... Do you think **today** it's harder to be a man, or harder to be a woman, or is there not much difference?



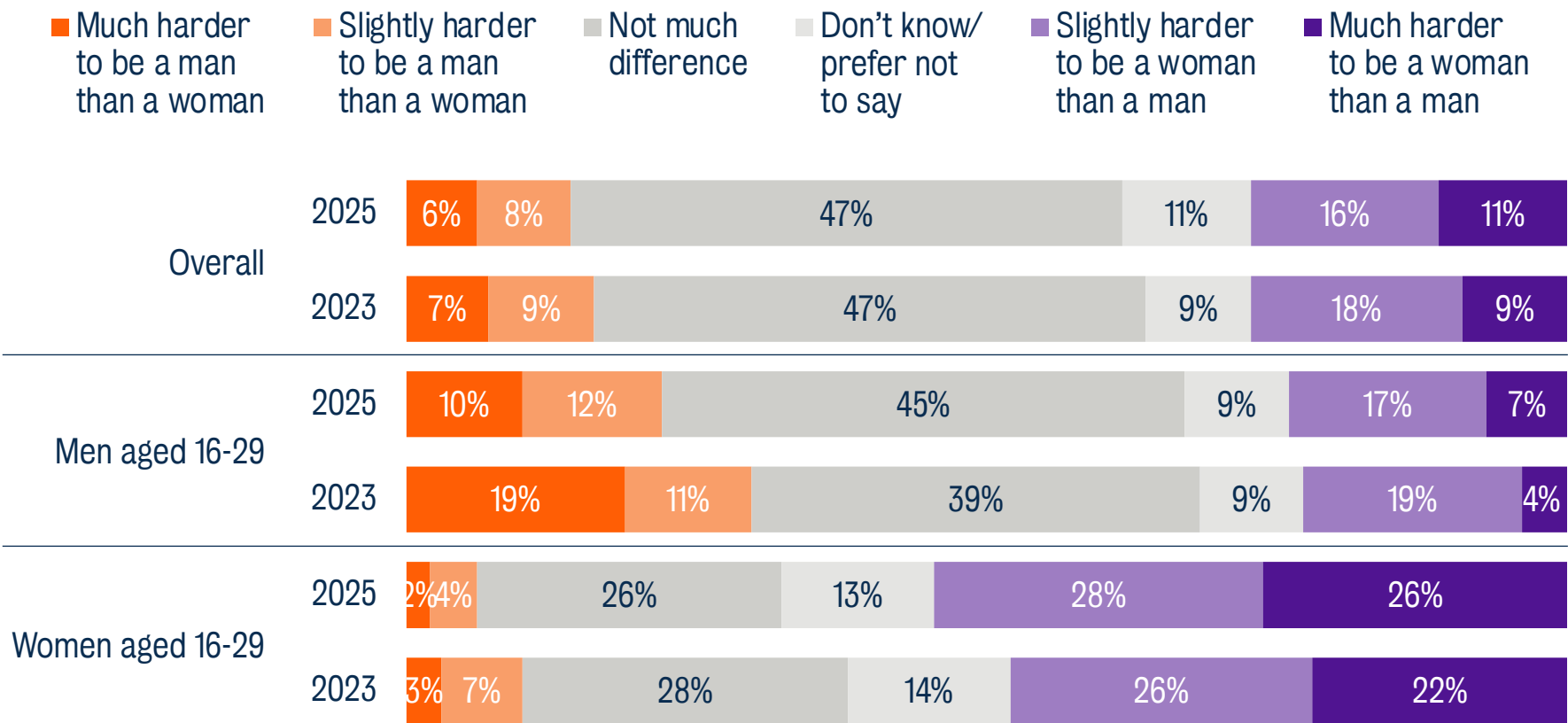
Among men, only the youngest surveyed have become more likely to say it's harder to be a woman than a man today, with the proportion who feel this way rising from 35% to 46% since since 2023.

And this shift is driven by a doubling of the proportion of young men who say it's *much* harder to be a woman, which has risen from 10% to 20%.

By contrast, over the same period, men belonging to older age groups have become *less* likely to say women have it tougher. For example, 35% of men aged 30 to 59 now hold this view – down from 42%.

There has also been a decline in the share of young men who think it will be harder to be a man in 20 years' time

When thinking about society in Britain... Do you think **in 20 years' time** it will be harder to be a man, or harder to be a woman, or will there be not much difference?

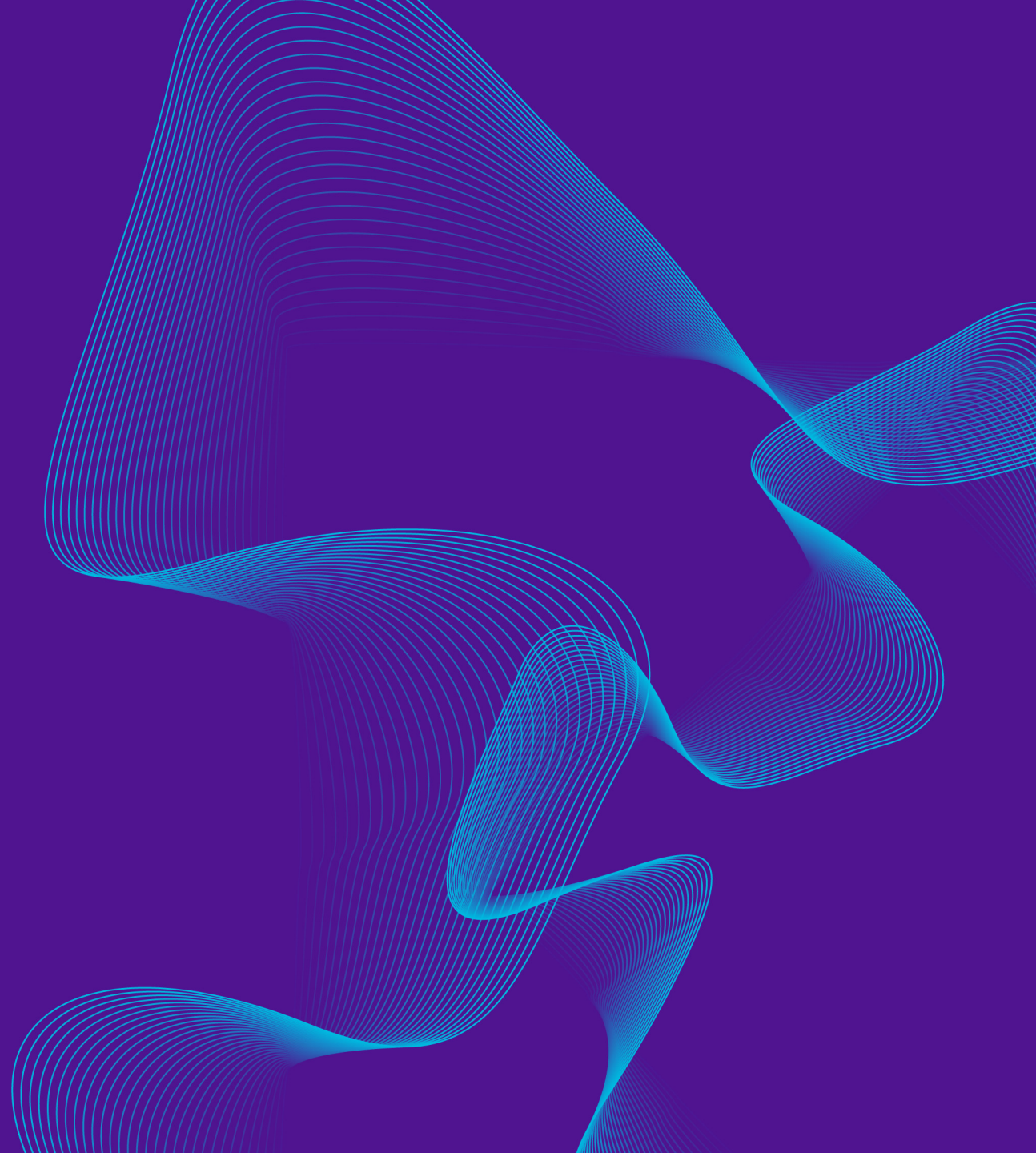


22% of young men now predict it will be harder to be a man in 20 years' time – down from 30% in 2023, with this change driven by a decline in the share who feel it'll be *much* harder to be a man.

Over the same period, there has been a rise in young women believing it will harder to be a woman in the future, up from 48% to 54%.

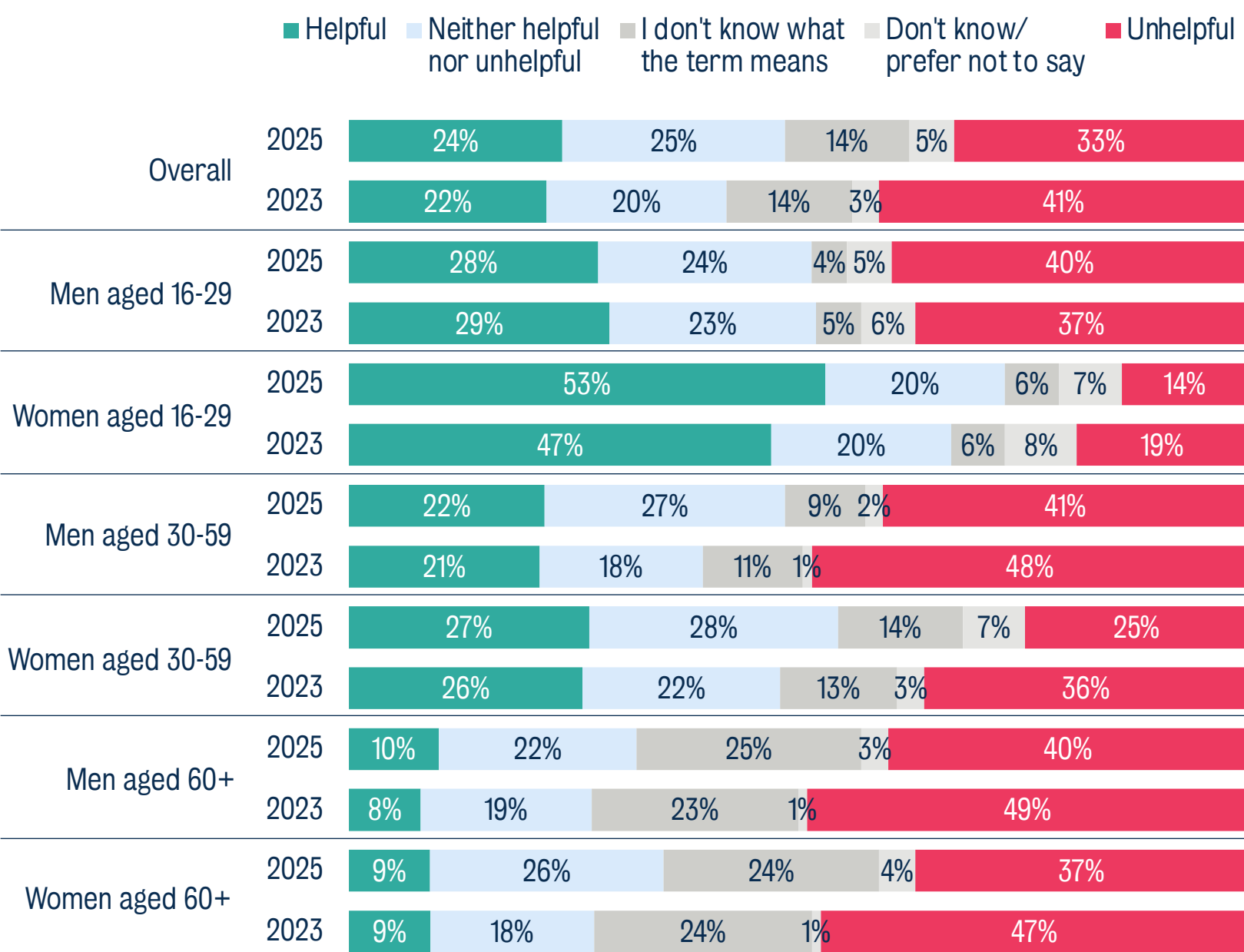
5. The terms used in the debate on gender divides

Compared with 2023, young women are the only group who have become more likely to say they find the phrase “toxic masculinity” helpful, while just under half the population say they’ve heard a lot or a little about incels



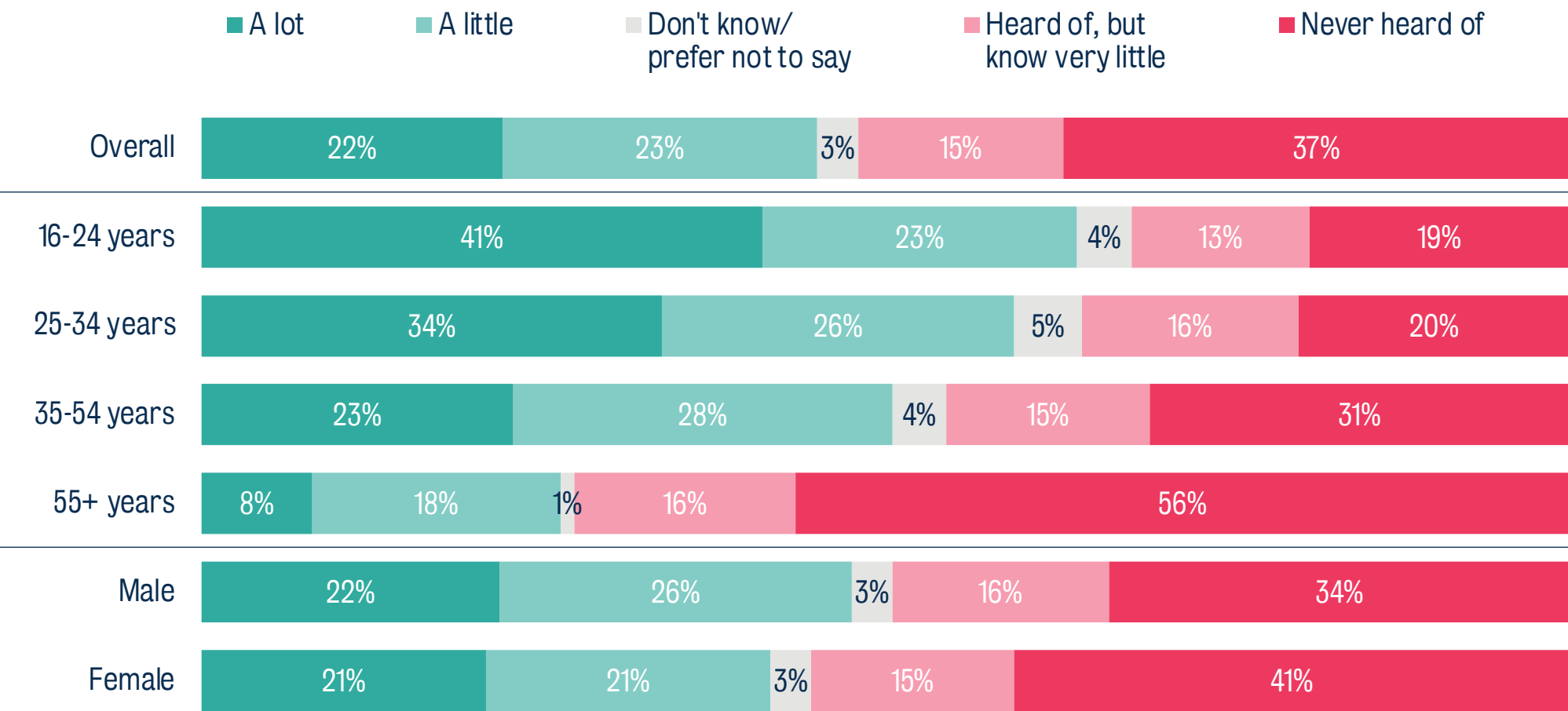
A third of people see “toxic masculinity” as an unhelpful term – down from four in 10 two years ago – though young women are the only group to see a slight increase in the share who feel the phrase is helpful

To what extent, if at all, do you personally find the term “toxic masculinity” helpful or unhelpful when thinking about relations between men and women in Britain today?



Just under half the population say they've heard a lot or a little about incels, with awareness highest among younger age groups

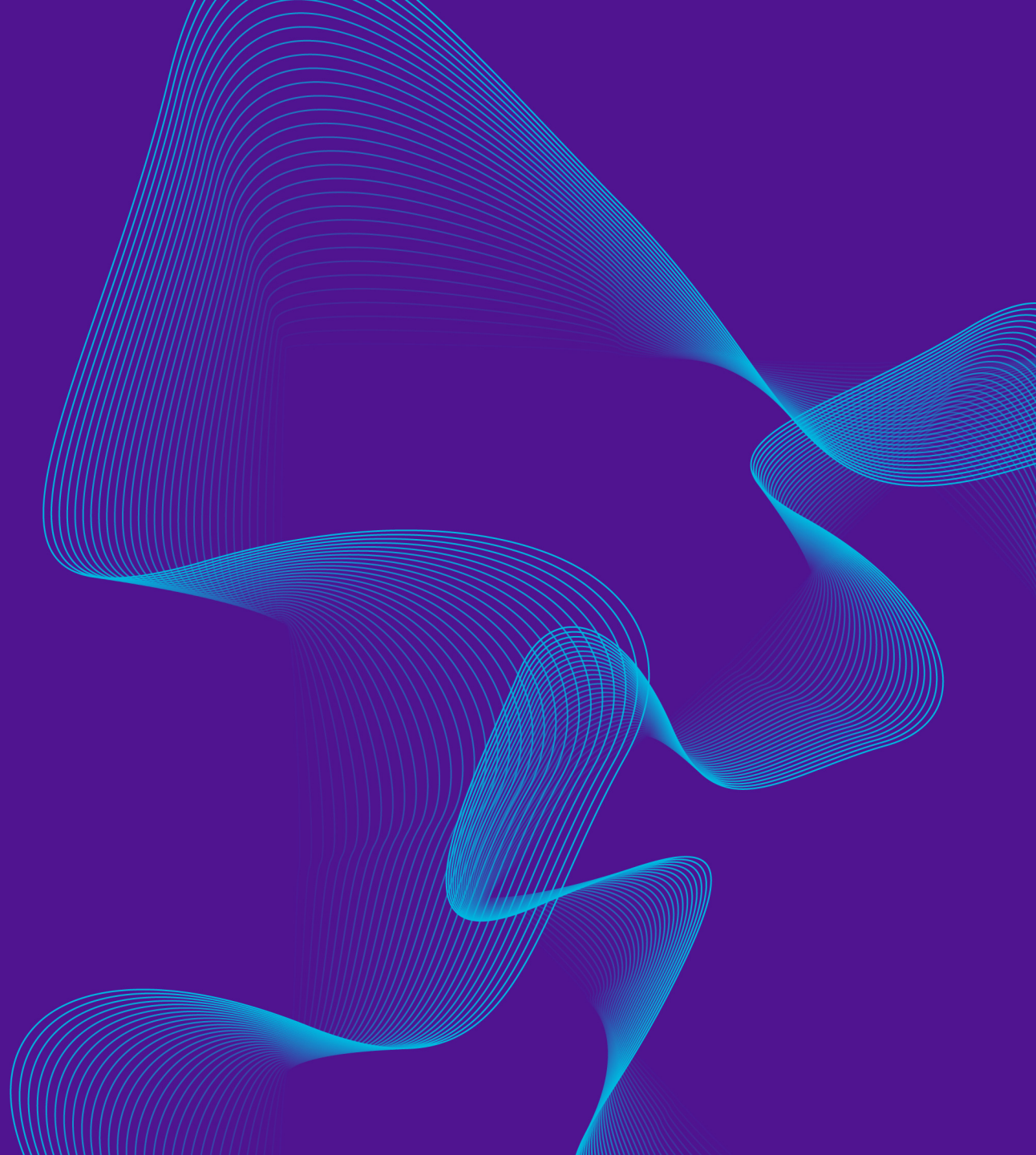
How much, if anything, have you heard or read about the following terms or phrases? **Incels**



6. What might help?

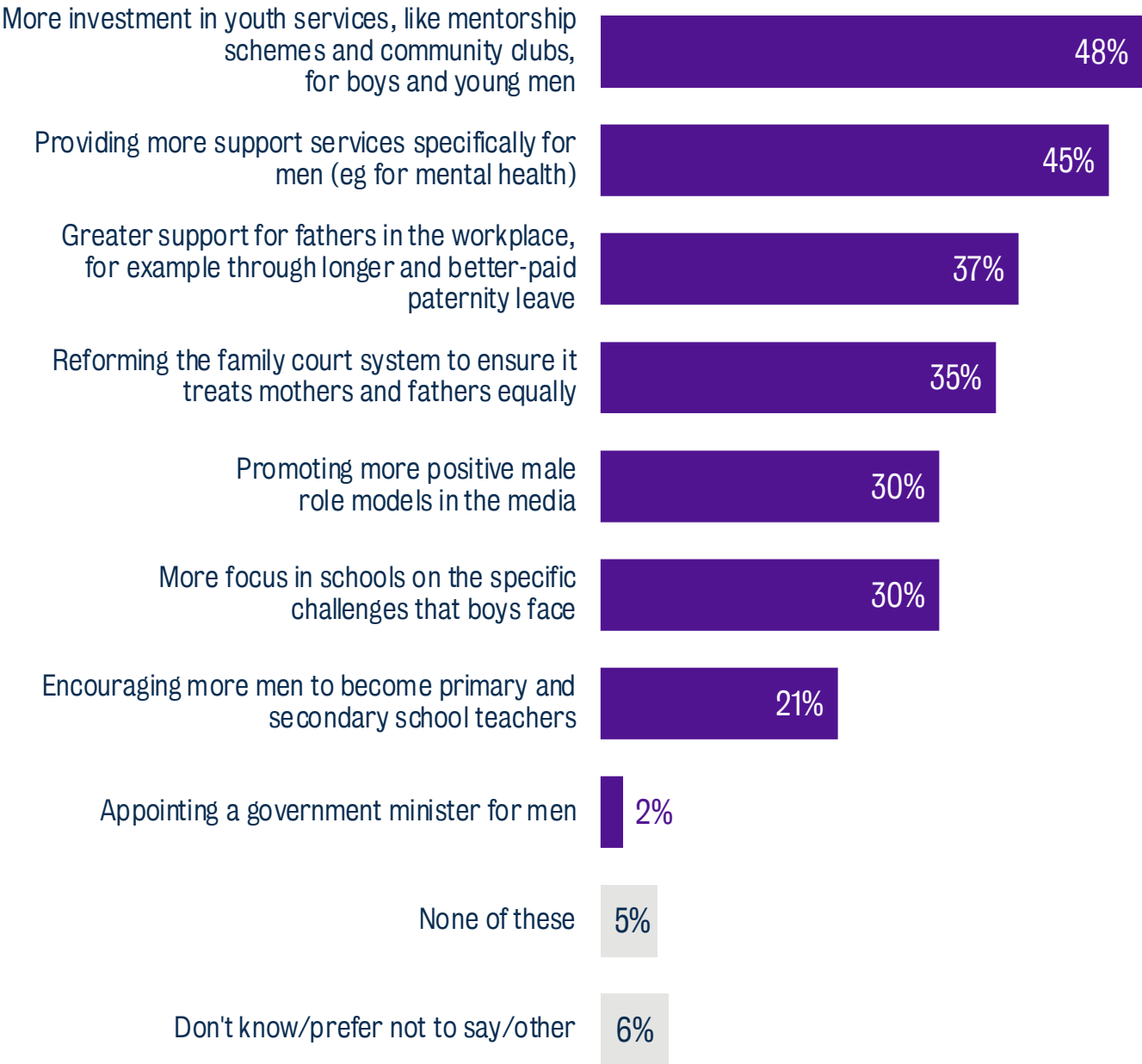
The public's priorities

Investment in youth services and greater mental health support for boys and young men are the most popular options



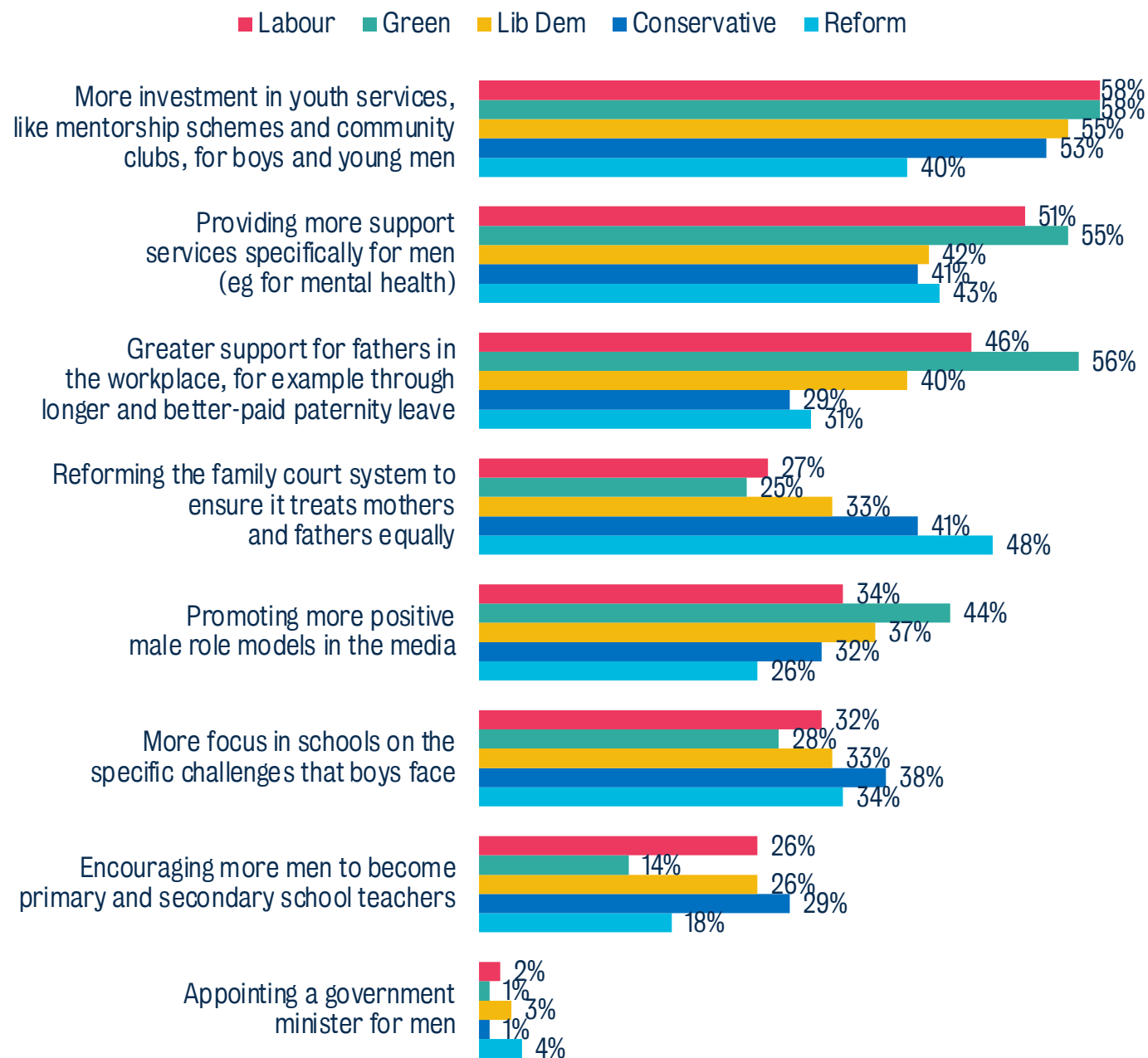
The public see a range of possible solutions to the challenges facing boys and young men, with investment in youth services and greater mental health support for boys and young men the most popular options, while just 2% prioritise appointing a government minister for men

Below is a list of ideas that have been suggested to help address some of the challenges faced by boys and young men in the UK today. Which THREE of these, if any, do you think should be prioritised?

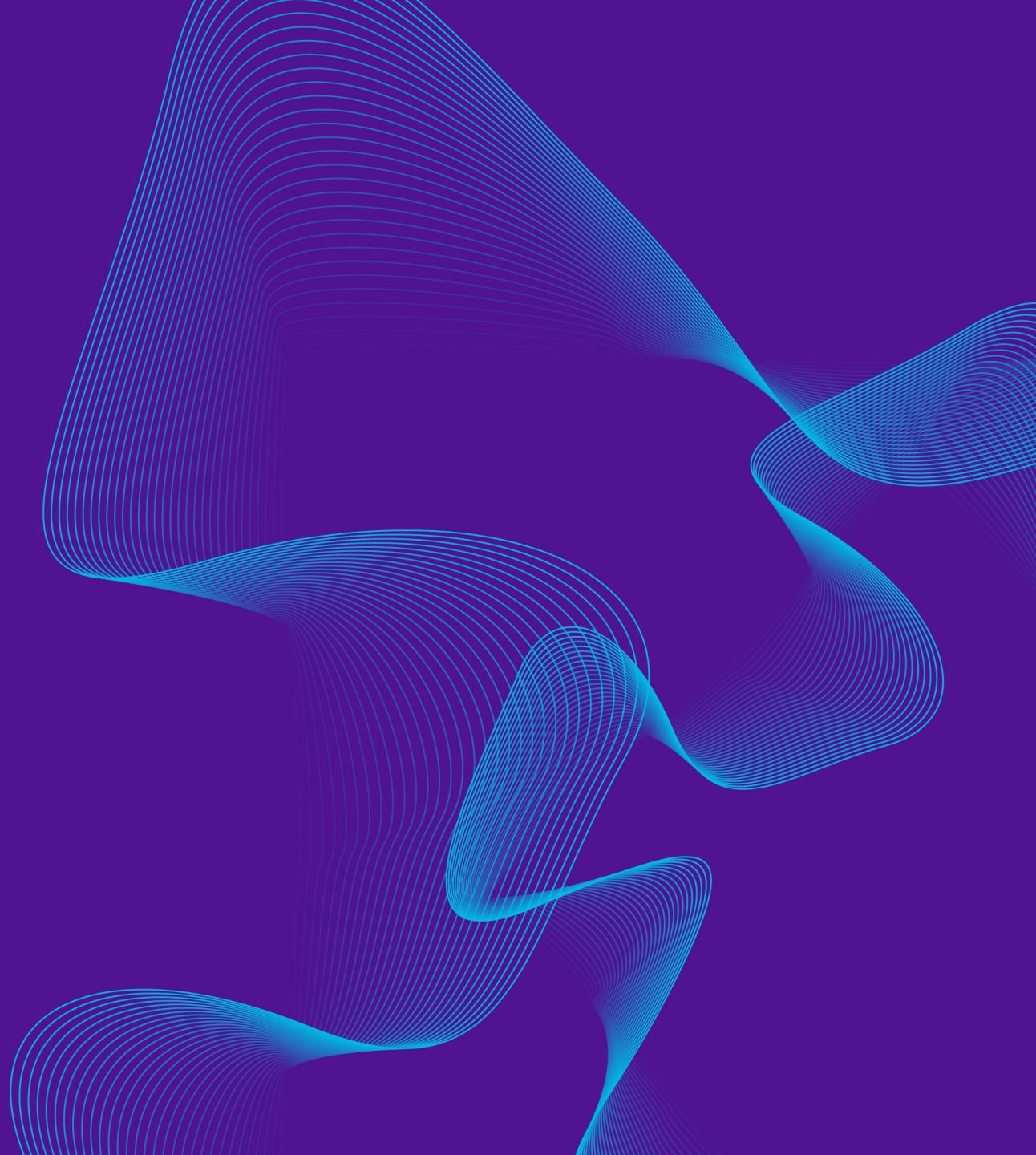


Youth services are a priority for all, while supporters of left and centre-left parties are more likely to favour workplace support, such as better paternity leave for fathers, while those on the right are relatively more likely to prioritise reform of the family court system

Below is a list of ideas that have been suggested to help address some of the challenges faced by boys and young men in the UK today. Which THREE of these, if any, do you think should be prioritised?



Study details



Study details

Ipsos UK interviewed online a representative sample of 4,027 adults aged 16+ across the United Kingdom between 21 and 27 August 2025, following previous surveys of 3,716 between 17 and 23 August 2023, 2,931 between 13 and 19 January 2022, and 2,834 between 25 November and 2 December 2020. This data has been collected by Ipsos’ UK KnowledgePanel, an online random probability panel which provides gold standard insights into the UK population, by providing bigger sample sizes via the most rigorous research methods. Data are weighted by age, gender, region, Index of Multiple Deprivation quintile, education, ethnicity and number of adults in the household in order to reflect the profile of the UK population. All polls are subject to a wide range of potential sources of error.

The Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel is the UK’s largest online random probability panel, providing total understanding of the UK public for businesses and organisations looking for cutting edge insight at the gold standard of online research methods. It is important because it includes both online and offline participants selected at random from every address in the UK, the first of its kind, with a single interface to eliminate modal effects and produce accurate data rapidly.

UK KnowledgePanel utilises a panel of 30,000+ participants to provide a new innovative tool for all those organisations who wish to garner greater insights into the behaviours, beliefs and attitudes of not just the UK population as a whole, but also into the specific communities which make up the UK’s diverse population.

Studies completed on UK KnowledgePanel will be fully representative of the UK population including households who are considered “offline”. This is made possible by recruiting offline and supplying participants with a tablet, internet access and the tech support needed to get online. As a result of this approach the panel utilises a single online data collection method, with no differential mode effects – a pioneering advancement which enhances the ability to understand our society.

The UK KnowledgePanel builds on work done by Ipsos in the US on their own, which has been operating since 1999, utilising that experience and blending it with Ipsos’ own research and methodological expertise to produce a tool which delivers robust nationally representative data at speed. Find out more.

2024 US survey

This survey is based on 1,092 interviews conducted by YouGov for the Young Men Research Initiative on the internet of US adult men ages 18-29. The sample was weighted according to race/ethnicity, education, and US Census region based on voter registration lists, the US Census American Community Survey, and the US Census Current Population Survey, as well as 2020 Presidential vote. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be nationally representative of U.S. adult men ages 18-29. Comparisons with this survey must be caveated due to different time period and methods used.

Subgroups

Variable	Base
Gender	
Male	1,844
Female	2,105
Age	
16-24	375
25-34	691
35-54	1,298
55+	1,663
Age by gender	
Women aged 16-29	388
Men aged 16-29	252
Men aged 30-59	863
Women aged 30-59	1,112
Women aged 60+	605
Men aged 60+	729
Ethnicity	
White	3,531
Ethnic minority	383
Party support	
Conservative	610
Labour	723
Reform UK	658
Liberal Democrats	296
Green Party	311
2016 Brexit vote	
Leave	1,186
Remain	1,679



KING'S
BUSINESS
SCHOOL

KING'S GLOBAL
INSTITUTE
FOR WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP

THE
POLICY
INSTITUTE

KING'S
College
LONDON

Connect with us

🖱 kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute

✉ policy-institute@kcl.ac.uk

📺 [The Policy Institute](#)

🦋 [@policyatkings.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/@policyatkings)

✂ [@policyatkings](https://twitter.com/policyatkings)

📷 [policyinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/policyinstitute)