

# STUDENTS, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS SURVEY 2021-22

**Drug & Alcohol  
Impact**



STUDENTS  
ORGANISING FOR  
SUSTAINABILITY  
UNITED KINGDOM

**Alcohol  
Impact**

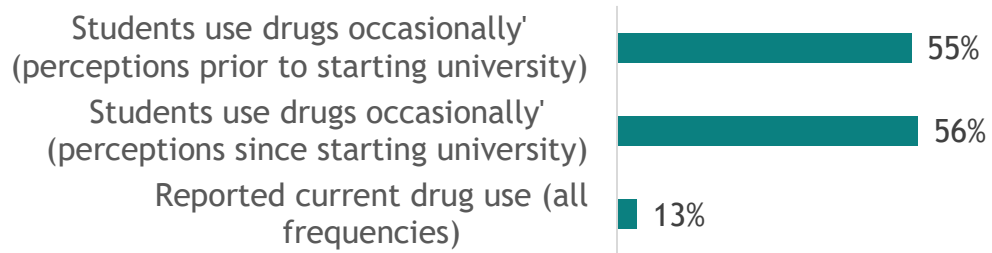
# Contents

Section	Page
<u>Summary</u>	3-6
<u>Notable changes</u>	7-9
<u>About the research</u>	10-11
<u>Research findings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Perceptions of student drug use and campus drug culture</u></li><li>• <u>Student drug use</u></li><li>• <u>Non-drug users</u></li><li>• <u>Drug advice and support</u></li><li>• <u>University/college drug policy</u></li><li>• <u>Impact of drug use</u></li><li>• <u>Patterns and practices of alcohol consumption</u></li><li>• <u>Perceptions of alcohol consumption on campus</u></li><li>• <u>Impacts of alcohol consumption</u></li><li>• <u>Reducing impacts through responsible consumption</u></li><li>• <u>Safety and COVID-19</u></li></ul>	12-75
<u>Sample demographics</u>	76-83

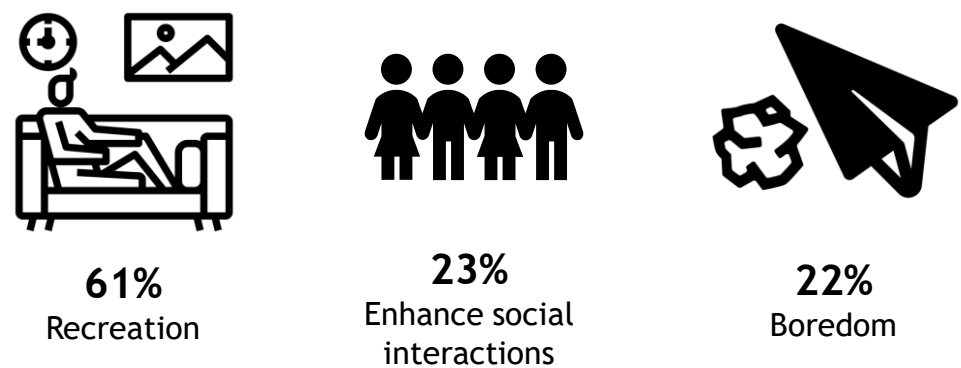
# SUMMARY

We asked students in higher education about their experiences of drugs and alcohol during their time at university. The 1600 respondents who completed an online survey between November 2021 to January 2022 told us...

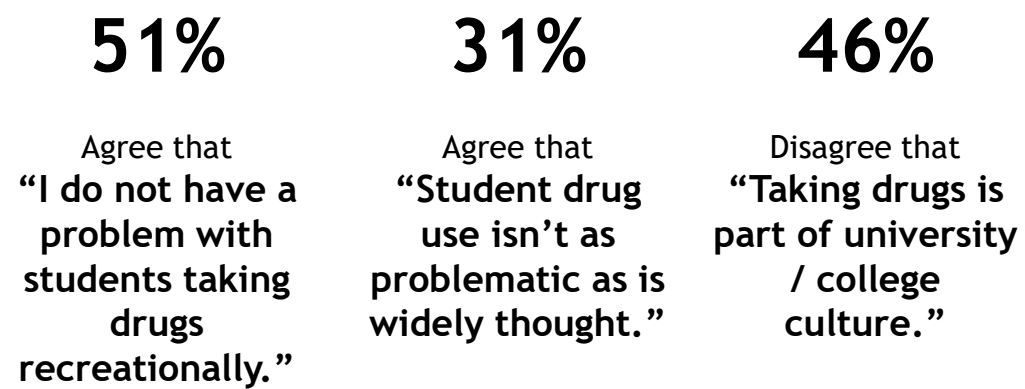
**Respondents’ perceptions of student drug use prior to starting university remains unchanged once they become a student, but overestimates reported use...**



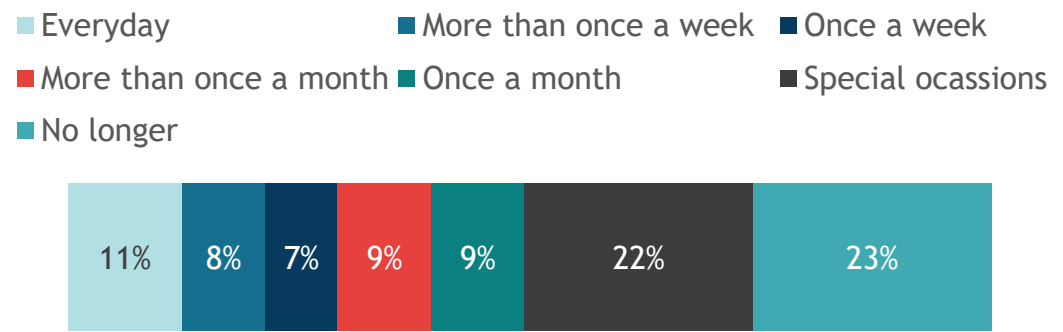
**Top reasons behind drug use are...**



**Perception of drug use are varied...**



**Cannabis is the most frequently reported drug used by respondents who currently use or have previously used drugs**



## Thinking of drugs and their place of study...



**35%** say they don't know if their university has a drug policy



**43%** say they feel confident that if they turned to their university for support with drug use that it would be dealt with appropriately.



**42%** say their university / college should not be punishing students who take drugs

## Reflecting on the impacts of drug use, respondents who currently (or previously) use drugs...



**26%**  
say it has resulted in  
a missed lecture /  
seminar / class



**19%**  
say its improved a mental  
health condition but...  
**13%** say it has made a  
condition worse



**43%**  
say it helped them  
make new friends



**24%**  
say they enjoyed the  
experience of sex on  
drugs



**19%**  
say they took risks  
with their personal  
safety they would  
not have otherwise

# Considering their experiences with alcohol whilst a student in higher education, respondents told us...



50%

Before going to university, half of students surveyed thought students got drunk most of the time



81%

agree that drinking and getting drunk is part of university culture



53%

Over half report drinking alcohol once a week or more



61%

Nearly two thirds of students regularly drink at home or a friend's house before going out for the night



51%

Around half of students surveyed think getting drunk means they'll have a good night out



78%

say they don't have to get drunk to have a good night out

# NOTABLE CHANGES (FROM 2020-2021 RESEARCH)

# Drugs: Changes in key findings between 2020-21 and 2021-22 research

The following changes between respondents to research carried out in 2020-21 and 2021-22 are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level. Respondents in 2021-22 are...

Less likely to agree they do not have a problem with students taking drugs recreationally

**59%**  **51%**  
2020-21 2021-22

More likely to report cannabis use once a week or more

**20%**  **26%**  
2020-21 2021-22

Non-users are more likely to say they are concerned about the long term effects of drugs on their health

**44%**  **54%**  
2020-21 2021-22

More likely to say they have missed university lectures/ seminars/ classes following or during taking drugs

**17%**  **26%**  
2020-21 2021-22

# Alcohol: Changes in key findings between 2020-21 and 2021-22 research

The following changes between respondents to research carried out in 2020-21 and 2021-22 are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level. Respondents in 2021-22 are...

Less likely to agree they never drink but have done in the past

**16%**  **7%**  
2020-21 2021-22

More likely to agree that they regularly drink at home or a friends house before going out

**43%**  **61%**  
2020-21 2021-22

More likely to think that getting drunk means they'll have a good night out

**38%**  **51%**  
2020-21 2021-22

More likely to report that they deliberately get drunk at home before going out on a regular basis

**17%**  **28%**  
2020-21 2021-22

# ABOUT THE RESEARCH

# About the research

**This report presents research completed as part of the Drug and Alcohol Impact programme. The programme is a whole-institution approach and embeds social norms of responsible drinking on our campuses, refocusing the conversation on drugs to be about reducing harm, and building healthier, safer, more productive student communities, involving action by local partnerships of students' unions, universities and community organisations. The programme includes an annual survey, designed to identify students' relationship with alcohol and drugs at participating institutions as well as students across the UK more widely. The survey is intended to provide a means for understanding changes in attitudes and behaviours.**

A total of 1631 responses were achieved in 2021-22 through promotion of the survey locally by universities and students' unions. The survey was mainly promoted by universities and students' unions participating in the Drug and Alcohol Impact programme however participation in the research was also opened to other universities and students' unions wishing to gather data on their students' relationship with drugs. Additionally, the survey was also promoted by NUS to students in the TOTUM database.

When reading the results, it is worth bearing in mind the characteristics of the respondents, outlined in the following chapter.

Variations between students with different characteristics, such as gender or nationality, are also drawn out throughout the report. Significant differences are reported where base size is greater than 30 and are valid at confidence level of at least 95%.

An error in the survey routing resulted in respondents who identified as non-drinkers being excluded from the analysis, and therefore the proportion of respondents identifying in this way is likely to be underreported in this research.

## About Drug and Alcohol Impact

Our student wellbeing programme Drug and Alcohol Impact embeds social norms of responsible drinking on our campuses, and refocuses the conversation on drugs to be about reducing harm, and building healthier, safer, more productive student communities.

The programme builds upon the success of Alcohol Impact, which since 2015 has supported 30 university and students' union partnerships to create lasting positive change around responsible alcohol consumption. Although progress has been made in improving drinking cultures on campus, there's still work to be done, and institutions are supported to build on and improve practices in this area.

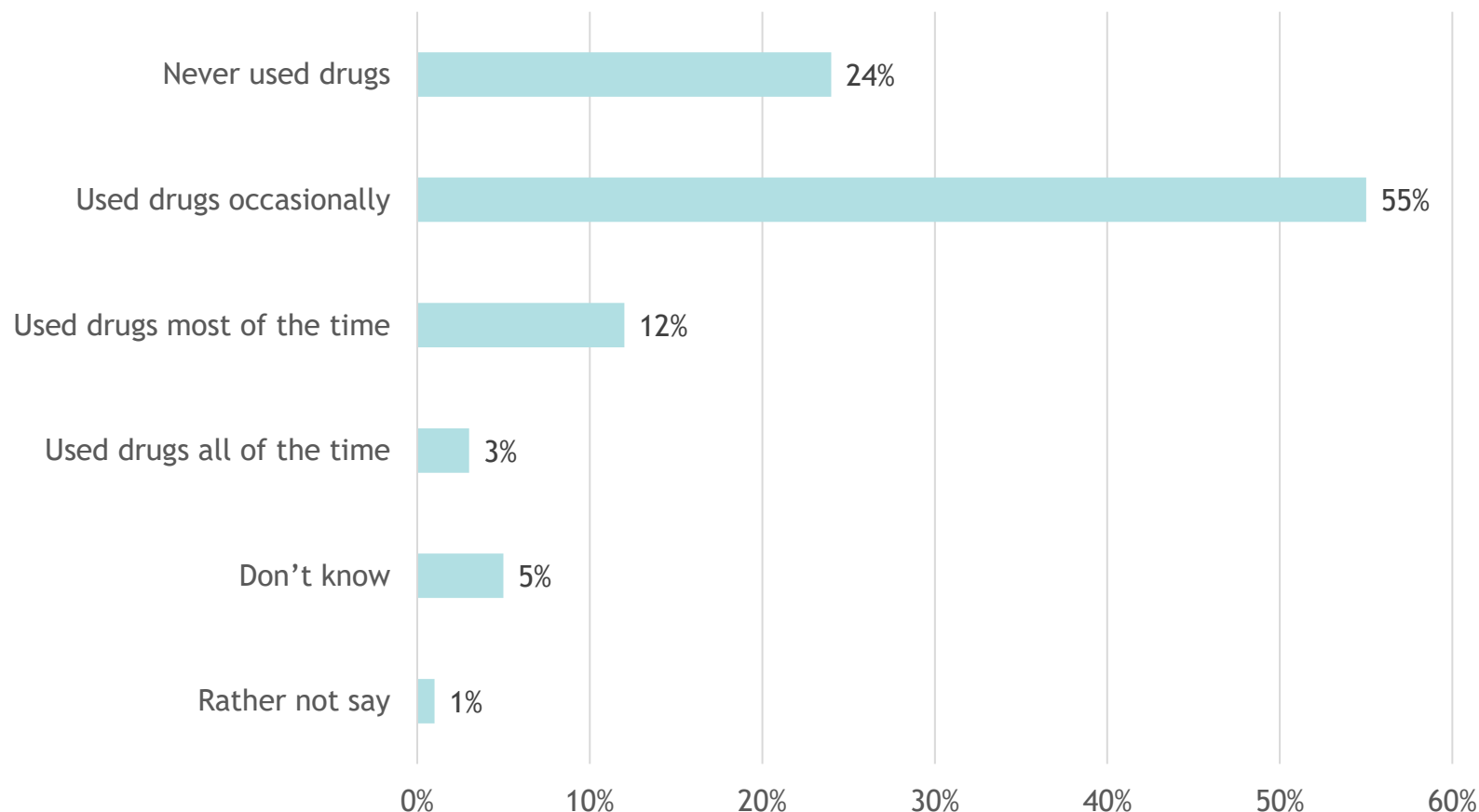
Drug and Alcohol Impact recognises that despite most universities taking a zero-tolerance approach to drug use, many students still choose to use drugs. The programme supports institutions to explore their own students drug use and design bespoke interventions to identify, educate and reduce harm.

For more information visit our [website](#) or email [hello@sos-uk.org](mailto:hello@sos-uk.org)

# RESEARCH FINDINGS: DRUGS

# Perceptions of student drug use and campus drug culture

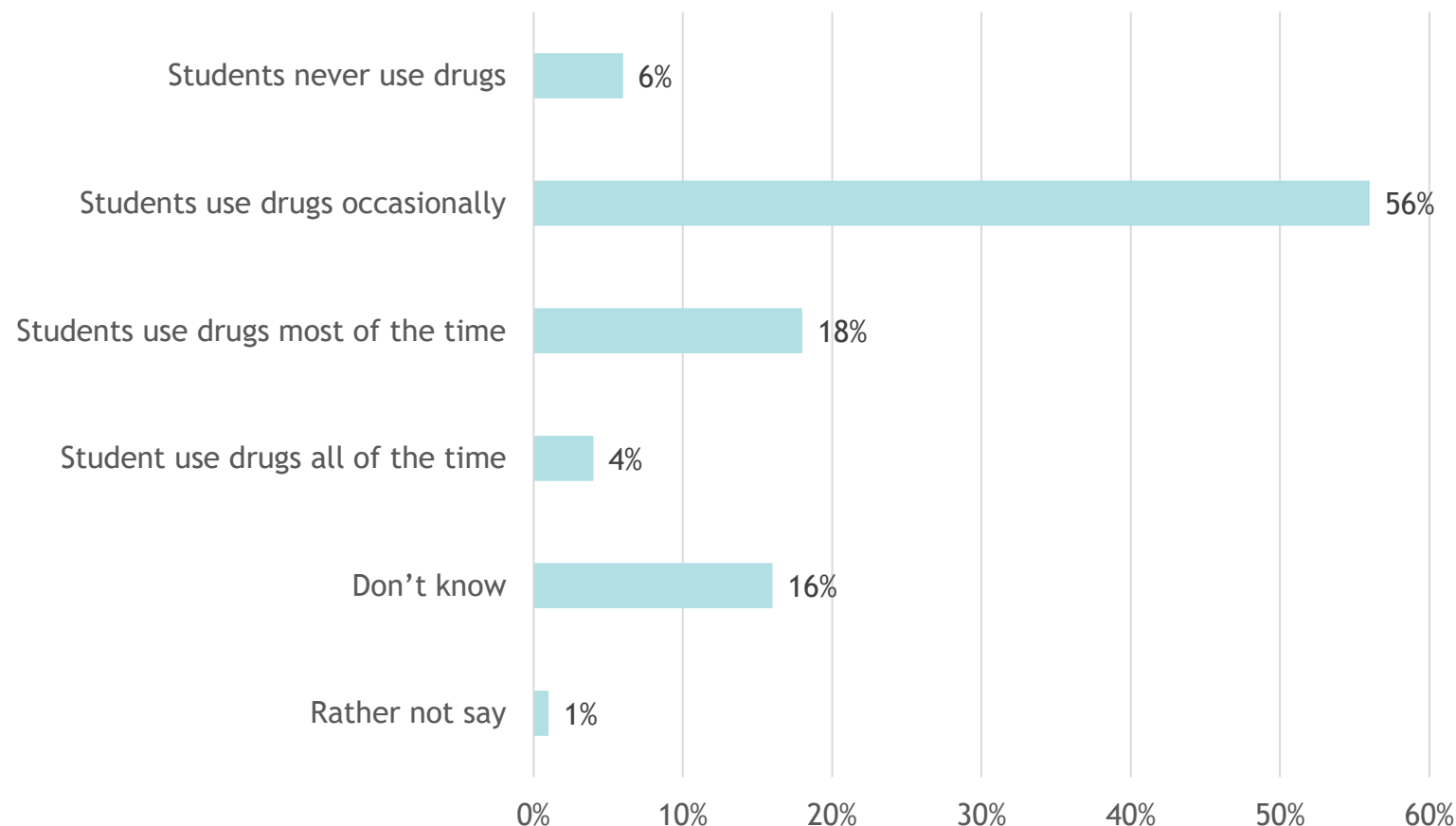
When asked to reflect on their perceptions of student drug use before starting university/college, over half of respondents say they thought students used drugs occasionally.



- Respondents identifying as men are less likely than women to say they thought students used drugs most of the time prior to starting their studies
- Respondents who identify as disabled are more likely to say they had the perception that students used drugs 'most of the time' prior to starting their studies compared to those who do not consider themselves disabled

Q. Please select the phrase which best describes your perceptions: Before starting at university/college, did you believe that students... [Base: 1269 Balance: No response]

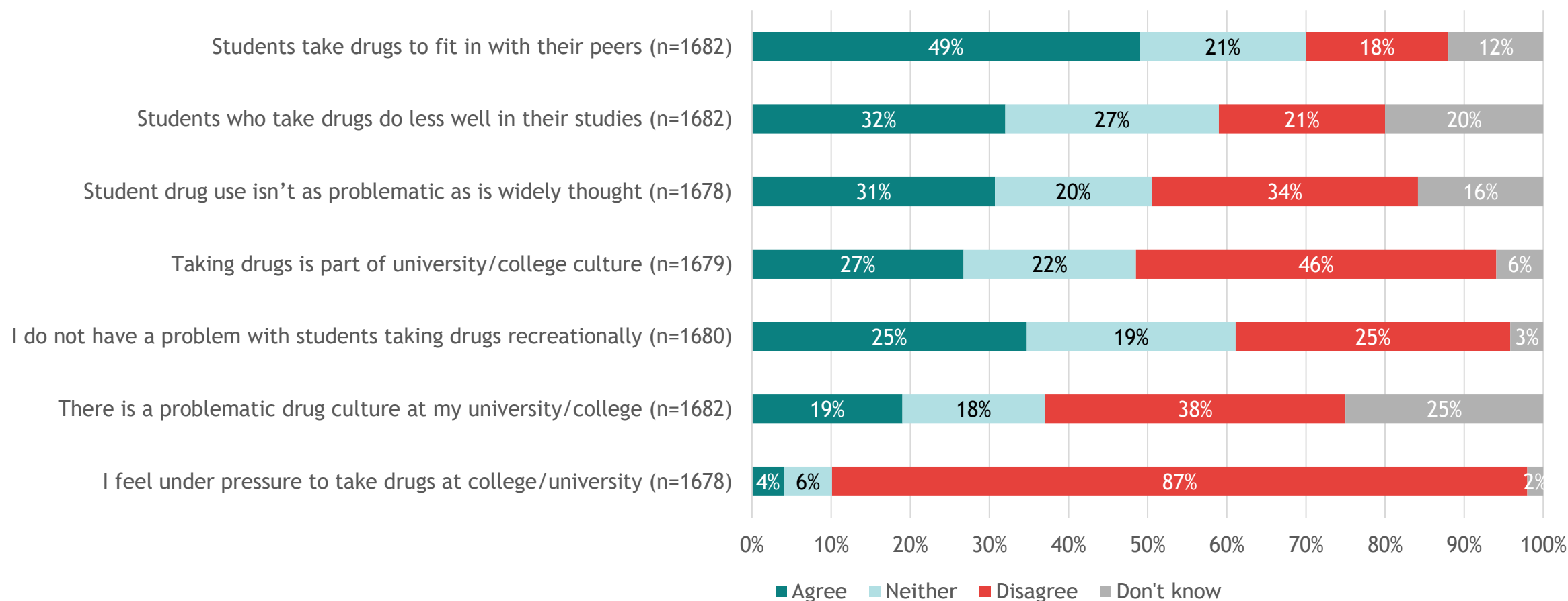
This is similar now they're at university/ college. Over half of respondents, based on their experiences, say students use drugs occasionally.



- Undergraduate respondents are most likely to say that now they're at university, they think students use drugs most of the time, compared to postgraduate or PhD students.
- Women respondents are more likely than to say that now they're at university, they think students use drugs most of the time, compared to men.

Q. And now you're a student at university/college, which of the following best matches your experiences of drug use? [Base: 1683 Balance: No response]

Nearly half of students take drugs to fit in with their peers, however the majority do not feel pressured to take drugs at university/ college. Over a quarter of students say taking drugs is part of university/college culture, and one fifth say the drug culture is problematic.



Q. To what extent, if at all, do you agree with the following statements? [Base: c.1680 Balance: No response, rather not say]

## Attitudes and experiences towards drug use at university or college vary according to respondent characteristics...

### Taking drugs is part of university/college culture

- Respondents who identify as disabled are more likely to agree compared to those that don't identify in this way
- Undergraduates are more likely to agree than postgraduates or PhD students.

### Students take drugs to fit in with their peers

- PhD students are more likely to agree than postgraduates or undergraduates.
- Women respondents are more likely to agree compared to men respondents

### I do not have a problem with students taking drugs recreationally

- Undergraduates are more likely to agree than postgraduates or PhD students.
- UK and EU respondents studying in the UK are more likely to agree than international student respondents from outside the UK.

### Students who take drugs do less well in their studies

- Respondents who identify as disabled are more likely to agree compared to those that don't identify in this way.

### There is a problematic drug culture at my university/college

- Undergraduates are more likely to agree than postgraduates or PhD students.
- Women and men are more likely to agree than non-binary respondents.

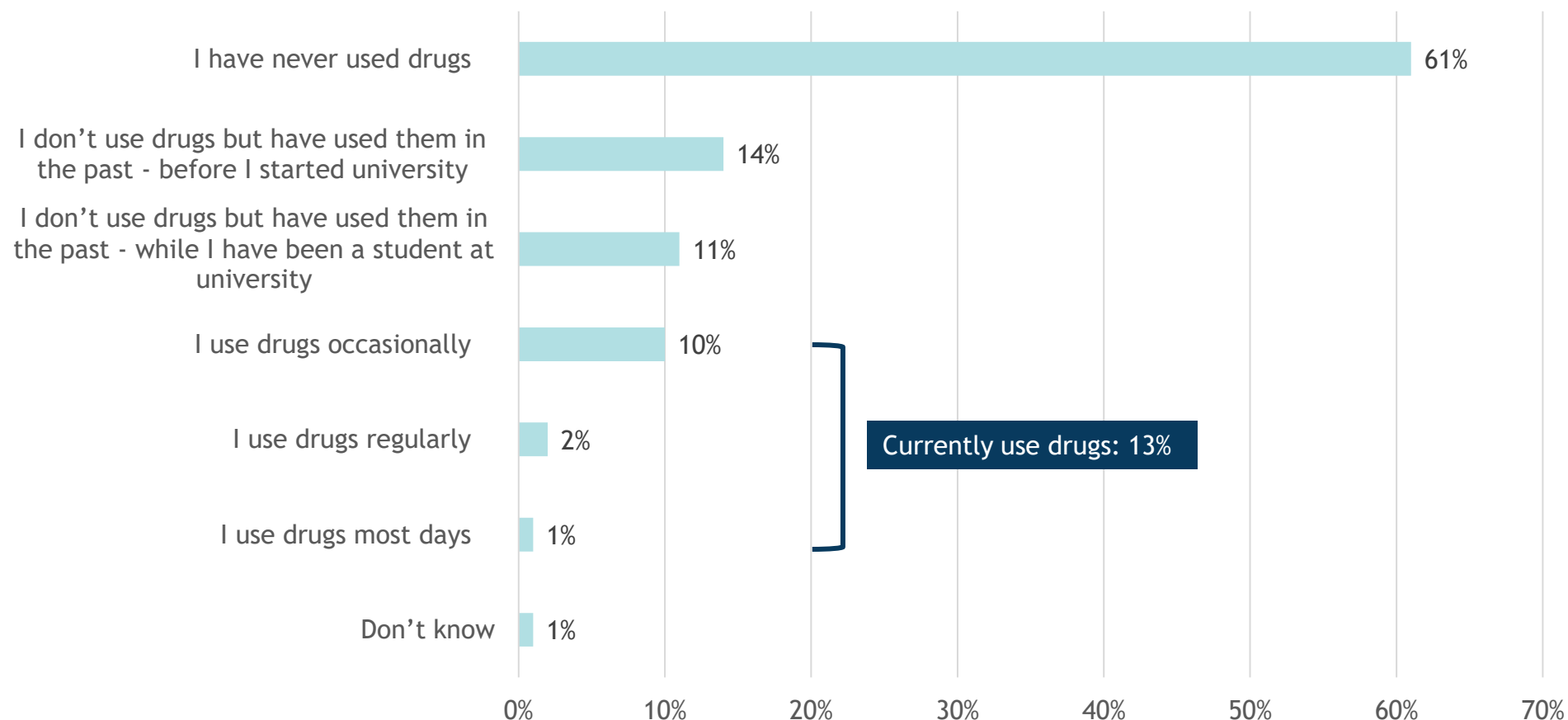
### Student drug use isn't as problematic as is widely thought

- Respondents who are men and non-binary are more likely to agree than women respondents
- UK respondents are more likely to agree than international student respondents
- Undergraduates and PhD students are more likely to agree than postgraduate students.

Q. To what extent, if at all, do you agree with the following statements?

# Student drug use

Three quarters of respondents do not currently use drugs. 13% say they are using drugs currently, with 1% using drugs most days.



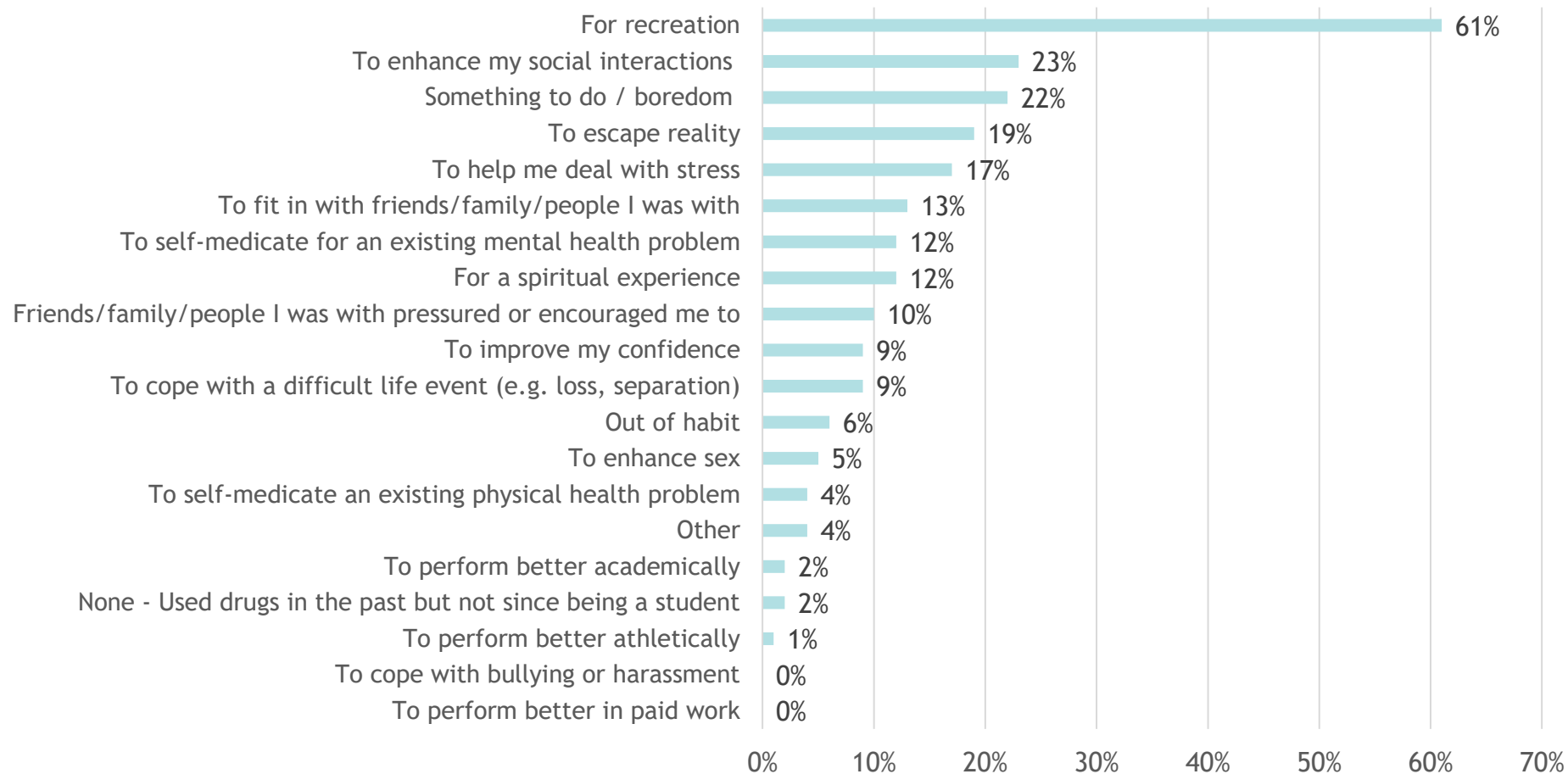
Do not currently  
use drugs: 86%

Currently use drugs: 13%

- International students from the EU are more likely to say they use drugs occasionally than UK respondents.
- Respondents who identify as disabled are more likely to say they use drugs occasionally or regularly compared to respondents who don't identify in this way.

Q. Which of the following best describes your current frequency of drug use? [Base:1695 Balance: No response]

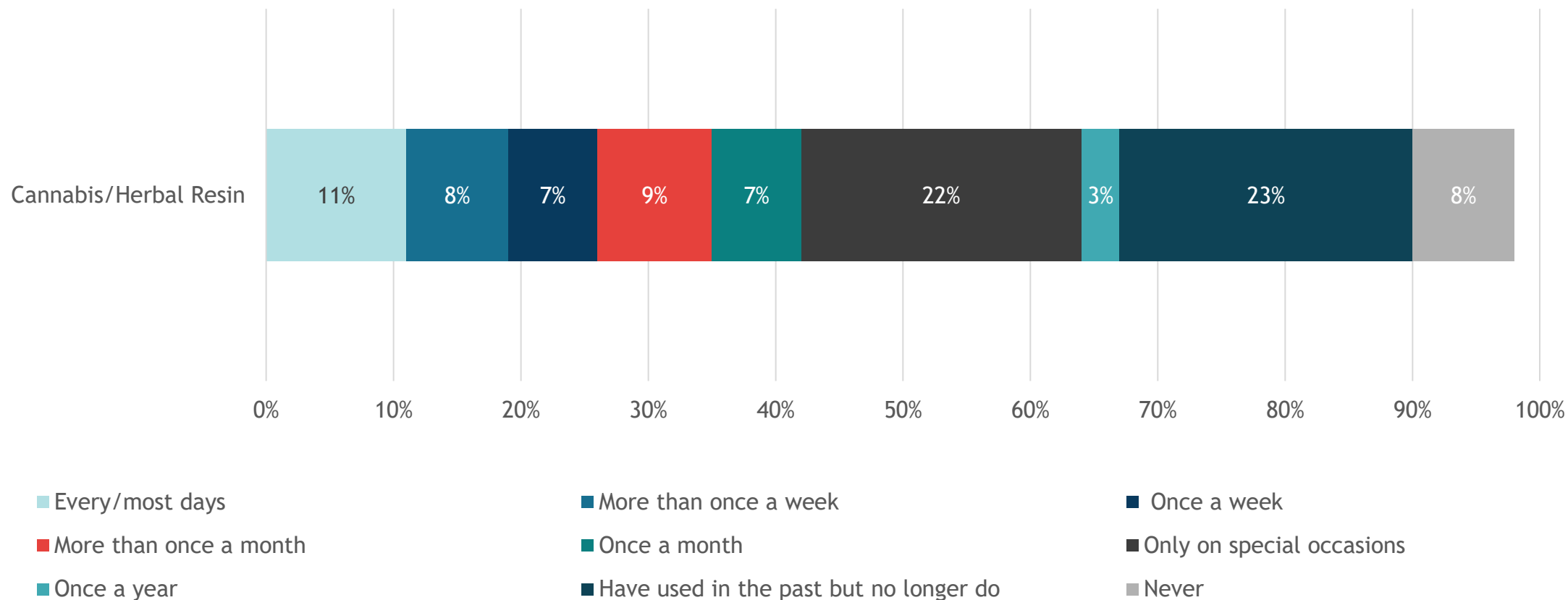
Over half (57%) of respondents who said they currently use, or have used drugs in the past whilst they were students, say they do so for recreation.



- Postgraduates are more likely to have used drugs for recreation than undergraduates and PhD students.
- UK students and international students from the EU are more likely to have used drugs for recreation than non-EU international students.
- Disabled students are more likely to self-medicate for an existing physical or mental health problem, compared to those who don't identify in this way.

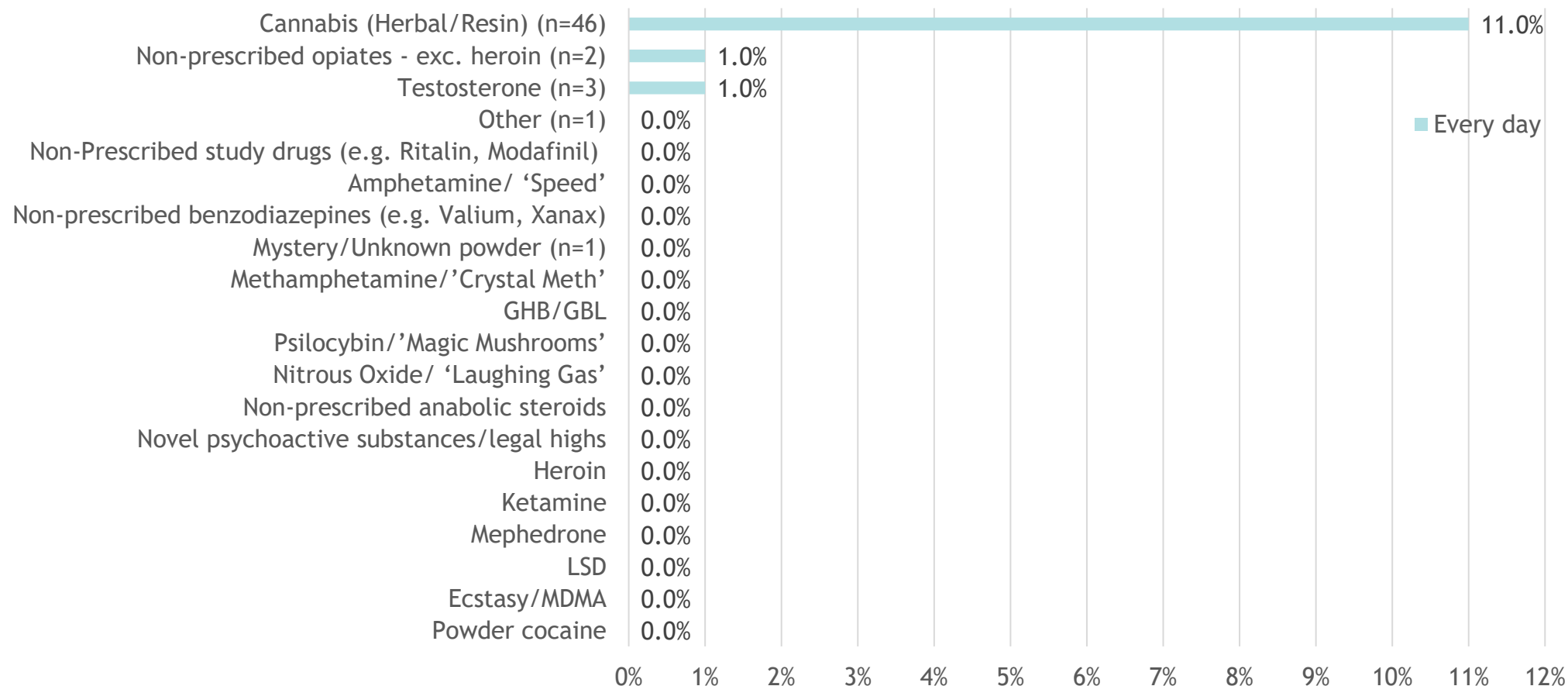
Q. Which of the following best describes why you use / have used drugs? [Base: 402 Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

Cannabis is the most frequently used drug reported by respondents who currently use or have previously used drugs. One fifth of students use cannabis during special occasions.



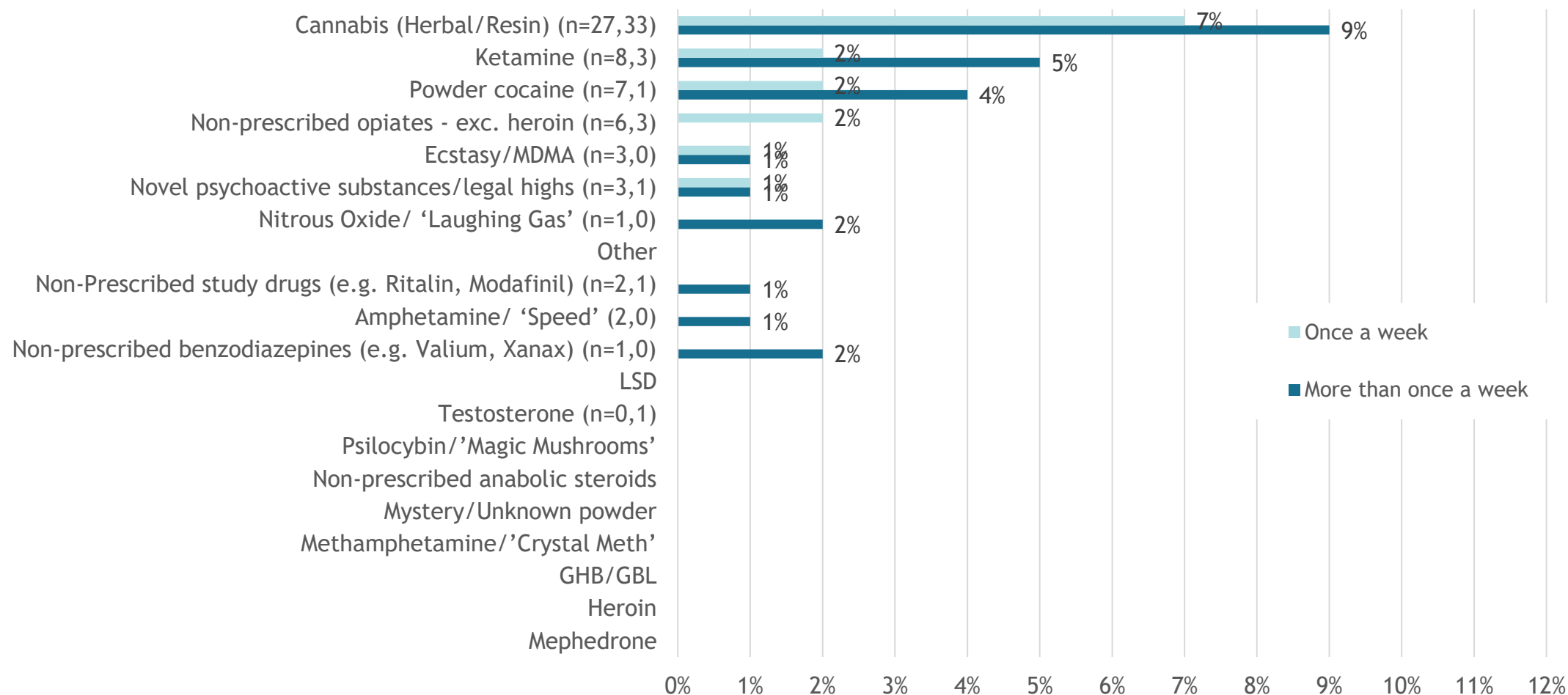
Q. Still thinking about your time at university/college, which of the following best describes your frequency of particular drug use? [Base: 405 Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

When looking at drugs that are used **every day**, cannabis (11%) is the most frequently reported drug, followed by non-prescribed opiates (excluding heroin) (1%).



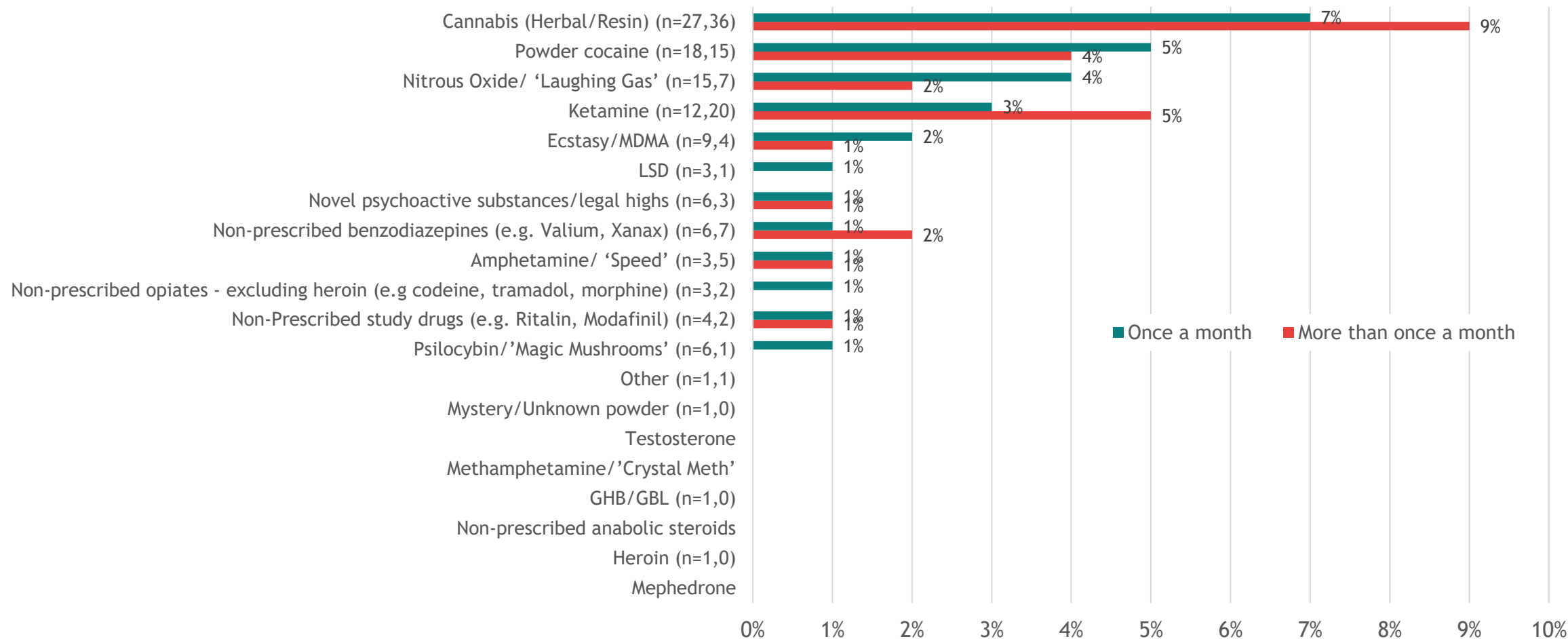
Q. Still thinking about your time at university/college, which of the following best describes your frequency of particular drug use? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

Cannabis is also the most frequently used drug for those that use less than every day but **up to once a week (7%)**. Ketamine, powder cocaine and non-prescribed opiates (excluding heroin) (2%) are the second most frequently used drug on this basis.



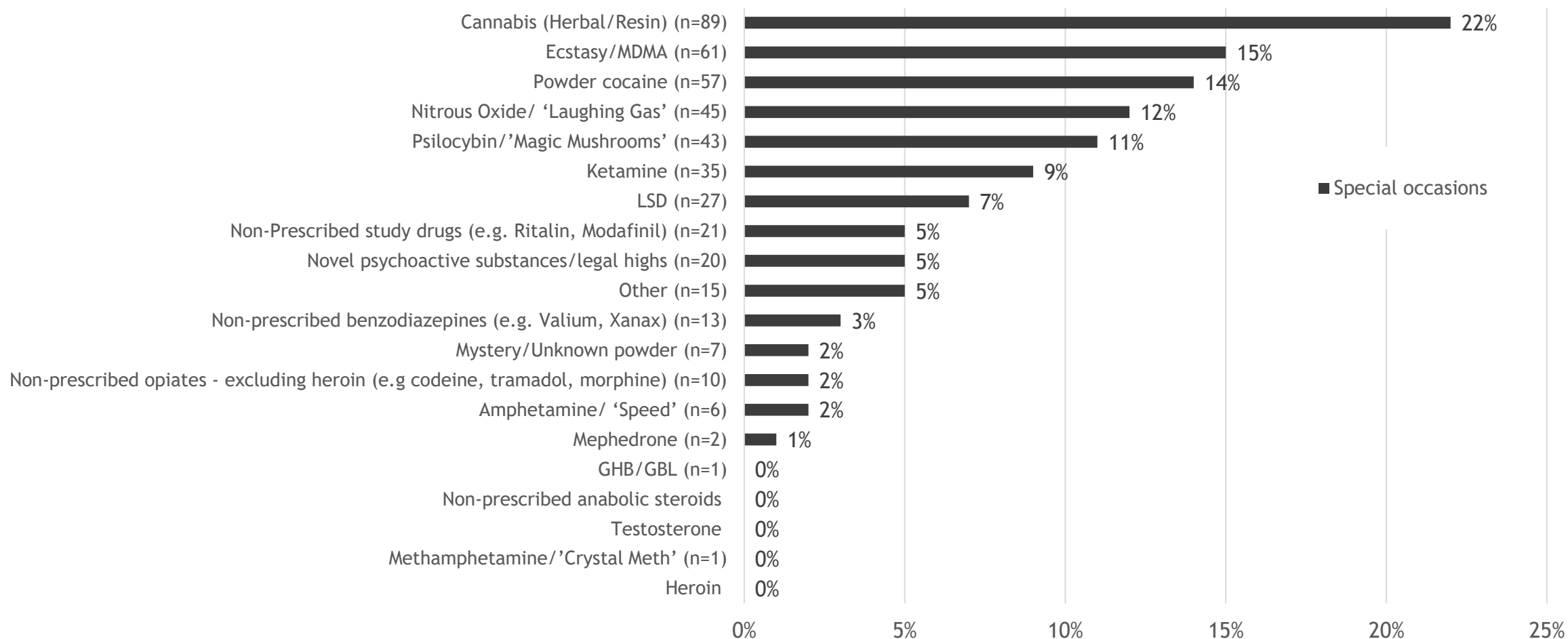
Q. Still thinking about your time at university/college, which of the following best describes your frequency of particular drug use? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

Cannabis (7%) is the most frequently reported drug on an 'once a month' basis, followed by powder cocaine (5%) and nitrous oxide/ 'laughing gas' (4%).



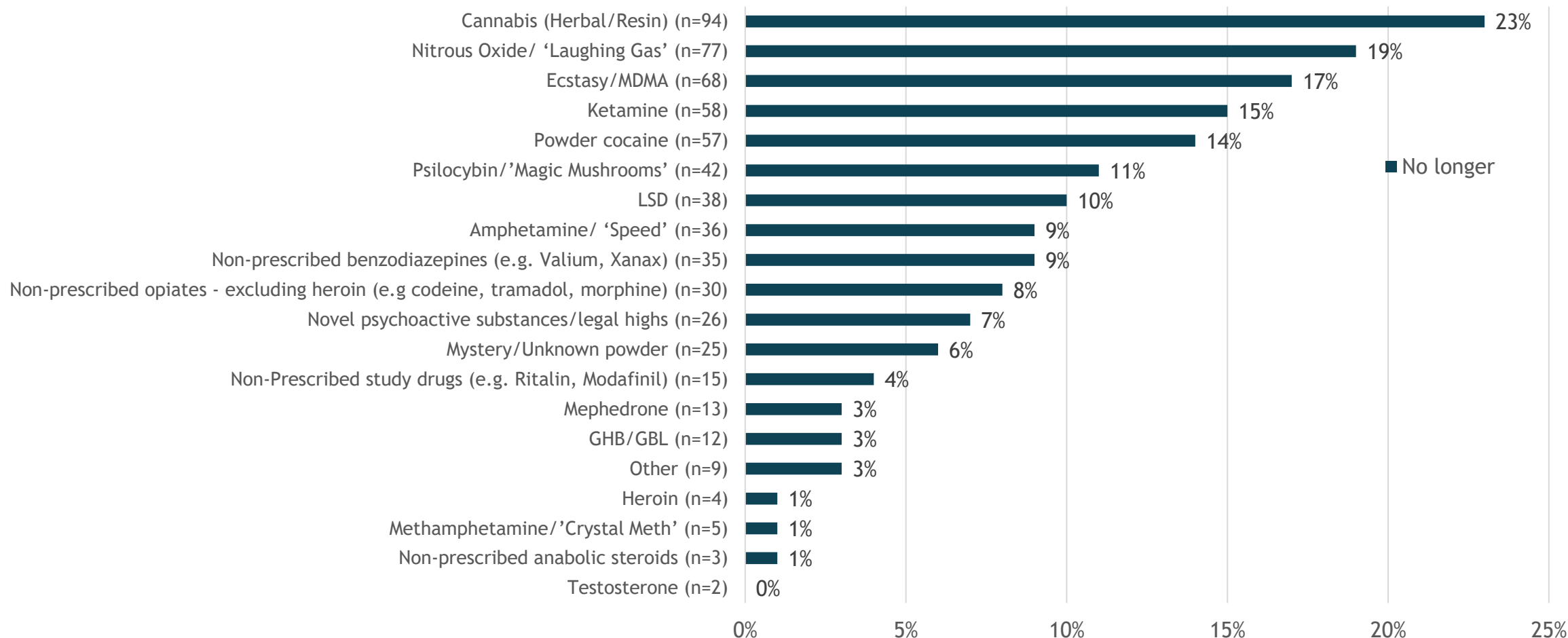
Q. Still thinking about your time at university/college, which of the following best describes your frequency of particular drug use? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

One fifth of those that currently use or have used whilst a student say they use cannabis on 'special occasions'. 14% say they use ecstasy on this basis.



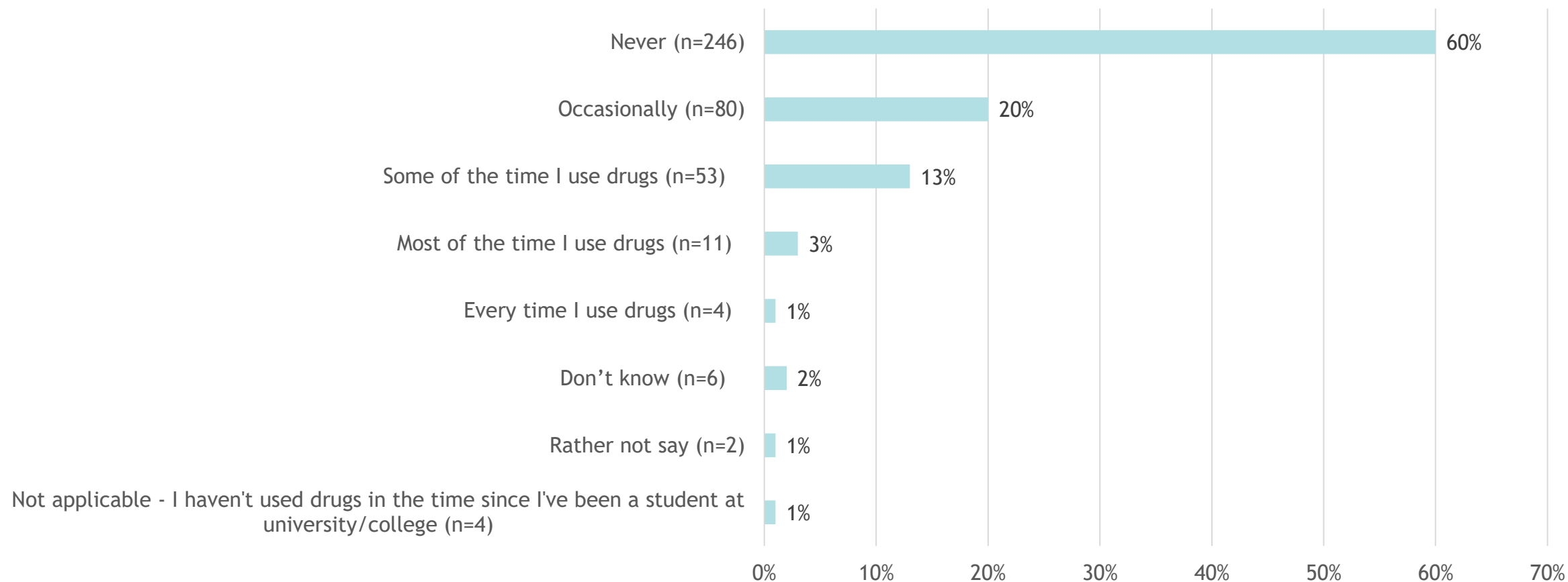
Q. Still thinking about your time at university/college, which of the following best describes your frequency of particular drug use? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

Over one fifth of respondents who said they currently use, or have used drugs in the past whilst they were students say they have used cannabis in the past but no longer do. 19% say this about nitrous oxide/ 'laughing gas'.



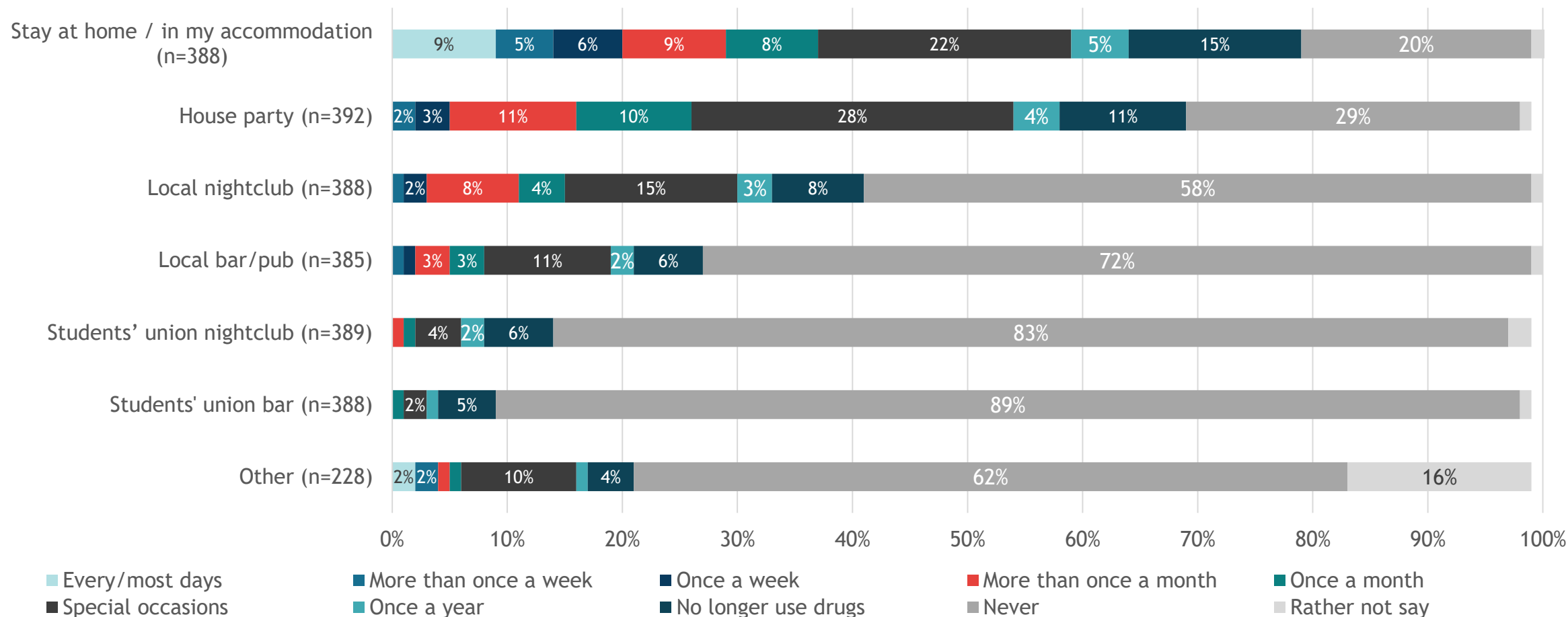
Q. Still thinking about your time at university/college, which of the following best describes your frequency of particular drug use? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response, and never have used drugs]

Over half of respondents who currently use or have used drugs whilst a student say they have never used two or more drugs at the same time. One fifth of these respondents use two or more drugs occasionally.



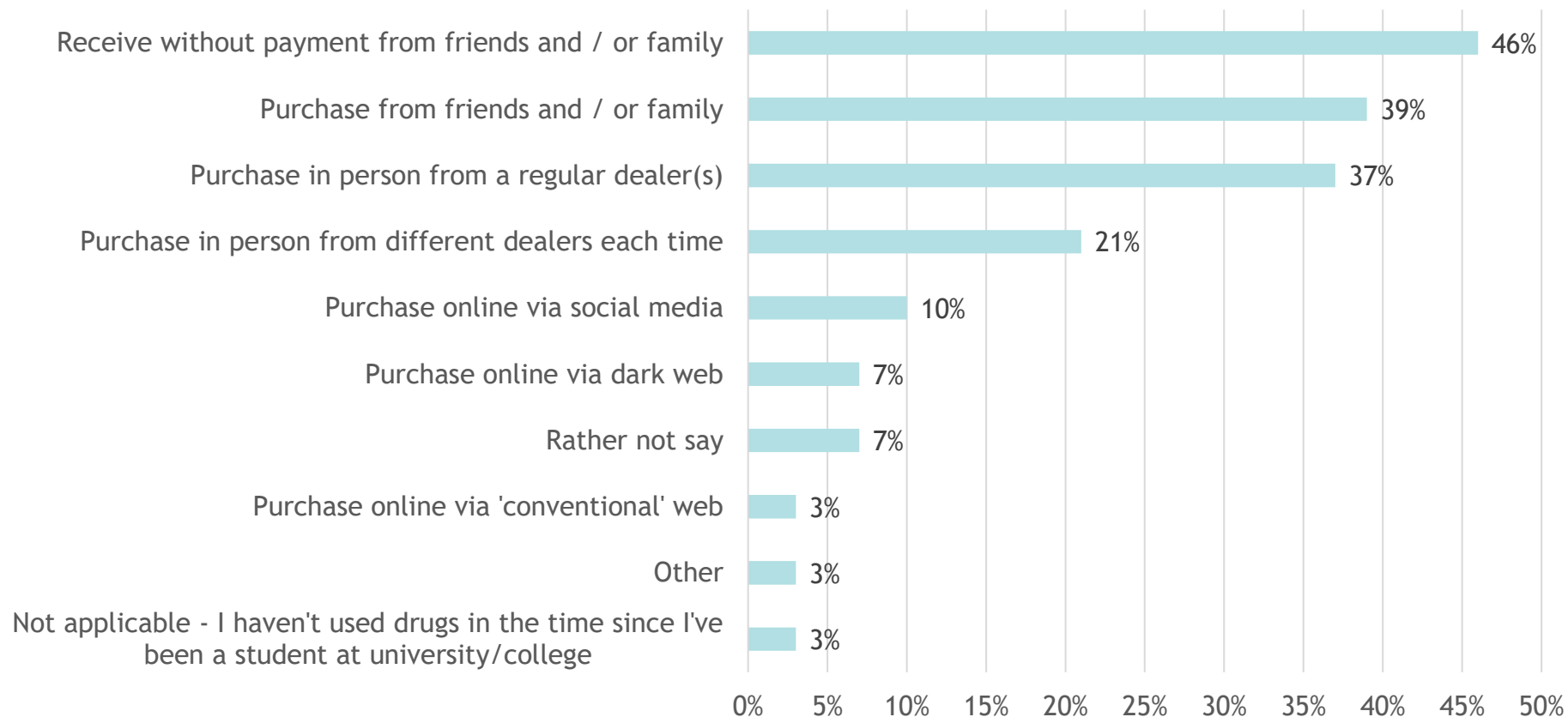
Q. Thinking about your time at university, approximately how often, if at all, do you use two or more drugs at one time? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response and never have used drugs]

Drug use is most prevalent in respondents' homes or accommodation with over one third of respondents saying they use drugs here up to once a month or more often. 28% of respondents say they use drugs on special occasions at house parties.



Q. Thinking of the time since you have been at university, approximately how often do you tend to take drugs in each of the following places? [Base: see graph, Balance: No response, rather not say and never have used drugs]

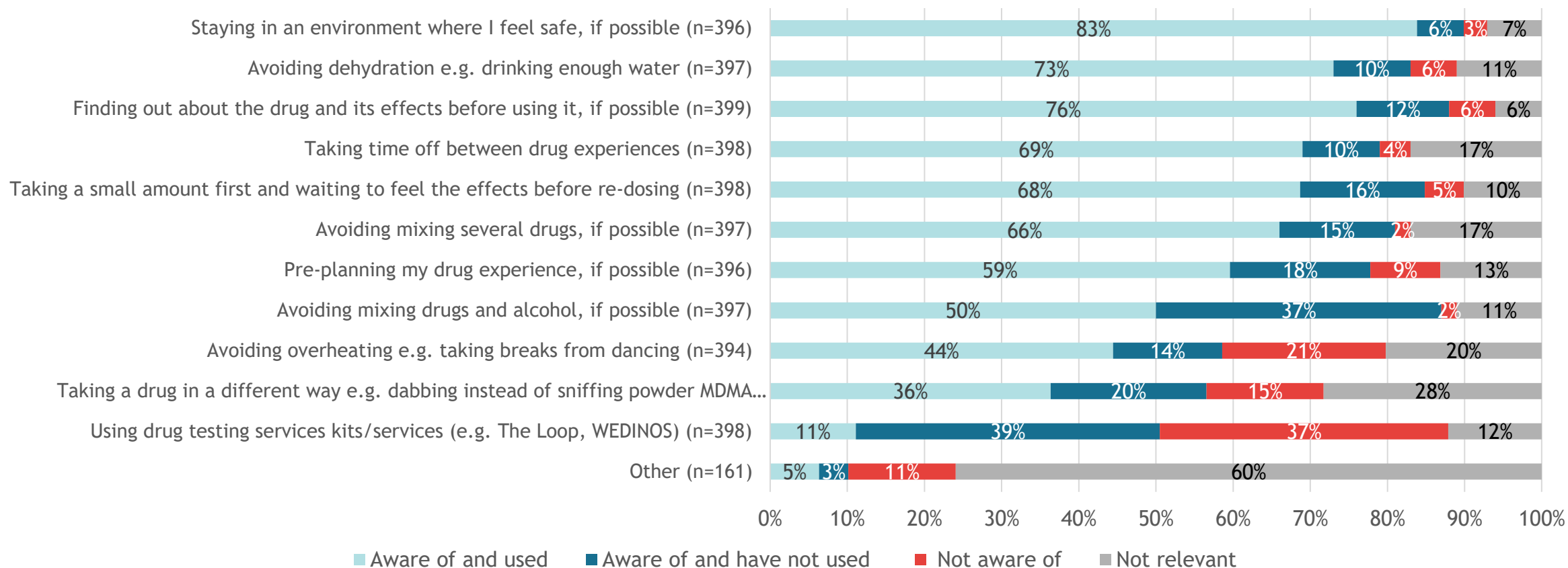
The most common method of procuring drugs is through friends/family without payment (46%), followed by purchases from friends or family (39%).



- Respondents who are international students are more likely compared to UK students to say they receive drugs without payment from friends and / or family
- Men respondents are more likely to purchase drugs from a regular dealer, whereas women are more likely to purchase from family/friends.

Q. Thinking of your experiences since you started university, which of the following describes where or how you acquire drugs? [Base: 399 Balance: No response, other and never have used drugs]

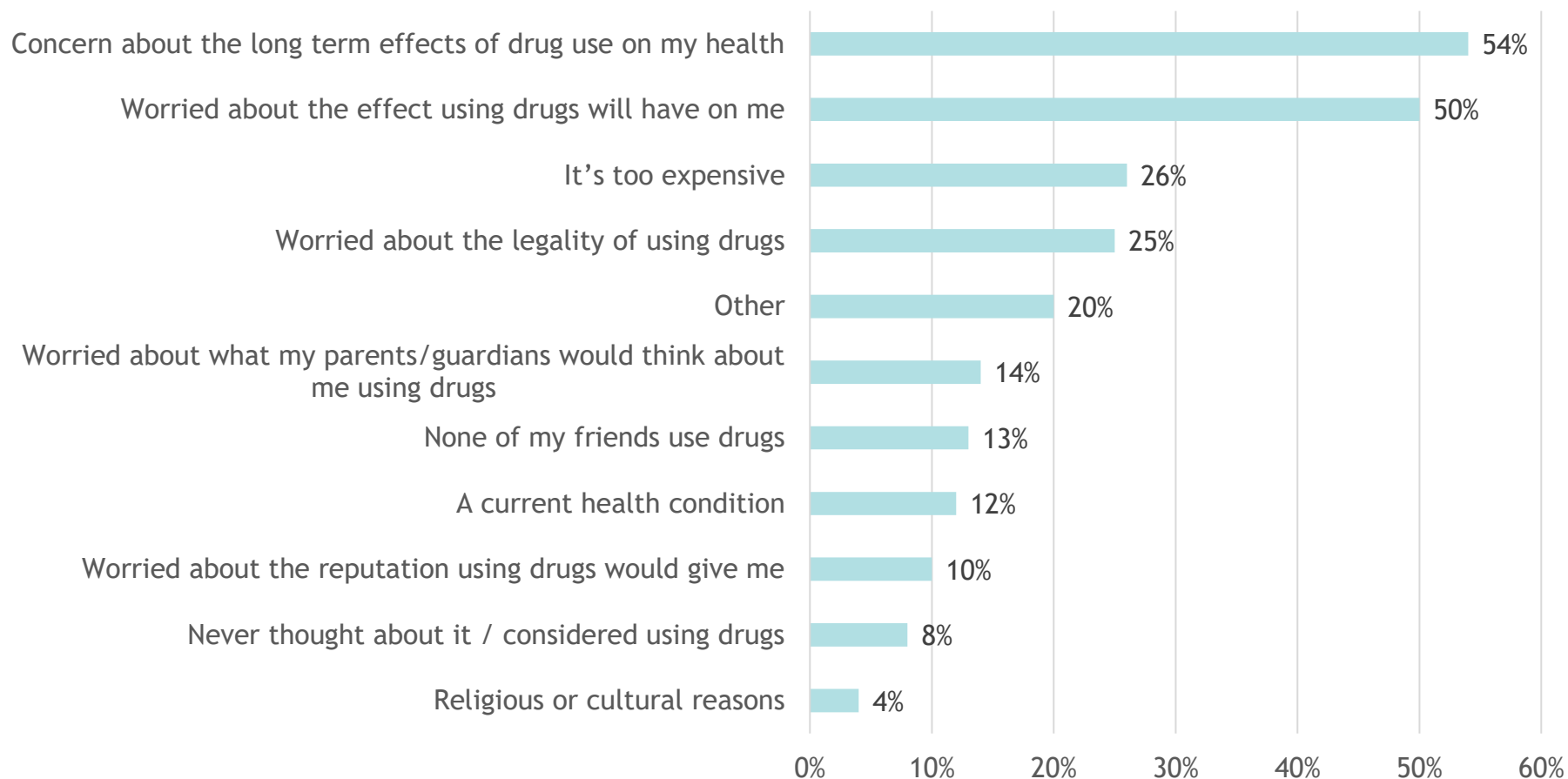
The most common approaches used by respondents to reduce harm when taking drugs include staying in a safe environment (83%), finding out about drugs before using them (76%) and avoiding dehydration (73%).



Q. Which of the following steps, if any, are you aware of/do you take to reduce the potential harm caused by taking drugs? [Base: See graph Balance: No response, never have used drugs and rather not say]

# Non-drug users

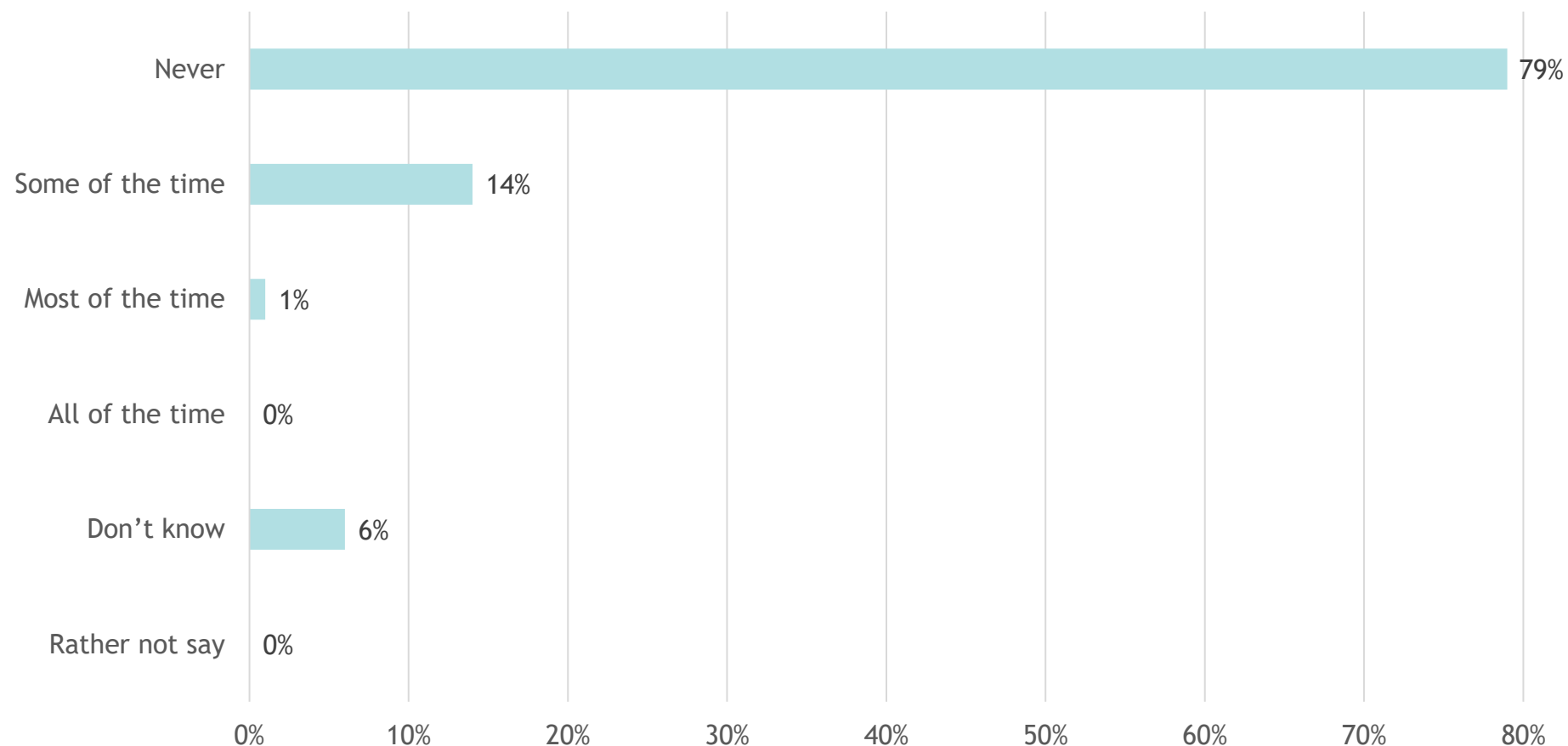
For those that don't currently and never have used drugs, half are concerned about long term health impacts and the effect drugs will have on them.



- International respondents from outside the EU are more likely to state that concern about long-term effects has influenced their decision not to use drugs than UK or international respondents from within the EU.
- PhD students are more likely to say they have never considered taking drugs than undergraduates or postgraduates.

[What would you say are your main reasons for not using drugs or stopping using drugs? Base: 401 Balance: No response, and currently use drugs]

Most non-drug users (79%) say they have never felt pressure to use drugs when socialising with friends at university.

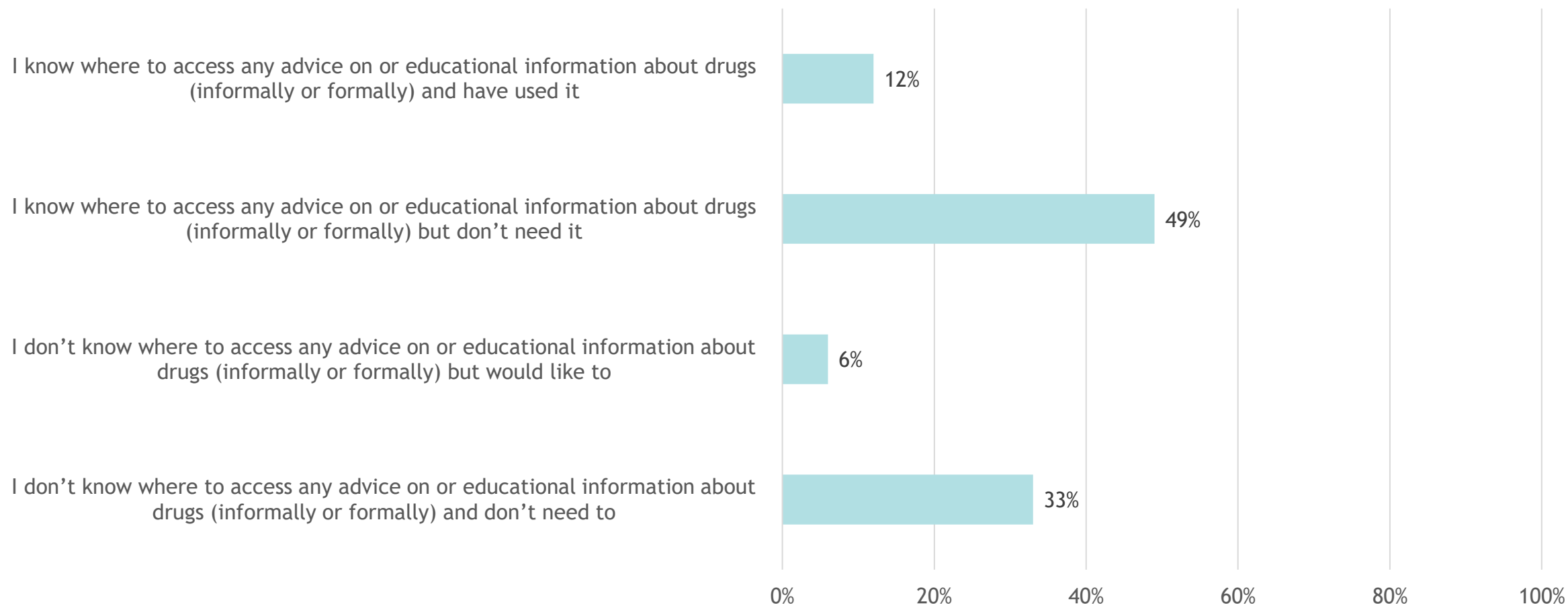


- UK respondents are more likely to say they never feel pressure to use drugs when socialising compared to international respondents.
- Women are more likely to say they feel pressure to use drugs while socialising some of the time, compared to men.

[Q. Thinking about the most recent university term, when you were socialising with other students, how often did you feel that your friends expected you to use drugs? Base: 402 Balance: No response / Currently use drugs]

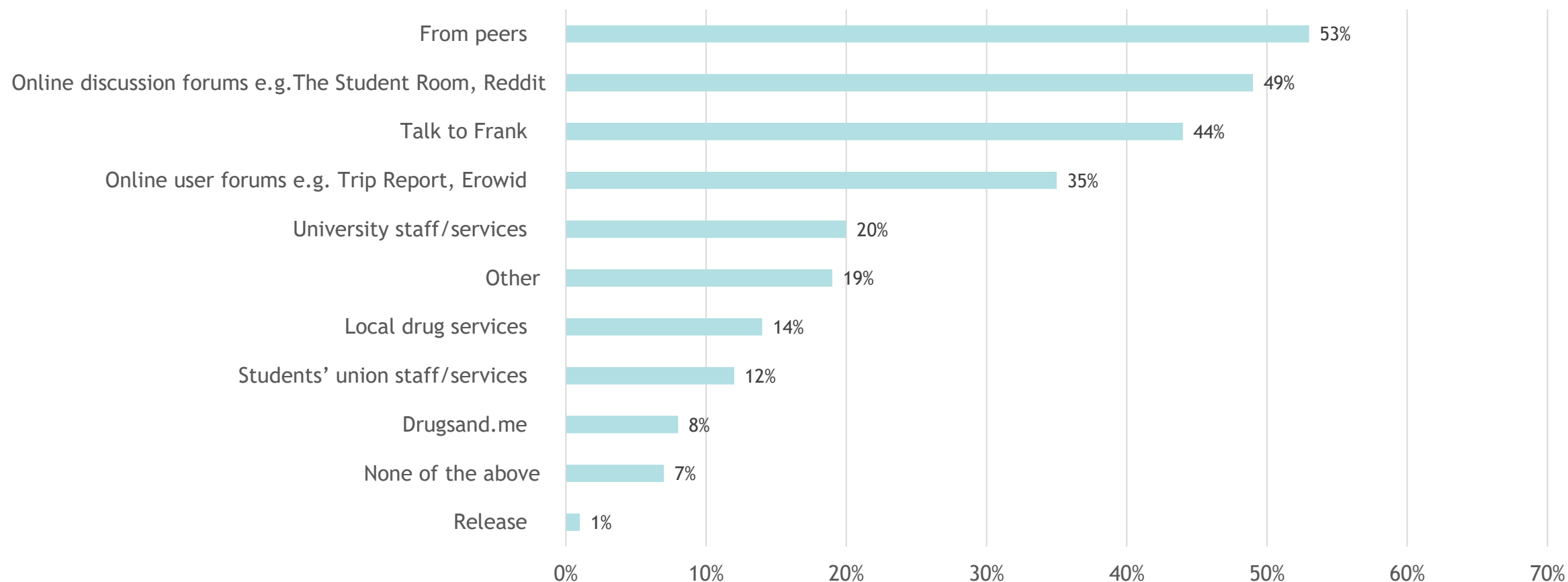
# Drug advice and support

Nearly half of respondents say they know where to access advice and educational information about drugs, either formally or informally, but don't need it. 6% would like advice or information but don't know how to access it.



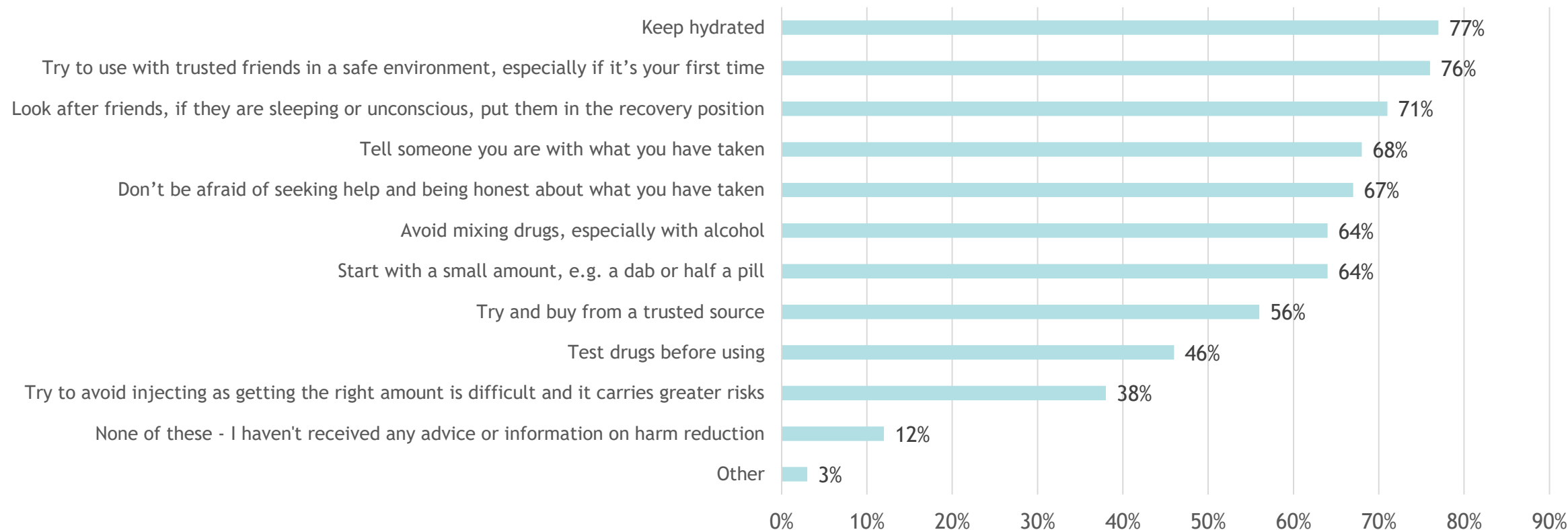
Q. Which of the following statements best describes your access to advice on drugs? Base: 1601 Balance: No response]

Of those who know where to access advice and information about drugs and have used it, over half gain advice and information from peers. Online discussion forums also highly sought after(49%).



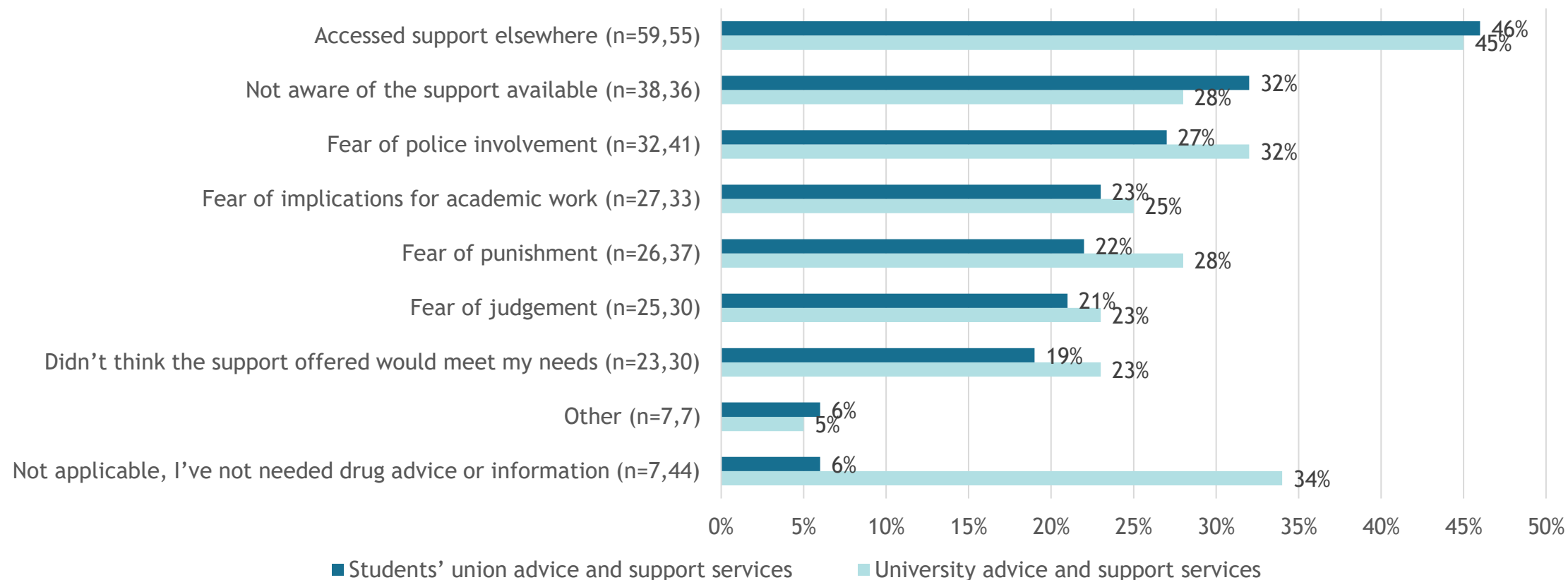
Q. Which of the following best describes where you access drug advice and information? Base: 197 Balance: No response, and not aware of drug advice and information

Of those who know where to access advice and information about drugs and have used it, most respondents say harm reduction strategies covered include keeping hydrated (77%), using with trusted friends (76%), looking out for friends (71%) and avoiding mixing of drugs (64%).



Q. Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies aimed at trying to reduce the harm that people do to themselves or others from their drug use. Thinking about your experiences of accessing drug advice and information, did it include any of the following harm reduction actions? Base: 181 Balance: No response / Not accessed drug advice or information

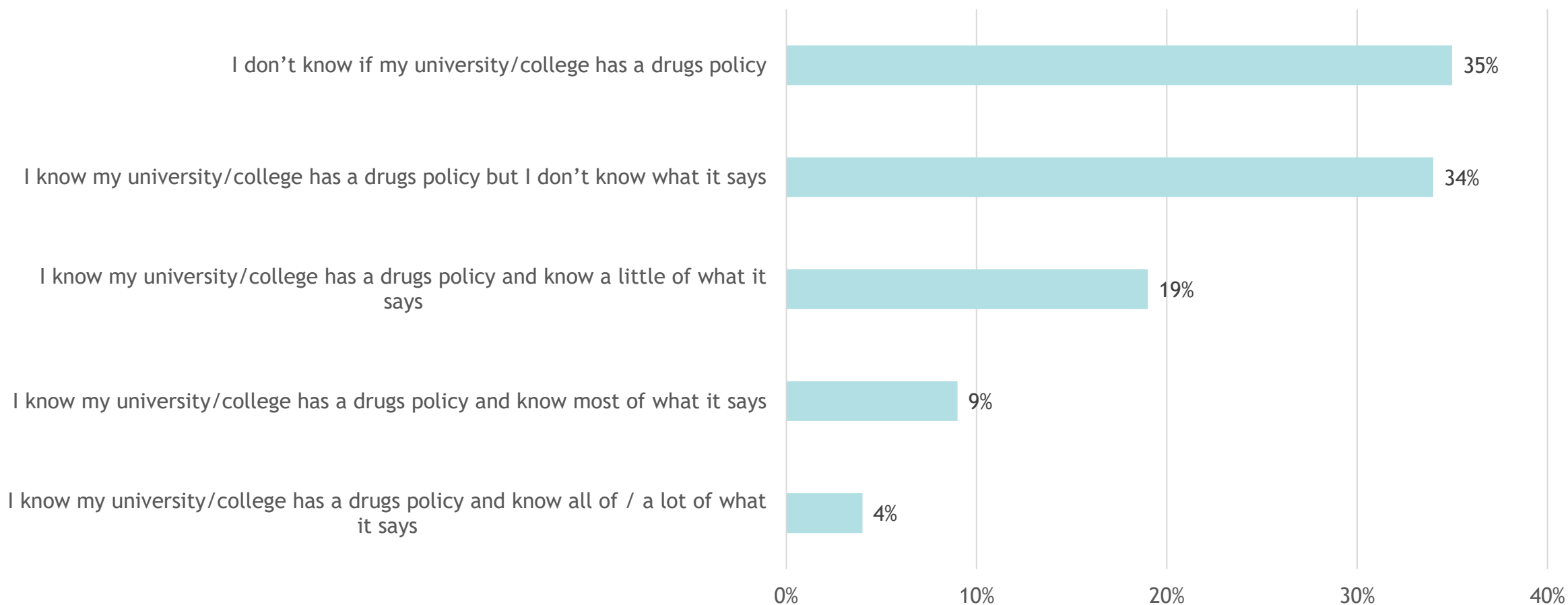
Reasons given by respondents who had accessed drug advice and information but not those offered by their place of study include not needing advice and information, or not thinking the support would meet their needs. Fear towards the university support services is higher than that of the student's union.



Q. You said you have used drug information and advice services but not those offered by your university or students' union. Which of the following reasons best describes why you haven't used drug information and advice services offered by your university or students' union? [Base: see graph Balance: No response and not accessed drug advice and information]

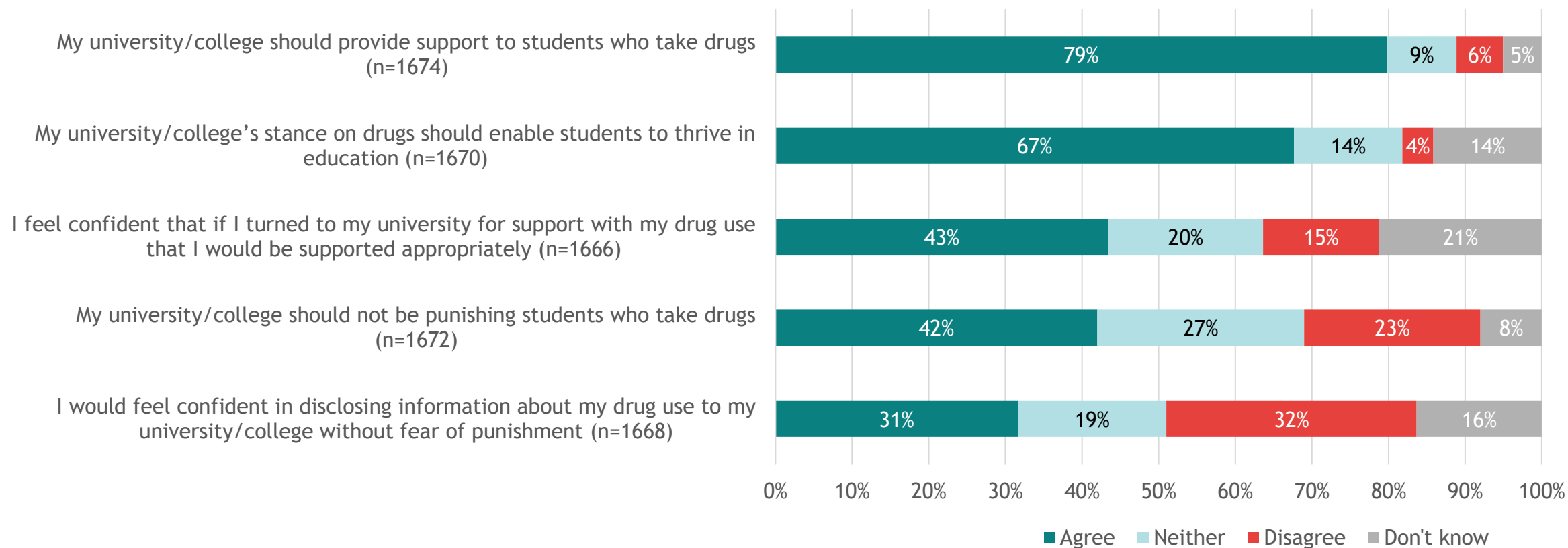
# University/college drug policy

Respondents show low levels of awareness of the details of their institution's drugs policy. Over one third of students do not know if their institution has a drugs policy.



[Q. How much, if anything, do you know about the policy/policies your university/college has on drugs? Base: 1696 Balance: No response]

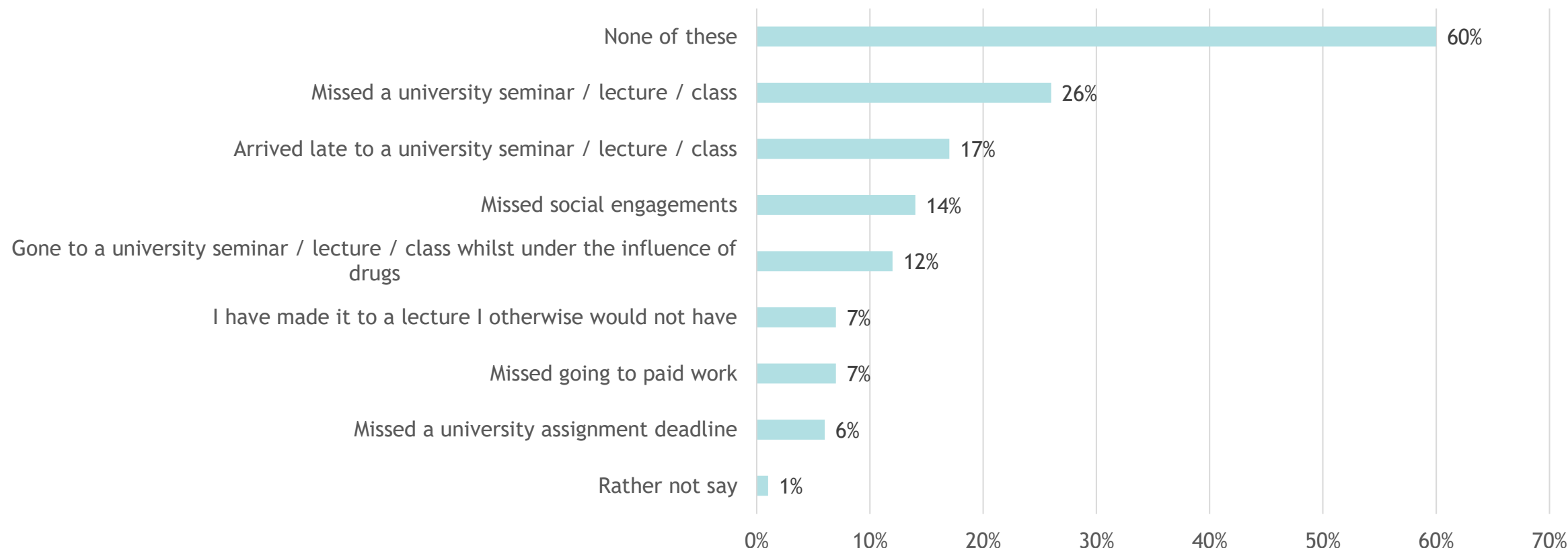
43% of respondents feel confident that their university would deal with their drug use appropriately if they required support. A similar proportion agree their institution should not be punishing students who take drugs. The majority of students agree that their institution should provide drug support.



Q. To what extent, if at all, do you agree with the following statements? [Base: see graph Balance: No response, rather not say]

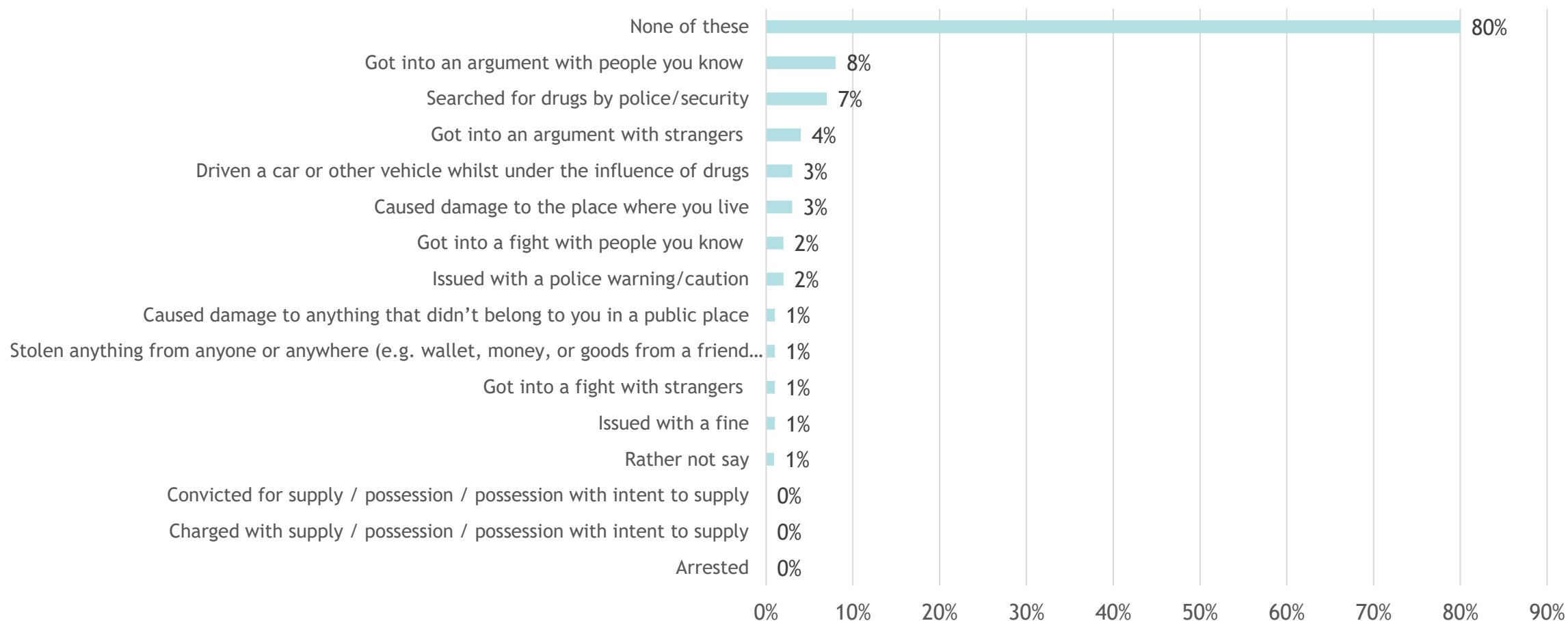
# Impacts of drug use

Amongst respondents who currently or have previously used drugs, the most commonly reported academic impacts are missing (26%) or arriving late (17%) to seminars, lectures or classes. 14% report missing social engagements and 12% report going to a seminar/ lecture or class under the influence.



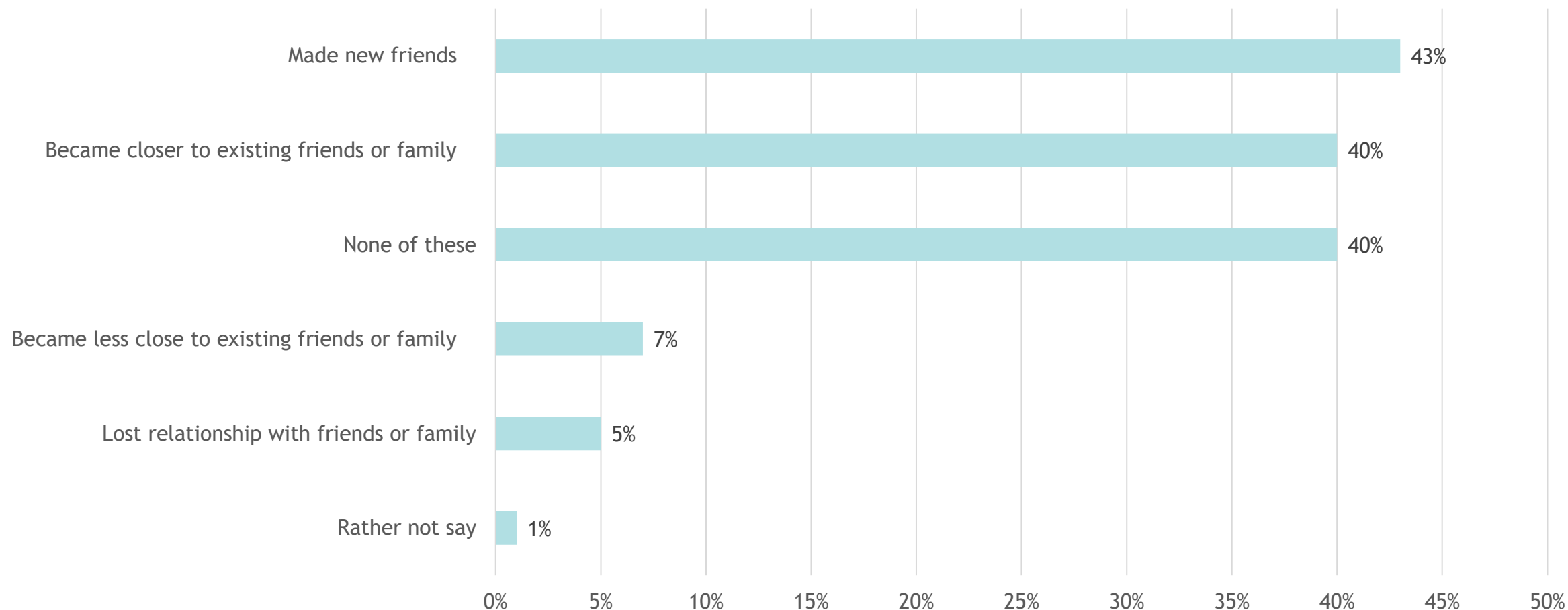
Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university / college during or following taking drugs? {Base: 403 Balance: No response and never used drugs}

Amongst respondents who currently or have previously used drugs, getting into an argument with people they know (8%) and being searched by security/ police are the most commonly reported impacts related to crime and anti-social behaviour.



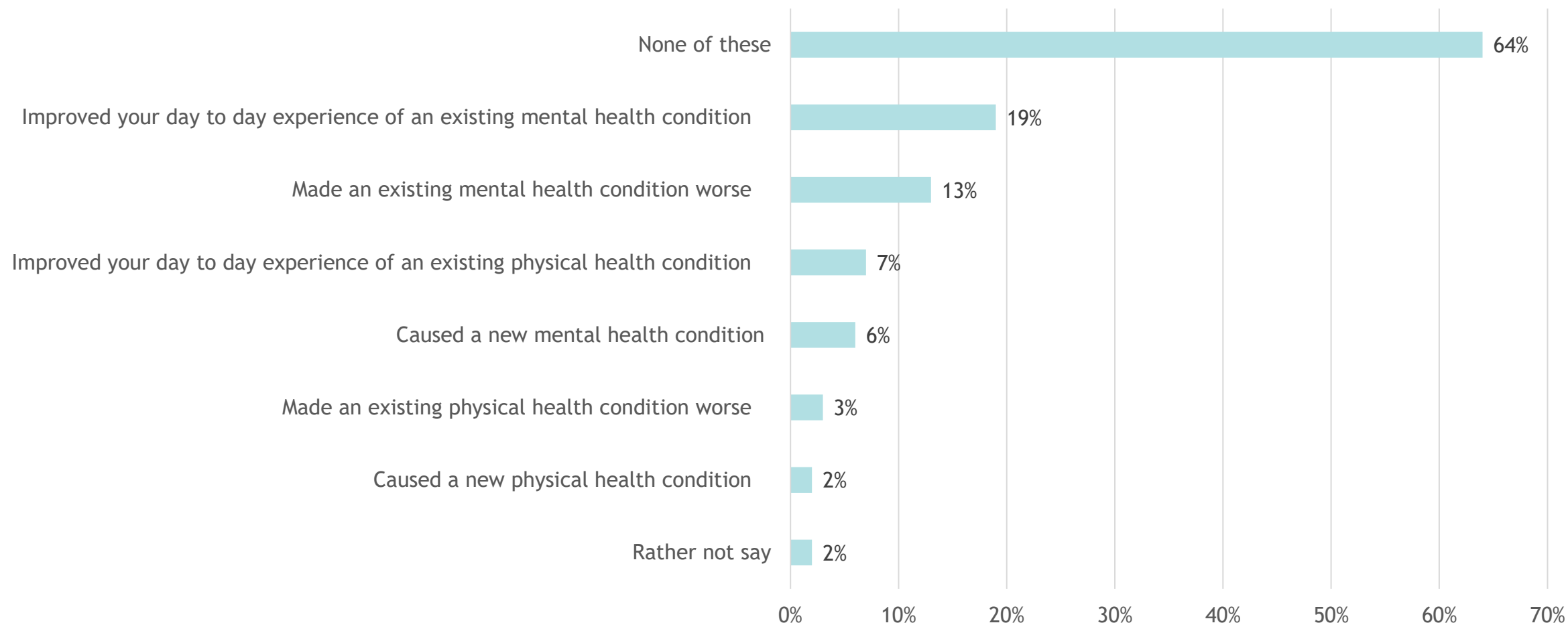
Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university / college during or following taking drugs? [Base: 394 Balance: No response and never used drugs]

Amongst respondents who currently or have previously used drugs, 43% say this has led to making new friends or becoming closer to existing friends or family (40%).



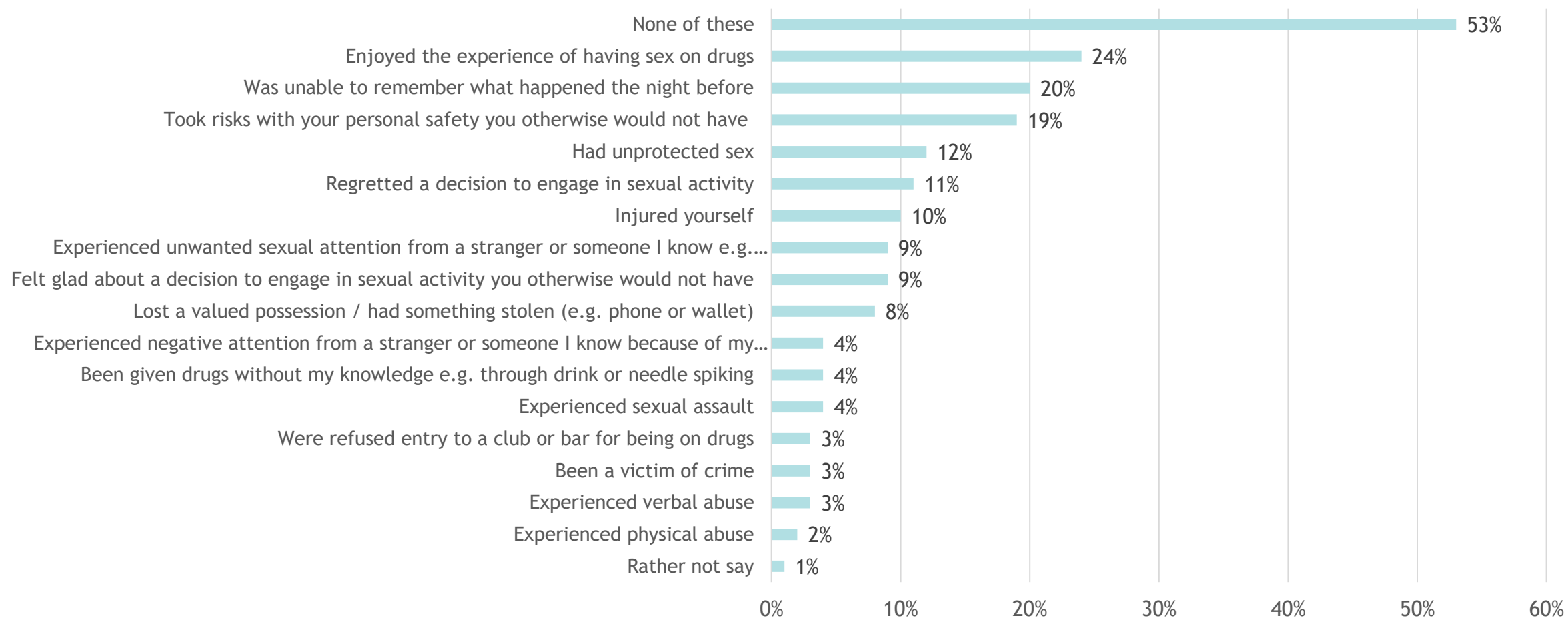
Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university / college during or following taking drugs? [Base: 401 Balance: No response and never used drugs]

Amongst respondents who currently or have previously used drugs, 19% say this use has improved an existing mental health condition. However 13% say it has made a mental health condition worse.



Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university / college during or following taking drugs? [Base: 402 Balance: No response and never used drugs]

Amongst respondents who currently or have previously used drugs, over one fifth say they have enjoyed the experience of having sex on drugs, and say they were unable to remember what happened the night before.

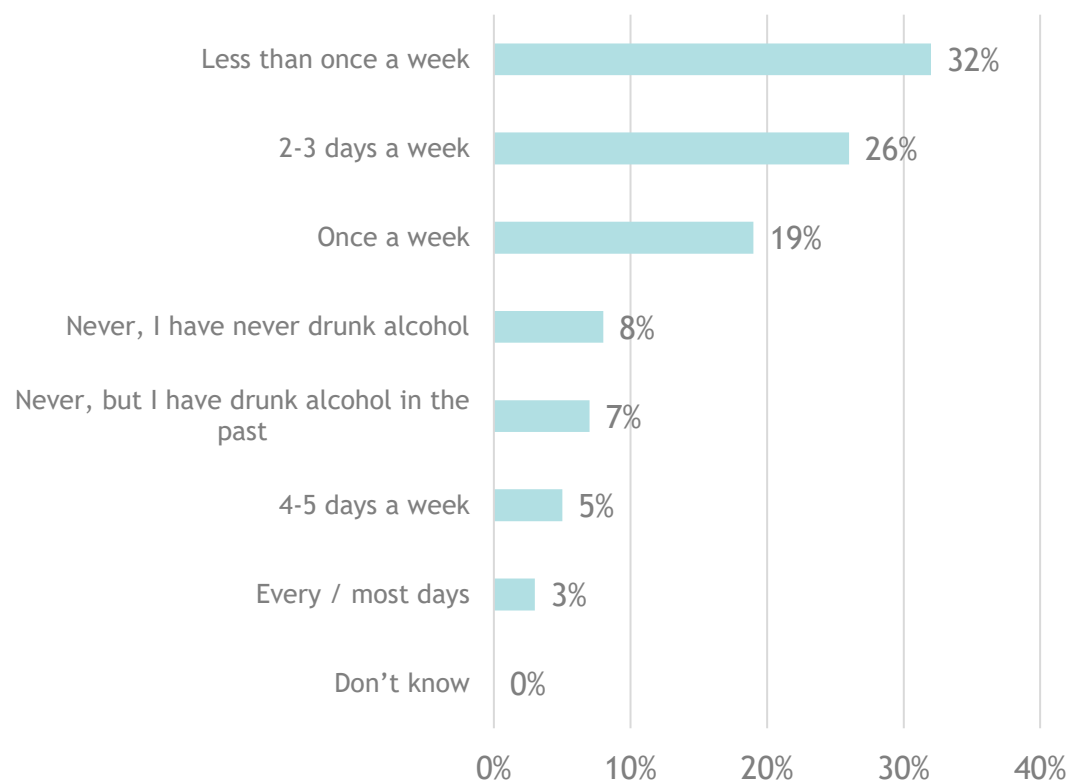


Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university / college during or following taking drugs? [Base: 401 Balance: No response and never used drugs]

# RESEARCH FINDINGS: ALCOHOL

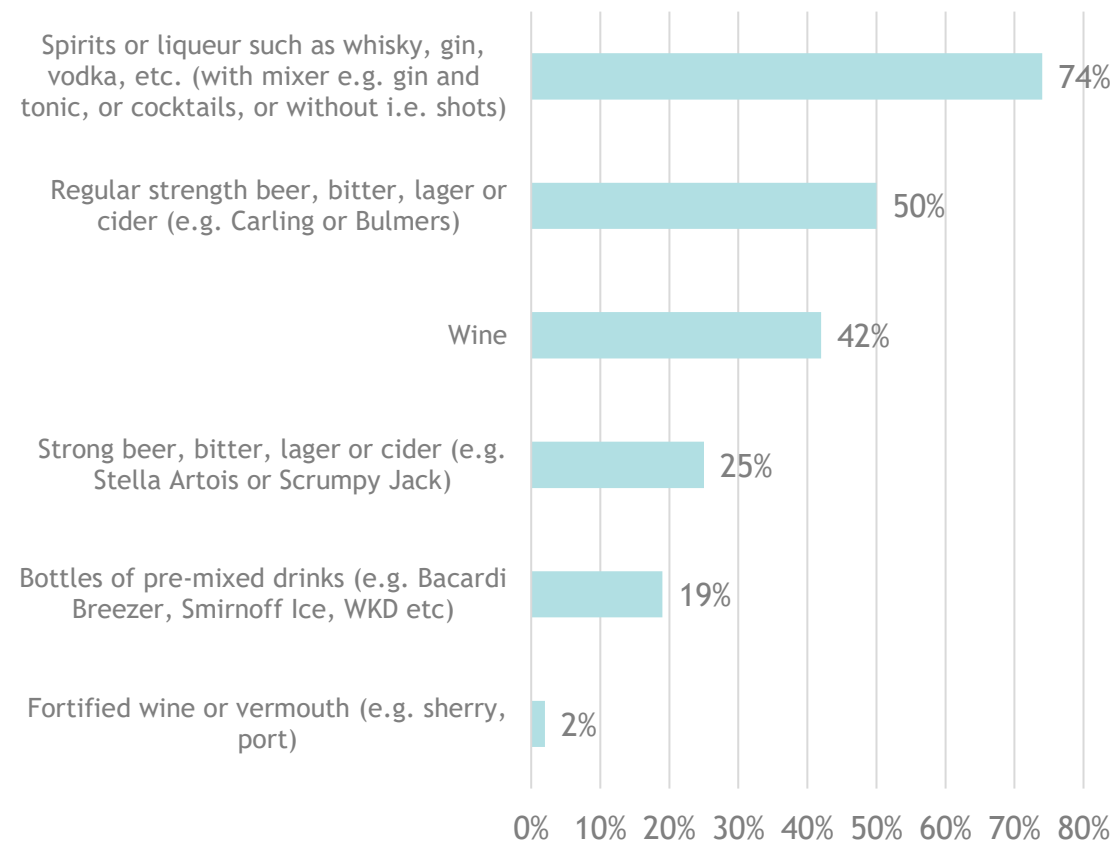
# Patterns and practices of alcohol consumption

Just over a quarter of students are drinking 2-3 times a week. Almost one third of students drink less than once a week. Spirits, with or without mixers, are most frequently drunk by respondents (74%).



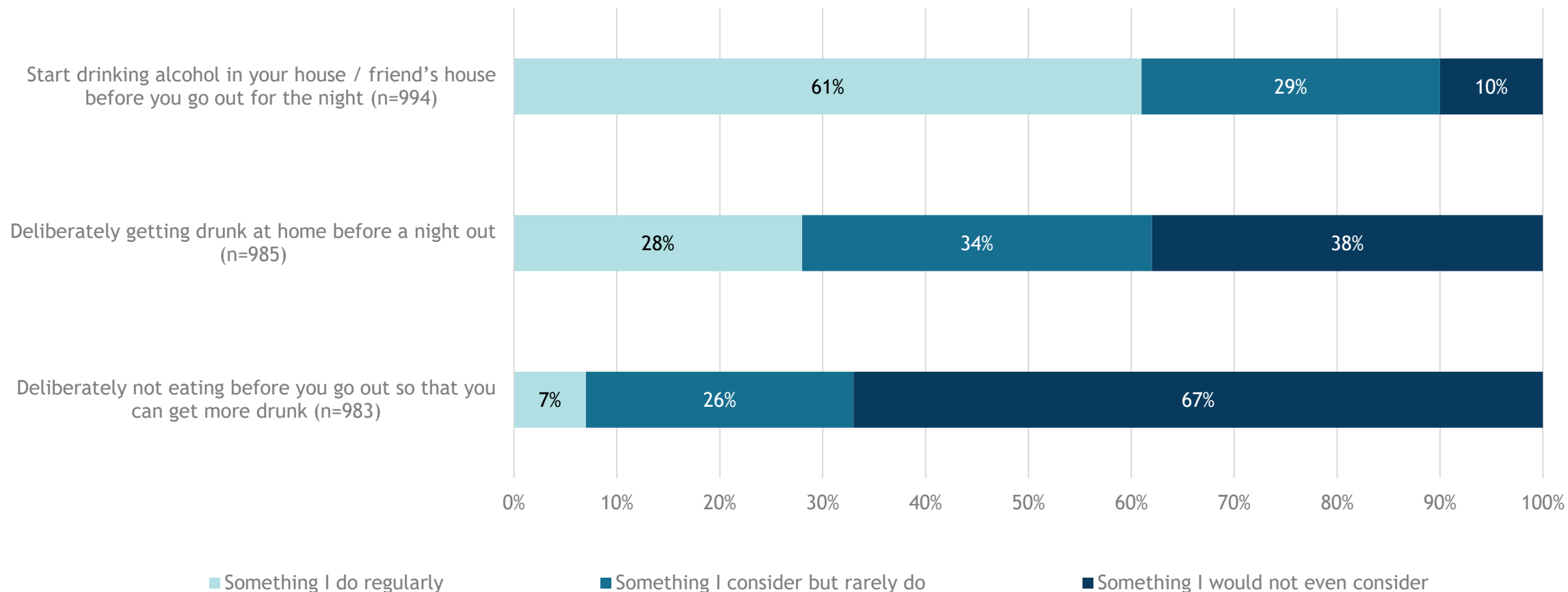
n.b. Errors in the survey routing resulted in the exclusion of some responses identified as non-drinkers from the analysis, therefore this is likely to be an underrepresentation of respondents identifying in this way

Q. How often, if at all, do you drink alcohol? Weighted base: 1688 Balance: No response



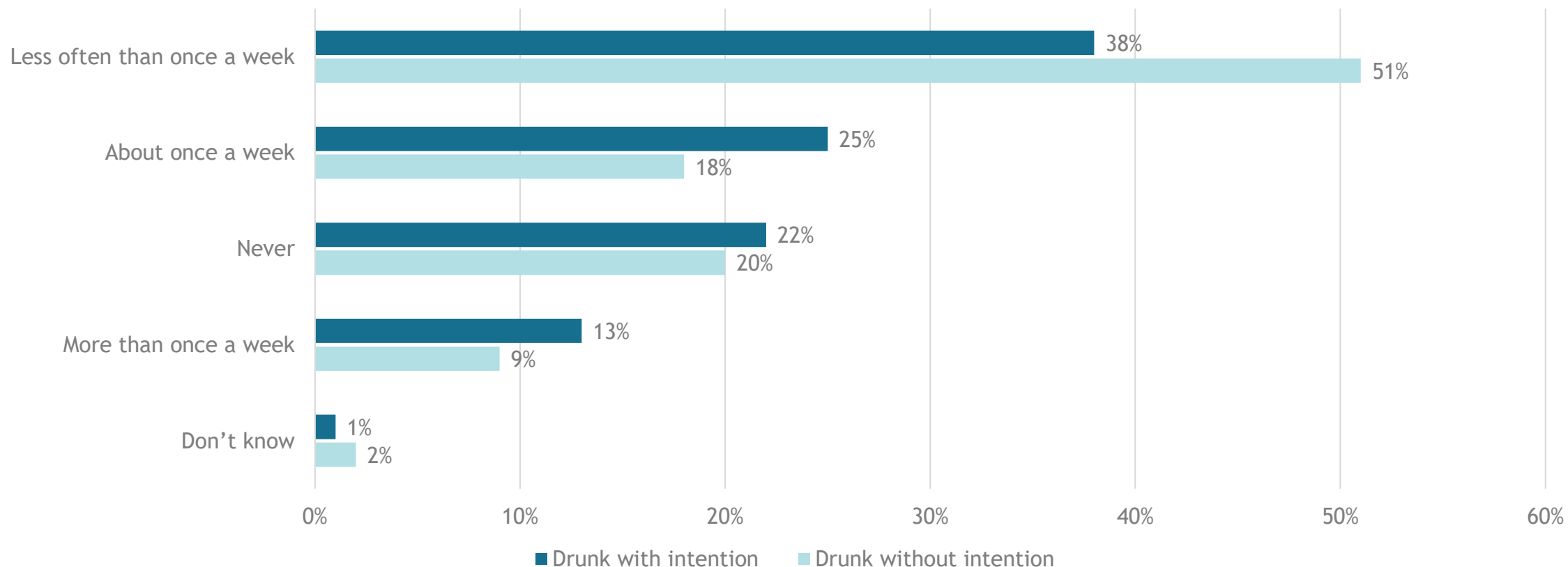
Q. Which of the following types of alcoholic drink do you drink most often? Weighted base: 1000  
Balance: No response and non-drinkers

61% of respondents regularly start drinking before they go out for the night (pre-drinking), however just over a third of respondents say they would not consider getting drunk at home deliberately before a night out.



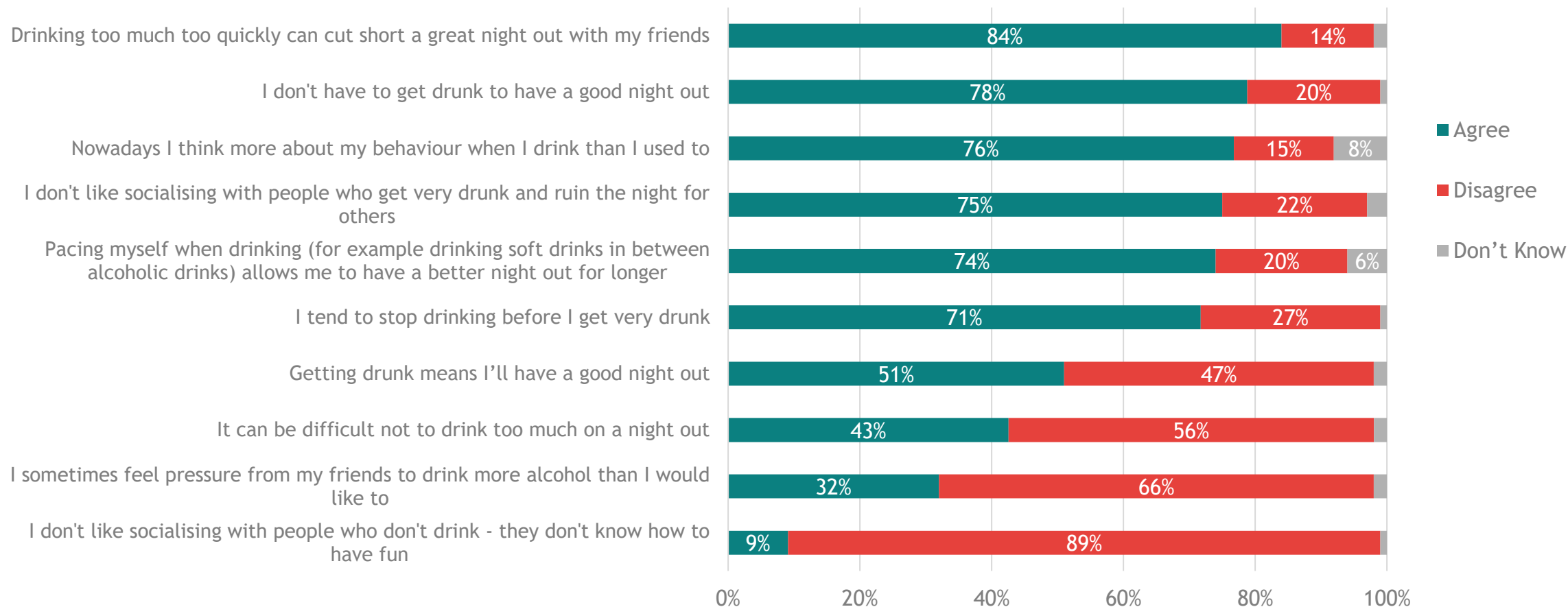
Q. Do any of the following describe your drinking behaviour? Weighted base: (in brackets) Balance: No response and non-drinkers

A quarter of respondents say they get drunk with the intention of doing so about once a week. Half of the students report they drunk without the intention less often than once a week.



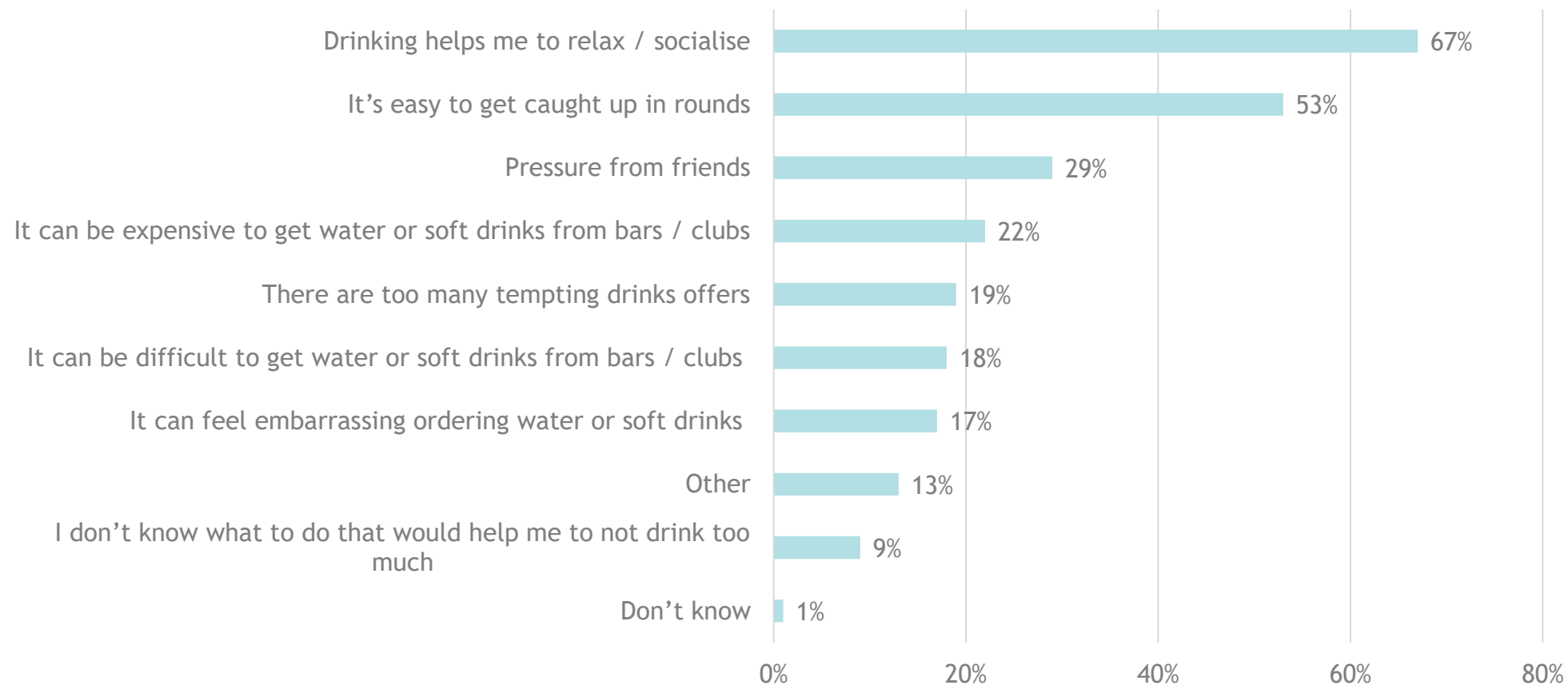
Q. Approximately how often do you drink alcohol with the intention of getting drunk / drink alcohol without the intention of getting drunk but end up getting drunk anyway ? Weighted base: 1006  
Balance: No response and non-drinkers

84% agreed that drinking too much too quickly can cut short a great night. 78% agreed that they didn't have to get drunk to have a good night out.



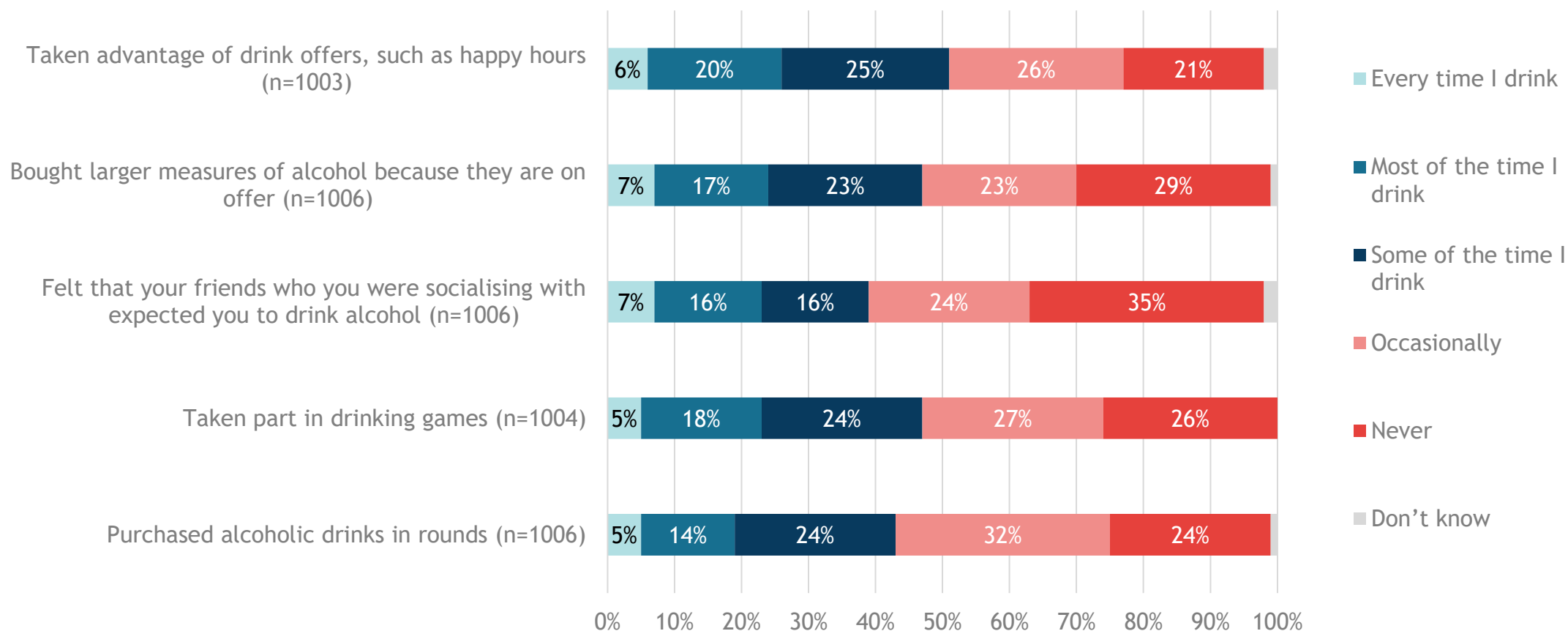
Q. To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements Weighted base: c. 1008 Balance: No response

Respondents who indicated they found it difficult not to drink too much on a night out (43%) were asked why. 67% stated that drinking alcohol helped them to relax / socialize. The practice of buying drinks in rounds was also identified by over half of respondents.



Q. You agreed it can be difficult not to drink too much on a night out - why do you think that? Weighted base: 422 Balance: No response, non-drinkers and those who did not agree it can be difficult not to drink too much

Just over a quarter say they take advantage of drink offers such as happy hours or buy larger measures of alcohol because they're on offer every or most of the time they drink. Similar numbers felt their friends expected them to drink alcohol (23%).



Q. Thinking about your time at university within the last term, please tell us how often you did each of the following... Weighted base: (5026) Balance: No response

Further analysis of the survey data has shown significant differences in practices between different groups of respondents. The key differences identified include:

#### Differences by gender

- Women respondents are more likely to report drinking alcohol less than once a week compared to men respondents (36% compared with 26%); drinking to get drunk more than once a week is also less likely among Women respondents (12% compared to 16%).
- Getting unintentionally drunk less than once a week is more likely among women respondents than men (53% compared with 50%).
- Women respondents are more likely to report never purchasing drinks in rounds than men respondents (27% women compared with 20% men); Men respondents are more likely to report purchasing drinks in rounds some of the time (28% compared to 21% women).
- Women respondents are more likely to buy larger measures of alcohol most of the time when on offer than men (18% women compared with 15% men); but men are more likely to take advantage of drink offers such as happy hours some of the time (28% men compared to 24%).

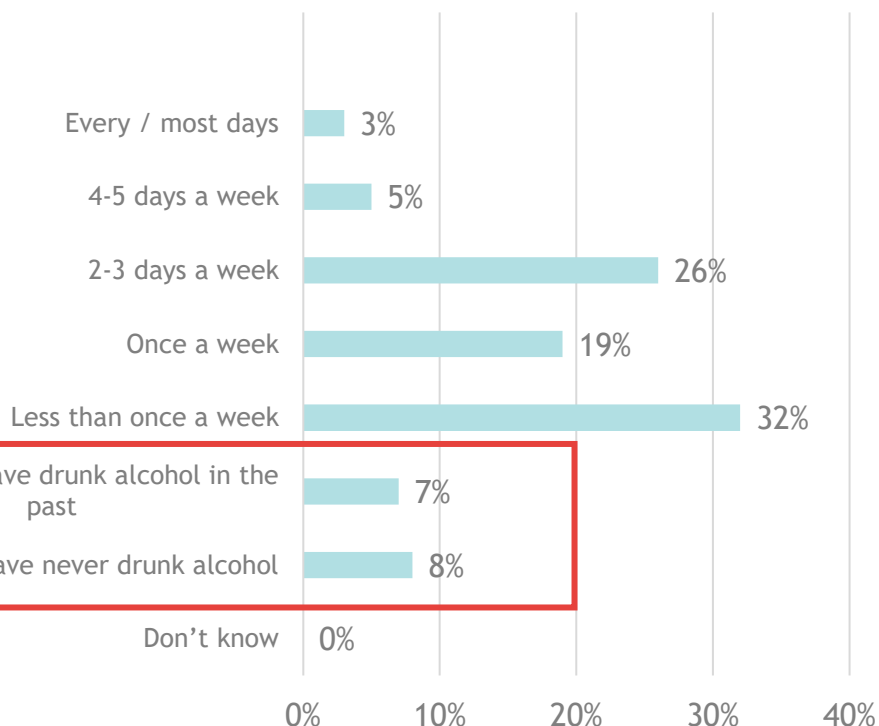
#### Differences by nationality

- Respondents from outside the EU are more likely to report never drinking alcohol than those from the EU or UK (29% non-EU compared with 12% UK and 14% EU).
- Respondents from outside the EU are least likely to report regularly drinking alcohol at a friend's house before they go out for the night compared with international respondents from the EU (47% compared with 54% EU and 63% UK).
- Respondents from the UK are least likely to never take advantage of drink offers such as happy hours (20%, compared to 23% of EU respondents from outside the UK).
- Respondents from the EU are more likely to disagree strongly (45%) that they sometimes feel pressure from friends to drink more alcohol than they would like to, compared to 39% of non EU students and 43% of UK respondents.

#### Differences by study status

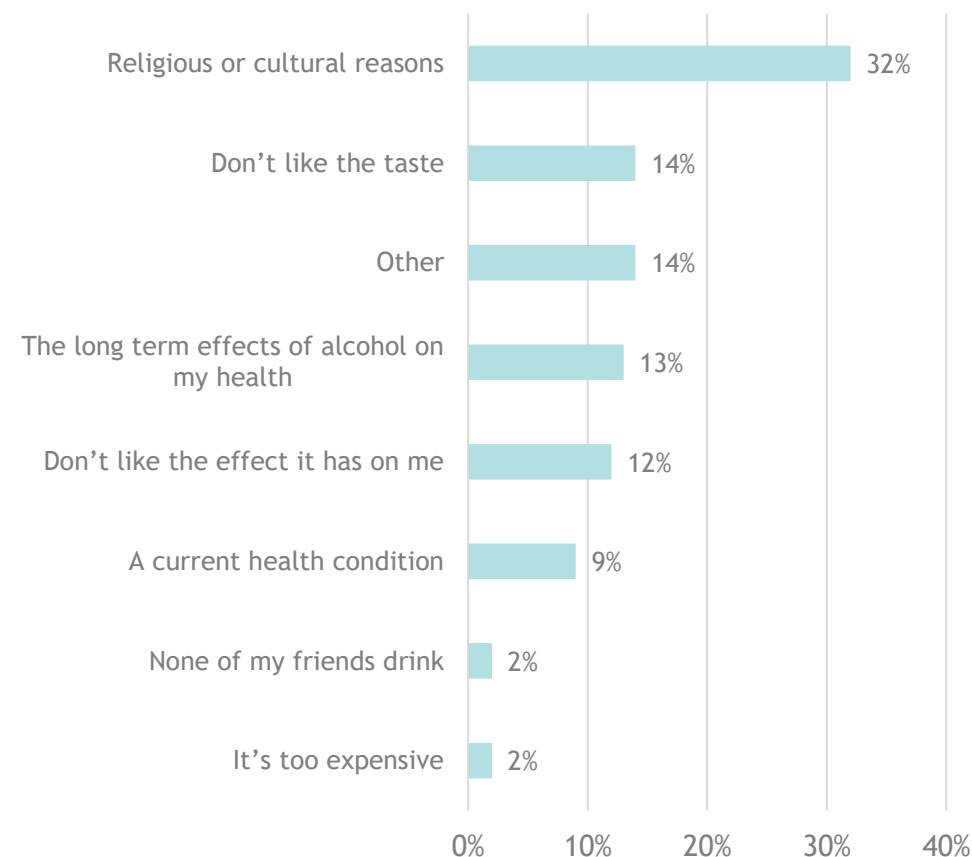
- Respondents studying full time are significantly more likely to report regularly getting drunk at home before a night out than respondents studying part time (32% compared to 8%).
- Part time respondents are more likely to report never drinking with the intention of getting drunk than those studying full time (40% part time respondents compared with 19% full time respondents).
- Part time respondents are also more likely to say that they never take part in drinking games, take advantage of offers such as happy hours or buy drinks in rounds (e.g. 56% part time respondents never take part in drinking games compared with 29% full time respondents).

15% of respondents report that they do not currently drink alcohol, including those that have never drunk alcohol, and those who have in the past. This is most commonly due to religious or cultural reasons.



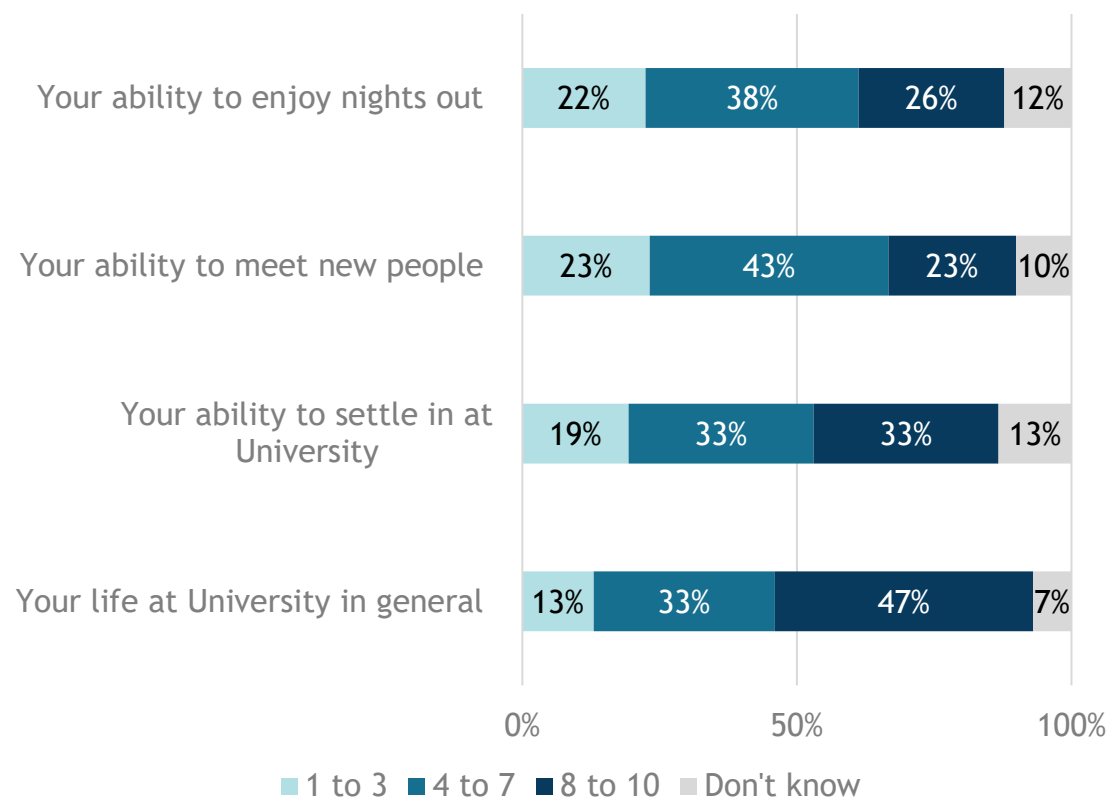
n.b. Errors in the survey routing resulted in the exclusion of some responses identified as non-drinkers from the analysis, therefore this is likely to be an underrepresentation of respondents identifying in this way

Q. How often, if at all, do you drink alcohol?  
 Weighted base: 1688 Balance: No response

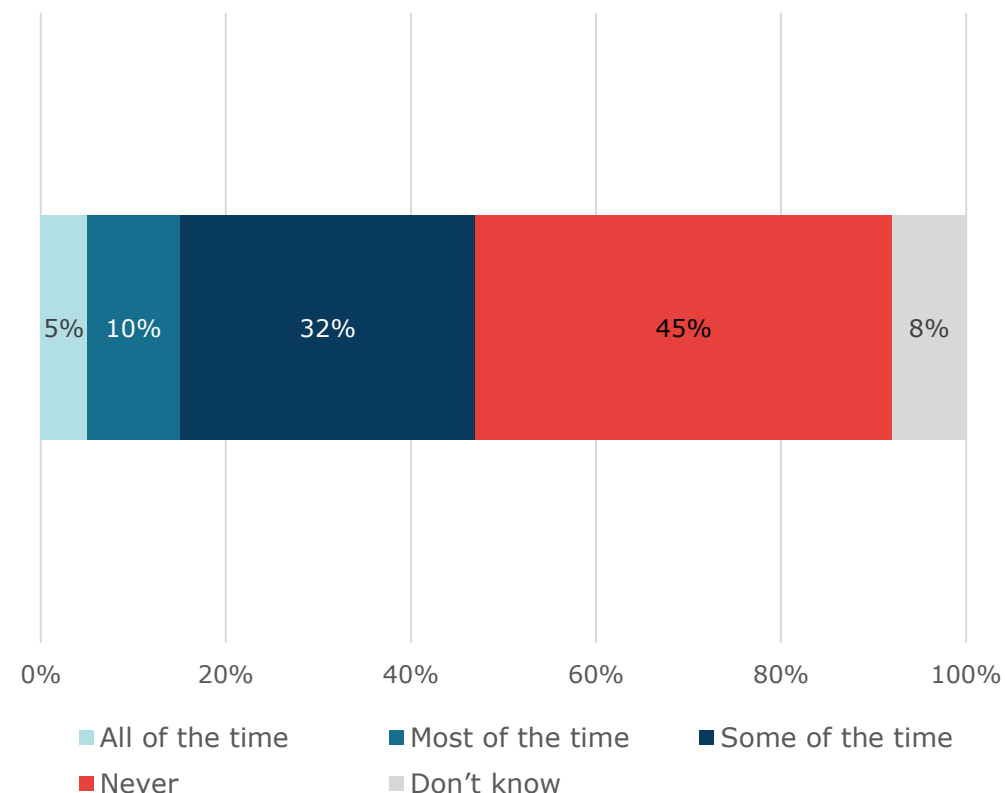


Q. What would you say is your main reason for not drinking, or stopping drinking, alcohol?  
 Weighted base: 250 Balance: No response

Almost half (47%) of non-drinkers reported that not drinking had a positive influence on their life at university in general. 45% say they never feel like their friends expect them to drink alcohol.



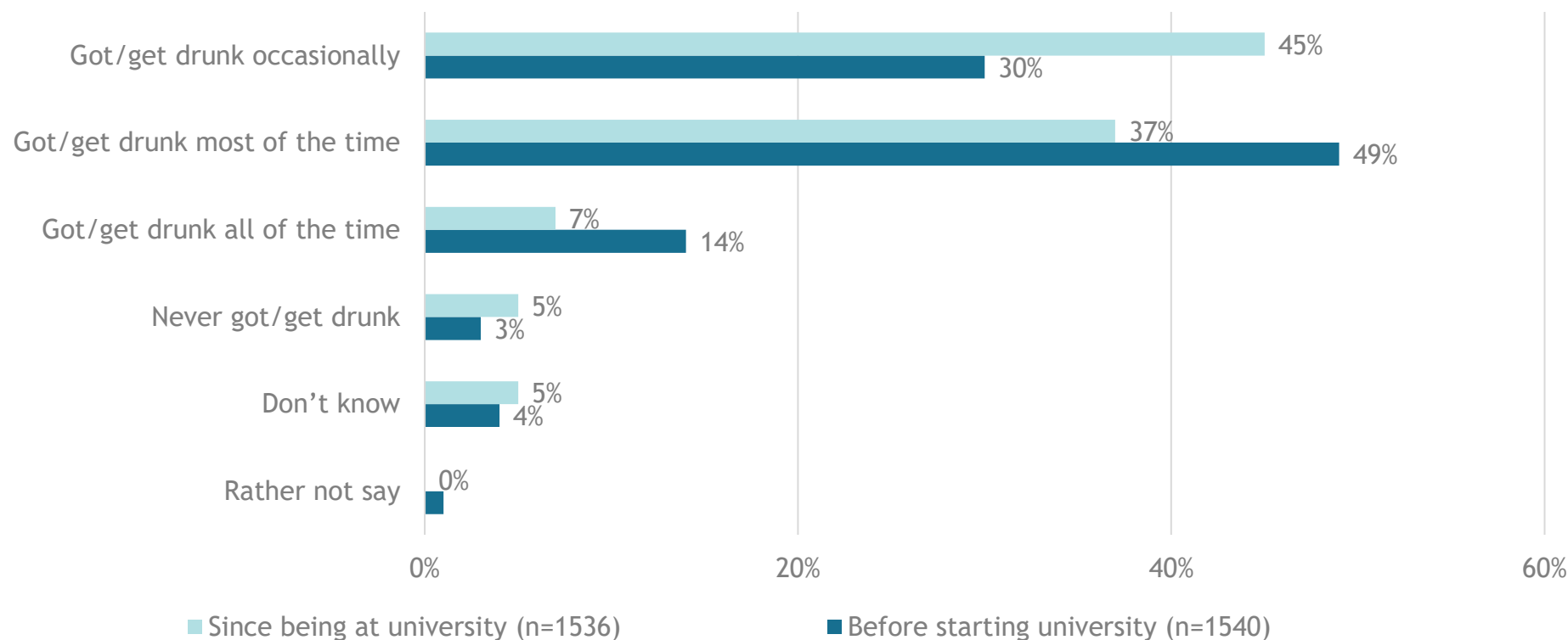
Q. On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 = a very negative impact and 10 = a very positive impact, how do you think that not drinking alcohol has impacted on the following? Weighted base: 250 Balance: No response



Q. Thinking about your most recent university term, when you were socialising with other students, how often did you feel that your friends expected you to drink alcohol? Base: 250 Balance: No response

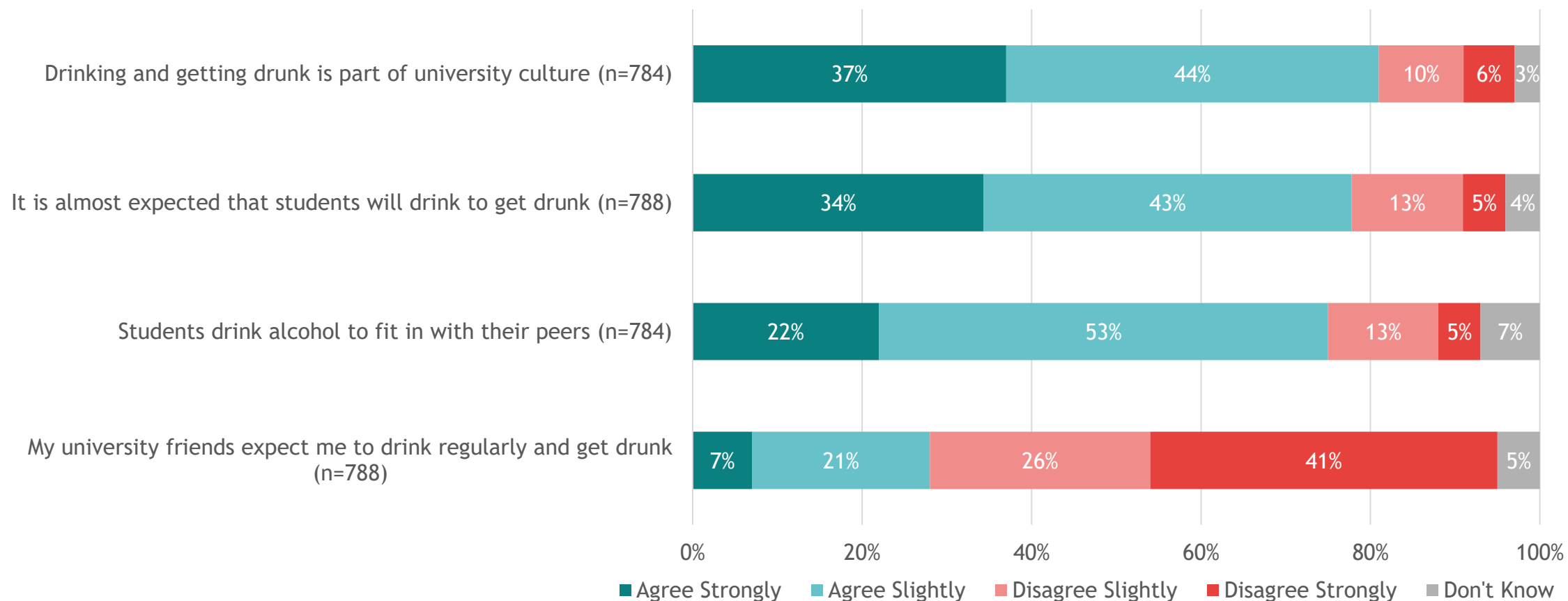
# Perceptions of alcohol consumption on campus

Half of respondent's report that prior to starting university they believed that students got drunk most of the time. There is a shift when respondents have started university, with 45% stating that in their experience students get drunk occasionally and 7% saying that their peers get drink 'all the time'



Q. Please select the phrase which best describes your perception... Before arriving at University, did you believe that students.../ And now you're a student at university, which of the following best matches your experiences of students? Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Respondents see alcohol as part of student life with the majority (81%) agreeing to some extent that drinking and getting drunk is part of university culture.



Q. Thinking specifically about drinking alcohol at university, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: c.1295 Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Further analysis of the survey data has shown significant differences in practices between different groups of respondents. The key differences identified include:

#### Perceptions of peer expectations

- Women respondents are more likely to agree that their friends expect them to drink alcohol regularly and get drunk than Men respondents (28% women respondents compared to 27% of men respondents).
- Non EU students are least likely to say their peers never expect them to drink alcohol (34%, compared to 35% of UK and 37% of EU respondents).

#### Experiences of peer pressure

- UK respondents (33%) are more likely to agree they feel pressure from their friends to drink more alcohol than they would like to compared to Non-EU (29%) and EU respondents (24%).

#### Perceptions of student drinking practices before starting university

- Women respondents are more likely to believe that students got drunk 'all of the time' before starting university than men respondents (17% compared with 11%).

#### Experiences of alcohol consumption culture on campus

- UK students are also more likely to think that drinking to get drunk is part of university culture than international respondents (85% UK respondents compared with 69% EU respondents and 66% non-EU respondents).
- EU students are least likely to agree that students drink alcohol to fit in with their peers (72%, compared to 75% UK and 77% non EU respondents)

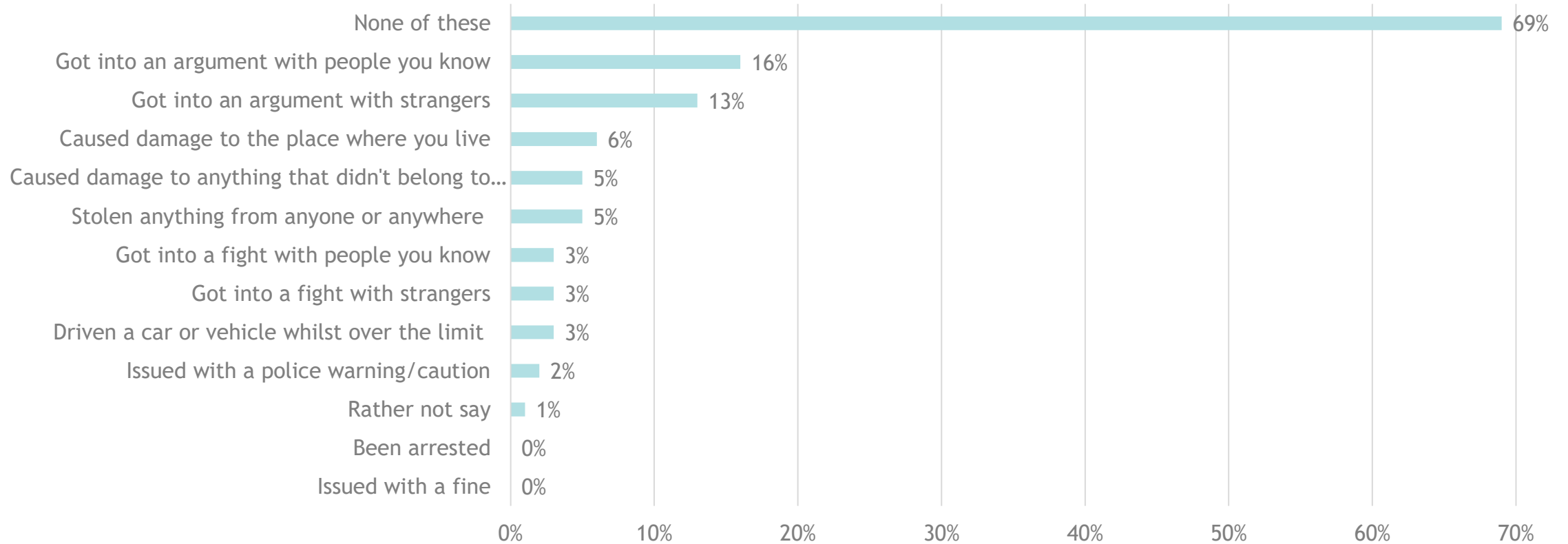
# Impacts of alcohol consumption

35% of students reported that they have missed a university seminar/lecture/class as a result of alcohol consumption and 19% missed social engagements during or following alcohol consumption.



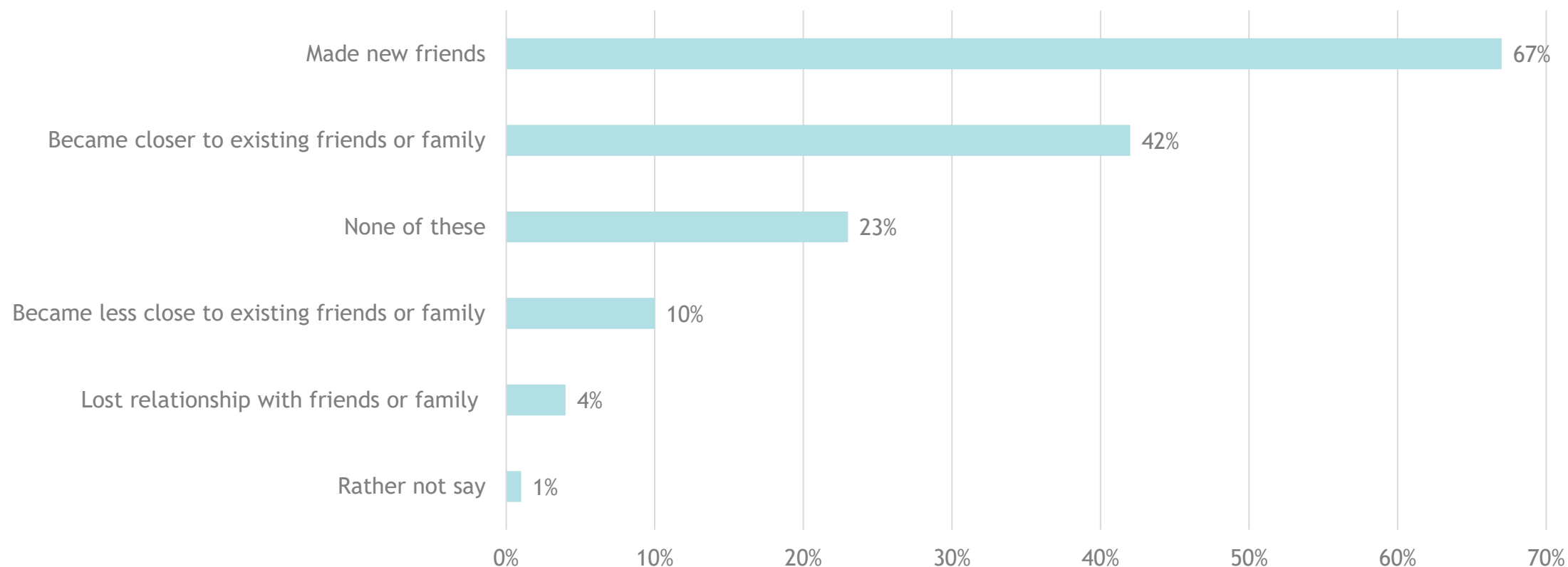
Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university, during or following the consumption of alcohol? Weighted base: 1006. Balance: No response and non-drinkers

The most common experience reported during or following drinking alcohol was getting into arguments, with 29% reporting this either with people they know or with strangers. However, 69% reported not having experienced any aspect.



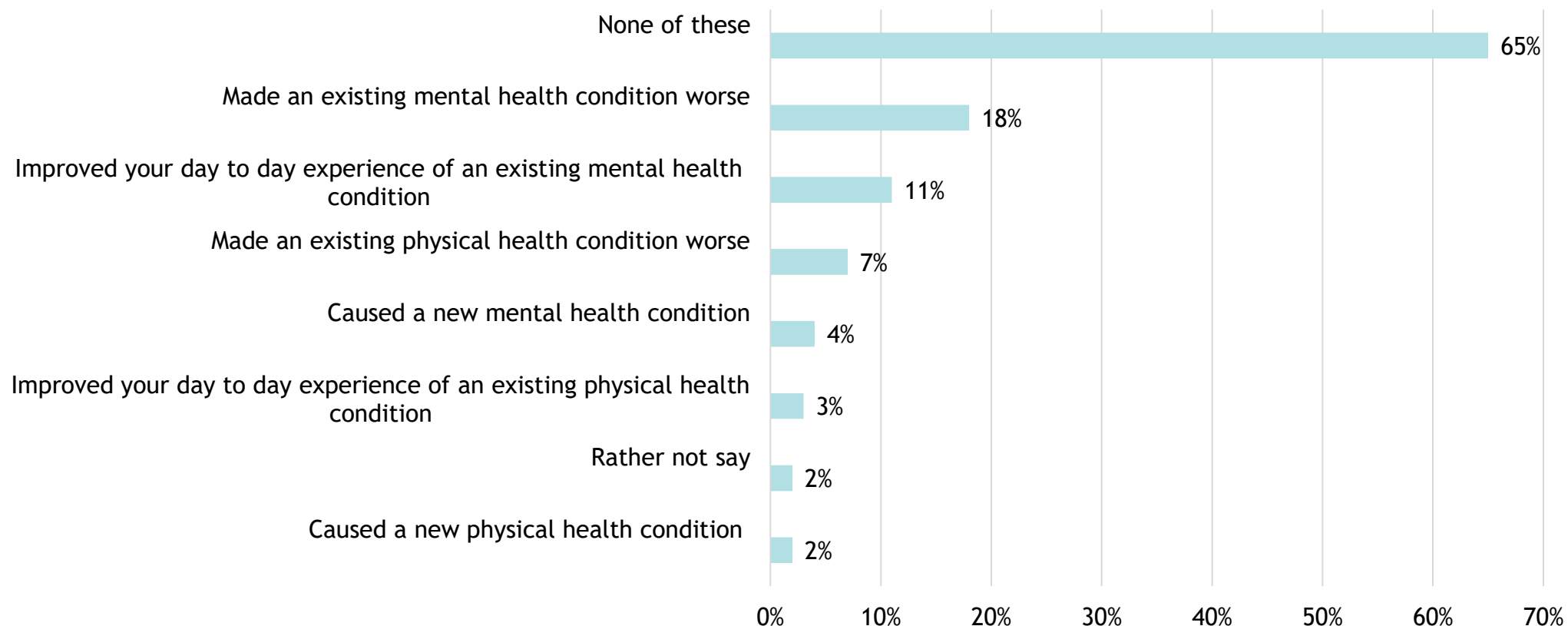
Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university, during or following the consumption of alcohol? Weighted base: 1004. Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Over a two thirds of respondents reported making new friends during or following the consumption of alcohol. Over two fifths reported becoming closer to friends and family. However, 10% becoming less close to friends and family.



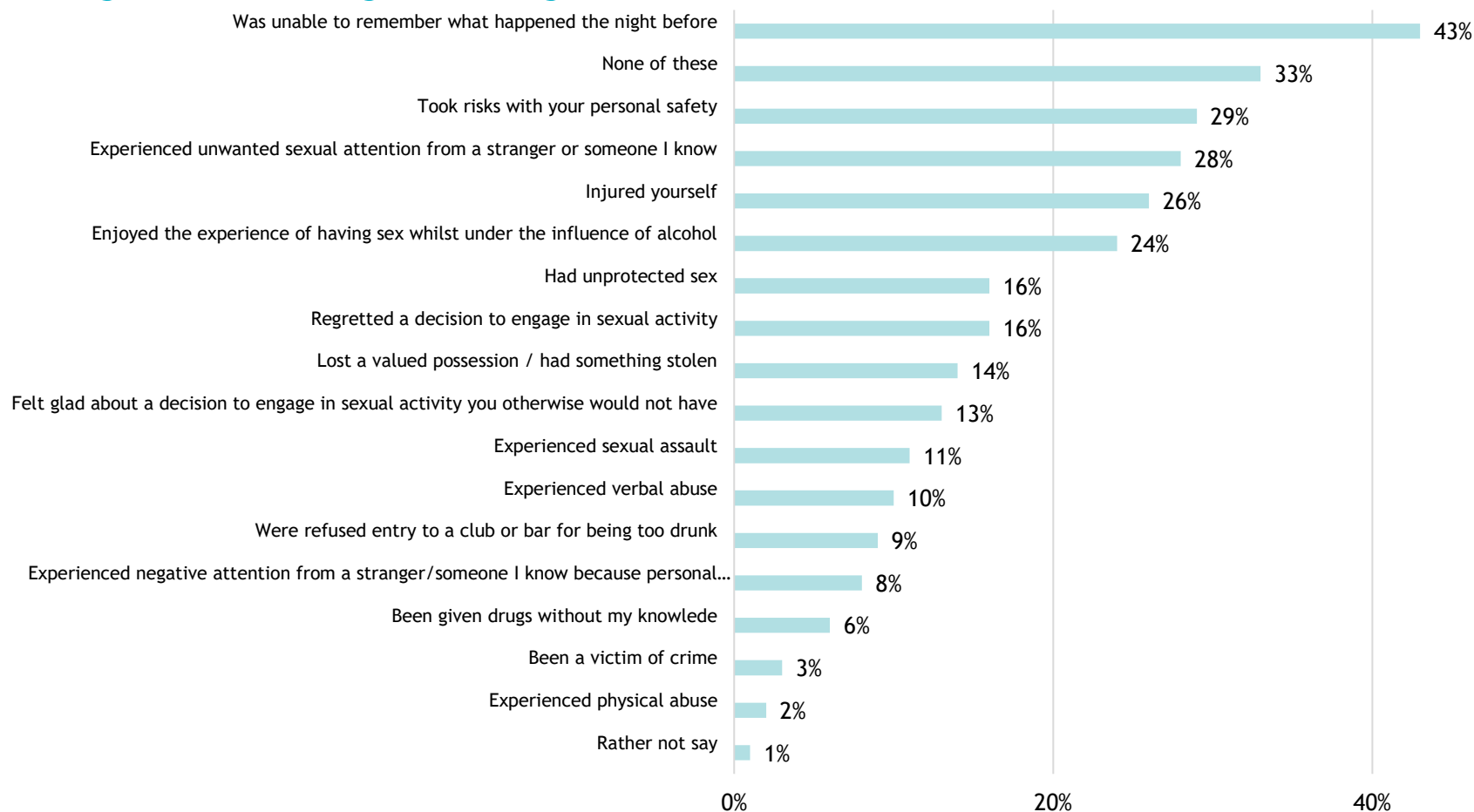
Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university, during or following the consumption of alcohol? Weighted base: 1006. Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Almost one fifth of respondents identified that drinking alcohol (during or following) had made an existing mental condition worse however 11% found that it improved their day-to-day experience of an existing mental health condition.



Q. Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university, during or following the consumption of alcohol? Weighted Base: 1001. Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Around half of students commonly experienced being unable to remember what happened the night before and almost one third took risk with their personal safety during or following drinking alcohol.



Q Which of the following have you experienced since you have been at university, during or following the consumption of alcohol?  
Weighted Base: 1006. Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Further analysis of the survey data has shown significant differences in experiences after drinking alcohol between different groups of respondents. The key differences identified include:

#### Health and wellbeing

- Respondents who are in full time education are more likely to report not being able to remember what happened the night before compared with those respondents in part time education (45% compared to 35%).
- Women respondents are more likely to have injured themselves (29%) than men respondents (20%).
- An improvement in the day-to-day experience of an existing physical health condition was 3% for both Women and Men respondents.
- UK respondents were more likely to have experienced a change in an existing mental health condition, with 12% reporting an improvement, compared to 4% of EU and 6% of non-EU respondents.

#### Paid work and study

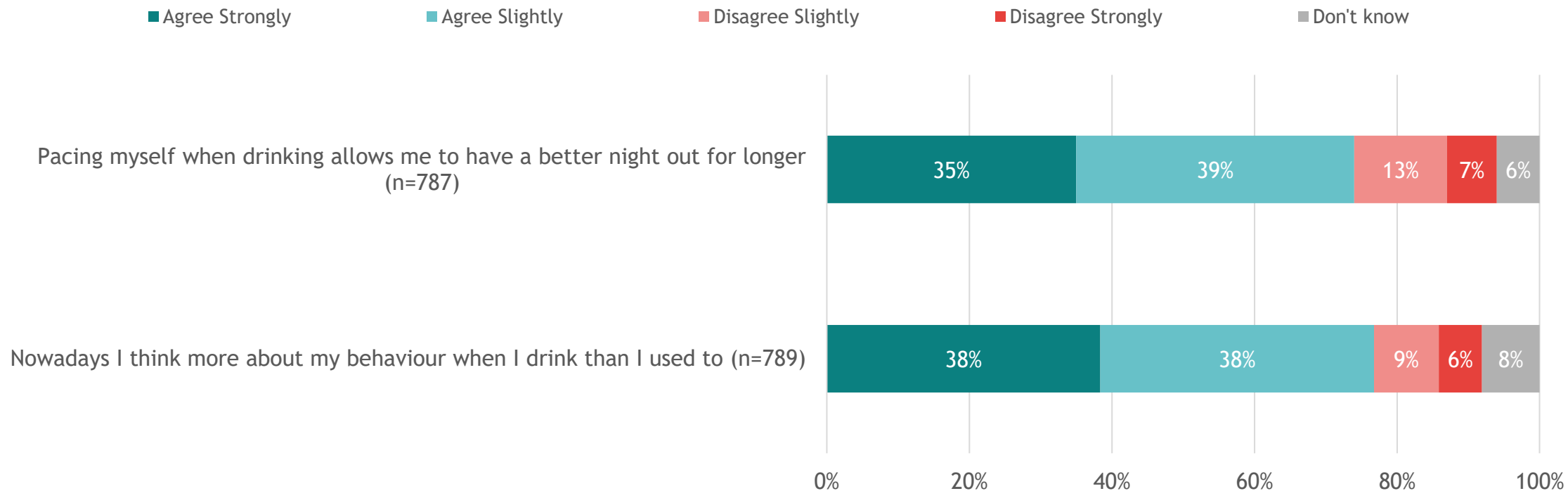
- Men respondents are more likely to report arriving late to a seminar, lecture or class as a result of alcohol consumption than women respondents (24% compared with 22% respectively).
- Part-time students are more likely to miss paid work the next day than respondents in full-time education (11% compared with 5% respectively).

#### Relationships

- UK respondents are more likely to report getting into an argument with people they know after consuming alcohol (18% compared with 10% of EU students and 7% of non-EU students).
- Undergraduate students are more likely to report making friends after consuming alcohol than postgraduate and PhD students (74% of undergraduates compared to 49% of postgraduates and 41% of PhD students).
- Students who identify as disabled are more likely to report becoming closer to friends and family after drinking alcohol than those who don't identify this way (47% compared to 41%).

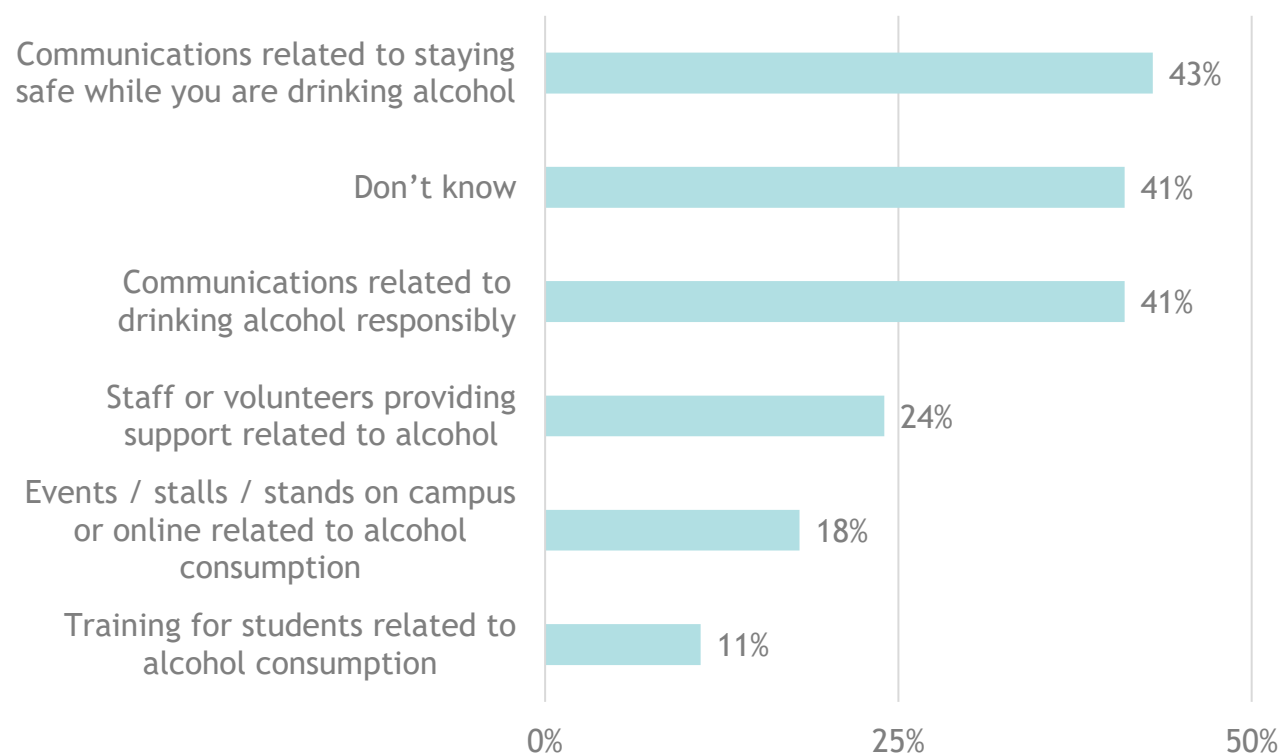
# Reducing impacts through responsible consumption

More than one third of respondents reported that they agree strongly with the statement that they think more about their behaviour when they drink than they used to, and that by pacing themselves when drinking they can have a better night out.

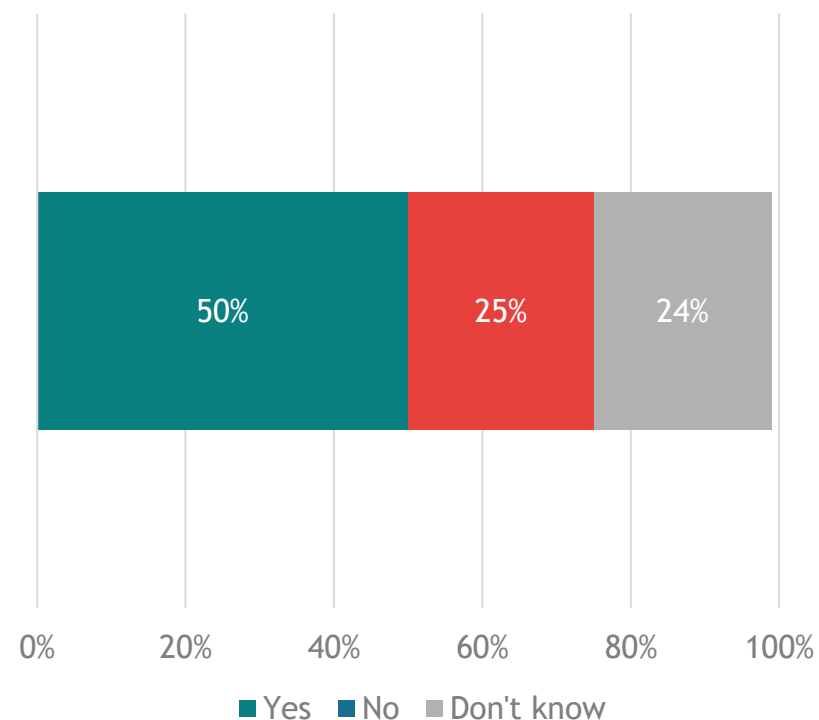


Q. Thinking specifically about drinking alcohol at university, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
Weighted base: c. 1008 Balance: No response and non-drinkers

Over two fifths of students are aware of communication related to staying safe while you drink at their university. Half of the respondents say there are enough social events at their university that don't involve drinking.



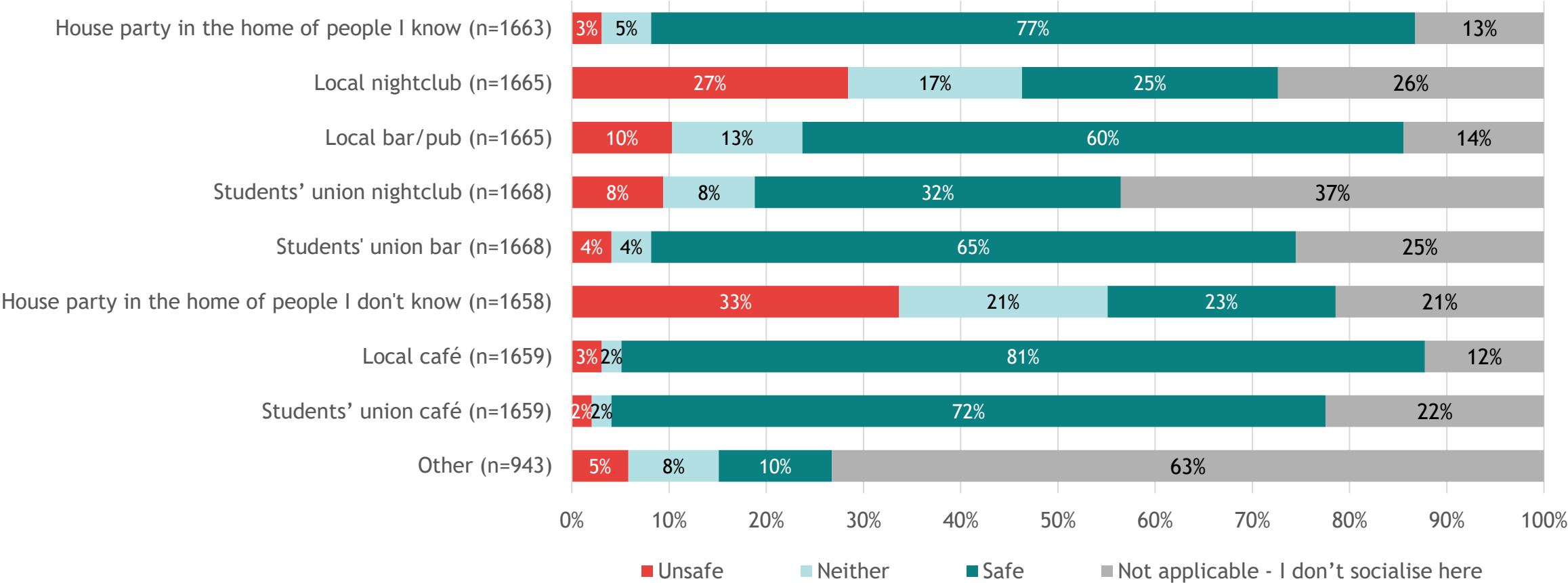
Q. Are you aware of any safe or responsible drinking campaigns, projects or activities at your university?  
 Weighted base: 1250 Balance: No response, Other



Q. Do you feel that there are enough social events for you at university that do not involve having to drink or get drunk?  
 Weighted base: 1267 Balance: No response

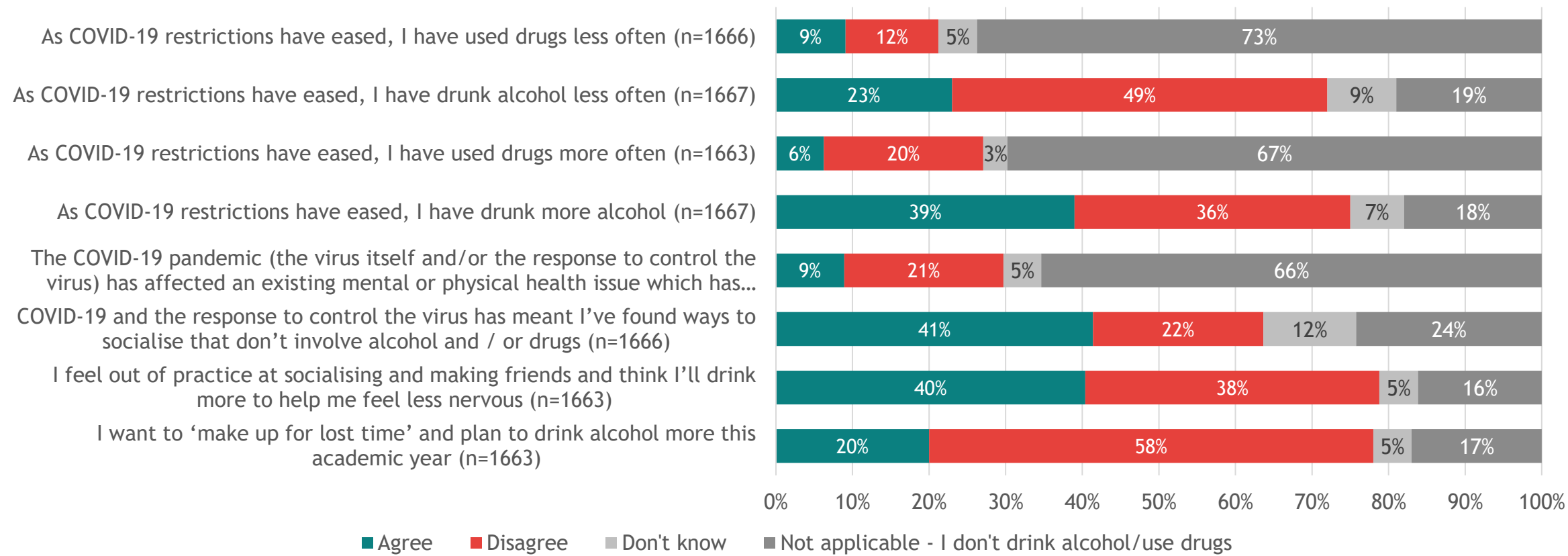
# Safety and COVID-19

The majority of students feel safe at a house party in the home of people they know, however over a third of students also feel unsafe at this location. Over half of students feel safe at a student’s union café, bar or nightclub.



Q. Thinking about the different places where you might socialise with friends/peers whilst you are at university, how safe you do feel? [Base: see graph Balance: No response, don't know, never used drugs]

Over half of students disagree with ‘wanting to make up for lost time’ due to the pandemic. 39% of students agree that they have drunk more alcohol due to easing restrictions, however 41% agree that they have found other ways to socialise, not involving drugs or alcohol, due to the pandemic.

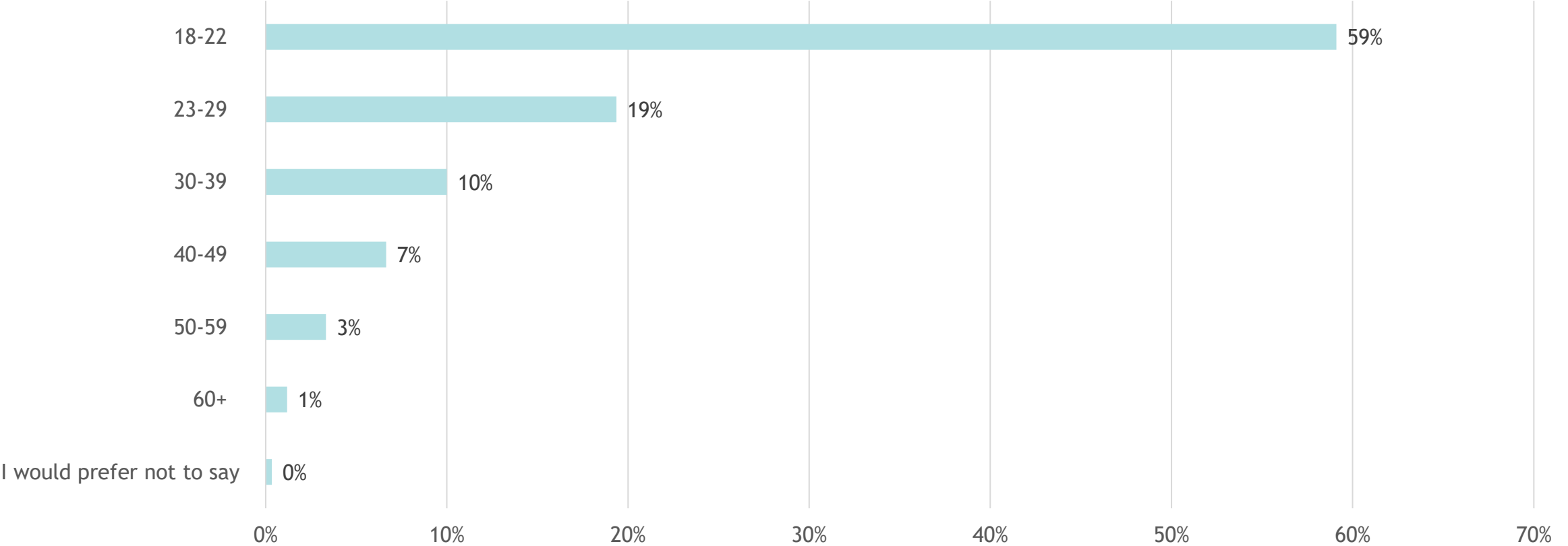


Q. We’re interested in hearing how your experiences related to the COVID-19 pandemic may have influenced your attitudes and behaviours related to alcohol and drugs. To what extent do you agree or disagree, if at all, with the following statements? {Base: see graph Balance: No response, don't know , never used drugs}

# Respondent demographics

# The majority of respondents were aged under 30 years old

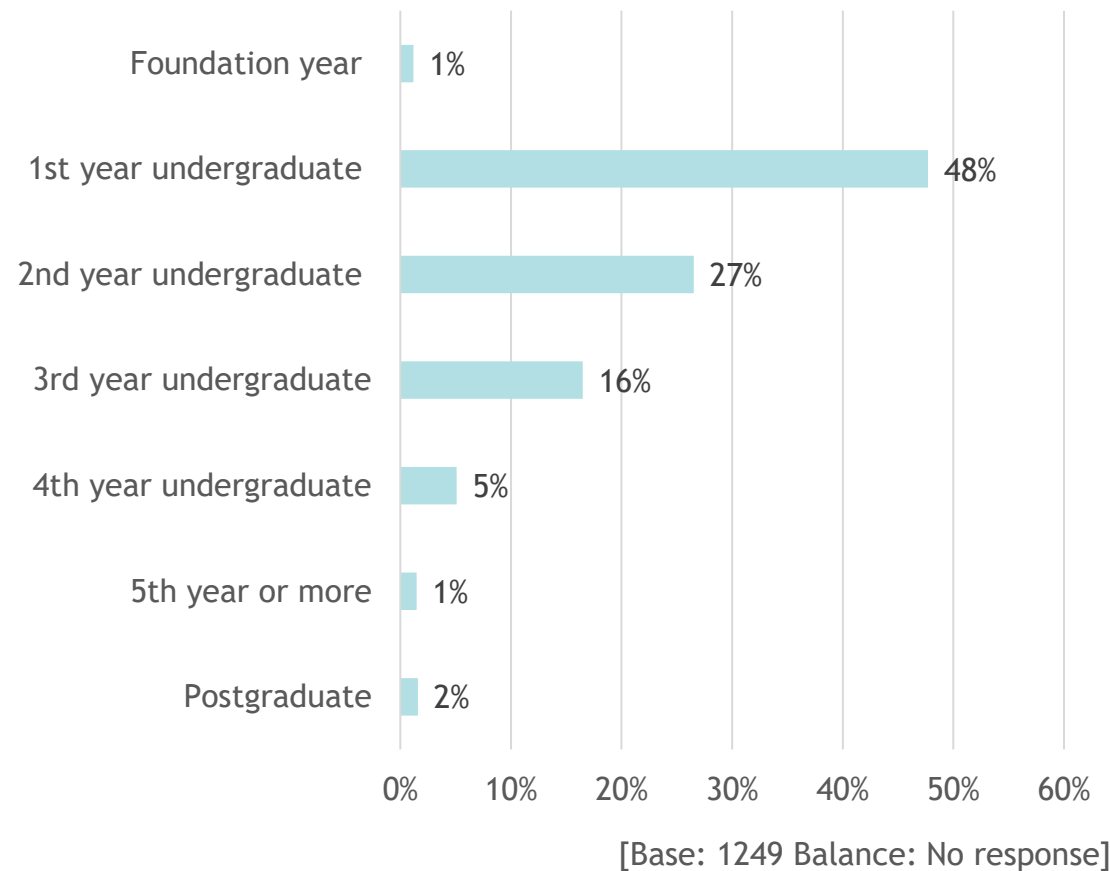
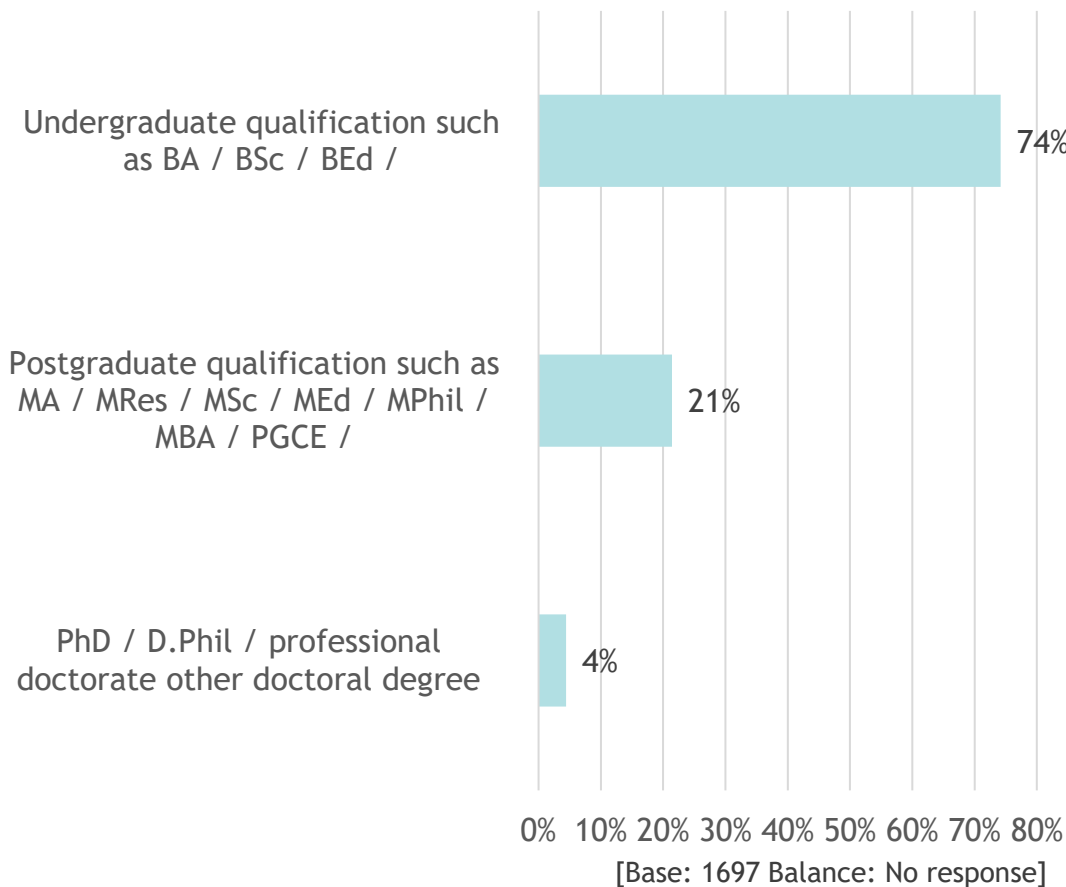
## AGE



[Base: 1998 Balance: No response]

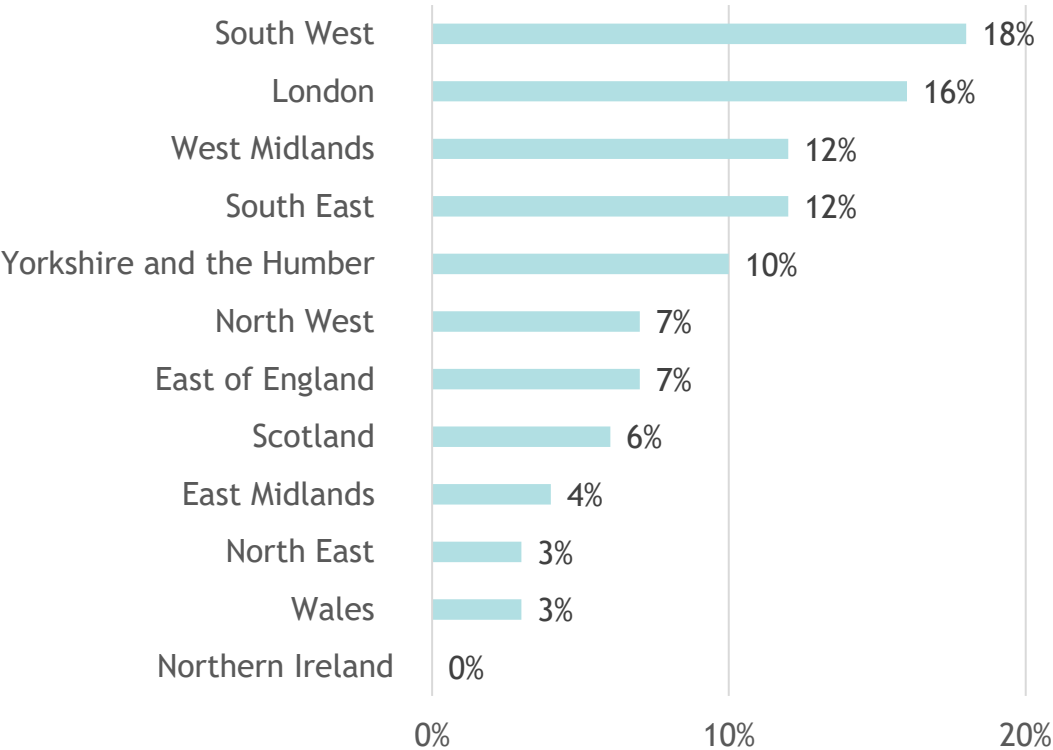
# The majority of respondents were 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year undergraduates

## STUDY LEVEL (HE ONLY)



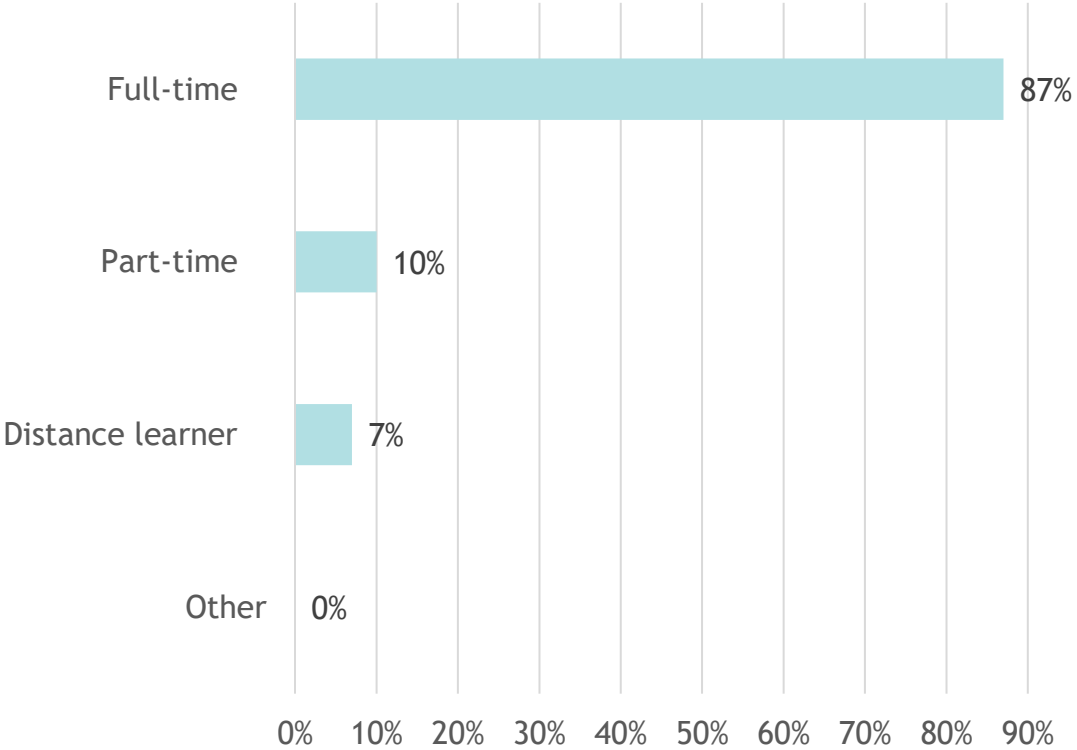
# Respondents were mostly full-time students, based in the south of England

## STUDY LOCATION



[Base: 1686 Balance: No response]

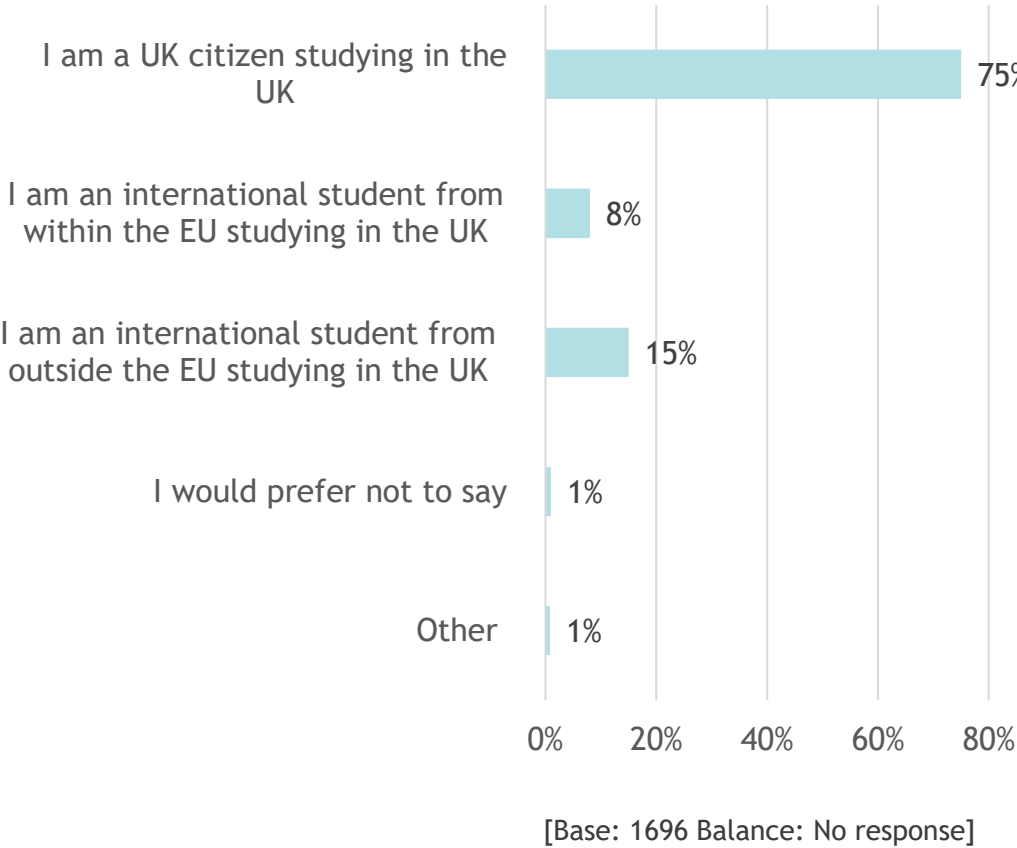
## STUDY TYPE



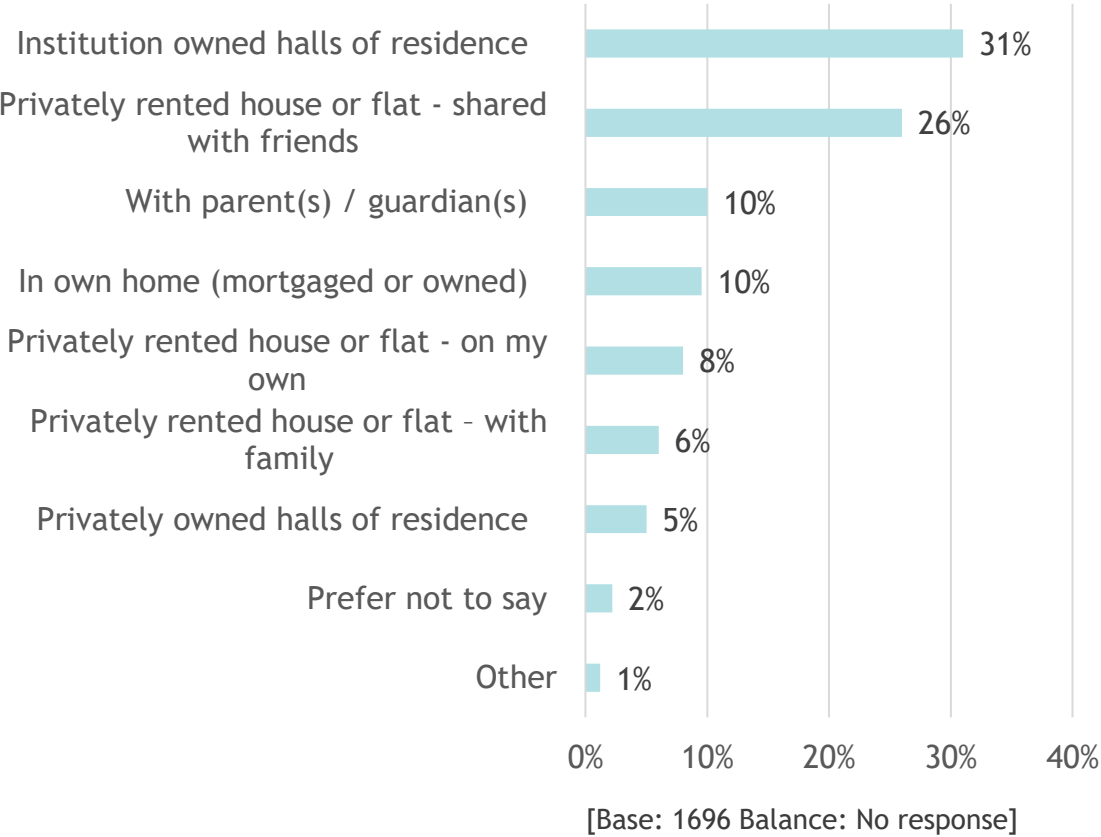
[Base: 1695 Balance: No response]

# Three quarters of respondents were UK citizens based in the UK, and a almost one third live in institution owned halls

## NATIONALITY

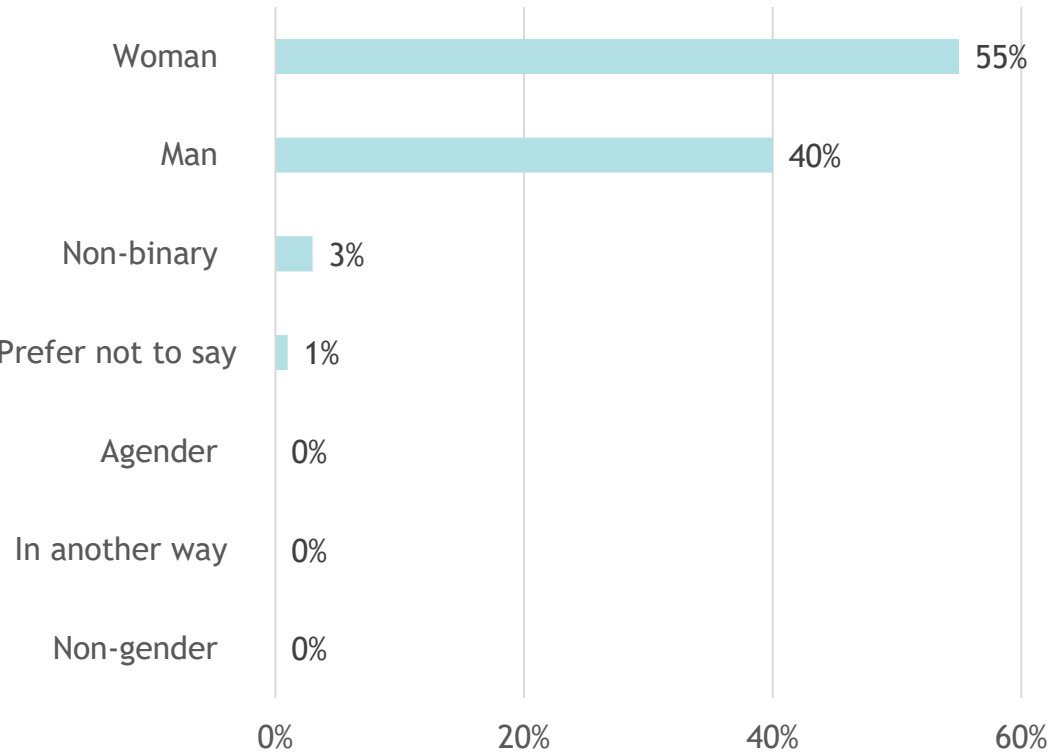


## ACCOMMODATION TYPE



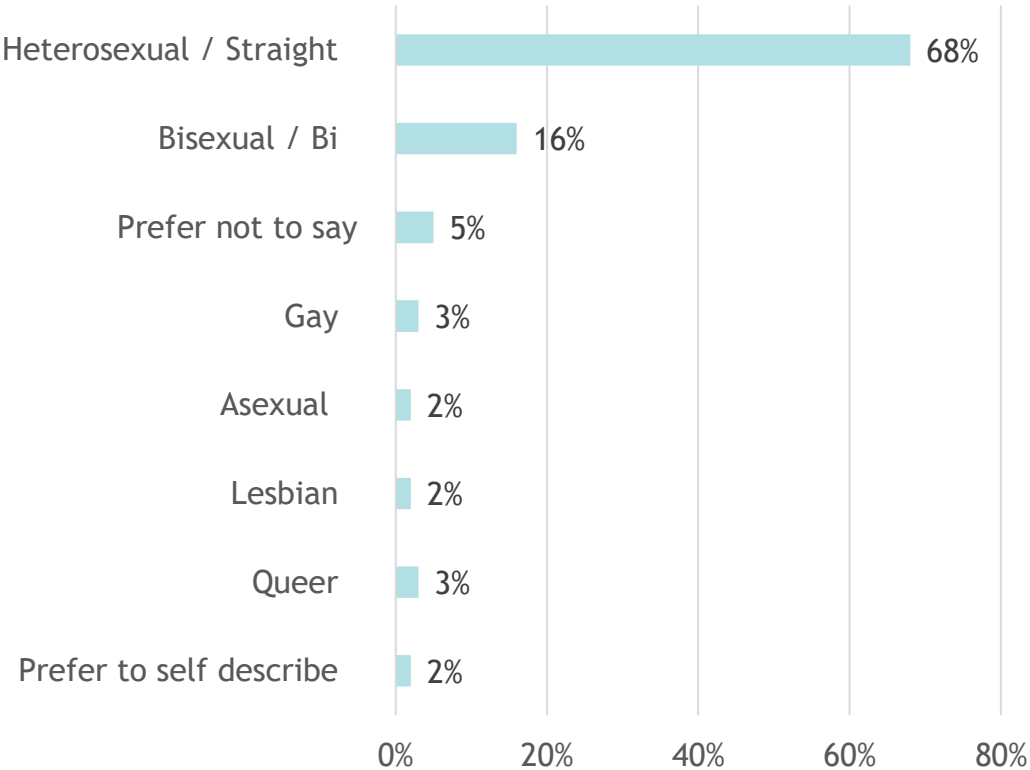
55% identify as women and two thirds of participants identified as heterosexual.

GENDER IDENTITY



[Base: 1697 Balance: No response]

SEXUALITY

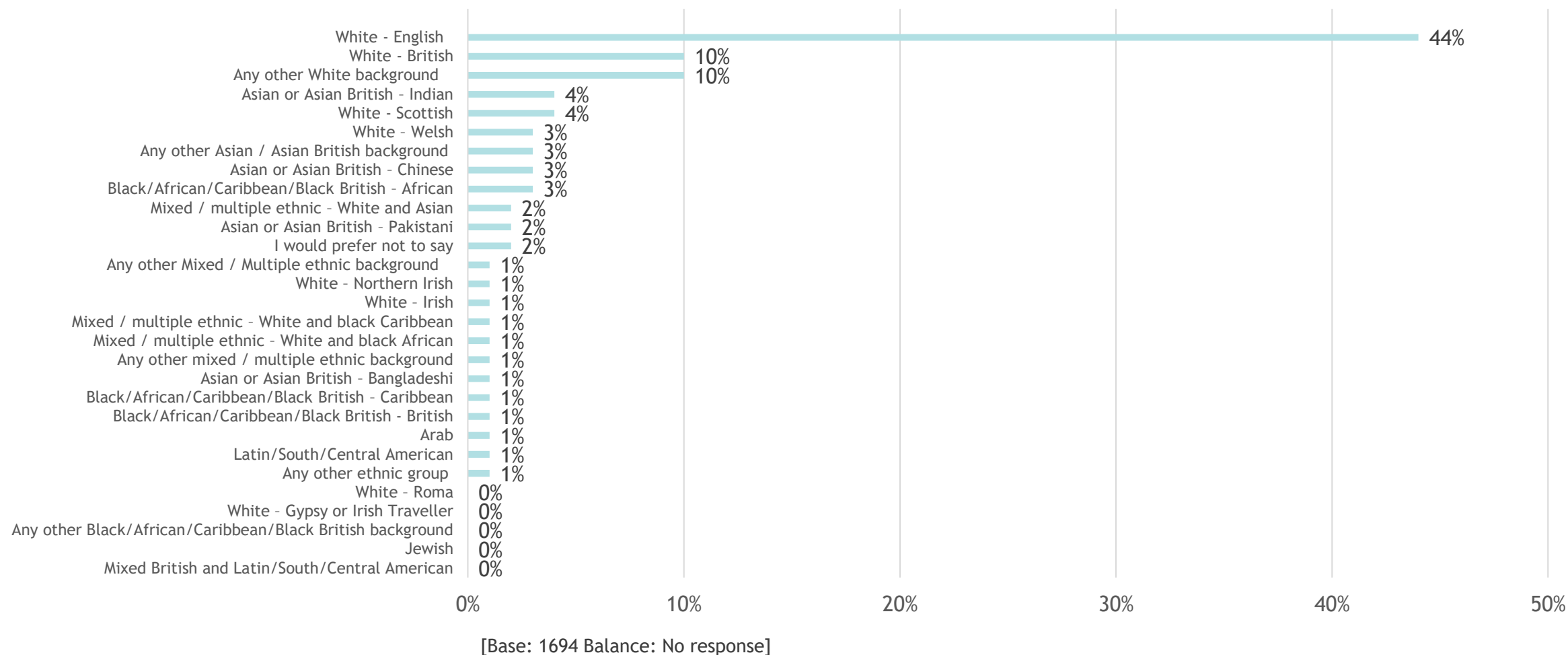


[Base: 1692 Balance: No response]



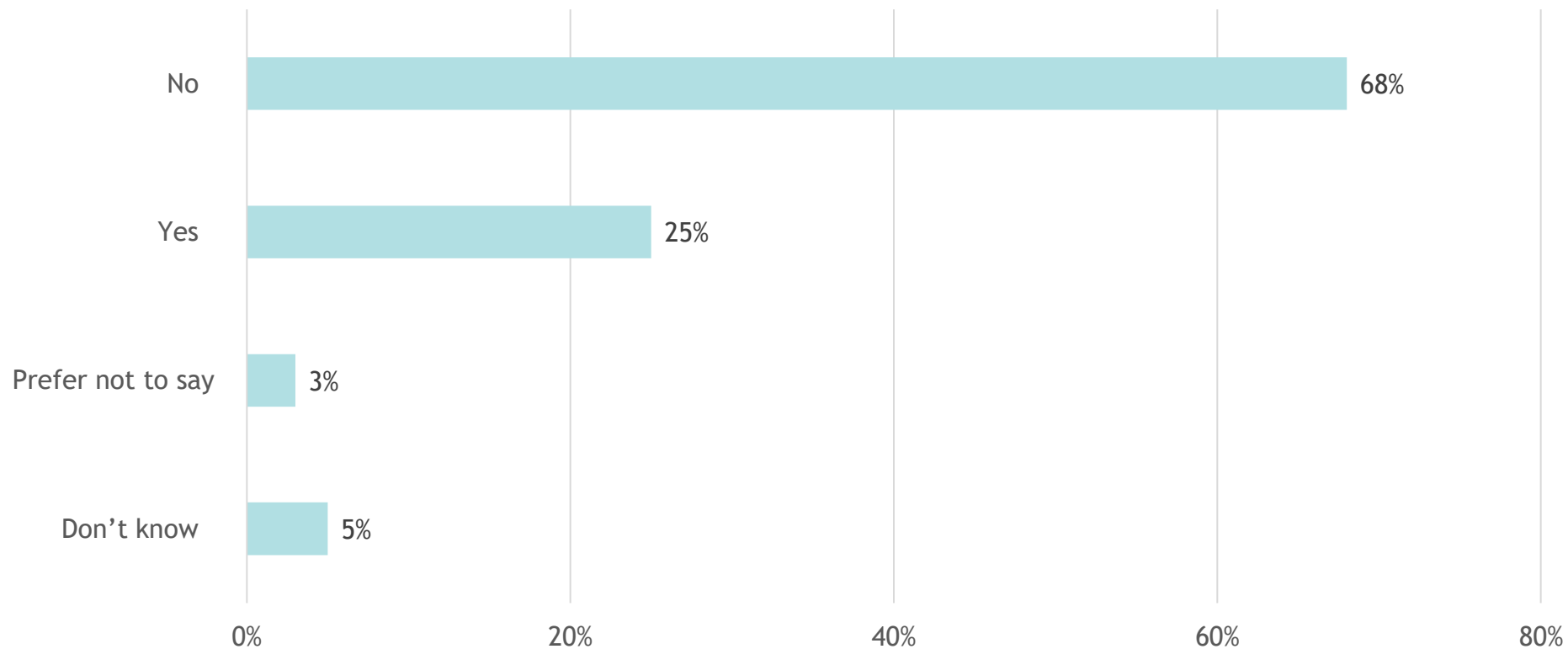
# 72% of participants identify as white

## RACE / ETHNICITY



A quarter of respondents identify as disabled. Half of these respondents experience mental health difficulties.

DISABILITY



[Base: 1690 Balance: No response]

For more information about our drugs and alcohol research and programmes, please visit our [website](#) or email [hello@sos-uk.org](mailto:hello@sos-uk.org)