

Sustainability Skills Survey 2024-25

Research into students' experiences of teaching
and learning on sustainable development

September 2025



Students Organising
for Sustainability
United Kingdom

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Summary



Key findings:

Expectations for sustainability and education

86%

agree that their place of study should **teach skills and understanding that positively impact** society and the environment

70%

say that knowing their place of study **limits its negative impact** on the environment and society makes them **proud to be a student** there

77%

agree that sustainable development is something which **all courses** should actively incorporate and promote



49%

said **how seriously a university takes environmental issues was important** in deciding where to apply to study

Key findings: Experiences of education and sustainability

56%

feel like their education has at least somewhat prepared them to **meet the challenges of climate change**

48%

feel like their education has at least somewhat prepared them to **meet the challenges of the nature crisis**

70%

say their place of study takes action **to limit its negative impact** on the environment and society

62%

say being a student at my place of study **encourages them to think and act to help the environment, and other people**



Key findings: Jobs and employers

59%

say whether a **role contributes to tackling climate change** will be important when applying for jobs

56%

say whether a **role contributes to tackling the nature crisis** will be important when applying for jobs

53%

say they want **their job to actively contribute to sustainable development**

71%

would accept a salary **£1000 lower** than average to work in a **company with a good social and environmental record**

50%

would accept a salary **£3000 lower** than average to work in a **company with a good social and environmental record**

46%

would accept a **salary £3000 lower** than average to work in a **job that contributes to positive social and environmental change**





Introduction



About the research



Aims

This research is designed to investigate **higher education students' experiences of teaching and learning on sustainable development**. The research aimed to assess student **attitudes to sustainable development** issues within their experience of education, their aspirations towards learning about sustainability and expectations of **their place of study, and also their** aspirations for **sustainability in employment** after their time in education.



The data presented in this report builds on the data gathered through **fifteen years of previous research** and continues to track changes in demand amongst students across the UK. Running since 2010-11, the research was updated in 2024-25 to include new areas of questioning on student experiences of learning about key topics encompassed by sustainability, as well as understanding in better detail their experiences of accumulating skills that can contribute to sustainability.

Method

The online survey was completed in **October and November 2024** by students across the UK studying in higher education. **9973 respondents** completed the survey, which was promoted on a national basis through the **NUS' database** and through **local promotions** by universities and students' unions.

The survey was incentivised with a **£1000 prize draw** and was promoted as a '**skills survey**', making no mention of sustainability, to avoid attracting only respondents with a prior interest in the subject. Additionally, the terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' were not used until the penultimate section of the survey to avoid influencing respondent understanding.



Analysis

The survey results have been weighted according to **gender, ethnicity and disability** to reflect available statistics for students in Higher Education available through the Higher Education Statistics Agency. The base sizes note the unweighted total responses, with the charts showing the weighted results. A full breakdown of respondent characteristics can be found in section 6. This report presents the findings for students studying higher education courses only.

Throughout the report, where analysis has revealed statistically significant differences between groups of respondents, these have been outlined. Significant differences are reported at **95% confidence level** unless specified otherwise.



Report focus

This report presents the findings in the following areas:

- **Expectations** for education and sustainability
- **Experiences** of sustainability in education
- **Sustainability skills** beyond education



What are sustainability 'skills'?

To help assess respondents' experiences of teaching and learning, the survey includes questions linked to a number of 'skills' that can be associated with the achievement of sustainable development. In 2024-25, the 'skills' were revised according to key references on competences for sustainability published since the last update to the 'skills' measured by the survey in 2015-16 including the [QAA/Advance HE Education for Sustainable Development Guidance \(2021\)](#), [UNESCO, Education for Sustainable Development Goals Learning Objectives \(2017\)](#), and the [QAA's 'A Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education' \(2023\)](#).

Able to think about both **short-term and long-term options** and understand how each might affect the world differently

Able to see how **different sustainability issues are connected** and find solutions that consider how they affect each other

Able to think about how **plans will affect different groups and communities** and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits

Able to use **different types of knowledge** and ideas to help solve problems

Able to understand, respect and appreciate **different cultures, traditions and ways of thinking**

Understand how **power and influence** works in our society, and the strategies that can be used to change the current situation

Able to **ask questions** and think carefully about information before forming opinions or solving problems

Able to set **clear goals** and create and complete step-by-step plans to achieve them effectively

Understand how **cultural norms and values** shape our opinions and actions, and how to challenge them to support sustainability

Able to **collaborate and communicate** well with others while being understanding and caring about their feelings and needs

Able to **think carefully about your own thoughts and feelings** and understand how they affect your actions and behaviour

Able to think about how **plans and actions will affect nature**, and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it



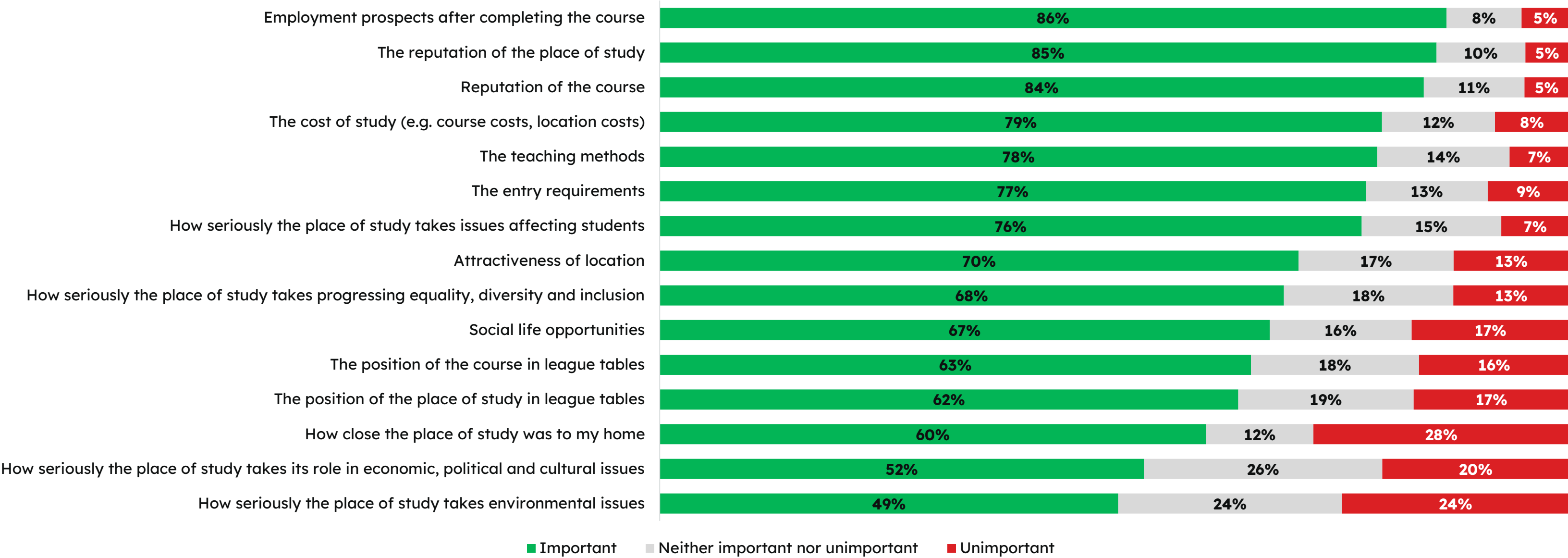


Expectations for education and sustainability



What factors influence choice over place of study?

Respondents were asked to think back to when choosing which university to apply to, and to consider which factors were important or not. The most important factors were reported as ‘employment prospects after completing the course’ (86%), ‘reputation of the place of study’ (85%) and ‘reputation of the course’ (84%). Around half of respondents said factors related to progressing sustainability were important in their choice. For example, 52% said how seriously the institution takes its role in economic, political and cultural issues was important, and 49% said this about how seriously the institution takes environmental issues.

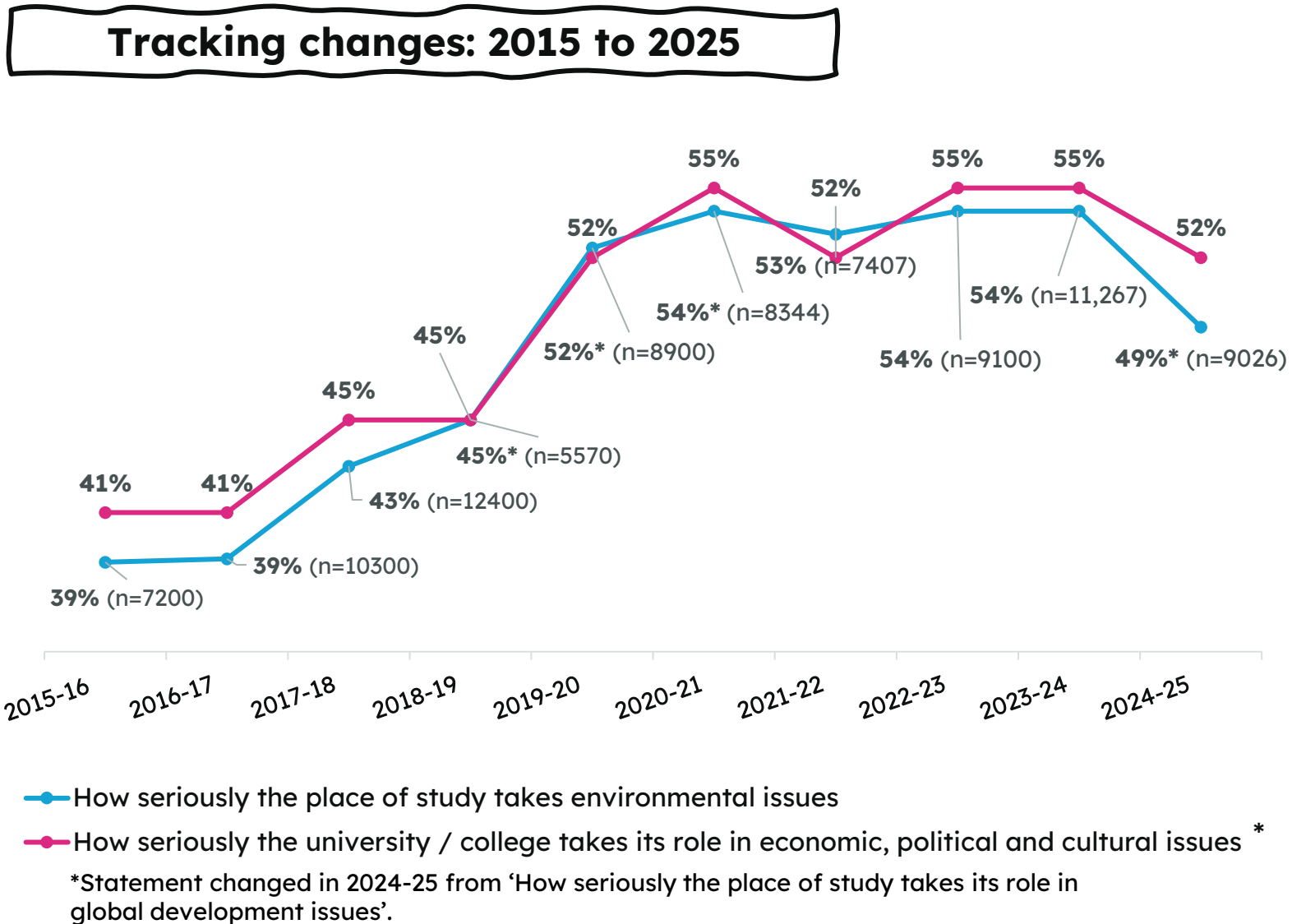
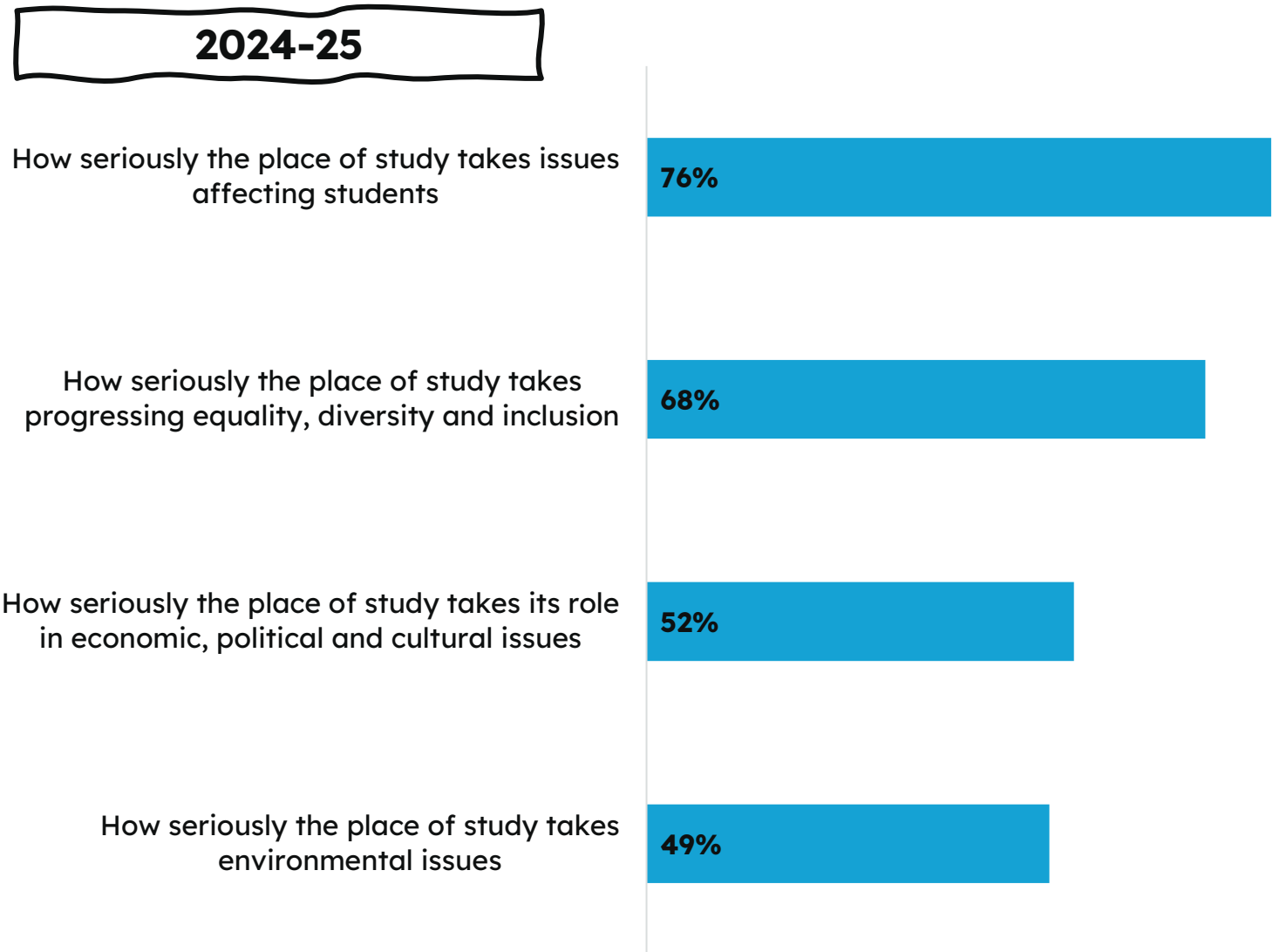


Q. How important were the following when choosing which college or university to apply to? [BASE: c9900 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’, ‘Rather not say’]



What role does an institutions' commitment to environmental and social justice play in choice of where to study?

Looking across the different factors considered by respondents, aspects of social and environmental justice range in importance when choosing their place of study. Three quarters (76%) of respondents reported that 'how seriously the place of study takes issues affecting students' was important when deciding their place of study. Over two thirds (68%) said 'how seriously progressing equality, diversity and inclusion' was important to their choice. By comparison, around half said 'how seriously the place of study takes environmental issues' (49%) and 'how seriously the place of study takes its role in economic, political and cultural issues' (52%) was important.



Q. How important were the following when choosing which college or university to apply to? [BASE: c9900 BALANCE: No response, 'Don't know', 'Rather not say'].

* Represents significant difference relative to the previous year at the 95% confidence level.



What factors influence choice over place of study?

There are significant differences amongst different demographic groups in what factors influence their choice over place of study.

Academic reputation and quality

- Global majority respondents are more likely than white respondents to say that the position of the place of study in league tables is very important.
- Respondents in their first year of study are more likely than those in their fourth year that teaching methods are very important.

Practical and career considerations

- International students from outside the EU are more likely than UK citizens to say that the entry requirements were very important.
- Non-disabled respondents are more likely than disabled respondents to say that employment prospects after completing the course is very important.

Lifestyle and environment

- International students from outside the EU are more likely than UK citizens to report that the attractiveness of location is very important.
- Men respondents are more likely than women respondents to say that social life opportunities are very important.

Institution action on sustainability

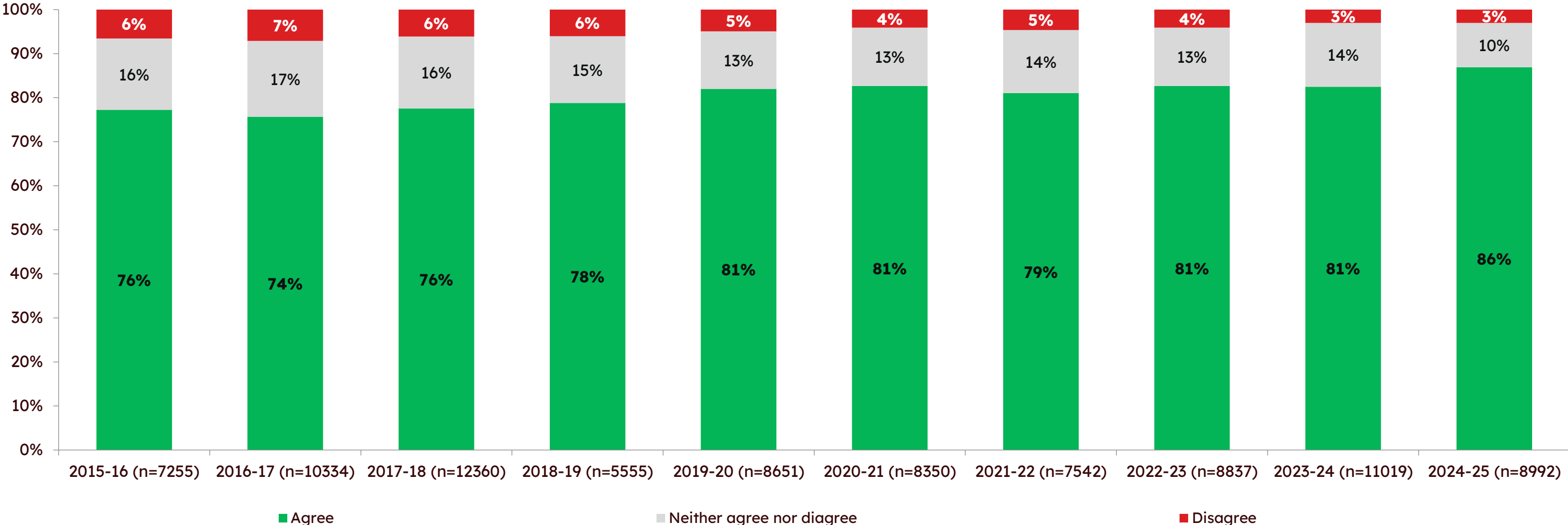
- Men respondents are more likely than women respondents to report that how seriously the place of study takes its role in environmental issues is very important.
- Global majority respondents are more likely than white respondents to say that how seriously the place of study takes its role in economic, political and cultural issues is very important.

Q. How important were the following when choosing which college or university to apply to? [BASE: c9900 BALANCE: No response, 'Don't know', 'Rather not say'].



Do students expect their place of study to help them make a positive difference to the world around them?

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree their place of study should help them make a positive difference to society and the environment. The majority (**86%**) of respondents agreed that their place of study should be obliged to do so, representing a **5%*** increase from 2023-24.



Q. How much, if at all, do you agree that places of study/apprenticeships like yours should be obliged to develop students'/apprentices' understanding and skills that make a positive difference to society and the environment as part of their courses? [BASE: 9833 BALANCE: No response, 'Don't know', 'Rather not say'.]

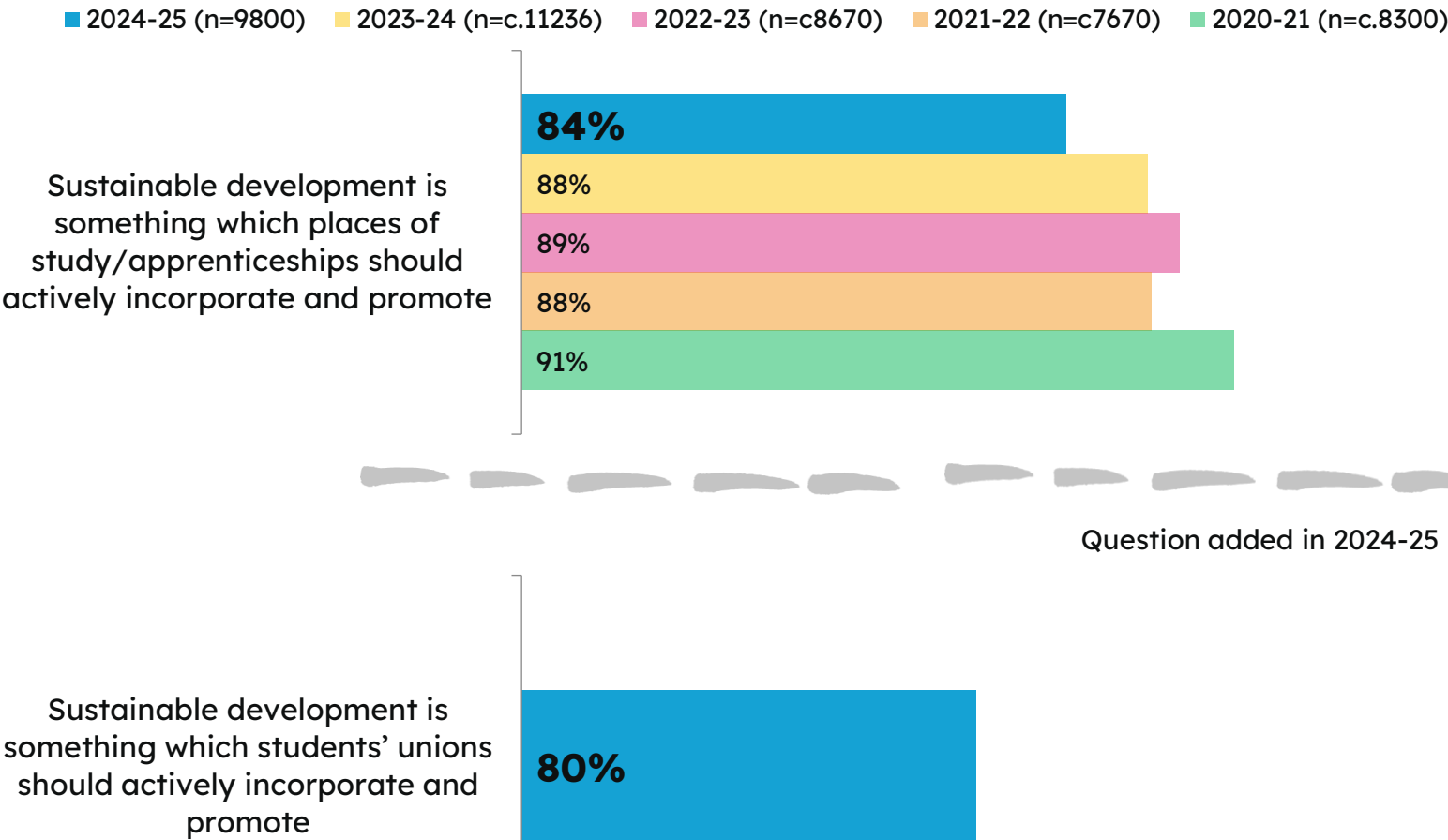
* Represents significant difference to a 95% confidence level.
Question text 2025-16 to 2023-24: 'To what extent, if at all, do you agree places of study should be obliged to develop student's social and environmental skills as part of their courses?'



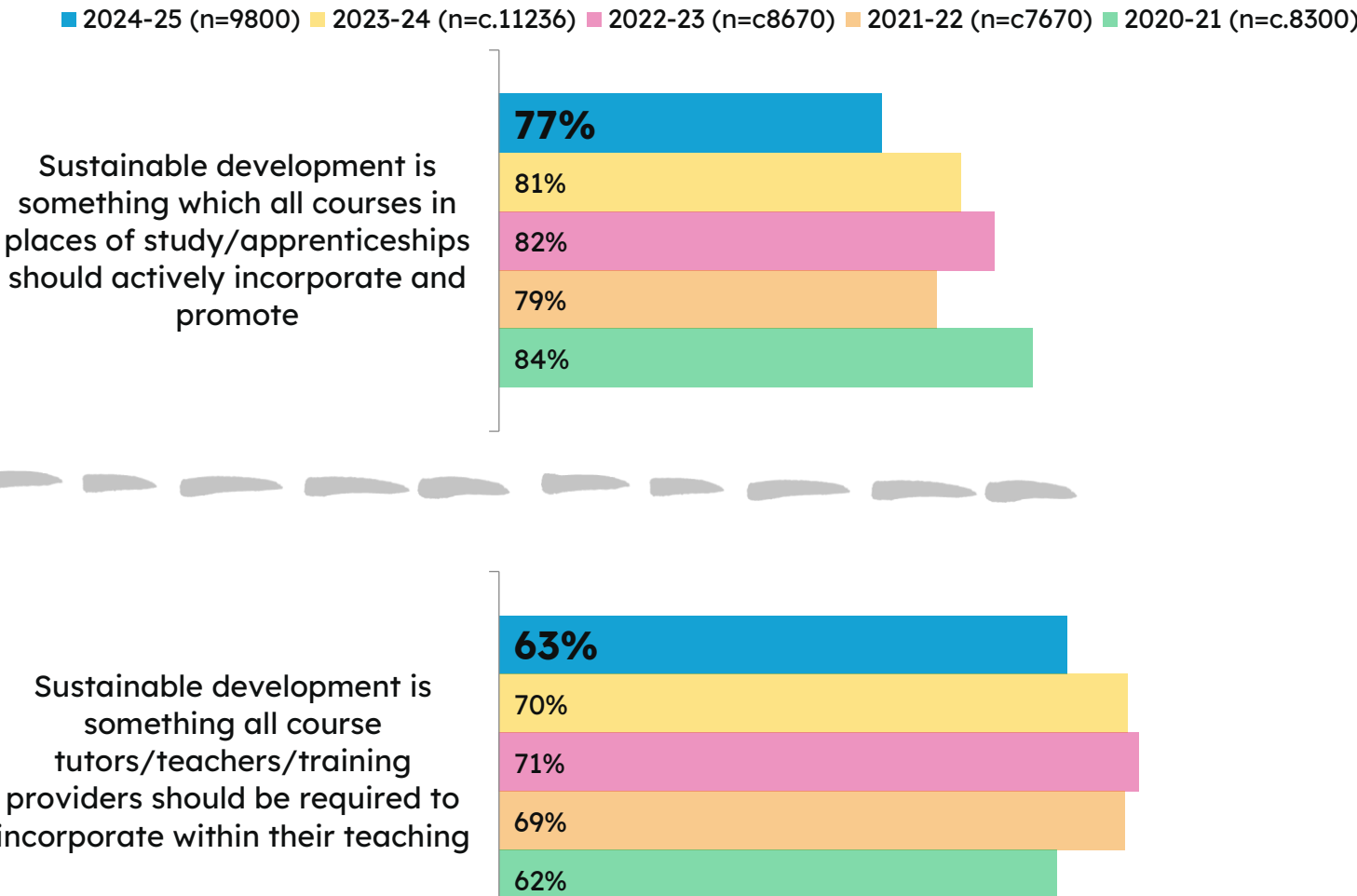
Do students expect their place of study to take action on sustainability?

The majority of respondents (84%) agree that their place of study should incorporate and promote sustainable development, while 77% agree that their course should. Both represent a significant decrease of 4%* from the previous wave of research in 2023-24.

Places of study and students' unions



Teaching and courses



Q. Taking the definition of sustainable development as: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. To what extent, if at all, would you say that you personally agree with the following statements? [BASE: see legend BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’, ‘Rather not say’]

* Represents significant difference to a 95% confidence level



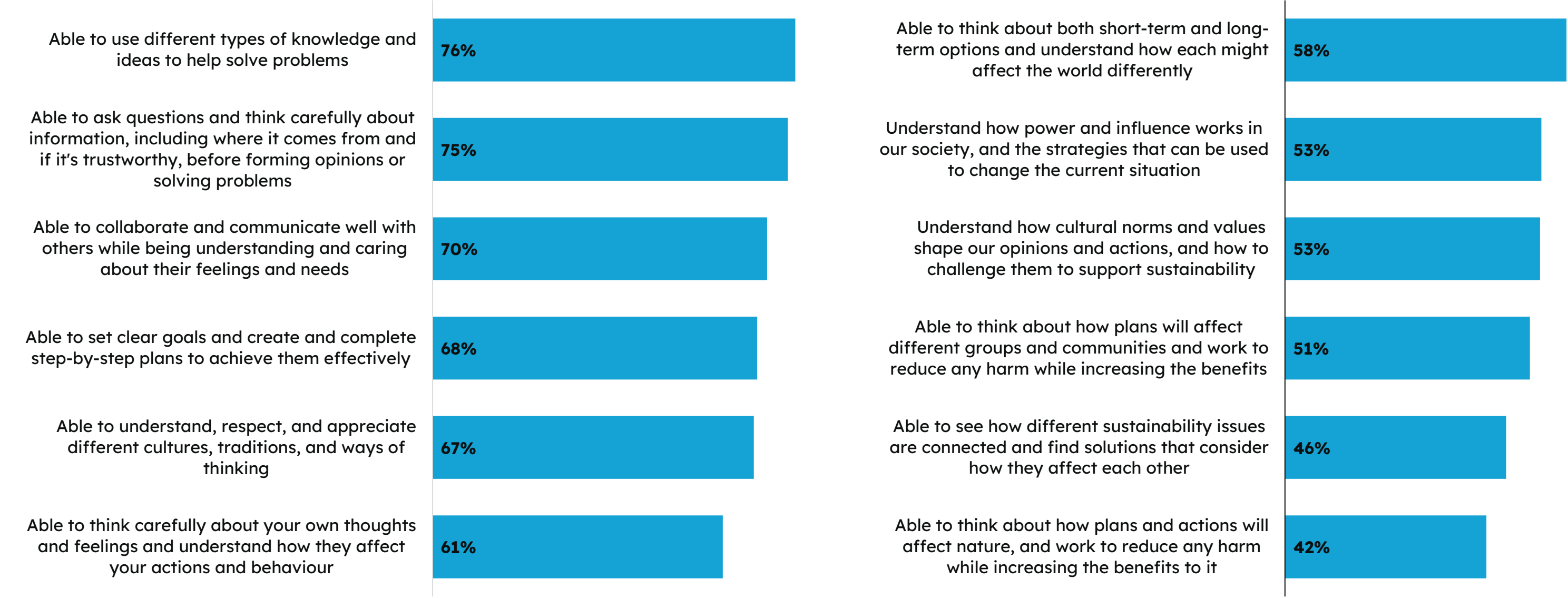
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Experiences of sustainability in education



What skills are currently covered in teaching?

We asked respondents which skills and/or understanding for sustainability had been covered in their teaching. Three quarters reported that skills ‘to use different types of knowledge and ideas to help solve problems’ (76%) and to ‘ask questions and think carefully about information before forming opinions’ (75%) is currently covered in teaching. Less commonly reported is the ability to think about how plans and actions will affect nature, and to work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it’ (42%).



Q. Thinking of your time at your current place of study, have any of the following skills/understanding been covered in the teaching you’ve experienced so far? [BASE: 9775 BALANCE: No response]



What skills are currently covered in teaching?

There are significant differences amongst different subject groupings between what skills are currently covered in teaching. See page 44 for details of the subject groupings used in this analysis.

Able to see how different sustainability issues are connected and find solutions that consider how they affect each other

- Respondents on professional, vocational and applied courses are more likely to report this than those studying arts, humanities and social sciences.

Able to understand, respect and appreciate different cultures, traditions and ways of thinking

- Respondents who study health, psychology and life sciences are more likely to report this than those in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) courses.

Able to think carefully about your own thoughts and feelings and understand how they affect your actions and behaviour

- Respondents who study health, psychology and life sciences are more likely to report this than those studying arts, humanities and social sciences.

Understand how power and influence works in our society, and the strategies that can be used to change the current situation

- Respondents who study arts, humanities and social sciences are more likely to report this than those in STEM courses.

Understand how cultural norms and values shape our opinions and actions, and how to challenge them to support sustainability

- Respondents who study health, psychology and life sciences are more likely to report this than those on STEM courses.

Able to think about how plans and actions will affect nature, and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it

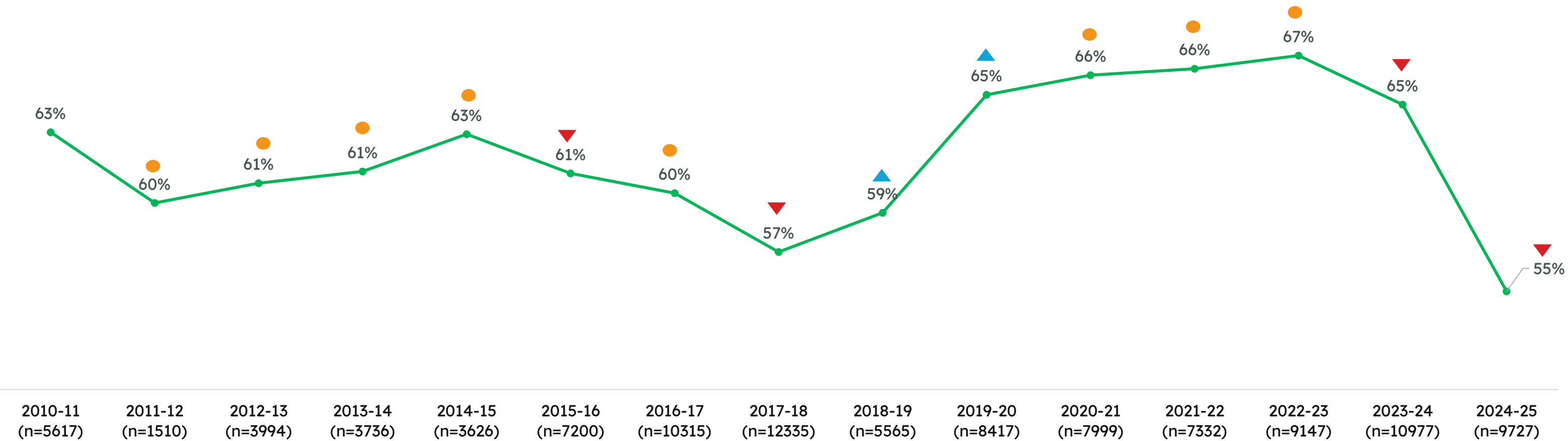
- Respondents who study STEM courses are 20% more likely to report this than those in arts, humanities and social sciences.

Q. Thinking of your time at your current place of study, have any of the following skills/understanding been covered in the teaching you've experienced so far? [BASE: 9775 BALANCE: No response]



Do students want to learn more about sustainability?

The latest wave of research in 2024-25 sees 55% of respondents say they want to learn more about sustainability a significant decrease of 11%* of students reporting that sustainable development is something they would like to learn more about. Hypotheses into why we've seen a decline in demand for learning more include increased precarity in other areas of students' lives, for example the ongoing cost of living crisis, making learning about sustainability a lower priority. Similarly, coverage of climate change in UK media has fluctuated during the course of the research with studies showing a drop in coverage since 2023 which may also have influenced perspectives. A further possibility is increased coverage in curriculums meaning students feel their learning is sufficient. Our survey will continue to monitor these trends; however, further research is needed to fully understand the reasons behind this shift.



Each year of study is compared to the preceding year to identify any significant differences with the following symbols identifying any significant change in reported agreement: ● No change compared to the previous year, ▲ Significant increase compared to the previous year, ▼ Significant decrease compared to the previous year.

Q: Taking a definition of sustainable development as: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. To what extent, if at all, would you say that you personally agree with the following statements? [BASE: see graph BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’, ‘Rather not say’

* Represents significant difference to the 95% confidence level.



Why do students want to learn more about sustainable development?

When respondents were asked why they would like to learn more about sustainable development, the most common response was concerns related to the environment and society.

Environmental and broader societal concerns	41
Professional/academic interest/aspirations	29
Lack of knowledge/desire to learn more	26
Personal responsibility and impact	21
Concern about the future/importance for future generations	16
General relevance/importance to today	10

To better understand how social, economic and environmental factors intersect

...to help me integrate environmentally responsible practices into my work, especially as technology becomes a key player in solving global challenges

I would like to be aware of the actions I can take to make a positive impact on the world

I believe in creating a lasting positive impact on my peers and future generations

Global warming devastating effect being experienced is enough to prompt everyone to embrace sustainability

A relevant topic that should be included in any curriculum that hopes to be relevant to the world today

Q. You said you would like to learn more about sustainable development. Please write why you would like to learn more in the box below.

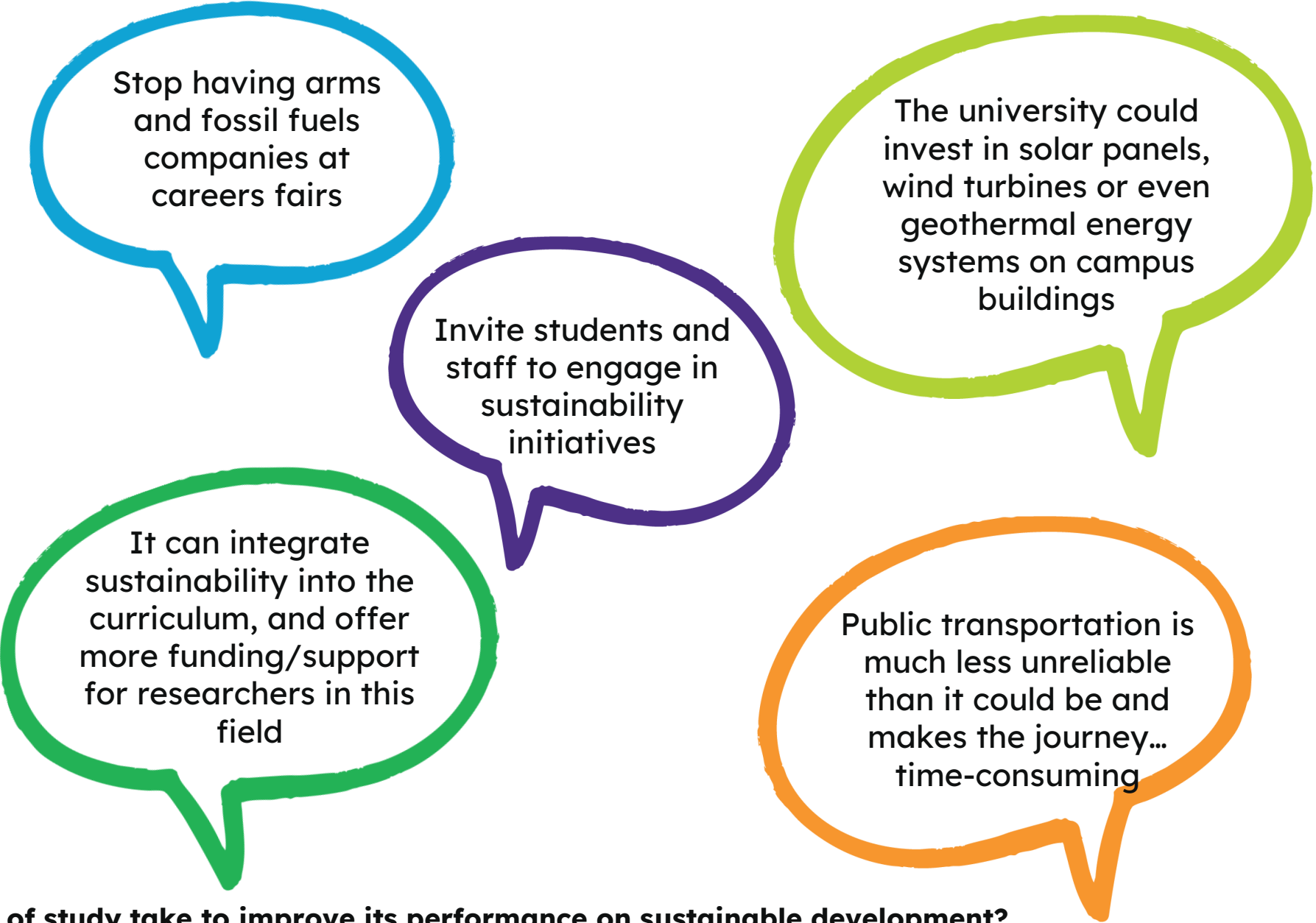
100 responses were coded. Please note that one response may fall under more than one code.



What actions do students want to see their place of study take to improve its performance on sustainable development?

When respondents were asked what actions they would like to see their place of study take, the most common response related to greater sustainable infrastructure on campus.

Greater infrastructure on campus to support recycling, renewable energy, efficient waste disposal and green spaces	36
More awareness-building by sharing information on careers and actions that support sustainable development, including actions their place of study is undertaking	23
Integrating in teaching, assessments and research	20
Supporting student and staff involvement/action in its sustainable development performance	9
Place of study is doing the best that it can	8
Increasing availability and accessibility of public transport on and around campus	6



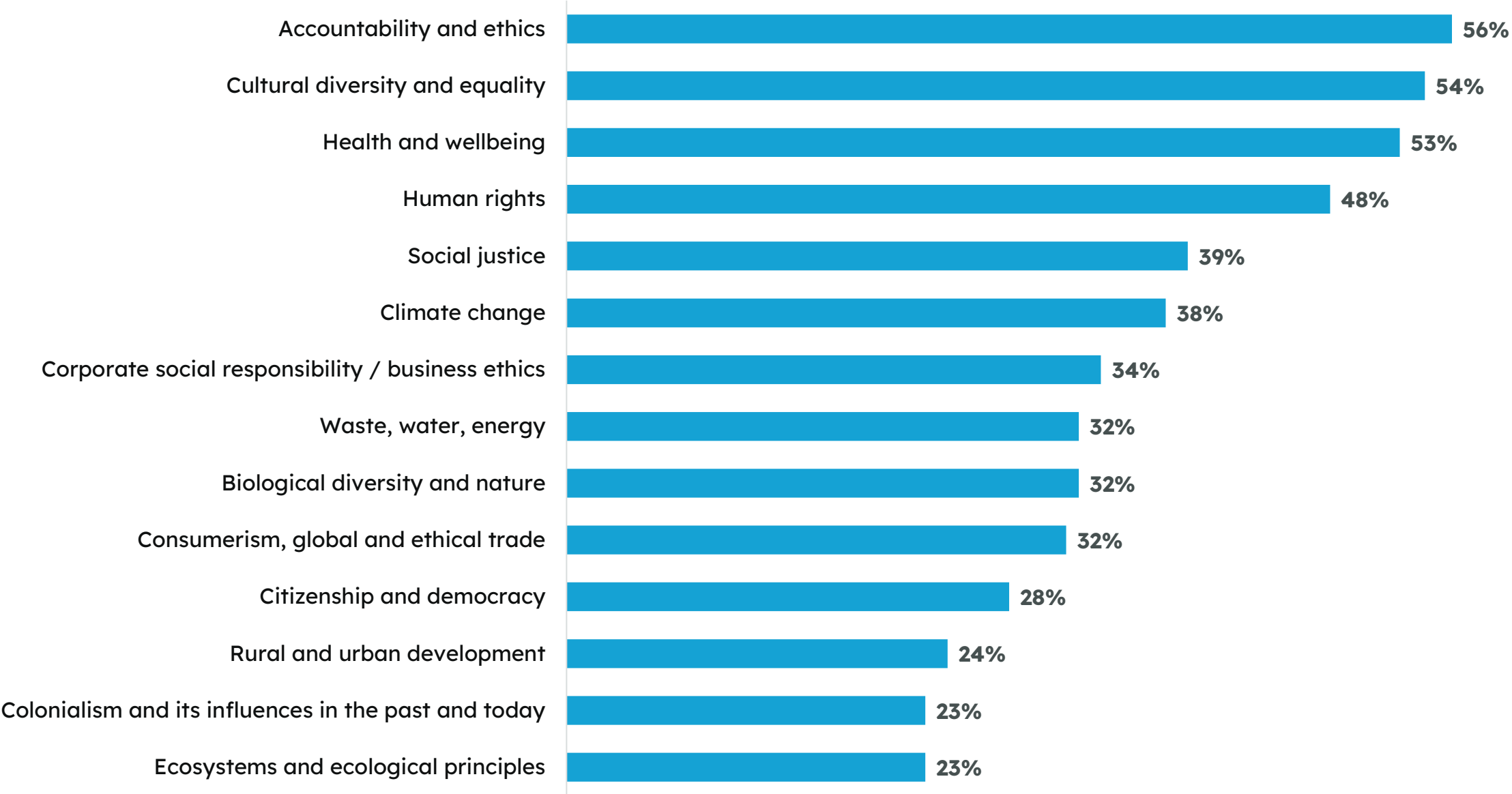
Q. Do you have any suggestions on what actions you would like to see your place of study take to improve its performance on sustainable development?

100 responses were coded. Please note that one response may fall under more than one code.



At students' current place of study, what issues have been covered in teaching?

When presented with a list of different issues encompassed by sustainability, over half of respondents report that the teaching at their current place of study has covered ‘accountability and ethics’ (56%), followed by ‘cultural diversity and equality’ (54%). Less commonly covered by teaching are issues related to ‘colonialism and its influences in the past and today’ (23%), and ‘ecosystems and ecological principles’ (23%).



Respondents who study arts, humanities and social sciences are more likely to say that **citizenship and democracy** is covered in their teaching than those in health, psychology and life sciences.

Respondents who study STEM courses are more likely to say that **biological diversity and nature** is covered in their teaching than those in arts, humanities and social sciences.

Respondents who study arts, humanities and social sciences are more likely to say that **colonialism** is covered in their teaching than those in professional, vocational and applied courses.

Respondents who study health, psychology and life sciences are more likely to say **social justice** is covered in their teaching than those in STEM courses.

Q. Thinking about your time at your current place of study, which of the following issues have been covered in teaching so far? [BASE: 9394 BALANCE: No response]



What impact has learning about these issues had on students?

When respondents were asked why they would like to learn more about sustainable development, the most common response was concerns related to the environment and society.

Personal awareness and perspective shifts: greater empathy, increased understanding of history and inequalities and rethinking assumptions about society, culture and work	55
Minimal or no impact	19
Career and academic aspirations: choosing sustainability career paths and applying sustainability skills to professional roles	13
Lifestyle and daily habits: adopting eco-friendly behaviours, more conscious of day-to-day impact	8
Social justice and ethical engagement: greater recognition of links between sustainability, structural inequality and human rights	6

Learning about climate change refugees changed my perspective on the impact of climate change and made me realise the collective effort that is necessary to delay such a devastating reality

Learning about sustainability... has shaped my values and future aspirations. I'm now focussed on building a career that actively contributes to sustainable development and positive change

Learning about colonialism and rural and urban development has deepened my understanding of historical inequalities and ongoing development challenges

Daily, I have become more conscious of my environmental impact. I now prioritise reducing waste by adopting habits such as using reusable bags, bottles and containers

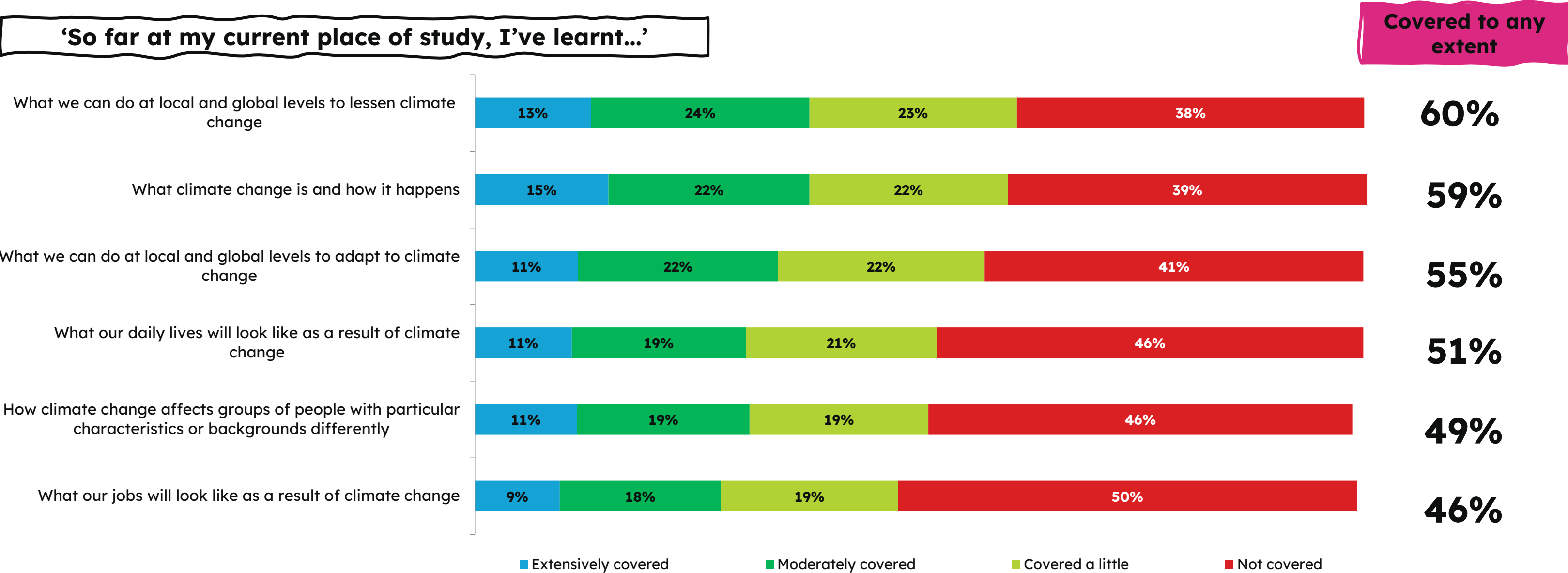
Q. What impact, if any, has learning about any of the issues in the previous question had on you personally?

100 responses were coded. Please note that one response may fall under more than one code.



What experience do students have of learning linked to climate change?

Over half of respondents report that, at their current place of study, they have learnt about what we can do to lessen climate change (60%) and what climate change is and how it happens (59%). In comparison, around half report never learning about how climate change affects groups of people differently (46%), what our daily lives will look like as a result of climate change (46%) and what our and jobs (50%) will look like as a result of climate change.

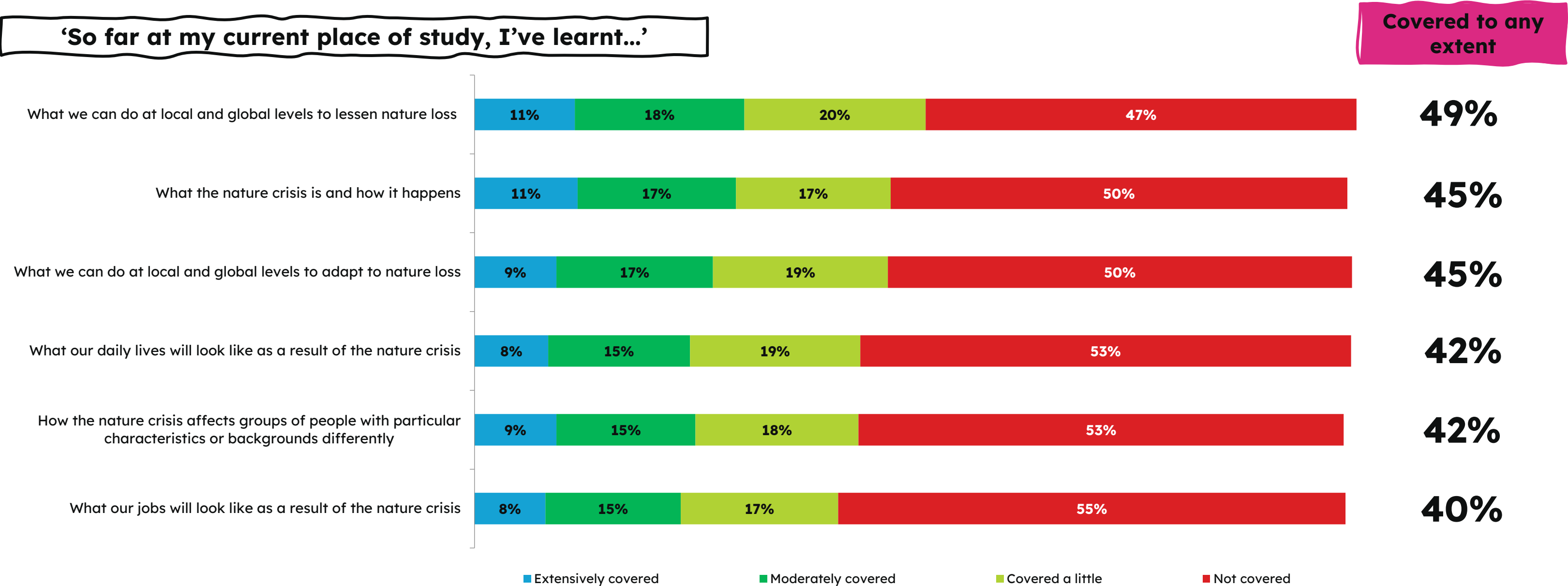


Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “So far at my current place of study, I’ve learnt..” [BASE: c9725 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’]



What experience do students have of learning linked to nature?

Half of respondents report that, at their place of study, they have learnt about what we can do to lessen nature loss (49%), what the nature crisis is (45%) and what we can do to adapt (45%). Only 2 in 5 (40%) say that they have learnt about the impact of the nature crisis on jobs.

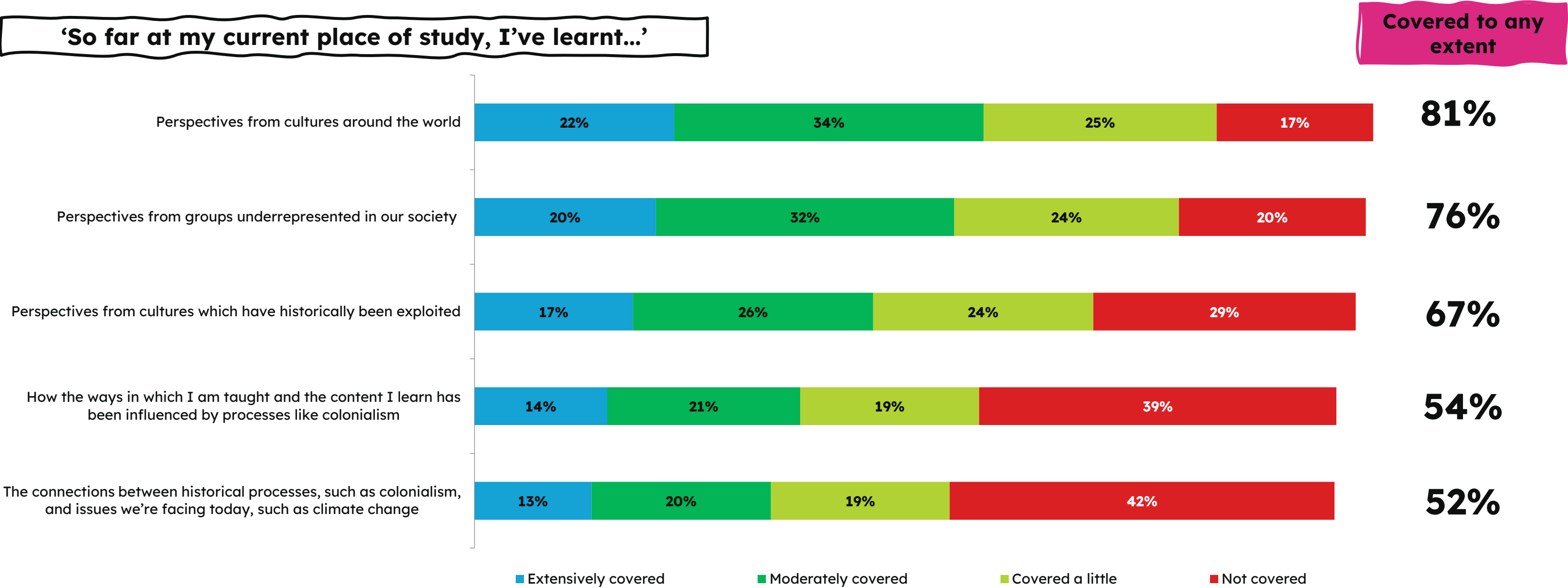


Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “So far at my current place of study, I’ve learnt..” [BASE: c9725 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’]



What experience do students have of learning linked to colonialism?

Most respondents (**81%**) report, through their time at their place of study, learning about perspectives from cultures around the world, while three quarters (**76%**) say they have learnt about perspectives from groups underrepresented in our society. **42%** report never learning about the connections between historical processes and issues we're facing today.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "So far at my current place of study, I've learnt.." [BASE: c9650 BALANCE: No response, 'Don't know']



What experiences do students have of learning linked to climate change, nature and colonialism?

There are significant differences amongst respondents subject grouping in their reported experience of learning about climate change, nature and colonialism. See page 44 for details of the subject groupings used in this analysis.

Arts, humanities and social sciences

- Respondents are **most likely to report covering the connections between historical processes and issues we're facing today** during learning than any other respondents.
- Respondents are **most likely to report covering perspectives from cultures which have been historically exploited** than any other respondents.

Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)

- Respondents are **least likely to report covering perspectives from groups underrepresented in our society** during learning than any other respondents.
- Respondents are **least likely to report learning about perspectives from cultures around the world** than any other respondents.

Health, psychology and life sciences

- Respondents are **least likely to report covering what climate change is and how it happens** during teaching than any other respondents.
- Respondents are **least likely to report covering what we can do at local and global levels to lessen climate change** than any other respondents.

Professional, vocational and applied courses

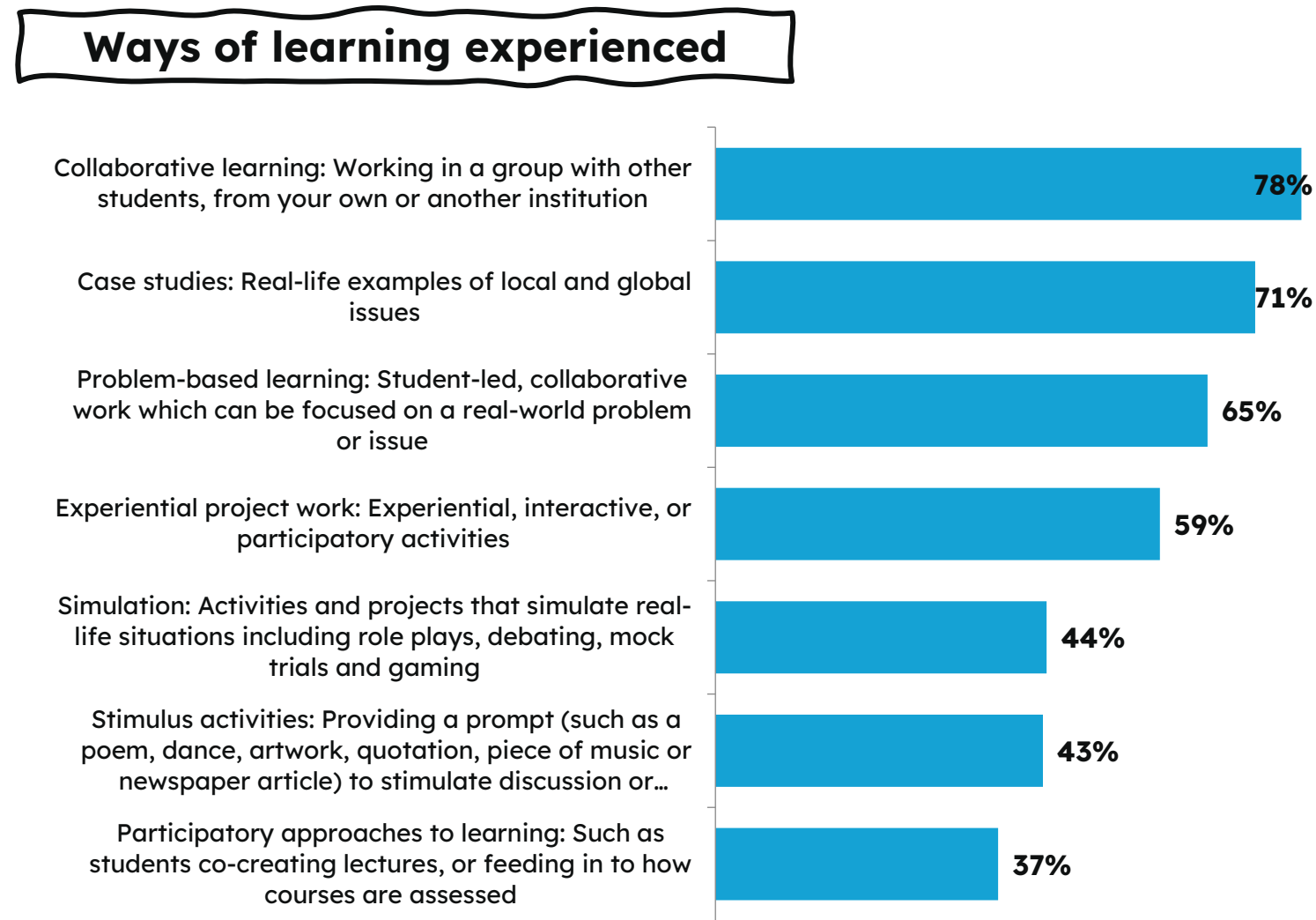
- Respondents are **most likely to report covering what we can do at local and global levels to lessen nature loss** during teaching than any other respondents.
- Respondents are **most likely to report what our daily lives will look like as a result of the nature crisis** than any other respondents.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "So far at my current place of study, I've learnt.." [BASE: c8959 BALANCE: No response, 'Don't know']

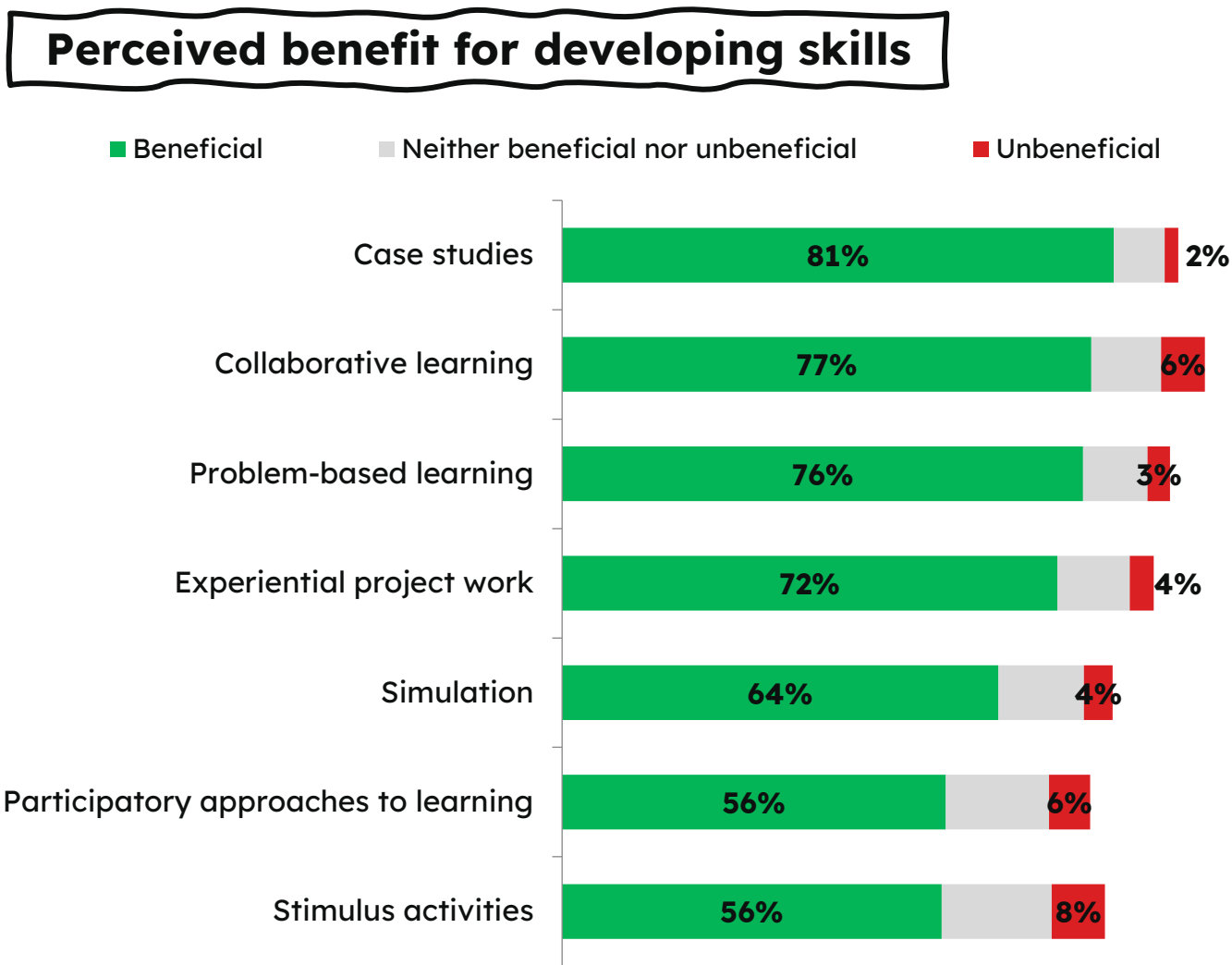


What ways of learning have students experienced, and how beneficial have they found them?

Reflecting on their learning experiences just over three quarters (**78%**) of respondents report experiencing ‘collaborative learning’ on their current course, however only **37%** say they have experienced ‘participatory approaches to learning’. Think of the benefit they’ve gained from different approaches, **81%** said they found case studies beneficial, compared to **56%** reporting that participatory approaches or ‘stimulus activities’ are beneficial.



Q. Thinking specifically about your current course, which of the following ways of learning have you experienced? [BASE: 9300 BALANCE: No response]

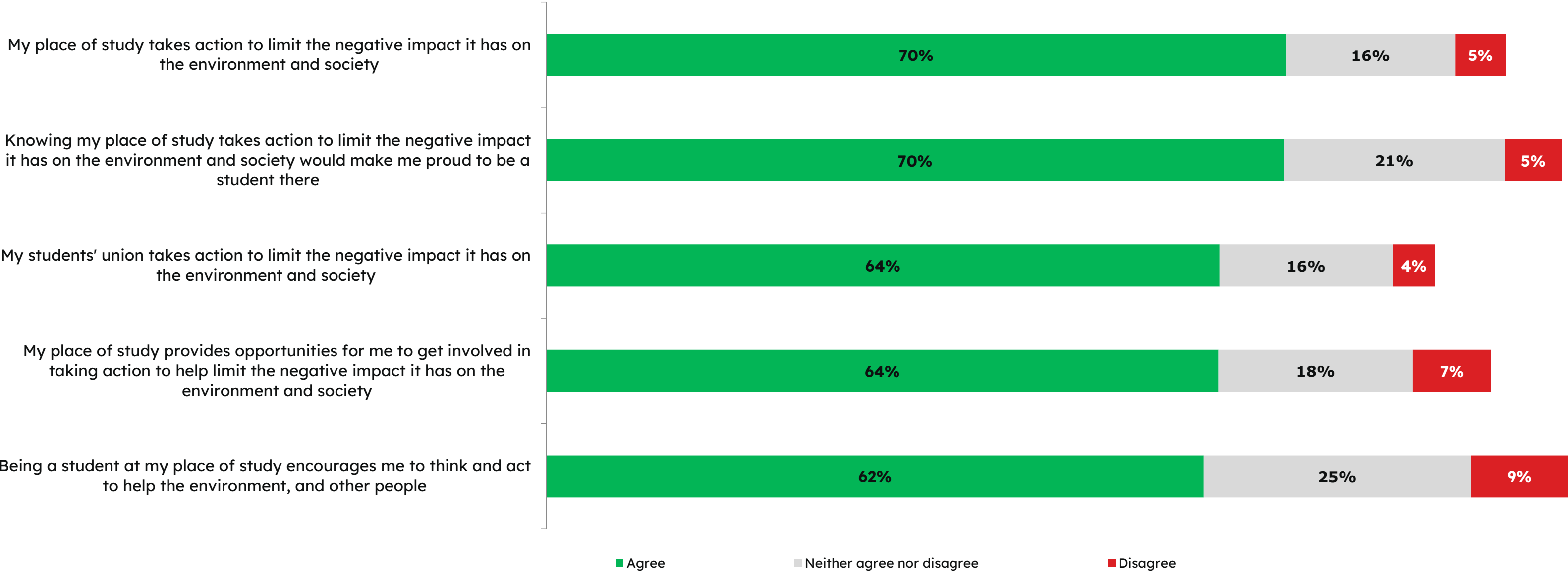


Q. And how beneficial have you found each of these ways of learning in terms of developing your skills and knowledge on the issues they have involved? [BASE: 9300 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’]
Question wording changed from ‘helpful’ (2023-24) to ‘beneficial’.



What impression do students have of their place of study in terms of its sustainability action?

Respondents were asked to extent to which they agree with a range of statements related to their current place of study’s action on sustainability. 7 in 10 (**70%**) agreed that their place of study takes action to limit its negative impact on the environment and society, and knowing the place of study takes this action makes them proud to be a student there.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [BASE: c.9800 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’, ‘Not applicable’]





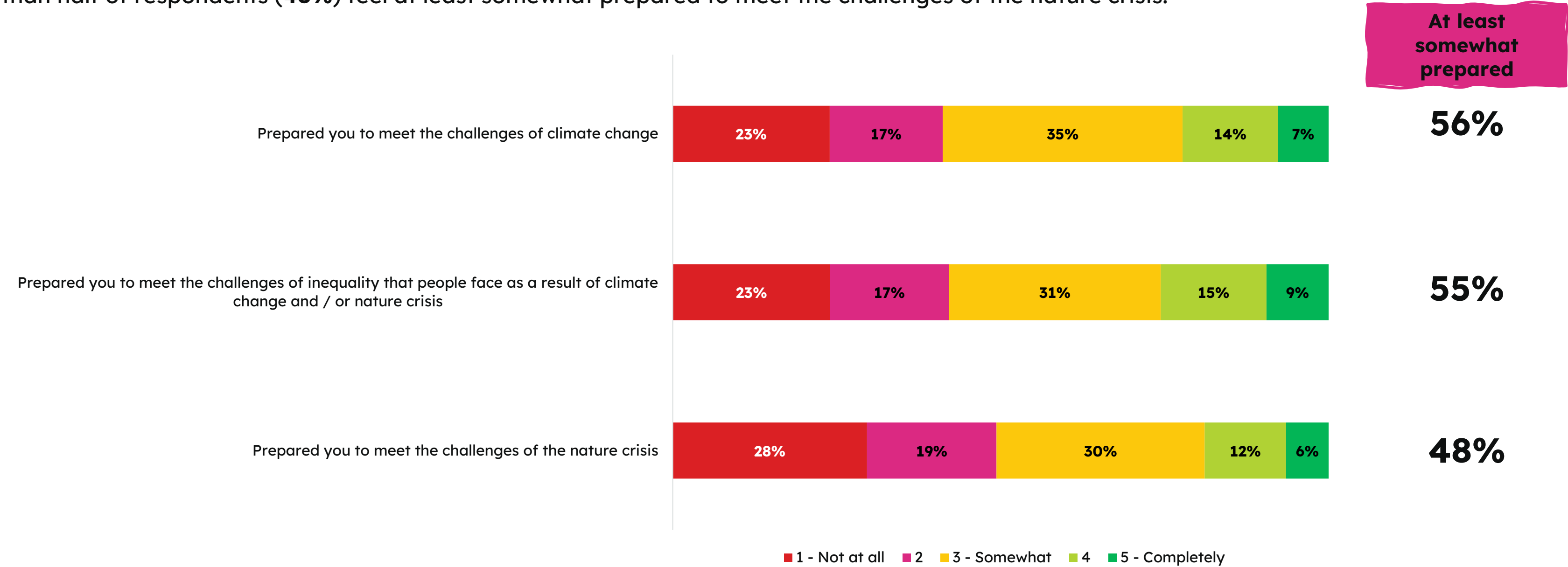
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Sustainability beyond education



How prepared by their education do students feel to meet current sustainability challenges?

Just over half of respondents report that their education has **at least somewhat prepared** them to meet the challenges of climate change (56%) and the challenges of inequalities that people face as a result of climate change and/or nature crisis (55%). By comparison, just less than half of respondents (48%) feel at least somewhat prepared to meet the challenges of the nature crisis.



Q. How much, if at all, would you say your education has.. [BASE: c9660 BALANCE: No response]



How prepared by their education do students feel to meet current sustainability challenges, and how does this vary by subject?

There are significant differences amongst different subject groupings in how prepared students feel to meet sustainability challenges. See page 44 for details of the subject groupings used in this analysis.

Arts, humanities and social sciences

- Respondents are **more likely to report feeling prepared by their education to meet the challenges of climate change** than those in health, psychology and life sciences.
- Respondents are **more likely to report feeling prepared to meet the challenges of the nature crisis** than those in health, psychology and life sciences.

Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)

- Respondents are **more likely to report feeling prepared by their education to meet the challenges of climate change** than respondents in arts, humanities and social sciences, and health, psychology and life sciences.

Health, psychology and life sciences

- Respondents are **least likely to report feeling prepared by their education to meet the challenges of the nature crisis** than any other respondents.
- Respondents are **least likely to report feeling prepared to meet the challenges of inequality that people face as a result of climate change and/or nature crisis** than any other respondents.

Professional, vocational and applied courses

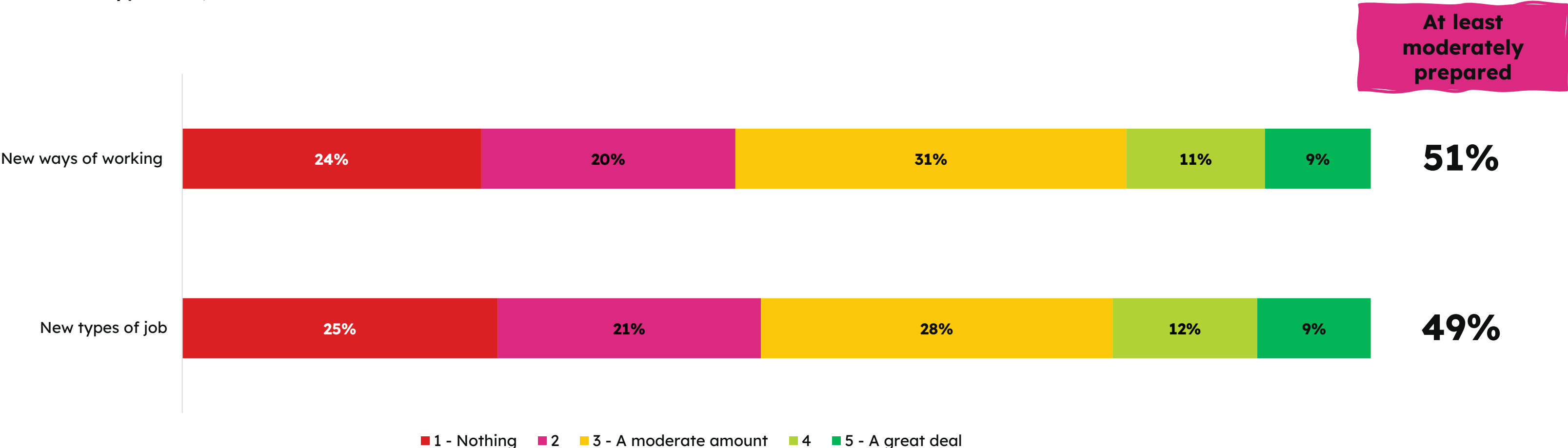
- Respondents are **more likely to report feeling prepared by their education to meet challenges of the nature crisis** than those in arts, humanities and social sciences and health, psychology and life sciences.
- Respondents are **most likely to report feeling prepared the challenges of inequality that people face as a result of climate change and / or nature crisis** than any other respondents.

Q. How much, if at all, would you say your education has.. [BASE: c9660 BALANCE: No response]



How prepared do students feel for ‘green’ jobs and ways of working?

Respondents were introduced to the effect tackling climate change and nature loss and achieving sustainable development will have on ways of working and the types of job available before being asked how much they think their education has prepared them for this. Around half of respondents report that their education has made them feel prepared (moderately to a great deal) for new ways of working (**42%**) and new types of jobs (**70%**).



Respondents who study professional, vocational and applied courses are more likely to report feeling prepared for **new ways of working** than any other respondents.

Respondents who study health, psychology and life sciences are less likely to report feeling prepared for **new types of job** than any other respondents.

Q. Tackling climate change and nature loss, and achieving sustainable development, will mean businesses/employers changing their ways or working and new types of job being created. How much do you think your education has prepared you for the new ways of working and/or new types of jobs needed to tackle climate change and nature loss? [BASE: c9620 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’]



What skills do students think will be important for new types of working and new jobs?

When respondents were asked what skills they think will be important for people to have for new ways of working or new types of jobs to tackle climate change and the nature crisis, analytical skills were the most common response. Respondents' responses have then been matched with the sustainability 'skills' referenced throughout this report. The overlap between respondents' verbatim answers and the 'sustainability skills' is highlighted by colour.

Understand how **power and influence** works in our society, and the strategies that can be used to change the current situation

Able to think about how **plans and actions will affect nature**, and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it

Able to **collaborate and communicate well** with others while understanding and caring about their feelings and needs



Analytical skills: critical/logical thinking, problem-solving, innovation	41
Sustainability and environmental awareness: understanding of climate change, sustainable development, renewable energy	30
Adaptability and flexibility: openness to learning, proactivity and forward-thinking	15
Communication and collaboration skills: teamwork, negotiation and leadership	14

Able to see how **different sustainability issues are connected and find solutions** that consider how they affect each other

Able to **ask questions and think carefully about information**, including where it comes from and if it's trustworthy, before forming opinions or solving problems

Able to **understand, respect and appreciate different cultures, traditions and ways of thinking**

Q. And what skills and understanding do you think will be important for people to have for new ways of working or new types of job needed to tackle climate change and the nature crisis?

100 responses were coded. Please note that one response may fall under more than one code.



How important do students think sustainability ‘skills’ are to future employers?

High levels of importance of sustainability ‘skills’ to future employers were reported by most respondents. An ability to ‘set clear goals... and complete step-by-step plans to achieve them effectively’ attracted the highest levels of reported importance (86%).



Q. How important do you think it is for your future employers that the people they hire have these skills and understanding? [BASE: c9550 BALANCE: No response, ‘Don’t know’]



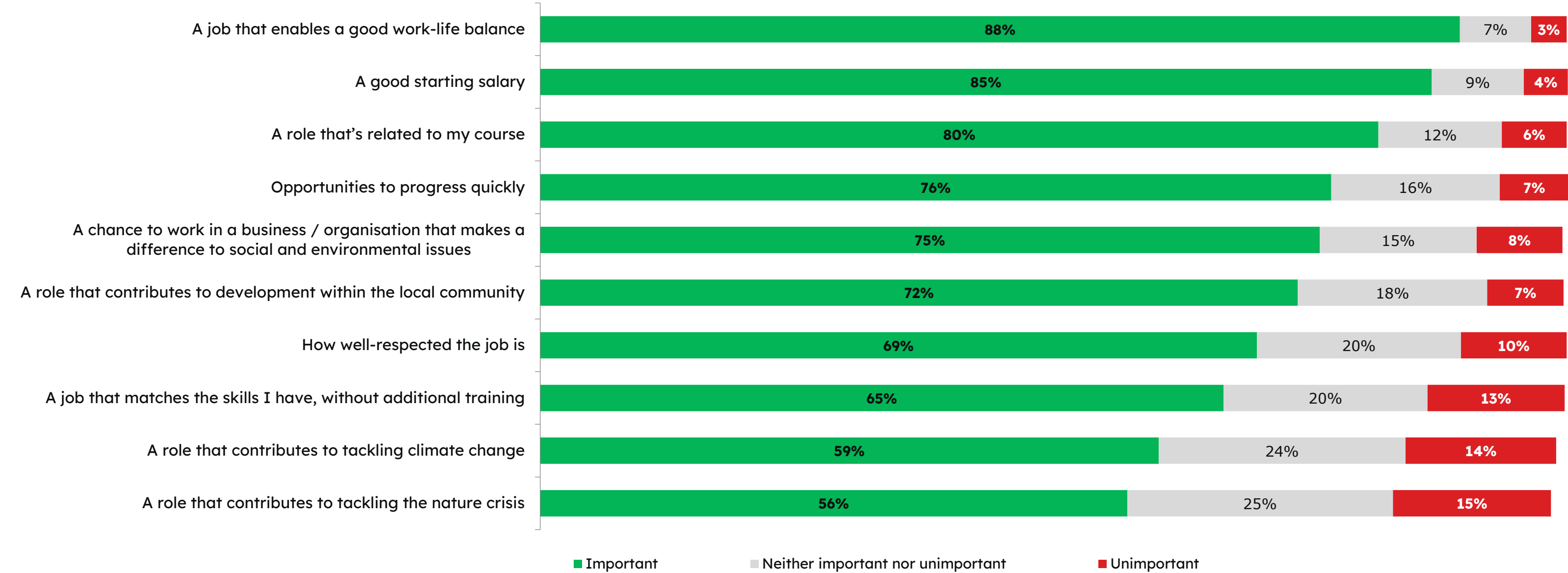
Comparing the responses from students on what ‘skills’ have been covered during their course so far and their perceptions of the importance of the skills to their future employers shows a disconnect between what they’re learning and what they think is important for employers. For example, **42%** say teaching has covered the ability to ‘think about how plans and actions will affect nature, and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it’ whereas **74%** think this ability will be important to their future employers. The top three skills ranked as most covered and most important, and least covered and least important are shown below:

	Coverage during teaching		Importance to future employers	
Most commonly covered/most important	Able to use different types of knowledge and ideas to help solve problems	76%	86%	Able to set clear goals and create and complete step-by-step plans to achieve them effectively
	Able to ask questions and think carefully about information before forming opinions or solving problems	75%	85%	Able to collaborate and communicate well with others while being understanding and caring about their feelings and needs
	Able to collaborate and communicate well with others while being understanding and caring about their feelings and needs	70%	85%	Able to use different types of knowledge and ideas to help solve problems
Least commonly covered/least important	Able to think about how plans will affect different groups and communities and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits	51%	76%	Understand how cultural norms and values shape our opinions and actions, and how to challenge them to support sustainability
	Able to see how different sustainability issues are connected and find solutions that consider how they affect each other	46%	74%	Able to think about how plans and actions will affect nature, and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it
	Able to think about how plans and actions will affect nature, and work to reduce any harm while increasing the benefits to it	42%	71%	Able to see how different sustainability issues are connected and find solutions that consider how they affect each other



What factors do students consider when applying for jobs?

Respondents were asked how important the following factors will be when considering which jobs to apply for. The majority (88%) said that ‘a job that enables a good work-life balance’ is important, followed by ‘a good starting salary’ (85%). Whilst ranked as least important, over half of respondents said they ‘a role that contributes to tackling climate change’ (59%) and the ‘...the nature crisis’ (56%) is important.

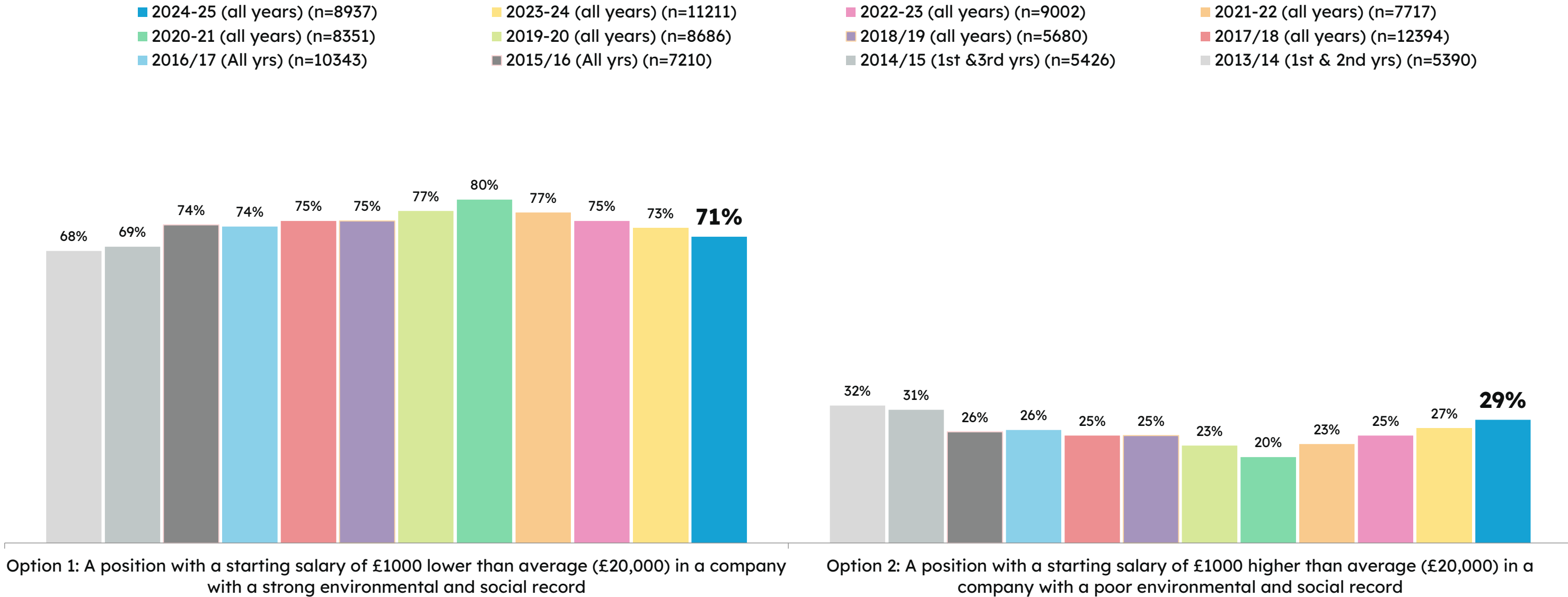


Q: Thinking about your future employer, how important, if at all, do you think the following factors will be when considering which jobs to apply for? [BASE: c9540
BALANCE: No response, ‘Other’]



What desire do students have to work for employers with positive environmental and social credentials?

Three quarters (**71%**) of respondents reported that they would choose a position with a starting salary of £1000 lower than average in a company with a strong environmental and social record.

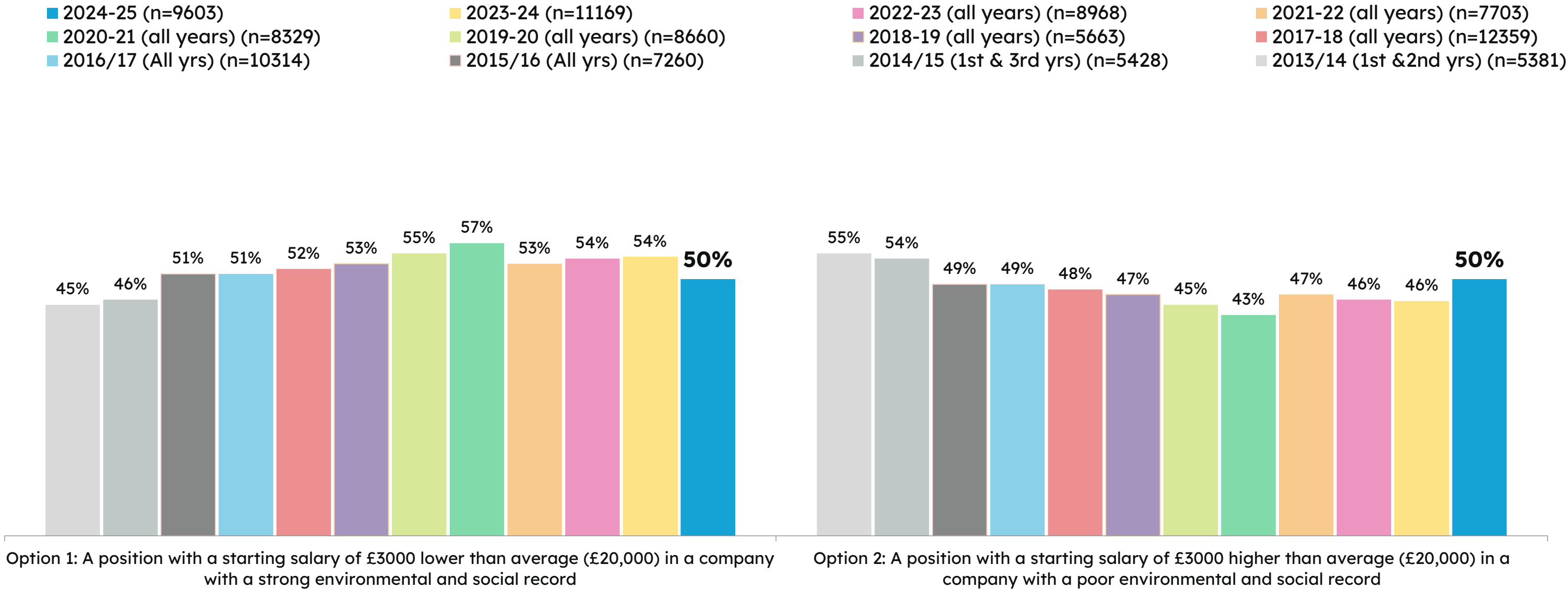


Q. For the following pairings, please select which option you think that you would choose in the future. [BASE: see graph BALANCE: No response]



What desire do students have to work for employers with positive environmental and social credentials?

Half (**50%**) of respondents say that they would choose a position with a starting salary of £3000 lower than average in a company with a strong environmental and social record. This represents a **4%*** decrease from 2023-24.



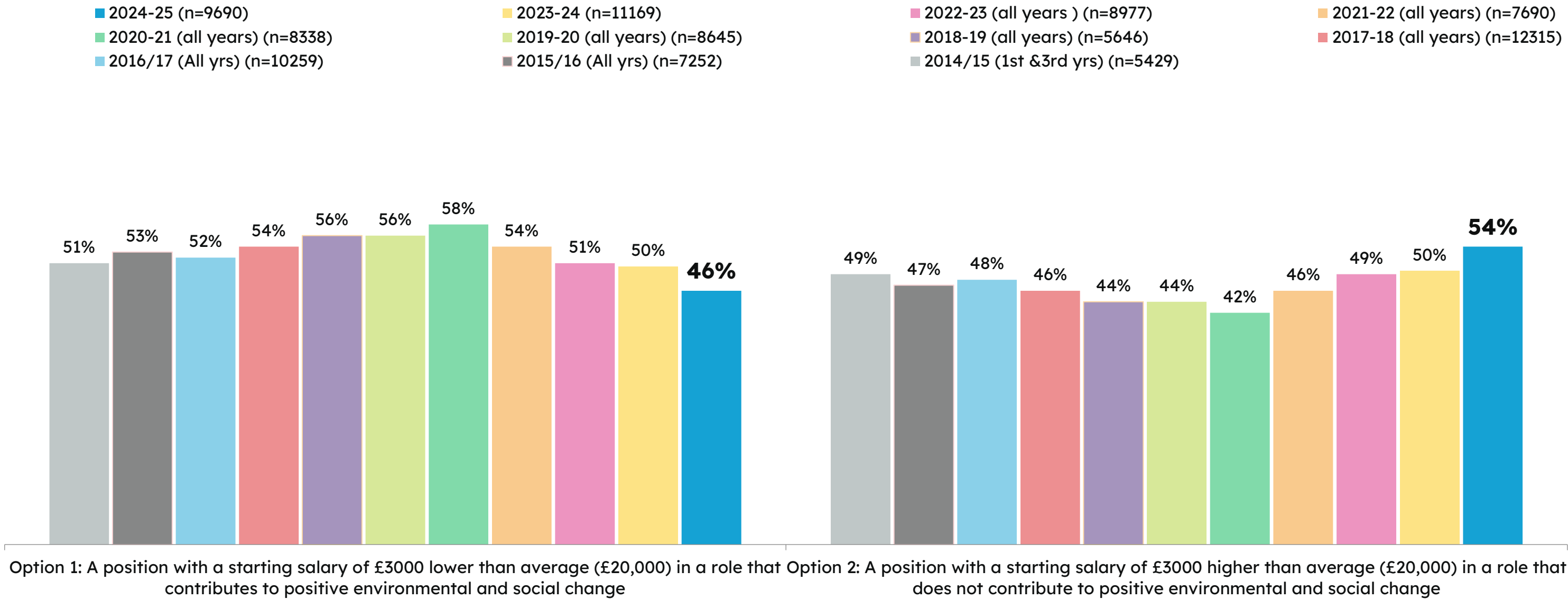
Q. For the following pairings, please select which option you think that you would choose in the future. [BASE: see graph BALANCE: No response]

* Represents significant difference to a 95% confidence level.



What desire do students have to work for employers that contribute to positive environmental and social change?

Under half (**46%**) of respondents report they would choose a position with a starting salary of £3000 lower than average, compared to **54%** who say they would instead choose a position with a salary of £3000 higher in a role that does not contribute to positive environmental and social change.



Q. For the following pairings, please select which option you think that you would choose in the future. [BASE: see graph BALANCE: No response]





Appendix: The respondents



Study level

BA / BSc / BEd / Foundation Degree / HNC / HND / other equivalent Level 4 qualification

65%

MA / MRes / MSc / MEd / MPhil / MBA / PGCE / other postgraduate qualification

27%

PHD / D.Phil / professional doctorate other doctoral degree

8%

Year of study (UG only)

1st year

41%

2nd year

26%

3rd year

25%

4th year

7%

5th year or more

2%



Subject groupings

Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)



34%



Arts, humanities and social sciences



27%



Health, psychology and life sciences



22%



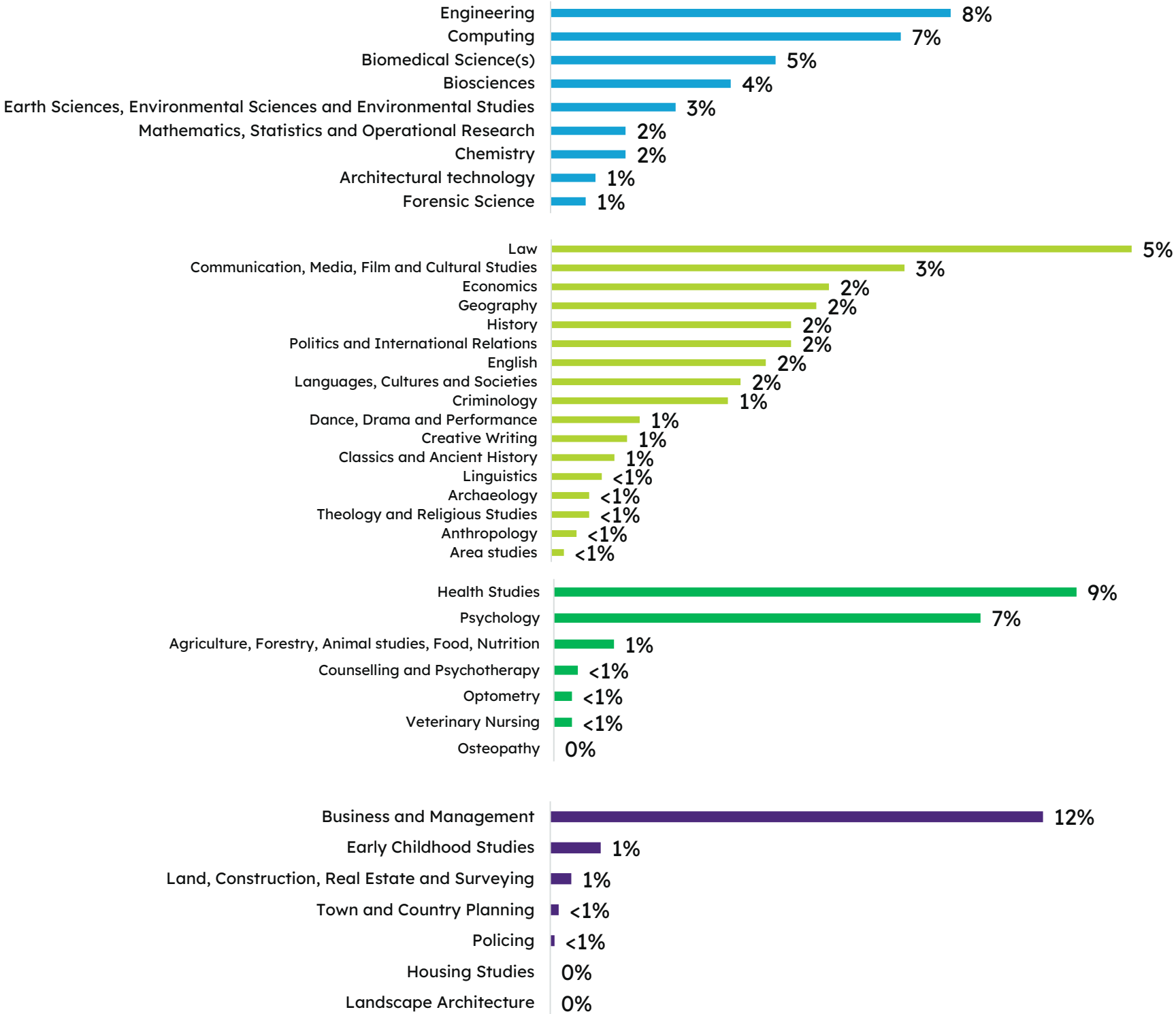
Professional, vocational and applied



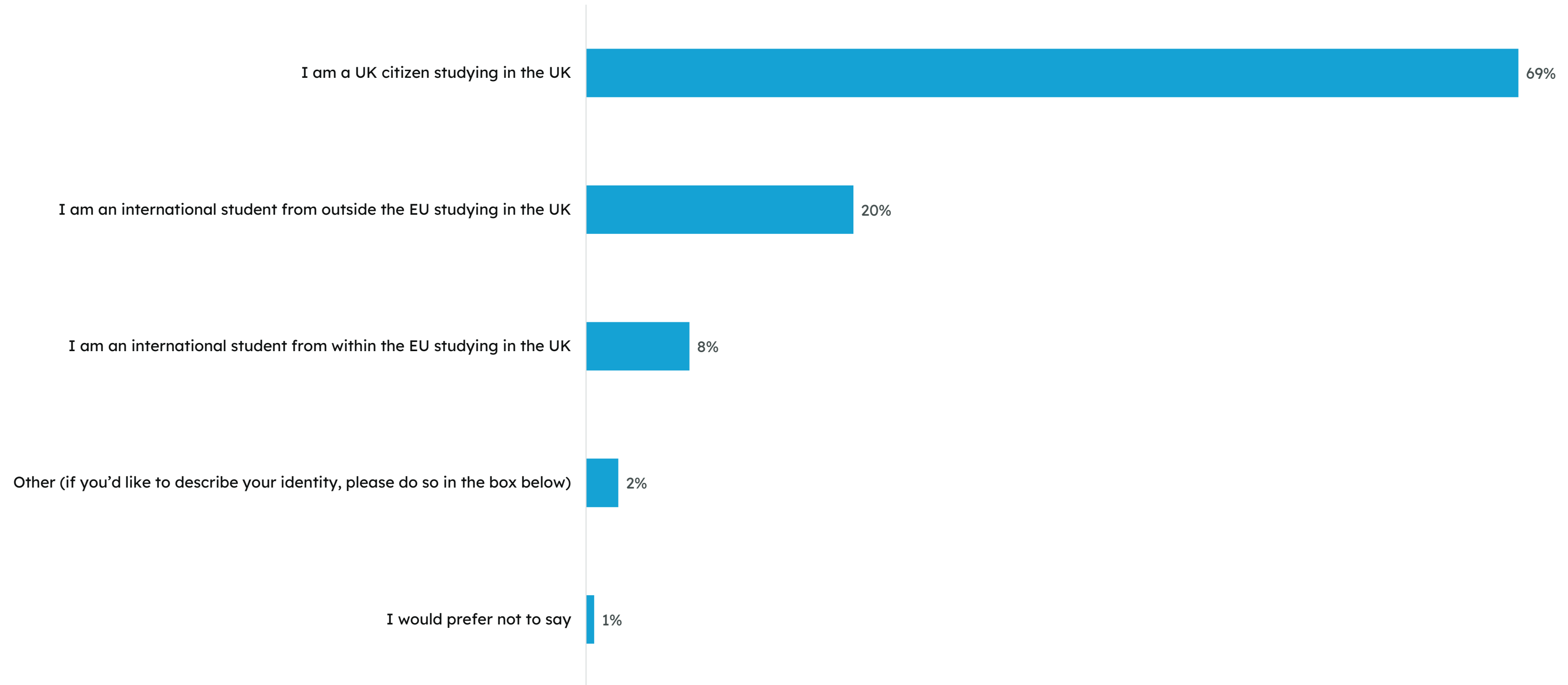
18%



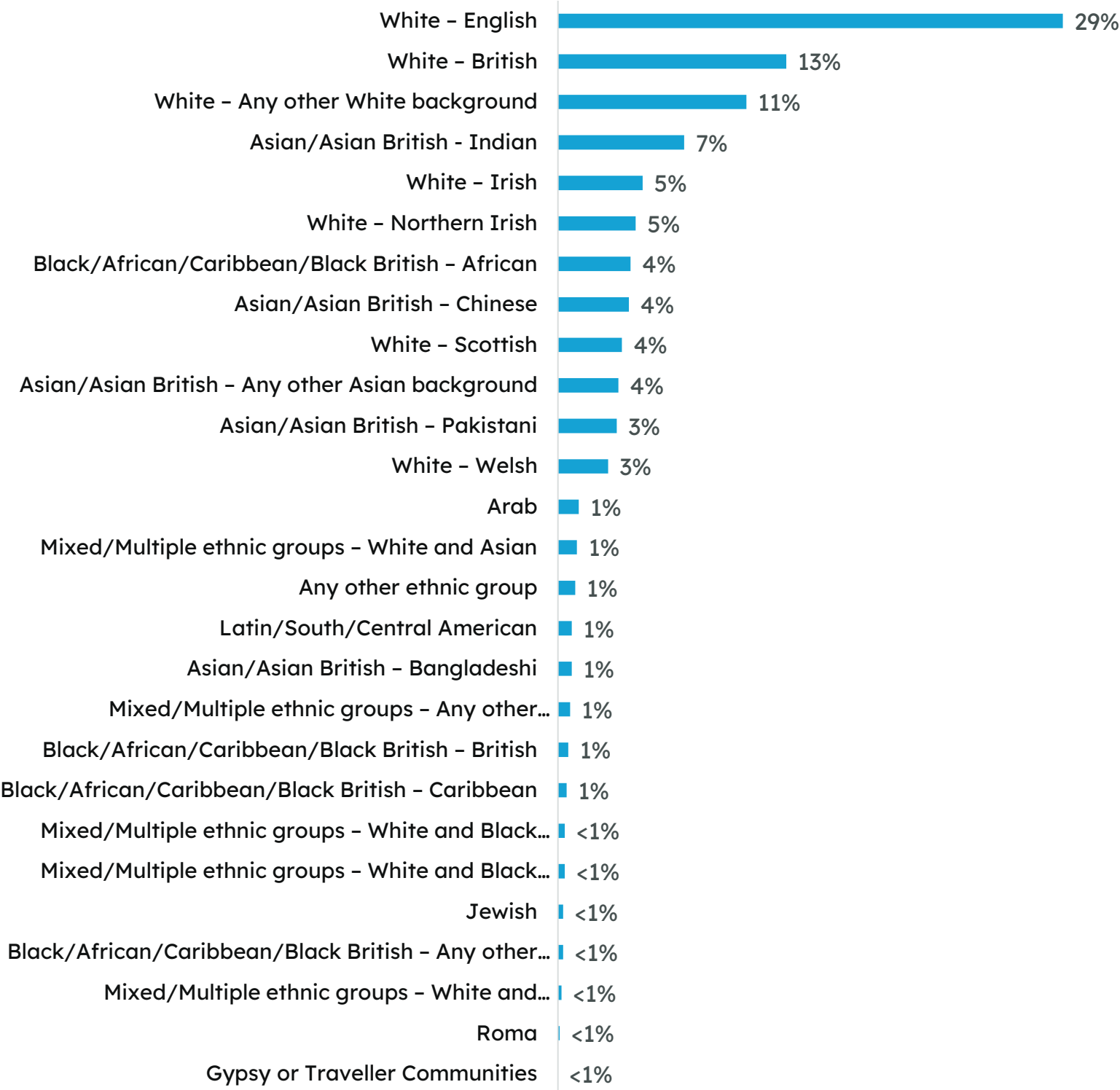
Subject



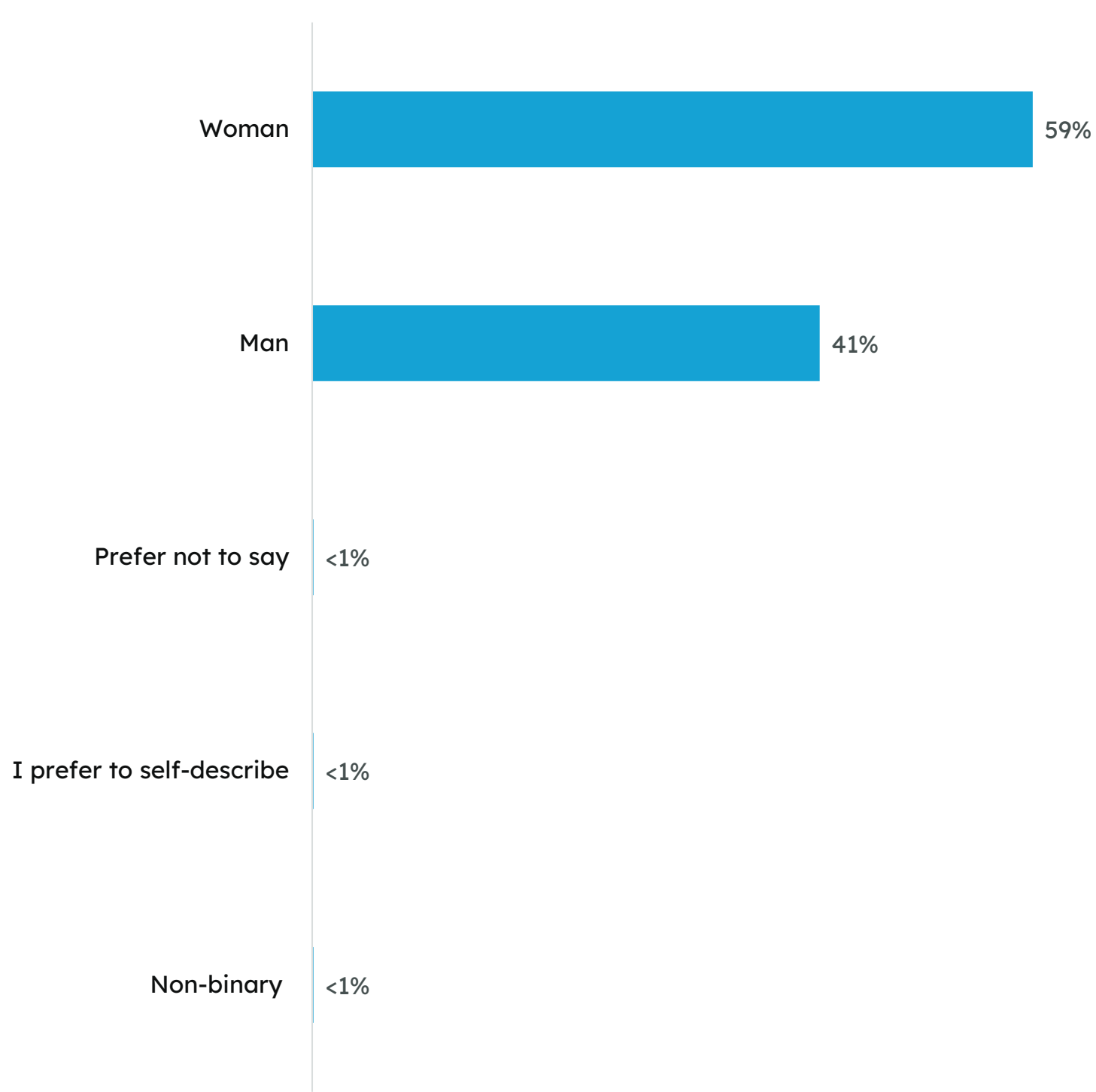
Nationality



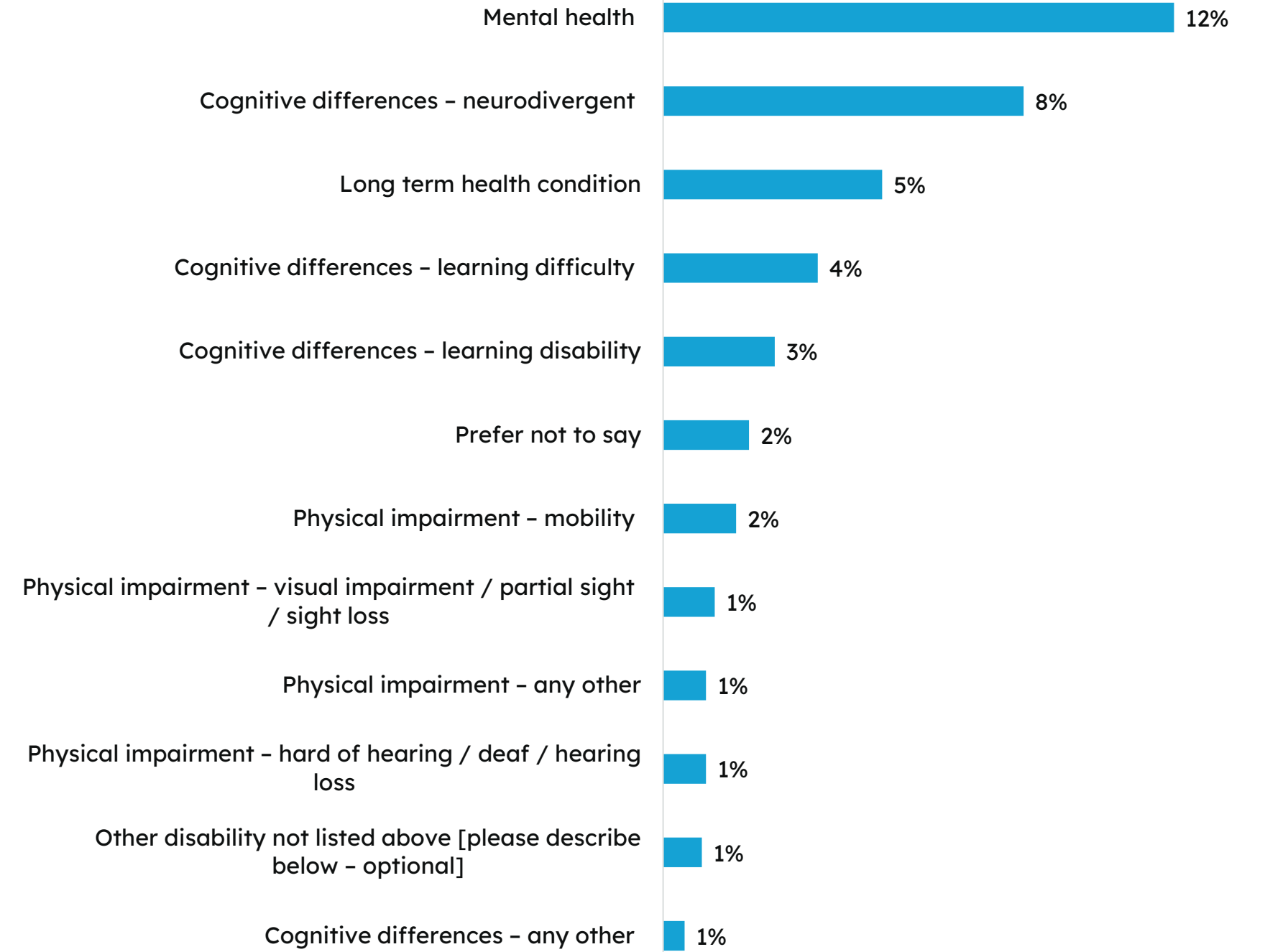
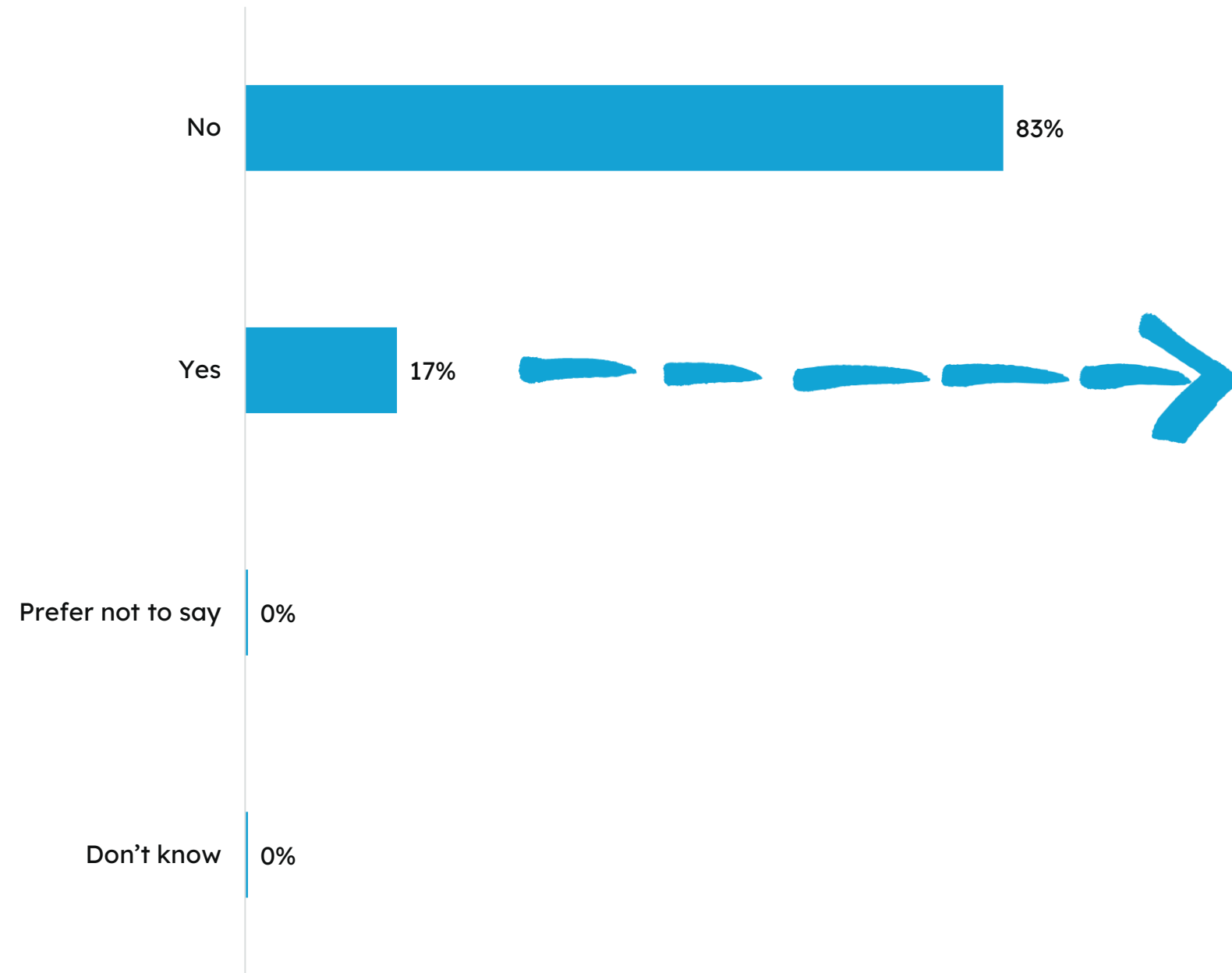
Ethnicity



Gender identity



Disability





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Get in touch at research@sos-uk.org