



Post-European Elections Poll 2019

Phil Newbold - phil.newbold@yougov.com

Laura Piggott - laura.piggott@yougov.com

The
Electoral
Commission



Methodology

- This report presents findings from the Electoral Commission's survey regarding the European Parliament elections in the United Kingdom in May 2019
- The sample is comprised of 2,262 respondents from across the United Kingdom. The sample has been weighted to be nationally representative of the UK's population by age, gender, region, and social grade
- The fieldwork was timed to launch straight after the results of the election were announced and ran from 28th May to 6th June 2019
- Figures may not total to 100% due to rounding
- Throughout the report, voters are defined as those who voted in the elections, and non-voters as those who did not

		Unweighted N	Unweighted %
Gender	Male	1,089	48
	Female	1,147	51
	In another way	13	1
	Prefer not to say	13	1
Age	18-24	128	6
	25-34	316	14
	35-44	362	16
	45-54	375	17
	55+	1,081	48
Social grade	ABC1	1406	62
	C2DE	852	38
Region	North East	61	3
	North West	173	8
	Yorkshire	131	6
	East Midlands	113	5
	West Midlands	113	5
	East of England	145	6
	London	158	7
	South East	226	10
	South West	167	7
	Wales	349	15
	Scotland	328	15
	Northern Ireland	298	13

Key findings (1)

- Most voters had registered to vote months before the election: 80% of voters had registered over 6 months in advance and few registered in the weeks before the election. Non-voters were more likely to not remember when they had registered.
- Similarly most people are aware of how to register to vote, with three-quarters (74%) correctly aware that you can register online.
- Changing the voting process (e.g. by allowing people to vote online) would make no difference for most people in whether they would have voted or not. Younger people however were more likely to vote if the process was made simpler; three-quarters of non-voters aged 18-24 said that they would have been more likely to vote if they could have done so online.
- Most are also in favour of making the voting process easier with 60% supporting a change to allow people to be automatically added to the electoral register when they receive a National Insurance Number. However a majority also support mandatory voter ID. Again, younger people are more likely to be in favour of measures to make registering to vote easier.

Key findings (2)

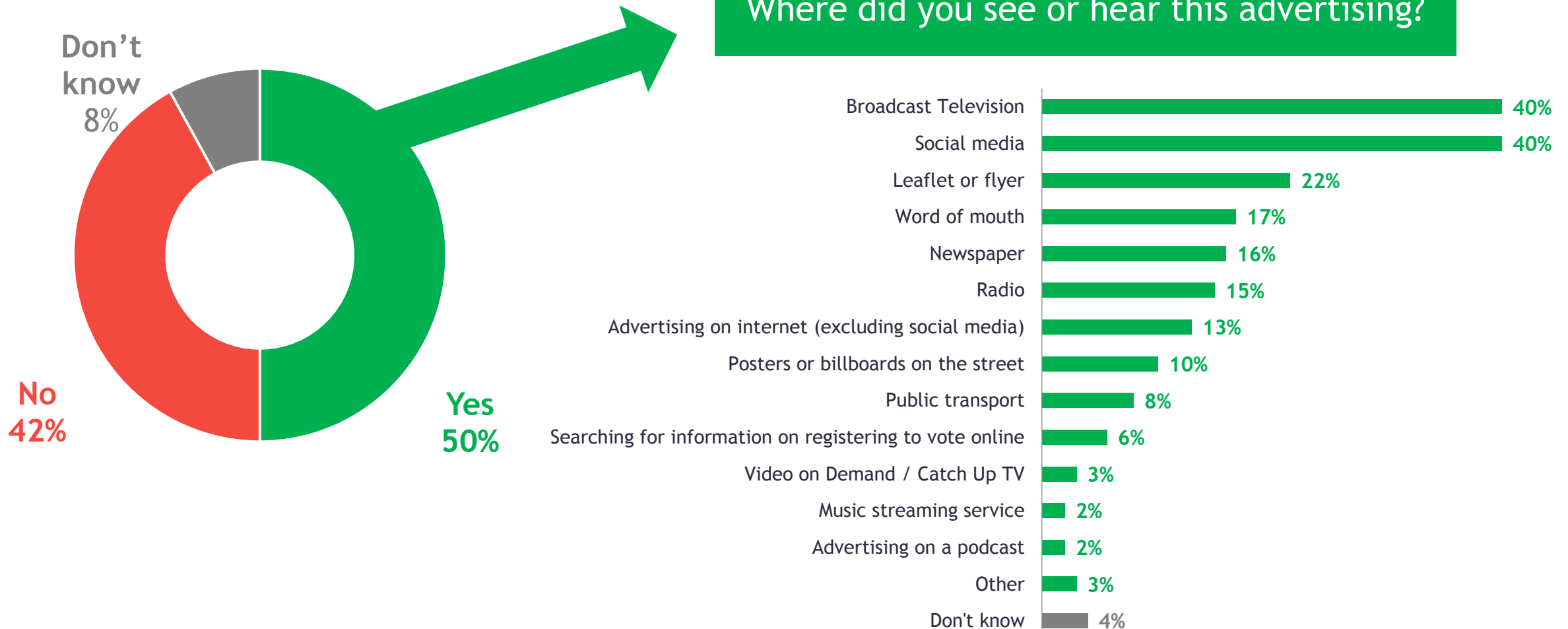
- Most people had a good understanding of why the EU elections were happening and what they were about. In total, 69% said that they knew a great deal or a fair amount about the elections and only 1% were unaware that it was happening. Nearly nine-tenths (87%) of people surveyed had seen some sort of political message or been engaged by campaigners.
- Around two-thirds (65%) were certain or fairly sure that the elections would take place. However, only 29% said that they were concerned about the elections being cancelled.
- Nearly three-quarters (73%) found it easy to get information about how to cast their vote in the election, although fewer (50%) found it easy to information about the candidates. Non-voters found finding information about the elections significantly more difficult than voters. Similarly, non-voters wanted more information about the elections while voters felt that they had enough.
- The most common source of information on candidates was from them directly (54%). One in four (26%) received information on social media, with Facebook the most popular source.
- Most (85%) of those who voted were satisfied with the process. Of those who were not satisfied, the most common reason given was many people being unable to vote.
- Across both voters and non-voters, 62% were confident that the election was well run. Around one in five (22%) felt the opposite, with the most common reason given being voters, particularly EU citizens, not being allowed to vote.

Key findings (3)

- For most, casting their vote was a straightforward process: 96% of all voters found it easy to fill in the ballot paper, 97% of those who voted at a polling station found it easy to get in and vote and 95% of those who voted by post found completing the postal ballot simple.
- Of the eight electoral issues* presented to respondents, the most concerning is bias in the media, followed by low voter turnout and inadequate regulation of political spending and political activity on social media.
- Over one-third (36%) felt there was some electoral fraud during the elections but just 8% thought this constituted a lot of fraud; 38% said that they did not know how much took place.
- Those who believed that electoral fraud had taken place gave a variety of reasons why, but no clear answer emerged. Most commonly cited was suspicion over not requiring identification to vote (36%).
- Nevertheless, four-fifths (79%) believe that voting in general in the UK is safe from fraud and abuse.
- The public is split over whether they believe the authorities will take appropriate action should a political campaign be caught breaking the rules: 38% agreed they would but 38% also disagreed.

Section 1: Awareness, perceptions and behaviour

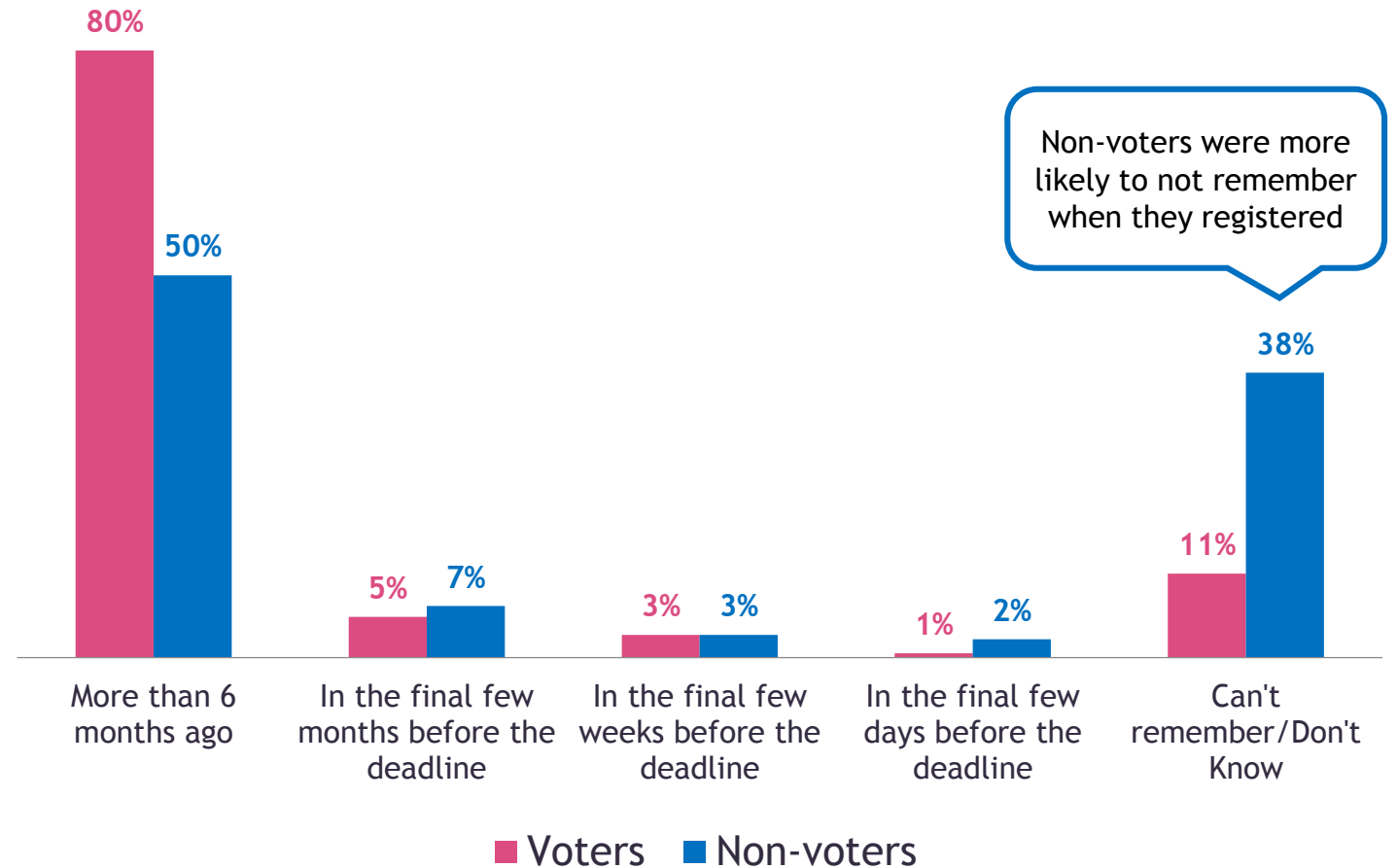
Half had seen or heard an advert about registering to vote, with 18-24 year olds the most likely (65%)



The deadline for registering to vote in the European Parliament Election was the 7th May, but most had registered well before then

Few registered in the final few weeks before the deadline

When did you register to vote?



Q1a. The deadline for registering to vote in the European Parliament Election on Thursday 23 May was Tuesday 7 May. Thinking back, can you remember when you registered to vote?
Base: all on the electoral register (2,206)

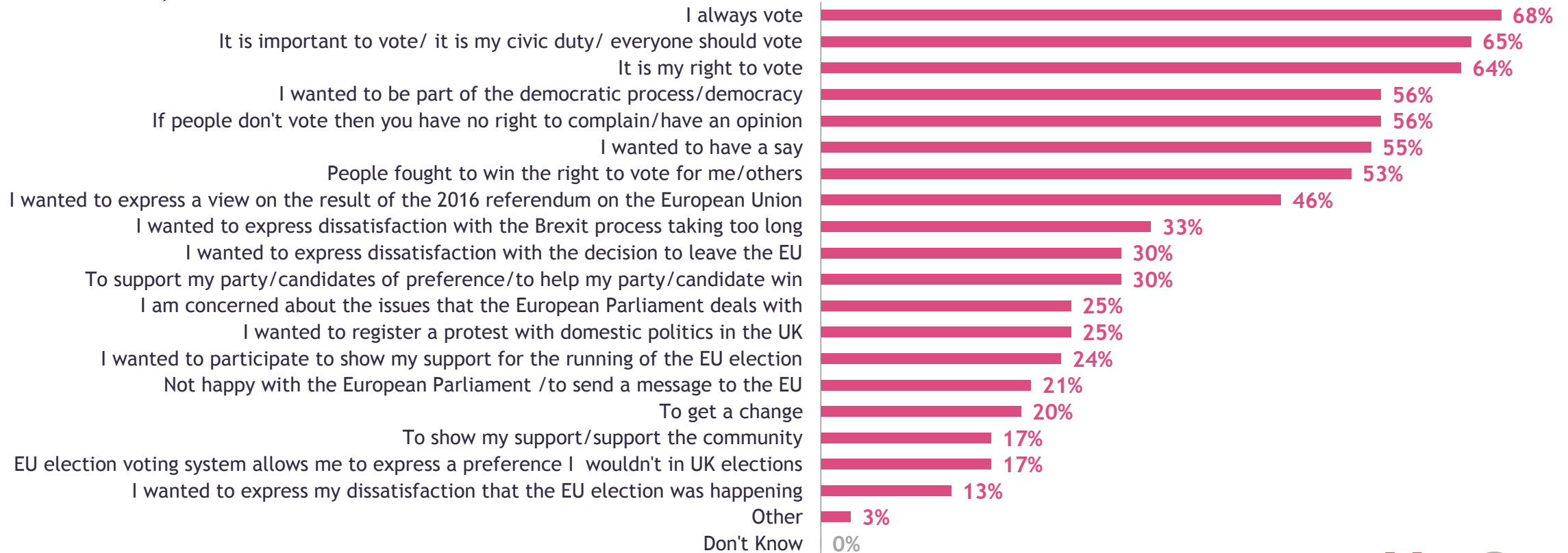
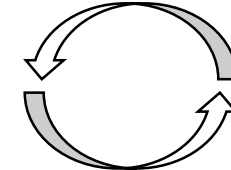
A variety of reasons were given for taking part in the election, with the majority voting to express a view or out of a sense of civic responsibility

Voters only

Net: To express a view 90%

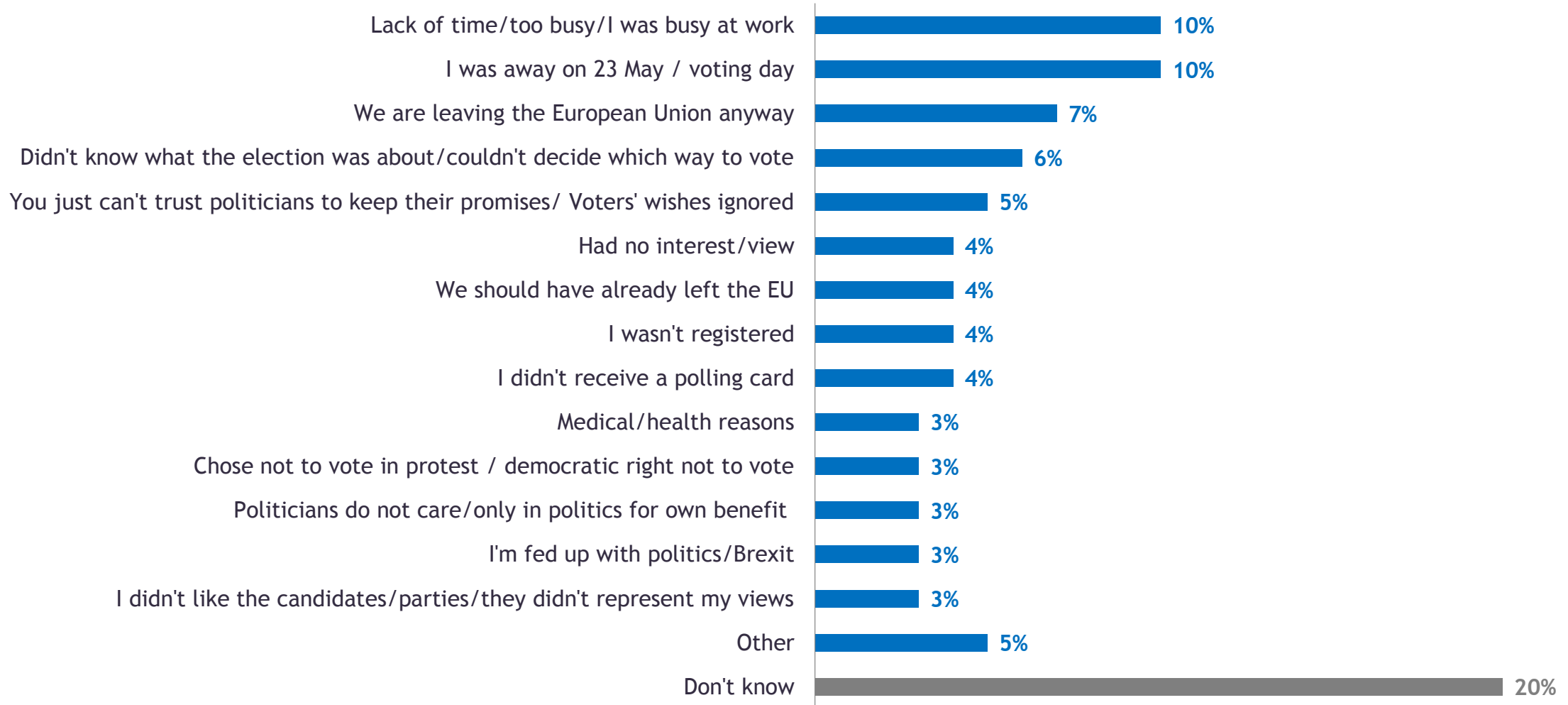
Net: Civic responsibility 86%

Net: To help create a change 32%



When non-voters were asked why they didn't vote, a variety of reasons were given including that we are leaving the EU anyway

Non-voters
only



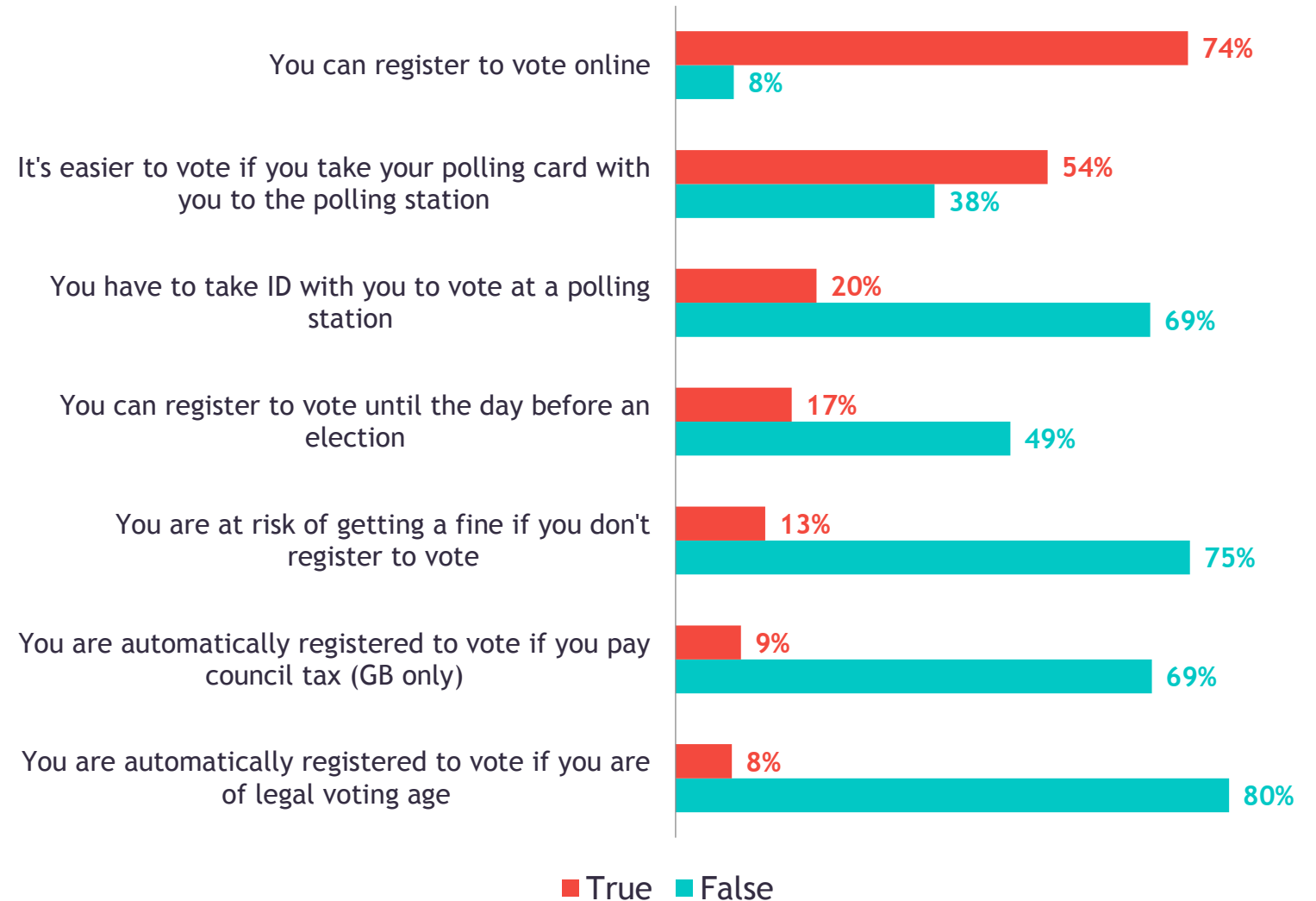
*Only codes with 3% or more are shown

Q9. People had different reasons for not voting in the elections. Why did you not vote in the European Parliament election on 23rd May? Please write in your reasons below. Base: all who did not vote (571)

Three quarters
of UK adults
are aware that
you can
register to vote
online

Those aged 55+ are
more likely to say that
the online registration
statement is false
(11%)

Please could you indicate whether you think each of
statements below are true or false?

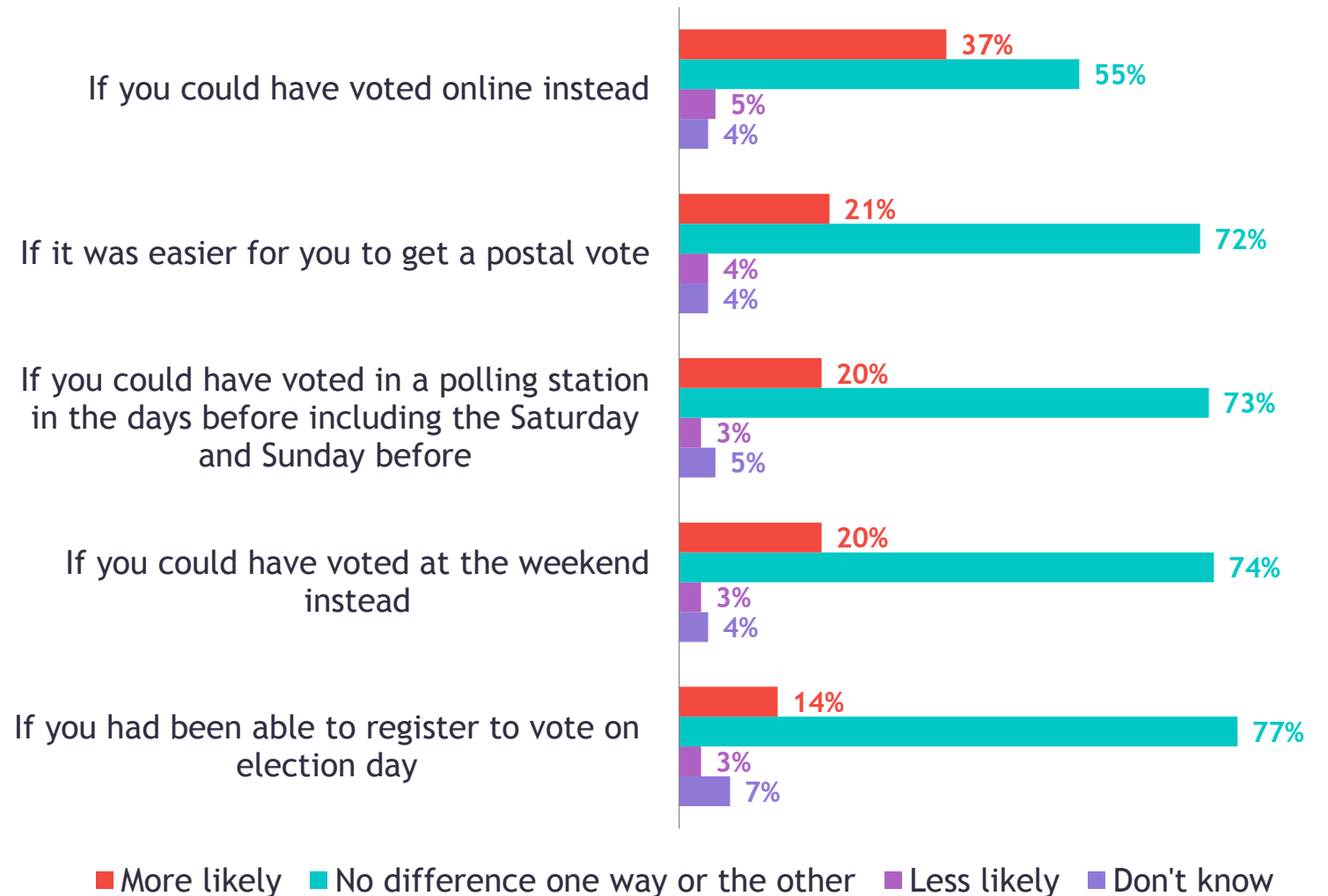


Q10. Please could you indicate whether you think each of statements below are true or false? Select one answer per statement. Base: all (2,262)

For most, changing the voting process would make no difference in whether they would have voted or not, although online voting is a relatively popular option

Those under 35 are more likely to agree that every change would make them more likely to vote

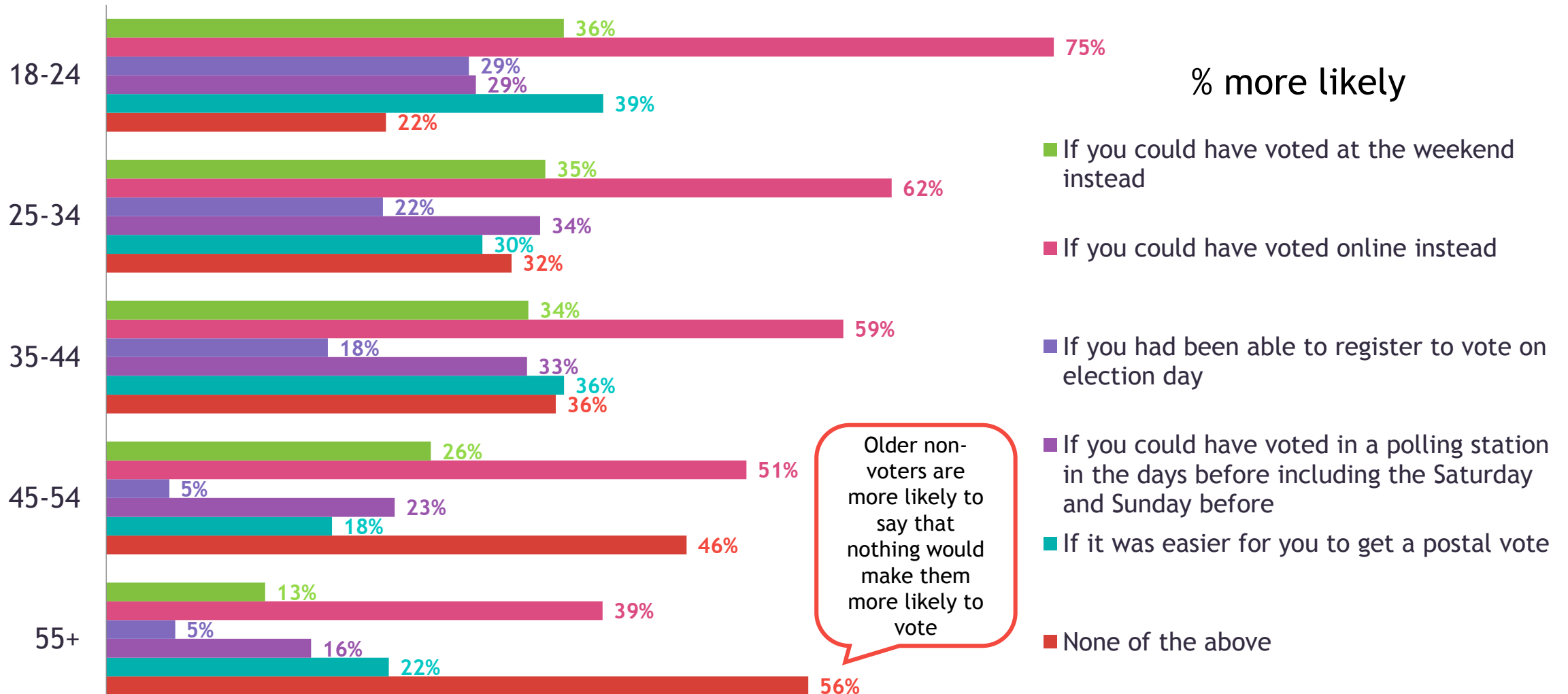
Would you have been more likely to vote on 23rd May, less likely, or would it have made no difference one way or the other if the following things were true?



Q11. Would you have been more likely to vote on 23rd May, less likely, or would it have made no difference one way or the other if the following things were true? Base: all (2,262)

Three-quarters of non-voters aged 18-24 said that they would have been more likely to vote if they could have done so online

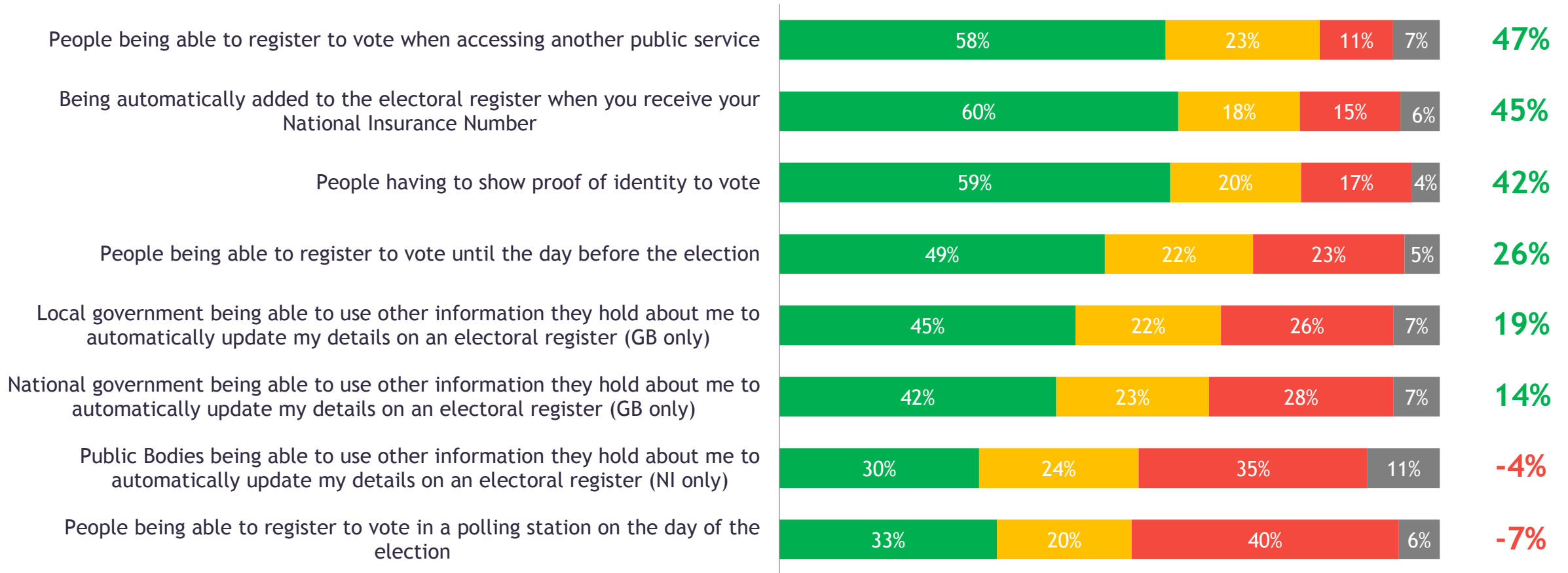
Non-voters only



The public is generally in favour of making registering to vote easier, although they are also in favour of mandatory voter ID

Net support score* 

■ Support ■ Neither support nor oppose ■ Oppose ■ Don't know

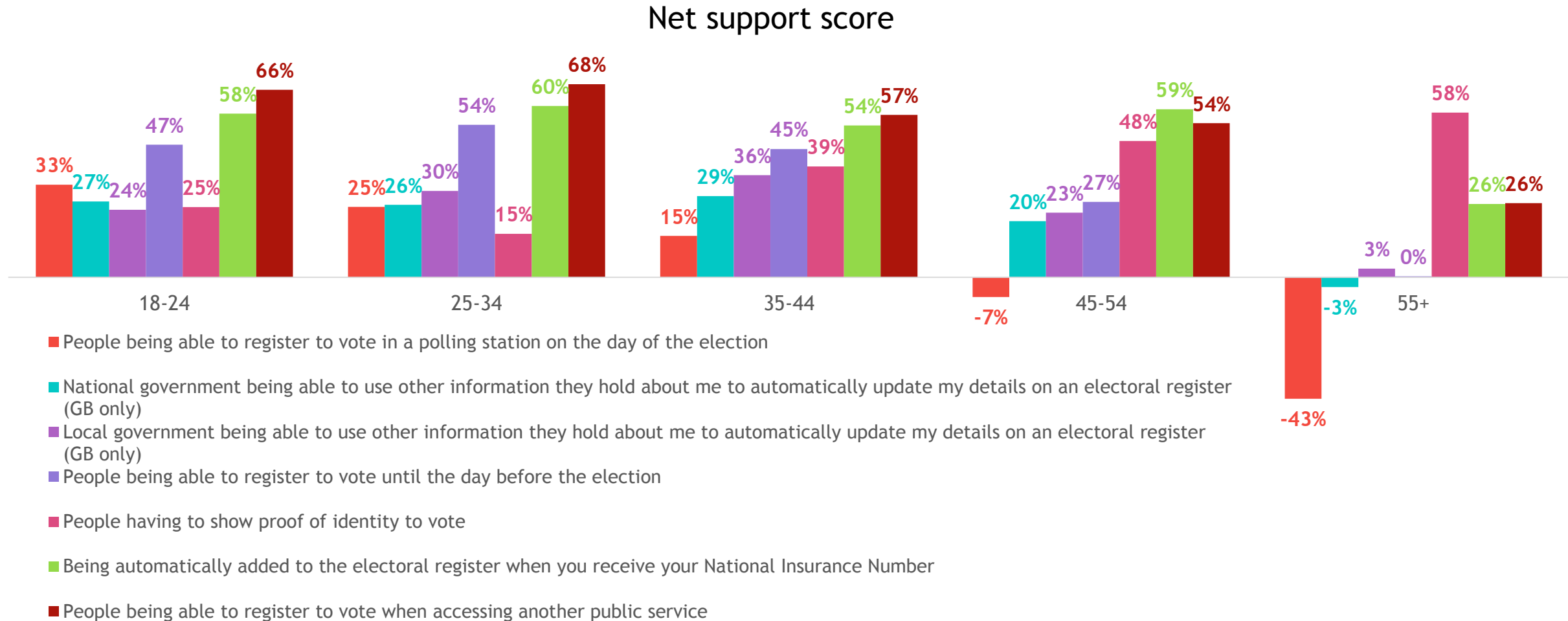


Q12. To what extent do you support or oppose the following? Select one answer per statement.

Base: all (2,262), all GB only (1,964), all NI only (298)

*Net support score is the % who support minus the % who oppose

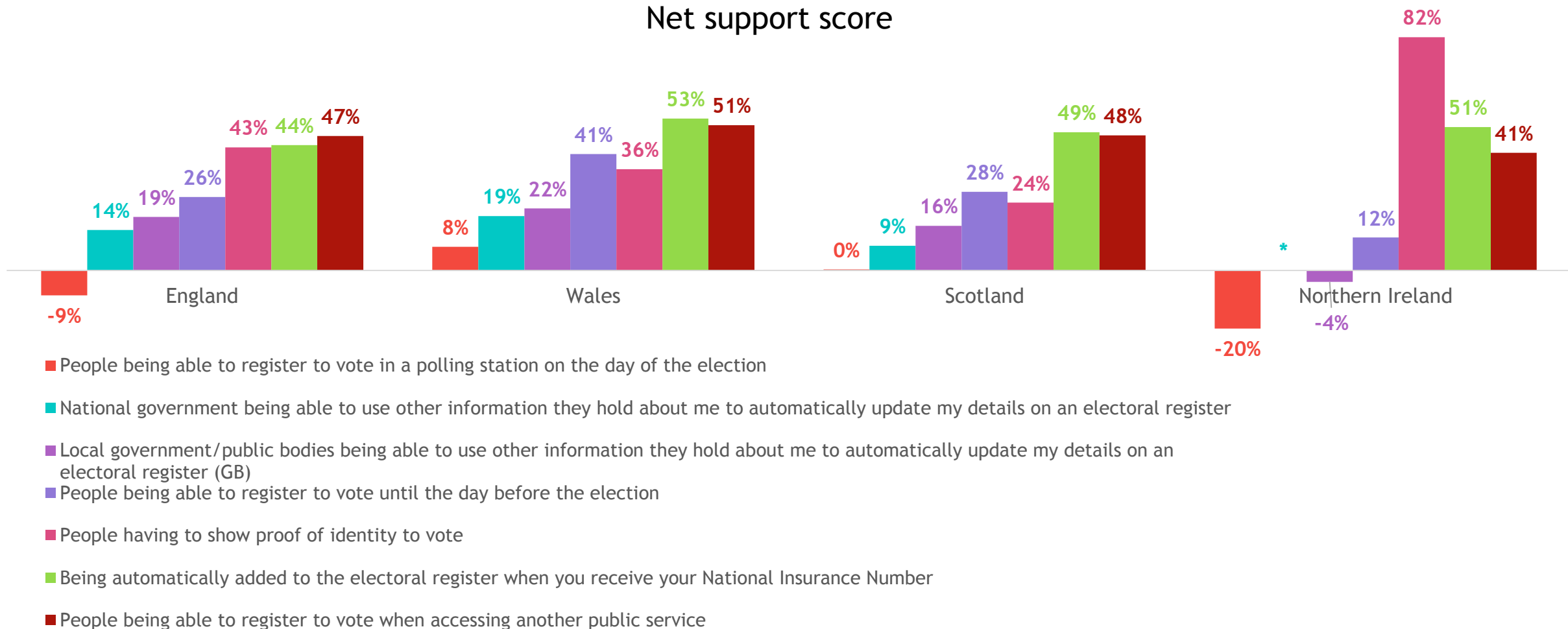
Split by age, younger people are more likely to be in favour of all the measures suggested, while those over 55 are less supportive, with the exception of compulsory voter ID



Q12. To what extent do you support or oppose the following? Select one answer per statement. Base: 18-24=128, 25-34=316, 35-44=362, 45-54=375, 55+=1,081

**Public Bodies being able to use other information they hold about me to automatically update my details on an electoral register (NI)' excluded due to low base size

By region views are similar across the UK, although a greater proportion in Northern Ireland support voters having to show proof of identity

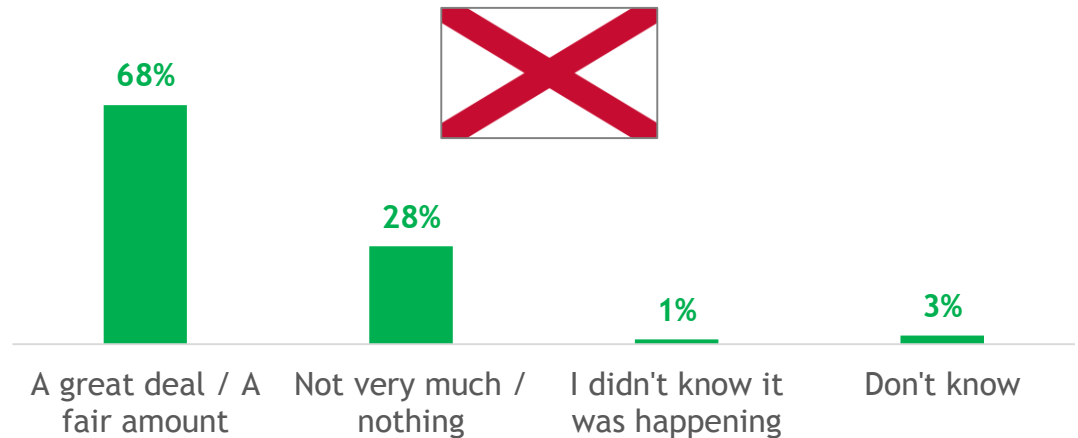
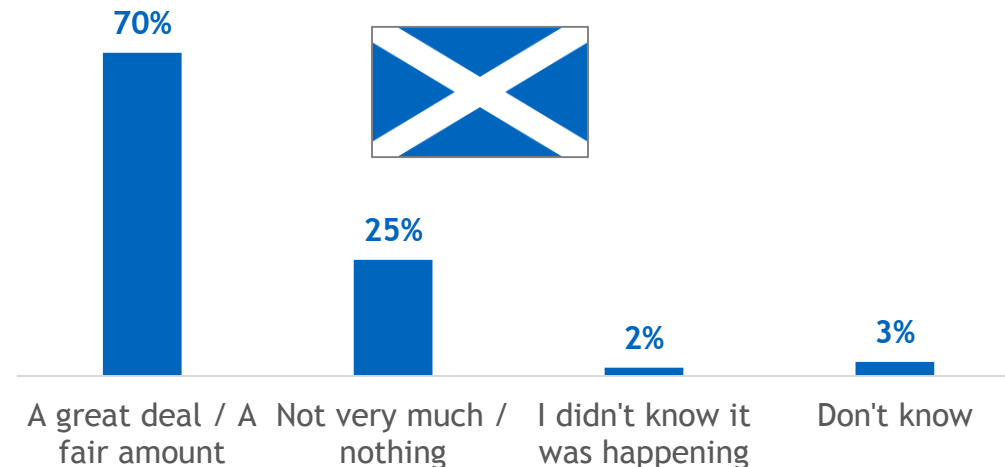
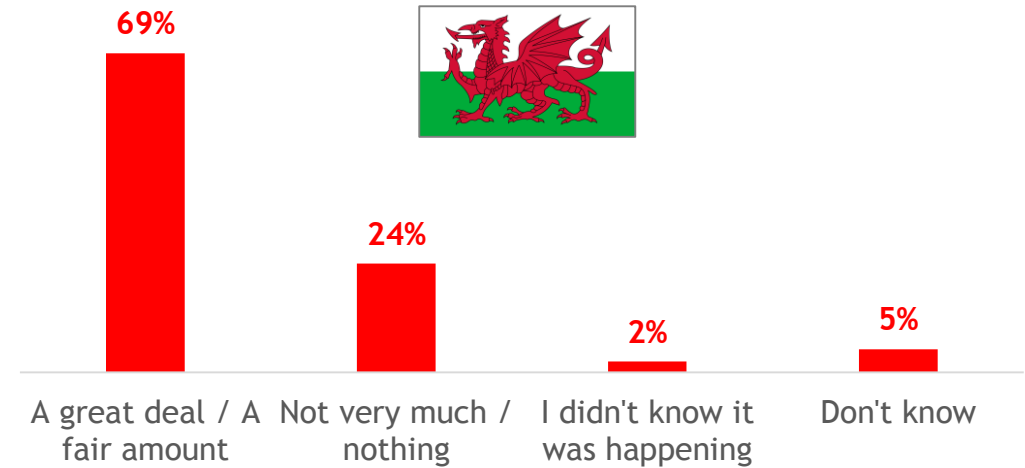
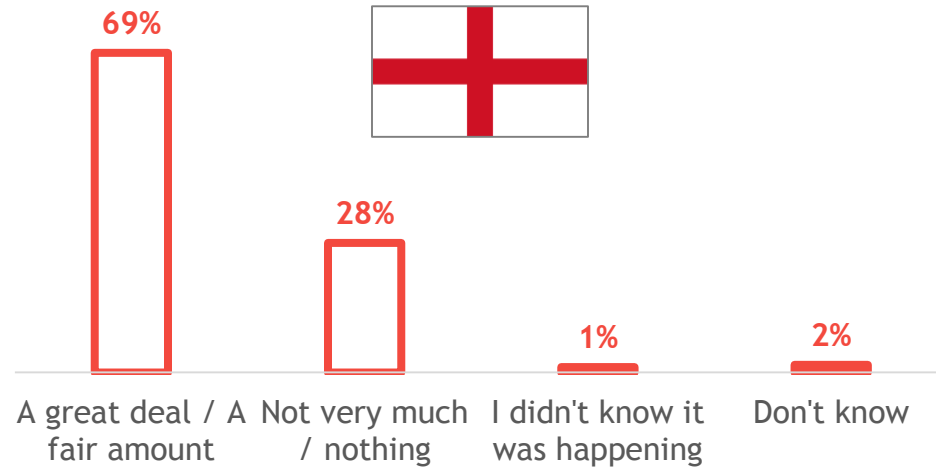


Q12. To what extent do you support or oppose the following? Select one answer per statement. Base: England=1,287, Wales=349, Scotland=328, Northern Ireland=298

*Public Bodies being able to use other information they hold about me to automatically update my details on an electoral register (NI)' excluded due to low base sizes

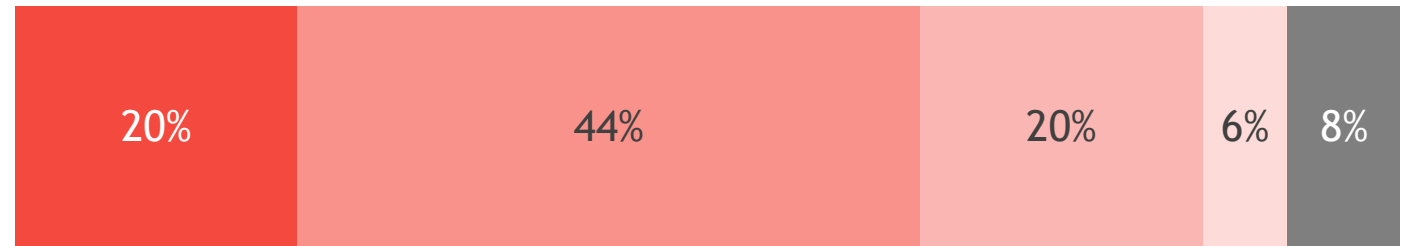
Section 2: Awareness and access to information

Across the United Kingdom, most people have a good grasp of what the election was about; only 1% overall were unaware that it was happening



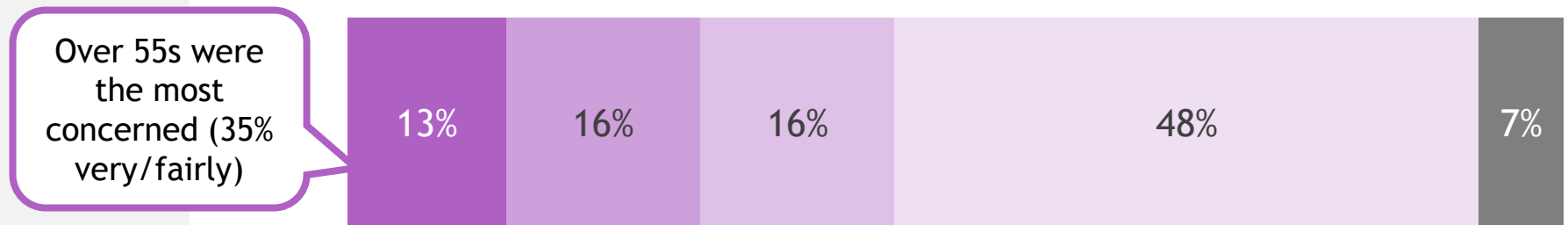
Around two-thirds (65%) were certain or fairly sure that the elections would take place, although around half were unconcerned whether they did or not; only a quarter were very or fairly concerned

How sure were you that the elections would be held?



■ Certain ■ Fairly sure ■ Not very sure ■ Not at all sure ■ Don't know

How concerned were you about whether or not the elections would take place?

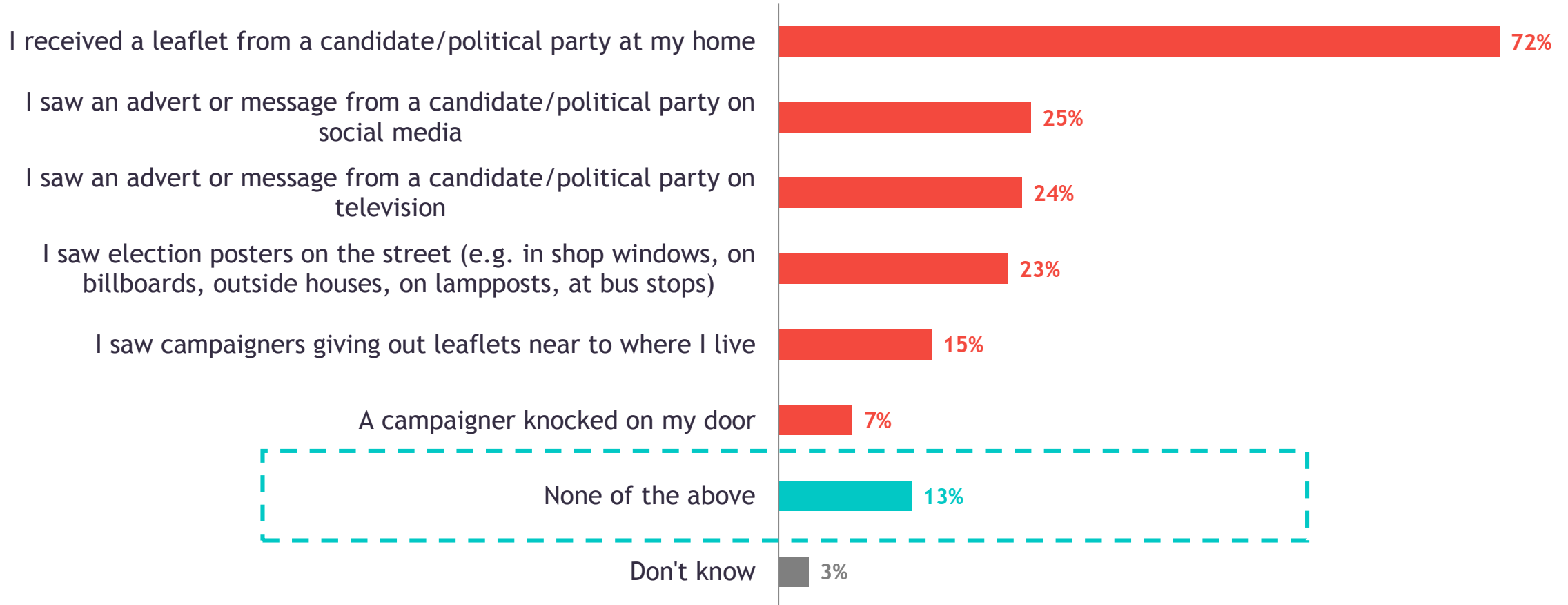


■ Very ■ Fairly ■ A bit ■ Not at all ■ Don't know

Q21c. Before the elections there was some speculation about whether these elections to the European Parliament would take place. Thinking about the month or so before 23rd May how sure were you that the elections would be held? Base: all (2,296)

Q21d. How concerned were you about whether or not the elections would take place? Base: all (2,296)

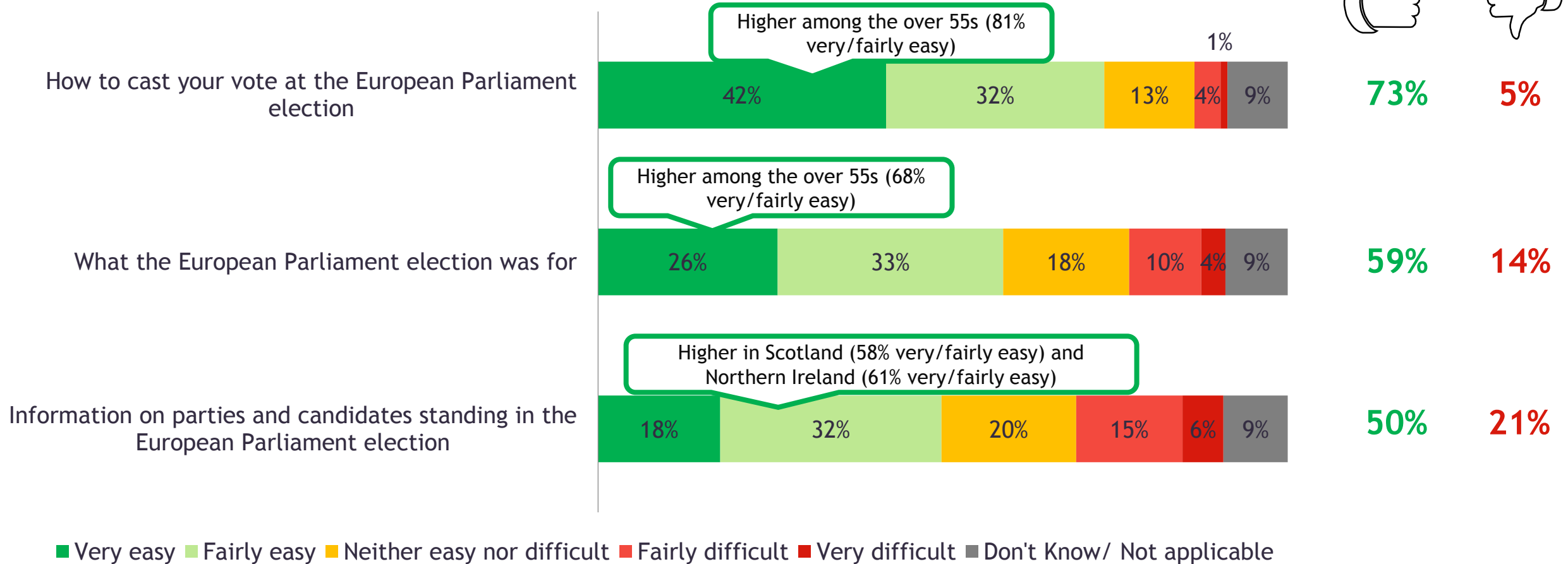
Awareness that the election was going on was high: nearly nine-tenths (87%) of UK adults had seen some sort of political message or been engaged by campaigners



Q17. Thinking about the last few months, which of the following can you recall happening? Select all that apply. Base: all (2,262)

Most found it easy to get information about the election and how to cast their ballot

How easy or difficult would you say it was to access information on...?



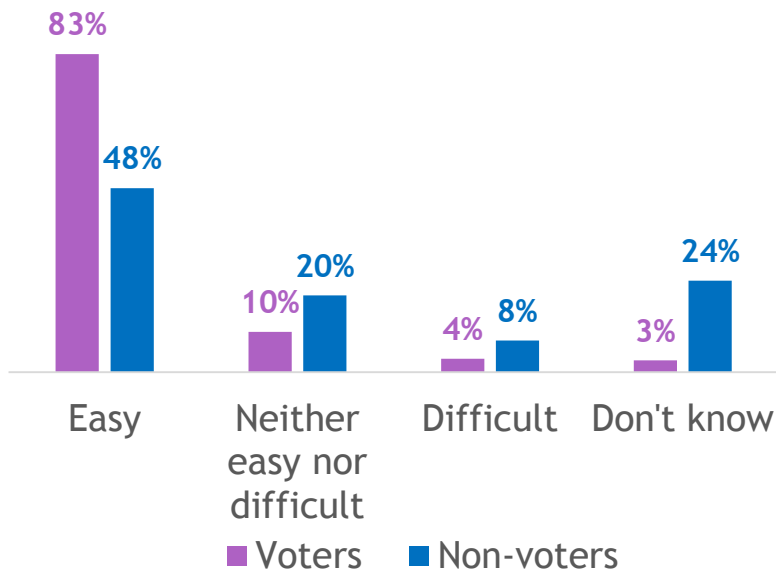
Q14. For each of the following statements, how easy or difficult would you say it was to access information on...? Select one answer per statement.

Base: all (2,262)

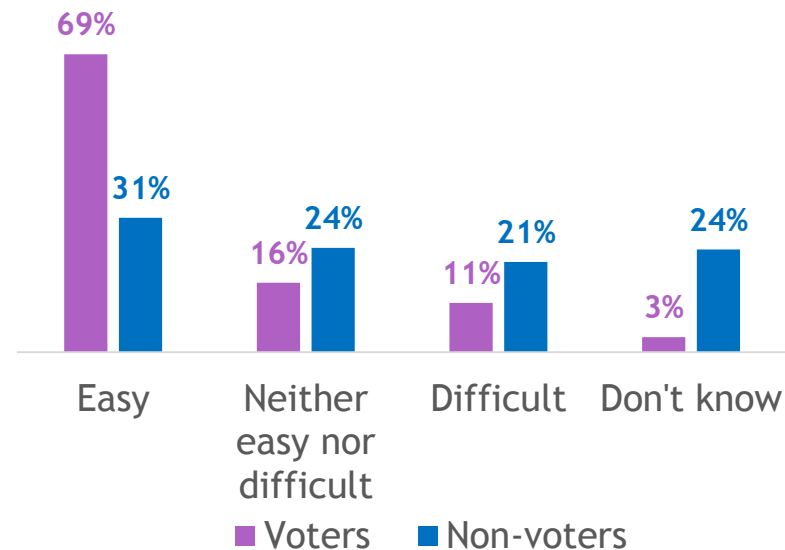
Non-voters found finding information about the elections significantly more difficult than voters

It is likely, however, that non-voters would answer this question more negatively because they are not actively searching for information as they are more disengaged with the process. Non-voters were also more likely to say that they did not know how easy or difficult it to get information and more likely to say that it was neither easy nor difficult.

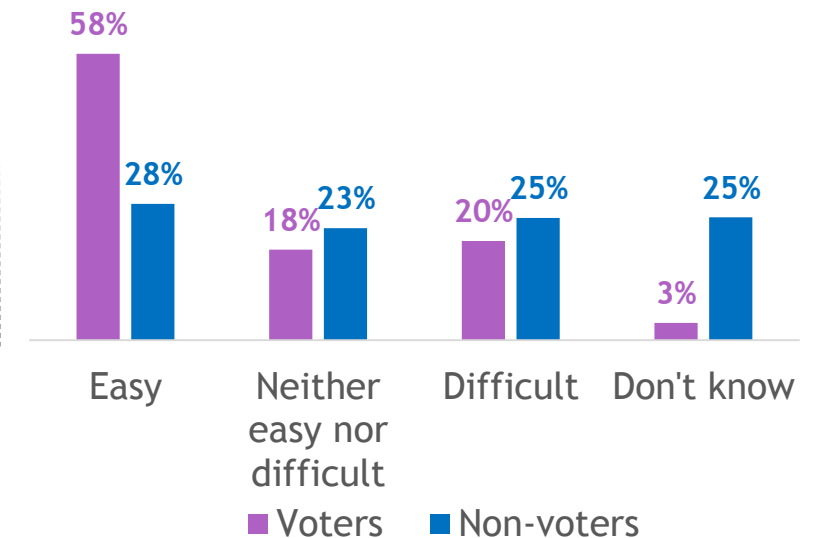
How to cast your vote at the European Parliament election



What the European Parliament election was for



Information on parties and candidates standing in the European Parliament election



Q14. For each of the following statements, how easy or difficult would you say it was to access information on...? Select one answer per statement.
Base: voters (1,691), non-voters (571)

Most felt that they had enough information about how to register and cast their vote, but almost half wanted more information on the parties and candidates

Across all measures, those over 55 are more likely to say that they had enough information than any other age group

Which of the following best describes the amount of information you feel you had on the things shown below?

How to cast your vote



84% had enough information

10% would have like to know more

How to register to vote



80% had enough information

10% would have like to know more

What the election was for / about



66% had enough information

27% would have like to know more

When the deadline was for registering to vote



65% had enough information

18% would have like to know more

The candidates and parties standing

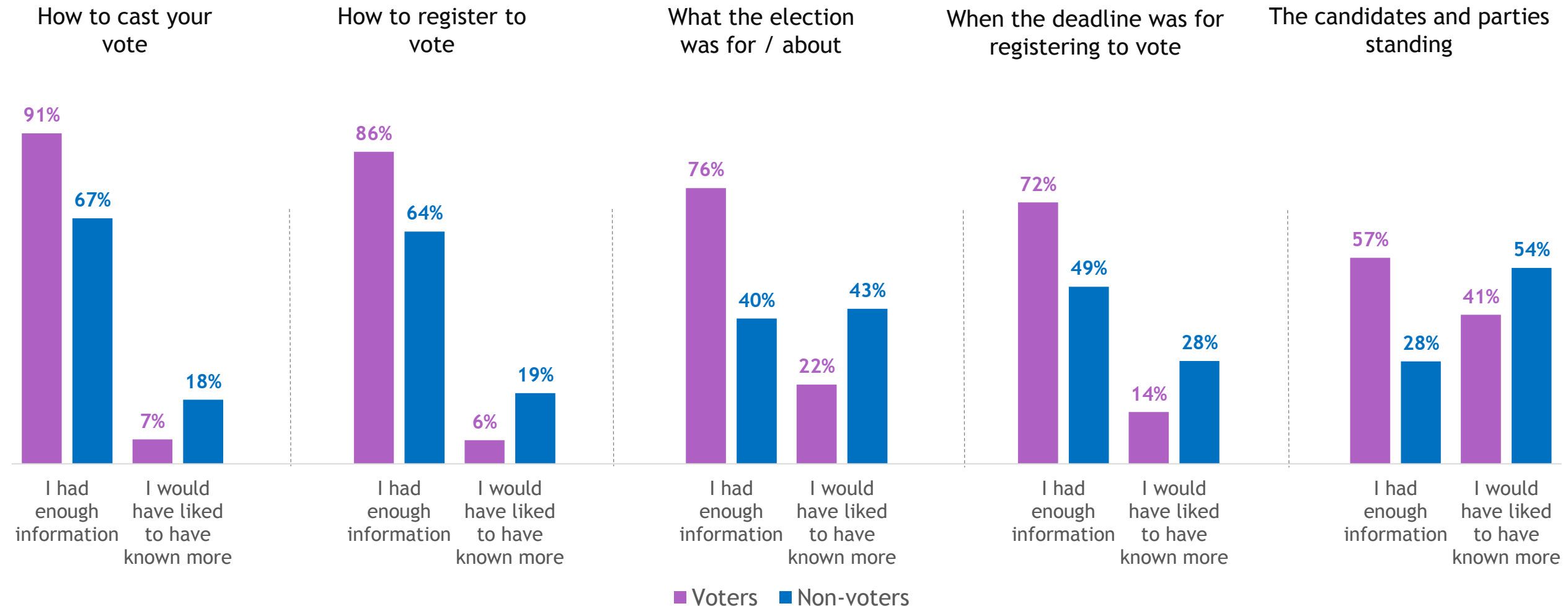


49% had enough information

44% would have like to know more

Q15. Which of the following best describes the amount of information you feel you had on the things shown below? Select one answer per statement
Base: all (2,262)

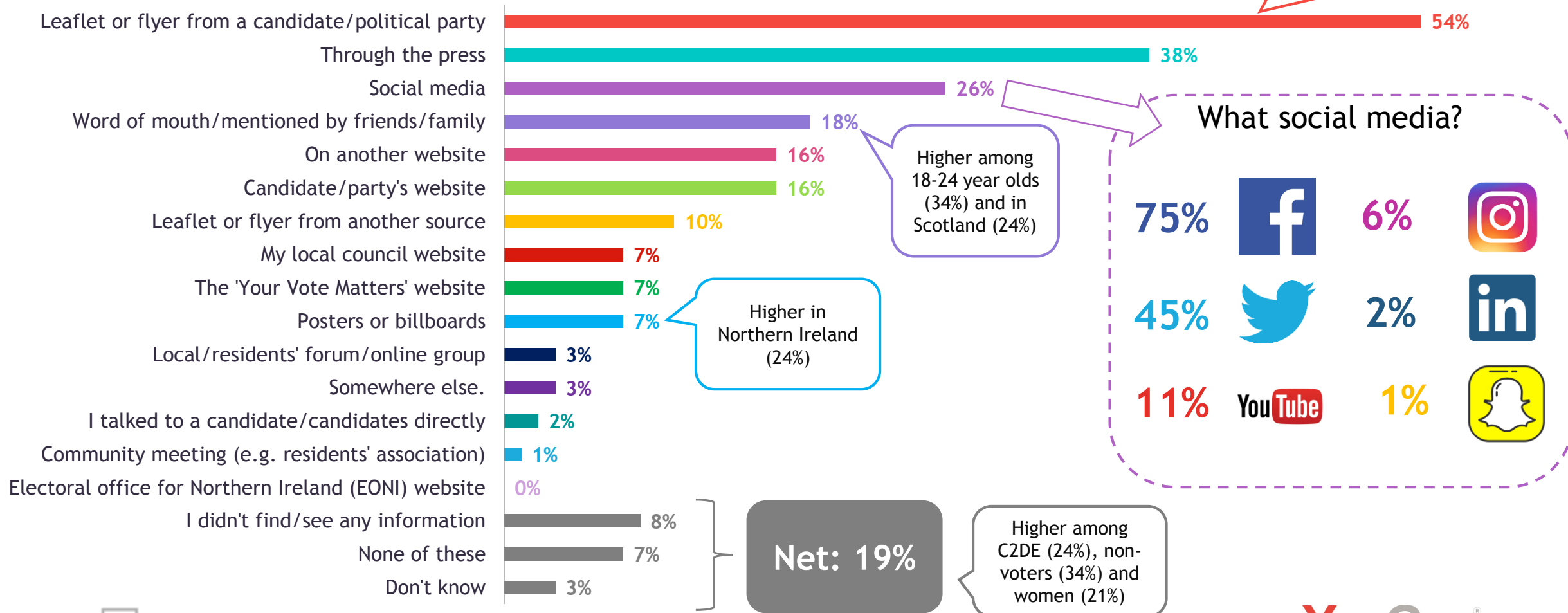
Non-voters wanted more information while voters felt satisfied that they had enough



The most common source of information on candidates was from them directly, followed by the press

A quarter received information over social media; this was higher among men (31%) and ABC1 (28%) respondents. Facebook was the most popular social media site by far, with three-quarters getting information from there

Where did you get information on candidates/parties?



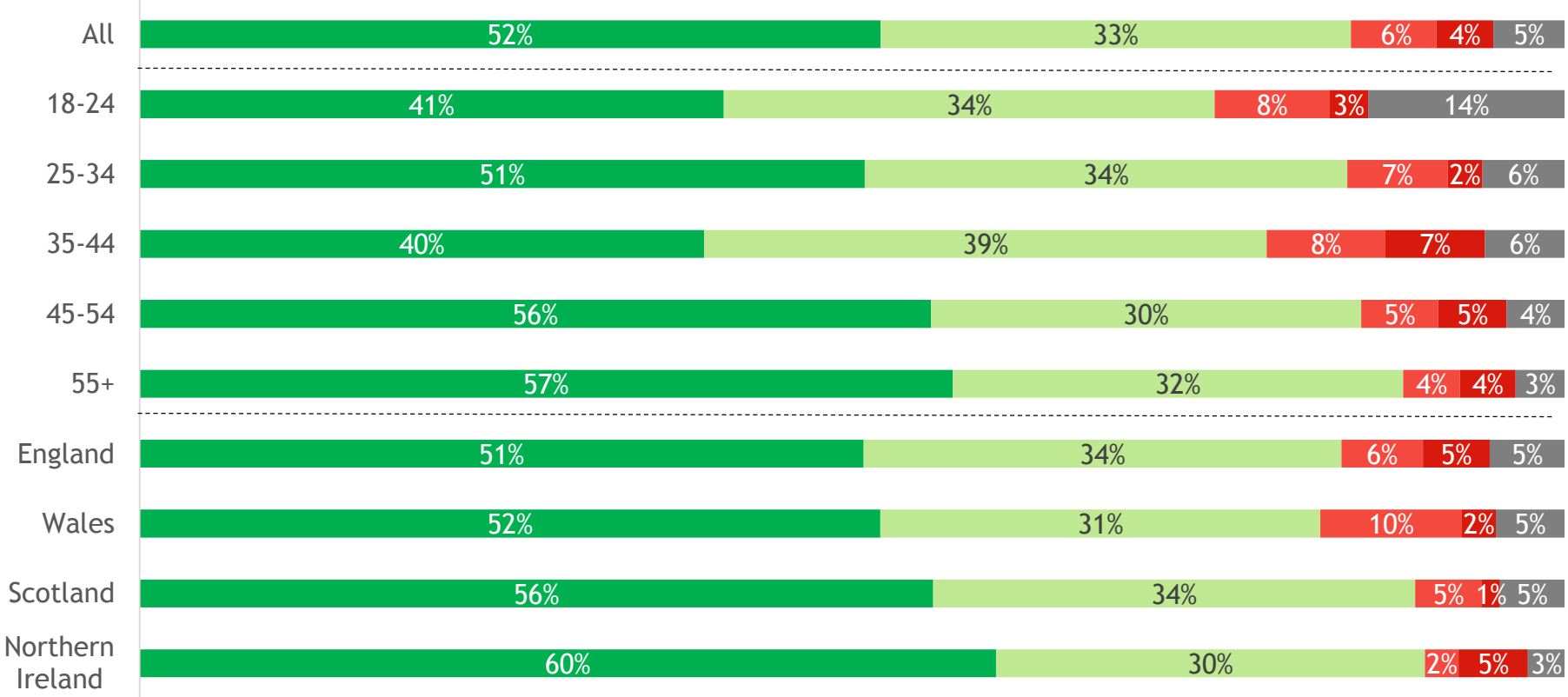
Q16. Where did you get information on candidates/parties? Select all that apply. Base: all (2,262)
Q16_B. And on what social media did you get information? Base: all who received information on social media (560)

— Section 3: Voting processes and priorities

Most voters were satisfied with the voting process

Voters only

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the process of voting in the 23rd May elections?



Net satisfied  Net dissatisfied 

85% 10%

75% 11%

85% 9%

79% 15%

86% 10%

89% 8%

84% 10%

83% 12%

90% 6%

90% 7%

Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Fairly dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Don't know

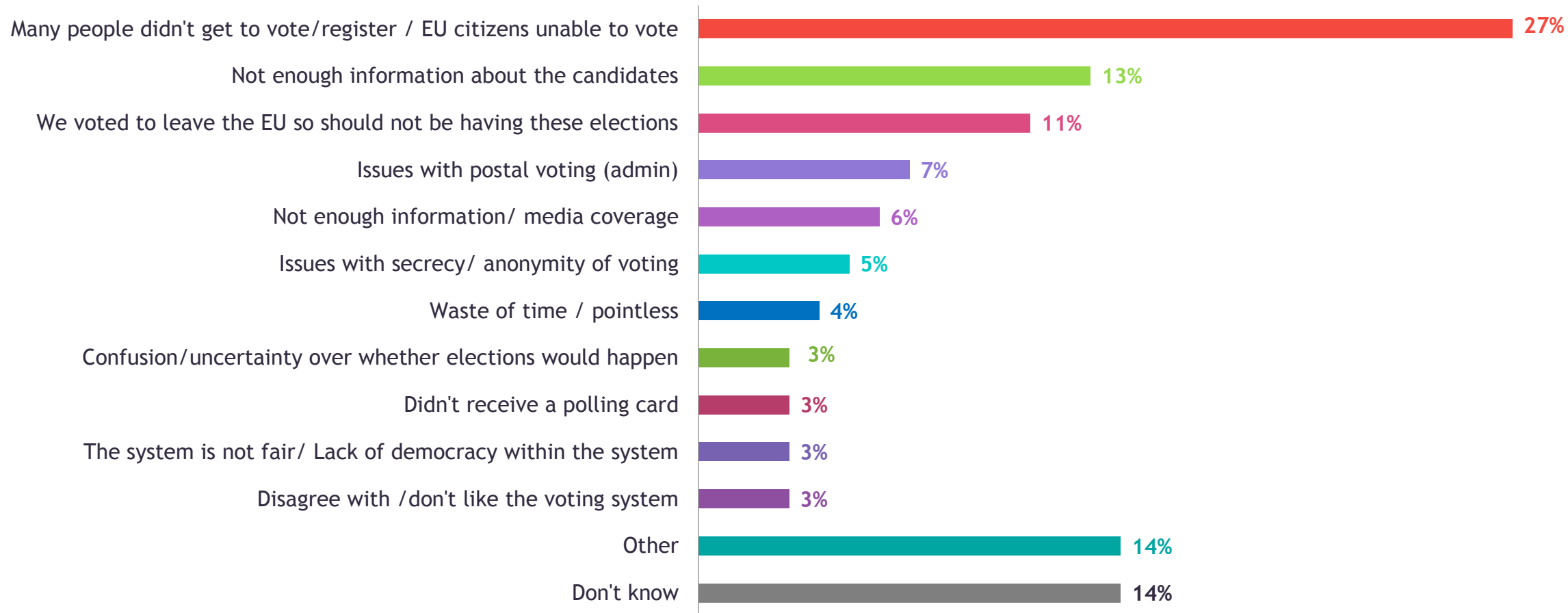
Q18. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the process of voting in the 23rd May elections? Select one answer only

Base: all voters (1,691), 18-24 (69), 25-34 (203), 35-44 (264), 45-54 (269), 55+ (886), England (979), Wales (254), Scotland (255), Northern Ireland (203)

Of those dissatisfied with the voting process, the most common reason given was many people, particularly EU citizens, being unable to vote

Voters only

Why do you say you were dissatisfied with the process for voting?



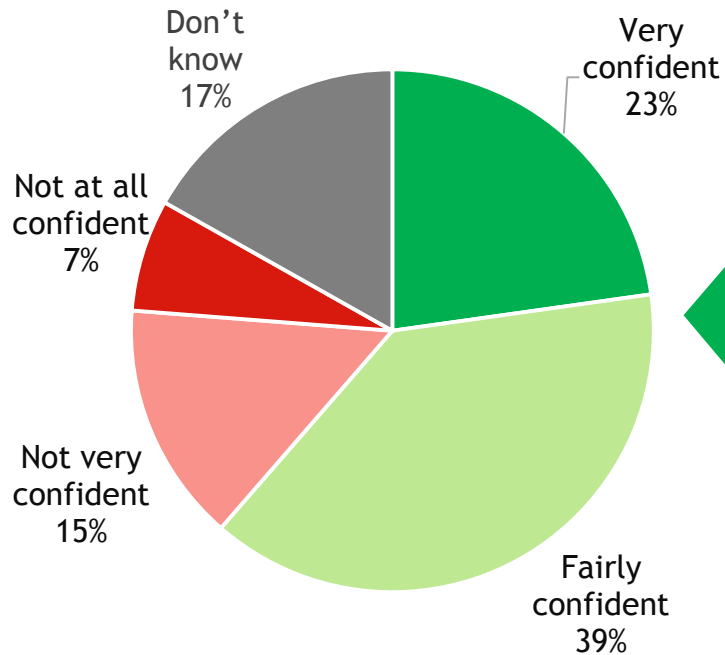
*Responses selected by 2% or fewer of respondents have been excluded

Q19. Why do you say you were dissatisfied with the process for voting in the 23rd May elections? Please write in everything you think is relevant. Please give us as much information as you can to help us to understand your answer. Base: all dissatisfied with the voting process (120)

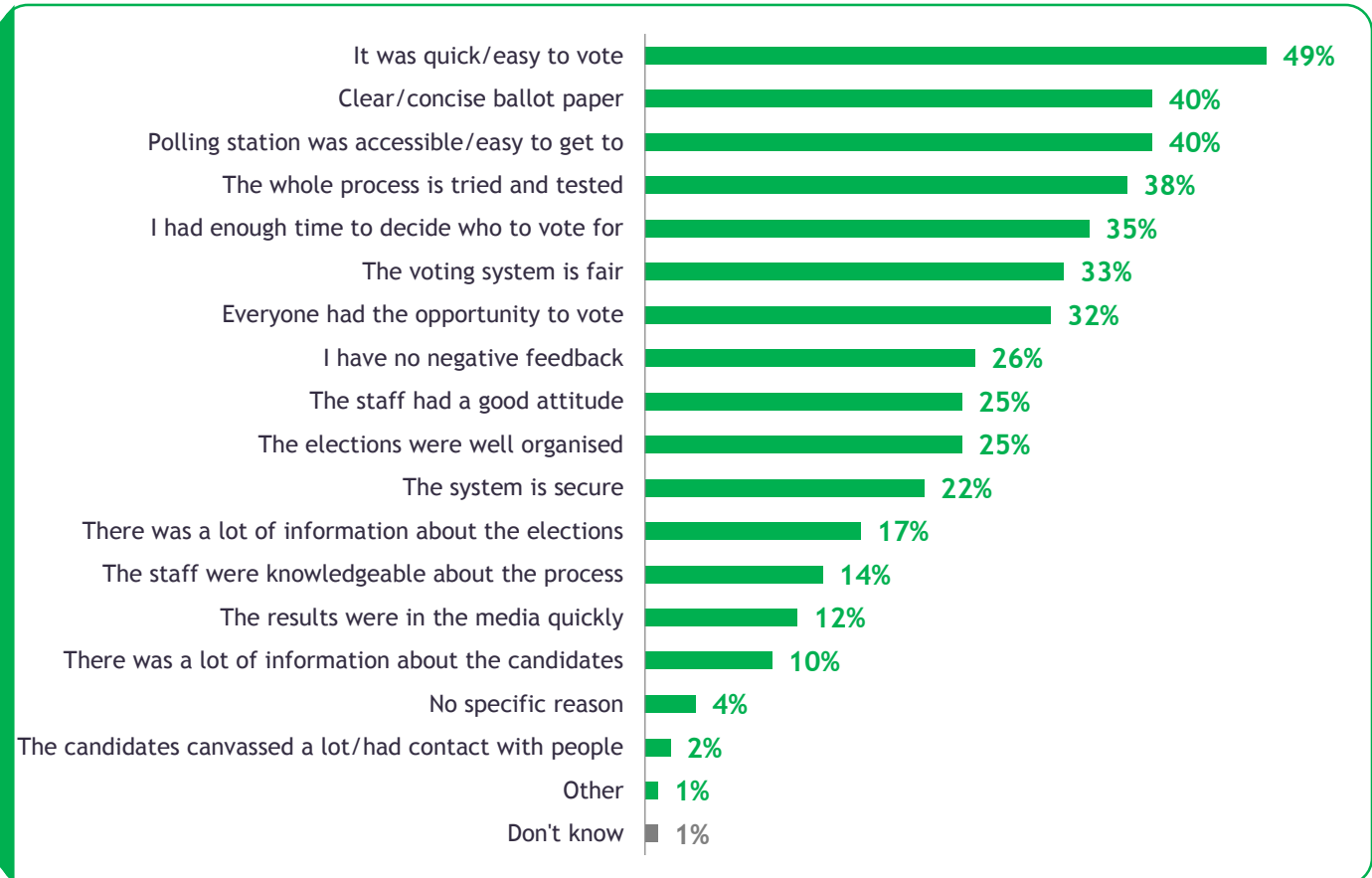
Most agreed that the election was well run, with it being quick and easy to vote and having a clear and concise ballot paper and convenient polling station the main reasons given

Voters only

How confident are you that the European Parliament election(s) was/were well run?



Why do you say you are confident that the election(s) was/were well run?



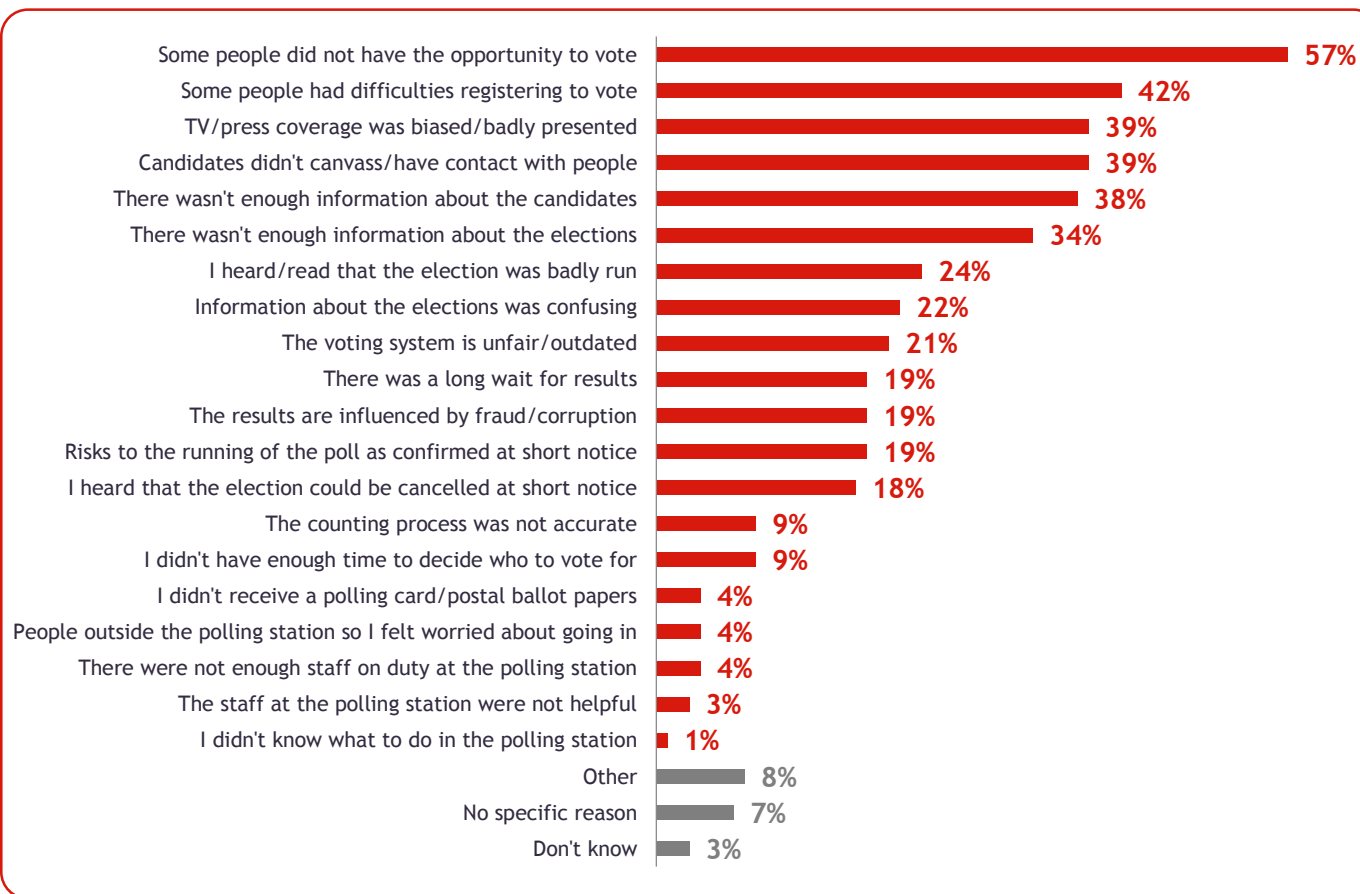
Q20. How confident, if at all, are you that the European Parliament election(s) on 23rd May was/were well run? Select one answer only. Base: all (2,262)

Q21a. Why do you say you are confident that the election(s) on 23rd May was/were well run? Select one answer only. Base: all confident (1,472)

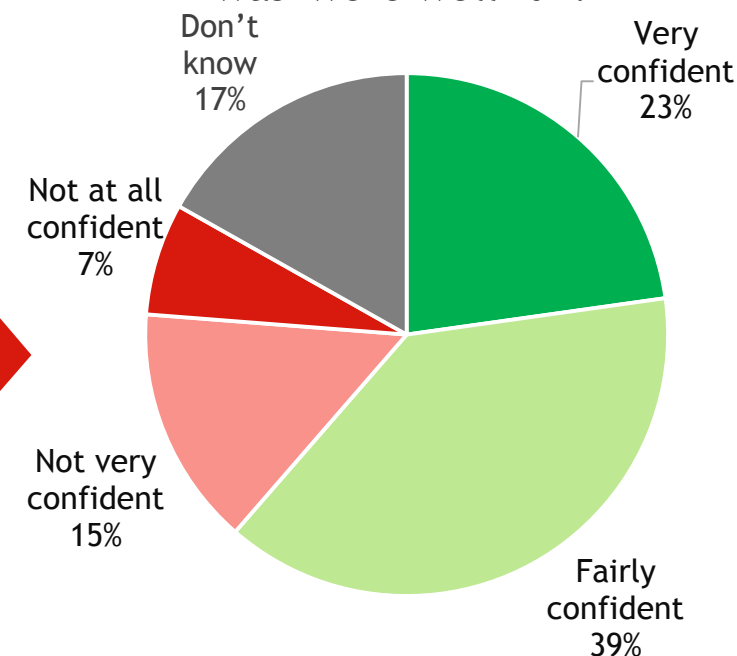
However, almost a quarter were not confident that they were well run. The issues around voter registration, likely regarding EU citizens, was the main reason given

Voters only

Why do you say you are not confident that the election(s) was/were well run?



How confident are you that the European Parliament election(s) was/were well run?



Q20. How confident, if at all, are you that the European Parliament election(s) on 23rd May was/were well run? Select one answer only. Base: all (2,262)

Q21b. Why do you say you are not confident that the election(s) on 23rd May was/were well run? Select one answer only. Base: all not confident (449)

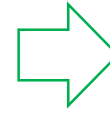
— Section 4: Ballot paper

Most found it easy to fill in the ballot paper, but those aged 18-24 were more likely to struggle; 8% of this group found it difficult

Voters in Wales were less likely to say it was easy to fill in their ballot paper than in other regions, but 93% of Welsh voters still found it easy



96% of voters found it easy to fill in the ballot paper...



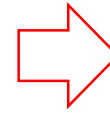
82% very easy

15% fairly easy

Voters only



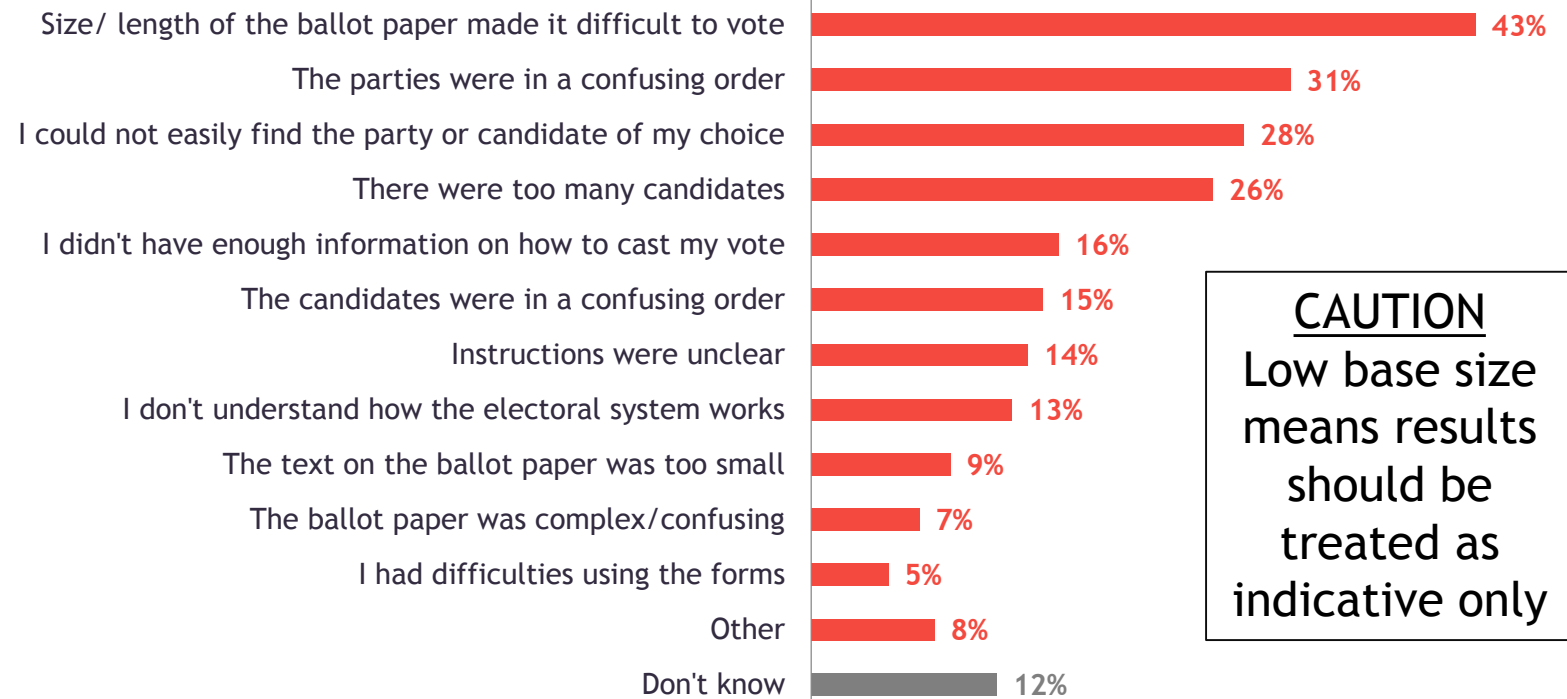
...while only 3% found it difficult



2% fairly difficult

1% very difficult

Of those who found it difficult:



CAUTION
Low base size means results should be treated as indicative only

— Section 5: Polling station

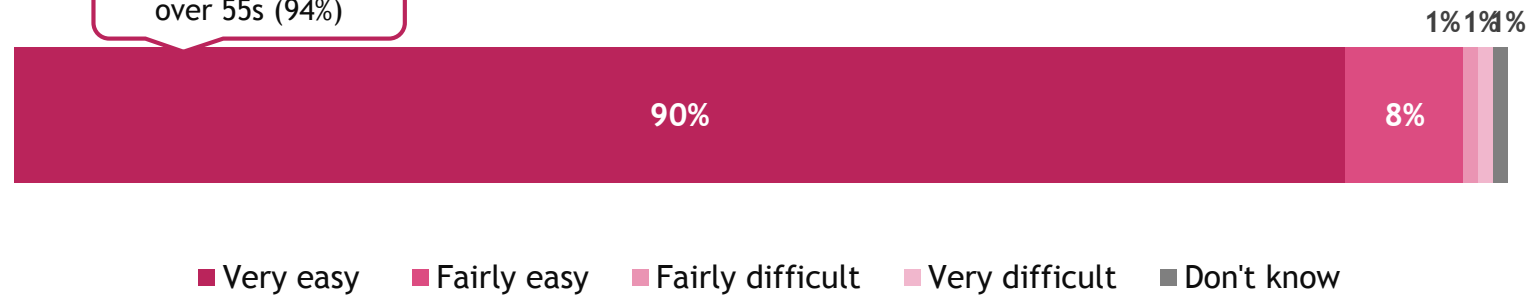
For the vast majority, going to the polling station was a smooth experience; 97% found it easy to get inside and vote



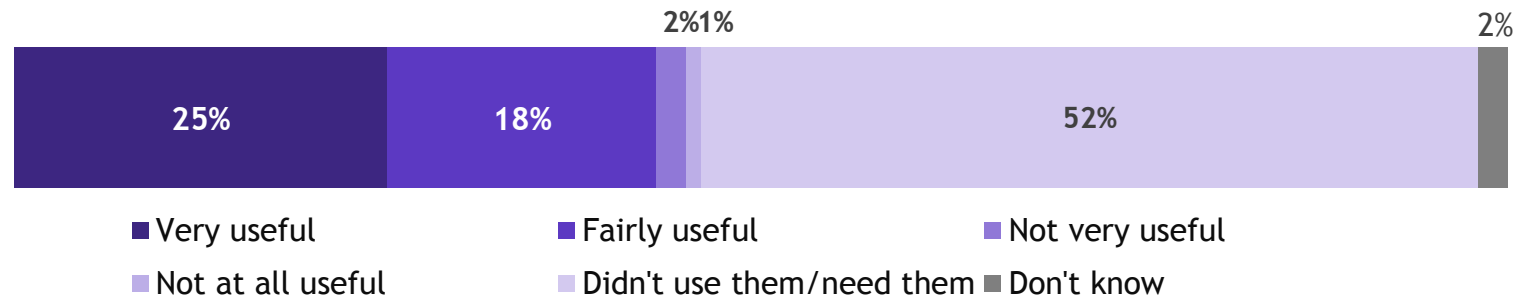
Once you arrived at your polling station, how easy or difficult was it for you to get inside to vote?

Voters only

Higher among the over 55s (94%)



How useful, if at all, was the help or support available from polling station staff on how to vote?



Q24. Once you arrived at your polling station, how easy or difficult was it for you to get inside to vote? Select one answer only. Base: all who voted in a polling station (1,239)

Q25. Thinking back to when you went to vote at the polling station how useful, if at all, was the help or support available from polling station staff on how to vote? Select one answer only. Base: all who voted in a polling station (1,239)

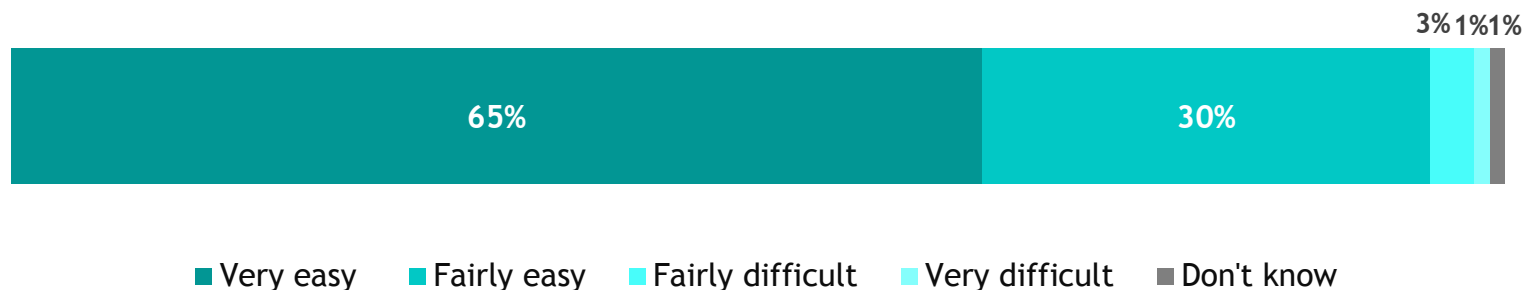
— Section 6: Voting by post

Similarly, most postal voters thought the postal ballot was easy to complete (95%) and found the written instructions useful (89%)



How easy or difficult was it to understand what you had to do in order to complete and return your postal vote?

Voters only



How useful, if at all were any written instructions on how to vote and return your vote, such as guidance on the ballot paper(s)?



Q26. How easy or difficult was it to understand what you had to do in order to complete and return your postal vote? Select one answer only. Base: all who voted by post (431)

Q27. Thinking back to when you voted by post, how useful, if at all were any written instructions on how to vote and return your vote, such as guidance on the ballot paper(s)? Select one answer only. Base: all who voted by post (431)

— Section 7: Integrity of elections

Bias in the media is considered the most serious problem facing the UK at the moment followed by low voter turnout and inadequate regulation of political spending and political activity on social media

How much of a problem do you think that each of the following is in the UK at the moment?

■ Don't know ■ 1 - Not a problem ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 - Serious problem

Higher among men and C2DE (both 49%) but lower in Northern Ireland (36%)

Mean score

Bias in the media



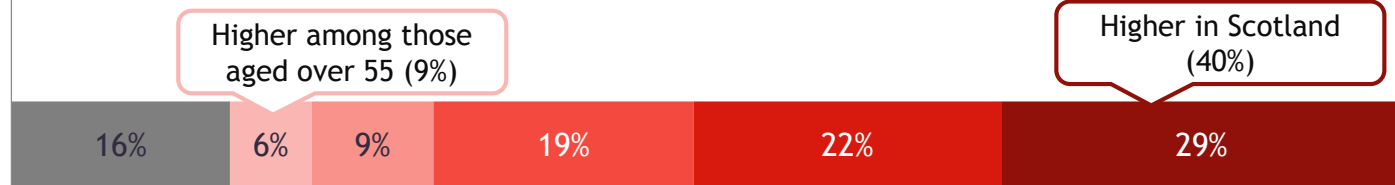
4.13

Low voter turnout at elections



4.06

Inadequate regulation of the money political parties spend on their election campaigns

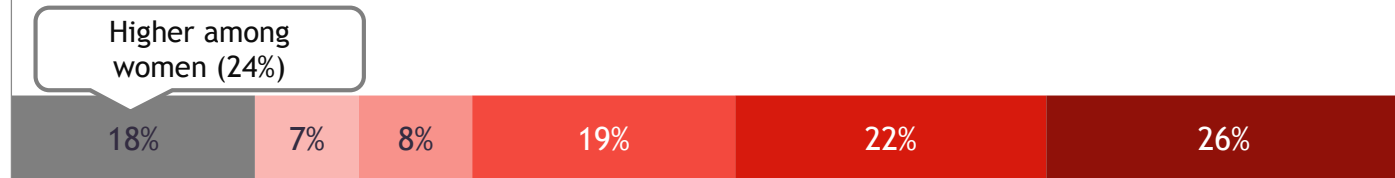


3.70

Higher in Scotland (40%)

Higher among those aged over 55 (9%)

Inadequate regulation of political activity on social media



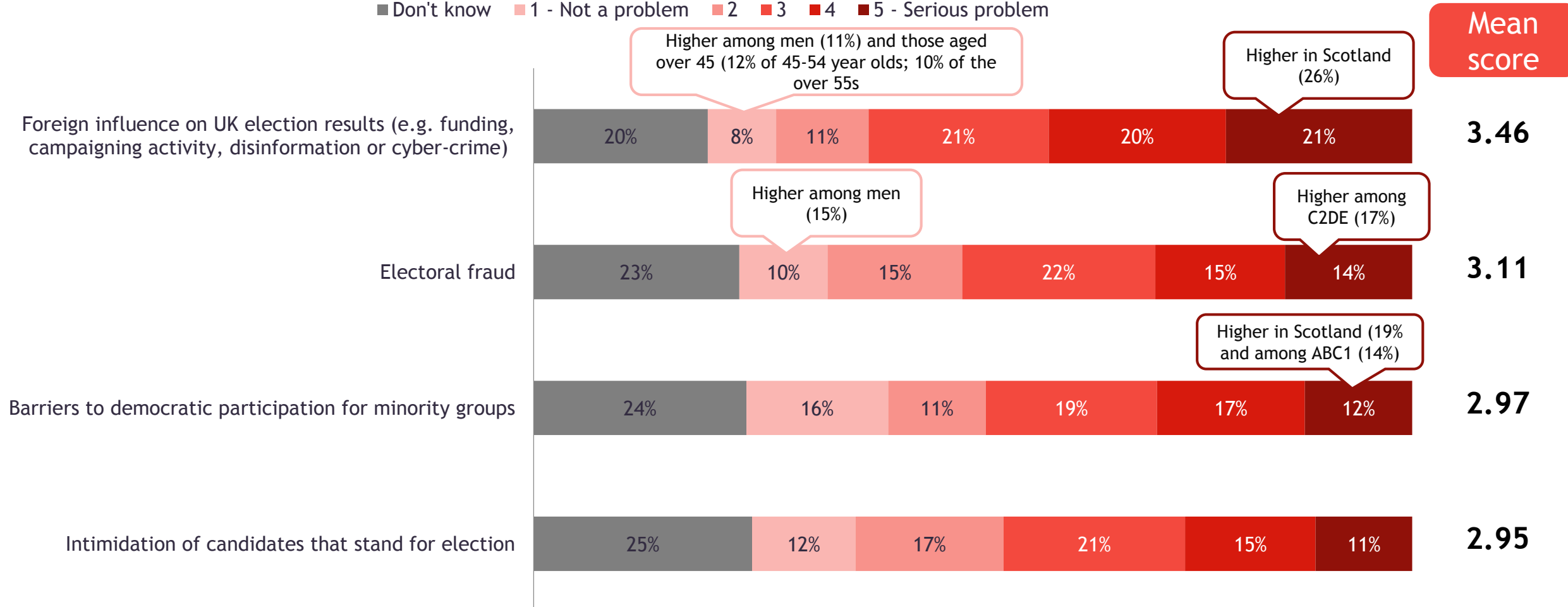
3.61

Higher among women (24%)

The below are of less concern to the British public, although a higher proportion still consider them a problem in comparison to those who don't

How much of a problem do you think that each of the following is in the UK at the moment?

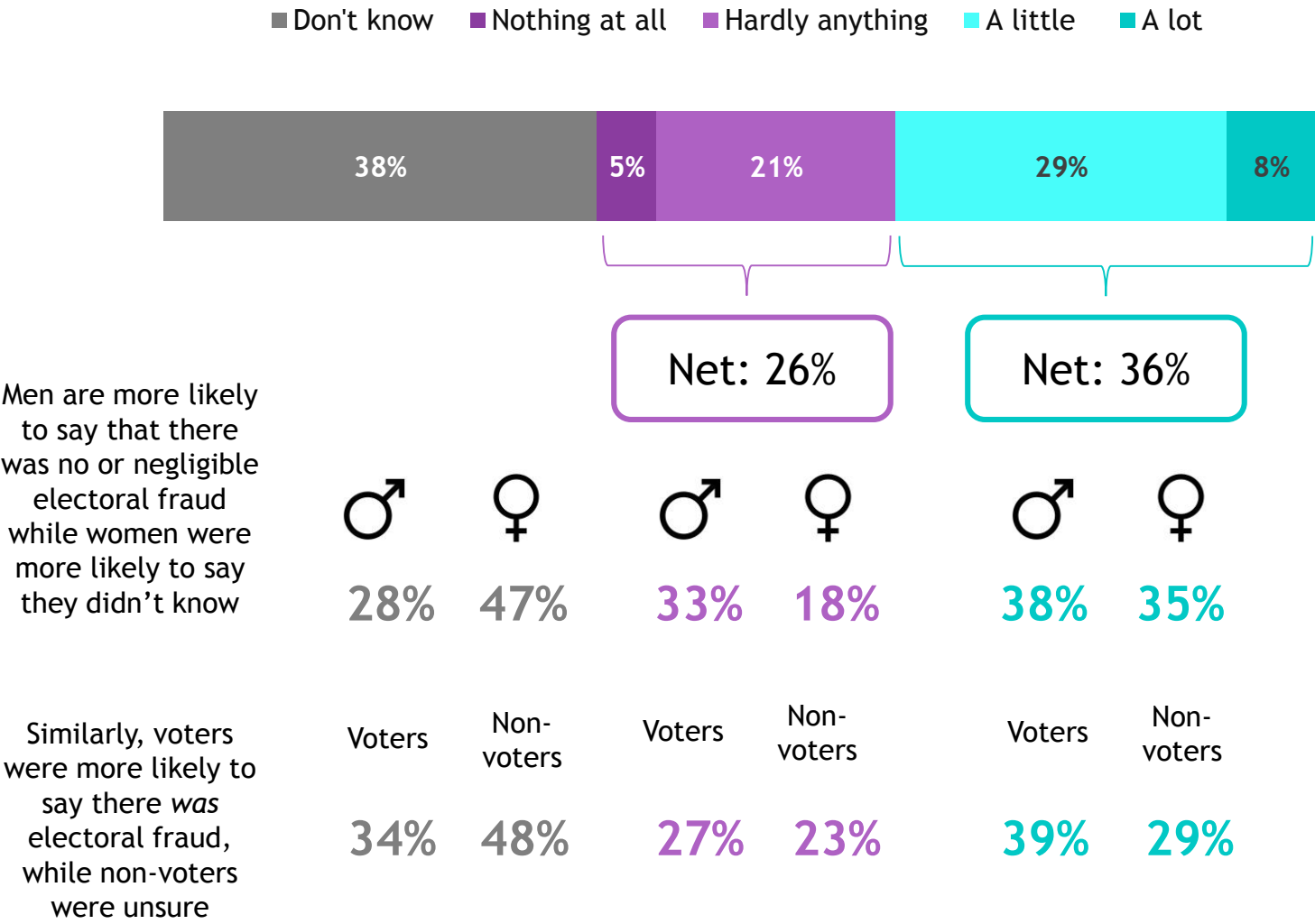
■ Don't know ■ 1 - Not a problem ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 - Serious problem



Over one-third feel there was some electoral fraud during the elections but just 8% thought this constituted a lot of fraud

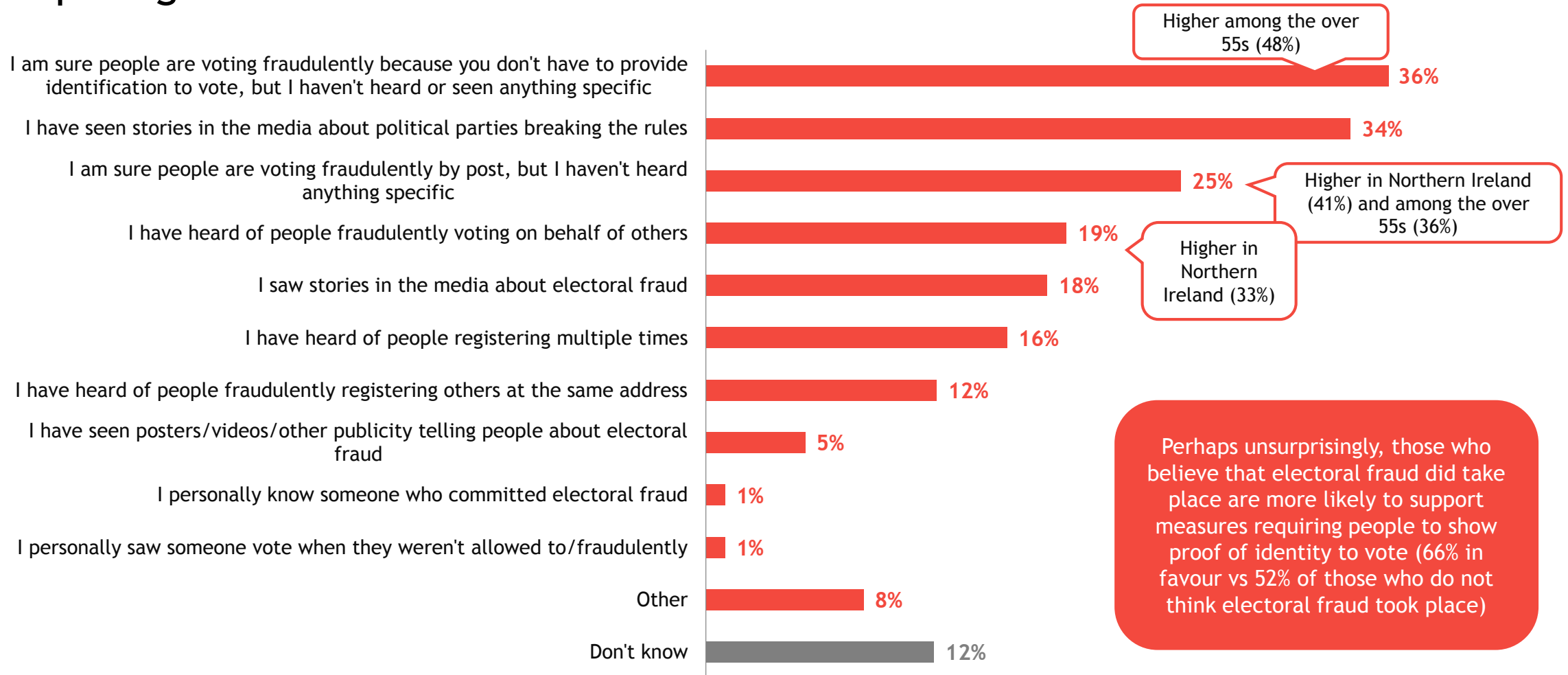
The most common answer given was ‘Don’t know’; only 5% thought there was no electoral fraud

How much electoral fraud or abuse, if any, do you think took place at the 23rd May elections?

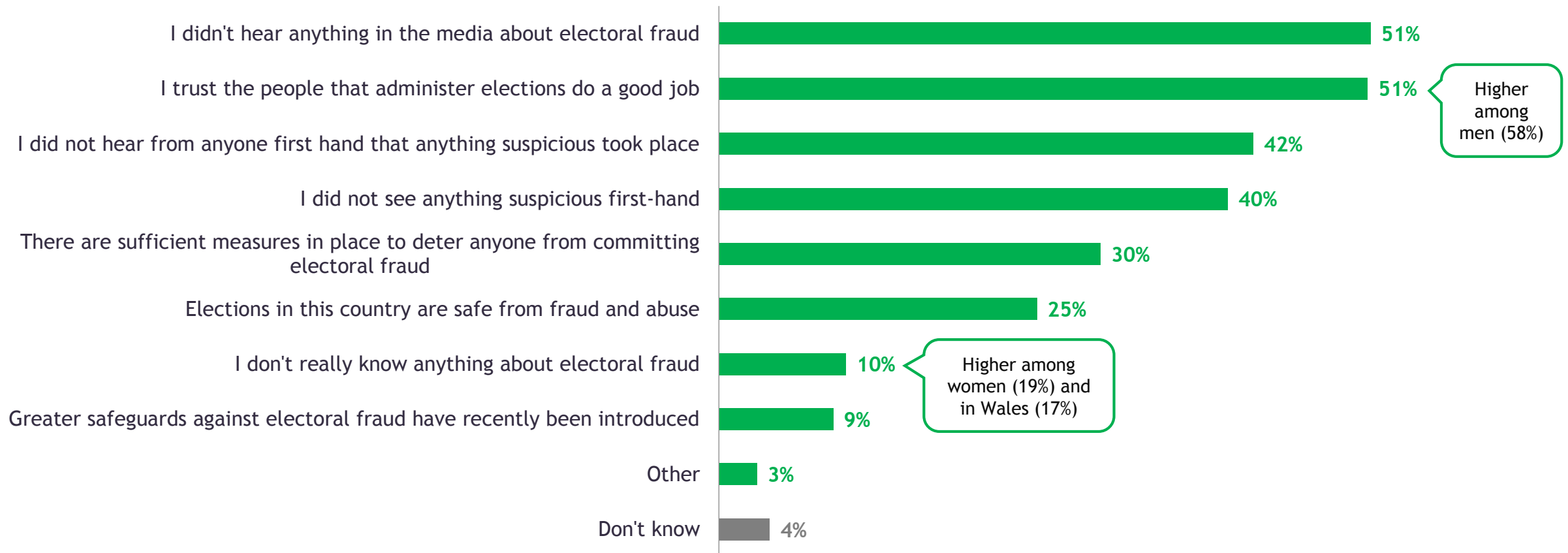


Q29. How much electoral fraud or abuse, if any, do you think took place at the 23rd May elections? Select one answer only. Base: all (2,262)

There was no standout reason for why some thought electoral fraud had taken place, but the most common answer was suspicion over not requiring identification to vote



Of those who did not think that electoral fraud took place, the most common reasons given were trusting those who administer the elections and not hearing about fraud in the media

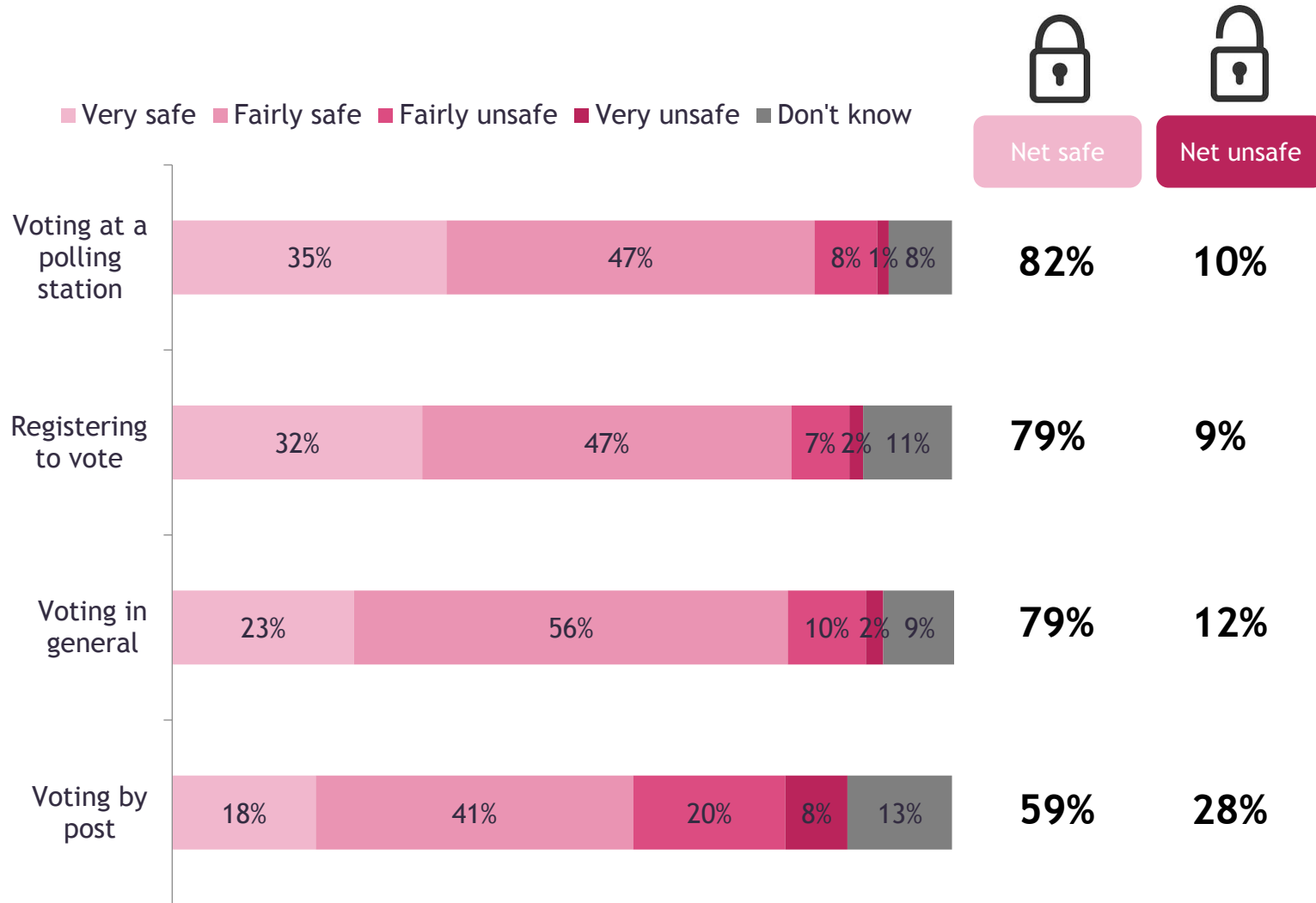


Q30b. Which one of the following best describes why you said that you think electoral fraud or abuse did not take place on 23rd May? Select all that apply
Base: all who did not think that electoral fraud took place (576)

Voting is considered safe from fraud and abuse by a majority of the population

Men (85%) and those aged over 55 (83%) are more likely to consider voting in general safe but there are no significant differences by region

When it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, how safe or unsafe do you think these things are?



In general, when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, how safe or unsafe do you think these things are? Select one answer only
Base: all (2,262)

— Section 8: Party and election finance

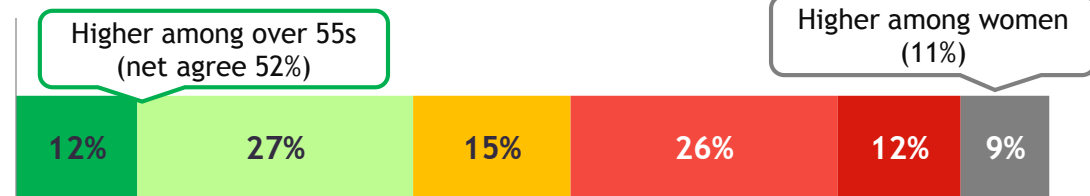
Most disagree that campaigns are open and transparent and that they could find out how campaigns are funded

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't Know



Net %

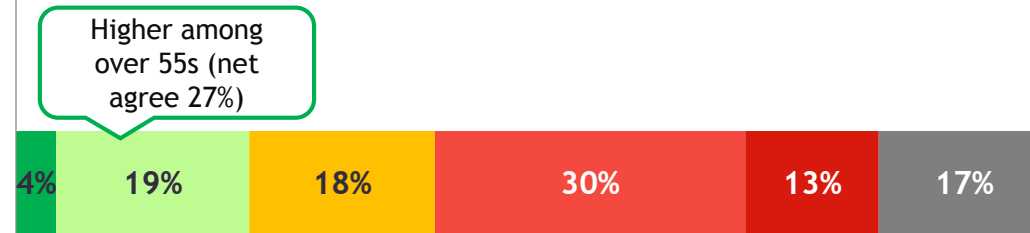
If a political party or another campaigner is caught breaking the rules, the authorities will take appropriate action.



38%

38%

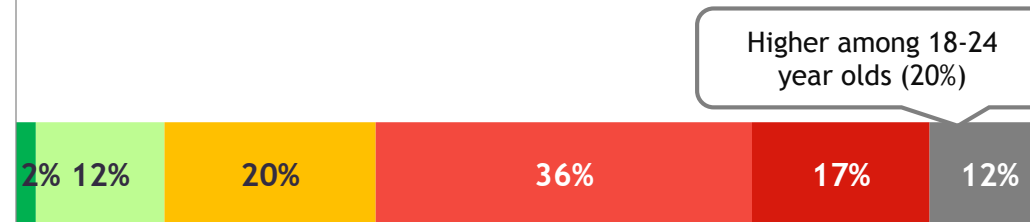
If I wanted to, I could easily find out how much political parties, candidates and other organisations spent on campaigning and how they were funded



23%

43%

The spending and funding of political parties and candidates and other campaigning organisations at elections is open and transparent



14%

54%

Q32. Here are some statements relating to the rules on the money that political parties, organisations and other individuals use when campaigning. These rules do not include politicians' expenses. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: all (2,262)