

WHO CARES?

Understanding people's attitudes and
experiences of combining work and care



STUDY METHODOLOGY AND CONTEXT



**IPSOS CARRIED
OUT A SURVEY IN
COLLABORATION
WITH BUSINESS IN THE
COMMUNITY
TO UNDERSTAND
PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES
AND EXPERIENCES
OF BALANCING
WORK AND CARE**

The questionnaire was tested and validated through six cognitive interviews with members of the public prior to data collection.

Fieldwork was carried out with a representative random probability sample of 5,444 adults aged 16 and over from across the UK using the Ipsos UK KnowledgePanel. Fieldwork took place between 11-17 November 2021. Design and calibration weights were applied to correct for differences in selection probabilities and response rates between subgroups.

The questionnaire covered a range of topics including:

- **Attitudes toward gender and care**
- **Care policies at work**
- **Flexible working**
- **Sharing caring responsibilities**

Panelists were asked about their gender in accordance with ONS guidance. Those identifying outside the male/female binary are included in the overall figures but did not comprise a large enough group to report separate findings.



EXPERIENCES OF WORK AND CARE

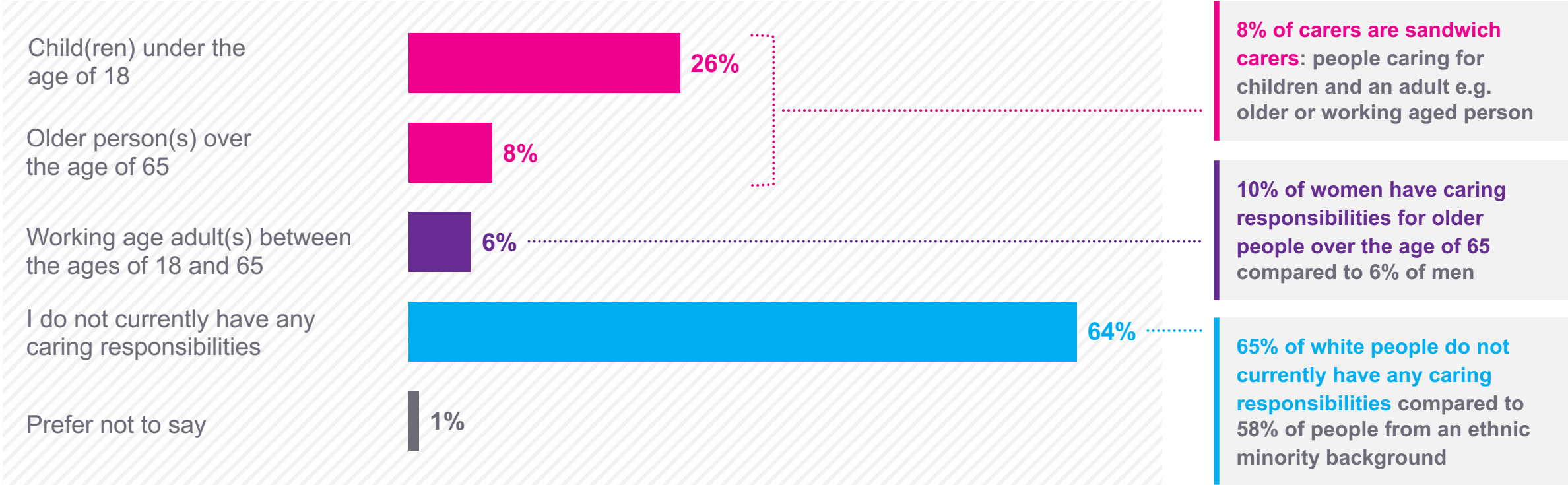


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A THIRD (35%) OF ALL ADULTS HAVE SOME TYPE OF CARING RESPONSIBILITY, RISING TO 44% OF WORKING ADULTS

S8: Do you currently have any of the following caring responsibilities?



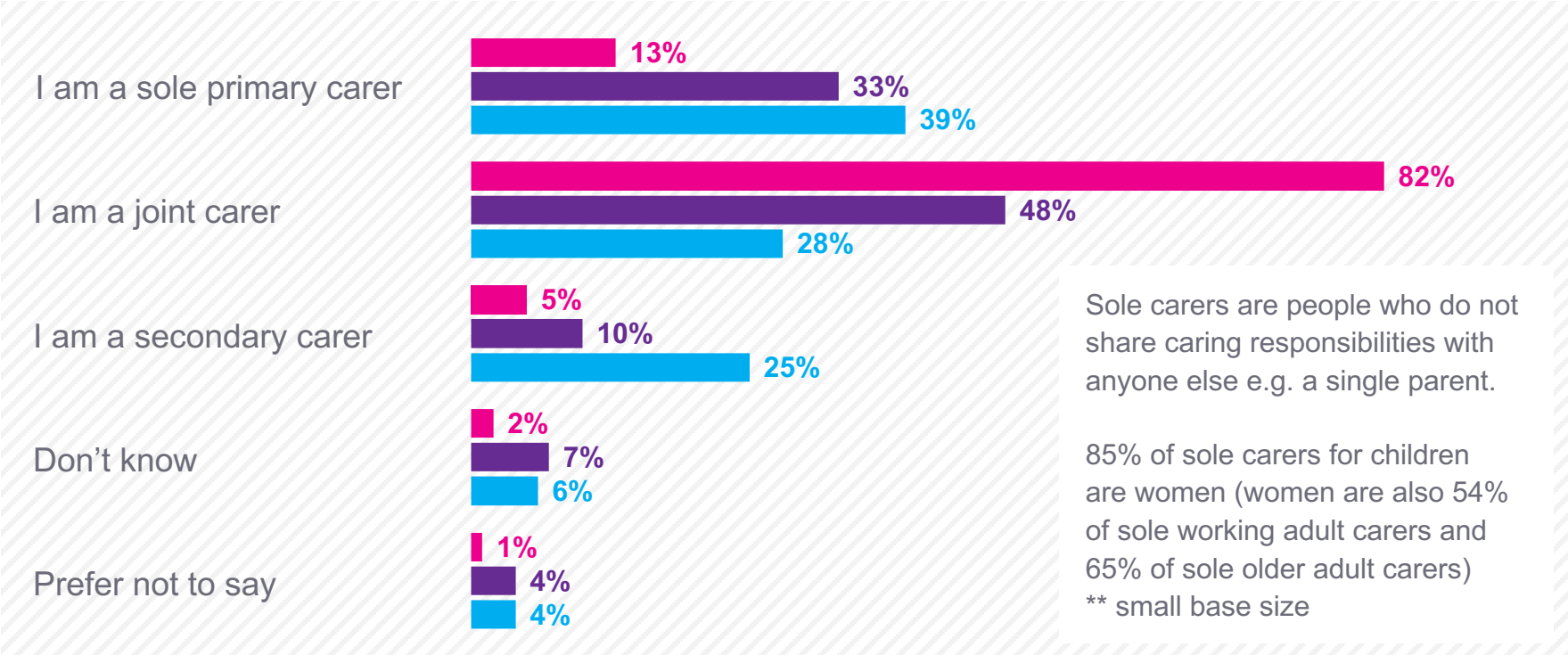
Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

MOST OF THOSE WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18 ARE JOINT CARERS

S9: At present, how would you best describe your relationship to [child, working age adult, older person] for whom you provide care?

- Children
- Working adult
- Older adult

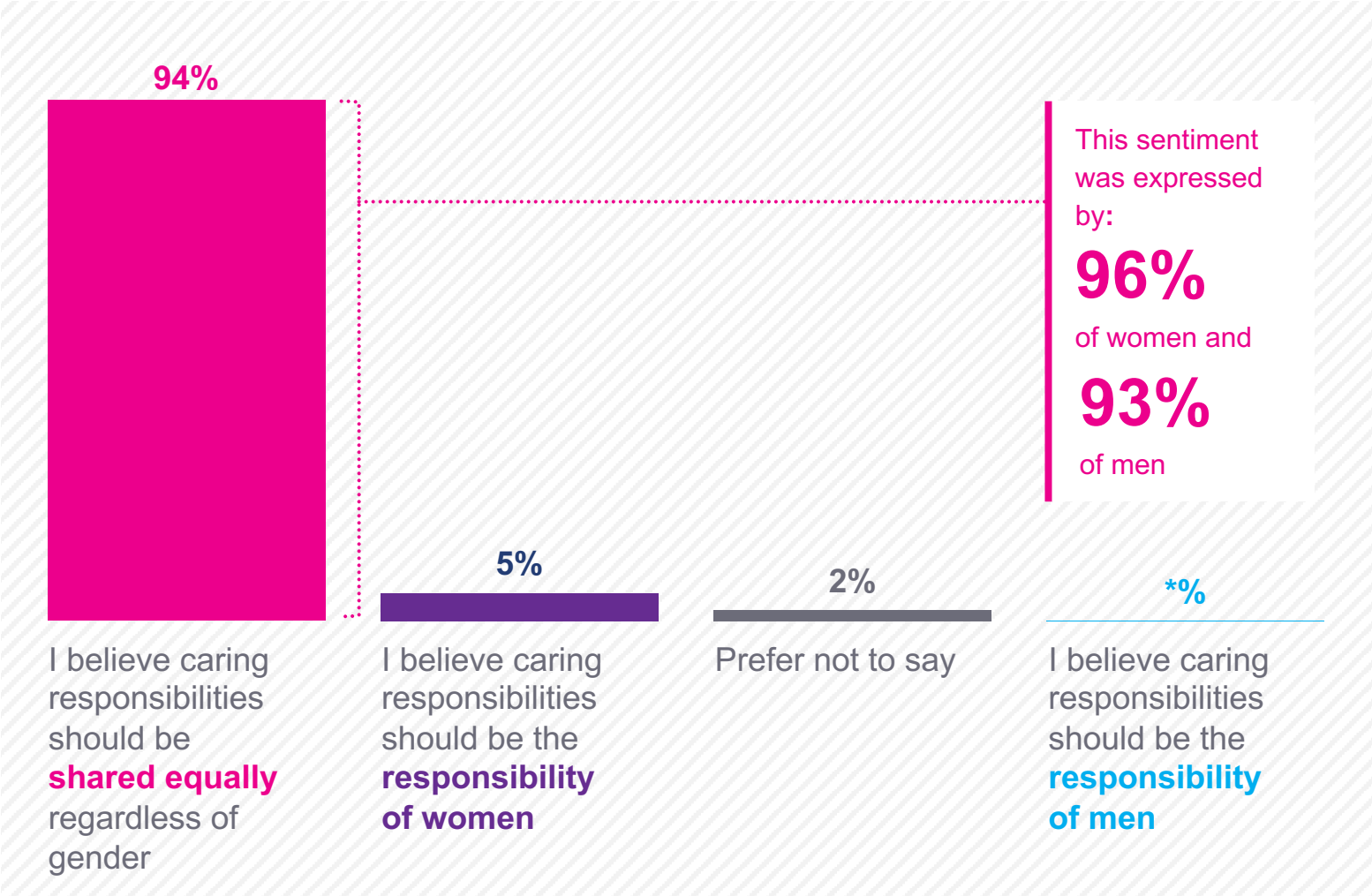
THE PICTURE IS MORE VARIED FOR OTHER CARING RESPONSIBILITIES



Base: All those with caring responsibilities (1837) Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

An overwhelming majority believe that caring responsibilities should be shared equally, regardless of gender

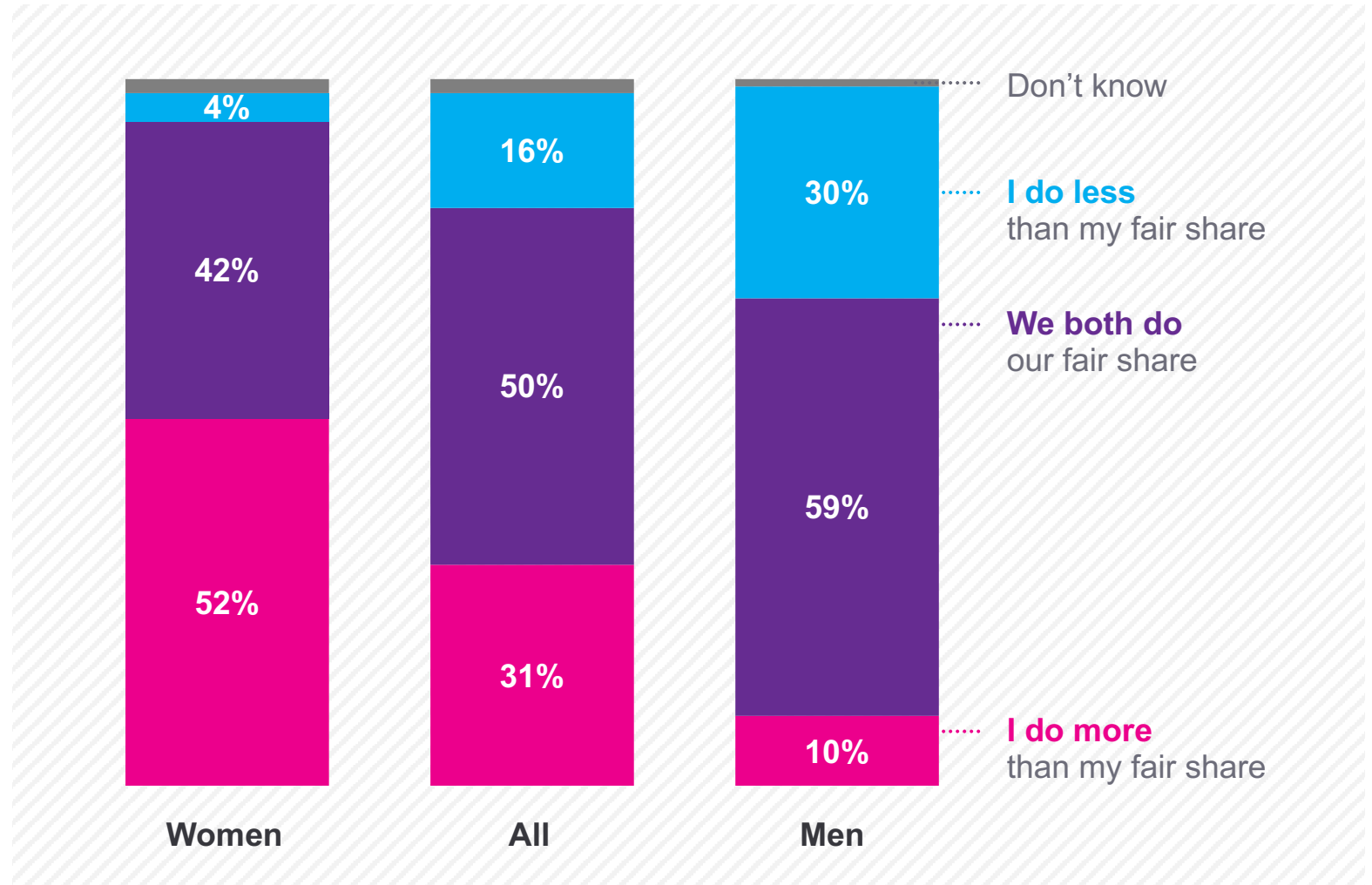
A6: Which of the following comes closest to your view?



Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

But care is not shared equally: over half of women who care jointly say they do more than their fair share – one in ten men say the same

D5: Earlier, you mentioned you were currently a joint primary carer. Do you feel both you and the other person do a fair share of the caring responsibilities you jointly manage, or not?



Base: All joint carers (1166) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

EXPERIENCES OF CARE DIFFER – PARTICULARLY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

While both men and women have caring responsibilities, women are more likely to be single parents, carers for working age adults or older people – and to feel that they take on more of the share of care giving.

As might be expected, younger people aged under 25 are less likely to have caring responsibilities as are those aged over 65.

More people from ethnic minority backgrounds (42%) currently have caring responsibilities compared to people from white backgrounds (35%).

Otherwise caring responsibilities are similar across society, with no notable differences by region, income or ethnicity.

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

While both men and women have caring responsibilities, women are more likely to be single parents, carers for working age adults or older people – and to feel that they take on more of the share of care giving

Women are more likely than men to have at least one type of caring responsibility (42% versus 36%)

Women are more likely than men to care for older people (10% versus 6%)

Care is not shared equally. Over half of women who care jointly say they do more than their fair share – one in ten men say the same (52% versus 10%)

85% of sole carers for children are women (women are also 54% of sole working adult carers and 65% of sole older adult carers). Note the small base size (total of 172 single carers)



BALANCING WORK AND CARE

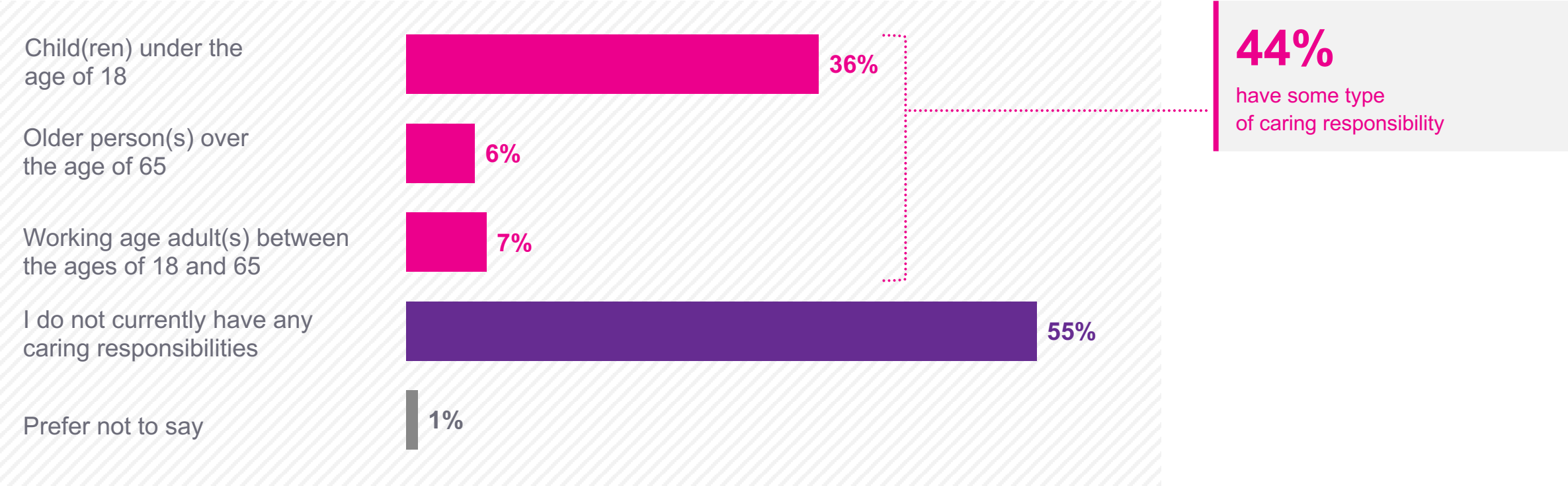


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APPROACHING HALF OF WORKING ADULTS (44%) HAVE SOME TYPE OF CARING RESPONSIBILITY – WITH CARING FOR CHILDREN MOST COMMON

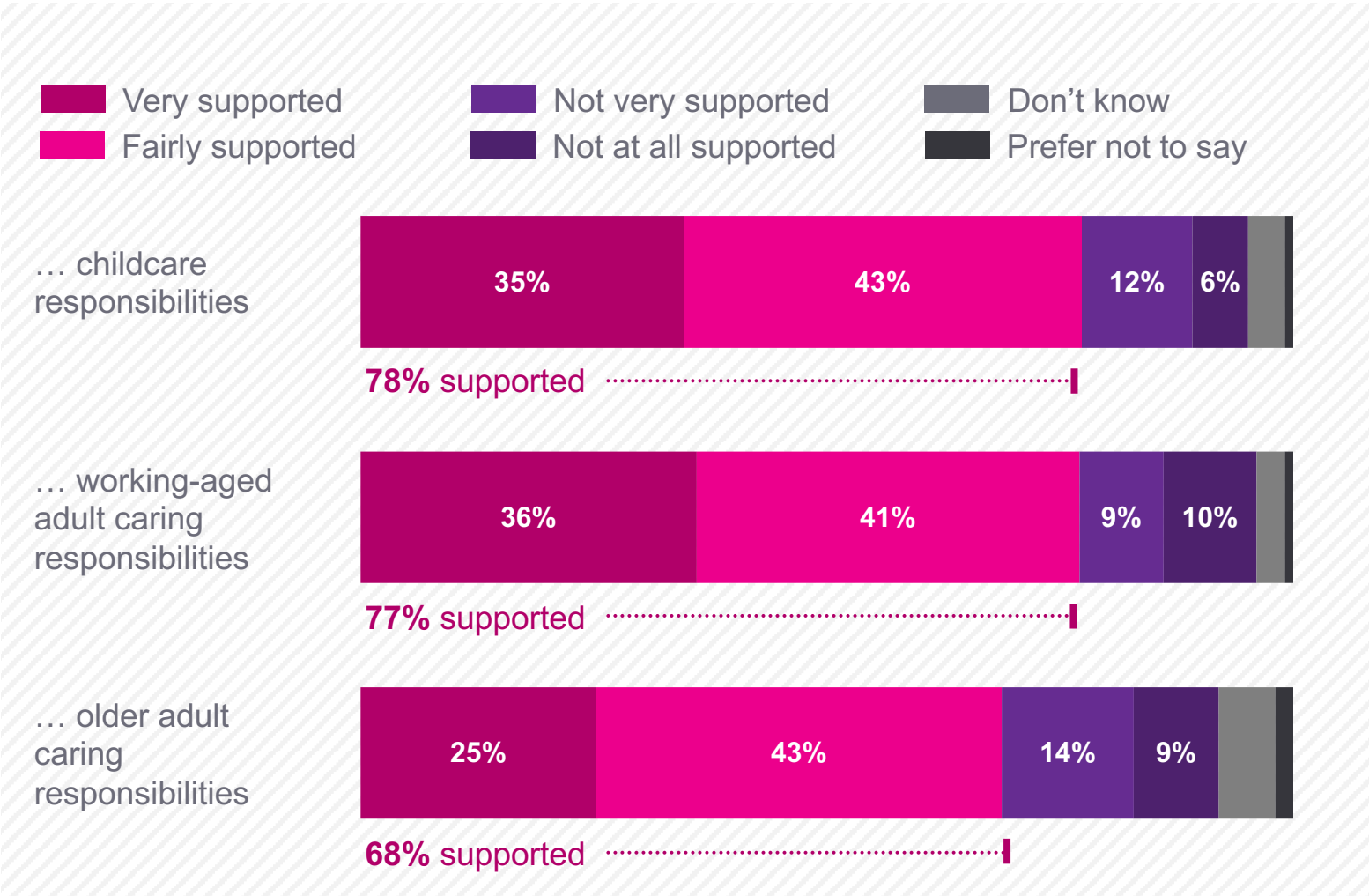
S8: Do you currently have any of the following caring responsibilities?



Base: All those currently working full or part time (3229) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

Most balancing work and care say they feel supported – however, other findings suggest this does not always match experiences

B4A/B/C : To what extent, if at all, do you feel supported by your employer to manage your...?



Base: All employed and caring for child(ren under 18 (1006); All employed and caring for working-aged adult(s) between the ages of 18 and 65 (197); All employed and caring for older person(s) over the age of 65 (218)

ALMOST HALF OF WORKERS HAVE HAD CHILDCARE RESPONSIBILITIES COME UP DURING THE WORKING DAY

A3: During your career, have any of the following things happened to you?

Yes
No

AND A THIRD HAVE
HAD OTHER CARING
RESPONSIBILITIES
COME UP

I have talked about
my family life at work

86%

13%

I have prioritised
my family over work

70%

26%

I have worked part-time

47%

52%

I have had childcare responsibilities come
up during the working day

46%

53%

I have been unable or unwilling to work
beyond my contracted hours

45%

53%

I have had caring responsibilities (other than
childcare) come up during the working day

33%

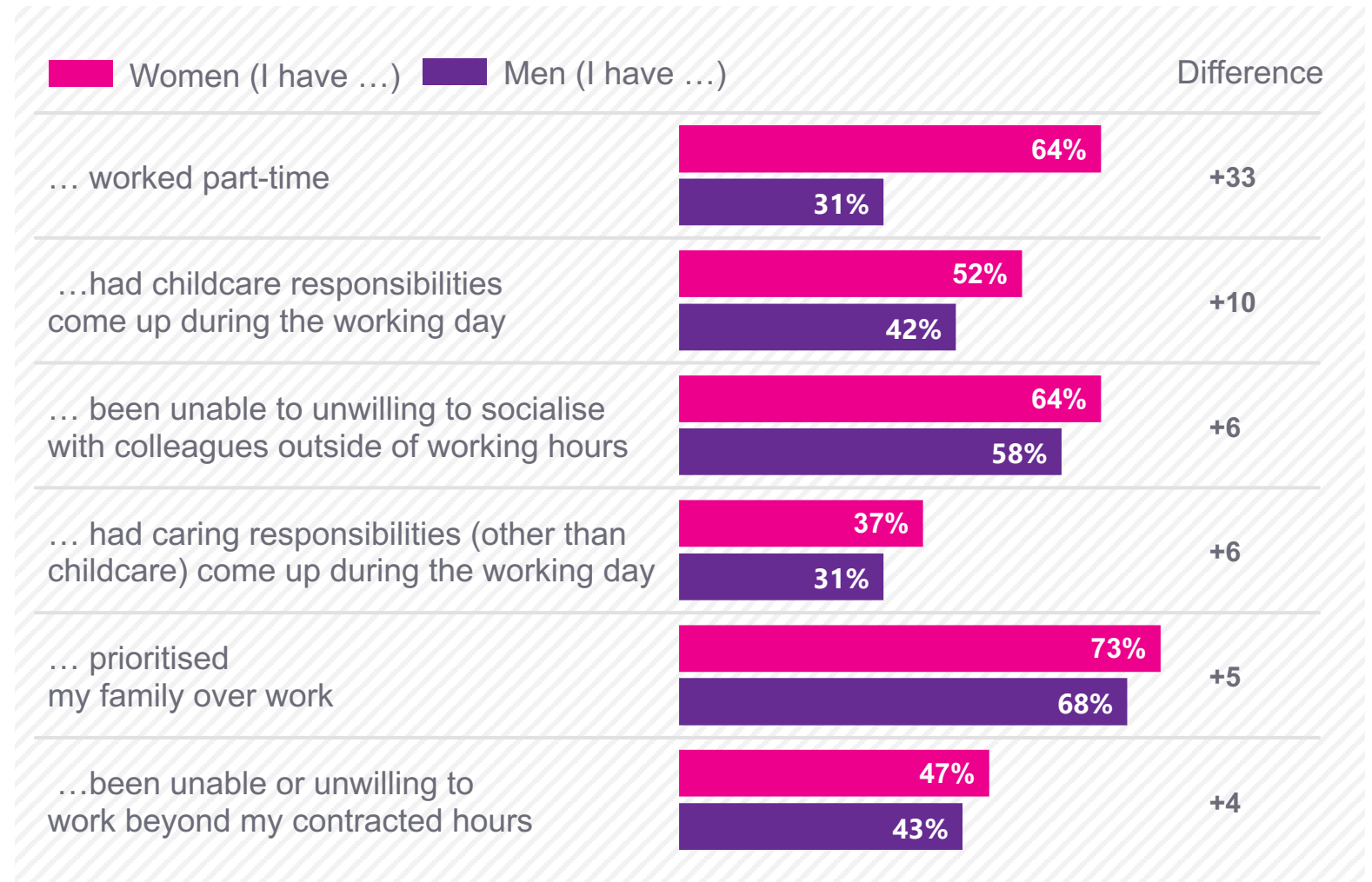
65%

Base: All employed (2991) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

Other **%, None of these 2%, Don't know 4%

Women are twice as likely as men to have worked part-time, and women are also more likely to have childcare responsibilities come up during work

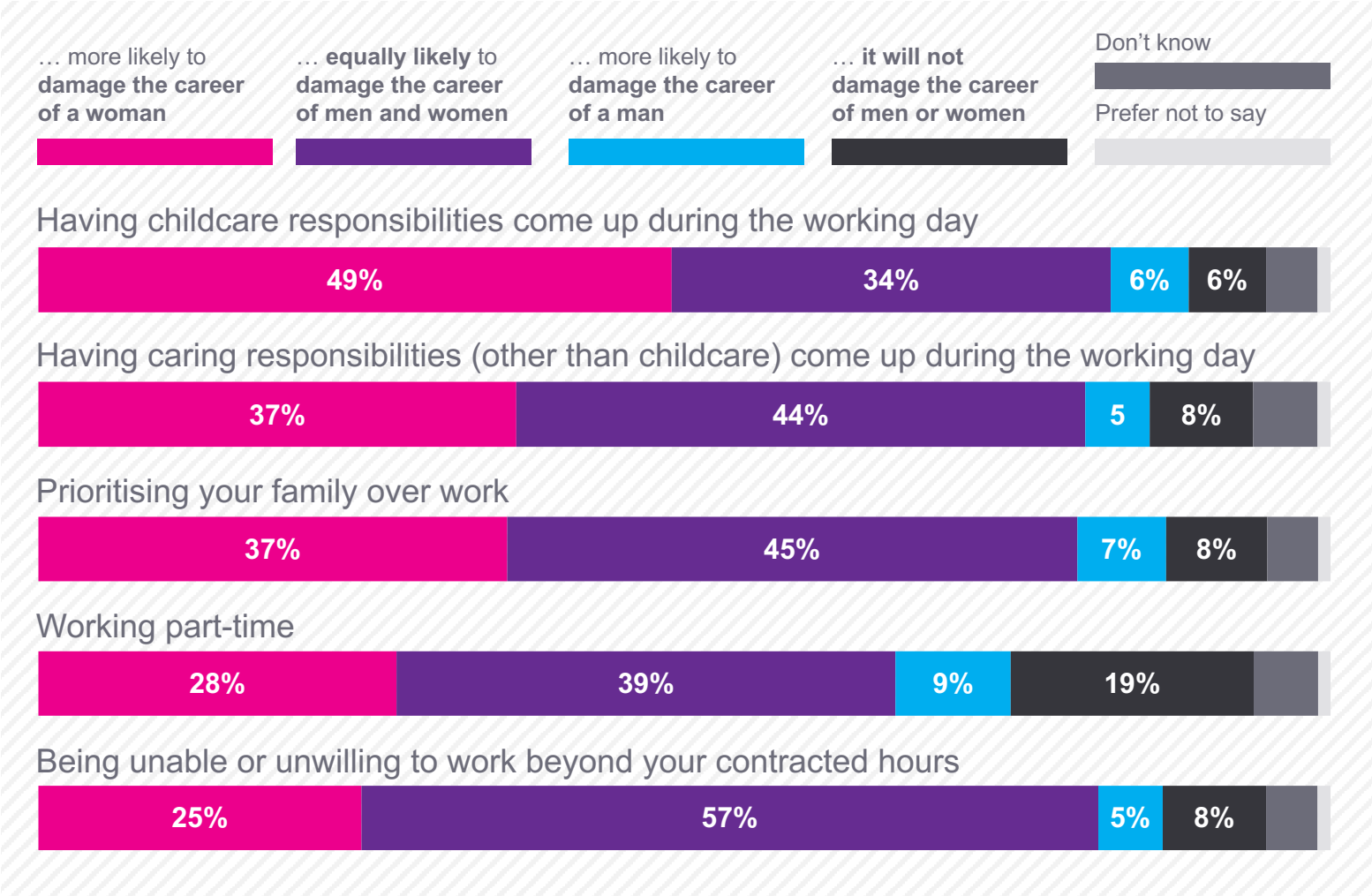
A3: During your career, have any of the following things happened to you?



Base: All joint carers (1166) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

People think caring responsibilities coming up during work, prioritising family and working part time are all more likely to damage women's careers

A2A: Thinking about men and women who work in the UK, please say whether you think each of the following is more likely to ...



Base: Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

JOINT CARERS ARE MAKING CHOICES ABOUT SHARING CARE BASED ON WORKING PATTERNS, WORKING CULTURE AND FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

D6: You said you take on more/less than your fair share of the caring responsibilities. In your opinion, what are some of the reasons that these responsibilities are not shared equally?

51%

Their/my job has longer hours, making it harder for them/me to perform care

38%

It's what made sense for us financially

36%

Their working pattern/work culture is not supportive of balancing work and care

“

We made a joint decision that I would work less hours that fit in with the children so I would be around for them while he is the main earner.”

Female, 46, working PT, childcare, South East

“

My wife took a lower paid job in order to be able to take on more responsibilities for childcare.”

Male, 45, working FT, childcare, London

“

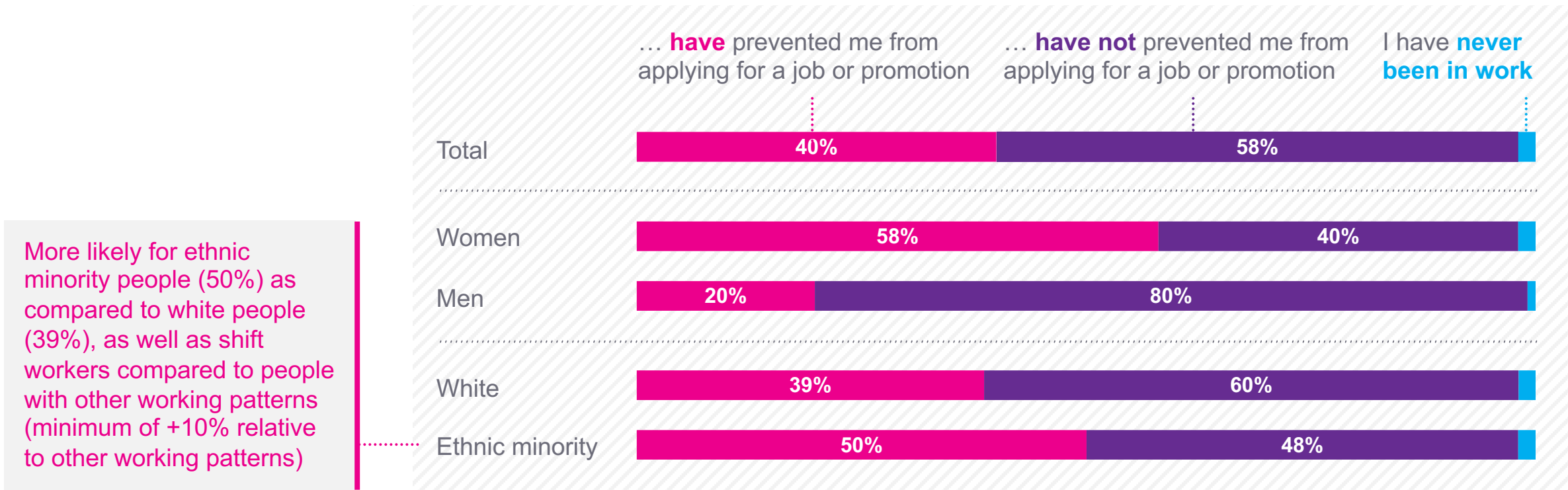
My shift patterns mean that I work late shifts some evenings, so I'm lucky to get to see my daughter 20 mins in a morning before school.”

Male, 39, working FT, childcare, Yorkshire & The Humber

Base: All who say they do more of their joint caring responsibilities (366)

TWO IN FIVE CARERS SAY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE STOPPED THEM APPLYING FOR A JOB/PROMOTION – MUCH MORE COMMON FOR WOMEN

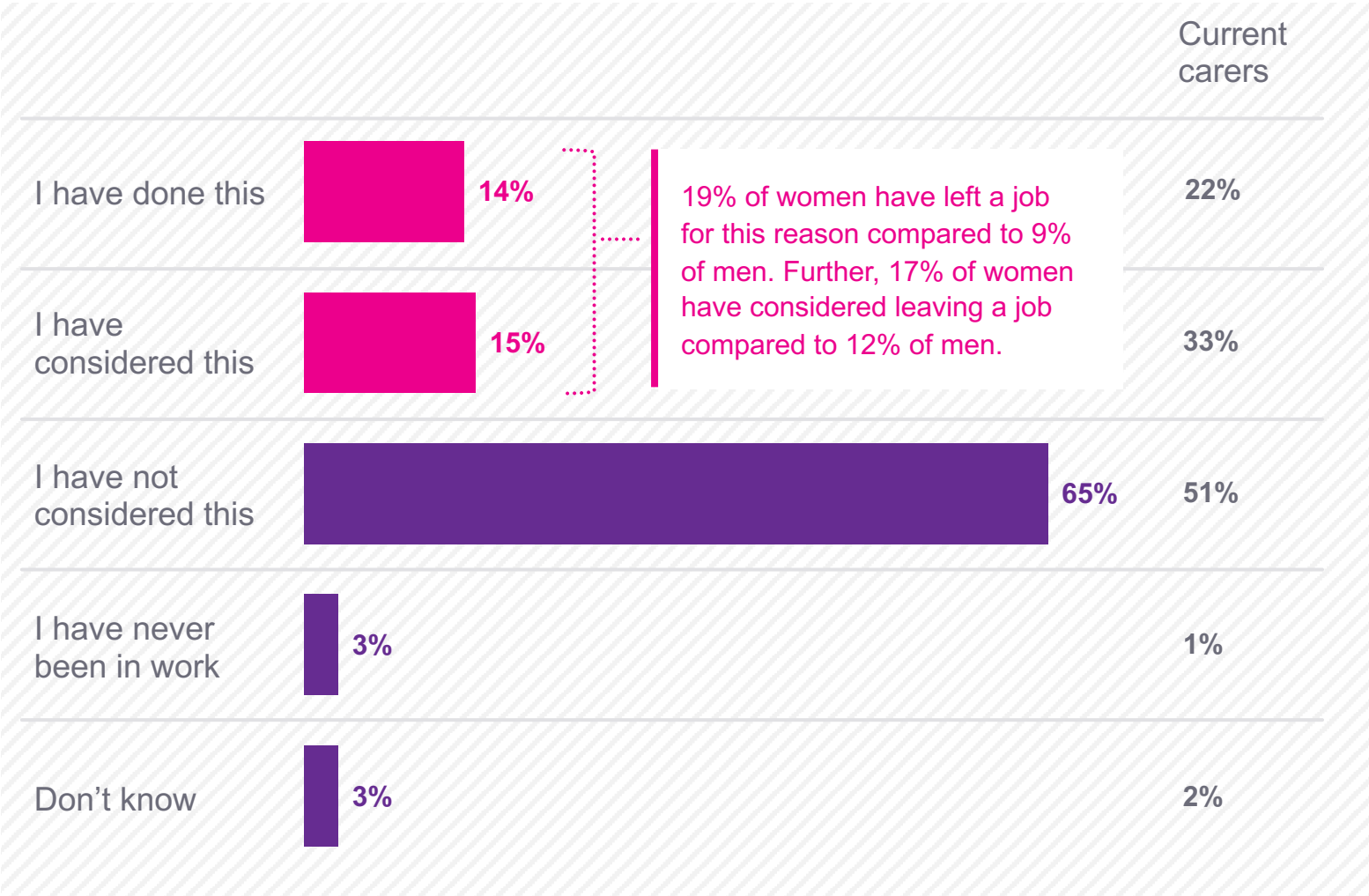
C11: Have your childcare or other caring responsibilities ever prevented you from applying for a job or promotion, or not?



Base: All with caring responsibilities (1837) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

Nearly 3 in 10 people have left or considered leaving a job due to difficulties balancing work and care – more common for women and current carers

B5: Have you ever left a job, or considered leaving a job because of difficulties balancing your work and family or other caring responsibilities, or not?



Base: all respondents (5444)

HERE ARE A FEW REASONS WHY

B5A: You mentioned childcare or other caring responsibilities have prevented you from applying for a job or promotion. Can you tell us more about that?

“

I currently work 8am-4pm leaving at 2pm, 2 days a week to collect children from school under the our flexible working policy but moving up the ladder I would not be allowed to do this.”

Female, 38, working FT, childcare, London

“

My dad was ill and I cared for him so I didn't apply for a promotion.”

Female, 55, working FT, sandwich carer, South East

“

Roles that don't offer any flexibility or require a lot of hours outside of contracted hours would not be suitable.”

Male, 40, working FT, childcare, Scotland

“

I have 50-50 custody of 2 kids with an ex so have them half the week so can't work a standard 9-5 job.”

Male, 31, working PT, childcare, West Midlands

“

I work 3 days and a job has come up at work but I can't go for it as they want the person to do 4 days per week.”

Female, 44, working PT, sandwich carer, Yorkshire & The Humber

Base: All whose caring responsibilities have prevented them from applying for a job or promotion (734) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

HOW SUPPORTED PEOPLE FEEL AND HOW THEY BALANCE WORK AND CARE DIFFERS DEPENDING ON THEIR BACKGROUND AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Feeling supported to manage care

- Around a quarter of people who work shifts (28%) or who work on weekends (25%) do not feel supported with managing their childcare by their employer, while this is much lower for those who work regular office hours (10%).
- Household income also influences feelings around support for childcare – 50% of those earning under £26,0000 per year feeling supported compared with 75% of those who earn £26,000 per year or more.
- People who care for older adults (68%) are less likely to feel supported than those with childcare responsibilities or caring for working age adults (78% and 77%). There were no notable differences across other demographic characteristics.

Managing care and work

- Beyond gender, there are no notable demographic differences regarding the experience of having caring responsibilities coming up during the working day.
- But there are differences in how people have chosen to balance their careers and care. Women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who are lower income or shift workers are more likely to have not applied for a job/promotion or to have considered leaving or left a job to manage their work and care.

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

Though there were no gender differences in feeling supported to balance childcare, more men reported feeling not supported relative to women (22% men versus 15% women).

Women are twice as likely as men to have worked part-time (64% versus 31%), and women are also more likely to have childcare responsibilities come up during work (52% versus 42%).

Women are twice as likely as men to have left a job because of difficulties balancing care and work (19% versus 9%). Further, 17% of women have considered leaving a job compared to 12% of men.

People think caring responsibilities coming up during work, prioritising family and working part time are all more likely to damage women's careers (slide 15). Women who have had childcare responsibilities come up during their working day are more than twice as likely as men who have experienced this to think that it has harmed their career (45% versus 20%).

Women are also far more likely than men to say that their caring responsibilities have prevented them from applying for a job or promotion (58% versus 20%).



OPENING UP FLEXIBLE WORKING TO ALL



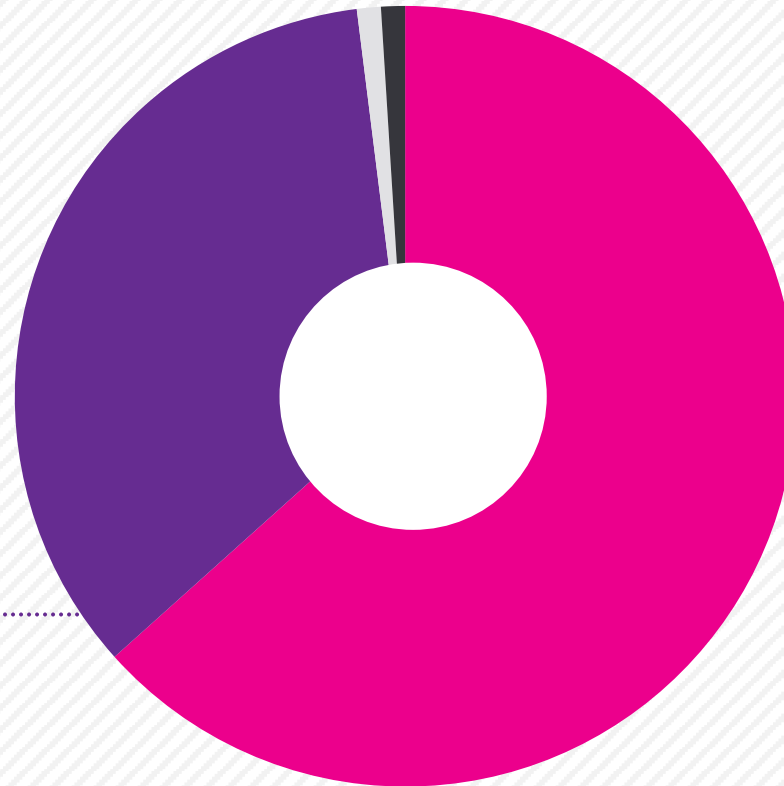
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Nearly two in three people in work believe their current main job can be done flexibly

C1: In general, do you believe your current main job can be done flexibly or not?

35%
My job can't be done flexibly



64%
My job can be done flexibly

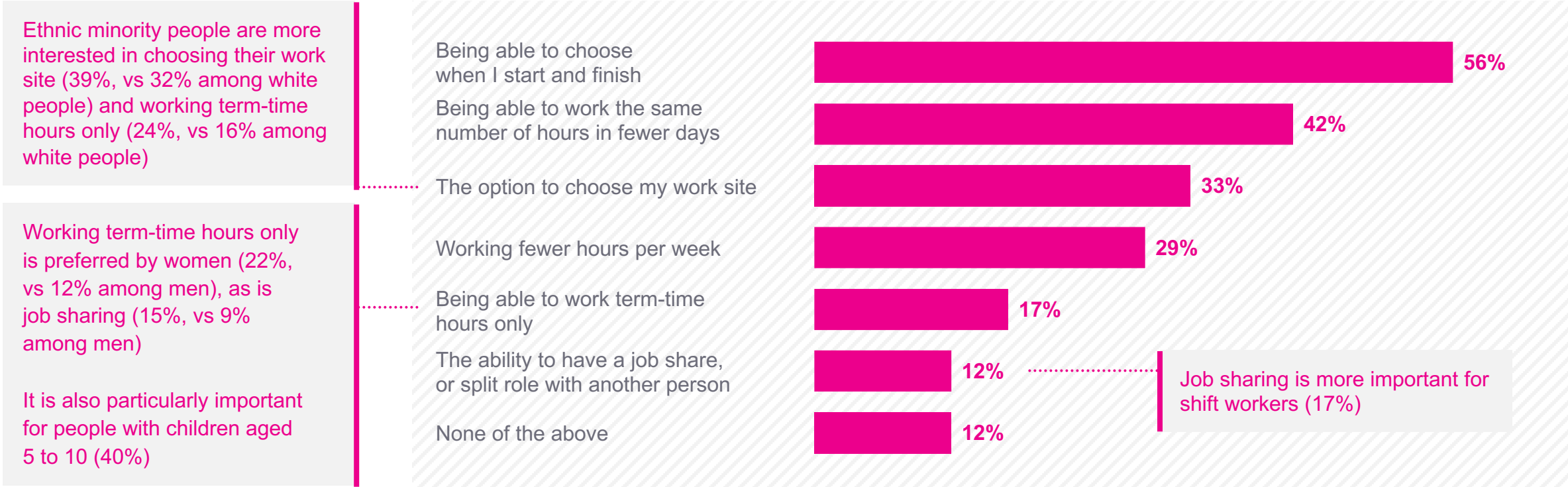
This is the highest for people with regular office hours (76%), and lowest for those who do shift work (39%).

84%
of people who were able to work more flexibly since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic (March 2020) expect this to be sustained – either in terms of hours and/or location.

Base: All employed (2991)

BEING ABLE TO CHOOSE WHEN TO START AND FINISH IS THE MOST APPEALING FLEXIBLE WORKING OPTION

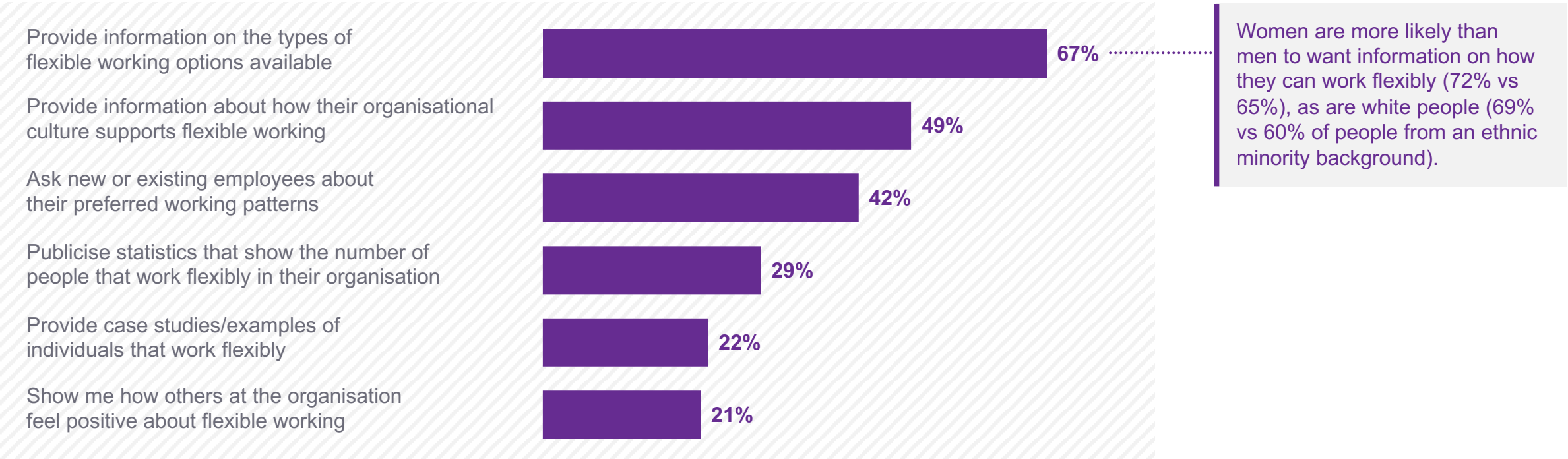
C5: If you could do your current job role or a future job role in a more flexible way, which of the following would be of interest to you?



Base: All except retirees (3637)
Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021
Don't know 3%

THE MOST CONVINCING WAY EMPLOYERS CAN DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT TO FLEXIBLE WORKING IS PROVIDING CONCRETE INFORMATION ABOUT FLEXIBLE WORKING OPTIONS

C8: There a number of things an employer could do to demonstrate they are committed to flexible working. Which of the following, if any, would you find convincing?

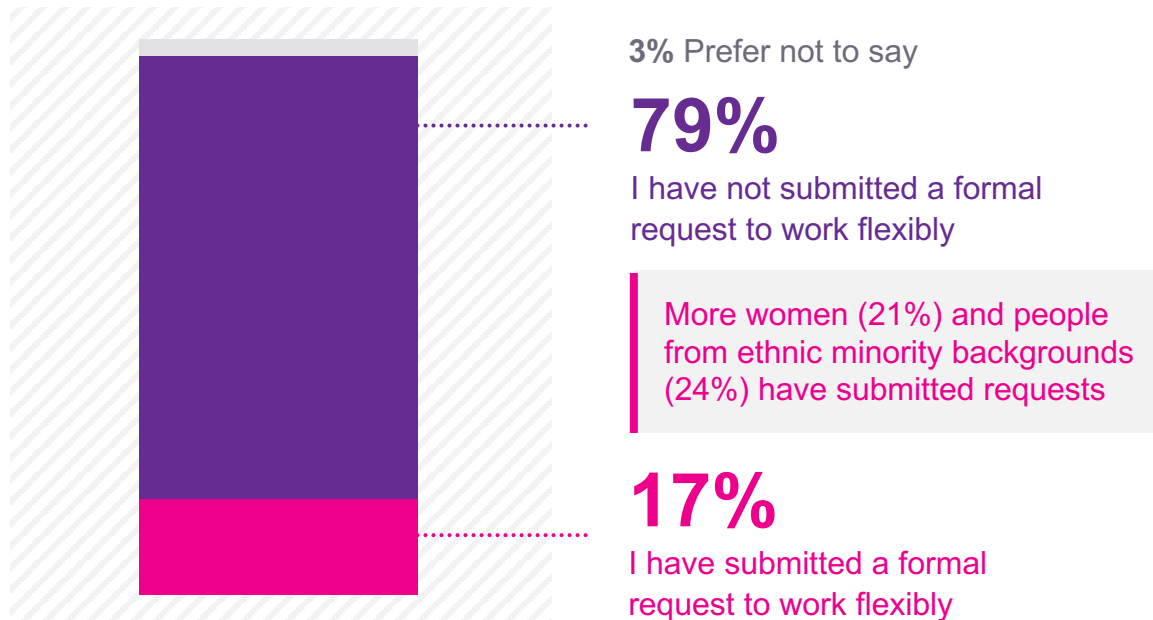


Base: All respondents (5444). Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

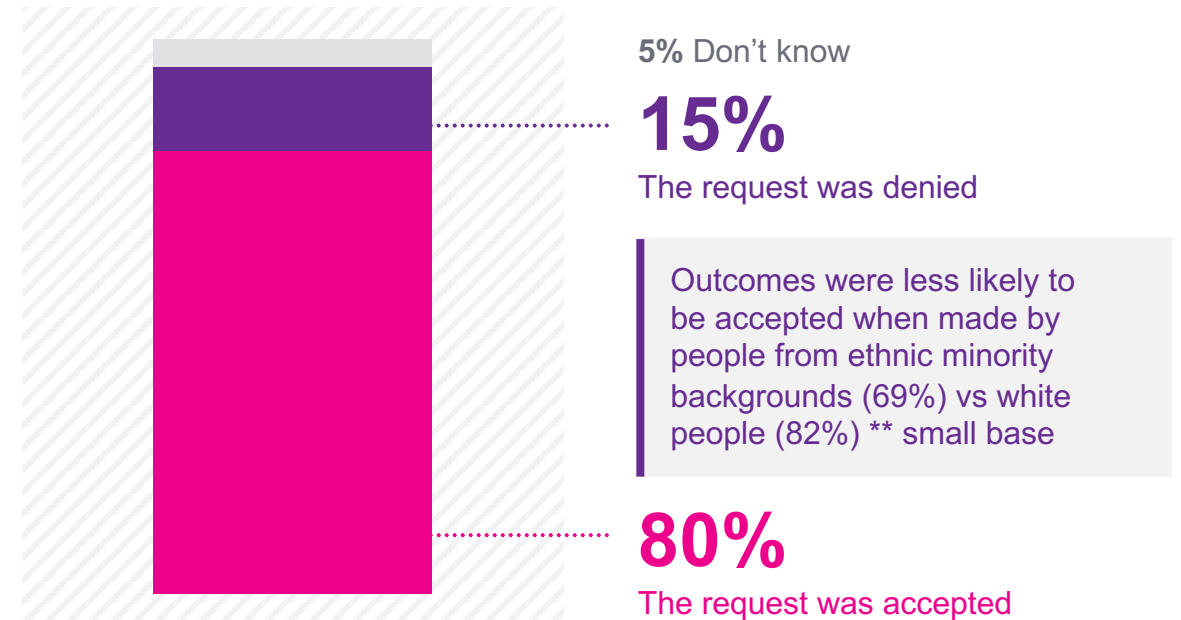
None of these 4%, Don't know 5%

AROUND ONE IN FIVE PEOPLE CURRENTLY IN WORK HAVE EVER SUBMITTED A FORMAL REQUEST TO WORK FLEXIBLY – MOST WHO HAVE DONE SO HAD IT ACCEPTED

C15: Have you ever submitted a formal request to your employer to work flexibly in some way, or not?



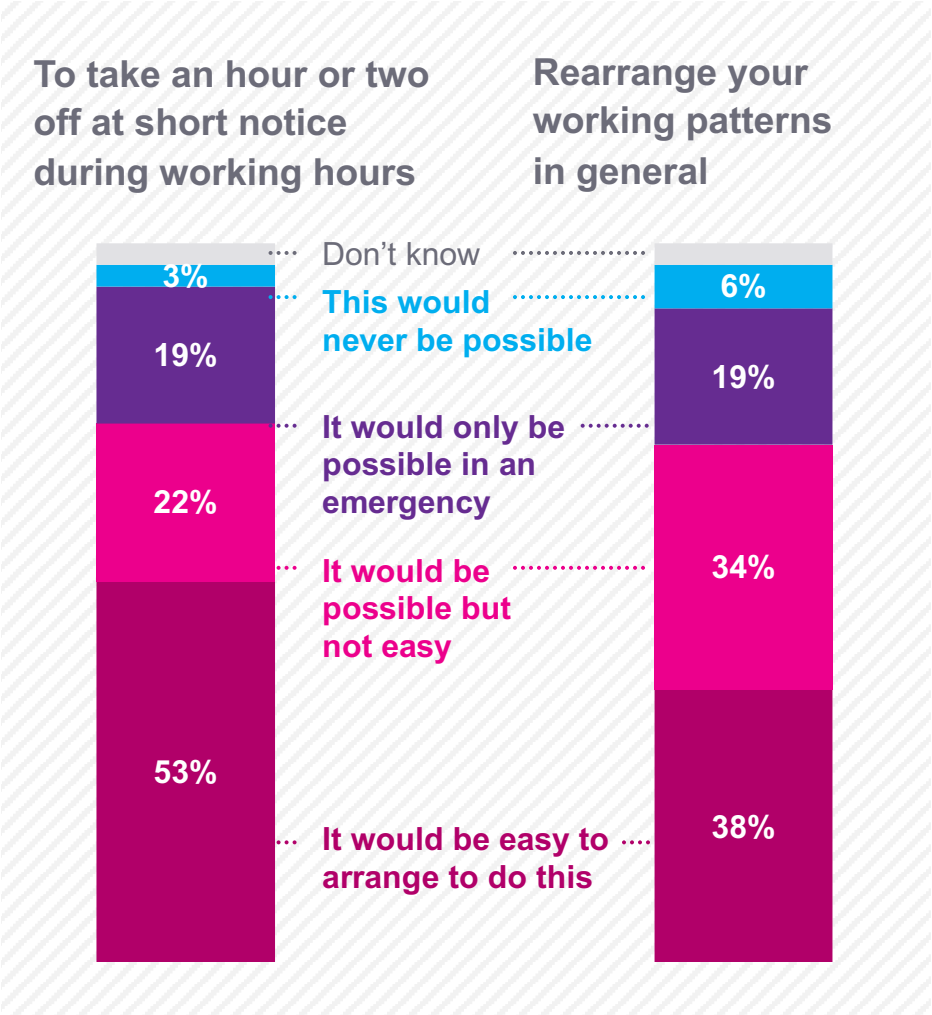
C16: What was the outcome of that request?



Base: All employed (2991). Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

Women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely to find it easy to arrange to take time off at short notice during work

C13/14: Would it be possible for you to arrange to take an hour or two off at short notice during working hours/your working patterns in general in order to attend to personal/family matters?



More men (58%) than women (48%) said it would be easy to take an hour or two off at short notice

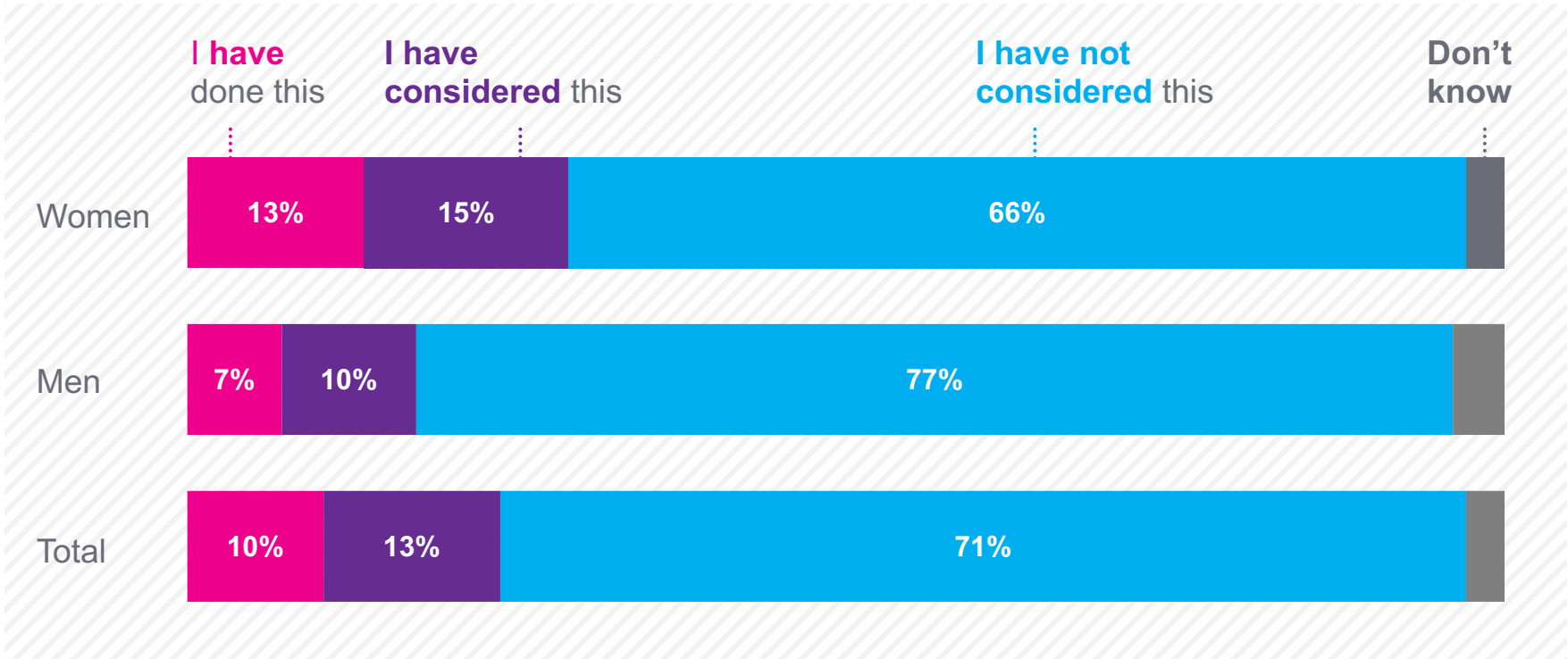
A larger proportion of white people (54%) felt it would be easy to take an hour or two off at short notice relative to ethnic minority people (39%). This was also the case for rearranging working patterns in general (39% white people vs 30% from ethnic minority backgrounds)

Base: All employed (2991). Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

NEARLY 3 IN 10 WOMEN (28%) HAVE LEFT OR CONSIDERED LEAVING A JOB DUE TO LACK OF FLEXIBILITY, COMPARED TO 17% OF MEN

A1: Have you ever left a job, or considered leaving a job because of a lack of flexibility, or not?

Around a third (32%) of people from an ethnic minority background have left or considered leaving a job due to a lack of flexibility, compared with around one in five white people (21%)



Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

EXPERIENCES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING DIFFER, AND DIFFERENT OPTIONS ARE NEEDED TO SUIT PEOPLE'S DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES

Is flexible working available to all?

- Women (compared to men) and people from ethnic minority backgrounds (compared to white people) are more likely to have considered leaving a job due to lack of flexibility, or to have had requests for flexible working turned down.
- These groups are also more likely to have found it difficult to arrange to take an hour or two off from work at short notice. Taking a limited amount of time off at short notice is also more difficult for shift workers than office workers (27% versus 67% who find it easy). Those on higher incomes (> £52K), or those who are older would find it easier to take a couple of hours off at short notice.

What do people want from flexible working?

- Being able to choose working hours and location is important to everyone, but for some people e.g., those with children or those who don't work in offices, other options such as working in term time only or job shares matter too.
- People want information from employers on the different types of flexible working that is available to them. Women are more likely than men to want information on how they can work flexibly (72% versus 65%), as are people from an ethnic minority background (69% versus 60% of white people).

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

When asked about types of flexible working that would be of interest, **women are more likely than men to chose working term-time hours only** (22%, versus 12% among men).

Women are also more likely than men to want information on how they can **work flexibly** (72% versus 65%).

Women are more likely than men to have submitted a formal request to work flexibly (21% versus 14%). However, more men (58%) than women (48%) said it would be easy to take an hour or two off at short notice.



IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR WORKING CARERS

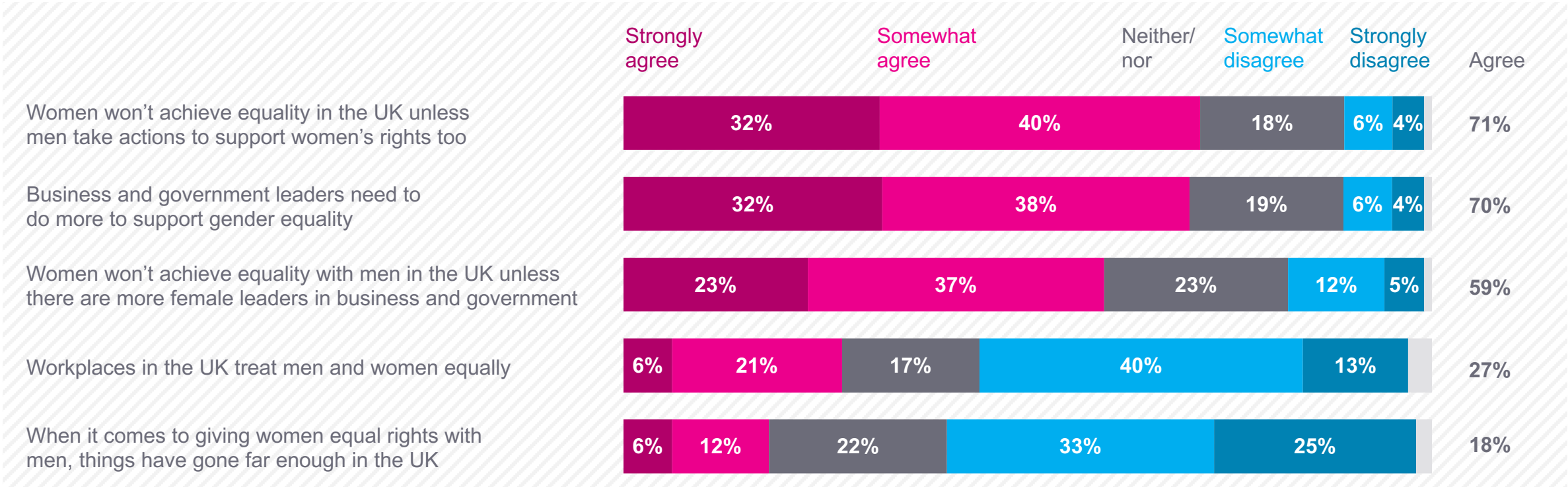


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THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT FOR ACTION TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY GENERALLY AND IN THE WORKPLACE

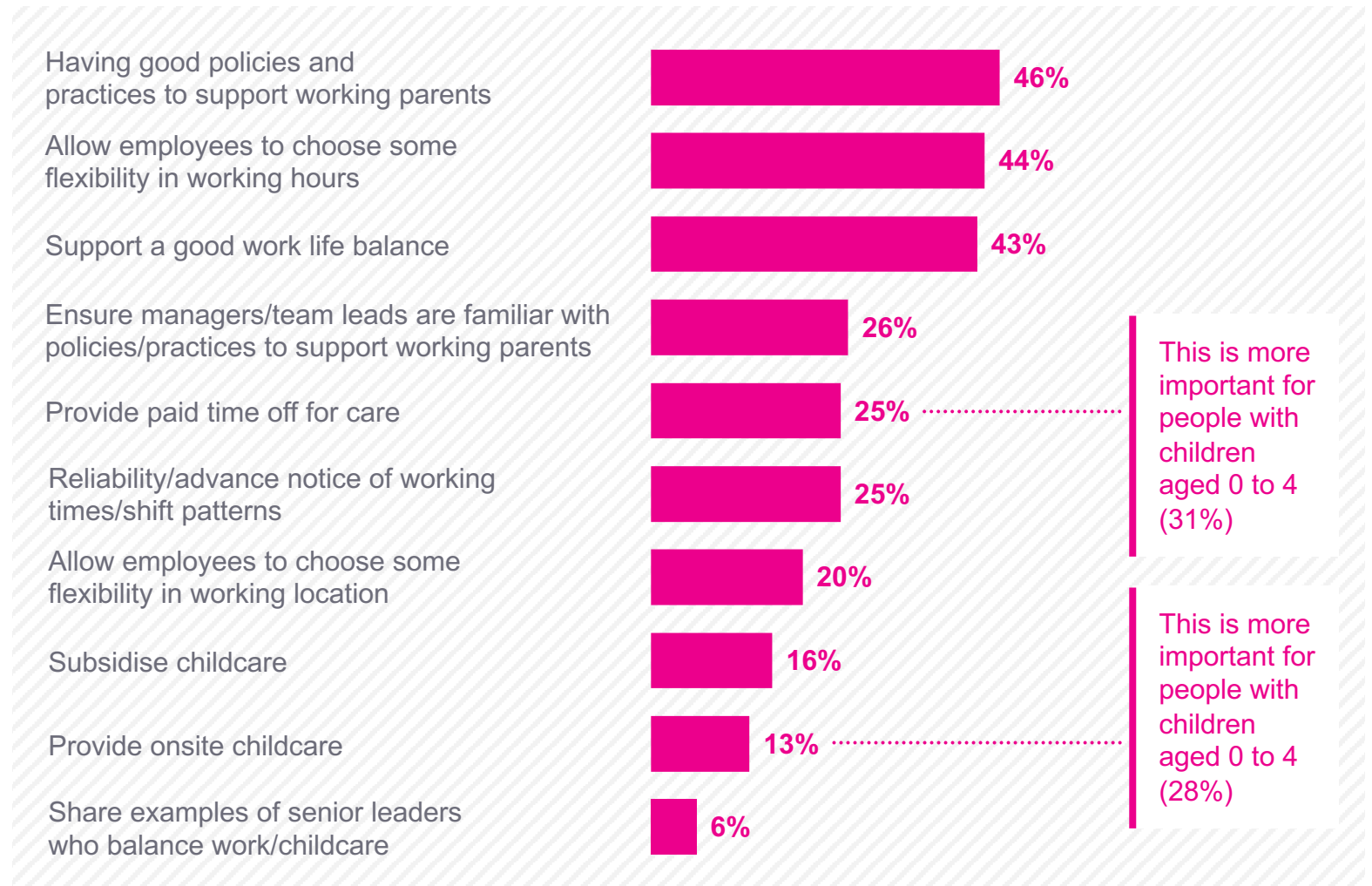
A10: To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?



Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

When it comes to balancing work and childcare: good policies and practices; flexible working hours; and a culture that supports work life balance are key

B2: What are the most important things you think workplaces can do to support those balancing work and childcare responsibilities?

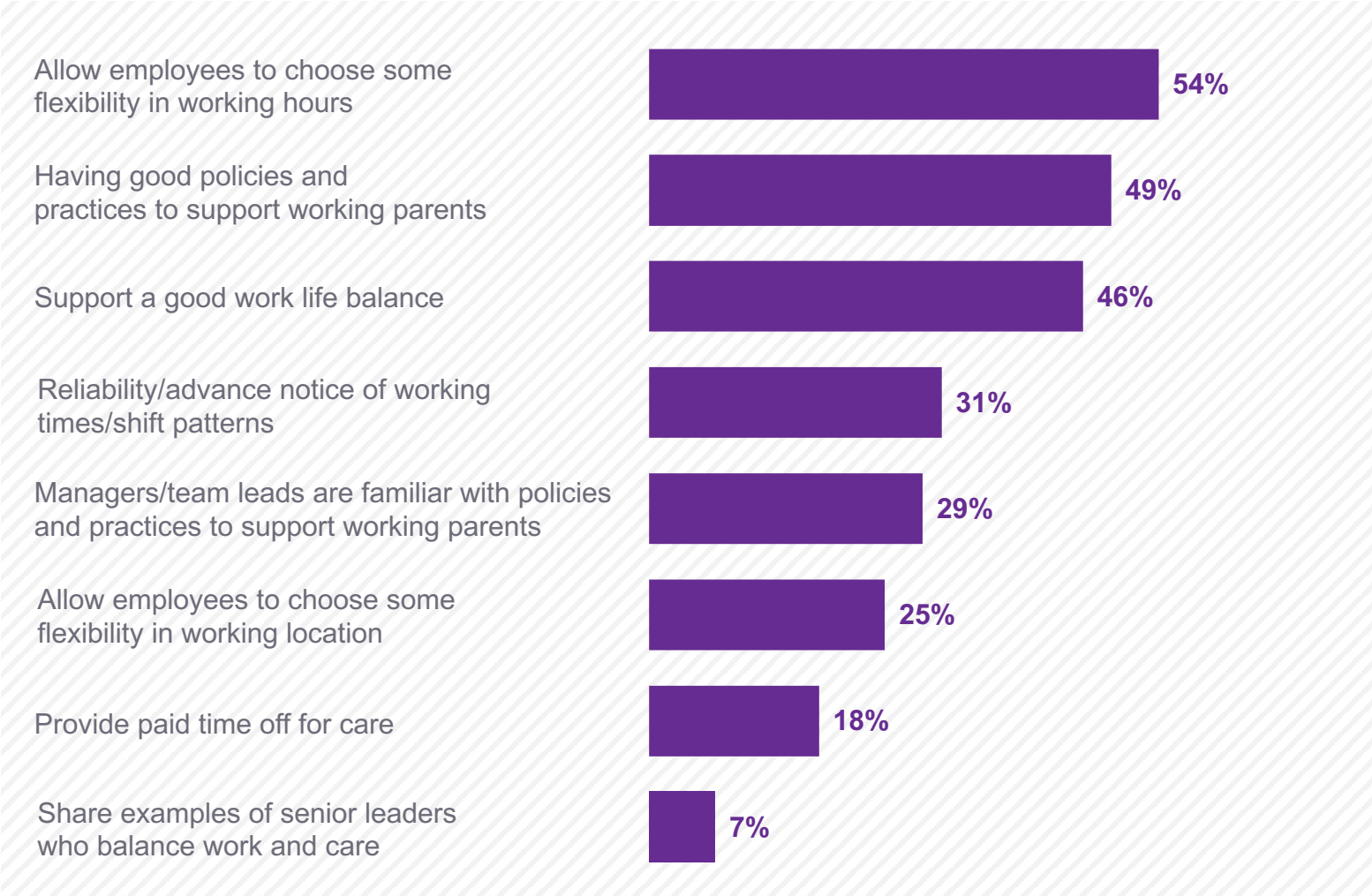


Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

Other **%, None of these 2%, Don't know 4%

People have similar priorities when it comes to supporting those balancing work and caring for older people or working age adults

B3: What are the most important things you think workplaces can do to support those balancing work and care responsibilities for older people or working age adults?

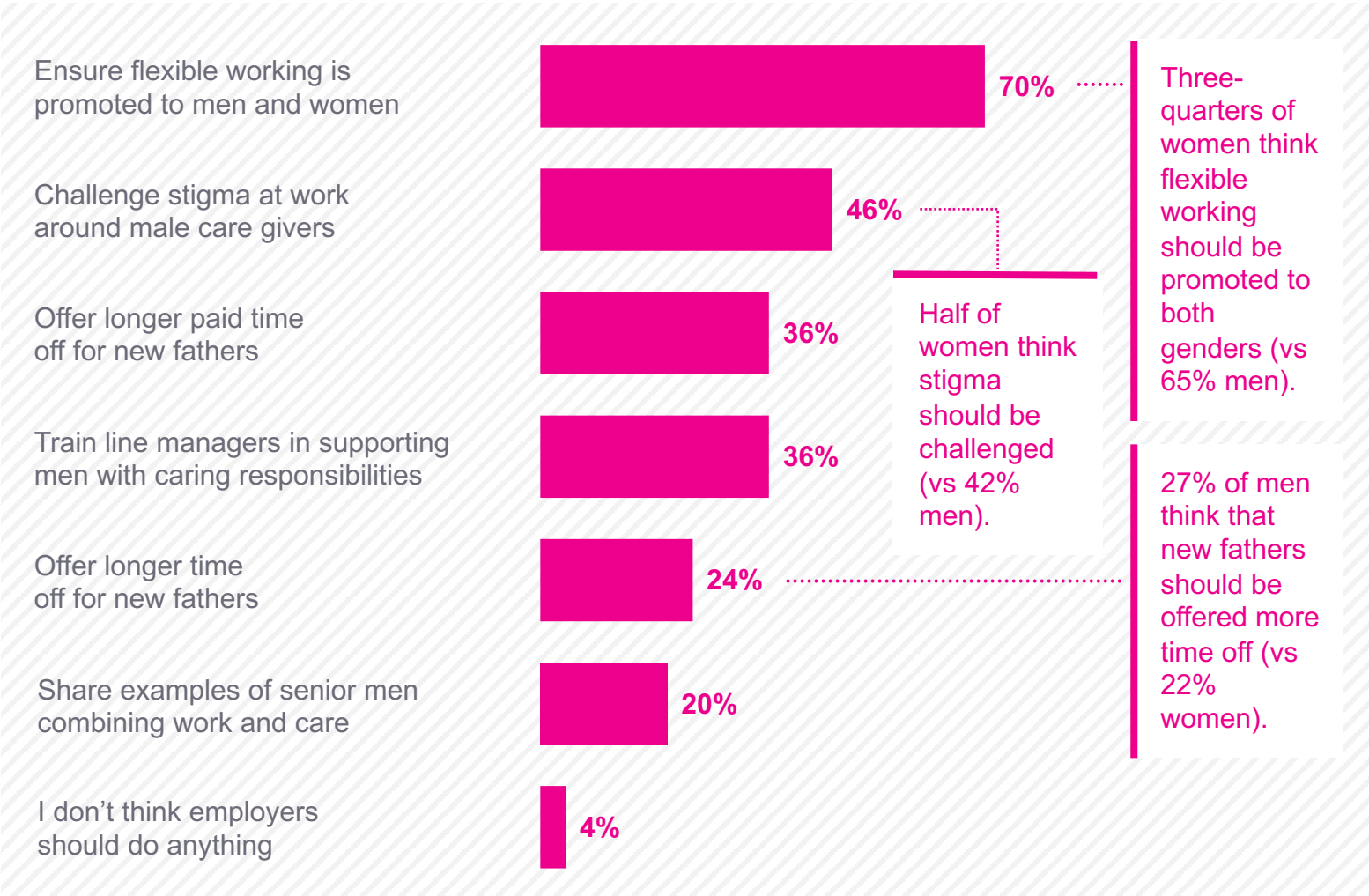


Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

Other **%, None of these 2%, Don't know 4%

Challenging stigma and offering paid time off for new fathers can better also support men to combine work and care

D4: Which two or three of the following, if any, do you think would be the best way for employers to support men to combine work and care?

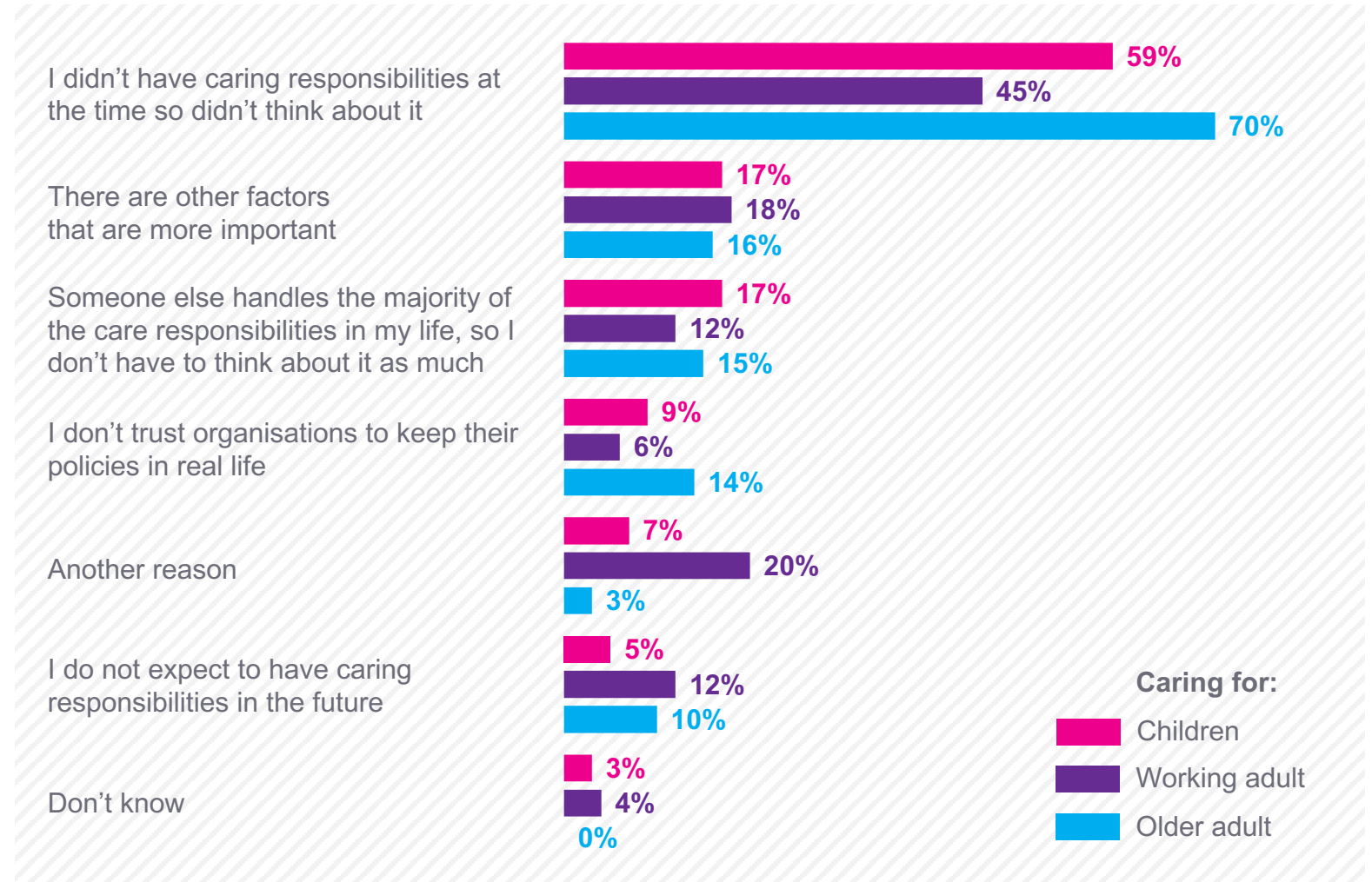


Base: All who agree or neither/nor that men are less likely to be supported at work to undertake childcare (4343) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

None of these 2%, Don't know 4%

A majority of those who didn't factor in care policies offered by their employer when taking a job didn't think it was relevant to their circumstances at the time

B8: You mentioned an organisation's care policies weren't a factor when you took your current job. What makes you say that?



All with caring responsibilities for whom employer support for caring responsibilities was not at all important when taking a job (755) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

THERE IS BROAD AGREEMENT ON HOW TO SUPPORT CARERS – AND SOME MORE TARGETED APPROACHES TO CONSIDER

People agree that **good policies and practices, flexible working hours, and a culture that supports work life balance** are key to help all types of working carers. Men and women have similar views.

When it comes to supporting men with balancing work and care, **opening up flexible working to all is seen as important**. Young people and ethnic minorities are more likely than most to want longer paid time off for new fathers. Men in households earning over £52,000 were more likely to want to see examples of senior men who can combine work and care.

Among those who didn't think about care policies when taking a job, the **main reason is not having caring responsibilities at the time** – there may be an opportunity for organisations to promote 'care planning' to help people make more informed and longer-lasting career choices.

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

There is strong support for action to support gender equality generally and in the workplace. 70% of people think that business and government leaders need to do more to support gender equality (77% of women and 63% of men). Similarly, 71% agree that women won't achieve equality in the UK unless men take actions to support women's rights (77% of women and 66% of men agree).

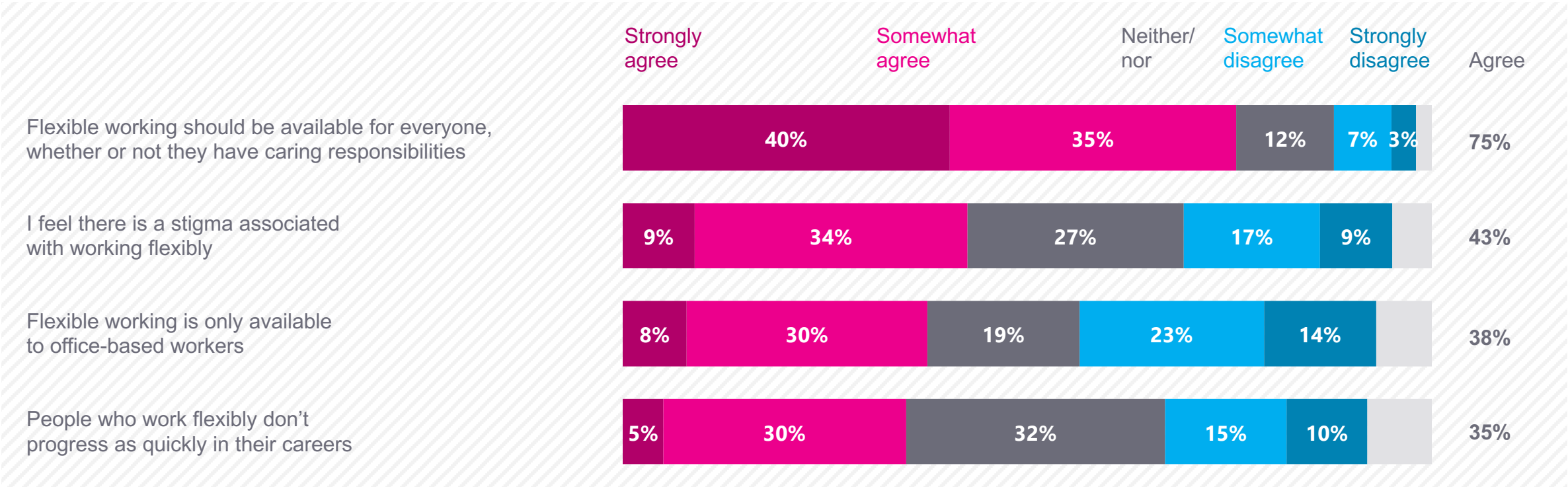
There are things employers can do to support male caregivers at work. Three-quarters of women think flexible working should be promoted to both genders (versus 65% men). Half of women think that stigma around male caregivers should be challenged at work (versus 42% of men). Men are more likely than women to think that new fathers should be offered more time off work (versus 22% women).



ADDRESSING PEOPLE'S CONCERNS ABOUT FLEXIBLE WORKING AND CARE

THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING BEING AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE, YET MORE THAN TWO IN FIVE FEEL THERE’S STILL STIGMA

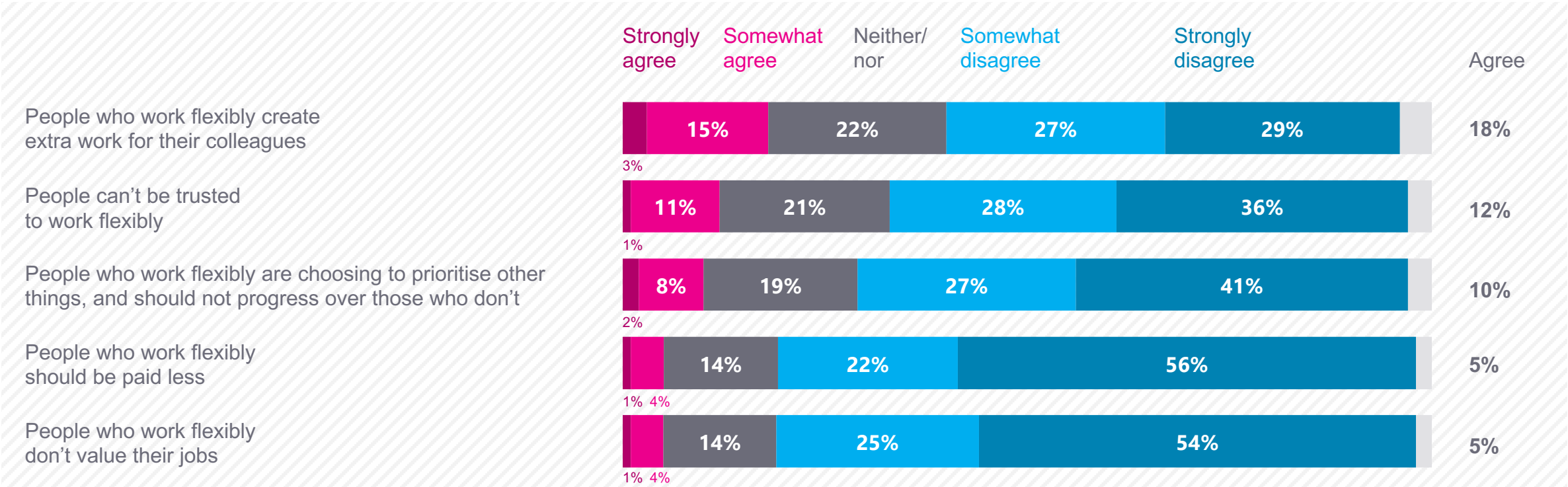
C6: To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

EVEN THOUGH FEW AGREE WITH NEGATIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WORK FLEXIBLY

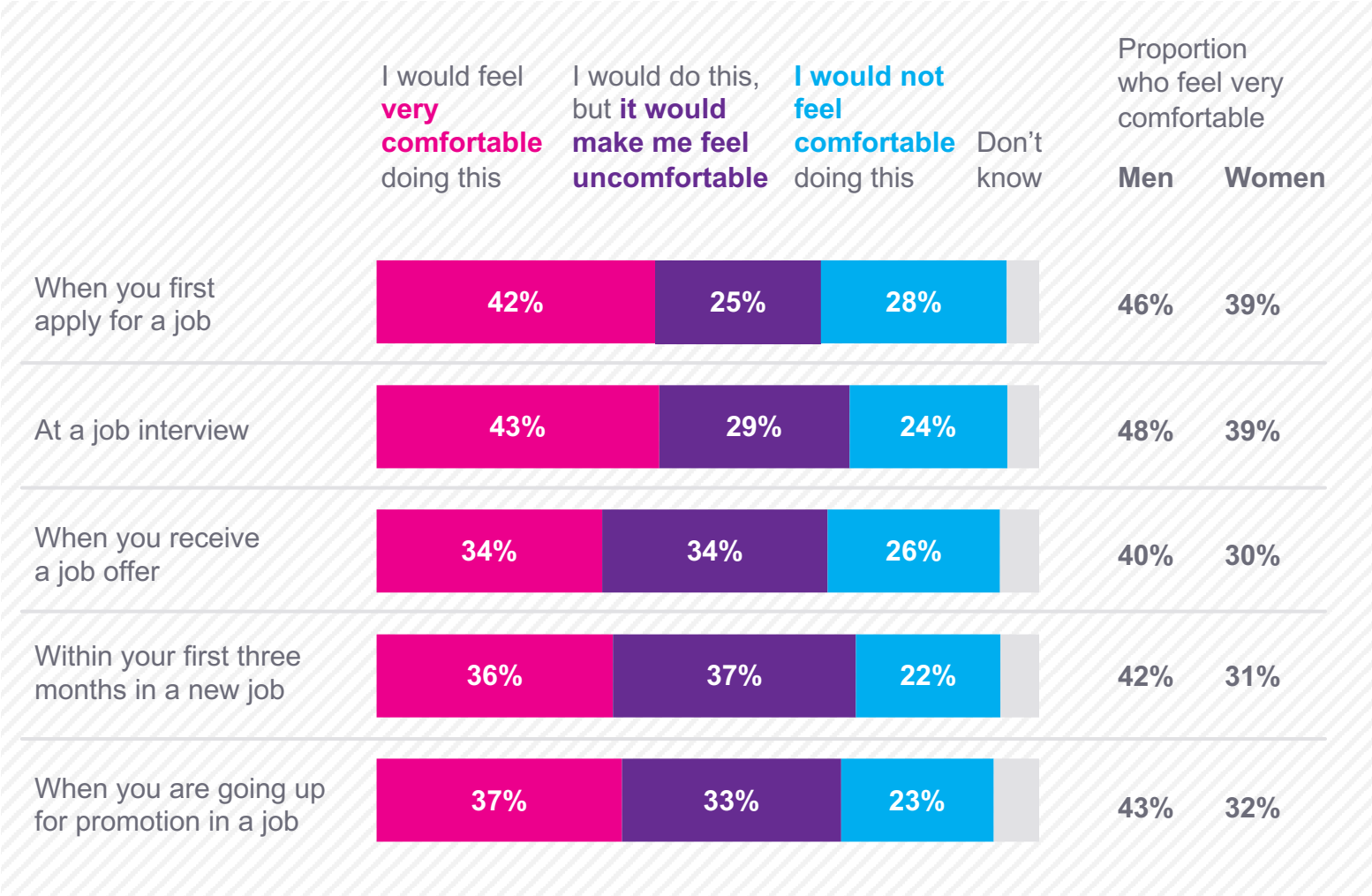
C6: To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

More than half wouldn't feel comfortable asking about flexible working when taking a new job – although men are more comfortable than women

C9: How comfortable or uncomfortable would you feel asking an employer about their flexible working policies/the ability to work flexibly...?



Base: All participants (5444) : Fieldwork dates: 11-17 November 2021

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

Women are more likely than men to think there is a stigma associated with working flexibly (47% versus 40%). They are also more likely than men to think that people who work flexibly don't advance as fast in their careers (37% versus 33%).

Generally, men feel more comfortable than women to ask about flexible working at each stage of the job lifecycle. Those who are already working flexibly are more comfortable at all stages - so it's not necessarily an imagined situation. Those who aren't working flexibly were significantly less comfortable asking at all stages.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Ipsos carried out a survey in collaboration with Business in the Community to understand people's attitudes and experiences of balancing work and care. The survey was carried out with a representative sample of 5,444 adults aged 16 and over from across the United Kingdom. This includes 2,752 women and 2,551 men. Of the total sample, 3,229 adults aged 16 over were working full-time or part-time and 2,122 people had at least one caring responsibility for children or adults. The fieldwork took place between 11-17 November 2021.

The survey was conducted using the Ipsos UK Knowledge Panel. The UK KnowledgePanel is a random probability online panel of approximately 15,000 UK adults aged 16+. It provides an accessible random probability alternative to face-to-face and telephone-based methods and offers a high quality and efficient means of obtaining survey results using a single data collection method.

Panellists to the KnowledgePanel are recruited via a push-to-web methodology using random probability unclustered address-based sampling. Up to two adults aged 16 and over in each household are invited to join the panel. Members of the public who do not have internet access or are digitally excluded are offered an internet-enabled device which allows them to complete KnowledgePanel surveys online. Panel members are randomly selected for KnowledgePanel surveys.

The final data is weighted to adjust for unequal probabilities of selection and differential response.