



# CORE

## Mood of The Nation: Cost of Living Crisis

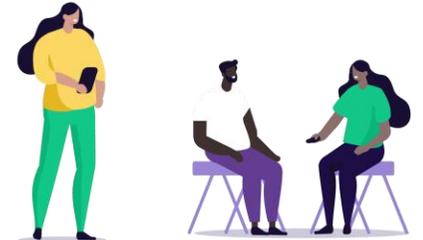
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# Methodology

This research is the fourth wave of our **Mood Of The Nation** surveys which have taken place between **March 2020 and January 2021**. They aim to capture the thoughts and feelings of consumers in times of social and economic changes.

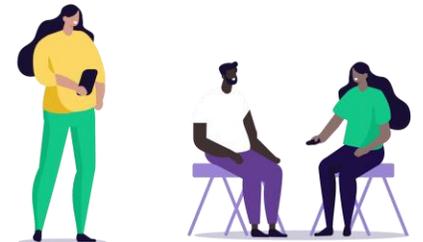
We asked a series of questions to consumers around attitudes towards everyday British life to understand the problems we currently face during the **Cost of Living Crisis**. The fieldwork took place from the **6<sup>th</sup> May to 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022**.

The research was undertaken using an online questionnaire given to members of our **Core4** and **4Youth community**. The total sample size was **1,215 respondents**.



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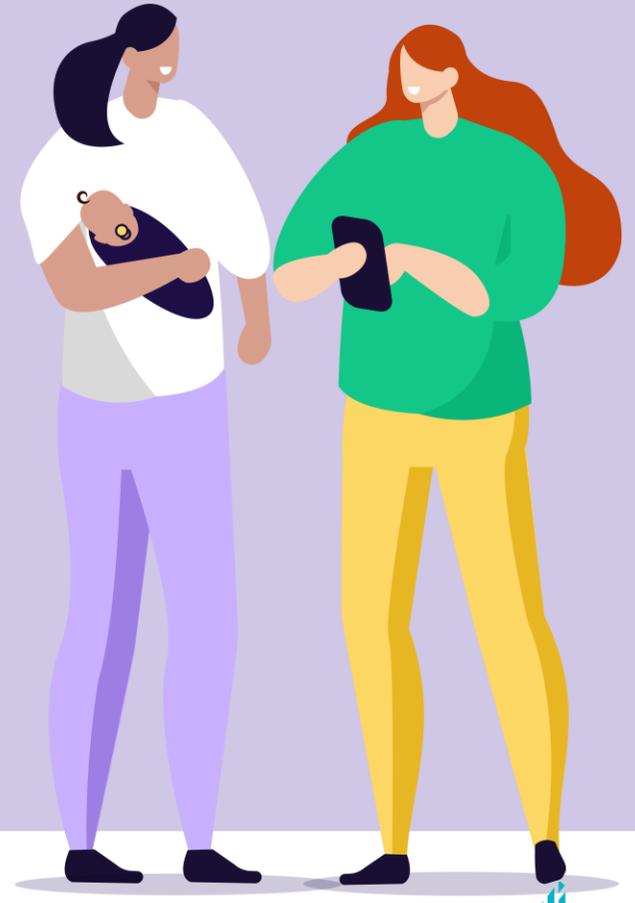
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# Headlines



# The Headlines



## Almost everyone has been impacted by the Cost of Living Crisis

Over 9 in 10 say they are **affected**. 44% say they are **troubled** and 16% are **angry** at the current situation.



## There is widespread discontent with the UK political scene

30% say they are **troubled** and 28% are **angry** about UK politics. Only 11% recorded positive responses.

## Consumer behaviour is adapting to economic challenges

83% agree that they **want to make the most out of offers and discounts**, and 60% agree that they are going to **reduce the amount they shop**.



## The crisis has influenced a diversity of purchase decisions for consumers

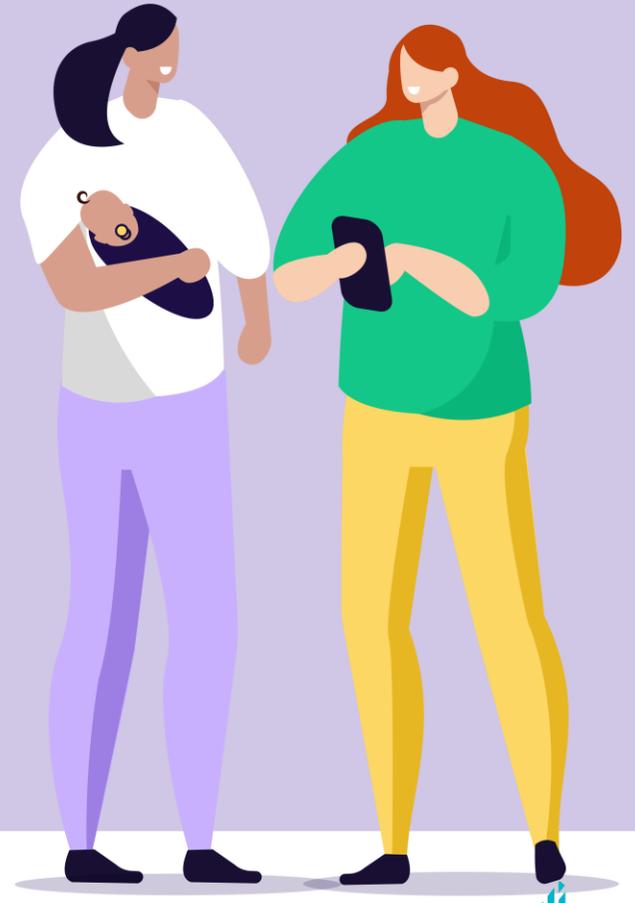
17% said their international **holiday plans** had been impacted, while 25% have had **clothing purchases affected**.

## There is little optimism for times ahead

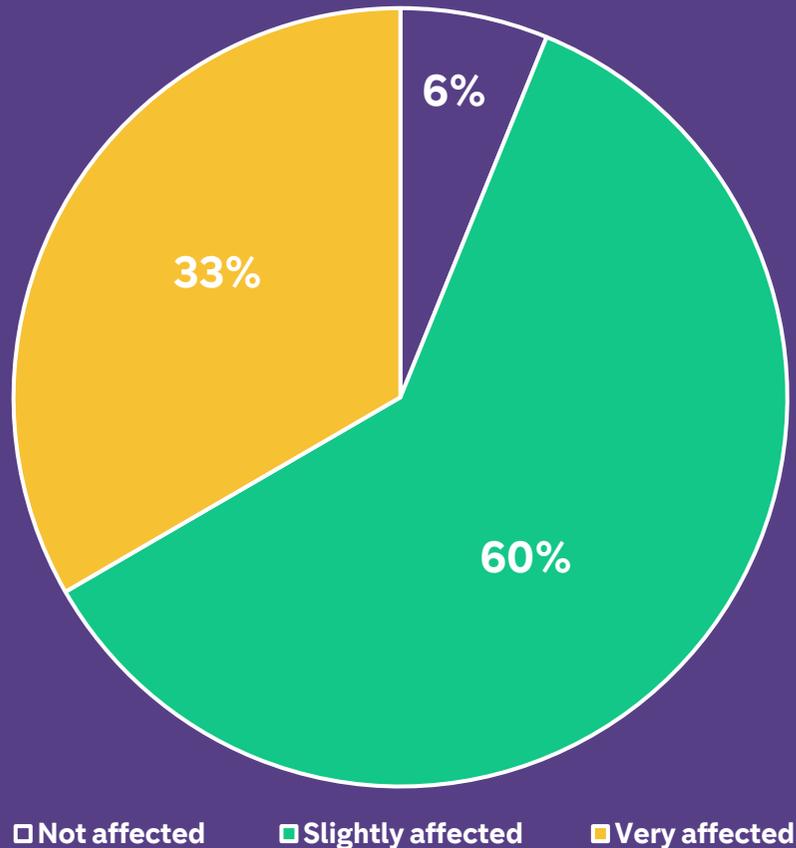
Nearly half feel **troubled** about the future. Only 6% say they are **optimistic**.



# 02 Temperature Check



# 93% say they are affected by the Cost of Living Crisis

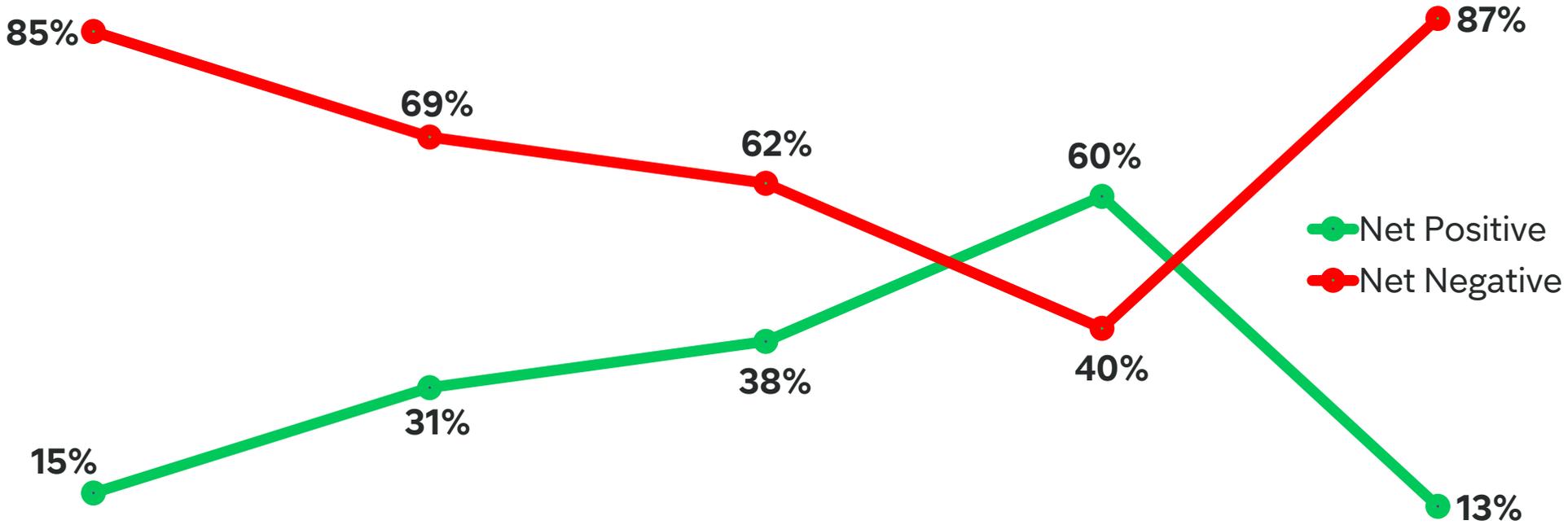


- **98%** of **over-75s** and **25-34s** report being affected, the highest response from any age band.
- In comparison, **87%** of **16-24s** say they have been affected.
- **45%** of respondents with a family income **under £20,000 a year** report being **very affected**.
- Compared to only 9% of people with a family income **over £75,000 a year** say they are **very affected**.

Q: First things first - to what extent do you feel affected by the cost of living crisis? May 2022, n=1215 adults 16+



# Negative feeling is higher than in the start of Lockdown in 2020



Mar-2020 MOTN - Start of Lockdown      June-2020 MOTN - Some COVID restrictions removed      Jan-2021 MOTN - End of January lockdown and booster rollout      Feb-22\* - All COVID Restrictions Lifted      May-22 - CoL Crisis



Source: March 2020 MOTN (n=1211). June 2020 MOTN (n=1066). January 2021 MOTN (n=936). June 2022 MOTN (n=1215). (Feb-22\* data pulled from retrospective question in the June 2022 MOTN survey, n=1215)



# And optimism has plummeted since January 2021

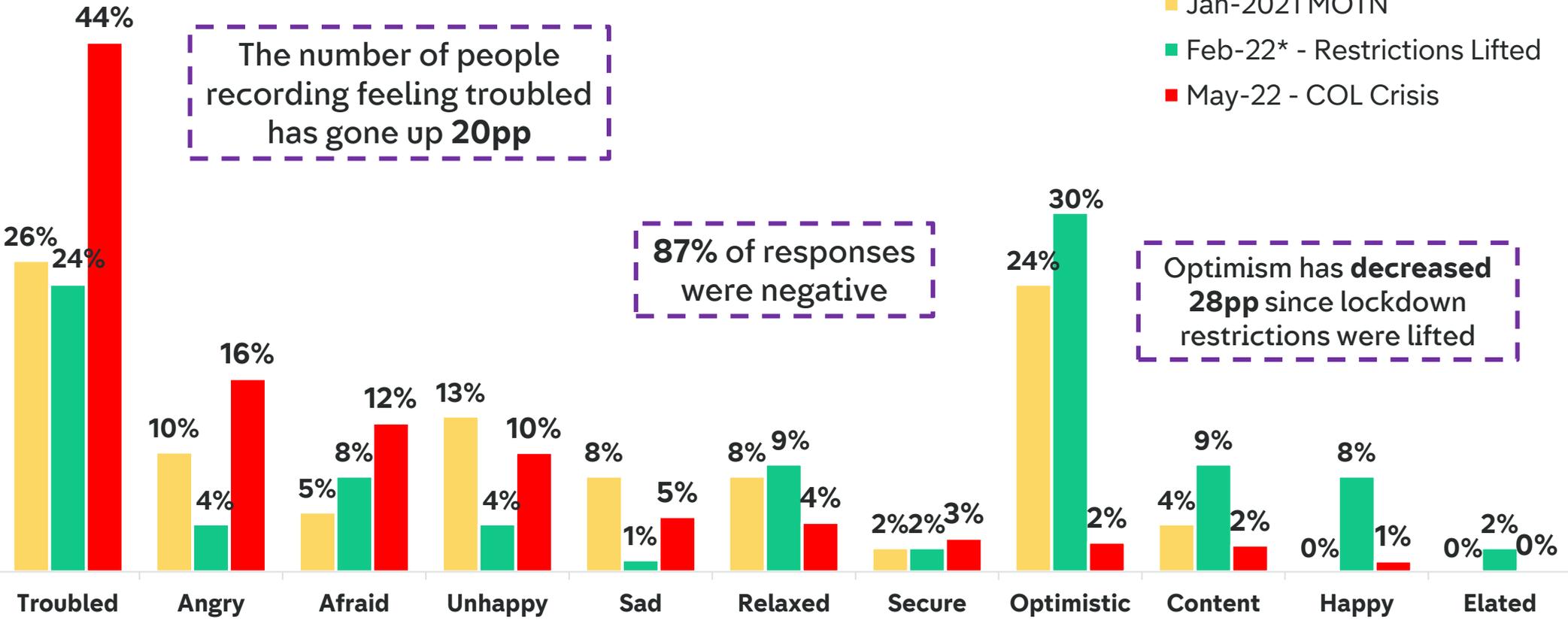


- Jan-2021 MOTN
- Feb-22\* - Restrictions Lifted
- May-22 - COL Crisis

The number of people recording feeling troubled has gone up **20pp**

**87%** of responses were negative

Optimism has **decreased 28pp** since lockdown restrictions were lifted



Some of the most commonly used words included...

## GOVERNMENT

Used 95 times

## COST

Used 93 times

## FOOD

Used 74 times

## PRICES

Used 63 times

## MONEY

Used 60 times

## ENERGY

Used 58 times

# Why do they feel the way they do?



*"I have never worried about money but now it's all I think about"*

*"Rises in prices for households but companies continue to make huge profits"*

*"Maybe things will get better sooner than later"*

*"Not enough is being done to offset the impact of the crisis, especially to help those on low incomes"*

*"I won't be affected hugely by it, even though I feel a squeeze"*

*"Things just seem to get worse by the day. Every time I shop, prices have risen, petrol is very expensive"*



Again, if you'd like to please share why you feel this way n=649

# 03 UK Political Scene



# 89% feel negatively towards the current political scene



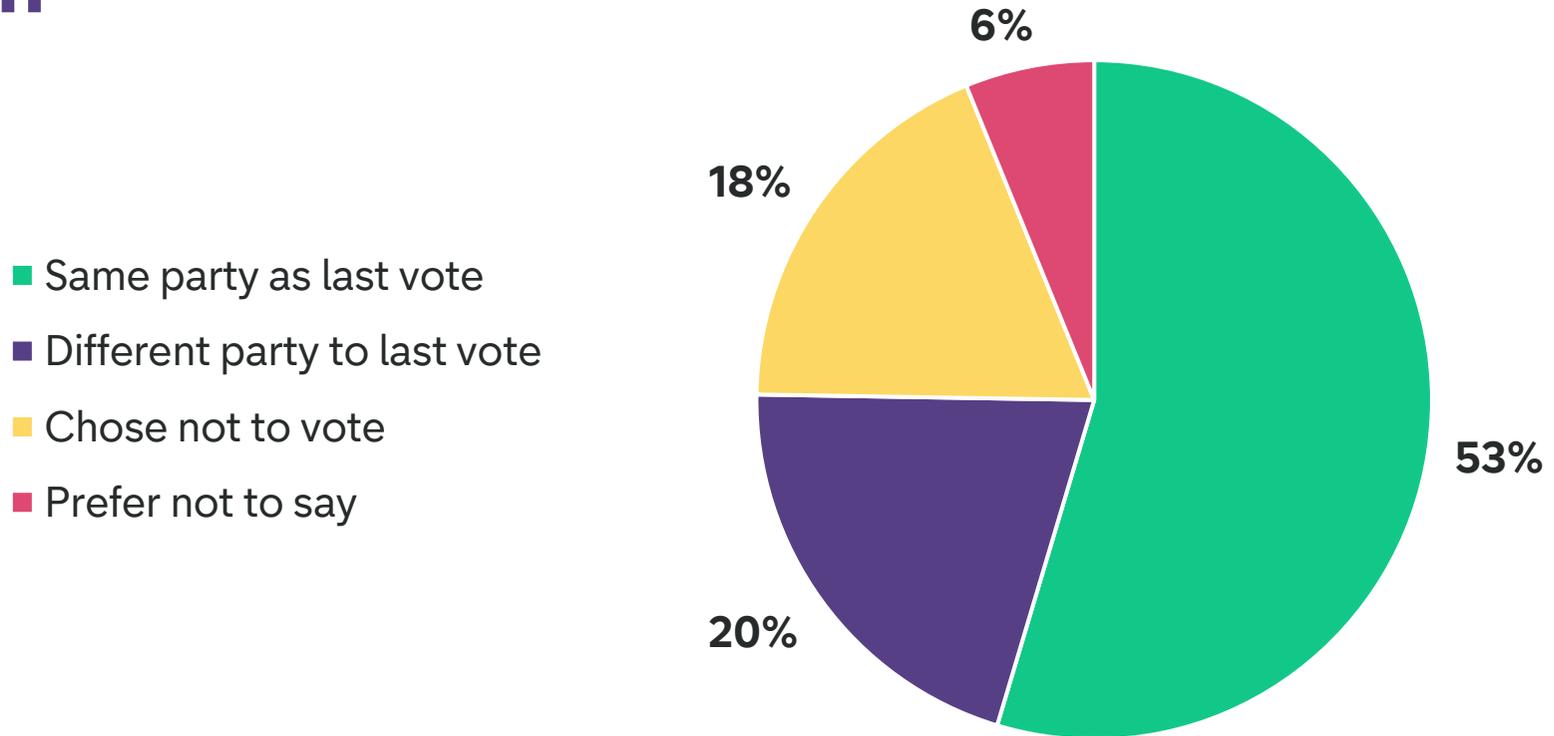
*"No one seems to know what they're doing"*

*"It is what it is. There's nothing individually that I can do, so just have to make the best of it"*

*"It is one thing after another!"*

*"I think the UK is in a good place to recover"*

# And one in five people voted for a different party than their last vote in the local election



- Same party as last vote
- Different party to last vote
- Chose not to vote
- Prefer not to say

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# Consumer Behaviour



# Over 8 in 10 agree that they want to make the most out of discounts and offers

Consumers want to find cheaper alternatives to their usual brands and purchases



Over half are looking for cheaper brands to their usual "go-to's"

73% agree that brands have a responsibility to make products affordable

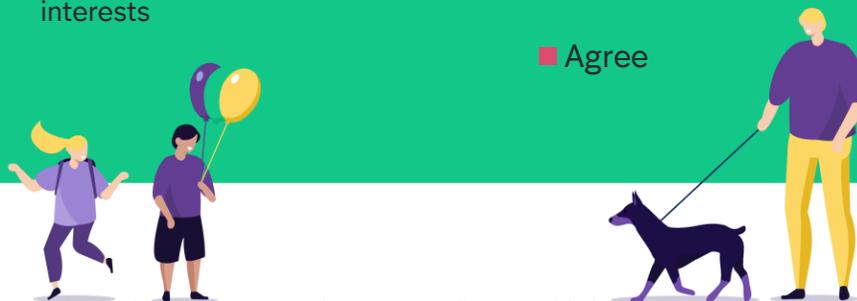
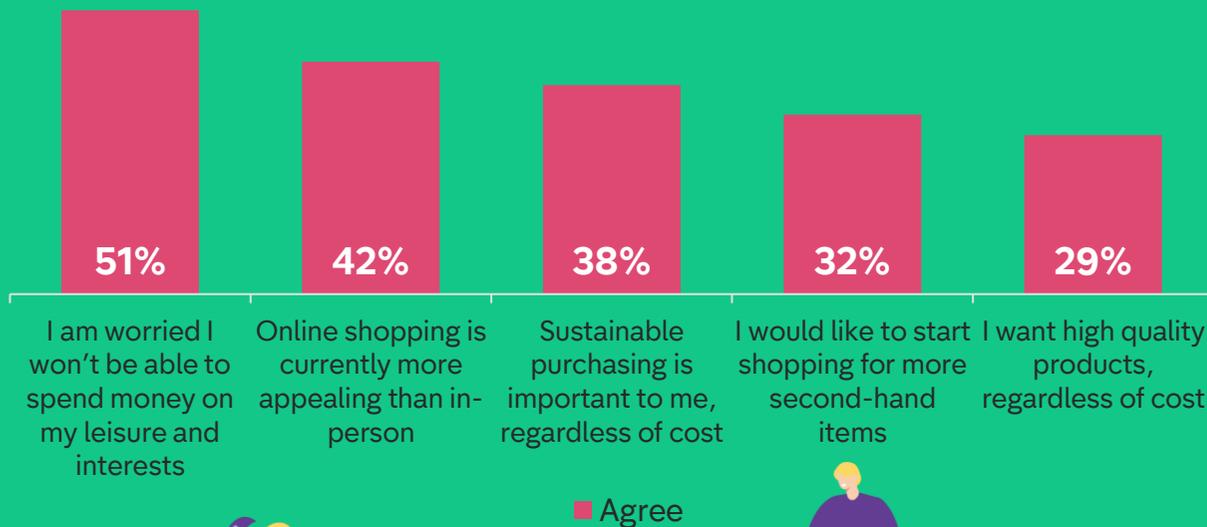
1 in 6 agree that they will reduce the amount they shop due to the Cost of Living Crisis



**Nearly 4 in 10** agree that sustainable purchasing is important to them, regardless of the cost.

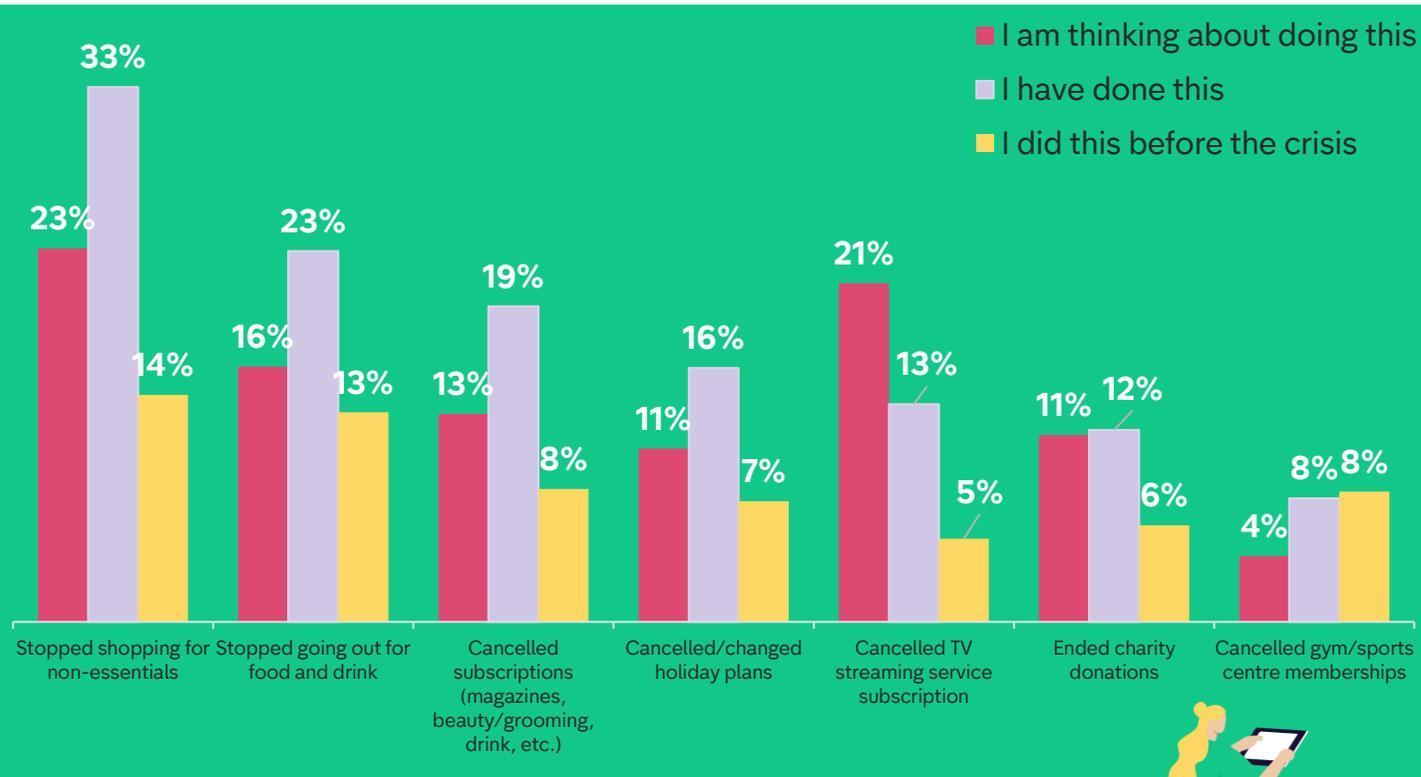
**42%** currently prefer shopping online, whilst only **32%** are open to **start shopping for secondhand items**.

# Over half are concerned that they won't be able to spend on their hobbies or leisure





**Nearly 4 in 10** have stopped going out for food or drink

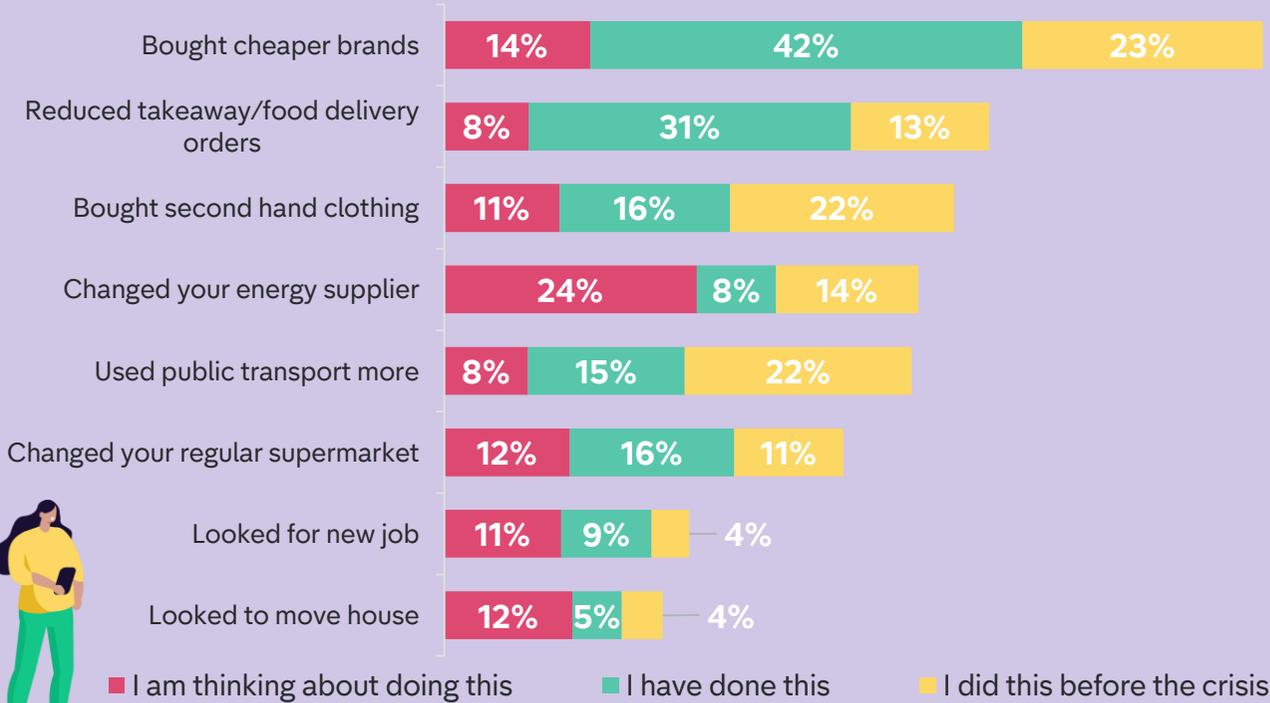


**Nearly half** have stopped shopping for non-essentials with a further **32%** thinking about doing this due to the Cost of Living Crisis

**Over 1 in 10** are thinking about cancelling or changing holiday plans



# 42% have bought cheaper brands with 23% already doing this before the Cost of Living Crisis



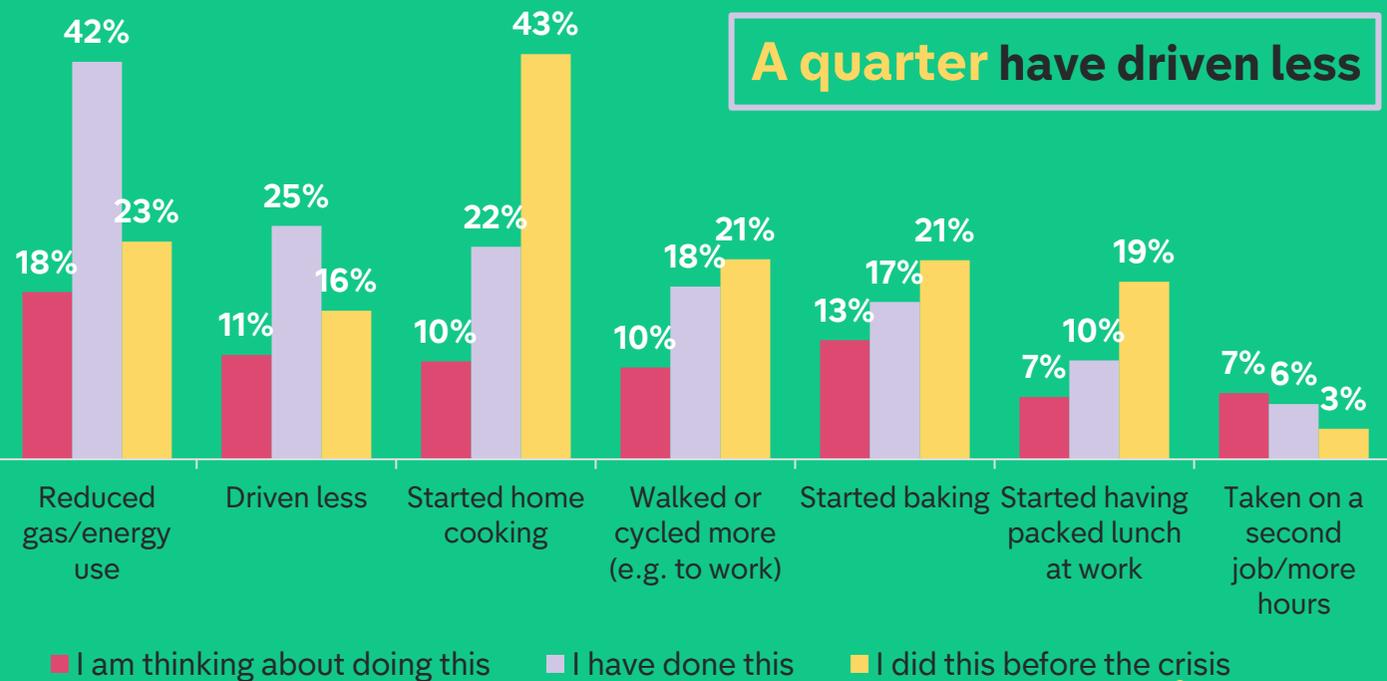
44% have reduced takeaway or food delivery orders

Nearly 4 in 10 have bought second hand clothing

37% have used public transport more

Nearly a quarter have been thinking about changing energy supplier





**42%** have been using less gas and energy to combat rising prices, whilst **23%** did this before the Cost of Living crisis



# Impacts of CoL Crisis on Life Plans



# Household and personal purchases have been the most affected



Buy new clothes/ accessories



Make a household purchase



Buy a luxury item (e.g. jewellery)



Undergo major home renovations



Buy a luxury item



"I'd planned this and it **has** been impacted"

25%

18%

18%

17%

13%

"I'd planned this and it **hasn't** been impacted"

25%

29%

11%

11%

10%

# Holidays and major purchases have also been notably impacted by the crisis



Book a UK holiday

Book a holiday abroad

Make a big tech purchase

Book a city break

Buy a car



"I'd planned this and it **has** been impacted"

17%

17%

16%

14%

12%

"I'd planned this and it **hasn't** been impacted"

25%

15%

12%

16%

17%

# The crisis impacted on life plans, especially on financial investments



Make a financial investment



Retire



Start studying



Start a new job



Start a business



"I'd planned this and it **has** been impacted"

13%

9%

7%

7%

3%

"I'd planned this and it **hasn't** been impacted"

10%

9%

7%

4%

2%

# The crisis has affected a small number of family plans



"I'd planned this and it **has** been impacted"

8%

7%

7%

2%

2%

"I'd planned this and it **hasn't** been impacted"

5%

4%

6%

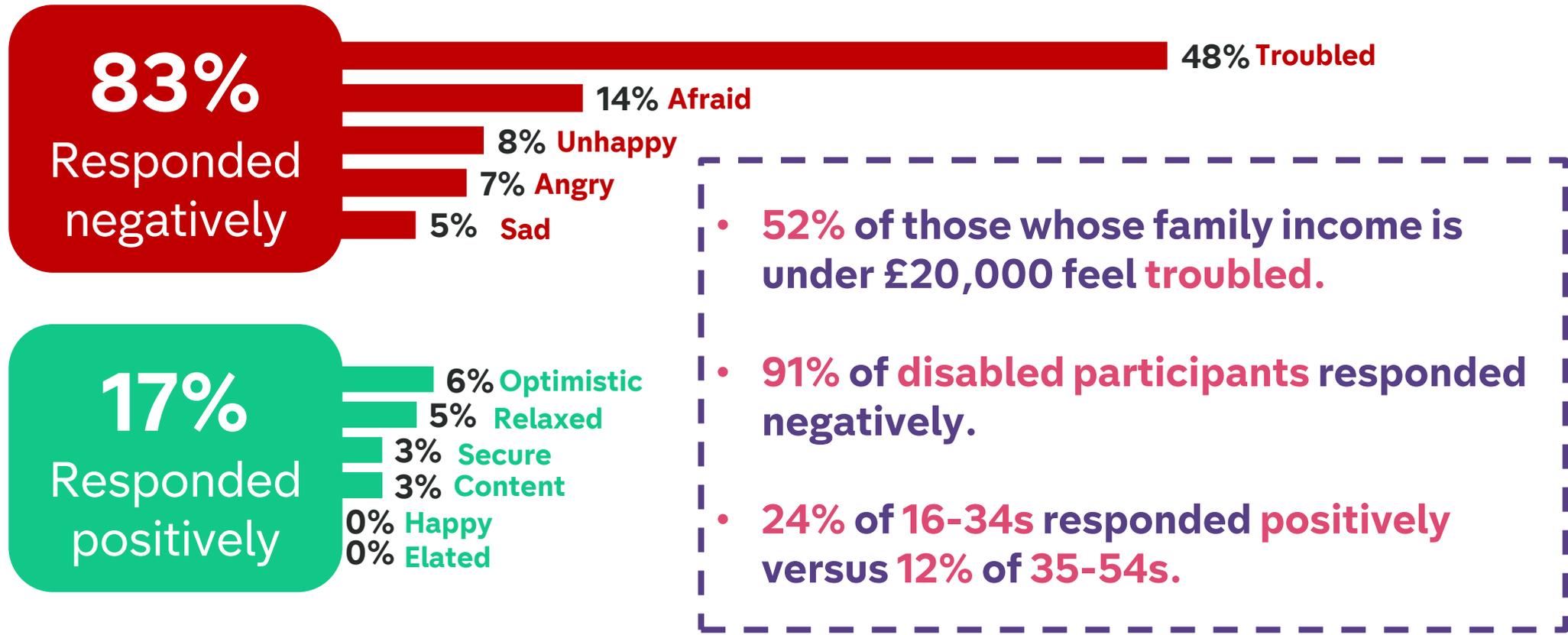
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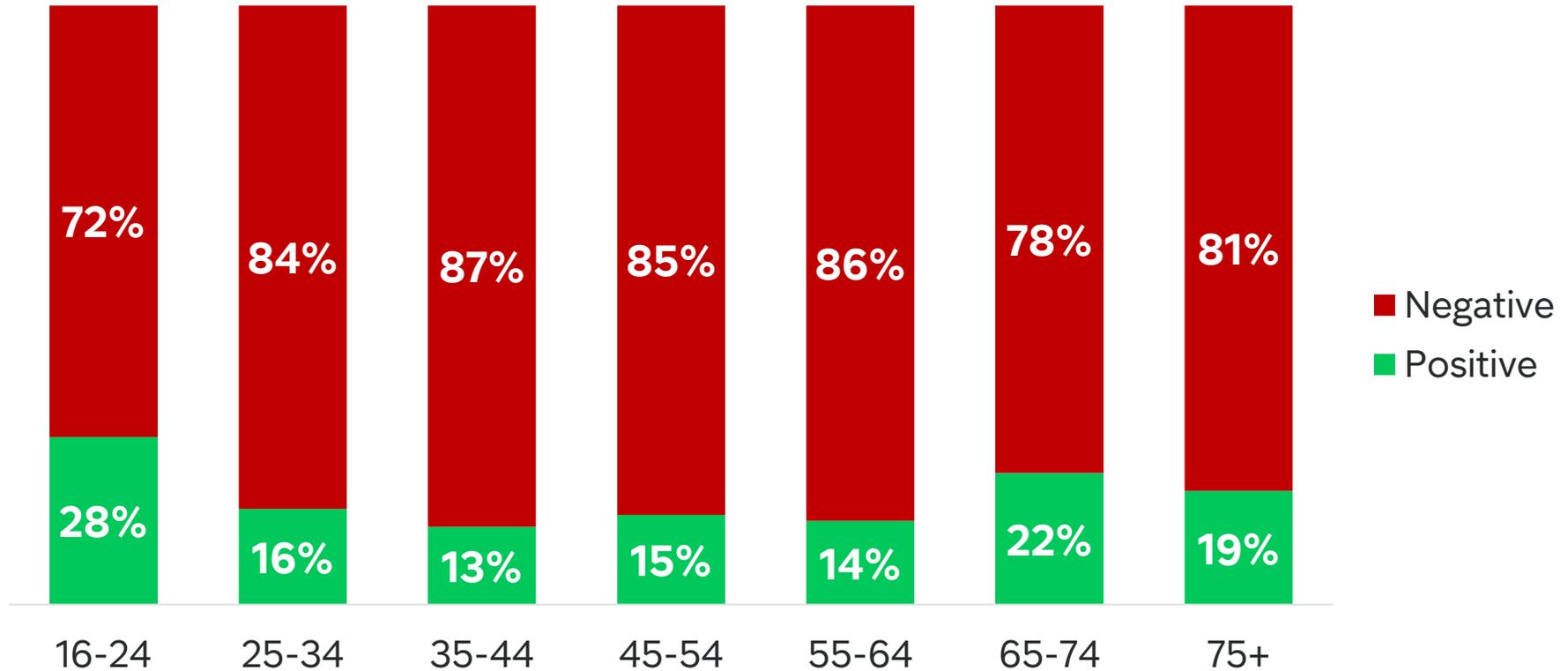
**Looking  
forward**



# When asked about **the future**, many remain pessimistic...



# Though **younger and older** age groups are slightly more likely to feel **positive** about the future





# Summary



**Almost everyone** has been **affected** by the Cost of Living Crisis

**Optimism has decreased 28pp** since lockdown restrictions were lifted

**Nearly 9 in 10** feel negatively towards the current political scene

Despite the discontent with the political scene, **over half still voted for the same party as before**



**83%** want to make the most of discounts whilst **1 in 6** agree that they will reduce the amount they shop due to the Cost of Living Crisis



**25%** say that their clothing and accessory purchases have been impacted by the cost of living

**48%** feel **troubled** about the future whilst **16-24s** and **65-74s** are slightly more likely to feel positively about the future than other age groups



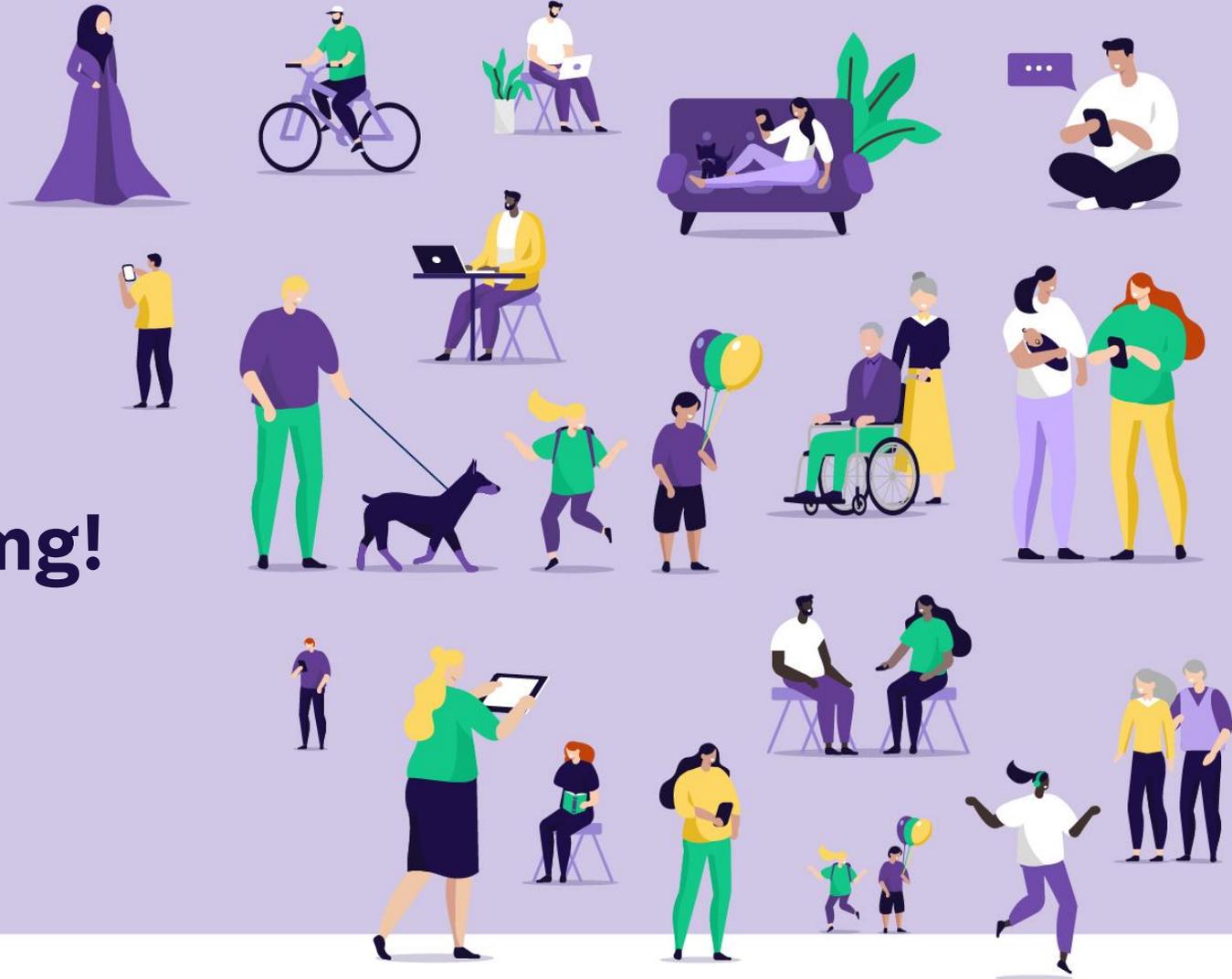
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Thanks for reading!

Any questions about the survey? Email:

Jamie Bains: [jbains@channel4.co.uk](mailto:jbains@channel4.co.uk)

Natalie Hobkirk: [nhobkirk@channel4.co.uk](mailto:nhobkirk@channel4.co.uk)





# CORE 4

## Appendix

# Consumers want to find cheaper alternatives to their usual brands and purchases

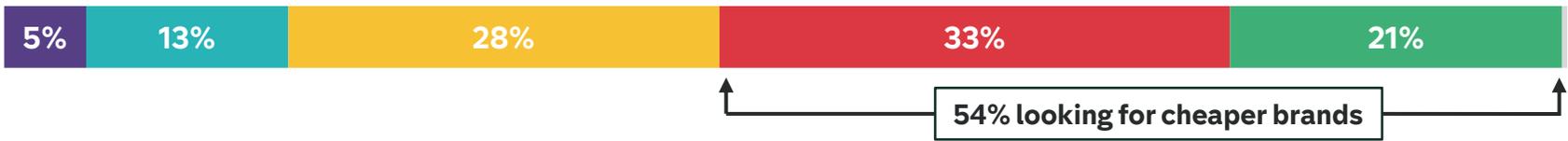


■ Strongly disagree      ■ Slightly disagree      ■ Neither agree or disagree  
■ Slightly Agree      ■ Strongly Agree      ■ Did not answer

“I want to make the most out of discounts and offers”



“I am looking for cheaper alternatives to my usual brands and shops”



“Right now, brands have a responsibility to keep products affordable”



“I’m not sure how to find cheaper shopping options”



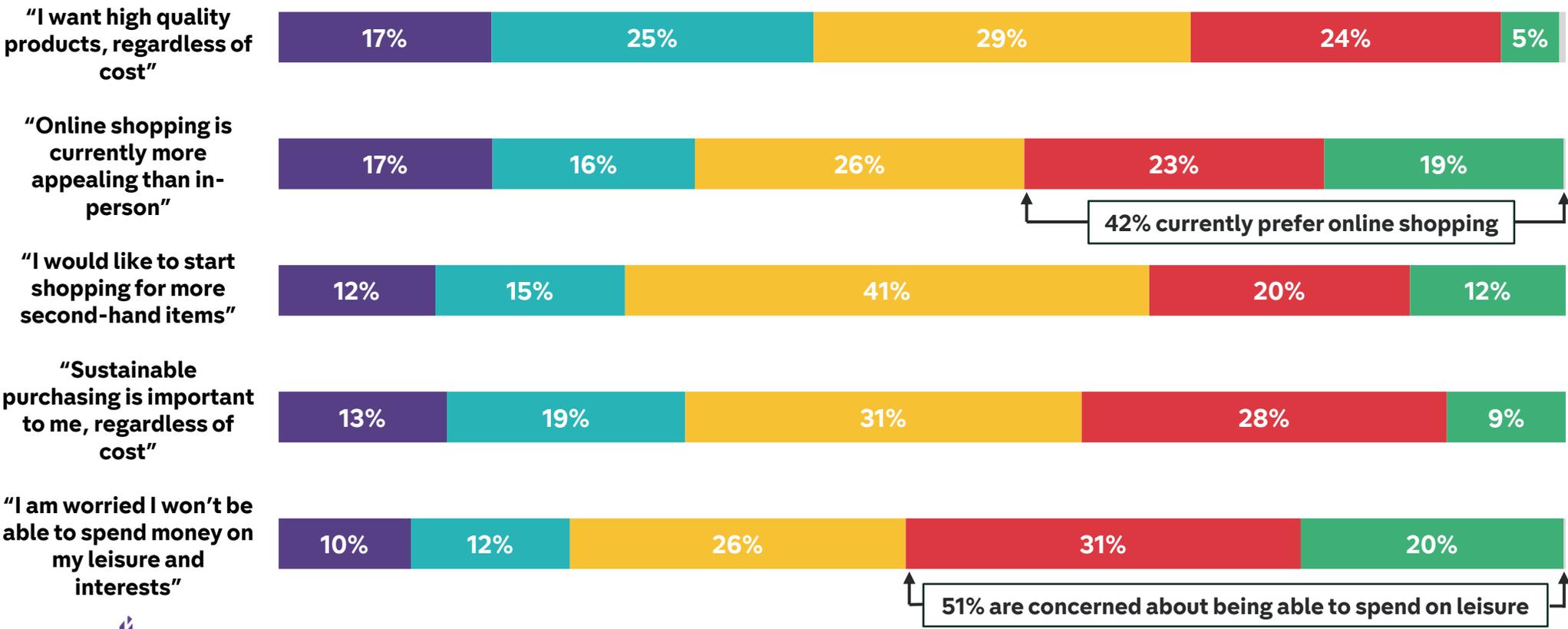
“I am going to reduce the amount I shop for generally”



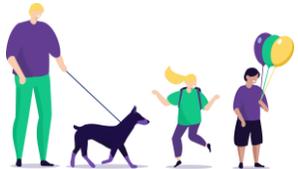
# Results vary for purchasing influences outside of economic necessity



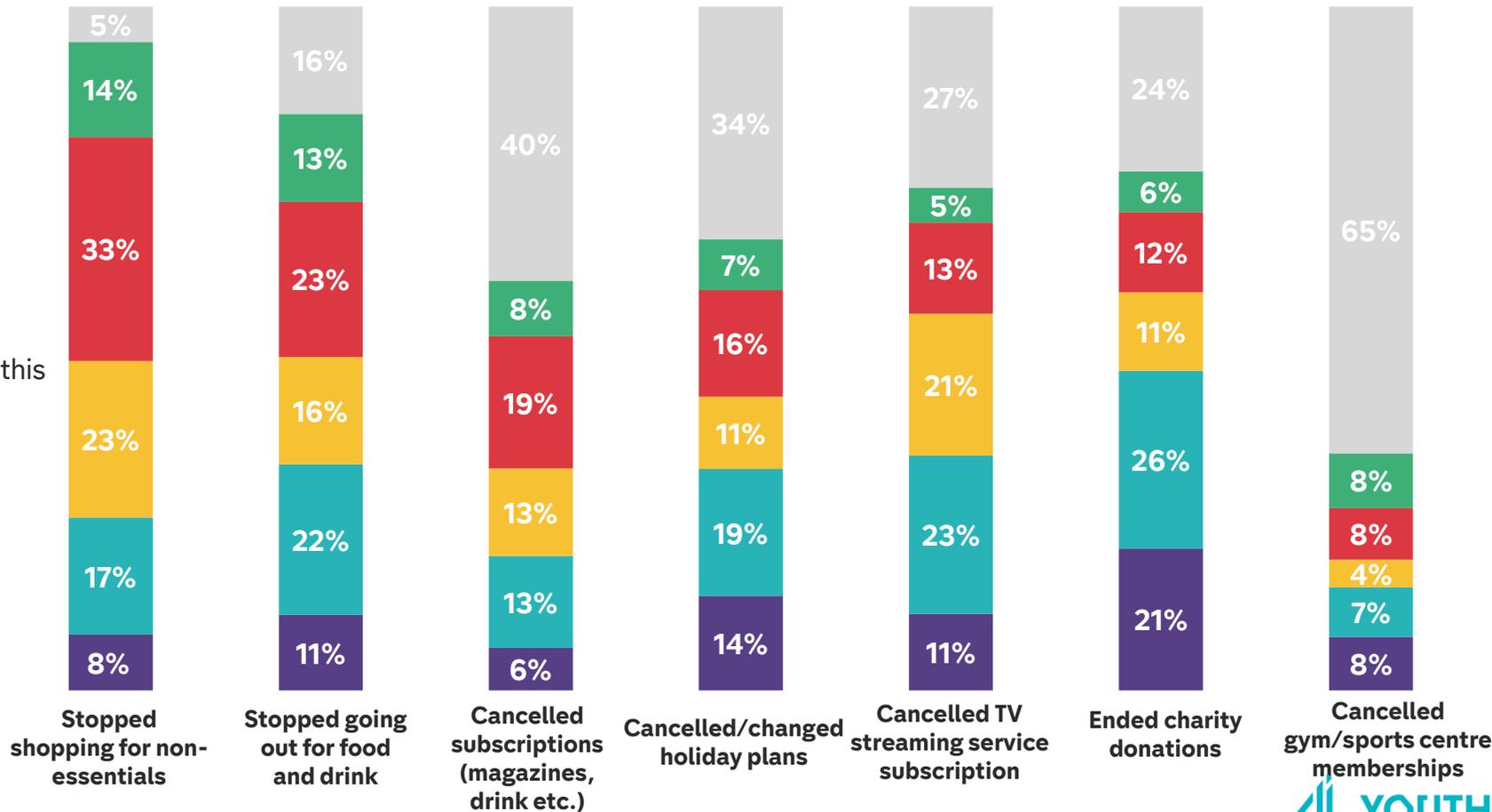
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■ Slightly Agree      ■ Strongly Agree      ■ Did not answer



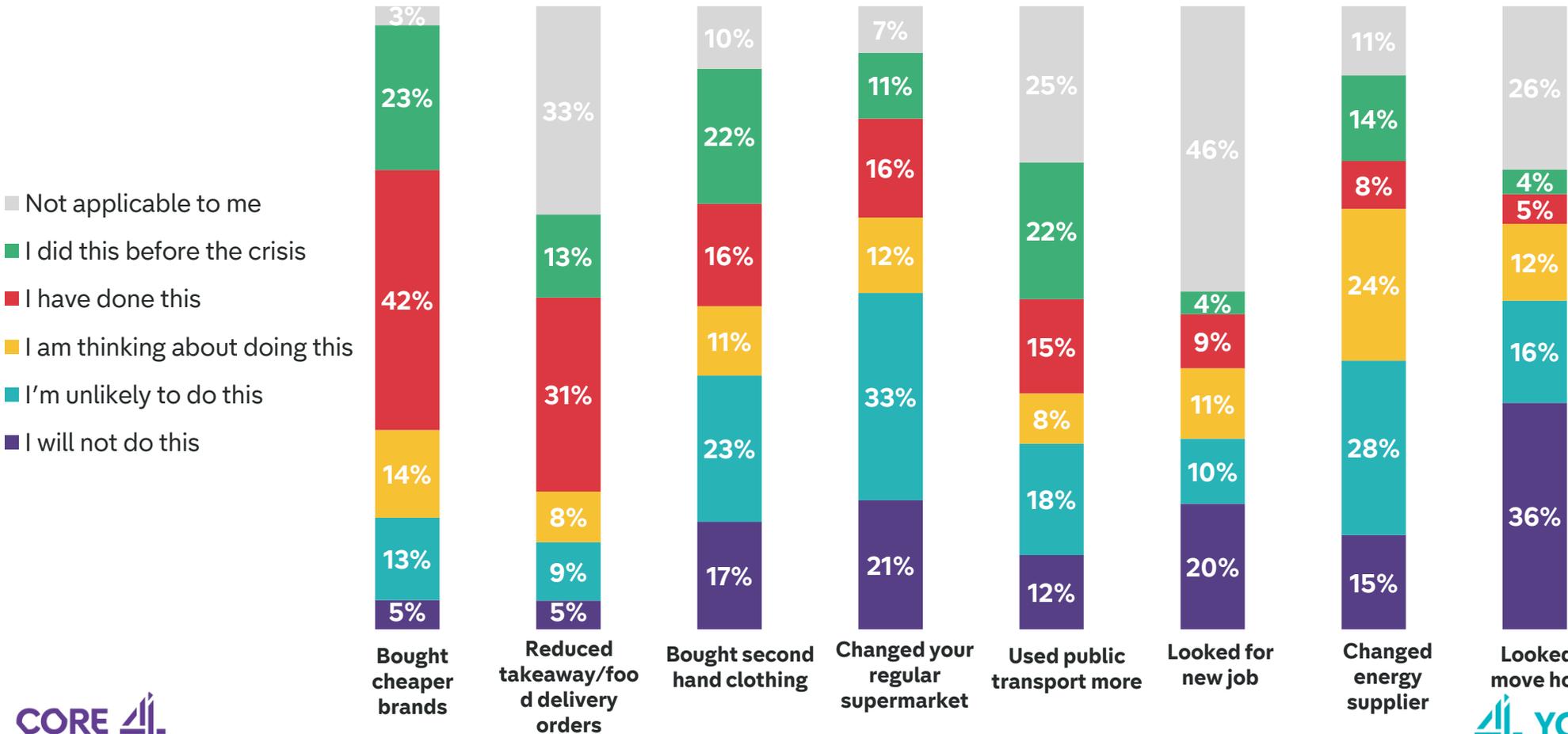
# Many are cutting back on spending altogether in response to the crisis



- Not applicable to me
- I did this before the crisis
- I have done this
- I am thinking about doing this
- I'm unlikely to do this
- I will not do this



# Some have tried to adapt their spending – 42% have started buying cheaper brands



Q ...and similarly, have you done any of these during the cost of living crisis? ? N=1215

# 42% have started using less gas and energy to combat rising prices



- Not applicable to me
- I did this before the crisis
- I have done this
- I am thinking about doing this
- I'm unlikely to do this
- I will not do this

