

Public attitudes and behaviour: Cost of Living

January 2022

Methodology



This survey was carried out by YouGov for the GLA between 21st to 26th January 2022, with a response of 1,188 London residents aged 18+.



The figures have been weighted to be representative of all London adults.



Respondents completed the surveys online from an email link.

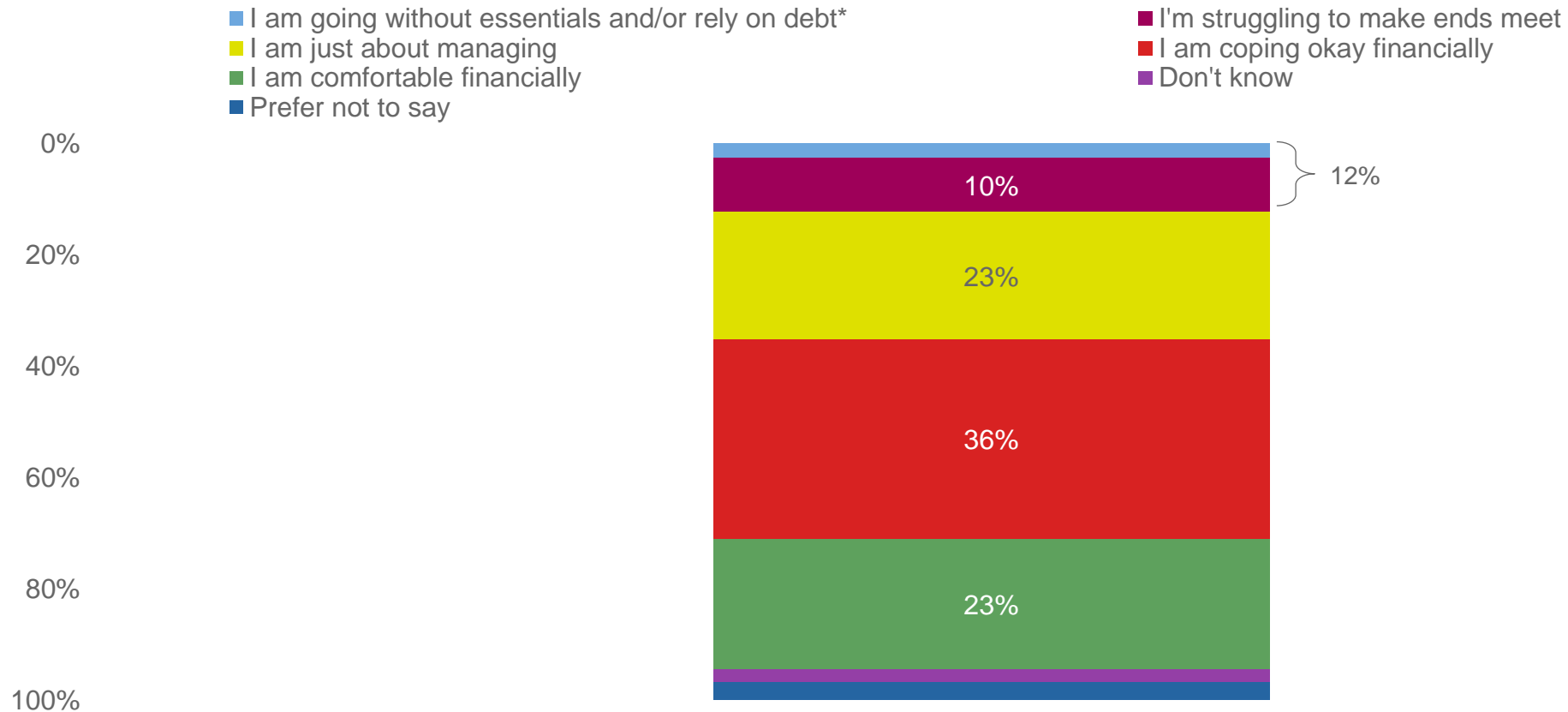
Summary

- 12% of Londoners say they are currently struggling to make ends meet, going without essentials or relying on debt. This increases significantly for Londoners whose gross household income is less than £20,00 per year with 27% who are struggling, going without or relying on debt.
- 79% of Londoners say their cost of living has increased to some extent over the last six months, with three in ten (29%) saying that it has increased a lot for their household.
 - Living costs have increased for at least half of Londoners in almost all areas.
 - Rent and mortgage payments are least likely to have increased with 56% of Londoners saying they've stayed the same.
 - Most Londoners have seen increases in energy bills (72% seeing an increase) and household essentials shop (73% seeing an increase) over the last six months.
 - 61% of Londoners say their other household bills and 49% say their day to day transport costs have increased over the last six months.
- Almost four in ten (36%) Londoners* have struggled to make payments on their rent or mortgage at some point in the last six months, 7% have fallen behind on some or all payments.
- A similar number (38%) have struggled to pay their household bills, with 7% saying they have fallen behind on some or all payments.
- 10% of Londoners have fallen behind on meeting credit commitments in the last six months.
- Whilst majority of Londoners have been able to meet their food and essential shopping needs, 9% have had to buy less than they needed, go without, or rely on support from others.
- In response to rising living costs 45% of Londoners are spending less on non-essential items, a third (32%) have stopped spending on non-essential items altogether and 36% are buying cheaper products. 12% of Londoners are using more credit or going into debt.
- 72% of Londoners are worried about future increases to living costs in the next twelve months, comprised of 32% who are very worried and 40% who are fairly worried.
- Overall Londoners whose household income is less than £20,000 per year, or who are renting from local authorities and housing associations, or have a health problem or disability that impacts day to day activities are more likely to be impacted and concerned about cost of living increases.

Whilst 23% of Londoners are comfortable financially and 36% say they are coping okay financially, 13% of Londoners say they are currently struggling to make ends meet, going without essentials or relying on debt.

This increases significantly for Londoners whose gross household income is less than £20,00 per year with 27% who are struggling, going without or relying on debt.

Londoners Financial Situation



Note: Numbers less than 5% removed

Question: Thinking about your current financial situation, which of these statements best applies to you?

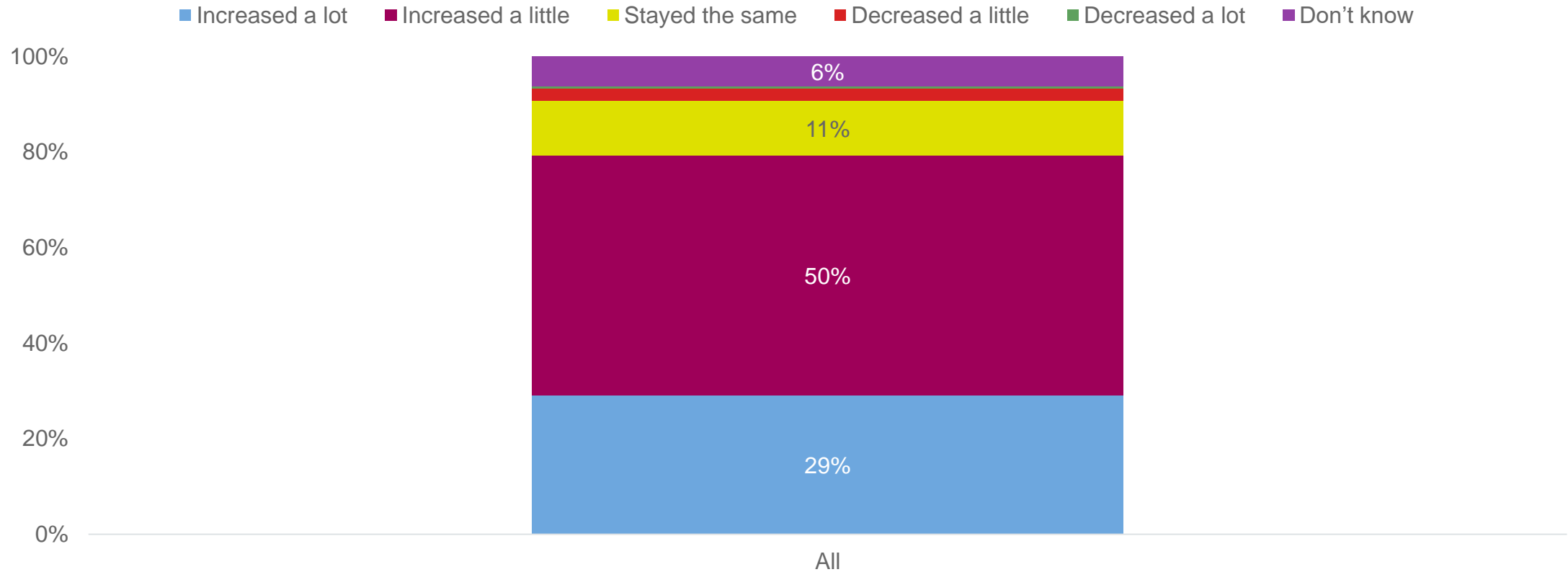


Financial Situation demographics

- Those going without basic needs or relying on debt are more likely to be 35-49 years old, C2DE
- Asian Londoners and those not in employment are also more likely to say they are going without basic needs or relying on debt.
- 21% of unemployed and not working Londoners are struggling to make ends meet with another 5% saying they are going without basic needs or relying on debt.
- Those renting from a local authority are more likely to be struggling to make ends meet (27%) as are 17% of those renting from a housing association. 8% of housing association renters say they are going without essentials or relying on debt.
- 8% Londoners whose day to day activities are limited a lot by a health problem or disability are going without essentials or relying on debt and another 24% are struggling to make ends meet.
- 26% of Londoners whose gross household income is less than £20,000 per year (equivalent to the London Living Wage) are struggling financially, comprised of 22% who are struggling and 5% who are going without or relying on debt.

79% of Londoners say their cost of living has increased to some extent over the last six months, with three in ten (29%) saying that it has increased a lot for their household.

Cost of Living changes over the last six months



Note: Numbers less than 5% removed

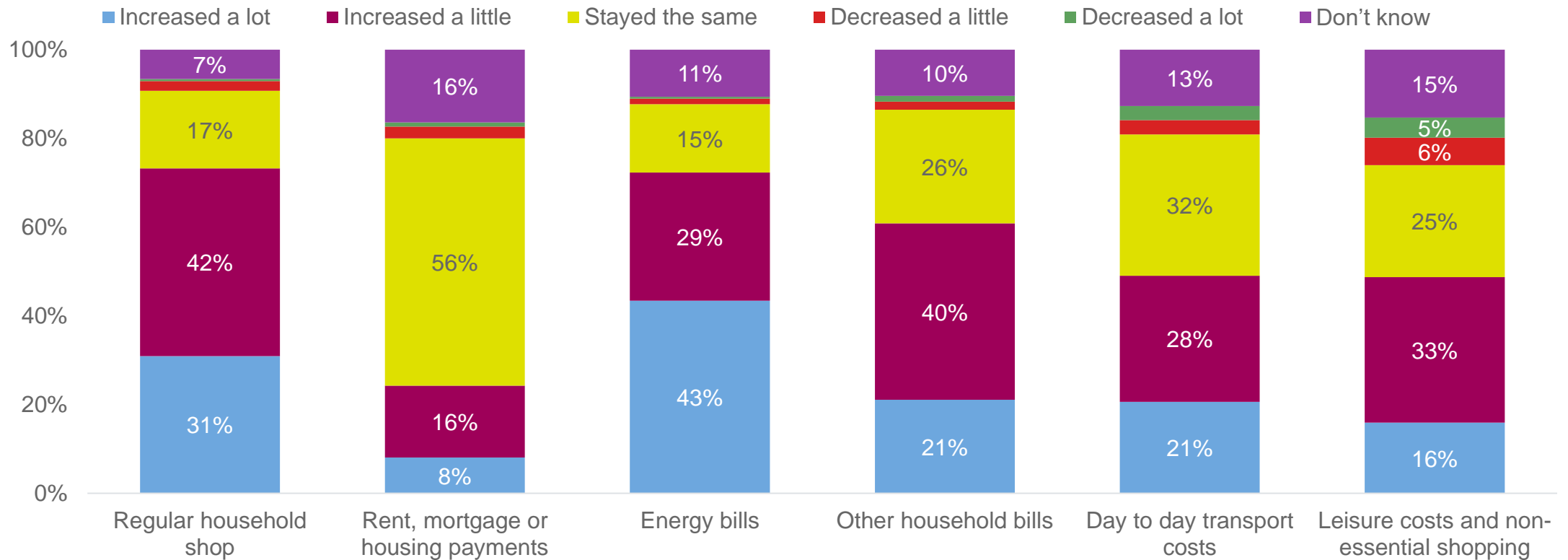
Question: Overall, for your household, has the cost of living increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last six months?

Living costs have increased for at least half of Londoners in almost all areas.

Rent and mortgage payments are least likely to have increased with 56% of Londoners saying they've stayed the same.

Most Londoners have seen increases in energy bills (72% seeing an increase) and household essentials shop (73% seeing an increase) over the last six months. 61% of Londoners say their other household bills and 49% say their day to day transport costs have increased over the last six months.

Cost of living changes by category



Note: Numbers less than 5% removed

Question: To what extent have each of the following living costs increased, decreased or stayed the same for your household over the last six months?



Cost of Living demographics

Overall

- Asian and Black Londoners, Londoners aged 35 to 49 years old and C2DE Londoners are more likely to say that living costs have increased a lot.
- White Londoners and those over 50 year olds are more likely to have seen costs increase a little.
- Londoners with a gross household income of less than £20,000 per year are more likely to say costs have increased a lot (35%) as are those renting from their local authority (40%) and those whose day to day activity is limited a lot by health or disability (43%).

By category

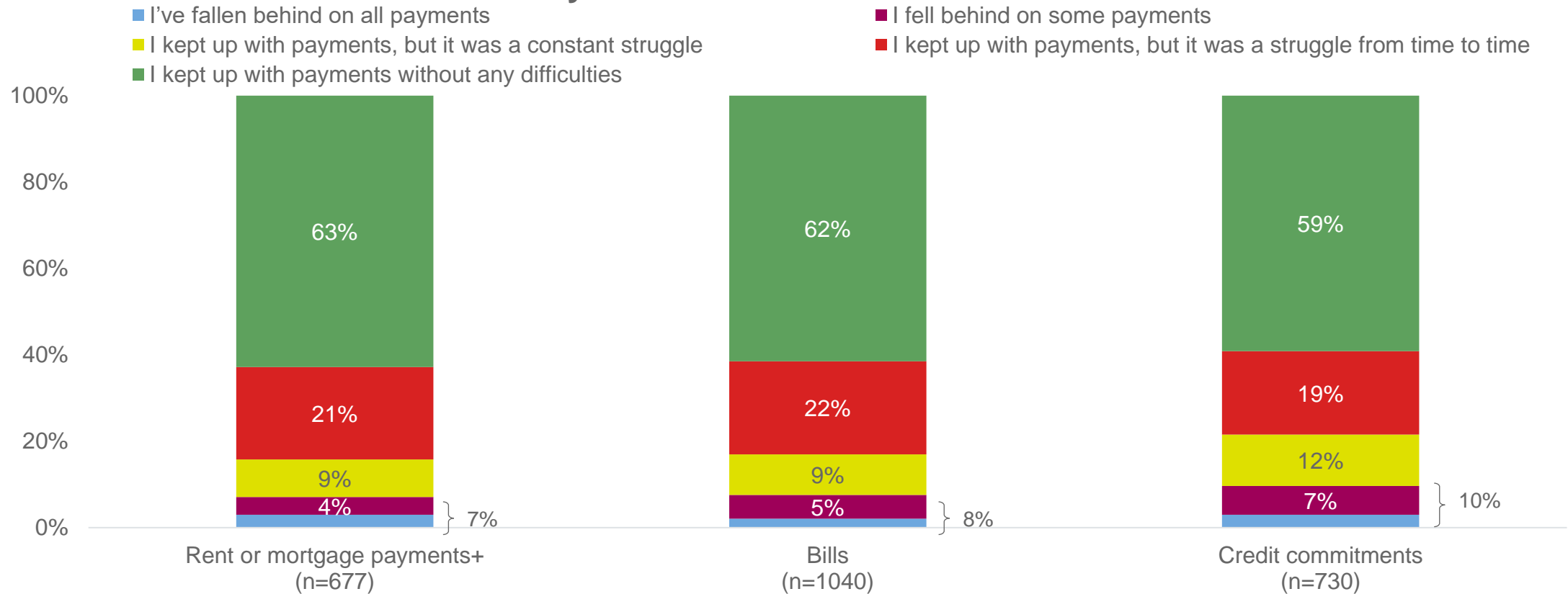
- Females and those over 35 years old are more likely to say household shopping has increased a lot as are those renting from their local authority and Londoners with a health problem or disability that impacts their day to day lives, White Londoners are more likely to say household shopping has increased a little.
- 35 to 49 year olds are more likely to say rent or mortgage payments have increased a lot. C2DE Londoners are more likely to say they have increased a little. 15% of Londoners who rent from a housing association say their rent costs have increased a lot in the last six months and another 27% say they have increased a little.
- Londoners over 50 years old are more likely to say energy bills have increased a little, as are White Londoners. Londoners whose day to day activities are limited a lot by health or disability are more likely to say energy bills have increased a lot (56%).
- 50-64 year olds are more likely to say other household bills have increased a lot, C2DE and Asian Londoners are more likely to say they've increased a lot whereas ABC1, White and Inner Londoners are more likely to say they've increased a little.
- C2DE Londoners are more likely to say transport costs have increased a lot as are Outer Londoners whereas those in employment say that costs have increased a little. Those with a health problem or disability that effects their day to day activities are also more likely to say day to day transport have increased a lot (29%).
- There are no significant differences across demographic groups for leisure and non-essential costs.

Almost four in ten (36%) Londoners* have struggled to make payments on their rent or mortgage at some point in the last six months, 7% have fallen behind on some or all payments.

A similar number (38%) have struggled to pay their household bills, with 8% saying they have fallen behind on some or all payments.

10% of Londoners have fallen behind on meeting credit commitments.

Ability to meet financial commitments



Note: Numbers less than 5% removed

Question: Thinking about the last six months, have you, or have you not, been able to meet payments on the following?

+ only asked to those who pay rent or have a mortgage

*of those who answered the question (excludes don't know, not applicable, prefer not to say responses)



Ability to meet financial commitments demographics

Rent and mortgage payments

- C2DE Londoners are more likely to have fallen behind on some payments (8%).
- Inner Londoners are also slightly more likely to have fallen behind on payments (5%).
- Those who are unemployed or not working (excluding students and retired adults) are more likely to have fallen behind on paying their rent or mortgage (8%).
- 16% of those with a household income less than £20k are more likely to have fallen behind on all (6%) or some (10%) rent payments.
- Londoners whose day to day activities are limited by health or disability are also more likely to have fallen behind on rent or mortgage payments (4% - all payments, 9% - some payments).

Bills

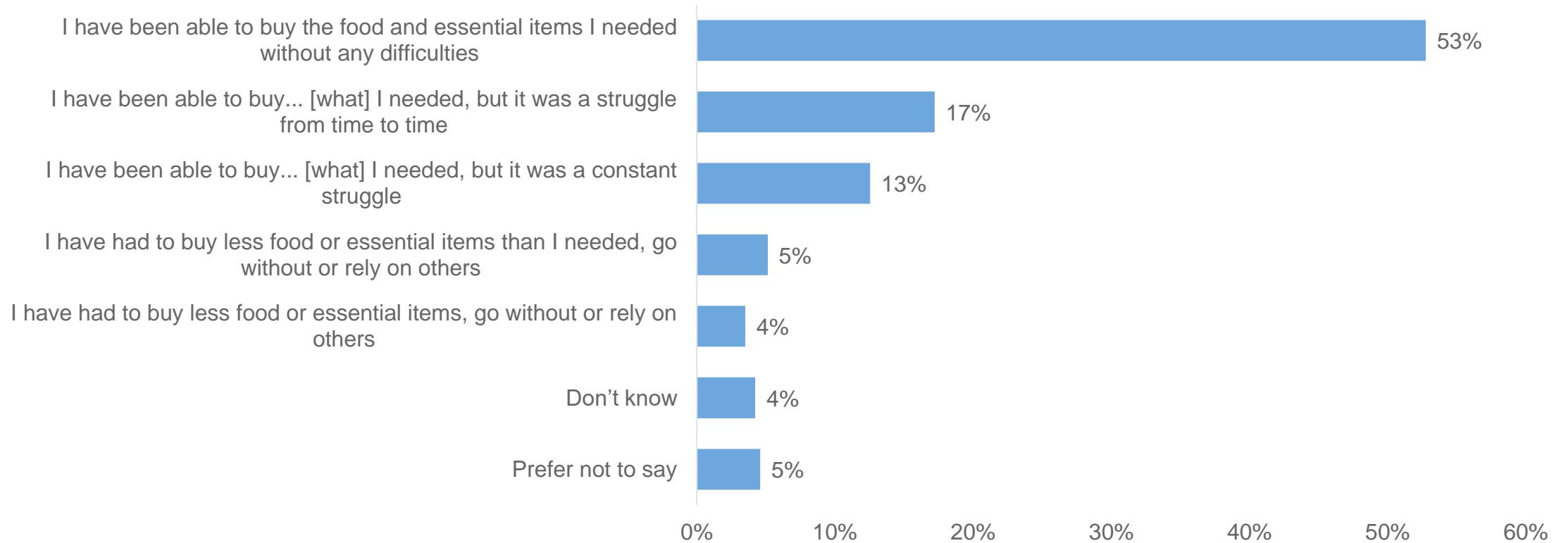
- 35 to 49 year old Londoners are more likely to say they've fallen behind on some bills (8%), as are Inner Londoners (4%) and those who are unemployed or not working (9%).
- Those in part time work (5%), with a household income of less than £20,000 (5%) and those renting from a housing association (6%) are more likely to have fallen behind on all bills.

Credit commitments

- 5% of 35 to 49 year olds say they've fallen behind on all credit payments in the last six months. As are 9% of C2DE Londoners.
- 16% of Londoners with a household income less than £40,000 are likely to have fallen behind on some or all credit payments.

Whilst the majority of Londoners have been able to meet their food and essential shopping needs, 9% have had to buy less than they needed, go without or rely on support from others.

Ability to meet food and basic essential shopping needs



Question: Thinking about the last six months, which of the following statements describes you?
Question responses have been abbreviated



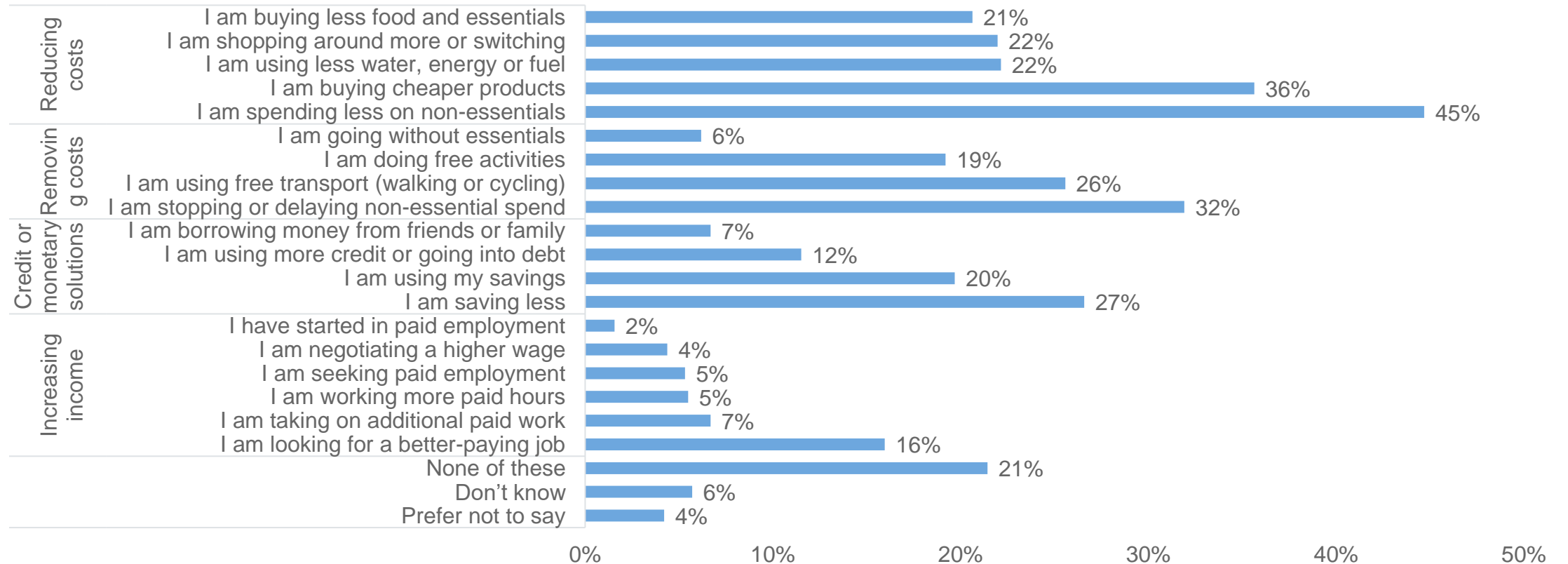
Ability to meet food and basic essential shopping needs demographics

- Males and Londoners under 34 are more likely to say that they have had to buy less food or essential items, go without or rely on support occasionally or regularly.
- C2DE, Asian and Black Londoners as well as Londoners not in employment are more likely to have had to buy less food, go without or rely on support regularly. Londoners in part time work are more likely to say they've had to buy less food or essentials, go without or rely on support on some occasions (11%).
- Londoners renting from a housing association are more likely to say they have had to buy less food or essentials items, go without or rely on support regularly (8%) as are those whose day to day activities are limited a lot by health or disability (14%).

In response to rising living costs, 45% of Londoners are spending less on non-essential items, a third (32%) have stopped spending on non-essential items altogether, and 36% are buying cheaper products.

12% of Londoners are using more credit or going into debt.

How Londoners are managing living costs





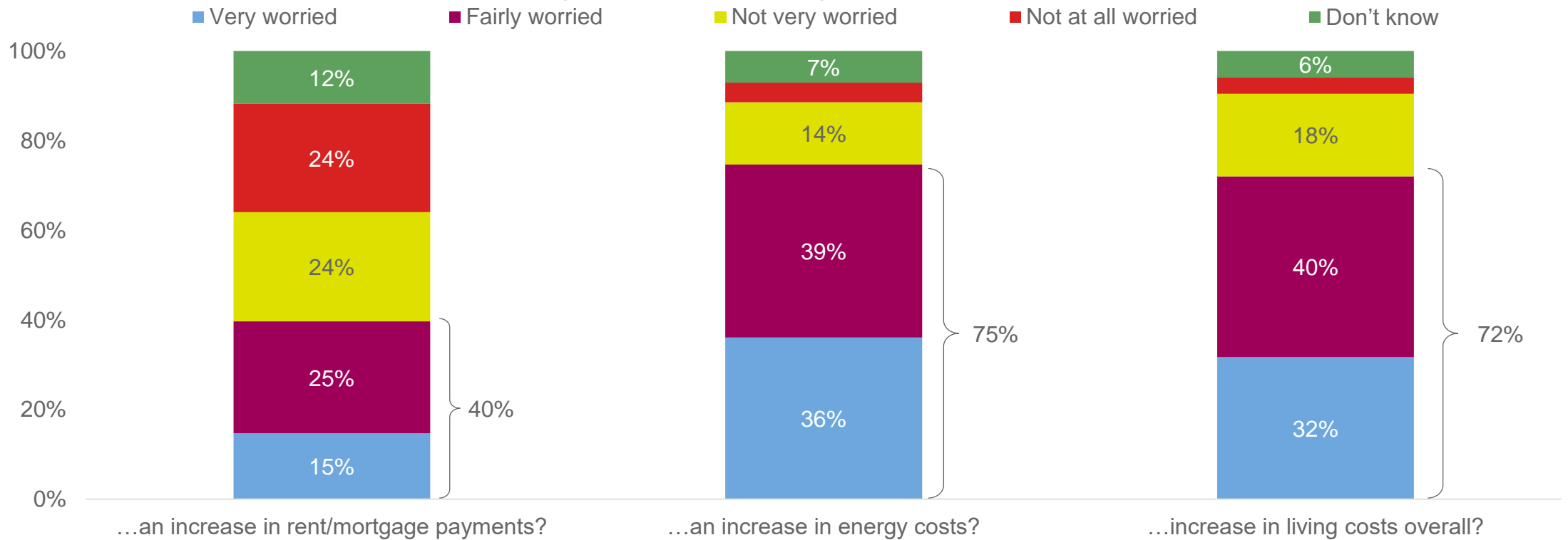
How Londoners are managing living costs demographics

- Female Londoners are more likely to be reducing costs by using less or shopping around.
- 25 to 34 year olds are more likely to be doing free activities, buying cheaper products and either looking for a better paid job or negotiating a better salary.
- 35 to 49 year olds are also looking for a better paying job but are also more likely to be going into debt.
- C2DE Londoners are more likely to be buying less food and essentials or going without as well as borrowing money from friends and family.
- Black Londoners are more likely to be reducing costs but also borrowing money either formally or from family and friends. They are also more likely to be seeking better paid work or working more hours.
- Those not in employment are more likely to be looking for paid work, whereas those in part time work are looking for more hours (12) or taking on additional work (14%).
- Londoners with a household income of less than £20k are buying cheaper products (45%) and buying less (28%) but are also relying on savings (26%) and credit (12%). 41% have stopped non-essential spend.
- Londoners renting from a local authority are buying less food and essentials, and buying cheaper products as are those renting from a housing association, these Londoners are also spending less on non essentials (56%) and more likely to be going without essentials (15%) and relying on credit (19%).
- Londoners with disabilities or health problems impacting their day to day lives a lot are also buying less (39%), buying cheaper (47%) and borrowing (15% from family and friends and 23% from credit companies).

72% of Londoners are worried about future increases to living costs in the next twelve months, comprised of 32% who are very worried and 40% who are fairly worried.

Energy costs are a bigger cause of worry than rent or mortgage payment increases, with 75% of Londoners saying they are worried about energy cost increases compared to 40% of Londoners who are worried about rent or mortgage increases.

Worry over future payment increases



Note: Numbers less than 5% removed

Question: To what extent are you worried about the impact of the following on your household finances over the next 12 months?

...an increase in rent/mortgage payments

...an increase in energy costs

...increase in living costs overall



Worry over future living cost increases demographics

Rent / mortgage


- Londoners who are renting are more worried about increases to payments. 56% of private renters and 58% of those renting from local authorities or housing associations are very or fairly worried.
- Londoners whose activities are limited by health or disability are more likely to be very worried (21%)

Energy

- Local authority and housing association renters and Londoners with significant health or disability limitations are also more likely to be very worried about energy cost increases.

Cost of living overall

- The same groups are also more likely to be worried about increases to living costs overall



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