



London at night

A survey of Londoners and night time workers

January 2023

Introduction

The Greater London Authority (GLA) commissioned Redfield and Wilton Strategies to conduct a survey of Londoners.

This survey explored the behaviours and experiences of Londoners at night, though the focus of the survey was on night time work.

Throughout this report, 'night' or 'night time' refers to anytime between 6pm and 6am.

This report is set out as follows:

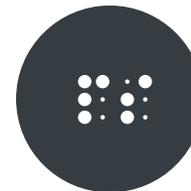
- 1. Key findings**
- 2. Experiences of London at night**
- 3. Prevalence and characteristics of night time work**
- 4. Experiences of night time workers**



This online survey was conducted between 8th and 9th March 2022



The survey was completed by 2,000 London residents aged 18+



The figures have been weighted to be representative of London adults

See additional analysis of ONS Labour Force Survey data from March 2022 here: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-at-night--research-and-analysis>



1. Key findings



Experiences of London at night

- The most common activities at night are everyday tasks such as shopping and personal errands, with 70% of Londoners doing this at least once a week, followed by going to work and wellbeing or fitness activities. Men are generally more active at night and are more likely to do most activities at night than women. For example, 74% of men do everyday tasks at night at least once a week compared to 66% of women.
- Cost and safety are the biggest barriers to going out at night more, with 1 in 3 citing these as barriers. Feeling unsafe at night is a greater barrier for women and those aged 18 to 24.
- Londoners say more police in public is the top priority for London at night, followed by improved night-time transport, better street lighting, and more free/low-cost activities. Black Londoners are much less likely to want more police in public at night, though this is still the 3rd ranked choice. Londoners aged 18-24 are also less likely to want police presence.



Prevalence and characteristics of night time work

- Just over a third of working Londoners say they work at night at least once a week, and over half work at night at least once a month. A third of working Londoners say they never work at night. Those Londoners most likely to work at night at least once a week are men, aged under 34, Black, and Asian .
- Almost half of night time workers say they are working at night more now compared to before the pandemic, whereas 16% say they are working less. Over a third have seen no change.
- Night time workers mostly work in the evening (6pm-12am) rather than in the morning (12am-6am). Night time workers are generally split between mostly working at night and mostly working during the day.
- The large majority of Londoners who work at night do so for their main job, with two-thirds in a full time job and just over a quarter in a part time job. Just under 1 in 10 do night time work as a second/additional job.
- Almost half of night time workers work in office-based jobs, 19% work at a restaurant, bar, or nightclub, and 12% work in a shop. Additionally, over half of night time workers say they work from home at night all or most of the time, whereas 28% of night time workers never work from home at night.
- Although the majority of night time workers earn the London Living Wage or above, nearly a quarter do not.



Experiences of night time workers

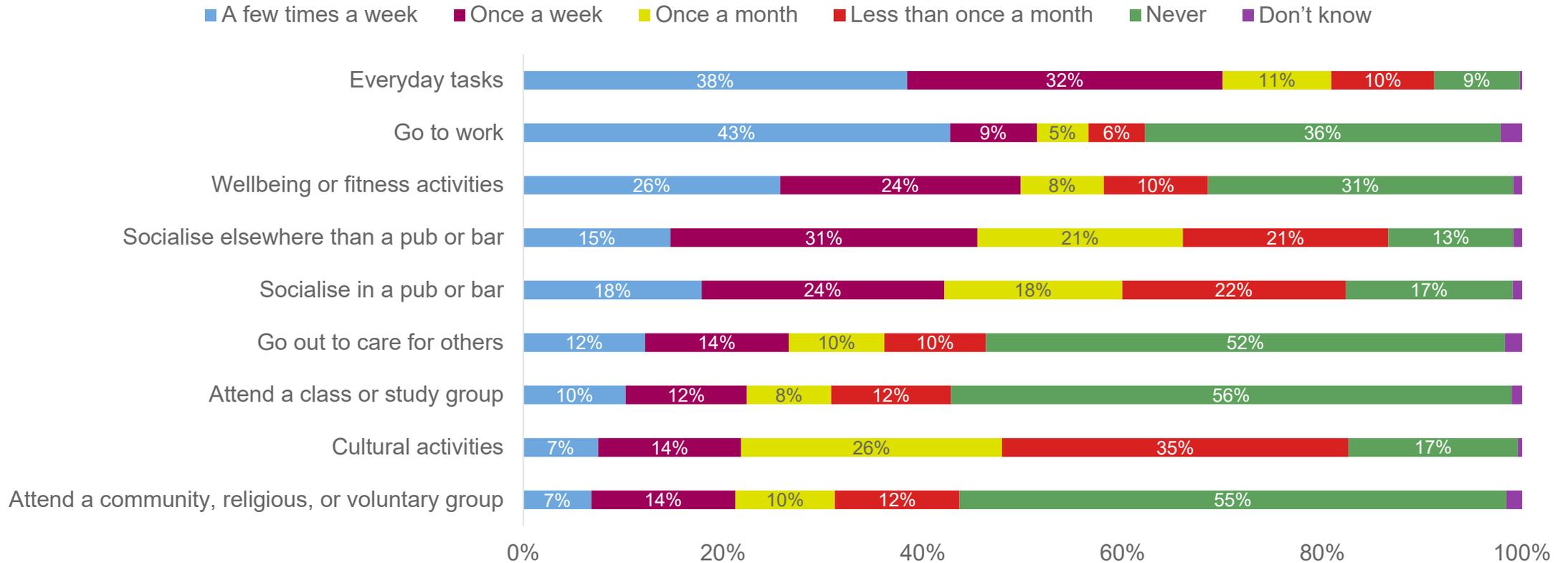
- Almost half of night time workers say they work at night because it is a requirement of their job, whereas a quarter work at night because they prefer it. Just less than a quarter say they work at night for both reasons.
- The main benefit of working at night is that it is less busy, followed by higher pay and having more time during the day for other things. The worst things about working at night are the impact on sleep and tiredness, feeling unsafe at night, and travelling to/from work at night. Almost 6 out of 10 night time workers say that working at night has a toll on their health and wellbeing.
- More than 4 out of 10 night time workers say the opportunities to work at night have gotten better since the start of the pandemic, and just under 4 out of 10 say working conditions at night have gotten better. Though roughly 22% say travelling at night and 20% say their wellbeing at work have gotten worse since the pandemic.
- Roughly a third of night time workers say their overall experience working at night has gotten better since the start of the pandemic, whereas half report no difference. Overall experiences working at night have improved most for men, those aged 18-24, Black, Asian and minority ethnic, and self-employed Londoners since the pandemic.
- Night time workers generally feel safer when at work at night than they do travelling to/from work at night. Almost a third of Londoners do not feel safe whilst travelling at night.
- Better night-time transport would most improve Londoners' experiences of working at night, followed by 24-hour access to healthy, fresh and affordable food, and access to break rooms/sleep and cooking areas when working.



2. Experiences of London at night

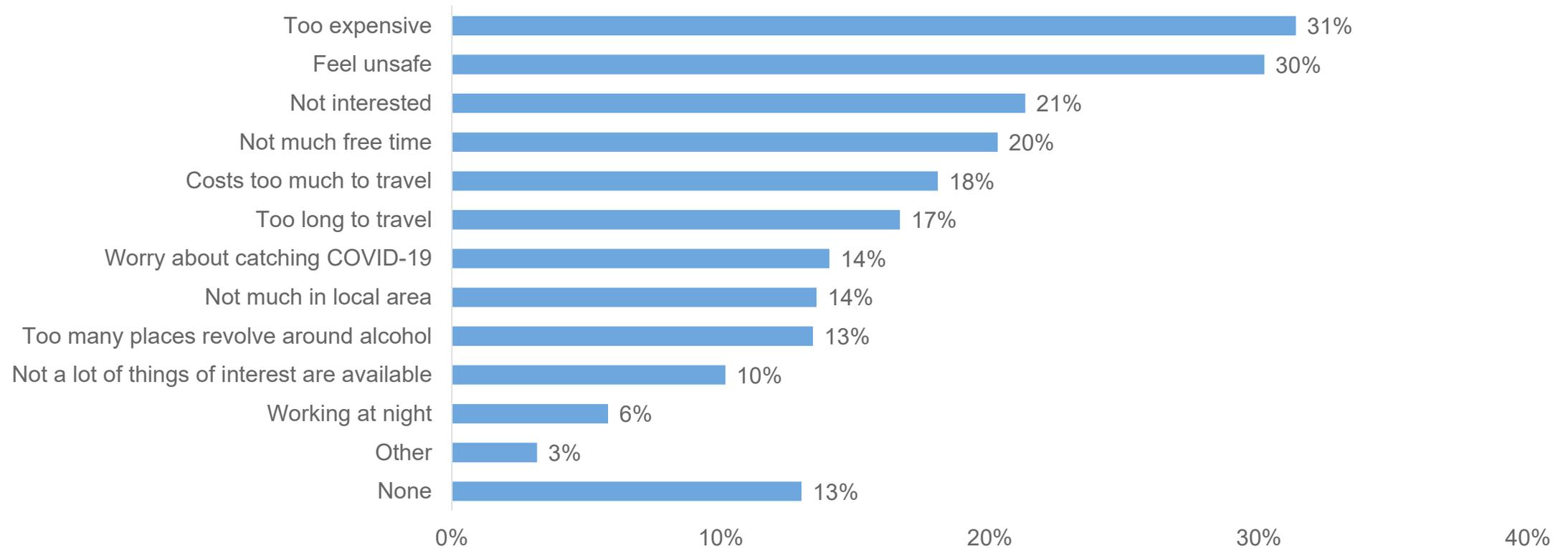
The most common activities at night are everyday tasks such as shopping and personal errands, with 70% of Londoners doing this at least once a week, followed by going to work (52%) and wellbeing or fitness activities (50%).

Frequency of activities at night in London



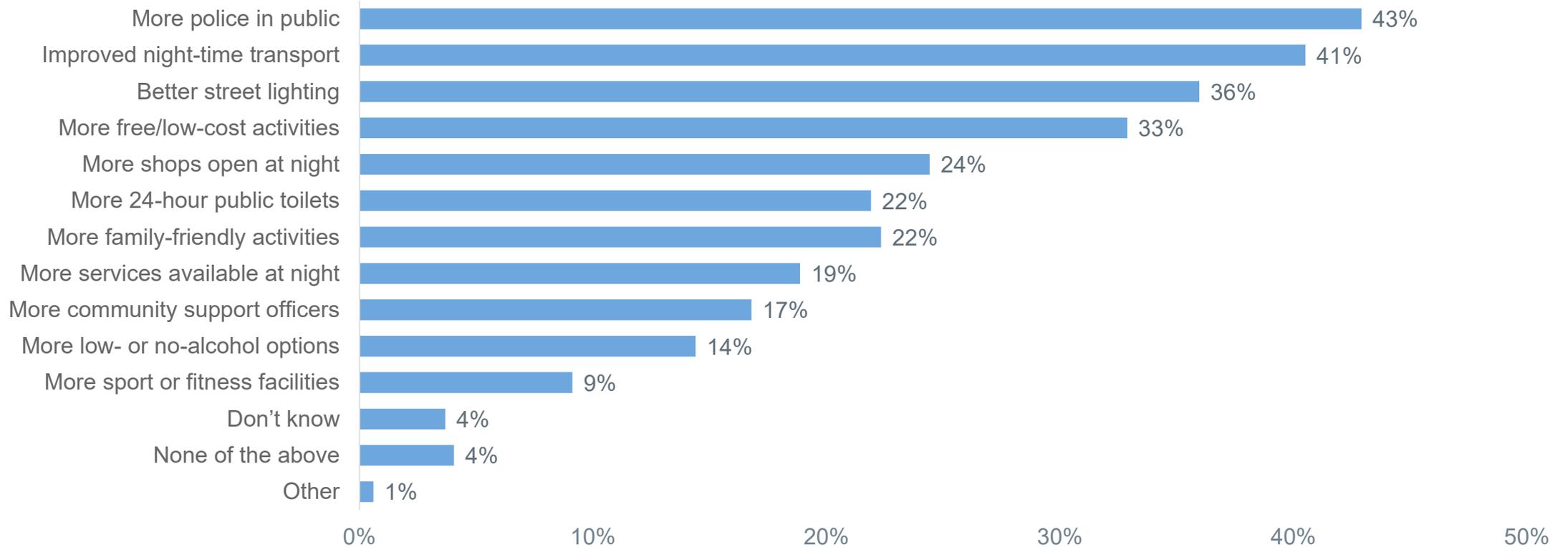
Cost and safety are the biggest barriers to going out at night more, with 1 in 3 citing these as barriers.

Barriers to going out more at night in London



Londoners say more police in public during night-time is top priority for London at night, followed by improved night-time transport, better street lighting, and more free/low-cost activities.

Improving London at night

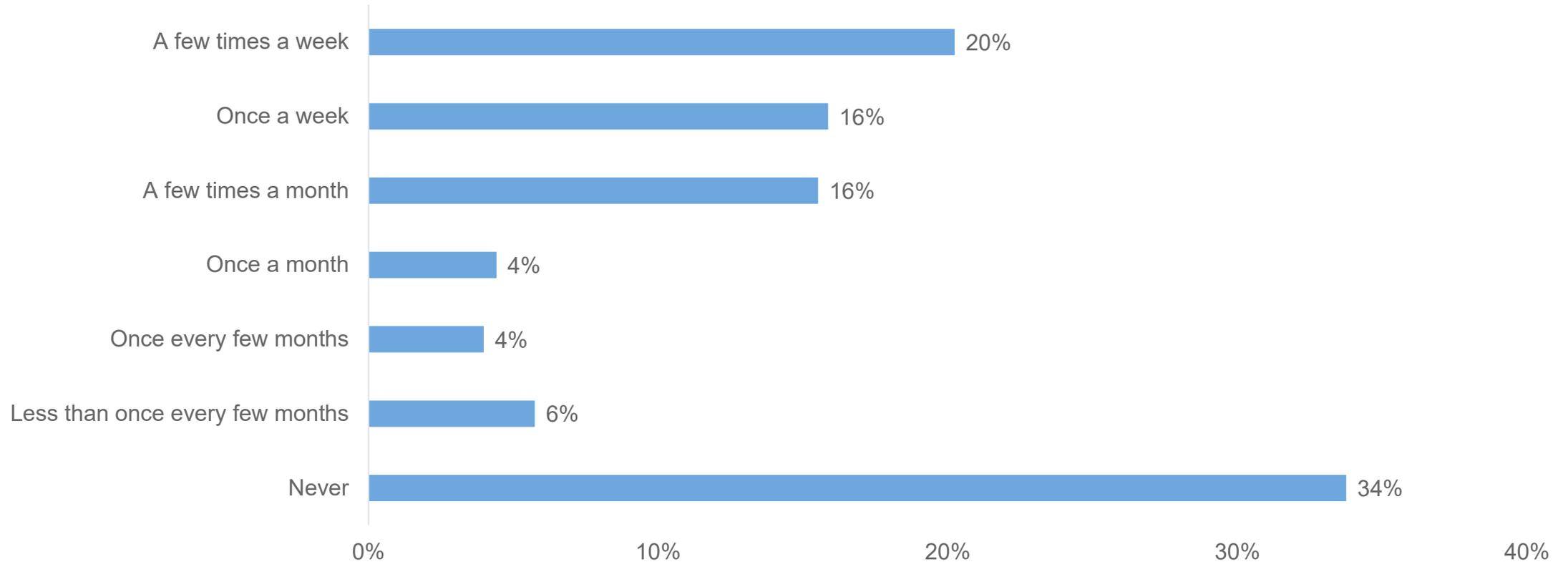




3. Prevalence and characteristics of night time work

Just over a third of working Londoners (36%) say they work at night at least once a week, and over half (56%) work at night at least once a month. A third of working Londoners say they never work at night.

How often Londoners* work at night

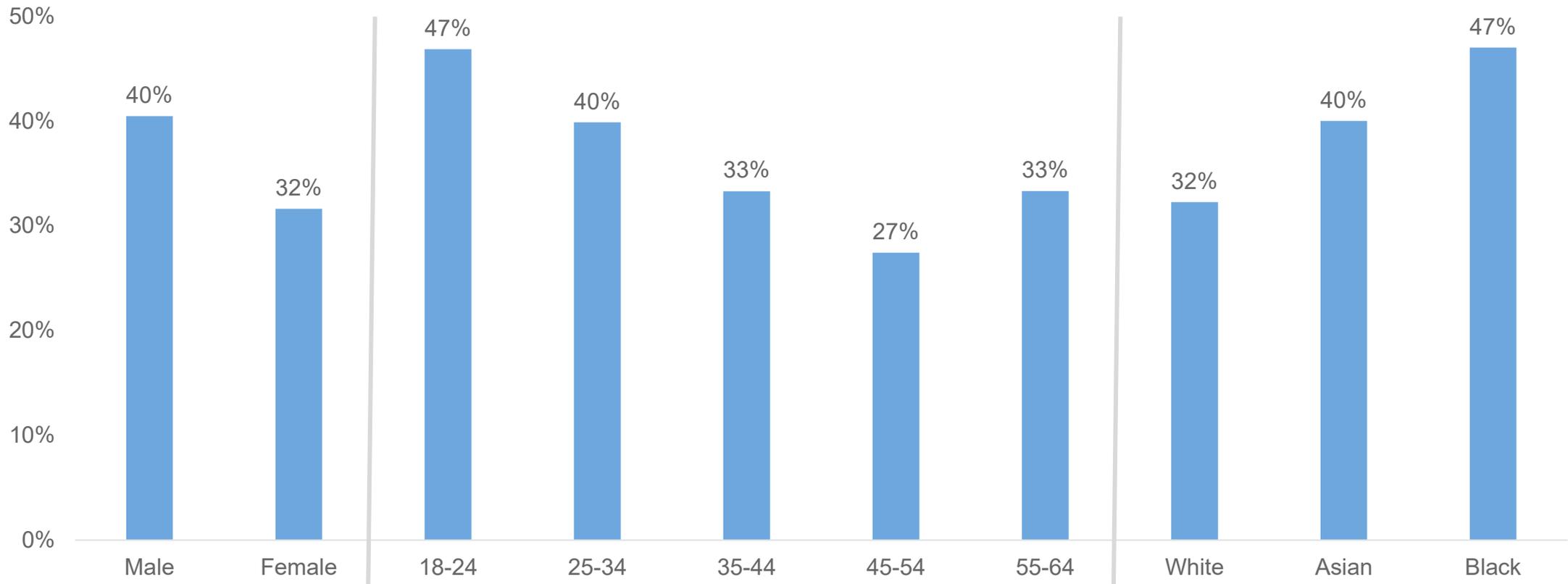


Question: How often, if at all, do you work at night (anytime between 6pm and 6am), including working from home? This work can include work done primarily during the day that sometimes starts before 6am or continue pasts 6pm (N=1493).

*Question was asked to respondents who are employed or self self-employed

Male, under 34, Black and Asian Londoners are most likely to work at night at least once a week.

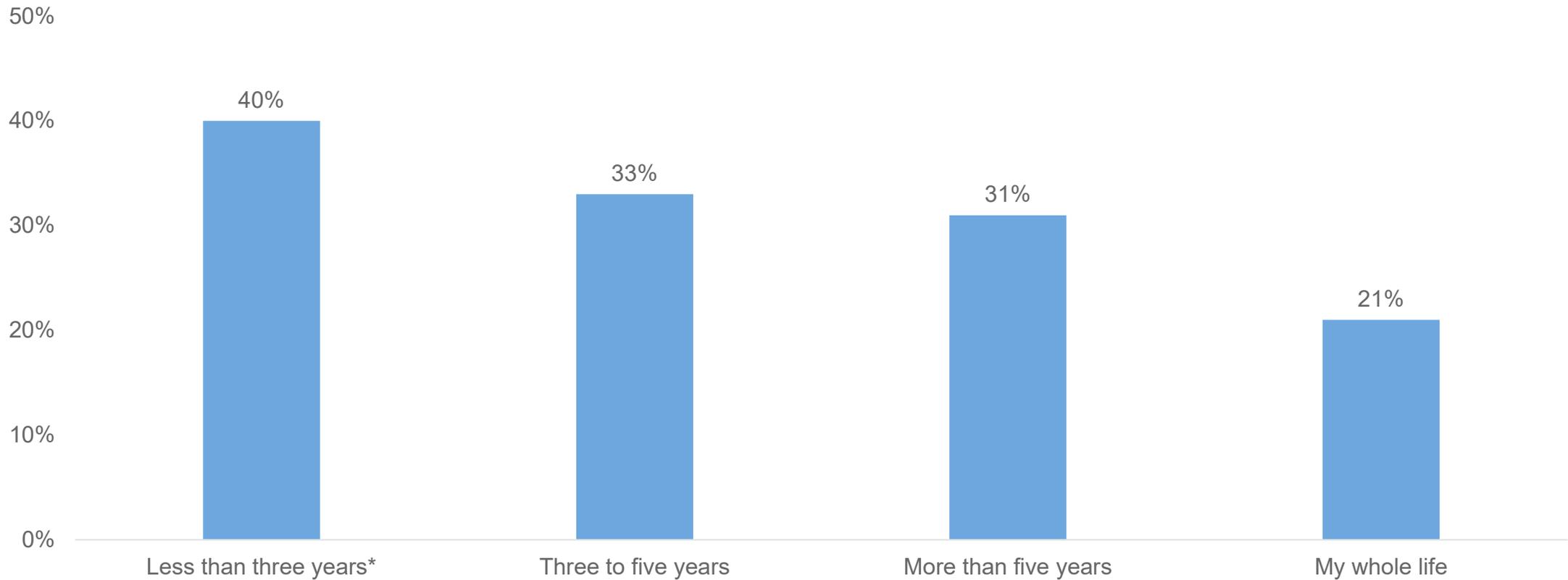
Work at night at least once a week by gender, age, and ethnicity



Question: How often, if at all, do you work at night (anytime between 6pm and 6am), including working from home? This work can include work done primarily during the day that sometimes starts before 6am or continue pasts 6pm (N=1493).

Those who have recently moved to the UK are also more likely to be night time workers.

Work at night at least once a week by time spent living in the UK

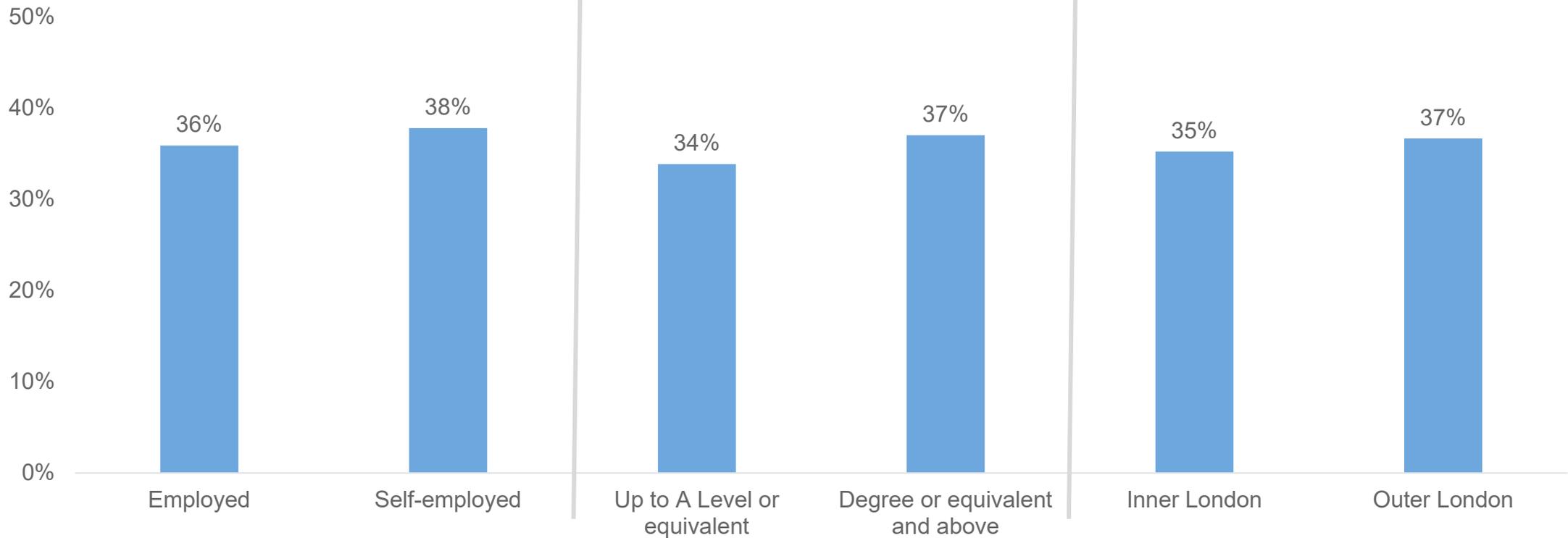


Question: How often, if at all, do you work at night (anytime between 6pm and 6am), including working from home? This work can include work done primarily during the day that sometimes starts before 6am or continue pasts 6pm (N=1493).

*the base sample for this group is below 100 respondents so the findings should be taken with caution.

There is little difference by employment status, highest level of education, and where they live.

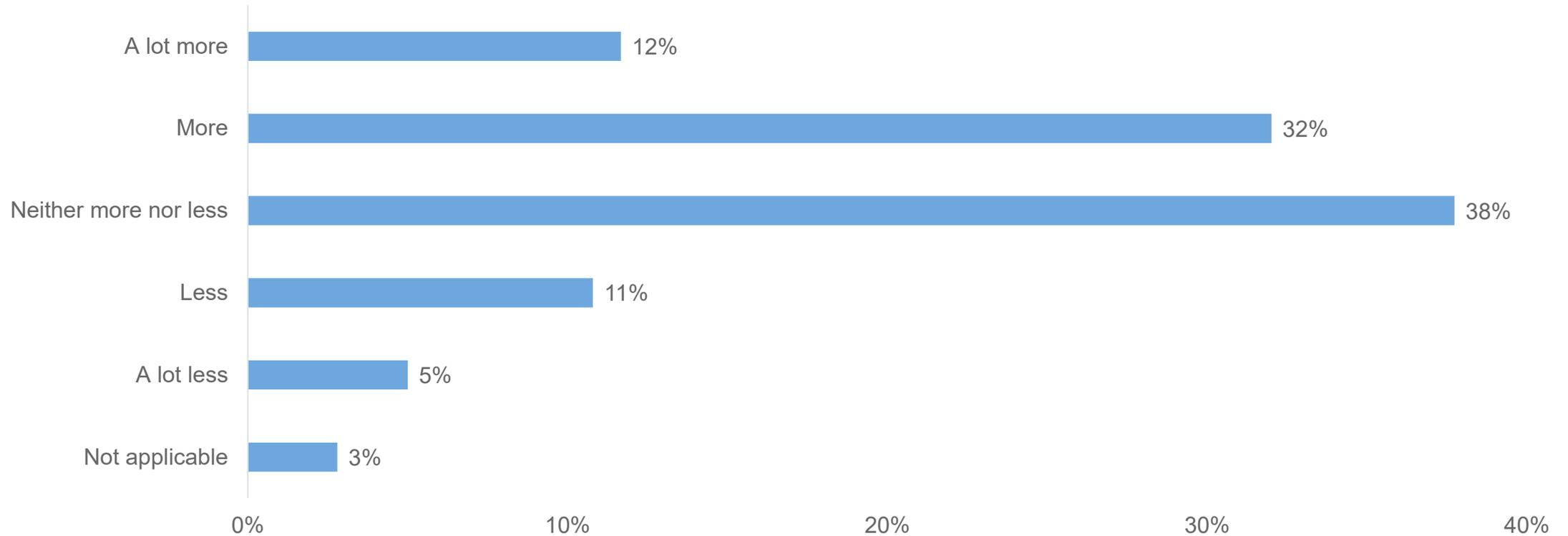
Work at night at least once a week by employment, education, and location



Question: How often, if at all, do you work at night (anytime between 6pm and 6am), including working from home? This work can include work done primarily during the day that sometimes starts before 6am or continue pasts 6pm (N=1493).

Almost half (44%) of night time workers say they are working at night more now compared to before the pandemic, whereas 16% say they are working less. Over a third (38%) have seen no change.

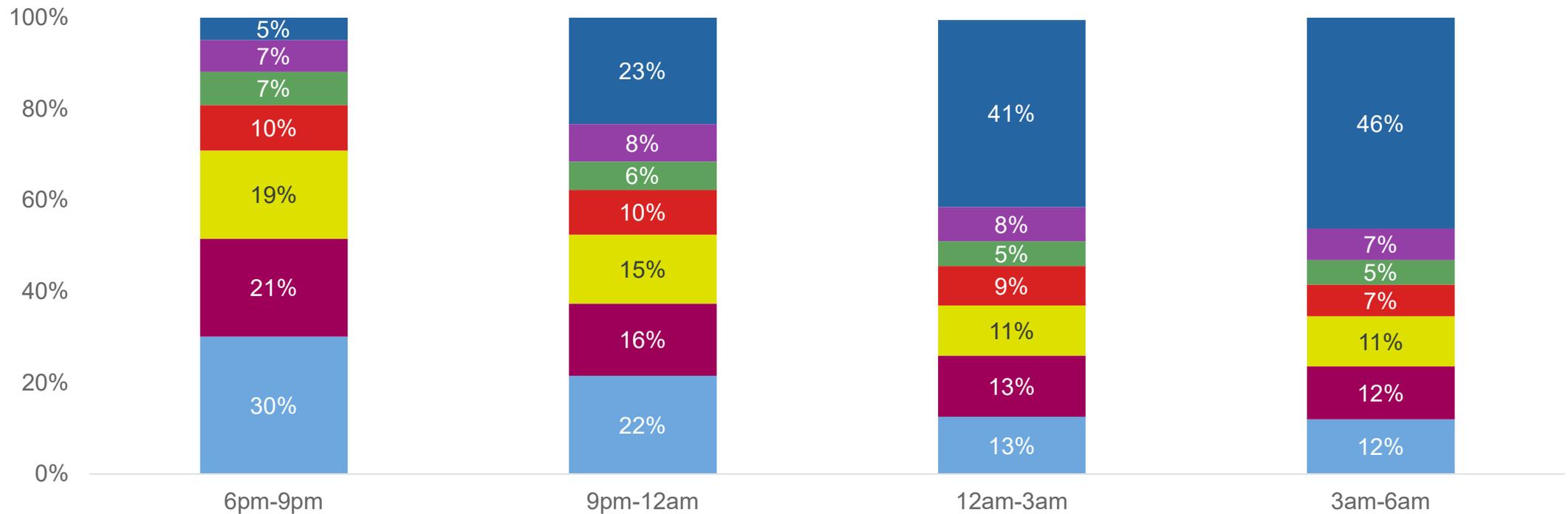
Frequency working at night compared to before the pandemic



Night time workers mostly work in the evening (6pm-12am) rather than in the morning (12am-6am).

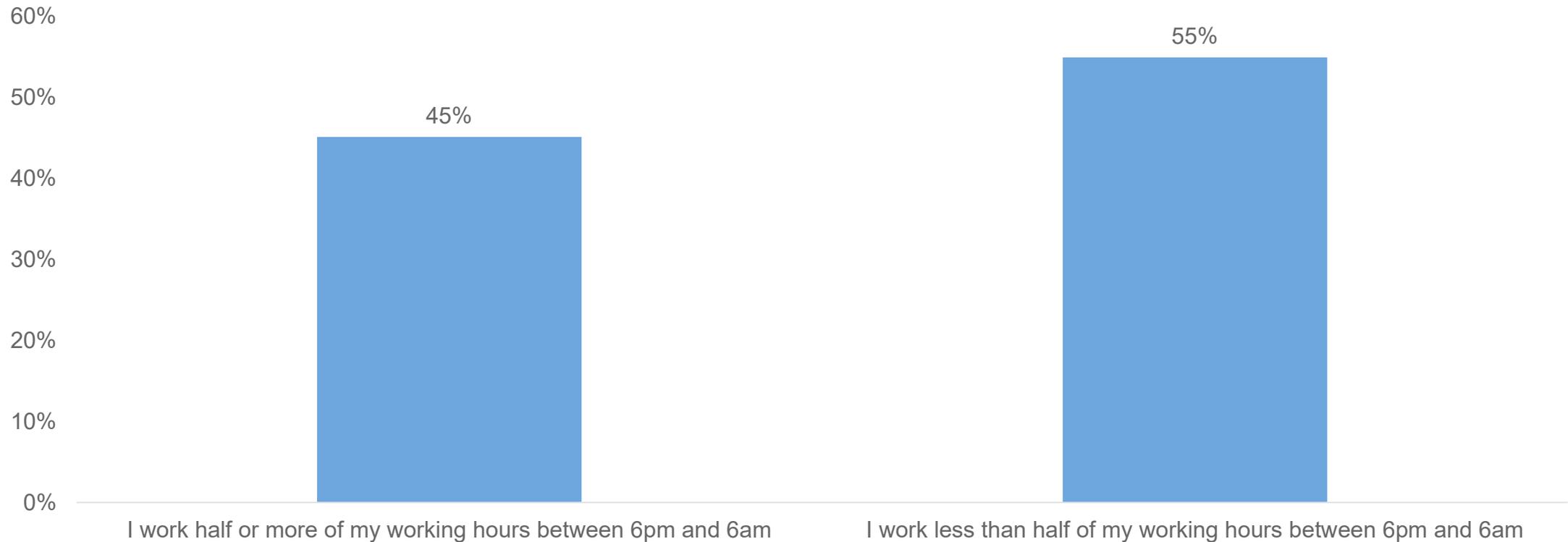
When Londoners work at night

■ A few times a week ■ Once a week ■ A few times a month ■ Once a month ■ Once every few months ■ Less than once every few months ■ Never



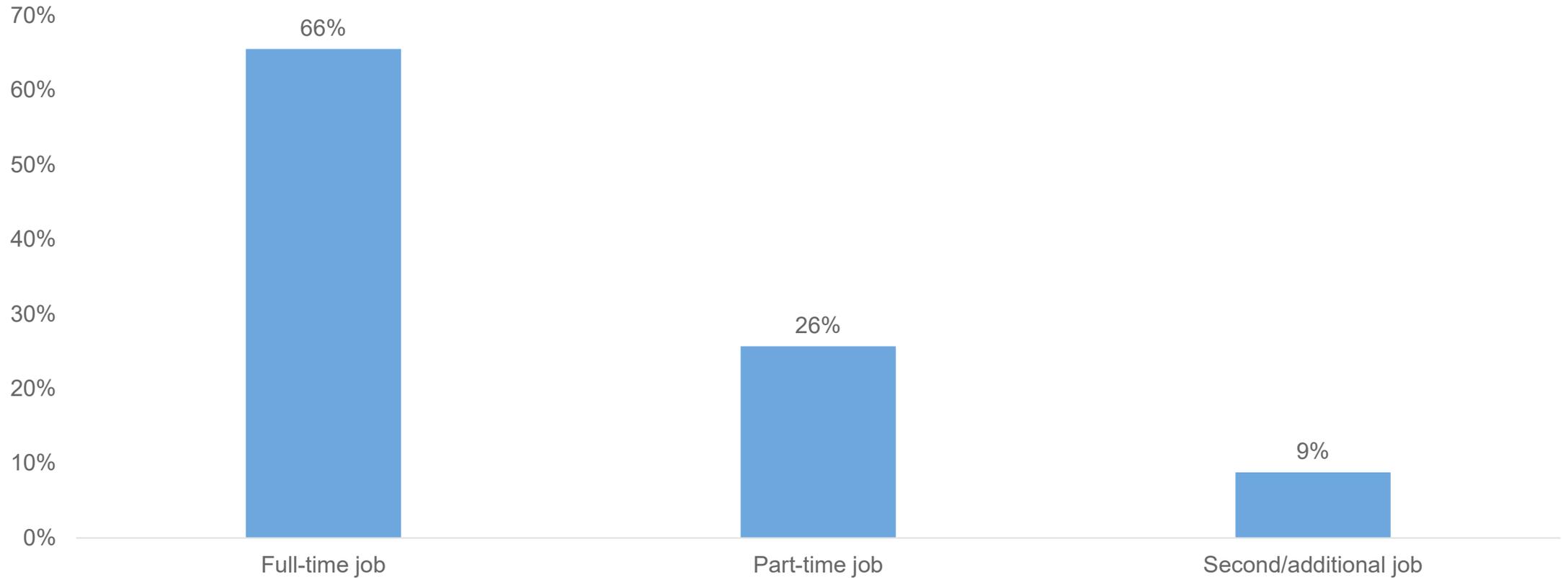
Just over half of night time workers (55%) work less than half of their working hours between 6pm and 6am, decreasing to less than half (45%) of those who work half or more of their working hours between 6pm and 6am.

Time spent working at night



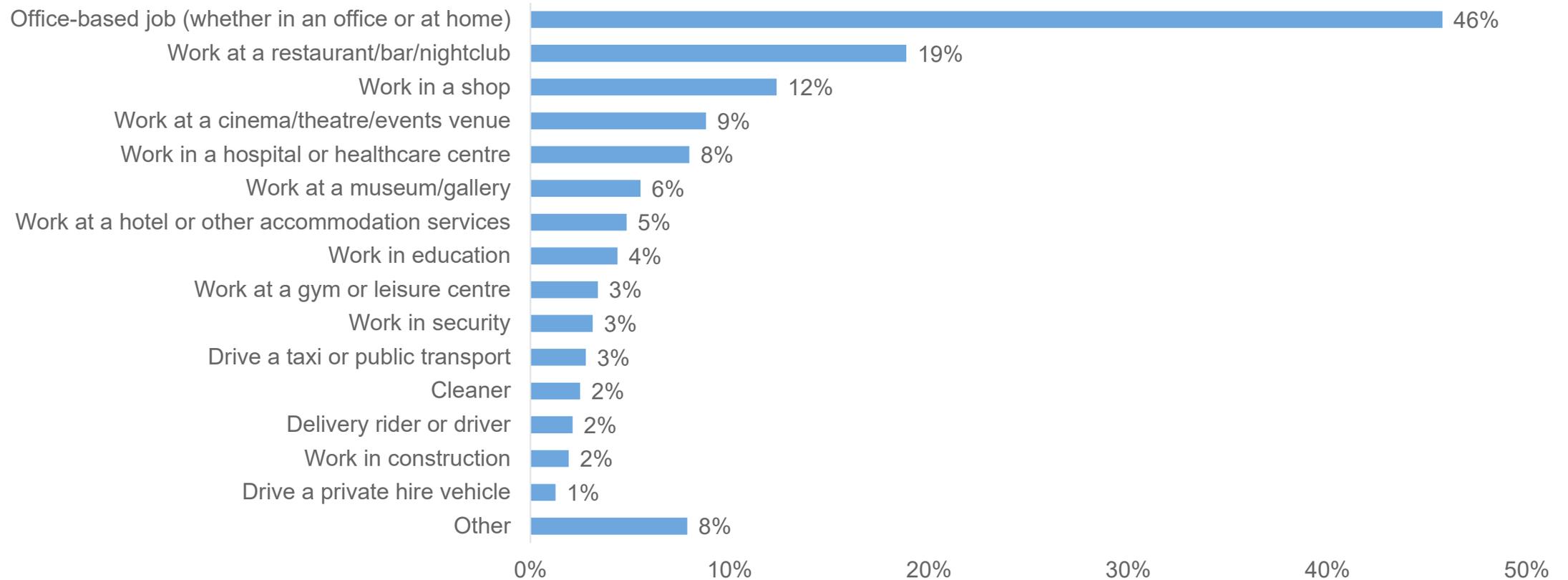
The large majority of Londoners who work at night do so for their main job, with two-thirds (66%) in a full time job and just over a quarter (26%) in a part time job. Just under 1 in 10 (9%) do night time work as a second/additional job.

Type of job at night



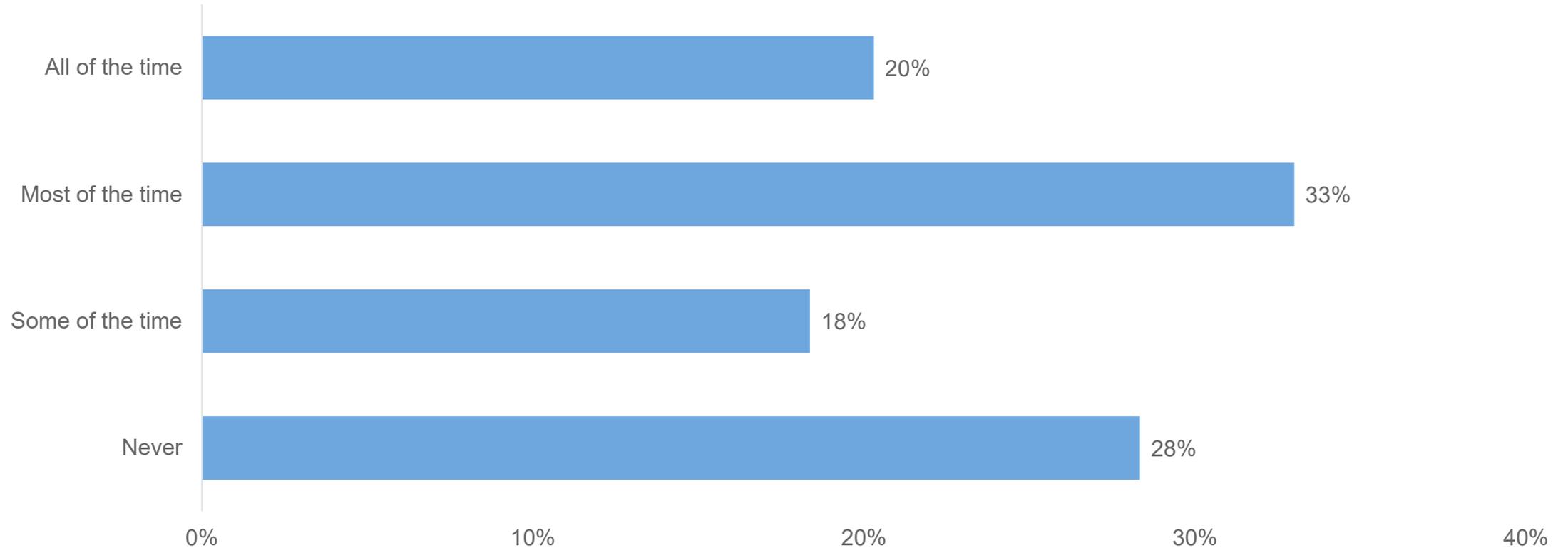
Almost half (46%) of night time workers work in office-based jobs, 19% work at a restaurant, bar, or nightclub, and 12% work in a shop.

Type of work at night



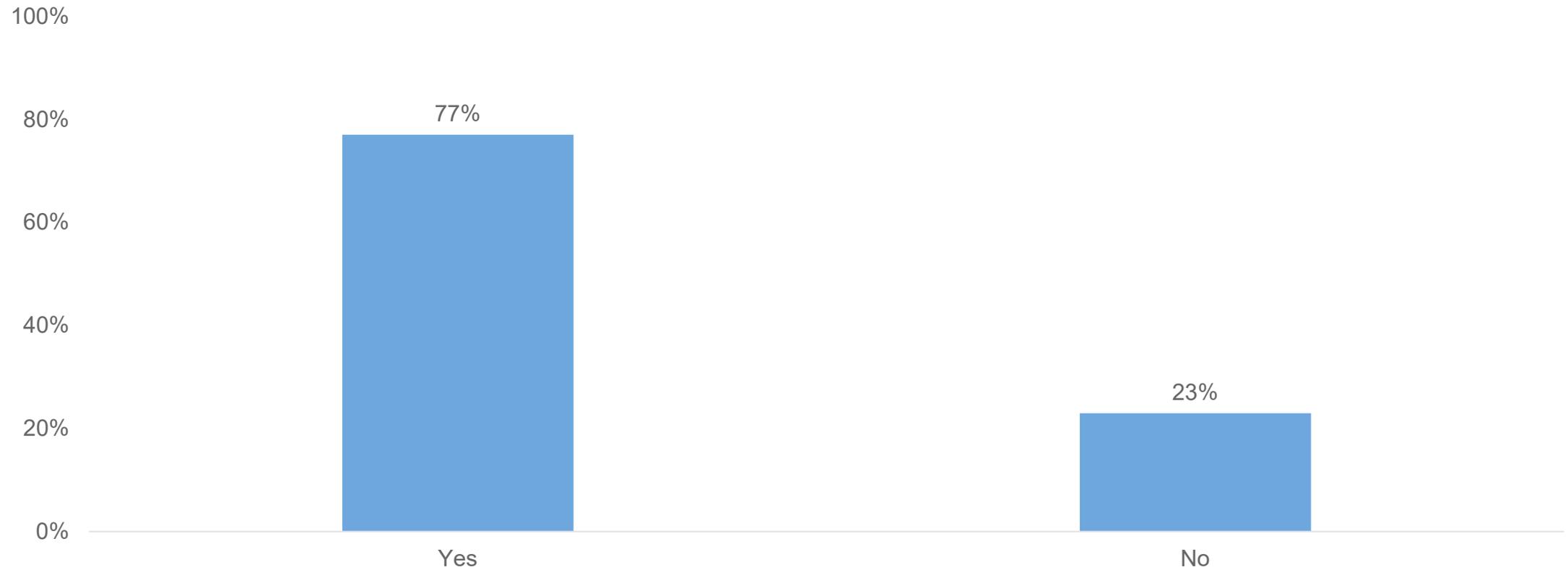
Over half of night time workers (53%) say they work from home at night all or most of the time, whereas 28% of night time workers never work from home at night.

Frequency working at night from home



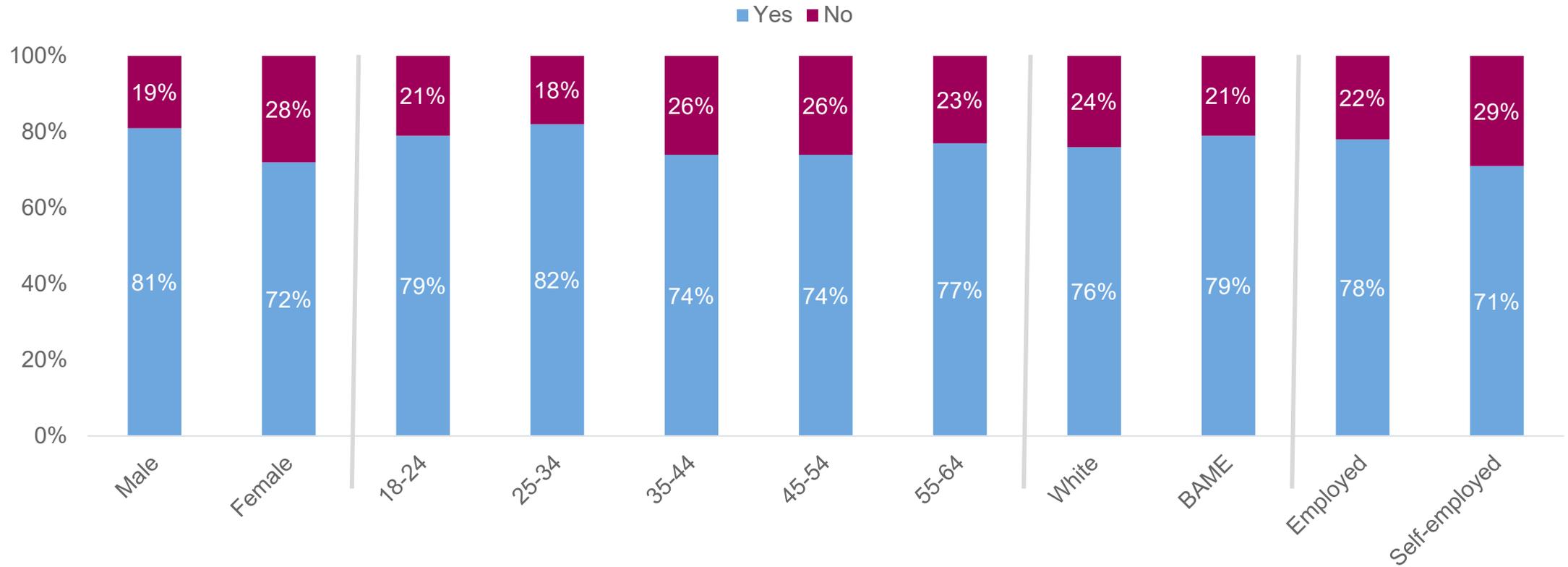
Although the majority (77%) of night time workers earn the London Living Wage or above, nearly a quarter (23%) do not.

Proportion of night time workers earning the London Living Wage



Female and self-employed night time workers are least likely to be earning the London Living Wage.

Proportion of night time workers earning the London Living Wage

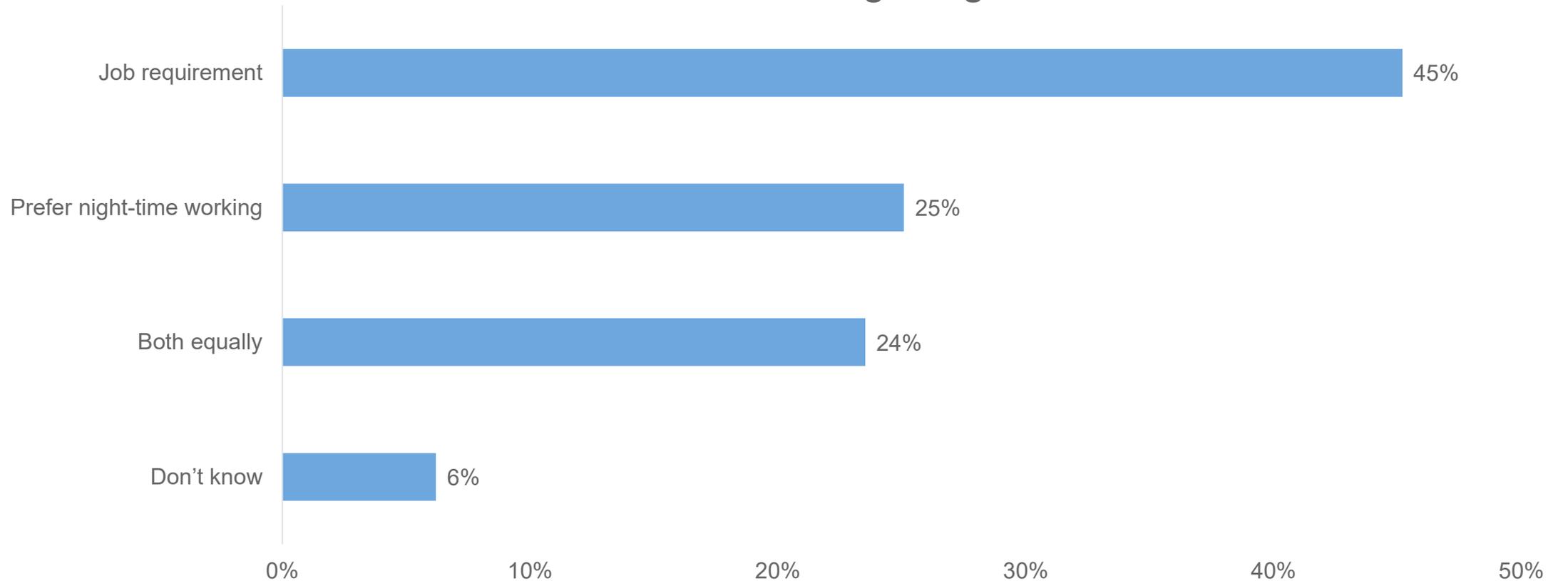




4. Experiences of night time workers

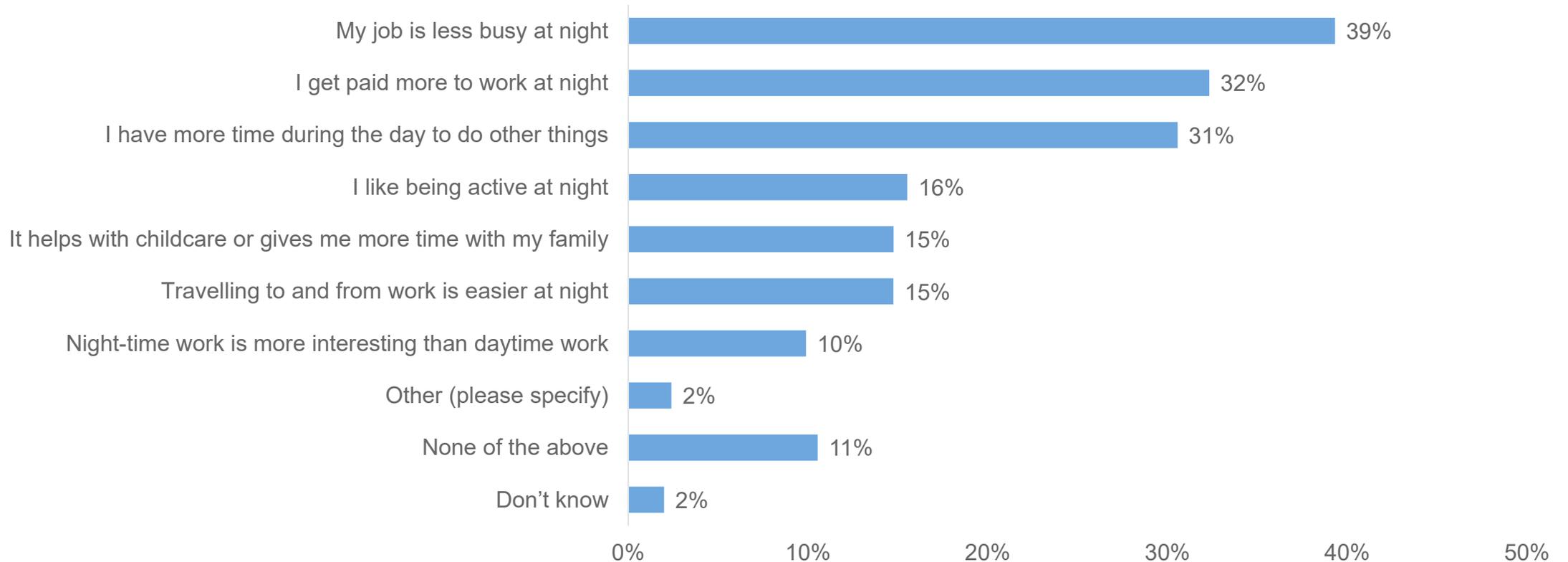
Almost half of night time workers (45%) say they work at night because it is a requirement of their job, whereas a quarter (25%) say they work at night because they prefer it. Just less than a quarter say they work at night for both reasons.

Reasons for working at night



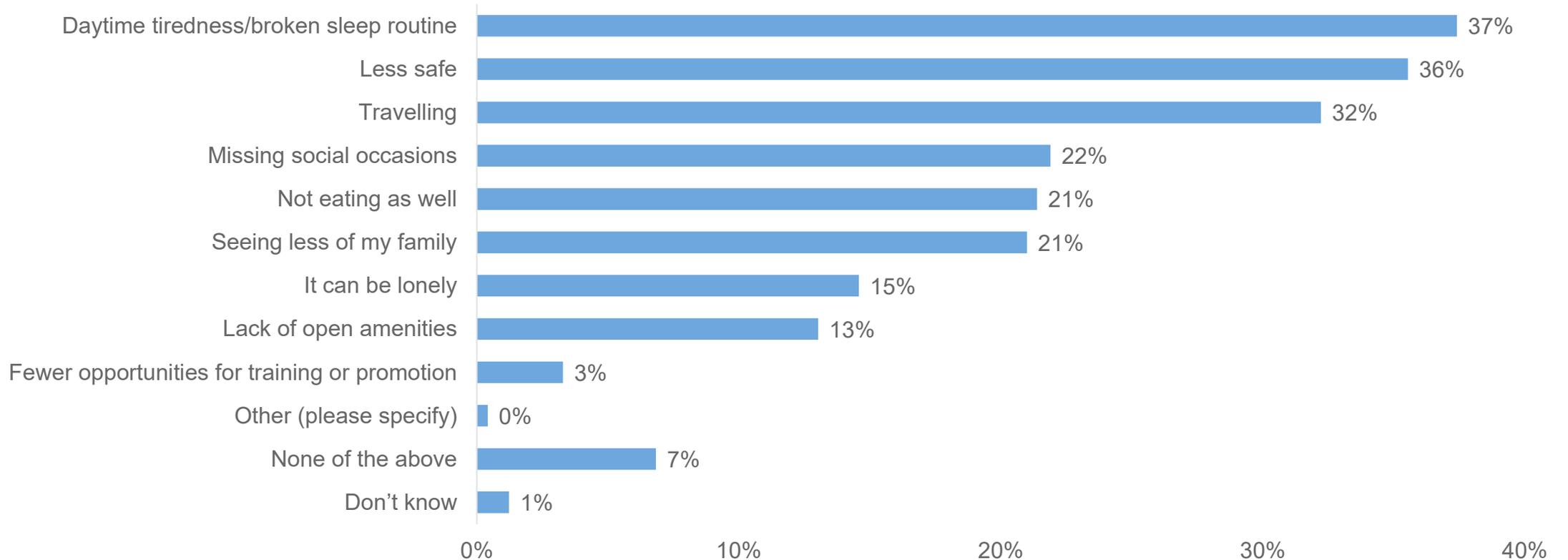
The main benefit of working at night is that it is less busy, with 39% of night time workers stating this, followed by higher pay (32%) and having more time during the day for other things (31%).

Best things about working at night



On the other hand, the worst things about working at night are the impact on sleep and tiredness, feeling unsafe in London at night, and travelling to/from work at night.

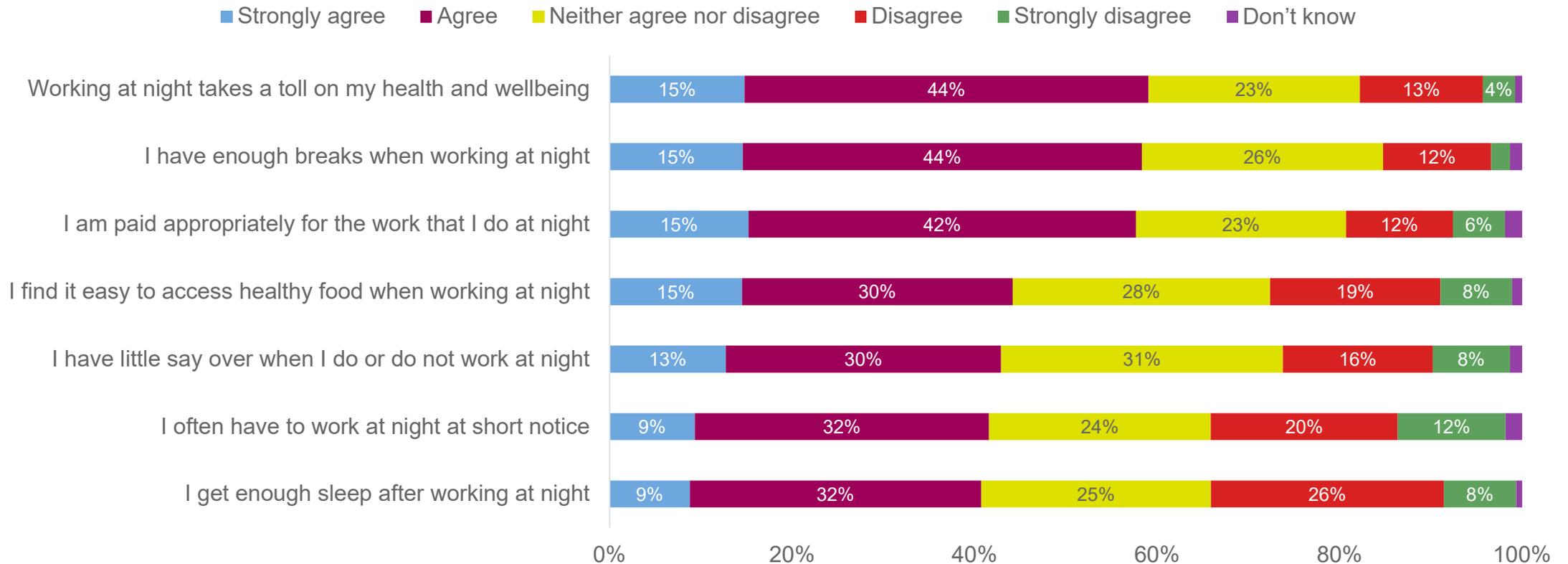
Worst things about working at night



Although most night time workers say they get enough breaks when working at night (59%) and receive appropriate pay for the work (57%), a similar proportion (59%) say that working at night has a toll on their health and wellbeing.

Over 4 in 10 night time workers have little control over when they work at night, and often work at short notice.

Experiences working at night

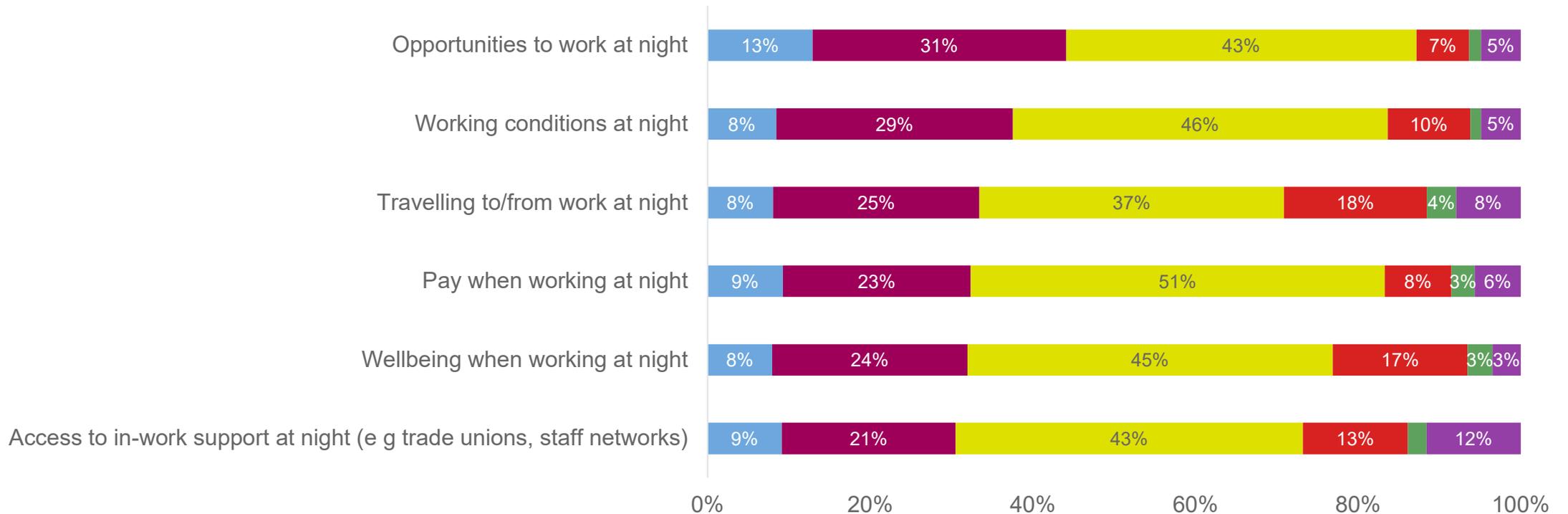


Over 4 out of 10 night time workers (44%) say the opportunities to work at night have gotten better since the start of the pandemic and 37% say working conditions at night have gotten better.

Though 22% say travelling at night and 20% say their wellbeing at work have gotten worse since the pandemic.

Changes to working at night since the pandemic

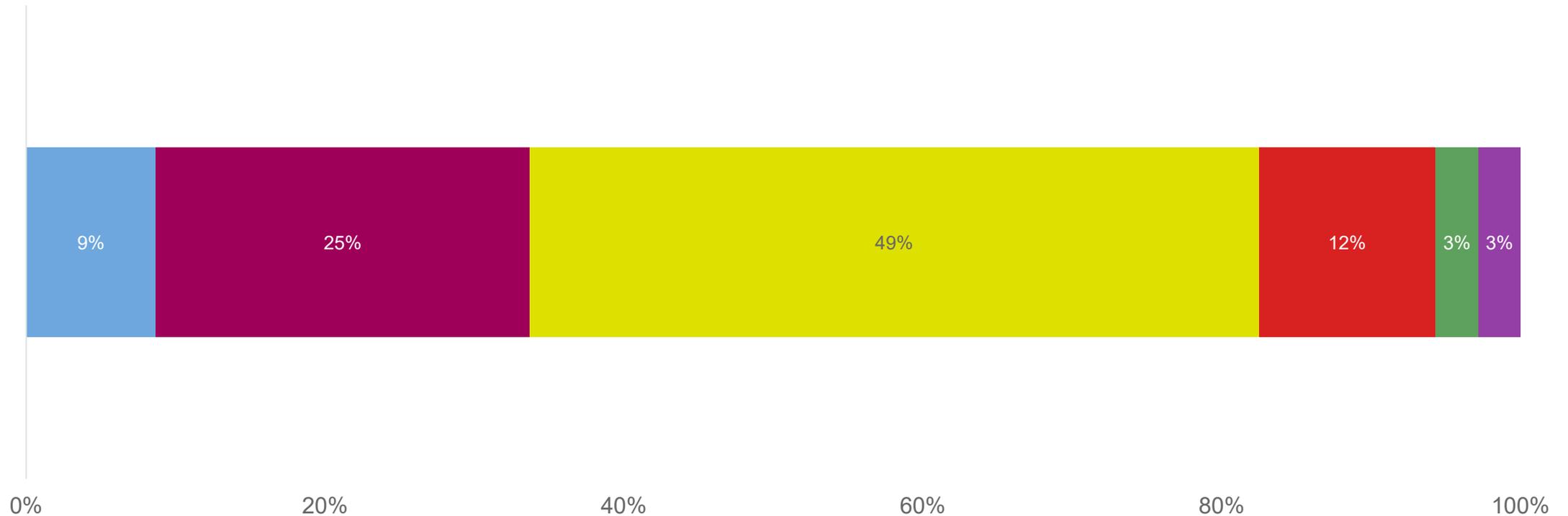
■ A lot better ■ Better ■ Neither better nor worse ■ Worse ■ A lot worse ■ Not applicable



Roughly a third (34%) of night time workers say their overall experience working at night has gotten better since the start of the pandemic, whereas 15% say it has gotten worse. Almost half have seen no change.

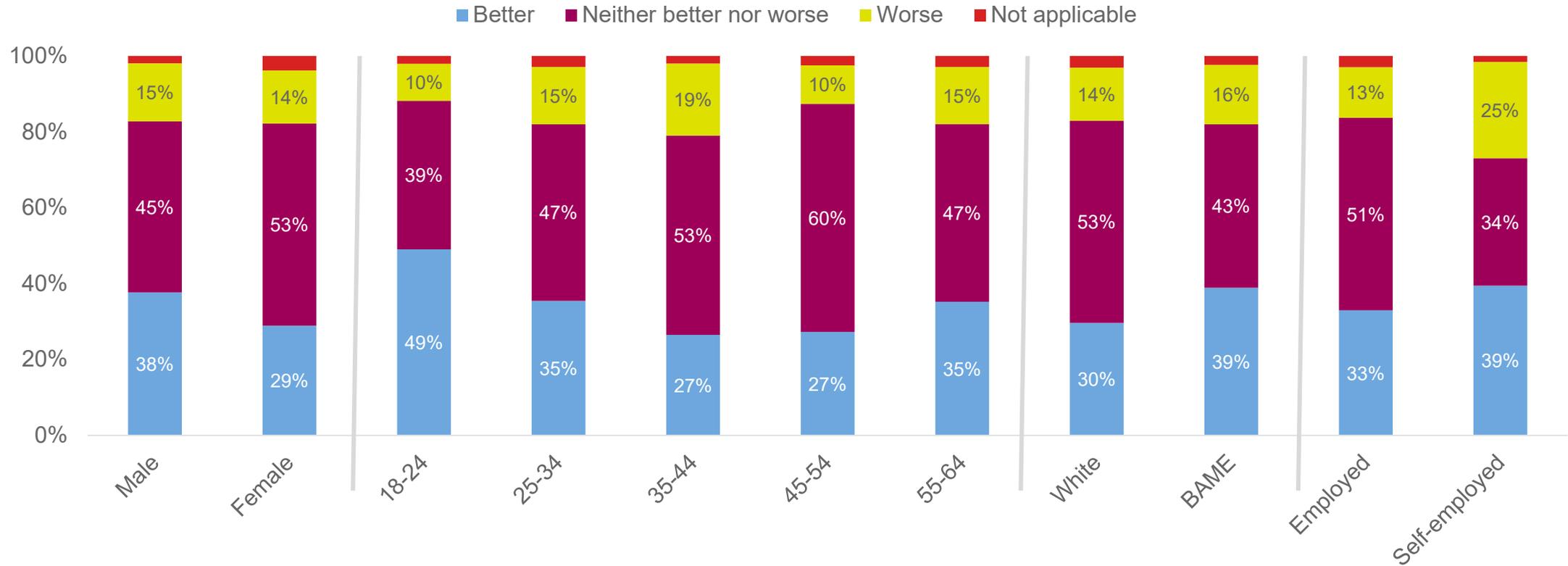
Overall experience working at night since the pandemic

■ A lot better ■ Better ■ Neither better nor worse ■ Worse ■ A lot worse ■ Not applicable



Overall experiences working at night have improved most for male, 18-24, Black, Asian and minority ethnic, and self-employed Londoners since the pandemic.

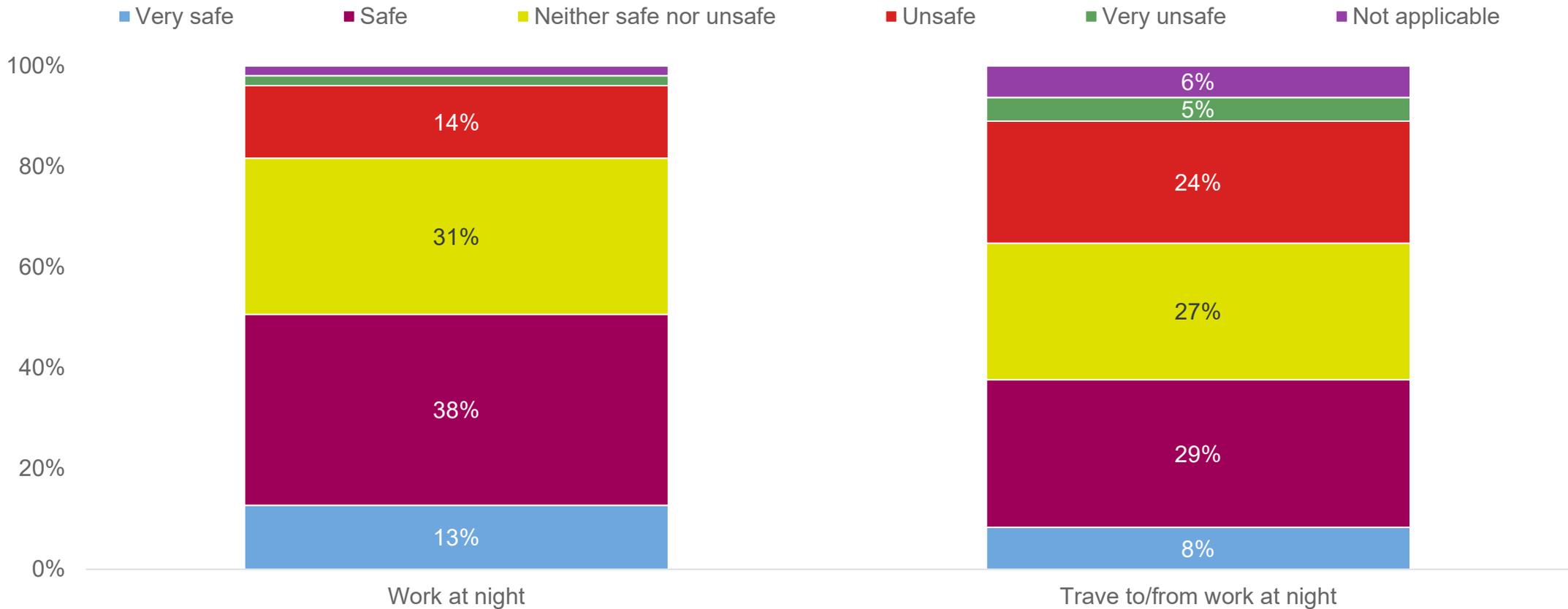
Overall experience working at night since the pandemic – by groups



Overall, night time workers feel safer working at night (51% say they feel safe doing this) than they do travelling to/from work at night (38% feel safe doing this).

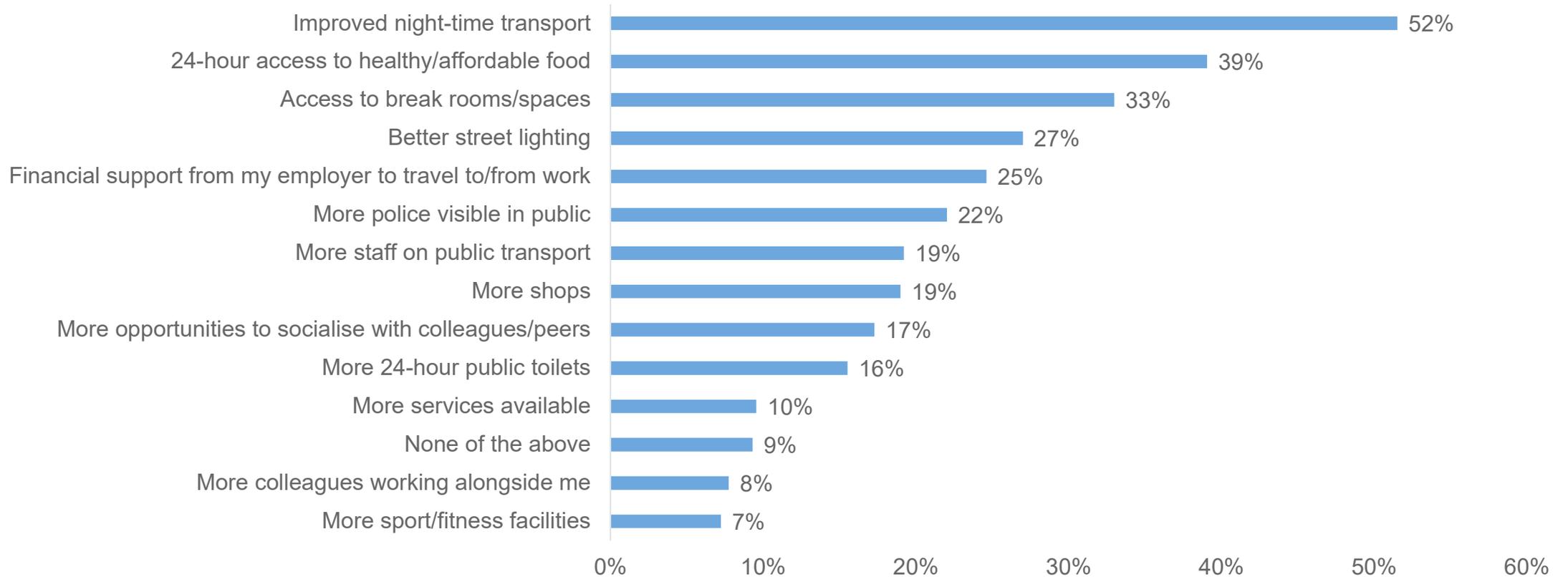
Almost a third of Londoners do not feel safe whilst travelling at night (29%).

Feeling safe at night



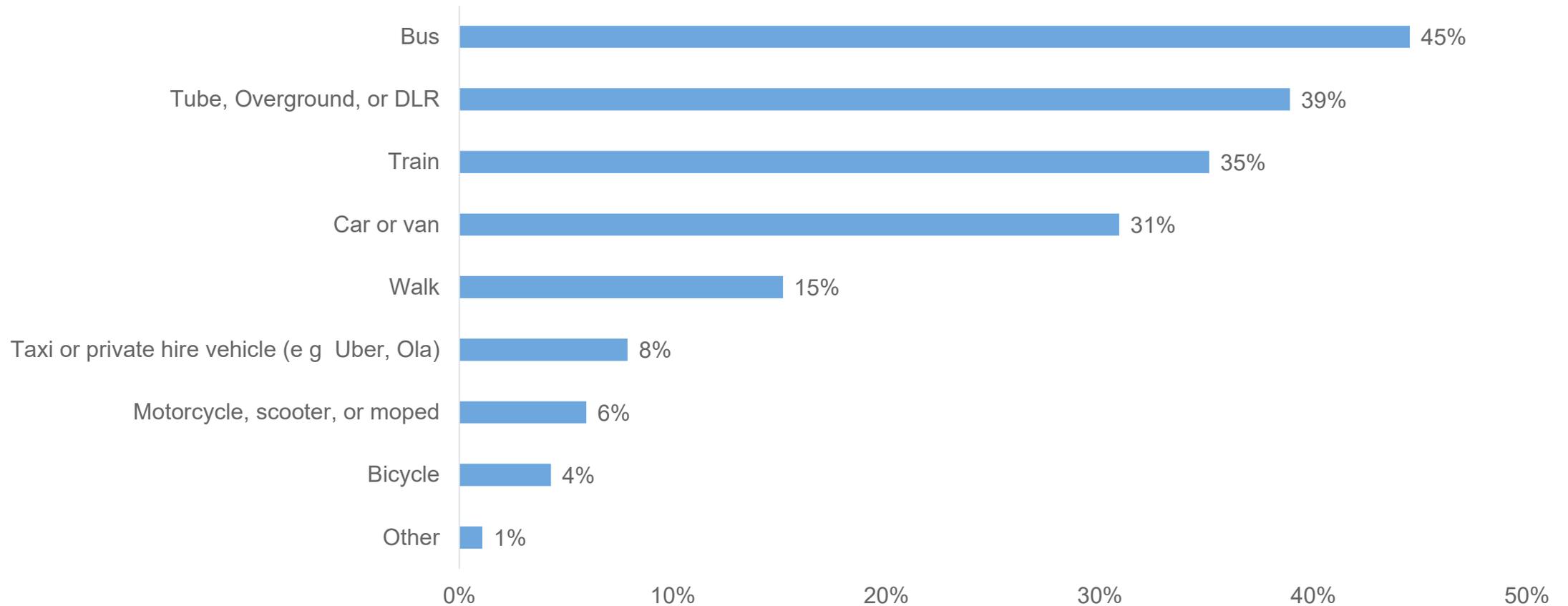
Better night-time transport would most improve Londoners' experiences of working at night, followed by 24-hour access to healthy, fresh and affordable food, and access to break rooms/sleep and cooking areas when working.

Improving experiences working at night in London



The most common mode of transport for night time workers is the bus, with almost half (45%) using this to get to or from work at night, followed by over a third who take the Tube, Overground, DLR, or train.

Mode of travel when working at night





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