



RED C Sustainability Monitor

Environmental Attitudes and Behaviours in Ireland

Published: October 2023

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Monitoring Sustainability

RED C has been tracking consumer views and behaviours pertaining to sustainability and the environment in the Republic of Ireland since July 2019



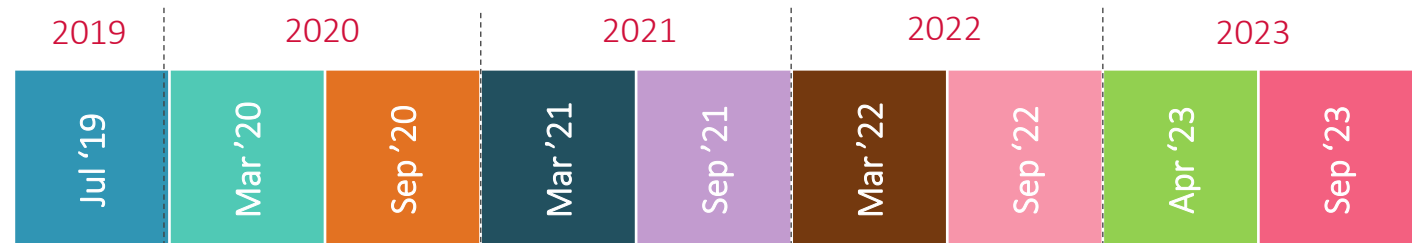
The RED C Sustainability Monitor – tracking behaviour since July 2019

This latest edition of RED C's Sustainability Monitor (previously published in October 2023) looks at consumer views on sustainability issues in Ireland.

Questions were tested on RED C's own online omnibus service, **RED Line**, in Ireland. A nationally representative sample of adults aged 18+ surveyed as follows:

/ n=1,005 in Ireland, with fieldwork in current wave conducted between 22nd and 27th September 2023

Months covered in RED C Sustainability Monitor



Opportunities for brands despite lingering consumer scepticism



RED C Consumer Sustainability Monitor – October '23



1

With the June 2023 EPA report projecting Ireland to fall well short of climate targets, it is no surprise that less than 1 in 5 in Ireland (same as in the UK) agree the country is on pace to hit its 2030 emissions reduction target, with agreement especially low in rural areas of the country. Interestingly, younger people are most in agreement on this, which seems to suggest a certain degree of reluctance to come to grips with the present situation.

3

With other concerns trumping the environment and sustainable living, it makes sense that behaviours have not changed drastically since April 2023, with the exception being reduction in flying which is more likely tied to the end of summer holiday season. Society's car overreliance and meat addiction remain unchanged, and short of a drastic disruption on par to the recent Covid pandemic, seem unlikely to change significantly anytime soon.

2

Despite the public's acknowledgement that the country is not on pace to hit its 2030 emissions target, there are indications that this is not a top concern at present and that there are bigger fish to fry in the minds of a public who is still coping with the after shocks of the Covid pandemic. Attitudes on sustainability and the environment are recovering, but still remain depressed when compared to the pre-Covid era.

4

There is some good news for brands though, with opportunities existing from the resurgence in those who seek out sustainable products and the interest in seeing influencers promoting more such products. Brands do need to be mindful though of some consumers reporting buying fewer products due to sustainability concerns, and also of the majority who are willing to change brands if they were concerned about greenwashing.



With low level of belief that Ireland will meet its 2030 emissions target and personal finances still a concern, cynicism persists on some aspects of sustainability

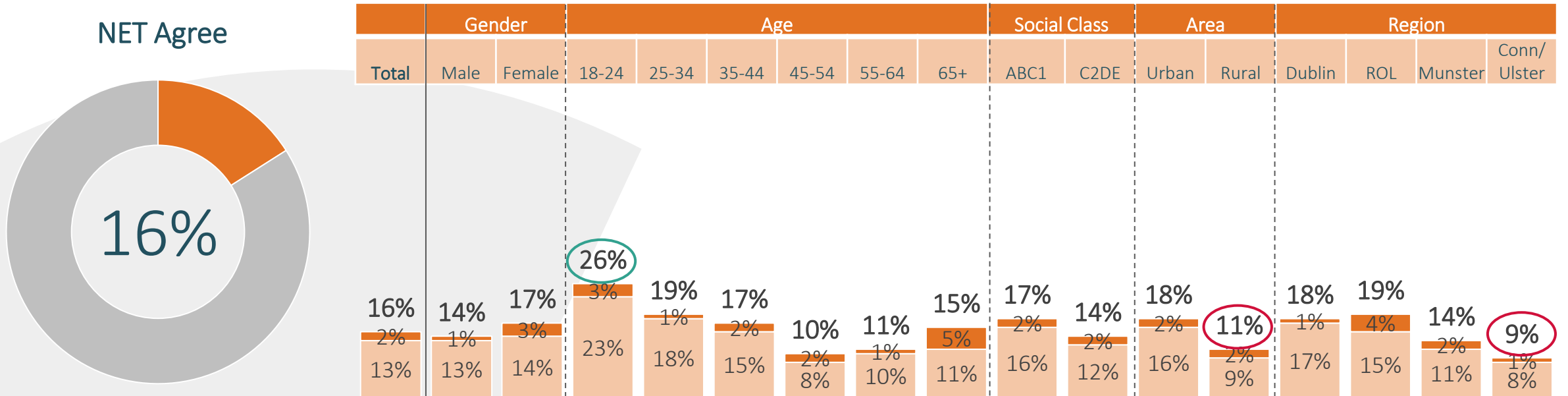
Very low level belief that Ireland will hit 2030 emissions target



Nationwide, less than 1 in 5 agree the country is on pace to hit its targets, and despite younger people holding higher level of agreement, this level of agreement is still low, with rural areas and Conn/Ulster even lower.

Ireland is currently on pace to reach its 2030 emissions reduction target

NET Agree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

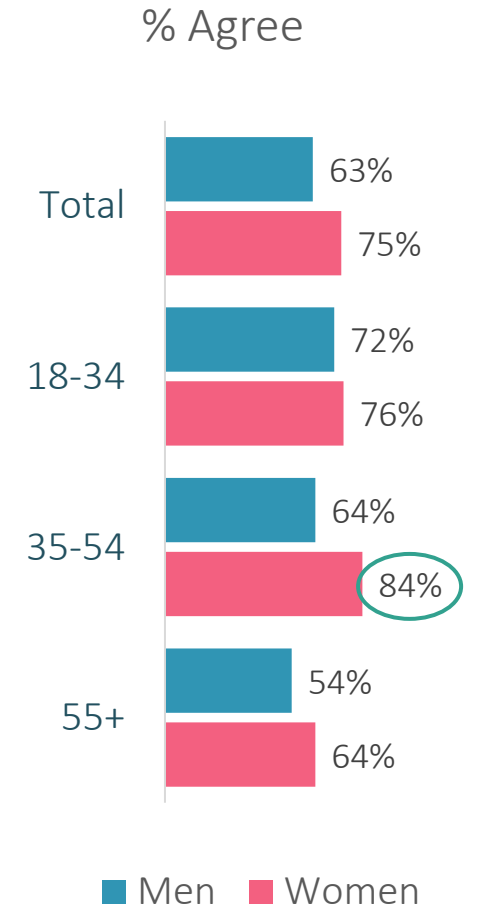
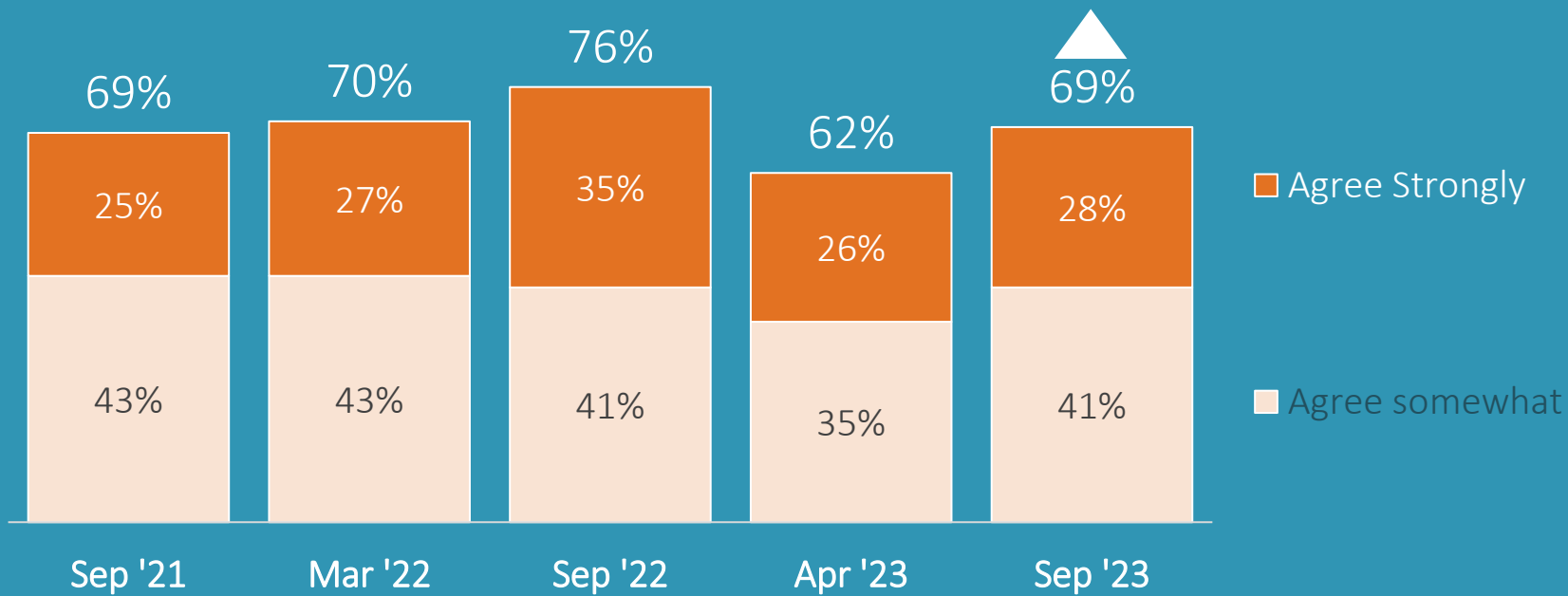
(Base: all adults aged 18+)



Most still feel they lack the means to live more sustainably despite wanting to

This view is especially prominent amongst women aged 18-54, and especially so amongst women aged 35-54.

I would like to live more sustainably, but I cannot financially afford to make the changes needed to do so



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

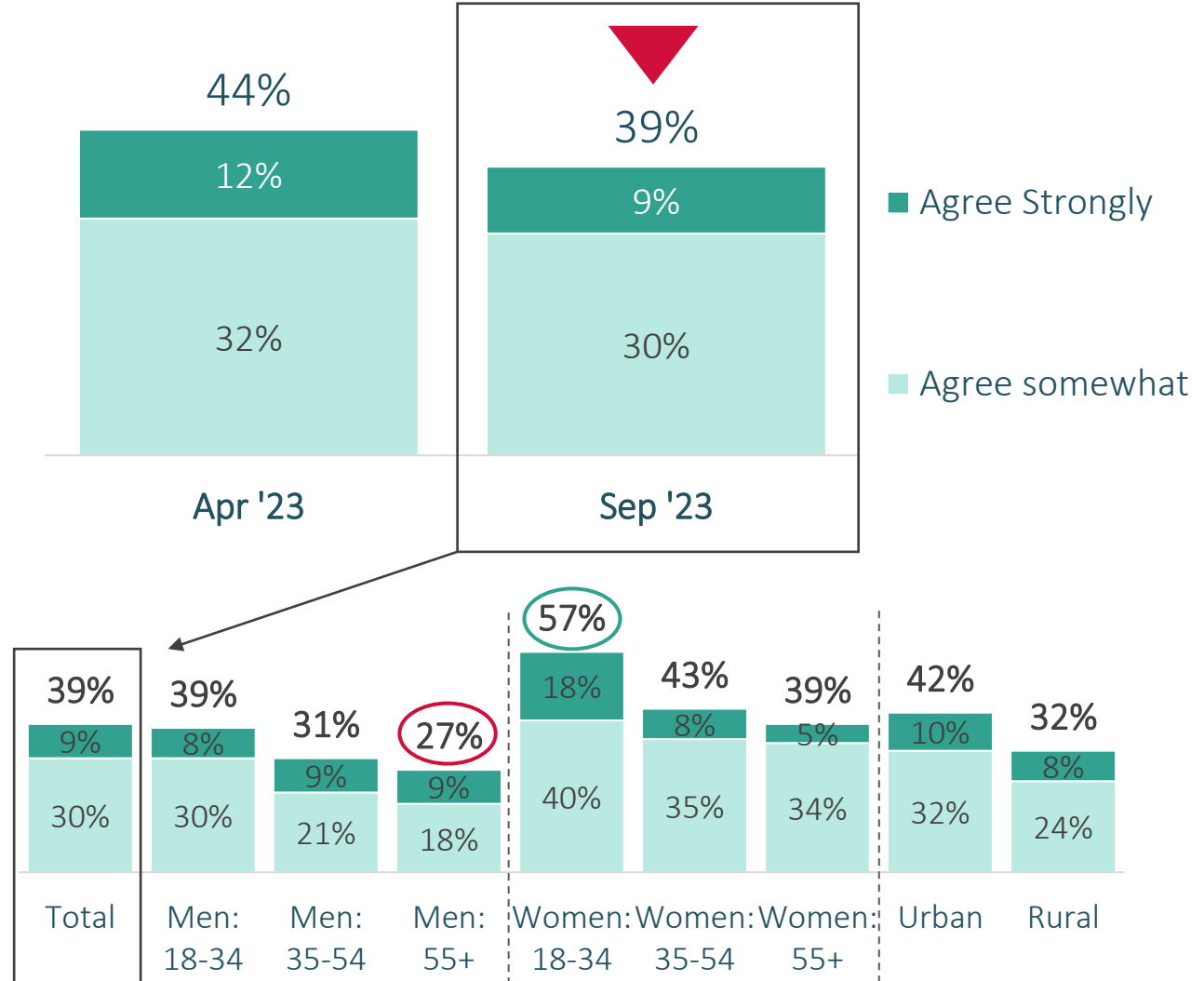
(Base: all adults aged 18+)

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Apr '23

There are still some who try not to think about the climate crisis, with this especially prevalent amongst younger women



I try not to think about the climate crisis because of how depressing it is



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Apr '23

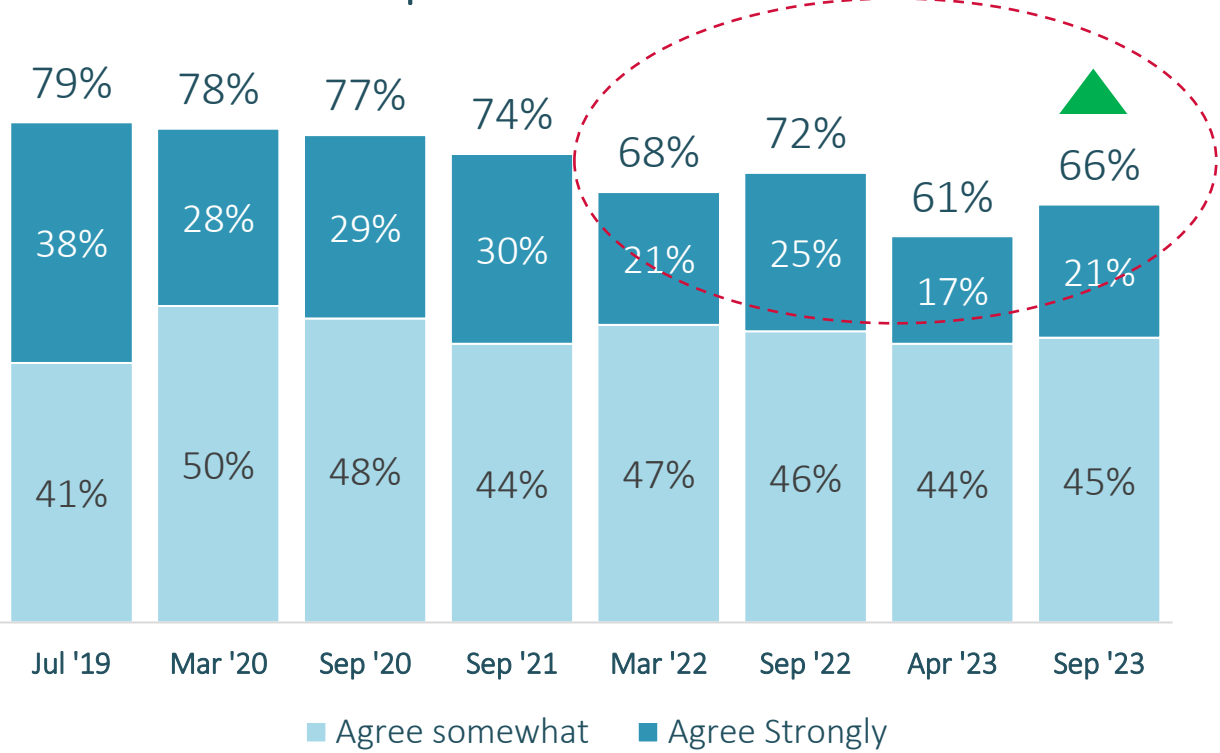
Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Belief remains lower post-Covid era that one's actions can help the environment

This is despite a rebound in this belief from an all time low in Apr '23, with only 1 in 5 strongly believing this.

I believe my personal actions can improve the environment



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Apr '23
 Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

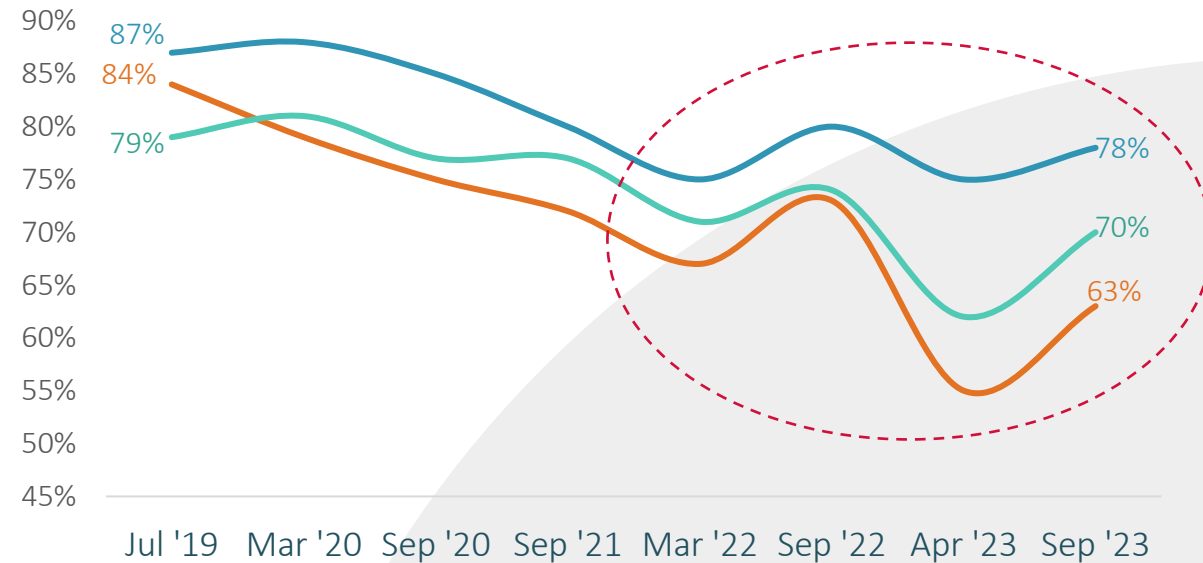
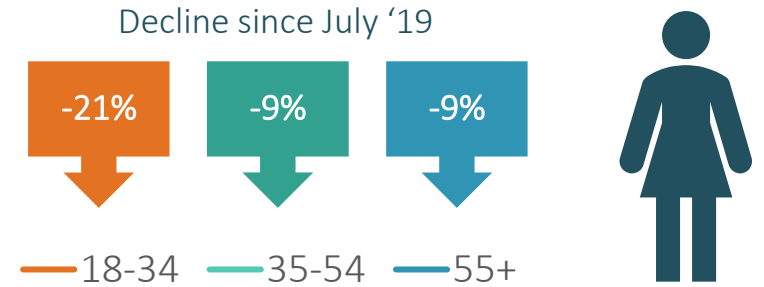
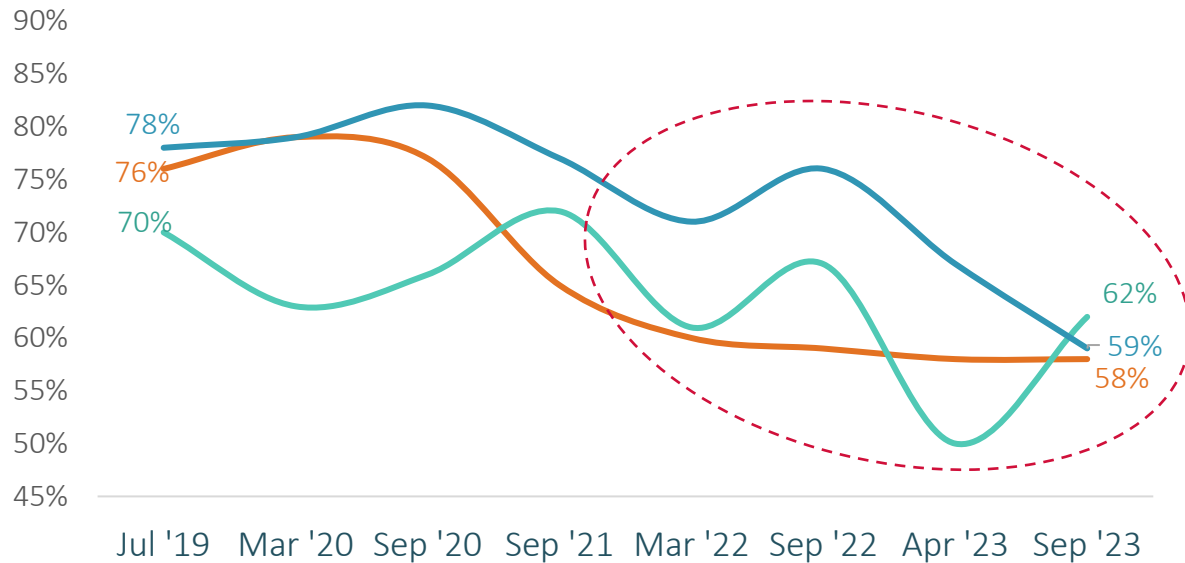
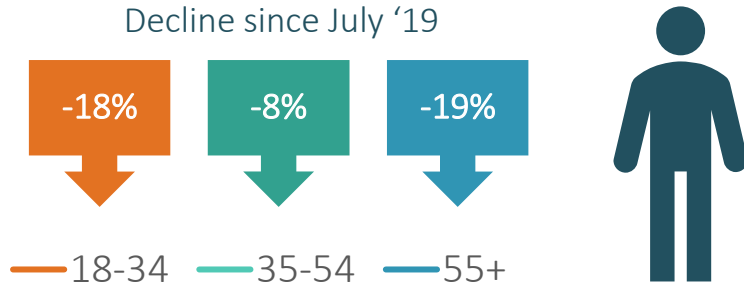


Belief is especially low amongst men, but is also down for women



Women – and especially older women – are by far more likely to believe that their personal actions can improve the environment, with this view in both men and women remaining lower in post Covid era.

Belief that one's personal actions can improve the environment

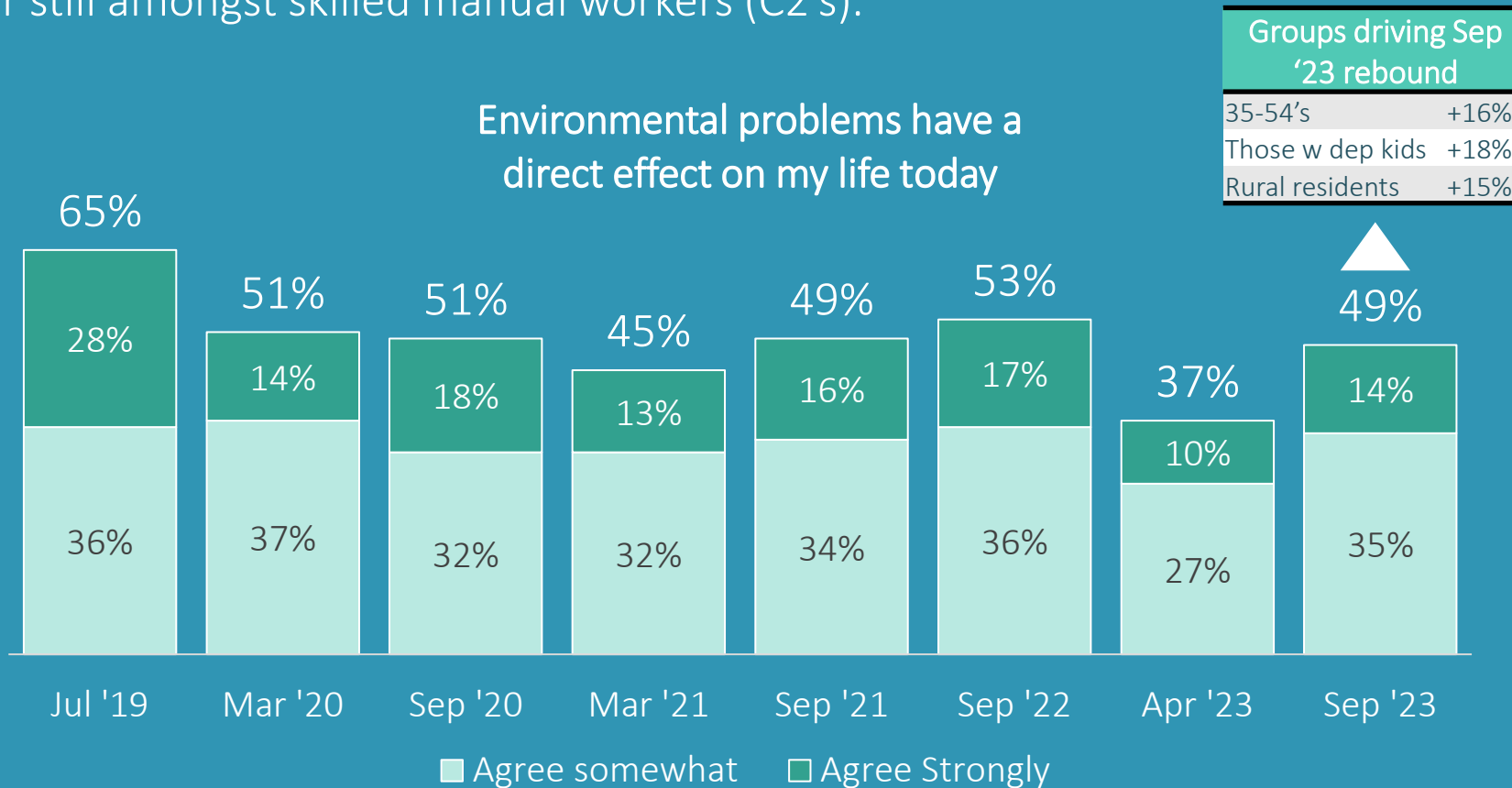




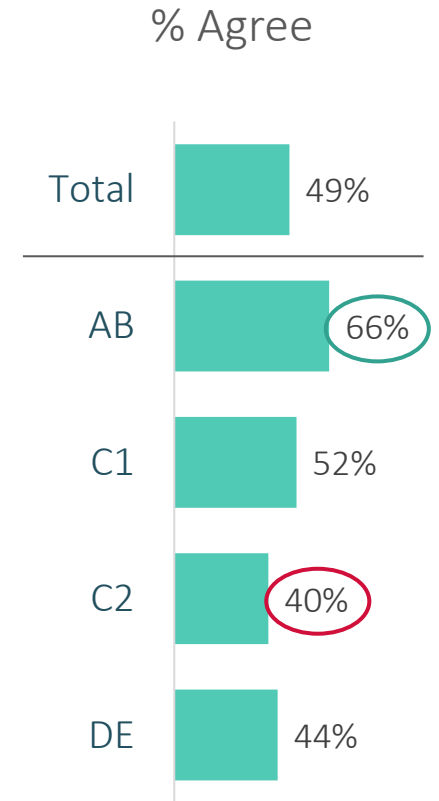
Despite some rebound in belief that environment affects one's life, this still remains relatively low

After falling off in April, there is a rebound in the perception that environmental problems have a direct effect on one's life, but this is still low versus pre-Covid and is lower still amongst skilled manual workers (C2's).

Environmental problems have a direct effect on my life today



Groups driving Sep '23 rebound	
35-54's	+16%
Those w dep kids	+18%
Rural residents	+15%



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Apr '23

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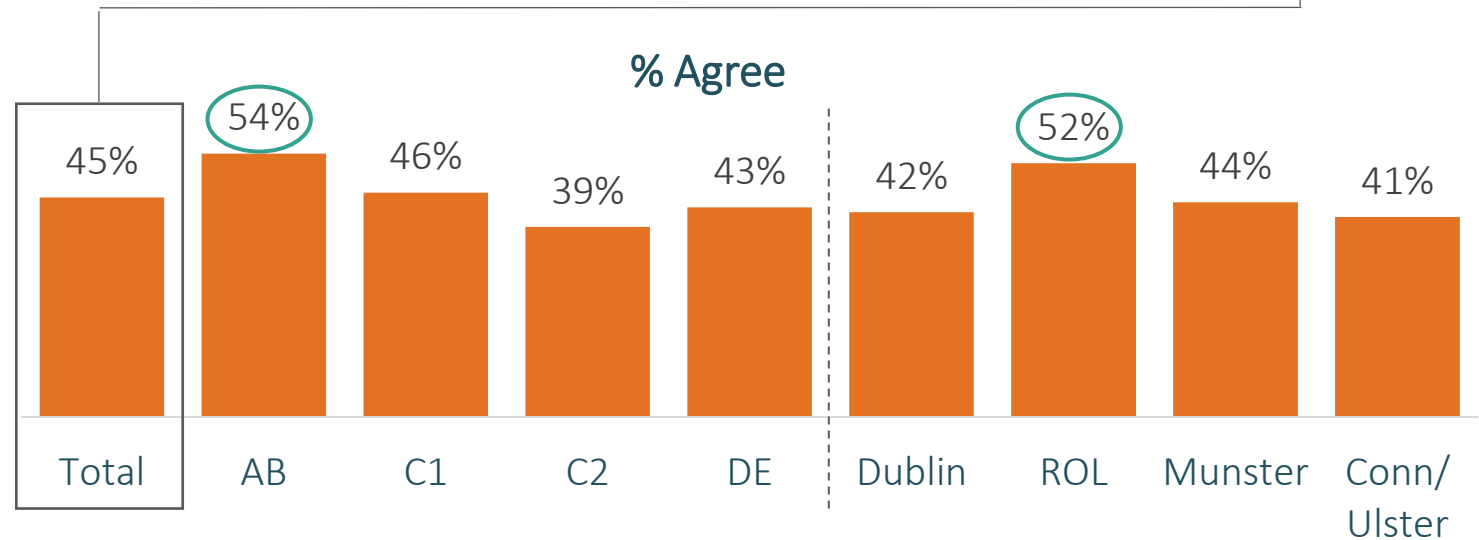
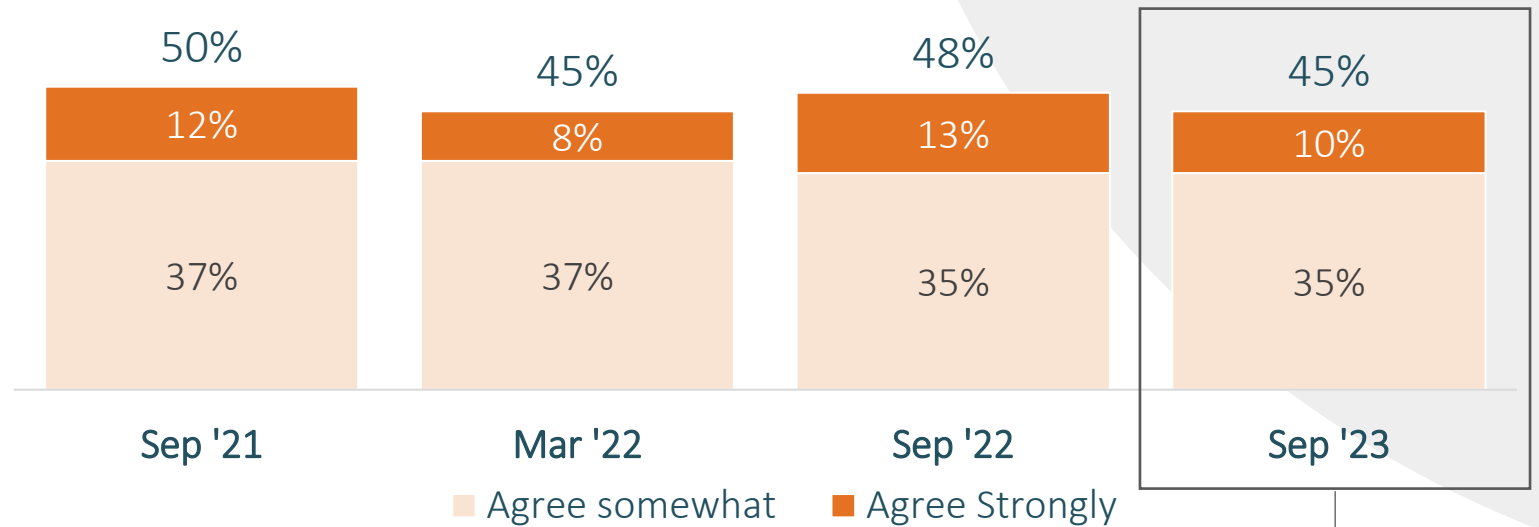
(Base: all adults aged 18+)



And only half say the reporting of extreme weather has prompted behavioural changes

This actually remains lower versus Sep '21 and also versus Sep '22 is especially prevalent amongst AB social grades and those living in Leinster region outside of Dublin.

The reporting of extreme global weather events has prompted me to change my behaviour in the past 6 months and live more sustainably



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

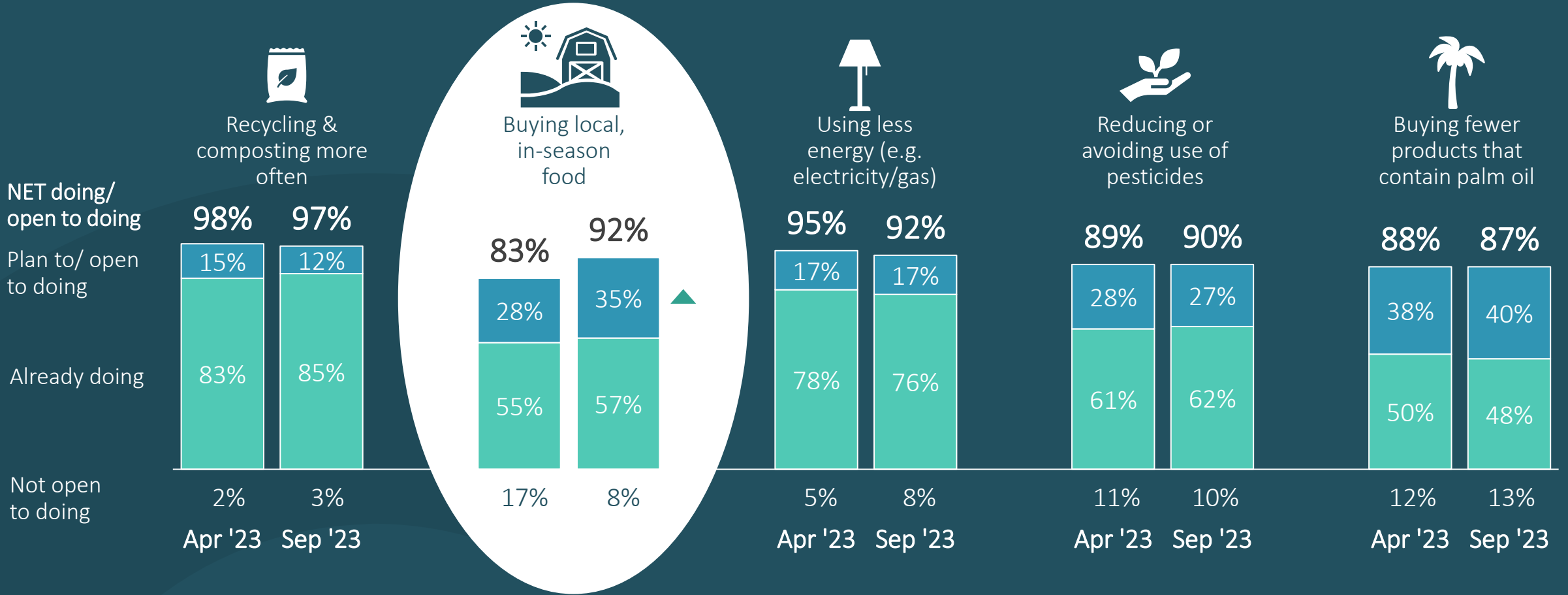
▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Apr '23
 Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?
 (Base: all adults aged 18+)

Reduction of meat consumption
and car usage remain elusive,
with flying reduction on back of
end of summer holidays cause
for tempered optimism

Significant rise vs April in potential for buying local / in-season food

Other reported behaviour holds relatively steady versus Apr '23, with vast majority either already or open to recycling/composting, using less energy, avoiding pesticides and buying fewer products with palm oil.

Actions willing to do to lower environmental impact – Summary I



Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all.
(Base: all adults aged 18+)

And with summer now past, an increase is noted in those flying less

For the most part, we see relative stability vs April in terms of the actions people are willing to take to help combat climate change.

Actions willing to do to lower environmental impact – Summary II



Mowing grass less often and planting pollinator friendly plants & trees



Buying more second-hand products (e.g. clothing, furniture, electronics)



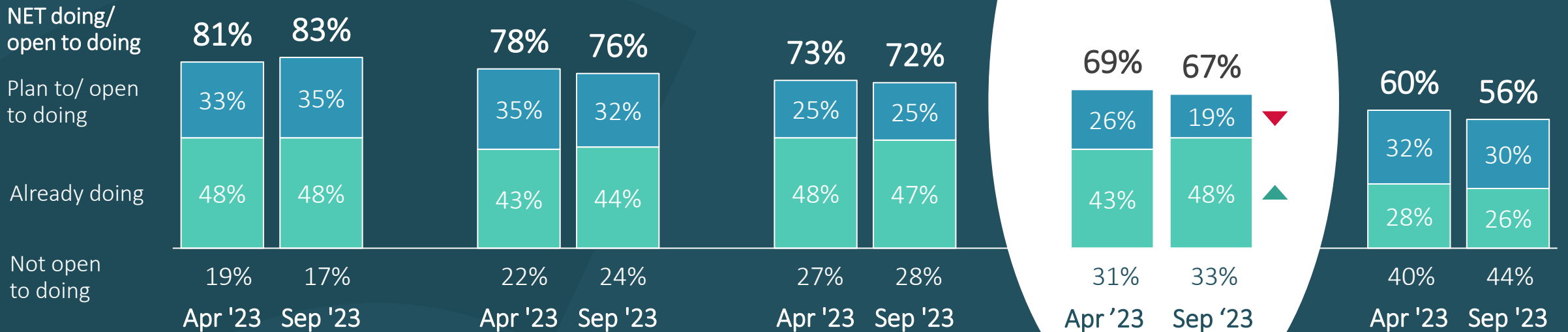
Driving less often and using more public transport or walking or cycling instead



Flying less often



Regularly eating plant-based foods and limiting consumption of animal products



Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

18-34's & Dublin residents have lower claimed levels of eco actions

This contrasts with those aged 55+ ages and those outside of Dublin in Rest of Leinster and Munster who are more likely to be report engaging in various behaviours to help tackle the climate crisis.

Lower vs Total Higher vs Total

Actions currently doing (Excluding N/A)

- Recycling and composting more often  85%
- Using less energy (e.g., electricity/gas)  76%
- Reducing or avoiding use of pesticides (chemicals used for killing pests such as insects, rodents, fungi and weeds)  62%
- Buying local, in-season food (e.g., fruit and vegetables that are in-season and grown locally)  57%
- Flying less often  48% ▲
- Buying fewer products that contain palm oil  48%
- Mowing grass less often and planting pollinator friendly plants and trees  48%
- Driving less often and using more public transport or walking or cycling instead  47%
- Buying more second-hand products (e.g., clothing, furniture, electronics)  44%
- Regularly eating plant-based foods and limiting consumption of animal products (e.g. meaty/fish/eggs/dairy)  26%

Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region			
Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Dublin	ROL	Munster	Conn/ Ulster
		Red		Green				Green ▲		
		Red		Green			Red ▼		Green	
		Red					Red ▼	Green		
		Red		Green			Red			
		Red	Green ▲		Green ▲				Green ▲	
								Green		
		Red	Green				Red	Green ▲		
	Red ▼									Red
Red	Green	Green					Red		Green ▲	
Red	Green									

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Apr '23











Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

However, 18-34's & Dublin more likely to plan to / be open to doing

Despite having lower than average levels of reported environmentally friendly behaviours, 18-34-year-olds and Dublin residents have higher than average intent or openness to some of these same behaviours.

Plan to/open to doing (Excluding N/A)

Lower vs Total Higher vs Total

- Buying fewer products that contain palm oil  40%
- Buying local, in-season food (e.g., fruit and vegetables that are in-season and grown locally)  35%
- Mowing grass less often and planting pollinator friendly plants and trees  35%
- Buying more second-hand products (e.g., clothing, furniture, electronics)  32%
- Regularly eating plant-based foods and limiting consumption of animal products (e.g. meaty/fish/eggs/dairy)  30%
- Reducing or avoiding use of pesticides (chemicals used for killing pests such as insects, rodents, fungi and weeds)  27%
- Driving less often and using more public transport or walking or cycling instead  25%
- Flying less often  19% ▼
- Using less energy (e.g., electricity/gas)  17%
- Recycling and composting more often  12%

Gender		Age			Social Grade		Region			
Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Dublin	ROL	Munster	Conn/ Ulster
		Higher vs Total		Lower vs Total						
	Higher vs Total	Higher vs Total		Lower vs Total			Higher vs Total			
		Lower vs Total					Higher vs Total		Lower vs Total	
		Higher vs Total					Higher vs Total	Lower vs Total	Lower vs Total	
Lower vs Total	Lower vs Total		Lower vs Total			Lower vs Total		Lower vs Total	Lower vs Total	
		Higher vs Total		Lower vs Total			Higher vs Total	Lower vs Total	Lower vs Total	
		Higher vs Total		Lower vs Total				Lower vs Total		

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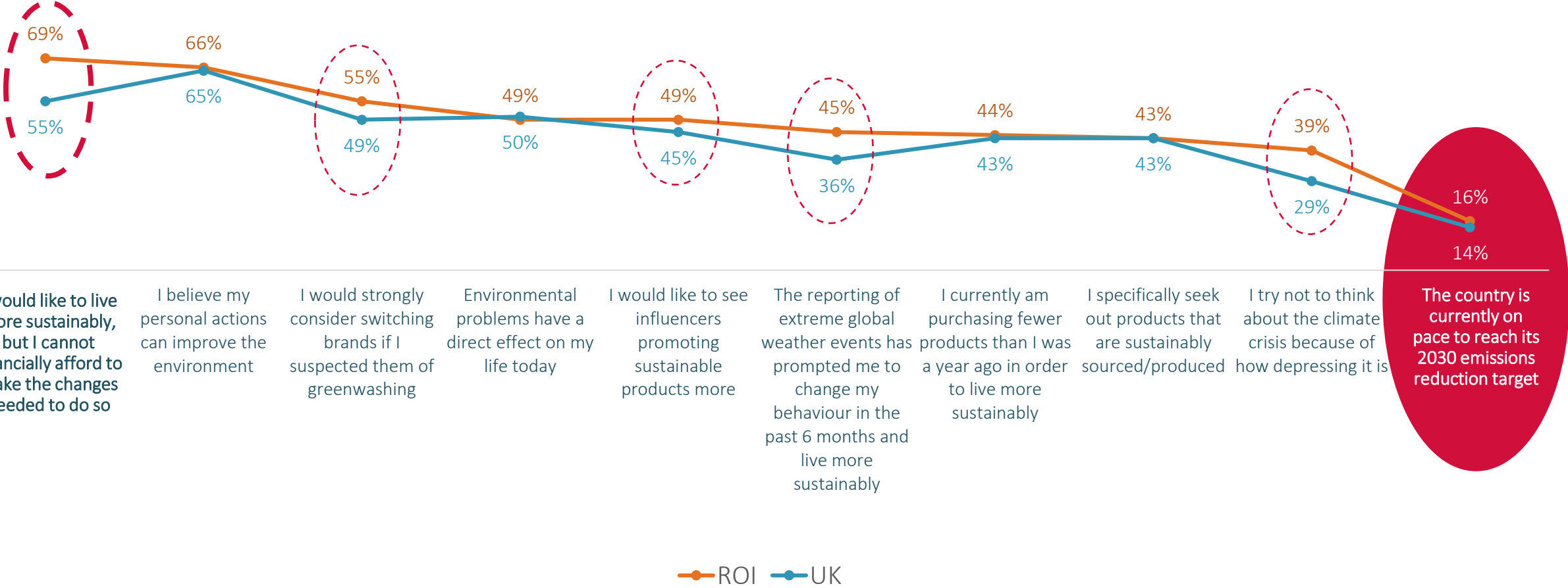
There is clear consensus in Ireland and the UK that respective countries are unfortunately not on pace to meet 2030 emissions targets

Low level of agreement that UK / ROI on pace to meet targets



Those in ROI are more likely to say they can't afford to live sustainably; and they'd consider switching brands due to greenwashing among other issues, with less difference seen on other areas.

% Agree



(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

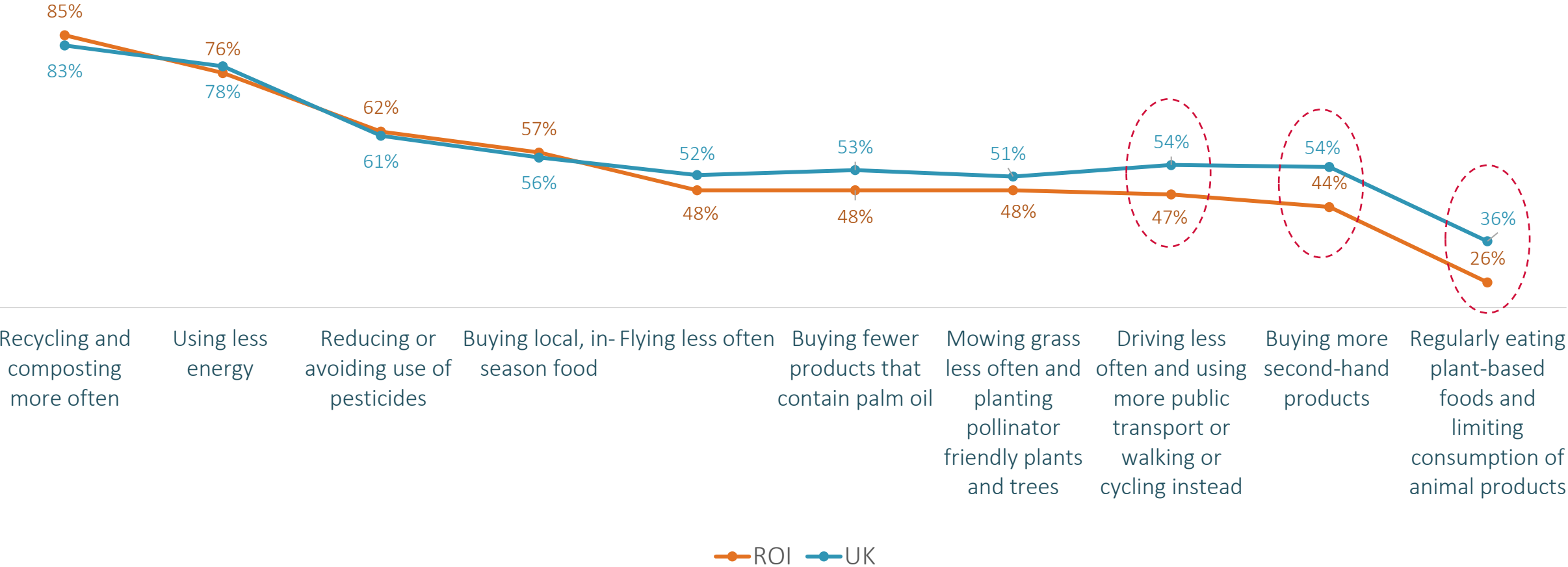
(Base: all adults aged 18+)

UK residents more likely to be engaging in various eco behaviours



ROI and UK residents are roughly on par for most behaviours, but the gap widens with UK residents more likely to be driving less often; to be buying more second-hand products; and to regularly eat plant-based foods.

% currently doing this (excluding not applicable)



Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

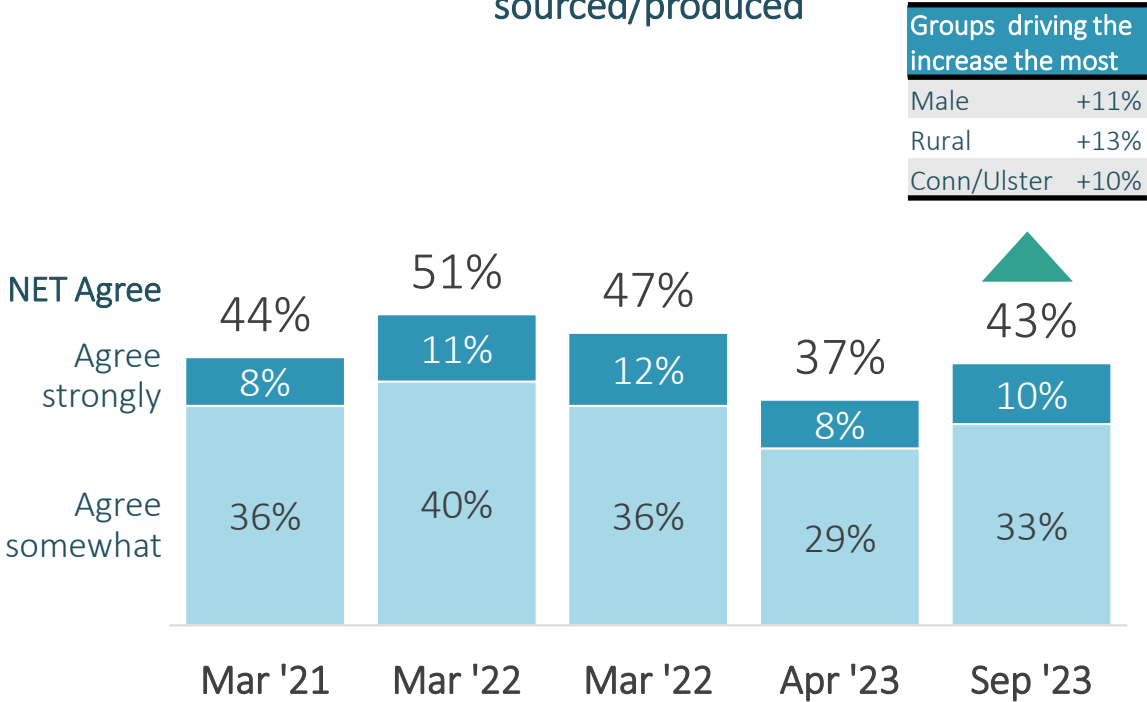


Opportunity for brands and businesses as appetite picks up again in buying sustainable products, and with strong interest in seeing influencers promoting more sustainable brands

Rebound in those who seek out sustainable products

After falling off for two waves, we now see an increase in those who say they seek out sustainable products

I specifically seek out products that are sustainably sourced/produced



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Apr '23
 Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)



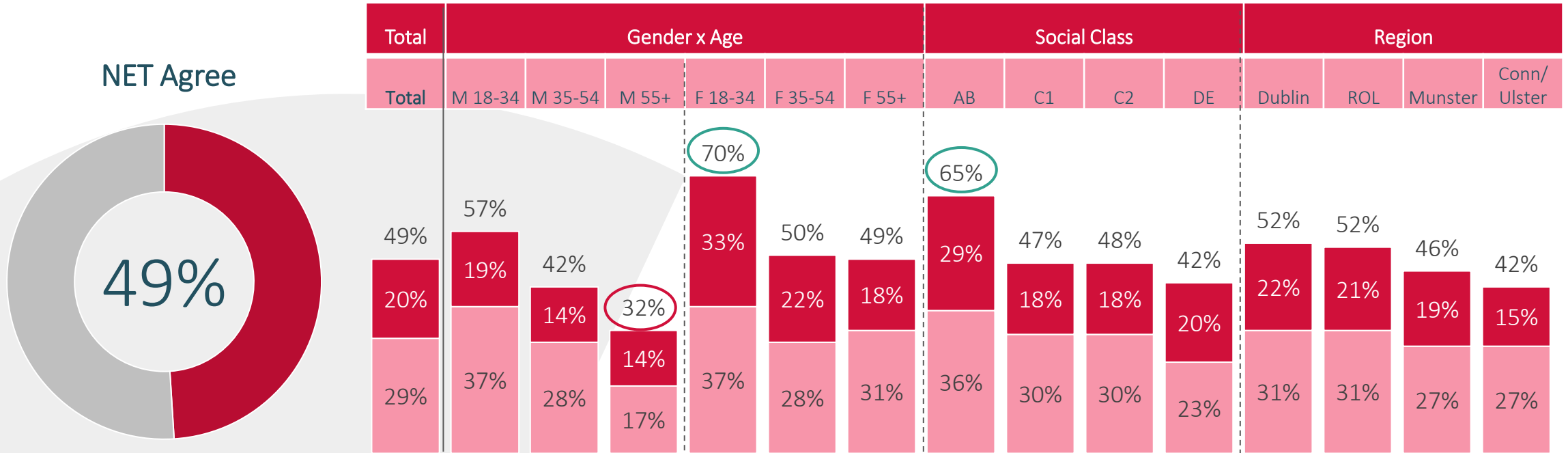
Notable appetite for influencers to promote sustainable products



Half of adults would like to see influencers promoting more sustainable products, with this especially prevalent amongst 18-34-year-old women and also AB social grades.

I would like to see influencers promoting sustainable products more

NET Agree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Corresponding risk for business as customers are shopping less due to sustainability concerns, and are willing to leave brands responsible of greenwashing

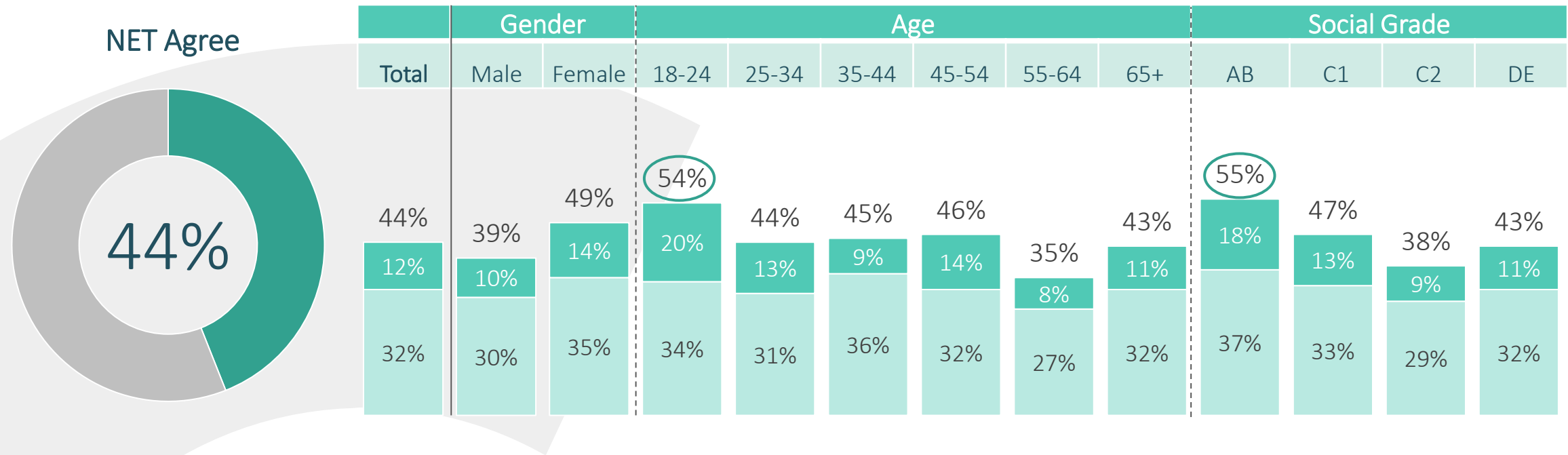
Some claim to be buying fewer products so as to live sustainably



This claim is especially prominent amongst 18-24-year-olds, as well as higher AB social grades who are also especially likely to agree that environmental problems have a direct effect on their life today.

I currently am purchasing fewer products than I was a year ago in order to live more sustainably

NET Agree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

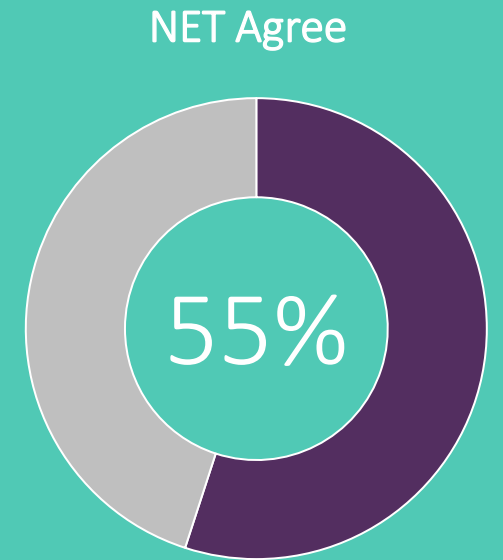
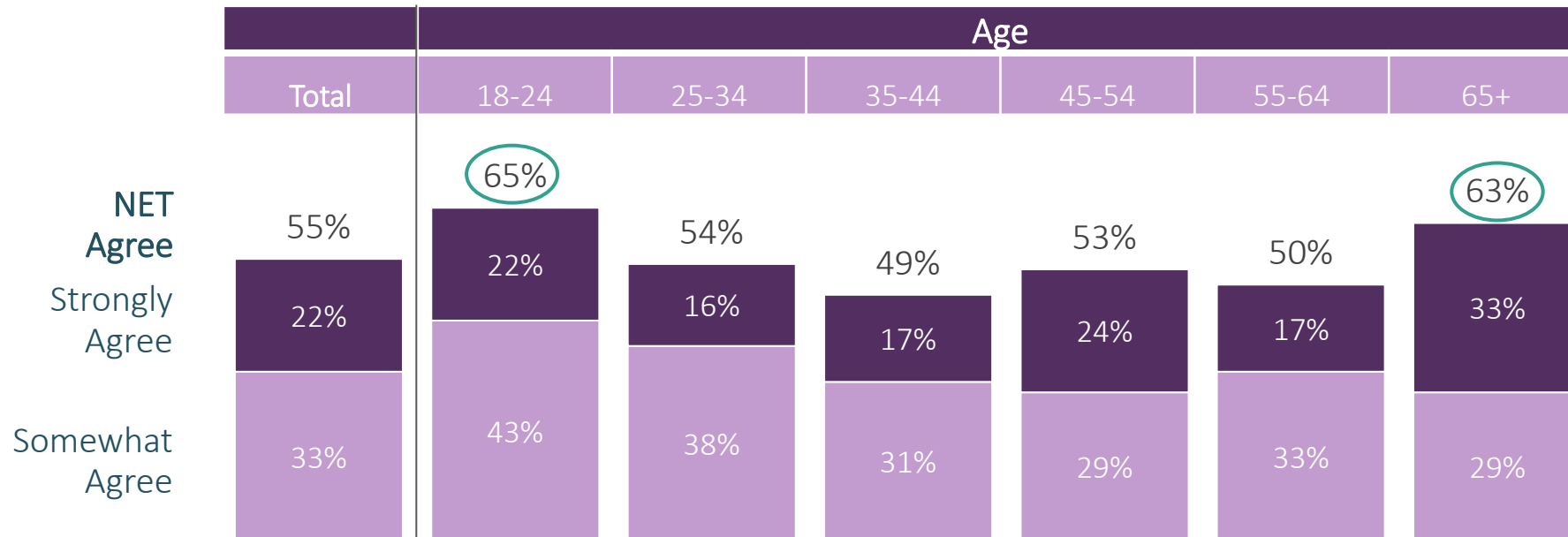
(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Important to be mindful of notable propensity to switch brands suspected of greenwashing

The likelihood of this is especially high amongst those aged 65+, with 1 in 3 agreeing strongly with this. 18-24's also displaying high level of agreement.

I would strongly consider switching brands if I suspected them of greenwashing



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

RESEARCH
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CLARITY

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