



FUTURE
LEADERS
NETWORK

2021 U.K. YOUTH PERSPECTIVES



What people think,
feel and do

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the quantitative and qualitative findings from public consultations on young people's priorities leading up to the G7, commissioned by The Future Leaders Network and led by Y7 and Y20 UK Delegates. We are grateful to Opinium for helping to lead this project and to the Cabinet Office for funding this research.

As the world recovers from the coronavirus pandemic, it is important that young people's views are embedded into global decision-making, to create a future that is representative, diverse and inclusive and which takes into account the needs of future generations. This report highlights the key concerns of young people in the UK and what actions they want to see world leaders take to build a better and brighter future for future generations.

The G7 (Group of 7) and the G20 (Group of 20), are annual gatherings of Heads of Government from many of the world's most advanced and largest economies. At their annual meetings, world leaders discuss the most pressing shared issues they are facing, and agree solutions they will collectively take to address them.

Each year, the meeting is hosted by a different member state, who is said to hold the "Presidency". In 2021, the United Kingdom holds the G7 Presidency, and the G7 Summit will be hosted in Carbis Bay, Cornwall from 11 - 13 June 2021.

In 2021, the U.K. is supporting six official engagement groups. One of these is the Y7, whose purpose is to ensure that the decisions and agreements made by G7 Ministers and leaders reflect the needs and priorities of young people (aged 18-30) across G7 states. In line with the U.K.'s G7 Presidency, the Future Leaders Network (as the official organising committee for the U.K.'s representatives at the youth summits) is hosting the Y7 2021.

This report was commissioned by the Youth 7 (Y7) and Youth 20 (Y20) UK delegations, and it aims to explore the views of young people in the UK, following the consultations held by the Y7 and Y20 in March and April 2021. The findings from this report will inform the UK delegates positions in multilateral negotiations with delegates from all the other G7 and G20 nations, and thus shape the policy recommendations that will be put forward to the Leaders' Summit.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young people feel underrepresented and unheard on the global stage, and yet they have distinct and important views on many of the most important issues facing the world today. Particularly in a democratic and inclusive society, it is important that the views of all people are represented at every level of global decision making, as a matter of both equality and inclusion and to build public support for the UK's open and democratic values.

This paper outlines some of the key priorities for young people as the UK sets out its priorities for the upcoming G7 and G20 summits.



On the economy and work, young people's most significant concern is over the affordability of housing and their ability to get on the property ladder. In line with this, young people are also particularly concerned about debt, future income and job security, which is likely to be compounded by the long-term impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. As the world recovers from the pandemic, young people in the UK want to ensure youth employment and flexibility around work are at the forefront of the recovery.



As technology advances and continues to intersect with all aspects of our lives, young people show high levels of concern about online safety and data privacy, particularly women and other marginalised communities. In making the most of the digital age, there is a clear desire for better regulation and support to protect young people in online spaces. There is also a need for further digital training and education for young people, with only one in five young people feeling fully equipped with the necessary digital skills to be successful in their daily life. Furthermore, only one in three young people don't face any impediments to accessing digital services, with a quarter of young people in the UK struggling with unstable internet access. Where the digital world provides opportunities for young people, including in democratic engagement, work clearly needs to be done to ensure these spaces are safe, inclusive and accessible to all young people, to avoid exasperating existing inequalities.



Mental health is the defining health priority for young people, who urgently want to see action, particularly by the government, to tackle the mental health crisis. While many young people do feel informed about mental health, a substantial number (1 in 4) don't feel informed, suggesting that significant knowledge gaps still need to be filled. This is also the case for antimicrobial resistance, with half of young people feeling uninformed about this issue. The rising use of technology in healthcare brings many benefits, however only a minority of young people think that enough is being done by government to ensure that AI technology in healthcare is safe and reliable. This is likely a factor in why the majority of young people would prefer a consultation with a human doctor than AI powered technology in the future.

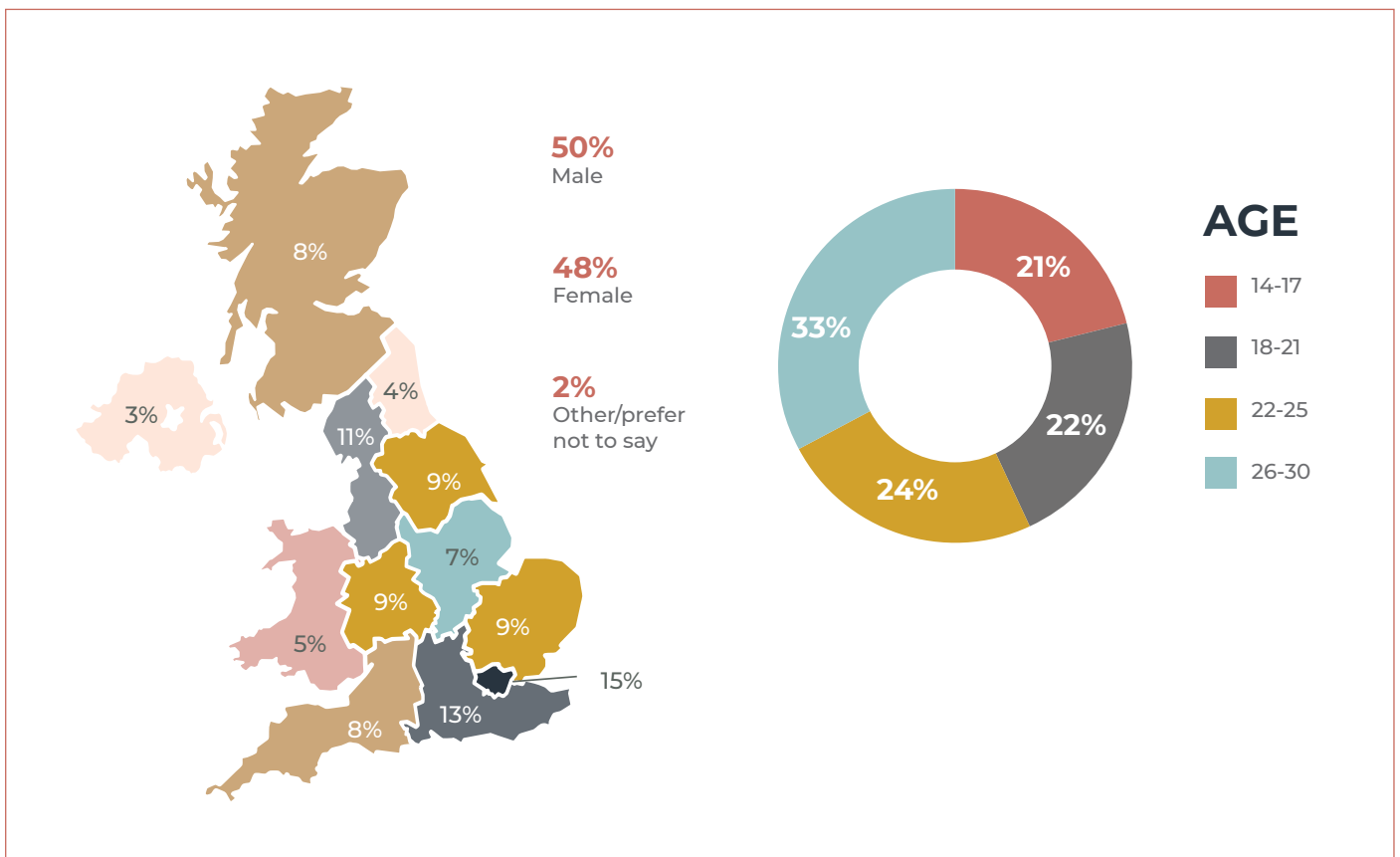


Finally, on climate change and the environment, despite the prominence of youth campaigns against climate change, a quarter of young people do not feel informed about climate change. However, young people do display a high level of concern around climate issues, with plastic pollution and deforestation seen as the biggest environmental issues to address. While young people think individual behavioural change is the most effective way to make a positive impact on the environment, cost and inaccessibility of sustainable products and investments were identified as key barriers to young people living a sustainable life.

METHODOLOGY

Opinium conducted an online nationally representative survey of 2,000 young people aged 14-30 across the UK in March 2021. The Future Leaders Network also conducted focus groups among young people aged 16-30 in March and April 2021. This report is the culmination of both consultation activities.

ONS statistics were used to create the survey sample frame, and the data has been weighted at the end to ensure that the survey is representative of 14-30-year-olds across the UK. Below is a breakdown of the demographics of the survey:



NOTES FOR CONSIDERATION

Any references to social grade in this survey relate to the participants social grade when they were 14 years old.

REPRESENTATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

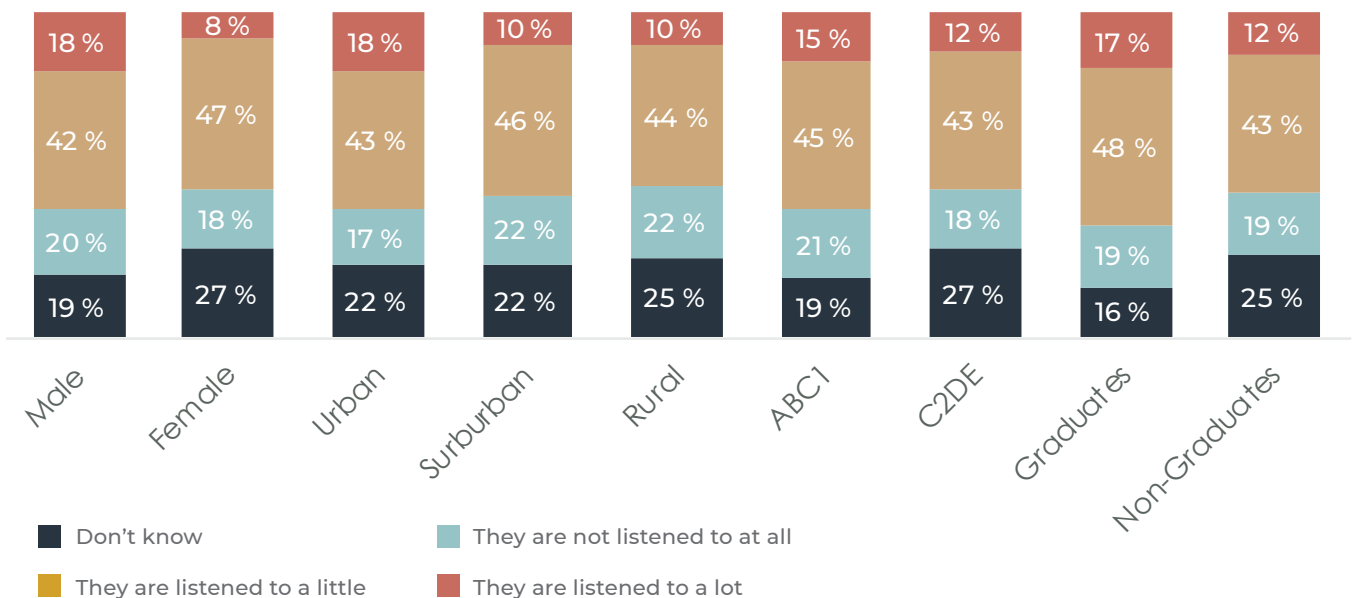
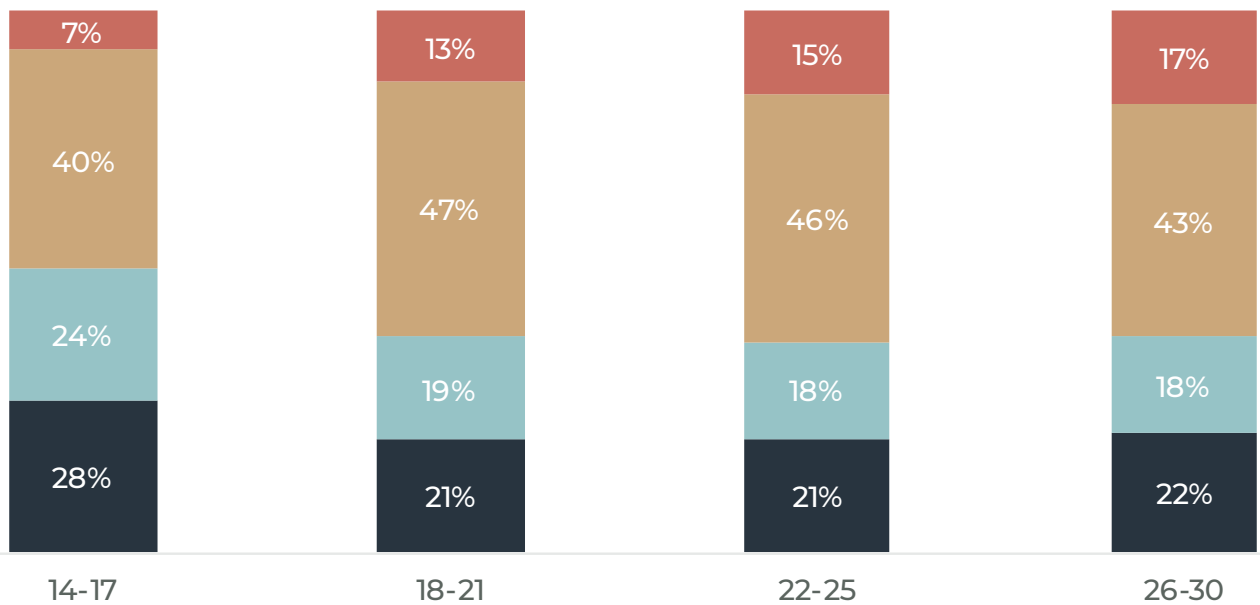
Young people do not feel fully heard by the G7



The majority of young people do not feel that their views are well listened to by the G7, with only 14% of young people thinking the G7 listens to their views a lot. Over two fifths (44%) say that young people's views are listened to by the G7 'a little', with 19% saying they feel they are not listened to at all. This indicates that there is still significant room for improvement to make young people feel they are being heard, with the data showing that more work is required amongst particular demographics.

Particularly concerning, the younger a person is, the less likely they are to feel the G7 listens to their views. Less than half (48%) of people aged 14 to 17 feel the G7 listens to their views either a little, or a lot, compared to 60% of those aged 26 to 30. Furthermore, just under a quarter (24%) of 14 to 17-year-olds feel the G7 do not listen to their views at all, compared to 18% of 26 to 30-year-olds. This could suggest that an individual's confidence that their views are heard builds with age. Additionally, this could signal that the crisis in representativeness of the G7 is likely to deepen among future generations, unless concrete actions are taken.

To what extent, if at all, do you think young people's views are listened to by the G7?



Men are significantly more likely than women to feel their views are listened to a lot, as are those in urban areas compared to those in coastal, suburban and rural areas. There are also differences by education level, with non-graduates, particularly those with no formal qualifications, being less likely than graduates to feel that their voices are heard.

Despite a current lack of voice within the G7, there is a strong sentiment coming through the focus groups that young people want to feel heard:



If adults listened we would bring up the issues that are being ignored

People think young people know things...but we know more than people think

We have a passion and we want to be listened to



Young people are leaders and deserved to be treated as such

We've got so much to say, we just want to be heard

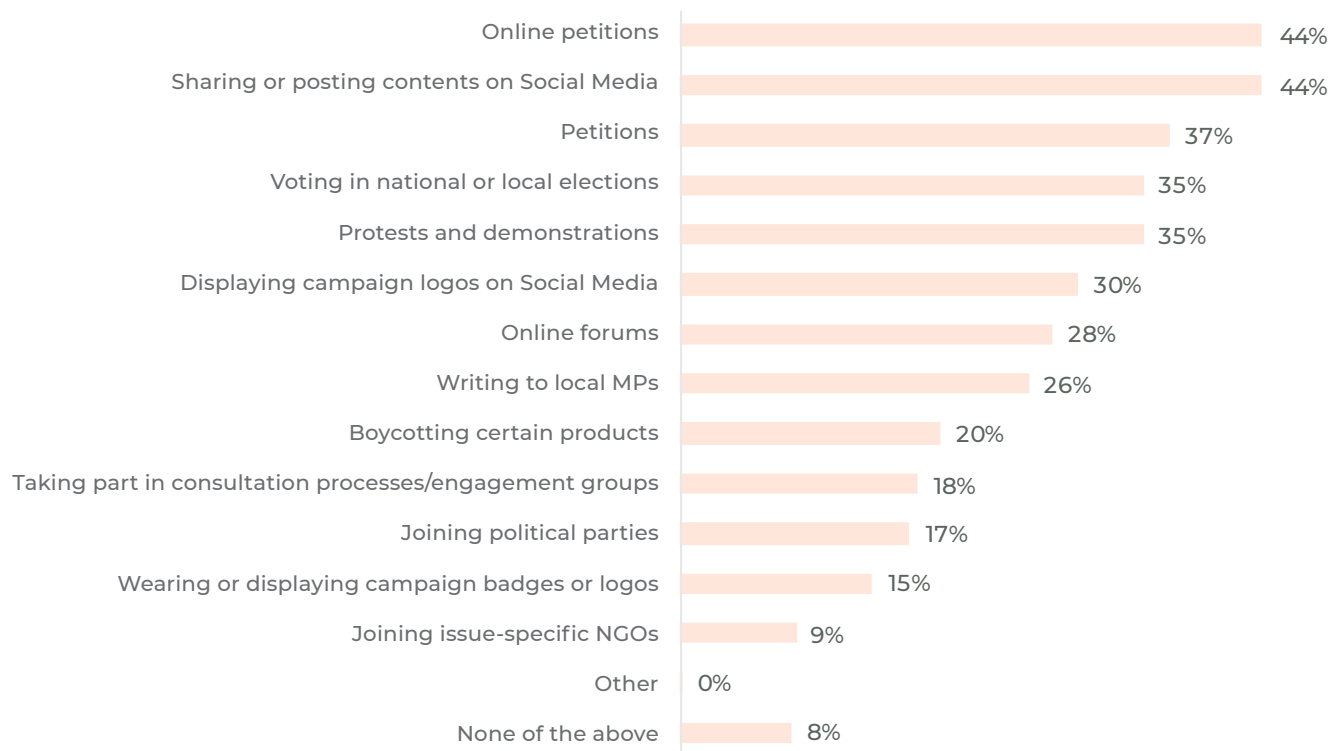
This makes clear that there is a strong appetite among young people for greater engagement with and opportunities to be heard through the G7, should leaders seek to seize it.

Online petitions and sharing content through social media are perceived as the most effective mediums of participation

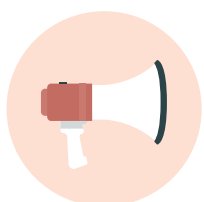
Looking to what other methods of engagement make young people feel heard, online petitions (44%) and sharing or posting social media content (44%) are considered the most effective mediums of participation to reflect their voices. In comparison, more direct forms of engagement with politicians and the political system are

less likely to be seen as effective; one in three (35%) select voting in national or local elections as an effective way to reflect their voices, just one in four (26%) select writing to local MPs, 18% select taking part in consultation processes or engagement groups and 17% select joining political parties.

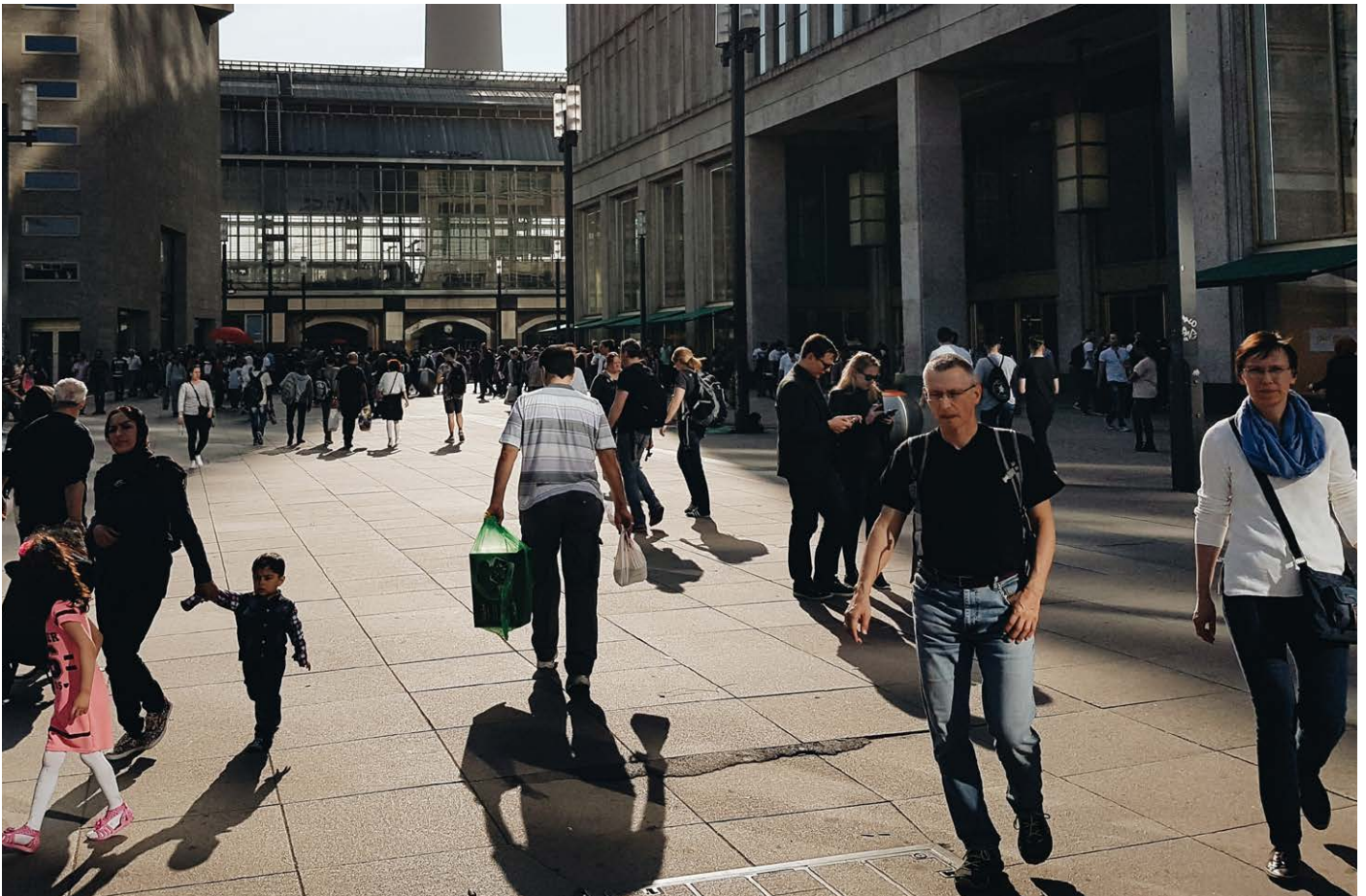
Which mediums of participation do you think are effective in reflecting young people's voices?



Men are more sceptical of the effectiveness of most forms of participation than women. One in ten men (11%) say that none of the mediums are effective for reflecting young people's voices, compared to 6% of women. This is also reflected in specific forms of participation. Online petitions are the most popular overall medium for reflecting the views of young people, but where more than half (51%) of women believe it is effective, less than two in five (38%) men agree.



With the exception of online petitions and online forums, LGBT+ people are generally consistently more confident in the effectiveness of methods of engagement than heterosexual people, particularly boycotts. 32% of LGBT+ youth see boycotting certain products as effective in reflecting youth voices, compared to 19% of heterosexual young people. Strikingly, young people with no qualifications have by far the lowest levels of confidence in the effectiveness of participation, with 15% believing none of the suggested forms of participation are effective in reflecting young people's voices.



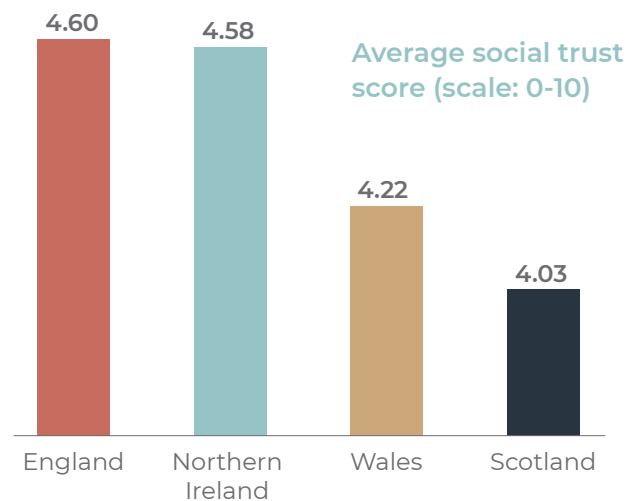
Levels of social trust are fairly low

One key contributor to sustaining wellbeing outcomes such as economic development is trust, a core element of social capital. Survey participants were asked to tell us on a scale of 0-10 how much they trust people in society, with 0 meaning you think you can't be too careful in dealing with people, and 10 meaning you think that most people can be trusted.

The average social trust score is fairly low at 4.54 on this scale. There are variations in social trust scores across different demographics. Men have a higher social trust score than women (4.77 vs 4.33 respectively), as do those in ABC1 social grade category compared to C2DE social grade category (4.69 vs 4.39 respectively). Graduates are also more likely to generally trust people in society compared to non-graduates (4.92 vs. 4.42 respectively). Interestingly, those in urban and suburban areas have higher social trust scores

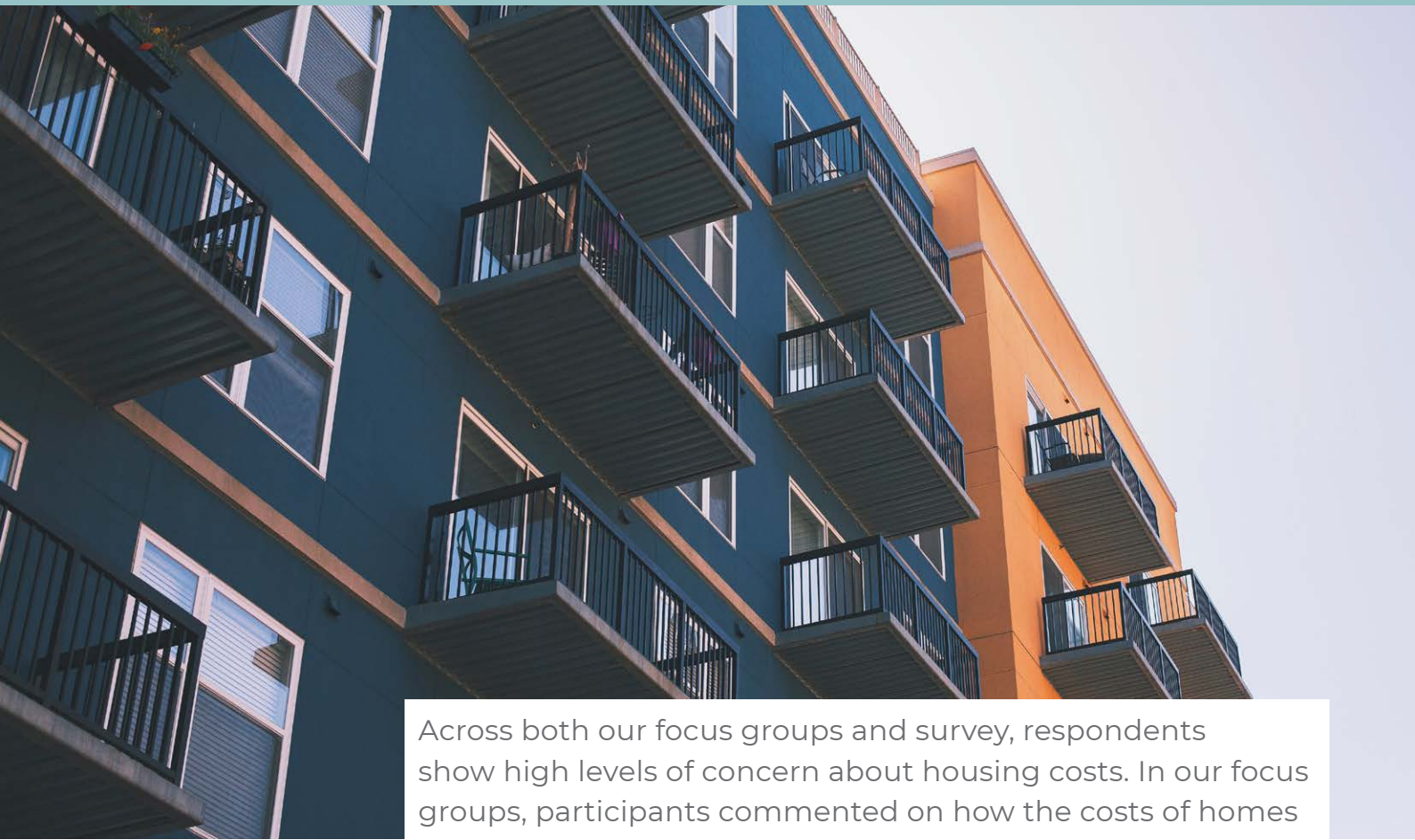
than those in rural and coastal areas (4.67 and 4.60 vs. 4.12 and 3.65).

There are also variations across the four nations. Scottish youth have lower levels of social trust in comparison to the other nations, while English youth have the highest levels of social trust.



ECONOMY AND WORK

Housing is the biggest economic concern for young people



Across both our focus groups and survey, respondents show high levels of concern about housing costs. In our focus groups, participants commented on how the costs of homes is 'ridiculous' and how housing is unaffordable.

This is also reflected in the survey. When asked which areas of the economy are most important for young people, the largest plurality choose affordable and sustainable housing (45%). The second most important area is tackling child poverty (43%).

What are the most important areas for you regarding the economy?



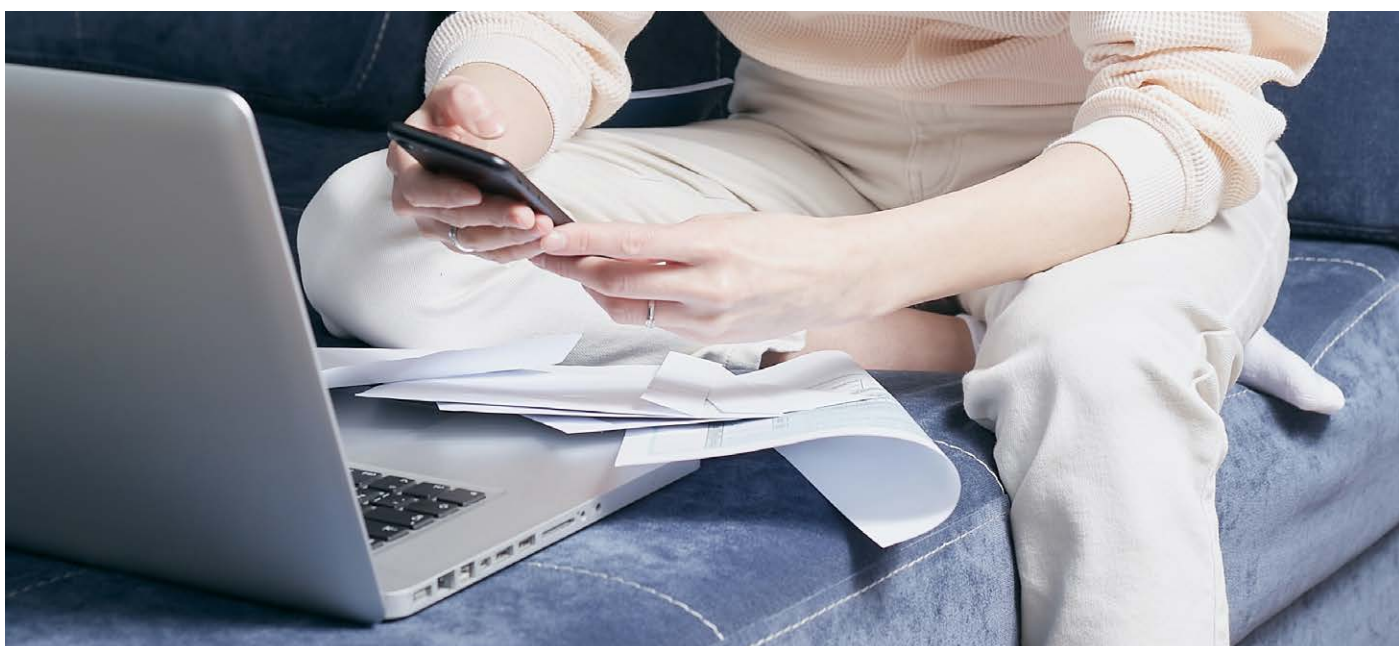
With the exception of maximising economic growth, ensuring world trade is free and fair and tackling the impact of rising government debt, women place higher levels of importance on all areas of the economy than men. More than half of women see affordable and sustainable housing and tackling child poverty as among the most important (54% for both), compared to 37% of men for sustainable housing and a third (33%) of men for child poverty.



Tackling the unequal distribution of wealth is also a priority for many young people; a quarter (27%) consider tackling the unequal distribution of wealth to be an important area with the economy. However, levels of concern with international and global inequality are lower, with one in six seeing international development and elimination of poverty globally (17%) and tackling geographic inequality between regions (17%) as important.



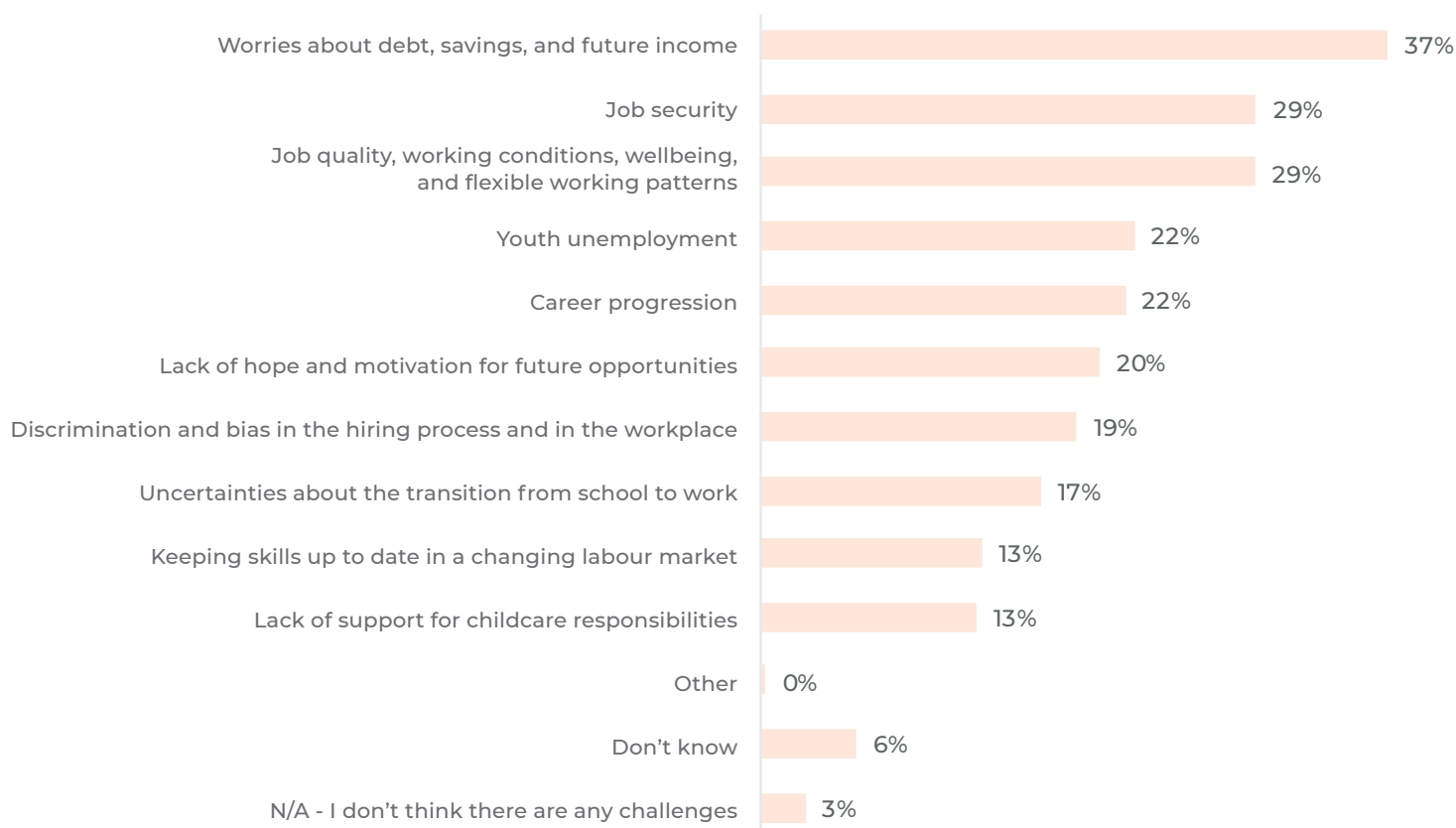
Concerns about inequality are also reflected in discussions in the focus groups with young people commenting that 'it's so sad that homelessness is still happening in 2021!' At an international level, there are concerns that the debt of poorer countries prevents growth and development.



Debt, savings and future income are the biggest challenges about the working world

Worries about debt, savings and future income (37%) are considered the biggest challenges young people face now and in the future in the working world. Strikingly, just 3% of young people don't think there are any challenges to young people in the working world.

Thinking about the working world, what do you think are the biggest challenges you face now and in the future?





There are again demographic differences in levels of concern. The starkest gender difference is on worries about debt, savings and future income, with almost half of women (49%) being concerned about this compared to 27% of men. There are also differences in concern on this according to education level, reflecting the high costs associated with higher education. Over two fifths (44%) of those whose highest qualification is an undergraduate degree are concerned about debts, savings and their future income, compared with just under a third (32%) of young people with no formal qualifications.



The other big challenges identified include job security (29%), job quality, working conditions, wellbeing, and flexible working patterns (29%) and youth unemployment (22%). Concerns about jobs and unemployment are also raised in the focus groups. Worries are raised about the cost of qualifications pushing people into lower-skilled jobs and of difficulties in starting out in the working world with the paradox of needing experience to get a job but also needing a job to get experience.



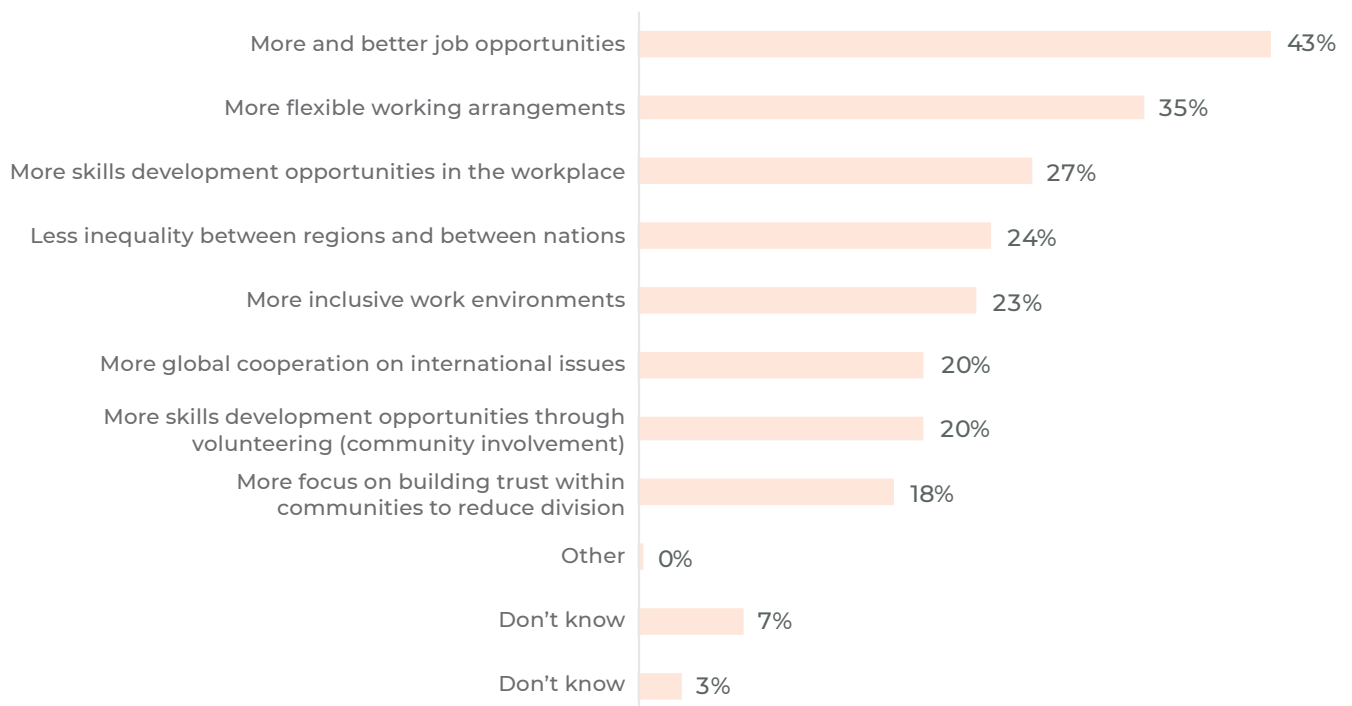
One in five (19%) young people think discrimination in the workplace poses a big challenge. This is of higher concern among ethnic minorities than those from a white background and among the LGBT+ community than heterosexuals. More than a quarter (26%) of ethnic minorities are concerned about bias and discrimination in the hiring process and in the workplace, making this among the biggest challenges for this group, compared to 17% of youth from a white background.



Young people want more and better job opportunities

Thinking ahead to when the economy recovers from the Coronavirus pandemic and the changes they want, young people would most like to see more and better job opportunities (43%), followed by more flexible working arrangements (35%). Over a quarter (27%) would like to see more skills development opportunities in the workplace. This is also raised in the focus groups with a desire for more lifelong learning and reskilling opportunities.

Which of the following changes, if any, are you most hoping to see as the economy recovers from the Coronavirus pandemic?





Half (50%) of women want to see more and better job opportunities after the pandemic, compared to 38% of men. Women are also more likely to say they want to see more flexible working arrangements (42% of women vs. 29% of men), more skills development opportunities in the workplace (30% of women vs. 24% of men) and more inclusive work environments (26% of women vs 21% of men).



Interestingly, there is a correlation between age and the desire for flexible working arrangements. More than two fifths (42%) of 26 to 30-year-olds hope for more flexible working arrangements after the pandemic. This desire is lower among younger age groups, with less than a quarter (24%) of those aged 14 to 17 wanting this, likely reflective of the variations in kinds of employment and possibilities for flexible working among different age groups.



More than a quarter (26%) of ethnic minorities want to see more skills and development opportunities through volunteering post-pandemic, compared to 18% of those from a white background. Additionally, 28% of those who identify as LGBT+ also hope to see more inclusive working environments, compared to 23% of people who consider themselves as heterosexual.

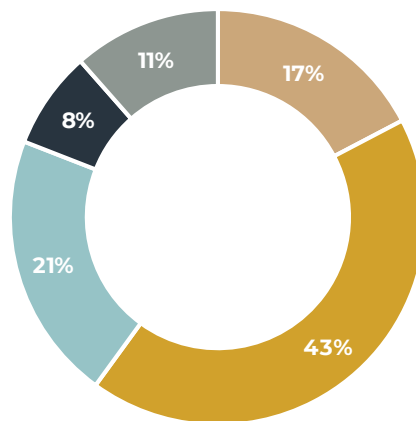


Other changes raised in the focus groups include stopping unpaid internships, promoting the benefits of apprenticeships, more incentives (e.g. subsidies) to promote youth employment and Equal Pay for Equal Work (based on age).

Most young people would prefer a mixture of working remotely and working in a physical location

When it comes to future working arrangements, the majority of young people (43%) say they would prefer a balance between working remotely and at a physical workplace location in the future. Meanwhile, one in five (21%) would prefer to work exclusively in a physical location, and 17% would prefer to work exclusively remotely.

Thinking about the future, would you be interested in working remotely if possible in your (current or future desired) line of work?



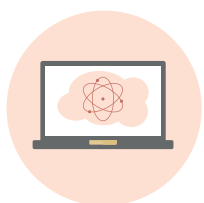
- I would prefer to work exclusively remotely
- I would prefer a balance between working remotely and at a physical workplace location
- I would prefer to work from a physical workplace location
- N/A Working remotely is not possible in my current or future or desired line of work
- Don't know



More women are interested in hybrid working, with 46% preferring this option compared to 40% of men.



Almost a quarter (23%) of people with disabilities would like to work from home exclusively after the pandemic, with 38% wanting hybrid working and 22% prefer to work exclusively in a physical workplace. Among all graduates, more than half (51%) would prefer to work both from home and from a workplace, compared to just over a third (34%) of those with no formal qualifications.



Of those who would be interested in working remotely in the future – either always or sometimes - the biggest advantage of doing so is seen to be the flexibility it allows for managing life and work (36%). Young people in Wales (53%), Scotland (46%) and the North East (43%) particularly see more flexibility as valuable, while those in London (29%) and the East Midlands (29%) are notably less likely to.



The second biggest advantage identified for working remotely is the money it allows youth to save on travel (22%). This is particularly seen as an advantage by youth in London (27%) and the East Midlands (27%). Youth in urban areas (25%) are also more likely to identify saving money on travel as an advantage than those in suburban (20%) or remote areas (15%).

Advantages of working remotely

(Base: Those interested in working remotely always or sometimes in the future)

More flexibility for managing life and work	36%
Saving money on travel	22%
Reducing carbon emissions through fewer commuter journeys	15%
Greater flexibility to travel and live outside of major cities	13%
Improved productivity	13%

Disadvantages of working remotely

(Base: Those who want to work in a physical location or want a hybrid approach)

Loneliness	34%
Reduced productivity	18%
Technical difficulties and unreliable broadband	16%
Overly complex work life balance	15%
Limited network opportunities	15%



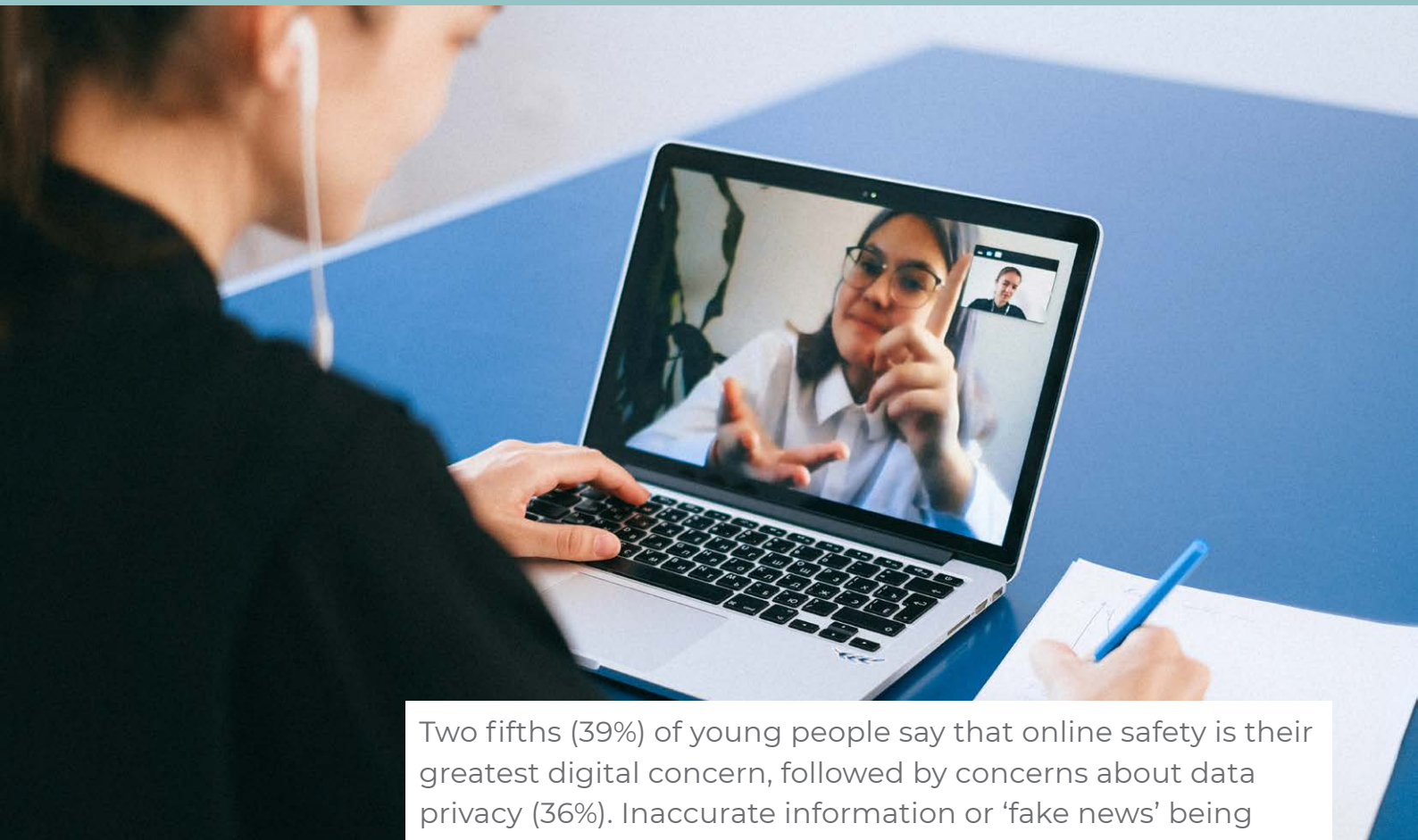
Of those who would not want to work entirely remotely, the biggest disadvantage for working remotely is loneliness (34%).

Two fifths (40%) of women think the biggest disadvantage of working from home is loneliness, compared to 28% of men. For men, limited networking opportunities is the second biggest disadvantage, with 18% seeing it as the biggest disadvantage to working from home, compared to 12% of women.

Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more concerned about loneliness, with 37% of those in the C2DE social grade category selecting this as the biggest disadvantage compared to 31% of people in the ABC1 social grade category.

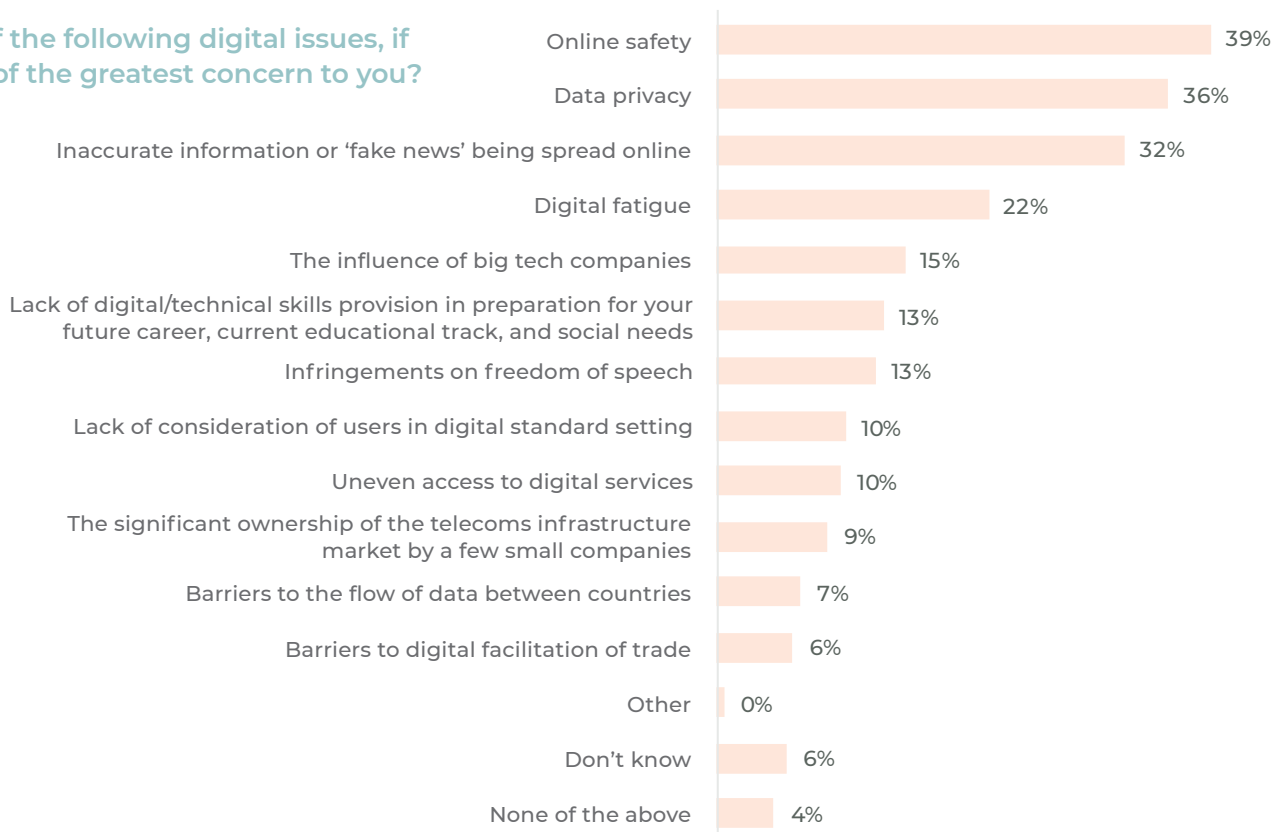
THE DIGITAL WORLD

Online safety is the biggest digital concern for young people



Two fifths (39%) of young people say that online safety is their greatest digital concern, followed by concerns about data privacy (36%). Inaccurate information or 'fake news' being spread online (32%) and digital fatigue (22%) are the next biggest concerns, while barriers to the flow of data between countries (7%) and barriers to digital facilitation of trade (6%) are less commonly cited, highlighting that their personal experiences of the digital world are the primary concern of young people within the digital sphere. Just 4% of young people have no concerns about the online world.

Which of the following digital issues, if any, are of the greatest concern to you?



Women display a higher level of concern about the top 3 digital issues compared to men. Just under half (45%) of women are worried about online safety compared to one in three (34%) young men. Similar numbers of men are concerned about data privacy (33%), rising to 39% for women. Two in five (39%) women are concerned about fake news compared to a quarter of men (25%). As all three of these concerns pertain to online safety and security online, this highlights the stark gender disparities in feelings of safety and comfortability online, likely reflective of concerning disparities in how men and women experience the digital world.



Alarming, concerns about online safety are significantly higher among 14 to 17-year-olds (46%) than older age groups, particularly 22 to 25-year-olds (35%). Meanwhile, older age groups are more concerned than younger age groups about data privacy (30% of 14 to 17-year-olds vs. 39% of 22-25 and 40% of 26 to 30-year-olds).



There are also significant geographic disparities in concerns about online safety, with levels of concern significantly higher among young people in Scotland (48%) and the South West (44%) than in London (33%) and the North East (28%). In part this is driven by the fact young people in the North East (16%) show above-average levels of concern about uneven access to digital services.



Online safety is also a key concern among focus group attendees. There is a feeling that online abuse can be particularly damaging because we're so embedded in the digital sphere, making it hard to escape online abuse, and also because it impacts mental health as well as political participation. Participants feel there is a need for more immediate help on this issue and to target the root of the issue. Government is perceived to be responsible for tackling online abuse, with participants wanting government to combat harmful norms and stereotypes, but also wanting more specific and targeted regulation to online harassment (e.g. laws that are specific to digital abuse).

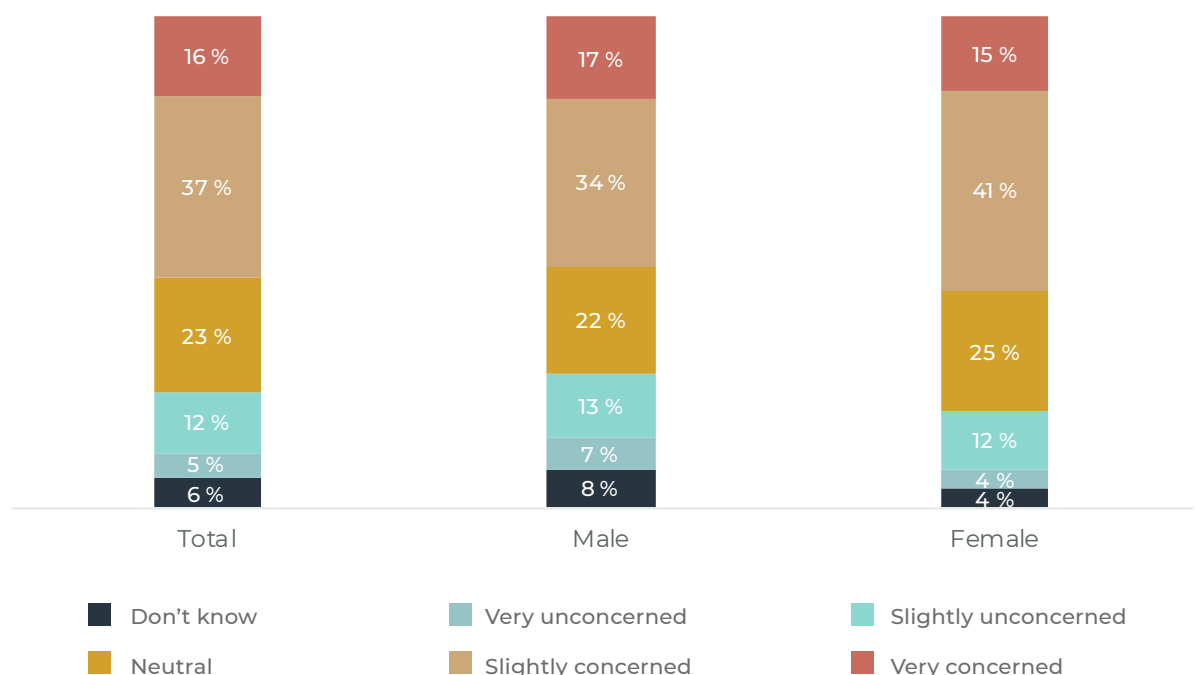


A third (32%) of young people think 'fake news' being spread online is one of the biggest digital concerns. Concerns about spread of misinformation is also raised in the focus groups, particularly with concerns about how 'fake news' is affecting perceptions of the coronavirus vaccine, especially among marginalised communities. Participants emphasise the importance of increasing public awareness and understanding of the facts.

Over half of young people are concerned about how their online data is being processed and shared

On the topic of data privacy, over half (53%) of young people are slightly or very concerned about how their data is being processed or shared online. In contrast, just 17% are slightly or very unconcerned and 23% are neither concerned nor unconcerned. A similar pattern emerges as in relation to online safety, with women (56%) showing higher levels of concern than men (51%).

How concerned or unconcerned are you about how your data is being processed or shared online?





Levels of concern are particularly high among residents in Northern Ireland (61%), in contrast to lower levels of concern in the North West (49%) and Yorkshire and Humberside (44%). The disparities in levels of concern across other demographics are relatively minimal, suggesting a degree of universality in levels of concern about data privacy among young people.



The ways in which personal data is stored, protected and shared is also an issue that is raised in the focus groups, with concerns that technology is developing faster than legislation to protect individuals. There is a general feeling that there is insufficient investment in improving data protection and ensuring it reflects current issues, and that it is afforded insufficient attention by some organisations. Participants want to see greater regulation of the tech industry and feel that leaders need to properly invest in and employ tech experts and lawyers to create regulation to ensure it keeps up with the pace at which technology is progressing.

Only 1 in 5 young people feel fully equipped with the necessary digital skills to succeed

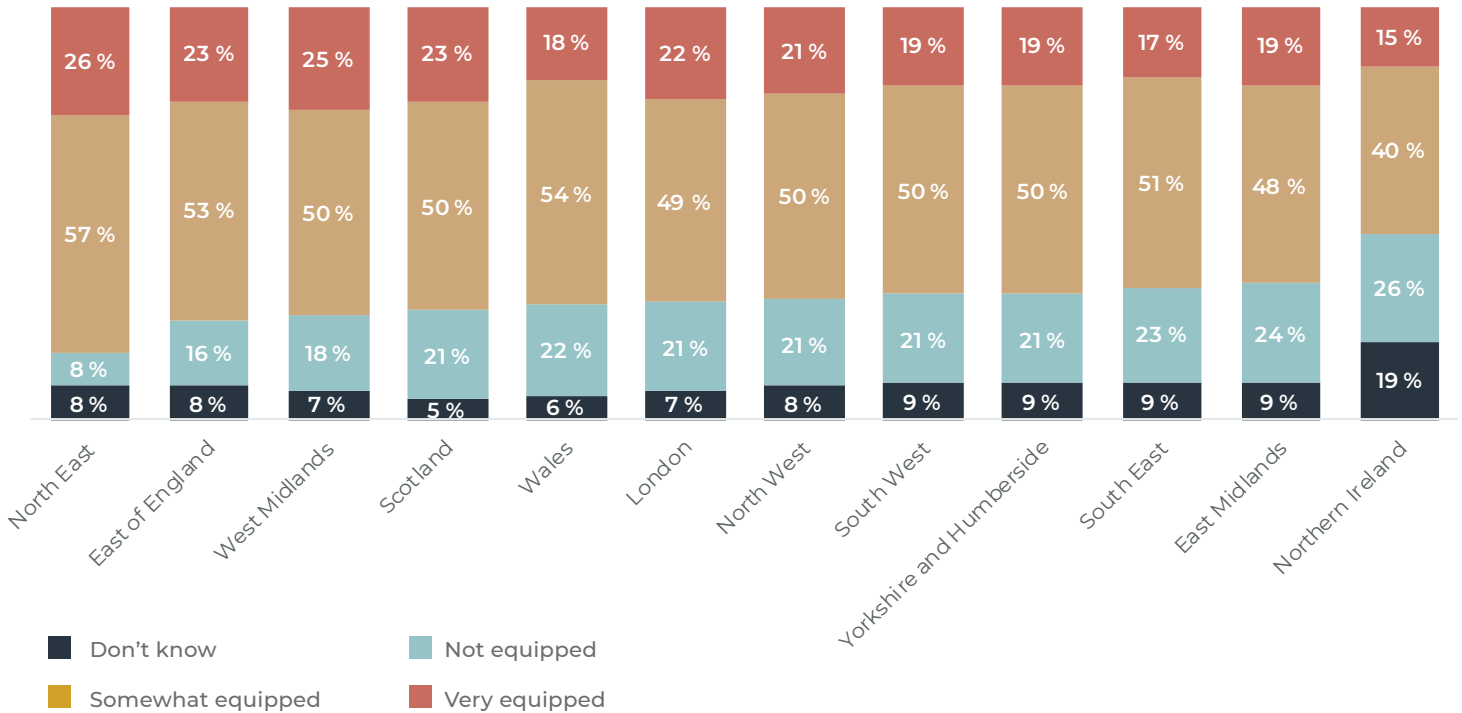
Over two thirds (71%) of young people feel they are equipped with the necessary digital skills and effective training to succeed in daily life (including economic transactions, workforce, learning and education). However, this is driven by the fact 50% of young people feel 'somewhat equipped' with the necessary digital skills to succeed, while only 21% feel 'very equipped'. Furthermore, a sizeable minority (20%) do not feel equipped, highlighting how significant gaps remain to ensuring all young people are fully equipped with the digital skills required to succeed.

Particular attention should be paid to the disparities in the extent to which different

demographics feel digitally equipped to succeed. Women (18%) are less likely to feel fully equipped than men (24%), as are 18 to 21 year olds (15%) relative to 26 to 30 year olds (26%). Those with no formal qualifications (14%) and ethnic minorities (17%) are also less likely to feel fully equipped. Concerningly, 28% of people with disabilities do not feel equipped with the necessary digital skills to succeed.

There were also some regional disparities. Young people in Northern Ireland are particularly unlikely to feel fully equipped (15%), with 26% feeling unequipped. Young people in the North East (26%) and West Midlands (25%) are the most likely to feel fully equipped.

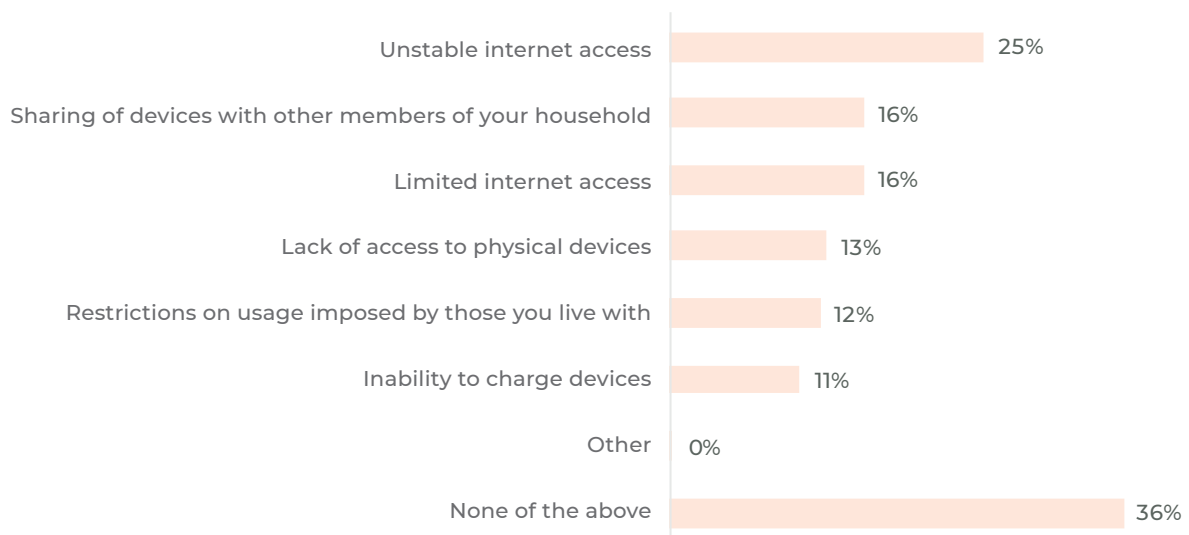
To what extent do you feel equipped with the necessary digital skills and effective training to succeed in daily life?

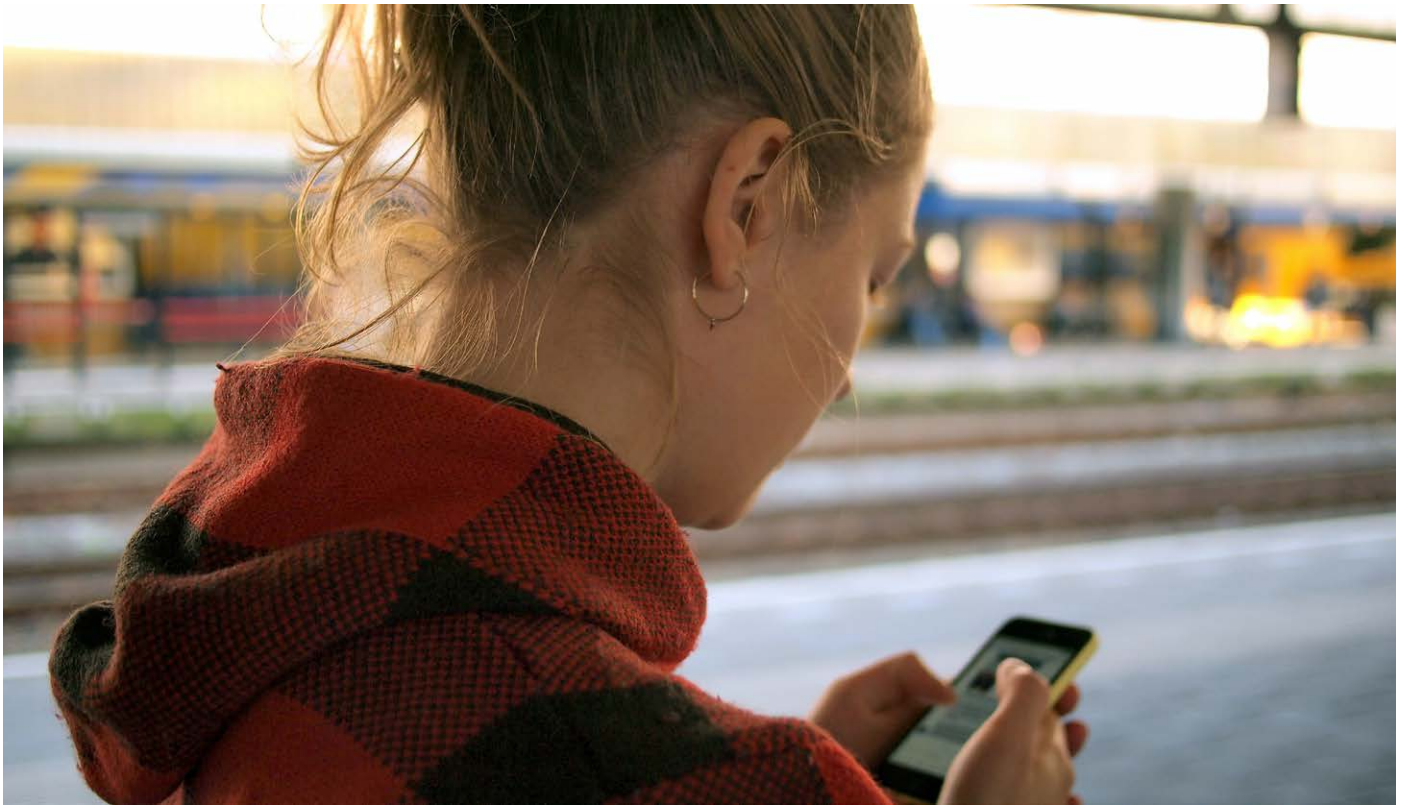


A quarter of young people struggle with unstable internet access

The main issue young people face regarding accessing digital services is unstable internet access (25%), followed by sharing of devices with other household members (16%) and limited internet access (16%). Only 36% of young people do not face any difficulties in accessing digital services.

Do any of the following limit your access to digital services?





Women (28%) are more likely than men (22%) to say that unstable internet access limits their access to digital services. Those in coastal (30%) and suburban (27%) areas are also more likely to be limited by unstable internet access than those in urban (25%) or rural areas (22%). However, this is likely driven by the fact young people living in urban (18%) and rural areas (16%) are more likely than those in suburban (14%) and coastal (11%) areas to have limited internet access.

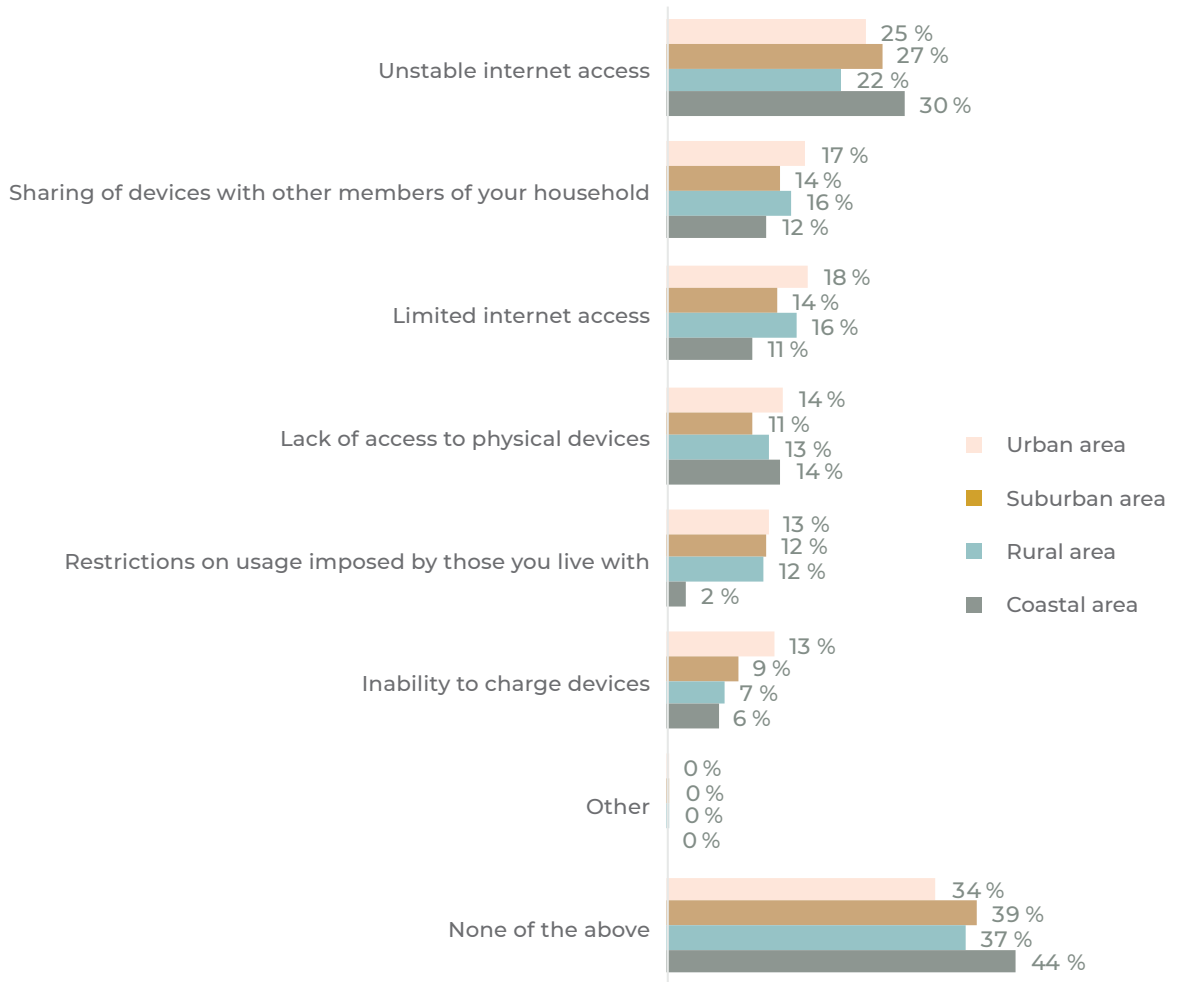


Interestingly, those with no formal qualifications are less likely than graduates to feel that their access to the digital world is limited. For example, just 7% of those with no formal qualifications feel limited by lack of access to physical devices compared to 17% of graduates. Similarly, those in the ABC1 social category (28%) are more likely than those in the C2DE social category (23%) to be limited by unstable internet access. Those in the C2DE social category (40%) are also more likely than those in the ABC1 social category (33%) to feel that none of the options limit their access to digital services.



Regionally, residents in the North West (21%) and Scotland (20%) are the most likely to say they are limited by having to share devices with other household members, while those in Northern Ireland (20%) are the most likely to be limited by internet access.

Do any of the following limit your access to digital services?



In our focus groups, digital accessibility is identified as a primary digital and technology issue that young respondents want the G7 or G20 tackle. There are concerns that disparities in accessibility could lead to some young people falling behind in education or making it more difficult for some people to get jobs. There are

also concerns raised that a rural/urban digital divide on accessibility would leave those in rural areas behind and concerns extend beyond lack of access and also to quality of services. The UK government is perceived to have primary responsibility for addressing these issues due to being seen as responsible for infrastructure.

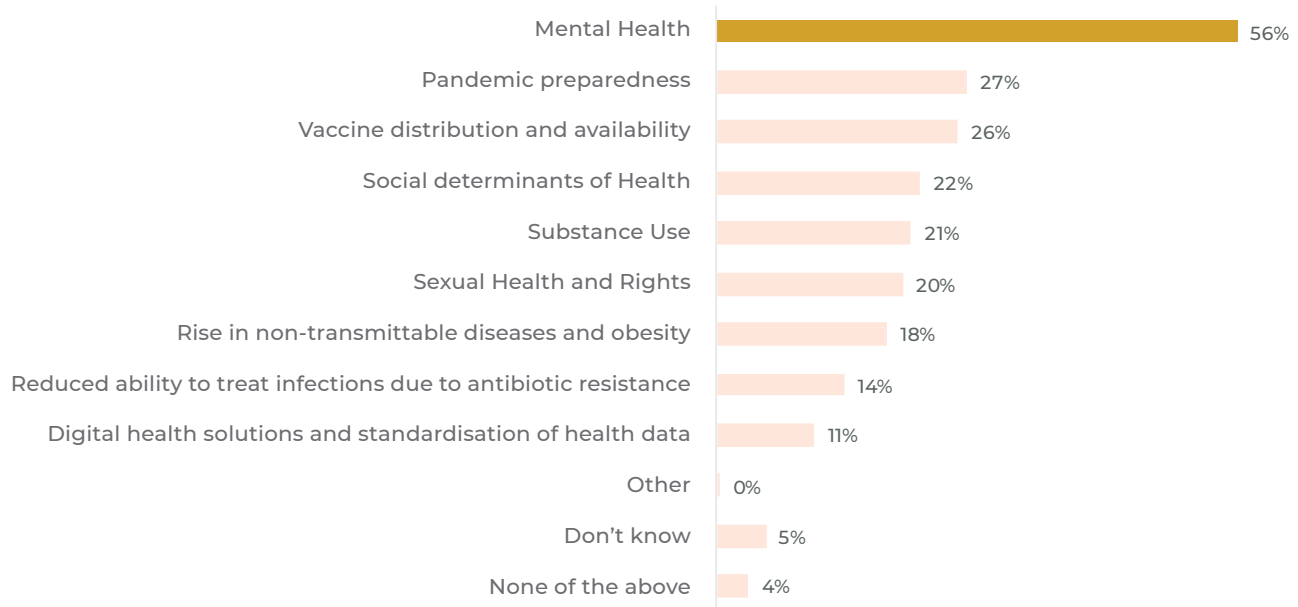
HEALTHCARE

Young people want more government action taken on mental health



Young people decisively think mental health is the key area within healthcare that they most want to see government take action on, with over half (56%) of young people selecting it as a key priority.

What are the key areas within health that you want to see the government take action on?

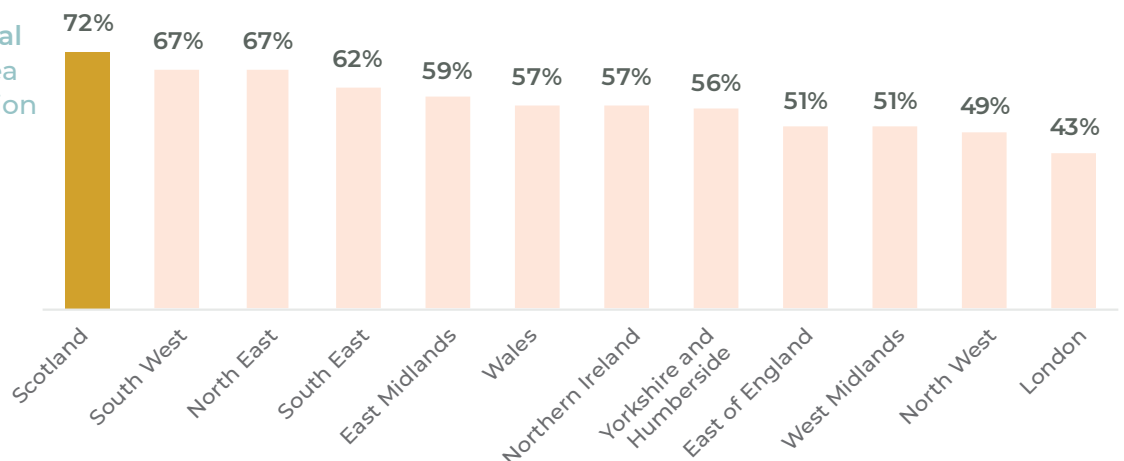


It is the number one priority across every demographic, although there are some demographics that have particular outsized support for government action on mental health.



For example, those living in Scotland tend to be especially strong advocates of mental health action, with almost three quarters (72%) of Scottish respondents viewing mental health as a key priority. This figure is 29 percentage points higher than in London, where 43% agree mental health is a key priority.

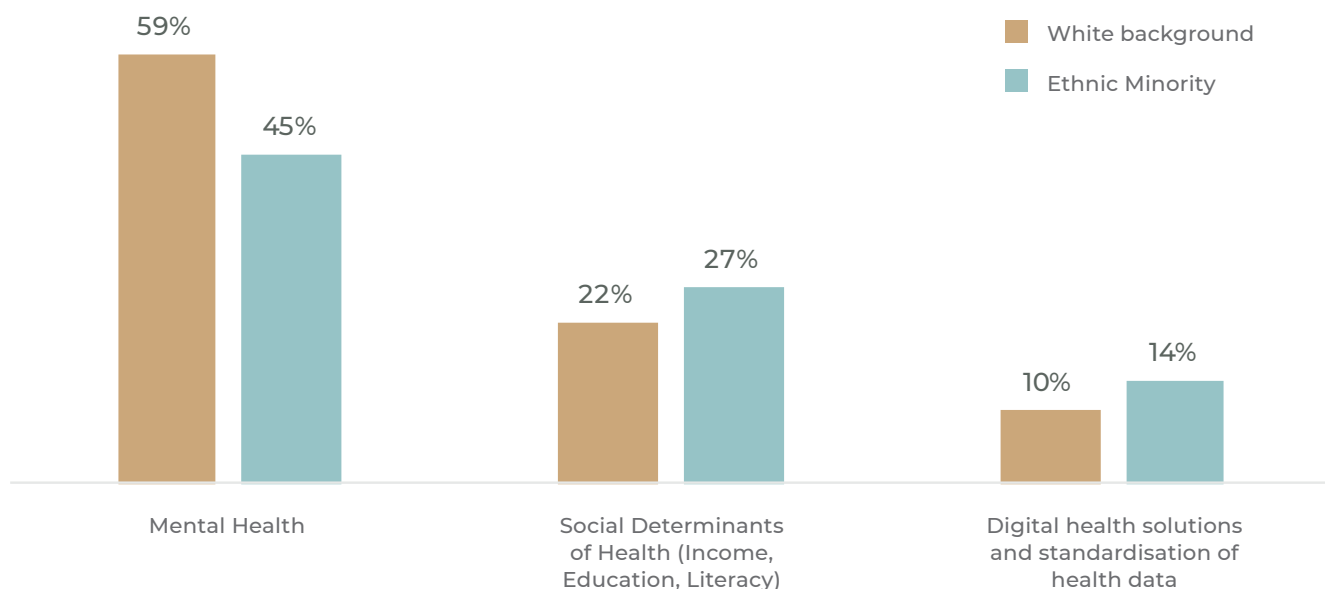
% who consider Mental Health to be a key area within health, by Region



There is also significantly stronger support for mental health action among women (67%) compared to men (46%) and among youth from a white background relative to ethnic minorities.

What are the key areas within health that you want to see the government take action on, if any?

Most polarising issues, split by ethnic background



Mental health is a key concern also raised in the focus groups. Participants want to see more education on eliminating toxic language for mental health, stronger regulation around the media's approach to mental health and increased funding for anonymous mental health platforms. There is also a perceived need not to treat mental health in silos, but for a joined-up approach between different areas (e.g. health, social care, housing and justice) to tackle the root cause of mental health issues. In terms of approach, participants see a need 'to adopt a long-termist view of mental health'. Schools are identified as a key part of the approach to tackling mental health issues, with more education needed, starting in primary schools, with participants stating:



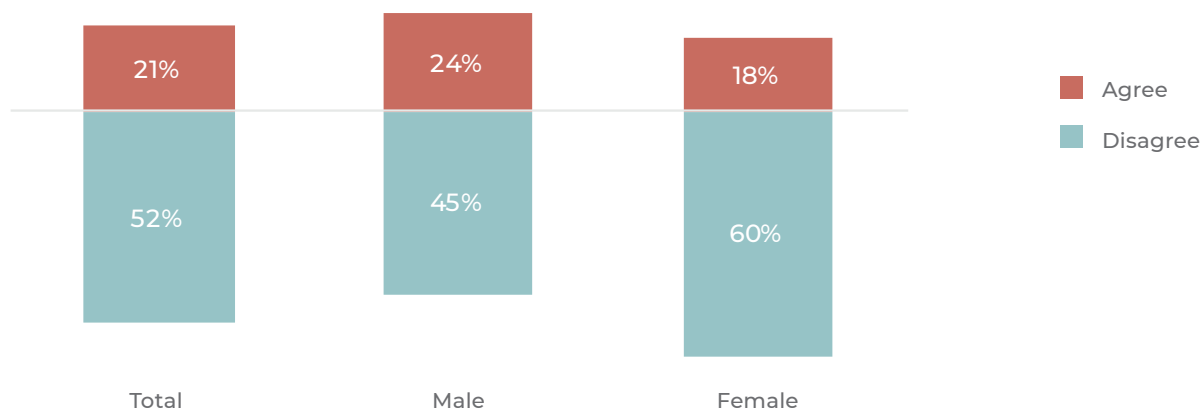
(We should) normalise things like mindfulness/ meditation sessions in schools the same way we do PE lessons

I think mental health is such an issue because the ways to process and deal with any emotions aren't really taught about in school



There is a strong feeling among the young people surveyed that politicians and researchers are not doing enough to understand the underlying cause of widespread mental health issues. This feeling is more pronounced among women than men.

How much do you agree or disagree that enough is being done by politicians and researchers to understand the underlying causes of widespread mental health issues?



1 in 4 young people do not feel informed about mental health

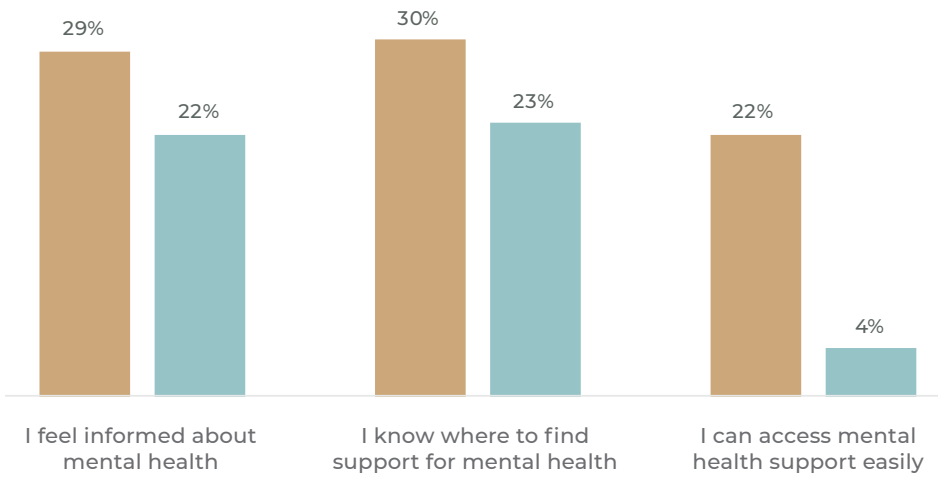


Half (50%) of young people say they feel informed about mental health. However, a significant minority do not feel informed (24%). A similar pattern emerges when it comes to seeking and accessing support for mental health. Half (50%) know where to find support and 42% know how to access it easily. However, a quarter (24%) don't know where to find support, whilst 30% don't know how to access it. Concerns over finding support are also raised in the focus groups. One participant states that: **'I feel we have lots of information about what mental health is, but not how to help or support ourselves or each other'**.

Men tend to feel more informed about mental health and how to seek help than women when looking at net agreement figures. The difference is particularly stark when looking at access to mental health care.

Mental Health Awareness: Male vs Female

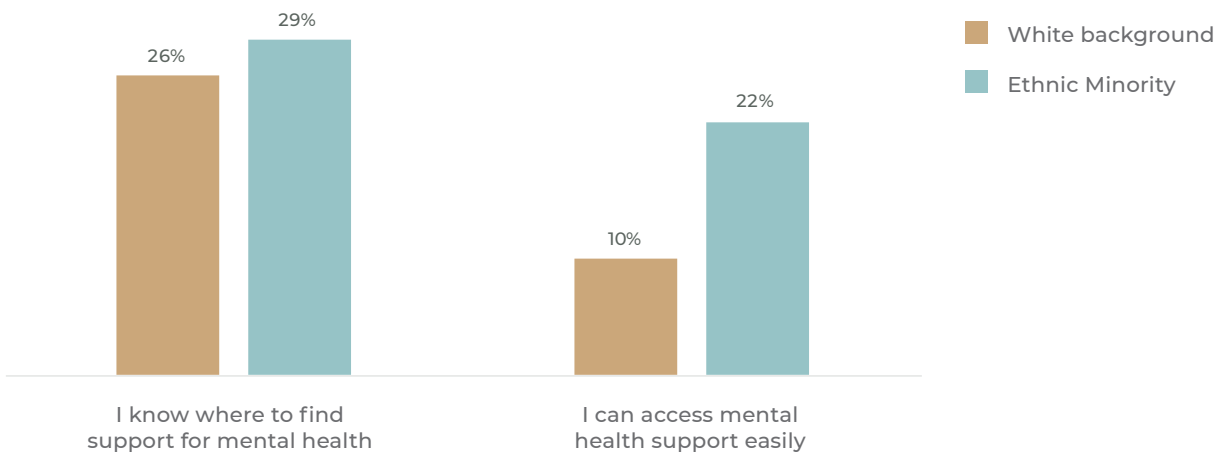
% net agreement



Those from ethnic minority backgrounds and white backgrounds are in agreement surrounding the statement: 'I feel informed about mental health' (both 50%). However, just under half (47%) of ethnic minorities agree that they can access mental health support easily, compared to 41% from white backgrounds.

Access to Mental Health Services:

Net agreement, White Background & Ethnic Minority



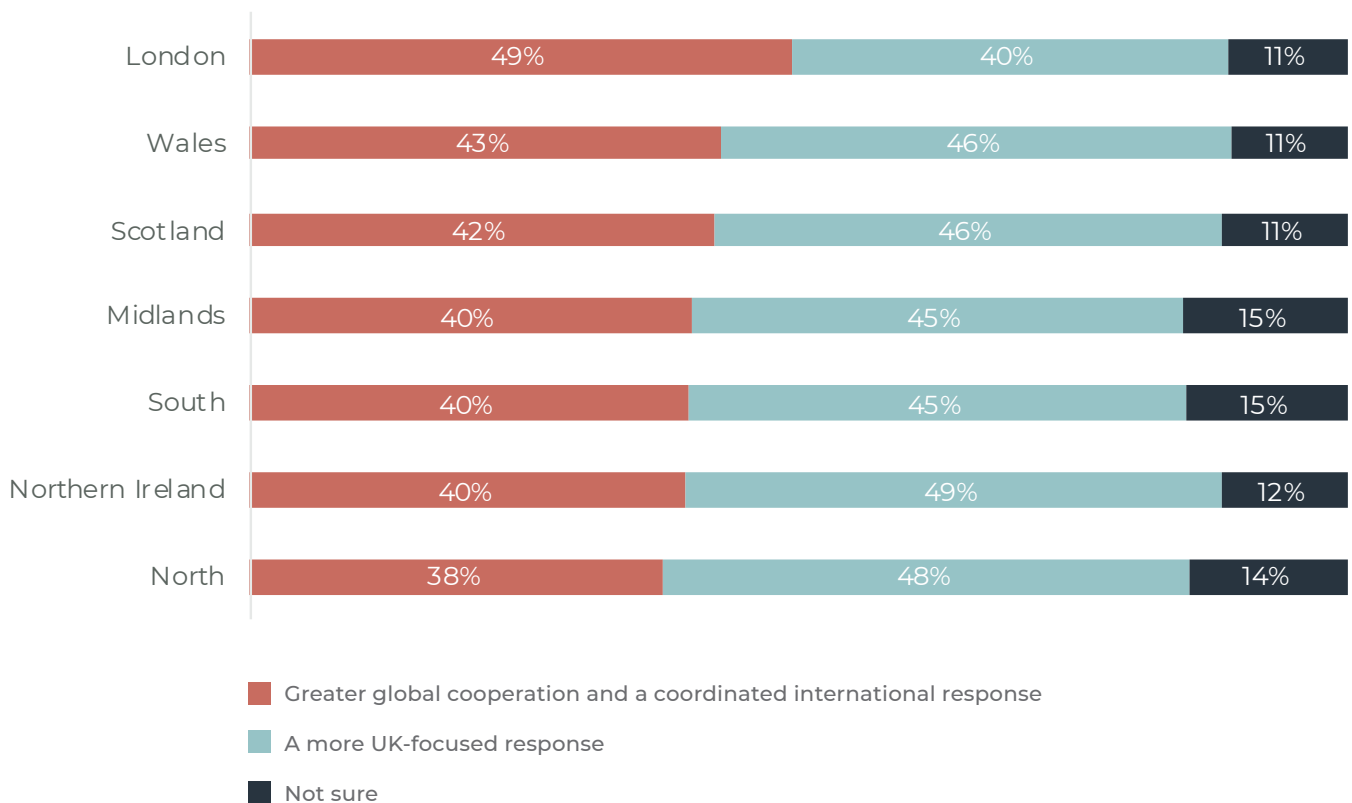
Young people are split on the UK's approach for the next pandemic

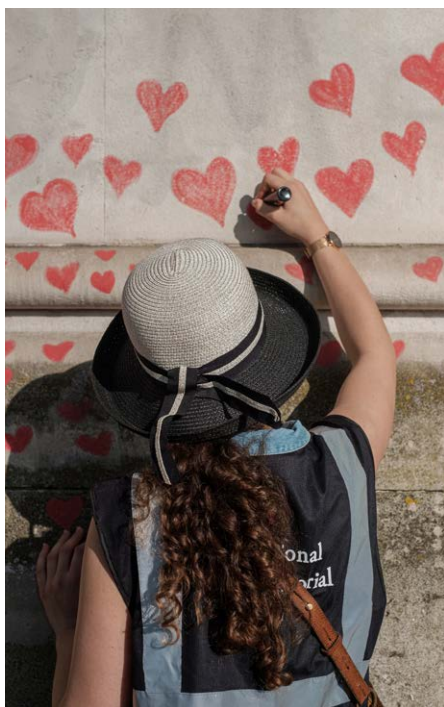
Reflecting the events of the past year, the second and third most important areas for government to take action on are seen to be pandemic preparedness (27%) and vaccine distribution and availability (26%).

However, young people are divided over whether the UK should advocate an outward-looking or inward-looking approach to the next pandemic. Forty-five percent think the UK should take a more UK-focused response next time, whereas

41% would like to see greater global cooperation. There is a sharp regional disparity in people's outlook on future pandemics, with those living in London the most likely to advocate for the UK's response being part of a wider global effort. Meanwhile, those in the North and those in Northern Ireland are more strongly inclined to believe that the UK should take a more UK-focused response next time rather than a global response.

What general approach do you think the UK should advocate for in the next pandemic?





In the Midlands, there are variations between the East and the West. 46% of those in the West Midlands would prefer greater global cooperation while 41% would prefer a more UK- focused response. Meanwhile, those in the East Midlands are much more likely than their West Midlands counterparts to want a UK focused approach (50%), while a third (33%) want greater global cooperation.

Focusing on location type, those in coastal (53%) and rural (49%) areas are more likely to want a more UK focused response than those in urban areas (42%).

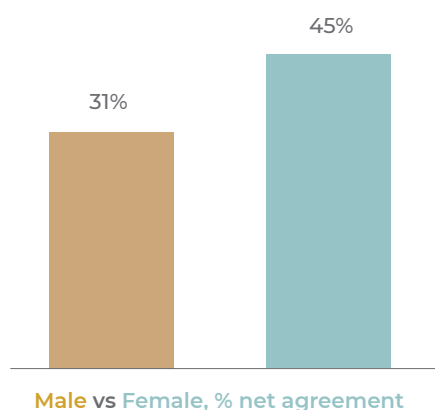
There are also variations by education level and social grade. Graduates (50%) are more likely to want greater global cooperation than non-graduates (38%). Those in the ABC1 social grade category growing up are more likely to support greater global cooperation than those who fell into the C2DE category (46% vs. 36% respectively).

Consultations with human doctors are preferred over AI-powered alternatives

The majority of young people would prefer a consultation with a human doctor than an AI-powered alternative – even if the AI is more statistically accurate (56%). Only 18% disagree with this statement, while 21% are neutral. Those with a disability are less opposed to

the idea of consultations with AI powered technology compared to the average. While half (51%) agree they would prefer a consultation with a doctor than with an AI powered alternative, a quarter (26%) disagree with this statement, and 21% are neutral.

I would rather have a consultation by a human doctor than by AI-powered technology in the future...



There is also a slight gender split on people's preferences. When seen in net agreement terms, men are less negative towards the idea of an AI-powered alternative – less emphatically in favour of a human doctor and less likely to reject AI.

Safety and reliability of AI powered technology in healthcare is a concern

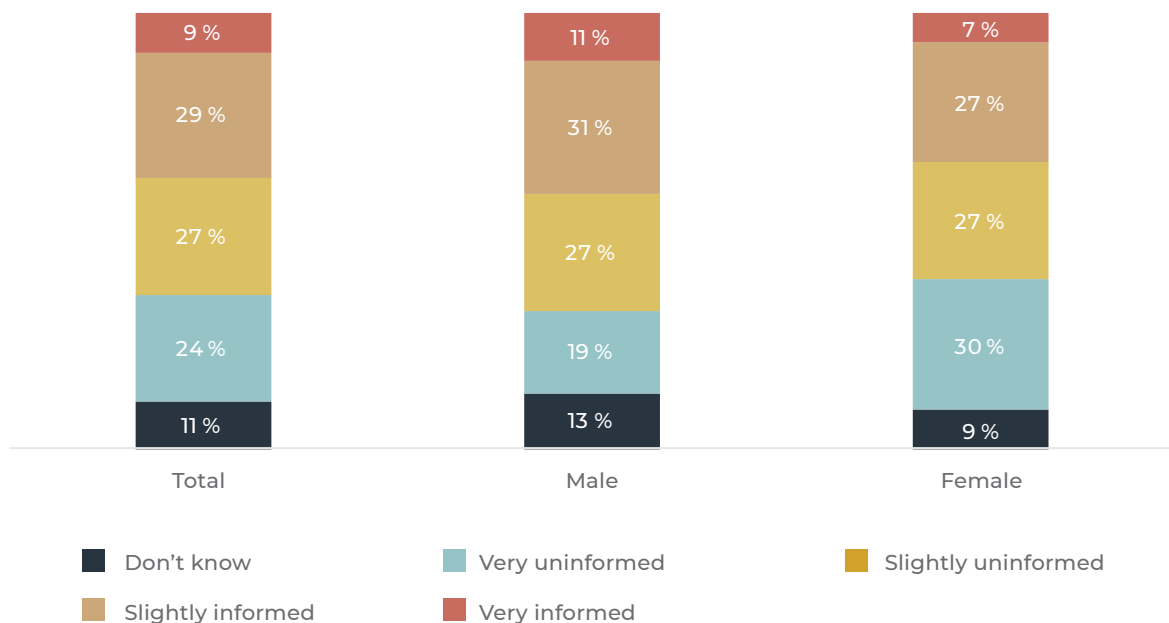
Part of the concern of consultations with AI powered technology seems to stem from worries about safety and reliability. Only 29% of young people think that enough is being done to ensure that AI technology in healthcare is safe and reliable, while a quarter (24%) disagree with this and a third (34%) are neutral on this statement. Again, there is a gender disparity on sentiment expressed, with men (33%) more likely than women (25%) to

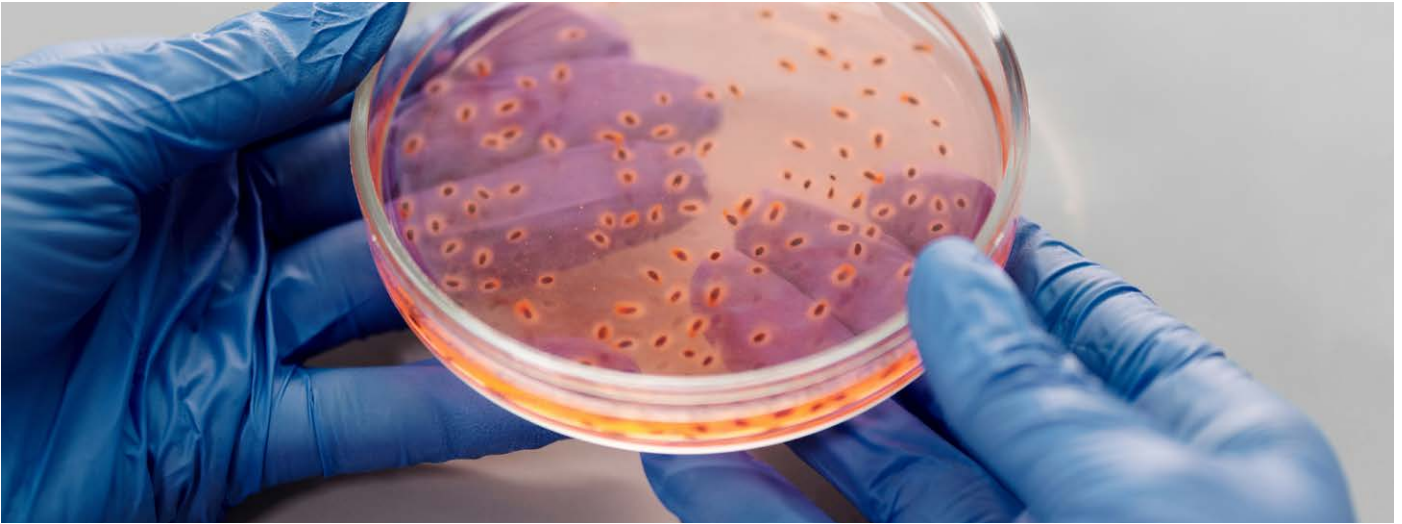
think enough is being done to ensure safety and reliability. Concerns are also raised in the focus groups about 'making sure that technological progress in both health and tech is ethical and just.' Further to this, there are concerns about cultural biases with a feeling that there is a need to engage a third party at the product development stage for health products to ensure that any cultural biases are accounted for.

Half of young people feel uninformed about antimicrobial resistance

Worryingly, half of young people (51%) feel uninformed about antimicrobial resistance, with a quarter (24%) saying they feel very uninformed. In comparison, 38% feel informed. Women are more likely than men to feel uninformed (57% of women vs. 46% of men).

Before today, how informed or uninformed did you feel about antimicrobial resistance?



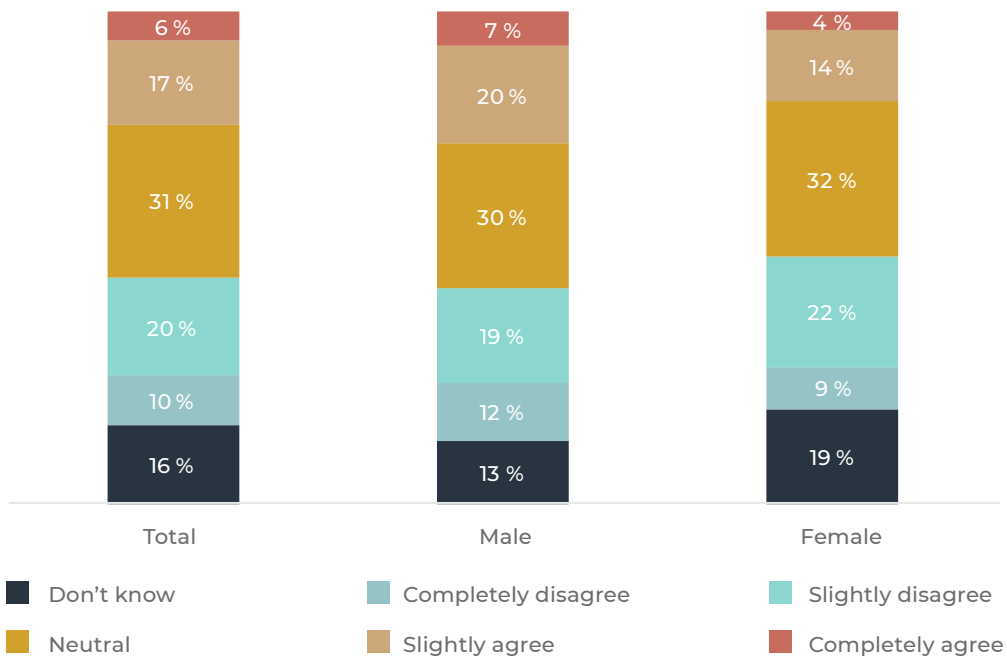


There are also other demographic variations in the proportion of people saying they feel informed. Ethnic minorities (47%) are more likely to say they felt informed than those from a white background (36%); as are those from the ABC1 social grade category (41%), compared to those in the C2DE social grade category (35%).



Thinking about actions being taken, a net disagreement of young people think that enough is being done by politicians and researchers to tackle antimicrobial resistance (23% agree vs 30% disagree). Men are more likely than women to think enough is being done (26% of men agree vs 19% of women). Youth in London (29%) and the West Midlands (28%) are the most likely to think enough is being done and youth in Northern Ireland (13%) and Scotland (15%) are the least likely to agree.

How much do you agree or disagree... enough is being done by politicians and researchers to tackle antimicrobial resistance



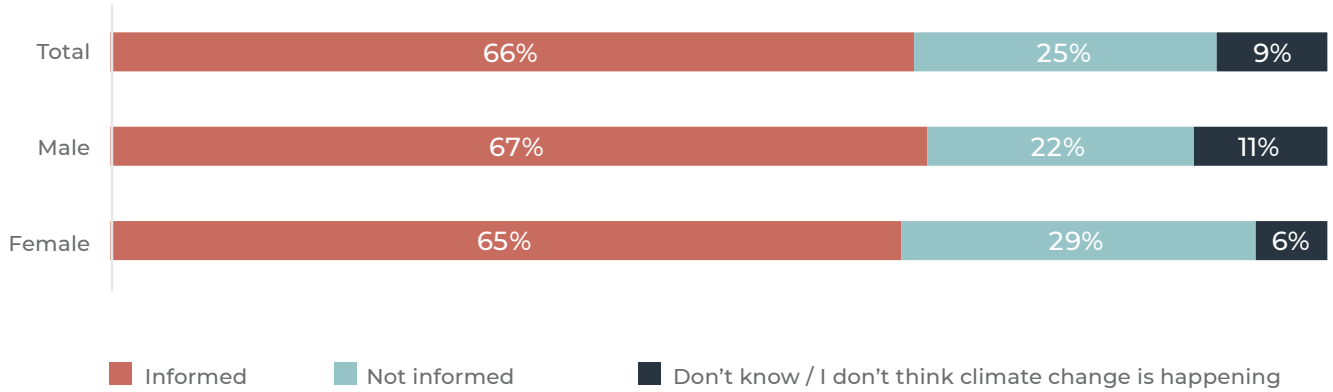
CLIMATE

Two thirds feel informed about changes happening to the climate



Two thirds (66%) of young people feel, in some way, informed about changes happening to the climate. However, a quarter (25%) say they feel uninformed. Women are more likely than men to say that they feel uninformed (29% vs 22% respectively).

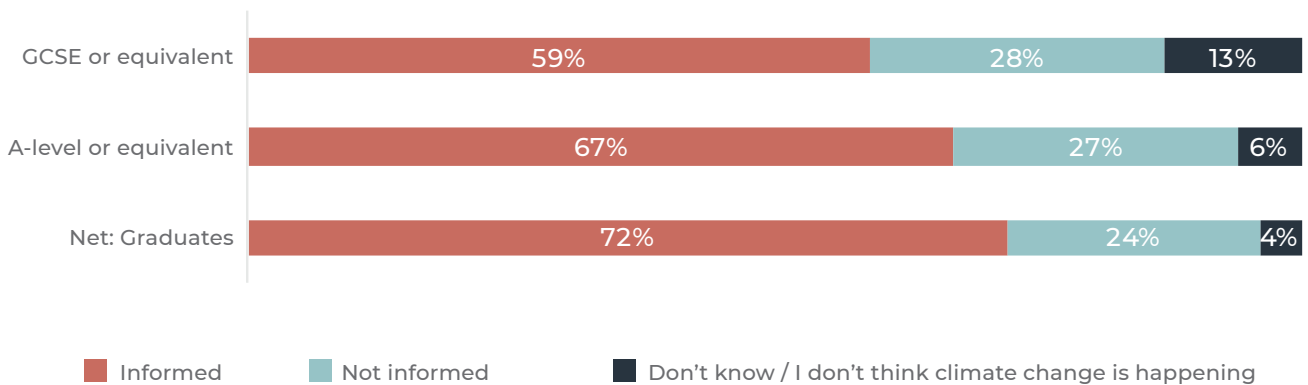
How informed or uninformed do you feel about changes happening to the climate?



Additionally, younger respondents feel more informed than older respondents. 14 to 17-year-olds feel the most informed of the younger age groups, as just one in five (20%) feel uninformed to any degree, compared to over a quarter (27%) of people aged 18 to 30.

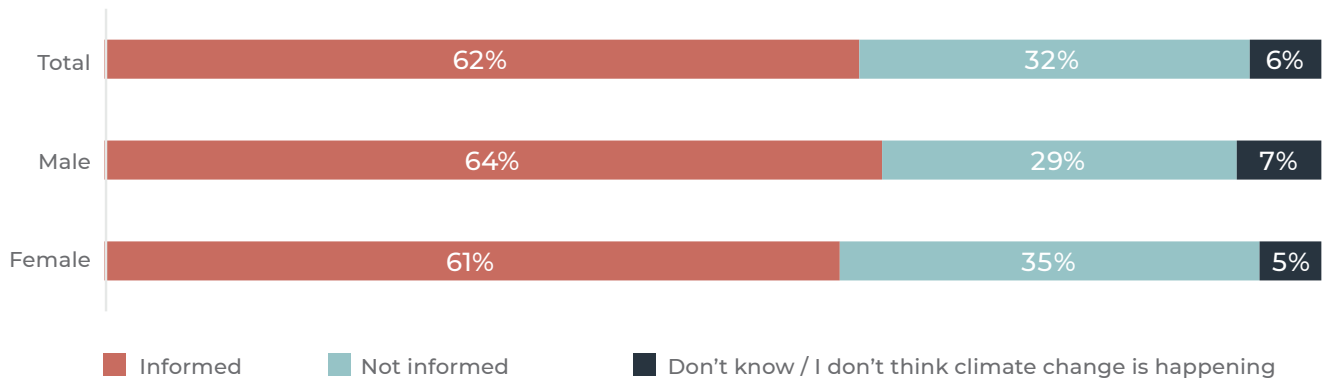
Graduates especially feel they are well informed about the climate, with 72% either very or slightly informed on the issue, compared with 59% of those whose highest qualifications are GCSE or equivalent.

How informed or uninformed do you feel about changes happening to the climate? (By highest education level)



Of those that believe in climate change, three-fifths (62%) also feel informed about the reasons for the changes happening to the climate, with almost a third (32%) feeling uninformed. A similar pattern emerges as before of women being more likely than men to say they feel uninformed about the reasons for climate change (35% vs. 29% respectively).

How informed or uninformed do you feel about the reasons for the changes happening to the climate? (Base: those who believe in climate change)

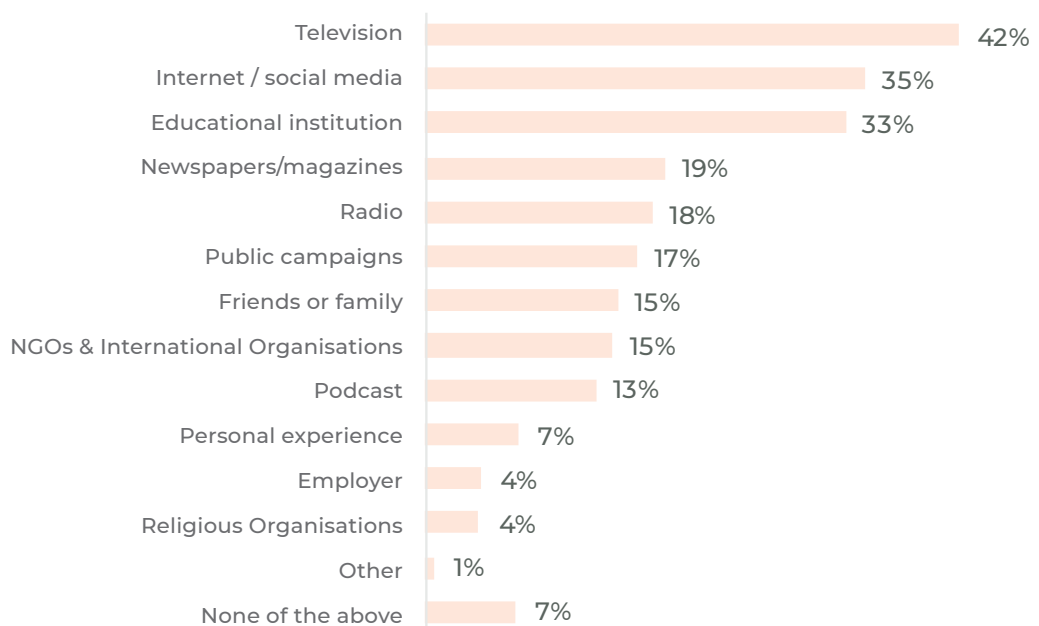


Ethnic minorities are also more likely to say they feel uninformed about the reasons for climate change than respondents from a white background (36% vs 31% respectively).

TV and the internet/social media are the most common sources of climate change information

Looking at ways in which young people engage with climate change information, the most common sources are television (42%), internet or social media (35%), and their educational institution such as school or university (33%).

What are your three main sources of climate change information?

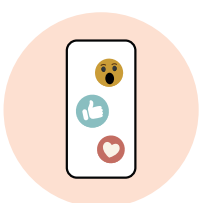




Across the top three main sources of information, women are much more likely than men to select these as a source; 47% of women mention TV vs. 38% of men, 42% of women choose the internet/social media vs. 28% of men, and 36% of women select educational institutions vs. 30% of men.



Almost half (49%) of those at school age (14 to 17) are most likely to find their educational institution as one of their three most common sources of information on climate change, with 38% of those at university age (18 to 21) selecting educational institutions among their top three. 14 to 17-year-olds are also the most likely age bracket to consider TV as one of their main three sources of information on climate change, with half (51%) selecting this. Almost a quarter of 26 to 30-year-olds (24%) use newspapers and magazines as one of their top three sources of climate change information and are the most likely age group to do so. Those aged 22+ are more likely to select radio as a top source than those under the age of 22 (21% vs. 14% respectively).

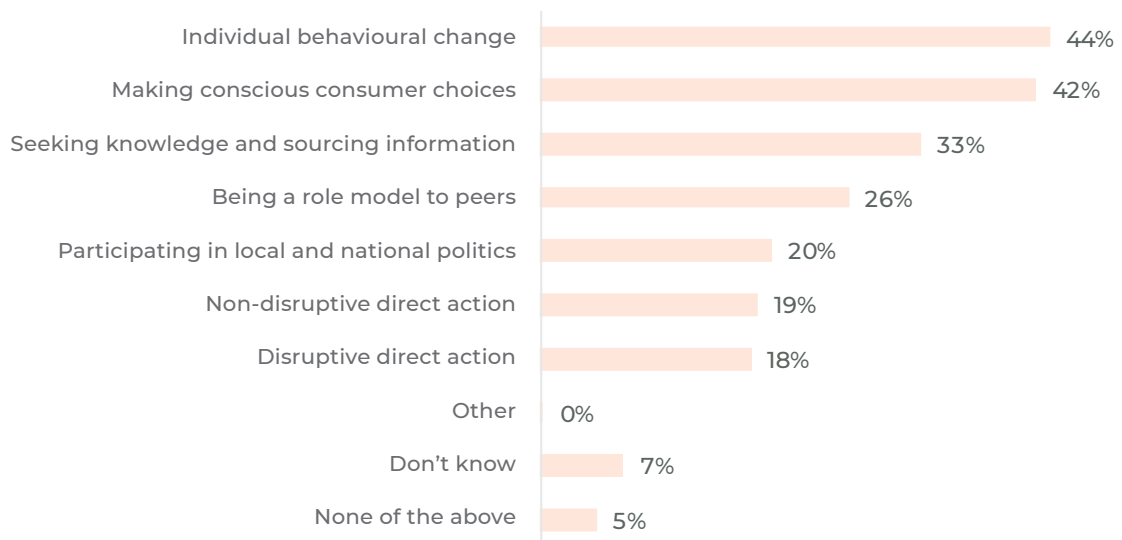


Those from lower social grades are more likely to say the internet or social media is one of their main three sources of information for climate change compared to those from higher social grades (37% C2DE vs. 32% ABC1). Meanwhile, those from higher social grades are more likely than those from lower social grades to say one of their main three sources for information is NGOs & International organisations (17% ABC1 vs. 12% C2DE) and podcasts (16% ABC1 vs. 11% C2DE).

Individual behaviour change is seen as the most effective way to impact climate change

When it comes to the most effective ways young people can positively impact climate change or the environment, over two fifths of young people recognise individual behavioural change as the most impactful way.

Which of the following do you think are the most effective ways that young people can positively impact climate change or the environment?



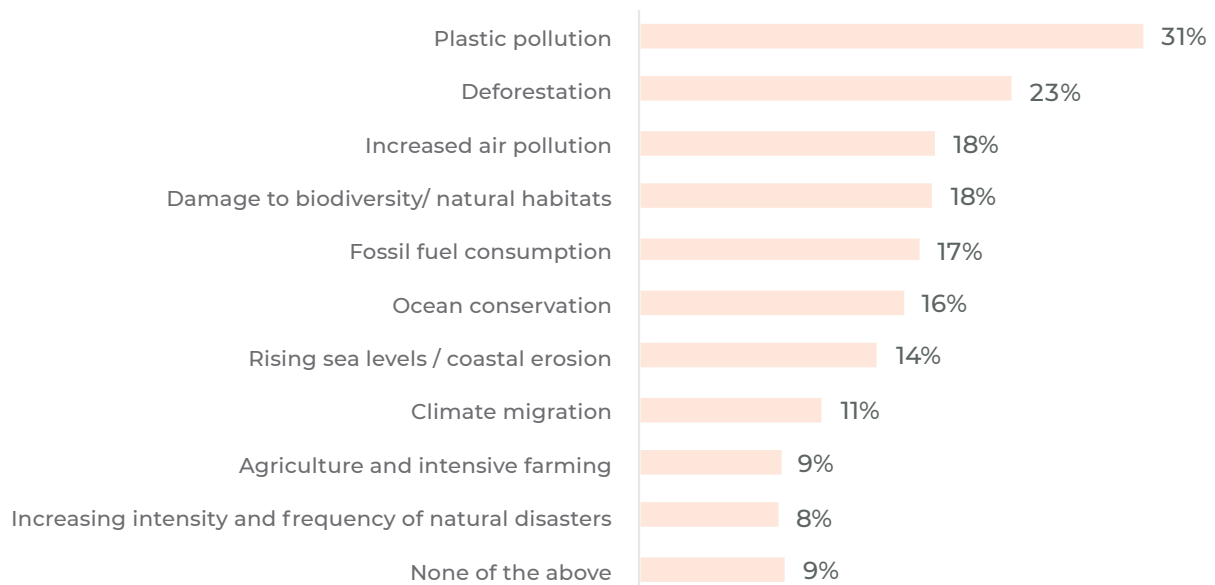
There are differences between men and women in the strength of their sentiment on the best ways to positively impact the environment or climate changes. Half (51%) of women think individual behavioural change is effective in positively impacting climate change, compared to 36% of men. Half (50%) of women also think that making conscious consumer choices is an effective method, compared to 36% of men. Women are also more likely than men to think that seeking knowledge and sourcing information is an effective way (38% vs. 28% respectively). Meanwhile men are more likely to say that participating in local and national politics is an effective method than women (22% vs. 18% respectively). Overall, men are twice as likely to think none of the options would be effective in tackling climate change than women (6% vs. 3% respectively).



Plastic pollution and deforestation are seen as the biggest environmental issues to address

Plastic pollution and deforestation are identified as the areas of climate change or the environment that require the most attention. Almost a third (31%) of young people say that plastic pollution requires the most attention, followed by just under a quarter (23%) saying deforestation requires the most attention.

Which areas of climate change or the environment do you think require the most attention?



Air pollution is seen as the second biggest issue among ethnic minorities, with 22% citing it as important, compared to 17% of respondents from a white background. Meanwhile, men are twice as likely to see none of the above as issues, with 12% saying this compared to 6% of women. More than one in ten of people with no formal qualifications (13%) or educated to GCSE level (11%) see none of the above as issues, double the level of graduates (6%).

Solutions to tackling key environmental issues

The following **solutions** are seen as the most effective in tackling each of the issues in which young people deem most in need of attention.

Deforestation

Reforestation	35%
Banning clear-cutting of forests	23%
Reduce consumption of deforestation prone products	15%

Climate Migration

Legislation and funding to protect the most vulnerable regions in the world	33%
Tougher border restrictions	20%
Increased foreign development aid	16%

Fossil Fuel Consumption

Encouraging companies and countries to become net-zero	42%
Increased incentives for investment into renewable energy	23%
Carbon tax	16%

Plastic Pollution

Ban of single-use plastics	37%
Improved waste collection and recycling/deposit return facilities	28%
Penalties for depositing non-decomposing plastics into oceans	23%

Extreme Weather

Increased funding for climate resilience projects (e.g. flood barriers)	32%
Better education and awareness of extreme weather events	26%
Encouraging insurance companies to provide insurance for high-risk areas (e.g. areas that are likely to be flooded)	22%

Damage to Biodiversity/ Natural Habitats

Protection of certain habitats with rich biodiversity	28%
Increased government funding for biodiversity conservation	18%
Regulation to prevent or reduce deforestation	18%



Ocean Conservation

Regulation over plastic waste, particularly microplastics	51%
Additional regulation and protect of coral reefs	22%
Increased regulation over oil transportation	13%

Sea Levels/Coastal Erosion

Increase in infrastructure such as seawalls	31%
Increased funding for communities and businesses located in coastal areas	29%
Enforced insurance of properties vulnerable to coastal erosion	18%

Increased Air Pollution

Incentivised use of electric vehicles	39%
Funding of carbon-capture methods and other polluting particulates	33%
Incentivised use of public transport	21%

Agriculture and Intensive Farming

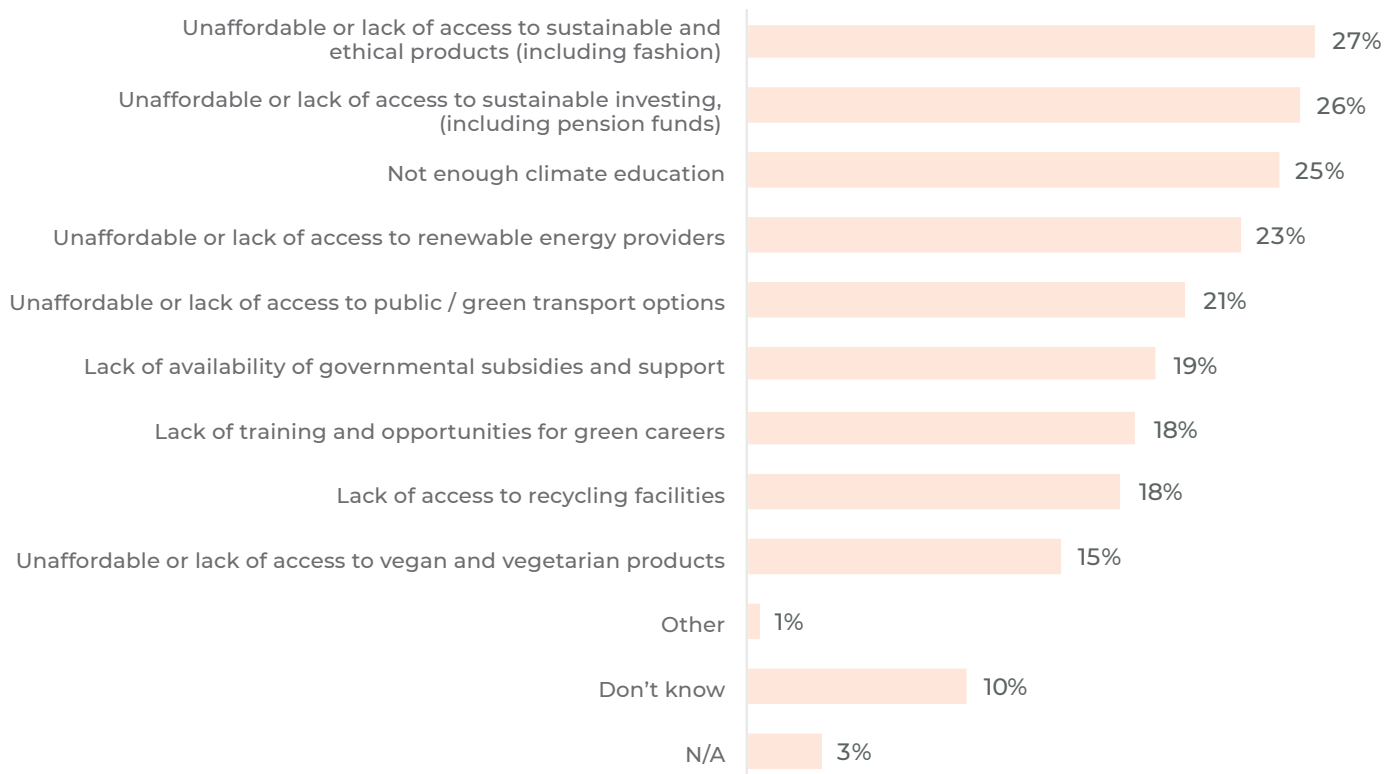
Use of rotation and cover crops whilst adopting agroforestry practices*	25%
More research and development into sustainable farming practises/resources	22%
Better waste management	20%

**(i.e. the growing of both trees and agricultural / horticultural crops on the same piece of land)*

Cost and inaccessibility of sustainable resources are key barriers to living a sustainable life

Young people see the unaffordability and lack of access to sustainable resources as the central obstacles to living a sustainable life. A quarter perceive the cost of, or lack of access to, sustainable and ethical products (27%), and financial products (26%) as barriers. However, one in four (25%) think that insufficient climate education is a barrier.

Which of the following barriers and obstacles, if any, make it difficult for you (or other young people around you) to live a sustainable life?



For men, a lack of sustainable investment opportunities (24%) is the most common barrier, whilst a lack of access to renewable energy providers (22%) and there not being enough climate education (21%) is the next most common barriers for men. Across all top three barriers, women are more likely than men to say this poses a barrier to them living a sustainable life.

Ethnic minorities are more likely than respondents from a white background to say

that lack of availability of governmental subsidies and support is a barrier for them (23% vs. 19% respectively).

Three in ten (30%) people aged 26 to 30 believe a lack of sustainable investment is the biggest barrier, compared to 23% of people aged 14 to 17. Among the youngest people, 22% of 14 to 17-year-olds feel there is a lack of training opportunities for green careers, compared to 15% of those at university age (18 to 21).

CONCLUSION

With only 14% of young people saying that they think the G7 represents their views a lot, the findings of this report suggest there is still significant work to be done by the G7 to make young people feel that they are being heard and their views are being considered when setting priorities and making decisions on the important issues of today. The avenues that most young people feel that their voices are reflected tend to be online, with online petitions and sharing and posting of social media content being the top two methods that young people feel are effective mediums of participation to reflect their opinions.

As such, it is important now more than ever to address the concerns young people have around digital spaces, particularly around online safety and data privacy which are having a profound impact on young people's mental health and ability to engage fully in society. There are also concerns that need to

be addressed on the use of AI powered technology in healthcare to ensure that it is safe, reliable, ethical and just.

There are concerns about the cost of living from both the survey and focus groups with housing, inequality, poverty, and unemployment issues ranking highly. More than a third of young people worry about future income opportunities alongside better job quality and security. Almost half of young people want more and better jobs as we recover from the pandemic alongside a general preference for greater flexibility and hybrid working models for future ways of working.

Across issue areas, it is clear that there is an information gap that needs filling, with many of the topics covered having a substantial minority of people who feel uninformed. A quarter of young people feel uninformed about climate change with three in ten feeling uninformed about the reasons for changes happening to the




climate. A quarter of young people also do not feel informed about mental health, with a quarter not knowing where to go for mental health support.

Furthermore, it is particularly concerning that half of young people feel uninformed about antimicrobial resistance especially as this threatens the effective prevention and treatment of a range of infections. These knowledge gaps only makes it harder to tackle the key issues of today and the future; impacting public engagement in key issues and willingness to take the necessary actions to create a more just and sustainable future.

Another clear theme that emerges is a feeling amongst young people that government and experts could be doing more to tackle key issues. Less than a quarter of young people think politicians and researchers are doing enough to understand the underlying causes of widespread health issues, and to tackle

antimicrobial resistance and only 29% of young people think that enough is being done by the government to ensure that AI technology in healthcare is safe and reliable. Our focus groups also show that young people want more government action on mental health, on regulation (including more regulation of the tech industry and of social media to protect against abuse) and more done to improve digital accessibility for all.

Moving forwards, it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure young people's voices and concerns are heard. Young people have a clear and distinct voice across a range of issues, including profound concerns about mental health, climate change, housing and online safety. As we recover from the coronavirus pandemic, now is the moment to ensure that young people's voices are embedded at every level of global decision making as we seek to build a future fit for future generations.





FUTURE
LEADERS
NETWORK



What people think,
feel and do

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