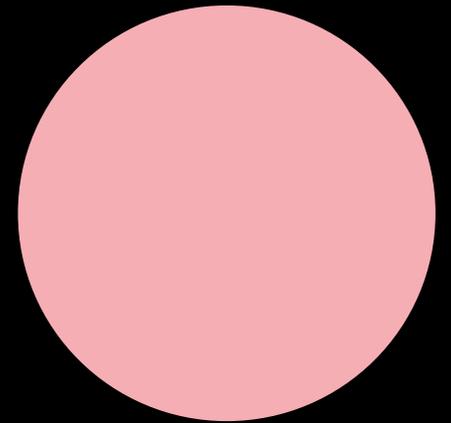
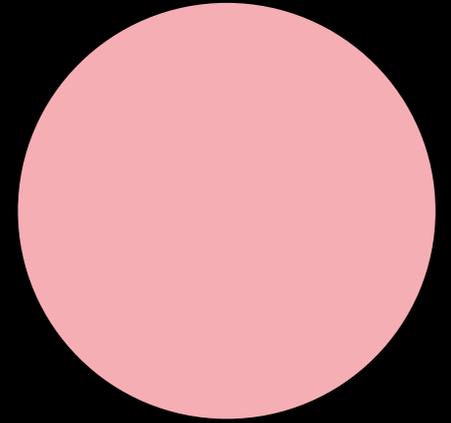
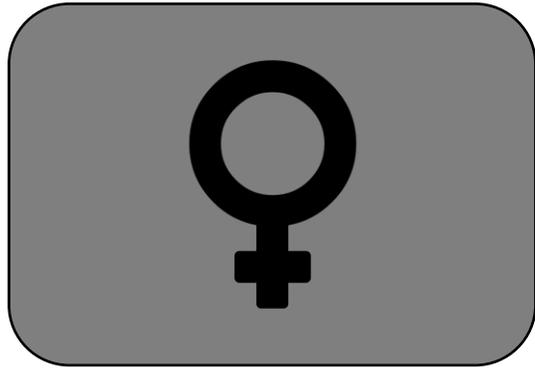


# Attitudes and Experiences of Women During the Covid-19 Pandemic

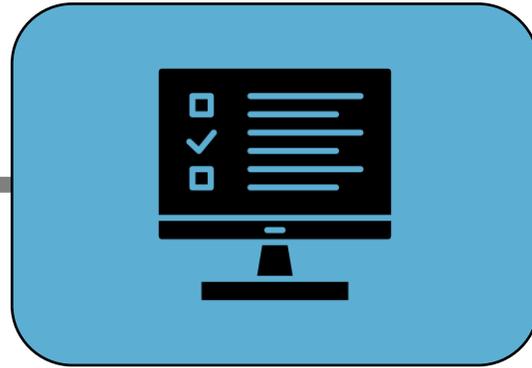
Savanta ComRes for Greater  
Manchester Combined Authority



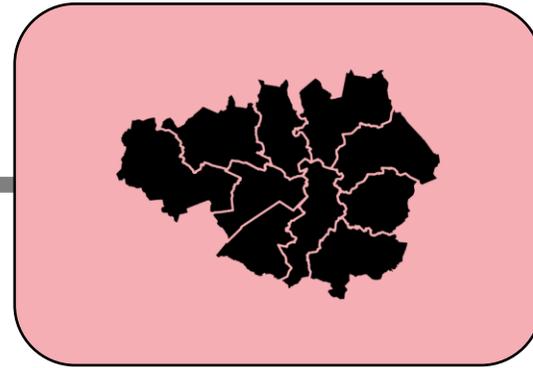
# Methodology



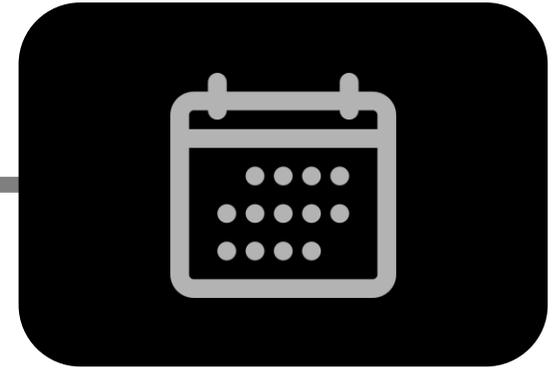
1,017 women aged 18+



Interviewed online



Greater Manchester



23 June – 1 July

Data were weighted to be representative of the local female population by:



Sub-region



Age



Ethnicity

*Those data marked with an asterisk (\*) rely on a sample size of less than 200 women, and thus should be treated with appropriate caution*

# Sample Breakdown (Unweighted)

- Savanta ComRes polled 1,017 women aged 18+ from Greater Manchester.
- Below reflects the demographic breakdown of this unweighted sample.
- This sample was then weighted by sub-region, age and ethnicity to form our weighted sample, representative of the Greater Manchester region as a whole.
- The subsequent presentation reports using our weighted sample, with weighting effects and variations from the below detailed in our full data tables.

| Demographic | Sub-demographic | Count |
|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Age         | 18-34           | 347   |
|             | 35-54           | 402   |
|             | 55+             | 268   |
| Ethnicity   | White           | 889   |
|             | BAME            | 125   |
| SEG         | AB              | 323   |
|             | C1              | 261   |
|             | C2              | 121   |
|             | DE              | 312   |
| Parenthood  | None            | 589   |
|             | Parents         | 428   |

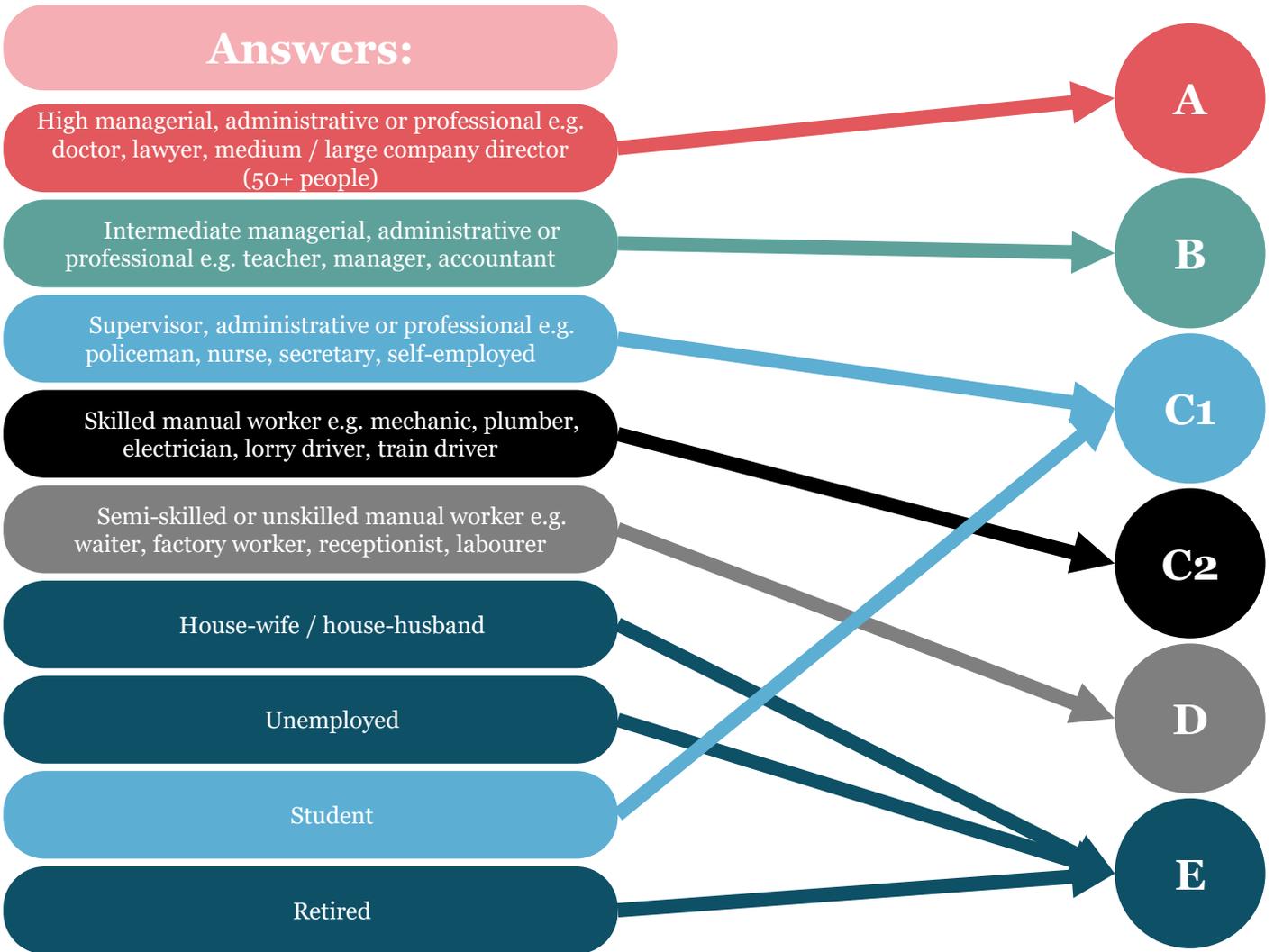
| Demographic                | Sub-demographic                        | Count |
|----------------------------|--|-------|
| Housing Tenure             | Own                                    | 595   |
|                            | Rent                                   | 385   |
| Country of origin          | UK                                     | 931   |
|                            | Non-UK                                 | 84    |
| Household Income           | £0 - £21k                              | 292   |
|                            | £21 - £40k                             | 376   |
|                            | £40k +                                 | 284   |
| Covid-19 Employment change | Furloughed / Redundant / Reduced hours | 289   |
|                            | No change                              | 126   |

# Defining social grade

## Question:

Please indicate which one of the following best describes the profession of the chief income earner in your household.

## Answers:



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the beginning of this pandemic, many felt that Covid-19 (coronavirus) would impact us all in the same way. Whatever the sentiment behind such remarks, a key takeaway from this research is the resilience women in Greater Manchester have shown throughout the pandemic.
- Four fifths of employed women have seen their job change in some way; nearly a third are struggling to make ends meet; two in five say their mental health has suffered; yet very few reach out to support networks, many are using an increase in available time to consider retraining and upskilling and there is even a hint, although it remains little more than a hint, of optimism that things could be better three to six months down the line.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

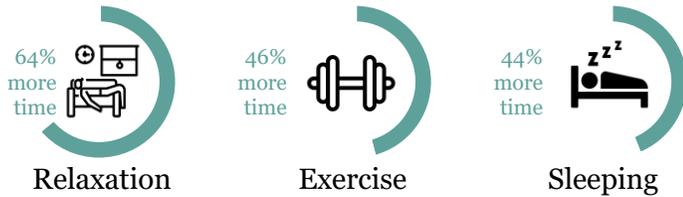
- There are some differences between how different demographic groups of women have handled the pandemic, but often these are small and, usually, consistent across all questions, implying something more to do with cultural response biases rather than a specific coronavirus-related demographic differences. If Covid-19 is the great leveller, however, little is done to account for the varying socioeconomic situations these women may be in, even if their perception of how it affects them may well be similar.
- The message from Greater Manchester women appears positive towards their local and combined authorities, too; they are keen to access services, believe them to be important, and would feel comfortable in using them. Perhaps more would need to be done in messaging in order to further engage the women of Greater Manchester to utilise such services and allow councils and authorities to further ease the significant impact that Covid-19 has had on women across the region.

# Health

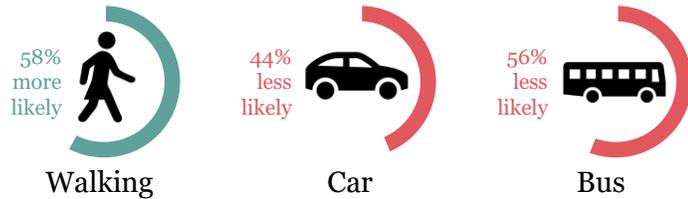


## Changes in lockdown

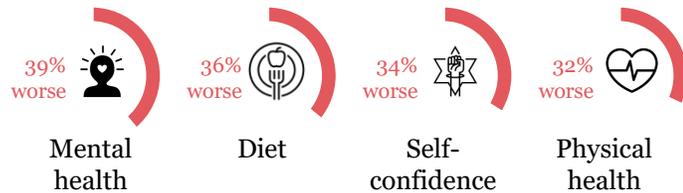
Overall, women have more time to take part in activities crucial to health and wellbeing



Women are also more likely to now walk, and less likely to be using sedentary forms of transport

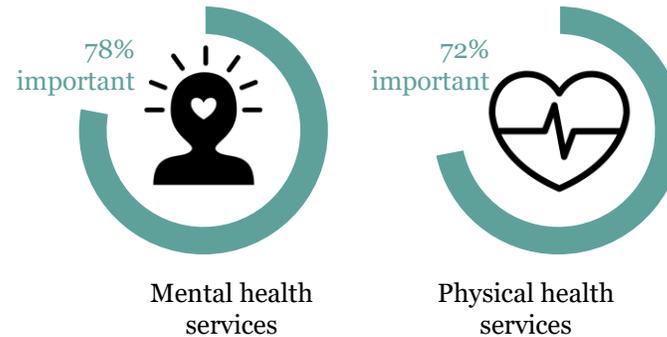


Worryingly, overall women report a decline across many metrics of health and wellbeing

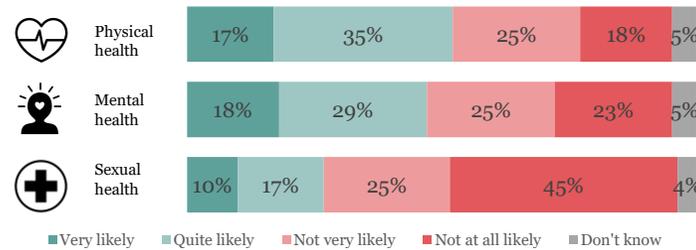


## Services women want

Most women believe it is important for their local authority or regional (combined) authority to provide physical and mental health services to people like themselves throughout the Covid-19 pandemic



Broadly half of women indicated that they are likely to use physical and mental health services if they should be available



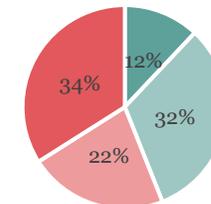
## Abuse and wellbeing

The majority of women feel comfortable contacting the appropriate support networks in the case of domestic abuse over the lockdown period, while around a fifth feel uncomfortable



## Plans for the future

Looking forward, just over two in five have expressed giving some thought over the pandemic to retraining in the health and social care sector



• Given serious thought • Given some thought • Not given much thought • Not given any thought

## SUMMARY (1/3)

- The message from Greater Manchester women regarding health is clear; they see the provision of health services at a local level as important and many would use them if they were available.
- Almost four in five women in Greater Manchester say that it is important for local or combined authorities to provide mental health services, while a diverse range of other health-related services, from physical health assessments to the provision of green spaces are also deemed important services for local authorities to provide.
- Exercise advice and support, however, proved slightly less important than other health-related services.
- What is striking about the importance of these services, particularly mental health provision, is that they are rated almost universally as important among all demographics.

## SUMMARY (2/3)

- There is also an implication that, were these services available as pop-ups in local hubs, they would be used. Around half of women in Greater Manchester say that they would use physical health and mental health pop-ups, although sexual health pop-ups proved considerably less popular, possibly due to the nature of a pop-up in a local hub spot lacking discretion.
- It is worth highlighting, however, that while half of women would use these services, half would not; those most likely to say that they would use the pop-ups tend to be younger women, BAME women, parents, those from a higher household income, and those not in the lowest socioeconomic grade.
- The desire for these services may indeed stem from the way in which the Covid-19 pandemic has affected daily life. Approaching two in five women in Greater Manchester say that their diet and their mental health has worsened during the lockdown, while women were 1.5x more likely to say that their physical health had got worse rather than better, with the difference particularly stark among women with a lower household income and from lower socioeconomic grades.

## SUMMARY (3/3)

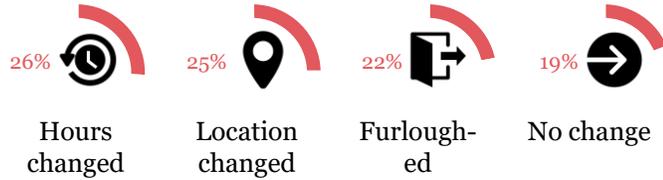
- Women in Greater Manchester were also twice as likely to say that their self-confidence had gotten worse rather than better, pointing to a real deterioration of not only health but general wellbeing among women in Greater Manchester during the last four months.
- Despite this, more than half of women in Greater Manchester report walking more during the lockdown, while use of public transport and cars is significantly down; while the government's lockdown rules are undoubtedly the reason why, it'll be interesting to see whether this trend is temporary or part of a more fundamental change in transport or lifestyle habits.
- Approaching half of women also say that they've had more time to exercise during lockdown, but this is more prevalent among those who have a higher household income or those who have been furloughed, made redundant or are now working reduced hours.

# Employment

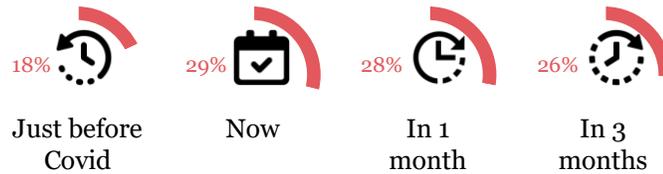


## Changes in lockdown

Overall, the vast majority of employed women have been affected in some form due to the pandemic



Women report an uptick in struggling financially due to Covid, and don't anticipate this changing soon

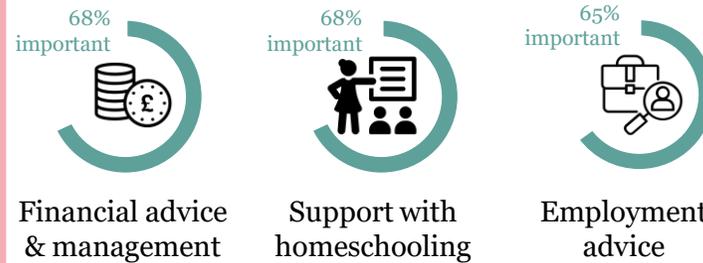


Worryingly, overall women report a decline across many important aspects related to employment



## Services women want

Most women believe it is important for their local authority or regional (combined) authority to provide services related to employment, childcare and finances to people like themselves throughout the Covid-19 pandemic

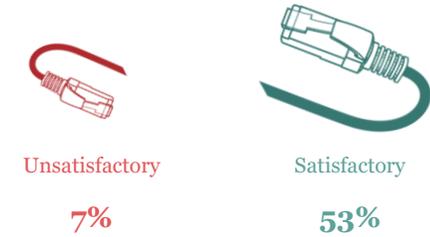


About two in five women indicate that they are likely to use these services if they were available



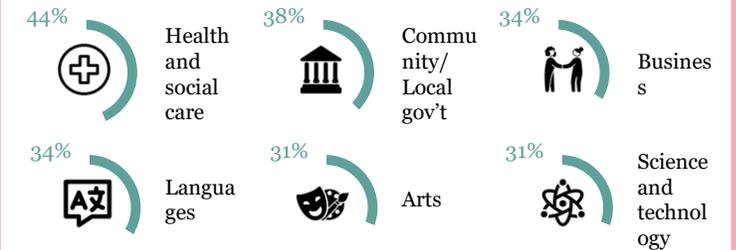
## Working from home

While some jobs have transitioned into working from home throughout the pandemic, just half of women report having a satisfactory broadband connection to do so



## Plans for the future

Looking forward, across a number of sectors a substantial number of women have given thought to retraining or upskilling in a number of areas



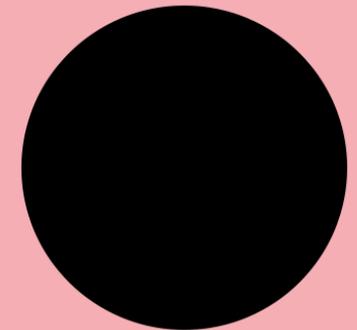
## SUMMARY (1/2)

- The Covid-19 pandemic has affected women and their jobs across Greater Manchester. Just one in five women that were working pre-Covid-19 say that they haven't undergone any changes at their place of work during lockdown, while the remainder have seen any combination of changes in role, hours, location, remuneration, or something more severe such as furlough or redundancy.
- In fact, one in fourteen working women have undergone at least two changes at work (from role, location, hours or pay), while almost a quarter have experienced furlough. Furlough has disproportionately affected those in lower-income households, with a third of those whose household income is less than £21k p.a. experiencing furlough compared to a fifth of those whose household income is above £40k p.a.
- Specifically looking at hours, two thirds of those working women whose hours have changed are now working reduced hours, which equates to around one in ten working women.

## SUMMARY (2/2)

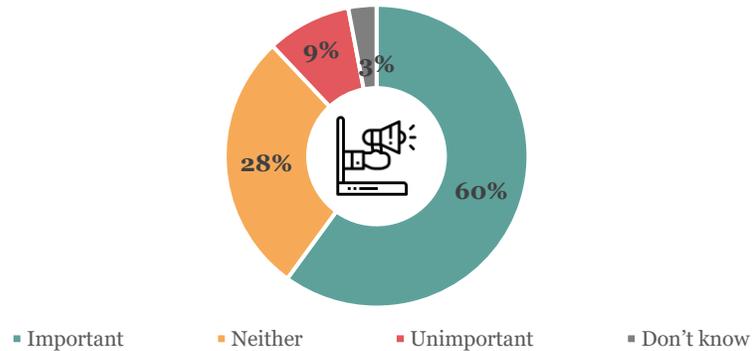
- Changes in job security have had a knock-on effect on abilities to cover living expenses. Two in five women say that they were comfortably covering living expenses before the pandemic hit, but that drops to just one in three when asked whether they're covering living expenses at the moment, with a similar proportion now saying that they're struggling, compared to one in six pre-lockdown. Perhaps unsurprisingly, renters, parents and BAME women are struggling more to cover living expenses compared to homeowners, non-parents and white women.
- While council services related to health are deemed more important, a heavy importance is still placed on services to help with working or home life, including support with homeschooling and employment advice. Two fifths of women also said that they'd be likely to use an employment advice pop-up.
- Further, there is a desire to retrain and upskill. While a larger proportion have given thought to the health and social care sector, possibly due to a greater focus on it within the context of a global pandemic, significant proportions of women have thought about training or upskilling in other sectors, including within the community, as entrepreneurs or within business, and science and technology.

# Digital Skills

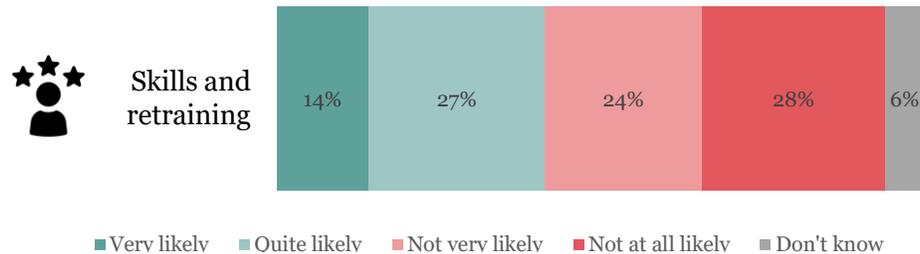


## Services women want

Most women believe it is important for their local authority or regional (combined) authority to provide services related to digital skills and technology to people like themselves throughout the Covid-19 pandemic



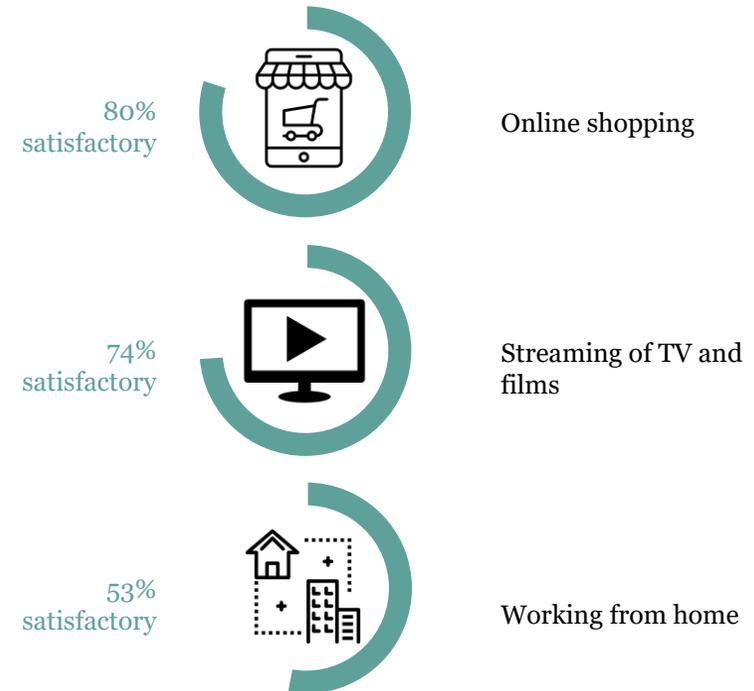
Women are split on whether they are likely to use services related to skills and training



## Practical limitations

While a comfortable majority of women believe their broadband is of satisfactory quality to go online shopping, or stream tv and films, just half of women believe it is of adequate quality to work from home

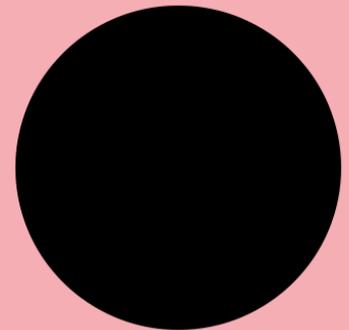
This has the potential to impede take up of this option among those employed women who would otherwise be able to do so



## SUMMARY

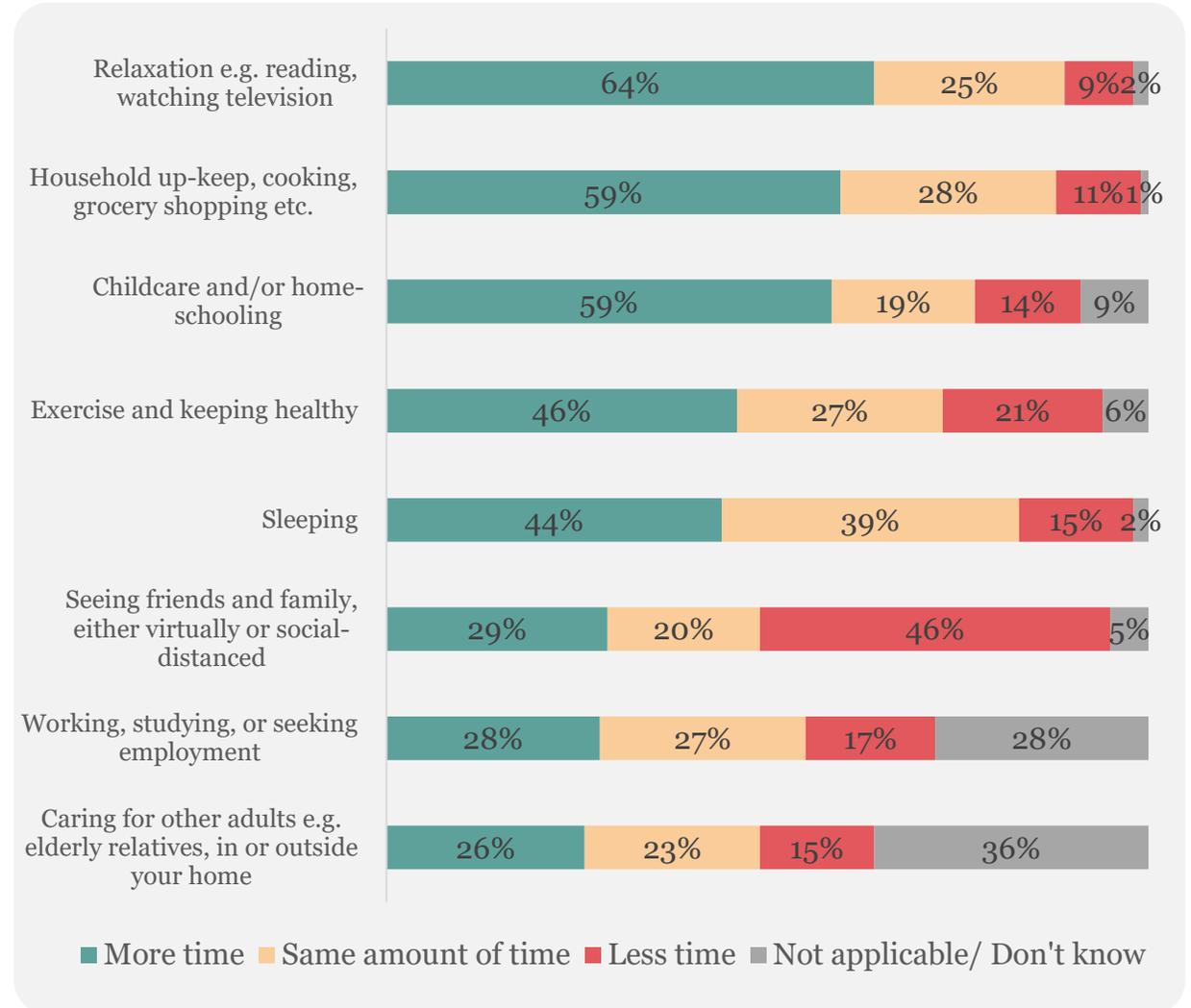
- Women express their current level of broadband access was considerably more likely to be to a satisfactory level to stream movies or television as opposed to work from home.
- This may be a result of infrastructure issues, but the discrepancies may indicate the possibility of a digital skills deficit when it comes to digital work as opposed to digital play. Three in five women say that it is important that councils provide digital skills and support, considerably fewer than those who say health services are important. This importance deficit may mean that engaging with women on the issue could be a considerable challenge for local authorities.
- However, around a quarter of working women are now working from home as a result of the pandemic, so it may soon be something of a necessity rather than a luxury to help women facilitate an easier homeworking setup and lifestyle.

# Full Results



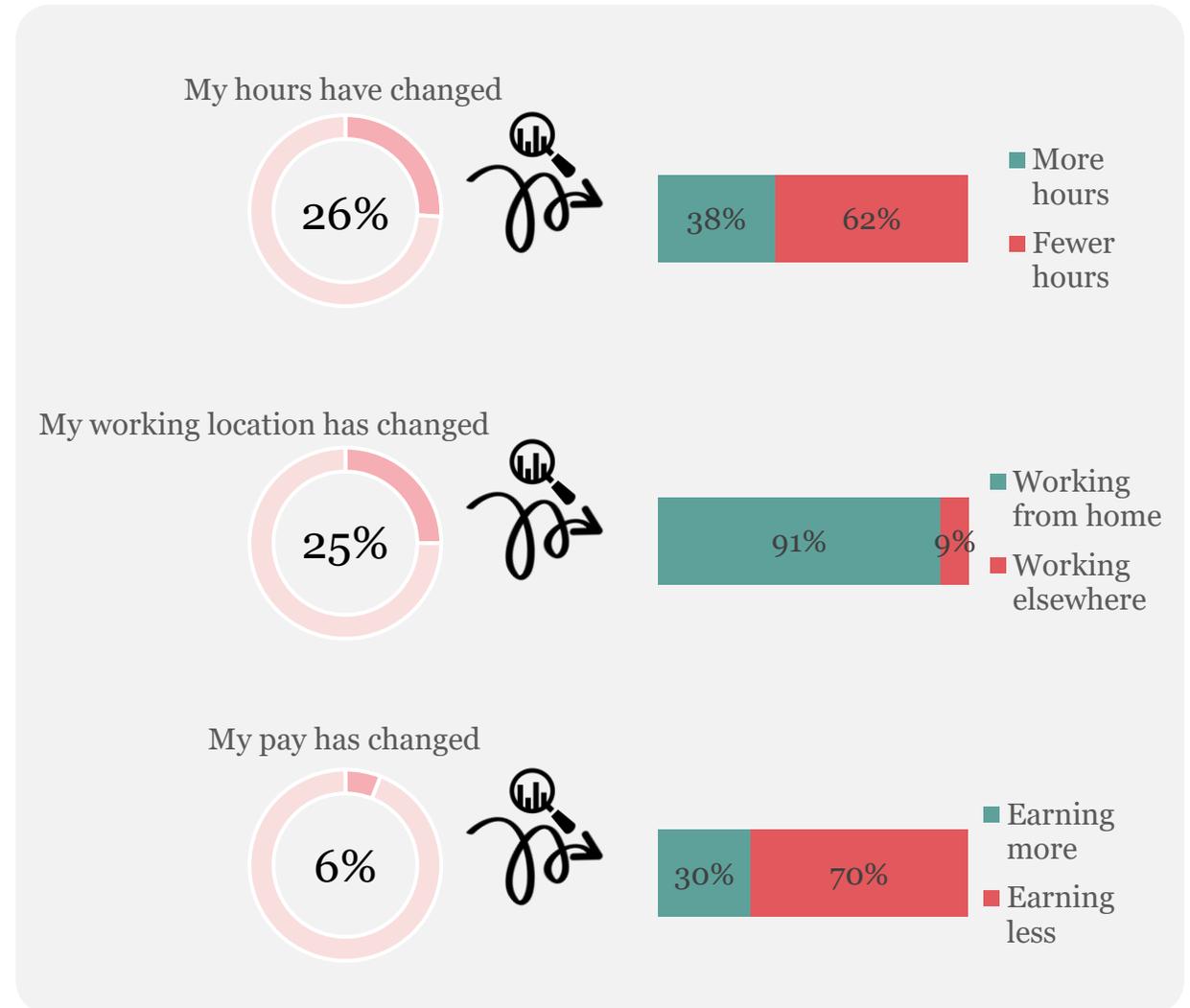
# Except for socialising, Covid-19 has given women more time, rather than less, to complete regular day-to-day activities

- Around three in five women say that they have **more time to relax** (64%), for **childcare / homeschooling** (59%) and general **household up-keep** (59%).
- However, around half of women (46%) say that they now have **less time to see friends and family**.
- Generally, **younger women are more likely to say that they have more time** for the various tasks and activities listed besides relaxation and childcare, where there were no significant differences by age.
- **Additionally, parents also say they have more time** for other tasks and activities than non-parents, as do those in a **higher socioeconomic grade (AB)** than those from a lower socioeconomic grade (DE), with the same exception of relaxation.



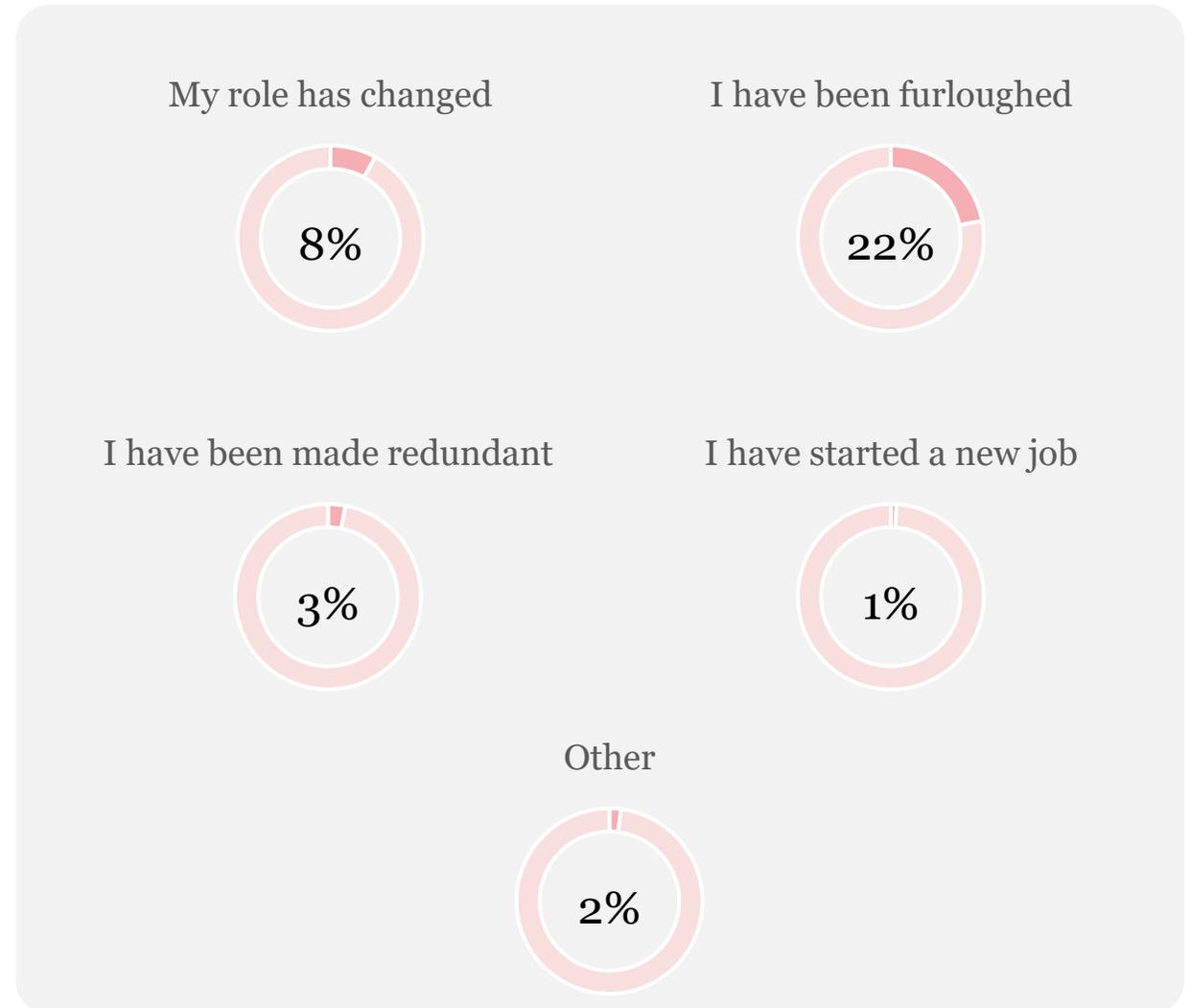
# Just a quarter of employed women have seen their working location change due to Covid-19, with nearly all affected working from home

- Among employed women, around **a quarter (26%) have seen their hours change** over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, with **three in five (62%) of those seeing their hours reduced**.
- **A quarter (25%) of employed women have seen their working location change**, although this was significantly higher among women who work full-time (31%) as opposed to part-time (13%), and among those from high income households (34%) as opposed to low (10%).
- Just six per cent of women say that their **pay has changed during the pandemic**, including 12%\* of employed women born abroad compared to just one in twenty (5%) UK-born employed women.
- **Seven per cent of women have seen two changes to their work life**, between hours, location, role and pay, and BAME employed women are twice as likely to have experienced two changes than white employed women (14%\* vs. 6%).



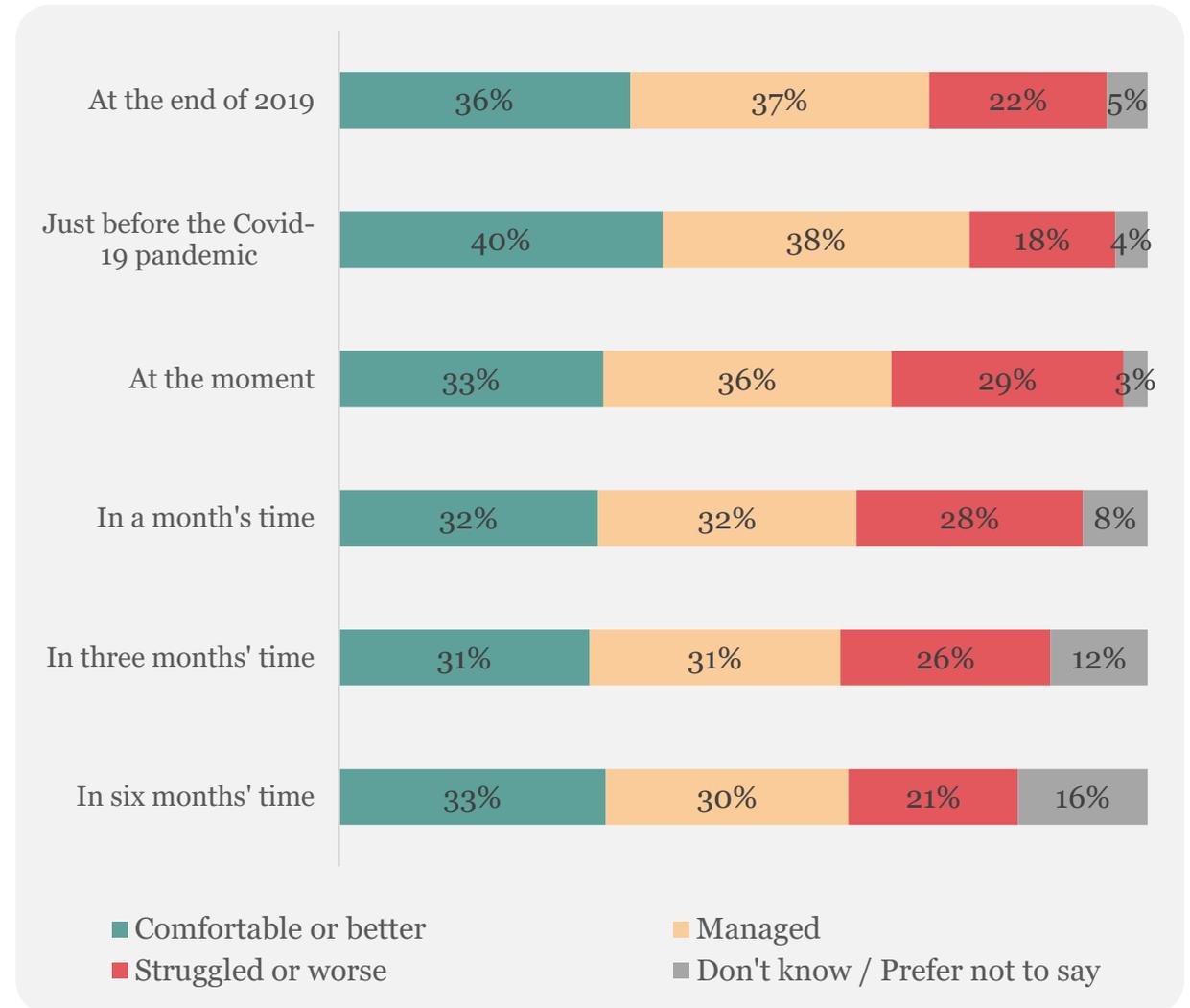
# Over a fifth of employed women have been furloughed during Covid-19, and one in ten have been given a changed role

- **Over a fifth of employed women (22%) have been furloughed** during the pandemic.
- This has **disproportionately affected renters rather than homeowners** (28% vs. 18%), as well as those from **low-income households**, with 30% of low-income households saying they have been furloughed, compared to one in five medium and high-income households (20% and 19% respectively).
- **Just a fifth (19%) of employed women say that nothing has changed in their job** during the pandemic, but disproportionately fewer younger (18-34) women say that compared to older (55+) women (10% vs 34%). Additionally, employed women from **lower socioeconomic grades** (24% DE vs. 14% AB), **those without children** (23% vs. 15% parents), and **those born in the UK** (20% vs. 8% born abroad\*) are more likely to have had nothing change in their job.



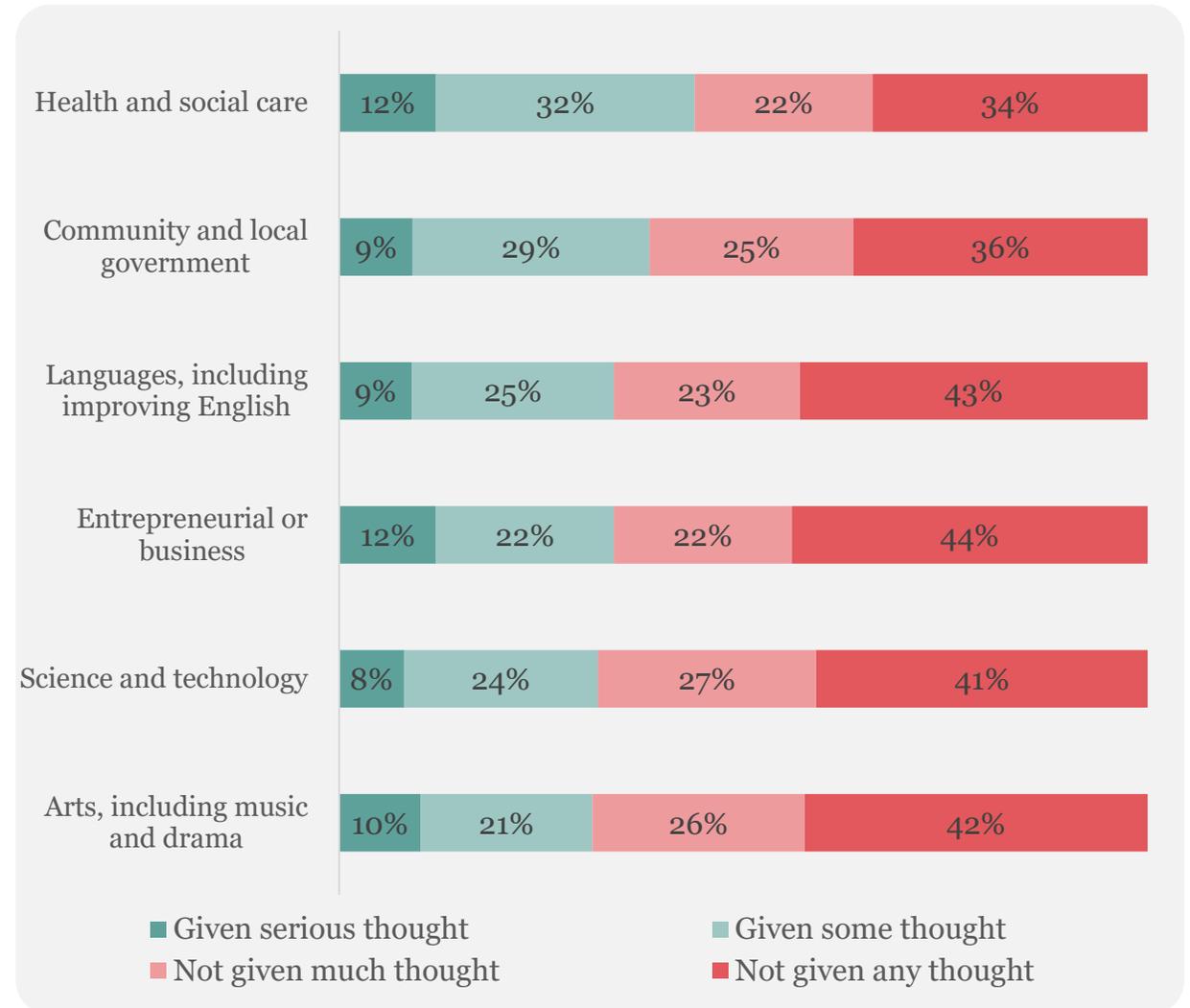
# Over a third more women are now struggling or worse to cover living expenses than were before the pandemic

- Two in five (40%) women say that they were able to cover their living expenses comfortably or better just before the pandemic, **just one third (33%) say the same now.**
- Worryingly, a similar amount of women say that they're both likely to be comfortable and uncomfortable as now in a month (32% & 28%) and three months' time (31% & 26%). This indicates a lack of optimism that the economic situation is going to improve in the immediate future.
- **Younger women are significantly more likely to say they're struggling** to cover living expenses now than older women (18-34 34%, 35-54 41% vs 55+ 14%), **as are BAME women** compared to white women (**37%\* vs. 27%**), **parents** compared to non-parents (39% vs. 23%), **low and medium-income households** compared to high (35% and 30% vs. 23%) and **renters** compared to homeowners (40% vs 22%).



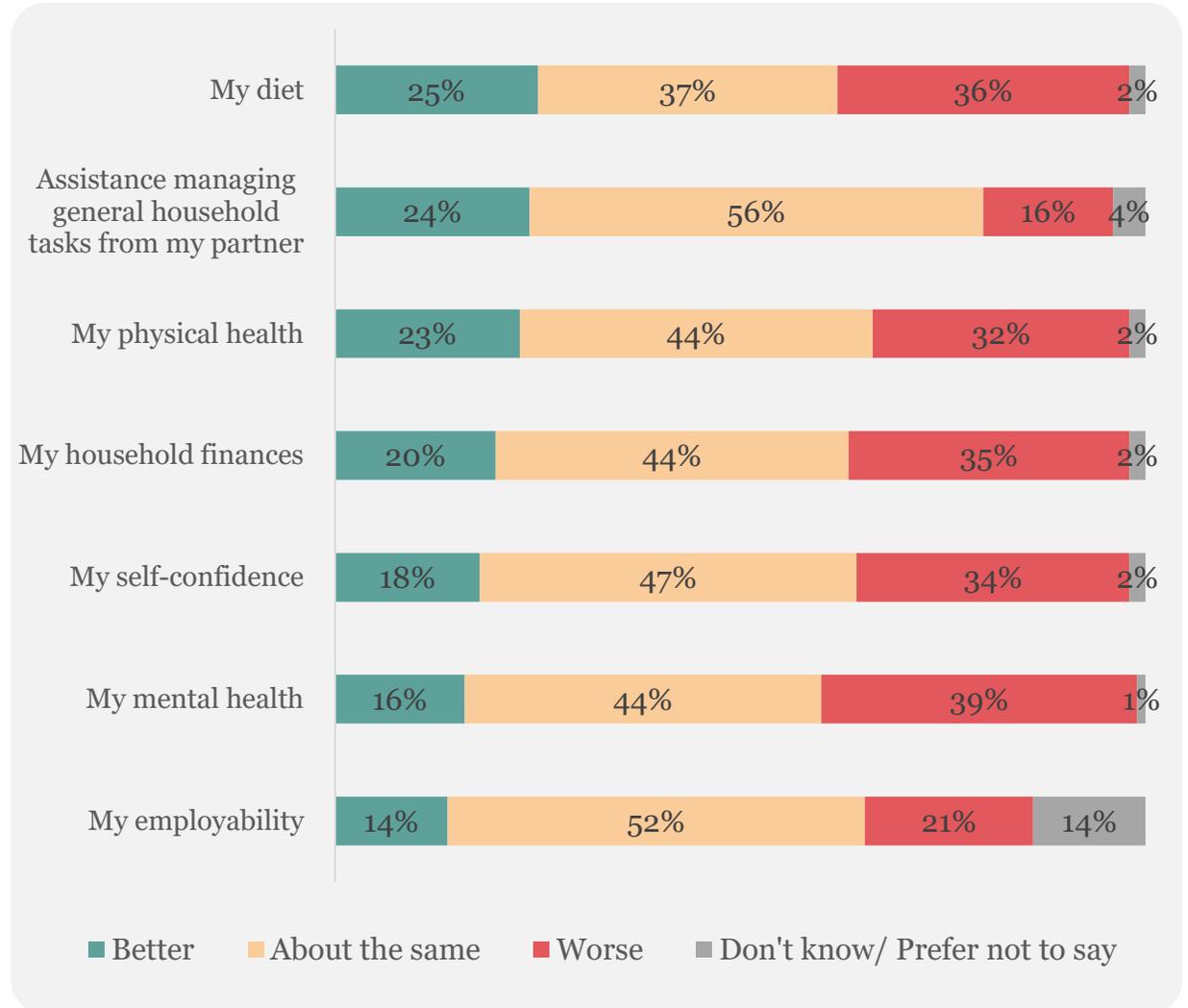
# Approaching half of women have given some thought to retaining or upskilling in health and social care in the wake of Covid-19

- Women are most likely to have given thought to upskilling or retraining in the field of **health and social care** (44%) in the wake of Covid-19 and are least likely to have thought about the field of **arts, including music and drama** and **science and technology** (31%).
- Across all fields, **younger women, BAME women\***, **women in the higher socio-economic groups, and parents** were the most likely to have given some thought to retraining or upskilling during the pandemic.
- However, there was more **parity** among all demographics of women when it came to considering retraining or upskilling in the **health and social care** sector.



# Two in five women say that their mental health has worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic

- Around a third of women say that each of their **mental health** (39%), **diet** (36%), their **household finances** (35%), their **self-confidence** (34%) and their **physical health** (32%) have **gotten worse** since the Covid-19 lockdown.
- Those in the **lowest socioeconomic groups (DE)** were more likely than **ABs** to say that their **mental health had gotten worse** since the pandemic and lockdown began (DE 45% vs AB 36%), as well as their **diet** (DE 42%, AB 31%).
- Perhaps expectedly, those who have gone through furlough or reduced hours were more likely than those who have experienced no work changes to say that their employability has gotten worse (33% vs 7%).



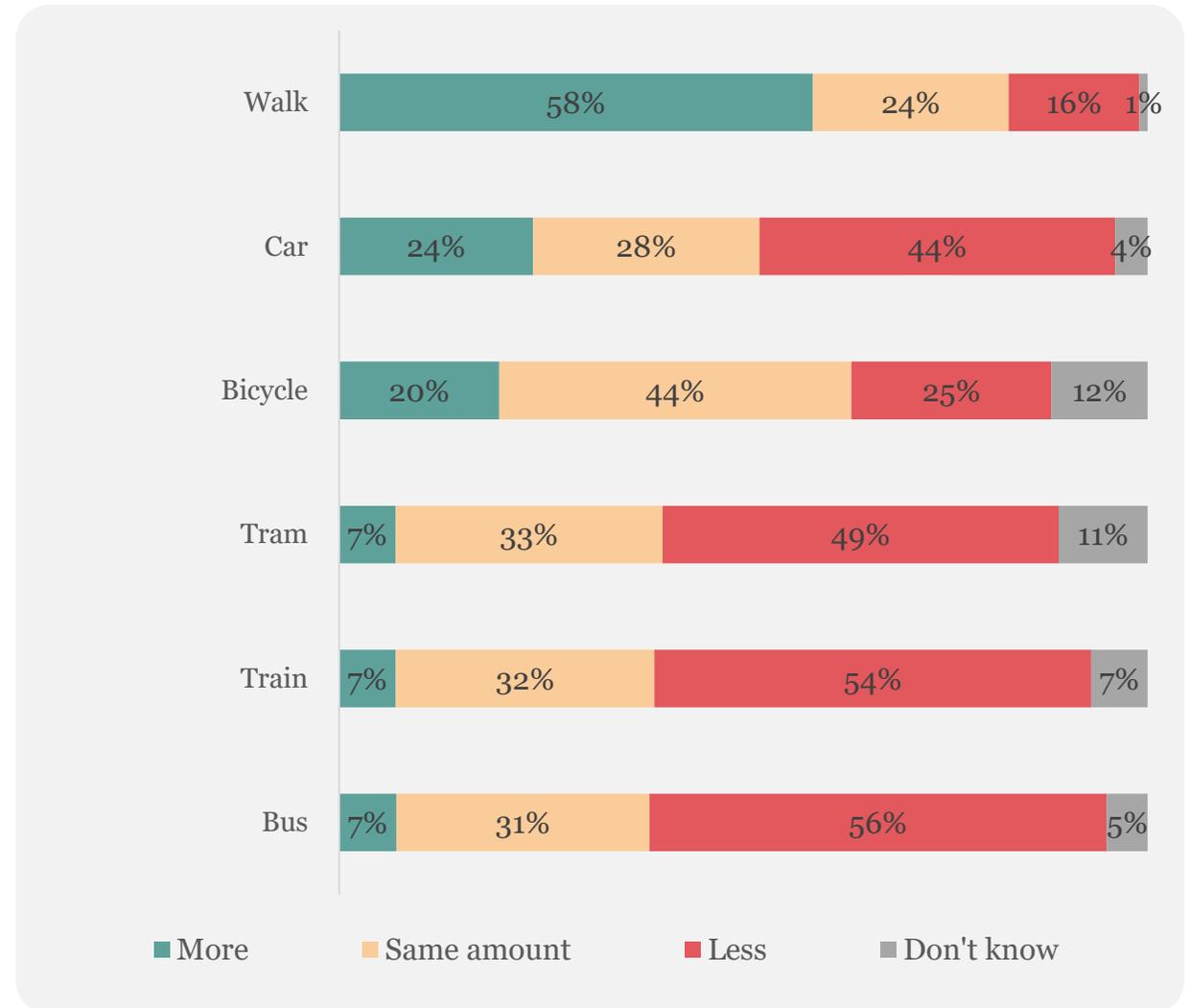
# One in six women have used charities more to support their family through Covid-19, roughly equal to those who have used these services less

- Overall there are no major net increases in women using these various support systems to assist themselves and their families during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- While around **one in six women report using charities (17%), their local council (16%), and their combined authority (15%) more to support their families** during the pandemic, around one in eight women also reported using these services less.
- Younger women, BAME women\*, women in the AB and C2 socioeconomic groups and parents were generally more likely to say that they use these support systems more now.



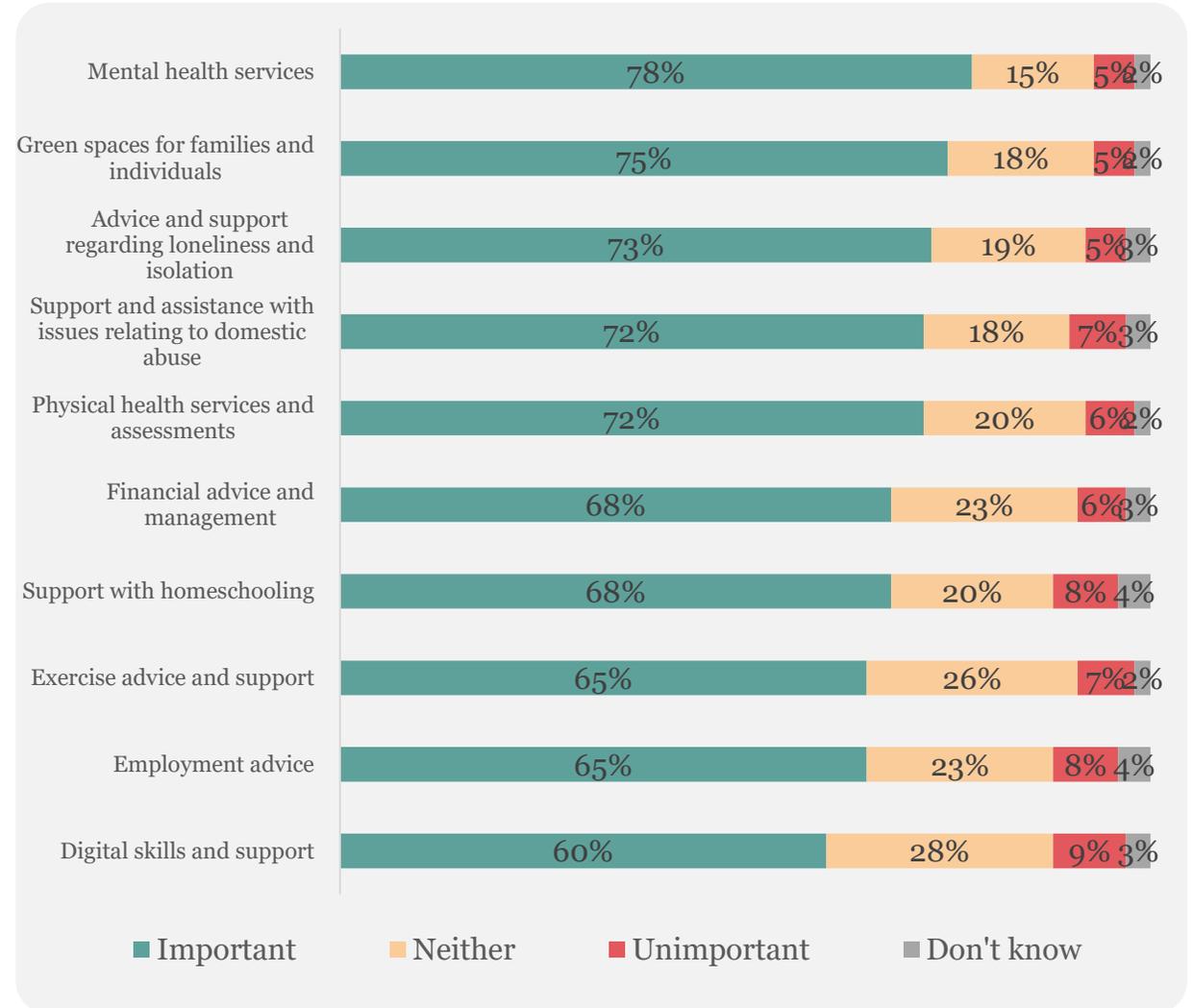
# Public transport usage declines steeply, while half of women walk more since lockdown was introduced

- Likely to be influenced by changes to working patterns and enforced government rules, **more than half of women say that they have used the bus (56%) and train (54%) less than before the lockdown.** Half (49%) also say that they're using the tram less.
- **One in four (24%)** say that they're **using the car more now** than before the lockdown, but almost twice as many (44%) say they're using the car less.
- **The net decline in car usage is driven primarily by middle-aged to older women;** around the same proportion of women aged 18-34 who said that they used the car less (36%) also said they'd used it more (36%).
- **More than half of women (58%) say they have been walking more** since lockdown was introduced compared to before.



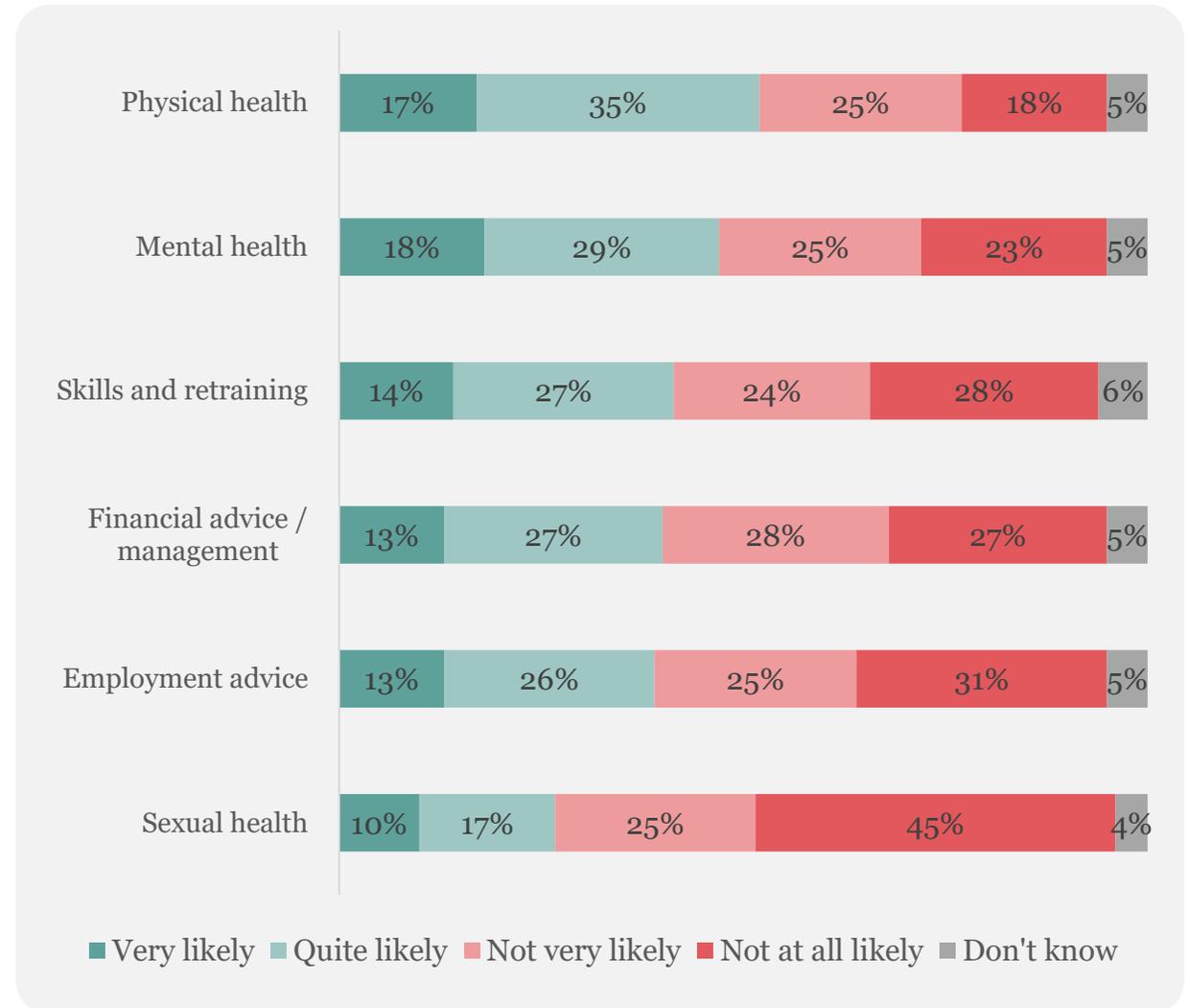
# Three quarters of women say it is important for local or combined authorities to provide mental health services during Covid-19

- While a majority of women believe it is important that their local or combined authority provides all of these services during a pandemic, there are three distinct tiers.
- In **tier one**, at least seven in ten women say that services related to **health and wellbeing** are important services for their local or combined authority to provide.
- In **tier two**, around two thirds of women say that advice and assistance related to **employment and education** are important for their local or combined authority to provide.
- **Digital skills and support** (60%) is on its own in tier three.



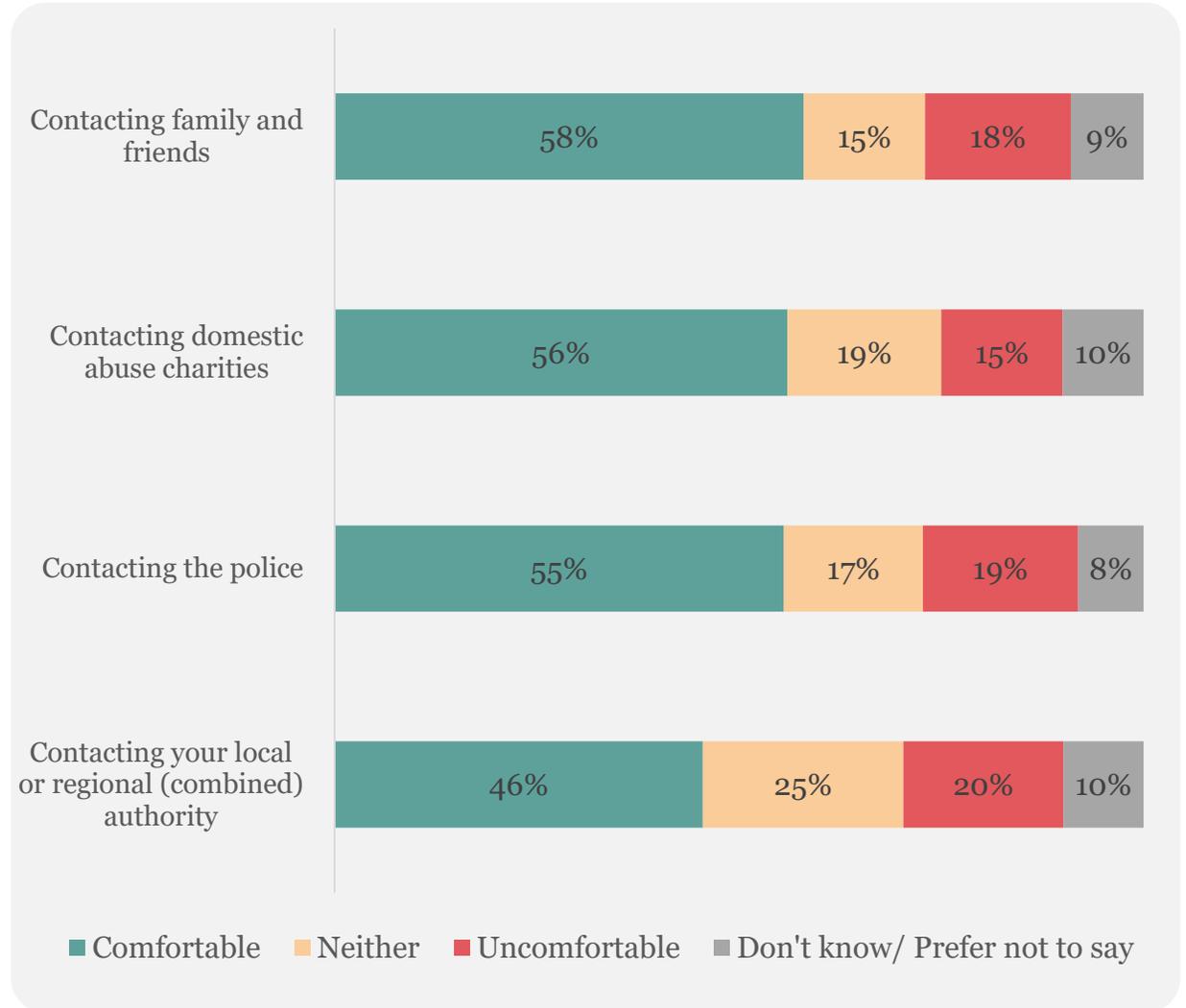
# Half of women say they would likely use physical or mental health pop-up services if they were to open near local hubs

- Around **half of women say that they would use physical health (52%) or mental health (47%) pop-up services** if they were to open near a local hub.
- The most likely to use such services were **younger women, BAME women\*, and parents.**
- Around two in five women would be likely to use pop-ups relating to skills and retraining (42%), financial advice / management (40%), and employment advice (39%), although again these are most likely to be used by younger women, BAME women and parents.
- Just a quarter of women (27%) say that they would be likely to use pop-up sexual health facilities, compared to 69% who would not be likely.



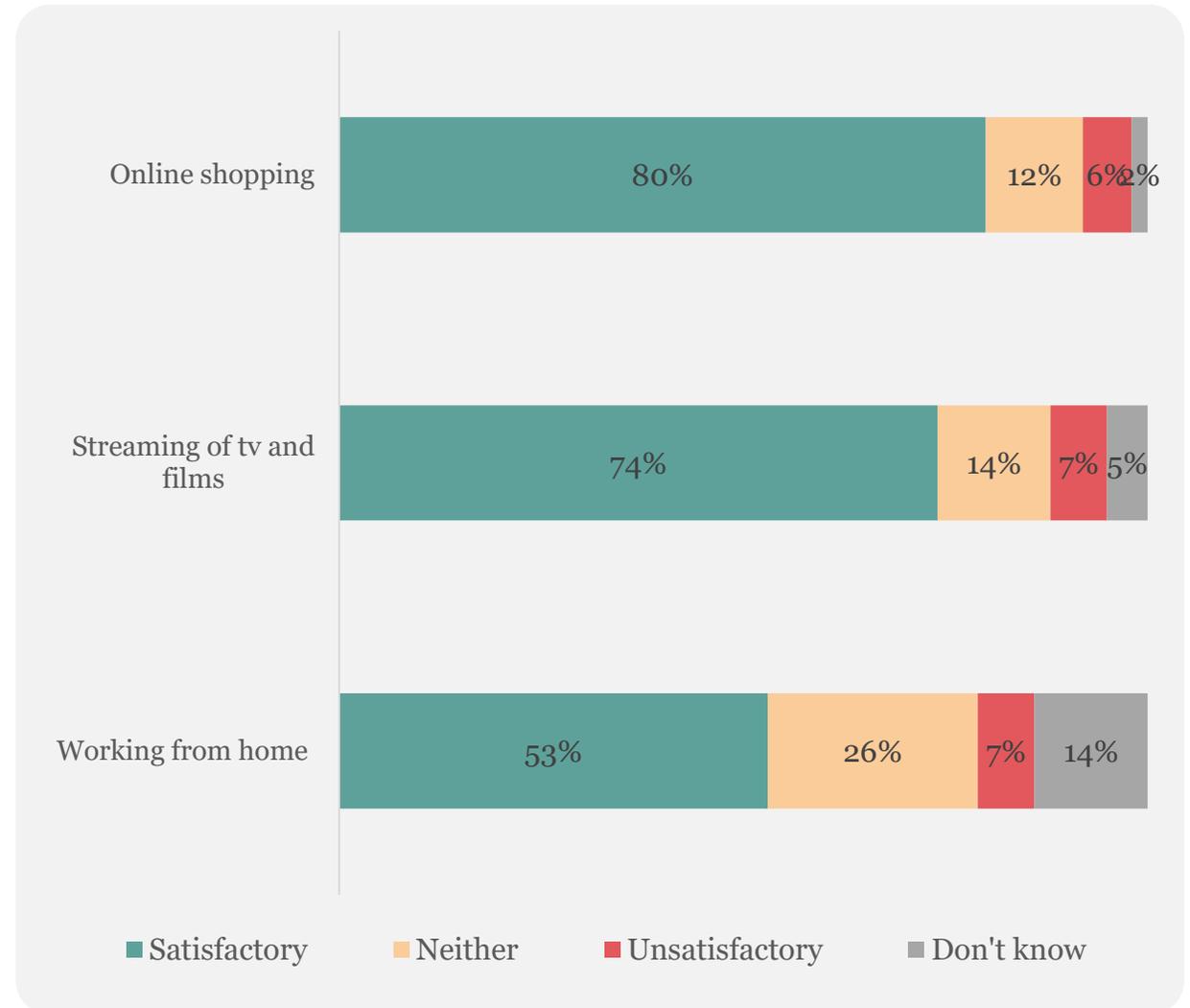
# Two in five women say they would feel comfortable contacting their local or combined authority if they were at risk of domestic abuse

- While approaching half (46%) of women say that they would be comfortable contacting their regional or combined authority if they were at risk of domestic abuse, this is **at least 9 points less comfortable** than they would be contacting family and friends (58%), domestic abuse charities (56%) or the police (55%).
- There are a few differences in demographic groups that would feel comfortable in contacting their local or combined authority; ABs (53%) would be more comfortable than DEs (43%), but no other distinct differences beyond that.
- There were no significant differences between white and BAME women\* when it came to being more or less comfortable contacting the police.



# Just half of women feel that their current access to broadband is satisfactory to be able to work from home

- **Just half of women (53%) say that their current access to broadband is satisfactory to work from home**, compared to three quarters (74%) who say it is good enough to stream tv and films and four in five (80%) who say it is good enough to shop online.
- Those who say their internet access is satisfactory rises to six in ten (61%) among women who are employed either full or part time.
- **This does also correlate with socioeconomic grade**, with around three quarters of those in the top socioeconomic groups saying they have satisfactory access to broadband to enable homeworking (AB 73%) compared to just half of those in C1 (54%) and C2 (51%) and a third (35%) of those in DE.



# Thank you



**Chris Hopkins**  
Associate Director

**Simon Cereda**  
Senior Consultant

