

# Public Perceptions Research

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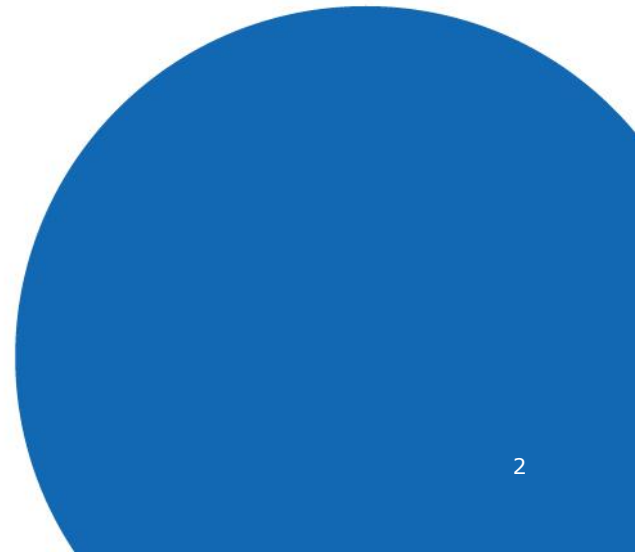
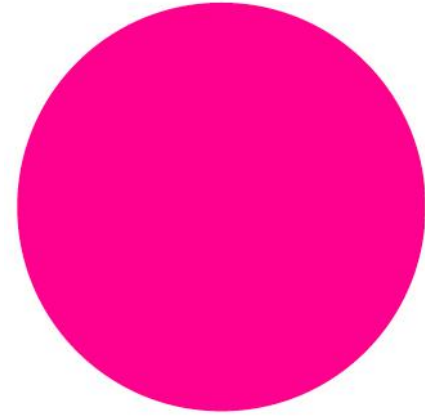
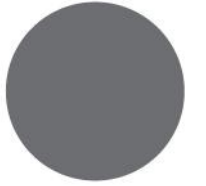


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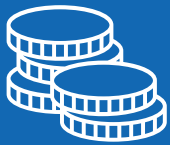
## 02 Summary of findings



# Summary of findings (1)



**Satisfaction** with the overall experience of an opticians/optometrist practice remains high (87%), with an increase in those saying they are **very satisfied** (55% vs. 50% 2024). New questions for this wave show that satisfaction varies when it comes to **delivery of information** (90%), **time taken to properly address needs** (87%), being **treated with care and compassion** (89%), and **involvement in care and treatment decisions** (83%).



Around three quarters (74%) remain satisfied with the overall **value for money**, with an increase in the proportion saying they are **very satisfied** (38% vs. 32% 2024). Satisfaction also remains stable when it comes to **the experience of buying glasses or contact lenses** (72%).

Younger people aged 16-24, ethnic minorities, and those with at least one vulnerability marker are **less likely than average to be satisfied across almost all satisfaction metrics**. This is in line with the previous wave.



## Summary of findings (2)



**An opticians/optometrist practice** remains the most likely place that the public would go to in the event of an eye problem (36%) – ahead of a GP practice/surgery, which has seen a drop this year (27% vs. 30% 2024). Those in **England** remain less likely to turn to an opticians/optometrist practice first (33%), while those in Scotland (53%) and Wales (53%) are more likely to do so. In Northern Ireland, 44% say they would turn to an opticians/optometrist practice first. Those aged 16-24 remain more inclined to visit a GP practice/surgery than an opticians/optometrist practice.



**Confidence in a high standard of care** from an opticians/optometrist practice remains high (93%), compared to a pharmacy (86%), dental practice/surgery (80%) and a GP practice/surgery (78%).

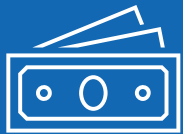
As in 2024, most (85%) are **confident in managing their own eye health**, with relatively few saying they have little or no confidence (11%).



## Summary of findings (3)



**Not being able to be seen on the same day** is still the most common reason why some would not visit an opticians/optometrist practice first in the event of an eye problem (30%). However, in 2025, more identify the inconvenience of the location as a factor (13% vs. 10% 2024), while fewer cite the possibility of needing to pay (14% vs. 17% 2024).



The cost of glasses/contact lenses (22%) and sight test/eye examinations (17%) continue to be the main reasons why some feel uncomfortable **visiting an opticians/optometrist practice**, although half do not feel uncomfortable at all (49%). Those who feel particularly uncomfortable due to a range of factors include those aged 16-34, ethnic minorities, those with at least one vulnerability marker, those who are struggling financially, and those not confident in managing their own eye health.

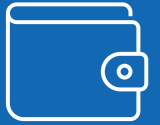
A stable four in five (80%) say they have **had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years**, with only 3% saying they have **never had a sight test/eye examination**. Those aged 25-34 (5%) and ethnic minorities (6%) are more likely to state they have never had a sight test/eye examination.



## Summary of findings (4)



**A high street opticians/optometrist practice** continues to be the most popular location for a sight test/eye examination (83%). The proportions of those who shop around (31%) and know the price before attending their appointment (65%) also remain stable with 2024.



The location where the public purchase their glasses and contact lenses is consistent with 2024. However, new questions for this wave show that almost a quarter (24%) say they **felt pressured** to purchase a specific brand or type of glasses or contact lenses. Over three quarters (77%) feel that the pricing was **clear and transparent** when they last purchased glasses or contact lenses, while slightly fewer (73%) feel that the price they expected to pay **matched** the price they ended up paying.

Amongst those who knew the price of their sight test/eye examination before attending, around two in five (39%) say they knew this information from previous visits. Just over a quarter (26%) found out before booking, while one in five (20%) found out during the booking process. Around one in ten (9%) found out after booking, but before attending.





## Summary of findings (5)

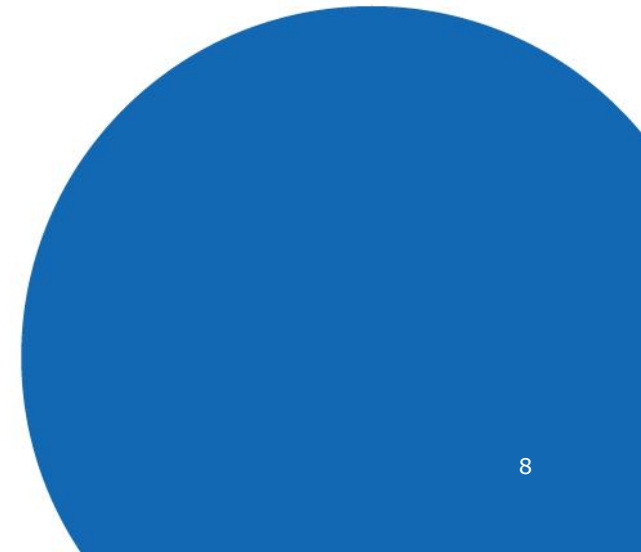
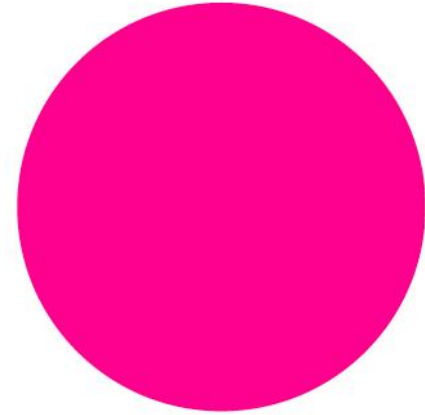
Just over one in ten (12%) say they **complained or considered complaining about an experience** at their opticians/optometrist practice. New questions for this wave show that the most common outcome to complaints include receiving a suitable repair or replacement (33%), an apology (32%) or a full or partial refund (28%). Almost three quarters (73%) say they are **satisfied with the outcome of their complaint**, with more being *very satisfied* (45%) than *fairly satisfied* (28%). Less than one in five (16%) are dissatisfied with the outcome.



New to this wave, 12% say they felt they were treated **less favourably due to a range of personal characteristics**, including age, gender, weight, race, or disability. This is particularly prevalent among younger people aged 16-34.

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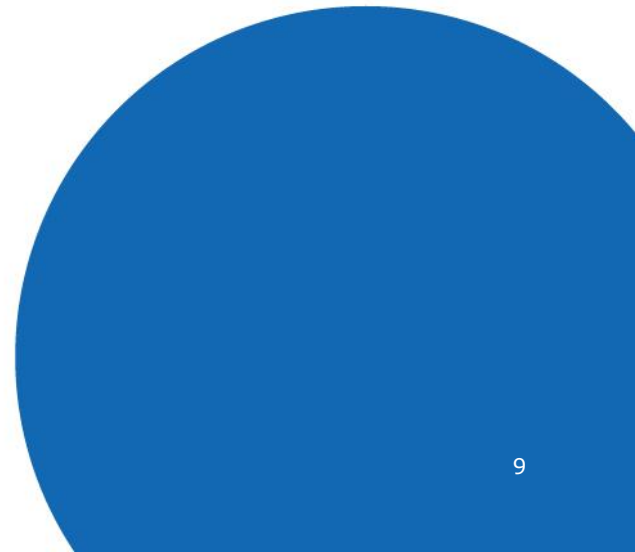
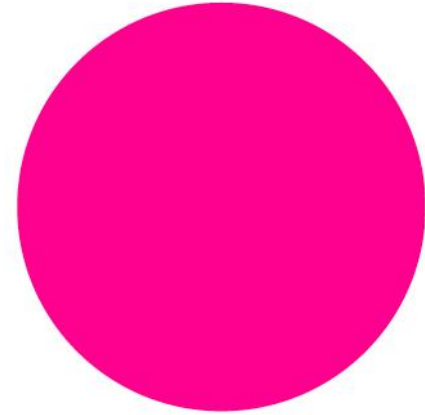
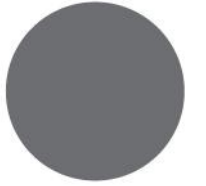
Poor experiences and complaints

**04** Audience profile



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# 01 Background and methodology





# Background and methodology

Since 2015, the regulator for the optical professions in the UK, the General Optical Council (GOC), has carried out an annual representative public perceptions survey to explore areas such as satisfaction levels with sight tests/eye examinations, confidence and trust in the optical professions, shopping habits and complaints.

Making decisions based on evidence is a strategic priority for the GOC. This research helps to identify improvements in the service provided to patients. The findings of the annual survey are used to inform the policy work conducted both at the GOC and with stakeholder bodies across the optical sector. The GOC commissioned DJS research in 2024 to continue the long-standing annual survey.

The 2025 survey was redesigned by DJS Research in conjunction with the GOC. A copy of the questionnaire is published separately.

Fieldwork was conducted online and distributed to a sample using our UK consumer partner panel provider, Dynata. Fieldwork took place between **17 – 24 February 2025**.

A total of **2,012 completes** were achieved. A full breakdown of the sample profile can be found in chapter 4.

Replicating the approach in previous waves, interlocking quotas were set on gender and age within UK nations in order to achieve a representative sample of the UK. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland were over-sampled so that confident statistical analysis could be undertaken by nation.

As in the previous wave, data in this wave has been weighted to reflect a nationally representative sample of the UK population in terms of age, gender, and nation. It is important to take into consideration that waves before 2024 had been weighted to the 'boosted' profiles of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, rather than the actual representative proportions of those nations. While comparisons to previous waves have been made throughout this report, it is important to consider the different weighting schemes applied, although the difference is small (approximately 1% or less between weight schemes).

Throughout this report, the commentary provided on sub-groups is based on statistically significant differences, unless otherwise stated. The most relevant statistically significant differences are reported on in each question, meaning, there may be instances where some statistically significant differences are not discussed as they are not relevant.



# Note on statistics and confidence intervals

Participants in the research are only samples of the total population, so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have found if every single person in the United Kingdom aged 16+ had been surveyed. However, we can predict the variation between the sample results and the true values from knowing the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given.

It is important to note that margins of error relate only to samples that have been selected using strict random probability sampling methods. However, in practice it is reasonable to assume that these calculations provide a good indication of the confidence intervals relating to this survey and the sampling approach used.

Size of sample on which the survey results are based	Approx. sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels (at the 95% confidence level)		
	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
2,012 (all participants)	1.3%	2.0%	2.2%
1,616 (all participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years)	1.5%	2.2%	2.4%
1,177 (all participants who have purchases glasses OR contact lenses)	1.7%	2.6%	2.9%

For example, with a sample of 2,012 where 50% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 (95%) that the true value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been surveyed) will fall within the range of plus or minus 2.2 percentage points from the sample result, i.e. between 47.8% and 52.2%.



# Notes on reporting

Where a 'patient' is mentioned in this report, it is defined as those who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years.

The General Optical Council wished to explore differences in access and experience within the sample. To enable this, analysis was conducted using 'vulnerability markers' throughout the report.

Where 'vulnerability markers' are mentioned in this report, these include those:

- With a disability
- Who have less than £25,000 of household income
- Not confident in managing their own eye health
- Going through a difficult life circumstance
- Consider themselves to be struggling financially
- Say they cannot afford essentials

Vulnerability markers have been grouped into four different categories:

- None
- One
- Two to three
- Four or more

Trend data has been significance tested. Statistically significant changes between 2024 and 2025 are indicated throughout with these arrows depending on the direction change:



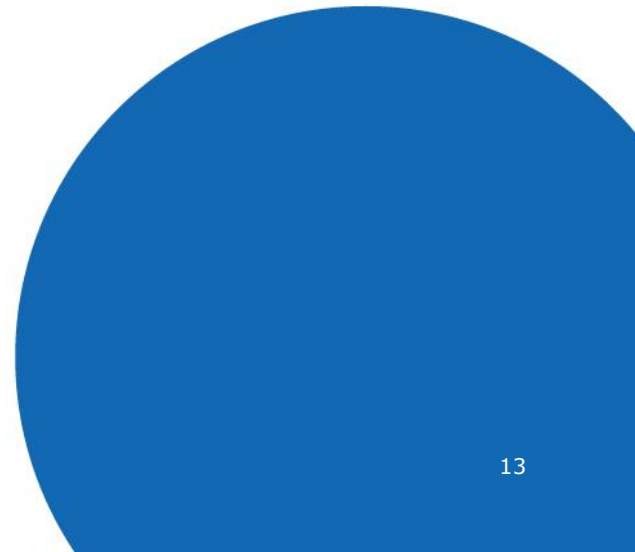
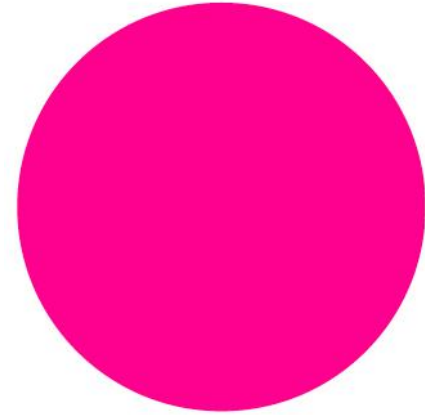
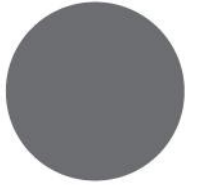
denotes significantly higher than the previous wave



denotes significantly lower than the previous wave

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# 03 Main report findings



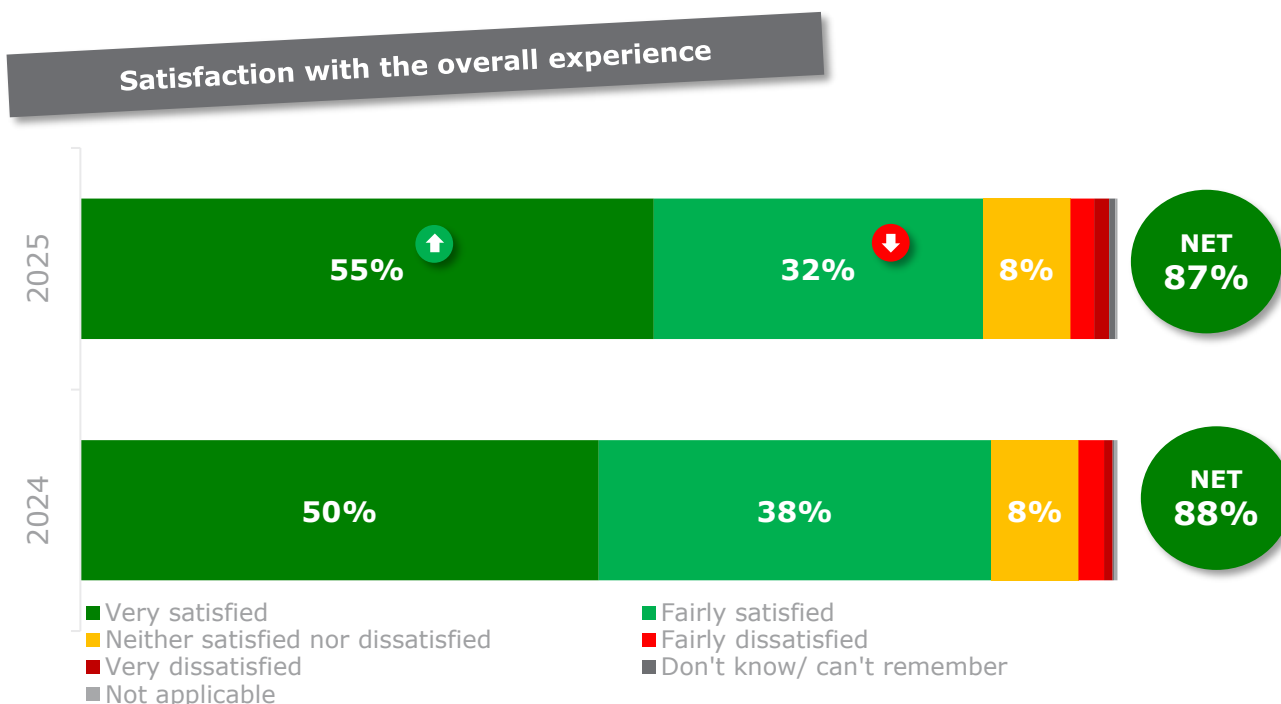
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# Satisfaction levels



# Satisfaction with the overall experience

Satisfaction with the overall experience of the opticians/optometrist practice remains stable overall at 87%, although more this year say they are *very satisfied* (55% vs. 50% 2024) than *fairly satisfied* (32% vs. 38%). Levels of dissatisfaction remain low (4%).



Consistent with the previous year, there are a number of demographic differences in relation to overall satisfaction:

- Those in younger age groups (aged 16-34) are less likely than those in older age groups (aged 55 and over) to be satisfied with the overall experience (79% vs. 92%)
- Those from a white background are more satisfied than those from an ethnic minority background (88% vs. 82%)
- Those with a disability are less likely than those without one to be satisfied with the overall experience (83% vs 88%)

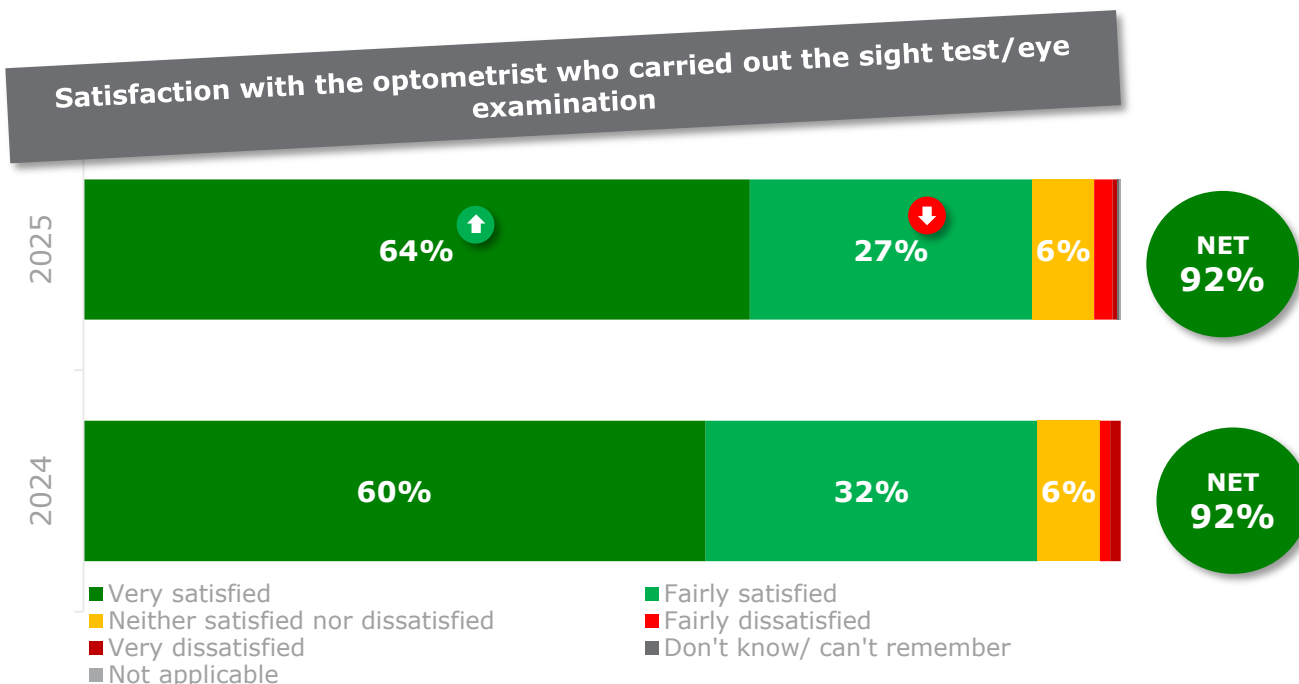
Additionally, women are more likely than men to say they were satisfied with the overall experience (89% vs 85%).

Other groups less likely to be satisfied include carers (79%), those with at least one vulnerability marker (84%), those not confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice (46%) or managing their own eye health (68%), those with an eye condition (84%), and those who felt they were treated less favourably due to a personal characteristic (62%).

Results vary based on the location of the sight test/eye examination; those having their sight test/eye examination at a high street opticians/optometrist practice are more likely to be satisfied with the overall experience (89%) compared to those in a hospital (77%).

# Satisfaction with the optometrist who carried out the sight test/eye examination

As with satisfaction with the overall experience, satisfaction with the optometrist who carried with the sight test/eye examination remains stable (92%), and more say they are *very satisfied* (64% vs. 60% 2024) than *fairly satisfied* (27% vs. 32%). Just 2% are dissatisfied.



Consistent with the previous year, those in younger age groups 16-34 are less likely to be satisfied with the optometrist when compared to older participants aged 55 and over (87% vs 96%). White participants also continue to be more satisfied than ethnic minorities (93% vs. 86%).

Carers are less satisfied than non-carers with their optometrist (86% vs. 93%). Satisfaction is also lower among those with at least one vulnerability marker (90%), those in work (89%), those not confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice (54%) or managing their eye health (75%), and those who felt they were treated less favourably due to a personal characteristic (78%).

Higher levels of satisfaction with optometrists continue to be present among those who had their sight test/eye examination at a high street opticians/optometrist practice (93%) compared to those in a hospital (87%).

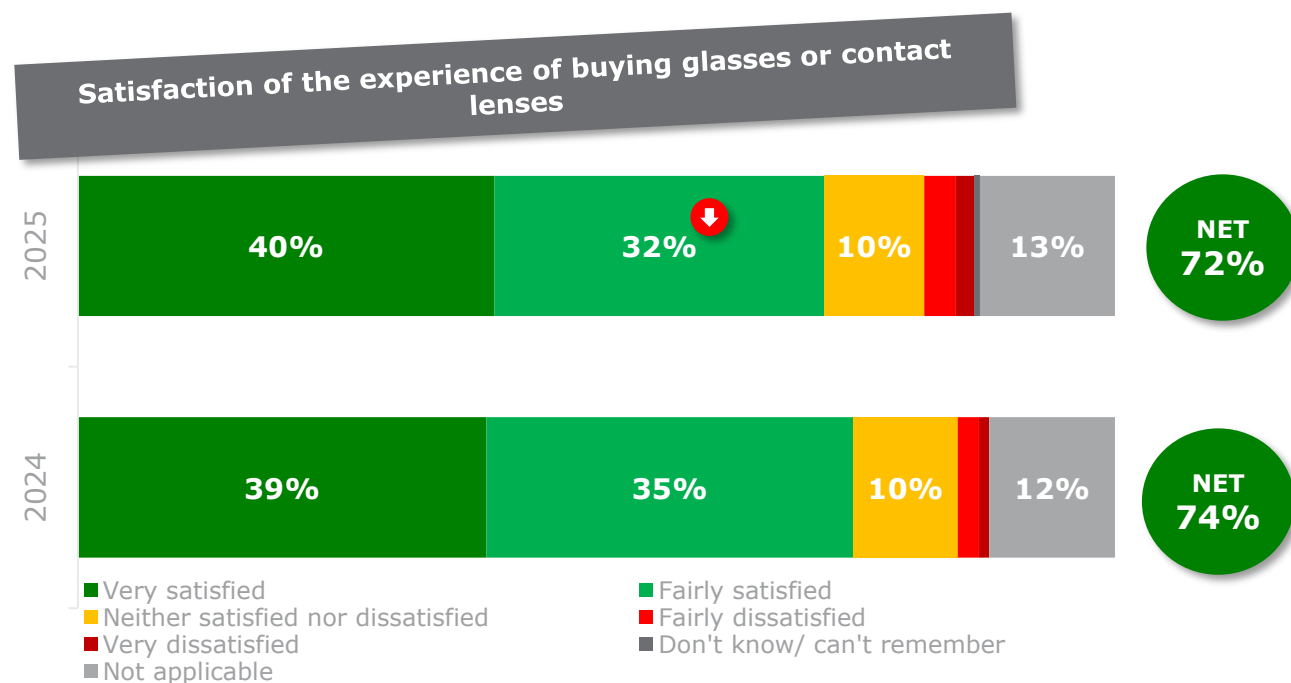
**Q018.** Thinking of the last time you had a sight test/eye examination, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following? **Base:** All participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (1,616), 2024 participants (1,599).

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# Satisfaction with the experience of buying glasses or contact lenses

Over seven in ten (72%) are satisfied with their experience of buying glasses or contact lenses. This year, fewer say they are *fairly satisfied* with their experience (32% vs. 35%) and dissatisfaction is higher (5% vs 3% 2024), although the proportion who are dissatisfied remains fairly low.



Women are more likely than men to say they were satisfied with the experience of buying glasses or contact lenses (76% vs. 68%). Ethnic minorities are also more likely than white participants to be satisfied with their experience (77% vs. 71%).

Those who had their sight test/eye examination conducted at a high street opticians/optometrist practice are more likely to be satisfied (74%) compared to a hospital (64%).

Dissatisfaction is comparatively higher among those:

- Who do not speak English as a first language (12%)
- With a disability (10%)
- Who are carers (9%)
- With at least one vulnerability marker (7%)
- Who are not confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice (25%)
- Who are not confident in managing their eye health (12%)
- Who felt they were treated less favourably due to a personal characteristic (17%).

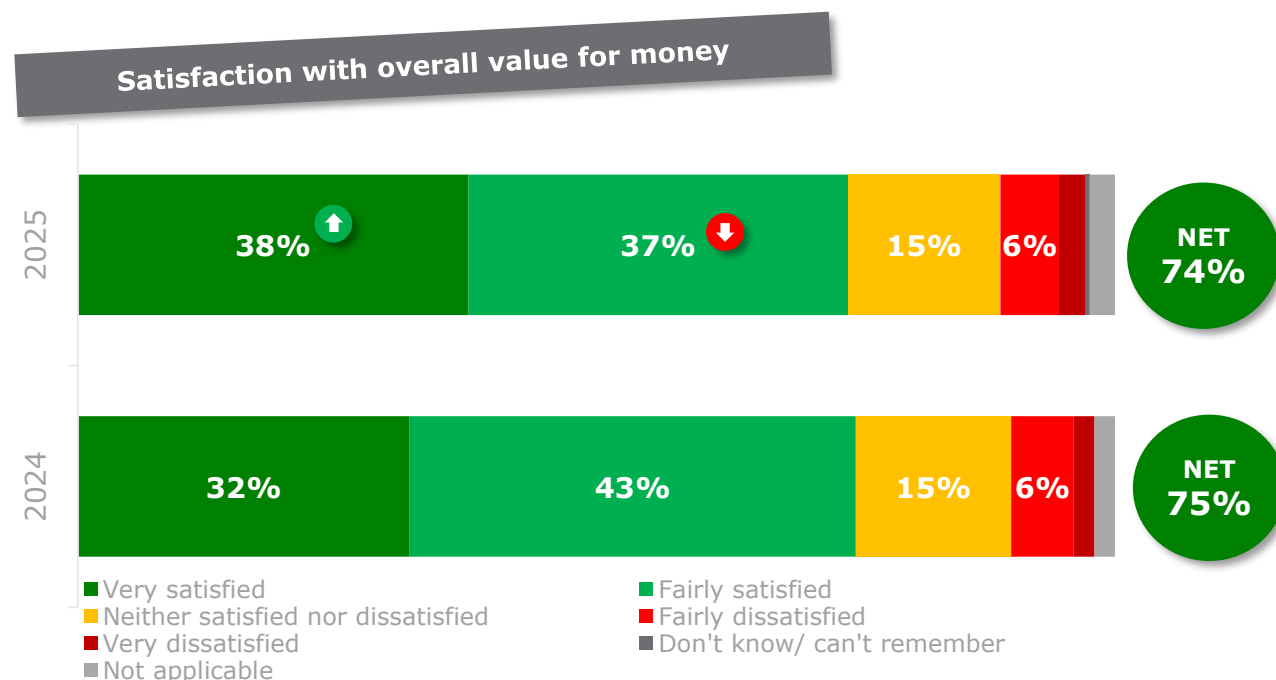
**Q018.** Thinking of the last time you had a sight test/eye examination, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following? **Base:** All participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (1,616), 2024 participants (1,599).

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# Satisfaction with value for money

Just under three quarters (74%) are satisfied with the overall value for money. This year, the proportion of those who are *very satisfied* (38% vs. 32% 2024) is now in line with those who say they are *fairly satisfied* (37% vs. 43% 2024). There is no change in the proportion who are dissatisfied with value for money (8%).



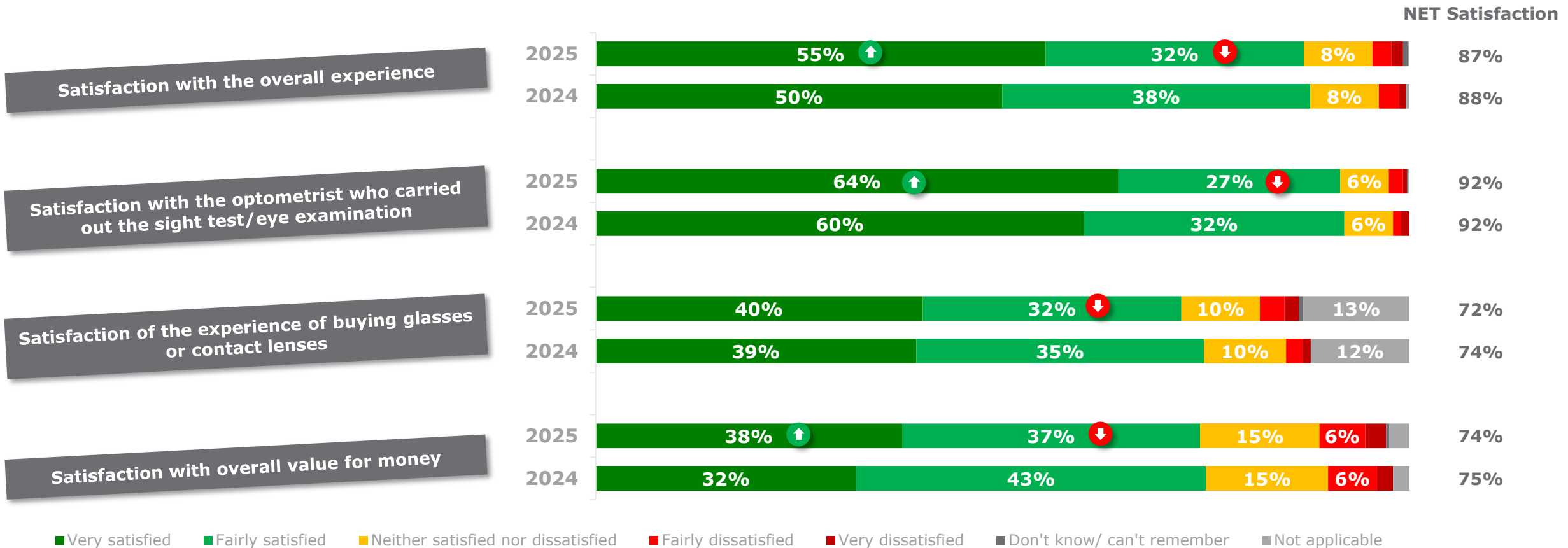
Those aged 16-24 continue to be less likely than any other age group to be satisfied with the overall value for money (67%). Those with an income of £25,001 – 35,000 are also less likely to be satisfied with value for money (67%), as are those who say they are struggling financially (71%). In contrast, those with a household income of £50,001 or more are more inclined to be satisfied with value for money (78%).

Those not confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice (44%) or managing their own eye health (51%) are less likely to be satisfied with the overall value for money. The same can be found for those who felt they were treated less favourably due to a personal characteristic (65%).

Those who have had a recent sight test/eye examination in the last six months are more likely than average to be satisfied with the value for money (77%). Participants who paid for their own eye test are more likely than those who had employer contributions to be satisfied with value for money (78% vs. 62%).

# Satisfaction trends

While the proportion of net satisfaction remains stable this year, the proportion of those who are very satisfied is significantly higher across almost all metrics, with the exception of the buying glasses or contact lenses experience.



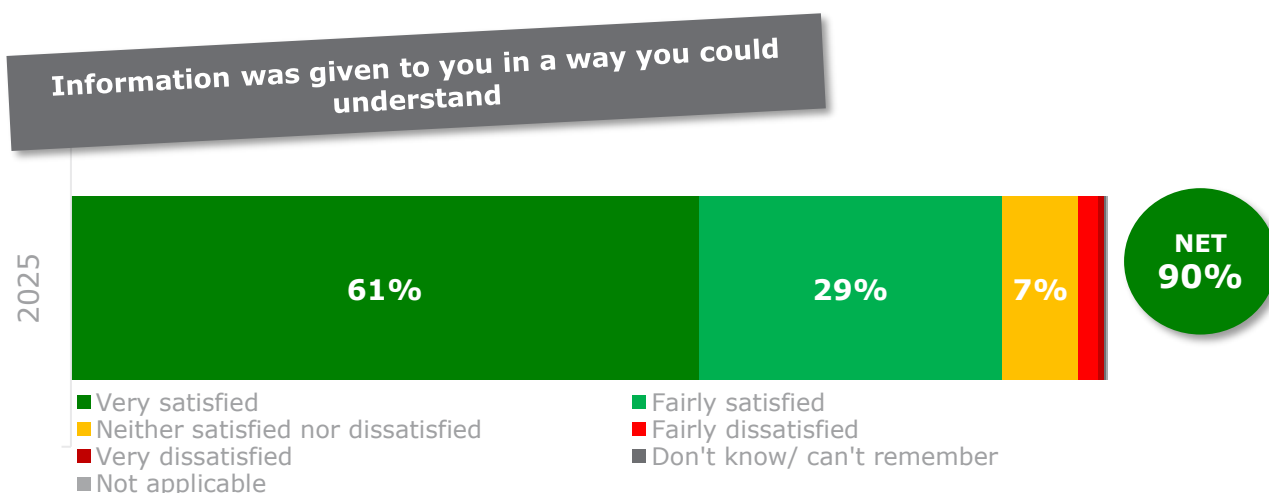
**Q018.** Thinking of the last time you had a sight test/eye examination, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following? **Base:** All participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (1,616), 2024 participants (1,599).

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# Satisfaction with delivery of information

Nine in ten (90%) say that at their last sight test/eye examination, information was given to them in a way which they could understand. More say they were *very satisfied* (61%) than *fairly satisfied* (29%). Just 2% say they were dissatisfied.



In terms of demographic differences:

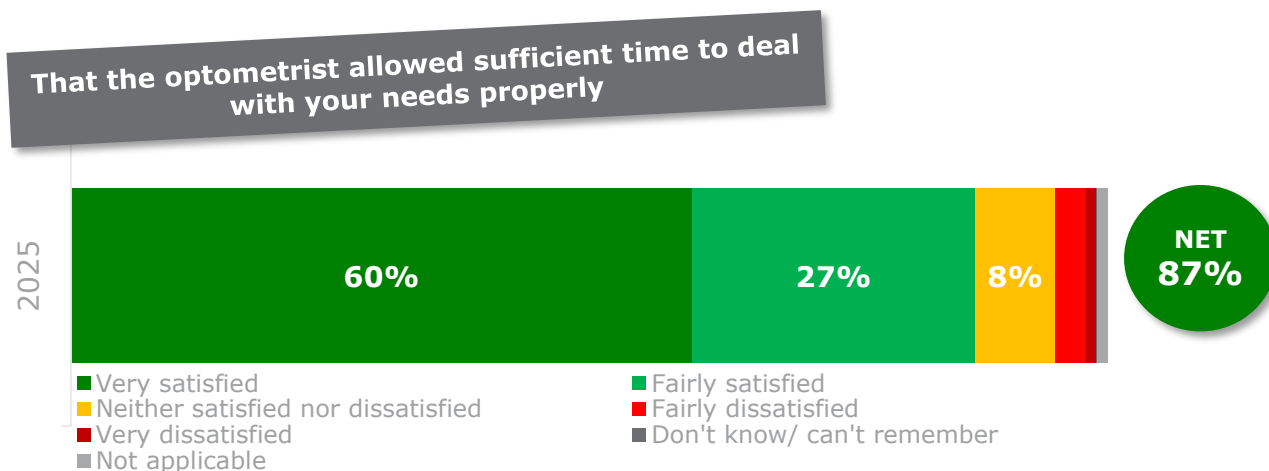
- Women are more likely than men to be satisfied with the delivery of information (92% vs. 88%)
- Those aged 55 and over are more likely to be satisfied compared to younger age groups (95% vs. 83% of those aged 16-34)
- White participants are more likely than those from an ethnic minority background to be satisfied (91% vs. 84%)
- Those in work are less likely to be satisfied (87%) compared to those who are retired (97%).
- Those who state English is their first language are more likely to be satisfied (90%) compared to those where English is not their first language (83%).

Satisfaction is higher among those who had their sight test/eye examination at a high street opticians/optometrist practice (91%) compared to a hospital (83%) setting.



# Satisfaction with time given to address needs

Almost nine in ten (87%) are satisfied that their optometrist allowed sufficient time to deal with their needs properly, more of which are *very satisfied* (60%) than *fairly satisfied* (27%). Only 4% are dissatisfied.



In terms of demographic differences:

- Women are more likely than men to be satisfied with the time that was given to address their needs (89% vs. 85%)
- Those aged 55 and over are more likely than younger age groups to be satisfied (94% vs. 77% 16-34)
- White participants are more likely than those from an ethnic minority background to be satisfied (89% vs. 80%)

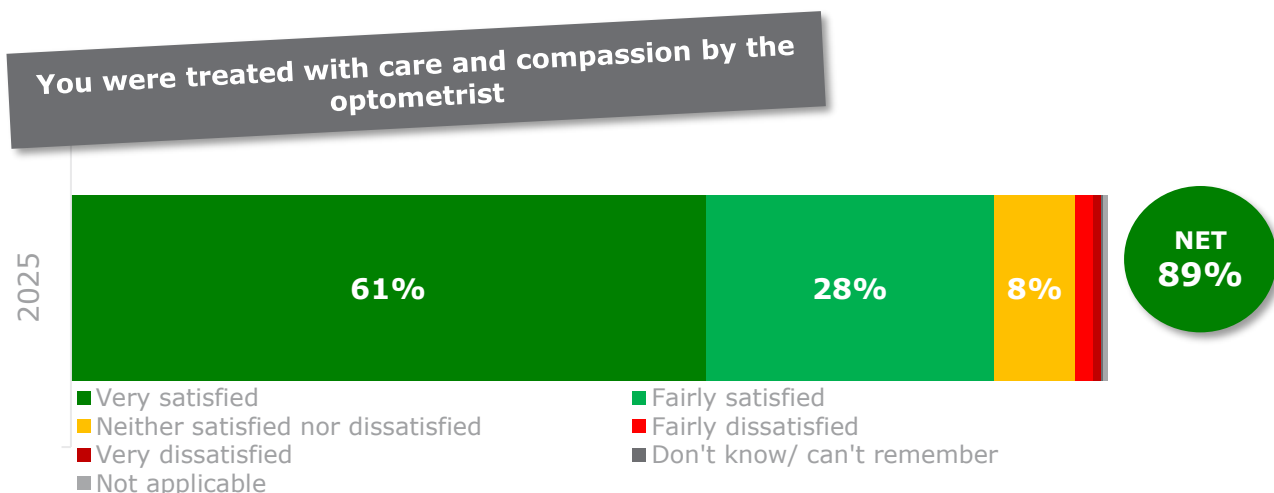
Those with a lower income of under £20,000 are more likely than average to be satisfied with the time given to address their needs (91%), as are those with a household income of £50,001 or more (90%). Those with at least one vulnerability marker are also less inclined to be satisfied (85%).

Participants who are less confident in receiving a high standard of care from their opticians/optometrist practice (42%) or managing their own eye health (60%) are also less likely than average to be satisfied when it comes to sufficient time being given to address their needs.



# Satisfaction with care and compassion

Just under nine in ten (89%) are satisfied that they were treated with care and compassion by their optometrist – more are *very satisfied* (61%) than *fairly satisfied* (28%). Just 2% are dissatisfied.



In terms of demographic differences:

- Those aged 55 and over are more likely than younger age groups to be satisfied (94% vs. 81% 16-34)
- White participants are more likely than those from an ethnic minority background to be satisfied (91% vs. 83%)

Those who do not speak English as a first language are less likely to be satisfied compared to the average (77%). The same can be said for carers (82%) and those in work (86%).

Those with at least one vulnerability marker are less likely than average to be satisfied (87%).

Participants who are less confident in receiving a high standard of care from their opticians/optometrist practice (56%) or managing their own eye health (73%) are also less likely than average to be satisfied with the levels of care and compassion.

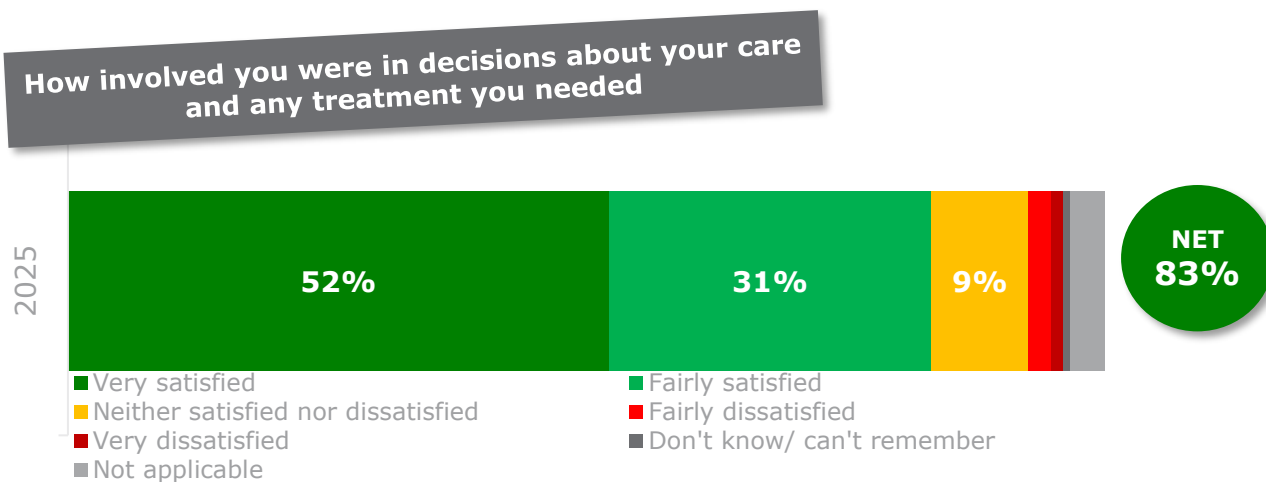
Those who had their sight test/eye examination conducted at a high street opticians/optometrist practice are more likely to be satisfied (92%) compared to those done in a hospital (77%).

**Q018.** Thinking of the last time you had a sight test/eye examination, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following? **Base:** All participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (1,616). Please note this statement was added in the 2025 survey wave so 2024 data is not available.



# Satisfaction with involvement in care and treatment decisions

More than four in five (83%) are satisfied with the level of involvement they had in decisions about their care and treatment. Most are very satisfied (52%) rather than fairly satisfied (31%). Only 3% say they are dissatisfied with their involvement. Just 1% say they don't know while 3% say it is not applicable to them.



In terms of demographic differences:

- Women are more likely than men to be satisfied with their involvement (86% vs. 81%)
- Those aged 55 and over are more likely than younger age groups to be to satisfied (87% vs. 77% 16-34)
- White participants are more likely than those from an ethnic minority background to be satisfied (84% vs. 79%)

Those with a lower income of under £20,000 are more likely than average to be satisfied with their involvement in care and decision making (89%), as are those with a household income of £50,001 or more (87%). Those with at least one vulnerability marker are also less likely than average to be satisfied (81%).

Those less confident in receiving a high standard of care from their opticians/optometrist practice (49%) or managing their own eye health (58%) are less likely than average to be satisfied with their involvement.

Participants who had their sight test/eye examination at a high street opticians/optometrist (85%) practice are more likely to be satisfied compared to those who had it at a hospital (77%).

**Q018.** Thinking of the last time you had a sight test/eye examination, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following? **Base:** All participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (1,616). Please note this statement was added in the 2025 survey wave so 2024 data is not available.

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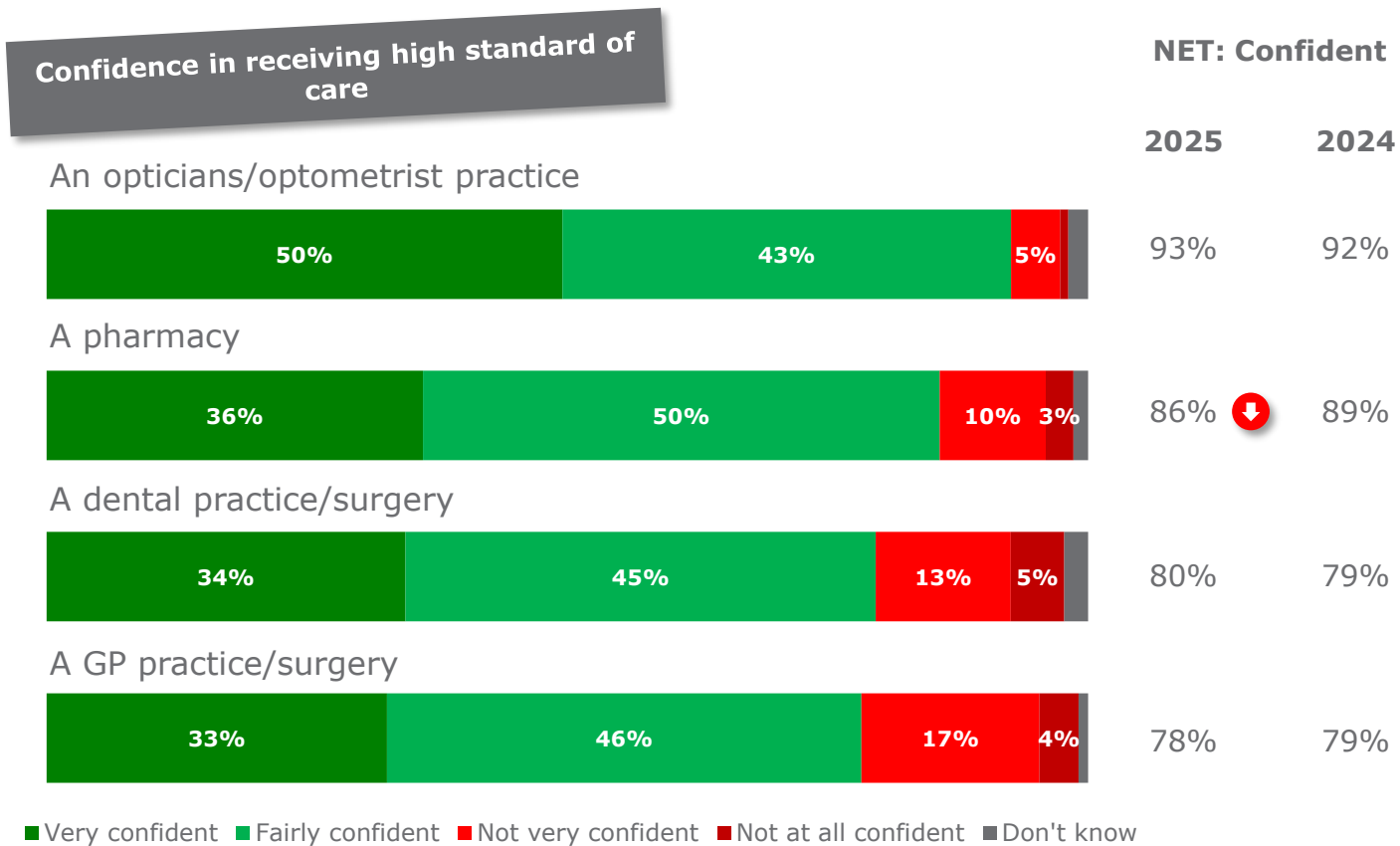


# Confidence levels



# Confidence in receiving care

Confidence in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice remains stable this year (93% confident) and remains ahead of other services in comparison. By way of context, confidence in receiving a high standard of care from a pharmacy has fallen this year (86% vs 89% 2024).



Confidence in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice remains varied when it comes to age - those aged 16-24 are less likely than those aged 65 and over to say they are confident (88% vs. 97%). Similarly, those from a white background are more likely to be confident compared to those from an ethnic minority background (94% vs. 88%), as are those with English as a first language (93% vs 84% of those who do not speak English as a first language).

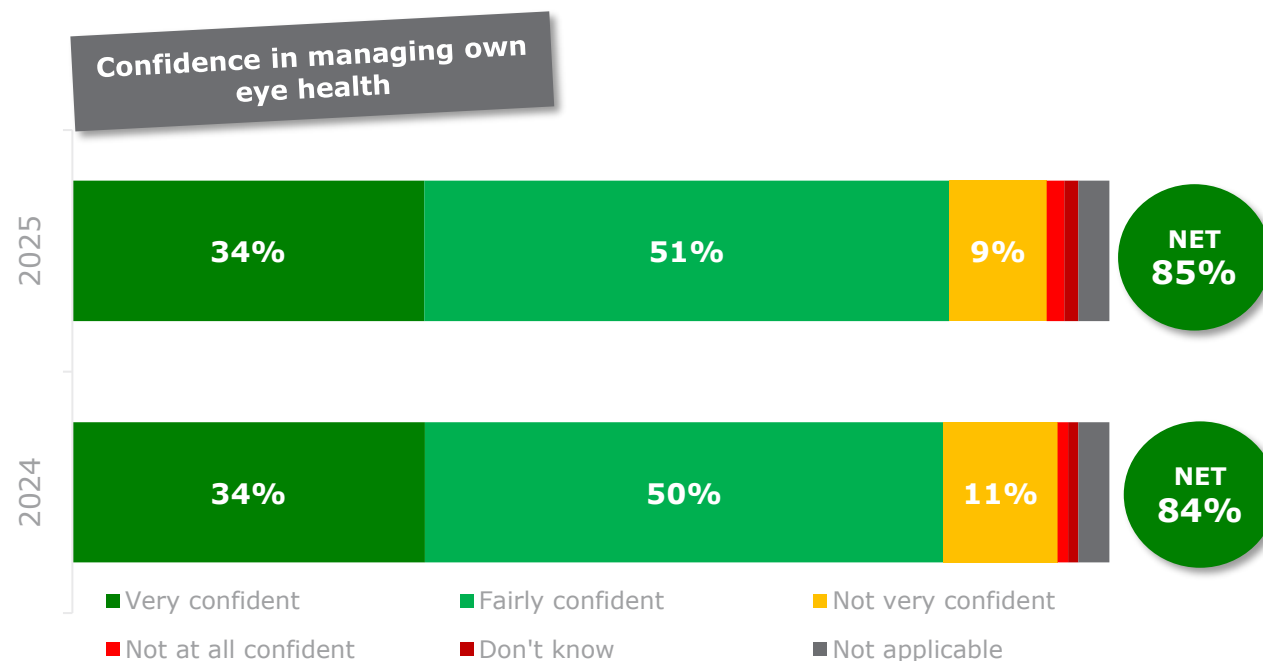
Those who have at least one vulnerability marker are less likely than average to be confident in their opticians/optometrist practice overall (90%), as are those who are not confident in managing their own eye health (70%).

Those who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (95%) are more likely to be confident than those who had one more than two years ago (86%), with even lower levels of confidence amongst those who have never had a sight test/eye examination (60%).



# Confidence in managing eye health

The public's confidence in managing own their own eye health remains stable this year (85%).



As with confidence in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice, there is a clear difference in confidence by age group as those aged 16-24 are less likely than those aged 65 and over to say they are confident (77% vs. 90%). Similar differences in confidence can also be found by ethnicity (86% white vs. 80% ethnic minority) and speaking English as a first language (85% vs 73% who do not speak English as a first language).

Those who have at least one vulnerability marker are less likely to say they are confident in managing their own eye health (76%), as are those not confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice (43%).

Those who do not wear glasses or contact lenses are less likely to be confident in managing their own eye health (72%), as are those who have last had an eye test over two years ago (66%).

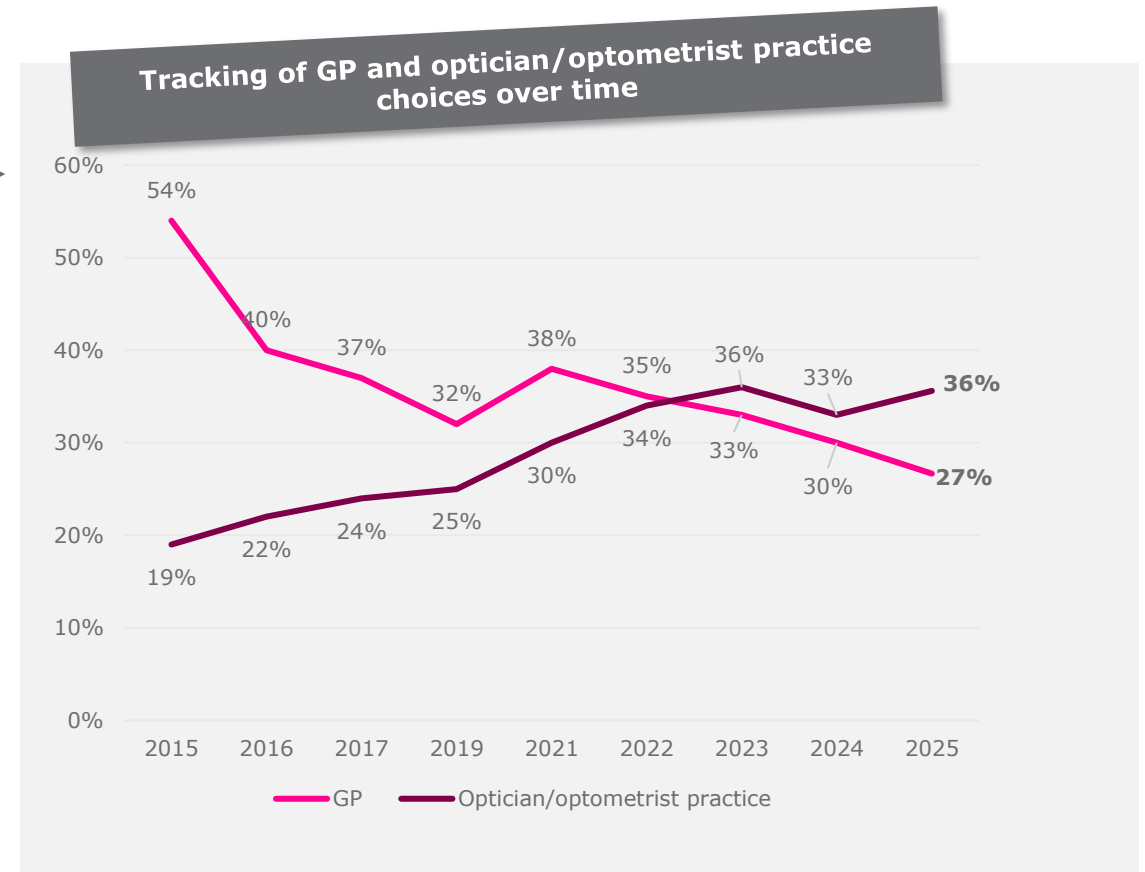
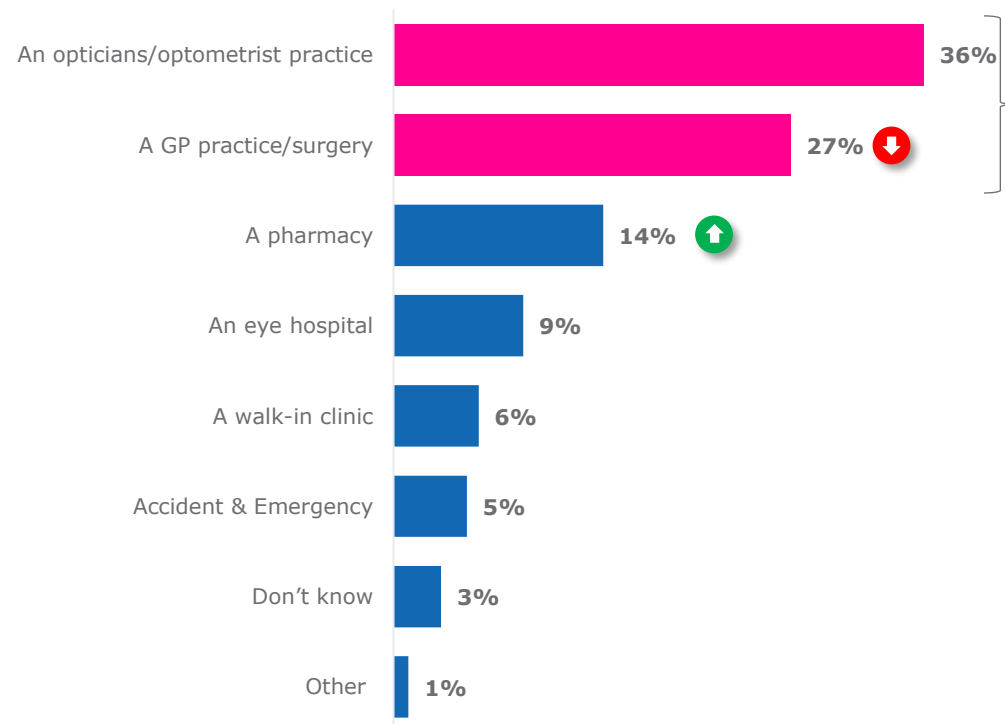
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# Perceptions of urgent care



# First 'port of call' for an eye problem

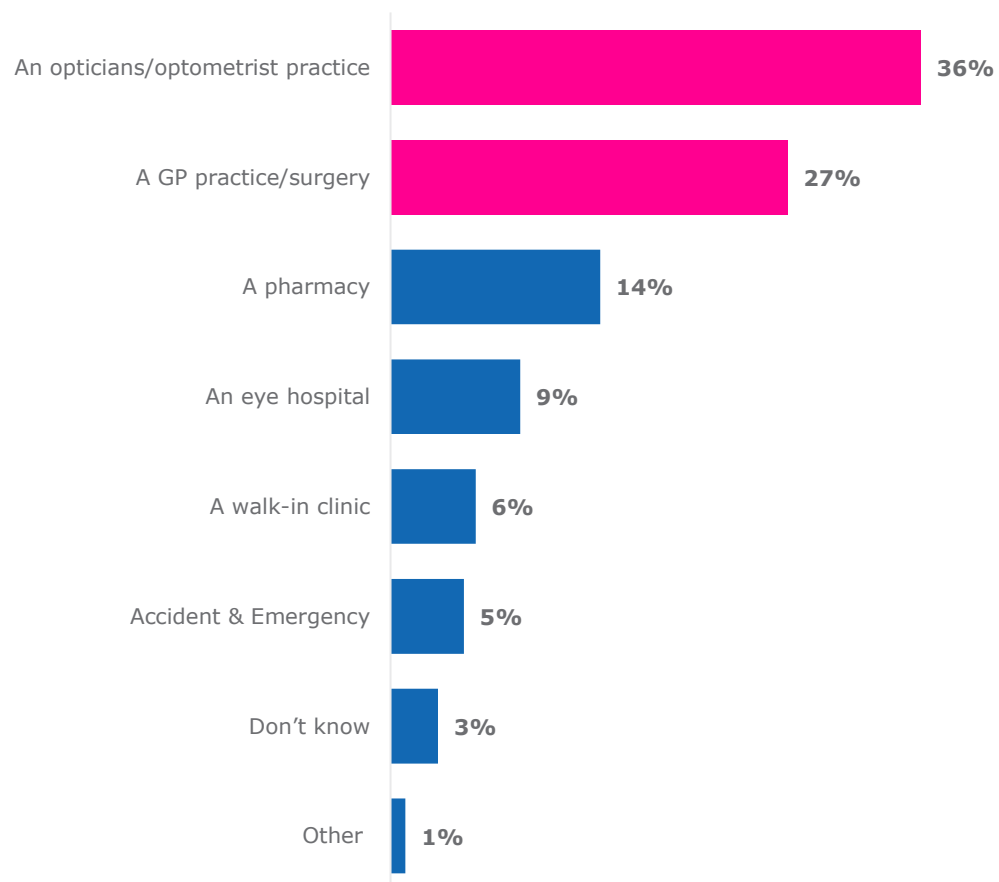
While not a statistically significant shift, a slightly higher proportion say they would turn to an opticians/optometrist practice first in the event of an eye problem (36% vs. 33% 2024). Significantly fewer say they would turn to a GP this year (27% vs. 30% 2024), while more would turn to a pharmacy (14% vs. 12% 2024).



**Q01.** If you woke up tomorrow with an eye problem, such as something in your eye, a red eye or blurred vision, where would you go or who would you speak to first? **Base:** All participants (2,012), 2024 participants (2,035).



# First 'port of call' for an eye problem cont'd.



Younger people aged 16-24 are less inclined to say they would visit an opticians/optometrist practice (28% vs. 36% overall) and more likely to turn to a GP practice/surgery (35% vs. 27% overall) or walk-in clinic (9% vs. 6% overall) instead.

Those with a disability are less likely than average to say they would turn to an opticians/optometrist practice as their first port of call for an eye problem (29%) – instead, they are more likely than average to say they would go to a walk-in clinic (9% vs 6%).

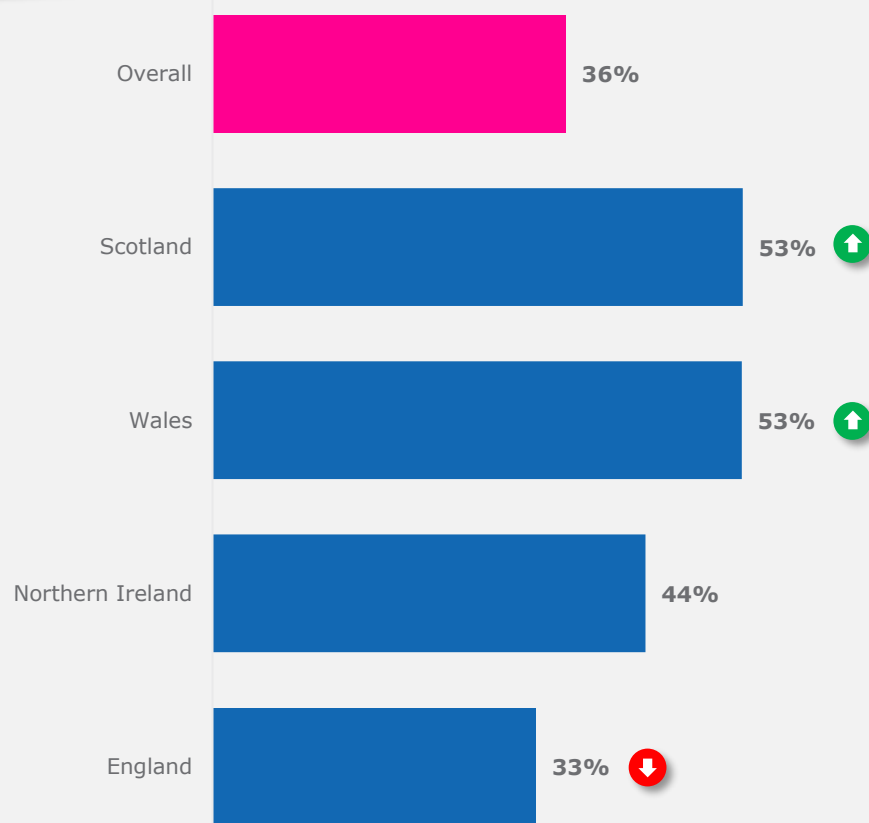
Those with a lower household income of less than £20,000 are less likely to say they would turn to an opticians/optometrist practice first (30%). They are more likely than average to say they don't know who they would go to first (8% vs. 3% overall). The opposite is found for those who have a higher household income of £50,001 or more, where 41% would go to an opticians/optometrist practice (vs. 36% overall).

Those with at least one vulnerability marker are less likely to say they would go to an opticians/optometrist practice in the first place for an eye problem (33%) and are more likely than average to go to a GP practice/surgery (29%). Participants who are less confident in receiving a high standard of care from their opticians/optometrist practice (27%) or in managing their own eye health (23%) are also less likely than average to turn to an opticians/optometrist practice first.

Participants who have had their sight test/eye examination within the last two years are more likely to say they would speak to their opticians/optometrist practice first in the event of an eye problem (39%). The opposite can be found for those who last had their sight test/eye examination more than two years ago (22%); they are instead more likely to speak to their GP practice/surgery (38%).

# First 'port of call' for an eye problem cont'd.

## Opticians/optometrist practice by nation



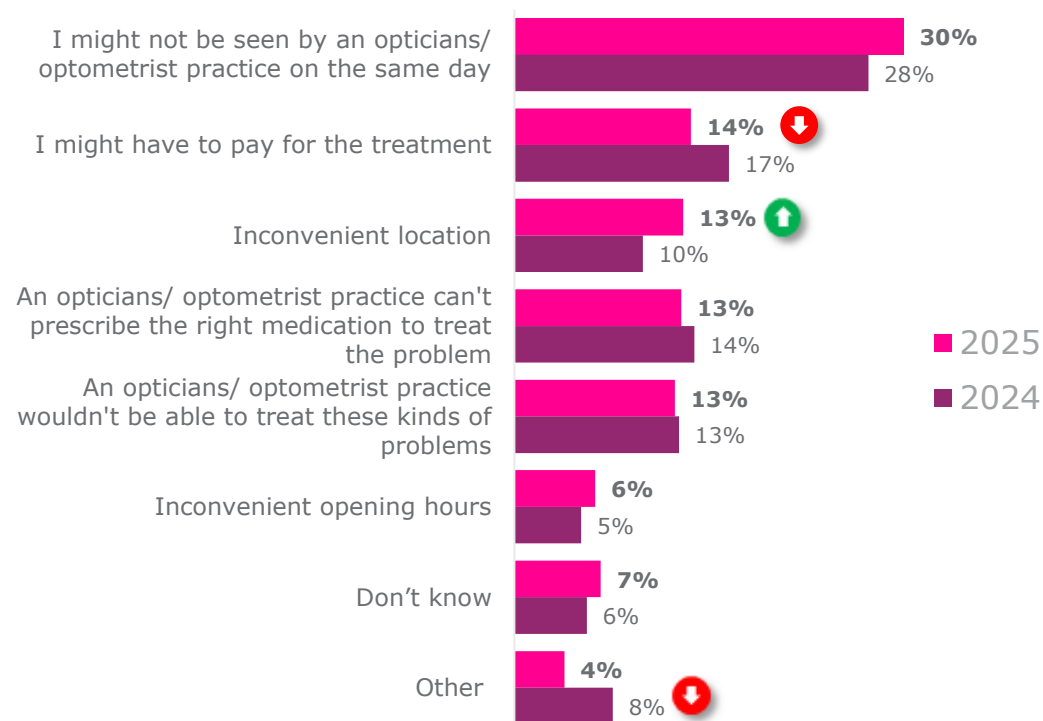
When looking at the results by nation, those living in England (33%) are less likely than those living in Wales (53%) and Scotland (53%) to say they would turn to an opticians/optometrist practice first. This is consistent with the previous year, where those in Wales (43%) and Scotland (44%) were more likely than those in England (31%). In Northern Ireland, 44% say they would turn to an opticians/optometrist practice in the event of a problem.

Those living in England are more likely than those in other nations to say that they would turn to a GP surgery/practice (28%) instead.



# Reasons for not choosing an opticians/optometrist practice as first port of call

Among those who did not say they would go to an opticians/optometrist practice first in the event of an eye problem, fear of not getting a same day appointment continues to be the most common reason for doing so (30%). Fewer this year say they are worried about paying for treatment (14% vs. 17% 2024), while more cite the opticians/optometrist practice being in an inconvenient location.



Amongst those who would not go to an opticians/optometrist practice first in the event of an eye problem, women are more likely than men to cite the possibility of not being seen on the same day as a barrier (34% vs. 27%). Those aged 55 and over are also more likely than average to say this (35%), while the possibility of paying for treatment is a bigger worry, comparatively speaking, for those aged 16-34 (18%).

Those who have a disability are more likely than average to say they are worried about not getting a same day appointment (36%). Carers, on the other hand, are more likely to cite inconvenient opening hours as a factor (10%).

Those with at least one vulnerability marker are more inclined to mention the possibility of paying for treatment as a reason for not choosing to visit an opticians/optometrist practice first (17%). Those not confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice (28%) or managing their own eye health (24%) are also more likely to mention this reason.

Those who last had a sight test/eye examination two or more years ago are more likely to cite potential payment for treatment as a reason not to choose an opticians/optometrist practice first (19%). In contrast, those who have been seen in the last two years are more likely to mention opticians/optometrist practices not being able to prescribe the right medication as a barrier (15%).

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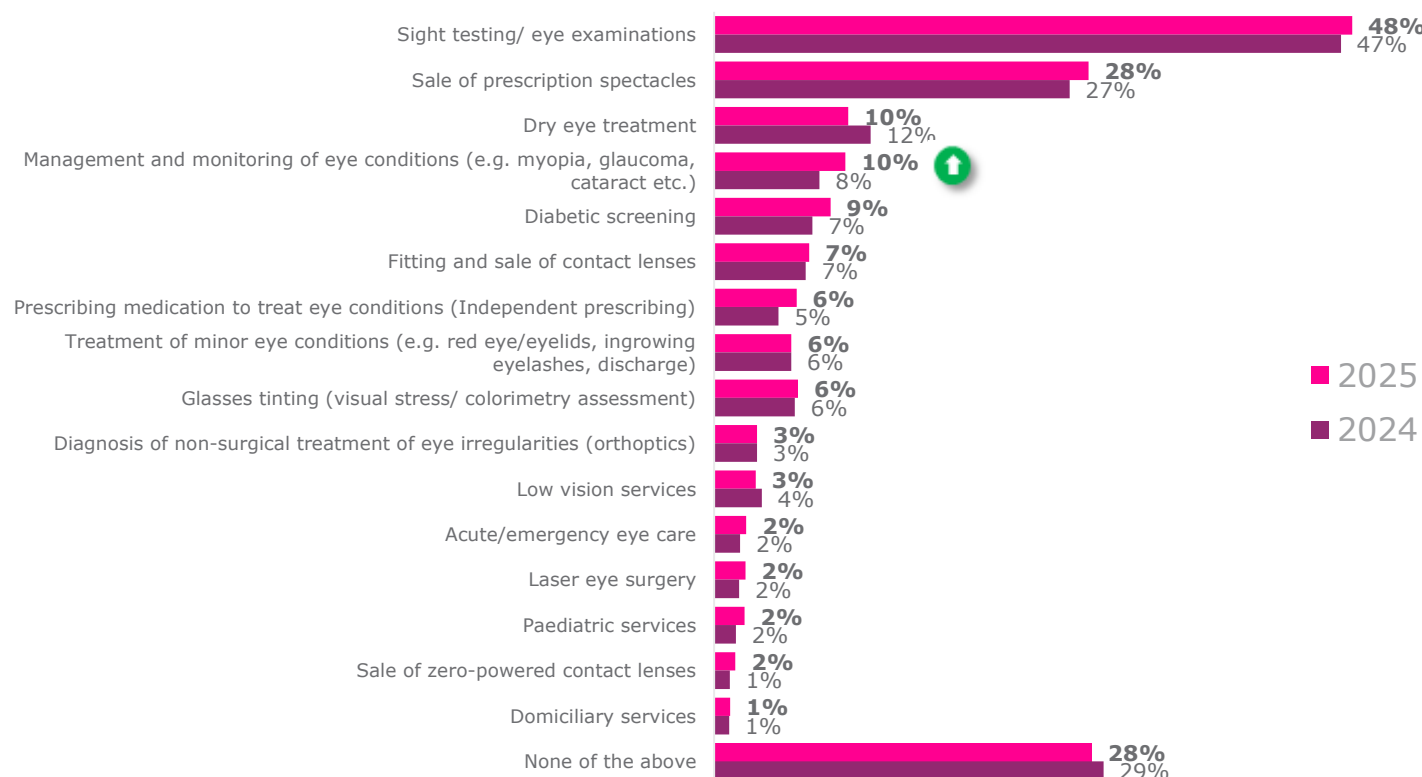
# Use of optical services





# Use of optical services

Participants were asked if they had used any of the listed optical services in the past two years. Similarly to 2024, having a sight test/eye examination is the most common service used (48%), followed by sale of prescription glasses (28%) and dry eye treatment (10%). Participants in this wave are more likely to have used management and monitoring of eye conditions than those in 2024 (10% vs. 8%). A similar proportion have not used any optical service in the past two years (28% vs. 29%).



Those aged 55 and over are more likely than others to have had a sight test/eye examination (60% vs. 48% overall) and to buy prescription glasses (43% vs. 28% overall). For those aged 65 and over specifically, they are also more likely to have made use of management and monitoring of eye condition services (18% vs. 10% overall) and diabetic screening services (16% vs. 9% overall).

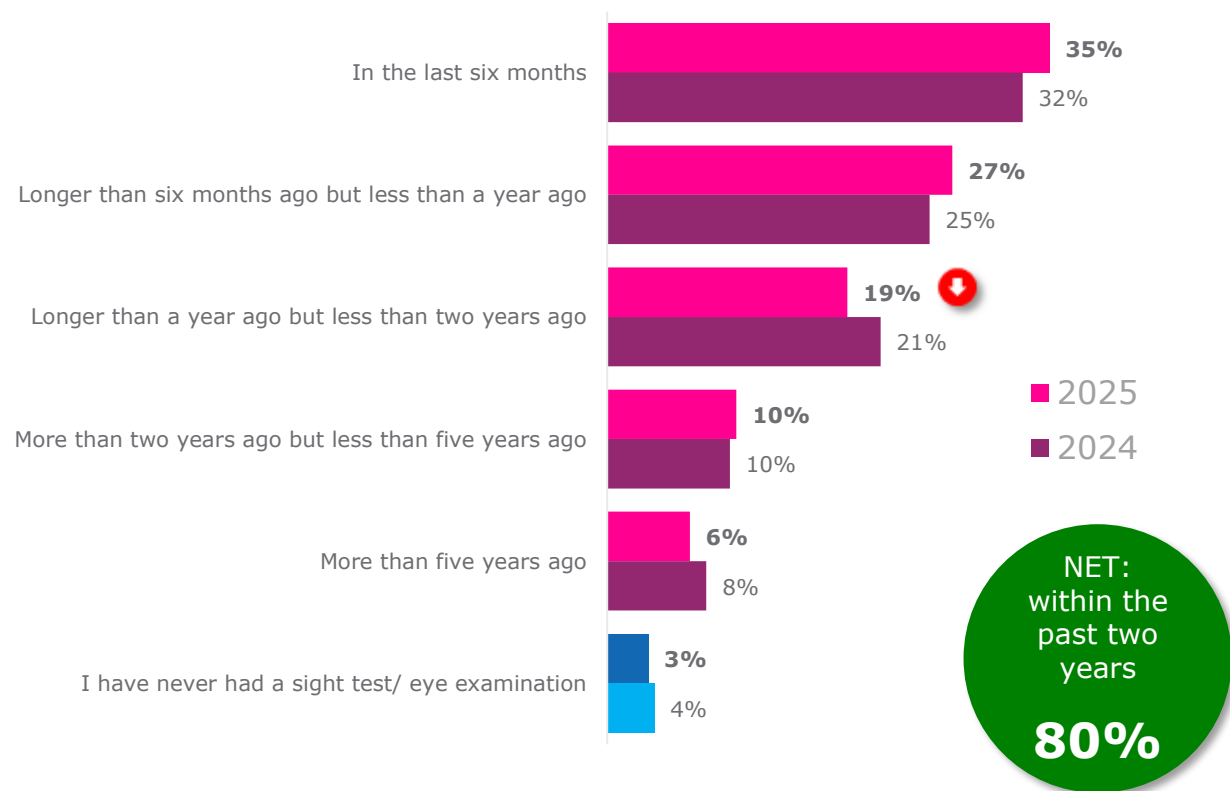
Those aged 16-34 are more likely to have used fitting and sale of contact lenses (11% vs. 7% overall) or to have not used any of the listed services in the past 2 years (32% vs. 28% overall).

As seen in the previous wave, those who are less confident in managing their eye health are more likely to say they have used none of the different services (41% vs. 28% overall), as are those with low incomes of under £20,000 (35%).



# Last reported visit for sight test/eye examination

Four in five (80%) state that they have had a sight test/eye examination in the past two years, in line with the previous wave (79%). Just under one in five (17%) had a sight test/eye examination more than two years ago, while only 3% say that they have never had one.



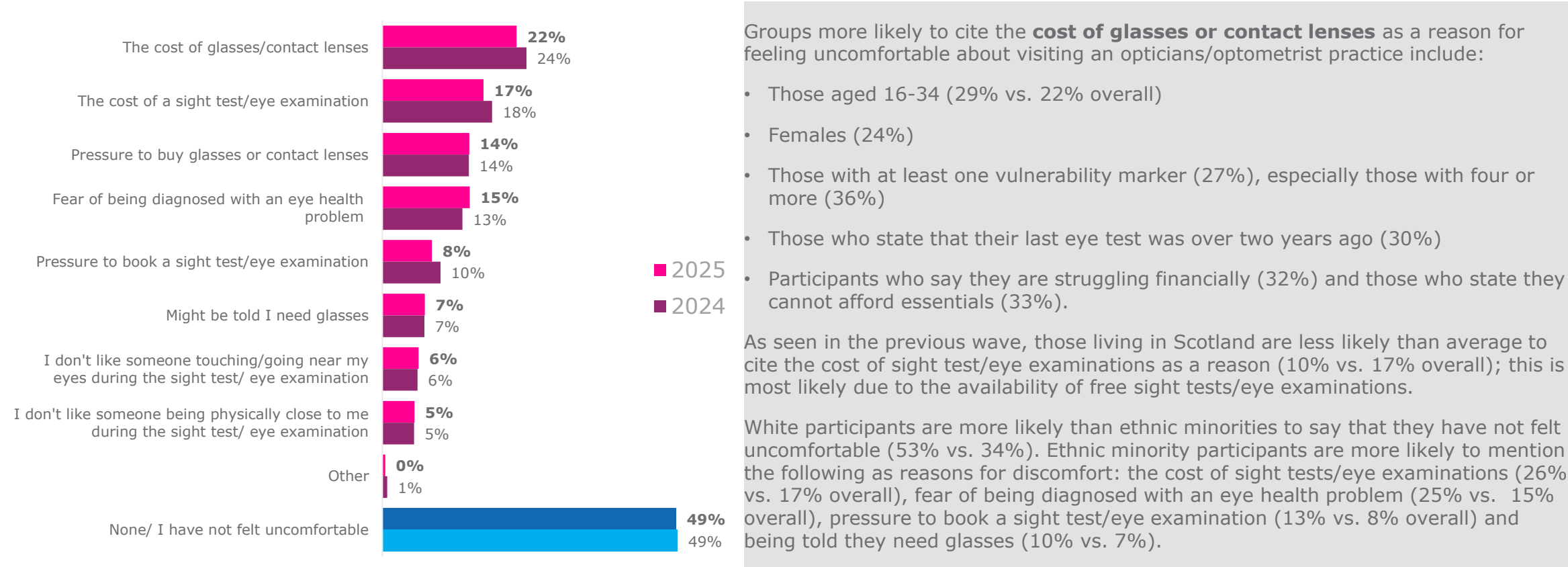
Those aged 55 and over are more likely to have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (87% vs. 80% overall), while those aged 16-34 are more likely to state it has been over two years since their last sight test/eye examination (20% vs. 17%). Those aged 65 and over specifically are more likely to state they had had a sight test/eye examination in the past six months (41% vs. 35%). Those aged 25-34 (5%) and ethnic minorities (6%) are more likely to state they have never had a sight test/eye examination (vs. 3% overall). These differences are consistent with the previous wave.

Sub-group differences that are also consistent with 2024 include:

- Those who wear glasses (89%) or contact lenses (91%) are more likely to have had a sight test/eye examination in the past two years (vs. 80% overall), in addition to those with an existing eye condition (90%).
- Those with no vulnerability markers (84%) are more likely than those with at least one marker (77%) to have had a sight test/eye examination in the past two years.
- Those who have low confidence in managing their eye health are more likely to say their last sight test/eye examination was two or more years ago (38% vs. 17% overall), or that they have never had one (9% vs. 3% overall).

# Discomfort around visiting an opticians/optometrist practice

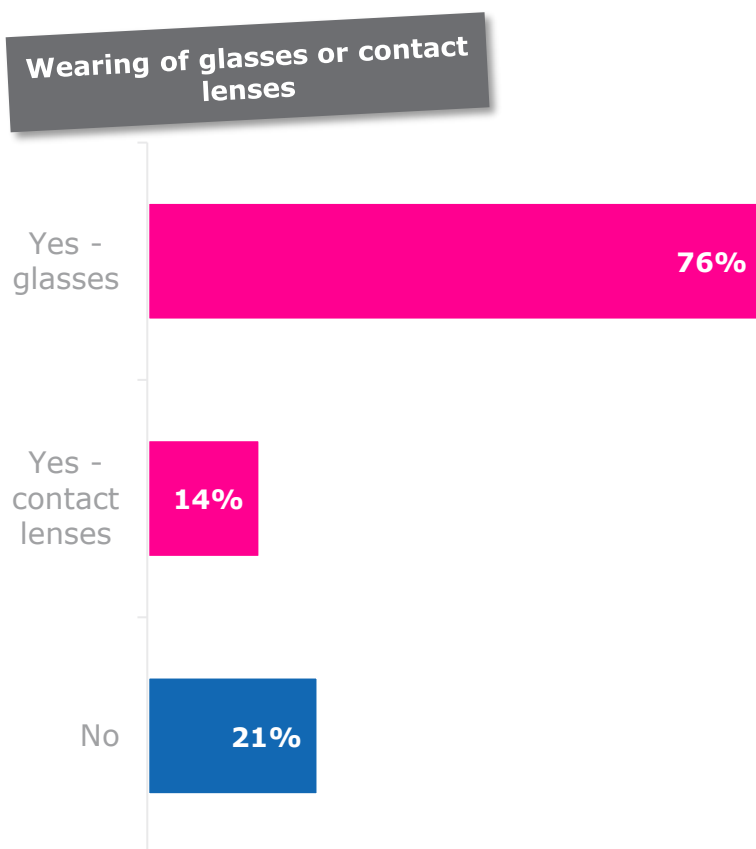
The most commonly cited reasons for discomfort around visiting an opticians/optometrist practice are associated with money, consistent with 2024. The cost of glasses is the most cited reason for discomfort (22%), followed by the cost of a sight test/eye examination (17%) and the pressure to buy glasses or contact lenses (14%).





# Wearing glasses or contact lenses

Just under four in five (79%) say that they wear glasses, contact lenses, or both, which is consistent with the previous wave (77%). Three quarters (76%) say they wear glasses and one in seven (14%) say they wear contact lenses.



2025 NET  
wear either  
glasses or  
contact lenses  
**79%**

2024 NET  
wear either  
glasses or  
contact lenses  
**77%**

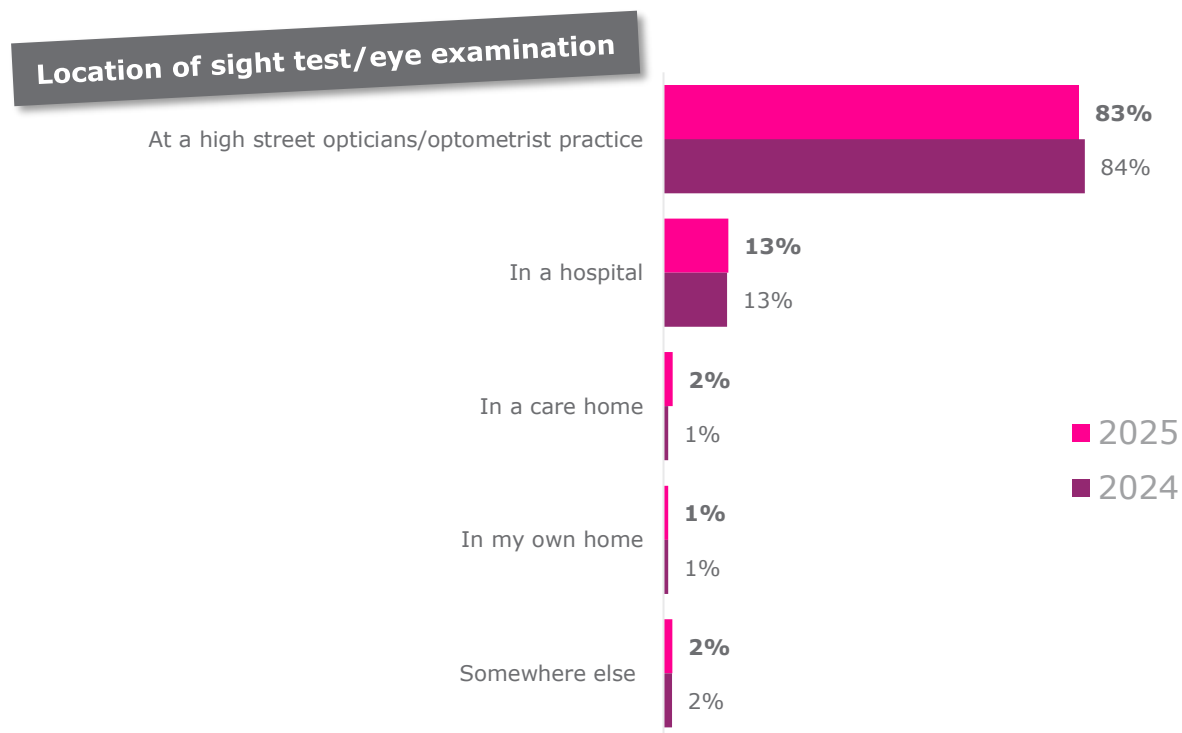
Those aged 55 and over are more likely than average to wear glasses (90% vs. 76% overall). Those aged 16-34 and 35-54 are more likely to wear contact lenses (21% and 16% vs. 14% overall). Those aged 16-34 are also more likely to wear neither glasses nor contact lenses (34% vs. 21% overall).

Females (16% vs. 14% overall), ethnic minorities (23%), those who work, either part time or full time (18%), and those on a high income (21%) are more likely to wear contact lenses than average.

Participants who state their last sight test/eye examination was over two years ago (47%), those who cannot afford essentials (28%) and those with at least one vulnerability marker (23%) are more likely to wear neither glasses nor contact lenses (vs. 21% overall).

# Location of test

Over eight in ten (83%) of those who have had a sight test/eye examination did so at a high street opticians/optometrist practice. The locations of sight tests/eye examinations continue the pattern that was seen in the previous wave.



Women are more likely than men to say their sight test/eye examination took place at a high street opticians/optometrist practice (86% vs. 79%).

Those aged 55 and over are also more likely to say their sight test/eye examination took place at a high street opticians/optometrist practice (90% vs. 71% of those aged 16-34).

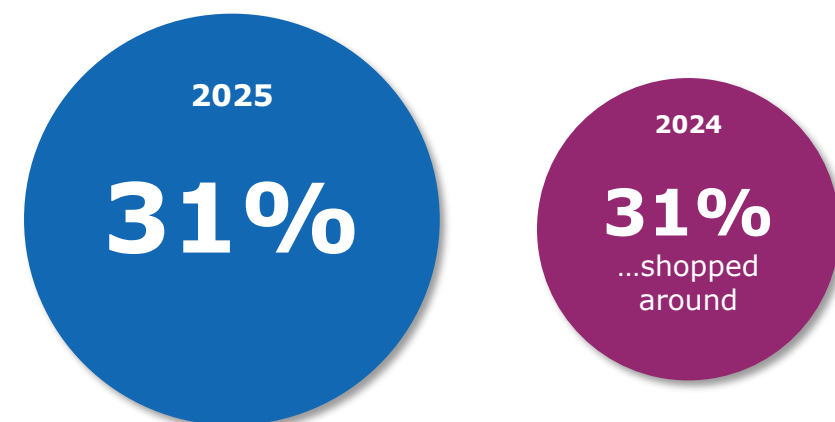
Young people are more likely to state that their last sight test/eye examination took place at a hospital (23% vs. 13%). This may suggest that young people are less likely to attend regular sight tests/eye examinations and appointments but rather wait until they experience potential issues with their eye health. Participants with an existing eye condition are also more likely to have had their last sight test/eye examination at a hospital (24%).

Those who state that their sight test/eye examination was funded by the NHS are more likely to have visited a high street opticians/optometrist practice (88% vs. 83% overall).



# Choosing the opticians/optometrist practice

Similar to last year, three in ten (31%) say that they shopped around before picking which optician/optometrist practice to visit. This continues to be significantly higher than the proportion that shopped around in 2023 (21%).



... shopped around before picking which opticians/optometrist practice to go to...

Shopping around before selecting an optician/optometrist practice is more likely amongst younger participants aged 16-34 (48% vs. 31% overall), while those aged 55 and over are more likely to say they did not shop around (81% vs. 67% overall).

The likelihood to shop around is higher amongst:

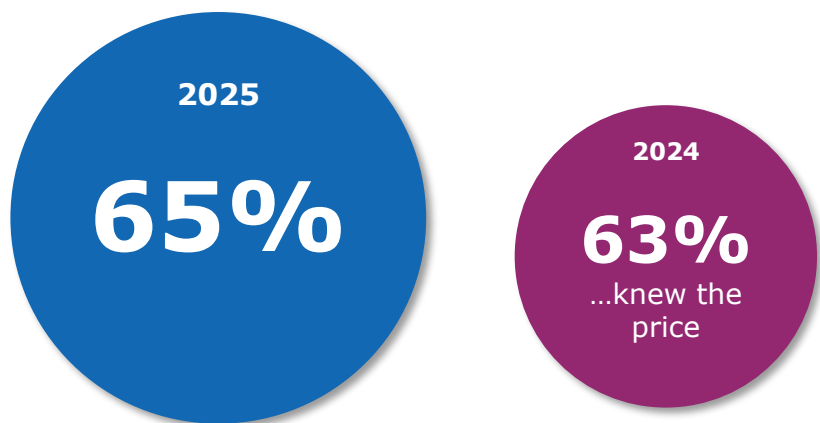
- Those who have an eye condition (41% vs. 31% overall)
- Participants who have previously felt uncomfortable at an optician/optometrist practice (43%)
- Those who paid for their sight tests/eye examinations (36%)
- Those with at least two vulnerability markers (38%)
- Participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the past 6 months (35%).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who knew the price of their sight test/eye examination prior to visiting are more likely to have shopped around (35%), compared to those who did not know the price beforehand (24%).

Other groups who are less likely to say that they shopped around include those who are not struggling financially (26%).

# Knowledge of prices before attending appointment

Two thirds (65%) say that they knew the price of the sight test/eye examination before their appointment, in line with the proportion in 2024 (63%).



... knew the price of the sight test/eye examination before they attended their appointment

Those aged 65 and over are significantly more likely to say they knew the price before their sight test/eye examination (71% vs. 58% of those aged 16-34).

When looking at financial circumstances, perhaps counter-intuitively, those who say that they are *not* struggling financially are more likely to have known the price of their sight test/eye examination prior to their visit than those who *are* struggling financially (67% vs. 62% respectively).

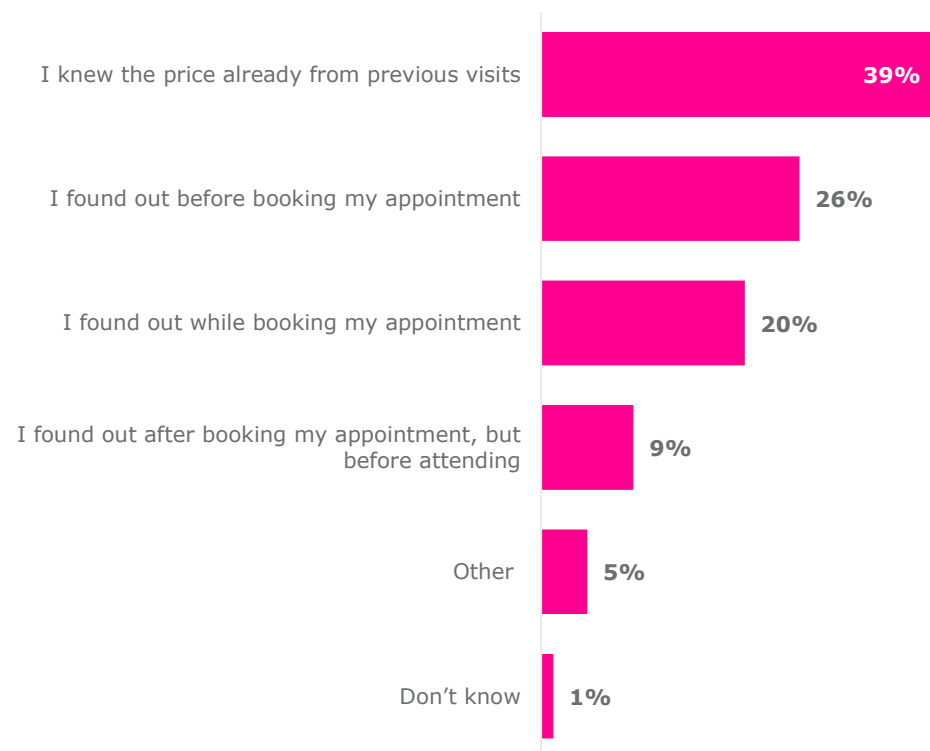
As expected, those who say that they shopped around before their appointment are more likely to say that they knew the price compared with those who did not (73% vs 61% respectively).

There are no significant differences by means of payment.



# Source of price information

When asked how they first found out about the price of their sight test/eye examination, around four in ten (39%) say that they knew this from previous visits . This is followed by a quarter (26%) who report finding out the price before booking their appointment and two in ten (20%) who found out while booking the appointment.



In terms of demographic differences:

- Those aged 55 or over are more likely to know the price from a previous visit (50% vs. 39% overall), while those aged 34-54 were more likely to find out whilst booking (28% vs. 20%) and those aged 16-34 after booking but before attending (17% vs. 9% overall).
- Participants in England are more likely than average to find out the price while booking (21%).
- White participants are more likely to know the price from previous visits compared to ethnic minorities (42% vs. 27% respectively), who are more likely to have found out the price while booking the appointment (28% vs. 19%).

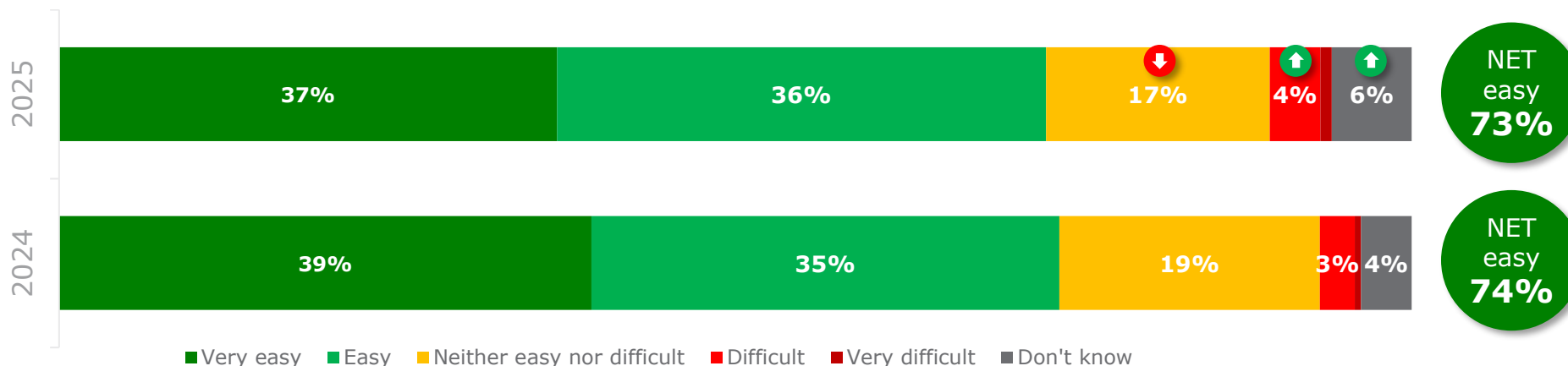
Participants who had their last sight test/eye examination at a high street opticians/optometrist practice are more likely to know the price from previous visits (41%) than average.





# Ease of sourcing price information

Just under three quarters (73%) say they found sourcing the price of their sight test/eye examination *very easy* or *easy*, in line with last year at 74%. However, there has been a slight fall in the proportion who say they found it *neither easy nor difficult* (17% vs. 19%) and a slight increase in those who found it *difficult* (5% vs. 3%), compared to 2024.



Those aged 55 or over are more likely to say they found it *very easy* or *easy* to find out the price of their sight test/eye examination (77% vs. 70% of those aged 16-34 and 71% of those aged 35-54). Younger participants aged 16-34 are more likely to say they found the process of discovering the price *difficult* or *very difficult* (7% vs. 5% overall).

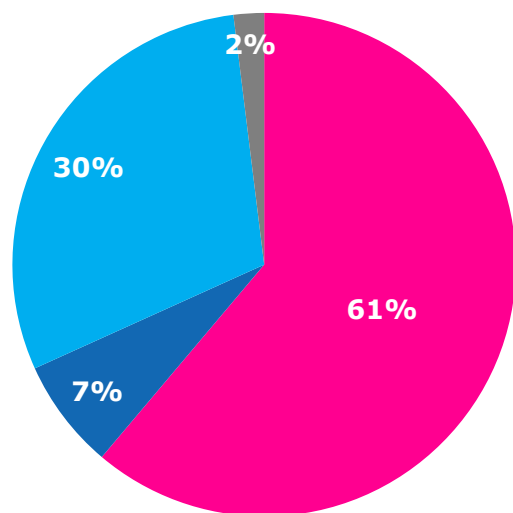
Participants who are confident in receiving care from an opticians/optometrist practice (75%) and confident in managing their eye care (77%) are both significantly more likely to have found it *very easy* or *easy* to find out the price, compared with those who are not confident (44% and 50% respectively).

**Q09.** Overall, how easy, or difficult was it to find out the price of your last sight test/eye examination? **Base:** All participants who have had a sight test/eye examination in the last two years (1,953), 2024 participants (1,599). Please note that question routing has changed in the 2025 wave, therefore comparisons to previous waves are indicative only.

# Source of sight test/eye examination funding

Over six in ten (61%) of those who had a sight test/eye examination in the past two years say they paid for it themselves, whereas three in ten (30%) say it was funded by the NHS. Less than one in ten (7%) say their employer paid or contributed towards their sight test/eye examination. A small proportion (2%) paid in another way.

- I paid myself
- My employer paid/contributed
- It was an NHS funded sight test/eye examination
- Other



In terms of demographic differences:

- Those aged 16-54 are more likely than those aged 55 and over to have paid themselves (72% vs. 46%).
- Those aged 25-44 are more likely than those aged 55 and over to have had their sight test/eye examination paid for (or at least contributed to) by their employers (11% vs. 2%).
- In contrast, those aged 65 and over are more likely than younger age groups to have an NHS funded sight test/eye examination (59% vs. 17% 16-54).
- Those with a disability are more likely to say their sight test/eye examination was funded by the NHS (40% vs. 27% of those without a disability).

Those who last had their sight test/eye examination at a high street optician/optometrist practice are slightly more likely to say it was funded by the NHS (32% vs. 30% overall). In contrast, those who had their last sight test/eye examination at a hospital are more likely to say they paid themselves (70% vs. 61% overall).

Intuitively those who shopped around are more likely than average to have paid themselves (71%), whilst those who did not shop around are more likely to have received NHS funding (34%).

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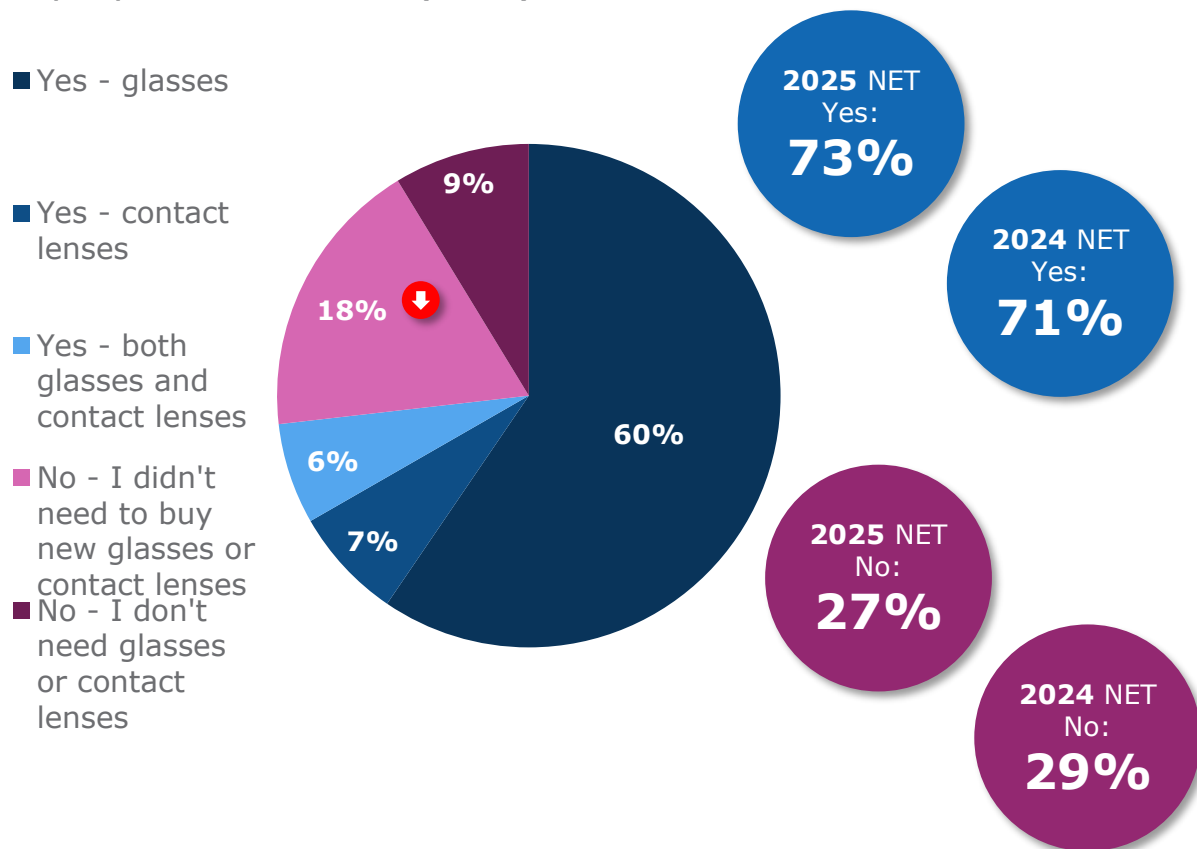


# Purchasing eyewear



# Purchase of glasses or contact lenses

Almost three quarters (73%) purchased glasses or contact lenses following their sight test/eye examination. The largest proportion (60%) bought glasses only, but 7% bought contact lenses only, and 6% bought both. Just under one in five (18%) did not need to purchase new glasses or contact lenses, which is significantly lower than the proportion in 2024 (22%).



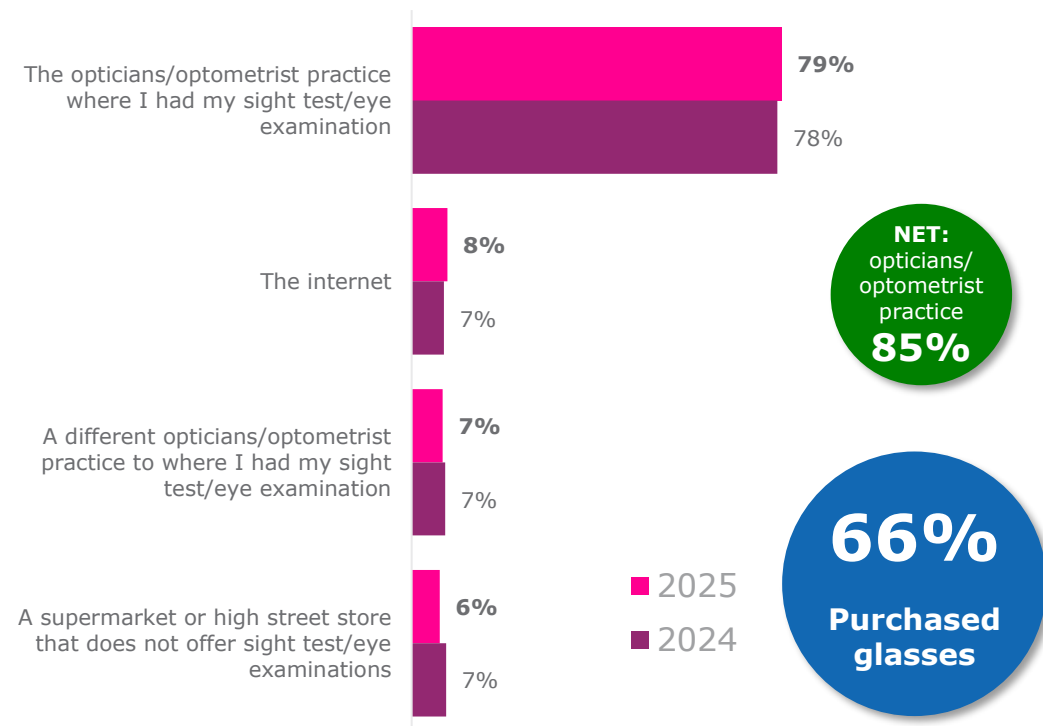
In terms of demographic differences:

- Women are more likely to purchase glasses, contacts or both as a result of their visit (78% vs. 68% of men).
- Those aged 16-24 are more likely to have made some form of purchase than those aged 55 and over (77% vs. 69% respectively). However, those aged 55 and over were more likely to have purchased glasses specifically (66% vs. 60% overall).
- White participants are less likely to have made a purchase as a result of their sight test/eye examination than ethnic minority participants (72% vs. 80%).

Consistent with 2024, those who had their sight test/eye examination at a high street opticians/optometrist practice are more likely to have purchased glasses only as a result of their sight test/eye examination (64% vs. 60% overall). Alternatively, those whose sight test/eye examination was performed at a hospital facility are significantly more likely to have purchased contact lenses only (17% vs. 7% overall), or both glasses and contacts (13% vs. 6% overall).

# Source of glasses purchase

Of those who purchased glasses as a result of their sight test/eye examination, eight in ten (79%) purchased them from the same opticians/optometrist practice where they had their sight test/eye examination, consistent with 2024. Other sources of glasses purchase are less commonly used.



Those more likely than average to have purchased their glasses from the same opticians/optometrist practice where they had their sight test/eye examination are:

- Women (82% vs. 75% of men)
- Those aged 55 and over (86% vs. 65% of 16-34s and 81% of 35-54s)
- White participants (80% vs. 73% of ethnic minority participants)
- Those whose sight test/eye examination was funded by the NHS (85%), compared to those who paid themselves (77%) or their employer paid/contributed to the purchase of glasses (70%)
- Those with no vulnerability markers (83%) and those who state they are not financially struggling (83%).

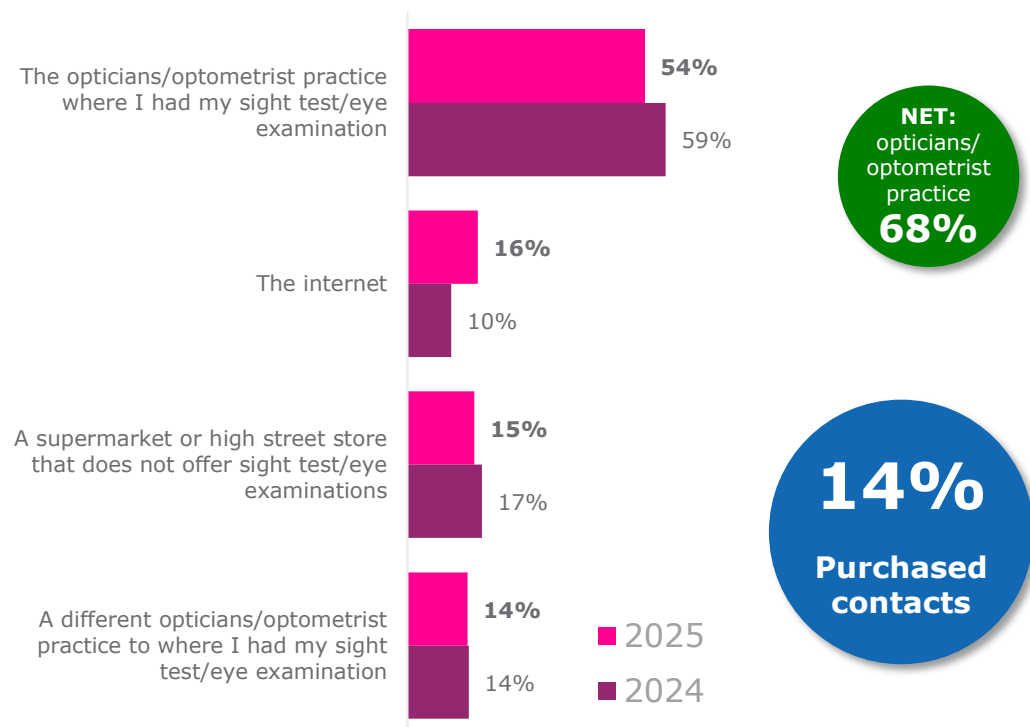
Those who had their sight test/eye examination in a hospital facility (13%) and those who shopped around before their visit (14%) are more likely to purchase their glasses from the internet (vs. 8% overall).

Those with an eye condition (11%) and those with a low income (13%) are more likely to have purchased their glasses from a different opticians/optometrist practice to where they had their sight test/eye examination (vs. 7% overall).



# Source of contact lenses purchase

Of those who purchased contact lenses as a result of their sight test/eye examination, over half (54%) purchased them from the same opticians/optometrist practice where they had their sight test/eye examination. As seen in 2024, those who purchased contact lenses are more likely to use other sources than the opticians/optometrist practice where they had their sight test/eye examination, compared with those who purchased glasses.



Women are more likely to purchase their contact lenses from the opticians/optometrist practice where they had their sight test/eye examination (61% vs. 46% of men). Conversely, men are more likely to source them from a supermarket or high street store that does not offer sight test/eye examinations (21% vs. 11% of women).

There are very few significant differences by age group in terms of where contact lenses are purchased, however those aged 35-44 are more likely to make their purchases on the internet (28% vs. 16% overall).



# Experience of purchase

Of those who purchased either glasses or contact lenses, a quarter (24%) agree that they felt pressure to purchase specific brands or types of glasses or contact lenses. However, just under two thirds (63%) disagree that they felt this pressure.

I felt pressured to purchase specific brands or types of glasses or contact lenses



■ Strongly agree  
■ Tend to disagree

■ Tend to agree  
■ Strongly disagree

■ Neither agree nor disagree  
■ Don't know

Groups who are more likely to agree that they felt pressure to purchase specific brands or types of glasses or contact lenses include (vs. 24% overall):

- Those aged 16-34 (38%)
- Ethnic minorities (37%)
- Those who had their sight test/eye examination at a hospital facility (47%).

Other groups more likely to have felt pressure include those with at least one vulnerability marker (27%), those with an income of £20,001-£25,000 (32%) and those with an eye condition (30%). This is in addition to those who are not confident in managing their eye health or receiving care (35% and 41% respectively). This may be a potential concern, as those with financial and care needs are potentially experiencing pressure to purchase specific brands or types of glasses or contact lenses.

**Q013A.** Thinking about when you last purchased glasses or contact lenses, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? **Base:** All participants who have purchases glasses OR contact lenses (1,177)

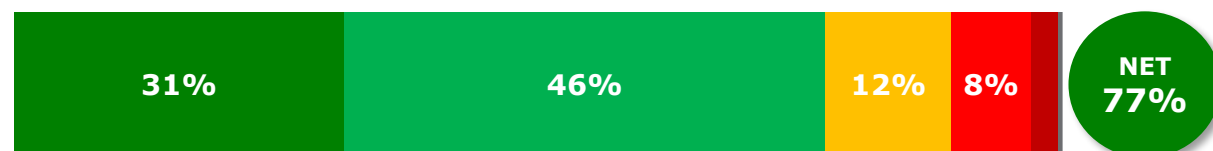
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# Experience of purchase

Over three quarters (77%) agree that the pricing was clear when they last purchased glasses or contact lenses, with three in ten reporting that they *strongly agree*. Only one in ten (10%) disagree with the statement.

I felt the pricing was clear and transparent



■ Strongly agree  
■ Tend to disagree

■ Tend to agree  
■ Strongly disagree

■ Neither agree nor disagree  
■ Don't know

In terms of demographic differences:

- Those aged 55 and over are more likely to agree the pricing was clear and transparent (81% vs. 73% of those aged 16-34).
- White participants are more likely than those from an ethnic minority background to disagree that the pricing was clear (11% vs. 7% overall).

Those with an income of £20,001-£25,000 (16%), those with at least one vulnerability marker (13%), and those with a disability (14%) are all significantly more likely to disagree that the pricing was clear.

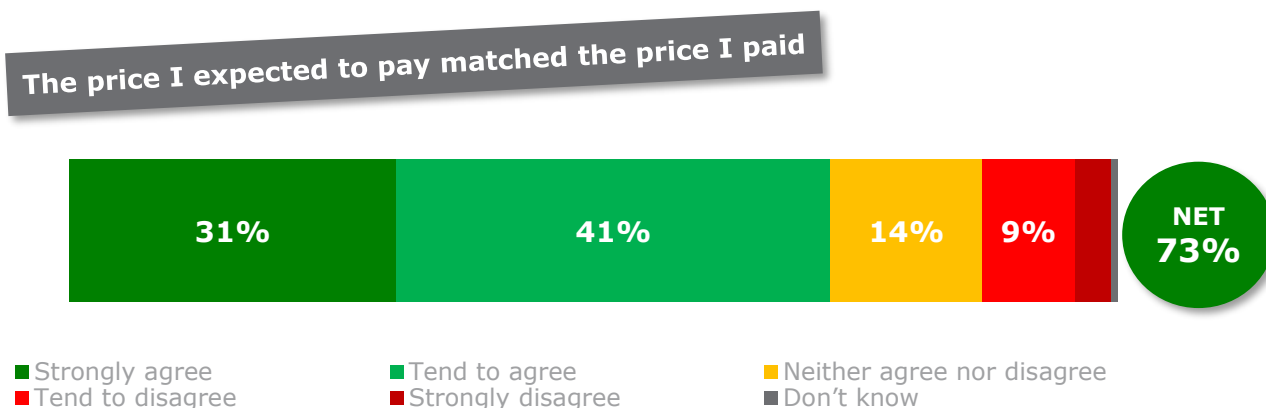
Those that have low confidence both in receiving care from their opticians/optometrist practice and managing their eye health are also more likely to disagree with the transparency of the pricing (22% and 23% respectively).





# Experience of purchase

Amongst those who purchased glasses or contact lenses as a result of their sight test/eye examination, over seven in ten (73%) agree that they paid the price that they had expected, while only 12% disagree. More say they *tend to agree* with this statement than *strongly agree* (41% vs. 31%).



In terms of demographic differences, those aged 35-54 are more likely to agree that the price of the glasses or contact lenses matched what they were expecting (76% vs. 65% of those aged 16-34).

Those who say that they knew the price before their appointment are more likely to agree that the price matched their expectations (77%).

Groups who are less likely to agree that the price matched their expectations include those who state they are struggling financially (67%) and those who have at least one vulnerability marker (70%).

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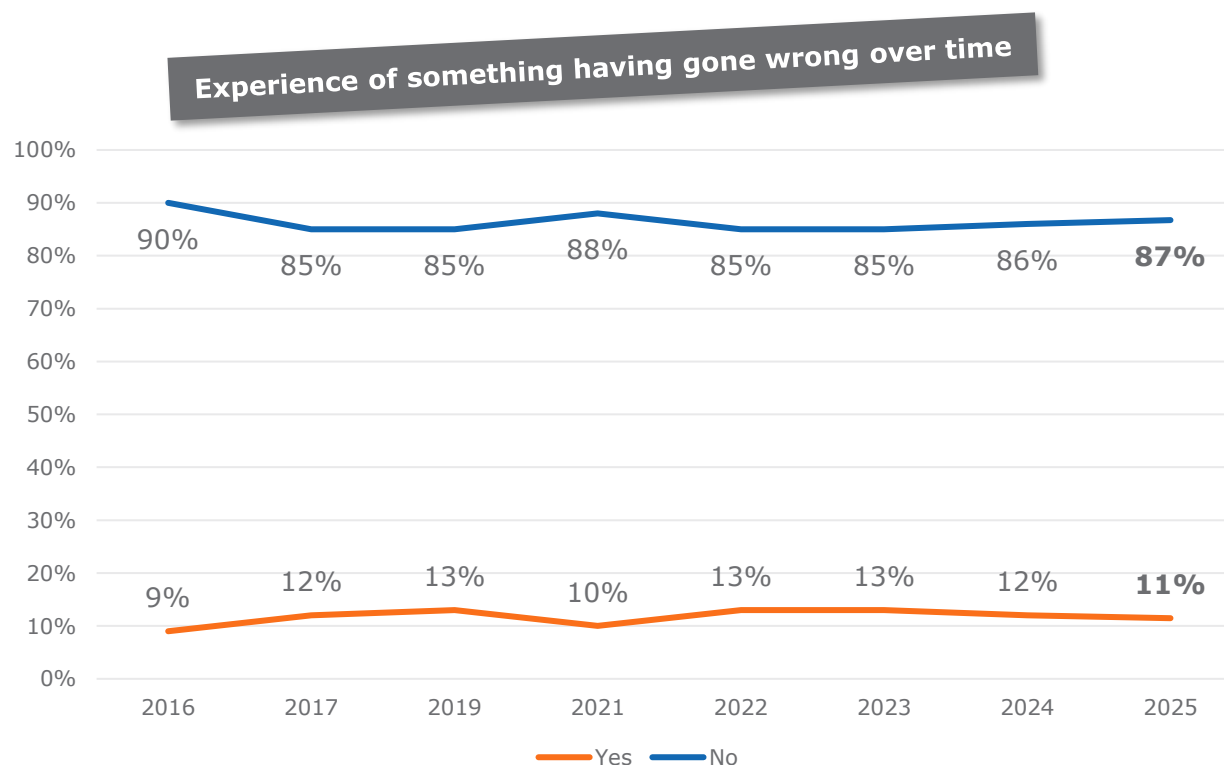
# Poor experiences and complaints





# Poor experiences

The proportion of those who say they have experienced something go wrong when visiting an opticians/optometrist practice remains stable this year (87% no; 11% yes).



Those in older age groups are more likely to say they have not experienced anything go wrong with the care or service they received (89%). While those in younger age groups are no more or less likely to say something did go wrong (11% of 16-34s), they are more likely to say they 'don't know' if something went wrong (4% vs. 2% overall).

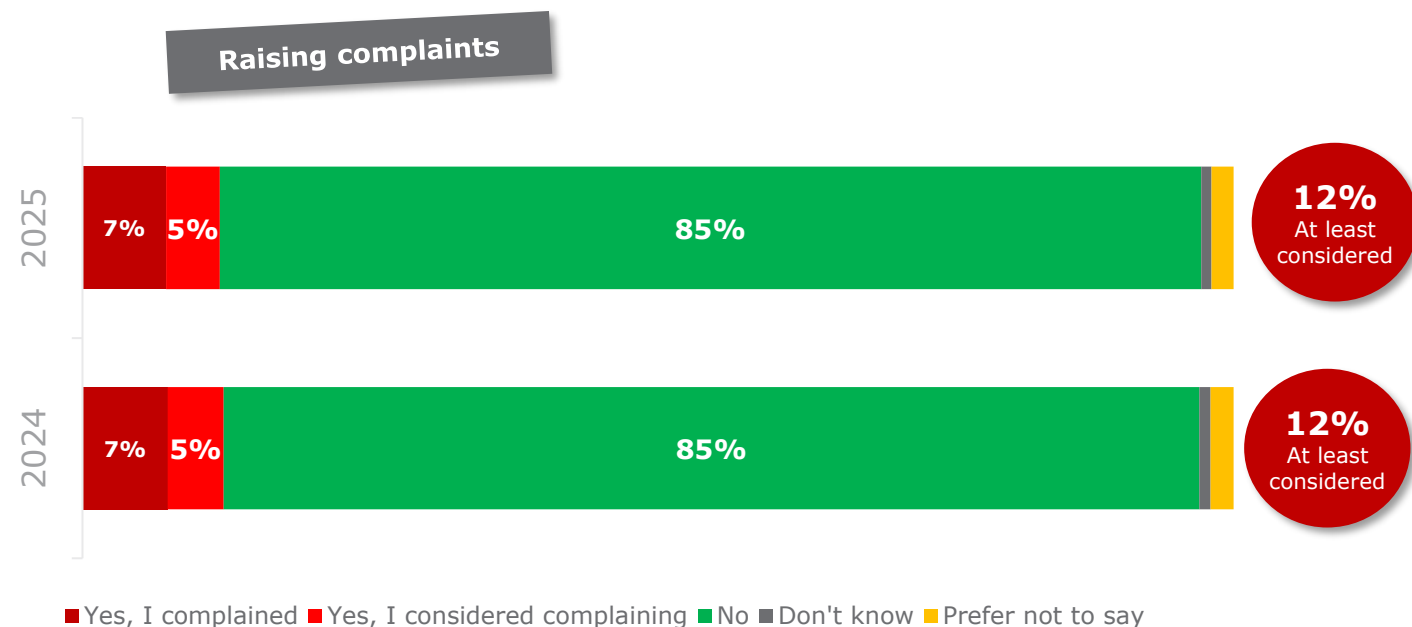
Those with a disability are more likely than average to say that something went wrong with their service or care (19%), as are carers (23%), those with a household income of less than £20,000 (19%), and those not in work (16%).

Those with at least one vulnerability marker are more likely than average to say that something went wrong with the care or service when visiting an opticians/optometrist practice (15%), as are those who are less confident in receiving a high standard of care from their opticians/optometrist practice (20%) or in managing their own eye health (18%).



# Raising complaints

The proportion of those who made a complaint remains stable this year, with 7% saying they complained and a further 5% considered complaining.



In terms of demographic differences:

- Women are more likely than men to say they complained (9% vs. 6%)
- Younger age groups aged 16-34 are more likely than older people aged 55 and over to say they *considered* complaining (8% vs. 2%)
- Those from a white background are less likely than ethnic minorities to say they *considered* complaining (4% vs. 9%)

Carers are more likely to say they have complained about an experience before (15%), as are those with a household income of £20,001 - £25,000 (13%).

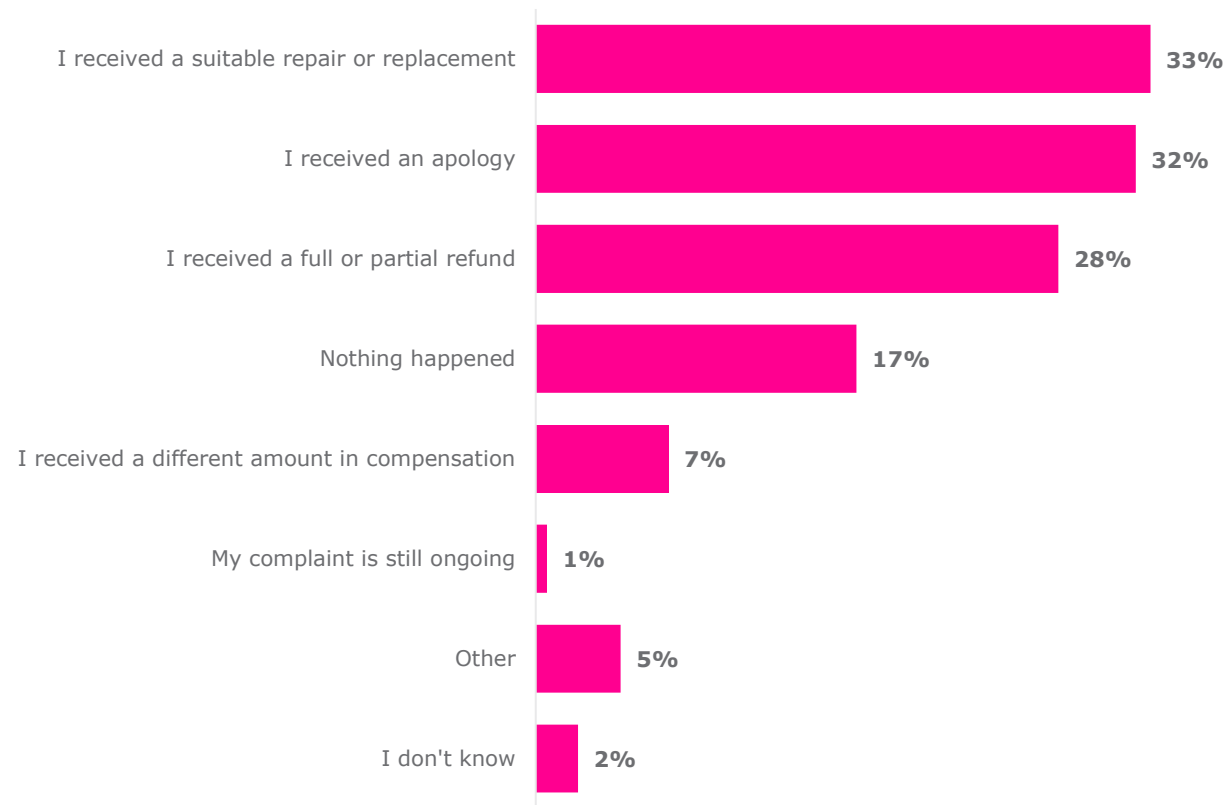
Those with at least one vulnerability marker are more likely than average to say they have complained before about an experience at an opticians/optometrist practice (8%), as are those who say they have been treated less favourably due to a personal characteristic (21%). Those less confident in receiving a high standard of care from their opticians/optometrist practice or managing their own eye health are more likely to say they *considered* complaining (14% and 11% respectively).

**Q016.** Have you ever complained or considered complaining about an experience when visiting an opticians/ optometrist practice? **Base:** All participants who visited an opticians/ optometrist practice on their last sight test/eye examination (1,634), 2024 participants (1,667).



# Outcome of complaint

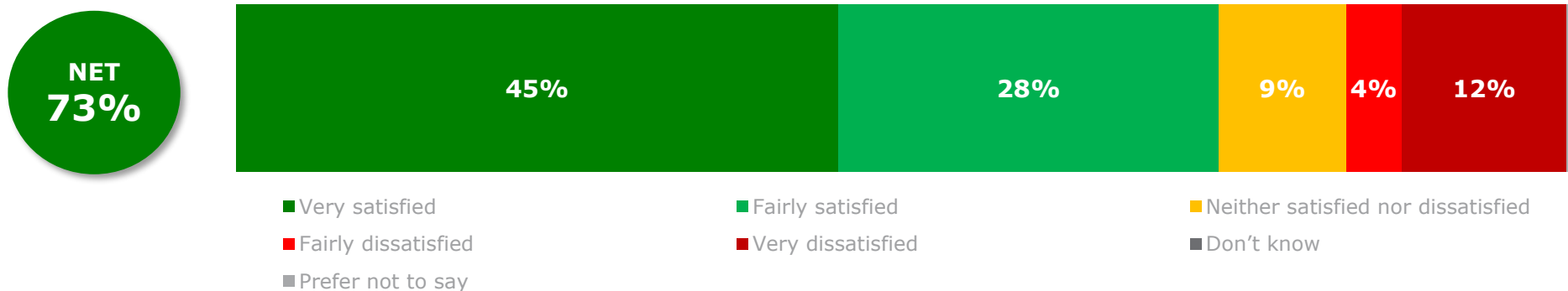
New to the survey this year, those who complained were asked what the outcome of their complaint was. The most common outcomes include receiving a suitable repair or replacement (33%), an apology (32%), or receiving a refund, either in full or partial (28%). Sub-group analysis is not possible for this question due to small sub-group sizes.





# Satisfaction with the outcome of the complaint

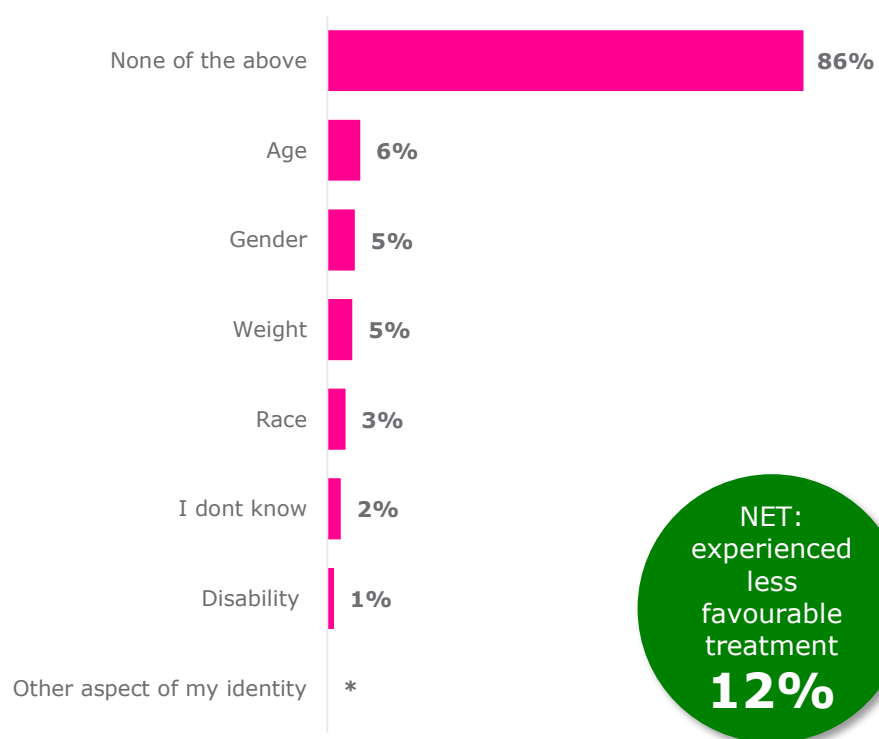
Also a new question to the survey this year, those who complained and reached some form of resolution were asked about the extent to which they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the outcome. Almost three quarters (73%) say they were satisfied with the outcome, with more of these being *very satisfied* (45%) than *fairly satisfied* (28%). Fewer than one in five (16%) were dissatisfied, with more being *very dissatisfied* (12%) than *fairly dissatisfied* (4%). Just under one in ten (9%) say they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the outcome. Again, sub-group analysis is not possible for this question due to the small base size (109).





# Treatment during sight test/eye examination

Finally, another new question to the survey this year involved asking those who had a sight test/eye examination in the past two years if they felt they were treated less favourably due to their personal characteristics. Overall, one in eight (12%) feel they were treated less favourably due to at least one of the factors covered in the survey. This was most often due to their age (6%), followed by their gender (5%), weight (5%), race (3%), or disability (1%). However, just under nine in ten (86%) feel they were not treated any less favourably due to any of the listed personal characteristics.



Young people aged 16-34 are more likely than average to say they felt that they were treated less favourably due to age (11%), gender (11%), weight (9%) or race (7%). In contrast, those aged 55 and over were more likely than average to say they were not treated any less favourably due to the factors listed (94% vs. 86% of overall).

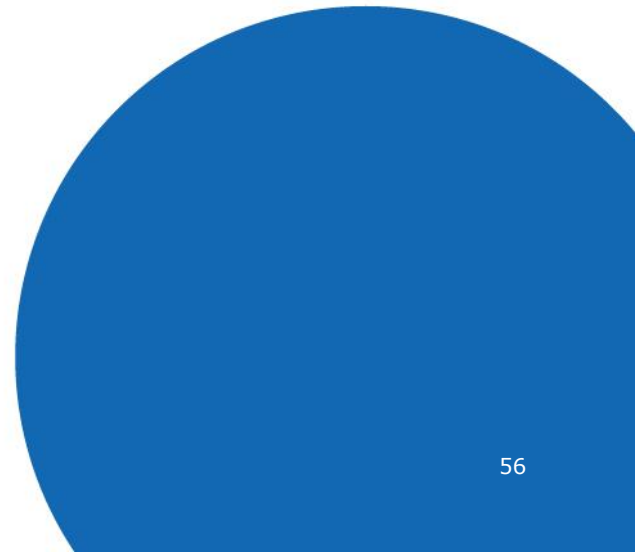
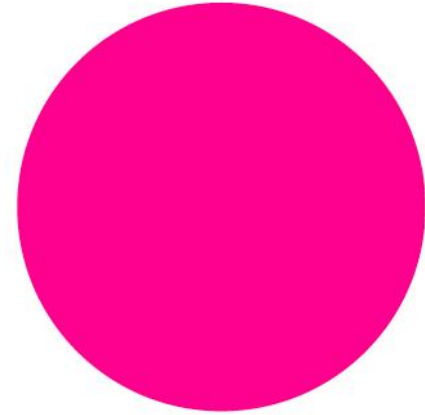
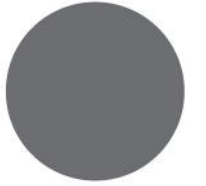
In terms of other demographic differences, men are more likely than women to say they were treated less favourably due to race (4% vs. 2%). Those from an ethnic minority background are more likely than average to say they were treated less favourably due to their race (7%).

Those with a disability and carers are more likely to say they were treated less favourably due a personal characteristic (23% and 27% respectively). The same can be found for those with at least one vulnerability marker (16%).

Those with a household income of less than £20,000 or more than £50,001 are more likely to say they were not treated less favourably (92% and 89% respectively vs. 86% overall).

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# 04 Audience profile

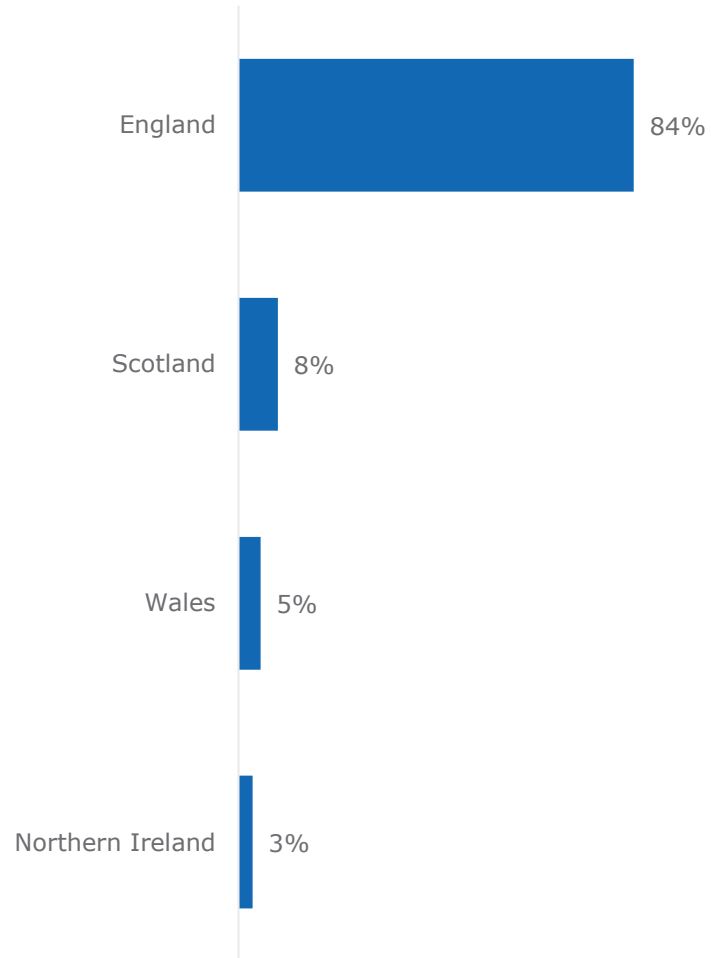




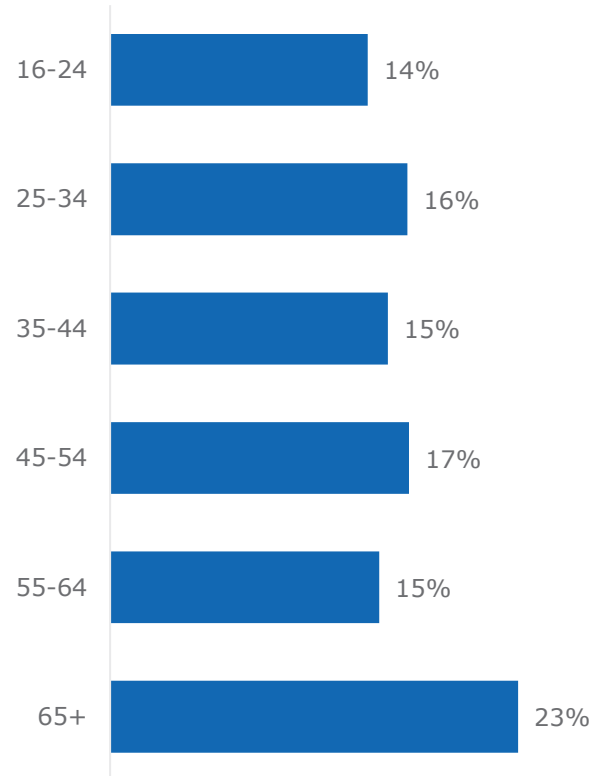
# Weighted profile of participants (1)



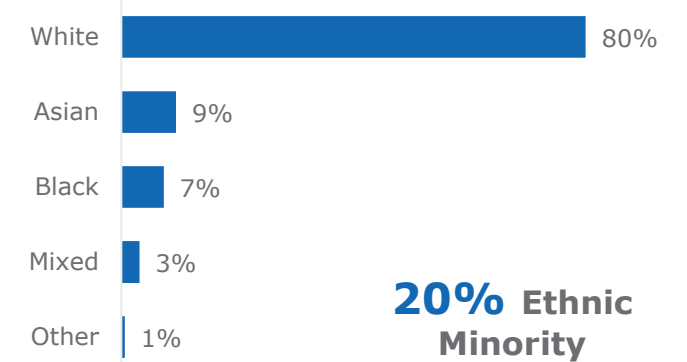
## Nation



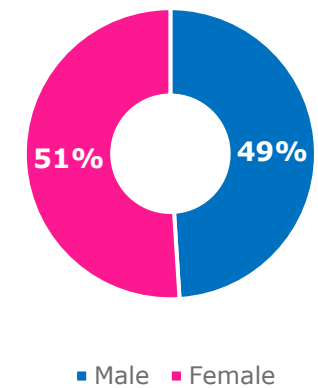
## Age group



## Ethnicity



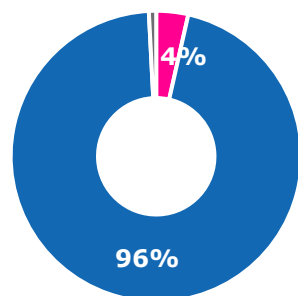
## Gender



# Weighted profile of participants (2)

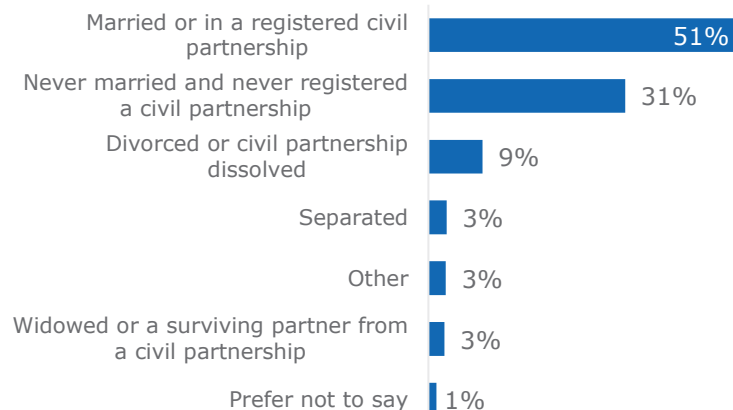


## Trans history

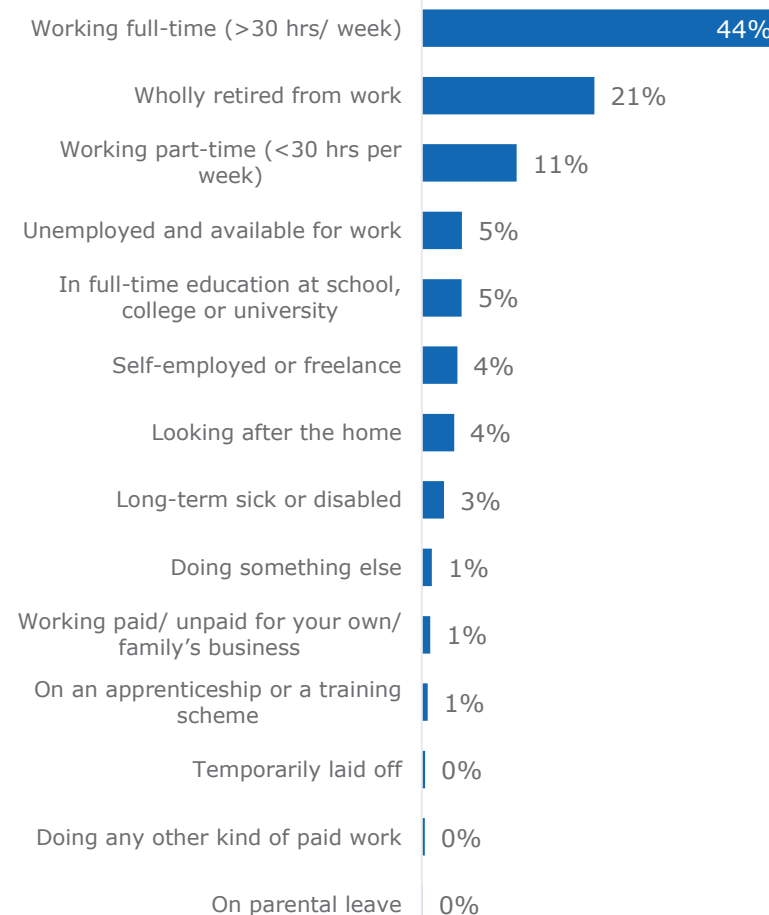


■ Yes ■ No ■ Prefer not to say

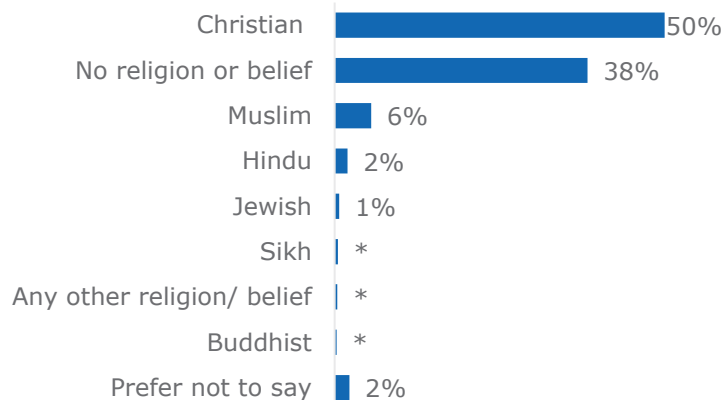
## Marital status



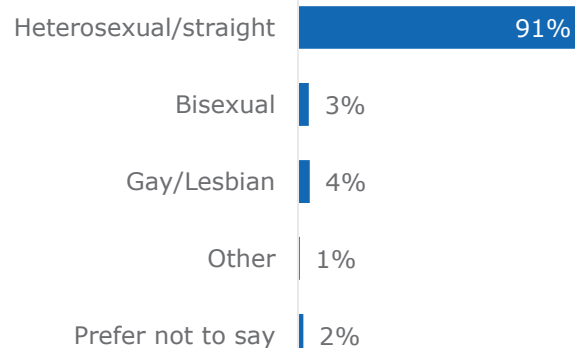
## Working status



## Religion

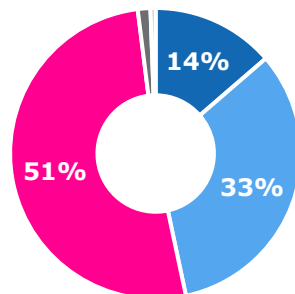


## Sexual orientation



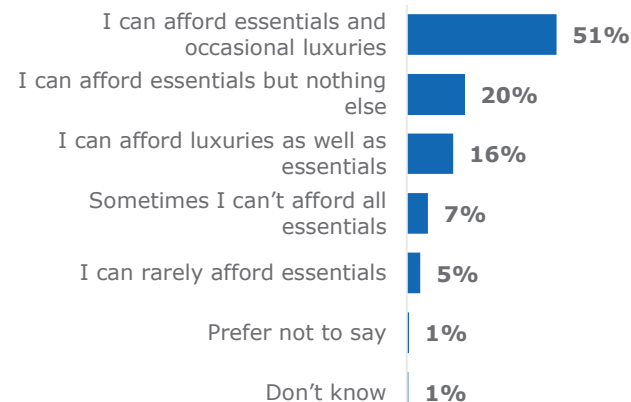
# Weighted profile of participants (3)

## Financially struggling

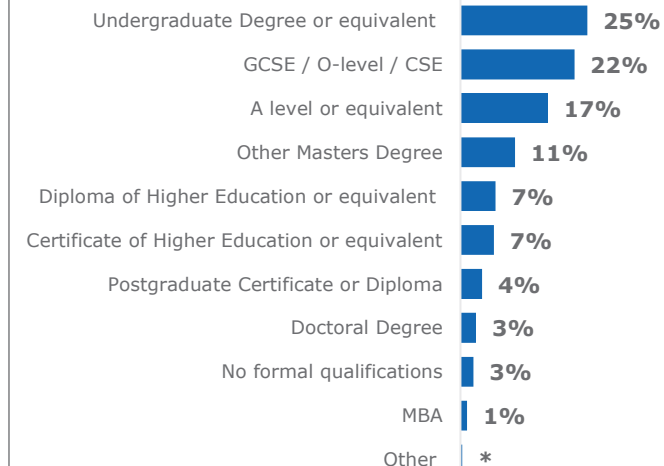


■ Yes ■ Slightly ■ No ■ Don't know ■ Prefer not to say

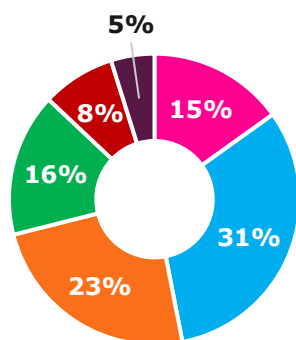
## Ability to pay for luxuries or essentials



## Highest level of education

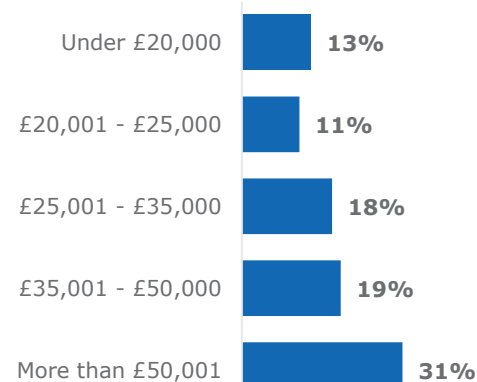


## SEG

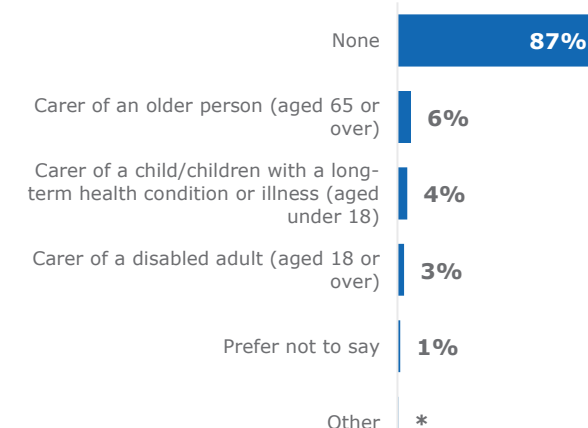


■ A ■ B ■ C1 ■ C2 ■ D ■ E

## Annual income

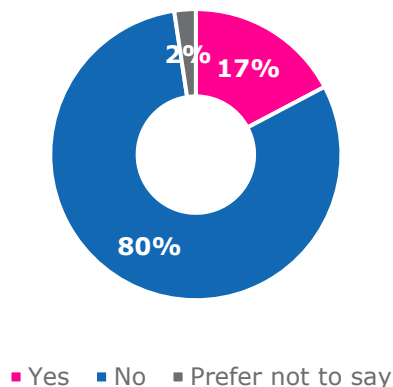


## Unpaid caring responsibilities

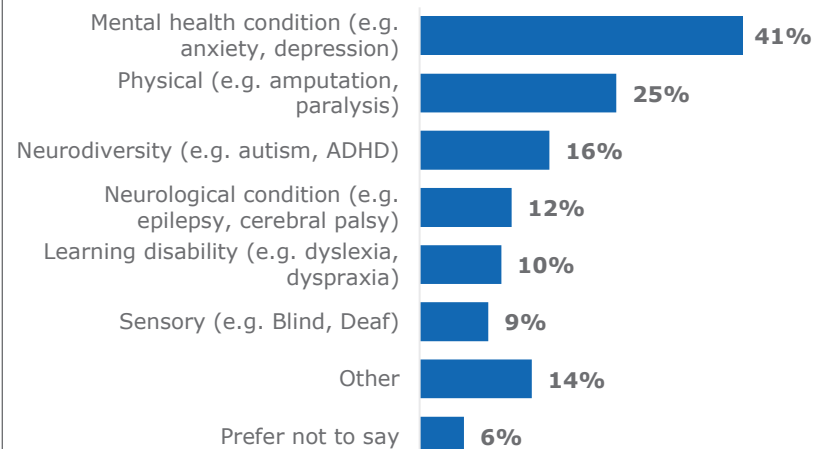


# Weighted profile of participants (4)

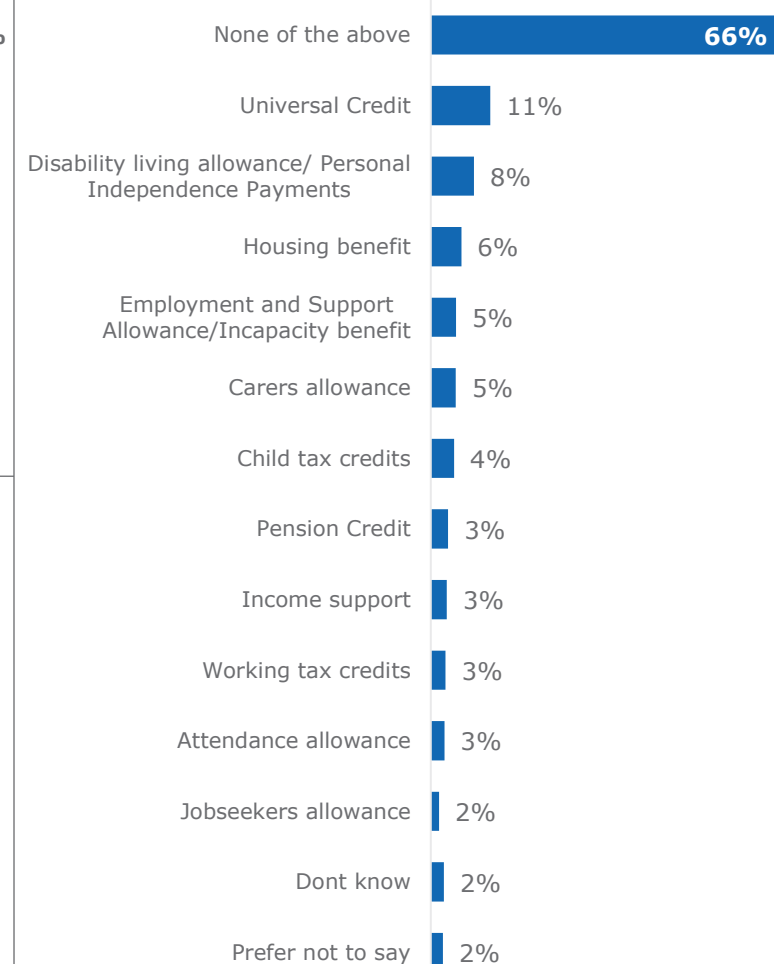
## Disability



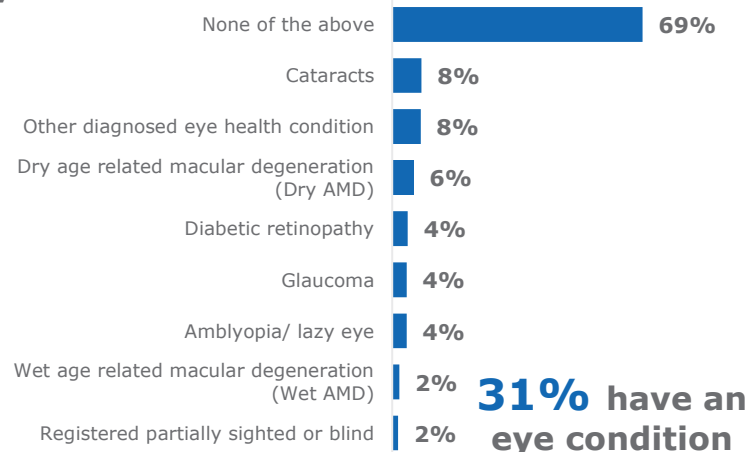
## Disability category



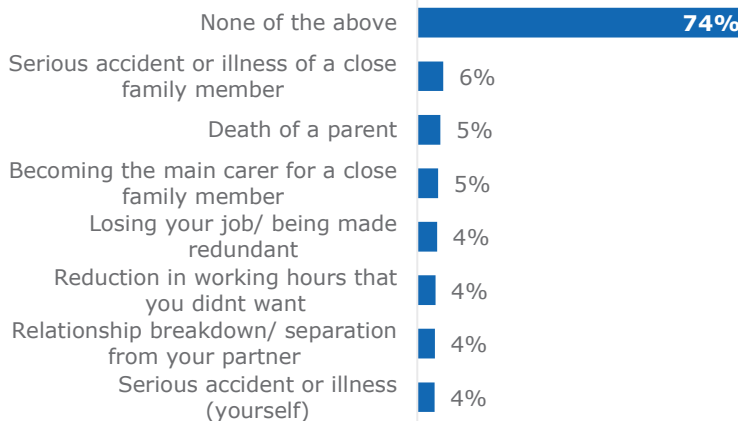
## Benefits received



## Eye conditions



## Events experienced in last 12 months (>1%)

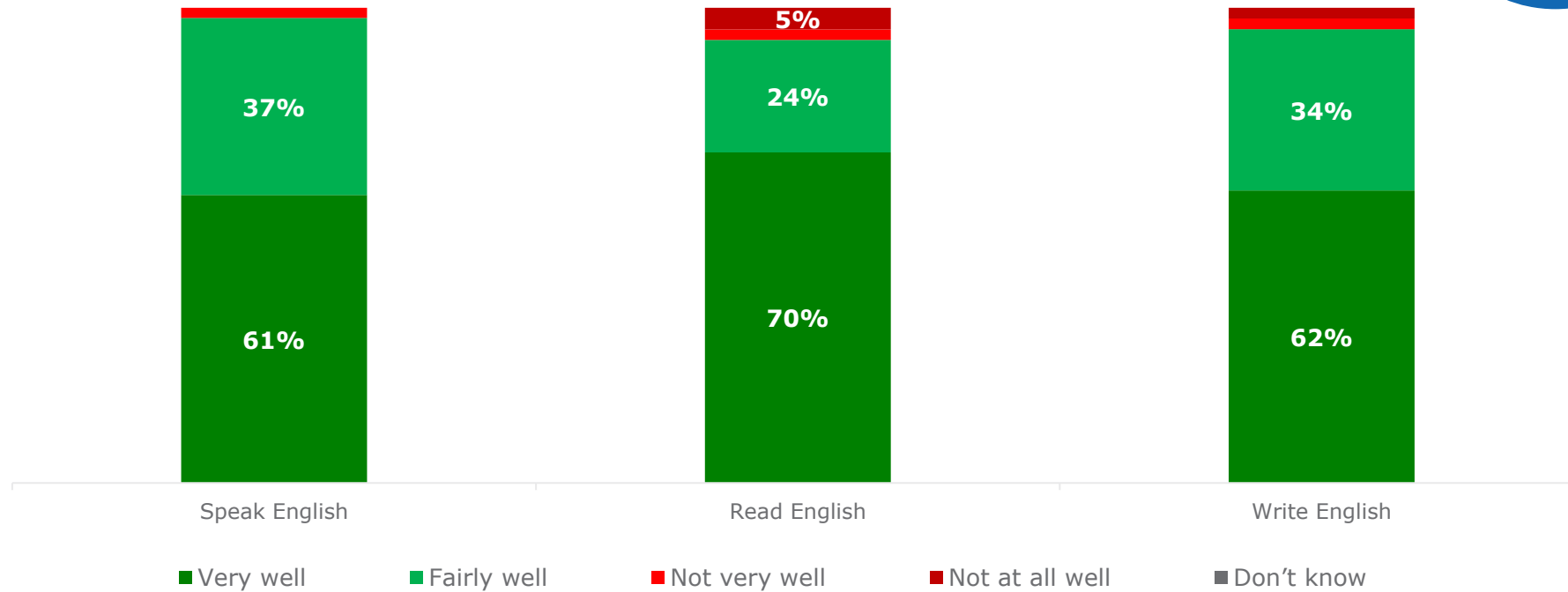


# Language



Ability to speak and read English

**3%**  
said that English  
was not their first  
language



**Source:** S07. Is English your first language, or not? **Base:** All participants (2,012). **S08.** Overall, how well, or not, would you say you speak English? **Base:** All participants who do not speak English as their first language (62).

# For more information



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