

Public Opinion Survey on Equality in Northern Ireland Summary Report

Ipsos MORI Northern Ireland
December 2019

© 2019 Ipsos. All rights reserved. Contains Ipsos' Confidential and Proprietary information and may not be disclosed or reproduced without the prior written consent of Ipsos.



Ipsos Public Affairs

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	03
BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH	06
DEMOGRAPHICS	07
RESEARCH FINDINGS	10
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28



Executive summary

Awareness and understanding

When asked what the term 'equality' means to participants thinking specifically about Northern Ireland (NI), the most commonly cited response is that it means the equal treatment of all people (16%).

Over one in ten participants (14%) hold a negative view about the level of equality in NI or feel that equality is lacking.

Attitudes

Over a third of participants agree that the term 'equality' is meaningless to them and not something they think about day to day (36%), marking a significant increase from the previous wave (28%).

Equality status and discrimination

The groups considered to be protected from unlawful discrimination overall are racial and ethnic groups (24%), those of a certain sexual orientation (18%) and those living with a disability (16%). The proportion of participants feeling that none of the listed groups are protected has increased this wave to 17%, from 10% in the previous wave.

Almost a third of participants (30%) said that they do not know any groups protected from unlawful discrimination.

In terms of the settings in which people are protected from unlawful discrimination, 36% stated the workplace. Just over one in ten considered people to be protected in education (11%). While in 2018-19 18% of participants mentioned that people are protected from unlawful discrimination in accessing public services, this has dropped to 8% in 2019. Again there is a significant increase since the last wave in participants feeling that none of these settings are covered by unlawful discrimination (up to 12% from 8%).

Over a third of participants (36%) said they do not know any settings in which people are protected from unlawful discrimination.

Views on equality in NI

The majority of participants overall agree that equality and anti-discrimination laws in NI are necessary (82%), however this marks a significant decrease since the last wave when 90% agreed. A small, albeit growing, proportion disagree that anti-discrimination laws are necessary (up to 8% in 2019 from 4% in 2018-19).

There is less optimism among NI citizens that people can achieve their potential regardless of their personal characteristics; while 61% agree that this is the case, two in ten disagree (20%), up from one in ten in 2018-19 (12%).

The majority of participants agree that workplaces are welcoming and inclusive in NI generally (58%). However, since the last wave the proportion of participants disagreeing that workplaces are welcoming and inclusive has increased from 8% to 13%.



Executive summary (cont'd)

Views on equality in NI (cont'd)

Similarly with the notion that workers are generally treated with dignity and respect, the proportion of participants disagreeing has increased from 13% in 2018-19 to 18% in 2019. The majority, however, agree that workers are generally treated with dignity and respect (57%).

The level of concern over future anti-discrimination laws in NI compared to Great Britain (GB) or the Republic of Ireland (ROI) is mixed. Over a third say they are worried that the laws protecting them from discrimination will not be as strong as for others in GB or ROI (34%). Just under a third are not worried about this (30%). It is worth noting that those who express greatest concern are non-heterosexual individuals, those who are living with a disability or illness and those who identify as nationalist.

Personal experiences of unwanted behaviour

The majority of participants stated that they had not personally experienced a situation at work where they were not treated with dignity and respect based on their personal characteristics in the last 12 months (65%). Thirteen percent of participants stated that they had not been treated with dignity and respect (13%). Twenty two percent of participants stated that they have not been in a workplace during the last 12 months (22%).

Among those participants who are working, 70% reported that they had not witnessed a situation in the last 12 months where others in their workplace were not treated with dignity and respect based on their personal characteristics. Just under a third of participants said they had witnessed this (30%).

Aspects of life in Northern Ireland

A number of statements were presented to participants covering various aspects of life in NI, including the workplace, in education, the local area and public services.

Workplaces

The level of agreement around aspects of workplaces in NI is mixed. Less than a third of participants (29%) agree that workplaces tend to employ people with disabilities, while over a third (37%) disagree that this is the case. This marks a significant shift since 2018-19, when over a third of people agreed that workplaces tend to employ people with disabilities (35%) and almost a quarter disagreed (24%).

Once in employment, just under half agree that employees with disabilities are well supported (49%). Since 2018-19, a higher proportion of participants disagree that workplaces support employees with disabilities (up to 20% in 2019 from 14% in 2018-19).

There are more mixed views over support on mental health in the workplace. Over a third of participants agree that they rarely support employees with mental ill-health (39%), however 29% disagree that this is the case.



Executive summary (cont'd)

In 2019, over half of participants (60%) share the perception that there are still jobs still more suited to men than women. Over a third (67%), reject the idea that employers should employ people according to a job being seen as a man's or a woman's job.

Education

There is broad agreement that pre-school should meet the needs of all children, including those with disabilities or whose first language is not English (86%). There is also agreement, albeit to a lesser extent, that the curriculum should be used to address bullying because of a pupil's personal characteristics (72%).

The issue of funding in schools to support the needs of all pupils draws more mixed levels of support, though the majority agree that funding should focus on those groups which do less well at school (59%). Just over two in ten participants disagree with this (21%).

Two thirds of participants agree that additional funding provided to schools by government – to meet the needs of, for example, disabled pupils – should be monitored in order to track how the funding is spent (66%). Around two in ten disagree that this funding should be monitored (19%).

Local area

Thinking about participation at a local level, the majority of participants say they would consider voluntary or community work (67%), while 21% say they would not.

There is less engagement with the prospect of sitting on a public board such as a school's board of governors or a board for a publicly funded body; over a third of participants would consider this (39%), however almost half would not (48%).

Public services

Overall, just under half of participants (49%) agree that the needs of different groups of people are taken into account when planning public services, while 25% disagree.

Less than a quarter of participants (22%) agree that public figures show leadership on equality matters, while over half (52%) disagree with this.

These findings are consistent with the previous wave of research.



Background to the research

Background

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a telephone survey measuring public opinion on equality in Northern Ireland (NI) among the general public in winter 2018-19. Following this, ECNI commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct the second wave of this telephone survey in order to:

- **Understand** the level of awareness of equality issues.
- **Gather** views on equality issues in Northern Ireland.
- **Measure** perceptions of Northern Ireland's performance on equality issues.
- Collect data that is **comparable** with the 2018 survey results

The findings from the research will be used to support ECNI's 2019-2022 corporate plan.

Presentation of the data

Corrective rim weighting has been applied to the data on the region, age, gender and social class quotas to ensure the findings are representative of the population in Northern Ireland.

Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses. Multiple response questions are indicated on the relevant charts.

The report contains topline findings from the 2019 survey and comparable data from the 2018-19 survey is presented where applicable. Statistical significance testing was done using a Z-score, which is designed to test the difference between two proportions or test a single proportion against the total. The data has been tested to a 95% confidence level. Statistical significance is indicated in the report as follows:

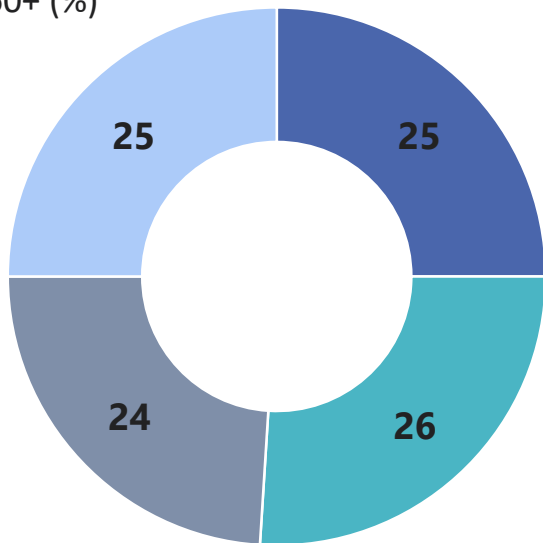
▲ Significant increase since previous wave

▼ Significant decrease since previous wave

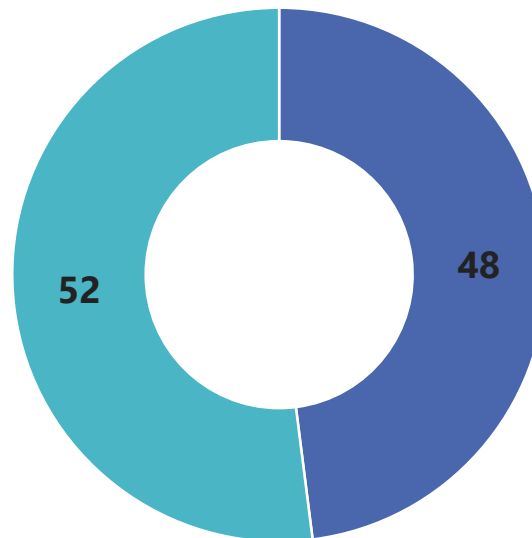
Demographics

Age, gender and sexual orientation

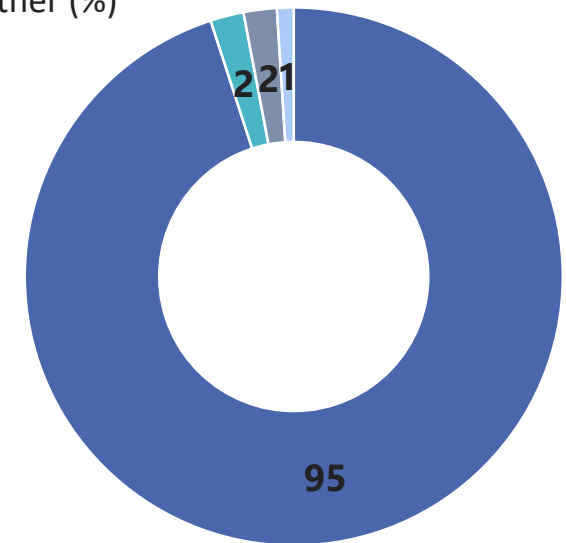
- 16-29 (%)
- 30-44 (%)
- 45-59 (%)
- 60+ (%)



- Male (%)
- Female (%)

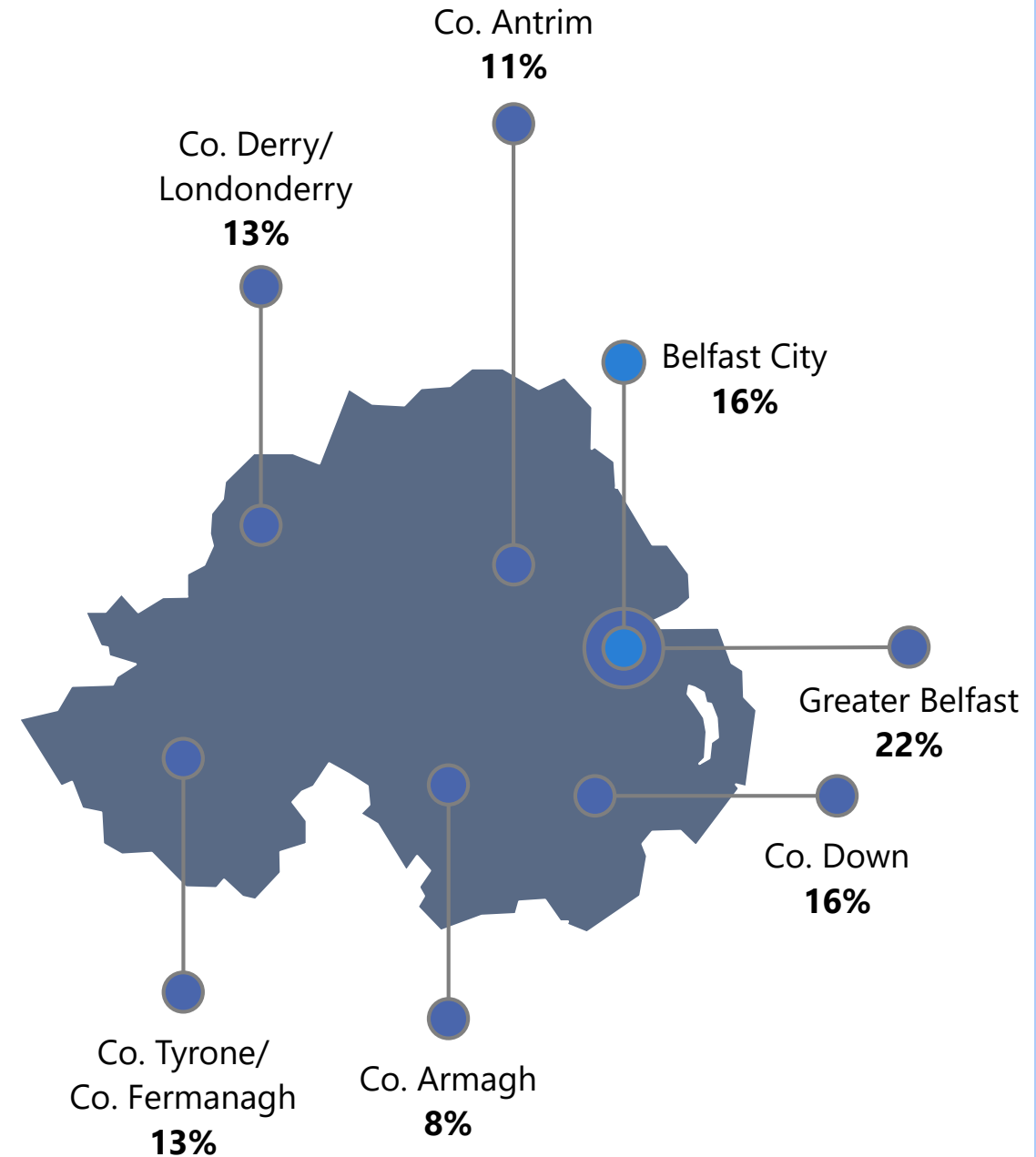
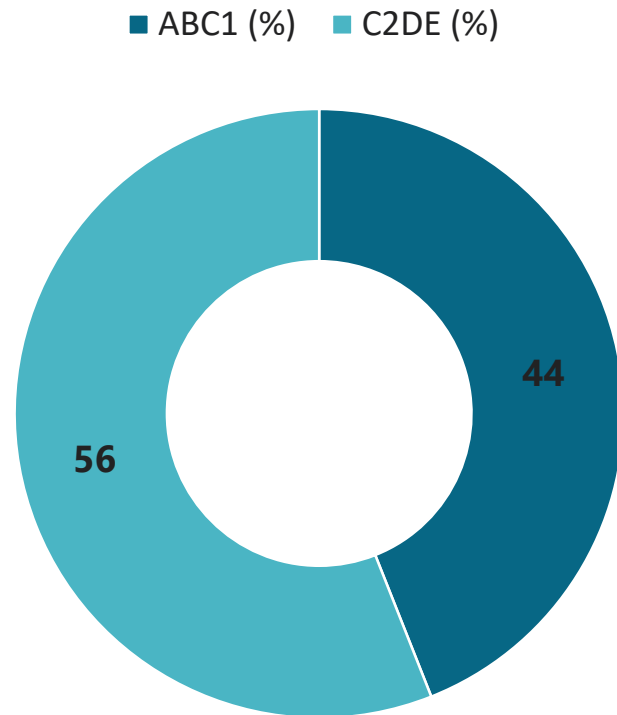


- Straight/heterosexual (%)
- Gay/lesbian (%)
- Bisexual (%)
- Other (%)



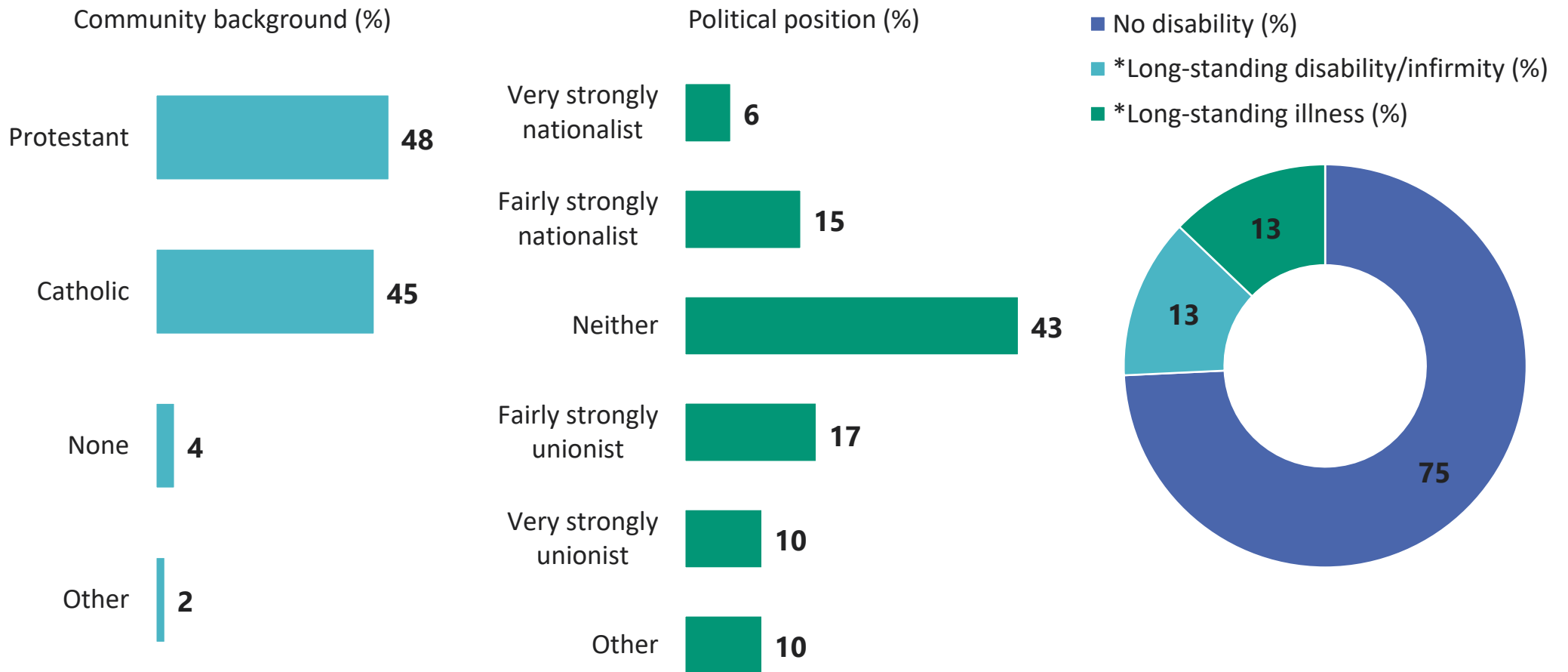
Demographics

Social class and region



Demographics

Community background, political position and disability status

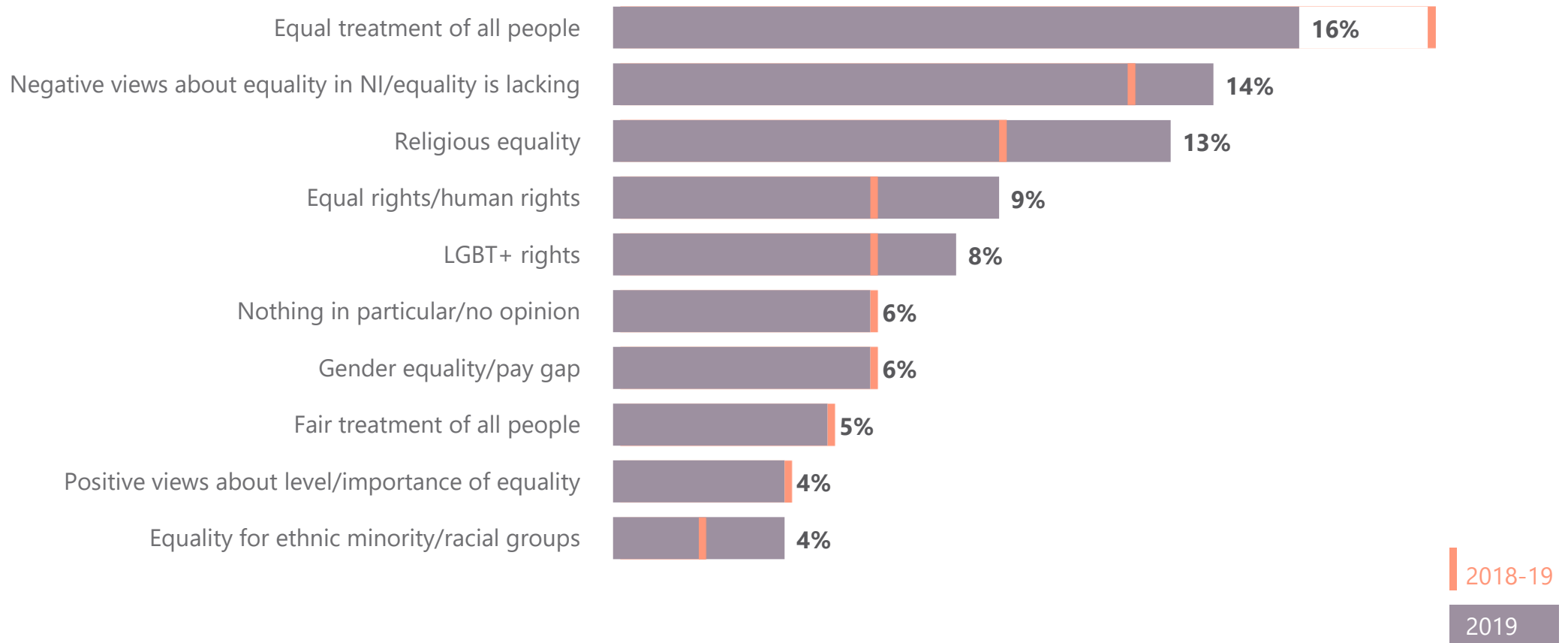


Research findings



Awareness and understanding

Q1. Thinking specifically about Northern Ireland, what do you think of when you hear the term “equality”? (top 10 responses)



Awareness and understanding

Q1. Thinking specifically about Northern Ireland, what do you think of when you hear the term "equality"? (all responses)

Response	% 19	% 18-19	Response (cont'd)	% 19	% 18-19
Equal treatment of all people	16	19	Historical issues/troubles	2	1
Negative views about level of equality in NI/equality is lacking	14	12	Overcoming divisions in NI/peace process	2	9
Religious equality	13	9	Inequality	2	1
Equal rights/human rights	8	6	No discrimination	1	1
LGBT+ rights	8	6	Equality is a confusing subject	1	0
Nothing in particular/no opinion	6	6	Has become overused/means too many things	1	*
Gender equality/pay gap	6	6	Not something I think about/not interested	1	4
Fair treatment of all people	5	5	Politicians/NI Assembly aren't doing enough	1	*
Equality for ethnic minority/racial groups	4	2	Equality under the law	1	*
Positive views about level/importance of equality in NI and progress	4	4	Equality for disabled people	1	1
Equality in employment	3	2	Equality has become too PC/gone too far	1	1
Equal opportunities/equality of opportunity	3	0	<i>Other</i>	10	6
Equality is a political/bureaucratic issue	3	2	<i>Don't know</i>	7	6
Equality is an ongoing issue/work in progress/room for improvement	2	4			





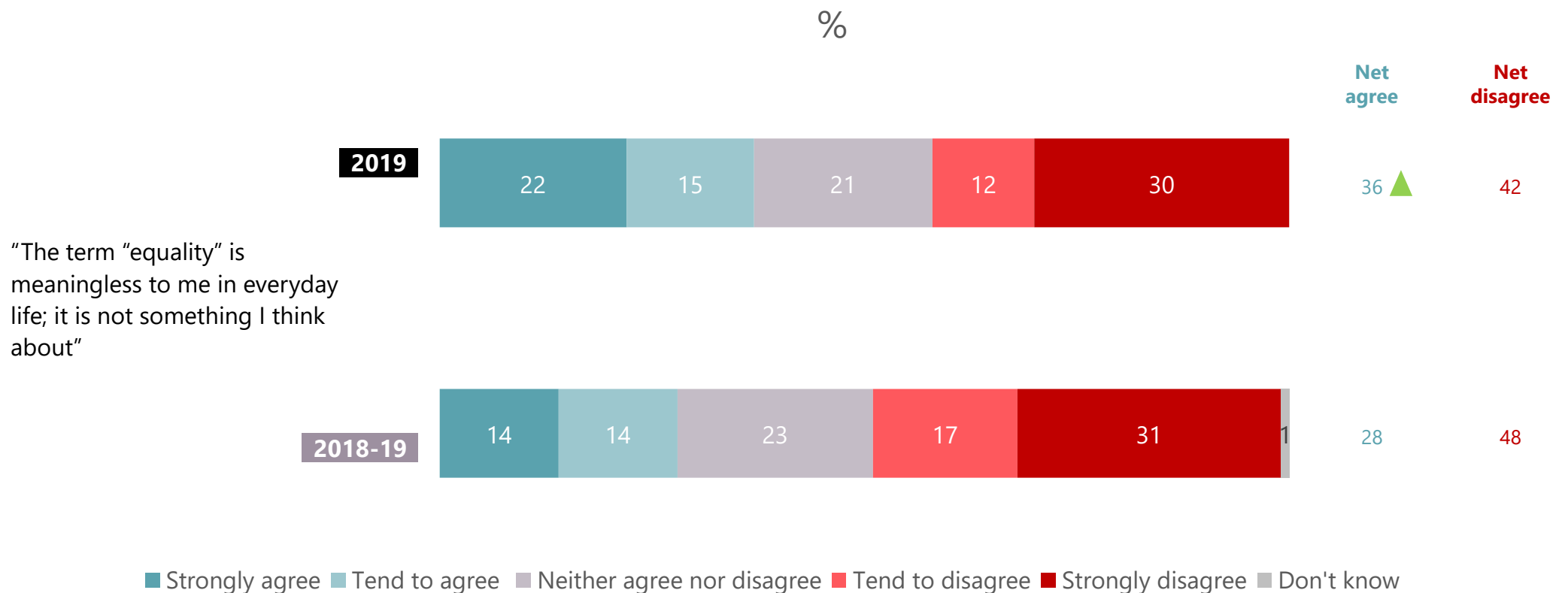
**Trying to do the same for both sides
of the community, or for any
religion in NI. Treating everybody
the same.**

Female, 30-44, Protestant, Armagh, C2DE



Attitudes

Q2. Thinking of yourself, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



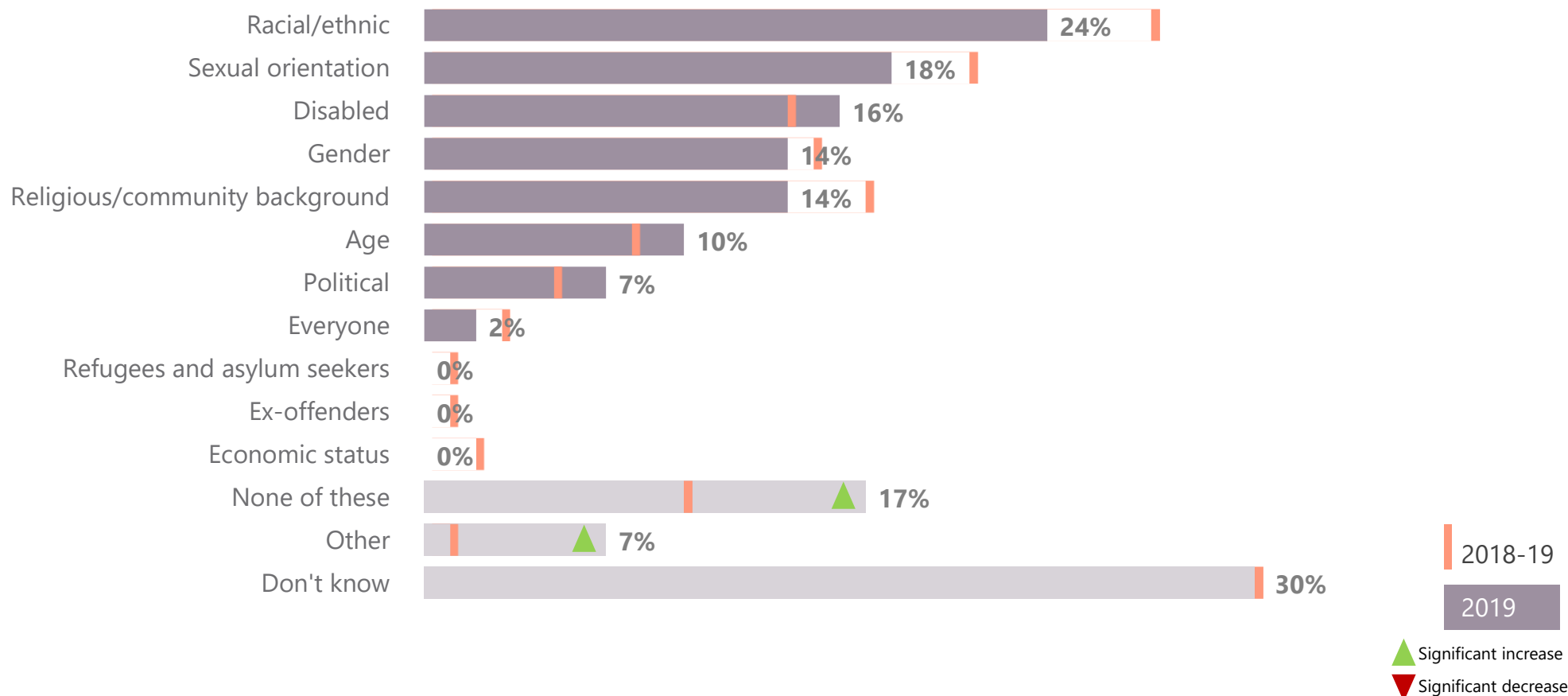
"The term "equality" is meaningless to me in everyday life; it is not something I think about"

▲ Significant increase
▼ Significant decrease

Base: 500 adults living in Northern Ireland (2019 v 2018-19)

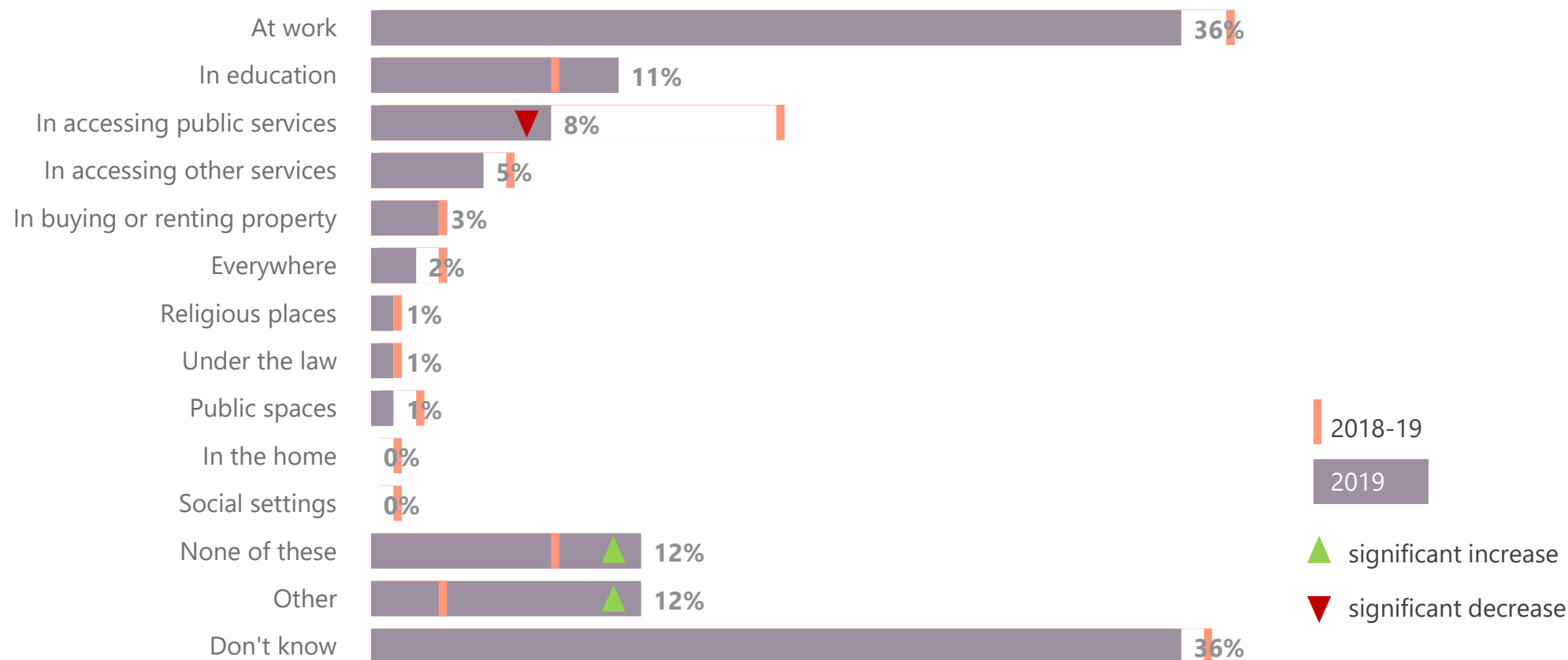
Equality status and discrimination

Q3. Which groups of people, if any, do you think are protected from unlawful discrimination?



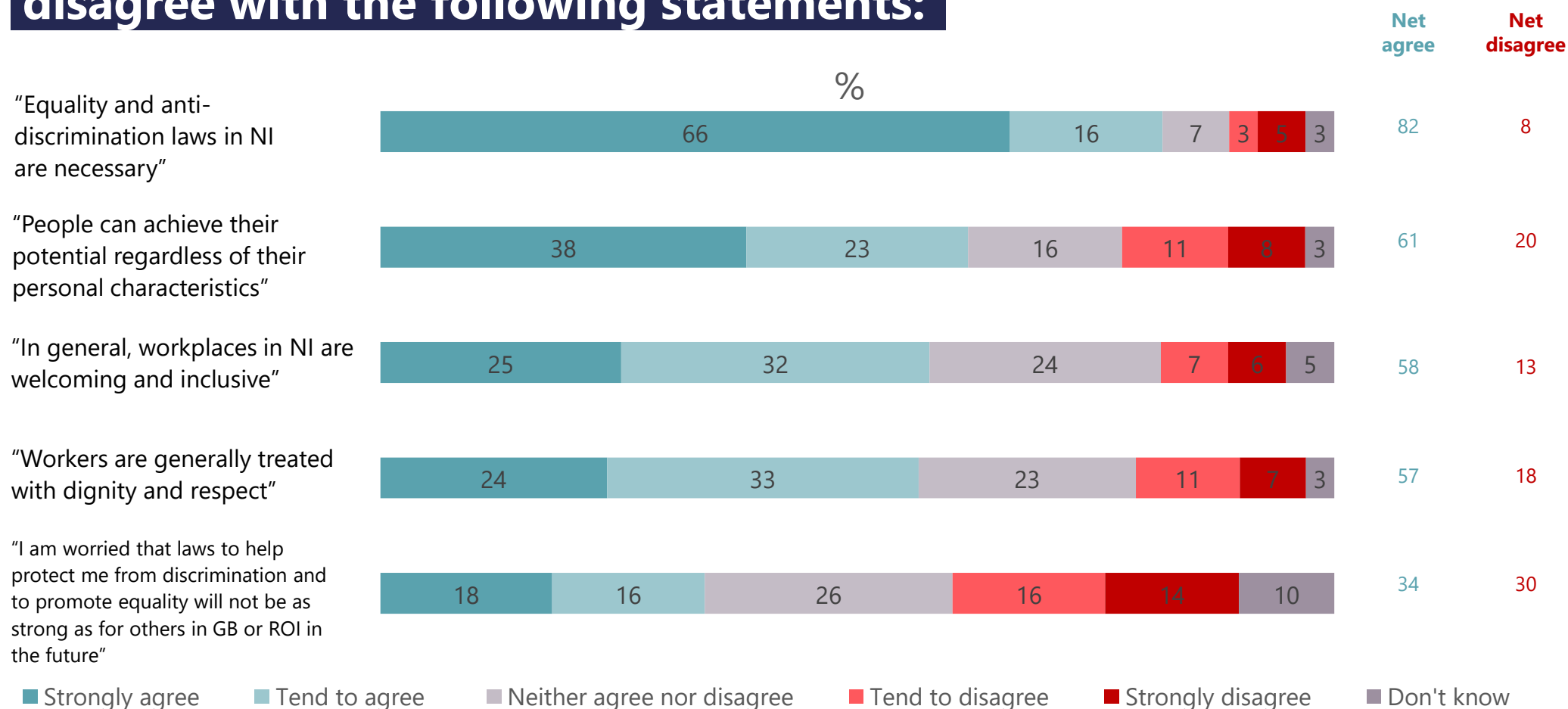
Equality status and discrimination

Q4. And in what settings, if any, do you think people are protected by these laws?



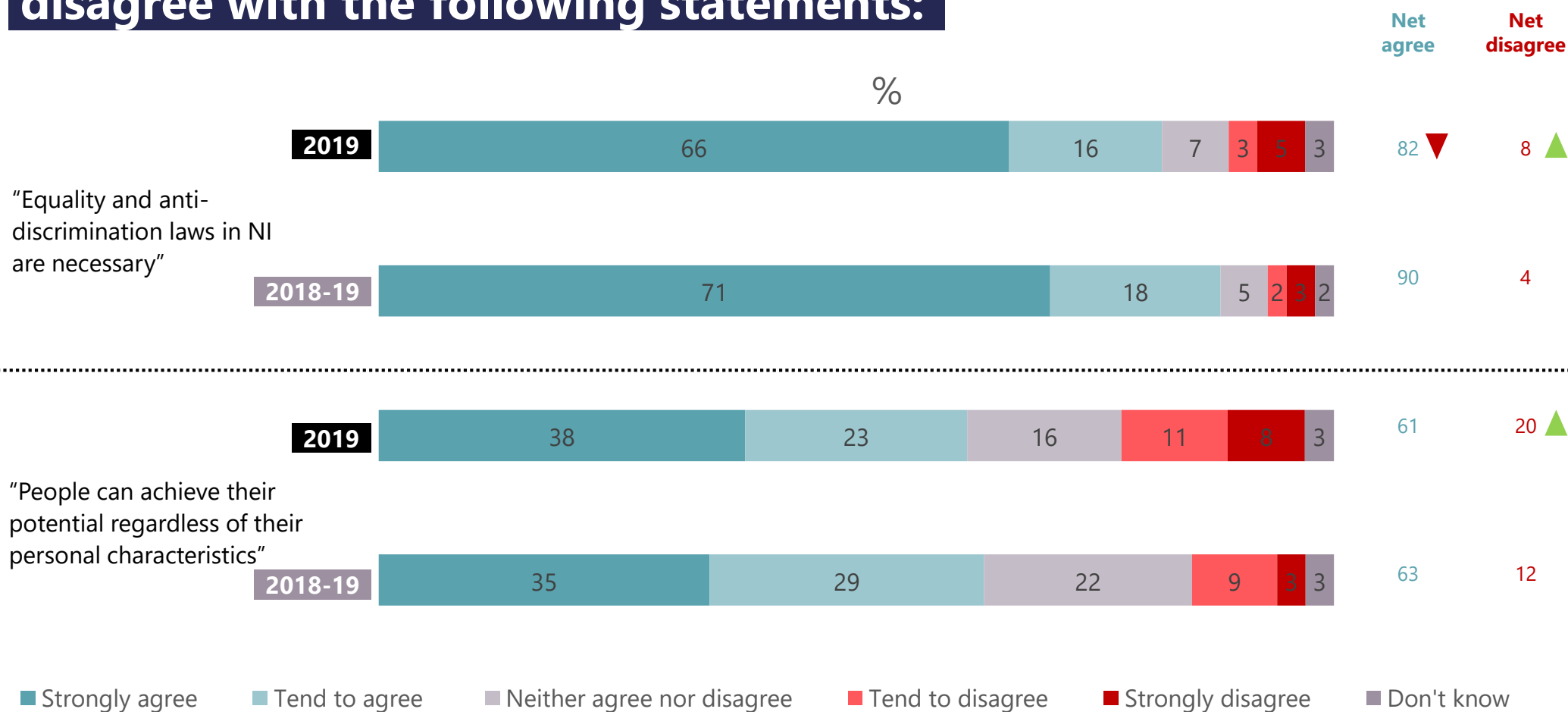
Views on equality in NI

Q5. Thinking about NI today, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



Views on equality in NI

Q5. Thinking about NI today, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

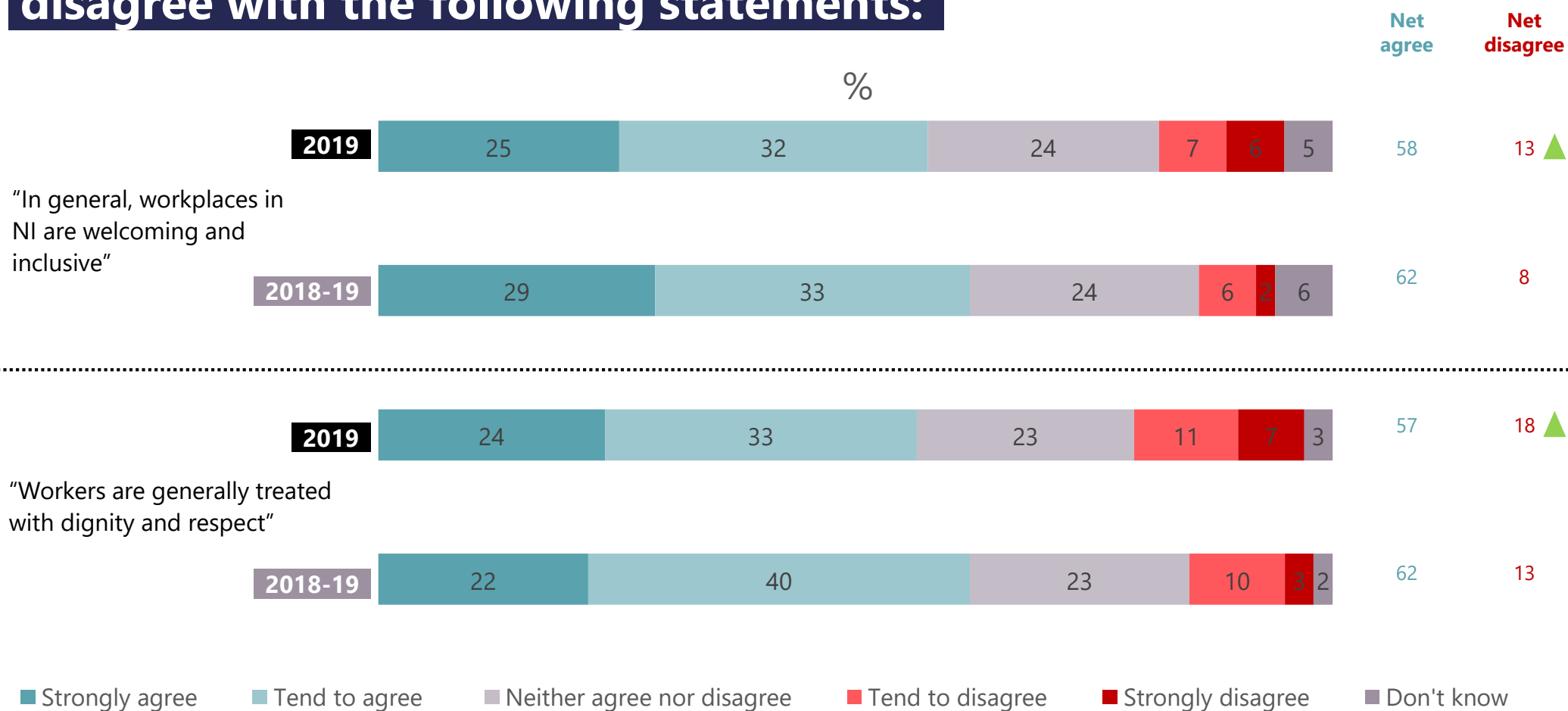


▲ Significant increase
 ▼ Significant decrease

Base: 500 adults living in Northern Ireland (2019 v 2018-19)

Views on equality in NI

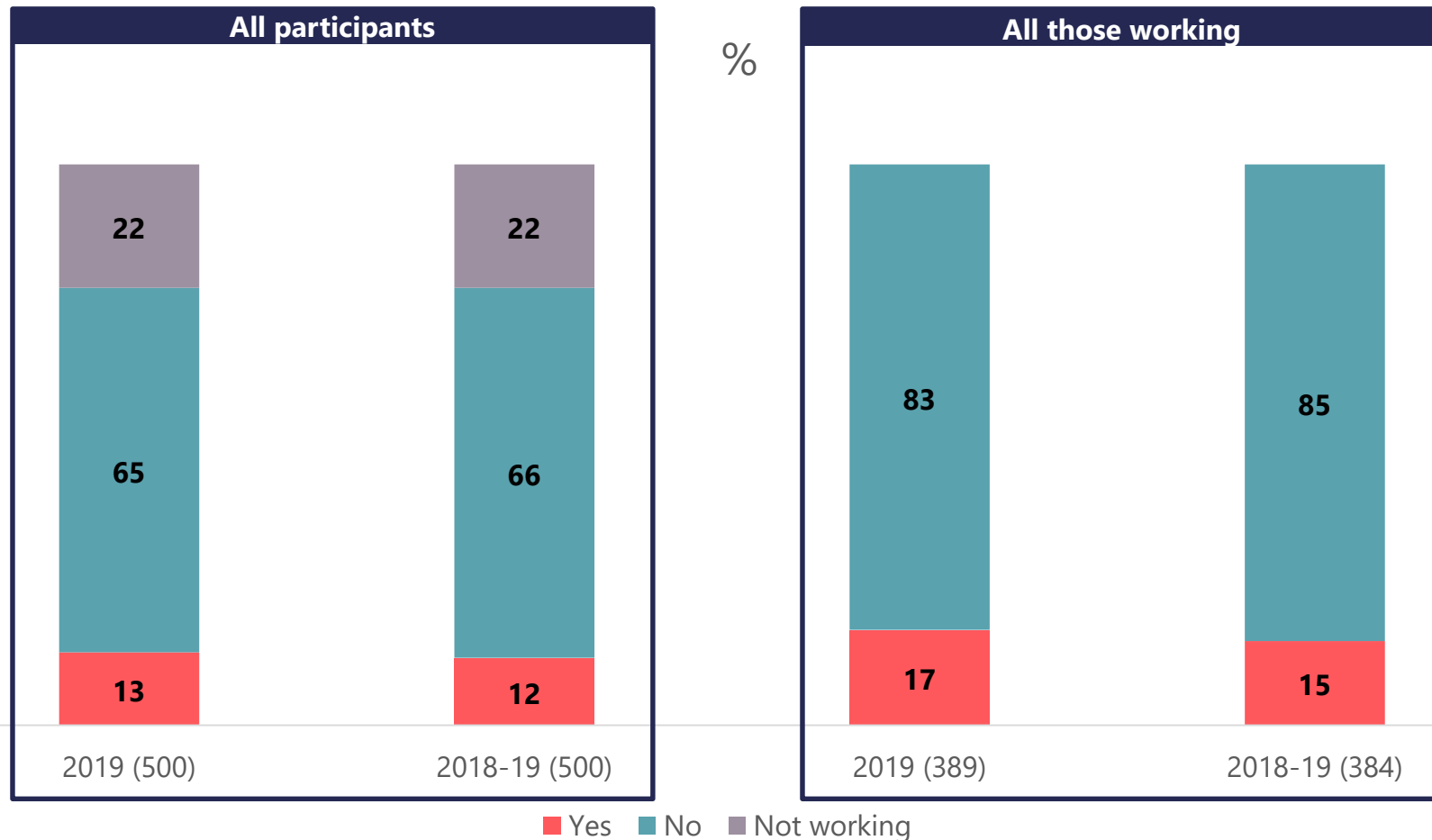
Q5. Thinking about NI today, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



▲ Significant increase
▼ Significant decrease

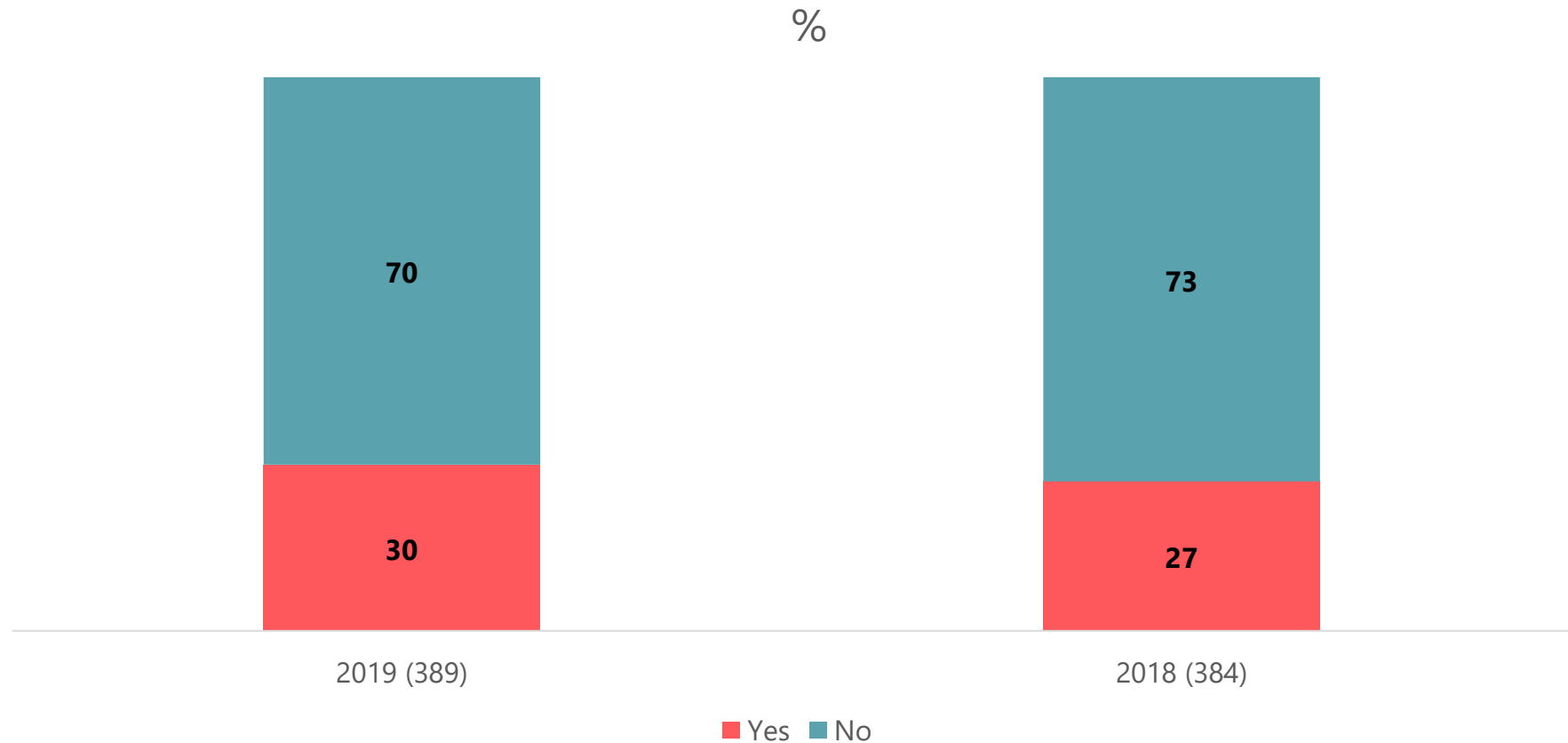
Personal experiences of unwanted behaviour

Q6. During the past 12 months, have you personally experienced a situation where you were not treated with dignity and respect in the workplace based on your personal characteristics?



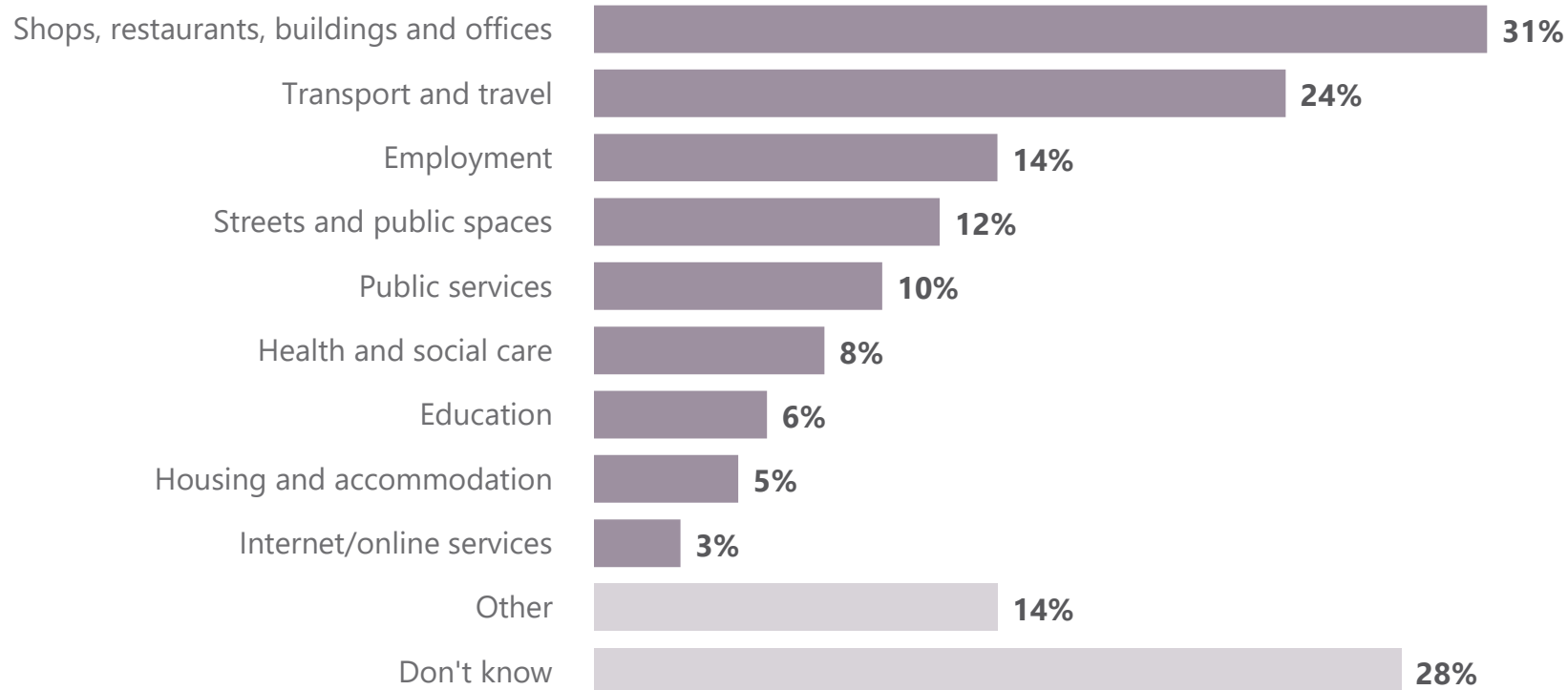
Personal experiences of unwanted behaviour

Q7. During the past 12 months, have you witnessed a situation where others in your workplace were not treated with dignity and respect based on their personal characteristics



Experience of people with disabilities

Q9. What services, facilities or settings do you think people with disabilities find it hardest to access?

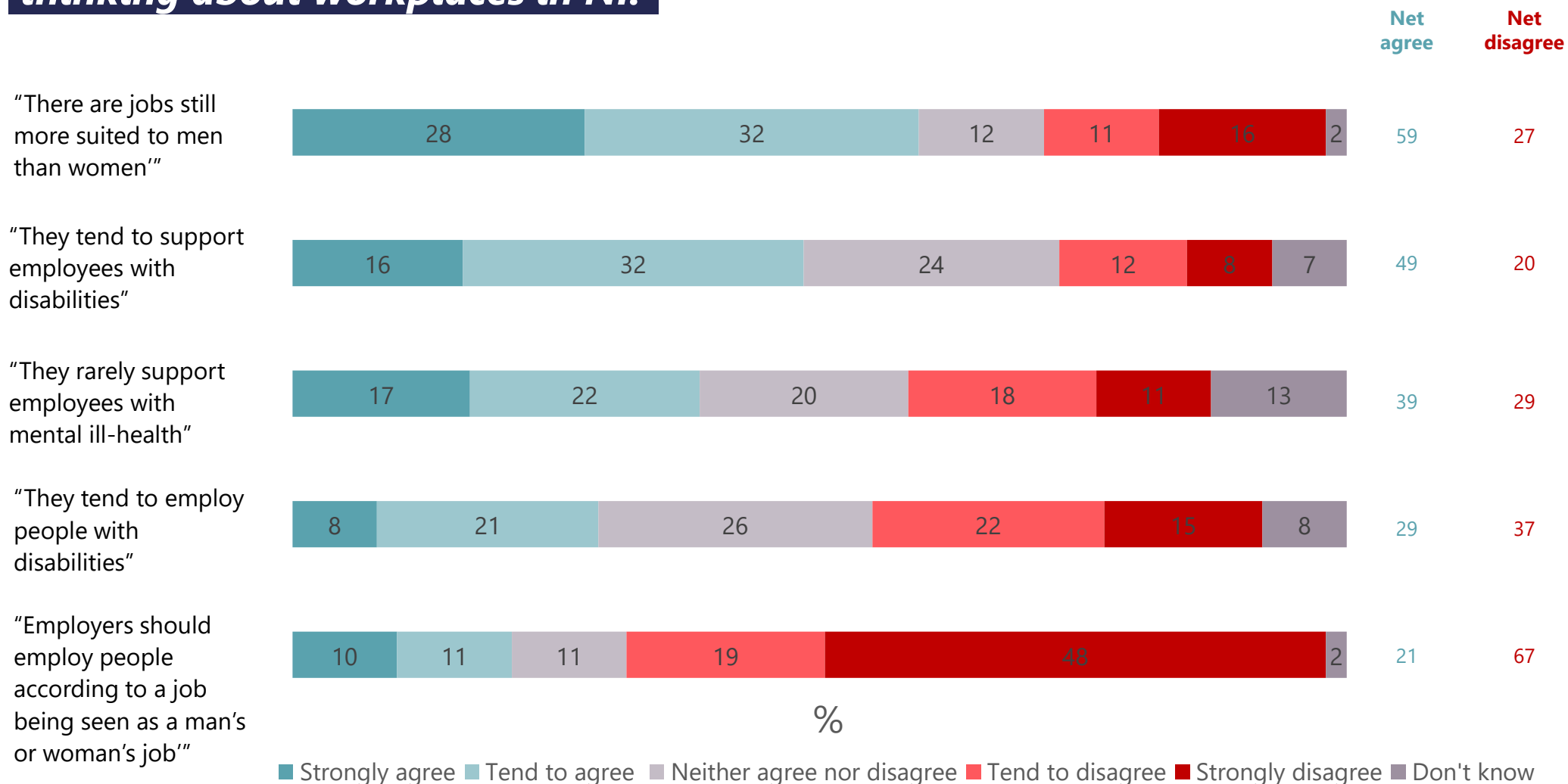


DISABILITY %	
illness / disability	Living with illness / disability No
35%	30%
23%	24%
13%	14%
13%	12%
10%	11%
10%	7%
4%	6%
5%	5%
3%	3%
14%	14%
29%	28%



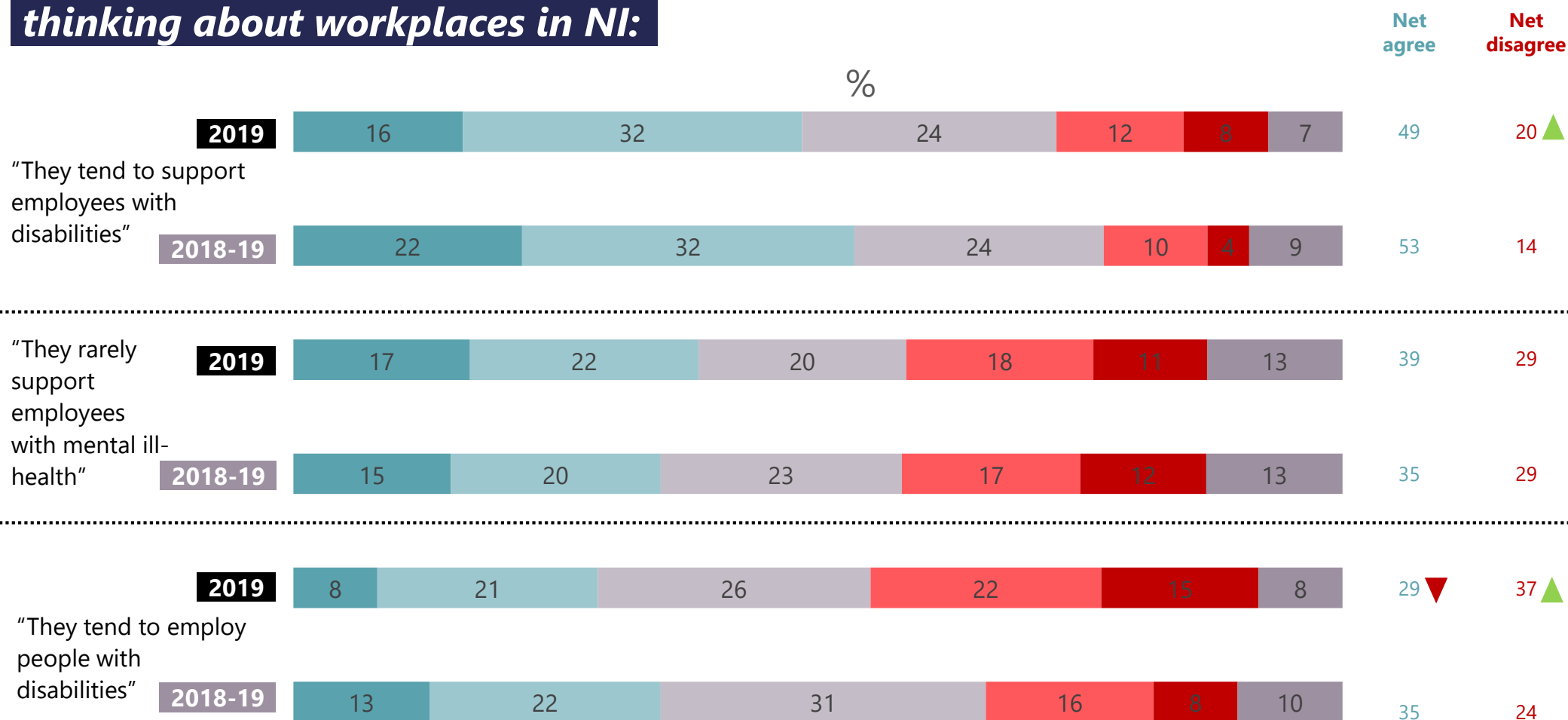
Aspects of life in NI

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, thinking about workplaces in NI:



Aspects of life in NI

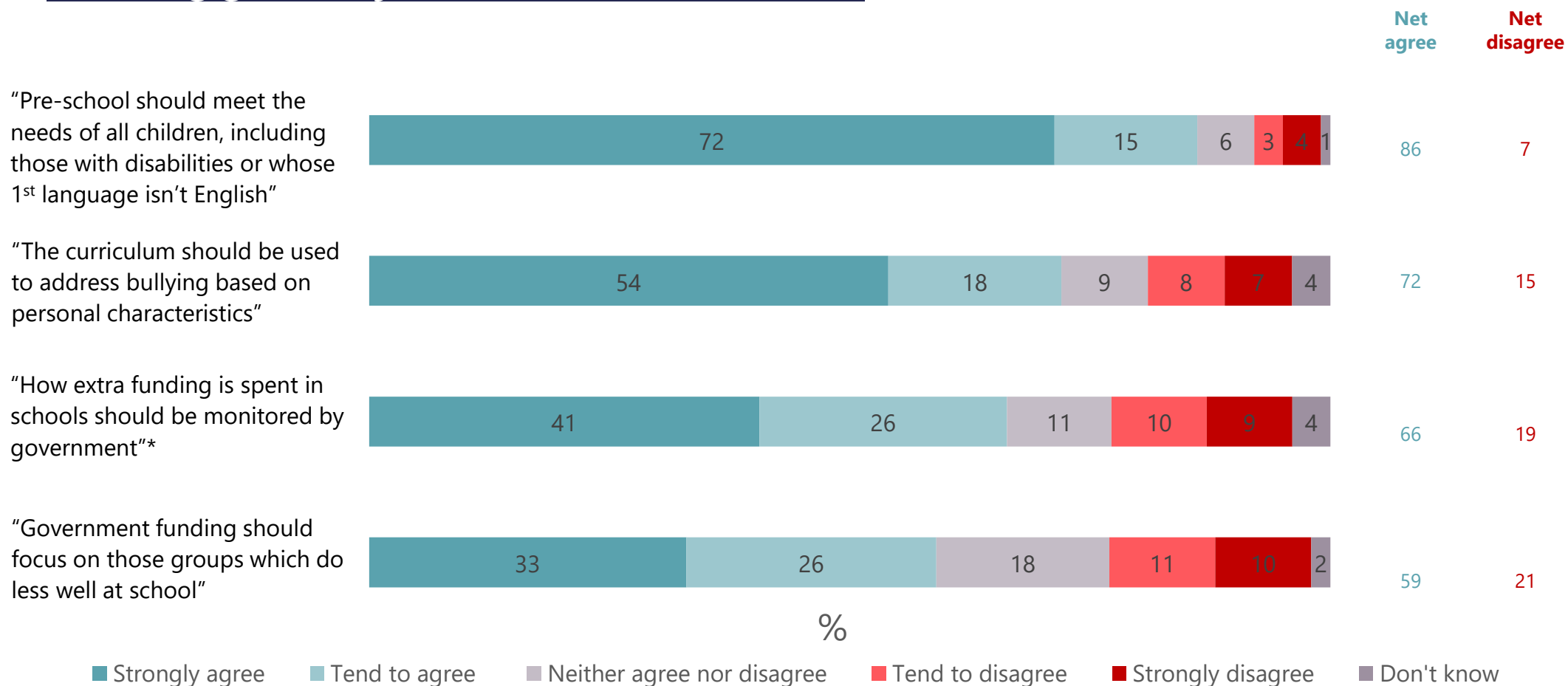
Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, thinking about workplaces in NI:



■ Strongly agree ■ Tend to agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Tend to disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

Aspects of life in NI

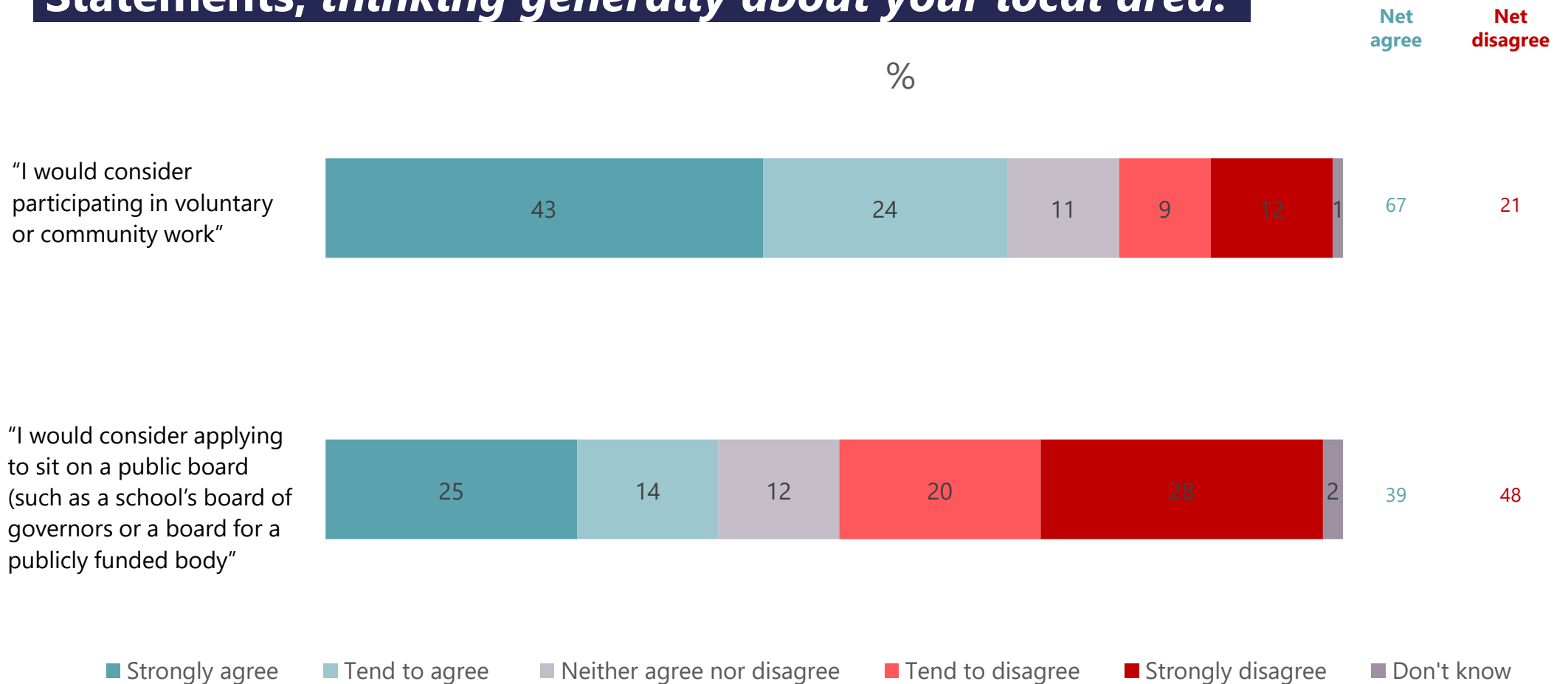
Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, thinking generally about education in NI:



Base: 500 adults living in Northern Ireland (2019)

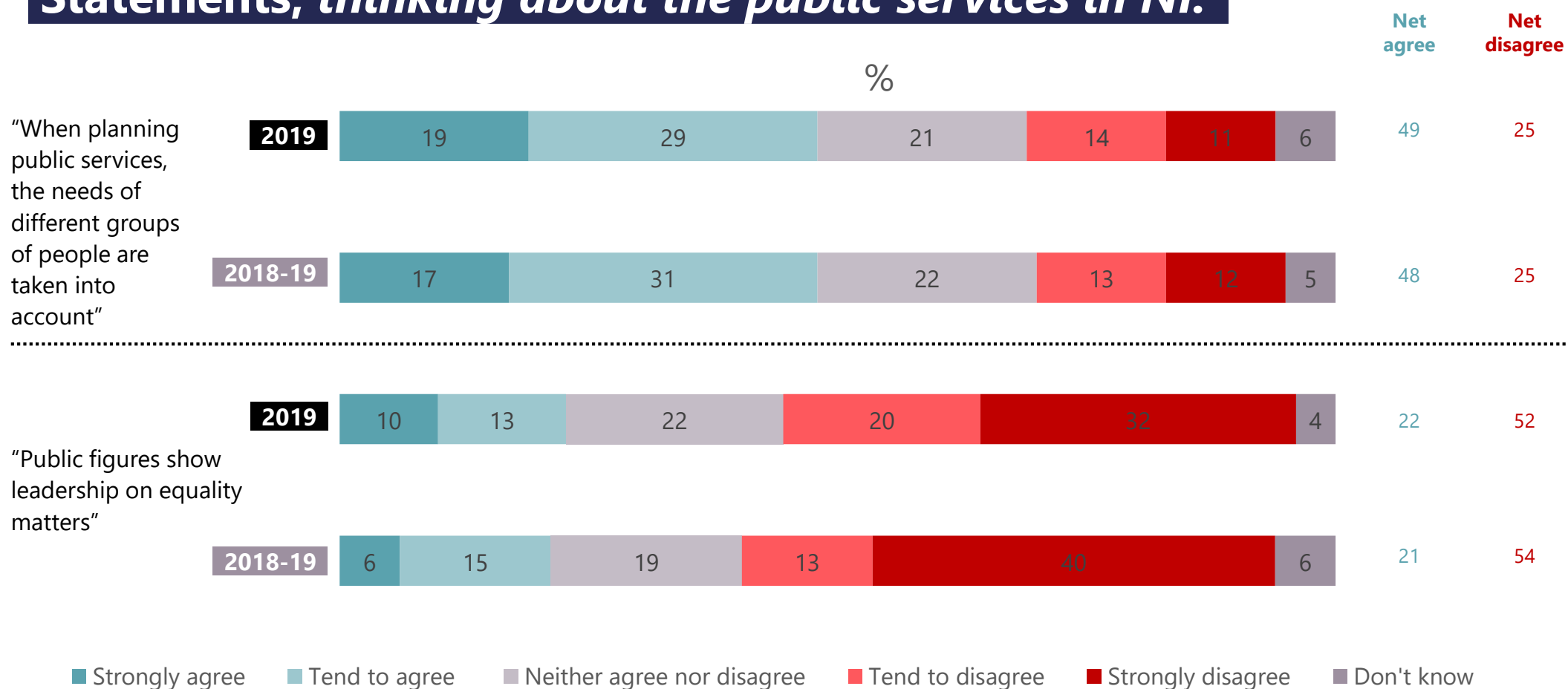
Local area

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following Statements, thinking generally about your local area:



Aspects of life in NI

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following Statements, thinking about the public services in NI:



Research methodology

In order to meet the objectives of the research, Ipsos MORI conducted a telephone survey among a representative sample of people living in Northern Ireland. All interviews were conducted using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) from our Belfast-based telephone centre. In total, 500 interviews were conducted with people from across Northern Ireland. The telephone survey lasted 14 minutes on average.

Ipsos MORI purchased a contact database containing 8,131 records for Northern Ireland. Therefore, a response rate of 6% was achieved from this sample. A summary of sample outcomes is provided in the table below:

Sample outcome	Count	% of sample
Completed interview	500	6%
Refused	304	4%
Unusable	1,007	12%
No answer/maximum tries/over-quota	6,320	78%
Total	8,131	100%

A quota-based sampling approach was applied to the telephone survey to ensure the results are representative of the Northern Ireland population. The demographic breakdown of participants is provided on pages 8-10.



Ipsos MORI's standards and accreditations

Ipsos MORI's standards and accreditations provide our clients with the peace of mind that they can always depend on us to deliver reliable, sustainable findings. Our focus on quality and continuous improvement means we have embedded a 'right first time' approach throughout our organisation.



ISO 20252:2012

The international market research specific standard that supersedes BS 7911 / MRQSA & incorporates IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme); it covers the 5 stages of a Market Research project. Ipsos MORI was the first company in the world to gain this accreditation.



ISO 27001:2005

International standard for information security designed to ensure the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls. Ipsos MORI was the first research company in the UK to be awarded this in August 2008.



MRS Company Partnership

By being an MRS Company Partner, Ipsos MORI endorse and support the core MRS brand values of professionalism, research excellence and business effectiveness, and commit to comply with the MRS Code of Conduct throughout the organisation.

Data Protection Act

Ipsos MORI is required to comply with the Data Protection Act; it covers the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy



ISO 9001:2008

International general company standard with a focus on continual improvement through quality management systems. In 1994 we became one of the early adopters of the ISO 9001 business standard.

This work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the international quality standard for market research, ISO 20252:2012 and with the Ipsos MORI Terms and Conditions.

Ipsos MORI's Business Excellence

System

Ipsos MORI's Business Excellence System (BES) incorporates the requirements of the three international standards, the Data Protection Act, and the MRS Code of Conduct. The Business Excellence System is continually reviewed for effectiveness and improvement – we achieve this in a number of ways:

Business Excellence System (BES) Group:

BES representatives from all areas of the business meet regularly. Their remit includes: promoting and encouraging Business Excellence within their business units; reviewing, developing and maintaining Ipsos MORI's Business Excellence management systems and; learning and sharing best practice.

Ipsos MORI's Internal Audits and Metrics Team:

Ipsos MORI has a large team of trained internal auditors from across the business. Internal audits and spot checks are carried out throughout the year to measure the effectiveness of the company's Business Excellence Systems. Monthly metrics are reported to the UK Management Board and the BES Group. Where necessary corrective and preventative actions are implemented.

BES Training and Communications Team:

A team of BES Reps are responsible for developing effective and engaging training. All staff receive induction and refresher training. Delegate feedback is used to further improve training where appropriate.

External Audits:

An external auditing company visits annually to ensure that Ipsos MORI complies with the international standards we are accredited to. Findings are reported back to the business and corrective and/or preventative measures adopted where necessary.

External Client Satisfaction Monitor:

At the close of each project, an online survey is sent to the client. Returned questionnaires are reviewed and followed up where necessary. Data is used by the Audits and Metrics Team for the monthly UK Management and BES Report.

This work will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the international quality standard for market research, ISO 20252:2012 and with the Ipsos MORI Terms and Conditions.



For more information

Sally Abernethy

Senior Research Executive

☎ 028 9050 0800

✉ sally.abernethy@ipsos.com

Fiona Rooney

Managing Director

☎ 028 9050 0800

✉ fiona.rooney@ipsos.com

Simon Hookham

Senior Research Officer

☎ 028 90 500 612

✉ SHookham@equalityni.org



Ipsos Public Affairs

www.ipsos-mori.com/

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND