

GIRL GUIDES  
AUSTRALIA

# Understanding the World of Girls & Young Women

February 2025

**YOUTH INSIGHT**  
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# Introduction

Girl Guides Australia (GGA) seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the lives of girls and young women in Australia.

Inspired by Girlguiding UK's periodical research on Girls' Attitudes, which monitors various aspects of the lives of girls and young women in the UK, GGA aims to capture similar themes for Australian girls and young women.

This research explored what makes girls and young women happy and what motivates them, providing insights into the pressures, challenges, hopes, and aspirations they face.

We have conducted 500 online surveys with girls and young women aged between 12 and 18 during October and November 2024.





# s≡ Executive Summary

This research explores the world of Australian girls and young women aged 12–18, seeking to understand their dreams, concerns, challenges, and the systems that support them. Through their eyes, we gain a picture of a generation balancing optimism and realism, grappling with societal pressures while striving for independence and fulfillment.

Girls and young women feel generally positive about their lives, with 57% expressing satisfaction and 78% finding joy in friendships and social activities. However, mental health emerges as a concern, with only 40% reporting satisfaction in this area. Mental health influences all aspects of their well-being, and the cascading effects are particularly pronounced among members of LGBTQIA+ community and those identifying as neurodiverse. For these groups, the challenges of navigating societal judgment.

Self-confidence, while supported by relationships, is hindered by appearance-related anxieties. Confidence in appearance is low, with only 33% feeling confident about how they look. Social media, while a valuable tool for connection and self-expression, often intensifies this anxiety, particularly for minority groups. LGBTQIA+ community members report both empowerment and alienation online, highlighting the complex dynamics of digital spaces. Neurodiverse individuals appreciate the flexibility technology provides but face barriers like cyberbullying and exclusion.

Relationships are important support systems for girls and young women. Family and friends are central to their sense of security and confidence, with 70% relying on family for emotional grounding and 60% trusting their friends. Girls who feel supported in these relationships report higher overall satisfaction.

The challenges faced by girls and young women vary across different groups, with predictable disparities for minority populations. Members of LGBTQIA+ community and neurodiverse individuals express heightened concerns about safety, fairness, and acceptance. Despite these challenges, there is resilience and determination in their narratives.

Looking ahead, their aspirations shine brightly. Though many express dissatisfaction with their high school experience, they are eager to take control of their lives, with 73% excited about future careers and 66% valuing the independence higher education can provide. Financial independence is seen as essential, and girls and young women are ready to navigate the real world with confidence and ambition.



# s≡ Summary of findings

## Current State of Mind, Hopes, and Concerns

The emotional landscape of Australian girls and young women is a blend of optimism and realism. While 53% describe themselves as generally happy, this happiness is nuanced by challenges they navigate daily. Younger respondents (12–14 years) report higher levels of happiness (19%) compared to older teens (15–18 years), who face increased pressures such as academic stress and societal expectations. The LGBTQIA+ community members and neurodiverse individuals express lower levels of happiness, reflecting the unique challenges these groups encounter.

Girls and young women are most excited about spending time with friends (78%), pursuing hobbies (60%), achieving goals (58%), and exploring independence (41%). However, their concerns run deep: 57% worry about societal judgment, financial instability, and being excluded. Mental health struggles (44%) and economic fears (34%) are common themes. For members of LGBTQIA+ community and those with disabilities, concerns about safety, fairness, and global issues are heightened, emphasising a need for more inclusive support systems.

## Satisfaction and the Role of Mental Health

Life satisfaction among respondents is driven by several key factors: mental health, relationships, safety, and autonomy. Mental health stands out as the strongest determinant of overall satisfaction with life as a whole. Only 40% report being satisfied with their mental health, and this dissatisfaction impacts other areas of their lives, including relationships and personal safety. Those with better mental health tend to have higher satisfaction across these domains, illustrating its cascading effect on overall well-being.

Strong family connections (3.8 out of 5) and friendships (3.6 out of 5) are pivotal to satisfaction. Feeling safe—whether in public spaces or in expressing oneself—is also important. Younger participants (12–14 years) feel safer in their environments (3.5 out of 5) than older peers, who express greater concerns about safety and societal pressures.

For marginalised groups, satisfaction is lower. Members of LGBTQIA+ community and those identifying as neurodiverse report feeling less safe and supported.

# s≡ Summary of findings

## Confidence and the Impact of Appearance

Confidence among young women is multi-dimensional, built on support systems, achievements, independence, and self-image. Relationships are a key pillar, with 70% feeling confident in their family's support and 60% trusting their friends. Achieving personal goals and demonstrating independence also play important roles, with 47% citing these as confidence boosters.

However, appearance remains a significant area of vulnerability. Only 33% of respondents feel confident about how they look, making it the lowest-scoring factor in self-confidence. Societal pressures and beauty standards weigh on young women, particularly older teens and minority groups. For LGBTQIA+ community, the lack of representation in beauty norms compounds these challenges, leading to greater insecurity about appearance.

Compliments and validation are powerful in boosting confidence—71% of respondents say they feel more confident when they receive compliments, and 53% report an uplift when someone appreciates their style. However, the persistent impact of appearance anxiety highlights the need for more positive and inclusive representations of beauty and identity.

## School Experience

School presents both opportunities and challenges. While 75% of high school students appreciate that school helps them develop skills, only 42% enjoy the experience overall. Over half (53%) feel overwhelmed by schoolwork, and 48% worry about being liked, underscoring the pressure to succeed academically and socially.

Younger girls are more likely to say school boosts their confidence (36% compared to 14% of older peers). However, bullying, gender inequality, and racism—though less frequently reported—are more common among marginalised groups, such as neurodiverse students and those identifying as a member of LGBTQIA+ community. School is seen as a place of learning but also a space where balance, belonging, and acceptance are deeply sought.

# s≡ Summary of findings

## Further Studies and Career

The prospect of further education excites 57% of respondents, who see it as a path to independence, confidence, and personal growth. Multilingual students express even greater enthusiasm (3.8 out of 5) compared to their English-only peers (3.4).

Despite many expressing low enjoyment with their high school experience, girls and young women are eager to take control of their lives beyond school. Higher education is viewed as a stepping stone toward this autonomy. Respondents believe it offers opportunities to meet like-minded people (59%), gain independence (66%), and make their families proud (55%).

Careers are a particularly bright spot for future aspirations, with 73% excited about entering the workforce. Financial independence is a key motivator—respondents are aware of the need to earn their own money to lead fulfilling lives. A significant majority (76%) believe women can excel in male-dominated fields, and 75% say having a job would boost their confidence.

However, challenges persist. Over half (58%) believe men receive more career opportunities, and 63% agree women must work harder to prove themselves. Balancing work-life demands also weighs on their minds, with 63% anticipating challenges in this area. Despite these concerns, their optimism for building fulfilling careers remains strong.

## Self Value

We adapted the Self-Worth Measure by Crocker et al. (2003) to assess self-value, focusing on six dimensions: **approval from others, appearance, competition, academic competence, family support, and personal values**. This multidimensional scale recognises that self-value is shaped by diverse and individual factors.

The self-value index (65 out of 100) reveals how young women view themselves across those six dimensions. Personal values (72) and competition (69) rank highest, reflecting a strong connection to personal principles and a belief in their abilities. Family support (65) also plays a key role in fostering self-value.

Appearance, however, scores lowest at 51, highlighting the pervasive impact of societal pressures. This challenge is particularly acute for members of LGBTQIA+ community and neurodiverse individuals, who report lower confidence in their appearance and greater dependence on external validation.

# s≡ Summary of findings

## Online Experiences and Minority Groups

The digital space is both empowering and challenging for young women. Social media provides a platform for connection and self-expression, with 35% finding it exciting. However, for minority groups—including LGBTQIA+ and neurodiverse individuals — it can also amplify exclusion and harassment.

Members of LGBTQIA+ community value online spaces for advocacy and community-building, though they also report higher exposure to harassment. Neurodiverse individuals often find the digital world offers flexibility but can feel isolated due to accessibility barriers or cyberbullying. These mixed experiences highlight the need for safer, more inclusive digital environments.

## Technology and Its Impact on Identity and Appearance

Technology offers young women tools for education and self-expression but also intensifies pressures around appearance and identity. Satisfaction with digital access is high, but the emotional toll of constant comparison and validation-seeking is significant. For minority groups, technology's impact on identity is a double-edged sword, providing both empowerment and challenge.

## Communities and Social Impact

Young women are passionate about social causes, with mental health (43%), human rights (38%), and gender equality (30%) ranking highest. They enjoy helping others (77%) and believe small actions can make a difference (74%). However, only 25% feel confident in their ability to solve global problems, reflecting a gap between their aspirations and perceived empowerment.

LGBTQIA+ respondents are more likely to engage with advocacy and activism, particularly around mental health and gender equality. For many, the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals online offers a crucial space for expressing their values.

## Climate Change

Concerns about climate change resonate with 26% of respondents, though it ranks lower than other social issues. Younger participants are more likely to advocate for environmental causes, reflecting a potential opportunity to engage them through relatable, youth-focused campaigns.

## Managing Periods at Sleepovers or Camp

Periods remain a practical concern for girls in communal settings. Addressing this through education and preparation can help normalize menstruation and foster confidence, ensuring girls feel comfortable and included in all activities.

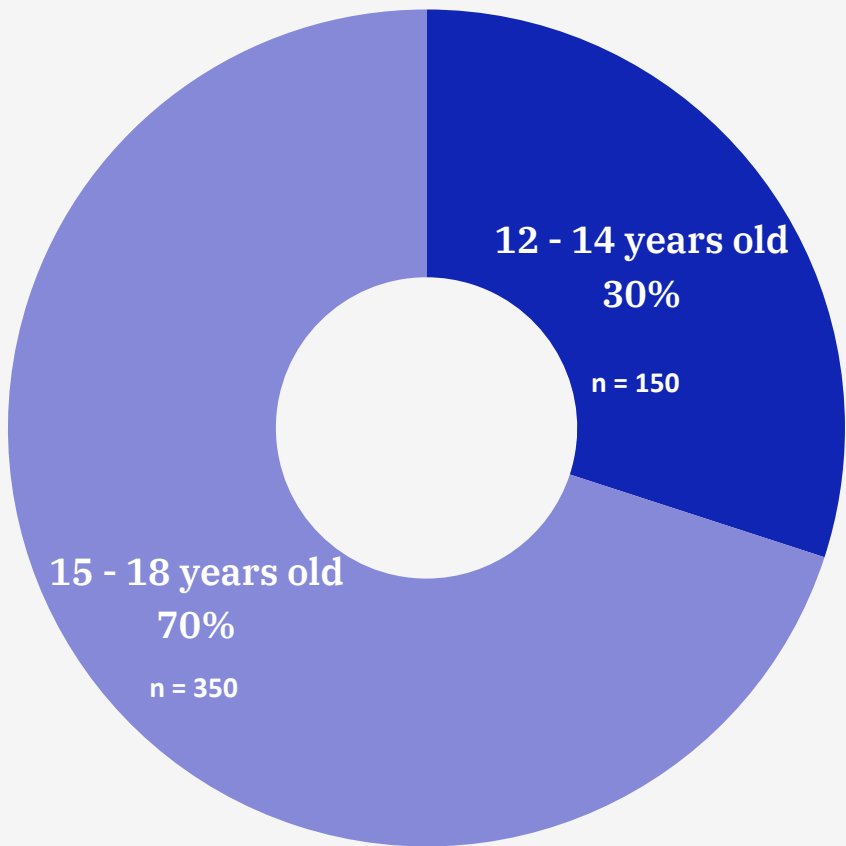


# Sample Profile





# Sample Profile – Age



We collected responses from 500 girls and young women aged 12 to 18.

In compliance with the Australian Research Society’s [Code of Conduct](#) for research with young people, special considerations were applied to ensure ethical data collection. According to the [Code](#), researchers must obtain parental consent and permission to survey participants under the age of 14.

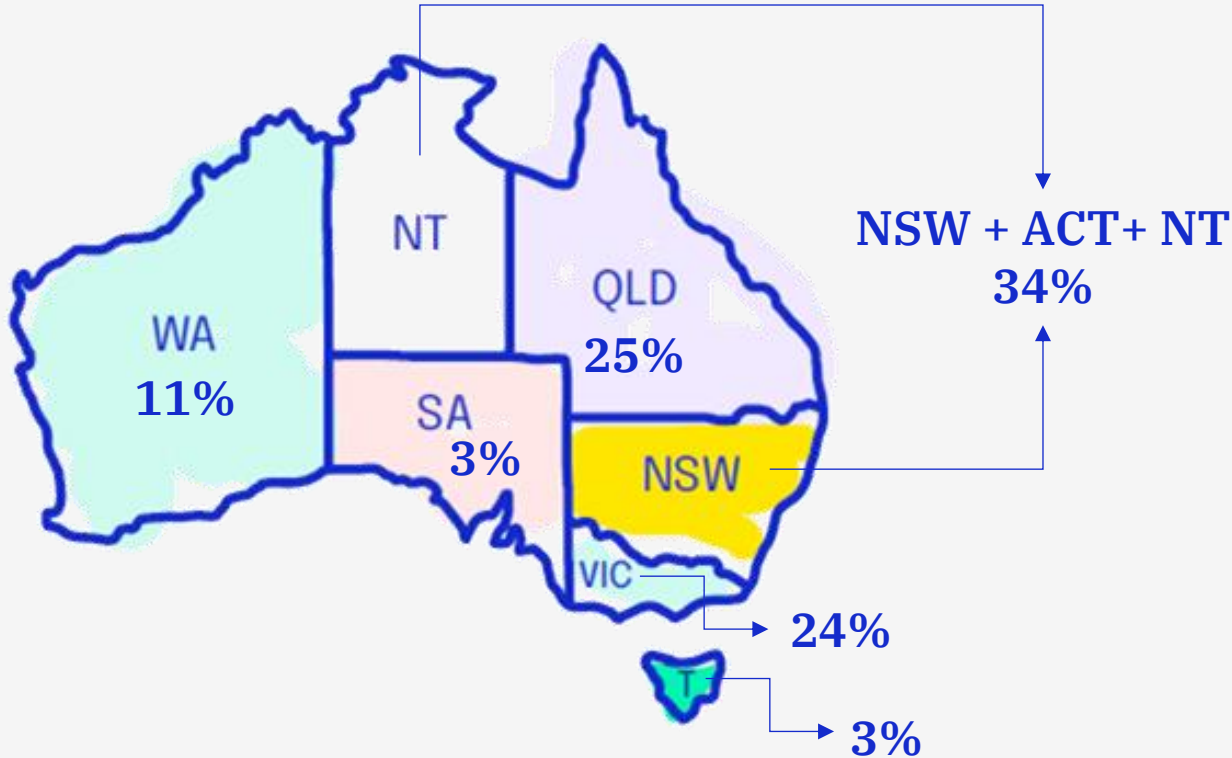
For this study, we directly surveyed young people aged 15 to 18, inviting them to complete the questionnaire themselves. To gather responses from 12 to 14-year-olds, we shared the survey link with individuals aged 18 and older, asking if they were parents of children in this age group. If they confirmed, we sought their consent and permission to invite their 12 to 14-year-old children to participate.

As a result, we collected 350 responses directly from 15 to 18-year-olds and 150 responses from 12 to 14-year-olds with parental consent.

To reach our sample, we partnered with Student Edge’s [Youth Panel](#) and other trusted panel providers known for their access to this demographic.

Throughout this report, we have investigated patterns among age groups to understand whether these two age groups’ experiences, expectations, and perceptions differ in any way.

# S≡ Sample Profile – State



81%

RESIDE IN  
MAJOR CITIES



19%

RESIDE IN  
REGIONAL LOCATIONS

We used stratified sampling to ensure our survey results represented the distribution of Girl Guides members across Australia. This means we divided our sample into groups based on states and regions, then selected responses in proportion to these groups.

Using the Girl Guides Australia Census Summary provided on 16 June 2024, which reported 11,658 members, we targeted response numbers for each state based on their share of the total membership.

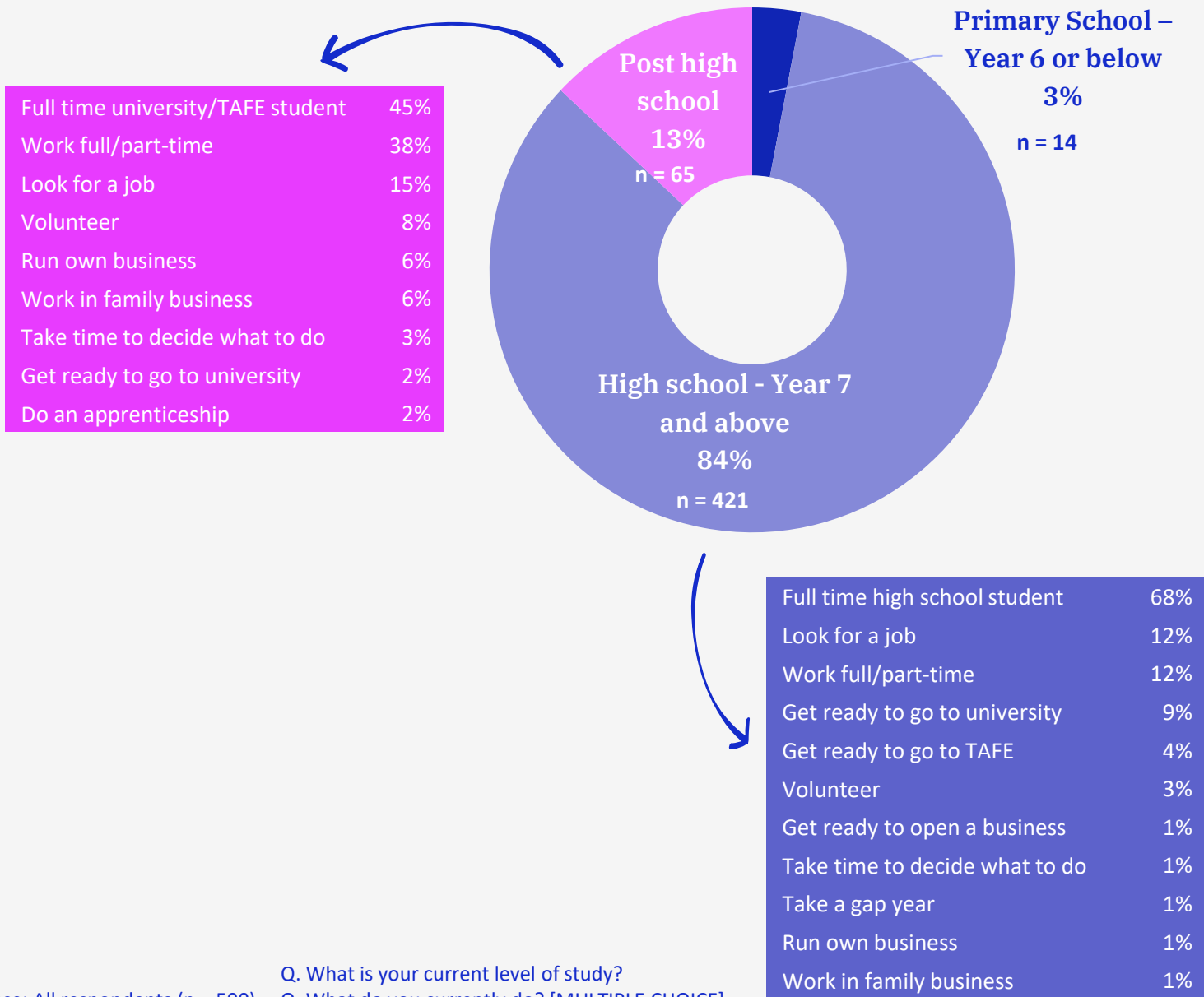
Additionally, we aimed for an 80/20 split between metropolitan and regional areas, aligning with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population distribution.

Q. Which state do you live in?

Base: All respondents (n = 500)



# S Sample Profile – Study and Work



Our sample contains a proportion of primary school students (3%), a significant majority of high school students (84%), and a smaller group of post-high school group, including tertiary students (13%).

In the survey, when asked what they currently do, respondents could select multiple options. Unsurprisingly, all 14 primary school students reported being full-time students. Similarly, most high school students (68%) are full-time students, however, some high school students are diversifying their experiences:

- 12% are either actively seeking employment or already working part- or full-time.
- Additionally, 9% are preparing for university, 4% plan to attend TAFE, and 3% engage in volunteer work.

Among post-high school group, nearly half (45%) are full-time university or TAFE students. Employment is also common in this group, with 38% holding part- or full-time jobs and 15% seeking work. Some take on entrepreneurial roles, with 6% running their own business and another 6% contributing to their family’s business. Volunteerism is also evident, with 8% giving their time to support causes or communities.

Throughout this report, we have analysed patterns among working and full-time high school and tertiary students to uncover any differences in their experiences, expectations, and perceptions.

# Sample Profile – High School and University

University Students	
Queensland University of Technology	15%
University of Sydney	10%
University of Technology Sydney	8%
University of the Sunshine Coast	8%
Monash University	7%
University of Queensland	6%
University of New South Wales	6%
Curtin University	5%
Deakin University	4%
Latrobe University	4%
Griffith University	3%
Avondale University	2%
Charles Darwin University	2%
Southern Cross University	2%
University of South Australia	2%
Australian Catholic University	2%
RMIT University	2%
Torrens University Australia	2%
University of Adelaide	1%
Prefer not to say	12%

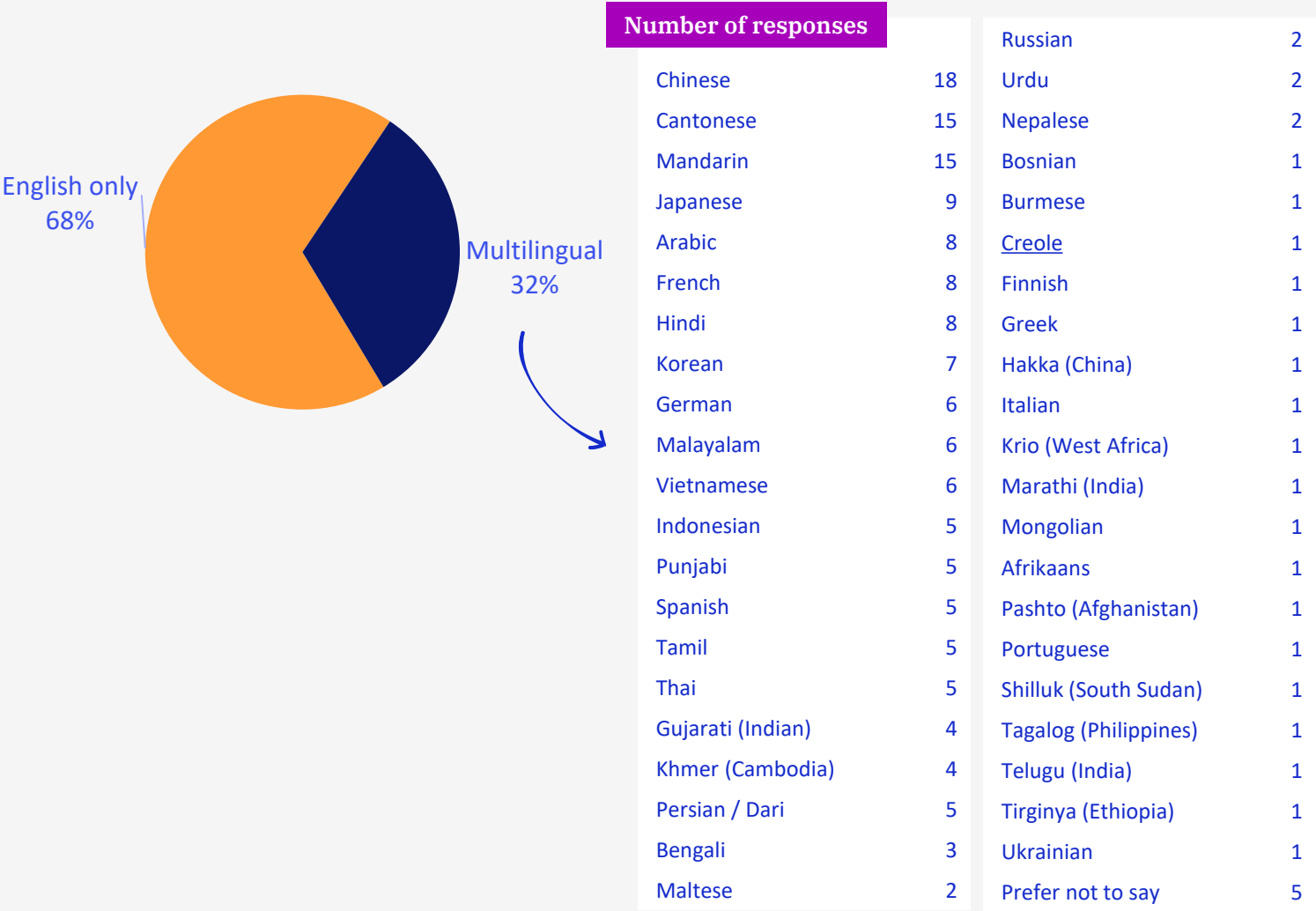
High School Students	
Public school	50%
Private school	24%
Catholic school	16%
Selective school	6%
Home school	2%
Other religious school	2%

We asked high school students about the type of school they attend, and university students to share the names of the universities they're enrolled in.

Half of the entire sample attends public schools (50%). Among the girls and young women surveyed, 24% are enrolled in private schools, while 16% attend Catholic schools.

Our sample also includes 46 girls and young women who are currently university students, attending a diverse range of universities across Australia.

# S Sample Profile – Language



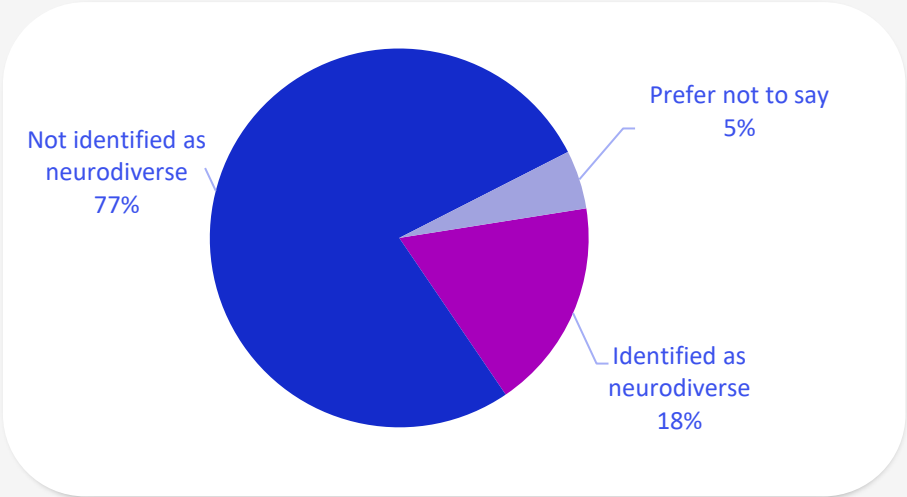
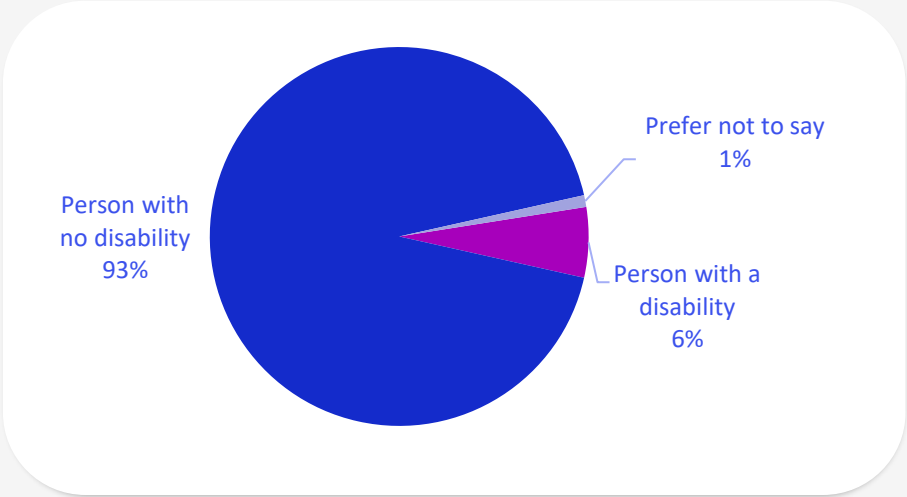
We asked respondents to indicate the languages in which they can hold conversations on a variety of topics or read different types of materials.

Notably, 32% reported speaking a total of 42 different languages in addition to English. This highlights not only the diversity of our sample but also reflects the rich cultural backgrounds of girls and young women living in Australia.

Throughout this document, we have reported patterns among girls and young women who speak only English compared to those who are multilingual. Our aim is to understand whether their experiences, expectations, and perceptions differ in meaningful ways.



# S≡ Sample Profile – Neurodiversity and Disability

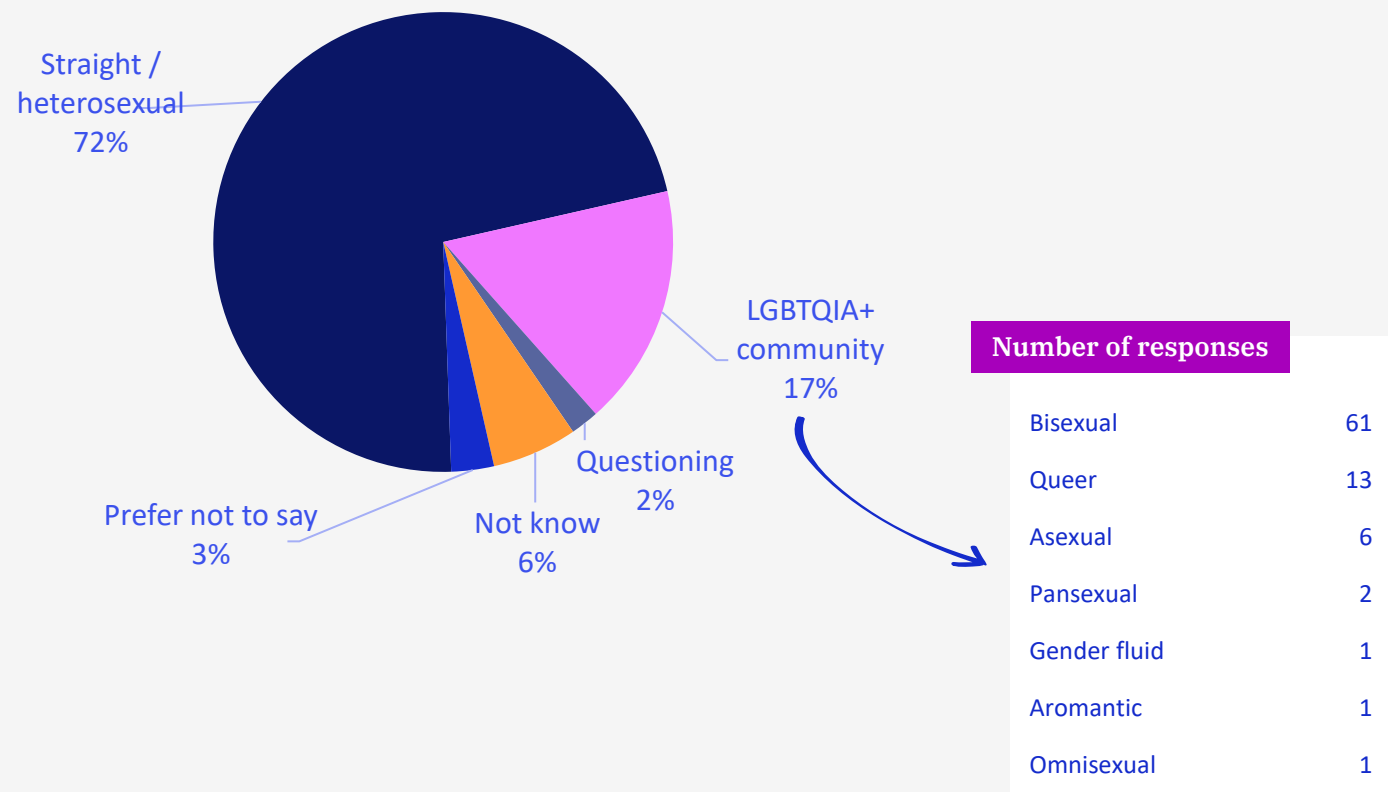


We asked the girls and young women we surveyed whether they identify as a person with a disability or as neurodiverse.

Slightly over 90% of respondents indicated that they do not identify as a person with a disability, while 77% reported that they do not identify as neurodiverse.

Throughout this document, we have examined patterns among girls and young women who identify as either a person with a disability or as neurodiverse, compared to those who identify as neither. Our goal is to assess whether their experiences, expectations, and perceptions show differences.

# S Sample Profile – Sexual Orientation



Finally, we asked respondents to select the option that best described their sexual orientation.

The findings reveal a diverse spectrum: 72% identified as straight or heterosexual, while 17% identified as members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Additionally, 3% preferred not to disclose, 2% indicated they are questioning, and 6% expressed uncertainty about their orientation.

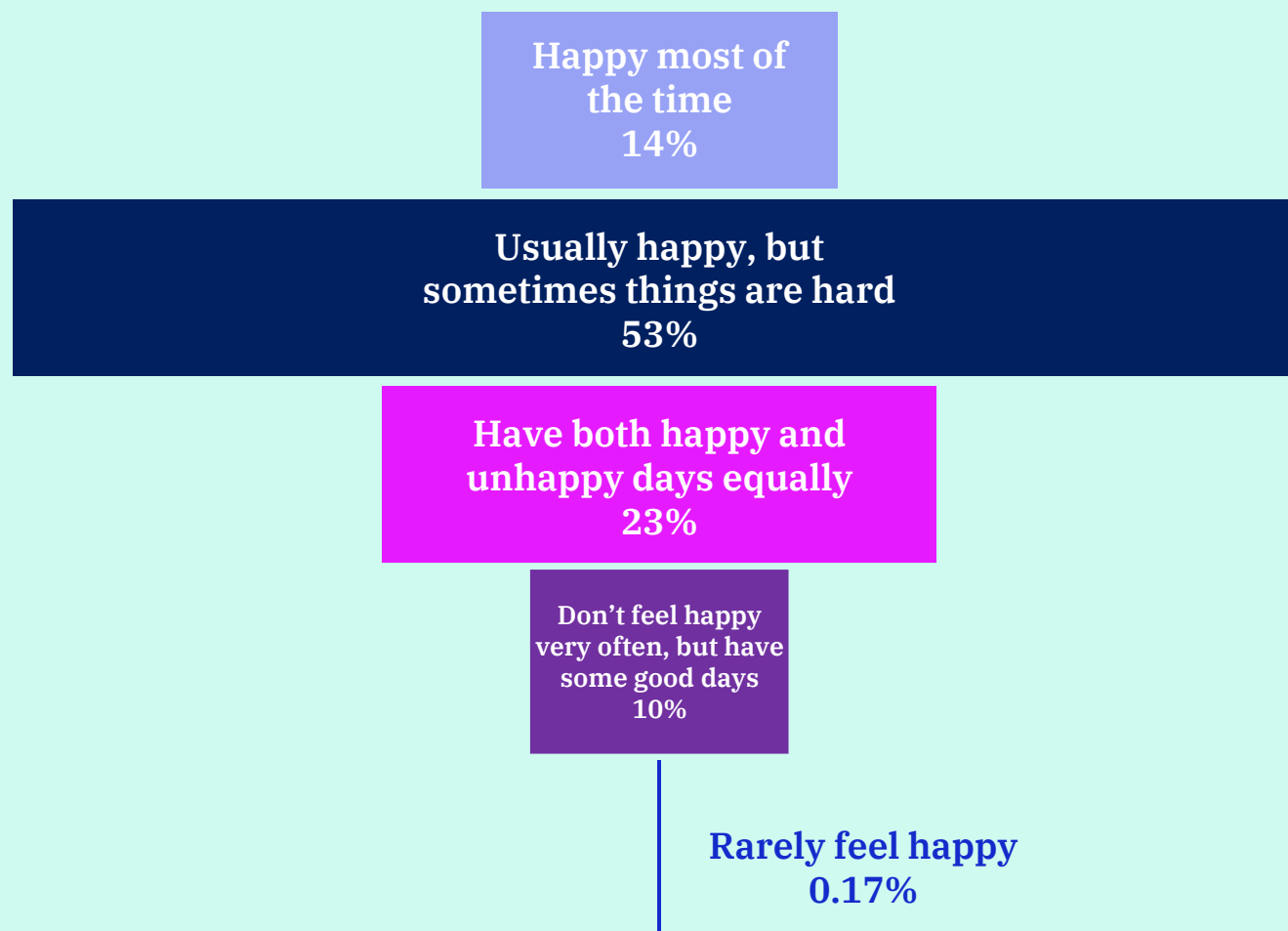
These insights have shaped our analysis throughout the report, where we explore patterns among girls and young women who identify as straight compared to those who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

# Current State of Mind, Hopes and Concerns





# **S** The girls and young women we surveyed reflect a balanced and realistic perspective on their mood.



Just over half (53%) are usually happy, though they acknowledge that sometimes things get hard. At the opposite end of the spectrum, 10% report that they don't feel happy very often, but they do have some good days.

At the extremes, 14% report feeling happy most of the time, while just one respondent (0.17%) states that they rarely feel happy.

When examining patterns across subsamples, we detect the following differences:

- Younger respondents aged 12–14 are more likely to report feeling happy most of the time (19%) compared to older respondents aged 15–18 (12%). This aligns with findings from the Girlguiding Girls' Attitudes Survey 2023, which highlights that younger girls often display higher levels of happiness and resilience, while older teens face increased pressures, such as academic stress and societal expectations.
- Respondents who identify as straight/heterosexual are more likely to report being happy most of the time (15%) compared to those who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community (7%). This results in consistent with Scape's Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2024, which reveals that members of LGBTQIA+ community face unique challenges, such as discrimination and a sense of exclusion, which can impact their overall well-being.
- Finally, individuals who are not neurodiverse or living with a disability are more likely to describe themselves as usually happy, with some bad days (56%), compared to their peers who are neurodiverse or have a disability (39%). This finding aligns with Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2024, which underscores the importance of inclusive support systems for these groups to improve emotional outcomes.



# The top ten things that excite girls and young women reflect a mix of social connections, personal interests, and determination to succeed

1	Being with friends	[78%]
2	Doing well in school	[62%]
3	My hobbies	[60%]
4	Participating in fun activities	[58%]
4	Achieving my goals	[58%]
5	Doing things for me	[51%]
6	Going to movies	[48%]
6	Exploring new places	[48%]
7	Excelling in activities	[46%]
8	Gaining independence	[41%]
9	Doing things for others	[36%]
9	Reading	[36%]
10	Being heard	[35%]
10	Social media	[35%]

A social and active life excites the girls and young women surveyed. Spending time with friends (78%) and participating in fun activities (58%) are among the top ten activities that excite them. They also enjoy going to the movies (48%) and exploring new places (48%).

Personal growth and hobbies are also exciting to them. They are enthusiastic about their hobbies (60%) and reading (36%) and doing things for themselves (51%). These findings align with trends mentioned in Scape’s Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2024, which emphasises the value of self-focus and personal development among young people.

Ambitions and determination are also key drivers of excitement. For example, 62% are excited about doing well in school, and 58% find achieving their goals exciting. Additionally, 46% are excited about excelling in activities, and 41% about gaining independence. The Girls’ Attitudes Survey 2023 echoes these findings, showing that structured goal-setting significantly boosts confidence in girls.

Subgroup patterns are detailed in the next slide.



# Patterns highlight what excites different subgroups

Being with friends	78%
Doing well in school	62%
My hobbies	60%
Participating in fun activities	58%
Achieving my goals	58%
Doing things for me	51%
Going to movies	48%
Exploring new places	48%
Excelling in activities	46%
Gaining independence	41%
Doing things for others	36%
Reading	36%
Being heard	35%
Social media	35%
Making a positive impact in the world	32%
Planning my future career	32%
Participating in team sports	29%
Meeting with new people	26%
Contributing to meaningful causes	26%
Doing better than boys	22%
Thinking about how I look	19%

When we examine patterns within subgroups, some differences emerge. Multilingual girls and young women, for instance, are more likely to express excitement about academic and personal achievements, including:

- Doing well in school (74%)
- Achieving their goals (72%)
- Excelling in activities (58%)

Meanwhile, girls and young women from LGBTQIA+ community show greater enthusiasm for activities that emphasise empathy, advocacy, and social impact, such as:

- Doing things for others (50%)
- Being heard (51%)
- Making a positive impact in the world (49%)
- Contributing to meaningful causes (41%)
- Doing better than boys (32%)





# The concerns expressed by girls and young women reveal a mix of personal, social, and financial pressures they navigate

1	What people think of me	[ 57%]
1	Not having enough money	[ 57%]
2	Being excluded / left out	[ 56%]
3	Feeling stupid	[ 50%]
4	Getting things wrong	[ 47%]
5	Struggling with my mental health	[ 44%]
6	Not being able to afford a home	[ 41%]
7	Not being able to find a job	[ 37%]
8	How the state of the economy will affect me	[ 34%]
8	Not being treated fairly or respectfully because I am a girl	[ 34%]
8	Expectations of parents	[ 34%]
9	Big emotions	[ 32%]
9	Having poor health	[ 32%]
10	Conflicts around the world	[ 31%]

For 57%, worries about what people think of them and not having enough money stand out as concerning.

Their focus on self-perception and societal judgment is highlighted by worries such as being excluded (56%), feeling stupid (50%), and getting things wrong (47%).

Financial worries are also concerning, with 41% concerned about not being able to afford a home, 37% worried about their ability to find a job, and 34% anxious about how the state of the economy will affect them.

Mental health emerges as another critical issue, ranking as the fifth most mentioned concern, with 44% indicating struggles with mental health and 32% grappling with big emotions.

Other worries, such as having poor health and conflicts around the world, complete the top 10 concerns voiced by girls and young women.

Subgroup patterns are detailed in the next slide.



# Patterns highlight how concerns vary among different groups

What people think of me	57%
Not having enough money	57%
Being excluded / left out	56%
Feeling stupid	50%
Getting things wrong	47%
Struggling with my mental health	44%
Not being able to afford a home	41%
Not being able to find a job	37%
How the state of the economy will affect me	34%
Not being treated fairly or respectfully because I am a girl	34%
Expectations of parents	34%
Big emotions	32%
Having poor health	32%
Conflicts around the world	31%
Having limited job opportunities	30%
Not being treated respectfully because of who I am	29%
The impacts of climate change	28%
What boys think of me	27%
Not being able to make choices for myself	26%
Bullies	26%
Having learning difficulties	17%
The impacts of new technology on me	12%
Not getting education	10%

Results show that older respondents aged 15–18 are more likely to worry about following compared to younger respondents aged 12–14:

- Struggling with my mental health (48%)
- Not being able to afford a home (49%)
- Not being able to find a job (44%)
- How the state of the economy will affect me (40%)
- Having poor health (38%)
- The impacts of climate change (33%)
- Not getting education (12%)

Whereas younger respondents aged 12–14 are more likely to be worried about bullies (44%) compared to older respondents aged 15–18 (18%).

Multilingual respondents are more likely to worry about:

- Expectations of parents (50%)
- Not being treated respectfully because of who I am (38%)
- Not being able to make choices for myself (37%)

Girls and young women from LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to worry about:

- Struggling with my mental health (71%)
- How the state of the economy will affect me (49%)
- Not being treated fairly or respectfully because I am a girl (48%)
- Having poor health (47%)
- Conflicts around the world (46%)
- The impacts of climate change (48%)

Finally, individuals who are neurodiverse or living with a disability are more likely to worry about:

- Struggling with my mental health (66%)
- Having learning difficulties (40%)

# General Wellbeing

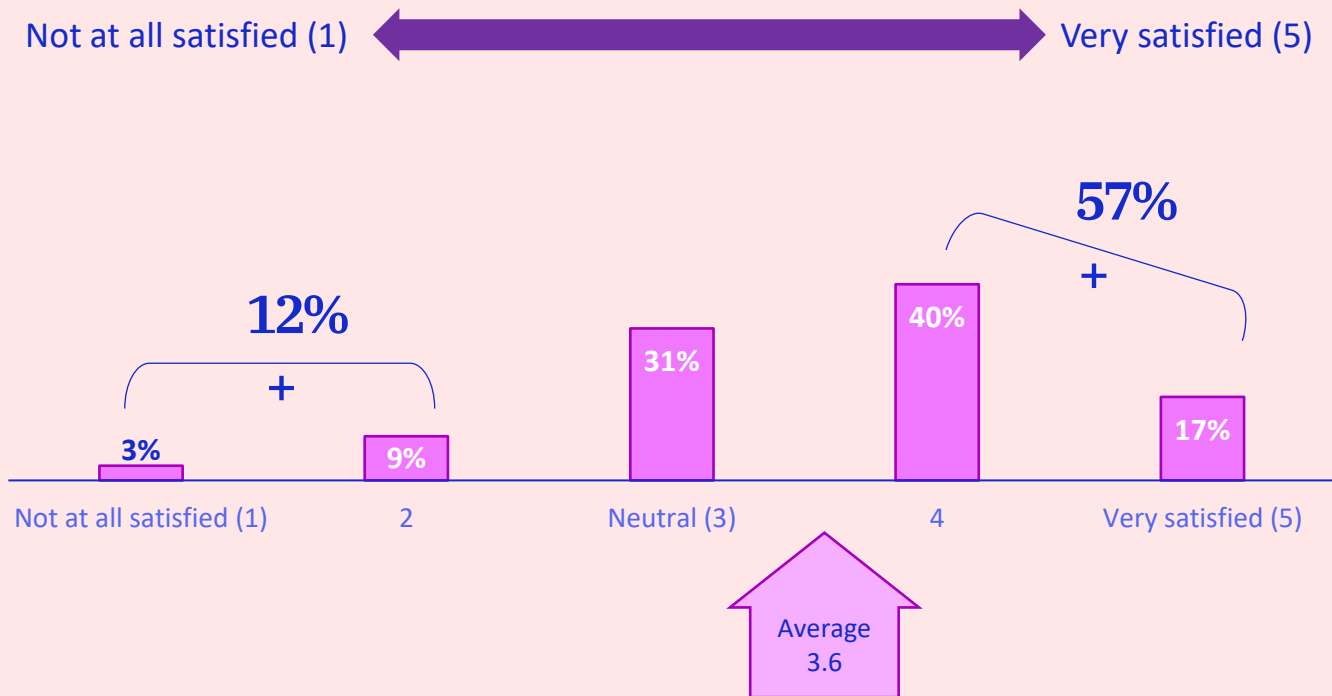
*Satisfaction*





# SE Results reflect global trends of declining happiness in adolescence, particularly among young women

## \* My life as a whole



Our research aimed to better understand the lives of girls and young women in Australia. Based on responses from 500 participants, over half (57%) reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with their life as a whole.

Satisfaction levels are more likely to be higher among younger girls aged 12–14, with 68% expressing satisfaction, compared to 53% of older girls aged 15–18. Similarly, girls and young women identifying as straight or heterosexual reported higher satisfaction (59%) than those belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community (51%).

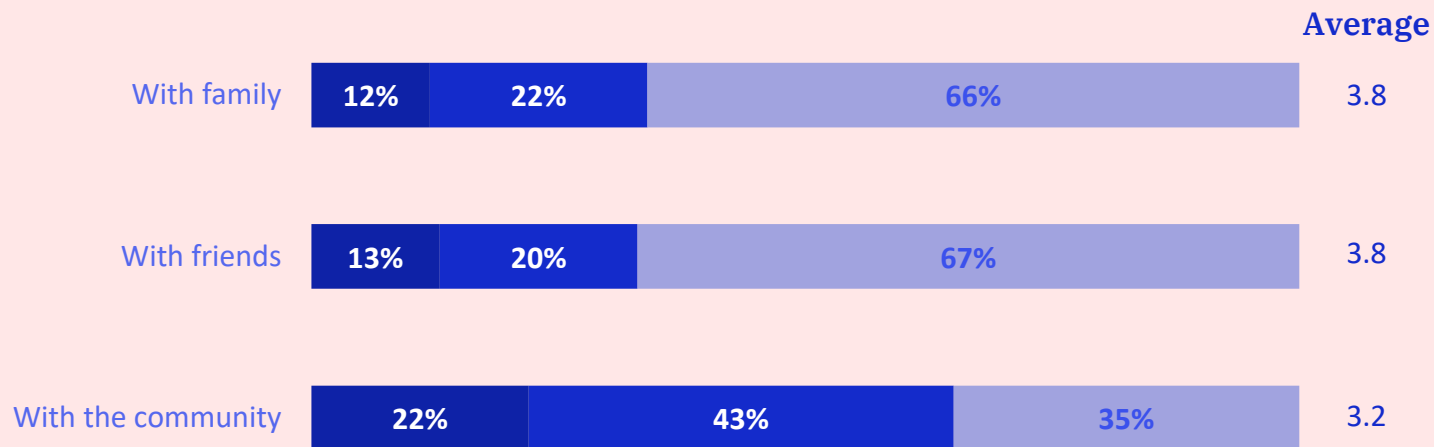
Secondary research indicates that very few studies specifically explore the experiences of girls and young women in Australia. Globally, research highlights nuanced trends in happiness among young people. The [Gen Z: Global Citizenship Survey \(2017\)](#) found that despite decreasing happiness levels, many young people continue to report being happy with their lives. However, happiness levels often differ by gender, with young men consistently reporting higher levels of happiness than young women.

The Girlguiding UK [Girls' Attitudes Survey 2023](#) further illustrates this trend, reporting a significant rise in the proportion of girls reporting unhappiness—from 9% in 2009 to 25% in 2023. Older girls (17–21) are the most likely to report unhappiness, although this increase is reflected across younger age groups as well.



## \* Relationships

■ Dissatisfied (1 + 2) ■ Neutral (3) ■ Satisfied (4+5)



Satisfaction levels with different aspects of relationships are consistent with satisfaction with girls and young women's life as a whole.

Compared to older age groups (15 – 18), younger age groups (12 – 14) are more likely to be satisfied with their:

- Relationships with their family (4.1 vs 3.7 out of 5)
- Relationships with their friends (4.1 vs 3.6 out of 5)

Young girls and women who are identified as straight/heterosexual are more likely to be satisfied with their **relationships with their families** compared to those belong to LGBTQIA+ community (3.8 vs 3.5)

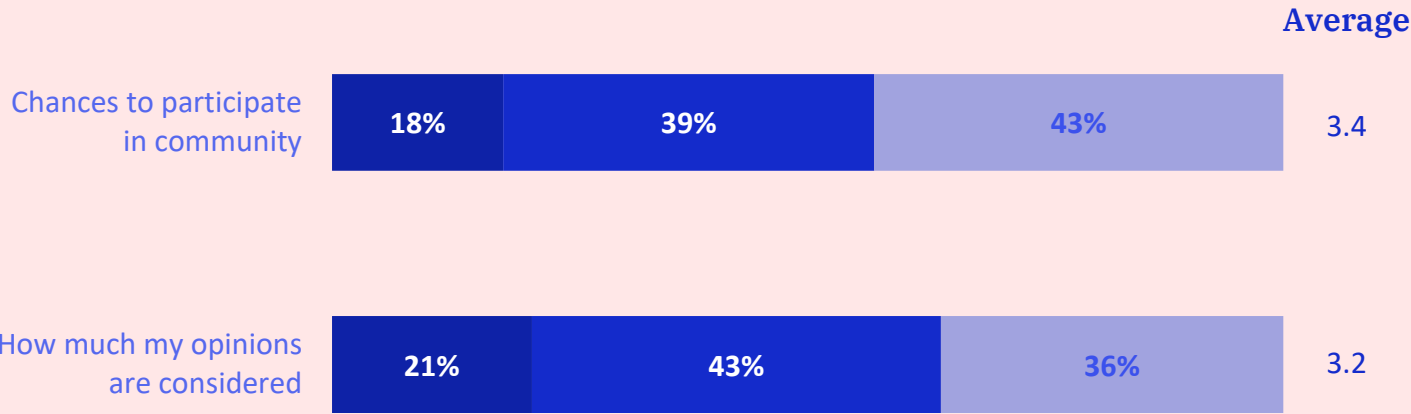
Compared to those who don't feel happy very often but have some good days, those who are usually happy but find things hard sometimes are more likely to be satisfied with:

- Relationships with their family (3.9 vs 3.1)
- Relationships with their friends (3.9 vs 3.1)
- The support they receive from their communities (3.2 vs 2.6)

# Satisfaction with different aspects of life

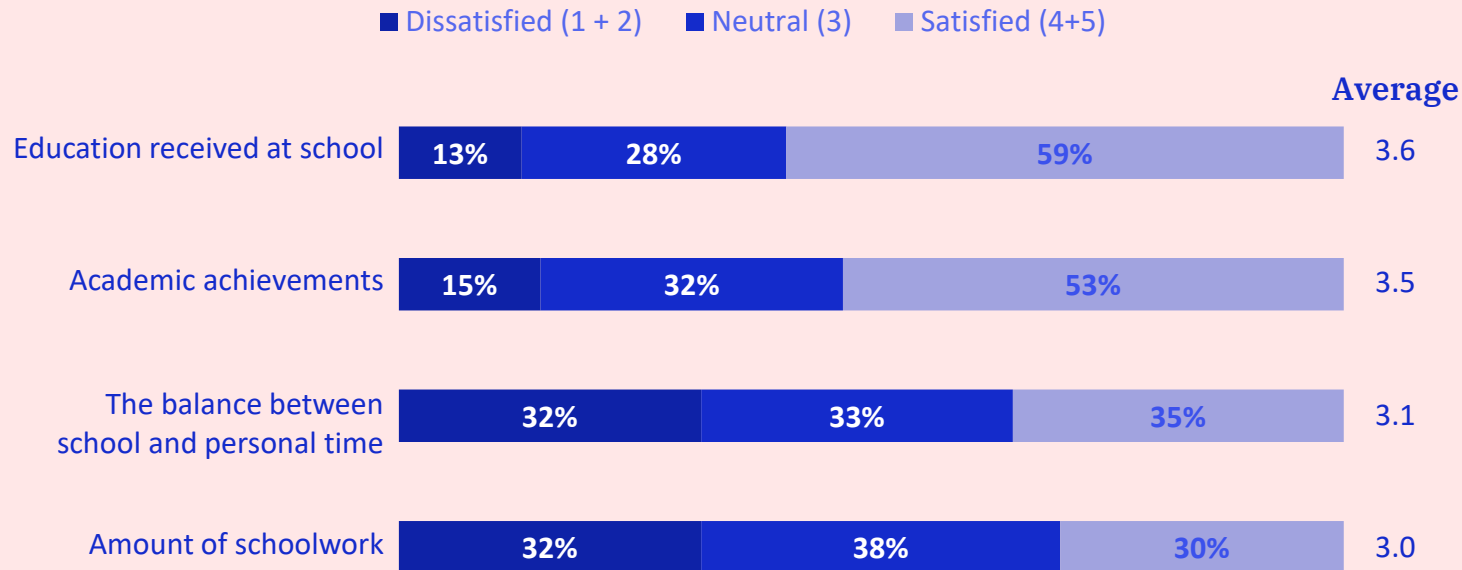
## \* Social interactions

■ Dissatisfied (1 + 2)   ■ Neutral (3)   ■ Satisfied (4+5)



Compared to those who don't feel happy very often, but have some good days, those who are usually happy, but find things hard sometimes are more likely to be satisfied with **how much their opinions are considered by others** (3.2 vs 2.8)

## \* Education



Compared to older age groups (15 – 18), younger age groups (12 – 14) are more likely to be satisfied with:

- Their academic achievements (3.8 vs 3.4)
- The balance between school and their personal time (3.3 vs 3.0)

Young girls and women who are identified as neurodiverse or live with a disability are more likely to be satisfied with the **education they are receiving/have received at school** compared to those who are not neurodiverse or a person with a disability (3.7 vs 3.2)

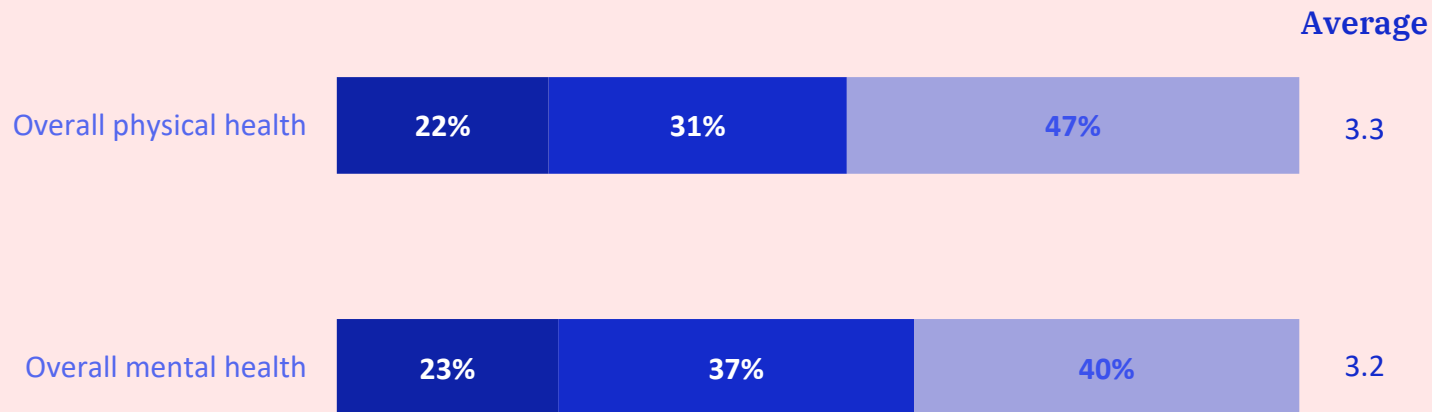
Compared to those who don't feel happy very often but have some good days, those who are usually happy but find things hard sometimes are more likely to be satisfied with:

- Their academic achievements (3.6 vs 2.9)
- The balance between school and their personal time (3.1 vs 2.6)

# Satisfaction with different aspects of life

## \* Overall health

■ Dissatisfied (1 + 2) ■ Neutral (3) ■ Satisfied (4+5)



Compared to older age groups (15–18), younger age groups (12–14) are more likely to be satisfied with their:

- Overall physical health (3.9 vs. 3.1)
- Overall mental health (3.5 vs. 3.1)

Compared to those who belong to LGBTQIA+ community, young girls and women identified as straight/heterosexual are more likely to be satisfied with their:

- Overall physical health (3.4 vs. 3.0)
- Overall mental health (3.3 vs. 2.8)

Compared to those who don't feel happy very often but have some good days, those who are usually happy but find things hard sometimes are more likely to be satisfied with their:

- Overall physical health (3.4 vs. 2.4)
- Overall mental health (3.4 vs. 1.9)

Satisfaction with **overall physical health** is higher among girls and young women who:

- Can communicate in English only (3.5) compared to multilinguals (3.0)
- Are full-time students (3.4) compared to students who have a full-time or part-time job on the side (3.0)

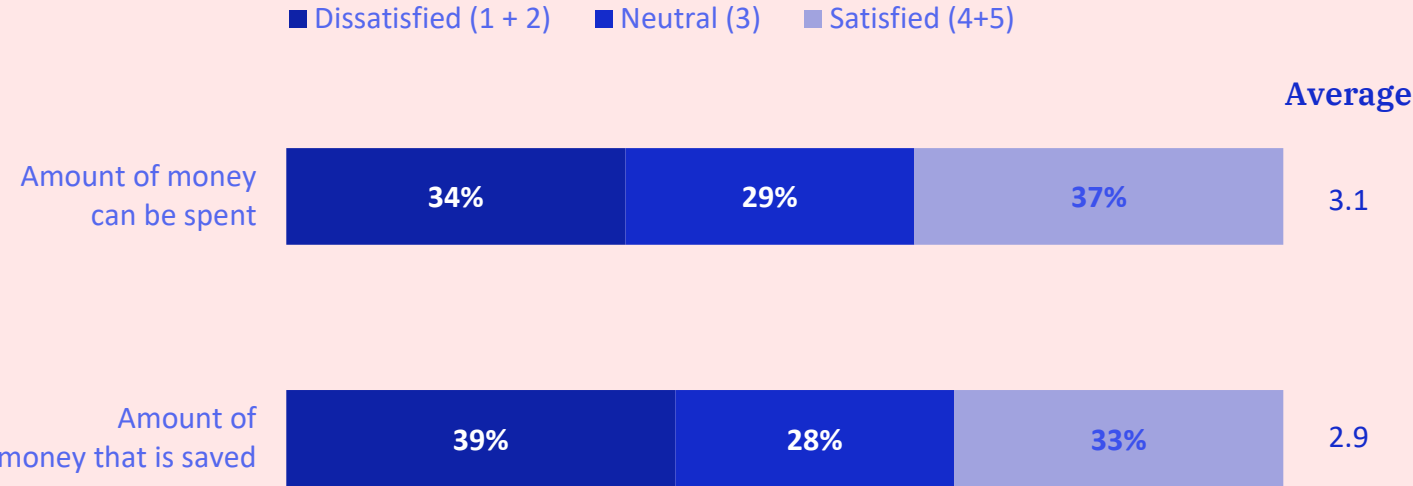


S≡

# Satisfaction with different aspects of life

\*

Financial status



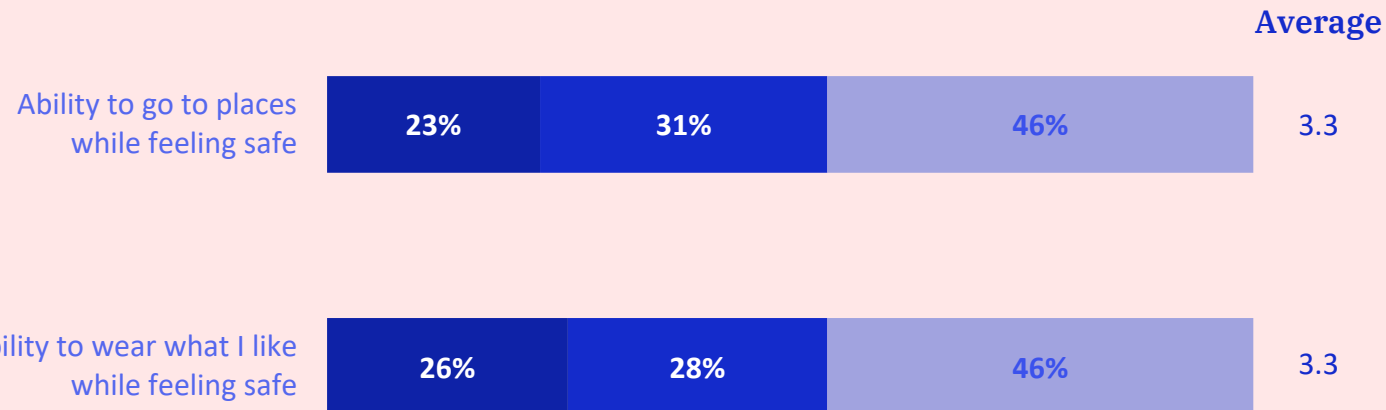
Compared to those who don't feel happy very often but have some good days, those who are usually happy but find things hard sometimes are more likely to be satisfied with the amount of money they save (2.9 vs 2.4)



# Satisfaction with different aspects of life

## \* Safety

■ Dissatisfied (1 + 2) ■ Neutral (3) ■ Satisfied (4+5)



Compared to older age groups (15–18), younger age groups (12–14) are more likely to be satisfied with their:

- Ability to go to places while feeling safe (3.5 vs 3.2)
- Ability to wear what they like while feeling safe (3.5 vs 3.2)

Compared to those who don't feel happy very often but have some good days, those who are usually happy but find things hard sometimes are more likely to be satisfied with their:

- Ability to go to places while feeling safe (3.5 vs 3.0)
- Ability to wear what they like while feeling safe (3.4 vs 2.8)

Compared to students who have a full-time or part-time job on the side, full-time students are more likely to be satisfied with their ability to wear what they like while feeling safe (3.4 vs 3.0)

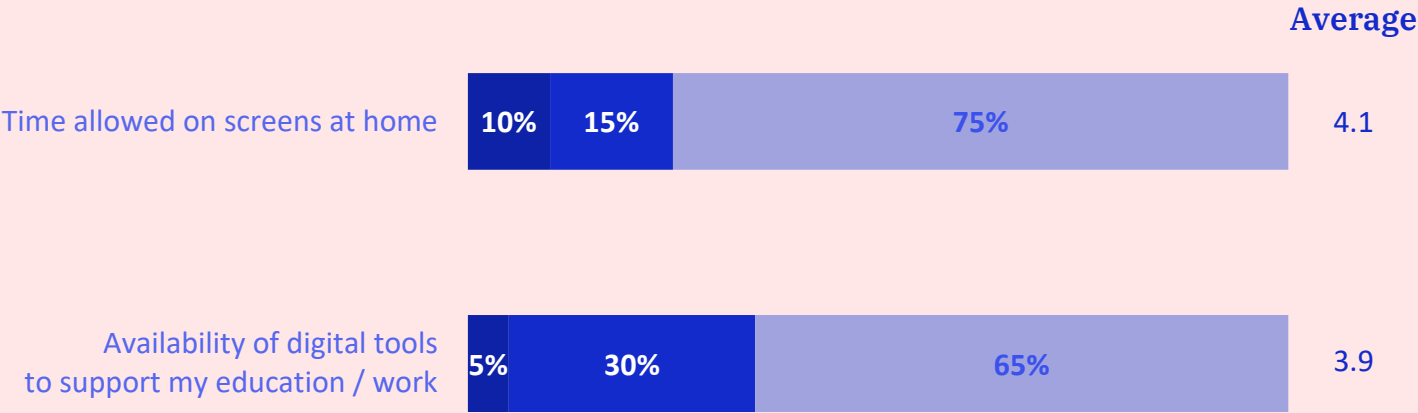
S≡

# Satisfaction with different aspects of life

\*

Technology

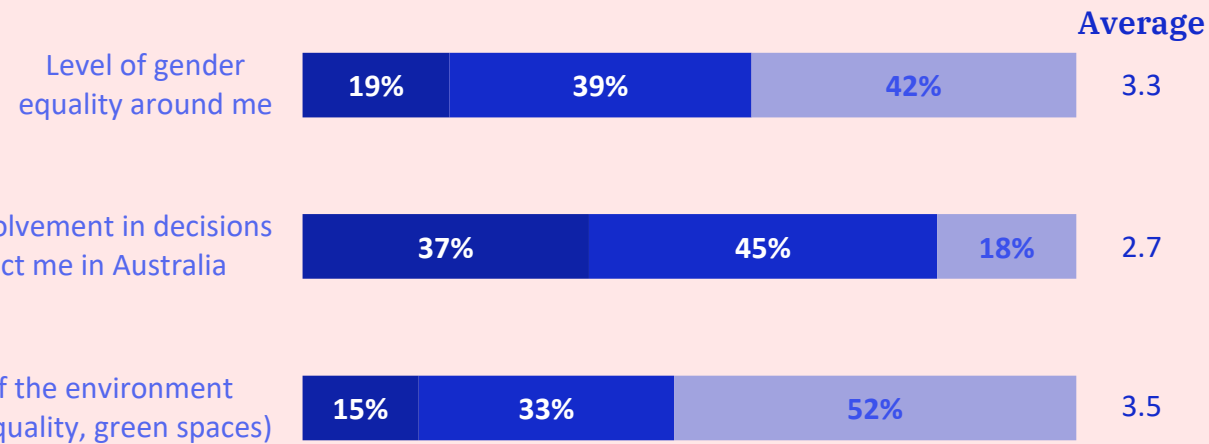
■ Dissatisfied (1 + 2)   ■ Neutral (3)   ■ Satisfied (4+5)



Compared to younger age groups (12–14), older age groups (15–18) are more likely to be satisfied with the time they are allowed on screens at home (4.2 vs 3.8)

## \* Gender Equality, Inclusion and Environment

■ Dissatisfied (1 + 2) ■ Neutral (3) ■ Satisfied (4+5)



Following groups are more likely to be satisfied with how much they are involved in decisions that affect them in Australia:

- Older age groups (4.2) compared to younger age groups (3.8)
- Young girls and women identified as straight/heterosexual (2.8) compared to those who belong to LGBTQIA+ community (2.5)
- Full time students (2.8) compared to working students (2.5)
- Those who are usually happy, but find things hard sometimes (2.7) compared to those who don't feel happy very often, but have some good days (2.4)



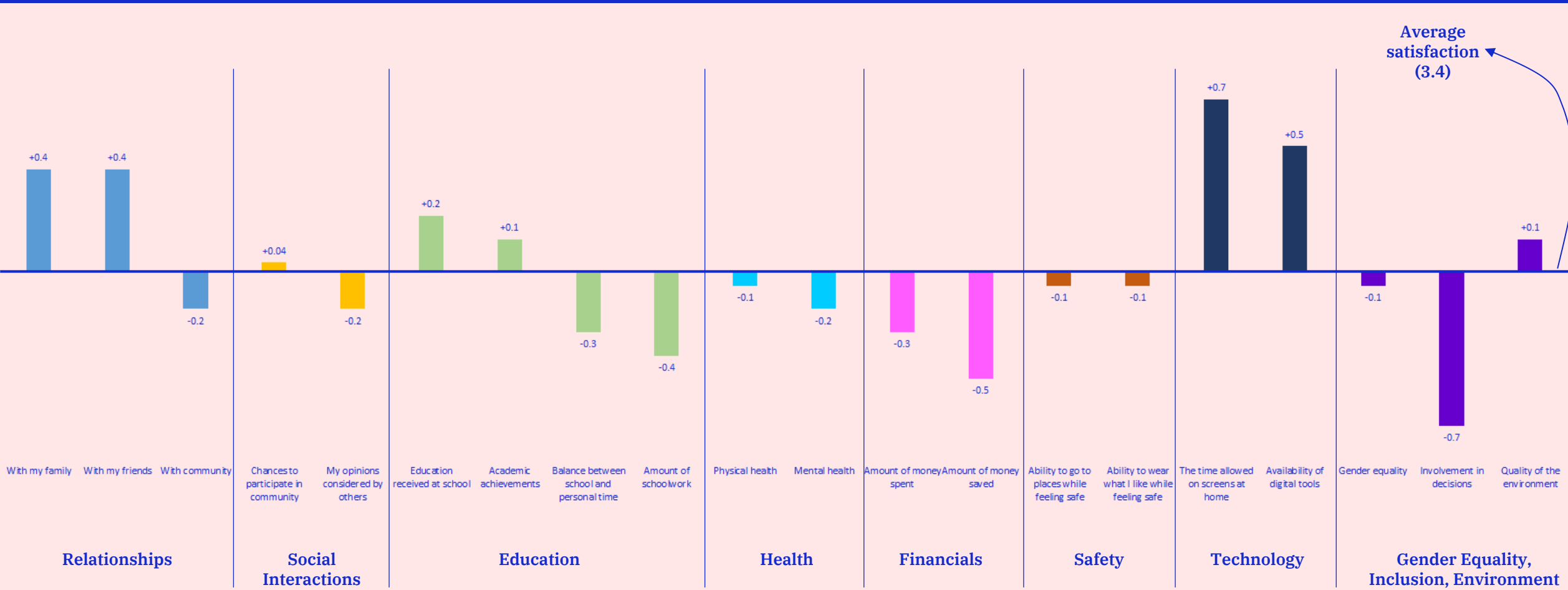
To assess satisfaction levels across various aspects of life, we calculated the average satisfaction score for all 20 aspects. The overall average satisfaction, is 3.4 out of 5. Each aspect’s deviation from this average was then analysed, allowing us to gain a comprehensive understanding of areas where respondents felt satisfied or dissatisfied.

The findings indicate that girls and young women are generally satisfied with aspects related to their relationships and the technology available to them. Younger students, in particular, report higher satisfaction with their relationships but lower satisfaction with the screen time they are allowed at home.

Dissatisfaction seems to be driven by financial concerns. Girls and young women report lower satisfaction with the amount of money they can spend and manage to save. Additionally, they indicate lower levels of satisfaction with their overall physical and mental health.

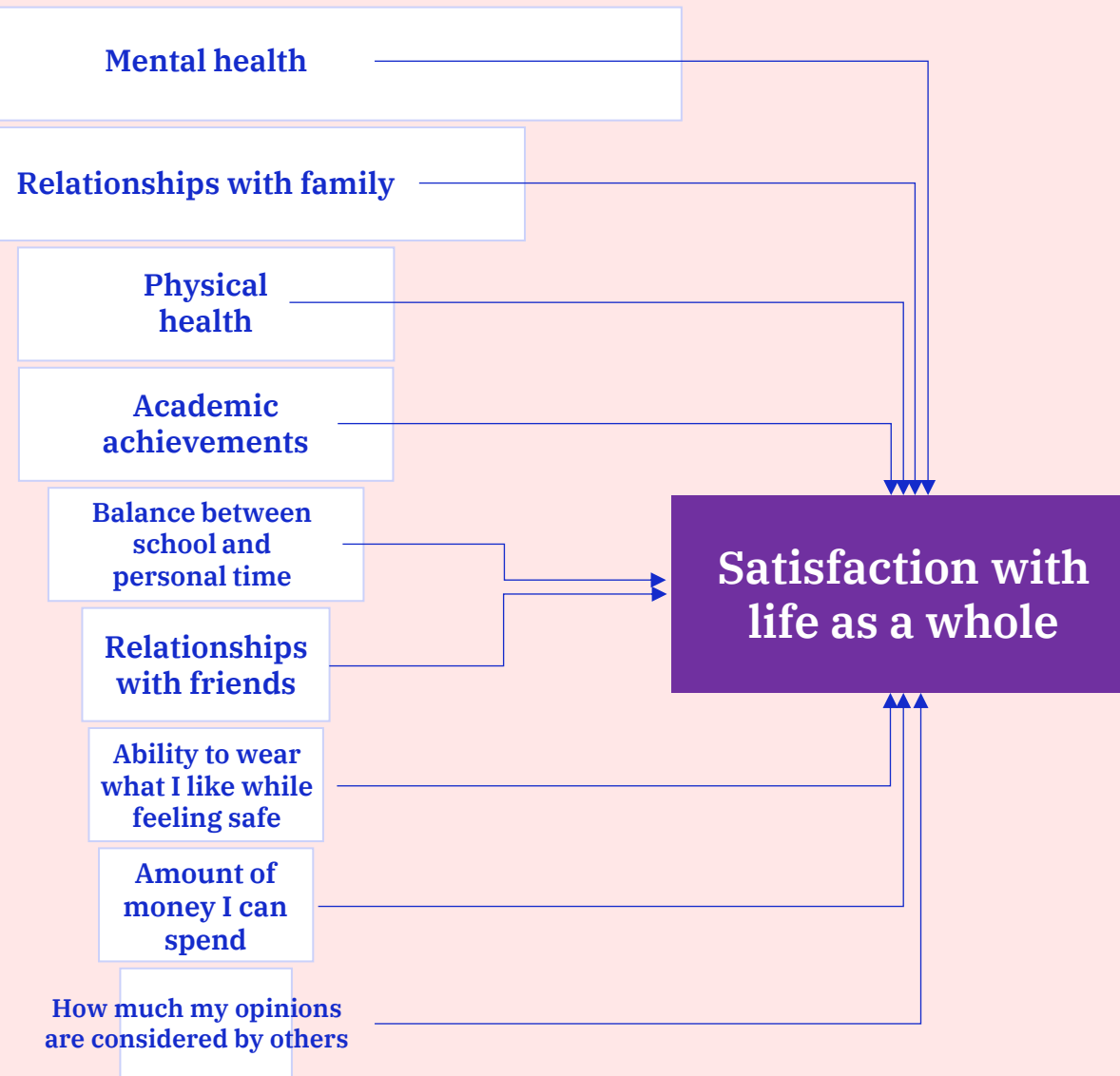
Despite being satisfied with the education they receive and their academic achievements, they expressed lower satisfaction with the amount of schoolwork assigned and the balance between school and personal life. This dissatisfaction is more pronounced among younger students.

Lastly, the aspect with the lowest satisfaction is the level of involvement girls and young women feel they have in the decisions that are made about them in Australia. This dissatisfaction is particularly evident among older respondents, members of LGBTQIA+ community, and students balancing full-time or part-time work with their studies.





# Girl's and young women's satisfaction with life is driven by good mental health and relationships



We conducted a driver analysis to identify the key aspects of life that significantly influence satisfaction with life as a whole. Our aim was to determine which factors have the greatest potential to impact girls' and young women's overall happiness. The analysis revealed nine significant factors that can either improve or diminish their satisfaction with life.

Unsurprisingly, mental health emerged as the most critical driver. As we reported earlier, only 40% of young women surveyed are satisfied or very satisfied with their mental health. Therefore, improving mental health should be the primary focus for enhancing their overall well-being.

Relationships with family also play an important role in driving life satisfaction. While young women generally report high satisfaction with their family relationships, those from LGBTQIA+ community expressed lower satisfaction levels. This highlights the need to support families with LGBTQIA+ members to foster stronger, more inclusive connections.

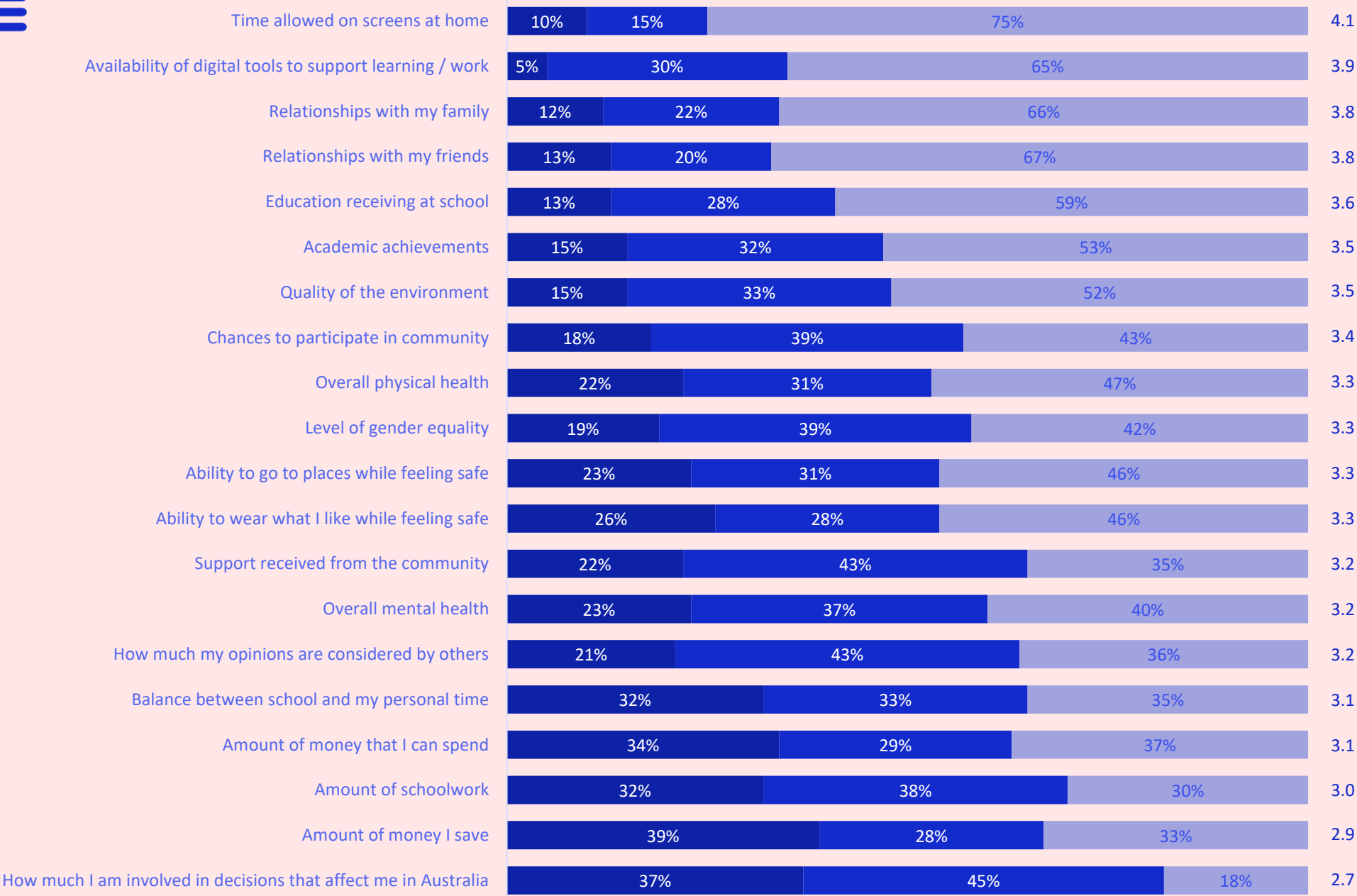
Another key factor is achieving a balance between schoolwork and personal time, which was one of the least satisfying aspects for respondents. Addressing the workload young women face and providing time management support could significantly improve their quality of life.

Finally, feeling safe when dressing as they like is another important factor. Satisfaction in this area is slightly lower, suggesting the need for initiatives to help young girls feel secure and confident in expressing themselves.



Average

# Satisfaction with aspects of life – Full List



- Dissatisfied (1 + 2)
- Neutral (3)
- Satisfied (4 + 5)

General  
Wellbeing

*Confidence*





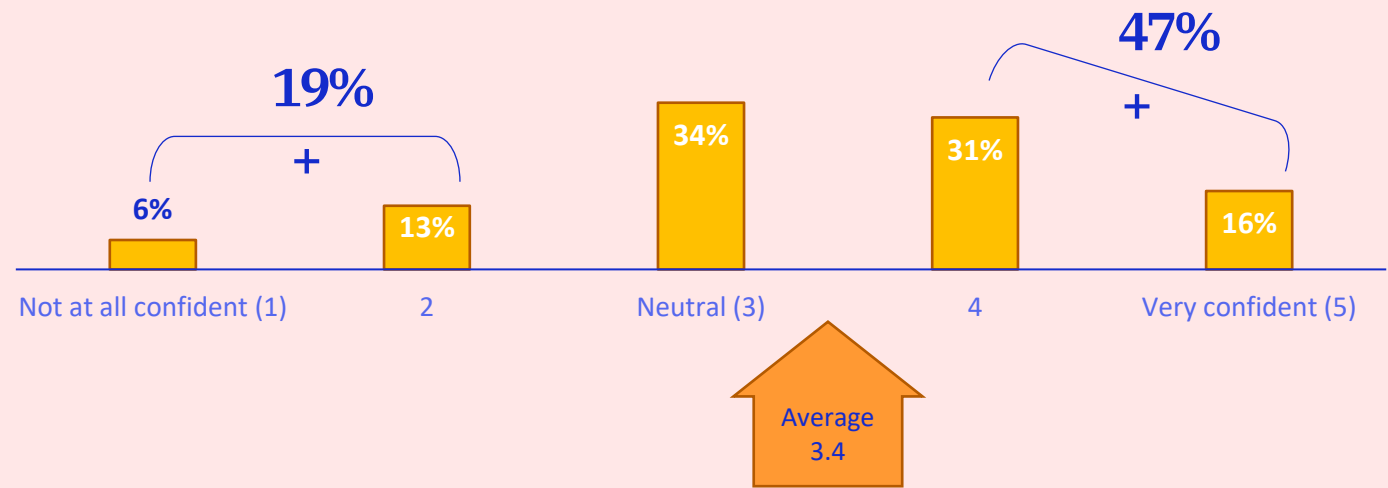


# Nearly half of the girls and young women feel confident about themselves



## About myself

Not at all confident (1) Very confident (5)



Nearly half of the girls and young women surveyed feel confident about themselves (47%). Of these, 16% say they are very confident, 31% are somewhat confident. Moreover, 34% feel neutral about their confidence overall.

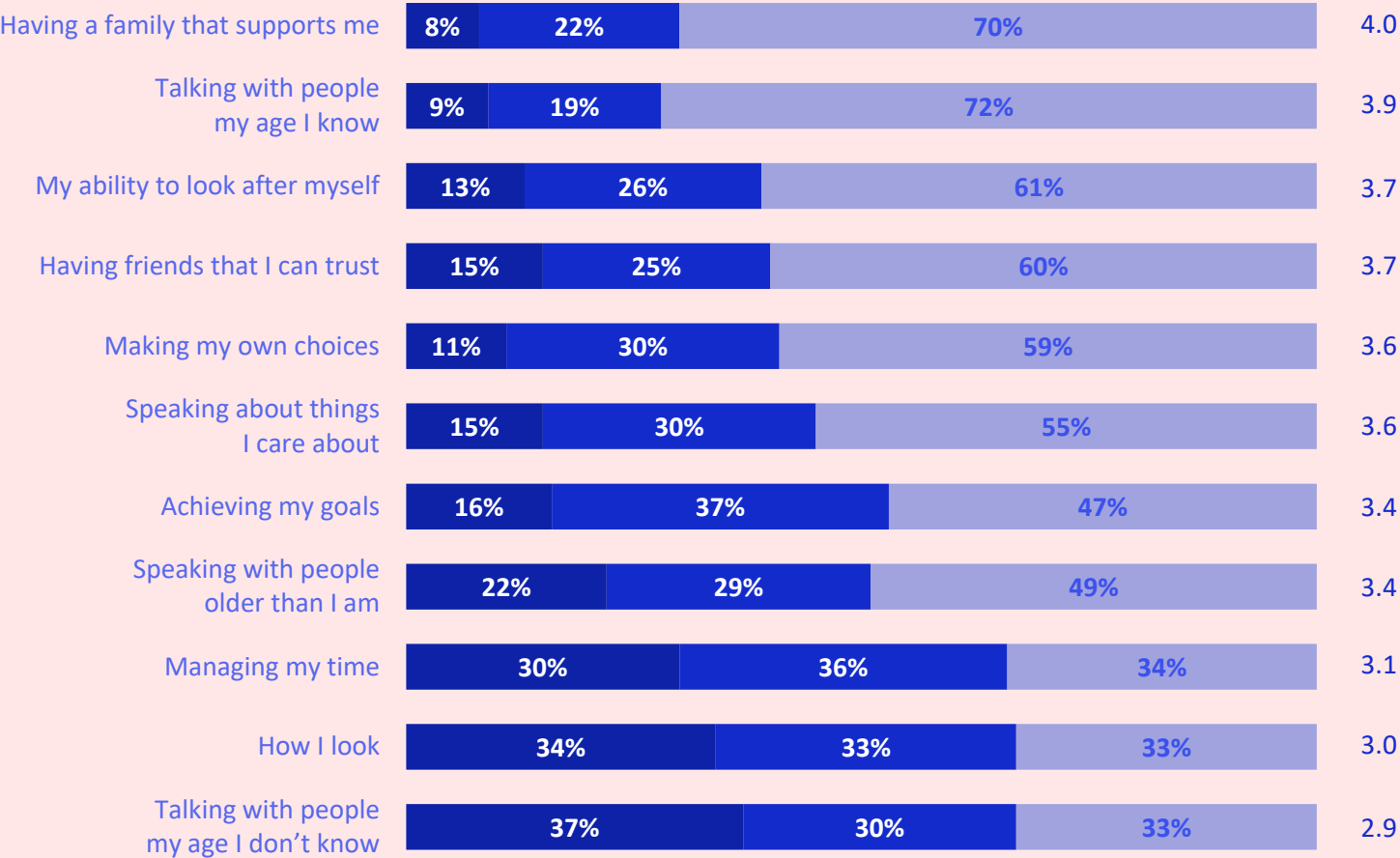
There is no significant pattern across groups, except younger respondents (12 – 15 years) seem to feel more confident (3.7 out of 5) compared to older ones (15 – 18 years) (3.2 out of 5).



# Girls and young women feel most confident in relationships with family but show lower confidence in unfamiliar social settings, achieving goals, and self-image

■ Not confident (1+ 2) ■ Neutral (3) ■ Confident (4+5)

Average



We measured how confident girls and young women feel about various aspects, using a 5-point scale. The results show that girls and young women feel most confident in areas where they can rely on support systems:

- Having a family that supports me: 70%
- Talking with people my age I know: 72%
- Having friends I can trust: 60%

These findings align with the importance of relationships with family and friends in fostering life satisfaction. The ability to rely on trusted networks seems to help young women’s confidence.

When it comes to self-reliance and independence, their confidence is moderate:

- My ability to look after myself: 61%
- Making my own choices: 59%
- Speaking about things I care about: 55%
- Achieving my goals: 47%

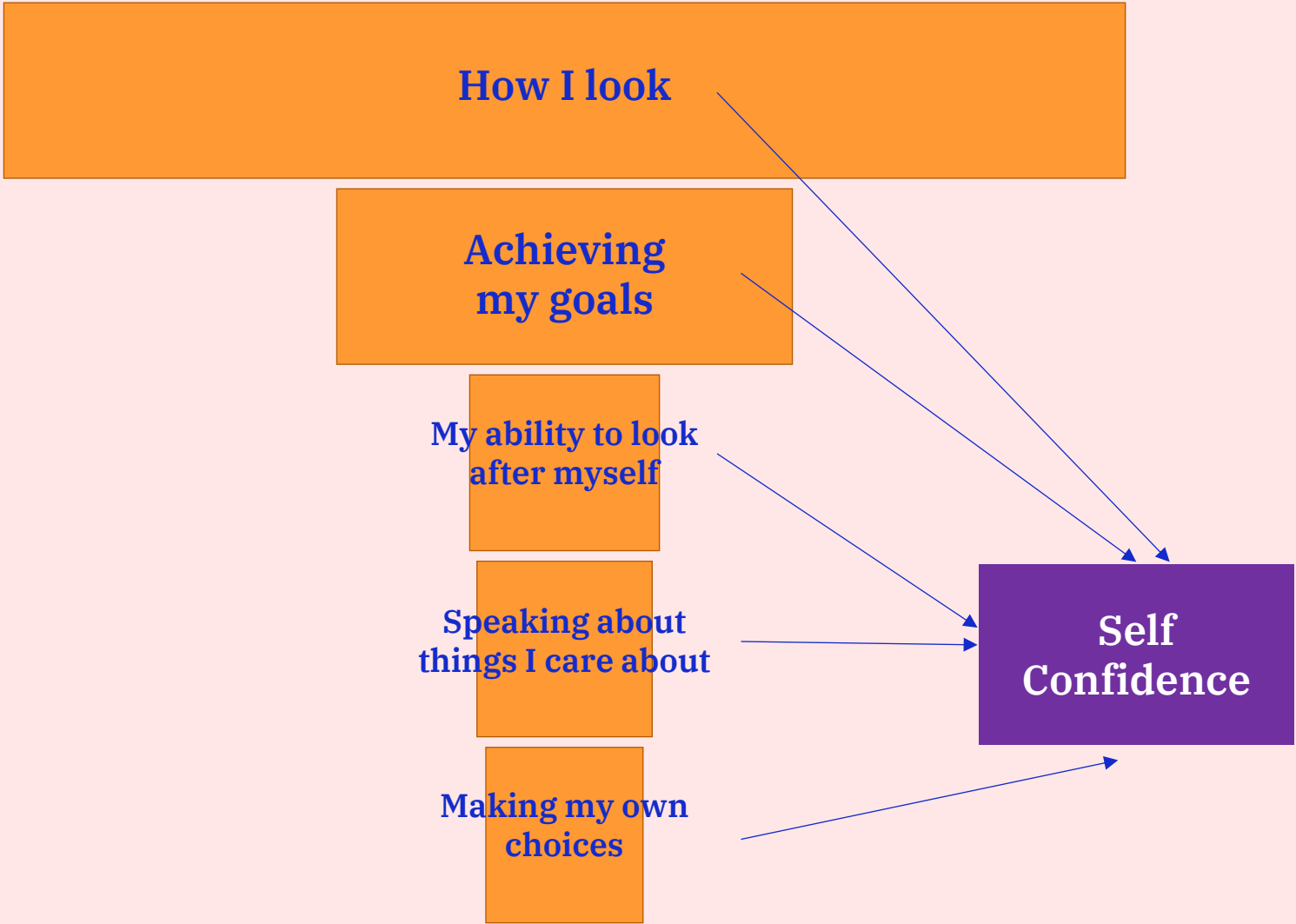
This suggests that while many girls and young women are developing skills to manage their independence, there remains some uncertainty about achieving personal ambitions or advocating for their opinions.

Confidence drops in areas related to broader social interactions and self-perception:

- Speaking with people older than I am: 49%
- Managing my time: 34%
- How I look: 33%
- Talking with people my age I don’t know: 33%



# Appearance, social perceptions, goal achievement and independence are key factors influencing confidence among girls and young women



We conducted another driver analysis to identify the most significant factors influencing confidence among girls and young women.

Unsurprisingly, appearance is the strongest driver impacting their self-confidence. Considering that only 33% feel confident or very confident about their appearance, this is a concerning factor that needs to be addressed to improve perceptions among young women. Additionally, we know that what people think of them (57%) is one of their most mentioned concerns among young women. These results align with the findings of the Girls' Attitude Survey 2023, which highlighted that social pressures create anxiety about body image among young women in the UK.

Feeling confident about achieving their goals also enhances young women's overall self-confidence. As mentioned earlier, this is something that excites them (58%). Furthermore, we discussed earlier that they are generally satisfied with their academic achievements (53%), and doing well in school makes them feel excited (62%). Therefore, it would be interesting to explore young women's individual goals in life.

Their ability to look after themselves, speaking about things they care about, and making their own choices are also strong drivers of confidence. This indicates that girls and young women aged 15-18 need to feel their independence and inner strength to build their self-confidence.



# Compliments, family recognition, acknowledgment in opinions significantly boost confidence among girls and young women



## *Feel more confident and feel positive when...*

I receive compliments	(71%)
Someone understands me	(68%)
My family tells me they're proud of me	(67%)
I get recognised for my efforts at school	(66%)
I'm made to feel special	(56%)
My friends ask for my opinion	(55%)
I'm included in activities	(54%)
Someone likes my style	(53%)
Someone asks my opinion	(52%)
I have someone's full attention	(52%)
Adults really listen to me	(50%)
I learn something new	(38%)
I'm acknowledged for my efforts in sports	(36%)
I'm chosen to lead activities	(33%)
I get 'likes' on social media	(26%)

Considering the significance of appearance on confidence, it is not surprising that the majority of girls and young women surveyed feel more confident and positive about themselves when they receive compliments (71%). Similarly, given the impact of gaining independence and self-discovery on their overall confidence, it is not surprising to see that they feel more positive when someone understands them (68%).

The role of families and receiving recognition from them is also evident, with 67% indicating they feel more confident and positive about themselves when their families tell them they are proud of them.

When we examine the patterns, we see that the following groups are more likely to feel confident and positive about themselves:

- Younger age groups if they are acknowledged for their efforts in sports (47%) compared to older groups (31%)
- Young girls and women who belong to LGBTQIA+ community when someone asks their opinion (66%) compared to those identified as straight/heterosexual (48%)

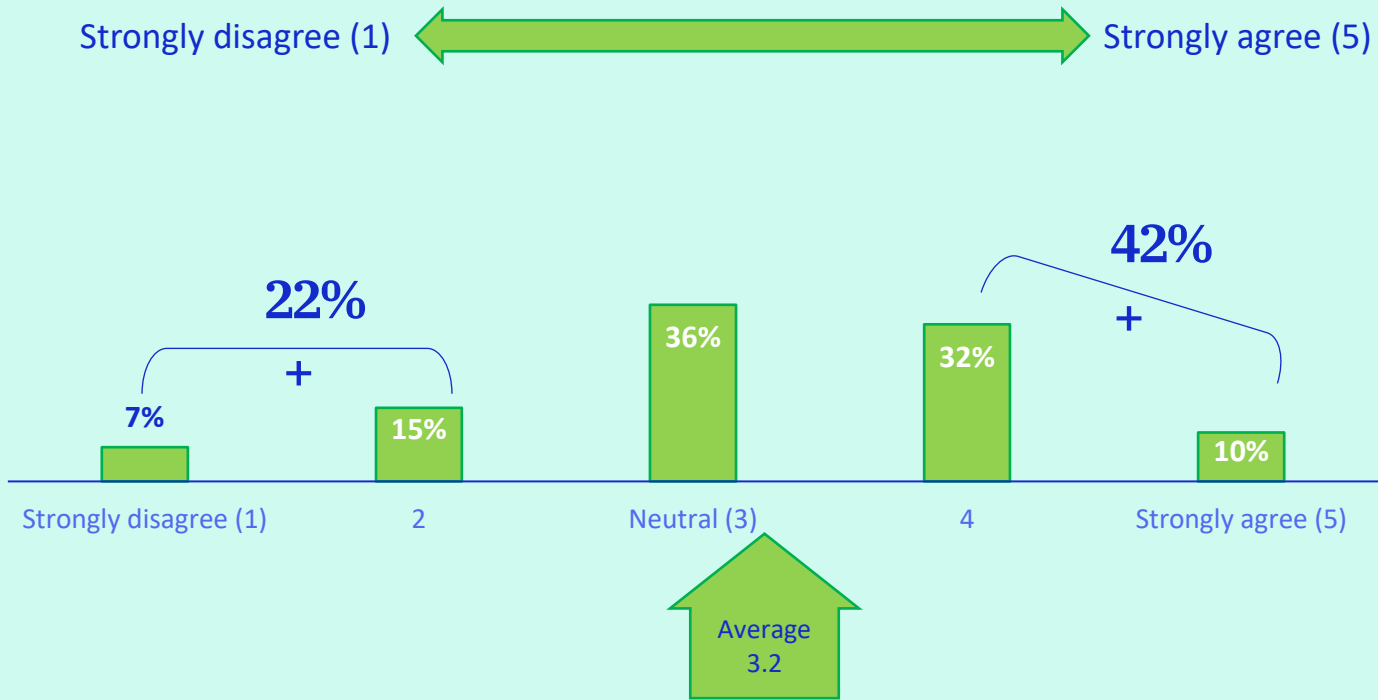
# School Experience





# Attending school gives girls and young women a moderate experience

## \* Overall, I like school



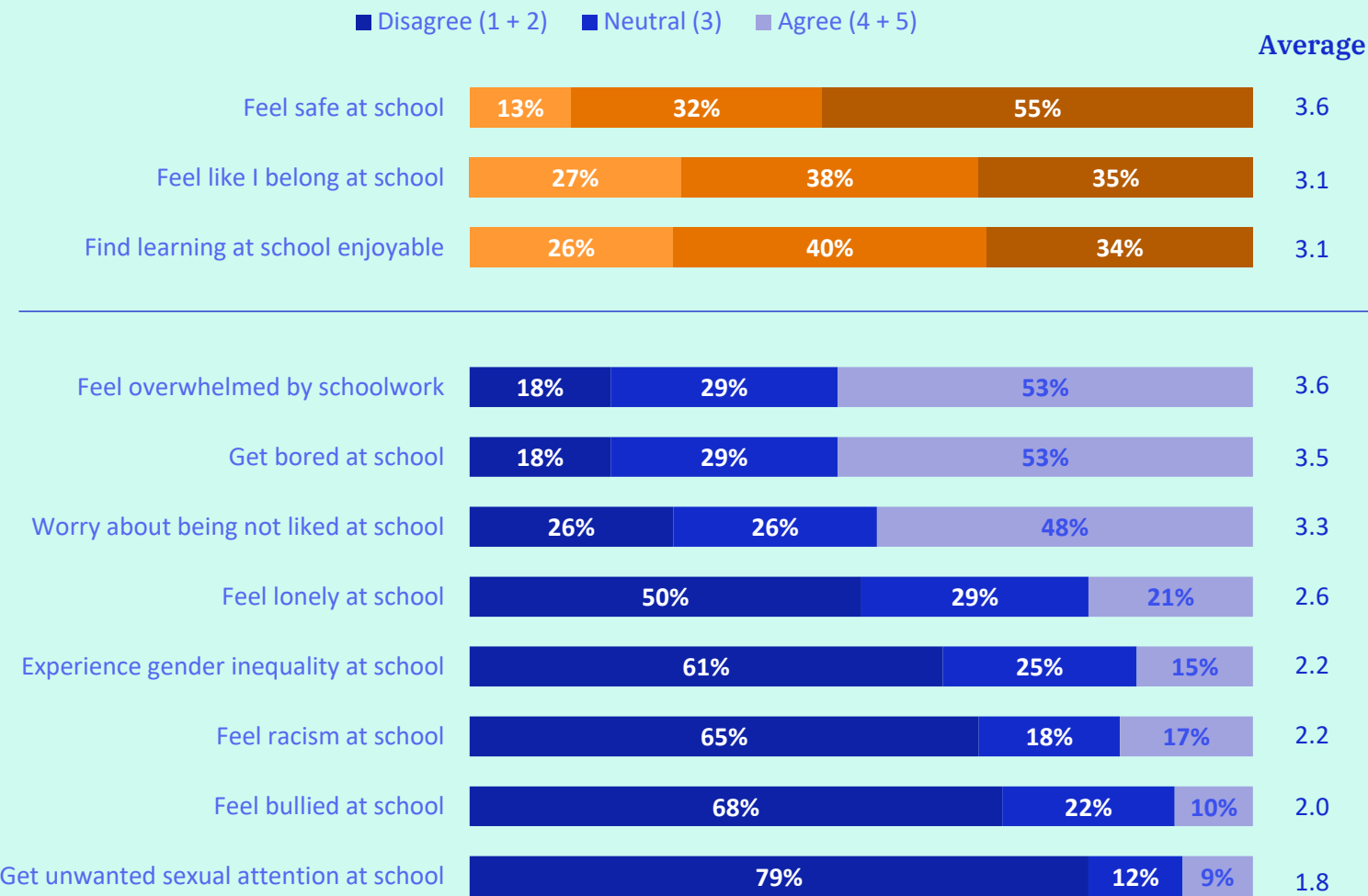
In the survey, we included a section specifically for high school students, containing three questions to gather information about their school experience. Overall, only 42% agree that they like school.

Students who are not identified as neurodiverse or living with a disability are more likely to enjoy school (46%) compared to those who are (25%).





# High school girls and young women feel overwhelmed by schoolwork and seek balance, belonging, and acceptance



Over half of the high school students feel overwhelmed by schoolwork (53%) and get bored at school yet they feel safe at school (55%). This outcome is not surprising, considering 32% of all girls and young women are dissatisfied with both the amount of schoolwork and the balance between school and personal time. Our results also revealed that the balance between school and personal time is a significant driver of life satisfaction.

Almost half of the girls and young women surveyed are worried about not being liked at school (48%). Given the importance of appearance and acknowledgment of opinions in self-confidence, it is safe to assume that acceptance refers to being both physically and intellectually liked.

They agree that they feel like they belong at school (35%) and find learning enjoyable (34%), rather than feeling lonely at school (21%).

Girls and young women disagree with some of the other negative experiences young people might have at school, such as gender inequality (15%), racism (17%), bullying (10%), and unwanted sexual attention (9%).



# Minority groups seem to have more negative experiences at school compared to mainstream groups

## Positive aspects of school experience

### More likely to feel safe at school:

- Students who identify as straight or heterosexual (3.7 vs 3.2)
- Students who do not identify as neurodiverse or as a person with a disability (3.7 vs 3.2)

### More likely to feel a sense of belonging at school:

- Students who do not identify as neurodiverse or as a person with a disability (3.2 vs 2.6)
- Students who are usually happy but occasionally find things difficult (3.3 vs 2.2)

## Negative aspects of school experience

### More likely to worry about not being liked:

- Students who can communicate only in English (3.4 vs 3.0)
- Students who don't feel happy often but have some good days (3.9 vs 3.2)

### More likely to feel lonely at school:

- Students who identify as neurodiverse or as a person with a disability (3.1 vs 2.4)
- Students who don't feel happy often but have some good days (3.3 vs 2.4)

### More likely to experience gender inequality at school:

- Students who belong to the LGBTQIA+ community (2.7 vs 2.1)
- Students who don't feel happy often but have some good days (2.6 vs 2.1)
- Students who identify as neurodiverse or as a person with a disability (2.6 vs 2.2)

### More likely to feel bullied at school:

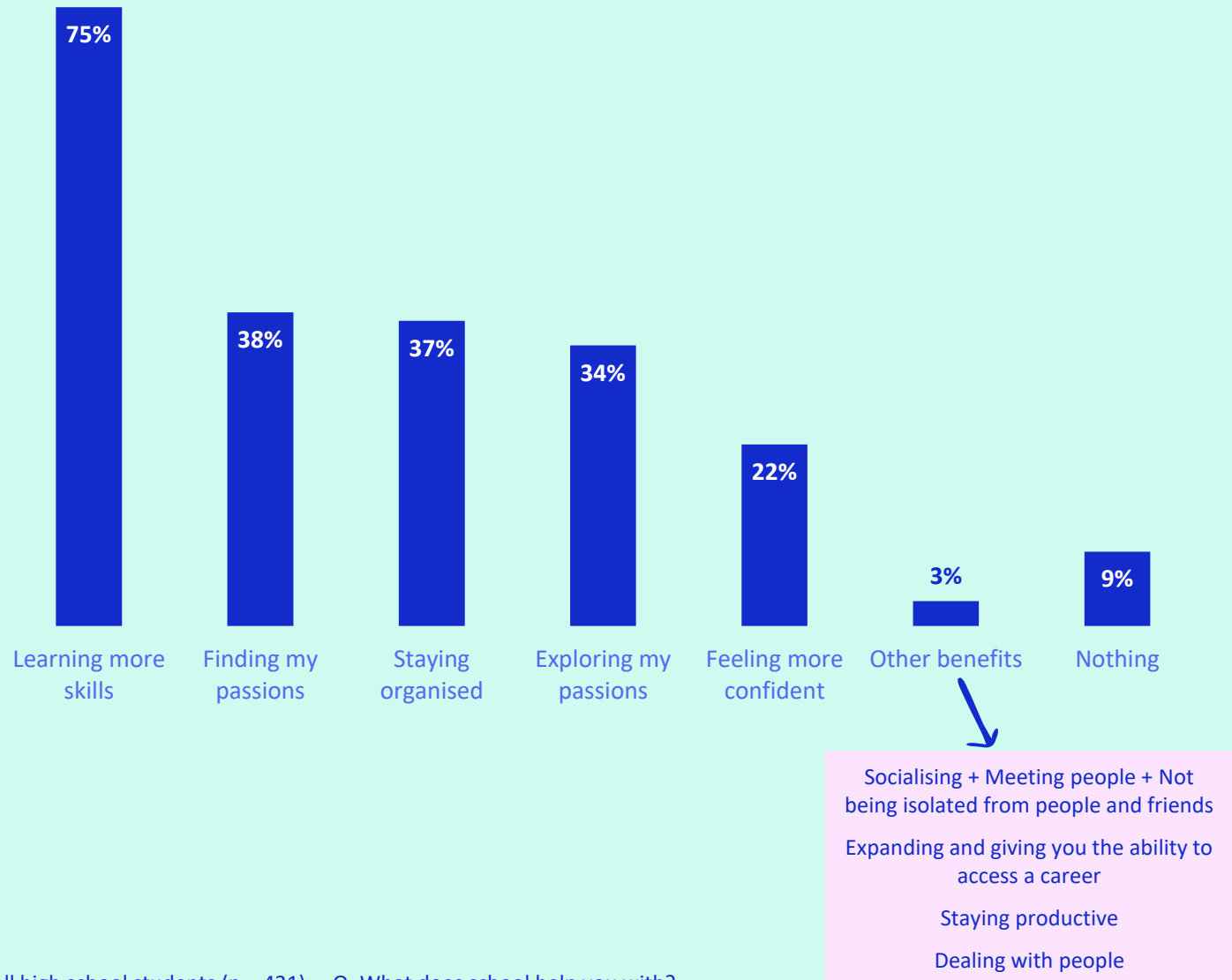
- Students who can communicate only in English (2.1 vs 1.8)
- Students who identify as neurodiverse or as a person with a disability (2.4 vs 1.9)

### Other findings:

- Multilingual students are more likely to experience racism (2.4 vs 2.1)
- Neurodiverse students are more likely to experience unwanted sexual attention (2.3 vs 1.7)



# High school girls and young women feel overwhelmed by schoolwork and seek balance, as well as belonging, and acceptance at school

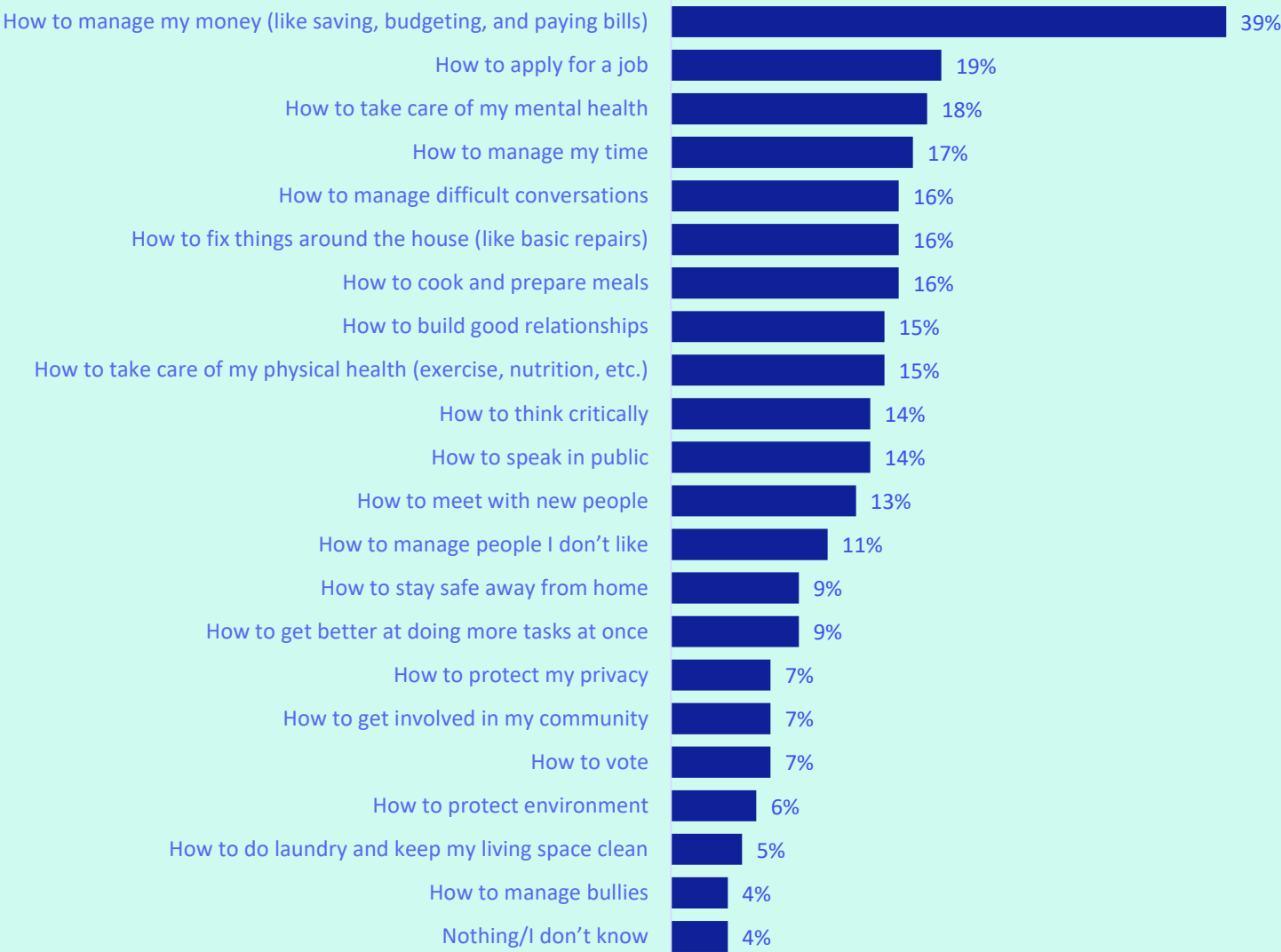


School helps girls and young women develop new skills (75%). It also enables them to discover (38%) and explore their passions (34%). Additionally, school supports them in staying organised (37%) and building confidence (22%). Younger age groups are more likely to report that school helps boost their confidence (36% compared to 14% who are older).

According to girls and young women, school is a place where they can socialise with new people, feel less isolated, and remain productive. However, 9% of girls and young women say that school does not help them with anything.



# Students' desire to learn additional skills at school reflects a clear alignment with the areas of their lives where they feel least satisfied



Students are expressing a desire for practical financial skills to be included in their school curriculum alongside their current studies. 39% want to learn how to manage their money, including skills like saving, budgeting, and paying bills. Additionally, 19% are would like to learn how to apply for a job. These preferences align closely with their dissatisfaction with financial aspects of like. Girls and young women show a readiness to improve their financial satisfaction by getting money management and job-seeking skills at school.

The data also reveals a promising trend regarding mental health education: 18% of high school students want to learn how to take better care of their mental health. This interest corresponds with their reported levels of satisfaction in this area, suggesting that such lessons could address a critical need.

Time management is another area of focus, as 17% of students indicate they would benefit from learning how to balance schoolwork and personal life more effectively. This aligns with their dissatisfaction regarding the amount of schoolwork and the challenge of maintaining a good work-life balance.

The findings highlight a connection between what students wish to learn at school and the aspects of their lives where they experience lower satisfaction. By addressing these gaps, schools have the opportunity to empower students with the skills they need to thrive in both their academic and personal lives.



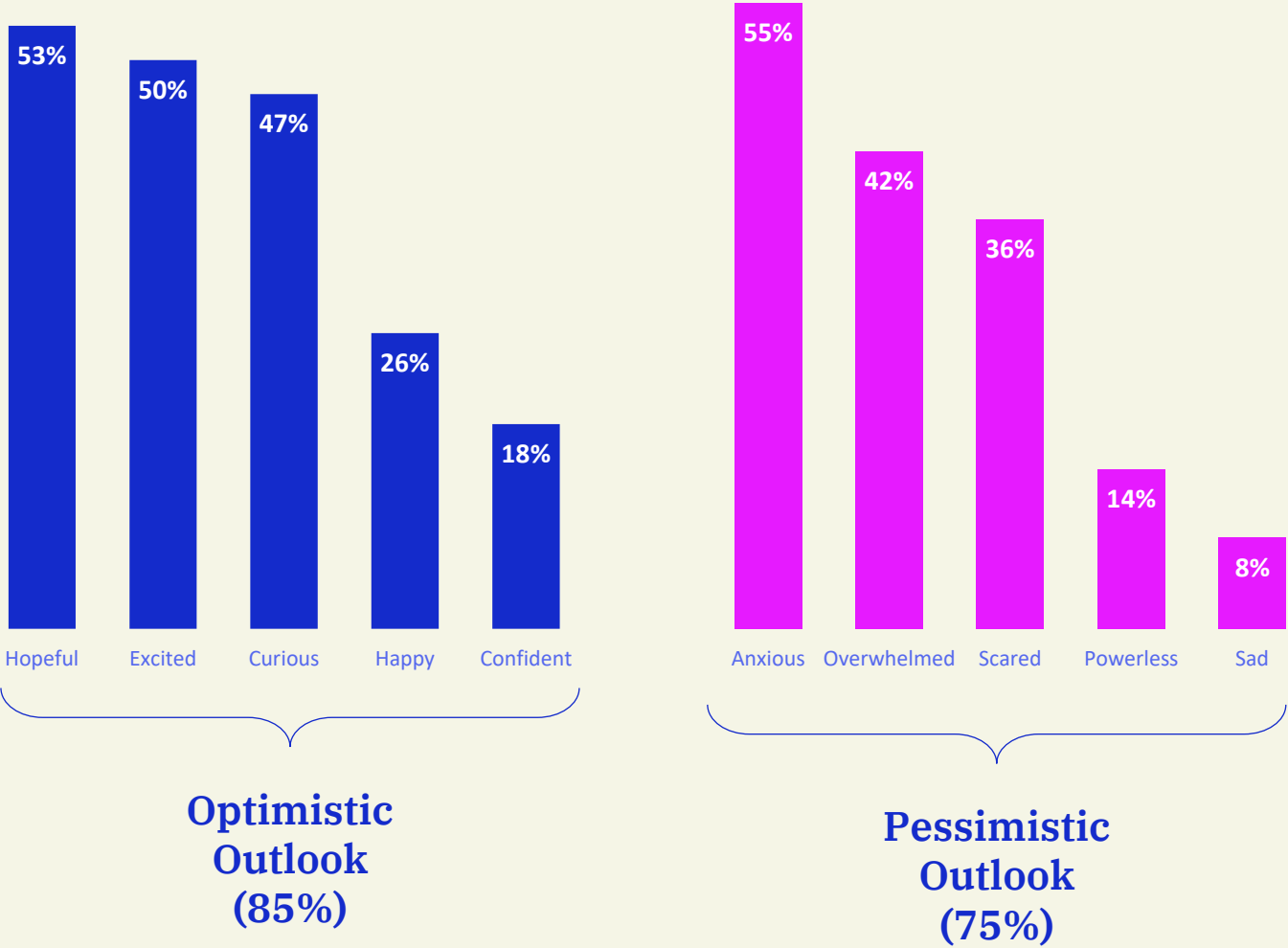
# Aspirations for Beyond School

*Further Studies*





# Girls and young women hold a mix of emotions about the future, balancing both optimistic and pessimistic outlook



Slightly over half of the girls and young women surveyed feel anxious about the future (55%); however, 53% feel hopeful.

Overall, they express a mix of emotions, with many feeling excited (50%) and curious (47%) about what lies ahead, while others report feeling overwhelmed (42%) and scared (36%).

In total, 85% indicate optimistic outlook about the future, whereas 75% report experiencing pessimistic outlook when thinking about it.

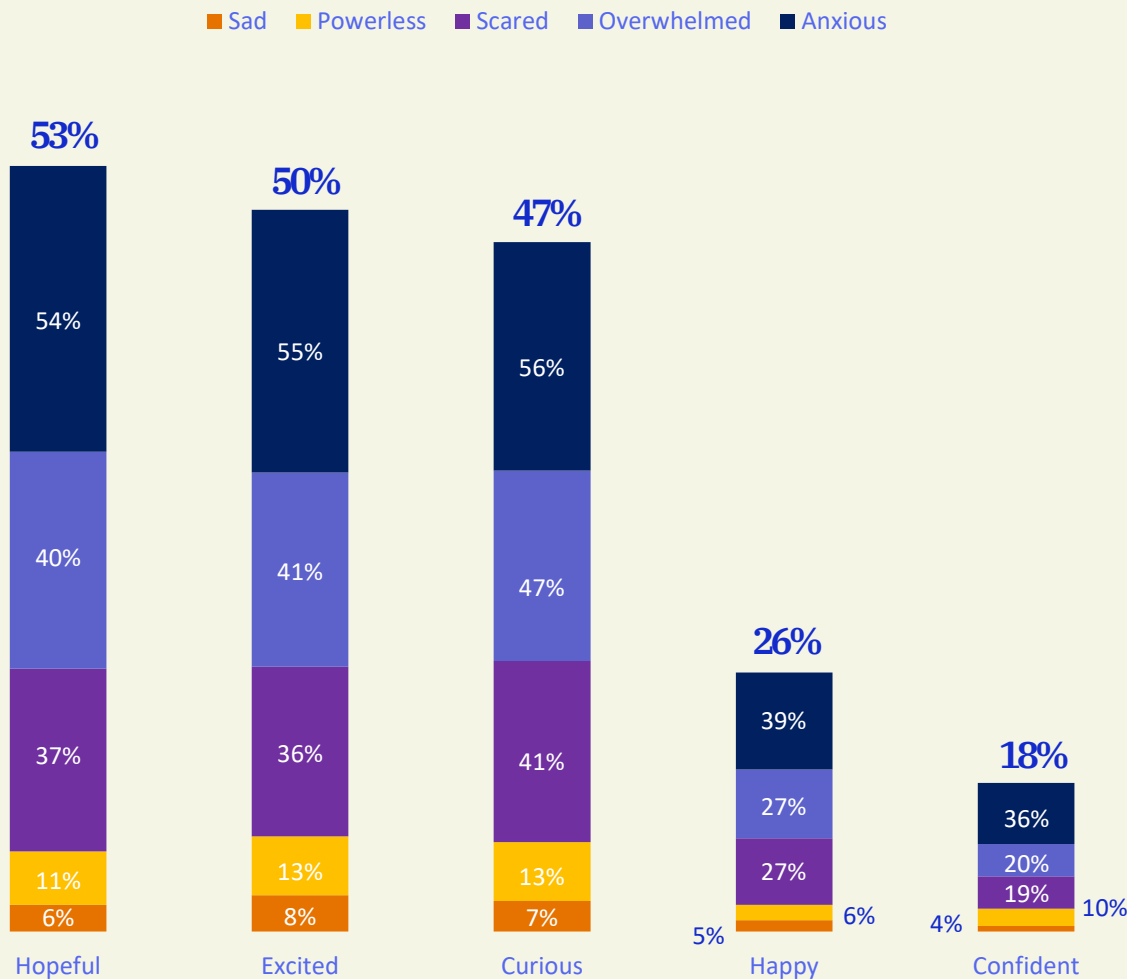
When examining patterns among the groups to explore how their perceptions of the future differ, we found the following:

	More likely to be felt by
Excited	LGBTQIA+ community members (61% vs 48%)
Happy	Can communicate only in English (29% vs 19%)
Negative	15 - 18 yrs (83% vs 57%)
Anxious	15 - 18 yrs (61% vs 42%)
Overwhelmed	15 - 18 yrs (50% vs 23%) LGBTQIA+ community members (53% vs 40%)
Sad	15 - 18 yrs (10% vs 1%) Neurodiverse individuals (15% vs 6%)





# Girls and young women who feel hopeful, excited, and curious about the future also experience feelings of anxiety, overwhelm, and fear



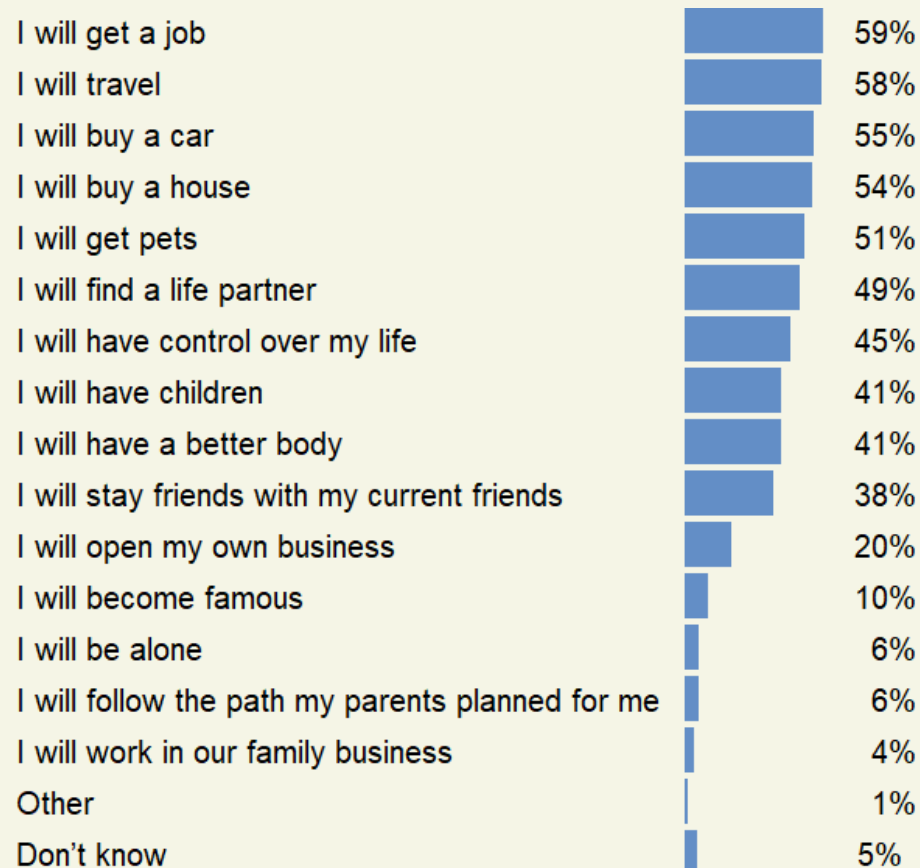
When we delve deeper into understanding these mixed emotions, we find that more than half of the respondents who feel hopeful (54%), excited (55%), and curious (56%) about the future also feel anxious about it.

Similarly, some of those who feel hopeful (40%), excited (41%), and curious (47%) also feel overwhelmed.

Finally, some respondents are scared of the future, yet remain hopeful (37%), excited (36%), and curious (41%).



# Girls and young women aspire to build a fulfilling future with careers, travel, stability, and personal growth



I will be happy and satisfied and feel calm  
I will be happy  
I will follow my dreams  
I will succeed in my goals  
I will start my own non-profit organisation  
I will move abroad, even if it is just temporary (all of this is just hopeful, probably will be all alone, failing at life)

We included a list of actions that girls and young women would like to pursue in the future and asked respondents to select all the activities they are interested in.

Nearly 60% indicated plans to get a job and travel.

Their future aspirations reflect dreams of settling down and leading a comfortable life, with plans to buy a car (55%) and a house (54%), get pets (51%), and find a life partner (49%). Having children is also a goal for 41%.

Almost half aspire to gain control over their lives (45%) and improve their physical well-being (41%).

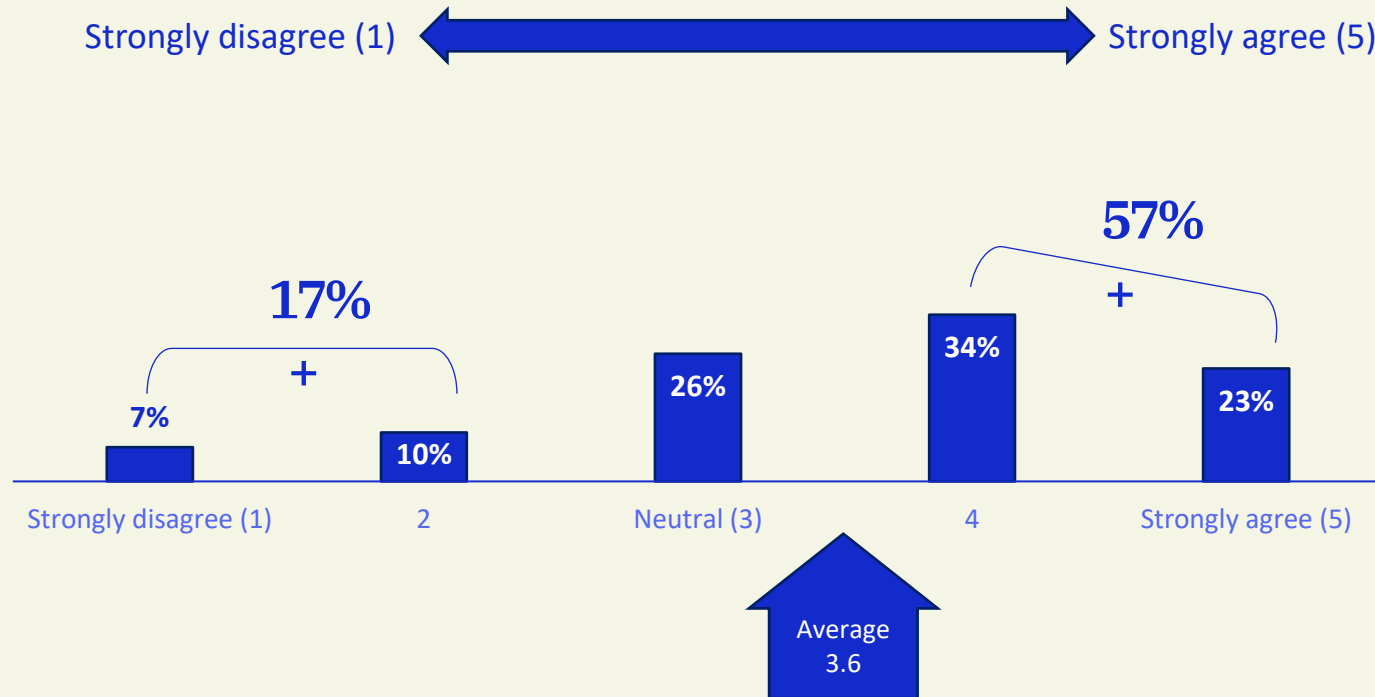
Fewer respondents expressed interest in opening their own business (20%), working in the family business (4%), or following plans set by their parents (6%).

According to pattern analysis:

- Older groups are more likely to plan for a better body compared to younger age groups (48% vs. 23%)
- Those who identify as straight or heterosexual are more likely to plan for children compared to those who belong to the LGBTQIA+ community (47% vs. 26%)
- Those who are usually happy are more likely to plan to buy a house (65% vs. 40%) and have children (50% vs. 26%) compared to those who don't feel happy often

# S≡ Most girls and young women are excited about pursuing further education after high school

\* Overall, I am excited about studying after high school



More than half of the surveyed girls and young women show excitement about pursuing further studies after high school, including those who have already graduated (65 respondents). When analysed separately, the level of excitement is consistent across both current and former high school students, with 57% in agreement.

As mentioned earlier, among 421 high school students surveyed, only 42% agreed or strongly agree that they enjoy high school overall. Interestingly, they are more enthusiastic about studying beyond high school, with 57% expressing excitement.

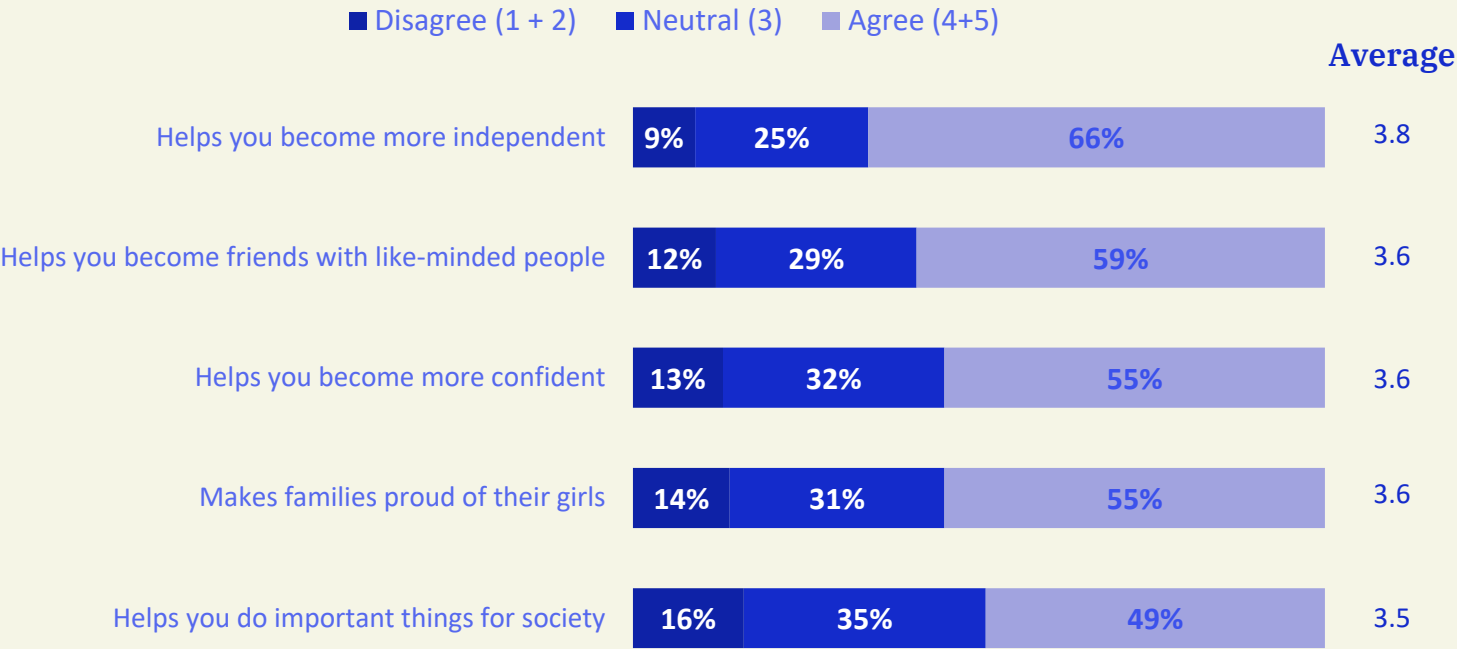
When examining excitement levels about studying after high school in more detail, multilingual students show greater enthusiasm (average score of 3.8 out of 5) compared to those who communicate only in English (average score of 3.4).

S≡

# Studying after high school is seen as a path to independence, confidence, and pride, helping girls and young women achieve personal and social goals

\*

## Emotional aspects of studying after high school



Almost 70% agree that studying after high school helps them become more independent. This result is not surprising given how they feel about the future. Despite having good relationships with their families, girls and young women want to find a job, make their own money, and start their own families. Studying after high school seems to be viewed as a pathway to gaining the independence they need to achieve these goals.

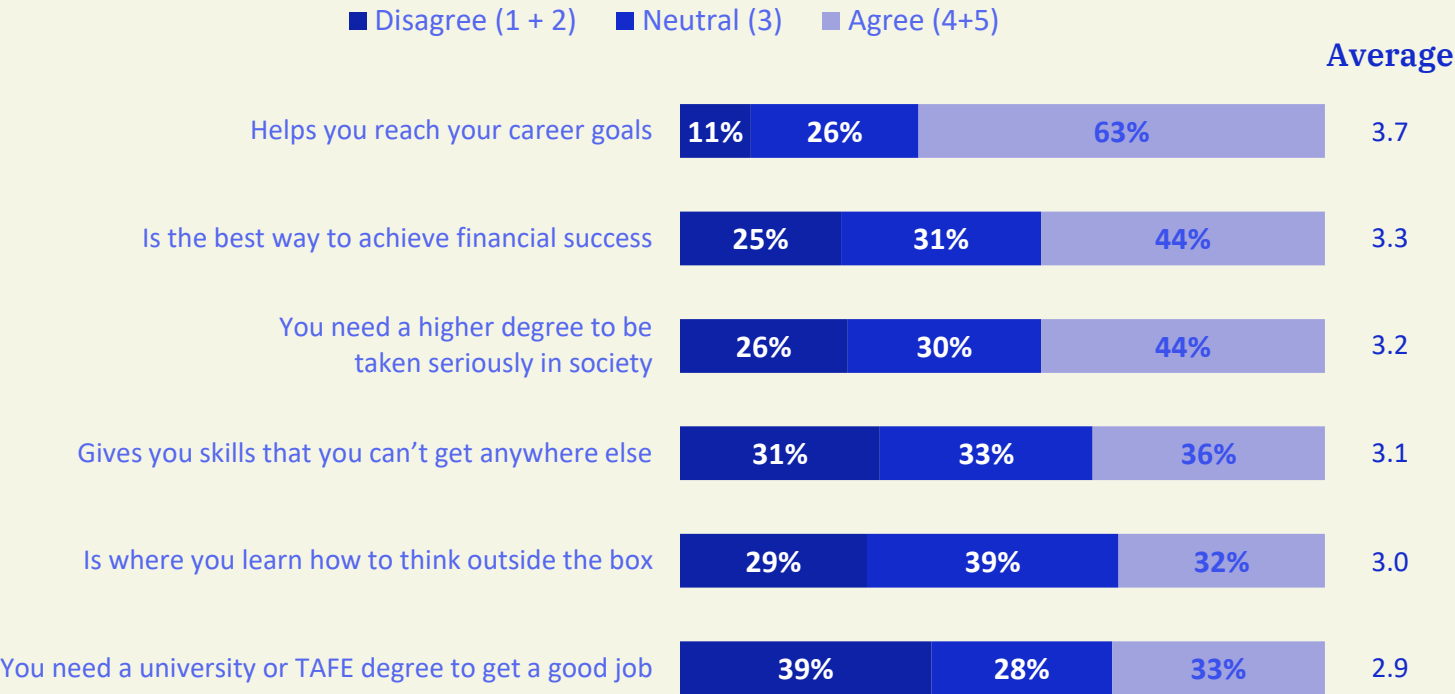
Additionally, more than half (55%) agree that studying after high school makes their families proud. A similar proportion also believe it allows them to meet like-minded people (59%) and feel more confident (55%). Considering their discomfort with socializing with strangers and concerns about their appearance, they may see further education as a way to overcome these insecurities.

Further analysis reveals that multilingual girls and young women are more likely to agree with all statements related to emotional aspects, indicating they hold stronger opinions compared to their single-language peers.



# While many girls and young women see studying after high school as key to career goals and confidence, fewer associate it with financial success or good jobs

## \* Functional aspects of studying after high school



Girls and young women agree that studying after high school helps them reach their career goals (63%). Their excitement about achieving their goals and the confidence it brings is encouraging, as they view high school as a stepping stone toward their aspirations.

However, most girls and young women do not see studying after high school as a direct path to financial success (44%) or securing a good job (33%).

Further analysis shows that the multilingual cohort is more likely to agree with all statements related to functional aspects compared to the single-language cohort.

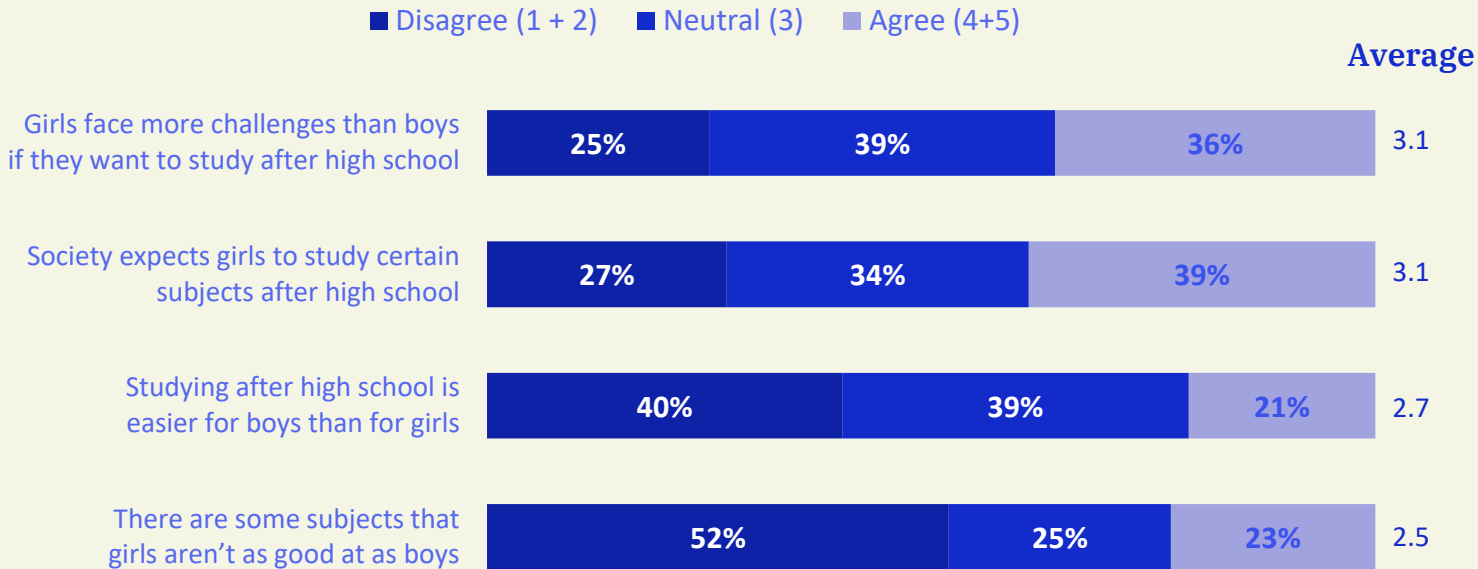


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While many girls and young women see studying after high school as key to career goals and confidence, fewer associate it with financial success or good jobs

\*

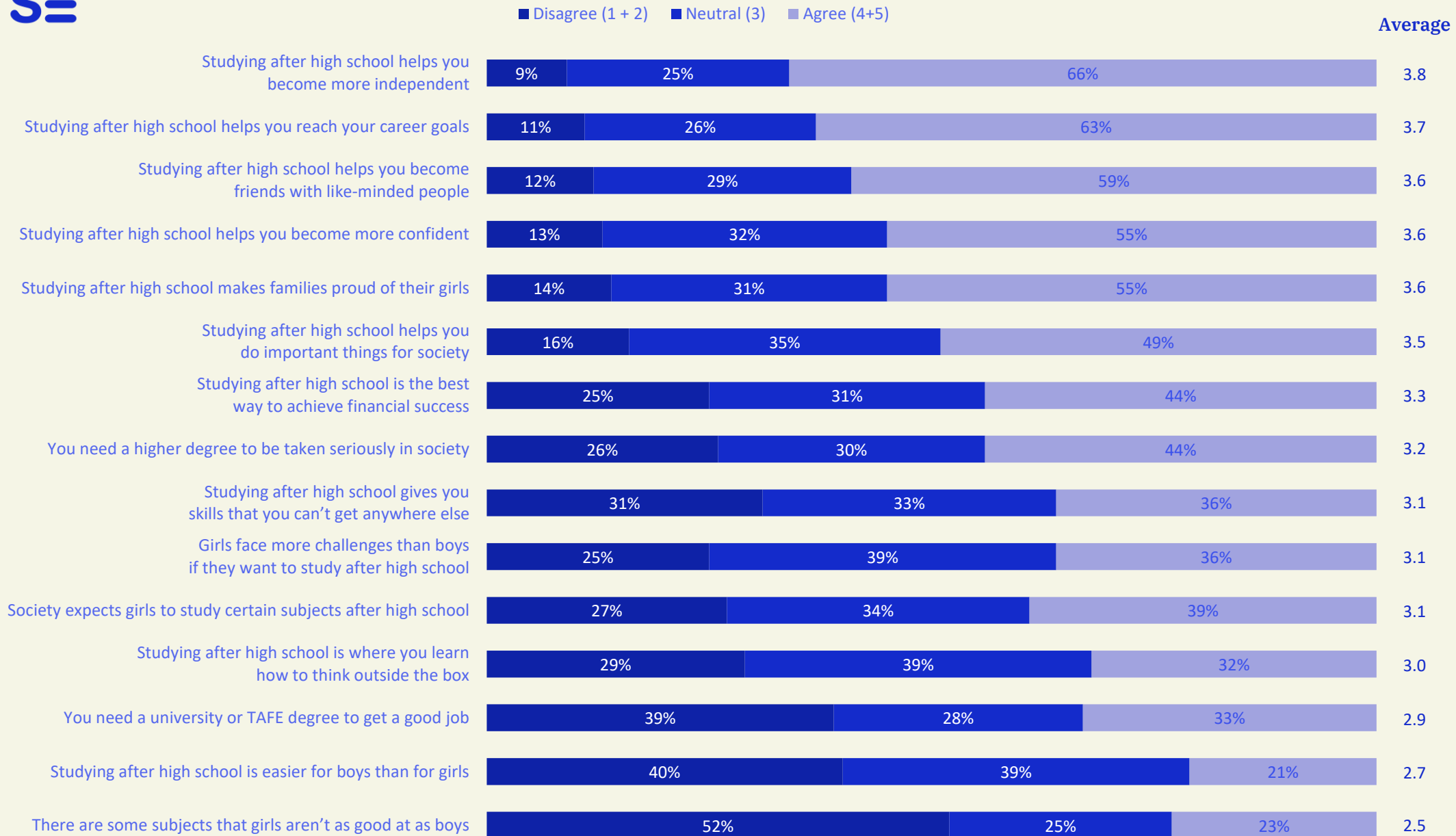
Negative aspects of studying after high school



When examining the negative aspects of studying after high school, we find that 52% of girls and young women disagree with the statement there are some subjects that girls aren't as good at as boys. Similarly, 40% disagree that studying after high school is easier for boys than girls.

However, they express more neutral opinions regarding society's expectation of girls studying certain subjects (34% neutral) and girls facing more challenges than boys if they want to study after high school (39% neutral). Given their age and interest in social issues, it is understandable that girls and young women surveyed have not formed strong opinions on the well-known challenges girls around the world face in achieving equal rights in education.

Girls and young women who belong to LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to agree that society expects girls to study certain subjects after high school compared to their straight/heterosexual peers (3.5 vs. 3.0 out of 5). And interestingly, straight/heterosexual girls and young women are more likely to agree with the statement "there are some subjects that girls aren't as good at as boys" (2.6 vs. 2.0).



## Aspects of studying after high school - Full List

# Aspirations for Beyond School

*Career*

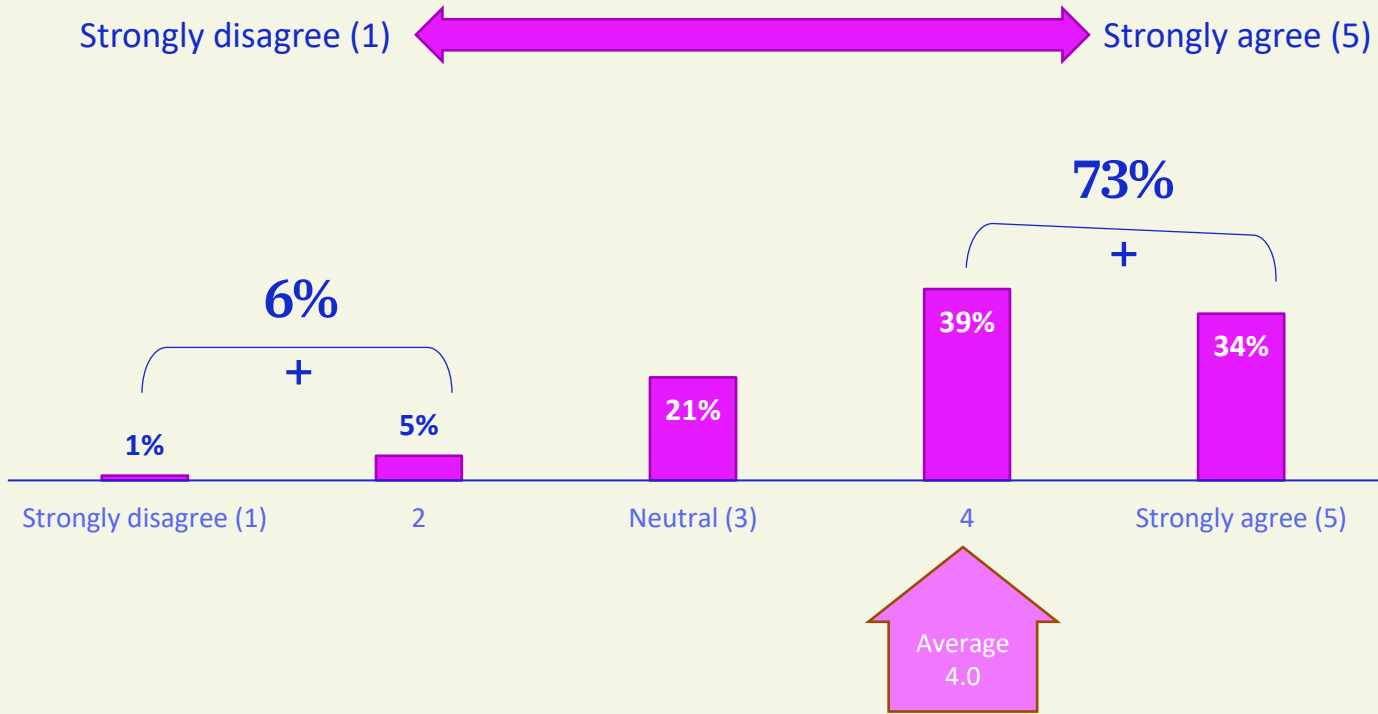






# Girls and young women are highly excited about the prospect of having a career

\* Overall, I am excited to have a career



The goal of this research was to gain insight into the world of girls and young women, seeing it through their eyes. We wanted to understand their hopes, concerns, motivations, and what excites or challenges them in today’s world.

So far, we’ve learned that, overall, they feel generally positive about their lives (57%) and are excited about spending time with friends (78%). Their mental health is somewhat of a concern, with only 40% reporting satisfaction, yet it plays a significant role in their overall happiness. They worry about how others perceive them (57%), with their appearance being a key factor in boosting their self-confidence.

While many are excited about doing well at school (62%), the high school experience itself isn’t bringing them much joy, with only 42% expressing enjoyment. However, both students and school leavers are more optimistic about pursuing higher education (57%).

Financial worries are also important, with 57% concerned about not having enough money. However, many are determined to get a job (59%), gain independence, start their own families, and achieve their goals, which is a factor that significantly boosts their self-confidence.

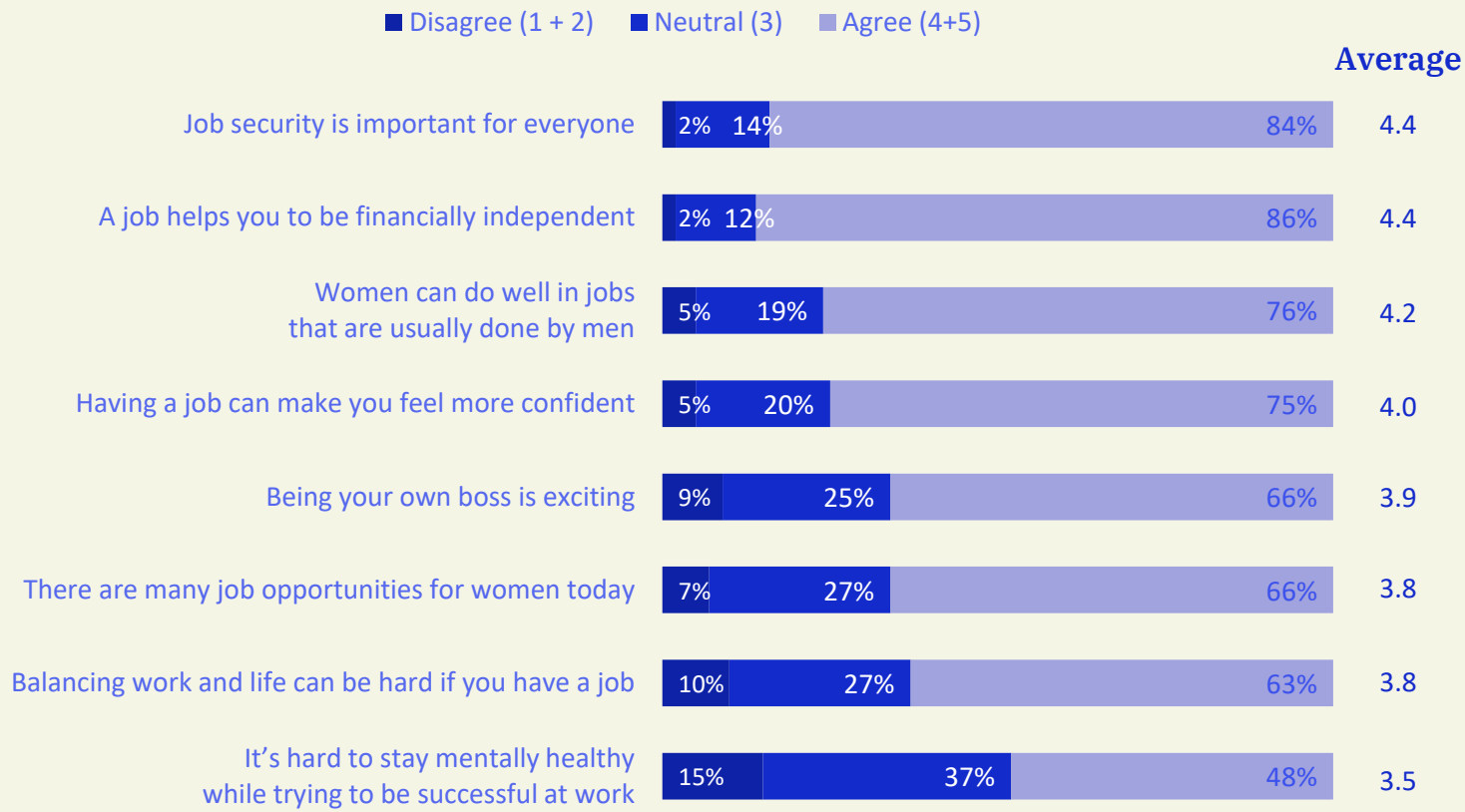
Looking ahead to the future, we see that a career excites them just as much as spending time with friends (73% versus 78%). This reflects their strong determination to create a fulfilling life, one built around the goals they set for themselves.

According to patterns, all cohorts are equally excited about having a career.



# Girls and young women are optimistic about career opportunities and value financial independence

## \* Opportunities and Empowerment



Girls and young women have strong opinions about their careers and various aspects of future employment. When examining opportunities and empowerment in the workforce, the majority agree on the importance of job security (84%) and having a job that provides financial independence. This aligns with their concerns about financial challenges and their determination to build independent lives.

The girls and young women surveyed believe that women can excel in jobs typically dominated by men (76%), a view especially strong among respondents from the LGBTQIA+ community (90%). They also believe that having a job can boost confidence (75%).

Although many think achieving a work-life balance might be difficult for women (63%), they remain optimistic about the job opportunities available to them (66%) and view becoming their own boss as an exciting prospect (66%).

Interestingly, fewer respondents believe that striving for career success would negatively impact mental health (48%), though this concern is more prevalent among those in the LGBTQIA+ community (60%).

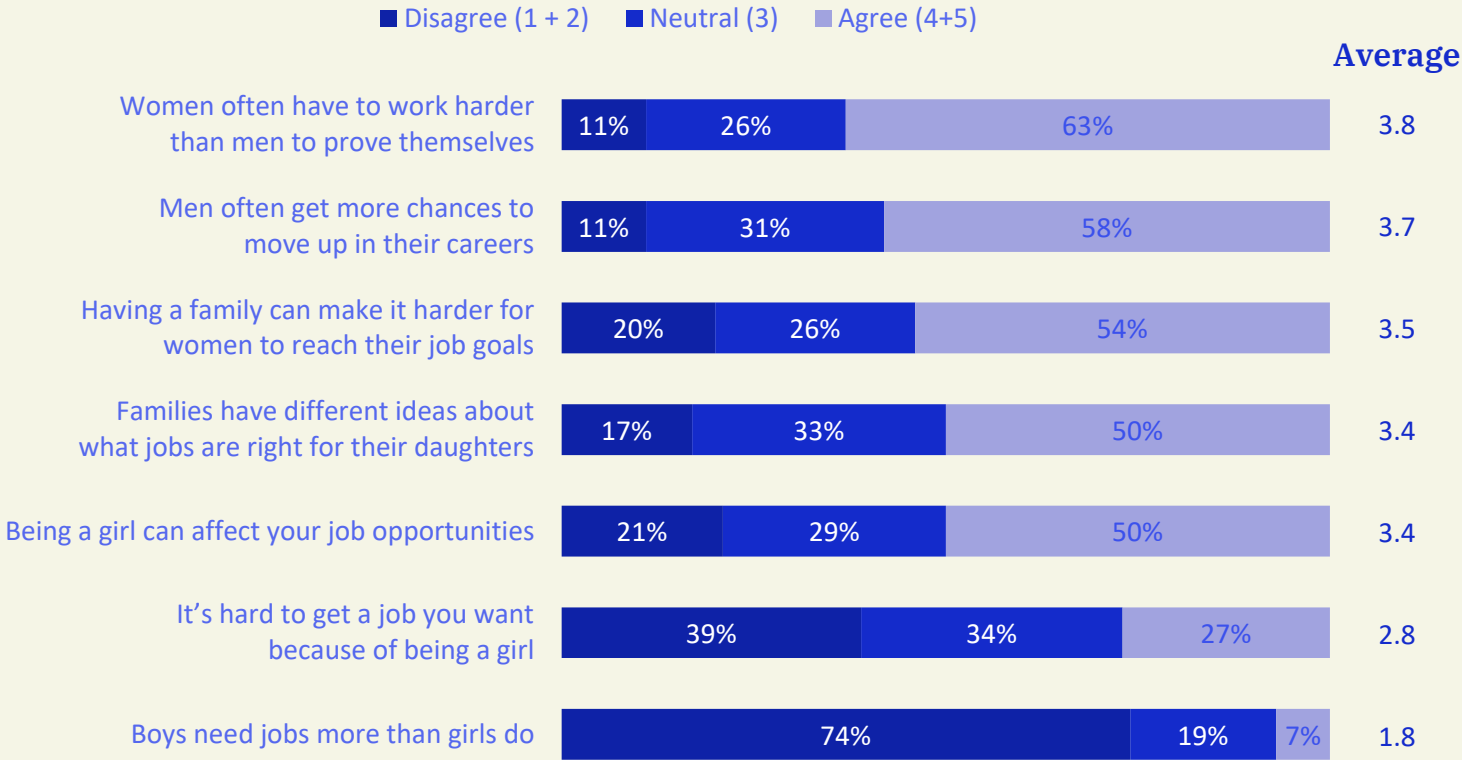




# When it comes to careers and jobs, girls and young women express concerns about gender-related challenges



## Gender Discrimination



A majority feel that women often have to work harder than men to prove themselves in the workplace (63%), and many believe that men are given more opportunities to advance in their careers (58%).

Challenges related to balancing family life and career aspirations also emerge. Over half (54%) agree that having a family can make it harder for women to achieve their professional goals. Similarly, half of the respondents feel that families influence career choices based on gender, with 50% agreeing that families often have specific ideas about what jobs are suitable for their daughters.

The perceived impact of being a girl on job opportunities appears to be more nuanced. While 50% agree that being a girl can affect job opportunities, fewer (27%) believe it outright prevents them from getting the jobs they want. Encouragingly, only 7% think boys need jobs more than girls.

According to the patterns, respondents from LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to agree with all the statements, except for the belief that boys need jobs more than girls. Additionally, older respondents are more likely to agree that being a girl can affect job opportunities (55% vs. 38%), while multilingual respondents are more likely to believe that families have different ideas about what jobs are suitable for their daughters (61% vs. 45%).

# SE Girls and young women appear to have neutral perceptions about small businesses and how they are run

## \* Small Business

■ Disagree (1 + 2) ■ Neutral (3) ■ Agree (4+5)

Average

It's easier for women to start a small business if their partner has a good job

25%

36%

39%

3.2

It is easy to run your own business using social media

25%

40%

35%

3.1

Running a small business is not a proper job

76%

14%

10%

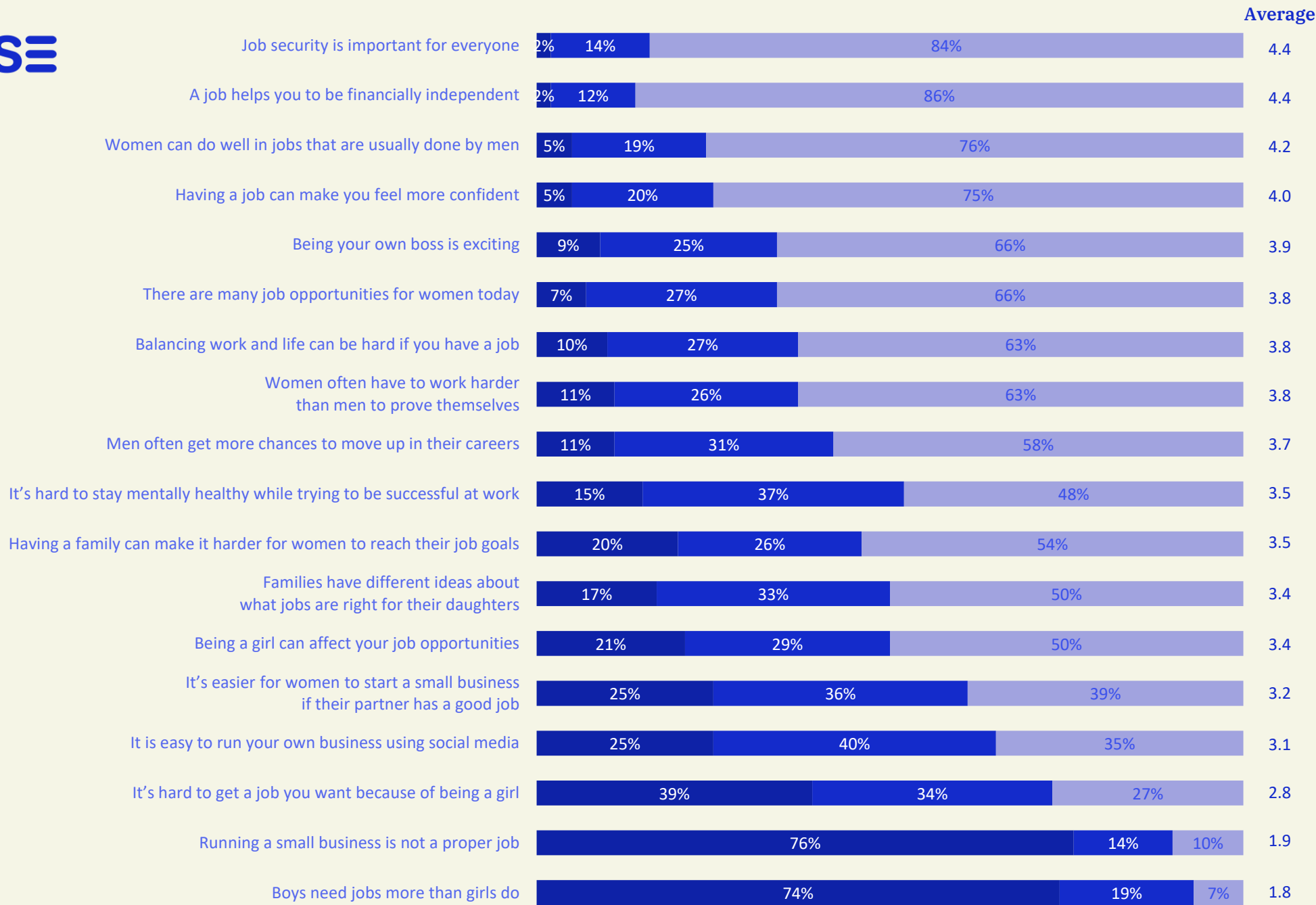
1.9

Girls and young women appear to have neutral perceptions about small businesses and how they are run, suggesting they have not yet formed strong opinions on the topic.

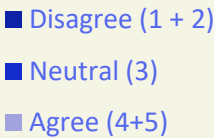
While 39% agree that it's easier for women to start a small business if their partner has a stable or well-paying job, fewer (35%) believe that running a small business is easy with the help of social media. This indicates a cautious view of the practical challenges involved in entrepreneurship.

However, there is strong agreement on one key point: the legitimacy of small businesses as a career choice. Only 10% think that running a small business is not a proper job.

Perceptions of small businesses show no dramatic patterns among cohorts.



## Aspects of having a career / getting a job - Full List



# Self Value



# Calculation of self value index

## OVERALL SELF VALUE

### Others' approval

*I focus on doing things for myself, not just to please others*

### Appearance

*I feel confident about how I look*

### Competition

*I believe I can outperform others if I put in the effort*

### Academic competence

*Doing well academically is a top priority for me*

### Family support

*My greatest happiness comes from making my family proud  
Knowing that my family loves me boosts my self-esteem*

### Personal Values

*I couldn't respect myself if I didn't live by my values  
Being a good person makes me feel more confident*

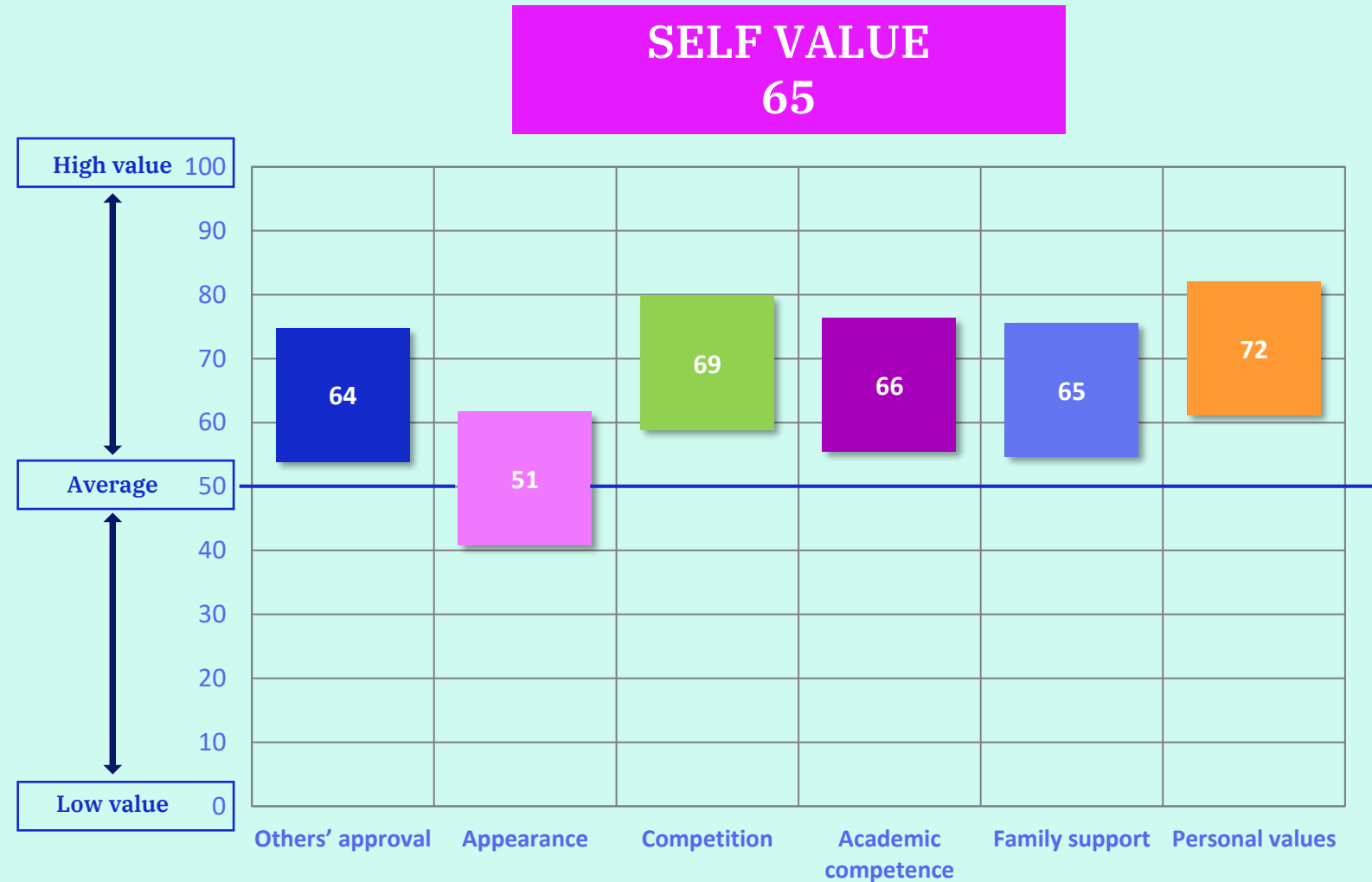
We adapted the Self-Worth Measure developed by Crocker et al. (2003) to assess the of self value among the 500 girls and young women we surveyed. The Self-Worth Scale was originally created to evaluate the different domains on which college students base their self-esteem. Crocker and her colleagues recognised that self-esteem is not a uniform construct but is dependent on various sources that differ across individuals. Their scale measures a number of sources of self value: approval from others, appearance, competition, academic competence, family support, and personal values.

In our study, we asked our respondent to rate their agreement with statements related to **approval from others**, **appearance**, **competition**, **academic competence**, **family support**, and **personal values**. We indexed the average scores to 100 to calculate a universal self value score, and the findings are presented on the next slide.





# Young women are building their self value through strong connections to values, achievements, and family, but confidence in appearance remains a challenge



We measured self-value across six dimensions. We indexed these scores to 100 to understand how much girls and young women view these areas as sources of self value.

**Others' approval** scored 64 out of 100, suggesting that girls and young women are beginning to focus on their own goals and actions, though the need for external validation still carries some weight. **Confidence in appearance**, however, remains a challenge, with this dimension scoring the lowest at 51. In contrast, **competition** emerges as one of the stronger areas with a score of 69. This result reflects a belief that effort can lead to success and a sense of determination to achieve when they set their minds to something. Similarly, **academic competence** (66) shows that performing well at school continues to be a meaningful source of self value for girls and young women.

**Family support**, with a score of 65, highlights the importance of family as a foundation for self value. Young women value the happiness that comes from making their family proud and the confidence they gain from knowing they are unconditionally loved. Finally, **personal values** stands out as the strongest dimension at 72. This reflects a clear connection between self-value and living by one's principles, with girls and young women finding confidence in being a good person and staying true to what they believe in.

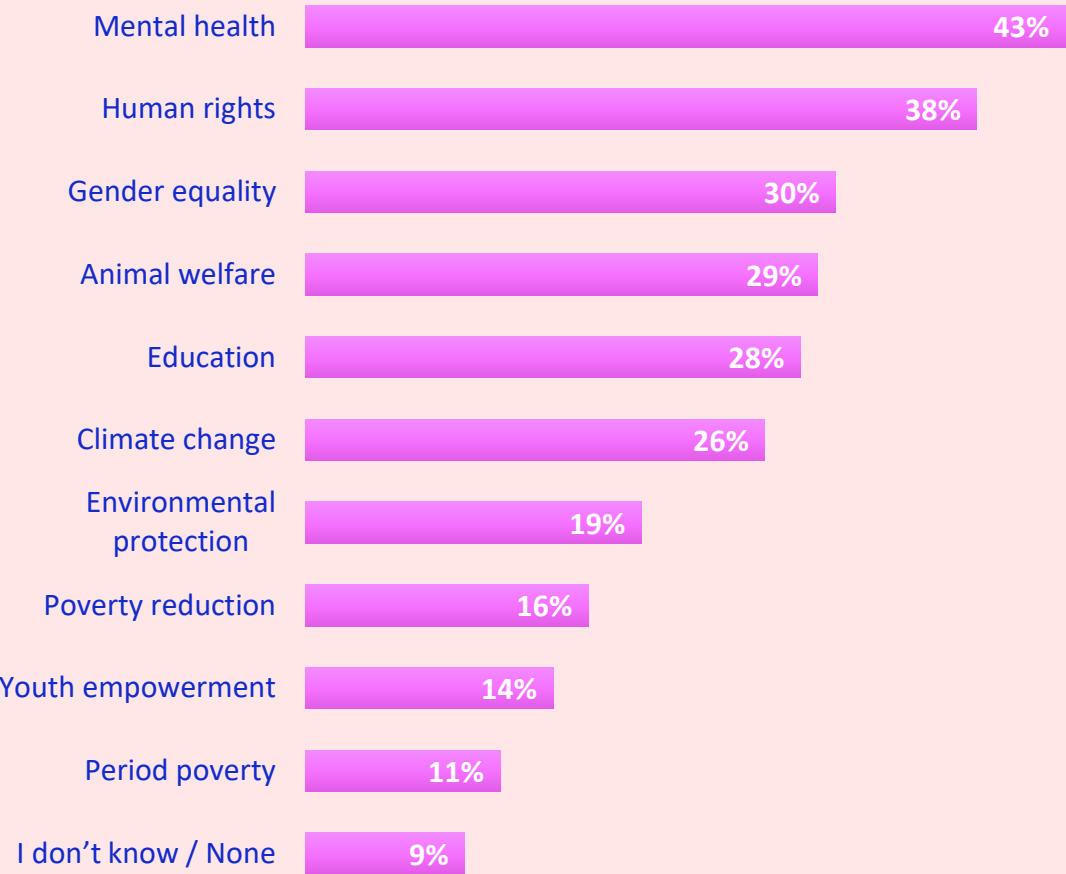
Overall, the **self-value index** stands at 65. This score paints a picture of girls and young women building their sense of self in meaningful ways. Their strong connection to values and belief in their abilities shine through, while challenges around appearance point to areas where self-assurance is influenced by external pressures.

# Communities and Social Impact





# Girls and young women are passionate about mental health and human rights



Girls and young women are passionate about a variety of social causes. Unsurprisingly, mental health is the top cause they care about, with 43% expressing strong interest. This is followed by human rights (38%), gender equality (30%), animal welfare (29%), and education (28%).

Climate change (26%) and environmental protection (19%) are less frequently cited, indicating that fewer girls and young women feel strongly about these issues.

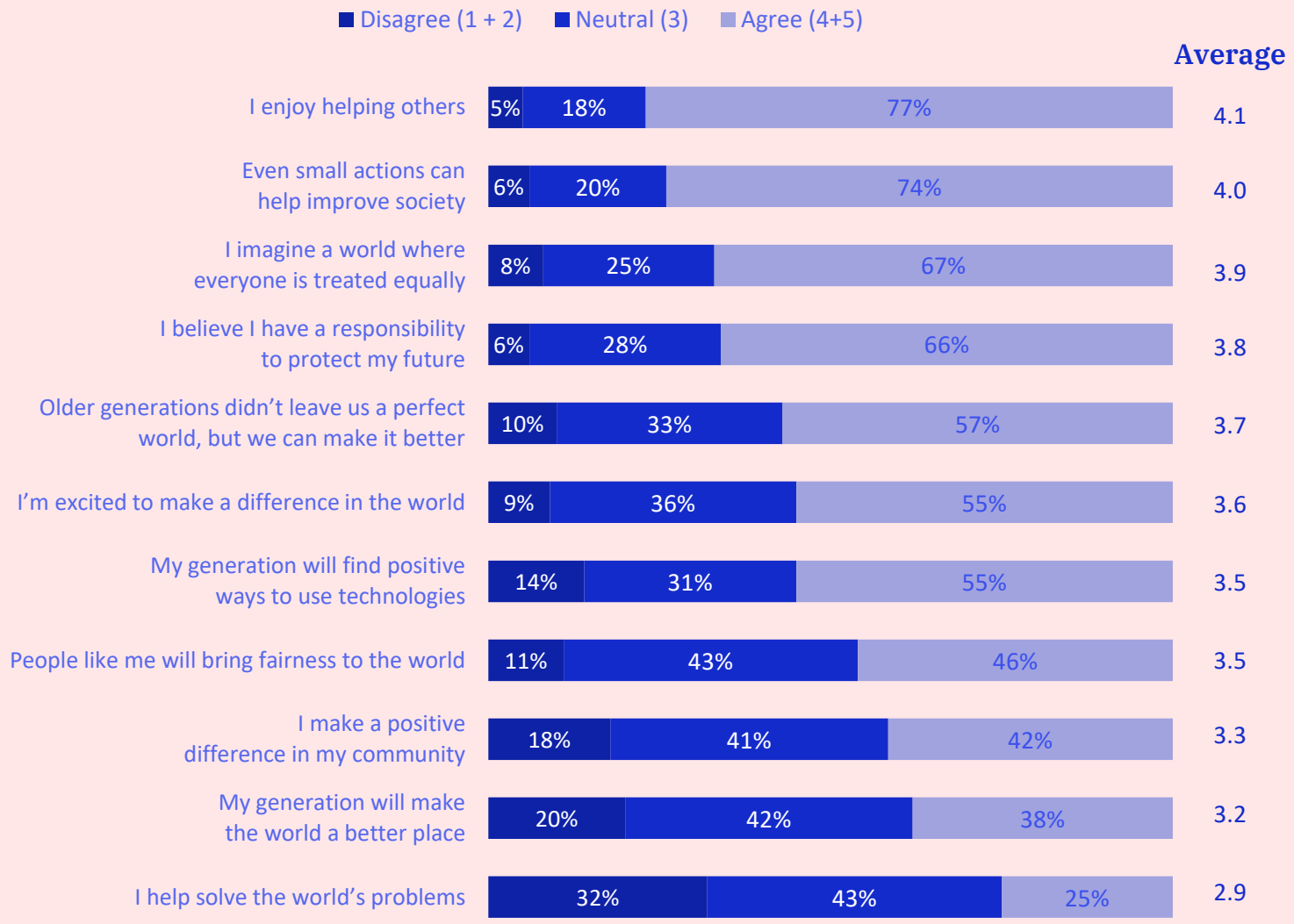
We identified several patterns regarding girls’ and young women’s passion for social causes:

- Younger age groups are significantly more likely to feel passionate about animal welfare (41% vs. 24%). Additionally, those who communicate only in English are more likely to care about this cause (34% vs. 18%)
- Multilingual girls and young women are more likely to feel passionate about human rights (47% vs. 34%)
- Those who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to be passionate about mental health (61% vs. 40%) and gender equality (48% vs. 26%)
- Girls and young women who don’t feel happy very often are more likely to care about mental health compared to those who are usually happy (67% vs. 41%)





# Girls and young women are eager to help and believe in positive change but feel less confident in their involvement in solving the problems



Girls and young women surveyed enjoy helping others (77%) and recognise that even the small actions can help improve society (74%). They have faith in a world where everyone is treated equally (67%) and feel a sense of responsibility to protect their future (66%), acknowledging that their older generations did not leave them a perfect world (57%).

However, despite being excited about making a difference in the world (55%), their agreement levels reveal lower confidence in their ability to be involved in solving the world's problems (25%) or in making the world a better place alongside their generation (38%).

S≡

21% of girls and young women are involved in organisations, with higher participation among LGBTQIA+ community members



Only 21% of girls and young women surveyed are involved with any organisations or groups. Those who are involved typically participate in sports (36%), such as local netball clubs. They also engage in community services (36%), including Rotary Club, The Greens, Greenpeace, and the Girl Guides.

According to patterns, those who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to be involved in organisations or groups (27% vs. 18%).

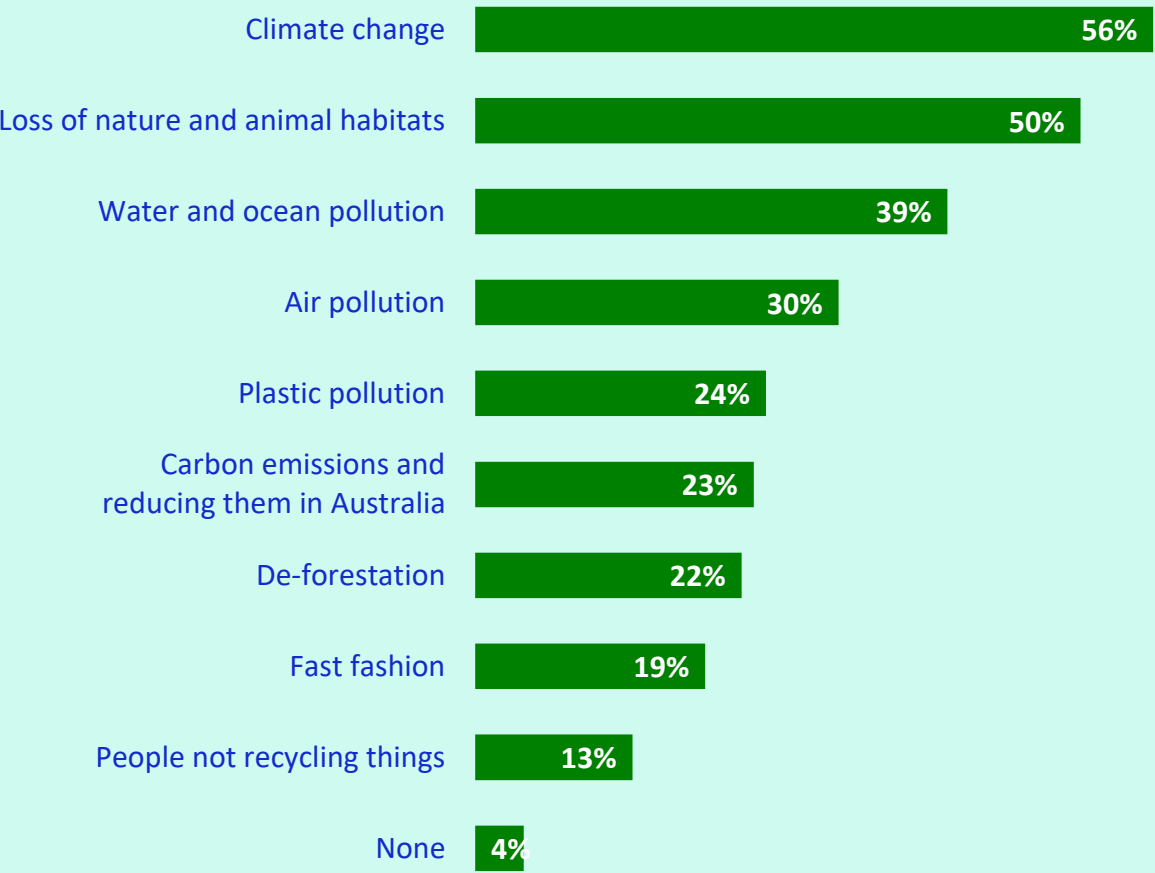


# Climate Change





# 56% of girls and young women are concerned about climate change, with additional worries about habitat loss and pollution



As we mentioned earlier, climate change (26%) and environmental protection (19%) are less frequently cited as social issues that girls and young women feel passionate about, compared to mental health (43%).

However, when asked to select the three environmental issues they are most concerned about, slightly more than half of the respondents indicate climate change (56%), followed by the loss of nature and animal habitats (50%).

The pollution issues that most worry them are water and ocean pollution (39%), followed by air pollution (30%) and plastic pollution (24%).

Moreover, those who are passionate about climate change most worried about carbon emissions and reducing them in Australia and loss of nature and animal habitats.

In terms of patterns, all cohorts show similar levels of concern about environmental issues.



# The general reaction to climate change is one of concern and anger

It makes me feel worried	[ 42% ]
I am angry as I do not feel people with power to change things are doing enough to reduce carbon emissions	[ 36% ]
It makes me feel angry that adults are not doing enough to tackle this issue	[ 31% ]
I feel hopeless or that I can't do anything about it	[ 29% ]
I feel hopeful that people are talking about it more and trying to help	[ 28% ]
It makes me feel overwhelmed	[ 26% ]
It makes me change my own behaviour e.g. try to walk or cycle instead of going by car	[ 24% ]
I feel like there is nothing that can be done to address the issue now	[ 15% ]
It makes me interested in studying or working in this area e.g. environmental sciences	[ 14% ]
I feel like some things about climate change are lies	[ 11% ]
Don't feel my life is affected by climate change	[ 17% ]
I do not know how	[ 12% ]

When asked about how climate change affects them, girls and young women's most common response is feeling worried (42%). They also feel anger, with 36% stating they are frustrated by the lack of action from those in power to reduce carbon emissions, and 31% expressing anger that adults are not doing enough to address the issue.

While some feel the weight of climate change on their emotions, with 29% feeling hopeless or powerless to make a difference, others express hope (28%) that the increasing conversation and efforts around climate action can lead to meaningful change.

A sense of being overwhelmed is also shared, with 26% of respondents indicating they feel burdened by the scale of the problem. Despite these feelings, some respondents are taking personal action, with 24% reporting that climate change has motivated them to alter their behaviours, such as walking or cycling instead of driving.

A smaller percentage of respondents feel a sense of **despair**, with 15% believing there is nothing that can be done to address the issue now. However, some respondents are looking to the future with optimism, as 14% feel inspired to pursue careers in environmental sciences or related fields, driven by their concern for the planet.



# Girls and young women rely on larger institutions to drive meaningful environmental change

- 1 The government
- 2 Companies and businesses
- 3 Individuals/adults
- 4 Charities and not for profit organisations
- 5 Schools and colleges
- 6 Households (families)
- 7 Children and young people

We asked girls and young women to rank the authorities they believe are responsible for addressing environmental issues. Using a list adapted from Girl Guiding UK’s Girls Attitudes Survey 2024, the majority placed the government in the top position, followed by companies and businesses.

Individuals / adults ranked third, while charities and non-profit organisations took fourth place, followed by schools and colleges

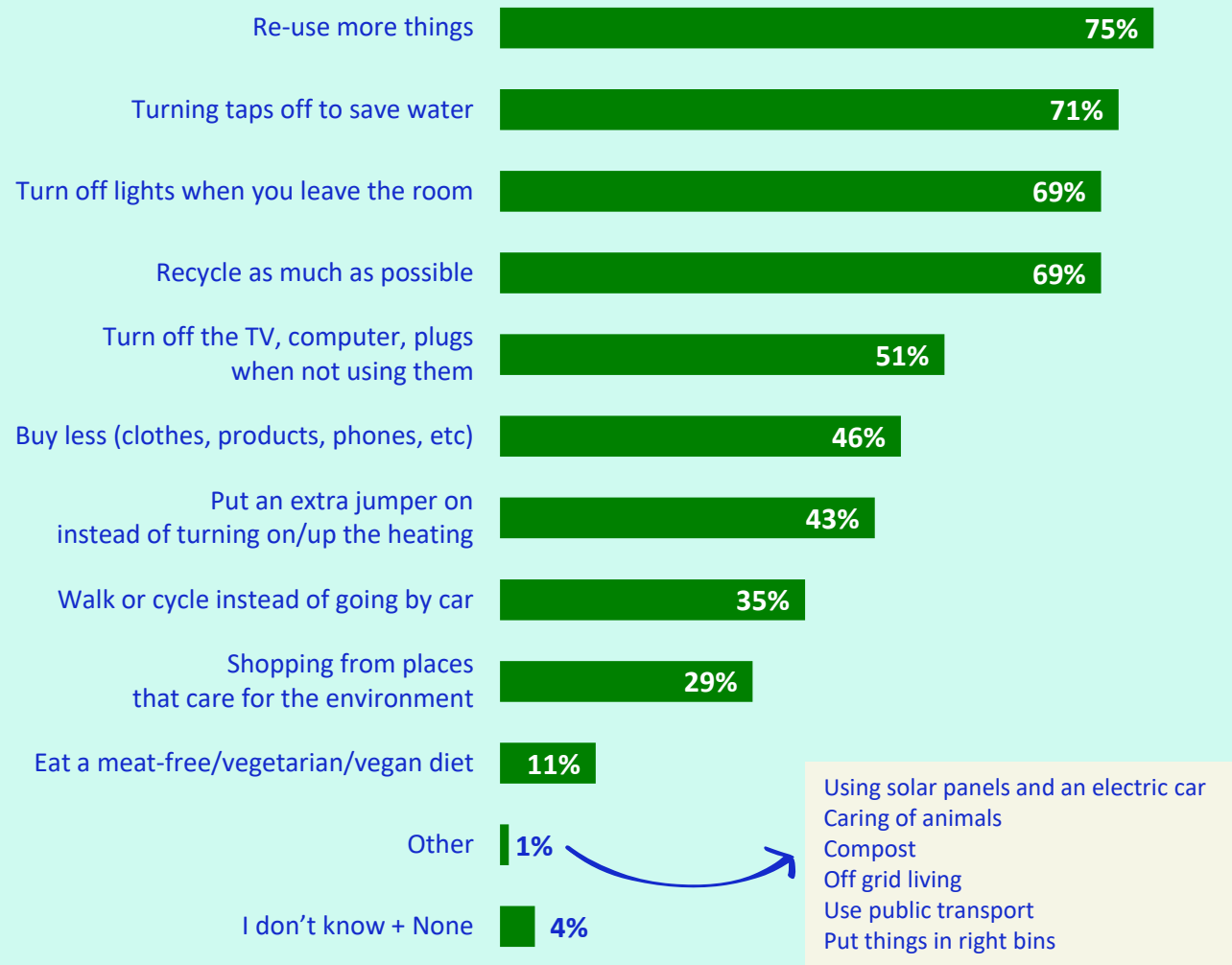
Households were next, and lastly, children and young people were seen as the least responsible.

Overall, it seems that girls and young women rely on larger institutions to drive meaningful environmental change, while possibly feeling less empowered to tackle these issues themselves.





# The responses highlight a commitment to simple, everyday actions aimed at reducing environmental impact



When asked about the actions they take to help tackle environmental issues, girls and young women revealed a range of behaviours that reflect their awareness and efforts to make a positive impact.

The most common actions are reusing items such as plastic bags and bottles, with 75% of respondents indicating they take this step. This is closely followed by turning off taps to save water (71%) and turning off lights when leaving a room (69%). These behaviours suggest that many are integrating small, everyday actions into their routines to reduce waste and conserve resources.

Recycling also remains a key practice for 69% of respondents, showing a strong commitment to reducing landfill waste. Other energy-saving habits, such as turning off electronics when not in use (51%), are also common, though less widespread.

When it comes to consumption, buying fewer items (46%) and wearing extra layers to avoid using heating (43%) reflect an understanding of the environmental impact of overconsumption and energy use. However, walking or cycling instead of driving (35%) and shopping from environmentally-conscious brands (29%) are less commonly practiced, indicating that while there is some awareness, these actions may require more effort or behavioural shifts.

Finally, adopting a meat-free or vegetarian/vegan diet is the least common action, with only 11% reporting they follow this lifestyle choice.

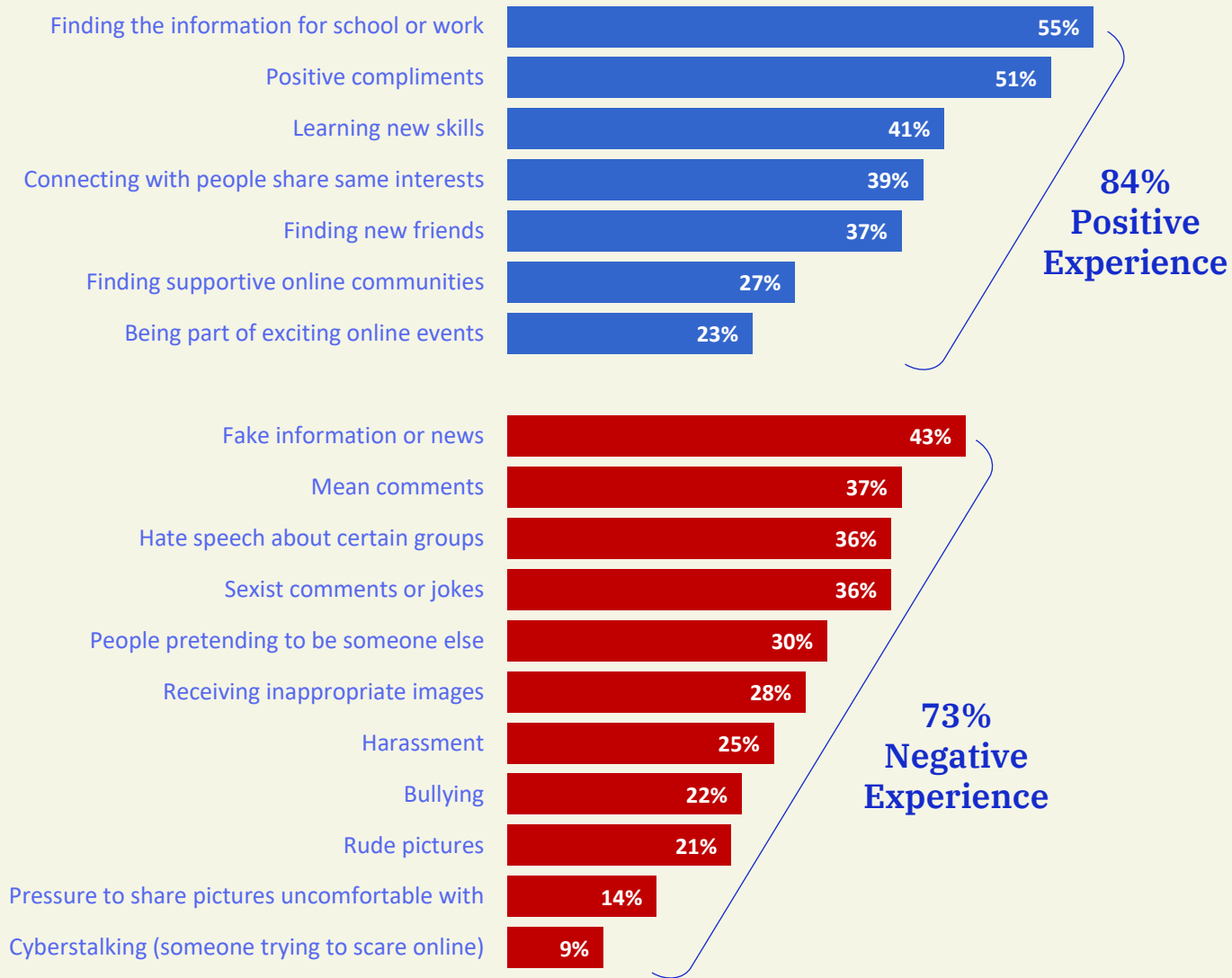


# Technology and its Impact on Identity and Appearance





# While most girls and young women report positive online experiences, many also face negative encounters, including fake information, mean comments, and harassment



We asked respondents to select all the experiences they have encountered while online. Overall, 84% of girls and young women report positive online experiences. The most common benefit is finding information for school or work (55%), followed closely by receiving positive compliments (51%). They also learn new skills (41%), connect with people who share the same interests (39%), and find new friends (37%). Additionally, 27% mention being part of supportive online communities, and 23% participate in exciting online events.

However, negative experiences are also prevalent, with 73% of respondents reporting at least one negative encounter. The most common issue is fake information or news (43%). Mean comments affect 37% of girls and young women, while 36% report encountering hate speech about certain groups (such as gender, disability, sexuality, or migrants). Equally, 36% have experienced sexist comments or jokes. Other negative experiences include people pretending to be someone else (30%), receiving inappropriate images (28%), and harassment in the form of unwanted messages or threats (25%). Smaller yet significant issues include bullying (22%), encountering rude pictures (21%), feeling pressure to share pictures they are uncomfortable with (14%), and experiencing cyberstalking (9%).

Pattern analysis showed how experiences differ across cohorts. The outcomes are detailed on the next slide.



# The findings highlight the heights vulnerability of minority groups and individuals with lower levels of happiness

	More likely to be experienced by
Negative experience	
Fake information or news	15 – 18 year olds (48% vs 32%)
Mean comments	LGBTQIA+ community (52% vs 34%) Neurodiverse (49% vs 34%) Do not feel happy very often (54% vs 36%)
Hate speech about certain groups (gender, disability, sexuality, migrants)	15 – 18 year olds (40% vs 26%) LGBTQIA+ community (56% vs 30%) Neurodiverse (50% vs 33%) Do not feel happy very often (53% vs 33%)
Sexist comments or jokes	LGBTQIA+ community (55% vs 31%) Do not feel happy very often (60% vs 34%)
People pretending to be someone else	15 – 18 year olds (34% vs 22%)
Receiving inappropriate images	15 – 18 year olds (33% vs 15%) Neurodiverse (40% vs 25%) Do not feel happy very often (47% vs 25%)
Harassment (e.g., unwanted messages, threats)	Neurodiverse (36% vs 22%) Do not feel happy very often (44% vs 24%)
Bullying	Do not feel happy very often (37% vs 18%)
Rude pictures	15 – 18 year olds (24% vs 12%) LGBTQIA+ community (31% vs 18%) Do not feel happy very often (35% vs 19%)
Prefer not to say	Do not feel happy very often (3% vs 1%)

Girls and young women report similar positive experiences online; however, the results reveal that minority groups face are more likely to have negative experiences online.

Unfortunately, more than half of girls and young women who are members of LGBTQIA+ community report experiencing mean comments, hate speech, and sexist jokes. They are also more likely to encounter rude pictures compared to others.

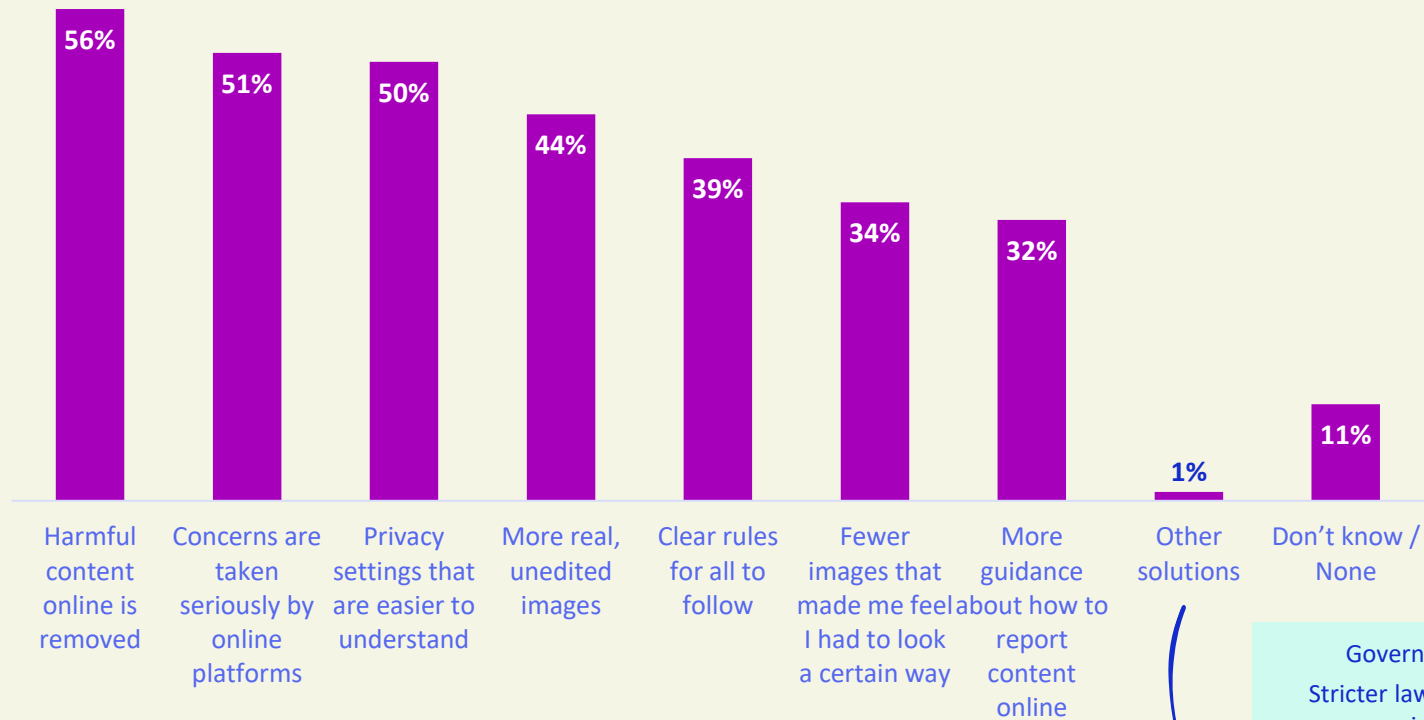
Similarly, neurodiverse respondents face a disproportionate share of negative online experiences, with nearly half reporting mean comments and hate speech. They are also more likely to have encountered receiving inappropriate images and harassment, such as unwanted messages or threats.

When comparing those who do not often feel happy to those who usually feel happy, it becomes evident that low-happiness respondents encounter negative online experiences at much higher rates. More than half report mean comments, hate speech about certain groups, and sexist jokes. Additionally, they are more likely to experience inappropriate images, harassment, bullying, and rude pictures. Interestingly, this group is also more likely to select "prefer not to say" when asked about their online experiences, which may indicate a reluctance or discomfort in disclosing these encounters.





# Girls and young women feel safer online when harmful content is removed, concerns are taken seriously



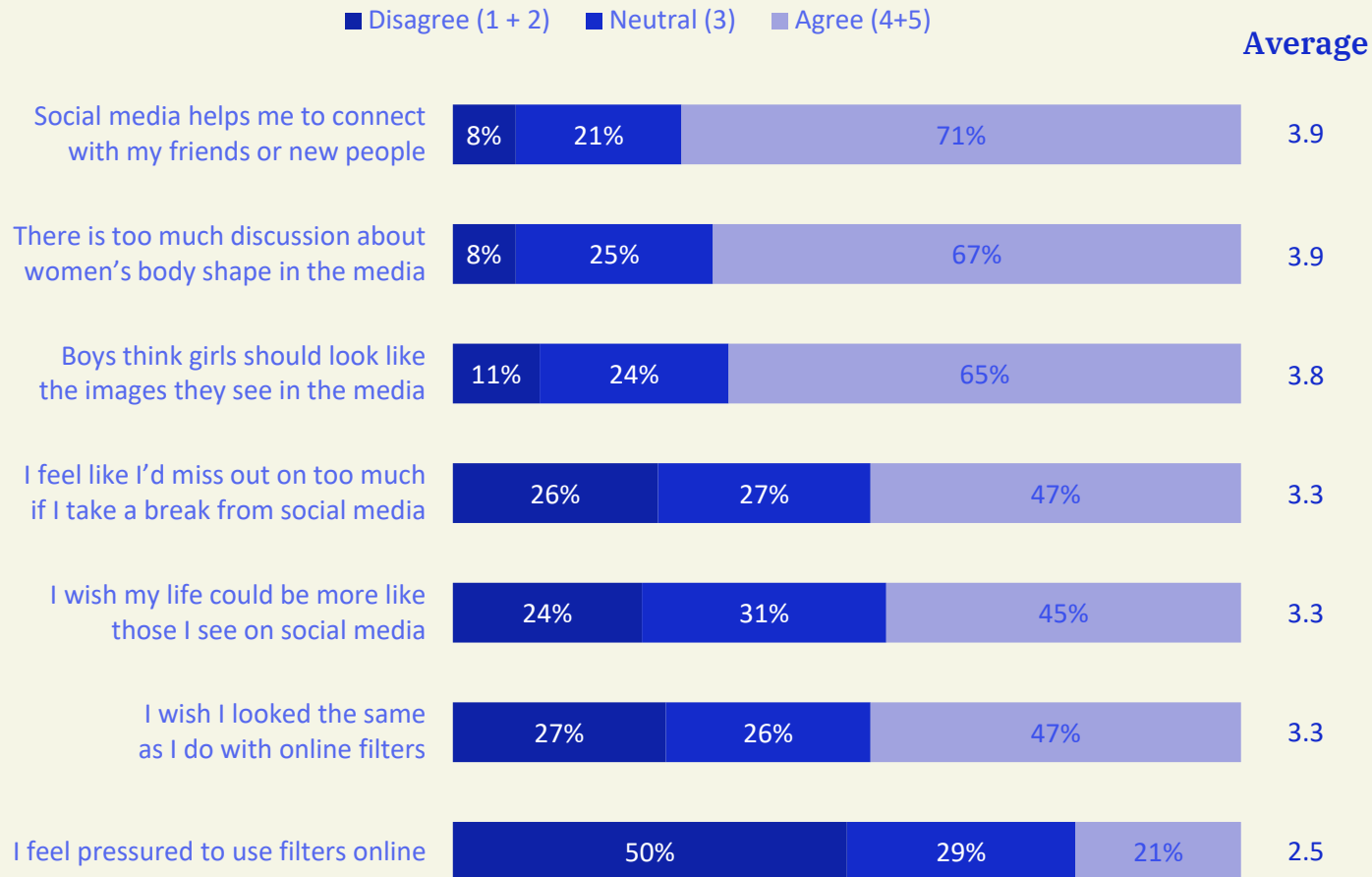
When asked about what would make them feel safer online, girls and young women highlighted several key actions that could improve their online experiences. The removal of harmful content was the most commonly selected solution, with over half (56%) of respondents. Similarly, ensuring concerns are taken seriously by online platforms (51%) and having privacy settings that are easier to understand (50%).

Respondents also expressed a desire for a more authentic and inclusive online environment, with 44% wanting to see more real, unedited images and 34% preferring fewer images that make them feel pressured to look a certain way. Additionally, 39% supported the need for clear rules for all to follow, while 32% highlighted the importance of receiving more guidance on how to report content online. Finally, 11% either didn't know or felt that none of the proposed actions would make a difference.

- Government mandated age limits
- Stricter laws and punishments for online crimes and grooming etc.
- AI flags
- Companies refusing to violate [sic.] people who have commented hurtful things. I have reported people for telling women that their only job is to cook and take c\* but TikTok refuses to take it down
- Online guidelines that filters in appropriate content
- Making it easier to use the report function on most apps/websites



# Social media is both empowering and challenging, providing opportunities for connection but fostering unhealthy comparisons and unrealistic expectations



The results reveal a complex relationship between girls and young women and their online experiences, particularly on social media. While social media serves as an important tool for connection, with 71% agreeing that it helps them connect with friends and meet new people, it also creates pressures and unrealistic expectations for girls and young women.

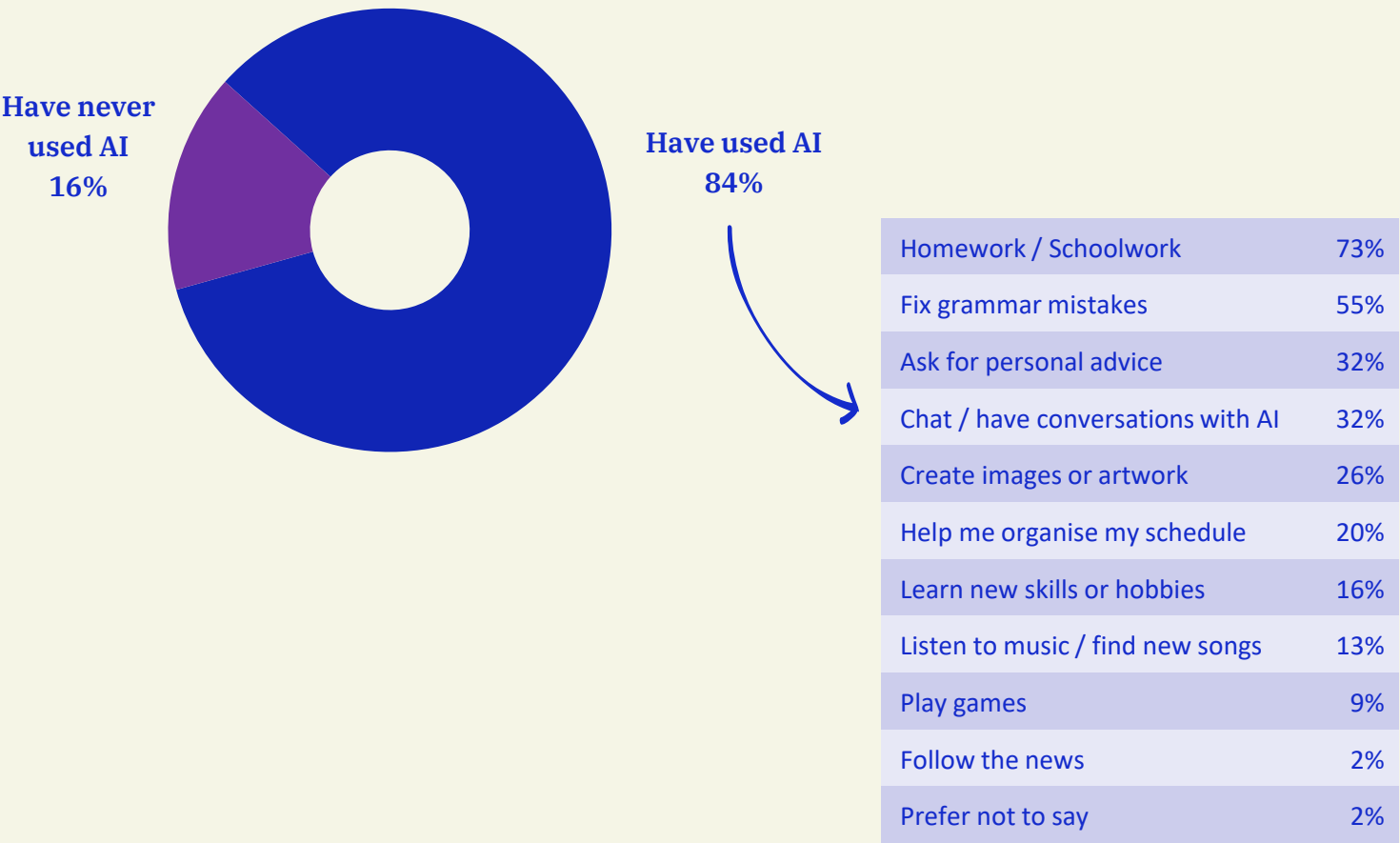
67% feel that there is too much focus on women's body shape in the media, and 65% believe that boys expect girls to look like the images portrayed in the media.

The pressure of social media extends beyond appearance. Nearly half (47%) express a [fear of missing out](#) if they take a break from social media, while a similar proportion (45%) wish their lives resembled the idealised versions they see online. Additionally, 47% admit wishing they looked the same as they do with online filters, with 21% feeling pressured to use filters in the first place.





# Girls and young women are integrating AI into their daily lives in a wide range of ways



Base: Those who participate in activities (n = 422)

The majority of girls and young women surveyed have used AI (84%).

They primarily use it to search for information related to their homework (73%) and to fix grammar mistakes (55%).

Additionally, 32% use AI to ask for personal advice and to have conversations with it. AI is also being used for more creative and organisational purposes, with 26% using it to create images or artwork and 20% for helping organise their schedules.

Some also turn to AI for personal development, such as learning new skills or hobbies (16%), while others use it for entertainment, like listening to music or finding new songs (13%) and playing games (9%).

Only a small proportion use AI for staying informed, with just 2% using it to follow the news.

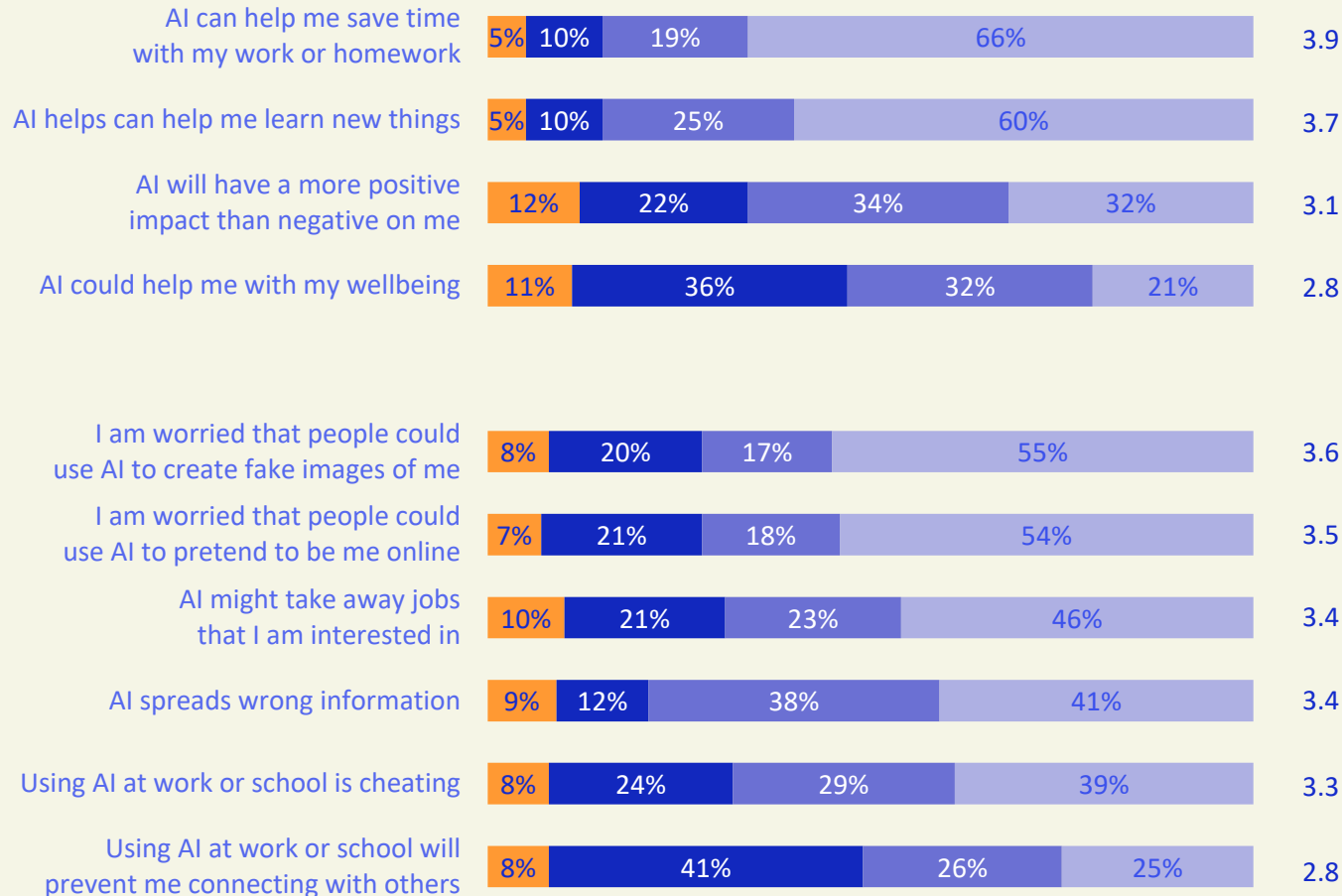
Q. Have you ever used AI?  
Q. What do you use AI for?



# Social media is both empowering and challenging, providing opportunities for connection but fostering unhealthy comparisons and unrealistic expectations

Unsure Disagree (1+2) Neutral (3) Agree (4+5)

Average



The survey results reveal both positive and negative perceptions of AI among girls and young women.

On the **positive** side, many see AI as a tool that can save time with their work or homework (66%) and help them learn new things (60%). However, only 32% believe that AI will have a more positive than negative impact on them, while a smaller proportion (21%) feel AI could assist with their well-being.

On the other hand, **concerns** about AI's potential drawbacks are significant. 55% of respondents worry that people could use AI to create fake images of them, and 54% are concerned about the possibility of AI being used to pretend to be them online. Additionally, nearly half (46%) fear that AI might take away jobs they are interested in, while 41% believe AI contributes to the spread of wrong information.

Ethical concerns also emerge, with 39% considering the use of AI at work or school as cheating, and 25% feeling that it could prevent them from connecting with others.

# Managing Period at a Sleepover or Camp







# Experience with period and period products

Have concerns about managing period or getting period while at a sleepover or camp

68%

Feel prepared to manage period at a sleepover or camp

28%

Period have stopped from attending a sleepover or camp

32%

Can talk openly about managing periods

70%

Have used period underwear before

56%

At the end of the survey, we included a set of questions about experiences with periods and period products to better understand how girls and young women feel about managing their periods, particularly in the context of sleepovers or camps. A trigger warning was included at the beginning of the question set to ensure that only those comfortable answering questions about managing periods and period products participated.

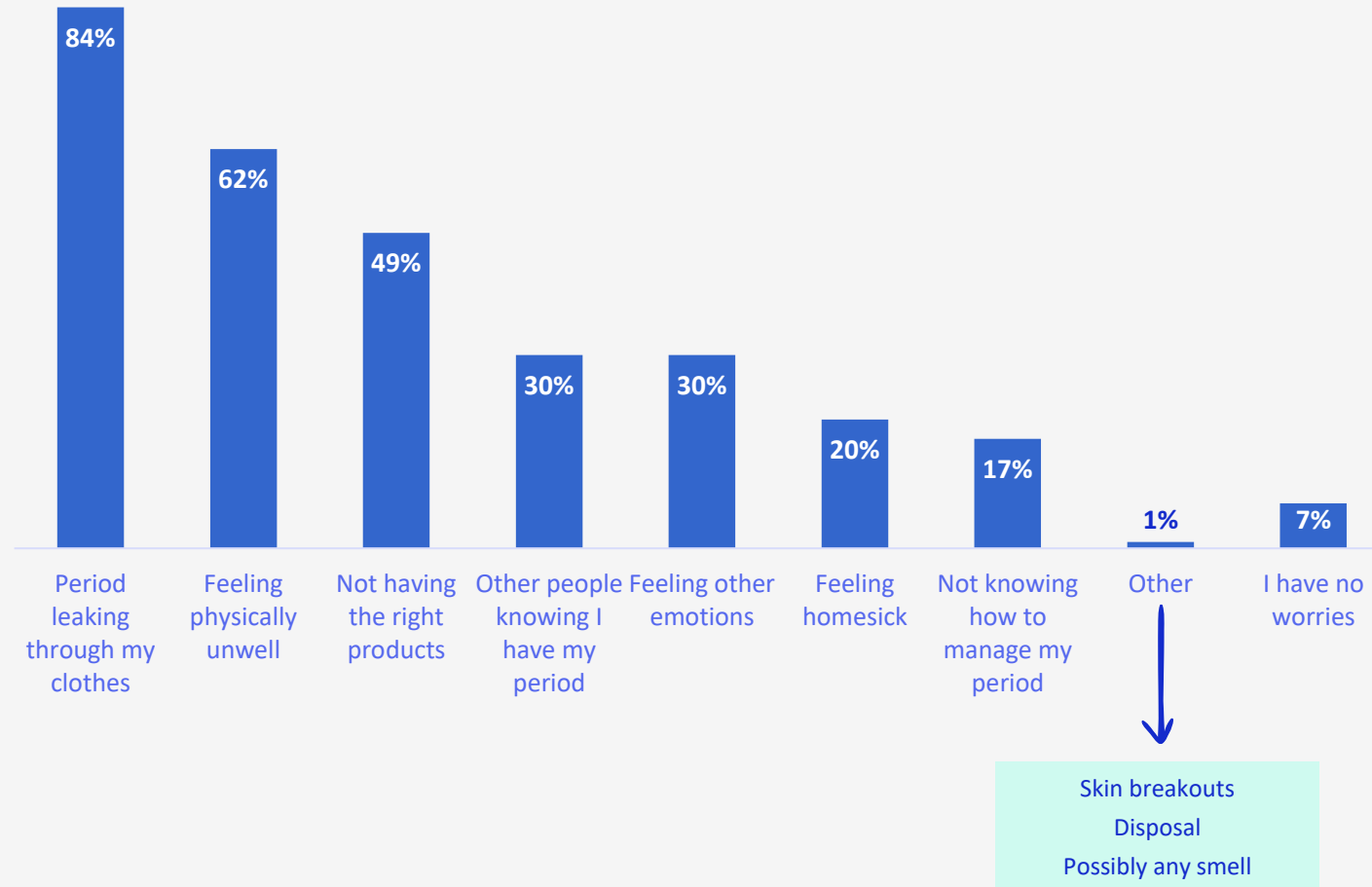
Concerns about managing their period in these situations are common, with 68% expressing worries. These concerns have some impact, as nearly a third (32%) report that their period has prevented them from attending a sleepover or camp.

Only 28% feel prepared to manage their period in such settings. However, it is encouraging that the majority (70%) feel comfortable talking openly about managing their periods, particularly with close female connections such as friends, their mothers, and female family members, including sisters.

In terms of products, more than half (56%) have already used period underwear, reflecting some adoption of this option.



# Experience with period and period products



Finally, we asked what really makes them worried about when managing their period at a sleepover or camp.

The most common worry, expressed by an overwhelming 84%, is the fear of their period leaking through their clothes. Feeling physically unwell is another significant concern, reported by 62%, suggesting that managing the physical symptoms of menstruation remains a challenge in sleepovers or camps.

Additionally, nearly half (49%) worry about not having the right period products available. Social concerns are also prevalent, with 30% expressing worry about other people knowing they have their period and the same proportion feeling other emotional challenges, such as embarrassment or self-consciousness. 20% mention feeling homesick, which may compound the emotional strain of managing their period away from home.

Finally, 17% are concerned about not knowing how to manage their period, emphasising the importance of education and guidance to empower girls and young women in these situations.

Q. Tick all the things you are worried about when managing your period at a sleepover or camp?

Base: Those who have chosen to answer period products related questions (n = 385)

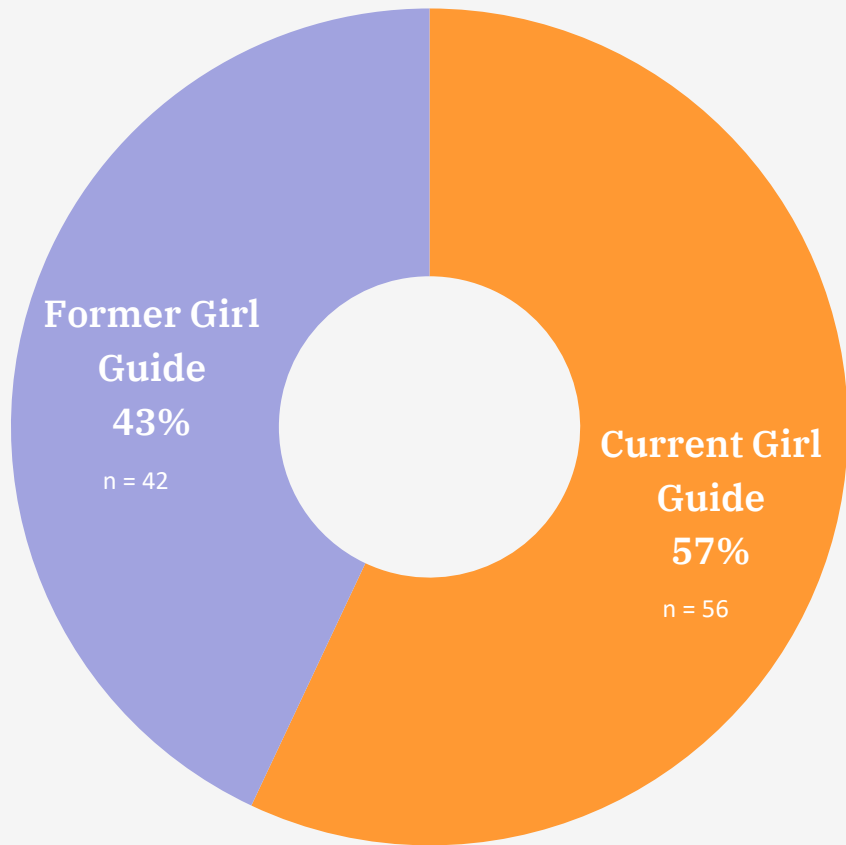


# The World of Girl Guides





# Sample profile of current and former Girl Guides



In this research, we aimed to explore the experiences of girls and young women involved in Girl Guiding.

We collected 98 completed responses from girls and young women who are either current or former Girl Guides.

The following section presents the findings from these respondents and highlights differences compared to those who have never participated in Girl Guiding.

Q. Are you currently a Girl Guide?  
Q. Have you ever been a Girl Guide?

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Demographic Profile

12-14 years old	44.6%	44
15-18 years old	55.4%	54

NSW + ACT + NT	33.2%	32
QLD	30.7%	30
VIC	13.4%	13
WA	10.2%	10
SA	6.0%	6
TAS	6.5%	7

Metro	79.2%	78
Regional	20.8%	20

English only	78.2%	78
Other languages	21.8%	20

Straight/heterosexual	65.3%	64
Bisexual	10.2%	10
Queer	3.1%	3
Pansexual	3.1%	3
Questioning	2.0%	2
I do not know	6.1%	6
Prefer not to say	10.2%	10

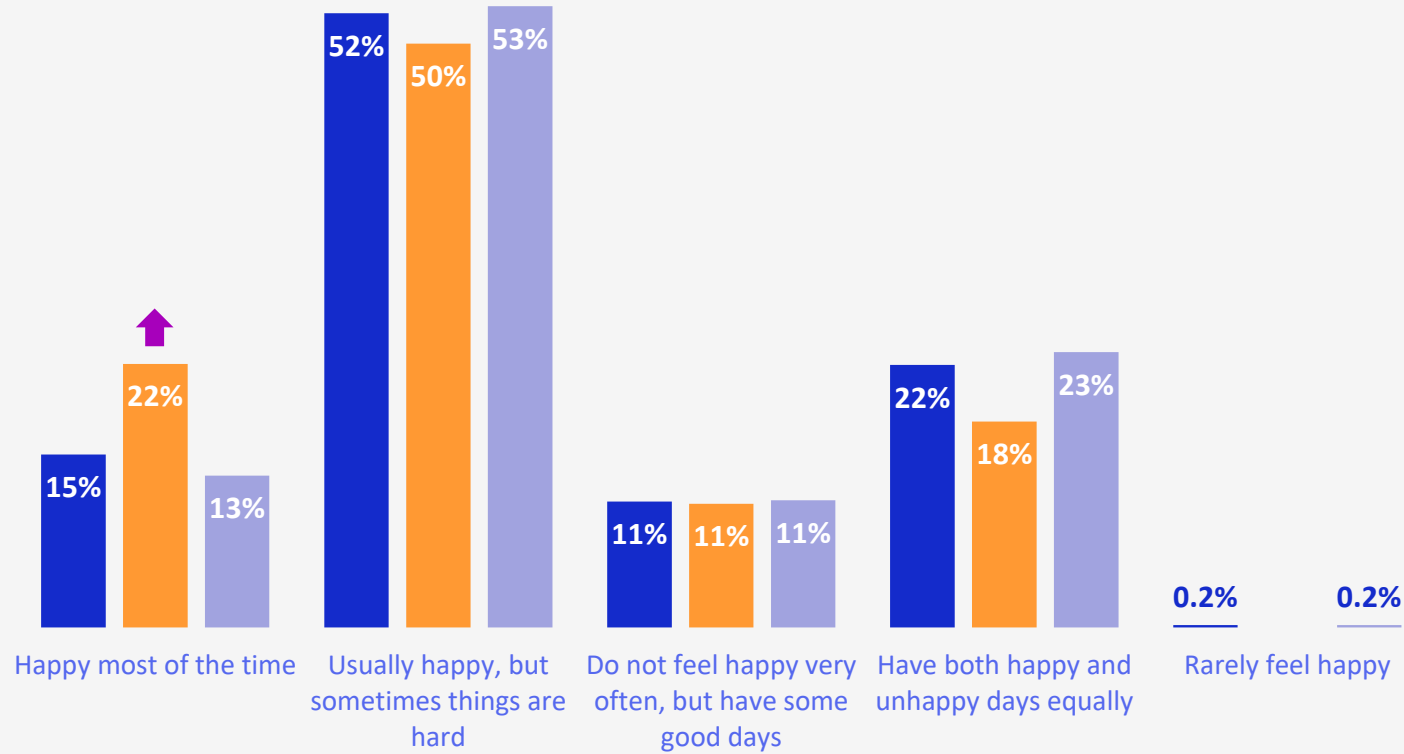
Identify as a person with disability	7.1%	7
Not identify as a person with disability	90.8%	89
Prefer not to say	2.0%	2

Neurodiverse	23.5%	23
Not neurodiverse	63.3%	62
Prefer not to say	13.3%	13



# Key insights - Happiness

■ Total ■ Girl Guides ■ Non Girl Guides

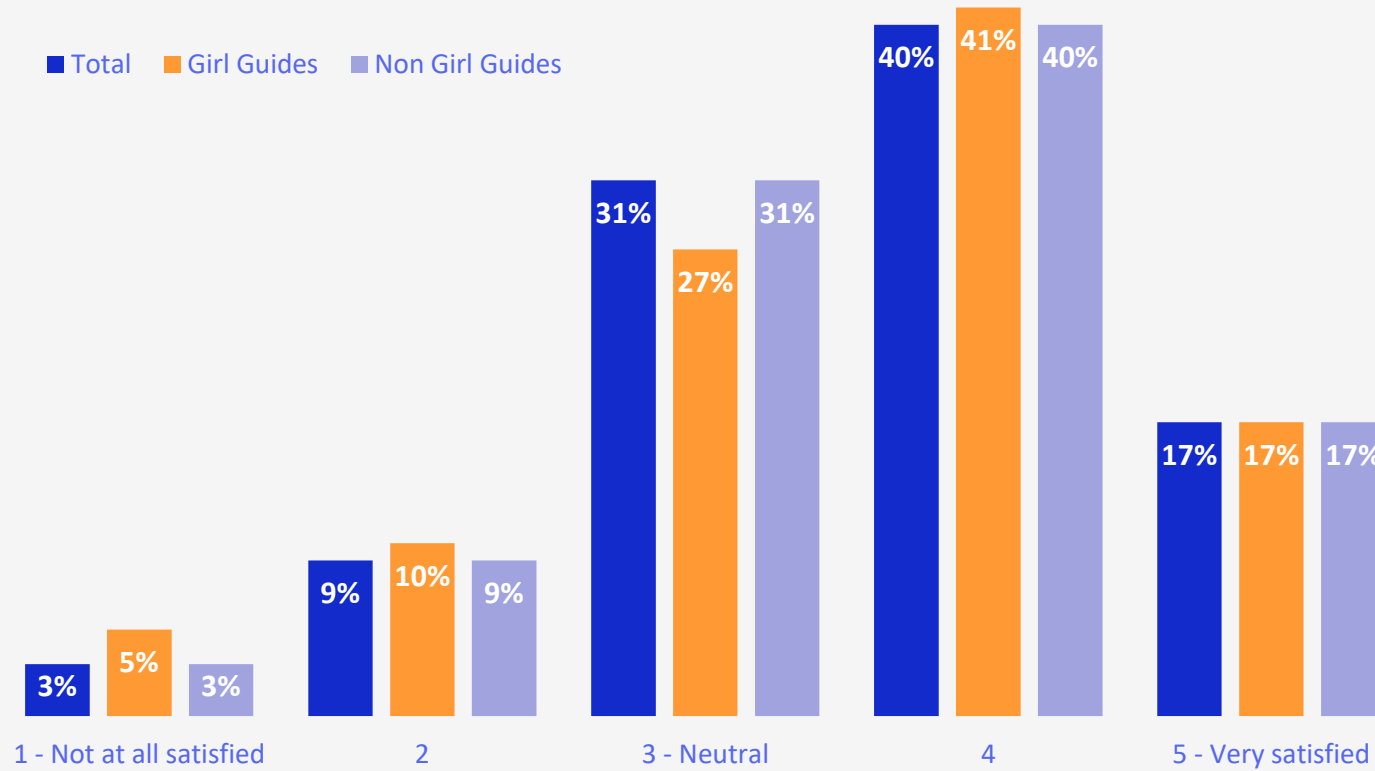


Although the sample size is not large enough to detect statistically significant differences, a higher proportion of Girl Guides (22%) report feeling happy most of the time compared to those who are not involved in Girl Guiding (13%).



# Key insights - Satisfaction

## \* My life as a whole



Girl Guides have the similar level of satisfaction with their life as a whole as the girls and young women who are not involved in girl guides.

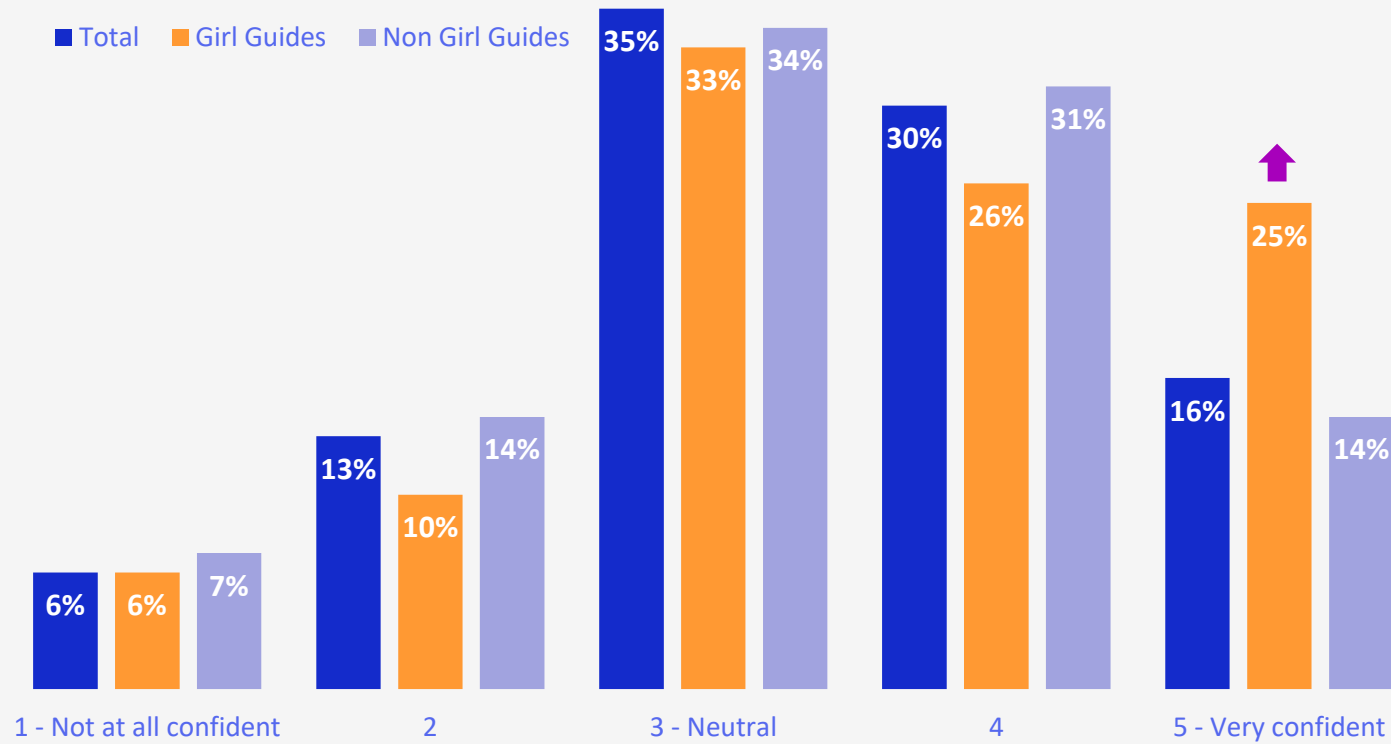




# Key insights - Confidence



## About myself



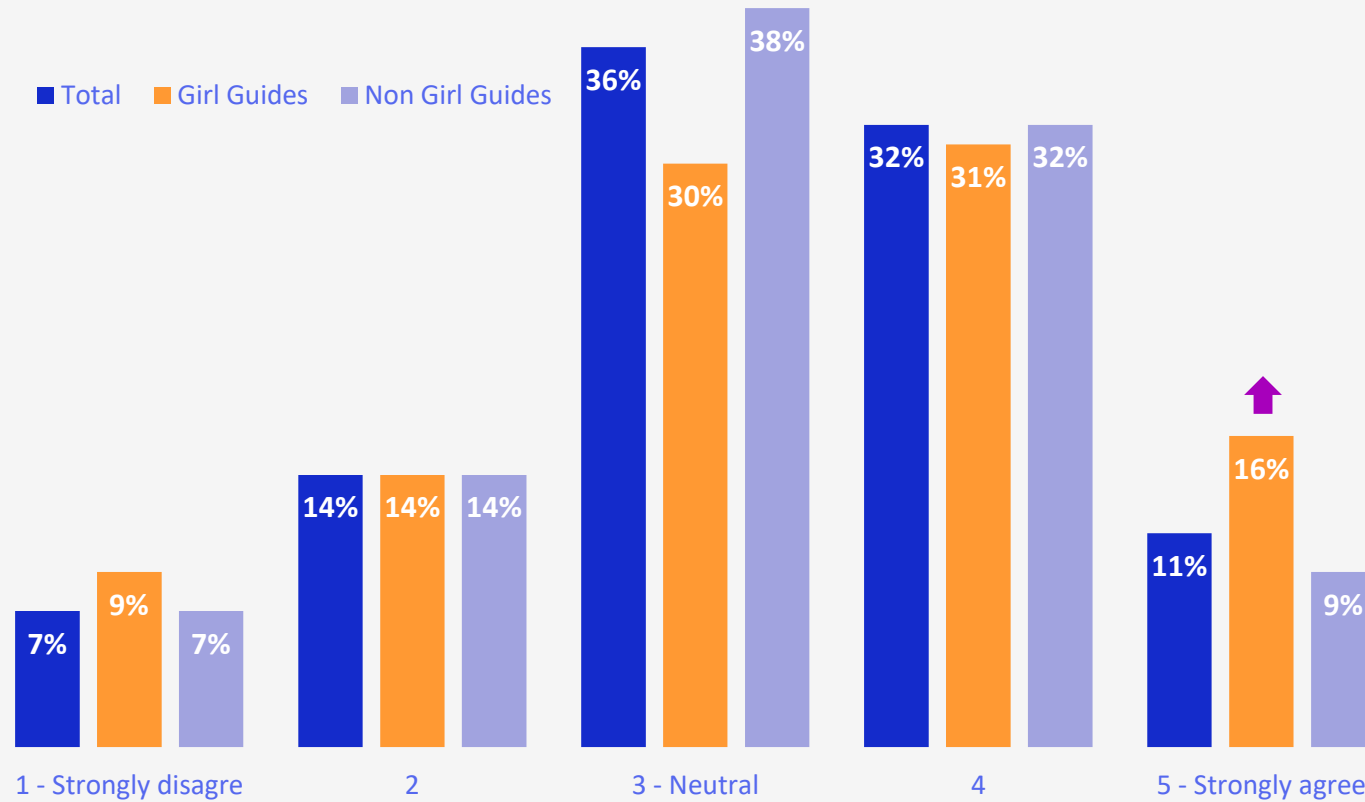
A higher proportion of Girl Guides (25%) are very confident about themselves compared to those who are not involved in Girl Guiding (14%).



# Key insights – School Experience



## Overall, I like school

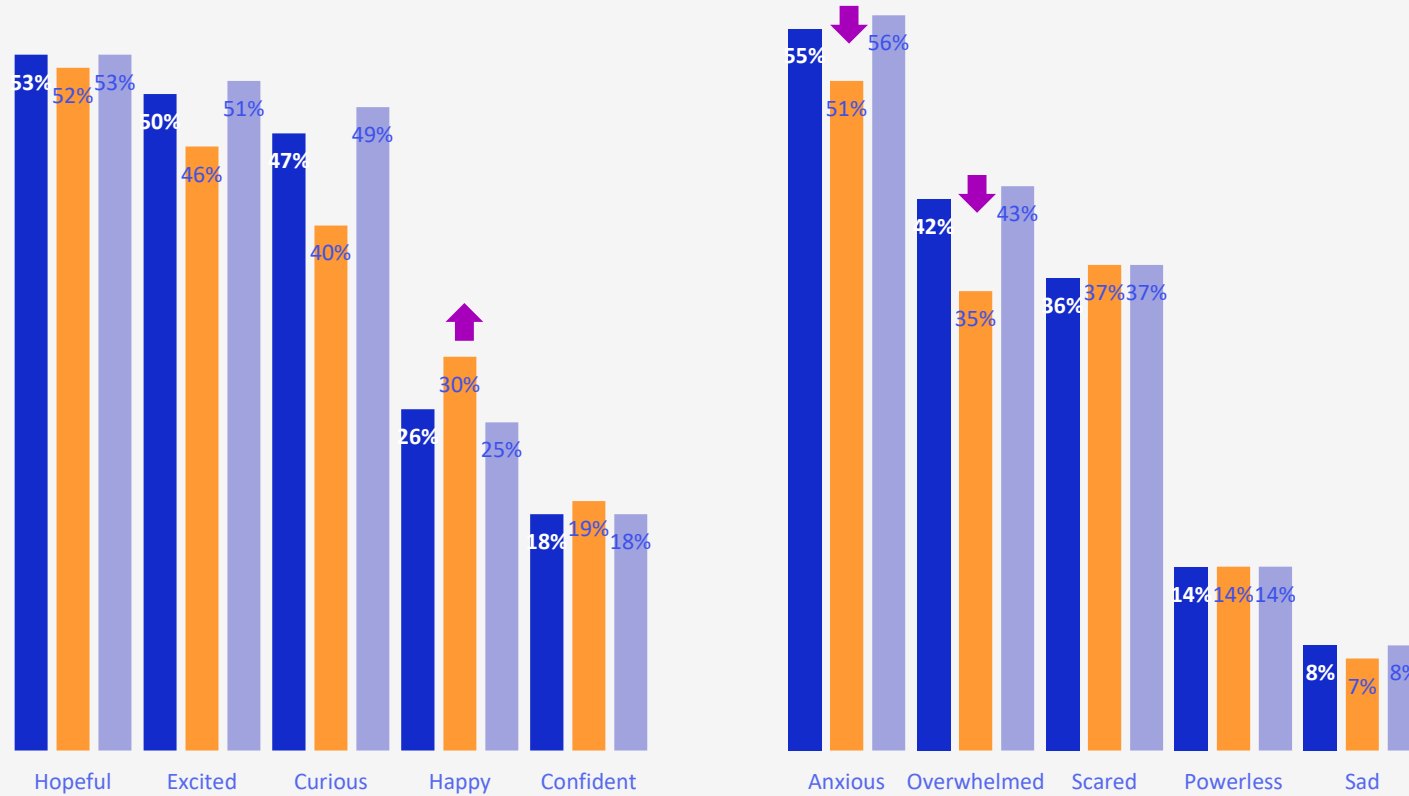


A higher proportion of Girl Guides (16%) enjoy school compared to those who are not involved in Girl Guiding (9%).



# Key insights – Feelings about Future

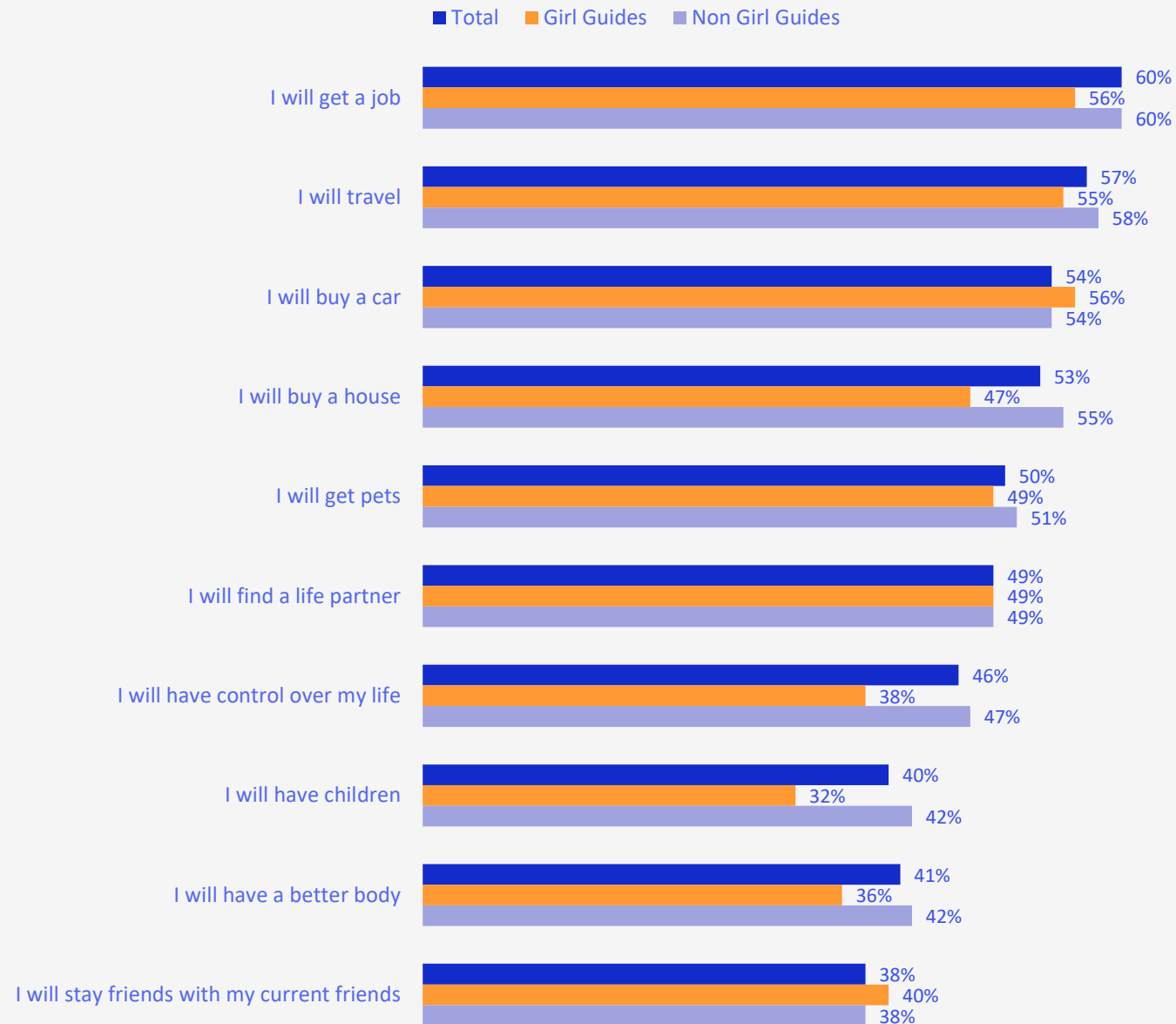
■ Total ■ Girl Guides ■ Non Girl Guides



A higher proportion of Girl Guides (30%) feel positive about the future compared to their non-Girl Guide counterparts (25%). Moreover, they report feeling less anxious (51%) and less overwhelmed about the future (35%) than those who are not involved in Girl Guiding (56% and 43%, respectively).



# Key insights – What future holds



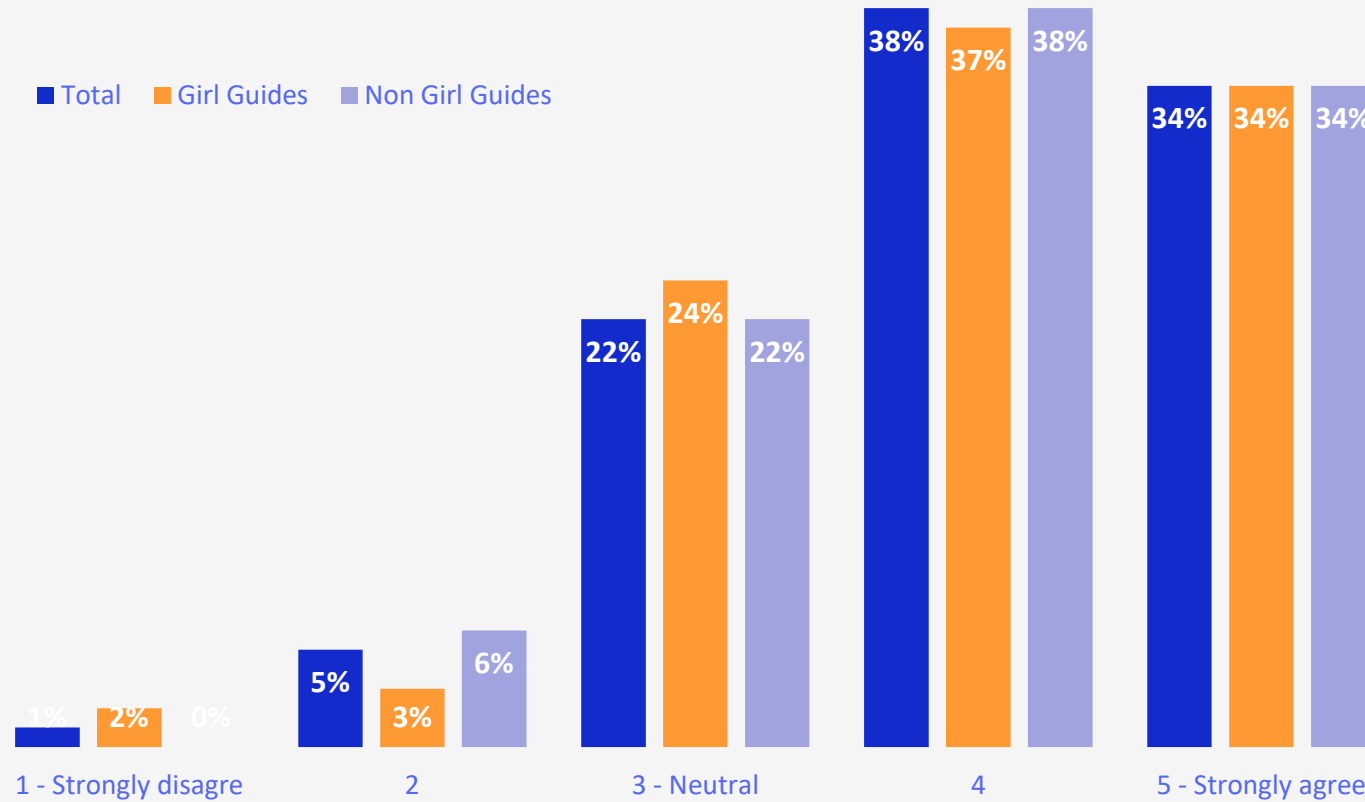
A smaller proportion of Girl Guides feel excited about buying (47%) a house, having children (32%), or having control over their lives (38%) compared to those who are not involved in Girl Guiding (55%, 42%, 47%).



# Key insights – Career



## Overall, I am excited to have a career

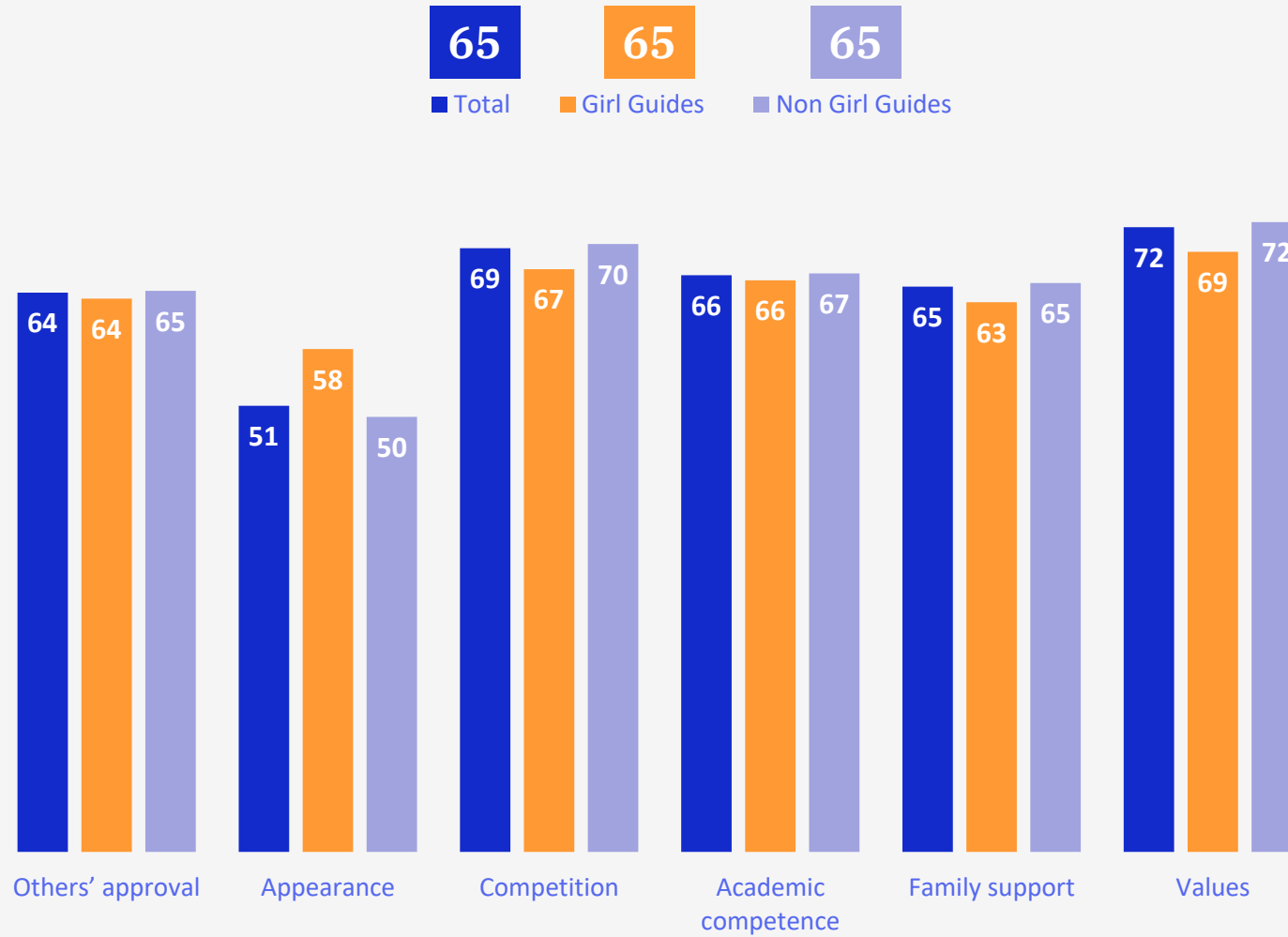


Girl Guides and non Girl Guides are equally excited about having a career.





# Key insights – Self Value Index



Girl Guides and non Girl Guides have the same self value.



# Key insights – Online Experience

Girl Guides and non Girl Guides have similar positive and negative online experiences.

	Total	Girl Guides	Non Girl Guides
<b>Positive experience</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>84%</b>
<i>Finding the information for school or work</i>	55%	61%	54%
<i>Positive compliments</i>	50%	56%	49%
<i>Learning new skills</i>	41%	41%	41%
<i>Connecting with people who share the same interests</i>	39%	33%	40%
<i>Finding new friends</i>	37%	34%	37%
<i>Finding supportive online communities</i>	28%	23%	29%
<i>Being part of exciting online events</i>	24%	32%	22%
<b>Negative experience</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>73%</b>
<i>Fake information or news</i>	42%	33%	44%
<i>Mean comments</i>	37%	34%	37%
<i>Hate speech about certain groups (gender, disability, sexuality, migrants)</i>	36%	42%	35%
<i>Sexist comments or jokes</i>	35%	31%	36%
<i>People pretending to be someone else</i>	30%	27%	31%
<i>Receiving inappropriate images</i>	28%	28%	28%
<i>Harassment (e.g., unwanted messages, threats)</i>	25%	20%	26%
<i>Bullying</i>	22%	19%	22%
<i>Rude pictures</i>	21%	20%	21%
<i>Pressure to share pictures you're not comfortable with</i>	14%	21%	13%
<i>Cyberstalking (e.g., someone trying to scare you online)</i>	9%	12%	9%



# Thank you

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