



RED C Sustainability Monitor

Environmental Attitudes and Behaviours in Ireland

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REF: 394519



Monitoring Sustainability

RED C has been tracking consumer views and behaviours pertaining to sustainability and the environment in the Republic of Ireland since July 2019



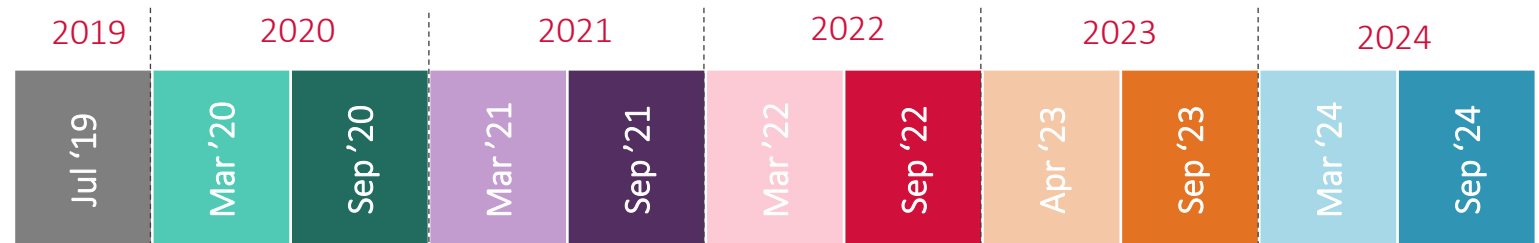
The RED C Sustainability Monitor – tracking behaviour since July 2019

This latest edition of RED C’s Sustainability Monitor (previously published in April 2024) looks at consumer views on sustainability issues in Ireland.

Questions were tested on RED C’s own online omnibus service, **RED Line**, in Ireland. A nationally representative sample of adults aged 18+ surveyed as follows:

/ n=1,007 in Ireland, with fieldwork in current wave conducted between 20th and 25th September 2024

Months covered in RED C Sustainability Monitor



Clear opportunity for brands to lead on sustainability



RED C Consumer Sustainability Monitor – September 2024

Climate remains important topic for public, with renewed sense of hope

Sustainability clearly remains an important issue for Irish people. A clear majority believe their personal actions can improve the environment, and wish to reduce their emissions.

One nugget of positivity is the use of the Deposit Return Scheme, which has skyrocketed since its launch earlier this year. Over 4 in 5 adults now use it at least monthly, thus highlighting the advantages of a stick / carrot approach to driving sustainable behaviours.

Environmental problems remain abstract and finances are still barrier

Despite continued reporting in the media with the effects of manmade climate change on weather patterns etc, environmental problems are still seen to the average consumer as an abstract threat relative to other more urgent problems.

Finances are still a barrier to the majority (2 in 3) of 18+ adults in Ireland, but this situation seems to be especially prevalent amongst young women, with 4 in 5 making this claim.

Gradual shift toward sustainable travel, but more resistance to flying less

With the DoT's Climate Action and Sustainable Mobility strategy in full swing, it is perhaps no surprise that we are seeing signs of a shift away from car travel to travelling more sustainably. This highlights the positive impact of the campaign so far.

Although it is good to see such popularity with the Deposit Return Scheme and high incidence of recycling, there is growing resistance to flying less, and there is no sign of a shift away from animal products to more of a plant-based diet.

Onus put on brands to lead on sustainability, with need to be transparent

With cost-of-living obstructing the majority from living more sustainably, the onus is being put on brands to assist here. Overall, a clear majority of 7 in 10 agree that brands should lead on helping the people live more sustainably.

There is a danger for brands who do not adapt to sustainability as a priority with over a third having reported already changing brands due to sustainability concerns, and over half being open to switching brands if they suspected them of greenwashing.



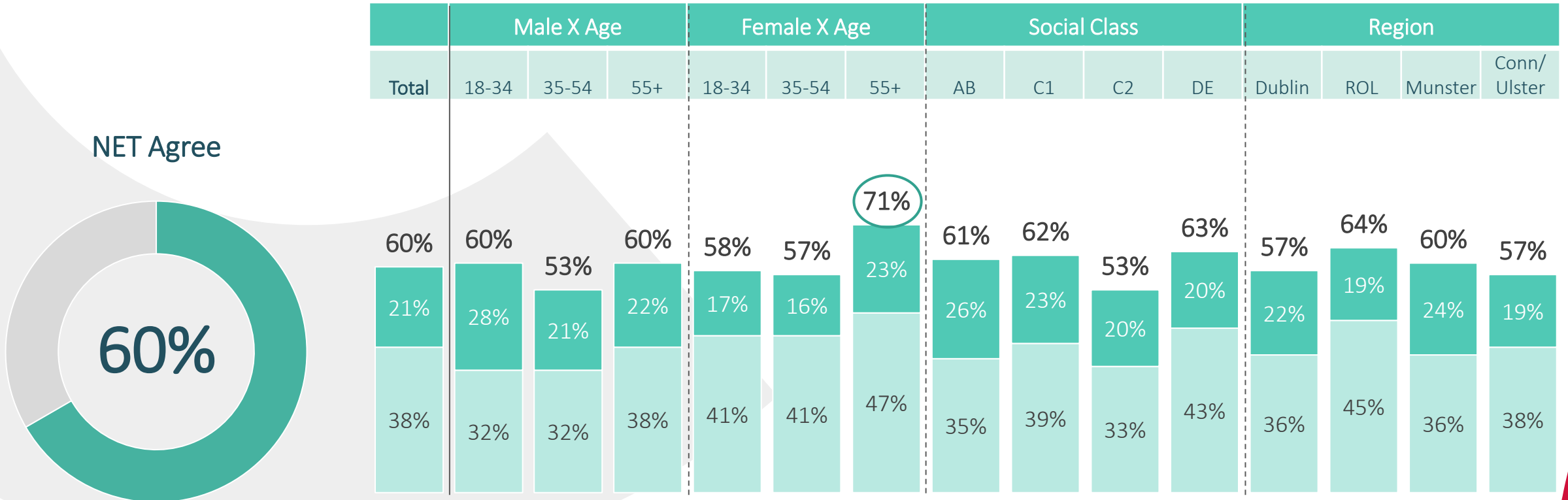
Sustainability remains an important topic and there is some sense of renewed hope, with a massive increase uptake of the Deposit Return Scheme since Apr '24

3 in 5 say it is important to them to reduce carbon emissions



1 in 5 *strongly* agree that it is important to themselves personally to cut their carbon emissions. Agreement is highest among women aged over 55.

It is very important to me personally to reduce my carbon emissions



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

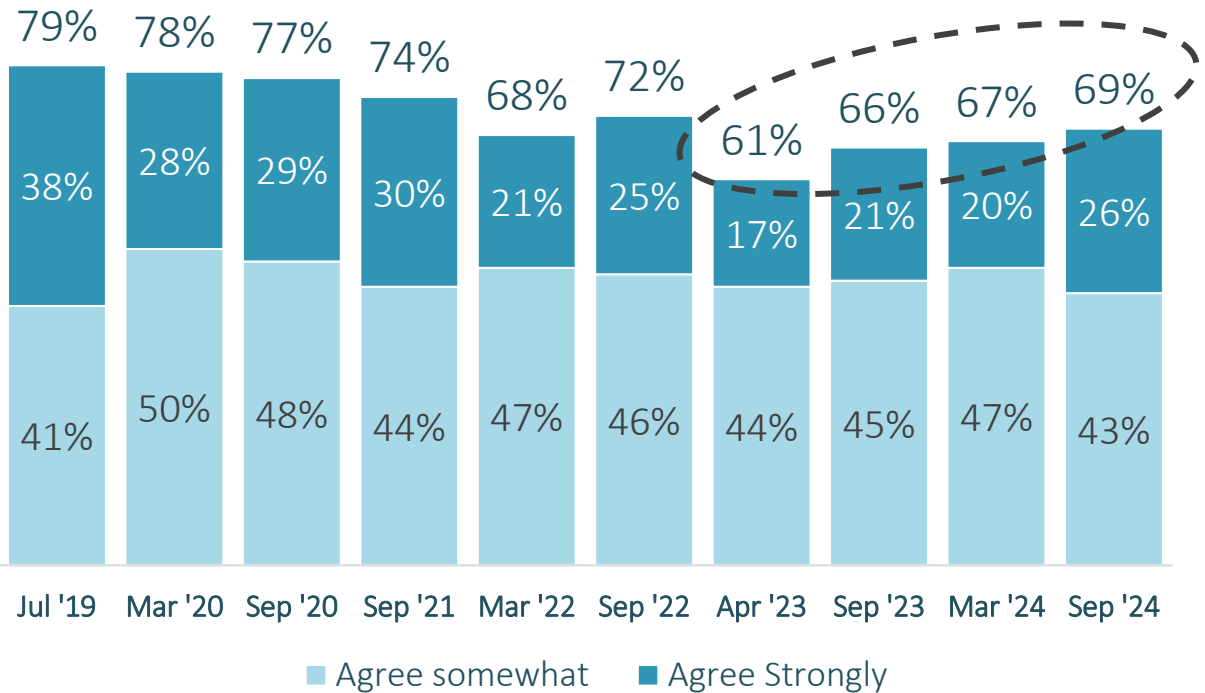
(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Slow resurgence in belief that personal actions can improve the environment

69% agree, up steadily since April 2023, and with more who agree *strongly*, but remaining below pre-Covid levels



I believe my personal actions can improve the environment



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24
 Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?
 (Base: all adults aged 18+)



Rebound in belief is being driven by 18-34s and Dublin/ROL

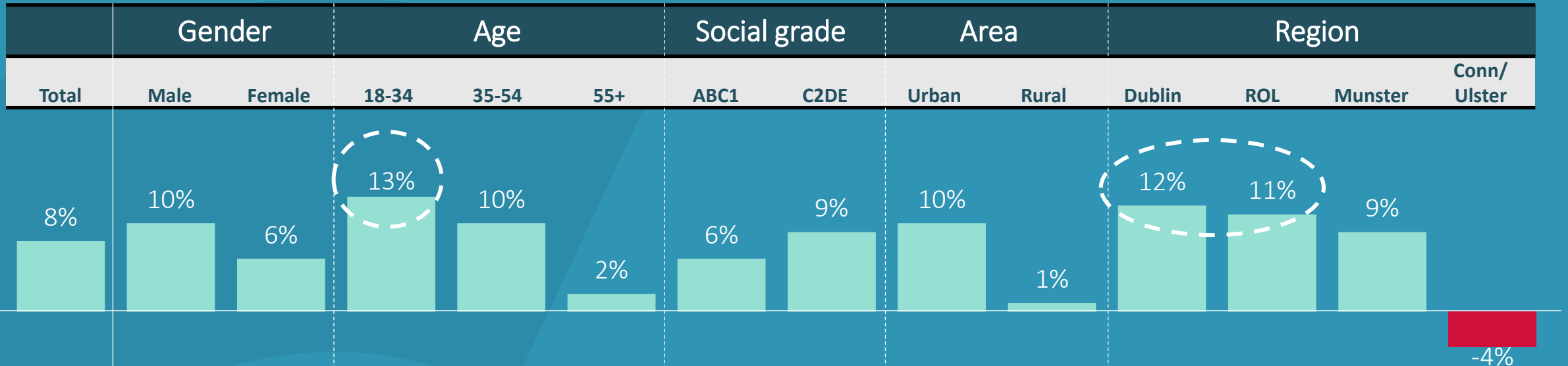


However, there are two stories that emerge, with weakened belief in Conn/Ulster region since April 2023 that one's personal actions can improve the environment.

Change since Apr '23 that one's personal actions can improve the environment



+/- change vs Apr '23: % Agree that 'I believe my personal actions can improve the environment



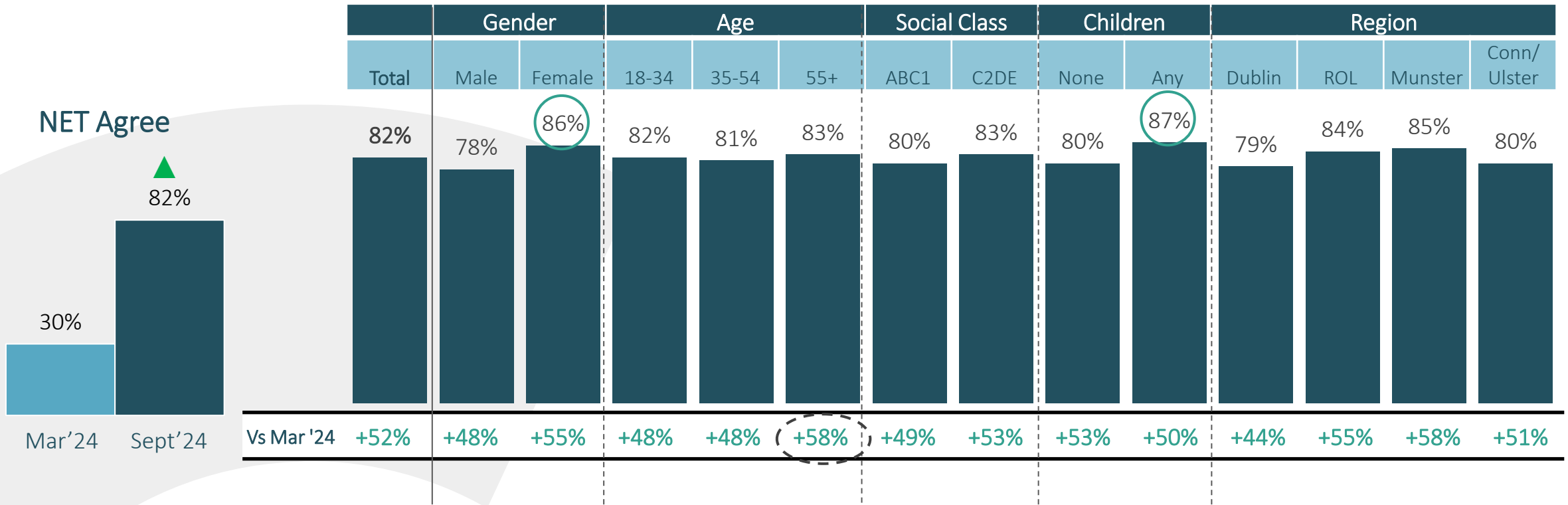
Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Dramatic upswing in uptake of deposit return scheme since launch

Past month usage of the deposit return scheme has increased dramatically in the six months since its launch. Over 4 in 5 now use it monthly. Use is highest among women and parents, while growth is from 55+ ages.

I have used the Deposit Return Scheme for bottles or cans in the past month



 Significantly higher/lower than national average

  Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24

Note: All demographics up significantly on March

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

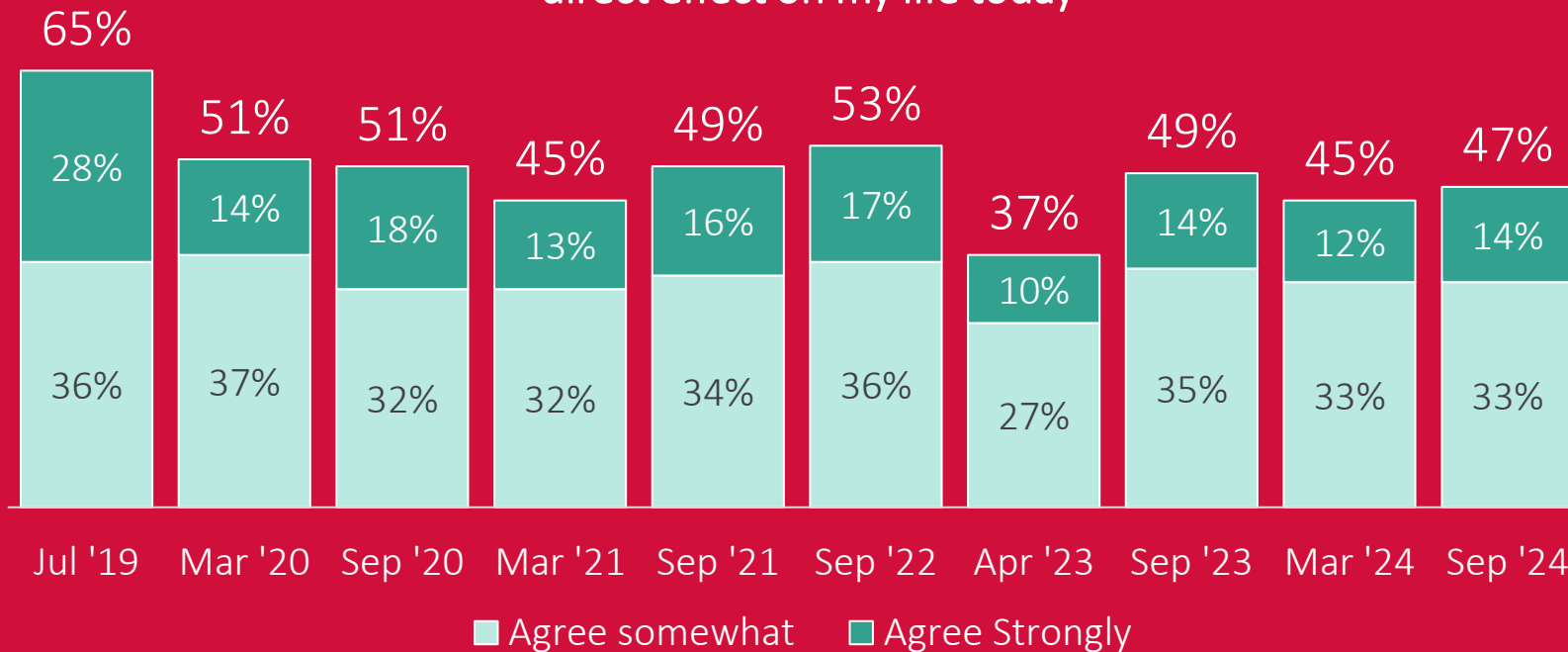
(Base: all adults aged 18+)

However, environmental problems remain an abstract threat, with this compounded by finances which are still a significant barrier

Just under half report that environmental problems have a direct effect on their life today

After falling steeply in the early days of the Covid pandemic, this has oscillated somewhat, but with ultimately little change on a total level. Agreement is highest among younger cohorts and higher social grades.

Environmental problems have a direct effect on my life today



Agreement *highest* among:

18-34 year-olds	55%
ABC1s	54%

▲▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24

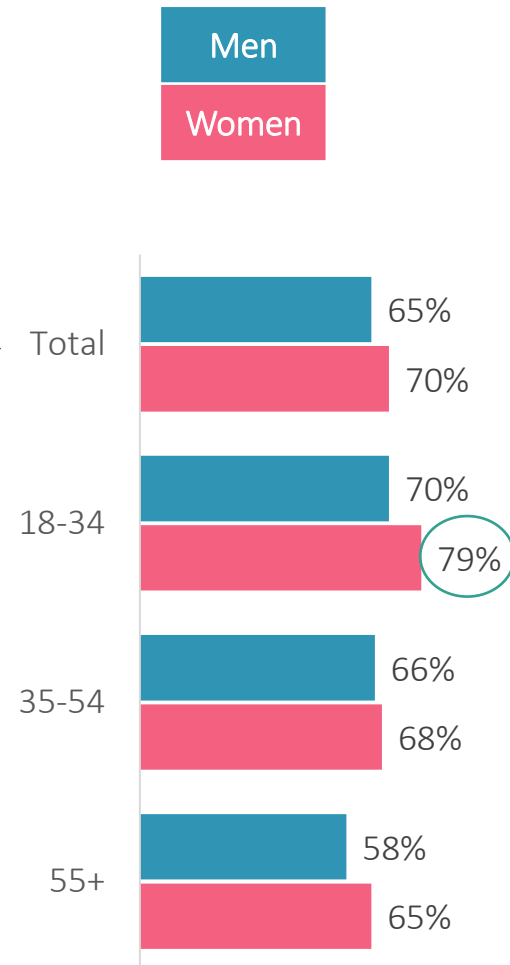
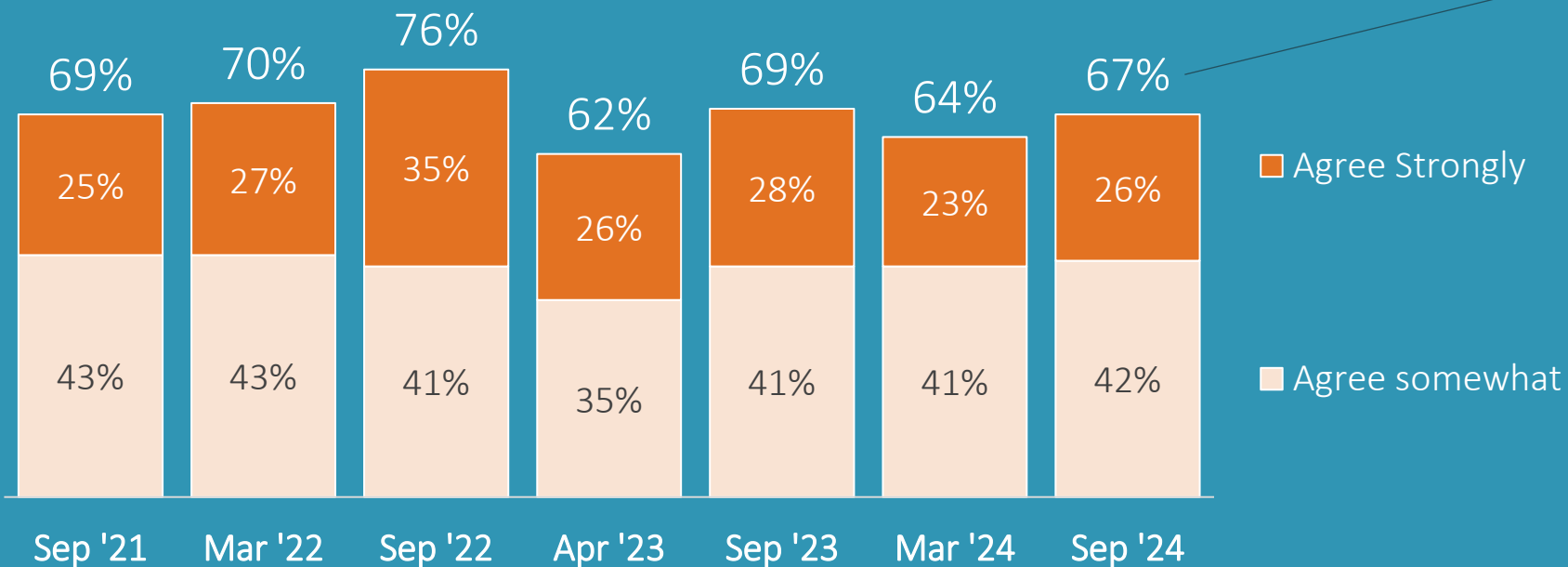
Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Two thirds say they would like to live sustainably, but can't afford to do so

This feeling is especially prevalent amongst young women aged 18-34

I would like to live more sustainably, but I cannot financially afford to make the changes needed to do so



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24



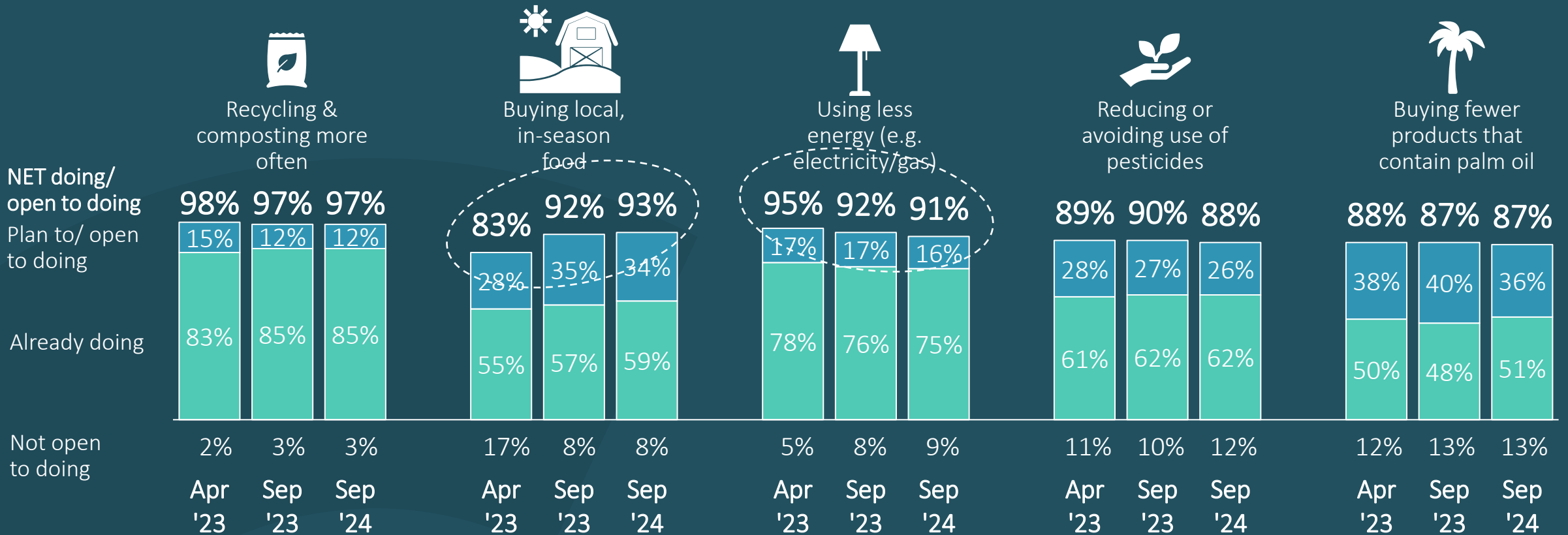
Irish adults continue to be open to taking various steps to help the environment, and there is a gradual shift away from car use to sustainable travel. However, there is increasing resistance to flying less and less openness to consuming plant products and limiting meat.

Adults continue to recycle and take other steps for environment



The great majority of Irish adults are either already taking, or are open to taking, various steps to lower their environmental impact including recycling, buying local food, using less energy, and avoiding pesticides.

Actions willing to do to lower environmental impact – Summary I



Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

Growing number of those not open to flying less often



Regular consumption of plant-based foods meanwhile is steady following a decline this same time last year, but there is positivity in the rise in those driving less often and using sustainable travel modes instead.

Actions willing to do to lower environmental impact – Summary II



Mowing grass less often and planting pollinator friendly plants & trees



Buying more second-hand products (e.g. clothing, furniture, electronics)



Driving less often and using more public transport or walking or cycling instead



Flying less often



Regularly eating plant-based foods and limiting consumption of animal products

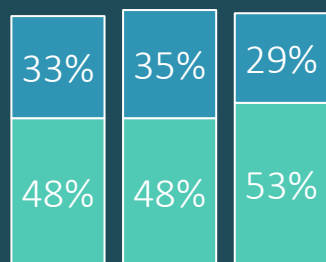
NET doing/
open to doing

Plan to/ open
to doing

Already doing

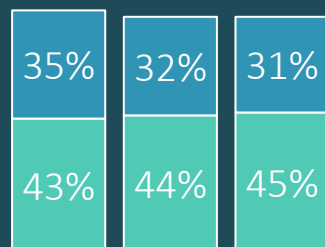
Not open
to doing

81% 83% 82%



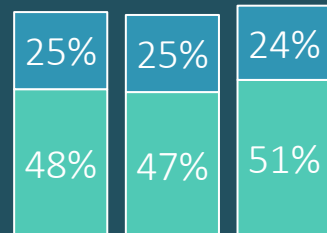
19% 17% 18%
Apr '23 Sep '23 Sep '24

78% 76% 76%



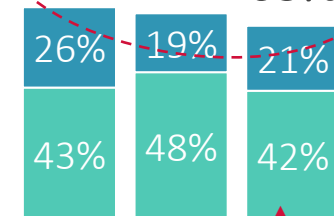
22% 24% 24%
Apr '23 Sep '23 Sep '24

73% 72% 75%



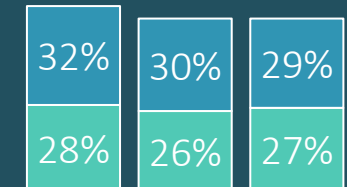
27% 28% 25%
Apr '23 Sep '23 Sep '24

69% 67% 63%



31% 33% 38%
Apr '23 Sep '23 Sep '24

60% 56% 56%



40% 44% 44%
Apr '23 Sep '23 Sep '24

Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

Clear age gap on many actions



Over 55s are more likely to report already recycling; using less energy; and buying local food; but are less likely to buy more second-hand products

Lower vs Total Higher vs Total

Actions currently doing (Excluding N/A)

Recycling and composting more often		85%
Using less energy (e.g., electricity/gas)		75%
Reducing or avoiding use of pesticides (chemicals used for killing pests such as insects, rodents, fungi and weeds)		62%
Buying local, in-season food (e.g., fruit and vegetables that are in-season and grown locally)		59%
Mowing grass less often and planting pollinator friendly plants and trees		53% ▲
Buying fewer products that contain palm oil		51%
Driving less often and using more public transport or walking or cycling instead		51%
Buying more second-hand products (e.g., clothing, furniture, electronics)		45%
Flying less often		42% ▼
Regularly eating plant-based foods and limiting consumption of animal products (e.g. meaty/fish/eggs/dairy)		27%

Gender		Age			Social Class		Region			
Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	ABC1	C2DE	Dublin	ROL	Munster	Conn/ Ulster
		Red		Teal						
		Red		Teal			▲			
		Red		Teal			▲			
		▲					▲			
						▲				Red
		▲			▲		▲			Red
Red	Teal			Red			▲			
	▼		▼			▼				
Red										

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sep '23

Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

Greater proportion of 18-34s open to most actions

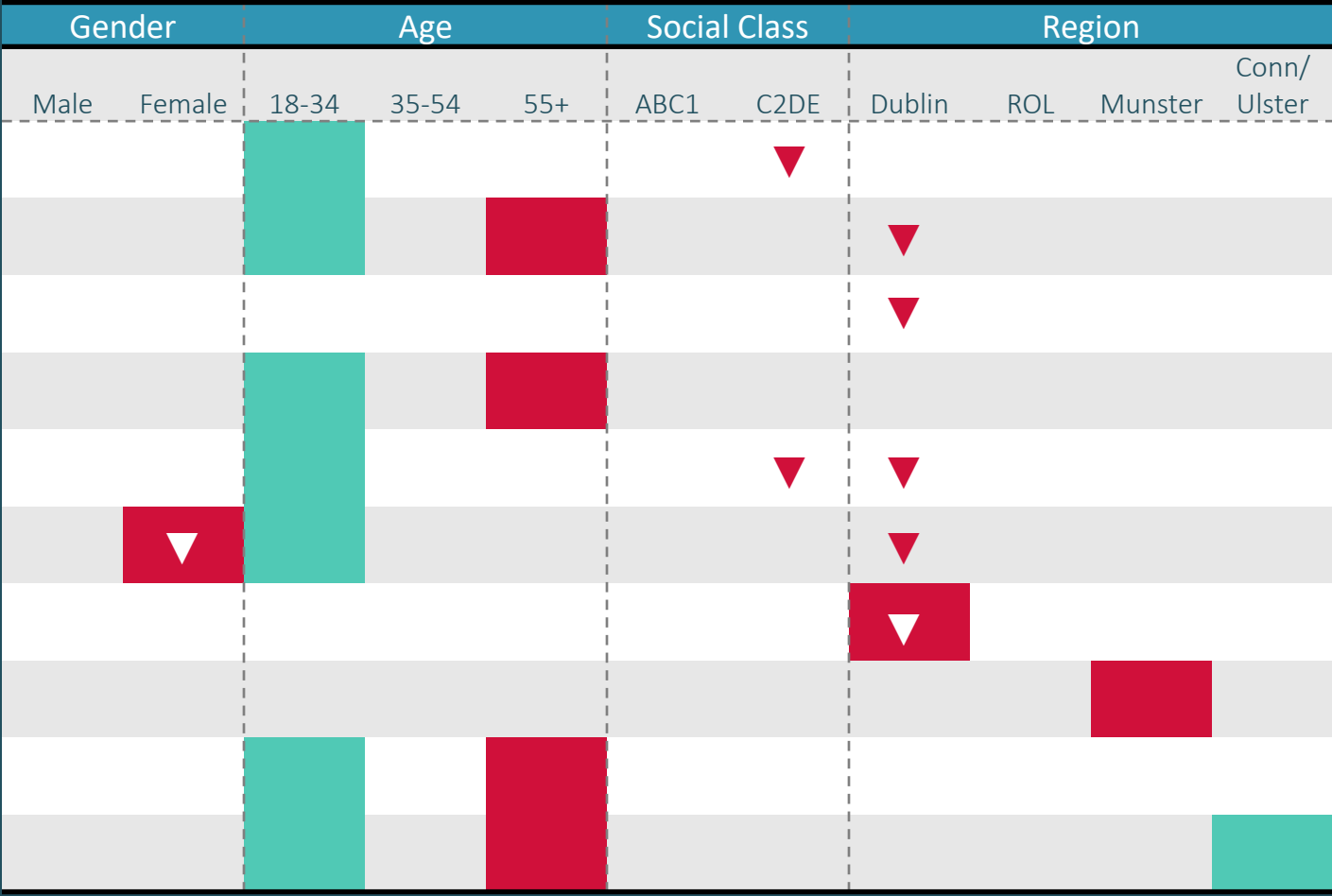


18-34 year olds are more likely to say they are open to buying fewer products with palm oil; buying local food; eating plant-based food; mowing grass less often; and avoiding pesticides, among other actions.

Plan to/open to doing (Excluding N/A)

Lower vs Total Higher vs Total

- Buying fewer products that contain palm oil  36%
- Buying local, in-season food (e.g., fruit and vegetables that are in-season and grown locally)  34%
- Buying more second-hand products (e.g., clothing, furniture, electronics)  31%
- Regularly eating plant-based foods and limiting consumption of animal products (e.g. meaty/fish/eggs/dairy)  29%
- Mowing grass less often and planting pollinator friendly plants and trees  29%
- Reducing or avoiding use of pesticides (chemicals used for killing pests such as insects, rodents, fungi and weeds)  26%
- Driving less often and using more public transport or walking or cycling instead  24%
- Flying less often  21%
- Using less energy (e.g., electricity/gas)  16%
- Recycling and composting more often  12%



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs. Sep '23

Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

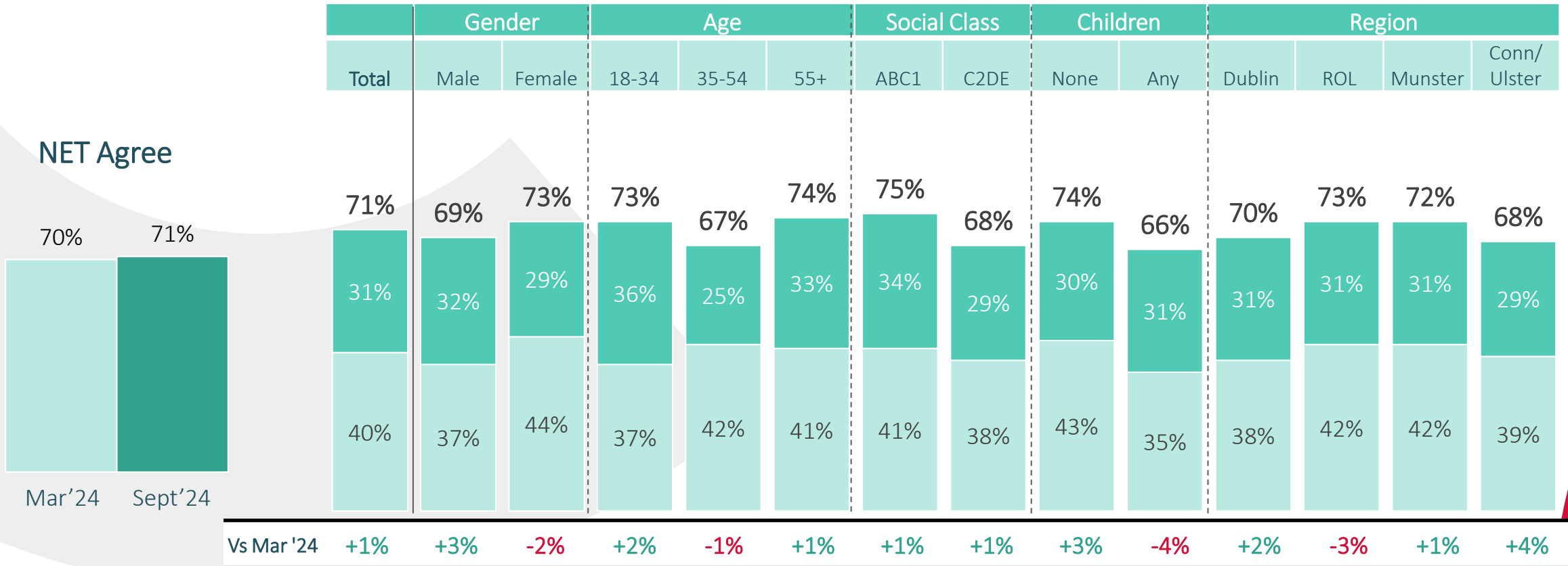
Clear opportunities for brands to help the majority of consumers who expect them to lead, with watch out being the recent rise in those who say they have switched products or brands due to sustainability concerns

Majority continue to say brands should lead on sustainability

With little change on March, over 7 in 10 say they expect brands to lead on helping them be more sustainable. Women are slightly more likely to say this.



I expect brands to lead on helping me be more sustainable



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24

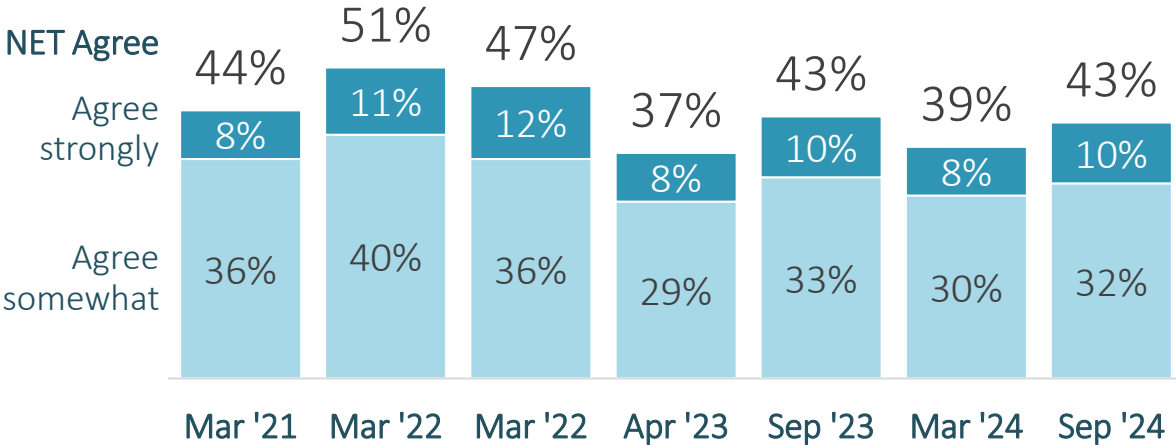
(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

Over 2 in 5 say they seek out sustainably sourced products

I specifically seek out products that are sustainably sourced/produced



Agreement is *highest* among 18-24-year-olds (58%) and women in higher social grades (51%)

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24
 Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?

(Base: all adults aged 18+)



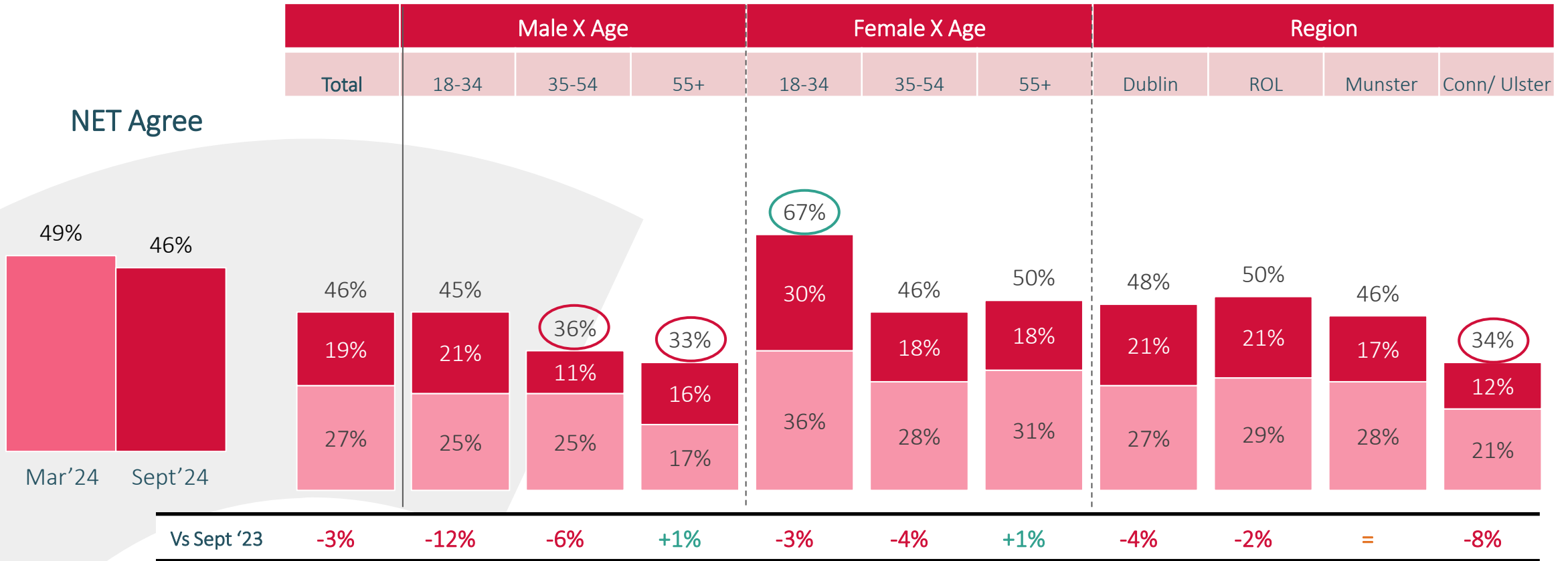
Demand persists for influencers to promote sustainable products



Just under half continue to say they would like to see influencers promote more sustainable products. Interest is highest among younger cohorts, particularly young women.

I would like to see influencers promoting sustainable products more

NET Agree
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Sept '23

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

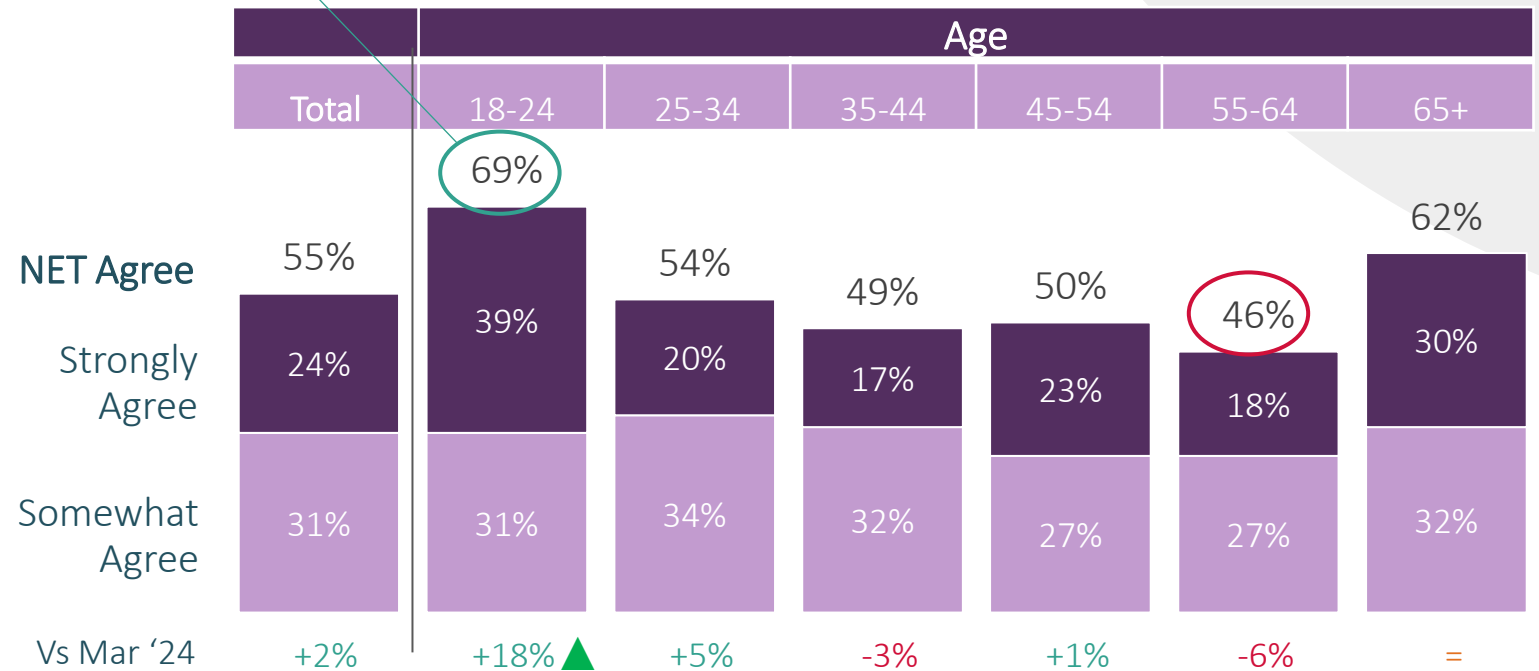
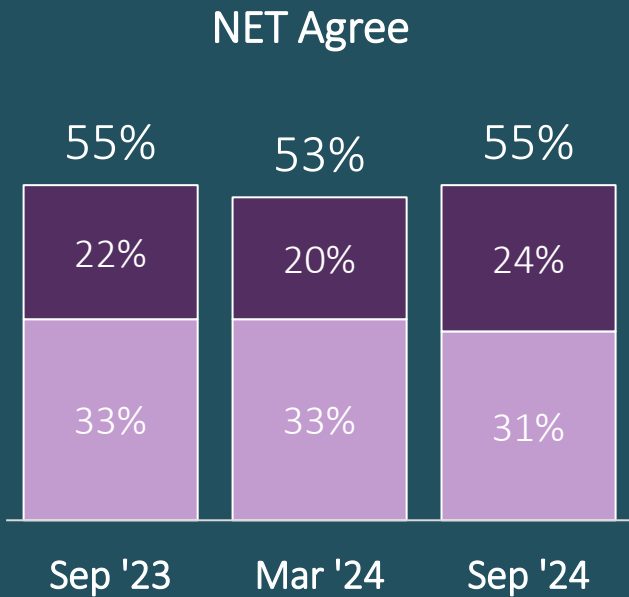
○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Over half continue to say they would switch brands over greenwashing

Agreement highest among, and up notably among, 18-24 year olds

I would strongly consider switching brands if I suspected them of greenwashing



○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

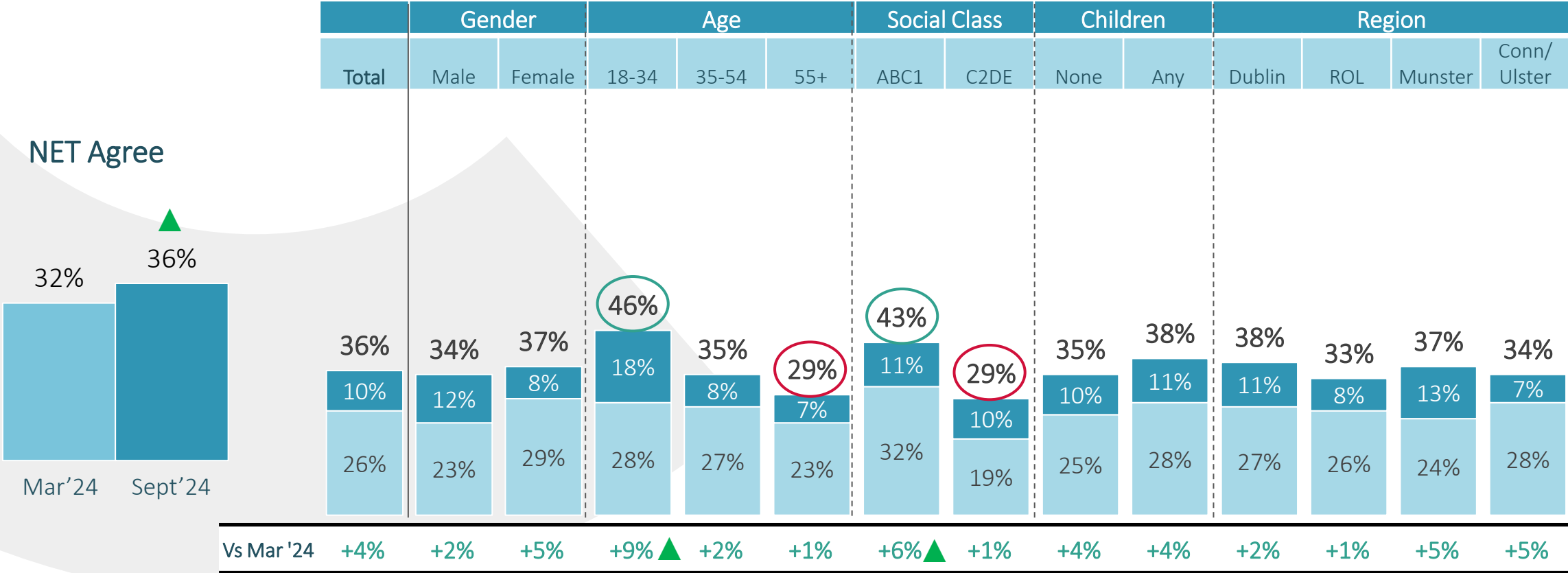
NOTE: Agreement is also high amongst higher social grades (63%)

Slight increase in reported brand switching due to sustainability



Over a third now report having switched brands/products over sustainability concerns. This is highest among, and up most among, 18-34 year olds, as well as higher social grades.

I have switched products or brands due to sustainability concerns



▲ ▼ Indicates significant difference vs Mar '24

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

○ Significantly higher/lower than national average

(Base: all adults aged 18+)

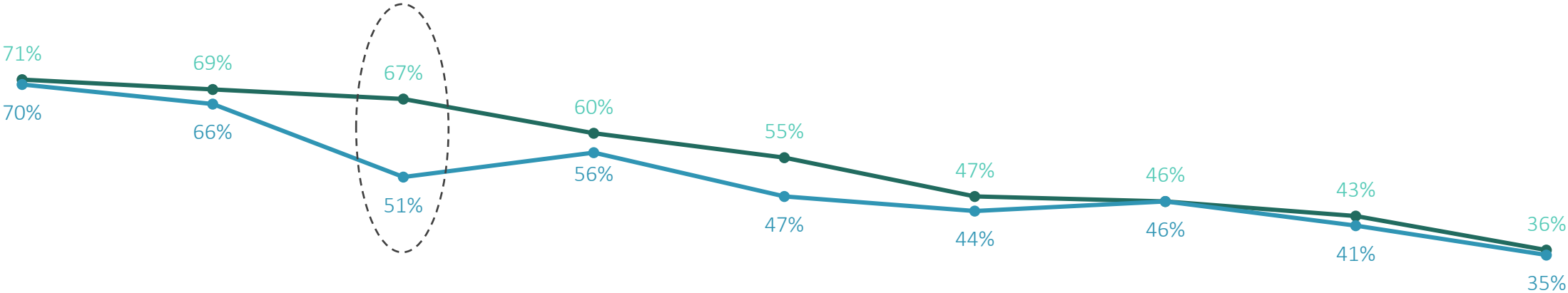
Sustainability views and behaviours in Ireland are mostly mirrored in the UK, but some indications that finances are more of a barrier to living sustainably in Ireland

ROI and UK adults closely aligned on most environmental issues



ROI residents are more likely to say they would like to live more sustainably, but can't afford to do so

% Agree



- I expect brands to lead on helping me be more sustainable
 - I believe my personal actions can improve the environment
 - I would like to live more sustainably, but I cannot financially afford to make the changes needed to do so
 - It is very important to me personally to reduce my carbon emissions
 - I would strongly consider switching brands if I suspected them of greenwashing
 - Environmental problems have a direct effect on my life today
 - I would like to see influencers promoting sustainable products more
 - I specifically seek out products that are sustainably sourced/produced
 - I have switched products or brands due to sustainability concerns
- Legend: ROI (dark green line), UK (blue line)

(Q.1 - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to your personal views on the environment?)

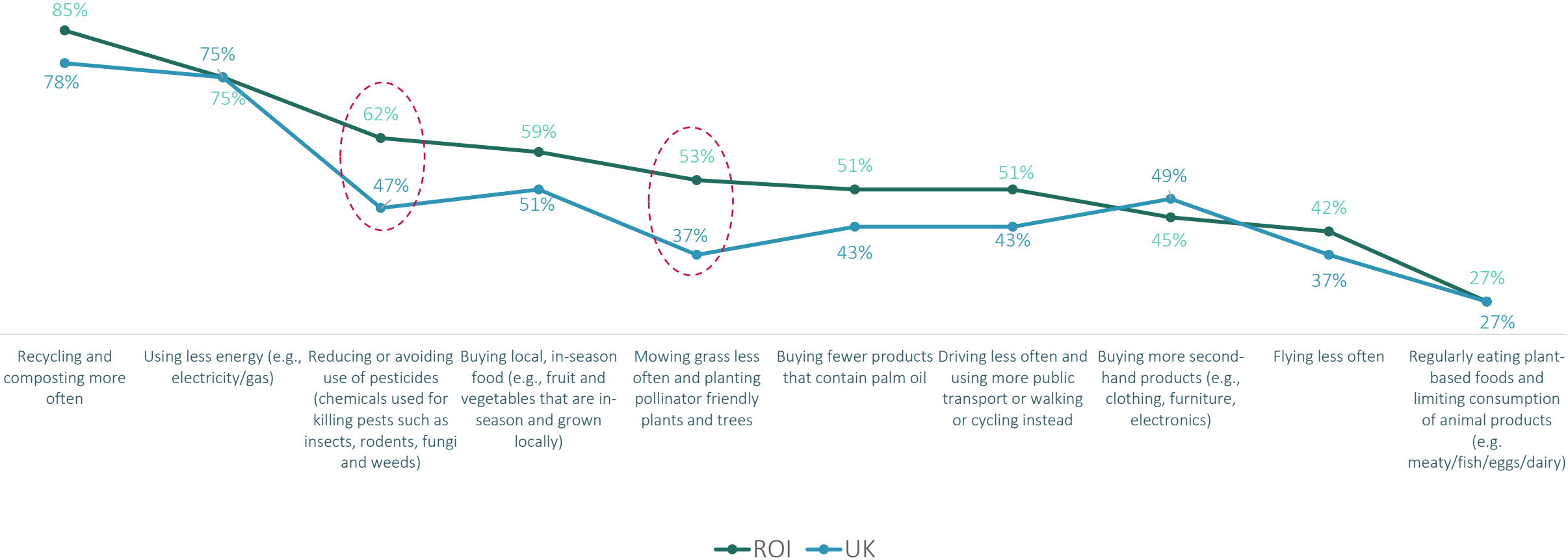
(Base: all adults aged 18+)

Mostly similar behaviours around sustainability in ROI and the UK



ROI adults are markedly more likely to say they are already reducing/avoiding use of pesticides; and that they are mowing their grass less often/planting pollinator-friendly trees/plants.

% currently doing this (excluding not applicable)



Q7. Below are a range of actions known to lower our environmental impact and help tackle the climate crisis. Please select whether you are doing this already if you are open to doing it, or if you are not open to doing it at all. (Base: all adults aged 18+)

RESEARCH
EVALUATION
DIRECTION
CLARITY

See More, Clearly

REDC

