



Waste and Resource Efficiency - Behavioural Trend Monitoring Survey

A Quantitative Report

July 2024

Prepared for
Ministry for the Environment

ak research & consulting

Objectives and methodology

The main objective of this research is to understand people's attitudes, awareness and behaviours around waste minimisation.

Research was first undertaken in 2023, the latest results track the progress and impact of the Ministry's various Waste work programmes (including kerbside standardisation, plastic phase outs, food waste reduction programme), and of sector led campaigns such as Love Food Hate Waste and Plastic Free July.



Results in this report are based upon questions asked of a nationally representative online sample of n=1025 adults 18 years and over.

- The margin of error for a 50% figure at the 95% confidence level is $\pm 3.1\%$.
- Research was conducted between the 22nd to the 27th of May 2024
- The analysis and commentary provides reporting for the general public. Where there are significant demographic differences these have been included in the commentary.



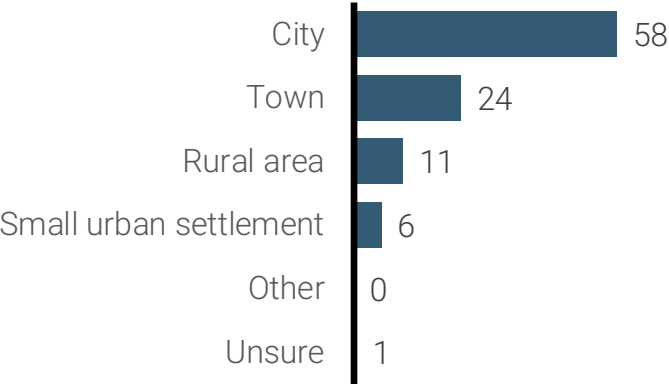
All numbers are shown rounded to zero decimal places, hence specified totals are not always exactly equal to the sum of the specified sub-totals. The differences are seldom more than 1%.

- For example, $2.7 + 3.5 = 6.2$ would appear: $3 + 4 = 6$.

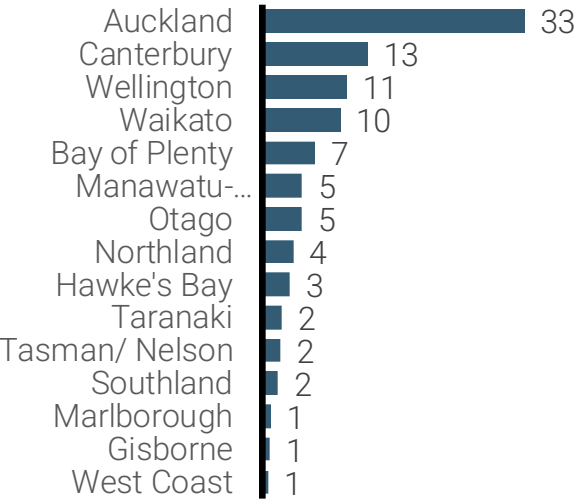
Sample Demographics

All numbers are percentages of the survey sample (%)

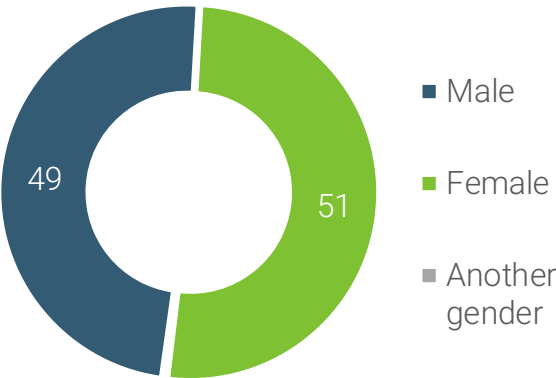
Settlement



Region



Gender



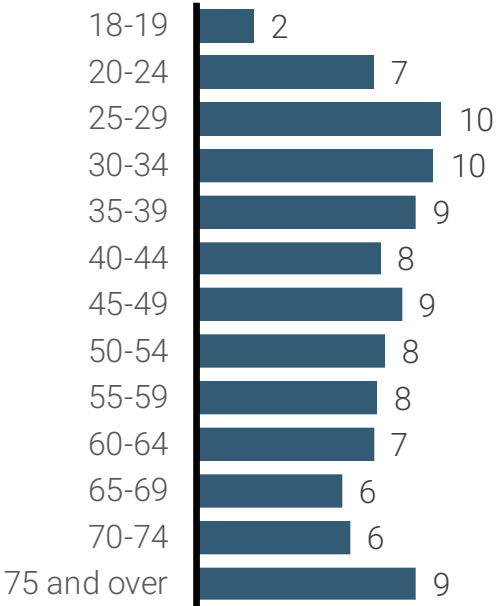
Household income

<\$50,000	26
\$50,001-\$100,000	34
>\$100,000	30

Household occupants

Spouse/partner	55
Children aged under 18	30
No one	18
Parents	11
Flatmates	8
Other adult family members	14
Other	2

Age group



Ethnicity

NZ European	66
Asian	15
NZ Māori	15
Pasifika	7
Prefer not to say	2
Other	9

Base: All respondents (n=1025)

Some demographic totals exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.
For example, someone can be both NZ European and Māori.

Key findings



Recycling behaviours and changes to kerbside recycling

- Nearly all claimed to recycle, with most recyclers using the Council kerbside service.
- Consistent with 2023, uncertainty over whether an item can be recycled would almost always lead to these items being put in the rubbish bin.
- Specific recycling behaviours were broadly similar to 2023, however, there were some drops, namely, rinsing and cleaning items, removing plastic wrap from meat trays, along with willingness to take some items to separate locations to recycle.
- A fifth had noticed changes to kerbside recycling in the past 12 months, with just under half that recalled seeing information on what can be recycled in kerbside recycling.
- Those with no awareness or recall of information about changes to recycling were less likely to undertake recycling behaviours. Perhaps indicating lack of knowledge may impact behaviour.



Recycling attitudes and knowledge

- Seeing recycling as worthwhile, being confident in correctly undertaking this task, and perceived ease - remained key factors in driving the high levels of recycling behaviour, with all these attitudes increasing in 2024.
- There was a general trend in the latest monitor for positive attitudes towards recycling to increase, and negative attitudes to decrease since 2023.
- The move to standardise recycling practices across New Zealand has not yet lessened confusion on what can and can't be recycled.
- Correct attribution of 15 items according to what is recyclable or non-recyclable improved slightly in 2024.



Repairing behaviours and attitudes

- New questions on repairing items, showed that around a third would consistently try to repair broken items before buying a new one.
- Difficulty repairing items may be a factor deterring this behaviour with only a quarter of those that try, succeeding in their repair efforts.
- For those that undertake repairs, nearly two-thirds tried to fix items themselves.
- The main barriers to repairing items were the belief that some items cannot be fixed, and that it is cheaper to replace rather than repair.

Key findings (cont.)



Food waste behaviour, attitudes, and segments

- The majority say they produce less than a 2L ice cream container of food waste a week (wasting food that can be eaten). This was similar to 2023.
- Actions to reduce food waste tested were almost universally undertaken by households. Most remained unchanged from 2023.
- However, eliminating all food waste was a distant goal with three-quarters stating they throw out food that has gone off, although this indicator declined slightly in 2024.
- Segments based on the declared amount of food wasted in their household, showed a slight increase in the low waste segment with corresponding decreases in the high and medium waste segments.



Single use produce bags

- The use of reusable shopping bags and reusable produce bags increased this year (with around two-fifths claiming to use either, up 6% and 7% respectively).
- The use of single use produce bags declined (now just over a third, down 5%).
- Just over half, claimed to use the same amount of single use produce bags as before, while just under a third claimed to use less (new question).



Communications on reducing waste

- Testing recall of a range of information on waste reduction, highest recall was for information on 'recycling correctly' with over half recalling information.
 - There was significantly higher recall in 2024 for information on 'reducing your food waste' and having an 'Eat Me First' shelf in your fridge.
 - A quarter recalled information on the standardisation of kerbside recycling, with key channels being news media and their local council.
- Among four campaigns/ activities tested, highest recall was for 'Love Food Hate Waste' with just under a quarter recalling this campaign, up 6%.

Key findings (cont.)



The 'Eat Me First' campaign

- When taken across all three, 23% could recall either the Eat Me First campaign generally, specific Eat Me First advertisements, or the Eat Me First sticker advertising.
 - Just over ten percent recalled the 'Eat Me First' campaign, mainly through news media, followed by social media and at Woolworths supermarkets.
 - When shown, less than 10 percent could recall specific advertisements from the campaign.
 - Awareness of the 'Eat Me First' stickers was higher on 16%.
- Of those aware of the campaign, just under half could recall places where you could pick up stickers, with just over half of this group taking stickers home.
- For those that had not taken a sticker, the main reasons were that they already had a system to reduce food waste or wasted little food.
- Of those that had taken a sticker(s), 61% said they used the sticker, 48% said they had given a sticker to someone else, and 26% said they had lost it before they could use it. Respondents could choose multiple actions as they could take several stickers.
- Most that used the sticker had found it useful.

Conclusions:

- Recycling is an entrenched behaviour, with positive attitudes strengthening in this monitor and underpinning recycling behaviours. However, improvements can still be made, with many still not recycling correctly.
- A majority had not noticed changes to kerbside recycling in the past 12 months, although it should be noted that changes only impacted some council areas.
- Standardising recycling practices has not lessened confusion on what can and can't be recycled but as these become the norm, we would expect this to improve.
- Repairing items rather than purchasing a new item is undertaken by a minority, with significant barriers in place, including, perceived difficulty repairing items, required skills, and whether the cost to repair is felt to be justified.
- Most felt that they do not produce much food waste, while also claiming to undertake the majority of food waste reduction practices – consistent with 2023. However, many still admit to throwing out food and putting food in the rubbish bin.
- Indications on how to make ground on improving food waste behaviours are the drivers of recycling behaviour, namely, seeing the actions as worthwhile (a potential problem being that they currently see their level of food waste as relatively low), and confidence and ease of undertaking actions (as seen in other research food waste has negative connotations around smell and cleanliness).
- Use of reusable produce and shopping bags is increasing, with use of single use produce bags declining. However, use of reusable bags is nowhere near universal.
- Across information on waste reduction, highest recall was for 'recycling correctly'. Recall of many initiatives and campaigns remains fairly low, indicating the level of difficulty in finding messaging that cuts through and changes behaviour. Again, perceptions around being 'worthwhile', personal connection, and required effort may play a part. Along with the current economic climate, where priorities may be focused elsewhere.

Report findings: Recycling behaviours and changes to kerbside recycling



Summary: Recycling behaviours and changes to kerbside recycling

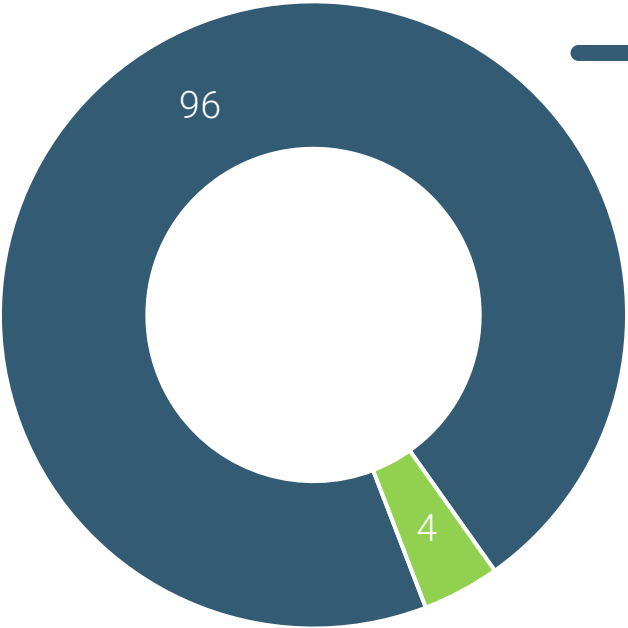
- This section of the survey asked respondents about their current recycling behaviours and awareness of changes to kerbside recycling over the past 12 months.
- **Nearly all (96%) claimed to recycle**, predominantly through Council kerbside recycling. As found in 2023, if **uncertain whether an item can be recycled**, most (90%, up 2%) would put the item in the rubbish bin.
- **Less than in 2023 (52%, down 7%) claimed to sometimes take items to a separate location for recycling** – the largest category remained 'old electronic products' on 31% (however, this dropped significantly from 46% in 2023), followed by 'paint' 28% (down 8%), and 'soft plastics' 24% (down 4%).
- The **top recycling behaviours remained broadly similar** to 2023, however, potentially concerning was a drop in some behaviours, namely, 'rinsing or cleaning recycling before putting in the bin' and 'removing plastic wrap from meat trays'. There was also **only a marginally higher number 'removing lids before putting containers, jars or bottles in recycling'** despite the change in recycling rules.
- **A fifth had noticed changes to kerbside recycling in the past 12 months**, with main changes seen as new exclusions, changes to what was acceptable, and new types of bins.
- Of those that had noticed changes, **72% had made subsequent changes to what they recycle** – the most commonly cited being improving their practices/ adherence and removing lids.
- Just **under half recalled seeing information about what can be recycled in kerbside recycling**, with a quarter recalling any of the images used in the recycling campaign about standardisation.



Nearly all claimed to recycle, with the vast majority choosing to recycle by using the Council kerbside recycling bin



Do you recycle? (%)



- Yes
- No

Those aged under 30 years were less likely to recycle (93%)



[Those who recycle] Which is the main way you recycle? (%)



Use of Council kerbside recycling was higher in Auckland (92%), while use of transfer station or recycling centre was lower (2%).

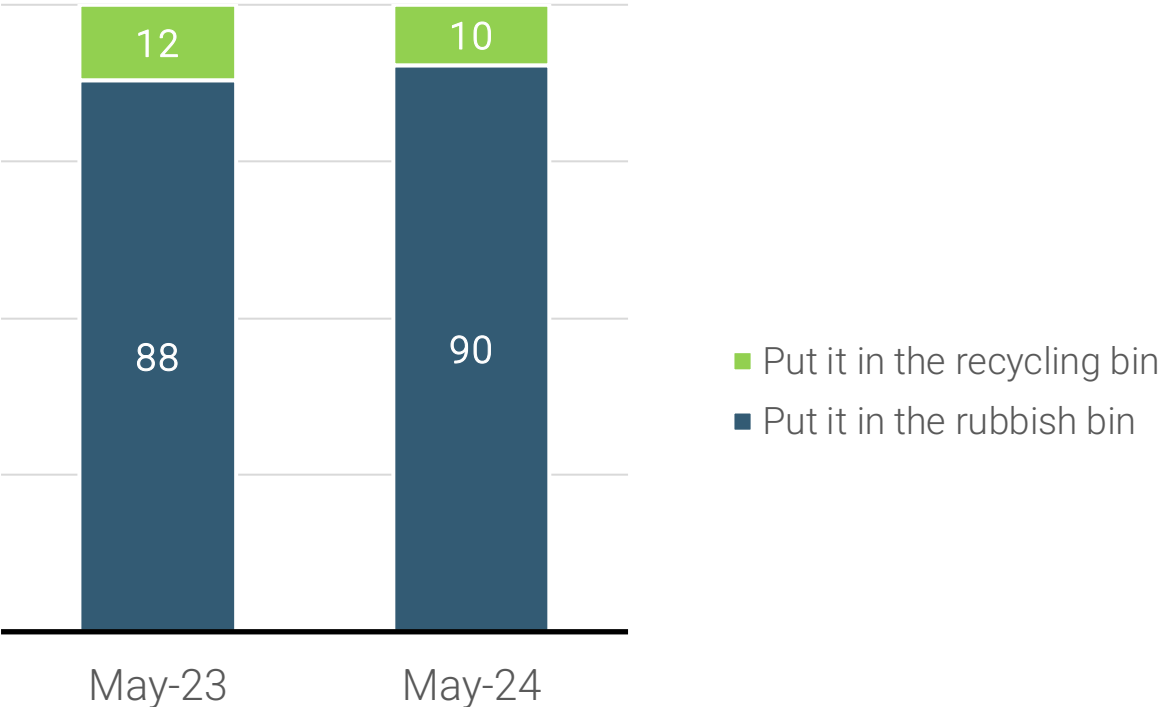
Wellingtonians were more likely to use a private company or landlord provided bin (14%).

Those in cities were more likely to use the Council service (91%), while those in small settlements or rural areas were more likely to use a transfer station/ recycling centre (22%).

Similar to 2023, if unsure whether an item could be recycled, most would put the item in the rubbish bin



If you are unsure of whether an item can be recycled, what do you typically do when disposing of it? (%)



If unsure, those more likely to put in the rubbish bin were:

- 60 plus years (95%)
- Cantabrians (98%)
- NZ Europeans (93%).

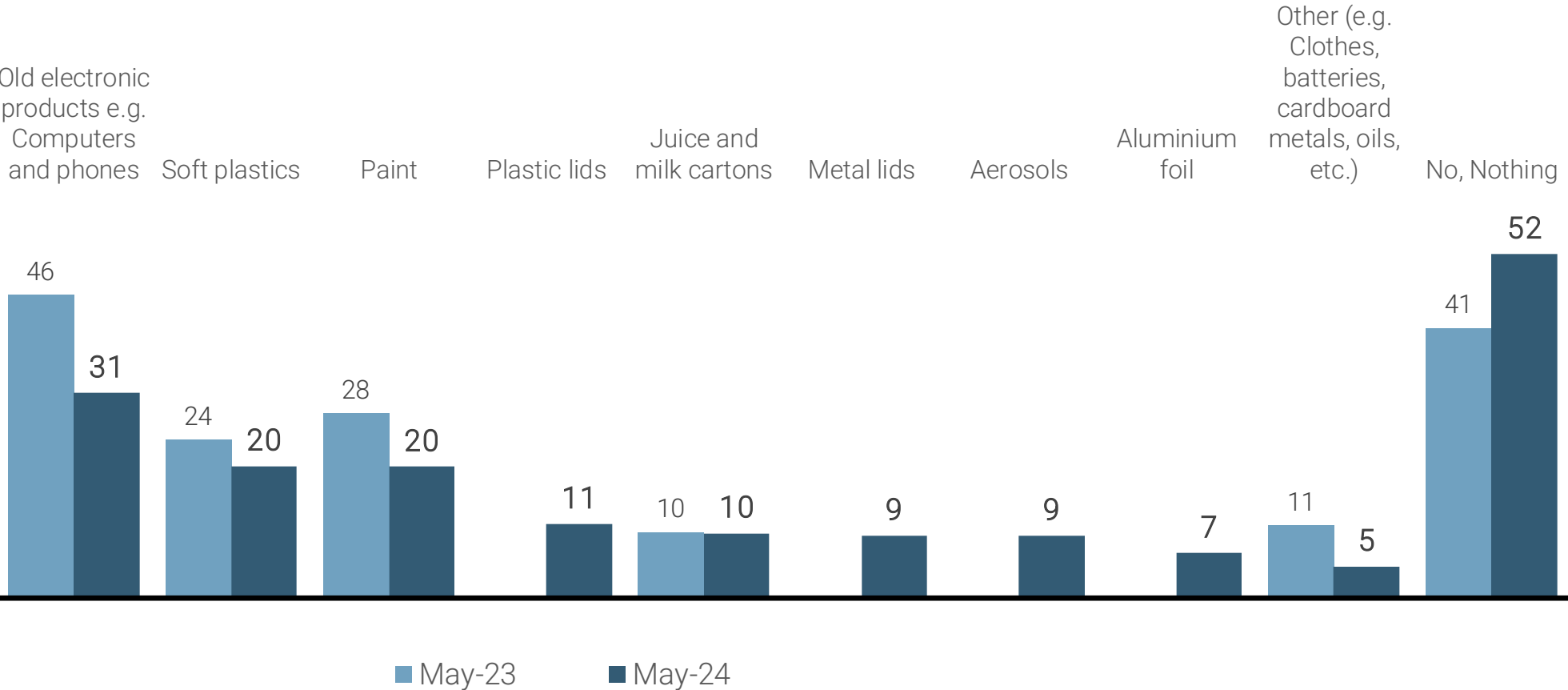
If unsure, those more likely to put in the recycling bin were:

- Under 30 years (15%)
- Aucklanders (13%)
- Pasifika (22%).

Around half claimed that they do not take items to be recycled at separate locations, up 11% from 2023. There was less willingness to take old electronic items or paint to separate locations compared to 2023. Added in 2024, lids (both plastic and metal), aerosols, and aluminium were only dropped off by a small proportion of people.



Do you or anyone in your household take any of these things to be recycled by dropping them off at a separate location? (%)



Males were more likely and females were less likely to drop off the following:

- Paint (24%:16% females)
- Plastic lids (15%: 8% females)
- Juice/ milk cartons (13%: 6% females)
- Metal lids (13%: 6% females)
- Aerosols (13%: 6% females)
- Aluminium foil (10%: 4% females).

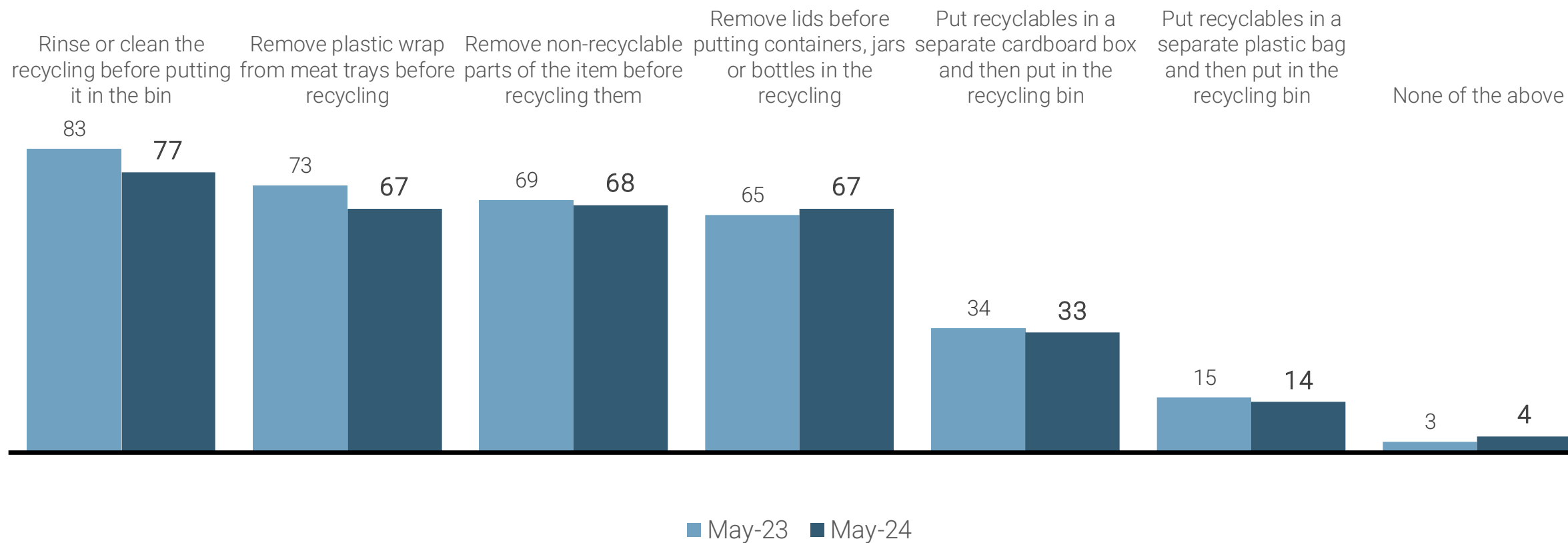
Older people were more likely to drop off old electronic items than younger people:

- Under 30 years (21%)
- 30-44 years (28%)
- 45-59 years (33%)
- 60 plus years (40%).

The most common recycling behaviours remained similar to 2023, 'rinsing or cleaning recycling before putting in the bin', 'removing non-recyclable parts before recycling them', 'removing plastic wrap from meat trays', and removing lids'. 'However, there was a slight drop across many behaviours, and removing lids' was only marginally higher (2%) than in 2023, despite the change in recycling rules.



Which of the following do you do? (%)



There were a number of differences in attitudes towards recycling across demographic groups. There were differences evident by awareness and recall of information on changes to kerbside recycling in the past year, this showed that those with no awareness or recall of information were less likely to undertake recycling behaviours.

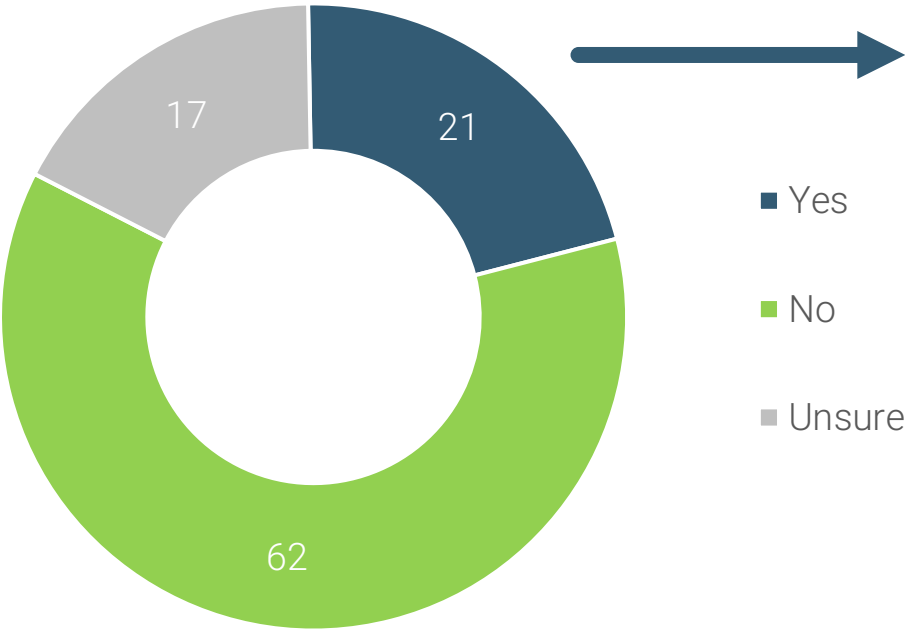
- By gender:
 - Females were more likely than males to rinse or clean items, and remove lids.
- By age:
 - There was a trend by age with older people more likely to undertake most actions than younger people. Apart from putting recyclables in a separate box or separate bag before putting into recycling bin.
- By region:
 - Those in provincial North Island areas were more likely to rinse or clean items, remove lids, and remove plastic wrap from meat trays.
 - Cantabrians were more likely to rinse or clean items and remove lids.
- By ethnicity:
 - Europeans were more likely to rinse/ clean items, remove lids, and non-recyclable parts. Pasifika and Asians were more likely to separate items into a box or bag before putting into recycling bin.

- By awareness of changes to kerbside over the past 12 months. Those not aware of changes were less likely to:
 - Remove plastic wrap from meat trays before recycling
 - Remove non-recyclable parts of the item before recycling them
 - Remove lids before putting containers, jars or bottles in the recycling.
- By recall of information about what you can recycle in kerbside recycling. Those not aware of information were less likely to:
 - Rinse or clean the recycling before putting it in the bin
 - Remove plastic wrap from meat trays before recycling
 - Remove non-recyclable parts of the item before recycling them
 - Remove lids before putting containers, jars or bottles in the recycling.

Around a fifth had noticed changes to kerbside recycling in the past 12 months. The most commonly cited changes were that some items and that certain types of materials were no longer accepted.



Have there been any changes to your kerbside recycling in the last 12 months? (%)



There was a trend by age with older people more likely to believe there had been changes than younger people.

- Under 30 years (10%)
- 30-44 years (20%)
- 45-59 years (25%)
- 60 plus years (27%).



[Those who said something has changed) What has change? (% coded)

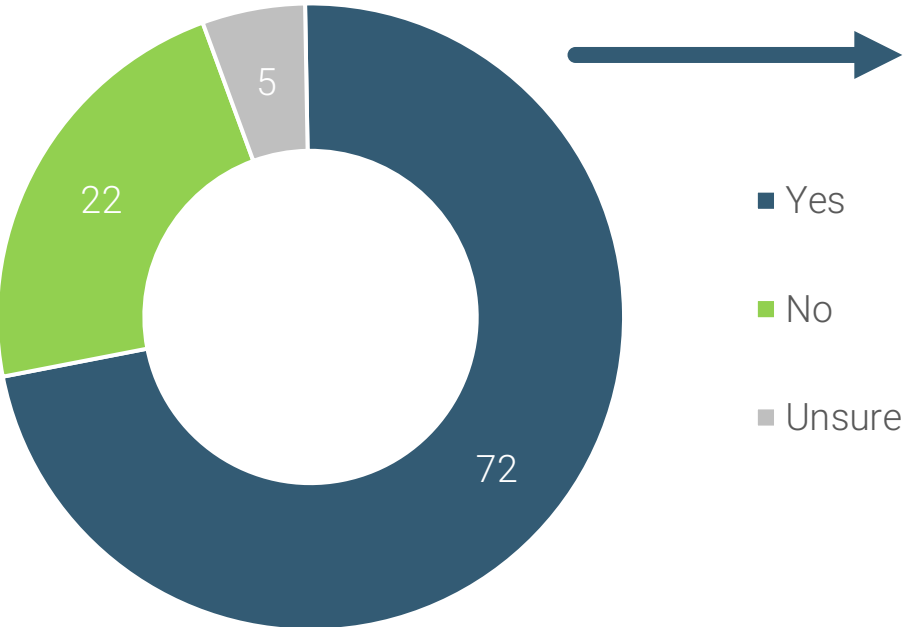
	%
Exclusions: Items that are no longer accepted for recycling, including certain plastics, lids, and small containers.	23
Changes in Acceptable Items: Updates on which materials can be recycled, such as specific plastics (e.g., #5 plastics) and aerosol cans	21
Introduction of New Bins: Provision of additional or new bins for composting, food scrap bins, and various types of waste (e.g. glass, green waste).	13
Confusion and Adaptation: Confusion or difficulty adapting to the new rules.	8
Educational Efforts: Dissemination of new guidelines and information on recycling practices.	6
Cleanliness Requirements: New rules about ensuring items like pizza boxes must be clean before recycling.	5
Standardisation: Implementation of uniform recycling rules across NZ.	5
Lid Removal: Requirement to remove lids from bottles and containers	5
Localised Adjustments: Changes specific to certain areas, such as the introduction of kerbside recycling or different bin types.	4
Increased Regulation: Stricter rules and inspections for what can be placed in recycling bins.	3
Other	4
Unsure	4

Base 1: All respondents (n=1025); Base 2: Those who said something has changed(n=224)

Of those that had noticed changes to kerbside recycling, a majority had made changes to their recycling behaviour. The most common changes included becoming more diligent in sorting recycling and removing lids.



[Noticed changes to kerbside recycling] Have you changed what you recycle, due to the changes made to your kerbside recycling? (%)



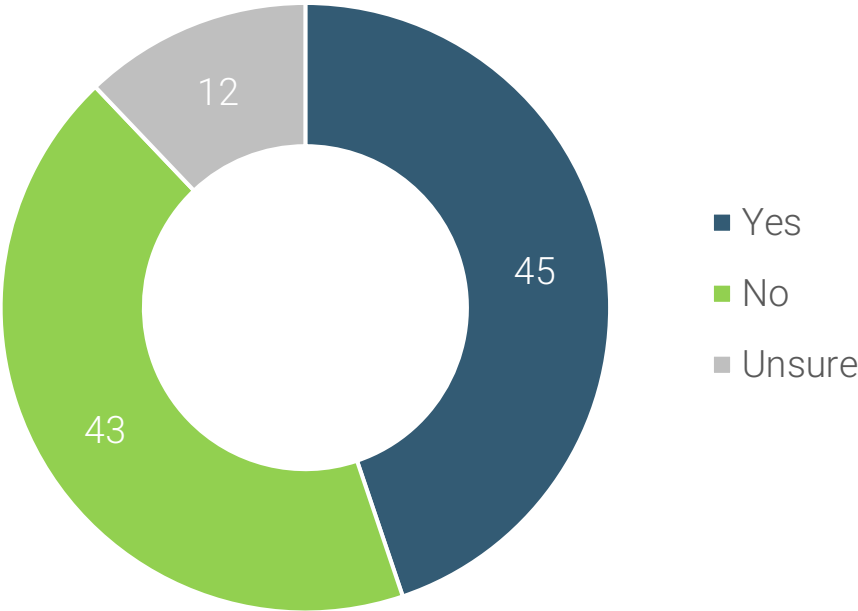
[Those who said they have changed] What have you changed? (% coded)

	%
Improved Practices: Sorting items more diligently, such as not mixing food scraps with general waste, avoiding polystyrene and aerosol cans, or ensuring clean pizza boxes are recycled.	29
Lid Removal: Consistently removing lids from bottles and containers before recycling.	28
Awareness and Education: Using council-provided lists and regularly checking guidelines to ensure compliance.	14
Following New Guidelines: Adhering to updated rules such as only specific plastic numbers (1, 2, 5), and recycling fewer items	9
Changes in Household Behaviour: Adjusting daily routines, like taking soft plastics to supermarkets for recycling or putting out bins at the correct times.	7
New Composting Practices: Separating food scraps and green waste into compost bins.	6
Unsure	7

Just under half had seen information on what can be recycled earlier in the year.



Have you seen any information about what you can recycle in your kerbside recycling bin earlier this year?(%)



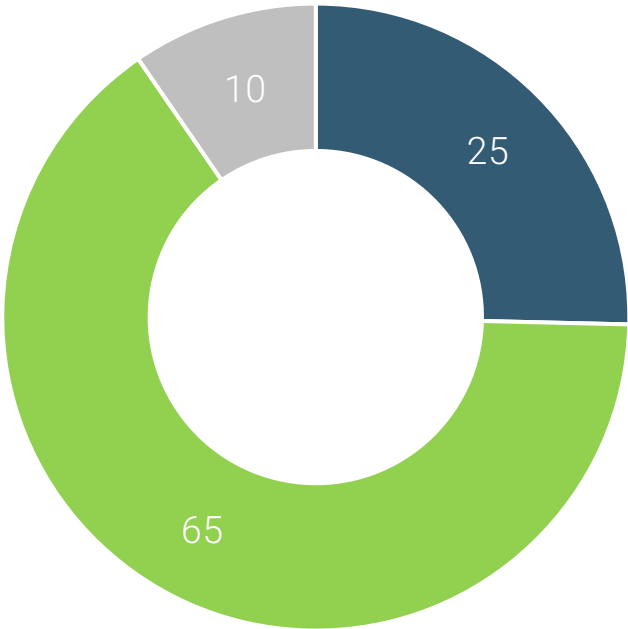
Those more likely to have seen information on recycling were:

- 60 plus years (53%)
- South Island residents (excluding Canterbury) (51%).

Only a quarter could recall images used in the recycling campaign.



Have you seen any of the following images? (%)



Those more likely to recall seeing the images were:

- Males (30%)
- Aucklanders (30%)
- Asians (37%).

There was a trend by age with younger people more likely to recall the images:

- Under 30 years (39%)
- 30-44 years (29%)
- 45-59 years (19%)
- 60 plus (18%).

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Report findings: Recycling attitudes and knowledge



Summary: Recycling attitudes and knowledge

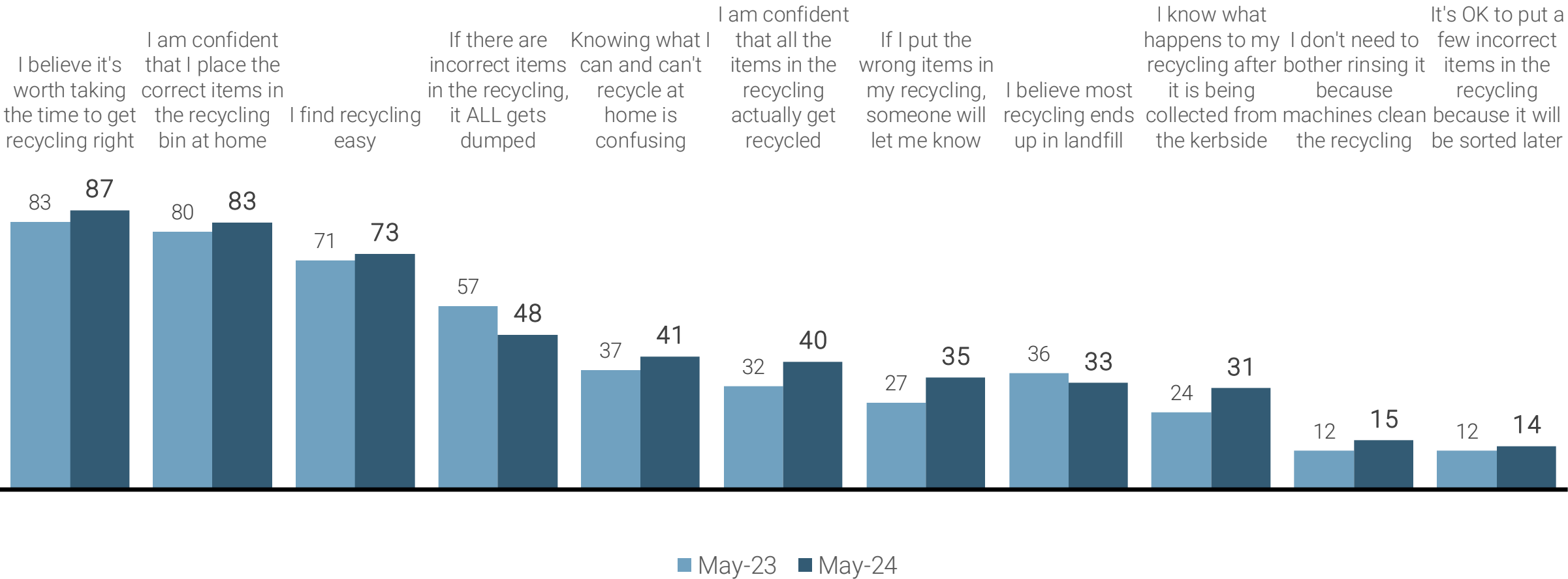
- This section of the survey asked respondents about their views of recycling and tested knowledge of whether items were recyclable or non-recyclable.
- **Key attitudes that continued to drive recycling behaviour** were 'it's worthwhile taking the time to get recycling right' (87%), 'I am confident that I place correct items in the recycling bin' (83%), and 'I find recycling easy' (73%) rating highest and recorded increases in the latest monitor.
- In general, **positive attitudes towards recycling increased, while negative attitudes decreased**. While early days, standardising recycling practices across New Zealand has not reduced confusion about what can and can't be recycled with 41% (up 4%) that say '**knowing what I can and can't recycle at home is confusing**'.
- Out of 15 items tested in 2023, there was a slight increase in **the majority correctly identifying whether an item was recyclable or not**. Now, 33% correctly identified at least 13 of 15 items as recyclable or non-recyclable, up 4% from 2023.



In general, positive attitudes towards recycling increased, while negative attitudes decreased. Agreement with many misconceptions declined, the biggest being a 9-point decline in those believing 'if there are incorrect items in the recycling, it all gets dumped'. The change in recycling practices in some areas appears to have had a relatively minor impact with a 4-point rise in those that say that 'knowing what I can and can't recycle at home is confusing'.



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about recycling? (% Total agree)



There were a number of differences in attitudes towards recycling across demographic groups.

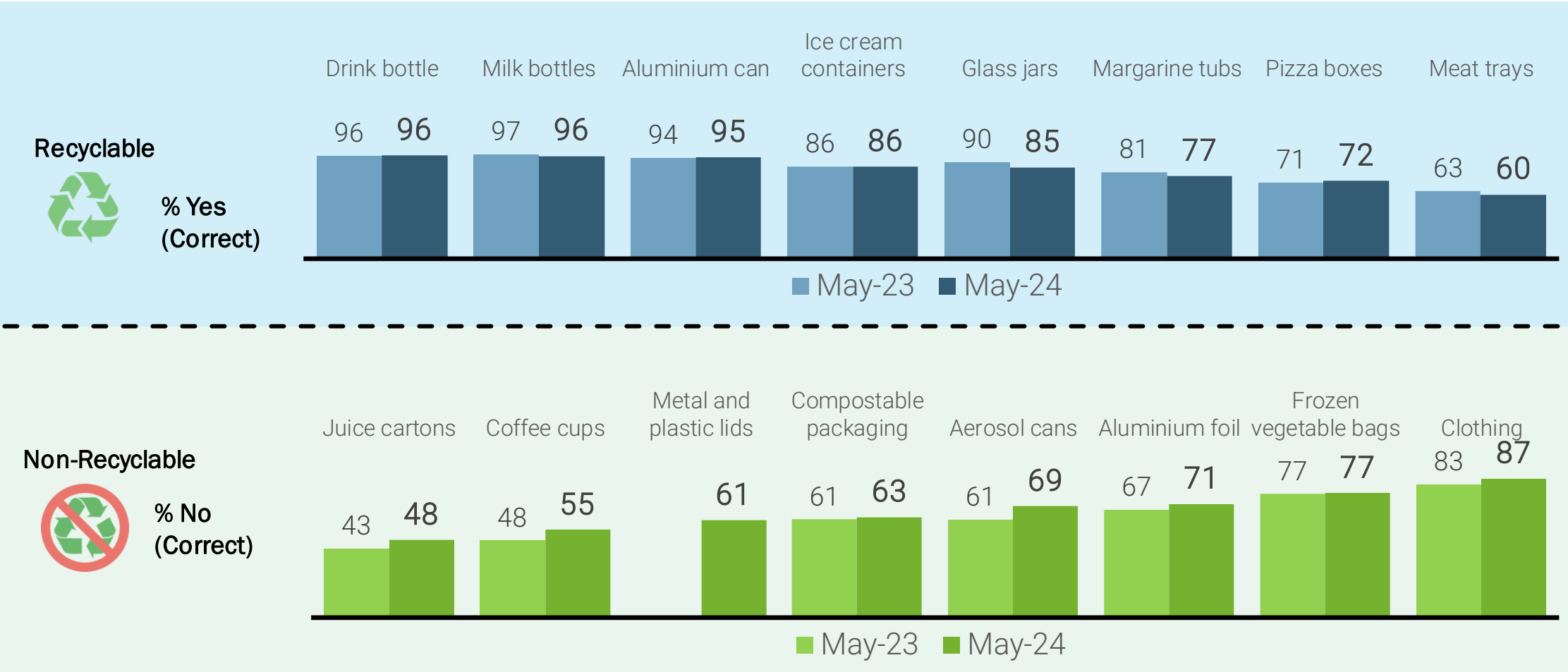
- By gender, males were more likely than females to agree that:
 - I know what happens to my recycling after it is being collected from the kerbside
 - Knowing what I can and can't recycle at home is confusing
 - I am confident that all the items in the recycling actually get recycled
 - It's OK to put a few incorrect items in the recycling because it will be sorted later
 - I don't need to bother rinsing it because machines clean the recycling.
- There were trends by age, where younger people were more likely to agree than older people that:
 - I am confident that all the items in the recycling actually get recycled
 - It's OK to put a few incorrect items in the recycling because it will be sorted later
 - Knowing what I can and can't recycle at home is confusing
 - If I put the wrong items in my recycling, someone will let me know.
- By age, those aged 60 years or more were more likely to agree that:
 - I find recycling easy
 - I believe it's worth taking the time to get recycling right.

- By region, those in Auckland were more likely to agree that:
 - I am confident that all the items in the recycling actually get recycled
 - It's OK to put a few incorrect items in the recycling because it will be sorted later
 - I don't need to bother rinsing it because machines clean the recycling.
- By region, those in Canterbury were more likely to agree that:
 - If there are incorrect items in the recycling, it ALL gets dumped.
- By region, those living in a town were more likely to agree that:
 - If I put the wrong items in my recycling, someone will let me know.
- By ethnicity, Pasifika and Asian were more likely to agree that:
 - I am confident that all the items in the recycling actually get recycled
 - I don't need to bother rinsing it because machines clean the recycling.
- By ethnicity, Pasifika were more likely to agree that:
 - It's OK to put a few incorrect items in the recycling because it will be sorted later
 - I believe most recycling ends up in landfill.
- By ethnicity, Asians were more likely to agree that:
 - I know what happens to my recycling after it is being collected from the kerbside.

Correct identification of non-recyclable items tended to increase in the latest monitor, the largest increase being for aerosol cans. A majority identified metal and plastic lids as being non-recyclable which was a new category added this year, due to recent standardisation of recycling across New Zealand. Correct identification of recyclable items remained similar to 2023, the largest decline being for glass jars (down 5 points).



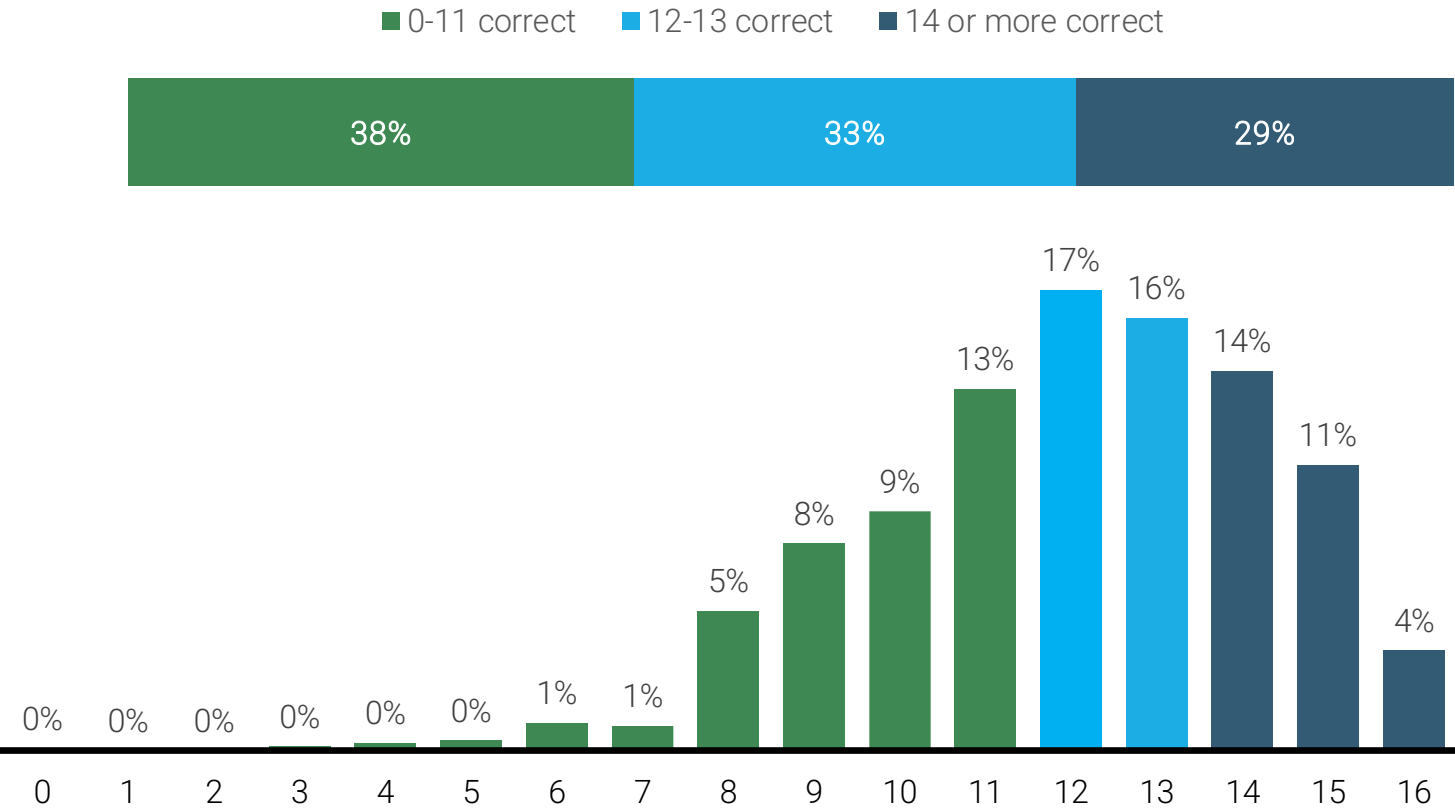
Would you typically put these items in your recycling? (%)



A majority correctly assigned items as recyclable or not. An additional item was added in 2024 (metal and plastic lids), but based on the same list asked last year, there was a slight increase in correct attribution this year.



Would you typically put these items in your recycling? CORRECT RESPONSE (%)



Out of 16 items, percentage that labelled number of items correctly as recyclable or non-recyclable.

Trendline		
[Based on 15 items asked in 2023]		
	2023	2024
0-10 correct	34	31
11-12 correct	37	36
13 or more correct	29	33

Report findings:
Reducing and
repairing
behaviours and
attitudes



Summary: Reusing and repairing behaviours

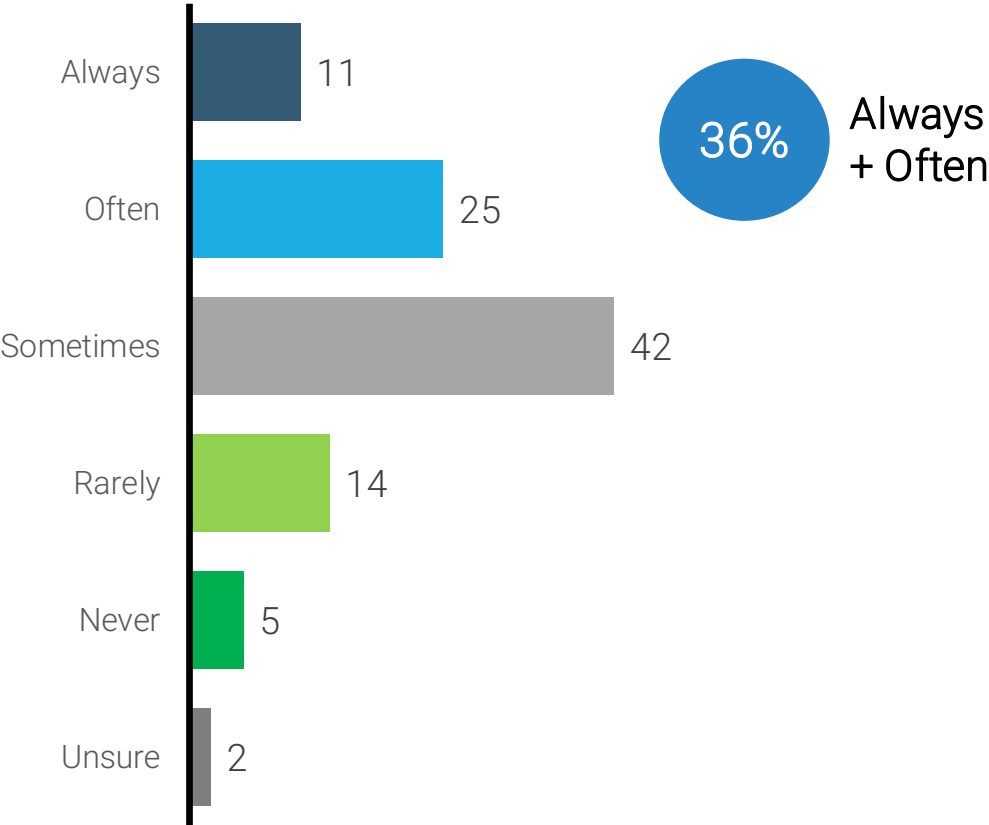
- This section covers questions asked of respondents on reusing and repairing items.
- Around a third (36%), **claimed to 'always or often' try to repair broken items** rather than buy a new item.
- A key **barrier to repairing items seems to be the perceived difficulty to repair**, with only 25% saying they 'always or often' succeed in repairing items.
- When repairing items, it seems that **personal DIY skills are important** with 64% saying they repair items themselves, 43% pay someone to repair an item, and 38% seeking assistance from a friend or family member.
- The **main barriers to repairing items was the view that some items cannot be fixed** (60%) and that it is cheaper to replace some items than it is to repair it (50%).
- **Reducing waste was seen as the most beneficial action to take to benefit the environment**, chosen by 40%. However, it was not clear-cut with reusing (29%) and recycling (24%) also scoring reasonable nominations, while combined first and second choices saw 'reusing' move ahead of 'reducing'.



Just over a third would routinely ('always' + 'often') repair broken items rather than buy a new item. The largest proportion (42%) would sometimes repair the item, while for 19% it would be an unlikely behaviour.



How often do you try to get broken or damaged items repaired rather than buying a new item? (%)



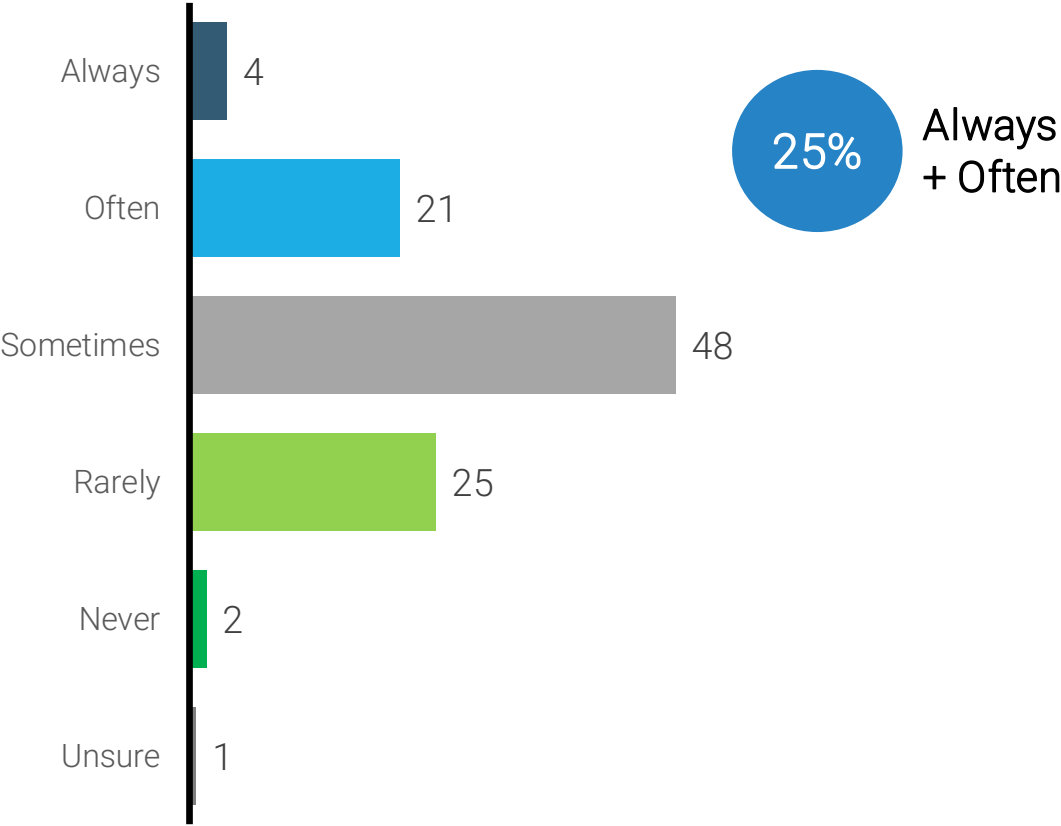
Those more likely to (always + often) repair items were:

- Males (41%)
- Those living in small settlements or rural areas (46%)
- Those living with a spouse or partner (41%).

Indicating a potential barrier to people attempting to repair items, there were significant numbers that failed to get broken or damaged items repaired.



[Those who rarely or more repair items] How often do you succeed in getting broken or damaged items repaired? (%)

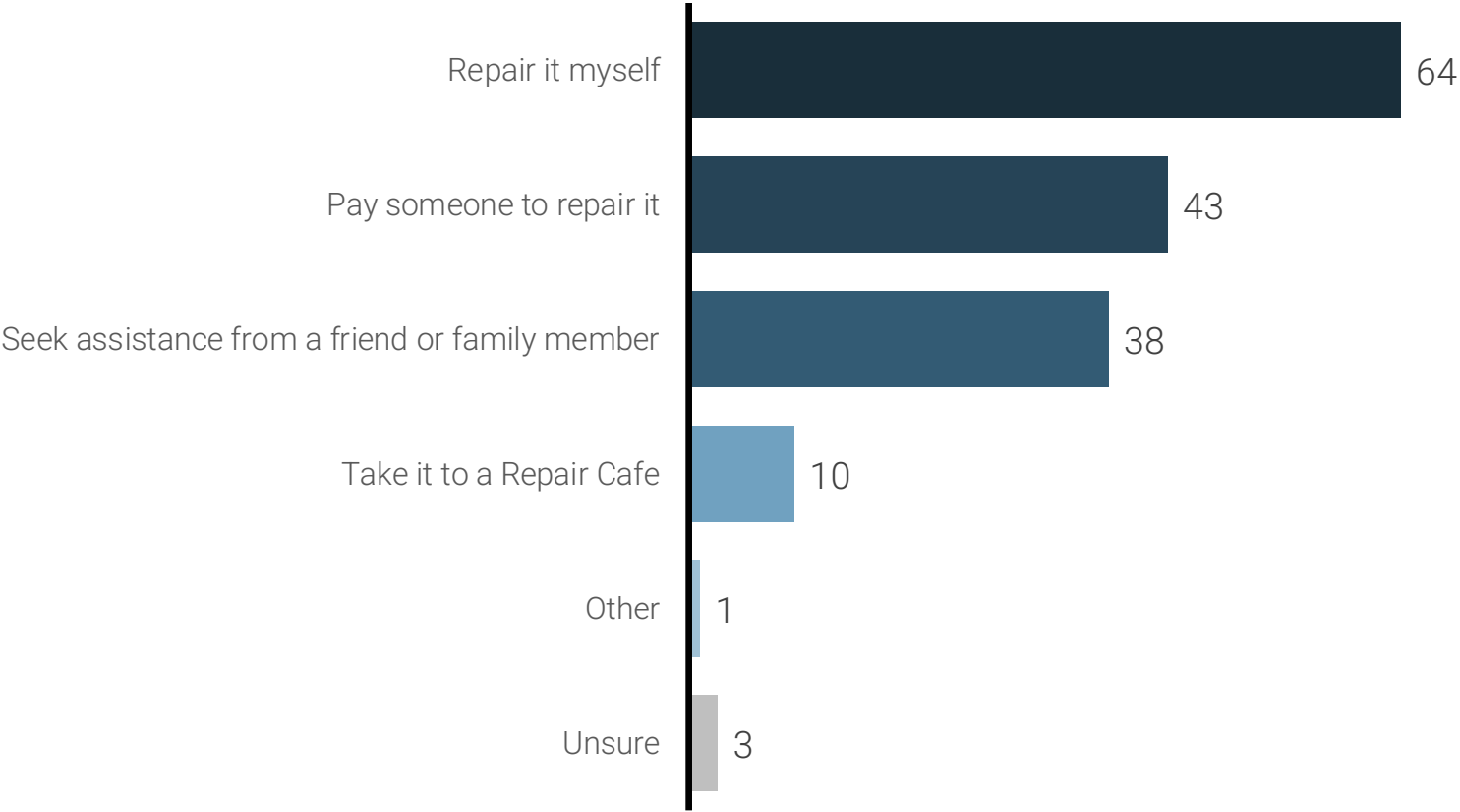


Males (30%) were more likely to (always + often) succeed in repairing items than females (21%).

Main methods for repairing items were to repair themselves, pay someone to repair items, or get assistance from friends or family. Showing reliance on accessing repair skills (either theirs, friends or family) and funds.



[Those who rarely or more repair items] What do you usually do to get items repaired?(%)



Males (70%) were more likely to repair items themselves compared to females (58%).

While females (46%) were more likely to seek assistance from a friend or family member compared to males (29%).

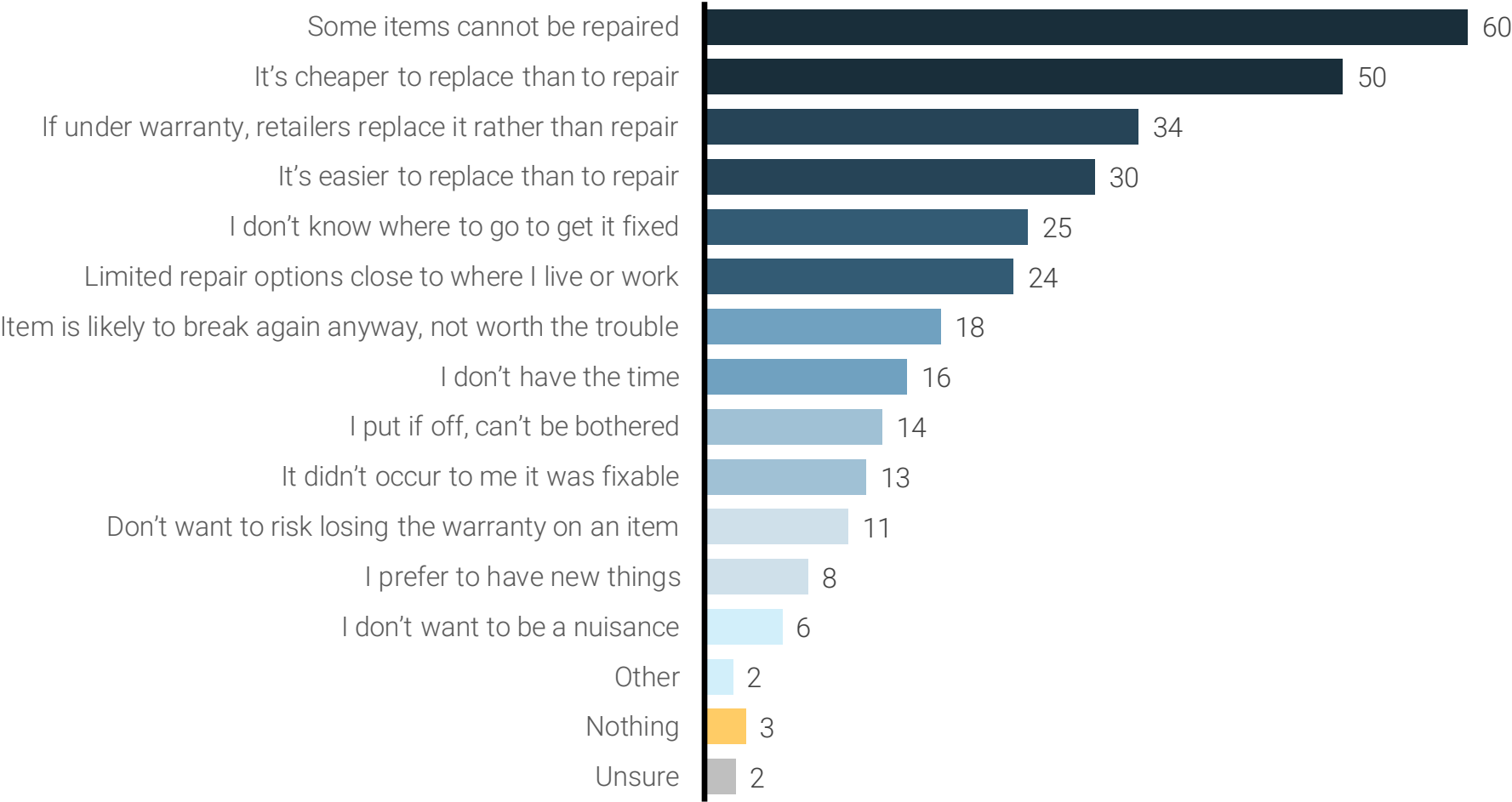
Asians (18%) were more likely to take an item to a repair café.

Base: Those who rarely or more repair items (n=948)
Multiple response question

The key barriers to not repairing items, was the belief that items can't be repaired and that they thought it was cheaper to replace rather than repair an item. This was followed by the fact that items can be under warranty and that they felt it was easier to replace an item. Next came potential issues that could be addressed through information – that they did not know where to go to get items fixed and that they felt there were limited options close to where they live or work.



What are the main things preventing you from getting as many items repaired as possible? CHOOSE UP TO FIVE (%)



There was a trend by age with older people more likely to believe that 'some items cannot be repaired' than younger people:

- Under 30 years (43%)
- 30-44 years (52%)
- 45-59 years (67%)
- 60 plus years (72%).

Females (31%) were more likely to say the "don't know where to go to get it fixed", than males (19%) .

Those in a small settlement or rural areas were more likely to say there were "limited repair options close by" (36%).

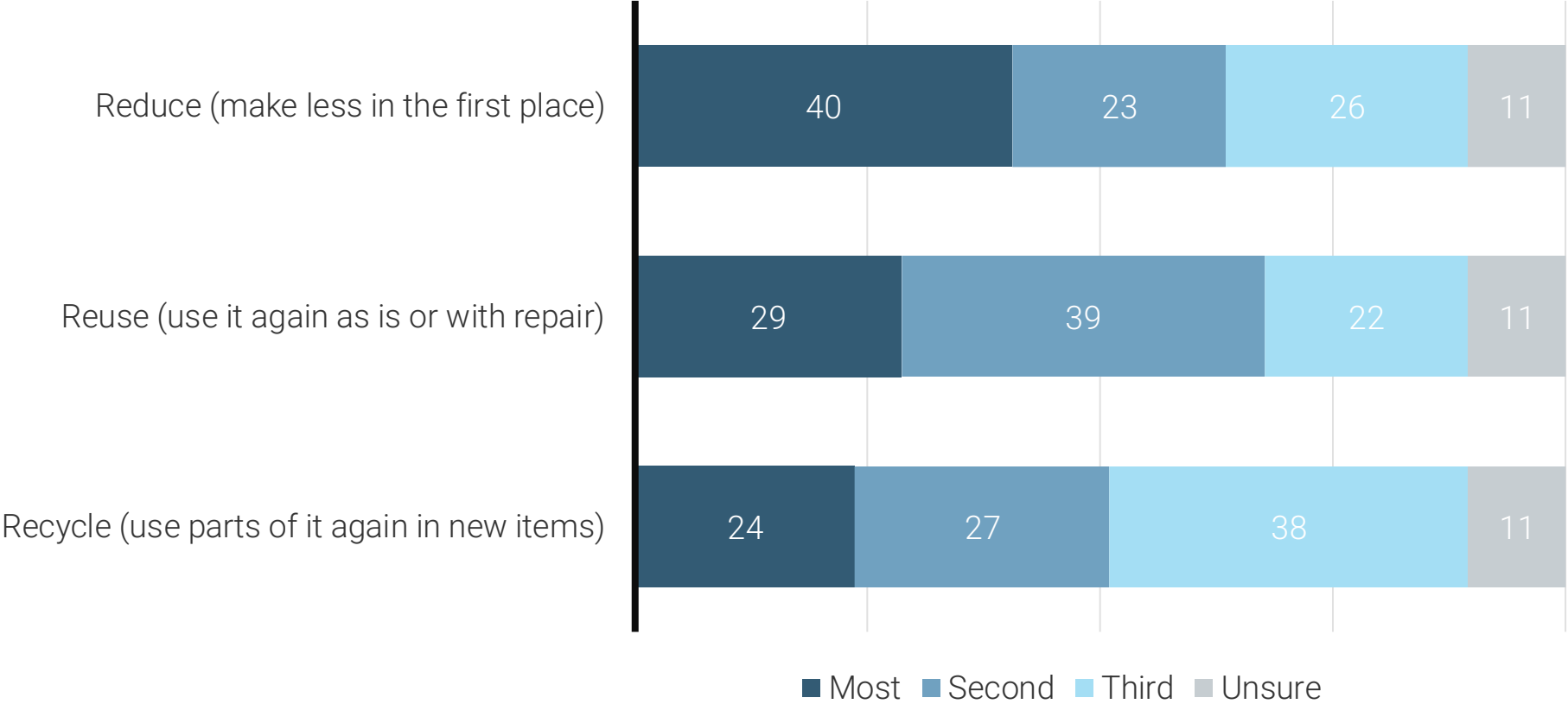
Those under 30 were more likely to say they:

- Can't be bothered (26%)
- Don't have the time (26%)
- Don't want to risk losing the warranty on an item (18%)
- Prefer to have new things (14%).

Reducing waste was seen as the most beneficial action to take to benefit the environment, however, reusing and recycling also recorded a reasonable level of nominations. When combining first and second choices – ‘reusing’ slightly exceeded ‘reducing’ waste on being beneficial evidence this issue was not clear-cut.



Thinking about the waste you produce, generally which of the following do you think is MOST beneficial to the environment?
And out of the remaining two what is the most beneficial?? (%)



Females (45%) were more likely than males to rate ‘reduce’ as most beneficial (36%).

By campaign awareness, only one showed a significant difference. Those that had seen information on how to recycle correctly, were more likely to choose ‘reduce’ as their top choice (44%).

Report findings: Food waste behaviour, attitudes, and segments



Summary: Food waste behaviour, attitudes and segments

- This section reviews the questions that explored attitudes and behaviours in respect to food waste. A segmentation of respondents was replicated based on their declared level of food waste, this identified those who exhibit low, medium and high food wastage.
- In line with this, **declared food waste* remained relatively low**, with 29% (down 2%) claiming to throw out at least the equivalent to a 2L ice cream container worth of food waste per week, 47% (down 3%) less than 2L, and 24% (up 5%) said they produced no food waste.
- Of those with some food waste, the **majority** (69%, down 2%) **believed that they wasted little to almost no food** (combined rating of those saying the waste 'almost nothing', 'very little' and 'little').
- **Most households continued to claim that they undertook many behaviours to reduce food waste.** The highest remained 'eating leftovers' (96%, no change), 'thinking about portion size' (93%, up 1%), 'using a shopping list' (91%, down 1%), and 'planning meals in advance' (91%, down 1%).
- However, as found in 2023, **a large number also 'threw out food that had gone off'** (75%, down 4%) and 59% (down 4%) 'put food waste into the rubbish bin', although both of these metrics declined slightly.
- Segments based on the declared amount of food wasted in their household, showed **a slight increase in the low waste segment** (now on 33%, up 3%).

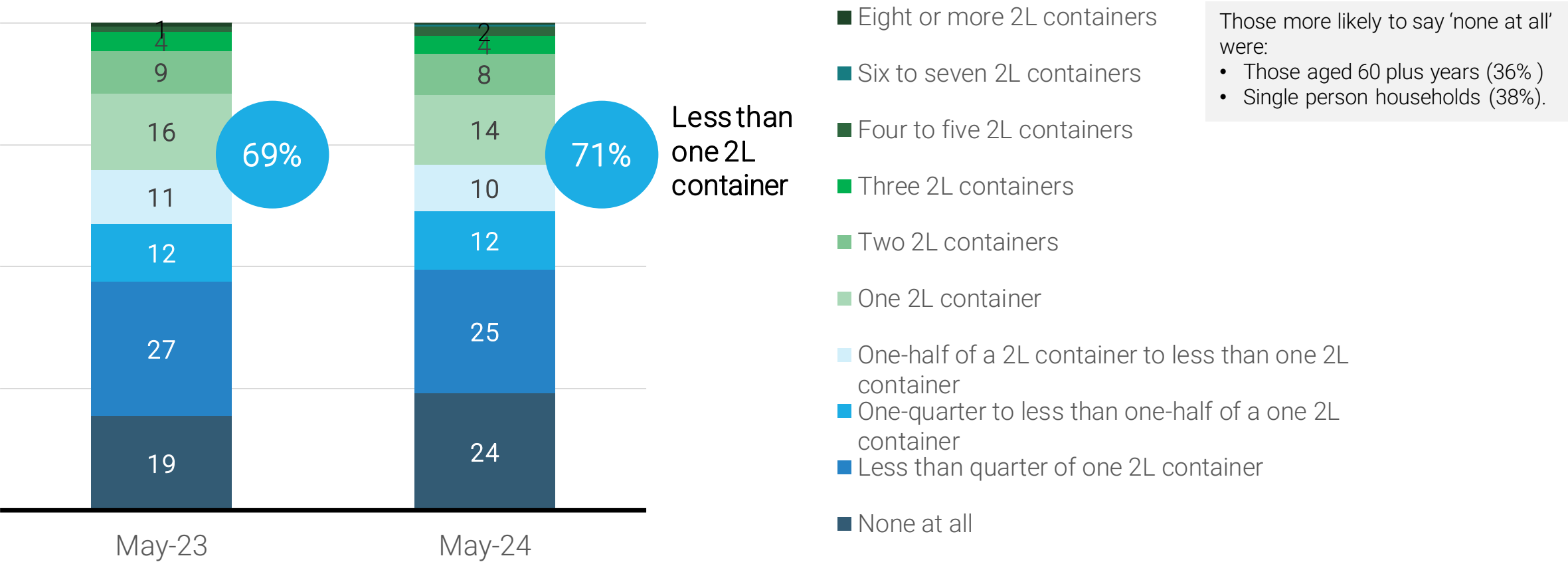
* Question relates to food that could have been eaten and includes food that was fed to animals or composted.



Declared level of food waste remained relatively low, with a majority claiming to waste less than one 2L container a week.



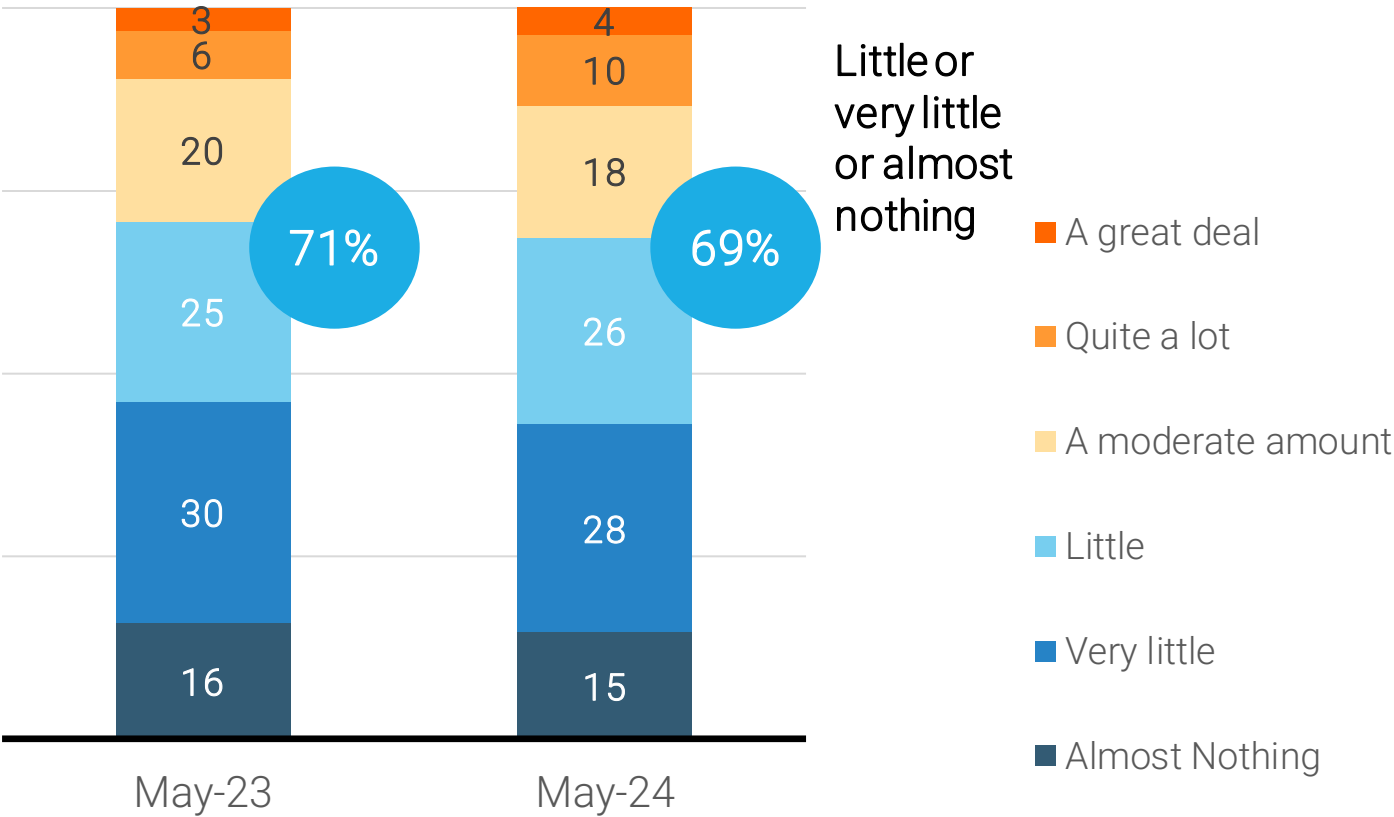
Using a 2L ice-cream container as a guide, approximately how much food does your household throw away that could have been eaten PER WEEK? This also includes any food that was fed to animals or composted? (%)



Across those that have some food waste, a majority claimed to waste little food ('little' + 'very little' + 'almost nothing').



In general, how much uneaten food would you say your household usually throws away that could have been eaten? This also includes any food that was fed to animals or composted. For example, food and drink that was edible at some point before being thrown away? (%)



There was a trend by age with older people more likely to say they waste 'very little' food than younger people:

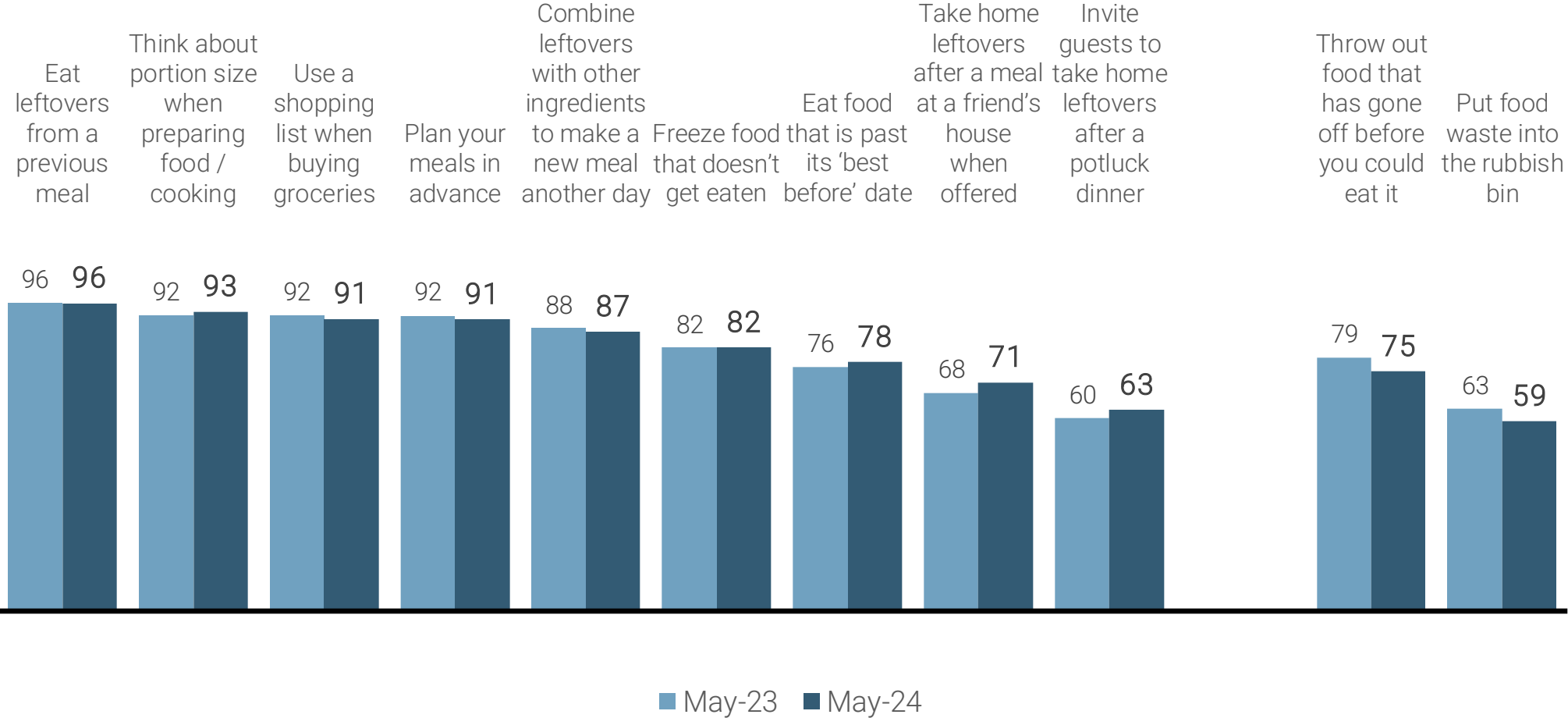
- Under 30 years (14%)
- 30-44 years (23%)
- 45-59 years (36%)
- 60 plus years (41%).

Households with dependent children were less likely to say they waste 'very little' food (20%).

Large majorities continued to claim to undertake positive actions in managing food waste. The lowest actions involving leftovers when hosting or having a meal at a friend's house. There were slight drops in the two negative actions – throwing out food that had gone off and putting food waste into the rubbish bin.



How often does the following occur in your household? (% Always + Sometimes)



Those under 30 were less likely to do the following:

- Use a shopping list...(83%)*
- Think about portion size when preparing/cooking food (85%)
- Eat leftovers...(90%)*
- Combine leftovers to make a new meal...(78%)*
- Plan meals in advance (83%)
- Freeze food not eaten* (75%)

Females were more likely to freeze food that doesn't get eaten (85%).

Those with dependent children were more likely to:

- Throw out food that has gone off (81%)*
- Put food waste into the rubbish bin (70%).

The size of the waste segments remained much the same, with a slight increase in the low waste segment with corresponding decreases in the medium and high waste segments. Larger proportions of those in the 'high waste' segment were evident in those using single use produce bags, that buy prepacked fruit and vegetables, and that order fruit and vegetables online.

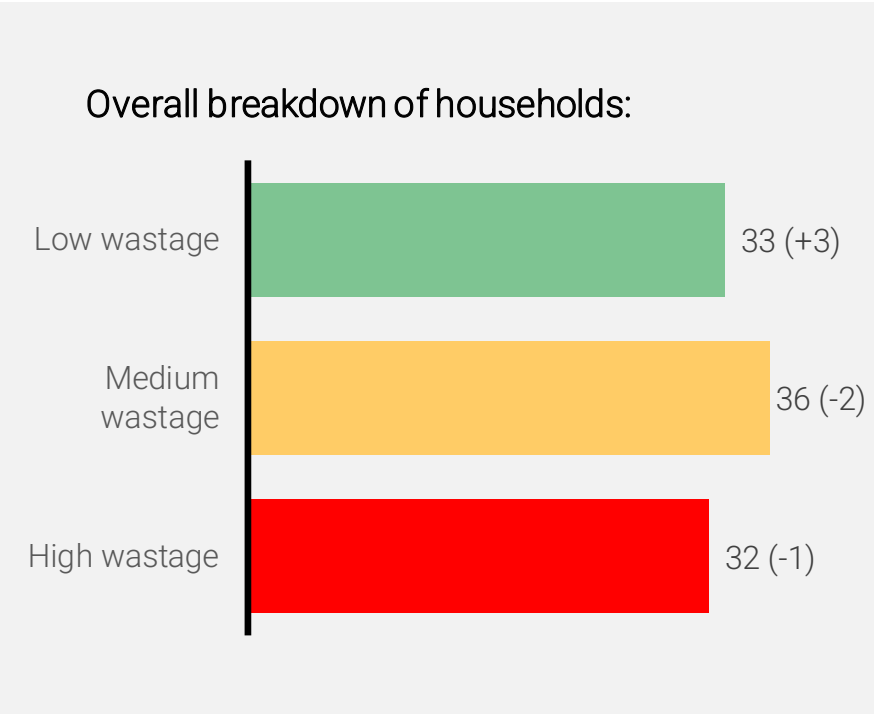


Using a 2L ice-cream container as a guide, approximately how much food does your household throw away that could have been eaten PER WEEK? This also includes any food that was fed to animals or composted?

In general, how much uneaten food would you say your household usually throws away that could have been eaten? This also includes any food that was fed to animals or composted. For example, food and drink that was edible at some point before being thrown? (%)

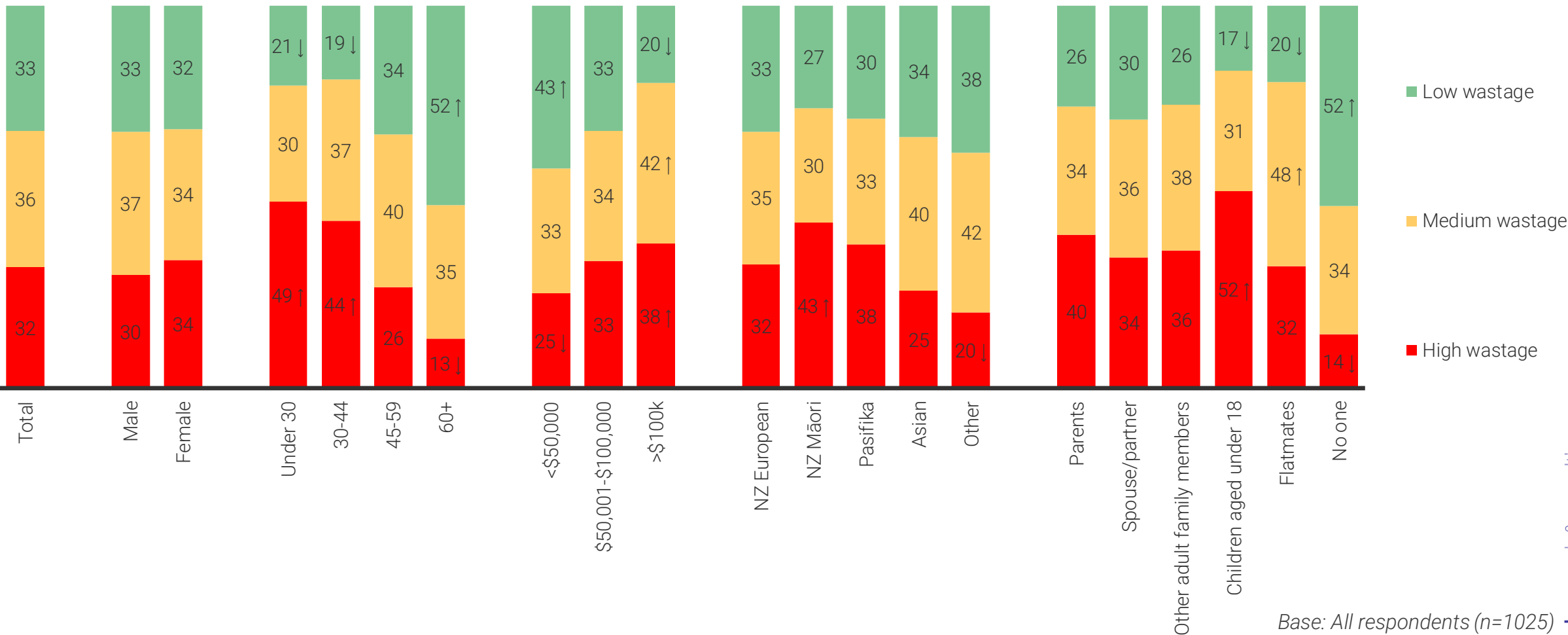
2L ice-cream
container of
food waste
per week

How much food waste is thrown out			
	None at all or almost nothing	Very little	Little or more
Less than a quarter	33%	11%	6%
One quarter to one half	1%	5%	6%
One half or more	1%	6%	32%



There were trends by age and income. Younger respondents were more likely to be in high waste segments compared to older people, while high income respondents were more likely to be in high waste segments compared to those on a lower income. Māori and those with dependent children were also more likely to be in the high waste segment.

Demographic trends were generally consistent with 2023, the only noticeable drop being for those ‘living with flatmates’ with a big move from high wastage (now 32%, down 19%) to medium wastage (now 48%, up 15%).



High food wasters were less likely to engage in a number of food waste reducing practices, and more likely to throw out food or put food waste into the rubbish bin. The order and rating of practices were consistent with 2023.



How often does the following occur in your household? (% Always or sometimes)



The high waste segment was less likely to 'combine leftovers to make a new meal another day', while the low waste segment was less likely to 'invite guests to take home leftovers' – the former perhaps less willing to rehash leftovers while the latter less likely to have leftovers for guests to take home.

The high waste segment was also more likely to 'throw out food that had gone off before they could eat it' or 'put food waste into the rubbish bin', than the low waste segment – this would be in line with the fact that they produce more food waste.

Report findings: Single use produce bags



Summary: Single use produce bags

- This section reviews the questions presented to respondents about single use produce bags.
- The **use of single use produce bags declined** this year (35%, down 5%), as did putting produce straight into the trolley without a bag (29%, down 7%), while there was **an increase in those using a reuseable shopping bag** (40%, up 6%) and **using a reuseable produce bag** (39%, up 7%).
- On the **use of single use produce bags provided in store**, the majority used about the **same amount** (56%) or less than before (31%).
- Across **those that purchase produce online**, views were more polarised with 27% that said they now receive more bags, 47% the same amount, and 25% less bags than before.

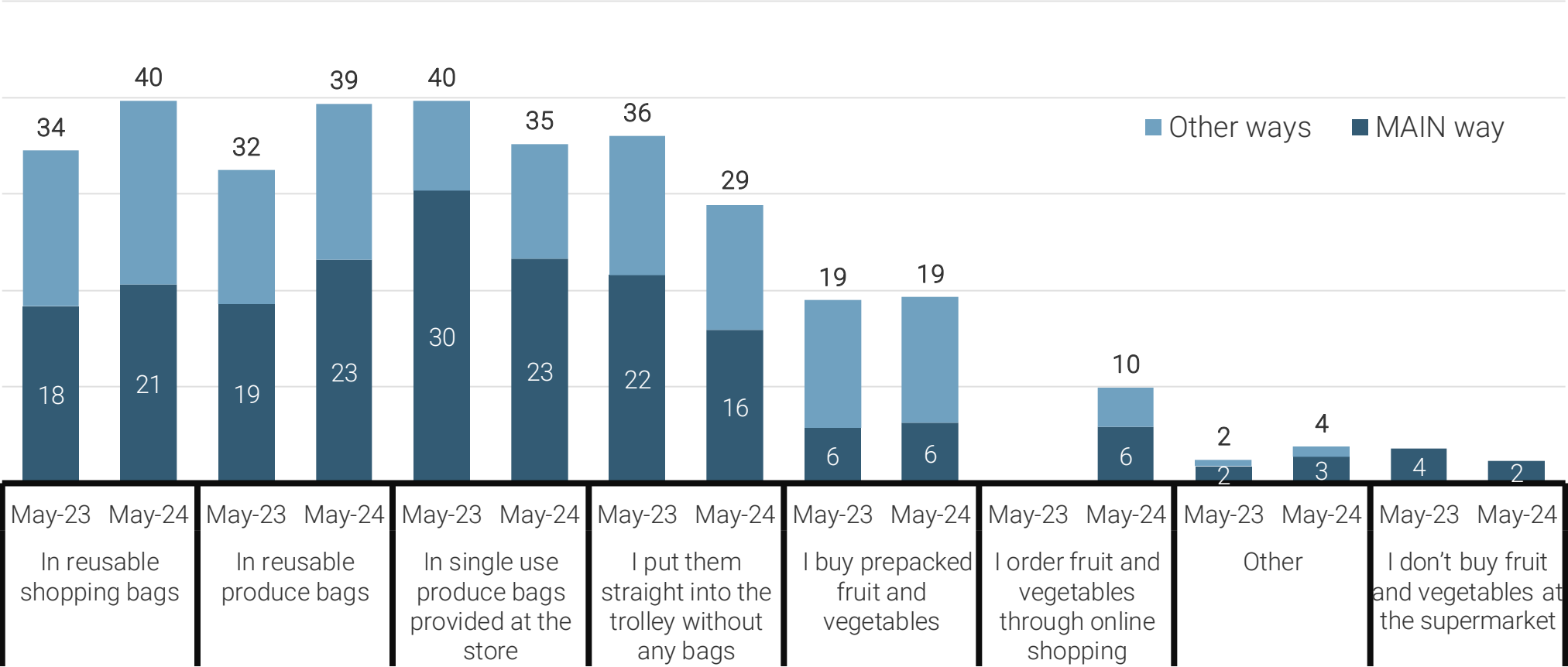


This year, there was lower declared use of single use produce bags when buying fruit and vegetables at the supermarket, along with putting the items straight into their trolley. While there was an increase in those using reusable shopping bags and produce bags.



How do you pack fruit and vegetables when you are shopping at the supermarket? (%)

What is the MAIN WAY? (%)



Females (34%) were more likely to put fruit and vegetables straight into the trolley than males (25%).

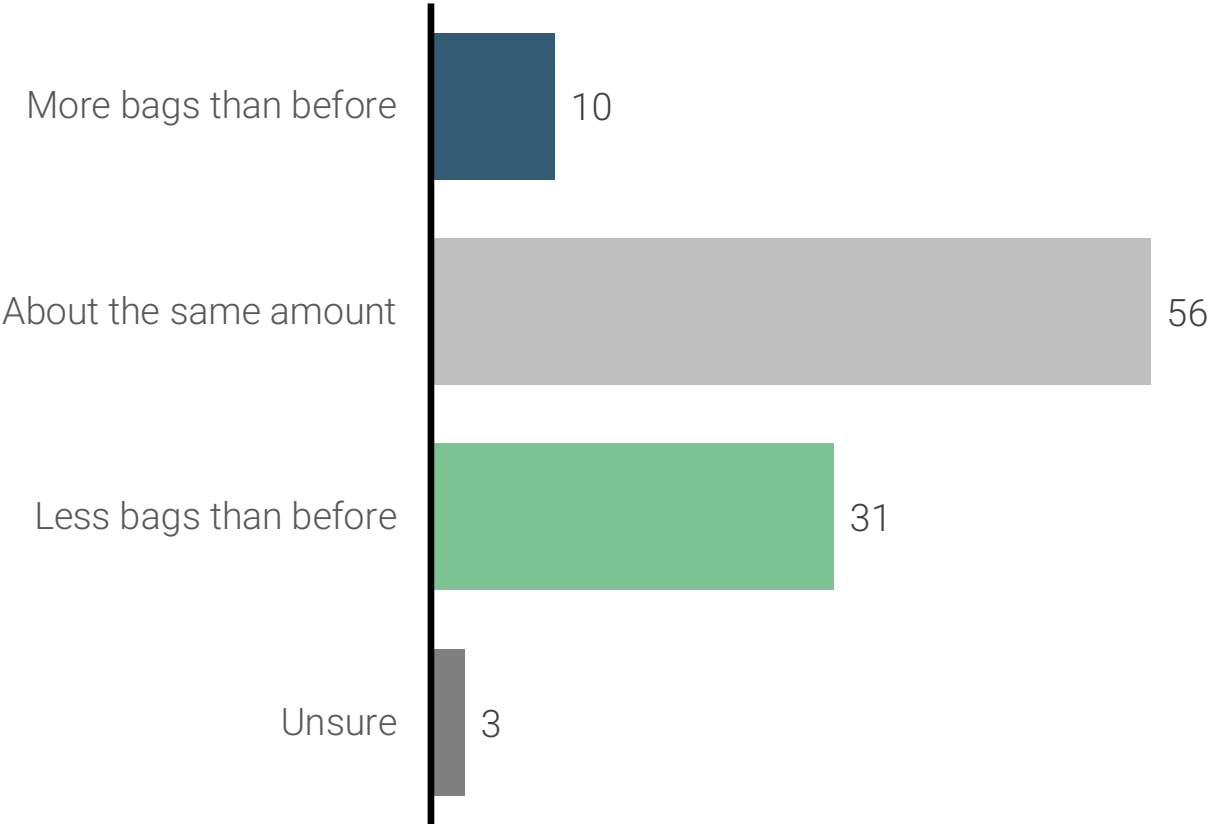
Those aged 60 years or more were more likely to use reusable produce bags (49%).

Those aged between 30-44 were more likely to use online shopping (15%).

There was an apparent decrease in the use of single use produce bags, with nearly a third saying they use less bags than before, around half saying they use the same amount and ten percent use more than before.



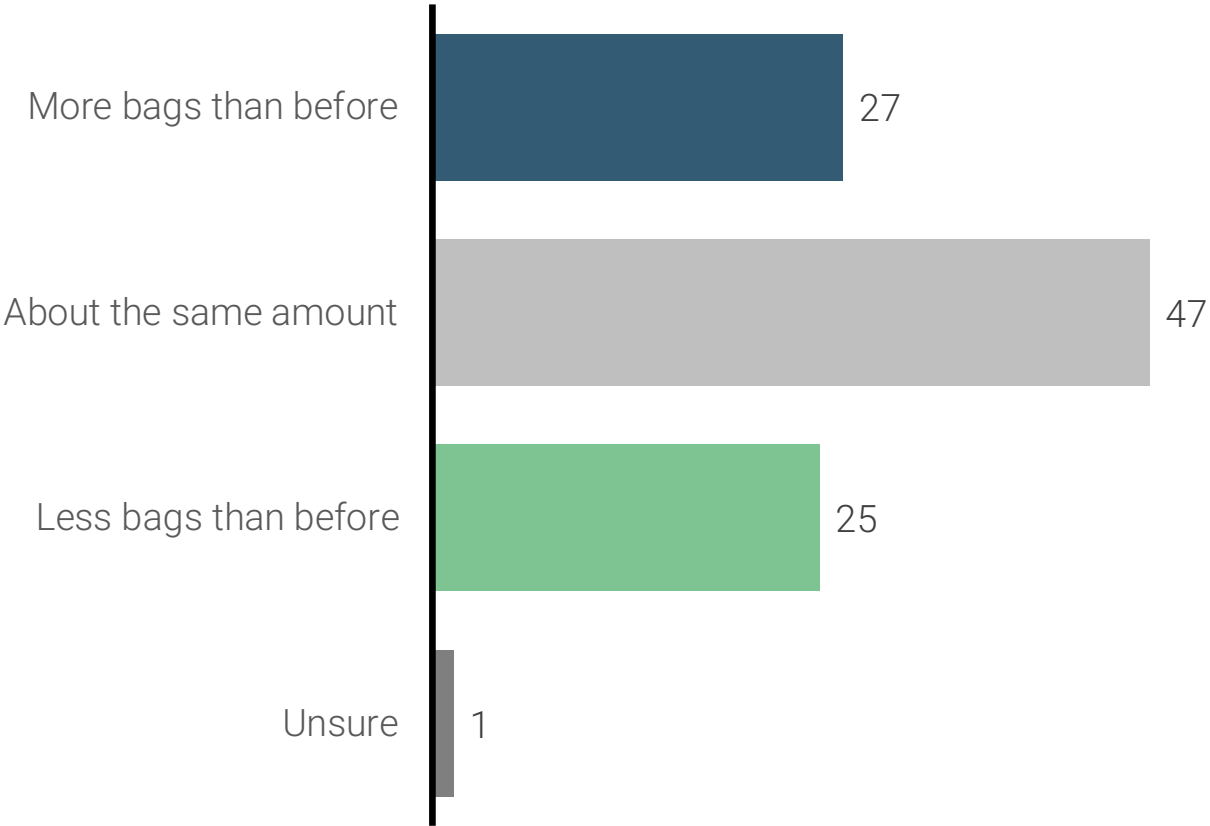
Thinking about single use produce bags provided at the store, do you think you use: (%)



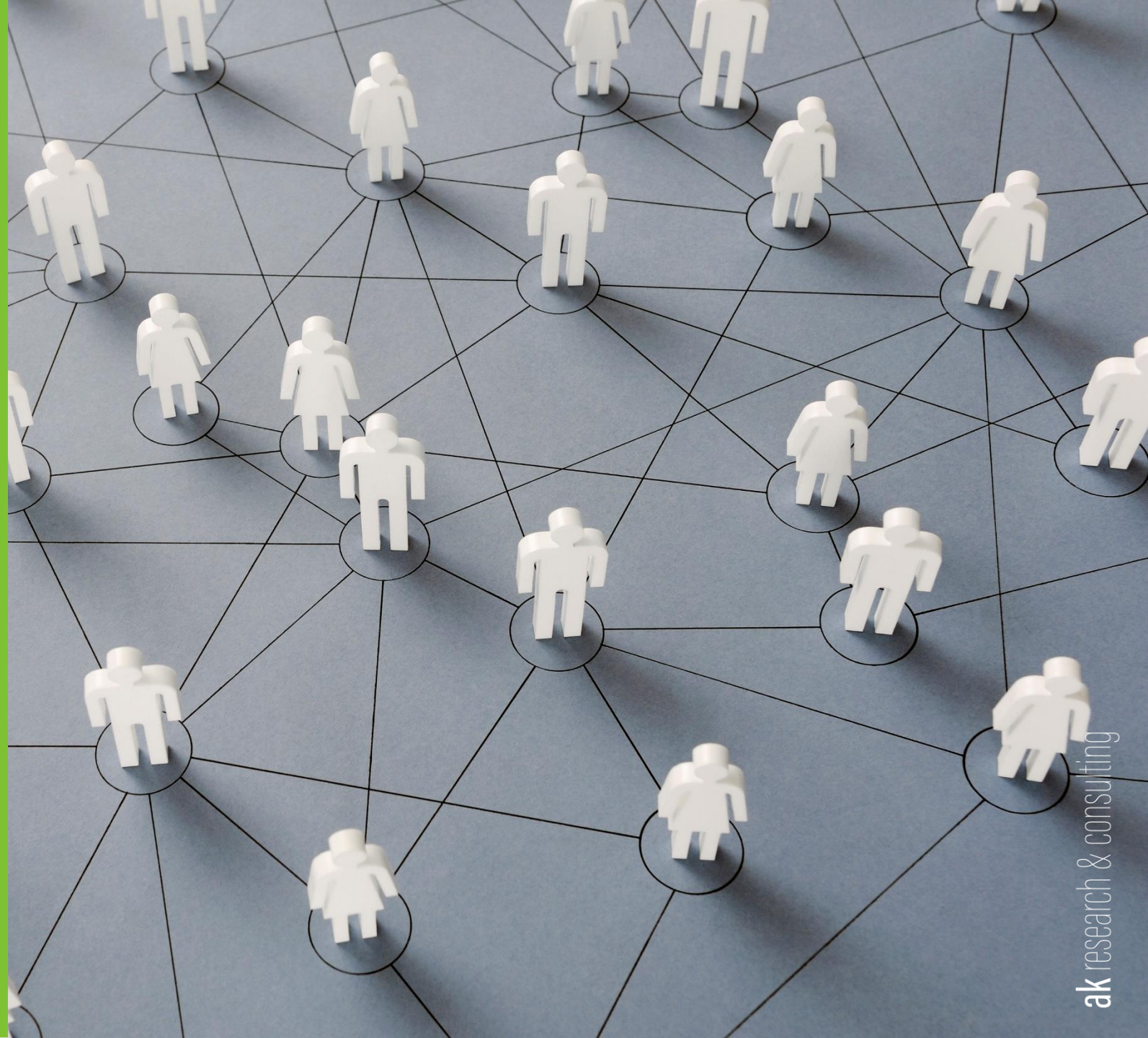
Across those that shop online, views were polarised on the number of bags they receive with 27% saying they receive more bags, 25% saying they receive less, and nearly half saying they get the same amount.



Do you think you receive in your online shopping.... (%)



Report findings: Communications on reducing waste



Summary: Communications

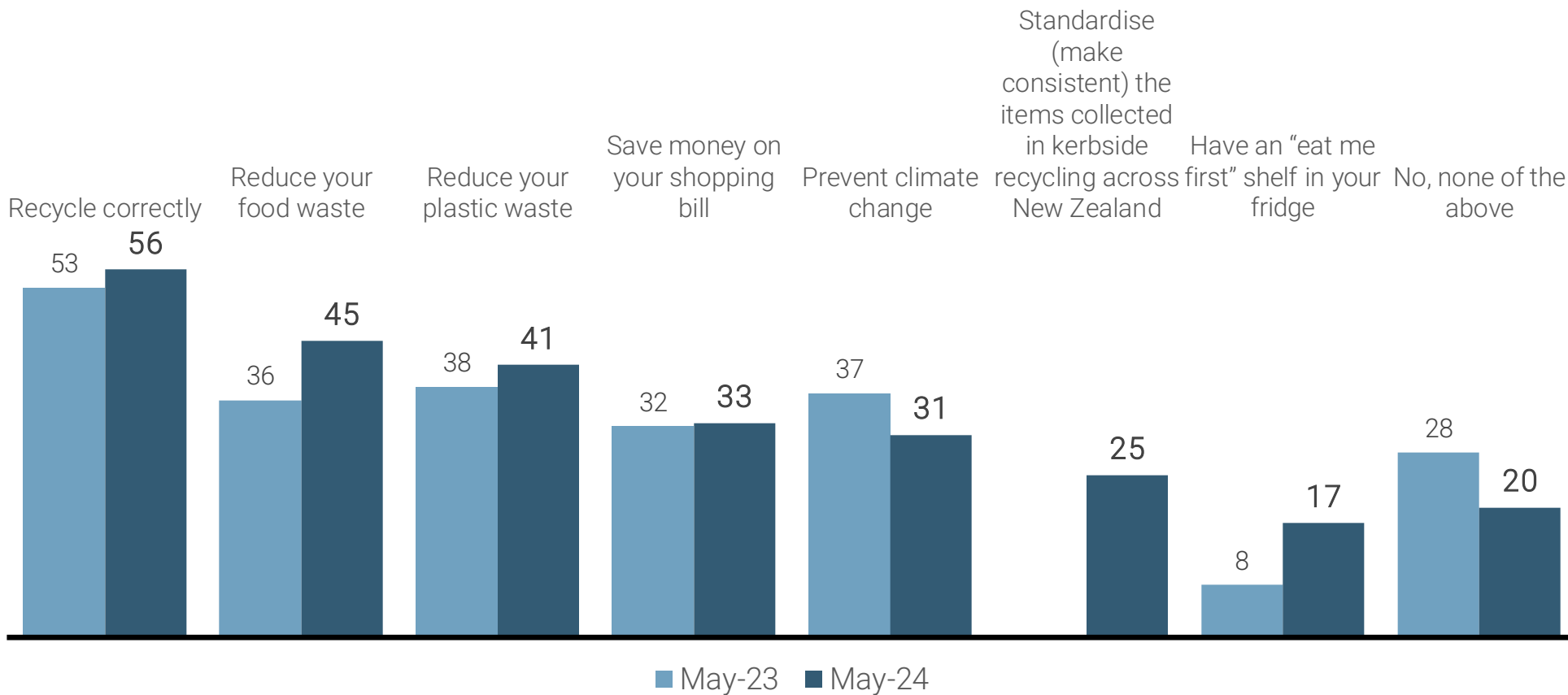
- This section covers questions asked about recall of information and initiatives targeting food waste reduction and the standardisation of kerbside recycling.
- Likely driven by recent food waste reduction initiatives, **recall increased significantly for information about 'reducing your food waste'** (45%, up 9%) and **having an 'eat me first' shelf in your fridge** (17%, up 9%).
- **Information on 'preventing climate change' declined** (31%, down 6%). A new category was added this year, information on 'standardising the items collected in kerbside recycling' which garnered 25% recall. **Highest recall remained information on 'recycling correctly'** (56%, up 3%).
- **Key channels for hearing about the standardisation of kerbside recycling were news media** (59%) and **their local Council** (46%). Further back were a bin sticker or flyer in letterbox (30%) and social media (27%).
- **Campaign recall was highest for 'Love Food Hate Waste'** (23%, up 6%) and **'Plastic Free July'** (16%, up 2%)



Large increases in recall were recorded for information about ‘reducing your food waste’ and having an ‘eat me first’ shelf in your fridge. Information on ‘preventing climate change’ declined, while new this year 25% recalled information on standardising the items collected in kerbside recycling.



Do you recall seeing or hearing any information about how to do the following in the last 2 years? (%)



Females (51%) were more likely to have seen information on reducing food waste than males (39%).

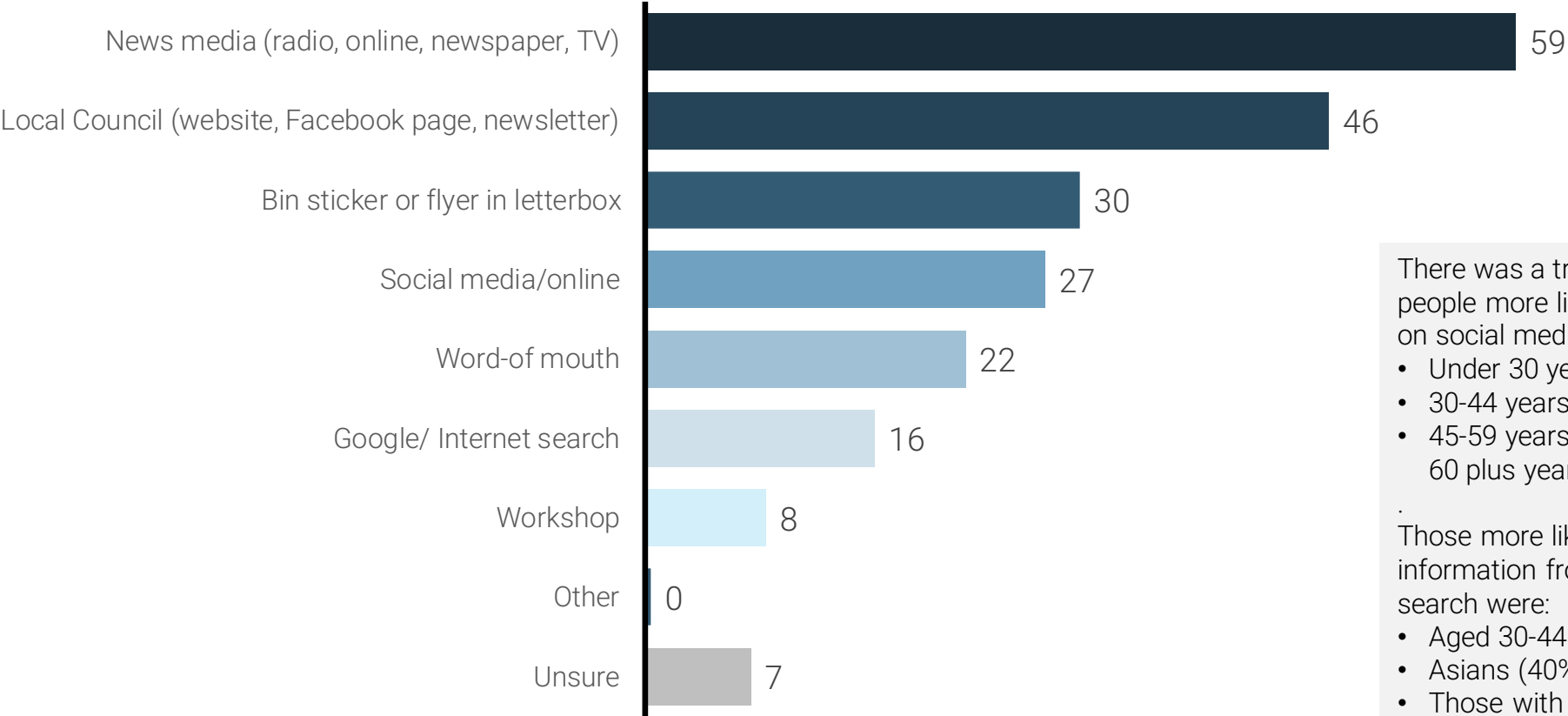
There was a trend by age with older people more aware than younger people of the following information.

- Recycling correctly:
- Under 30 years (44%).
 - 30-44 years (53%)
 - 45-59 years (56%)
 - 60 plus years (66%)

- Standardisation of kerbside recycling:
- Under 30 years (13%)
 - 30-44 years (22%)
 - 45-59 years (27%)
 - 60 plus years (33%).

Across those that had seen information on standardising items collected in kerbside recycling, the most common channels were in the media and the local Council. Followed by bin stickers or flyers, social media and word-of-mouth.

 Where did you hear, see, or read about Standardising (make consistent) the items collected in kerbside recycling across New Zealand? (%)



There was a trend by age with younger people more likely to have seen information on social media/ online than older people:

- Under 30 years (53%)
- 30-44 years (52%)
- 45-59 years (17%)
- 60 plus years (12%).

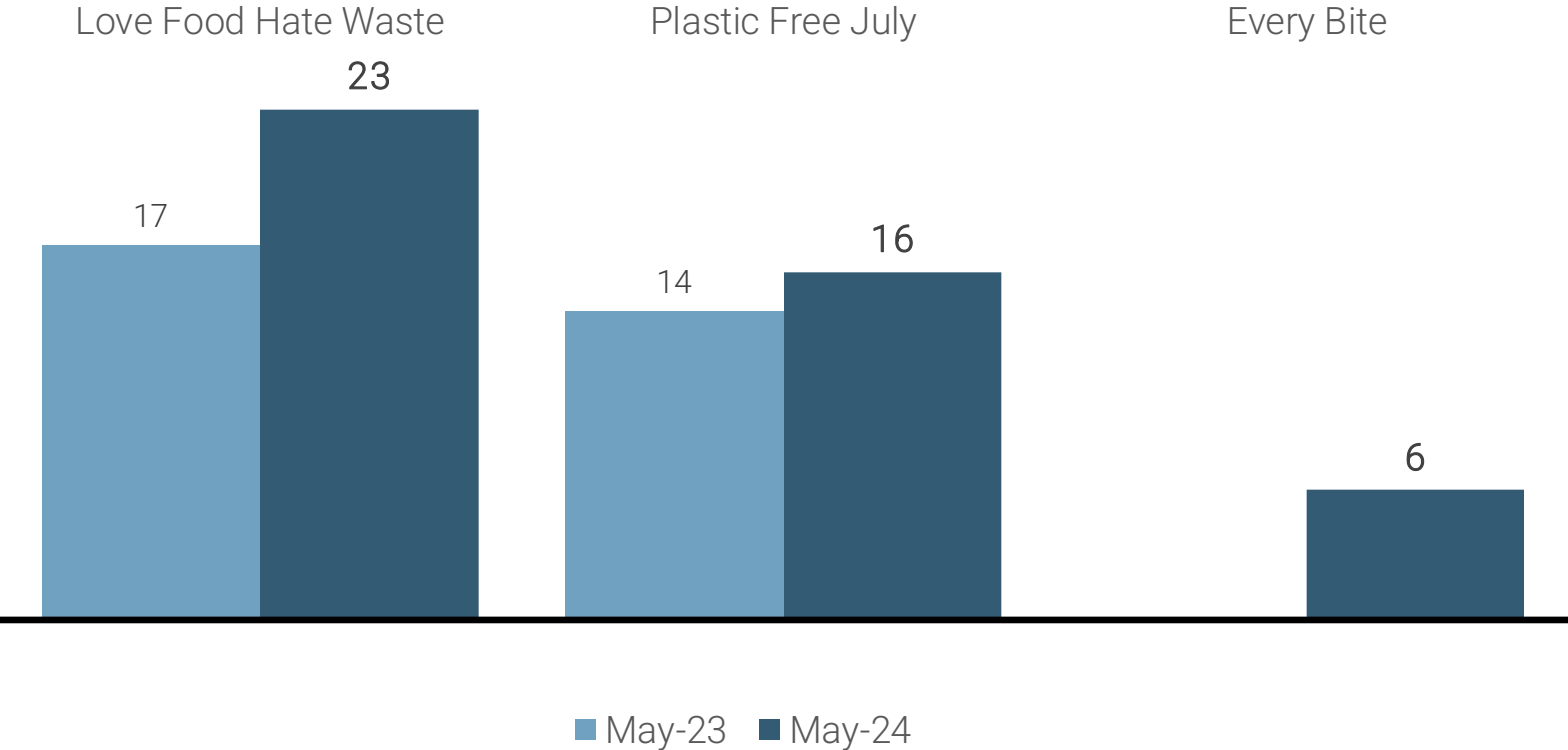
Those more likely to have sourced information from a Google or internet search were:

- Aged 30-44 years (29%)
- Asians (40%)
- Those with dependent children (30%).

Awareness of specific campaigns around waste was relatively low. However, the 'Love Food Hate Waste' campaign saw a significant increase (up 6 points) from 2023.



Which of the following campaigns or activities have you heard of? (%)



Please note Every Bite is a new behaviour change programme that did not have a communications campaign in 2024

There was higher declared recall of 'Every Bite' by:

- Males (9%)
- Asians (11%)
- Those aged between 30-44 years (11%)
- Those with dependent children (10%).

Those aged between 30-44 were also more likely to have heard of:

- 'Love Food Hate Waste' (30%)
- 'Plastic Free July' (22%).

Summary: Eat Me First

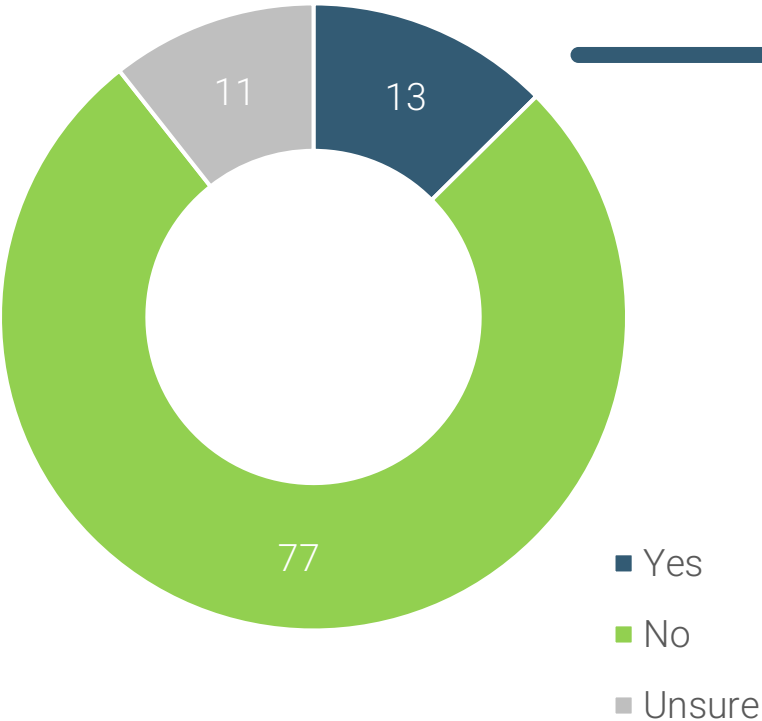
- Just over ten percent (13%) recall the 'Eat Me First' campaign, with the main channels being the news media (45%), followed by social media (26%) and in Woolworths (20%).
- Less than ten percent (8%) could recall specific advertisements from the 'Eat Me First' campaign.
- There was higher awareness of advertising that referenced the 'Eat Me First' stickers (16%).
- When taken across all three, 23% could either recall the Eat Me First campaign, or specific Eat Me First advertisements, or the Eat Me First sticker advertising.
- Of those that had seen the 'Eat Me First' campaign, 46% could recall places where you could pick up the stickers, with 53% of these saying they had taken stickers(s) to use at home.
- The main reasons for not taking a sticker was that they had no need for the sticker mainly because they had their own system for reducing food waste or already wasted little food.
- Of those that had taken a sticker(s), respondents were asked what they did with the sticker, multiple actions could be chosen as they could take a multiple number of stickers. 61% claimed to have used the sticker, 48% had given it to someone else, 26% lost it before they could use it, and 15% threw it away.
- The majority that had used the sticker found it useful (86%) - using it to label a food item that needed using up (45%), labelling a shelf in their fridge (39%), or labelling a reusable food container (16%).



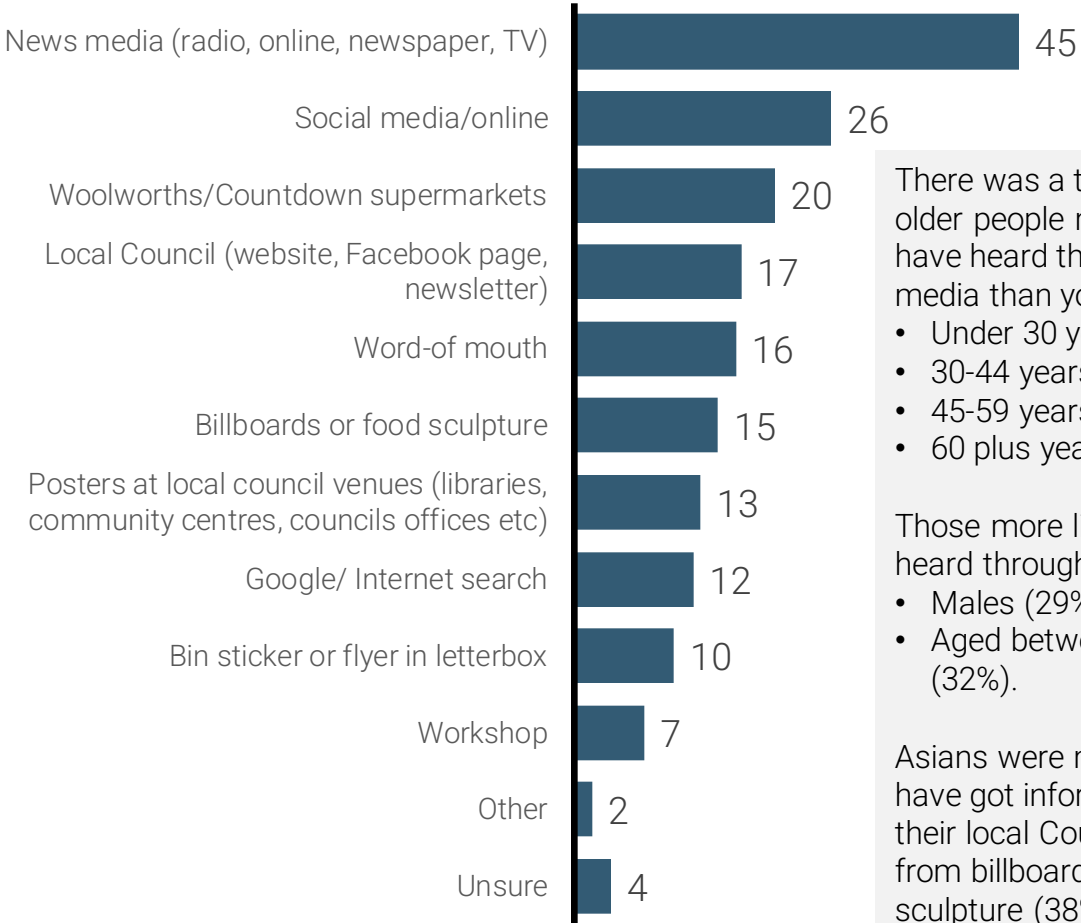
Just over ten percent recalled the 'Eat Me First' campaign. The main channel where it was recalled was in the news media, followed by social media and in the supermarket.



Have you read, seen, or heard anything about the Eat Me First campaign in the past few weeks? (%)



[Those aware] Where was that? (%)



There was a trend by age with older people more likely to have heard through news media than younger people.

- Under 30 years (23%)
- 30-44 years (25%)
- 45-59 years (51%)
- 60 plus years (72%).

Those more likely to have heard through word-of-mouth:

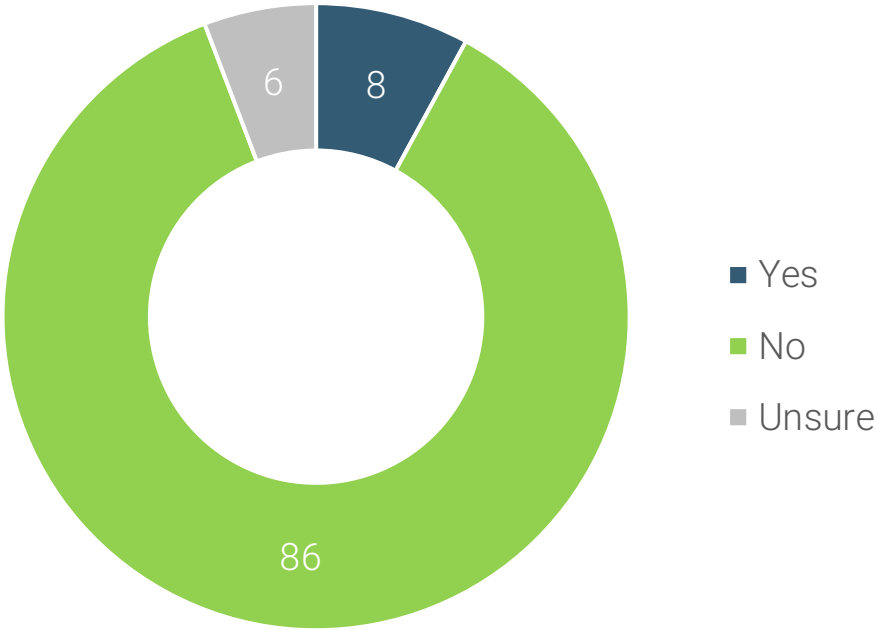
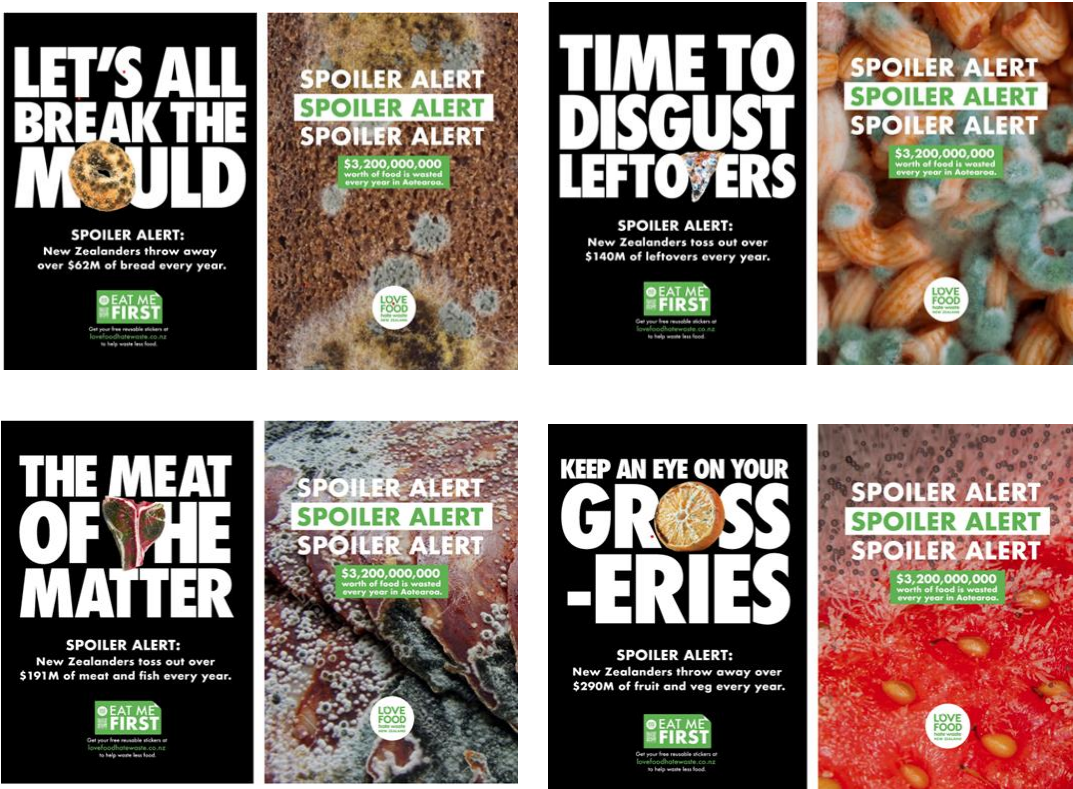
- Males (29%)
- Aged between 30-44 years (32%).

Asians were more likely to have got information from their local Council (41%), and from billboards/ food sculpture (38%).

Awareness of specific ads for the 'Eat Me First' campaign was low with less than ten percent recalling the ads.



Have you seen any of the following ads in the past month or so? (%)



Those more likely to have seen the ads were:

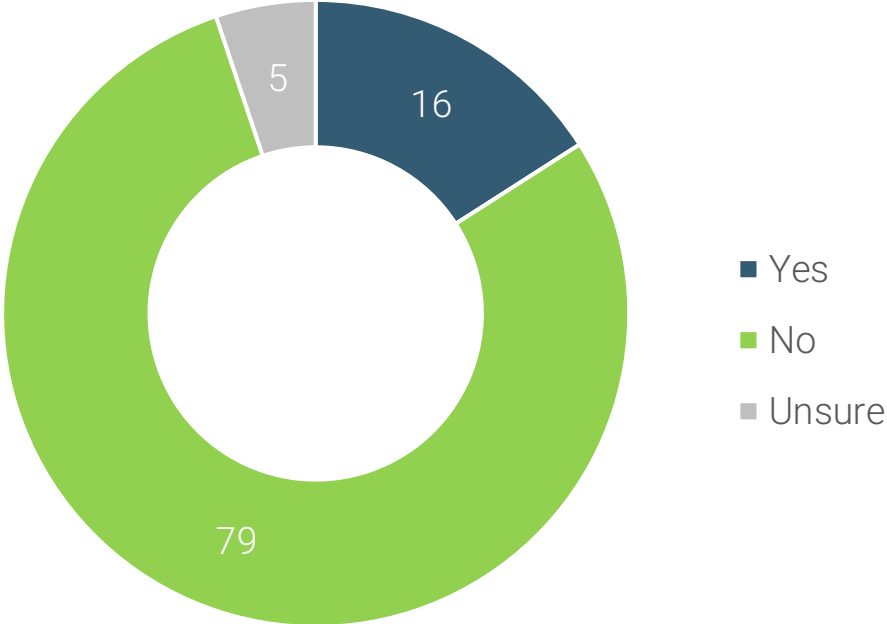
- Males (12%)
- Under 30 years (16%)
- 30-44 years (13%)
- Asians (14%)
- Those earning between \$50,000 to \$100,000 (12%)
- Those with dependent children (11%).

Base: All respondents (n=1025)

Awareness of advertising for the 'Eat Me First' stickers was higher on 16%.



Have you seen any of these stickers in advertising in the past month or so? (%)



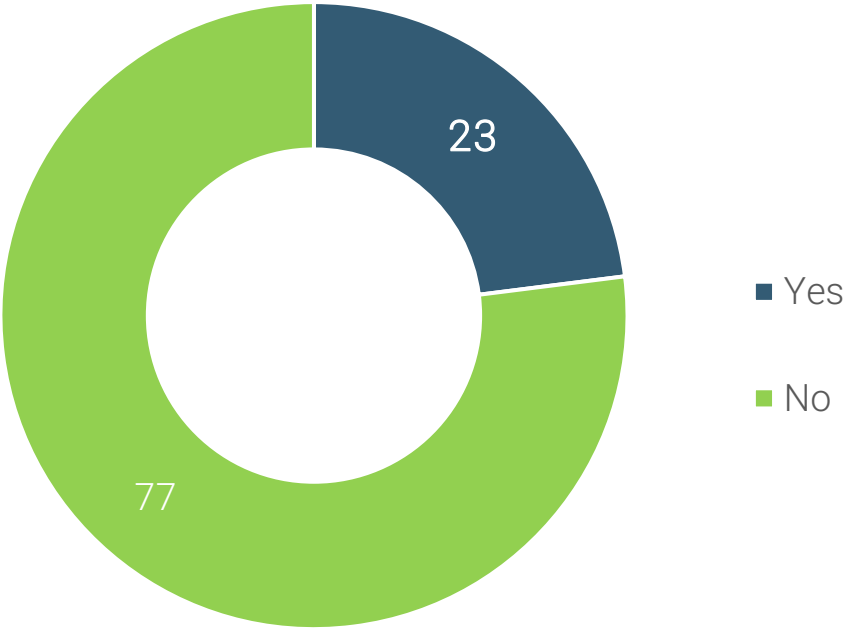
Those more likely to have seen the stickers in advertising were:

- Males (19%)
- Under 30 years (24%)
- 30-44 years (22%)
- Those earning between \$50,000 to \$100,000 (21%)
- Those with dependent children (20%).

Total campaign awareness was at 23%: [comprised of those who had read, seen or heard anything about the Eat Me First campaign OR seen the following ads (visuals as shown in survey) OR seen the stickers in advertising (visuals as shown in survey)]



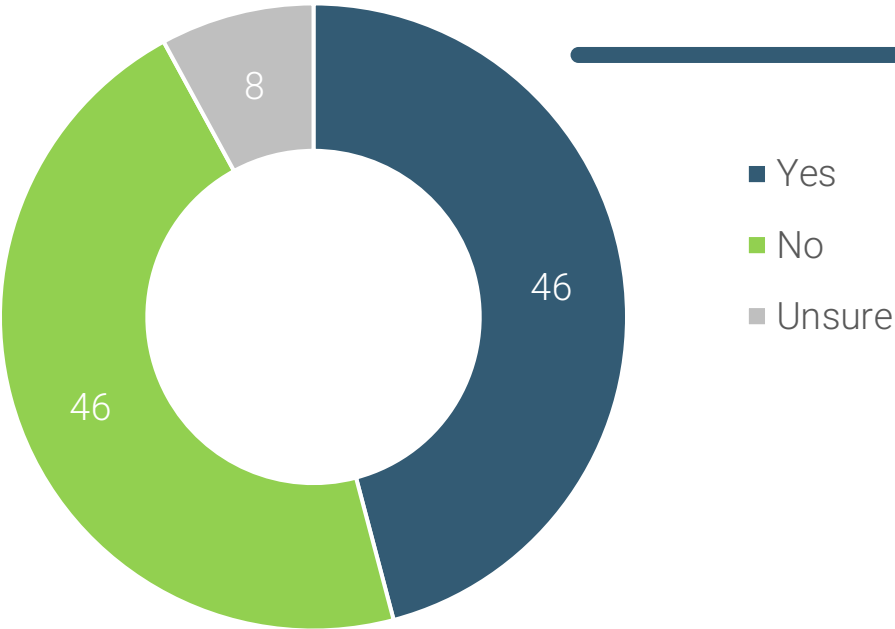
Yes to any of:
Have you seen any of the following ads in the past month or so?
Have you read, seen, or heard anything about the Eat Me First campaign in the past few weeks?
Have you seen any of these stickers in advertising in the past month or so?



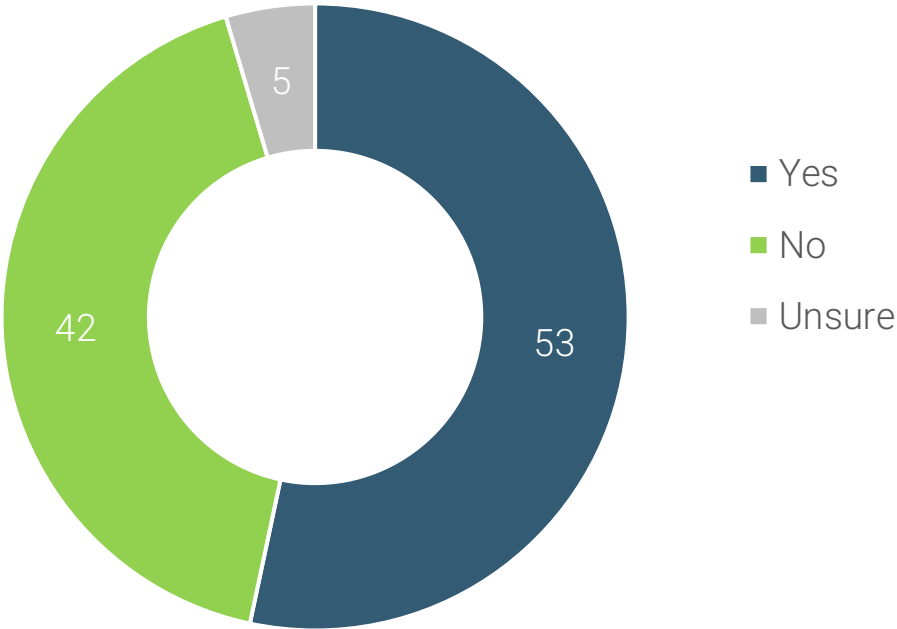
Across those that recalled the 'Eat Me First' campaign, nearly half had seen places where they could pick up the stickers. Of these, half said they had taken stickers home.



Have you seen places where you could pick up Eat Me First stickers? (%)



[Those aware] Did you take any sticker(s) to use at home? (%)



Asians were more likely to have seen places where you could pick up Eat Me First stickers (74%) and to have taken a sticker to use at home (79%).

Across those that had not taken a sticker, the main reason for not taking one was they did not need the stickers as they already have a system to not waste food or did not waste much food. At much lower levels was a lack of awareness of the stickers.



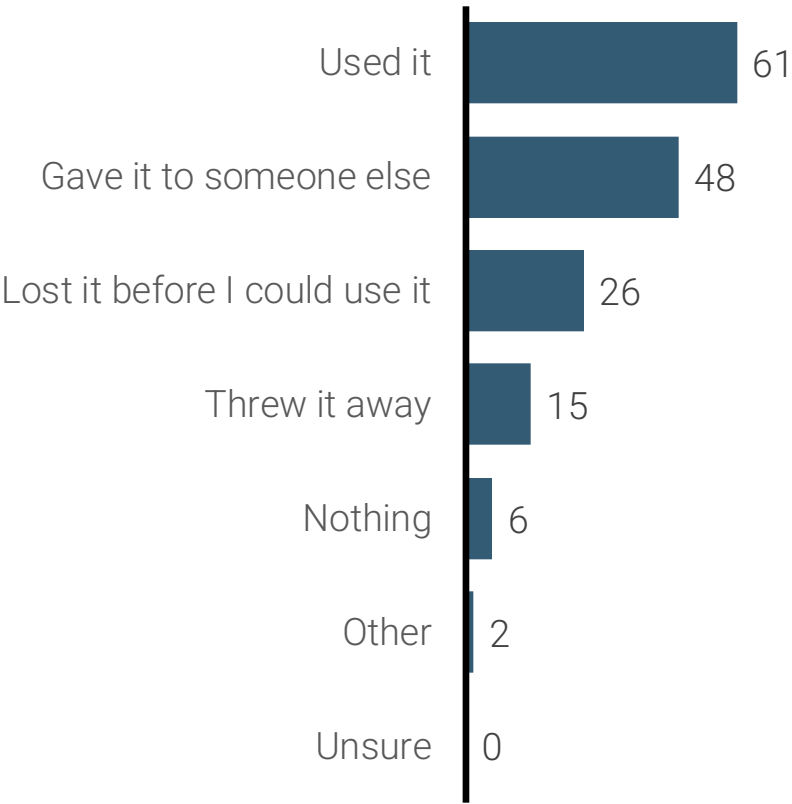
Why not? (% coded)

	%
No Need for Stickers: Already have a system to manage food that needs to be eaten first, don't waste much food, or have a small amount of food, unnecessary for their specific household needs, don't buy in bulk, or manage food consumption effectively without stickers.	35
Lack of Awareness or Availability: Didn't know about the stickers, forgot to grab them, or didn't see them available.	13
Personal Preferences: Don't want to attach stickers to the fridge, prefer not to use them, or find them pointless.	9
Awareness and Knowledge: Know what needs to be eaten first, shop wisely to minimise waste, and use own labels or systems.	9
Time Constraints: Didn't have time to use stickers or was in a rush.	9
Practical Issues: Stickers are not recyclable, or they ran out of stickers.	4
Skepticism: View it as a feel-good campaign or unnecessary waste of resources.	4
Specific Circumstances: Live alone, typically freeze leftovers, or was given some by a family member.	4
Environmental Concerns: Avoid using stickers to prevent waste, concerned about the environmental impact of stickers.	3
Unsure	11

Across those that took a sticker, three-fifths had used the sticker, around half gave it to someone else, a quarter had lost it before they used it, and 15% had thrown it away. The main uses were to label a food item that needed to be used and to label a shelf in their fridge. It was seen as useful by a majority that had used it (86%).



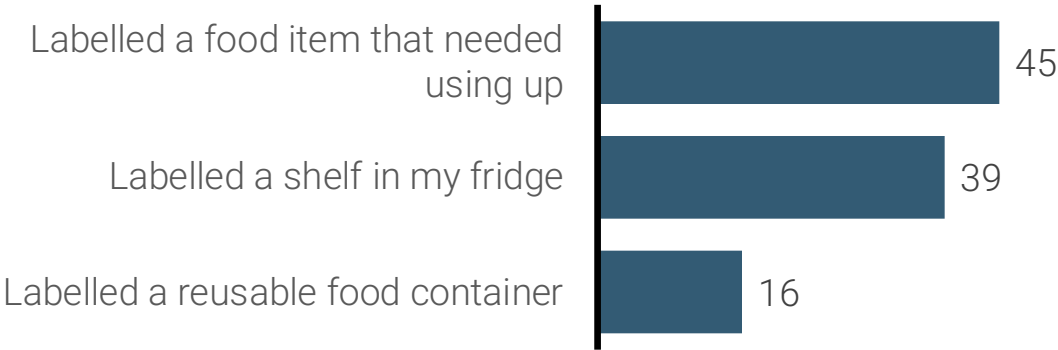
[Took a sticker] What did you do with the sticker(s)? (%)



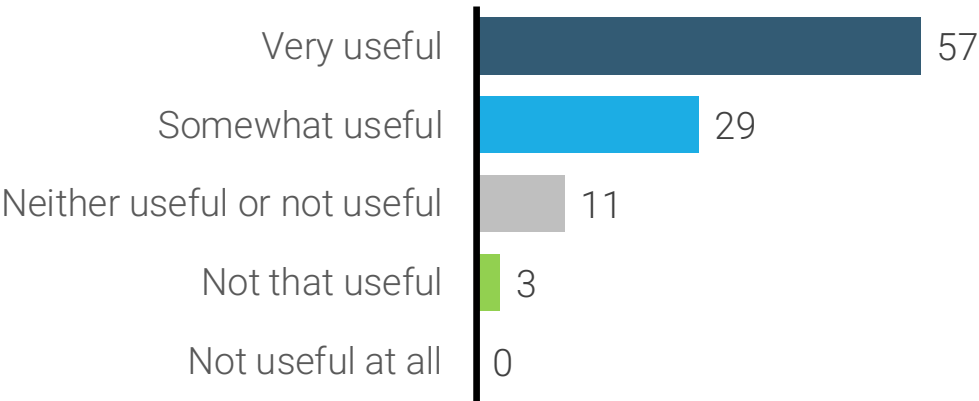
Those aged between 30-44 years were more likely to have given the sticker to someone else (72%) or thrown it away (32%).



[Used it] How did you use the sticker(s)?(%)



[Used it] How useful were the stickers in helping your household reduce food waste?(%)



Base 1: Took a sticker(n=55), multiple response question; Base 2: Used a sticker(n=34)

Appendix: Additional detailed charts

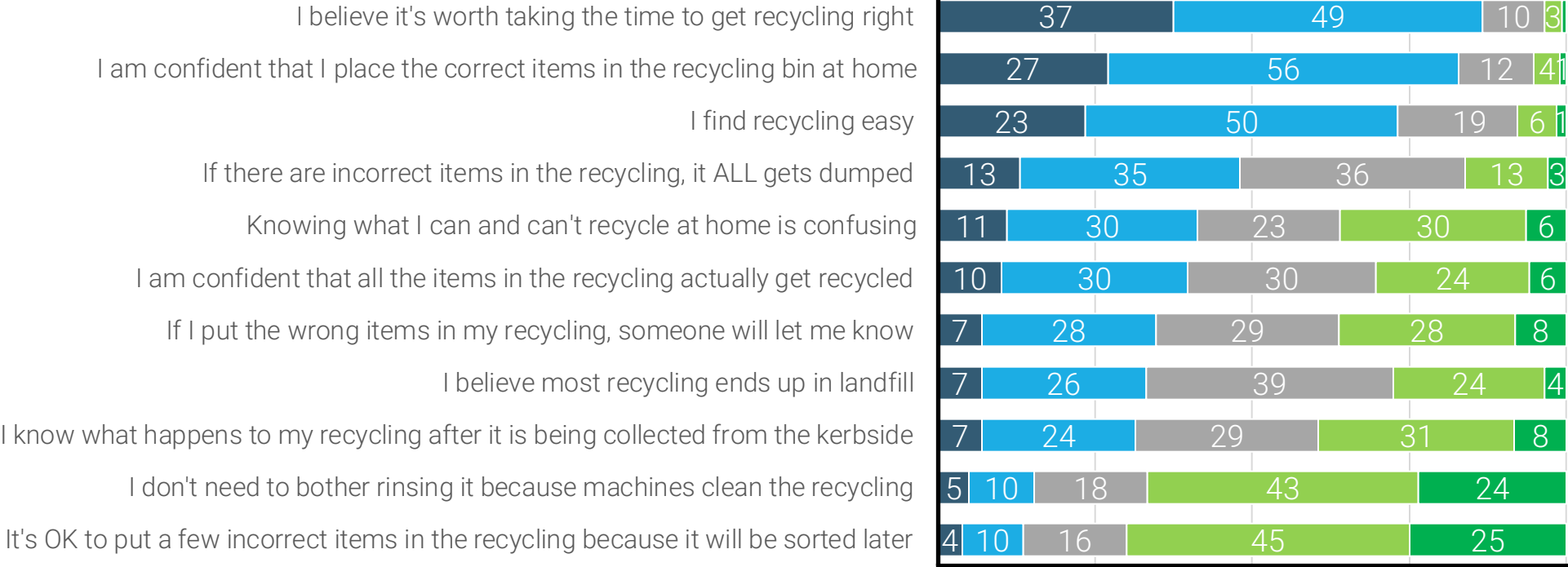
Attitudes on recycling: Full results 2024



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about recycling? (%)

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

Total agree



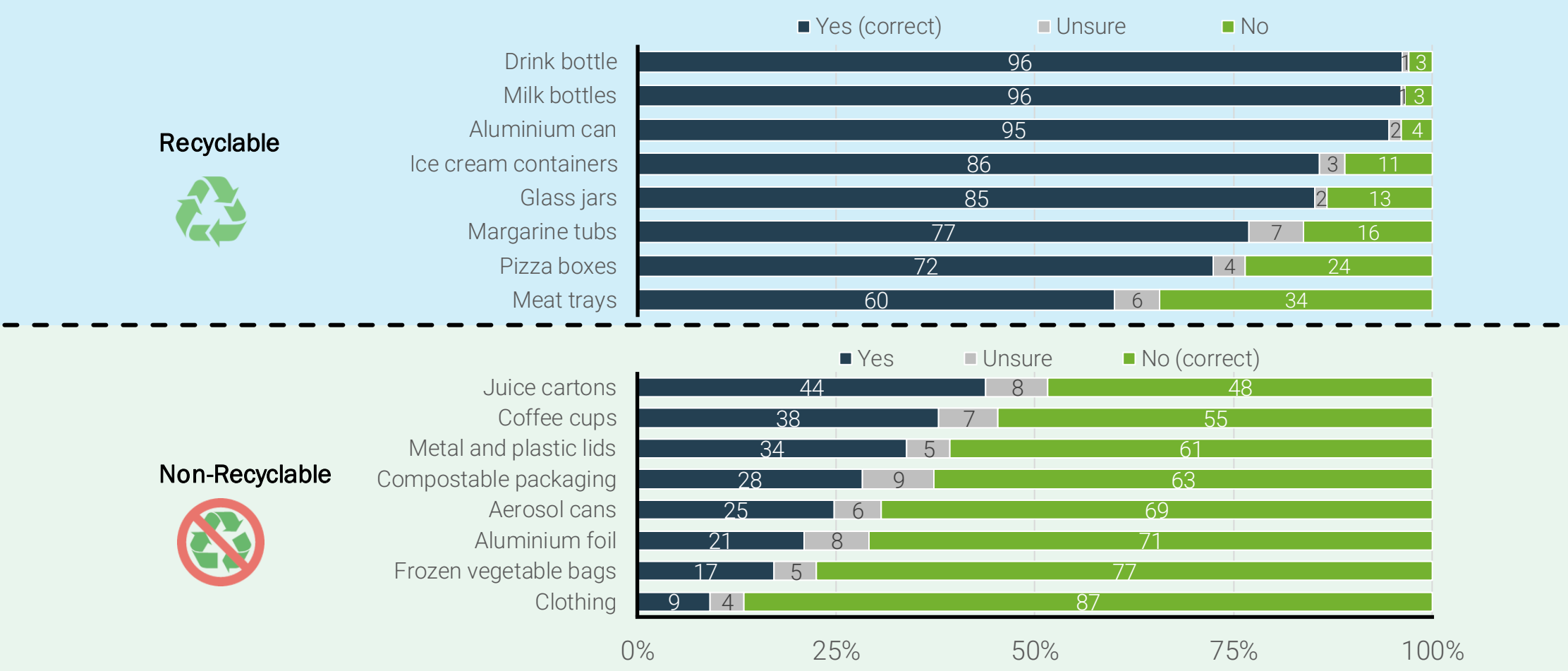
0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

Base: All respondents (n=1025)

Disposing recyclable items: Full results 2024



Would you typically put these items in your recycling? (%)

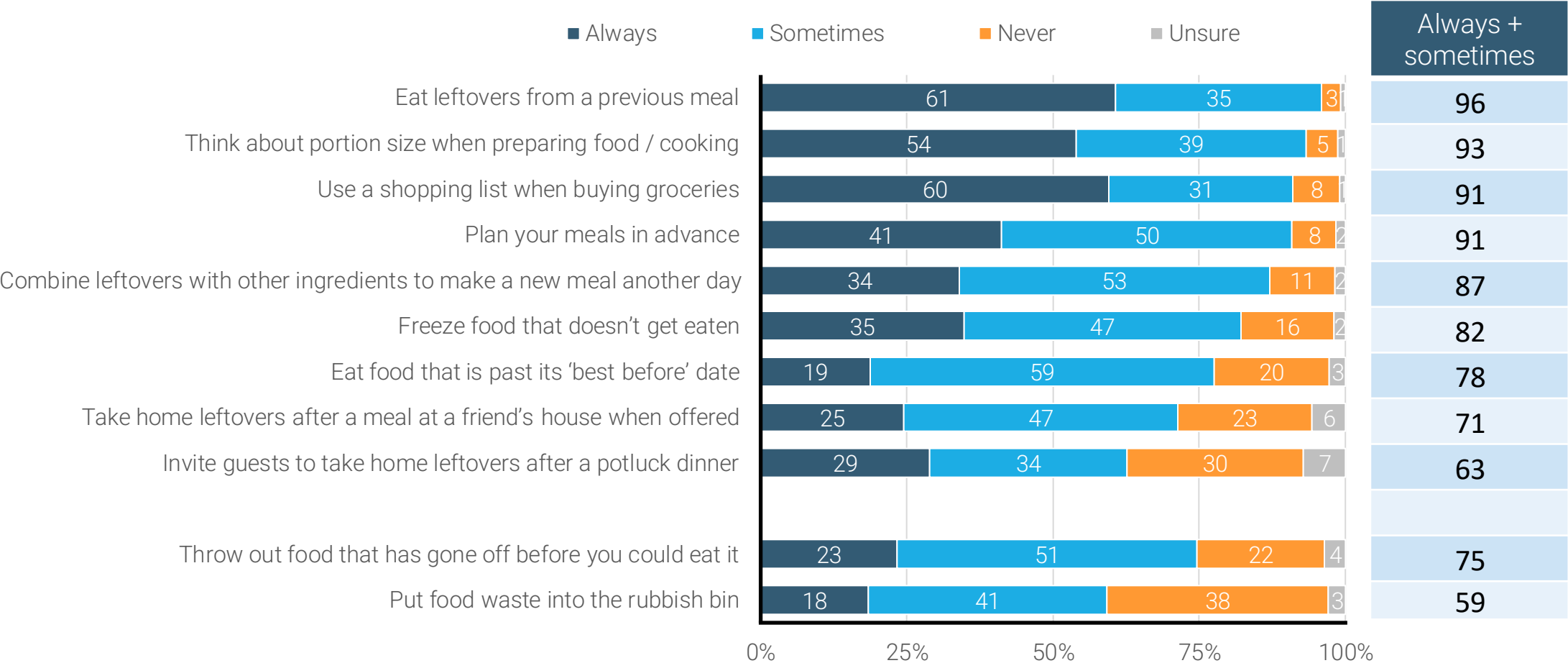


Base: All respondents (n=1025)

Reducing food waste actions: Full results 2024



How often does the following occur in your household? (%)



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