Deep Listening

2024

Method- Data Collection

USA

More in Common partnered with international polling company YouGov to conduct online survey interviews with N=2,009 US adults from May 23 – June 11, 2024. The data was weighted to be representative of the US adult population using propensity scores, with score functions including gender, age, race, education, and region. The weights were then post-stratified on 2020 Presidential vote choice, and a four-way stratification of gender, age (6-category), race (5-category), and education (4-category). The margin of error is +/- 2.2% for the US average and higher for subgroups.

Great Britain

Online survey interviews were conducted with N = 2,073 adults in Great Britain from October 9-10, 2024, via More in Common, a member of the British Polling Council. Polls are weighted and allocated to be representative of the adult population of Great Britain. The margin of error is +/- 2.04% for the average and higher for subgroups.

Beliefs about Listening (USA)

# 78% of US adults think they are good at listening.
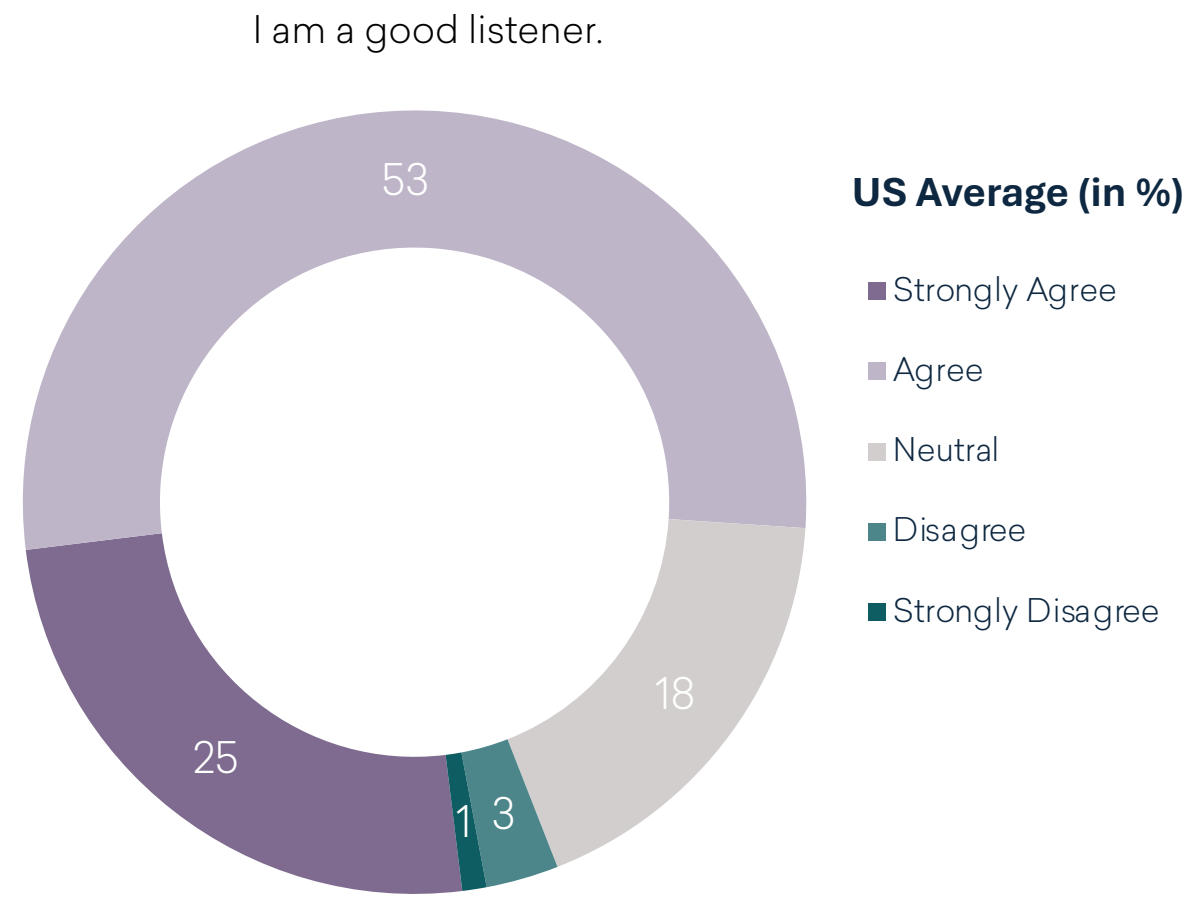
I am a good listener.

US Average (in %)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

57% of US adults agree that people aren't listening to them because they are distracted by phones.

I often feel like people aren't listening to me because they are distracted by their phone.

US Average (in %)
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
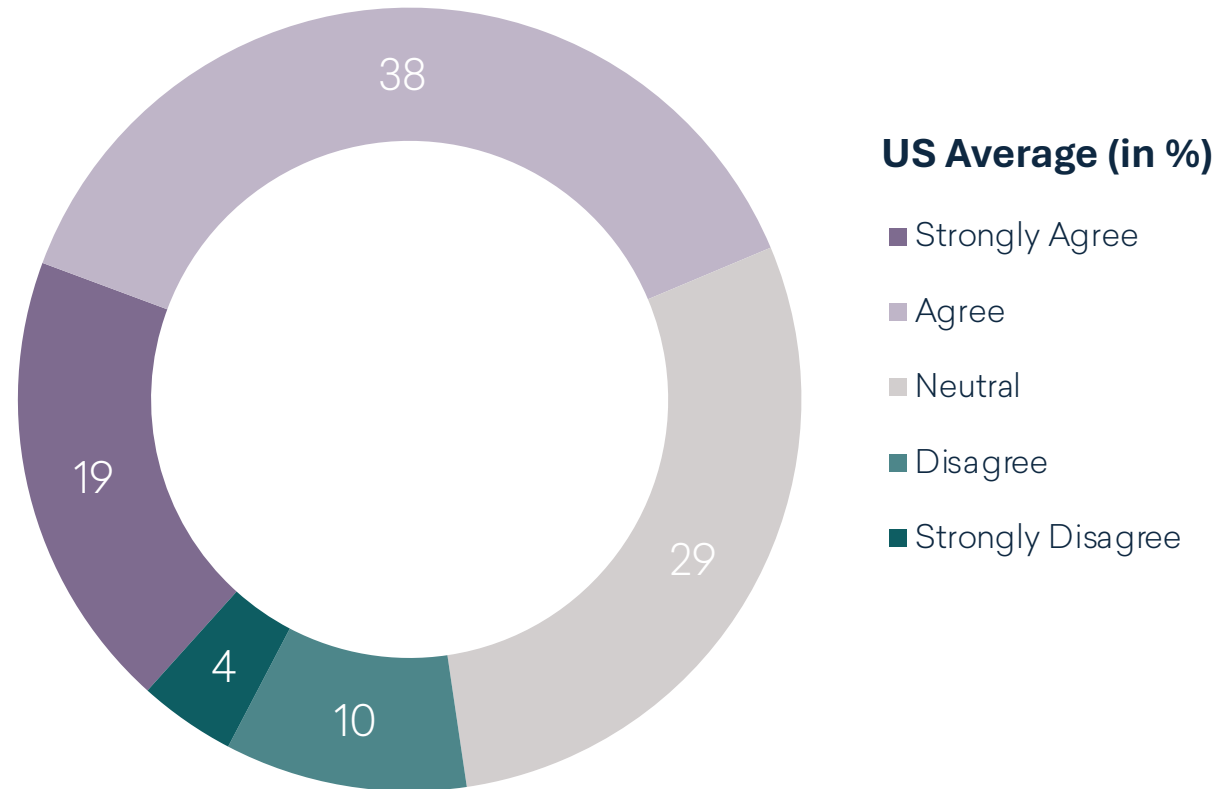
About 60% of US adults are confident that they can have a conversation with someone who thinks very differently about a big issue.

I am confident I can have a conversation with someone who thinks very differently than me about a big issue.
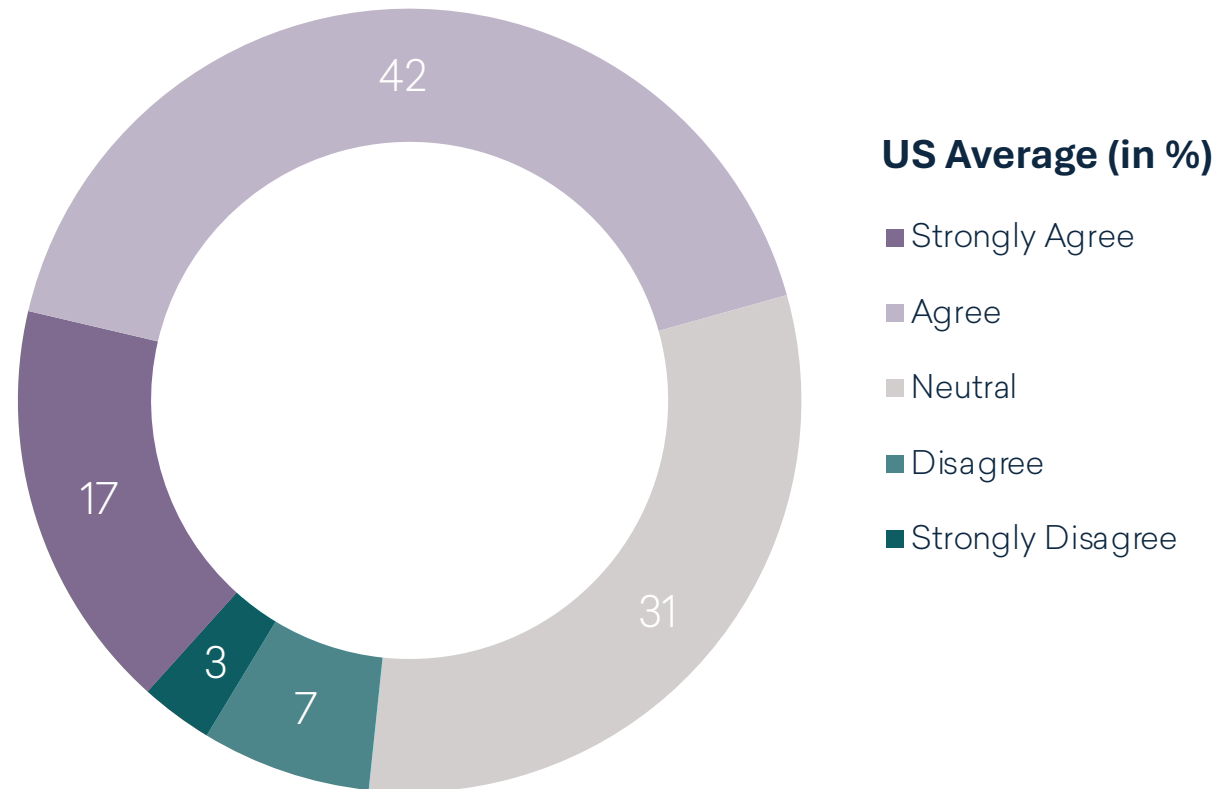
US Average (in %)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18% of US adults fear that listening to someone with opposing views might lead the person to assume agreement.

I fear that listening to someone with opposing views might make them think I agree with them.

Numbers in % ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	18	33	31	14	4
Silent Generation	17	34	41	9	
Baby Boomers	20	40	29	10	1
Gen X	22	34	29	10	5
Millennials	18	28	32	16	7
Gen Z	10	24	34	28	5
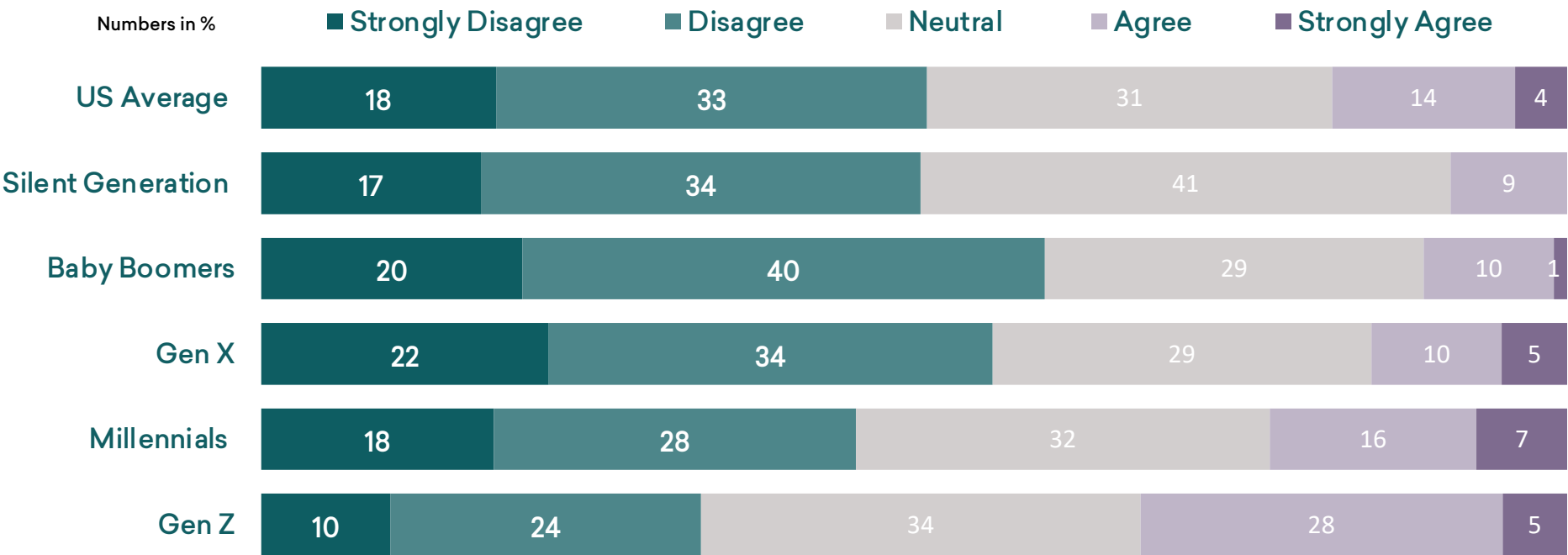
Gen Z Americans are twice as likely to feel that listening equates to agreeing with someone whose views differ from theirs.

I fear that listening to someone with opposing views might make them think I agree with them.

Numbers in % ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Gen Z	10	24	34	28	5
Non Gen-Z (Average)	20	34	30	12	4

Two-thirds of Americans feel that people used to be better at listening – just 6 percent disagree.

People are not as good at listening to others as they used to be.

Numbers in % | ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

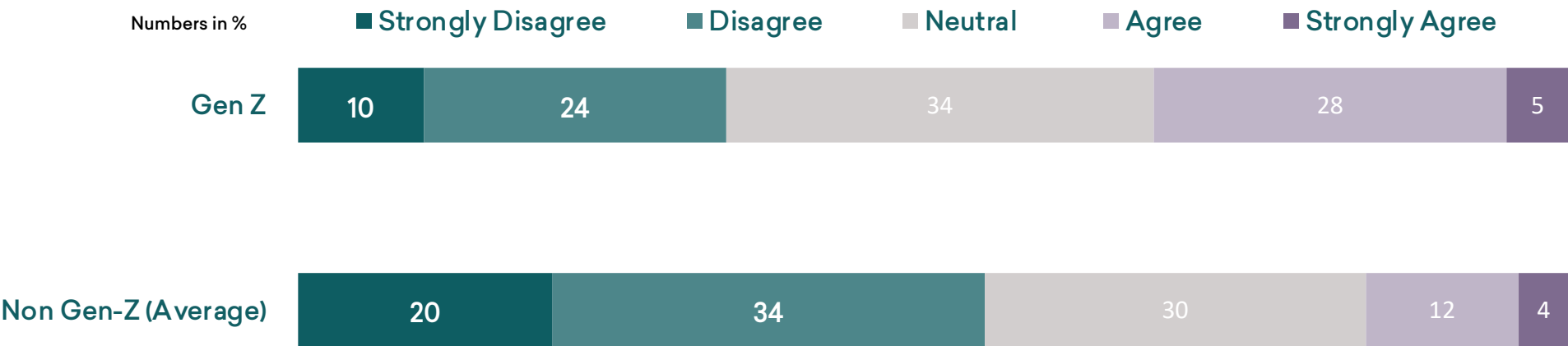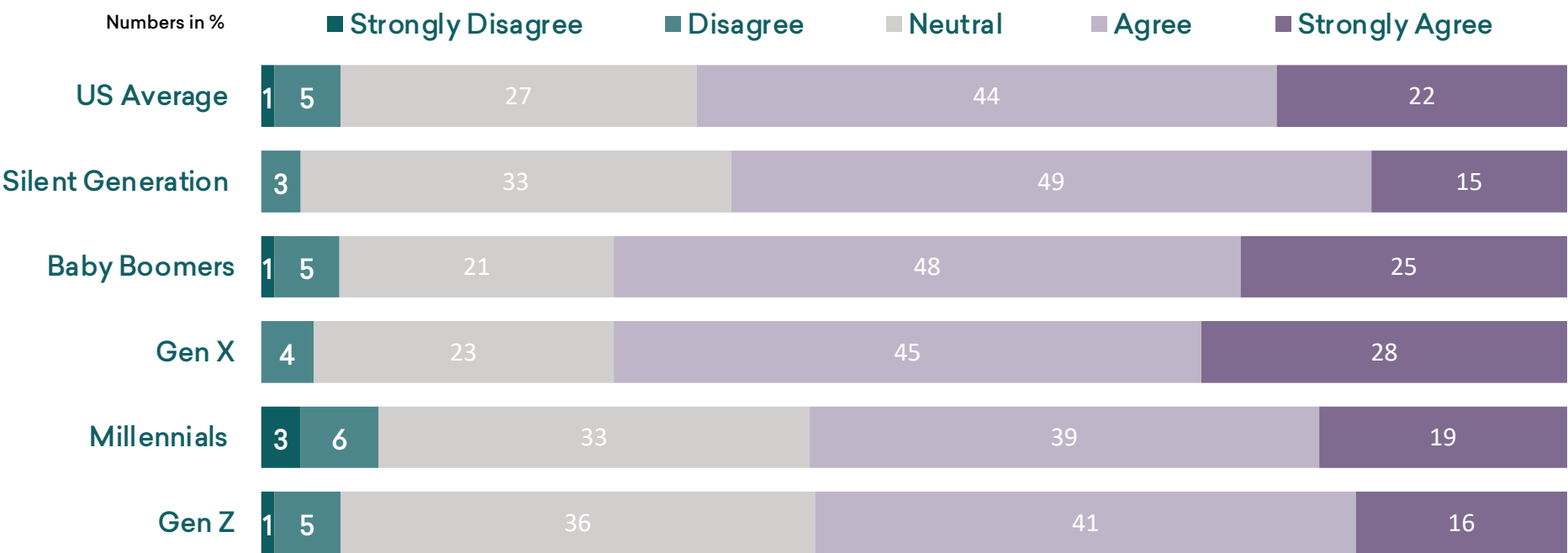|	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	1	5	27	44	22
Silent Generation		3	33	49	15
Baby Boomers	1	5	21	48	25
Gen X		4	23	45	28
Millennials	3	6	33	39	19
Gen Z	1	5	36	41	16

Question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?. (1=Strongly Disagree –5=Strongly Agree)*
Source: More in Common, N=2,009 US Adults.

9

Baby Boomers and Gen X are slightly more likely to agree.

People are not as good at listening to others as they used to be.

Numbers in %   ■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	1	5	27	44	22
Silent Generation		3	33	49	15
Baby Boomers	1	5	21	48	25
Gen X		4	23	45	28
Millennials	3	6	33	39	19
Gen Z	1	5	36	41	16

23% of US adults avoid listening to people whose views they don't like.

I avoid listening, one-on-one, to people whose views I don't like.

Numbers in %   ■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

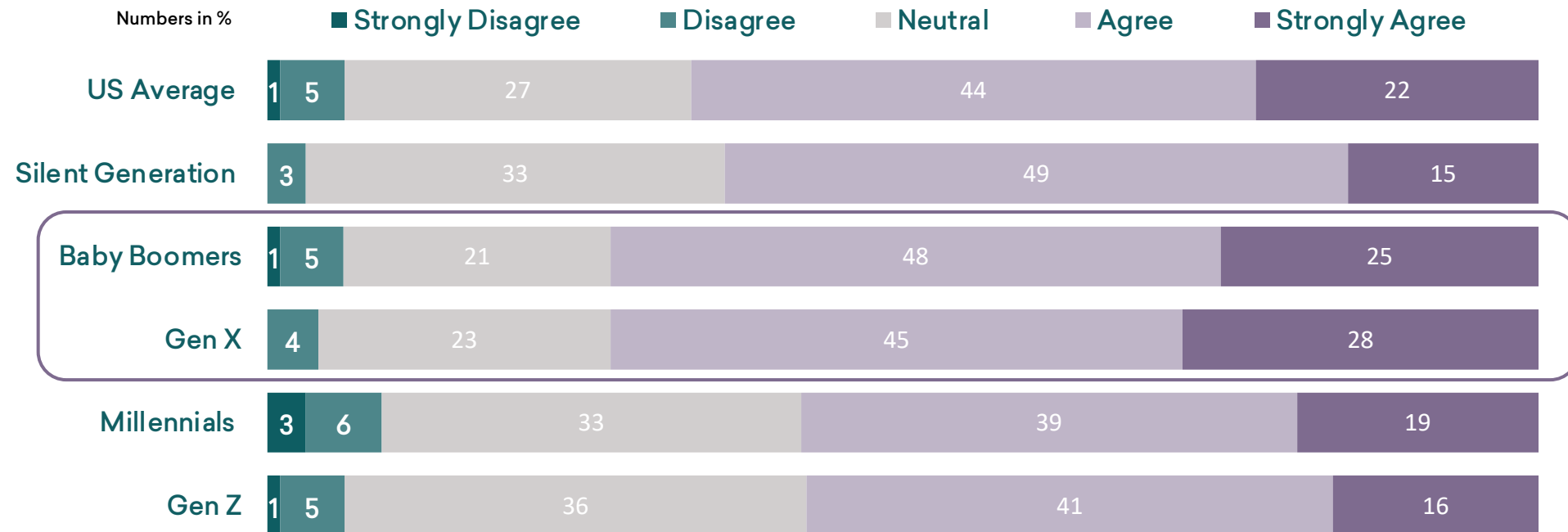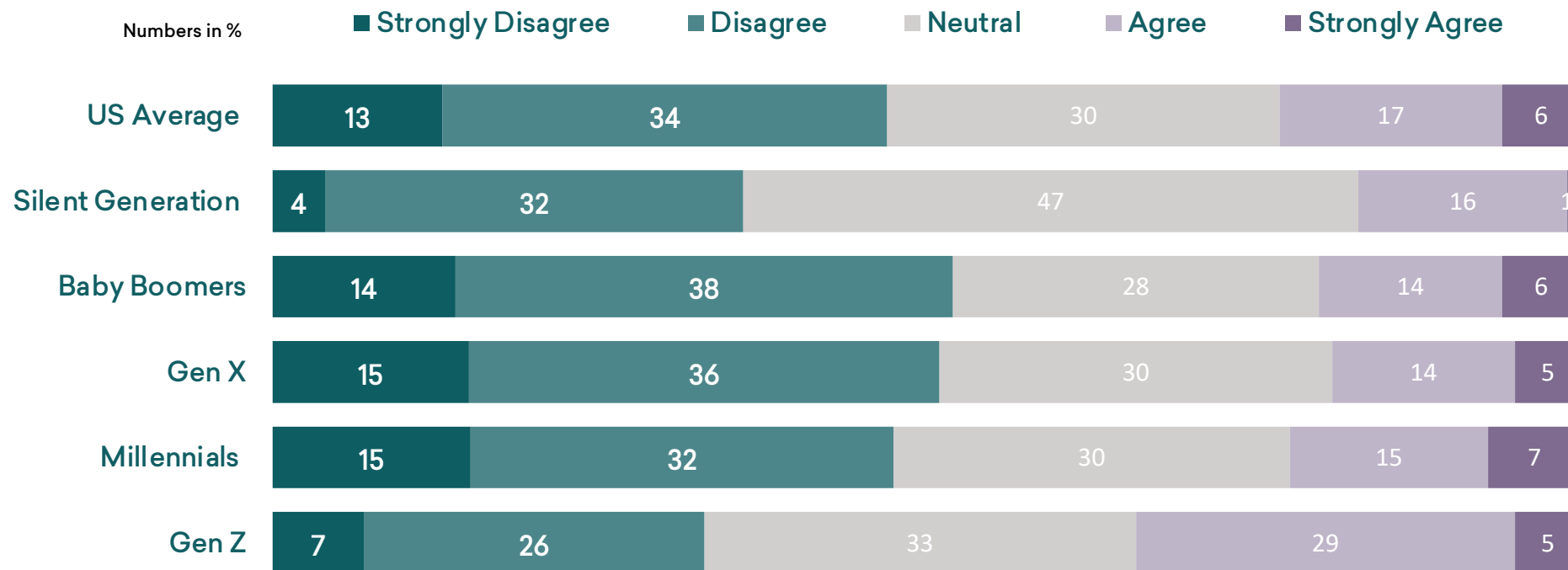|	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	13	34	30	17	6
Silent Generation	4	32	47	16	1
Baby Boomers	14	38	28	14	6
Gen X	15	36	30	14	5
Millennials	15	32	30	15	7
Gen Z	7	26	33	29	5

Question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?. (1=Strongly Disagree –5=Strongly Agree)*

Gen Z Americans are more likely to do this than any other generation.

I avoid listening, one-on-one, to people whose views I don't like.
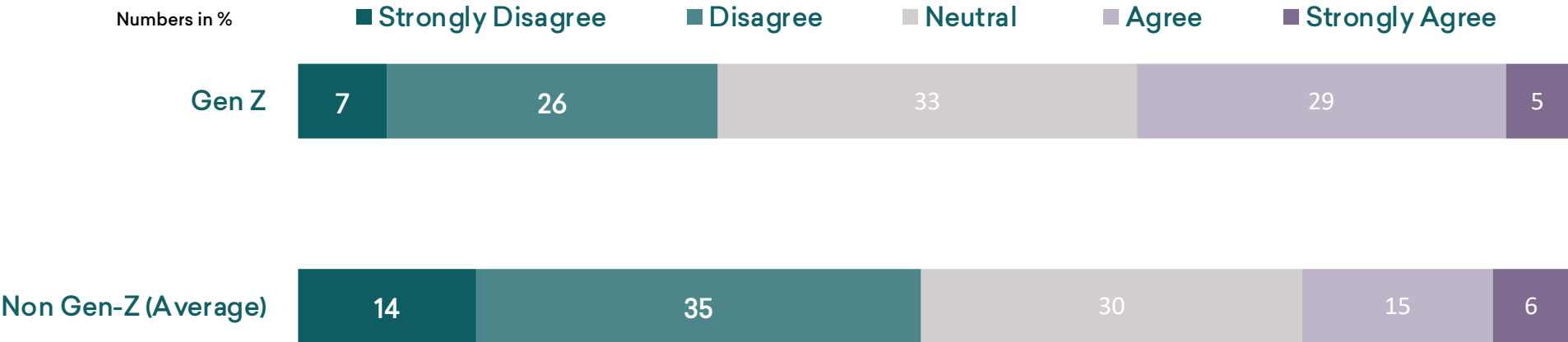
Numbers in %   ■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Gen Z	7	26	33	29	5
Non Gen-Z (Average)	14	35	30	15	6

People who interact with others "always online" are more likely to avoid listening to people whose views they dislike. People who interact mostly or always in person are more likely to disagree with this.

I avoid listening, one-on-one, to people whose views I don't like.

Numbers in %

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree
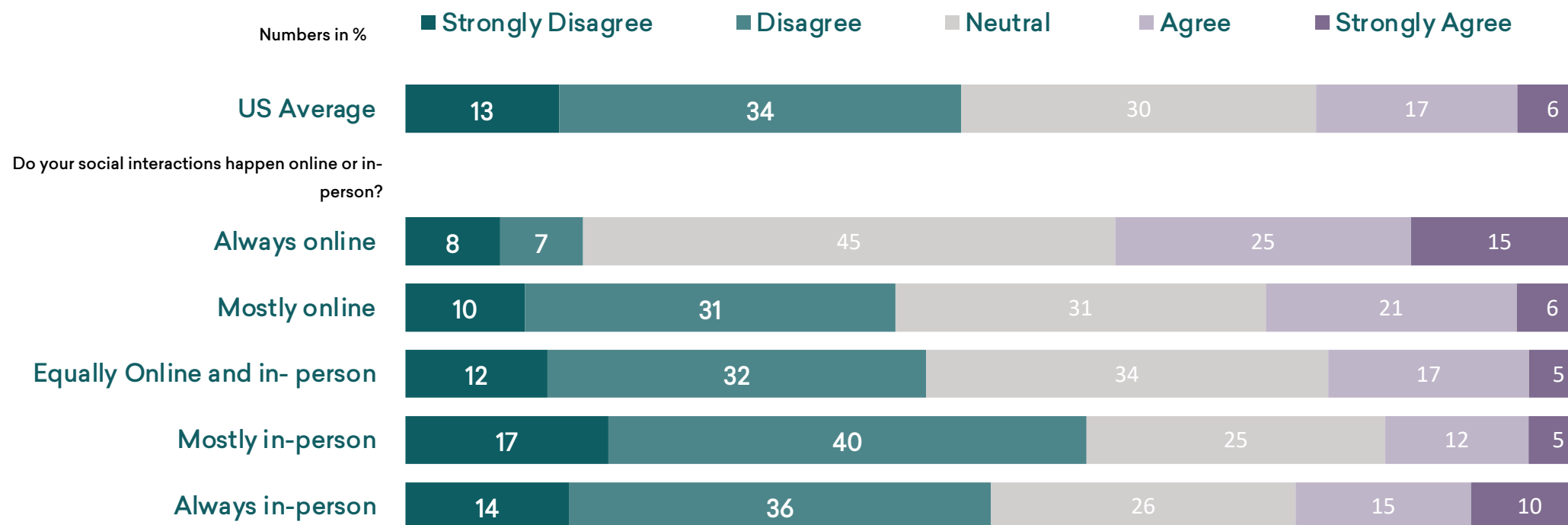
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	13	34	30	17	6

Do your social interactions happen online or in-person?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Always online	8	7	45	25	15
Mostly online	10	31	31	21	6
Equally Online and in- person	12	32	34	17	5
Mostly in-person	17	40	25	12	5
Always in-person	14	36	26	15	10

20% of US adults think that no one "really listens" to them.

No one really listens to me.

Numbers in % ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

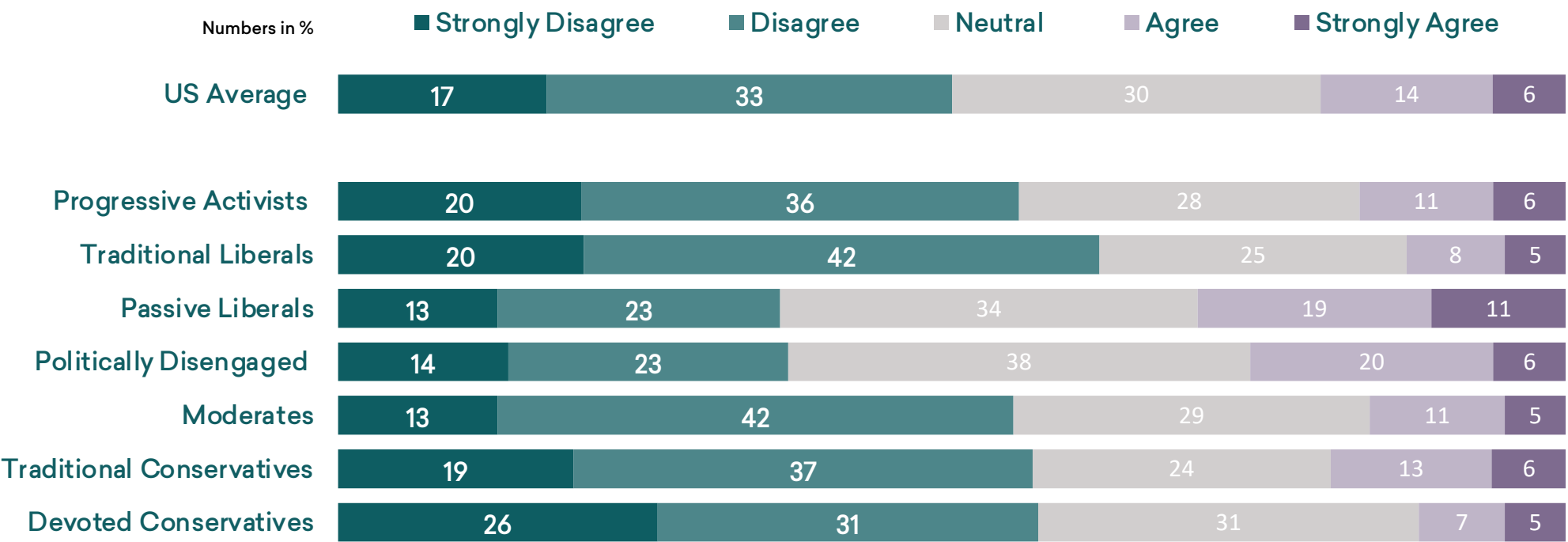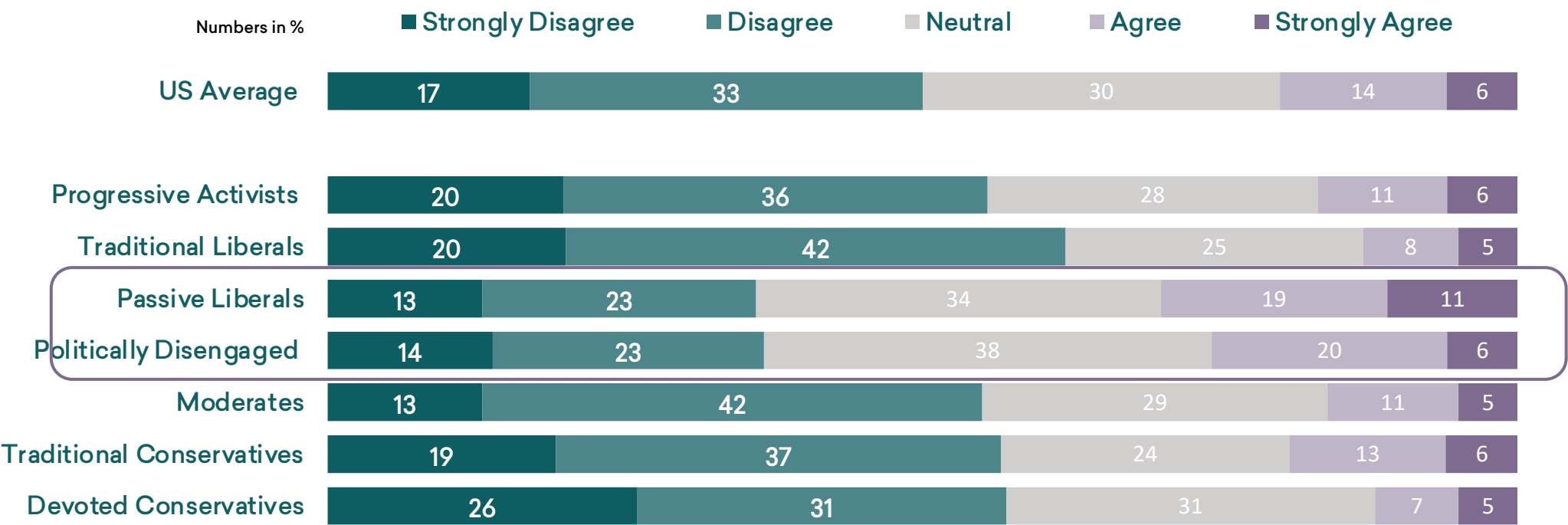| Group	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	17	33	30	14	6
Progressive Activists	20	36	28	11	6
Traditional Liberals	20	42	25	8	5
Passive Liberals	13	23	34	19	11
Politically Disengaged	14	23	38	20	6
Moderates	13	42	29	11	5
Traditional Conservatives	19	37	24	13	6
Devoted Conservatives	26	31	31	7	5

Questions : *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?. (1=Strongly Disagree –5=Strongly Agree).*

Source: More in Common, N=2,009 US Adults.

20% of US adults think that no one "really listens" to them. Passive Liberals and the Politically Disengaged are more likely to agree.

No one really listens to me.

Numbers in %　　■ Strongly Disagree　　■ Disagree　　■ Neutral　　■ Agree　　■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	17	33	30	14	6
Progressive Activists	20	36	28	11	6
Traditional Liberals	20	42	25	8	5
Passive Liberals	13	23	34	19	11
Politically Disengaged	14	23	38	20	6
Moderates	13	42	29	11	5
Traditional Conservatives	19	37	24	13	6
Devoted Conservatives	26	31	31	7	5

About 40% of US respondents who feel "excluded" at the local community level agree that no one "really listens" to them.
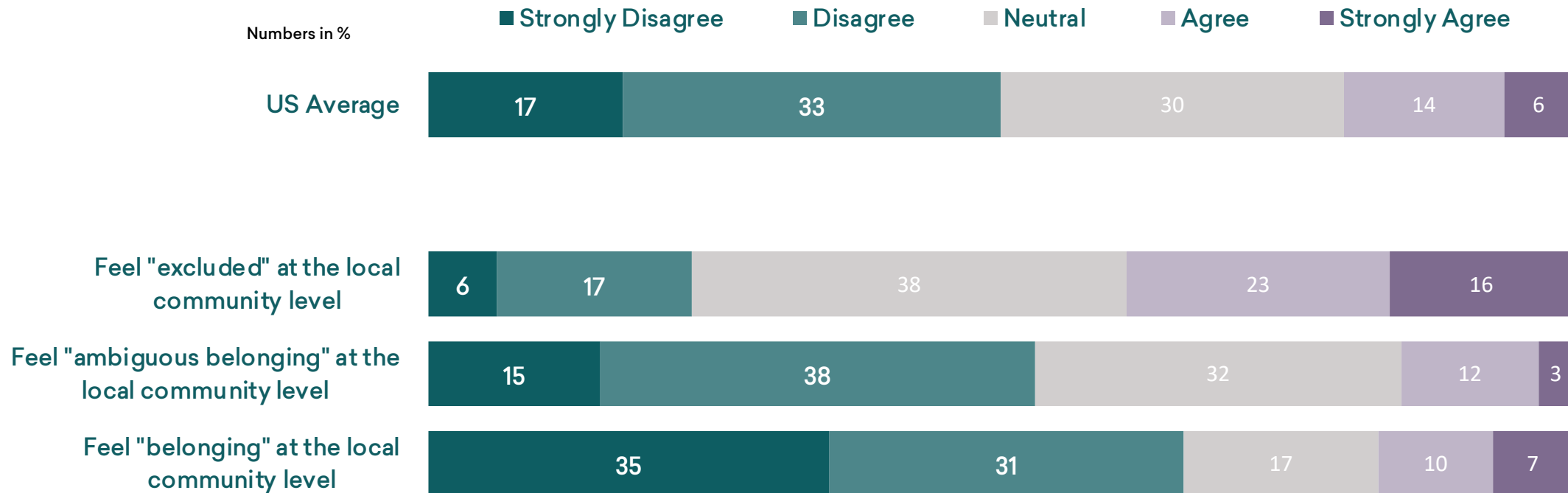
No one really listens to me.

Numbers in %

■ Strongly Disagree　■ Disagree　■ Neutral　■ Agree　■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	17	33	30	14	6
Feel "excluded" at the local community level	6	17	38	23	16
Feel "ambiguous belonging" at the local community level	15	38	32	12	3
Feel "belonging" at the local community level	35	31	17	10	7

43% of adults who interact with others "always" online think that no one "really listens" to them.

No one really listens to me.

Numbers in %   ■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	17	33	30	14	6

Do your social interactions happen online or in person?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Always online	3	13	42	32	11
Mostly online	13	31	26	21	9
Equally Online and in- person	17	30	34	14	4
Mostly in-person	20	39	28	9	4
Always in-person	14	28	33	11	14

Questions : *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?. (1=Strongly Disagree –5=Strongly Agree).*
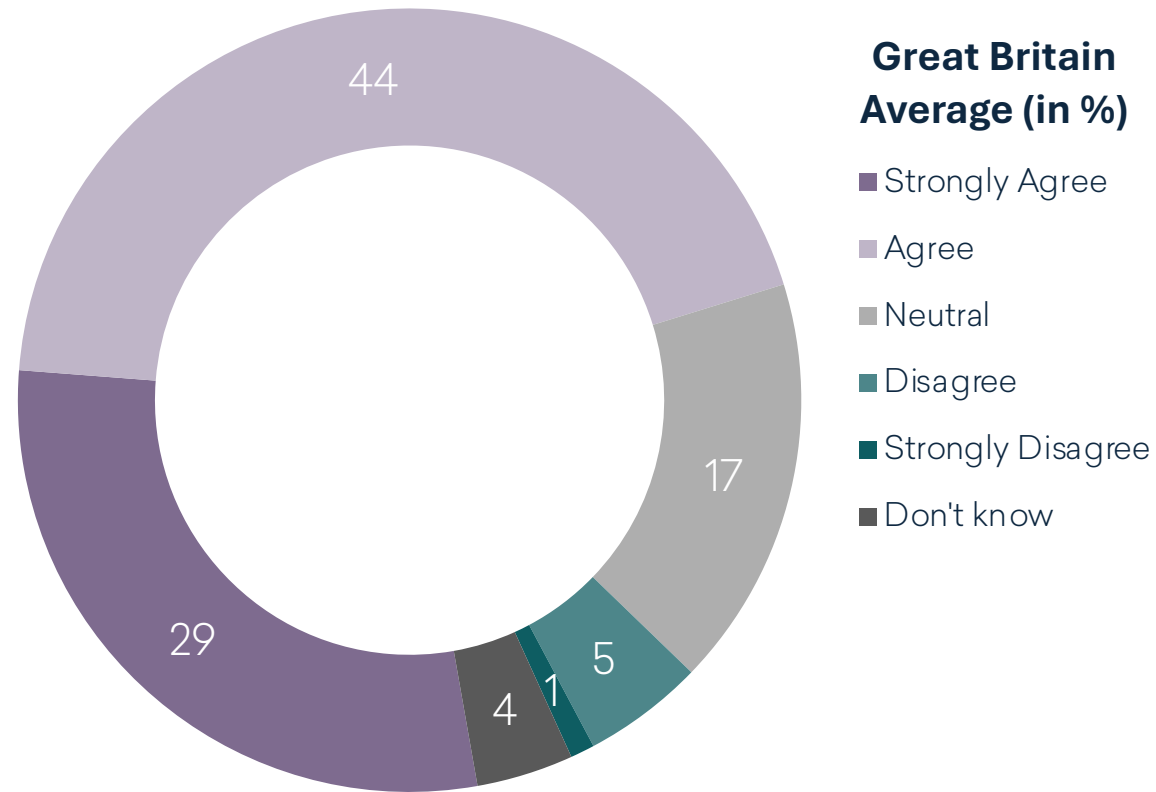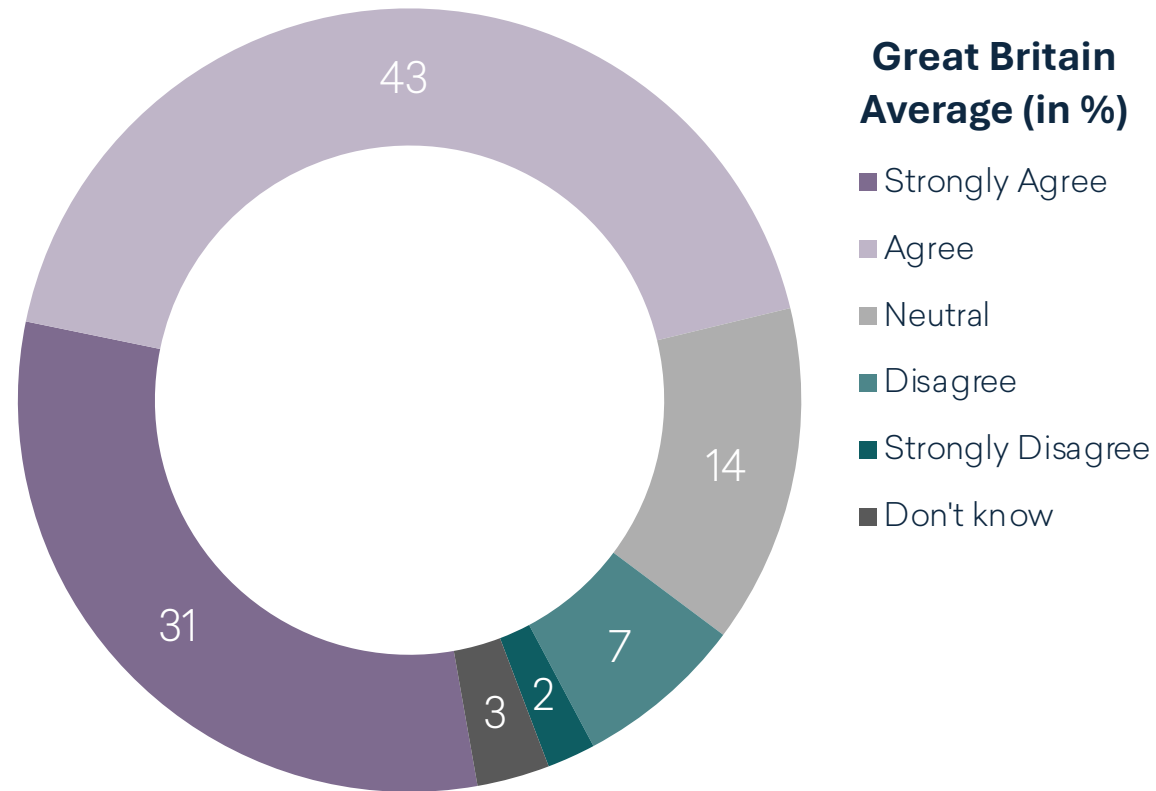Source: More in Common, N=2,009 US Adults.

Beliefs about Listening (Great Britain)

73% of adults in Great Britain think that people are not as good at listening as they used to be.

People are not as good at listening to others as they used to be.

Great Britain Average (in %)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know

44
29
17
5
1
4

74% of adults in Great Britain think that people don't listen because they are distracted by their phones.

I often feel like people aren't listening to me because they are distracted by their phone.
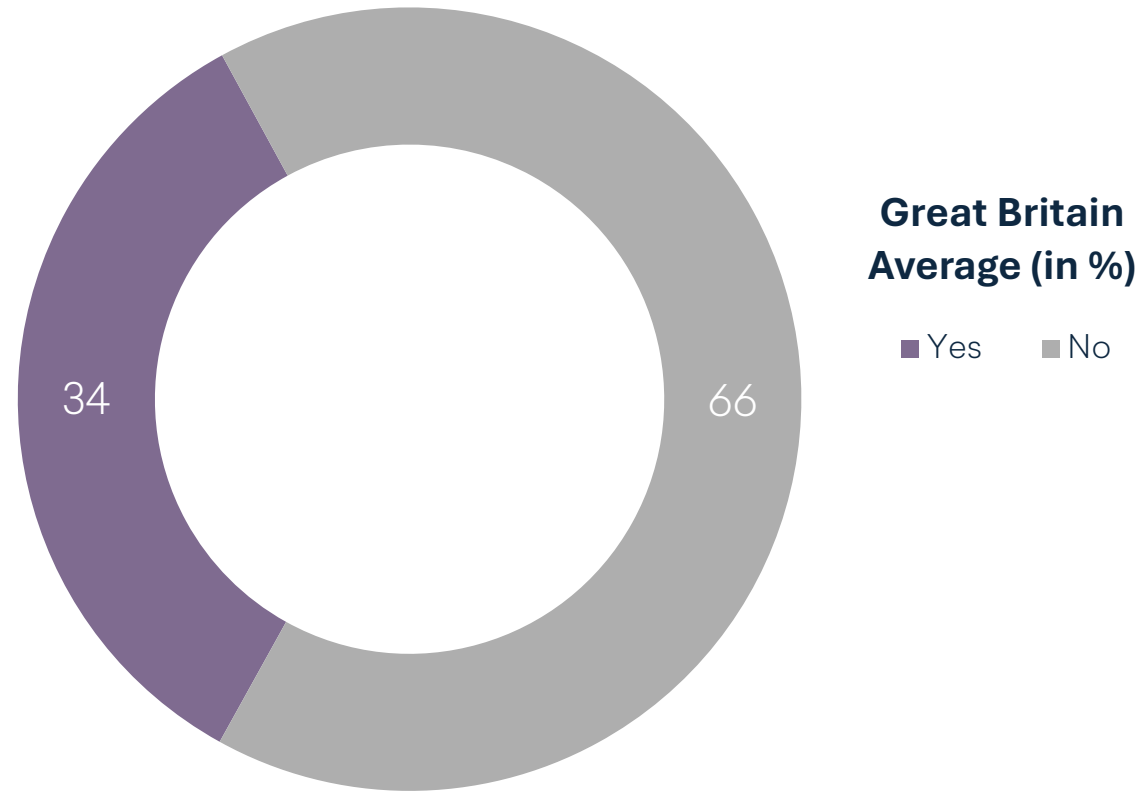

Great Britain Average (in %)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know

34% of adults in Great Britain are interested in taking a course to become a better listener.

Would you be interested in taking a 90 min course (for free) to help you become a better listener?
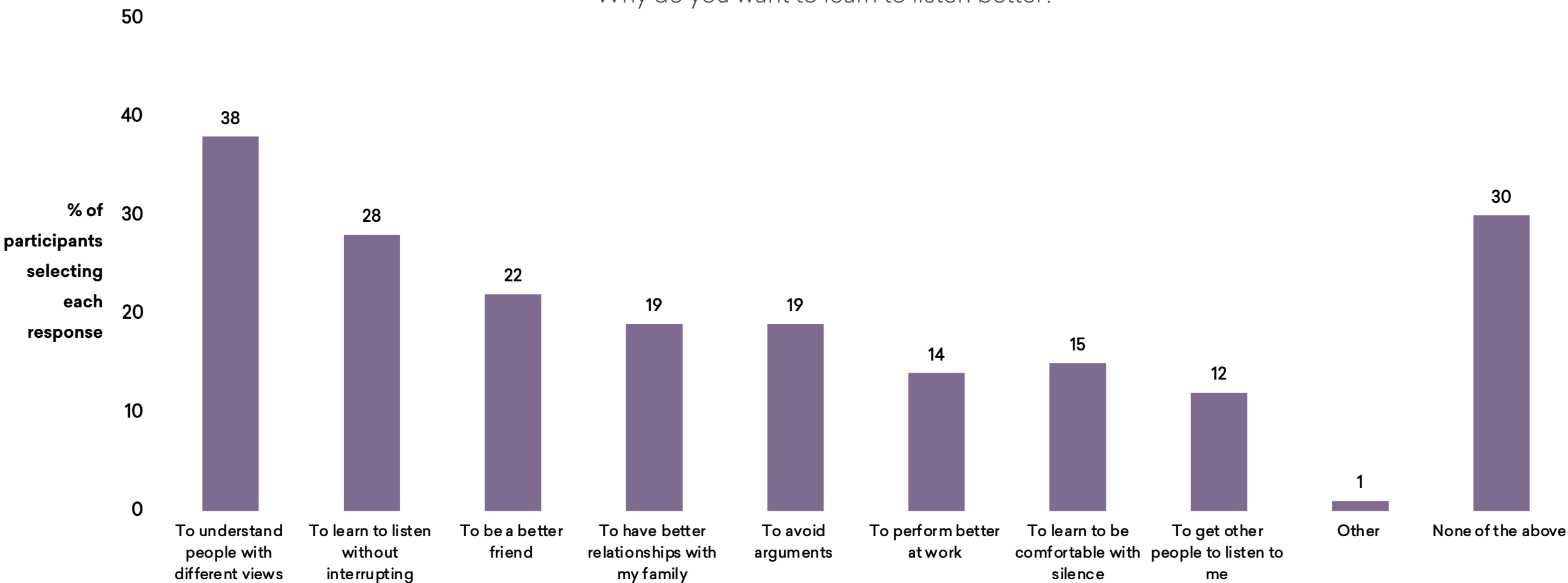

Great Britain Average (in %)

■ Yes   ■ No

34

66

The top reason for wanting to learn to listen better is "to understand people with different views."

Why do you want to learn to listen better?

% of participants selecting each response

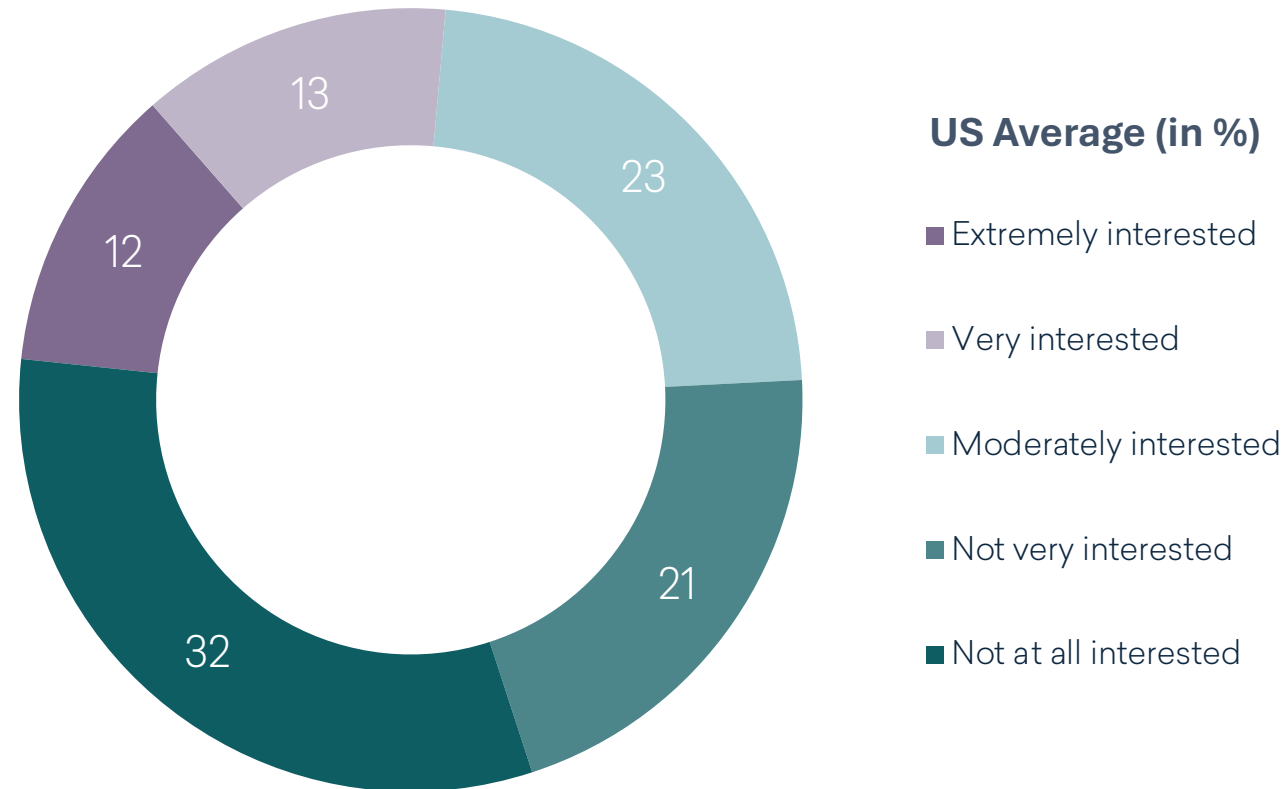| Response	%
To understand people with different views	38
To learn to listen without interrupting	28
To be a better friend	22
To have better relationships with my family	19
To avoid arguments	19
To perform better at work	14
To learn to be comfortable with silence	15
To get other people to listen to me	12
Other	1
None of the above	30

Interest in an online course (USA only)

48% of US adults are interested in taking an online deep listening training course.

Would you be interested in taking a 90-minute interactive online course (for free) to help you become a better listener?

US Average (in %)

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Not very interested
- Not at all interested

For interested respondents, wanting to understand people with different views was the top reason selected.
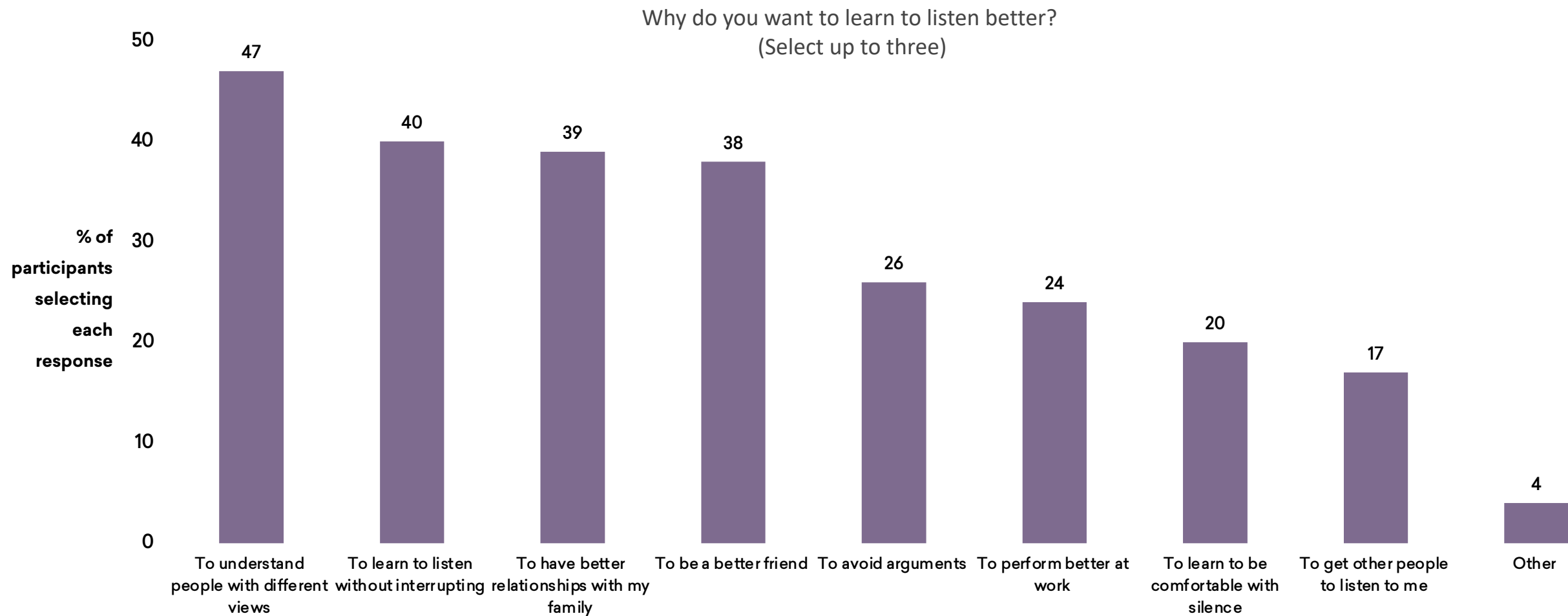
Why do you want to learn to listen better?
(Select up to three)

% of participants selecting each response

To understand people with different views	47
To learn to listen without interrupting	40
To have better relationships with my family	39
To be a better friend	38
To avoid arguments	26
To perform better at work	24
To learn to be comfortable with silence	20
To get other people to listen to me	17
Other	4

Uninterested respondents said that they were already good at listening or didn't have the time.

Why are you not interested, or not very interested, in attending?
(Select all that apply)
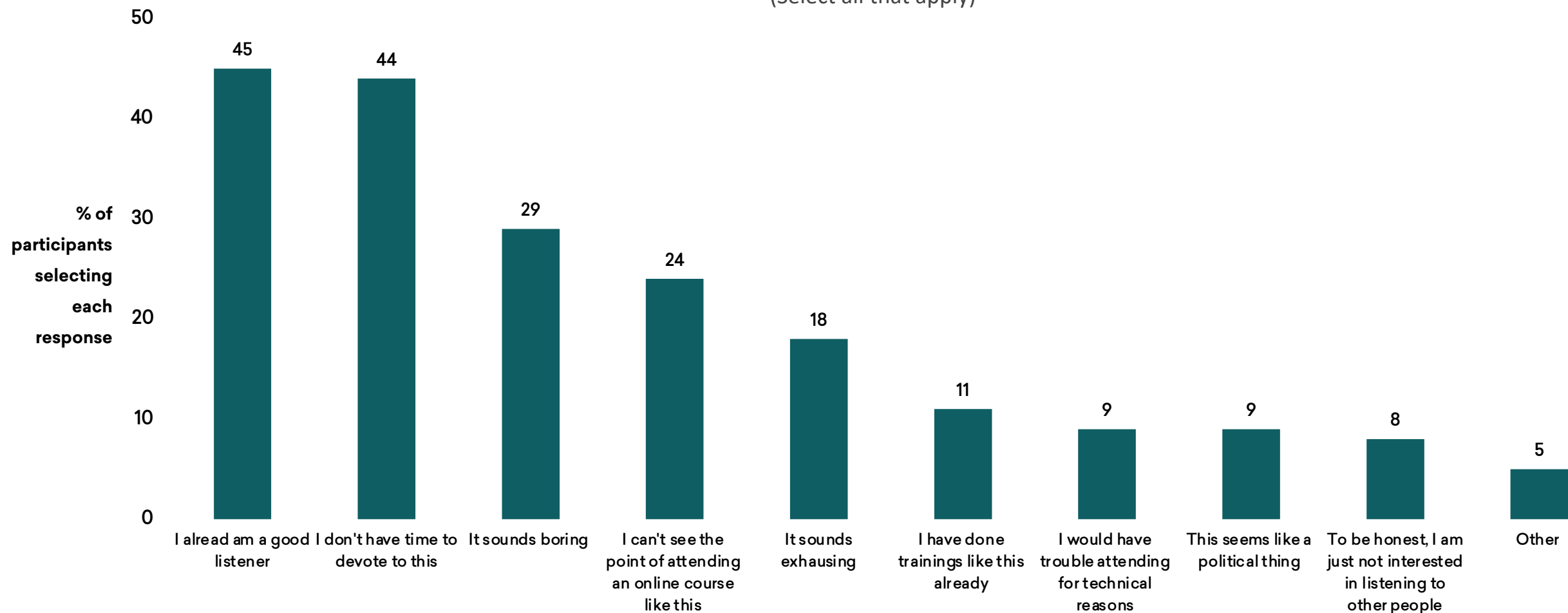
% of participants selecting each response

Response	%
I already am a good listener	45
I don't have time to devote to this	44
It sounds boring	29
I can't see the point of attending an online course like this	24
It sounds exhausing	18
I have done trainings like this already	11
I would have trouble attending for technical reasons	9
This seems like a political thing	9
To be honest, I am just not interested in listening to other people	8
Other	5

Top reasons for respondents who were the most interested in the course

Respondents more likely to select "extremely" or "very" interested	Top reasons
People making $250,000 or more	To understand people with different views, to perform better at work
Millennials, Gen Z	To understand people with different views, to perform better at work
Black Americans	To understand people with different views, to avoid arguments
Traditional Conservatives	To understand people with different views, to perform better at work
Traditional Liberals	To understand people with different views
People who have social interaction "always" or "mostly" online	To learn to be comfortable with silence, to have better relationships (with friends and family)
People who say religion is "very important" to them	To understand people with different views, to learn to listen without interrupting

Top reasons for respondents who were the least interested in the course

Respondents more likely to select "not very" or "not at all" interested	Top reasons
Silent Generation	I am already a good listener, I would have trouble attending for technical reasons
Baby Boomers	I am already a good listener, I can't see the point in this
Devoted Conservates	It sounds boring, I don't have the time, I don't see the point
Politically Disengaged	I already am a good listener, I don't have time
People who interact "mostly" or "always" in person	It sounds boring, I already am a good listener, technical trouble

Future Directions

- In the US sample, we found significant differences between groups that spent more or less time socializing online. However, the group that socialized "always online" was rather small (N=62 US adults). So, to be confident in this result, future researchers should replicate this study with a larger sample size.

- Why does Gen Z fear that listening to others might equate agreement? Qualitative research could help us better understand their beliefs.

- The differences between men and women (as shown in the Appendix) are very small but statistically significant. To better understand the beliefs of men vs. women, researchers should use a qualitative approach to provide more explanatory detail.

Thank you!

Appendix

Significant Differences by Gender

Men in the US are slightly more likely to agree that listening to someone with opposing views equates to agreeing with them.

I fear that listening to someone with opposing views might make them think I agree with them.

Numbers in %   ■ Strongly Disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
US Average	18	33	31	14	4
Men	18	32	28	17	5
Women	18	33	33	12	3
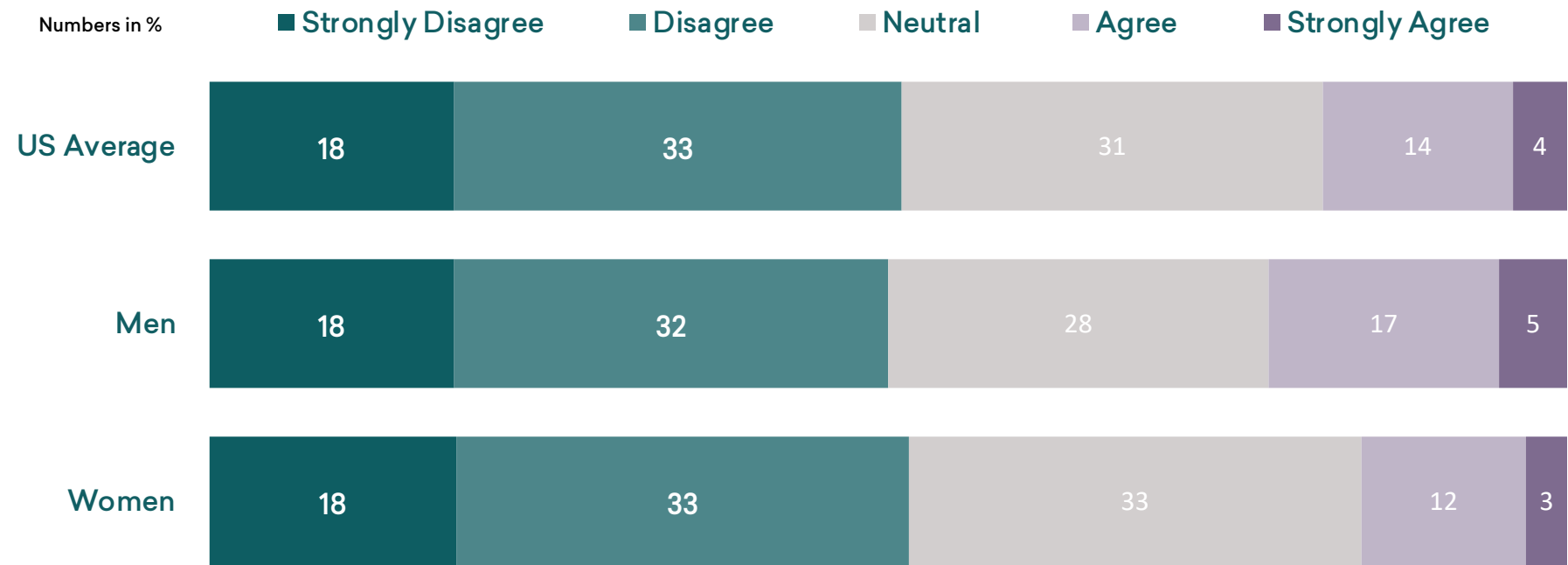
Question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?. (1=Strongly Disagree –5=Strongly Agree)*

Source: More in Common, N=2,009 US Adults.

Women in Great Britain are slightly more likely to agree that they are good at listening.

I am a good listener.

Numbers in % ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

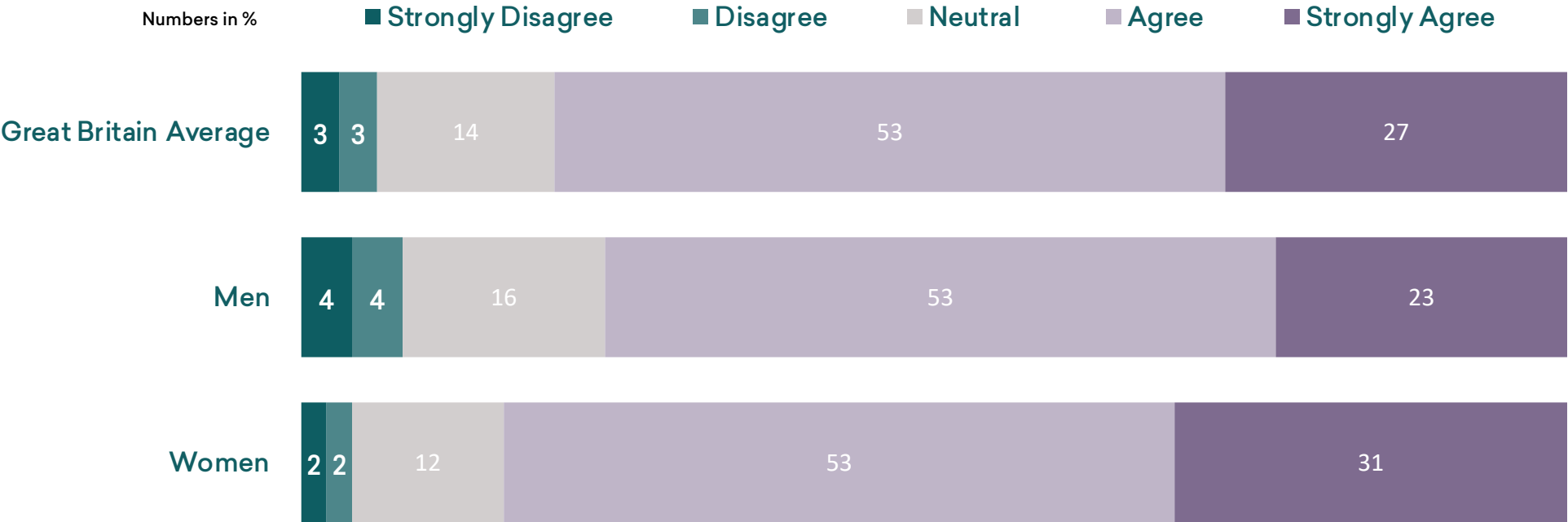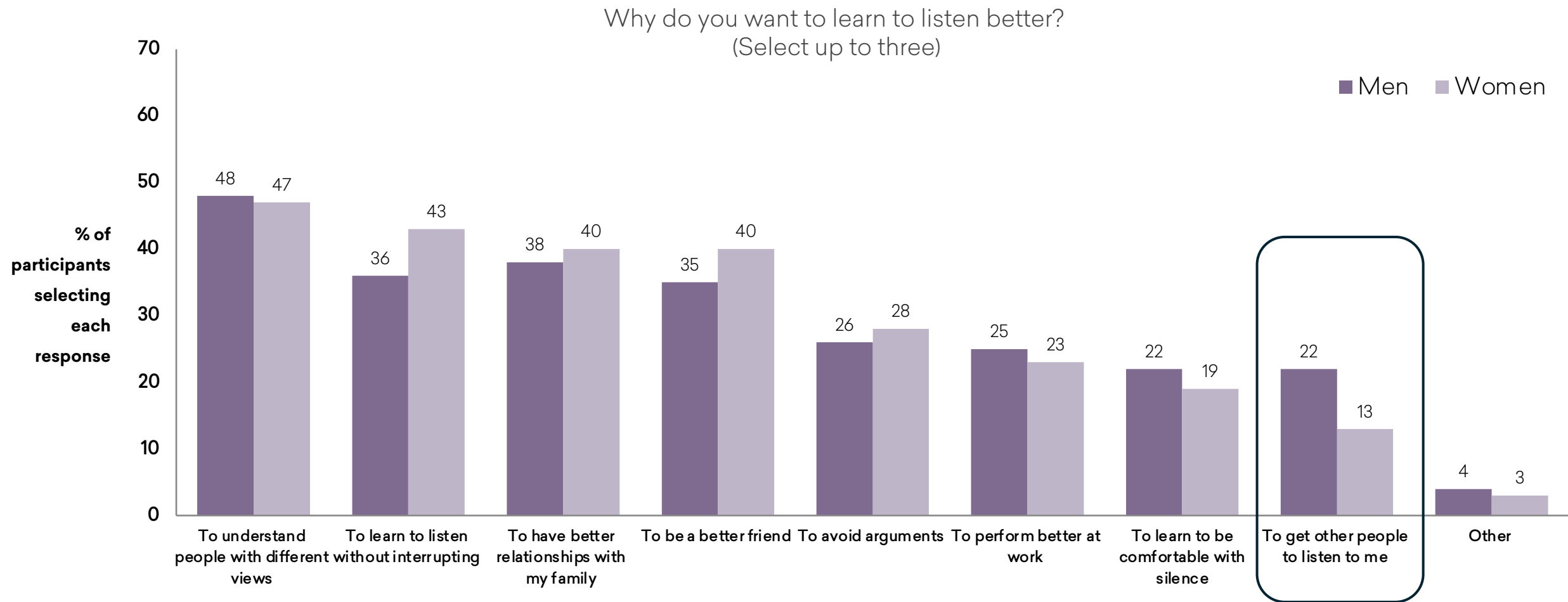|	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Great Britain Average	3	3	14	53	27
Men	4	4	16	53	23
Women	2	2	12	53	31

Question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?. (1=Strongly Disagree –5=Strongly Agree)*

Source: More in Common, N = 2,308 adults in Great Britain

Of men and women *interested* in the course, fewer women selected " to get other people to listen to me" than men.

Why do you want to learn to listen better?
(Select up to three)

■ Men ■ Women

% of participants selecting each response

Response	Men	Women
To understand people with different views	48	47
To learn to listen without interrupting	36	43
To have better relationships with my family	38	40
To be a better friend	35	40
To avoid arguments	26	28
To perform better at work	25	23
To learn to be comfortable with silence	22	19
To get other people to listen to me	22	13
Other	4	3

Of men and women *uninterested* in the course, fewer women selected "I can't see the point" than men.

Why are you not interested, or not very interested, in attending?
(Select all that apply)

% of participants selecting each response

Legend: ■ Men ■ Women

Response	Men	Women
I already am a good listener	48	43
I don't have time to devote to this	45	43
It sounds boring	32	25
I can't see the point of attending an online course like this	31	18
It sounds exhausing	20	16
I have done trainings like this already	14	9
I would have trouble attending for technical reasons	8	9
This seems like a political thing	11	7
To be honest, I am just not interested in listening to other people	10	7
Other	5	4