

The Impact of COVID-19 on Dutch Society

The Netherlands



About More in Common



More in Common is an international initiative set up in 2017 to build societies that are stronger, more united, and more resilient to the increasing threats of polarization and social division.

We work with a wide range of groups in civil society, business, faith, education, philanthropy, media and government to connect people across lines of division.

More in Common's teams in France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States work together and share a commitment to advancing our mission.

For more information please visit www.moreincommon.com or contact us at contact@moreincommon.com

About This Study



COVID-19 has up-ended the lives of people across the world, causing untold suffering and dislocation, with a death toll expected to exceed one million within days. The impact of the coronavirus on our health, economy and society will re-shape the world of the 2020s. It could result in societies becoming more deeply divided along existing fault-lines, but that is not inevitable. This study shows that COVID-19 has unleashed hopes for change in many societies, especially those who have struggled most with the virus. It has also made us more aware of our shared humanity, the value of strong local communities and the importance of our connection to nature.

Many choices lie ahead as we grapple with the fallout of the pandemic. The decisions being made in the months ahead – in families, communities and nations – will have consequences for a generation. This is why More in Common has compiled this snapshot of public opinion in France, Germany, Italy, Poland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, with key findings on:

- The impact of the pandemic on personal health, family life, employment and finances
- How COVID-19 has impacted our societies – and people's feelings of togetherness, solidarity, empathy, trust and loneliness
- Whether people want a return to normal or wish to see significant change in the aftermath of the pandemic
- Whether countries need more European and international co-operation, or whether they should go it alone
- Views on political priorities and support for policies on issues such as the economy, jobs, the environment and taxation
- Hopes and fears for the future

Our snapshot combines a mix of country-specific and cross-country questions. We hope that the findings presented here, as well as the detailed national studies that form part of this project, will provide valuable insights into this once-in-a-generation moment. Most of all, we hope they will strengthen efforts to build more united and resilient societies.

Method & Scope



Geographical Scope

France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, U.K., U.S.

Subject Matter

- Personal experience under COVID-19
- COVID-19 as a collective challenge
- Aftermath

Methodology

- N=2,000 per country; Margin of error +/- 2%
- Online poll
- Research partners: Kantar (Europe); YouGov (UK & US)
- Fieldwork dates for continental Europe: 1-8 July, 2020
- Fieldwork dates for UK: 19-28 June, 2020

Please note: In few cases, numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

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COVID-19 in the Netherlands



Situation (As of September 4)



So far, the Dutch health system has managed relatively well. Early bottlenecks undermined widespread testing, but these problems have now been solved.

72,464 Cases

6,235 Deaths



Relying heavily on trade, the Dutch economy has felt the COVID-crisis significantly: Exports are expected to drop by 10%, but should see positive growth again in 2021. Overall, the country is expected to experience its strongest economic contraction since the end of WWII, with severe consequences for the labor market.

-6.75% Expected drop in GDP for 2020

6% Expected unemployment rate



While the Dutch strategy of an “intelligent lockdown” was less strict and encompassing than in most other European countries, its measures ended up being similar to those in Germany.

Still, many shops remained open for the entirety of the crisis, and while mask wearing is still not mandatory in the country, individual cities are now imposing this measure.

National Context

The Dutch approach in containing the COVID crisis stands out in Europe in that its lockdown measures were less strict than elsewhere, but still stopped short of a ‘herd immunity’ strategy. The government’s communicative approach relied heavily on citizens’ individual responsibility, with the motto of “treating citizens like adults”. This course has so far been met with high public approval. On the European level, the Netherlands have led a strong opposition course to European initiatives of taking up common debt – at times coming into conflict especially with the Southern member states - but have now agreed to a compromise.

What sets the Netherlands apart?

- The Netherlands have chosen to take a less strict route to containing COVID-19, with many shops remaining open, and masks not being mandatory. So far, this strategy appears to have been relatively successful, although individual cities have started requiring masks in certain areas.
- In 2019, the Dutch supreme court decided on a landmark climate case (Urgenda case), forcing the Dutch government to reduce emissions by 25% (compared to 1990 levels) by the end of 2020. The government has stepped up its efforts to meet this goal in spite of the upcoming economic difficulties.

Key Infos

- **Head of State:** Prime Minister Mark Rutte (VVD: People’s Party for Freedom & Democracy)
- **Ruling Coalition:** VVD, CDA, D66, CU
- **Next Election:** House of Representatives election in March 2021

Key Findings

Personal Impact

In European comparison, COVID-19 has had a relatively limited effect on Dutch peoples' personal lives.

- Worries about loss of job, financial difficulties or future rounds of lockdown are amongst the lowest in Europe.
- However, 1 in 3 Dutch people know someone who has fallen ill with COVID-19, and around 17% know someone who has died in the past months.

Collective Experience

A large majority (71%) of Dutch people is convinced that most people have abided by the restrictions and rules related to COVID-19. 58% say the crisis has made them more aware of others' living conditions, and 65% say that the handling of this crisis has made them prouder of the Netherlands.

Institutions

In European comparison, the Dutch were highly satisfied with their government's performance in this crisis: government action was perceived as democratic (60%), competent (70%) and fair (68%). Approval of the acting Prime Minister is higher than in any of the other countries surveyed (at 77%).

The Future

In European comparison, the Dutch are not particularly looking for dramatic change coming out of the current crisis. Around 54% simply want things to return to normal. Political priorities besides containing COVID-19 include improving the health system (46%), reducing unemployment (30%), and supporting individuals and families in greatest need (28%).



Personal Experience under COVID-19



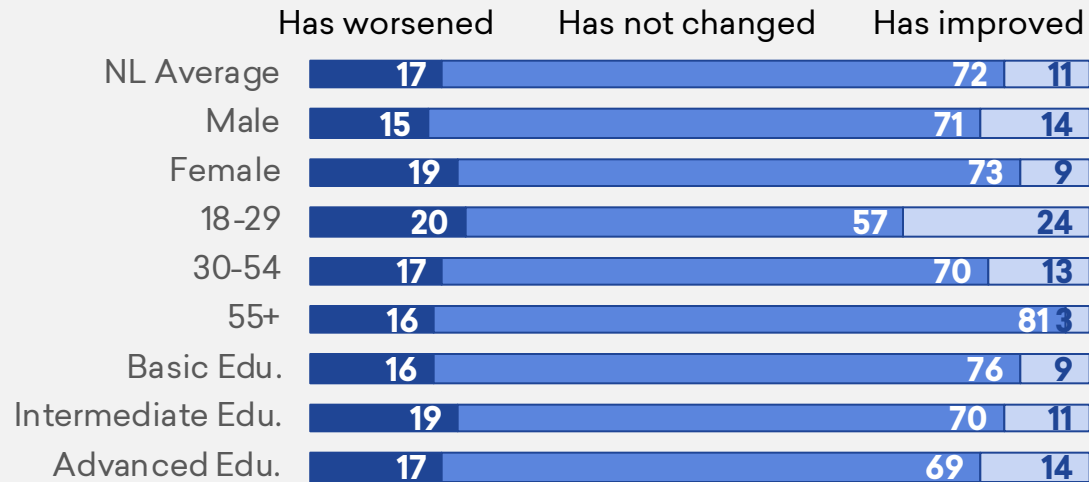
Impact of COVID-19 on personal lives



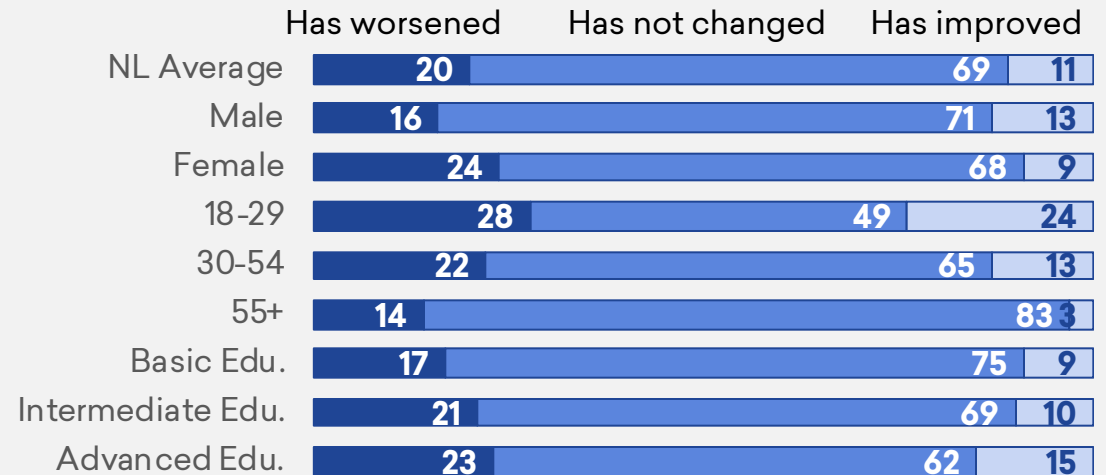
Physical and mental health since the onset of the pandemic

Young people stand out: they report the strongest impact of the crisis on their physical and mental health, both positively and negatively. Older people, 55 years and over, are least likely to report any change.

Physical Health



Mental Health



Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed, if at all?

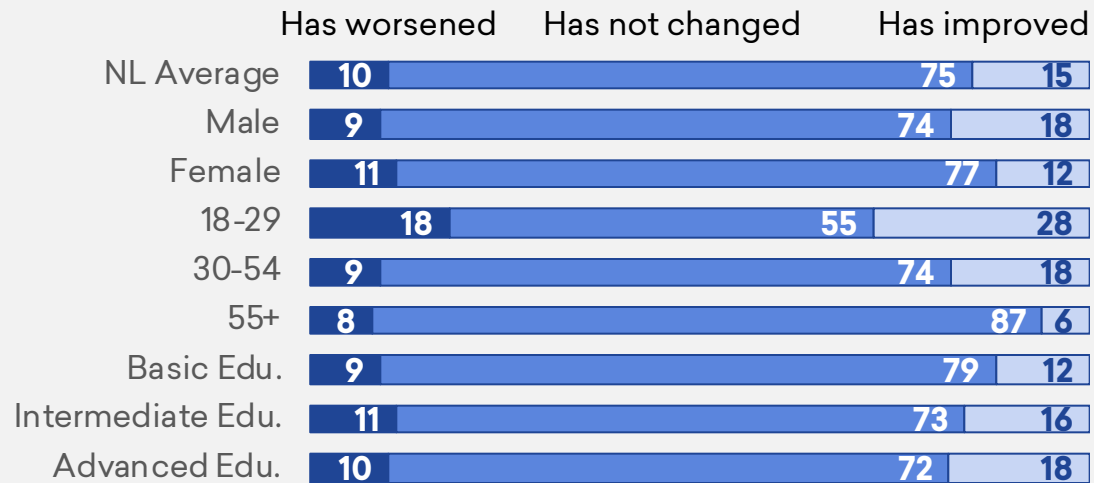
Impact of COVID-19 on personal lives



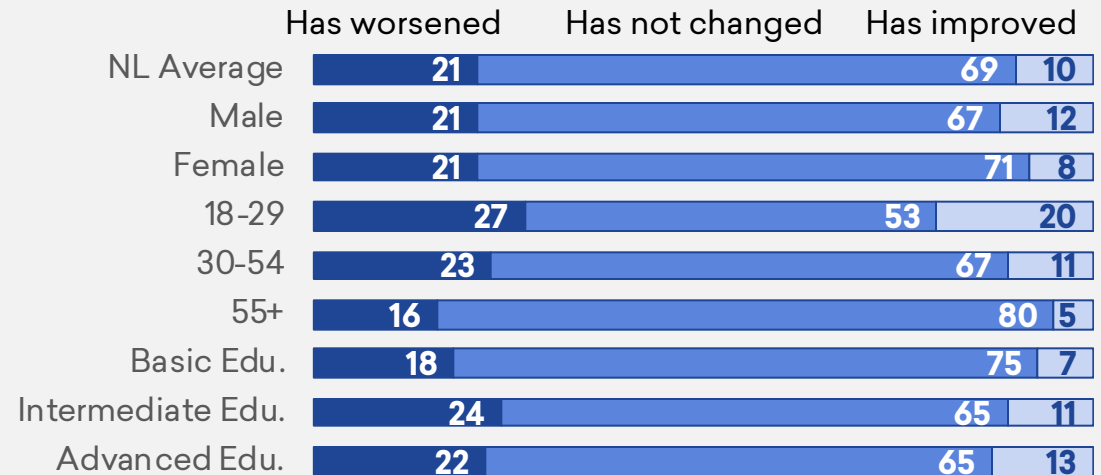
Impact on family life and financial situation

Again, young people are more strongly affected than older people.

Family Life



Financial situation



Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed, if at all?

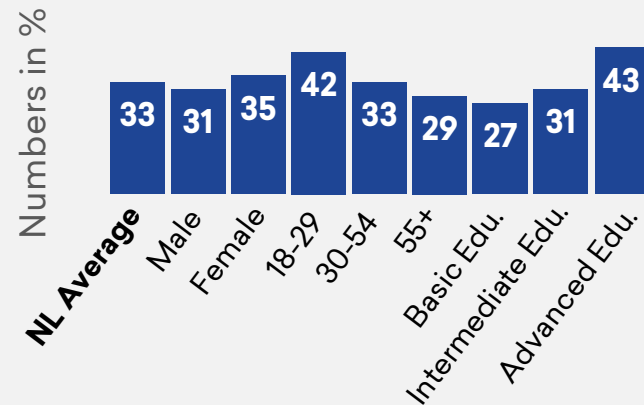
Impact of COVID-19 on personal networks



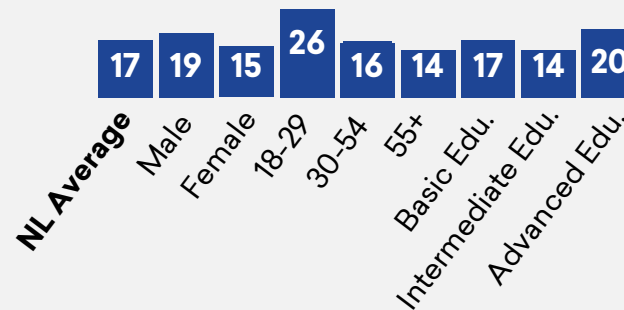
Young people, and to a lesser extent, highly educated people, have been exposed most to people who have had the disease, have died from it, or who have lost their job due to COVID-19. Older people are least likely to have been exposed to these groups.

“Do you personally know someone who... ?”

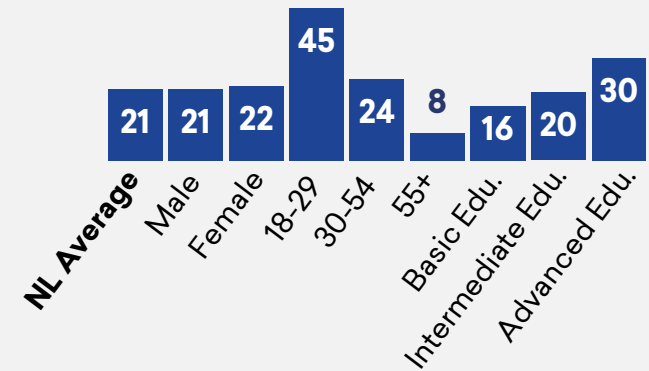
Has been ill with COVID-19



Has died from COVID-19



Who has lost their job or employment due to COVID-19



Question: Do you personally know someone who...?

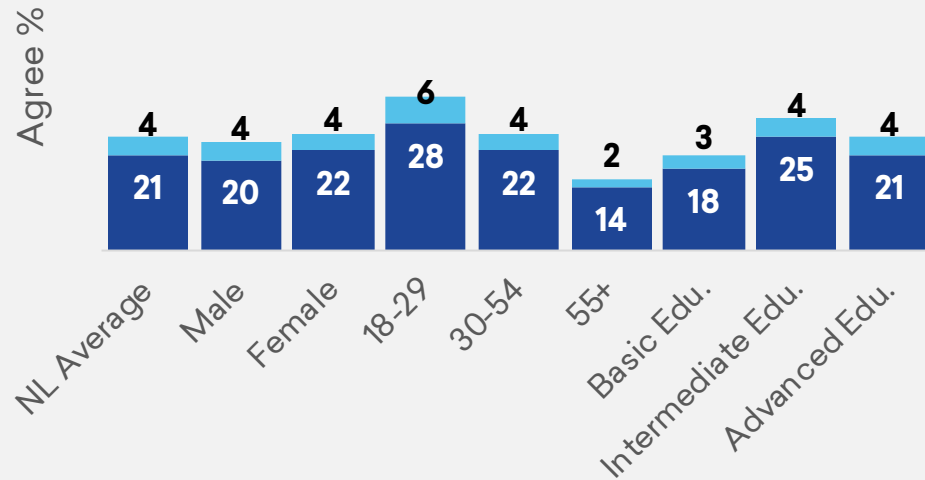
Economic worries and impacts



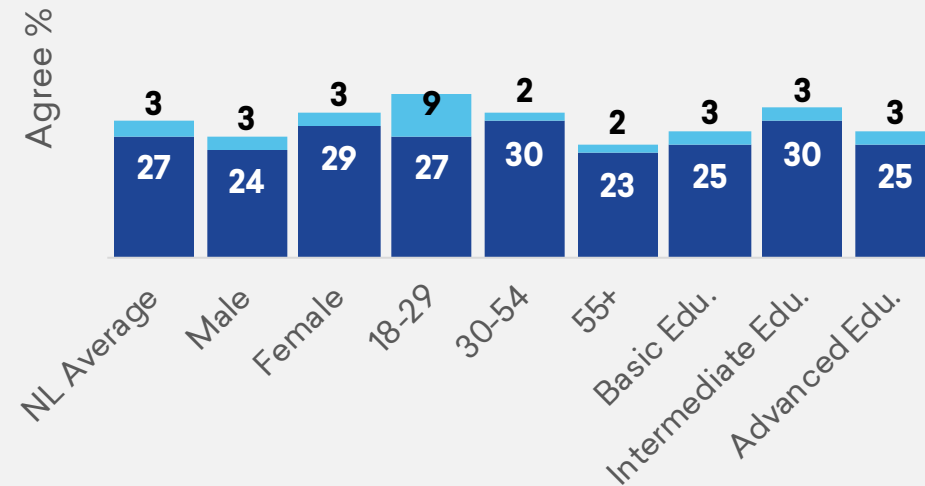
Job loss and Financial difficulties

About a quarter of the Dutch population worry about job loss or financial difficulties. Job loss and financial difficulties have already hit young people disproportionately.

Loss of job or employment*



Financial difficulties



■ Worried about ■ Already happened

Question: To what extent are you currently worried or not worried that...? *Note that these percentages exclude respondents who responded "Does not apply to me".

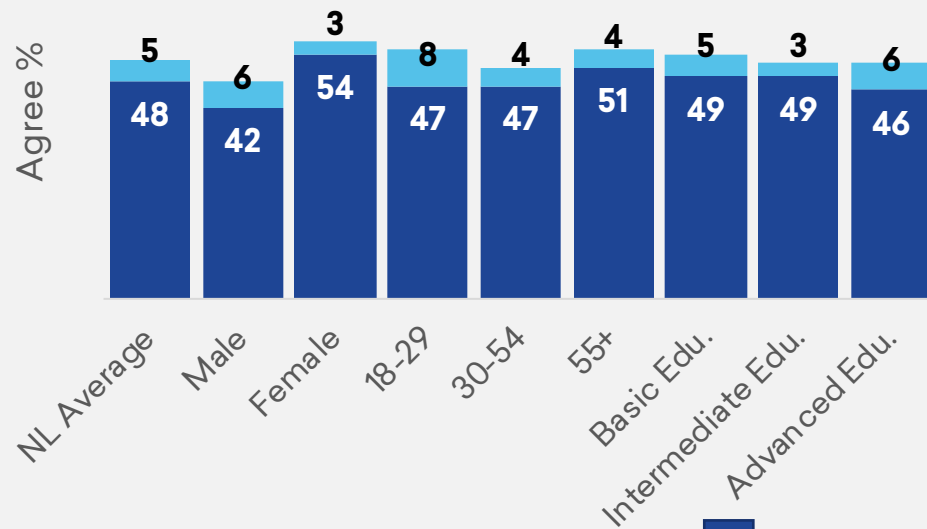
Health worries and impacts



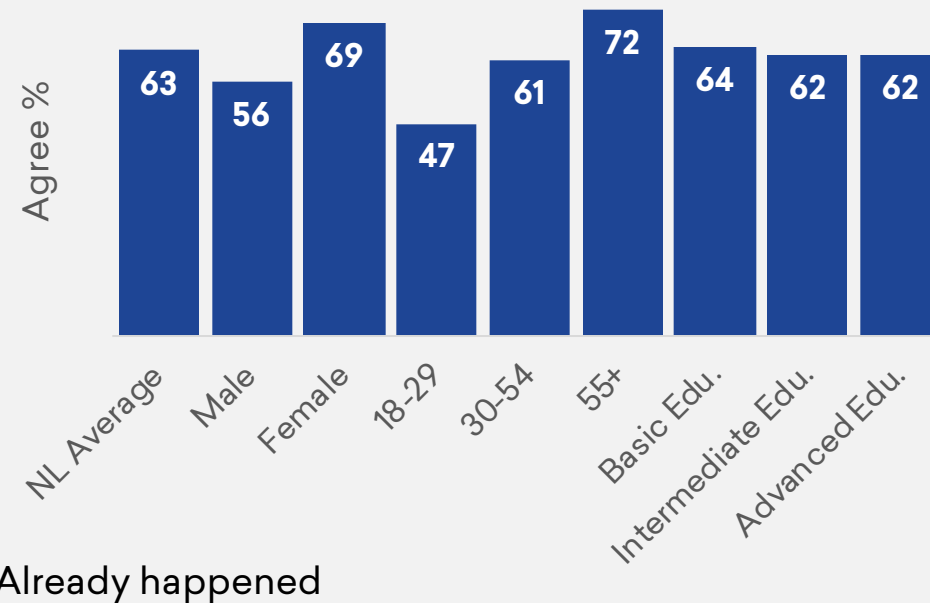
Family & friends; future waves of lockdown

People worry about their loved ones, and even more so about future lockdowns. Women and older age groups worry the most. Young people are least worried about new lockdowns, but they do worry about friends and family getting ill with COVID-19. There is little variation by educational attainment.

That someone among their friends & family will get ill with COVID-19



That there will be future waves of COVID-19 infections and lockdown in their country



■ Worried about ■ Already happened

Collective Experience under COVID-19

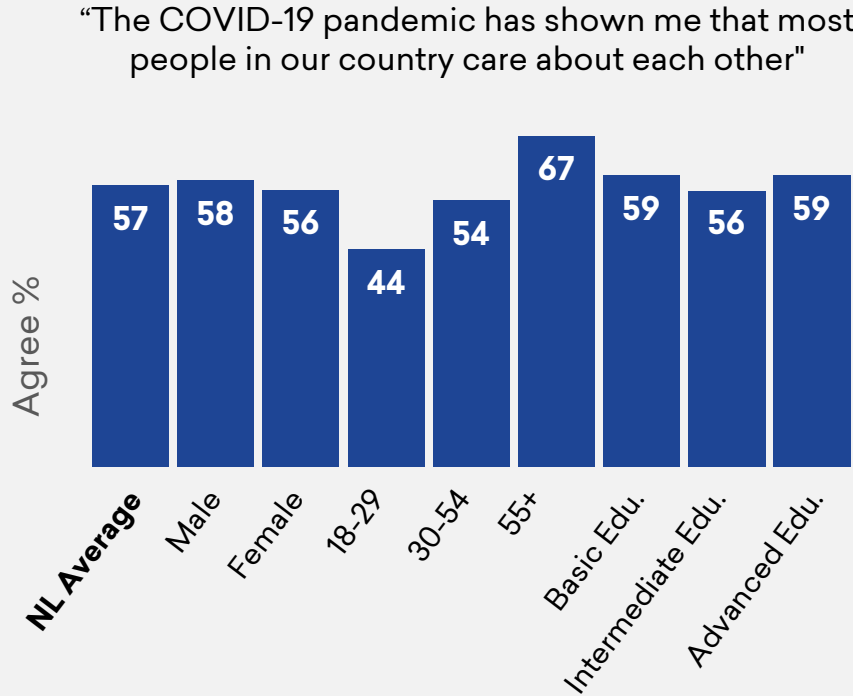


Support and Care



On your own or feeling supported?

While a majority of the Dutch population feels mainly left on their own in this pandemic, a majority also say the pandemic has shown that people in our country care about each other. Young people have experienced this the least.



Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?; To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

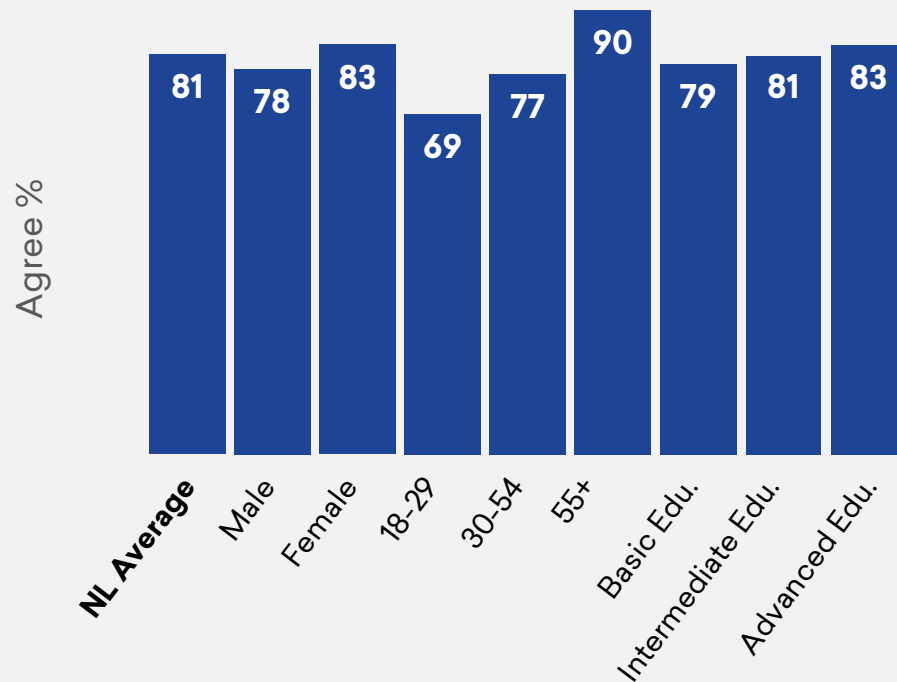
Lockdown and Restrictions



Following the rules to fight the virus?

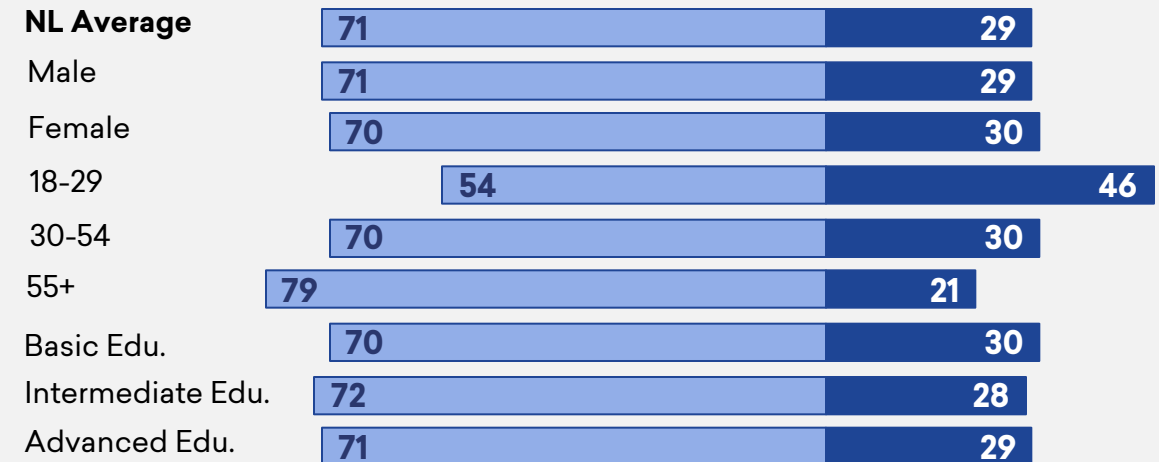
Eight out of ten respondents believe social distancing is a citizen's duty. Young people stand out: they are the least likely to think of social distancing as a duty and are by far the most skeptical on whether people have actually respected the COVID-19 rules.

"I feel that it is my duty as a citizen to follow social distancing and other rules."



Most people have been respecting the rules and doing their share to fight the virus together.

Most people have not been following the rules and have done too little to fight the virus together.



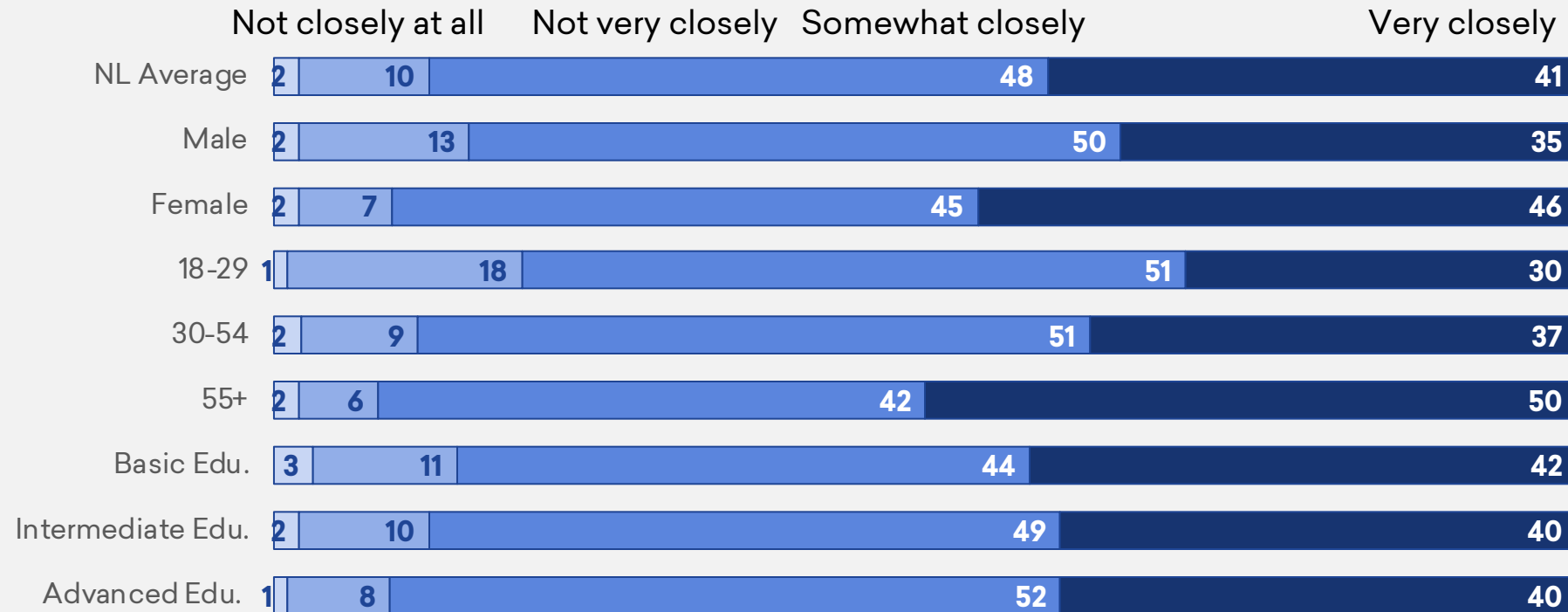
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?; To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

Lockdown and Restrictions



How closely do people follow the rules?

More than half the population admit to not following the COVID-19 rules 'very closely'. Young people are the least disciplined (or most frank about it): seven out of ten respondents admit to not always following the COVID rules 'very closely'.



Question: When it comes to the COVID-19 social distancing rules that have been put in place in your area (wearing a mask, staying home, etc.), would you say that you have followed the rules...?

Engagement & Contribution



Participating in pandemic-related social activities?

Participation in COVID-19 relief activities: highest participation in ‘expressing thanks to health care or essential workers’, followed immediately by spending more at local businesses.



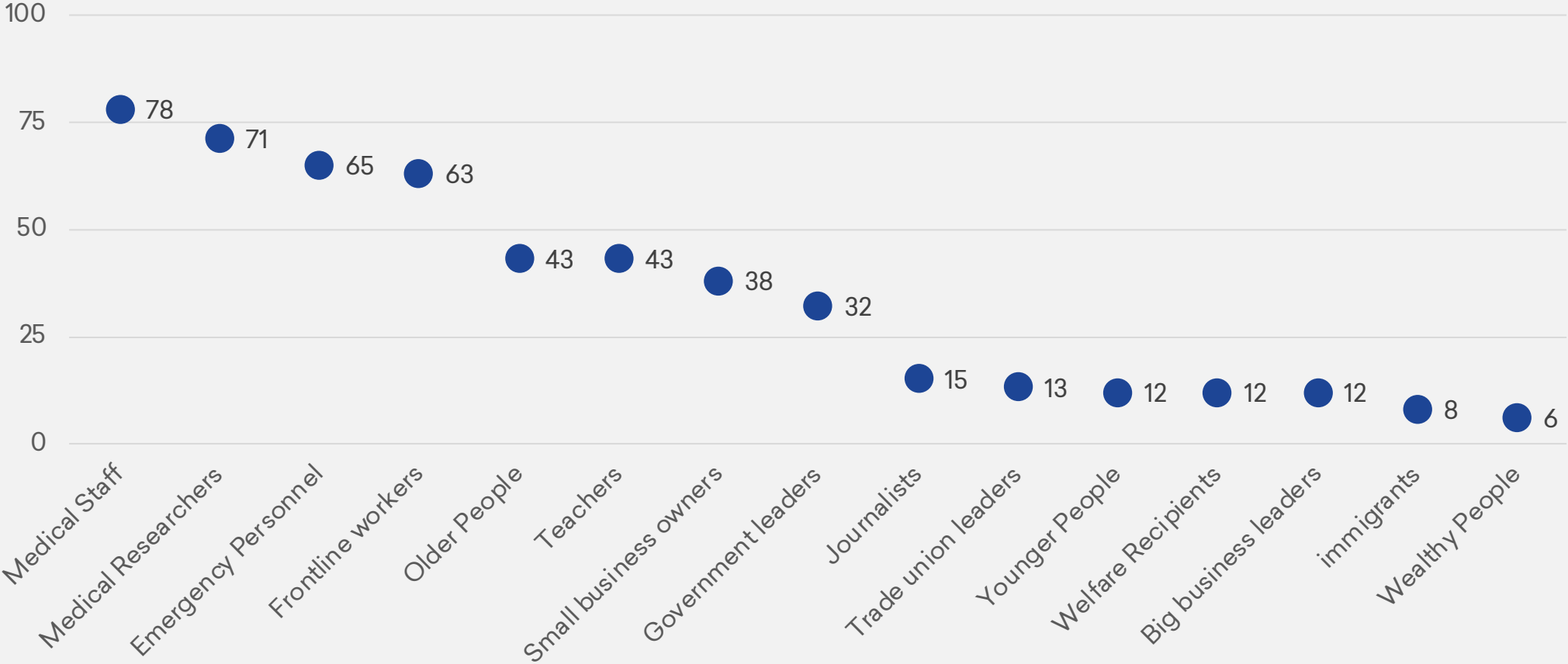
Question: In which of the following activities have you participated since the COVID-19 pandemic began, if any?

Groups in Society: Who deserves praise?



Who deserves most praise in the pandemic?

Medical staff, medical researchers, emergency personnel and frontline workers are the groups in society that deserve most praise for their actions in the COVID-19 pandemic. Strong majorities believe such praise is warranted.



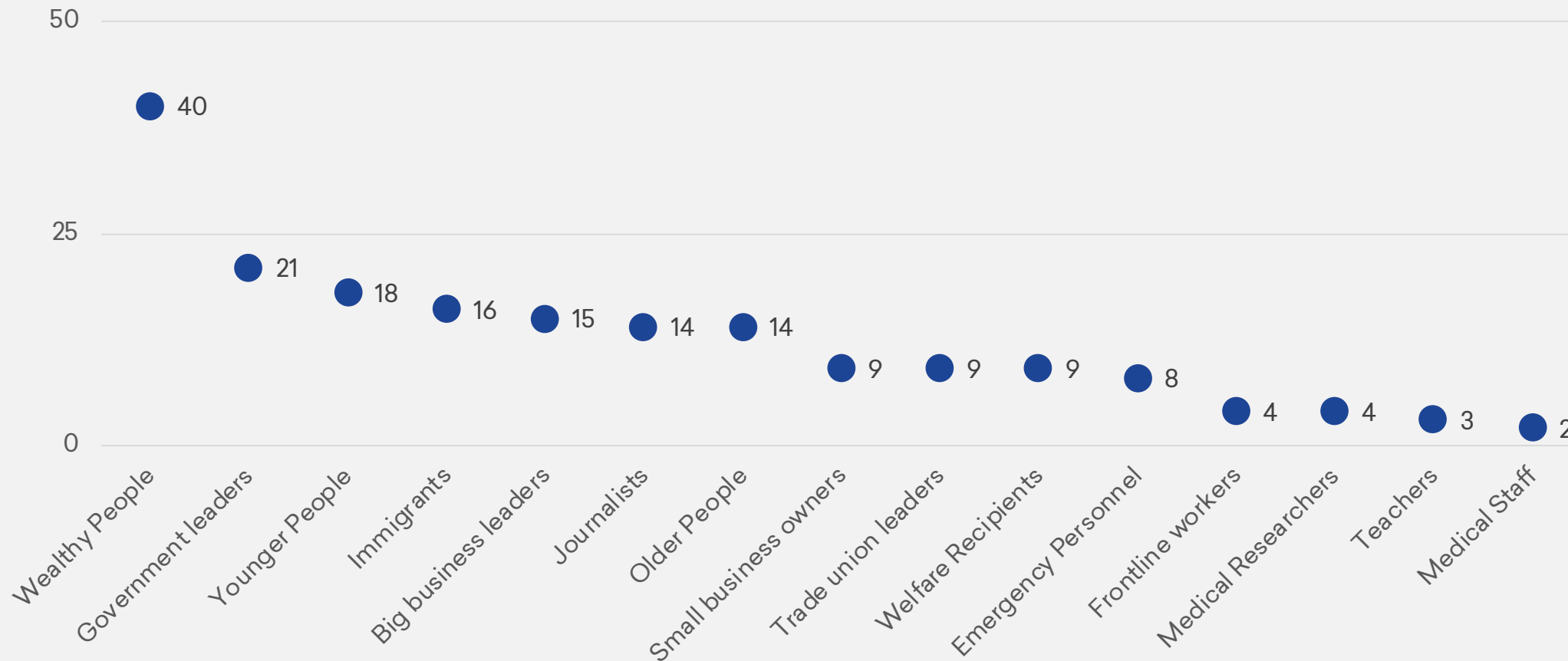
Question: When you think of how different people have acted in the COVID-19 pandemic so far: Please indicate whether the following groups of people deserve particular praise for their actions, deserve particular blame for their actions, or whether they deserve neither particular praise nor particular blame for their actions.

Groups in Society: Who deserves blame?



Who deserves most blame in the pandemic?

Out of fifteen actors, Dutch citizens pick 'wealthy people' as the ones deserving most blame for their actions in the COVID-19 pandemic.



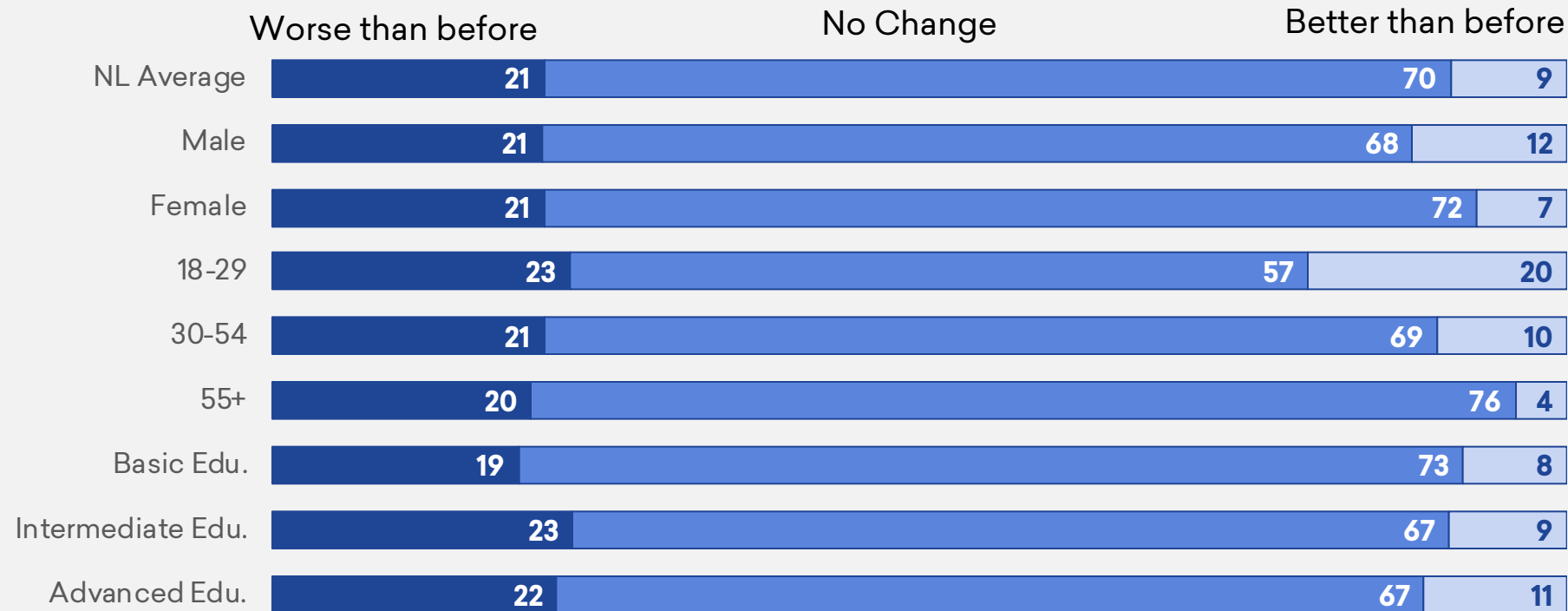
Question: When you think of how different people have acted in the COVID-19 pandemic so far: Please indicate whether the following groups of people deserve particular praise for their actions, deserve particular blame for their actions, or whether they deserve neither particular praise nor particular blame for their actions.

Trust in Others



How has people's trust in others changed during the crisis?

Most people don't report any change in their trust in other people. On balance, however, they lean toward less trust in others than before. Young people are the most polarized with both the highest proportion that gained trust and the highest proportion that lost trust.



Question: To what extent are the following aspects of your life different due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

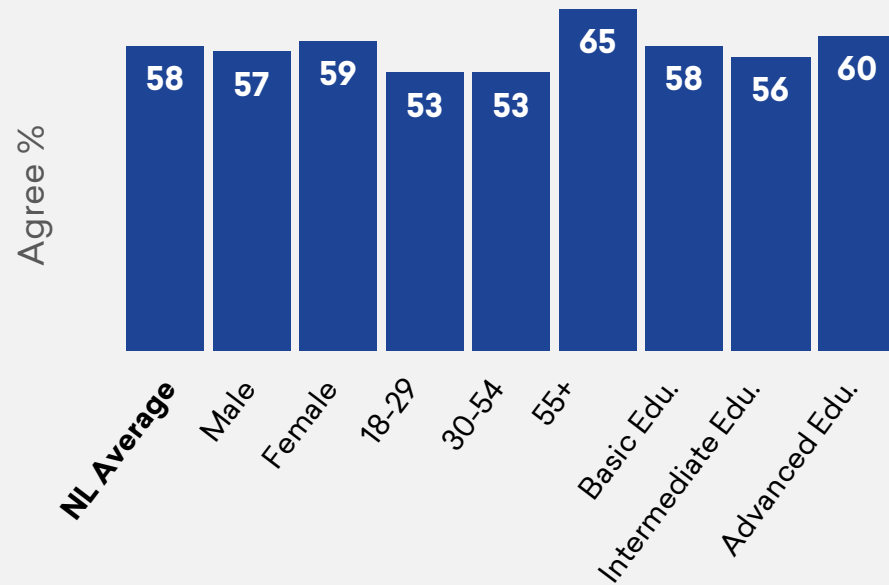
Empathy and Shared Humanity



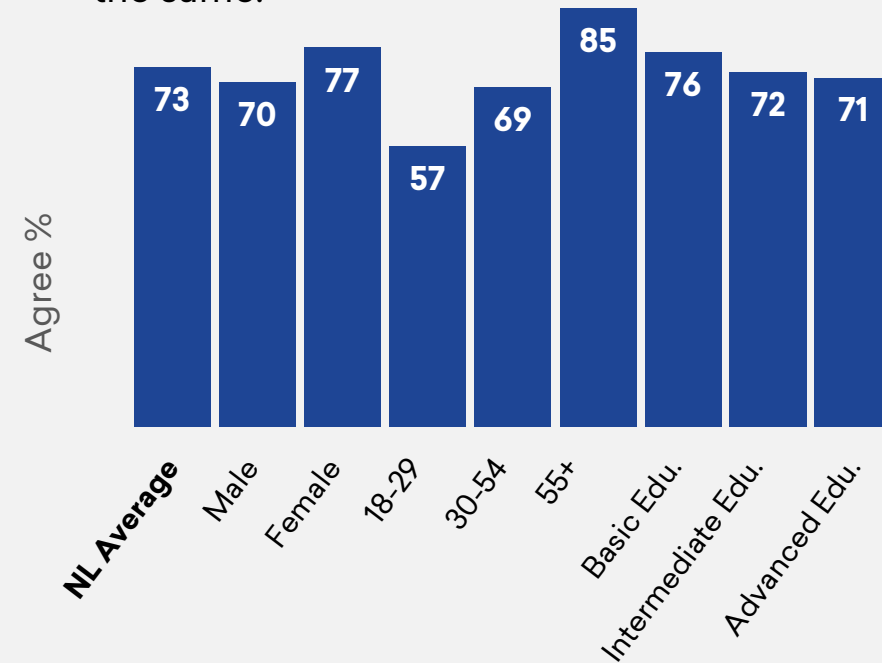
Aware of others' living conditions and views on humanity?

Solid majorities say COVID-19 has made them more aware of the living conditions of other people and that we as humans are fundamentally the same. On the latter, we see a strong correlation with age, with the eldest age group most keen on subscribing to this view.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has made me more aware of the living conditions of other people in this country.”



“The COVID-19 crisis has reminded us that no matter where we are from, as humans we are fundamentally the same.”



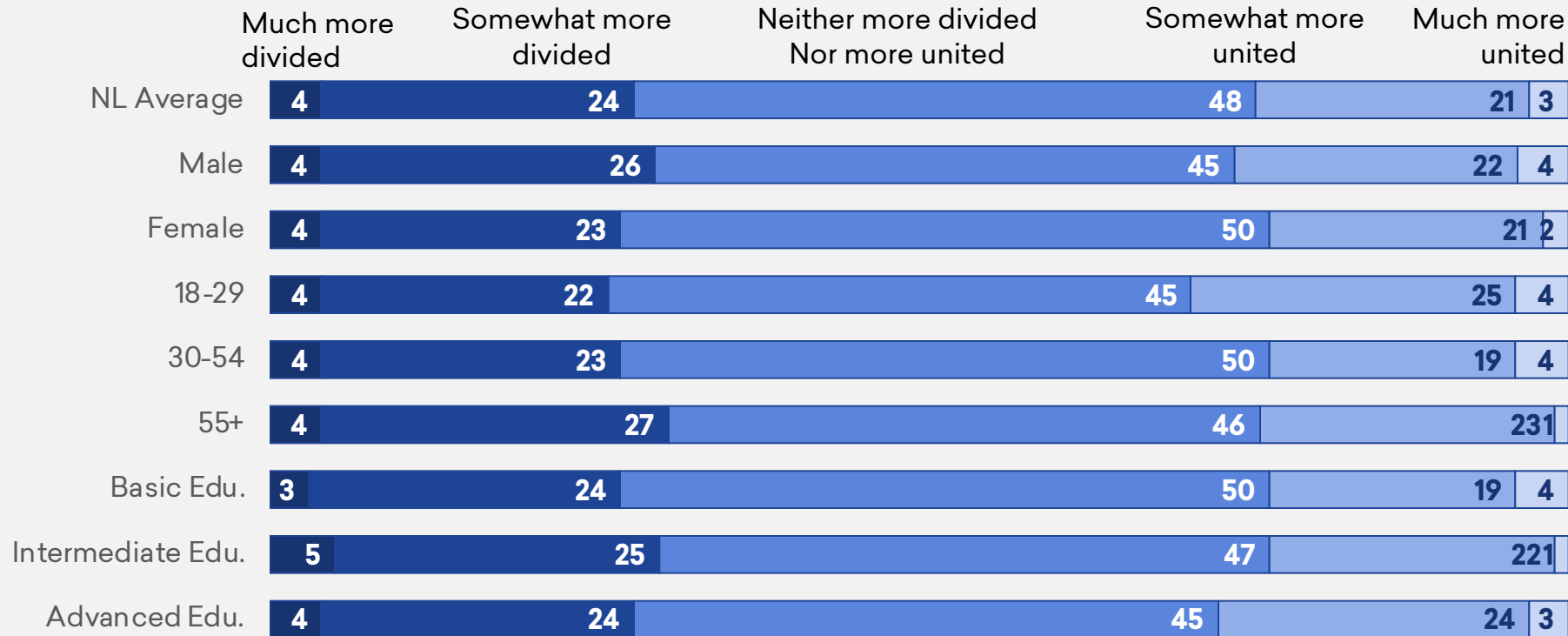
Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

Impact on Cohesion



More united or more divided since COVID-19?

The jury is still out. One quarter feels the country is less divided, while another quarter believes the country is more divided. The remaining half sees no difference. Differences between the social segments tend to be small.



Question: Since the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, how have your perceptions of [COUNTRY] changed, if at all? Is it...?

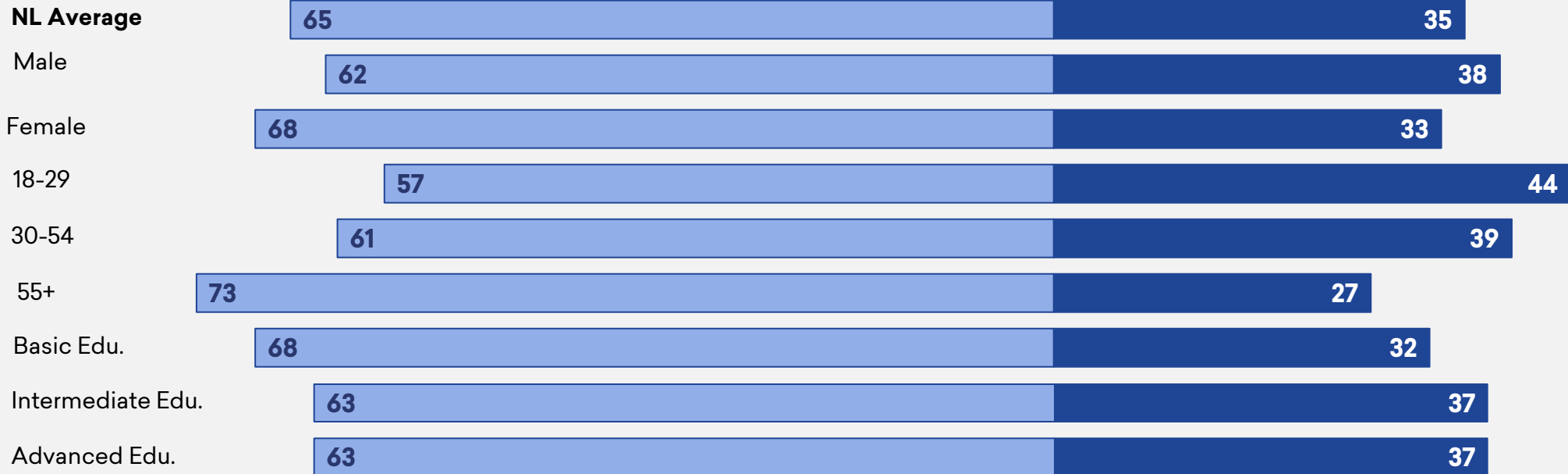
Feelings towards country



Proud or disappointed?

My country's handling of the crisis has made me feel **prouder** of my country.

My country's handling of the crisis has left me **disappointed** in my country.



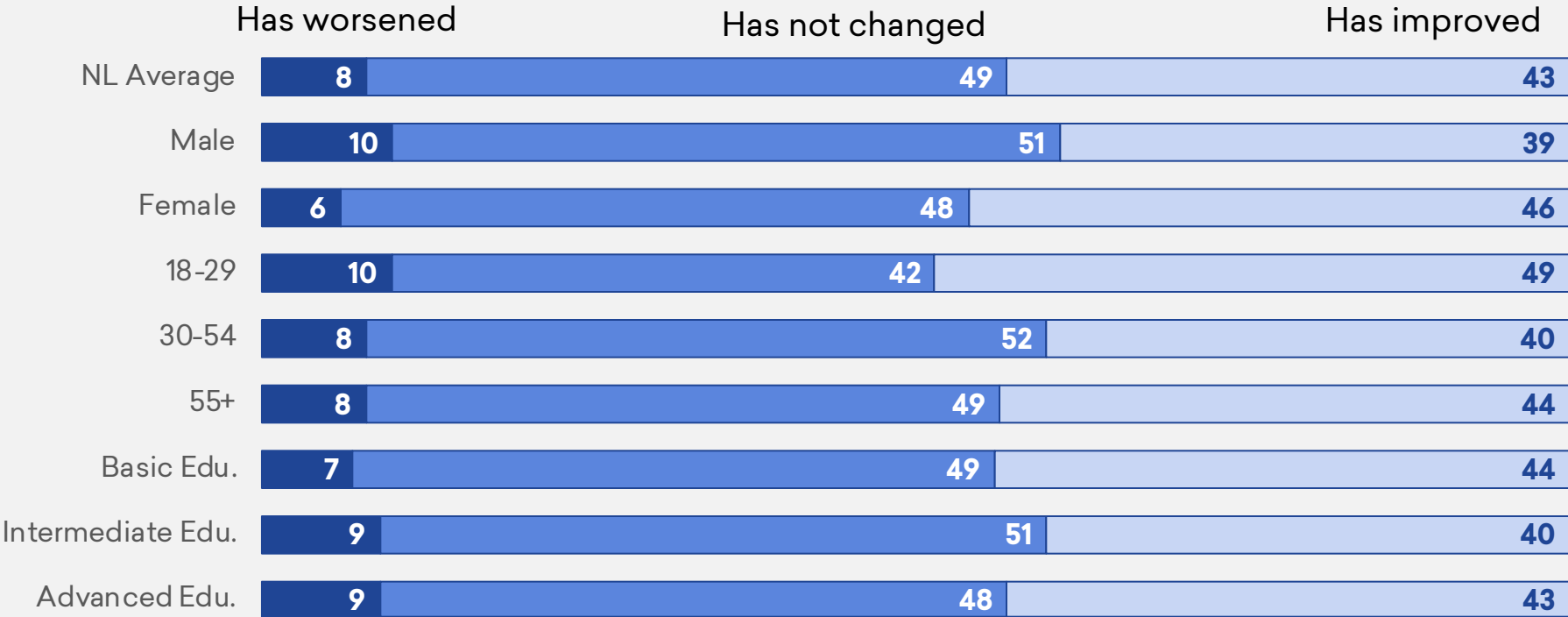
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Change in concern for others



How has people's concern for each other changed during the crisis?

People lighten up when asked about the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on people's concern for each other. Almost half the population say the crisis has improved people's concern for each other, while a tiny minority claim the opposite. Young people and women are the most positive.



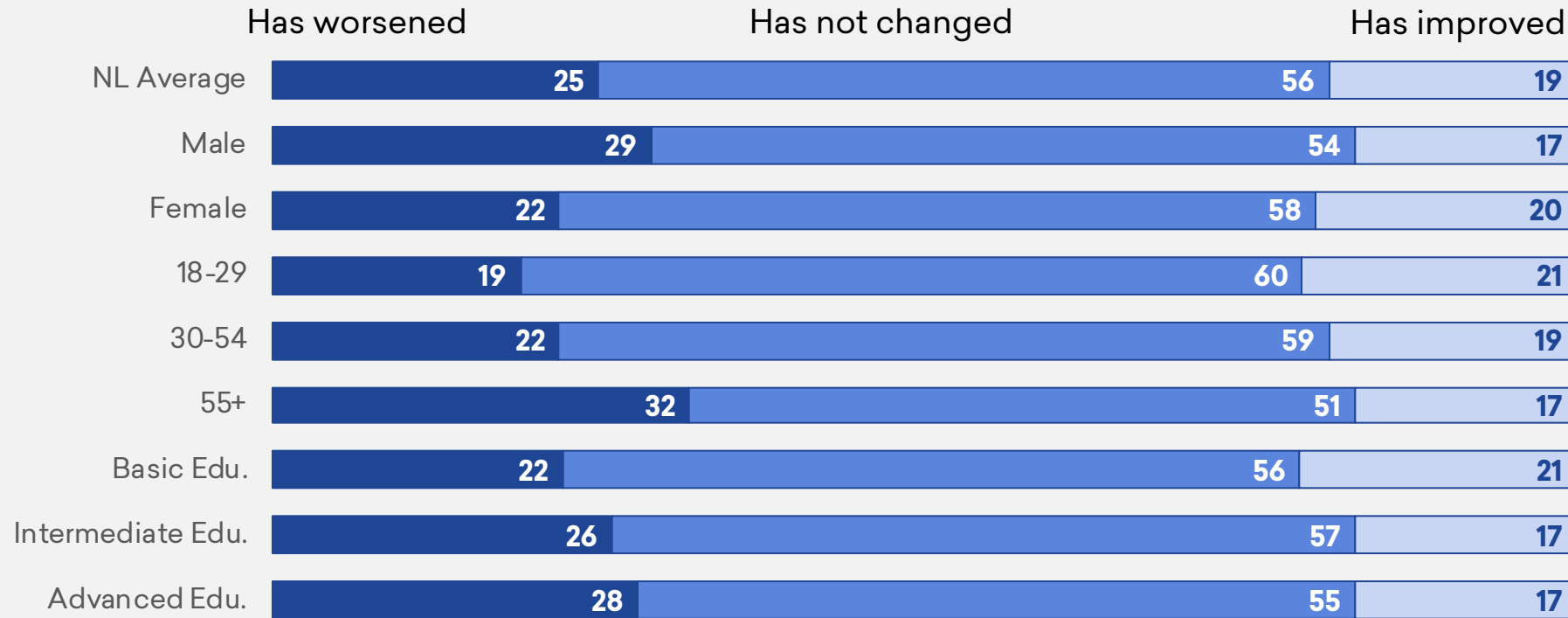
Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed in [COUNTRY], if at all?

Change in public debate



How has public debate in your country changed during the crisis?

On balance, people are moderately negative about COVID-19 induced changes in the public debate. We see strong correlations for age (more negative for older age groups) and gender (men more negative), and a weaker correlation for education (highly educated more negative).



Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed in [COUNTRY], if at all?

Power, Institutions and Media

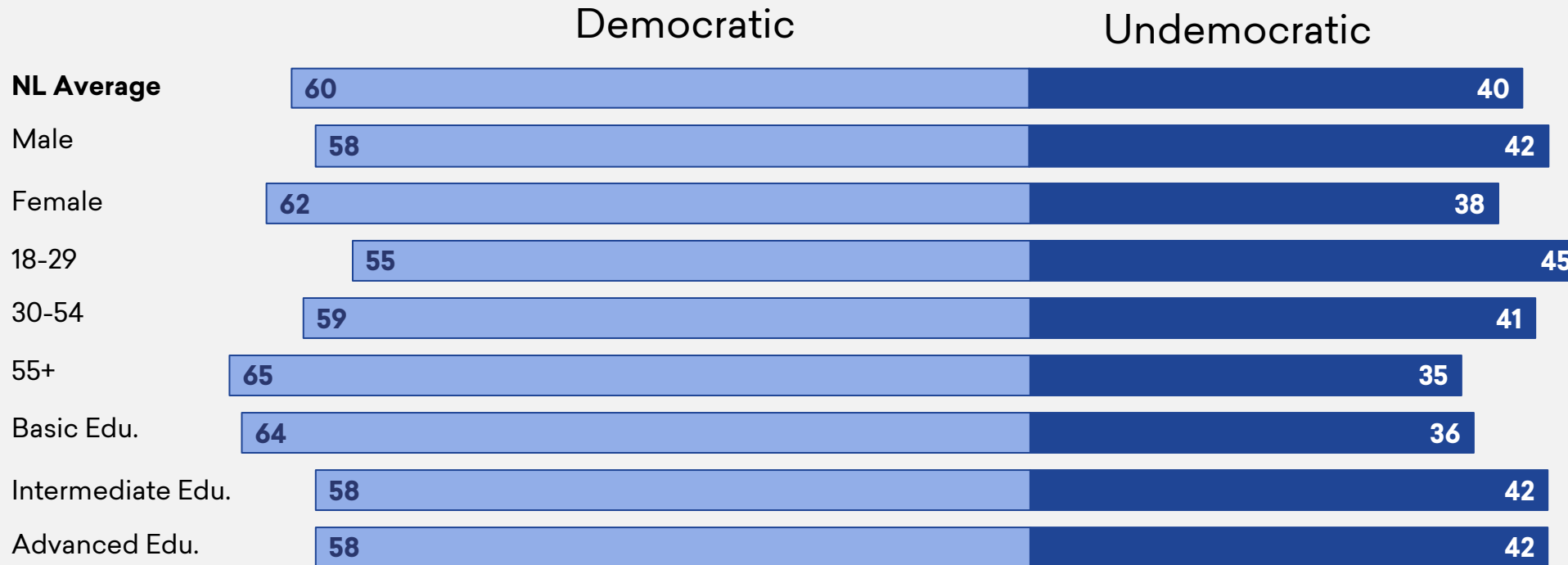


Government handling of crisis



Did government handle the COVID-19 crisis democratically?

People believe the government has handled the COVID-19 crisis democratically. Still, very large minorities say the government's handling was undemocratic. Interestingly, the higher educated are more critical than lower educated people.



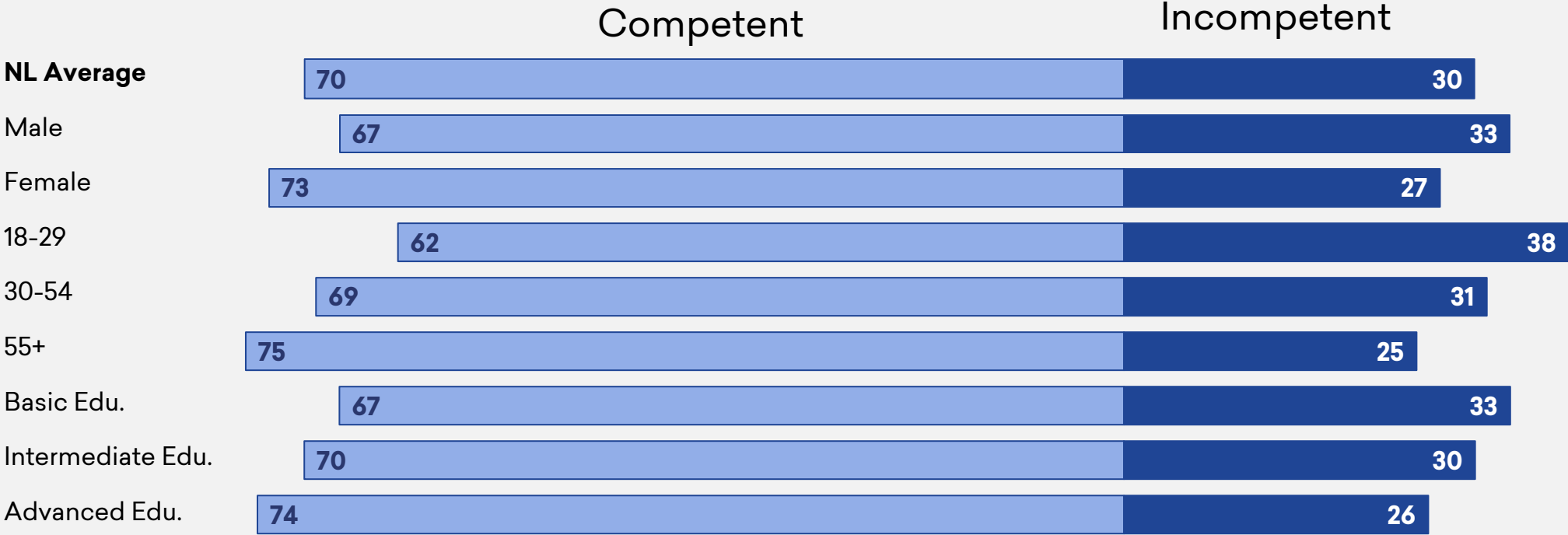
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Government handling of crisis



Did government handle the COVID-19 crisis competently?

A solid majority (70 percent) believe the government has handled the crisis competently. There are strong correlations for age (older respondents most supportive), education (highest educated most supportive) and gender (women most supportive).



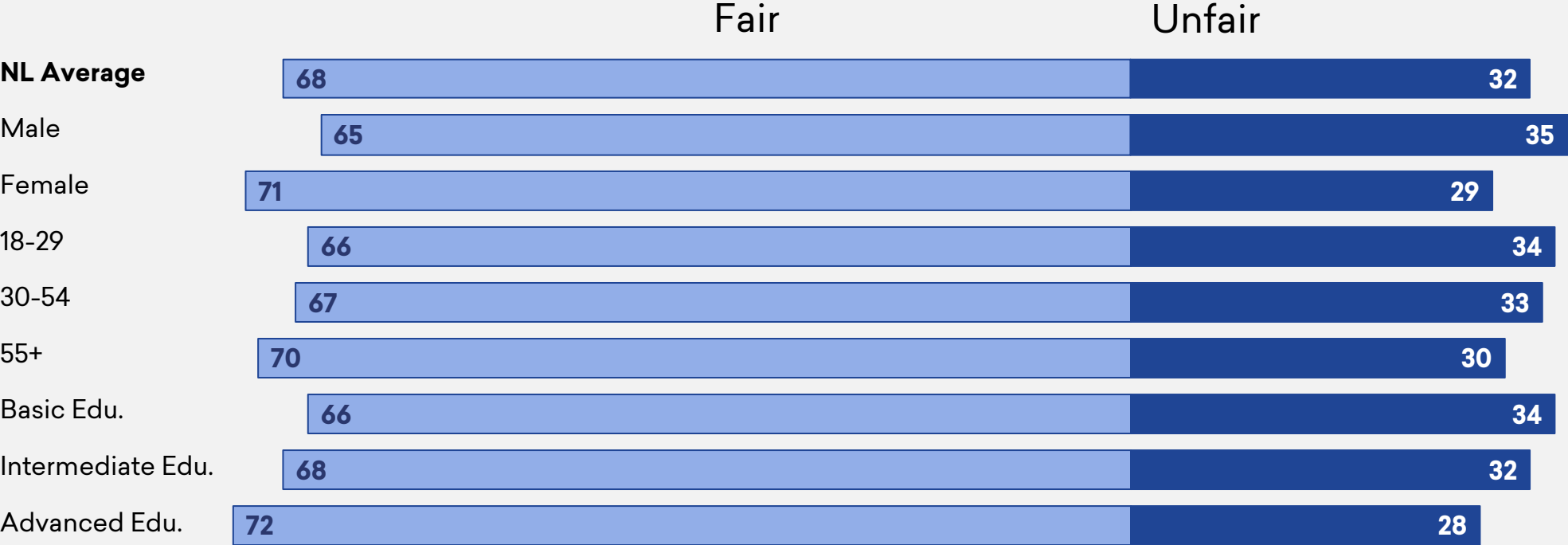
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Government handling of crisis



Did government handle the COVID-19 crisis fairly?

People also believe the government handled the crisis fairly. Correlations with social background variables exist, but are less pronounced in comparison with 'competence'.



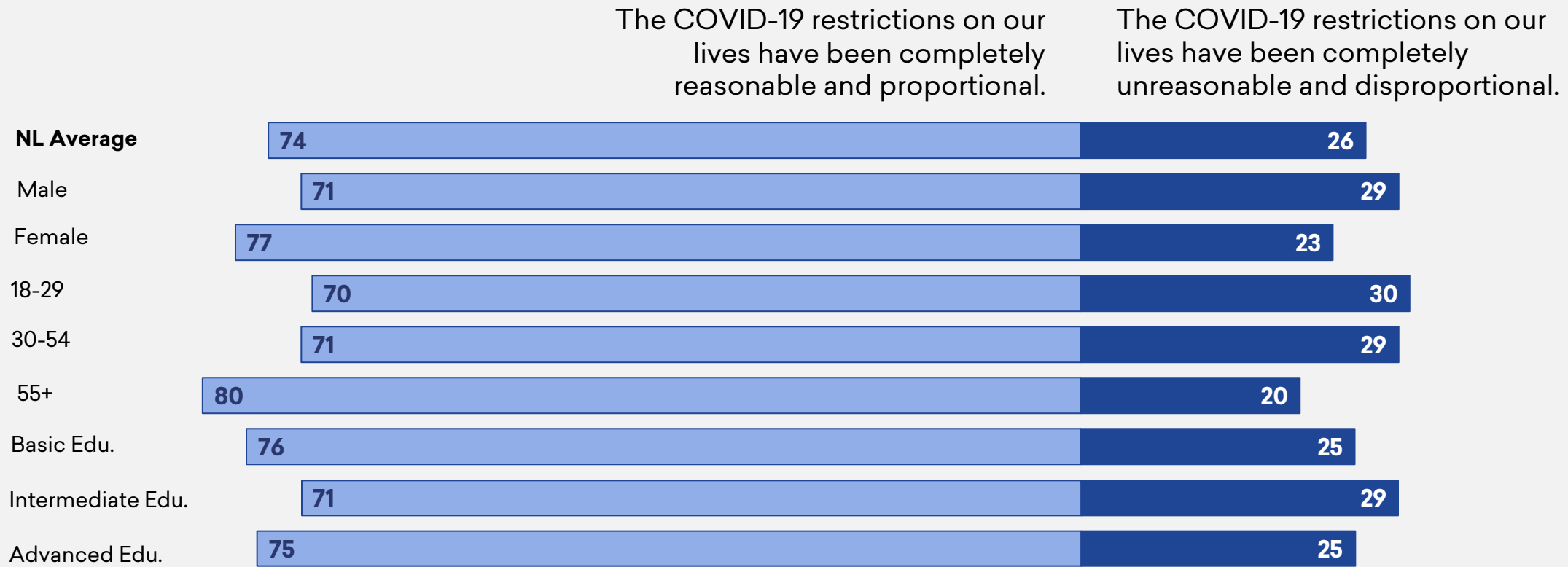
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Government Measures



Were restrictions perceived as proportional?

People show strong support for the the view that COVID-19 restrictions were completely reasonable and proportional. Men, respondents under 55 and people with an intermediate education are slightly more critical.



Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

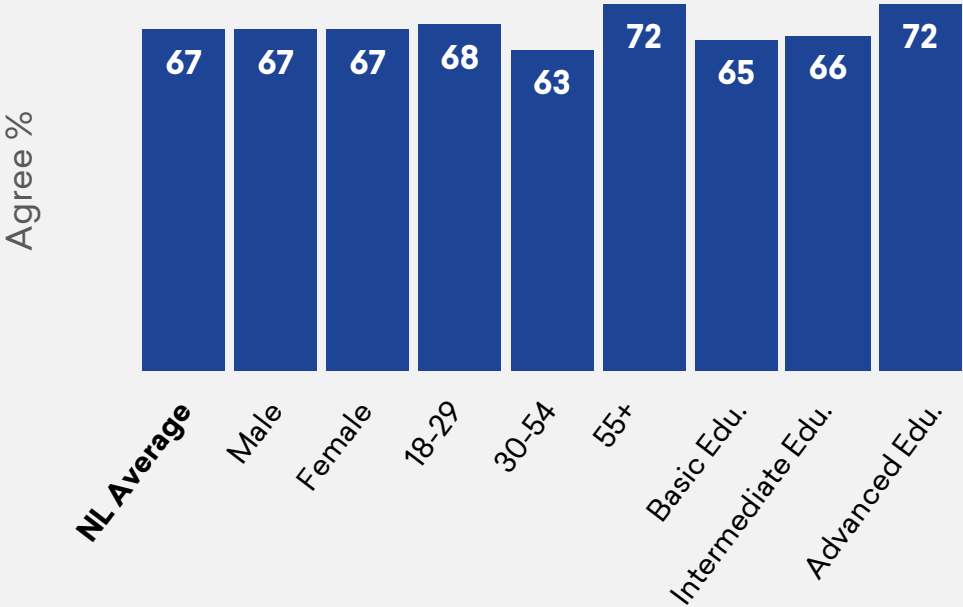
Confidence in Government Ability



Confident in the government's ability to tackle challenges?

Two out of three respondents (67 percent) are confident in the government's ability to tackle the challenges ahead of us. Support is strong across the board.

"I am confident in our current government's ability to tackle the challenges ahead of us."



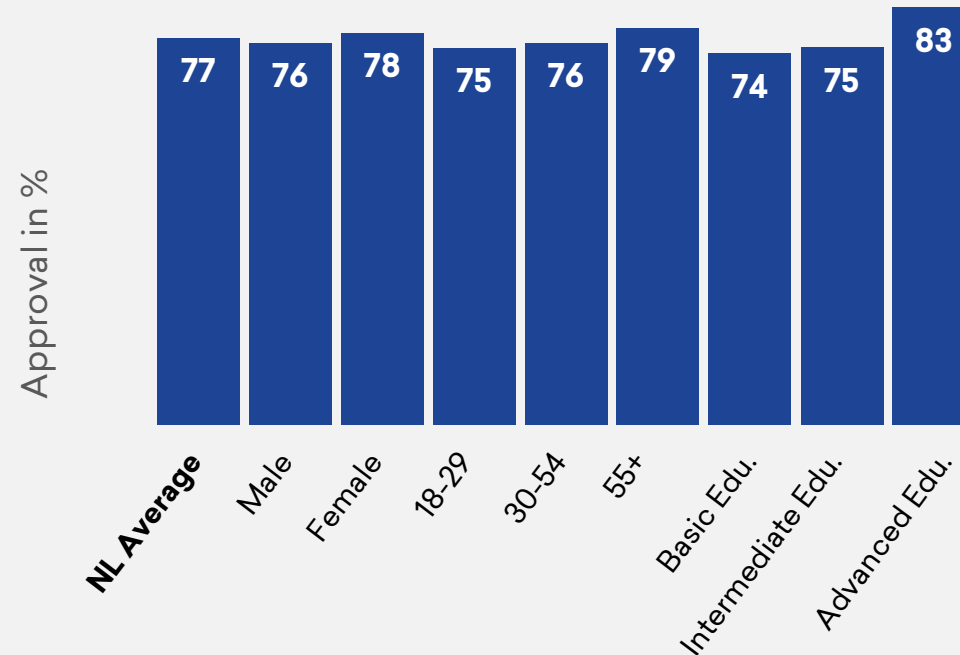
Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Head of State Approval



Approval of Prime Minister Mark Rutte

The Prime Minister's job approval is very high and stands at 77 percent. Evaluations are positive across the board.



Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way [HEAD OF GOVERNMENT / STATE] is doing his/her job?

Government Care for Groups



Government cares too little about...

The respondents believe the government, in its handling of the COVID-19 situation, cares too little about five groups: 'poor people', 'medical staff', the elderly', 'small business workers' and 'frontline workers'.



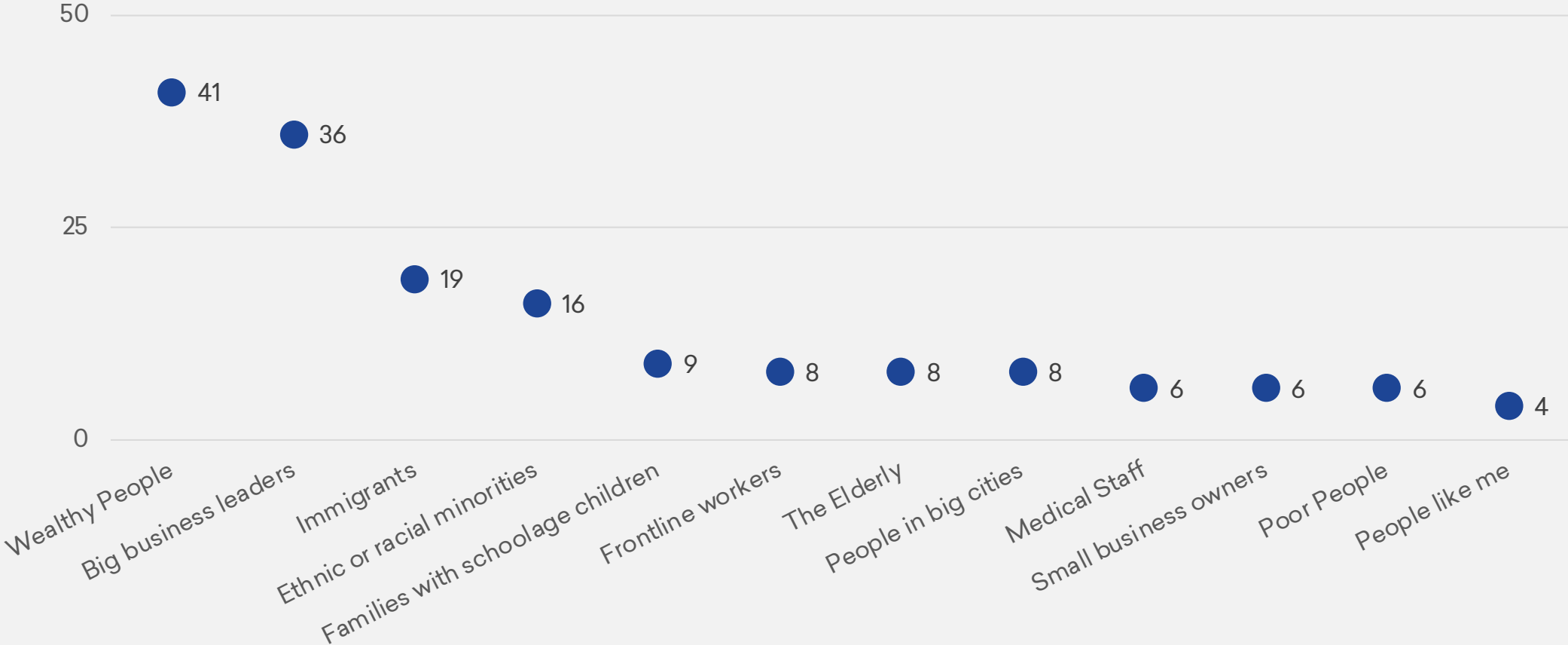
Question: Please indicate how much the [NATIONALITY] government seems to care about the following groups in its response to the COVID-19 situation...

Government Care for Groups



Government cares too much about...

Government is seen as caring too much for two specific groups in society: 'wealthy people' and 'big business leaders'.



Question: Please indicate how much the [NATIONALITY] government seems to care about the following groups in its response to the COVID-19 situation...

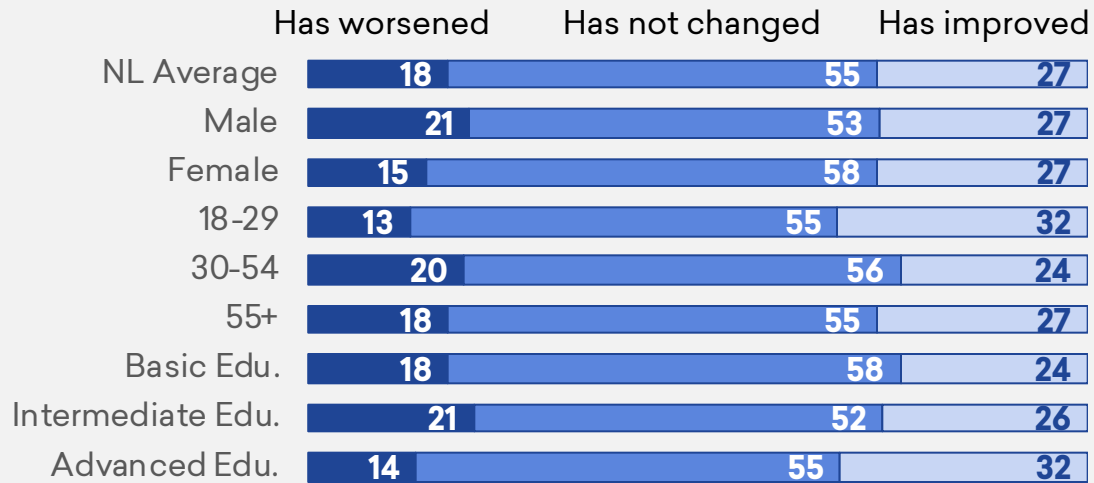
Change in Trust during the Pandemic



National Government vs. Local Government

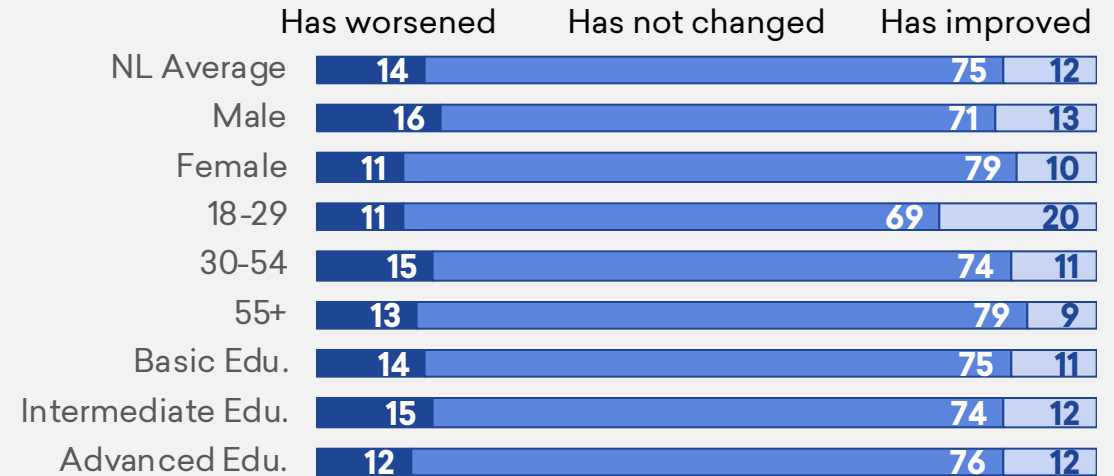
Since the beginning of the pandemic, respondents have warmed up to the national government: trust has increased, while trust in the local government remains largely unaffected. Among young people and highly educated people, trust in the national government went up the most.

Trust in National Government



Numbers in %

Trust in Local Government



Numbers in %

Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed, if at all?

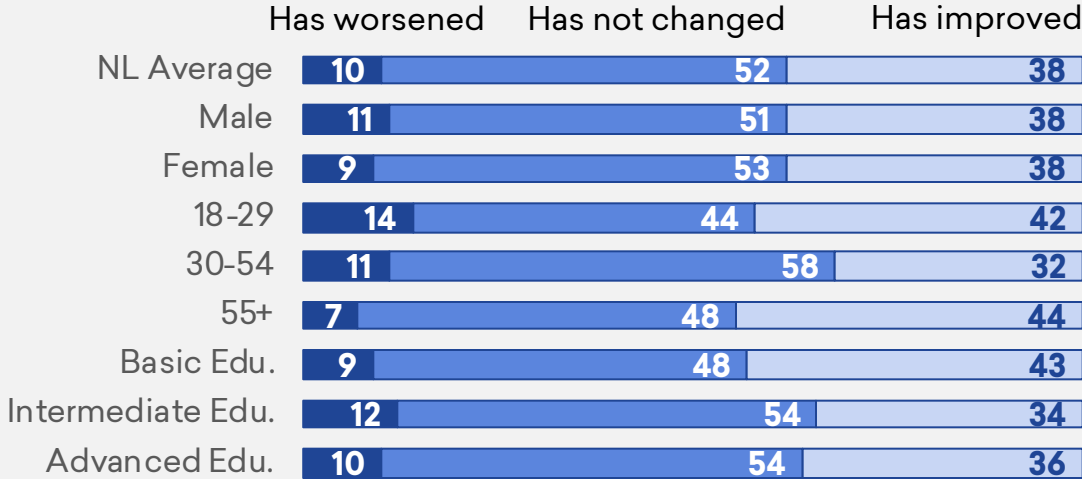
Change in Trust during the Pandemic



Health and welfare system

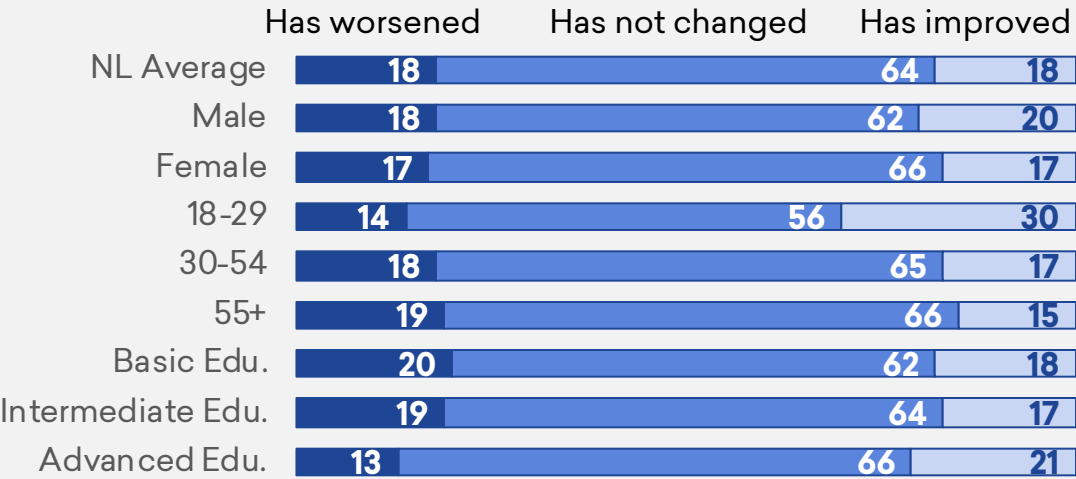
People appear to have laid new eyes on the health system. An impressive 38 percent of respondents say their trust in the health system has increased. So far, the pandemic has less of an effect on trust in the welfare system

Health System



Numbers in %

Welfare System



Numbers in %

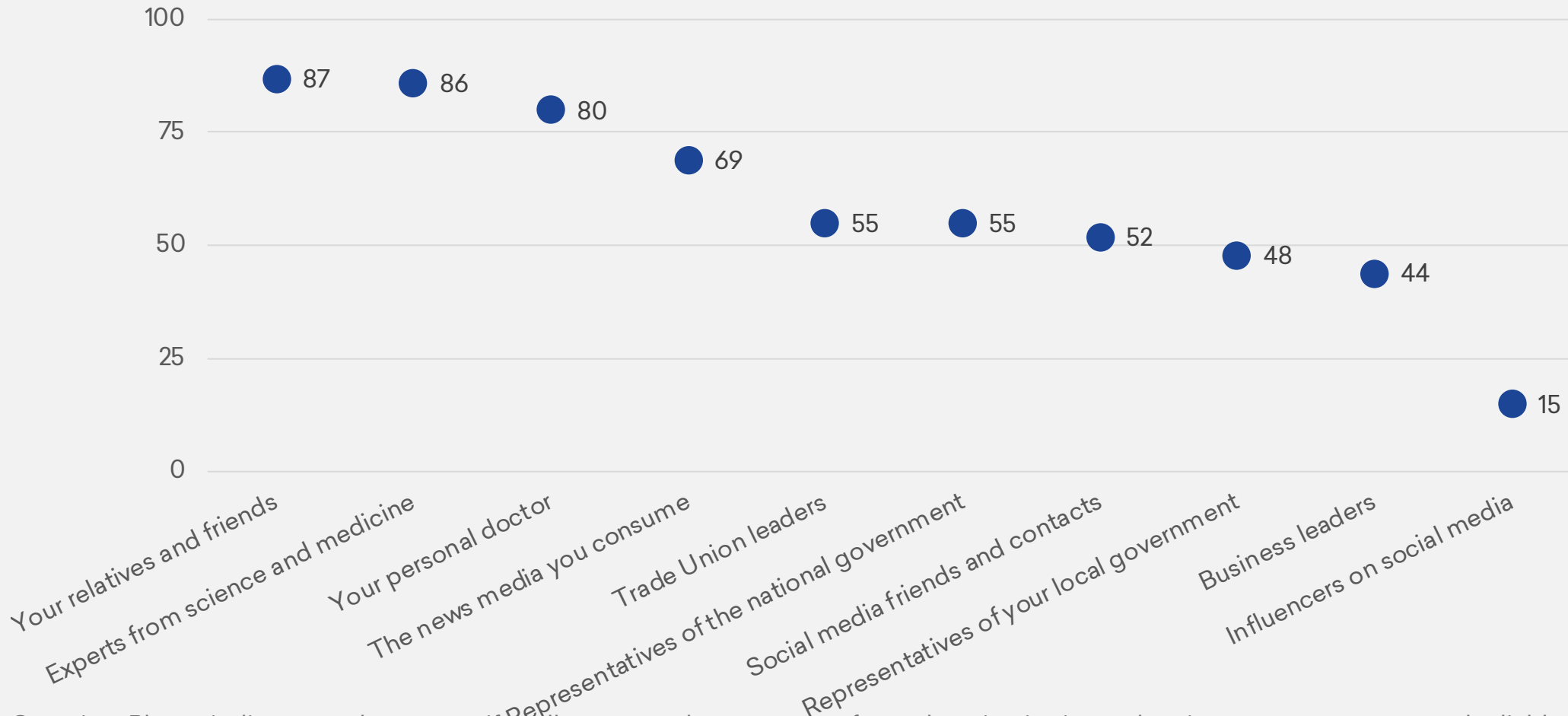
Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed, if at all?

Trust in information sources on COVID-19



Who do people trust for reliable information on COVID-19?

For their information, people trust their relatives, experts, their personal doctor and their own news media the most; influencers are at the bottom of the totem pole.



Question: Please indicate to what extent, if at all, you trust these groups of people or institutions when it comes to accurate and reliable information on the COVID-19 pandemic.

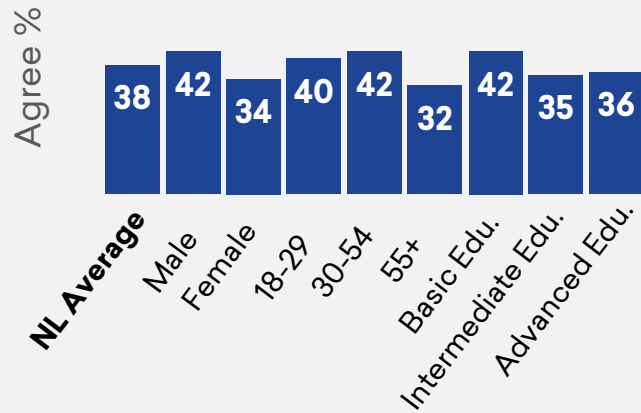
Suspicion and conspiracy



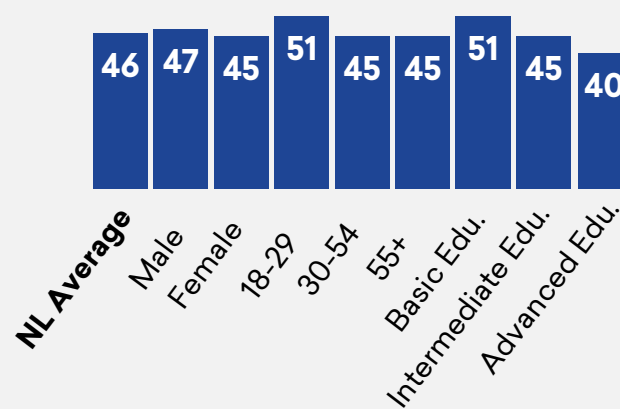
Are people suspicious of government and media?

A majority of the Dutch population (55 percent) believes the media seem to be pushing their own agenda, while sizable minorities buy into the notion that government ‘knows more’ (46 percent) and ‘is making the crisis seem bigger’ (38 percent)

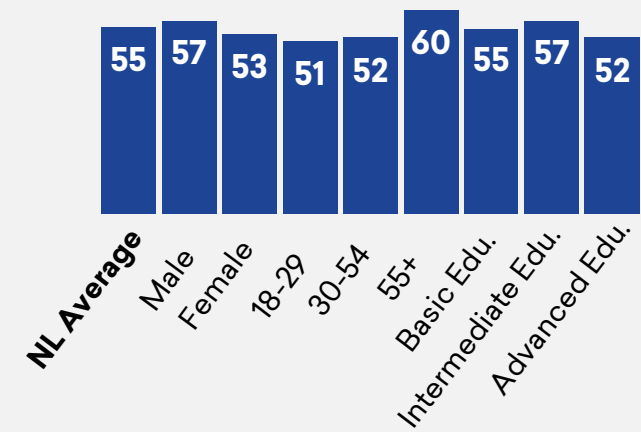
“The government is making this crisis seem bigger than it is to push through their own agenda.”



“The government knows things about COVID-19 that it is hiding from the public.”



“The media seem to be pursuing their own agenda rather than simply reporting the facts.”



Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

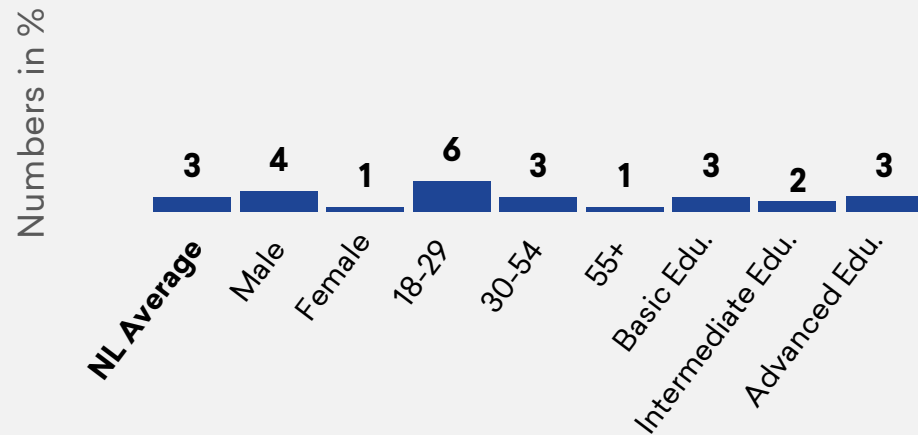
Participation in Anti-Government Protest



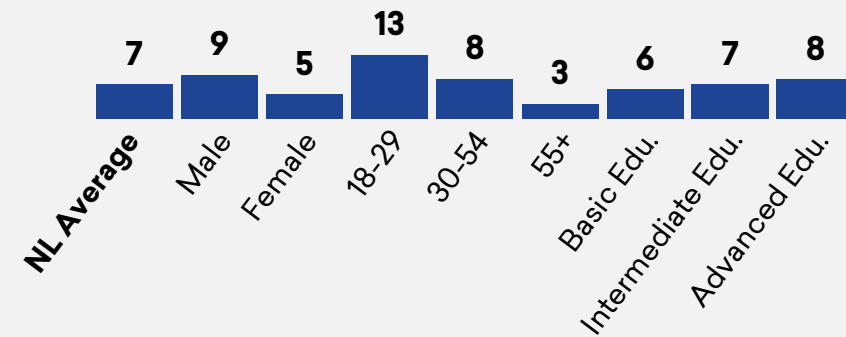
Attending protests and posting on social media

Young people and men stand out as social categories that are disproportionately inclined to attend a COVID-19 protest or to post on social media. Women and older respondents are much less inclined to participate in these protest activities.

Attended a protest against COVID-related government policies.



Posted on social media against COVID-19 government policies.



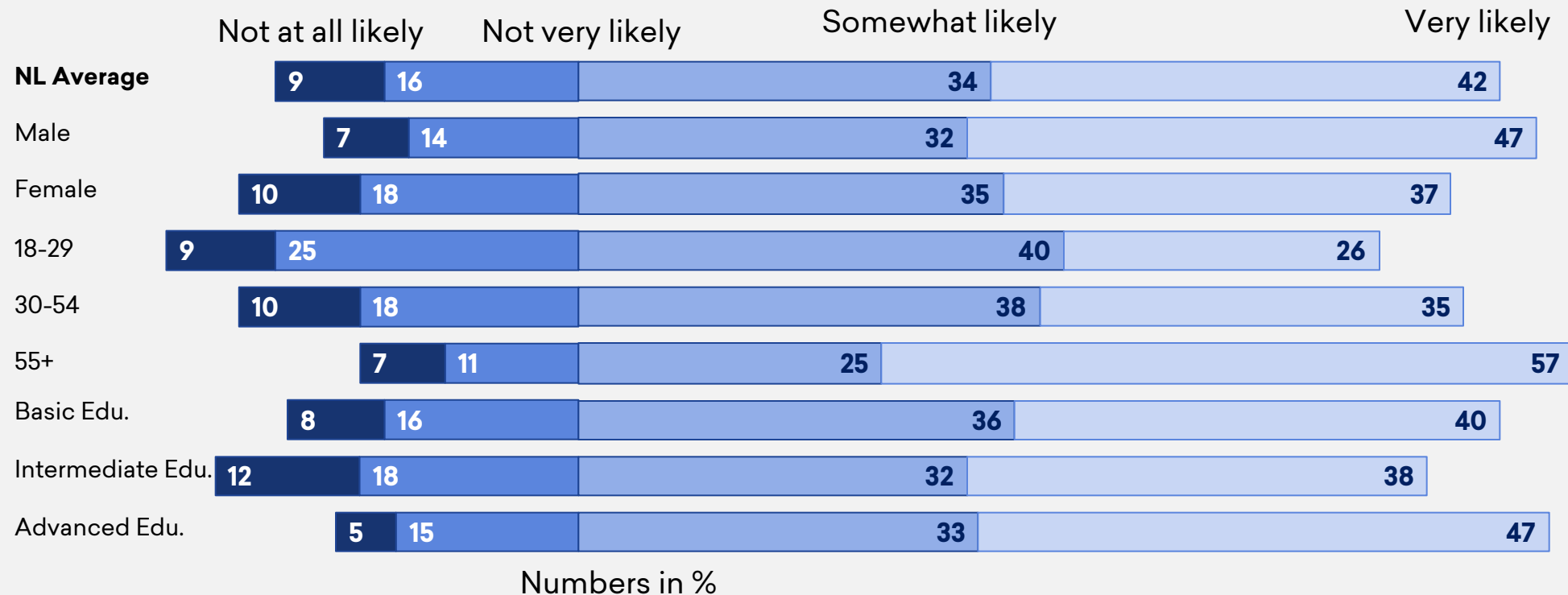
Question: In which of the following activities have you participated since the COVID-19 pandemic began, if any?

Vaccination against COVID-19



Likelihood of getting vaccinated

Nine percent of the Dutch population say they are 'not at all likely' to have themselves vaccinated against COVID-19, once a vaccine becomes available. Another 16 percent say this is not very likely, resulting in 26 percent expressing serious reservations about getting vaccinated.



Question: If a safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19 is developed, how likely would you be to get vaccinated?

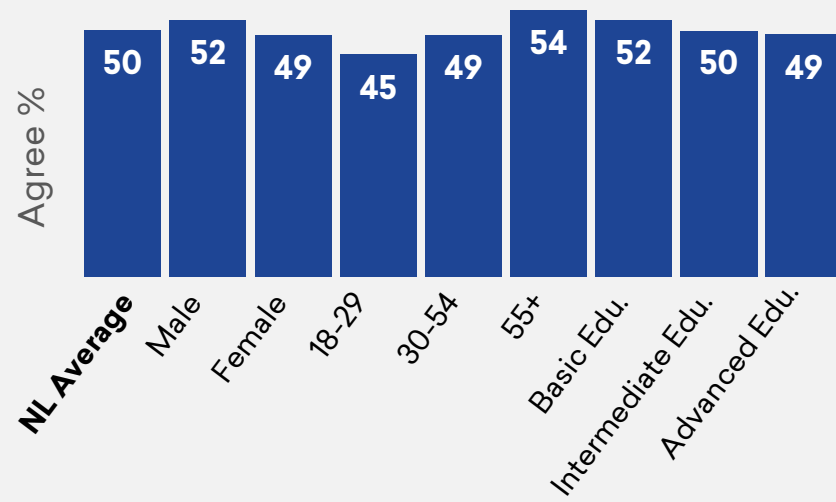
Acceptance of Mobile Tracing Apps



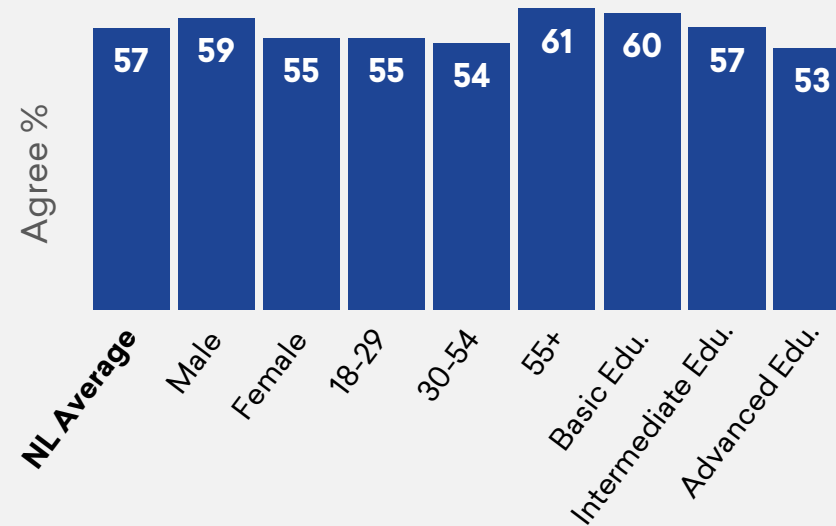
Views on tracing apps

Support for a tracing app hovers around a modest 50 percent. A slightly higher percentage (57 percent) express trust that their privacy will be protected. This leaves large minorities with no trust in tracing apps and skepticism about the protection of individual privacy.

“Introducing a tracing app is a necessary step.”



“I trust that my privacy will be protected.”



Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

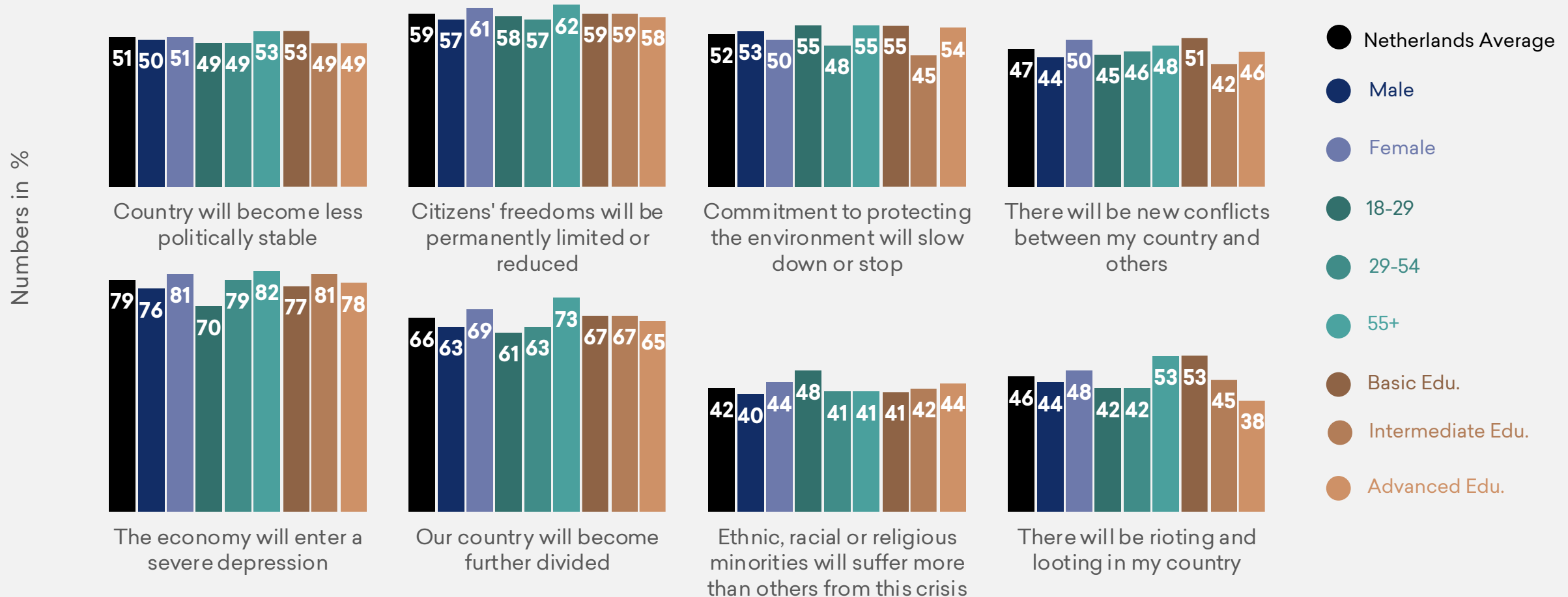
After COVID-19: Policy Outlook



Worries - General Situation



People worry about many serious consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. Their biggest worry is a severe economic depression (79 percent), followed by the country becoming further divided (66 percent) and the permanent curbing of citizens' freedoms (52 percent)



Question: To what extent are you currently worried or not worried that....?

Political Priorities

Improving the health system is top priority across the board. Other top priorities: reducing unemployment, supporting people in need, and protecting climate and the environment.



	NL Average	Male	Female	18-29	30-54	55+	Basic Edu.	Intermediate Edu.	Advanced Edu.
Improving the health system	46	40	51	31	44	54	52	44	39
Reducing unemployment	30	29	31	29	30	30	27	32	33
Supporting individuals and families in need	28	26	29	24	27	30	29	29	25
Protecting climate and environment	24	23	25	25	24	23	20	23	30
Supporting small businesses	20	17	23	21	19	21	20	22	18
Reducing immigration and refugee intake	20	21	19	9	21	24	23	22	13
Fighting crime and violence	20	23	18	14	18	26	24	21	13
Reducing economic inequality	16	15	16	13	17	15	12	16	20
Addressing racism in our society	13	13	13	19	10	13	14	11	13
Reducing terrorism	12	14	10	12	10	14	15	12	8
Protecting democratic rights and freedoms	12	13	11	11	13	13	10	13	15
Improving our education system	10	9	12	10	12	9	9	9	14
Improving cooperation between countries	9	10	8	10	10	7	8	8	12
Reducing political division	6	7	5	7	6	5	5	5	9
Strengthening European integration	5	7	3	6	5	4	4	4	7
Protecting ethnic and religious minorities	4	4	4	7	4	2	2	5	5
Working towards gender equality	3	4	3	7	4	1	3	3	5

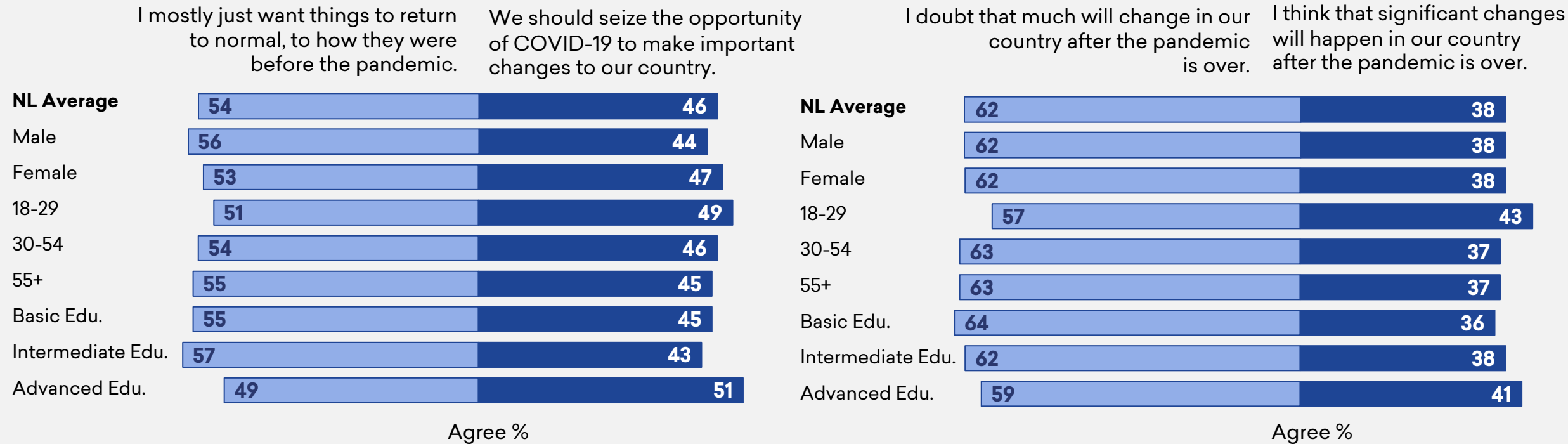
Question: Besides containing the COVID-19 pandemic, which of the following issues should the government prioritize addressing in the months ahead? Please select the top 3.

Turning Point vs. Return to Normal



Wanting change vs. Expectations of change taking place

Desire for normalcy has a small edge over desire for change. People are skeptical about significant change taking place after the pandemic. Young people and the highly educated are most open to change – and most likely to expect change to happen.



Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

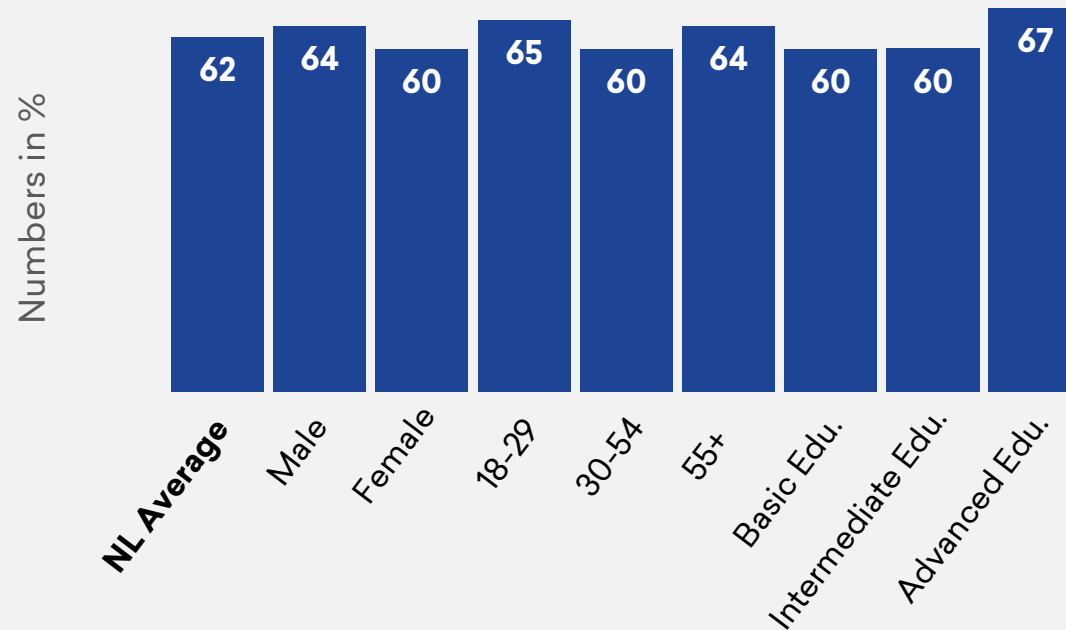
Green New Deal



Support for a Green New Deal in Europe

There exists strong majority support for a Green Deal (62 percent). Support is across the board.

A “Green New Deal” that makes large-scale government investments to make our economy more environmentally friendly.



Question: There is currently debate about different political measures. Would you support or oppose the following proposals?

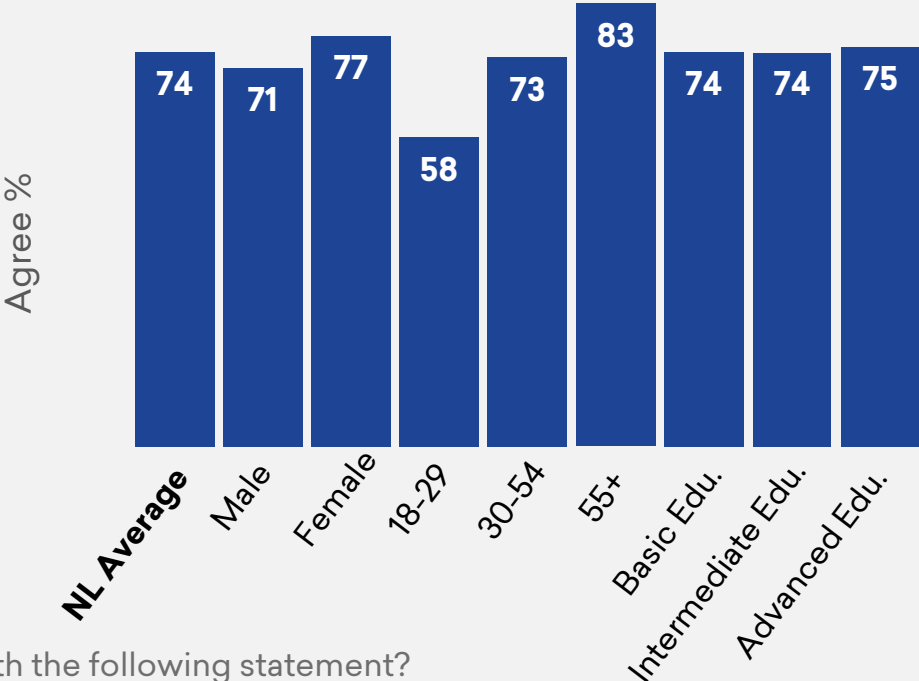
Climate and the Environment (1)



Does the pandemic pose an opportunity for climate action?

Majorities say that this moment has shown the possibility for agency in climate action. However, to a much lesser extent among younger groups (18-29).

“The drop in carbon emissions that was seen during the COVID-19 lockdown shows that we can reduce our impact on the environment if we really want to.”



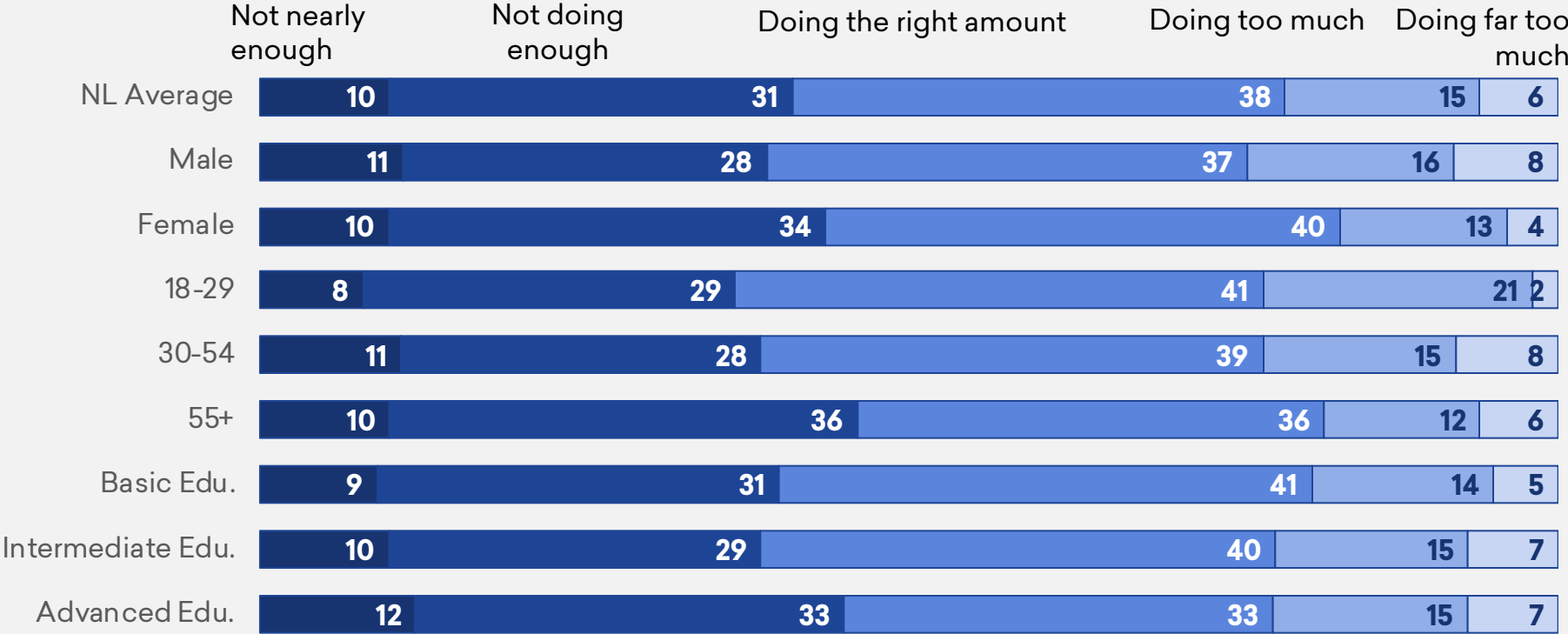
Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

Climate and the Environment (2)



On climate, the government is doing...

A call for more action is forming on climate change. Forty-one percent of the respondents believe the government should do more, while 21 percent believe the government is doing too much. Women and older people led the charge for more action.



Numbers in %

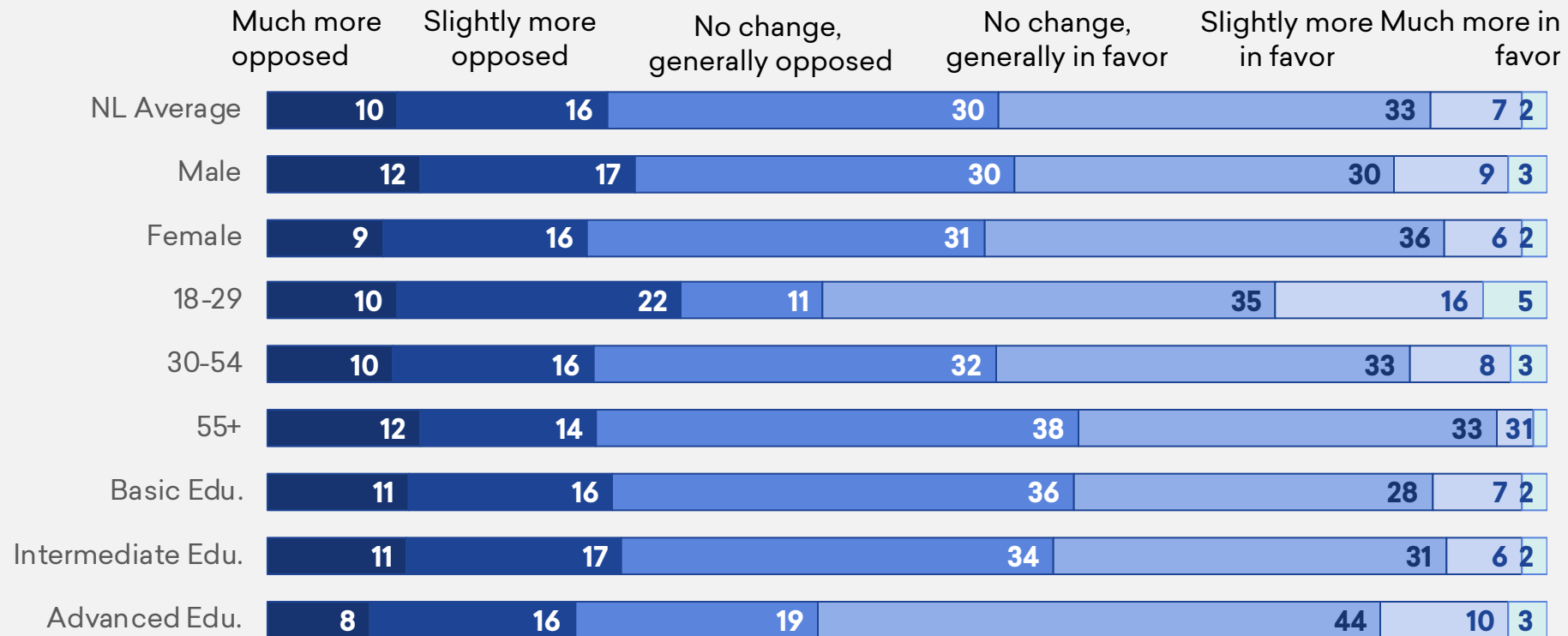
Question: Thinking about the current situation, which of the following statements do you agree with most? On the environment, the government is...

Migration



Change in views on migration since onset of pandemic

Since the beginning of the pandemic, respondents have grown more negative on migration. Young people and the higher educated remain most supportive of accepting migrants into the Netherlands.



Numbers in %

Question: Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, how have your views changed about accepting migrants into [COUNTRY], if at all?

International Cooperation



The need for working together & views on borders

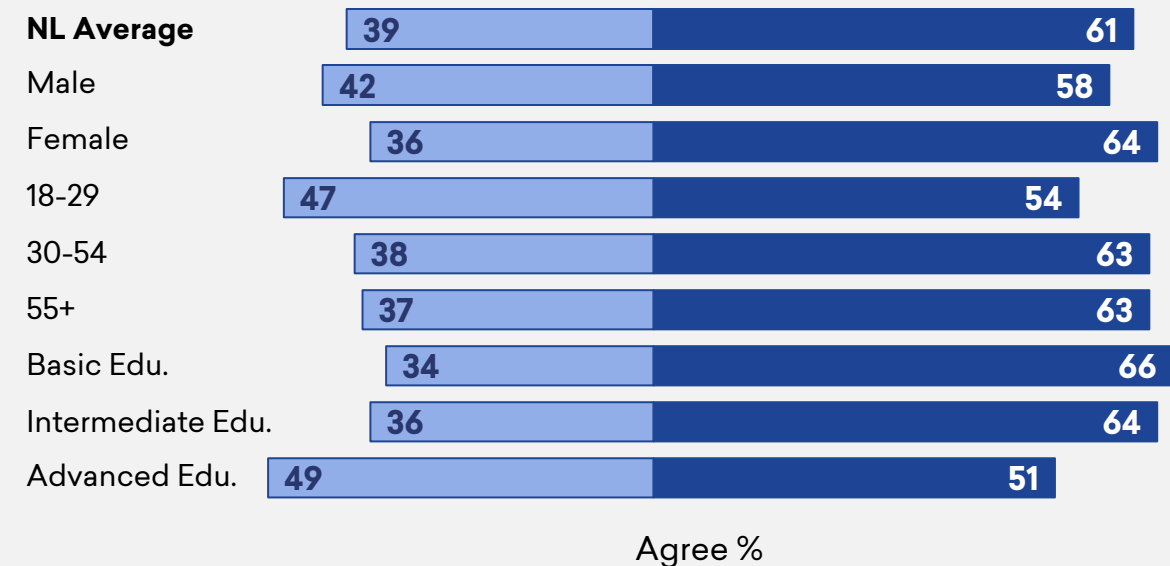
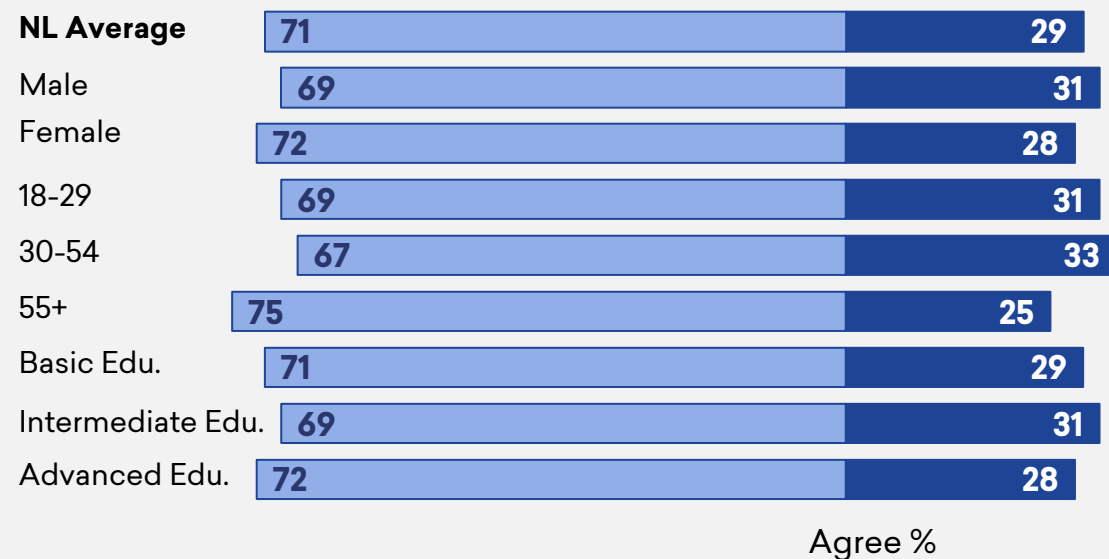
As people are still focused on getting COVID-19 under control, they are most reassured by closed borders. They do so in a broader context of international cooperation aimed at dealing with major challenges like pandemics and climate change.

This crisis shows we need to work more closely with other countries and international institutions to address major challenges like pandemics and climate change.

This crisis shows we can't rely on other countries and international institutions for support when we face major challenges like pandemics and climate change.

I hope borders will soon be as open as they were before the crisis.

I feel more reassured when borders are closed.



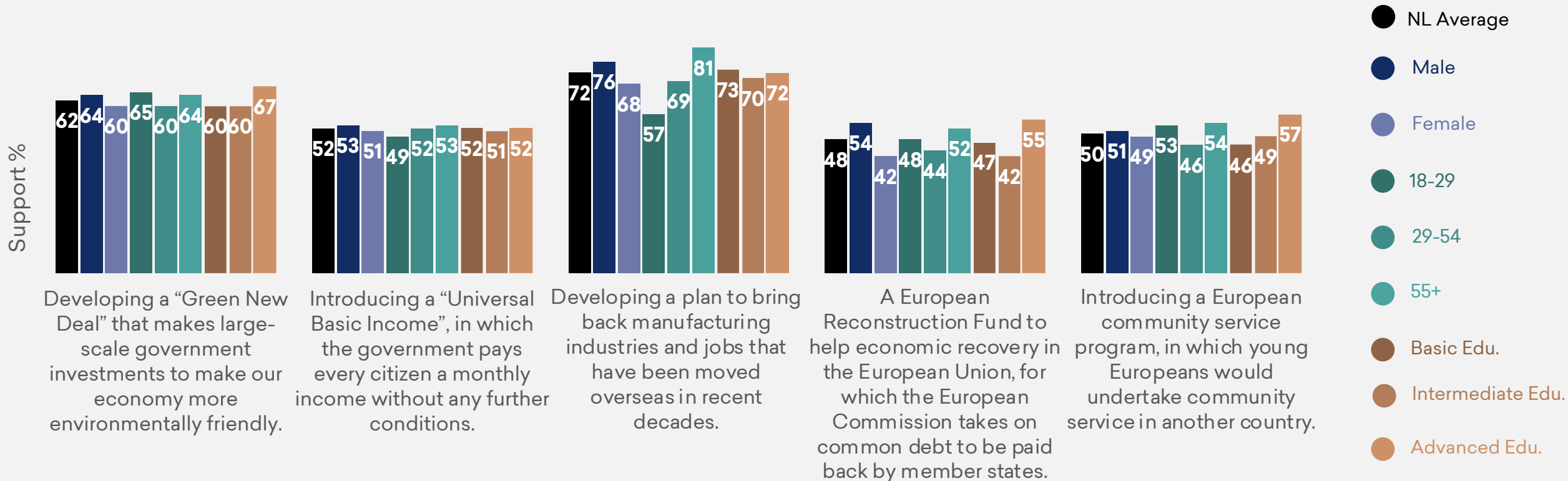
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Aspirational Policies



Appetite for big ideas?

There exists strong support for a plan to bring back manufacturing industries (72 percent) and for a Green Deal (62 percent). Support for bringing back manufacturing jobs is strongly correlated with age, with older people most supportive of bringing back manufacturing industries.



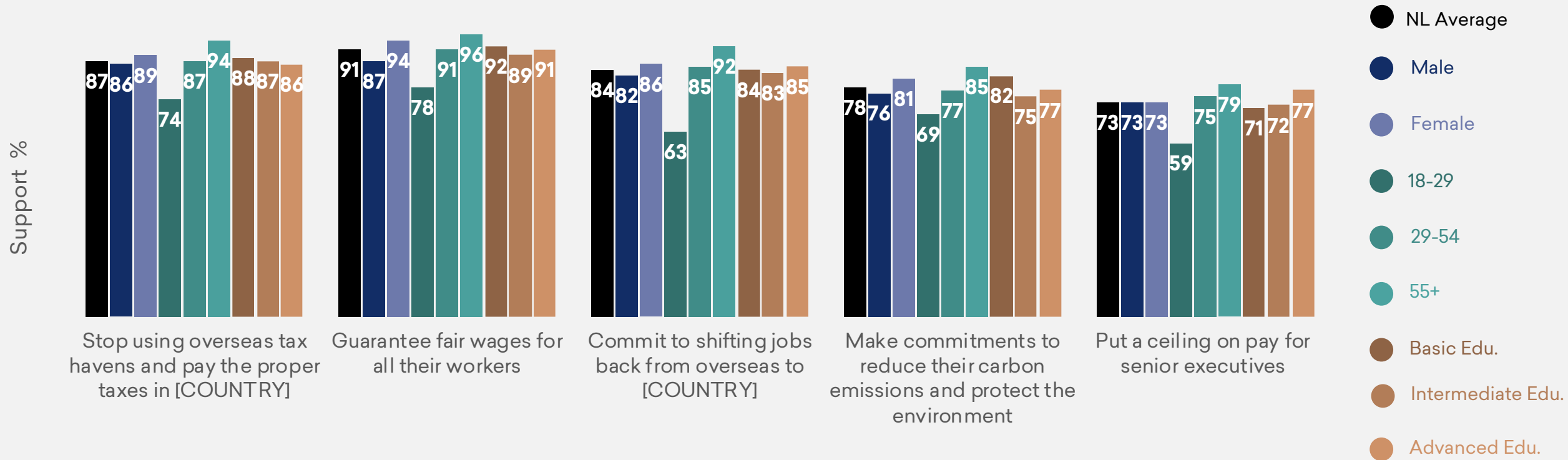
Question: There is currently debate about different political measures. Would you support or oppose the following proposals?

Conditionality for Companies



Better corporate behavior in exchange for government support?

People expect big business to change their ways. Very strong support exists for fair wages (91 percent), putting an end to the use of tax havens (87 percent), shifting jobs back from overseas (84 percent), reducing carbon emissions (78 percent) and putting a ceiling on executive pay (73 percent)



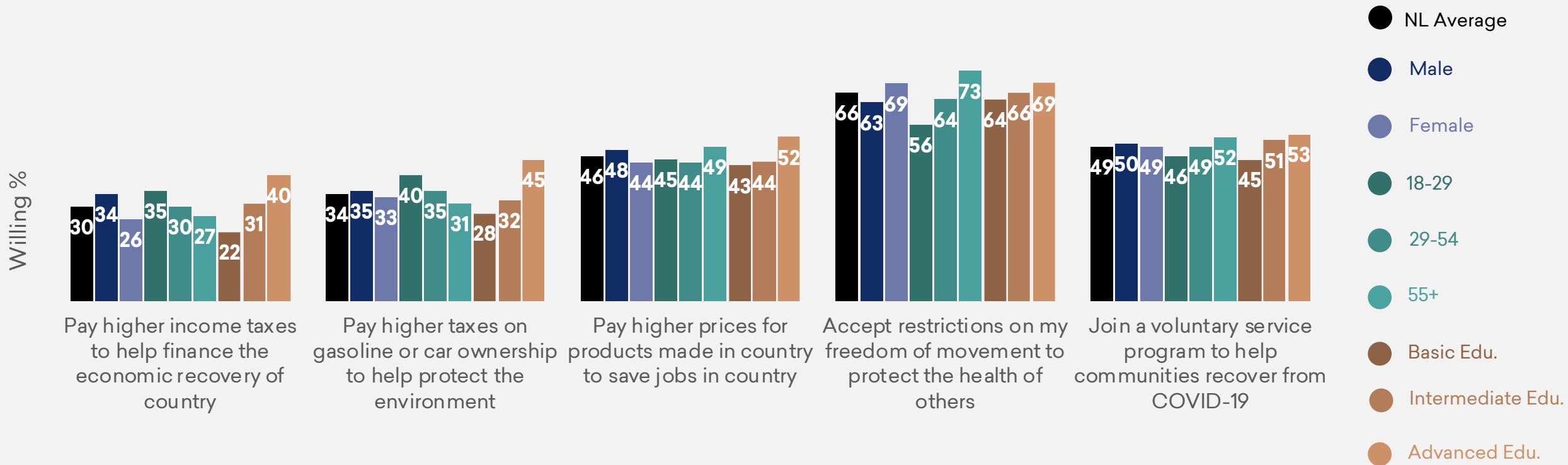
Question: The government is currently working on measures to help the economy and support businesses. What do you think: To what extent would you support or oppose requiring companies to fulfil the following criteria if they are to receive government aid?

Personal Willingness for Sacrifice



Willing to make personal sacrifice to help economic recovery?

Two out of three people (66 percent) are willing to accept restrictions on their freedom to protect the health of others. People are somewhat prepared to engage in voluntary action and pay higher prices for Dutch products. People are much less prepared to pay higher taxes.



Question: When it comes to your actions during and after the crisis, would you personally be willing or not to do the following...

Aspirations & Ideals Post-COVID-19

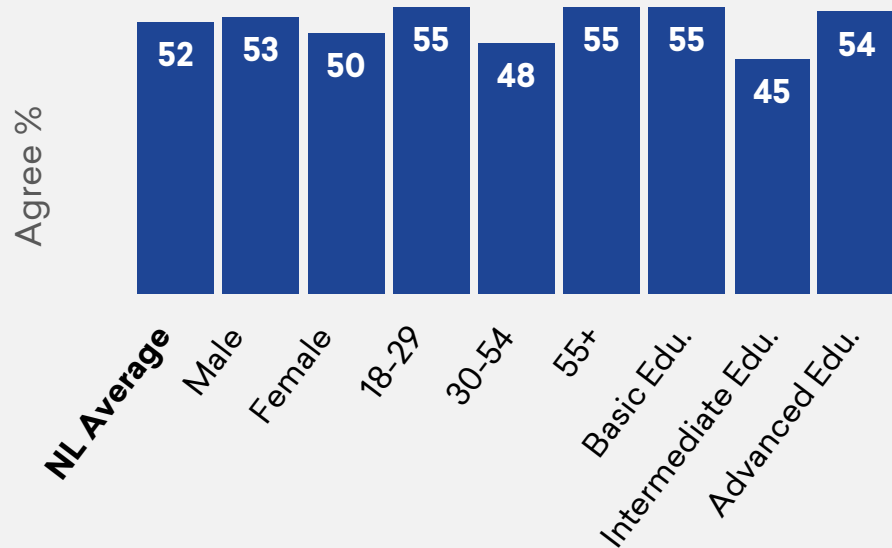


Climate

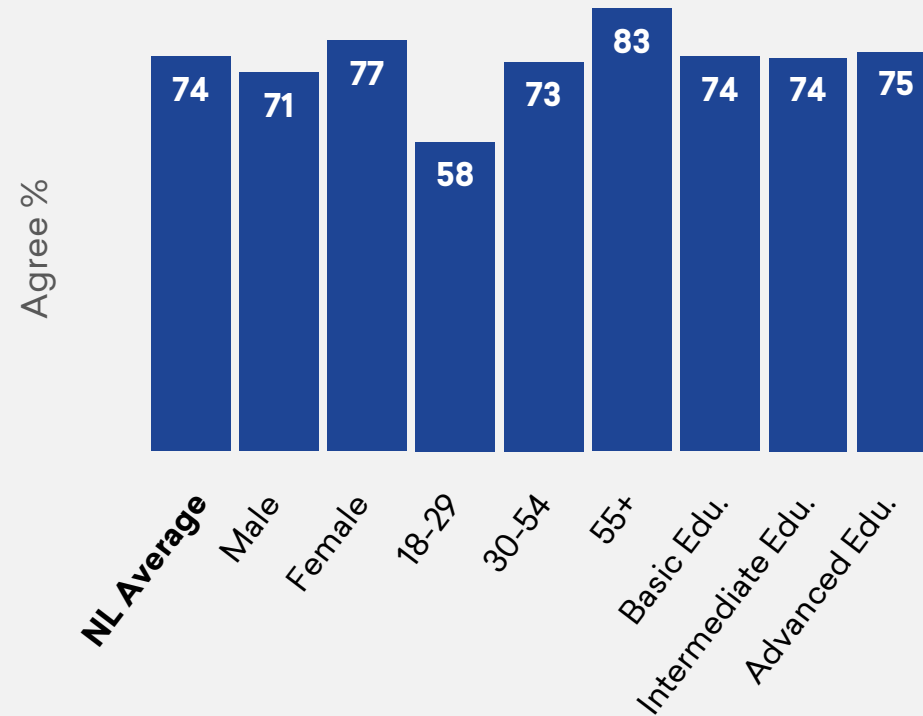


Does the pandemic pose an opportunity for climate action?

Worried that commitment to protecting the environment will slow down or stop



“The drop in carbon emissions that was seen during the COVID-19 lockdown shows that we can reduce our impact on the environment if we really want to.”



Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

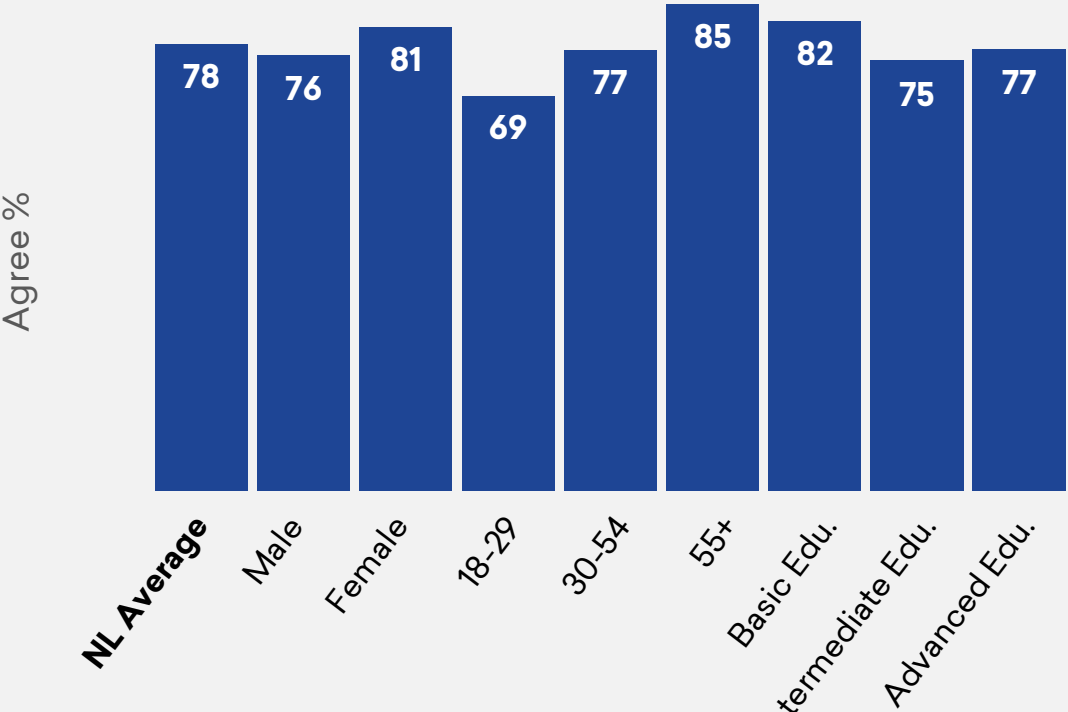
Climate conditionality for companies



Companies that receive state aid should...

People expect companies to change their ways. More than three out of four respondents say that companies should commit to reducing their carbon emissions and protect the environment. Older respondents, lower educated respondents and women lead the charge.

Companies should make commitments to reduce their carbon emissions and protect the environment.



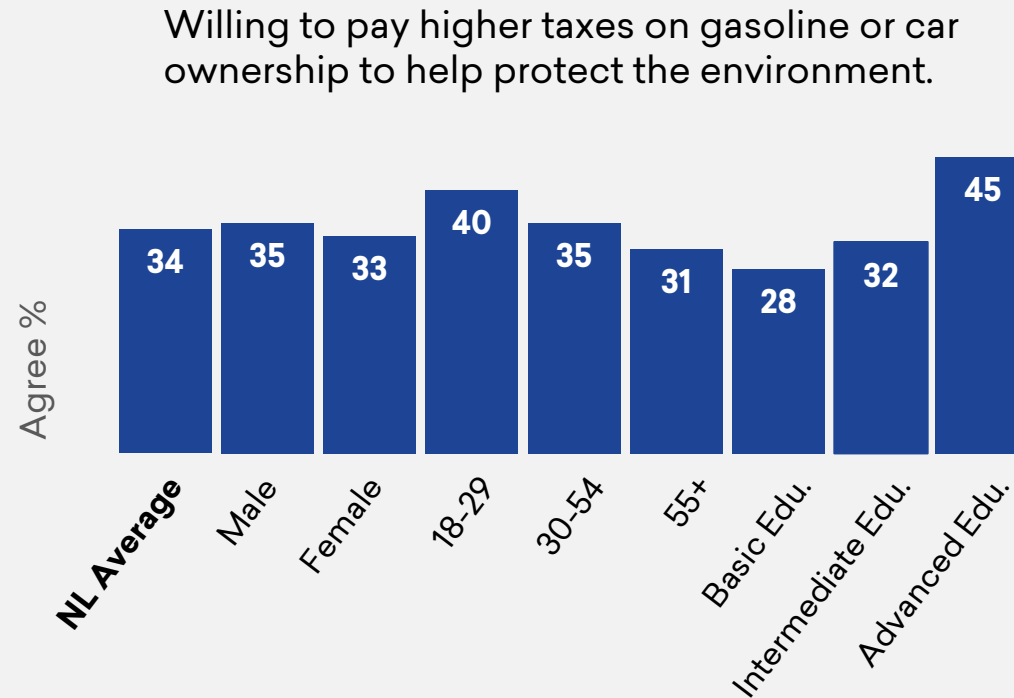
Question: The government is currently working on measures to help the economy and support businesses. What do you think: To what extent would you support or oppose requiring companies to fulfill the following criteria if they are to receive government aid?

Personal Sacrifice for the Environment



Willing to pay higher taxes on gasoline or car ownership?

One in three respondents (34 percent) are willing to pay higher taxes on gasoline or car ownership to help protect the environment. The higher educated and young people are most willing to do so.



Question: When it comes to your actions during and after the crisis, would you personally be willing or not to do the following...

Aspirations for the country



Which qualities should the country focus on the most?

People want the country to be safe, healthy and fair. In addition, people also would like the Netherlands to be environmentally friendly, democratic and equal.

	NL Average	Male	Female	18-29	30-54	55+	Basic Edu.	Intermediate Edu.	Advanced Edu.
Safe	32	29	35	27	31	35	38	30	24
Healthy	32	27	37	28	30	37	36	33	25
Fair	28	30	25	23	28	29	31	25	26
Environmentally-friendly	26	25	27	29	23	28	25	23	30
Democratic	22	26	17	13	17	31	22	21	22
Equal	21	17	24	29	21	16	20	20	23
Tolerant	18	17	19	16	16	21	13	18	26
Traditional	14	14	13	9	14	16	15	16	9
Patriotic	12	15	9	10	11	13	12	15	9
United	11	11	11	13	12	10	7	12	17
Compassionate	10	9	11	12	11	8	8	12	10
Hard-working	9	10	8	9	11	7	7	9	11
Prosperous	9	11	7	11	9	7	8	8	11
Family-oriented	8	7	8	7	10	5	8	8	6
Christian	6	7	5	6	6	6	5	7	6
Educated	6	7	5	8	6	5	3	6	9
Self-confident	6	7	5	7	7	4	5	6	7

Question: Which of the following qualities do you think [COUNTRY] should focus on the most? [COUNTRY] should become more...(max. 3)

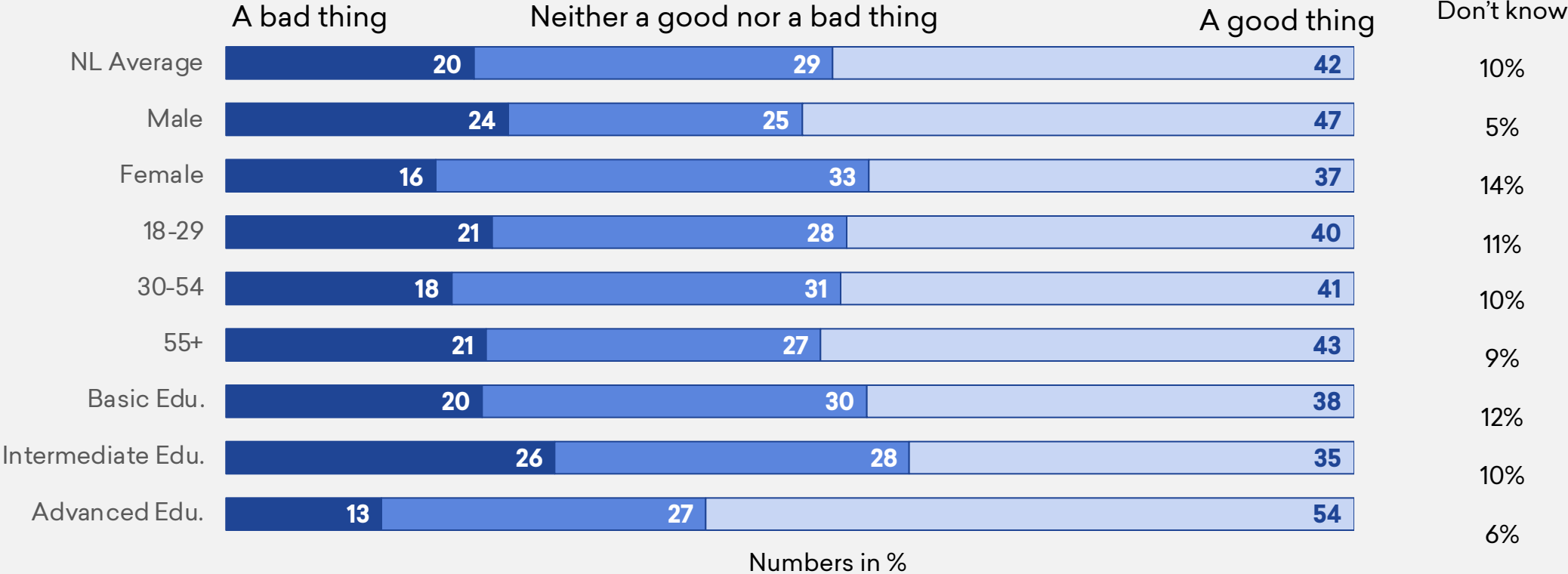
Views on the European Union



Views on EU Membership



EU membership is...

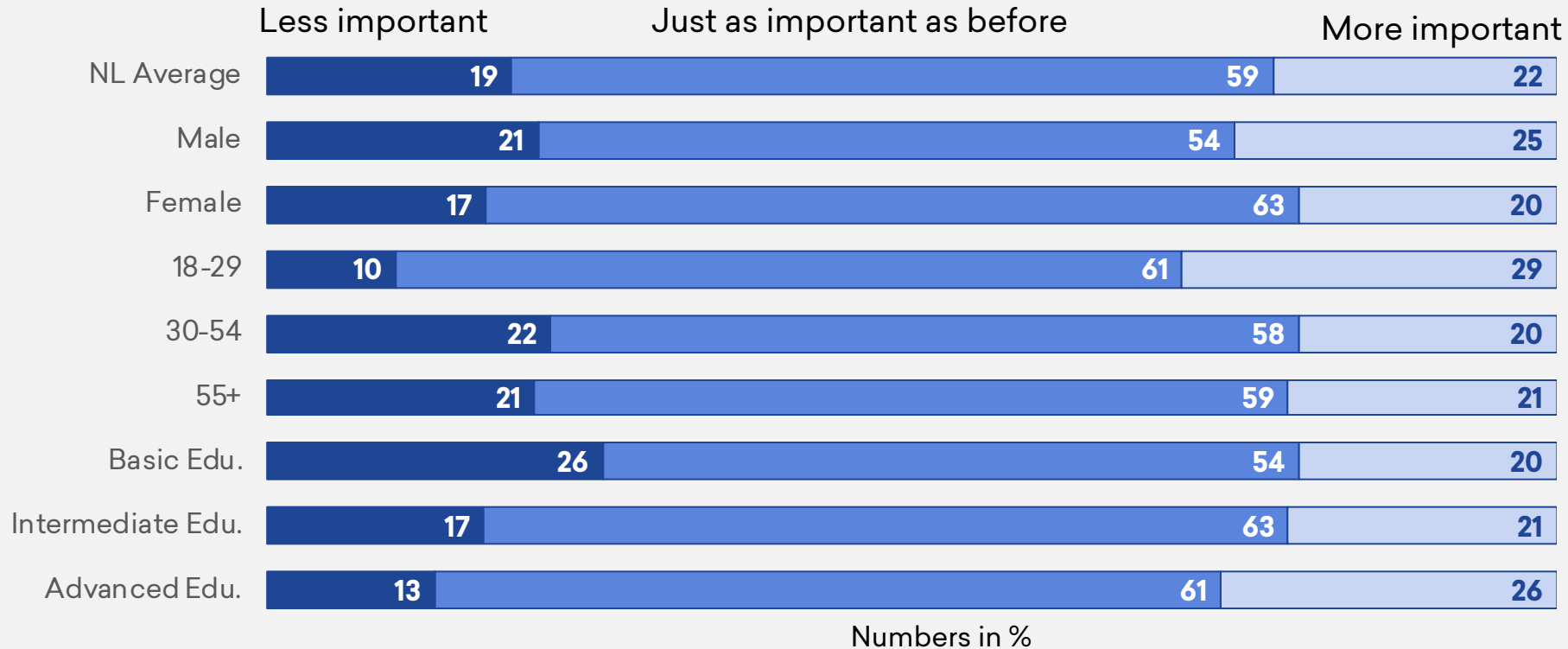


Question: Generally speaking, would you say that [COUNTRY's] membership of the EU is...?
 Please note: Numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

EU Membership: Looking Ahead



EU Membership will be...



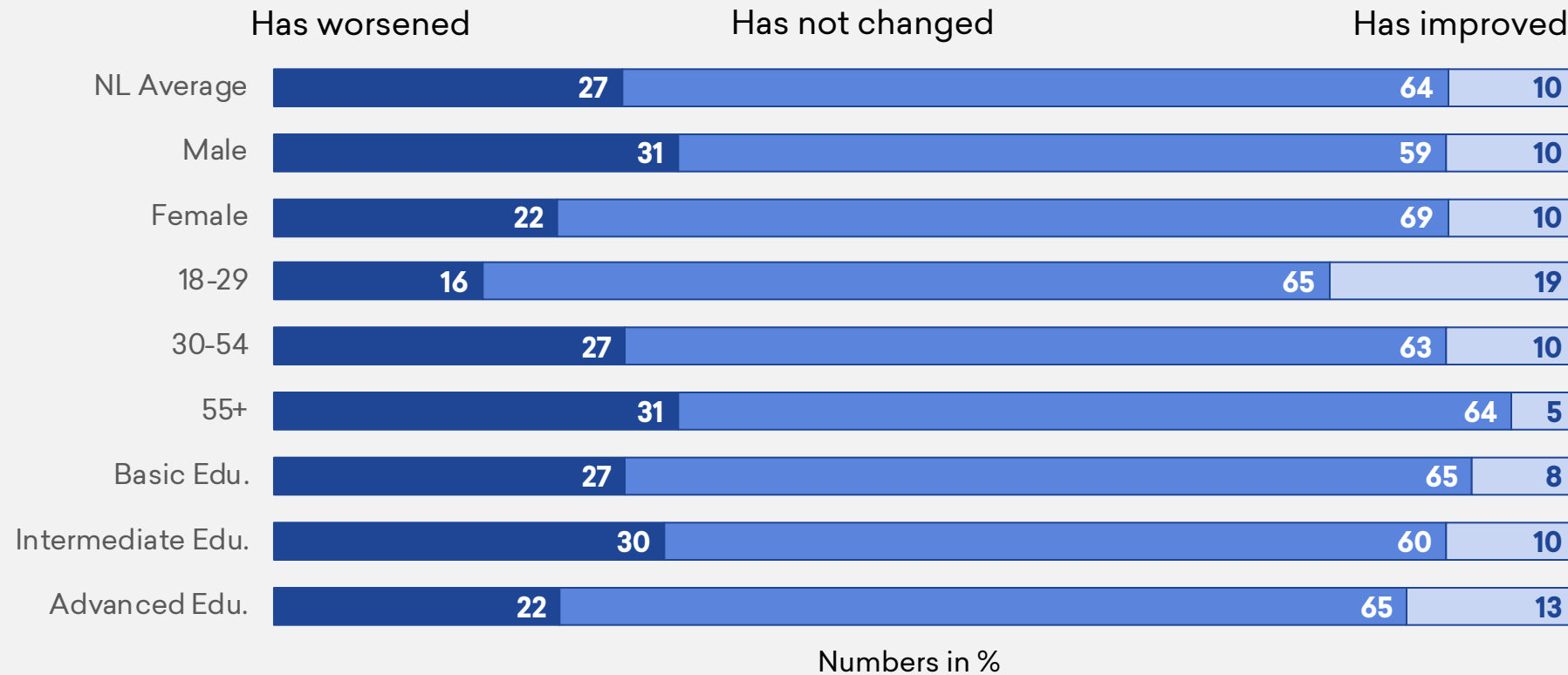
Question: In the coming years, [COUNTRY]'s membership in the EU will be...
Please note: Numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Trust in the EU



Since the COVID-19 pandemic, trust in the EU...

Respondents are critical of the EU. On average, trust in the EU has diminished. Older respondents (55 and over) are most critical, while young respondents (under thirty) are the only segment with a net increase in trust in the EU.

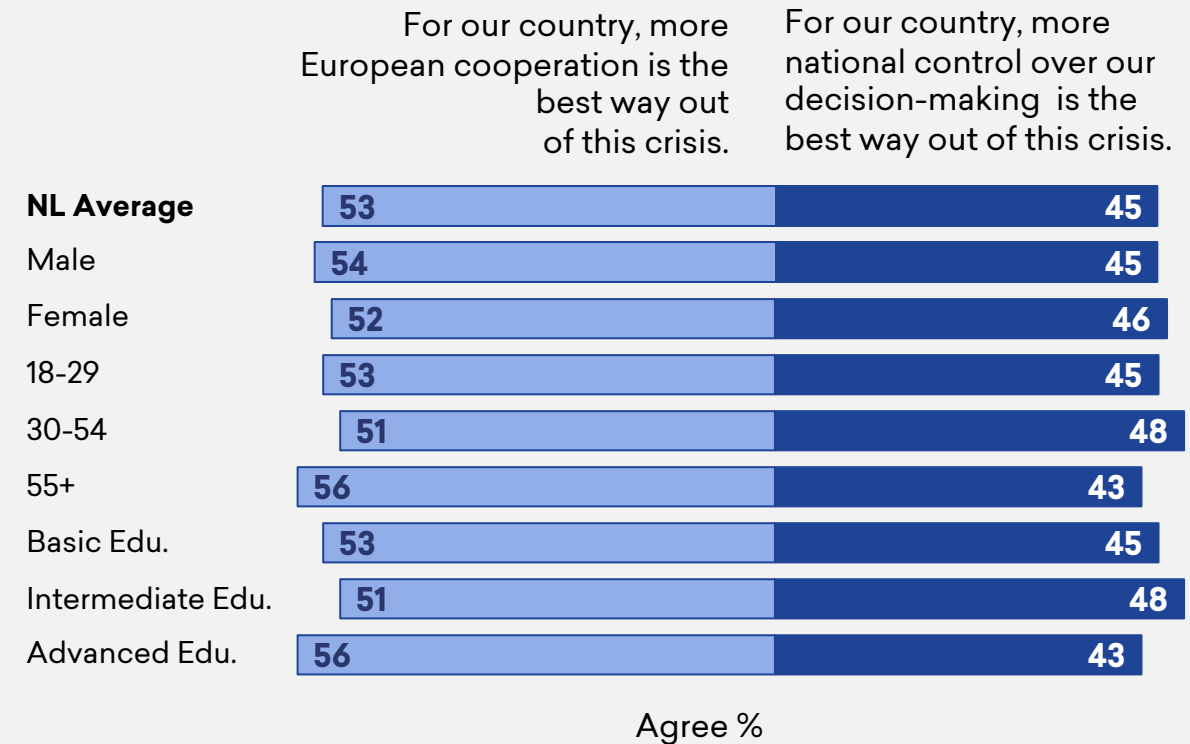
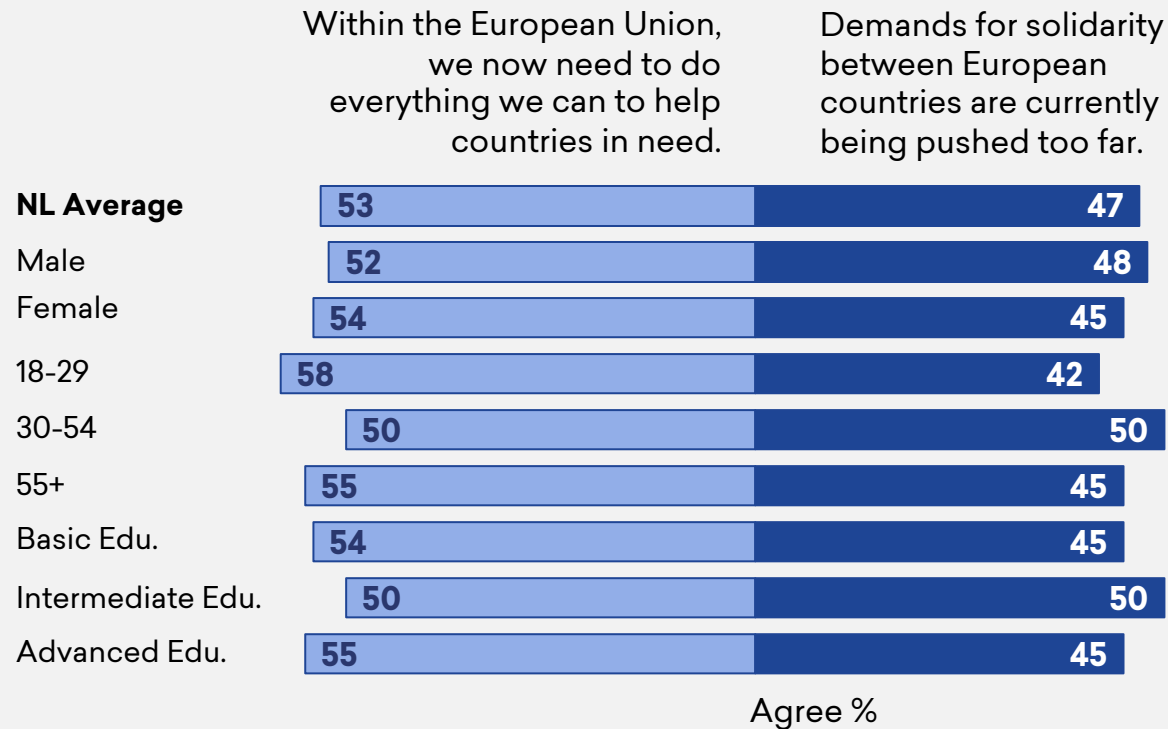


Question: Since this pandemic began, how have the following things changed, if at all?

EU Solidarity



Solidarity and Cooperation

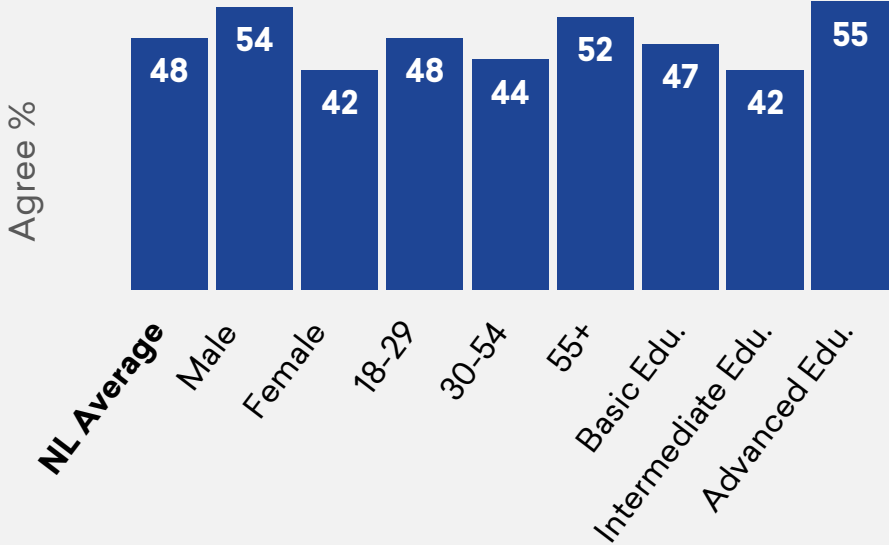


Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?
Please note: Numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Support for a European Reconstruction Fund



A **European Reconstruction Fund** to help economic recovery in the European Union, for which the European Commission takes on common debt to be paid back by member states.



Question: There is currently debate about different political measures. Would you support or oppose the following proposals?

Country-specific questions

The Netherlands



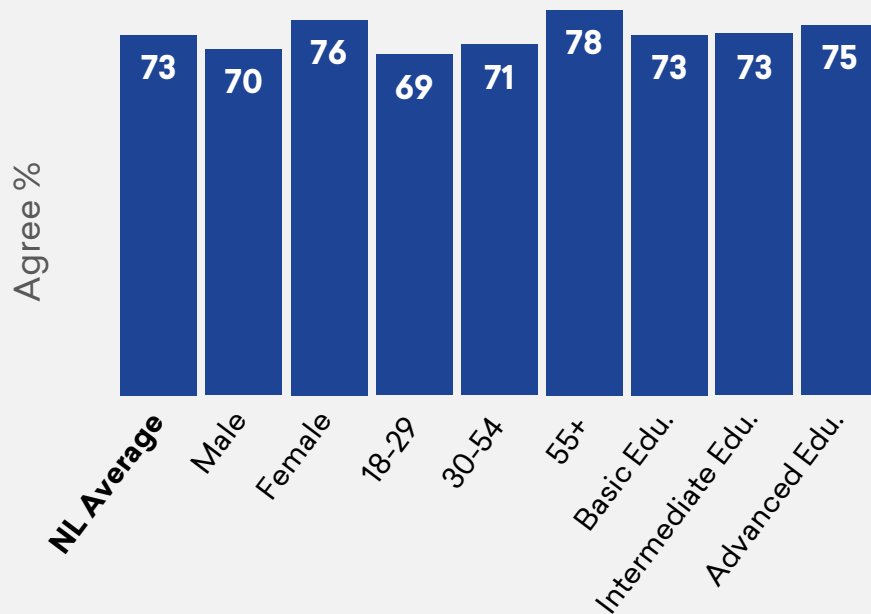
Dutch Exceptionalism?



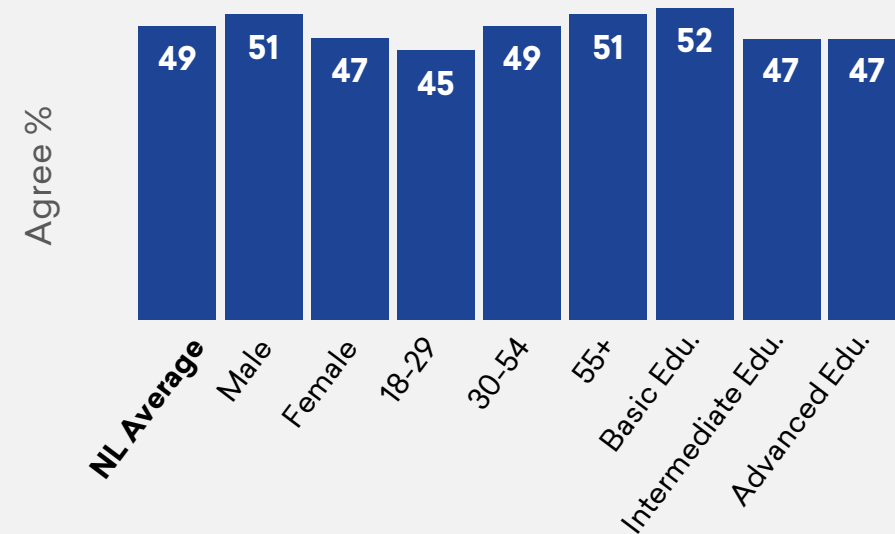
Perceptions of the Dutch “Intelligent Lockdown”

The concept of an intelligent lockdown appears to be properly aligned with people’s need for personal freedom. People are on the lookout for the vulnerable in society and express some concern in that direction.

“I feel that the Netherlands has chosen a path of containment that respects my personal freedom.”



“I feel like measures in the Netherlands have not sufficiently protected the most vulnerable in society.”



Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The Invisibles in the Netherlands





Overview: The Importance of Invisibles

Since 2019, More in Common has explored the attitudes, core beliefs, and behaviors of those less represented and seen in political life, whether it's at the ballot box, in political movements, or on social media. We refer to this population as the "Invisibles".

These populations are not homogenous, nor easily defined. However, More in Common's previous research reveals that they share a feeling of being powerless and disrespected, participate less in society generally, and have the highest levels of loneliness of any population group. Invisibles have the weakest political attachments and are more vulnerable to disinformation, conspiracy theories and the 'othering' of minorities within society.

Just as their embrace of populism has played the key role in up-ending politics in the past decade, the shifts among the Invisibles may prove pivotal in defining the trajectory of the post-lockdown period. It is crucial, for example, to understand the extent to which people in general, and the Invisibles in particular, emerge from the pandemic wanting a 'return to normal' or feeling that 'we can't go back to how it was'. This will be critical in understanding whether the post-COVID-19 frame will be about sweeping change or a return to normal.

In the analysis that follows, we present a new method that standardizes a definition of Invisibles that simplifies their characteristics into a set of behaviors (political disengagement) and attitudes (feeling neglected). We analyse how this key group aligns and departs from the broader Dutch population.

Invisible Segment Construction: (1/3)

Political Engagement Index



Political Engagement Index Items

Some people seem to follow what's going on in **government and public affairs** most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested.

Would you say you **follow what's going on** in government and public affairs...

1. Most of the time
2. Some of the time
3. Only now and then
4. Hardly at all

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

1 - I try as hard as I can to **avoid political discussions** with other people.

2

3

4

5

6 - I **take every opportunity to discuss** the right political point of view with other people.

- Aggregate scores were tabulated for each respondent.
- Sums were re-scaled on an index from 0 to 10.
- Each respondent was assigned into either High or Low, splitting at the national median with median scores assigned to High.

Invisible Segment Construction: (2/3)

Invisibility Index



Invisibility Index Items

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

1 - In my personal environment **I have people who understand me** and help me.

2

3

4 - In my life, **I'm mostly on my own.**

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

1 - Most **politicians are interested in what people like me think.**

2

3

4 - Most **politicians don't care** what people like me think.

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

I often feel like a second-class citizen.

1 - Strongly agree

2 - Somewhat agree

3 - Somewhat disagree

4 - Strongly disagree

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

All in all, I feel adequately respected and valued in my life.

1 - Strongly agree

2 - Somewhat agree

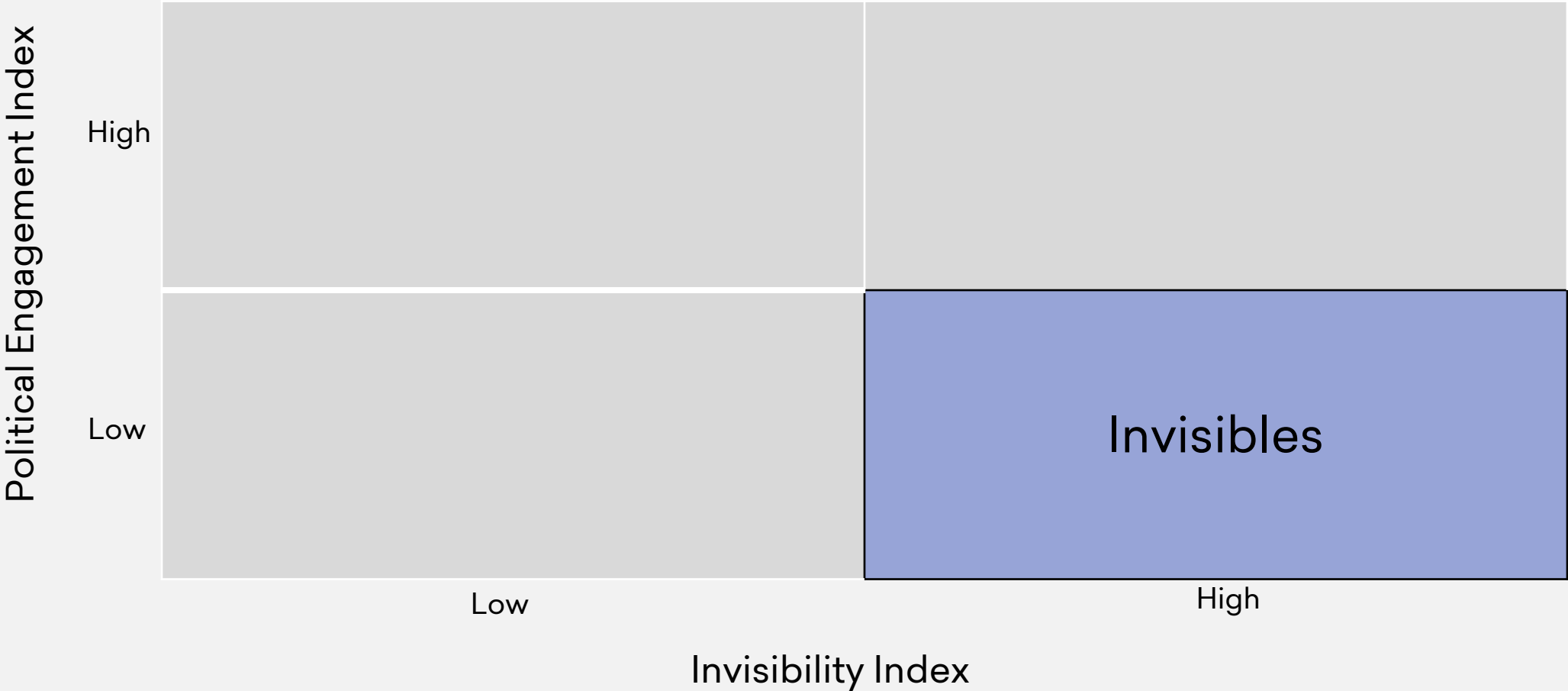
3 - Somewhat disagree

4 - Strongly disagree

- Aggregate scores were tabulated for each respondent.
- Sums were re-scaled on an index from 0 to 10.
- Each respondent was assigned into either High or Low, splitting at the national median with median scores assigned to High.

Invisible Segment Construction: (3/3)

Invisibles are low engagement + high invisibility



Demographic Background of the Invisibles



Population Average (%)

Invisibles (%)

		Population Average (%)	Invisibles (%)
Age	18-24	11	9
	25-39	23	25
	40-54	28	35
	55-64	16	15
	65+	22	17
Gender	Male	49	39
	Female	51	61
Education	Basic	40	46
	Intermediate	31	35
	Advanced	29	19
Income	< € 1000	12	17
	€ 1000 to 2000	23	32
	€ 2000 to 4000	25	24
	> € 4000	40	28



Partisan Background of the Invisibles

*Voting intention

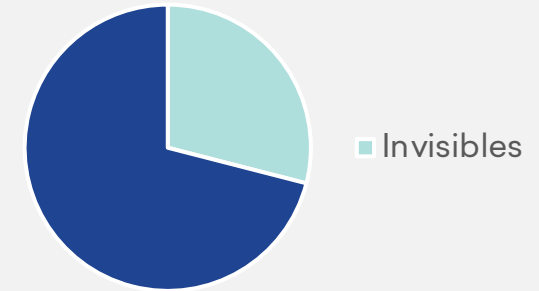
	Population Average (%)	Invisibles (%)
People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD)	13.4	7.7
Socialist Party (SP)	6.3	7.1
Democrats 66 (D66)	4.6	2.4
Forum for Democracy (FvD)	7.0	5.0
Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA)	5.4	3.6
Party for Freedom (PVV)	8.7	8.8
Green Left (GL)	6.4	5.0
Labour Party (PvdA)	6.5	3.7
Party for the Animals (PvdD)	4.4	6.3
Christian Union (CU)	3.6	2.0
50Plus (50+)	1.9	2.0
THINK (DENK)	0.7	0.6
Reformed Political Party (SGP)	1.5	1.2
A different party	1.0	0.6
I would not vote	9.1	19.8
Do not know	19.4	24.2

Who are the Invisibles in the Netherlands?



Invisibles are, in comparison with the overall population, less ideological, and hold more negative views about the direction of the country and trust in government.

- Invisibles make up **29% of the national population**.
- They are more likely to **place themselves at the center** on a left-right scale.
 - 33% of Invisibles are in the center; vs. 27% on average
 - 29% of Invisibles are on the right; vs. 35% on average
- Invisibles are **significantly more dissatisfied with democracy in their country** than the rest of the population.
 - Invisibles dissatisfied with democracy (41%) vs. Average (30%)
- And are more likely to say that the **country is going in the wrong direction**.
 - Invisibles (57%) vs. Average (51%)
- And **much less likely to say that others can be trusted**: Invisibles (41%) vs. Average (53%)
- Invisibles are **less proud of their nation**: Pride in country: Invisibles (57%) vs. Average (71%)
- And much **more likely to feel like a stranger in their own country**: Invisibles (68%) vs. Average (54%)
- Invisibles are **much less likely to trust the national government**: Invisibles (58%) vs. Average (69%)



**The Invisibles in the Netherlands
have had a more severe
experience of the
COVID-19 crisis.**

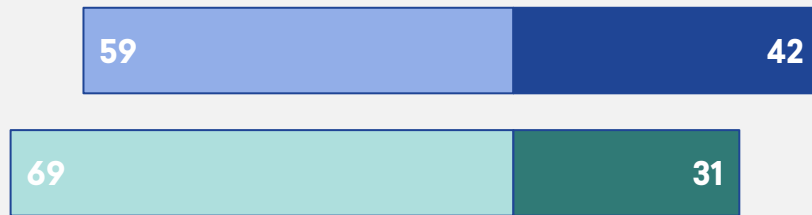




The Invisibles have experienced little support and higher degree of isolation during the COVID-19 crisis.

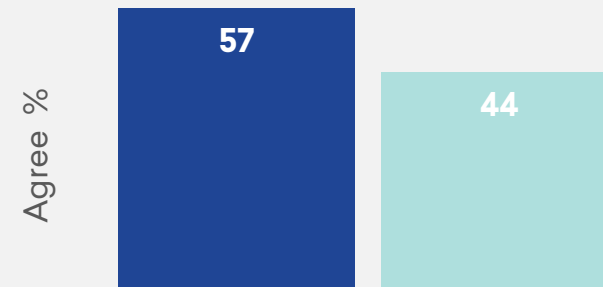
In this crisis, I have felt like I am mainly on my own.

In this crisis, I have felt the support and care of others.



Agree %

“The COVID-19 pandemic has shown me that most people in our country care about each other”



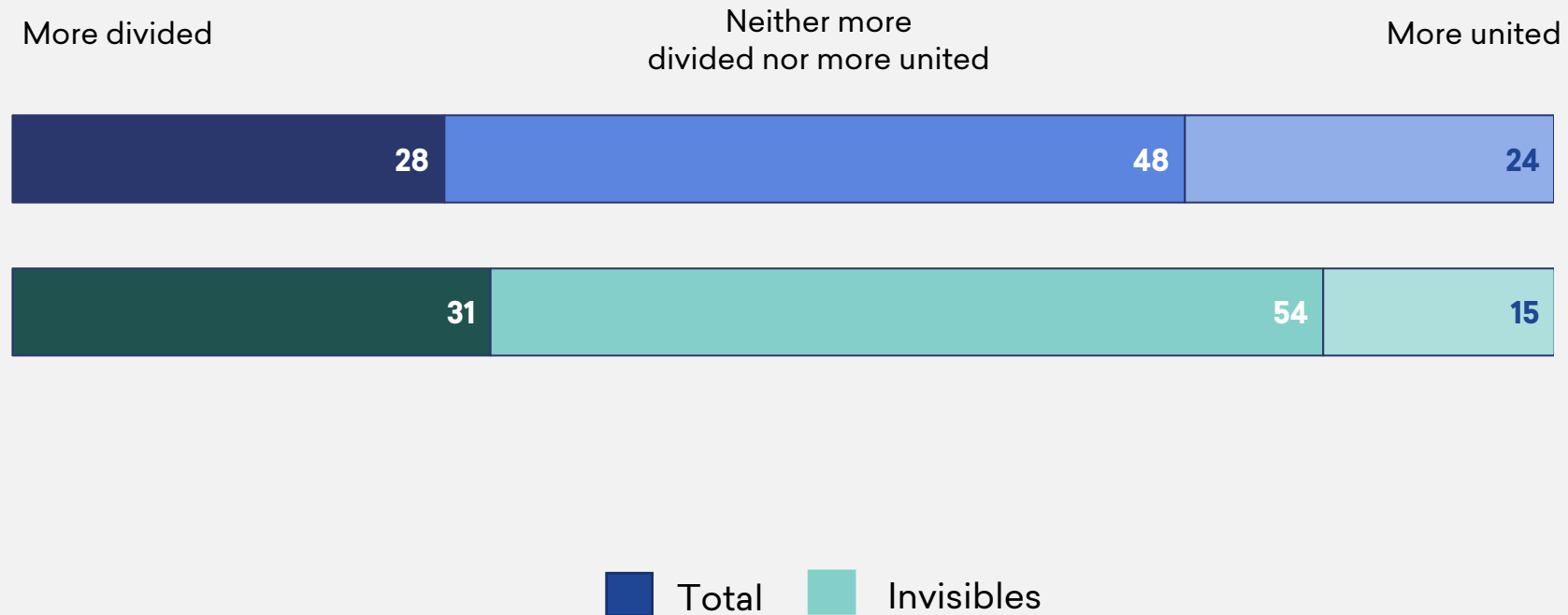
■ Total ■ Invisibles

Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?; To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

Invisibles are less likely to say that COVID-19 has brought the country together



Did your perceptions of your country change since the start of the pandemic?



Question: Since the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, how have your perceptions of [COUNTRY] changed, if at all? Is it...?

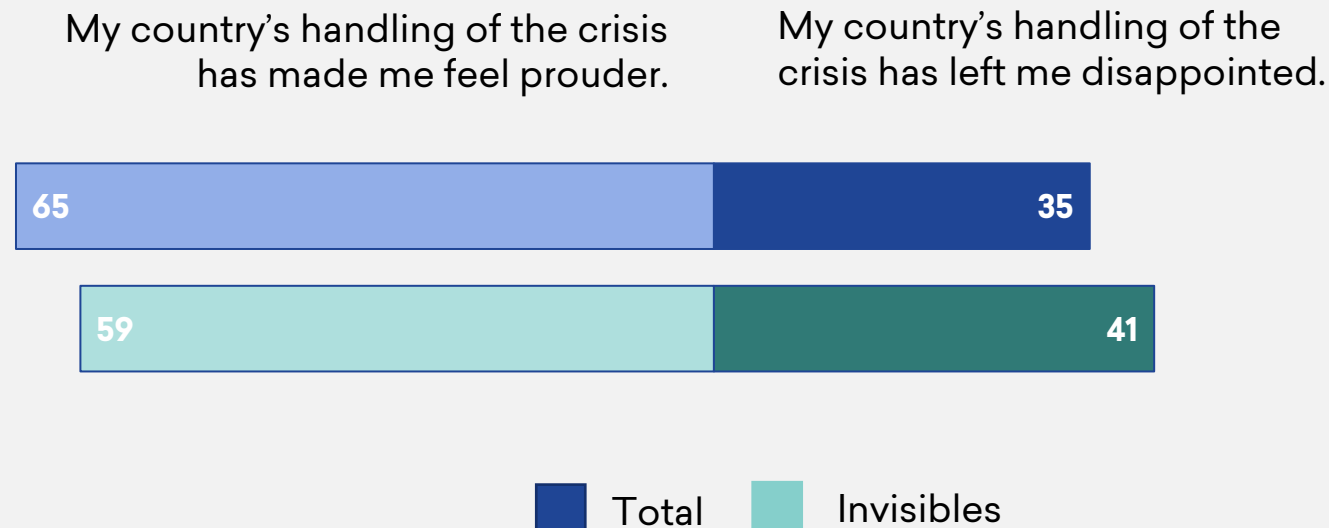
**Invisibles convey
higher levels of resentment
towards government
handling of the crisis.**





Invisibles are less likely to say they were proud of how the Netherlands handled this crisis...

Country's handling of the crisis: pride vs. disappointment

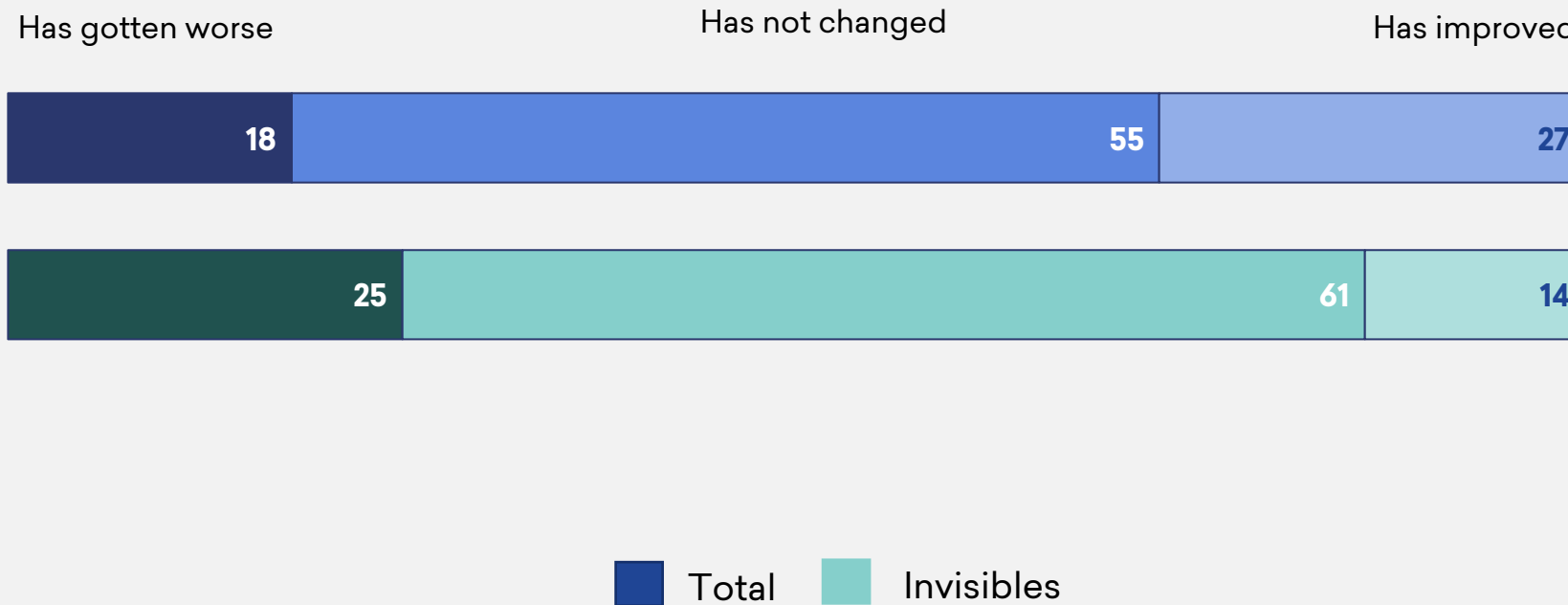


Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

... and their trust in government has decreased.



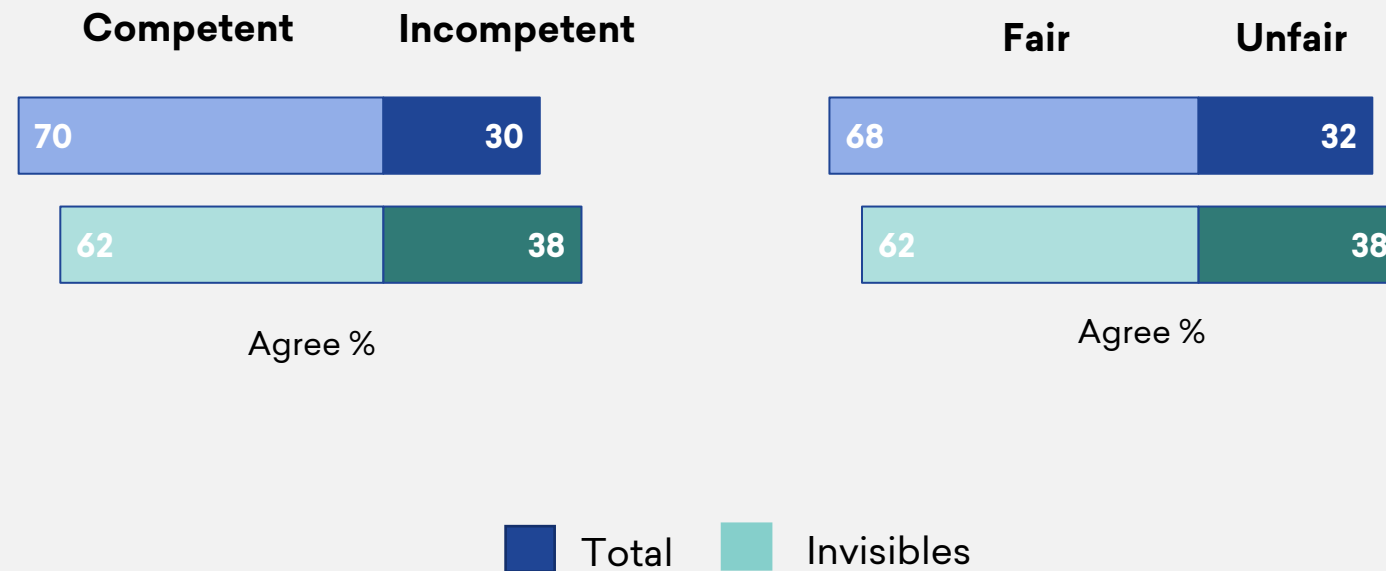
Trust in the Dutch government



Question: Since the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, how have the following changed? Your trust in the Dutch government.



Invisibles are more likely to say that government response was incompetent and unfair ...

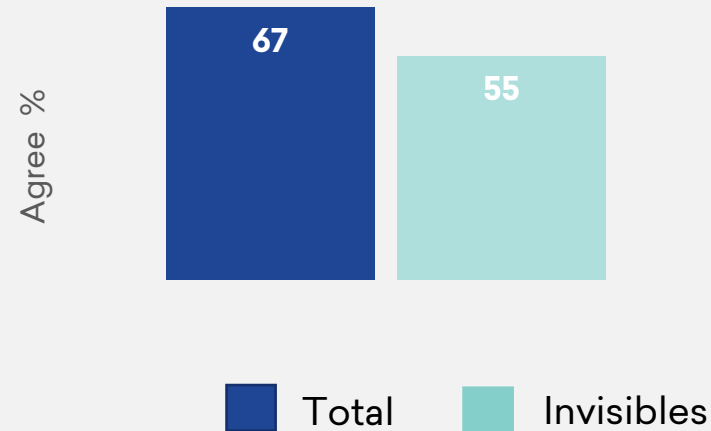


Question: When you think of how the [NATIONALITY] government has managed the COVID-19 situation so far, which of the following opposing terms describes government action better?



... and are less confident in the government's ability to tackle the challenges ahead of us.

“I am confident in our current government's ability to tackle the challenges ahead of us.”

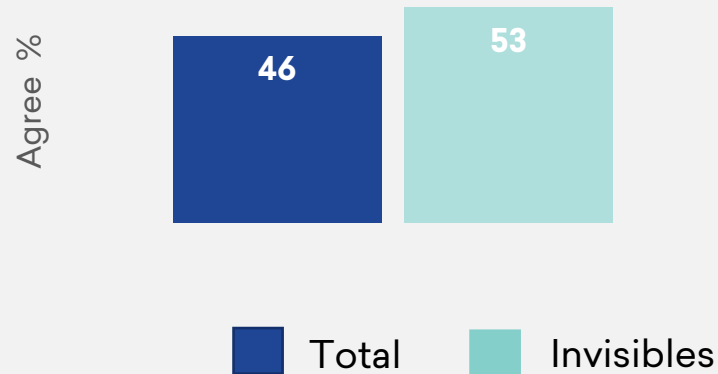


Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?



Invisibles are more prone to conspiracy theories.

“The government knows things about COVID-19 that it is hiding from the public.”



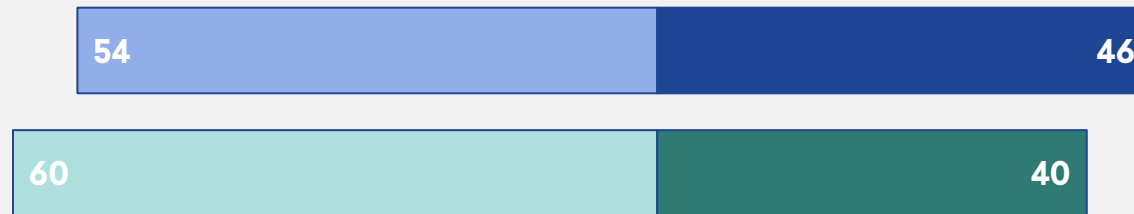
Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?



Coming out of this crisis, Invisibles are more likely to desire a return to normal.

I mostly just want things to return to normal, to how they were before the pandemic.

We should seize the opportunity of COVID-19 to make important changes to our country.



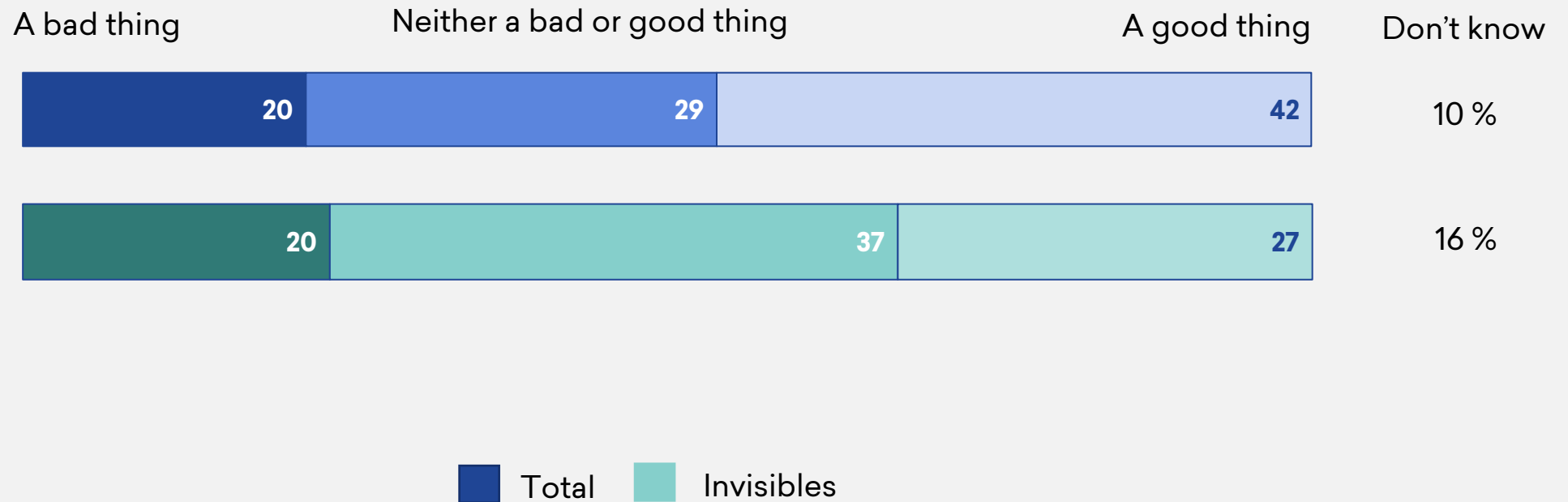
■ Total ■ Invisibles

Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

Lastly, EU membership is not an emotional topic for the Invisibles.



EU membership: good or a bad thing?



Question: EU Membership is...

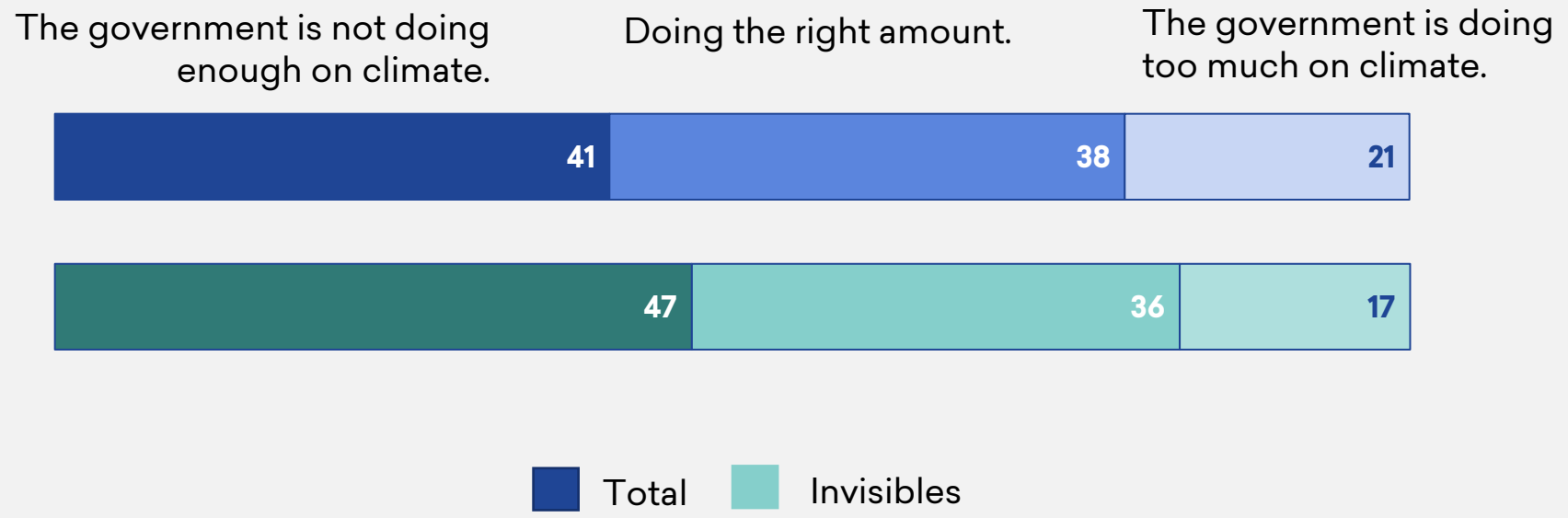
On the policy front, the Invisibles care more strongly about the environment, but they are less willing to make personal sacrifices for it.





The Invisibles are more likely to say that the government is not doing enough to protect the climate.

Climate change: doing too much or not enough?



Question: Thinking about the current situation, which of the following statements do you agree with most? On the environment, the government is...

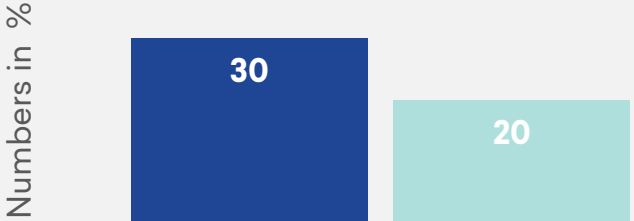
Personal Sacrifice for Recovery



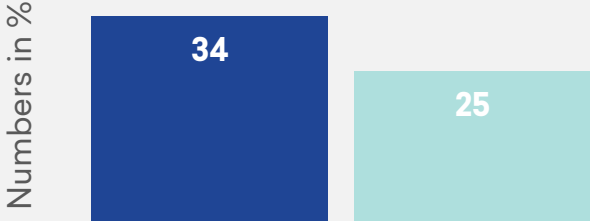
Willing to contribute through higher taxes?

At the same time, the Invisibles are less willing to pay higher personal income or environmental taxes to aid recovery efforts.

Willing to pay higher income taxes.



Willing to pay higher taxes on gasoline or car ownership to help protect the environment.



■ Total ■ Invisibles

Question: When it comes to your actions during and after the crisis, would you personally be willing or not to do the following...



Thank you

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