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The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

# Water Awareness

Summary Report  
May 2022

[ccwater.org.uk](http://ccwater.org.uk)

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# Foreword

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CCW wants to ensure that people in England and Wales have reliable water and sewerage services, now and in the future, at the lowest possible cost to the environment. A key part of this is ensuring customers are equipped with the information and resources they need to reduce their personal impact on the environment.

Through the People and the Environment programme, CCW is setting out to help people make the connection between their own use of water and sewerage services, and the water environment. Our goal is to achieve a measurable reduction in sewer misuse and water consumption by 2030.

To help us measure changes in levels of awareness and behaviours over time, this report introduces CCW's Water Awareness Index.; the baseline measure currently is 55 out of 100, and we will repeat this research to see how it changes over time.

At the outset, respondents claimed very high levels of awareness that water use, and what is flushed down the toilet or rinsed down the sink, must have some effect on the environment. However, our research shows that a large proportion of people struggled to identify what the actual impact was, and awareness had not necessarily led to people changing what they do to reduce their environmental impact.

The challenge for the sector is to go beyond awareness-raising and instigate a call to action that will resonate strongly with consumers. Over the coming years, CCW is committed to work with the sector to bring about a tangible difference in the way people value and use their water services. This research sets a benchmark to help us track our progress.

Karen Gibbs, Senior Policy Manager

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# Executive summary

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## Key themes for all three behaviours

- **There are high levels of awareness (91%) that personal water use, and what is disposed of down toilets or rinsed down the sink have an effect on the environment.**
  - Most - 53% - think these behaviours have a big/moderate effect, 38% a small effect, and 11% think there would be no effect or did not know.
- **Most people identified how each behaviour can affect the environment but the degree to which they could attribute it to a specific environmental effect varied;**
  - For correct environmental effects this was 9% for rinsing down the sink, 22% for water use and 72% for flushing down the toilet.
- **Understanding of the environmental impact is linked to whether it is thought to be a big/moderate, or a small impact.**
  - A big/moderate effect was more likely to be related to a wider picture (e.g. water being taken from the environment for treatment, and blockages in sewers leading to flooding and pollution).
  - A small effect was more often linked to the size of their household and household behaviours (e.g. their household is small and water use low, small quantities of things in drain/sewer make little difference, or things break down and are fine to rinse down the sink).
- **Some of those who said there was an impact on the environment struggled to say what this impact was.**
  - For water use, this was 44%, rinsing things down the sink 58% and flushing behaviours 8%. Of these behaviours, many thought it was common sense there was an impact of some kind – for water use this was 18%, sink usage 12% and flushing behaviours 7%.

# Executive summary (2 of 3)



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## Differences in views between the behaviours

- **Water use is seen as having a lesser effect on the environment than the other behaviours.**
  - People perceive flushing behaviours to have the biggest impact on the environment (67% think a big effect) with rinsing down the sink next (41% big) and water use having a lesser effect (11% big).
- **Aside from common sense, people get their information about the effects of these behaviours from different mixes of channels for each behaviour**
  - For water use, information from water companies is very important. 30% said they were made aware by water companies – through water saving campaigns, having a water meter fitted, or via other water company information.
  - For flushing behaviours, social media is the single most mentioned channel for information (25%), water companies play a smaller role in this with 16% mentioning either water company information or experiencing a blockage as the source for their information .
  - For information about rinsing down the sink, television and social media/social networks were the most commonly mentioned channels (19% and 17% respectively). 8% of respondents mentioned information from water companies.

## Water use

- Most – 62% - said they has not done anything in the last six months to use less water, while 30% said they had.
- Attitudes towards water use and the environment are complex. While most respondents (85%) say they understand how reducing their water use can help the environment, about a quarter (23%) would only save water if it saved them money, and just under 1 in 5 (18%) think it rains so much there is no need to save water.

# Executive summary (3 of 3)



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Flushing things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most – 73% - said they had not done anything in the last six months to reduce the environmental impact of things they flush. However, 16% said they had done something.</li><li>• 15% of respondents say they flush items other than human waste and toilet paper down the toilet.</li><li>• Attitudes and stated behaviours are more consistent for flushing behaviours than for water use, with more than 90% either claiming they know how to dispose of non-flushable things or that they are aware of the environmental effect of flushing behaviours on the environment.</li></ul>
Rinsing things down the kitchen sink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most - 72% - said they had not done anything in the last six months to reduce the environmental impact of things they rinse down the sink. Around one in five – 21% - said they had.</li><li>• 6% of respondents say they dispose of fats, oils and greases down the sink. A further 43% put other things down the sink which are not ideal – such as food waste and chemicals which are not used for cleaning purposes.</li><li>• There is more awareness that pouring fats oils and greases down the sink can cause a blockage in the sewer (53%) than there is of the potential for a blockage to cause flooding of sewage that pollutes the environment (22%).</li><li>• Attitudes and stated behaviours around rinsing down the sink are mixed. There are high levels of claimed understanding (92%) about how things poured away affect the environment. But fewer -78%- say they know what a fatberg is and 28% expect their water company to deal with anything they put down the sink or flush down the toilet. 14% say they do not know how else to dispose of fats, oils and greases other than down the sink.</li></ul>
Water Awareness Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The baseline Water Awareness Index Score is 55. This is explained in more detail on slides 15 and 16.</li></ul>

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# Background, objectives and methodology

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# Background and objectives



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CCW has a strategic objective, People and the Environment, to lead an industry-wide effort to raise consumer awareness of the impact their water use and disposal behaviours have on the environment.

Water behaviours affect the environment in three ways; through water which is taken from rivers etc. to be treated for water use, the things people flush down the toilets and pouring fats, oils and greases down the sink. The objective of this research was to track consumer awareness that their water behaviours have an impact on the environment. It aimed to fulfil the following objectives:

1

To measure spontaneous awareness of a link between water use, the things flushed down toilets and washed down the sink and the environment

2

To identify whether people have a correct understanding of how these behaviours affect the environment

3

For those who correctly understand how the environment affected, identify how they know about this - through what channels

4

To establish a baseline of awareness and attitudes and behaviour to inform a Water Awareness index for future tracking

# Methodology



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## Overview



CATI survey of 1,310 adults (aged 18+) in England and Wales



Fieldwork conducted 9<sup>th</sup> February – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022



The full sample was weighted to be representative of England and Wales combined based upon the 2011 Census profile. The boost sample was weighted down to be representative of Wales

## Approach

CCW commissioned Yonder Consulting to undertake a computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI) omnibus survey in England and Wales.

Yonder used their one-of-a-kind CATI Omnibus to reach the offline audience. The CATI Omnibus works to a nationally representative sample and is designed to ensure the right proportions of non internet users, vulnerable and hard to reach audiences are captured. This approach was chosen for its inclusivity of not only harder to reach audiences but so that open questions could be asked without leading consumers and to understand their views in their own words.

The CATI Omnibus utilizes Random Digit Dialing and calls both mobile and landline sample, interviewing 1000 respondents each week

The approach comprised of both qualitative and quantitative research. The first qualitative stage consisted of ten, thirty-minute in-depth video cognitive interviews with adults across England and Wales. The purpose of cognitive interviewing was to determine the cognitive processes that respondents went through when answering the survey and any difficulties they had. Improvements were made to the questionnaire to ensure that it was standardised, understood and answered in a consistent manner to produce reliable and unbiased data for analysis.

The subsequent quantitative stage was a CATI omnibus survey with a sample of 1,310 consumers (aged 18+) (bill-payers and non-bill payers) in England and Wales between 9th February and 23rd February 2022. Boost interviews of up to 400 interviews were conducted among consumers in Wales to allow for robust analysis and weighted back into the overall sample at the correct proportions.

## Sampling

Quotas were set on age, gender, region and social grade. The data was then weighted based upon the 2011 Census profile of England and Wales combined. Rim weighting was applied for age, gender, government office region, social grade, taken a foreign holiday in the last 3 years, number of cars in the household, and working status. Tenure was weighted based upon the England and Wales profile as individual nations. The boost sample was weighted down to match the 2011 Census profile of Wales.

# Scope and limitations of this report



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## Scope

This report aims to establish attitudes and behaviours of the overall England and Wales population and highlights results at an overall level as well as by the key sub-groups as outlined in the Table 1. It provides a robust sample to be able to analyse the data on this basis.

The statistical reliability of the data at 95% confidence level is outlined in Table 1

In addition to highlighting key subgroups significantly different to the total, results are also charted for other sub-group categories of interest when data is significantly different to the total.

## Statistical differences legend (at 95% confidence)

 Statistically higher than the total  
 Statistically lower than the total

 Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
 Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

NB: Data may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Table 1	Key subgroups	Sample Size	Margin of Error for response of 50%
	Total sample	1,310	+/- 2.7%
Region	England	907	+/- 3.3%
	Wales	403	+/- 4.9%
Gender	Male	618	+/- 3.9%
	Female	692	+/- 3.7%
Age	18-34 year olds	152	+/- 7.9%
	35-54 year olds	220	+/- 6.6%
	55 and over	938	+/- 3.2%
Social grade	ABC1	772	+/- 3.5%
	C2DE	538	+/- 4.2%
Urban/ Rural	Urban	816	+/- 3.4%
	Rural	336	+/- 5.3%
Tenure	Owners	951	+/- 3.2%
	Renters	318	+/- 5.5%

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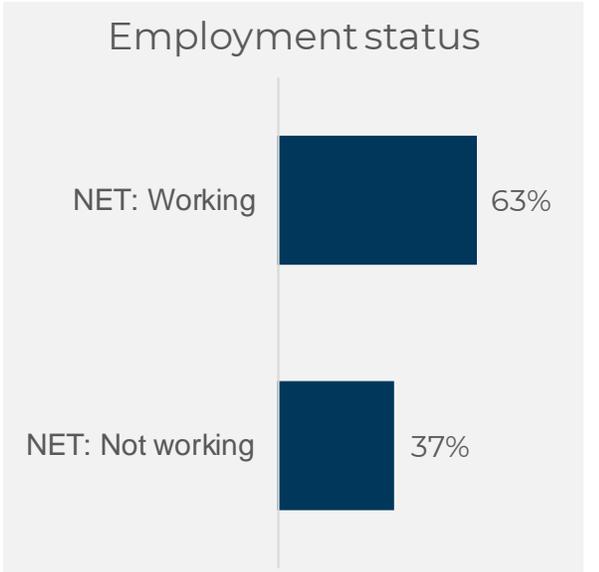
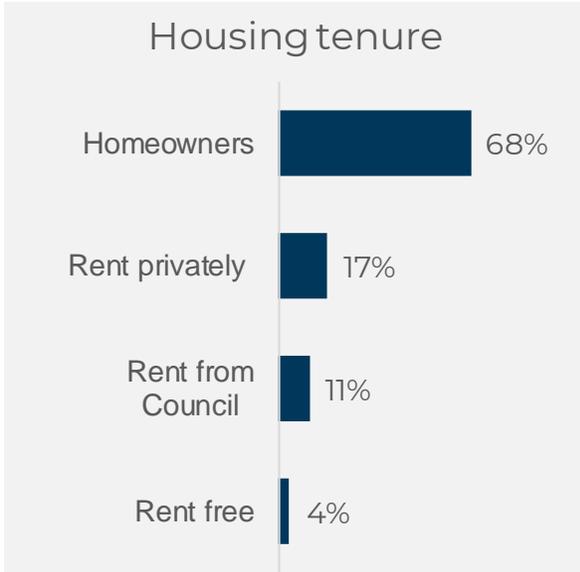
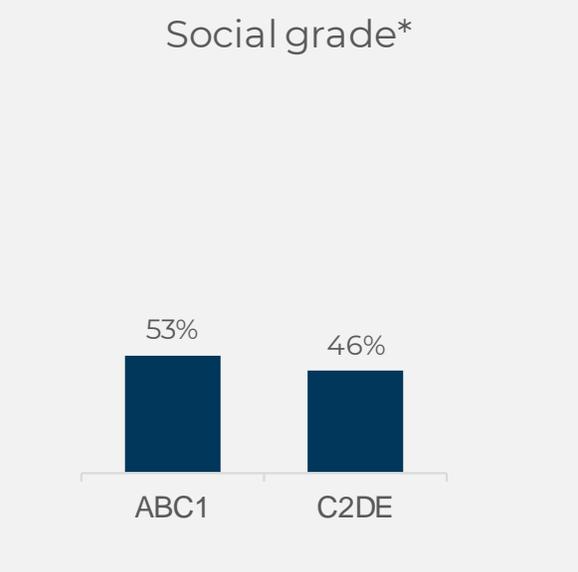
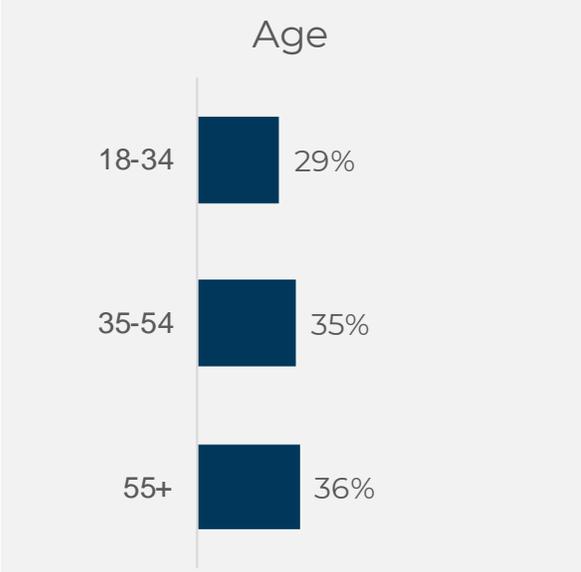
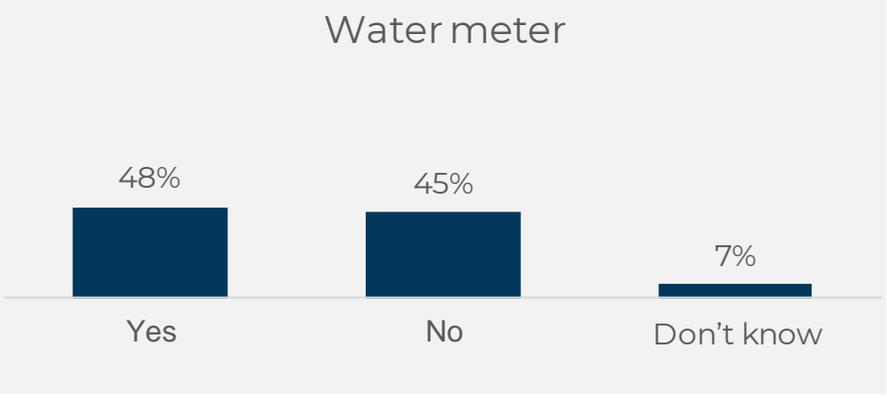
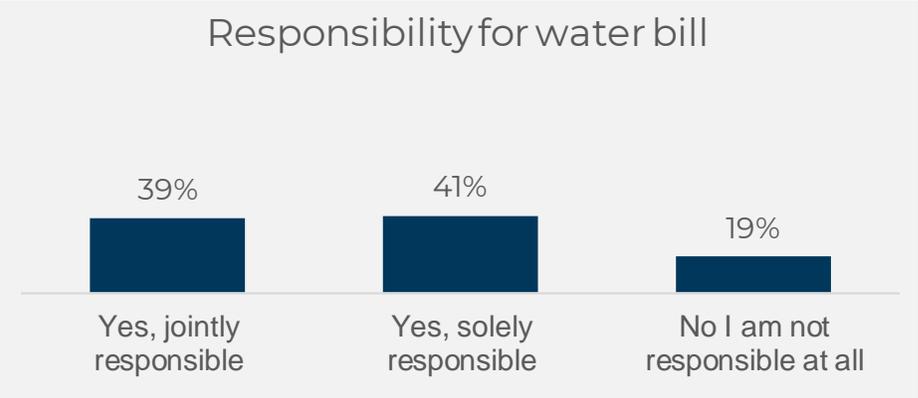
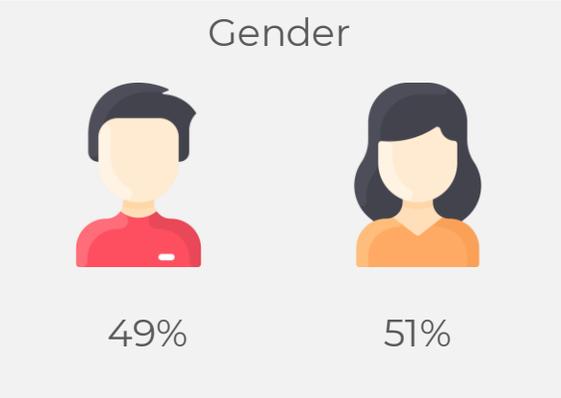
# Respondent profile

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# Respondent profile



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\*Social grade is a demographic classification based on the occupation of a household's chief income earner. AB is higher or intermediate, managerial, administrative or professional; C1 is supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional; C2 is skilled manual workers; DE is semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, state pensioners, casual workers and unemployed with state benefits only

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# Water Awareness Index

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# Water Awareness Index methodology



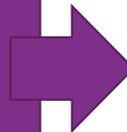
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Yonder designed a statistically robust composite behavioural index using factor analysis to analyse the similarities and differences in how respondents answer the individual measures. Similar statements were grouped together to determine which statements from each group could represent the group as a whole.

The factor analysis informed the decision of which measure from each group could go into the index, to retain the most information while minimising the number of questions.

The Water Awareness Index is an average of these 7 measures (on the right) for each respondent, based upon a scale of 100. Those who gave a response for at least 6 out of 7 measures.

The Water Awareness Index encapsulated all the optimal metrics into one easy to use measure to track awareness over time and analyse differences across subgroups



Q4. To what extent do you think the amount of water you personally use, what you rinse down the kitchen sink and flush or dispose of down the toilet affects the environment?

Q23. I am aware of the impact of what I flush down the toilet on rivers and beaches

Q23. I don't know how else to get rid of cooking fats and oils other than down the sink

Q23. I avoid putting anything except human waste and toilet paper down the toilet

Q23. I understand how reducing my personal water use helps the environment

Q23. I would only reduce my personal water use if it saved me money

Q23. I know where my water company takes water from, to treat and turn into my drinking water

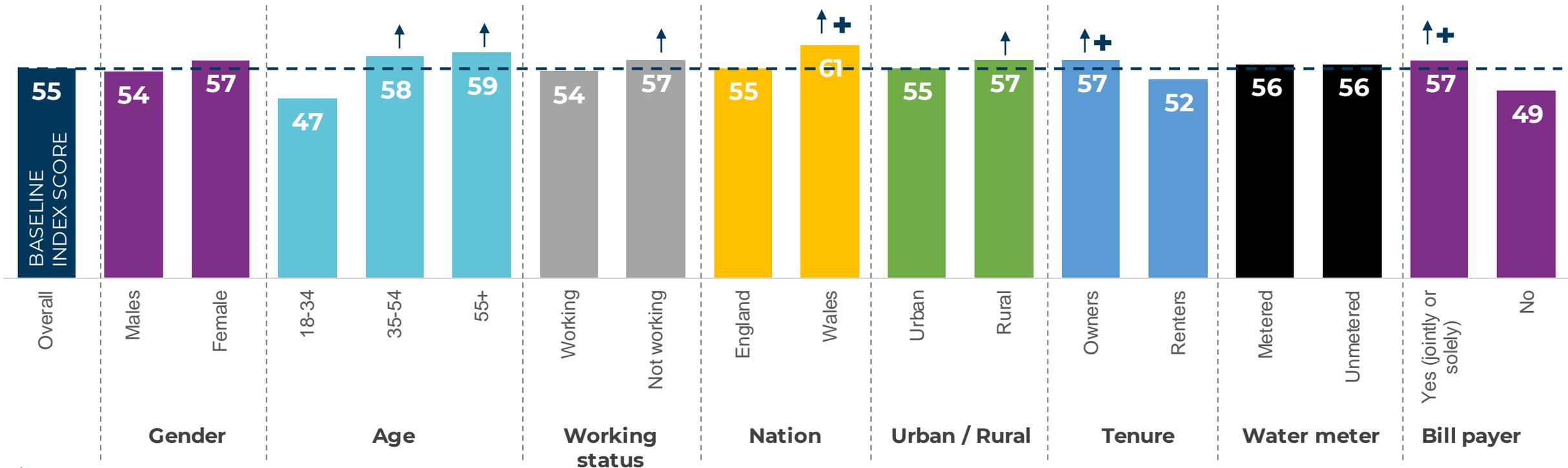
# How different demographics compare to the Baseline Water Awareness Index Score of 55



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## Mean score by demographic groups

Seven metrics were combined to create a composite Water Awareness Index based on a scale of 100



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

Q4 To what extent do you think the amount of water you personally use, what you rinse down the kitchen sink and flush or dispose of down the toilet affects the environment? Please answer using a scale of a big effect, a moderate effect, a small effect or none. Q23 For each statement, please answer using a scale of strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree Base: All respondents who answered 6 out of 7 measures (1,262); 16

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# Overall findings

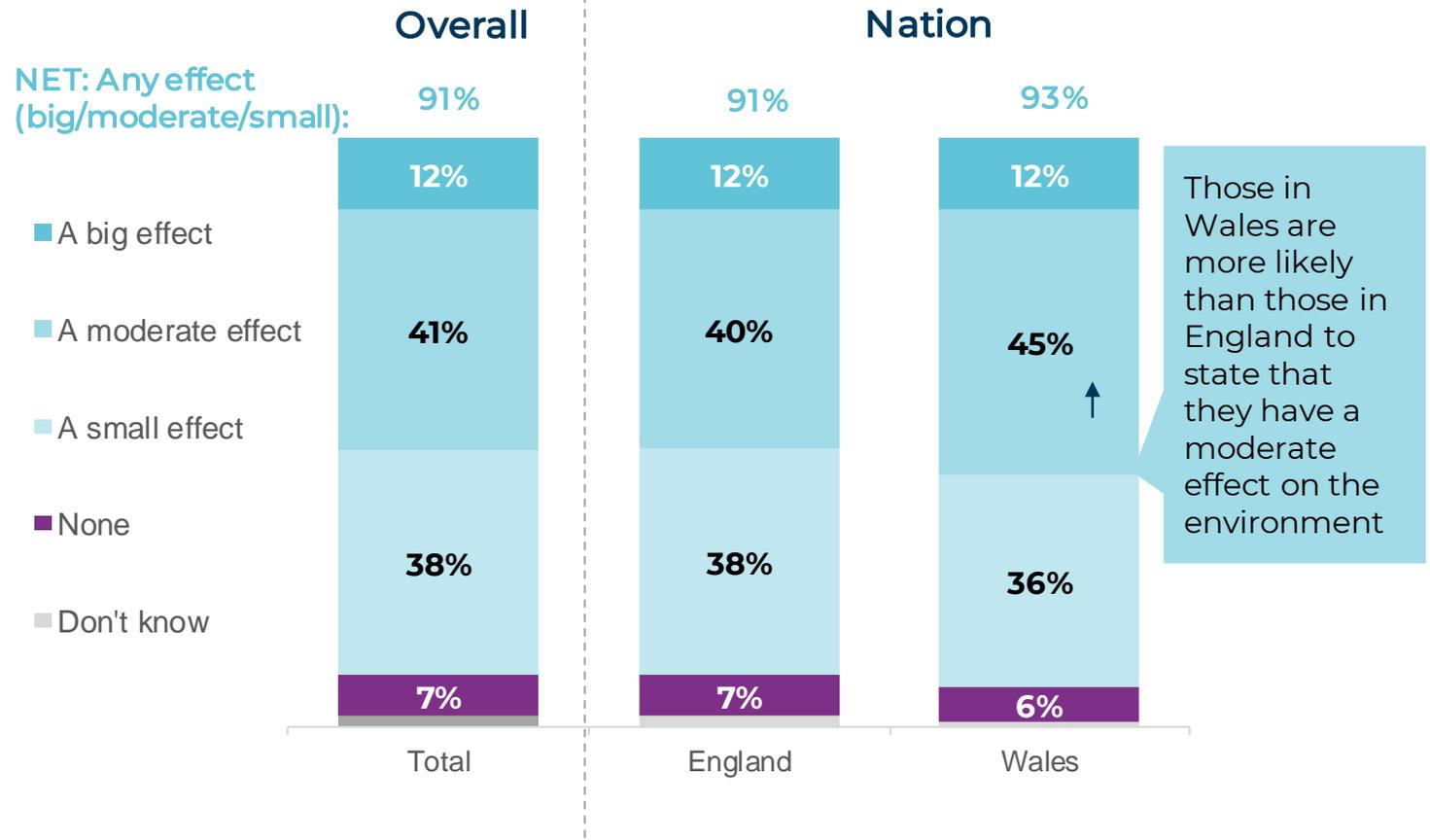
[ccwater.org.uk](http://ccwater.org.uk)

# There are high levels of awareness of the environmental impact of water use, and what is rinsed or flushed down drains. Understanding of how these activities affect the environment is lower

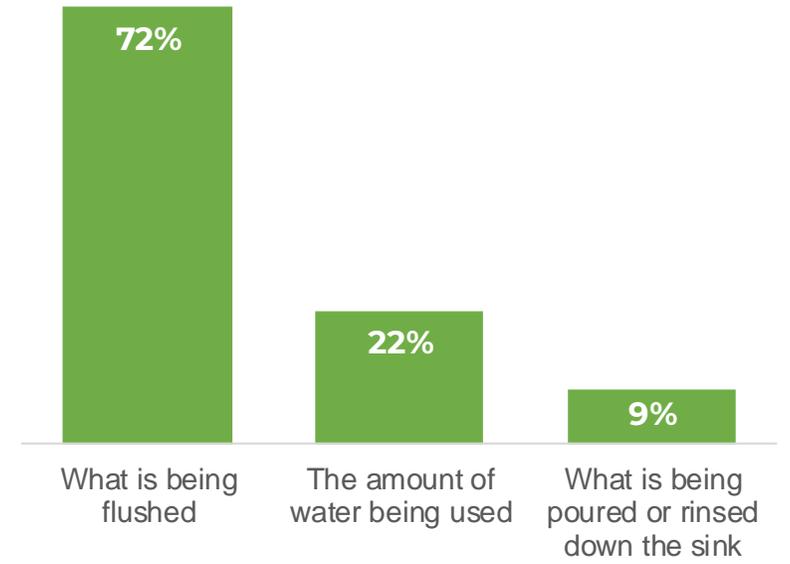


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## Overall awareness



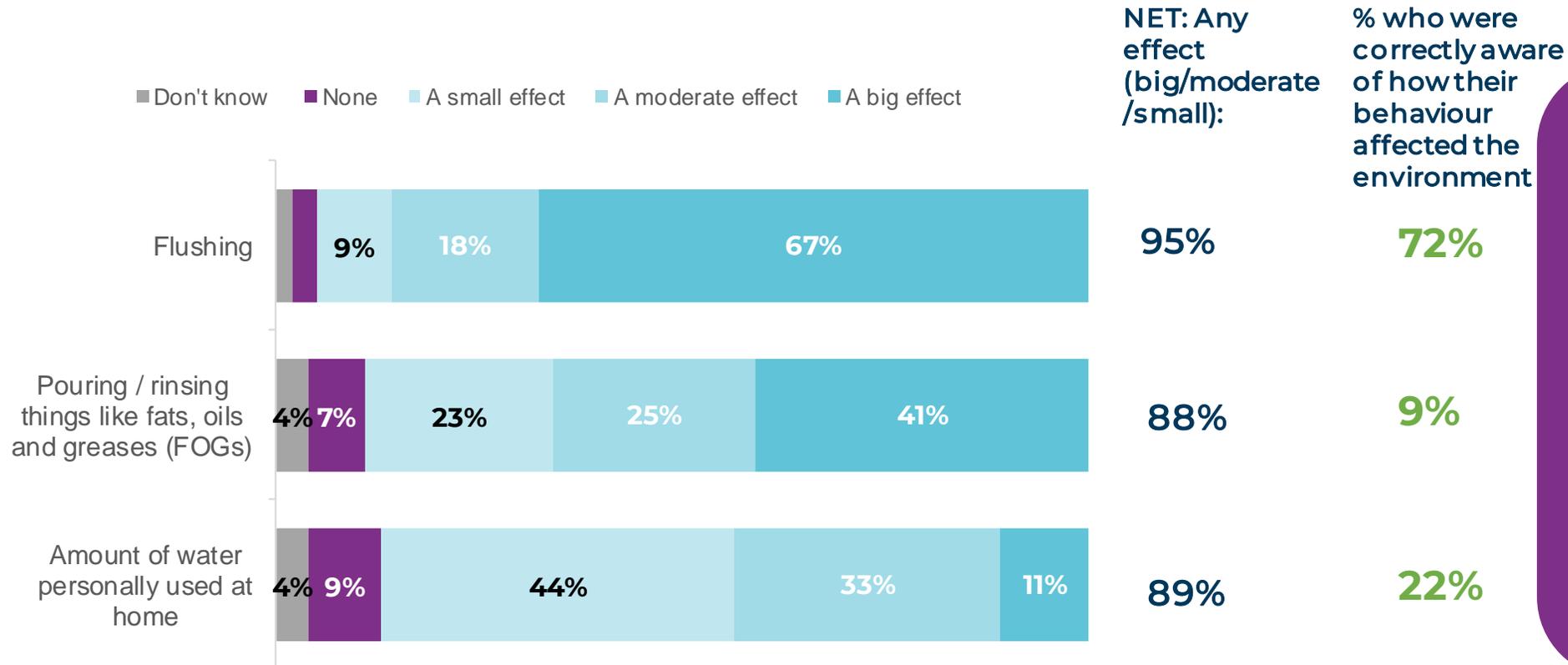
## % who were correctly aware of how their behaviour affected the environment



Q4 To what extent do you think the amount of water you personally use, what you rinse down the kitchen sink and flush or dispose of down the toilet affects the environment? Please answer using a scale of a big effect, a moderate effect, a small effect or none. Base: All respondents (1,310); England (907); Wales (403). Q20a. Why do you say that the amount of water you use at home has [insert Q14 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? Base: All who feel amount of water used has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,048). Q9a. Why do you say that what you flush or dispose of has [insert Q8 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? Base: All who consider flushing non-human waste down the toilet has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,211). Q15a. Why do you say that what you pour or rinse down the sink at home has [insert Q12 answer codes 1-7] on the environment? Base: All who consider pouring/ rinsing items down the sink has an affect on the environment and gave an answer (1,156).

↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

# Only 11% of respondents felt that water use has a big effect on the environment, compared to 67% for flushing behaviours, and 41% for what is rinsed down the sink



- Those living in Wales (91%), and those with meters (97%) are more likely to recognise flushing as having a big effect on the environment.
- Homeowners (91%) and those aged 65+ (92%) are more likely to recognise pouring/rinsing things like FOGs as having any effect on the environment.
- Those belonging to ABC1 social grade (90%), homeowners (90%), and those living in urban areas (89%) are more likely to recognise any affect of personal water use.

Q19. To what extent do you think that the amount of water you personally use at home affects the environment? Base: All respondents (1,310) NET: Any effect (114), Q8. You've said you flush things like .... down the toilet/ Now thinking about flushing items like sanitary pads, cotton buds, and wet wipes down the toilet To what extent do you think what you flush or dispose of down the toilet affects the environment? Base: All respondents (1,310). Q14. Now thinking about pouring or rinsing things like fats, oil and grease down the sink, to what extent do you think these affect the environment? Base: All respondents (1,310). Q20a. Why do you say that the amount of water you use at home has [insert Q14 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? Base: All who feel amount of water used has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,048). Q9. Why do you say that what you flush or dispose of has [insert Q8 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? Base: All who consider flushing non-human waste down the toilet has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,211). Q15a. Why do you say that what you pour or rinse down the sink at home has [insert Q12 answer codes 1-7] on the environment? Base: All who consider pouring/ rinsing items down the sink has an affect on the environment and gave an answer (1,156).

# Water use



# Most respondents feel their water use at home affects the environment, with few significant differences between demographic groups

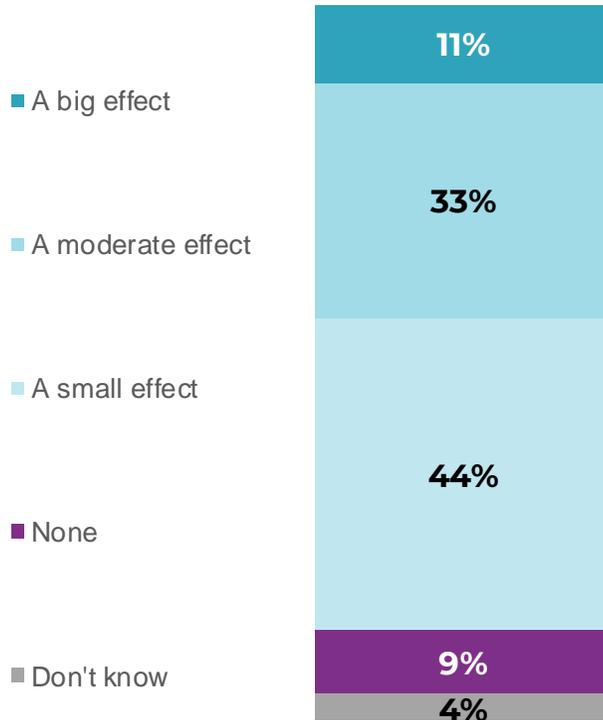


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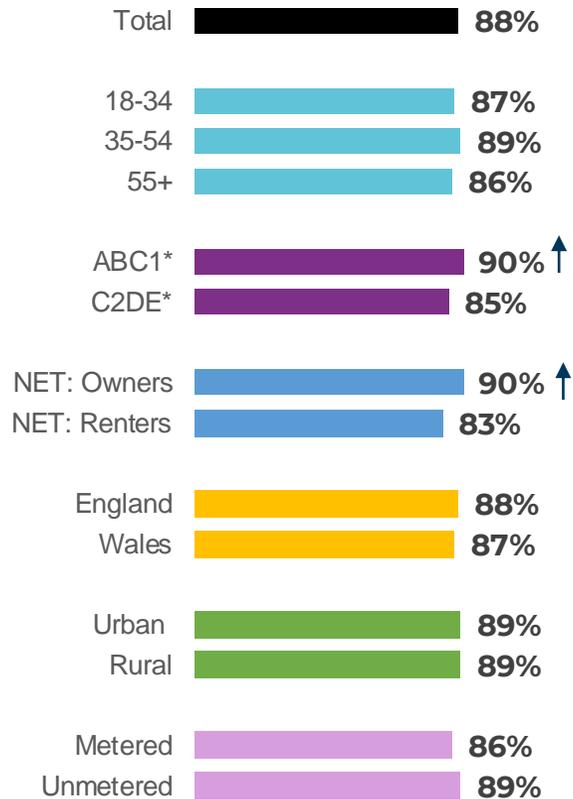
## Personal water usage and affects on environment

NET: Any effect (big/moderate/small):

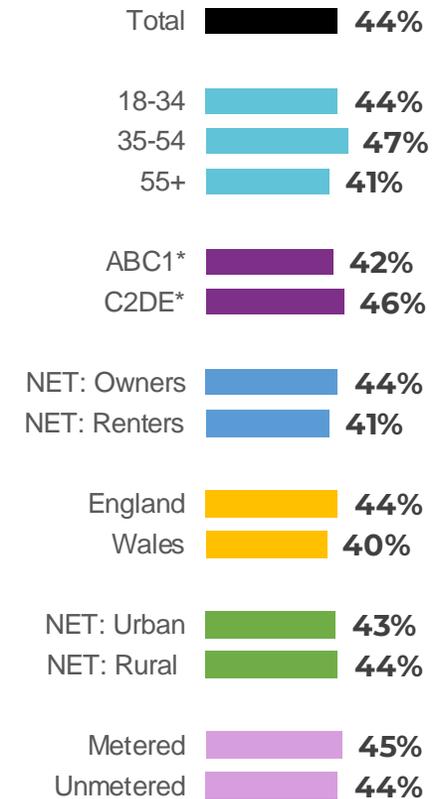
88%



NET: Any effect:



NET: Big/Moderate effect:



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

\*Social grade is a demographic classification based on the occupation of a household's chief income earner. See slide 13 for further details

Q19. To what extent do you think that the amount of water you personally use at home affects the environment? Base: All respondents (1,310) NET: Any effect (1141), NET: Big/moderate effect (534), 18-34 (152), 35-54 (220), 55+ (938), ABC1 (772), C2DE (538). Owners (951), Renters (318), England (907), Wales (403), Urban (816), Rural (366).

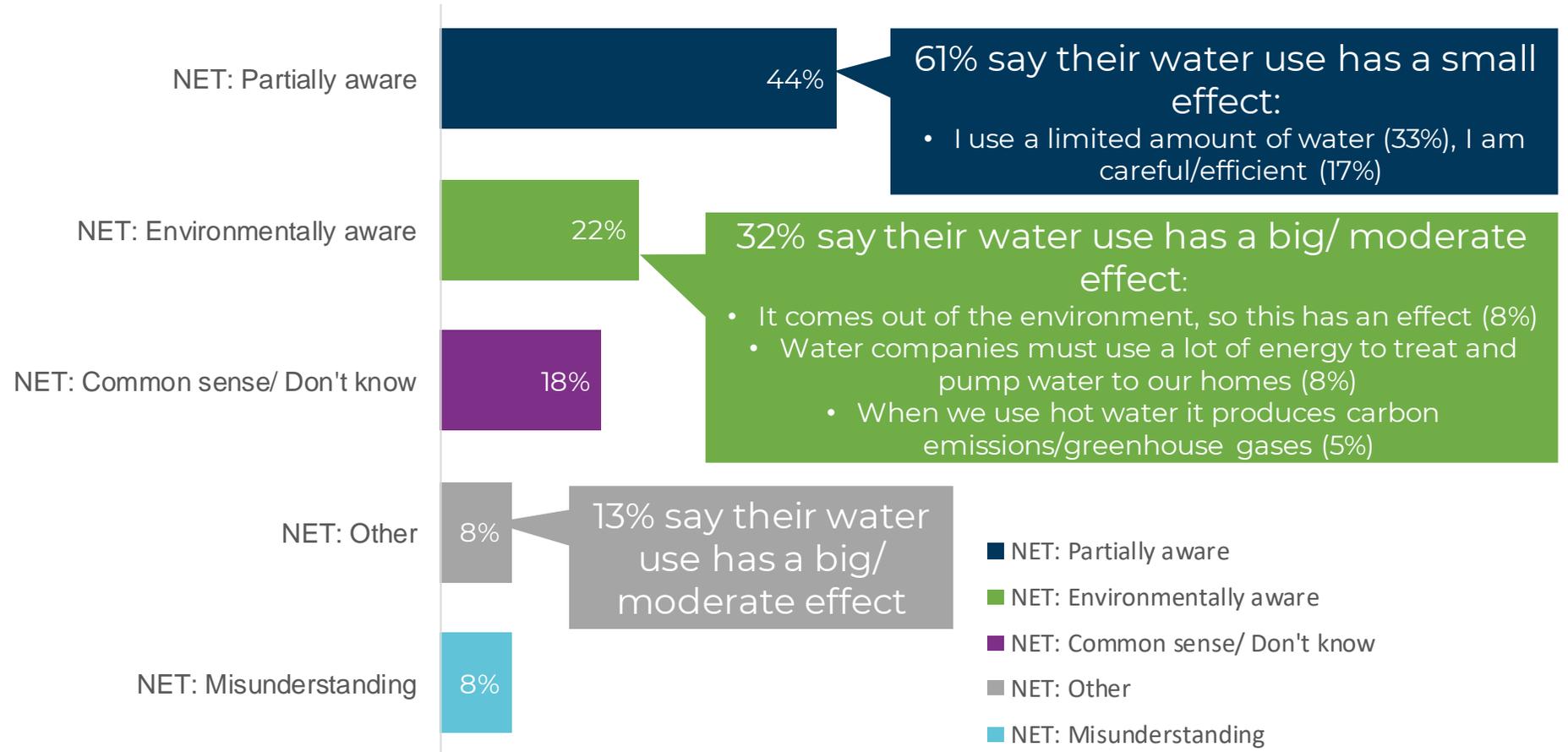
# More than two-fifths are partially aware that the amount of water they use at home has an affect on the environment but are unsure of the specific environmental effect



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## Environmental reasons why water use at home has an effect on the environment

NET %s have been adjusted to remove multi-codes, by allocating each multi-coded response to the following NET response groups in the priority order of Misunderstanding, Commonsense/DK, Other, Partially aware and Environmentally aware

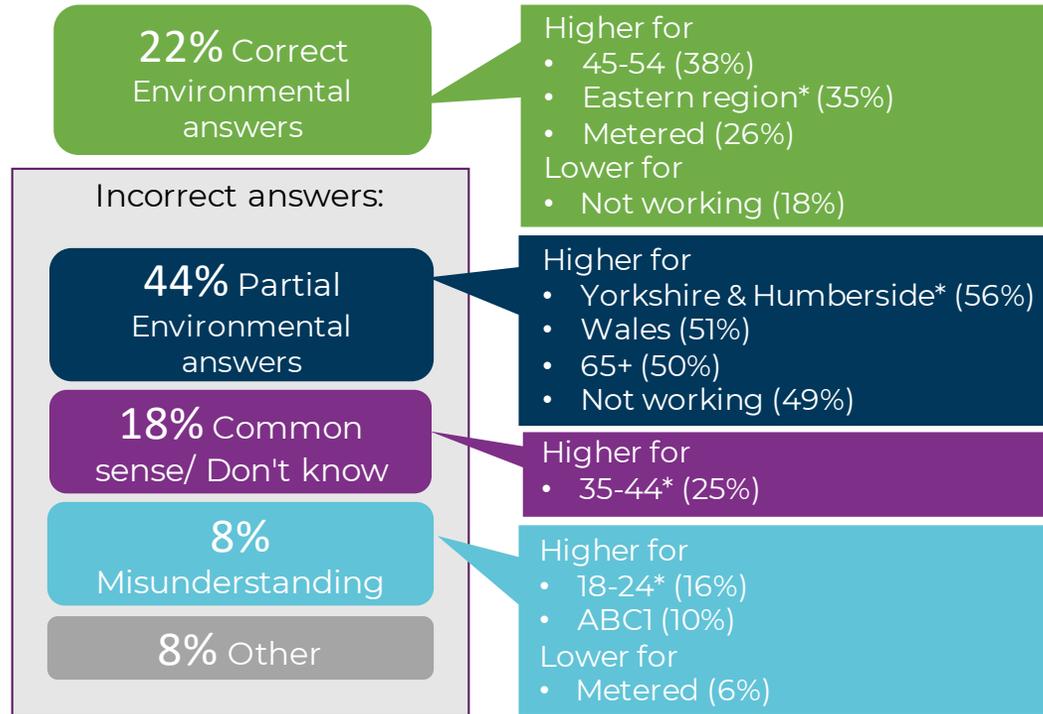


# A fifth correctly identified why the amount of water used at home has an effect on the environment



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## Reasons why water use affects the environment



## Reasons for not having an effect on the environment

"Our water is collected from rainfall and piped by gravity to the house using little power. The amount of water we use for showering and cooking doesn't have a big effect"

"I don't use that much water, I only run the washing machine once a month and use a plate more than once before washing it, I don't use that much in the first place"

"Power consumption needed for water generates co2 emissions"  
*Big effect*

"I am a single occupant, and my usage is a lot less than a family of say 5 and I am not a heavy water user"  
*Small effect*

"All the water used has to be cleaned and we should save water so there is enough to go around"  
*Big effect*

"We haven't got a bath. We don't shower everyday. The washing isn't constantly going. We try not to use much water. I don't think we do anything unnecessary and wasteful with water here."  
*Small effect*

"Well although the water I use personally or my household uses may not be a lot, when you pair it with the other 70 million people living in Britain, it's way too much"  
*Big effect*

"Generally, believe any amount of water usage effects the environment in a big way"  
*Big effect*

"If its clean water it won't effect the environment, if it's pumped it will as it will use energy. We live in Wales so we have lots of water"  
*Small effect*

\*Caution low base

Q20a. Why do you say that the amount of water you use at home has [insert Q14 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? Base: All who feel amount of water used has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,048). Q20b You've said the amount of water you use has no effect on the environment. Why do you say that? (115)

# More than three-in-five who thought their water use affects the environment said this was common sense, and could not give a more specific reason



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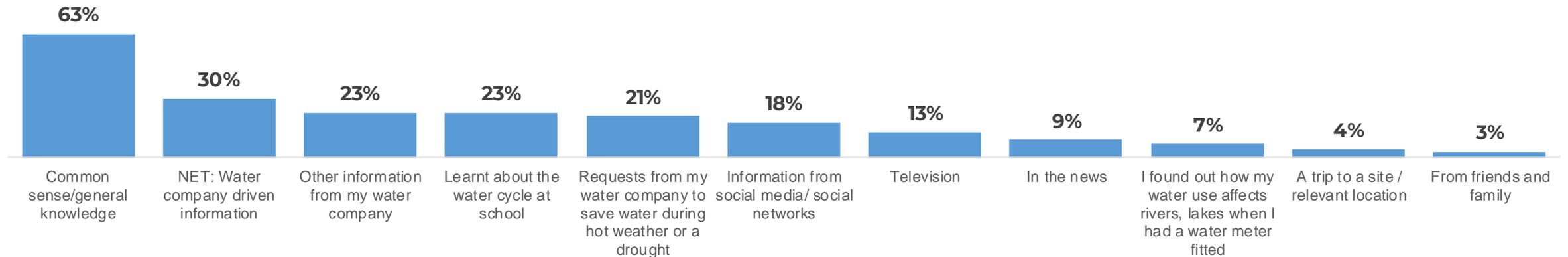
## Awareness of how water use can affect the environment\*



55+ year-olds are more likely to state they are aware due to common sense/general knowledge (73%) compared to 35-54-year-olds (50%)\*

### Those who said the amount of water they use effects the environment because...

1. The water that we use comes out of rivers, lakes, and underground water sources etc – it comes out of the environment so this has an effect
2. If there is a drought, and people use a lot of water, this affects the environment
3. When we use hot water it produces carbon emissions/greenhouse gases
4. Water companies must use a lot of energy to treat and pump water to our homes



\*NB: Multi-coded question therefore chart may not sum to 100%

Q21. How did you find out about this? 24

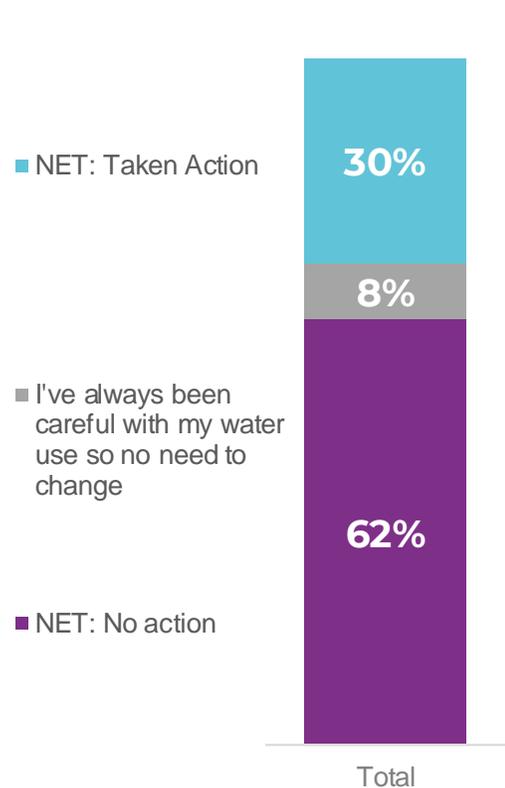
Base: All who are aware how water use can affect the environment and gave a specific environmental reason (173)

# More than six-in-ten have not taken action in the last 6 months to reduce the effect of their water use on the environment

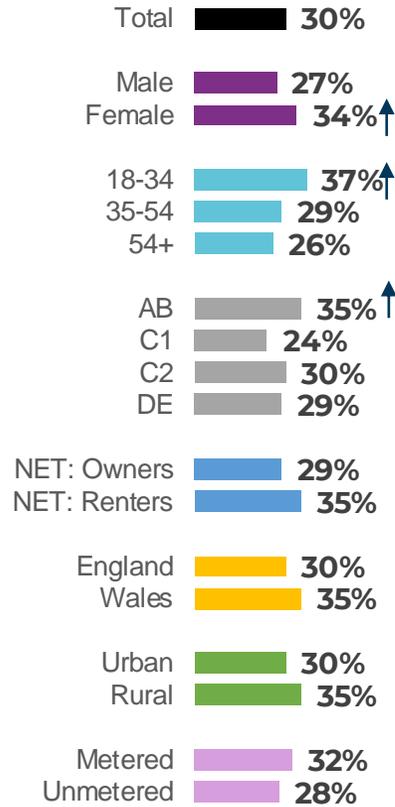


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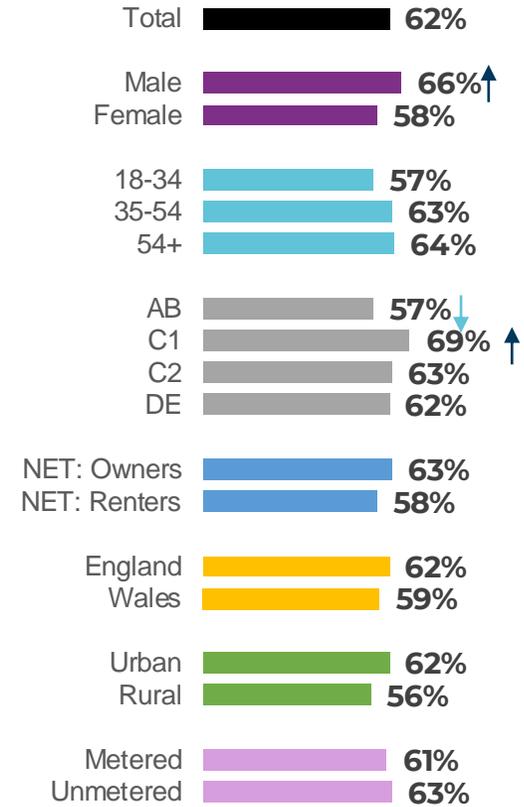
## Reducing effect of water use on the environment in last 6 months



### NET: Taken Action



### NET: No action



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

NB: Chart may not sum to 100% due to rounding

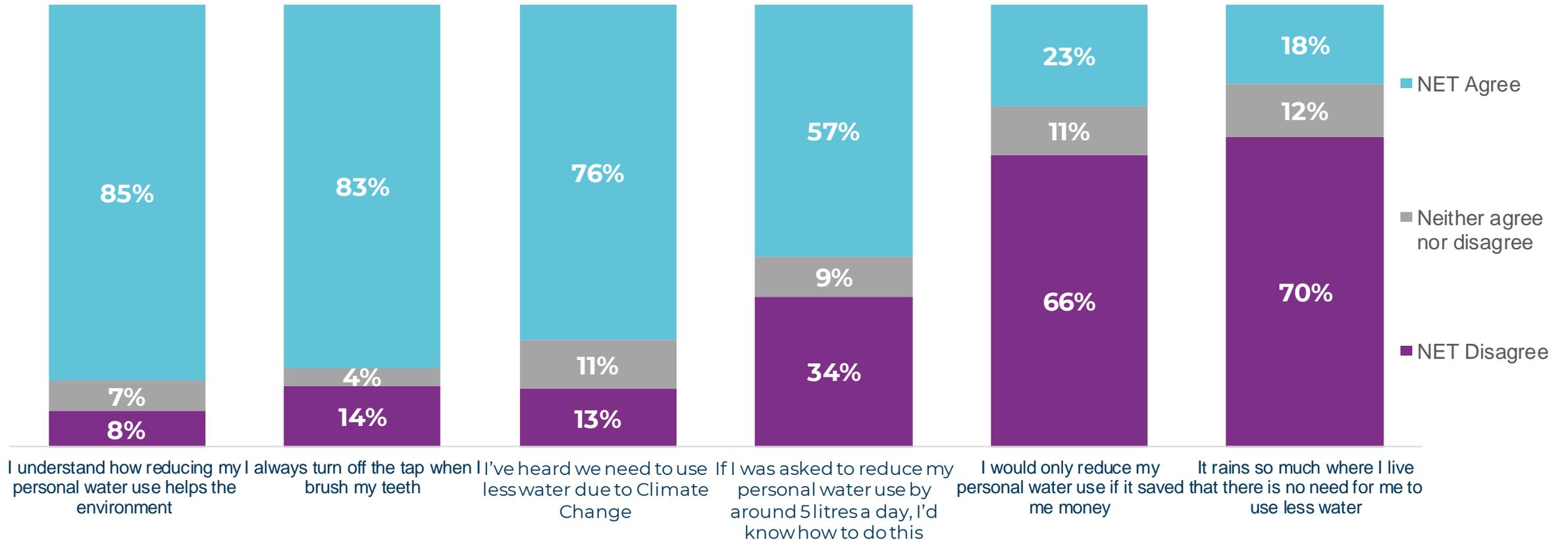
Q22. Is there anything that you've done in the last 6 months to reduce the effect of your water use on the environment? Base: All respondents 25 (1,310)

# Just over one-fifth would only reduce their water use if it saved them money



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## Agreement with statements on water use and the environment



Q23. For each statement, please answer using a scale of strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree ... Base: All 26 respondents (1,310).

# Flushing behaviours



# While the majority say they only flush human waste and toilet paper down the toilet, 15% of respondents report flushing other items

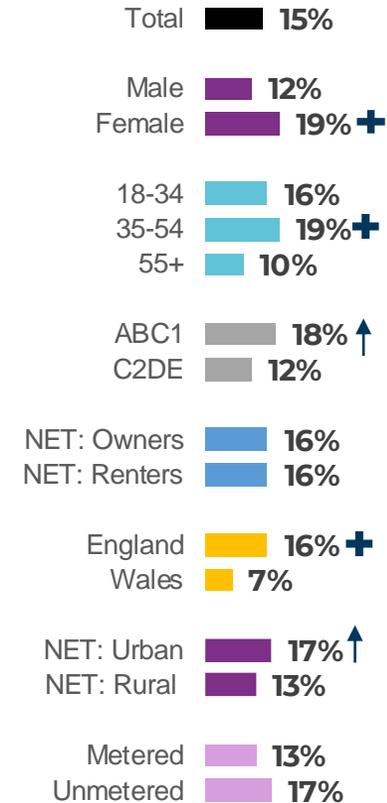


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## Things flushed/disposed of down the toilet



## NET: Any other items



Females, 35-54-year-olds, ABC1, those who live in England and from Urban areas are all more likely to flush any other items down the toilet

↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

NB: Chart may not sum to 100% due to rounding 28

Q6. Can you name all the things that you personally flush or dispose of down the toilet? Base: All respondents (1,310)

# More than 9 in 10 believe what they flush down the toilet affects the environment



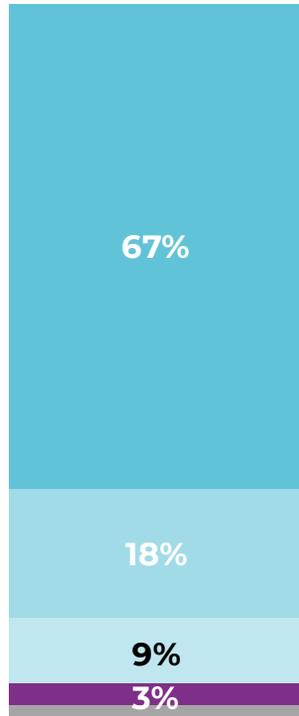
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## The effect on environment due to what is being flushed

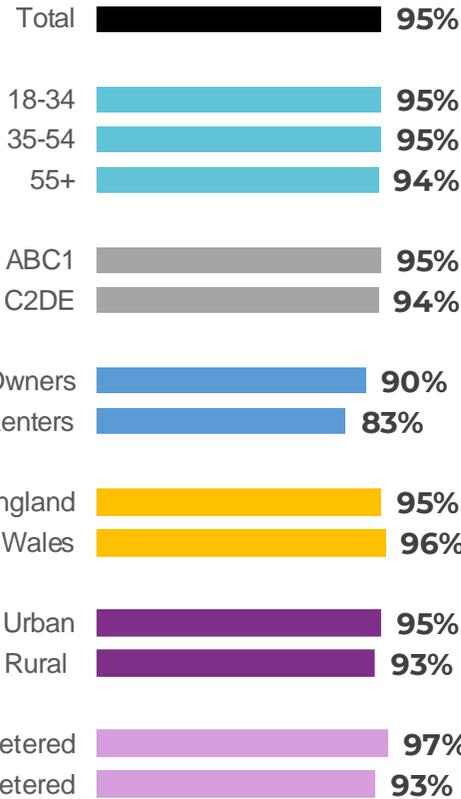
NET: Any effect  
(big/moderate/small):

95%

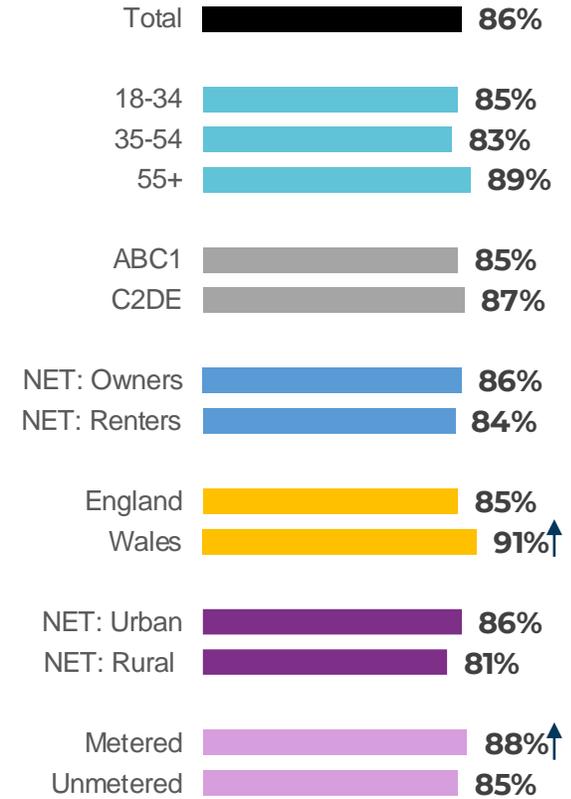
- A big effect
- A moderate effect
- A small effect
- None
- Don't know



NET: Any effect



NET: Big/moderate effect



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

Q8. You've said you flush things like .... down the toilet/ Now thinking about flushing items like sanitary pads, cotton buds, and wet wipes down the toilet To what extent do you think what you flush or dispose of down the toilet affects the environment? Base: All respondents (1,310)

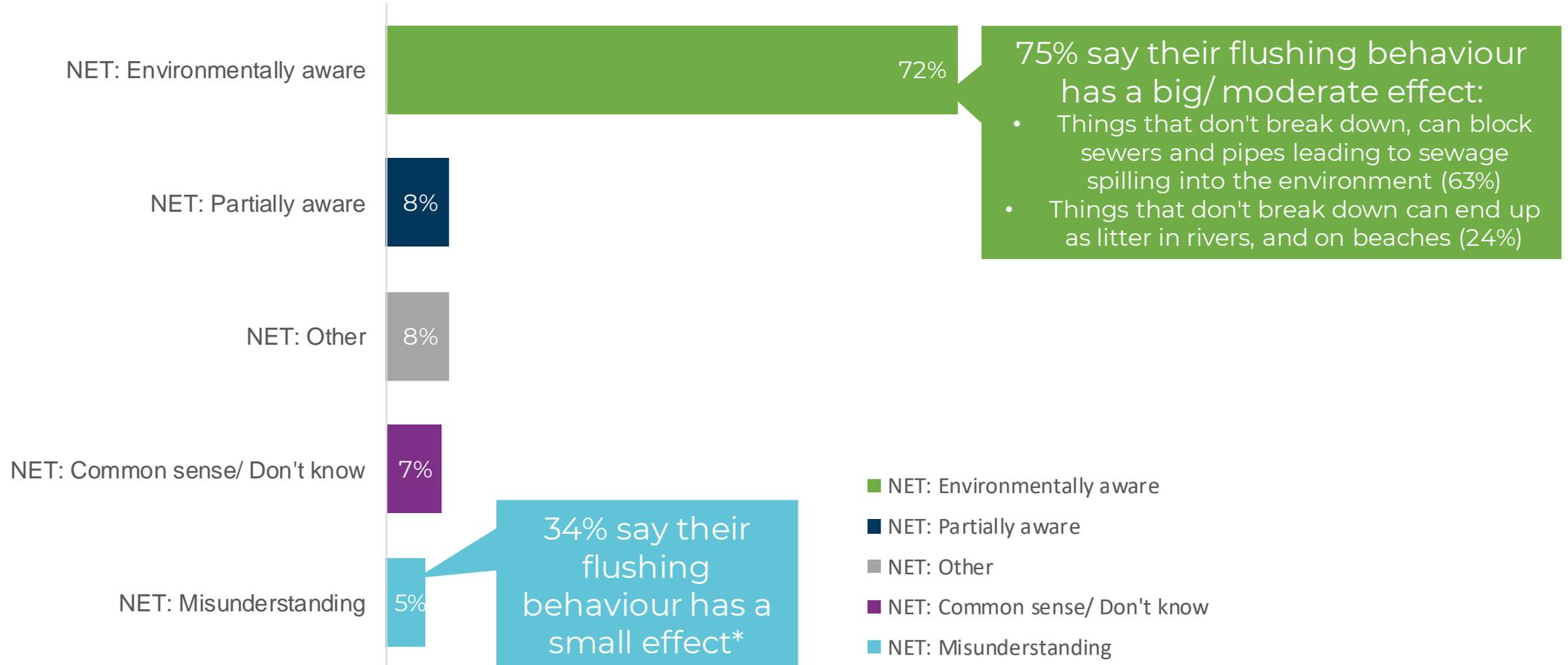
# A majority were able to link their behaviour of flushing non-human waste to a specific environmental effect



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## Environmental reasons why flushing non-human waste has an effect on the environment

NET %s have been adjusted to remove multi-codes, by allocating each multi-coded response to the following NET response groups in the priority order of Misunderstanding, Commonsense/DK, Other, Partially aware and Environmentally aware



\*Caution low base

Q9a. Why do you say that what you flush or dispose of has [insert Q8 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? 30

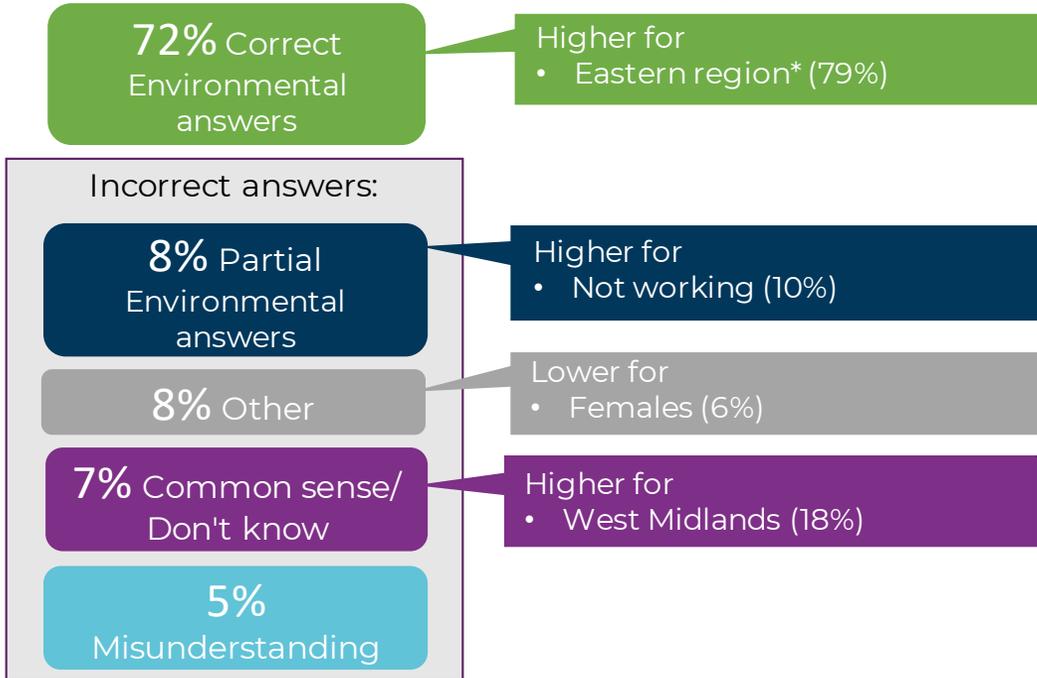
Base: All who consider flushing non-human waste down the toilet has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,211);

# More than 7 in 10 correctly identified the effect on the environment of what they flush or dispose of down the toilet



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## Environmental effects of what is being flushed



## Reasons for not having an effect on the environment

- I can't see how it effects the environment when it runs through a tank and then is emptied somewhere
- I don't see it has a different effect from organic water created by humans so it's shouldn't have much of a damaging effect
- It's biodegradable and it says on the packet you can flush it and it breaks down

The microplastics affect the environment, because they are not meant to be in the environment.  
*Big effect*

It has an cumulative effect, especially in developing countries. It affects animals not just an immediate effect but spread out to marine creatures. I do feel concerned about pollution, spreading to areas that don't use things as much as we do  
*Big effect*

Anything you flush down the toilet can put raw sewerage into the rivers and can have a significant effect on the environment  
*Big effect*

Everything comes from the ground, and it has to go back into the ground one way or another. I'm not an environmentalist or a scientist but its not going to affect the environment, it also just depends on to what extent and exactly how it's diluted. Bleach will be diluted when it gets mixed in with all the other water that's used in the drains.  
*Small effect*

We only 2 not a family of 5.  
*Small effect*

I think it all breaks down - does not have much of an affect on the environment  
*Small effect*

\*Caution low base

Q9. Why do you say that what you flush or dispose of has [insert Q8 answer codes 1-3] on the environment? Base: All who consider flushing non-human waste down the toilet has an effect on the environment and gave an answer (1,211). Q9b You said that this has no effect on the environment. Why do you say that? Base (35)

# Common sense is a key part of people's awareness about what not to flush down the toilet

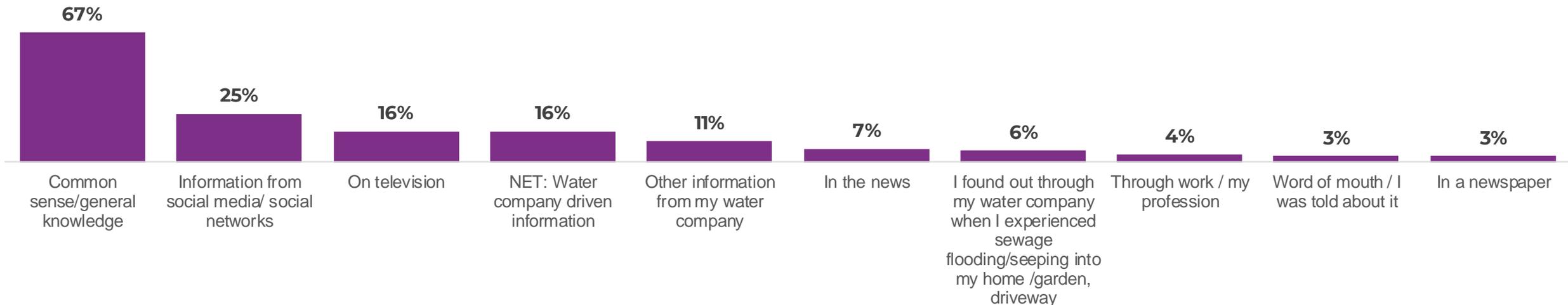


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## Awareness of how flushing can affect the environment\*

### Those who said flushing effects the environment because...

1. Things that don't break down – e.g. wet wipes, cotton buds and period products, can block sewers and pipes leading to sewage spilling into the environment
2. Things that don't break down – e.g. wet wipes, cotton buds and period products can end up as litter in rivers, and on beaches



\*NB: Multi-coded question therefore chart may not sum to 100%

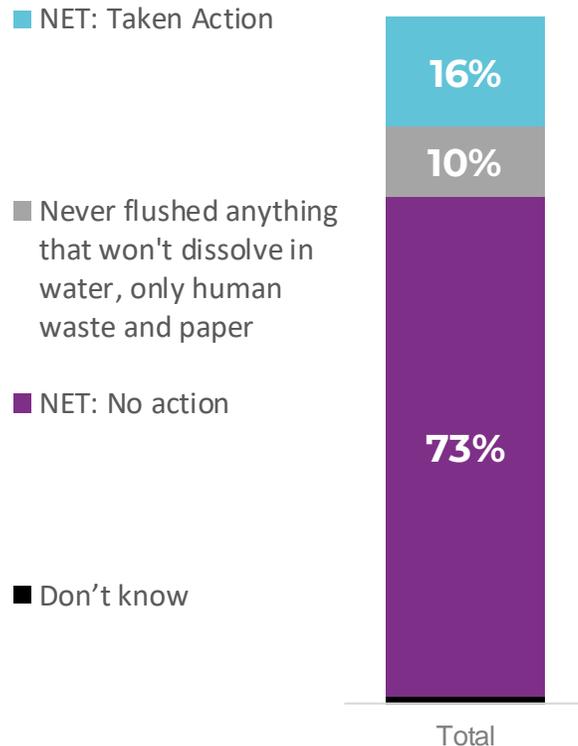
Q10. How did you find out about this? Base: All who give correct response for reason to not flush items down toilet and gave a specific 32 environmental reason (889)

# Around seven in ten report not taking any action in the last six months to reduce the environmental impact of what they flush down the toilet

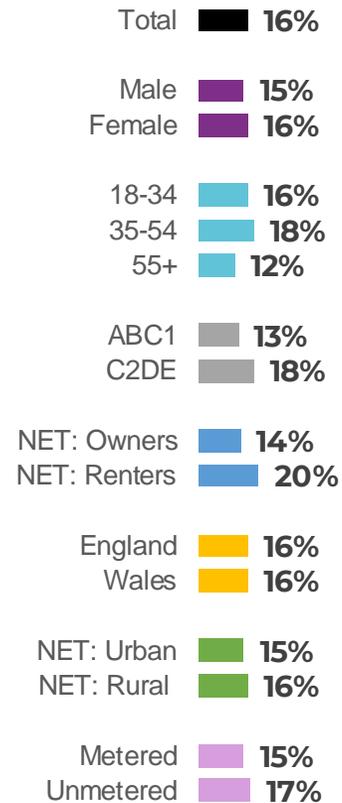


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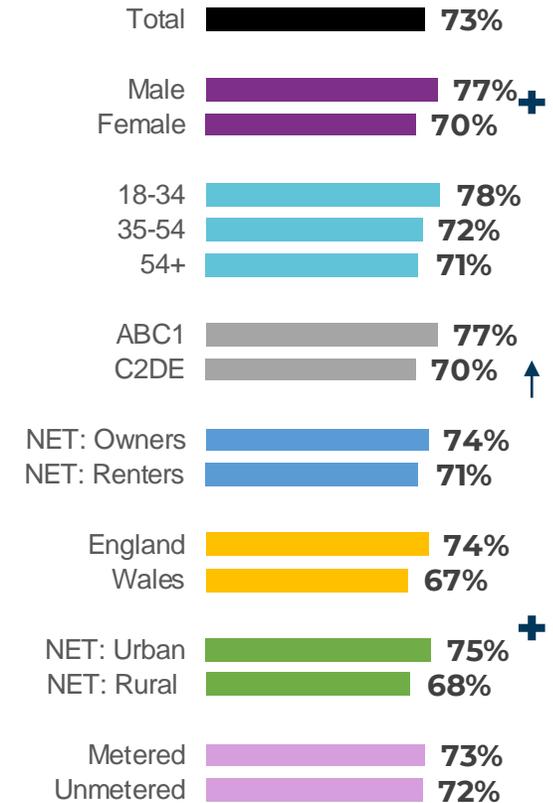
## Action taken in the last 6 months to reduce the impact of what is flushed down the toilet



### NET: Taken Action



### NET: No action



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

NB: Chart may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Q11. Is there anything that you've done in the last 6 months to reduce the impact on the environment of what you/others flush down the toilet? 33

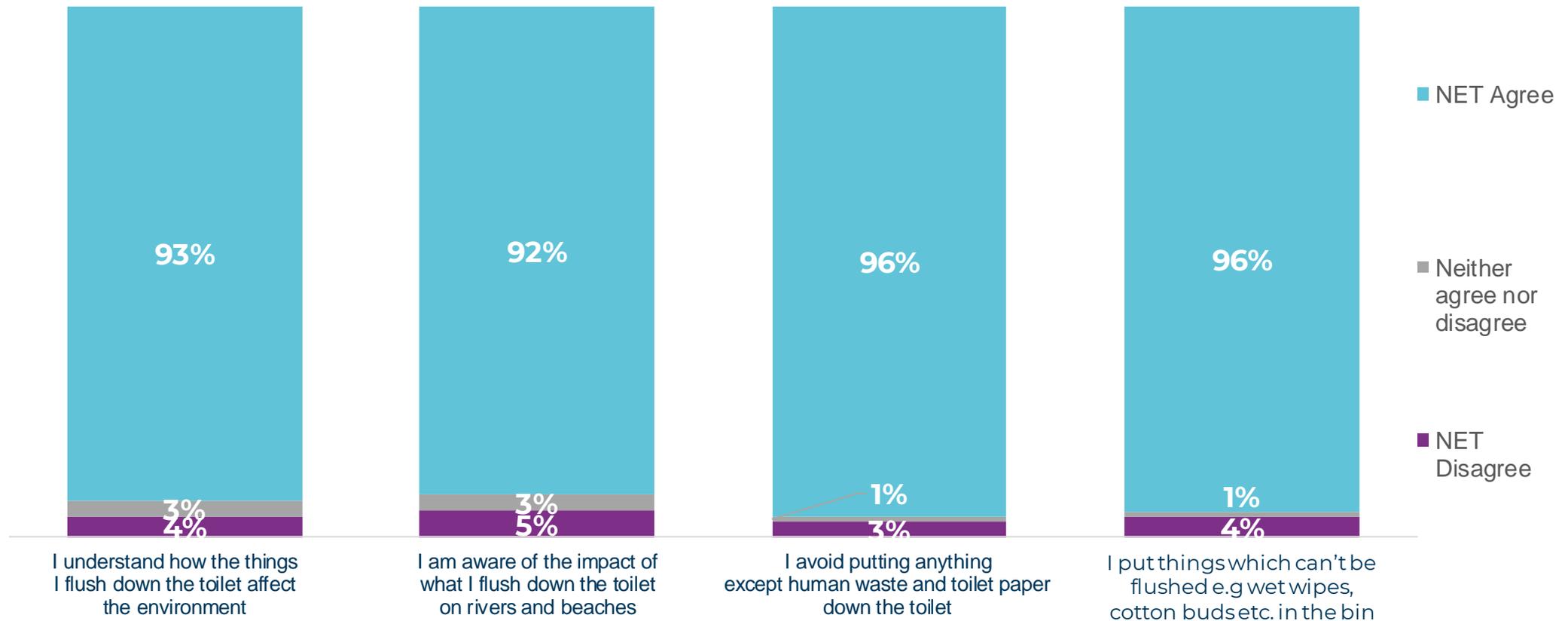
Base: All respondents (1,310)

# More than 9 in 10 of respondents say they understand how things they flush affect the environment, specifically rivers and beaches



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## Agreement with statements on flushing and the environment



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

Q23. For each statement please answer using a scale of strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree ... Base: All 34 respondents (1,310).

# Rinsing down the sink

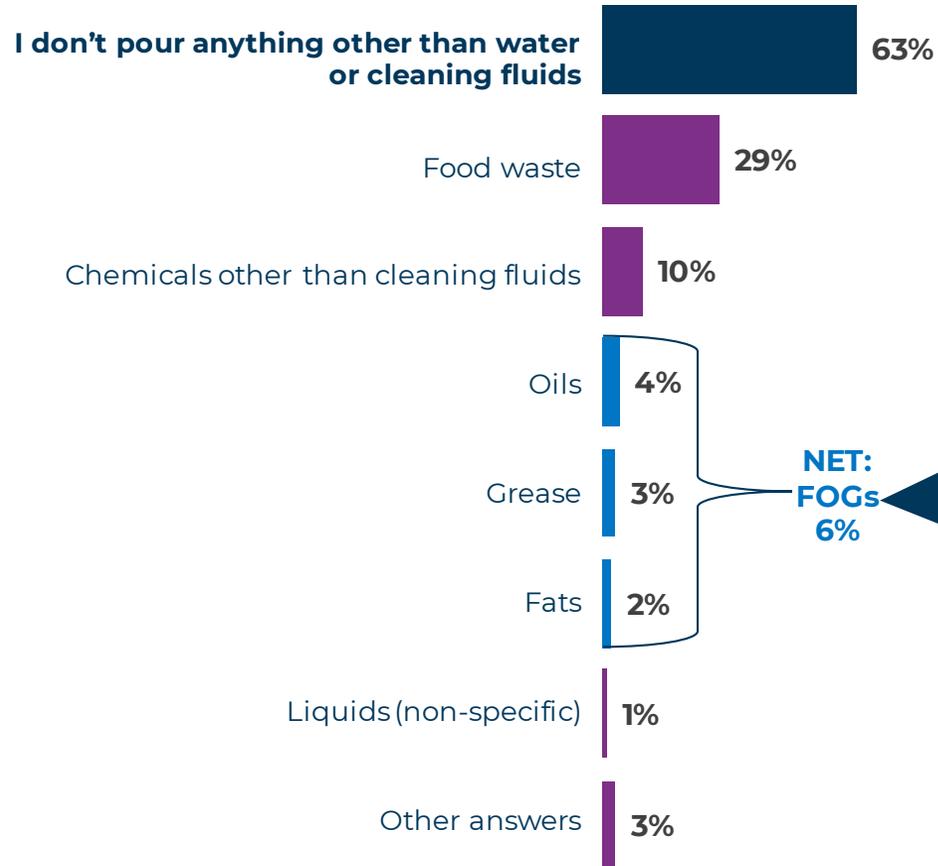


# Just under two-fifths report rinsing items other than water and cleaning fluids down the sink, particularly those in urban areas and 18–34 year-olds



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## Things poured/rinsed down the sink



**NET: FOGs 6%**

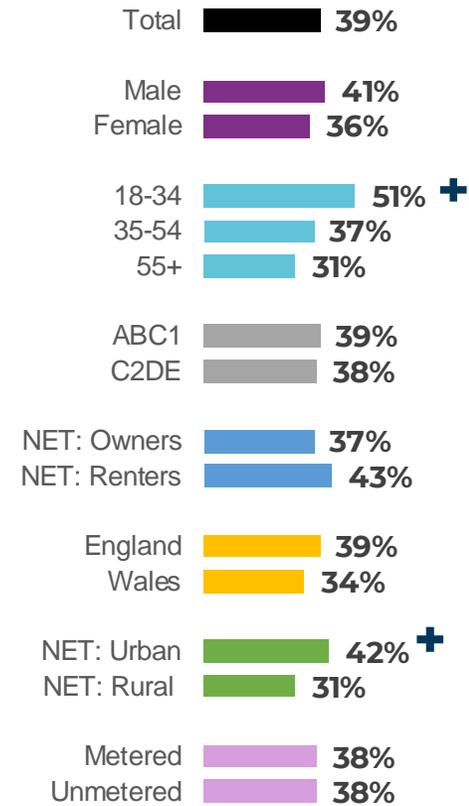
**NET: FOGs**  
More likely to those:

- Living in Eastern England (13%)
- Urban areas (8%)

Less likely to be those:

- Living in Wales (4%)
- Not working (2%)

## NET: Other items rinsed or poured down the sink



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

NB: Chart may not sum to 100% due to rounding

Q12. Can you name all the things that you personally rinse or pour down the sink? 36

Base: All respondents (1,310)

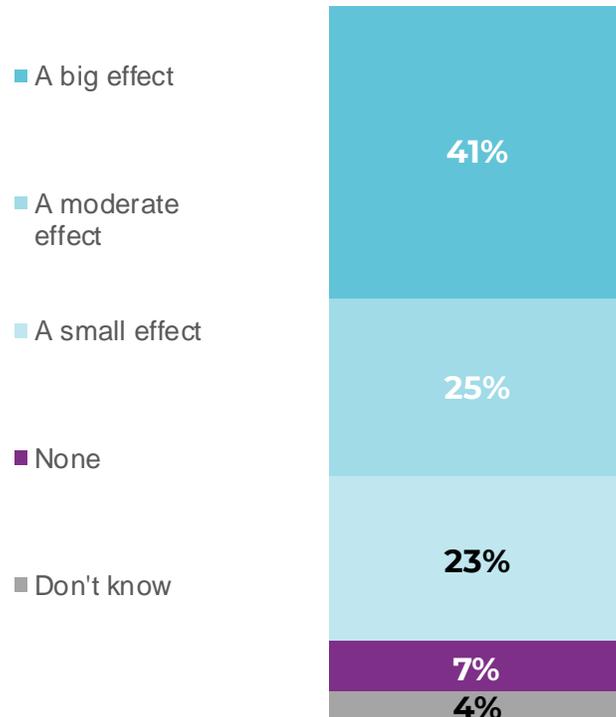
# Most respondents are aware that pouring/rinsing FOGs down the sink has an effect on the environment.



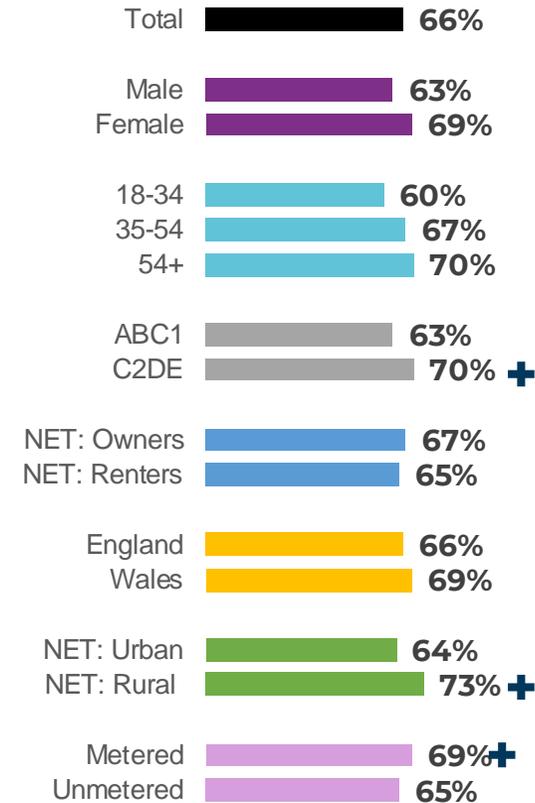
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## The effect on environment due to what is being poured or rinsed down the sink

NET: Any effect (big/moderate/small): 89%



NET: Big/Moderate effect:



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

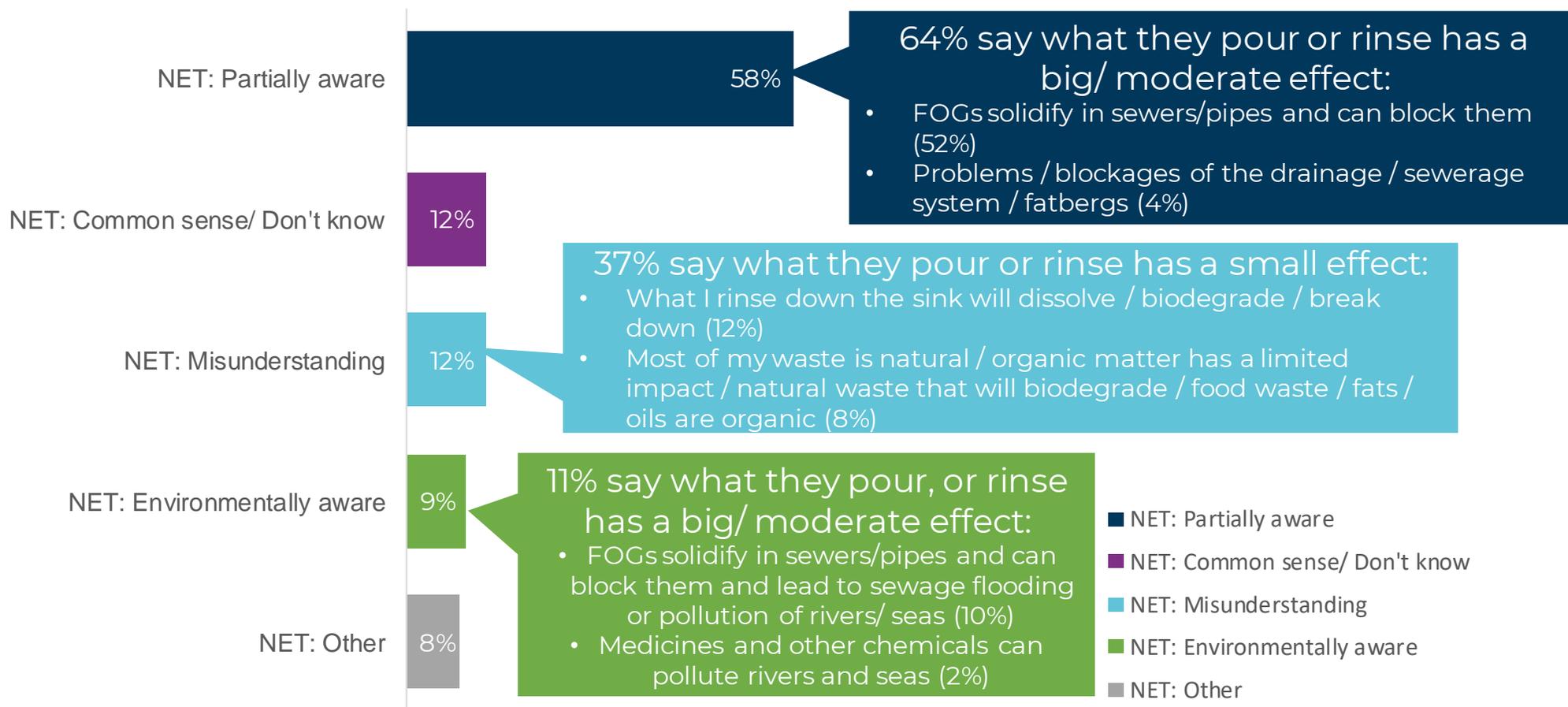
+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

Q14. Now thinking about pouring or rinsing things like fats, oil and grease down the sink, to what extent do you think these affect the environment? Base: All respondents (1,310)

# The environmental impact of FOGs rinsed down the sink is understood by less than 1 in 10. Almost three-in-five are partially aware of an effect but are unable to give a specific environmental effect

## Environmental reasons why what you pour or rinse down the sink has an effect on the environment

NET %s have been adjusted to remove multi-codes, by allocating each multi-coded response to the following NET response groups in the priority order of Misunderstanding, Commonsense/DK, Other, Partially aware and Environmentally aware



# Less than 1 in 10 correctly identified why pouring or rinsing items other than water and cleaning fluids down the sink affects the environment



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## Environmental effects of what is being poured or rinsed down the sink



Q15a. Why do you say that what you pour or rinse down the sink at home has [insert Q12 answer codes 1-7] on the environment? Base: All who consider pouring/ rinsing items down the sink has an affect on the environment and gave an answer (1,156). Q15b You said that this has no effect on the environment. Why do you say that? Base (69)

# Common sense is a key part of people's awareness about what can be rinsed down the sink

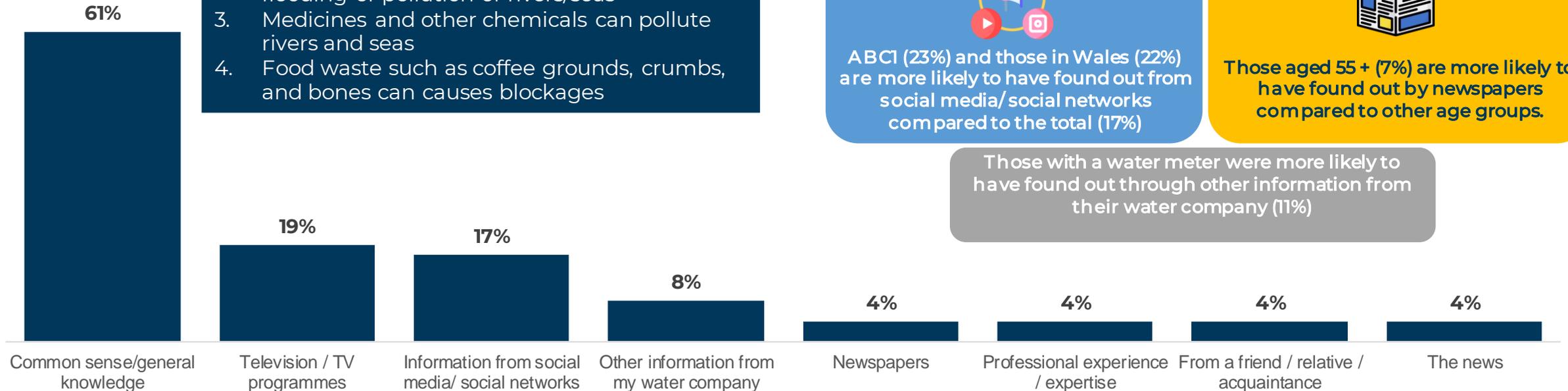


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How did you find out about this?\*

**Those who said what they pour or rinse down the sink at home effects the environment because...**

1. Fats, oils and greases solidify in sewers/pipes and can block them
2. Fats, oils and greases solidify in sewers/pipes and can block them and lead to sewage flooding or pollution of rivers/seas
3. Medicines and other chemicals can pollute rivers and seas
4. Food waste such as coffee grounds, crumbs, and bones can causes blockages



**Those in Wales are more likely to believe it is common sense/general knowledge (67%)**

**Those aged 35 + (23%) are more likely to have found out by Television/TV programmes compared to those under 35 (7%)**

**ABC1 (23%) and those in Wales (22%) are more likely to have found out from social media/social networks compared to the total (17%)**

**Those aged 55 + (7%) are more likely to have found out by newspapers compared to other age groups.**

**Those with a water meter were more likely to have found out through other information from their water company (11%)**

\*NB: Multi-coded question therefore chart may not sum to 100%

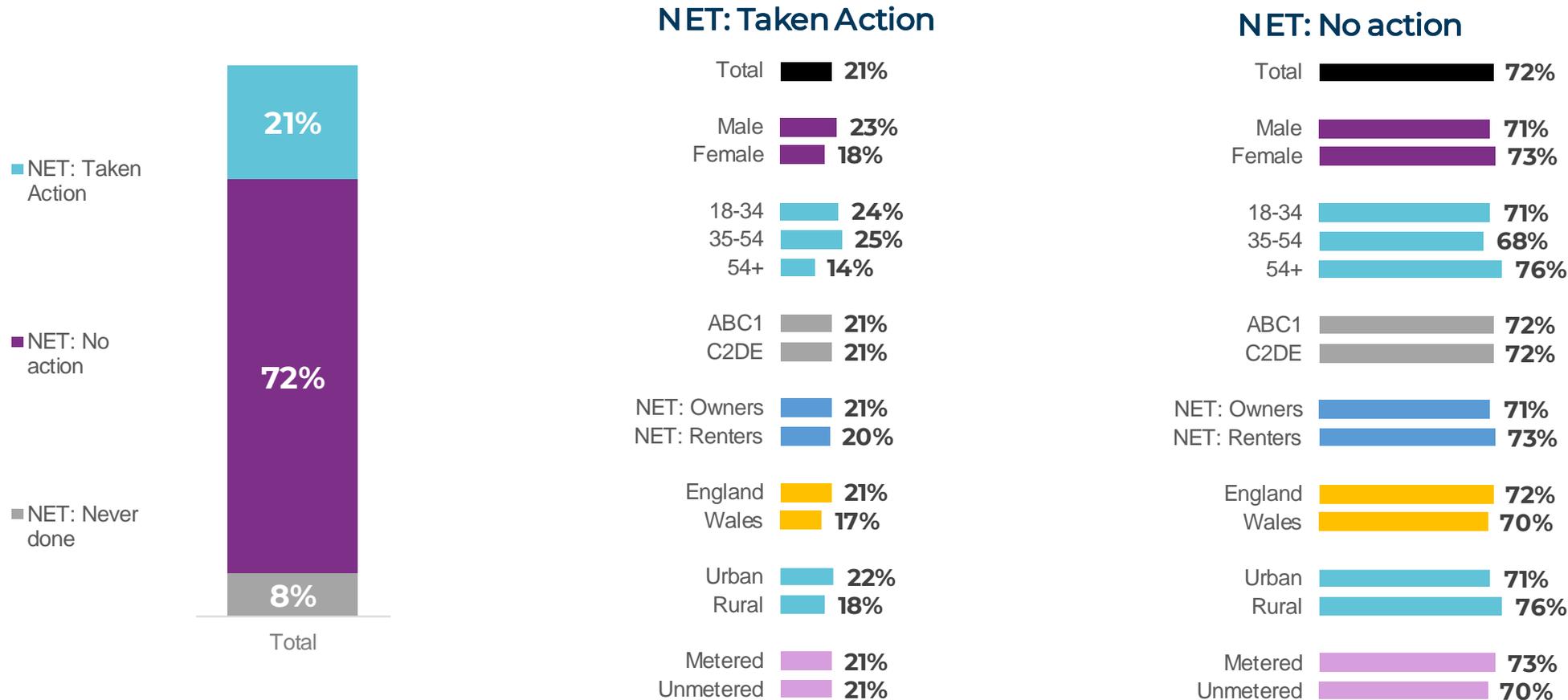
Q16. How did you find out about this? Base: All who give correct response for reason to not pour items down the sink and gave a specific environmental reason (677), males (316), females (361), 18-34 (62), 35-54 (117), 55+ (498), England (441), Wales (236)

# Around seven in ten consumers have not taken any action in the last six months to reduce the environmental impact of what they rinse down the sink



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## Action taken to reduce environmental impact of pouring/rinsing in sink



There are no significant differences among those who have taken action, or not, by demographic groups

↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

NB: Chart may not sum to 100% due to rounding

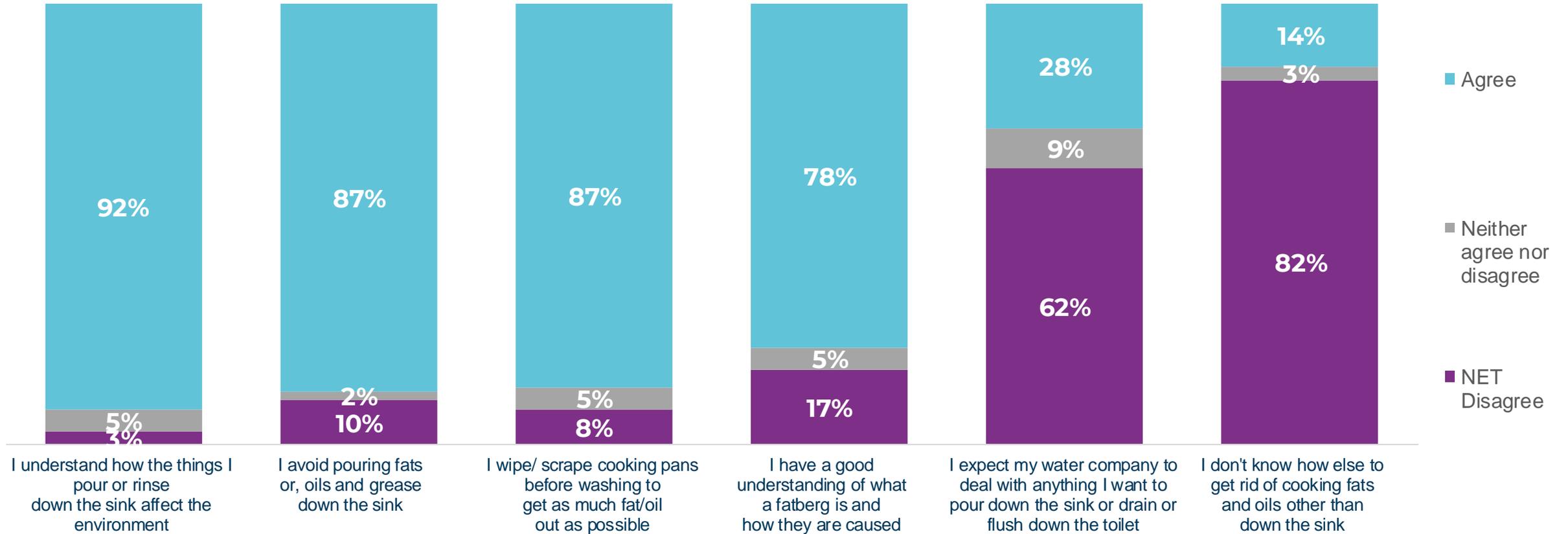
Q17. Is there anything you've done in the last 6 months to reduce the impact on the environment of what you/ others in the household pour or rinse down the sink? Base: All respondents (1,310), male (618), female (692), 18-34 (152), 35-54 (220), 55+ (338), ABC1 (772), C2DE (538), England (907), Wales (403), Owners (951), Renters (318)

# Just under third of respondents felt that it is the water company's responsibility to deal with anything they dispose of down the sink, drains or toilet



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## Agreement with statements on what is poured or rinsed down the sink and associated environmental issues



↑ Statistically higher than the total  
↓ Statistically lower than the total

+ Statistically higher than all other categories within the subgroup  
- Statistically lower than all other categories within the subgroup

Q23. For each statement, please answer using a scale of strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree ... Base: All 42 respondents (1,310).

# Potential changes in behaviour



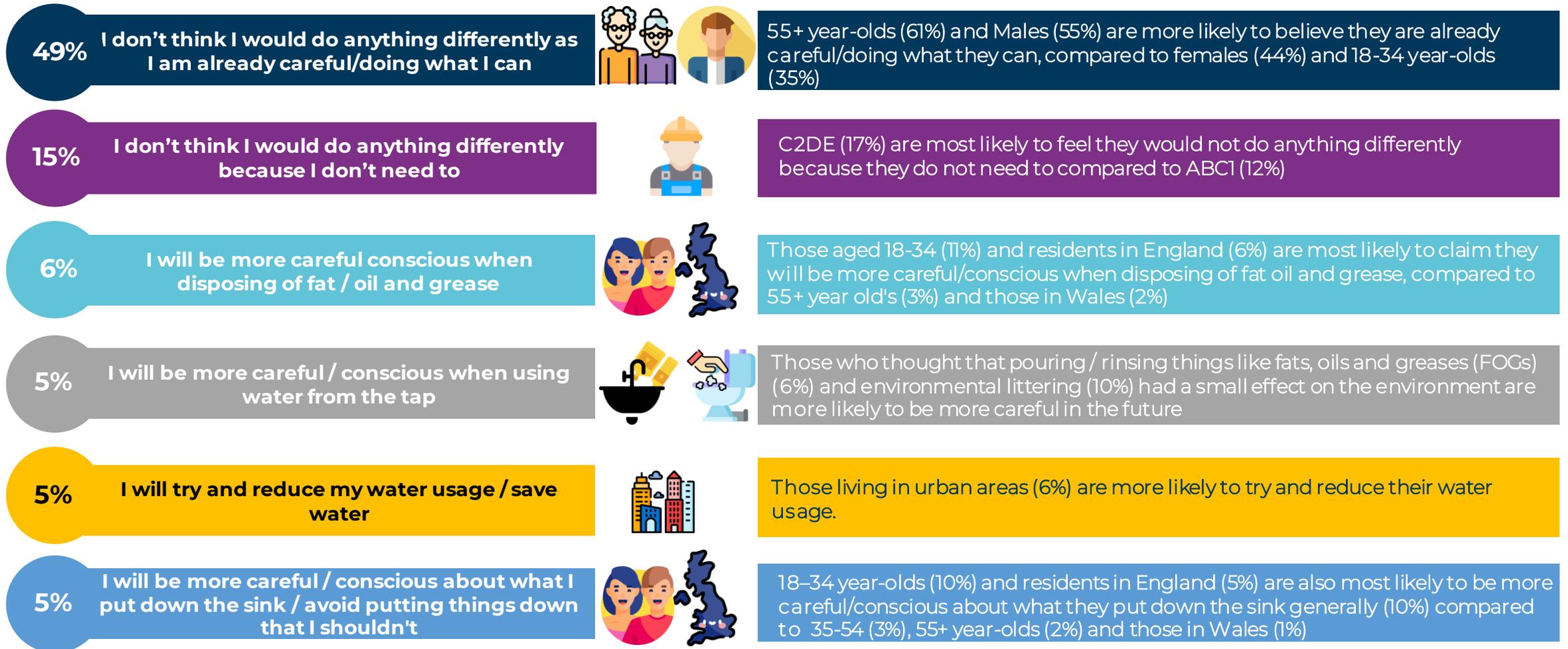
# Almost half of respondents would not change their water use behaviours as they feel they are already doing what they can



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## What respondents told us they would consider doing differently

NB: Data not shown where the percentage is <5%.



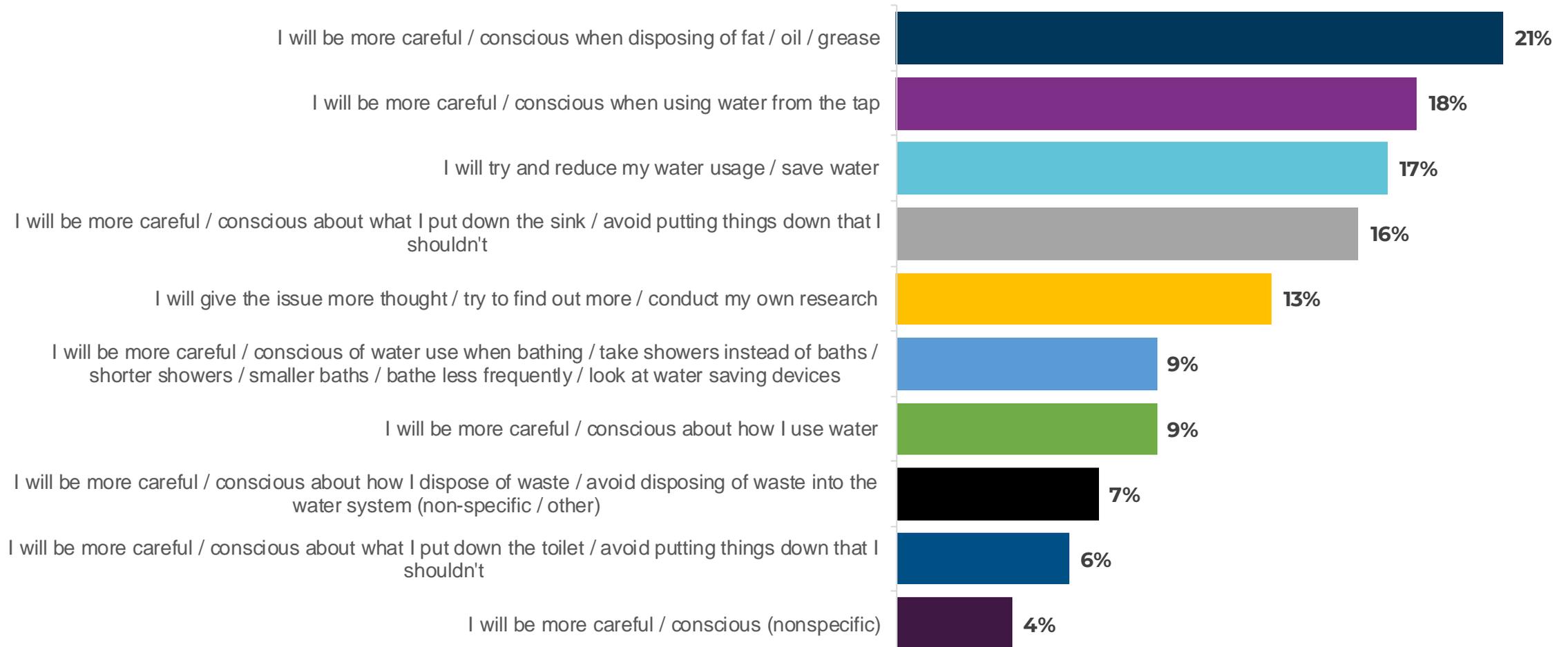
Q24. Having taken this survey, what, if anything, might you now consider or do differently at home in terms of your water use, what you flush, and what you pour or rinse? Base: All respondents (1,310), male (618), female (692), 18-34 (380), 35-54 (461), 55+ (469), ABC1 (694), C2DE (616), England (1,242), Wales (68)

# Out of the three behaviours, flushing non-human waste is the one which people see the least reason for them to change



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All those who would consider doing things differently, having taken the survey



NB: Data not shown where the percentage is <3%. Chart will not sum to 100% as verbatim are multi-coded

Q24. Having taken this survey, what, if anything, might you now consider or do differently at home in terms of your water use, what you flush, and what you pour or rinse? Base: All respondents who might now consider or do things differently in terms of water use (308),

ccw

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