TRAJECTORY

Optimism Index September 2021

Pandemic Analysis

Sample Information and Methodology

- Every month, Trajectory survey a nationally representative sample of 1500 respondents on a variety of issues, including consumer confidence, personal choice and control, social trust, opportunities in technology, optimism and their place in the world.

- Due to current circumstances surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic, additional questions have been added in recent months examining both the current climate in general as well as the impact that the pandemic is having on certain views in relation to finances, confidence and spending, amongst others.

- All surveys were carried out online, with fieldwork this month taking place between **8th and 15th September.**

Key Findings

- Rising cost of living raises concerns over financial impacts of pandemic on household finances
- Concerns about household finances most prominent amongst younger consumers
- Price conscious behaviours grow more prominent amidst rising financial concerns
- Consumers continue to grow less concerned about visiting public spaces despite rising case numbers
- Younger generations drive rising sense of pandemic cynicism
- Despite growing concerns regarding finances, consumers insist health risks remain the biggest issue
- Consensus continues to suggest that Gen Z will be most negatively impacted by pandemic

Last Month's Key Events

19th August – Sajid Javid confirms a COVID jab booster programme will take place, with September set as a provisional date for it to begin

20th August – Ronapreve is approved for use in the UK. It is shown to lower hospitalisation or mortality by 70% and to shorten the duration of symptoms

23rd August – The government agrees a contract for 35 million more doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, to be administered in 2022

25th August – A study of more than a million people shows a decrease in the effectiveness of COVID vaccinations after a few months

27th August – The last evacuation flight for British nationals and Afghans who are eligible for resettlement in the UK leaves Afghanistan

29th August – A record number of daily COVID cases is recorded in Scotland. The news comes as Scottish Health Secretary says that the NHS in Scotland is facing a "perfect storm"

1st September – The JCVI recommends people with weakened immune systems should be prioritised for a third COVID vaccine, with a separate booster scheme beginning later

3rd September – The JCVI decides against recommending COVID vaccinations for healthy children aged 12–15, saying the benefits of doing so would only be marginal

5th September – Nadhim Zahawi confirms that vaccine passports will be required for nightclubs and other indoor venues in England from the end of September

7th September – Boris Johnson announces social care reforms, including a 1.25% rise in National Insurance and a cap of £86,000 on lifetime care costs in England

9th September – The MHRA approves use of Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines for use in booster jab programme

11th September – Sources report COVID Winter Plan that suggests measures to be taken if cases begin to rise steeply could be used, but that future lockdowns have been ruled out

12th September – Sajid Javid confirms plans to introduce vaccine passports for nightclubs and other venues in England have been scrapped

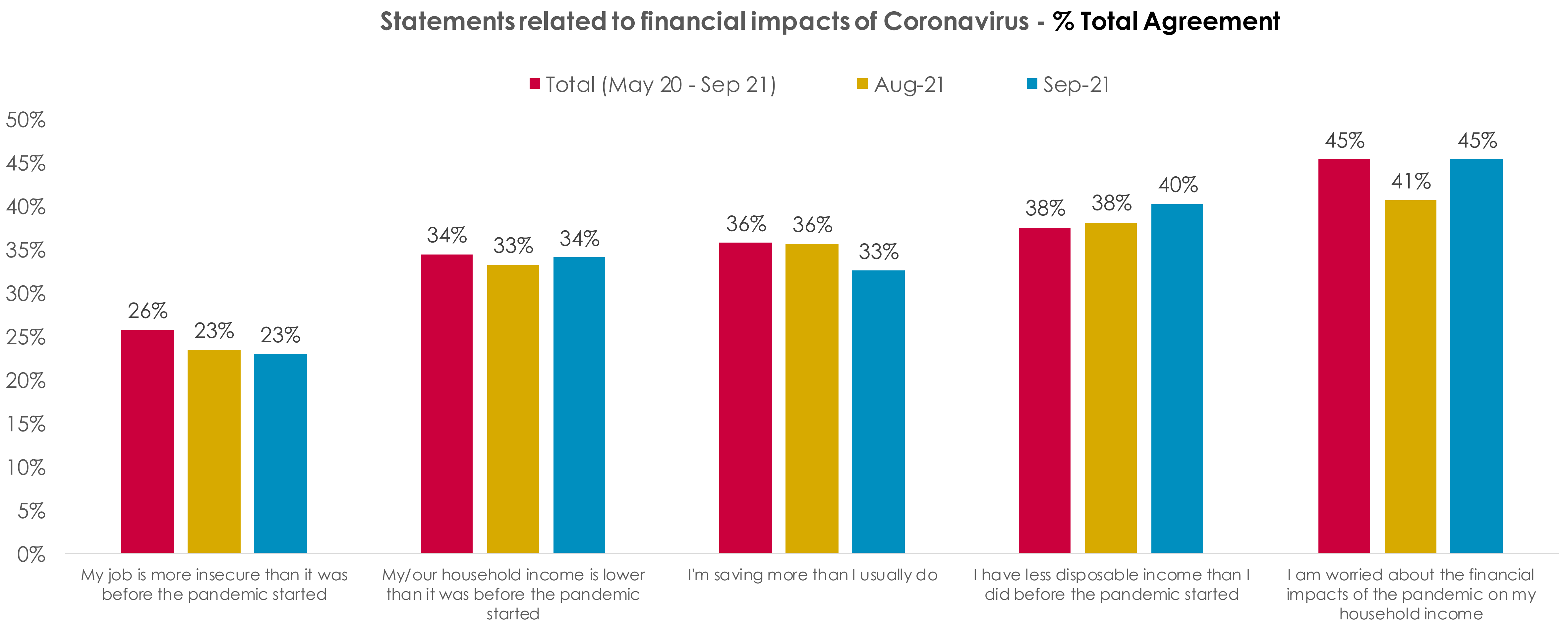
13th September – The UK's four chief medical officers recommend that healthy children aged 12–15 should be offered a single dose of COVID vaccine

14th September – Sources report that all over 50s and clinically vulnerable will be offered covid booster jabs in autumn and winter

Financial Implications

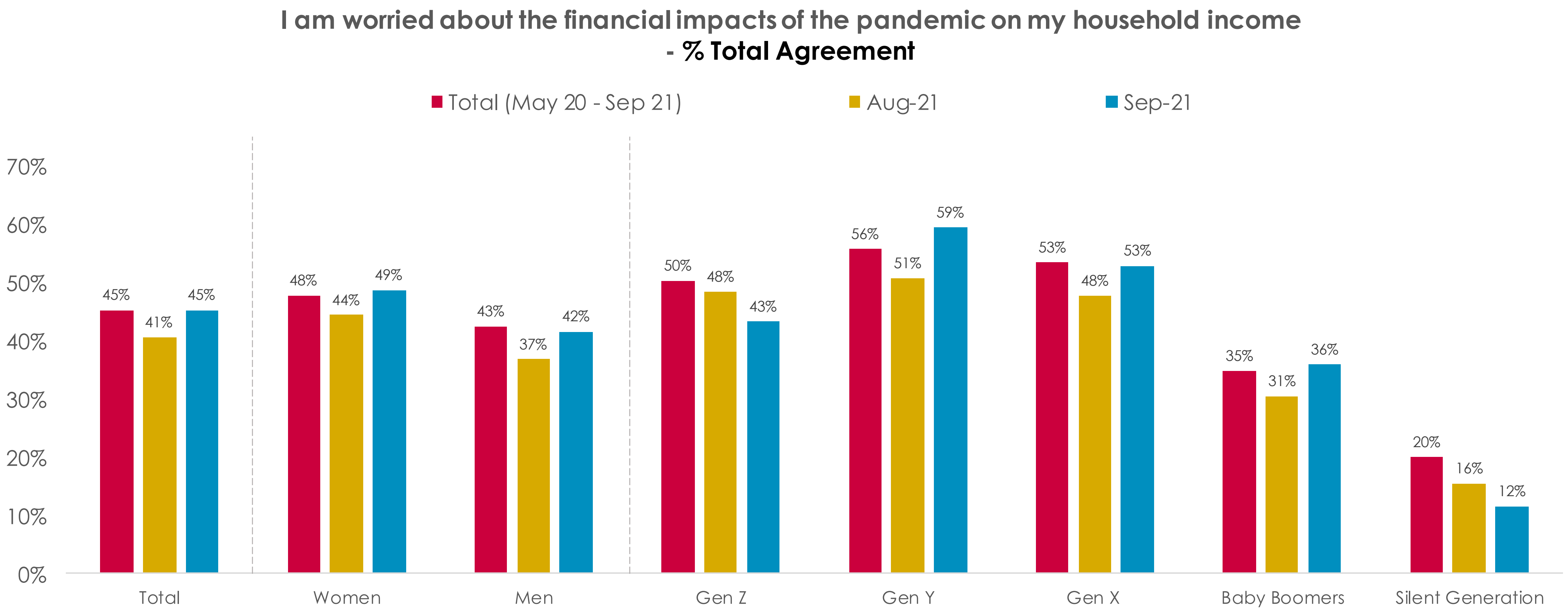
Reforms to national insurance contributions raise concerns over finances

- Proportion feeling worried about the financial impacts of pandemic on their household income up 4% this month from 41% to 45%
- This month also sees slight rise in proportion who feel they have less disposable income than pre-pandemic (38% to 40%)
- Only a third of respondents now feel that they are saving more than usual, down 3% compared to pandemic average



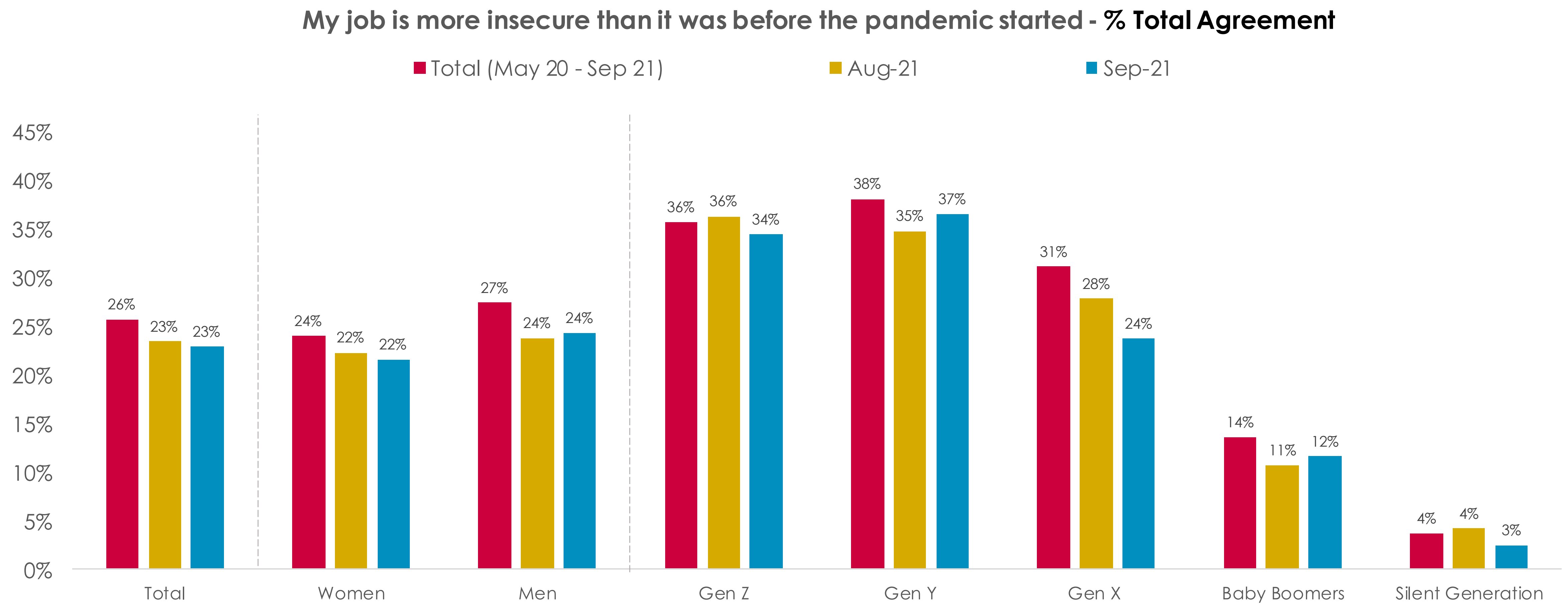
Those most likely to be economically active drive rise in financial concerns

- Topline rise of 4% this month driven by Gen Y (51% to 59%), Gen X (48% to 53%) and Baby Boomers (31% to 36%)
- Both men and women see a 5% rise in concerns this month, whilst men remain less likely to feel such concerns (42% to 49%)
- Silent Generation still substantially less likely to feel concerned about impact of pandemic on finances than younger cohorts



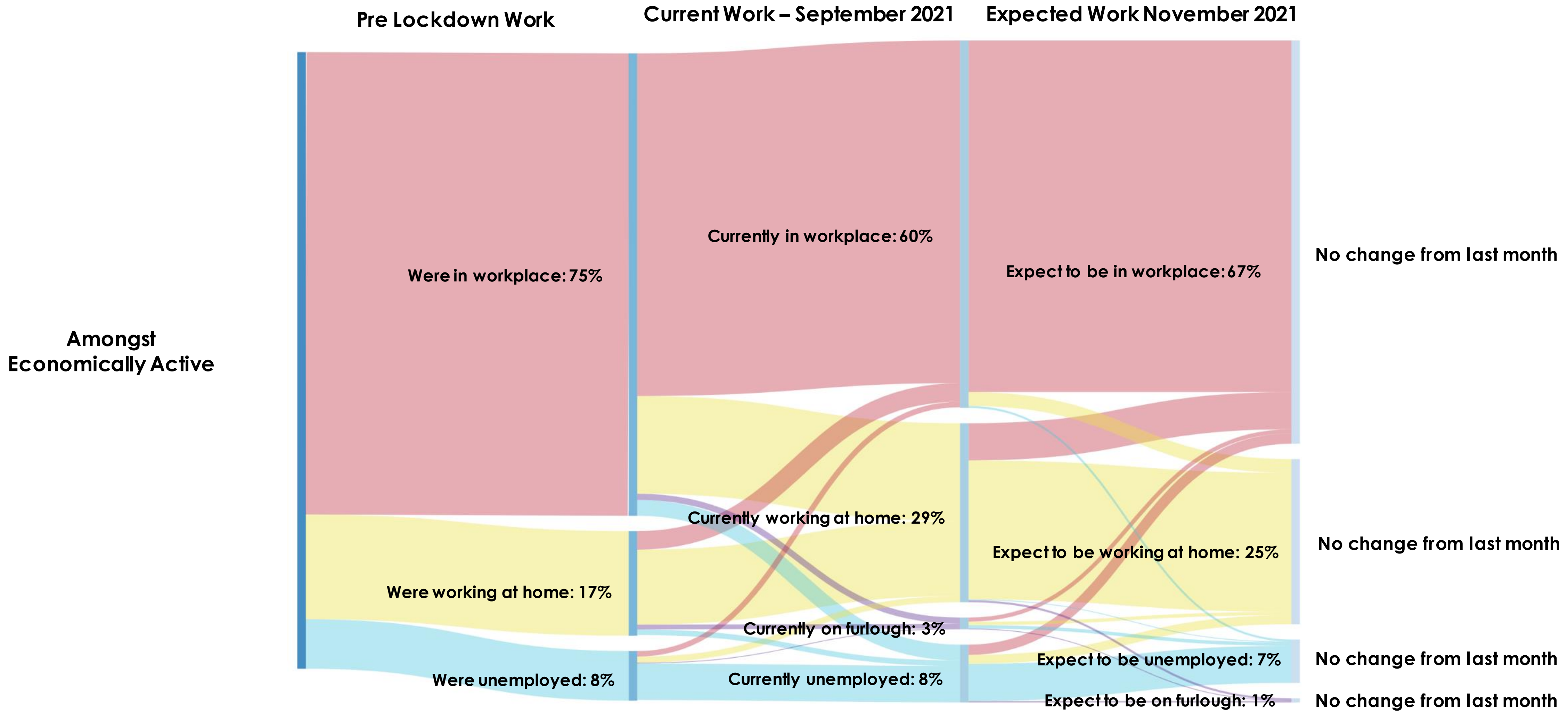
Sense of job insecurity remains more prominent amongst younger generations

- Whilst at a topline level just 23% feel more insecure about their job compared to pre-pandemic, this rises to more than a third for Gen Z/Gen Y
- Men remain slightly more likely to feel a sense of insecurity than women, seeing a very slight increase this month
- Gen X see a 4% decline in feeling of insecurity this month (28% to 24%), twice as high as Baby Boomers (12%)



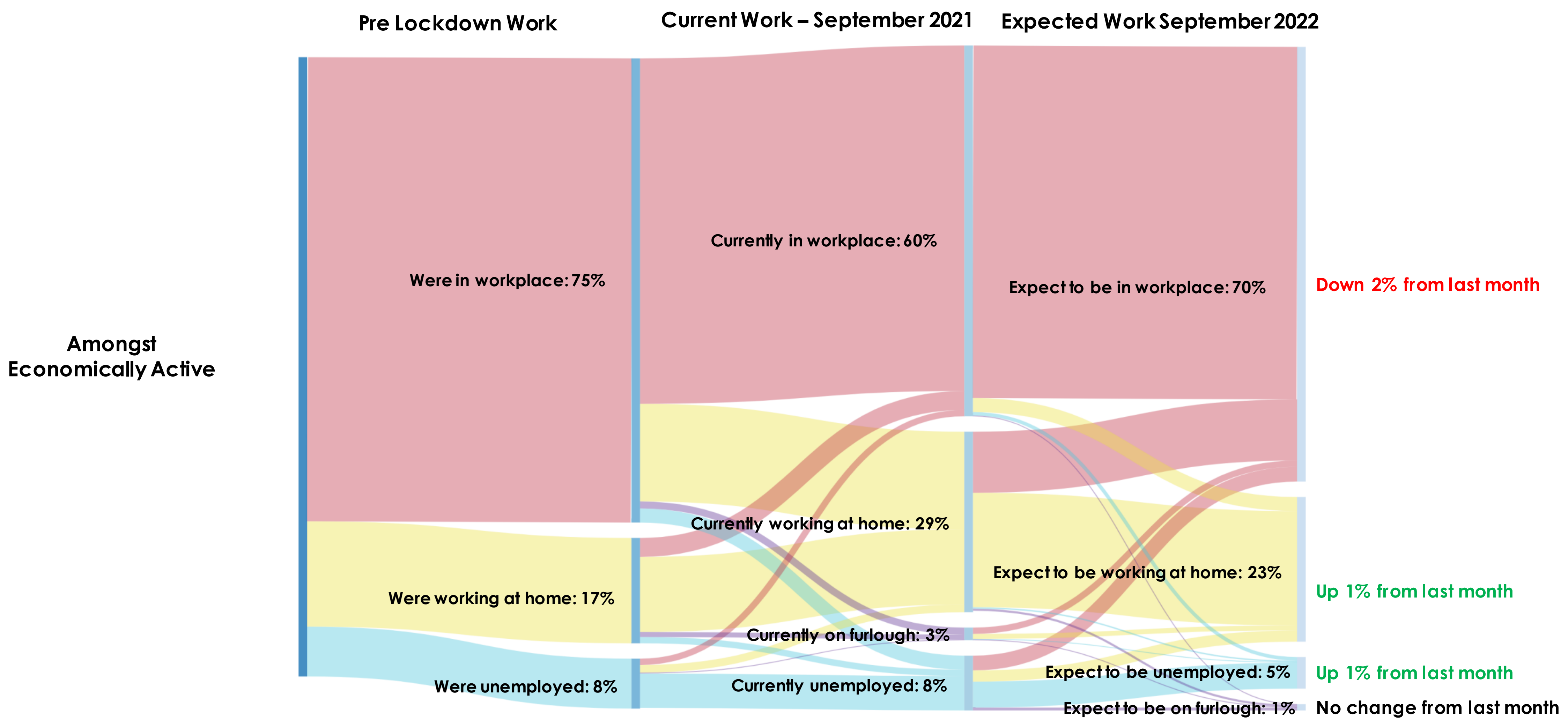
Employment expectations see no change in the short term

- Just 3% currently on furlough, whilst almost one in three are still predominantly working remotely
- Extent of unemployment remains at same level as pre-pandemic for the moment, despite concerns over increase when furlough ends



Longer term employment expectations dampened slightly

- Proportion expecting to be in workplace this time next year down 2% compared to August (72% to 70%)
- Almost a quarter still expect to be remote working (23%), whilst we see a slight increase in proportion expecting to be unemployed

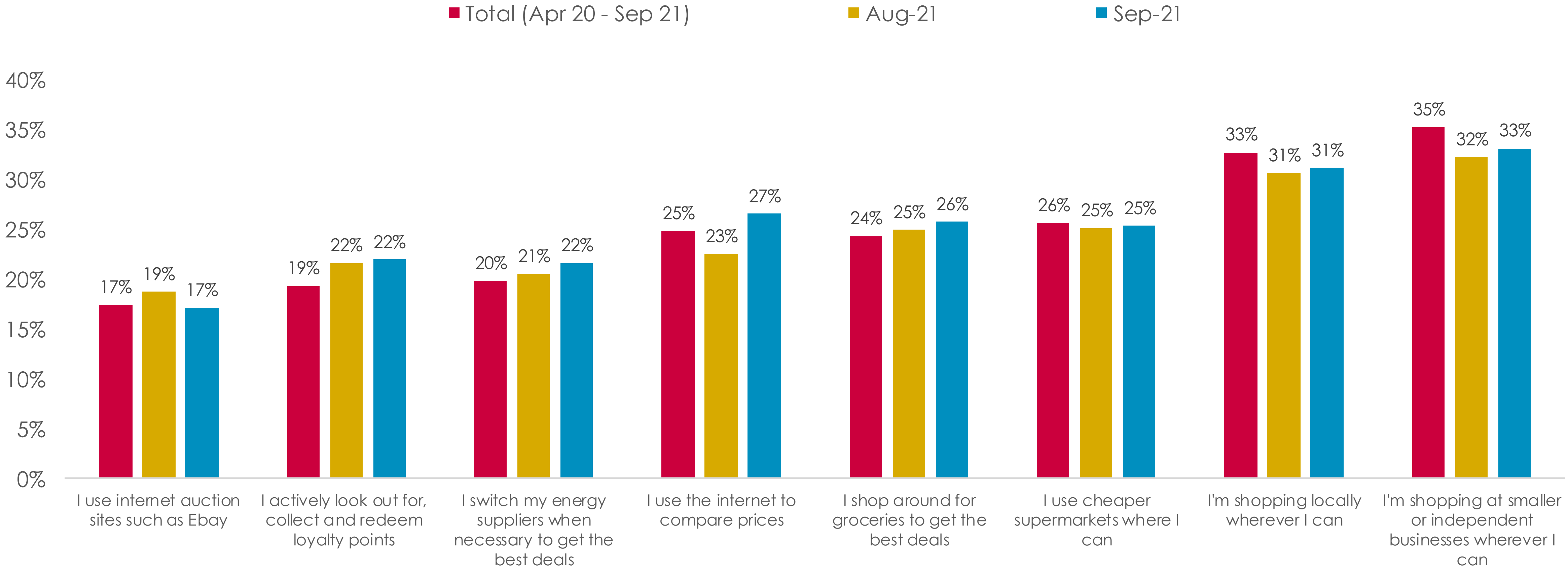


Impacts on Shopping Habits

Price conscious behaviours grow amidst rising financial concerns

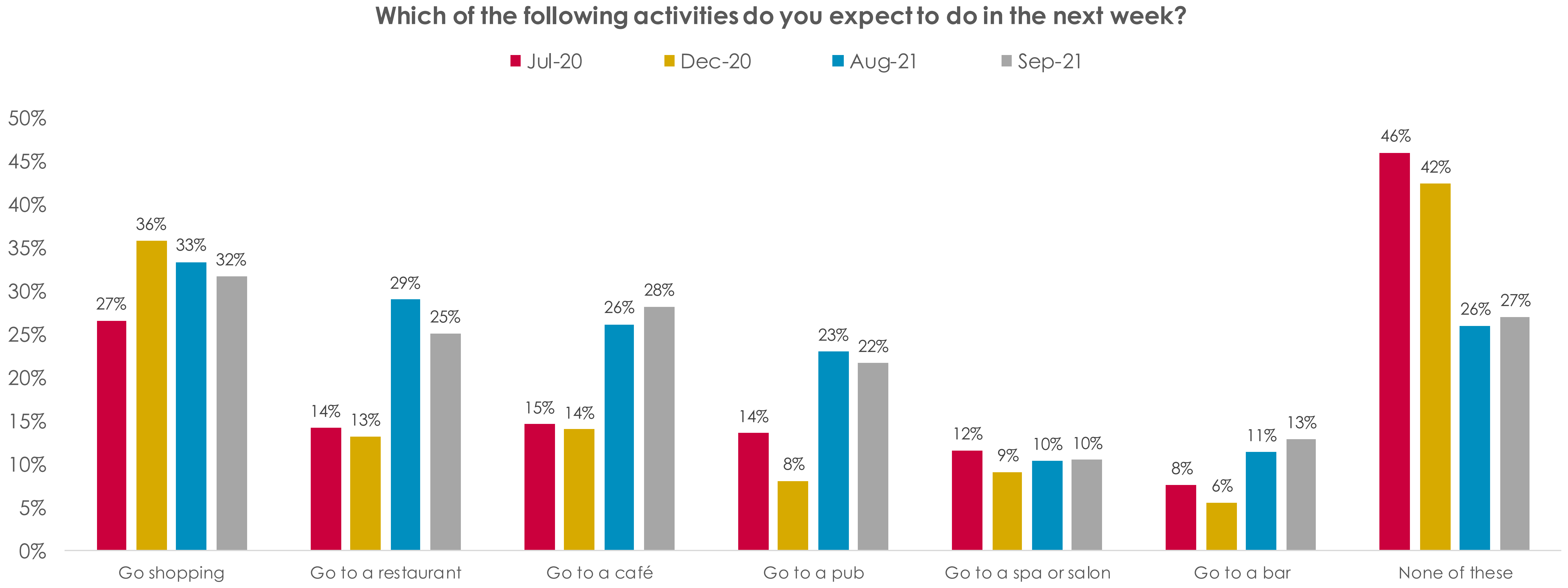
- Proportion who have recently begun comparing prices online up 4% this month – now up 2% compared to pandemic as a whole
- Those who have begun shopping around for groceries to get the best deals also up 1% this month (25% to 26%)
- Support for local independent businesses remains lower than compared to pandemic as a whole

Below are a list of shopping activities. Please select all activities which you *have started doing recently*



Appetite for out of home leisure dampened slightly as summer ends

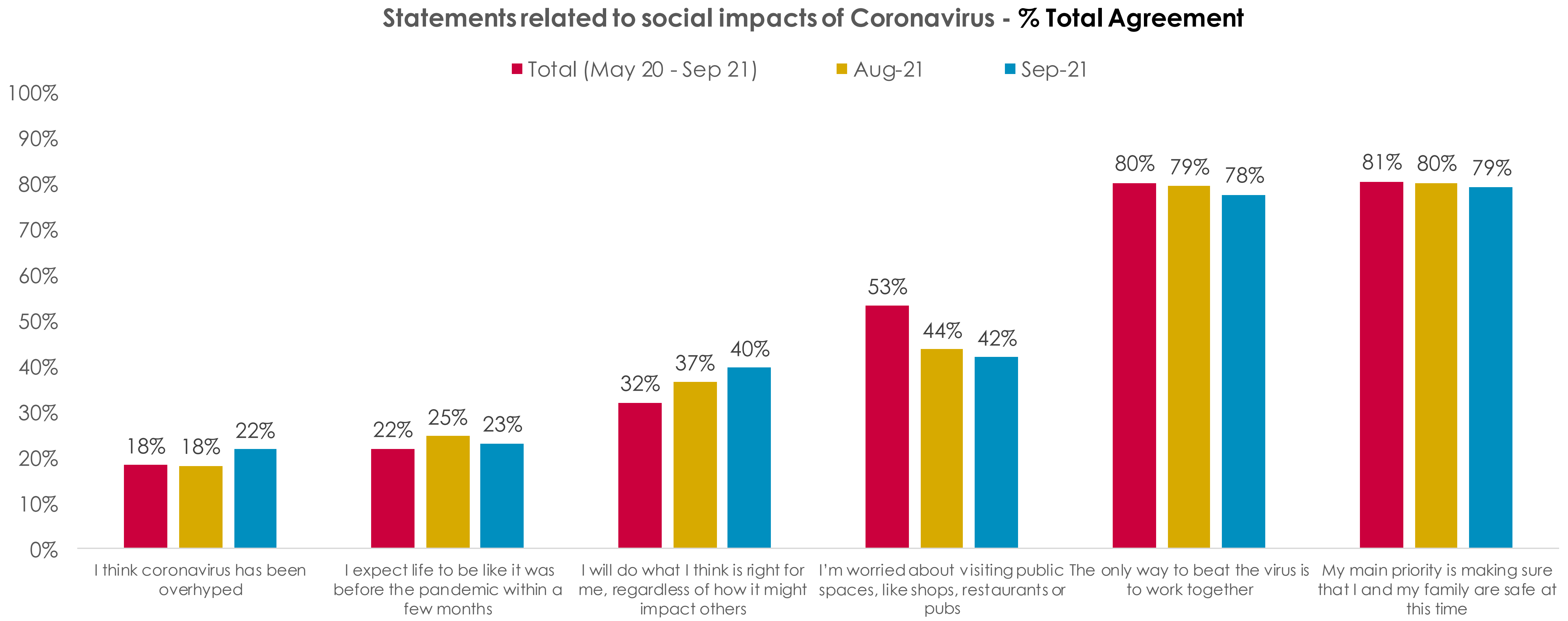
- Proportion expecting to visit a restaurant in the next week down 4% compared to August (29% to 25%)
- Despite decline in demand for most activities, this month sees slight rise in appetite for cafes (26% to 28%) and bars (11% to 13%)
- This month sees a 1% increase in the proportion not expecting to do any of the listed activities in the next week (26% to 27%)



Social Implications

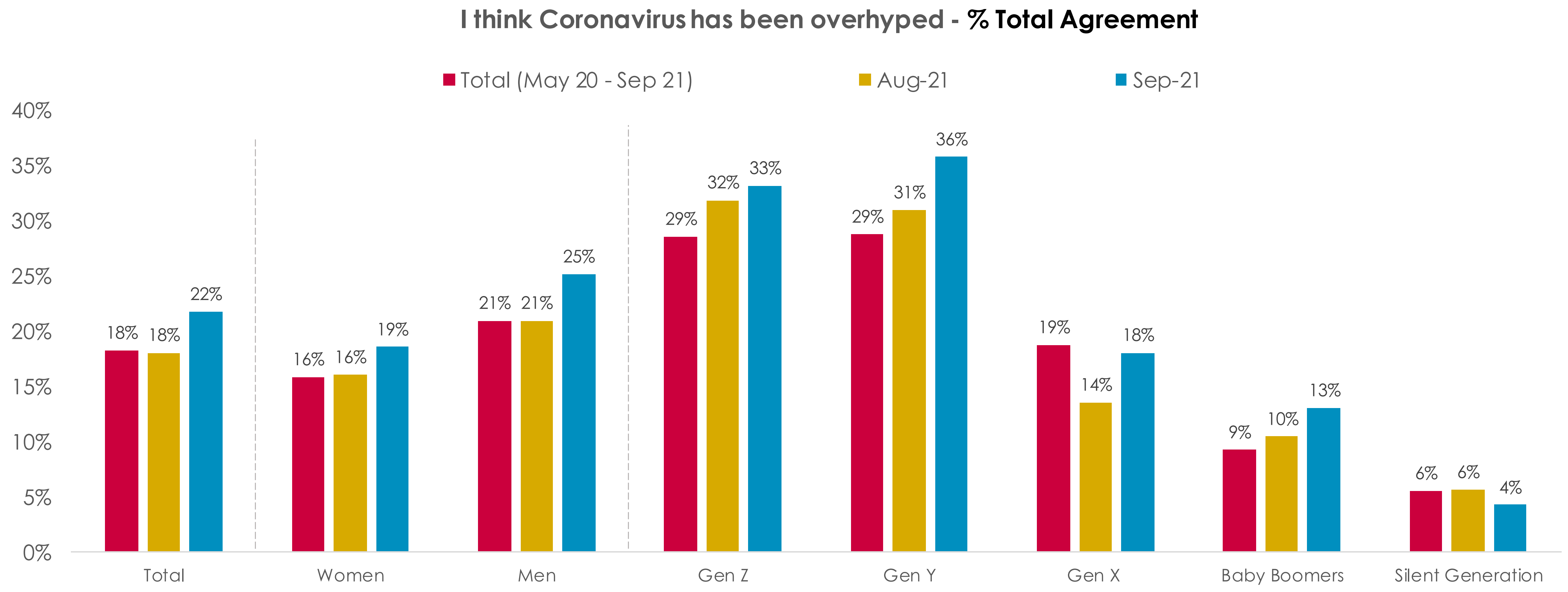
Concerns about visiting public spaces fall further this month

- Proportion worried about going out in public spaces down 2% from 44% to 42%, now 11% lower than pandemic average
- This month sees further rise in wanting to do what consumers think is right for them, perhaps implying sense of conflict
- Decline in concerns about going out in public drives 4% increase in feelings that pandemic has been overhyped



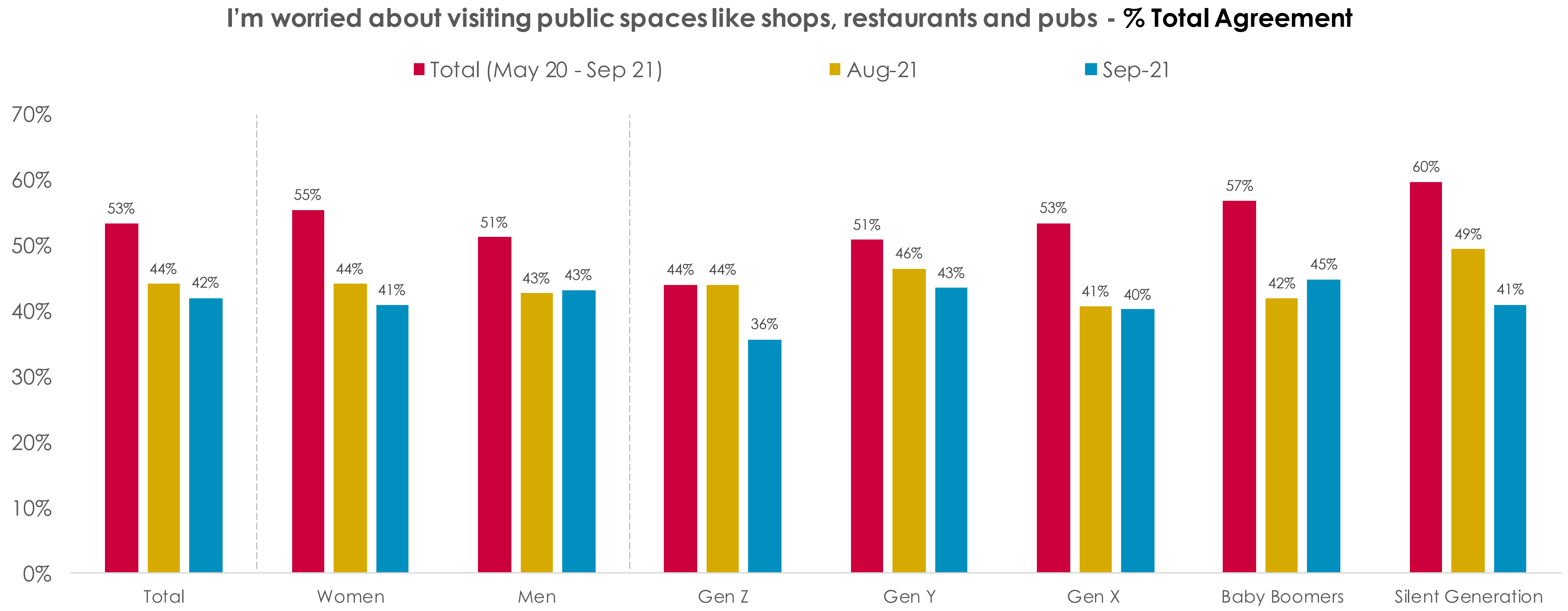
Men and Gen Y drive topline rise in pandemic cynicism

- Men see slightly sharper increase in feelings that pandemic has been overhyped this month, up 4% compared to 3% rise for women
- Gen Y see a 5% increase, up from 31% to 36% this month, higher than any other generation
- Silent Generation the only cohort to see a decline in cynicism this month, down from 6% to 4%



Second jabs drive sharp decline in concerns about public spaces for Gen Z

- Proportion of youngest cohort who feel concerned about going out to public spaces down 8% this month and compared to pandemic average
- Degree of concern across generations far less polarised this month than compared to pandemic as a whole
- Despite being more concerned about public spaces across pandemic as a whole, women are less concerned than men this month

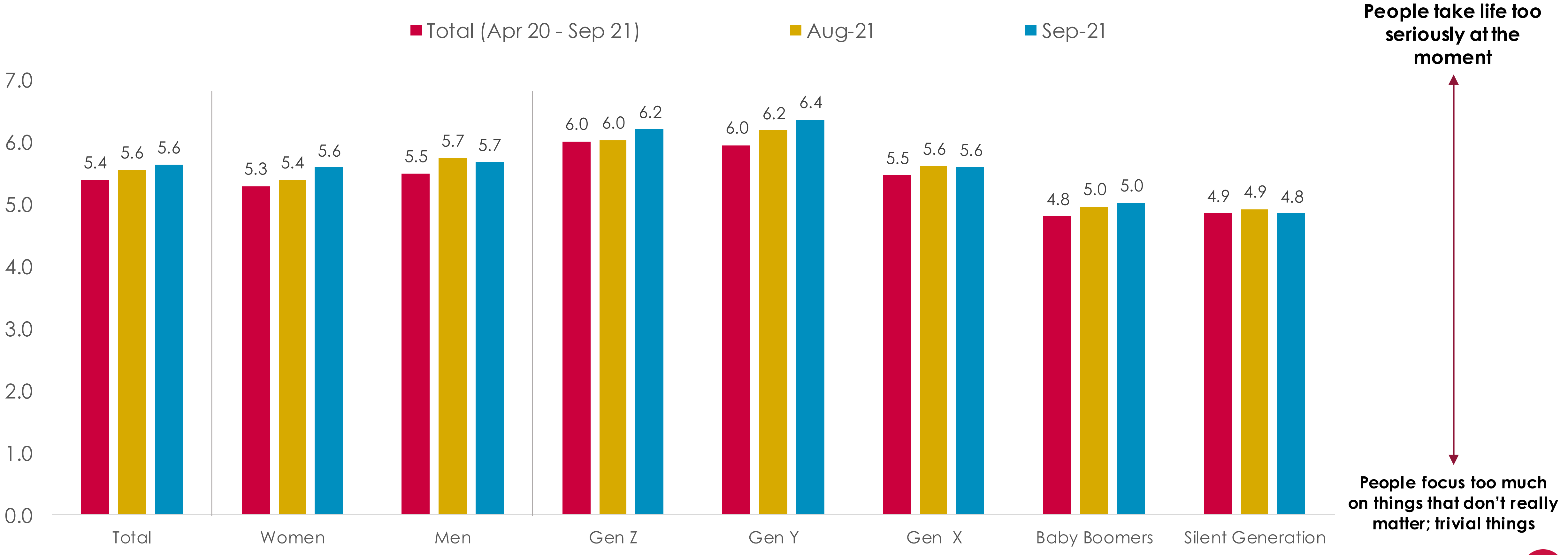


New seriousness dampened slightly amidst growing pandemic cynicism

- Declining seriousness more prominent this month amongst women (5.4 to 5.6) and younger generations (both 0.2 increase)
- Older cohorts see sense of seriousness either remain at same level or even increase slightly, such as with the Silent Generation (4.9 to 4.8)

On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate to what extent you feel people take life too seriously

[Average Response]

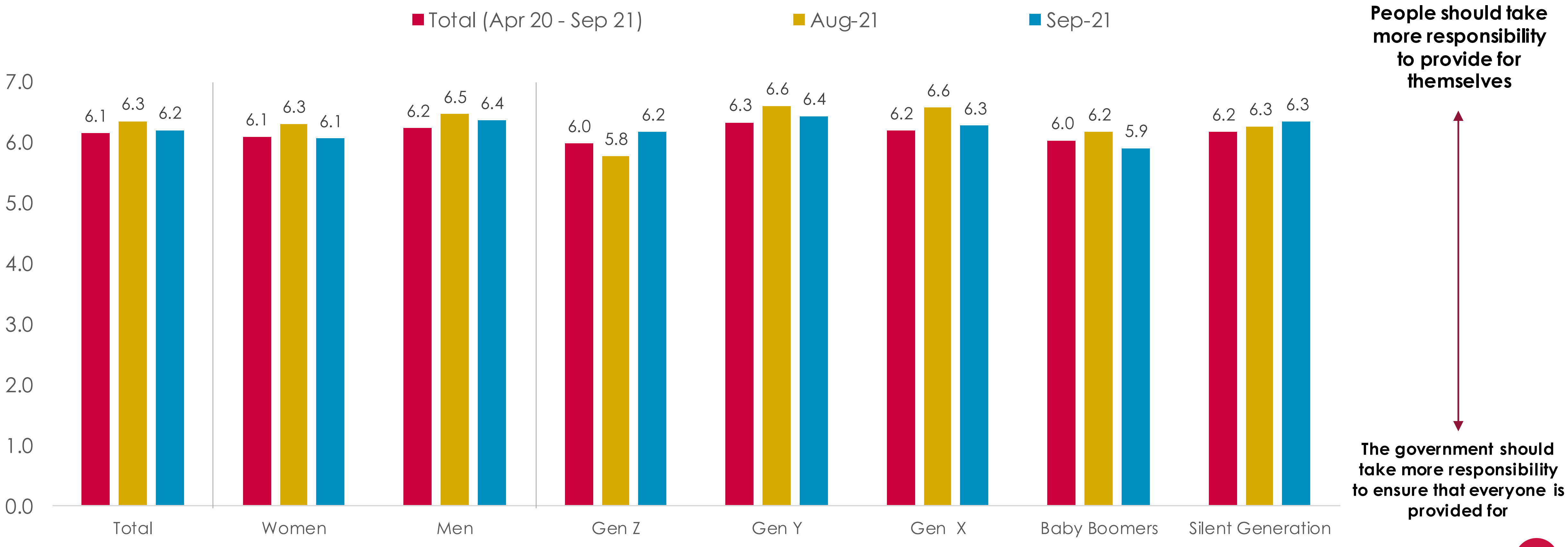


Priorities

Concerns over rising poverty drive shift towards greater government responsibility

- Average scores fell by 0.1 this month, suggesting consumers feel the Government should be taking a greater responsibility to provide for everyone
- This trend was most prominent amongst Gen Z this month, seeing a 0.4 rise from 5.8 to 6.2, whilst Baby Boomers saw a 0.3 point fall
- Women remain more likely to feel the Government should have greater responsibility to provide for everyone, down 0.2 this month

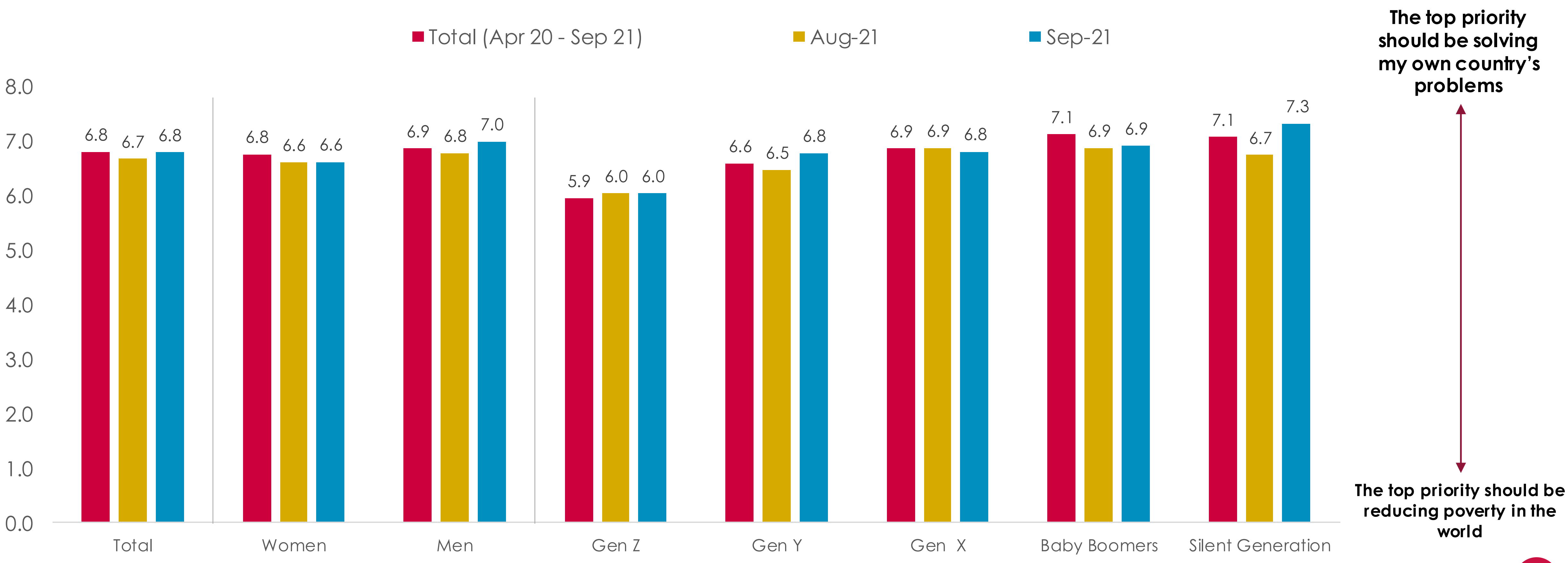
On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate to what extent you feel it is the Government's responsibility to ensure everybody is provided for *[Average Response]*



Silent Generation drive rising focus on solving domestic issues

- Average score for Silent Generation rose by 0.6 points this month from 6.7 to 7.3 – now higher than pandemic average
- Gen Z remain significantly more likely to focus on reducing poverty across the world, with an average score of just 6.0
- Women more likely than men to focus on reducing global poverty, with an average score 0.4 lower than men this month

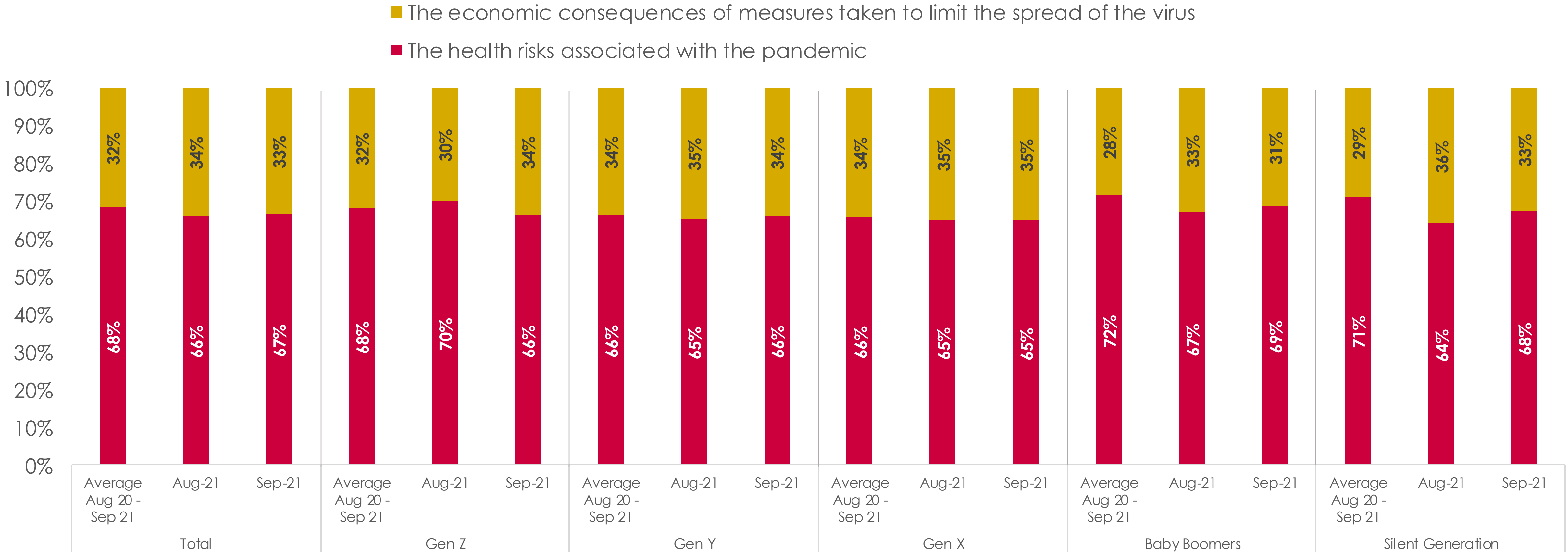
On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate what you feel the top priority for the UK Government should be
[Average Response]



Rising case and death numbers maintain focus on health issues

- Despite rising concerns about financial impacts of pandemic, consumers maintain that health risks are still the greater priority
- Baby Boomers, also the most likely to still be concerned about public spaces, most likely to prioritise health over economy
- Silent Generation 4% more likely to prioritise health over the economy this month, perhaps owing to wearing off of initial jabs

If you had to choose, which of the following two options would you say is your biggest concern at the moment?

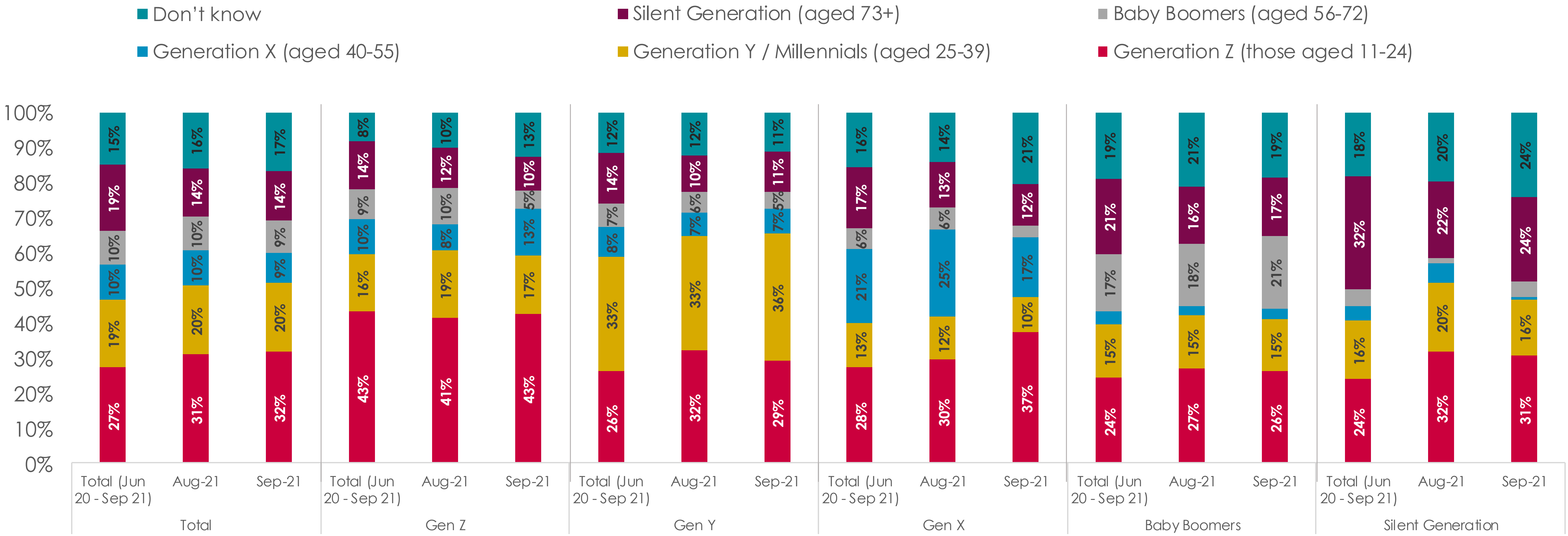


Generational Impacts

Almost a third maintain that Gen Z will be most negatively impacted by pandemic

- Proportion who feel that Gen Z will be most negatively impacted up 1% this month from 31% to 32%, at least 10% higher than any other generation
- Proportion feeling that Silent Generation will be most harmed by pandemic down 5% compared to pandemic average (19% to 14%)
- Both Gen Z and Gen Y far more likely than older cohorts to feel their own generation will be most negatively impacted

Which generation do you think will be most **negatively** affected by the coronavirus pandemic, all things considered?



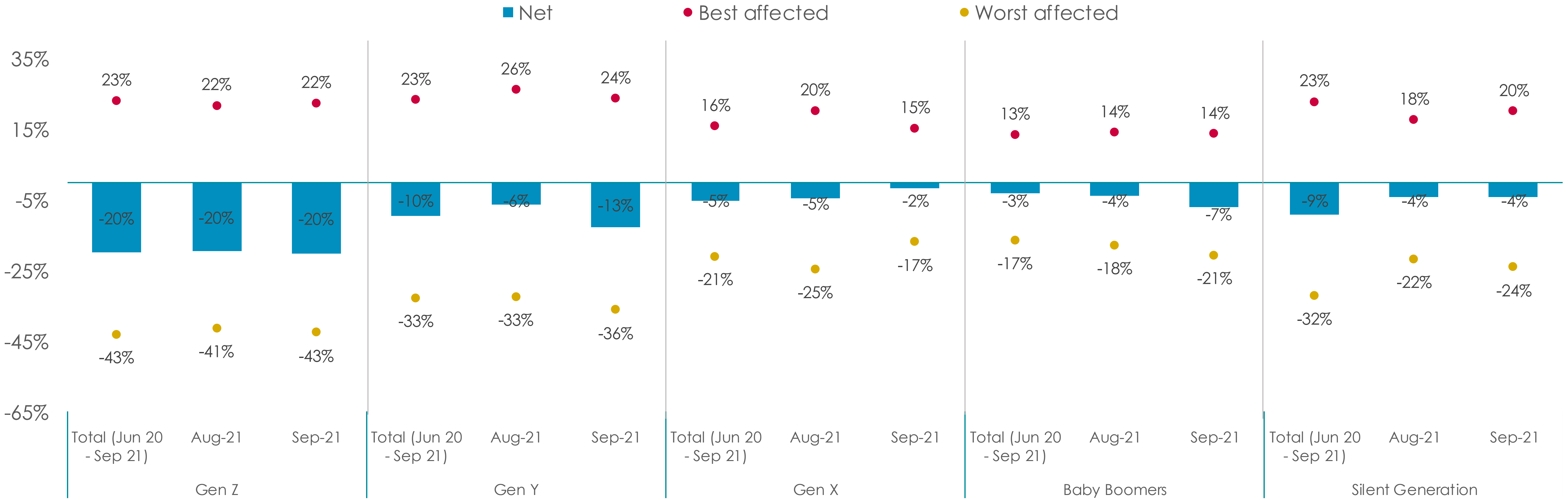
		Gen Z	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby Boomers	Silent Generation	Don't know
Total	Total (Jun 20 - Sep 21)	27%	19%	10%	10%	19%	15%
Total	Aug-21	31%	20%	10%	10%	14%	16%
Total	Sep-21	32%	20%	9%	9%	14%	17%
Gen Z	Total (Jun 20 - Sep 21)	43%	16%	10%	9%	14%	8%
Gen Z	Aug-21	41%	19%	8%	10%	12%	10%
Gen Z	Sep-21	43%	17%	13%	5%	10%	13%
Gen Y	Total (Jun 20 - Sep 21)	26%	33%	8%	7%	14%	12%
Gen Y	Aug-21	32%	33%	7%	6%	10%	12%
Gen Y	Sep-21	29%	36%	7%	5%	11%	11%
Gen X	Total (Jun 20 - Sep 21)	28%	13%	21%	6%	17%	16%
Gen X	Aug-21	30%	12%	25%	6%	13%	14%
Gen X	Sep-21	37%	10%	17%		12%	21%
Baby Boomers	Total (Jun 20 - Sep 21)	24%	15%		17%	21%	19%
Baby Boomers	Aug-21	27%	15%		18%	16%	21%
Baby Boomers	Sep-21	26%	15%		21%	17%	19%
Silent Generation	Total (Jun 20 - Sep 21)	24%	16%			32%	18%
Silent Generation	Aug-21	32%	20%			22%	20%
Silent Generation	Sep-21	31%	16%			24%	24%

Gen Y grow more pessimistic regarding impact of pandemic for their cohort

- Net proportion of Gen Y saying their generation will be best minus worst affected fell by 7% this month (-6% to -13%)
- Gen Z remain most pessimistic, but see no change compared to August (20%) – 10 times worse than for Gen X (2%)
- Older cohorts remain polarised regarding impacts of the pandemic on their generation

Which generation do you think will be most affected by the coronavirus pandemic, all things considered?

[Net % saying their own generation will be best *minus* worst affected]



TRAJECTORY

Each month Trajectory survey 1500 adults in the UK on a range of issues including consumer confidence, personal choice and control, social trust, opportunities in technology, optimism and their place in the world.

This data is analysed and produces The Optimism Index. The data presented here is a snapshot of the full data, which can be used for bespoke analyses on request – including time-series analysis (from 2011 onwards) and global comparisons.

Enquiries: info@trajectorypartnership.com

Trajectory
www.trajectorypartnership.com
@TrajectoryTweet