TRAJECTORY

Optimism Index
March 2022

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 **3rd and 9th March.**

Key Findings

- Almost half now have less disposable income than compared to before the pandemic
- Those with greater financial responsibilities more likely to adopt concerns over household finances
- Employment expectations indicate little slowdown in prevalence of remote working
- Recent take-up of price conscious behaviours up significantly this month as inflation growth continues
- Concerns about health impacts of pandemic fall to wayside as finances make headlines
- Increasing cost of essential spending drives decline in expected participation in leisure
- Satisfaction with social aspects of life compared to pre-pandemic remains high

Last Month's Key Events

18th February
Storm Eunice becomes one of the most powerful storms to hit the UK in decades

21st February
Boris Johnson confirms that all COVID measures in England will be lifted from 24th February, including need to self-isolate

22nd February
Nicola Sturgeon announces that all COVID measures in Scotland will be lifted on 21st March

24th February
Russian incursion to Ukraine escalates into a full scale invasion - with Boris Johnson condemning Putin's actions

25th February
The government agrees to extend the financial bailout for Transport for London implemented during the pandemic until the end of June

26th February
The UK and its allies commit to removing Russian banks from its SWIFT payment system as well as imposing measures on Russian Central Bank and other Russian elites

27th February
Boris Johnson extends the government's visa scheme to allow potentially 200,000 people to stay in the UK amidst ongoing crisis in Ukraine

1st March
The government confirms the lifting of compulsory vaccines for care home workers in England from 15 March

3rd March
The UK announces sanctions against two more Russian oligarchs, Alisher Usmanov and Igor Shuvalov, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine

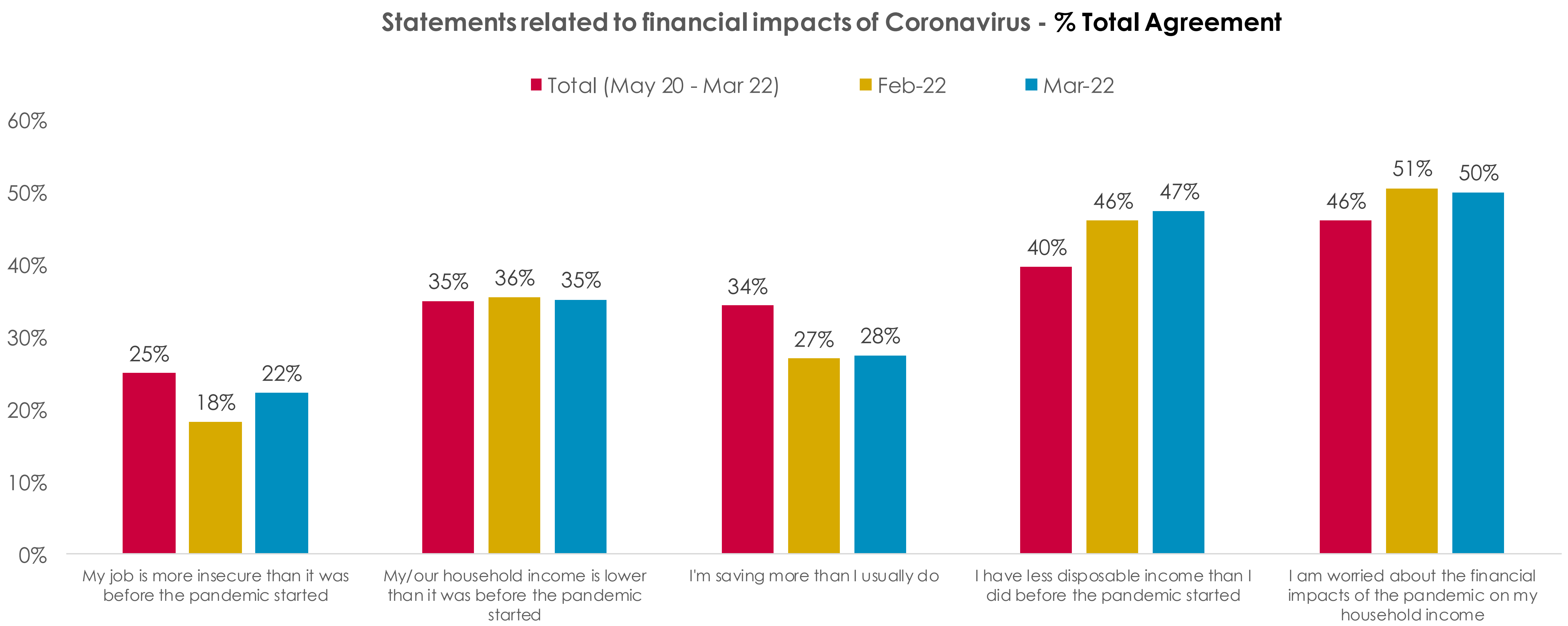
4th March
Two large tankers containing Russian gas are prevented from unloading their cargos at a terminal in Kent and are forced to go elsewhere

8th March
Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky delivers a historic address to the House of Commons via video link

Financial Implications

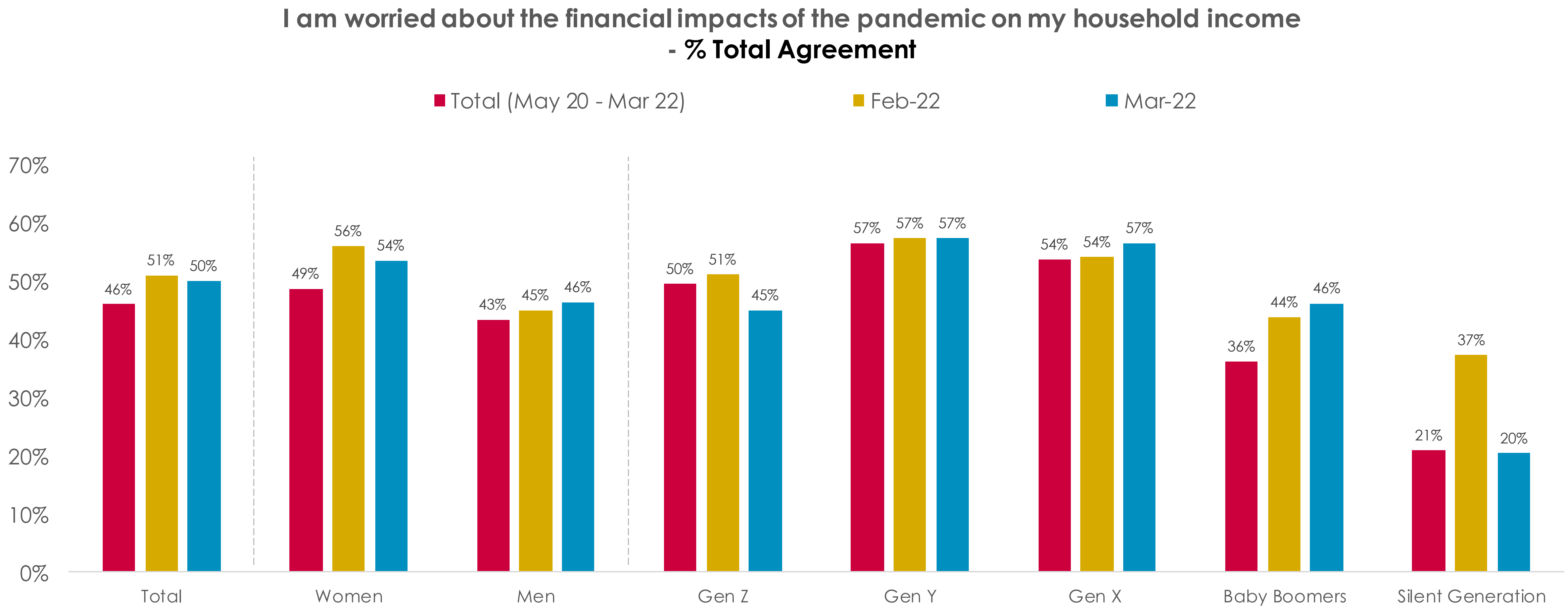
Almost half now have less disposable income than compared to pre-pandemic

- Proportion saying they have less disposable income up 1% to 47% this month – now 7% higher than pandemic average
- Considerable decline in excess savers compared to pandemic average continues this month, despite 1% increase to 28%



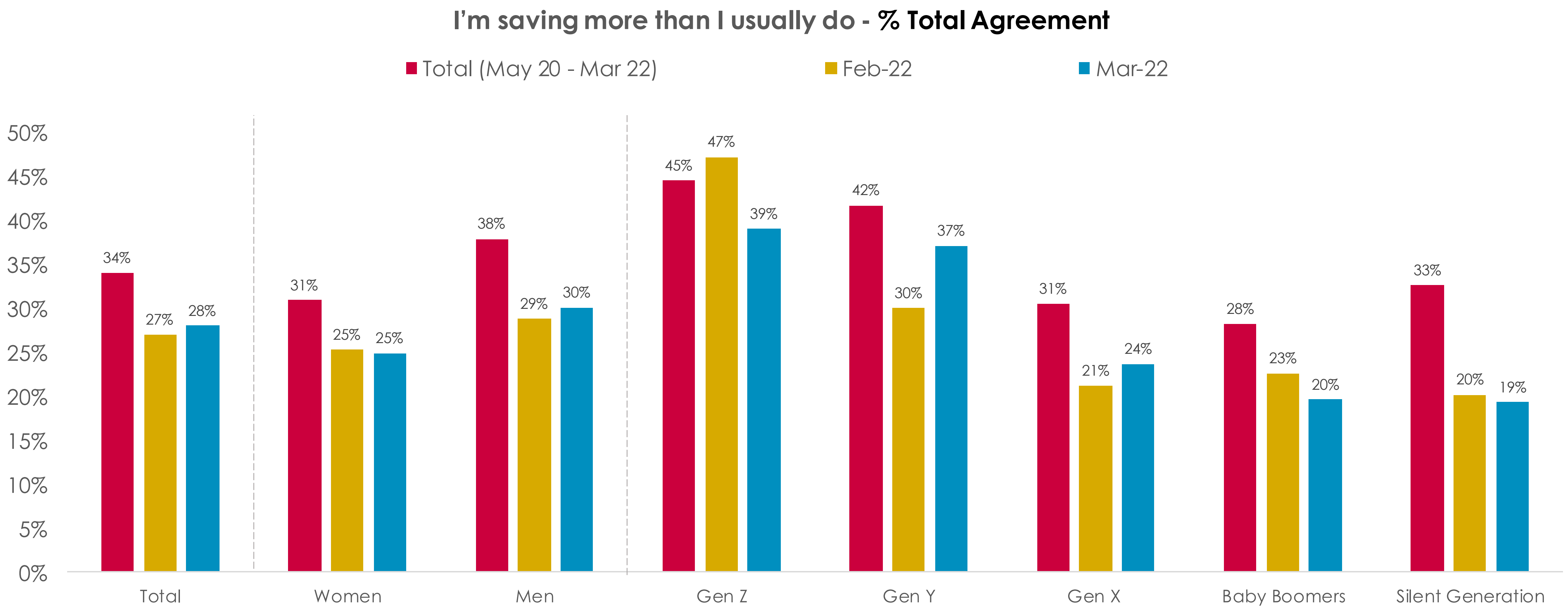
Gen Y, Gen X and Women the primary drivers of financial concerns

- Proportion of Gen X feeling concerned about impacts of pandemic on finances up 3% this month despite topline decline of 1%
- Women remain considerably more concerned than men, although the difference between the two groups has declined this month



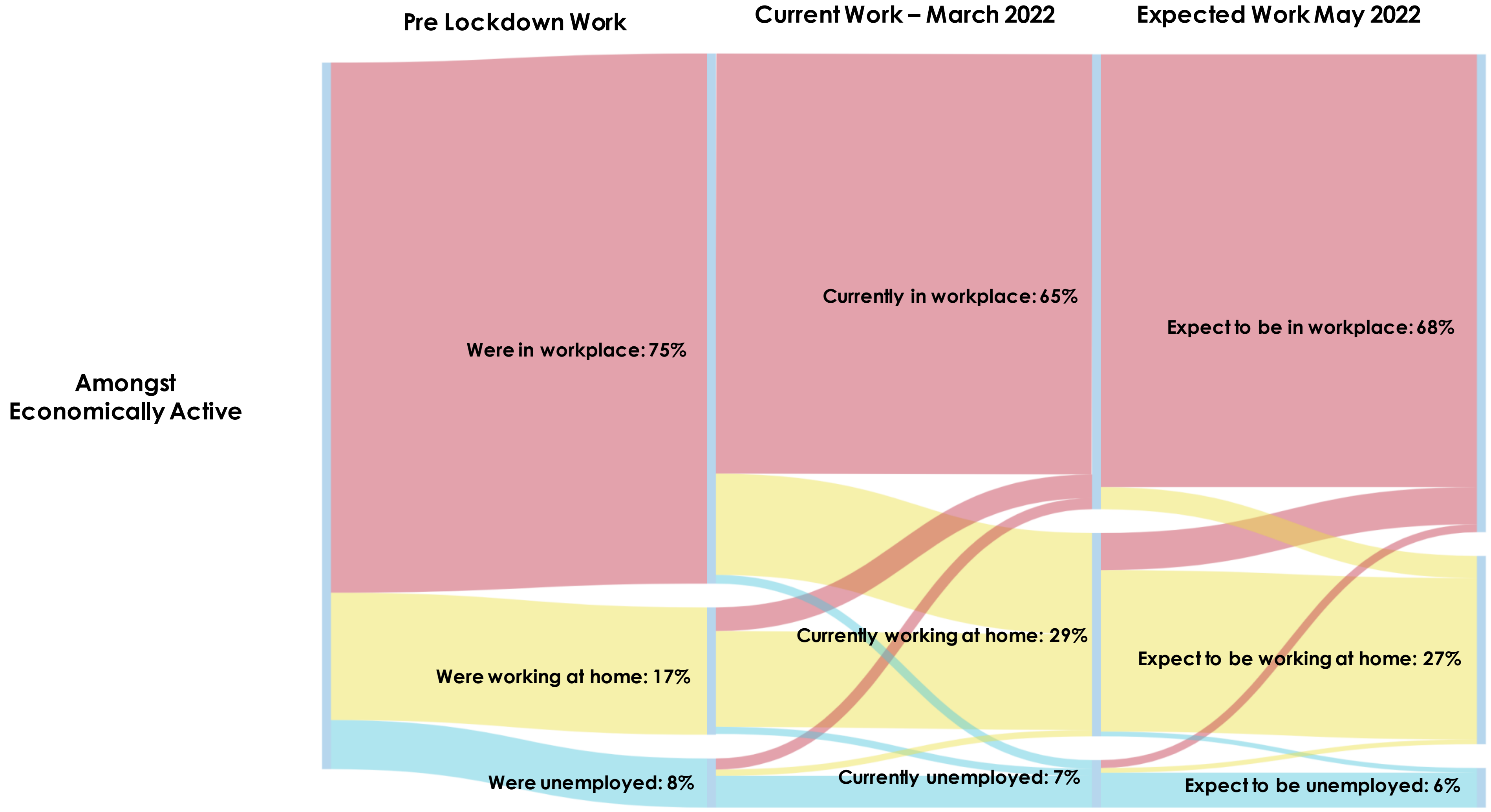
Excess savings more prominent for generations with less financial responsibility

- Proportion saving more than usual considerably higher amongst both Gen Z and Gen Y (39% and 37%) than compared to older age groups
- Men remain more likely to be saving more than usual than women this month, seeing a 1% increase to 30%



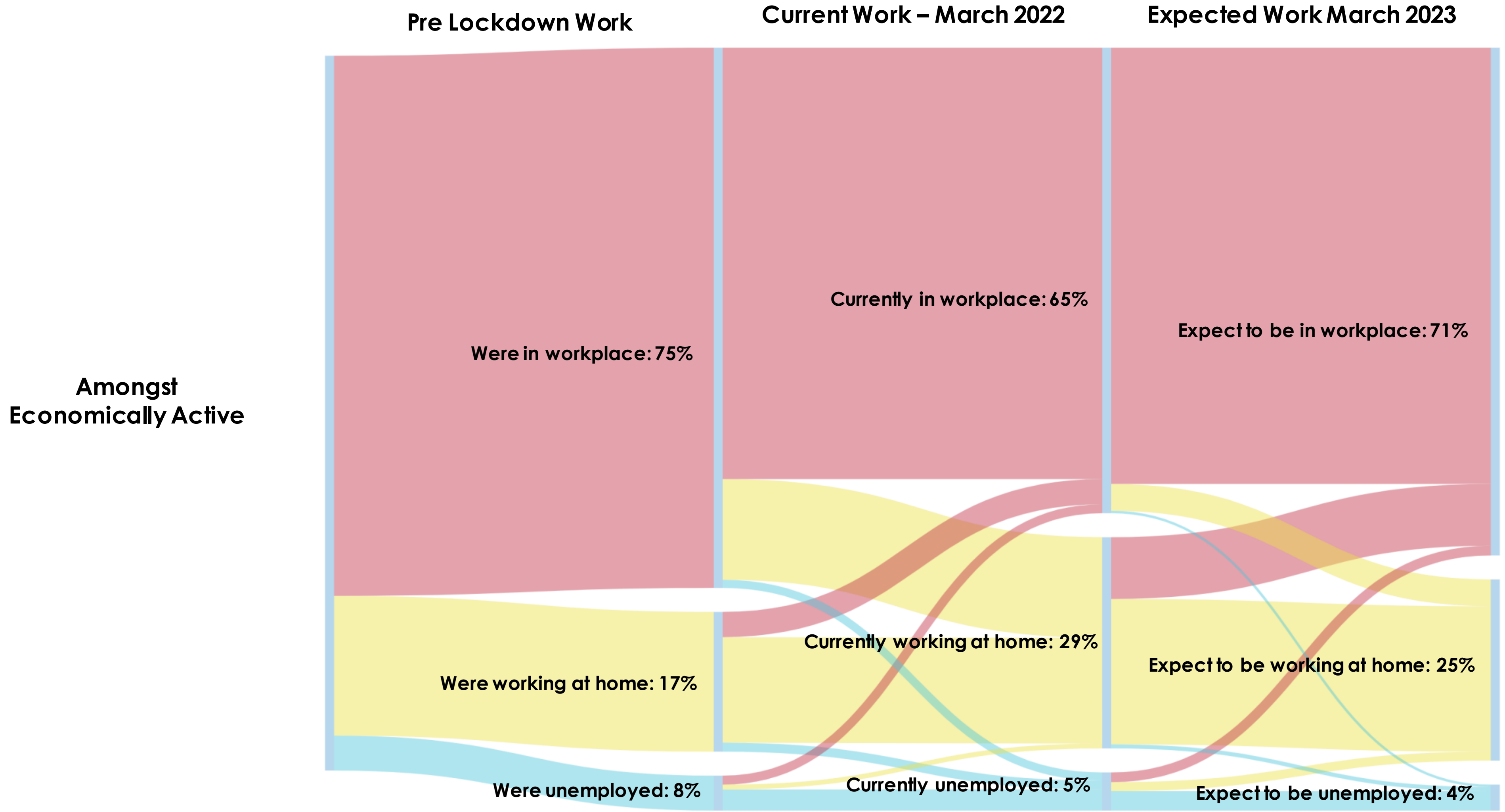
Almost a third of respondents are still predominantly working remotely

- 29% say they are working from home most of the time – up 12% compared to before the pandemic
- Expectations for next month drive slight rise in proportion expecting to be in the workplace



Long term employment expectations positive despite current climate

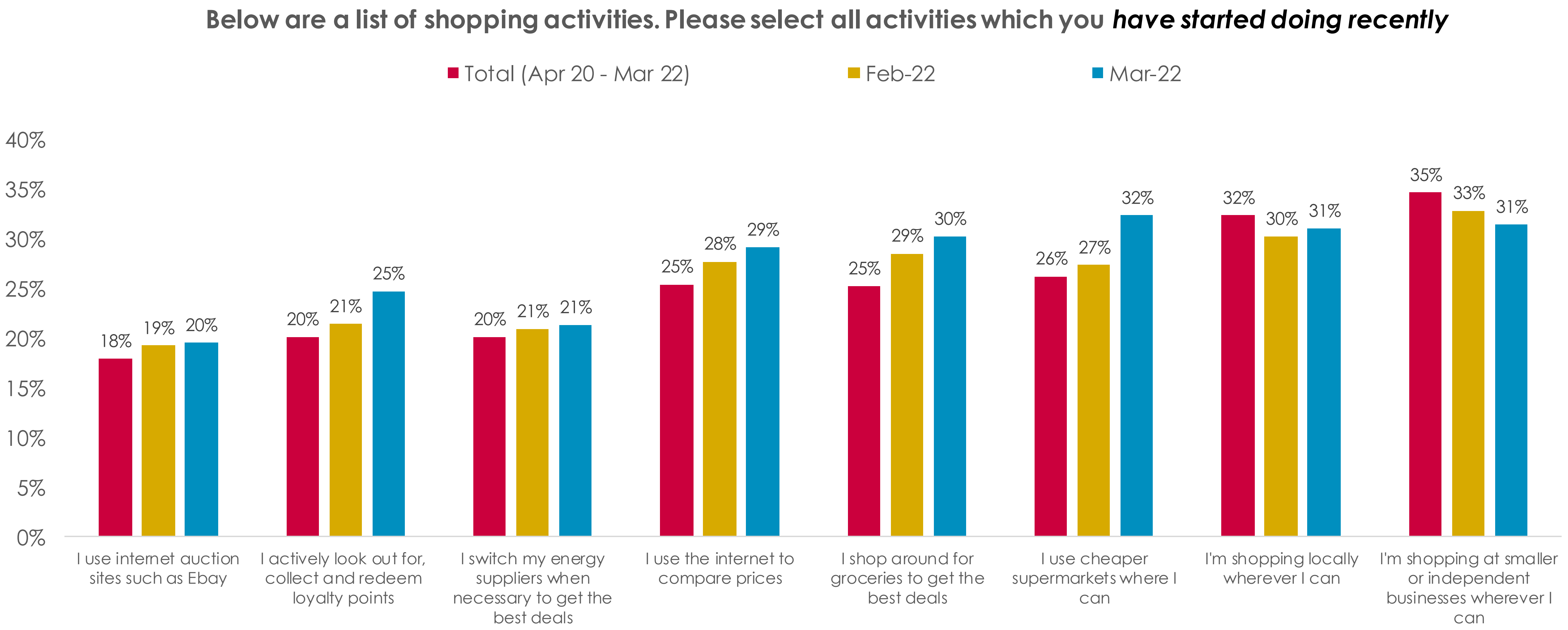
- Only 4% of those economically active currently expect to be unemployed in a years time – half of pre-pandemic levels (8%)
- 25% still expect to be working remotely most of the time by March 2022 – down just 4% compared to current levels



Impacts on Shopping Habits

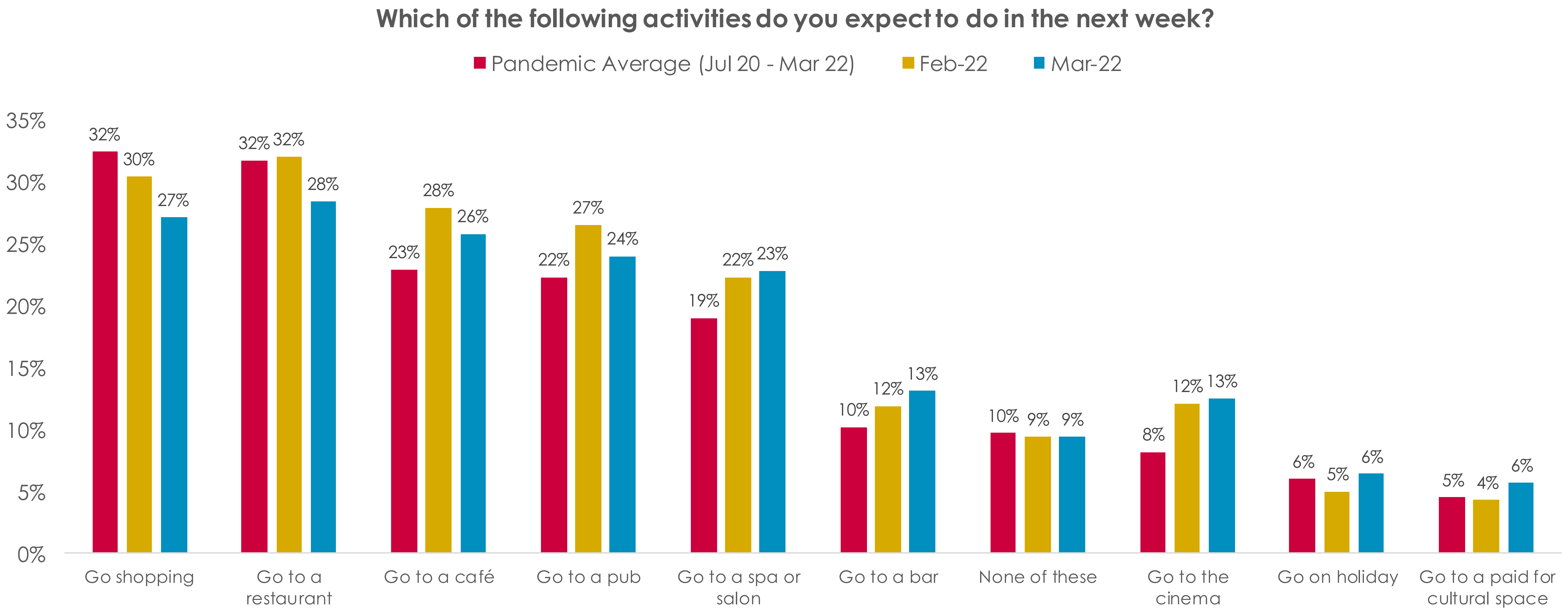
Price conscious behaviours up significantly this month as inflation growth continues

- Proportion who have recently started used cheaper supermarkets where possible up 5% on last month (27% to 32%)
- Recent usage of loyalty points and schemes also up this month – with one in four now having recently begun doing this



Leisure expectations down as cost of essential spending rises further

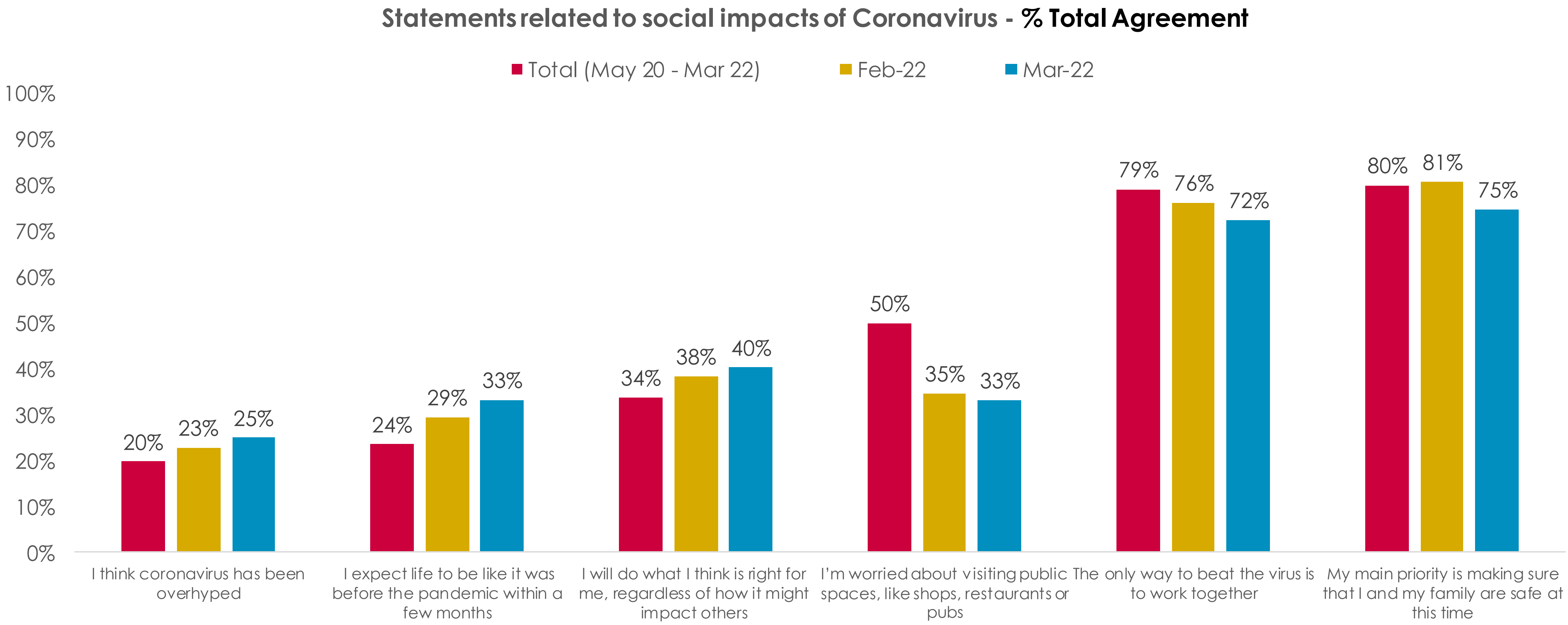
- Proportion expecting to go non-grocery shopping down 3% this month and now down 5% compared to pandemic average
- Expectations also down this month for restaurants (32% to 28%), cafes (28% to 26%) and pubs (27% to 24%)



Social Implications

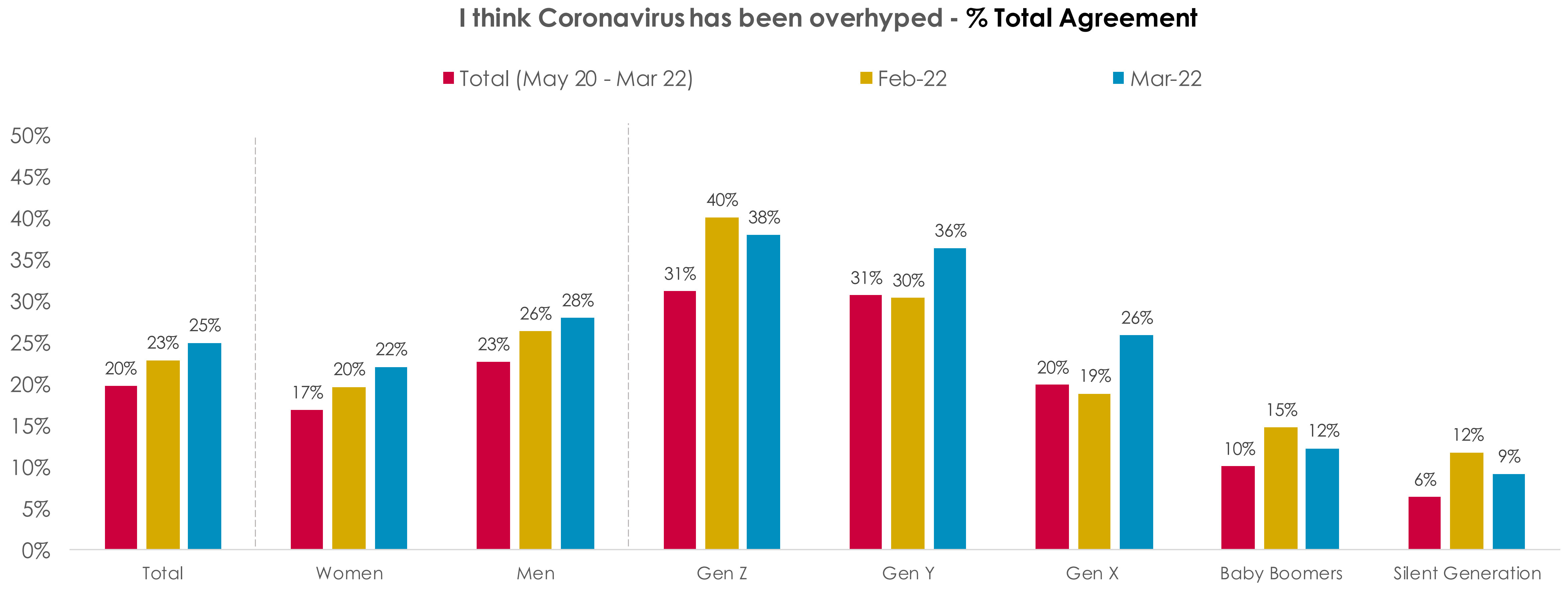
Concerns about health impacts of pandemic fall further as finances make headlines

- Proportion worried about visiting public spaces down to just one in three now – 17% lower than average for pandemic as a whole
- The same proportion now expect life to be like it was before the pandemic, up 4% this month from 29% to 33%



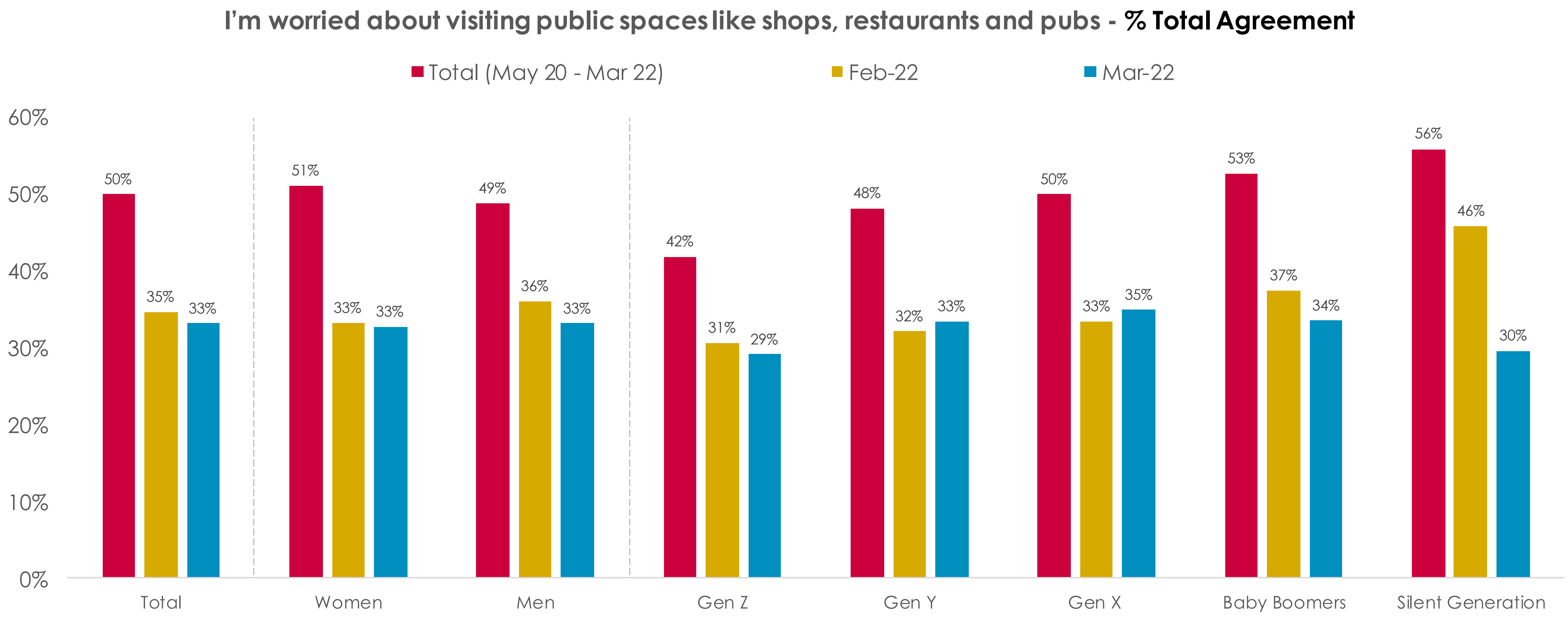
Pandemic cynicism remains low amongst older generations

- Gen Z and Gen Y remain considerably more likely to adopt a cynical outlook than Baby Boomers (15% to 12%) and Silent Generation (12% to 9%)
- Men and women see the same increase in cynicism this month, with men continuing to be slightly more likely to adopt this view



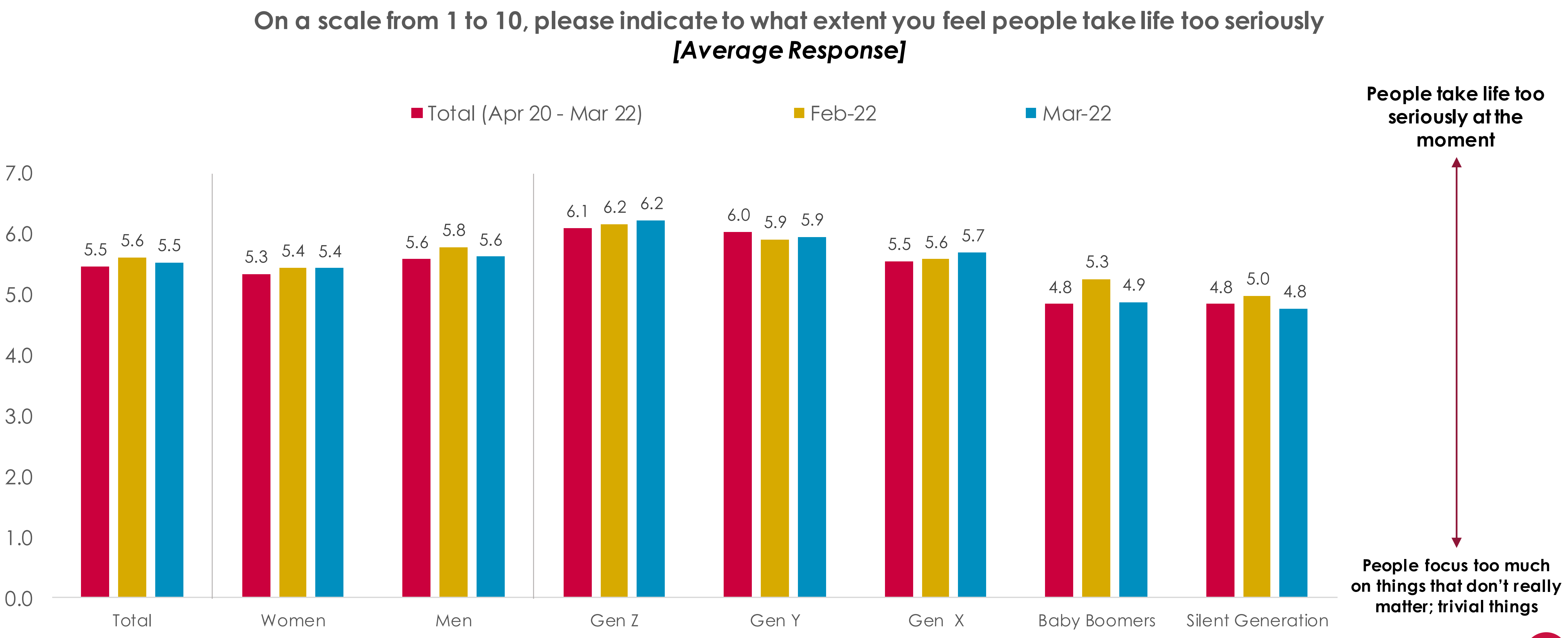
Concerns about public spaces drop sharply amongst over 70s this month

- Proportion of Silent Generation feeling worried about visiting shops and restaurants down 16% this month (46% to 30%)
- Men and women continue to adopt a similar level of concern about public spaces as each other



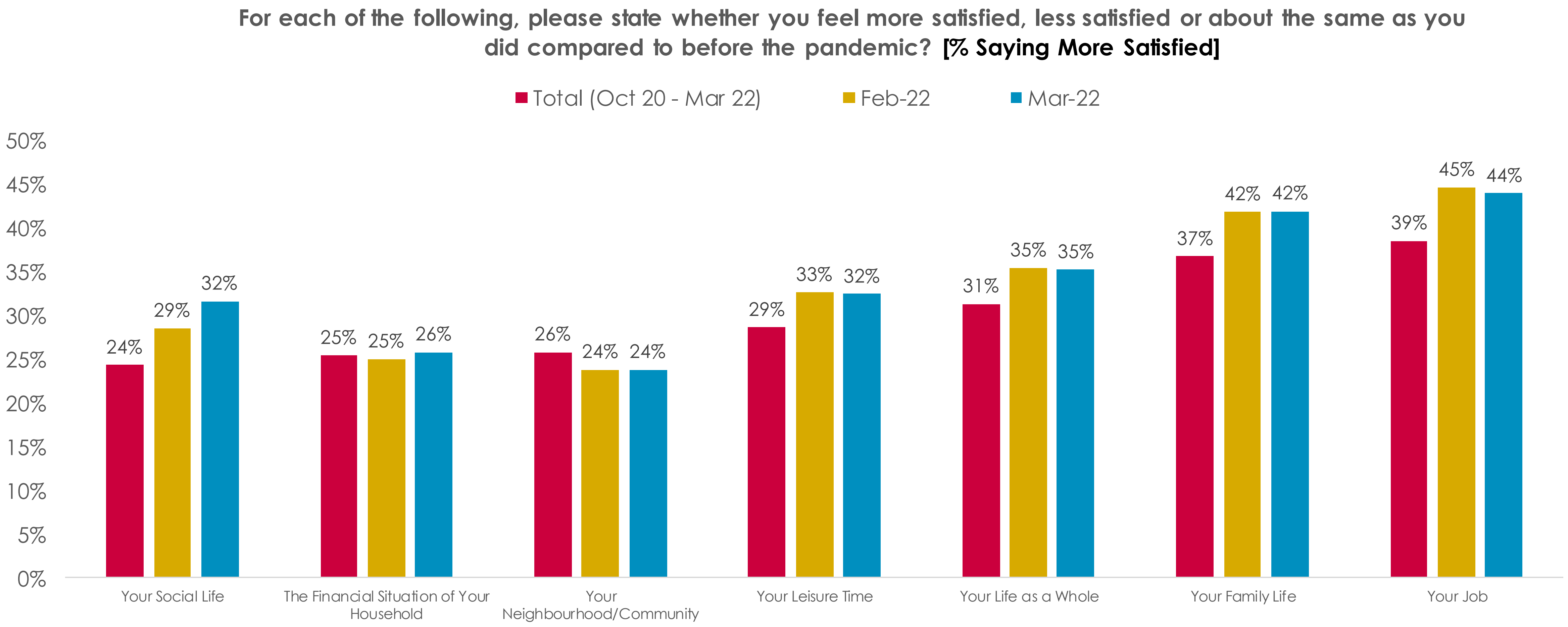
Sense of New Seriousness still far more prominent for older cohorts

- Average scores for Baby Boomers and Silent Generation decline this month, indicating a greater sense of seriousness
- Gen X experience the opposite trend this month, seeing a 0.1 point rise up, although they remain more serious than Gen Z and Gen Y



Satisfaction with aspects of life compared to pre-pandemic remains high

- Proportion more satisfied with their social life compared to pre-pandemic levels is up 3% this month and up 8% compared to pandemic average
- More than four in ten are still more satisfied than pre-pandemic with both the family life and their job

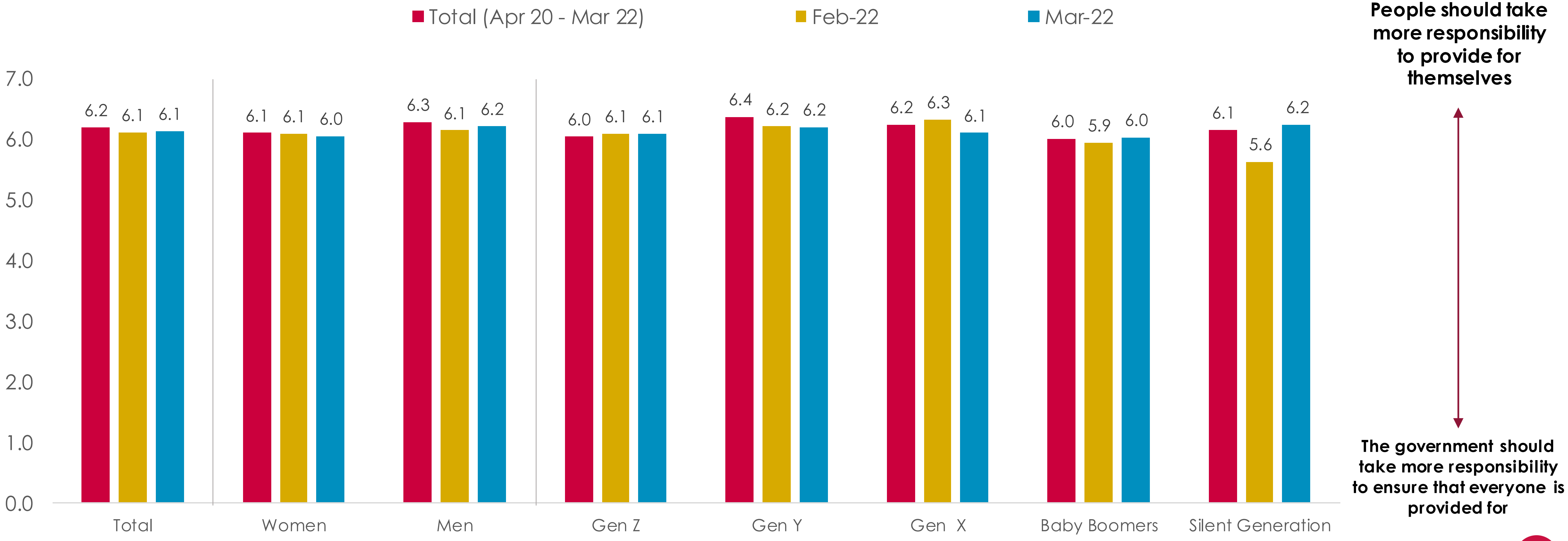


Priorities

Shift towards sense of greater personal responsibility amongst over 70s

- Average score for the Silent Generation up 0.6 points from 5.6 to 6.2 this month and now higher than pandemic average
- Slight rise in demand for greater Government responsibility amongst Gen X this month – who also adopt high levels of financial concern

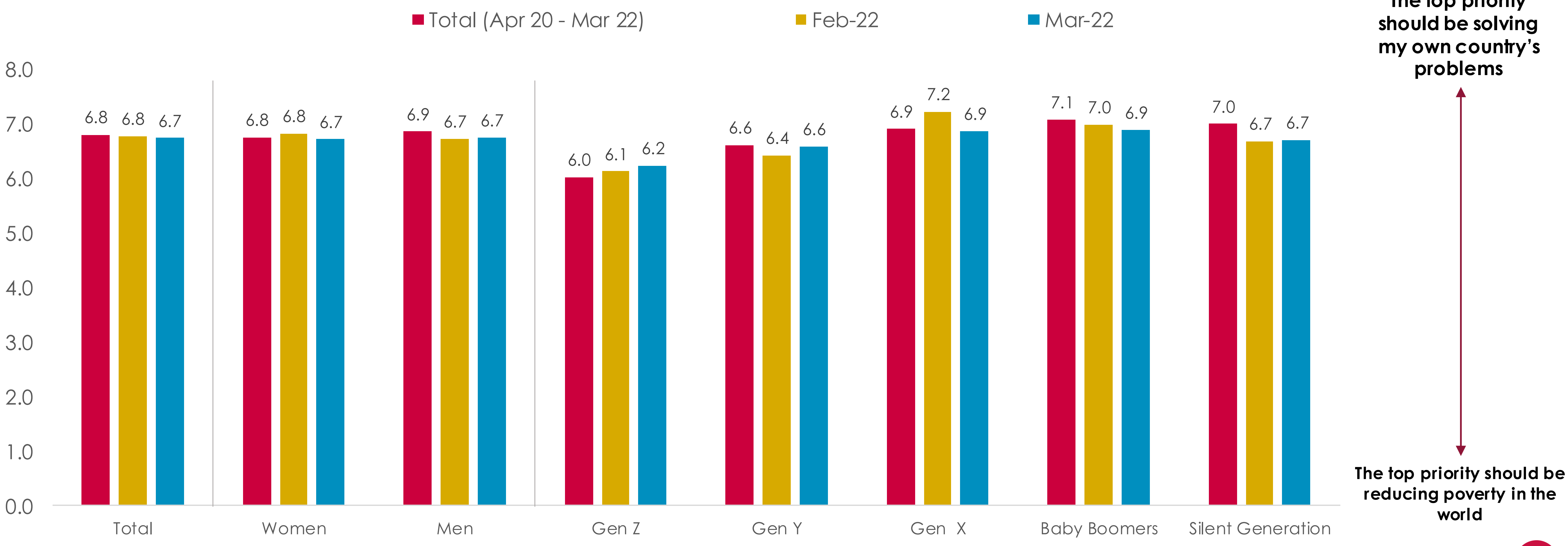
On a scale from 1 to 10, please indicate to what extent you feel it is the Government's responsibility to ensure everybody is provided for ***[Average Response]***



Russian invasion yet to have impact on priorities for resolving domestic issues

- Average scores overall down just 0.1 points this month, with majority still in favour of prioritising domestic issues
- Likelihood to favour resolving of world poverty more commonly seen amongst younger generations

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



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.

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