

UNDERSTANDING
SCOTLAND 

ECONOMIC ATTITUDES DURING THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

FEBRUARY 2023

ABOUT UNDERSTANDING SCOTLAND

Understanding Scotland is a quarterly survey tool measuring the most important facets of our lives and decision-making in Scotland: our society, economy, and environment.

The survey was produced in partnership between the David Hume Institute and the Diffley Partnership and invitations were issued online using the ScotPulse panel. Fieldwork was conducted between the 6th - 8th February 2023, and received 2,409 responses from the adult population, aged 16+, across Scotland. Results are weighted to the Scottish population (2020 estimates) by age and sex.



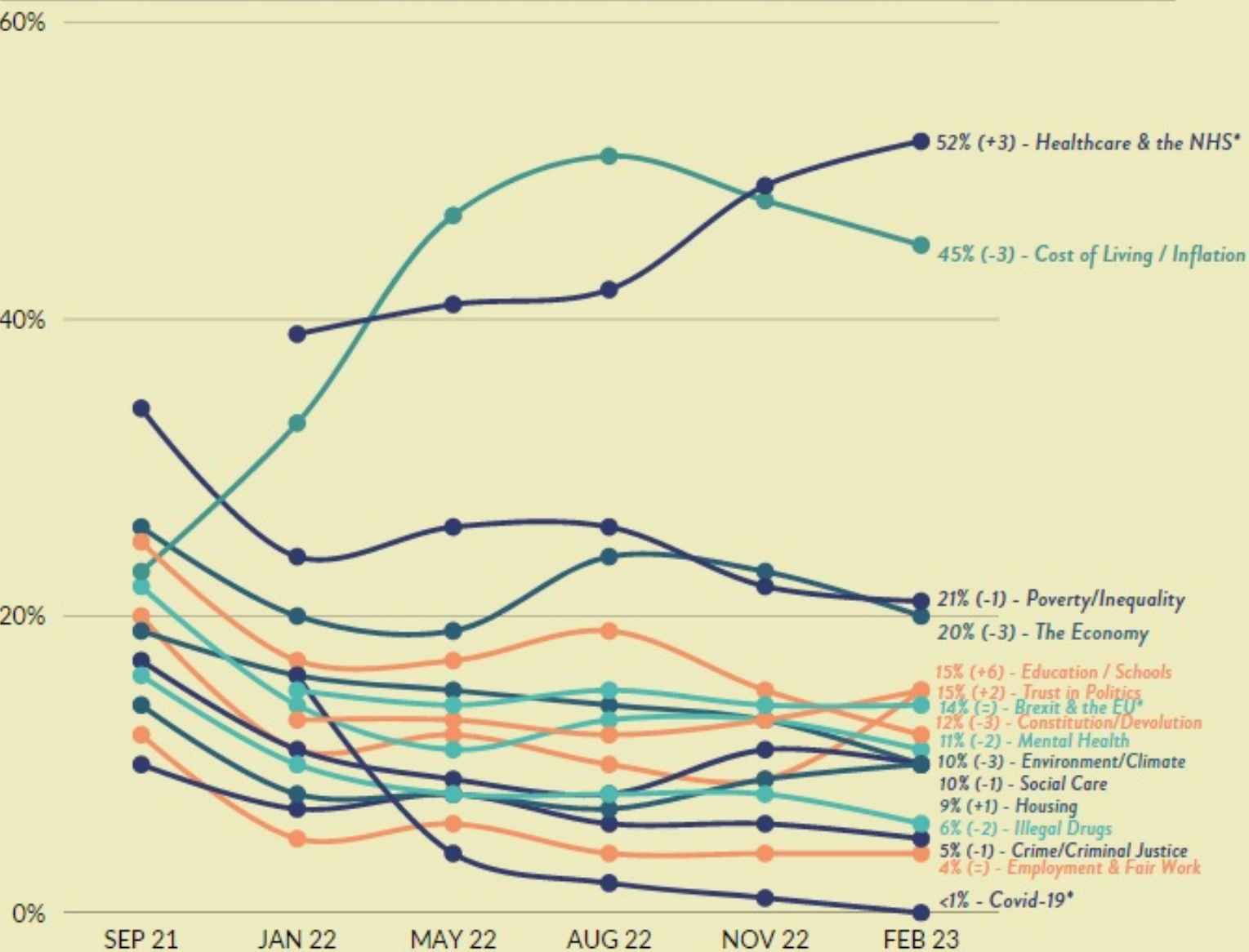
UNDERSTANDING SCOTLAND

A NEW SURVEY FOR SCOTLAND

ECONOMY
February 2023

PRIORITIES & ISSUES OVER TIME

Proportion of respondents citing each matter as one of the top three issues facing Scotland

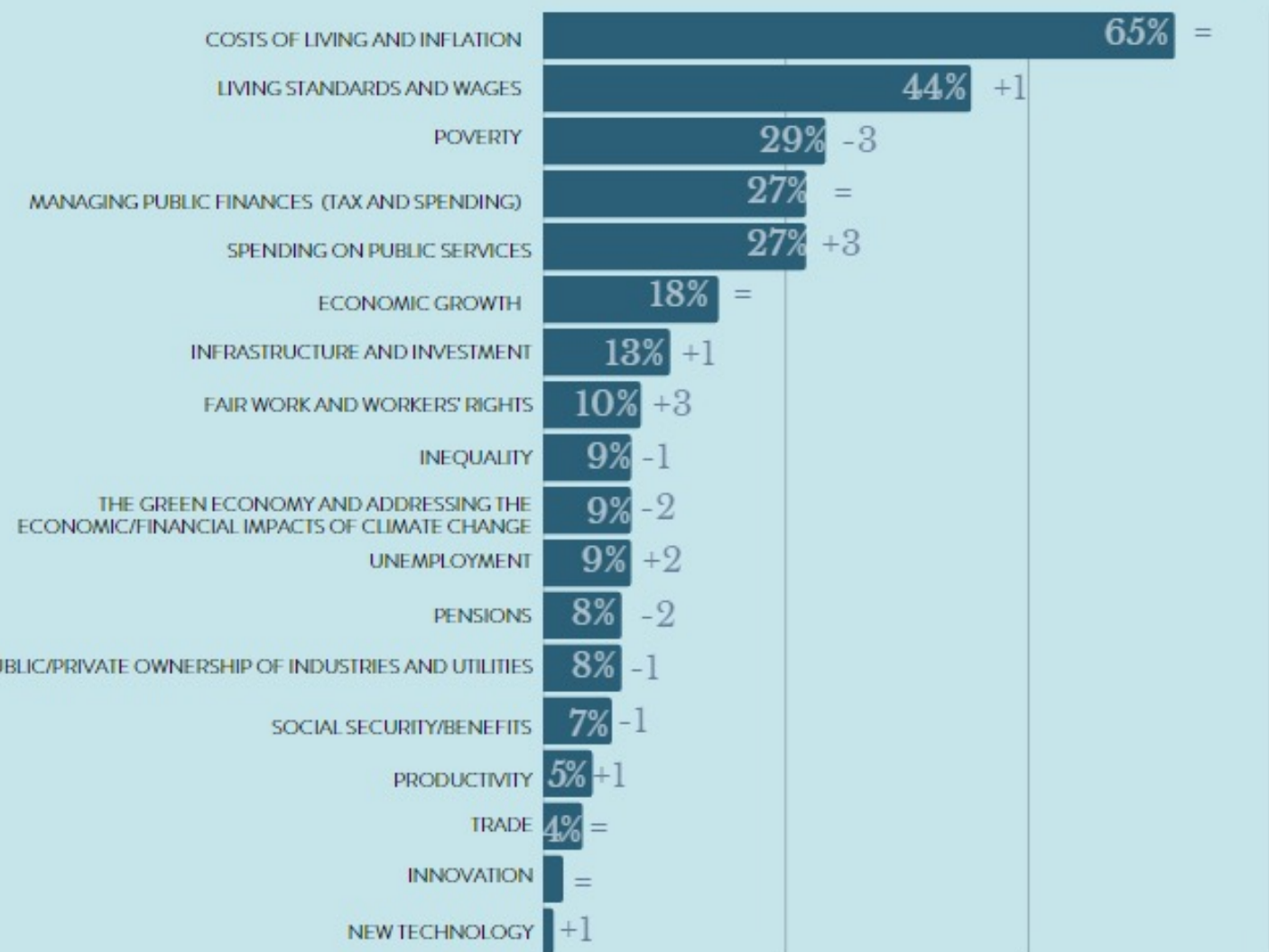


THE NHS AND COST OF LIVING CRISIS TOP SCOTS' PRIORITIES

And what do you think are the three most important issues facing Scotland today? (Only answer options with data points $\geq 10\%$ shown)
 N.B. An asterisk denotes a new or changed answer item since the first wave in September 2021. Changes in brackets since previous quarter

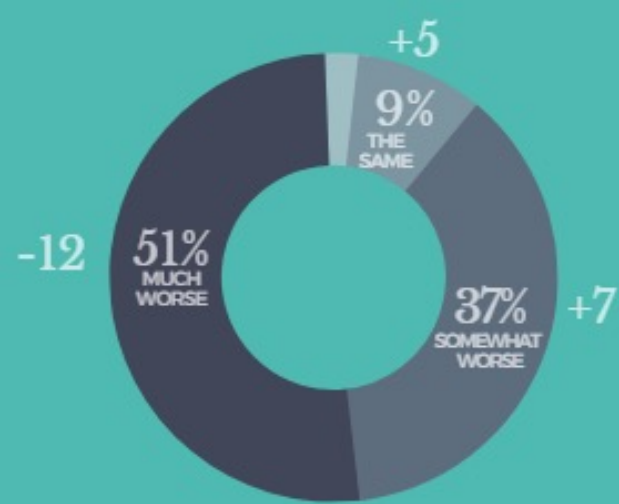
ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL PRIORITIES

Proportion of respondents citing each item as being among the top three issues facing the Scottish economy



COST OF LIVING AND INFLATION REMAINS THE PUBLIC'S TOP ECONOMIC PRIORITY

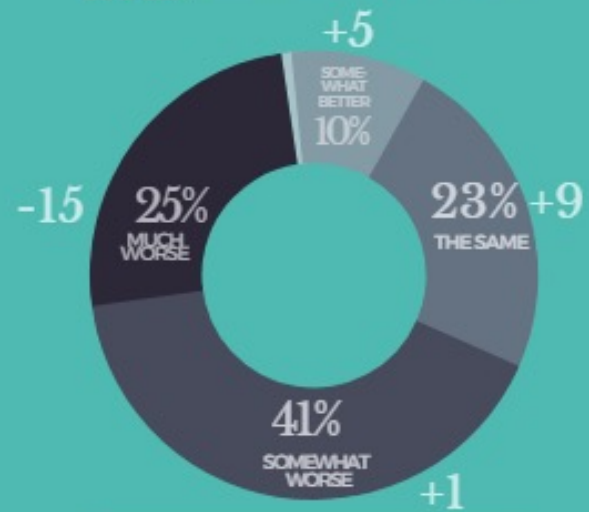
Thinking specifically about economic and financial issues, which of the following do you think are the three most important issues facing the Scottish economy? Numbers outside bars represent percentage point change from November 2022



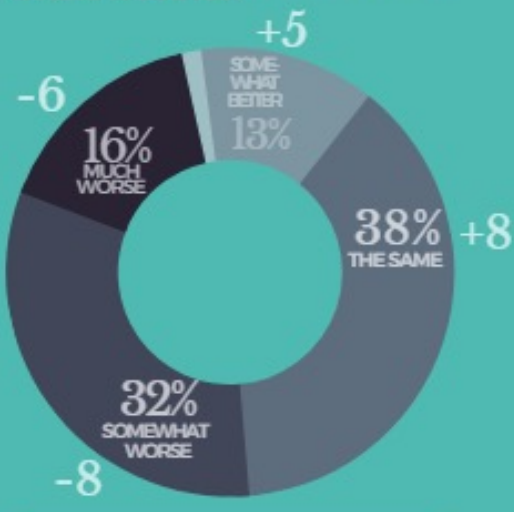
Compared to the past 12 months, do you believe that general economic conditions are better or worse now?



Compared to the past 12 months, do you believe that your own financial situation/circumstances are better or worse now?



Compared to now, do you believe that general economic conditions will be better or worse over the next 12 months?



Compared to now, do you believe that your own financial circumstances will be better or worse over the next 12 months?

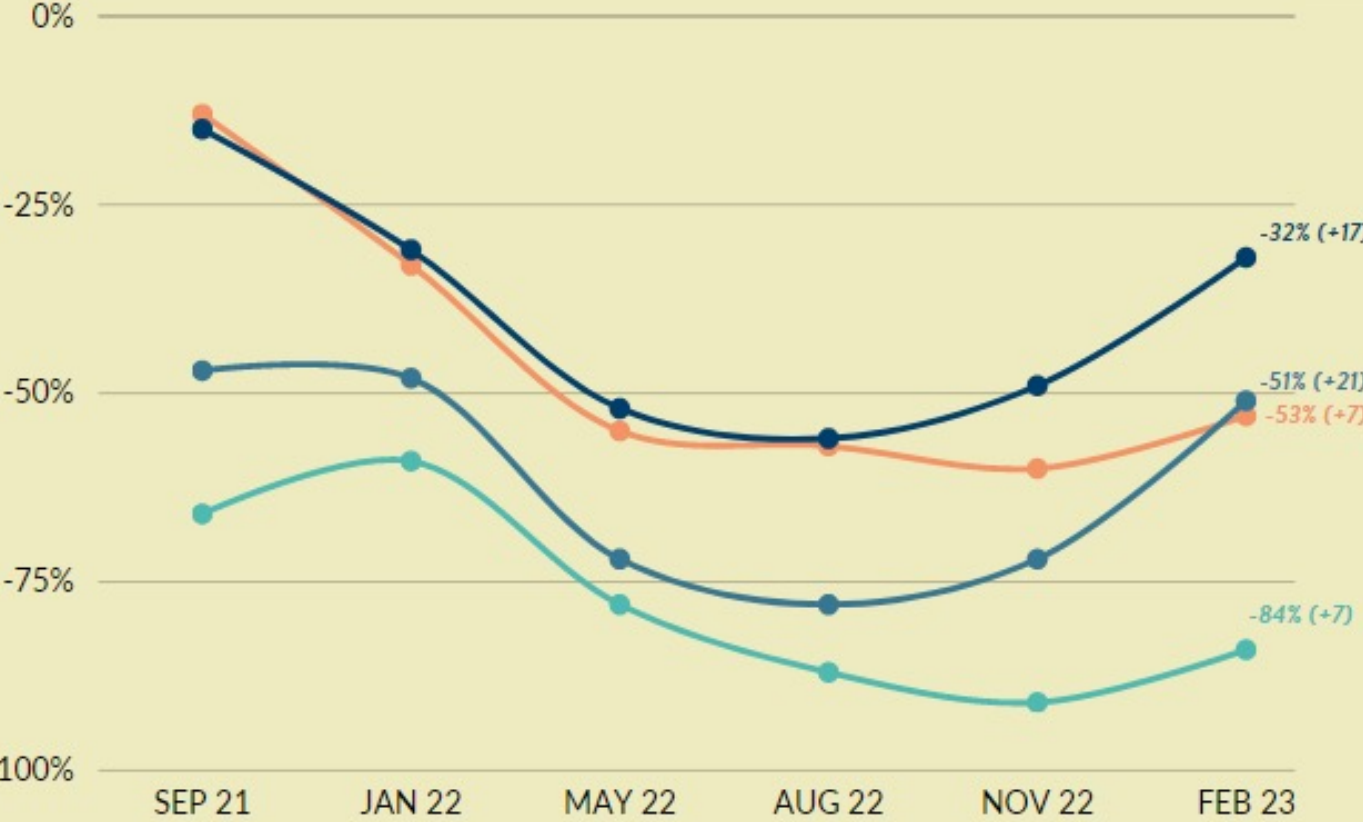
'Don't know' answers excluded. Numbers outside donut charts represent change from the previous wave

REFLECTIONS ON THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ECONOMY REMAIN OVERWHELMINGLY NEGATIVE.....

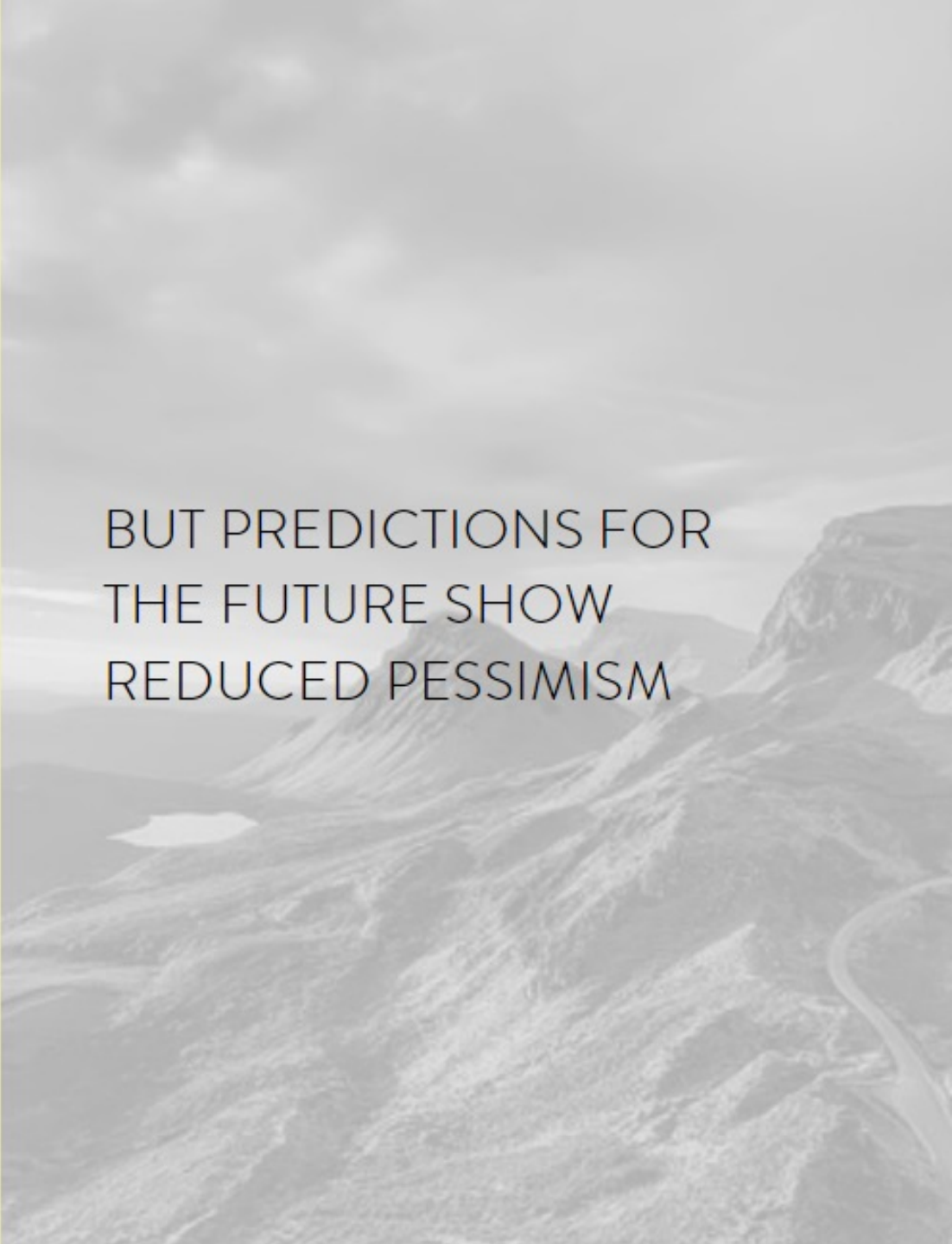
ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL OPTIMISM OVER TIME

'Net' proportion of people reporting/predicting an improvement in financial and economic conditions minus the proportion reporting/predicting a deterioration.

- Compared to the past 12 months, do you believe that general economic conditions are better or worse now?
- Compared to the past 12 months, do you believe that your own financial situation/circumstances are better or worse now?
- Compared to now, do you believe that general economic conditions will be better or worse over the next 12 months?
- Compared to now, do you believe that your own financial circumstances will be better or worse over the next 12 months?



Changes in brackets since the previous quarter

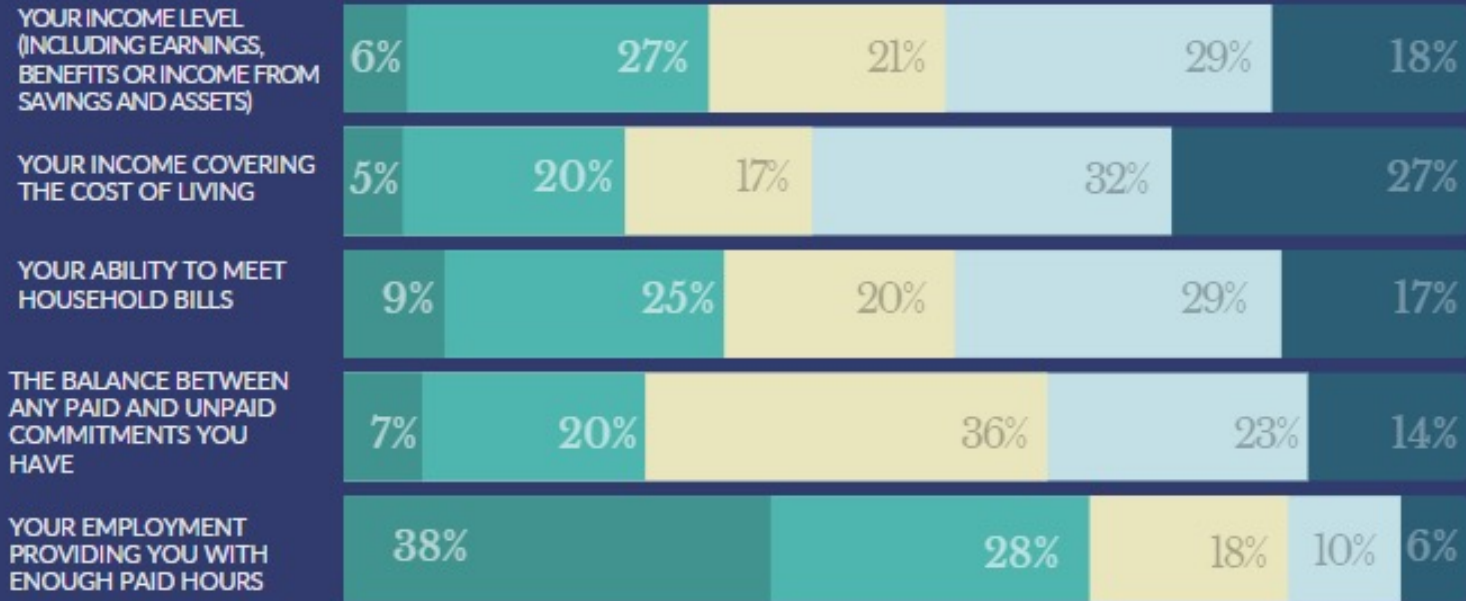


BUT PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE SHOW REDUCED PESSIMISM

WORK AND INCOME SATISFACTION

Proportions of respondents reporting satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their income levels and adequacy, and their work-life balance (excluding those answering 'Don't know' or 'Not applicable')

Very satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
Somewhat satisfied Somewhat dissatisfied

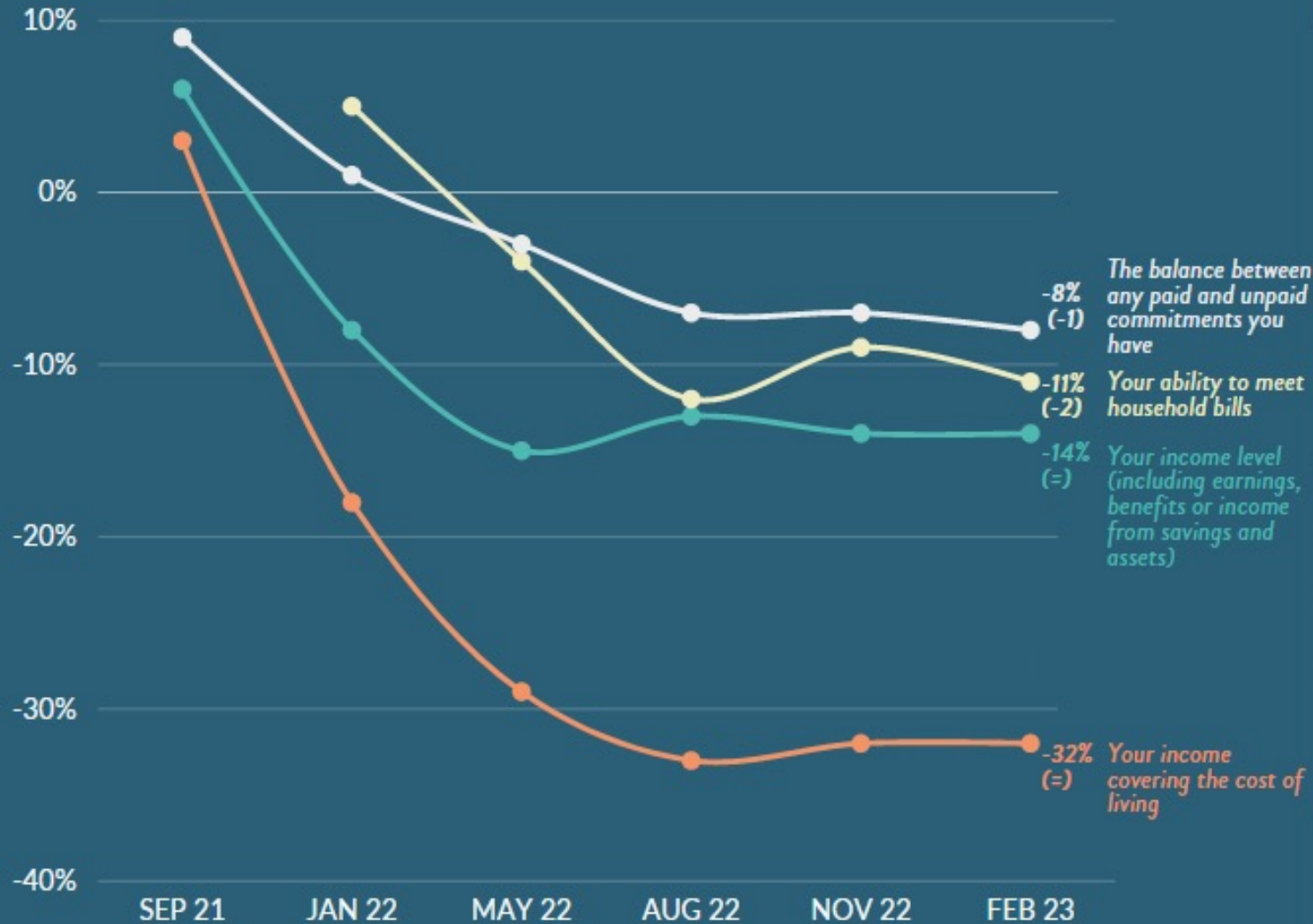


How satisfied are you with the following?

INCOME
DISSATISFACTION
REMAINS HIGH

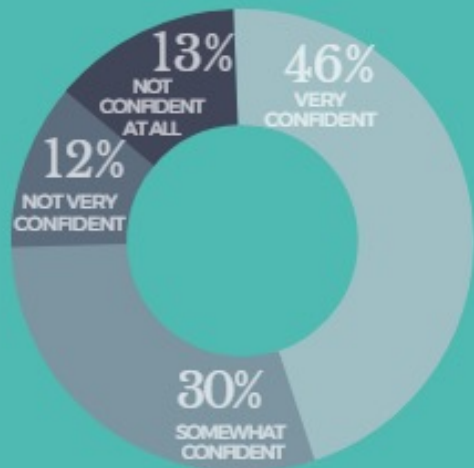
INCOME ADEQUACY OVER TIME

Net satisfaction with income levels/adequacy and work-life balance. ('Net' proportion of people reporting satisfaction minus the proportion reporting dissatisfaction)

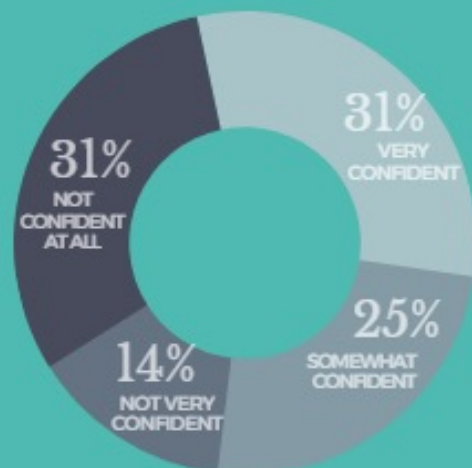


How satisfied are you with the following? Changes in brackets since the previous quarter

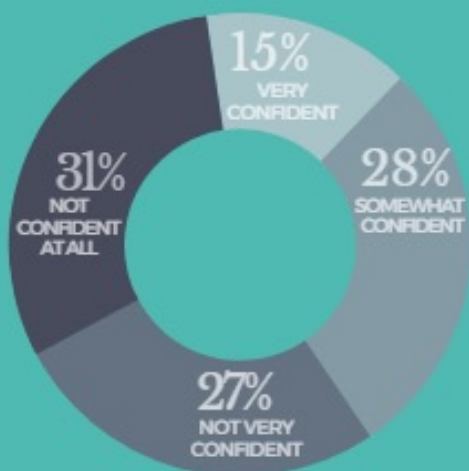
VIEWS ON INCOME ADEQUACY REMAIN FAIRLY STABLE



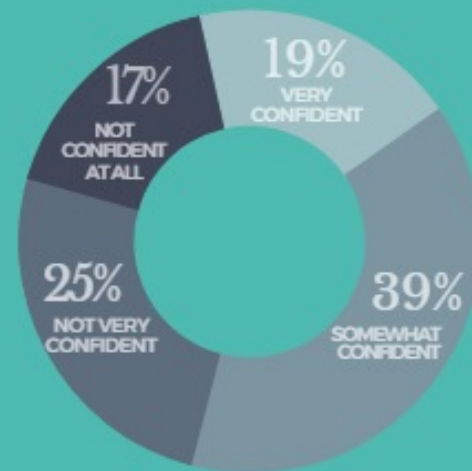
Thinking about your own financial circumstances, how confident are you that you could pay for an emergency expense of £100 without having to take out a loan/borrowing



Thinking about your own financial circumstances, how confident are you that you could pay for an emergency expense of £500 without having to take out a loan/borrowing



Thinking about your own financial circumstances, how confident are you that you could get another job/a new job within 3 months if necessary



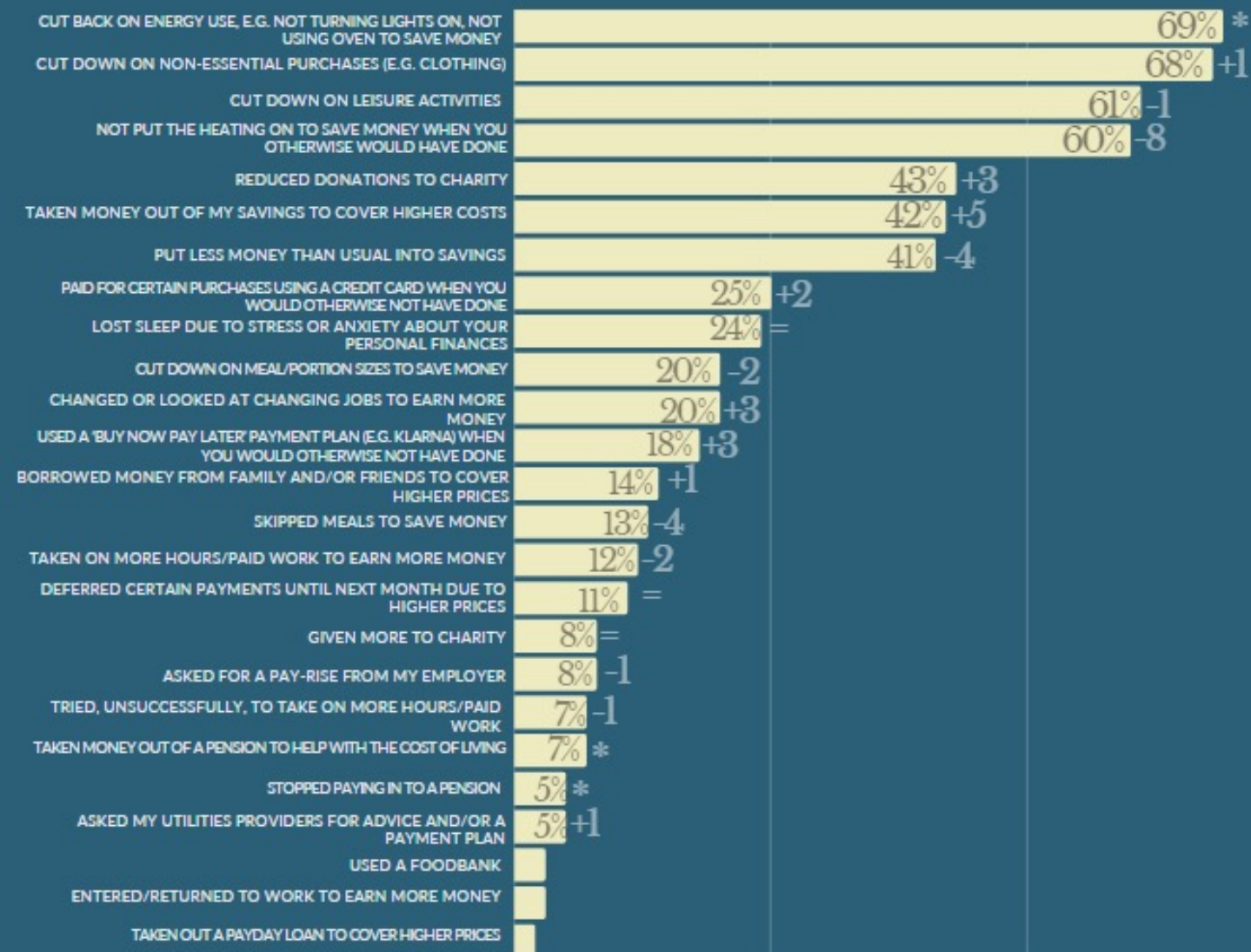
Thinking about your own financial circumstances, how confident are you that you could pay your housing costs (rent or mortgage) if they increase in the next 6 months

'Don't know' and not applicable answers excluded.

FINANCIAL FRAGILITY IS ALARMINGLY HIGH

RESPONSES TO THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Proportions of respondents saying that they have done each of the following in response to rising prices and inflation



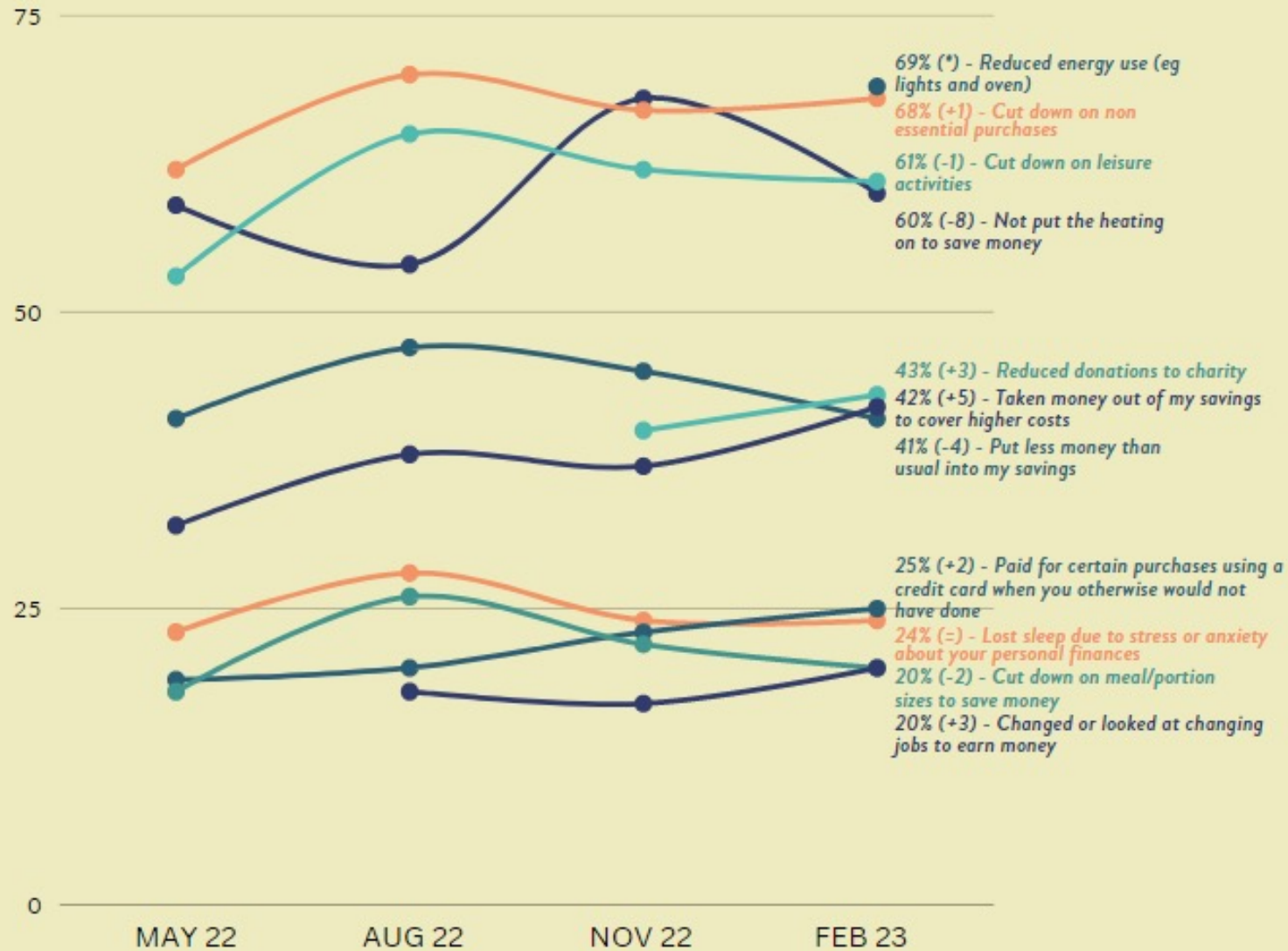
THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE REPORT REDUCING ENERGY USE AND/OR DISCRETIONARY SPENDING TO COMBAT HIGHER PRICES

Which of the following have you done in response to rising prices and inflation?

Changes from most recent data point displayed outside bar (*Has not previously been asked)

RESPONSES TO THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS OVER TIME

Proportion of respondents reporting doing each action to combat rising inflation



THE PREVALENCE OF DIFFERENT MONEY SAVING BEHAVIOURS REMAINS STABLE, WITH SLIGHT SEASONAL FLUCTUATIONS

Which of the following have you done in response to rising prices and inflation? (Only answer options with data points >=20% shown)
 N.B. An asterisk denotes a new or changed answer item. Changes in brackets since previous quarter

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SCOTLAND 

THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING

FEBRUARY 2023

