

IPSOS COST OF LIVING MONITOR

A 32-country Ipsos
Global Advisor Survey
New Zealand report

May 2024

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Welcome to the sixth edition of the Ipsos Cost of Living Monitor, a 32-country survey which tracks how people around the world feel about their finances during the polycrisis.

This is the fourth time it has run in New Zealand.

Around the world inflation rates in many countries are beginning to fall and people are starting to notice. But a feel good factor is a long way away. In our tracking research, most consumers still “feel” higher prices. Even in the most optimistic parts of the world, barely a quarter tell us they are “living comfortably”.

So while we began 2024 with [people less worried than they were about rising interest rates](#), in the second quarter of year, forecasts for rate cuts are being pushed further ahead and central bankers are not ruling out further rate increases.

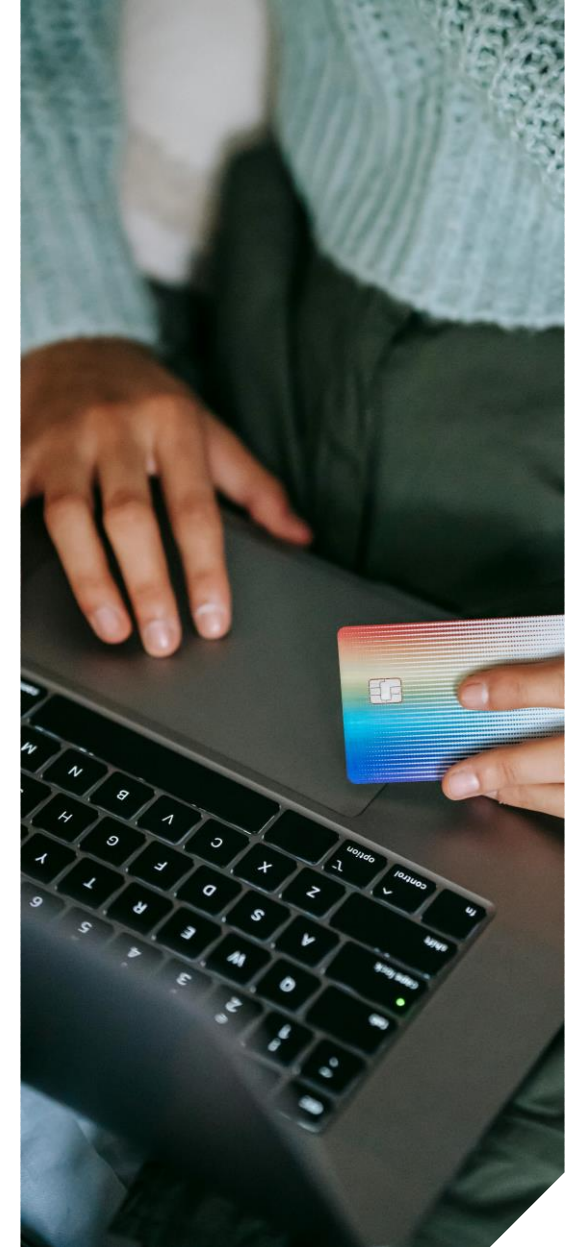
At the same time, in many countries, the proportion “finding it difficult” to manage their finances remains as high as ever. Many people don’t think they will have more money to spend any time soon. For every person who says their disposable income will rise over the next year, we find another who expects it to fall.

Overall, there is generally a clear correlation between GDP per capita and how people feel right now, with less

optimism in the less affluent countries.

As we approach the halfway point in what has been called [the biggest election year ever](#), cost-of-living concerns, and governments’ handling of it, are often the defining issue in the minds of voters. The challenge for politicians, even as economies improve, is translating this into a public recognition of progress.

In the US, with November’s election fast-approaching, many Americans still feel cost of living is a huge problem, whatever the more positive macro-economic indicators may say. The polarisation of the political debate



Introduction: the return to normal?

and of media coverage, may explain this. As the Financial Times has recently reminded us, there is [far more coverage of rising prices when they are high](#) than when they are low, and Republican voters will be exposed to more negative news than Democrats.

In America, despite the relative strength of the economy, political belief seems to now trump economic facts when consumers judge the economy.

This [separation of reality from perception](#) is something Ipsos has measured for over a decade, but whereas it has always applied to crime,

to see it so starkly visible on economic progress and numbers like inflation is something relatively new.

In the following pages, we highlight some of the key themes from the data, followed by the results for all 32 countries in the survey. There is much food for thought – including how people’s on the ground experiences collide with today’s national economic statistics. We look forward to discussing with you what it all means for your country, category or industry sector.

Ben Page, CEO, Ipsos

To learn more about consumer attitudes to inflation and explore previous issues of the *Ipsos Cost of Living Monitor* go to:

<https://www.ipsos.com/en/inflation>

Keep in touch with how public attitudes and concerns around the world are changing by bookmarking our [Global Consumer Confidence Index](#) and [What Worries the World](#) web pages.

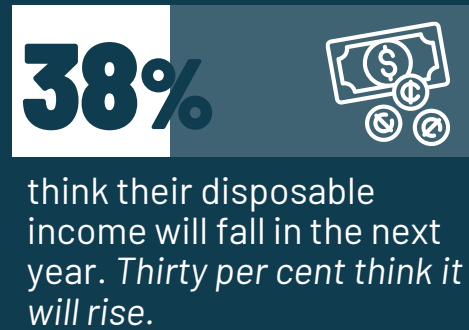
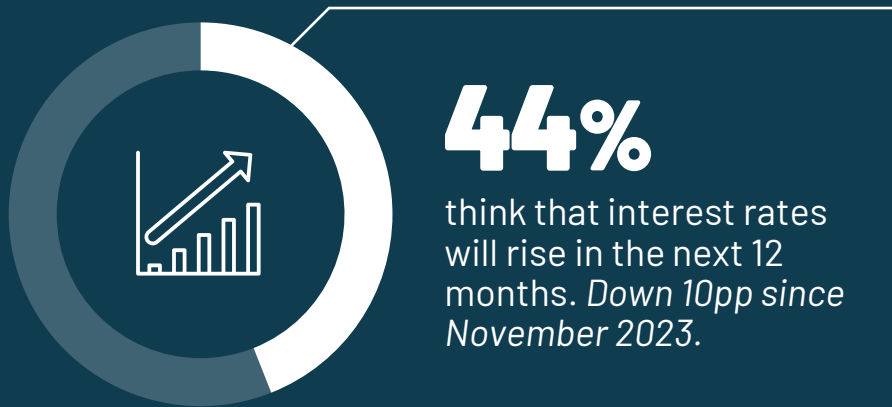
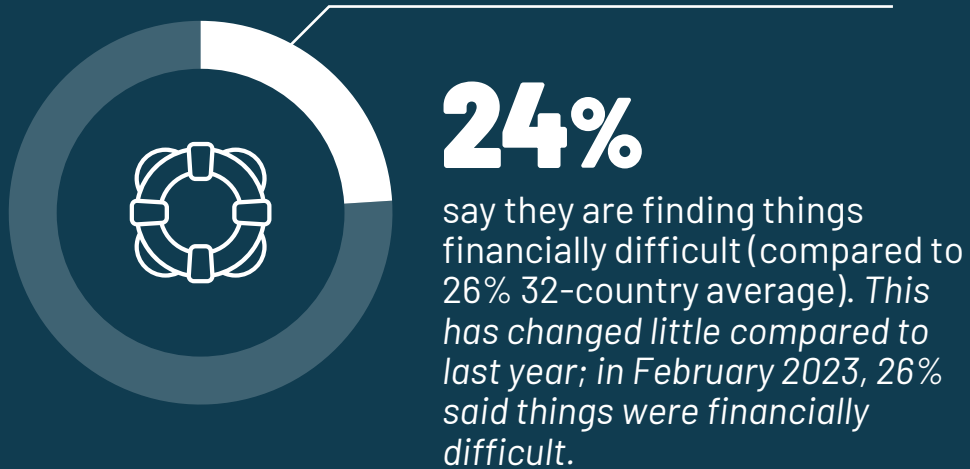


Summary





New Zealand at a glance



Key findings globally



Financial struggles remain

Since we started the *Ipsos Cost of Living Monitor* in 2022, the number of people finding it financially difficult has changed little (29% in June 2022, 26% in April 2024). The US, Canada, Australia and Italy still have as many saying they are struggling as they did two years ago.



Inflation expectations are easing a little

One sign of good news is fewer people think the rate of inflation will rise in their country. Fifty-eight per cent think inflation will continue to increase over the next year, 17pp lower than in June 2022. Despite this few think the rate of inflation will fall (14% across 32 countries).



Improving conditions in some places

While the number struggling may be changing little, there are some countries, in particular in Northern Europe, where the proportion saying they are financially comfortable is rising.



Have interest rates peaked?

The proportion who think interest rates will increase is falling. Forty-eight per cent think interest rates will rise, down from 58% last autumn and 64% back in June 2022. Twelve countries have seen a double-digit decline on this sentiment since November 2023.



But higher inflation expected to stay until at least mid-2025

In 29 of the 32 countries surveyed a majority think it will take more than a year for inflation to return to normal or that rising prices will never return to normal. A growing number in France, Belgium and the Netherlands think this will be the case.



Consumer confidence remains muted

Twenty-nine per cent think they will have less money to spend in the next year, while 30% think their disposable income will rise. While these figures are an improvement to the pessimism people felt in 2022, it has changed little in the last 12 months.

How people are feeling now

Finding it difficult



24% are finding it financially difficult in NZ

This figure has changed little in the last year. However, back in May 2022, 20% said they were finding it financially difficult, and by February 2023 this figure stood at 26%. [The Ipsos New Zealand Issues Monitor](#) has shown that inflation / cost of living has been the number one issue facing our country since February 2022.

Looking at the rest of the world, there are [big differences by country in how people are doing](#). In countries like Türkiye, Poland, Great Britain and Germany the number struggling appears to have peaked. While in the US, Canada, Australia, and Italy, the proportion who are finding it difficult is as high as it's been in the last two years.

Living comfortably

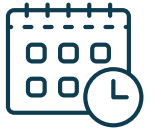


45% say they are living comfortably/doing alright in NZ, compared to 39% global country average

Once again, we see big differences by country. This time last year, only 16% in Poland said they were comfortable/alright, now 31% say this is the case. India, Germany, France, Great Britain and Indonesia have all seen increases in those comfortable/alright.

Meanwhile, the reverse is true in the US, Canada, Belgium, and Brazil, with the number doing at least alright falling. Looking at the US, in this election year, [Americans say inflation is their number one issue](#) and the last 12 months have seen those defining themselves as living comfortably/alright decline from 56% to 43%.

When will inflation end?



52% think inflation in NZ will return to normal after the next year.

Looking at those who think it will be at least 12 months before normal returns (combining “after the next year” and “never”), this sentiment is higher in Europe. France, Belgium and the Netherlands are in the top five for thinking it will be [at least a year before inflation returns to its previous levels](#) (79%, 75% and 73% respectively).

Globally 21% think it will never return to normal compared to 11% in New Zealand.

Expectations for the future

Inflation



Compared to previous years, fewer New Zealanders expect the rate of inflation to rise in the next year

Despite this, over half (56%) of New Zealanders still think inflation will continue to rise in the new year. This is compared to 58% across the countries surveyed. [This is the lowest level we have recorded in this survey](#) and is now 17pp lower than it was in June 2022.

While fewer now think the rate of inflation will increase, not many think it will fall. In New Zealand, 22% think it will stay about the same while 20% think it will fall a lot/little in the next year.

Money to spend?



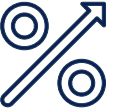
Just over 1 in 3 New Zealanders think their disposable income will fall while 1 in 4 think it will rise

38% think they will have less money to spend in the next year. This compares to the global-country average of 30%

New Zealand is among [the countries where people are most likely to feel this](#) (including Türkiye, Hungary, and Argentina).

In New Zealand, 33% think it will stay about the same while 26% think it will rise a lot/little in the next year.

Are rate cuts on their way?



Compared to previous years, fewer New Zealanders expect an interest rates rise in the next year

The proportion of New Zealanders who expect a further increase in interest rates has declined over the past two years. In New Zealand, 44% per cent think interest rates will rise, down from 54% in November 2023 and 79% in May 2022.

Twelve countries – Sweden, Great Britain, South Korea, Belgium, Italy, New Zealand, the Netherlands, France, Australia, Argentina, United States, and Singapore – have seen at least [a double-digit fall in those who expect rates to rise](#).

Why are prices still rising?

Inflation remains a global issue



79% of New Zealanders blame the global economy for inflation compared to the global-country average of 70%

New Zealand is among the countries which are most likely to blame the state of the global economy (among Indonesia, Singapore, South Korea and Ireland).

[The global economy is seen as the biggest driver of rising cost of living](#) in New Zealand ahead of our interest rates. The next biggest drivers are seen to be government policies and businesses making excessive profits.

Globally and in New Zealand, Immigration, workers' pay rises and the Covid-19 pandemic are the least likely to be seen as drivers of the cost of living crisis.

The role of interest rates



76% of New Zealanders say interest rates are fuelling inflation

This is compared to the global-country average of 68%.

South Korea, South Africa, Türkiye and Australia are countries which particularly blame [interest rates for driving the cost of living crisis](#) (81%, 80%, 78% and 78%).

Excessive profits



Two-thirds think businesses making excessive profits is driving inflation

69% of New Zealanders think businesses making excessive profits contributes a great deal/fair amount to the rising cost of living today. This is compared to the global-country average of 62%.

Globally, while many of the factors people see as driving inflation are falling, [businesses making excessive profits](#) or "greedflation", has remained at a consistent level throughout the last two years (around 65%).

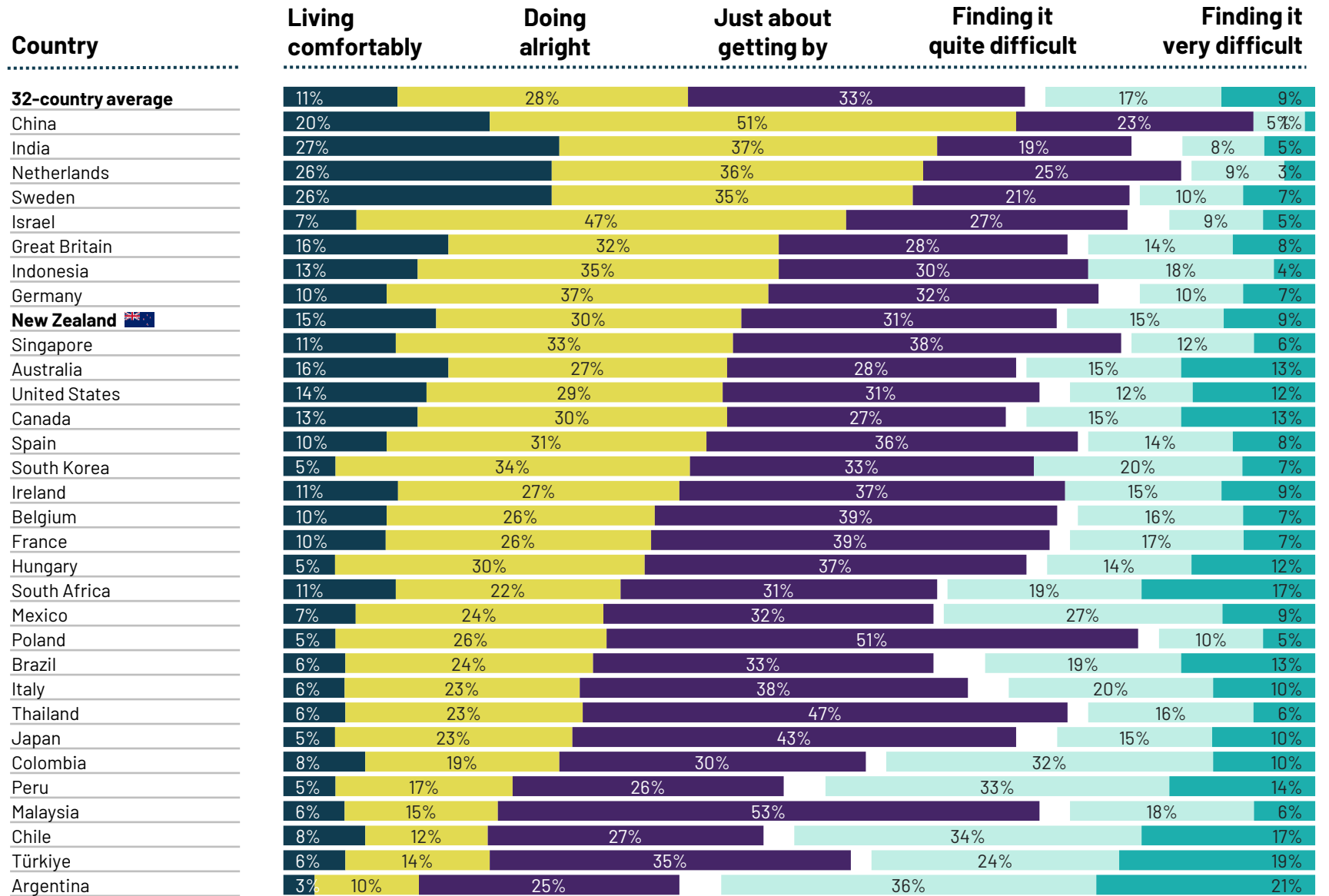
In Australia, 74% now believe businesses making excessive profits is making products and services more expensive, up from 69% last November.

Consumer perceptions and understanding



How well would you say you are managing financially these days?

Would you say you are...?



Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

How well would you say you are managing financially these days?

Would you say you are...?

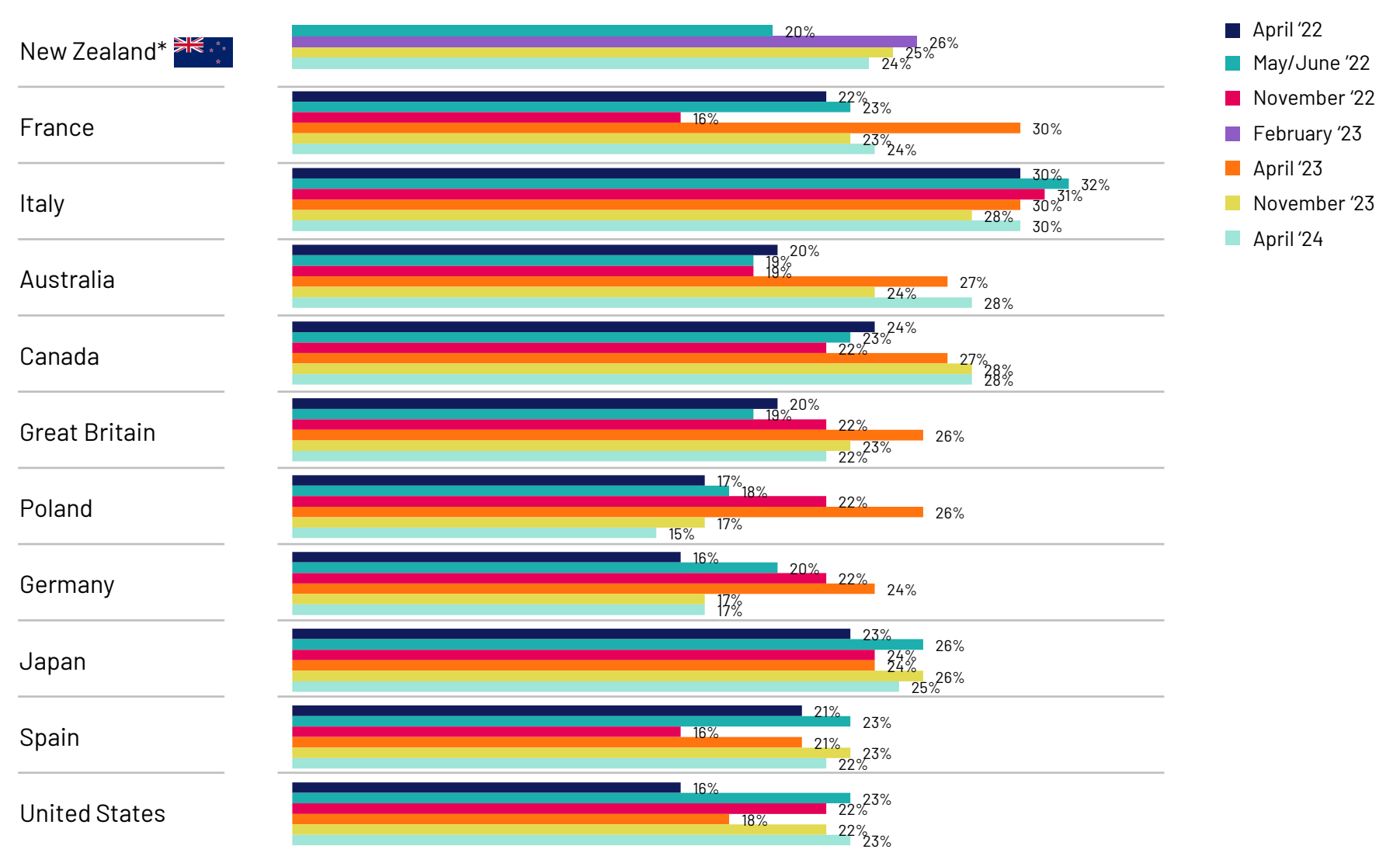
% finding it difficult/
very difficult

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024.

*Note: New Zealand was not included in global surveying prior to November '23. Ipsos New Zealand conducted surveying in February '23 and May '22.

Country

% finding it difficult/very difficult



How well would you say you are managing financially these days?

Would you say you are...?

% Living comfortably/doing alright compared with GDP per capita

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

Source for GDP per capita data: IMF



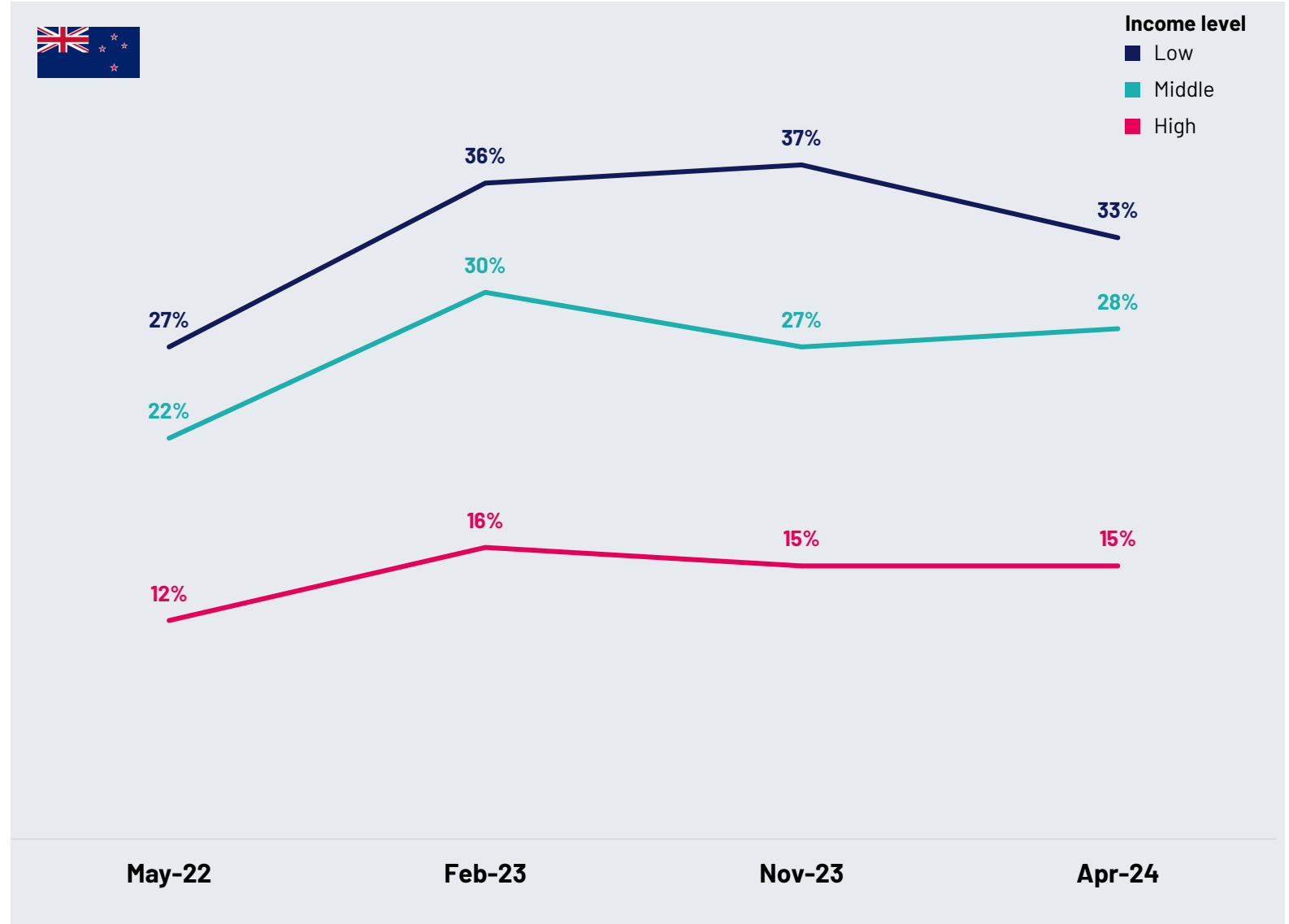
How well would you say you are managing financially these days?

Would you say you are...?

% finding it difficult/
very difficult

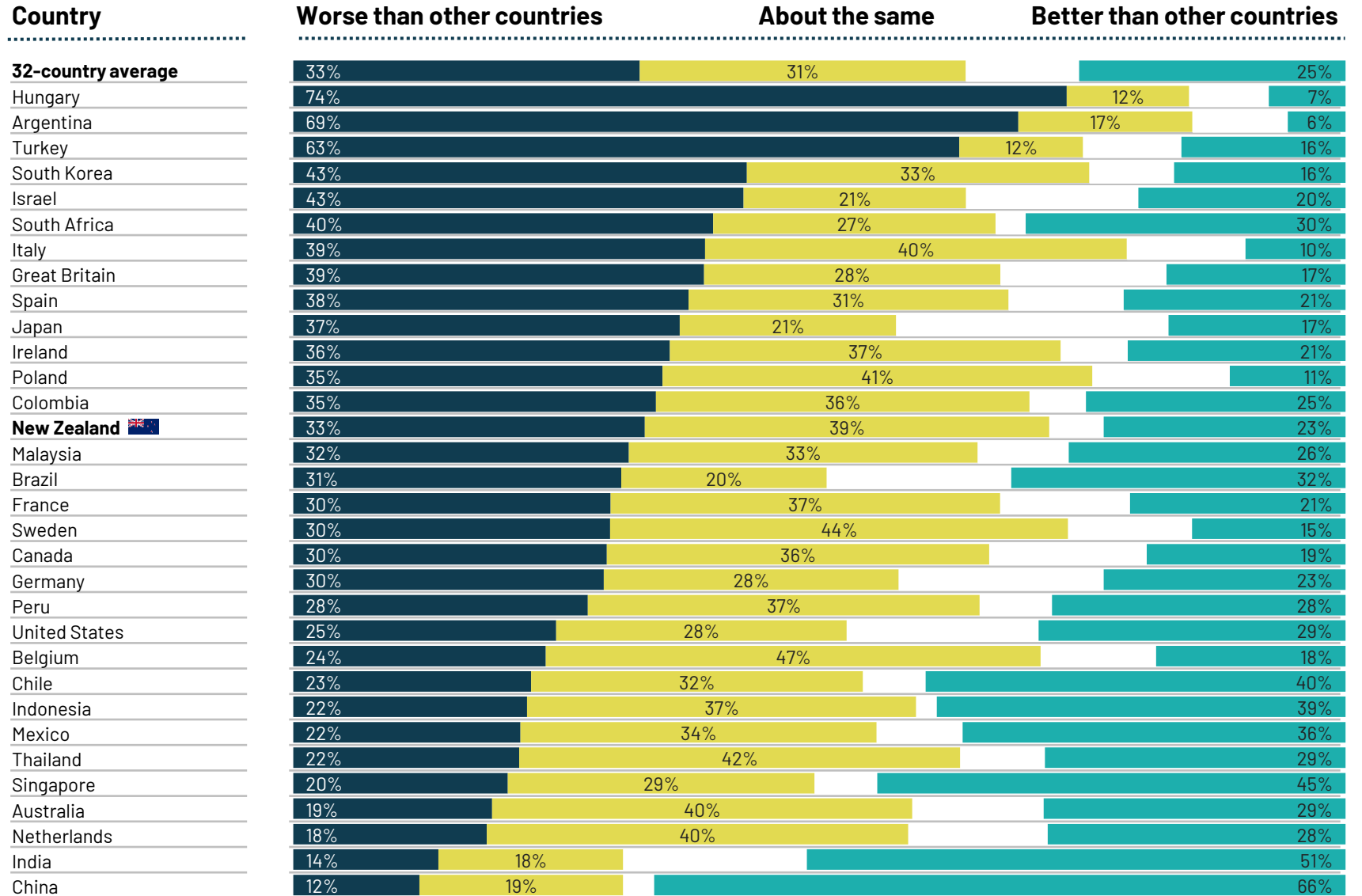
New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



Over the last few years, many countries have been experiencing what has been described as a cost-of-living crisis. How would you describe the experience in your country? **Compared with neighbouring countries our experience has been...**

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



Would you say that **the rate of inflation** in your country is higher, lower or about the same as it was at the start of this year?

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

Country

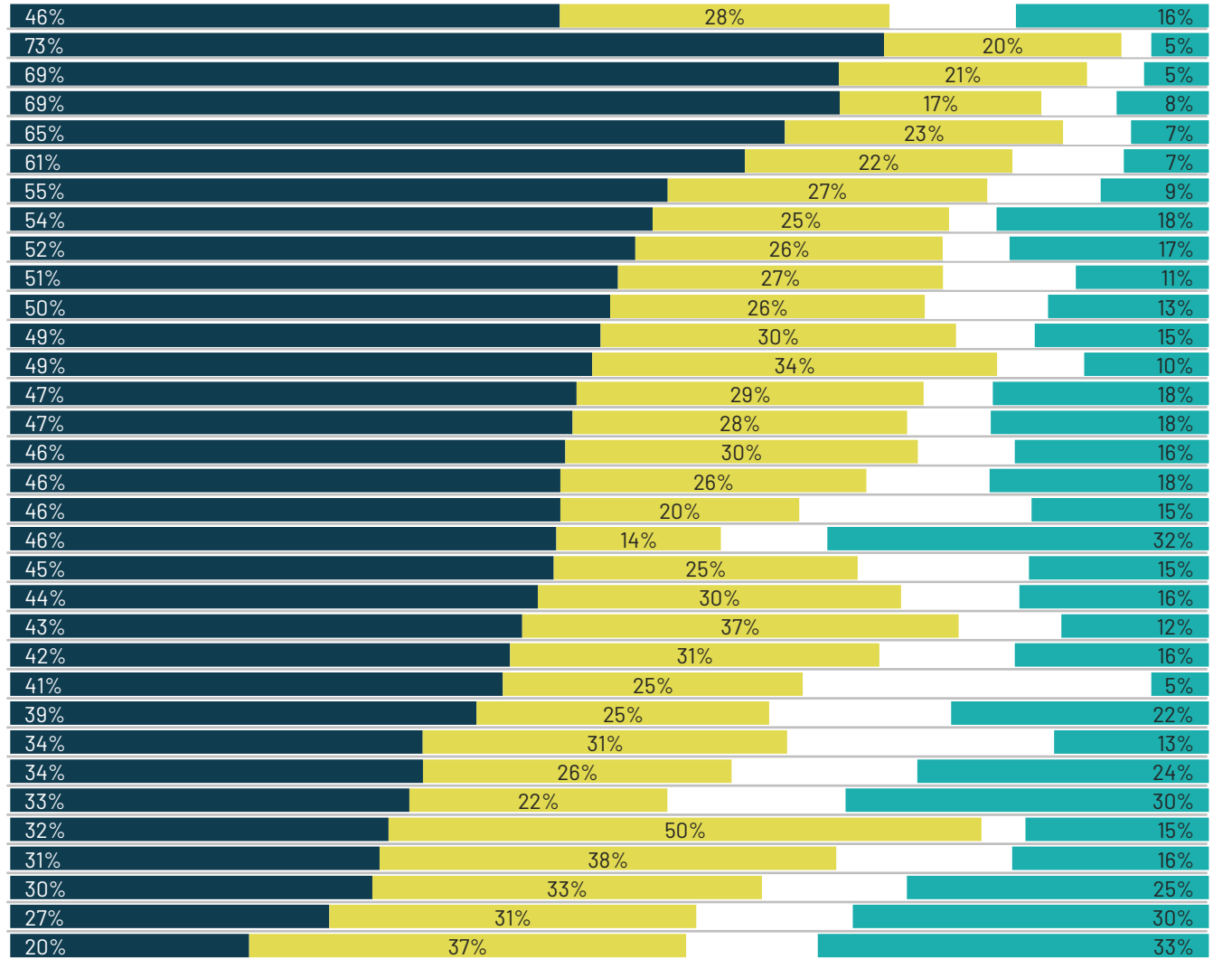
32-country average

- South Africa
- South Korea
- Türkiye
- Singapore
- Malaysia
- Thailand
- Indonesia
- Colombia
- United States
- Canada
- Hungary
- Peru
- New Zealand** 
- Ireland
- Chile
- France
- Israel
- Argentina
- Brazil
- Australia
- Mexico
- Spain
- Japan
- Belgium
- India
- Netherlands
- Great Britain
- China
- Italy
- Germany
- Poland
- Sweden

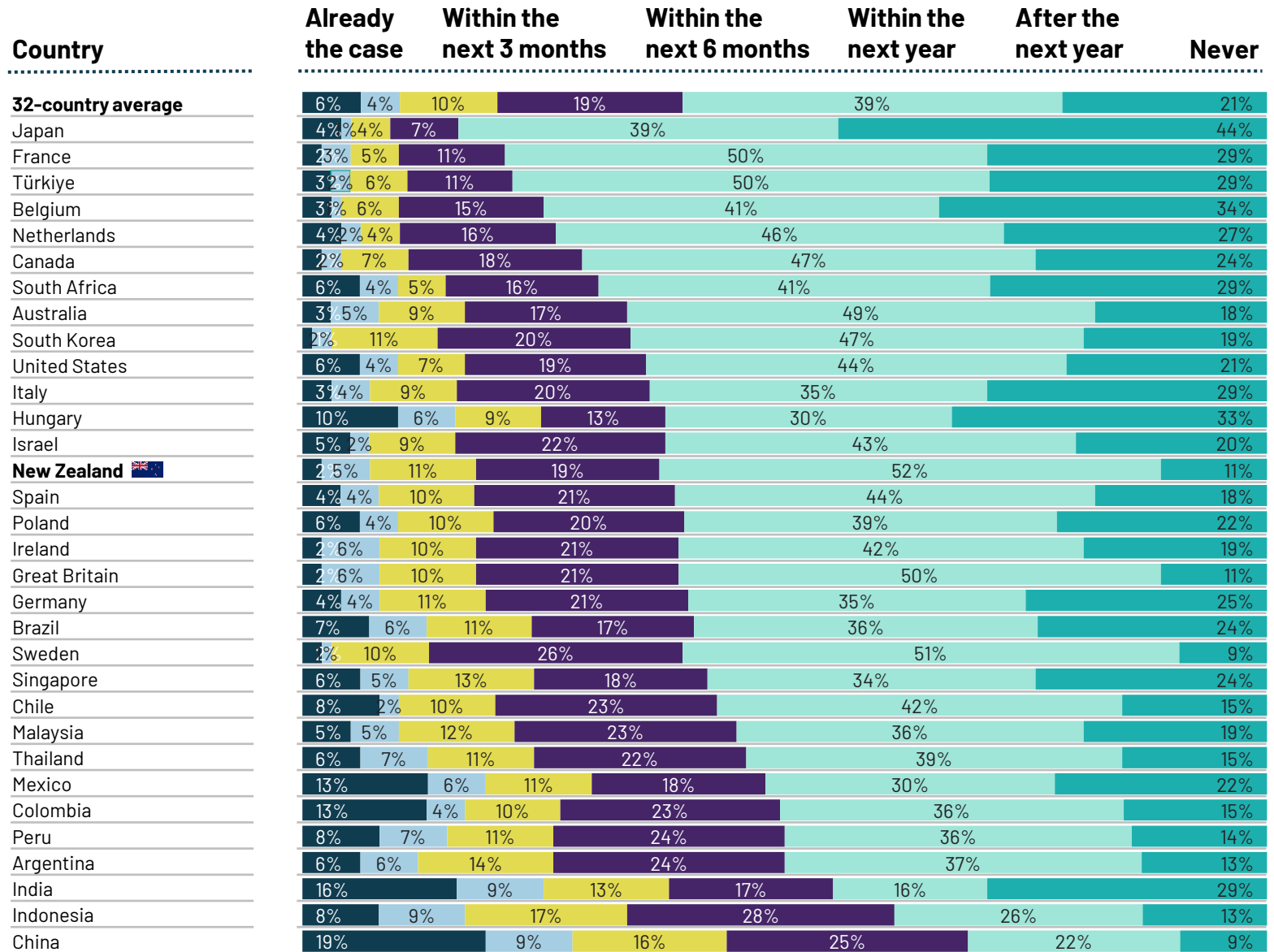
Higher

About the same

Lower



How long do you think it will take before **inflation returns to normal** in your country?

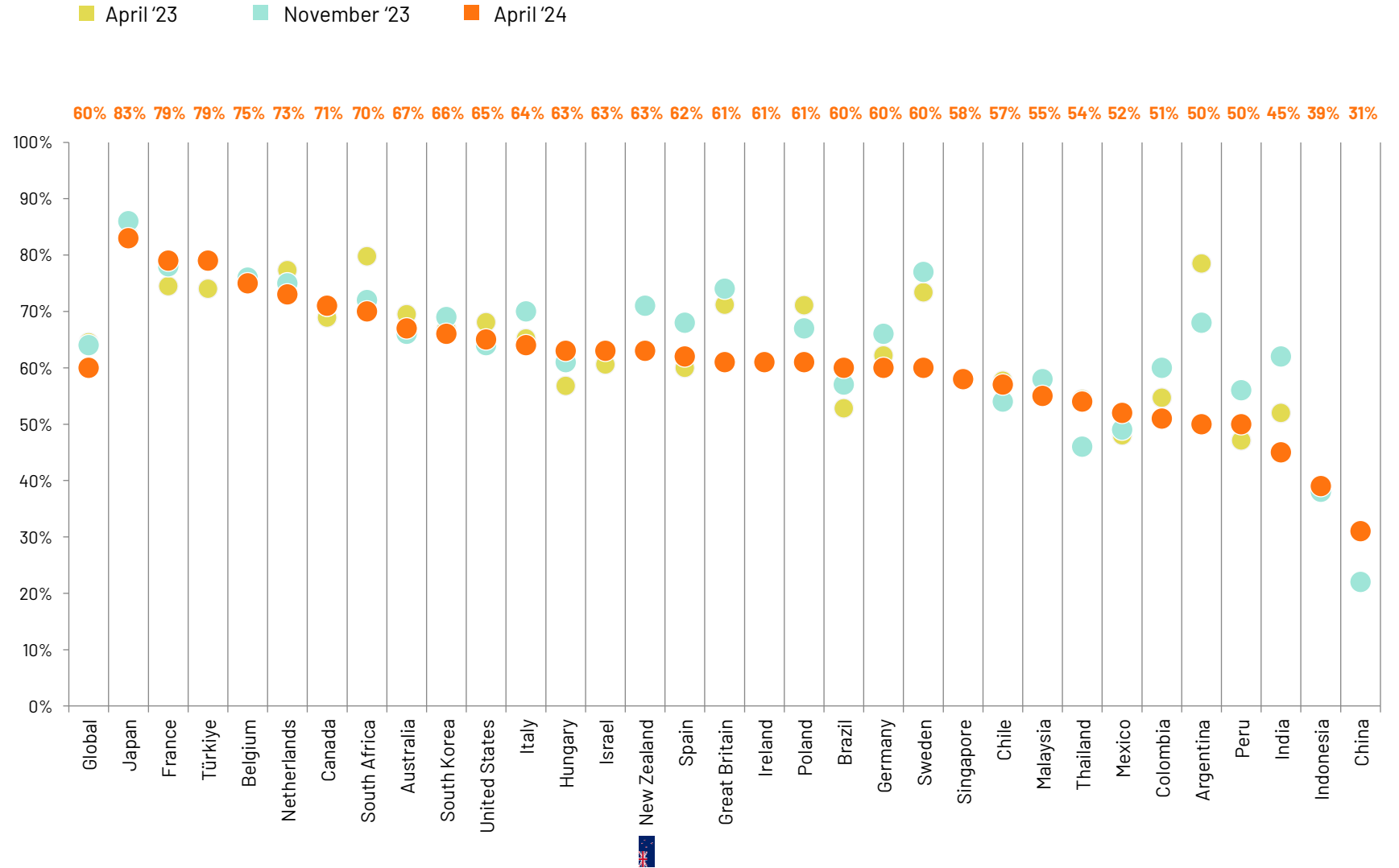


Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

How long do you think it will take before inflation returns to normal in your country?


% After the next year/never

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



As far as you are aware, is the economy in your country **currently in a recession?**

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

Country	Yes	Don't know	No	% Yes Nov '23	% Yes Apr '23
32-country average	45%	26%	29%	46%	49%
South Korea	76%	12%	12%	79%	79%
Türkiye	75%	12%	13%	77%	74%
Hungary	72%	13%	15%	77%	78%
Malaysia	68%	15%	17%	64%	62%
New Zealand 	68%	12%	20%	46%	N/A
Thailand	66%	11%	24%	61%	72%
Sweden	64%	24%	12%	71%	67%
Argentina	58%	33%	9%	47%	47%
Peru	58%	31%	11%	65%	50%
South Africa	52%	23%	26%	51%	59%
Great Britain	51%	19%	30%	37%	46%
Japan	51%	28%	21%	64%	63%
Indonesia	50%	11%	39%	47%	47%
France	47%	26%	27%	36%	44%
Canada	43%	31%	27%	40%	46%
Germany	43%	32%	25%	46%	32%
India	41%	28%	30%	44%	44%
Colombia	36%	35%	29%	41%	47%
Chile	36%	33%	31%	48%	47%
Italy	36%	32%	33%	42%	48%
United States	34%	30%	36%	36%	43%
Brazil	32%	38%	30%	37%	37%
Israel	32%	37%	30%	N/A	38%
Singapore	32%	20%	48%	32%	36%
Belgium	31%	41%	28%	29%	31%
Ireland	30%	20%	50%	N/A	N/A
Spain	29%	26%	45%	34%	42%
Poland	27%	42%	31%	41%	40%
Australia	25%	28%	47%	26%	29%
China	25%	9%	66%	20%	N/A
Mexico	25%	44%	31%	33%	37%
Netherlands	20%	31%	49%	33%	25%

Expectations for the future

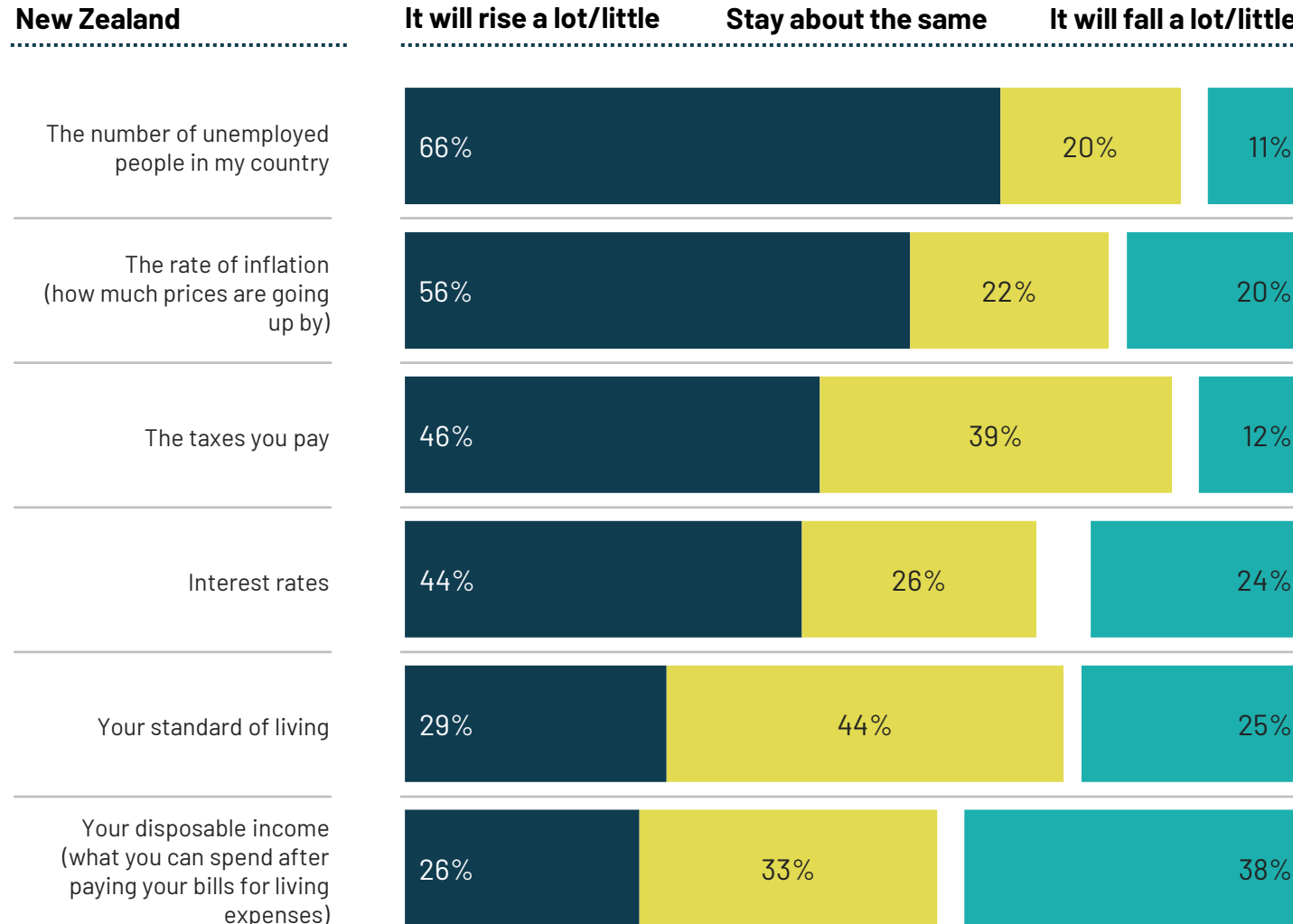




Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024





Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

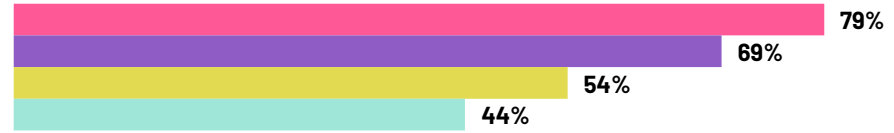
New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

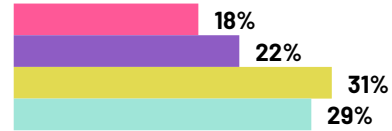
The number of unemployed people in my country



Interest rates



Your own standard of living



Your disposable income



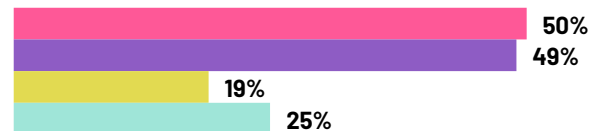
% It will RISE a lot/little

Your disposable income



% It will FALL a lot/little

Your own standard of living

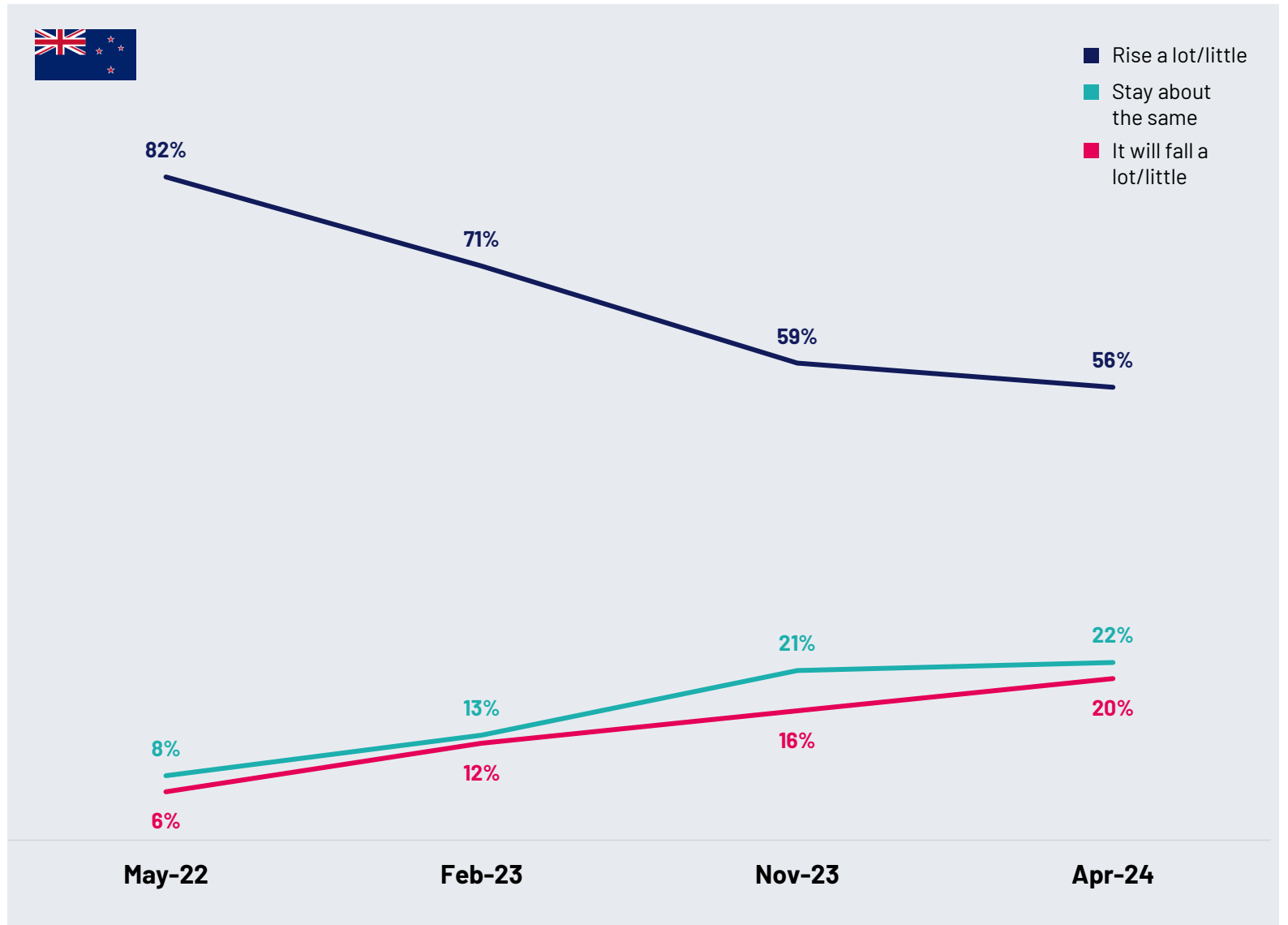


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

The rate of inflation (how much prices are going up by)

New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

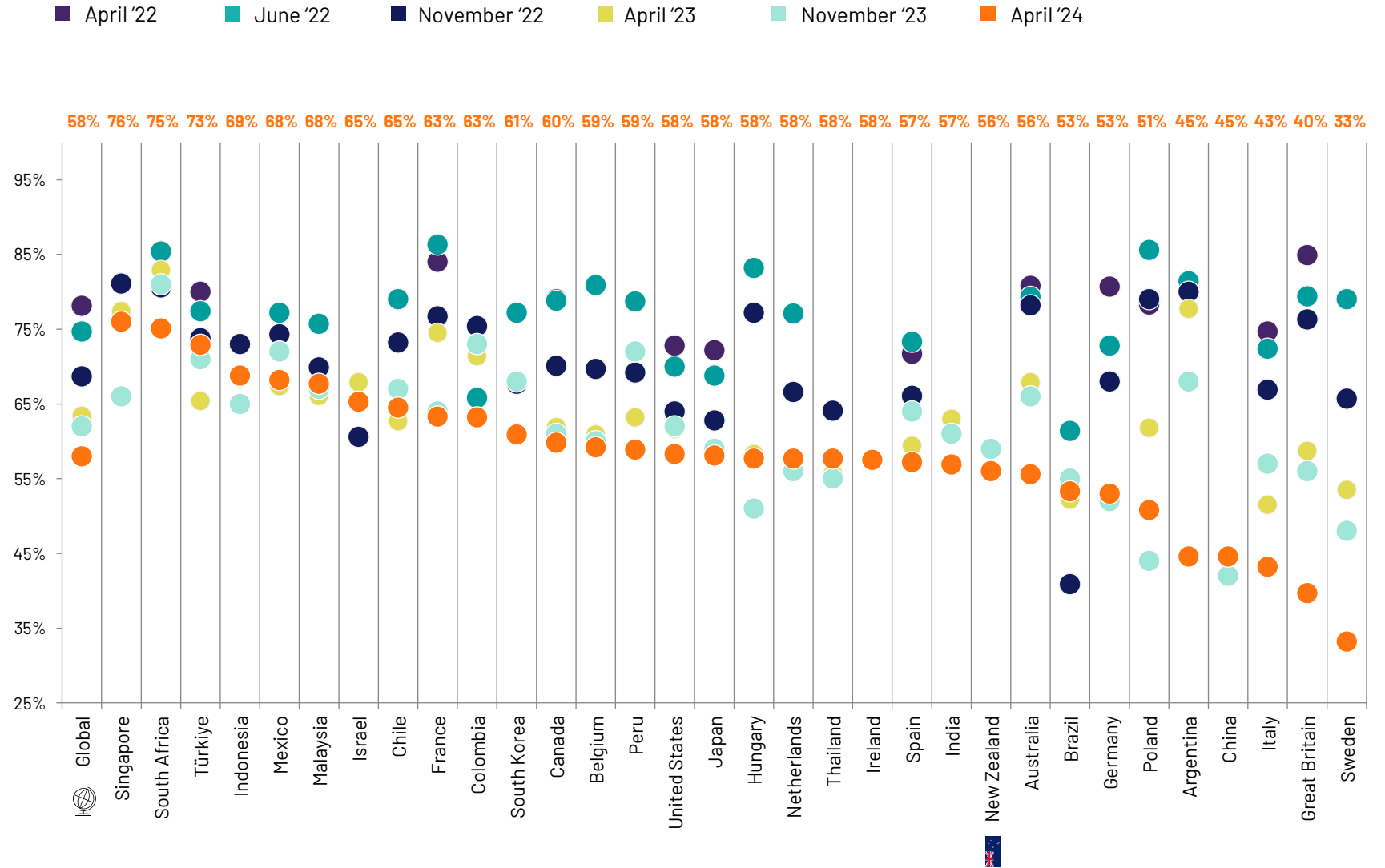


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

The rate of inflation (how much prices are going up by)

% it will **rise** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

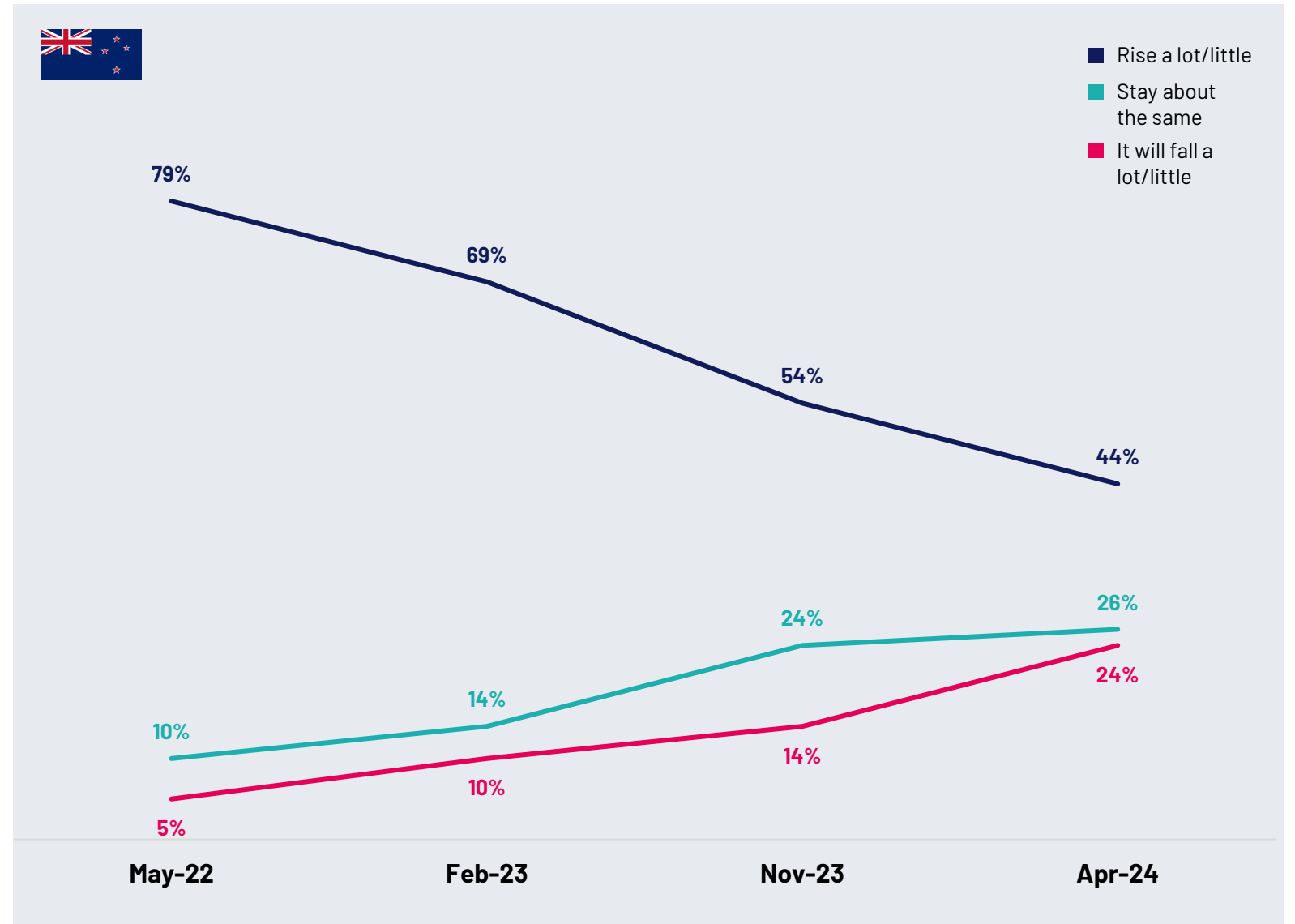


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

Interest rates

New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



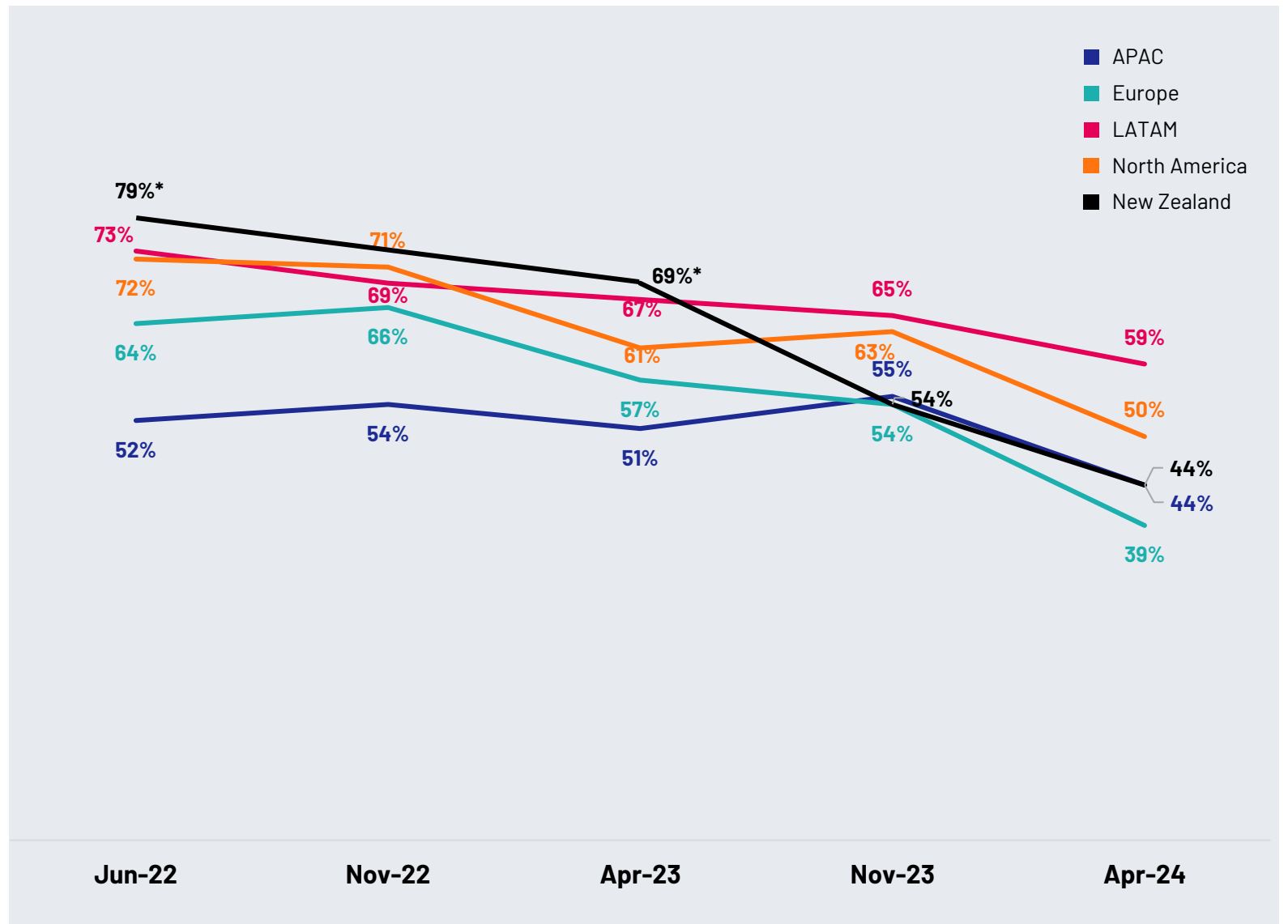
Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

Interest rates

% it will **rise** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024.

*Note: Fieldwork for New Zealand occurred in May 22 instead of June 22, and Feb 23 instead of April 23.

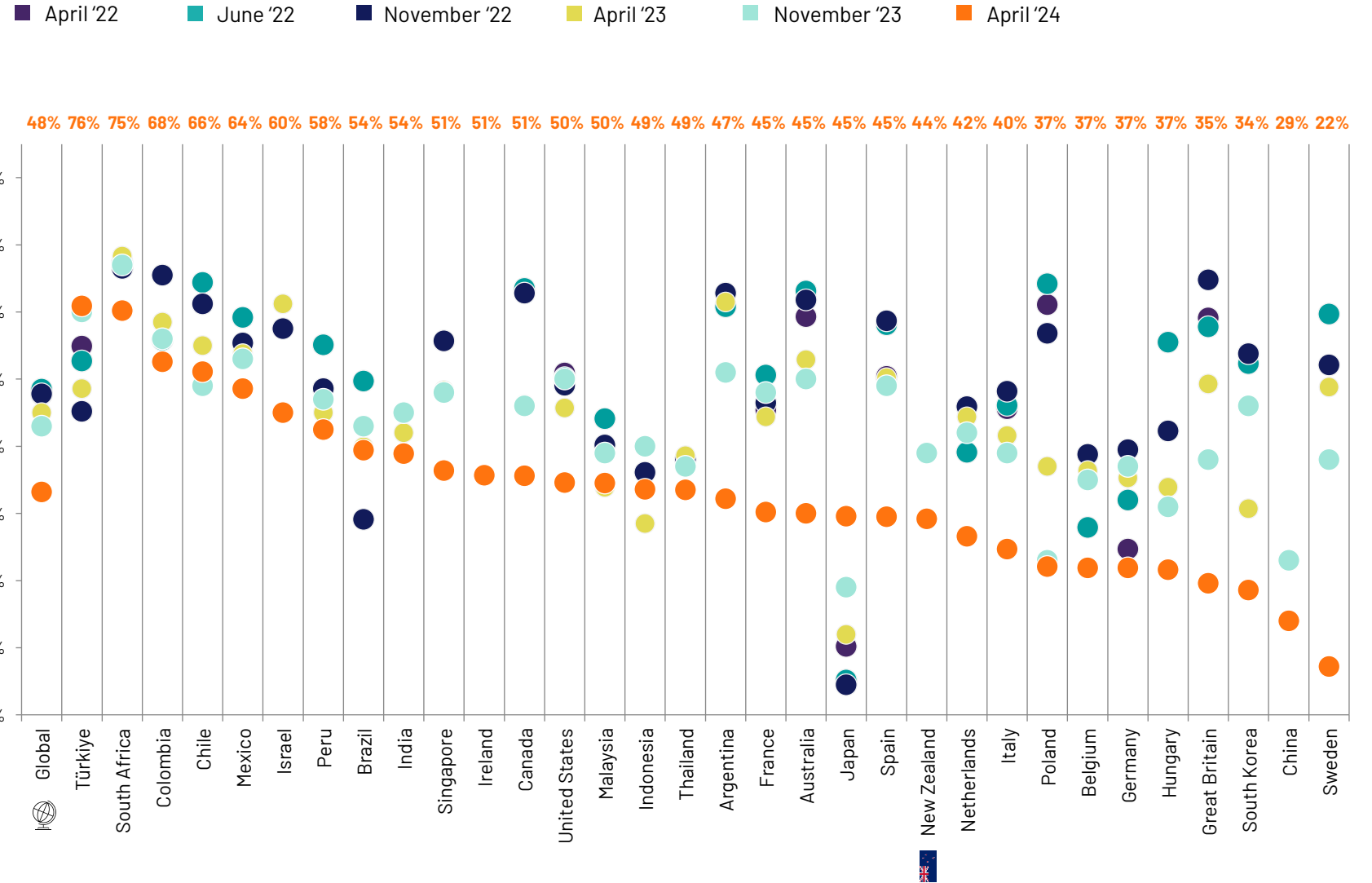


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

Interest rates

% it will **rise** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

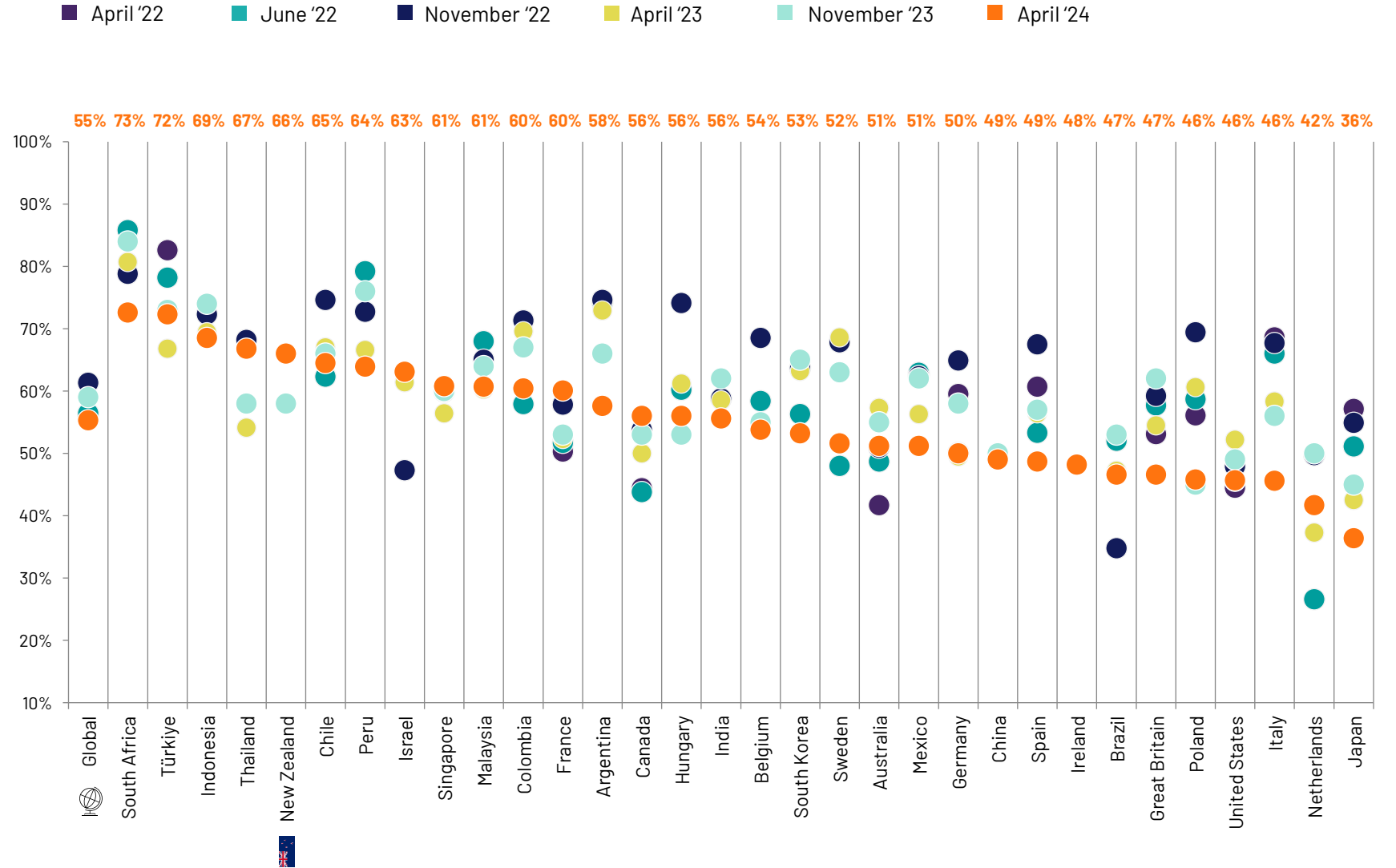


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

The number of unemployed people in my country

% it will **rise** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

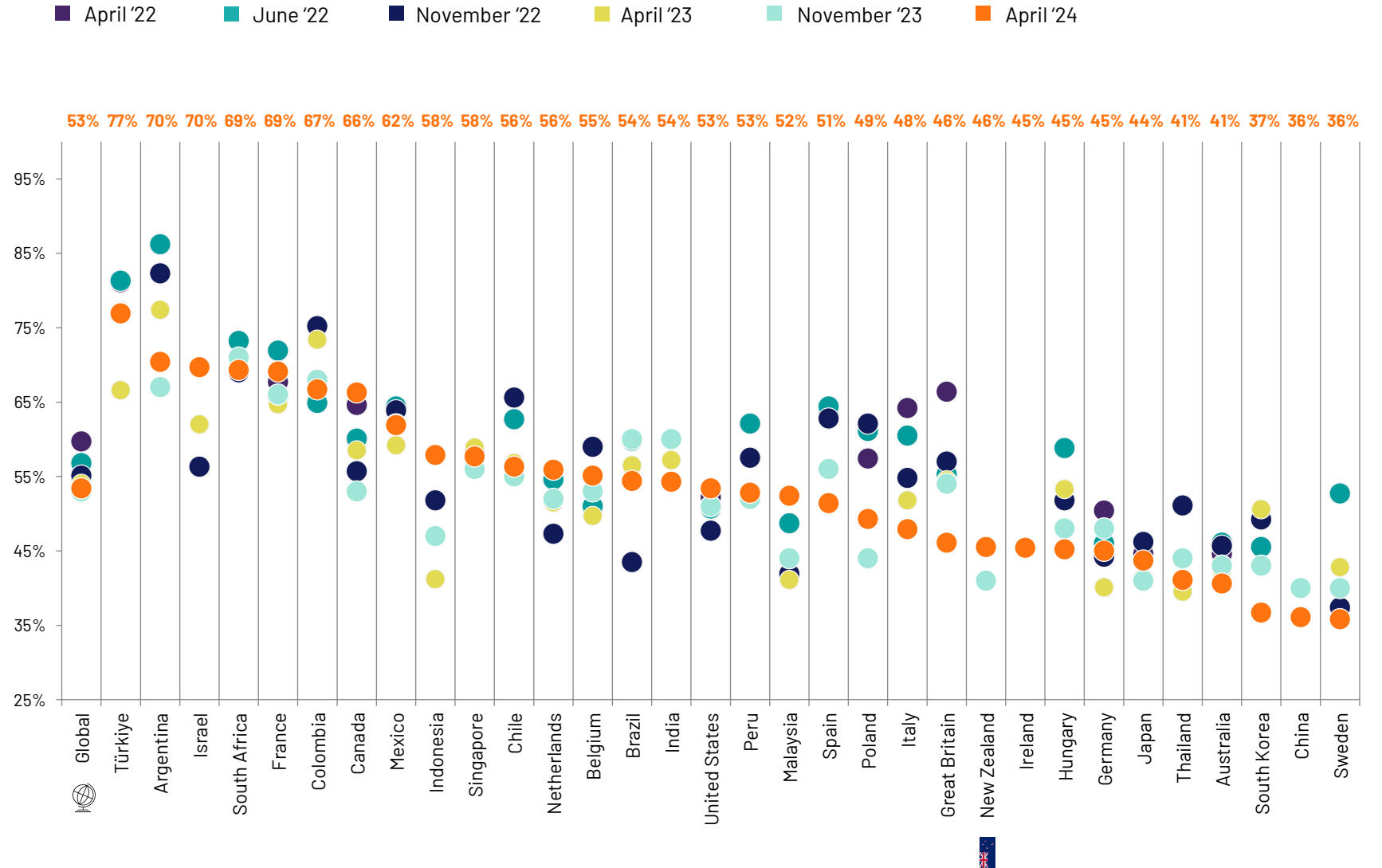


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

The taxes you pay

% it will **rise** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

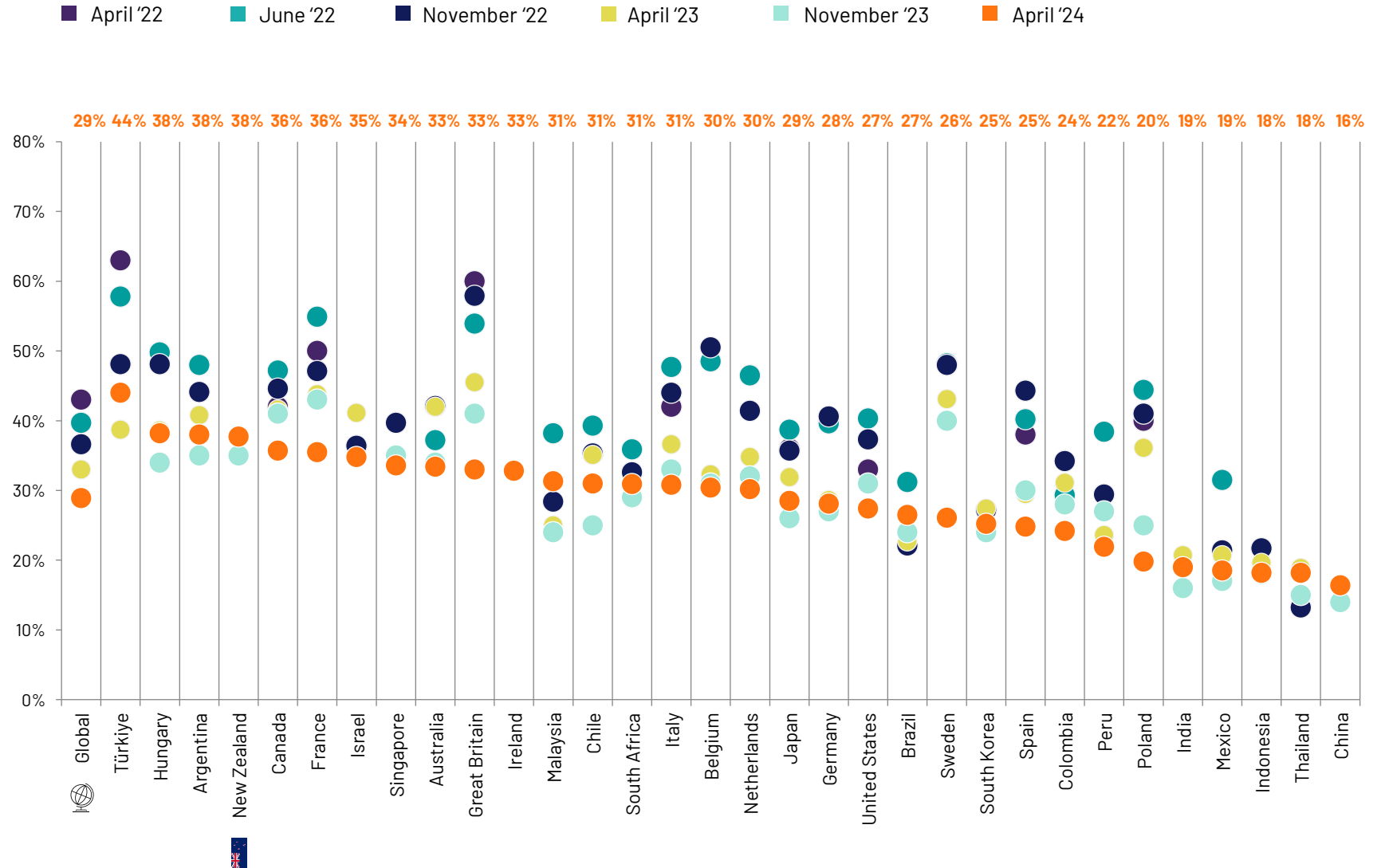


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

Your disposable income
(what you can spend after paying your bills for living expenses)

% it will **fall** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

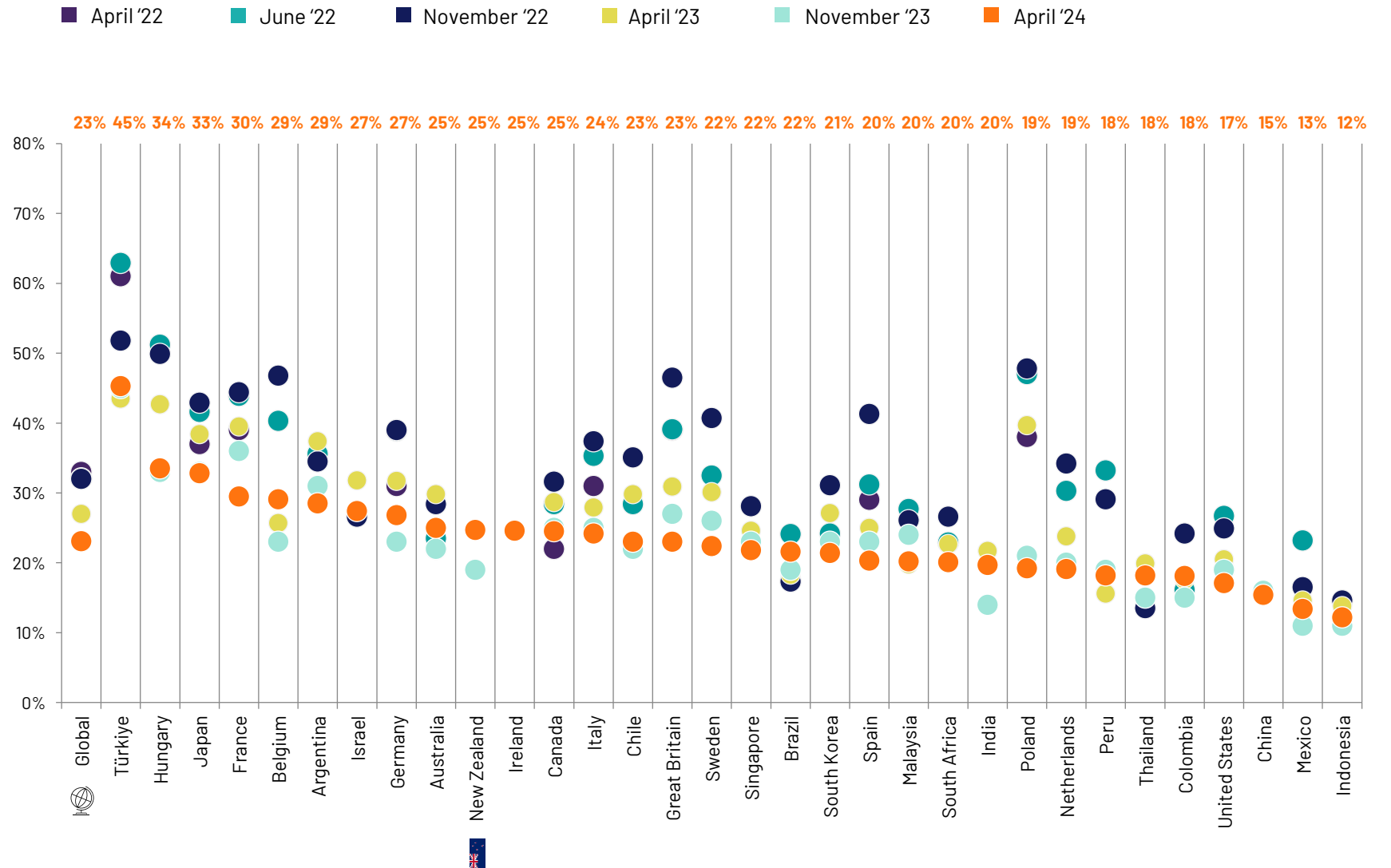


Over the next year, do you think each of the following will rise, decline, or stay at about the same level?

Your own standard of living

% it will **fall** a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

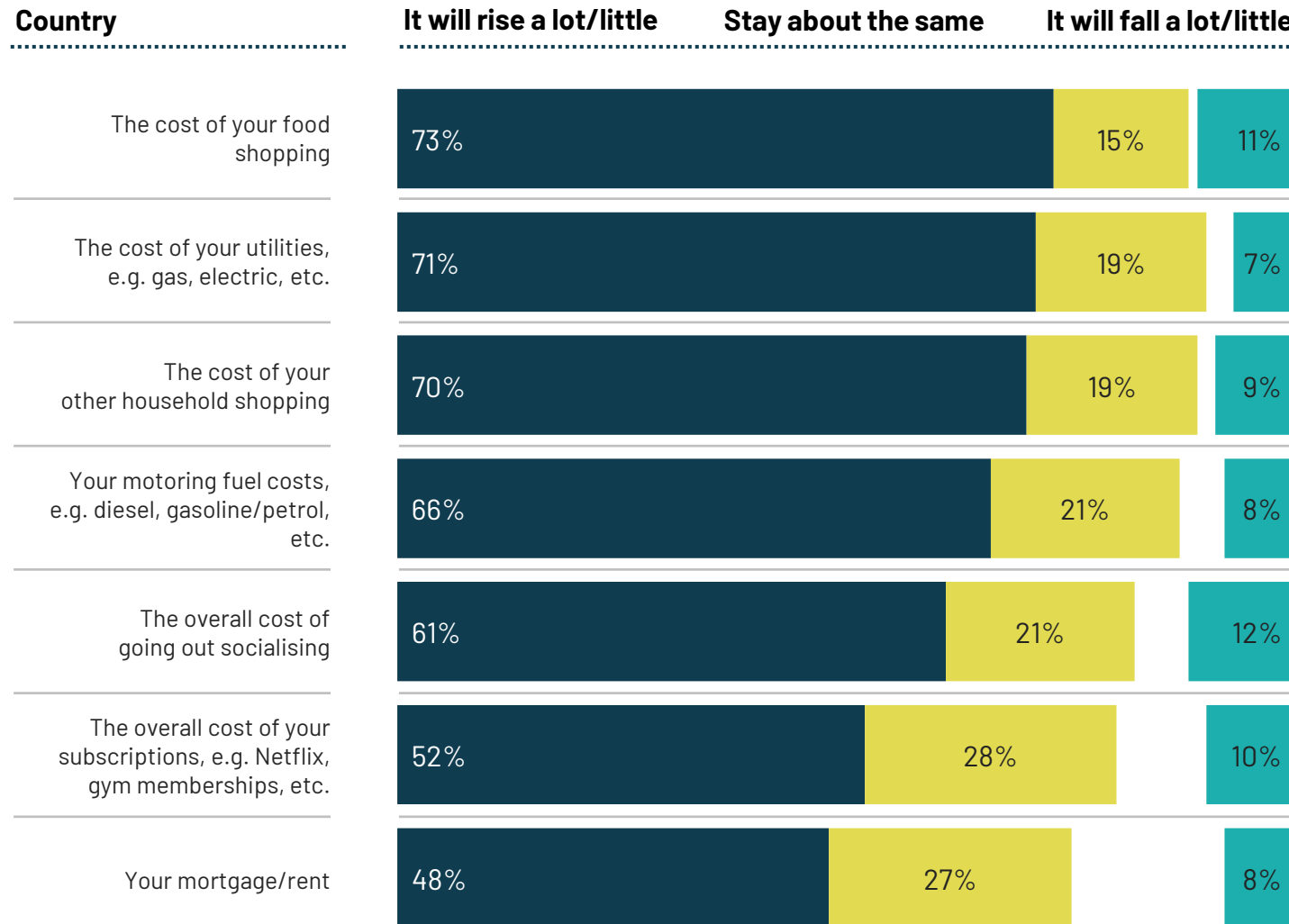




Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

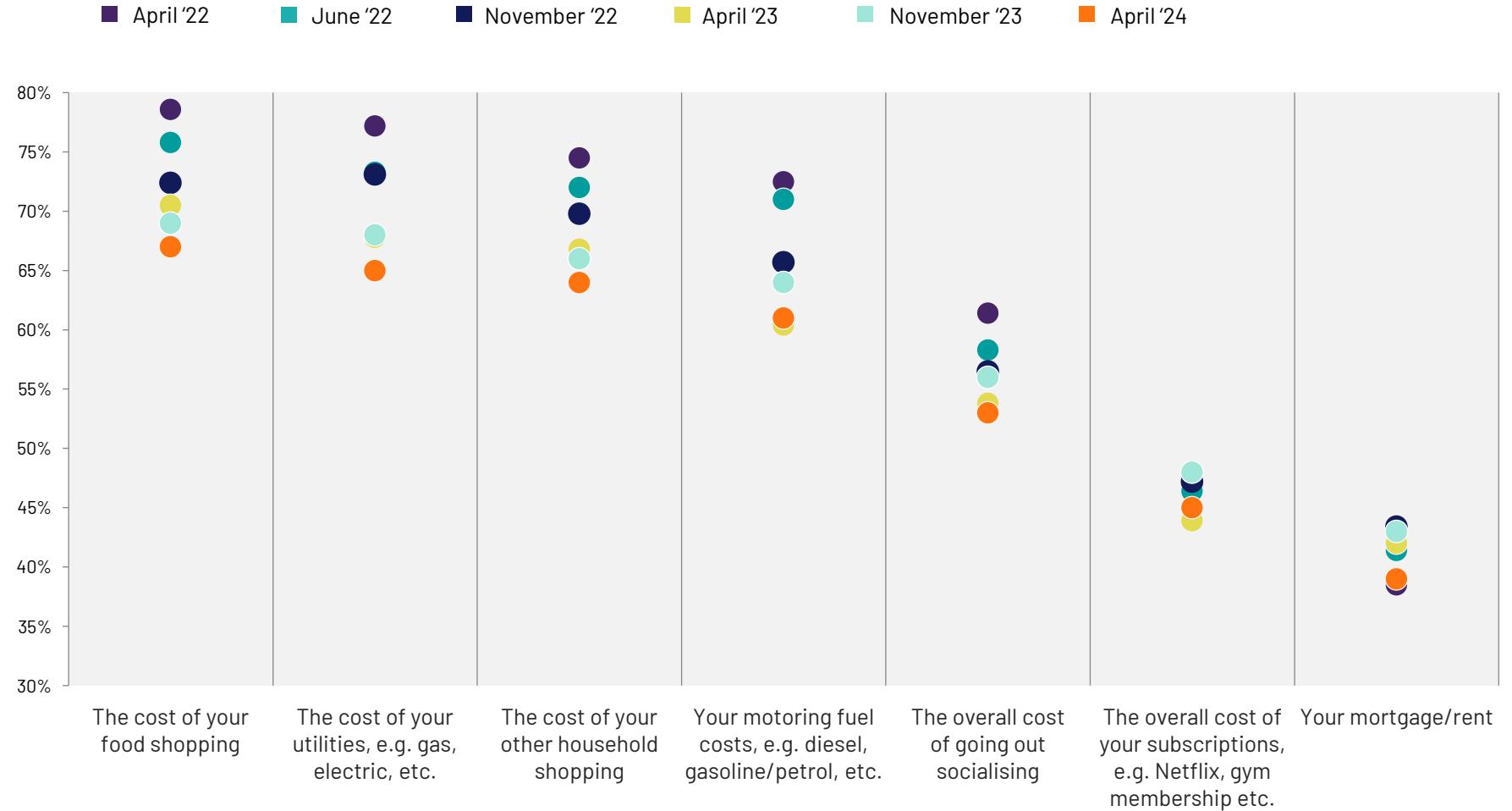


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

Increase a lot/little

32-country average %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

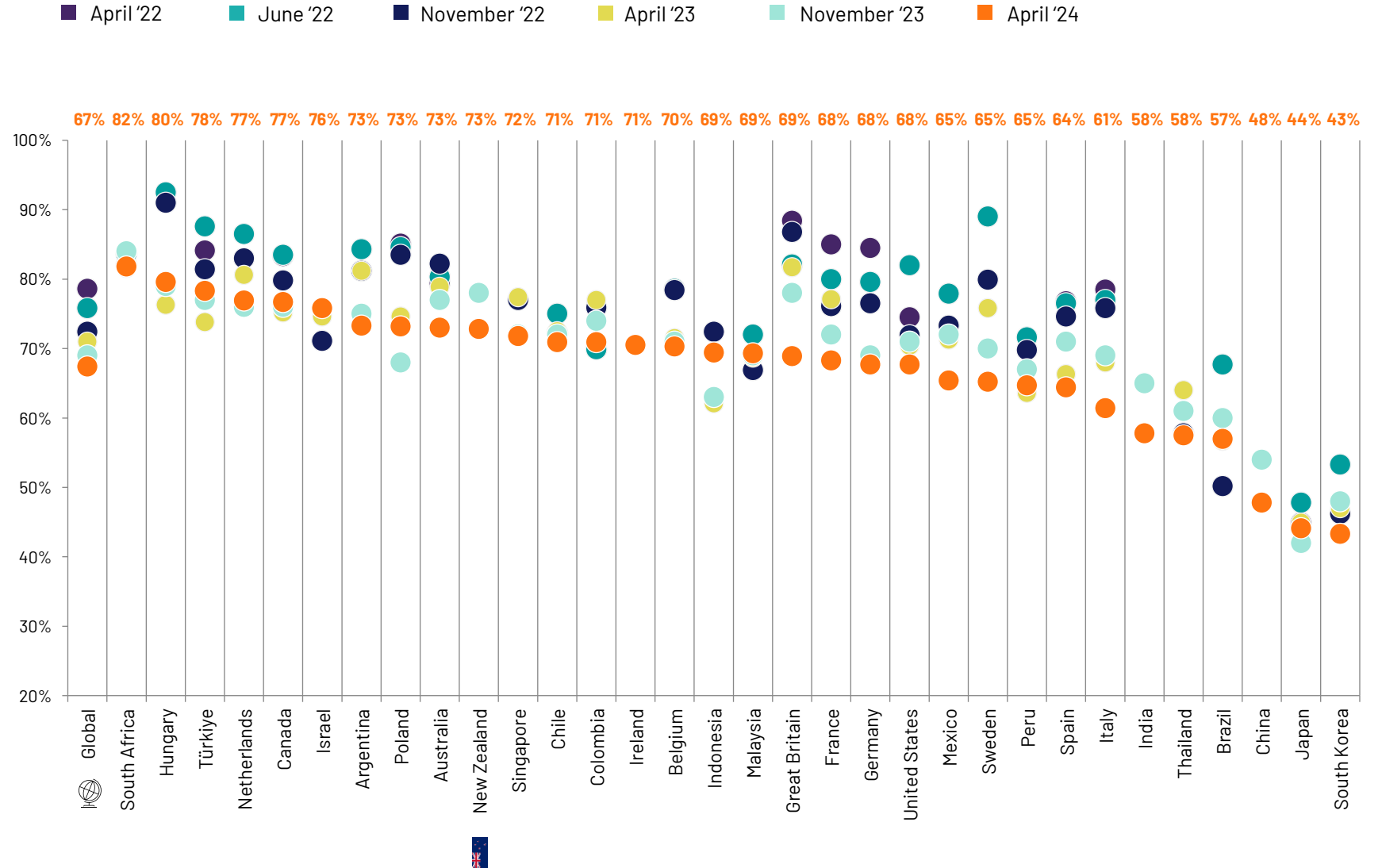


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

The cost of your food shopping

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

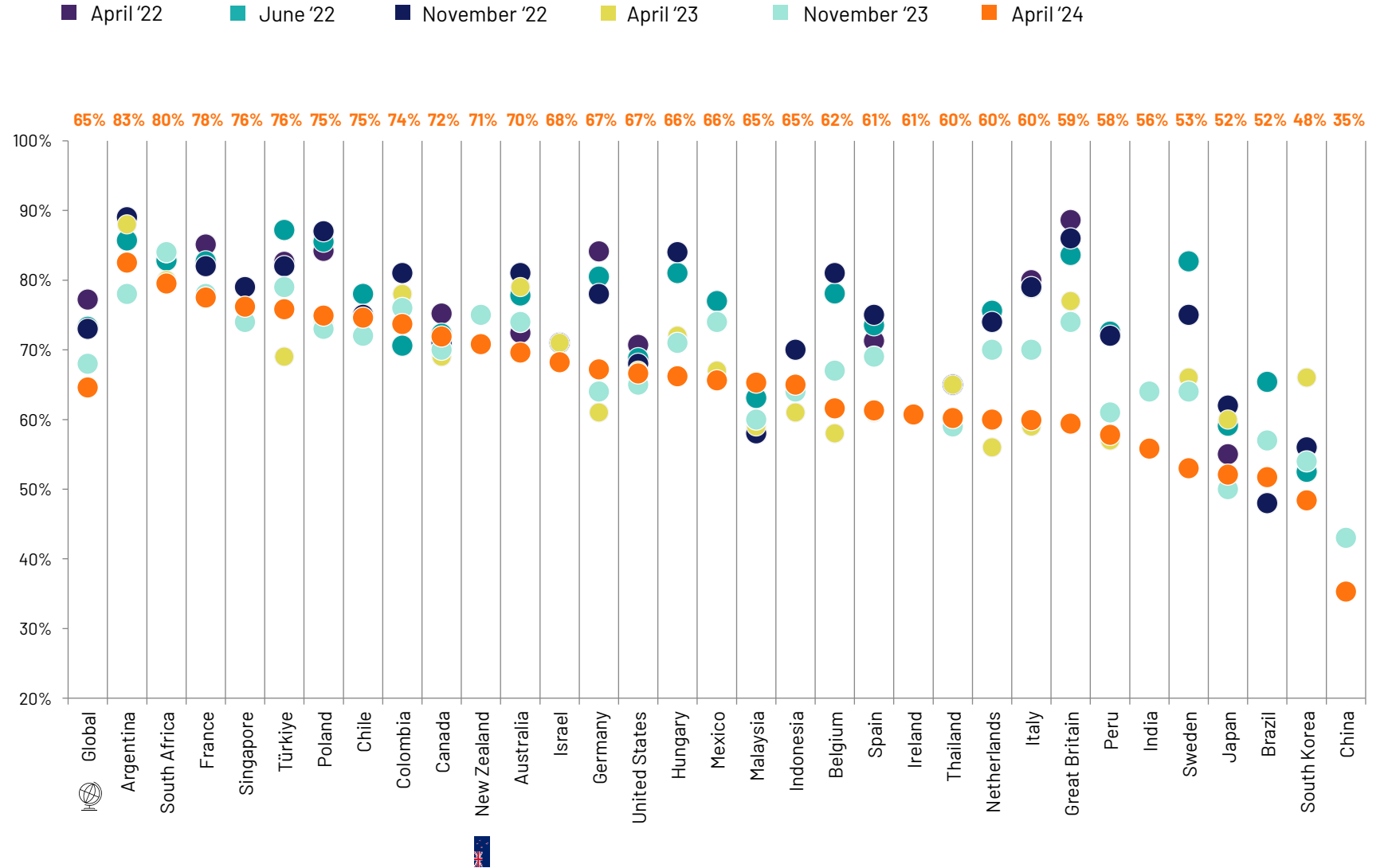


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

The cost of your utilities e.g. gas, electric, etc.

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

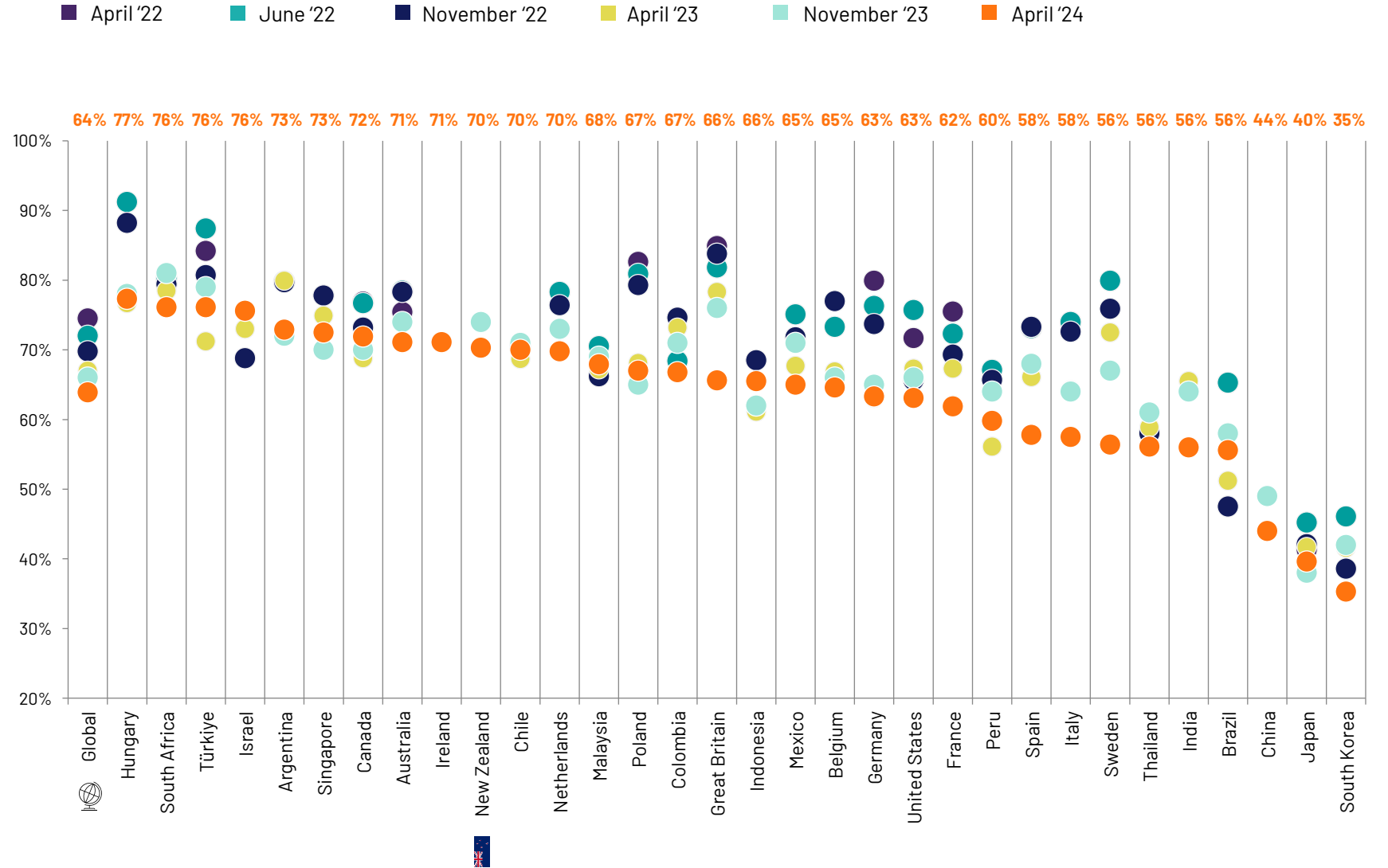


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

The cost of your other household shopping

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

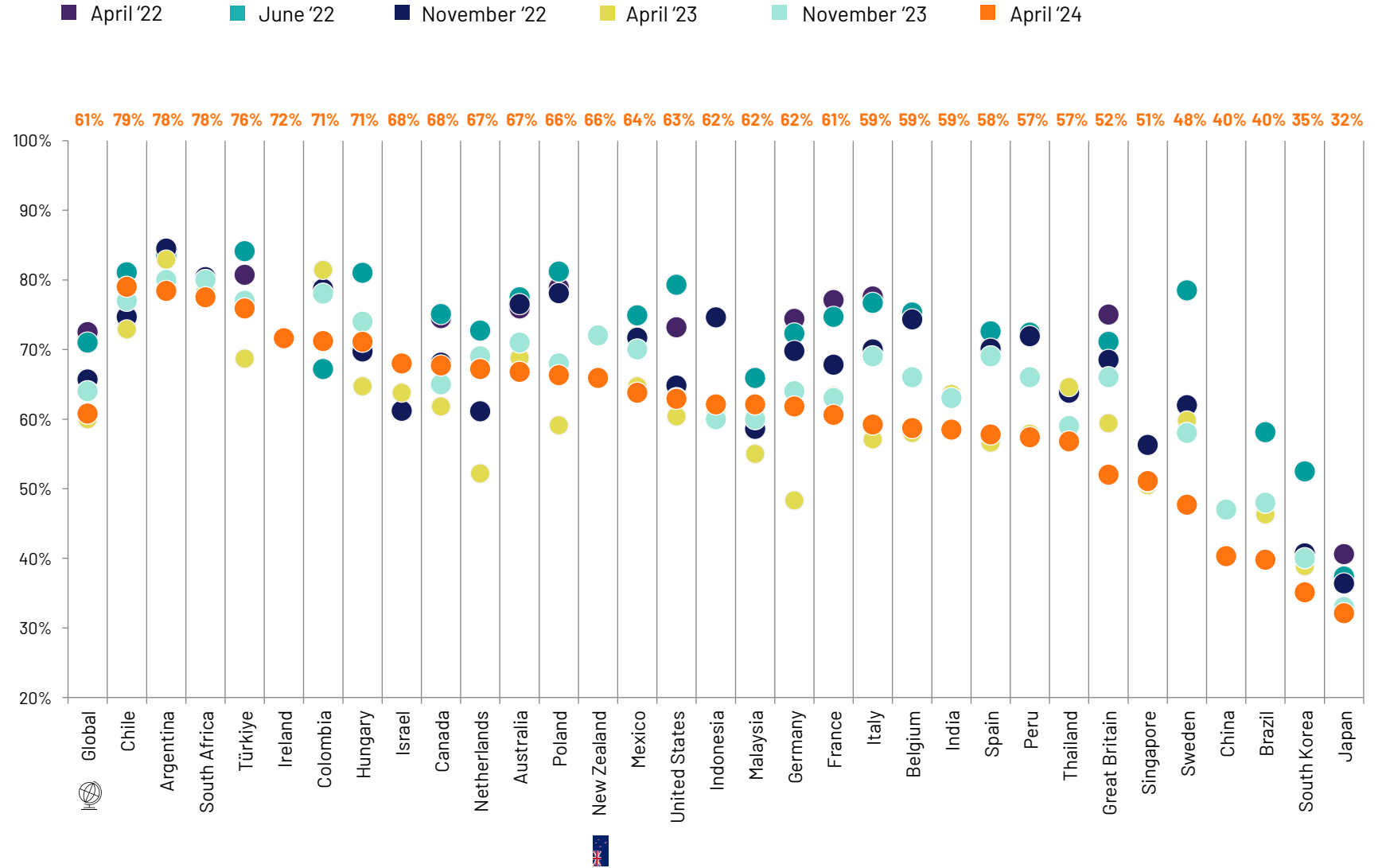


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

Your motoring fuel costs, e.g. diesel, gasoline/petrol, etc.

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



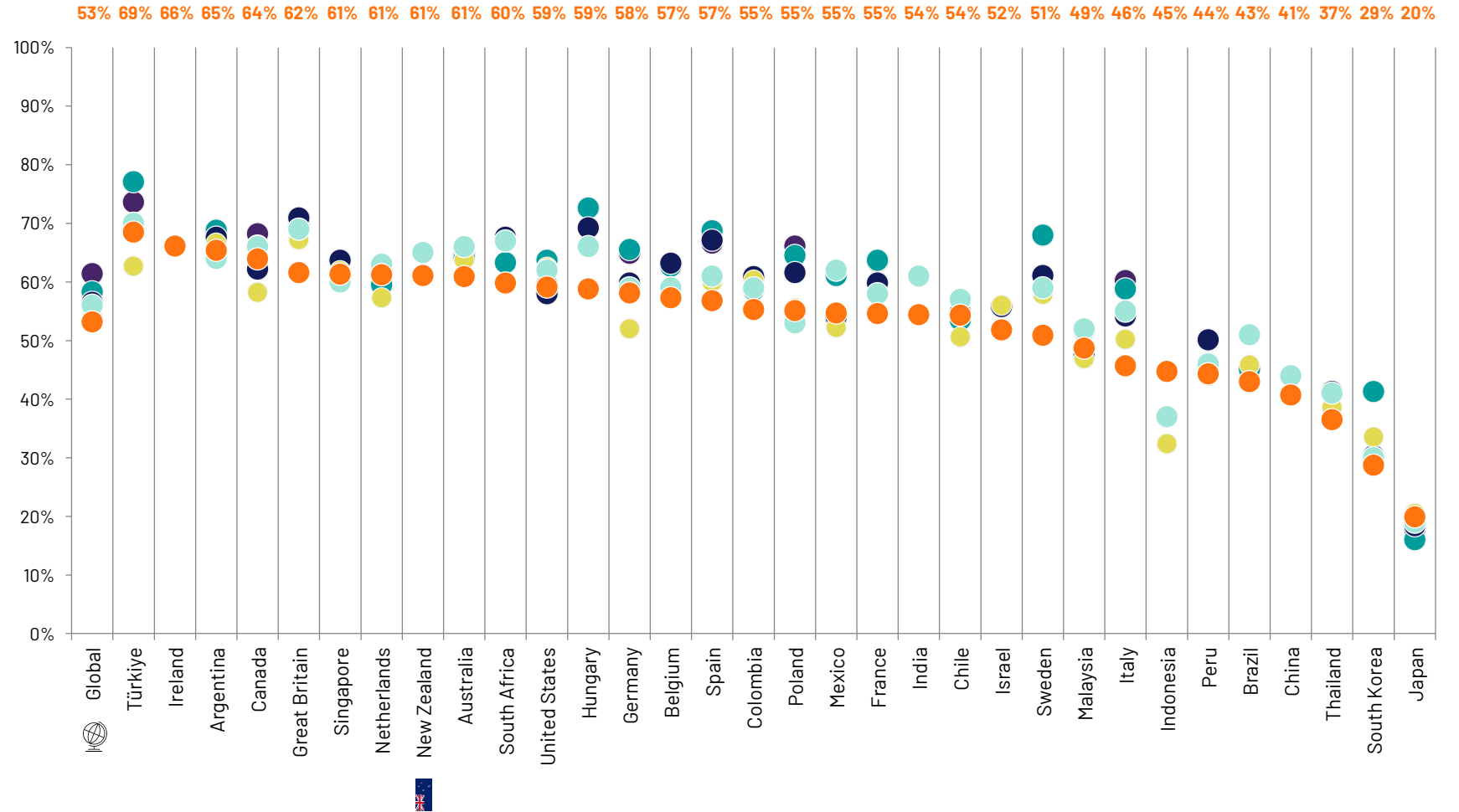
Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

The overall cost of going out socialising e.g. cinema, cafes, restaurants, pubs, clubs, etc.

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

April '22 June '22 November '22 April '23 November '23 April '24

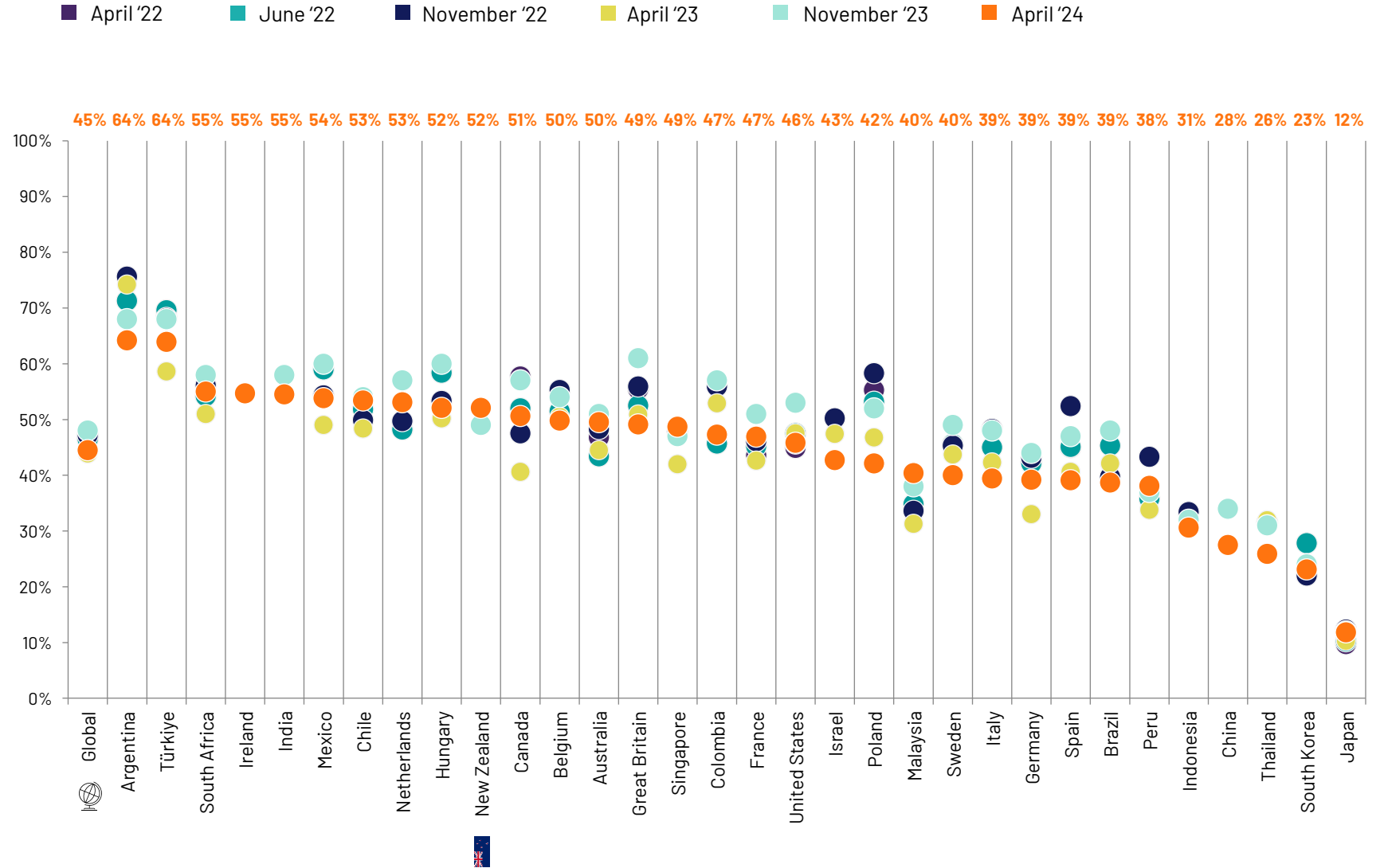


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

The overall cost of your subscriptions, e.g. Netflix, gym membership etc.

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

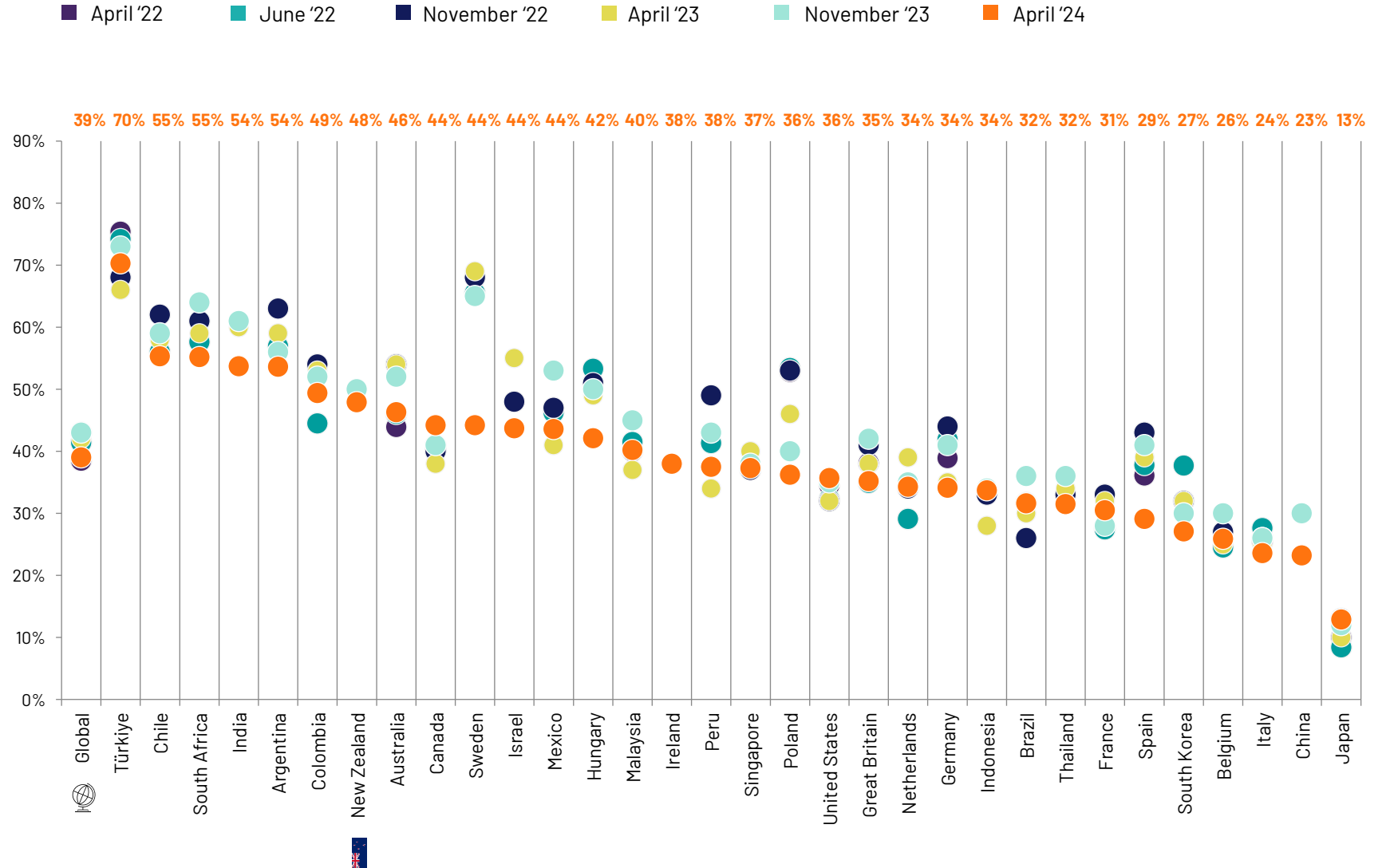


Thinking now about your household spend in the next six months, for each of the following types of spend, please say whether you expect it to increase, decrease, or stay the same as it is now.

Your mortgage/rent

% it will rise a lot/little

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



Why are prices rising?

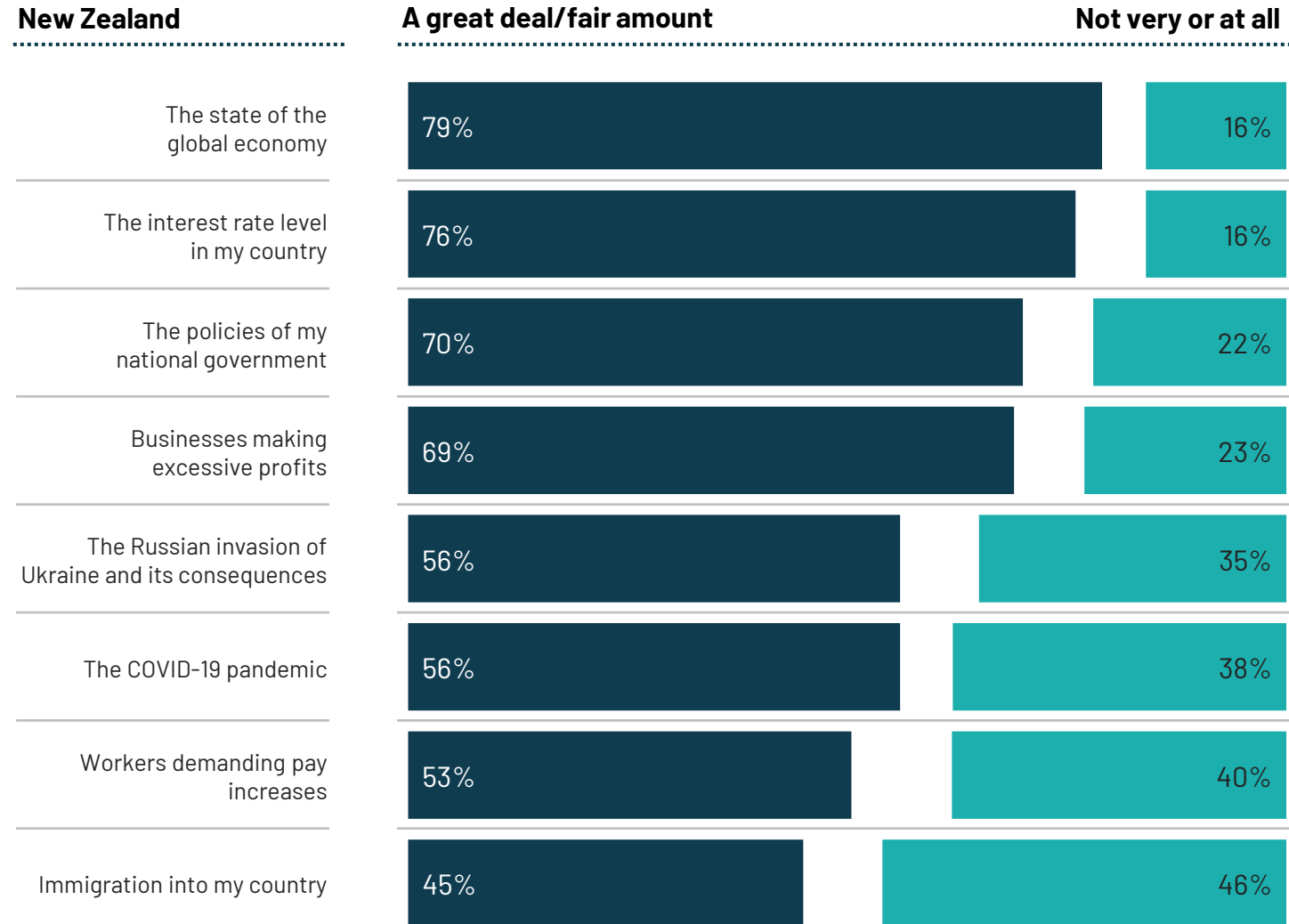




How much, if at all, do you think each of the following **are contributing to the rising cost of living** in ... today?

New Zealand %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

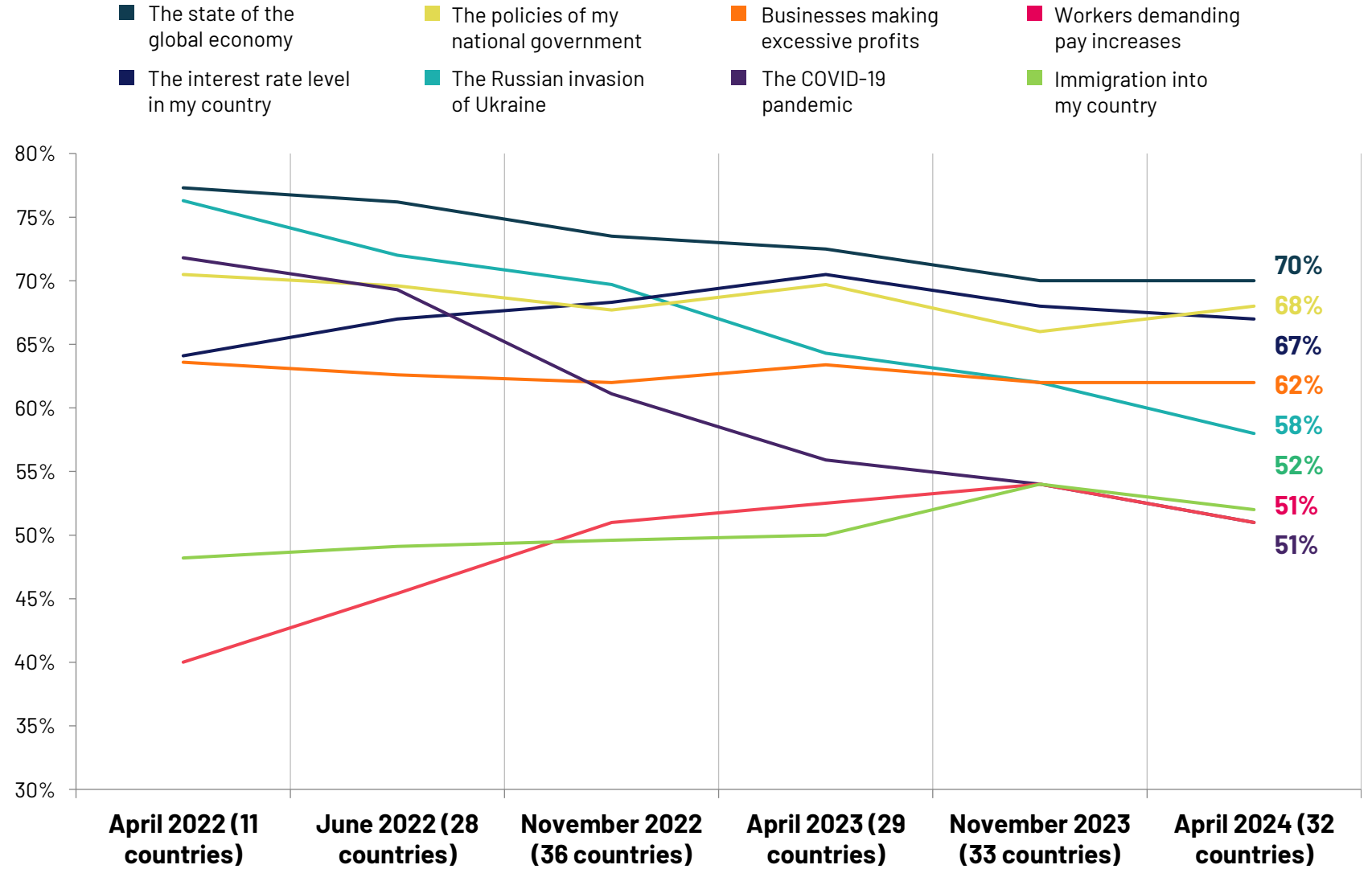


How much, it at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

A great deal/fair amount

32-country average %

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

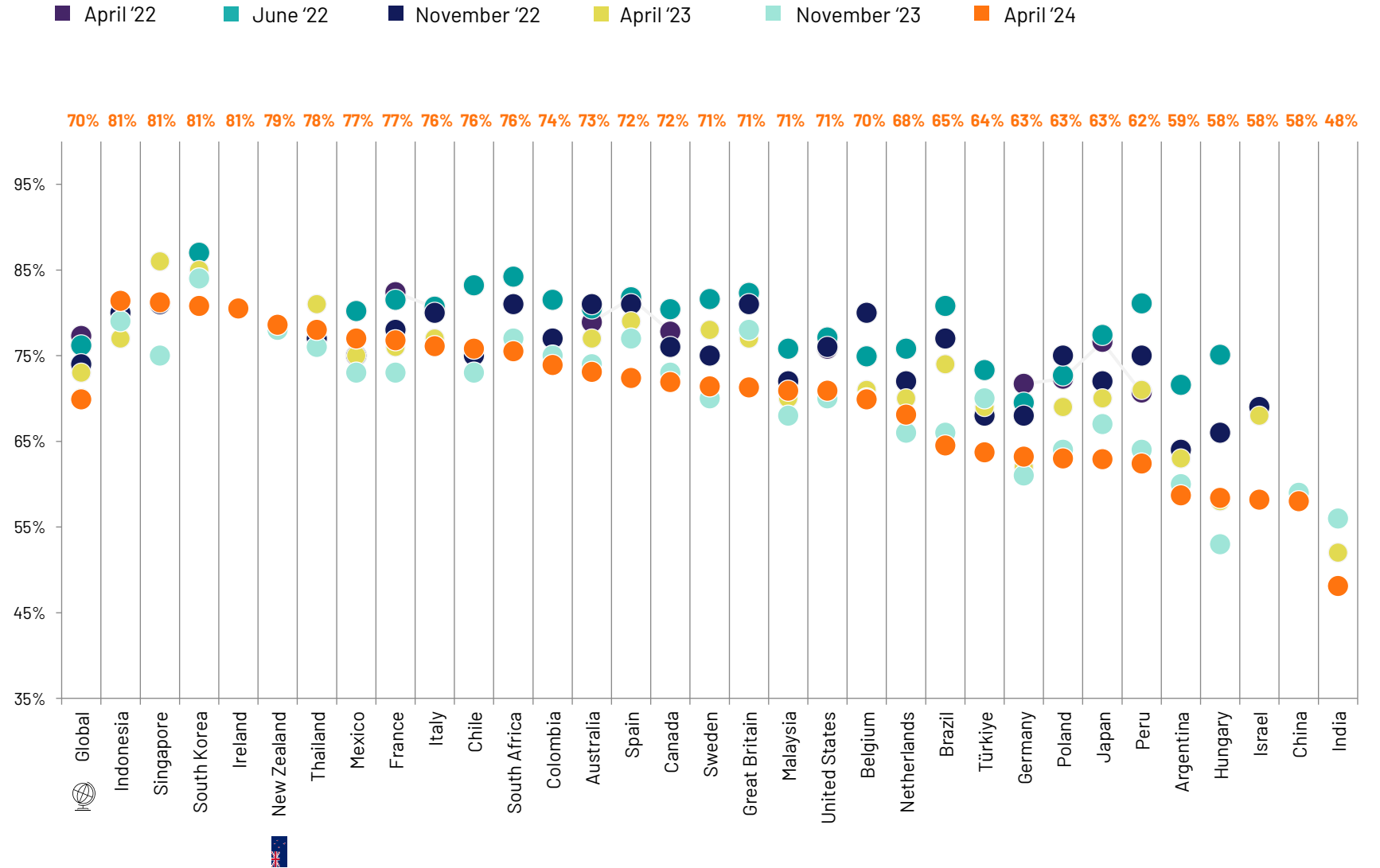


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

The state of the global economy

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

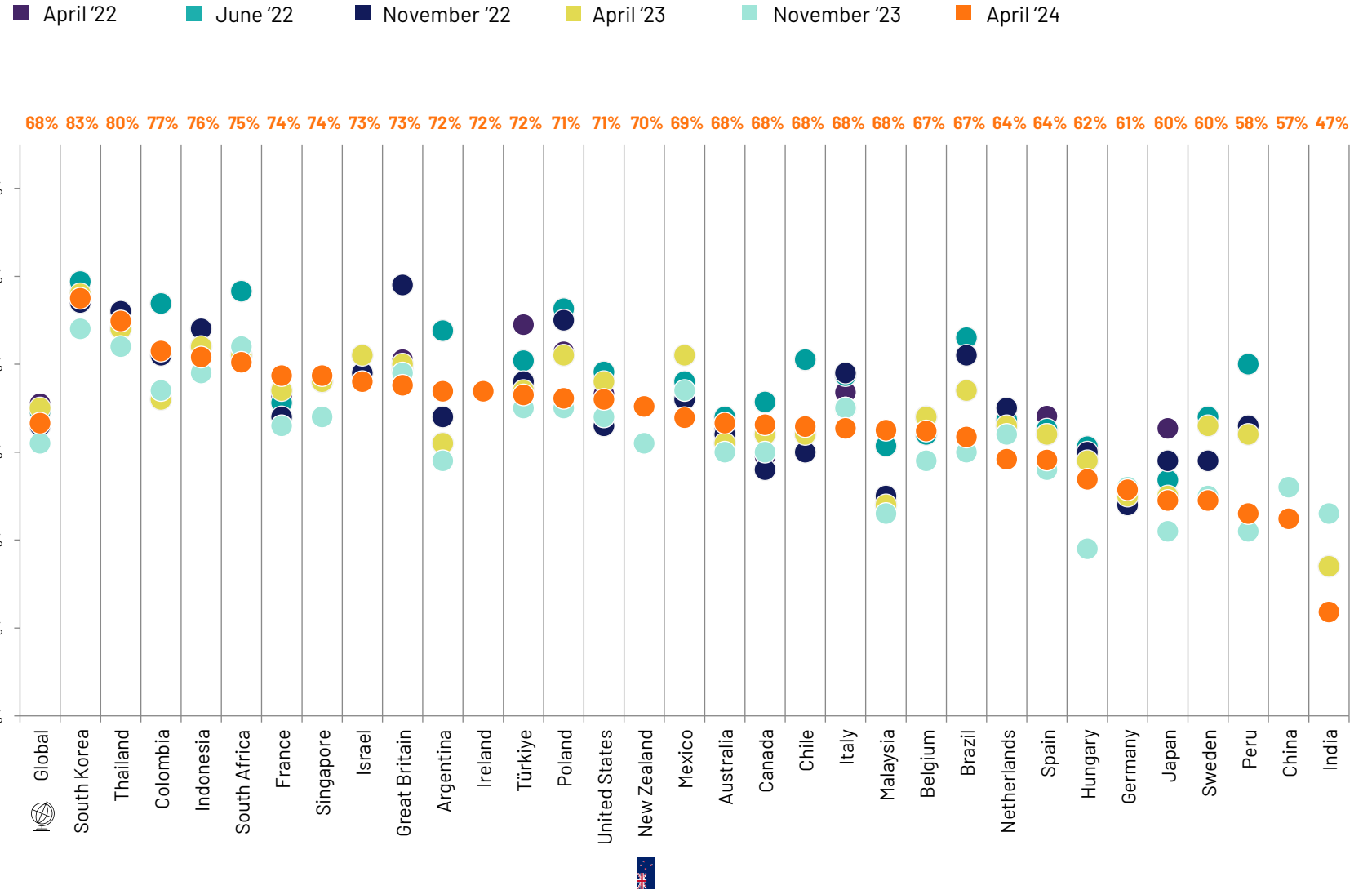


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

The policies of my national government

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

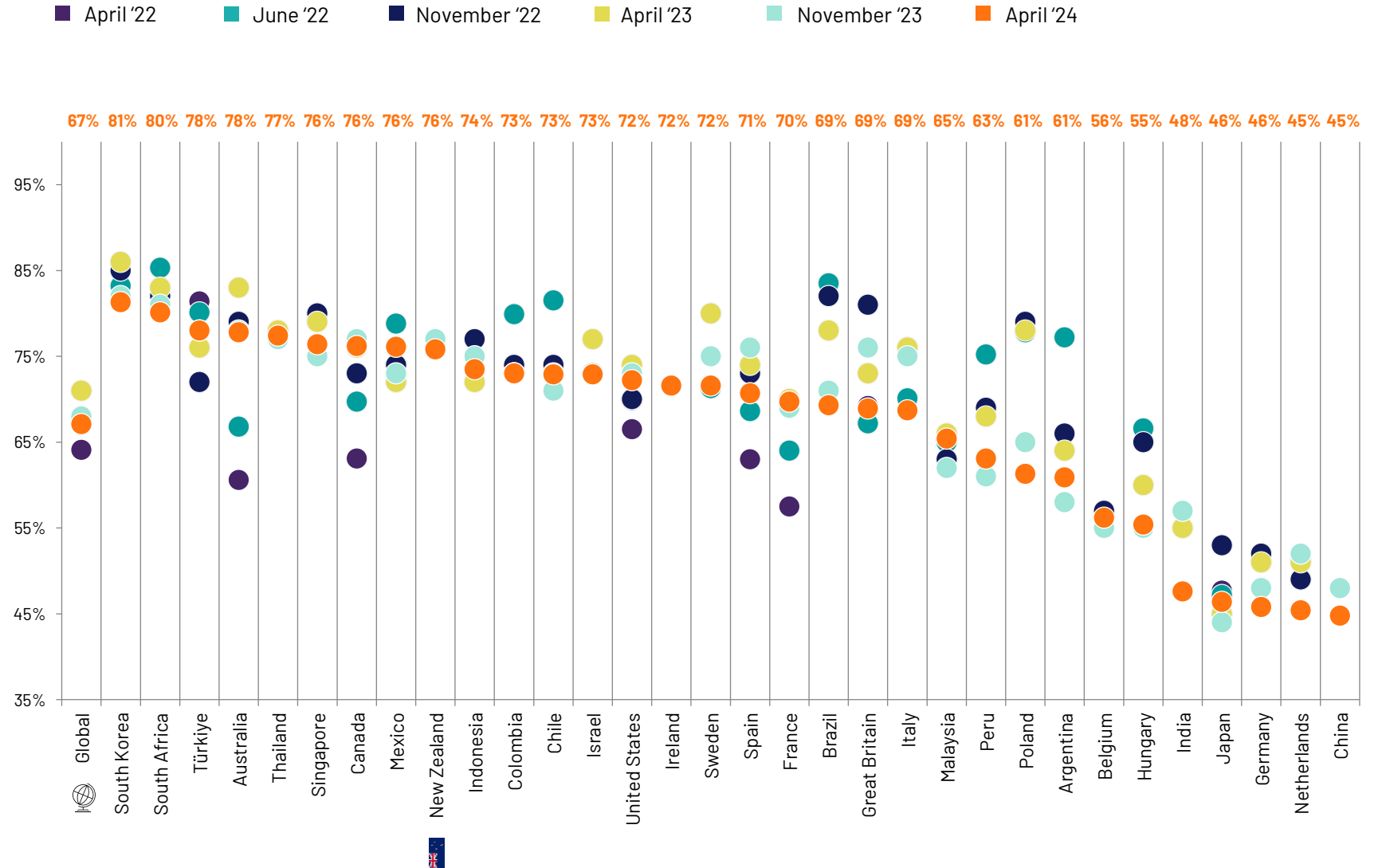


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

The interest level in my country

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

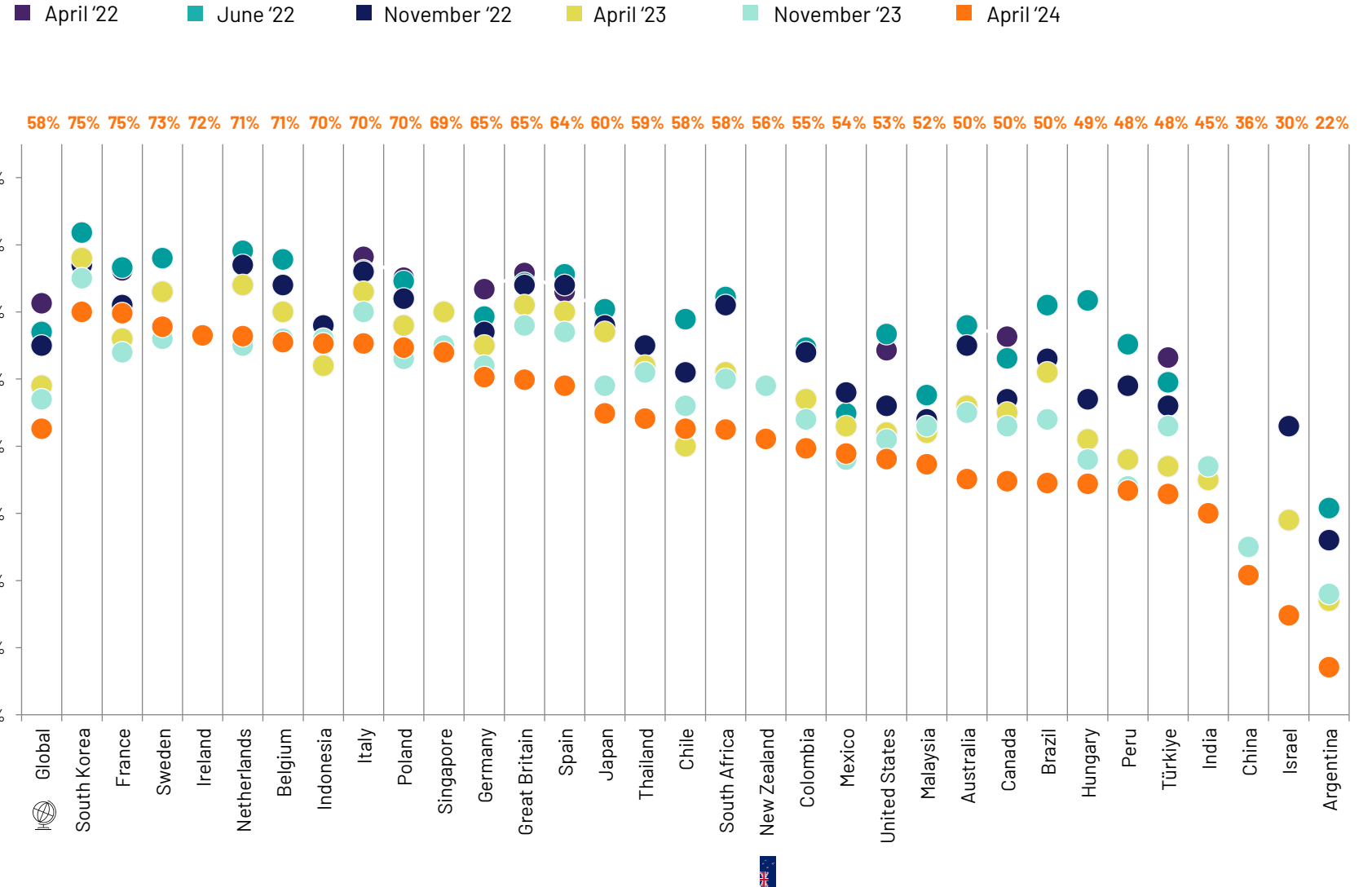


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and its consequences

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

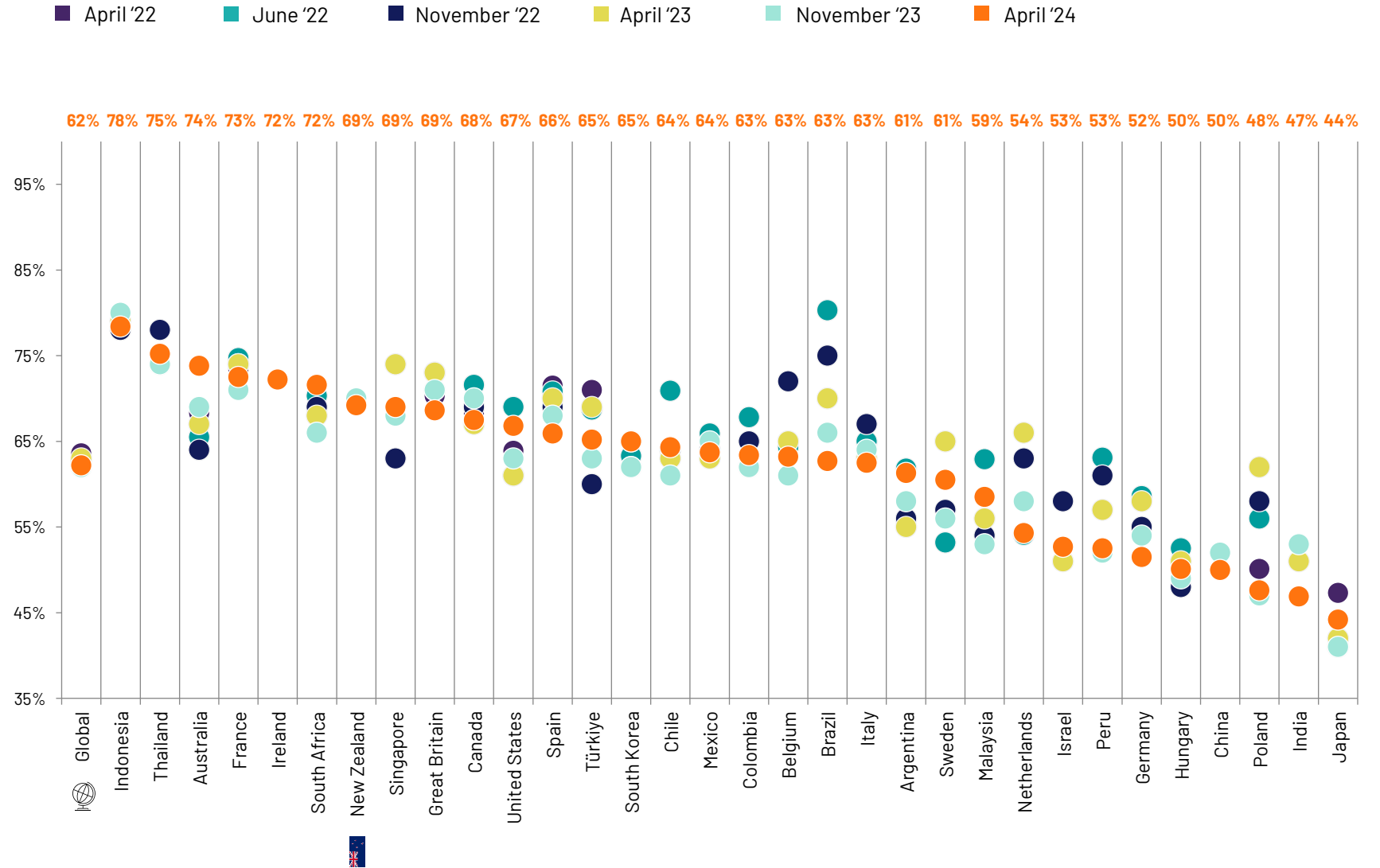


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

Businesses making excessive profits

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

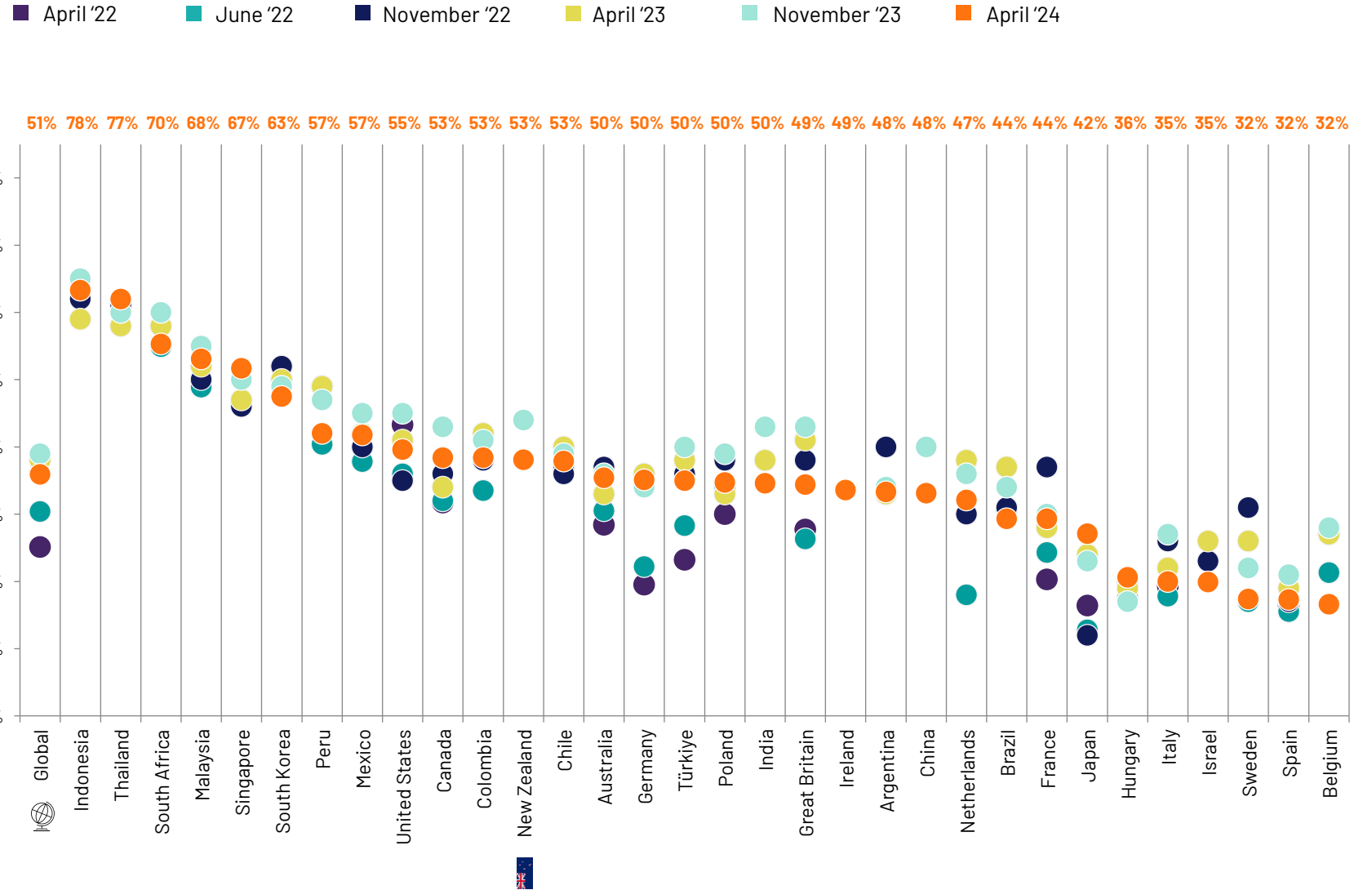


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

Workers demanding pay increases

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

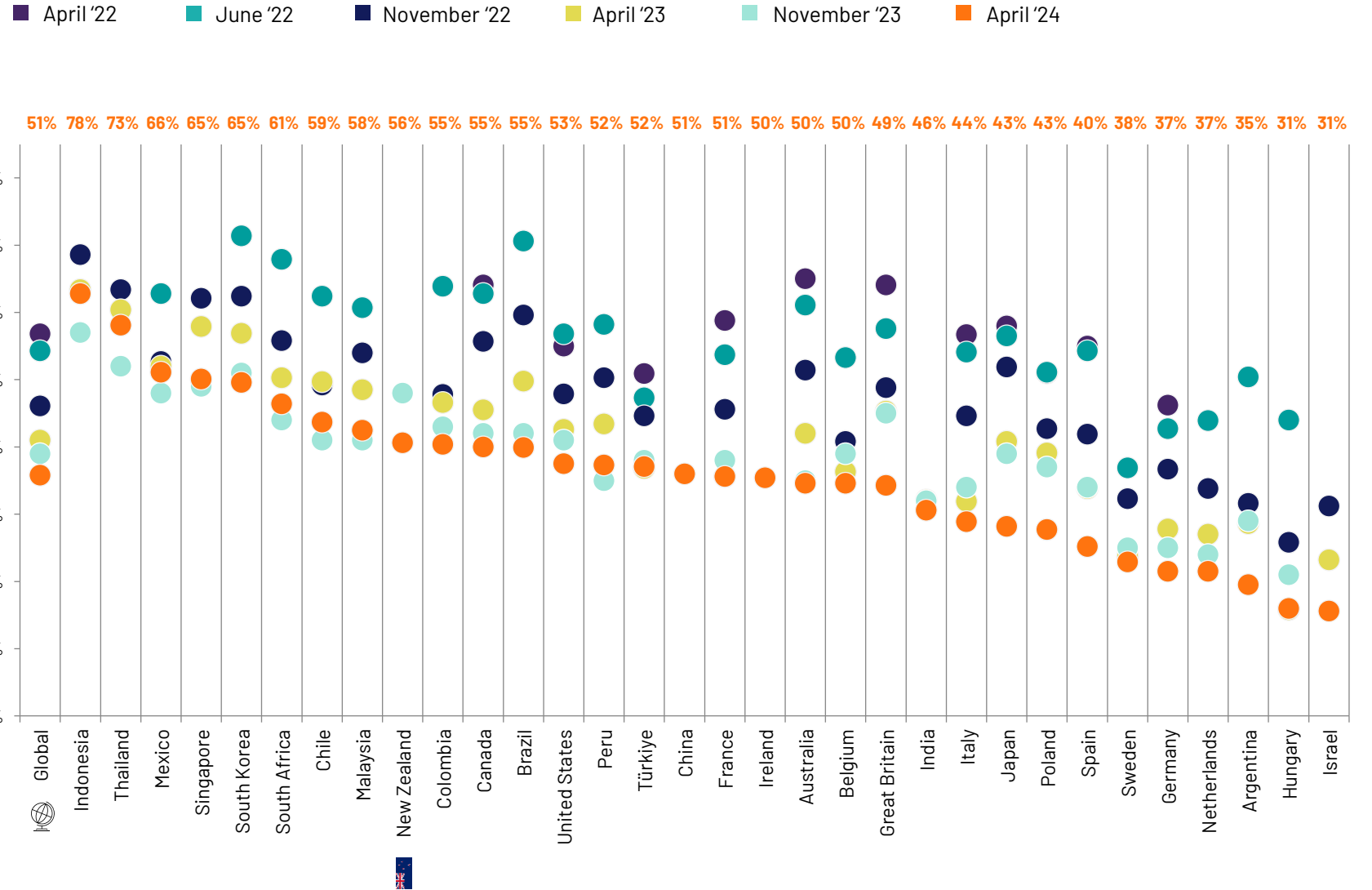


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

The COVID-19 pandemic

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024

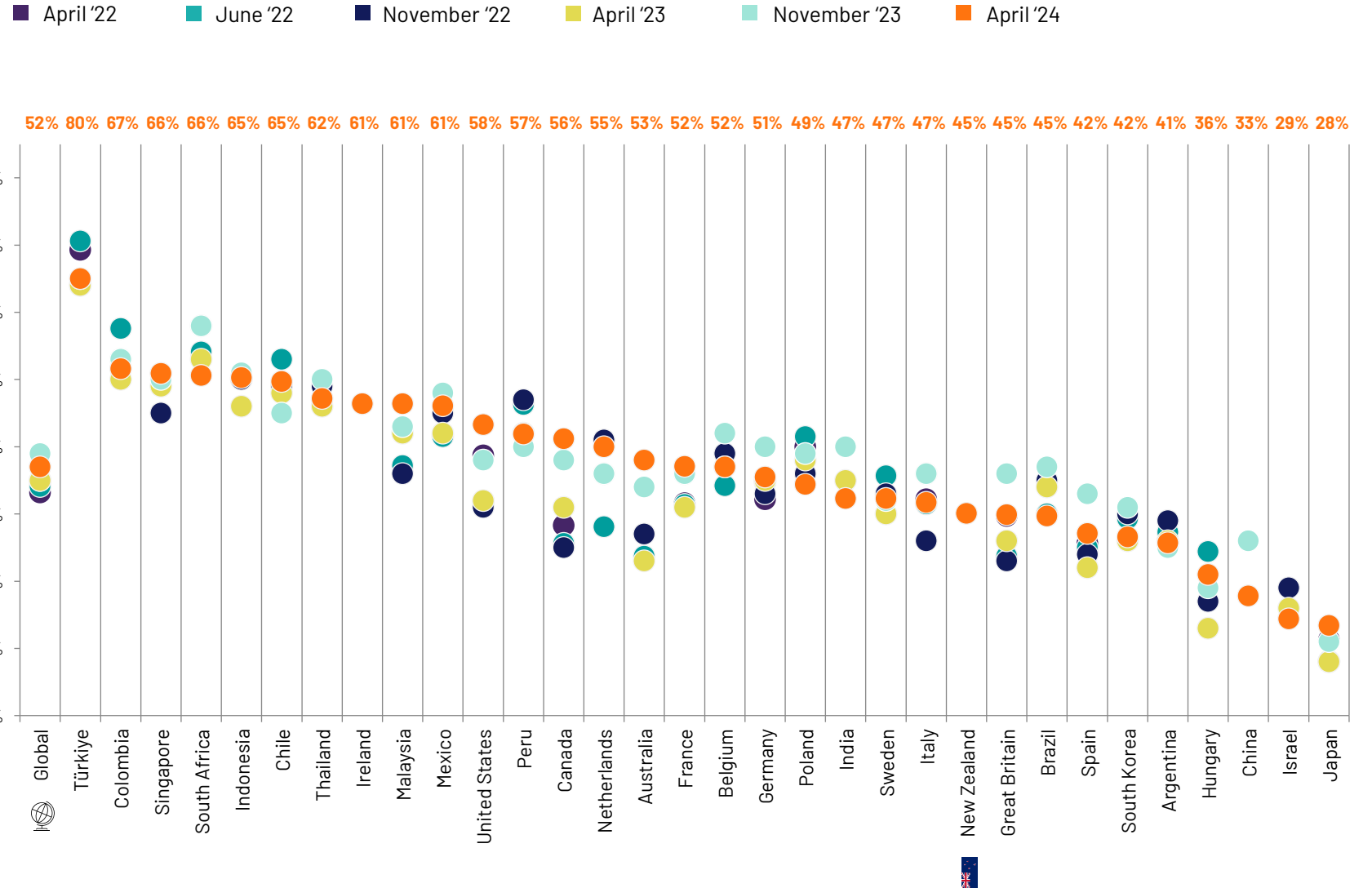


How much, if at all, do you think each of the following are contributing to the rising cost of living in ... today?

Immigration into my country

% a great deal/fair amount

Base: 24,801 online adults under age 75 across 33 countries, interviewed March 22 – April 5, 2024



Methodology

Methodology

These are the results of a 32-country survey conducted by Ipsos on its Global Advisor online platform and, in India, on its IndiaBus platform, between Friday, March 22 and Friday, April 5, 2024.

For this survey, Ipsos interviewed a total of 24,801 adults aged 18 years and older in India, 18-74 in Canada, Republic of Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa, Türkiye, and the United States, 20-74 in Thailand, 21-74 in Indonesia and Singapore, and 16-74 in all other countries.

The sample consists of approximately 1,000 individuals each in Australia, Brazil, Canada, mainland China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Spain, and the U.S., and 500 individuals each in Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, South

Korea, Sweden, Thailand, and Türkiye. The sample in India consists of approximately 2,200 individuals, of whom approximately 1,800 were interviewed face-to-face and 400 were interviewed online.

Samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S. can be considered representative of their general adult populations under the age of 75. Samples in Brazil, Chile, mainland China, Colombia, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, and Türkiye are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. The survey results for these countries should be viewed as reflecting the views of the more “connected” segment of their population.

India’s sample represents a large subset of its urban population — social economic classes A, B and C in metros and tier 1-3 town classes across all four zones.

The data is weighted so that the composition of each country’s sample best reflects the demographic profile of the adult population according to the most recent census data.

“The 32-country average” reflects the average result for all the countries and markets in which the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result.

When percentages do not sum up to 100 or the ‘difference’ appears to

be +/-1 percentage point more/less than the actual result, this may be due to rounding, multiple responses, or the exclusion of “don't know” or not stated responses.

The precision of Ipsos online polls is calculated using a credibility interval with a poll where N=1,000 being accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of where N=500 being accurate to +/- 5.0 percentage points. For more information on Ipsos' use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

The publication of these findings abides by local rules and regulations.

