

Attitudes towards immigration

Survey conducted in collaboration with British Future

29th July 2024 - 12th August 2024

British Future...



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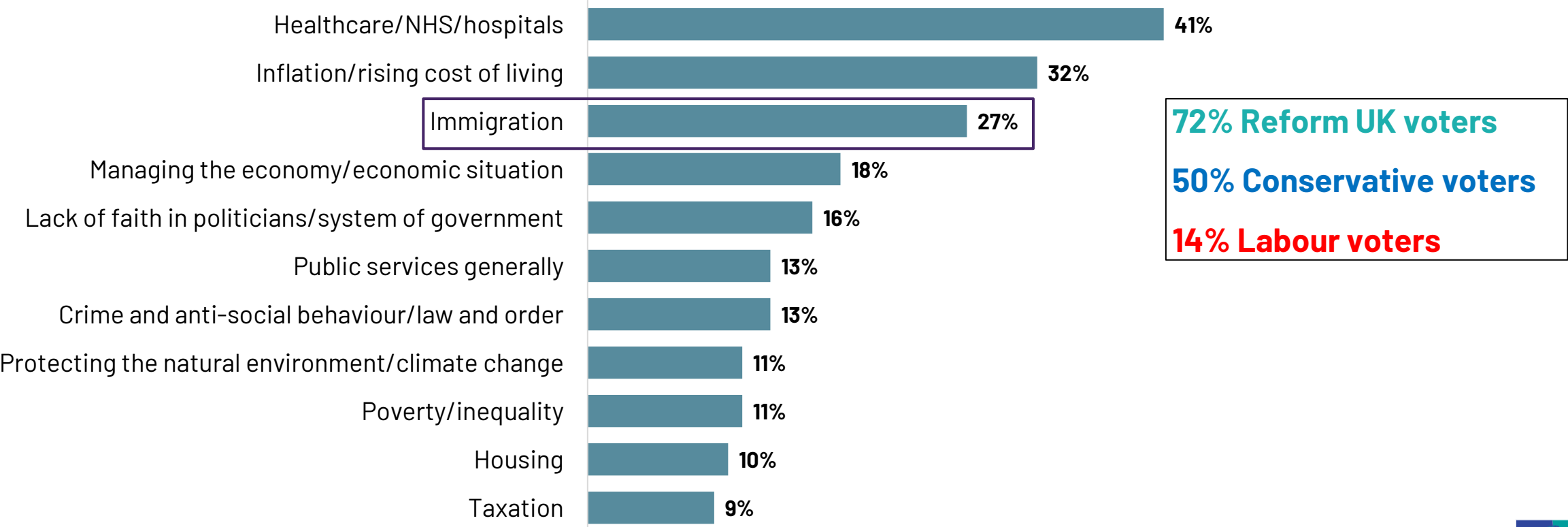
Technical note

- Ipsos interviewed 3,000 adults aged 18+ across Great Britain online. Data are weighted to reflect the population profile.
- Fieldwork dates were 29th July 2024 - 12th August 2024.
- The survey was conducted in collaboration with British Future with funding from Unbound Philanthropy and the Barrow Cadbury Trust.
- Percentage scores are shown out of 100%. Where figures do not add up to 100%, this is due to computer rounding. An asterisks indicates a score less than 0.5%, but greater than zero. Combined figures (e.g. net agree) are taken from computer tables, and may differ from the sum of the constituent parts due to rounding. All polls are subject to a range of potential sources of error.

Issues, trust and governance

Around a quarter (27%) cited immigration as an important issue to their vote in the 2024 General Election. This rose to half of Conservative voters and 72% of Reform UK voters.

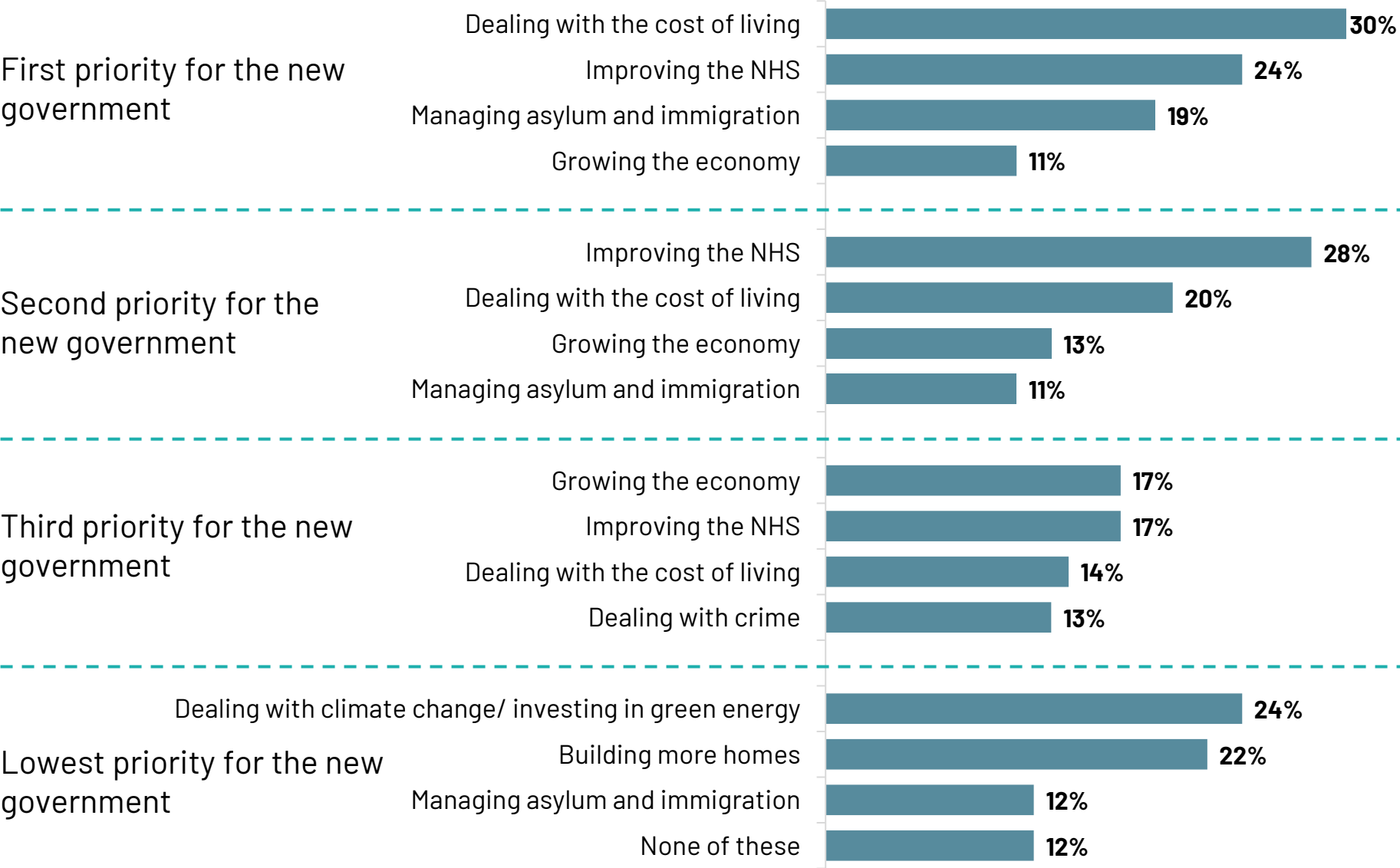
Q What were the top three issues that were most important to you in deciding which party to vote for in the 2024 General Election?



The public believes that dealing with the cost of living and improving the NHS should be the first priorities for the new government.

One in five think managing asylum and immigration should be the first priority.

Q Which of the following issues do you think should be the...



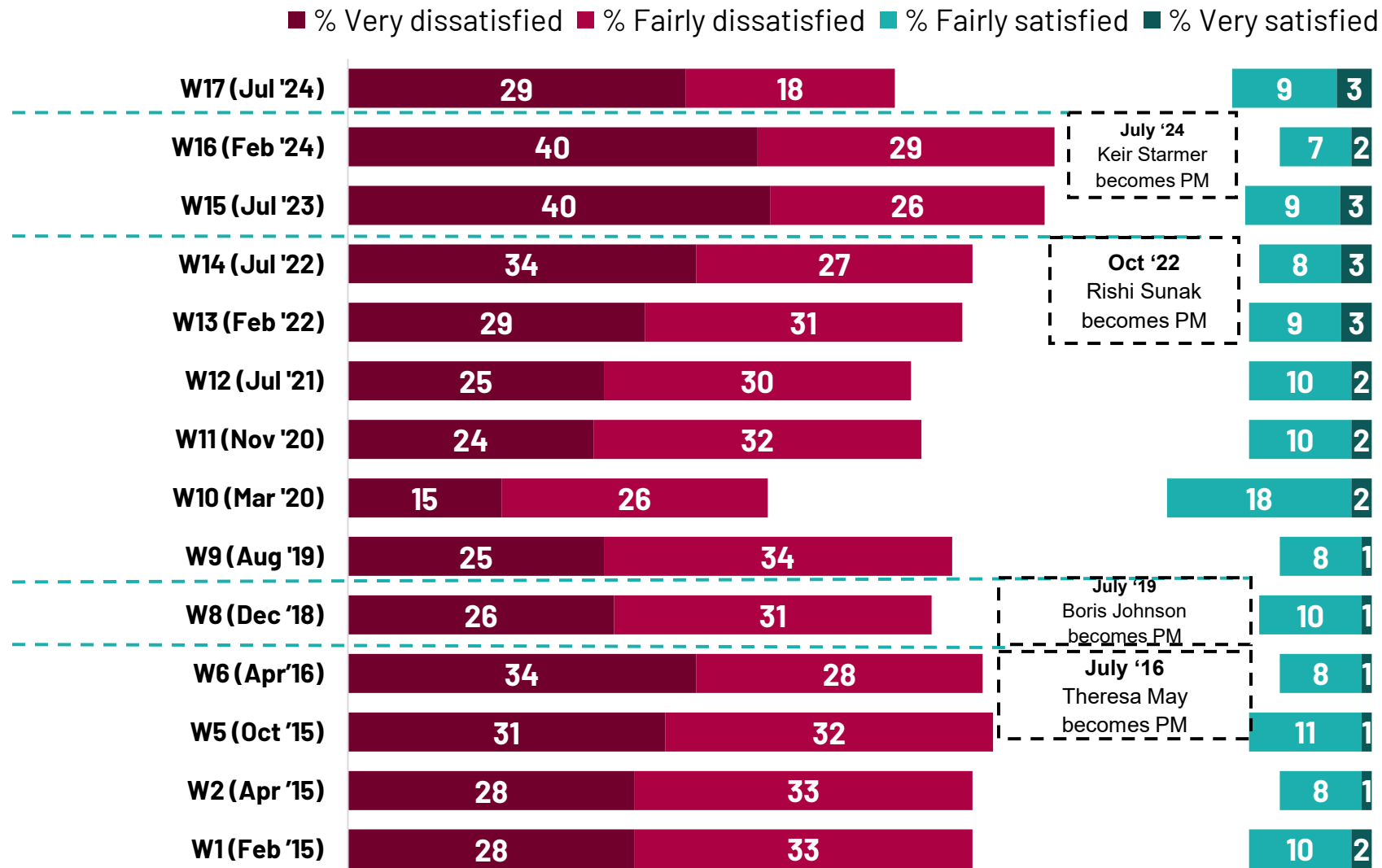
Base: All respondents (W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024



Dissatisfaction with the government's dealing of immigration has decreased since the Labour were elected in July 2024.

Just 12% however are satisfied.

Q Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the current government is dealing with immigration?

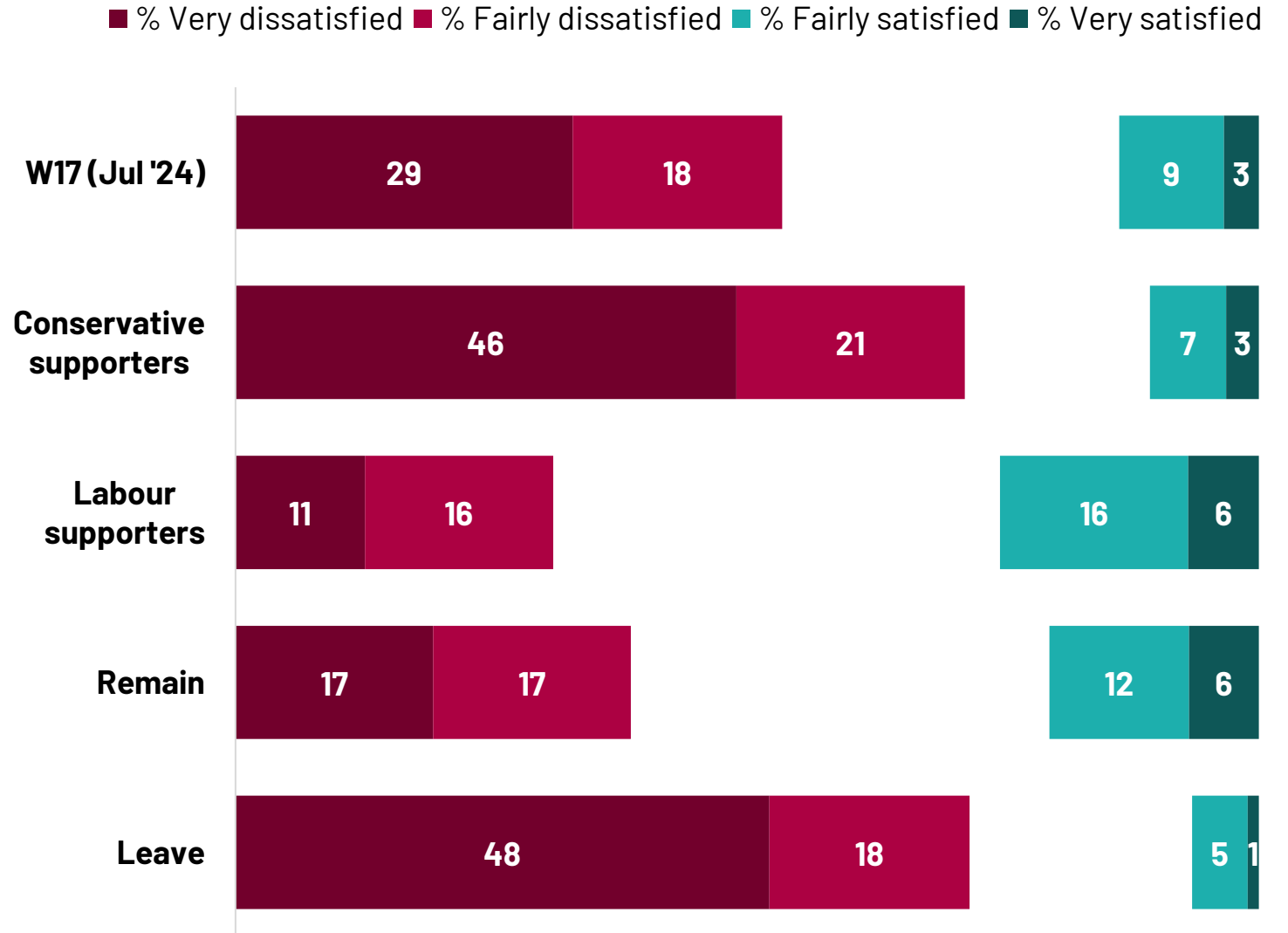


Base: All respondents (W1: 4574; W2: 3770; W3: 3023; W4: 2698; W6: 4002; W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9: 2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004; W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Two thirds of Leave voters and Conservative supporters are dissatisfied with the way the current government is dealing with immigration.

One in five Labour supporters are satisfied.

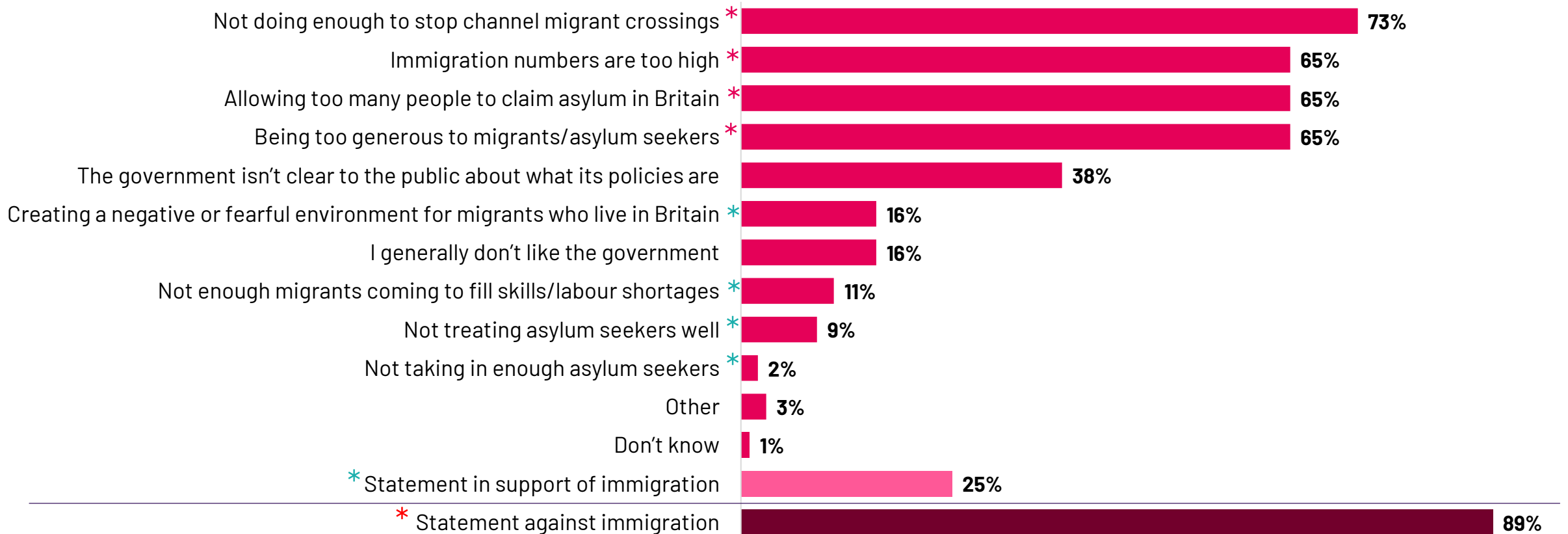
Q Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the current government is dealing with immigration?



Base: All respondents (W17: 3000): Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Those dissatisfied with the government's handling of immigration are most concerned about Channel crossings and the number of migrants and asylum claims

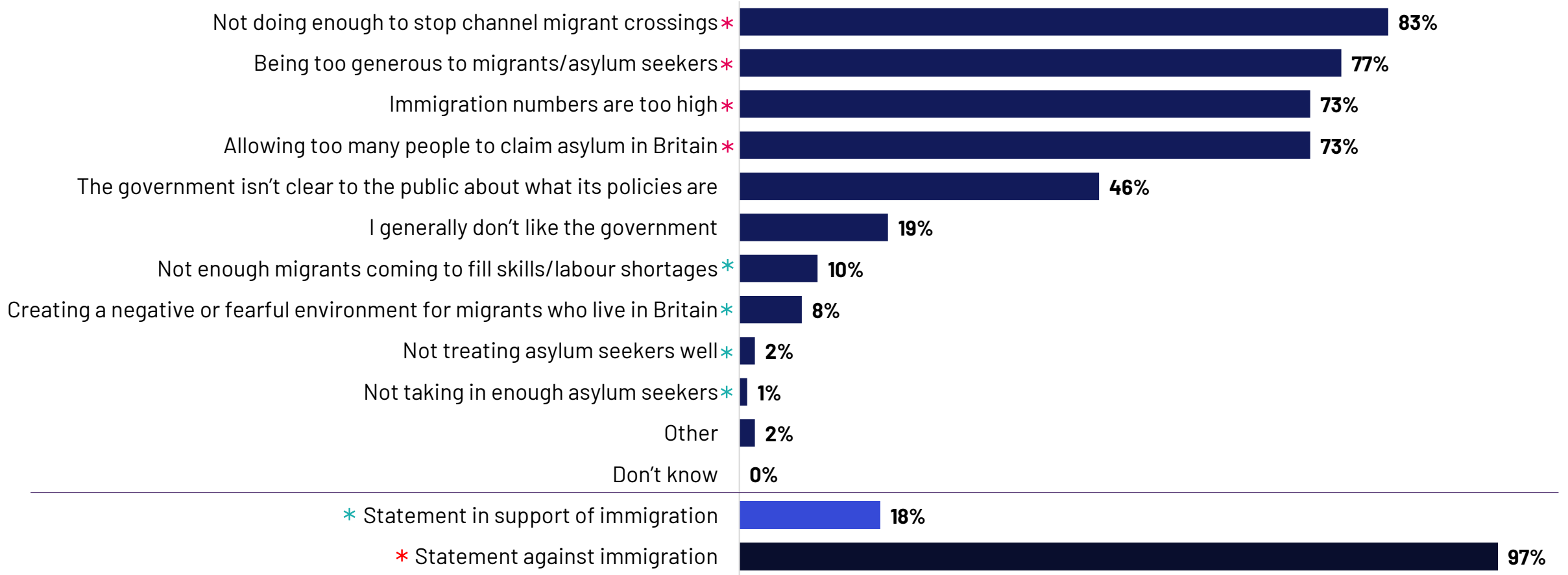
Q And for which of the following reasons, if any, make you dissatisfied with the way the current government is dealing with immigration?



Base: All respondents dissatisfied with the way the Government's dealing with immigration (W17: 1343); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Conservative voters are most dissatisfied with the government's handling of Channel crossings, generosity towards migrants and concerns around numbers

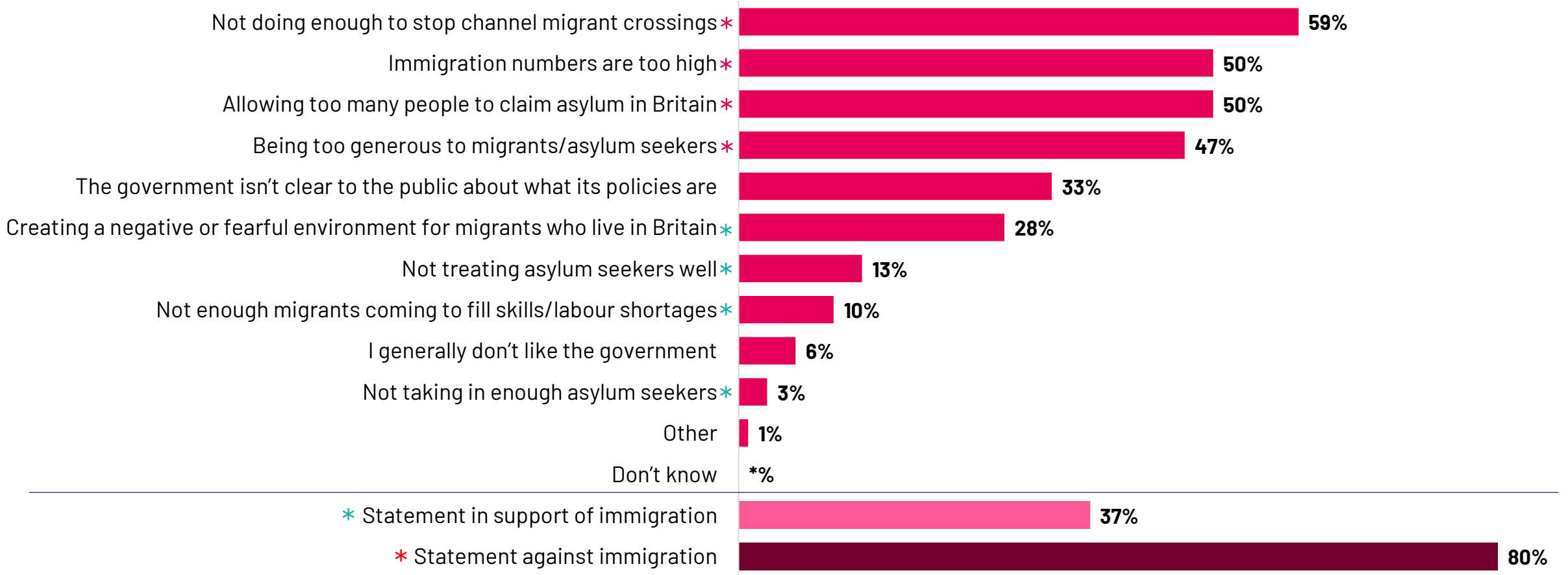
Q And for which of the following reasons, if any, make you dissatisfied with the way the current government is dealing with immigration?



Base: All Conservative supporters dissatisfied with the way the Government's dealing with immigration (W17: 330): Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024)

Although Labour voters are also dissatisfied with similar issues, they are also more likely than their Conservative counterparts to be concerned about the fearful environment and treatment of migrants in Britain

Q And for which of the following reasons, if any, make you dissatisfied with the way the current government is dealing with immigration?



Base: All Labour supporters dissatisfied with the way the Government's dealing with immigration (W17: 243); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024)

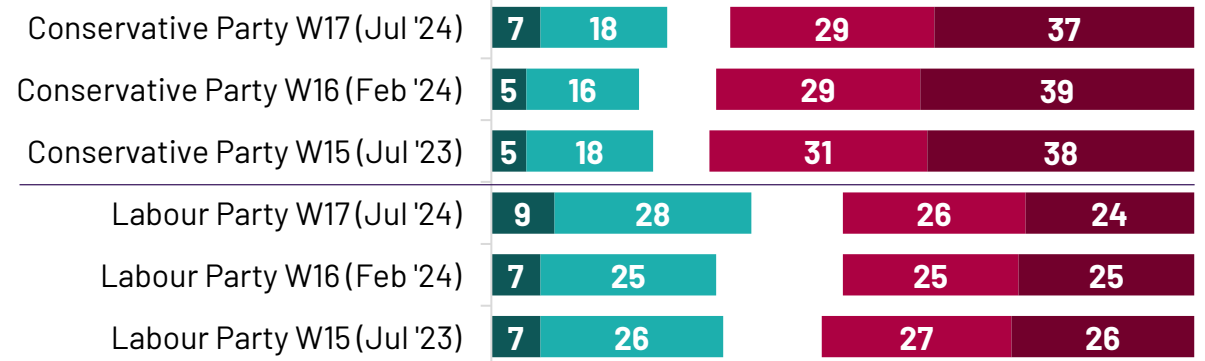
The Labour Party are more trusted than the Conservatives to have the right policies towards immigration, work visas and asylum seekers.

However, trust is lacking in both parties to deliver.

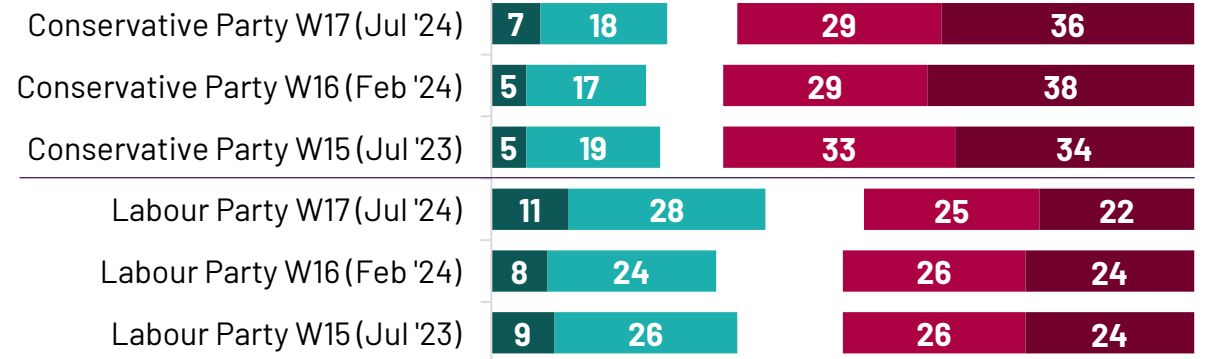
Q To what extent, if at all, do you trust each of the following political parties to have...

■ A great deal ■ A fair amount ■ Not very much ■ Not at all

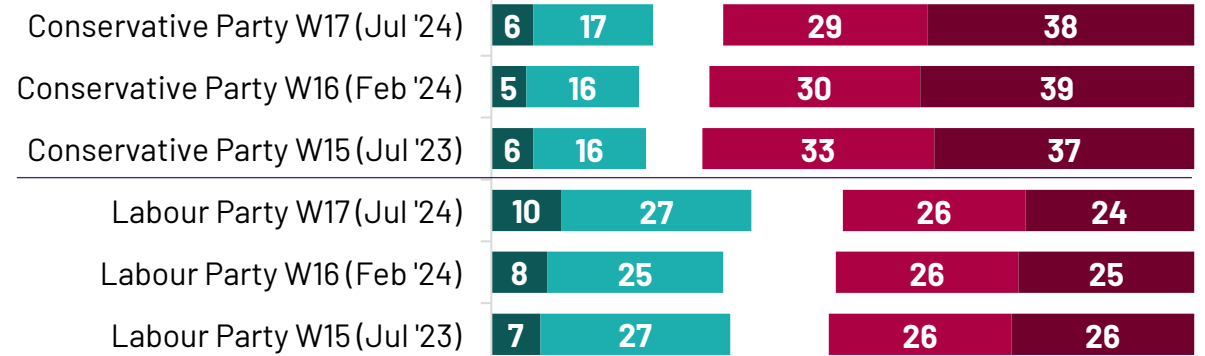
The right immigration policies overall?



The right policies on immigration visas for working in Britain?



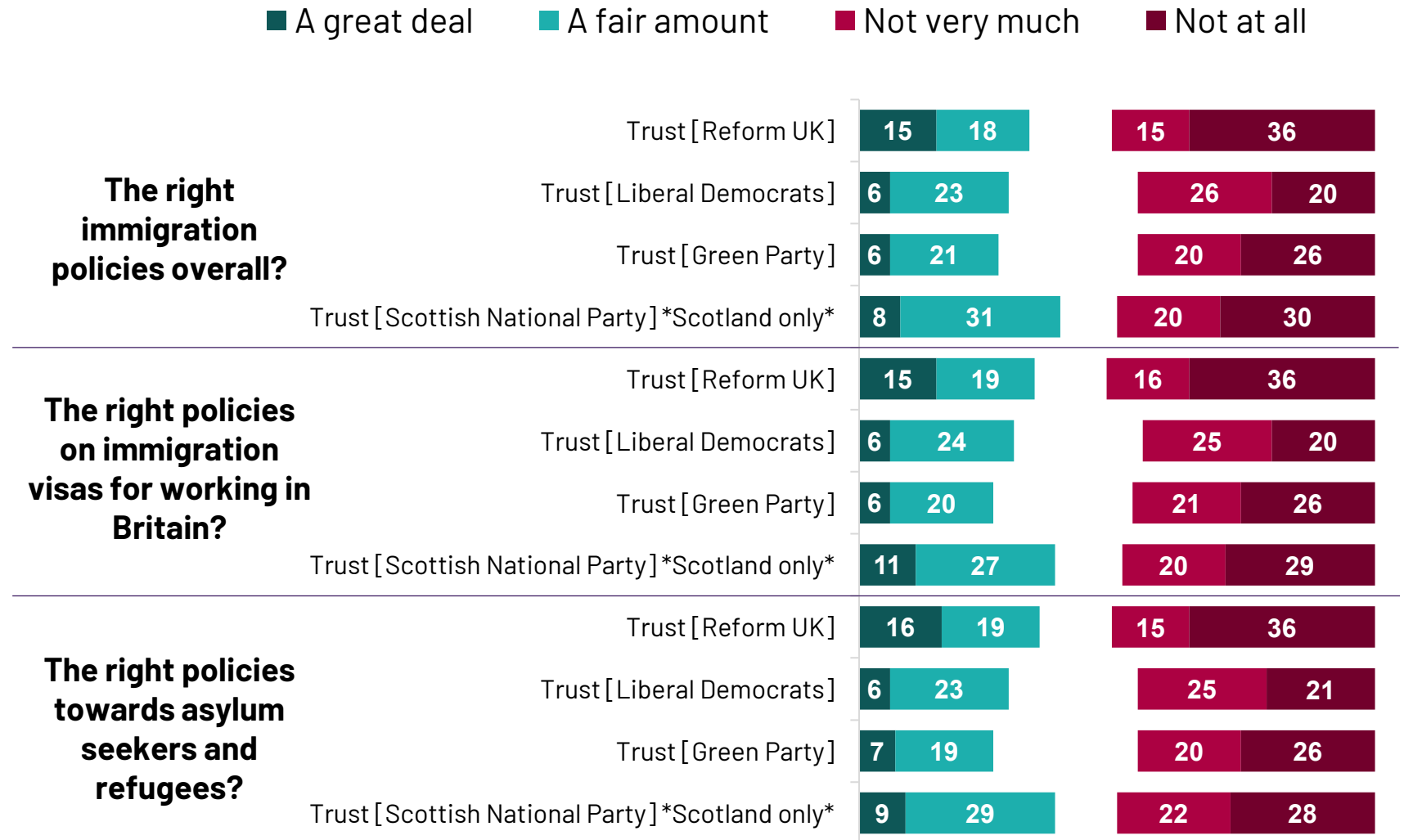
The right policies towards asylum seekers and refugees?



Base: All respondents (W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Trust in smaller parties on immigration is similarly low, but Reform UK and the SNP (among Scottish voters) are slightly the most trusted to deliver on immigration policy.

Q To what extent, if at all, do you trust each of the following political parties to have...

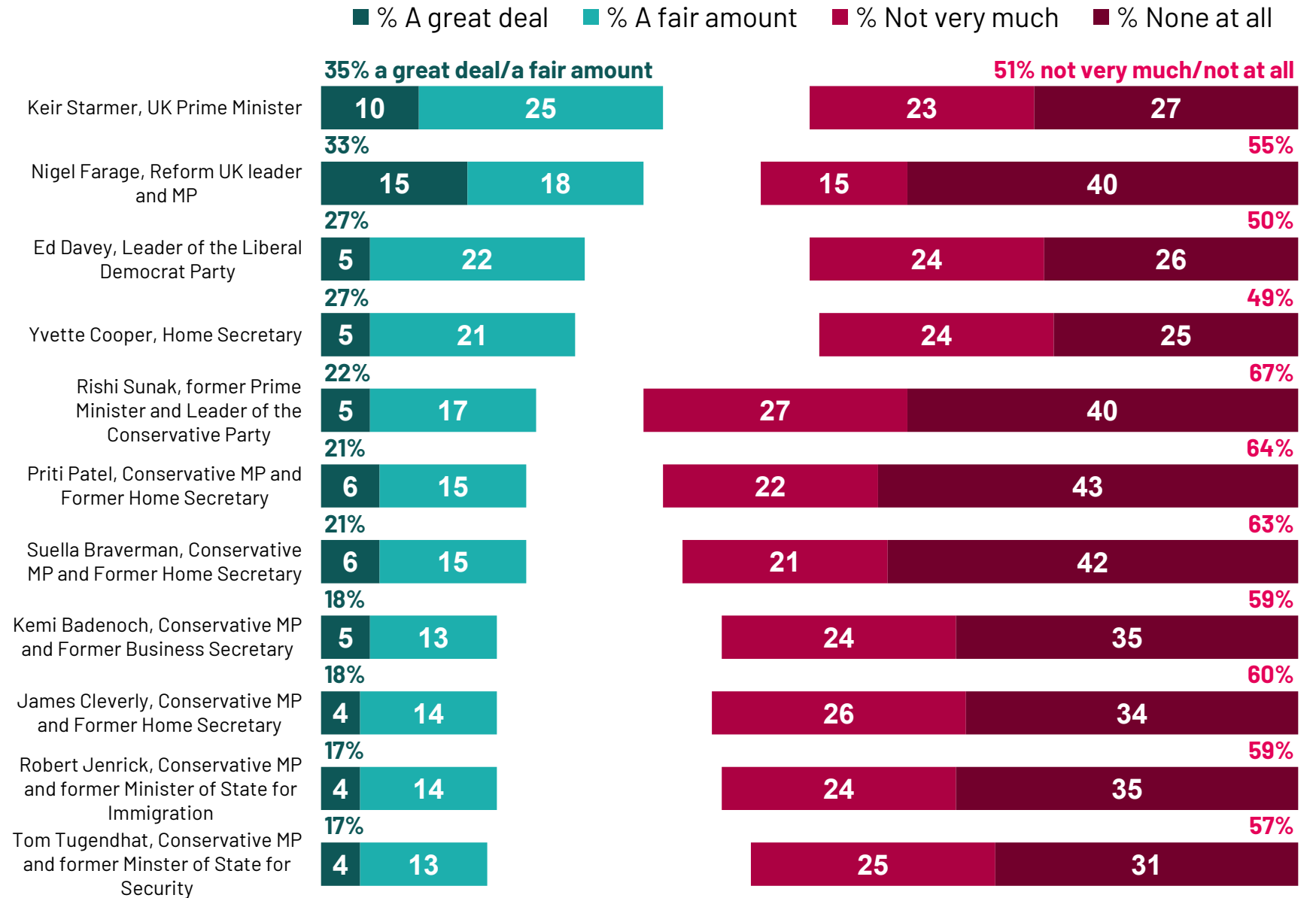


Base: All respondents from Scotland only (W17: 262), All respondents (W17: 3000): Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Kier Starmer is most trusted by Britons on immigration – followed by Nigel Farage.

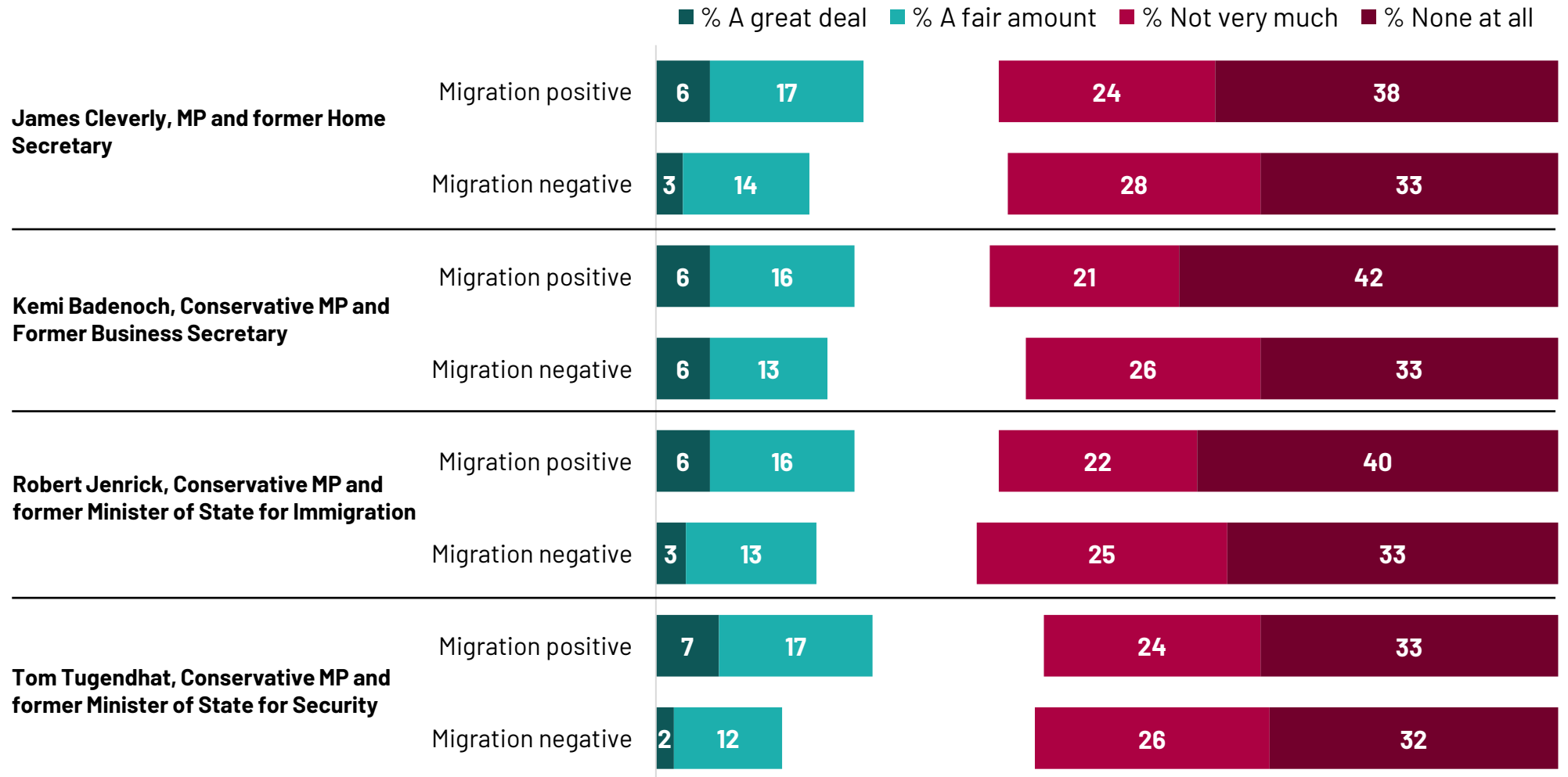
The remaining Conservative leadership contenders are all similarly distrusted.

Q To what extent, if at all, do you trust each of the following politicians when they talk about immigration...?



The majority of the public distrust the Conservative leadership candidates equally when talking about immigration, regardless of their perception of the impact of immigration on Britain

Q To what extent, if at all, do you trust each of the following politicians when they talk about immigration...?



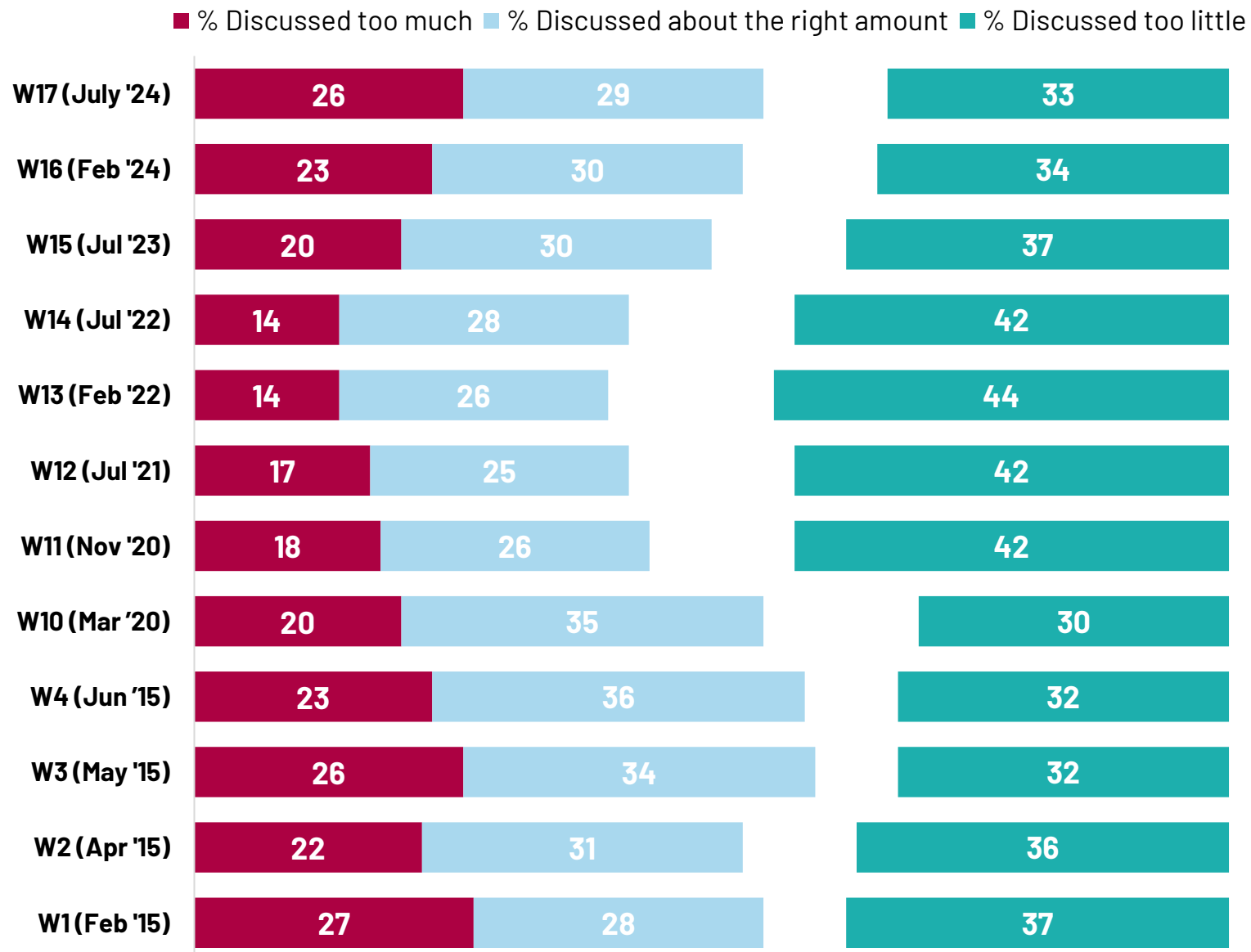
Base: All respondents (W17: 3000); Migration positive (1333); Migration negative (1010); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Immigration and visas

The proportion who think immigration has been discussed too much has steadily increased since 2022- returning to the levels of 2015.

A third think it is discussed too little.

Q Generally speaking, do you think that the issue of immigration has been discussed in Britain too much, too little or about the right amount over the last few months?

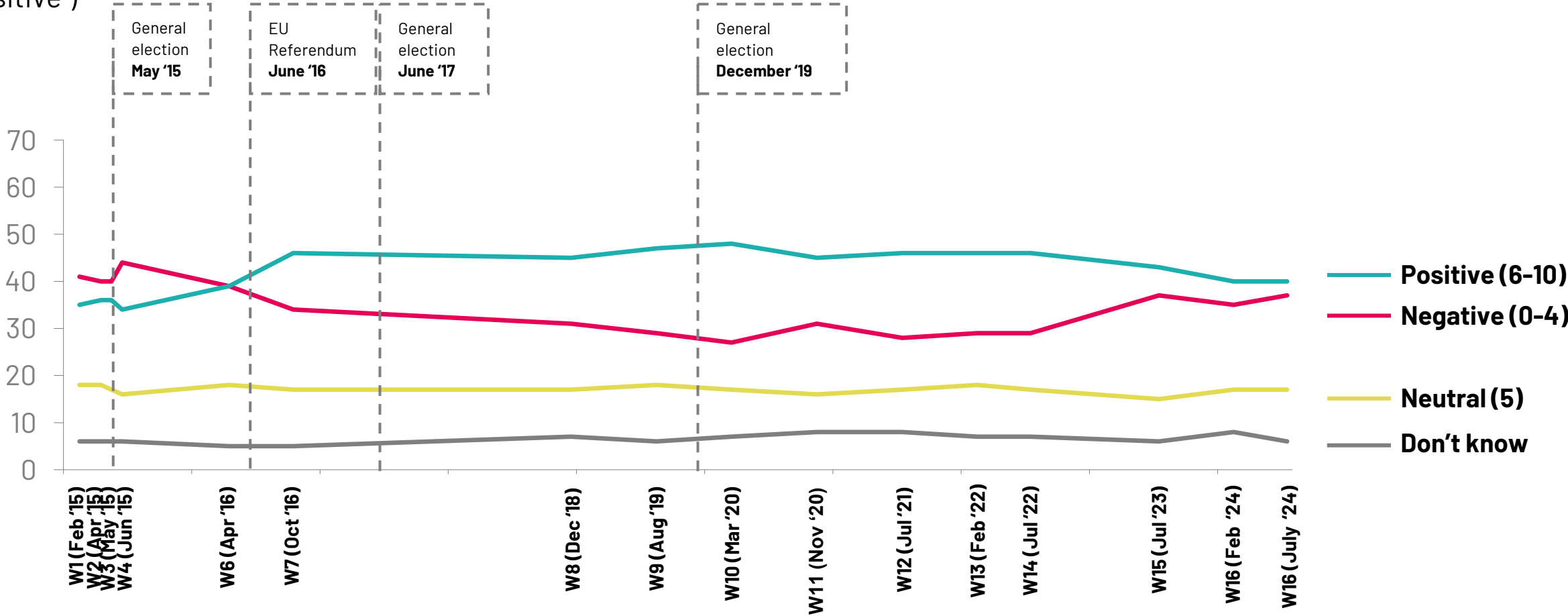


Base: All respondents (W1: 4574; W2: 3770; W3:3023; W4:2698; W6: 4002; W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9 2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004;

W15: 3000; W16: 3000, W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

The proportion of people who think migration has had a negative impact on Britain has steadily increased since July 2022, though still not as negative as in 2015

Q On a scale of 0 to 10, has migration had a positive or negative impact on Britain? (0 is "very negative", 10 is "very positive")



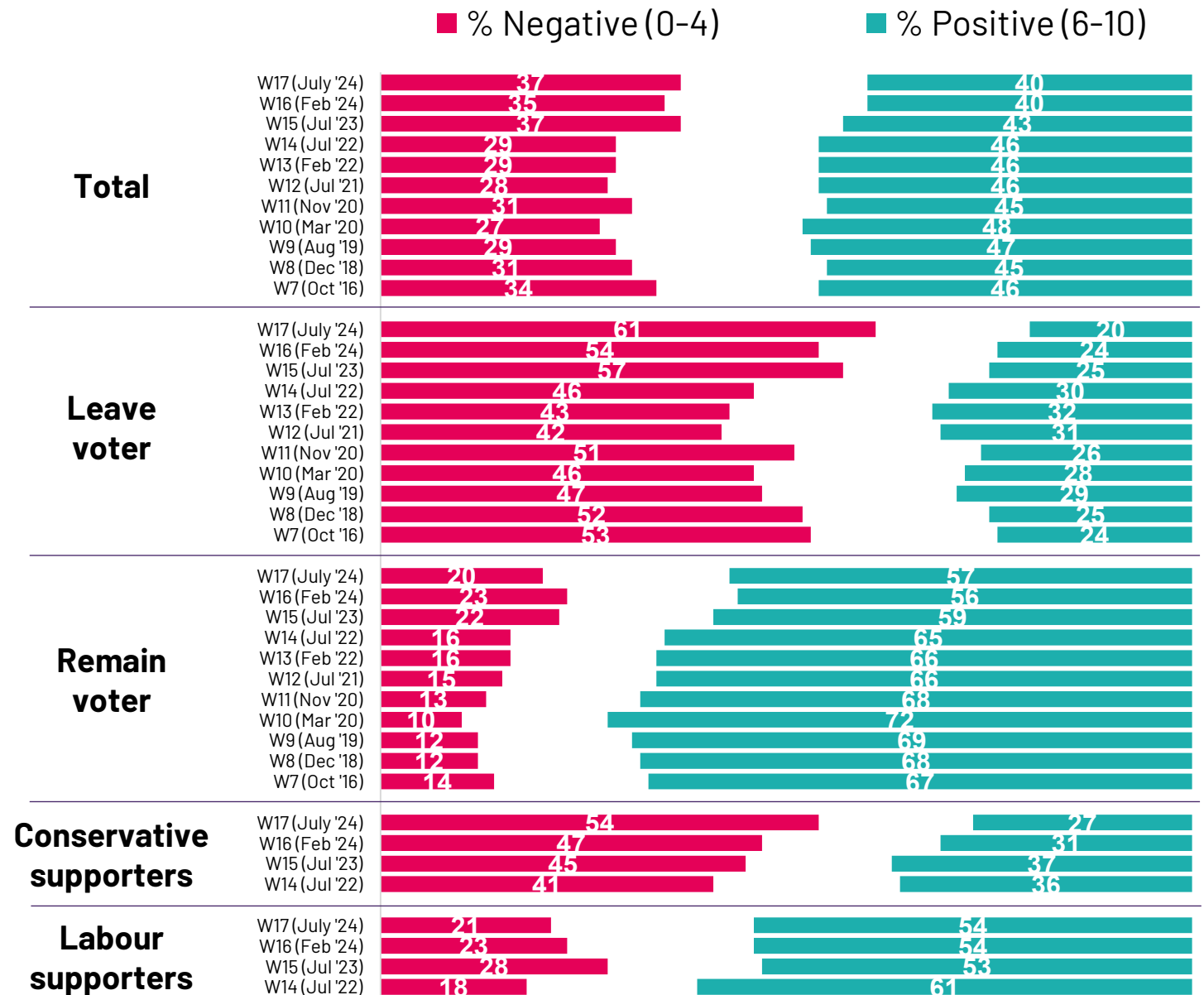
Base: All respondents (W1: 4574; W2: 3770; W3:3023; W4:2698; W6: 4002; W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9:2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004;



Overall, four in ten (40%) think migration has had a positive impact on the country, over a third (37%) disagree.

Views have become less positive across the political spectrum since 2022.

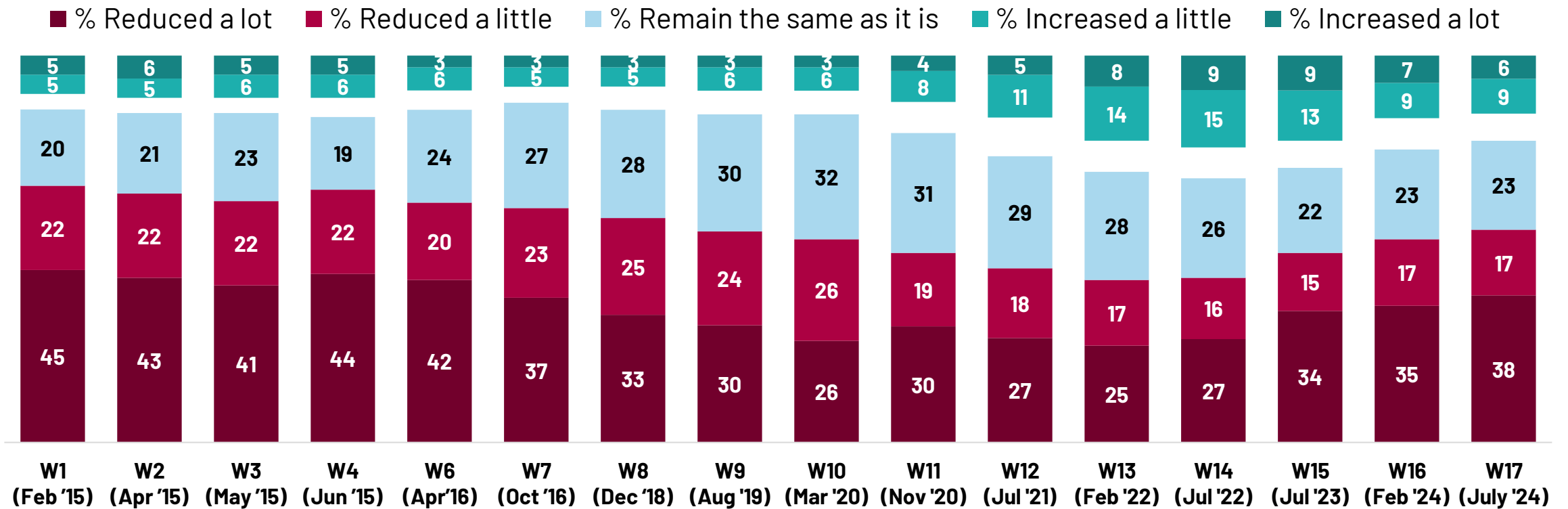
Q On a scale of 0 to 10, has migration had a positive or negative impact on Britain? (0 is "very negative", 10 is "very positive")



Base: All respondents (W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9: 2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004; W15: 3000; W16: 3000, W17: 3000)

An increasing majority now want to see immigration reduced (55%), while those wanting an increase remains at around one in six.

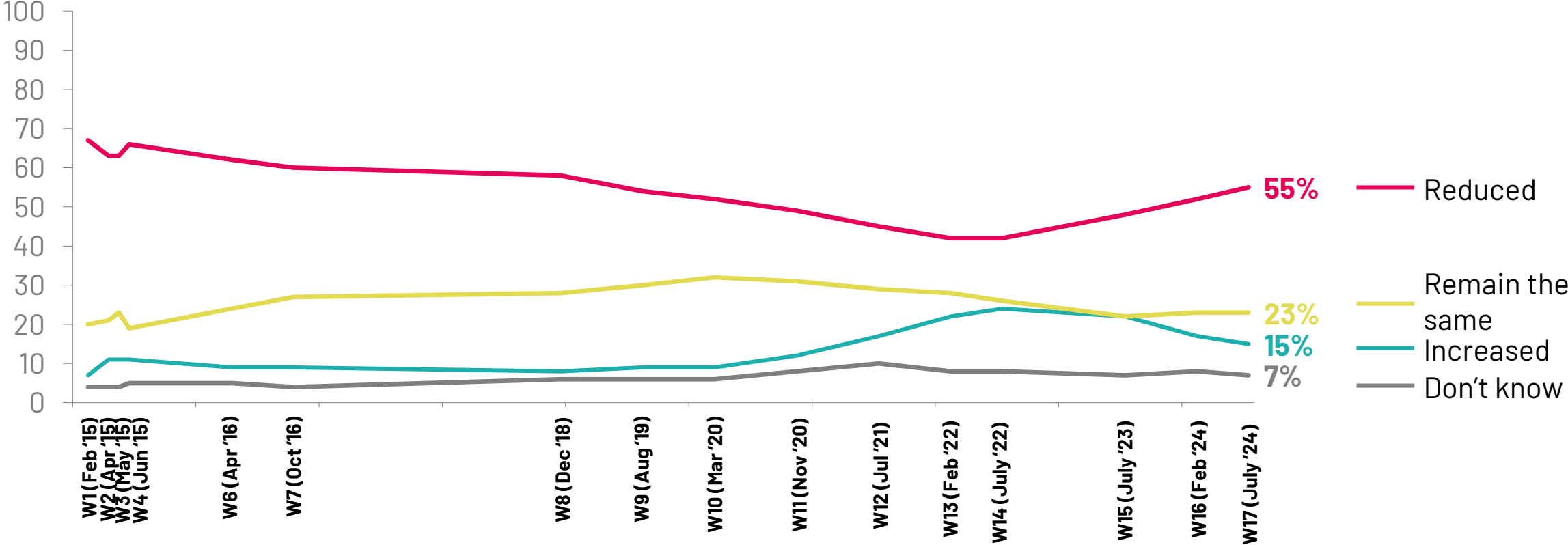
Q Do you think the number of immigrants coming to Britain nowadays should be increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same as it is, reduced a little, or reduced a lot?



Base: All respondents (W1: 4574; W2: 3770; W3: 3023; W4: 2698; W6: 4002; W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9: 2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004; W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000): Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August

The proportion wanting to see a reduction in immigration has increased steadily since 2022, with 55% now in support of reducing numbers.

Q Do you think the number of immigrants coming to Britain nowadays should be increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same as it is, reduced a little, or reduced a lot?



Base: All respondents (W1: 4574; W2: 3770; W3: 3023; W4: 2698; W6: 4002; W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9: 2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004; W15: 3000; W16: 3000, W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024



There has been an increase in sentiment across the political spectrum for a reduction in numbers since 2022. Conservative voters and Leave supporters feel this most strongly.

Q Do you think the number of immigrants coming to Britain nowadays should be increased, remain the same as it is, or reduced?



Base: All respondents (W7: 4071; W8: 2520; W9: 2006; W10: 2100; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004; W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000);



Half of Britons think that net migration figures will increase in the next 12 months. Around one in six (12%) think it will be lower.

Q Do you expect the figure for net migration to be higher or lower than it is now in one year's time, or do you think it will remain about the same?*

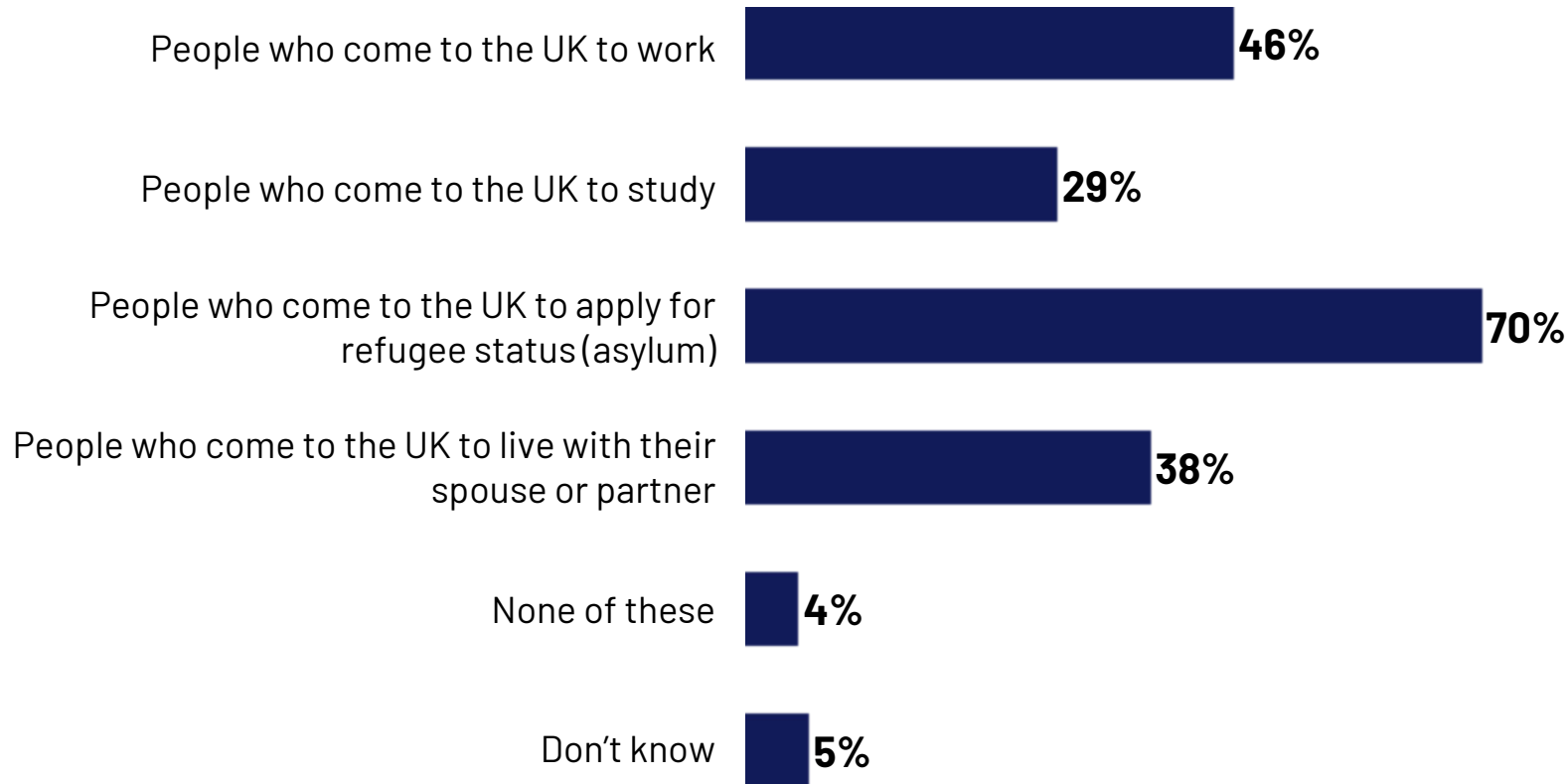


*Question was asked as split sample with half of respondents shown the info statement 'Net migration was at 685,000 in 2023'.



When thinking about who they consider to be immigrants, people who come to the UK to apply for asylum come to mind for seven in ten.

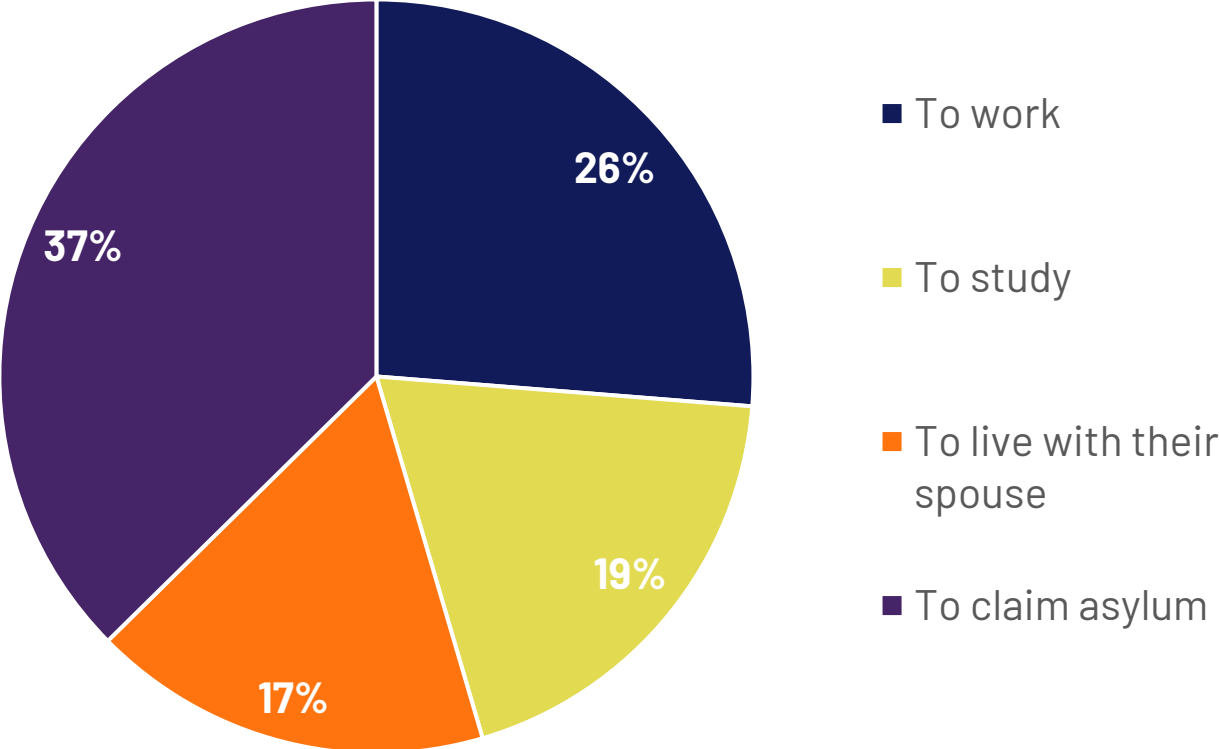
Q. When you think about 'immigrants', which of these types of people do you normally have in mind?



Base: All respondents (W17: 3000): Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

On average, the public believe that those claiming asylum make up the largest proportion of immigration to the UK (37%), followed by those seeking work (26%).

Q. Thinking about the total number of immigrants who came to the UK in 2023, what percentage of the total do you think each of these types of immigration make up?



Actual Figures

- To work: 40%
- To Study: 38%
- To Claim Asylum: 7%
- To join family: 6%

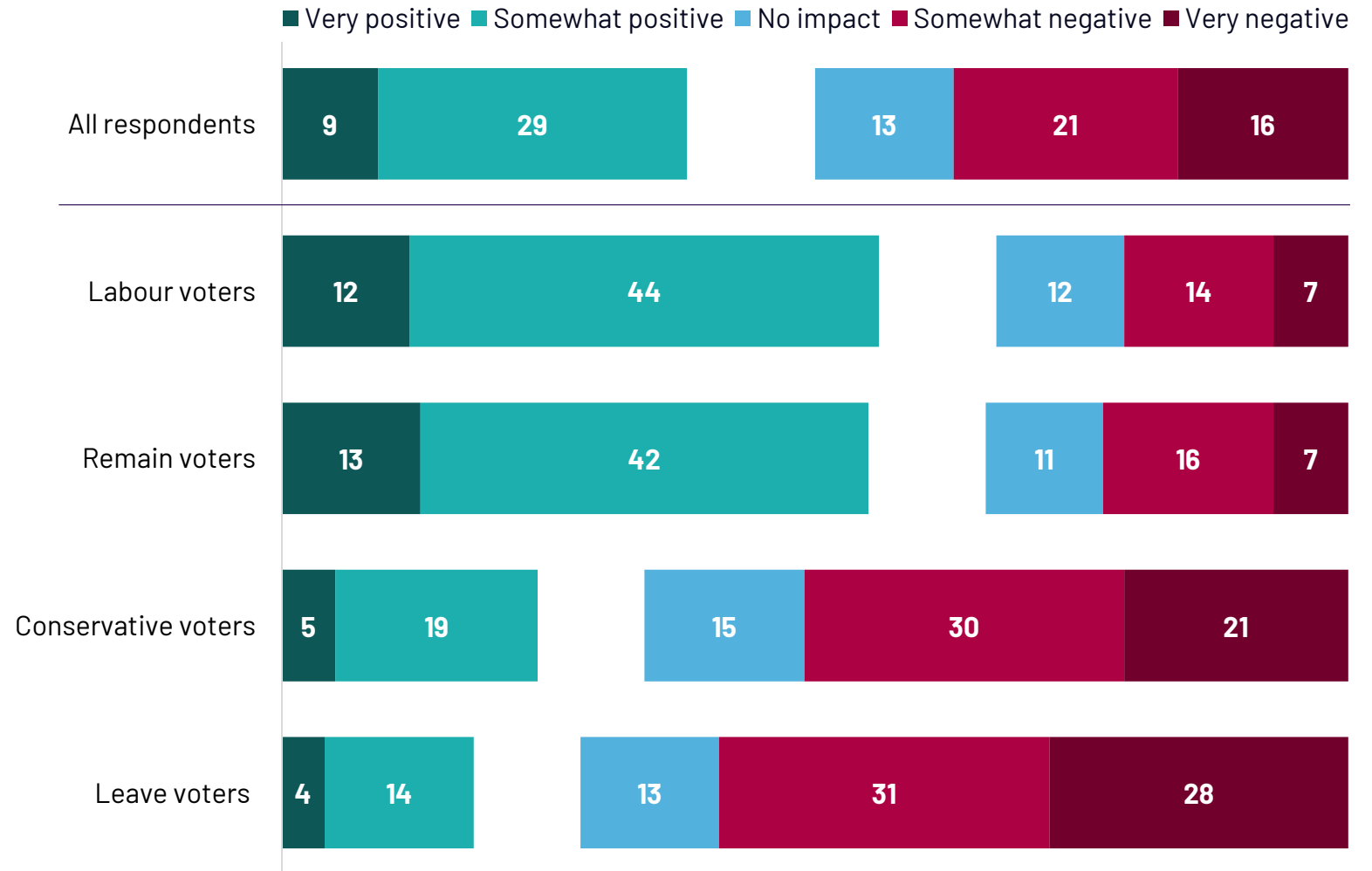
Source: ONS immigration statistics year ending June 2024



Equal proportions feel that immigration has a positive as negative impact on economic growth in the UK.

Labour and Remain supporters are more optimistic than Conservative or Leave supporters.

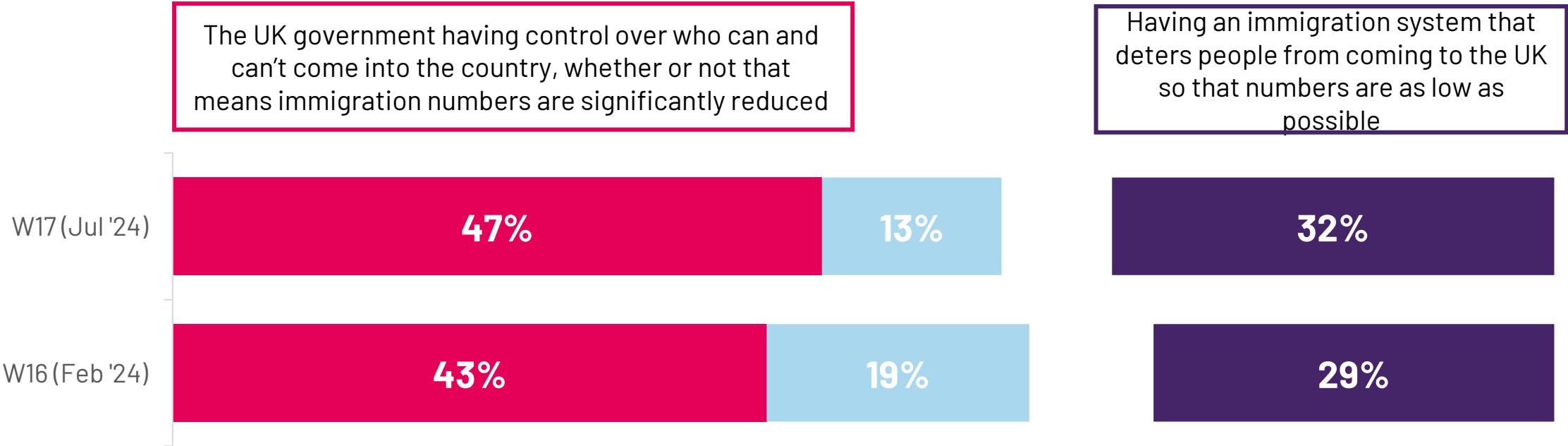
Q What impact, if any, do you think that immigration has on economic growth in the UK?



Base: All respondents (W17: 3000); Conservative voters (510); Labour voters (978); Leave voters (1082); Remain voters (1321); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

Nearly half (47%) think the government should prioritise controlling who comes into Britain, regardless of the impact on numbers. A third think that a deterrent to reduce numbers would be preferable. Fewer are undecided than in February

Q When thinking about the government’s immigration policy, which of the following statements is most important to you?

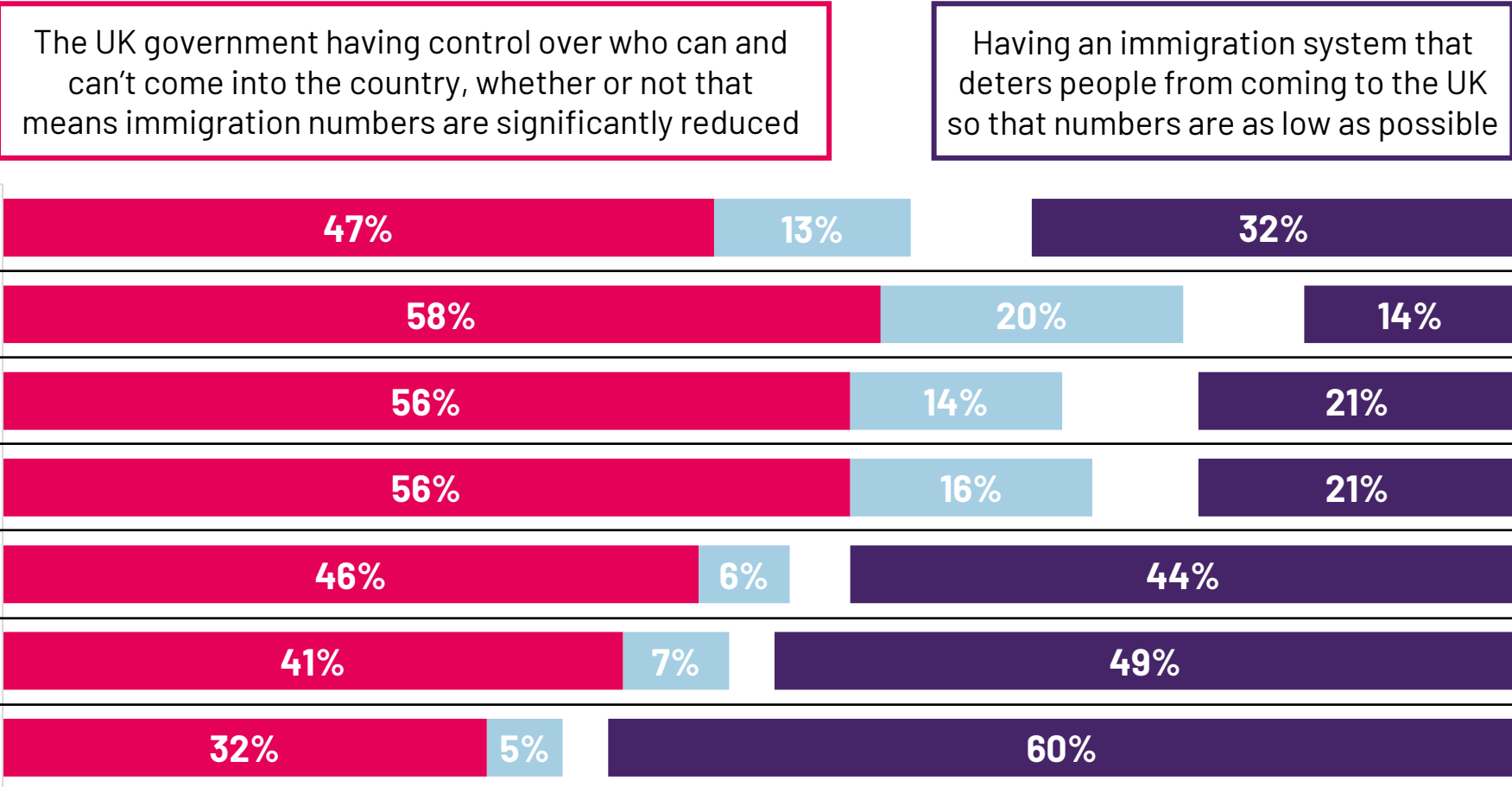


Base: All respondents (W16:3000; W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024



Labour voters and those with a positive view of immigration are more likely to prefer a policy favouring control, compared to those with a more negative view and Leave voters who would prefer a system of deterrence.

Q When thinking about the government’s immigration policy, which of the following statements is most important to you?

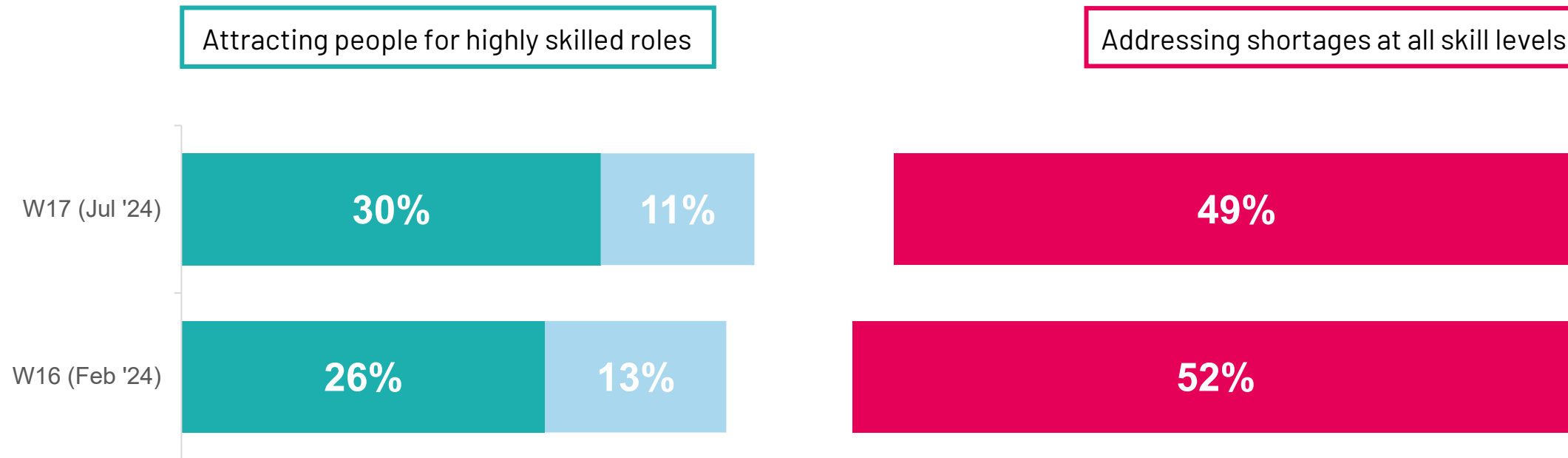


Base: All respondents (W16:3000; W17: 3000): Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024



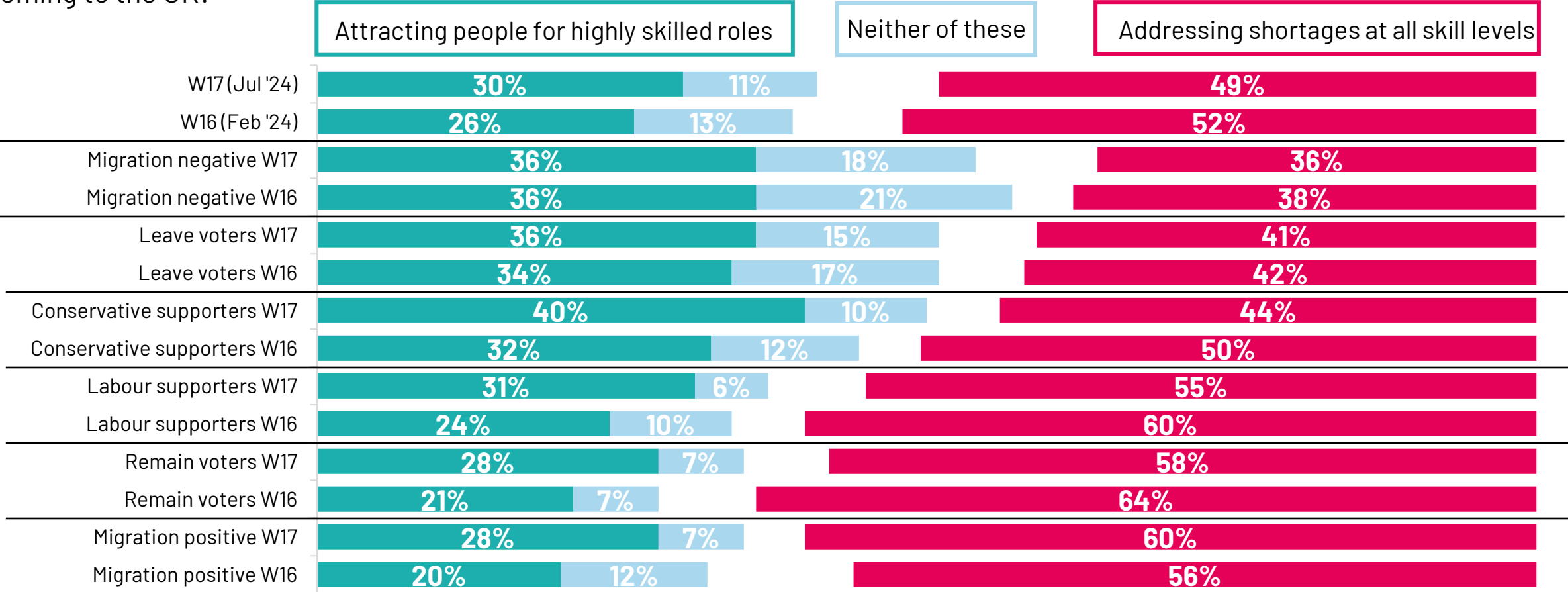
Half of Britons think addressing skill shortages at all levels should be the priority when allocating work visas. Three in ten would prefer a focus on attracting those with high skills.

Q Which, if either, of the following do you think should be the government's priority when allocating work visas to immigrants coming to the UK?



Most groups prioritise addressing shortages at all skill levels, but Leave voters and those negative towards migration are more split

Q Which, if either, of the following do you think should be the government's priority when allocating work visas to immigrants coming to the UK?



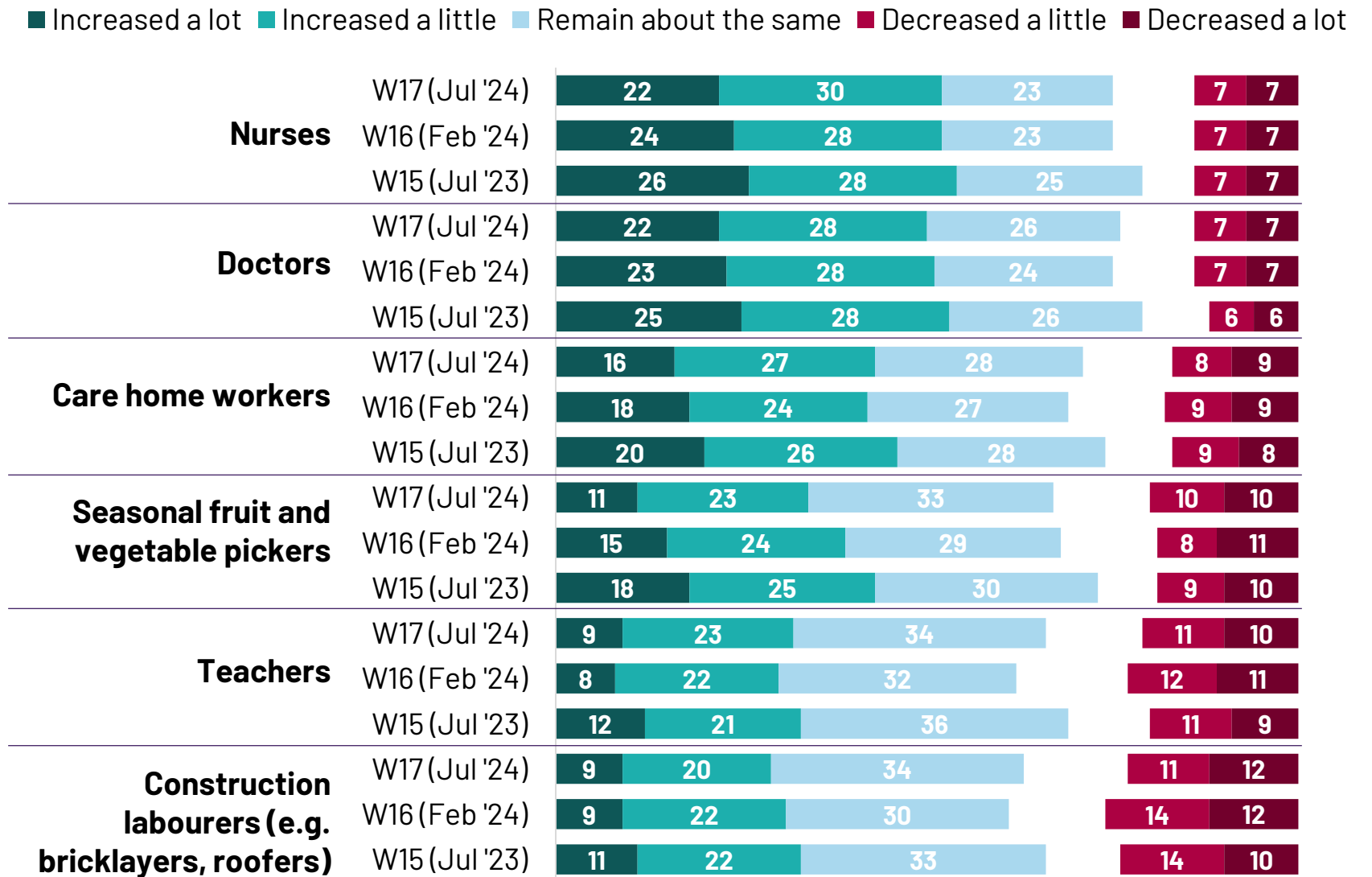
Base: All respondents (W16: 3000; W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024



Around half of Britons would like to see the number of migrant doctors and nurses increased.

A third would prefer an increase in seasonal fruit pickers—down from 2023.

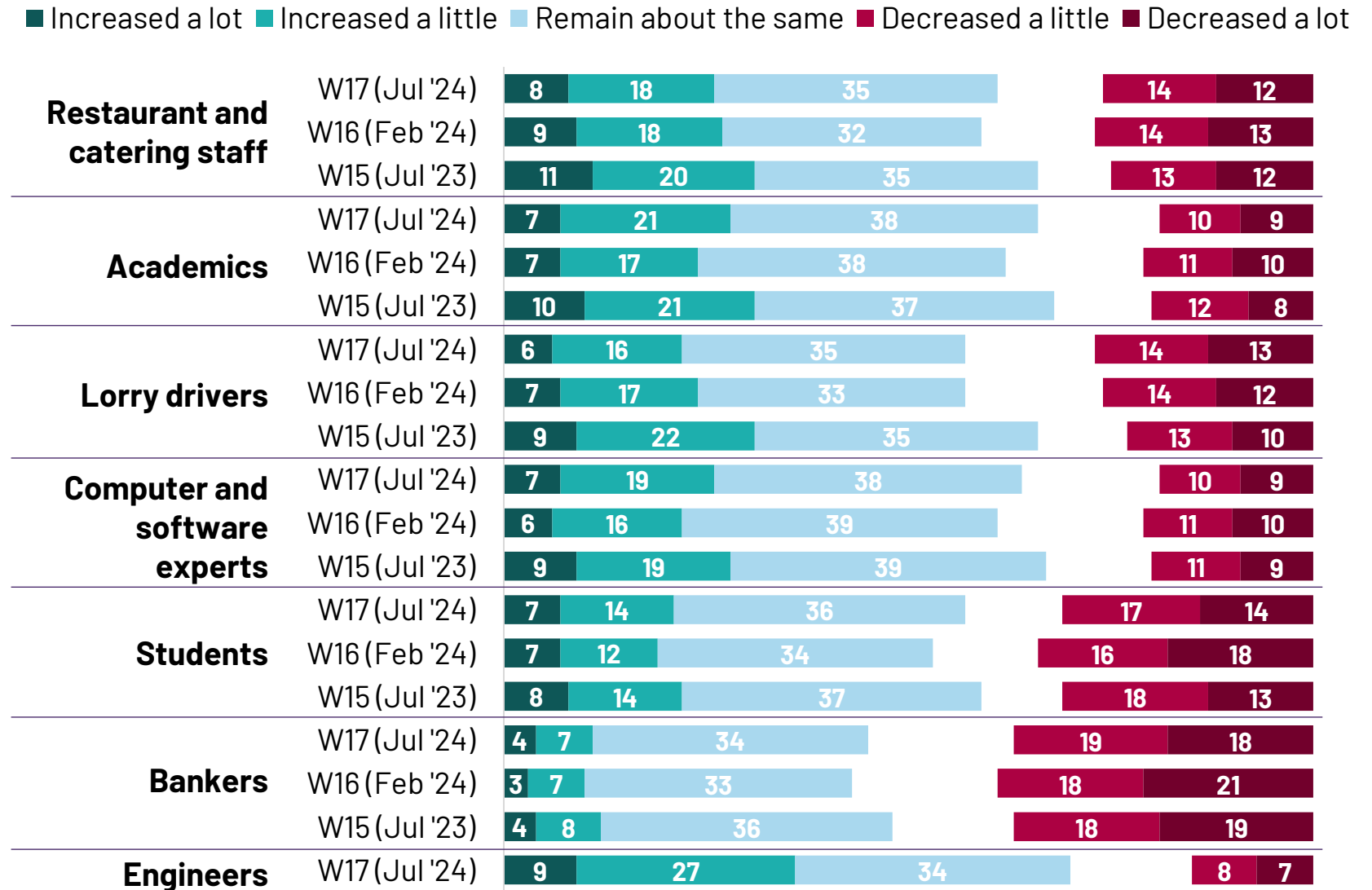
Q Would you prefer the number of migrants (from any country) from each of the below groups coming to live in the UK to be increased, reduced, or should it remain about the same?



Base: All respondents (W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000) Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

There is less appetite among the public to see an increase in the number of bankers, students and lorry drivers.

Q Would you prefer the number of migrants (from any country) from each of the below groups coming to live in the UK to be increased, reduced, or should it remain about the same?

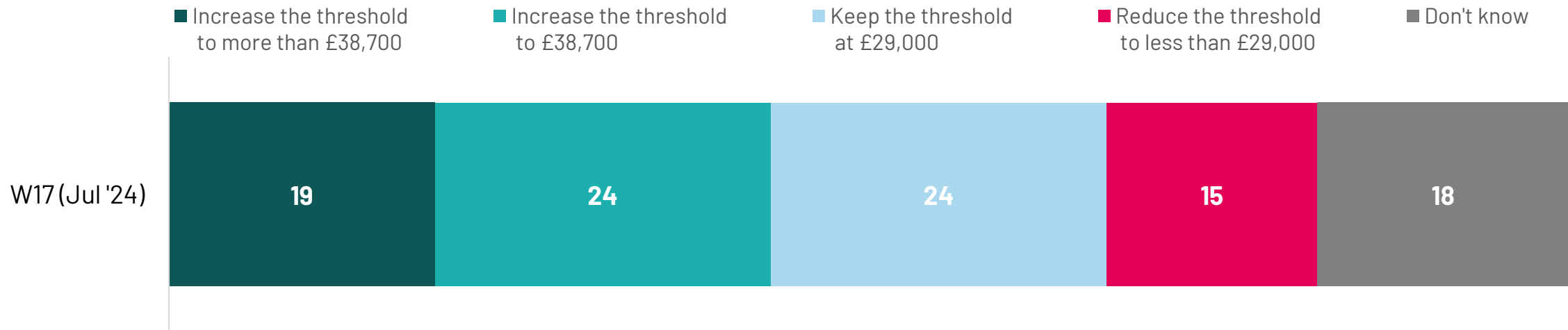


Base: All respondents (W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000) Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

The public are split on how a minimum income threshold should be set for spousal visas. A quarter would prefer to keep it at the current level of £29k, while a similar proportion would like it to be increased to £38,700. A further one in five would increase it further still.

Q If you are a British citizen and want your non-British husband, wife or civil partner to live with you in the UK, rules changed earlier this year mean you have to earn more than £29,000 per year (meaning 50% of the UK working population earn enough to bring their spouse here). This threshold is due to increase to £38,700 next year (meaning 30% of the UK working population would earn enough to bring their spouse here).

How if at all should the government set the minimum income threshold for these visas?



Base: All respondents (W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

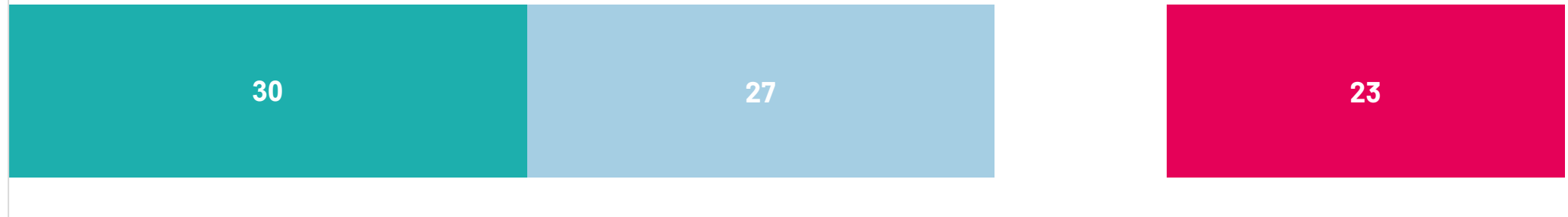
Slightly more would prefer the citizenship process to be made easier in order to encourage legal residents to become citizens, then to discourage and make it more difficult, although overall views are split.

Q Which of the following comes closest to your opinion about the UK's approach to Citizenship for foreign nationals who are legally resident in the UK?

Encourage more foreign nationals who are legally resident in the UK to become British citizens by making it easier to become a citizen

Discourage foreign nationals who are legally resident in the UK from becoming citizens by making it more difficult to become a citizen

W17 (Jul '24)

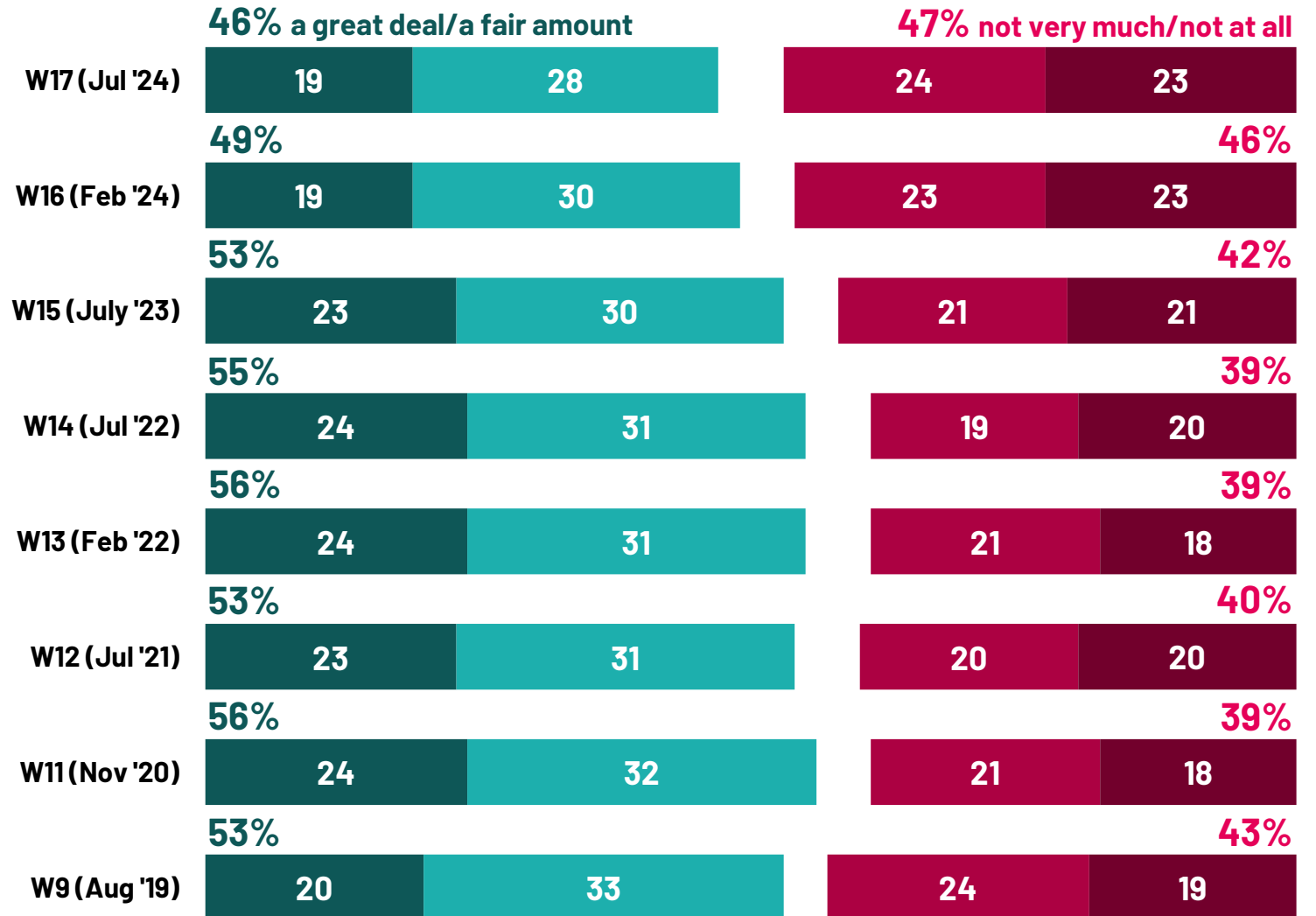


Refugees and asylum

Sympathy for migrants crossing the Channel has steadily decreased since 2022.

A similar proportion now have sympathy as do not.

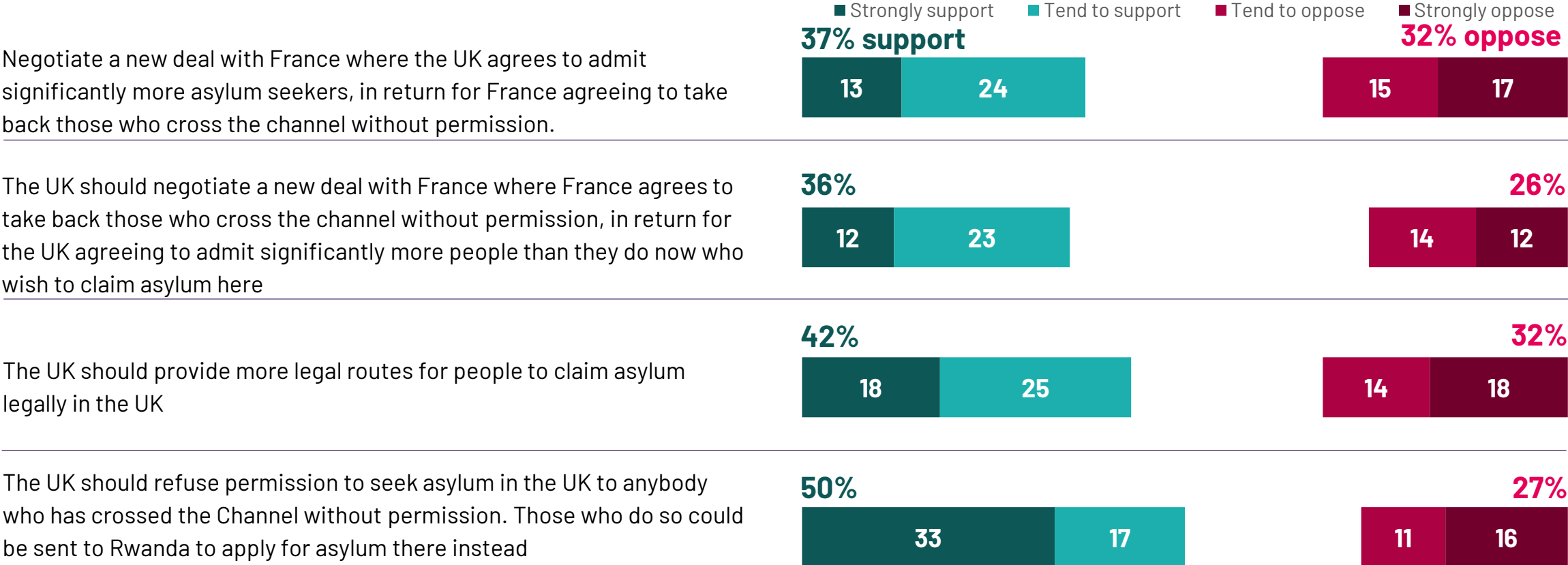
Q How much sympathy if at all, if any, do you have for the migrants attempting to cross the English Channel by boat to come to Britain?



Base: All respondents (W9: 2006; W11: 2532; W12: 4000; W13: 3206; W14: 3004; W15: 3000; W16: 3000; W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024

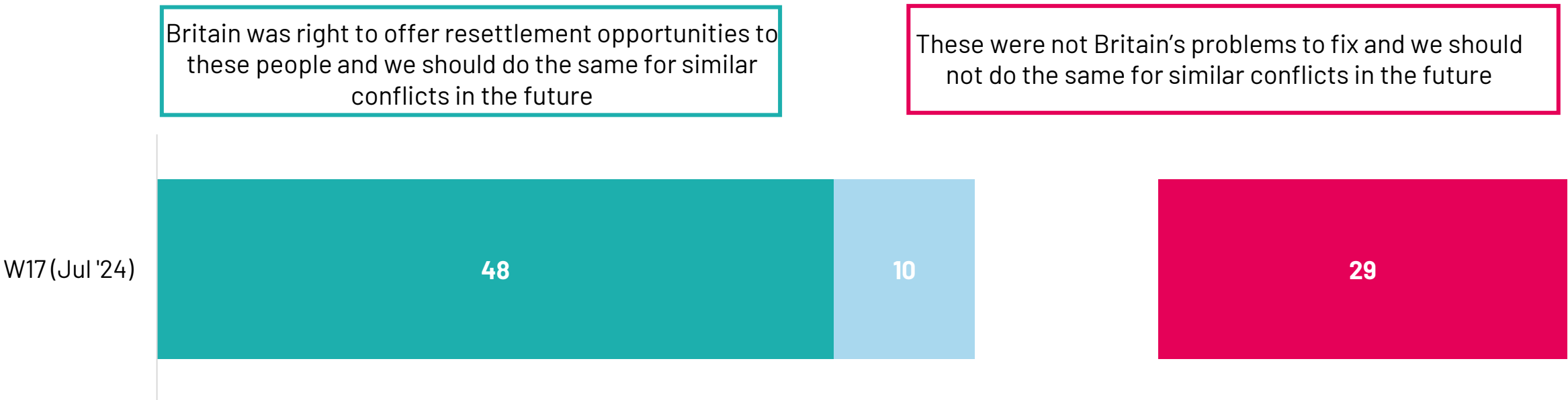
The Rwanda policy proposal on asylum and refugees is supported by 50% of Britons. Smaller proportions support the UK taking more asylum seekers in return for France taking back those who cross the channel or an increased number of legal routes for claiming asylum in the UK.

Q To what extent to do you support or oppose the following proposed UK policies on asylum and refugees...?



Around half of Britons think that Britain was right to offer to offer resettlement to those fleeing war in places such as Ukraine, Hong Kong and Syria and should continue to do so in the future.

Q Over the past ten years the UK has offered resettlement programmes to people fleeing war and crackdowns on democratic freedoms in Ukraine, Hong Kong, Afghanistan and Syria, enabling some people to come and live in the UK. Which of the following comes closest to your view?



Base: All respondents (W17: 3000); Fieldwork dates: 29 July-12 August 2024)

FURTHER INFORMATION

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