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# Youth mental health in crisis?

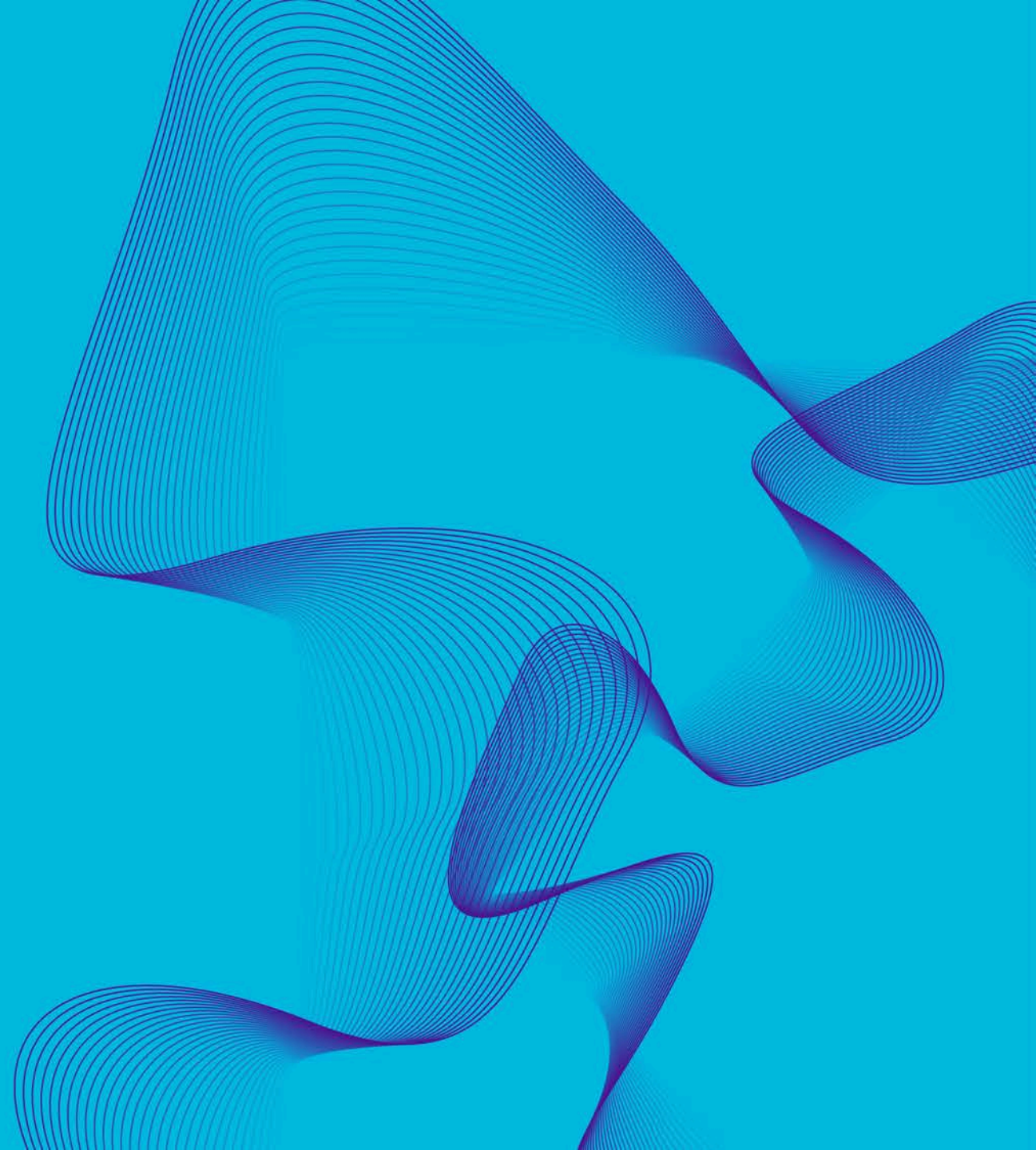
## Public and generational attitudes in Canada, the UK and Australia

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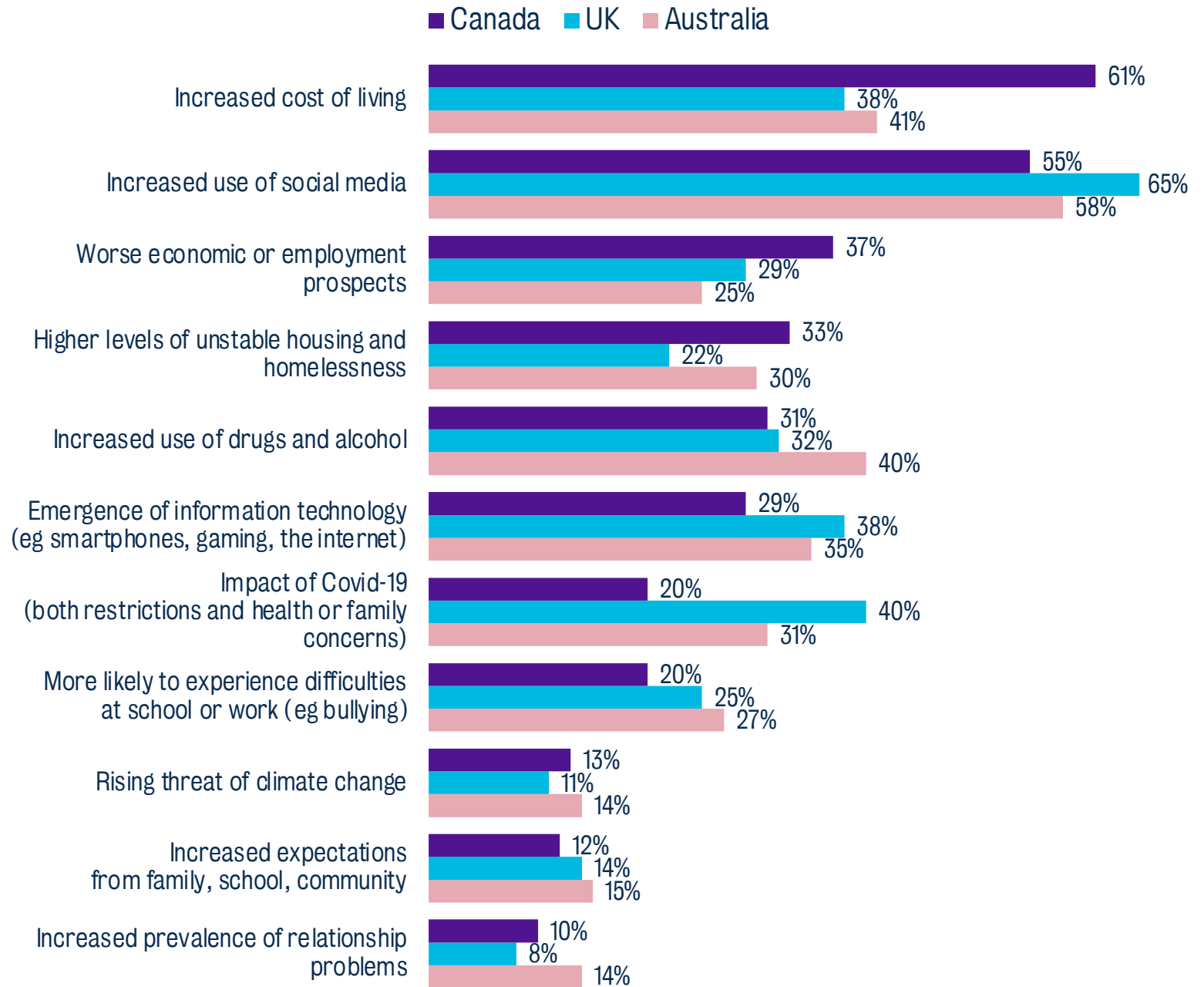
March 2025

# **Youth mental health problems today: potential causes**



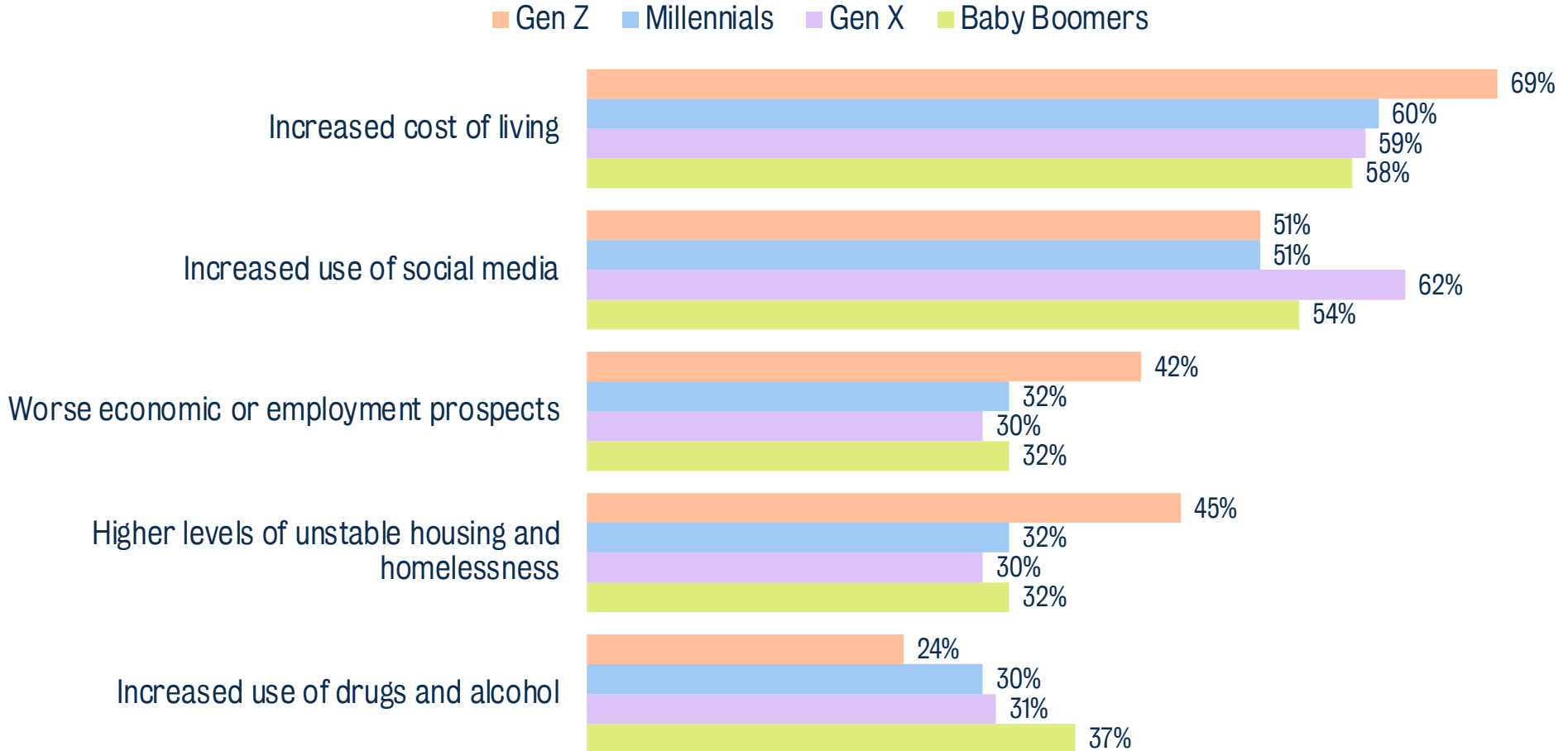
# People in Canada are hugely more likely than those in the UK or Australia to blame greater youth mental health problems on the increased cost of living

Studies have shown that mental health problems have increased significantly among young people. Which three or four of the following reasons, if any, do you think are the most important in explaining this increase?

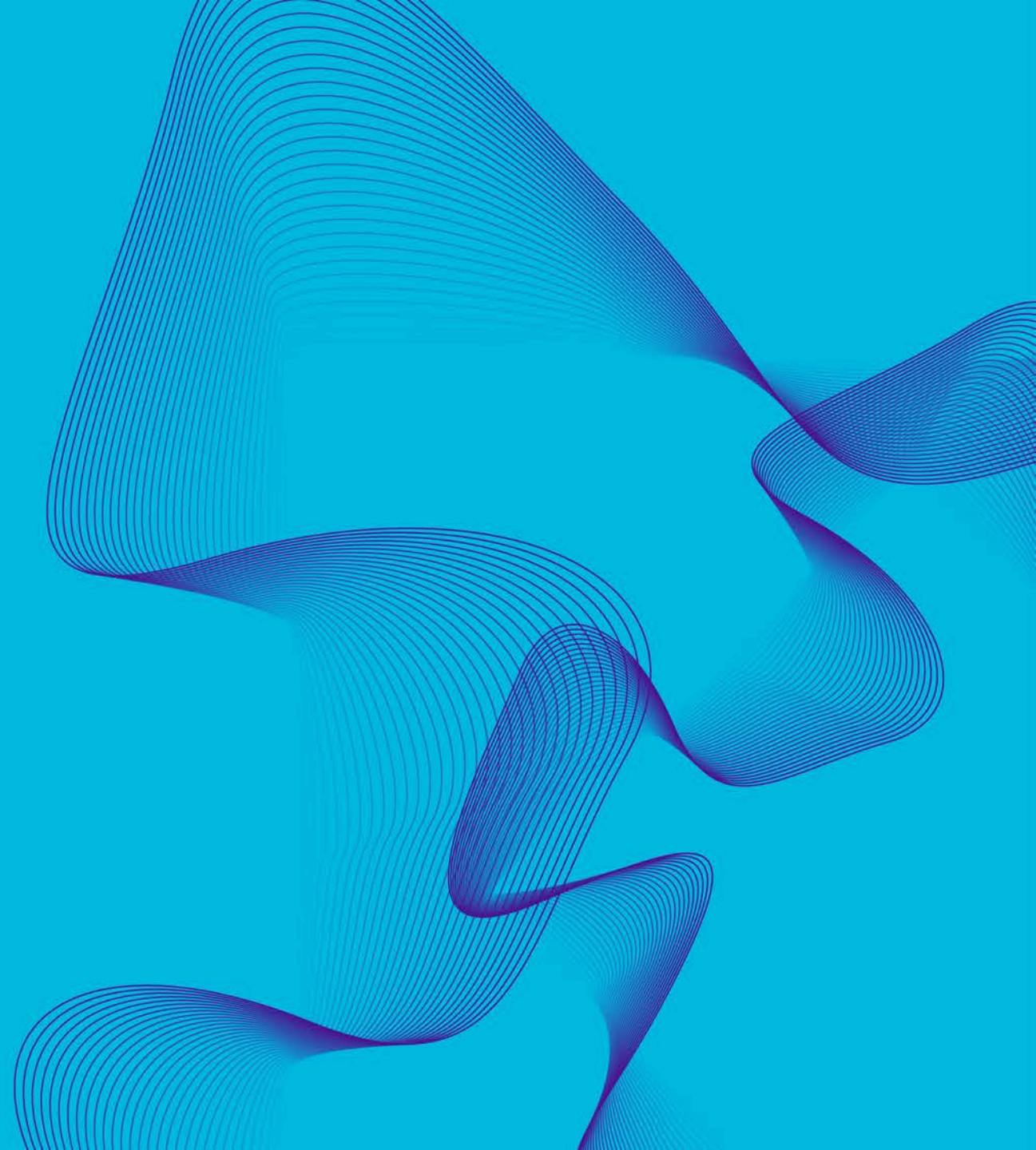


# Gen Z in Canada cite the higher cost of living, worse economic prospects and housing issues as drivers of deteriorating youth mental health, while Baby Boomers are most likely to blame greater drug and alcohol use and Gen X put it down to social media

Studies have shown that mental health problems have increased significantly among young people. Which three or four of the following reasons, if any, do you think are the most important in explaining this increase?



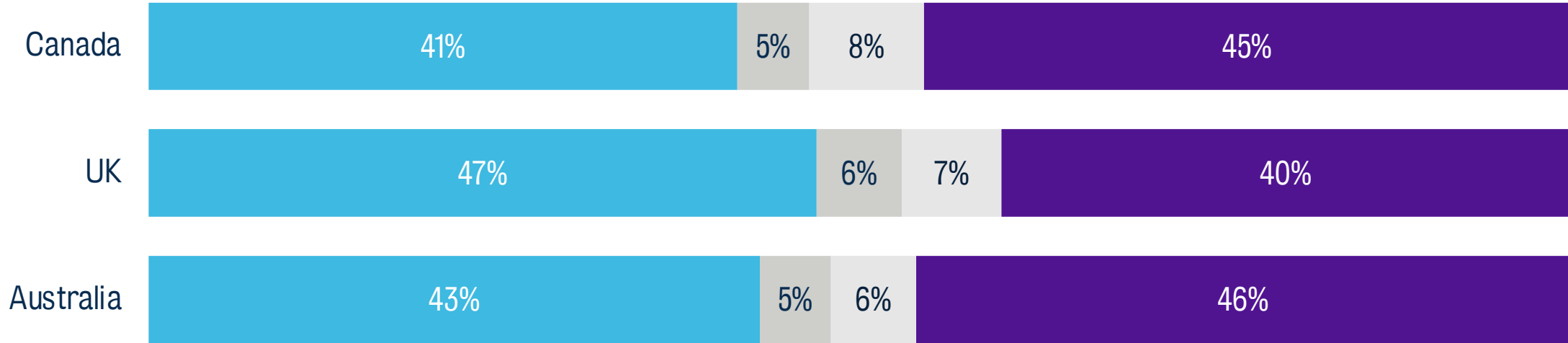
**Youth mental health problems  
today: just better diagnosis or  
a 'real' increase?**



# As in the UK and Australia, Canada is relatively divided on whether youth mental health problems were just as common in the past or whether there's been a real increase

When thinking about the changes in mental health problems among young people, which of the following, if either, is closest to your view...?

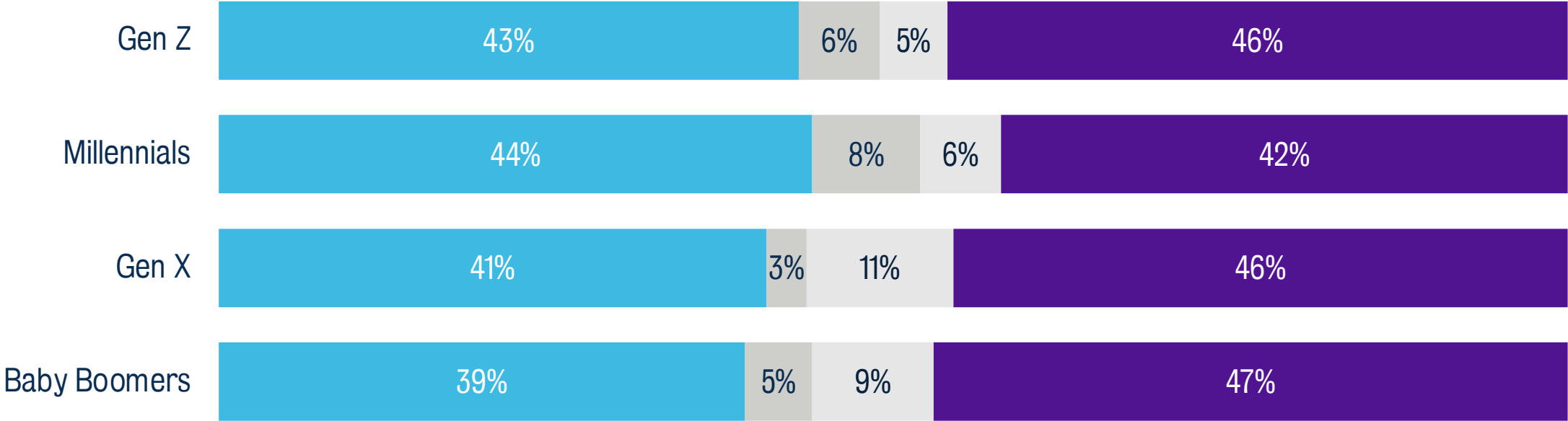
- Mental health problems were just as common among young people in the past, they just weren't identified as mental health problems back then
- Neither
- Don't know
- There has been a real increase in the proportion of young people with mental health problems today – this is a new trend



# And there is no clear consensus among different generations in Canada

When thinking about the changes in mental health problems among young people, which of the following, if either, is closest to your view...?

- Mental health problems were just as common among young people in the past, they just weren't identified as mental health problems back then
- Neither
- Don't know
- There has been a real increase in the proportion of young people with mental health problems today – this is a new trend



# Three-quarters of those who say mental health problems were just as common among young people in the past feel it's a good thing that we're better at identifying such issues today, while one in seven say it's a negative development

And which of the following, if either, is closest to your view?

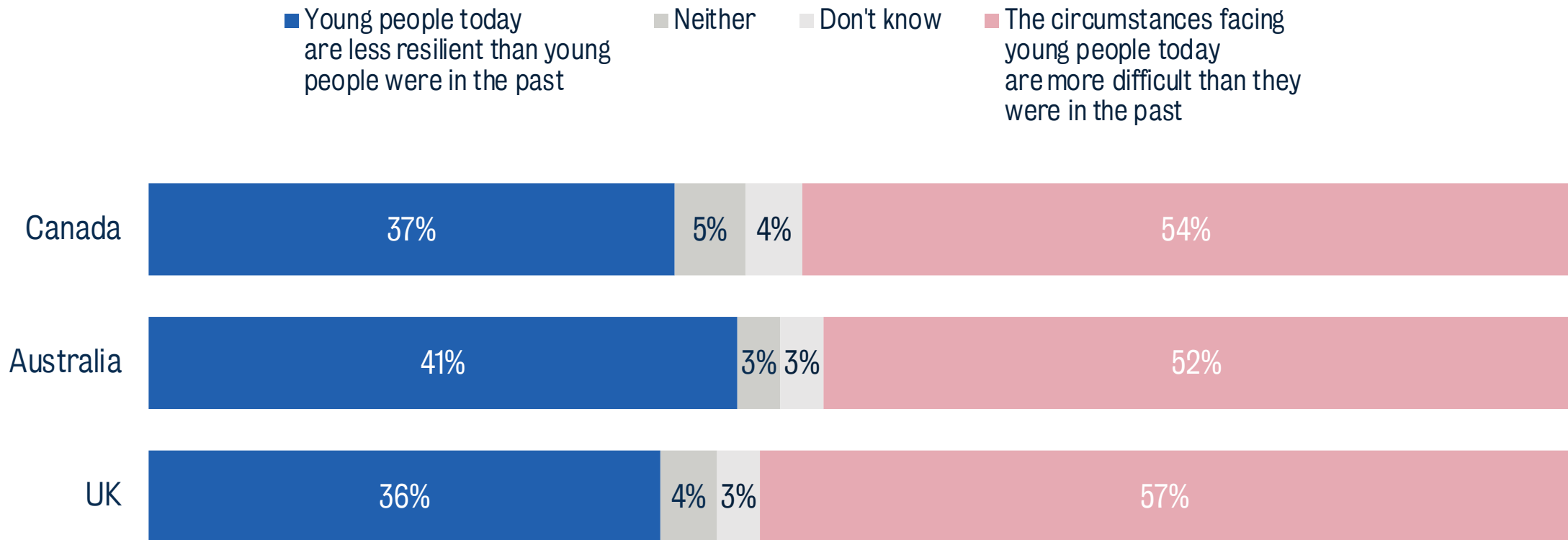
- It is a good thing that we are better at identifying mental health problems among young people today, for example, so they can get support
- Neither
- Don't know
- It is a bad thing that we are better at identifying mental health problems among young people today, for example, because we are exaggerating the real extent of mental health problems





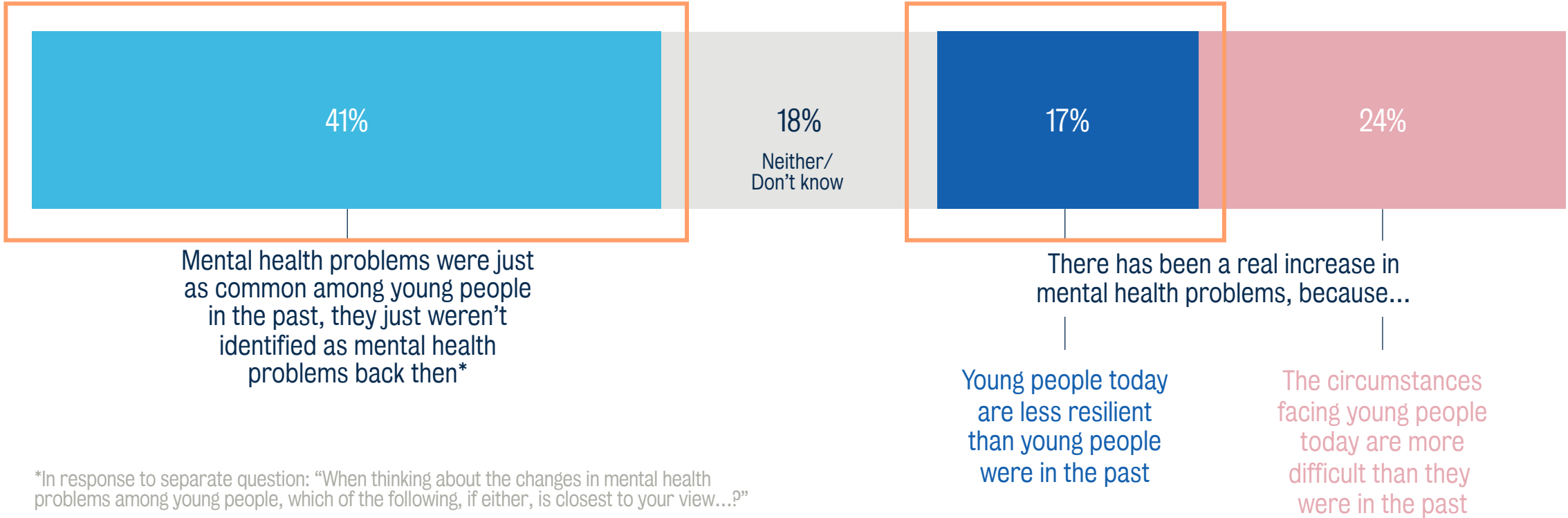
# Over half of those who say there *has* been a real increase in youth mental health problems blame tougher circumstances today, while around four in 10 say it's because of a lack of resilience among young people

And which of the following, if either, is closest to your view on why there has been an increase in mental health problems among young people?



# Overall, three in five (58%) people in Canada think youth mental health problems are either no worse than they were in the past or are increasing simply because today's youth are less resilient

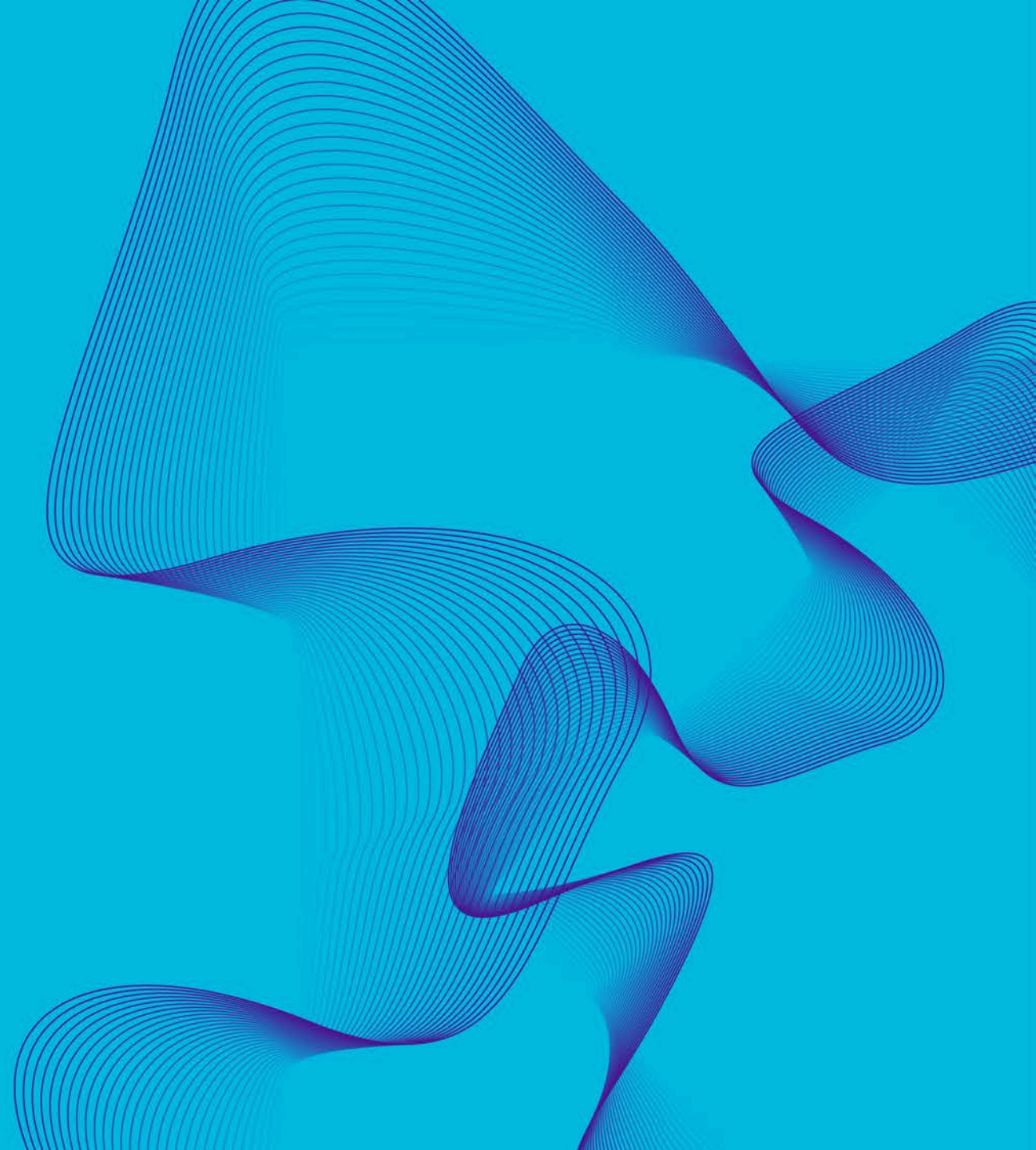
When thinking about the changes in mental health problems among young people, which of the following, if either, is closest to your view...?



\*In response to separate question: "When thinking about the changes in mental health problems among young people, which of the following, if either, is closest to your view...?"

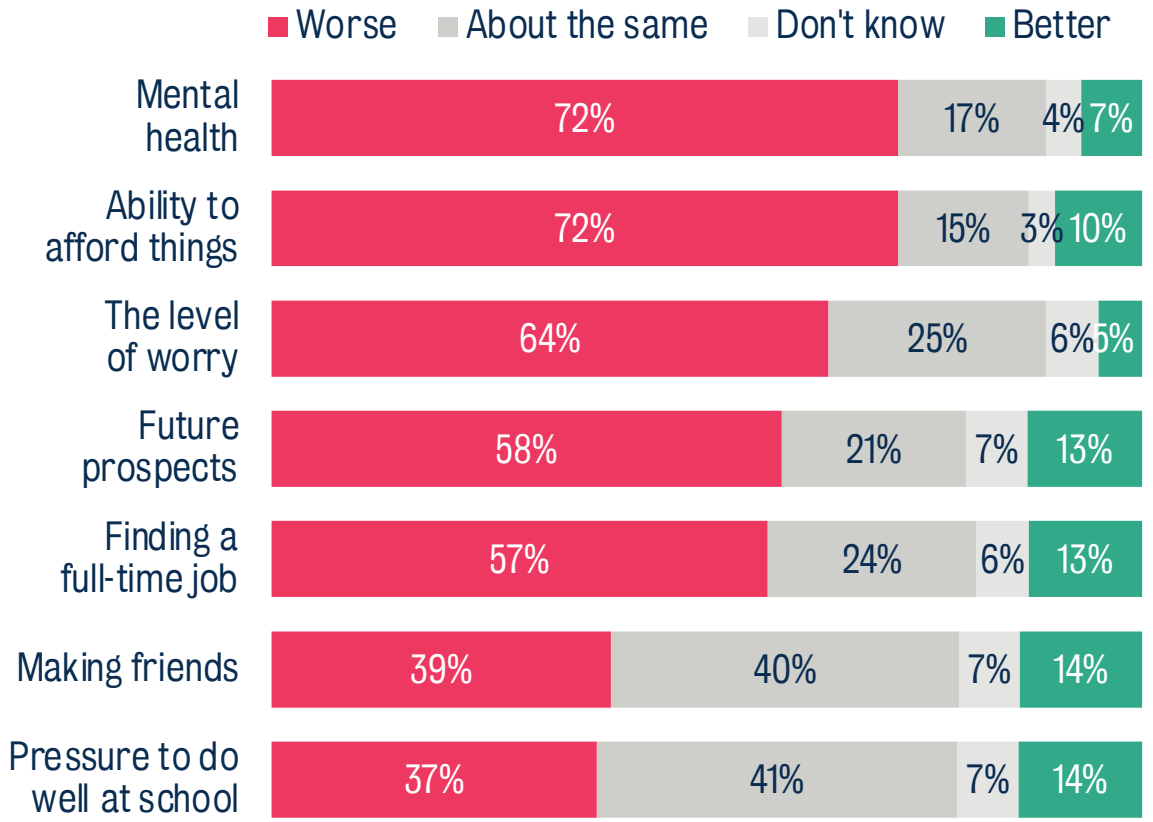
Base: 415 adults aged 18+. Figures rebased as a proportion of population as a whole

**Are today's youth worse off  
than previous generations of  
young people?**

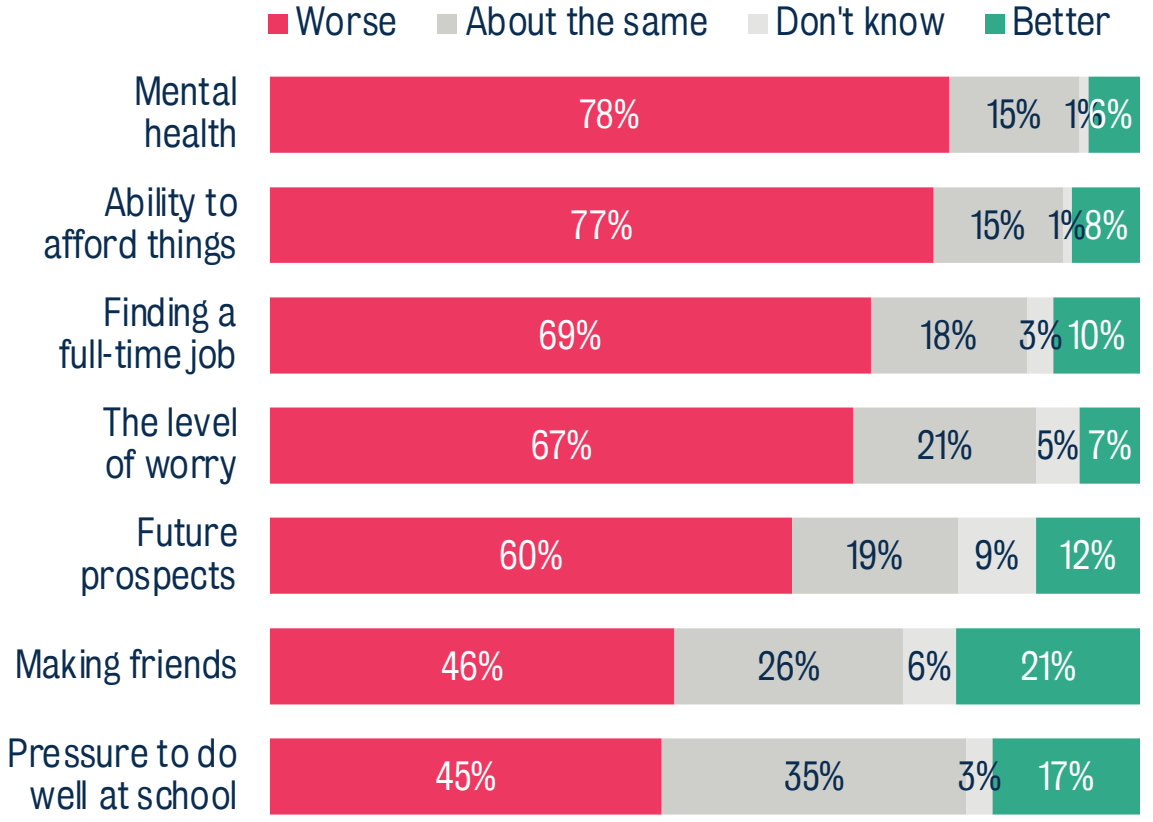


# Both over-30s and under-30s in Canada see today's youth as worse off than previous generations – though younger people are notably more likely to say finding a full-time job has become harder

Compared with **when you were aged 18-29 years**, do you think each of the following has got better or worse for young people today, or is it about the same? (Asked to those aged 30 and over)



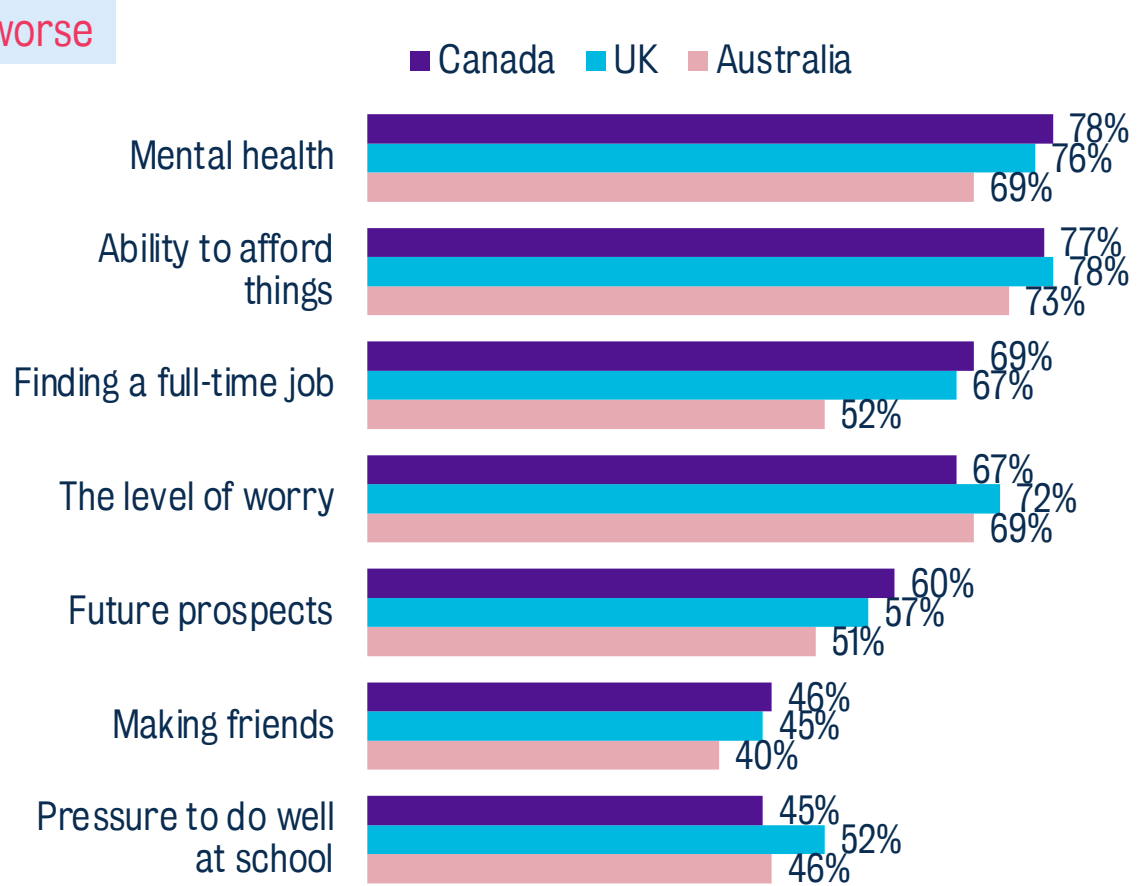
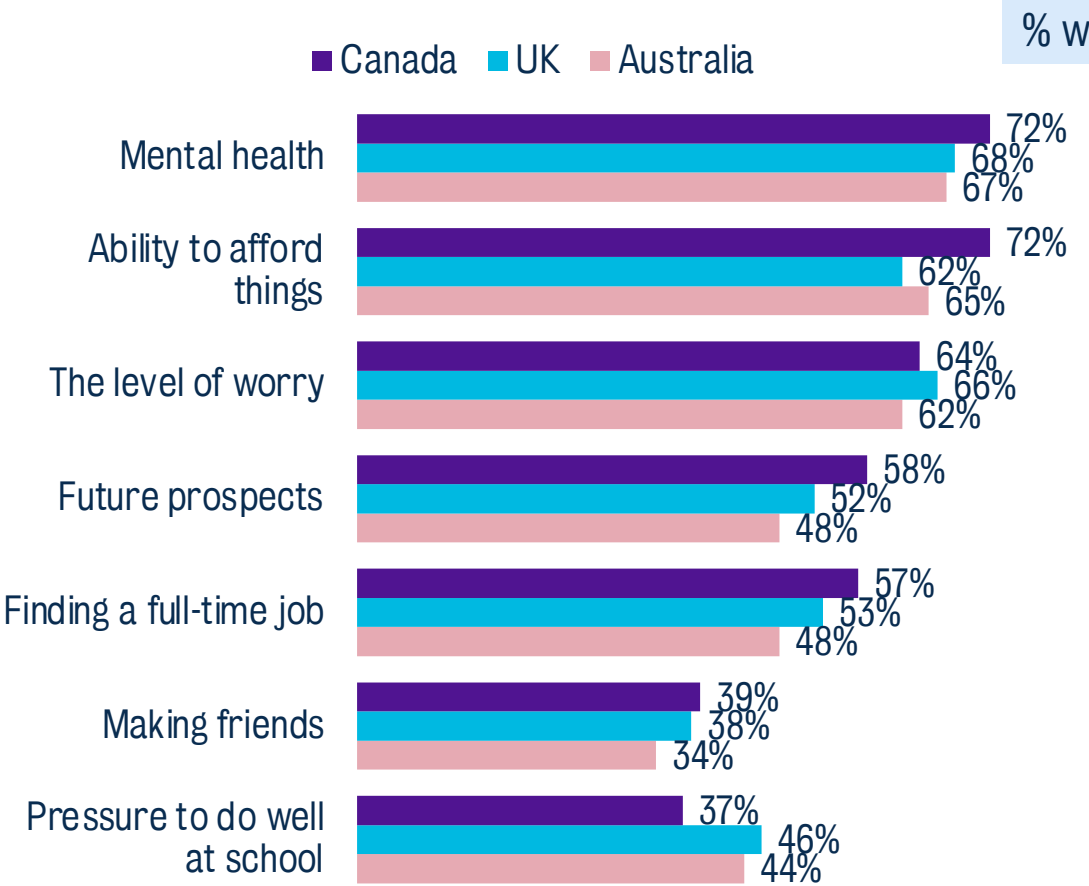
Compared with **when your parents were your age**, do you think each of the following has got better or worse for young people today, or is it about the same? (Asked to those aged 29 and under)



# Perceptions of the extent to which life is harder for young people today are similar across Canada, the UK and Australia

Compared with **when you were aged 18-29 years**, do you think each of the following has got better or worse for young people today, or is it about the same? (Asked to those aged 30 and over)

Compared with **when your parents were your age**, do you think each of the following has got better or worse for young people today, or is it about the same? (Asked to those aged 29 and under)





## About this survey

The Canadian portion of this research was conducted via the Ipsos Canada Online Omnibus and included 859 adults in Canada aged 30+ and 142 aged 29 and under. Fieldwork took place from 24–27 Jan 2025.

## Years of birth for generations used in report

|                             |                                   |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Gen Z</b><br>(1996–2012) | <b>Millennials</b><br>(1980–1995) | <b>Gen X</b><br>(1966–1979) | <b>Baby Boomers</b><br>(1945–1965) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|

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