

SAFETRAK RESEARCH

January 2024

A green circular graphic containing the name and title of Jessica Nogueira Luiz.

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Director

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**Lydia
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Researcher

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

- Sample Profile

2. FINDINGS

- Food Safety Concerns
- Healthy Eating
- Challenges facing Households
- Grocery Shopping And Meal Planning
- Emerging Trends
- Social Media And Cooking
- Online Searches for Food Information
- Further Information on Food Related Issues

3. APPENDICES

INTRODUCTION

1

BACKGROUND

- Since 2016, Ipsos B&A has held the contract to undertake quantitative and qualitative research on behalf of *safefood*.
- Over this period, we have worked on a number of studies on behalf of *safefood*, including safetrak, Childhood Obesity, Chicken Washing, Food Pyramid, Operation Transformation, Handwashing, START campaign evaluation, Meat Thermometers and Food Reformulation.
- Founded in 1962, Ipsos B&A is Ireland's longest established market research agency, and we are responsible for conducting many high profile published studies including the Irish Times series of opinion polls, Healthy Ireland and JNLR (Joint National Listenership Research).
- We are part of the global Ipsos Group with offices in 85 countries worldwide, in Ireland we have offices in both Dublin and Belfast.
- This safetrack study is the 25th survey in the *safefood* series.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- The safetrak research was conducted using a CAPI face-to-face methodology for all years with the exception of 2020 when the research was undertaken using a telephone methodology due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This difference in approach should be borne in mind when considering the 2020 results in comparison with other years.
- The total number of interviews achieved for *safefood 25* was 824 (515 ROI and 309 NI).
- Fieldwork was conducted between October 2023 and January 2024.
- Data was weighted to Census estimates at the analysis stage.

SAMPLE PROFILE



92%

**Involved in Food
Preparation and/ or
Cooking**

Q.B Are you involved in food preparation and/or cooking in your household?
Base: All IOI Respondents: 824

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FINDINGS

2

FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS



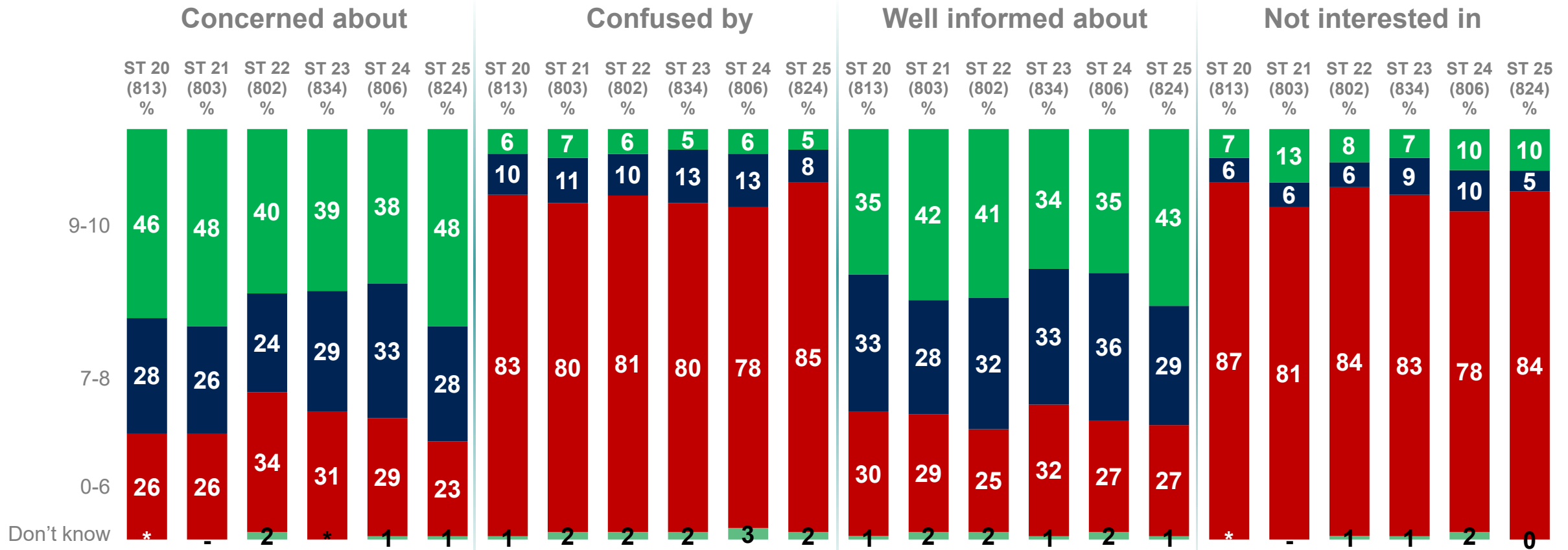
FOOD
SAFETY

Food Safety - Key Take Outs

- Overall concern about food safety has increased to 76% in 2023, the highest level recorded to date.
- While increases in concern were recorded in both ROI and NI, the overall increase was largely driven by ROI, where 54% claim to to be very concerned about food safety.
- Chicken preparation is the top food safety related concern (16%) followed by food poisoning (12%) and additives/e-numbers/dyes preservatives at 10%.

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT FOOD SAFETY - I

Overall concern about food safety has increased to 76% (from 71% in 2022), the highest level recorded to date.



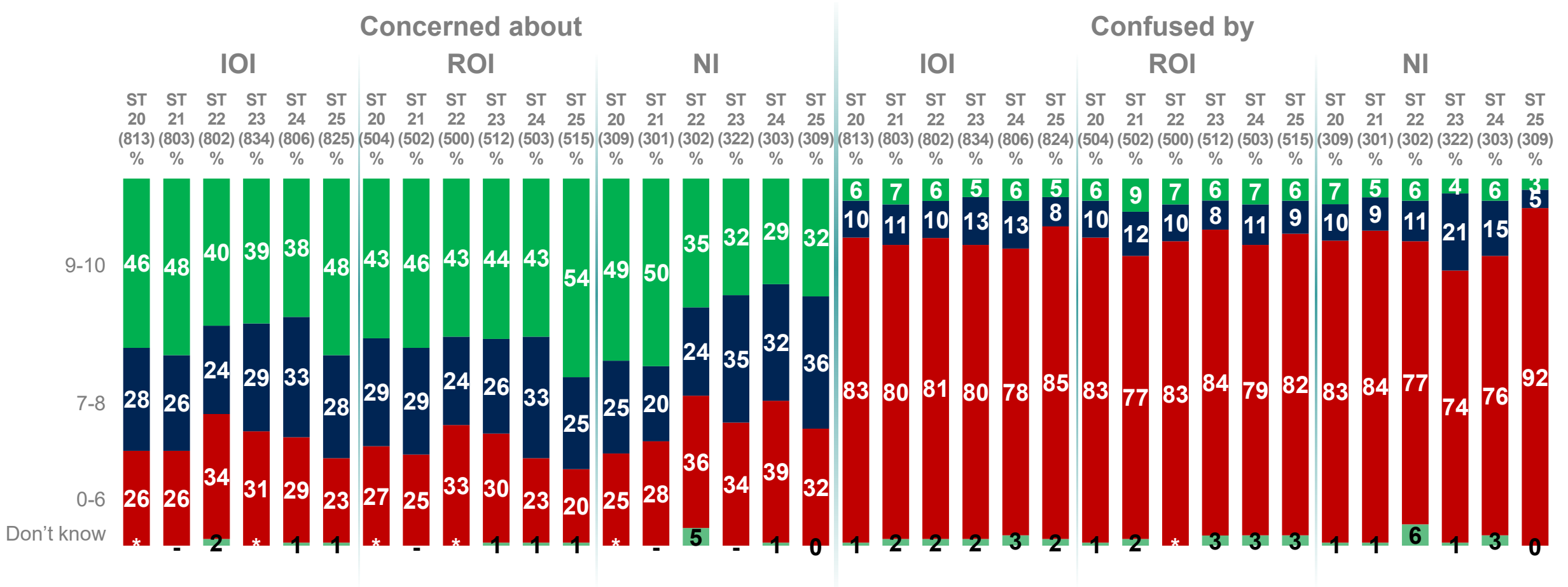
Q.11 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
 Base: All IOI Respondents: 824 (IOI)

10=Completely Agree
 0=Completely Disagree



LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT FOOD SAFETY - II

Concern about food safety has increased in both ROI and NI, just over half of adults (54%) in ROI are very concerned about food safety.



Q.11 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

10=Completely Agree
 0=Completely Disagree



FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS BY DEMOGRAPHICS - ROI (TOP 2 BOXES)

In ROI, those aged 65 or older are most likely to be concerned about food safety (66%) while those aged 35-49 are most likely to feel well informed (53%), just marginally ahead of women (52%).

	Total (515) %	Gender		Age				Social Class	
		Male (239) %	Female (276) %	15-34 (147) %	35-49 (147) %	50-64 (120) %	65-74 (101) %	ABC1 (260) %	C2DEF (255) %
Concerned about food safety	54	52	55	52	52	52	66	56	52
Confused about food safety	6	5	8	5	4	8	9	5	7
Well informed about food safety	47	42	52	40	53	47	51	49	45
Not interested in food safety	12	13	11	11	12	11	13	9	14

Q.11 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
Base: All ROI Respondents: 515 (ROI)

FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS BY DEMOGRAPHICS - NI (TOP 2 BOXES)

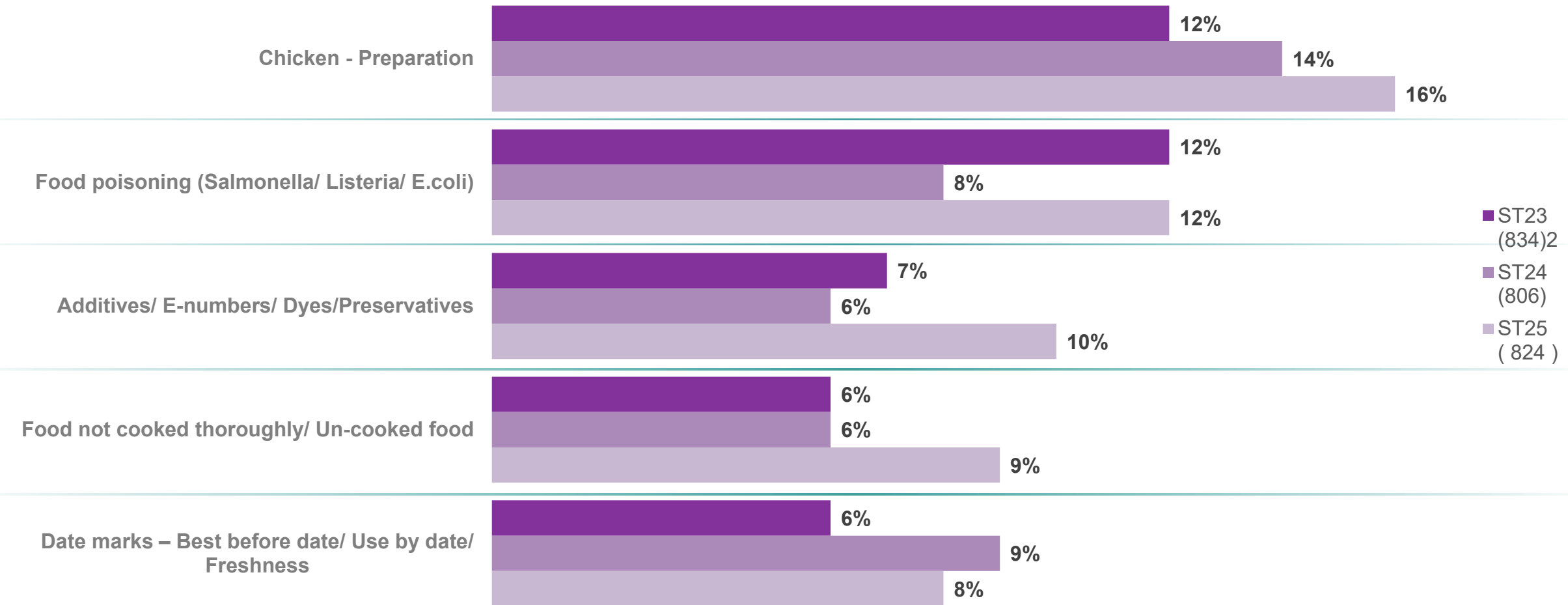
In NI, top 2 box concern is highest among ABC1s (44%) and 50-64 year olds (41%).

	Total (309) %	Gender		Age				Social Class	
		Male (150) %	Female (159) %	15-34 (122) %	35-49 (86) %	50-64 (65) %	65-74 (36) %	ABC1 (156) %	C2DEF (153) %
Concerned about food safety	32	31	33	29	28	41	28	44	22
Confused about food safety	3	2	4	1	3	6	*	4	1
Well informed about food safety	34	31	36	30	37	38	27	38	30
Not interested in food safety	7	4	9	4	13	4	6	8	6

Q.11 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
Base: All NI Respondents: 309 (NI)

FOOD RELATED ISSUE OF MOST CONCERN - IOI

Chicken preparation continues to be the most common food related concern on the island of Ireland at 16%, followed by food poisoning at 12%. Concern about additives and e-numbers is at 10%.



Q.12 What one food related issue are you most concerned about?
 Base: All IOI Respondents: 824 (IOI)

Only responses 5% or above from 2023 shown

FOOD RELATED ISSUE OF MOST CONCERN – ROI & NI

Chicken preparation is the top food related issue of most concern in ROI (17%) and NI (13%).

Top 5 Issues Of Most Concern	
	ROI (515) %
Chicken - Preparation	17
Food poisoning (Salmonella/ Listeria/ E.coli)	13
Date marks – Best before date/ Use by date/ Freshness	9
Additives/ E-numbers/ Dyes/Preservatives	9
Food not cooked thoroughly/Uncooked food	9

Top 5 Issues Of Most Concern	
	NI (309) %
Chicken - Preparation	13
Additives/ E-numbers/ Dyes/Preservatives	12
Food poisoning (Salmonella/ Listeria/ E.coli)	11
Food not cooked thoroughly/ Uncooked food	11
Fat content/ Fatty acids/ Saturated fat	7

Q.12 What one food related issue are you most concerned about?
 Base: All most concerned about one food related issue: 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

HEALTHY EATING

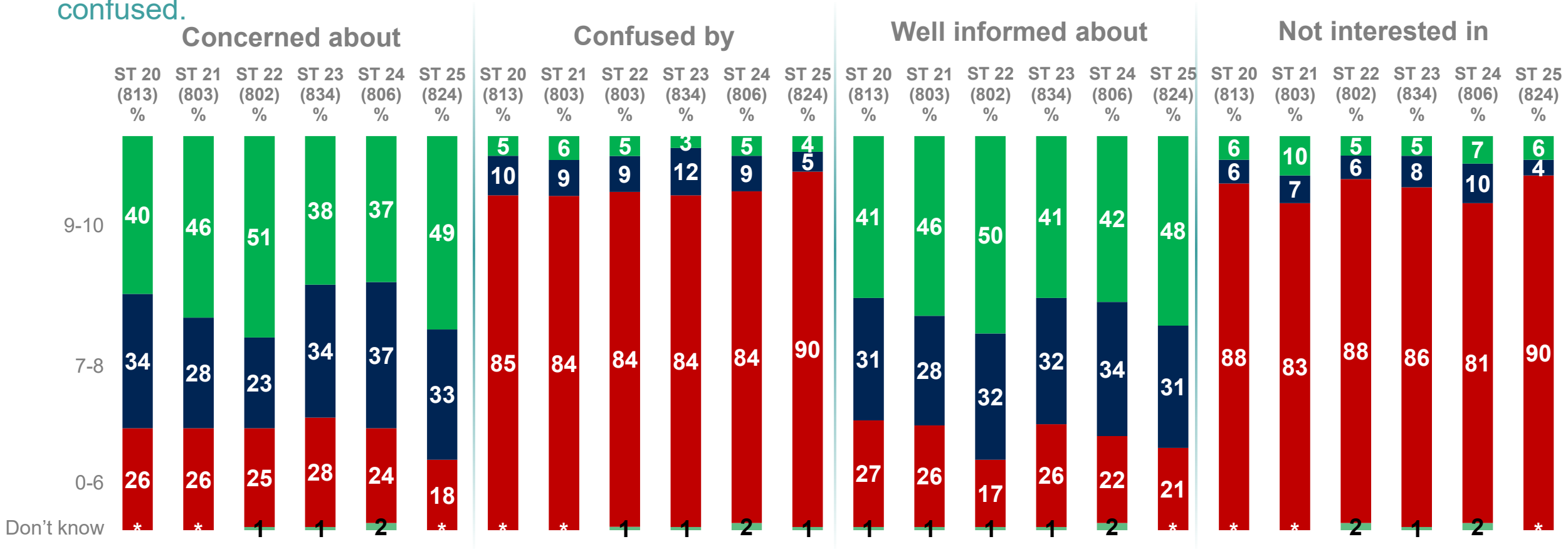


Healthy Eating - Key Take Outs

- The majority of adults (82%) state that they are concerned about healthy eating, the highest level recorded to date.
- The proportion reporting cholesterol/blood pressure/heart disease/stroke as a concern has increased in both ROI and NI and is now at 20%.
- Concern about this issue peaks at 37% among those aged 65-74.

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT HEALTHY EATING - IOI

The majority of adults (82%) state that they are concerned about healthy eating, the highest level recorded to date. People are also less confused by healthy eating than ever, with 90% stating that they are not confused.



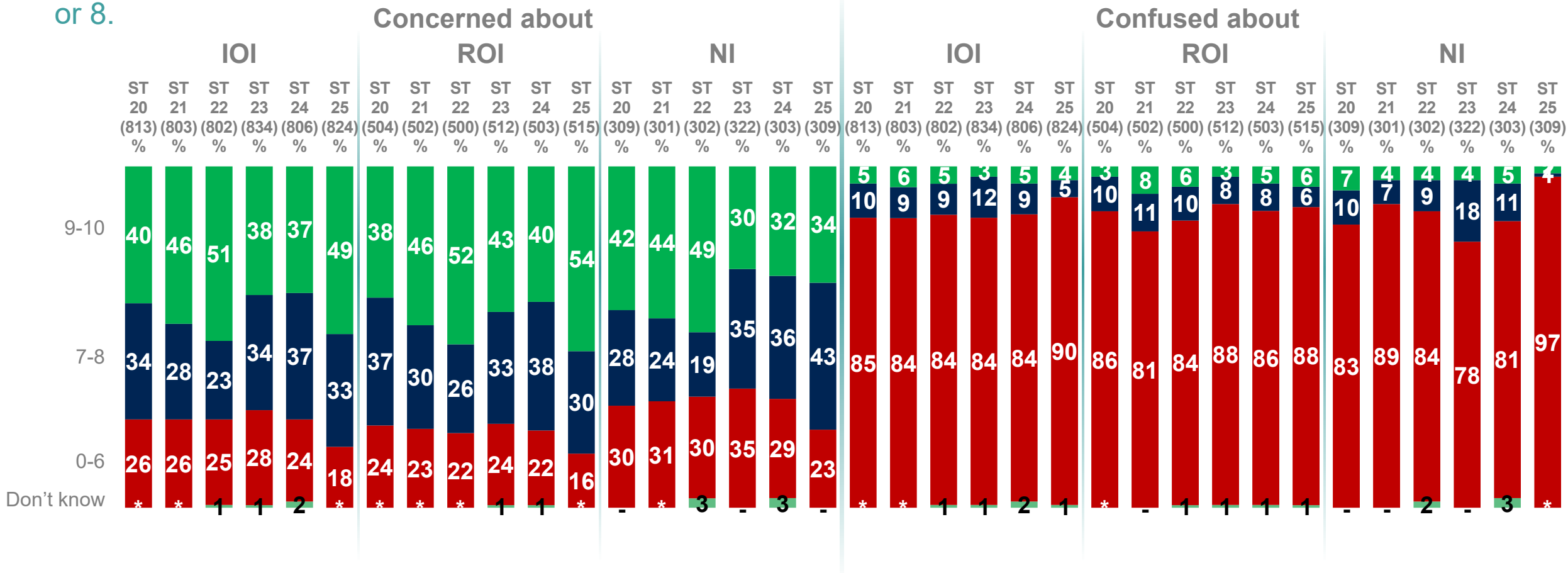
Q.18 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
 Base: All IOI Respondents: 824 (IOI)

10=Completely Agree
 0=Completely Disagree



LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT HEALTHY EATING - I

Just over half (54%) of adults in ROI claim to be very concerned about healthy eating, a 14-point increase, concern levels have also increased in NI, but with the increase being largely among those who give a score of 7 or 8.



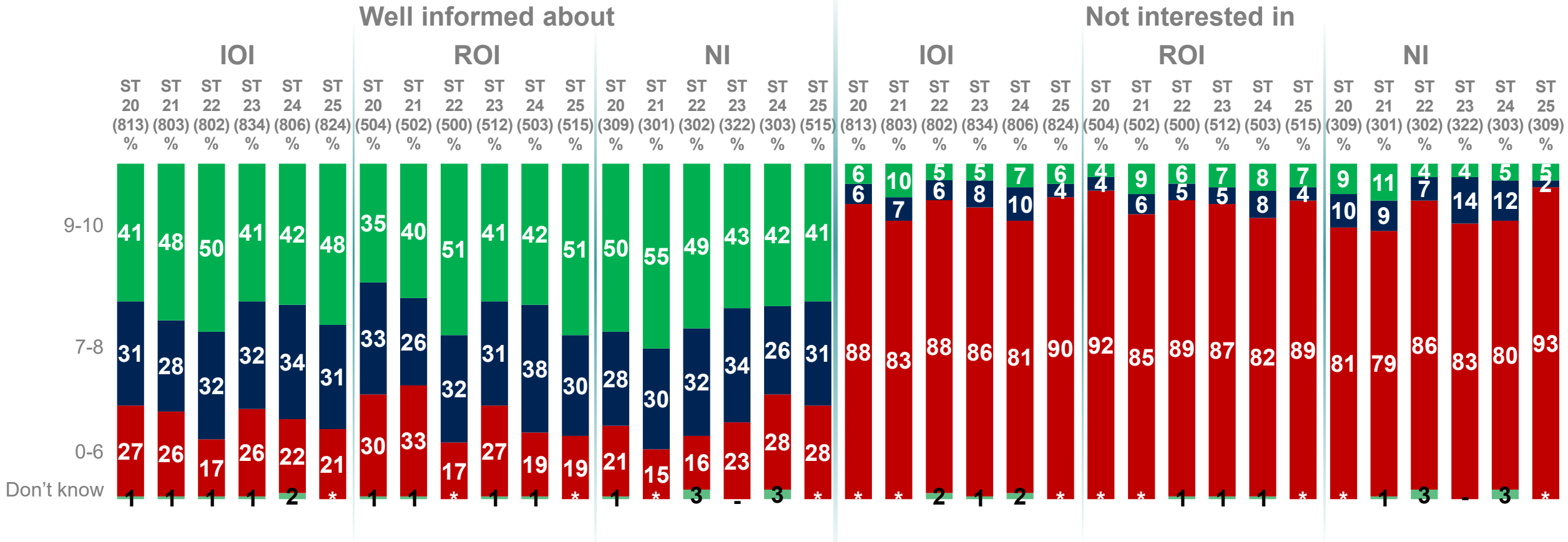
Q.18 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

10=Completely Agree
 0=Completely Disagree



LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT HEALTHY EATING - II

Almost 8 in 10 (79%) of adults claim that they are well informed about healthy eating, this figure is 81% in ROI and 72% in NI.



Q.18 On a scale of 0 to 10 please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following. 0 means you completely disagree 10 means you completely agree.
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

10=Completely Agree
 0=Completely Disagree



HEALTHY EATING - MAIN ISSUE OF CONCERN – BY REGION

While Cholesterol/blood pressure/heart disease/stroke has always been among the top concerns, the proportion reporting this as a concern has increased in both ROI and NI.

	IOI					ROI					NI				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	(803)	(802)	(834)	(806)	(824)	(502)	(500)	(512)	(503)	(515)	(301)	(302)	(322)	(303)	(309)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Sugar intake	12	11	14	12	9	12	12	15	11	9	11	8	11	12	9
Cholesterol/Blood pressure/Heart disease/Stroke	16	6	13	12	20	20	4	15	15	19	9	8	9	7	22
Fats in food/ Fat content/ Saturated fat/ Trans fat	12	6	11	11	10	12	6	11	13	10	13	6	11	8	10
Diabetes	8	2	10	7	9	9	1	10	8	10	7	3	10	4	6
Preservatives/Additives/Colouring	12	4	9	9	7	15	4	9	12	7	8	3	9	5	4
Weight management	4	6	7	6	4	5	4	7	6	5	3	10	7	4	4
Cancer	4	*	6	5	7	5	*	7	7	9	3	1	4	2	4
Salt	4	2	5	4	4	4	2	3	3	3	5	3	7	7	5
Variety in diet	2	8	4	4	5	2	10	3	4	4	3	4	5	3	8
Food for children	4	1	4	5	5	3	1	4	5	4	4	2	3	4	7
Vitamins and minerals	1	3	2	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	3	2	1	3
Getting the 5-a-day	2	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	5	3
Other	1	3	2	2	12	1	4	2	1	13	1	2	2	3	12
Don't know/ can't remember	3	8	1	3	1	2	7	1	-	1	5	8	1	6	*
None	11	10	5	12	2	4	8	5	5	2	22	13	5	23	2

Q.19 What one healthy eating issue are you most concerned about? (Unprompted)
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

HEALTHY EATING – CONCERN ABOUT CHOLESTEROL/BLOOD PRESSURE/HEART DISEASE

Concern about cholesterol/blood pressure/heart disease has increased across the board in terms of age and gender.

	2022 %	2023 %
Male	14	22
Female	11	18
15-24	6	9
25-34	9	12
35-44	7	16
45-49	15	18
50-54	18	26
55-64	18	30
65+	20	37

Q.19 What one healthy eating issue are you most concerned about? (Unprompted)
Base: All Respondents: 824 (IO), 515 (RO), 309 (NI)

HEALTHY EATING - MAIN ISSUE OF CONCERN – BY AGE GROUP

Concern about cholesterol/blood pressure/heart disease/stroke increases with age and peaks at 37% among those aged 65-74.

	Total							Age						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	50-54	55-64	65-74
	(808)	(813)	(803)	(802)	(834)	(806)	(824)	(124)	(145)	(172)	(61)	(81)	(104)	(137)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cholesterol/Blood pressure/Heart disease/Stroke	14	17	16	6	13	12	20	9	12	16	18	26	30	37
Fats in food/ Fat content/ Saturated fat/ Trans fat	12	13	12	6	11	11	10	8	11	13	9	8	12	9
Sugar intake	12	12	12	11	14	12	9	7	10	14	11	9	6	6
Diabetes	7	5	8	2	10	7	9	12	9	4	11	12	8	13
Preservatives/Additives/Colouring	9	8	12	4	9	9	7	12	7	6	3	3	9	2
Cancer	7	7	4	*	6	5	7	6	8	9	3	6	9	7
Food for children	4	3	4	1	4	5	5	4	9	8	8	4	*	*
Variety in Diet	3	4	2	8	4	4	5	9	5	5	11	5	1	2

Q.19 What one healthy eating issue are you most concerned about? (Unprompted)
 Base: All IOI Respondents: 824 (IOI)

CHALLENGES FACING HOUSEHOLDS



Challenges Facing Households

Key Take Outs

- The proportion of people eating out of the house often on the island of Ireland has declined to 2020 levels (30%) and is at 19% in NI.
- 4 in 10 believe that they eat more unhealthy food because it is available in so many different places.

CHALLENGES FACING HOUSEHOLDS – IOI

The proportion who report eating out of the house has declined to 2020 levels (30%). Just over 4 in 10 report that they eat more unhealthy food because it is available in so many places.

	2018 (813) %	2019 (803) %	2020 (802) %	2021 (834) %	2022 (806) %	2023 (824) %
We/I often eat out of the house	34	34	30	39	37	30
We/I don't have enough time to plan & prepare healthy meals	21	25	21	27	23	17
We/I do not have enough time to sit down for meals	15	23	15	23	18	13
We/I cannot afford to eat healthily	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	17	12
We/I find that we/I eat more unhealthy food because it is available in so many different places	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	41

Q.19aa I am now going to read out some statements people have said in relation to the challenges they face for them and their household regarding healthy eating. For each of these statements could you please tell me if they apply, or do not apply to you and your household.

Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

CHALLENGES FACING HOUSEHOLDS – ROI

No significant changes in the trend data recorded for ROI. 12% agree that they cannot afford to eat healthily.

	2018 (504) %	2019 (502) %	2020 (500) %	2021 (512) %	2022 (503) %	2023 (515) %
We/I often eat out of the house	37	35	29	34	35	34
We/I don't have enough time to plan & prepare healthy meals	20	27	20	19	21	17
We/I do not have enough time to sit down for meals	15	26	12	16	15	14
We/I cannot afford to eat healthily	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	14	12
We/I find that we/I eat more unhealthy food because it is available in so many different places	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	43

Q.19aa I am now going to read out some statements people have said in relation to the challenges they face for them and their household regarding healthy eating. For each of these statements could you please tell me if they apply, or do not apply to you and your household.

Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

CHALLENGES FACING HOUSEHOLDS - NI

The proportion of adults eating out of the house in NI has declined to just 19%, the lowest level recorded to date. As was the case in ROI, the proportion of people saying that they cannot afford to eat healthily has declined.

	2018 (309) %	2019 (301) %	2020 (302) %	2021 (322) %	2022 (303) %	2023 (309) %
We/I often eat out of the house	30	32	31	46	39	19
We/I don't have enough time to plan & prepare healthy meals	22	21	22	40	26	16
We/I do not have enough time to sit down for meals	15	17	20	33	22	11
We/I cannot afford to eat healthily	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	22	11
We/I find that we/I eat more unhealthy food because it is available in so many different places	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	38

Q.19aa I am now going to read out some statements people have said in relation to the challenges they face for them and their household regarding healthy eating. For each of these statements could you please tell me if they apply, or do not apply to you and your household.

Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

GROCERY SHOPPING AND MEAL PLANNING



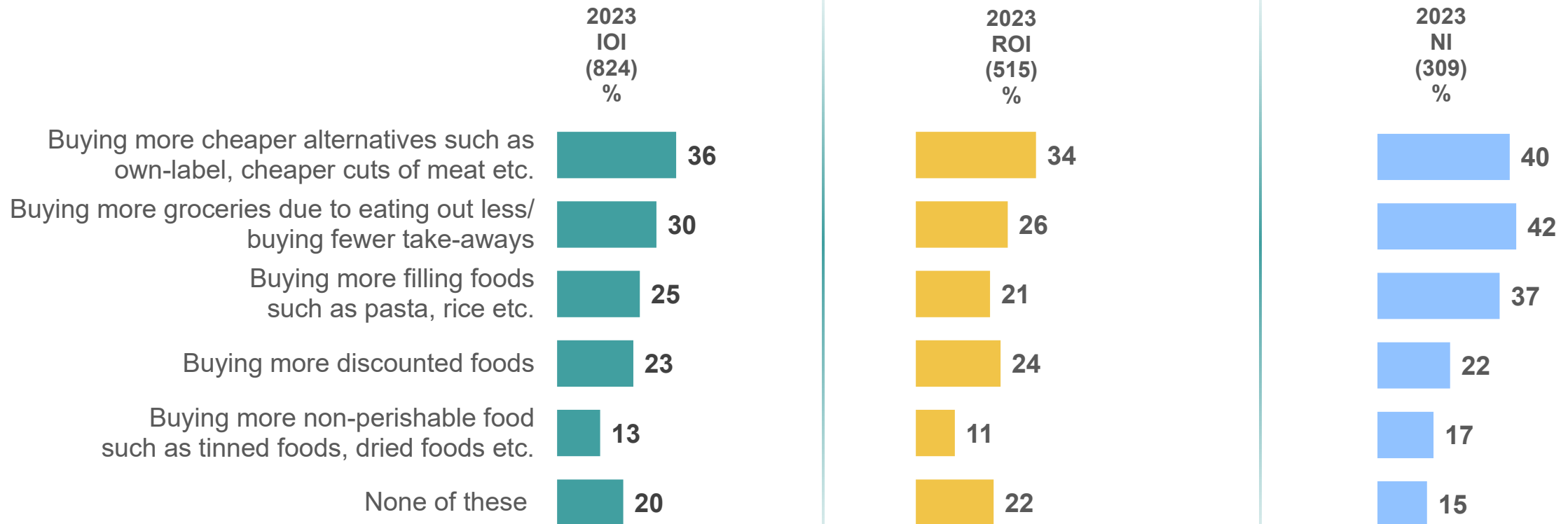
Grocery Shopping and Meal Planning

Key Take Outs

- The top change made to grocery shopping habits since the beginning of 2023 was to buy more cheaper alternatives (36%).
- In NI, the top change made was buying more groceries due to eating out less/eating fewer take-aways (42%).
- Just over 8 in 10 adults on the island of Ireland plan their meals ahead of doing their grocery shopping.

CHANGES TO GROCERY SHOPPING HABITS IN 2023

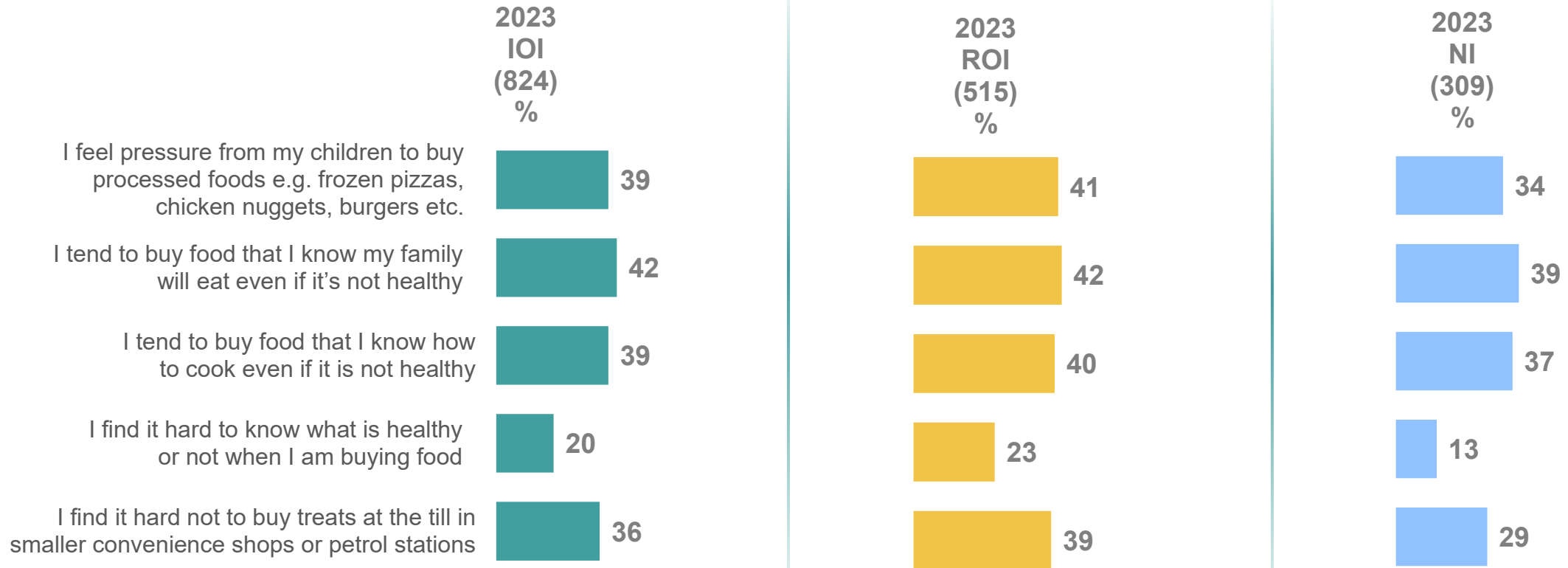
Just over one third (36%) of adults are buying more 'cheaper alternatives', those in NI are more likely to be buying more groceries due to cutting back on take-aways (42%).



Q.23NEW Which of the following changes, if any, have you made to your grocery shopping habits since the beginning of 2023?
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

STATEMENTS ABOUT GROCERY SHOPPING

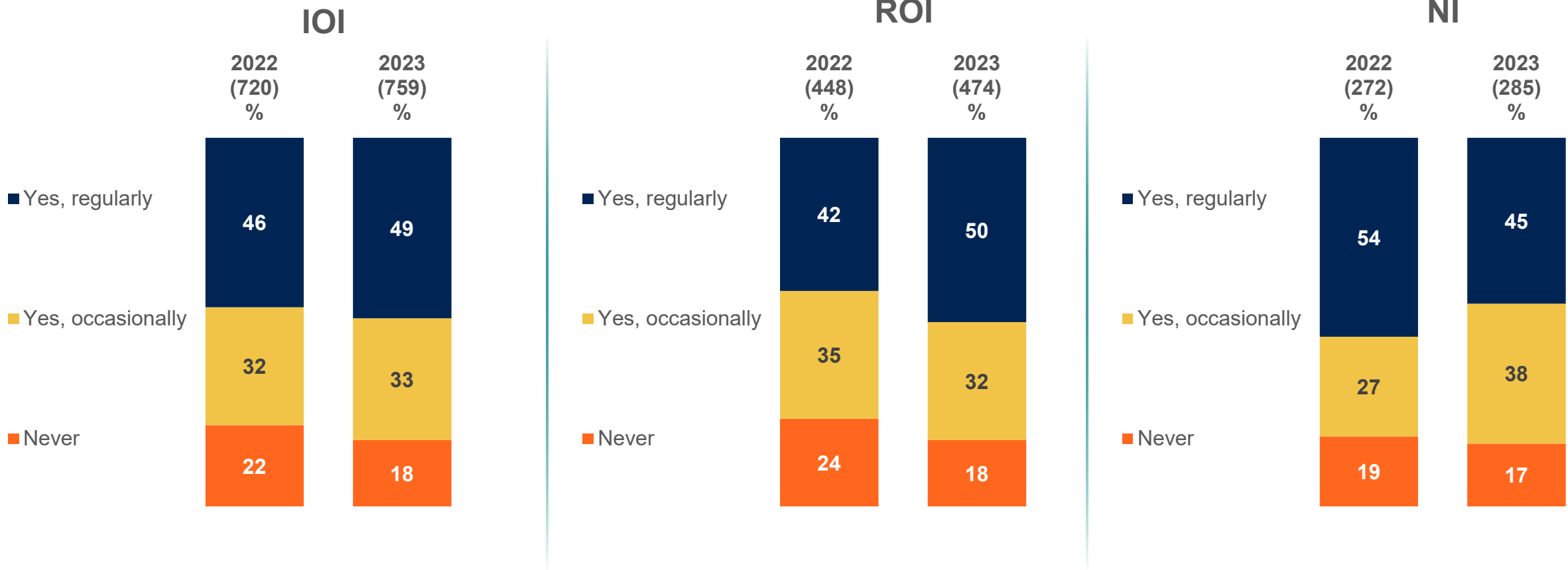
Over four in ten adults are buying foods that they know are not healthy because they know they will be eaten (42%). Just over one third (36%) find it hard not to buy treats at the till.



Q.22NEW Thinking now about grocery shopping, please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

MEAL PLANNING

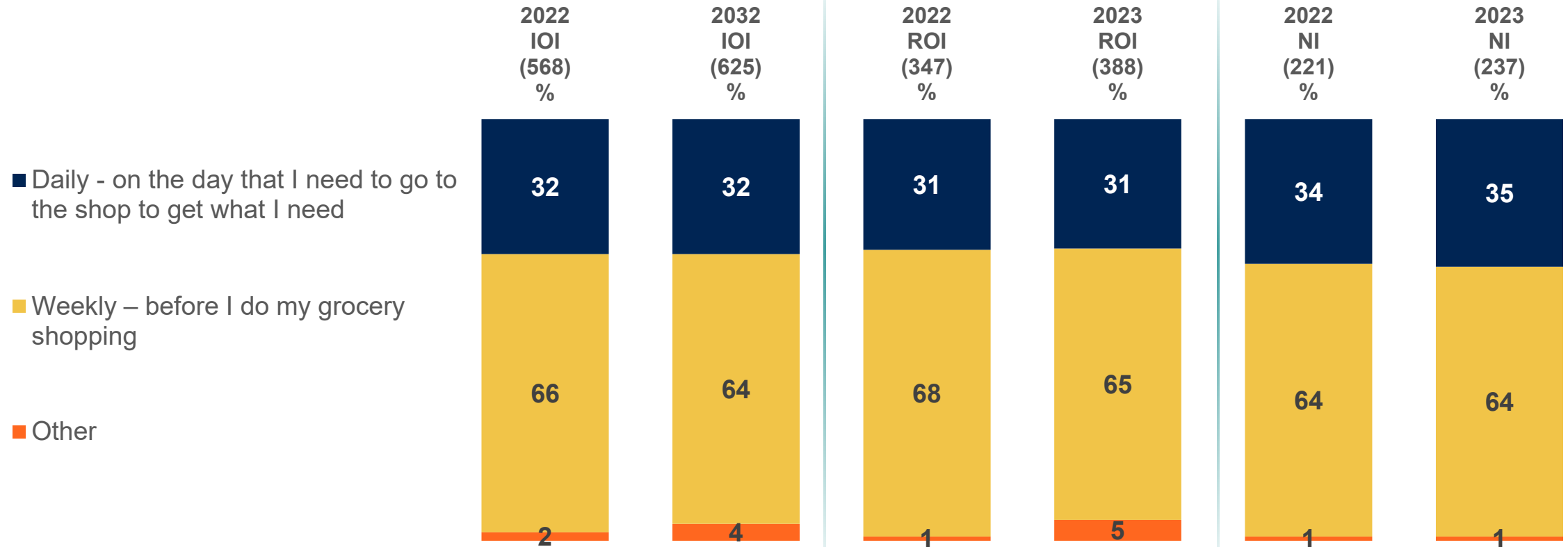
Just over 8 in 10 adults (82%) plan their meals in advance. While there has been no significant change in the overall data, analysis by region shows a 5-point increase in meal planning in ROI.



Q.24NEW Do you plan your/your family's meals in advance before you do your grocery shopping?
 Base: All Respondents involved in food prep: 759 (IOI), 474 (ROI), 285 (NI)

WHEN DO YOU PLAN MEAL/MEALS

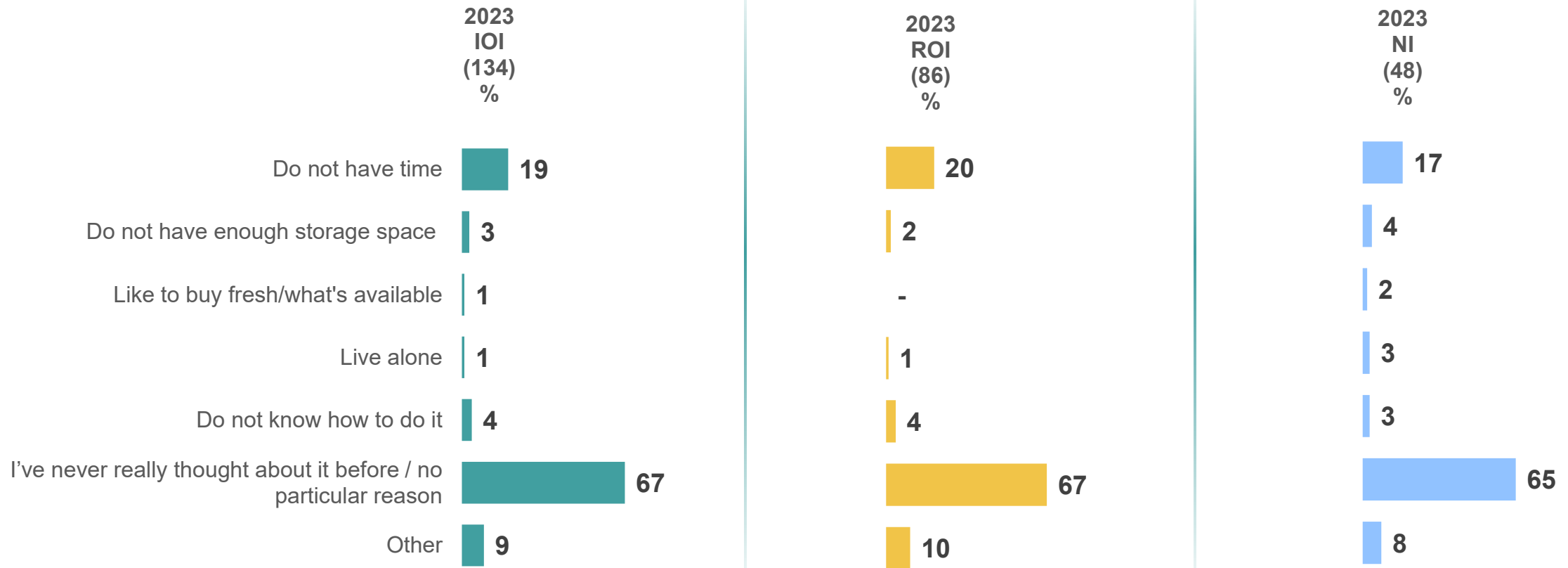
Almost two thirds of adults plan their meals on a weekly basis, with no significant difference recorded between ROI and NI.



Q.25NEW When do you usually plan your meal or meals?
Base: All Respondents who plan meals: 625 (IOI), 388 (ROI), 237 (NI)

REASONS FOR NOT PLANNING MEALS

The majority of people who don't plan meals report that they just haven't considered it (67%).



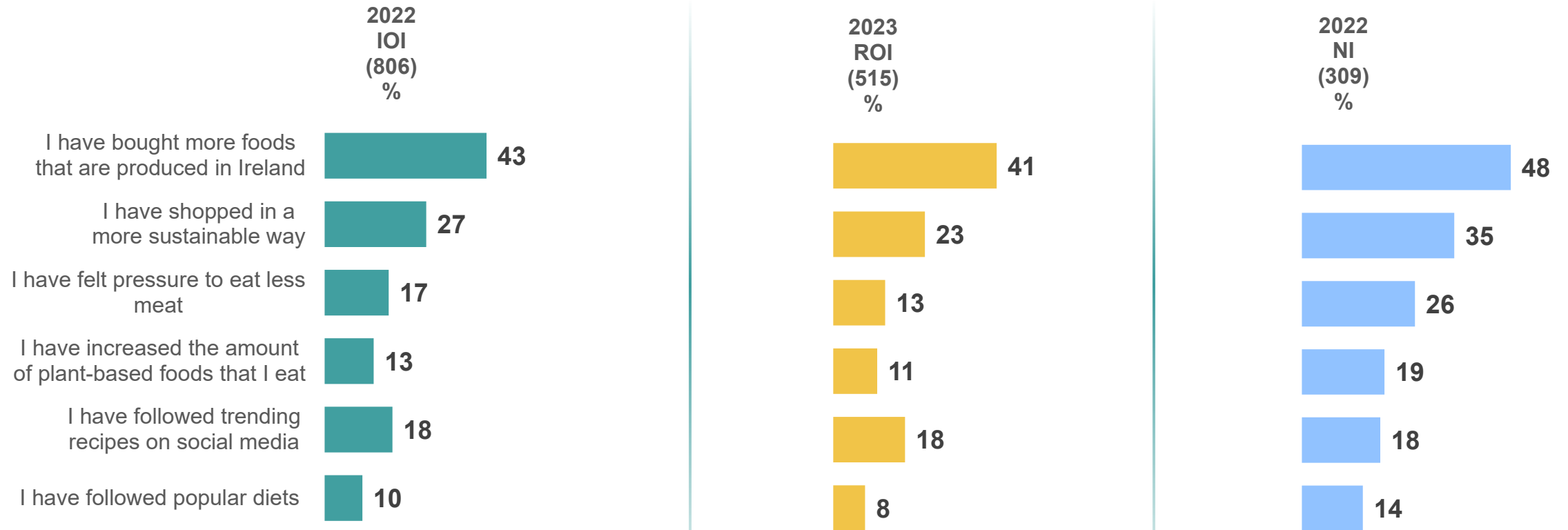
Q.27NEW Are there any particular reasons why you don't plan your/your family's meals in advance?
 Base: All Respondents who never plan meals: 134 (IOI), 86 (ROI), 48 (NI)

EMERGING TRENDS



AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT

Just over 4 in 10 adults on the island of Ireland claim to have bought more foods produced in Ireland over the past 6 months. Just over one quarter (27%) state that they are shopping in a more sustainable way, with a higher proportion in NI (35%) claiming this than in ROI (23%).



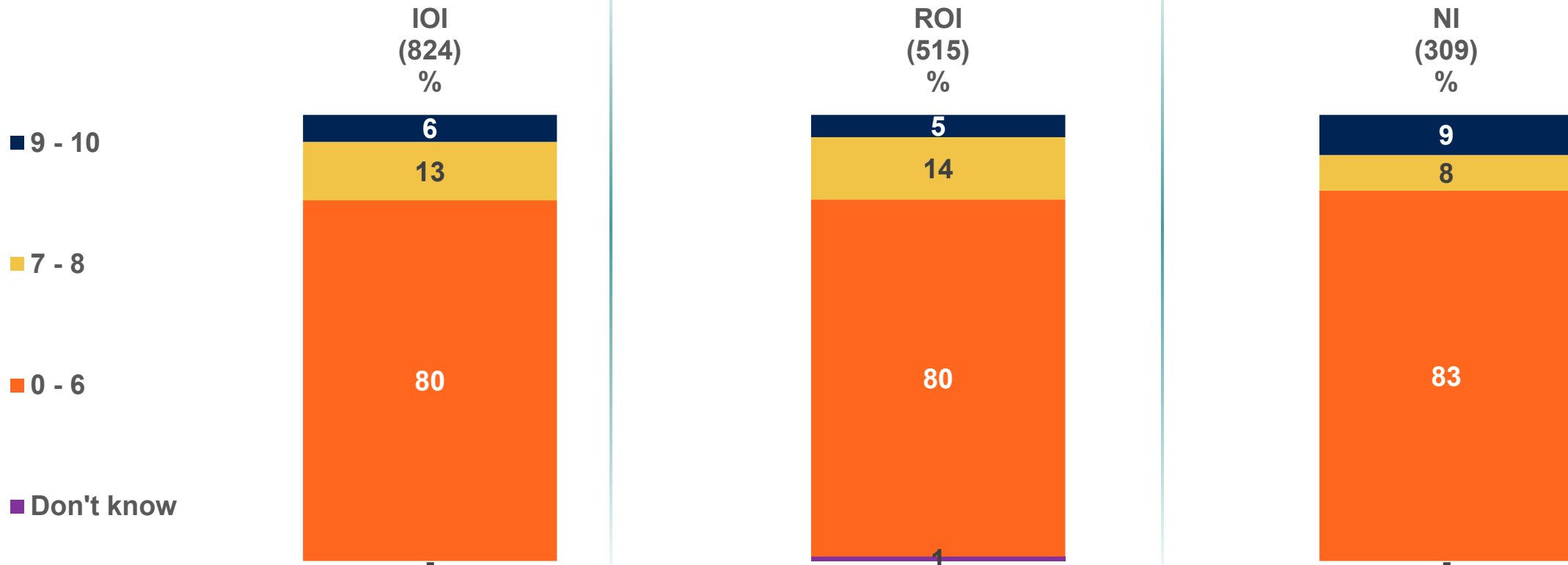
Q.30NEW Which of the following, if any, have applied to you over the past 6 months?
 Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

SOCIAL MEDIA AND COOKING



SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE ON COOKING

The majority (80%) of adults involved in food preparation claim that social media does not influence the food that they cook at home. On the flip side, 6% are influenced by social media and this figure rises to 9% in NI.



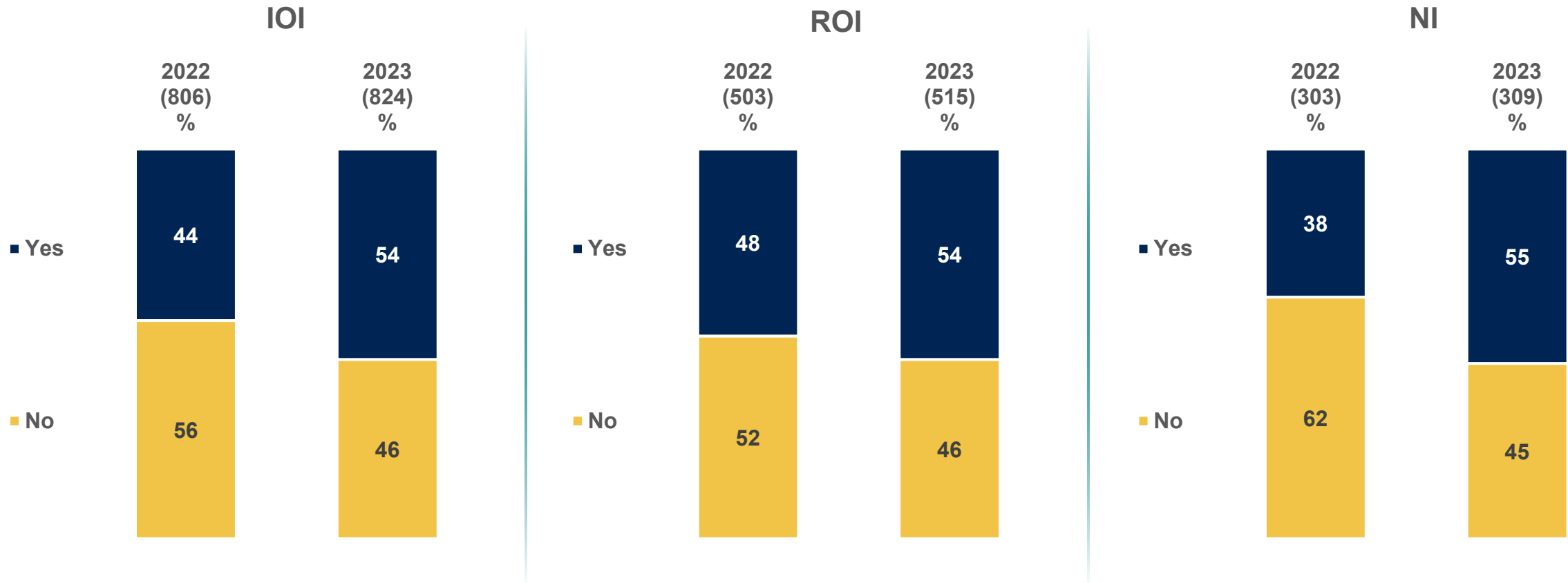
Q.29NEW On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is does not influence at all and 10 is influences very much, how much does social media influence the foods that you cook at home?
Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

ONLINE SEARCHES FOR FOOD INFORMATION



ONLINE SEARCHES FOR FOOD INFORMATION

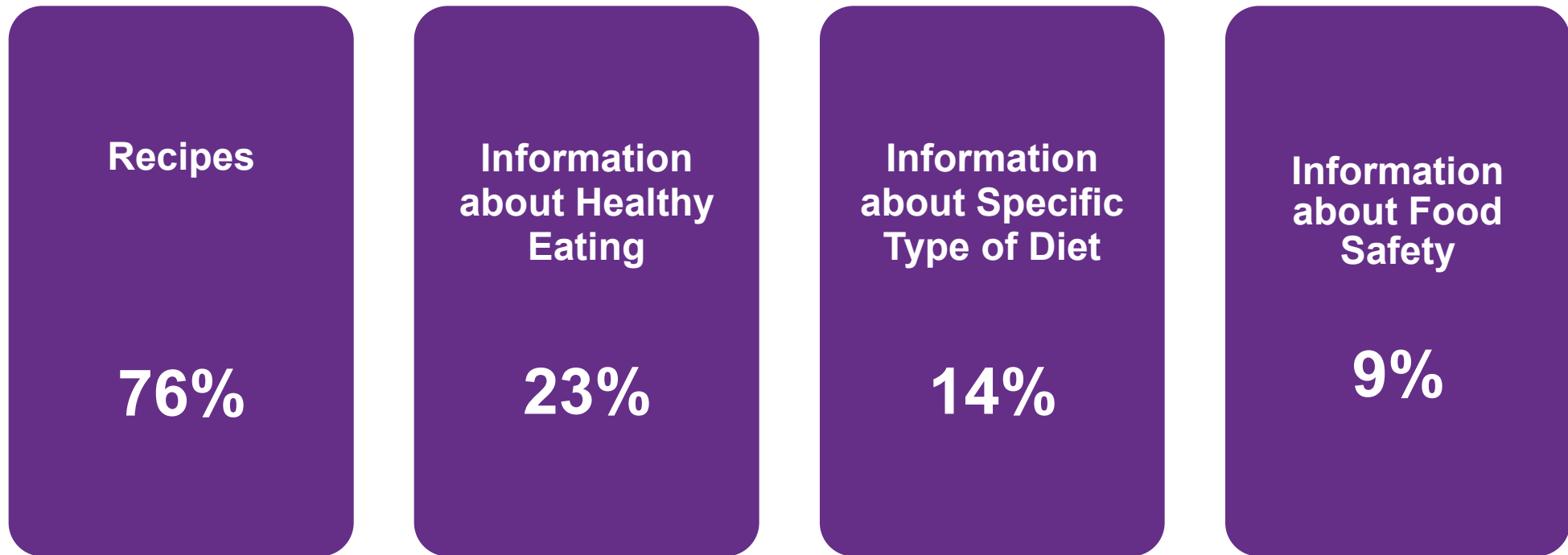
Just over half of adults on the island of Ireland (54%) have searched online for information about food such as recipes, healthy eating and food safety. No statistically significant differences were recorded between ROI and NI in 2023.



Q.34NEW In the past 6 months have you searched online for information about food such as recipes, healthy eating and food safety?
Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

LAST TYPE OF FOOD INFORMATION SEARCHED FOR ?

The top mentions in terms of food information searched for are unchanged versus 2023.



Recipes were the top food information searched for in both ROI (76%) and NI (67%).

Q.6 And how would you describe the work that safefood does?
Base: All Respondents aware of safefood: 344 (IOI), 242 (ROI), 102 (NI)

FURTHER INFORMATION ON FOOD RELATED ISSUES



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON?

The top mention in terms of topics that consumers would like more information on were 'foods that I should be choosing that are better for the environment' 54% and 'Budget recipes' 53%.

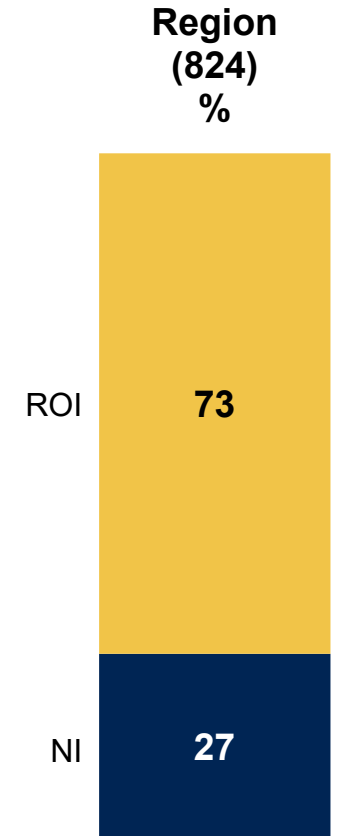
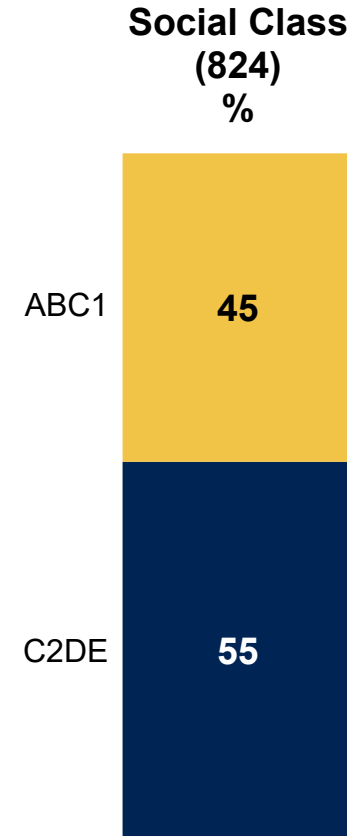
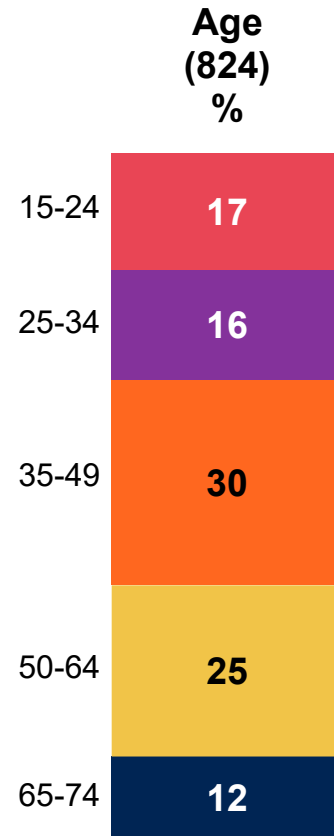
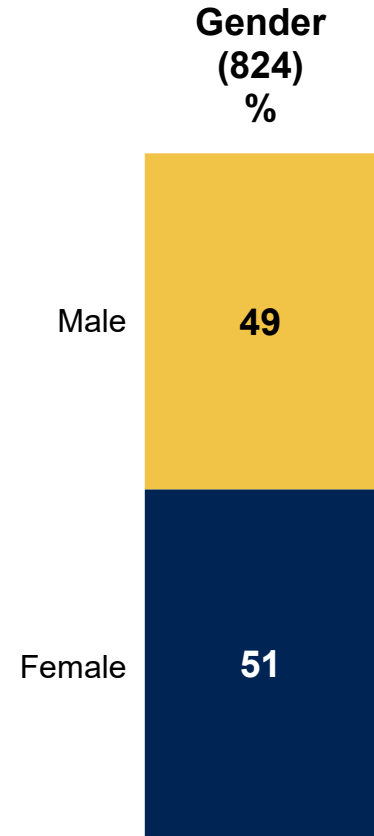
	IOI	ROI	NI
Foods that I should be choosing that are better for the environment	54%	55%	52%
Budget Recipes	53%	54%	53%
What to eat as I am growing older	47%	51%	39%
Diet for playing more sport/being active	38%	41%	31%
What to eat during menopause	19%	21%	15%
Learning how to cook for the first time	13%	15%	7%
Weaning a new baby	8%	8%	6%

Q.36NEW Which of the following, if any, would you like more information on?
Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

APPENDICES

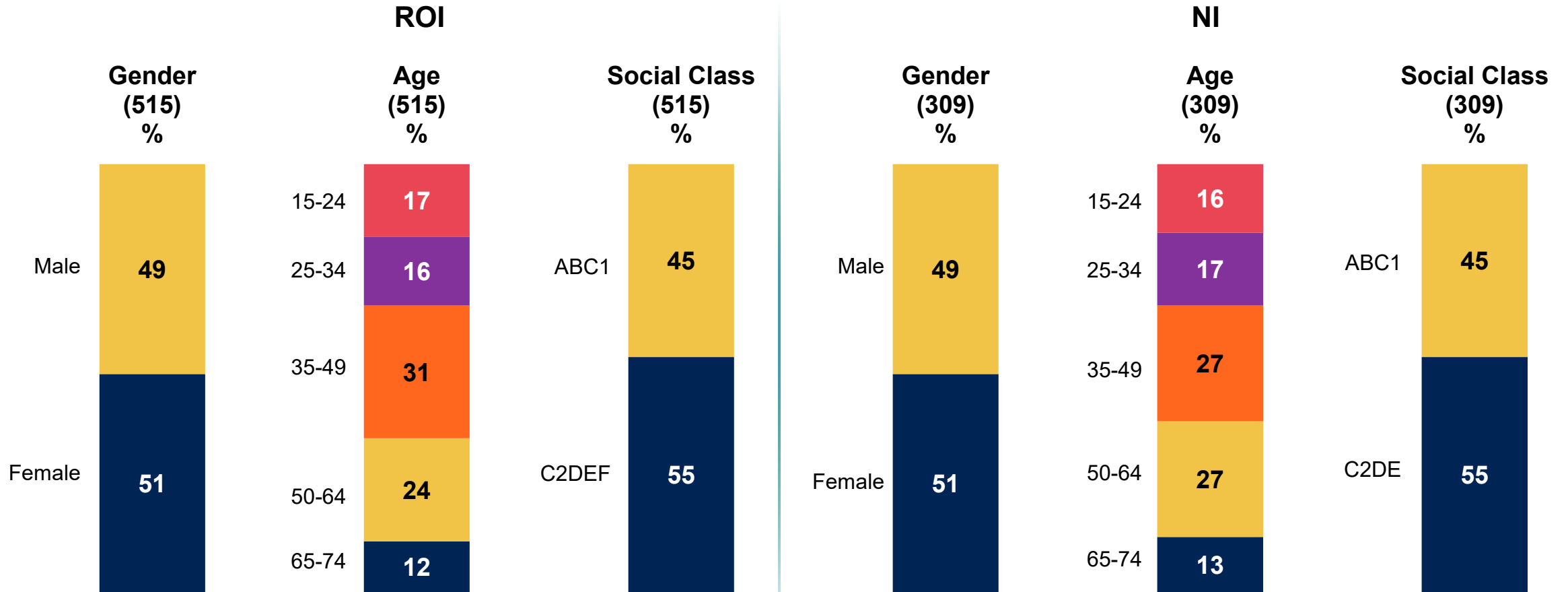
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SAMPLE PROFILE - OVERALL



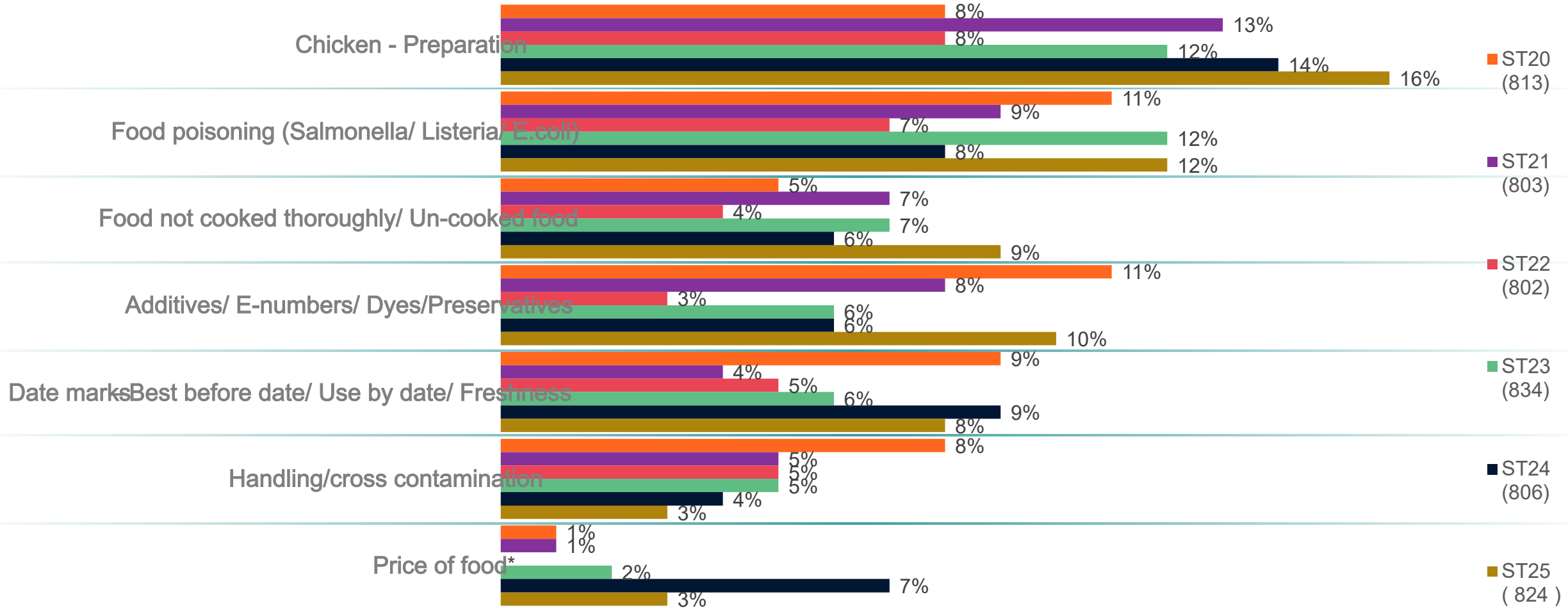
Base: All IOI Respondents: 824 (IOI)

SAMPLE PROFILE - ROI & NI



Base: All Respondents: 515 (ROI) / 309 (NI)

FOOD RELATED ISSUE OF MOST CONCERN - IOI

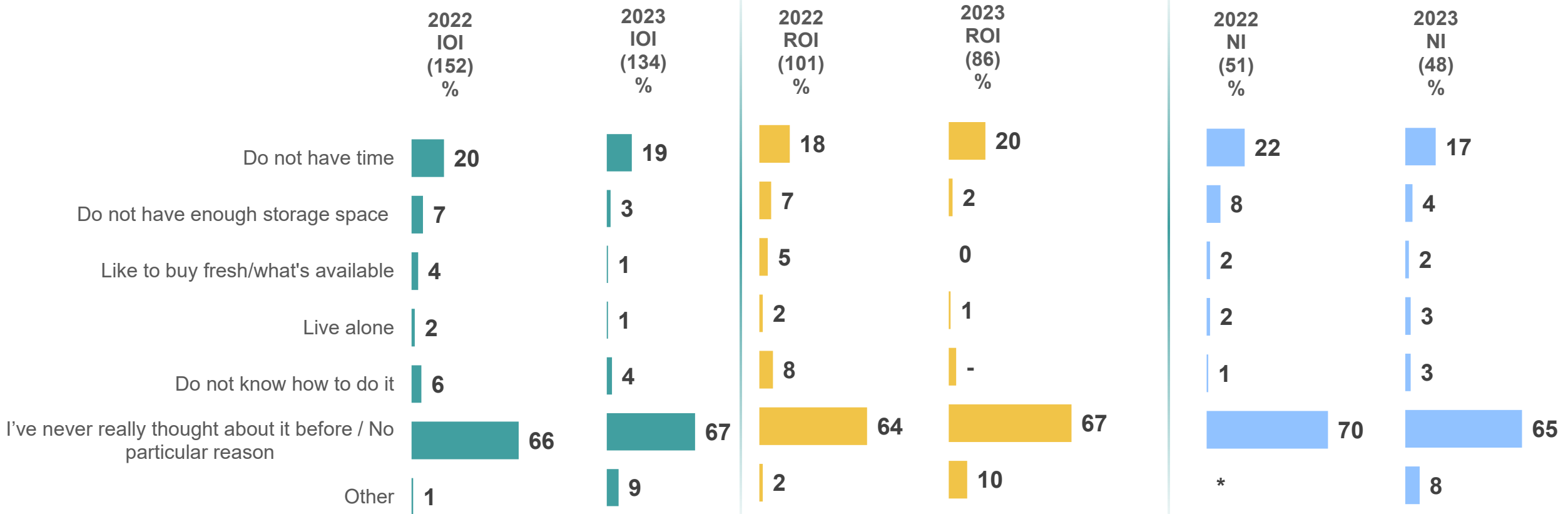


Q.12 What one food related issue are you most concerned about?
 Base: All IOI Respondents: 824 (IOI)

Only responses 5% or above from 2022 shown
 Others 4% or less not shown

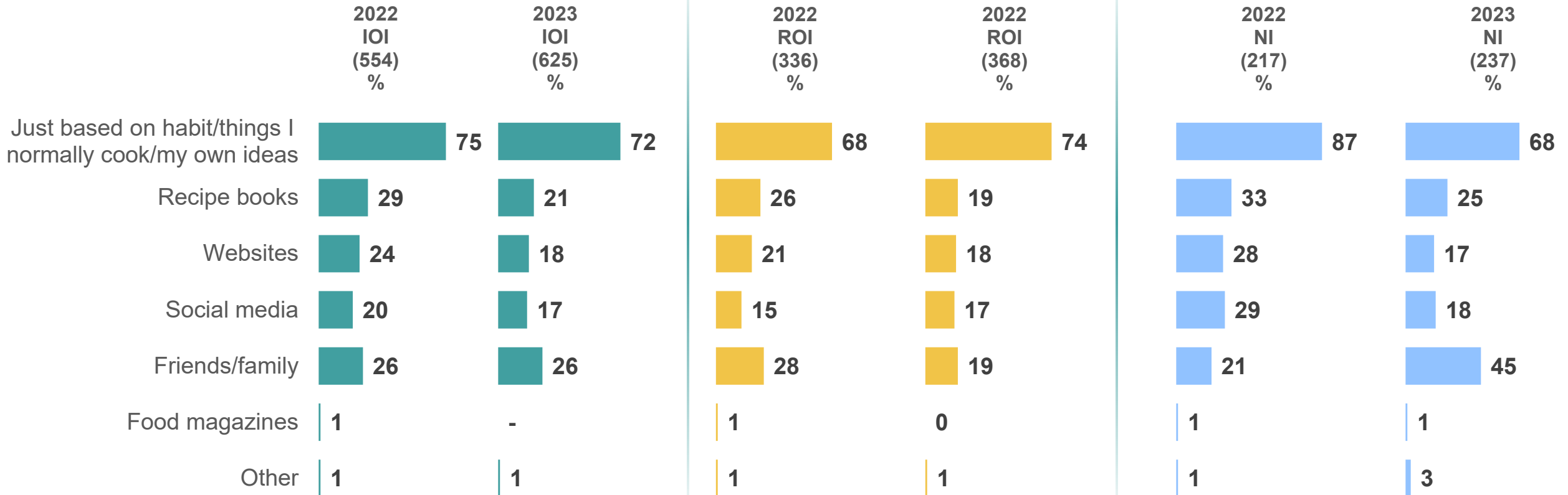


REASONS FOR NOT PLANNING MEALS



Q.27NEW Are there any particular reasons why you don't plan your/your family's meals in advance?
 Base: All Respondents who never plan meals: 134 (IOI), 86 (ROI), 48 (NI)

IDEAS FOR MEAL PLANNING



Q.26NEW Where do you normally get your ideas from when planning meals?
 Base: All Respondents who plan meals: 625 (IOI), 368 (ROI), 237 (NI)

LAST TYPE OF FOOD INFORMATION SEARCHED FOR

	IOI		ROI		NI	
	2022 (361)	2023 (441)	2022 (244)	2023 (263)	2022 (117)	2023 (178)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Recipe/recipes	82	76	82	79	82	68
Information about healthy eating	27	23	26	25	28	18
Information about food safety	11	9	12	7	9	14
Information about a specific type of diet e.g. gluten-free, plant-based, vegan high protein	10	14	12	14	7	13
Other	1	7	1	7	-	12
Can't recall	2	1	1	1	5	1

Q.35NEW What was the last type of food related information that you searched for?

Base: All Respondents who searched online information about food: 441 (IOI), 263 (ROI), 178 (NI)

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON?

	IOI		ROI		NI	
	2022 (806) %	2023 (824) %	2022 (503) %	2023 (515) %	2022 (303) %	2023 (309) %
Budget recipes	47	53	54	54	35	53
What diet to follow if I am playing more sport/being active	36	38	46	41	19	31
What to eat as I am growing older	35	47	46	51	18	39
Learning how to cook for the first time	14	13	18	15	6	7
What to eat during menopause	17	19	24	21	5	15
Weaning a new baby	6	8	8	8	2	6
Foods should I be choosing that are better for the environment climate change sustainability	n/a	54	n/a	55	n/a	52

Q.36NEW Which of the following, if any, would you like more information on?
Base: All Respondents: 824 (IOI), 515 (ROI), 309 (NI)

THANK YOU