



Stress and Counselling

Quantitative Research

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In assoc with : Carr Communications

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J.4226

Research Background & Objectives



Introduction

- This report presents the findings from a nationally representative survey of the adult population about stress and counselling.
- The research was undertaken for the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy by Behaviour & Attitudes in conjunction with Carr Communications.
- Questions were included on Behaviour & Attitudes February No.2 Barometer survey with fieldwork between 18th and 28th of that month.
- The survey is representative of the adult population aged 16 and over with quota controls in respect of gender, age, social class, region and area of residence.
- Data from the survey can be regarded as accurate within a predictable margin of error of ± 3.8 percentage points.

Analysis of Sample

Base: All Adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

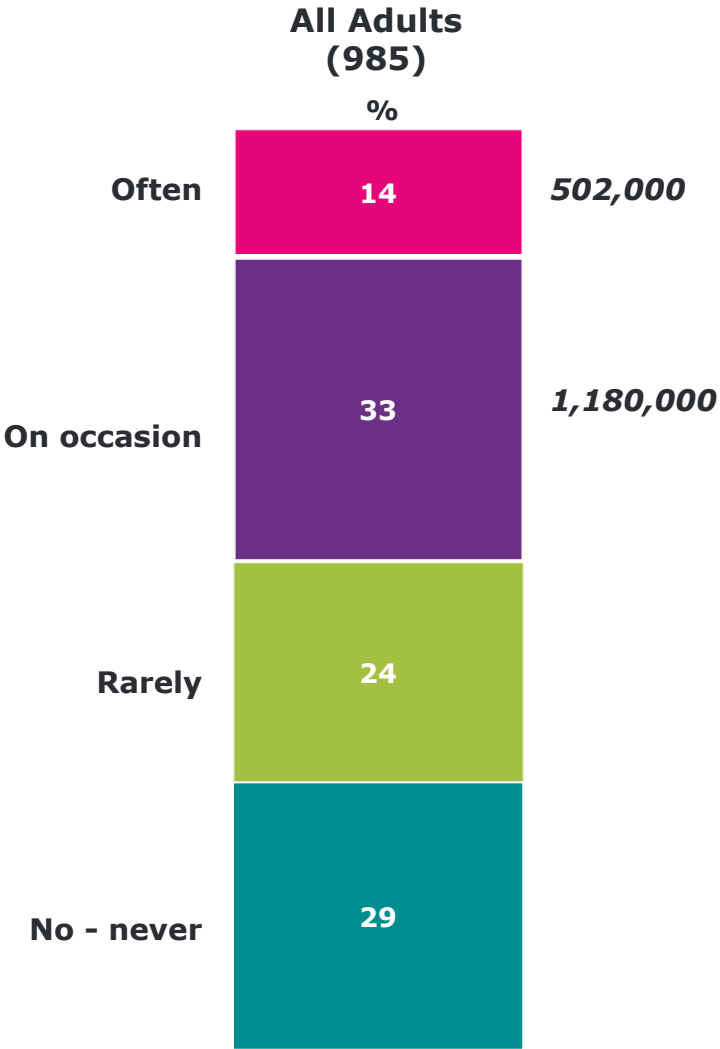


Stress Experience and Causes



Experience of Stress

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

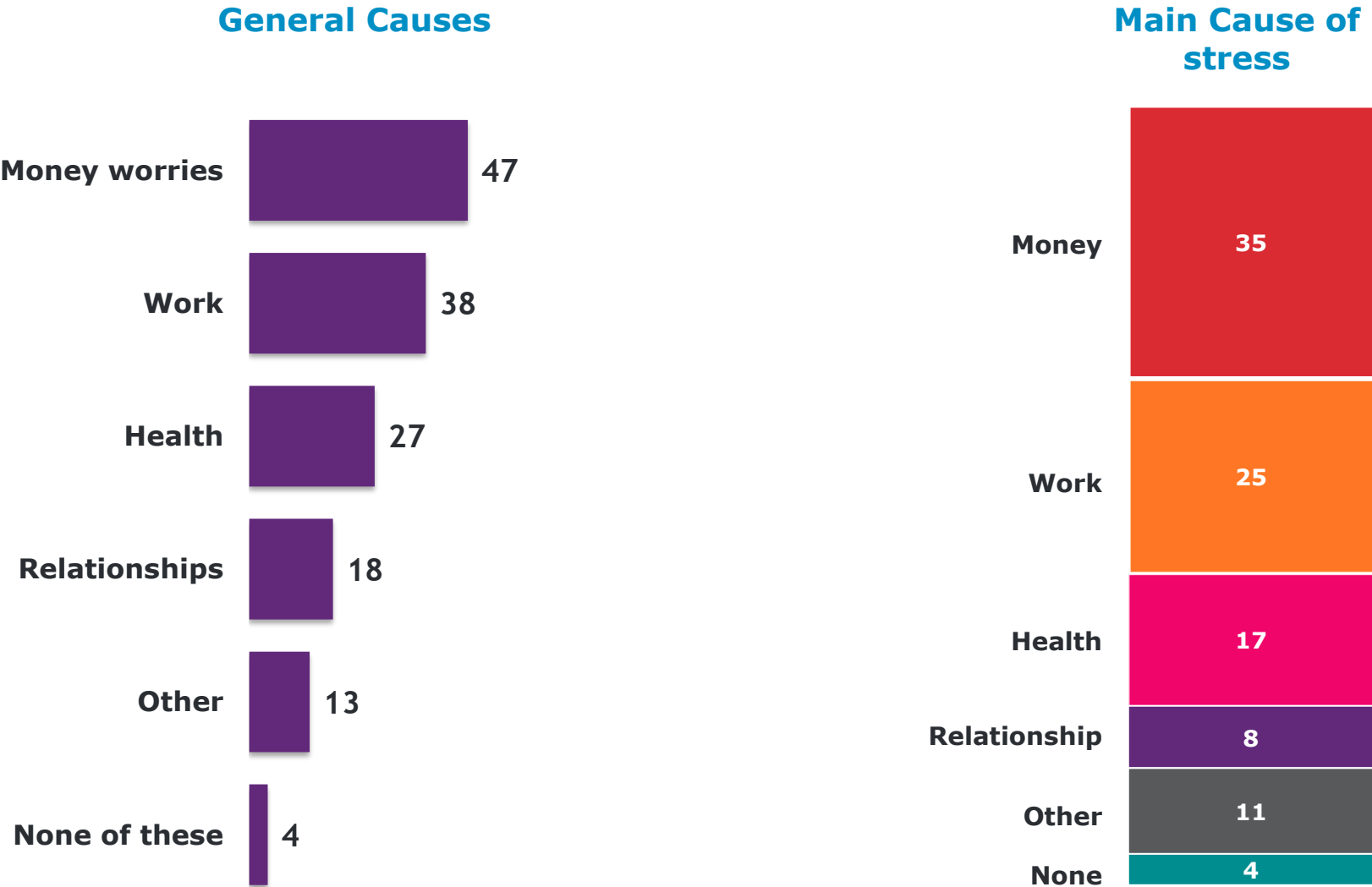


	Any Stress	Often Stressed
	%	%
All Adults (985)	71	14
Male (484)	66	12
Female (501)	76	16
Children in household (350)	79	20
No children (634)	66	11
U24 (165)	71	11
25-34 (202)	77	17
35-49 (272)	76	18
50-64 (203)	71	13
65+ (143)	53	7
ABC1 (430)	74	13
C2DE (493)	71	16
F (62)	52	4
Dublin (274)	78	14
Leinster (257)	67	17
Munster (273)	68	12
Conn/Ulster (181)	69	13
Urban (628)	73	15
Rural (357)	68	12

7 out of 10 adults claim to feel stress, to some degree, with 1 in 7 (14%) claiming to feel stressed frequently. Women, adults in mid life and notably parents, claim to be stressed significantly more often.

Causes of Stress

Base: All ever feel stressed 696/2,519,000



Money and work are key concerns at present.



General Causes of Stress

Base: All ever feel stressed: 696/2,519,000

	Total	Gender		Kids in Household		Age					Class		
		Male	Female	Yes	No	U24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1	C2DE	F
<i>Base:</i>	696	315	381	277	418	113	155	209	143	76	317	347	32
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Money worries	47	45	48	58	39	38	58	55	41	22	43	51	39
Work	38	48	29	41	35	33	51	42	34	12	47	29	47
Health	27	25	28	20	31	8	17	25	36	60	23	30	24
Relationships	18	18	19	19	18	30	21	20	9	10	17	21	7
Other	13	9	16	14	12	31	8	10	11	13	13	13	14
None of these	4	3	5	4	4	3	3	4	7	6	5	4	3

In the family life stage there is significant cause to worry about money and jobs, with health only starting to raise itself from midlife onwards. Relationships a bigger issue younger.

Q.2a

Which of the following ever cause you stress?

General Causes of Stress X Region and Stress Prevalence

Base: All ever feel stressed: 696/2,519,000

	Total	Region				Area		Feel Stress			
		Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Uls	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	Any Yes
Base:	696	215	168	186	127	455	241	134	326	236	696
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Money worries	47	52	43	41	51	48	44	55	49	39	47
Work	38	44	36	31	37	36	41	49	38	30	38
Health	27	26	23	30	27	27	26	35	23	27	27
Relationships	18	19	21	14	19	17	20	24	18	16	18
Other	13	9	16	15	13	14	12	14	15	10	13
None of these	4	3	6	5	3	5	3	2	2	8	4

Those in Dublin are critically concerned about money and work. Those who worry a lot, tend to worry about more aspects.

Main Cause of Stress

Base: All ever feel stressed: 696/2,519,000

	Total	Gender		Kids in Household		Age					Class		
		Male	Female	Yes	No	U24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1	C2DE	F
Base:	696	315	381	277	418	113	155	209	143	76	317	347	32
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Money worries	35	31	38	45	28	25	45	41	31	15	31	38	33
Work	25	31	19	26	24	28	31	28	21	5	34	17	26
Health	17	17	17	7	24	1	6	14	28	52	13	20	18
Relationships	8	9	8	8	8	14	9	8	3	8	6	10	7
Other (specify)	11	8	13	10	11	29	6	6	10	11	12	10	14
None of these	4	3	5	4	5	3	3	4	7	8	5	4	3

Money worries are the main source of stress for over one third of adults. Money as a stress particularly affects parents and those in the mid life stage who have in general experienced more adverse affects to wages, negative equity and job security due to the recession. A further one quarter feel stressed due to work; particularly men and white collar adults in the mid life stage. Health becomes an issue older. Men possibly don't share their work concerns with women.

Main Cause of Stress X Region and Stress Prevalence

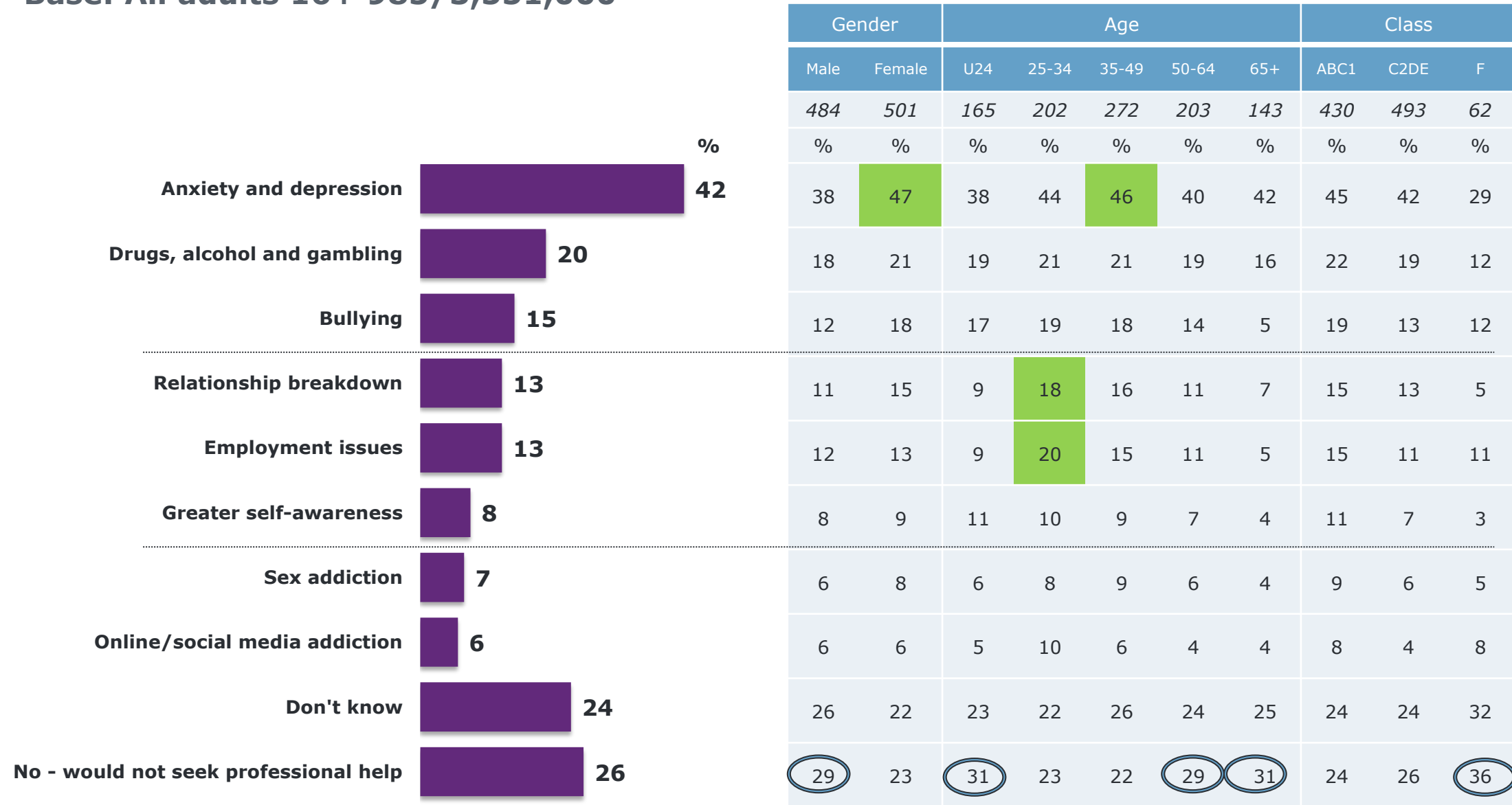
Base: All ever feel stressed: 696/2,519,000

	Total	Region				Area		Feel Stress			
		Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Uls	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	Any Yes
Base:	696	215	168	186	127	455	241	134	326	236	696
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Money worries	35	37	31	34	37	36	33	36	38	30	35
Work	25	30	24	20	22	24	25	27	24	24	25
Health	17	14	14	23	18	17	17	19	14	20	17
Relationships	8	8	13	5	7	8	10	7	8	9	8
Other (specify)	11	8	11	13	11	11	10	8	13	8	11
None of these	4	3	6	5	4	5	4	2	2	9	4

Money and work the predominant issues generally but particularly so in Dublin. Relationship worries are notable in Leinster, the key area for negative equity and Celtic Tiger development.

Drivers to Professional Help

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Elements that might prompt consideration of professional help differ by life stage and gender but depression and anxiety are key concerns, and particularly in mid-life and for women.



Drivers to Professional Help X Demographics

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

		Region				Area		Stress Prevalence			
		Dublin	Lein-ster	Muns-ster	Conn/Uls	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	Never experienced stress
		274	257	273	181	628	357	134	326	236	289
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Anxiety and depression	42	48	28	45	51	49	32	53	52	44	25
Drugs, alcohol and gambling	20	12	11	28	31	21	17	19	20	28	13
Bullying	15	8	10	22	24	14	17	19	17	17	9
Relationship breakdown	13	10	11	10	23	13	13	19	15	16	6
Employment issues	13	12	10	10	21	13	12	14	16	14	7
Greater self-awareness	8	5	8	6	17	8	9	10	10	11	4
Sex addiction	7	5	4	5	19	6	9	6	9	10	3
Online/social media addiction	6	3	4	5	14	6	6	5	6	10	3
Don't know	24	16	37	21	23	19	32	18	18	19	39
No - would not seek professional help	26	31	26	24	22	26	27	24	22	27	31

Those most frequently under stress are particularly likely to seek help for depression or anxiety.

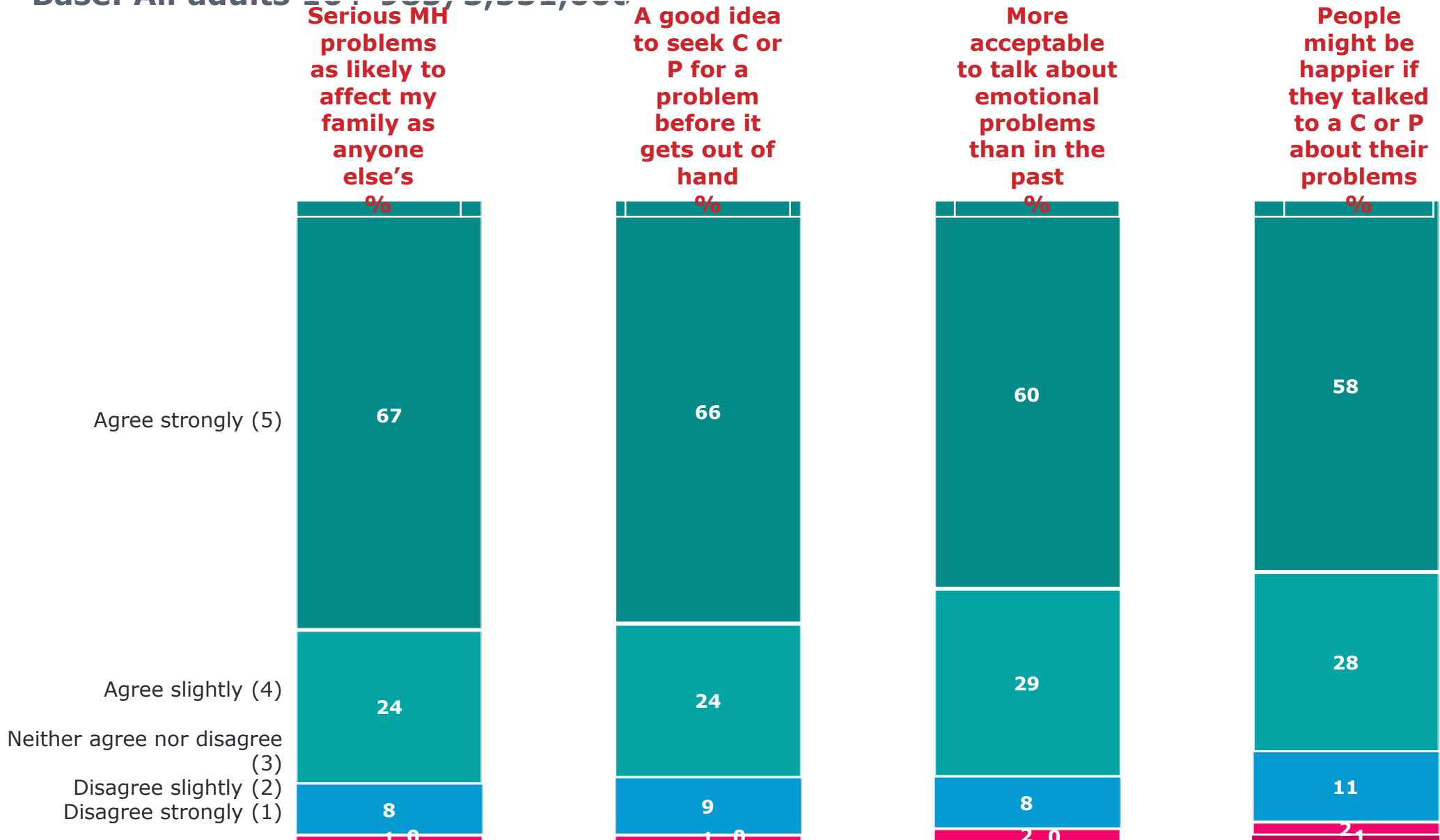


Attitudes to Mental Health



Discussing Mental Health & Emotional Problems

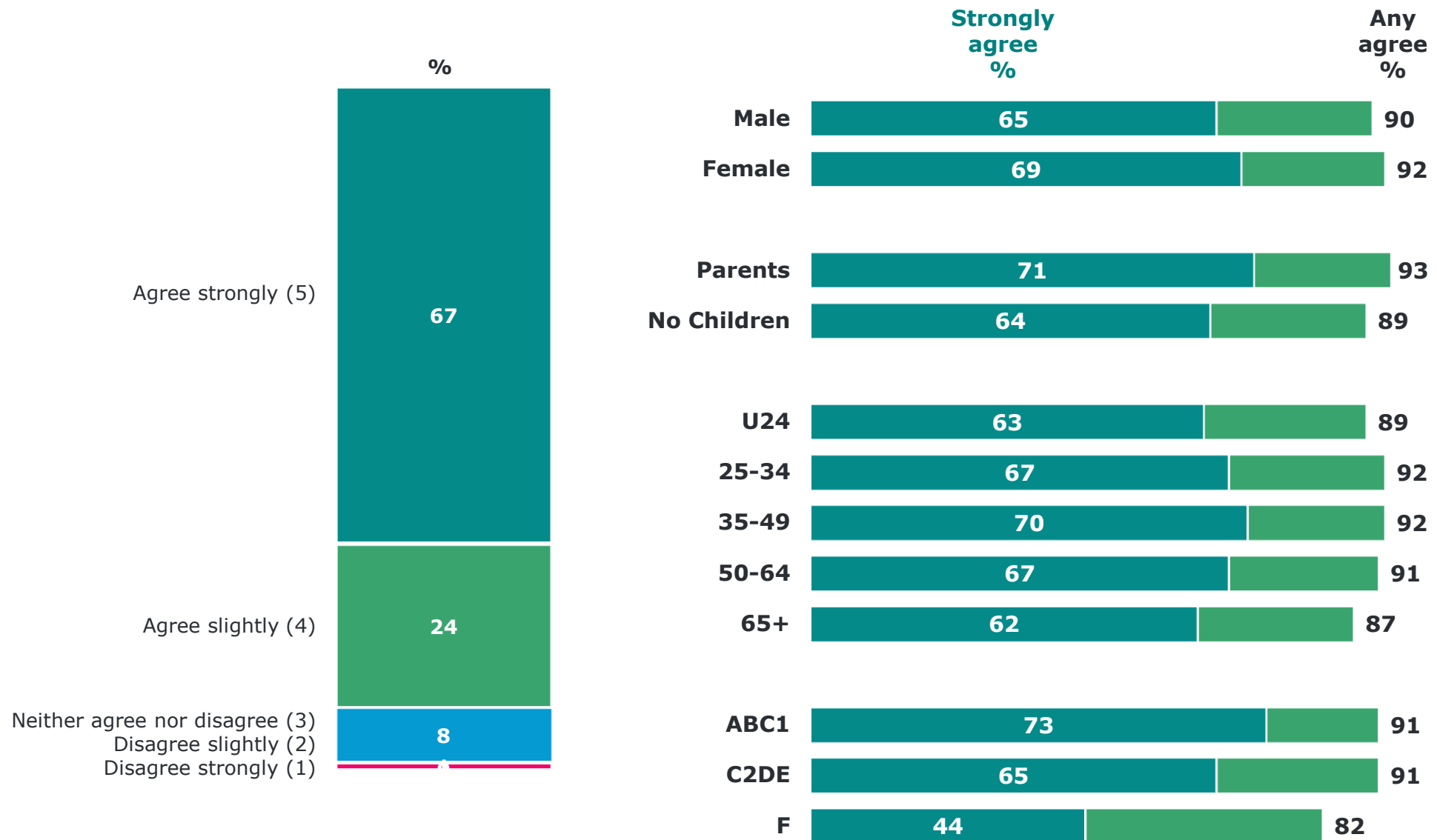
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



The level of agreement indicates that people may feel it has become more acceptable, in general, to discuss mental health or seek help for emotional difficulties.

Serious mental health problems are just as likely to affect my family as anyone else's

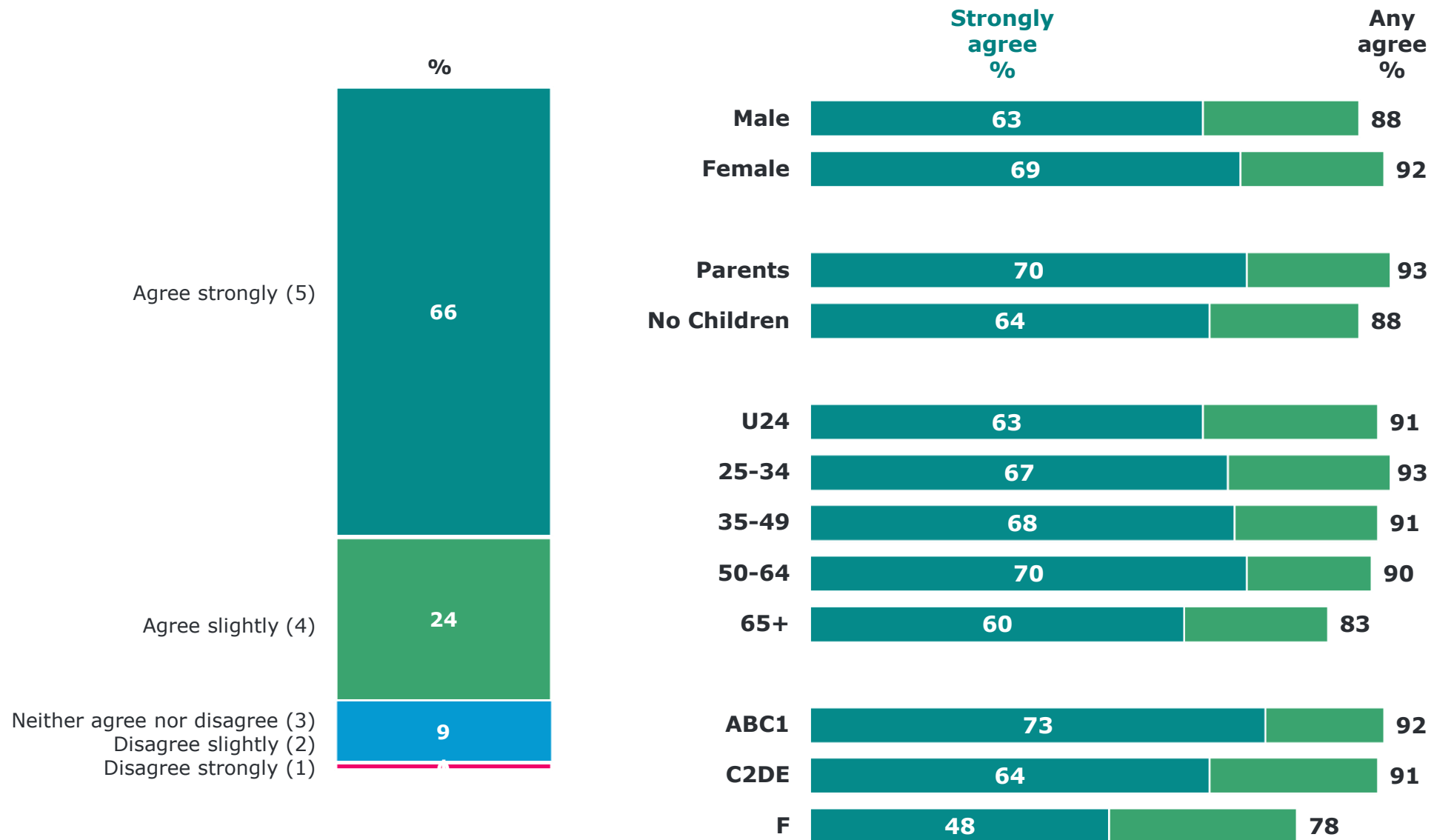
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



A similar pattern: Farming families more likely to be older.

It is a good idea to seek counselling or psychotherapy for a problem before it gets out of hand

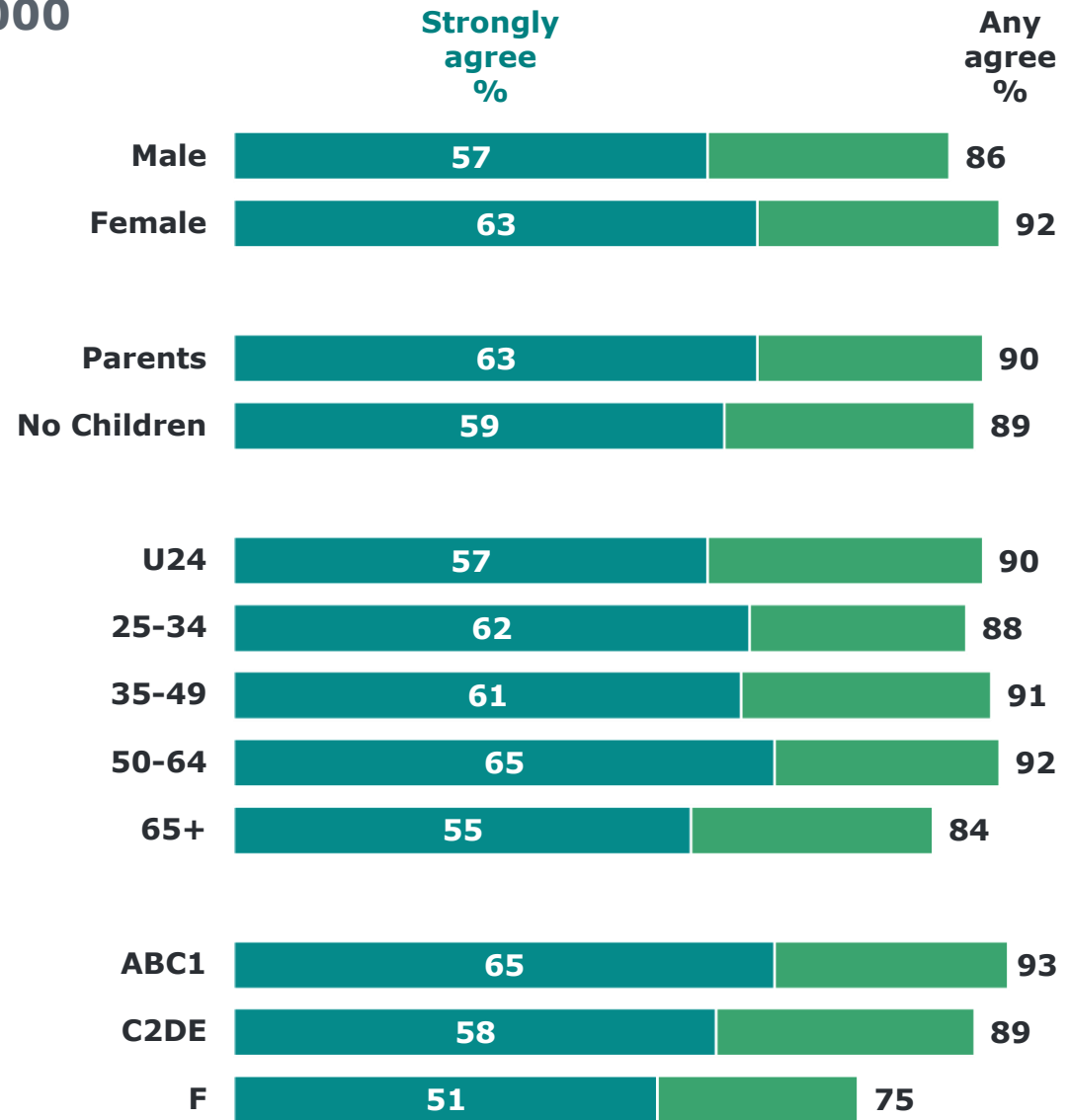
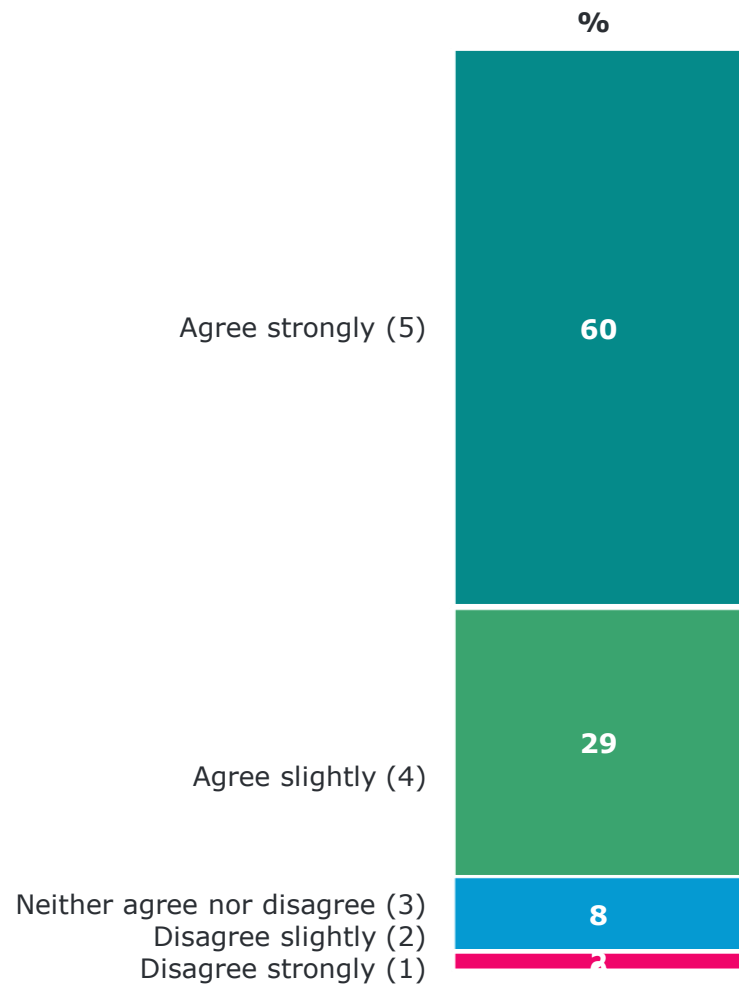
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Again, social background and gender the primary determinants of attitudinal difference.

It is more acceptable to talk about emotional problems than it was in the past

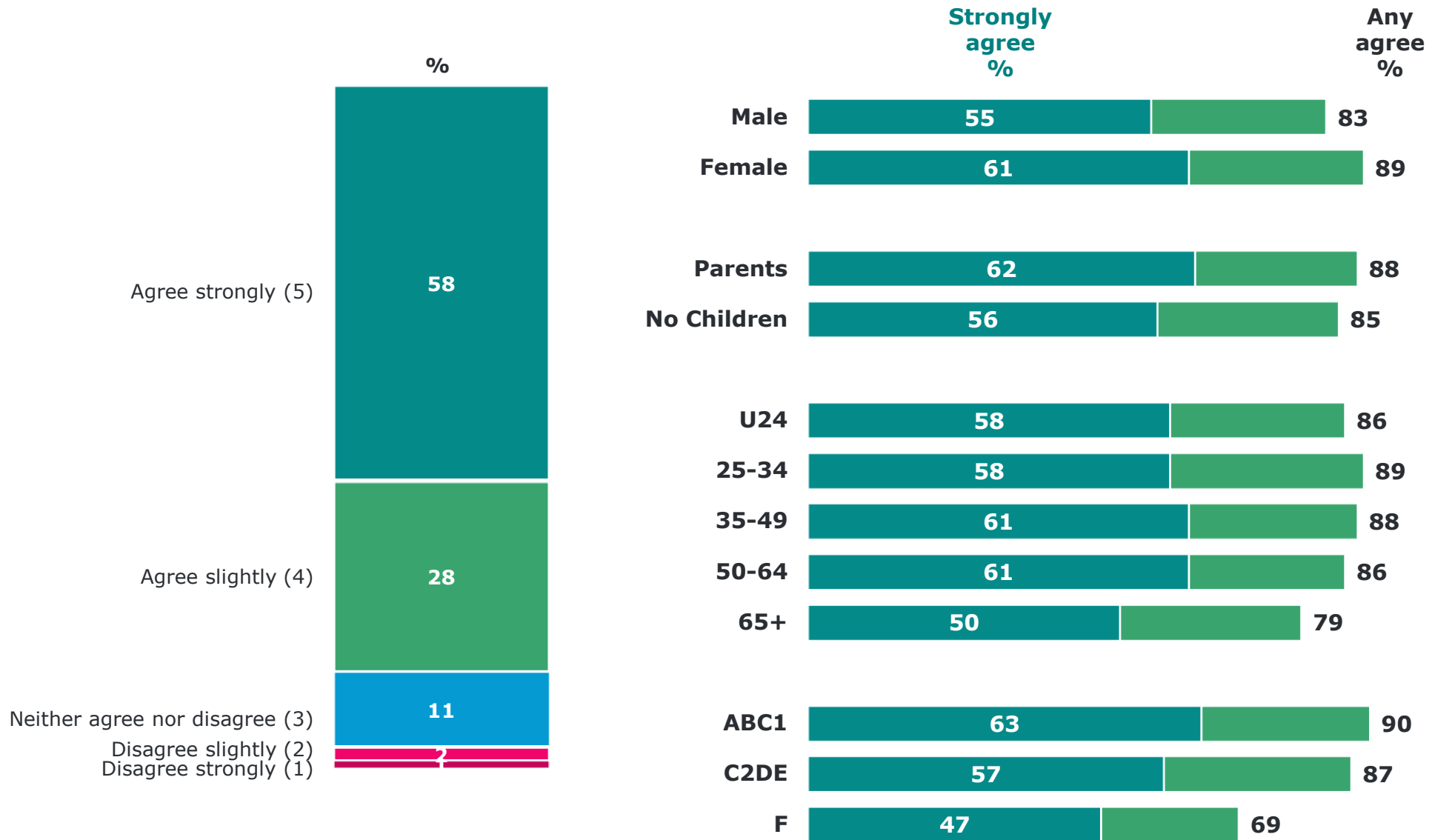
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Older adults and farmers a little less likely to agree.

People might be happier if they talked to a counsellor or psychotherapist about their problems

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



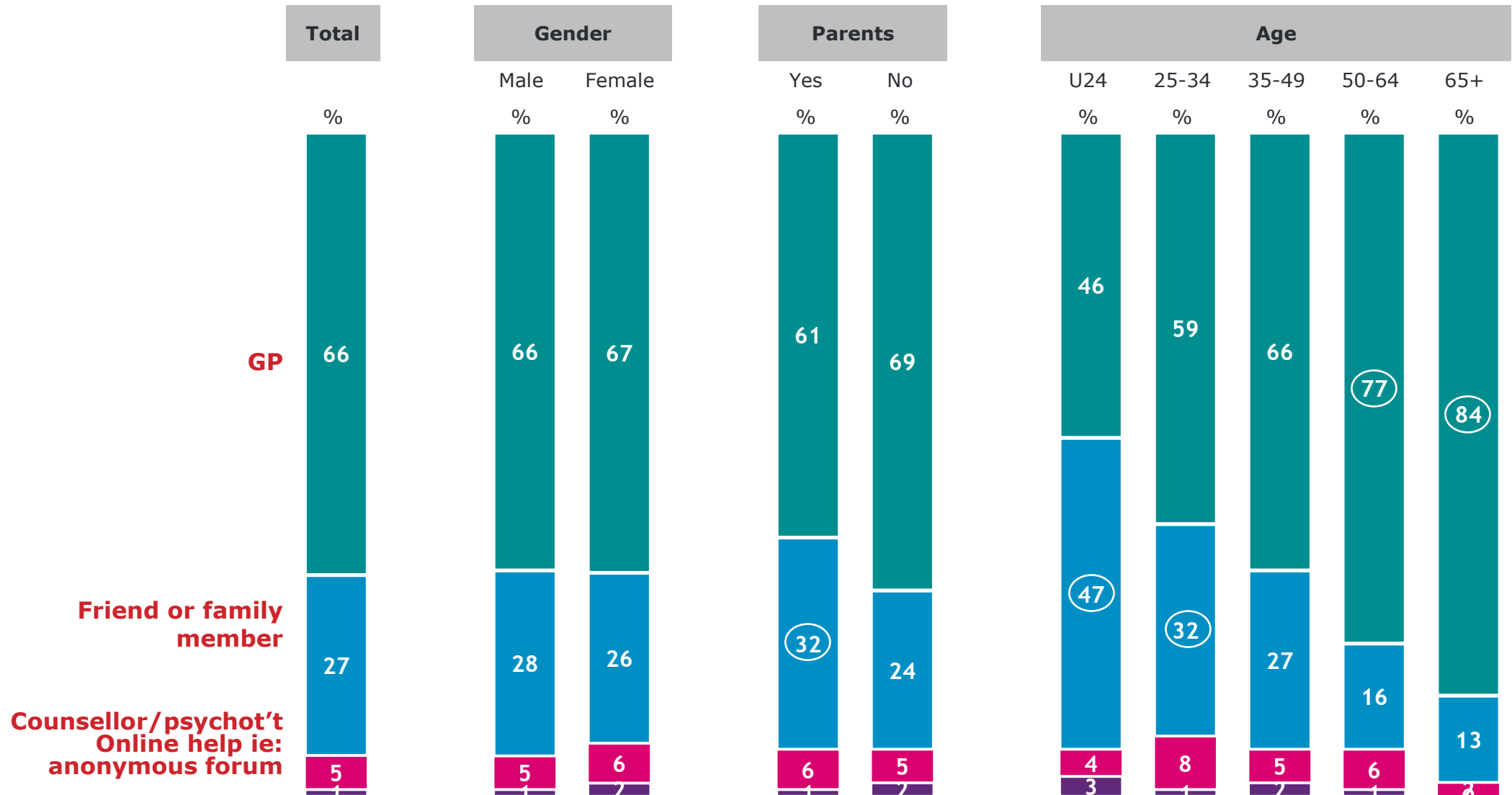
A notable class difference is apparent.

Professional Help



First Choice for Assistance with Mental Health

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Two thirds of adults indicate they would approach a GP initially to resolve a mental health difficulty, with over a quarter indicating they would turn to family or a friend. Age has a big impact. Going to counsellors or psychotherapists as an initial port of call appears muted at only 1 in 20 adults (5%).

First Choice X Class and Region

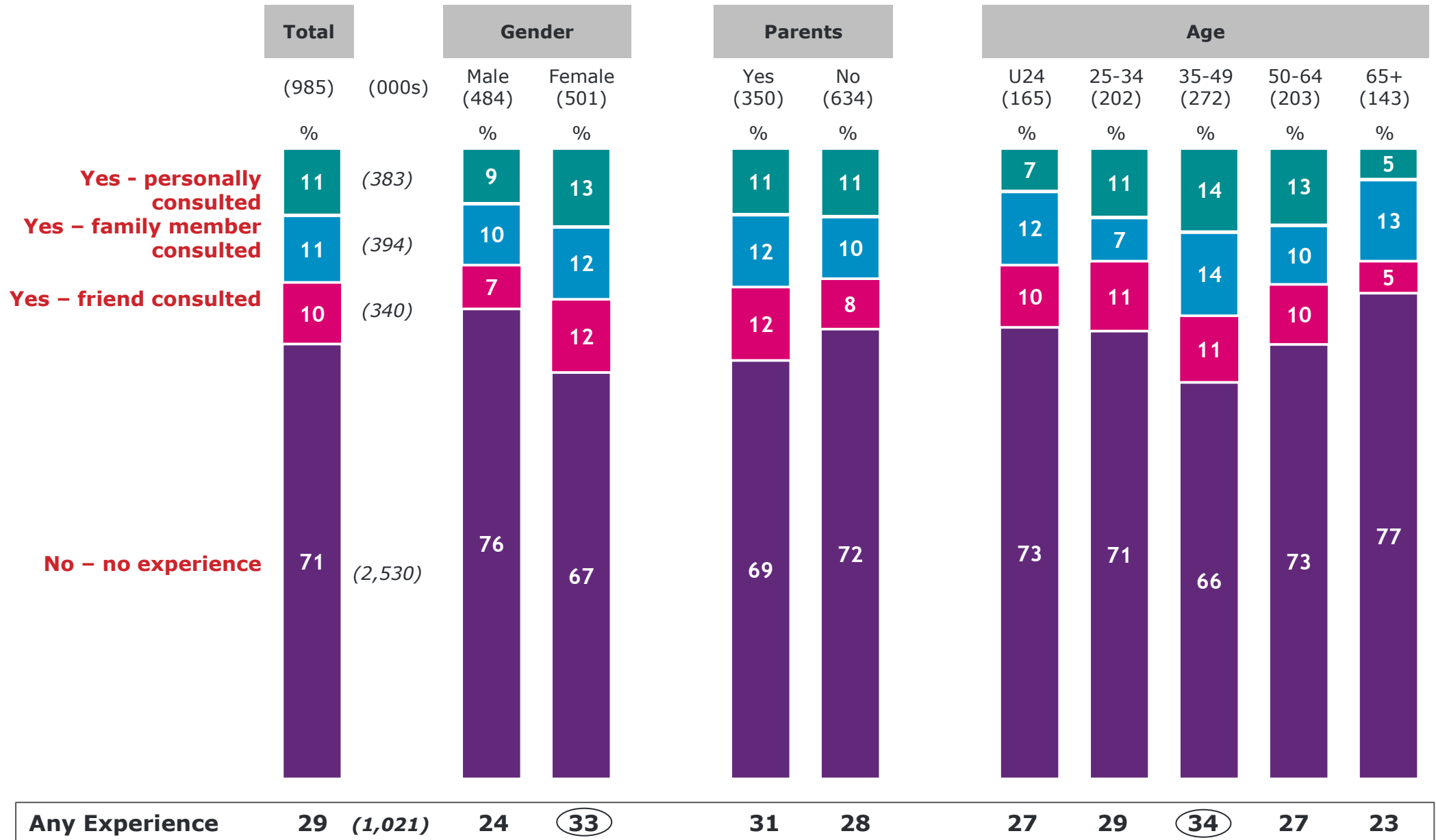
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

	Total	Social Class			Region				Area		Feel Stress				Ever Consulted				
		ABC1	C2DE	F	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	ANY Yes	Person-ally	Family Member	Friend	ANY Yes	NO
Base:	985	430	493	62	274	257	273	181	628	357	134	326	236	696	106	108	94	280	705
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
GP	66	65	68	68	60	72	67	68	68	63	67	64	67	65	69	56	65	64	67
Friend or family member	27	28	26	24	35	24	25	22	26	29	27	28	26	27	16	35	26	27	27
Counsellor or psychotherapist	5	5	5	8	4	3	7	9	5	6	5	7	6	6	15	9	9	9	4
Online help, for example an anonymous forum	1	2	1	-	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	0	2

Those who have experienced a mental health issue are three times more likely to nominate a counsellor or psychotherapist (and to relegate family and friends to third place).

Consulted with Counsellor or Psychotherapist in Last Year

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Middle aged adults and women the most likely.

Use of Counsellor or Psychotherapist X Demographics

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

	Total	Social Class			Region				Area		Feel Stress			
		ABC1	C2DE	F	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Uls	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	No Never
<i>Base:</i>	985	430	493	62	274	257	273	181	628	357	134	326	236	289
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes – personally consulted	11	10	12	3	8	8	11	17	9	13	27	13	8	2
Yes – family member consulted	11	11	12	7	11	11	10	13	13	9	17	13	13	5
Yes – friend consulted	10	10	9	11	5	13	9	13	7	14	8	15	11	4
No – no experience	71	71	70	80	77	72	71	62	74	67	53	64	70	90
Any Experience	29	29	30	20	23	28	29	38	26	33	47	36	30	10

1 in 10 or 383,000 individual adults have personally contacted a counsellor or psychotherapist in the past year, with 1 in 5 or 734,000 adults having a wider experience of counselling through a family member or friend. Of those often under stress, a quarter indicate that they have seen a counsellor in the past year.

First Contact with a Therapist

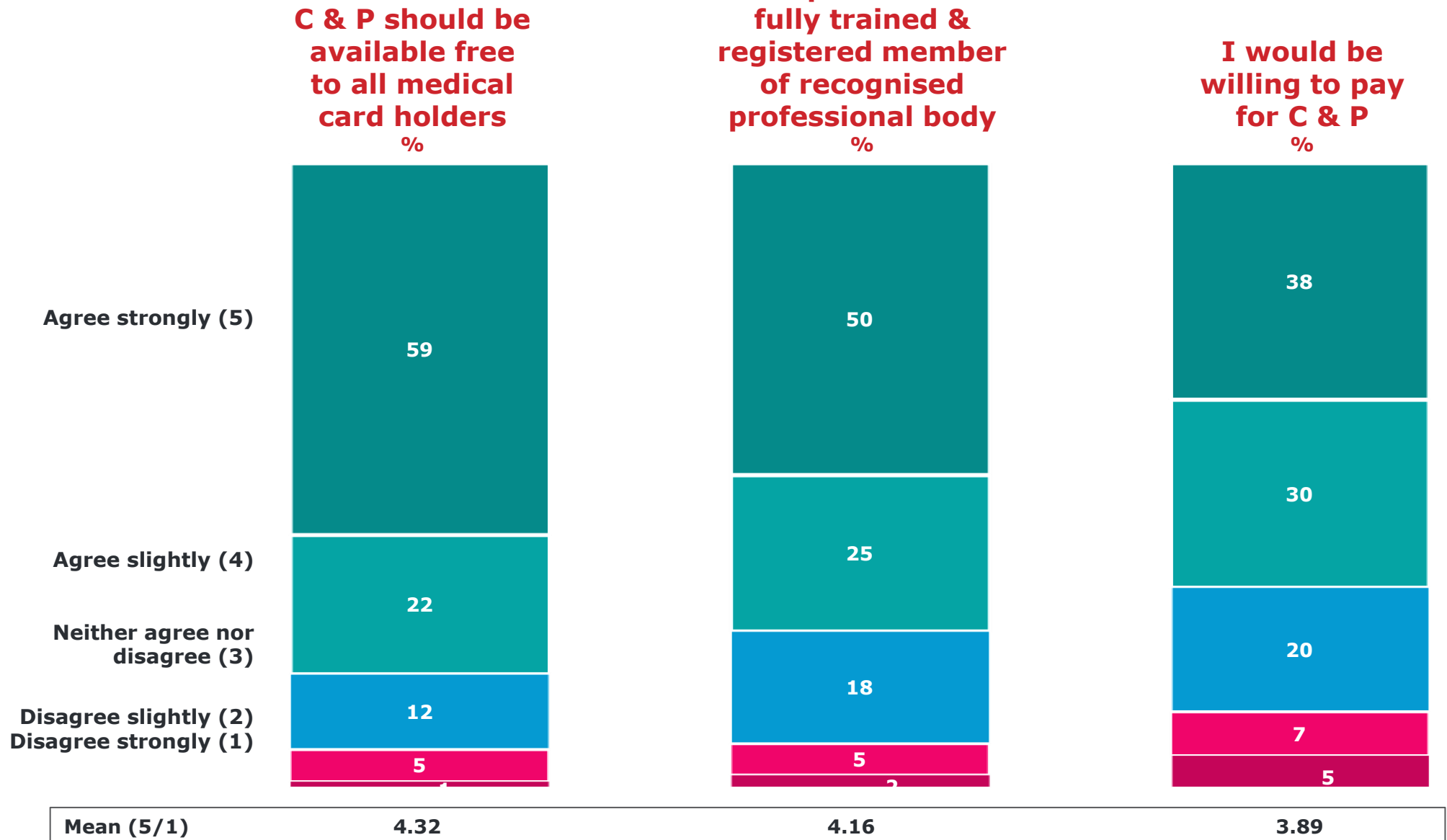
Base: Any experience with counsellors or therapists – 280/1,021,000



Three quarters of attendees to a therapist received their first referral from a GP with a further 1 in 6 (17%) referred by friends and family. 4 out of 5 adults attending personally were referred by GPs.

Counselling & Psychotherapy Funding

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



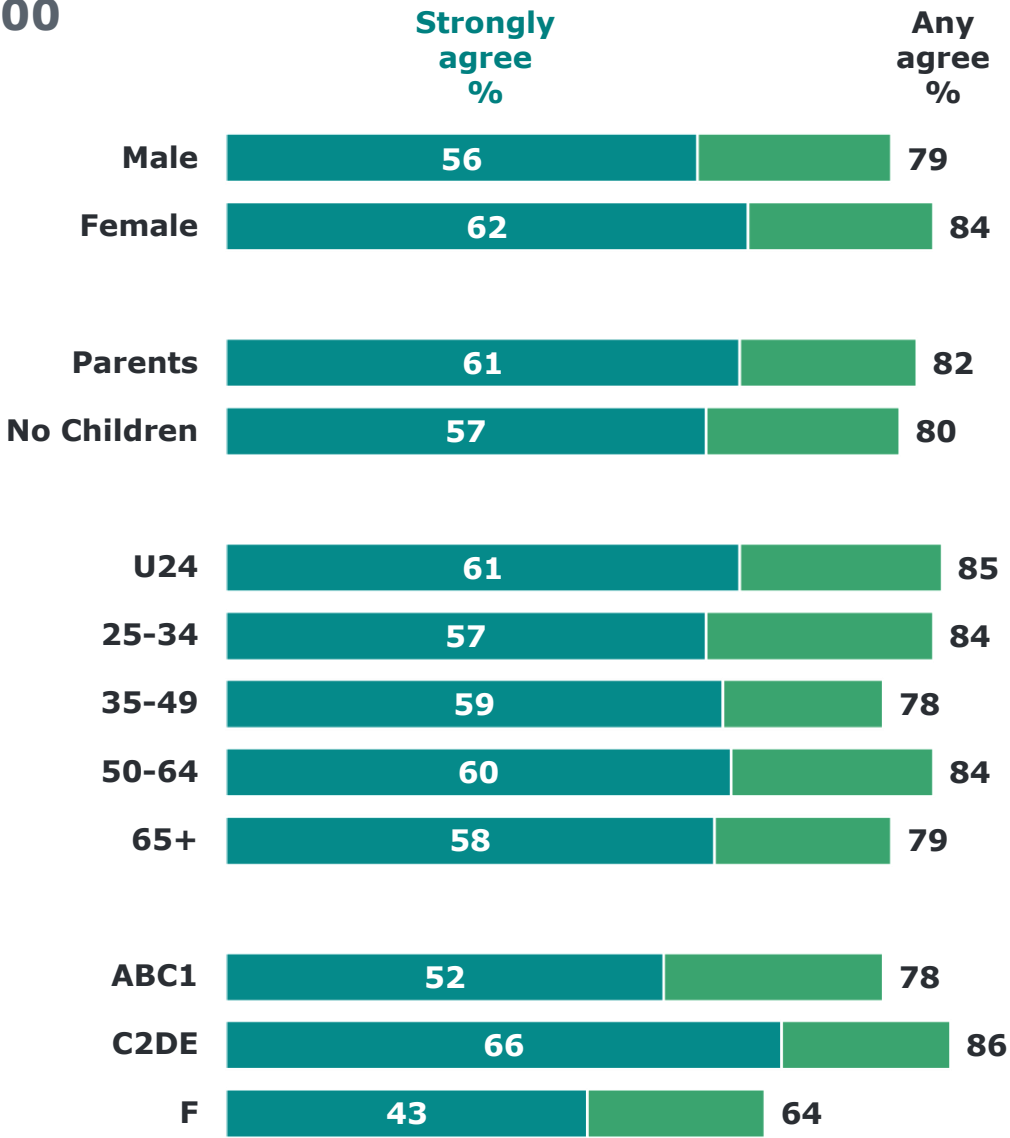
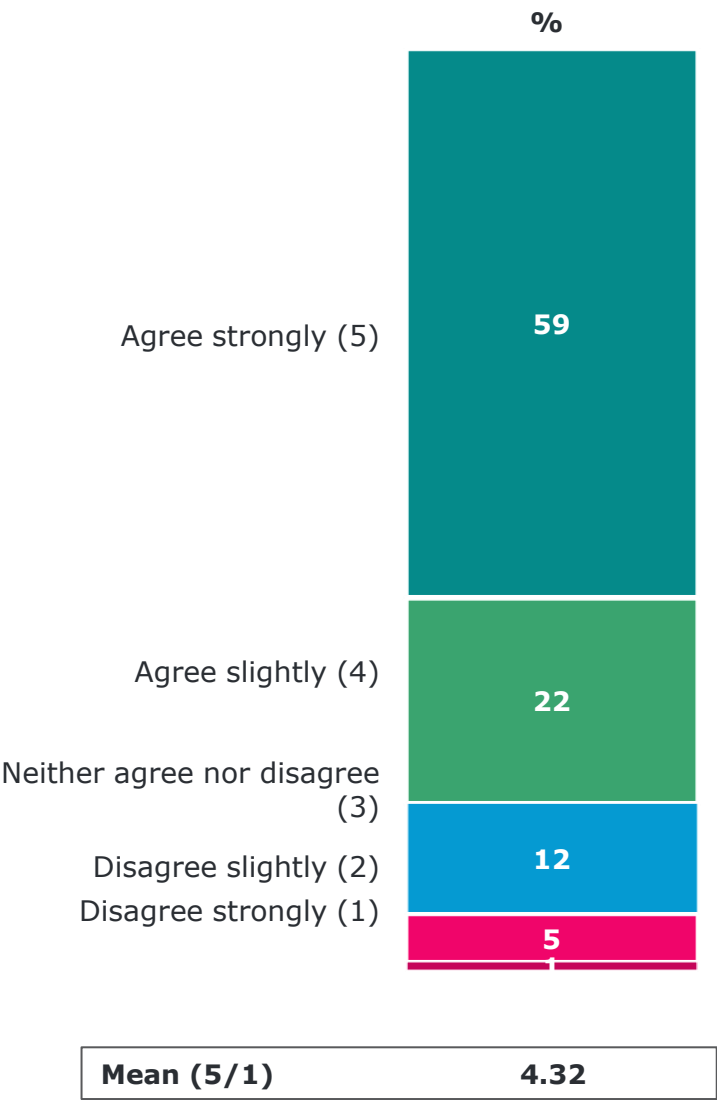
The majority feel that therapeutic treatment should be available free to medical card holders and that having the confidence of accreditation in a therapist would make them more likely to pay for treatment. Almost 7 in 10 claim they would be personally willing to pay for treatment.

Q.7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Counselling and psychotherapy should be available free to all medical card holders

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Female & mid life peak is apparent.



Counselling and psychotherapy should be available free to all medical card holders

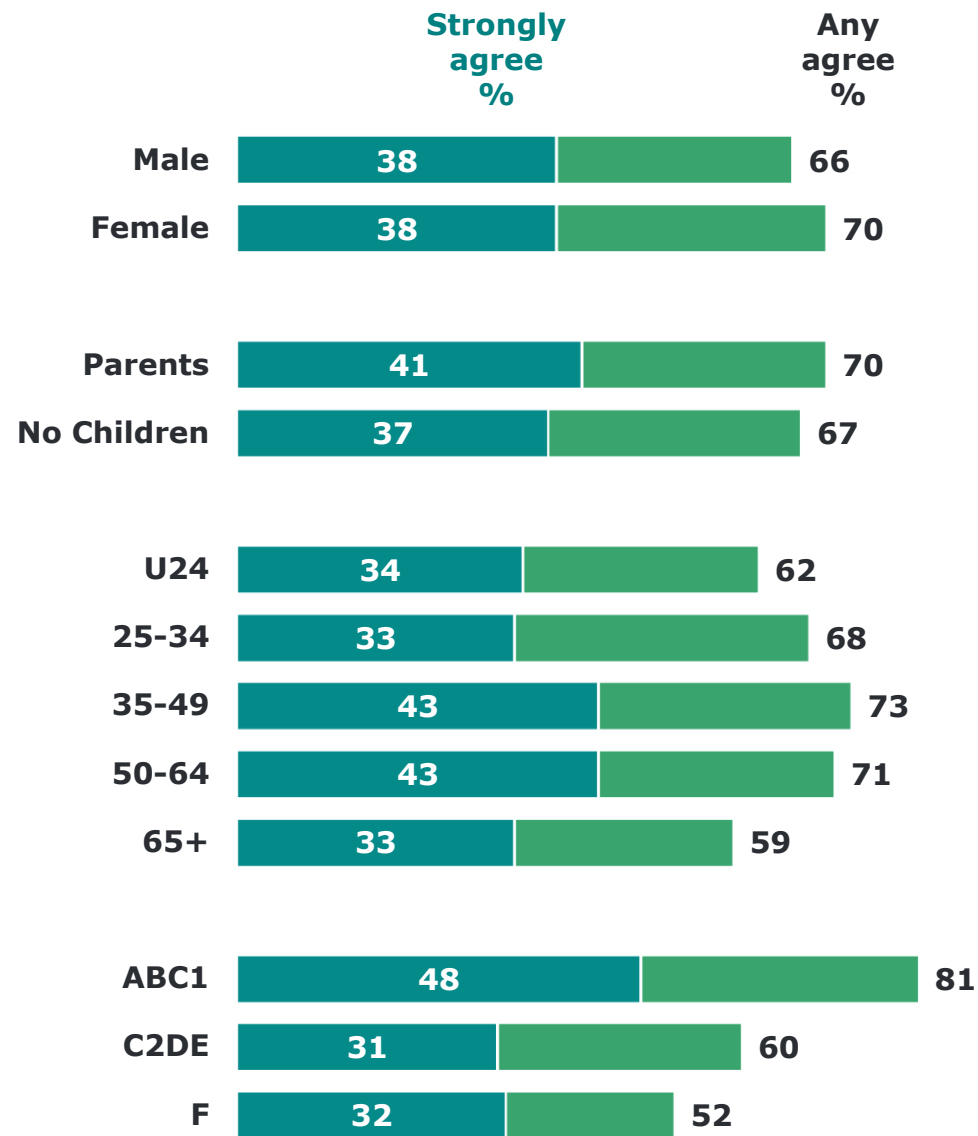
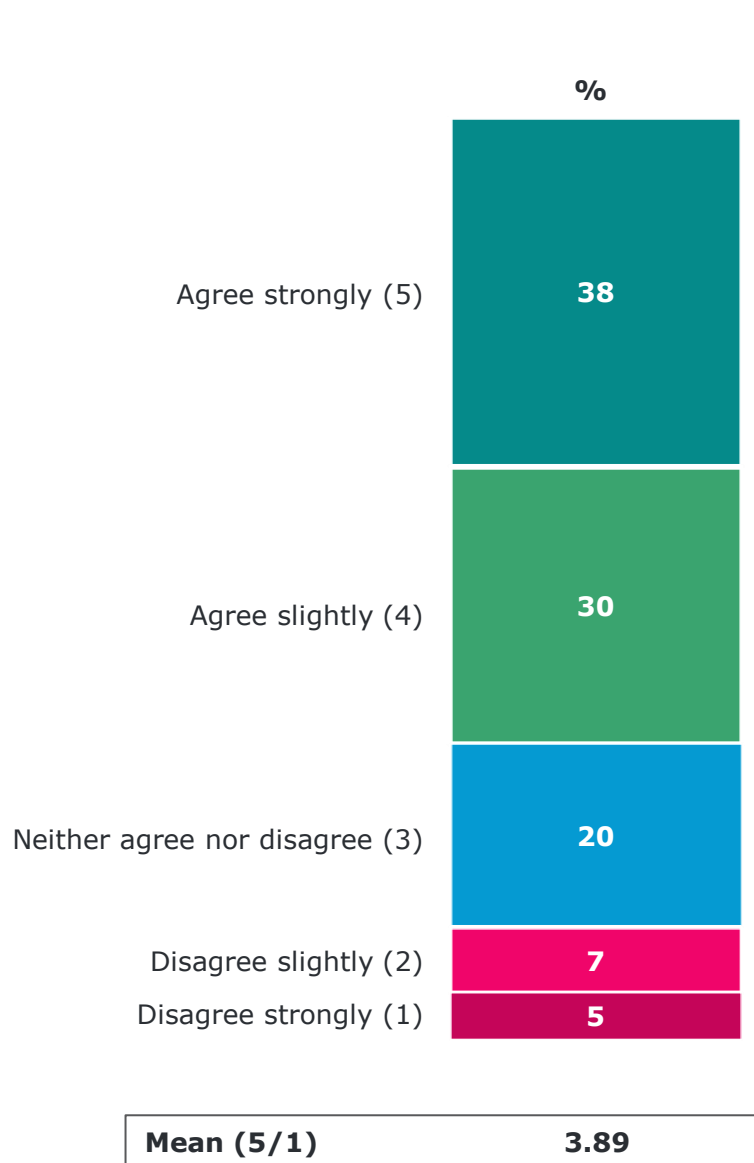
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

	Total	Region				Area		Feel Stress				Ever Consulted				
		Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	No Never	Person-ally	Family Member	Friend	ANY Yes	NO
Base:	985	274	257	273	181	628	357	134	326	236	696	106	108	94	280	705
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agree strongly	59	56	55	59	67	60	56	72	62	53	53	73	59	57	64	57
Agree slightly	22	24	28	17	20	23	21	16	22	26	24	14	23	27	21	23
Neither agree nor disagree	12	11	9	18	9	10	15	9	9	13	16	8	9	8	8	14
Disagree slightly	5	8	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	7	5	5	7	6	5	5
Disagree strongly	1	1	3	2	0	1	3	-	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2

There is strong support, particularly among those with experience and need.

I would be willing to pay for counselling or psychotherapy

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



I would be willing to pay for counselling or psychotherapy

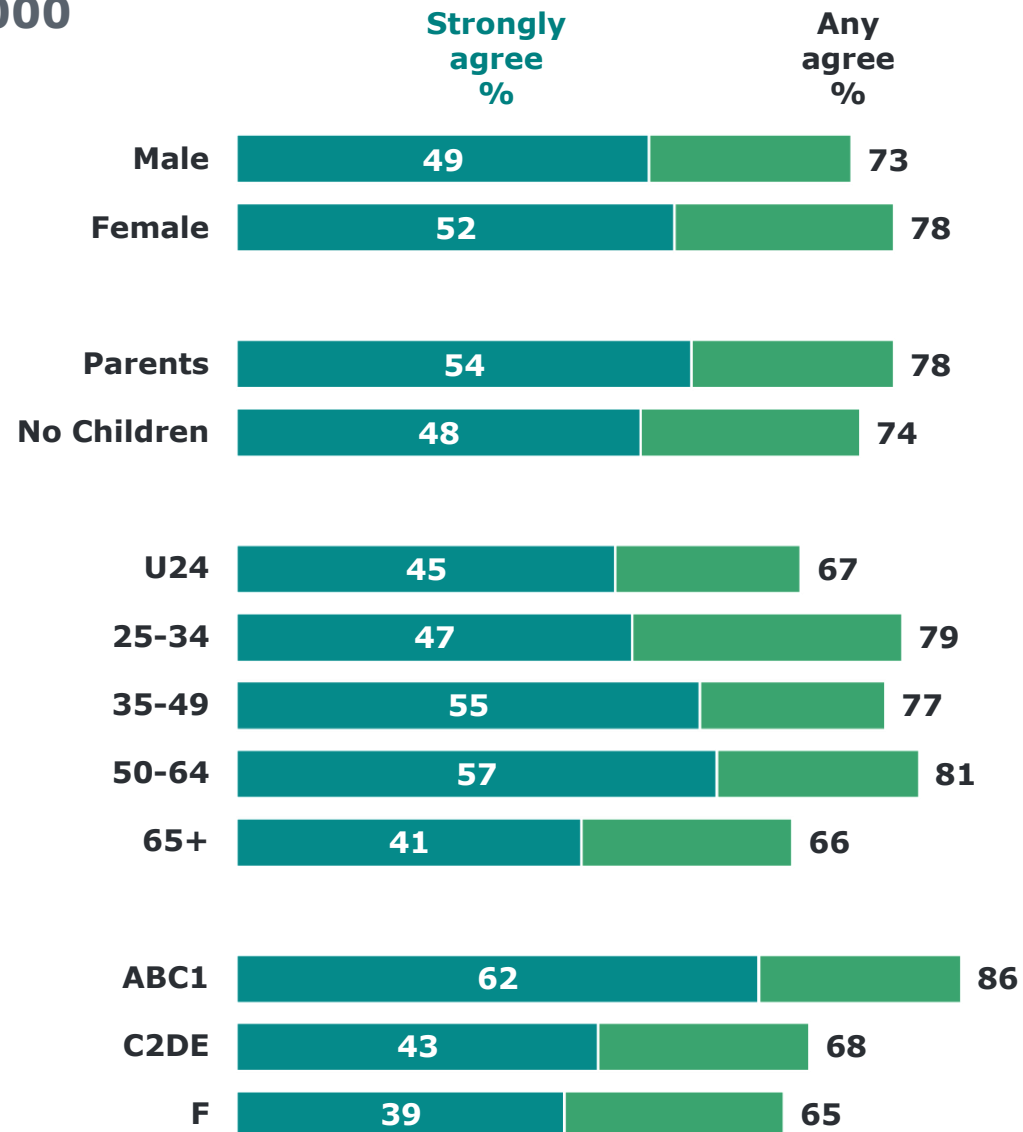
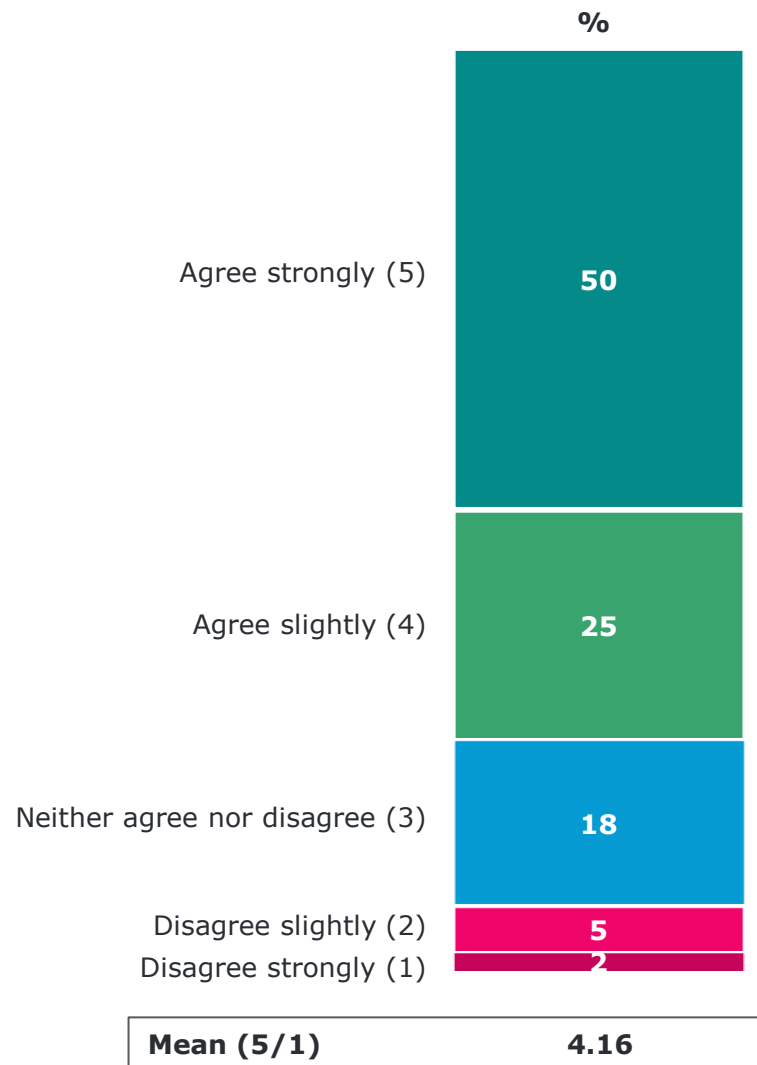
Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

	Total	Region				Area		Feel Stress					Ever Consulted				
		Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	ANY Yes	No Never	Person-ally	Family Member	Friend	ANY Yes	NO
Base:	985	274	257	273	181	628	357	134	326	236	696	696	106	108	94	280	705
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agree strongly	38	41	36	36	39	38	39	44	42	36	40	32	55	43	43	47	35
Agree slightly	30	35	29	28	27	33	25	28	30	37	32	25	23	33	29	29	30
Neither agree nor disagree	20	15	22	25	17	18	23	14	17	18	17	27	11	15	17	14	23
Disagree slightly	7	8	7	8	8	8	6	7	9	7	8	7	7	6	9	7	7
Disagree strongly	5	2	6	4	9	4	7	6	2	2	3	9	3	3	2	3	5
Mean	3.89	4.05	3.82	3.85	3.80	3.93	3.83	3.97	4.01	3.97	3.99	3.65	4.18	4.06	4.02	4.09	3.81

Many are quite willing.

I would be more likely to pay for counselling and psychotherapy if I knew that my practitioner was fully trained and registered as a member of a recognised professional body

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Support for accreditation peaks in middle age.

Willing to pay for counselling if properly accredited

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

	Total	Region				Area		Feel Stress					Ever Consulted				
		Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural	Often	Occ	Rarely	ANY Yes	No Never	Person-ally	Family Member	Friend	ANY Yes	NO
Base:	985	274	257	273	181	628	357	134	326	236	696	696	106	108	94	280	705
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agree strongly	50	55	43	49	54	53	46	55	56	53	55	39	63	67	52	60	46
Agree slightly	25	23	28	26	21	26	23	19	25	28	25	25	15	18	26	20	27
Neither agree nor disagree	18	15	19	20	16	15	22	20	13	14	15	25	16	10	16	14	19
Disagree slightly	5	7	5	4	6	6	5	3	5	6	5	7	3	3	5	4	6
Disagree strongly	2	-	4	2	3	1	4	4	1	0	1	4	3	2	1	2	2
Mean	4.16	4.26	4.02	4.17	4.18	4.24	4.03	4.18	4.30	4.27	4.26	3.90	4.32	4.45	4.23	4.31	4.09

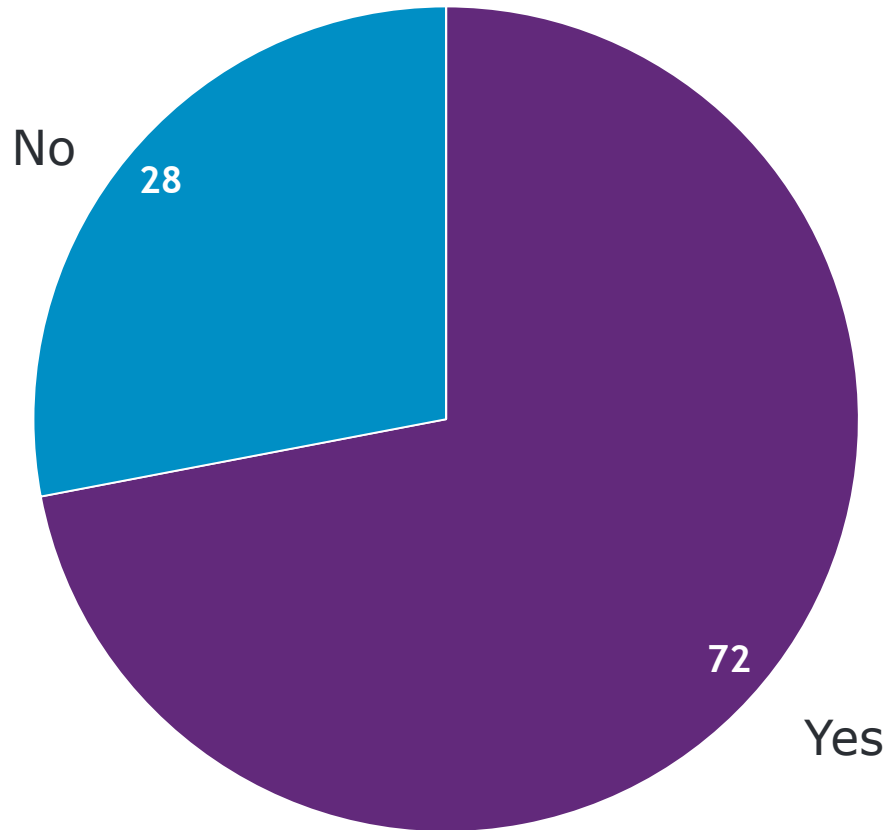
Few are opposed to the notion.

Work & Counselling



Counselling in the Workplace

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

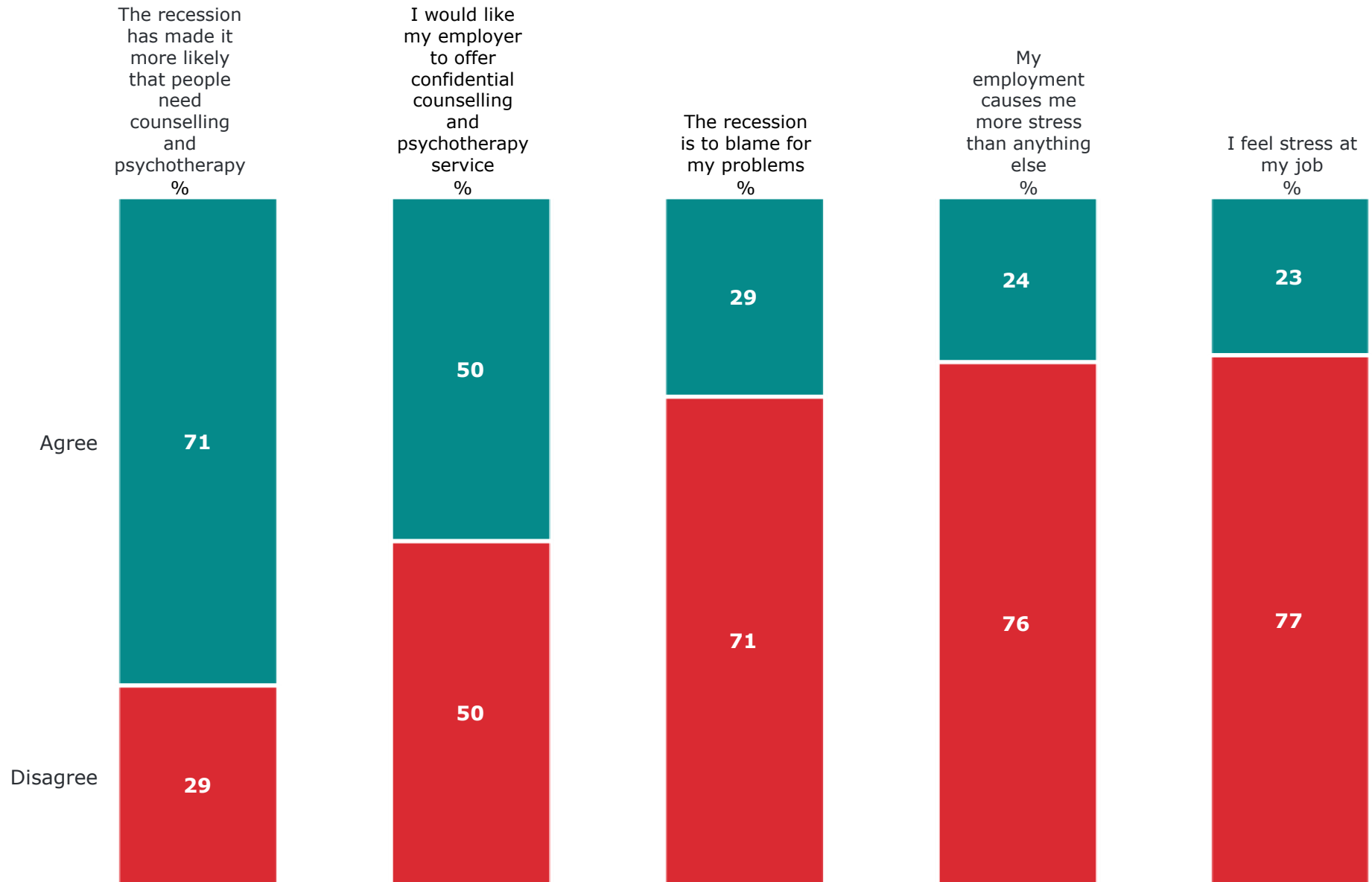


Strong support overall for this.

	Yes	No
	%	%
All Adults	72	28
Male	69	31
Female	74	26
Parents	74	26
No children	70	30
U24	77	23
25-34	74	26
35-49	71	29
50-64	70	30
65+	65	35
ABC1	75	25
C2DE	72	28
F	52	48
Dublin	76	24
Leinster	64	36
Munster	72	28
Conn/Ulster	74	26
Urban	76	24
Rural	65	35
Stress often	82	18
Stress occasionally	80	20
Feel stress rarely	67	33
Any stress	76	24
Never experienced stress	61	39
Ever consulted personally	81	19
Ever consulted family member	76	24
Ever consulted friend	79	21
Ever consulted any	79	21
No never consulted	69	31

Counselling in the Workplace

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



The recession is seen as having a central adverse impact on employees mental health. Working in the current economic environment appear to be having significant impact on individual stress levels.

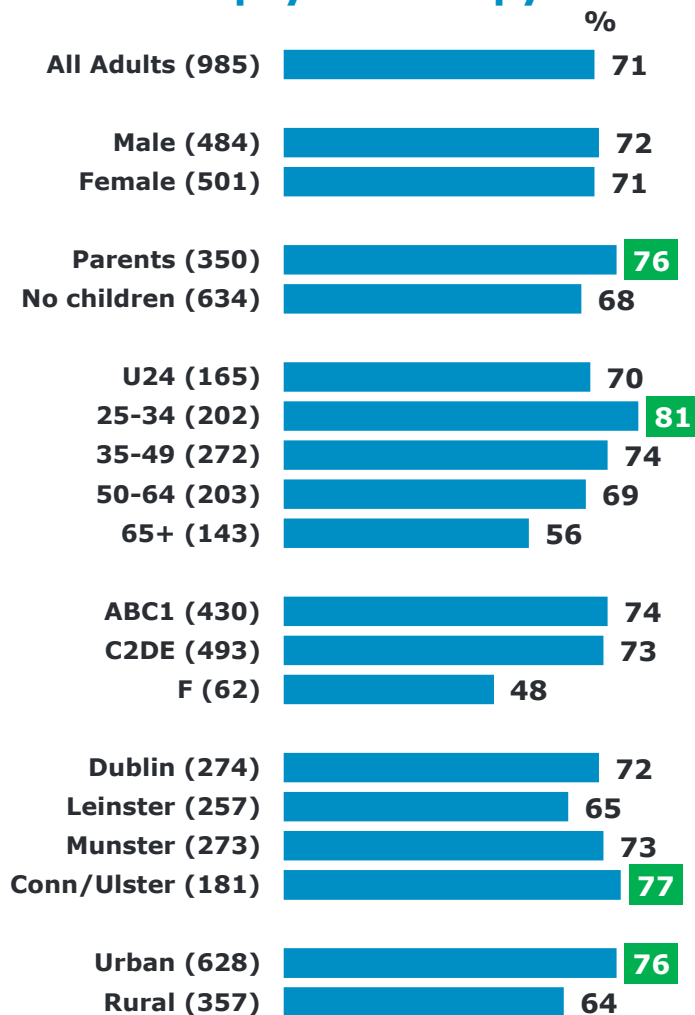
Q.8b

With which of the following statements if any do you tend to agree?

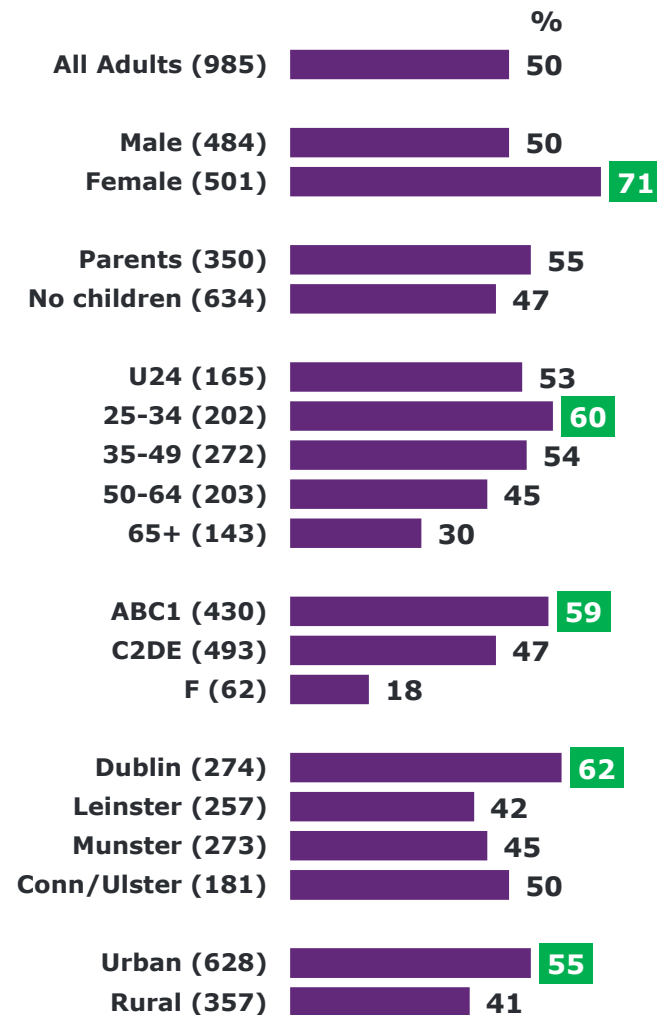
Counselling in the Workplace

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

The recession has made it more likely that people need counselling and psychotherapy



I would like my employer to offer confidential counselling and psychotherapy service



Women much more interested in workplace availability.

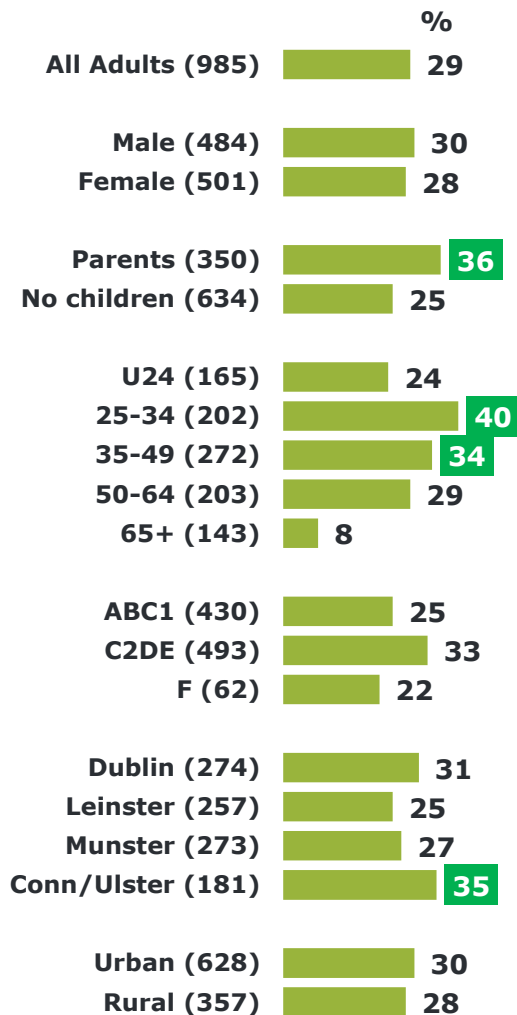
Q.8b

With which of the following statements if any do you tend to agree?

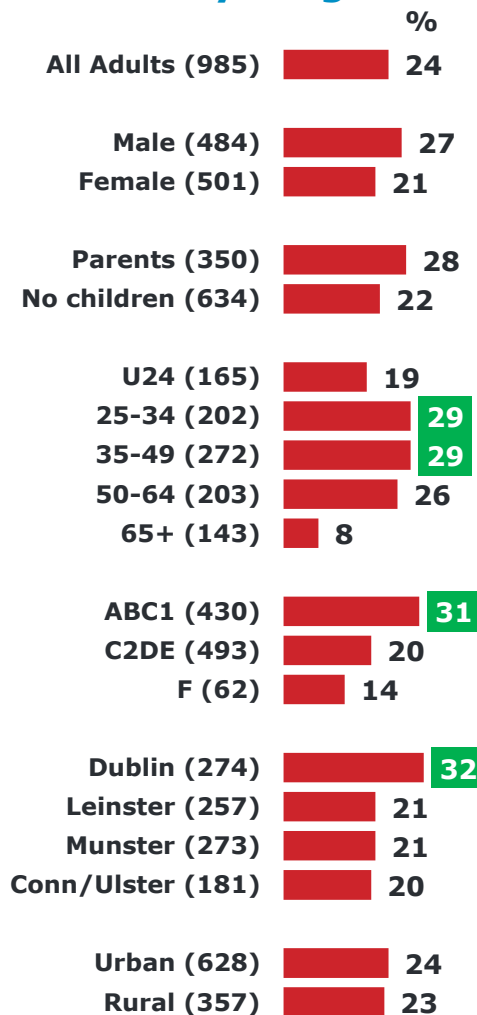
Counselling in the Workplace

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

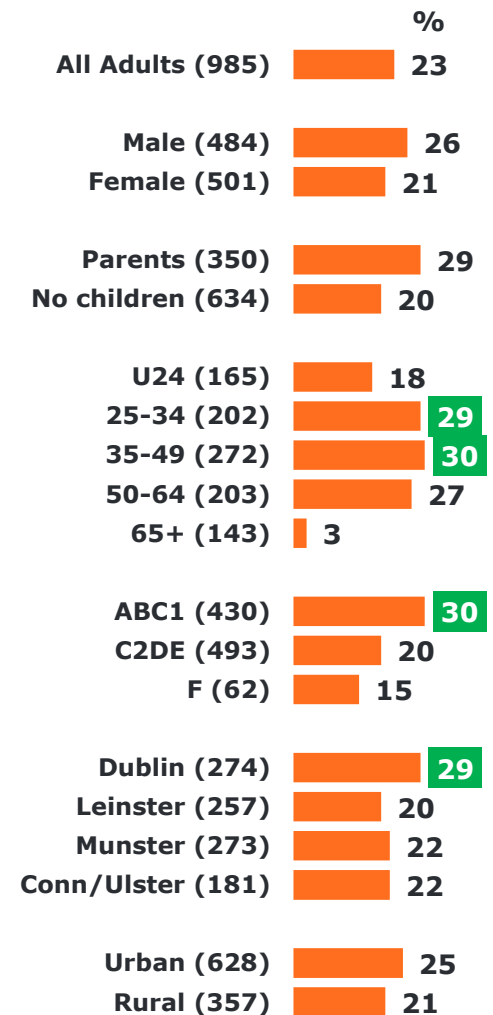
The recession is to blame for my problems



My employment causes me more stress than anything else



I feel stress at my job



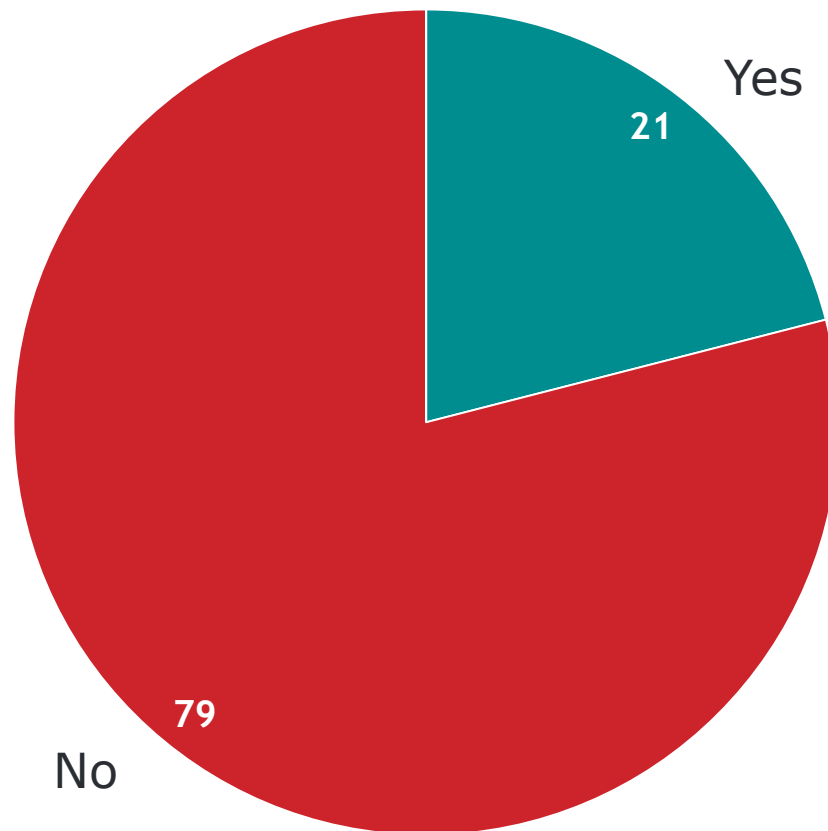
There is a notable 25-49 and Dublin issue.

Regulation



Awareness of Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP)

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000

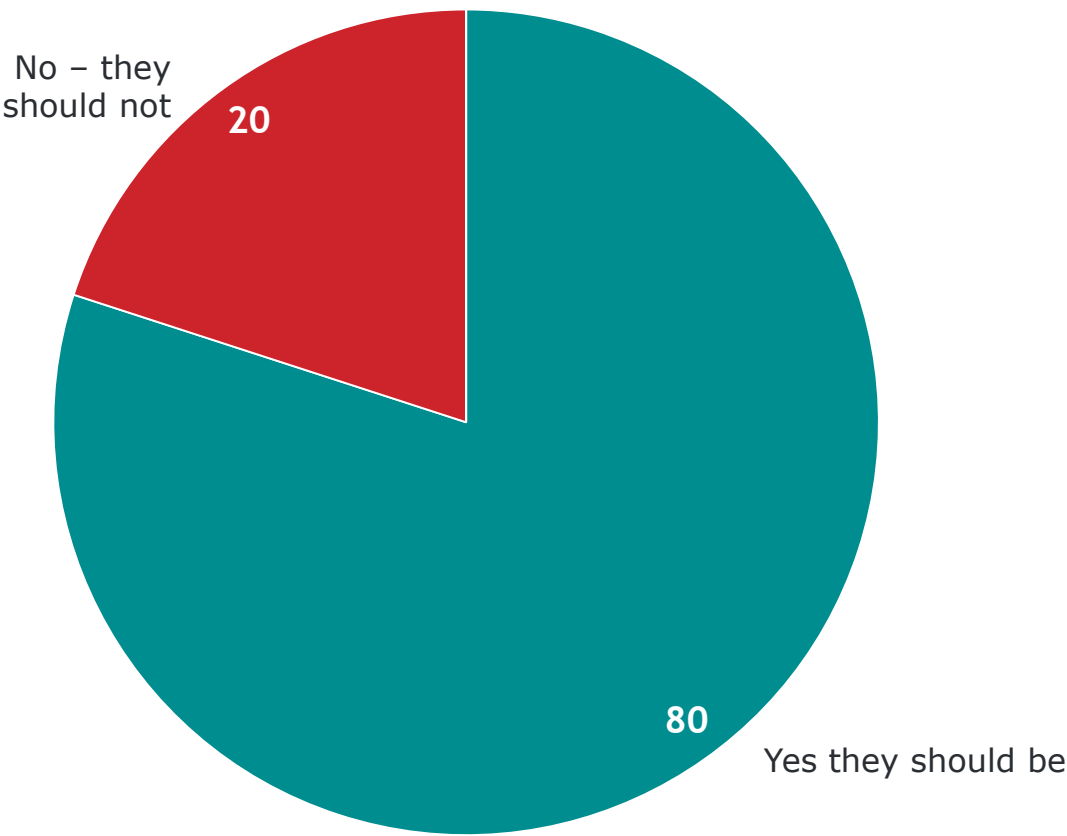


Aware of IACP	
	%
All Adults	21
Male	18
Female	23
Parents	23
No children	19
U24	15
25-34	17
35-49	25
50-64	24
65+	18
ABC1	28
C2DE	15
F	15
Dublin	29
Leinster	12
Munster	15
Conn/Ulster	30
Stress often	30
Stress occasionally	23
Feel stress rarely	19
Any stress	23

1 in 5 or 732,000 adults claim to be aware of the IACP. Awareness is stronger among women, parents of children, mid life stage adults, the more white collar and is particularly high in Dublin and Conn/Ulster. Awareness of the IACP is also particularly high among those who experience stress most frequently.

Should Counsellors and Psychotherapists be Regulated by the Government

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



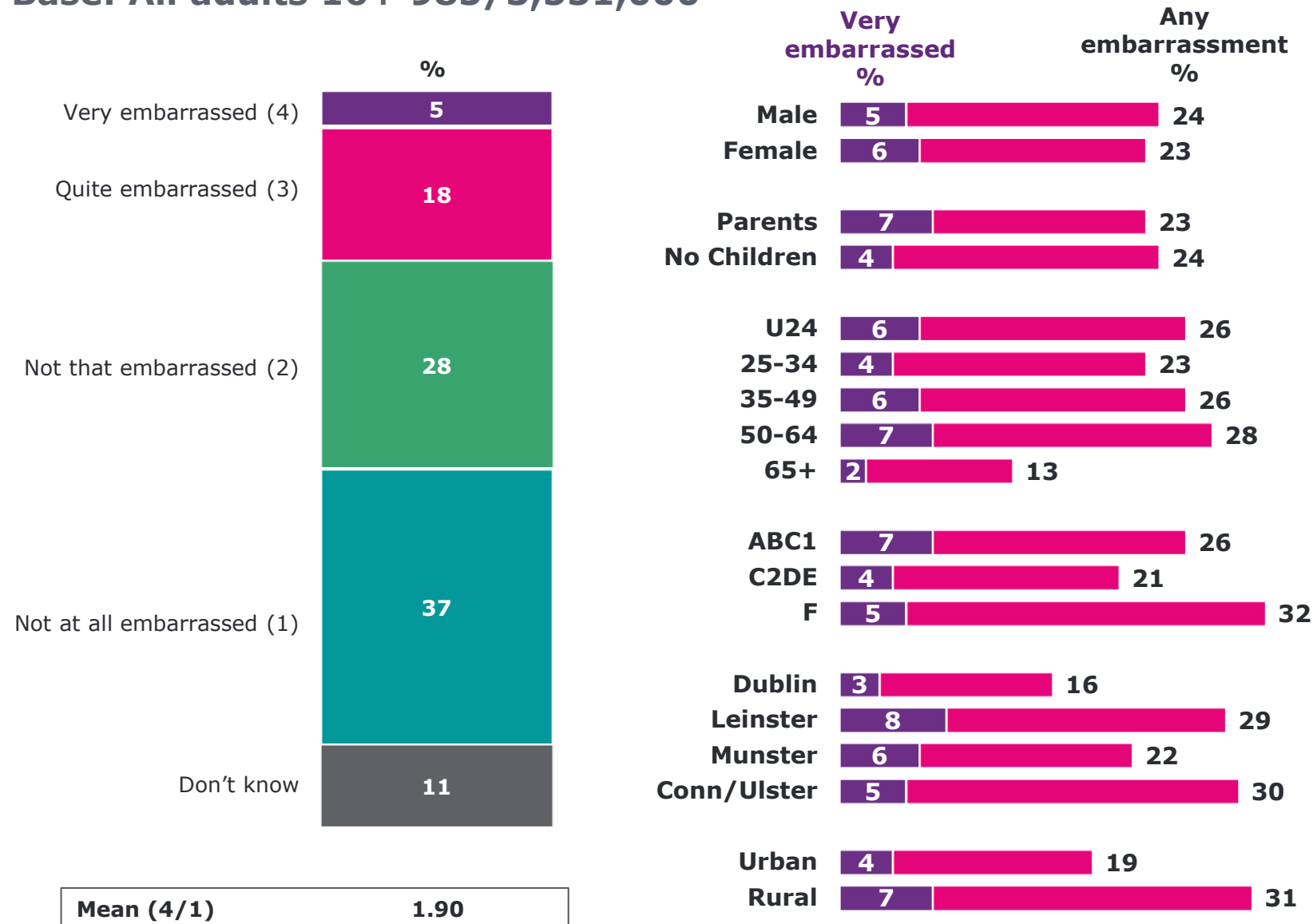
Should be Regulated	
	%
All Adults	80
Male	79
Female	80
Parents	80
No children	79
U24	79
25-34	82
35-49	82
50-64	75
65+	78
ABC1	79
C2DE	82
F	69
Dublin	85
Leinster	74
Munster	75
Conn/Ulster	86
Urban	85
Rural	72
Stress often	73
Stress occasionally	84
Feel stress rarely	83
Any stress	82
Never experienced stress	75

The majority (80%) believe that counsellors and psychotherapists should be regulated. This view is held particularly strongly in Dublin and in Conn/Ulster, where the greatest awareness of IACP is also noted.



Are people embarrassed to attend a counsellor or psychotherapist

Base: All adults 16+ 985/3,551,000



Just under one quarter of Irish adults believe they would be embarrassed if people knew they were attending a counsellor or psychotherapist. This view is more prevalent in rural areas and among mid life stage adults and white collar employees. Older adults and Dubliners don't appear to be embarrassed by this.

Summary & Conclusions



Summary & Conclusions

- About 1 in 7 adults claim that they are frequently stressed and as many as 7 in 10 experience some degree of stress from time to time.
- Those most commonly stressed tend to be women, parents and those in the mid life stages, particularly between 25 and 50. Dubliners seem somewhat more stressed than the generality of the population.
- Money, work and health are predominant causes of stress with relationships coming in fourth position overall. However when focusing on the main cause of stress, money is nominated by 35%, work by 25%, health by 17% and relationships by just 1 in 12.
- In the key mid life stage predominant concerns are about money and work, with health tending to become a cause for concern over the age of 50. Younger adults in particular worry about relationships. Those who worry a lot are more likely to worry about most things.
- As many as 42% of the adult population indicate that they would be likely to seek professional help if they felt they were suffering with anxiety or depression. Much lower numbers would indicate that they would go to counselling in relation to addiction issues, bullying, relationship breakdown or employment issues.

Summary & Conclusions

- The study indicates that there is much greater openness to discussing mental health and emotional problems nowadays than was the case before. Older adults and those particularly from farming backgrounds seem less likely to be open to the idea of discussing mental problems with a counsellor or psychotherapist.
- Nonetheless the vast majority of people indicate that it is a good idea to seek counselling or psychotherapy before a problem gets out of hand.
- Almost 2 in 3 adults suggested that their first port of call in relation to a mental health issue would be the GP. This becomes much more likely as adults get older and younger people suggested they are more likely to initially consult a friend or family member.
- About 11% of adults say that they have seen a counsellor or psychotherapist in the past year. In total, as many as 29% say that either they or a family member or friend have been in touch with a counsellor or psychotherapist in the past twelve months. Awareness of such contact is much more likely to be claimed by women and those in the middle age ranges.

Summary & Conclusions

- There is strong support for the idea that counselling and psychotherapy should be available free to all on the medical card but nonetheless almost 3 in 4 suggest that they would personally pay for counselling or psychotherapy if they were aware that their practitioner was properly trained and registered. Almost 7 in 10 overall say that they would personally pay for counselling or psychotherapy.
- The workplace seems to be a significant cause of stress with 72% feeling that counselling and psychotherapy should be available in the workplace. A quarter feel stress in their jobs and indeed a quarter suggest that their employment causes them more stress than anything else. Many blame the recession for their problems (29%) and in this regard men are more likely to agree than women, although this reflects the structure of the working population.
- 21% claim to be aware of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the vast majority (80% of adults) believe that counsellors and psychotherapists should be regulated by the government.
- About a quarter of adults suggest that they would be embarrassed for people to know they were attending a counsellor or psychotherapist. Such embarrassment is notably lower in Dublin and in urban areas.

Thank you.



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