



**MINISTRY OF HOUSING  
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

# Renters Pulse Survey – topline report

Wave 1, 2021



**COLMAR BRUNTON**  
A Kantar Company

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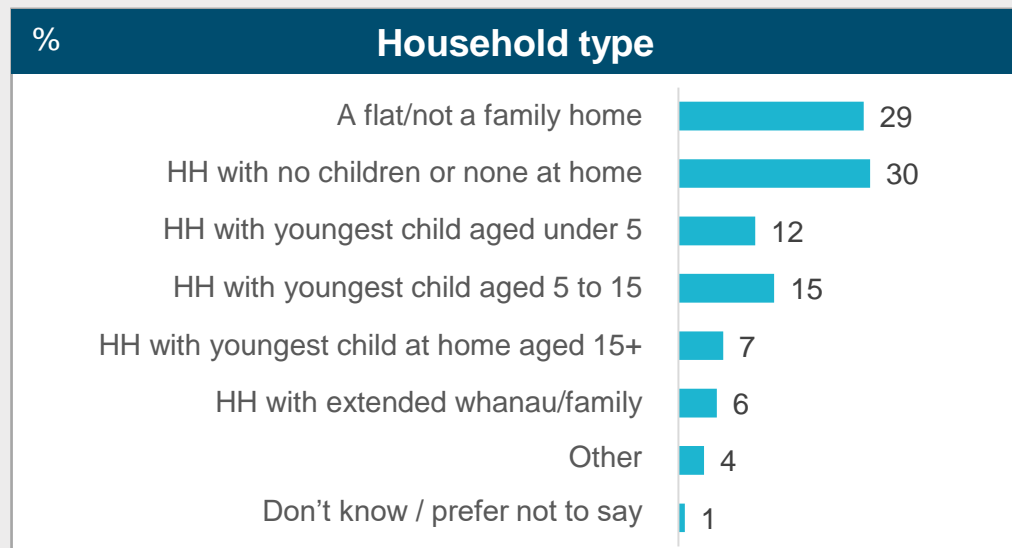
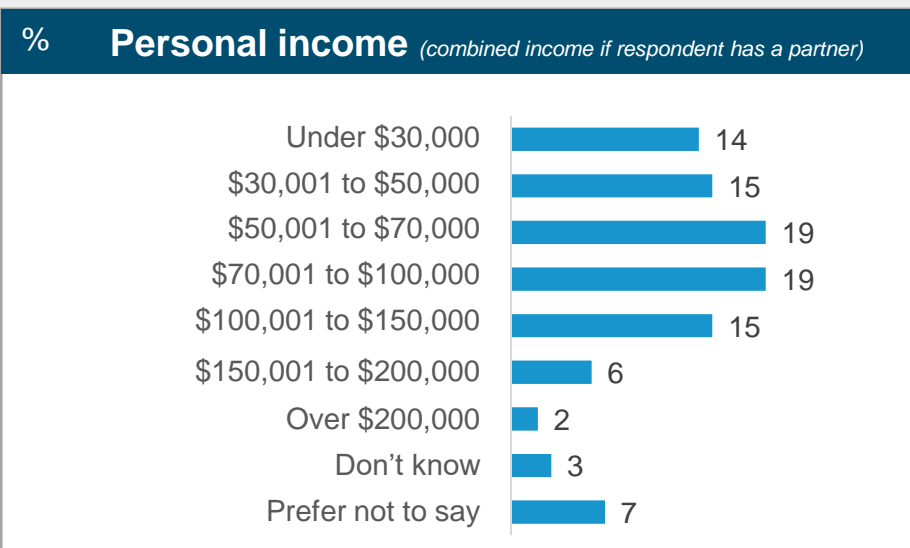
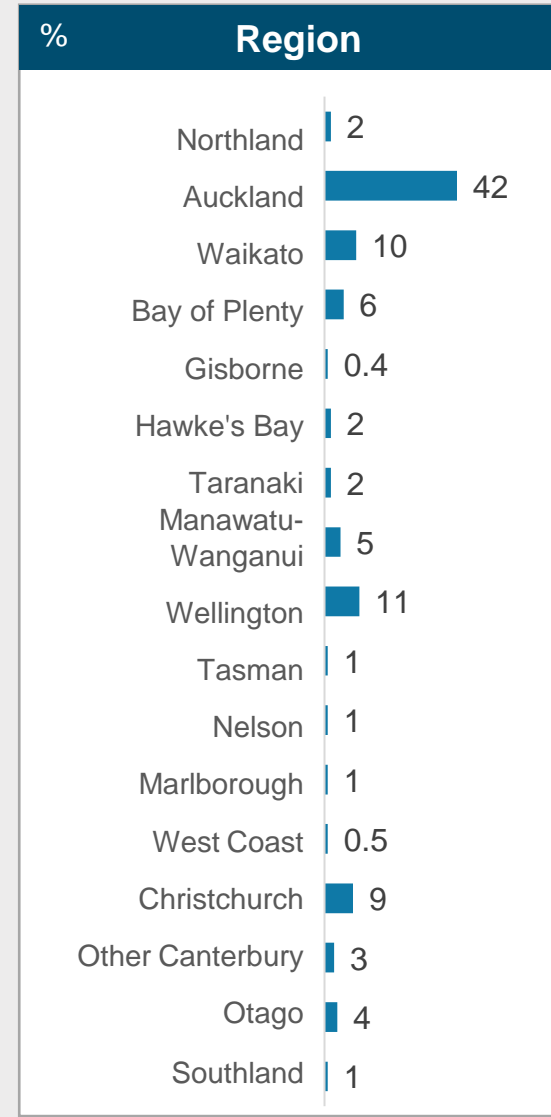
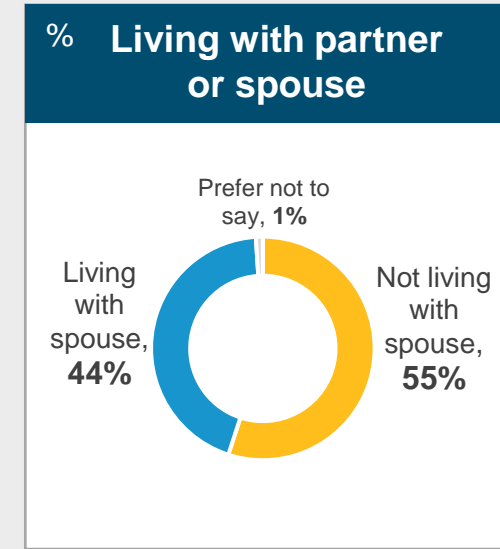
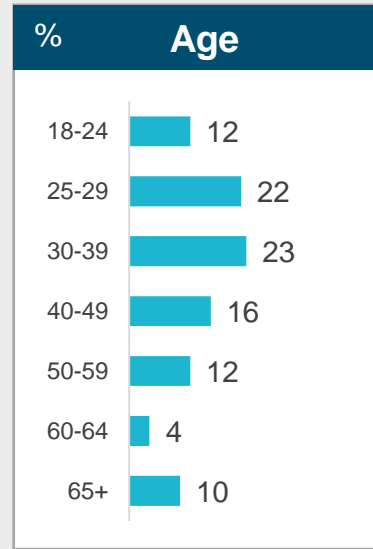
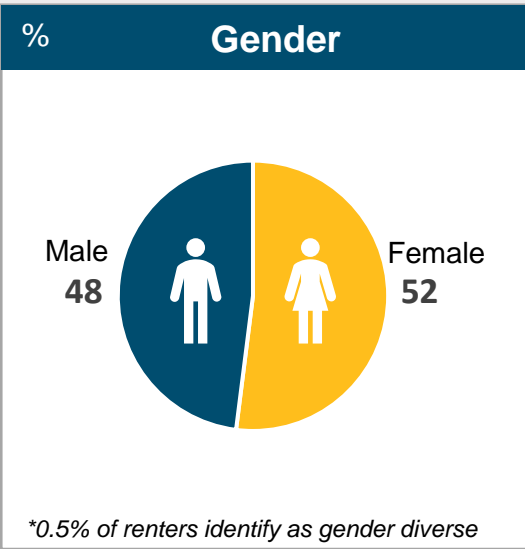


# Research Objectives and Method

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has commissioned Colmar Brunton to undertake ‘pulse’ surveys of renters and landlords twice a year to help inform its understanding of the impacts of recent legislative changes on the residential rental market. This report provides the results of the first pulse survey in 2021 with renters.

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- A nationwide online survey of **1,500 renters**.
  - Maximum margin of error on the total sample (at the 95% confidence level) is **+/-2.5%**.
  - Fieldwork was conducted from **14 to 28 April, 2021**.
  - Data were weighted by age within gender, and region, to match Census population characteristics of renters.

# Sample profile





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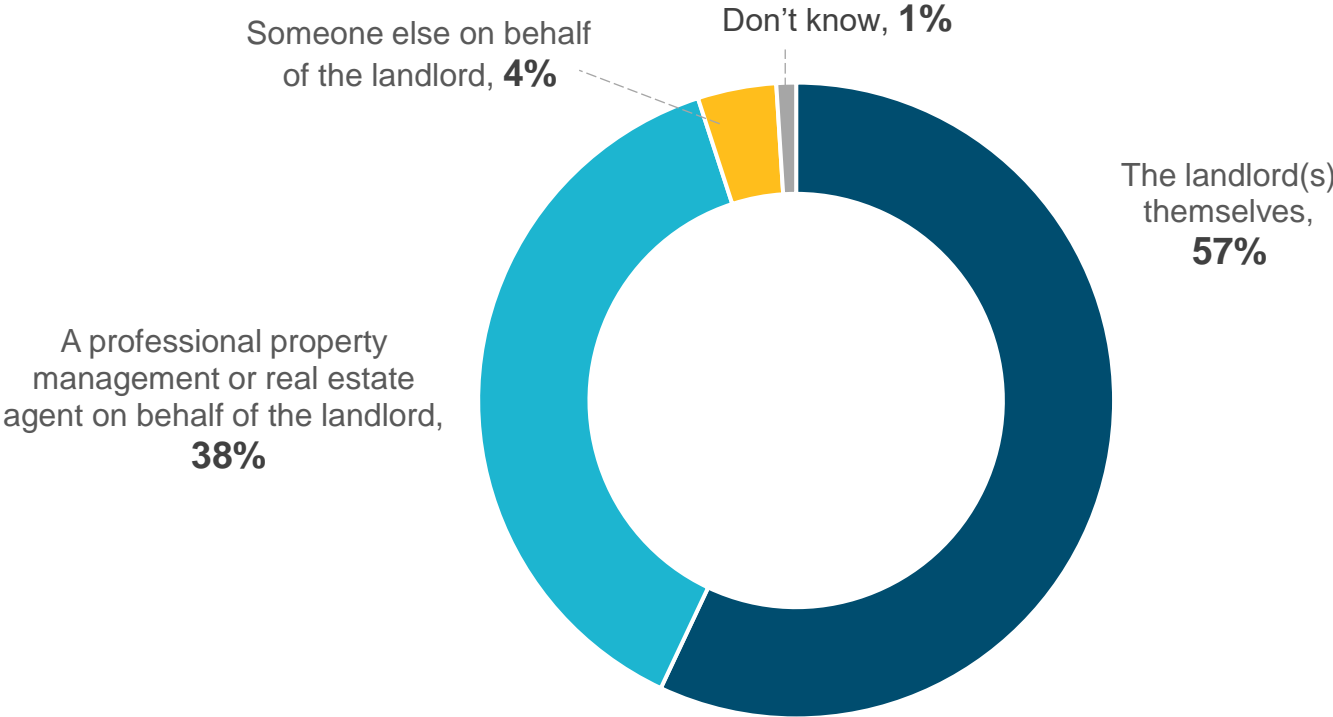
# Tenancy characteristics



# Management of the rental property

Just over half (57%) of renters say their rental is managed by their landlord(s), while 38% say their landlord uses a property manager or real estate agent.

## Who manages the rental property



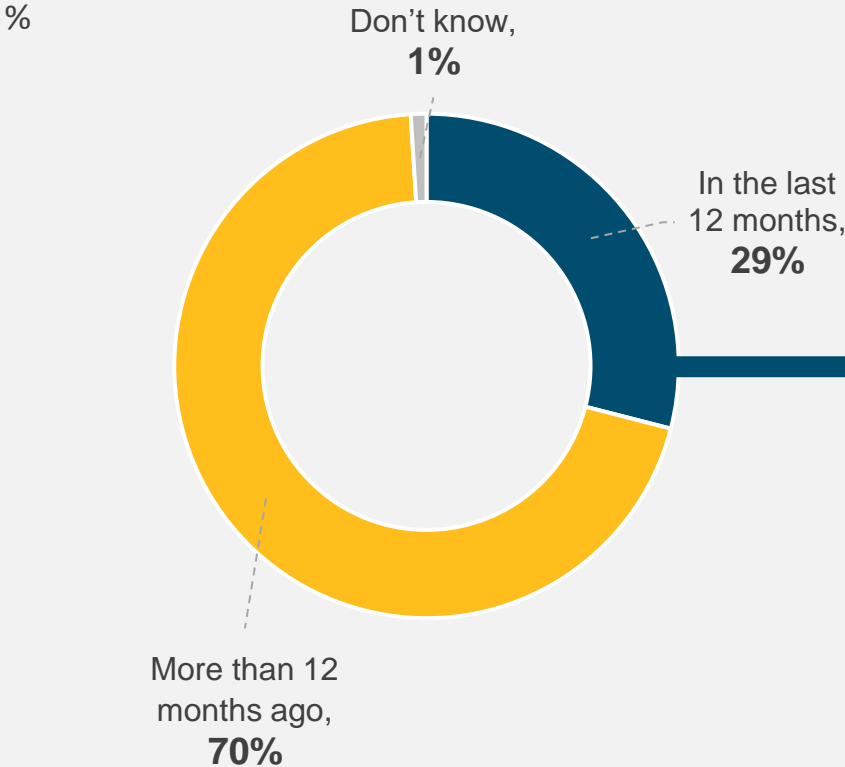
Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q7. "Who mainly manages the rental property where you live?"



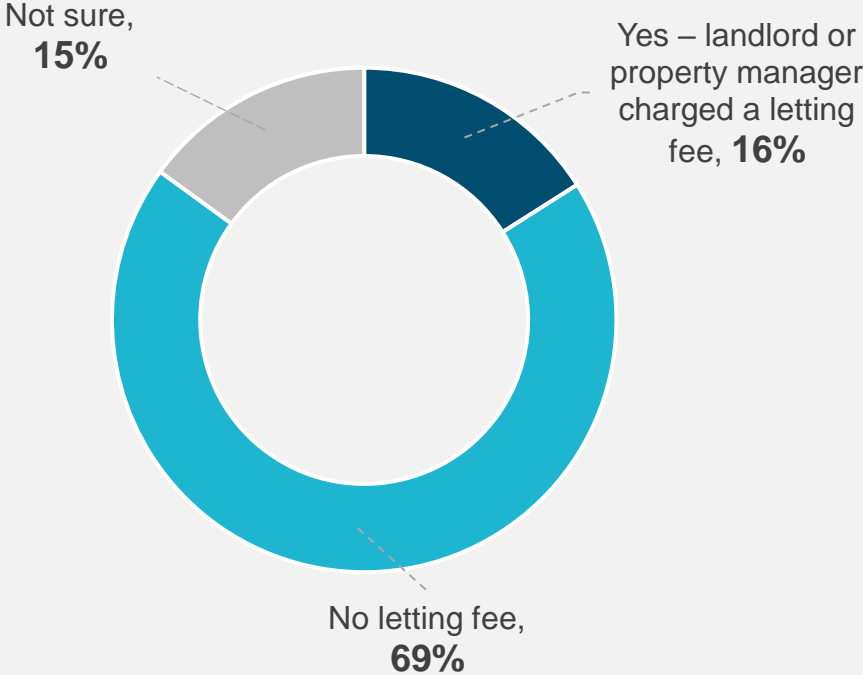
# Start of the tenancy

Seven in ten renters' current tenancy began over 12 months ago. Of the 30% whose tenancy started in the last 12 months, only 16% say their landlord or property manager charged a letting fee.

## When renters' current tenancy started



## Whether landlord or property manager charged a letting fee



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q9. "When did the tenancy start for the rental property you live in?"

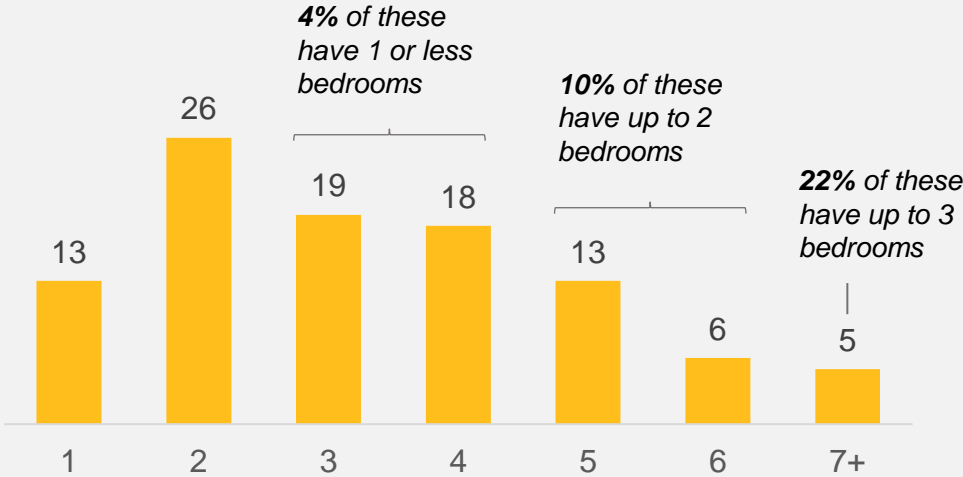
Base: Renters whose tenancy started in the last 12 months (n=432).  
Source: Q10. "Did the landlord (or property manager) charge a letting fee?" COLMAR BRUNTON 2021 7

# Tenancy characteristics

Three quarters (76%) of renters live in a four person or under household, while 78% of renters live in a rental with three or less bedrooms.

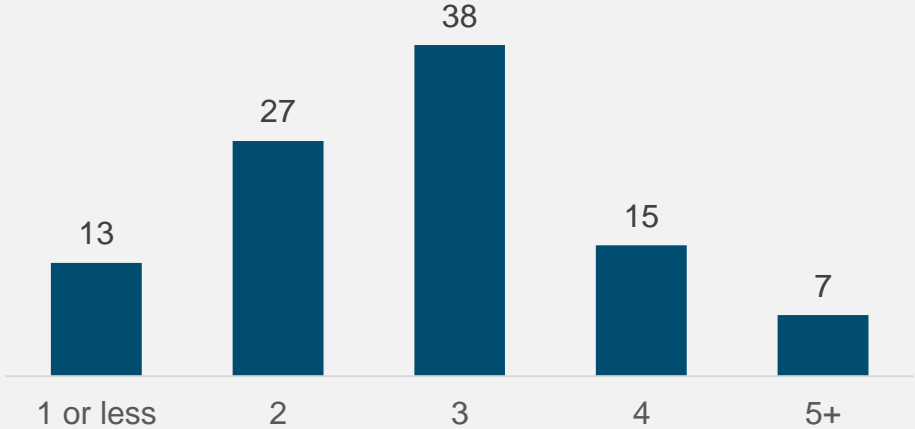
## Number of people living in rental

*\*Note, the question asked about the number of people the respondent is living with. Therefore, below we have added '1' to their answer to report on the total number of people living in the accommodation.*



## Number of bedrooms

%



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q5. "How many people do you currently live with?"

Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q6. "How many bedrooms are there where you currently live?"





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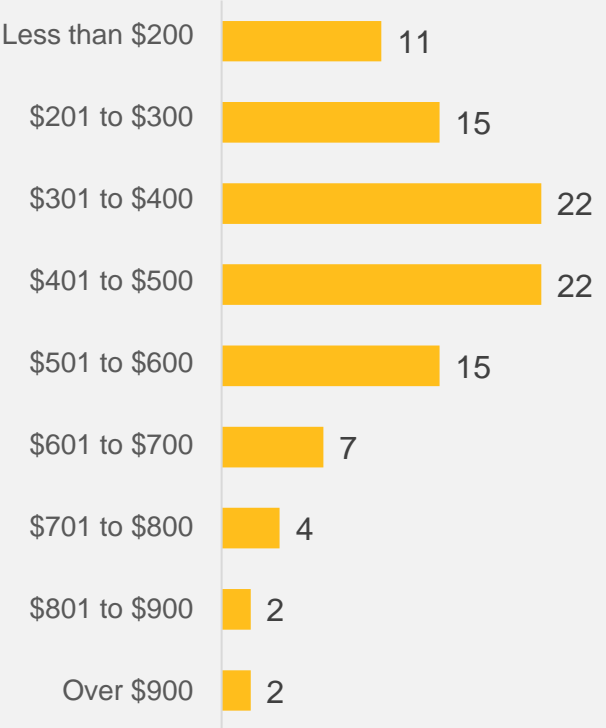
# Rental payments and government financial support



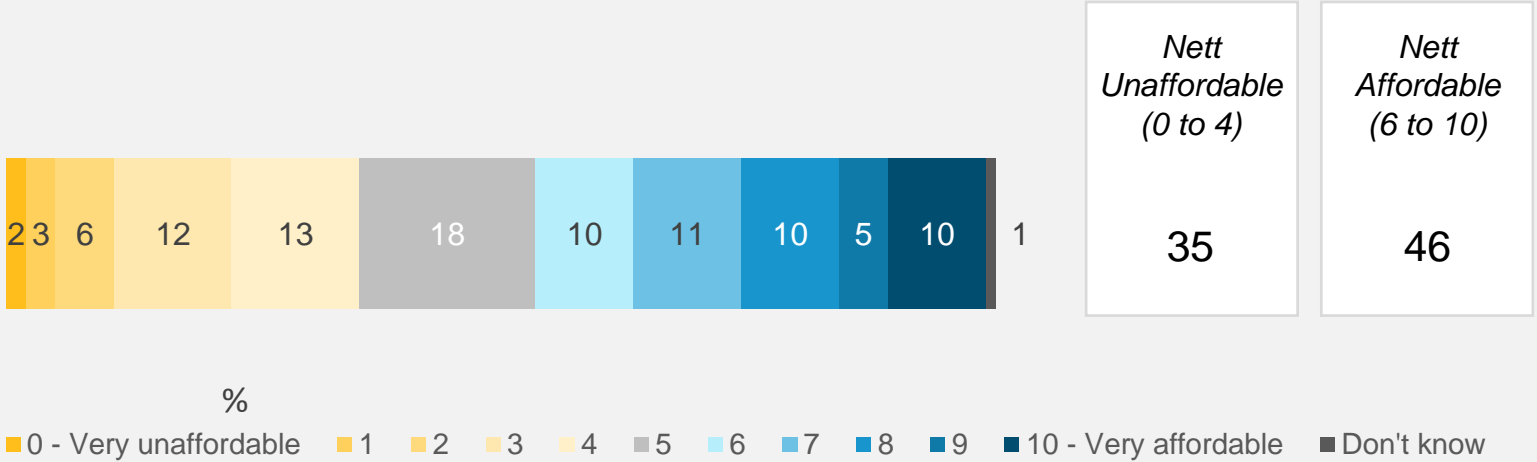
# Rental affordability

70% of renters say their household pays rent of \$500 or less per week. Sentiment around affordability is mixed – one third (35%) of renters feel their rent is unaffordable while 46% think it is affordable.

## Weekly rent (total for property) %



## Affordability %



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q11a. "How much rent does your landlord (or property manager) charge in total for your current rental property per week?"

Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q12. "How affordable is your current rent?"

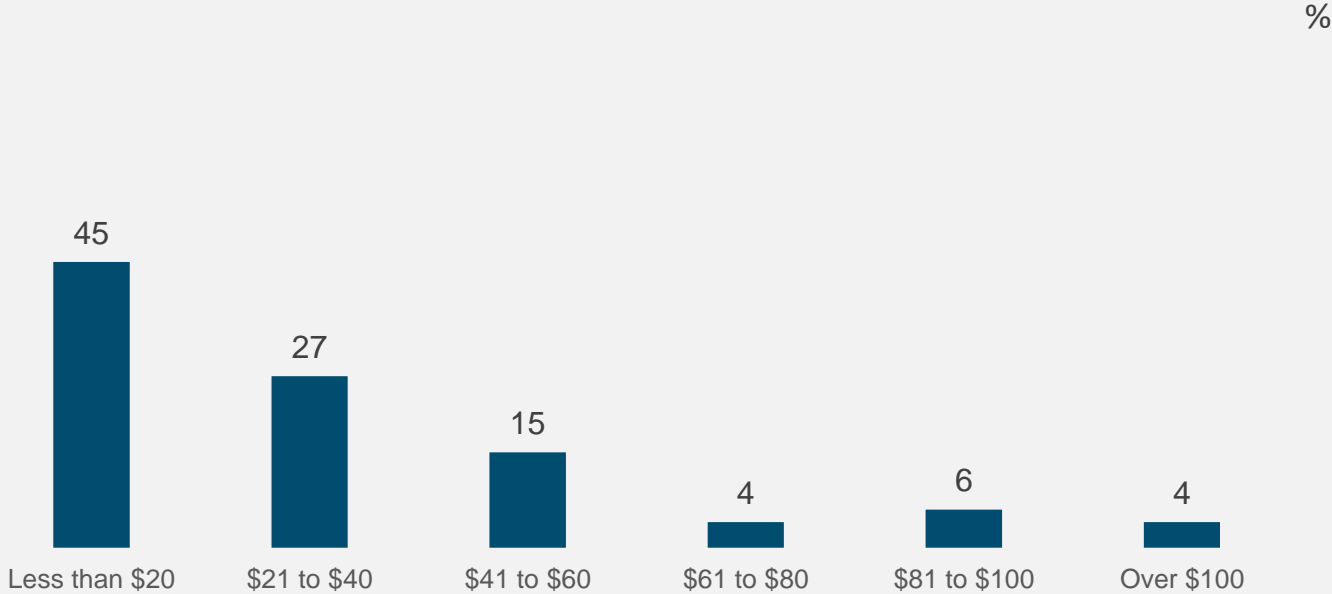
# Rent increases (1)

One in five (22%) renters say their most recent increase was within the last six months. 72% of these renters say their rent increased by \$40 or less per week.

## When last rent increase occurred



## Size of rent increase



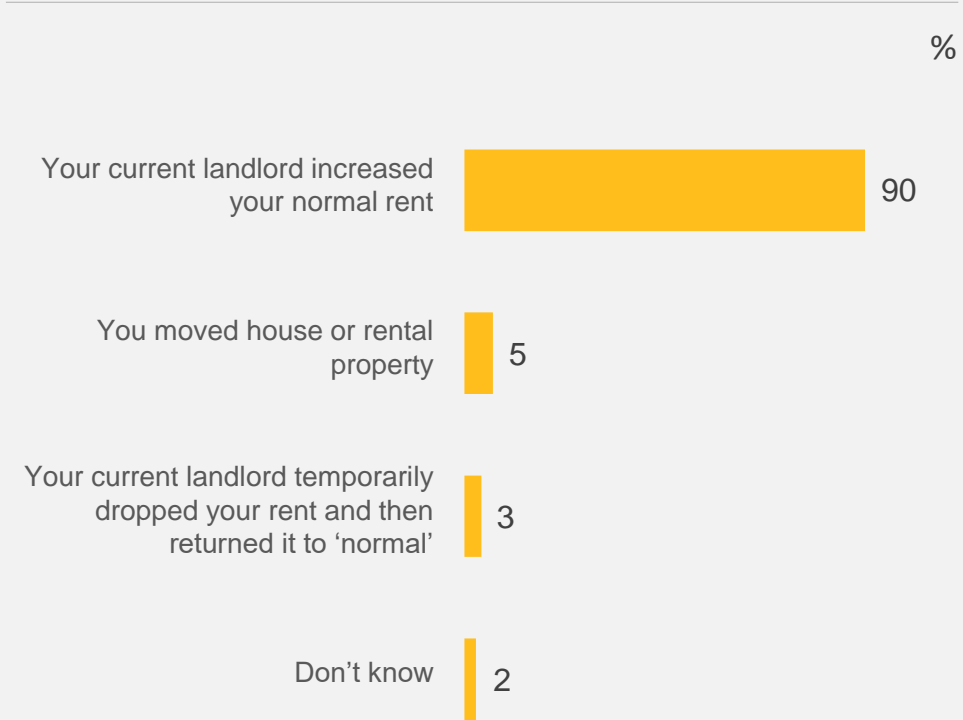
Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q13. "When was your last rent increase?"

Base: Renters whose rent has increased within the last six months (n=328).  
Source: Q14. "Still thinking about the last increase, how many dollars did your rent increase by per week?"

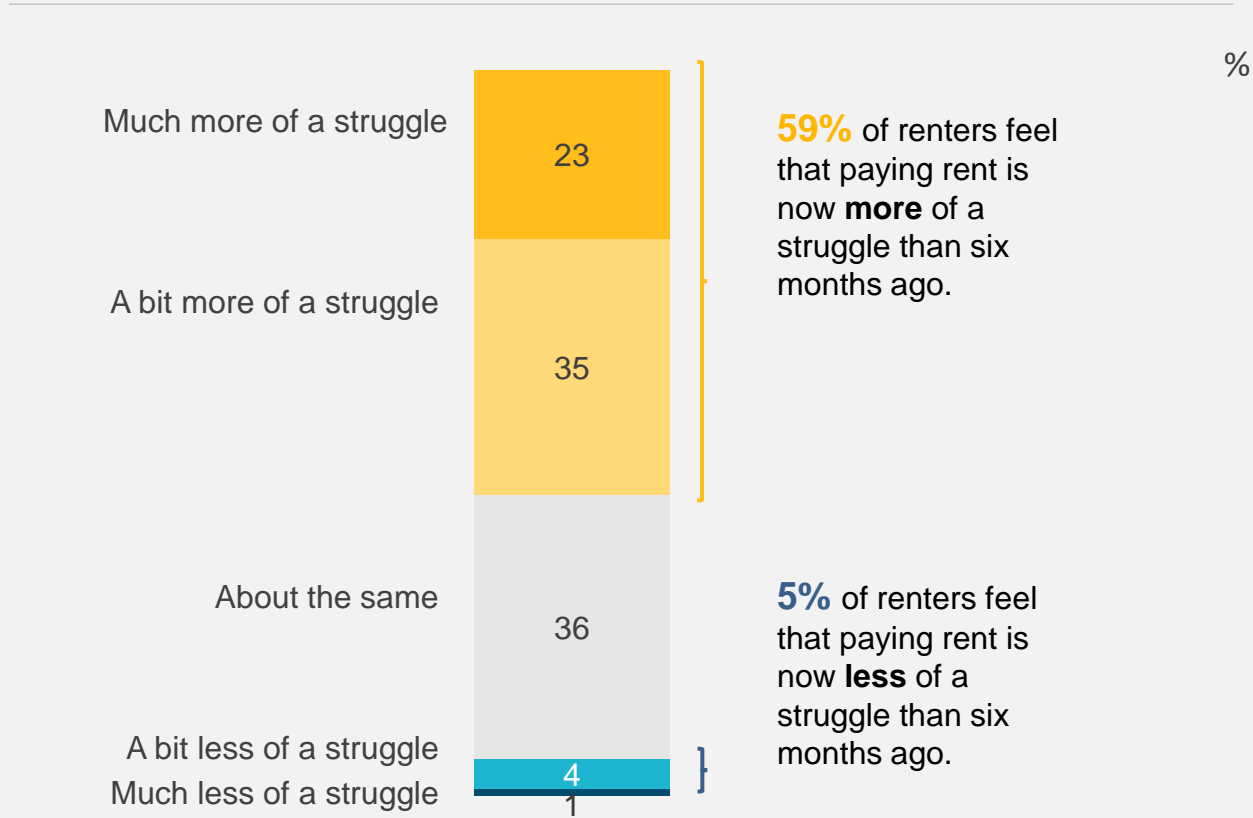
# Rent increases (2)

The large majority (90%) of renters whose rent has increased in the last six months say this increase was on top of their 'normal' rent. The increase seems to have caused financial strain for six in ten renters who faced a rent increase – they describe paying rent as more of a struggle than six months ago.

## Reason for last rent increase



## Struggles to pay rent since six months ago



Base: Renters whose rent has increased within the last six months (n=328).  
 Source: Q15. "Was your last rent increase because..."

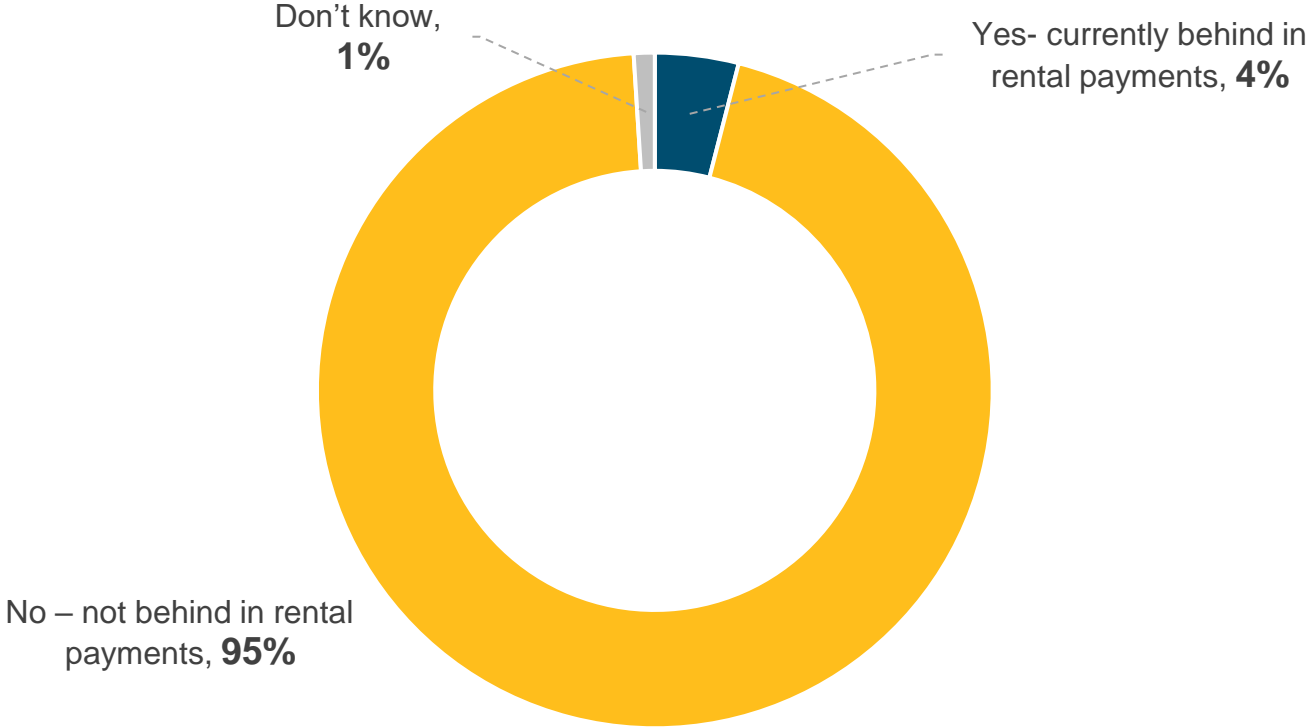
Base: Renters whose rent has increased within the last six months (n=328).  
 Source: Q16. "Is paying your rent now more or less of a struggle than it was 6 months ago? It is now..."  
 Note, only 1 respondent said 'Don't know' which is not shown on the chart.



# Rent arrears

Nearly one in twenty (4%) renters say they are currently behind in their rental payments.

## Currently behind in rental payments

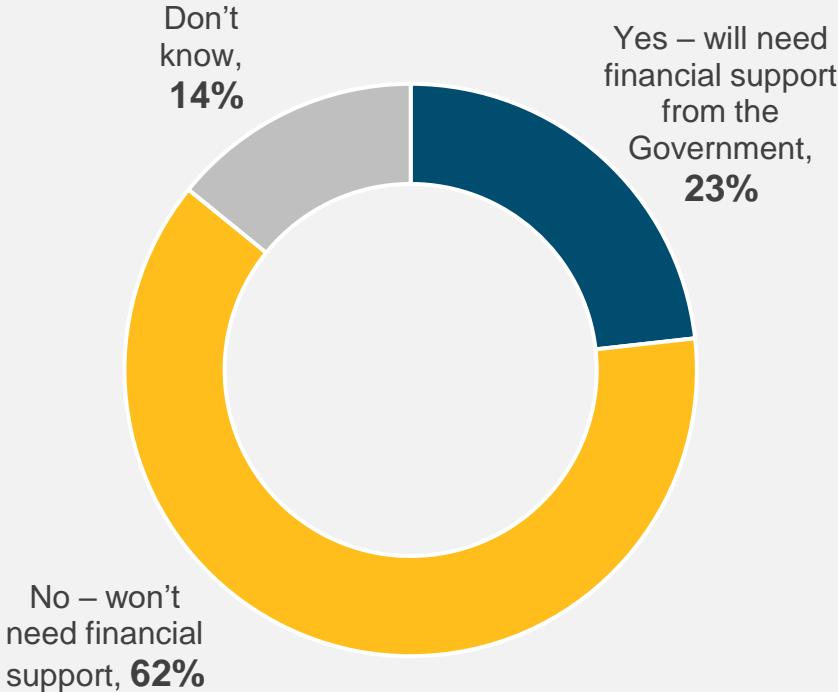


Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q17. "Are you currently behind in your rent payments?"

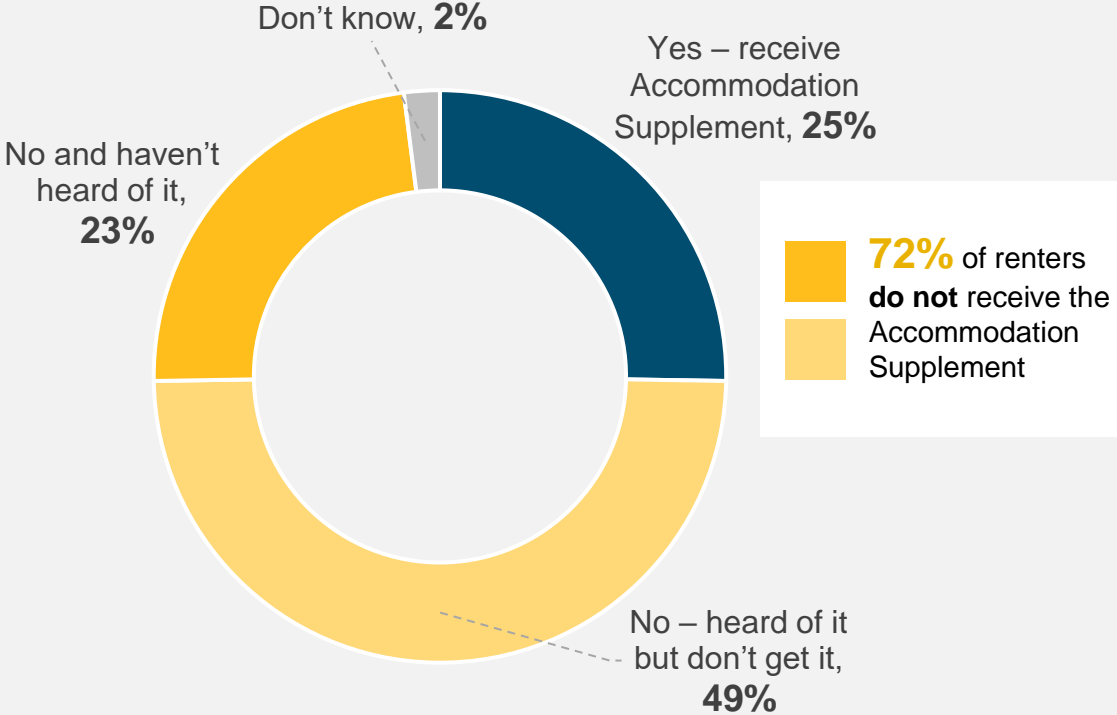
# Government financial support

Nearly one quarter (23%) of renters anticipate needing Government financial support in the coming months to pay their rent. A similar proportion (25%) already receive the Accommodation Supplement.

## Perceived need for Government financial support to pay rent over next few months



## Accommodation Supplement



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q18. "Do you think you'll need financial support from the Government over the next few months to pay your rent?"

Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q19. "Do you receive the Accommodation Supplement?"



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# Moving

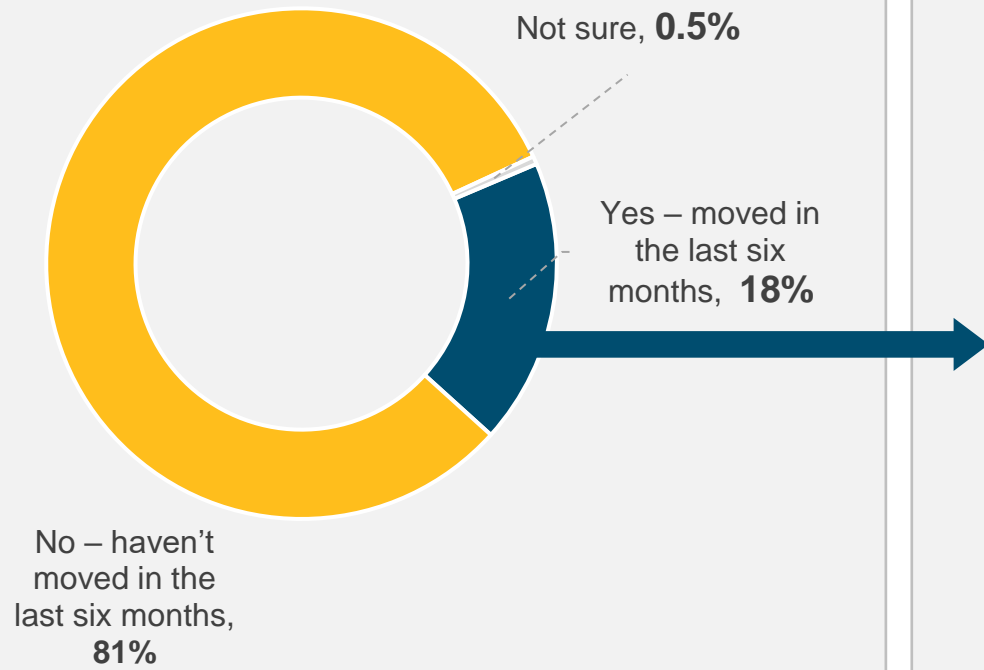


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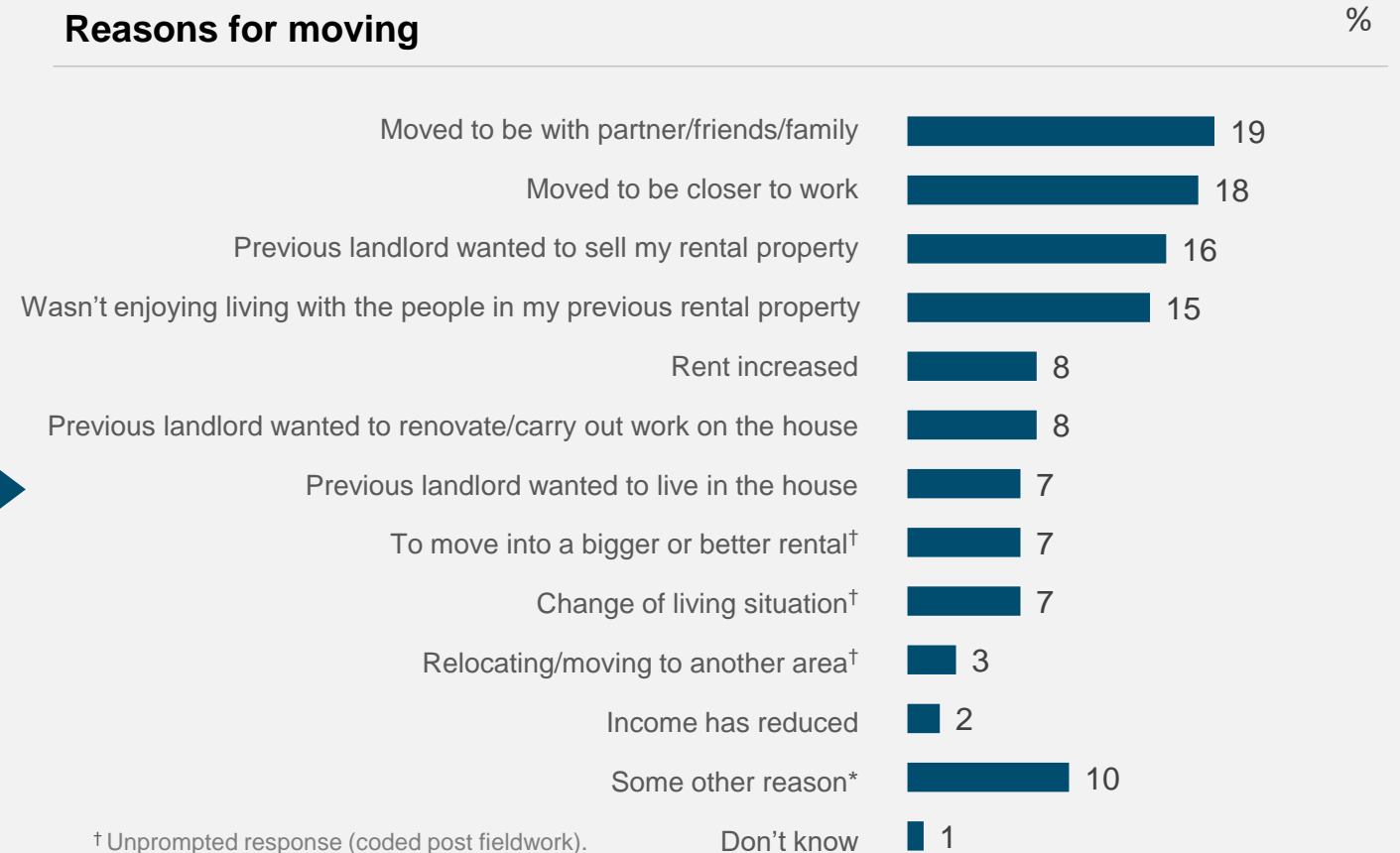
# Recent moves

One in five (18%) renters have moved to a new place in the last six months. The most common reasons for moving include to be with loved ones, to be closer to work or because their previous landlord hoped to sell the property.

## Whether moved in the last six months



## Reasons for moving



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q20. "In the last 6 months, have you moved to a new place to live?"

Base: Renters who have moved in the last six months (n=273).  
Source: Q21. "Why did you move?"

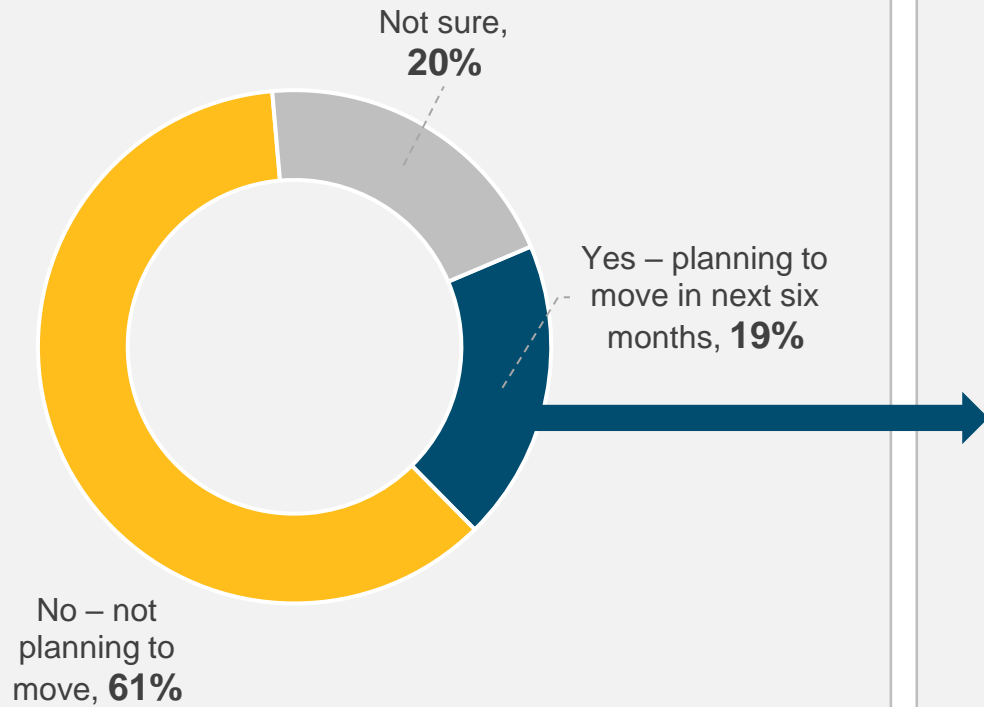
\*Other reasons include: expensive rent (2%), poor management (2%), for a smaller place (2%) and for study (2%).



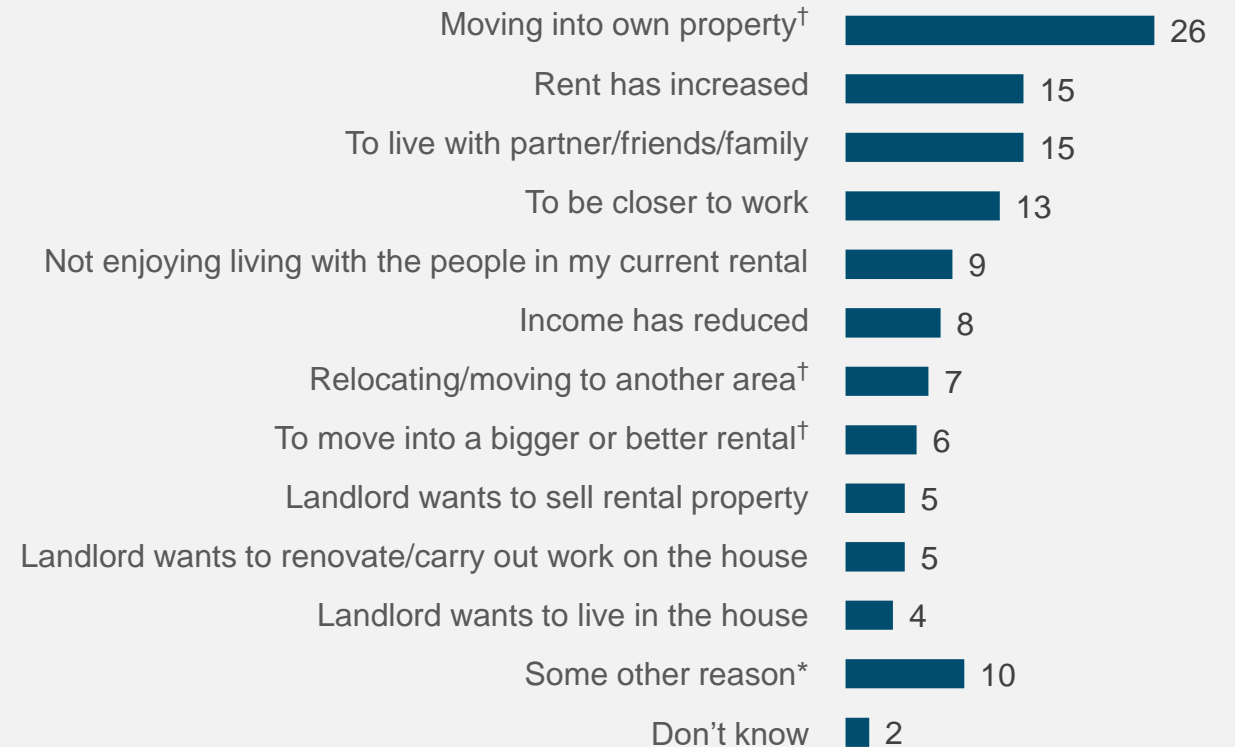
# Plans to move

One in five (19%) renters are planning to move in the next six months. One quarter (26%) of these renters are moving into their own property. Other key drivers relate to a rent increase in their current tenancy, to be with loved ones, and to be closer to work.

## Whether planning to move in the next six months



## Reasons for planning to move





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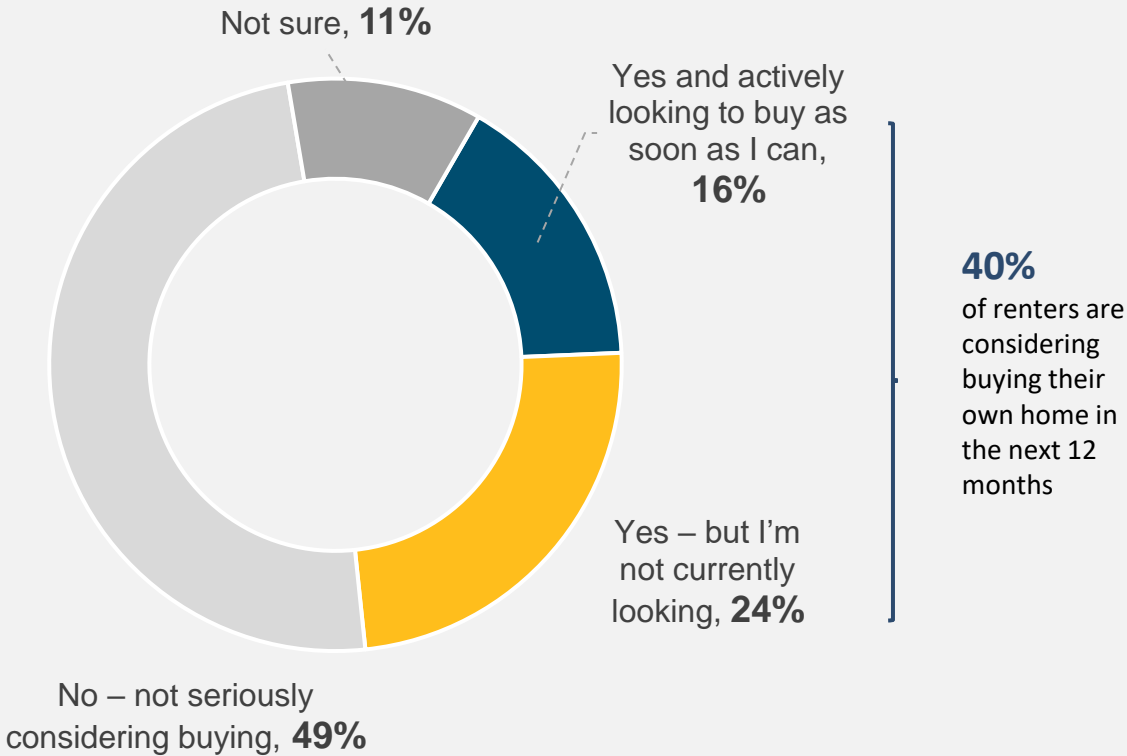
# Home buying



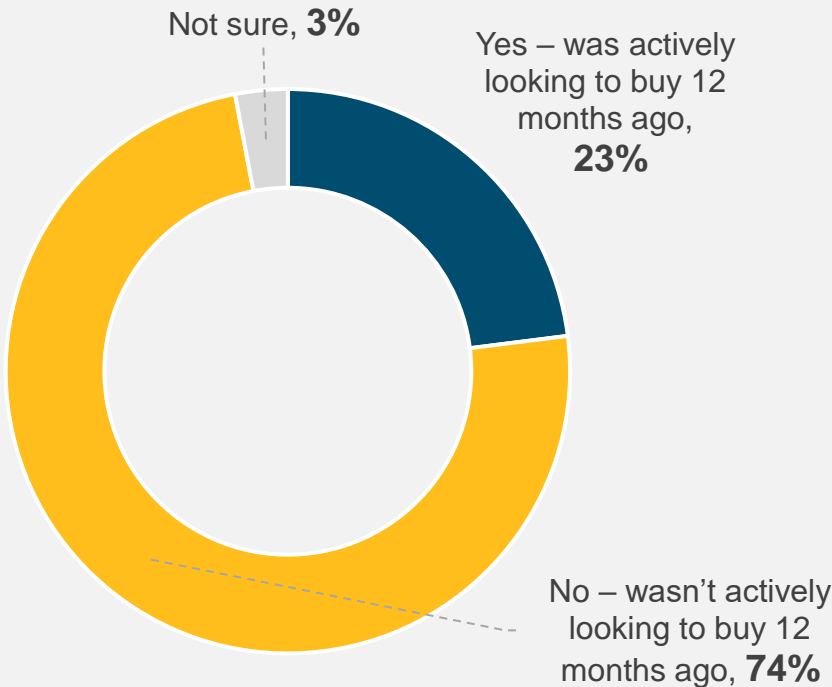
# Home buying intentions

Four in ten renters are now considering buying their own home in the next 12 months. This compares to around two in ten (23%) who were actively looking to buy 12 months ago.

### Whether considering buying home in next 12 months



### Whether actively looking to buy 12 months ago



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q24. "Are you seriously considering buying your own home in the next 12 months?"

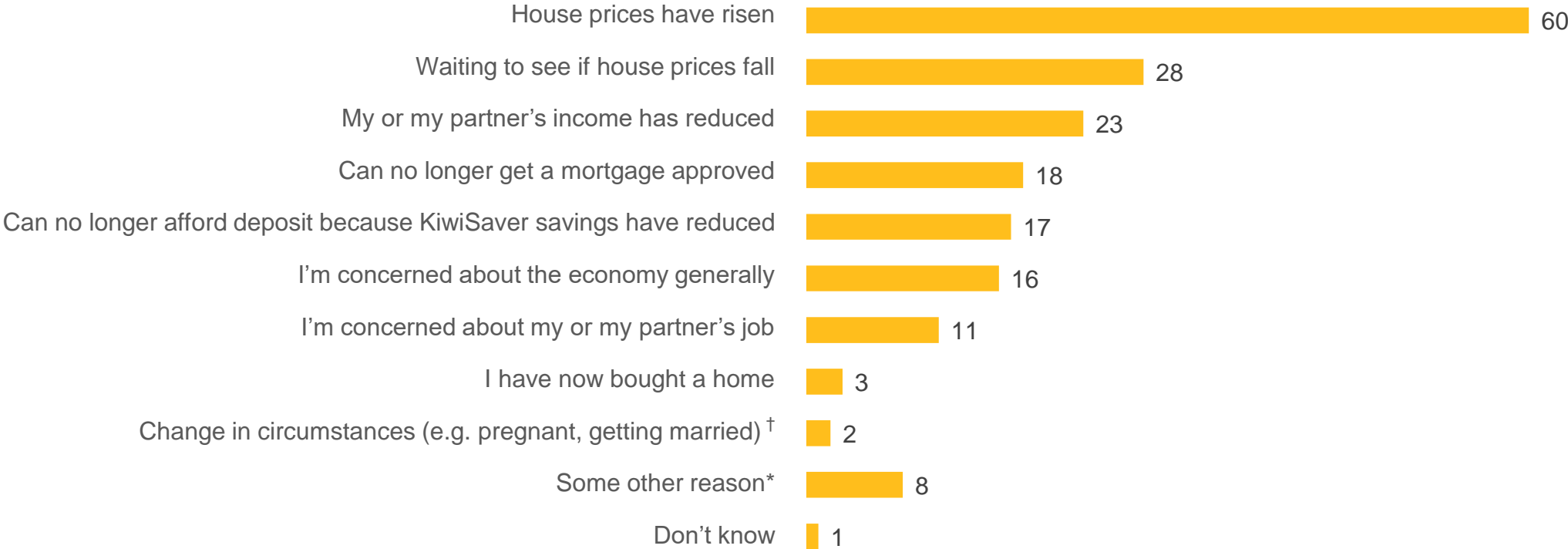
Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q25. "Were you actively looking to buy your own home a year ago?"

# Barriers to looking

House price inflation is the main reason why renters who were actively looking to buy 12 months ago are no longer considering this. Other common reasons include waiting to see if prices drop, reduced income, and issues with mortgage approval. A small group (3%) of these renters have since bought a home.

## Reasons why renters have stopped actively looking to buy

%



Base: Renters who were actively looking to buy 12 months ago, but are not currently looking or considering buying (n=191).

Source: Q26. "Why are you no longer actively looking to buy your own home?"

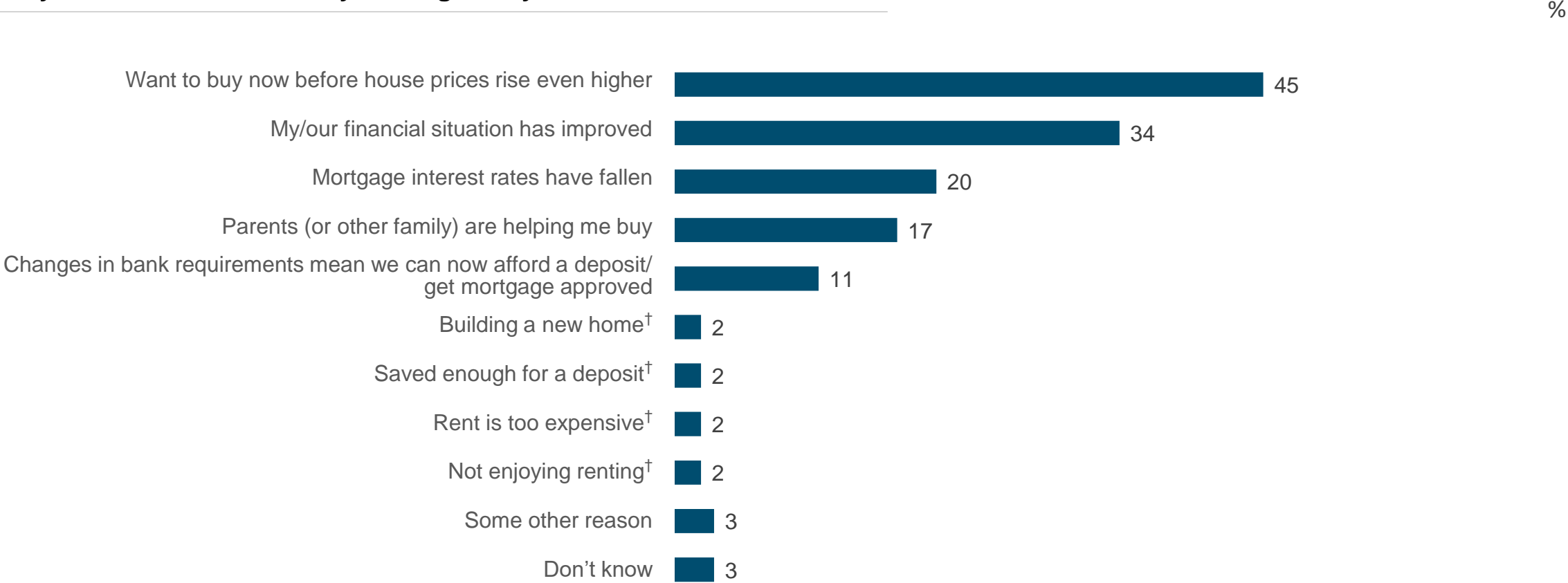
Other reasons include: General unaffordability of the current market (6%) and increased housing demand (1%). † Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork).



# Reasons for looking

Conversely, house price inflation is also motivating others to enter the property market: 45% of renters who were not actively looking to buy 12 months ago, but are now currently considering buying, cite this as the reason. Other reasons include improved financial situations and lower interest rates.

## Reasons why renters are now actively looking to buy



Base: Renters who were not actively looking to buy 12 months ago, but are now actively looking to buy (n=117).  
Source: Q27. "Why are you now actively looking to buy your own home?"  
<sup>†</sup> Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork).



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# Renters' relationships with landlords

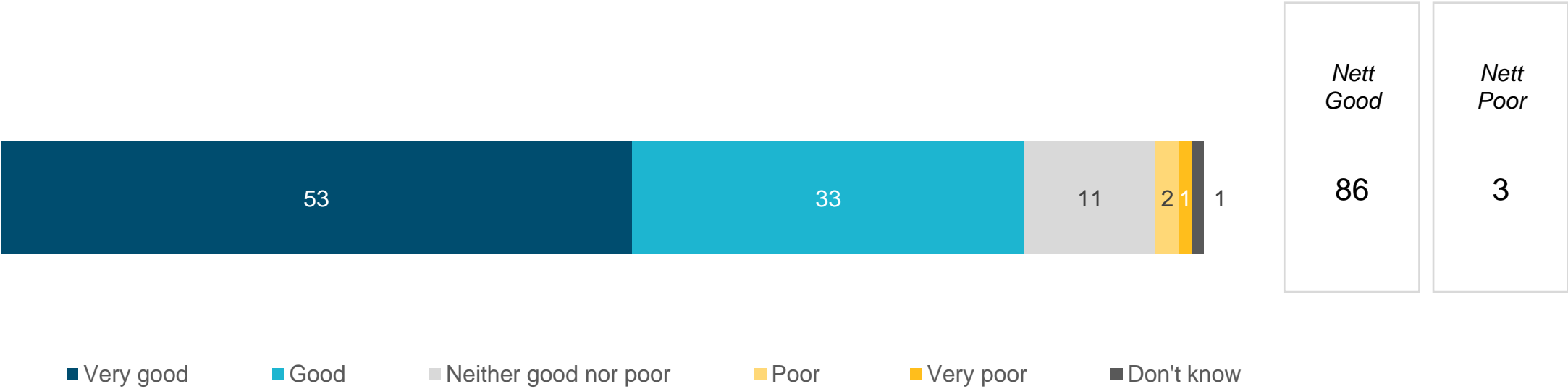


# Relationship with tenants

The majority of renters (86%) feel they have a positive relationship with their landlord or property manager.

## Relationship with tenants

%

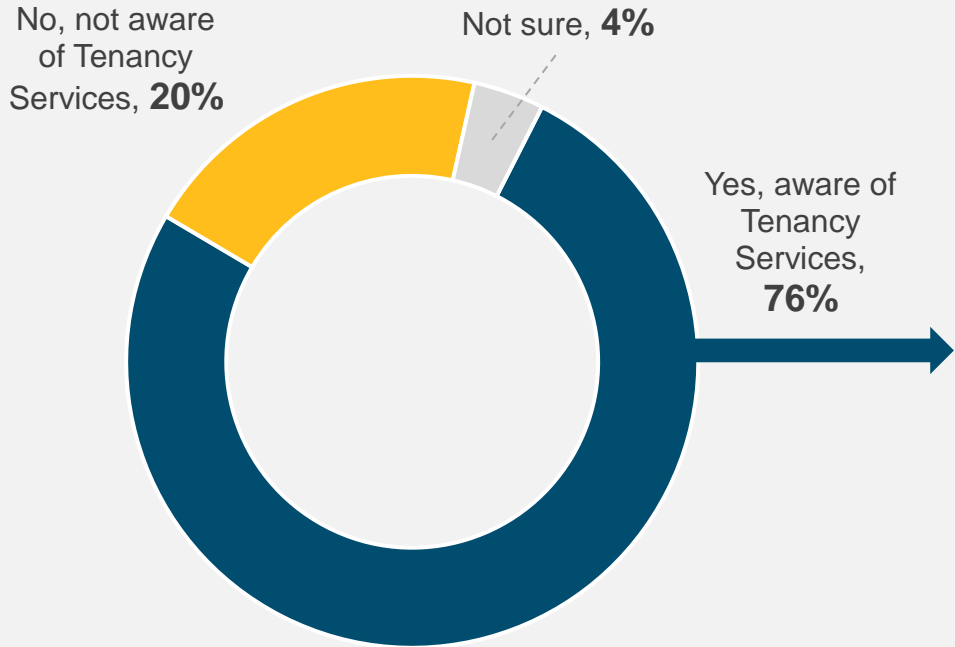


Base: Renters whose rental is managed by their landlord, or a professional property manager or real estate agent on the landlord's behalf (n=1,429).  
Source: Q8. "Overall, which of these best describes your relationship with your landlord (or property manager)?"

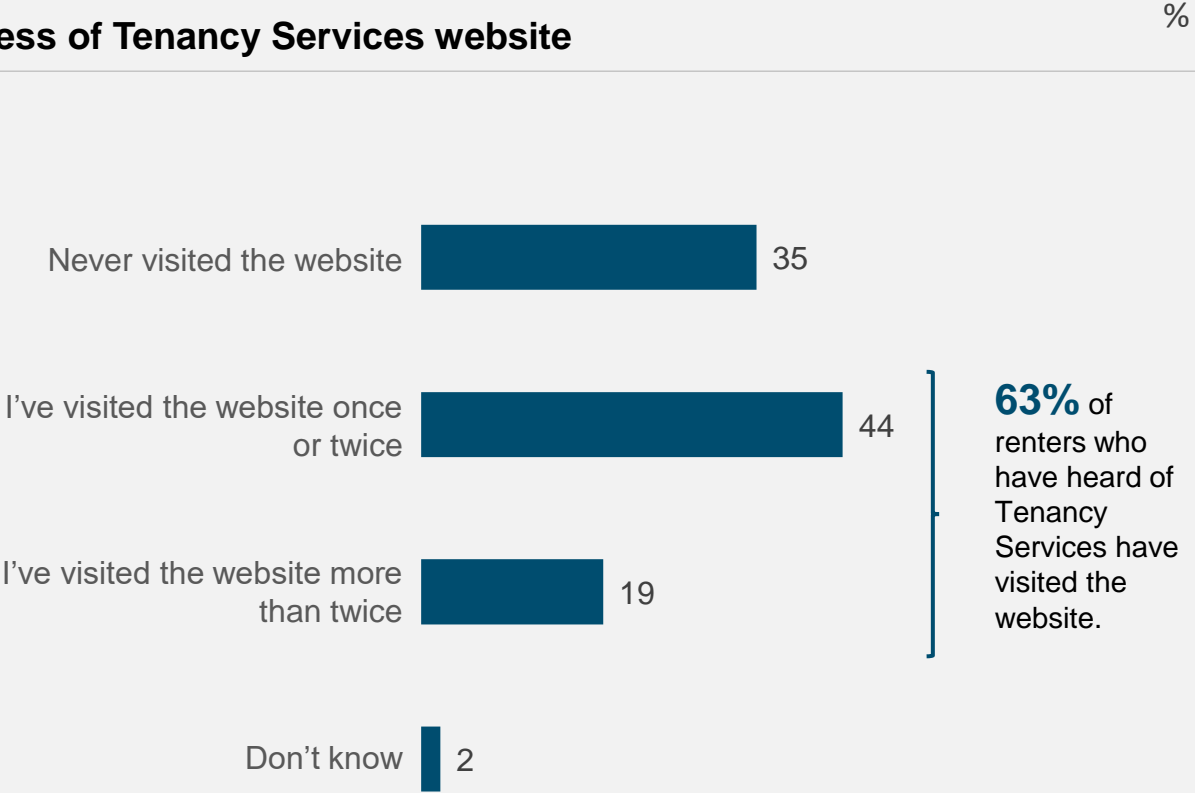
# Awareness of Tenancy Services and website use

Three quarters (76%) of renters are aware of Tenancy Services. Of these renters, 63% have visited the Tenancy Services website.

## Awareness of Tenancy Services



## Access of Tenancy Services website



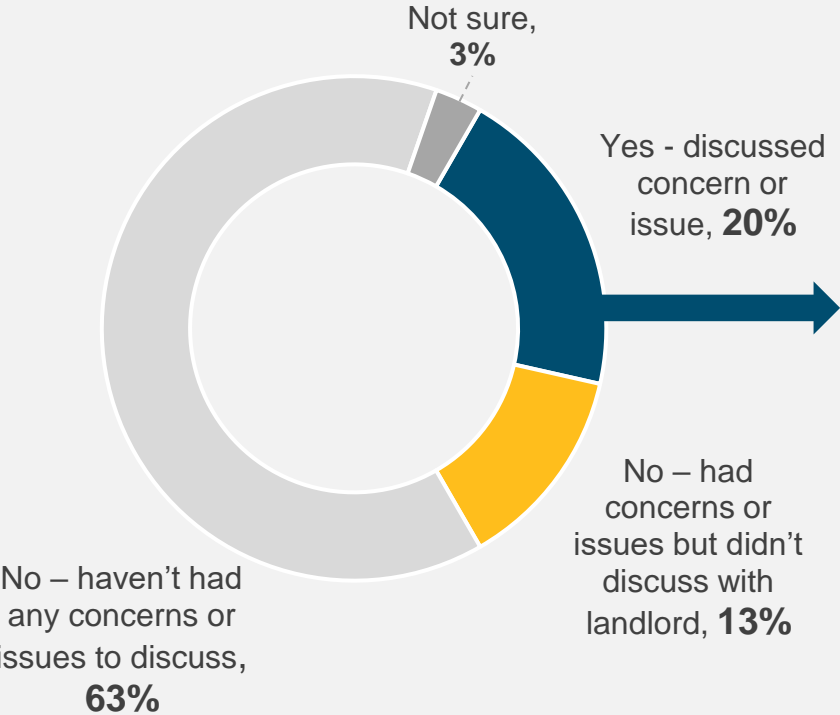
Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
 Source: Q28. "Tenancy Services provides information on tenancy law on its website [www.tenancy.govt.nz](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz). Before today, were you aware of Tenancy Services?"

Base: Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services (n=1,142).  
 Source: Q29. "How often have you visited the Tenancy Services website for information or to find answers to questions about your tenancy situation?"

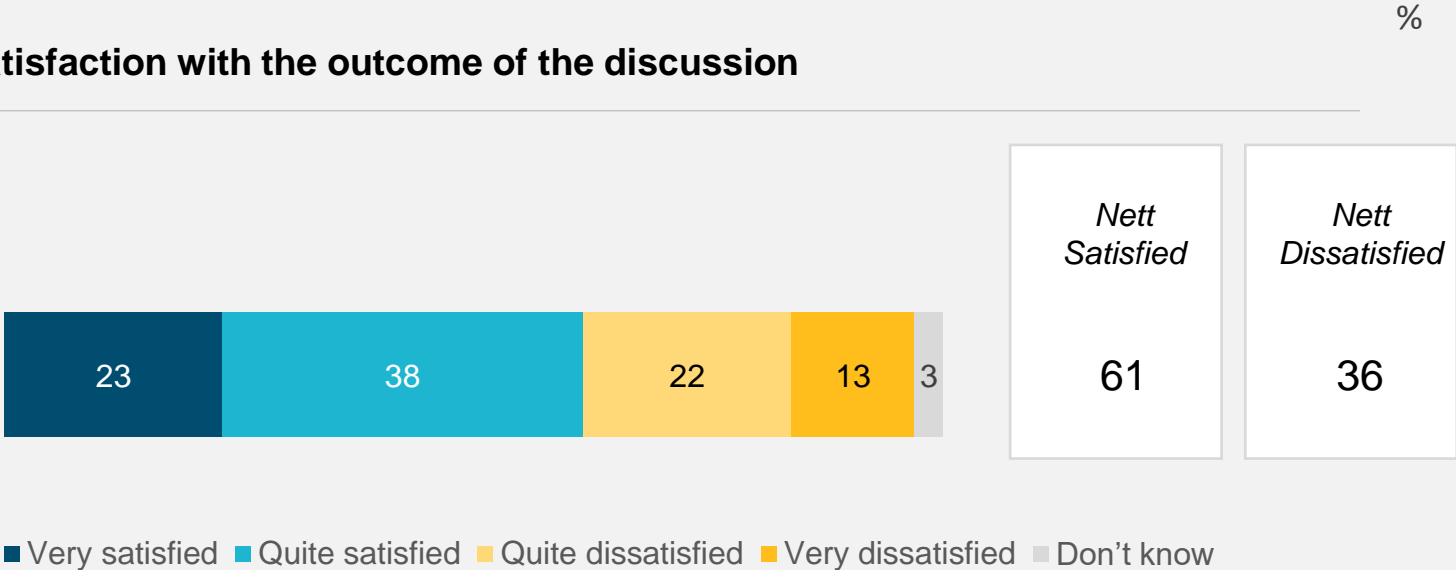
# Prevalence of tenancy issues

One in five renters discussed a significant concern or issue with their landlord or property manager in the last few months. Of these renters, three in five are satisfied with the outcome, though 36% say they are dissatisfied.

## Whether discussed any tenancy issues with landlord or property manager in the last three months



## Satisfaction with the outcome of the discussion



Base: All renters (n=1,500).  
Source: Q30. "In the last three months, have you discussed any significant concerns or issues about your tenancy with your landlord or property manager?"

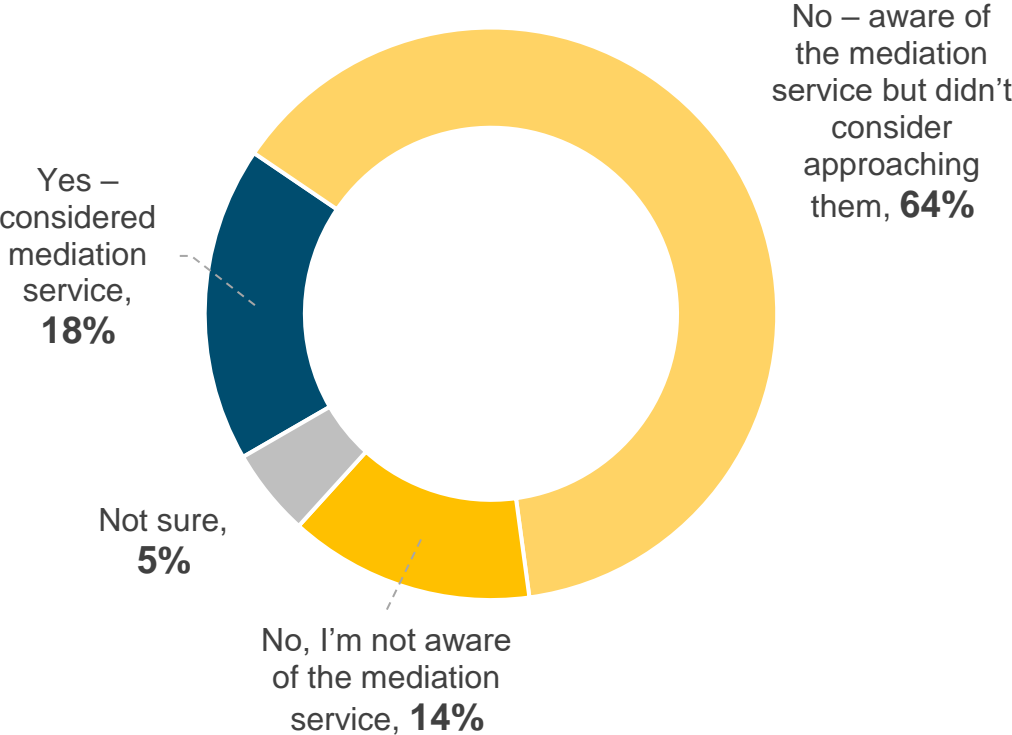
Base: Renters who had discussion with landlord or property manager in the last three months (n=307).  
Source: Q31. "How satisfied were you with the outcome of the discussion(s)?"



# Resolving tenancy issues

One in five (18%) renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and had a tenancy concern in the last three months considered using the mediation service offered by Tenancy Services.

## Whether seriously considered Tenancy Services' mediation service

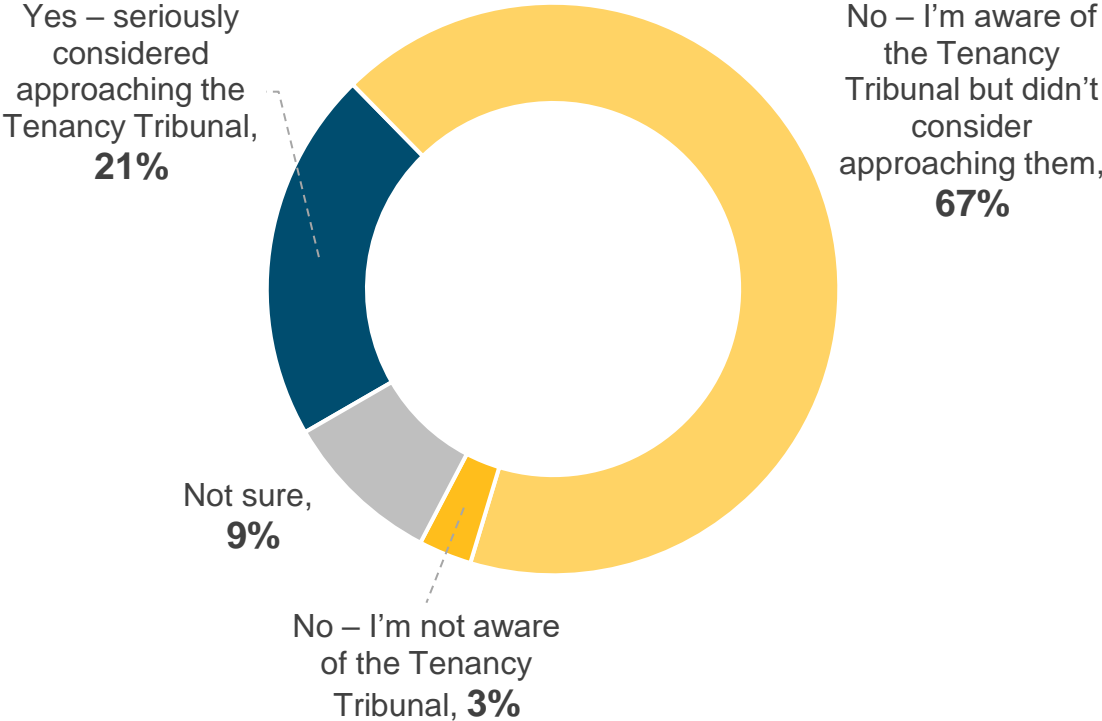


Base: Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and had a concern or issue with their tenancy in the last three months (n=399).  
Source: Q32. "Had you seriously considered the mediation service that Tenancy Services provides, to assist with resolving the issues with your landlord?"

# Tenancy Tribunal

One in five (21%) renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and were dissatisfied with the outcome of the discussion with their landlord or property manager (about the tenancy issue) considered approaching the Tenancy Tribunal to resolve the issue or dispute.

## Whether seriously considered approaching the Tenancy Tribunal

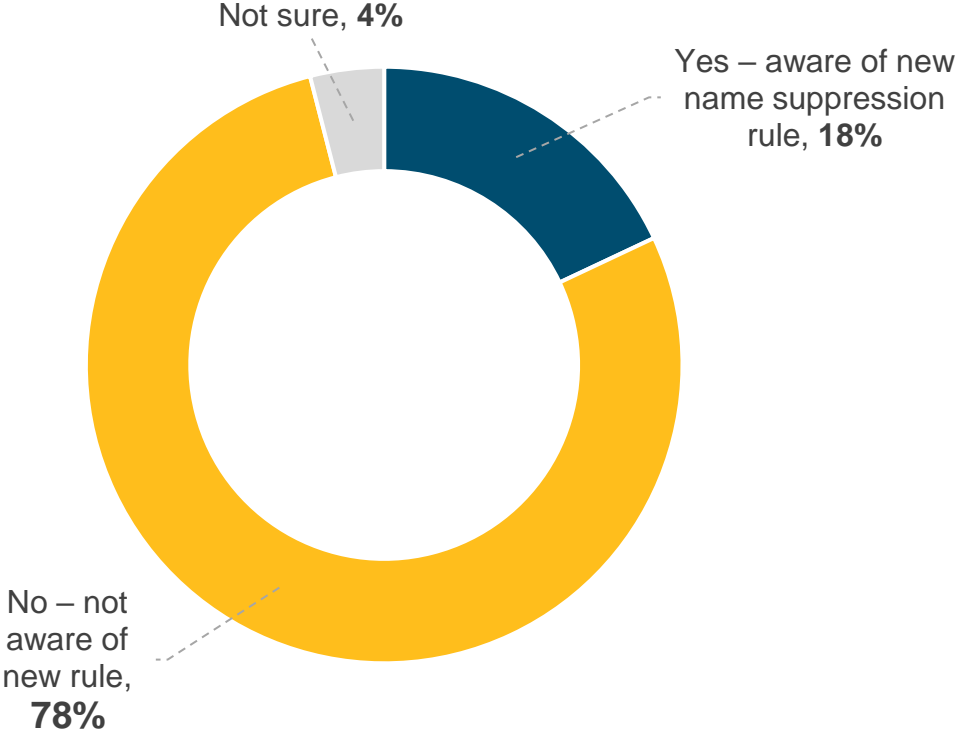


Base: Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and were dissatisfied with the outcome of their discussion with their landlord or property manager (n=92).  
Source: Q33. "Had you seriously considered approaching the Tenancy Tribunal to help resolve the issue?"

# Name suppression rule

Fewer than one in five (18%) renters who are aware of the Tenancy Tribunal are also aware of the new name suppression rule.

## Awareness of the Tenancy Tribunal's new name suppression rule



Base: Renters who are aware of the Tenancy Tribunal (n=89).  
Source: Q36. "There are new rules allowing name suppression in the Tenancy Tribunal for people who are successful in their applications. Before today, were you aware of these new rules about name suppression?"



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

**Jocelyn Rout or Emma Appleton**

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Colmar Brunton, a Kantar Company  
Level 1, 46 Sale Street, Auckland 1010  
PO Box 6621, Victoria Street West Auckland 1142  
Phone (09) 919 9200  
[www.colmarbrunton.co.nz](http://www.colmarbrunton.co.nz)



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