



**MINISTRY OF HOUSING  
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

# Renters Pulse Survey – topline report

May 2022, 2022



**KANTAR PUBLIC**



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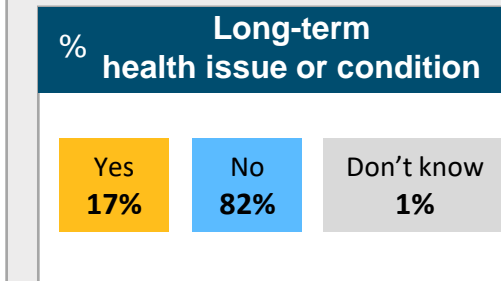
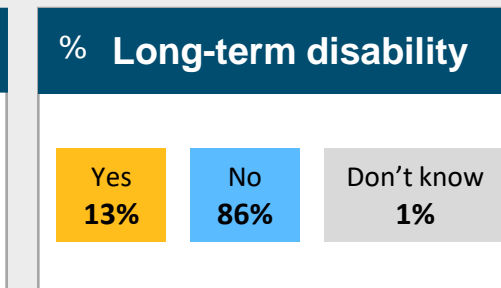
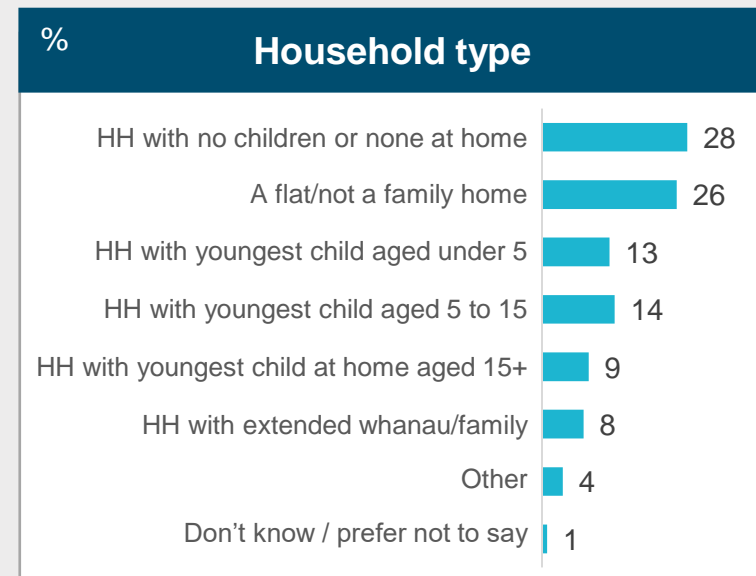
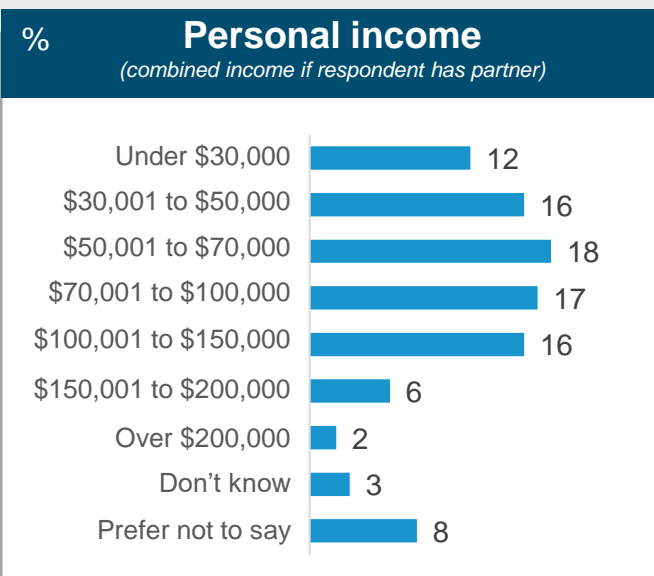
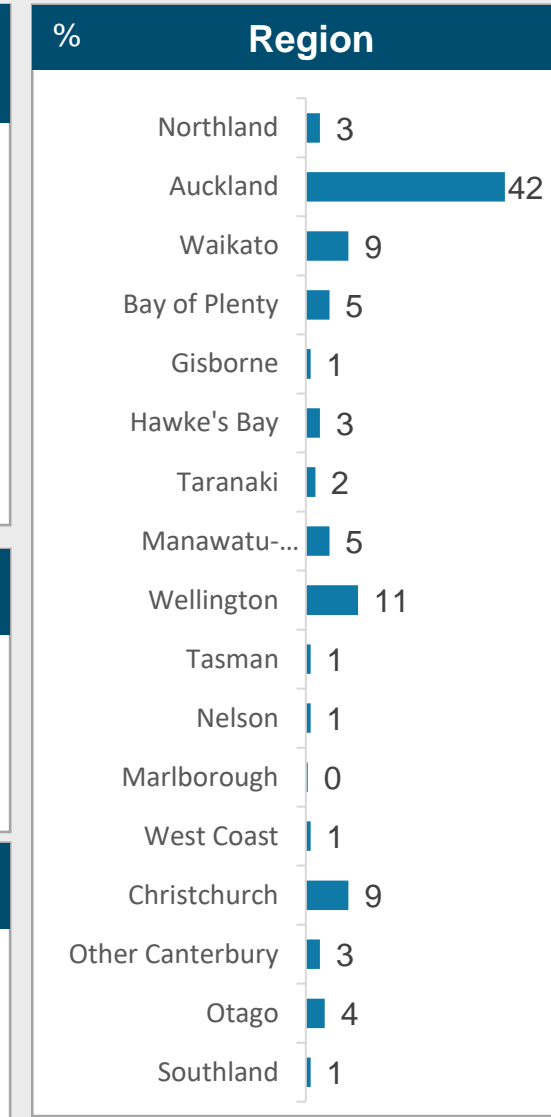
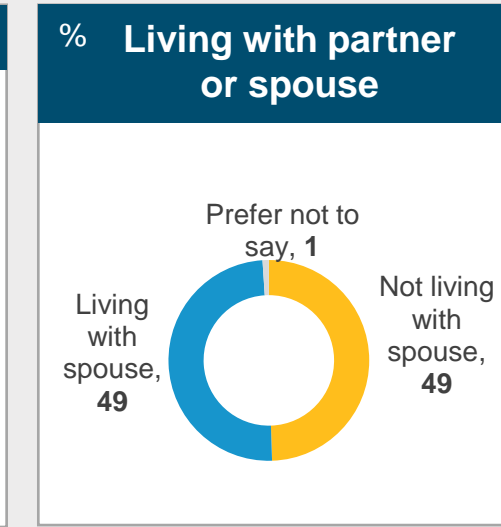
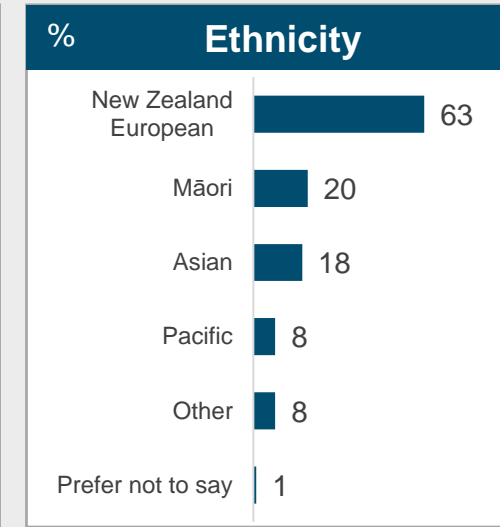
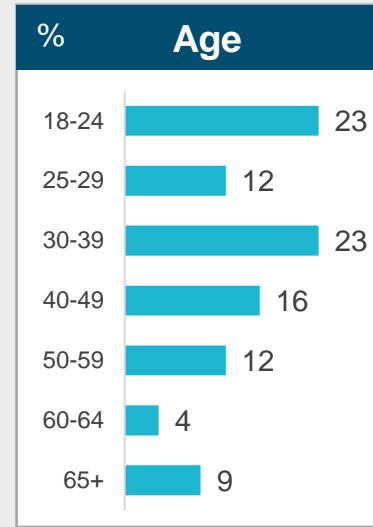
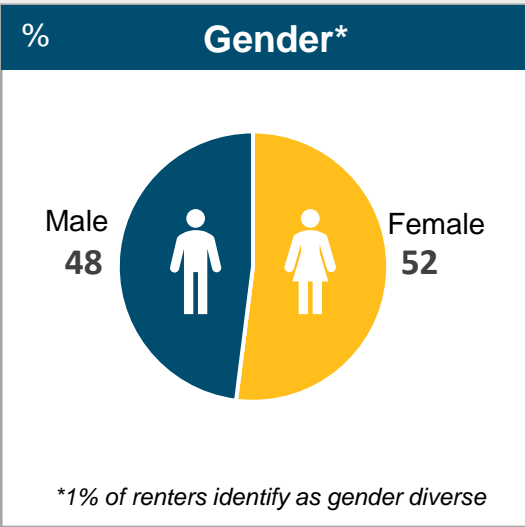


# Research objectives and method

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has commissioned Kantar Public 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 for the third wave (conducted in May 2022), with comparisons made with the previous two waves where appropriate (conducted in April and October 2021).

- A nationwide online survey of **1,501 renters**.
- Maximum margin of error on the total sample (at the 95% confidence level) is **+/-2.5%**.
- Fieldwork was conducted from **2 to 13 May, 2022**.
- Statistically significant changes since October 2021 (at the 95% confidence level) are denoted on the charts by triangles.
- Data were weighted by age within gender, and region, to match Census population characteristics of renters.

# Sample profile of renters (May 2022 only)



Base: All renters (May 2022 only, n=1,501).  
Source: S3, S4, S5, S6, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q37, Q38.





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# Tenancy characteristics

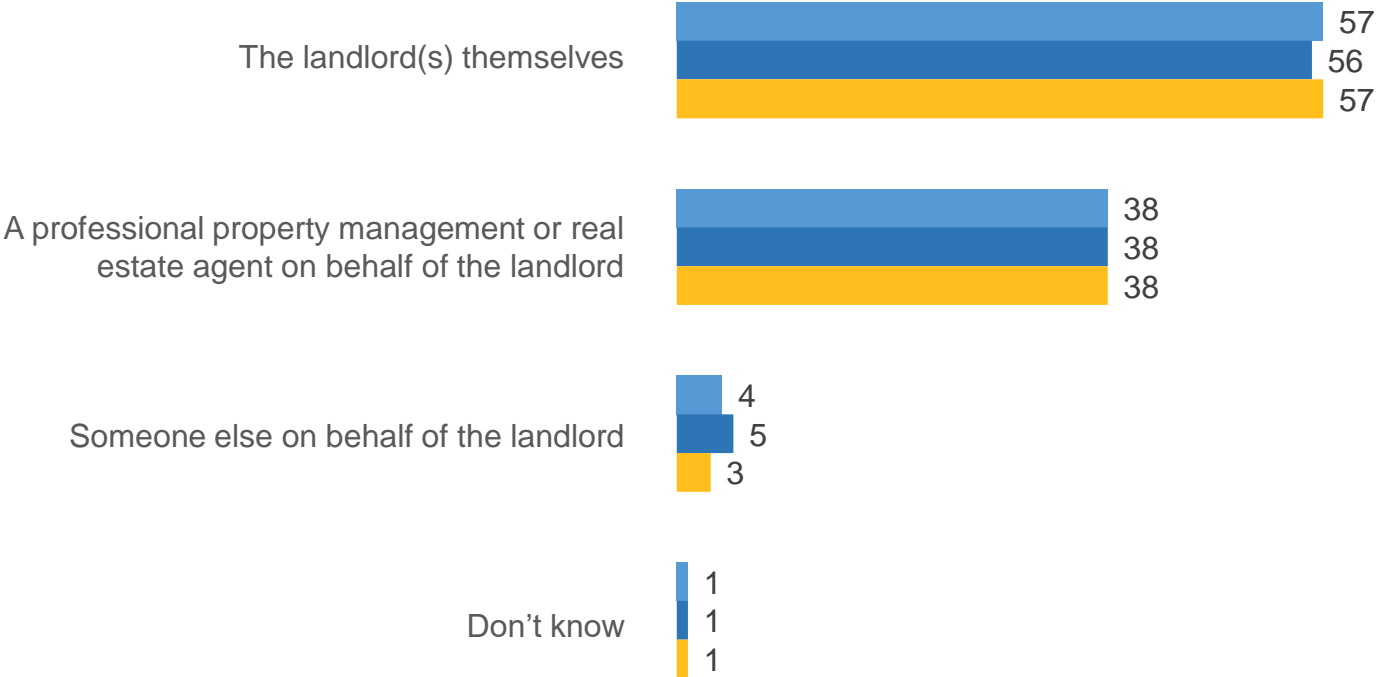
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# Management of the rental property

In line with the 2021 results, 57% say their rental is managed by their landlord(s) and 38% say their property is managed by a professional property management or real estate agent. Just 3% say the property is managed by someone else and 1% are unsure.

## Who manages the rental property

%



■ April 2021  
■ October 2021  
■ May 2022

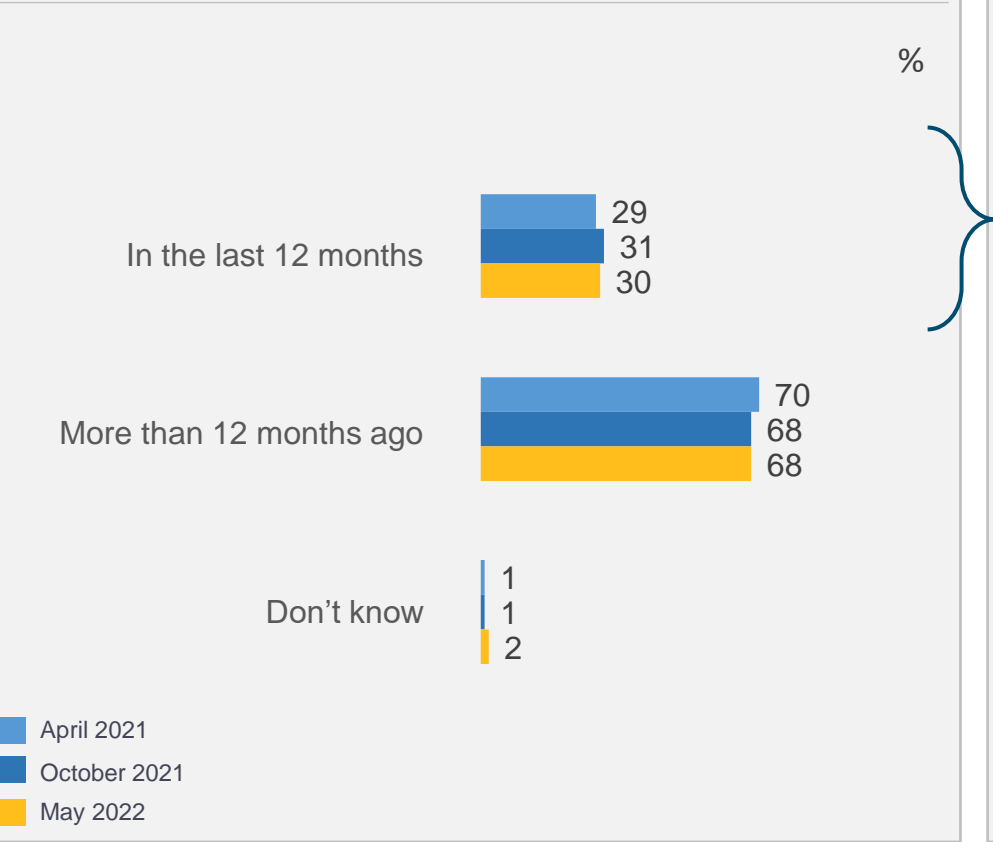
Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501).  
 Source: Q7. "Who mainly manages the rental property where you live?"

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

# Start of the tenancy

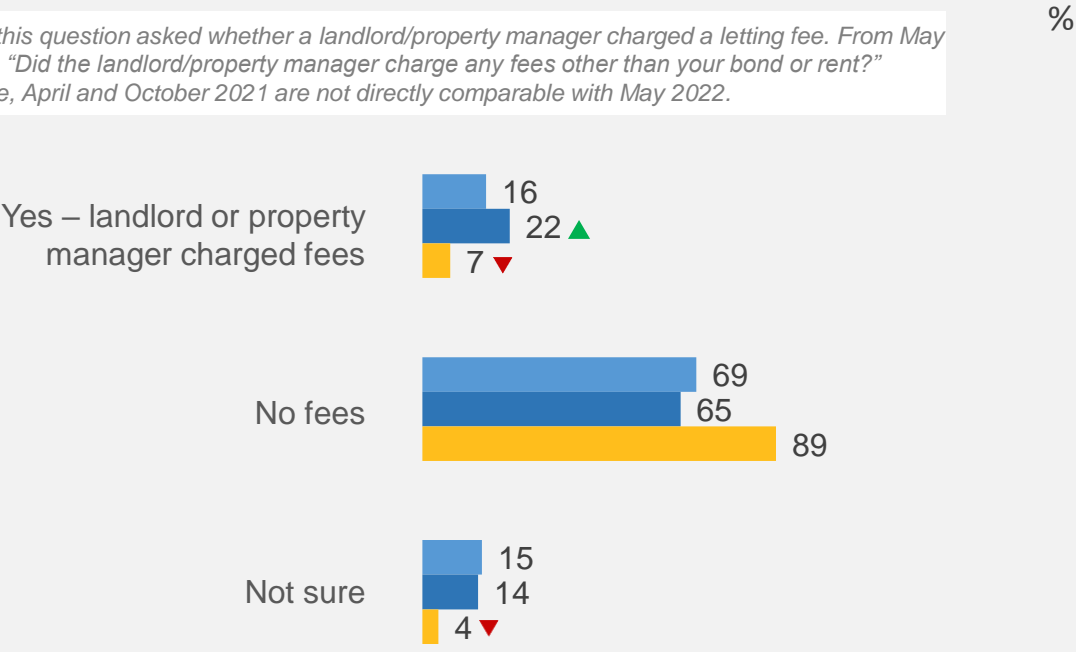
Almost seven out of ten (68%) renters say their current tenancy began more than 12 months ago which is consistent with the previous two waves. For those who say their tenancy began within the last 12 months (30%), just 7% said their landlord charged a fee (other than a bond or rent). While this appears lower than in the 2021 measures, the reader should note that these results are not directly comparable due to a change in the question wording.

## When renters' current tenancy started



## Whether landlord or property manager charged any fees other than bond or rent?\*

\*Note, prior to May 2022, this question asked whether a landlord/property manager charged a letting fee. From May 2022, this was changed to "Did the landlord/property manager charge any fees other than your bond or rent?" Due to the wording change, April and October 2021 are not directly comparable with May 2022.



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q9. "When did the tenancy start for the rental property you live in?"

Base: Renters whose tenancy started in the last 12 months (April 2021 n=432, October 2021 n=460, May 2022 n=452). Source: Q10. "Did the landlord (or property manager) charge any fees other than your bond or rent? (e.g. an optional fee that allows you a set time period to decide whether or not you want to rent the property)"

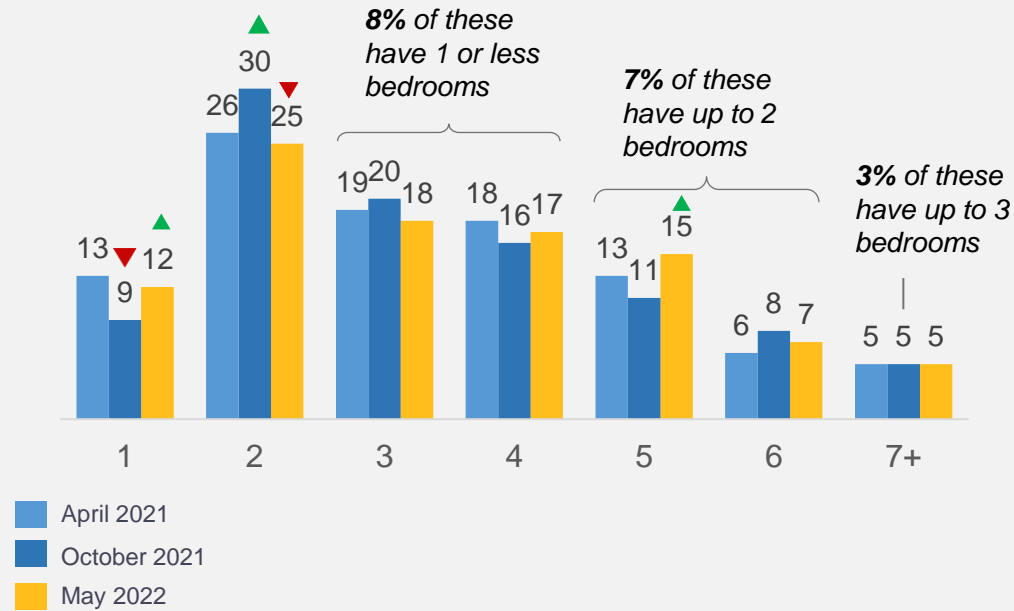
▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

# Tenancy characteristics

As in April and October 2021, around three quarters (72%) of renters live in a household with up to four people. A similar share (76%) live in a home with up to three bedrooms. Following a significant decline in October 2021, there has been a significant increase in those living alone (to 12%, which is back in line with April 2021).

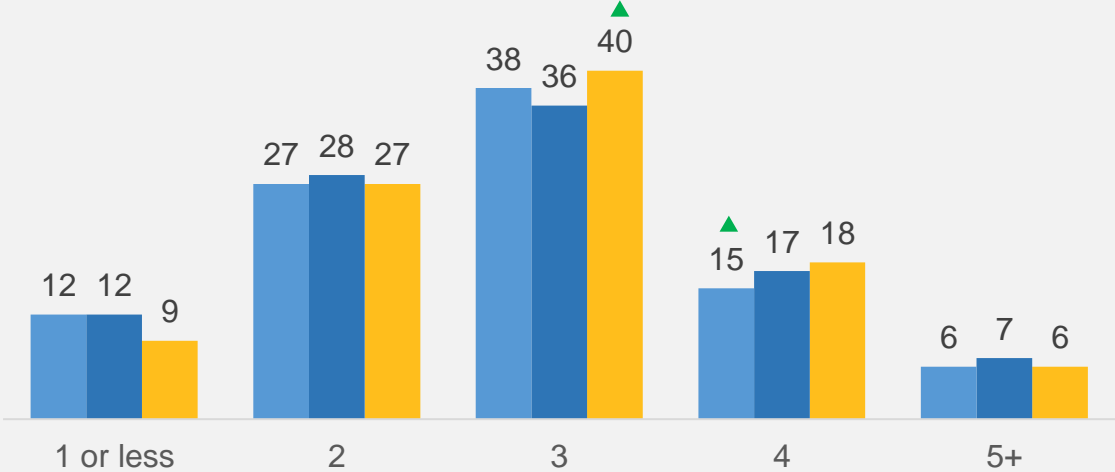
## Number of people living in rental

*\*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 (Wave1 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q5. "How many people do you currently live with?"

Base: All renters (Wave1 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q6. "How many bedrooms are there where you currently live?"

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave





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# Rental payments and government financial support

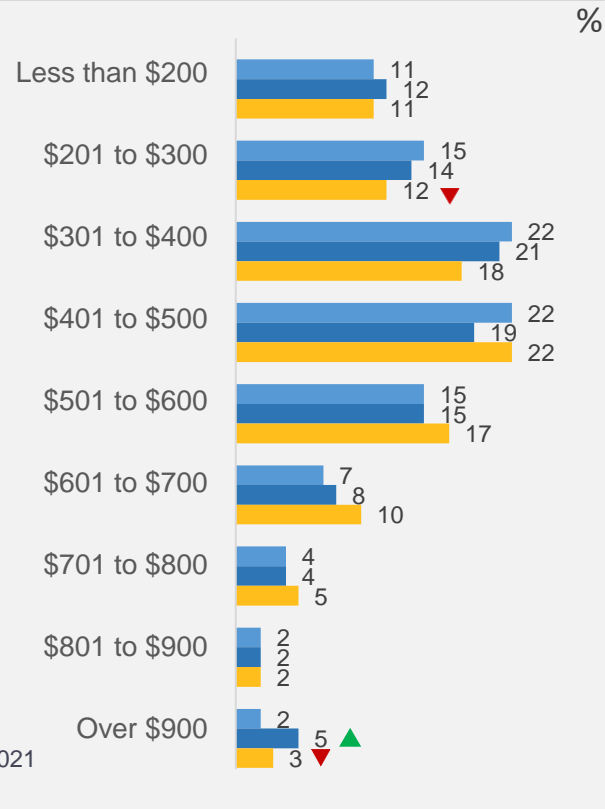


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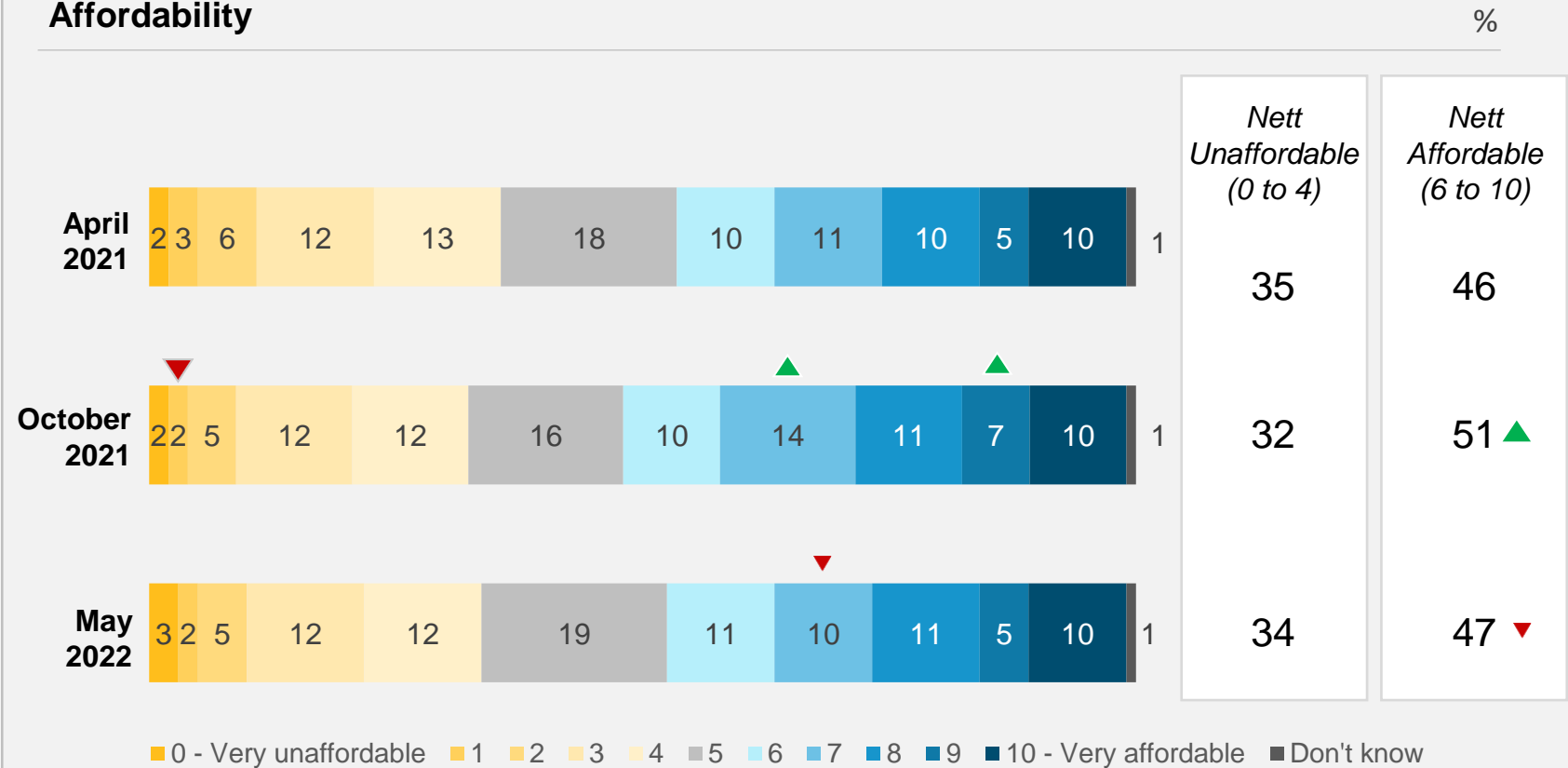
# Rental affordability (1)

There is some suggestion that rents have increased a little since October 20221 – just under two thirds (63%) of renters now say their households pay rent of \$500 or less per week compared to 66% in October 2021. Perceptions of affordability have declined since October 2021 (down four points to 47%).

## Weekly rent (total for property)



## Affordability



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q11a. "How much rent does your landlord (or property manager) charge in total for your current rental property per week?"

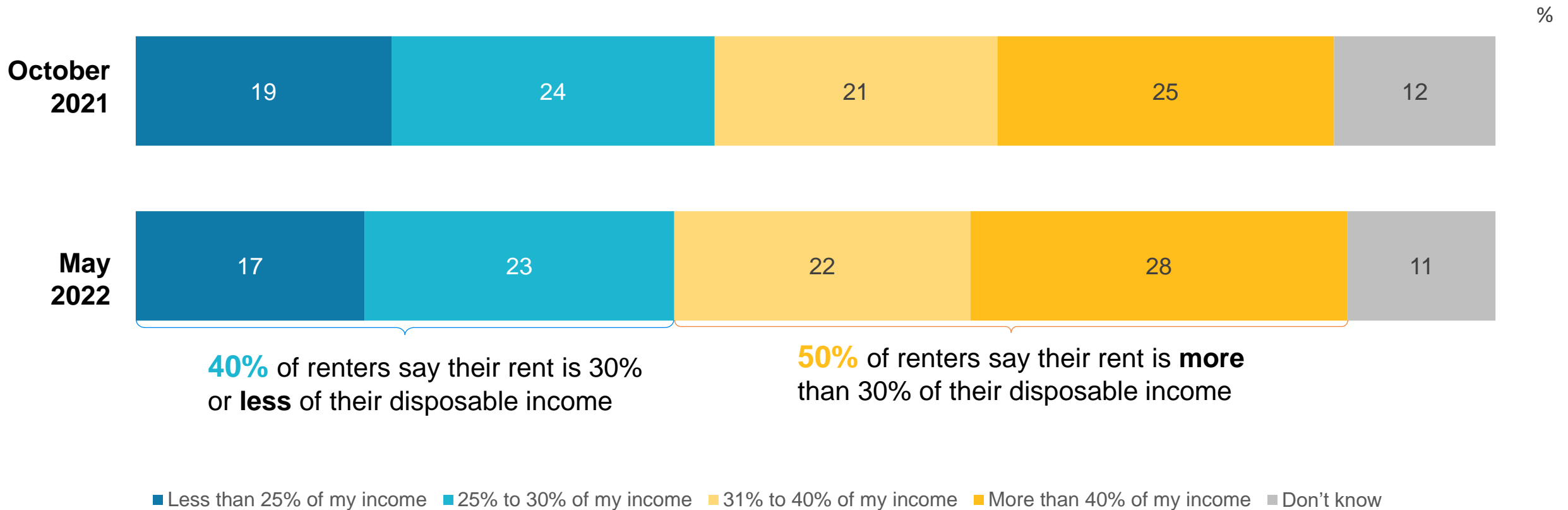
Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q12. "How affordable is your current rent?"

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

# Rental affordability (2)

Four out of ten (40%) renters say they spend 30% or less of their disposable income on rent and five out of ten (50%) say rent takes up more than 30% of their disposable income. This is broadly consistent with the October 2021 results.

## How much is rent as a percentage of renters' disposable income



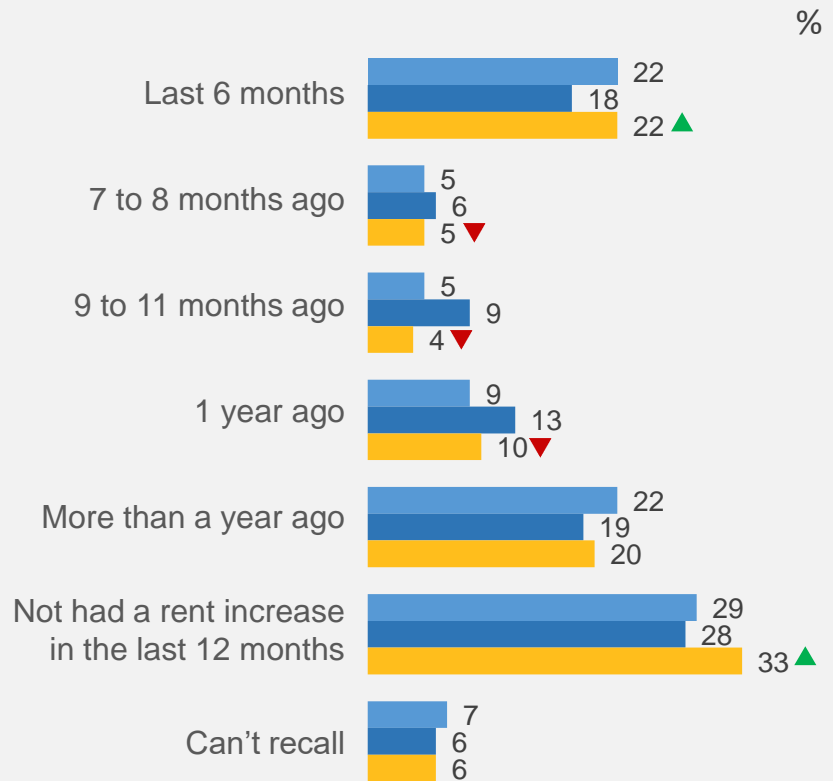
Base: All renters (October 2021 n=1500 , May 2022 n=1501).  
 Source: Q12b. "How much approximately is your rent as a percentage of your disposable income (income after tax)? My rent is..."  
 Note, due to rounding, totals may not add to 100%.. Asked for the first time in October 2021, so no data is available for April 2021



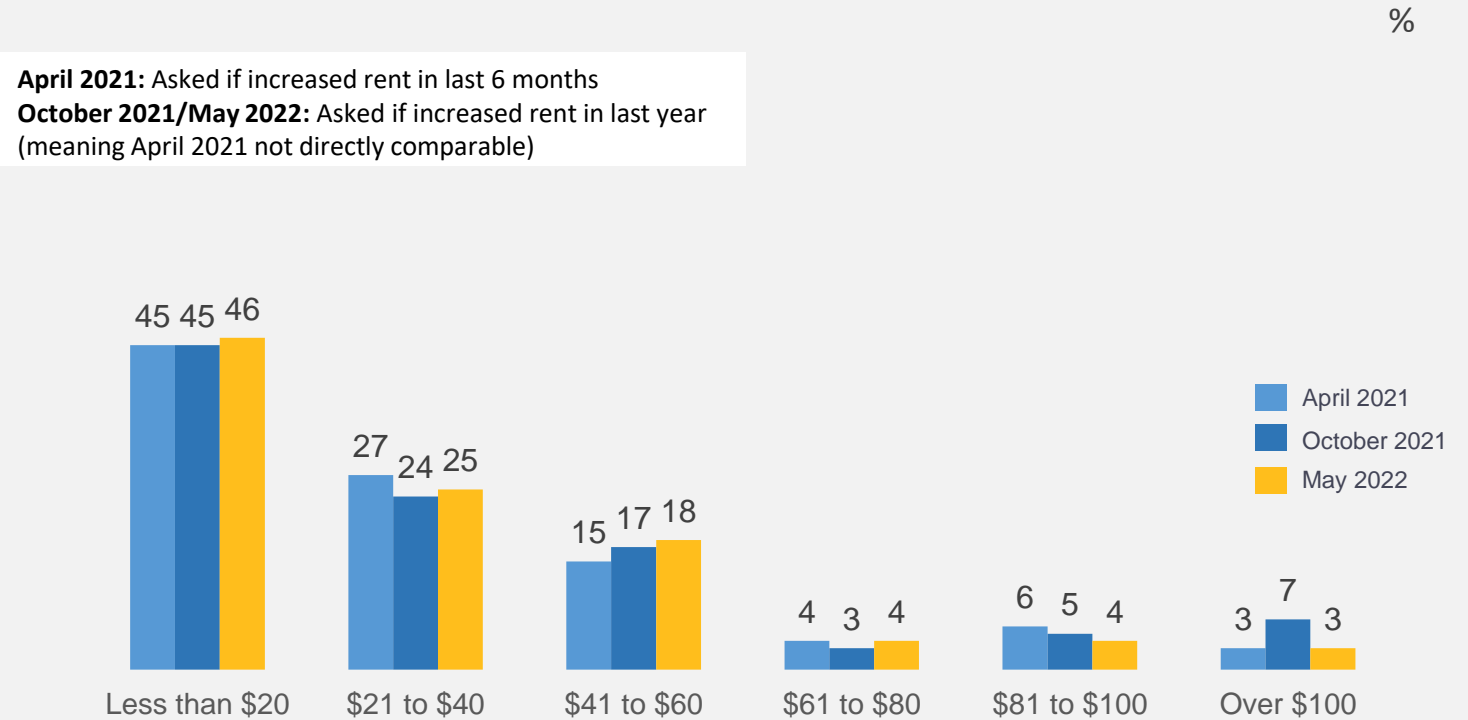
# Rent increases (1)

More tenants have experienced a rent increase in the last 6 months (22%; up from 18% in October 2021). However, there is also more tenants with stable rents for at least a year (up from 28% in October 2021 to 33% in May 2022). Most (71%) of those who experienced an increase faced an increase of \$40 or less (which is consistent with 2021).

## When last rent increase occurred



## Size of rent increase



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501).  
 Source: Q13. "When was your last rent increase?"

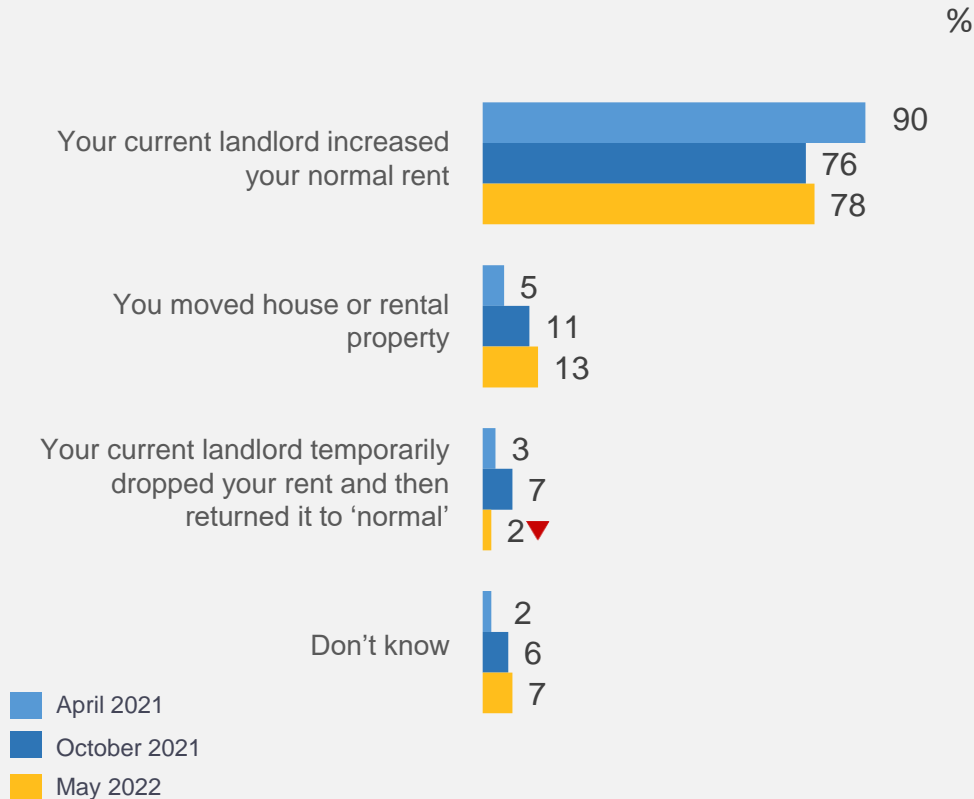
▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

Base: April 2021: Renters whose rent has increased within the last six months (n=328), October 2021 on: Renters whose rent increased at any point (n=982). May 2022 n=916  
 Source: Q14. "Still thinking about the last increase, how many dollars did your rent increase by per week?"

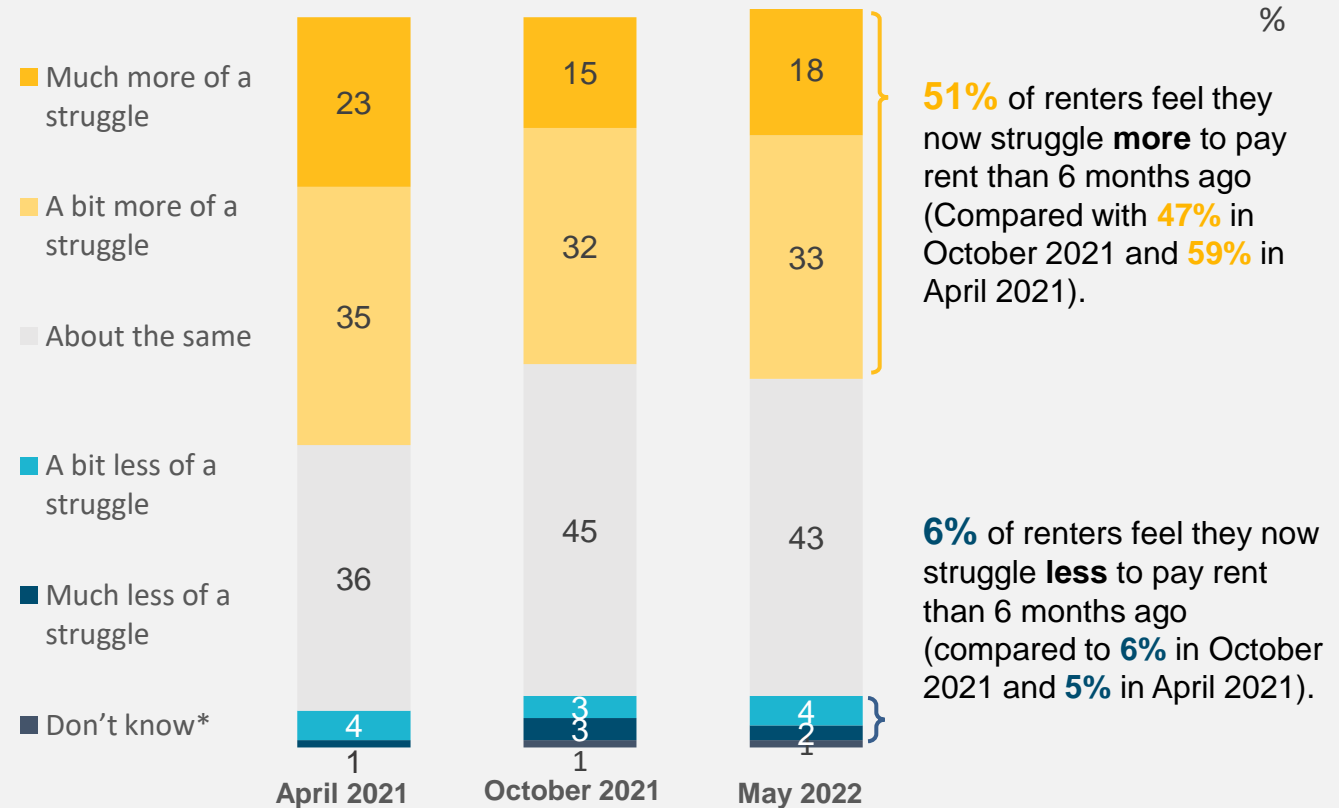
# Rent increases (2)

Almost four out of five (78%) renters whose rent has increased in the last six months say this was an additional increase to their 'normal' rent. Fewer renters have experienced temporary rent decreases (down to 2% from 7% in October 2021). Just over half (51%) of renters say they are now struggling more to pay their rent, which is broadly consistent with October 2021.

## Reason for last rent increase



## Struggles to pay rent since six months ago



Base: April 2021: Renters whose rent has increased within the last six months (n=328), October 2021 on: Renters whose rent increased at any point (n=982). May 2022 =916  
Source: Q15. "Was your last rent increase because..."

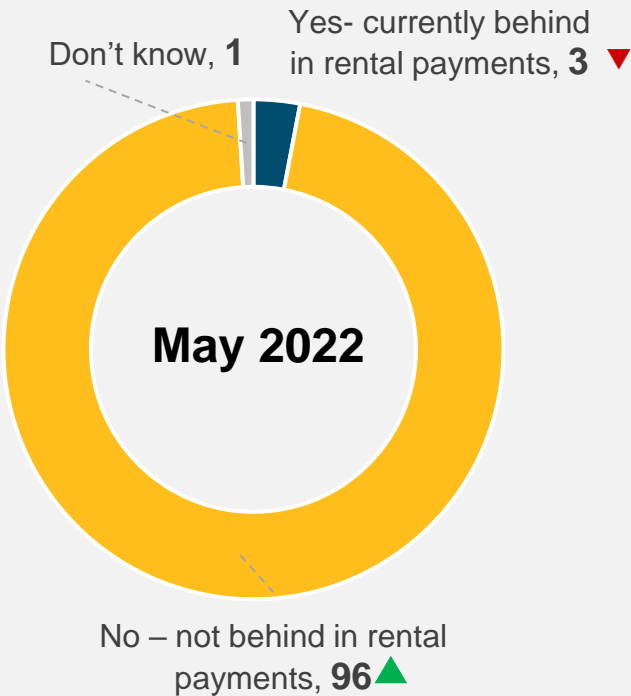
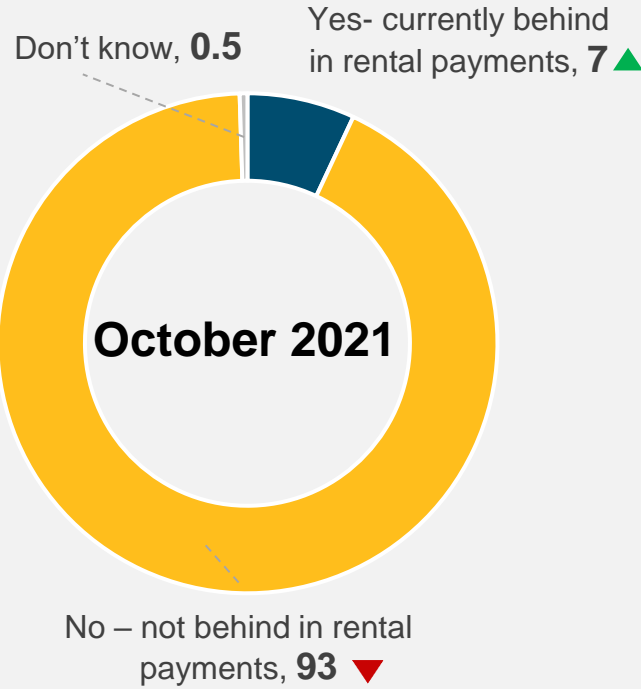
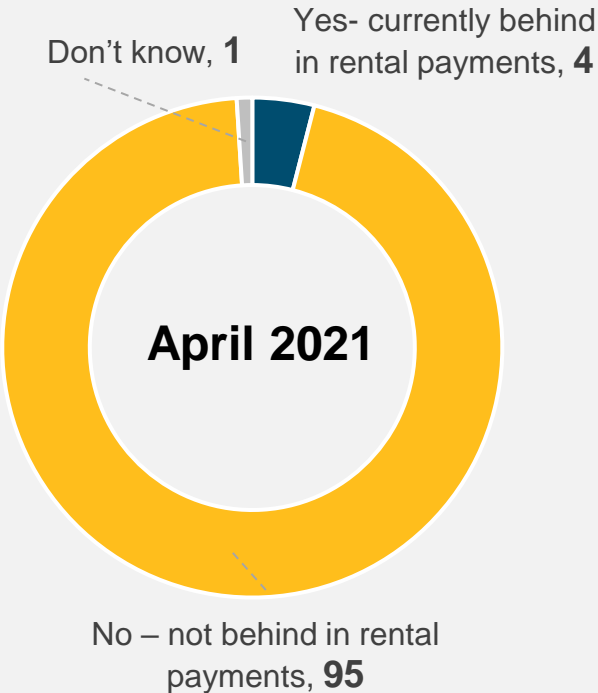
Base: April 2021: Renters whose rent has increased in last six months (n=328), October 2021: Renters whose rent increased at any point (n=982). May 2022 n= 916. Source: Q16. "Is paying your rent now more or less of a struggle than it was 6 months ago? It is now..."  
▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

# Rent arrears

Fewer renters are currently in rent arrears compared to October 2021 (down four points to 3% in May 2022). This is now more in line with the April 2021 level.

## Currently behind in rental payments

%



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501).  
Source: Q17. "Are you currently behind in your rent payments?"

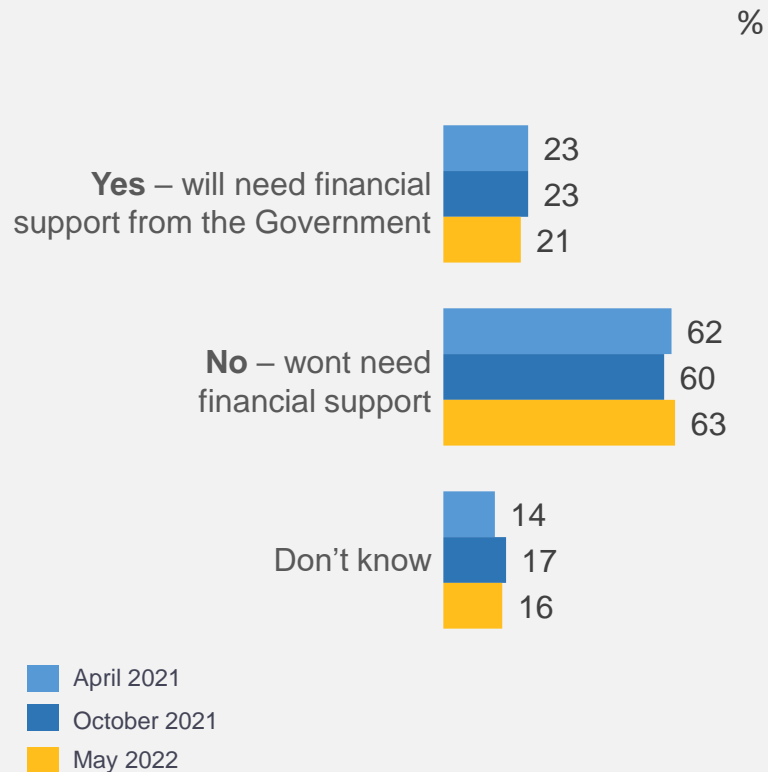
▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave



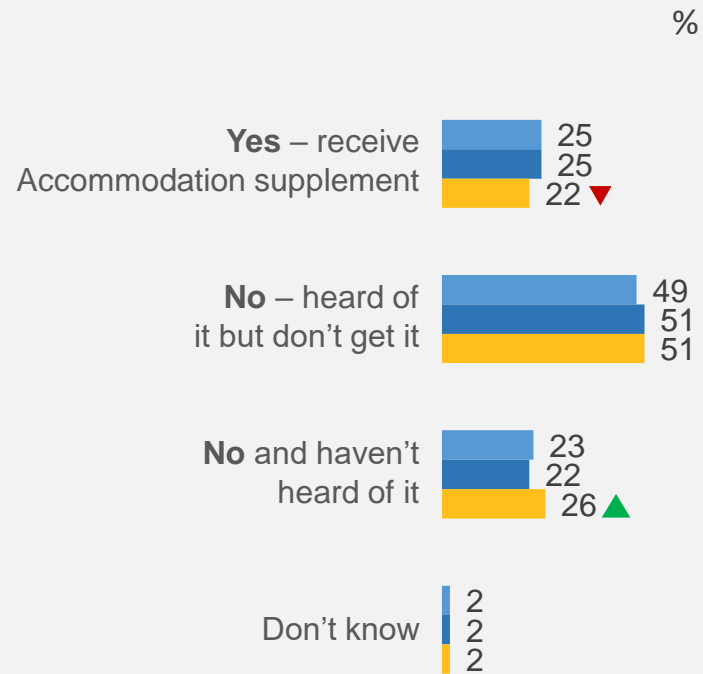
# Financial support

Anticipated need for government financial support remains stable. Slightly fewer report receiving the Accommodation Supplement (down three points to 22%) and a slightly higher proportion are not aware of the Accommodation Supplement (up four points to 26%). Four out of five renters (80%) said they have not received any other financial support. Among those who have, the most common support comes is from family (12%).

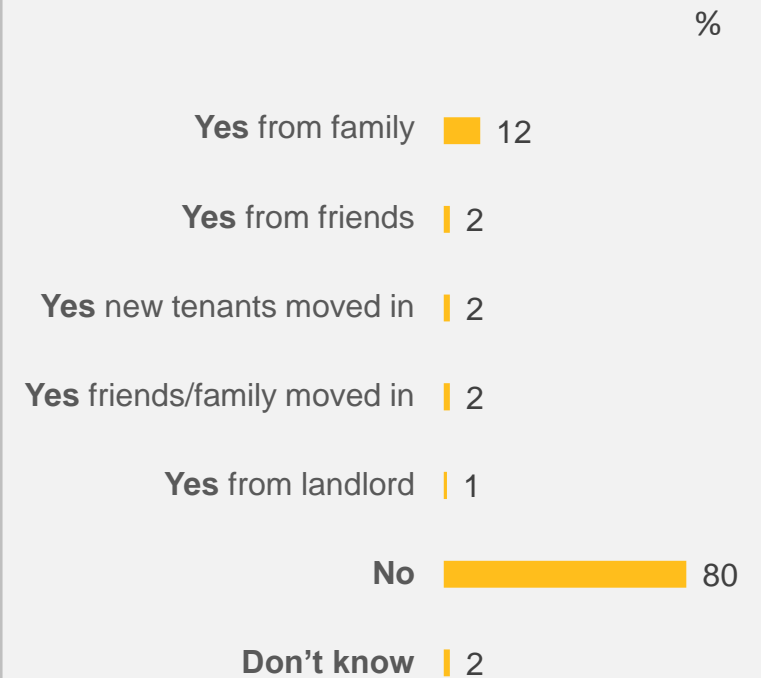
## Perceived need for Government financial support to pay rent over next few months



## Accommodation Supplement



## Other financial support



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). 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 (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q19a. "Do you receive the Accommodation Supplement?"  
▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

Base: All renters (May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q19b "Have you received any other financial support/help with your rent payments in the last 6 months?" Asked for the first time in May 2022, so no timeseries data is available



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# Moving

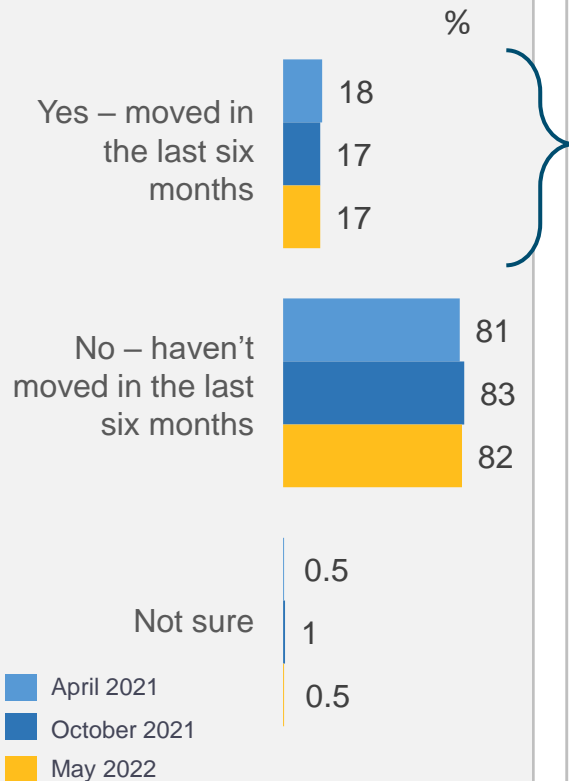


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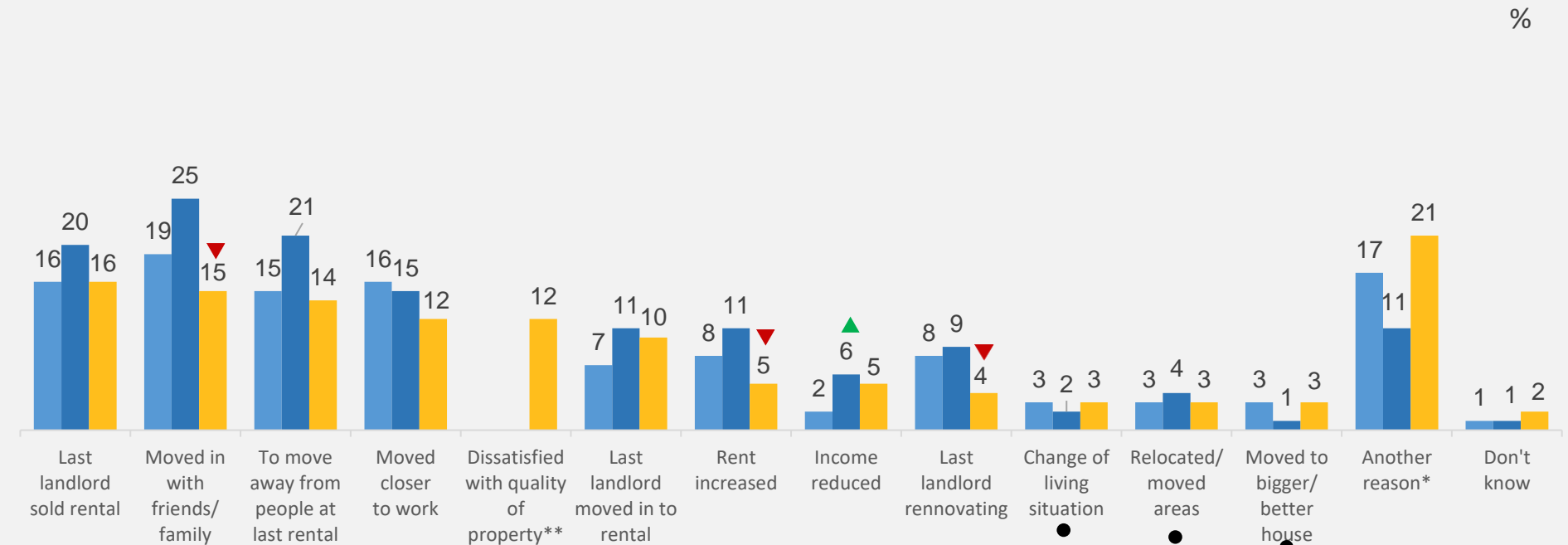
# Recent moves

Consistent with 2021 levels, 17% of renters have moved to a new rental property in the last six months. Key motivations for renters moving include their landlord deciding to sell the rental property (16%) and because the renter chose to move in with friends/family (15%) or move away from the people they used to rent with (14%). Compared with October 2021, somewhat fewer moves occurred because of renters moving in with friends/family, rent increases and landlord renovations.

## Whether moved in the last six months



## Reasons for moving



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). 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 (April 2021 n=273, October 2021 n=252, May 2022 n=260). Source: Q21. "Why did you move?" \*Other reasons include: divorce, downsizing, landlord re-developing land, lease ending etc. \*\*New coded added in May 2022

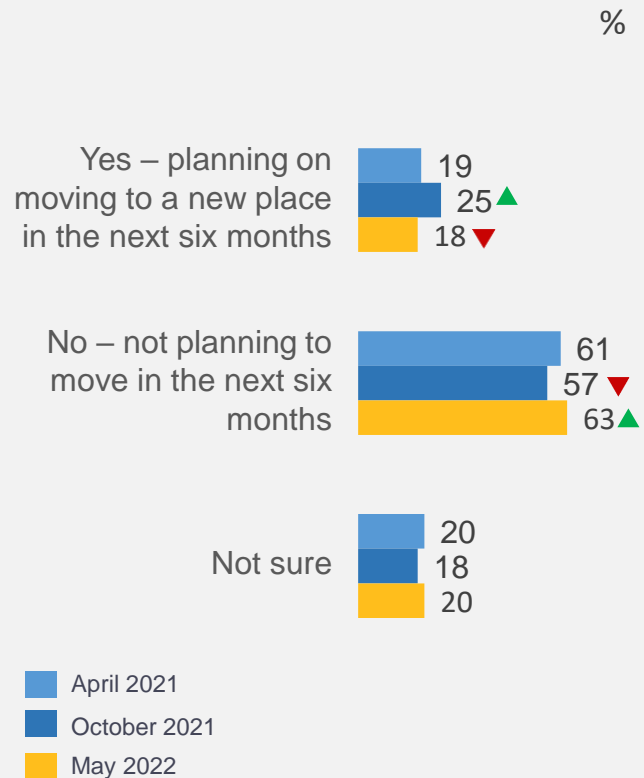
▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave  
● Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork)



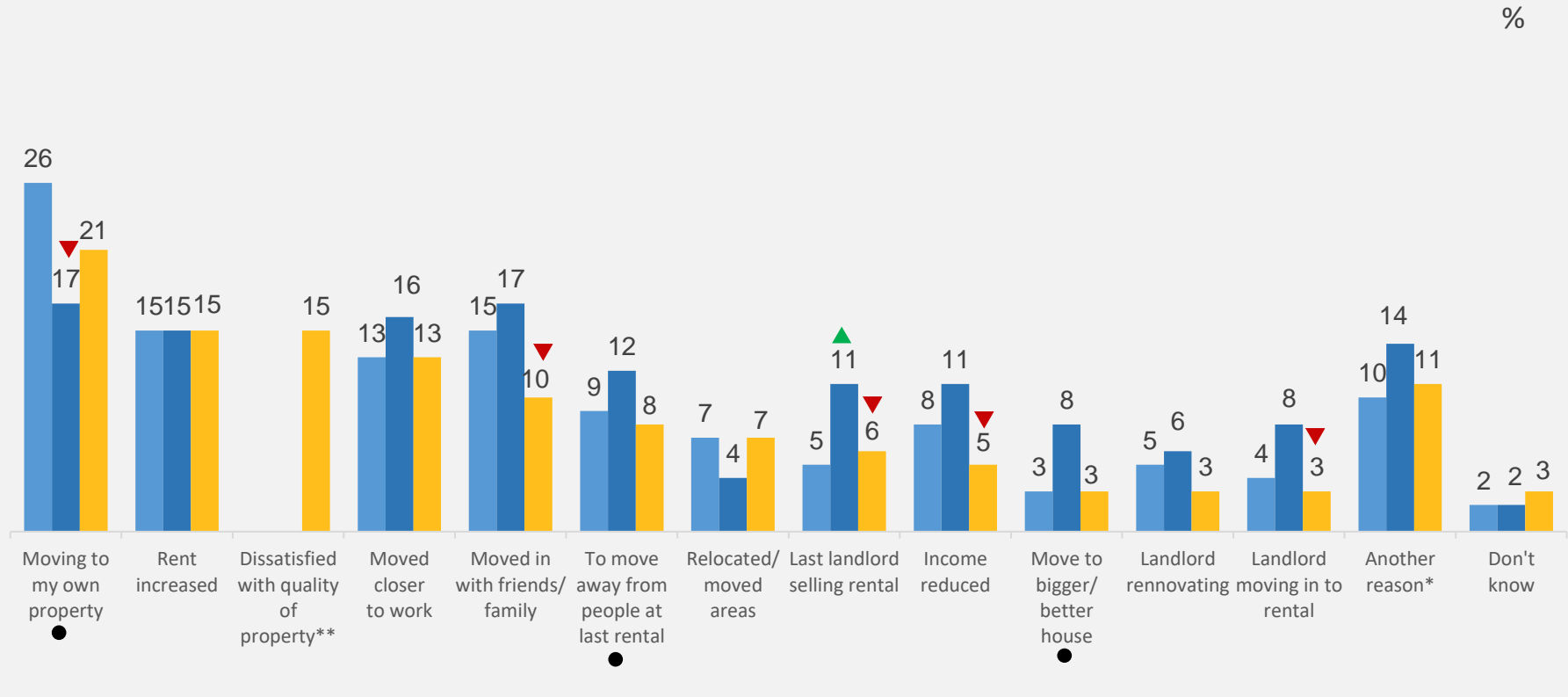
# Plans to move

Fewer renters are now planning to move (down seven points to 18% since October 2021). The most common reasons for contemplating moving relate to moving into their own property (23%), rent increases (16%) or moving to be closer to their work (14%). Compared with October 2021, fewer renters are thinking about moving in with friends/family, or feel they need to move for financial reasons or the landlord moving in.

## Whether planning to move in the next six months



## Reasons for planning to move



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). Source: Q22. "Are you planning on moving over the next 6 months to a new place to live?"

Base: Renters who are planning to move in the next six months (April 2021 n=293, October 2021 n=378, May 2022 n=267. Source: Q23. "Why are you planning on moving?" \*Other reasons include: landlord not doing necessary repairs, end of lease, being unhappy with the area/property etc. \*\*New code added in May 2022

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave  
● Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork)



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# Home buying

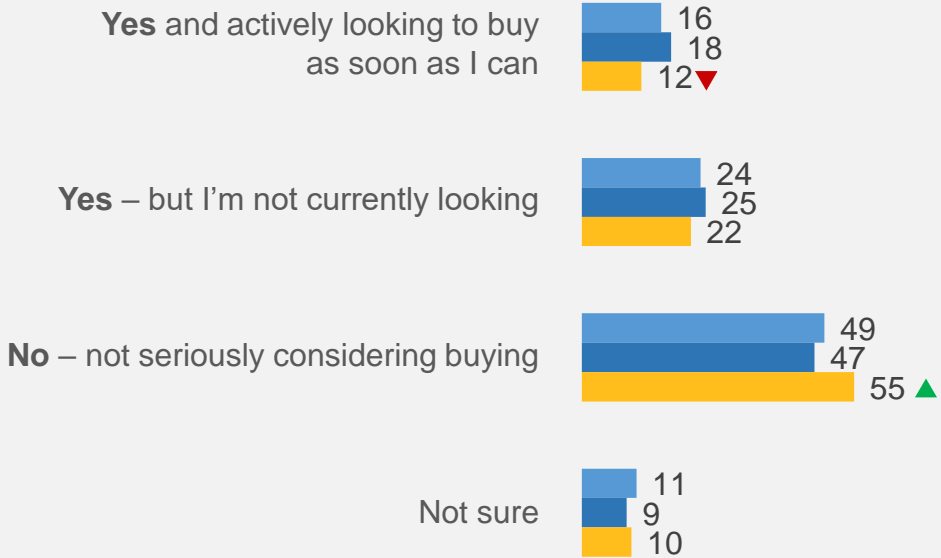


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# Home buying intentions

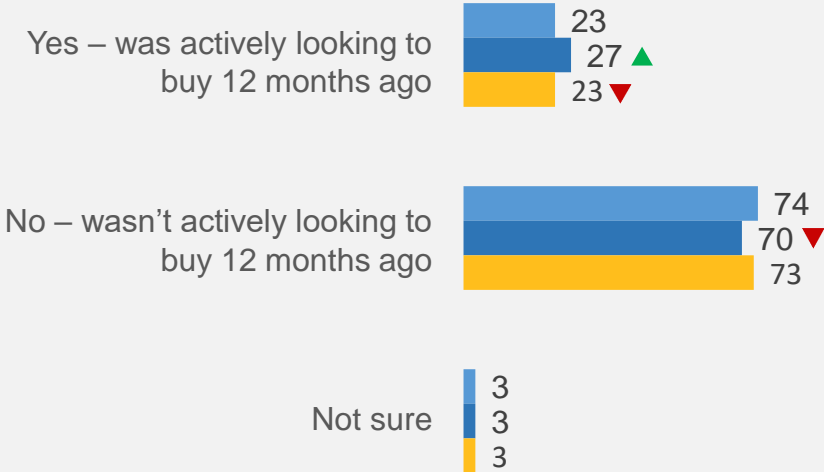
Fewer renters are actively looking to buy their own home in the next 12 months (down six points to 12%). And fewer report actively looking 12 months ago (down four points to 23%).

## Whether considering buying home in next 12 months



April 2021  
 October 2021  
 May 2022

## Whether actively looking to buy 12 months ago



Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501).  
 Source: Q24. “Are you seriously considering buying your own home in the next 12 months?”

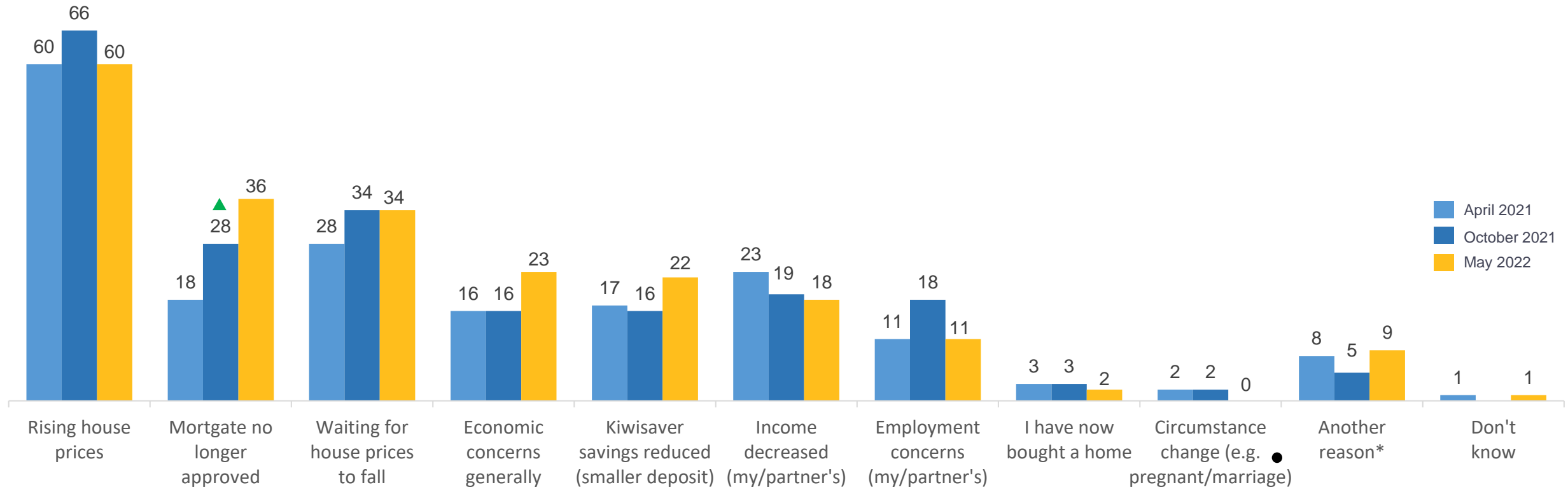
▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501).  
 Source: Q25. “Were you actively looking to buy your own home a year ago?”

# Barriers to looking

Six in ten tenants who were looking to buy a house 12 months ago but are no longer looking say they stopped because of rising house prices. Other key reasons include difficulty getting a mortgage application approved (36%) or waiting for house prices to fall (34%). Over one in three (36%) renters mention trouble accessing mortgages.

## Reasons why renters have stopped actively looking to buy



%

April 2021  
October 2021  
May 2022

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave  
● Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork)

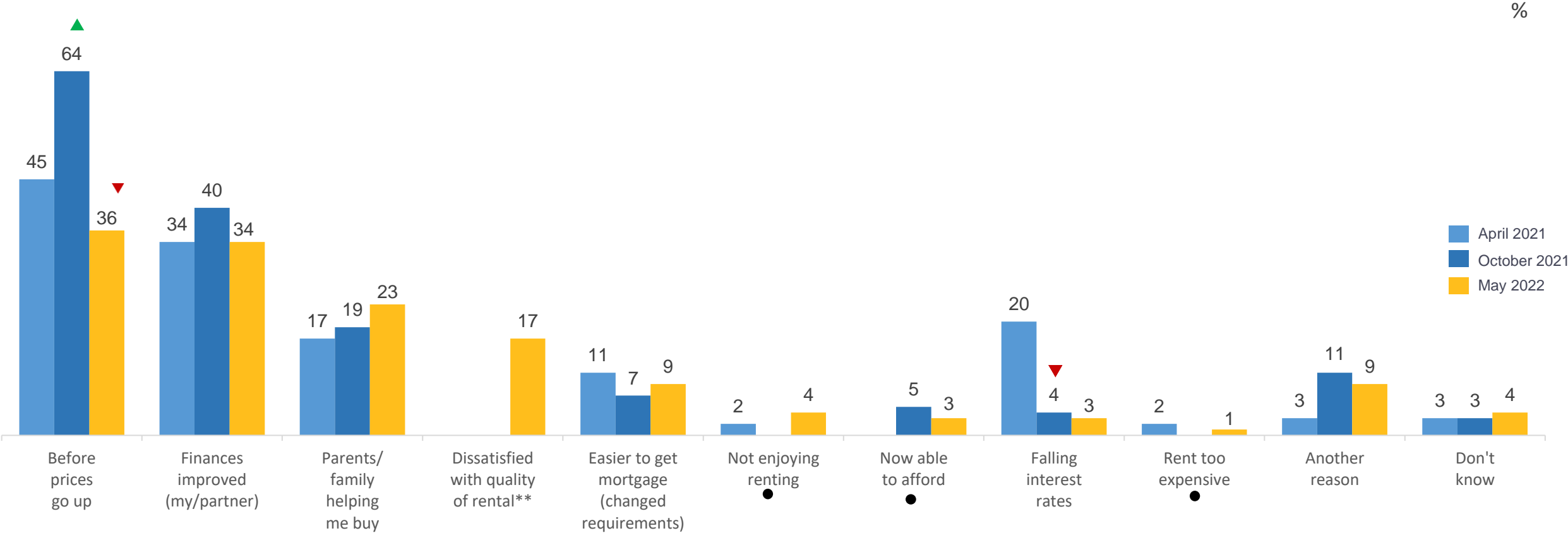
Base: Renters who were actively looking to buy 12 months ago, but are not currently looking or considering buying (April 2021 n=191, October 2021 n=204, May 2022 n=212).  
Source: Q26. "Why are you no longer actively looking to buy your own home?"  
Other reasons include: General concerns about the housing market, relocating, general concerns about finances etc.



# Reasons for looking

Renters looking to buy are now much less likely than in October 2021 to be motivated by wanting to beat rising house prices, although this remains one of the key reasons for wanting to buy. Improved financial situations and parental support to buy a house are other key reasons.

## Reasons why renters are now actively looking to buy



%

April 2021  
October 2021  
May 2022

Base: Renters who were not actively looking to buy 12 months ago, but are now actively looking to buy (April 2021 n=117, October 2021 n=96, May 2022 n=75). Source: Q27. "Why are you now actively looking to buy your own home?" † Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork). \*\*New code added in May 2022

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave  
● Unprompted response (coded post fieldwork)



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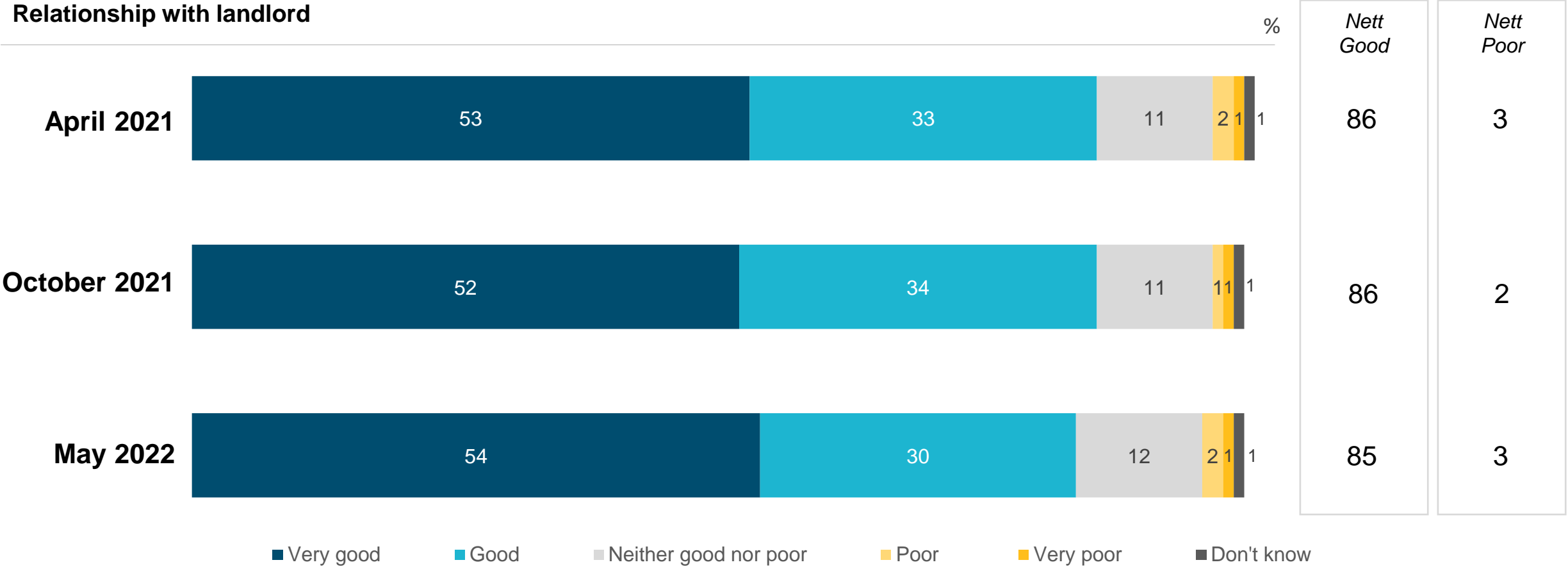
# Renters' relationships with landlords



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# Relationship with landlord

The majority of renters (85%) feel that they have a good or very good relationship with their landlord or property manager. This is consistent with previous waves



Base: Renters whose rental is managed by their landlord, or a professional property manager or real estate agent on the landlord's behalf (April 2021 n=1,429, October 2021 n=1,406, May 2022 n=1432). Source: Q8. "Overall, which of these best describes your relationship with your landlord (or property manager)?"

▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

# Why your relationship with the landlord is good

Renters who feel their relationship with their landlord is good were asked to explain why they feel this way in the May 2022 survey. Note that this data has not been coded (i.e. quantified). However, the verbatim responses suggest that tenants feel good relationships tend to stem from mutual respect and prompt landlord resolution to problems, as well as tenants feeling like they do their part to maintain the property. Infrequent rent increases also appear to aid in maintaining positive relationships.

“Always available and generally responds in a timely manor when requested”

“Our communication is great and the property manager and owner of the home have shown wonderful compassion during covid, separation and starting a new job as a single Mum.”

“They let us do anything we've wanted to do, they take care of all maintenance immediately. They complied with all healthy homes rules and the rent never goes up... fingers crossed.”

“They have been quick to address issues we brought to their attention and always ask if there are any problems during inspections.”

“They are very respectful of our privacy and trust us to look after the place. In the rare occasion something needs to be fixed, they are very responsive and get it done quickly. They have also never increased the rent in the 7 years we've been living there.”

“We get on well and I treat the home as if it is mine”

“We get along well. Rent has not increased since I moved in 3 years ago. We have become good friends and they fix / attend to anything quickly.”

“When we have issues or concerns with the house we know we can contact our property manager and they send someone out asap. Super friendly and easy to speak to.”



# Why your relationship with the landlord is bad

Renters who feel their relationship with their landlord is bad were asked to explain why they feel this way in the May 2022 survey. Poor relationships with landlords and property managers tend to come from a lack of respect, maintenance or communication. Other concerns relate to the house being non-compliant with the healthy homes standards.

“The property manager has discriminated me on my disability and ignores emails and messages to fix things”

“Our landlord is greedy and has no respect for us as tenants. We go above and beyond to maintain the property and make it look presentable but our landlord had not done any repairs or maintenance on the property in over 14 years unless it was actually required (i.e. leaking roof). The place is falling apart - inside and out.”

“She’s rude, has made our head tenant cry. Threatens to raise rent when things need fixing which are the landlords responsibility”

“They make up rules that are not legal.”

“She only communicates when it benefits her. Rarely hear back when we have issues.”

“Unresponsive, lazy, entitled, arrogant, rude, does not fix major and illegal problems with the house”

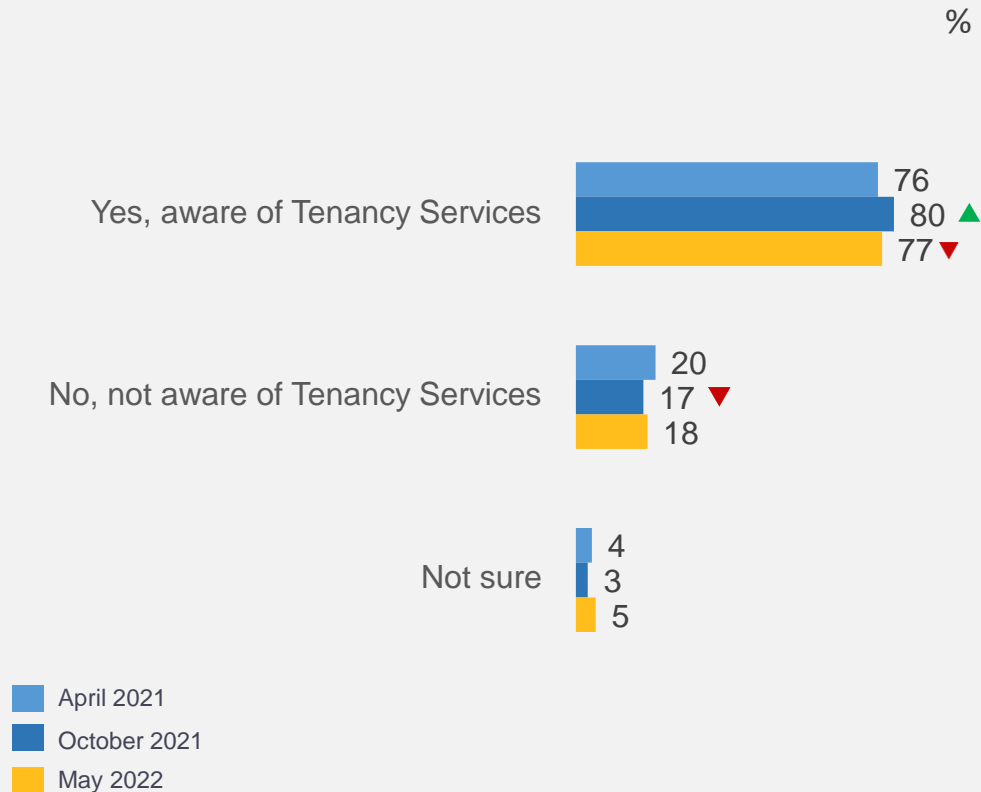
“They dictate [what happens] no matter what. If we don’t like it, we are out just like that. They know [about] the housing crisis so we must put up with everything.”

“The house we are currently renting doesn't have a heat pump, no ventilation system.”

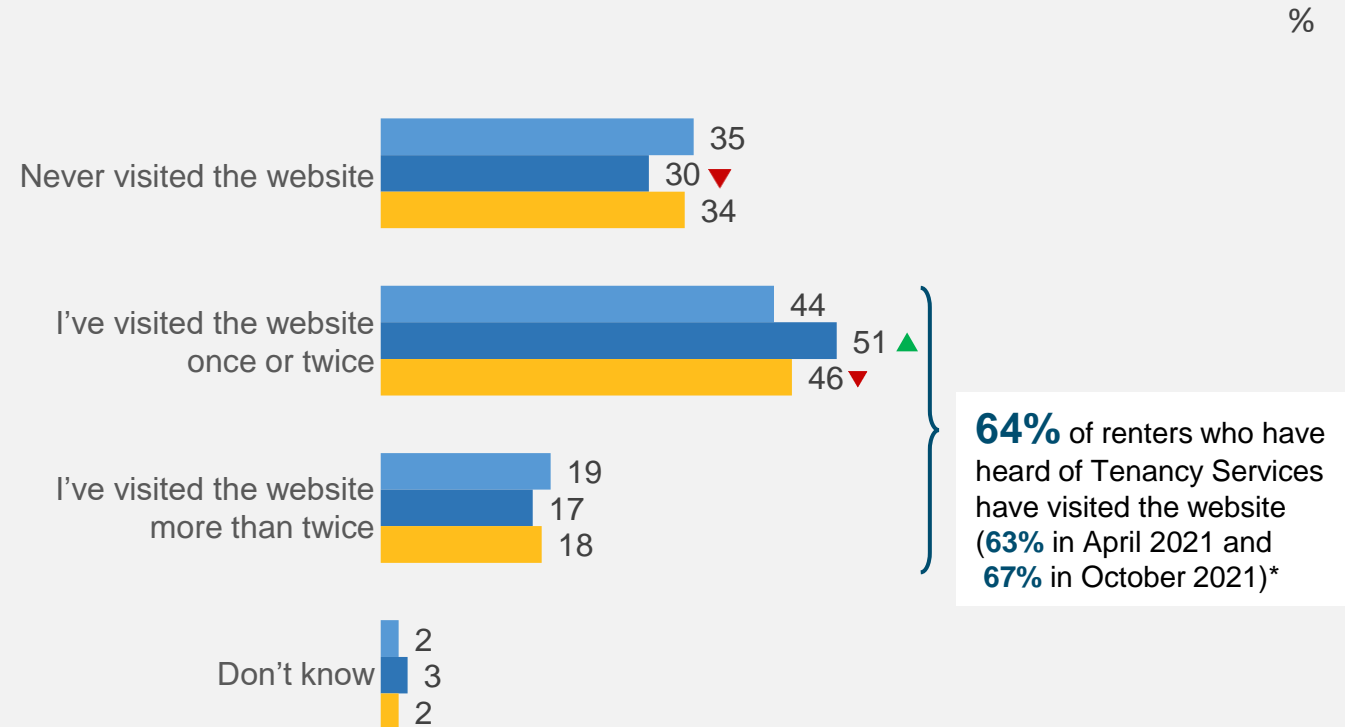
# Awareness of Tenancy Services and website use

Just under four out of five (77%) renters are aware of Tenancy Services (down three points since October 2021). Around two thirds (64%) of renters who are aware of Tenancy Services recall visiting the website at least once.

## Awareness of Tenancy Services



## Use of Tenancy Services website



**64%** of renters who have heard of Tenancy Services have visited the website (63% in April 2021 and 67% in October 2021)\*

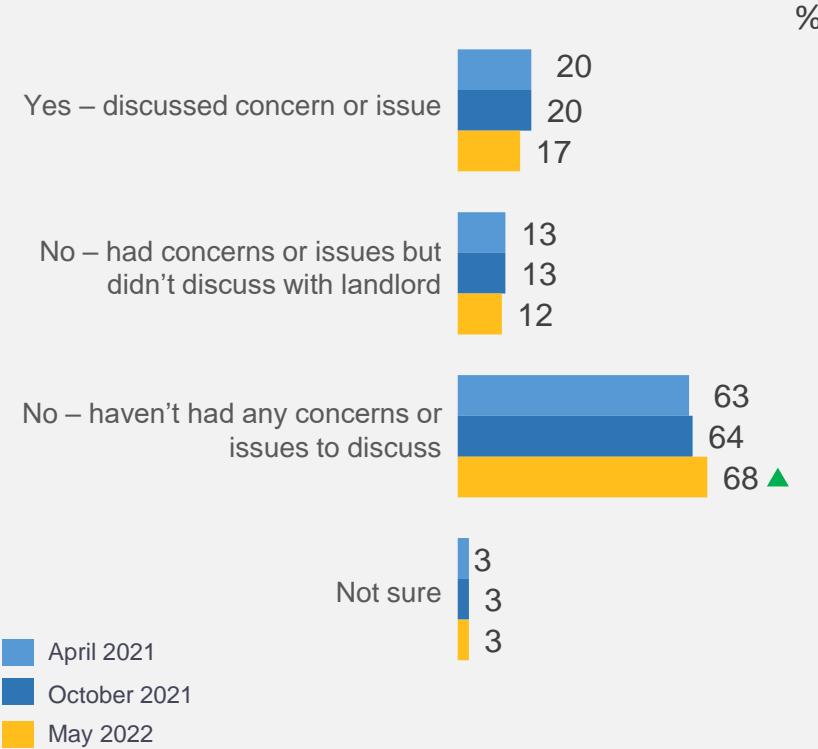
Base: All renters (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501).  
 Source: Q28. "Tenancy Services provides information on tenancy law on its website [www.tenancy.govt.nz](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz). Before today, were you aware of Tenancy Services?"  
 ▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

Base: Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services (April 2021 n=1,142, October 2021 n=1,199, May 2022 n=1154).  
 Source: Q29. "How often have you visited the Tenancy Services website for information or to find answers to questions about your tenancy situation?" \*Note this difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

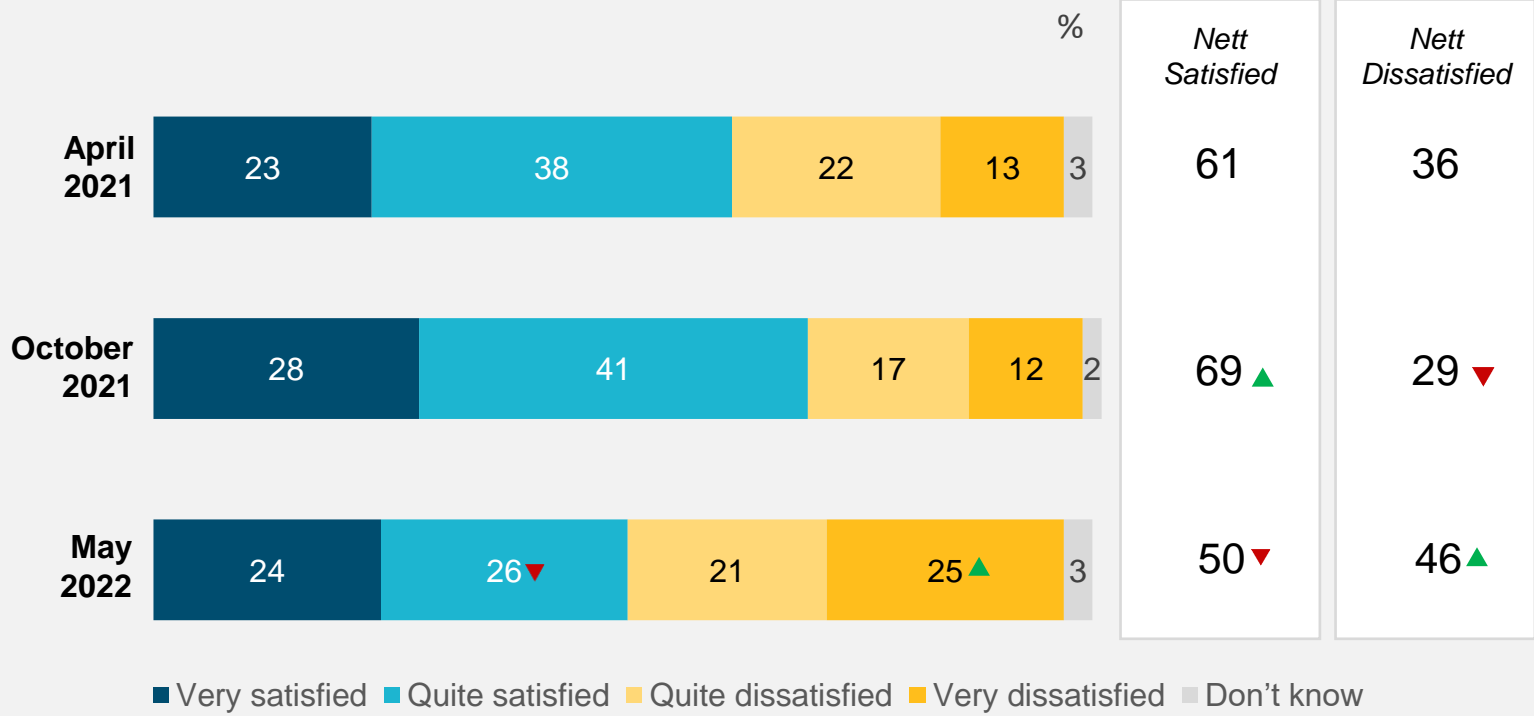
# Prevalence of tenancy issues

Around three in ten (29%) renters had a concern or issue about their tenancy (down by four points since October 2021). Satisfaction with the outcome of the discussion has dropped (down 19 points since October 2021 to 50%).

## 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 (April 2021 n=1,500, October 2021 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501). 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 (April 2021 n=307, October 2021 n=303, May 2022 n=262). Source: Q31. "How satisfied were you with the outcome of the discussion(s)?"

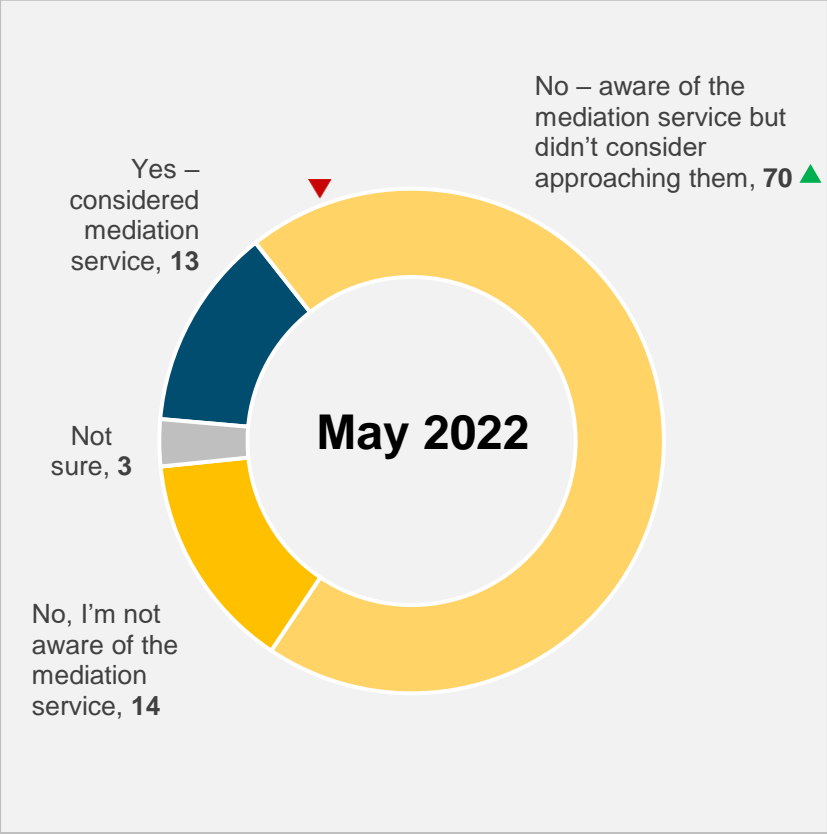
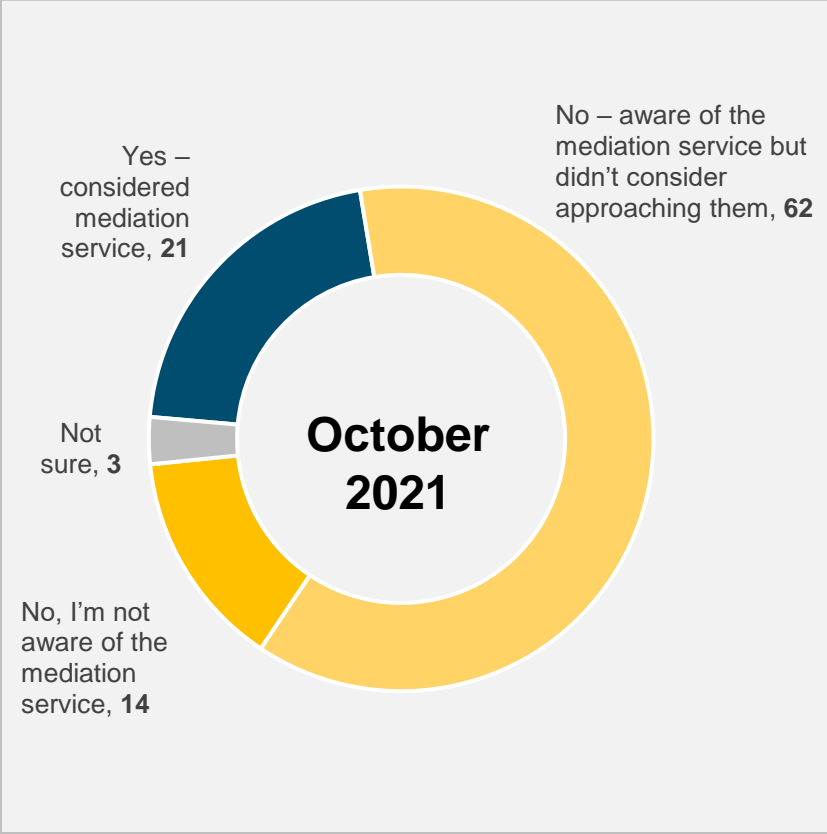
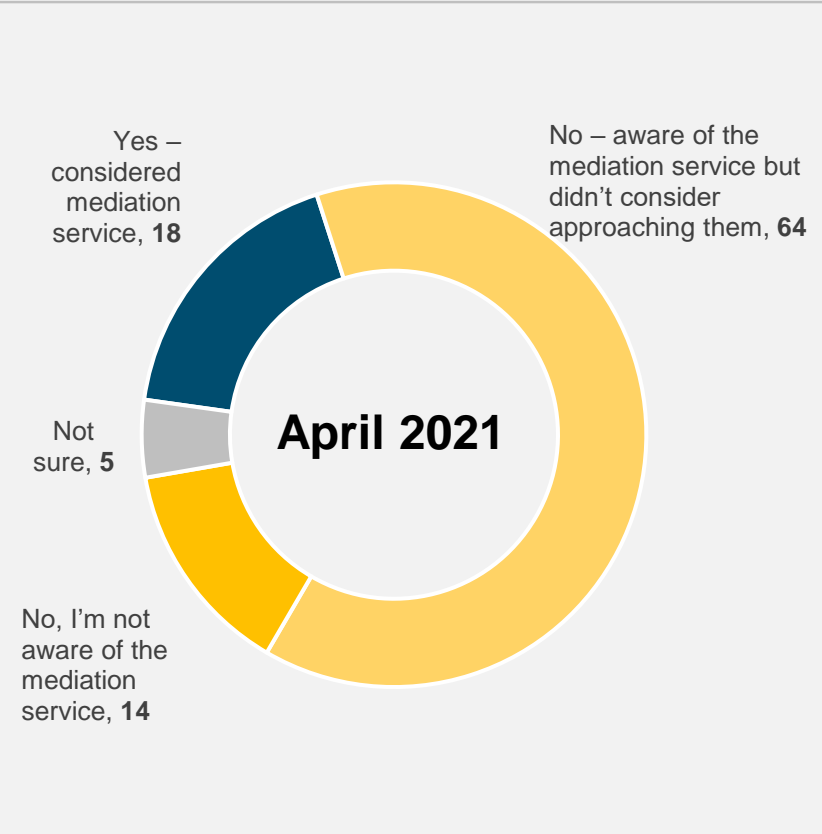
▲ Significant increase from previous wave  
▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

# Resolving tenancy issues

Just under one in seven (13%) renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and had a tenancy concern in the last three months said they considered using the mediation service offered by tenancy services (down eight points since October 2021).

## 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 (April 2021 n=399, October 2021 n=407, May 2022 n=357).  
 Source: Q32. "Had you seriously considered the mediation service that Tenancy Services provides, to assist with resolving the issues with your landlord?"

▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

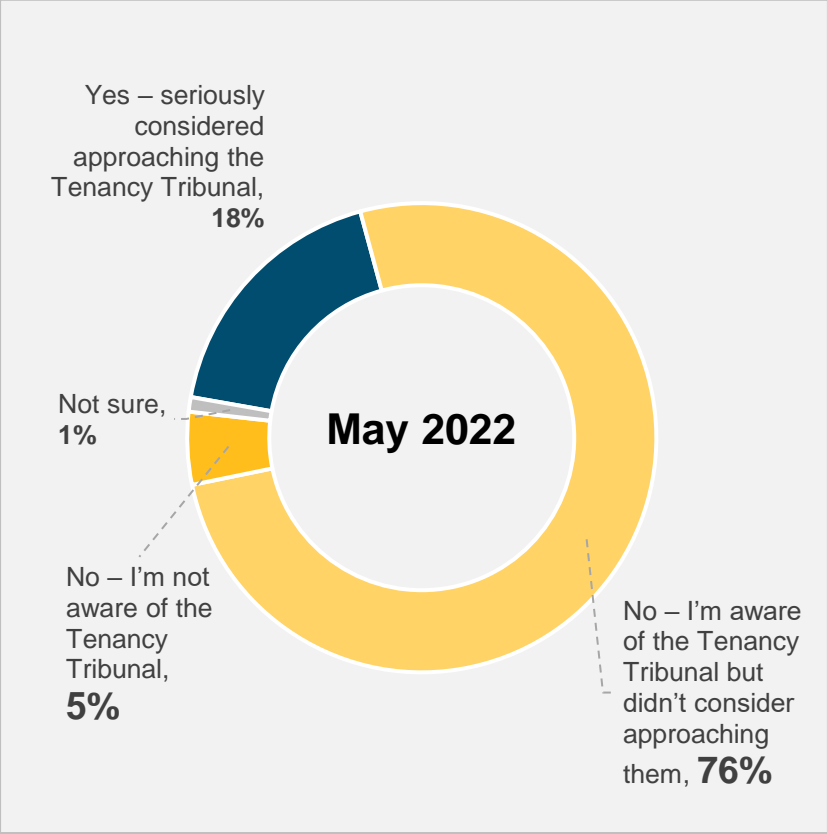
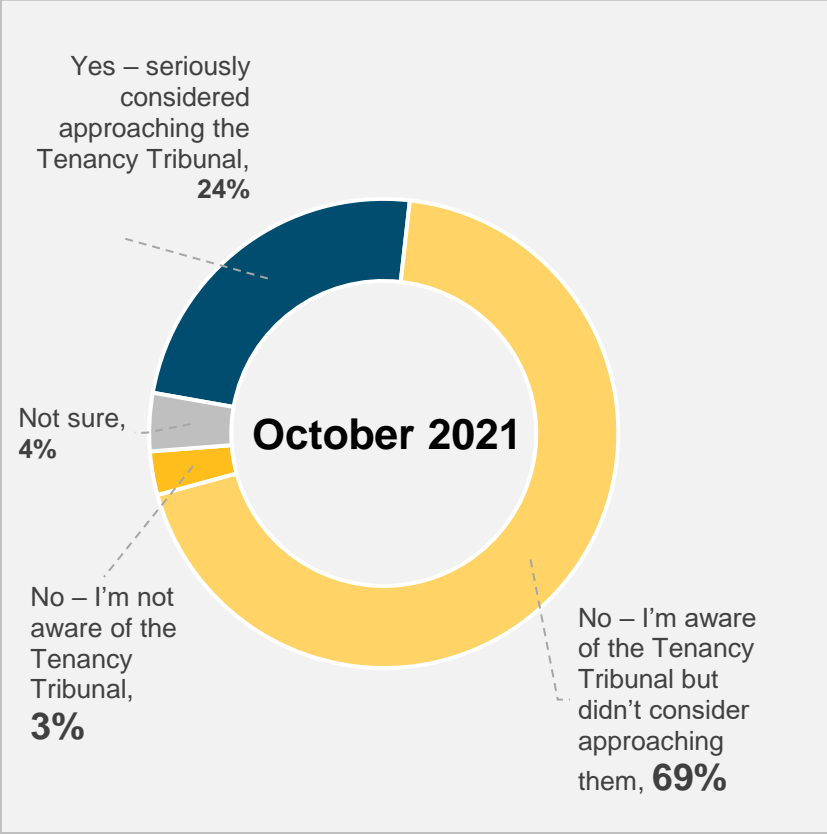
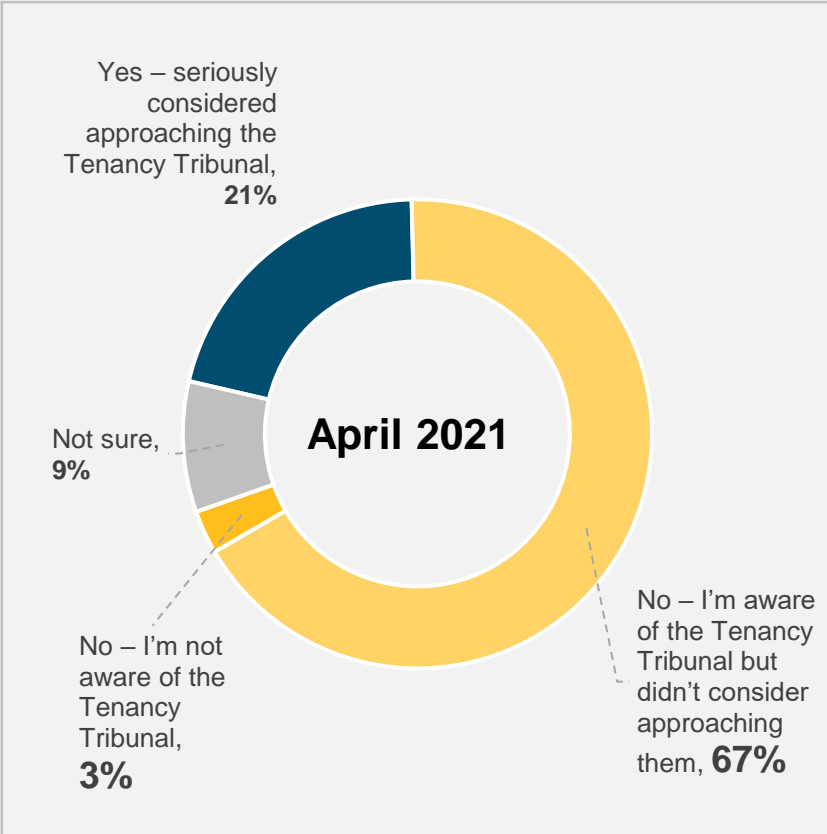


# Tenancy Tribunal

Less than one in five (18%) renters who were dissatisfied with the outcome of the discussion with their landlord or property manager are aware of the Tenancy Tribunal and considered approaching them to help resolve their 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 (April 2021 n=92, October 2021 n=72, May 2022 n=101). Source: Q33. "Had you seriously considered approaching the Tenancy Tribunal to help resolve the issue?"

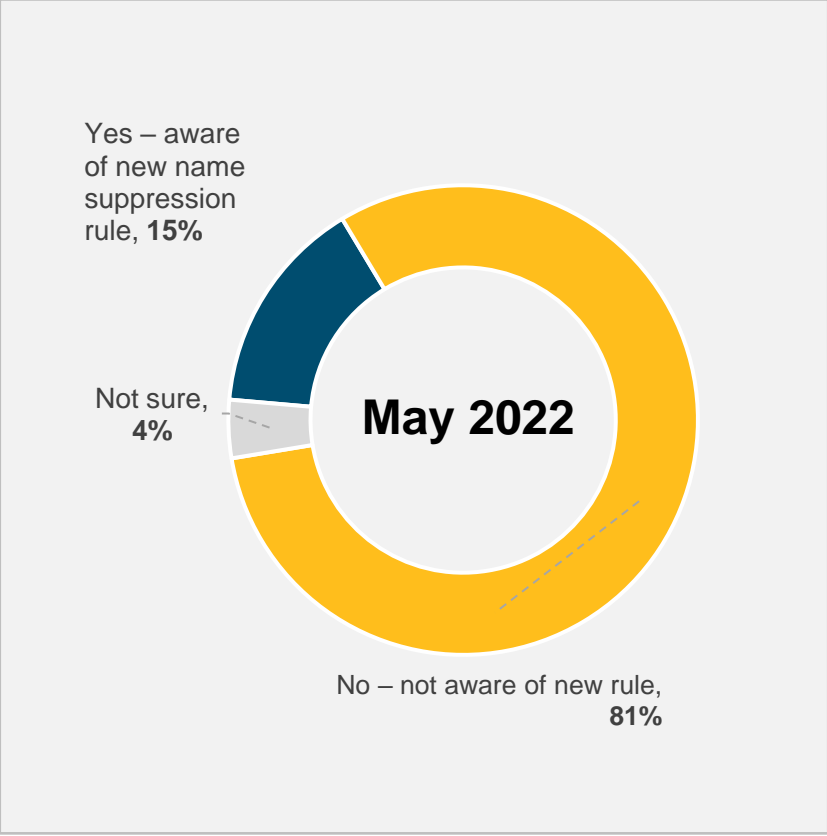
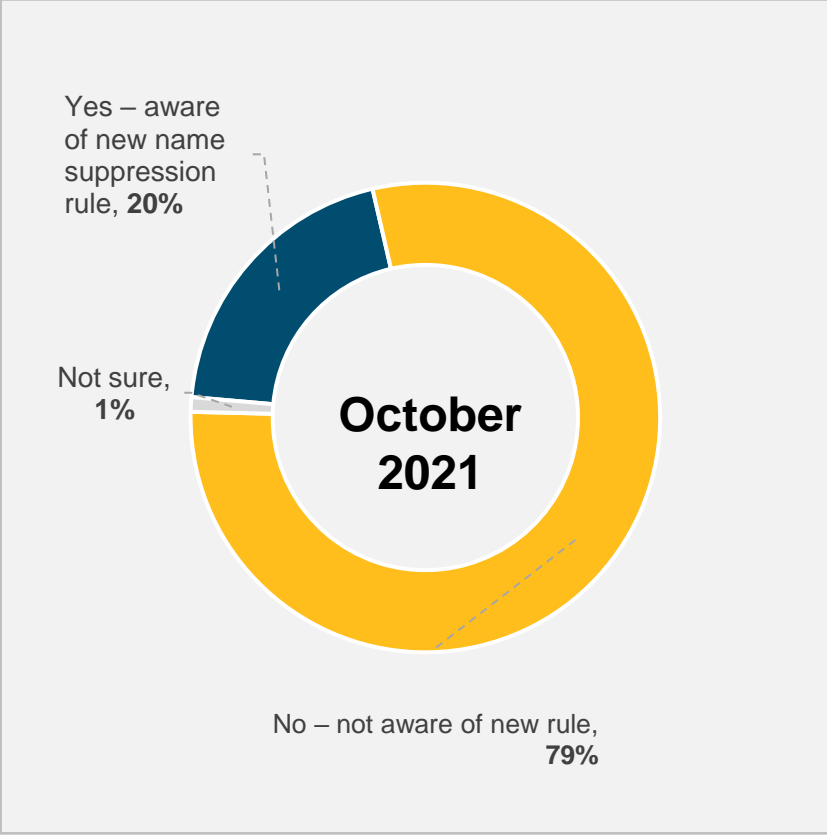
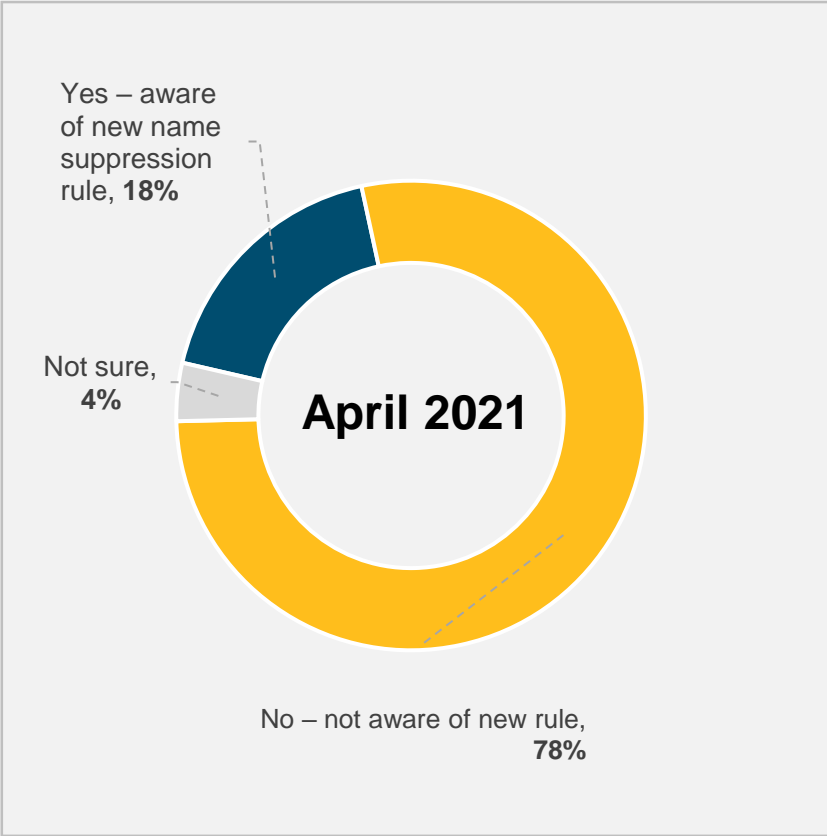
▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave

# Name suppression rule

15% of 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 (April 2021 n=89, October 2021 n=70, May 2022 n=96).  
 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?"  
 ▲ / ▼ Indicates a significant increase/decrease since previous wave



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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