



A Survey By **Leger**

FINANCIAL STRESS INDEX

2025



QAFP®



Methodology



A Canadian online survey.



2010 18+ Canadians.



Completed between January 6 to January 13, 2025, using Leger's online panel.



No margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample (i.e. a web panel in this case).

For comparison purposes, a probability sample of $n=2010$ yields a margin of error no greater than $\pm 2.2\%$, (19 times out of 20).

Leger's Online Panel

Leger's online panel has approximately 400,000 members nationally and has a retention rate of 90%.

Quality control

Stringent quality assurance measures allow Leger to achieve the high-quality standards set by the company. As a result, its methods of data collection and storage outperform the norms set by WAPOR (The World Association for Public Opinion Research). These measures are applied at every stage of the project: from data collection to processing, through to analysis. We aim to answer our clients' needs with honesty, total confidentiality, and integrity. Also, poll aggregator 338Canada.com gave Leger the highest rating among all polling firms in Canada for the accuracy of its studies. (See <https://338canada.com/pollster-ratings.htm>.)

Detailed Results

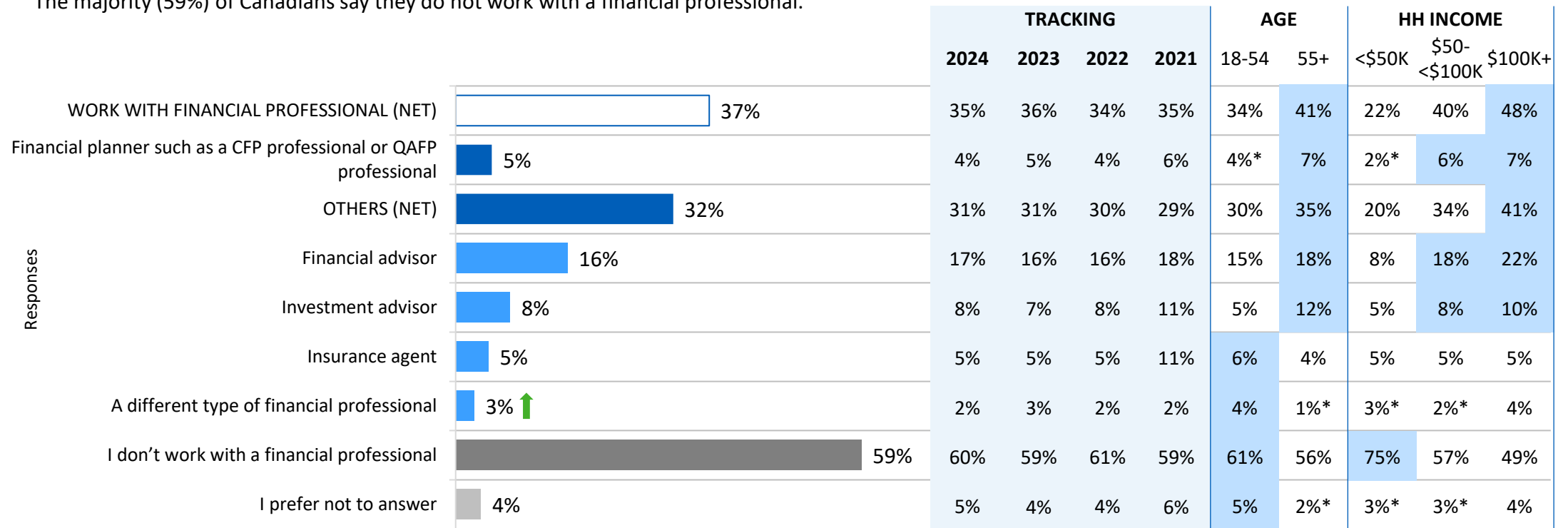
Use of Financial Professionals



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Nearly four-in-ten (37%) Canadians work with a financial professional.

Fewer than one-in-ten (5%) work with a financial planner, however, this has significantly increased among Albertans (8% up from 3% last wave). One-in-seven work with a financial advisor (16%), while fewer work with an investment advisor (8%), insurance agent (5%) or a different type of financial professional (3%). The majority (59%) of Canadians say they do not work with a financial professional.



Percentage

↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than last wave

Significantly higher than counterparts



Q1: Do you work with one of the following financial professionals?

=Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Detailed Results

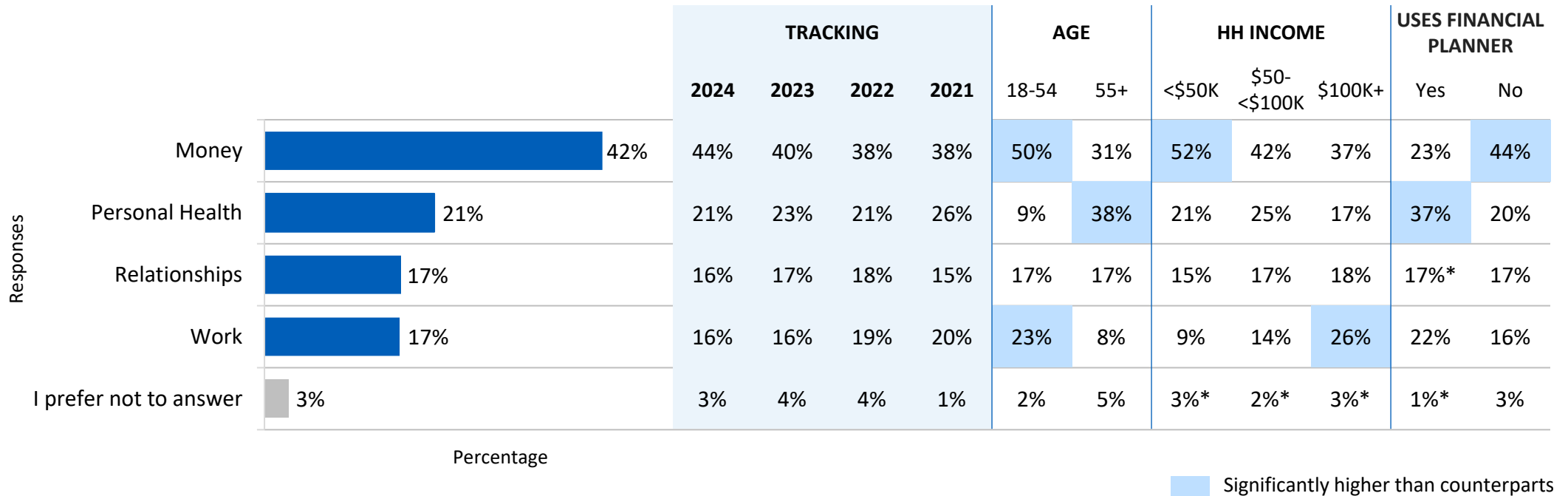
Current Financial Situation



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Money remains by far the greatest stressor for Canadians; double that of anything else that causes stress in their lives.

Money is a significantly greater source of stress for Canadians under 55, those with a household income below \$50K, and those living outside Quebec. Individuals without a financial planner are nearly twice as likely to feel financial stress compared to those who have one. Personal health is a concern for 21% of respondents, particularly older Canadians (55+), Quebecers, and those who use a financial planner. In fact, those with a financial planner are more worried about their health than their finances. Relationships and work stress 17% of Canadians, with variations based on age and income.

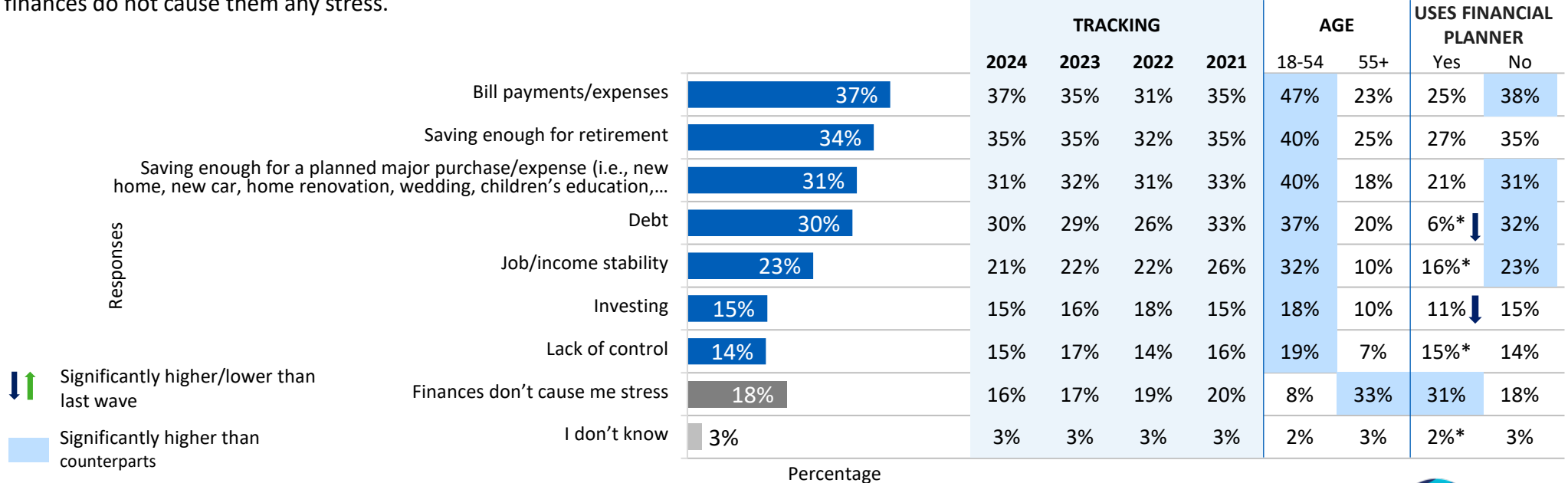


Q2: In general, what tends to cause you the most stress in your life?
 Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *category count <20.



Bill payments/expenses, saving for retirement, saving for a major purchase, and debt remain the top financial stressors for Canadians.

Canadians are stressed about an average of two aspects on their finances, with stress about paying bills (37%), saving for retirement (34%), saving enough for a planned major purchase (31%) and/or debt (30%) top of mind. A quarter (23%) are stressed about job/income stability, while one-in-seven worry about investing (15%) and lack of control (14%). Younger Canadians (aged <55) are more likely to mention one or more financial stressors than their counterparts. Those who use a financial planner are less stressed about debt (6% vs. 24% in 2024) and investing (11% vs. 23% in 2024). Notably, worry over debt is five times as likely among those without a financial planner as those with one. Older Canadians and those who use a financial planner are more likely to say finances do not cause them any stress.



Significantly higher/lower than last wave
 Significantly higher than counterparts



Q4: Which aspects of your finances cause you stress?

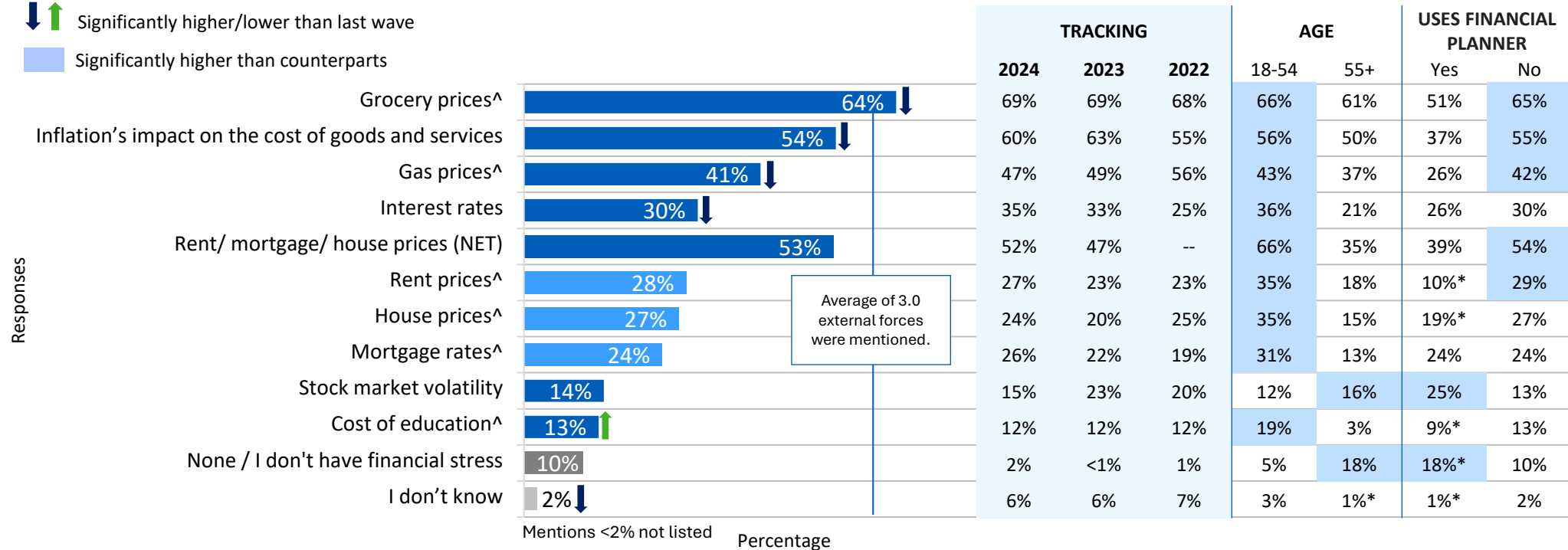
Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Grocery prices, the impact of inflation and gas prices continue to be the top three factors impacting financial stress, however, less so than in 2024.

Two-thirds (64%) say grocery prices are having a direct impact on their financial-related stress, followed by inflation (54%), gas prices (41%), and to a lesser extent, interest rates (30%). The good news is that these factors are less of an issue than they were a year ago. Half (53%) are impacted by rent, house, and mortgage rates. These issues are more pronounced among younger Canadians (aged <55) and those without a financial planner.

↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than last wave
 ■ Significantly higher than counterparts



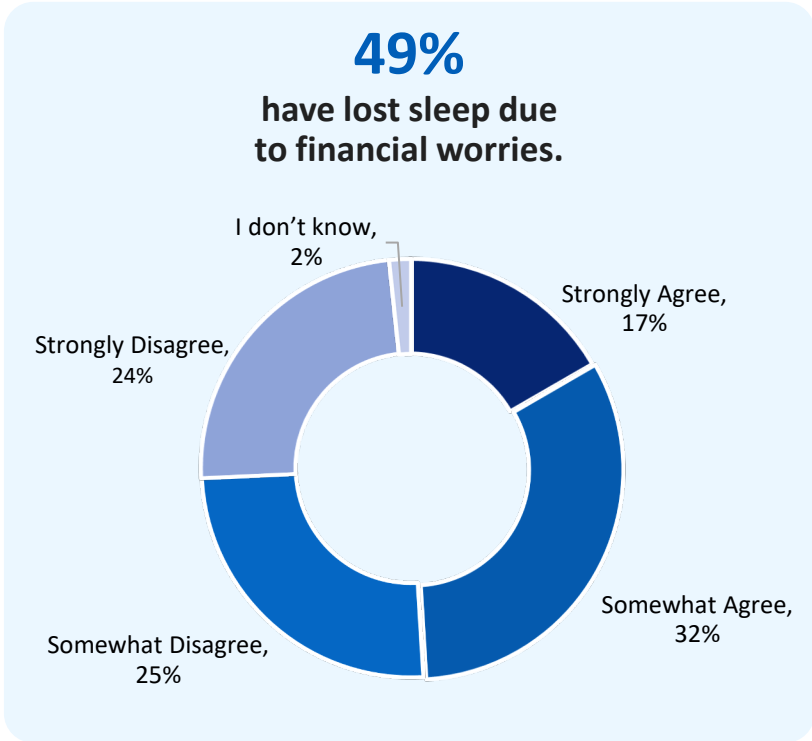
Q8: What, if any, external forces are having a direct impact on your financial-related stress? [^]in previous years, factors were described as 'elevated'.

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Half (49%) of Canadians continue to lose sleep because of financial worries.

Younger Canadians (<55) and lower earners (<\$50K in annual HH income) are more likely to report having lost sleep over financial worries. Moreover, those who do not use a financial professional are more likely to be losing sleep than those who do, and those specifically not working with a financial planner are about twice as likely to report having lost sleep as their counterparts who have one.



	TRACKING				AGE		HH INCOME			USES FINANCIAL PROFESSIONAL		USES FINANCIAL PLANNER	
	2024	2023	2022	2021	18-54	55+	<\$50K	\$50- <\$100K	\$100K+	Yes	No	Yes	No
AGREE (NET)	49%	48%	48%	51%	59%	35%	60%	49%	45%	42%	53%	27%	50%
Strongly Agree	15%	14%	14%	20%	22%	9%	25%	17%	12%	12%	20%	4%	17%
Somewhat Agree	34%	34%	34%	30%	37%	26%	35%	31%	33%	30%	34%	23%	33%
DISAGREE (NET)	50%	50%	50%	47%	39%	64%	38%	50%	54%	57%	45%	72%	48%
Somewhat Disagree	27%	25%	25%	23%	23%	28%	21%	26%	26%	28%	24%	30%	25%
Strongly Disagree	23%	25%	25%	24%	16%	36%	17%	24%	27%	30%	21%	42%	23%
I don't know	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%*	2%*	1%*	2%*	1%*	2%	1%*	1%

Significantly higher than counterparts

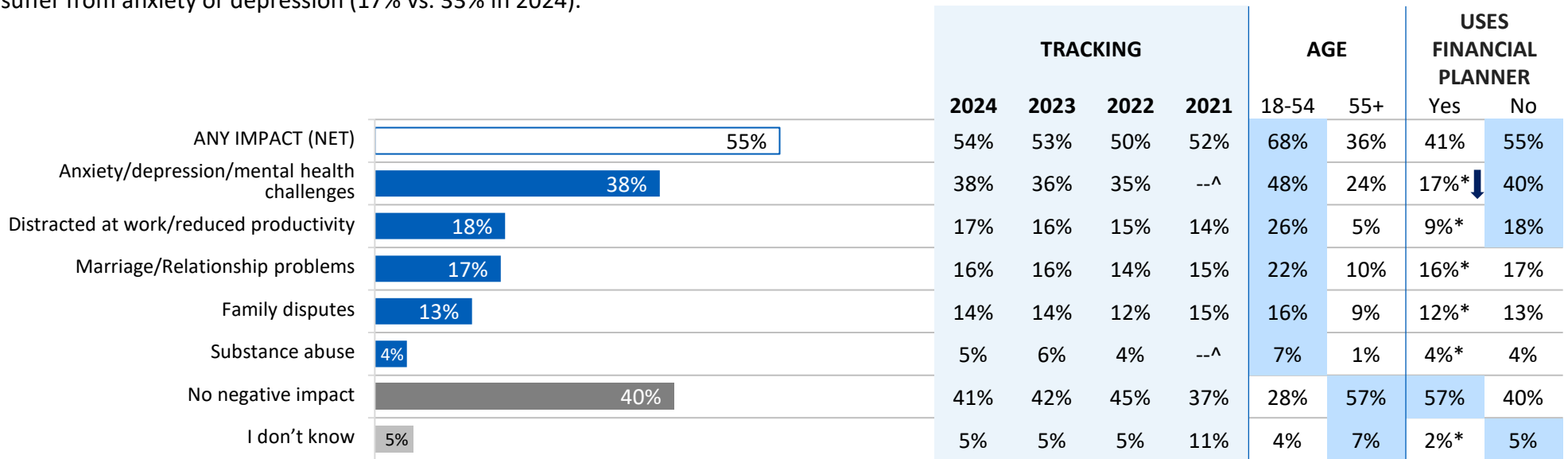


Q3: To what extent do you agree, or disagree, with the following statement: "I have lost sleep because of financial worries"?
Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



More than half (55%) of Canadians have experienced a negative impact on their life due to financial stress; anxiety/depression/mental health issues affect 38%.

Another two-in-ten report reduced productivity at work (18%) and marriage/relationship problems (17%), slightly fewer mention family disputes (13%), and just 4% report substance abuse as an impact. Among those who report a negative impact, younger (<55), lower earners (62% of those with a household income of <\$50 vs. 54% earning more), and those without a financial planner are more likely to be impacted, and in fact, those without a planner are roughly twice as likely to experience anxiety/depression and reduced productivity than those with one. Compared to last year, fewer with a financial planner indicate they suffer from anxiety or depression (17% vs. 33% in 2024).



↓↑ Significantly higher/lower than last wave
 Significantly higher than counterparts



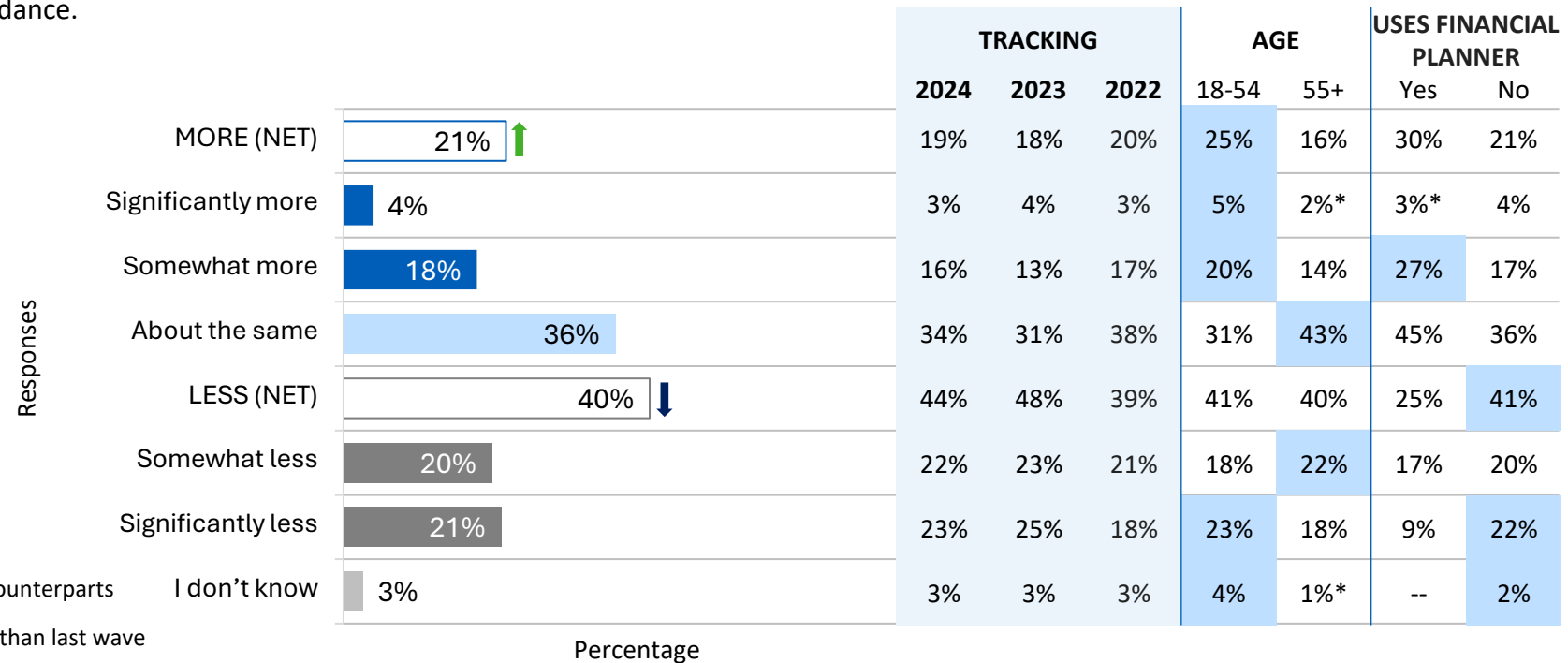
Q7: How has financial stress impacted your life? ^in 2021 these questions were asked differently

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510 *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



While three-quarters have the same or less disposable income as last year, two in ten (21%) report having more—a significant increase from 19% in 2024.

Younger Canadians (under 55) are more likely to report having more disposable income this year than last. Overall, 36% say their disposable income remains unchanged, while 40% report having less than last year—down from 44% in 2024. Canadians without a financial planner are more likely to have less disposable income than those who work with one. In fact, they are more than twice as likely to report a significant decline, highlighting the potential benefits of professional financial guidance.



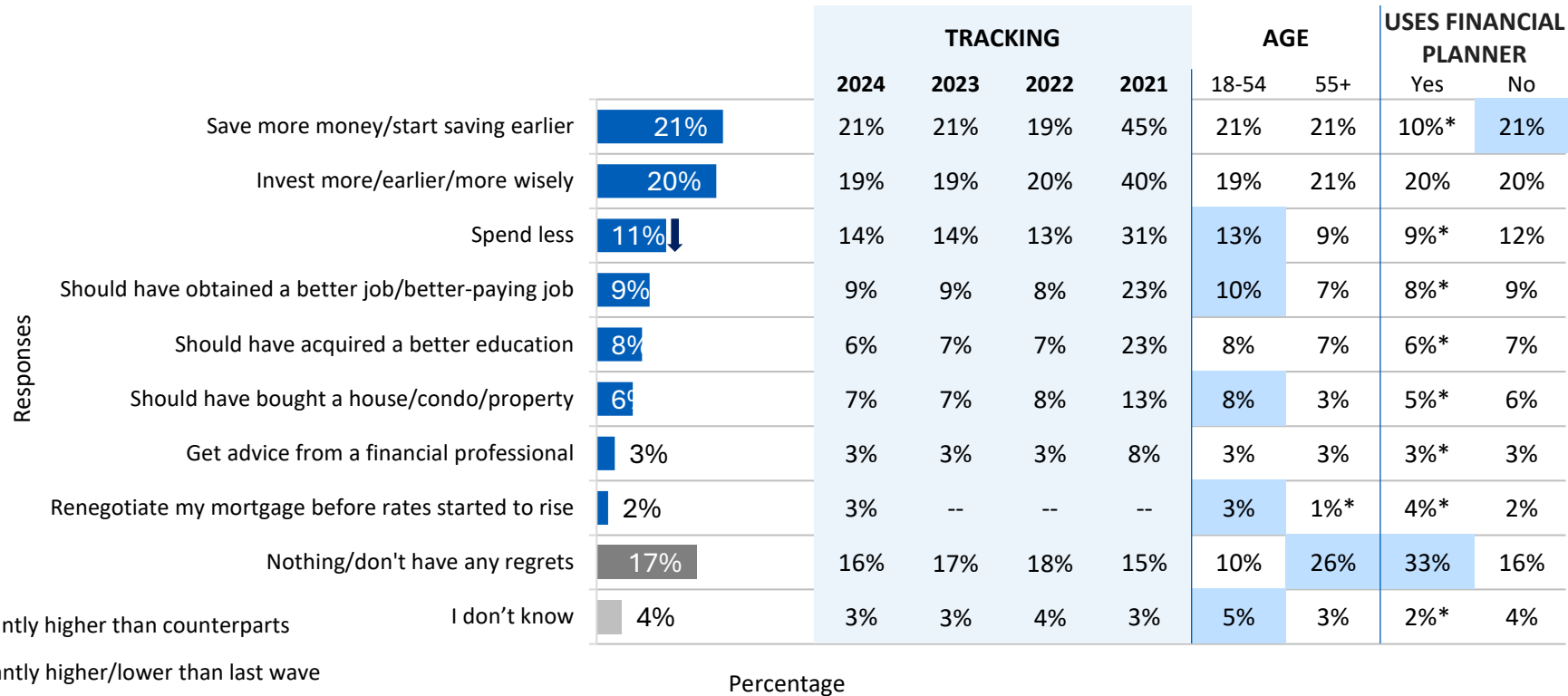
Q9: Do you feel that you have more disposable income this year than you did a year ago?

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Canadians most regret not saving (21%) and/or investing (20%) more, and earlier.

Fewer wish they had spent less (11%, but significantly less than the 14% from 2024), obtained a better paying job (9%), acquired a better education (8%), bought a house/condo (6%), got advice from a professional (3%), or renegotiated their mortgage (2%). Younger Canadians (<55) are more likely to express having some regrets vs. their counterparts. Canadians with a financial planner are twice as likely to say they would do nothing differently to reduce financial stress than those without one, while those without a planner are significantly more likely to wish they'd saved more money.

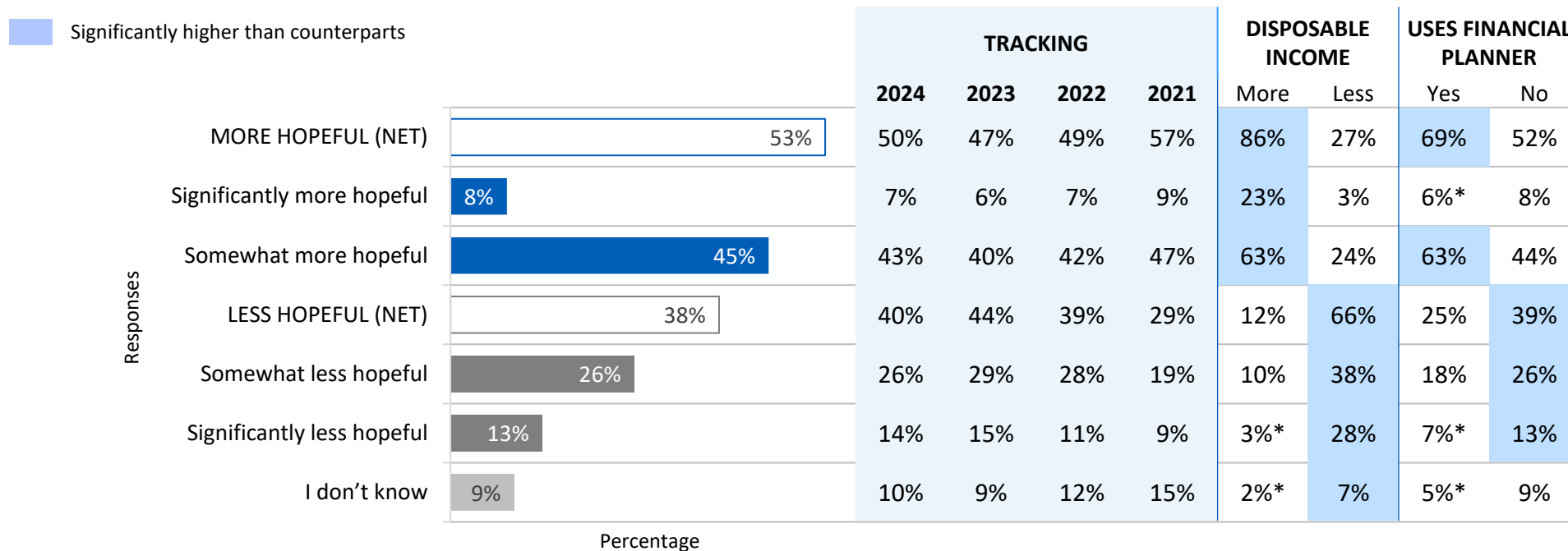


Q12: What is your greatest financial regret – that is, if you could go back in time and do things differently, what would that be? steps have you taken to reduce financial stress? = Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Just over half (53%) of Canadians say they are more hopeful about their future than a year ago, statistically stable compared to last year.

Hopefulness levels have remained relatively stable since 2021, when they rose to 57%, likely influenced by the post-pandemic recovery. Canadians who have more disposable income than a year ago, those earning more than \$50K+ (57% vs. 41% earning <\$50K), men (56% vs. 49% of women), those <35 (59% vs. 50% of those 35+), and using a financial planner are more likely to report feeling more hopeful. Conversely, those with less disposable income, women, (41%), those with a household income of <\$50K (50%), those aged 35+ (40%), and those with no financial planner are significantly more likely to report feeling less hopeful.



Q14: Are you feeling more hopeful about your financial future than a year ago?

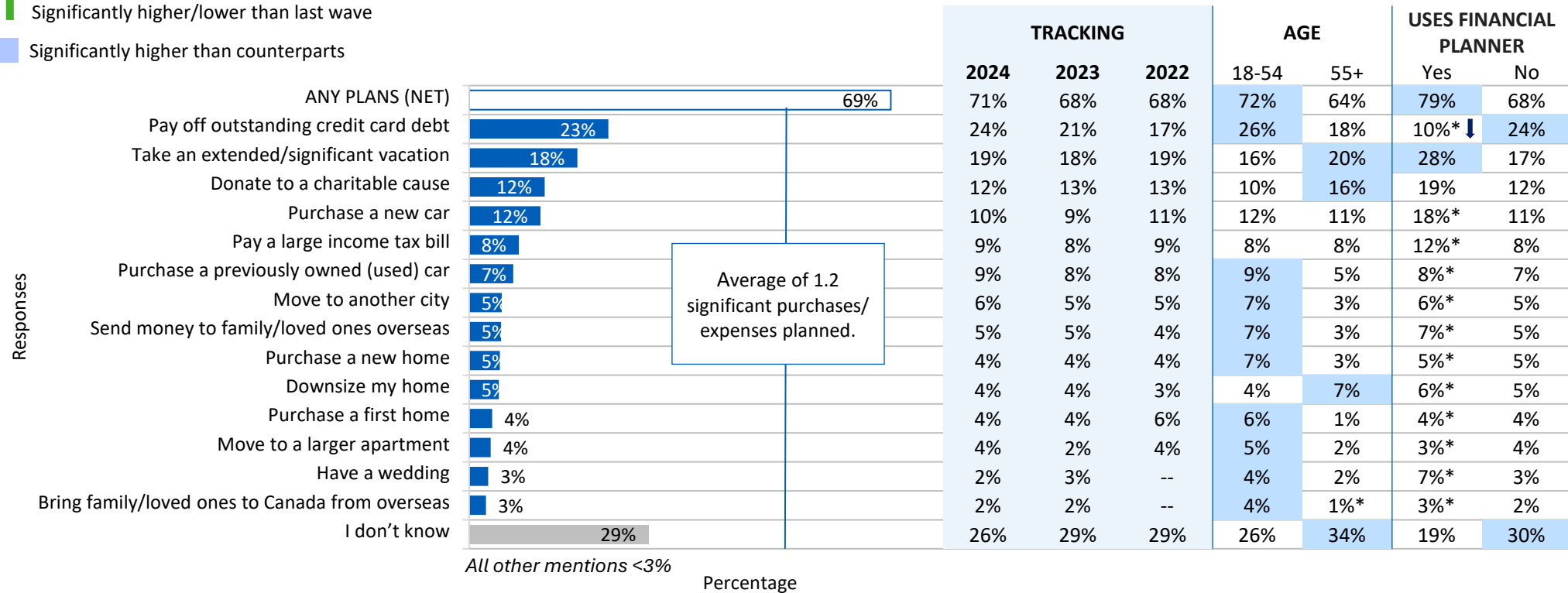
Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510 *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Similar to last year, seven-in-ten plan to make/incur a significant purchase or expense in the next 12 months.

A quarter (23%) are planning to pay off outstanding credit card debt, with taking a significant vacation (18%), donating to a charitable cause (12%), purchasing a new car (12%), and paying a large income tax bill (8%) rounding out the top 5 expenses Canadians intend to make. Those aged <55, those with a household income of \$50K or more (75% vs. 58% <\$50K), those who use a financial planner, and those who have more disposable income than a year ago (81% vs. 69% of those with less) are significantly more likely to say they will be making a significant purchase/expense in the next 12 months.

↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than last wave
 Significantly higher than counterparts



Q10: Do you plan to make any/incur any of the below significant purchases/expenses in the next 12 months?

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20

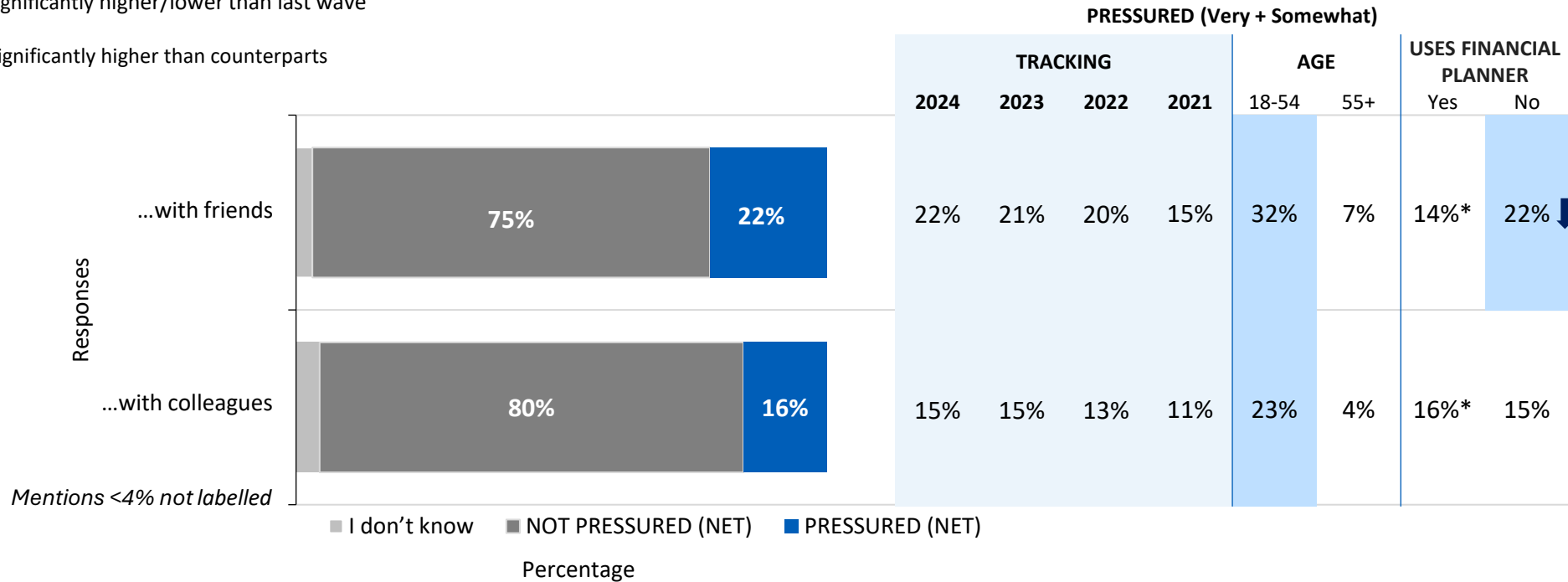


The feeling of pressure to keep up with friends' or colleagues' financial status has remained stable over the past three years.

Younger Canadians (18-54), particularly those aged 18-34, are significantly more likely than those 55+ to feel pressured to keep up financially with both friends (41%) and colleagues (31%). Additionally, those who feel pressured to match their friends' financial status are also more likely to feel the same pressure from colleagues, and vice-versa. Canadians with a financial planner are far less likely to experience the pressure from friends' status than those without one. In fact, they are half as likely to feel pressured to keep up with their friends' financial status compared to 2024 (27%).

↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than last wave

■ Significantly higher than counterparts



Q11: To what extent, if at all, do you feel pressure to keep up with your friends' or colleagues' financial status?

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1529 *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Detailed Results

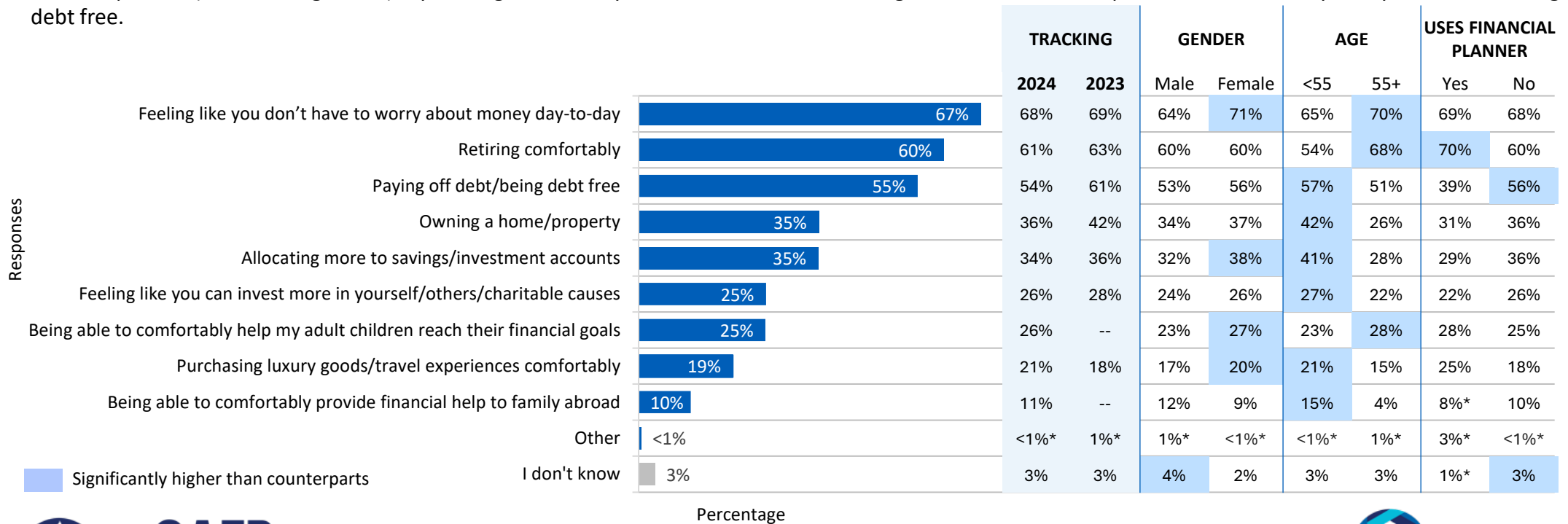
Financial Well-being & Professional
Advice



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Financial well-being means not having to worry about money day-to-day to two-thirds Canadians (67%), while 60% feel it means retiring comfortably.

Paying off debt/being debt free is seen as achieving financial well-being by over half of Canadians (55%) and owning a property and/or allocating more to savings/investments means well-being for 35%. Women and those aged 55+ tend to see achieving financial well-being as not worrying about money day-to-day and assisting their children, while those under age 55 are more likely to mention one of the other descriptions as achieving financial well-being. Canadians with a financial planner (and those aged 55+) say retiring comfortably looks like financial well-being, and those without a planner are more likely to say it looks like being debt free.



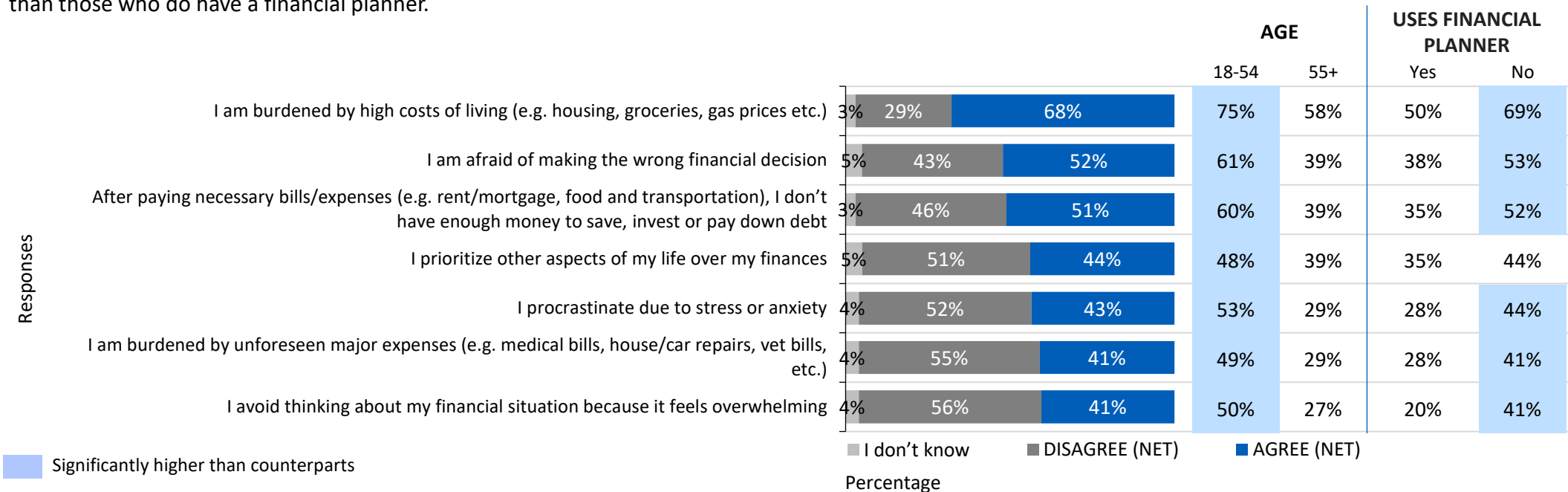
Q17a: What does achieving financial well-being look like to you?

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510 *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



While two-thirds of Canadians feel the high cost of living prevents them from taking control of their finances, half fear making the wrong decision.

Half also believe they don't have enough left over after paying bills to save or invest (51%). Four-in-ten prioritize other aspects of life over finances (44%), procrastinate due to stress or anxiety (43%), have been hit by unexpected expenses (41%), and/or avoid thinking about finances because they are overwhelmed by it (41%). Demographically, all or most sentiments are significantly more likely to be agreed with by those aged 18-54, and those who do not have a financial planner vs. their counterparts. Canadians not working with a financial planner are twice as likely to avoid thinking about finances because it feels overwhelming than those who do have a financial planner.

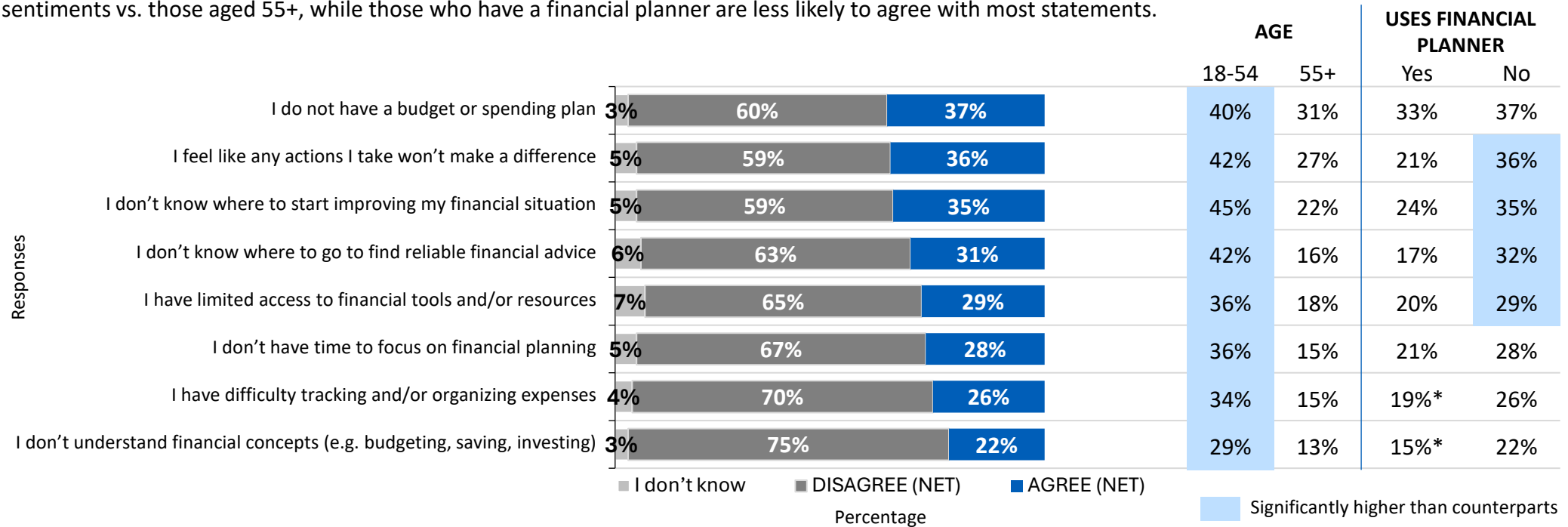


Q19 NEW: When thinking about obstacles preventing you from taking control of your financial situation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?
 Base: All (2025 n=2010)



Lack of understanding, time, or access to financial tools and planning are less common barriers to Canadians taking control of their financial situation.

A third or less agree that not knowing where to start (35%), not knowing where to get reliable advice (31%), limited resources (29%), time constraints (28%), difficulty tracking expenses (26%), or not understanding financial concepts (22%) are obstacles to getting their financial house in order. Another 37% don't have a budget or spending plan and 36% pessimistically feel nothing they do will make a difference. Again, it is younger Canadians who are more likely to agree with all sentiments vs. those aged 55+, while those who have a financial planner are less likely to agree with most statements.

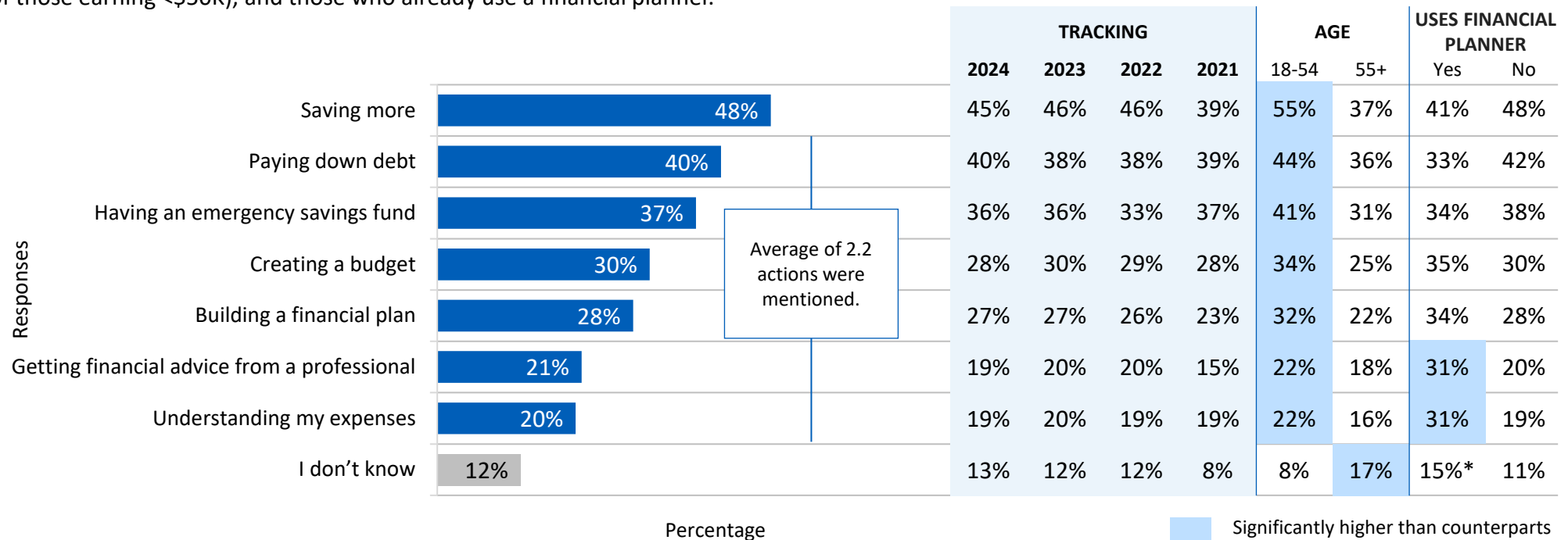


Q19 NEW: When thinking about obstacles preventing you from taking control of your financial situation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?
 Base: All (2025 n=2010) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



While two in ten (21%) believe getting professional financial advice would ease financial stress, a plurality thinks saving more would help.

Saving more remains the top action that would help reduce financial stress (48%), followed by paying down debt (40%), and having an emergency savings fund (37%). Creating a budget (30%), building a financial plan (28%), and understanding their expenses (20%) are also mentioned. Those who feel that getting help from a financial professional would help reduce financial stress are more likely to be younger (<55), those earning an annual household income of \$50K+ (22% vs. 14% of those earning <\$50K), and those who already use a financial planner.



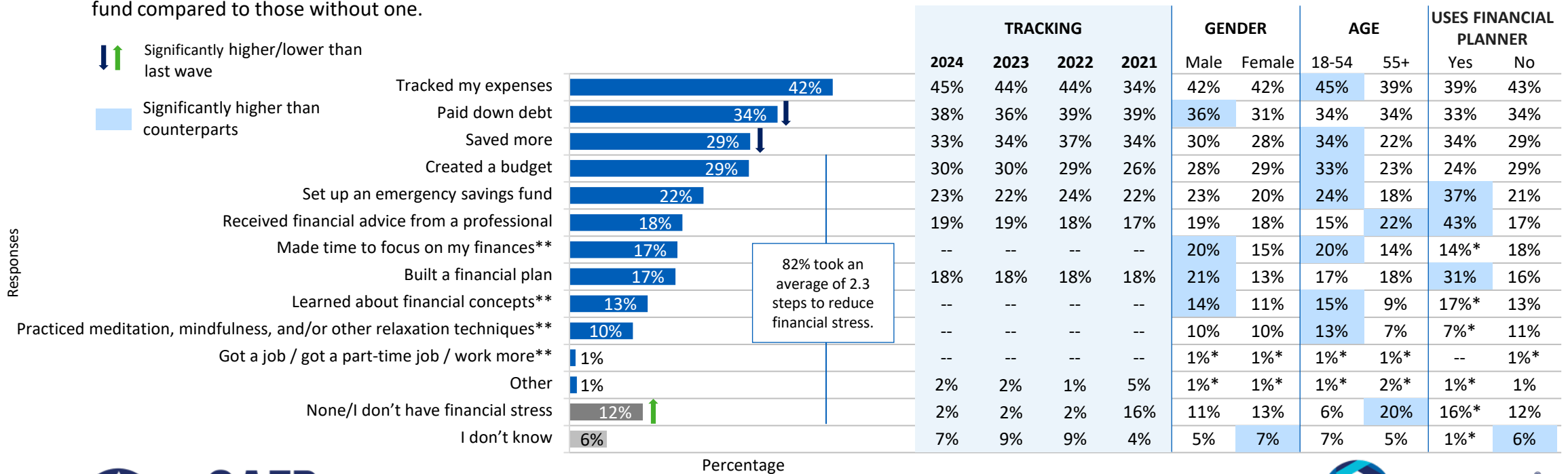
Q5: What actions do you think would help to reduce financial stress?

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



Two-in-ten (18%) received advice from a financial professional to help reduce financial stress; tracking expenses (42%) remains the top step taken.

Those who receive financial advice from a professional are more likely to be older (55+) and earn over \$50K (21% vs. 11% for lower earners). Other actions taken to manage finances include paying down debt (34%), saving more (29%), and creating a budget (29%). Notably, debt and saving for retirement or major life events remain the top financial stressors. However, compared to last year, fewer have paid down debt or saved more, while significantly more report taking no steps or experiencing no financial stress. Additionally, those with a financial planner are at least twice as likely to have built a financial plan or set up an emergency savings fund compared to those without one.



Q6: What steps have you taken to reduce financial stress? **new additions in 2025

Base: All (2025 n=2010 | 2024 n=2040 | 2023 n=2004 | 2022 n=2001 | 2021 n=1510) *Weighted Category Sample Size <=20



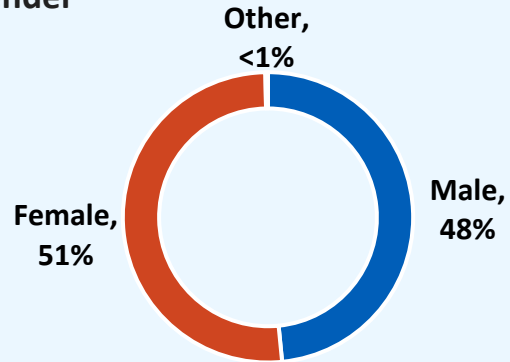
Respondent Profiles



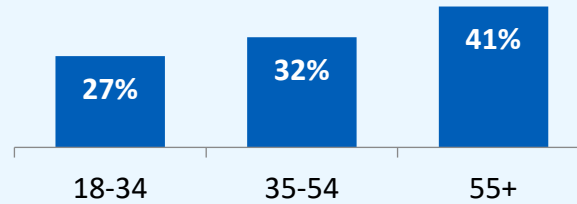
QAFP

Respondent Profile n=2,010

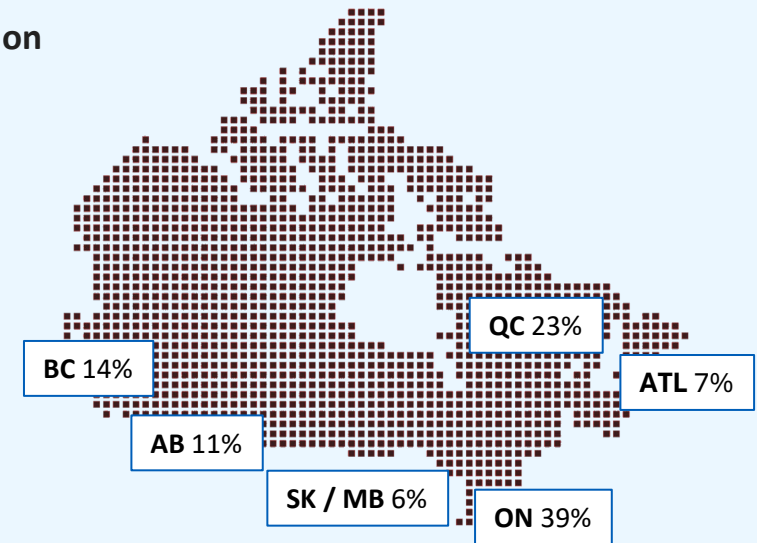
Gender



Age



Region



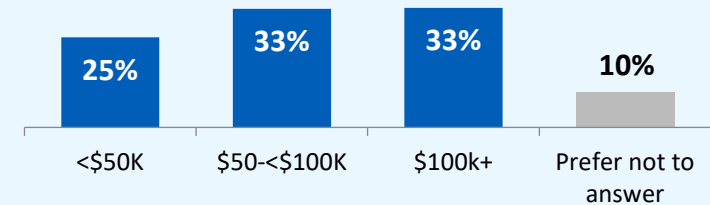
Marital Status

Single, never married	27%
Coupled (Married/ common law)	58%
Other (Widowed/ Divorced/Separated)	15%
Prefer not to answer	<1%

Employment Status

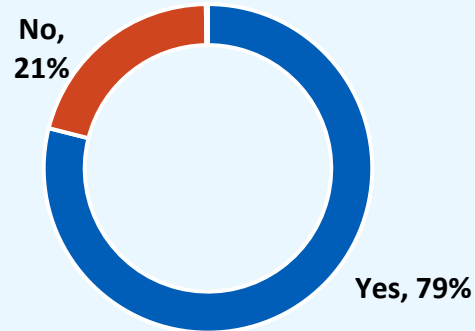
Employed	58%
Retired	27%
Other	15%
Prefer not to answer	<1%

Income



Respondent Profile n=2,010

Born in Canada



Education

<=High School	22%
College	23%
University	53%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Ethnicity

Caucasian (white)	75%
NET: BIPOC	23%
South Asian (Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)	6%
Chinese	5%
Black (African, African-American, etc.)	3%
First Nations / Métis / Inuk (Inuit)	2%
Latin American (Mexican, Chilean, Costa Rican, etc.)	1%
Arabic (Middle East, North Africa)	1%
Filipino	1%
Southeast Asian (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, etc.)	1%
West Asian (Iranian, Afghan, etc.)	<1%
Korean	<1%
Japanese	<1%
Other	2%
I prefer not to answer	1%

Community/Group

NET: YES to ANY	25%
Visible minority	16%
2SLGBTQI	8%
Indigenous (i.e. First Nations, Inuit, Métis)	3%

Disability Status

NET: Have a disability	22%
I have an invisible disability	14%
I have a mental health disability	7%
I have a visible disability	6%
I do not have a disability	74%
I don't know/prefer not to answer	2%

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