CCPC PENSIONS RESEARCH 2026

August 2026

Coimisiún um Iomaíocht agus Cosaint Tomhaltóirí
Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
Ipsos B&A

01

INTRODUCTION

Objectives & Methodology

This research was conducted on behalf of the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) to gather information on retirement planning in 2026. This follows similar studies conducted in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

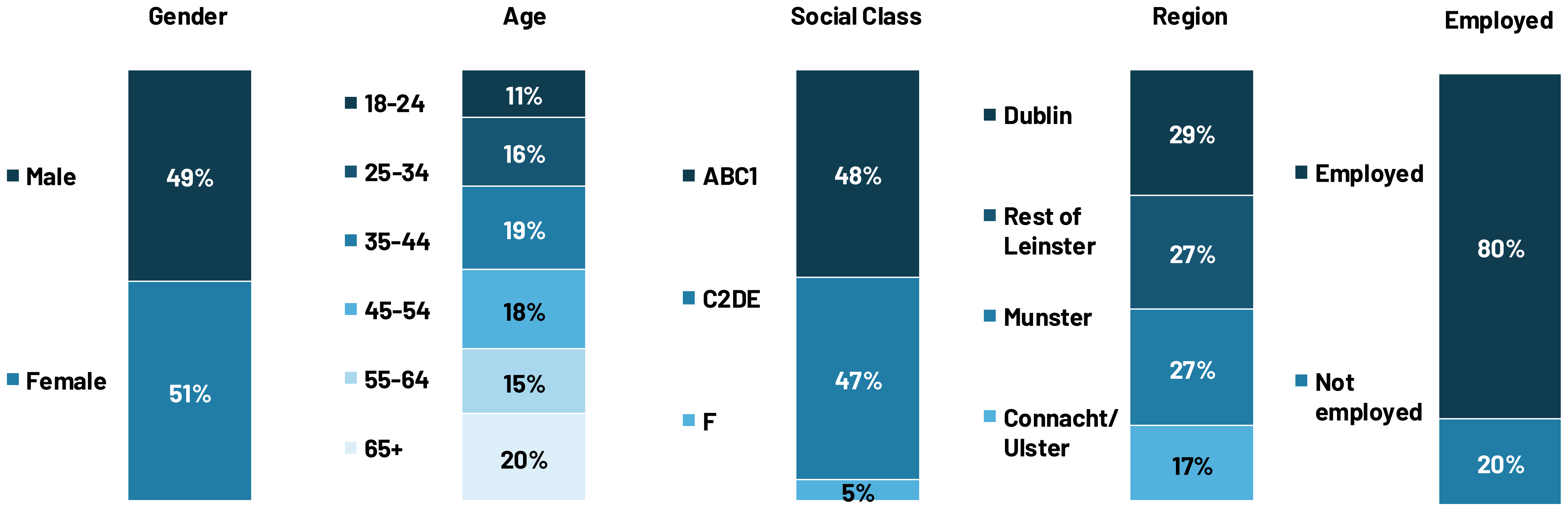
The survey aimed at gathering information on:

- Pension coverage, including of the auto-enrolment pension scheme My Future Fund, and the other forms of retirement planning they expect to use,
- Reasons for not having a pension in place,
- Whether they have ever talked to a financial advisor and how they found them,
- Understanding of how pensions work and of their fees & charges,
- Whether and when they review their pension arrangements.

Questionnaire was designed by Ipsos B&A and the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission.

- A total of 1,000 interviews were conducted with a nationally representative sample of adults aged 18+. They were conducted via our Telephone Omnibus service, using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI), between the 4th and 15th of August 2026.
- Data was weighted in line with the most up-to-date population estimates for gender, age, social class and region.
- The analysis in this report is based on a subgroup of 774 respondents from this sample who are aged 18+ and not yet retired. The weights applied to the full sample of 1,000 interviews were carried forward for the analysis of this subgroup.
- Note that when results do not exactly add up to 100% this is due to rounding.

Demographics Of Respondents (Weighted)



Base: All not yet retired: 774

Executive Summary

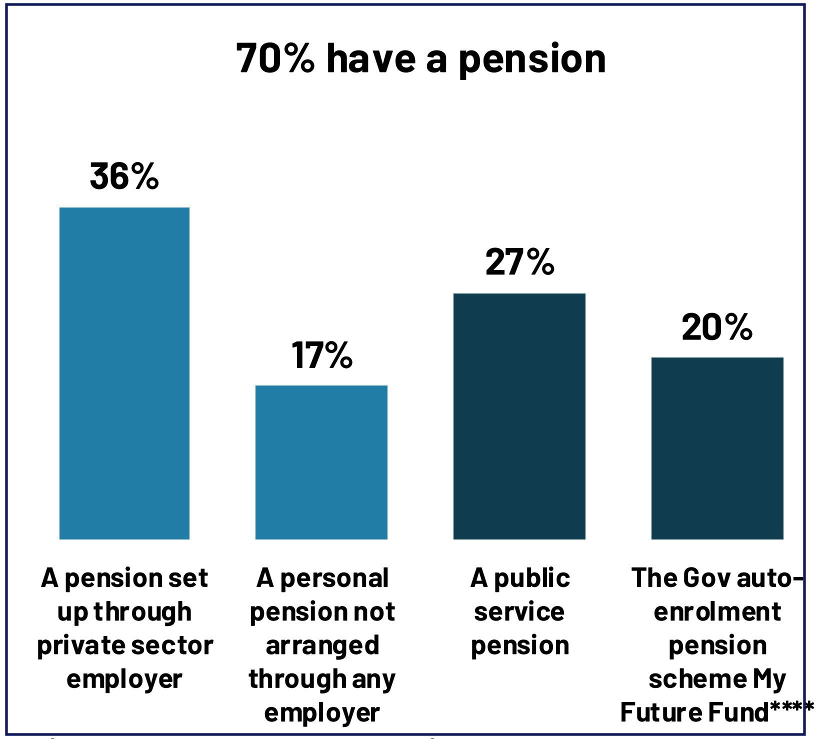
- **Pension Coverage Increased, While 1 in 5 Completely Unprepared:** Pension ownership has seen a notable increase from 2025, up ten points to 70%. The Government's auto-enrolment scheme was introduced in Ireland on January 1st, 2026, with 20% of respondents saying they will use this to fund their retirement. In contrast, reliance on personal savings as a source of retirement funding has declined significantly, falling from 45% in 2025 to 31% in 2026. Meanwhile, 21% of the population have no retirement arrangements in place, a five-point decrease from 2025 (26%).
- **Expected Reliance Upon the State Pension Remains Significant:** Although anticipated dependence on the State Pension has fallen, 7 in 10 still expect it to play a role in funding their retirement. Expectations increase with age, from 58% of 25-34-year-olds to 80% of those aged 45-64. Notably, while expectations among those with no retirement plan have declined by 15 percentage points year-on-year, the State Pension remains their most likely source of retirement income (2025: 61%; 2026: 46%), underscoring its continuing importance as a retirement safety net.
- **Affordability Concerns Fall Again in 2026:** Affordability has fallen for the second **consecutive** year as a reason for not having a pension in place (2024: 30%; 2026: 20%) and has been overtaken by inertia (25%) as the primary reason for not having a pension in place. Notably, the percentage of those who do not plan on retiring among those with no plan in place has increased from 1% in 2025 to 5% in 2026.
- **Pension Engagement Remains Low Despite Increased Coverage:** Two-thirds have never consulted a financial advisor about pensions, while fewer than half regularly review their pension arrangements. Understanding of pension fees remains particularly weak, with only 1 in 4 private pension holders saying they had a good understanding of the charges associated with their pension.
- **Confidence in Retirement Outcomes Remains Limited:** Just two in five believe their pension will provide a good standard of living in retirement, while only one in three are confident their pension savings will keep pace with inflation.

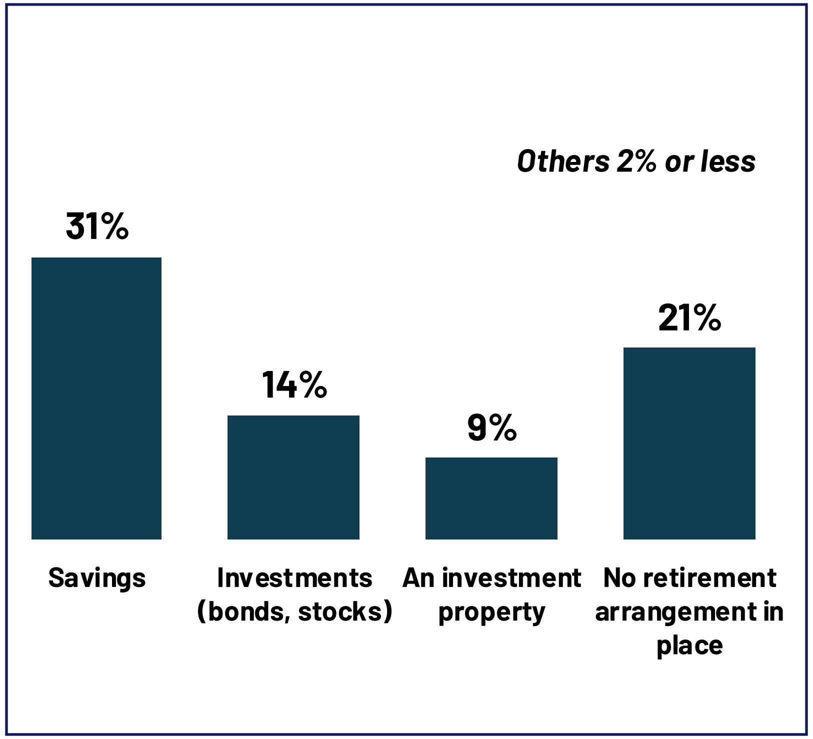
FINDINGS

02

Types of Retirement Arrangements Currently in Place

70% have a pension, while over 21% currently have no retirement arrangements in place, down from 26% last year.





44%

2025	46%	25%	-	45%	14%	11%	26%
2024	48%	26%	-	51%	14%	13%	21%
2023	45%*	34%	-	57%	10%**	-	17%***
2022	44%*	31%	-	45%	14%**	-	25%***

- Pension ownership has risen significantly from 60% in 2025 to 70% in 2026, likely related to the launch of the auto-enrolment scheme.
- A notable drop in those planning to use their savings is observed, the lowest measured since 2022, down to 31% in 2026 from 45% in 2025.
- 18–24-year-olds, residents in the rest of Leinster, and DEs are the most likely to not have any retirement arrangement in place.
- Significant differences are observed across gender – women are 18 points more likely to have a public service pension (36% vs 18% respectively), however they are much less likely to say they have savings (women: , men: 38%) or investments (women: 8%, men: 19%) currently in place to fund their retirements.

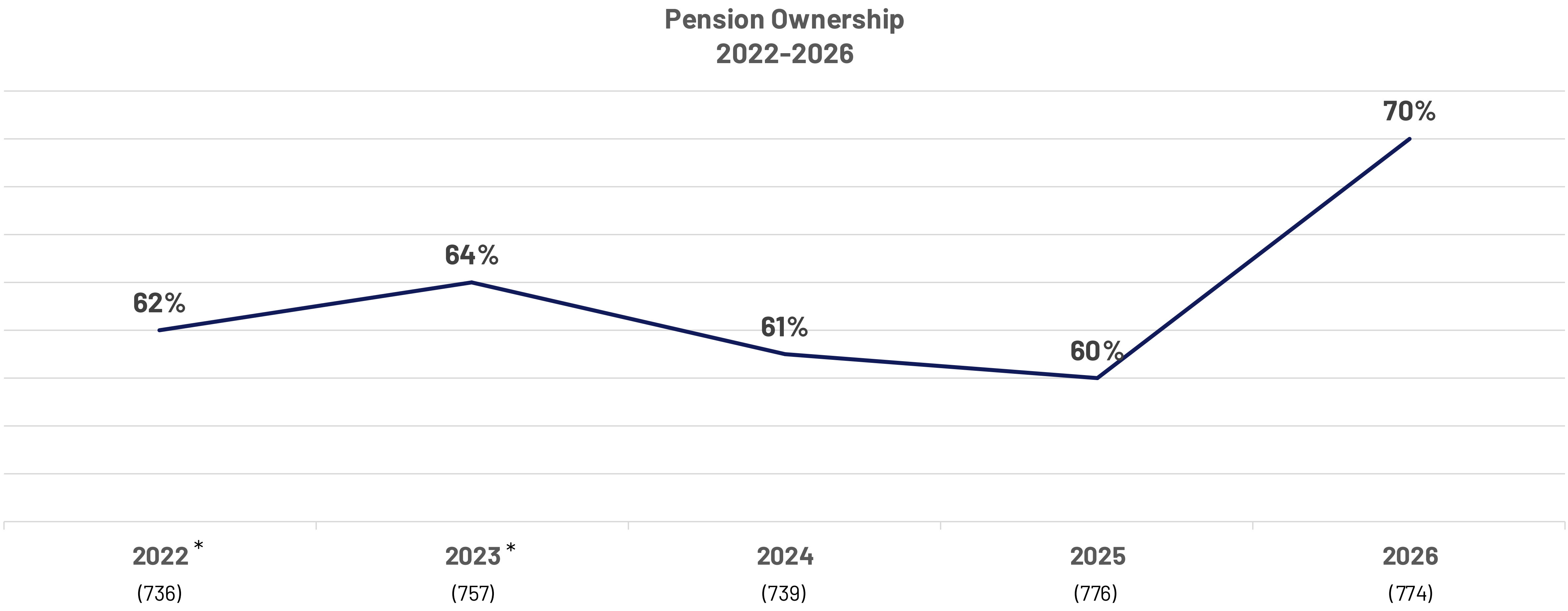
Q.1 Which, if any, of the following arrangements do you currently have in place that you will use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 774

****not asked in 2025

In 2022 and 2023: *these two options were combined in the following single category 'A private pension or PRSA', **this option was 'Stock market investments', *** this option was 'None of these'

Pension Ownership Over Time

Pension ownership has seen a marked increase in 2026 after a three-year period of stagnation



Q. Which, if any, of the following arrangements do you currently have in place that you will use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 2022: 736; 2023: 757; 2024: 739; 2025: 776; 2026: 774.

*The wording of this question has remained consistent across all years; however, additional response categories were introduced in later waves.

Retirement Arrangements 2026 v 2025 – Age Breakdown I

Declines across all age groups in proportions expecting to use savings to fund their retirement

	A pension setup through a private sector employer		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	15	6	+9
25-34	41	41	=
35-44	40	29	+11
45-54	50	39	+11
55-64	40	34	+6
65+	26	43	-17

	A personal pension not arranged through any employer		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	6	3	+3
25-34	11	11	=
35-44	9	12	-3
45-54	21	19	+2
55-64	26	28	-2
65+	24	39	-15

	A public service pension		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	10	12	-2
25-34	20	18	+2
35-44	22	35	-13
45-54	31	28	+3
55-64	32	31	+1
65+	39	20	+19

	Savings		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	30	31	-1
25-34	30	45	-15
35-44	26	41	-15
45-54	35	44	-9
55-64	32	43	-11
65+	31	57	-26

Q.1 Which, if any, of the following arrangements do you currently have in place that you will use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 2026: 774 2025: 776

**Please note: The Government's auto-enrolment pension scheme called My Future Fund not asked in 2025*

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Retirement Arrangements 2026 v 2025 – Age Breakdown II

Encouragingly, the percentage of those with no retirement arrangements in place has fallen across most age groups, with those aged 18-24 seeing the largest drop (2025:60%; 2026: 45%).

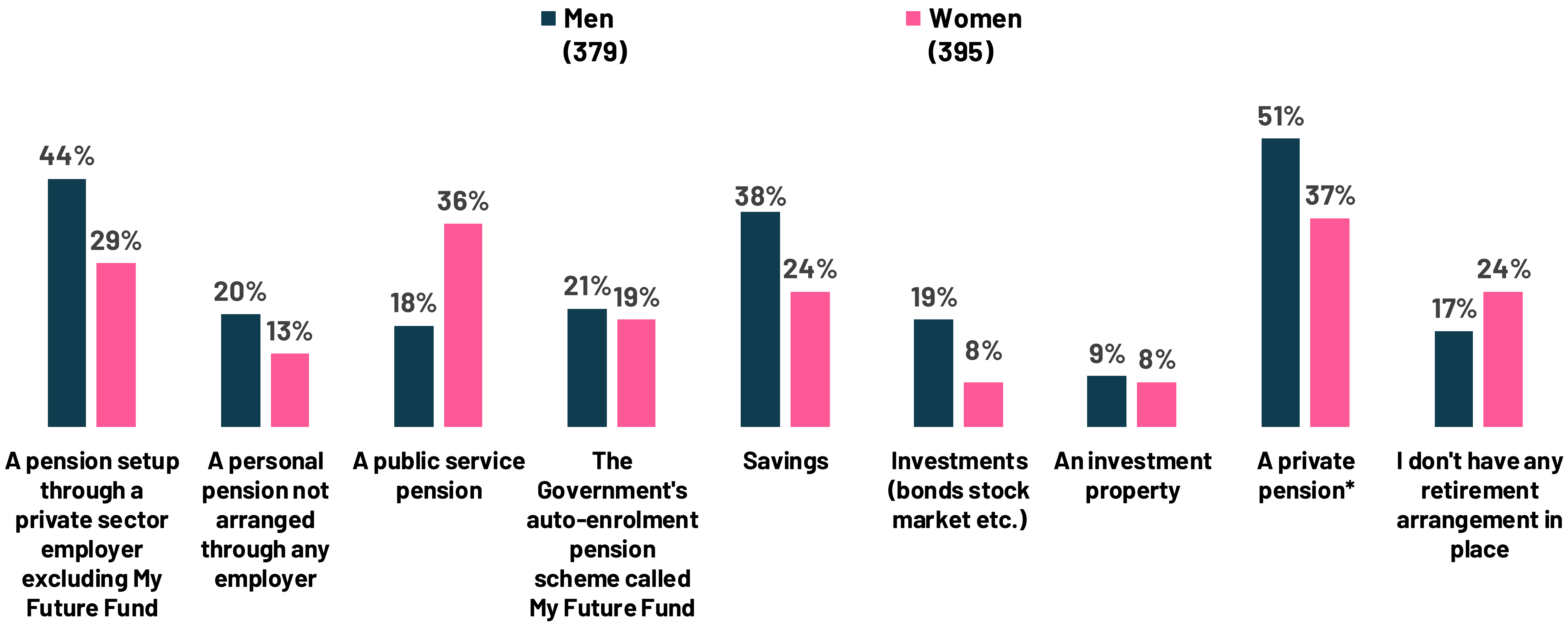
	Investments (bonds, stock market etc)		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	14	12	+2
25-34	14	15	-1
35-44	12	12	=
45-54	16	15	+1
55-64	13	15	-2
65+	13	15	-2

	An investment property		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	2	5	-3
25-34	3	7	-4
35-44	6	6	=
45-54	10	12	-2
55-64	12	13	-1
65+	16	22	-6

	I don't have any retirement arrangements in place		
	2026	2025	Difference
	%	%	+/-
18-24	45	60	-15
25-34	21	32	-9
35-44	23	22	+1
45-54	14	21	-7
55-64	21	18	+3
65+	12	17	-5

Q.1 Which, if any, of the following arrangements do you currently have in place that you will use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 2026: 774 2025: 776

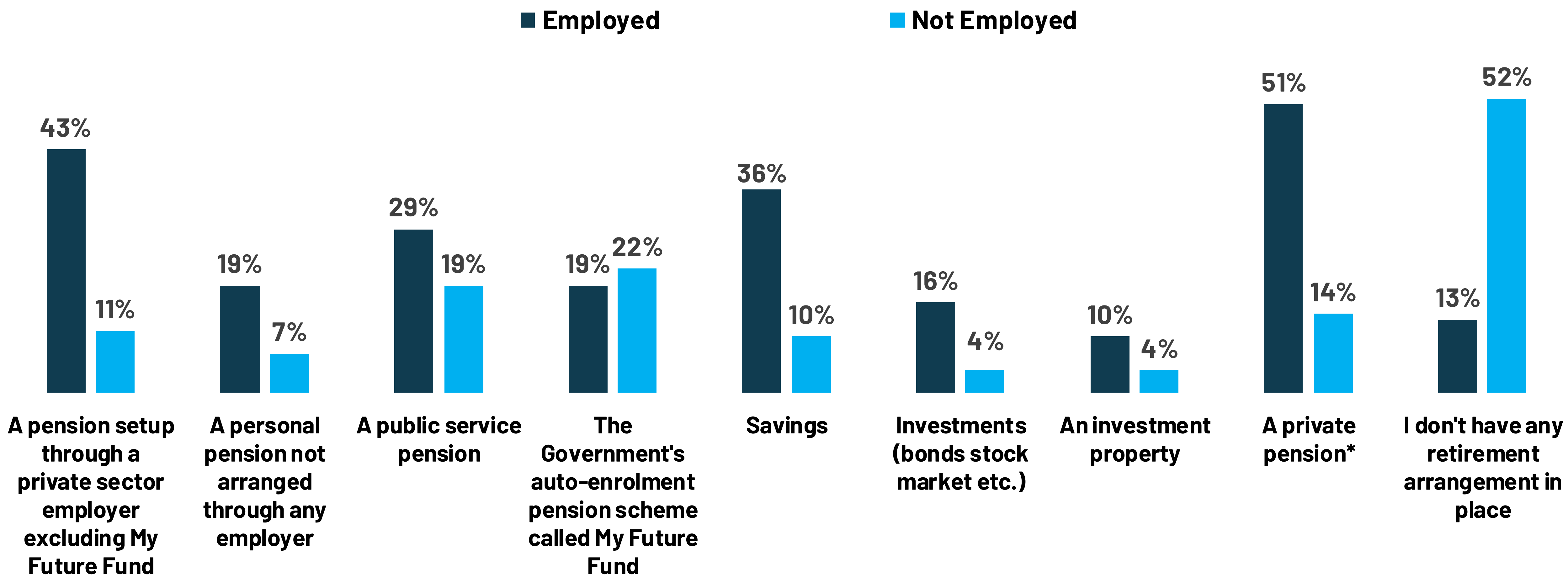
Retirement Arrangements Currently in Place x Gender



Q.1 Which, if any, of the following arrangements do you currently have in place that you will use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 774

*Private pension = A pension setup through a private sector employer excluding My Future Fund + A personal pension not arranged through any employer

Retirement Arrangements Currently in Place x Employment Status

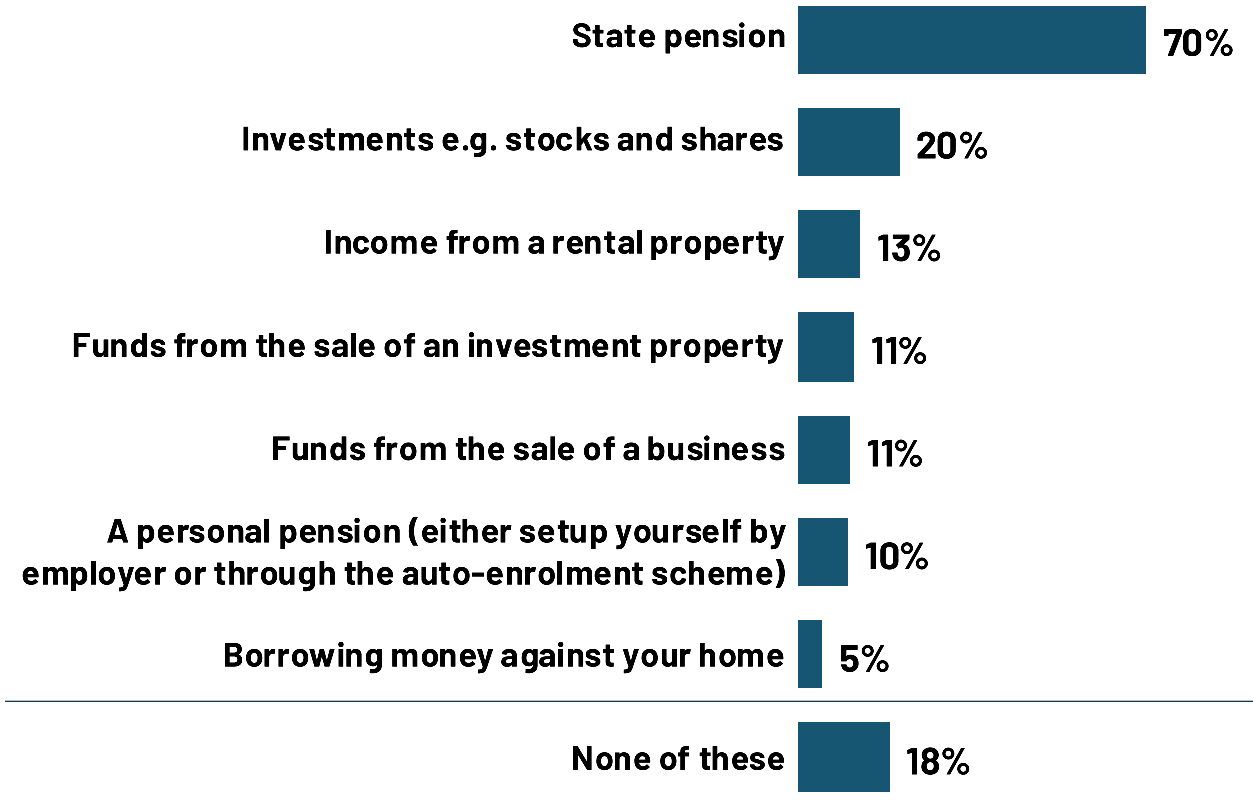


Q.1 Which, if any, of the following arrangements do you currently have in place that you will use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 774

*Private pension = A pension setup through a private sector employer excluding My Future Fund + A personal pension not arranged through any employer

Other Types of Funding Expected to be Used in Retirement

70% plan on using a state pension to further fund their retirement, broadly in line with previous years.



Others 1% or less

	2025	2024	2023	2022
State pension	75%	69%	64%*	66%*
Investments e.g. stocks and shares	-	-	-	-
Income from a rental property	17%	19%	17%	23%
Funds from the sale of an investment property	13%	20%	22%**	24%**
Funds from the sale of a business	7%	13%	10%	14%
A personal pension (either setup yourself by employer or through the auto-enrolment scheme)	14%	14%	-	-
Borrowing money against your home	4%	6%	11%***	15%***
None of these	15%	16%	22%	18%

- Similar to last year, under-35s are the least likely to expect using the state pension (58%) compared to 80% of 45-64-year-olds.
- Men are twice as likely than women to plan on using the funds from the sale of a business (14% vs 7%), and from the sale of an investment property (15% vs 8%). Furthermore, men are 11 point more likely than women (18% vs 7%) to plan on using income from a rental property.
- For those who currently hold a public or private pension, the state pension (76%) and investments (24%) are the primary additional sources they expect to rely on to fund their retirement.

Q.2 And which, if any, of these do you expect you may also use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 774

In 2022 and 2023: *this option was 'State contributory pension', ** this option was ' Funds from the sale of property/land', ***this was 'Releasing equity from your home'

Other types of retirement funding expected to be used by age groups

	Total*	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	(774)	*(85)*	*(123)*	*(150)*	*(142)*	*(115)*	*(157)*
State Pension	70%	58%	58%	64%	80%	80%	73%
Investments e,g. stocks and shares	20%	32%	25%	19%	18%	18%	15%
Income from a rental property	13%	19%	17%	10%	11%	10%	12%
Funds from the sale of an investment property	11%	22%	16%	10%	9%	9%	7%
Funds from the sale of a business	11%	14%	8%	13%	10%	4%	13%
A personal pension	10%	34%	7%	12%	5%	1%	9%
Borrowing money against your home	5%	8%	7%	5%	6%	2%	5%
None of these	18%	20%	27%	18%	14%	14%	18%

Q.2 And which, if any, of these do you expect you may also use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired: 774

**Please note: sample sizes add to less than total (774) due to rounding from weighting.*

Others 1% or less

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Other Types of Funding Expected to be Used in Retirement by Those Who Have No Retirement Arrangements in Place

46% with no retirement plan in place currently expect to use the state pension, down from 61% last year.

Those currently with no retirement arrangements in place n=161

	Those currently with no retirement arrangements in place n=161	2025	2024	2023	2022
State pension	46%	61%	53%	43%*	52%*
A personal pension (either setup yourself by employer or through the auto-enrolment scheme)	24%	30%	33%	-	-
Funds from the sale of a business	11%	6%	13%	11%	13%
Investments e.g. stocks and shares	10%	-	-	-	-
Income from a rental property	9%	9%	6%	9%	22%
Funds from the sale of an investment property	9%	7%	11%	16%**	16%**
Borrowing money against your home	4%	1%	4%	4%***	12%***
None of these	38%	24%	30%	45%	34%

Others 2% or less

Q.2 And which, if any, of these do you expect you may also use to fund your retirement?
Base: All not yet retired and who don't have any retirement arrangement in place: 161

In 2022 and 2023: *this option was 'State contributory pension', ** this option was ' Funds from the sale of property/land', ***this was 'Releasing equity from your home'

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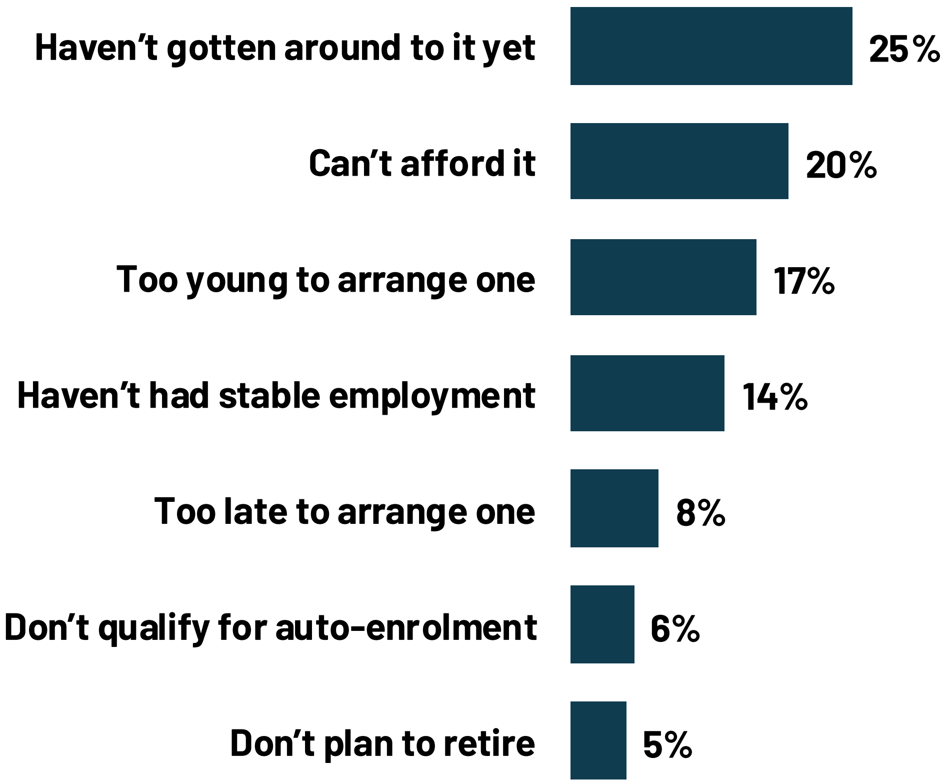
Reasons For Not Having a Pension in Place

Inertia is now the top reason mentioned by 1 in 4 for not currently having a pension in place. 1 in 5 cite affordability, this is down from 1 in 4 in 2025.

Reasons for not having a pension
(227)



Others 4% or less
Don't know 8%

2025	2024	2023	2022
19%	25%	27%	32%
25%	30%	24%	20%
15%	11%	25%	20%
13%	12%	2%	4%
12%	3%	7%	1%
-	-	-	-
1%	3%	1%	2%

- For the second consecutive year, the number of people citing affordability has fallen; down to 20% this year from it's peak of 30% in 2024 (back to what was measured in 2022).
- Women (14%) are significantly more likely than men (1%) to say that it is too late to arrange one.

Q.3 For what reasons do you not have a pensions arrangement in place currently?
Base: All not yet retired and who do not have a pension in place: 227

Reasons For Not Having a Pension in Place x Age

18-34-years-olds are most likely to say they are too young to arrange a pension (35%), while those aged 35-54 years old primarily say that they have not gotten around to it yet (39%). For those closer to retirement, aged 55 and above, 35% cite affordability as the reason for not having a pension in place.

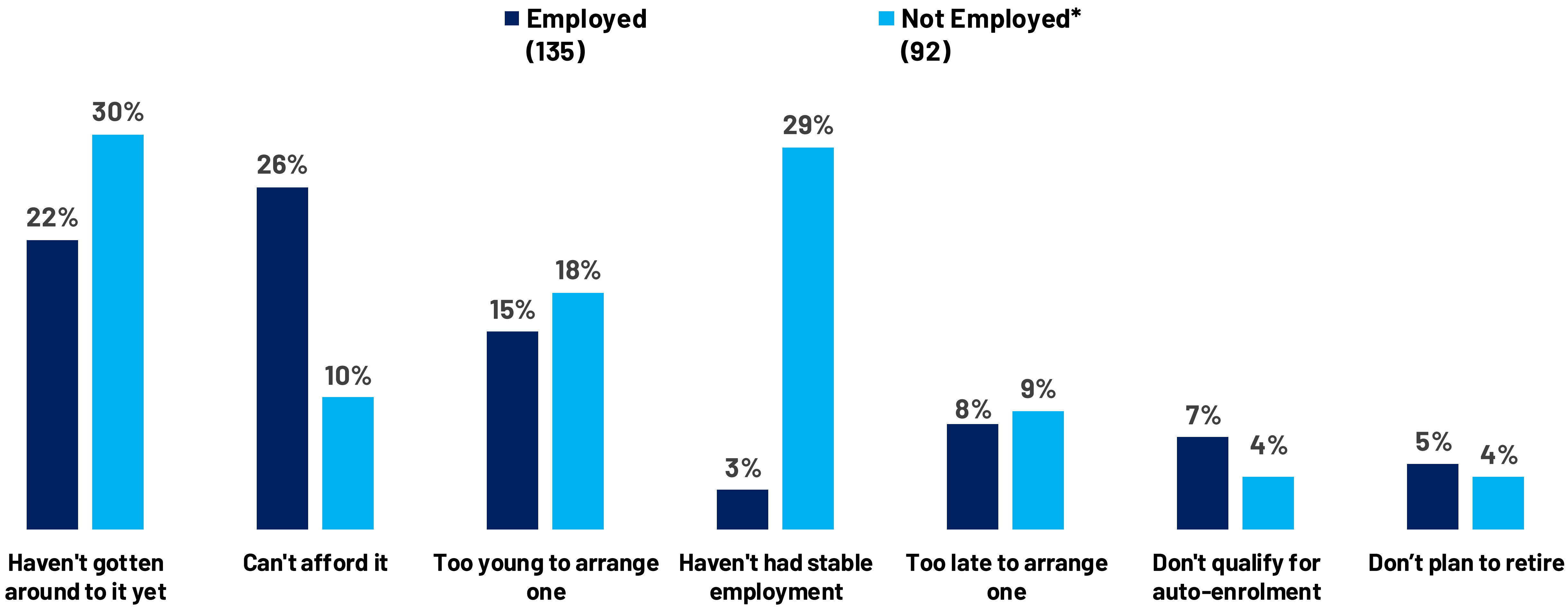
	Total*	18-34	35-54	55+
	(227)	**(89)**	**(69)**	**(68)**
Haven't gotten around to it yet	25%	32%	39%	2%
Can't afford it	20%	9%	18%	35%
Too young to arrange one	17%	35%	9%	-
Haven't had stable employment	14%	14%	21%	7%
Too late to arrange one	8%	-	-	26%
Don't qualify for auto-enrolment	6%	6%	5%	6%
Don't plan to retire	5%	3%	9%	4%
Will rely on other income	4%	-	10%	2%
Only recently started working (in Ireland)	4%	3%	8%	-

Q.3 For what reasons do you not have a pensions arrangement in place currently?
Base: All not yet retired and who do not have a pension in place: 227

**Please note: sample sizes add to less than total (227) due to rounding from weighting.*

Others 3% or less

Reasons For Not Having a Pension x Employment status



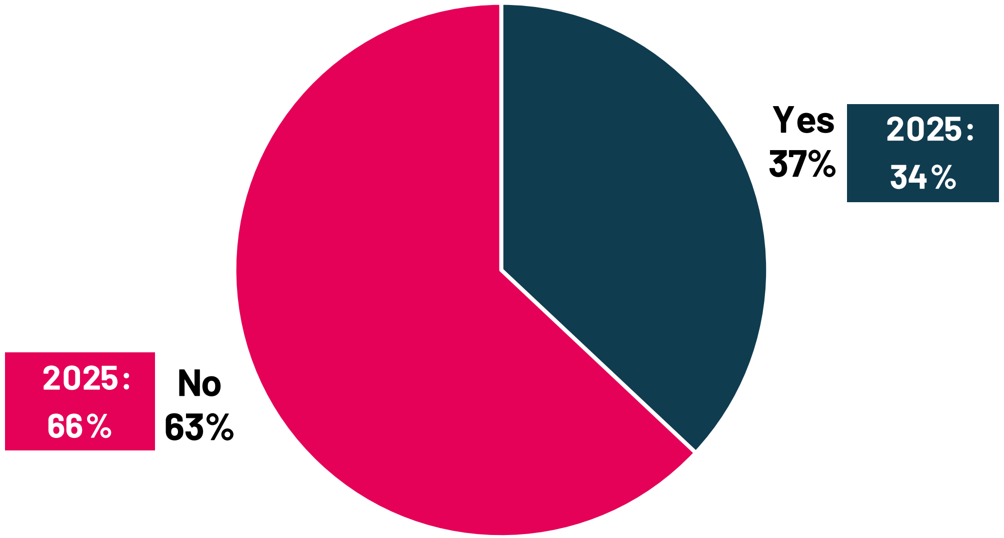
Q.3 For what reasons do you not have a pensions arrangement in place currently?
Base: All not yet retired and who do not have a pension in place: 227

**Not employed consists of students, fulltime homemakers and those currently unemployed.*

Financial Advisor

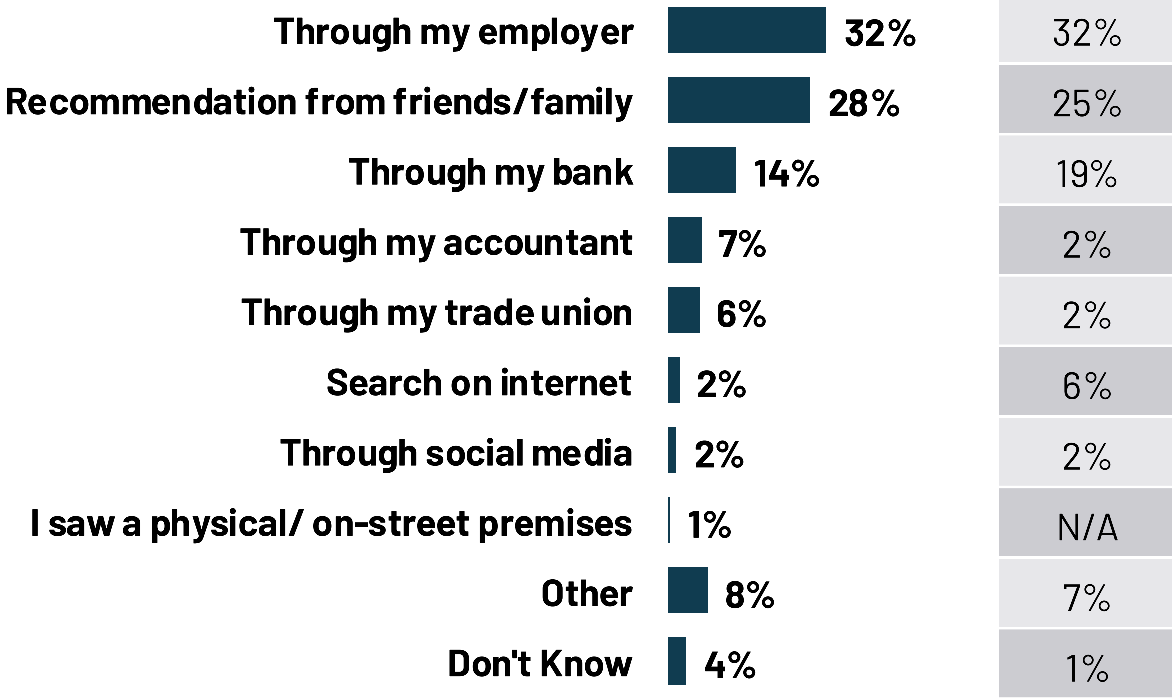
In line with previous years, two thirds of respondents say they have never spoken to a financial advisor about their pension. Among those who have, 1 in 3 say they found their financial advisor via their employer.

Talked one-to-one to a financial advisor for advice on retirement or pensions (774)



How found most recent financial advisor (284)

2024* (250)

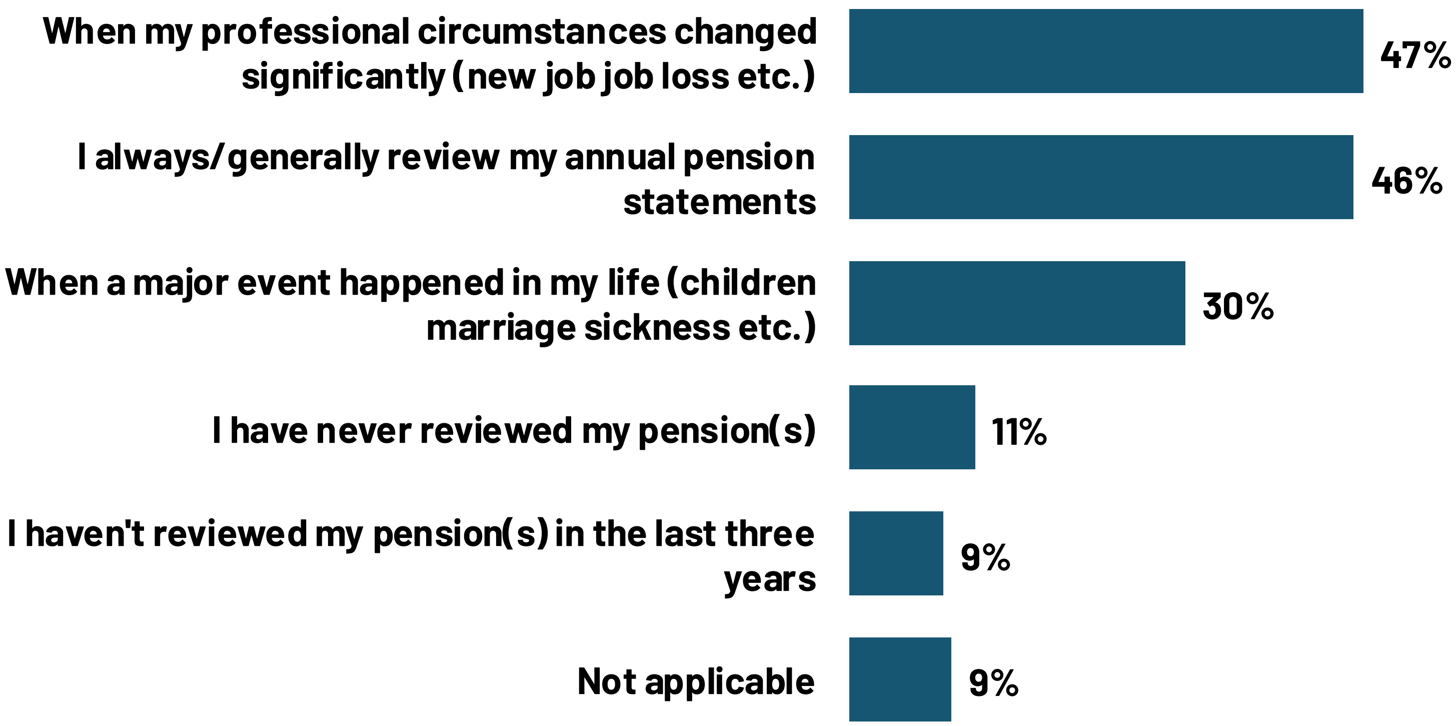


Q.4 Have you ever talked one-to-one to a financial advisor for advice on your retirement or pensions?
Base: All not yet retired: 774
Q.4a How did you find your most recent financial advisor you spoke to?
Base: All who have talked before one-to-one with a financial advisor: 284

**Question last asked in 2024*

Pension Review Frequency

Almost 1 in 2 check their pension when changes arise in their professional life, a figure that has remained consistent over the past two years.



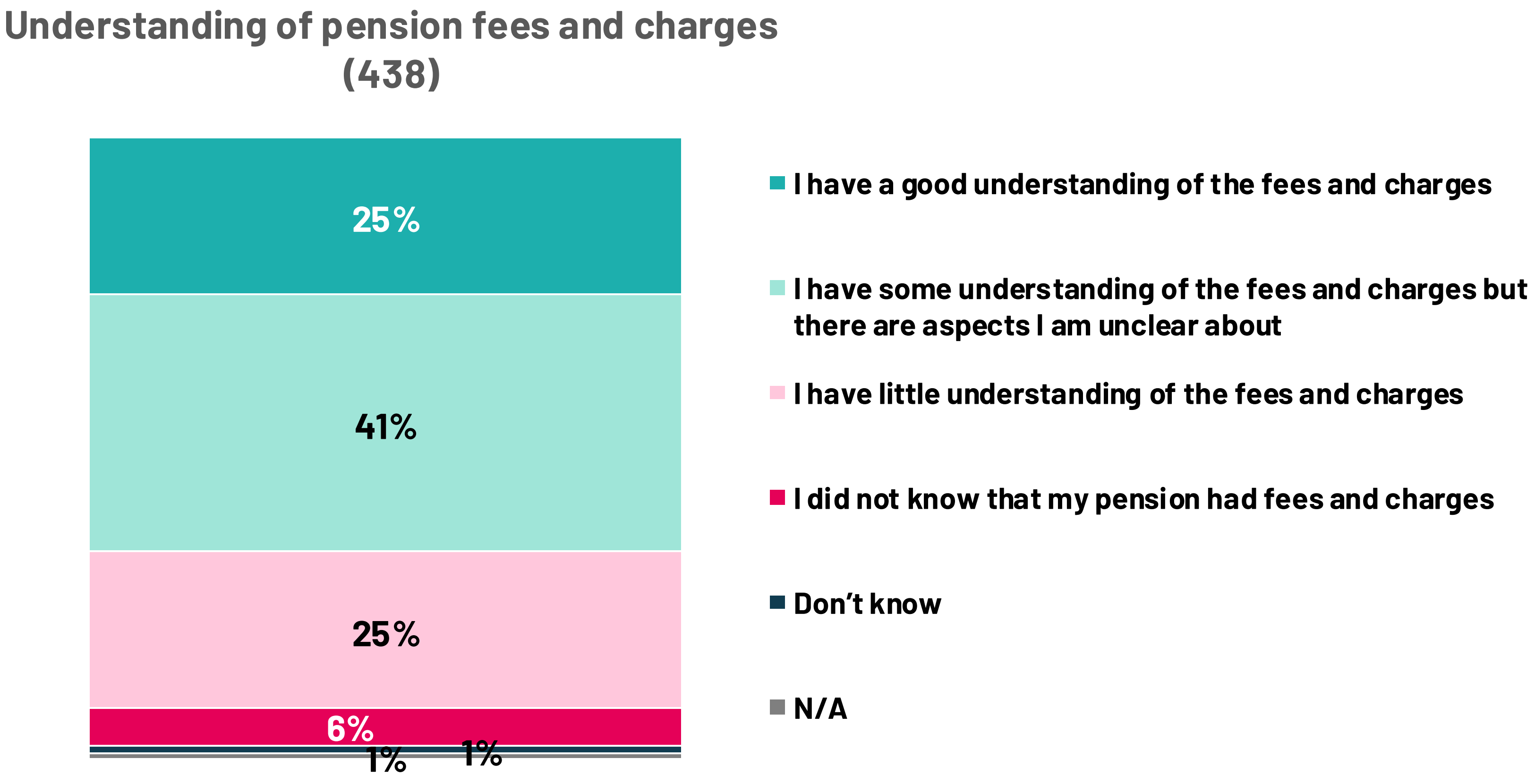
2025	2024
46%	48%
46%	51%
36%	27%
13%	7%
10%	27%
3%	4%

- Those with children under 18 years old (54%) are 12 points more likely to say they always/generally review their annual pension statements than to those without children (42%).
- Under 34-year-olds are most likely to say they have never reviewed their pension at 21%.
- Those aged 35-44 (57%) and Dublin residents (59%) are most likely to review their pension when their professional circumstances change.
- Those who say they are currently enrolled in My Future Fund, are the most likely to report having never reviewed their pension (18%).

Q.6 Which of these describes when you review your pension to see if it will meet your needs in retirement?
Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

Understanding of Fees and Charges

A quarter of private pension holders (25%) report little understanding of pension fees and charges, while 41% remain unclear on certain aspects.



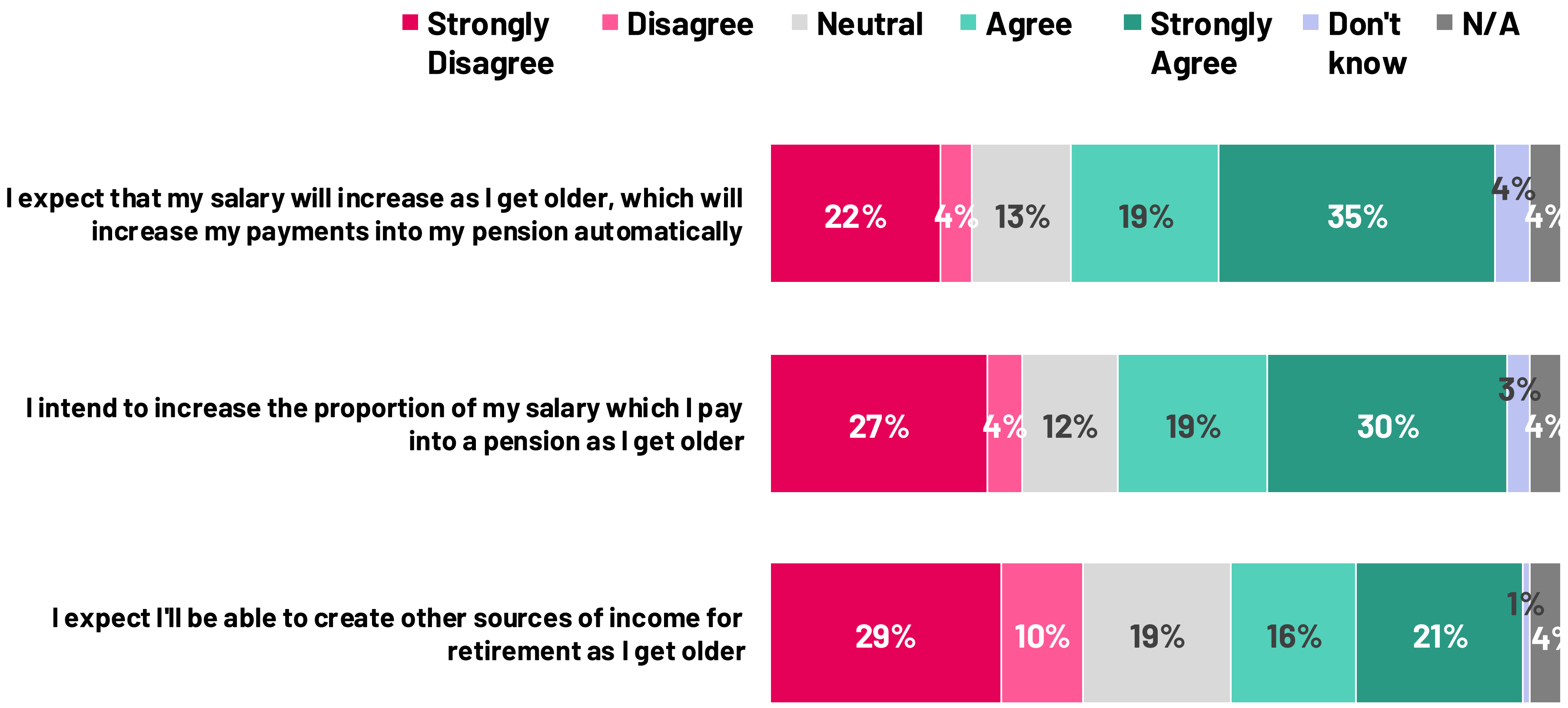
- Private pension holders who are under 35 years old, are the most likely to say that they did not know that their pensions had fees and charges (12%).
- Those who have a personal pension not arranged through an employer are the most likely to say they have a good understanding of the fees and charges at 38%. This figures drops to 26% for those whose pension was set up through a private sector employer. Notably, it is lowest for those enrolled in My Future Fund with only 17% reporting a good understanding off the fees and charges.

Q.7 Which of the following statements best describes your understanding of the fees and charges associated with your pension?*
Base: All not yet retired and who have a private pension in place (excluding those with only a public service pension): 438

new question in 2026

Attitudes Towards Pensions - I

The below capture a seemingly increase in optimism among pension holders compared to last year, with a higher share of pension holder expecting to increase their pension contribution.

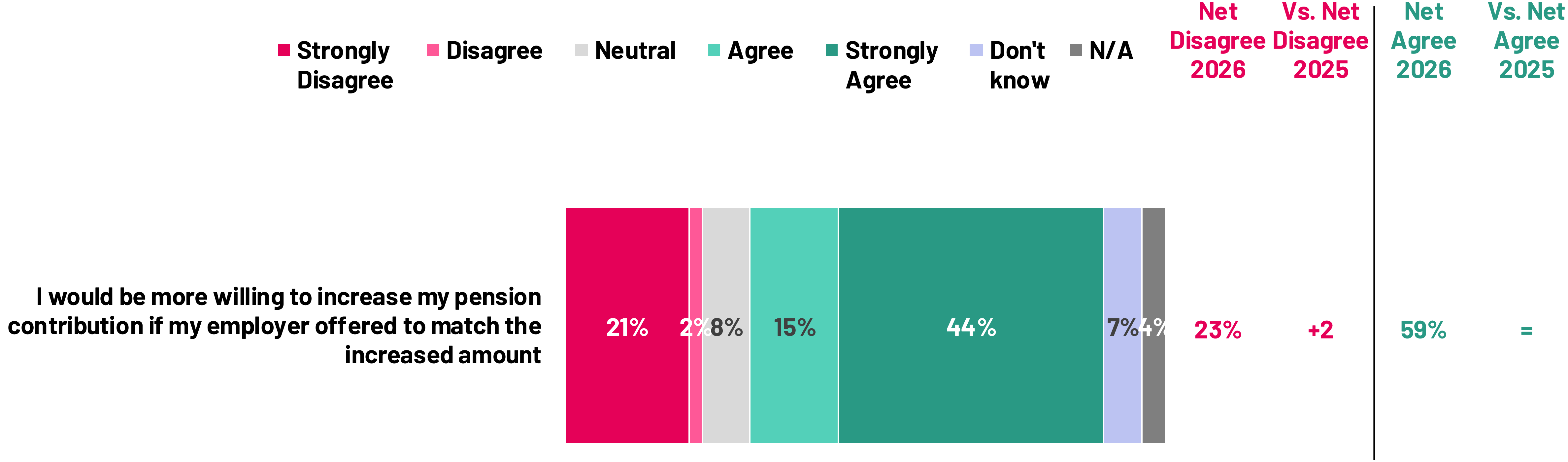


	Net Disagree 2026	Vs. Net Disagree 2025	Net Agree 2026	Vs. Net Agree 2025
I expect that my salary will increase as I get older, which will increase my payments into my pension automatically	26%	-8	53%	+5
I intend to increase the proportion of my salary which I pay into a pension as I get older	32%	-4	49%	+7
I expect I'll be able to create other sources of income for retirement as I get older	39%	-7	37%	+4

Q.5 Please listen to the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each? Please use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 5 is Strongly Agree, you can use any point along the scale.
Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

Attitudes Towards Pensions - II

More than half of pension holders (59%) agree that they would be more willing to increase their pension contribution if their employer offered to match the increased amount. This remains unchanged from last year.



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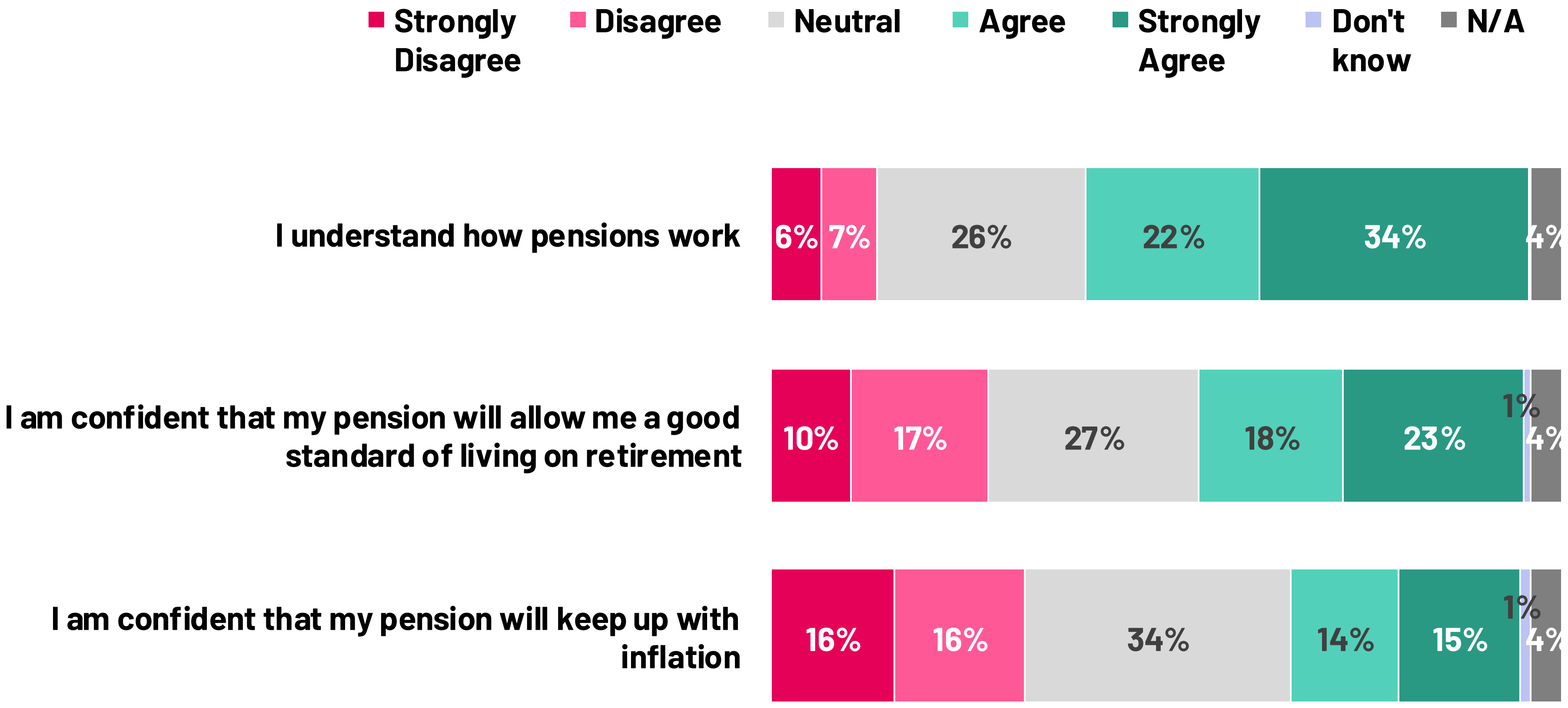
Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

Attitudes Towards Pensions – III

Respondents' views on their pension going forward are mixed: while two in five are confident that their pension will provide them a good standard of living in retirement, almost one third do not believe it will keep pace with inflation.



	Net Disagree 2026	Vs. Net Disagree 2025	Net Agree 2026	Vs. Net Agree 2025
I understand how pensions work	13%	=	56%	-7
I am confident that my pension will allow me a good standard of living on retirement	27%	-1	41%	=
I am confident that my pension will keep up with inflation	32%	(New)	29%	(New)

Q.5 Please listen to the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each? Please use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 5 is Strongly Agree, you can use any point along the scale.

Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

Attitudes Towards Pensions x Gender - I

	I expect that my salary will increase as I get older, which will increase my payments into my pension automatically		
	Men	Women	Gender Gradient
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	57	50	7 (M)
NET Disagree	25	26	1 (W)
Strongly disagree	20	23	
Disagree	5	3	
Neutral	11	14	
Agree	20	18	
Strongly Agree	37	33	

	I intend to increase the proportion of my salary which I pay into a pension as I get older		
	Men	Women	Gender Gradient
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	52	47	7 (M)
NET Disagree	31	33	2 (W)
Strongly disagree	25	30	
Disagree	5	3	
Neutral	13	11	
Agree	18	20	
Strongly Agree	34	27	

	I expect I'll be able to create other sources of income for retirement as I get older		
	Men	Women	Gender Gradient
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	44	30	14 (M)
NET Disagree	33	46	13 (W)
Strongly disagree	24	34	
Disagree	8	12	
Neutral	20	17	
Agree	19	13	
Strongly Agree	25	17	

Q.5 Please listen to the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each? Please use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 5 is Strongly Agree, you can use any point along the scale.
Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

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Attitudes Towards Pensions x Gender - II

	I would be more willing to increase my pension contribution if my employer offered to match the increased amount		
	Men	Women	Gender Gradient
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	64	53	11 (M)
NET Disagree	20	26	6 (W)
Strongly disagree	17	24	
Disagree	3	1	
Neutral	7	9	
Agree	16	13	
Strongly Agree	48	40	

	I understand how pensions work		
	Men	Women	Gender Gradient
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	63	49	14 (M)
NET Disagree	12	14	2 (W)
Strongly disagree	5	8	
Disagree	7	7	
Neutral	21	32	
Agree	27	16	
Strongly Agree	36	32	

Q.5 Please listen to the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each? Please use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 5 is Strongly Agree, you can use any point along the scale.
Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

Attitudes Towards Pensions x Gender – III

	I am confident that my pension will allow me a good standard of living on retirement		
	Men	*Women*	*Gender Gradient*
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	41	41	=
NET Disagree	23	32	***9 (W)***
Strongly disagree	8	12	
Disagree	15	19	
Neutral	32	21	
Agree	20	17	
Strongly Agree	21	24	

	I am confident that my pension will keep up with inflation		
	Men	*Women*	*Gender Gradient*
	%	%	+/-
NET Agree	35	22	***13 (M)***
NET Disagree	25	39	***14 (W)***
Strongly disagree	9	22	
Disagree	15	18	
Neutral	36	31	
Agree	15	12	
Strongly Agree	20	11	

Q.5 Please listen to the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each? Please use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 5 is Strongly Agree, you can use any point along the scale.
Base: All not yet retired and who have a pension in place: 547

THANK YOU

For media queries, contact
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