



SME Postal Users Survey – Annual Report

Produced by: BVA BDRC

Fieldwork: July 2023 – June 2024



Sample

- 2,216 SMEs with up to 249 employees in the UK
- Quotas set on region/nation, business size (no. of employees) and industry
- All interviews are with a postal decision maker for their company

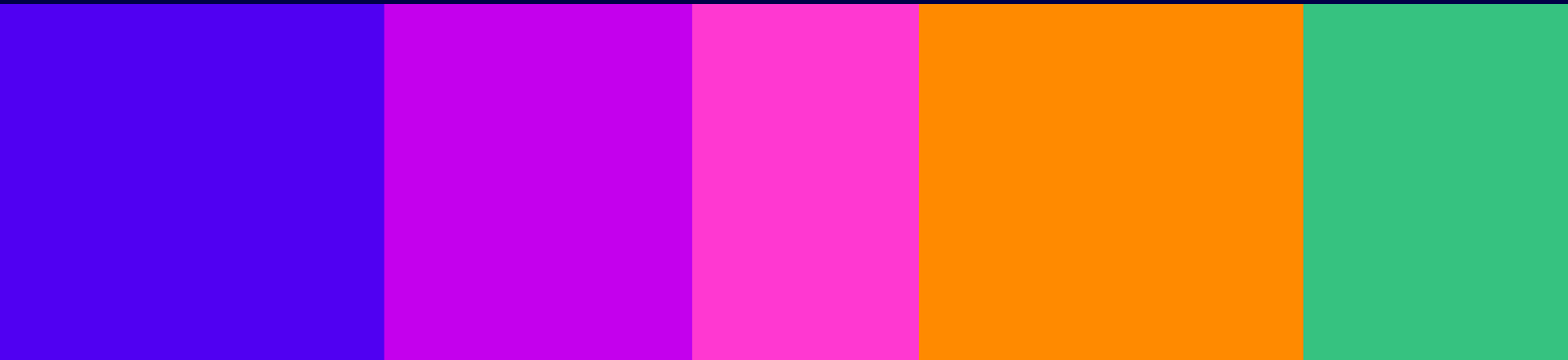
Data collection

- 20-minute interview via telephone and online
- 542 interviews via telephone and 1,674 online
- Analysed differences between data collection method
- Continuous fieldwork from 1st July 2023 - 30th June 2024
- Conducted by BVA BDRC

Data reporting

- Weighted to be nationally representative of SMEs in the UK
- Significance testing performed at the 95% confidence level

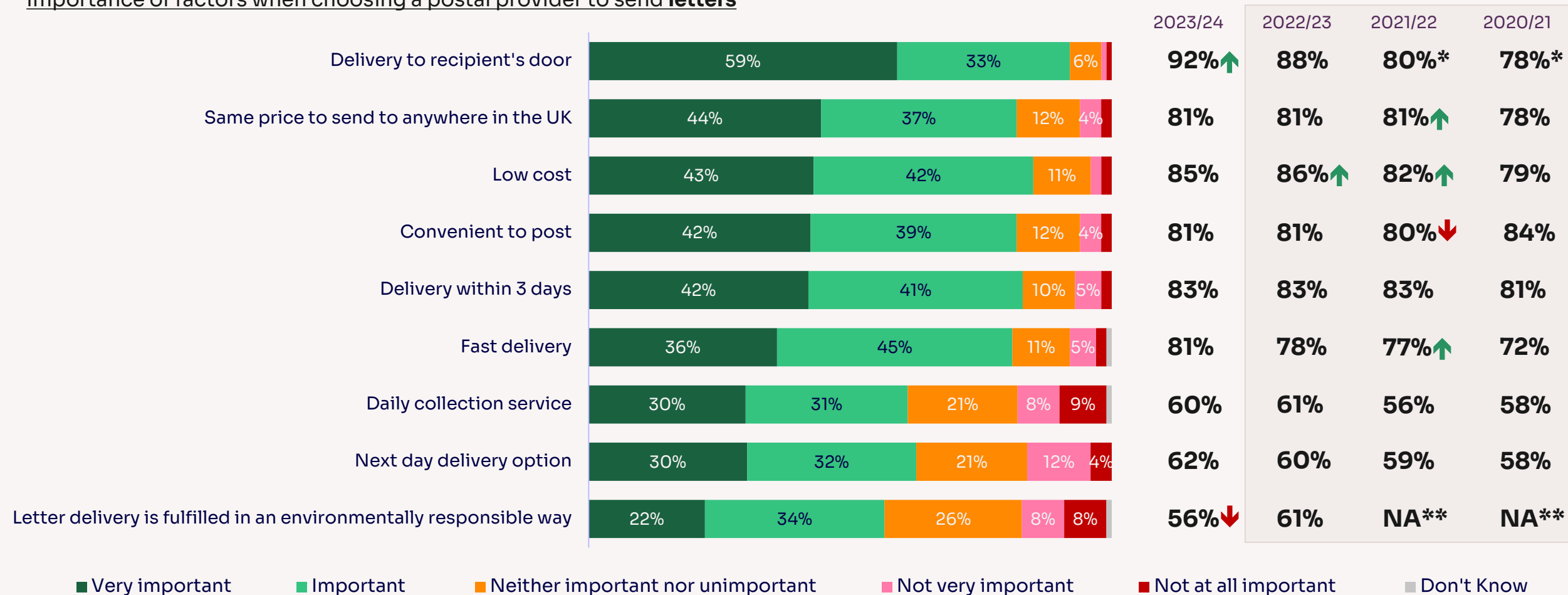
Attitudes and satisfaction



When choosing a provider to send **letters**, the importance of *delivery to door* remains high, while *delivery fulfilled in an environmentally responsible way* has decreased

Importance of factors when choosing a postal provider to send **letters**

Important net (Very important/important)



QD10b. Below, are a list of factors people tell us they consider when sending letters. For each factor, please tell us how important it is to you in choosing a postal provider or service.

Base: All who use Royal Mail for letters or large letters and selected a service: 2020/21 (1613); 2021/22 (1591); 2022/23 (1741); 2023/24 (1786)

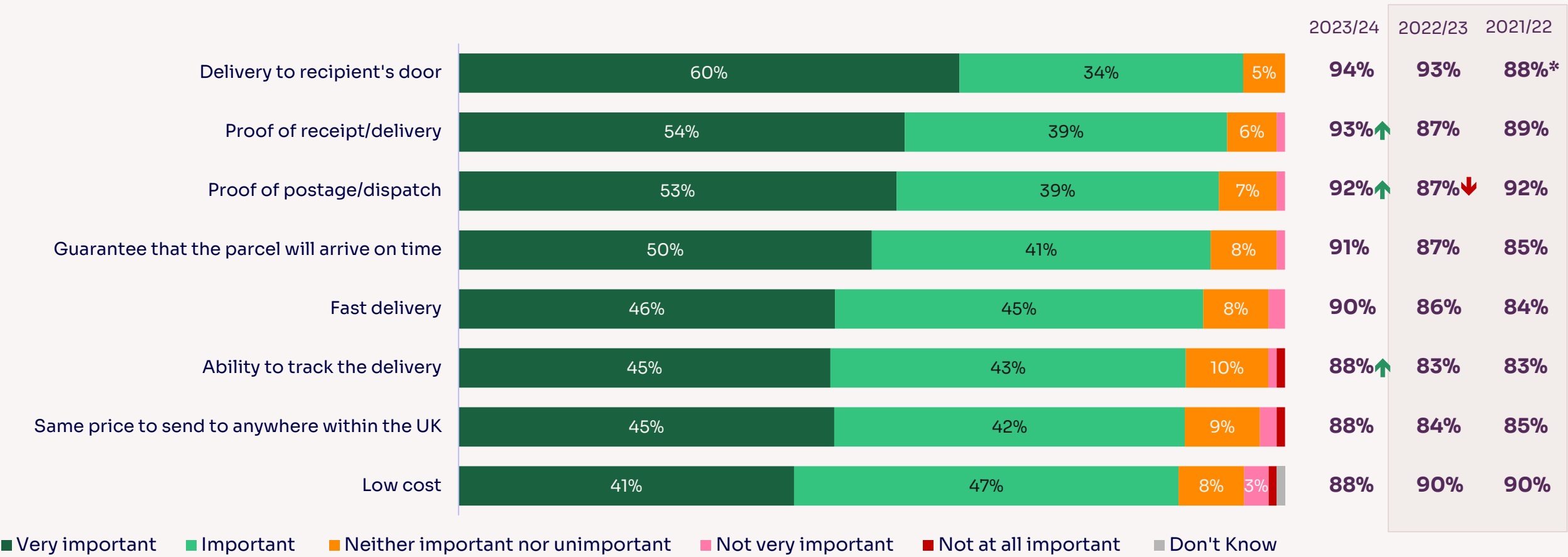
↓ ↑ Significant change since previous wave

*Phrase was “**Guaranteed** delivery to recipient’s door” prior to 2022/23 **Added 2022/23

N.B. only Net importance results tested for significant changes.

'Delivery to recipient's door' is the most important factor for SMEs when sending parcels. The importance of *having 'proof of receipt/delivery'* and *'proof of postage /dispatch'* have increased

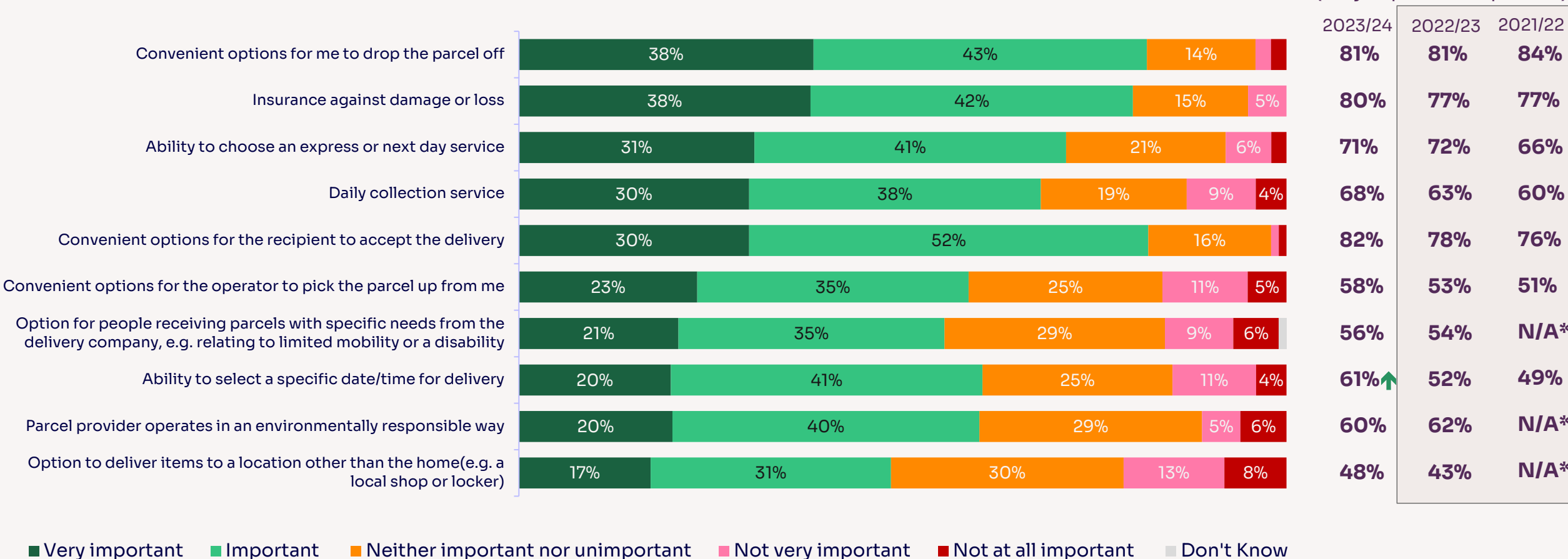
Importance of factors when choosing a postal provider to send **parcels** (slide 1 of 2 – most important)



QD10a. Below, are a list of factors people tell us they consider when sending parcels. For each factor, please tell us how important it is to you in choosing a postal provider or service.
 Base: All using Royal Mail to send parcels and packets: 2021/22 (719); 2022/23 (867); 2023/24 (836)
 *Phrase was "Guaranteed delivery to recipient's door" prior to 2022/23
 ↓ ↑ Significant change since previous wave
 N.B. only Net importance results tested for significant changes.

Ability to select a specific date/time for delivery has risen significantly since last year

Importance of factors when choosing a postal provider to send **parcels** (slide 2 of 2 – least important)



QD10a. Below, are a list of factors people tell us they consider when sending parcels. For each factor, please tell us how important it is to you in choosing a postal provider or service.

Base: All using Royal Mail to send parcels and packets: 2021/22 (719); 2022/23 (867); 2023/24 (836)

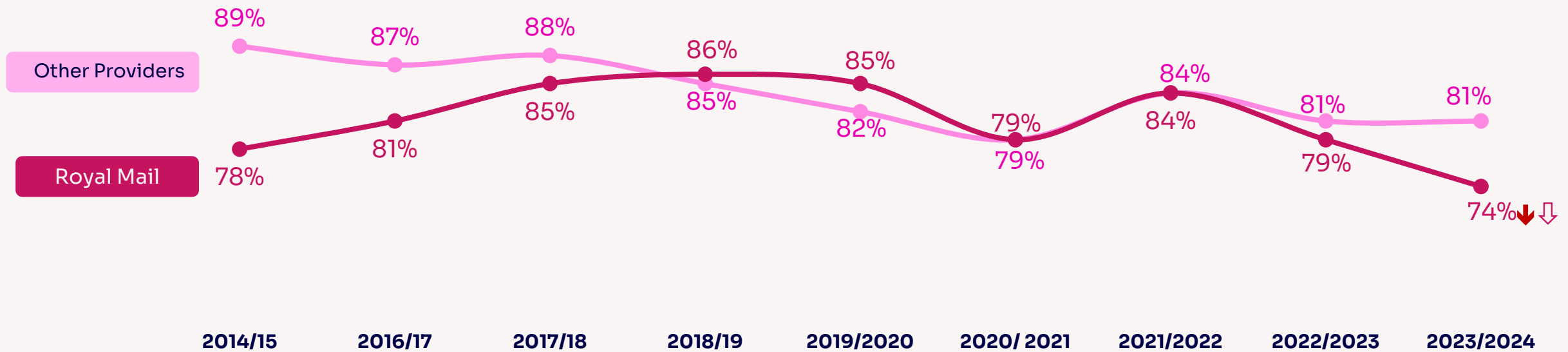
↓ ↑ Significant change since previous wave

*Added 2022/23

N.B. only Net importance results tested for significant changes.

Satisfaction with overall quality of service from Royal Mail has declined in the last two years

Overall satisfaction with Royal Mail and Other Providers, by year



Significant change since 2022/23 ↓ ↑

Significantly higher/lower between RM and Other Providers ↓ ↑

QRM2. Thinking generally about the service your organisation receives as a whole, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of the services you receive from Royal Mail as a recipient and sender?

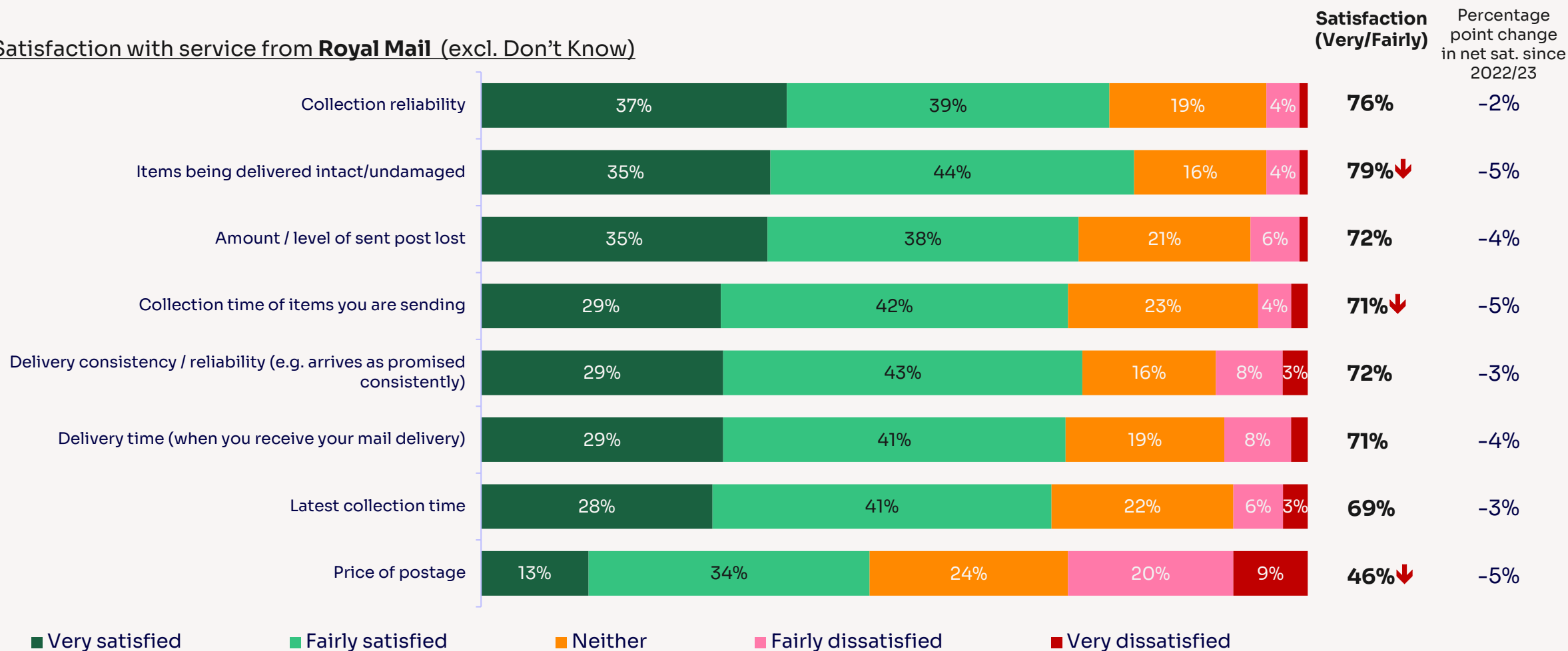
QOP1a. Thinking generally about the service you receive as a whole- as a sender and recipient of post, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied, how would you rate the quality of the services you receive from [NON-ROYAL MAIL PROVIDER]

Base: All who use Royal Mail: 2014/15 (1563); 2016/17 (1933); 2017/18 (2266); 2018/19 (1869); 2019/20 (1948); 2020/21 (2054); 2021/22 (2170); 2022/23 (2030); 2023/24 (2035)

All who use other provider: 2014/15 (279); 2016/17 (425); 2017/18 (434); 2018/19 (435); 2019/20 (479); 2020/21 (595); 2021/22 (551); 2022/23 (728); 2023/24 (876)

Price of postage is the area with lowest satisfaction with Royal Mail (9% are very dissatisfied)

Satisfaction with service from **Royal Mail** (excl. Don't Know)



QRM3. How would you rate the performance of Royal Mail, as a recipient and sender, in the following areas on a 5-point scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied?

Base: All who use Royal Mail (excluding don't know): 2022/23 (1570 to 2005); 2023/24 (1811 to 2018)

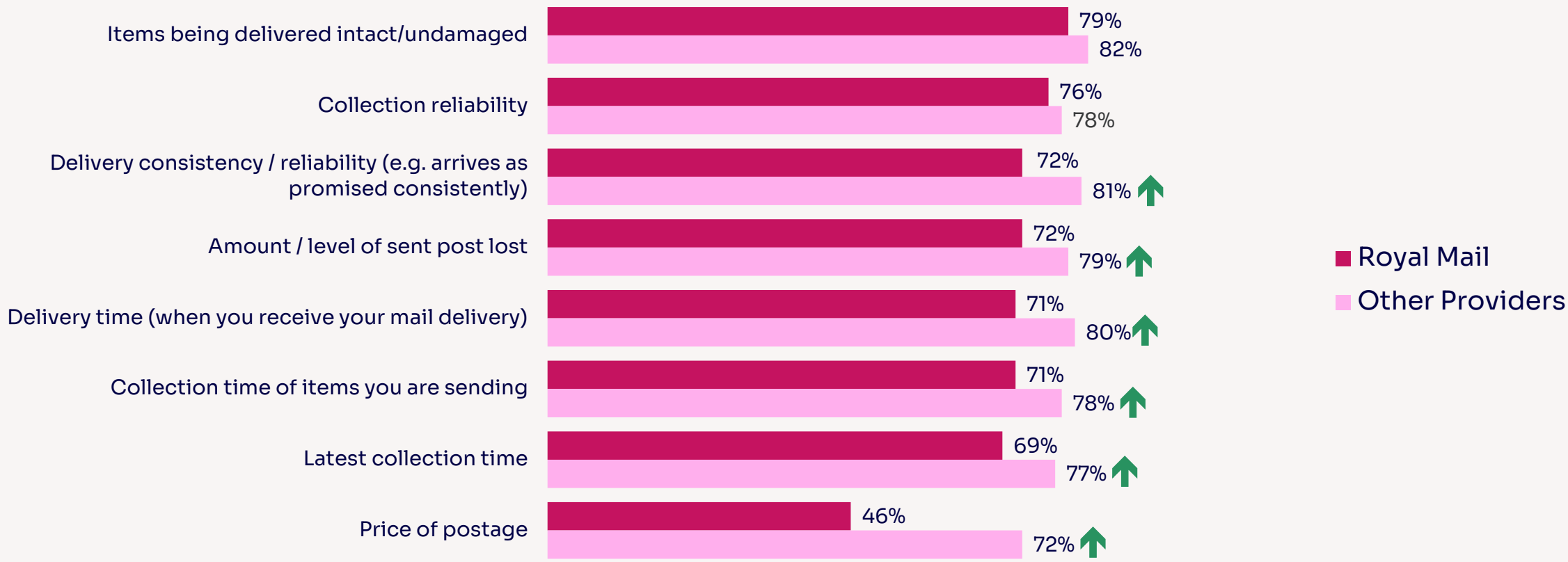
↓ ↑ Significant change since previous wave

N.B. only Net importance results tested for significant changes.

Other providers provide greater satisfaction than Royal Mail for all factors measured apart from *Items being delivered intact/undamaged* and *Collection reliability*



Net satisfaction (Very/ fairly satisfied) with service from Royal Mail and Other Providers (excluding don't know)



QRM3. How would you rate the performance of Royal Mail, as a recipient and sender, in the following areas on a 5-point scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied? / Base: All who use Royal Mail (excluding don't know): 2023/24 (1811 to 2018)

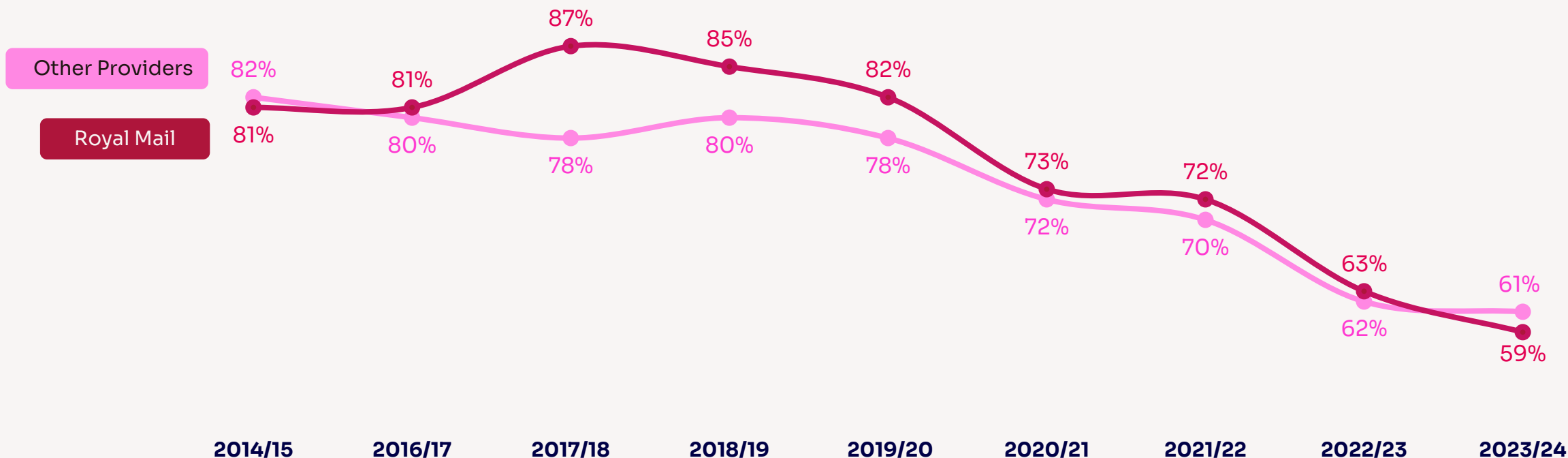
QOP2. As a recipient and sender of post, how would you rate the performance of [QV5c provider] in the following areas on a 5 point scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied Base: All who use provider other than Royal Mail: 2023/24 (826 to 866)

↓ ↑ Subgroup significantly higher/lower

Proportion of SMEs reporting “no problems” with their services is consistent YoY – six in ten report no problems

Negligible difference between RM and Other Providers

Users who have had ‘no problems’ in the last six months, by provider



QRM4. Have you experienced any problems with your service from Royal Mail (as a sender or recipient of mail) in the last 6 months?

QOP3. As a sender and recipient of mail, have you experienced any problems with your service from [QV4 provider] in the last 6 months?

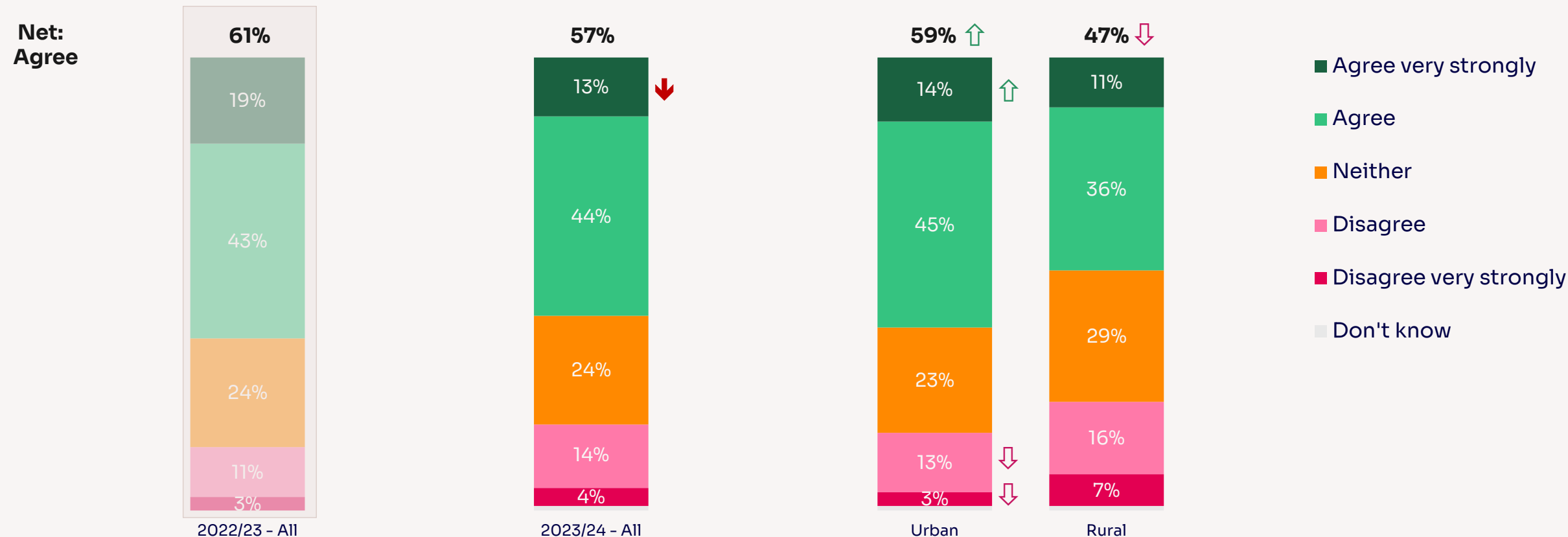
Base: All who use Royal Mail: 2014/15 (1563); 2016/17 (1933); 2017/18 (2266); 2018/19 (1869); 2019/20 (1948); 2020/21 (2054); 2021/22 (2170); 2022/23 (2030), 2023/24 (2035)

All who use other provider : 2014/15 (279); 2016/17 (425); 2017/18 (434); 2018/19 (435); 2019/20 (479); 2020/ 2021 (595) 2021/2022 (551); 2022/23 (728), 2023/24 (876)

Around six-in-ten SMEs agree UK postal services are good value for money

Strong agreement is higher for Urban and the three devolved nations

UK postal services: good value for money?



QAP1. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is agree very strongly and 1 is disagree very strongly, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree that mail services in the UK provide good value for money

Base: All 2022/23 (2223); 2023/24 (2216), Urban (1950), Rural (266)

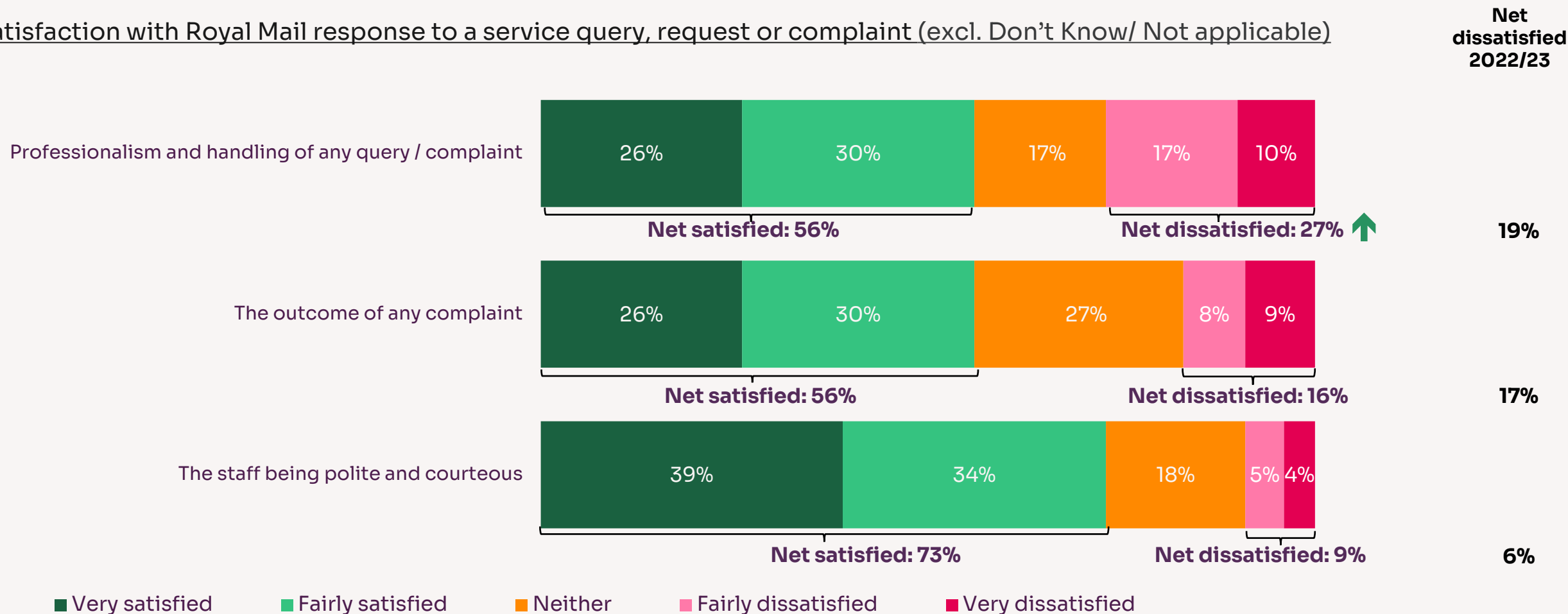
↓ ↑ Significant change since 2022/23

↓ ↑ Subgroup significantly

higher/lower than All

Over a quarter who contacted Royal mail were *dissatisfied* with the handling of their query or complaint and this is significantly higher than in 2022/23"

Satisfaction with Royal Mail response to a service query, request or complaint (excl. Don't Know/ Not applicable)



QRM5. Thinking about contacting Royal Mail with a service query, request or complaint, and your experiences in the last six months, please rate Royal Mail on the following aspects using a 5point scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied.

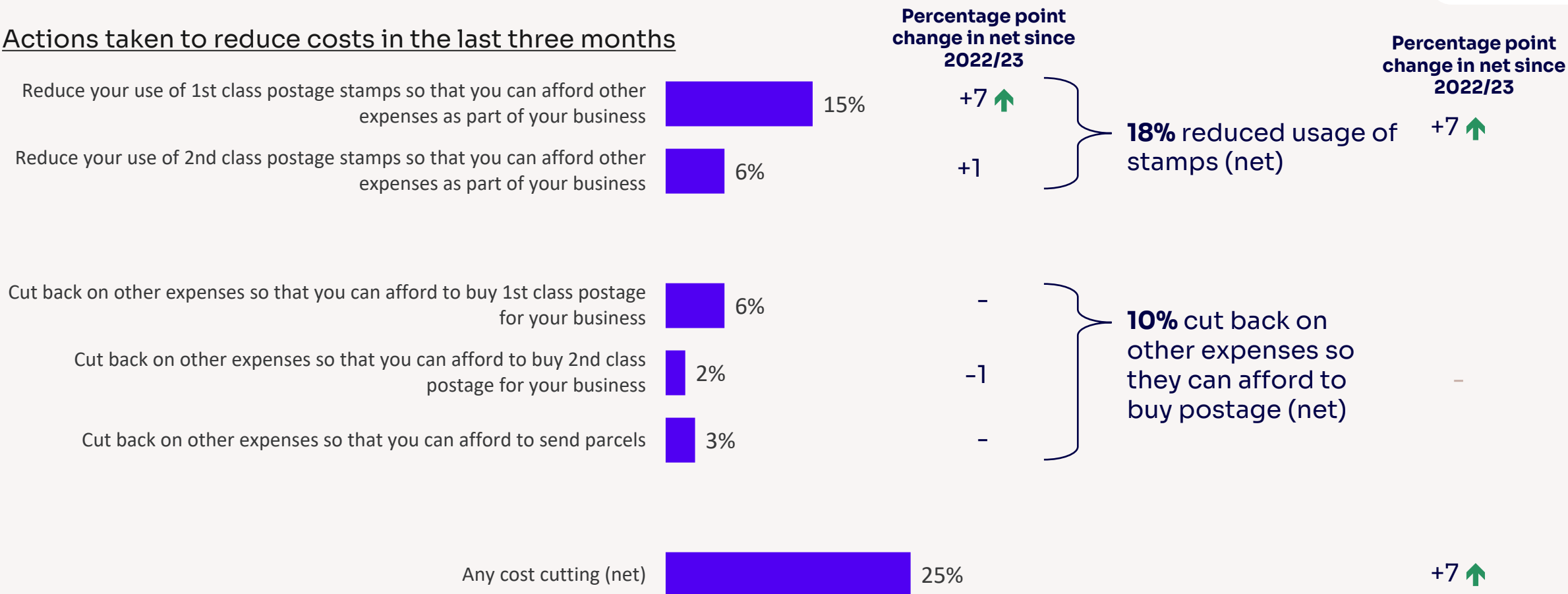
Base: 2023/24 All using Royal Mail and who have had problems with Royal Mail in the last 6 months and contacted Royal Mail and provided a rating (excluding DK/ not applicable):

↓ ↑ Significant change since
2022/23

Professionalism and handling of any query/complaint: 2022/23 (505); 2023/24 (614) / The outcome of any complaint: 2022/23 (455); 2023/24 (578) / The staff being polite and courteous: 2022/23 (567), 2023/24 (641)

One-in-four SMEs had done some post-related cost-cutting in the previous three months (an increase since last year)

Actions taken to reduce costs in the last three months



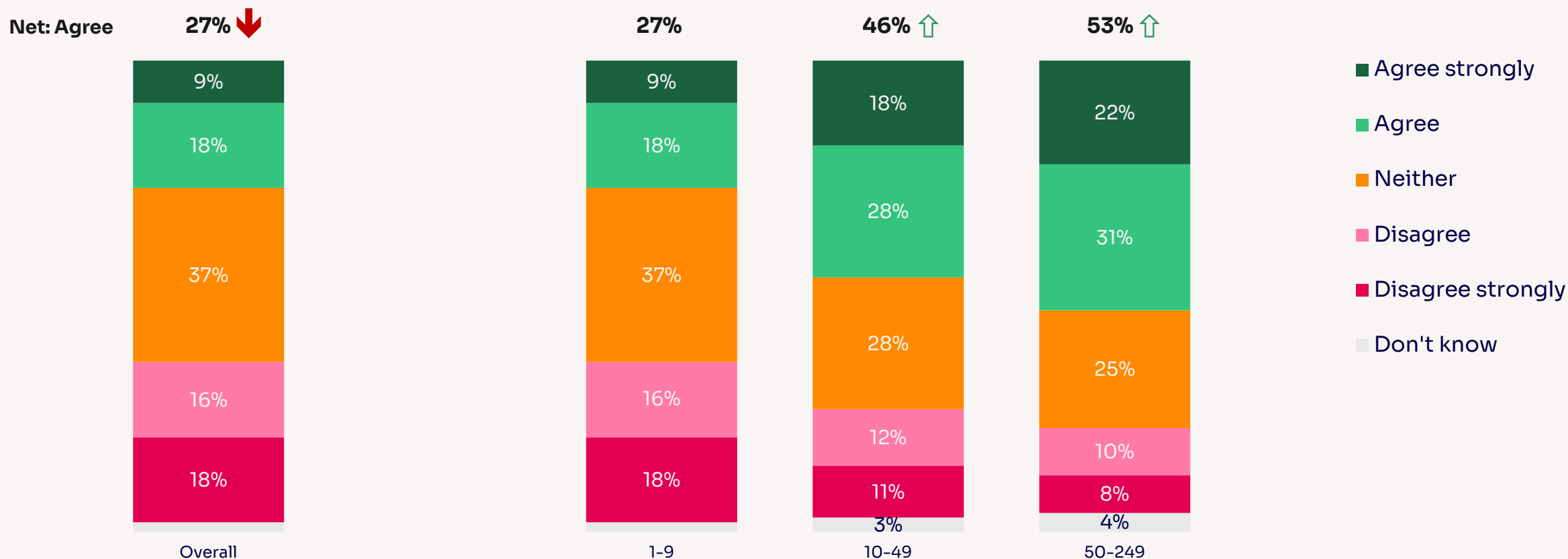
QN12. In the last three months have you had to do any of the following:

Base: All 2023/24 (2216)

↓ ↑ Significant change since 2022/23

Just over a quarter of SMEs say they would be willing to pay more for a parcel provider that operates in an environmentally friendly way

I will be willing to pay more for a parcel provider that operates in an environmentally friendly way



QN13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements: *I will be willing to pay more for a parcel provider that operates in an environmentally friendly way*

Base: All (2216); 1-9 employees (1523), 10-49 employees (364), 50-249 employees (329)

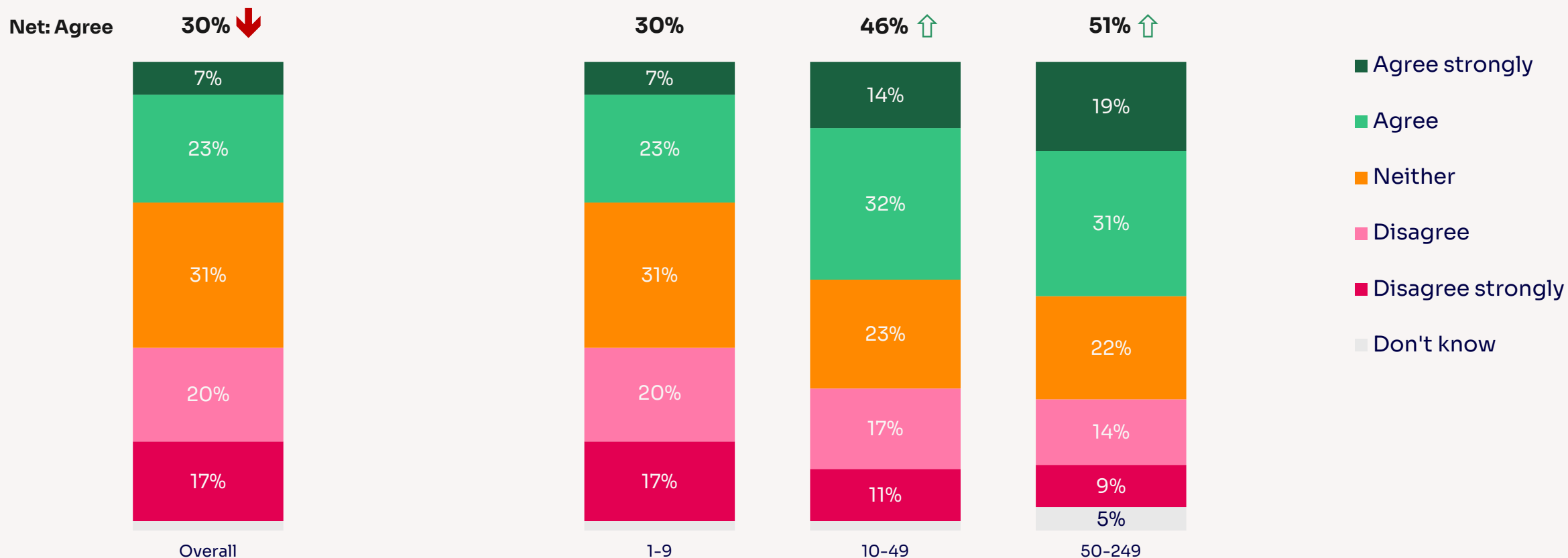
↓ ↑ Significant change since 2022/23

↓ ↑ Subgroup significantly higher/lower than Overall sample

N.B. only Net agreement results tested for significant differences.

Three-in-ten SMEs say they would be willing to use a parcel provider that operates in an environmentally friendly way even if items take longer to deliver

I will be willing to use a parcel provider that operates in an environmentally friendly way even if items take longer to deliver



QN13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements: *I will be willing to use a parcel provider that operates in an environmentally friendly way even if items take longer to deliver*

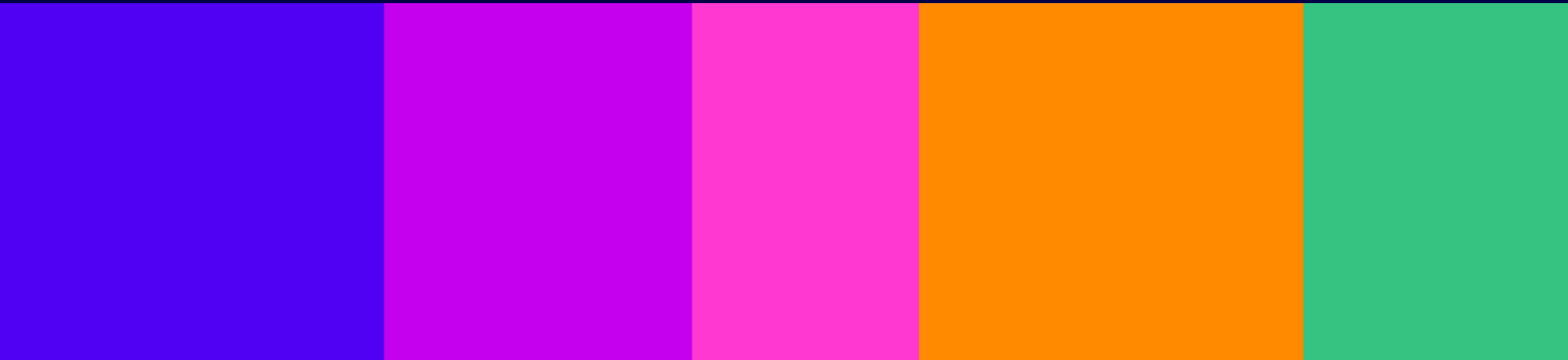
Base: All (2216); 1-9 employees (1523), 10-49 employees (364), 50-249 employees (329)

↓ ↑ Significant change since 2022/23

↓ ↑ Subgroup significantly higher/lower than Overall

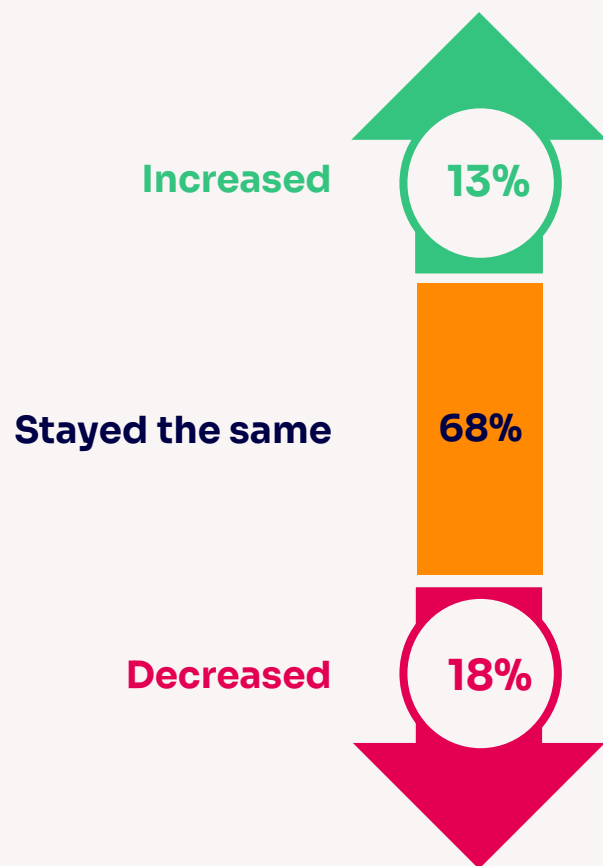
N.B. only Net agreement results tested for significant differences.

Sending and receiving post



Over the past 12 months, 13% of SMEs say the amount of post they send has increased vs. 18% that say it has decreased

Change in volume of post sent in past 12 months



Types of post that have experienced a particular increase/decrease in volumes*

- Parcels and packets – 58% (55% in 2022/23)
- Large letters – 36% (36% in 2022/23)
- Letters – 20% (34% in 2022/23) ↓
- Advertising/promotional – 8% (9% in 2022/23)
- Transactional mail – 8% (8% in 2022/23)
- Order fulfilment – 6% (7% in 2022/23)

- Letters – 61% (62% in 2022/23)
- Large letters – 38% (34% in 2022/23)
- Parcel and packets – 31% (29% in 2022/23)
- Other everyday correspondence – 4% (6% in 2022/23)

Q51. In the past 12 months, has the volume of mail your organisation sends increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

Q51a./b Are there any types of mail that you send in particular that have experienced an increase/decrease in volumes?

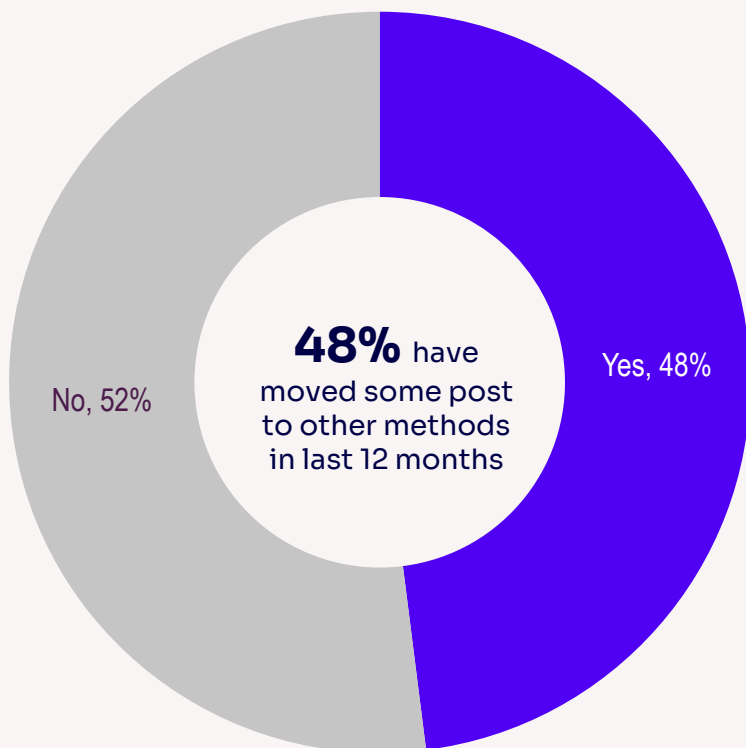
Base: All (2216); Experienced increase in volumes sent (302), Experienced decrease in volumes sent (453) (chart excludes 3% don't know)

*Only mentions >5% shown on slide

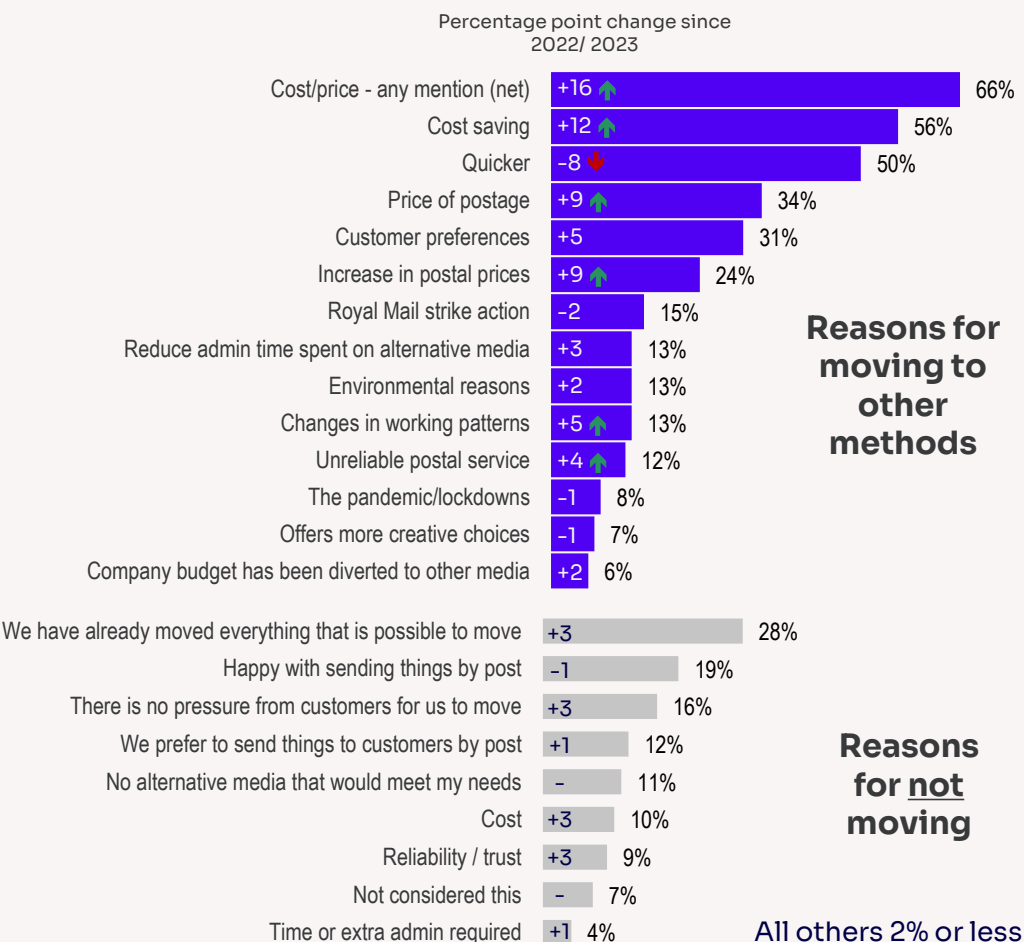
↓ ↑ Significant change since 2022/23

Nearly half say they have moved some post to another communication method in the past year (similar to the previous year). Cost/price is the top reason mentioned, and has increased year-on-year. Among those who have not moved, over a quarter have already moved all they can, and a fifth are happy with sending things by post.

Moving post to other communication methods in last 12 months



Moved to other methods in the last 12 months:
47% in 2022/23
39% in 2021/22
44% in 2020/21
44% in 2019/20



QF4. Over the last 12 months, has your organisation moved some post to other communication methods?

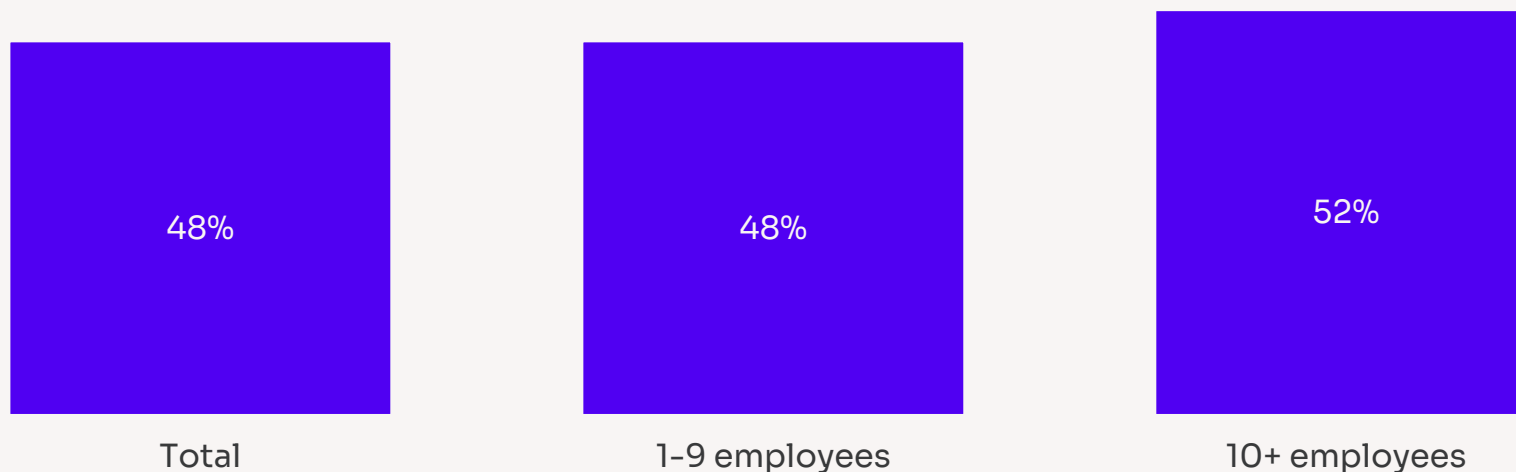
Base: All 2023/24 (2216)

QF6/5. Why have you moved/ not moved any mail to other communication methods in the last 12 months?

Base: Changed to other methods (1271), Not changed to other methods (945)

The proportion switching post over to other communication method(s) is similar by business size

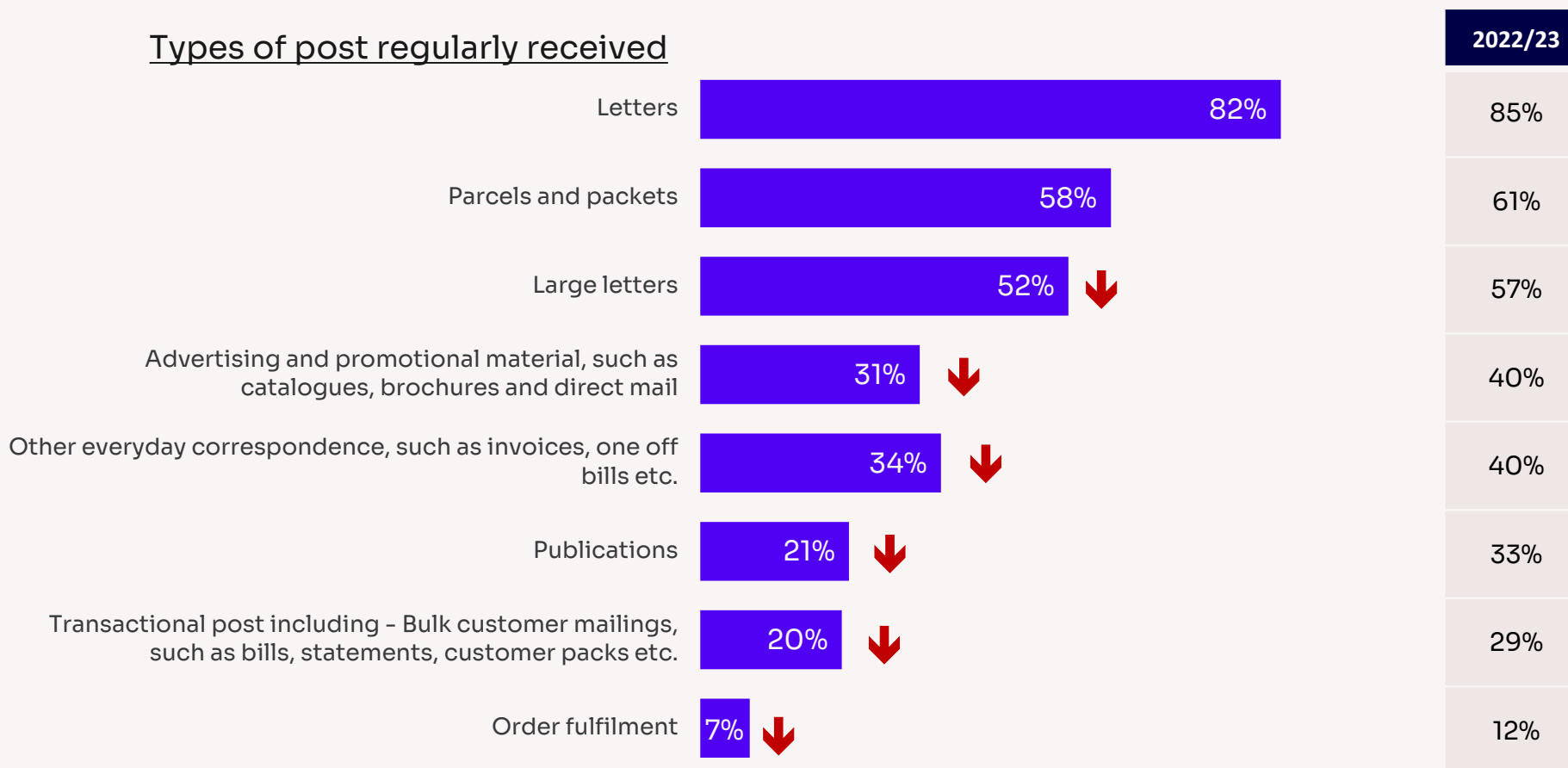
Moving post to other communication methods in last 12 months, by company size



QF4. Over the last 12 months, has your organisation moved some mail to other communication methods?

Base: All (2216); 1-9 employees (1523), 10+ employees (693)

No change in the past year in the proportion of SMEs that say they regularly **receive** letters or parcels and packets; all other types have fallen

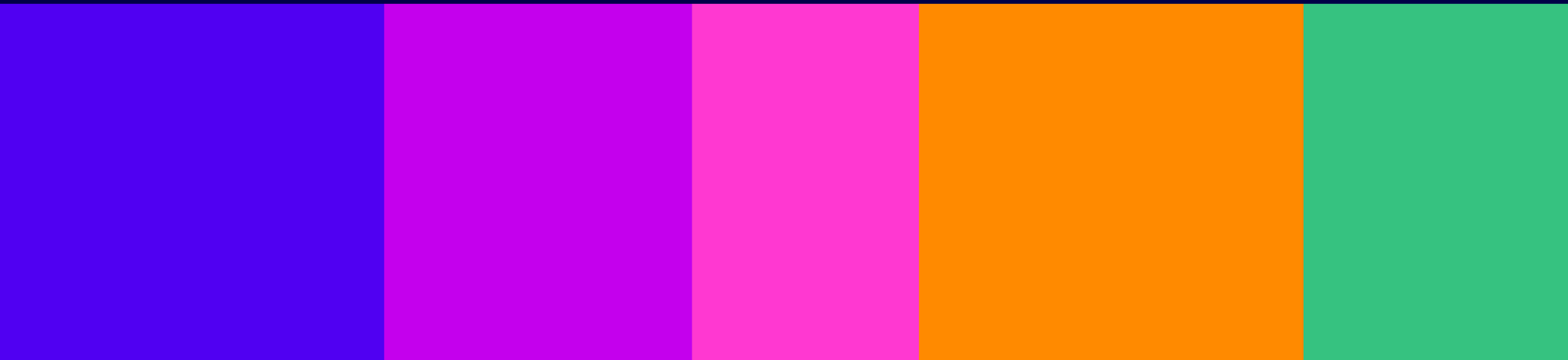


QV9a. Which of the following types of mail does your organisation regularly receive at your location?

Base: All 2022/23 (2223); 2023/24 (2216)

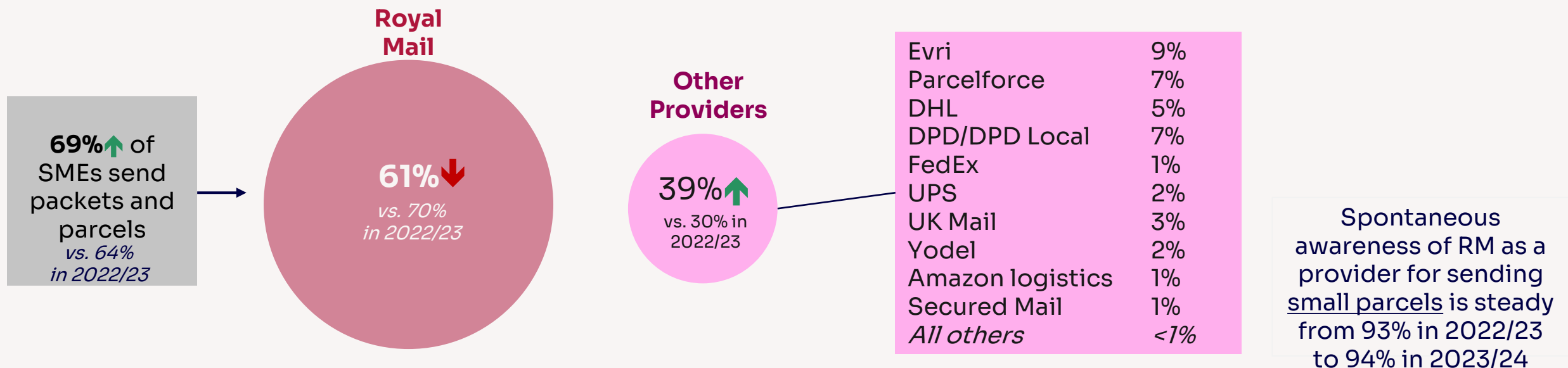
↓ ↑ Significant change since
2022/23

Use of Royal Mail services



Royal Mail is the most common main provider SMEs claim to use for sending parcels and packets, although alternatives are increasingly mentioned

Main provider: claimed use for **packets and parcels** by number of items



QV2A. On average, how many of the following types of post does your organisation typically send per mailing? - Packets and parcels Base: All (2216)

QV5a.1 Which would you say is your organisation's main postal service for packets and parcels in terms of the number of items you send? Base: All who send packets and parcels (1569)

QN1. Thinking now about sending small parcels, those that are under 2 kilograms in general. Which providers can you think of? IF NECESSARY: By this we mean companies who deliver small parcels in the UK.

Base: All 2022/23 (2223); 2023/24 (2216)

↓ ↑ Significant change since 2022/23