

JUST.

RETIREMENT INSIGHTS

2026

Understanding the South African
retirement market & their needs



WHAT IS JUST RETIREMENT INSIGHTS?

A tracking study aimed at understanding the South African retirement market and needs:

Online and telephonic interviews with target market respondents in **Cape Town, Durban and Gauteng:**

- The fieldwork was overseen by an independent data collection firm, 1DCS (Data Collection Services)
- Data collection took place in February 2026
- A total of 446 respondents participated

Profile of target respondents:

- Individuals who are pre-retirees and retirees
- Aged between 50 and 85 years
- Quotas were set based on Area, Race, Gender, Age and Monthly Household Income

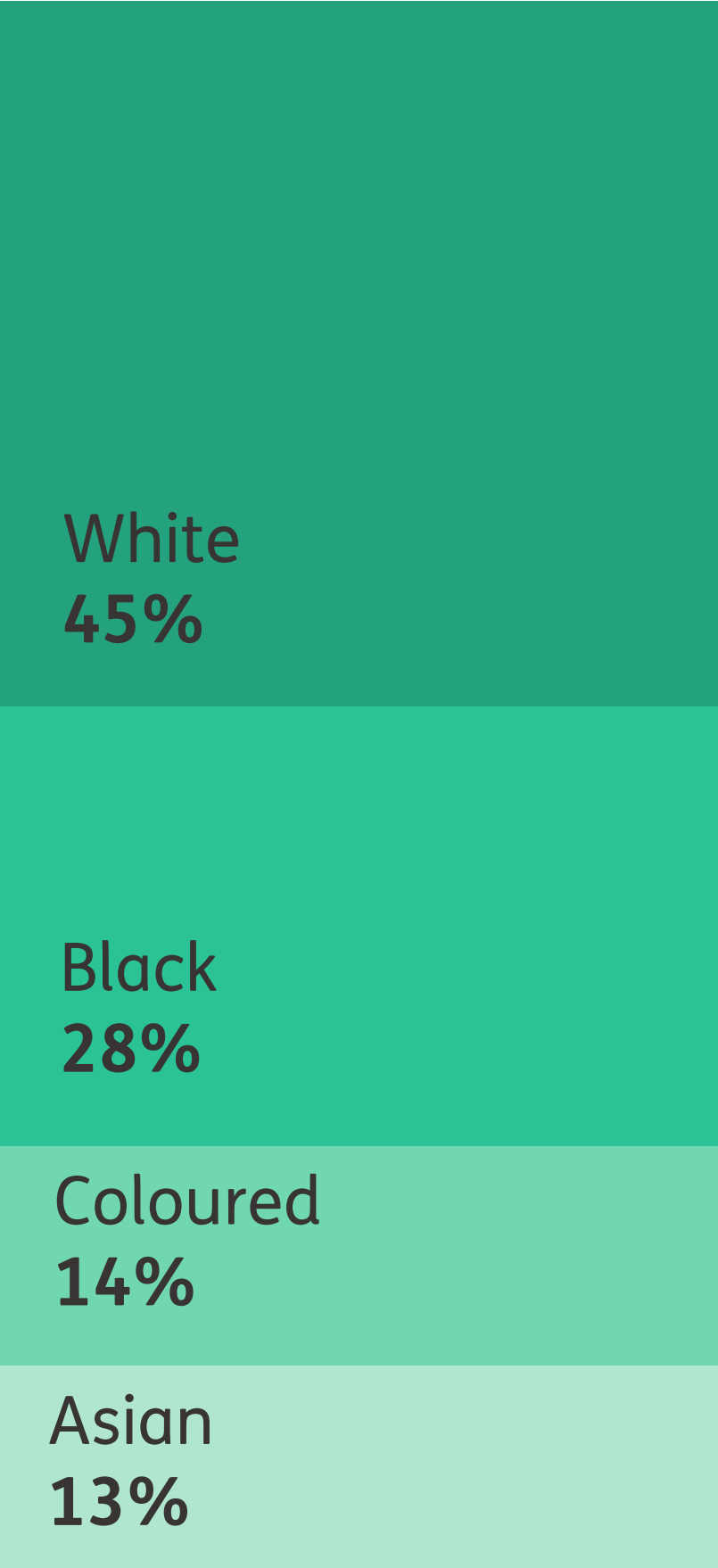
Survey frequency:

- Seven studies have been conducted over the last 11 years.
- The initial study was conducted in 2015
- It was re-launched in 2018, followed by a subsequent wave in 2019
- Just Retirement Insights Lite study in 2020 focused specifically on COVID-19's effect on retirement planning
- Comprehensive tracking studies were completed in 2022, 2024 and most recently in 2026

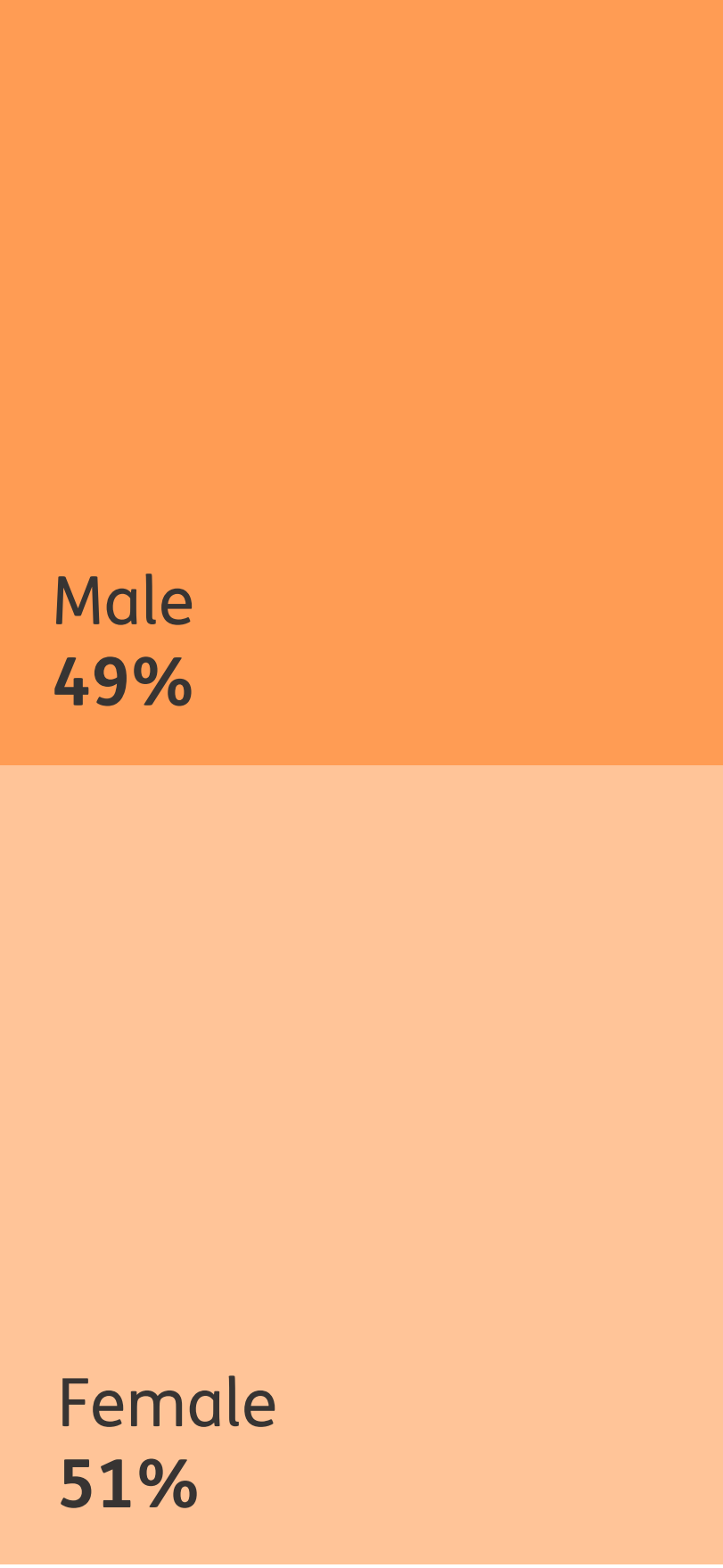
SAMPLE

Demographics and profile

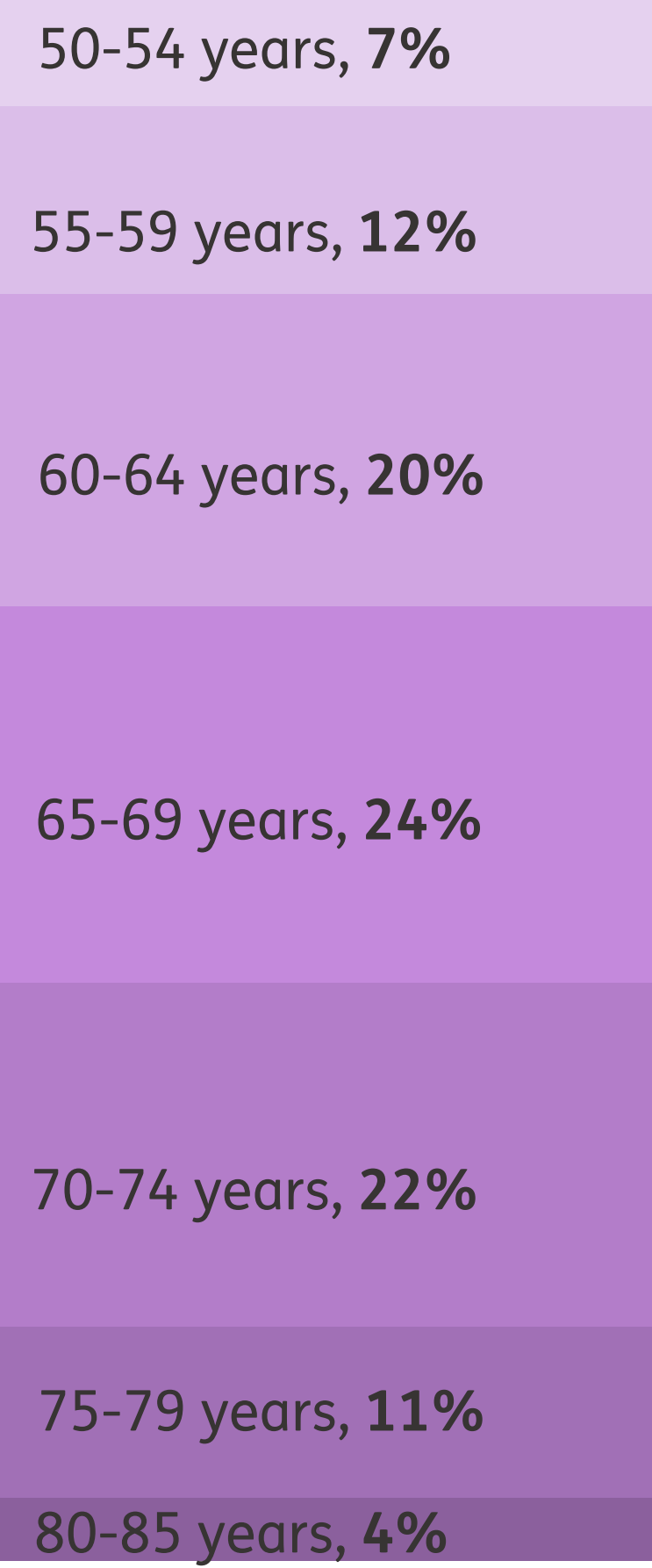
RACE



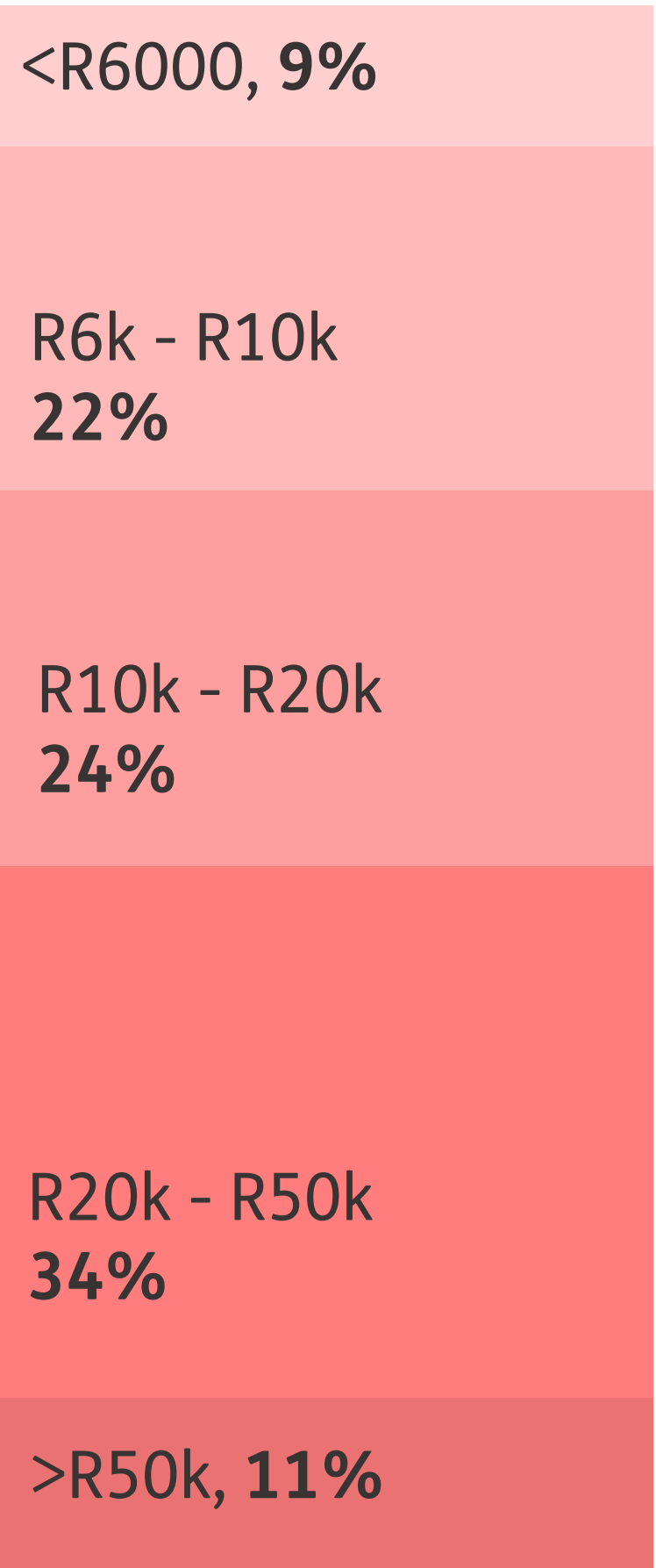
GENDER



AGE



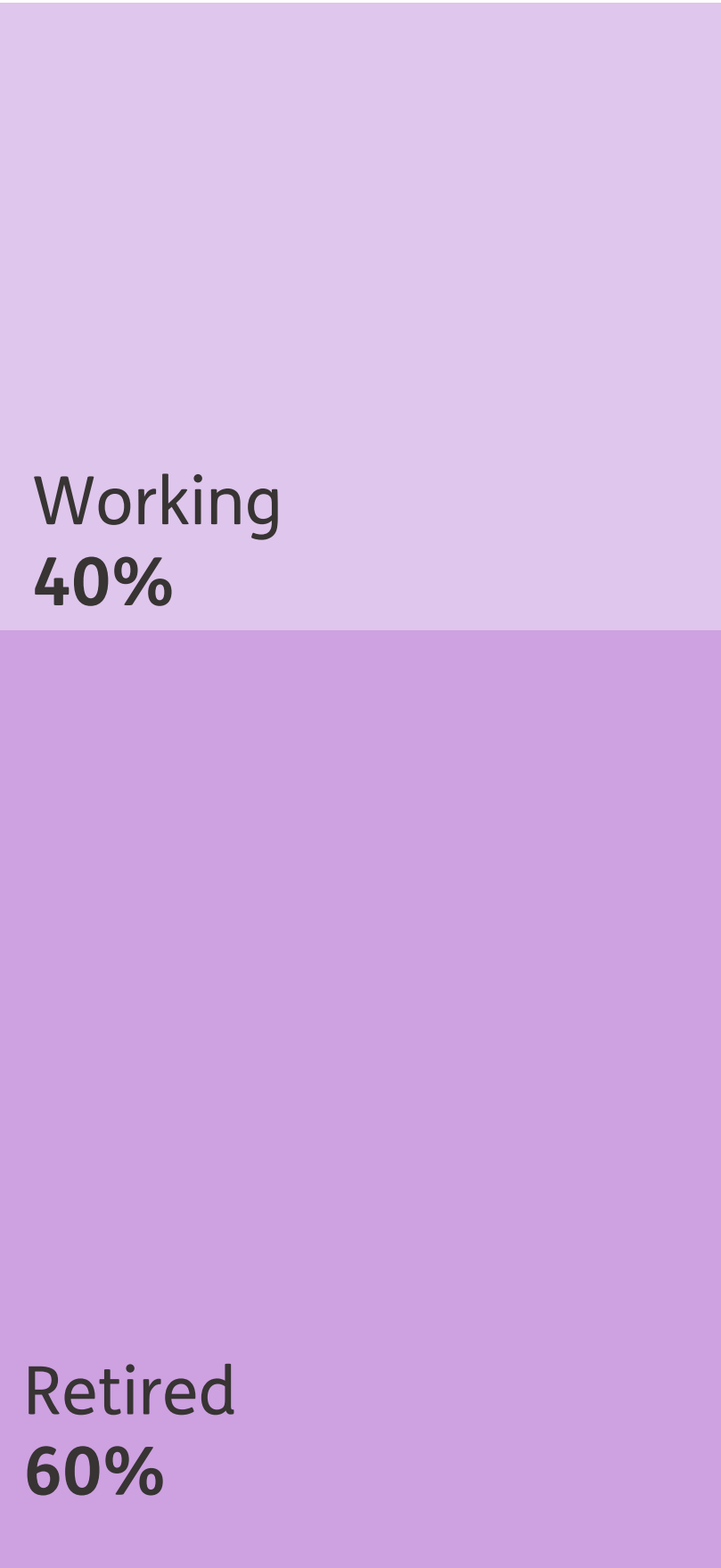
MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME



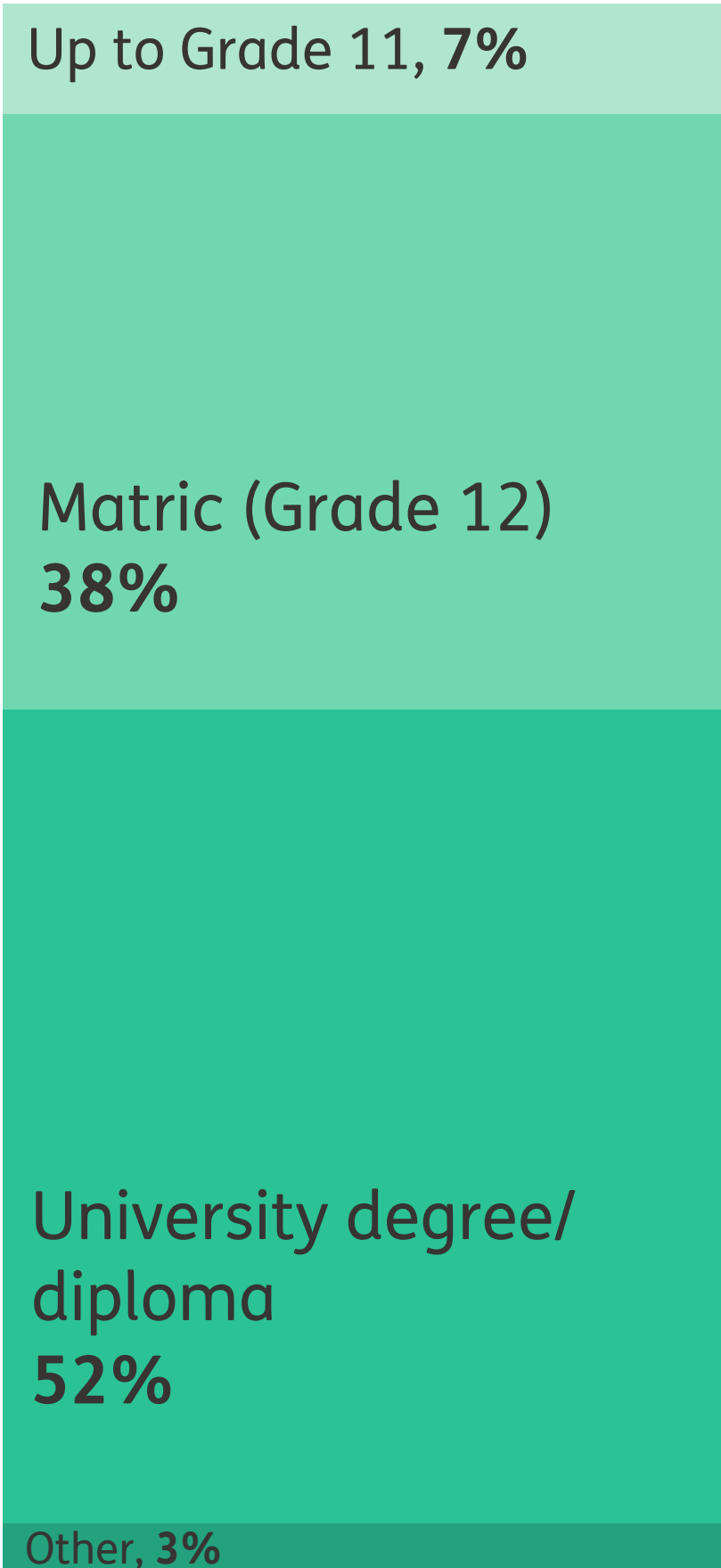
SAMPLE

Natural fallout in terms of other demographics

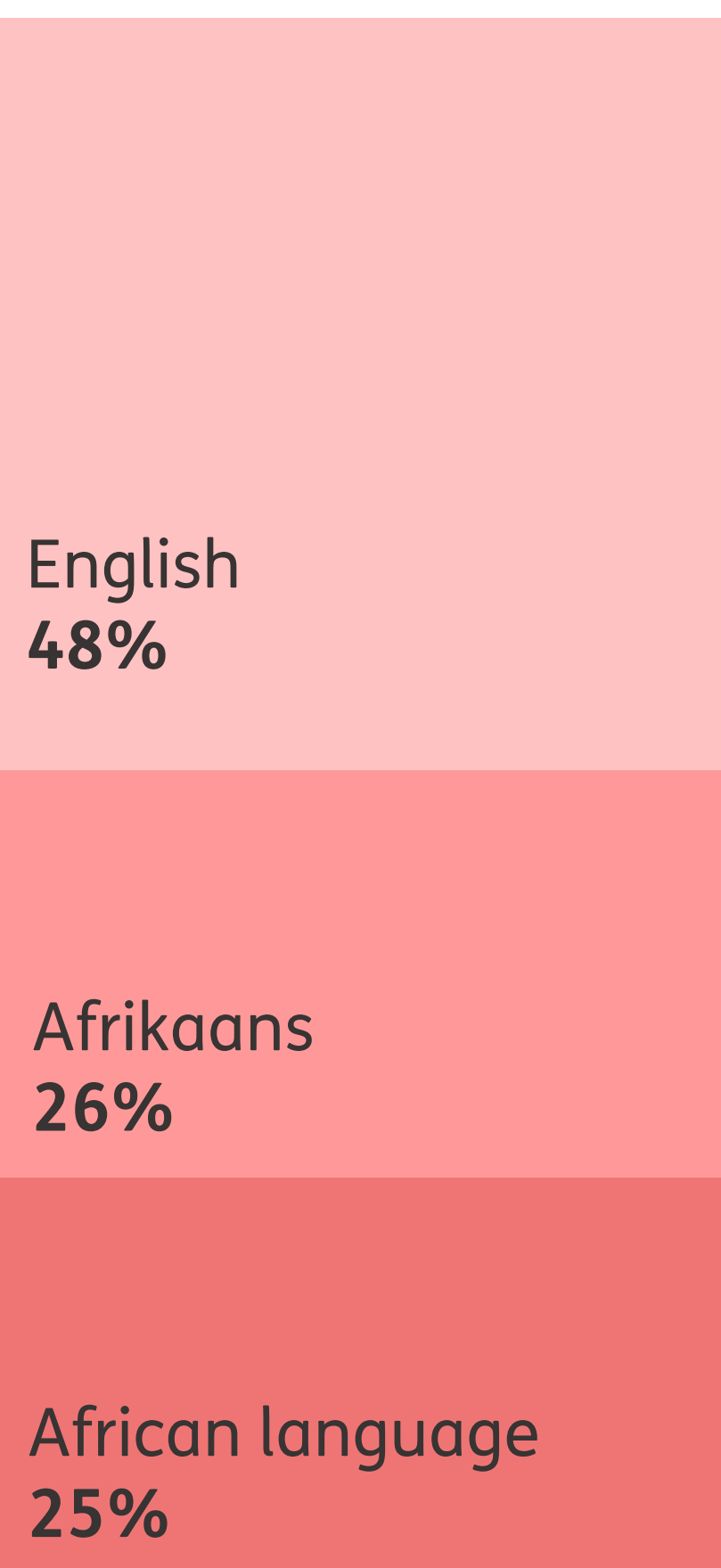
EMPLOYMENT STATUS



EDUCATION



LANGUAGE



MARITAL STATUS



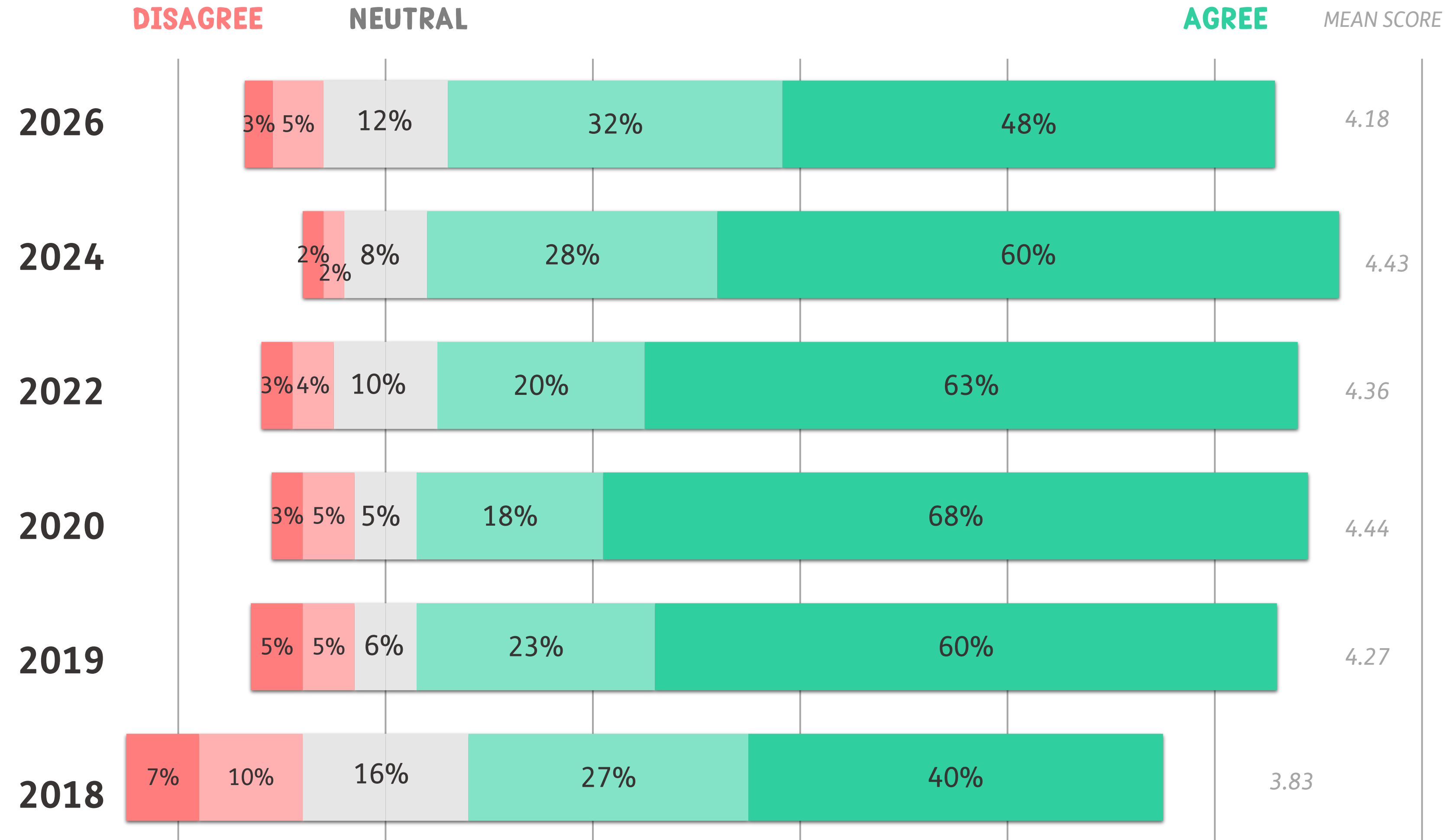
n = 446

Minimum quotas were imposed in line with Just's current and potential retiree population.

PRESSURE-DRIVEN CHANGES IN FINANCIAL BEHAVIOUR



ESTABLISHING CLEAR RETIREMENT GOALS

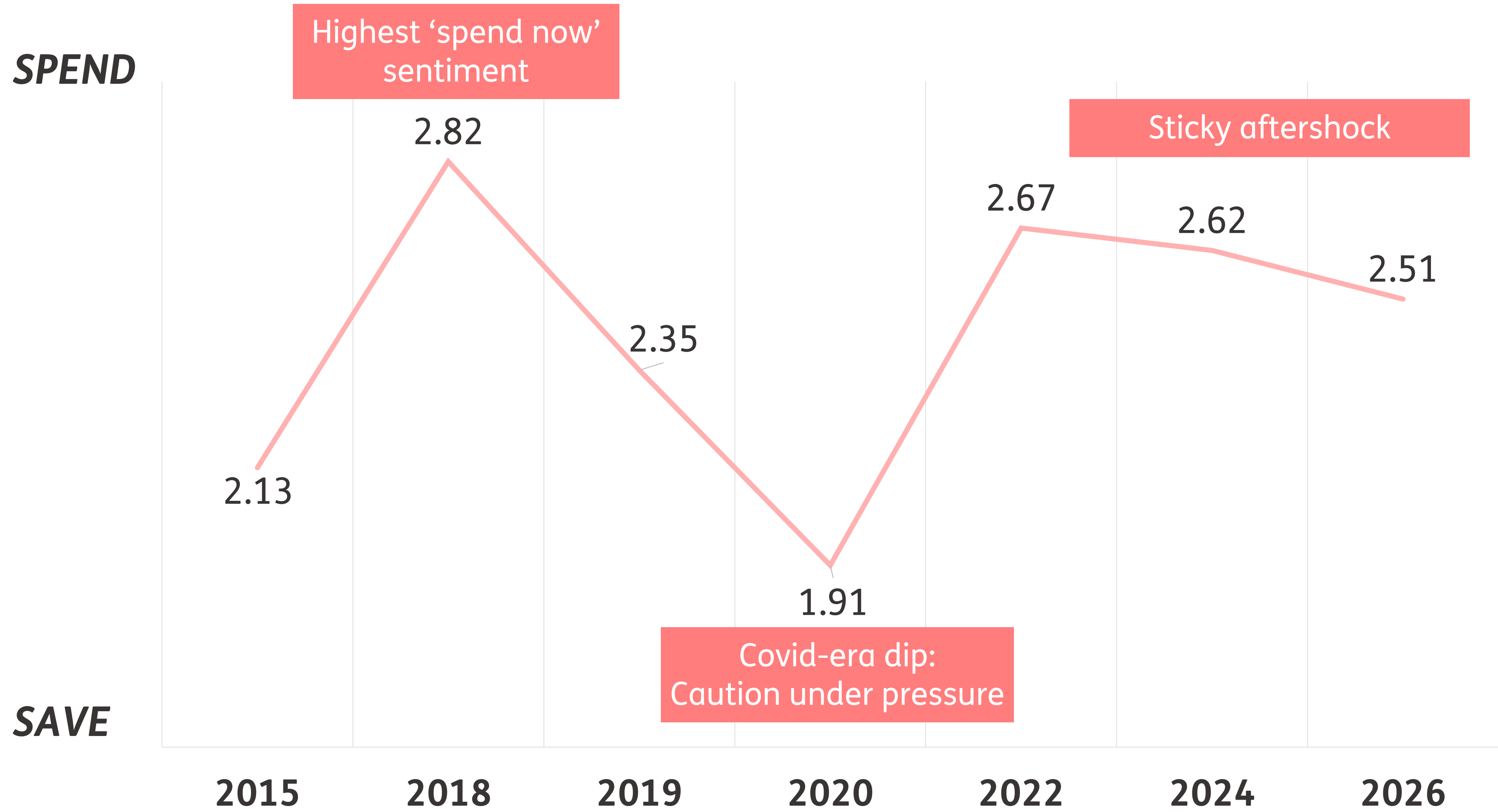


Planning behaviour has improved dramatically since 2018.

While there is a small pullback in 2026, most retirees and pre-retirees now actively set financial goals making planning far **more mainstream than it was a few years ago.**

Mean score (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) for: I plan my finances. I set goals that I want to achieve and work towards that.

CAUTION ROSE UNDER PRESSURE, AND IT'S STUCK



2020 was a turning point. The pandemic prompted the most disciplined behaviour (only 18% spenders, lowest mean of 1.91).

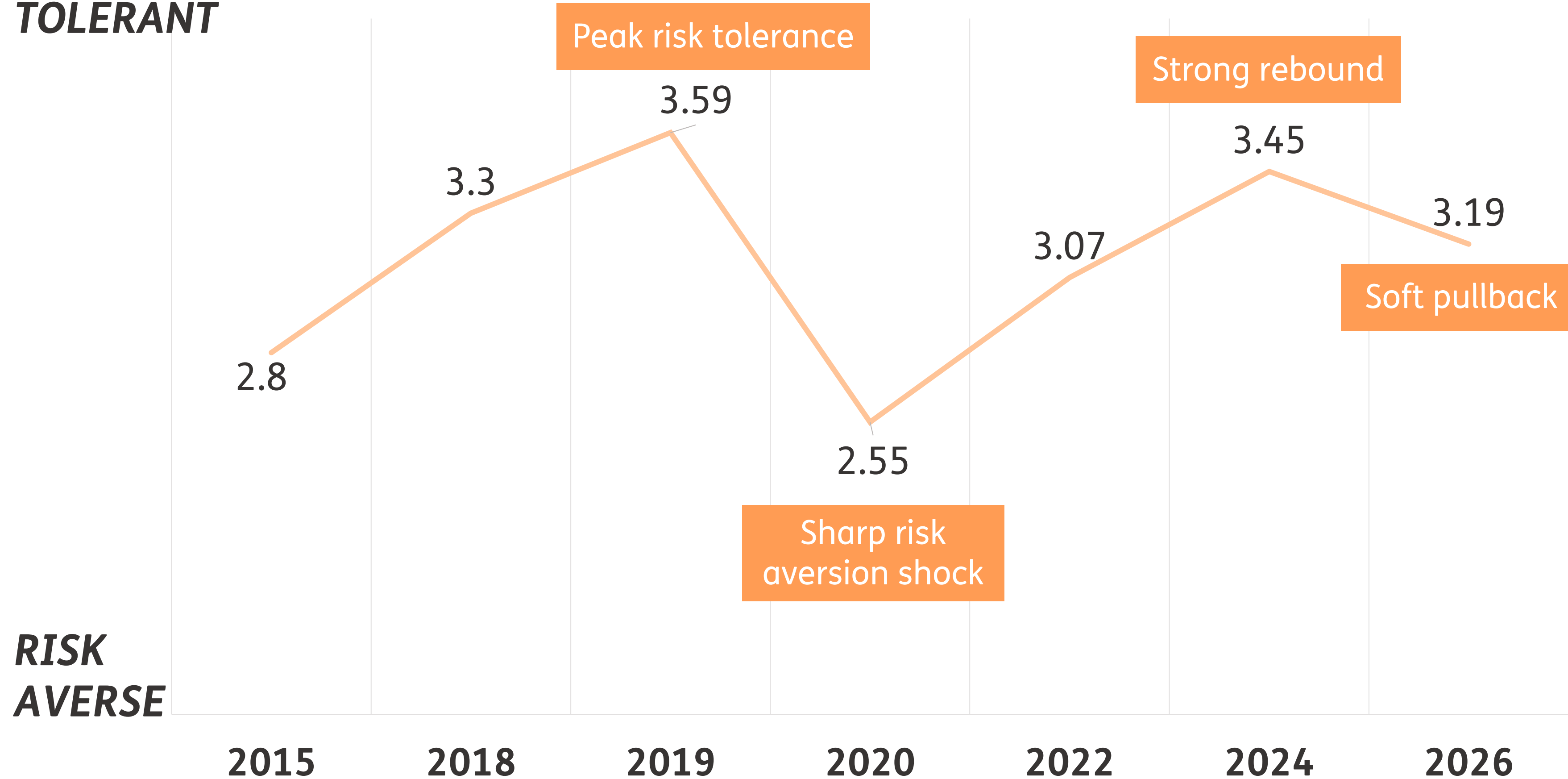
Post-pandemic regression. Agreement with spending over saving has increased since 2020 (now 33% in 2026).

2026 shows modest improvement from 2024's peak, suggesting a slight return to financial discipline.

Mean score (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) for: "I do not save much or plan for the future; I prefer to spend money when I have it."

RISK APPETITE FALLS UNDER PRESSURE AND ONLY PARTIALLY RECOVERS

**RISK
TOLERANT**



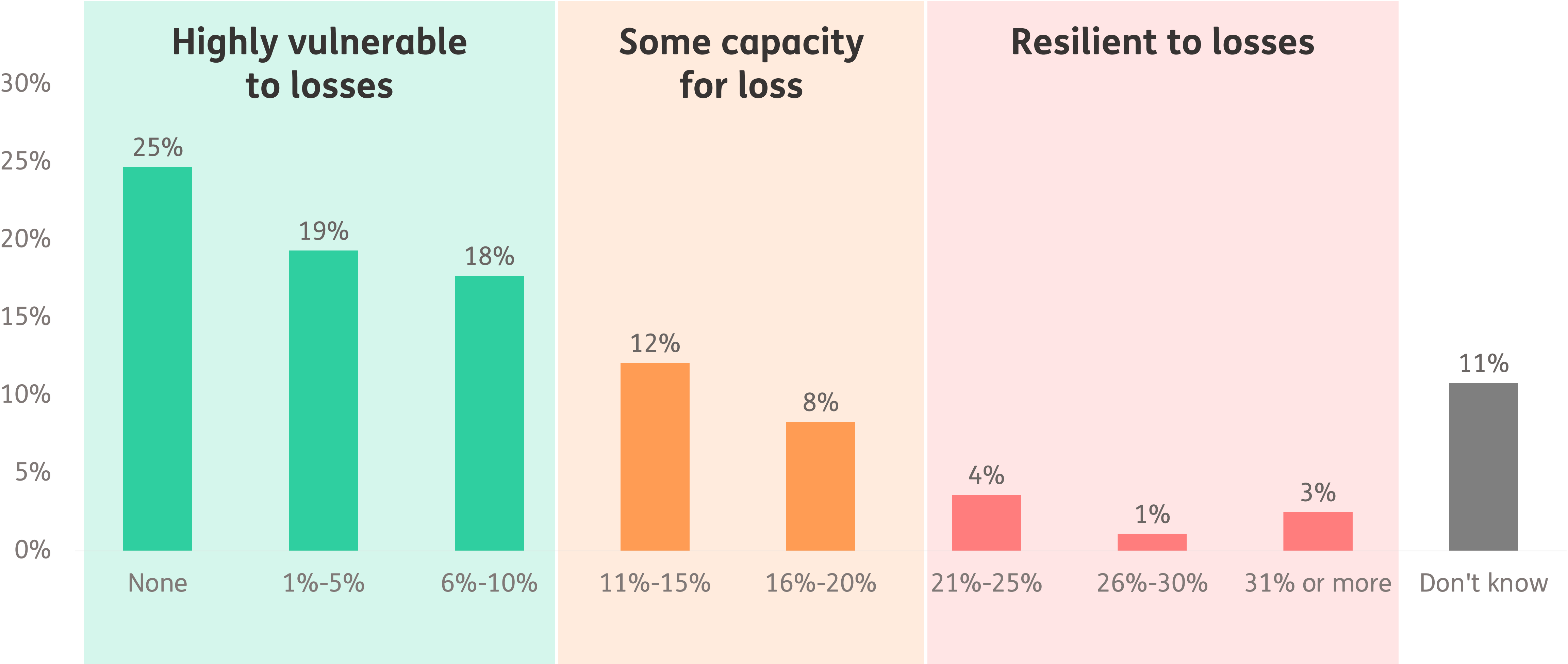
**RISK
AVERSE**

Risk appetite is **cyclical and pressure-sensitive**, not permanently reset.

Today's **caution is more persistent** than pre-2019 levels

Mean score (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) for: "I do not mind taking risks with my money for saving or investment purposes"

ONLY 8% OF RETIREES CLAIM TO BE MARKET SHOCK-RESISTANT



What percentage do you think you could afford to lose in a market crash before it seriously impacts on your retirement plans?

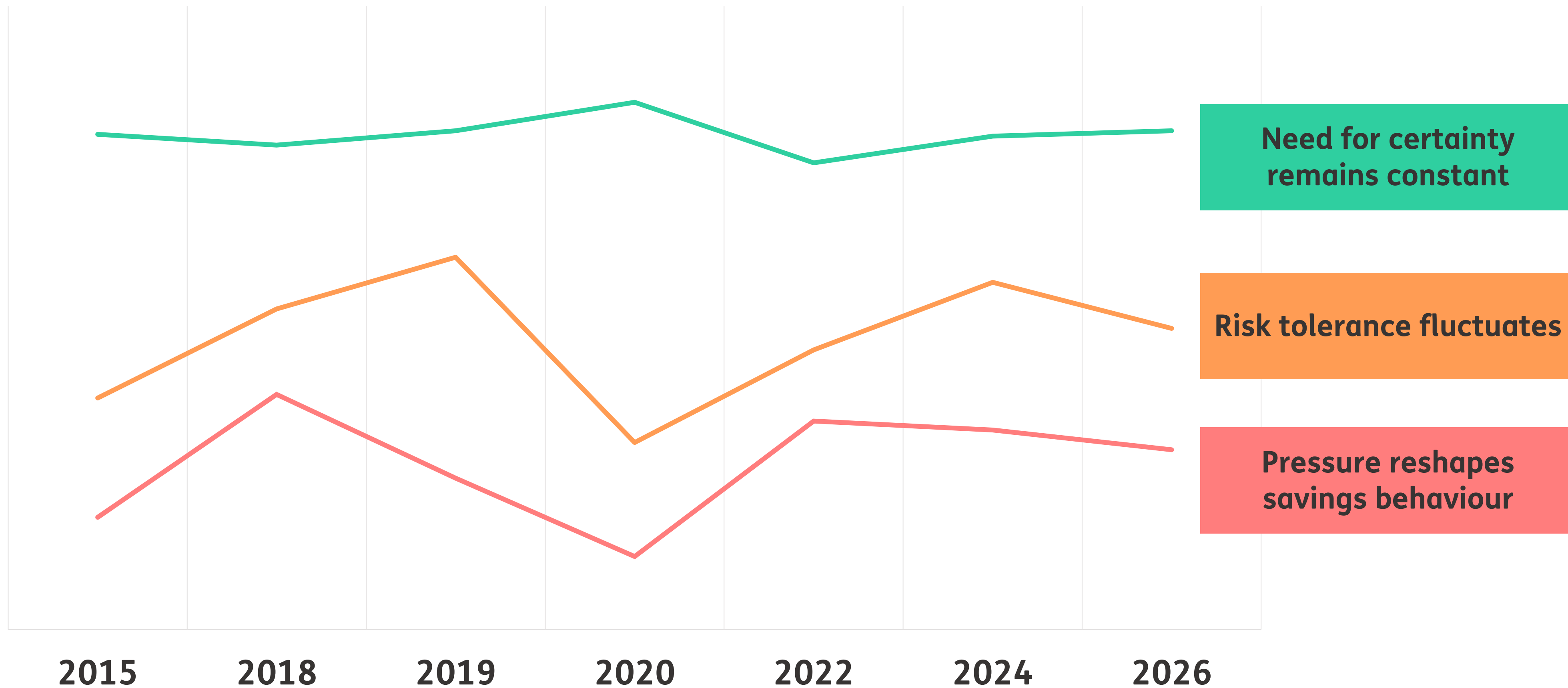
INSIGHT: OVERALL CAPACITY TO ABSORB LOSSES REMAINS VERY LOW

- People may be forced to spend less but they still hesitate to take risk with what they have.
 - **Savings behaviour**: Caution becomes sticky
 - **Risk behaviour**: Confidence rebounds but incompletely
- Confidence returns faster than caution, **but risk appetite has not fully reset.**
- While risk appetite fluctuates, capacity for loss is structurally low among pensioners.
- For the vast majority, even a moderate market fall would threaten their retirement security — reinforcing why certainty, not volatility, dominates retirement decision-making.



UNDER PRESSURE, BEHAVIOUR CHANGES BUT PREFERENCES DON'T

Preference for guaranteed monthly income that does not change with market conditions stays tightly between **77% and 86%**

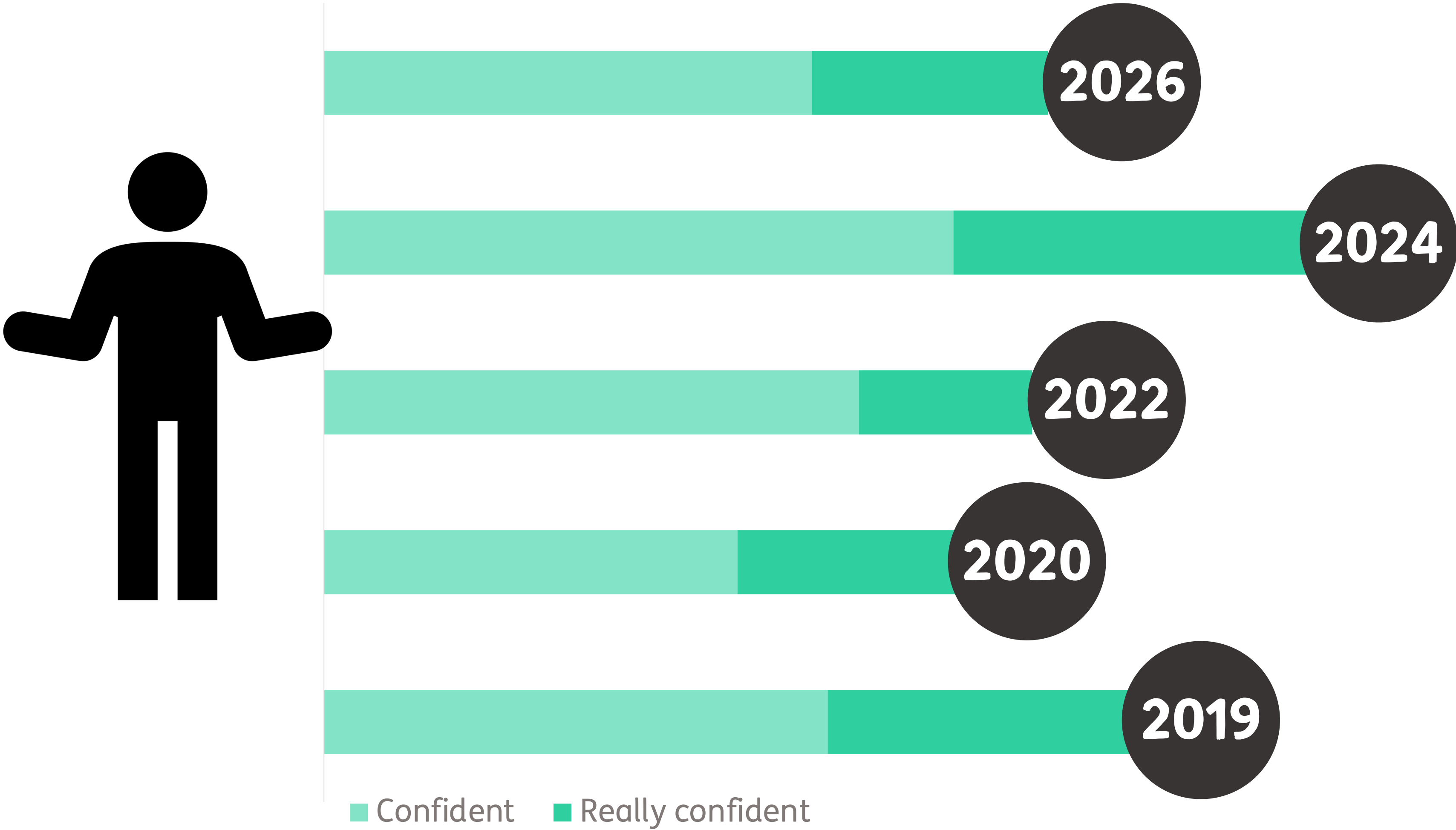


Mean score (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) for: "I prefer a secure, guaranteed monthly income in retirement over an income that might change, depending on investment returns"

RETIREMENT READY OR NOT?



FINANCIAL CONFIDENCE FOR RETIREMENT REMAINS FRAGILE



Confidence levels dropped to 46% from 63% in 2024.

This may reflect economic pressures (inflation, cost of living, market volatility).

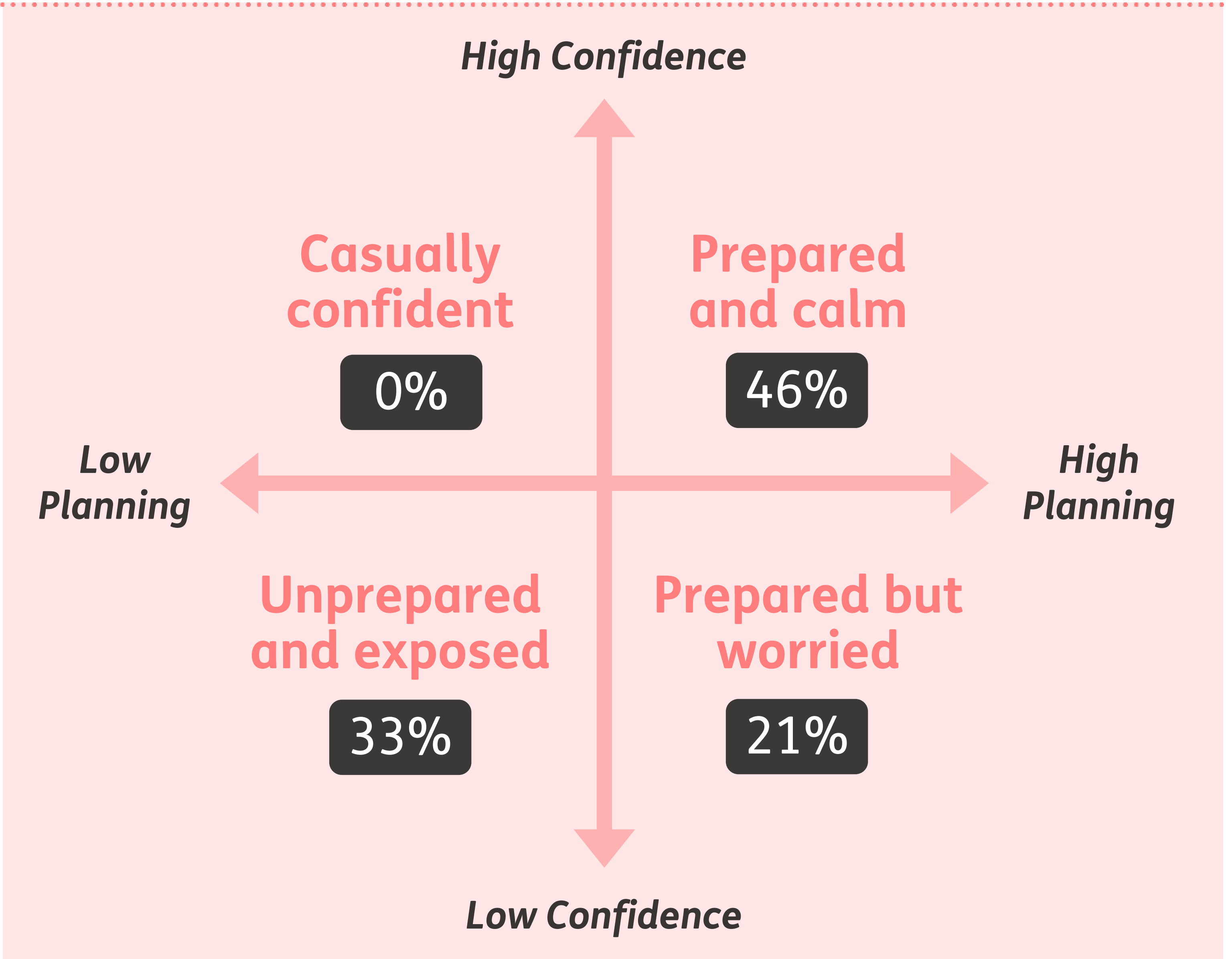
Mean score (1 = Really not confident, 5 = Really confident) for: How confident are you that your money will cover your monthly expenses in retirement if you reach the age of 100, allowing for inflation.

PEOPLE ARE PLANNING, BUT THEY DON'T FEEL *SECURE*.

A growing 'confidence gap'

One in five retirees have done the work but still feel uneasy about their finances in retirement.

Retirees are doing the right things, yet they still worry about longevity, inflation and market volatility

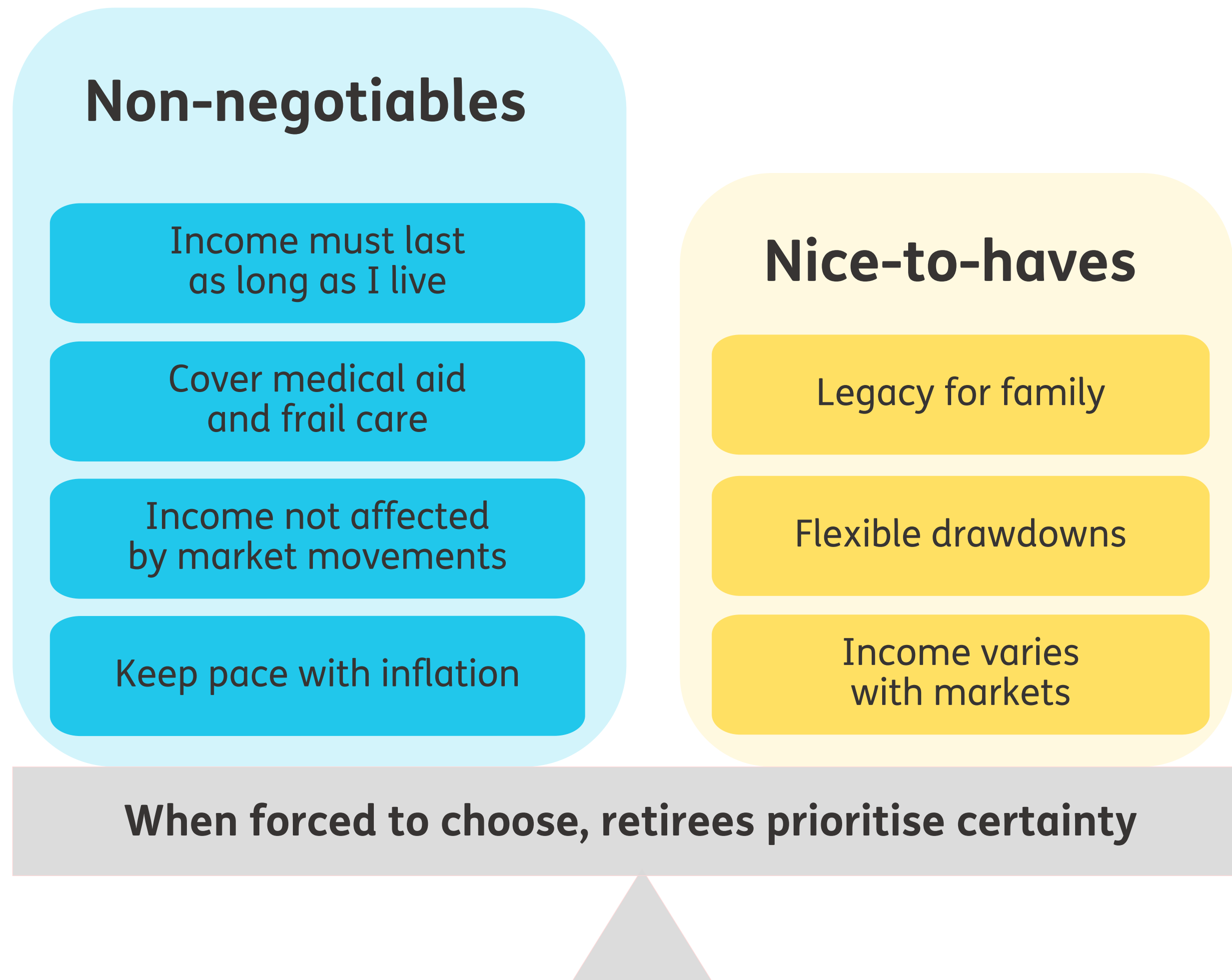


INSIGHT: GROWING RETIREMENT ANXIETY

- The 2026 drop in confidence suggests **people are increasingly worried about outliving their money.**
- **Rising cost of living** may be driving pessimism.
- High uncertainty rates suggest many **retirees lack clear visibility into their financial future.**
- **Planning is no longer the problem.** The real shift we're seeing is not a lack of effort, it's a lack of certainty.



CERTAINTY CONSISTENTLY OUTRANKS FLEXIBILITY

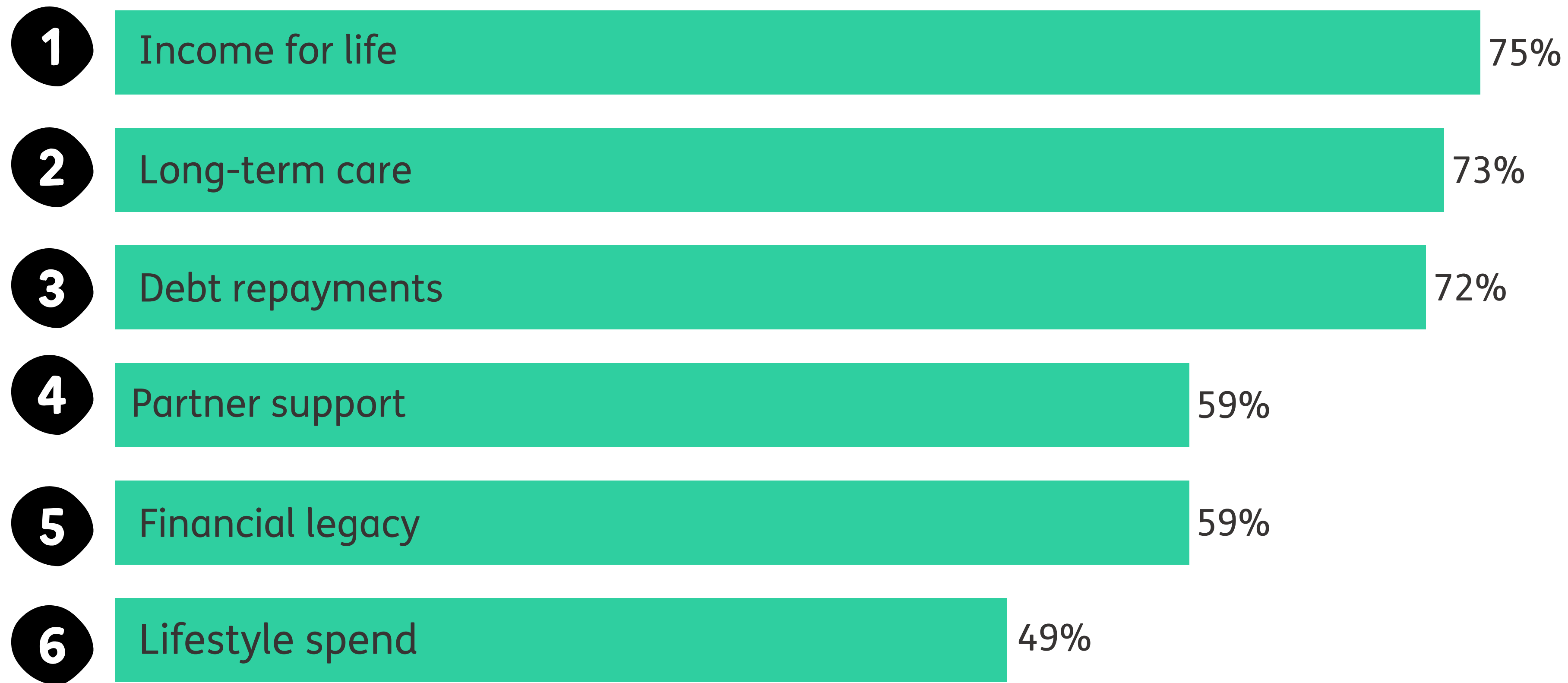


When trade-offs are required in retirement, **people consistently choose certainty over flexibility.** Income security comes first.

Even as confidence, risk appetite and spending behaviour fluctuate, these **income priorities remain remarkably stable.**

THE SHIFT ISN'T IN PRIORITIES — IT'S IN STRAIN

Importance of what retirement savings must cover



In 2026, **retirees' priorities** are remarkably unchanged from prior waves — but the pressure points are more visible.

INSIGHT: RETIREMENT SAVINGS SHIFT FROM LIFESTYLE TO SURVIVAL

- In 2026, lifetime income is *still non-negotiable*.
- **Generating an income for life** remains the clear, dominant objective, still **ranking highest across all years**. This reinforces that longevity risk continues to outweigh all other considerations.
- Covering **long-term care and medical needs stays very high**, indicating growing awareness of later-life costs rather than discretionary goals.
- **Rising pressure** means retirement savings are increasingly being used to **manage risk and debt**, not just lifestyle.



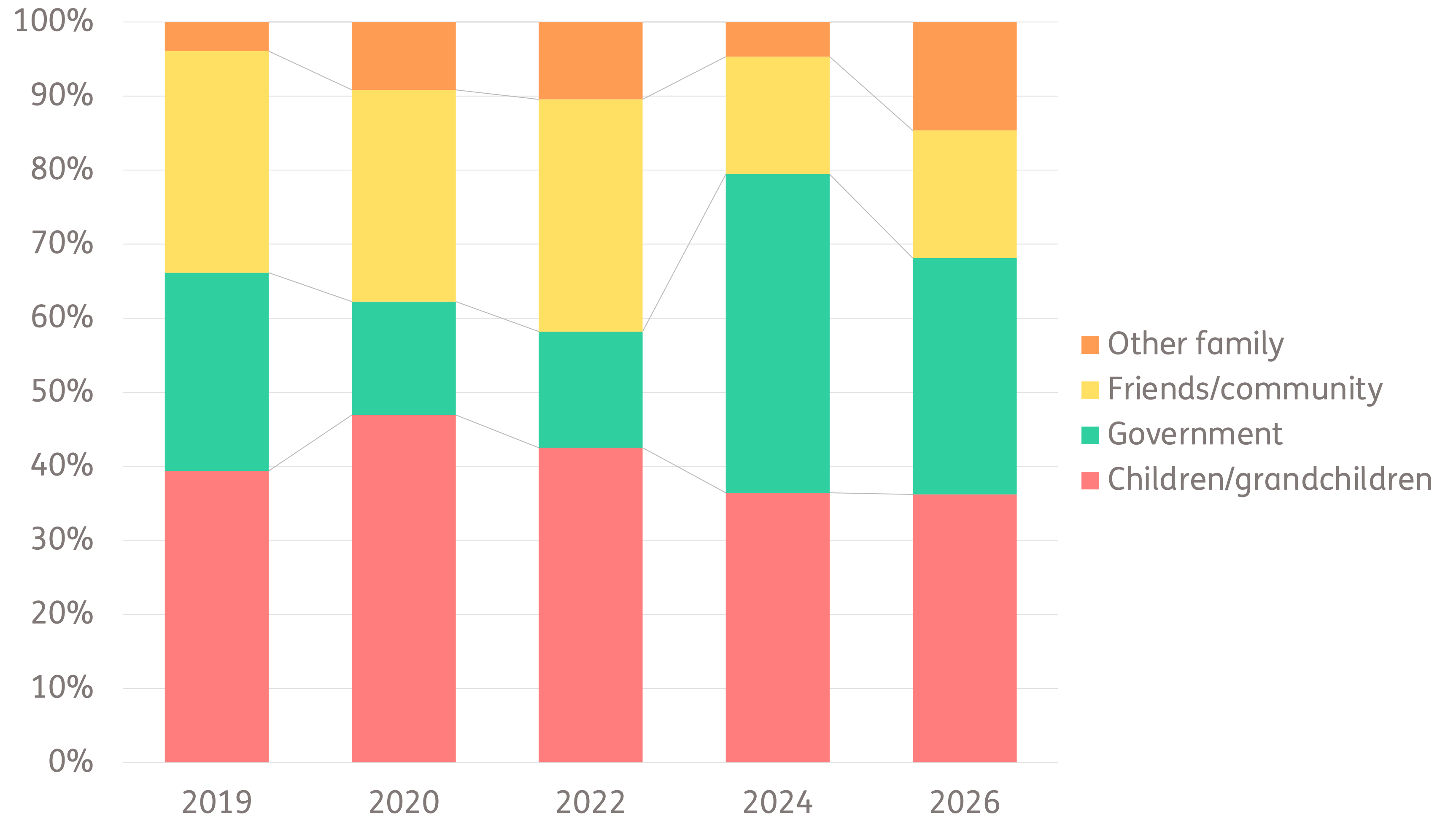
RETIREMENT BLIND SPOTS



RETIREMENT BACK-UP PLANS ARE BECOMING MORE FRAGMENTED

Children remain the **primary fallback** in every year.

Reliance on **government** support **more prominent** in recent years.

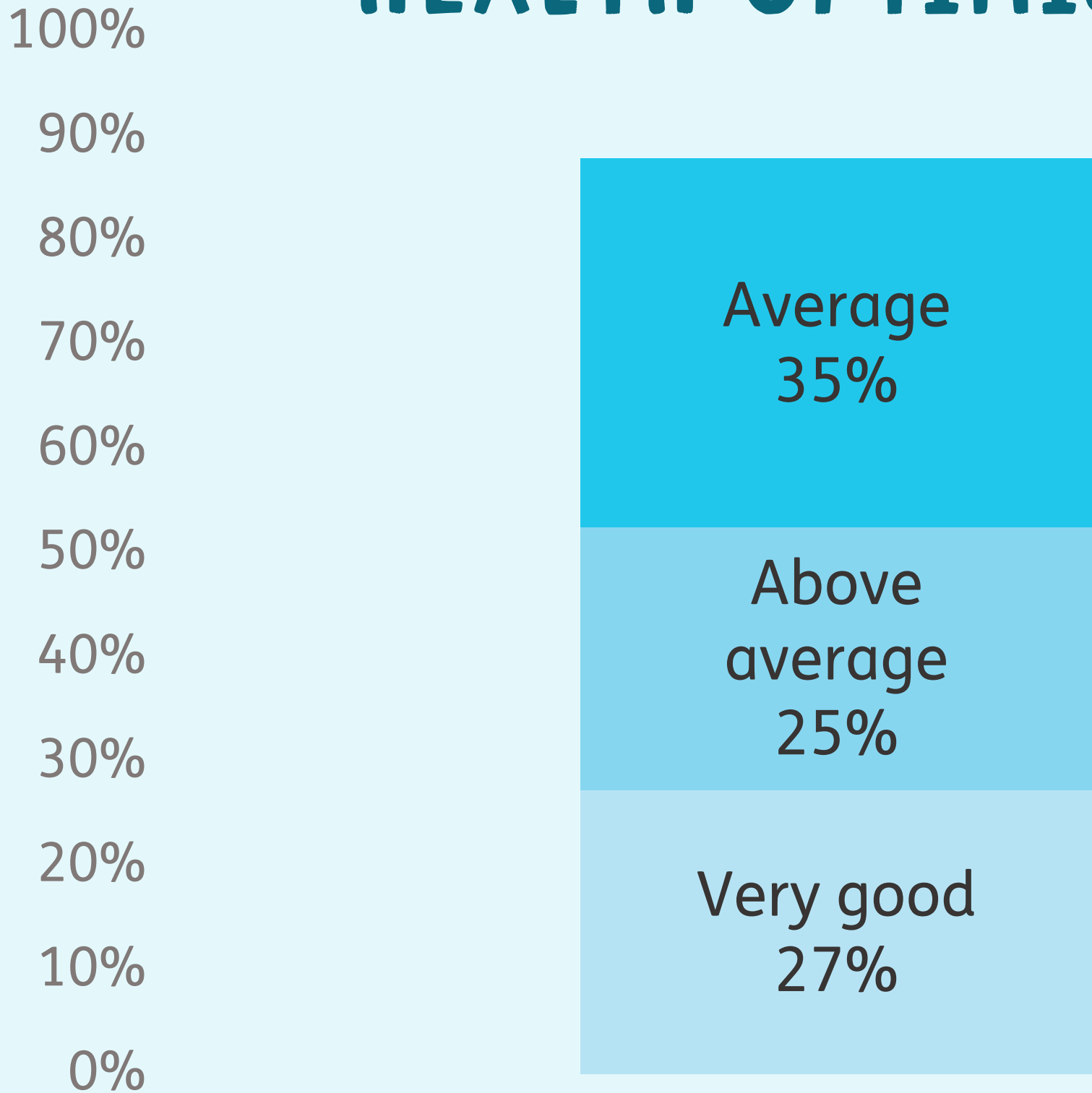


Base: Respondents who say their retirement money may run out (n varies by year)

MOST RETIREES ARE NOT PLANNING FOR COGNITIVE DECLINE

People are projecting today's health into an uncertain future

HEALTH OPTIMISM



Most rate their health as **average +**

PLANNING REALITY



Only **2 in 10** have thought extensively about planning for Alzheimer's or dementia

THE LONGEVITY GAP PROBLEM

At a median savings of R1.6m, the typical retiree faces a **~48%** funding shortfall against a 25-year retirement horizon.

And this estimate **excludes inflation, healthcare escalation, and longevity risk** beyond age 85.

METRIC	VALUE
Expected lifespan (self)	85 years
Median Retirement Savings	R1.6m
Median expected monthly income	R10,246
Years of retirement (retiring at 60)	25 years
Total income needed (simple estimate)	R3,07m (R10,246 X 12 X 25)
Gap	~ R1.5m shortfall

WHY THE GAP PERSISTS

People are not ignoring longevity risk anymore, but delay acting on it

Expect to live to 85, yet

54%

lack confidence their money will last.

Overconfidence — underestimating longevity risk.

Expect to live to 85, yet

34%

haven't calculated retirement needs.

Present bias — delaying planning for future risks

Expect to live to 85, yet

45%

may need care support.

Anchoring — people rely on current health to predict future outcomes and underestimate how long their money must last.

Expect to live to 85, and

83%

prefer guaranteed income protection.

Loss aversion — fear of running out is greater than desire for growth.

INSIGHT: THE QUIET TRANSFER OF RETIREMENT RISK

- **Family remains the primary fallback** but is increasingly under strain.
- **Government** and community support **are filling gaps** left by shrinking family networks.
- A **clear tension** exists between legacy goals and financial survival.
- Planning gaps persist, leaving a **meaningful at-risk segment**.
- While people expect to live longer, fewer feel they are ageing in good health, suggesting **later life may bring more health challenges than expected**.
- Many retirees may have a significant funding gap if they live as long as they expect.



SECURE A SUSTAINABLE INCOME

Finance more life for your years



THE NON-NEGOTIABLES OF RETIREMENT INCOME

Certainty is non-negotiable in retirement. Across all measures, retirees consistently prioritise income security over flexibility.

Lifetime income matters most. The top priority is that income must last as long as they live, well ahead of any desire for flexibility or upside.

Protection beats optionality. Covering medical and frail-care costs, keeping pace with inflation, and shielding income from market volatility are seen as essentials.

Flexibility and legacy are secondary. Features like flexible drawdowns or leaving money behind are viewed as “nice-to-haves,” not core needs.

Behaviour is consistent over time. Even as confidence, risk appetite and spending behaviour fluctuate, these income priorities remain remarkably stable.

Self-preservation dominates decision-making. When forced to choose, retirees default to protecting their own income security rather than chasing growth or optionality.

Partner planning matters: With partners estimated to live to 86, survivor benefits and joint-life planning are critical.

DO YOU NEED ADVICE ?

It is worth considering advice from a qualified financial adviser

- If you need help understanding your options – life, living and blended annuities
- If you want to take account of your personal financial circumstances
- If you are considering how your retirement savings can be used with other savings and investments to meet your financial needs
- If you need to consider the tax implications of your choices

**Contact Just or visit our website for more information,
or for details of independent financial advisers in your area**

Visit justsa.co.za

A well-documented challenge lies at the heart of what we do — **helping people avoid the risk of outliving their retirement savings.**

By rethinking retirement planning, we provide a diverse suite of income solutions, enabling retirees to tailor an income structure suited to their individual needs.

