London Assembly
Youth Unemployment Polling

September 2026

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Methodology



This survey was carried out by YouGov for the GLA between 4th to 21st September 2026, with responses from 1,422 London residents aged 18+. This includes a boosted sample of Londoners aged 18 to 24 (n=358)



The figures have been weighted to be representative of all London adults.



Respondents completed the surveys online from an email link.



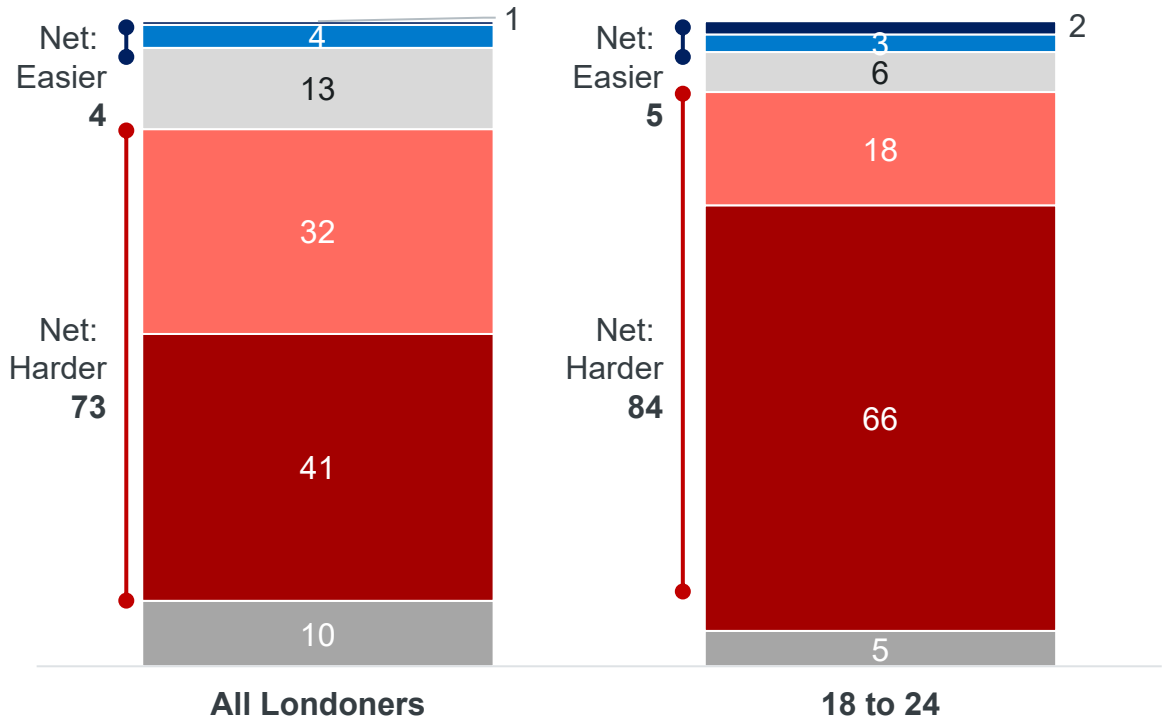
Data is analysed by gender, age, ethnicity, social grade, home ownership, disability, and inner/outer London. Where these are not mentioned there are no significant differences.

Summary

- The vast majority of young people aged 18 to 24 believe it has **become harder** for young people to find work over the last 5 years (84%). This is compared three quarters of London adults generally (73%).
- Most young people think this is due to **lack of suitable opportunities** (72%), though fewer London adults generally believe this is the cause (57%). Lack of experience (48%), competition (45%), and impact of AI (40%) are also seen as key barriers by young people.
- Both young Londoners and London adults more generally feel uneasy about AI's impact on jobs, with two thirds of young Londoners (67%) and six in ten adults (58%) saying it has already had a **negative impact** on opportunities for young people.
- A third of young Londoners (34%) and half of adults (50%) report having experienced a period of **unemployment**. Of those currently employed, half of young people (51%) and three in ten adults (30%) report having applied for 6 or more jobs before landing their current role.
- For both young Londoners and London adults more generally, unemployment is most likely to have had a **negative impact** on their financial position (62%/73%) and mental health (60%/61%).

Finding work: Young people are more likely than Londoners more broadly to believe it's become harder for young people to find work over the last 5 years (84% vs. 73%).

Change in young people's ability to find work (%)



Women and those living with family and friends are more likely than others in their category to think it has gotten harder.

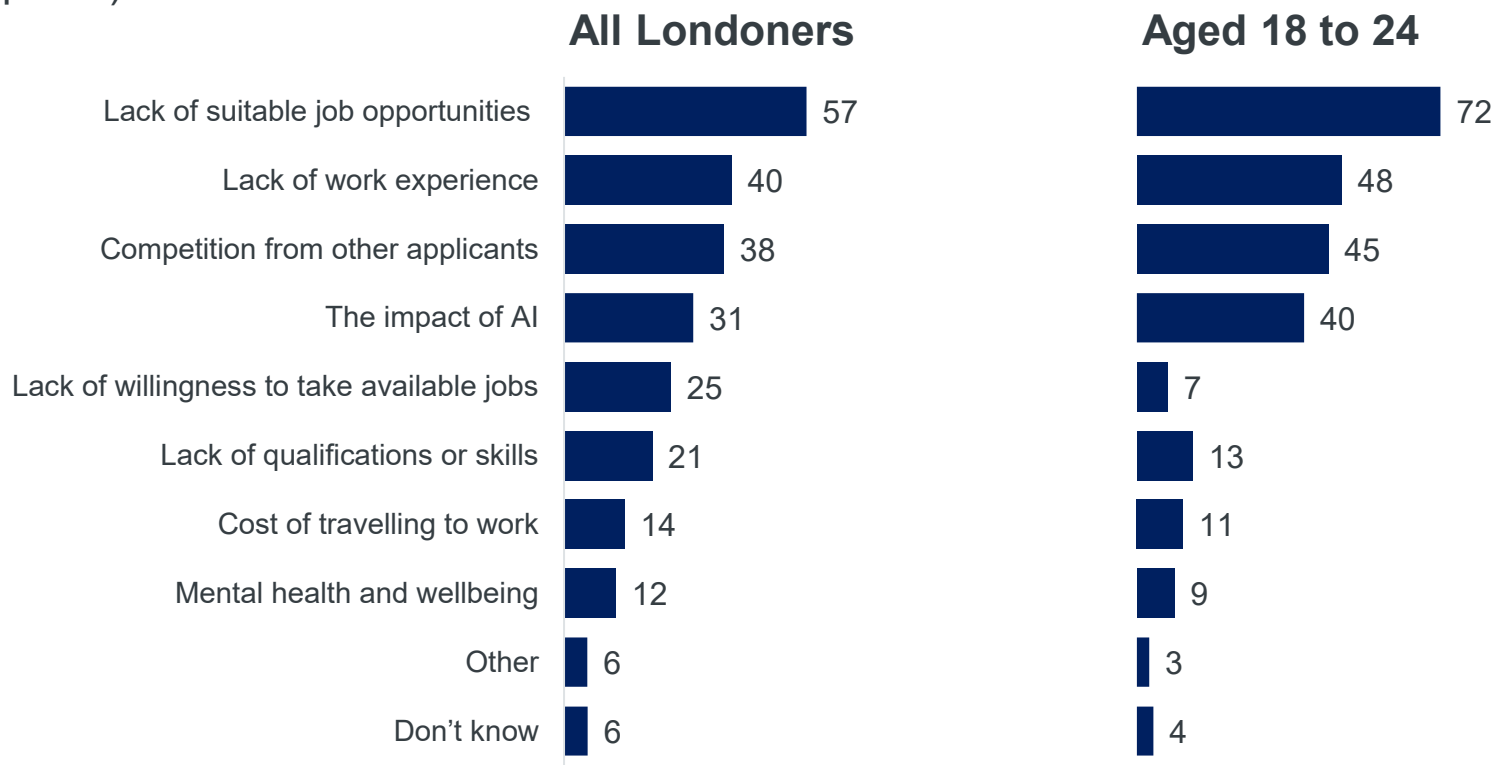
Question: Do you think it has become easier or harder for young people (aged 16 to 24) to find work in London over the past 5 years, or has it stayed about the same?
Base: All Londoners (1422) Londoners aged 18 to 24 (358)

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Barriers: Younger Londoners are more likely than Londoners overall to think that lack of jobs, work experience, competition, and AI are barriers for young people to finding work, and less likely to cite lack of qualifications or willingness to take available jobs.

Barriers for young people to find work in London

(%, up to 3)



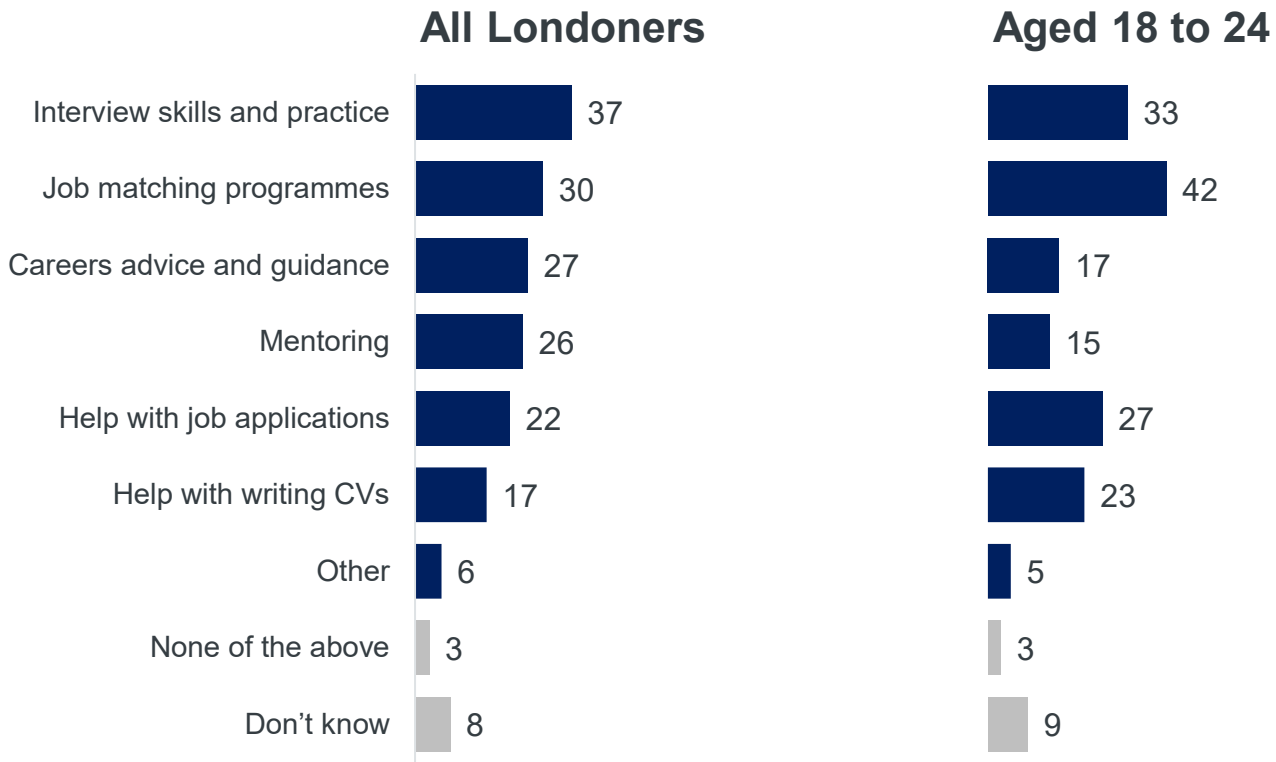
Question: Which of the following, if any, do you think are the biggest barriers preventing young people (aged 16 to 24) from finding work in London? Please select up to 3.
Base: All Londoners (1422) Londoners aged 18 to 24 (358)

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Support: Londoners overall are most likely to think interviews skills would most help young people get into work (37%), while young people themselves think job matching programmes would be most helpful (42%).

What support would help young people get into work

(%, up to 2)



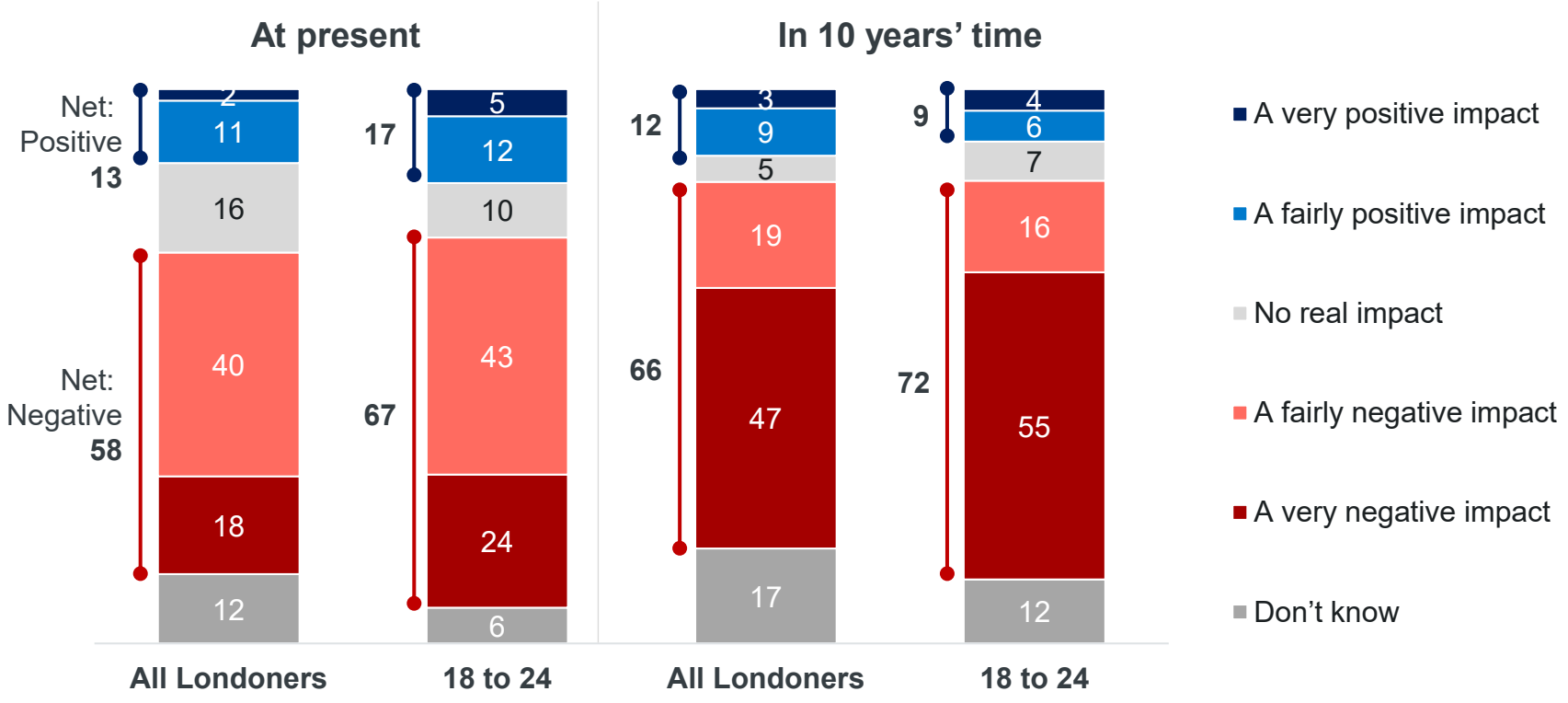
Easter and Outer Londoners are more likely than others in their category to think that interview skills and practice would most help young people.

Women are more likely to think job matching programmes would be most helpful.

Question: Which, if any, of the following types of support do you think would most help young people to get into work? Please select up to two.
Base: All Londoners (1422) Londoners aged 18 to 24 (358)

Impact of AI: Londoners are pessimistic about the impact of AI on jobs for young people. Six in ten adults (58%) and two thirds of young people (67%) say it's currently having a negative impact and even more (66% and 72%) think it will be negative in 10 years.

Impact of AI on job opportunities for young people...(%)



Londoners in social grade ABC1 and living with family and friends are more likely than others in their category to think that AI is having a **negative impact** on job opportunities for young people **currently**.

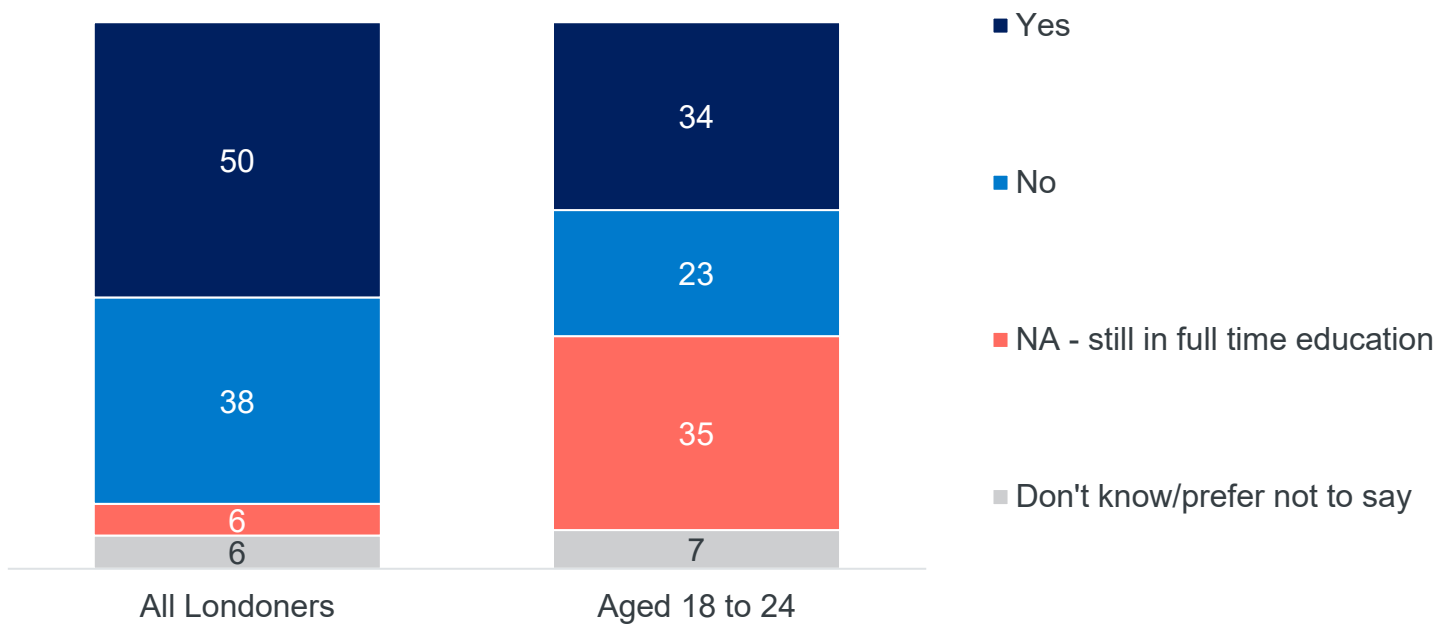
White Londoners and those living with family and friends are more likely to think it will have a **negative impact in 10 years.**

Question: Overall, what impact, if any, do you think AI is having / will have on job opportunities for young people…
Base: All Londoners (1422) Londoners aged 18 to 24 (358)

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Unemployment: Half of all London adults (50%) and a third of young Londoners (34%) report having experienced a period of unemployment.

Experience of unemployment (%)



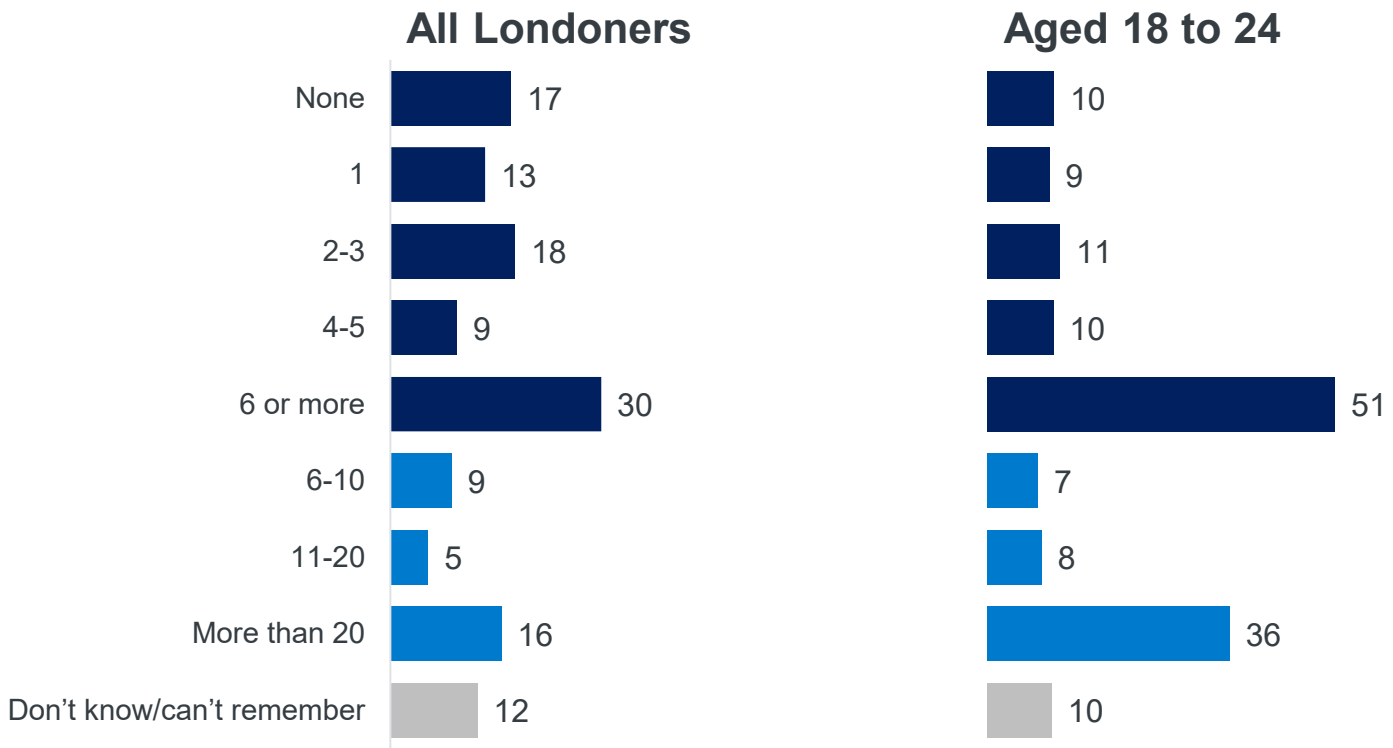
Londoners aged 50 to 64, West Londoners, private and social renters are more likely to report having experienced a period of unemployment.

Question: Have you ever experienced a period of unemployment lasting one month or longer since leaving full-time education? By unemployment we mean a period when you were not in paid employment and were actively looking for work.
Base: All Londoners (1422) Londoners aged 18 to 24 (358)

Job applications: Of currently employed Londoners, three in ten (30%) say they applied to 6 or more jobs before getting their current role, compared to half of young Londoners (51%).

Number of jobs applied

(%, currently employed)



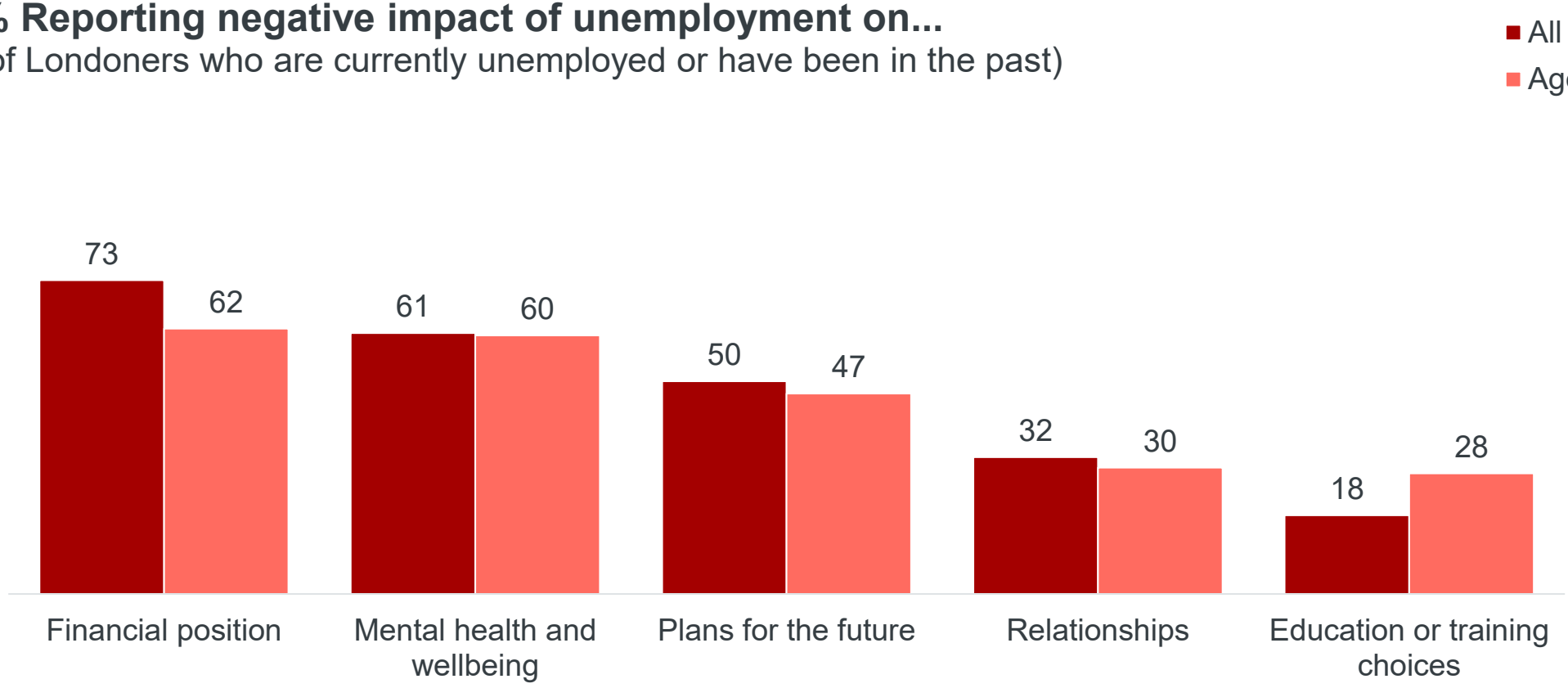
Men, ABC1 Londoners, Asian Londoners, Black Londoners, and private renters are more likely than others in their category to have submitted 6 or more applications to land their role.

Question: Thinking back to when you first joined your current employer, approximately how many jobs did you apply for before you were offered the job?
Base: All employed Londoners (738), Employed Londoners aged 18 to 24 (127)

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Impact of unemployment: Among those with experience of unemployment, Londoners overall are more likely to report a negative impact on their financial position than younger ones (73% vs. 62%), while younger Londoner are more likely to report negative impacts on education or training (18 vs. 28%).

% Reporting negative impact of unemployment on...
(of Londoners who are currently unemployed or have been in the past)



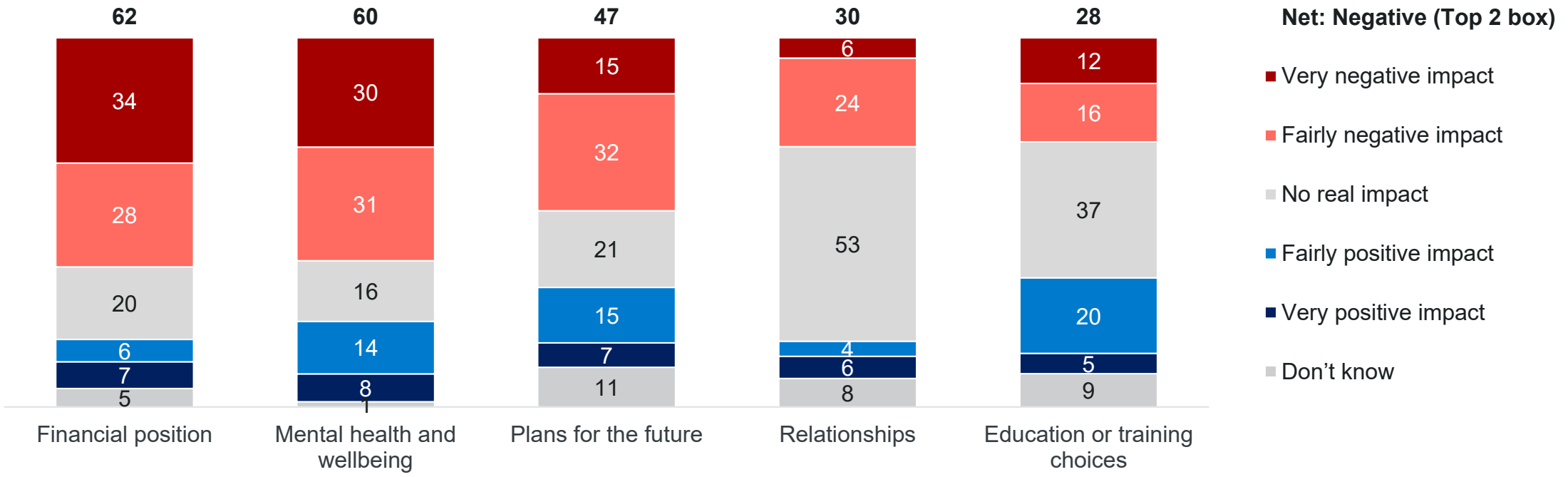
Question: Thinking about your most recent period of unemployment, what impact, if any, has it had on your…
Base: Londoners all Londoners/aged 18 to 24 who are currently unemployed or have ever been unemployed for at least one month (706/128)

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Impact of unemployment: For young people with experience of unemployment, the biggest negative impacts were on their financial position (62%) and mental health (60%).

Impact of unemployment on...

(%, of Londoners aged 18 to 24 who are currently unemployed or have been in the past)

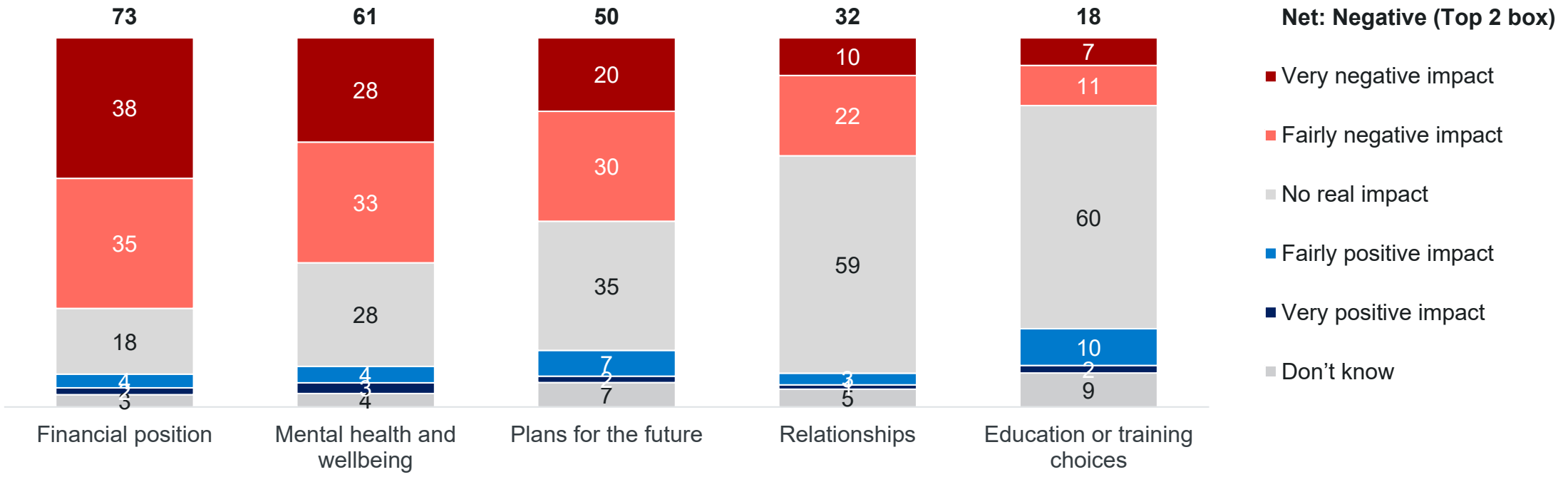


Question: Thinking about your most recent period of unemployment, what impact, if any, has it had on your…
Base: Londoners aged 18 to 24 who are currently unemployed or have ever been unemployed for at least one month (128)

Impact of unemployment: Among all Londoners with experience of unemployment, the impact was worst on their financial position (73%), with nearly four in ten saying it had a very negative impact (38%).

Impact of unemployment on...

(%, of all Londoners who are currently unemployed or have been in the past)



Question: Thinking about your most recent period of unemployment, what impact, if any, has it had on your…
Base: All Londoners who are currently unemployed or have ever been unemployed for at least one month (706)

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