



# Cost of living polling

Tracking the impacts of the cost of living crisis on Londoners

February 2023

# Introduction

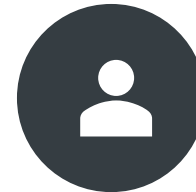
Since January 2022, GLA Opinion Research has conducted regular polling to understand the impact of the cost of living crisis on Londoners. This has included tracking Londoners' financial situation, changes in living costs, and ways in which they are managing increased living costs.

This report summarises key findings from polling between January 2022 and January 2023. Overall, Londoners are struggling more now than they were a year ago. They also remain pessimistic, and more-so compared to a year ago, about their household finances and future cost of living.

All data referenced in this report can be found here:  
[data.london.gov.uk/dataset/gla-poll-results-cost-of-living-2022](https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/gla-poll-results-cost-of-living-2022)



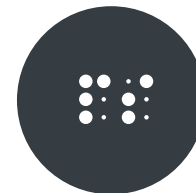
**Data from surveys carried out by YouGov for the GLA between January 2022 and January 2023**



**Surveys had a minimum sample size of 1,000 London residents aged 18+**

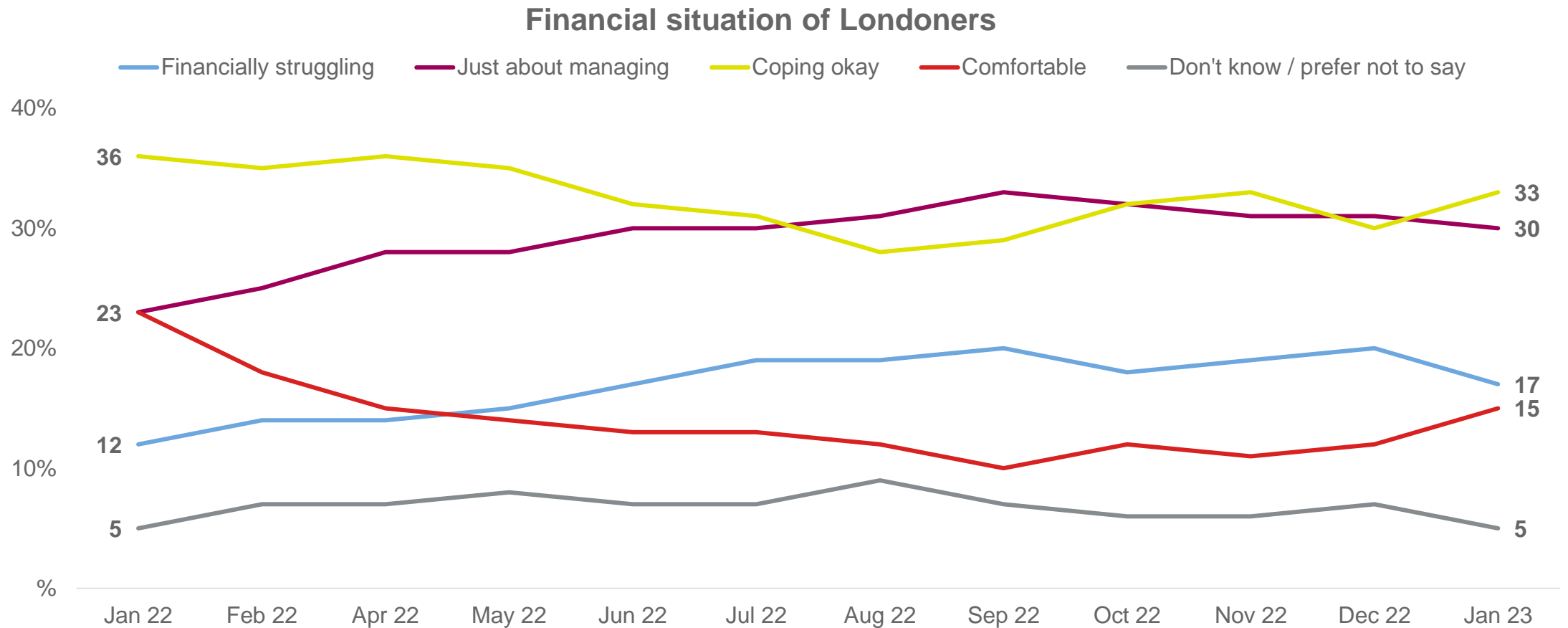


**Respondents completed the surveys online from an email link**



**The figures have been weighted to be representative of London adults**

The proportion of Londoners saying they were 'financially struggling' increased from 12% in January 2022 to 17% in January 2023, with a peak of 20% seen in September and December.

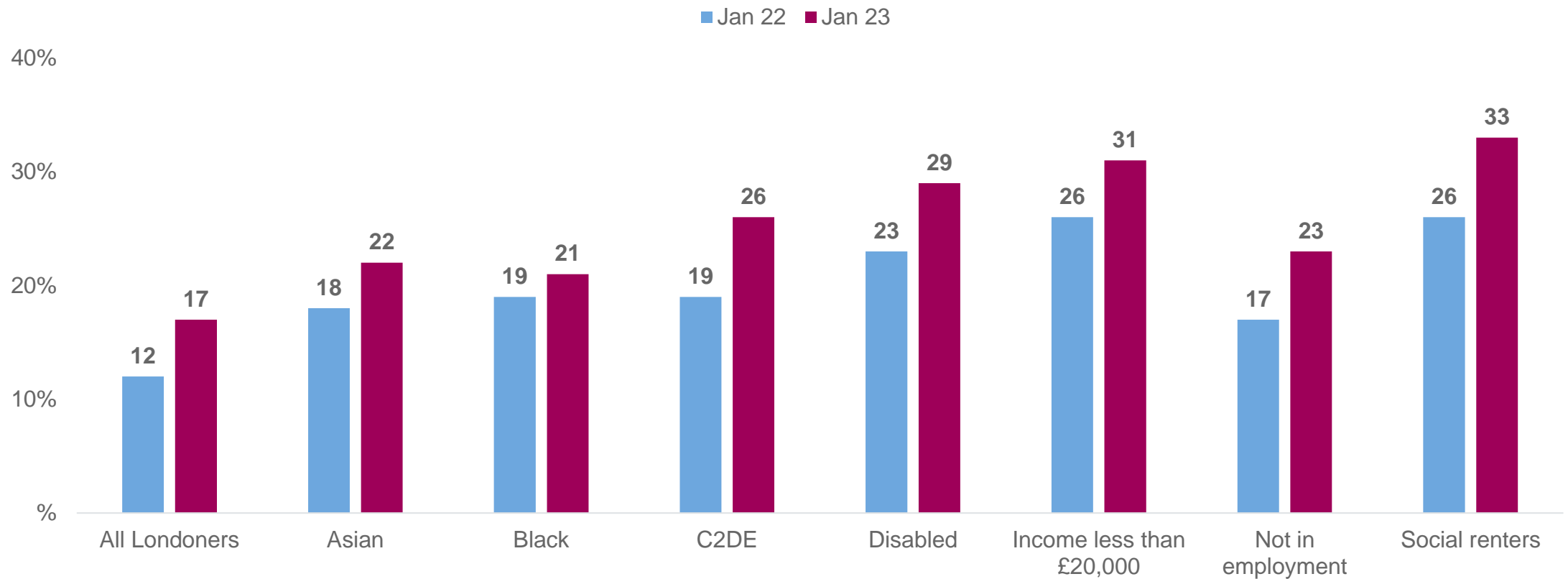


**Note:** For definition of 'financially struggling' and full response options see appendix

**Question:** Thinking about your current financial situation, which of these statements best applies to you?

Londoners living in social rented accommodation and with a gross household income of less than £20,000 continue to be most likely to be ‘financially struggling’.

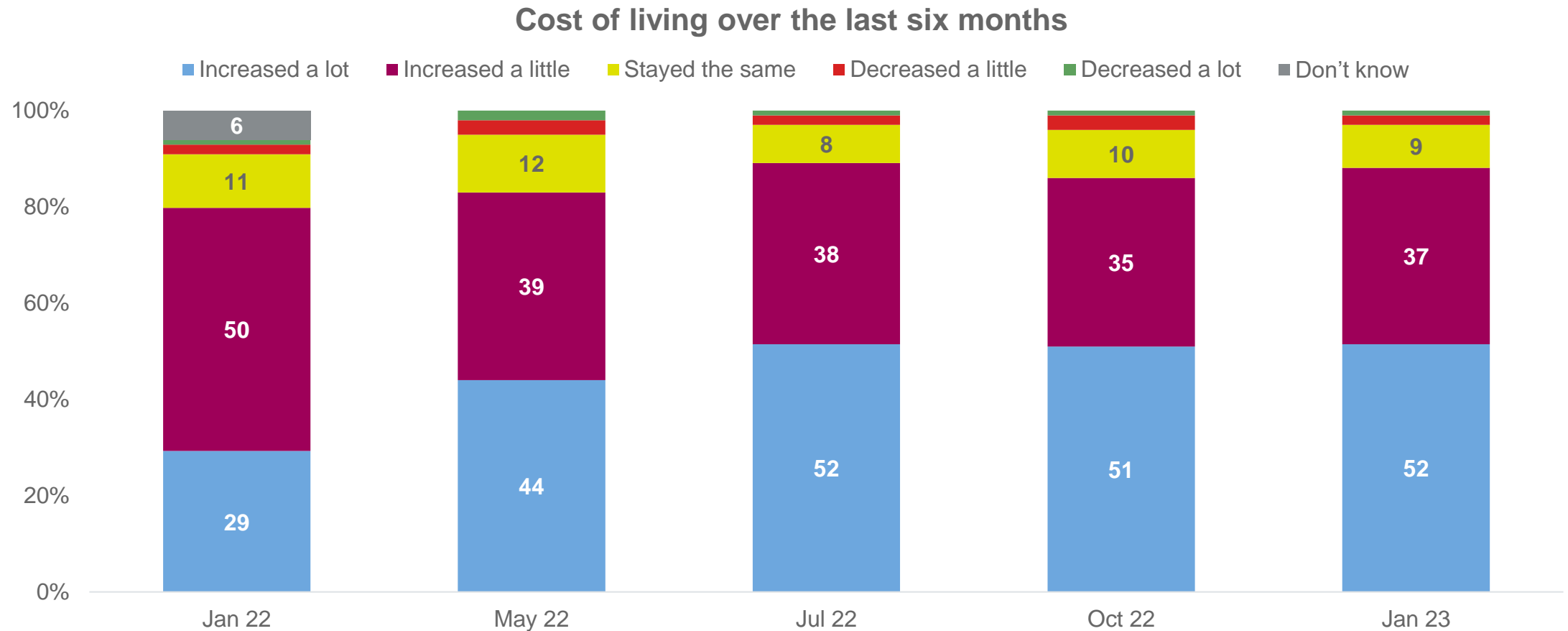
### ‘Financially struggling’ by key demographic groups



**Note:** For definition of ‘financially struggling’ see appendix

**Question:** Thinking about your current financial situation, which of these statements best applies to you?

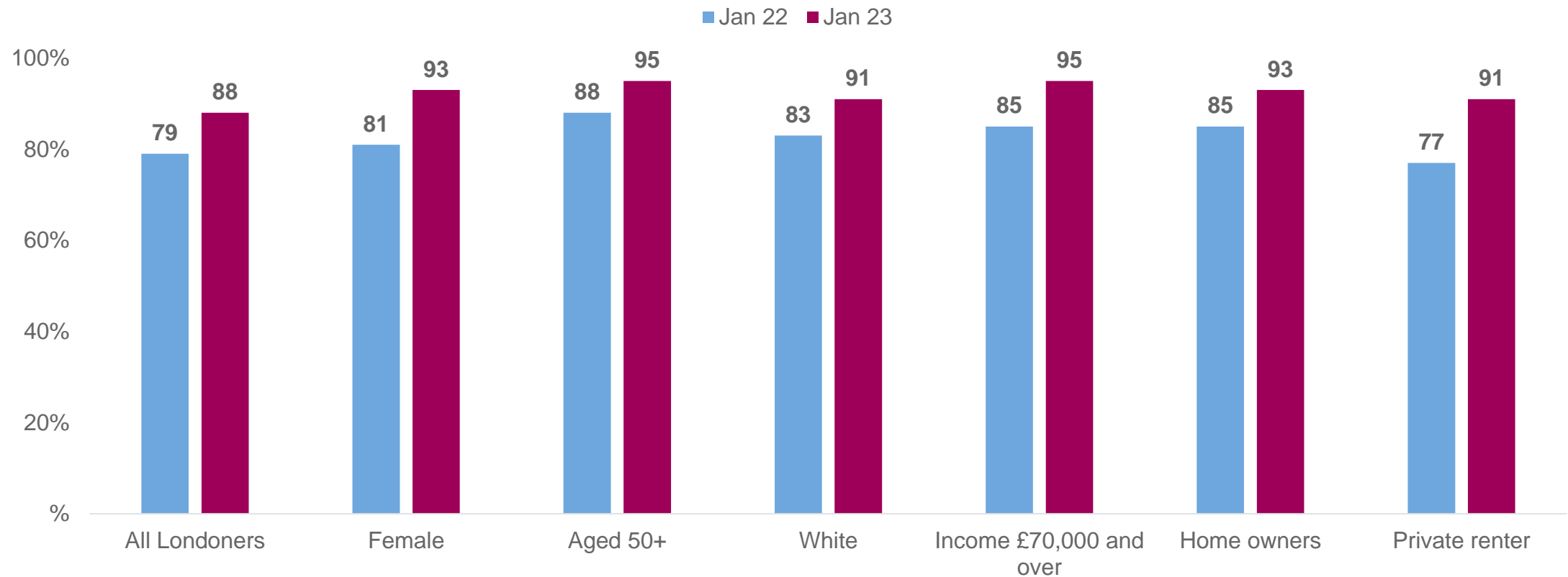
The majority of Londoners continue to say their cost of living has increased over the last six months, with over half in January 2023 saying it had increased a lot.



**Note:** Numbers less than 5% removed  
**Question:** Overall, for your household, has the cost of living increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last six months?

In contrast to those who are 'financially struggling', higher-income Londoners and those aged 50 and over are most likely to say their cost of living has increased.

Increased cost of living by key demographic groups

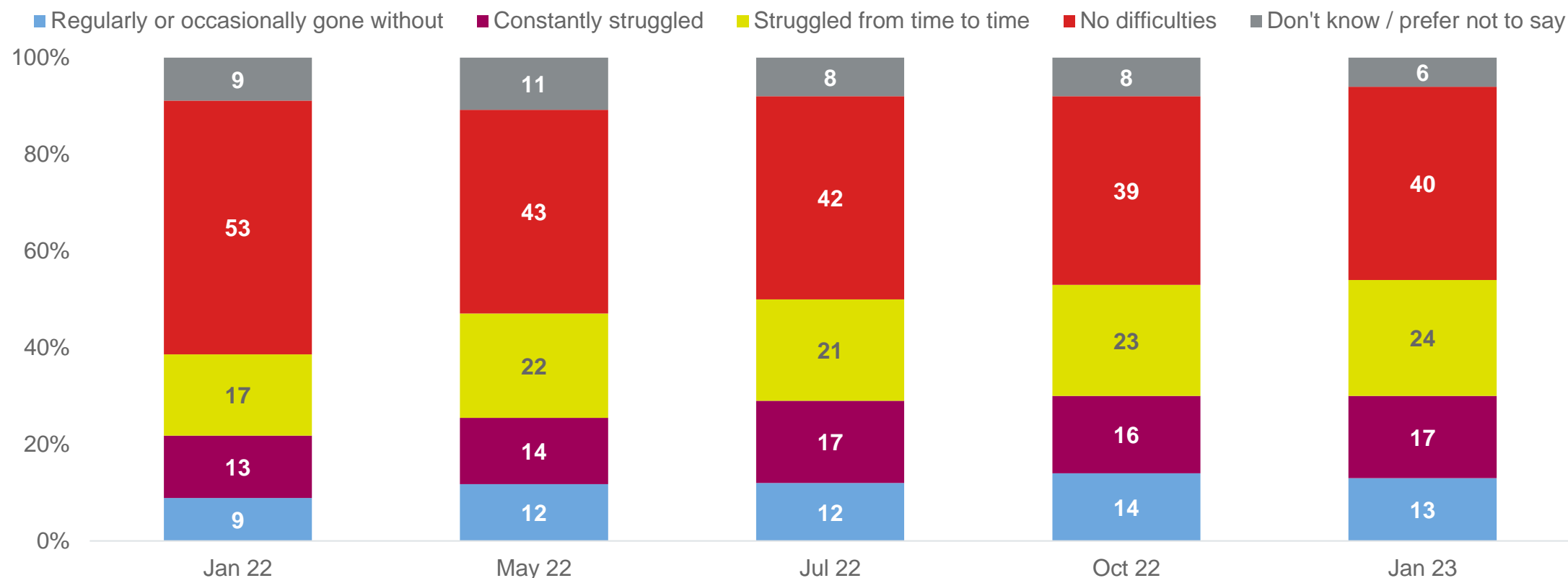


**Note:** Combined 'increased a lot' and 'increased a little'

**Question:** Overall, for your household, has the cost of living increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last six months?

Over half of Londoners (54%) in January 2023 said they struggled to pay for food and essential items, up from 39% in January 2022. We've seen similar trends when looking at bills, rent, and mortgage, with Londoners more likely to be struggling now than a year ago.

### Ability to buy food and essential items

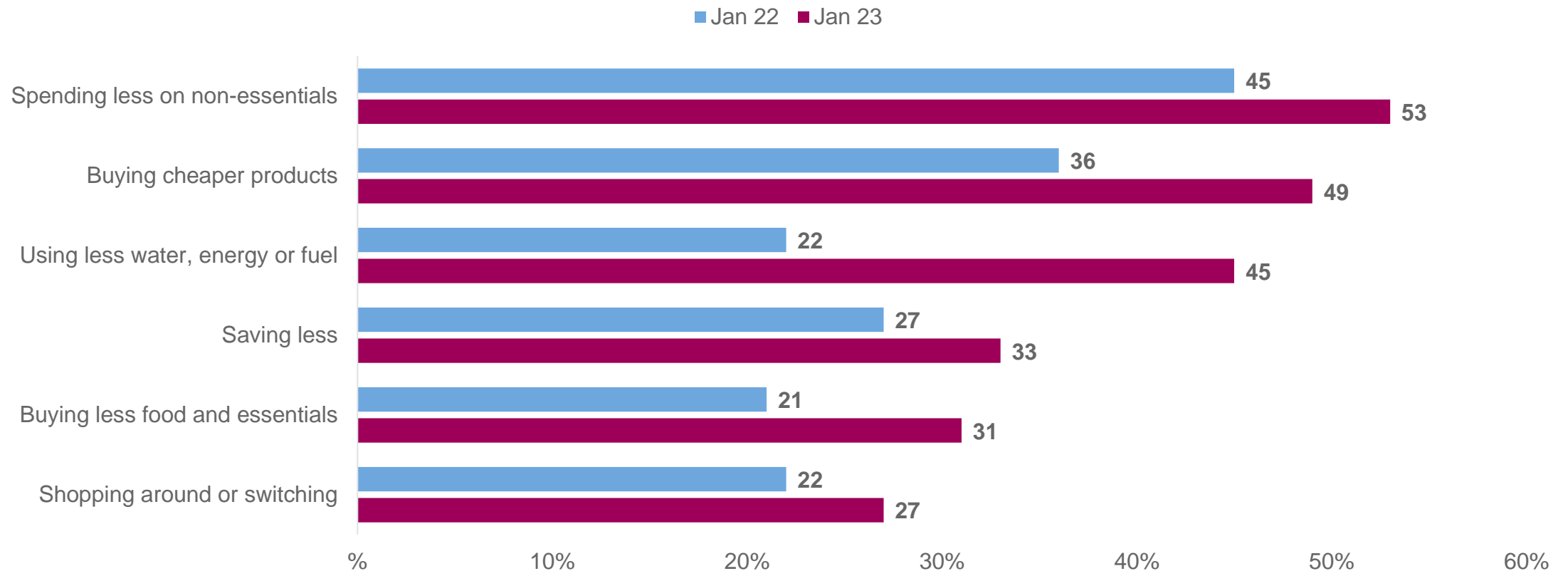


**Note:** For full response options see appendix

**Question:** Thinking about the last six months, which of the following statements describes you?

The proportion of Londoners using less water, energy or fuel doubled from 22% in January 2022 to 45% in January 2023. Those buying less food and essentials increased by half.

### How Londoners are managing living costs (top six actions)



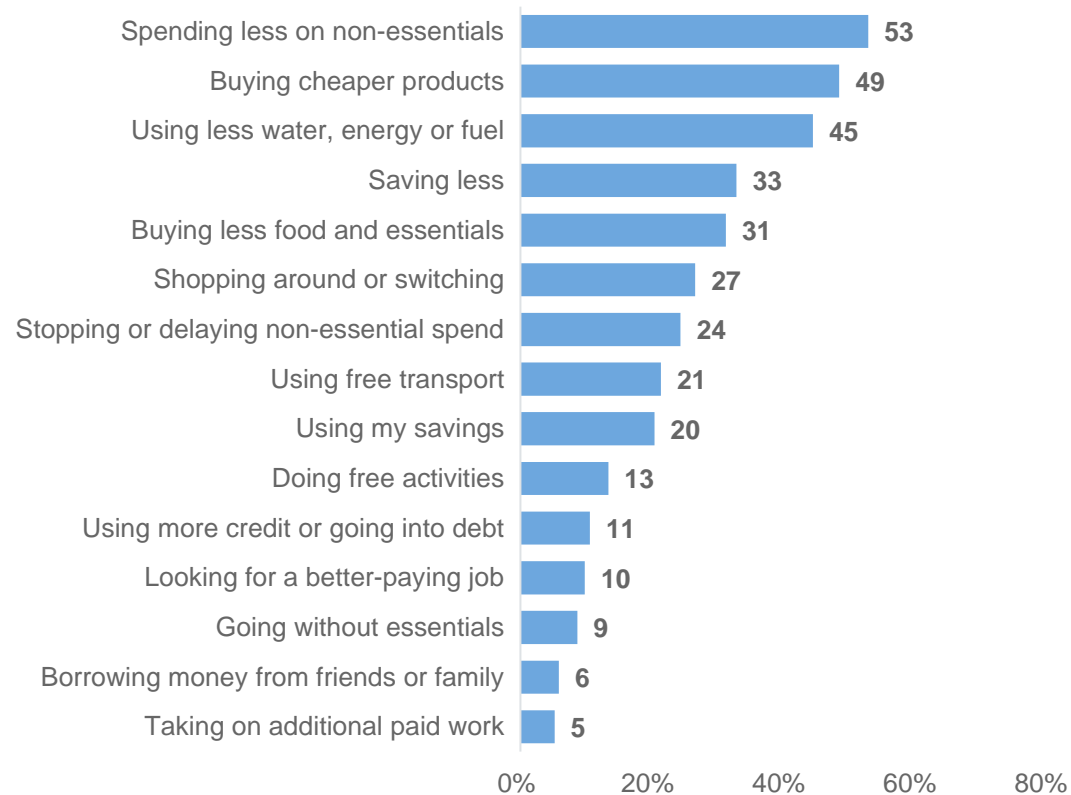
**Note:** For full response options see appendix

**Question:** Which, if any, of the following are you doing to help manage living costs??

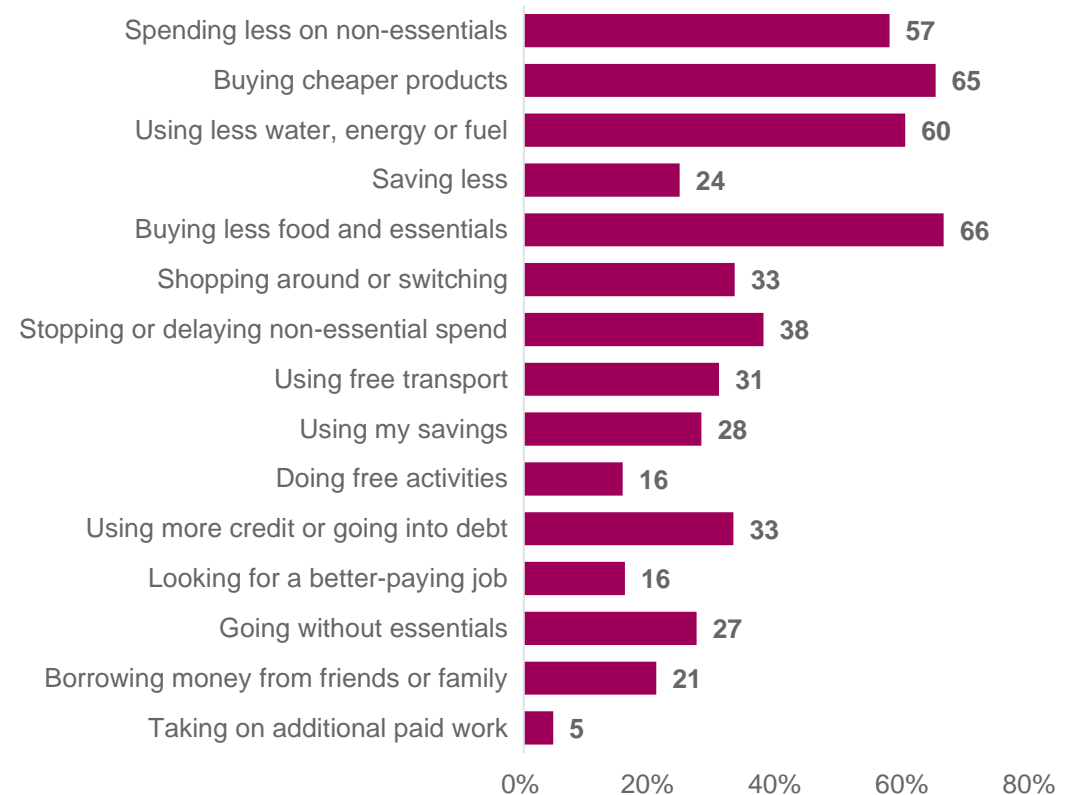


**‘Financially struggling’ Londoners in January 2023 were twice as likely to be buying less food and essentials, and three times as likely to be using more credit or going into debt.**

**Managing costs: all Londoners (Jan 23)**



**Managing costs: ‘financially struggling’ (Jan 23)**

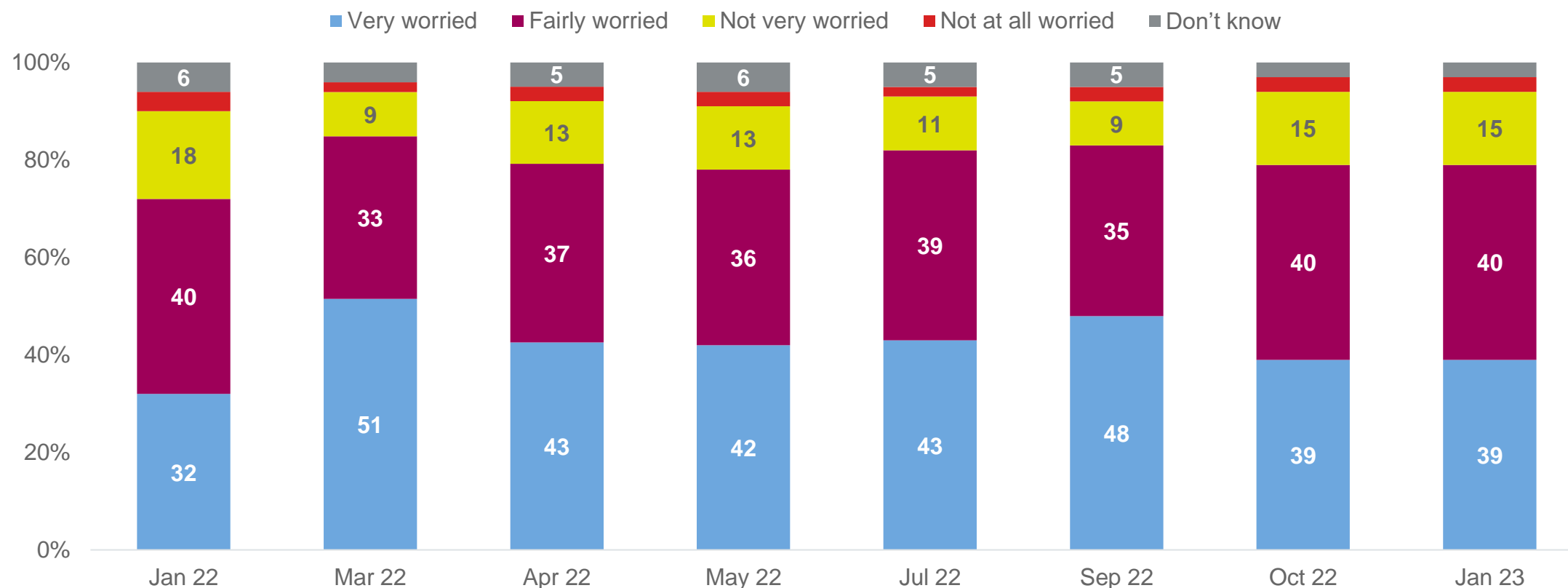


**Note:** all sample n=1162, financially struggling n=194

**Question:** Which, if any, of the following are you doing to help manage living costs?

Looking ahead, the picture remains bleak. Londoners continue to be worried about the cost of living over the next year, and more-so than they were a year ago, with 72% worried in January 2022 compared to 79% worried in January 2023.

### Worry about the cost of living over the next 12 months



**Note:** Numbers less than 5% removed

**Question:** To what extent are you worried about the impact of the following on your household finances over the next 12 months... living costs overall?



# Appendix

## Survey dates and sample sizes

Survey date	Sample size
21 <sup>st</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	1,188
18 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2022	1,276
18 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2022	1,321
14 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	1,123
20 <sup>th</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2022	1,250
17 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2022	1,015
15 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	1,245

Survey date	Sample size
19 <sup>th</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2022	1,299
23 <sup>rd</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	1,270
21 <sup>st</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	1,162
18 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2022	1,167
16 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2022	1,320
20 <sup>th</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	1,167



## Language

- **Financially struggling** is the combined responses for “I am having to go without my basic needs and/or rely on debt to pay for my basic needs” and “I’m struggling to make ends meet”.
- **Disabled** refers to respondents who selected “Yes – a lot” or “Yes – a little” to the question “Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?”.
- **Social renters** refer to respondents renting from housing associations or local authorities.
- **Income** refers to annual gross household income.

# Full questions and response options - 1

**Overall, for your household, has the cost of living increased, decreased or stayed the same over the last six months?**

- Increased a lot
- Increased a little
- Stayed the same
- Decreased a little
- Decreased a lot
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

**Thinking about your current financial situation, which of these statements best applies to you?**

- I am having to go without my basic needs and/or rely on debt to pay for my basic needs
- I'm struggling to make ends meet
- I am just about managing
- I am coping okay financially
- I am comfortable financially
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

**Thinking about the last six months, which of the following statements describes you?**

- I have had to buy less food or essential items, go without or rely on outside support (food parcels from a food bank for example) regularly
- I have had to buy less food or essential items than I needed, go without or rely on outside support (food parcels from a food bank for example) on some occasions
- I have been able to buy the food and essential items I needed, but it was a constant struggle
- I have been able to buy the food and essential items I needed, but it was a struggle from time to time
- I have been able to buy the food and essential items I needed without any difficulties
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

**To what extent are you worried about the impact of the following on your household finances over the next 12 months?**


- ...an increase in rent/mortgage payments?
- ...an increase in energy costs?
- ...increase in living costs overall?



## Full questions and response options - 2

**Which, if any, of the following are you doing to help manage living costs? Please tick all that apply.**

- I am buying less food and essentials
- I am shopping around more or switching providers
- I am using less water, energy or fuel
- I am buying cheaper products
- I am spending less on non-essentials
- I am going without essentials (food, electricity or gas for example)
- I am doing free activities
- I am using free transport (walking or cycling)
- I am stopping or delaying non-essential spend
- I am borrowing money from friends or family
- I am using more credit or going into debt (including overdrafts, loans, credit or store cards or missing payments)
- I am using my savings
- I am saving less
- I have started in paid employment
- I am negotiating a higher wage
- I am seeking paid employment
- I am working more paid hours
- I am taking on additional paid work
- I am looking for a better-paying job
- I have reviewed the state benefits I'm entitled to [January 2023]
- I am claiming a wider range of state benefits than I was before [January 2023]
- I am now claiming state benefits, when I wasn't before [January 2023]
- Other
- None of these
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say




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