



An Roinn Gnó,  
Fiontar agus Nuálaíochta  
Department of Business,  
Enterprise and Innovation

# The Markievicz Survey

Research among 5<sup>th</sup> Year girls  
and their teachers

Quantitative Research

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J.1317



RESEARCH  
& INSIGHT



# Introduction

- Report of a survey undertaken for the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation focussing upon girls ambitions, aspirations and interest in leadership roles with a focus on politics and public service.
- Fieldwork was undertaken in 23 schools with 769 girls being interviewed in addition to 34 teachers. 23 teachers were interviewed in school and an additional 11 by phone.
- Schools were chosen at random, but aiming to mirror the composition/structure of a representative sample (vis-à-vis fee-paying versus non-fee paying and single gender vs mixed.) Ultimately a slight over-representation of both fee-paying and single gender, to ensure adequate coverage of both.
- Fieldwork was undertaken in October and early November 2019.
- Interviews were undertaken on a self-completion basis with Behaviour & Attitudes field supervisor in attendance.

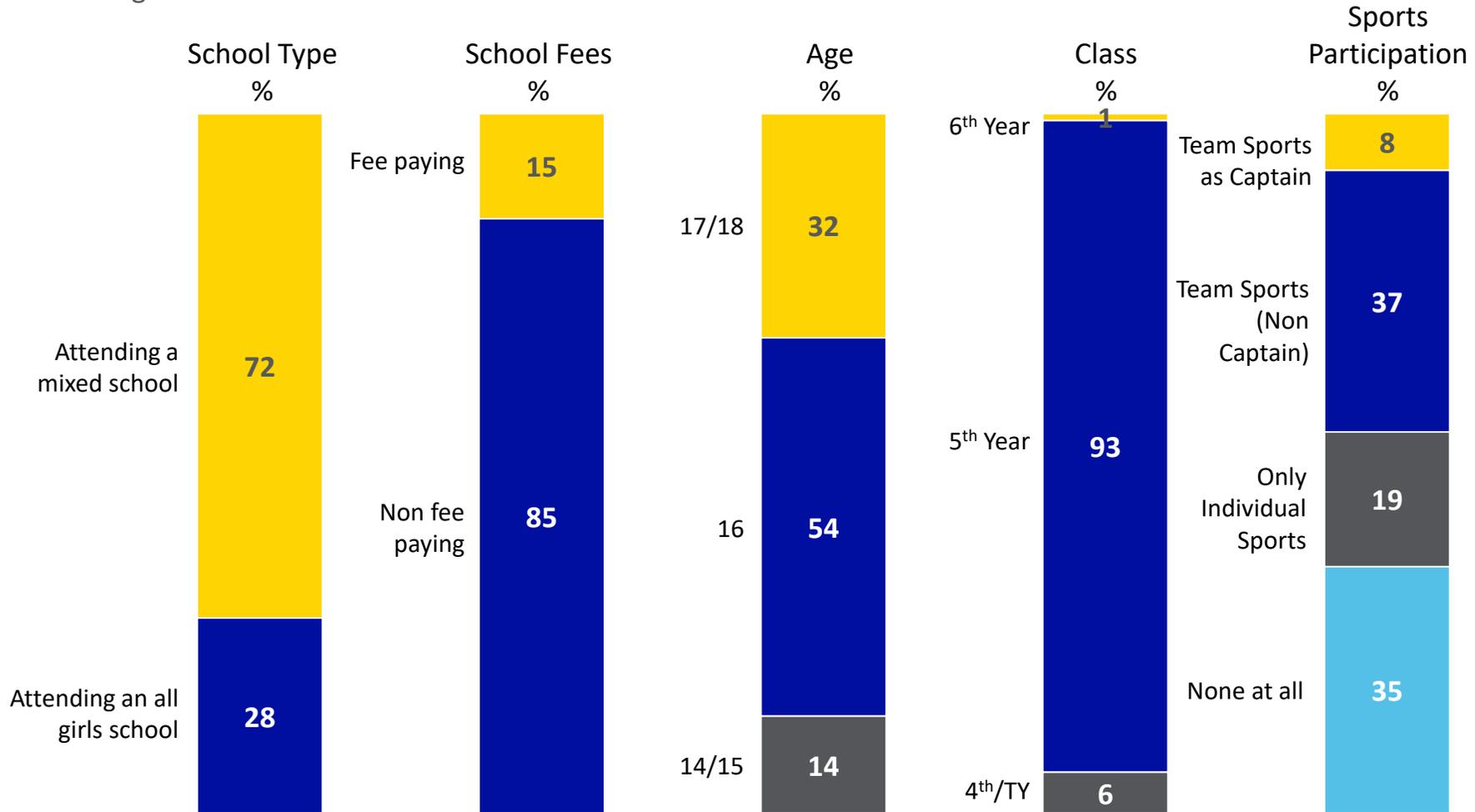


1. Girls admire a really motivating group of people...it's not Kim Kardashian, its Michelle Obama etc
2. Most girls want to go to college (80% intend to) and two out of three feel that they will realise their career ambitions
3. Parents are the key career influences although university websites and social media play a big role too (and all of these more than teachers)
4. 58% would like to manage people, 44% to start a company but 87% want to see more female ministers. They want to see women in politics but they don't necessarily want to be the boss themselves (yet)
5. Girls feel that they need to be much more Powerful, Ambitious, Confident and Intelligent to be leaders: this is the difference between the qualities they have and how they perceive leaders to be.
6. Most are more interested in working in the private sector than in the public sector: it seems to be hard to get public sector TY roles. Most had private sector placements and only a third public sector. One in three say they had no TY placements.
7. 75% feel that women make career sacrifices to have children *BUT* 68% still feel that a family friendly role is something that is important to them
8. Girls are not very interested in politics and indeed their focus on current affairs seems very low. That said, they are interested in the principle of more women being involved in politics, if not necessarily themselves

9. Sports involvement does correlate with girls being more confident and assertive and seemingly being prepared to take leadership roles. One in three play no sports at all; girls sports participation is much lower in mixed schools. Those who are Captains in sport are more assertive and confident.
10. Teachers feel that girls need extra assistance in many areas, and particularly to overcome worries around confidence and public speaking, but also to encourage them in sports participation.
11. Notable differences in results between girls-only and mixed schools...girls are a lot more assertive and focussed on women's rights in single sex schools.
12. That said, only about one in three are actively feminist (or identify with the term.) This is about the proportion that teacher project to be interested also. A bigger group claim broad interest however
13. A substantial majority of teachers see single gender education as better for girls

# Overview of students sample

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

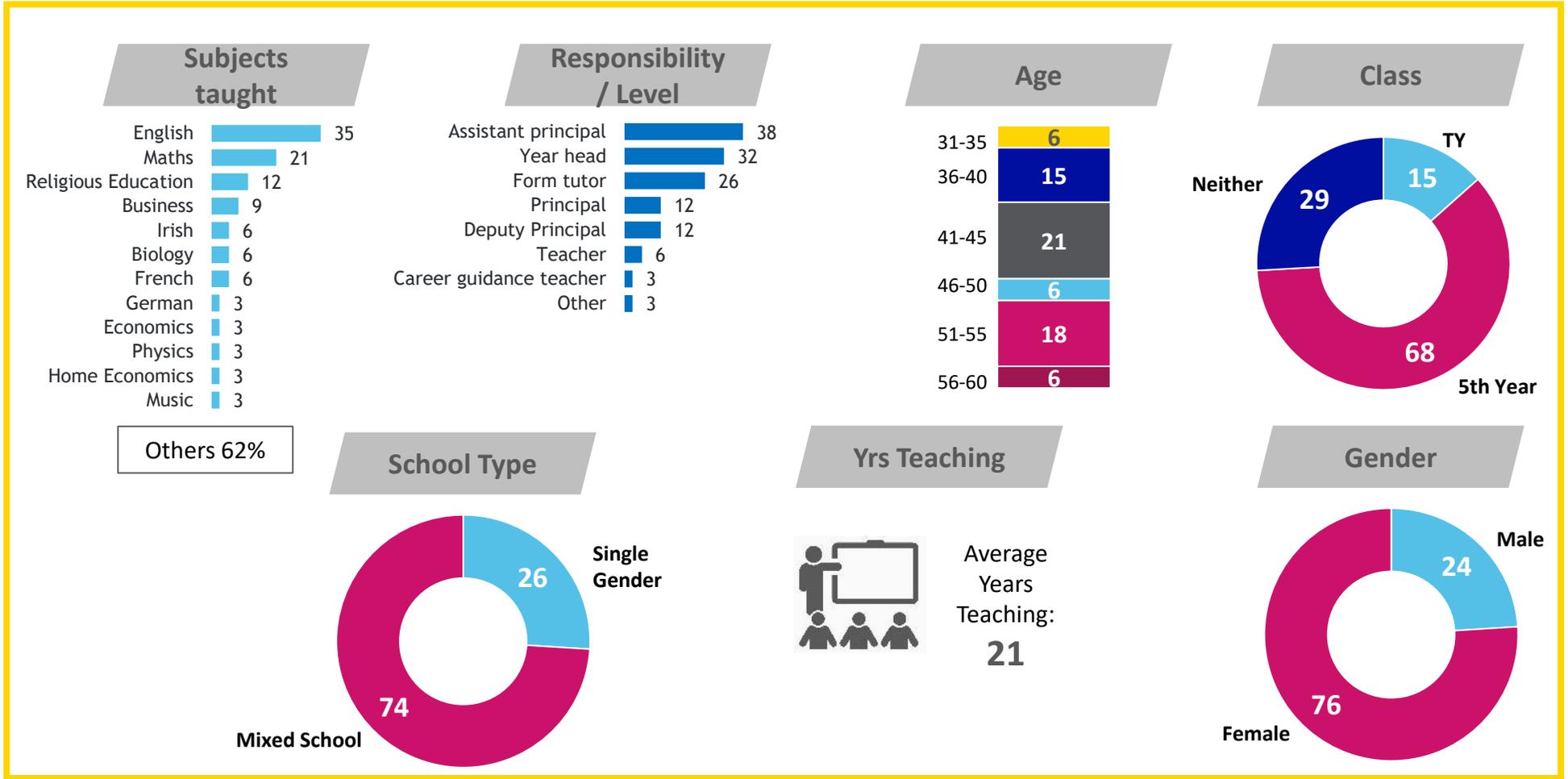


There are 616 schools with girls in the country

**The survey aimed to interview girls in 5<sup>th</sup> year (as they are finished TY) but some in TY also interviewed. The survey marginally over-represented fee paying and single gender schools to have adequate bases for analysis of these groups.**

# Overview of teachers sample

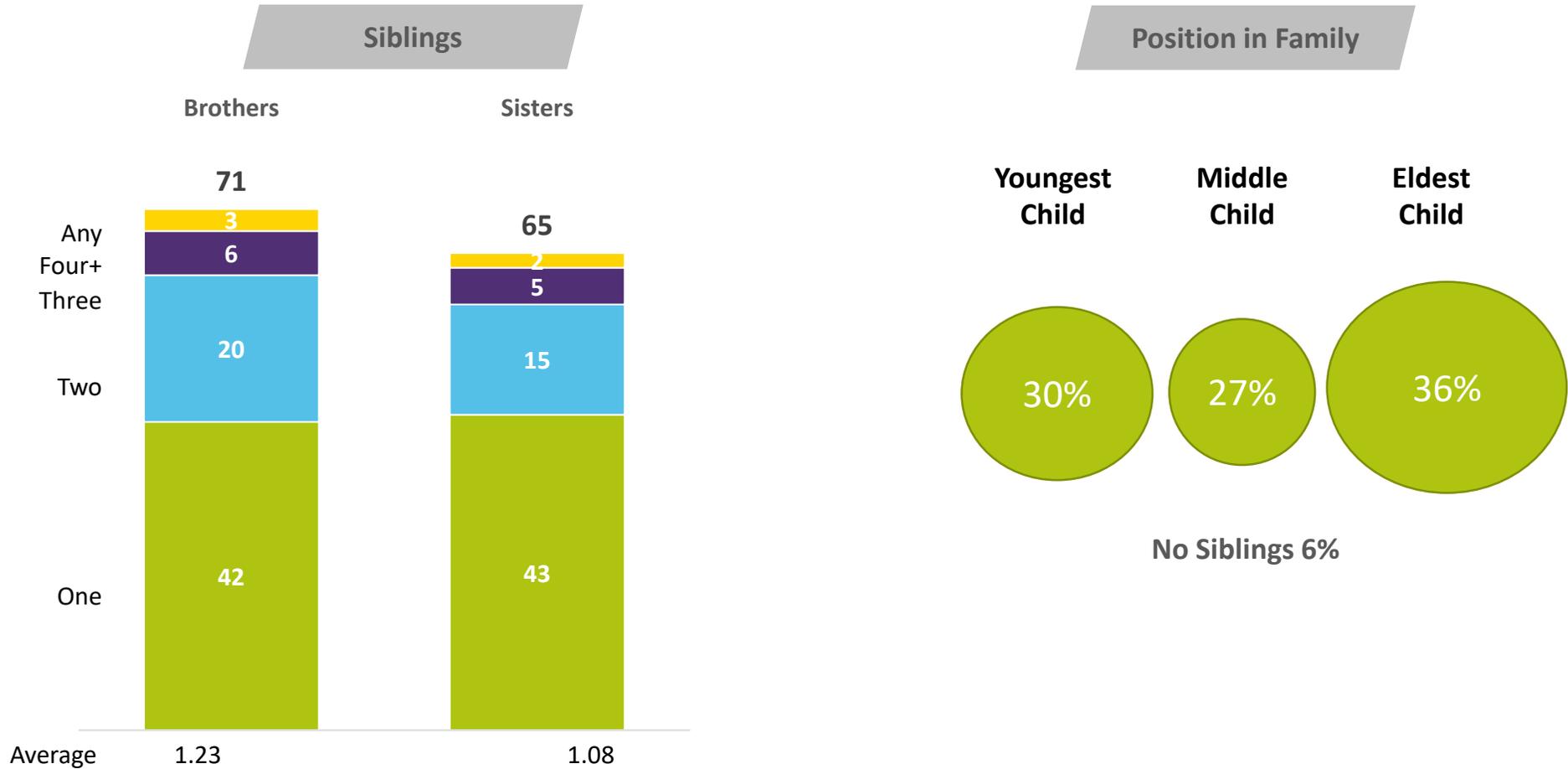
Base: 34 Teachers



Quite a senior group of teachers with an average of over twenty years service. 30% are teaching over 25 years. 3 out of 4 are in mixed schools and a similar proportion are women.

# Family composition and position in family

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

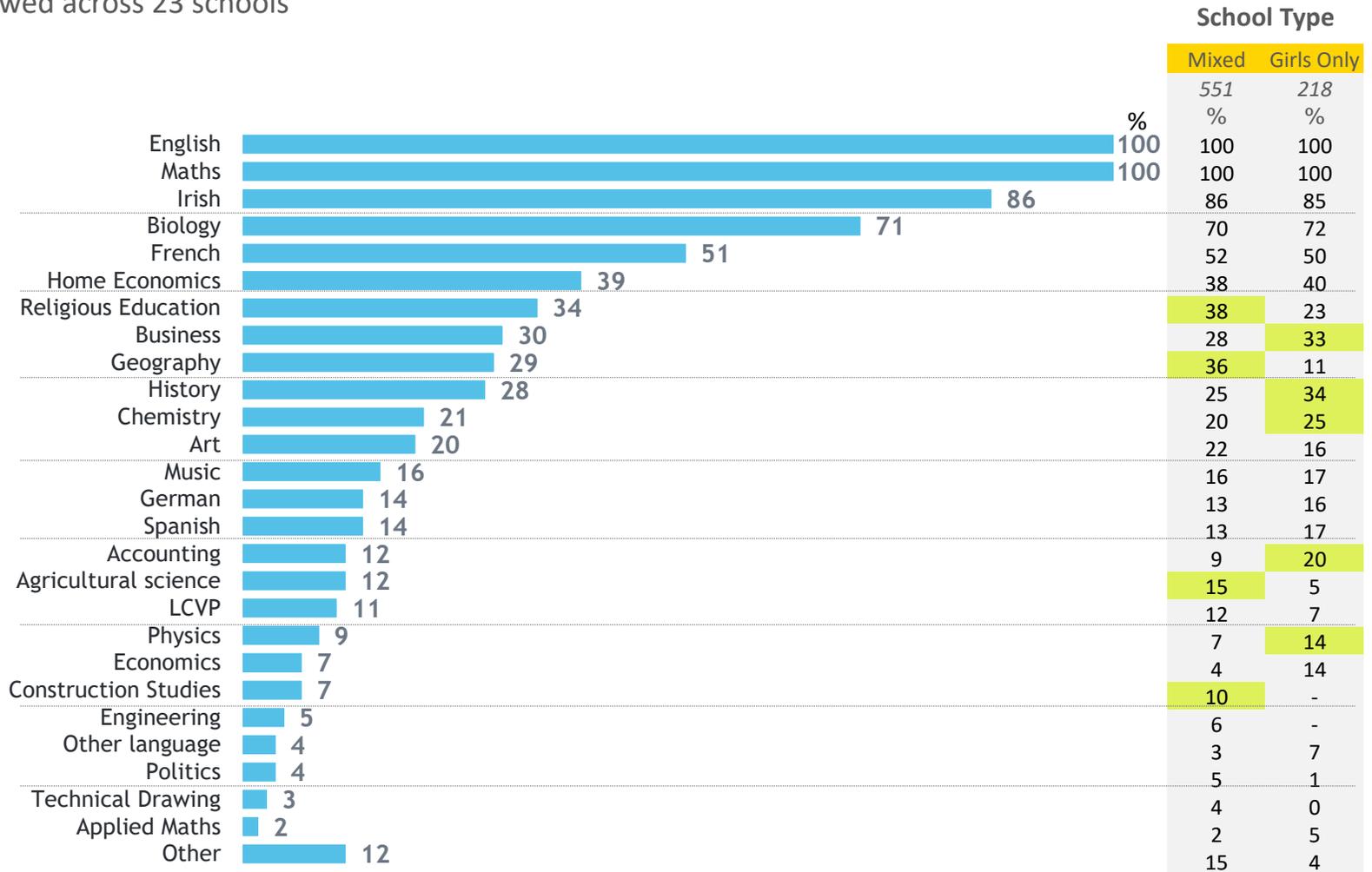


**Of those surveyed, 71% have a brother and 65% a sister (and, by definition, most have one of each, with an average number of siblings 2.3). Just 6% of those interviewed are 'only children.'**

7 ? Q.2 How many brothers and sisters, if any, do you have?  
Q.3 And are you the eldest, youngest or in the middle?

# Subjects studied

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

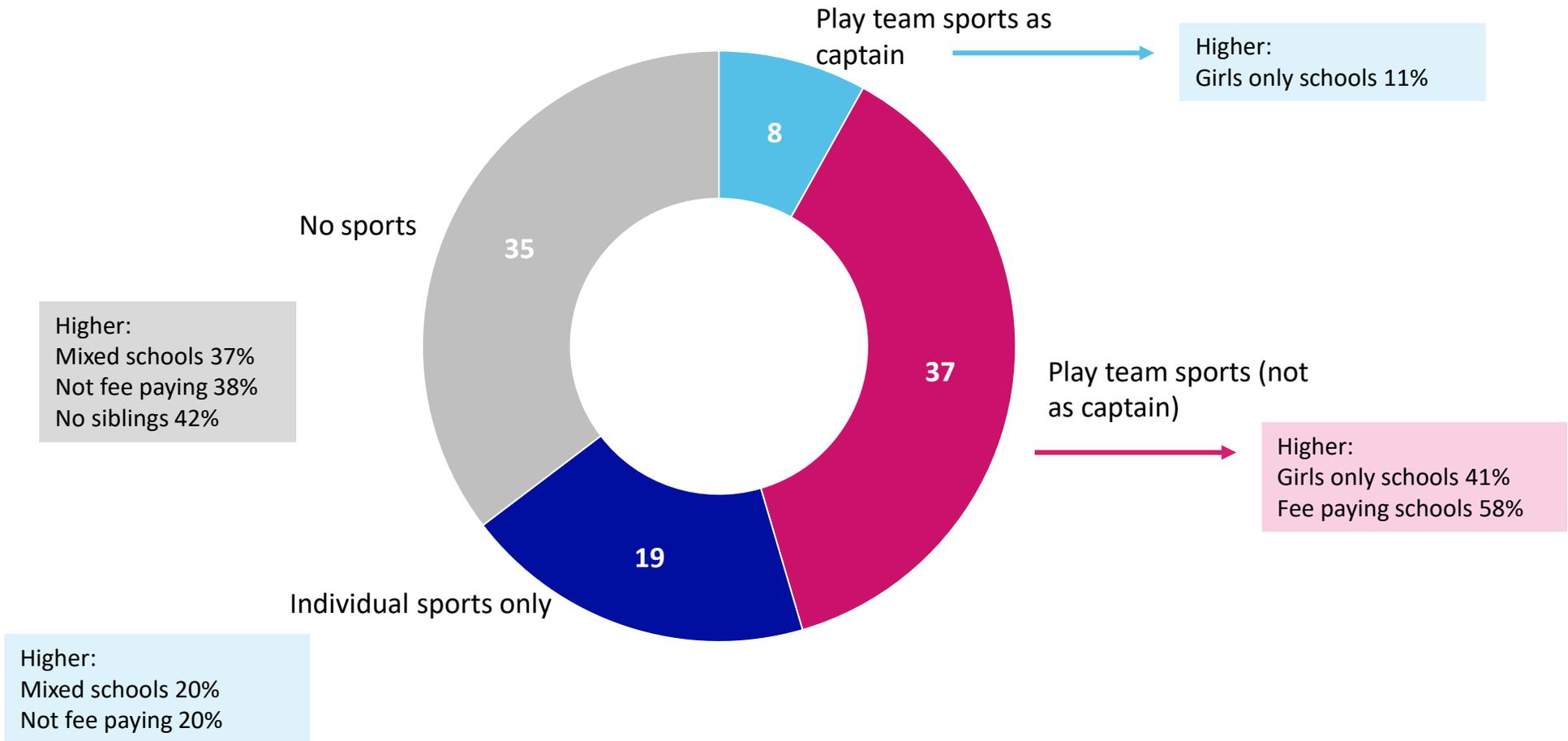


NB: LCVP, History and Geography not included on questionnaire but recorded under 'other'. The survey may under-represent them.

**Subject availability (or choice) seems to differ by school type with girls in single gender schools more likely to take History, Accounting, Business and Physics or Chemistry.**

# Sports participation

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



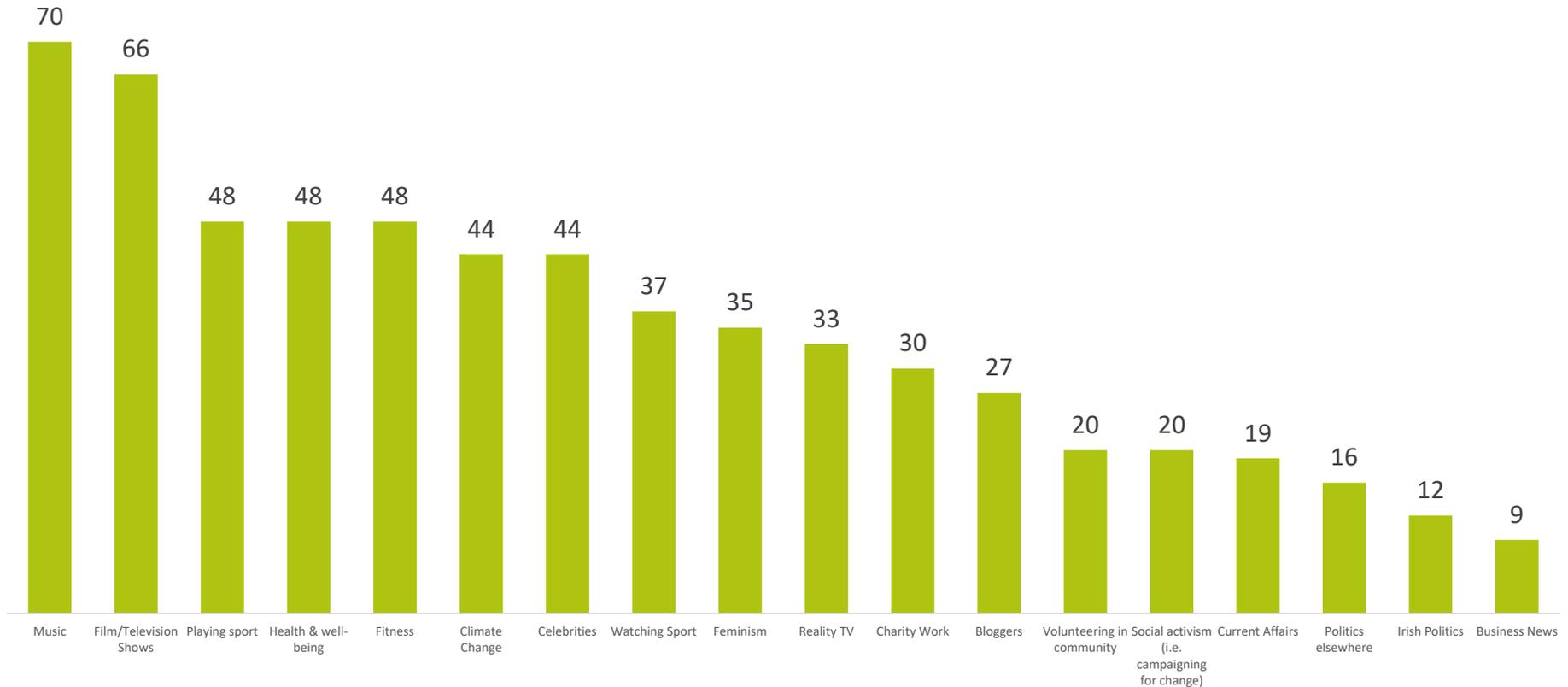
**Sports participation differs substantially by school type. 37% don't play any in mixed schools vs 29% in girls-only. 16% don't play any in fee paying versus 38% in non-fee paying.**



# Feminism & Activism in Context

# Personal interests

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

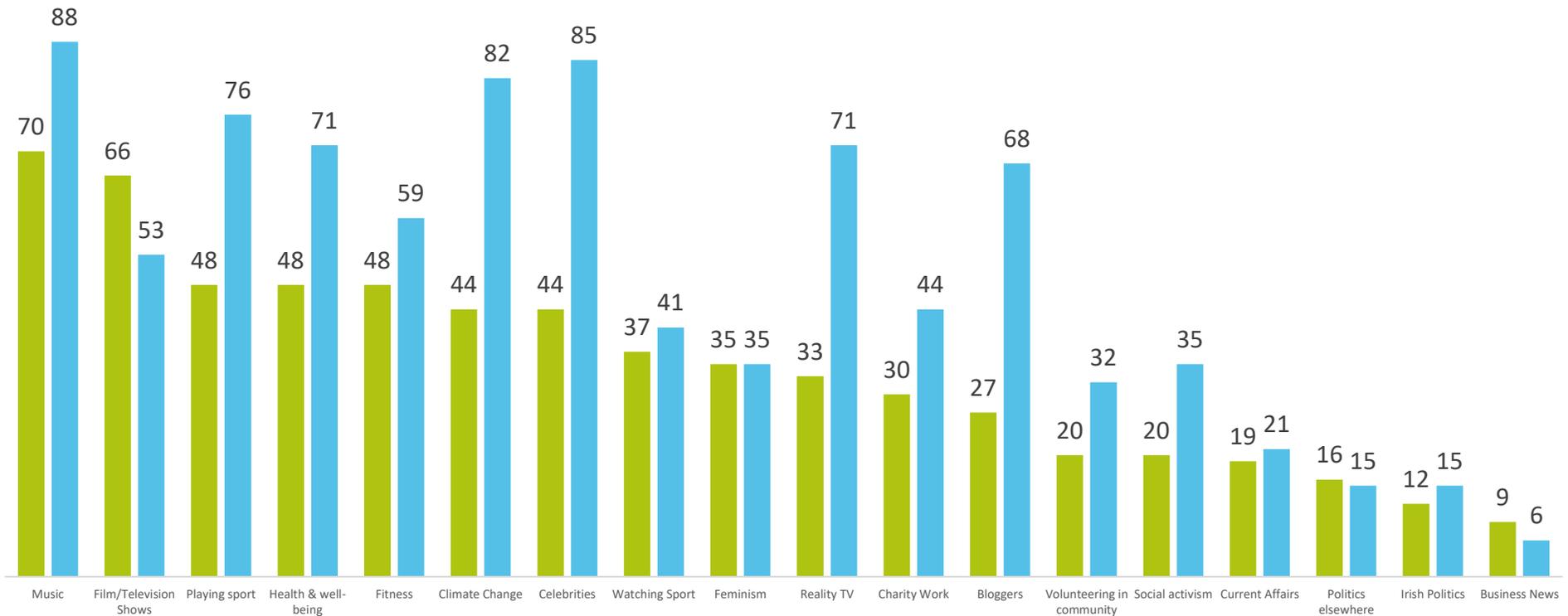


**Popular culture very important but elements like climate change (44%), feminism (35%), charity work (30%), volunteering (20%) or social activism (20%) all present too. Interest in current affairs and politics is very low.**

# Girls interests: contrasting girls & teachers views

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

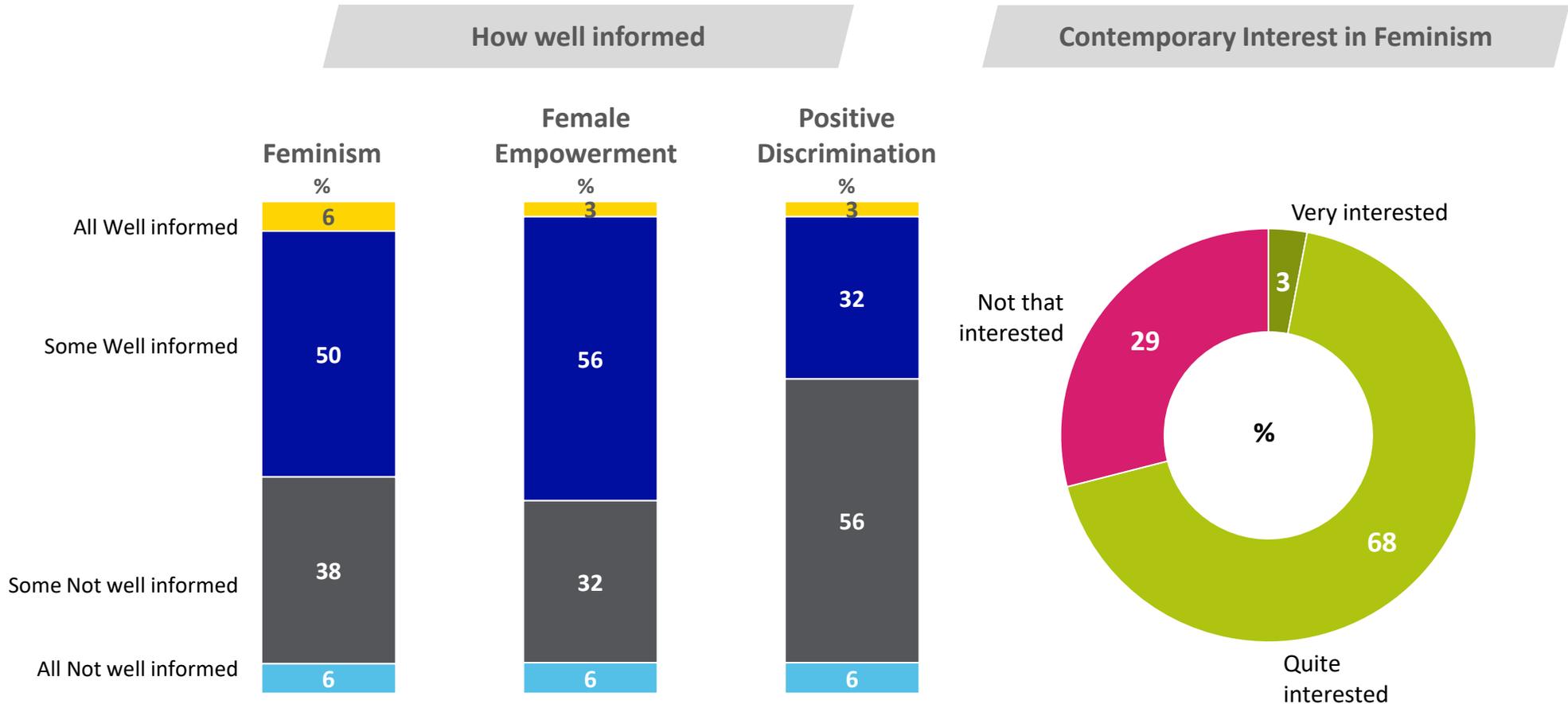
■ What girls like    ■ What teachers think girls like



**Quite a wide gap between teachers perceptions of girls interests and the reality. However both report that just 1 in 3 are interested in feminism, with equally limited focus on volunteering and social activism.**

# Girls & feminism: the teachers view

Base: Teachers view – 34 teachers



**While broad interest in feminism is perceived by teachers, there is a general perception that only some girls are well informed in relation to it or associated themes.**

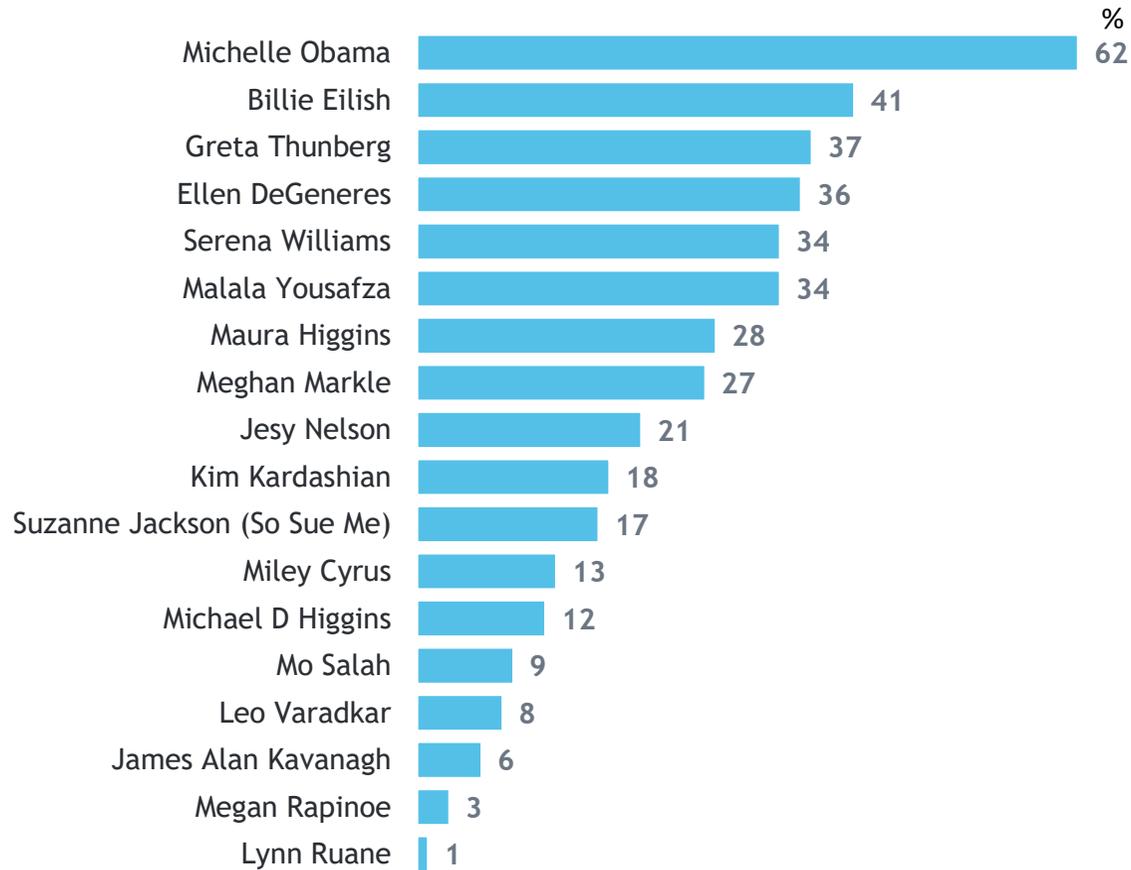
13 Q3 Do you feel that Feminism is an aspect that teenage girls/young women are well informed about?  
 Q3 Do you feel that Female empowerment is an aspect that teenage girls/young women are well informed about?  
 Q3 Do you feel that Positive discrimination (that is, to favour women) is an aspect that teenage girls/young women are well informed about?



**Icons & Role Models**

# Personalities admire or look up to

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

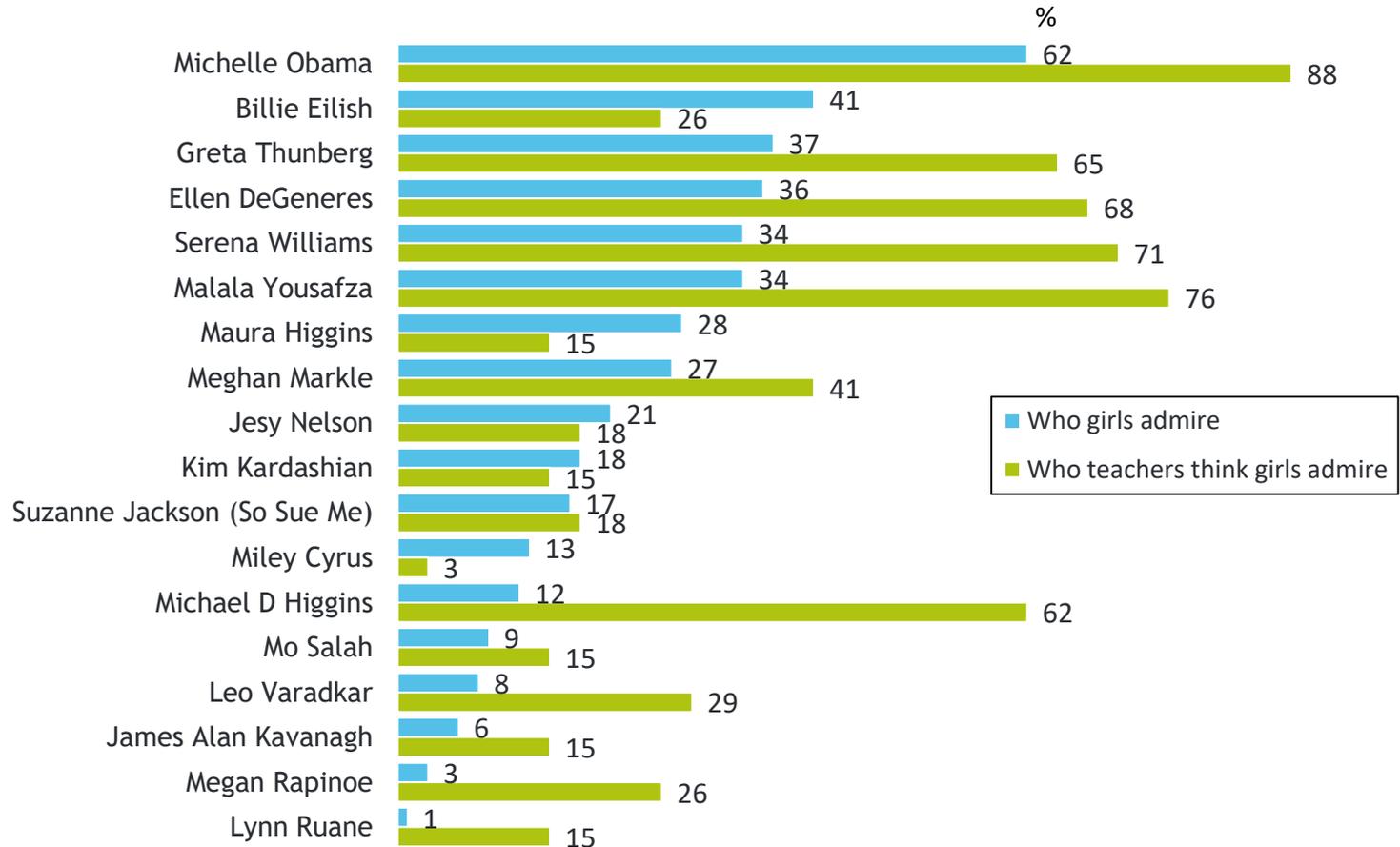


NB: No photo prompts (or explanations used.)

**World figures and notable women are much more salient than, for example, Kim Kardashian or Miley Cyrus.**

# Personalities admire or look up to: Girls/Teachers contrast

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



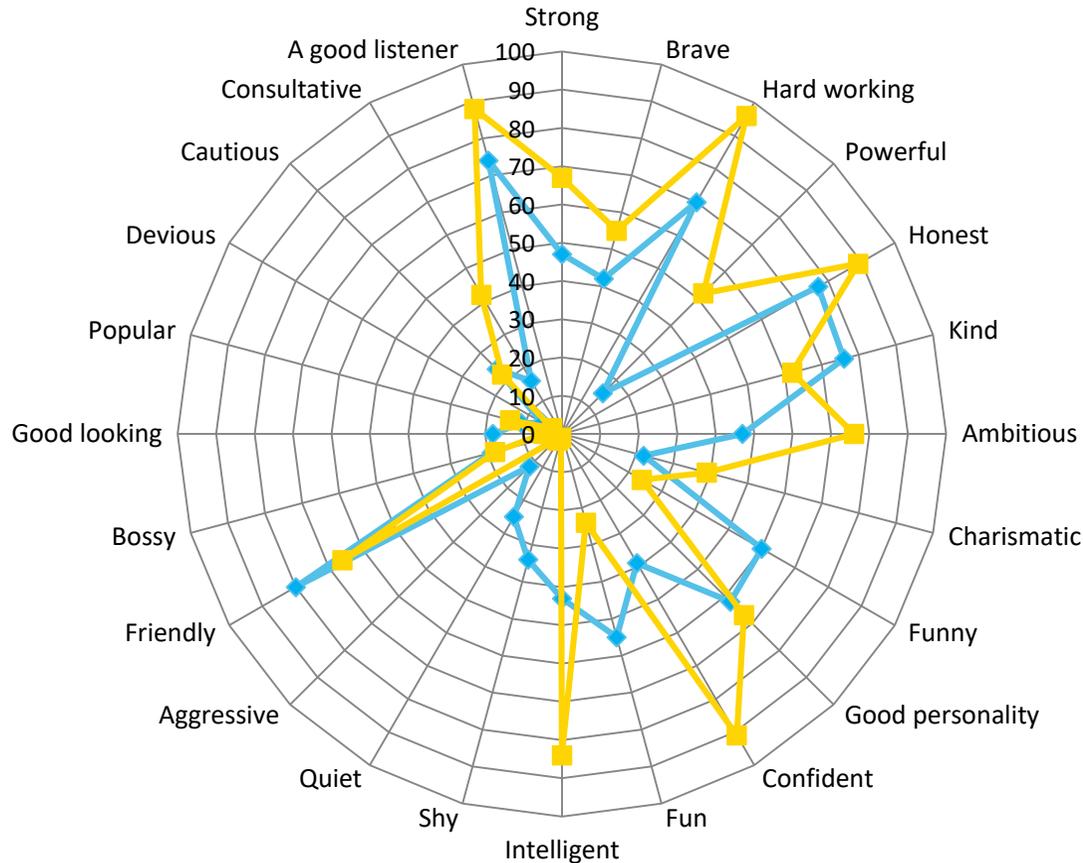
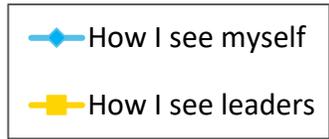
**Teachers focus much more on admirable role models such as Malala Yousafza, Greta Thunberg, Michelle Obama, Michael D. Higgins and Ellen DeGeneres. Teachers rate ‘politicians’ more highly.**



# Self Perception and Perception of Leaders

# Personality descriptions: me versus leaders

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



Girls see themselves as hardworking, honest, kind, funny, friendly; intelligence and confidence are lower scoring

Leaders by contrast need to be intelligent, confident, ambitious and powerful as well as kind, friendly and hardworking.

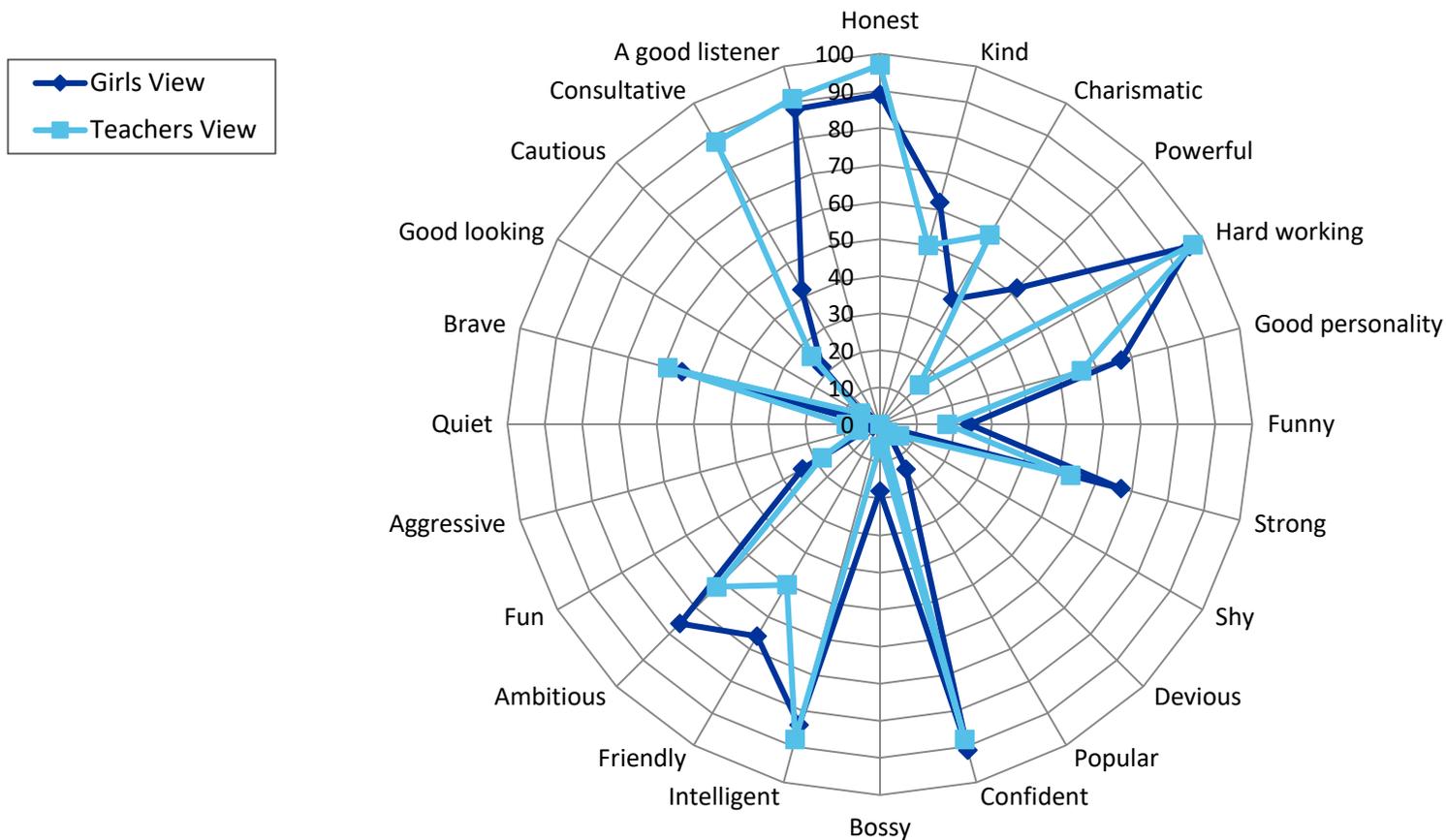
## Do girls often doubt themselves and lack confidence to take leadership roles?

Q.5 Looking at the list of qualities below that people can have, which of them do you feel you have?  
 Q.14 We would like you now to think about the qualities that leaders might have. Which of the following, do you think, are the most important qualities a person should have to be a good leader?



# Leadership qualities

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**Both teachers and girls feel that being a good listener, intelligence, honesty and confidence are important. Girls place more focus on ambition and power (but also friendliness and kindness) whereas teachers place more focus on being consultative and charismatic.**

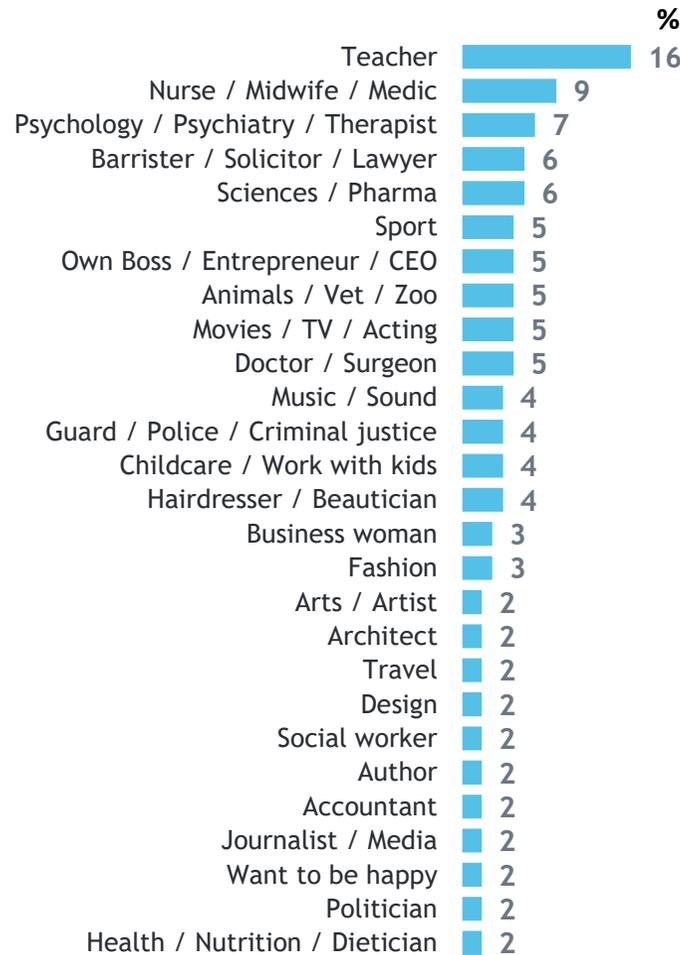




**Ambitions &  
Influences**

# Dream careers

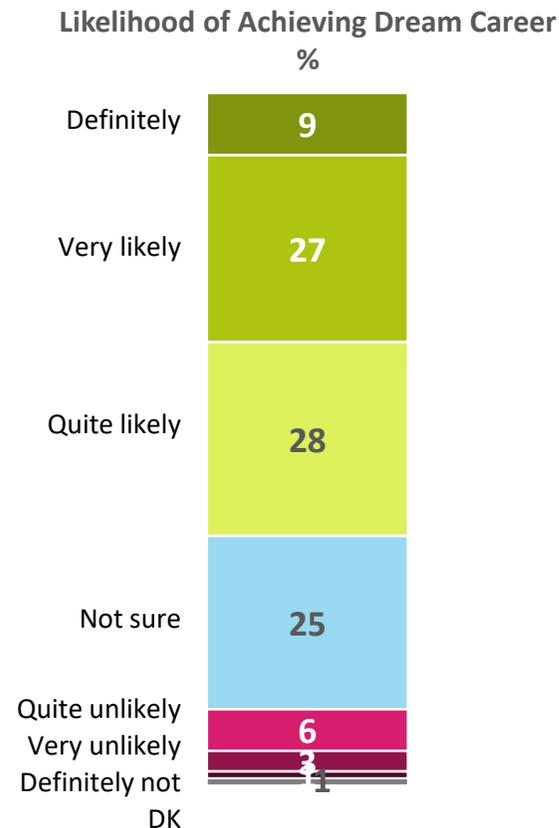
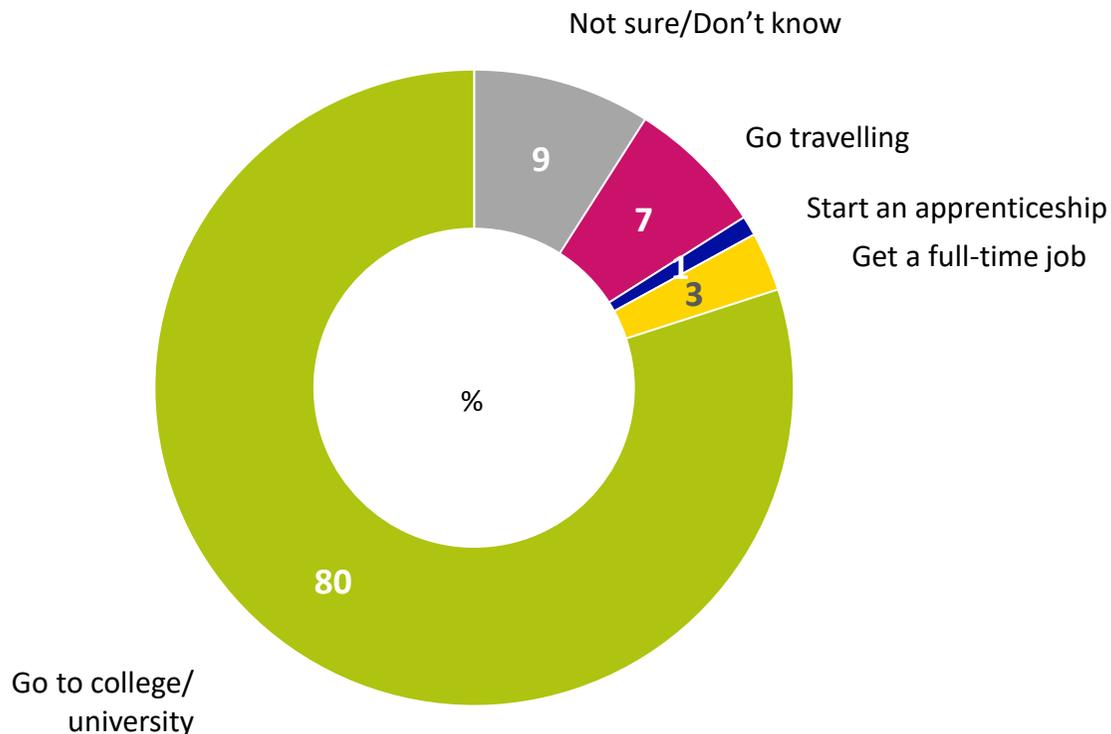
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



Career	%
Others	
Engineer	1
Dentist	1
Farm / Agriculture	1
Hotel / Hospitality	1
Occupational therapist	1
Economics	1
Animation	0
Carpenter	0
Cleaner	0
Firefighter	0
Not sure / DK	4

# Current ambition

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**The vast majority intend to go to college and two thirds feel they are likely to achieve their career ambitions. However, only 1 in 3 are confident of this.**

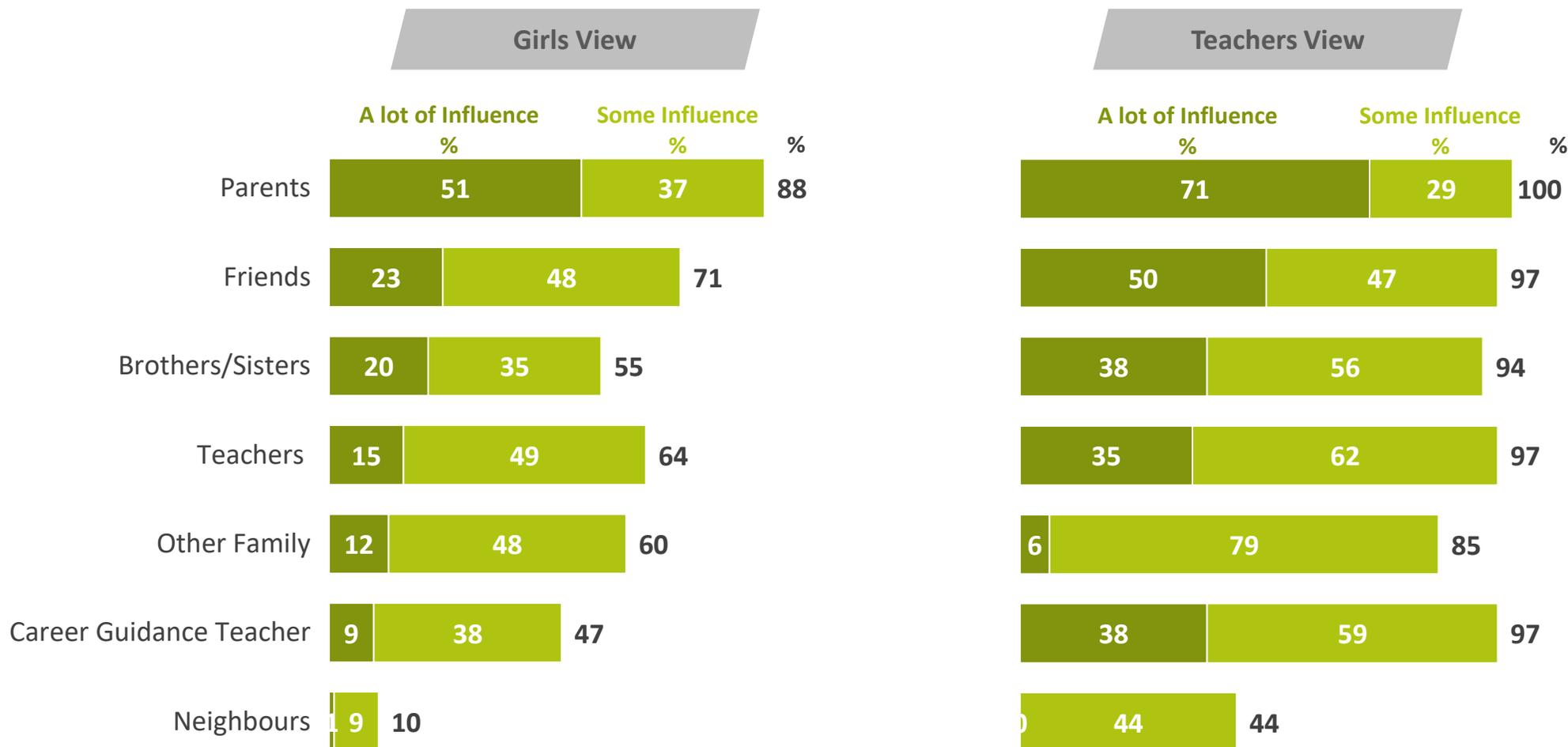
Q.6 What are you planning to do when you leave school?

Q.8a Using the scale below, could you please tell us how confident or otherwise you feel that you will have that particular career when you are older?



# Key Influences over choice of career

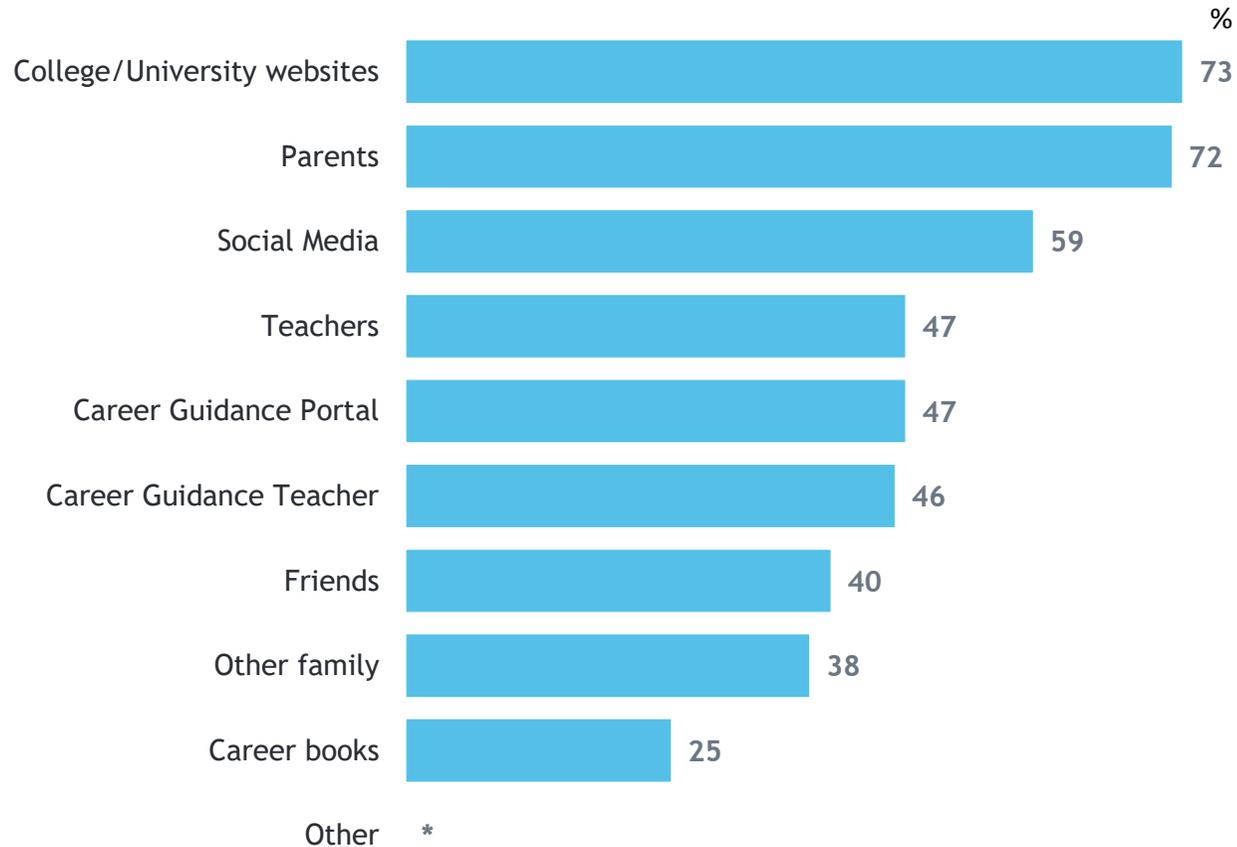
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools/34 teachers



**Both see parents as very important. Teachers project that they (or career guidance teachers) have more influence over what is claimed by girls themselves.**

# Information sources on career

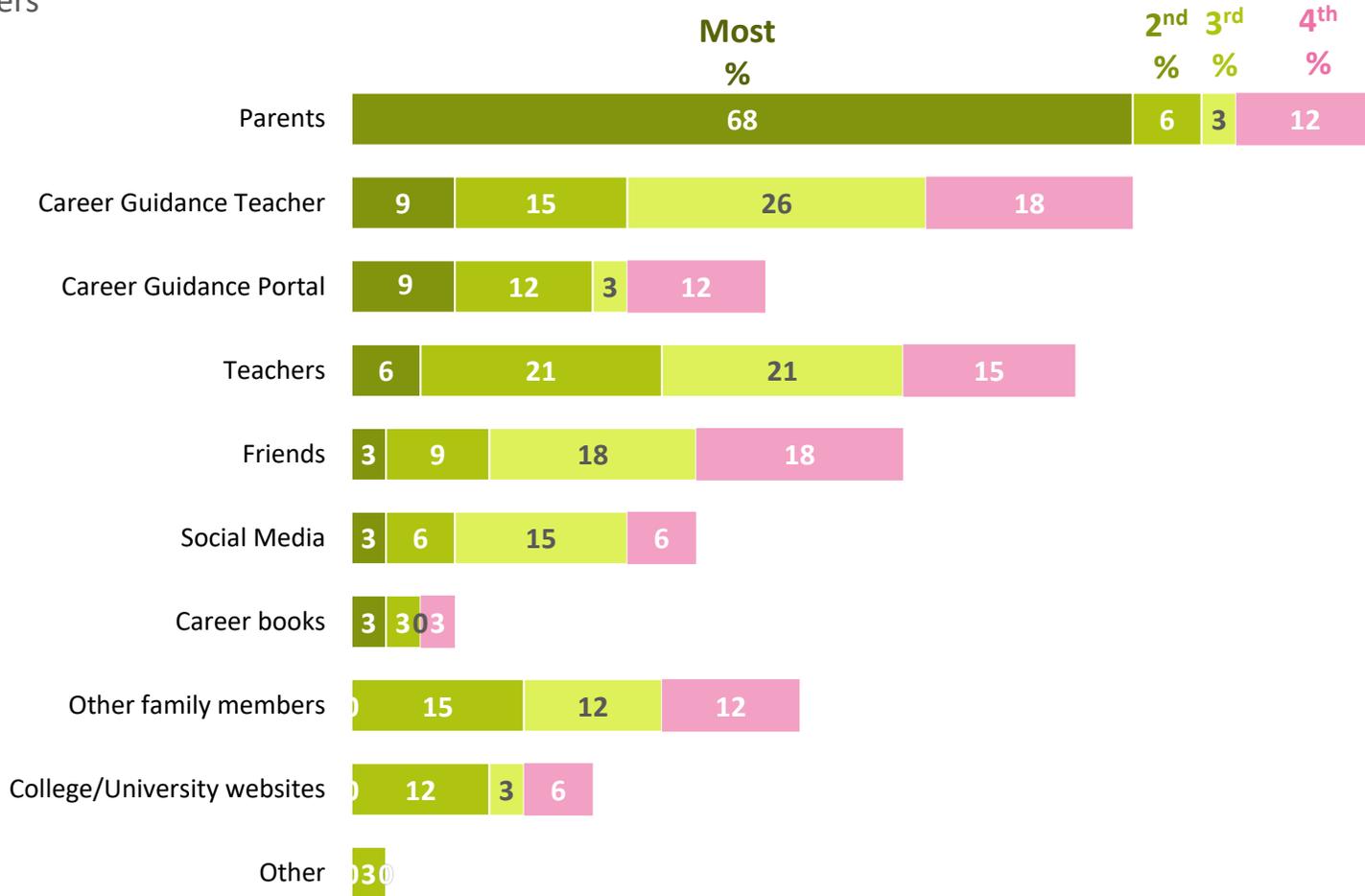
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**College websites and social media are as important as parents. Both teachers and career guidance teachers are discounted.**

# Impact of different influences on girls career choices (Teachers View)

Base: 34 Teachers

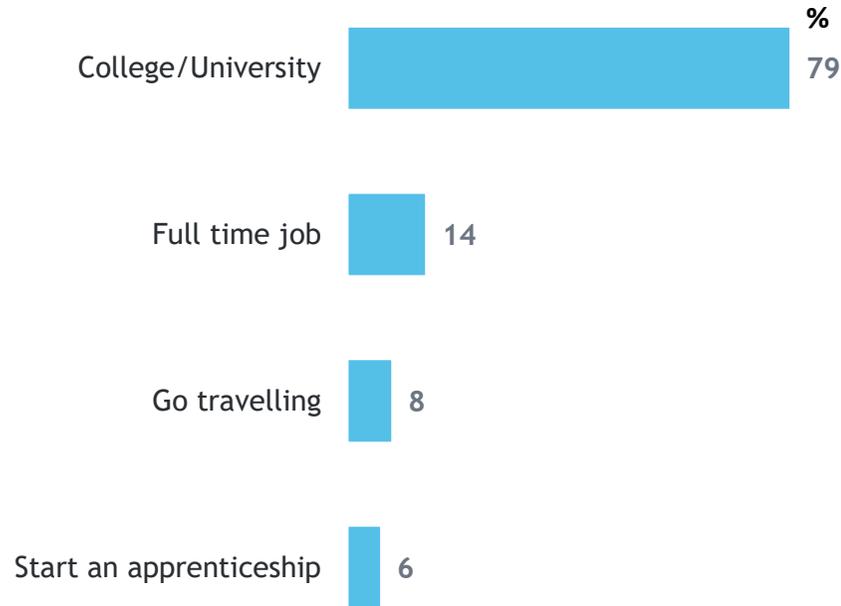


**A clear view among teachers that parents are of greatest influence albeit followed closely behind by career guidance teachers and teachers themselves.**

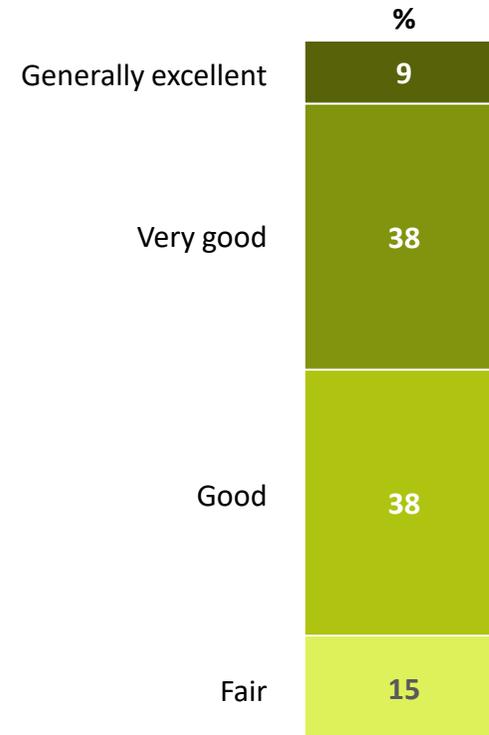
# What girls will do after school?

Base: 34 Teachers

Proportion most likely to choose certain route



How well developed are their ideas of what they will do after school

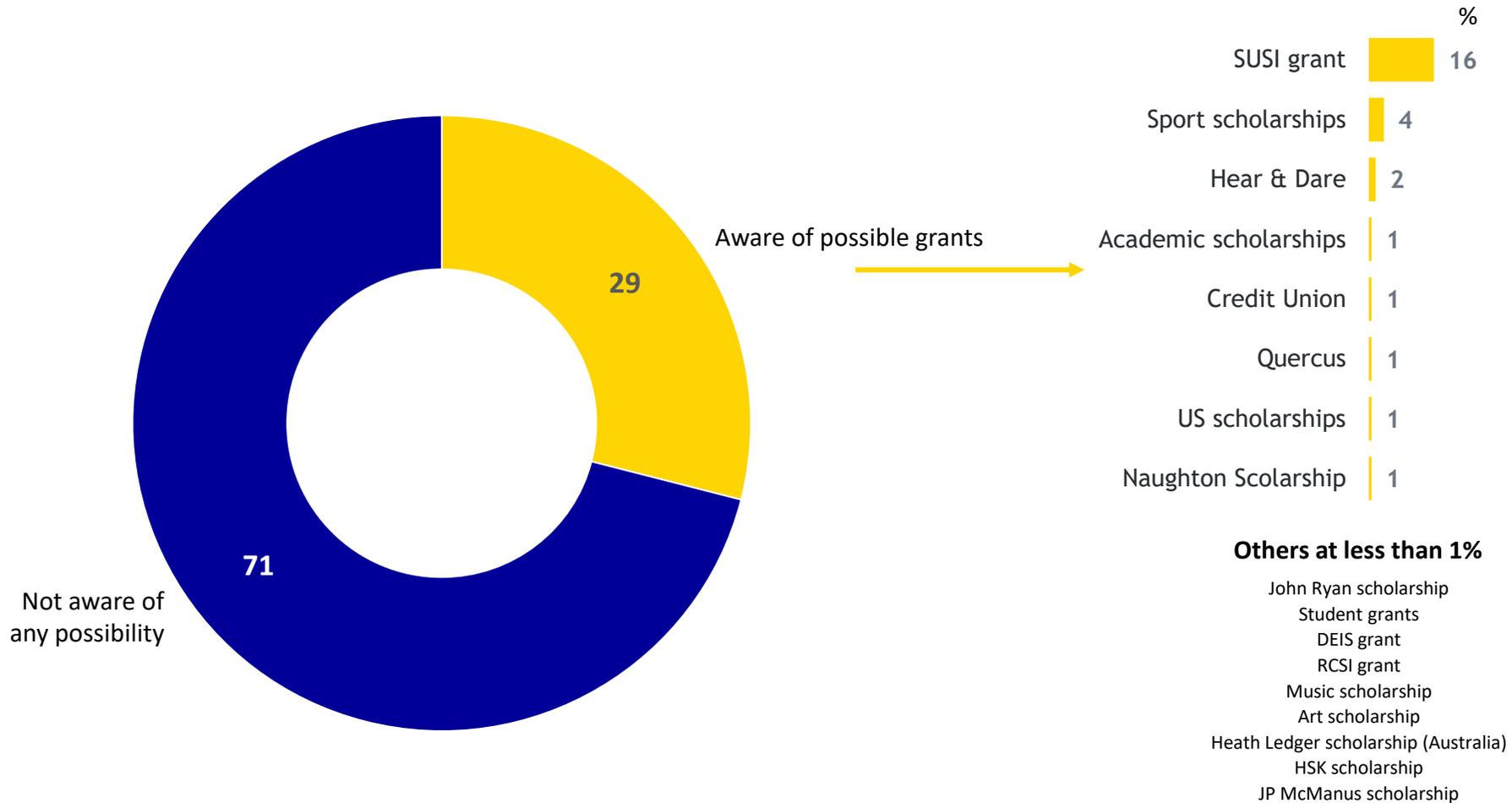


The majority are felt to have a good feel for what they are likely to do after school, with four out of five teachers thinking that they are likely to attend college.



# Possibility of grant funding of college education

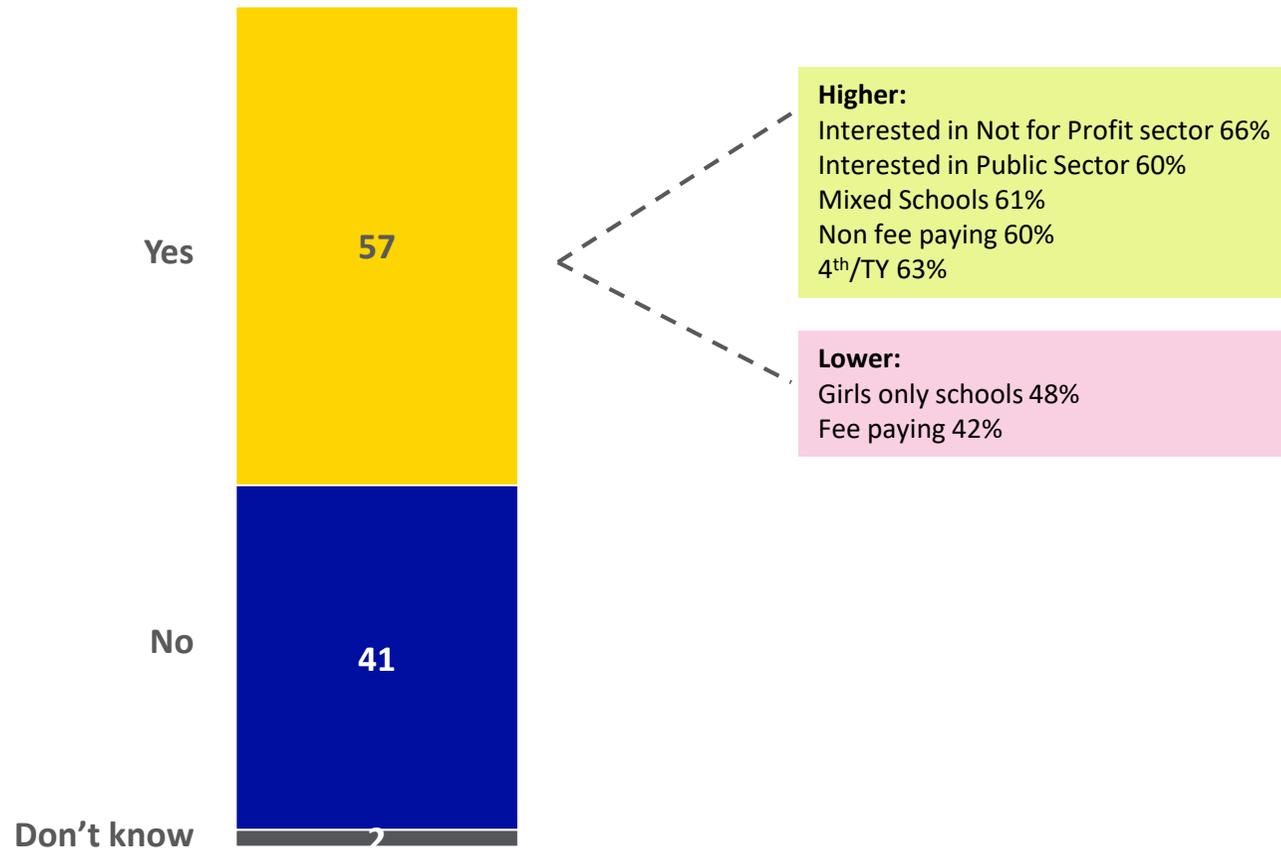
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**3 in 10 are aware of the availability of grants with only SUSI (at one in six) tangible.**

# Interest in a job that would fund night time college study

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



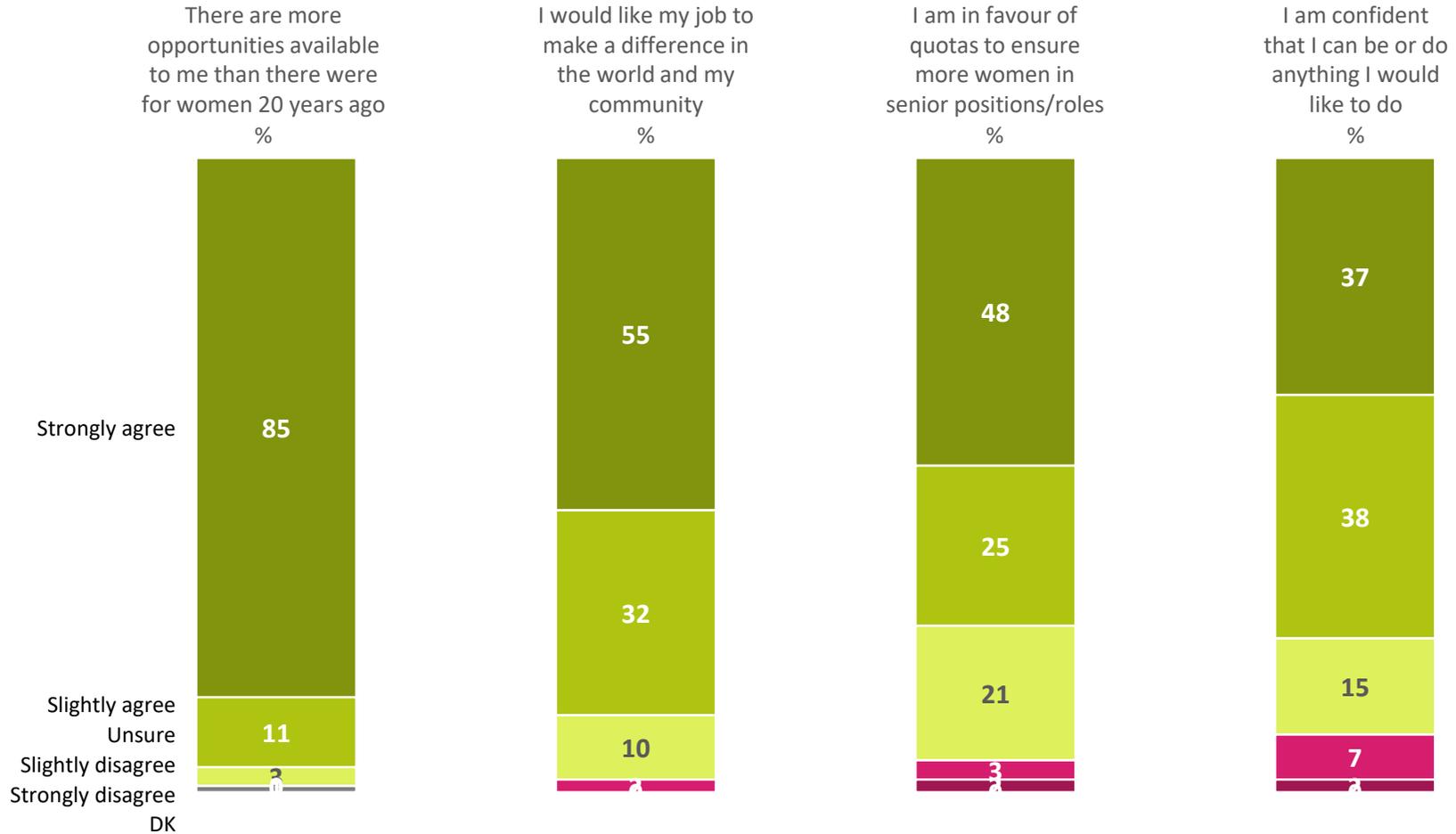
**Almost 3 in 5 find this of interest, and more particularly those with a public sector/Not-for-Profit orientation.**



**Perspectives of Work  
& Careers**

# Attitudes to careers & work

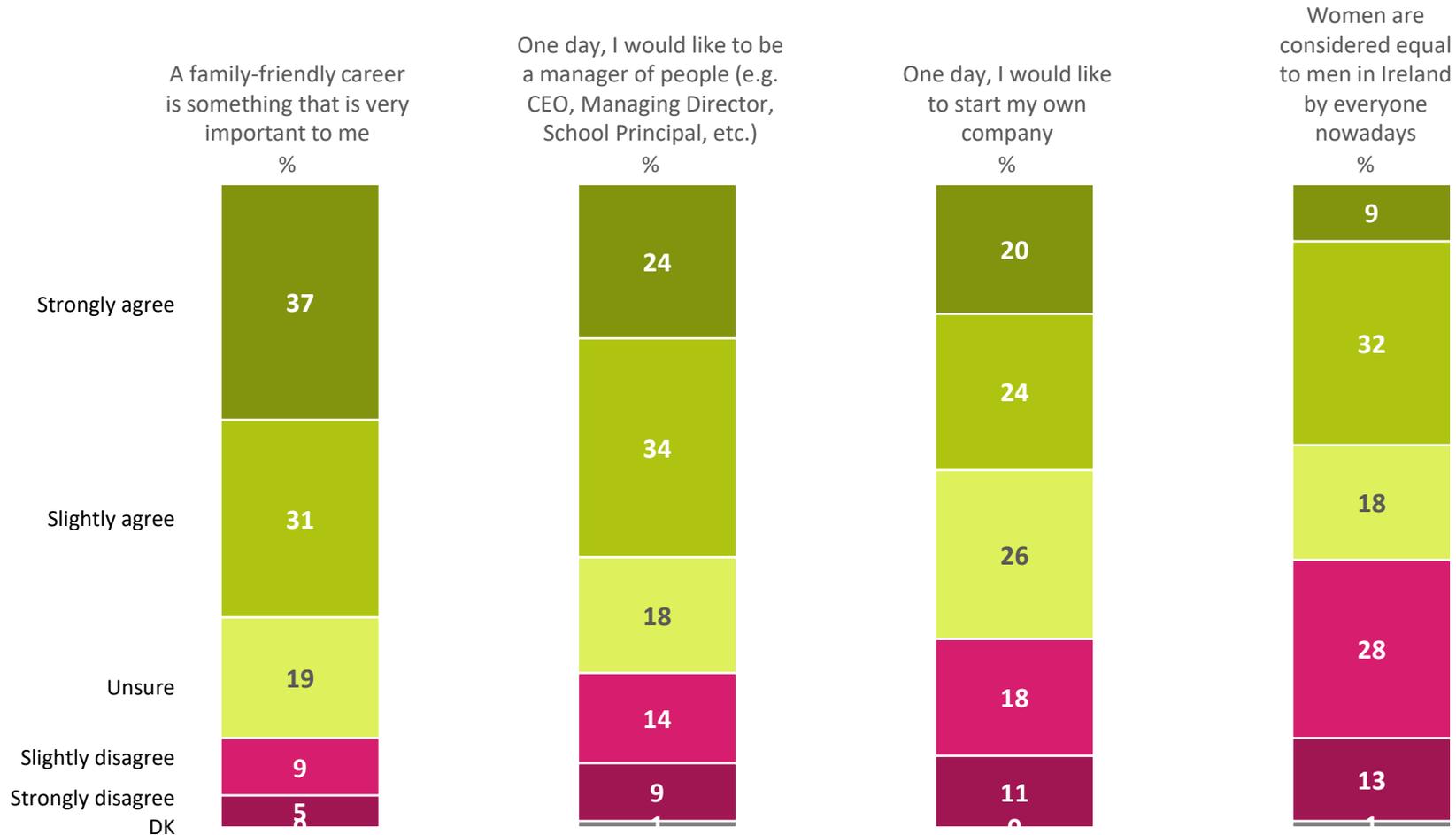
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**Considerable sense of social progress in respect of women's opportunities, as well as a commitment to making a difference: substantial majority favour gender quotas, but about 1 in 4 are lacking in confidence about realising their personal ambitions.**

# Attitudes to careers & work

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**Two out of three girls want a family-friendly career, much higher than the proportion who yet feel confident enough to manage or to be an entrepreneur.**

# Ambition to start own company

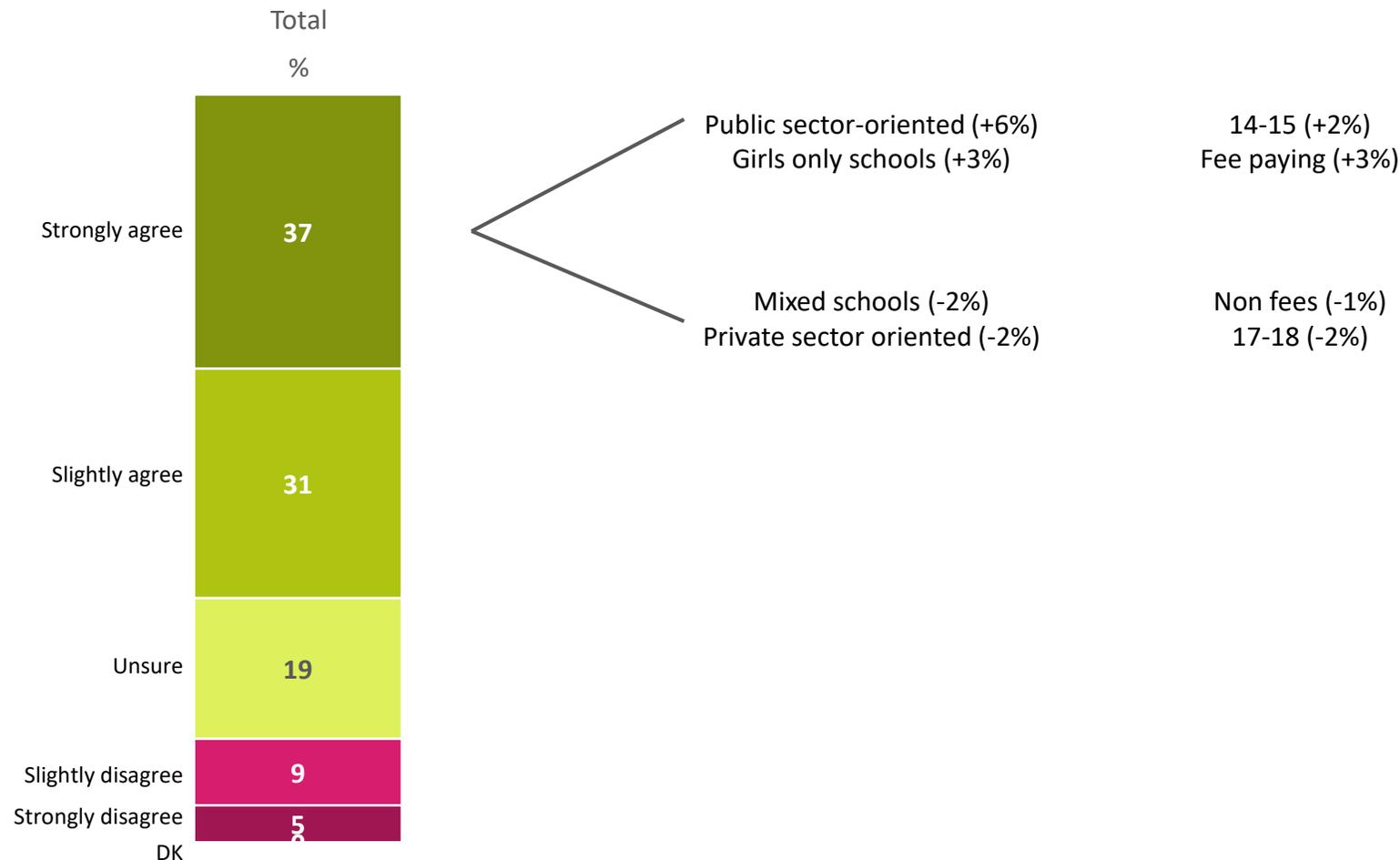
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



Quite a broad spectrum of opinion by and large but evidently seen as more of an attraction by those attending fee paying schools and, to an extent, single gender schools. Girls who see themselves as shy much less likely and sports captain's more likely.

# “A family-friendly career is something that is very important to me”

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



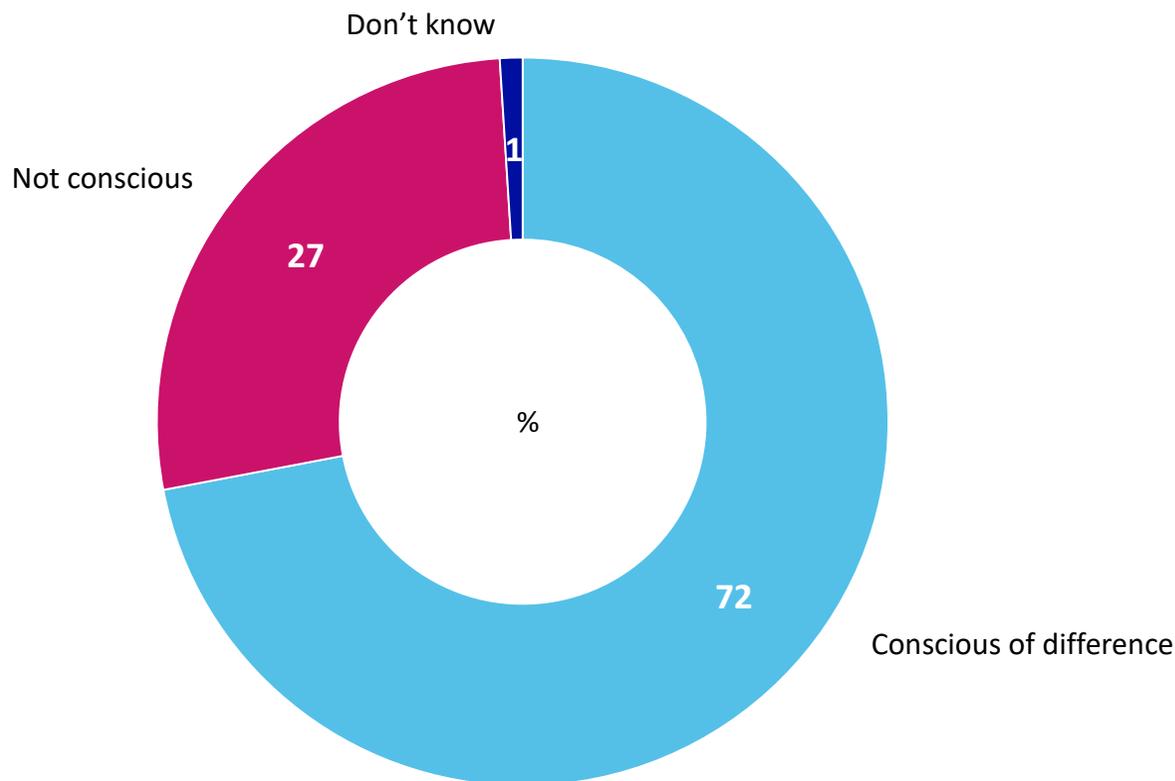
**Very consistent recognition of the general importance of a career that is family-friendly. This differs very slightly by school-type, and age but is marginally more pronounced relative to long term career interests (i.e. a public vs a private sector orientation.)**



**Sectoral Focus**

# Conscious of Public/Private sector difference

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

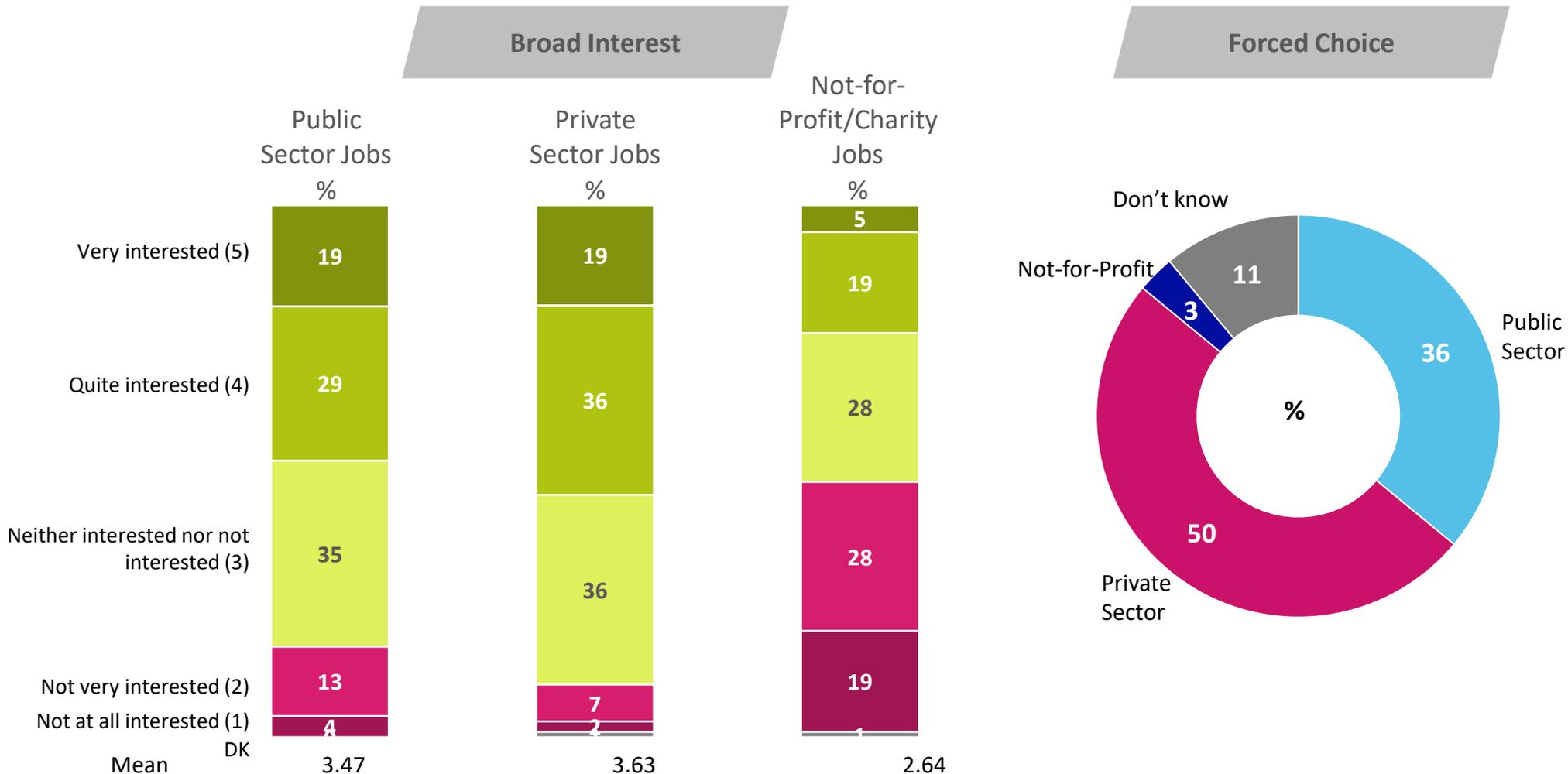


See self as 'ambitious'	81%
Private sector/TY placement	80%
See self as 'intelligent'	79%
Eldest child	79%
Team Captain	79%
Girls-only school	77%
Fee paying	75%
Def/very likely to achieve career ambitions	78%
College-oriented	76%
See self as CEO	76%

**About 1 in 4 are uncertain about the difference between public and private sector jobs. More ambitious girls, those who undertook a private sector TY placement and eldest children are more likely to be aware.**

# Sectoral Orientation

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



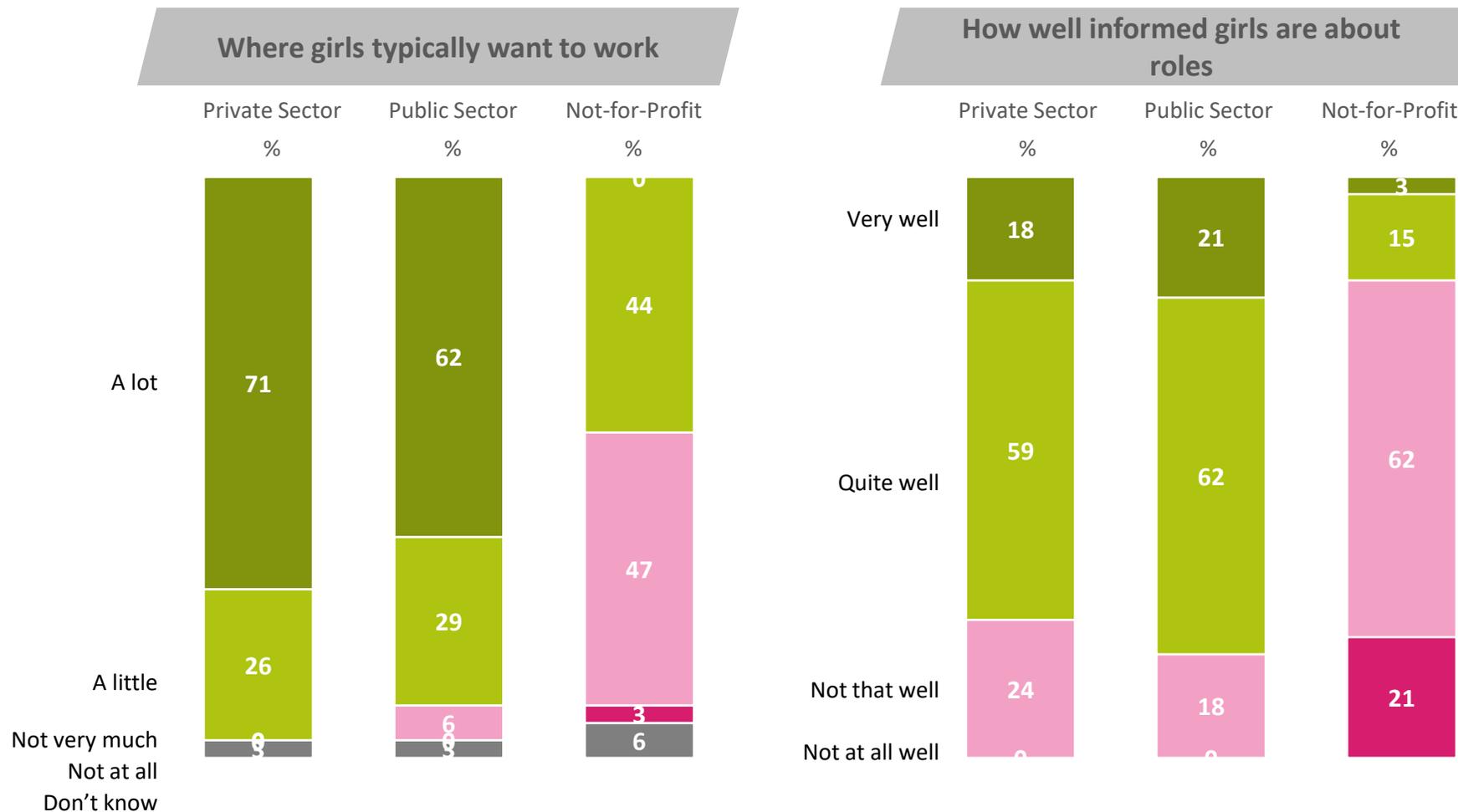
**Not a wide gap in perspectives of the appeal of public and private sector jobs, with private sector about 7 percentage points stronger, but – in a forced choice – coming 14% ahead ultimately.**



Q.16a Using the scale below, how interested, if at all, would you be in having a Public Sector job in the future?  
 Q.16c And using the scale below, how interested, if at all, would you be in having a Private Sector job in the future?  
 Q.16e And using the scale below, how interested, if at all, would you be in having a Not-for-Profit or Charity Sector job in the future?

# Girls affinity for different sectors

Base: 34 Teachers



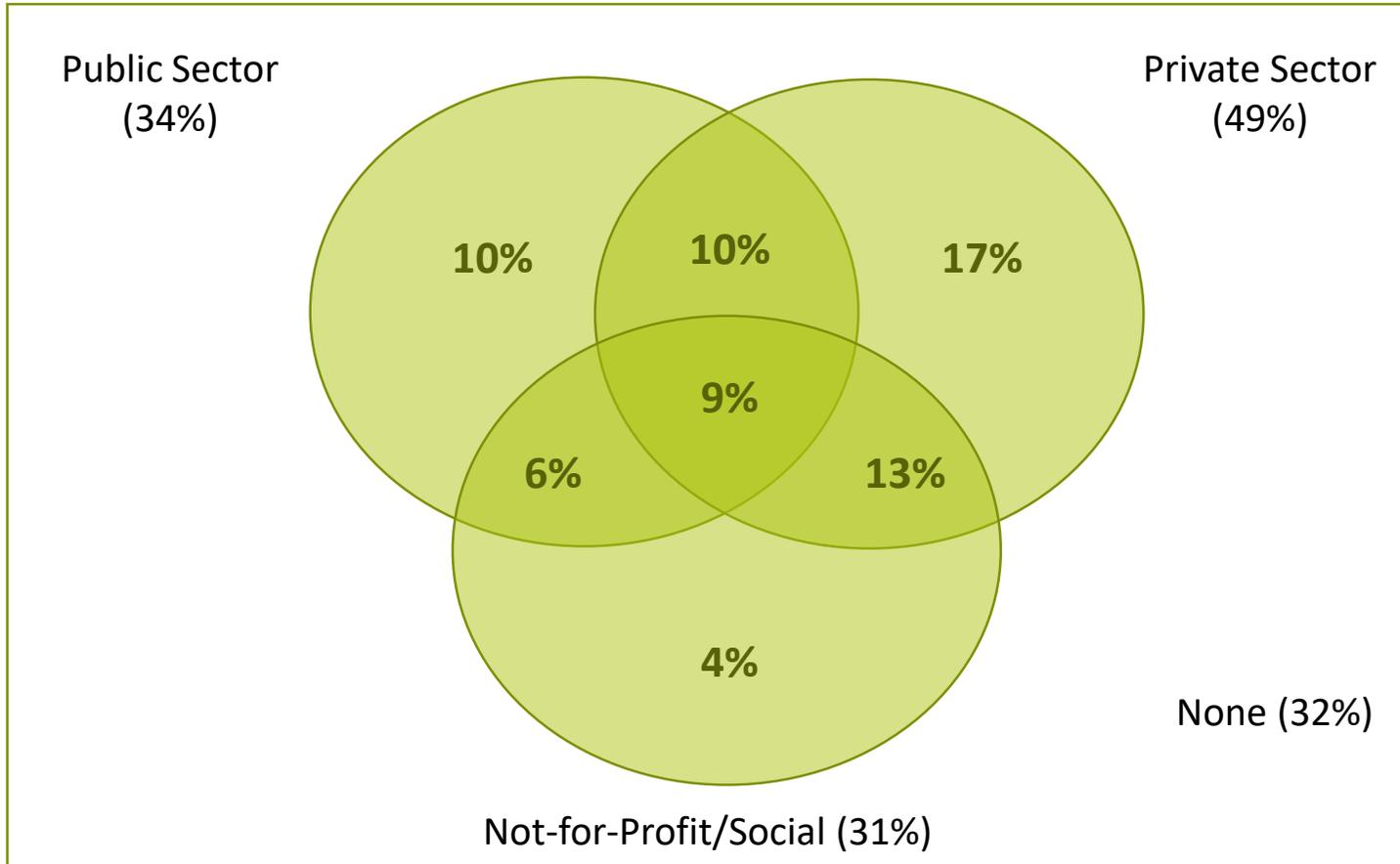
**Teachers tend to feel that girls are marginally more attuned to the private than the public sector. This contrasts quite sharply with girls own perspectives.**



**TY Placements**

# TY placements undertaken

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools\*



Those who had a Public sector placement rarely have Private.

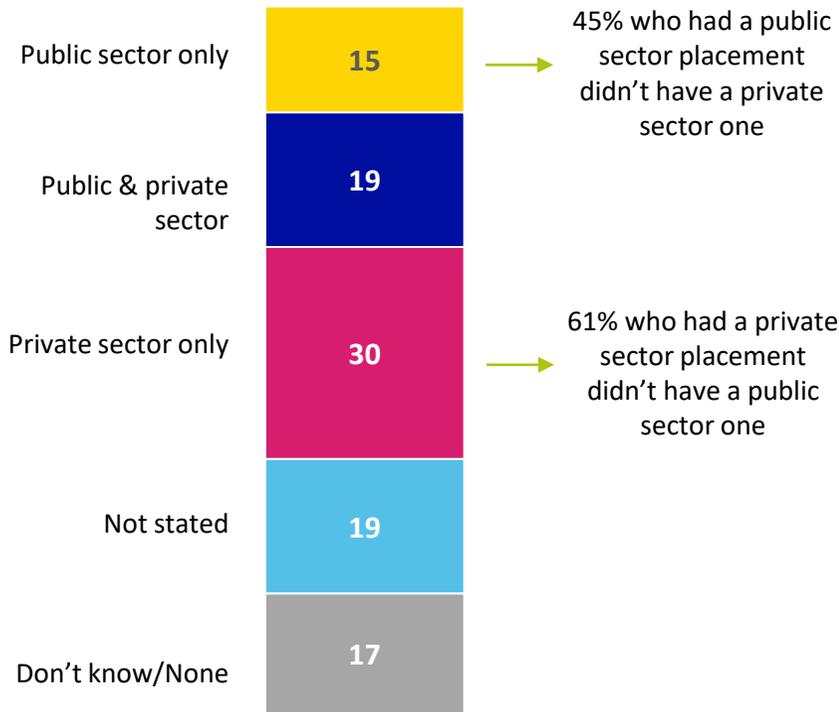
The biggest single groups are Private-only, followed by Private and Not-for-Profit.

One in three had no placements

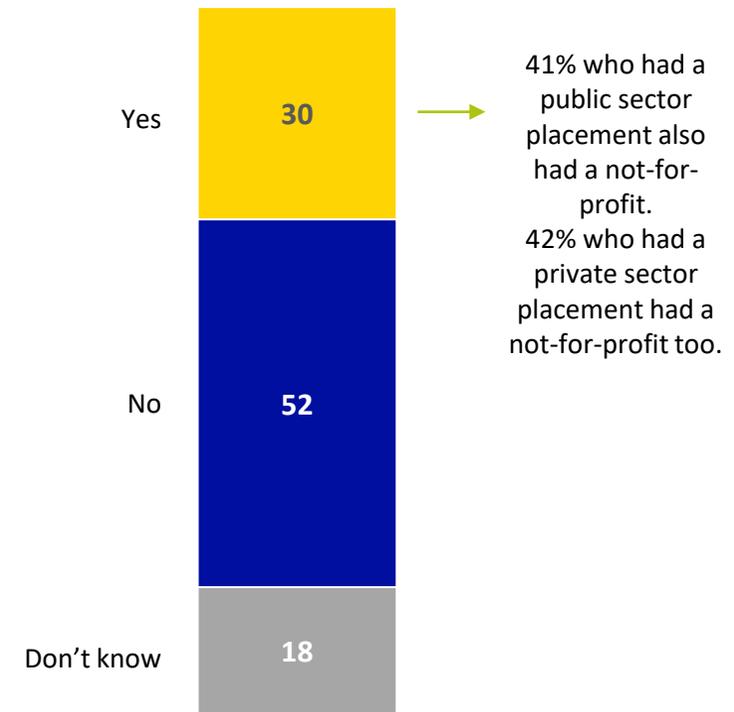
\*Current 4<sup>th</sup> Year/TY excluded

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools

## Work Experience Sector



## Social Placement in a Charity or Not-for-Profit



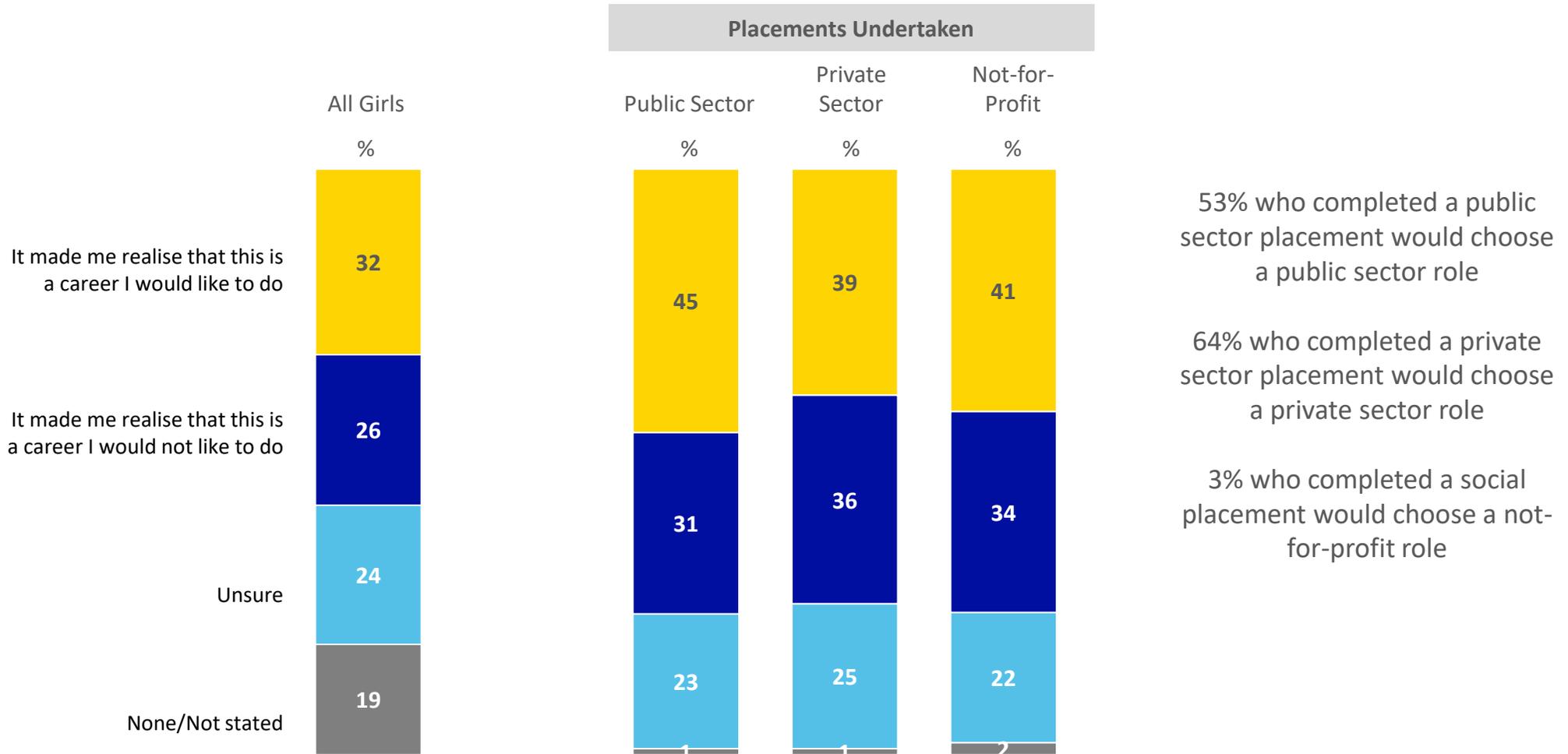
\*This analysis includes 4th Year girls (yet to start placements)

**2 out of 3 had a work placement (mainly private sector) while only 30% had a social placement.**



# TY experience impact

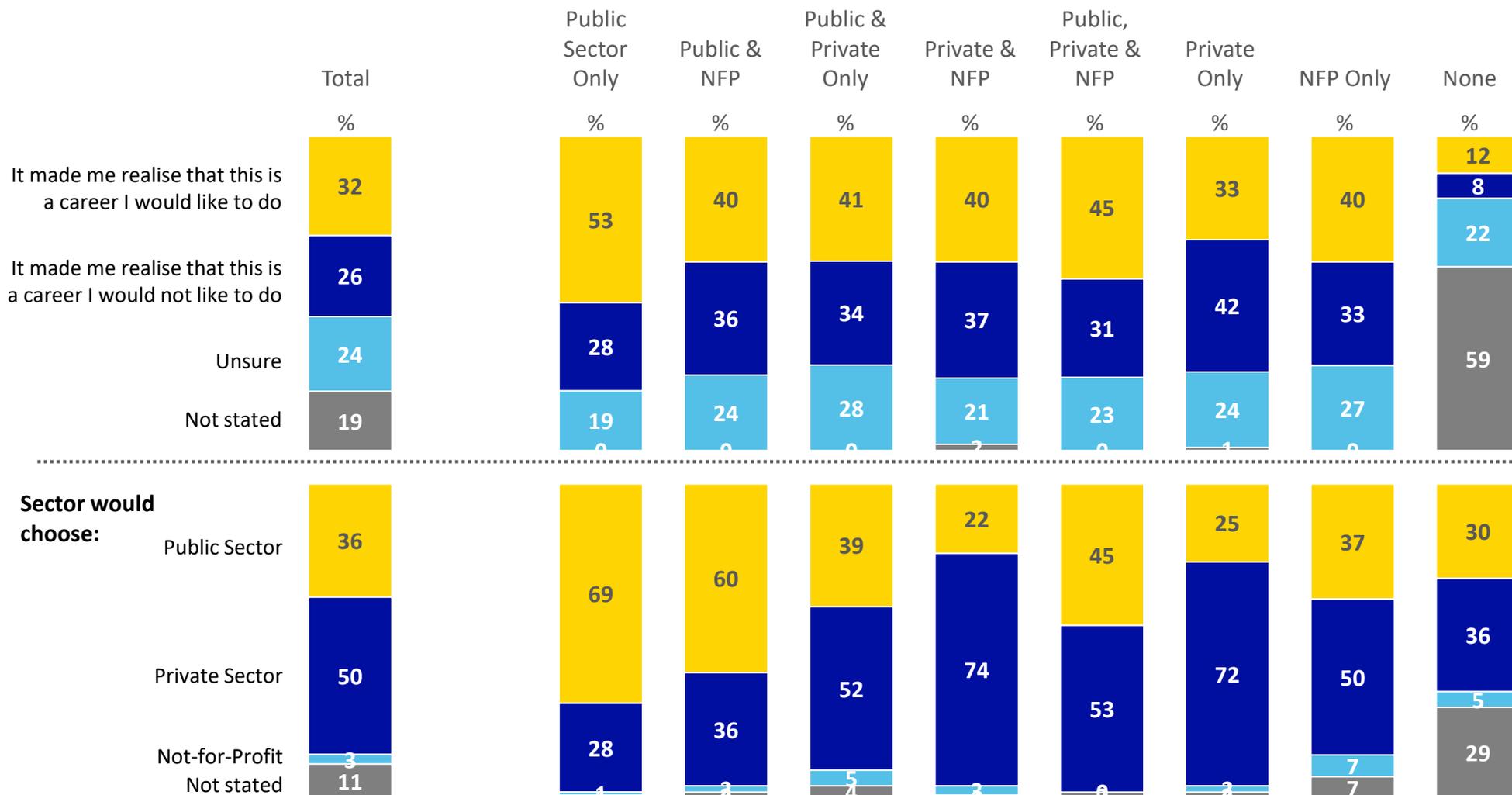
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**Completing placements does help to clarify career goals, with private sector placements more likely to prompt private sector choice.**

# Impact of TY placements x discrete cohorts

Base: 726 girls interviewed across 23 schools



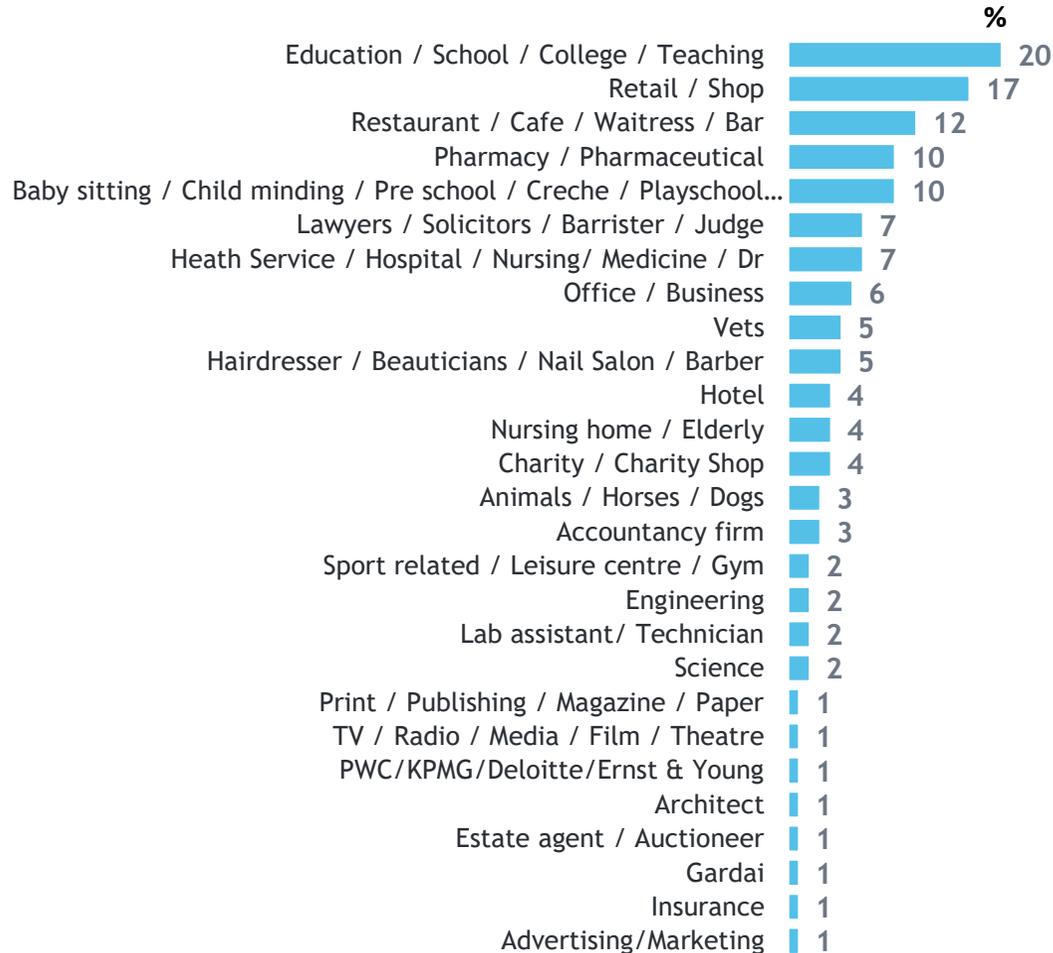
**A placement solely in a public sector or a private sector role leads to much greater focus on that area.**



Q.18 And which of the following best describes how you felt about your work experience. If you did more than one placement, please think about the most recent one you did.  
Q.18a If you were to choose now between public sector, private sector or not-for-profit, which would you most likely pick?

# TY Work placements undertaken

Base: 726 girls interviewed across 23 schools



Bank / Credit Union	1
Therapy / Occupational / Speech and Language / Psychology / Physio	1
Factory	1
Courts / Court Service / Attorney General's Office	1
Airport / Air base / Air Traffic Control	1
Politics / Government/ Dail	1
Library	1
Community work / Volunteering / Meals on Wheels	1
Tech / IT / Software Company	1
Design / Fashion	1
Cooking school	1
Heritage park /Aquarium / Museum / Airfield	1
Private Sector (unspec)	0
Public Sector (unspec)	0
OPW / County Council	0
TY Orchestra	0
Interior / Industrial design	0
Painter / Decorator	0
Defence Forces / Army	0
Photography	0
Youth Centre	0
Building / Construction	0
Dental	0
Art / Art Expo	0
Event Planning	0
Woodwork / Carpentry / Furniture Making	0
Stockbrokers	0
Laundrette	0
Post office	0
Music Studio	0
Fire Brigade	0
CIE	0
Cleaner	0
Animation / Animation Studio	0
Investment Management	0
Agriculture Inspector	0
Organic Farm producing veg	0
Finance	0
Chiropodist	0
Public Relations	0
Opera	0
Irish Georgian Society	0
DK	0

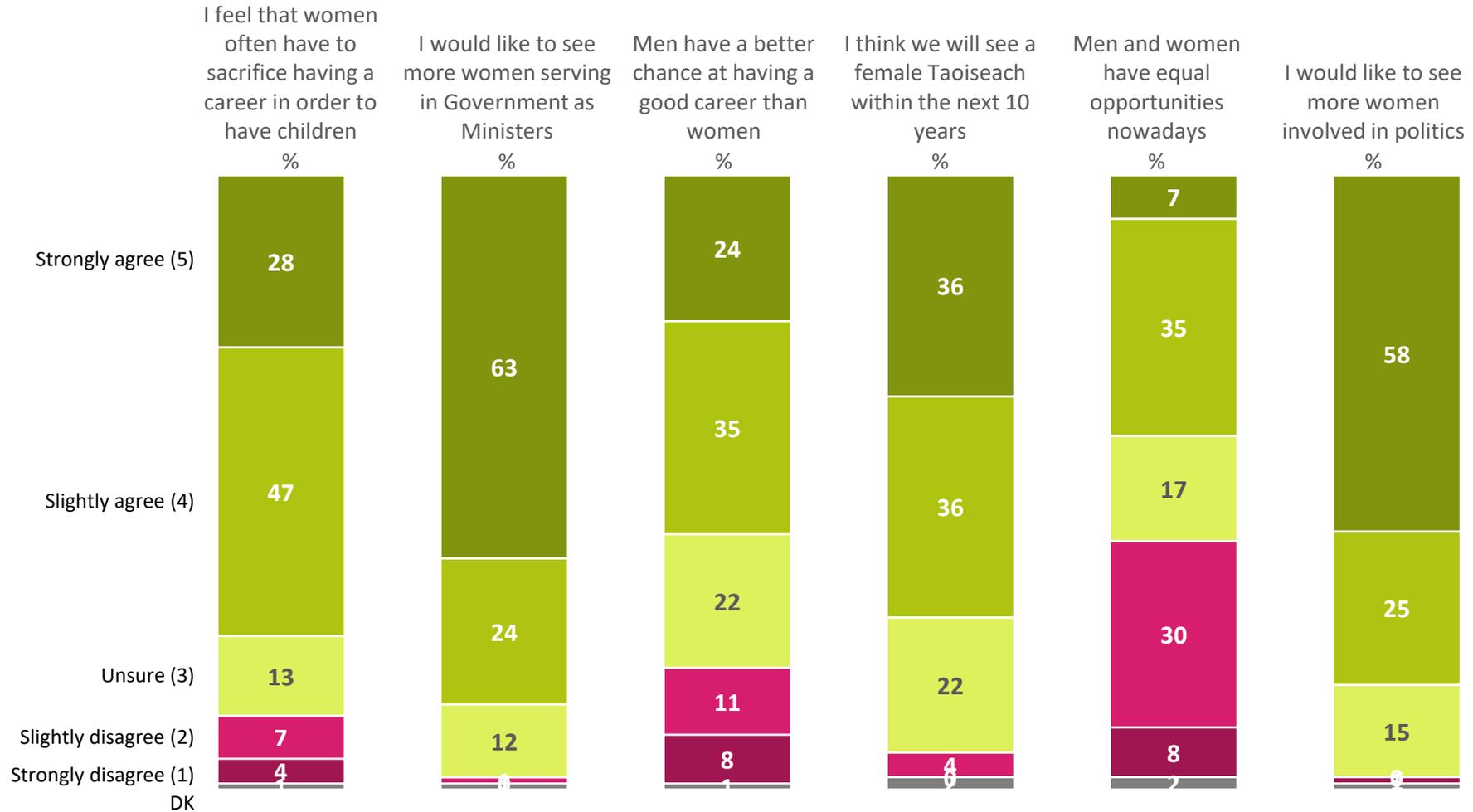




**Gender Issues**

# Attitudes to gender issues

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**Strong support for female minister increase. 38% feel men and women don't have equal opportunity and 75% feel women sacrifice their careers to have children.**



# I feel that women often have to sacrifice having a career in order to have children

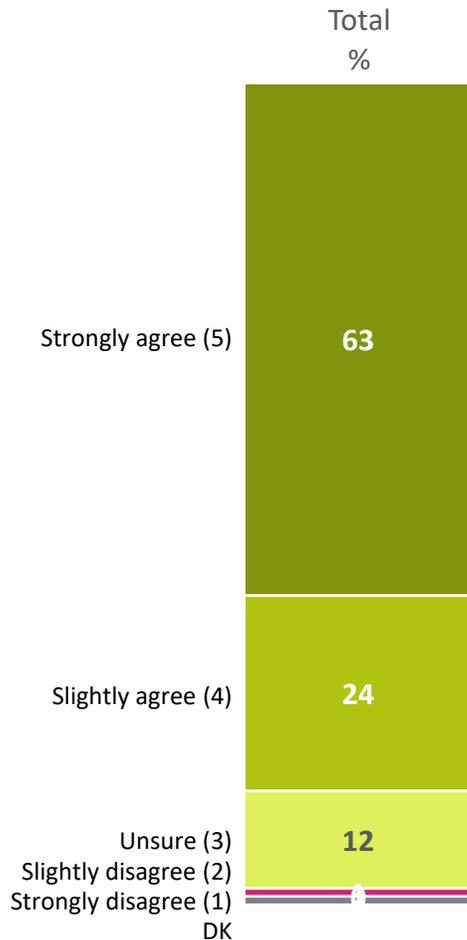
Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



**Stronger levels of agreement among children who feel more likely to succeed, who play individual sports, and interestingly, middle children. Only children and youngest children are least likely to agree.**

# I would like to see more women serving in Government as Ministers

Base: 769 girls interviewed across 23 schools



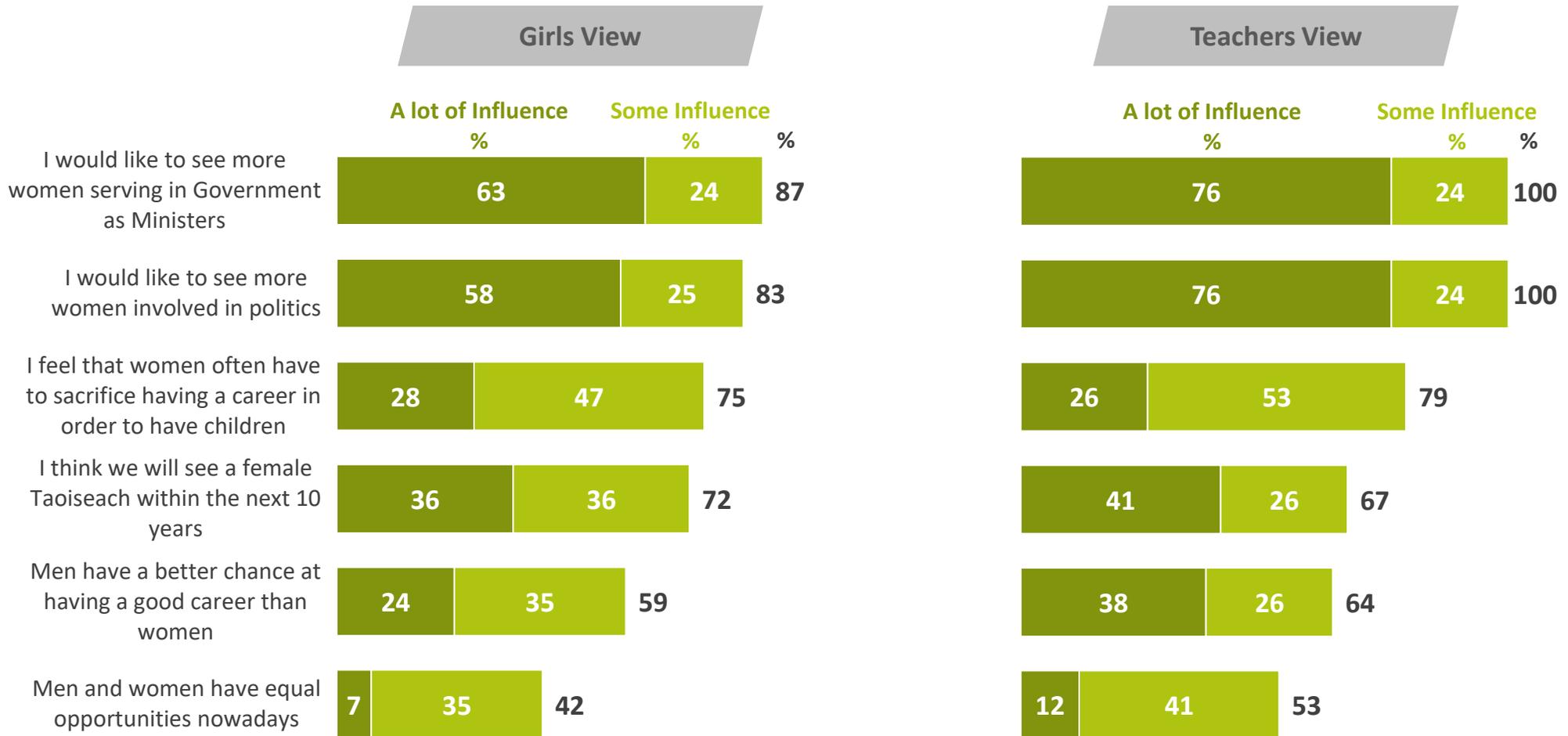
Higher Agreement:	
Not-for-Profit oriented	4.65
'Ambitious'	4.60
'Intelligent'	4.55
Sports Captains	4.54
Public Sector-Oriented	4.54
Individual Sports only	4.53
Team Sports Players	4.52
Play Any Sports	4.52
College-Oriented	4.51

Lower Agreement:	
Other Career (non-colleges)	4.43
Play No Sports	4.44
Shy, quiet, cautious	4.46

**The vast majority would like to see more women in Government but it is more apparent of those who would like to follow a Not-for-Profit or public sector career, and notably, for those who are sports involved (whether personally only or individually.) It matters a little less to those with non college ambitions, who don't play sports or who are personally shy/cautious.**

# Women's Roles: contrasting girls and teachers views

Base: 169 Girls/34 Teachers

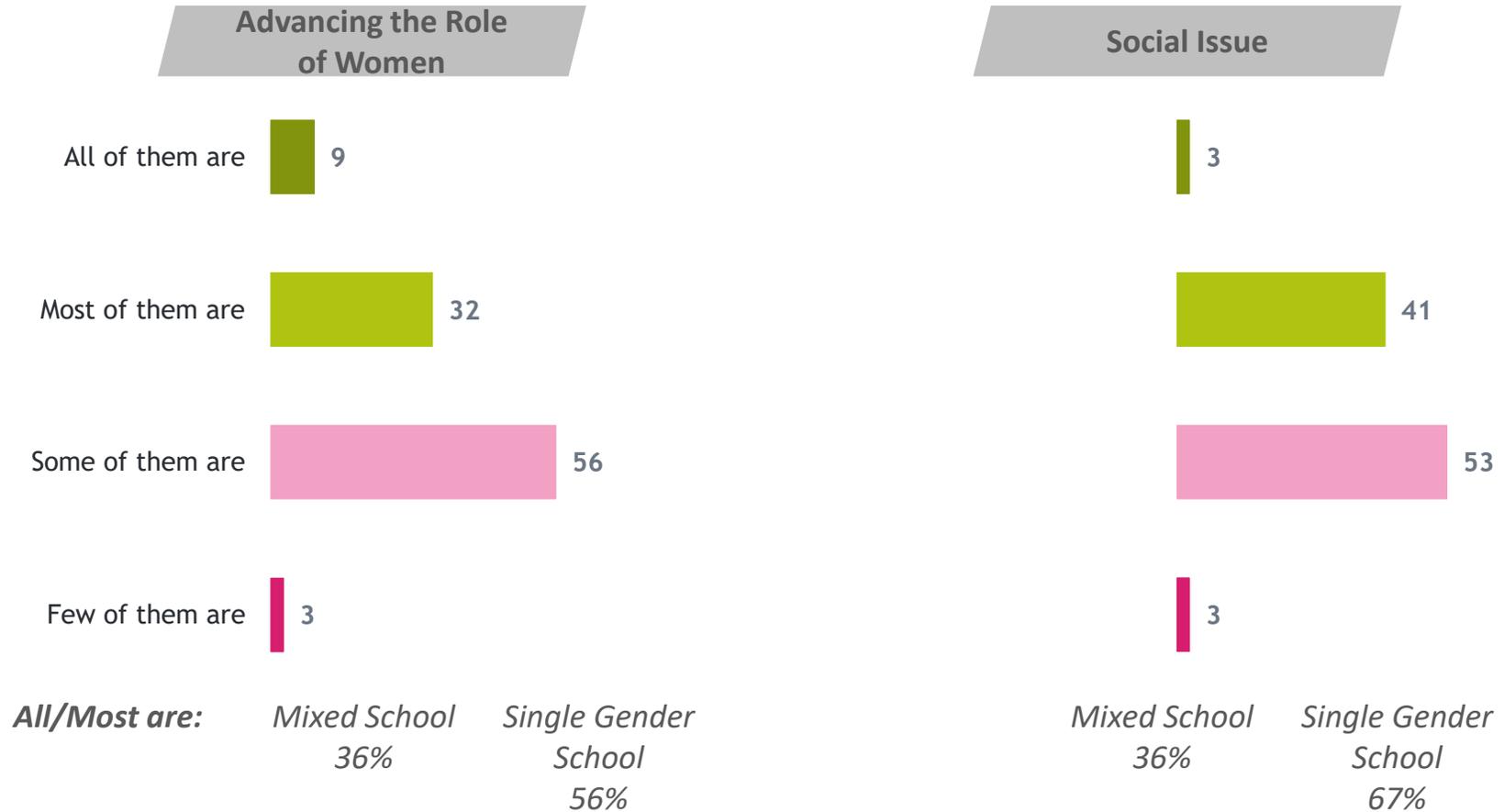


**Generally very strong support in both groups for more women in politics.**

Q.17 As I read out the following statements, could you please tell us how strongly or otherwise you agree or disagree with each of them.

# Teachers perceptions of contemporary girls interests

Base: 34 Teachers

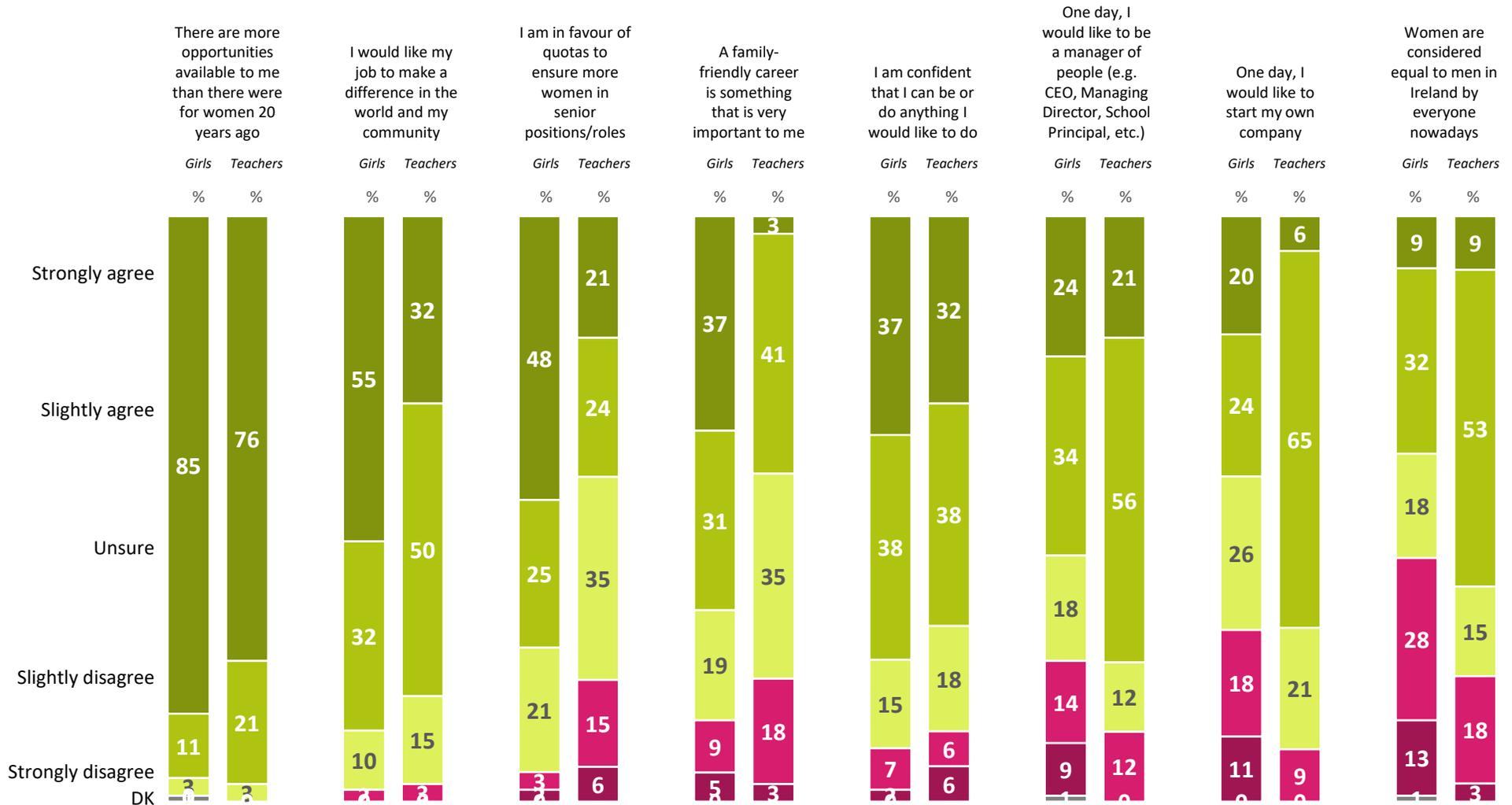


Teachers tend to feel that less than a majority are interested in social interests or advancing the role of women. Such interests much more pronounced in girls-only schools.



# Teachers perceptions of how 5<sup>th</sup> years feel

Base: 769 Girls/34 Teachers



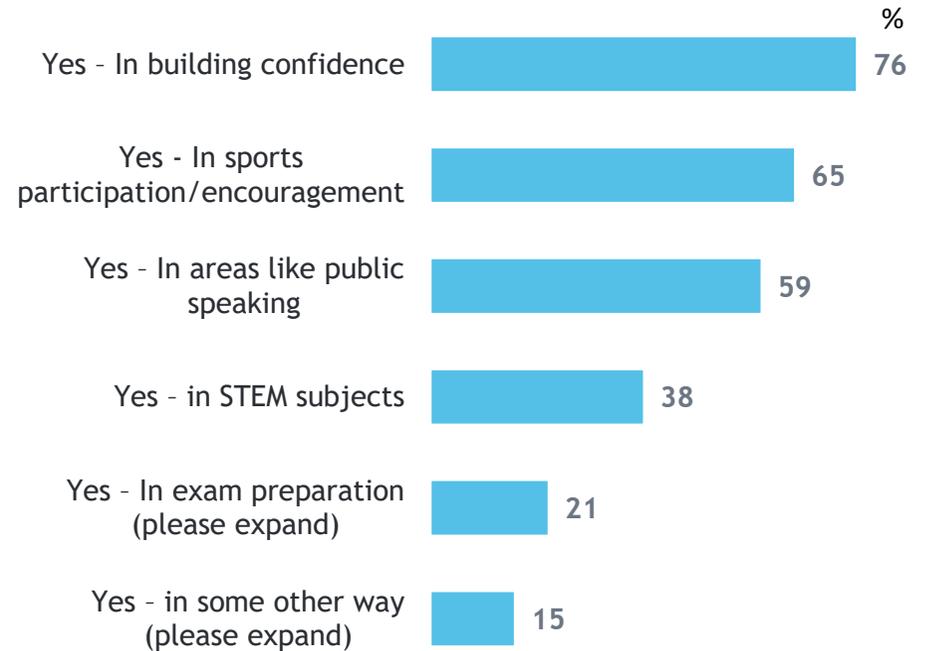
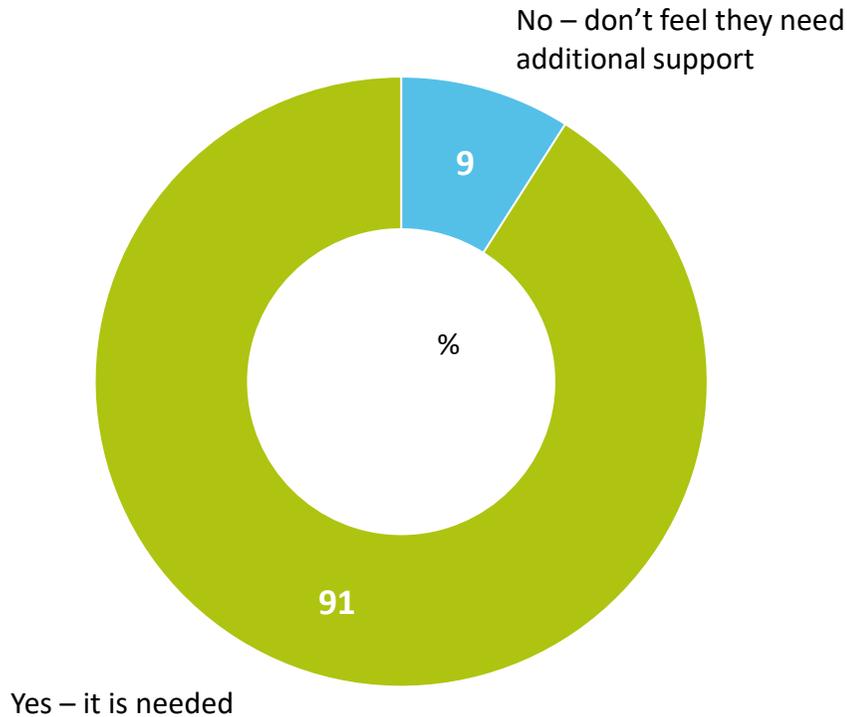
Quite closely aligned views overall.



# Supports & Environment

# Additional focus or supports needed for girls

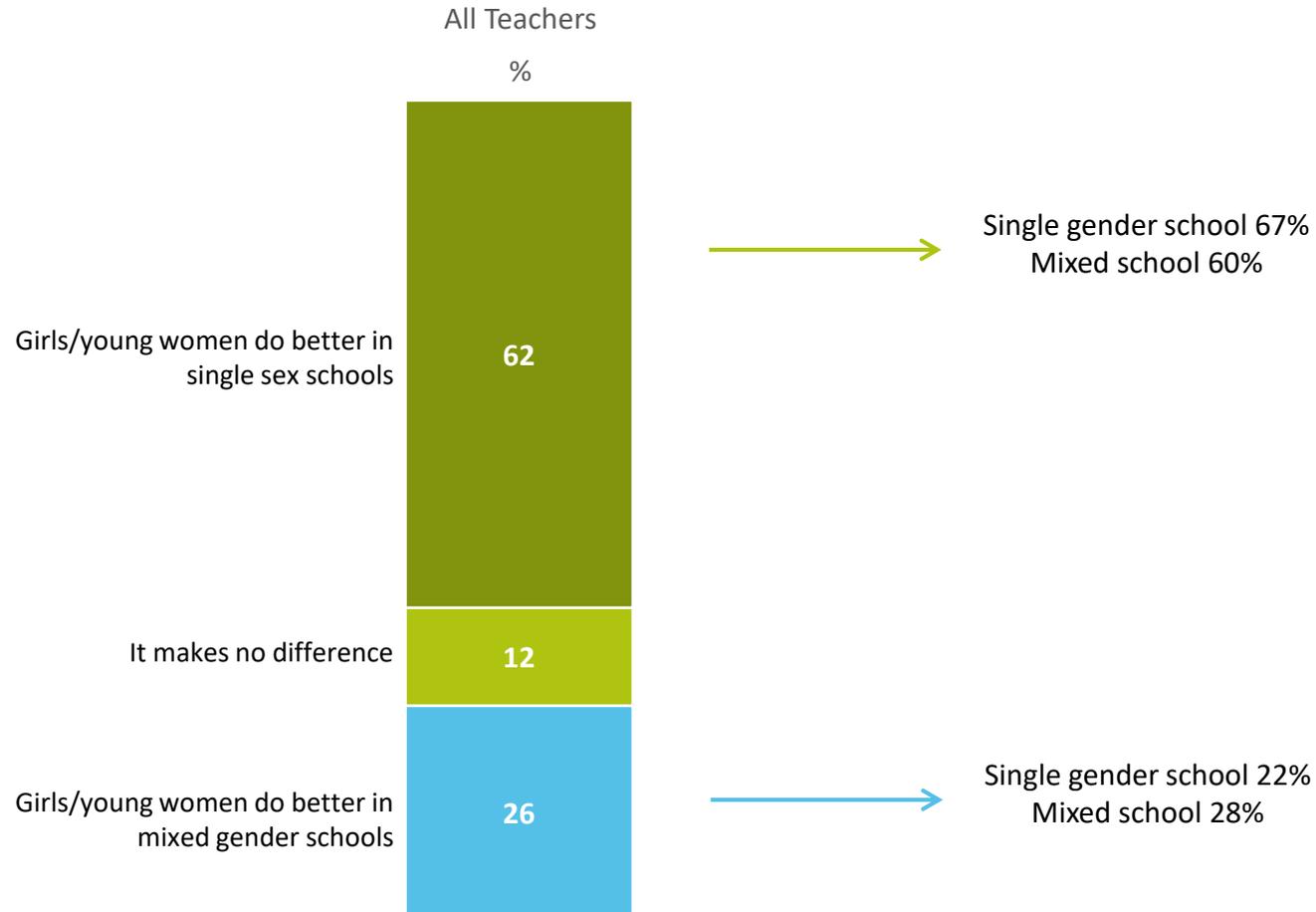
Base: 34 Teachers



**The vast majority of teachers feel girls need help in a variety of different areas with confidence, sports participation and public speaking all prominent.**

# Where do girls develop better?

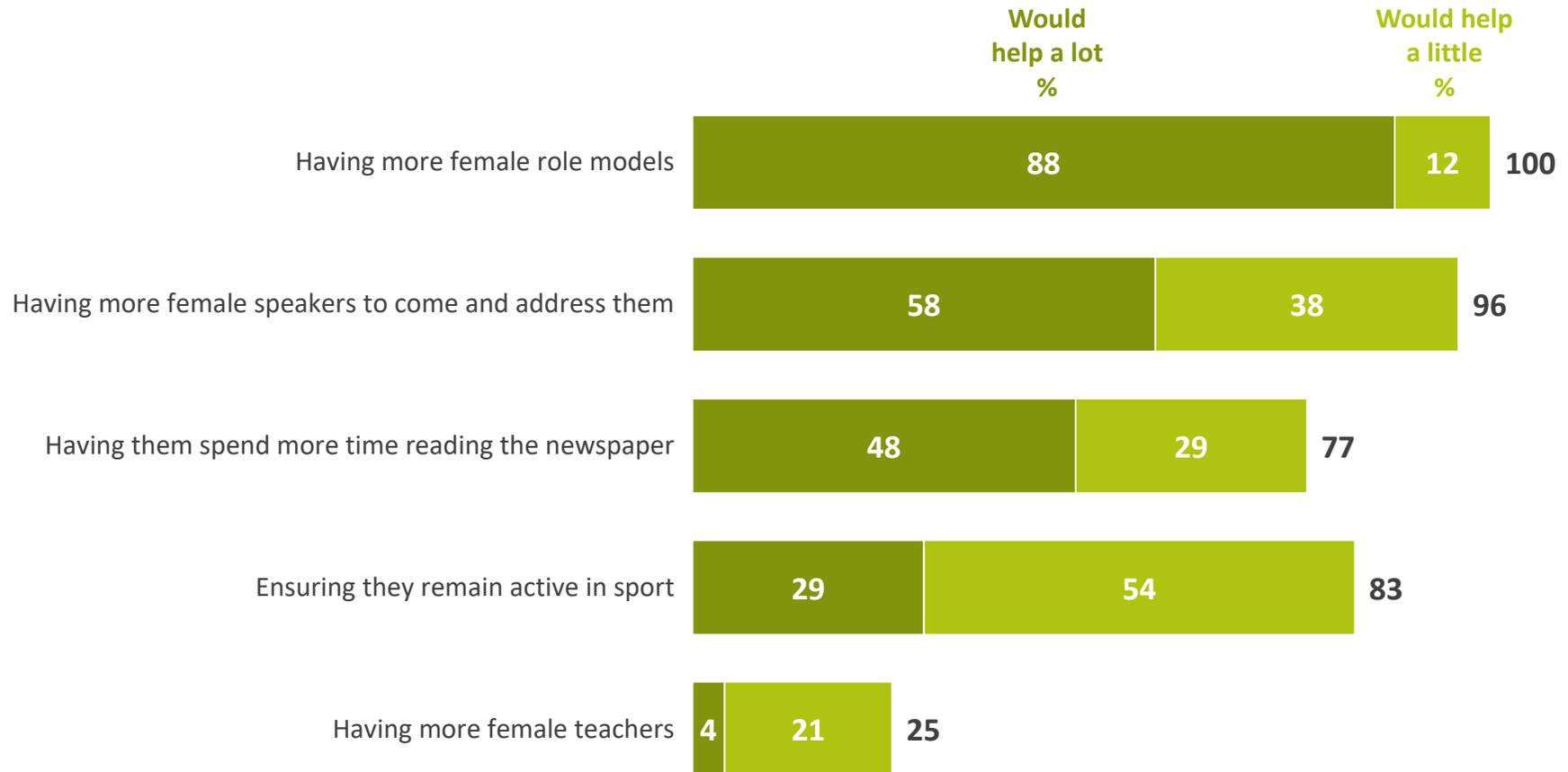
Base: 34 Teachers



**Almost a 70:30 split in favour of single gender schools as preferable in helping girls develop better. This is repeated across gender, age and other parameters, with even a majority of those teaching in mixed schools of this view.**

# What would help to boost girls interest in politics

Base: 34 Teachers



**Having more female role models and a greater number of female speakers seen as generally important, while keeping up to date with current affairs and remaining focused on sports seen as quite tangible subsidiary aspects.**

# Thank you.



RESEARCH  
& INSIGHT

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# Delve Deeper