

F&Y2 Wave 8: Chapter 2 Concerns about food

Introduction

The FSA's role, set out in [law](#), is to safeguard public health and protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. The FSA uses the Food and You 2 survey to monitor consumers' concerns about food issues, such as food safety, nutrition, and environmental issues. This chapter provides an overview of respondents' concerns about food.

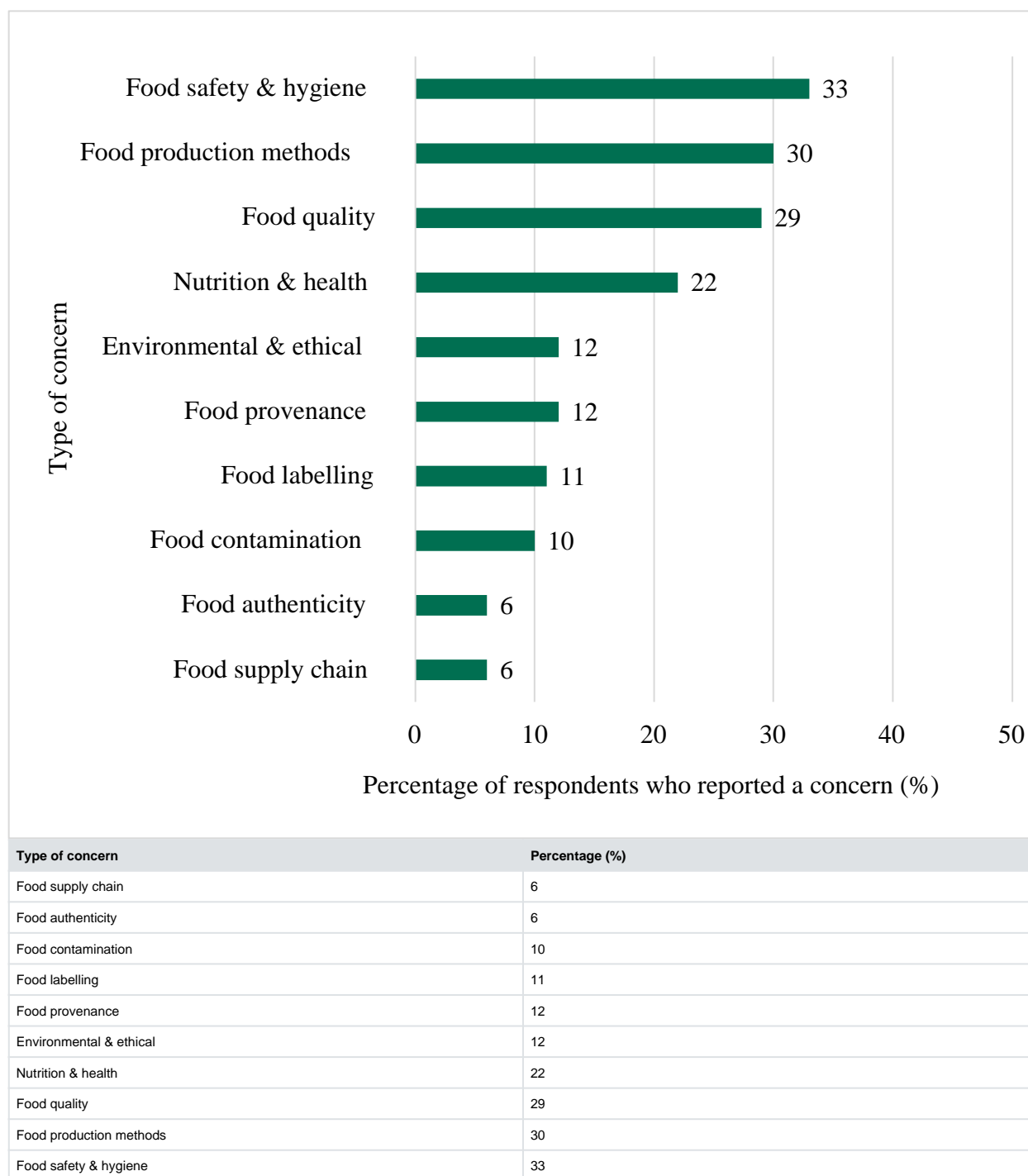
Common concerns

Respondents were asked to report whether they had any concerns about the food they eat. Most respondents (79%) had no concerns about the food they eat, and 21% of respondents reported that they had a concern [\(footnote 1\)](#).

Figure 2. Most common spontaneously expressed food-related concerns.

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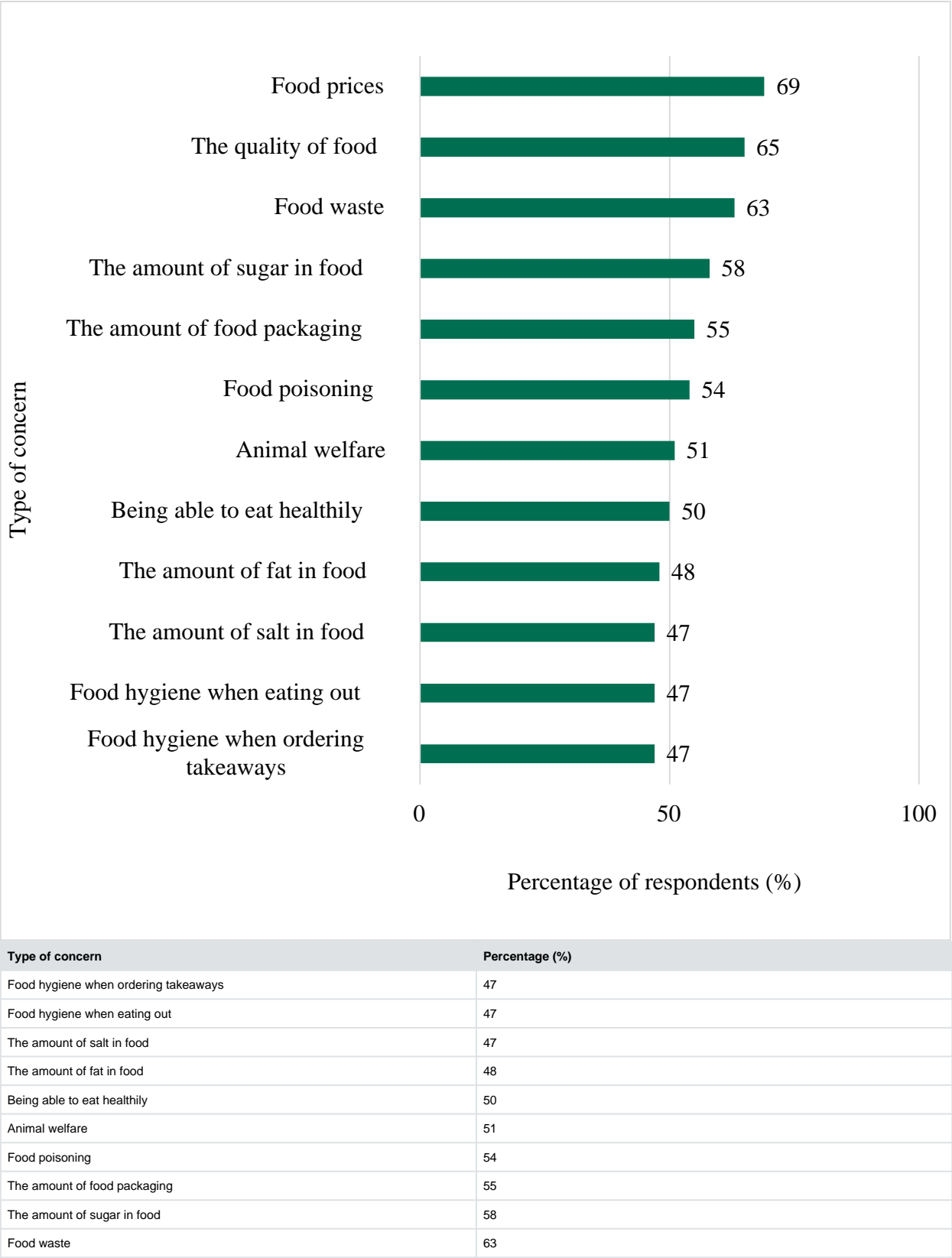
Source: Food and You 2: Wave 8

Respondents who reported having a concern were asked to briefly explain what their concerns were about the food they eat. The most common concerns related to food safety and hygiene (33%), food production methods (30%), the quality of food (29%), and nutrition and health (22%) (Figure 2) ([footnote 2](#)).

Figure 3. Most common prompted food-related concerns.

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Type of concern	Percentage (%)
The quality of food	65
Food prices	69

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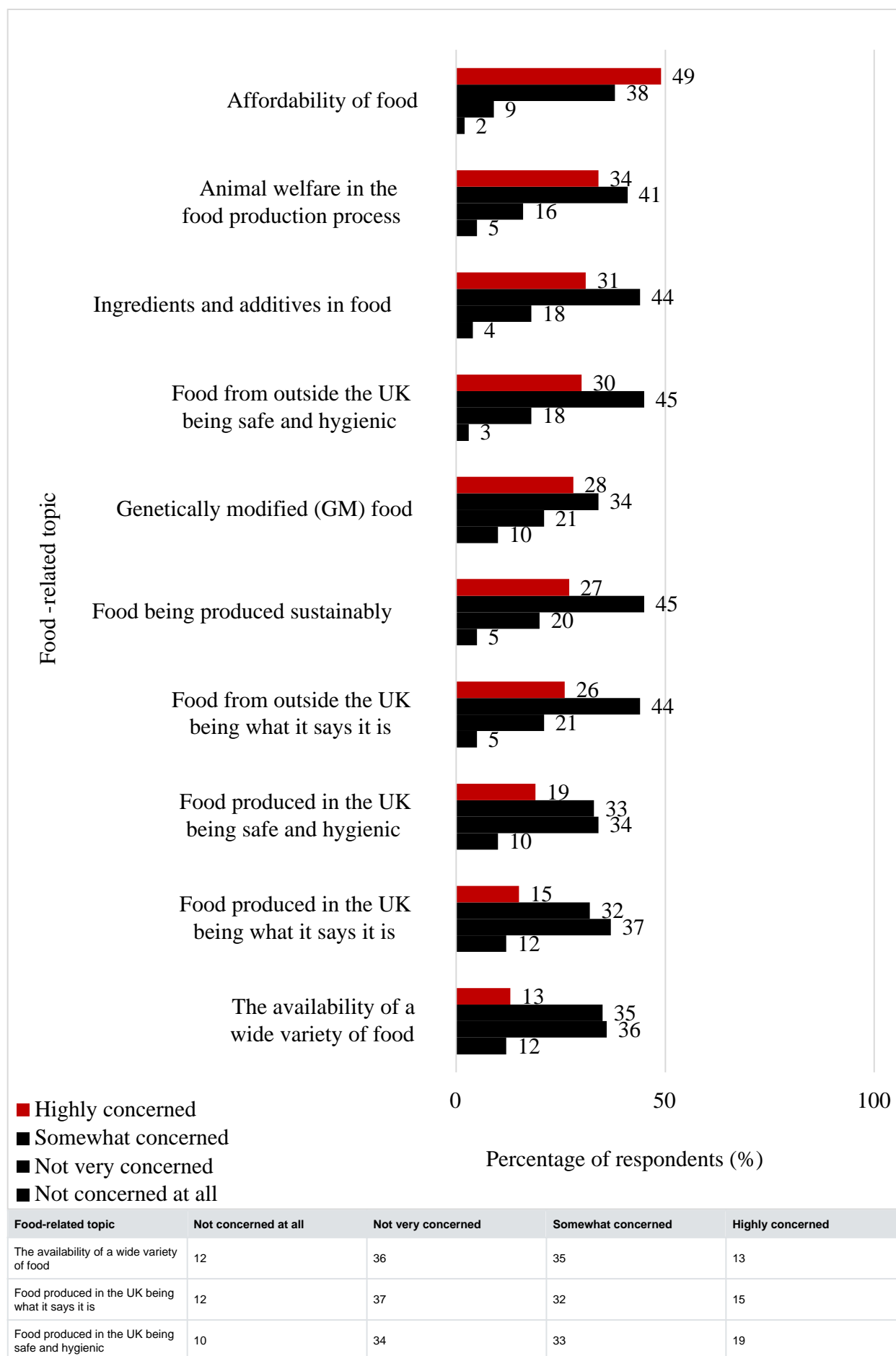
Source: Food and You 2: Wave 8

Respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about several food-related issues, from a list of options. The most common concern was food prices (69%). Other common concerns were the quality of food (65%), food waste (63%), and the amount of sugar in food (58%) (Figure 3) [\(footnote 3\)](#).

Figure 4. Level of concern about food-related topics.

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Food-related topic	Not concerned at all	Not very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Highly concerned
Food from outside the UK being what it says it is	5	21	44	26
Food being produced sustainably	5	20	45	27
Genetically modified (GM) food	10	21	34	28
Food from outside the UK being safe and hygienic	3	18	45	30
Ingredients and additives in food	4	18	44	31
Animal welfare in the food production process	5	16	41	34
Affordability of food	2	9	38	49

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Source: Food and You 2: Wave 8

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they were concerned about a number of specific food-related issues. Respondents were most likely to report a high level of concern about the affordability of food (49%). Other issues respondents were highly concerned about included animal welfare in the food production process (34%) and ingredients and additives in food (31%) (Figure 4) ([footnote 4](#)).

The reported level of concern about the affordability of food varied between different categories of people in the following ways:

- Age group: respondents aged between 16 and 54 years were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to those aged 55 years or over (for example, 55% of those aged 25-34 years compared to 34% of those aged 75 years or over).
- Annual household income: respondents with a lower income were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to households with a higher income (for example, 56% of those with an income below £19,000 compared to 36% of those with an income over £96,000).
- Region (England) ([footnote 5](#)): levels of concern about the affordability of food varied by region in England. For example, respondents who live in the North-East of England (64%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to those who live in most other regions in England, including the East Midlands (45%), London (47%), South-West (42%) and the South-East (46%).
- Food security: respondents with very low food security (74%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food than those with low (61%) or marginal (58%) food security. Those with high food security were least likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food (40%).
- Ethnic group: Asian or Asian British respondents (59%) were more likely to report that they were highly concerned about the affordability of food compared to white respondents (48%) ([footnote 6](#)).

1. Question: Do you have any concerns about the food you eat? Responses: Yes, No.
Base= 5808, all respondents.
2. Question: What are your concerns about the food you eat? Responses: [Open text].
Base= 1126, all respondents with concerns about the food they eat. Please note: additional

responses are available in the full data set and tables, responses were coded by Ipsos, see Technical Report for further details.

3. Question: Do you have concerns about any of the following? Responses: the amount of sugar in food, food waste, animal welfare, hormones, steroids or antibiotics in food, the amount of salt in food, the amount of fat in food, food poisoning, food hygiene when eating out, food hygiene when ordering takeaways, the use of pesticides, food fraud or crime, the use of additives (for example, preservatives and colouring), food prices, genetically modified (GM) foods, chemical contamination from the environment, food miles, the number of calories in food, food allergen information, cooking safely at home, the quality of food, the amount of food packaging, being able to eat healthily, none of these, don't know. Base= 3915, all online respondents.
4. Question: Thinking about food in the UK [question wording variation in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] today, how concerned, if at all, do you feel about each of the following topics? a) affordability of food b) food produced in [in England and Wales: the UK; [in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being safe and hygienic c) food from outside [in England and Wales: the UK; in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being safe and hygienic d) food produced in [in England and Wales: the UK; in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being what it says it is e) food from outside [in England and Wales: the UK; in Northern Ireland: the UK and Ireland] being what it says it is f) food being produced sustainably g) the availability of a wide variety of food h) animal welfare in the food production process i) ingredients and additives in food j) genetically modified (GM) food. Base = 5808, all respondents. Please note: some question wording was modified for respondents in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
5. Regional differences were only considered in England due to the low sample / base size in Wales and Northern Ireland.
6. Please note: the figures of other ethnic groups are not reported due to low base / sample size.