



Challenging Oneself to Achieve Life Goals is Crucial to Youths' Life Satisfaction

Media Briefing

5 August 2024

About Youth STEPS

The NYC and Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Social Lab have partnered to embark on the first national-level longitudinal study of youths in Singapore aged 17 to 24 to gain a life-course perspective and better understand young people's experiences as they live, study, work and play in Singapore and to give youths a voice to shine the spotlight on issues that matter to them.

Between 2017 and 2022, the Youth STEPS have explored youths' life evolving aspirations, values & attitudes, and achievements & mobility as they transition from adolescence to adulthood. The findings from this study will contribute towards improving policies and programmes for youth in Singapore.

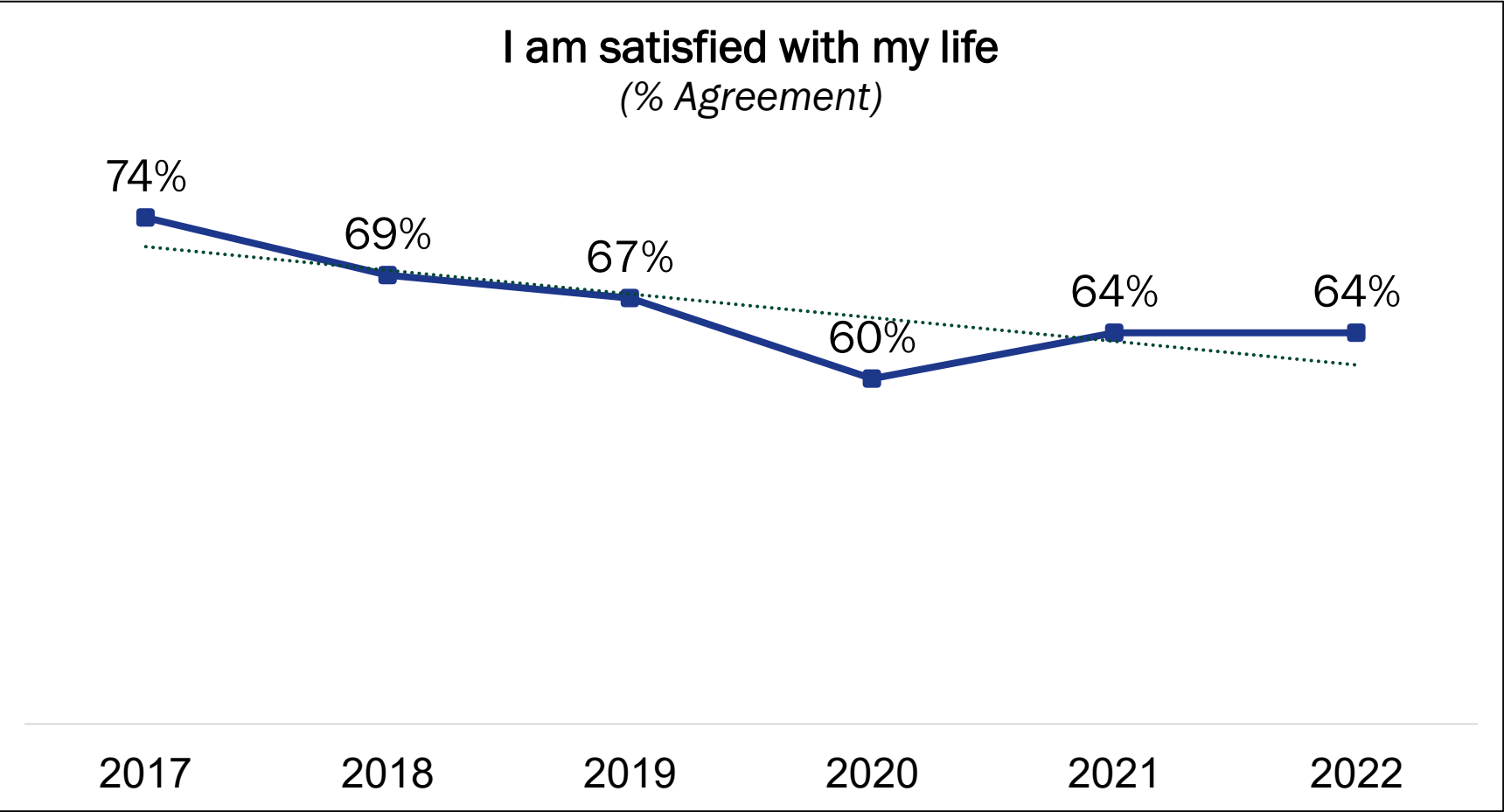
Methodology

- In collaboration with Dr Chew Han Ei and A/P Vincent Chua as Principal Investigators
- Singapore Citizens and PRs
- Youth panel nationally representative by age, ethnicity and dwelling type proportions

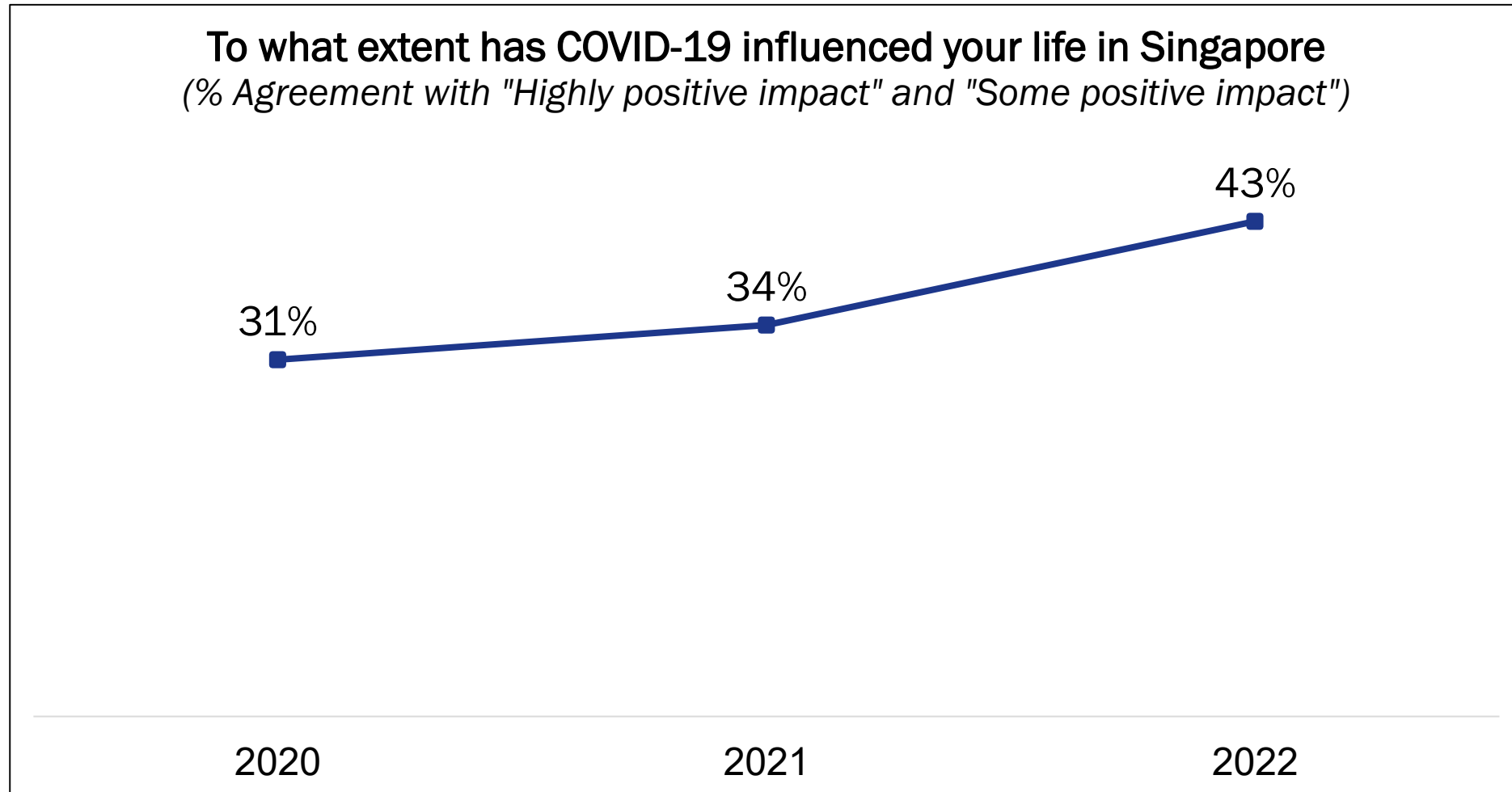
Youth Well-Being



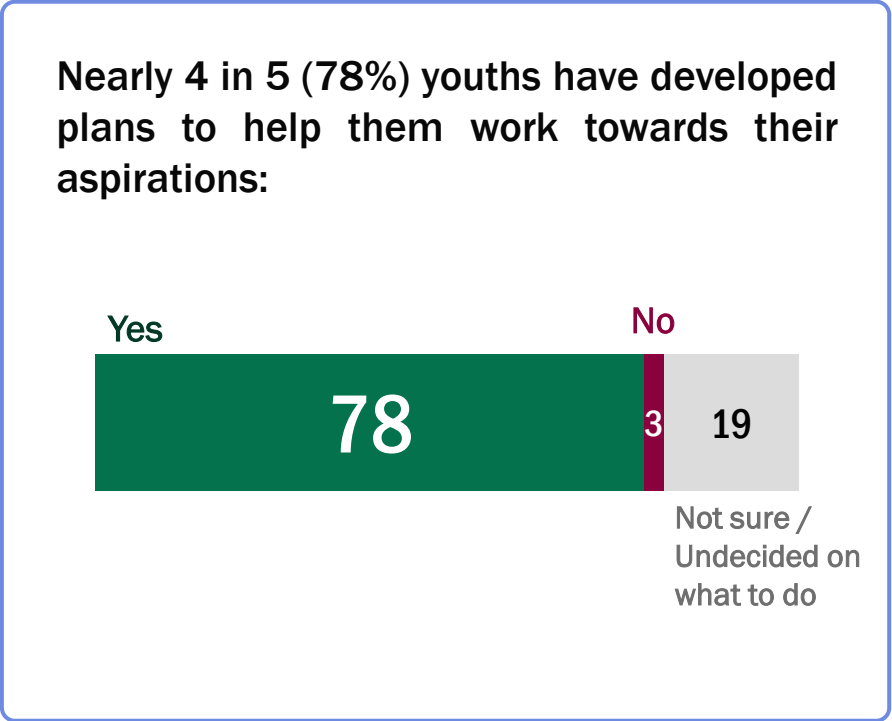
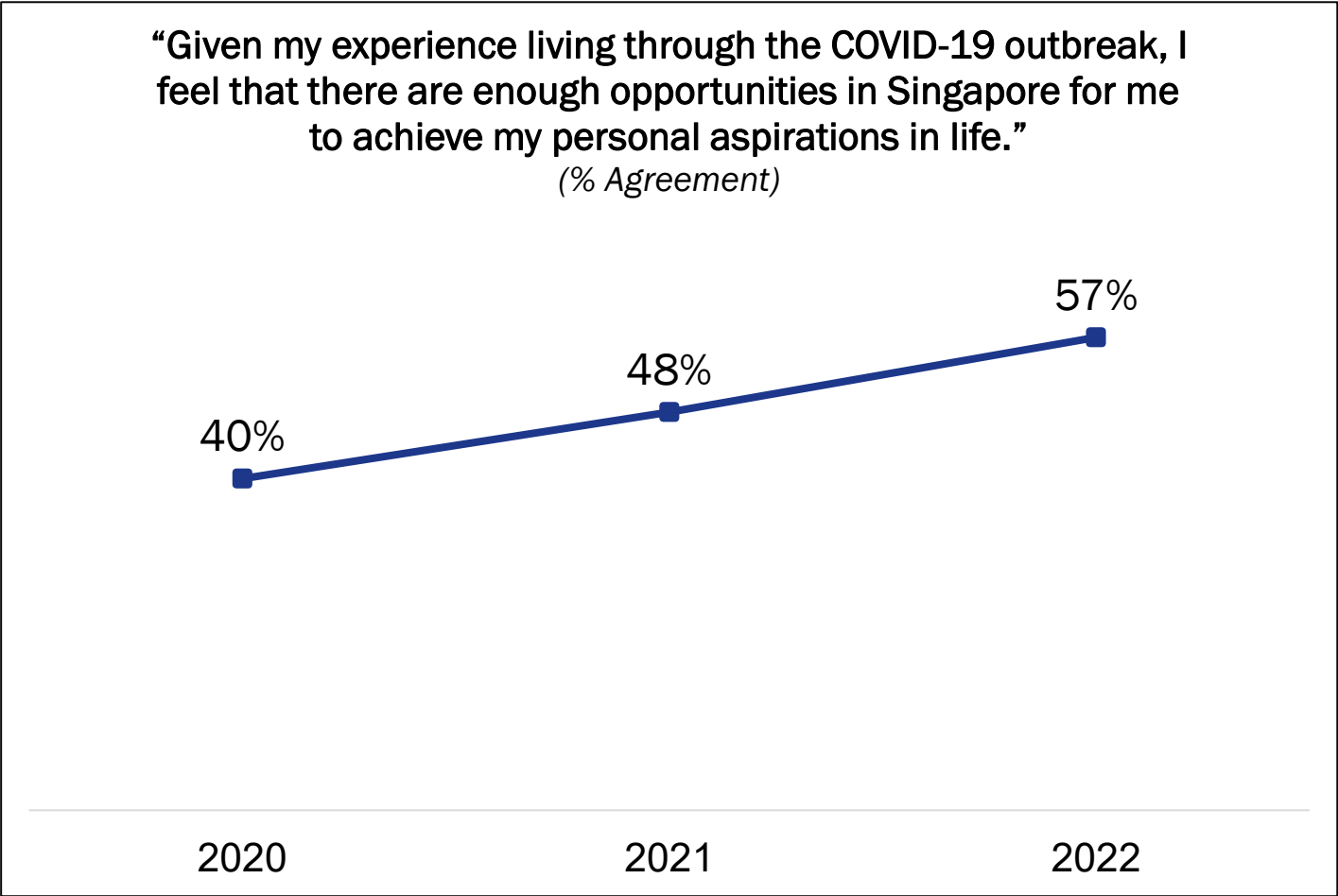
Youth life satisfaction declined from 2017 to 2020. It recovered slightly as the pandemic receded and remained stable in 2022, with 2 in 3 (64%) youths indicating that they were satisfied with their lives:



Compared to 2020 and 2021, more youths (43%) felt that the pandemic has had a positive impact on their lives in 2022:



In 2022, nearly 6 in 10 (57%) youths agreed that there were enough opportunities in Singapore for them to achieve their personal aspirations. This is an improvement from 2020 and 2021 that is consistent across different racial and socioeconomic groups:



**Career as a Key
Priority for Life Goals**

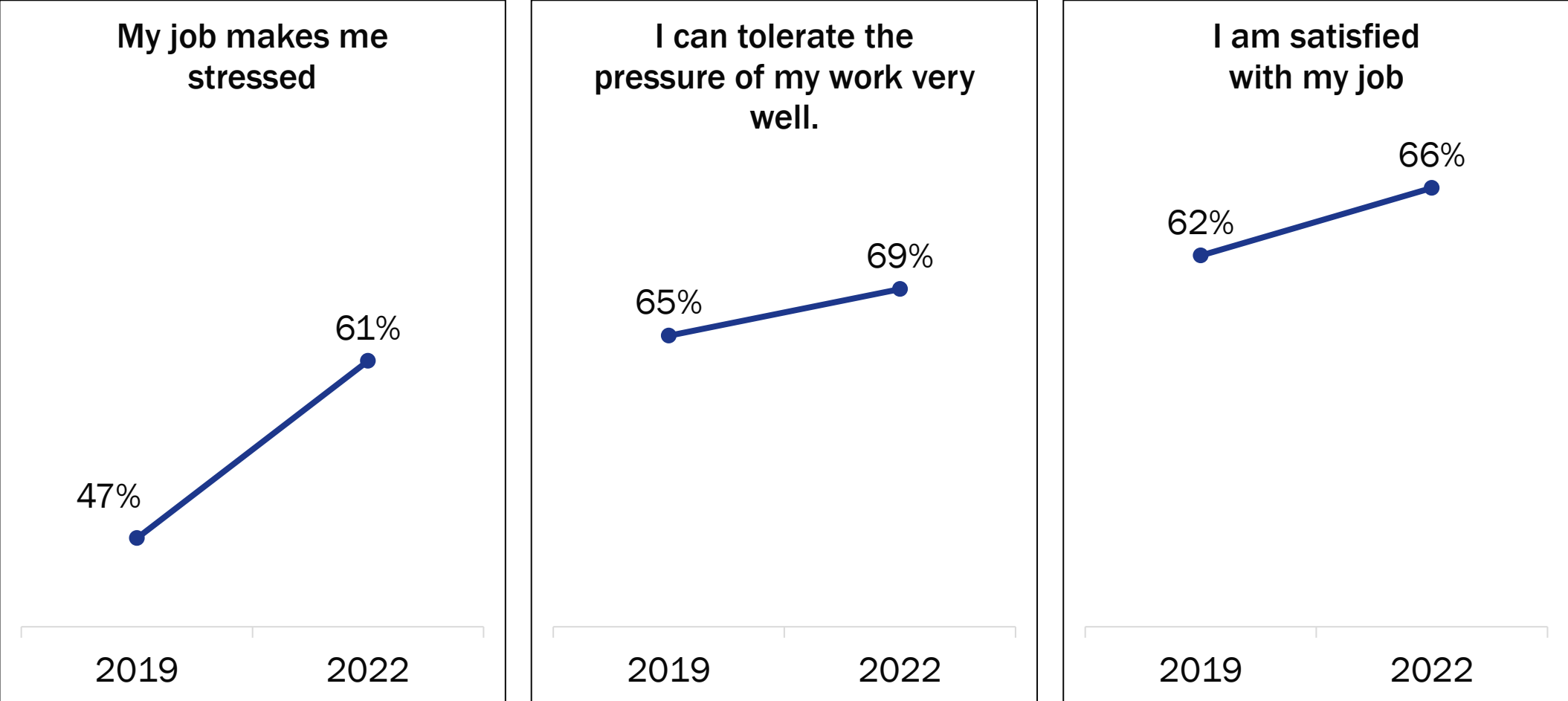


Youths ranked “having a good career” as one of the top life goals that they are prioritising for the next 5 years:

Top life goals youths are prioritising for the next 5 years	
1	Being in good health
2	Having a good career
3	Having lots of money
4	Having financial security
5	Having strong relationships with family and friends
6	Getting married
7	Having a fulfilling spiritual/religious life
8	Owning my own home

Although youths reported experiencing more job stress, more also indicated being able to tolerate work pressures and being satisfied with their jobs:

Youth Sentiment on Their Careers (% agreement)



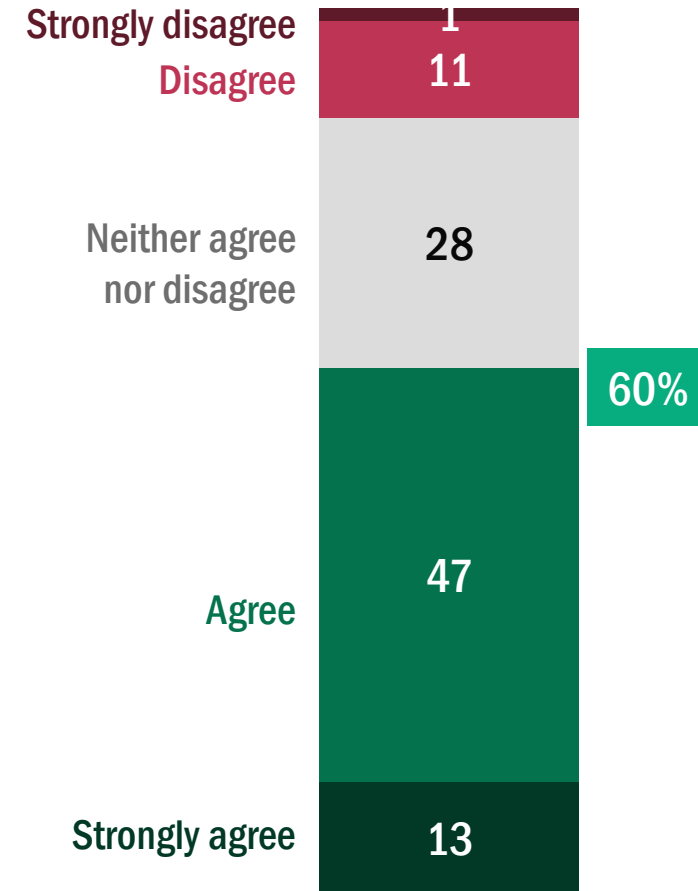
Note: These questions were only asked to employed individuals (n=1247 in 2019, n=1748 in 2022).

Most youths cited having good opportunities for advancement and job security as key considerations in a job. Meanwhile, 3 in 5 (60%) young job seekers said in 2022 that they know what they need to do to get the job that they want:

The following are qualities/characteristics related to jobs in general. Please tell us how important each quality/characteristic is to you.

	2018	2021
Good opportunities for advancement	95%	95%
Job security	94%	95%
An interesting job	92%	88%
High income	88%	91%
A job that is useful to society	79%	76%
A job that allows someone to help other people	77%	73%
A job that allows someone to work independently	68%	73%
A job that allows someone to decide their times or days of work	60%	76%
A job that involves personal contact with other people	60%	56%

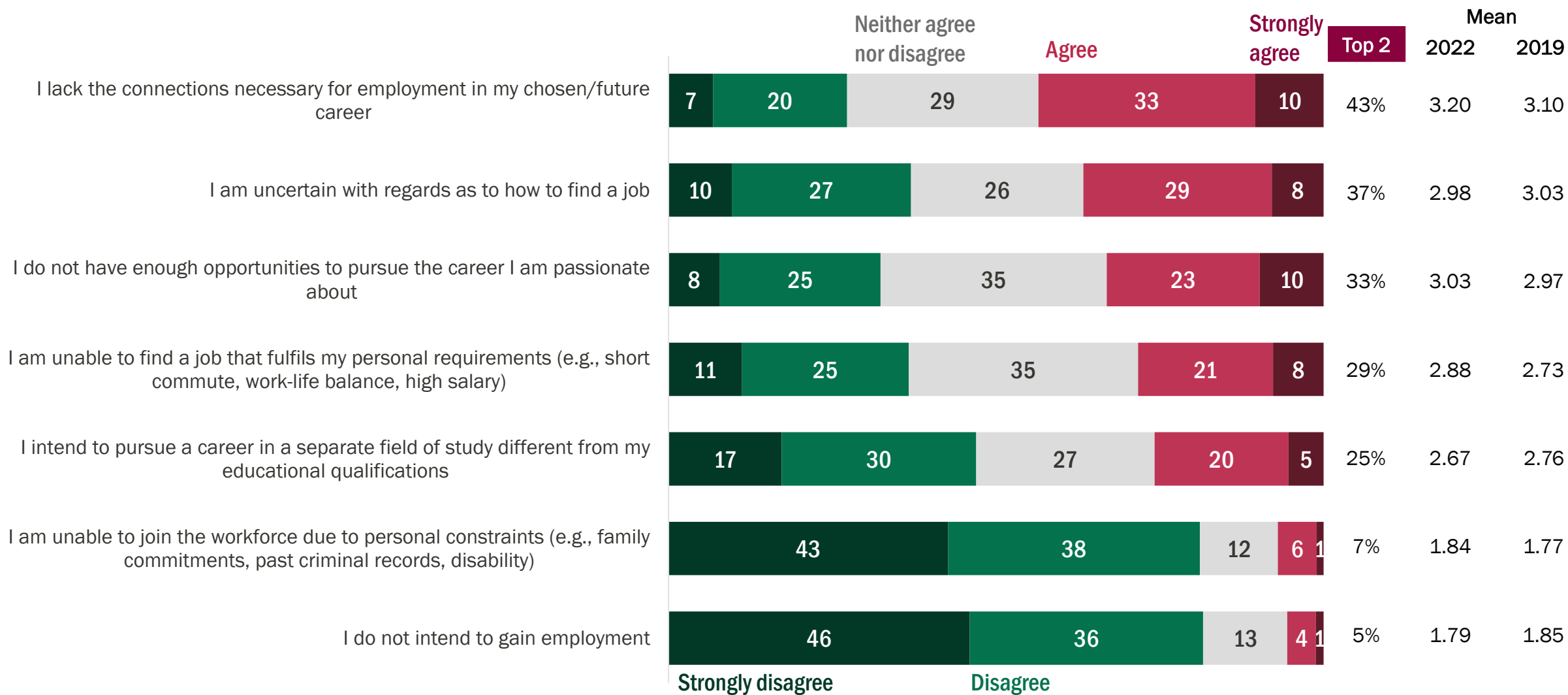
Note: Responses based on top 2 (“Important” and “Very important”) responses.



“I know what I need to do to get the job that I want.”

Note: This question was only asked to job seekers (n=848 in 2022).

Among youths who were not working, more than 4 in 10 (43%) felt that their lack of connections hindered the pursuit of their chosen career path. This has consistently been cited as the top barrier to employment since 2019:



Note: These questions were only asked to job seekers (n=1931 in 2019, n=872 in 2022).

Upskilling and Education as Contributor to Life Satisfaction



69%

of panellists indicated that they have plans to upskill or reskill in the next 5 years.

While this may be seen as a positive response to ongoing state efforts to promote upskilling, it could also stem in part from underlying anxieties that youths have about their mid- to long-term career prospects given volatile job market and economic conditions currently (e.g., mass retrenchments in the tech sector, inflation, potential recession).

Are you planning to pursue any upskilling or reskilling opportunities (i.e., to upgrade current skill or learn a new skill; does not include formal education, e.g., ITE, polytechnic diplomas) in the next 5 years?

Asian workers pushed to upskill as pandemic quickens digital shift

[ST, 7 Mar 2022](#)

Singapore

Need to equip Singaporeans with in-demand skills as uncertainties shake job market: Tan See Leng

Workers themselves have to put in the effort to reskill and keep up to date with the latest industry trends, said the Manpower Minister.

[CNA, 3 Nov 2022](#)

Singapore

More retrenchments in Singapore's tech sector, with 1,270 local workers affected since July

This is an increase from the 260 local workers in the tech sector who were retrenched in the first half of 2022.

[CNA, 28 Nov 2022](#)

Retrenchments jump by 35% in Q3, largely due to layoffs in tech sector: MOM



BY LOW YOUJIN

Published December 15, 2022
Updated December 16, 2022



[TODAY, 15 Dec 2022](#)

Look Ahead 2023: With a weaker job market looming, youth cannot afford to be choosy and should upskill, say experts



BY JUSTIN ONG
@JustinOngTODAY

Published January 5, 2023
Updated January 5, 2023



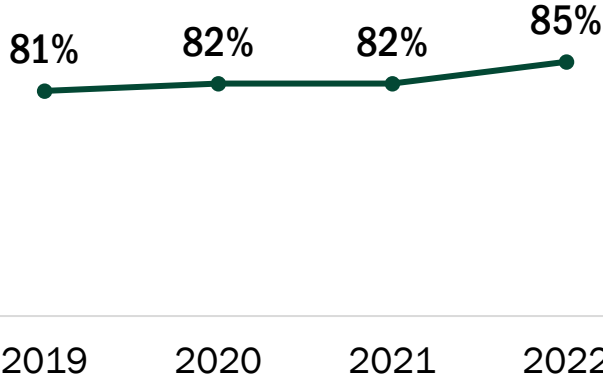
[TODAY, 5 Jan 2023](#)

**Relationships as
Main Source of Social Support**

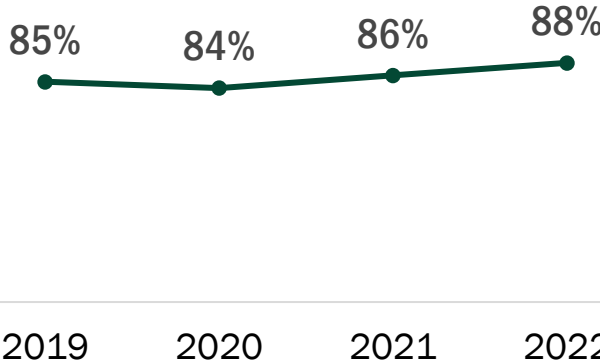


Consistently across the years, more than 8 in 10 youths agreed that there were people they could turn to for problem-solving and for advice when making important decisions. Majority of youths also agreed that interacting with others would make want to try new things:

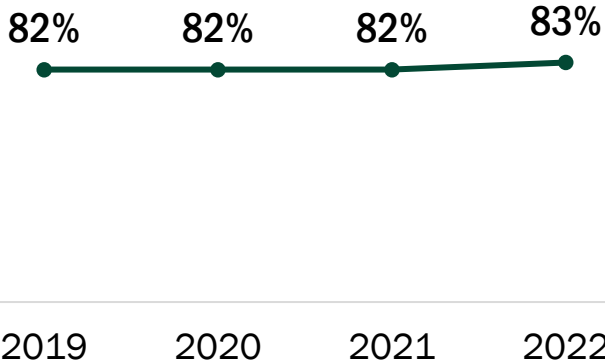
“There are several people I trust to help solve my problems.”
(% Agreement)



“There is someone I can turn to for advice about making very important decisions.”
(% Agreement)



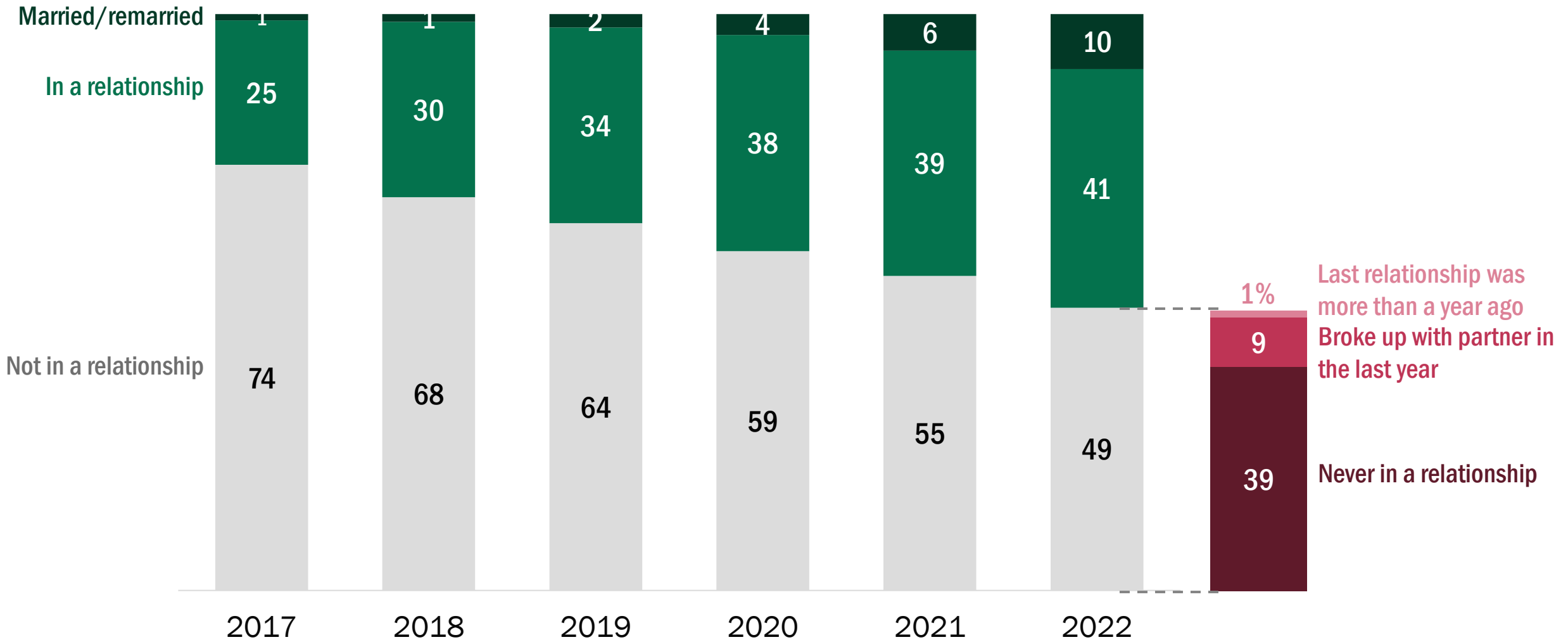
“Interacting with people makes me want to try new things.”
(% Agreement)



Note: Results based on top 2 (“Agree” and “Strongly agree”) responses.

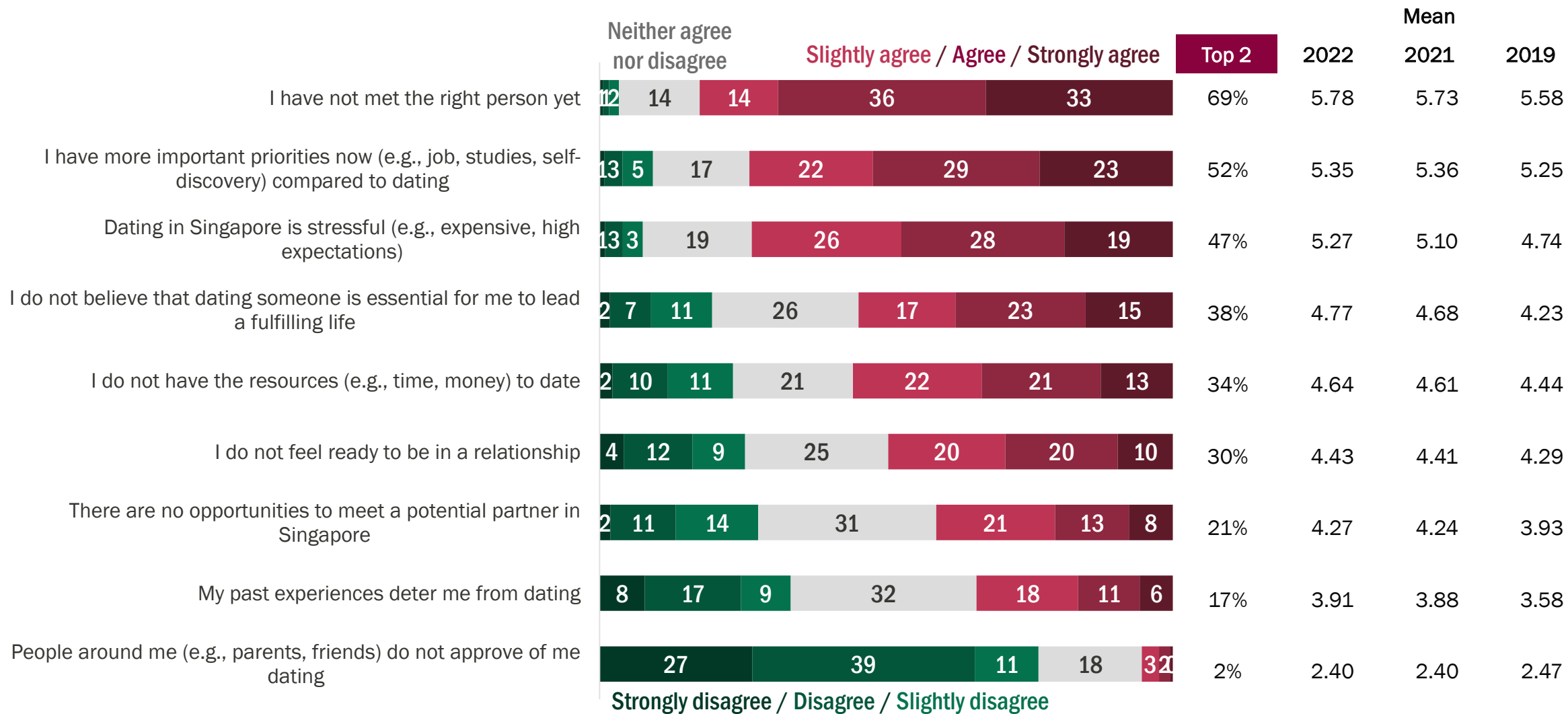


Marital & Relationship Status Among Panellists Who Have Participated Across All 6 Years



Base: Panellists who have participated across all 6 years (n=2064).

The top 3 barriers to dating for single youths are (1) have not met the right person yet, (2) have more important priorities, and (3) dating in Singapore is stressful. These top barriers remain consistent across the years:

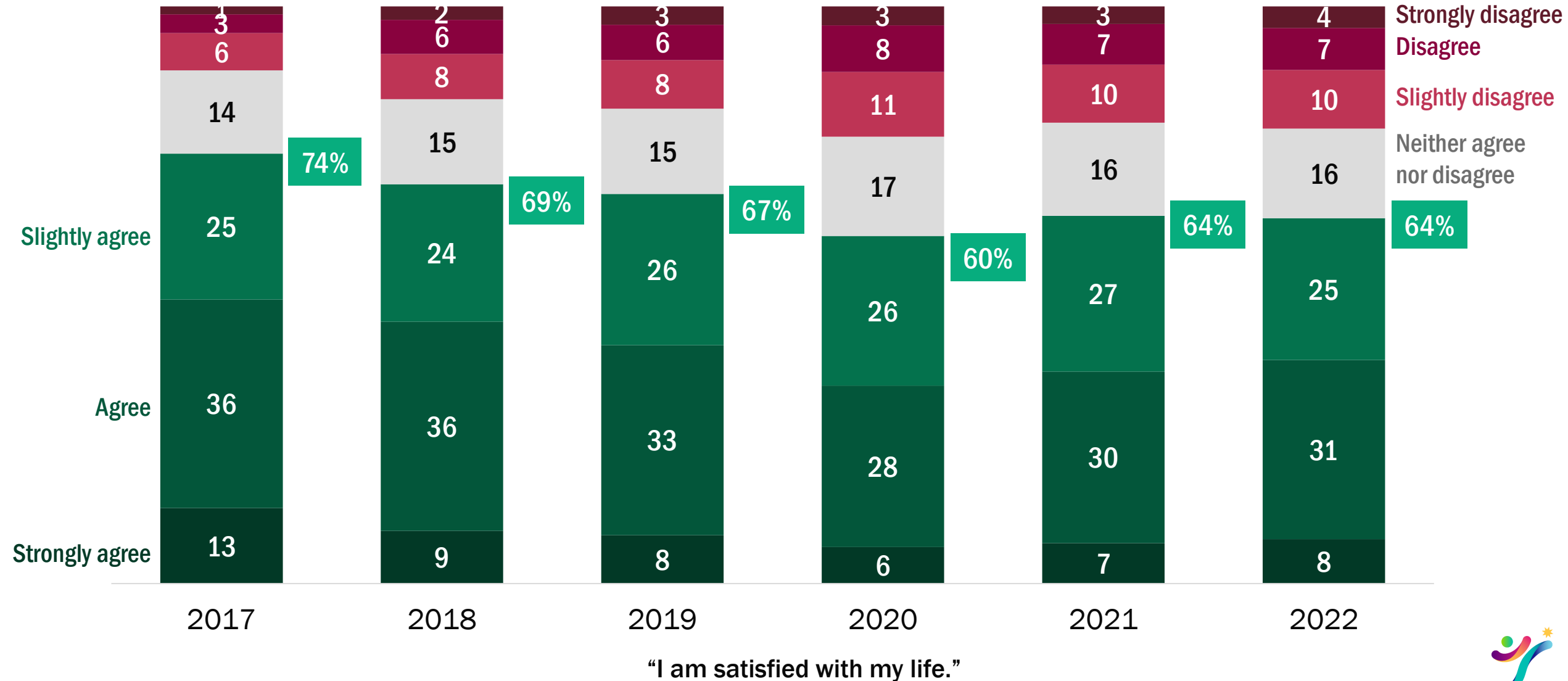


Note: These questions were only asked to those not in a romantic relationship (n=2001 in 2019, n=1474 in 2021, n=1254 in 2022).

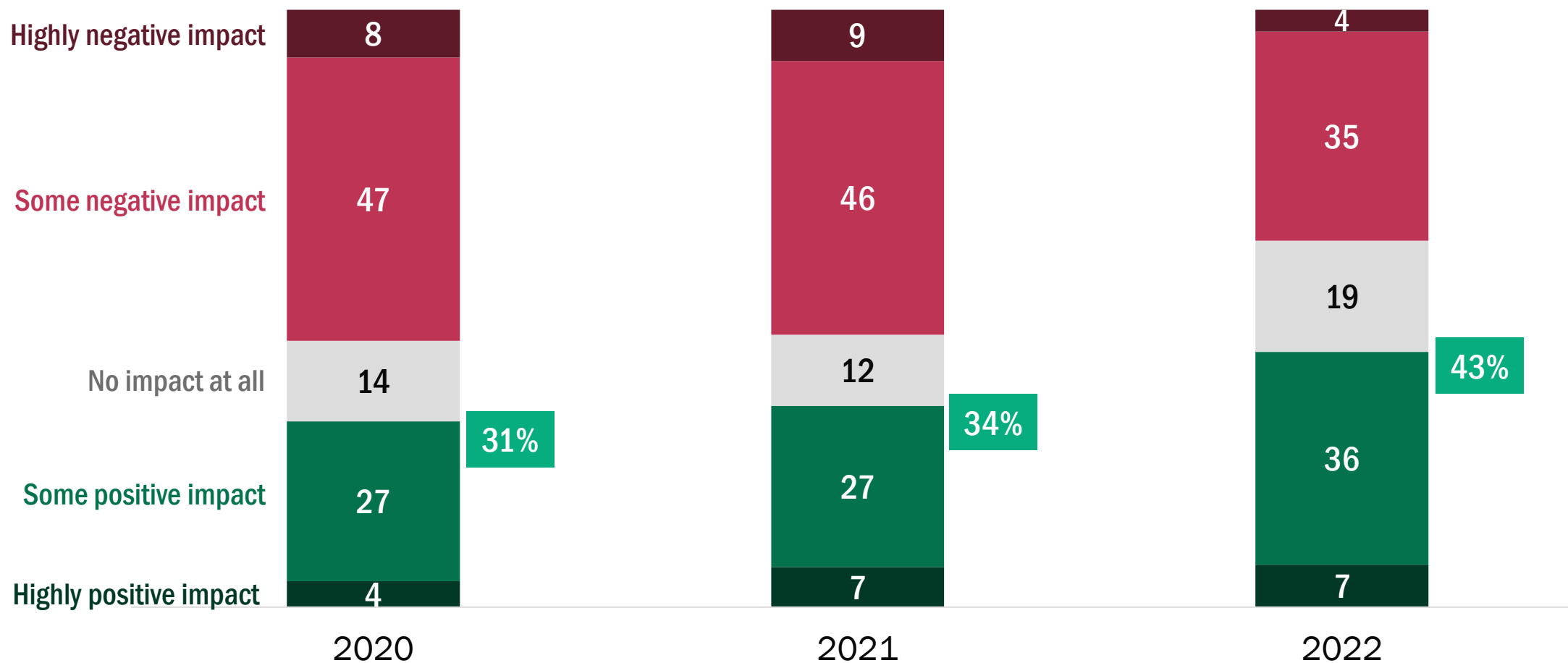


**YOUTH
STEPS**

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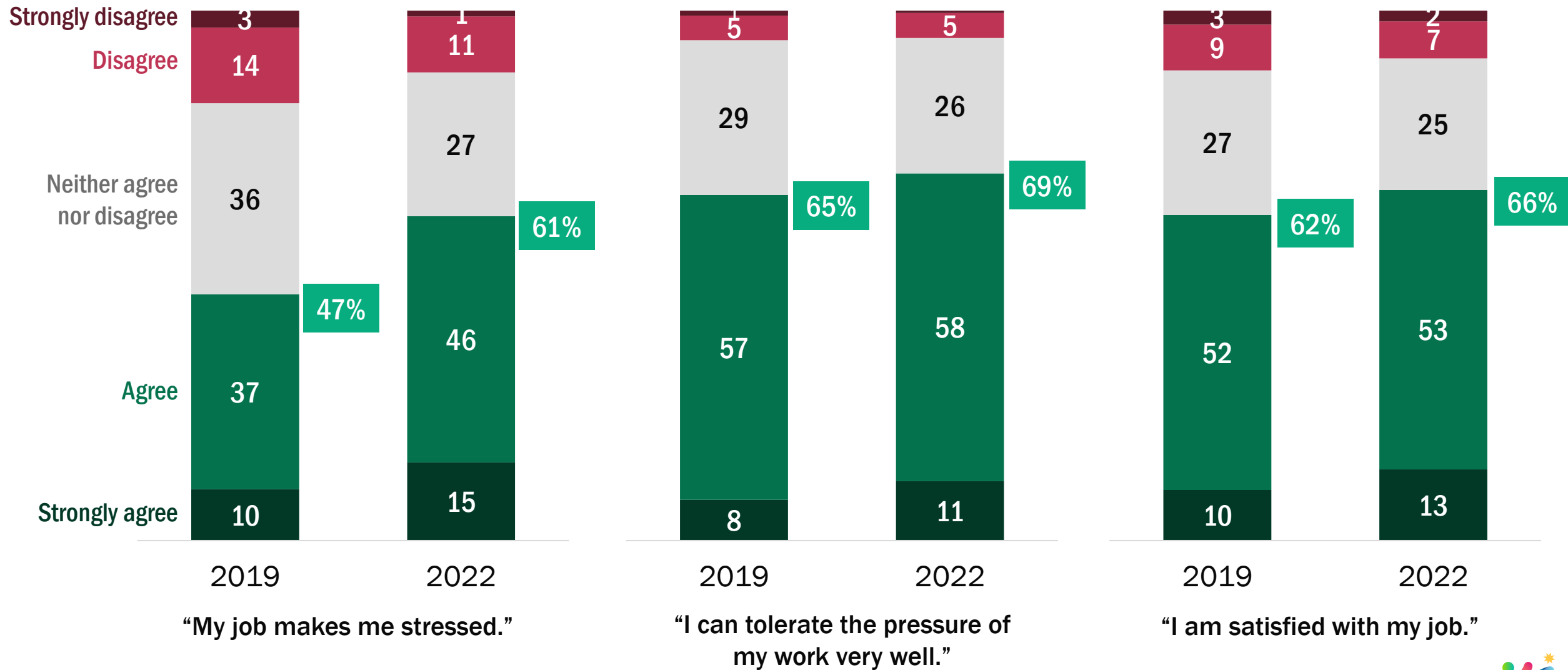


Compared to 2020 and 2021, more youths (43%) felt that the pandemic has had a positive impact on their lives in 2022:



To what extent has COVID-19 influenced your life in Singapore?

Although youths reported experiencing more job stress, more also indicated being able to tolerate work pressures and being satisfied with their jobs:



Note: These questions were only asked to employed individuals (n=1247 in 2019, n=1748 in 2022).