


Women with Disabilities in Lithuania

Representative public opinion survey





Methodology

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- **Field work:** 15-23 March 2024
 - 1001 respondents (Lithuanian residents, over 18 years old) were interviewed.
 - **Interview method:** mixed - face-to-face interview and telephone interview.
 - **Sampling method:** probabilistic sampling while maintaining proportions according to age, sex, place of residence. The research took place in 25 cities and over 40 villages in 31 municipalities in Lithuania.
 - This survey was conducted by an independent institution of public opinion and market research, "Vilmorus Ltd." on behalf of Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson in Lithuania

● Sizes of statistical errors for different results:



	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	3	5	10	15	20	25	30	40	50
	97	95	90	85	80	75	70	60	50
N									
100	3.4	4.4	6.0	7.1	8.0	8.7	9.2	9.8	10.0
200	2.4	3.1	4.2	5.0	5.7	6.1	6.5	6.9	7.1
300	2.0	2.5	3.5	4.1	4.6	5.0	5.3	5.7	5.8
400	1.7	2.2	3.0	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.9	5.0
500	1.5	1.9	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.9	4.1	4.4	4.5
750	1.2	1.6	2.2	2.6	2.9	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.7
1000	1.1	1.4	1.9	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.9	3.1	3.1



Results



Comparison of survey data with 2022 data

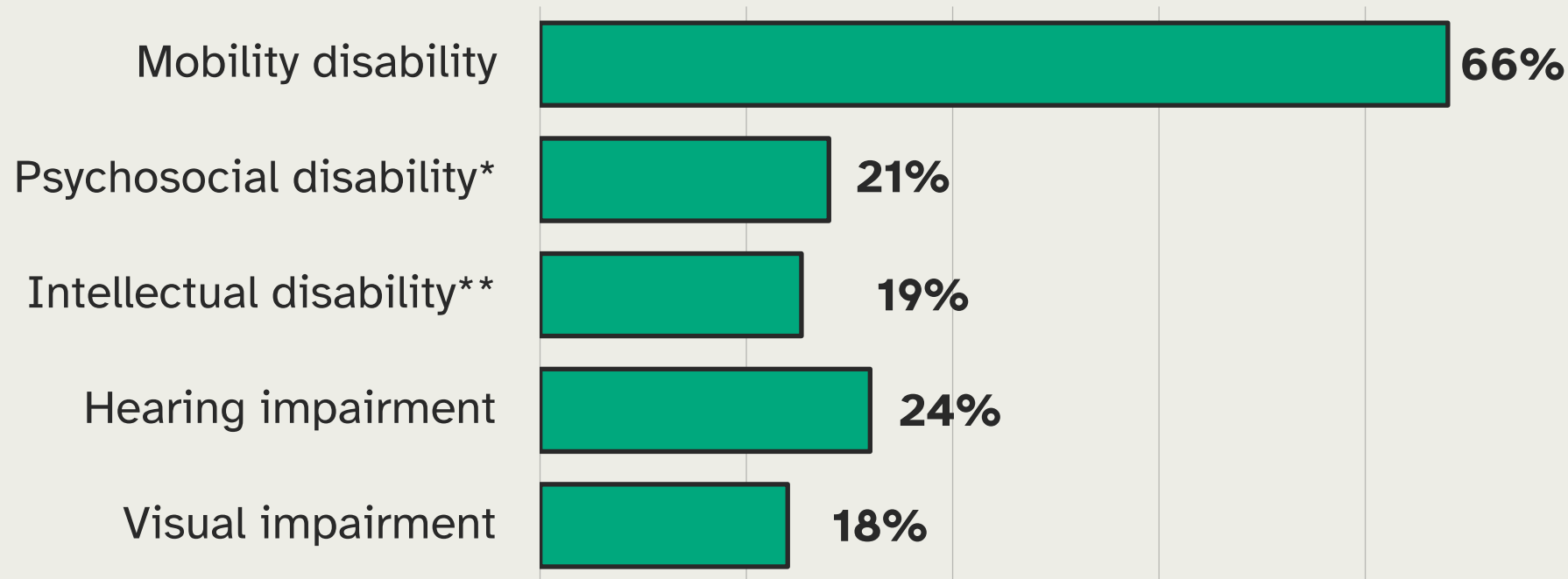
The data of the conducted survey are compared with the data of an identical public opinion survey conducted in September 2022.

The aim is to measure the change and trends in public opinion.

Do you know personally a person with a disability?



If yes, with what disability/disabilities? (N=629)



***Psychosocial disability** – disability associated with long-term mental health disorders (e.g., schizophrenia, depression, bipolar affective disorder, etc.) experienced when faced with barriers in the social or physical environment.

****Intellectual (mental) disability** - disability related to the development of intellectual abilities, experienced when faced with obstacles in the social and physical environment.



The residents of Lithuania usually know people with mobility disabilities, rarely - with visual impairment. People with mobility disabilities are mostly known by people aged 70 years and older.

Data summarization

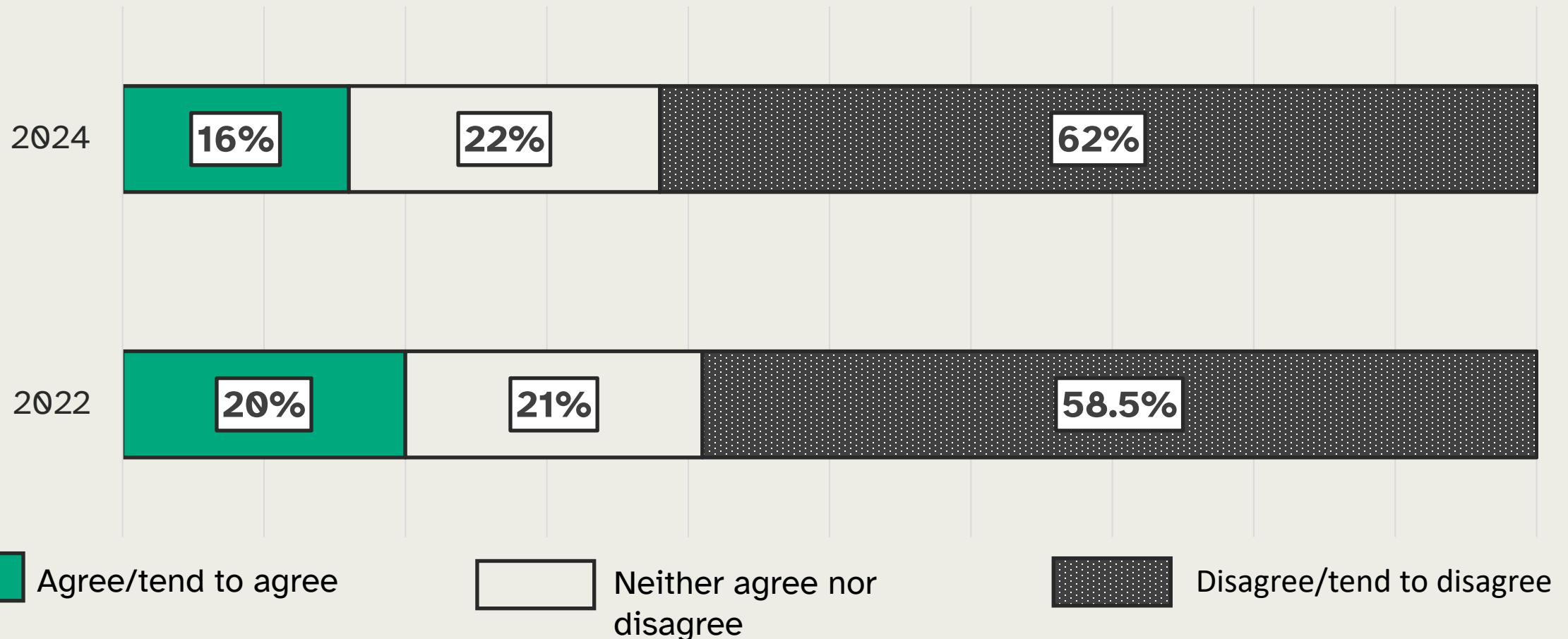


Attitudes towards women with disabilities

Women can live independently and make all decisions on their own when they are with:



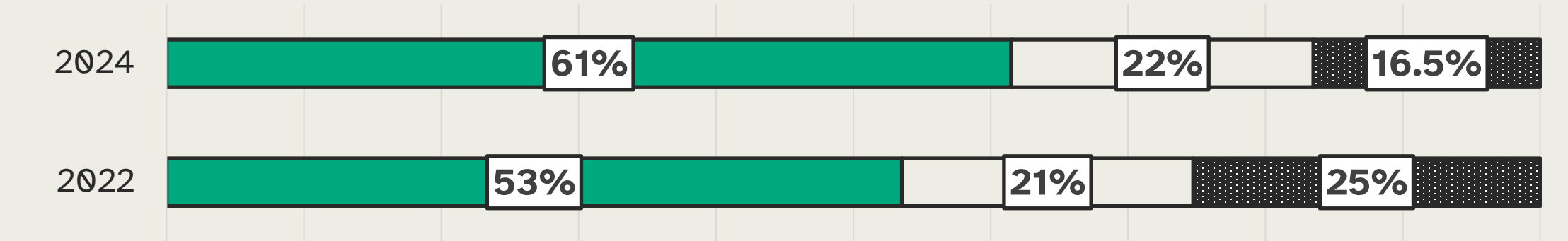
Intellectual disability



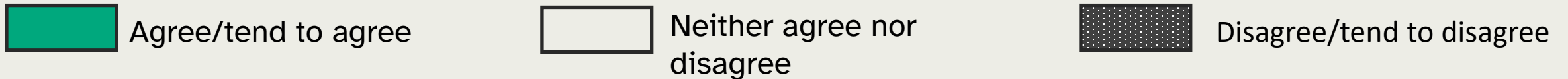
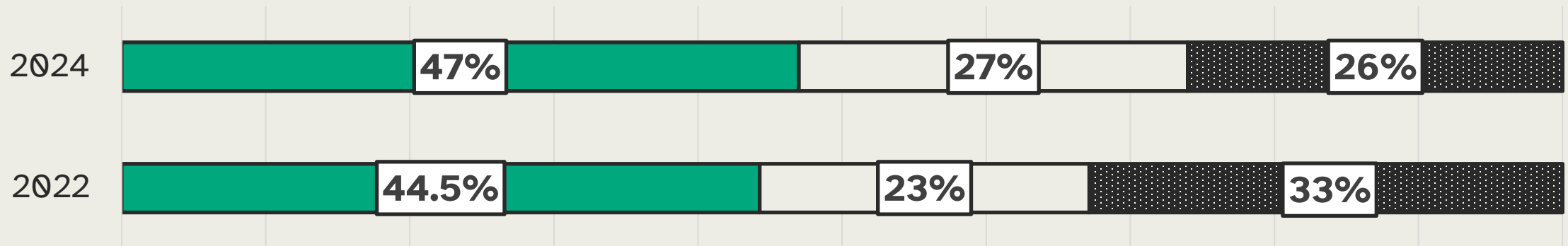
Women can live independently and make all decisions on their own when they are with:



Mobility disability



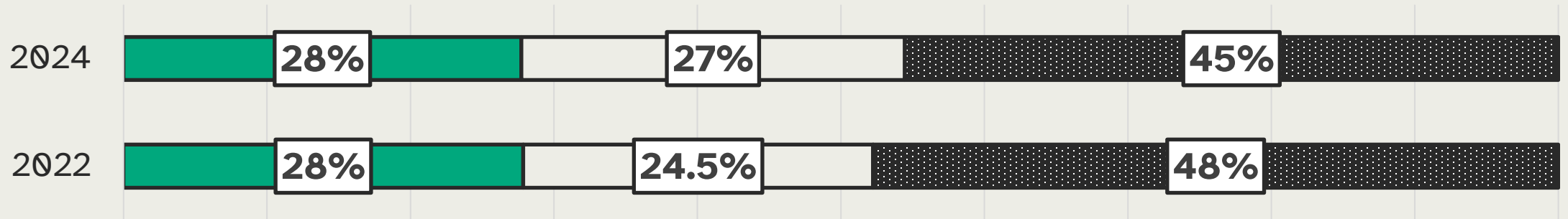
Visual impairment



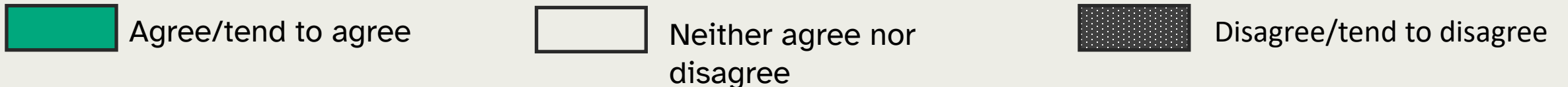
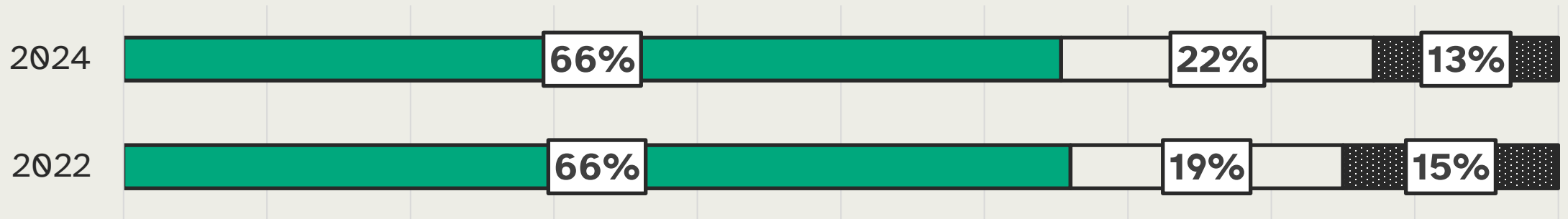
Women can live independently and make all decisions on their own when they are with:



Psychosocial disability



Hearing impairment



Self-reliance of women with disabilities

In the opinion of the public, women with hearing impairment are best able to live independently and make their own decisions (66% of survey participants agreed with this; people with higher education agreed more often - 74.5%) and those with mobility impairment (61%). The fewest respondents agreed with the independence of women with intellectual disabilities (only 16% of the Lithuanian population believed they could live independently and make their own decisions). For all disabilities, women's attitudes were more favorable than men's.

Data summarization

The oldest persons (aged 70 and older) were most opposed to the possibility of women with intellectual disabilities to live self-reliant (68% did not agree with their self-reliance), the youngest persons up to the age of 29 (56%) were the least opposed.

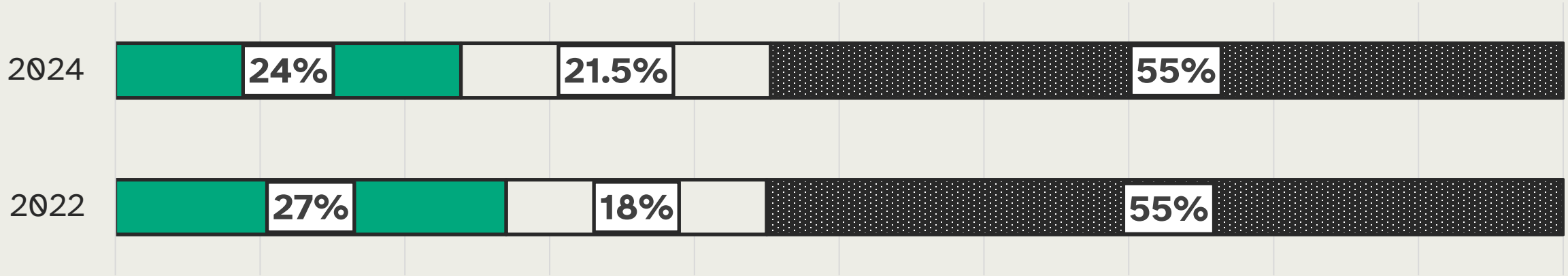
Compared to the data of 2022, society's attitude towards the self-reliance of women with intellectual disabilities has worsened. The number of people who believe that women with intellectual disabilities can live independently has decreased from 20% up to 16%.

Meanwhile, the attitudes towards the self-reliance of women with mobility disabilities has improved: in 2022, 53% of respondents believed that women with mobility disabilities can live self-reliant, in 2024 – 61%. Attitudes towards women with psychosocial disabilities and hearing impairment have remained unchanged since 2022.

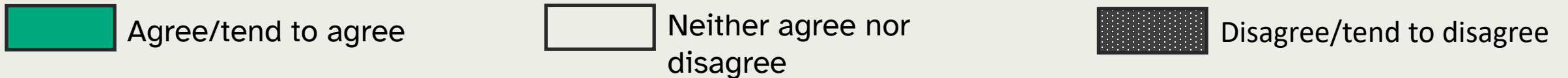
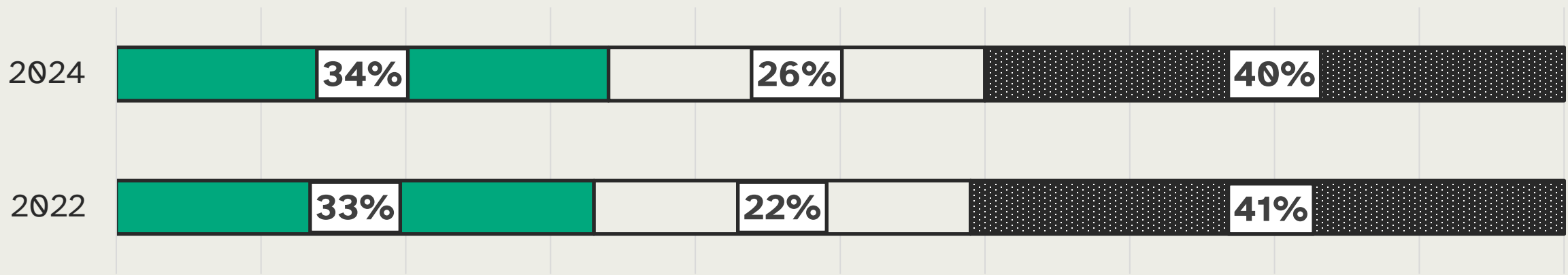
Women can be financially independent from their partner/spouse or relatives when they are with:



Intellectual disability



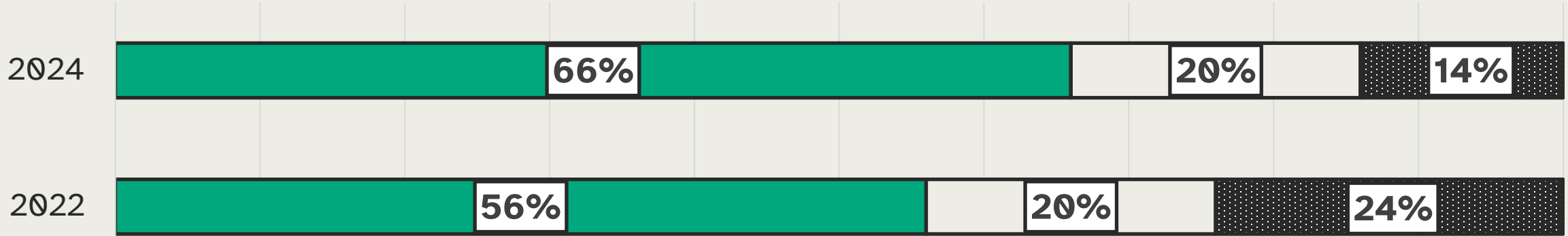
Psychosocial disability



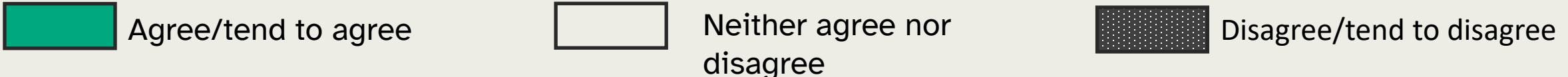
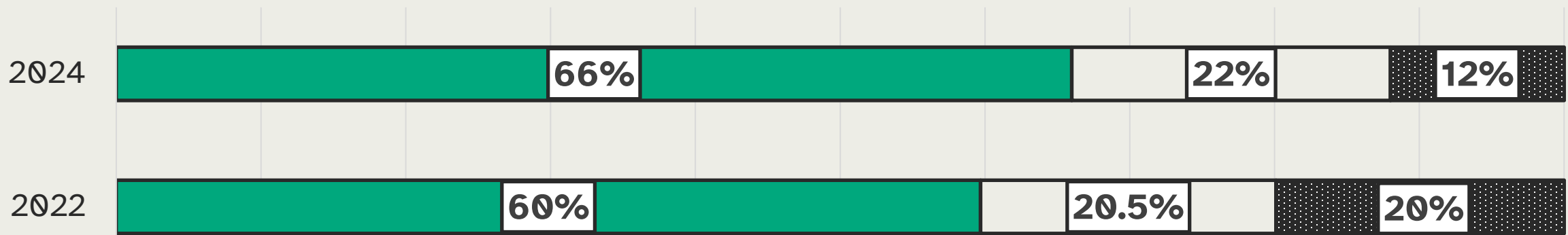
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Mobility disability



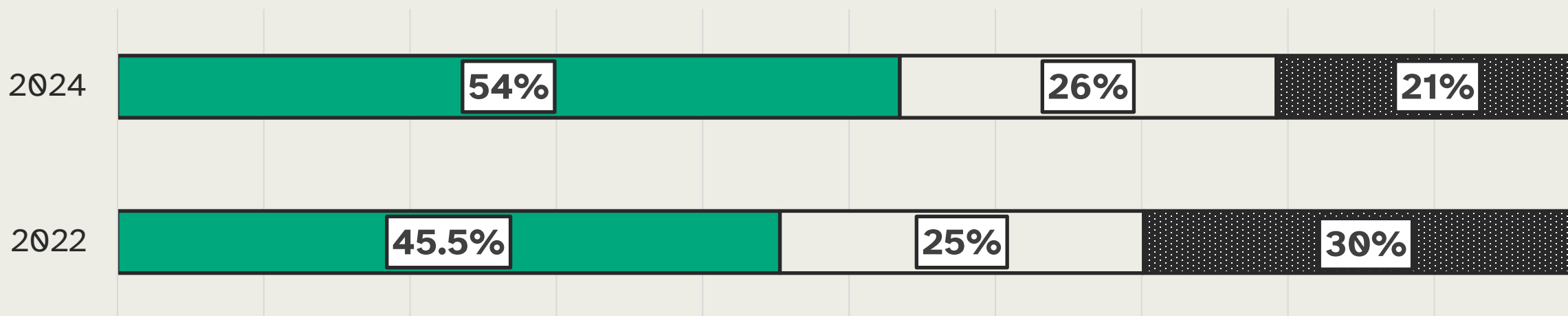
Hearing impairment




Women can be financially independent from their partner/spouse or relatives when they are with:



Visual impairment



 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

Financial independence of women with disabilities



Society's attitudes towards women's financial independence has improved since 2022 in relation to mobility disabilities, hearing impairment and visual disabilities. The attitudes towards women with mobility disabilities improved the most: 66% of the survey participants agreed that they can be financially independent from their partner/spouse or relatives (in 2022, 56% agreed with the same statement).

Persons with higher education have the most progressive attitudes towards the financial independence of women with various disabilities: 73% of survey participants with higher education supported the independence of women with mobility disabilities (compared to 66% of all participants), with hearing impairment – 74%. (66% of all participants), with visual impairment – 62%. (54% of all participants), with psychosocial disability - 41.5%. (34% of all participants). In all cases, women evaluated the independence of women with disabilities more favorably than men.

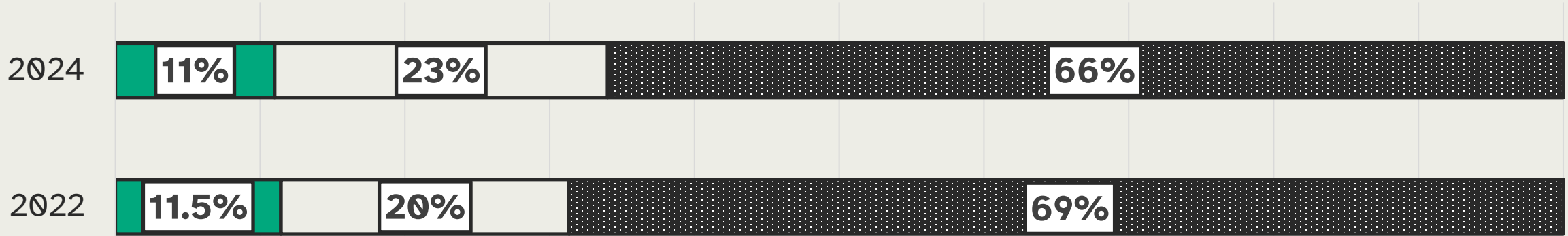
The ability of women with intellectual disabilities to be financially independent from their closest people is the least supported - only 23% thought so, slightly less than in 2022 (27%). In 2024, Vilnius residents supported the financial independence of women with intellectual disabilities the most (36%).

Data summarization

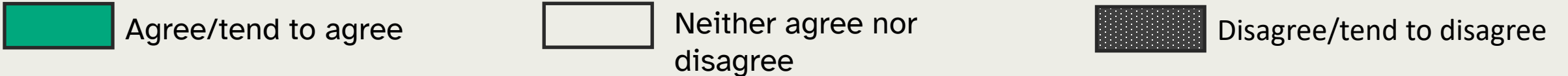
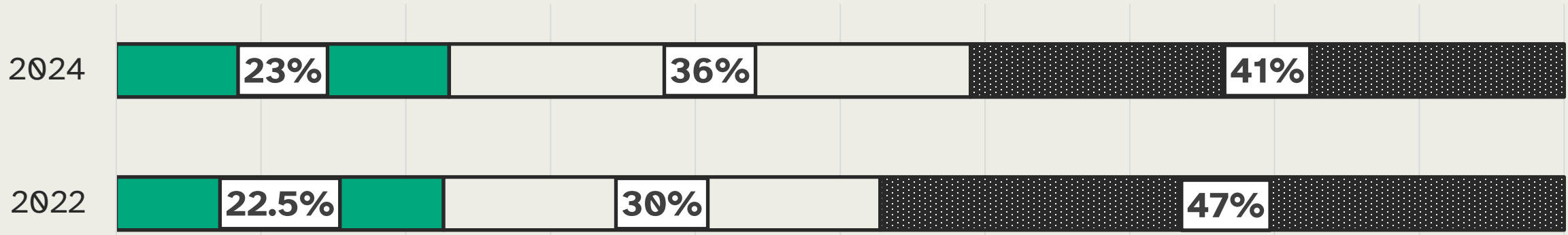
I would not mind my son marrying a woman who is with:



Intellectual disability



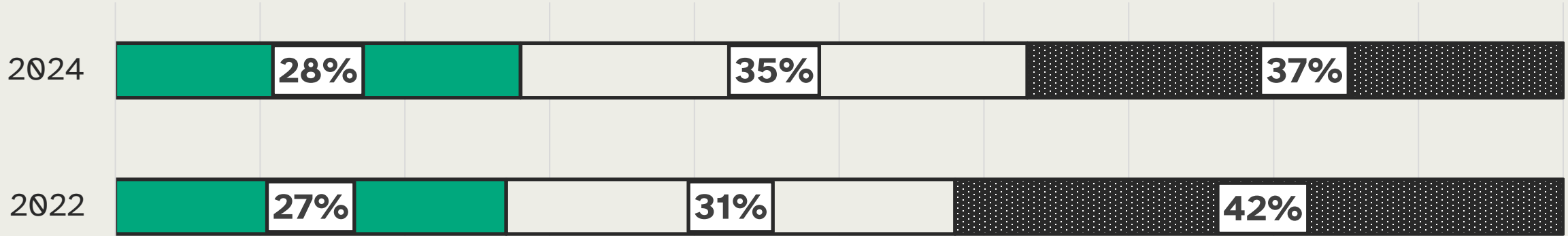
Mobility disability



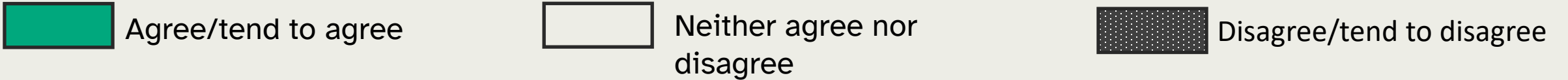
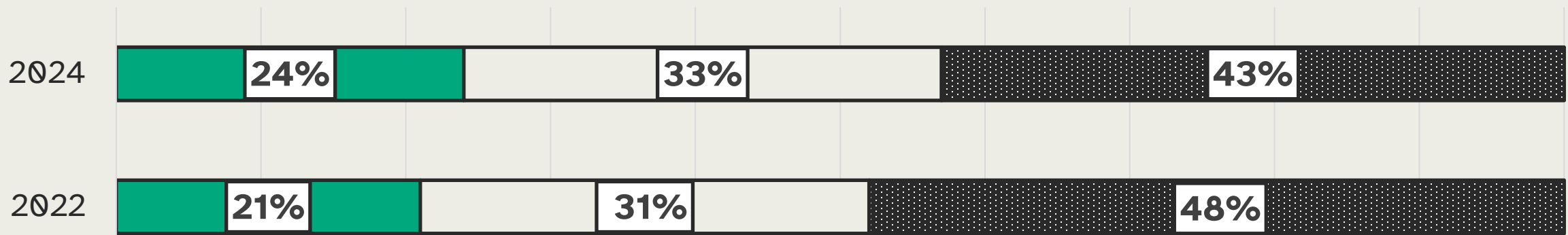
I would not mind my son marrying a woman who is with:



Hearing impairment



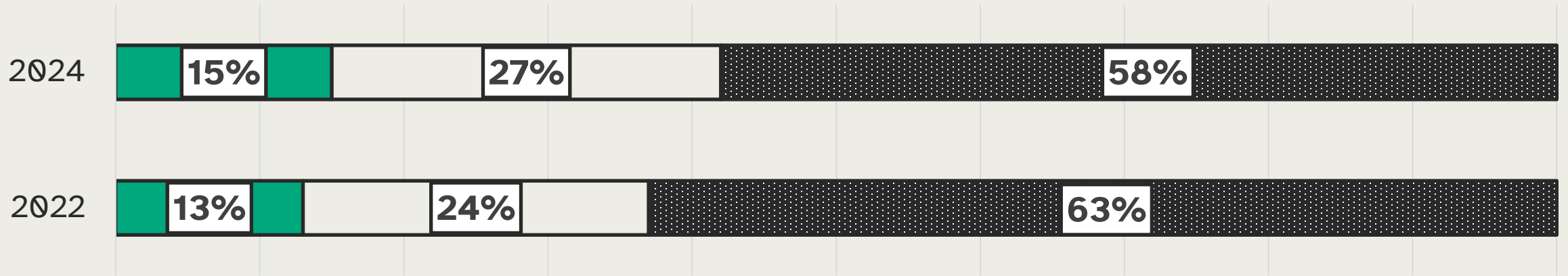
Visual impairment



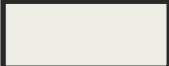
I would not mind my son marrying a woman who is with:



Psychosocial disability



 Agree/tend to agree

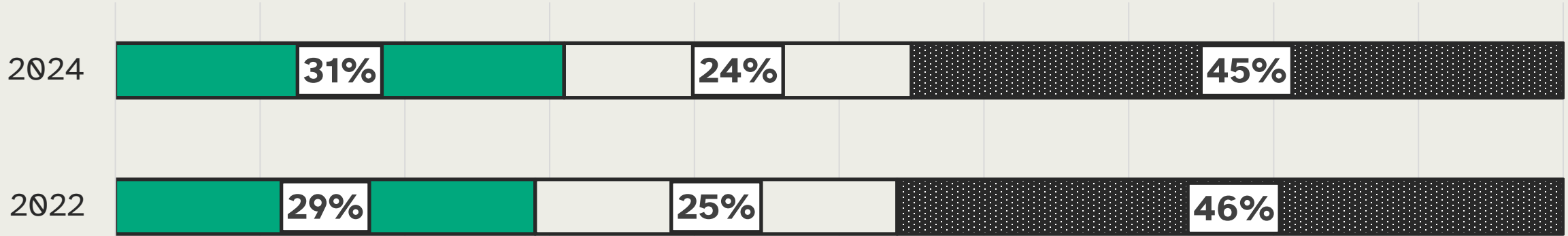
 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

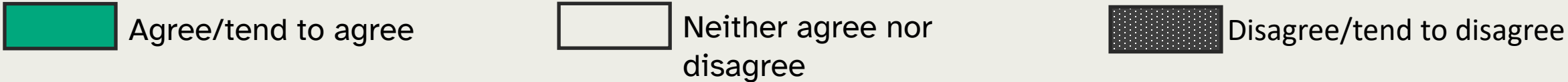
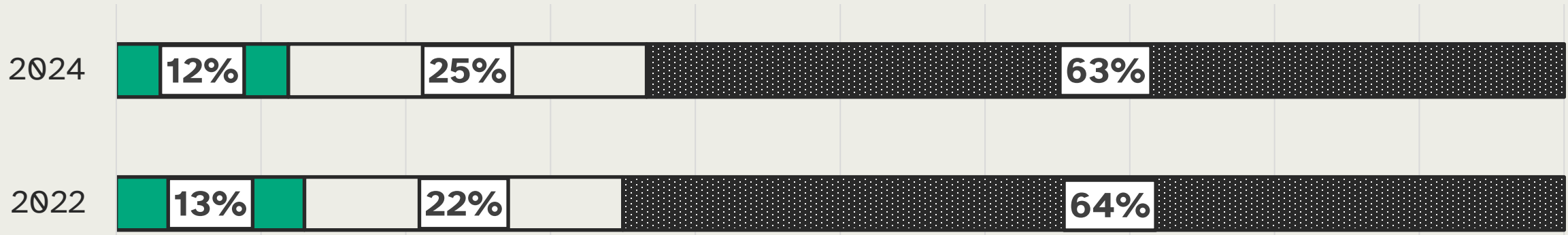
It is normal for a partner/spouse to be embarrassed to appear in public with a partner/spouse who is with:



Intellectual disability



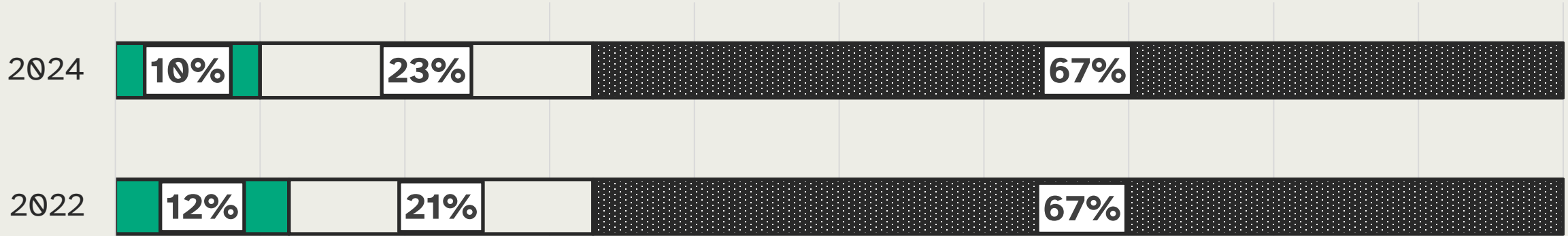
Mobility disability



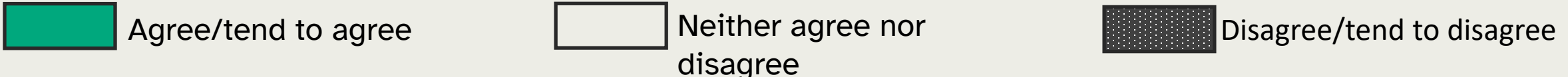
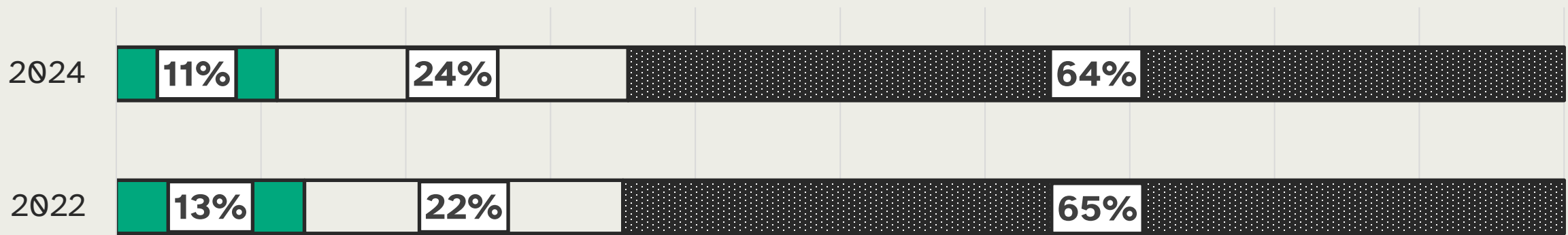
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Hearing impairment



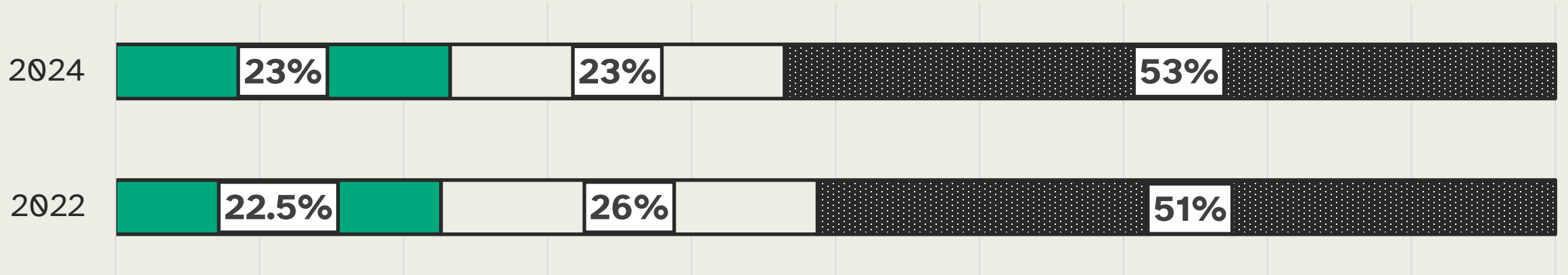
Visual impairment



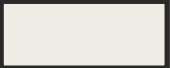
It is normal for a partner/spouse to be embarrassed to appear in public with a partner/spouse who is with:



Psychosocial disability



 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

Attitudes towards romantic relationships with women with disabilities



The attitudes towards romantic relationships of women with disabilities has hardly changed since 2022 - only a small part of society would approve of a son's marriage to a woman with disability.

The possibility of creating romantic relationships with hearing-impaired women is viewed most favorably - almost a third of the survey participants (28%) would approve of their son's marriage to a hearing-impaired woman. The residents of Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys (37%) had the most favorable view of such a marriage.

The marriage of a son to a woman with an intellectual disability is viewed least favorably (only 11% of the survey participants would agree). Pensioners and schoolchildren/students (72% of this group each) had the least favorable view of such an opportunity.

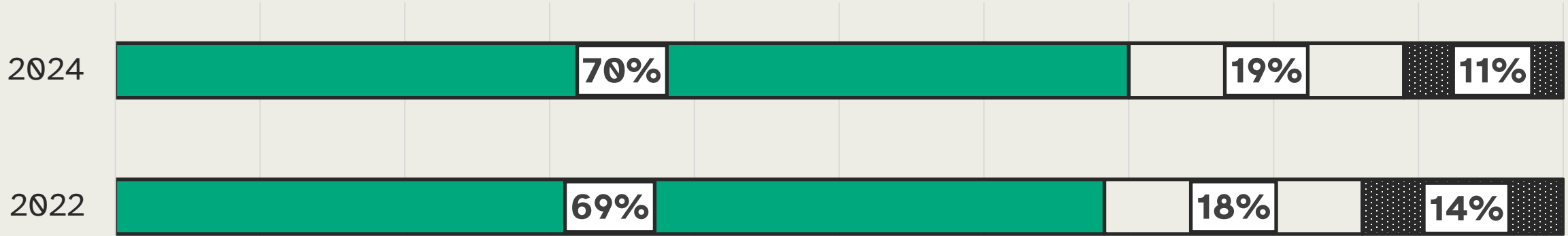
Being embarrassed about a partner's/spouse's disability is most justified when a woman has an intellectual disability (31% of the survey participants would justify being embarrassed of their partner/spouse's disability; people aged 70 and older would do so the most - 42% of people in this age group answered this way).

In all cases, men participating in the survey were more likely to justify being embarrassed of their partner/spouse's disability than women.

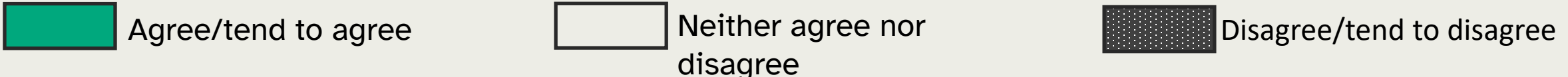
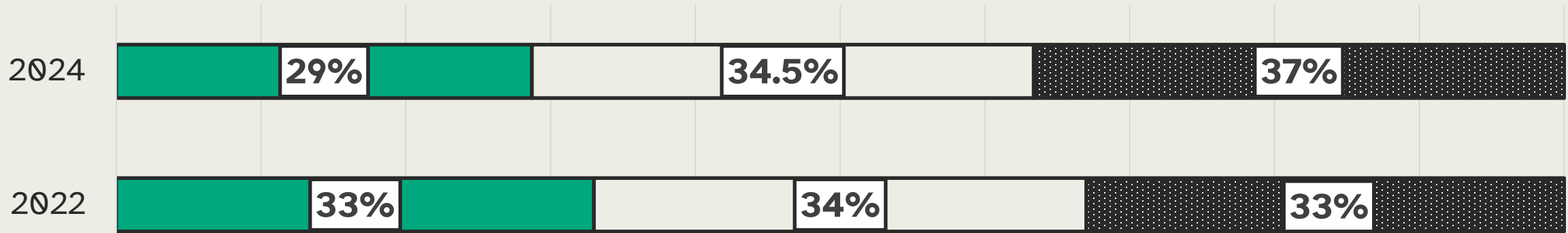
Data summarization

Women are acting irresponsibly in choosing to have children when they are with:

Intellectual disability



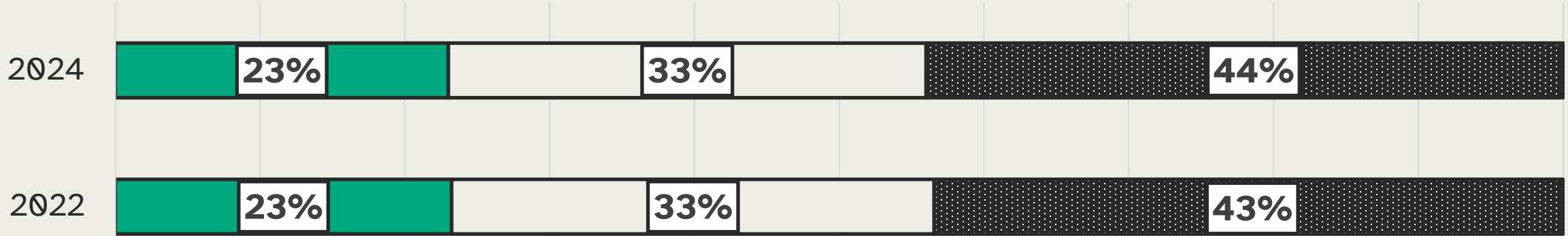
Mobility disability



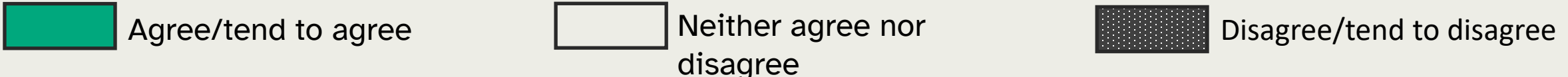
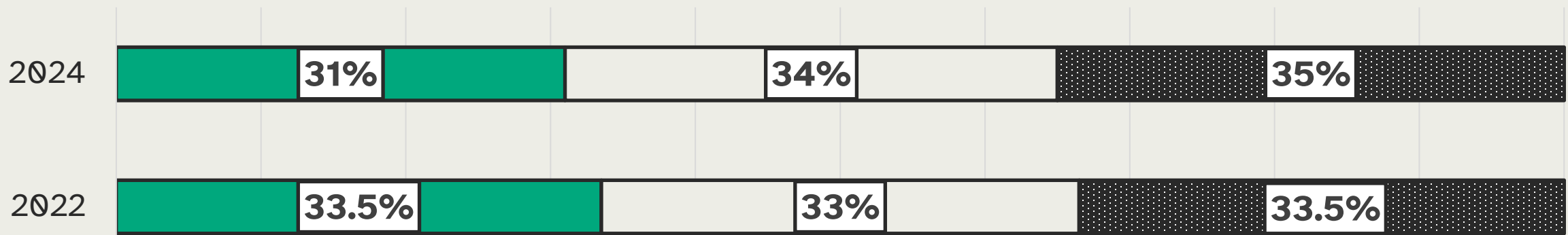
Women are acting irresponsibly in choosing to have children when they are with:



Hearing impairment



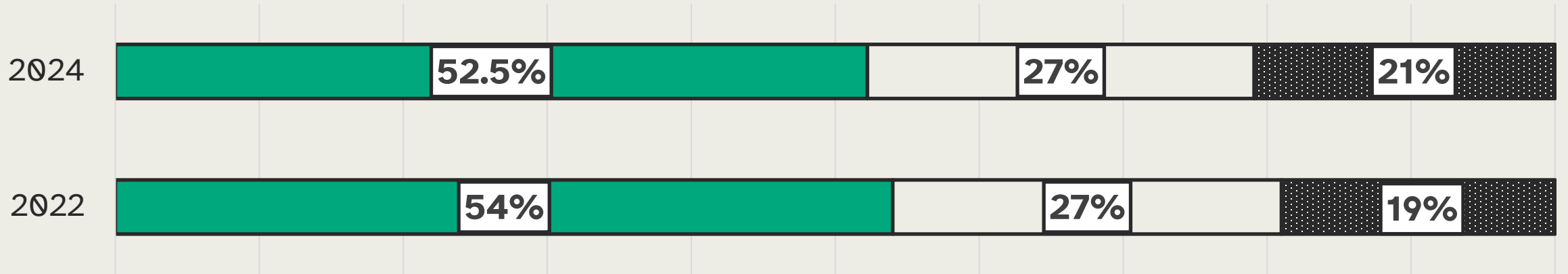
Visual impairment



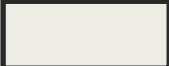
Women are acting irresponsibly in choosing to have children when they are with:



Psychosocial disability



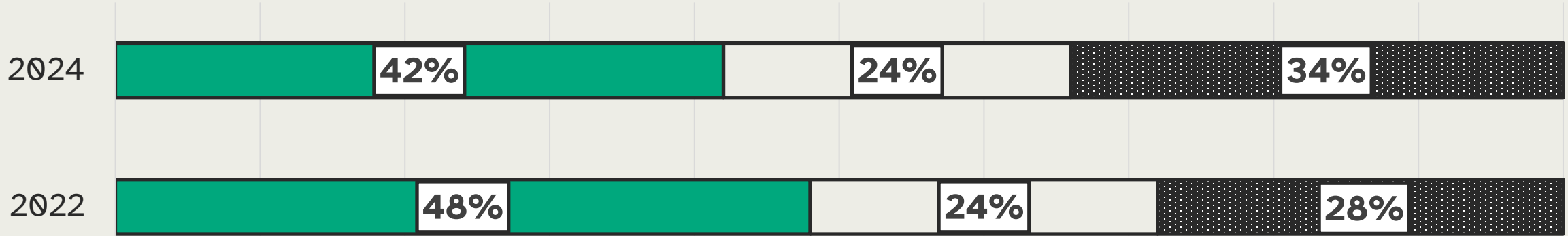
 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

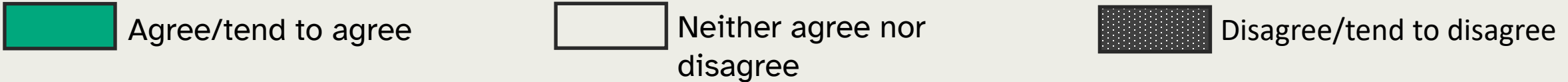
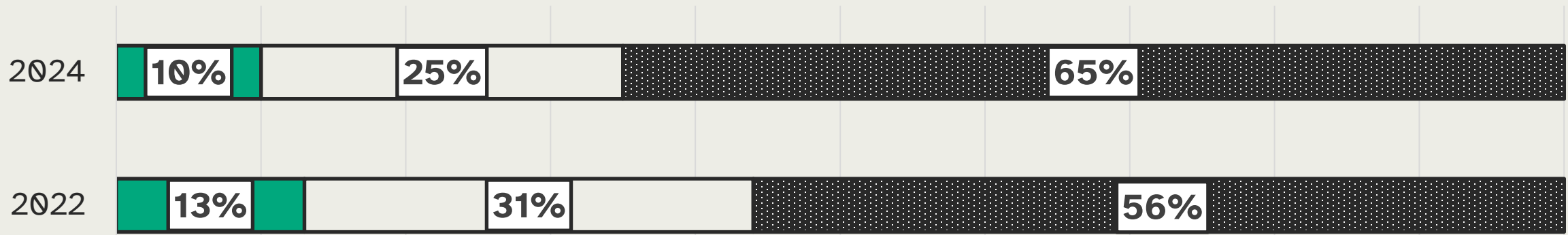
 Disagree/tend to disagree

A doctor can terminate a woman's pregnancy without her consent if she is with:

Intellectual disability



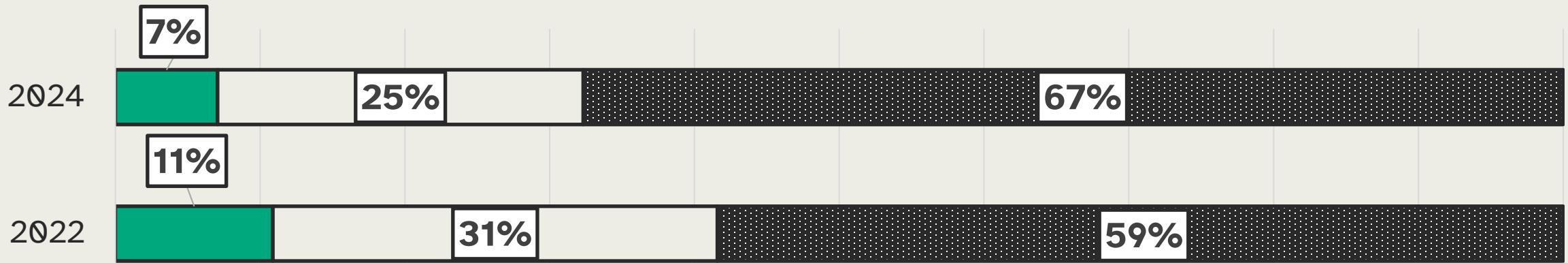
Mobility disability



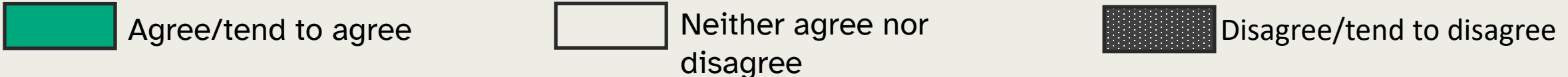
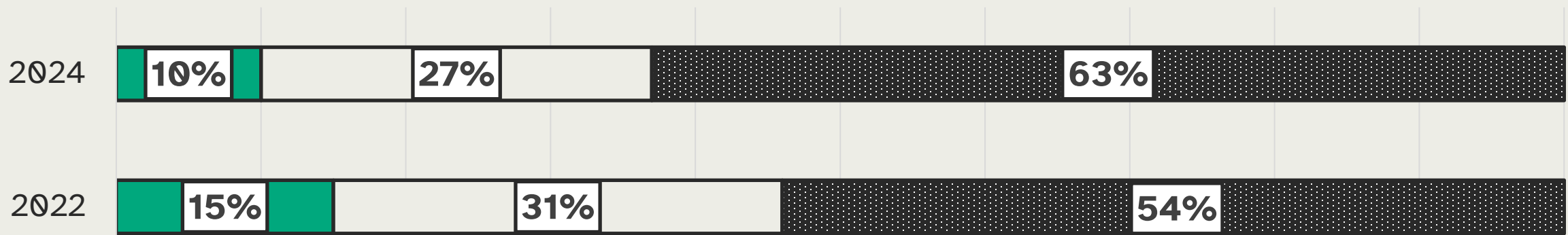
A doctor can terminate a woman's pregnancy without her consent if she is with:



Hearing impairment



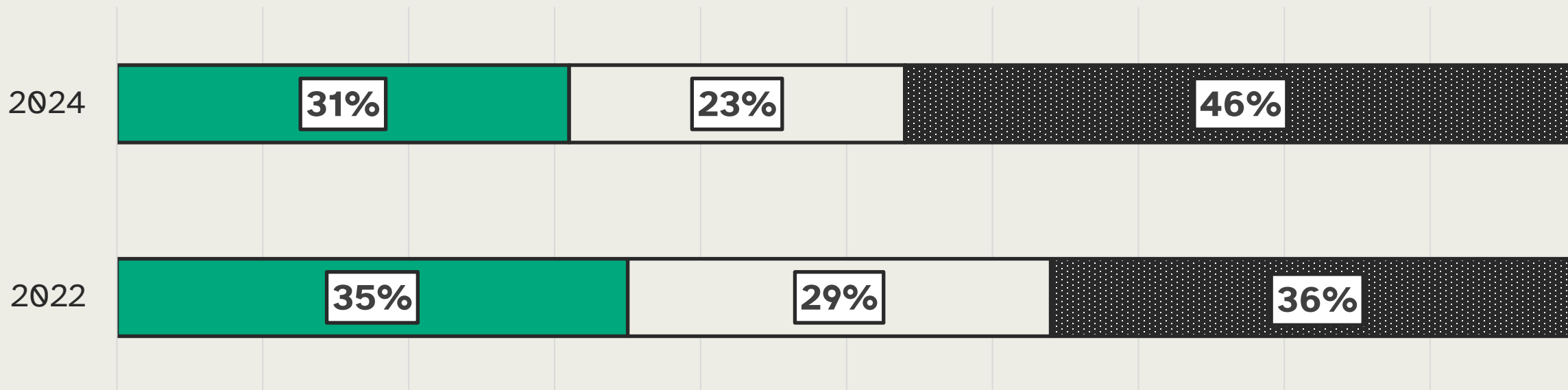
Visual impairment




A doctor can terminate a woman's pregnancy without her consent if she is with:



Psychosocial disability



 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

Attitudes towards motherhood of women with disabilities

Even 70% of respondents believed that women with intellectual disabilities behave irresponsibly in choosing to have children. This opinion was most supported by persons with incomplete secondary education (78%). A large part of society still believes that a doctor has the right to terminate the pregnancy of a woman with an intellectual disability without her consent. This opinion was supported by 42% of the survey participants (48% thought so in 2022).

Motherhood for hearing impaired women is most favored. 44% of the respondents disagreed with the statement "women are acting irresponsibly by choosing to have children when they have a hearing impairment". Specialists/employees (56%) disagreed with this statement the most.

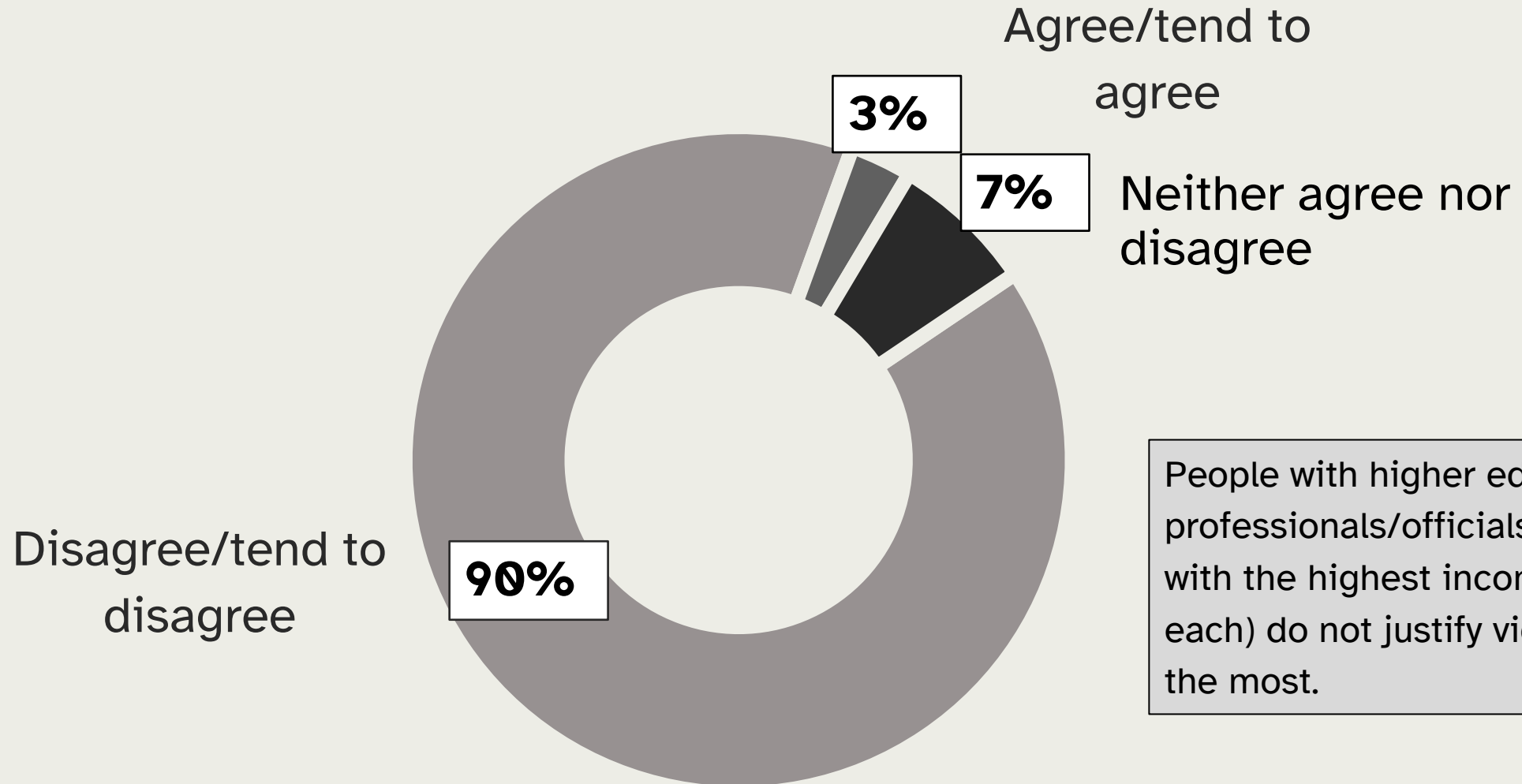
Compared to the data of 2022, there has been an increase in those who believe that a doctor has no right to terminate a woman's pregnancy without her consent when a woman has a mobility disability (65% thought so in 2024, 56% thought so in 2022), hearing impairment (67% thought so in 2024, in 2022 – 58%), visual impairment (63% thought so in 2024, 54% in 2022). In all the mentioned cases, the residents of Vilnius did not agree with this statement the most (81% of the respondents and more) .

Data summarization



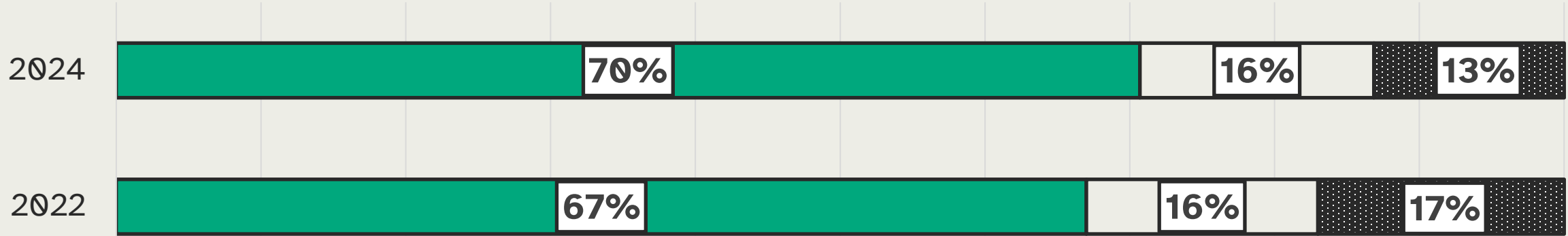
**Violence against women
with disabilities**

Partner/spousal violence against women with disabilities may be justified under certain circumstances

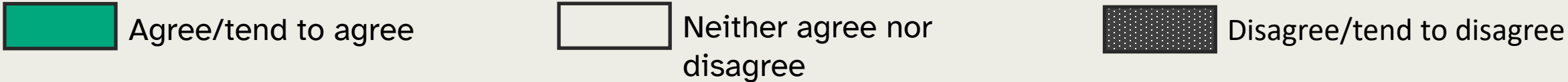
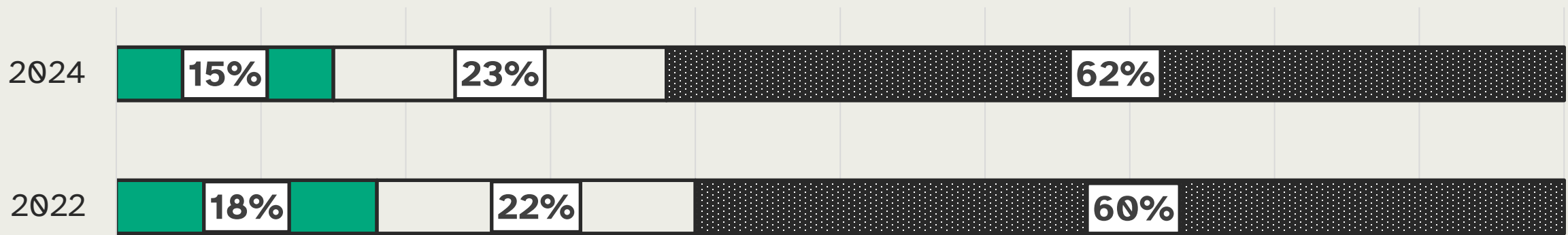


A partner/spouse can control a woman's finances if she is with:

Intellectual disability



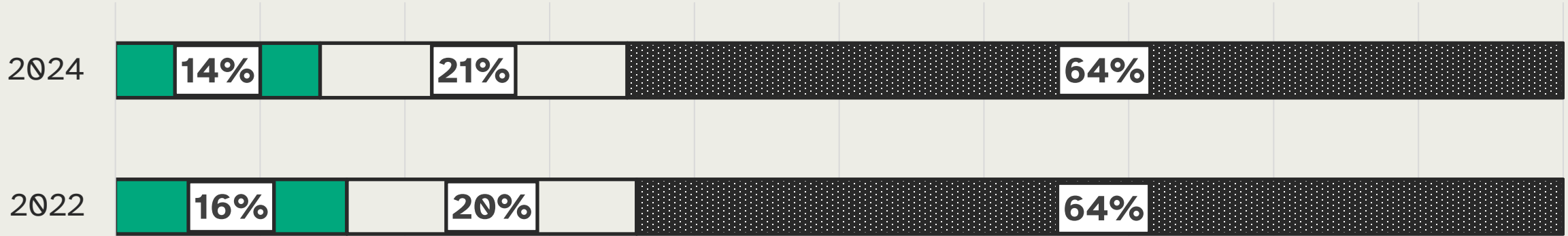
Mobility disability



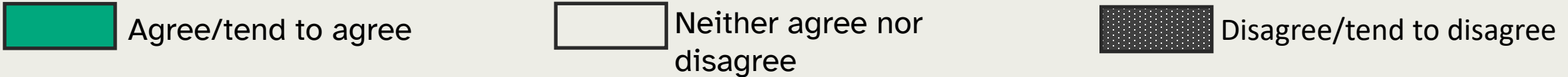
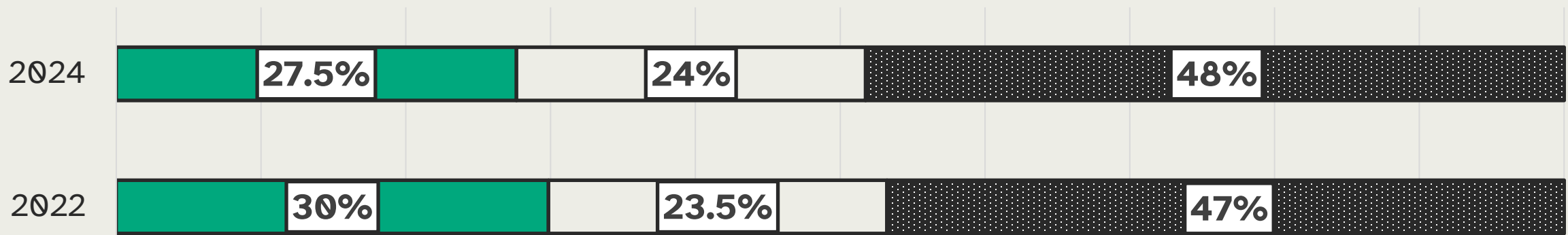
A partner/spouse can control a woman's finances if she is with:



Hearing impairment



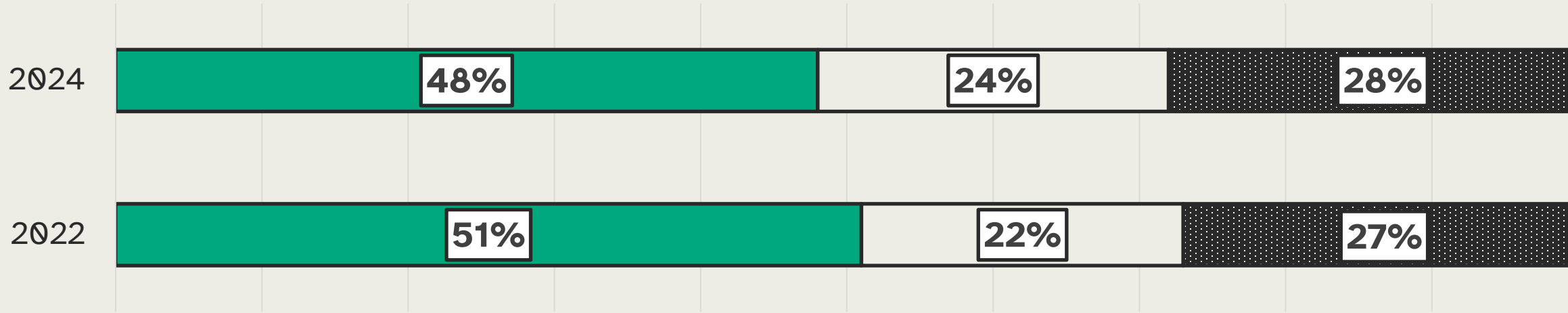
Visual impairment



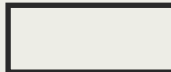
A partner/spouse can control a woman's finances if she is with:



Psychosocial disability



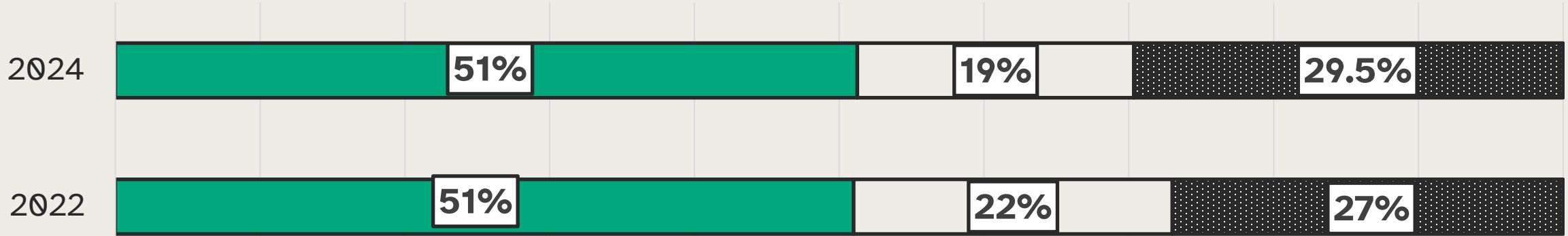
 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

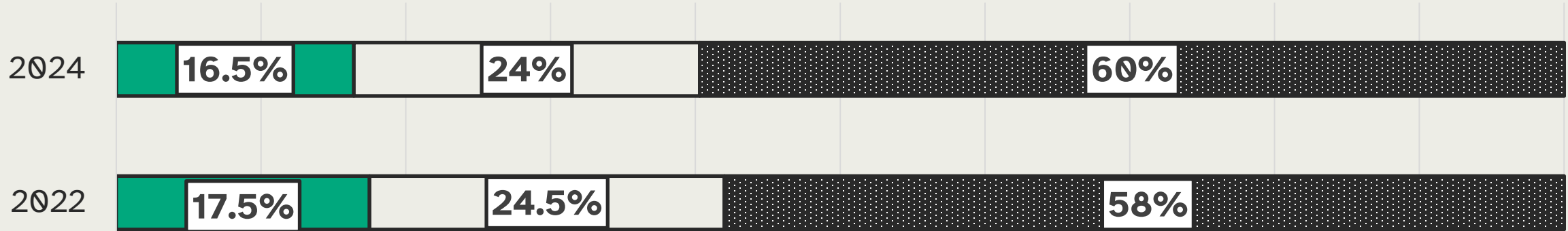
 Disagree/tend to disagree


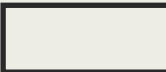

A partner/spouse can decide who and when a woman meets if she is with:

Intellectual disability



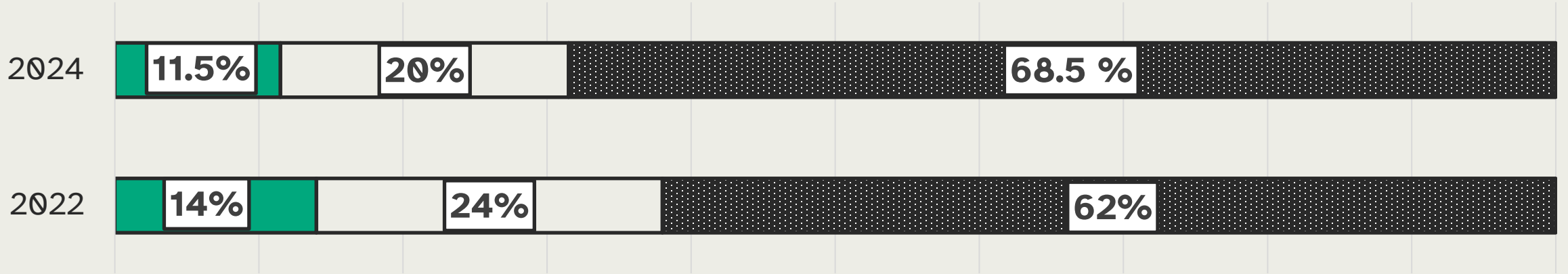
Visual impairment



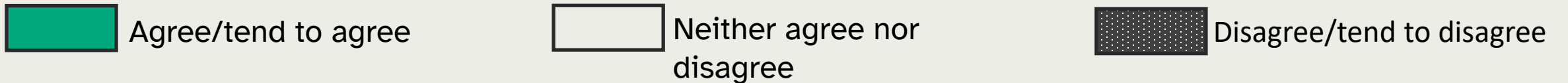
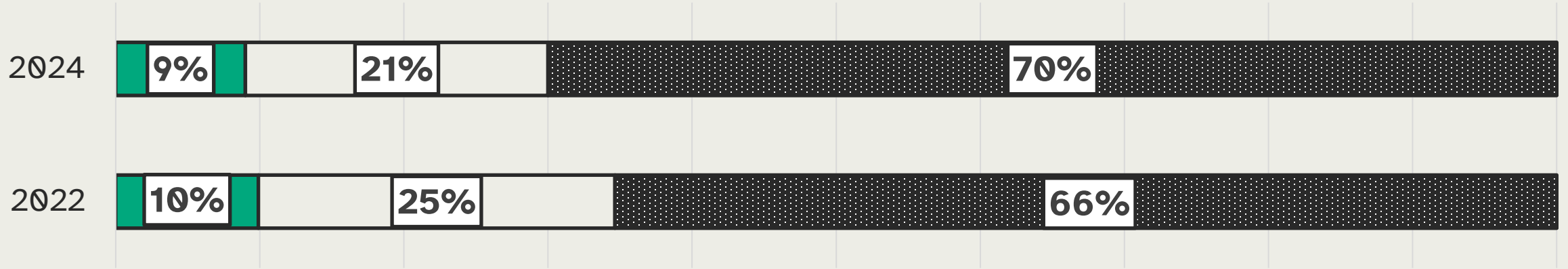
 Agree/tend to agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree/tend to disagree

A partner/spouse can decide who and when a woman meets if she is with:

Mobility disability



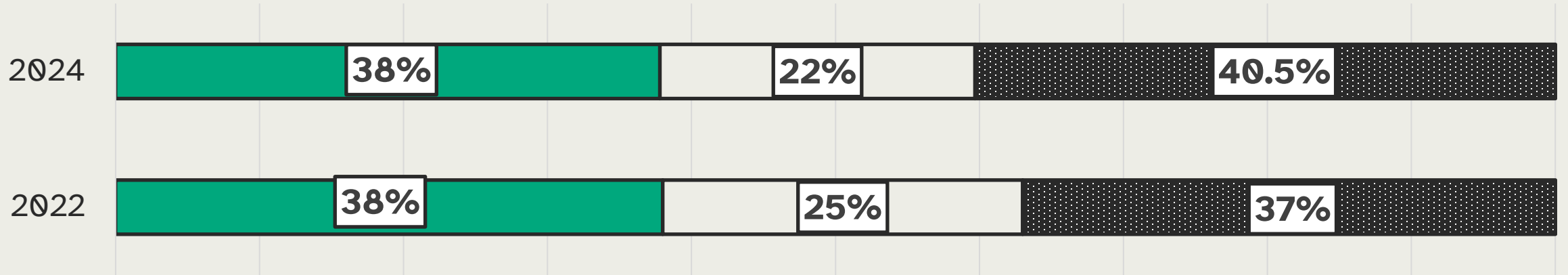
Hearing impairment



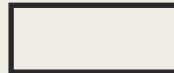
A partner/spouse can decide who and when a woman meets if she is with:



Psychosocial disability



 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

Attitudes towards partner/spouse financial and social control



7 out of 10 participants in the survey justified the financial control of the partner/spouse when a woman has an intellectual disability. People aged 70 and older (76%) and rural residents (77%) justified such behavior the most; people under the age of 29 (19%) and those with higher education (19%) did not support such behavior towards women with intellectual disabilities.

A similar trend can be seen in the answers of the survey participants regarding the social control of women with intellectual disabilities: 51% of those interviewed agreed that the partner/spouse can decide with whom and when the woman meets. Older people (70%), rural residents (62%) were the most in favor. Those with higher education (37%) were the most disapproving.

In the case of all disabilities, financial and social control of the partner/spouse was most opposed by persons with higher education. Such behavior towards women with disabilities was mostly justified by the oldest persons (age 70 and older), persons with the lowest income, people living in the countryside.

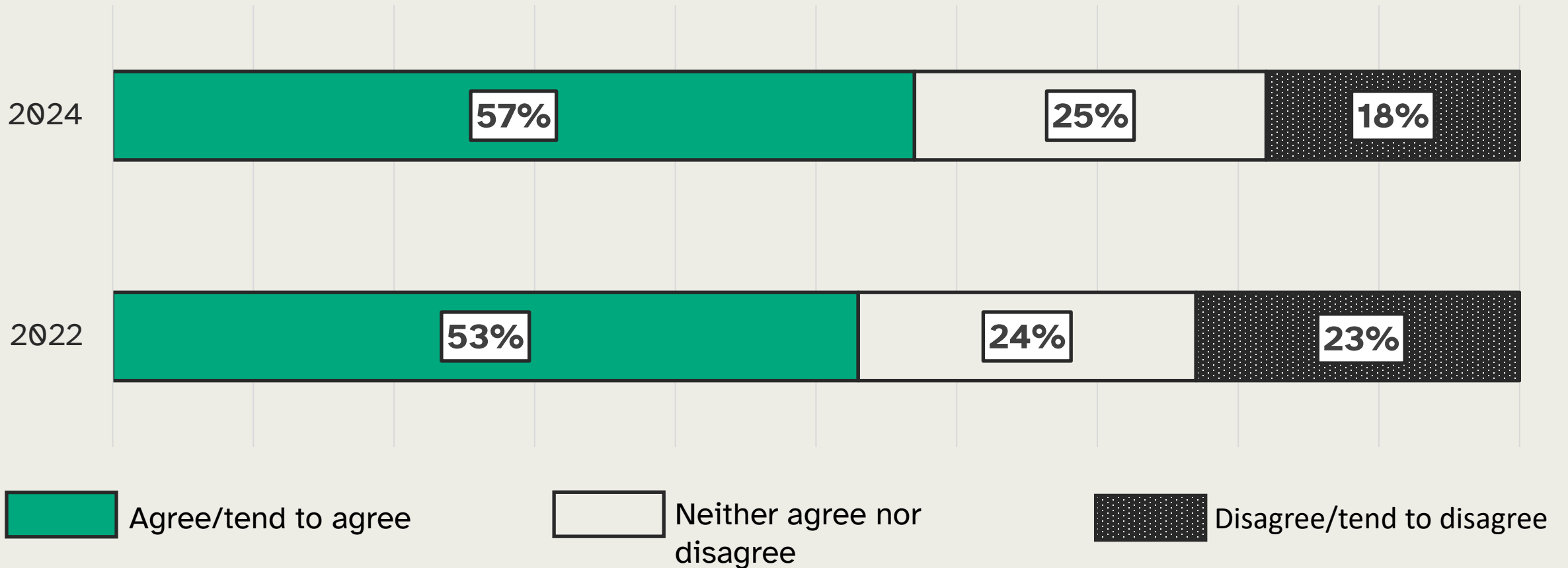
Men were always more inclined to justify controlling their partner/spouse than women (regardless of the woman's disability which was discussed). In the case of some disabilities, the difference is significant.

Data summarization

Would you consider the named situations as violence against women or not?



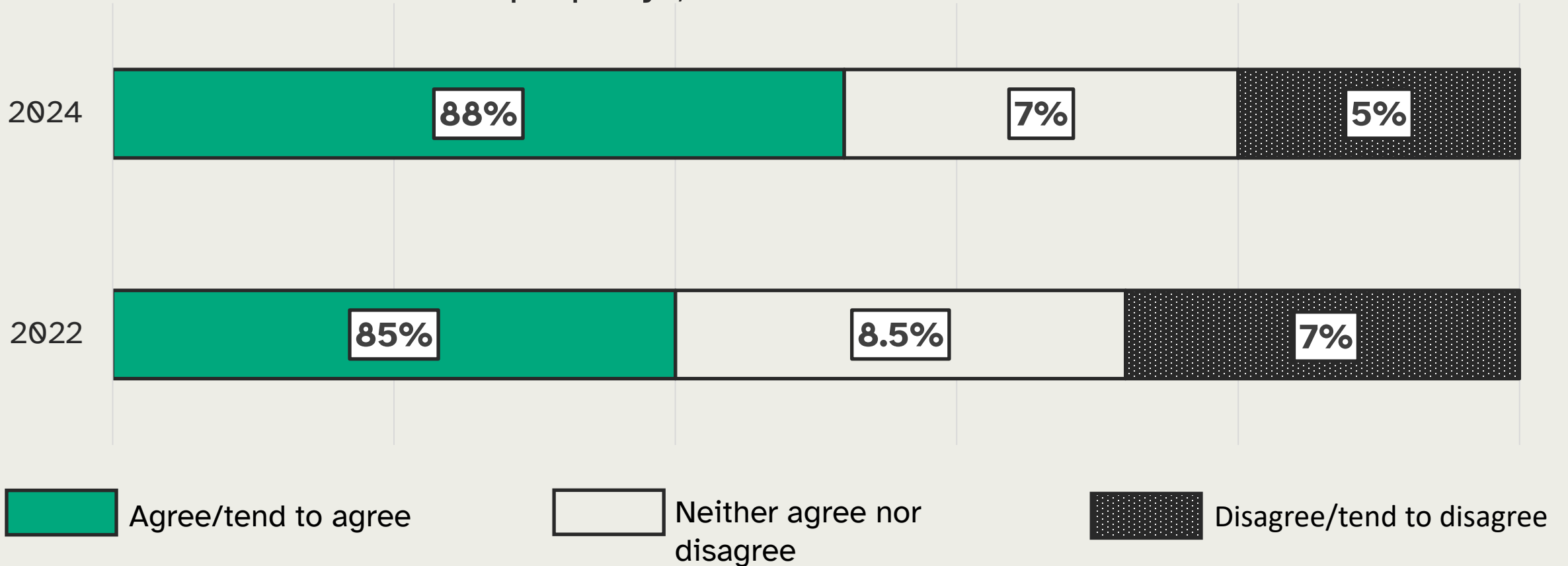
A man forbids his wheelchair-user wife from going to work, claiming that he earns enough money, and her duty is to take care of the house and children.



Would you consider the named situations as violence against women or not?



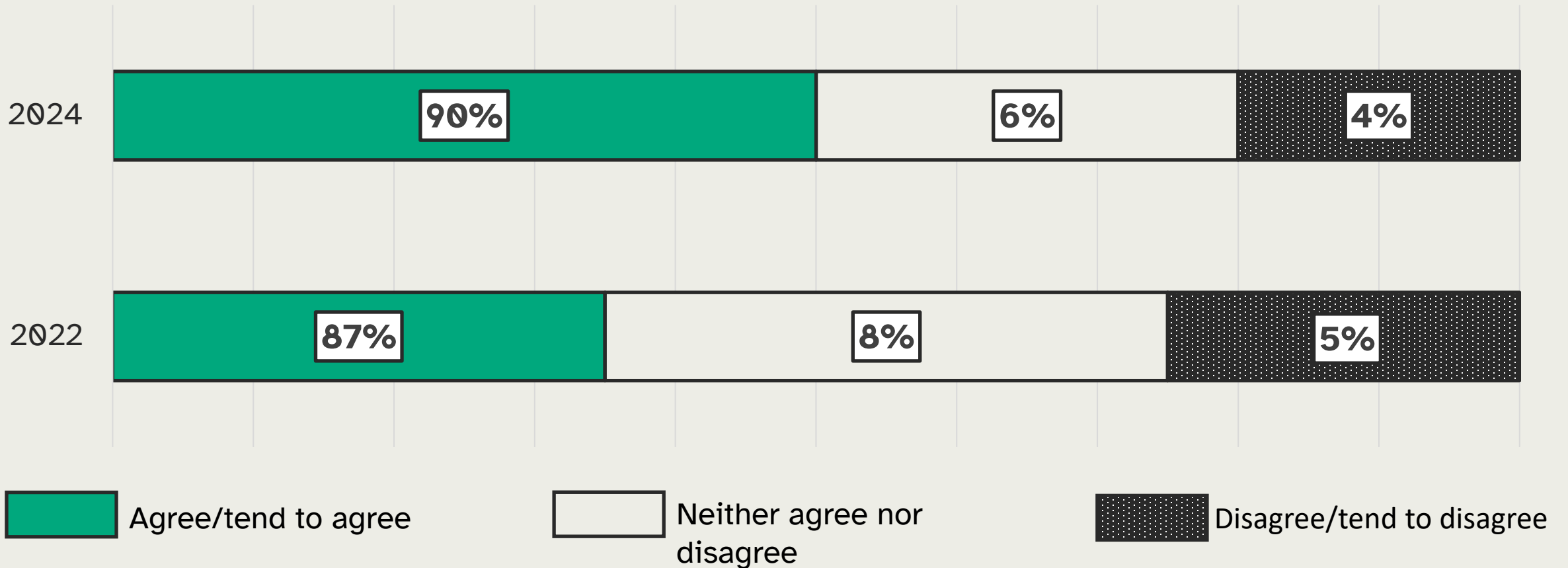
In a group of friends, the man keeps emphasizing how lame his deaf wife is - e.g., saying “she doesn't understand”, “she is not aware of the environment”, “she can't communicate properly”, etc.



Would you consider the named situations as violence against women or not?



A husband constantly calls his wife, who has depression, “a psycho”, “inadequate”, offers her to go to a psychiatric, etc.



Recognizing violence



Women recognize violence better than men. For example, 61% of women and 52% of men would consider the situation "A man forbids his wheelchair-user wife from going to work, claiming that <...> her duty is to take care of the house and children" . The situation "A man keeps emphasizing how lame his deaf wife is: <...> she can't communicate properly, etc.", 92% of women and 84% of men would consider to be violence.

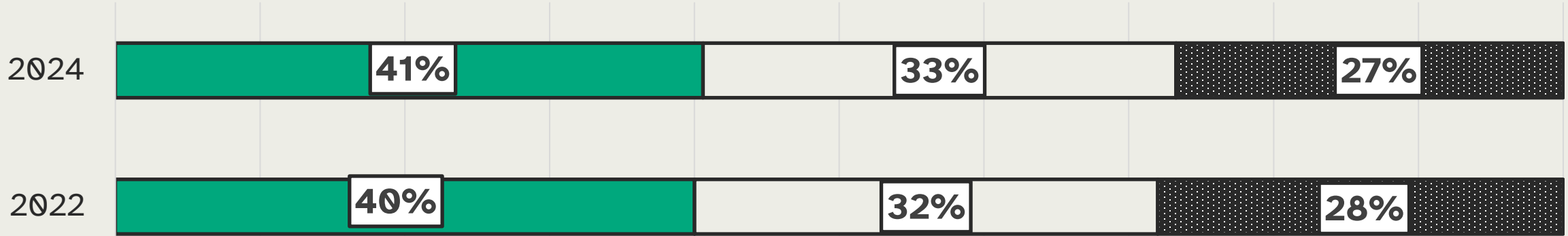
92% of women and 86% of men would consider the situation "a man calls his blind wife clumsy..." as violence. 92.5% of women and 87% of men would consider the situation "a man constantly calls his depressed wife a psycho, inadequate..." as violence..

In all cases, people with the lowest income (up to 400 euros per family member) recognize violence the best, Vilnius residents, specialists/employees recognize violence more often than other groups of society.

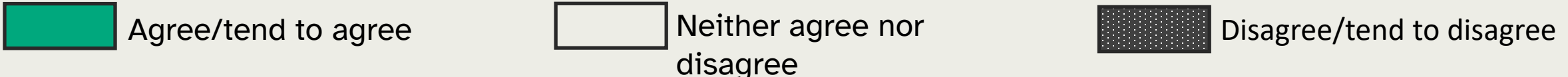
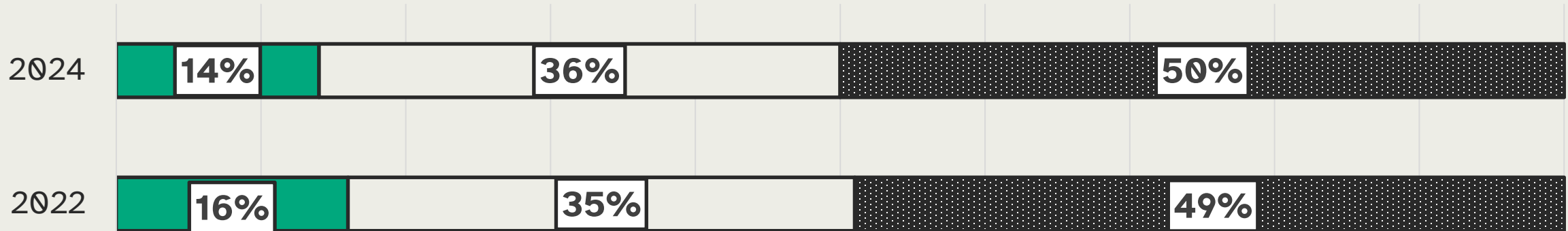
Data summarization

Women often provoke spousal/partner violence against them if they are with:

Intellectual disability

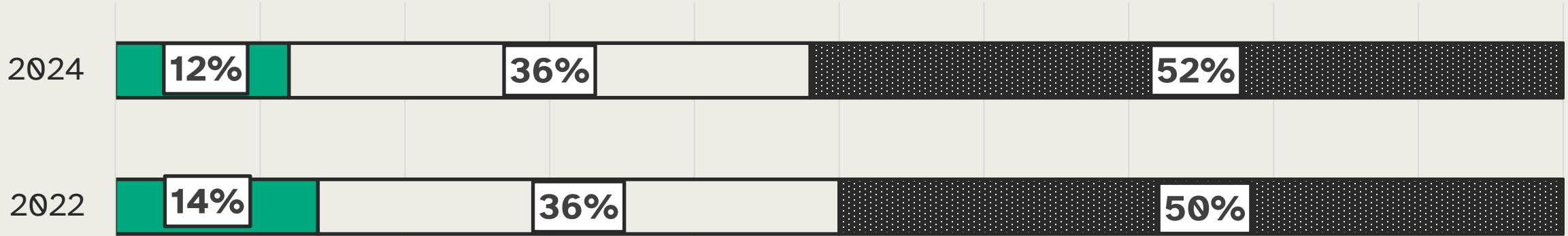


Mobility disability

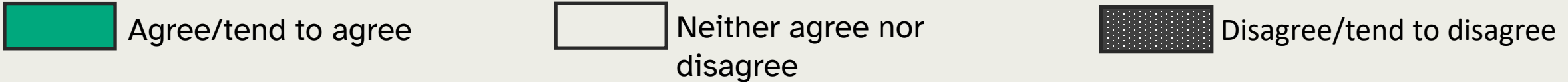
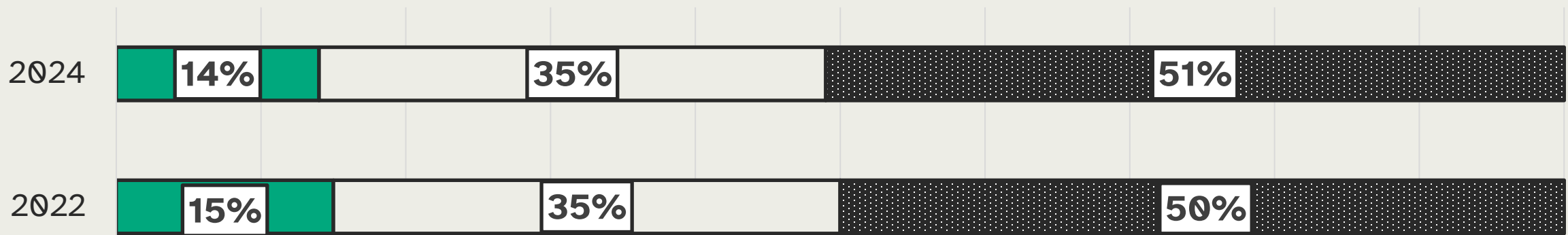


Women often provoke spousal/partner violence against them if they are with:

Hearing impairment



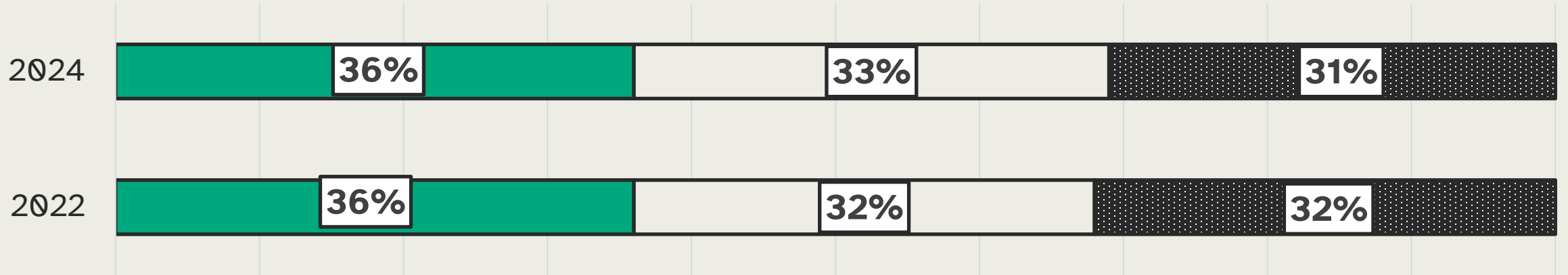
Visual impairment



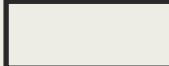
Women often provoke spousal/partner violence against them if they are with:



Psychosocial disability



 Agree/tend to agree

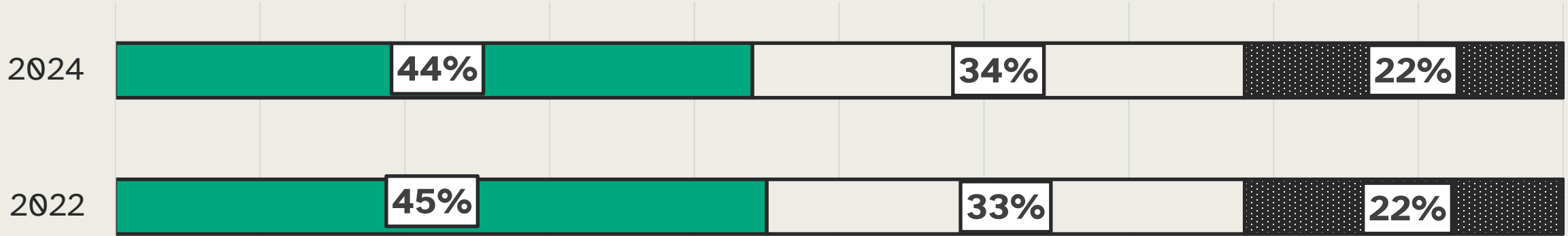
 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

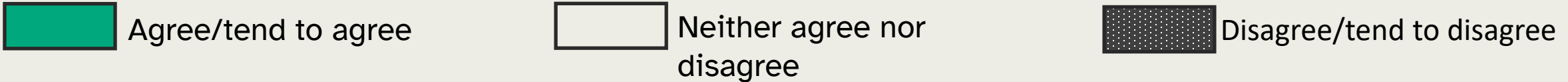
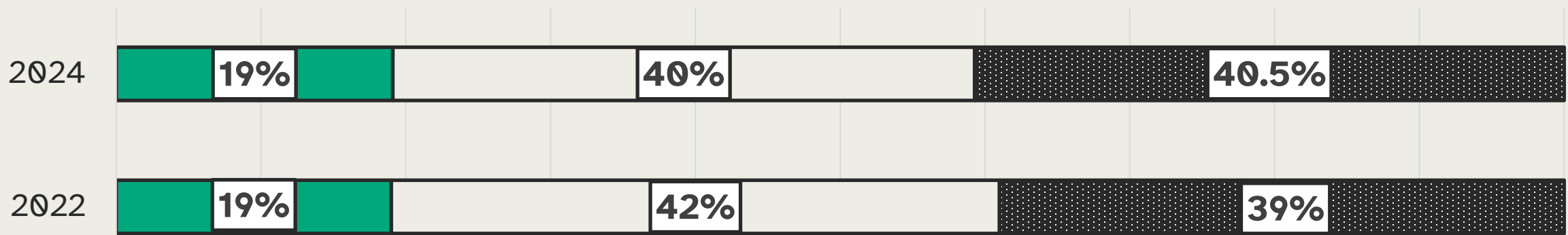
When blaming men for violence, women tend to exaggerate if they are with:



Intellectual disability

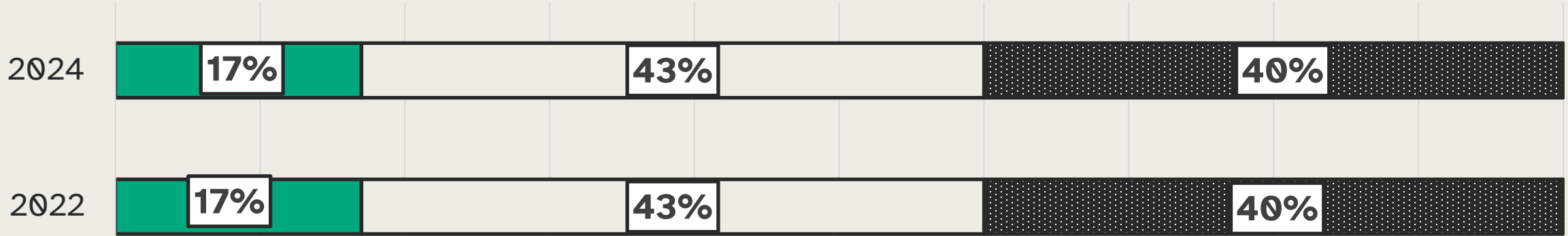


Mobility disability

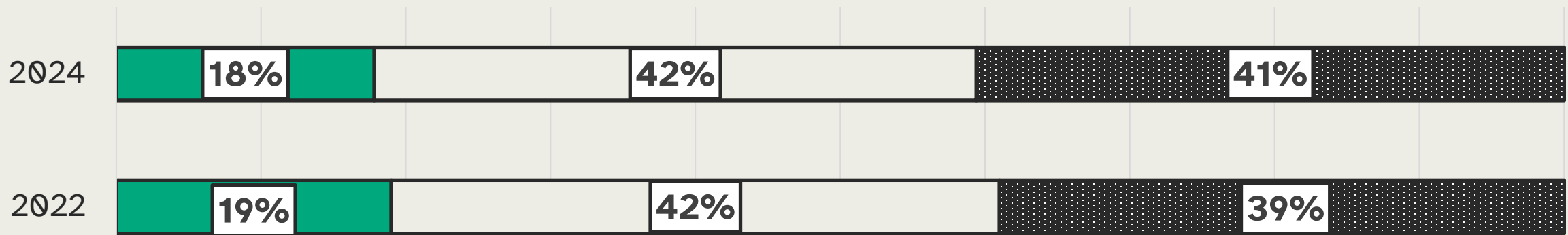



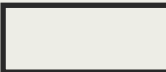

When blaming men for violence, women tend to exaggerate if they are with:

Hearing impairment



Visual impairment

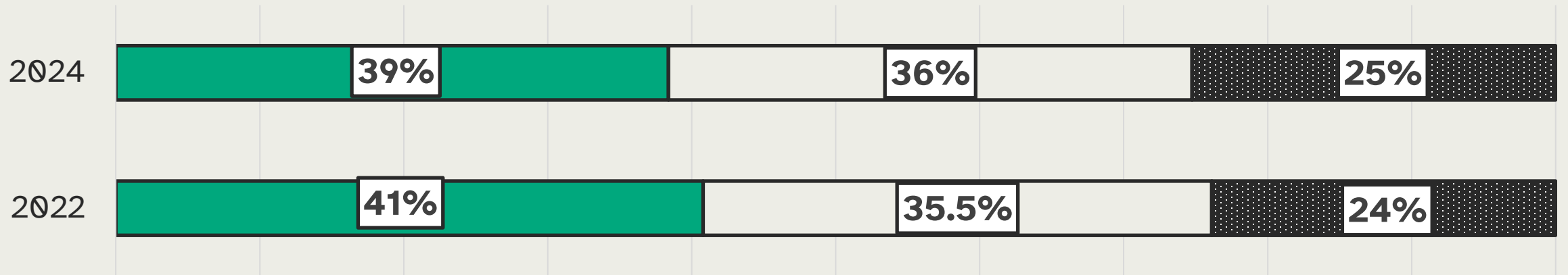


 Agree/tend to agree  Neither agree nor disagree  Disagree/tend to disagree

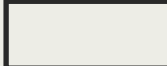
When blaming men for violence, women tend to exaggerate if they are with:



Psychosocial disability



 Agree/tend to agree

 Neither agree nor disagree

 Disagree/tend to disagree

Victim-blaming attitudes



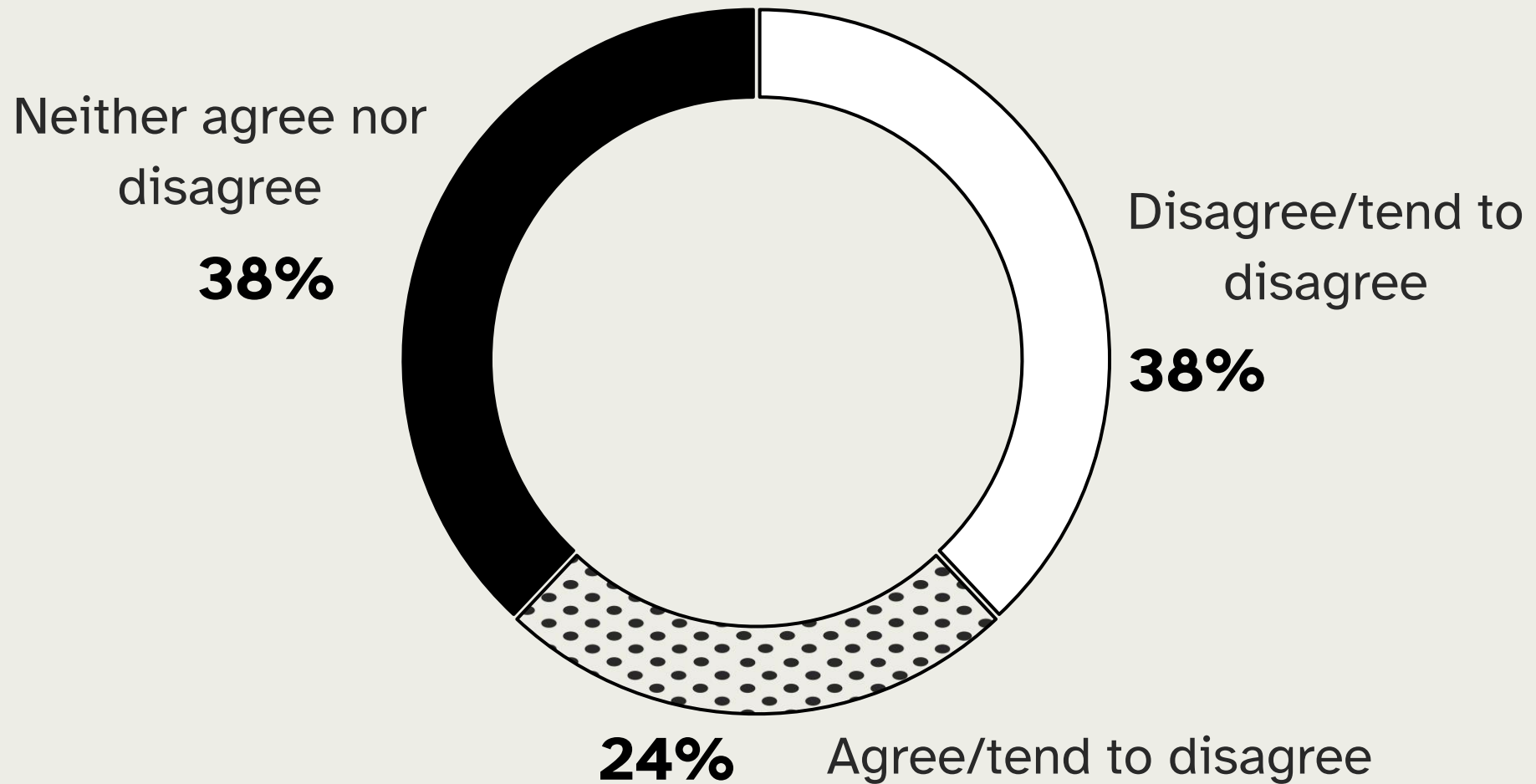
Men are more likely to blame women with disabilities who experience domestic violence. For example, 48% of men and 35% of women agreed with the statement "Women often provoke spousal/partner violence" when asked about women with intellectual disabilities. When asked about women with psychosocial disabilities, 43% of men and 29% of women agreed with the same statement. In cases of mobility disability, visual and hearing impairment, men were also more likely to agree that women themselves provoke violence.

Men were also more likely to agree with the statement "When blaming men for violence, women tend to exaggerate". When asked about women with intellectual disabilities, 53% of men and 36% of women agreed with the statement. In the case of women with psychosocial disabilities, 45% of men and 36% of women agreed with the same statement. Similar differences were recorded when asked about women with mobility disability, visual or hearing impairment.

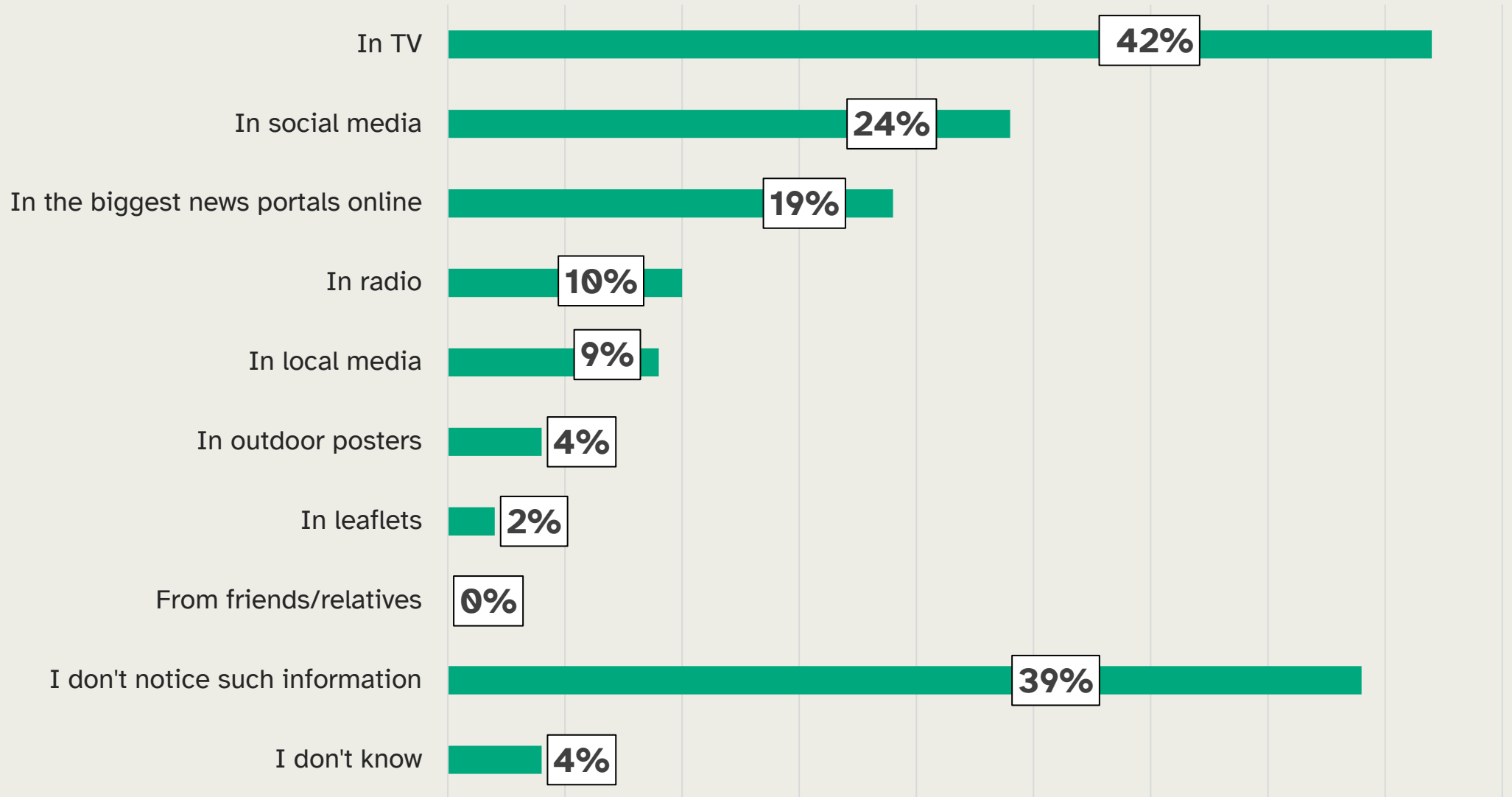
In all cases, women with disabilities who have experienced violence tend to be blamed for the violence they experience by the oldest people (age 70 and older) and people with incomplete secondary education. Women who experienced violence are blamed the least by the persons with higher education, specialists/employees.

Data summarization

Do you agree with the statement: "In the last two years, there has been an increase in information about violence against women with disabilities"?



I notice information about violence against women with disabilities in Lithuania:



Information about violence against women with disabilities



A quarter of those who took part in the survey believed that information about violence against women with disabilities had increased in the last two years in Lithuania. Women noticed information about violence against women with disabilities in all channels more often than men.

The information was most often seen on television (42%) and social media (24%).

Information on television and radio was most noticed by the oldest persons (50% on television and 17% on radio), and on social media by the youngest (36%).

Men noticed the least information about violence against women with disabilities in all information dissemination channels (42% said they did not notice such information) and persons aged 30-39 (43% did not notice).

Data summarization



Main insights

Attitudes towards self-reliance of women with disabilities



1

The self-reliance of hearing-impaired women is viewed most favorably. The attitudes have not changed since 2022 - 66% of the survey participants believed that deaf women can live independently. Society's attitudes towards women's financial independence has improved since 2022 in terms of mobility, hearing and visual disabilities.

2

Women with intellectual disabilities and psychosocial disabilities are viewed most unfavorably. The possibilities of their self-reliance and financial independence from the people closest to them were most often questioned. Comparing the data with the data of the survey conducted in 2022, it can be seen that the attitude towards the independence of women with intellectual disabilities has worsened.

3

The most unfavorably assessed the independence opportunities of women with disabilities were by the elderly and oldest persons (age 70 and older) and residents of Lithuania with incomplete secondary education, the most favorably – by persons with higher education.

4

Women evaluated the self-reliance of women with disabilities in all cases more favorably than men who participated in the survey.

Attitudes towards women with disabilities having a family



5

Regarding mobility, visual, and hearing disabilities, women's attitudes about starting a family for women with disabilities were more favorable than those of men who participated in the survey. Being embarrassed of a partner's or spouse's disability was more justified by men than by women.

6

The possibility of creating romantic relationships with hearing-impaired women is viewed most favorably - almost a third of the survey participants (28%) would approve of their son's marriage to a hearing-impaired woman. A son's marriage to a woman with an intellectual disability is viewed with complete disfavor. Only 11% of survey participants would approve of such a marriage.

7

The majority of society considered the choice to have children as irresponsible if a woman has an intellectual disability (70%). Mothers with hearing impairment are looked upon most favorably.

8

A large part of society still believes that a doctor has the right to terminate the pregnancy of a woman with an intellectual disability without her consent. This opinion was supported by 42% of survey participants (48% thought so in 2022). The number of people who believe that a doctor does not have the right to terminate a woman's pregnancy without her consent has increased if the woman is with mobility, hearing, or vision disabilities.

Attitudes towards violence against women with disabilities



9

Although most of the society (90%) does not under any circumstances justify partner/spouse violence against women with disabilities, 70% of research participants would justify partner/spouse financial control over women with intellectual disabilities; 51% of Lithuanian residents would justify partner's social control.

10

Men tended to justify violence against women with disabilities in all cases more often than women.

11

People with higher education, specialists/officials, and people with the highest incomes (95%) tend to justify and normalize violence and its forms the least. Most of all - the oldest persons (age 70 and older), persons with the lowest income, people living in the countryside.

Recognizing violence and victim-blaming attitudes



12

Women recognize violence better than men and are less likely to blame women for the violence they experience.

13

In all cases, people with the lowest incomes (up to 400 euros per family member) recognize violence best, Vilnius residents, specialists/employees recognize violence more often than other groups of society.

14

Men were more likely than women to agree that women with disabilities provoke violence against them themselves, and when they blame men for violence, they tend to exaggerate.

15

Women with intellectual disabilities and women with psychosocial disabilities are the most blamed for the violence they experience.

The survey was conducted during the implementation of the project “SEEN: Gender Based Violence Against Women with Disabilities in Focus.

The project is co-financed by the European Union.

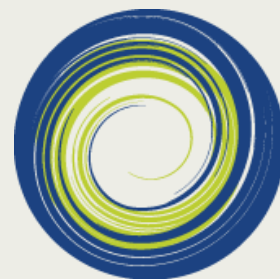


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