

# Department of Social Protection Community Welfare Services Survey Report July 2023

J.234775

**B&A**

Prepared by:  
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An Roinn Cobairte Sárlála  
Department of Social Protection

### Executive Summary

B&A

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**Overall Satisfaction: CWS**

★★★★★

75% report they are very or fairly satisfied with the service received.

Satisfaction is highest (79%) for younger participants (under 30 years).

**Rating of Customer Service**

Most: In-person (21%) Phone (27%) Online (6%)

<p><b>12%</b> most positively rated</p> <p>92% offices easy to find</p> <p>82% convenient opening hours</p> <p>80% satisfied with waiting times</p> <p>Phone most positively rated</p> <p>69% easy to find phone no.</p> <p>68% satisfied not left on hold</p> <p>66% easy to connect over phone</p>	<p><b>Staff highly rated</b></p> <p>82% staff friendly &amp; welcoming</p> <p>82% staff by their best for me</p> <p>81% staff are very good at job</p> <p>Services also positively rated</p> <p>80% good understanding of the process</p> <p>77% Understood reason for decision</p>
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**Process**

45% would prefer to apply online

40% have applied online for other social welfare payments.

Those who would prefer to apply for CWS payments online driven by age

61% Under 30 years ↑

53% 30-45 years ↓

30% Over 45 years ↓

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**Mywelfare.ie**

79% Familiar

84% In-person

Familiarity with mywelfare.ie is higher for those aged under 30 years (87%) and those in receipt of S423 payment (83%). Registration on mywelfare.ie is also higher for the under 45 age group (69%) and is highest for those in the Mid-East region at 89%.

**Net score 47%**

47% of CWS clients report that the services offered by the Community Welfare Service are better than their main financial institution

**Suggested improvements**

32% happy/no improvement

32% application speed/waiting times

10% better customer service

8% clarity on entitlements

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# Executive Summary





# Executive Summary



## Overall Satisfaction: CWS

75% report they are very or fairly satisfied with the service received.

Satisfaction is highest (79%) for younger participants (Under 30 years).

## Rating of Customer Service

Most interacted F2F(39%) Phone(27%) Online (6%)

### F2F most positively rated

- 92% offices easy to find
- 82% convenient opening hours
- 80% satisfied with waiting times

### Phone next most positively rated

- 69% easy to find phone no.
- 68% satisfied not left on hold
- 66% easy to connect over phone

### Staff highly rated

- 82% staff friendly & welcoming
- 82% staff try their best for me
- 81% staff are very good at job

### Services also positively rated

- 80% good understanding of the process
- 77% Understood reason for decision

## Process

45% would prefer to apply online  
40% have applied online for other social welfare payments.

Those who would prefer to apply for CWS payments online driven by age

- 61% Under 30 years
- 53% 30-45 years.
- 30% Over 45 years



## Mywelfare.ie

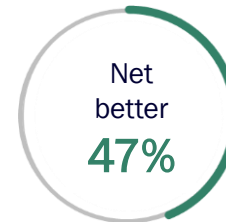


Familiarity with mywelfare.ie is higher for those aged under 30 years (87%) and those in receipt of BASI payment (83%). Registration on mywelfare.ie is also higher for the under 45 age group (88%) and is highest for those in the Mid East region at 89%.



69% of all participants who are familiar with mywelfare.ie agree that the site is easy to use.

80% for the under 30 age group.



47% of CWS clients report that the services offered by the Community Welfare Service are better than their main financial institution

## Suggested improvements



- 32% happy/no improvement
- 12% application speed/waiting times
- 10% better customer service
- 8% clarity on entitlements





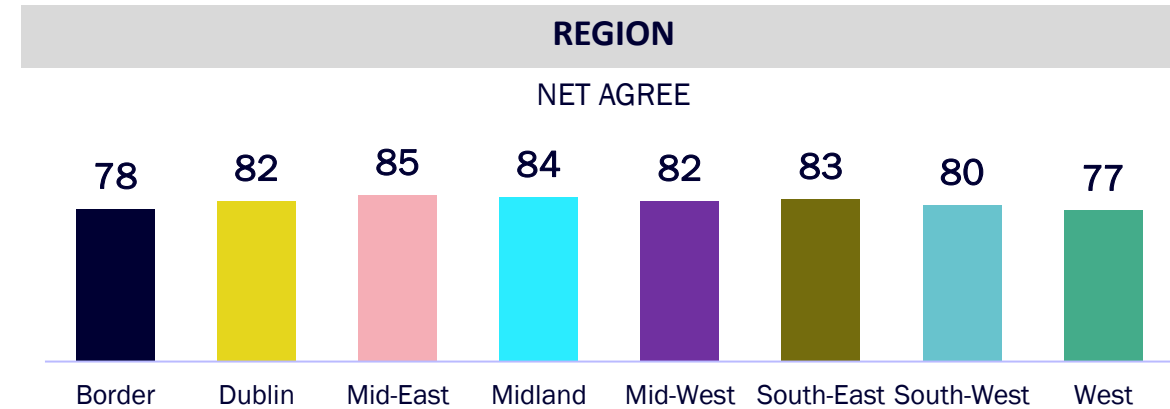
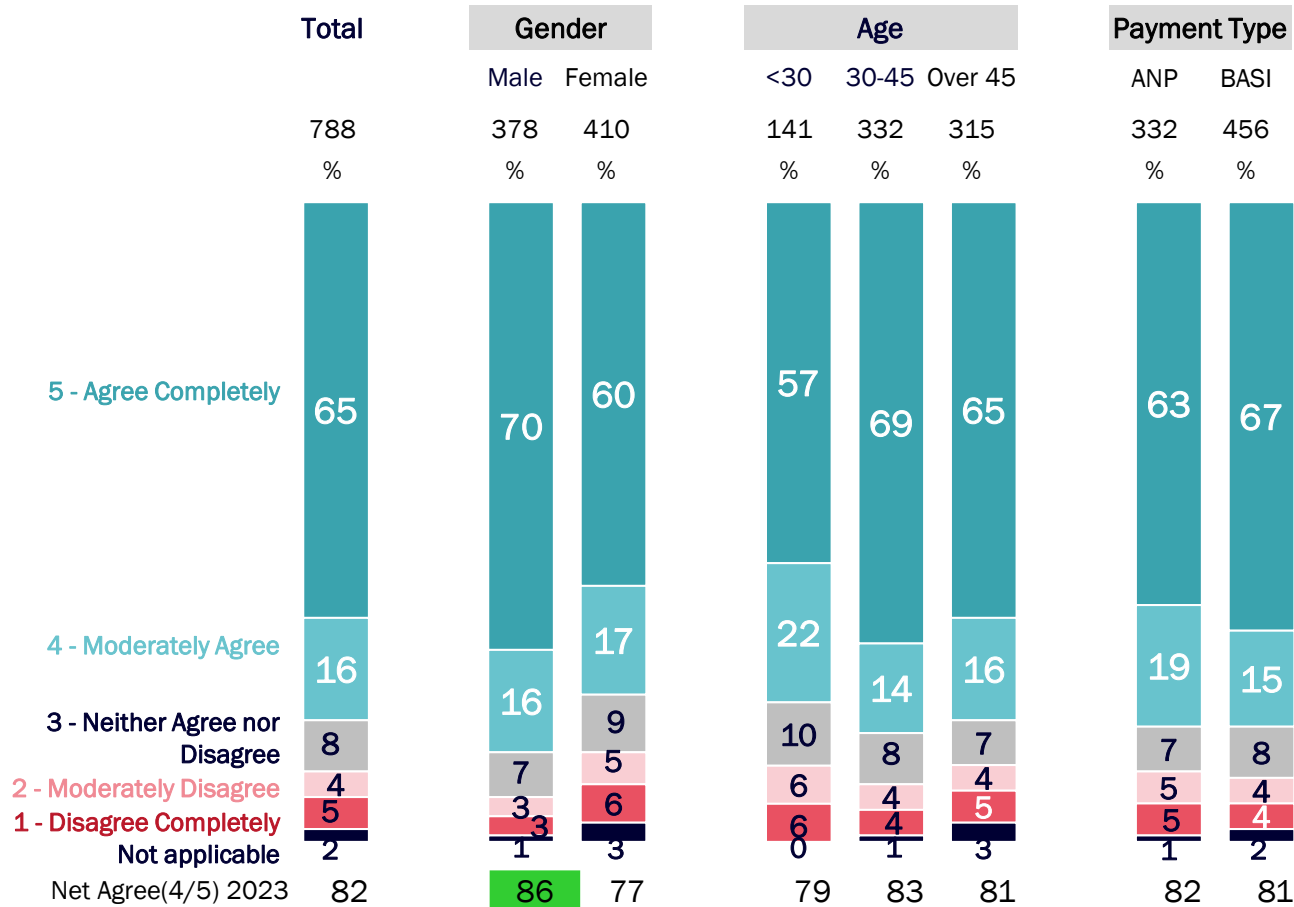
**Face to Face Interaction**



# Convenient Opening Hours

Base: All who had face to face meetings N – 788

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total





Over eight in ten (82%) of those who had a face-to-face meeting in 2023 found the opening hours to be convenient for them. Satisfaction levels were universally high, statistically higher for men at 86%.

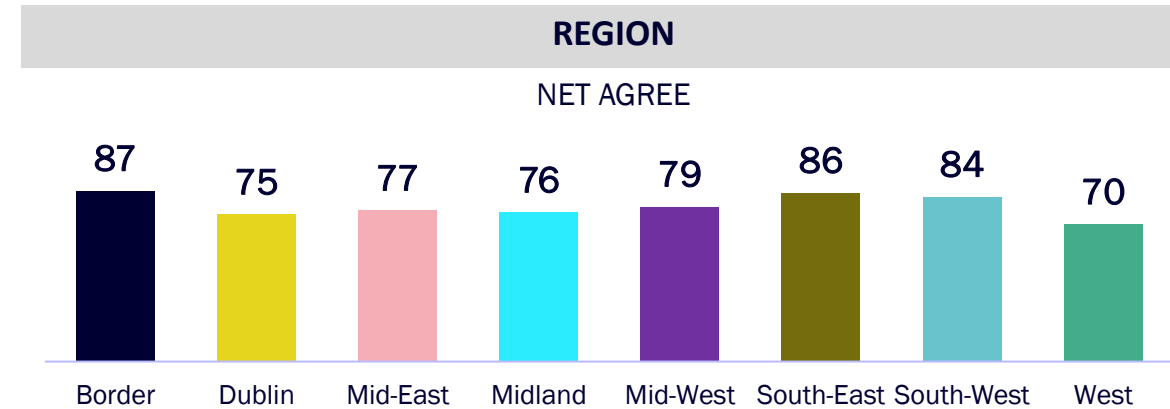
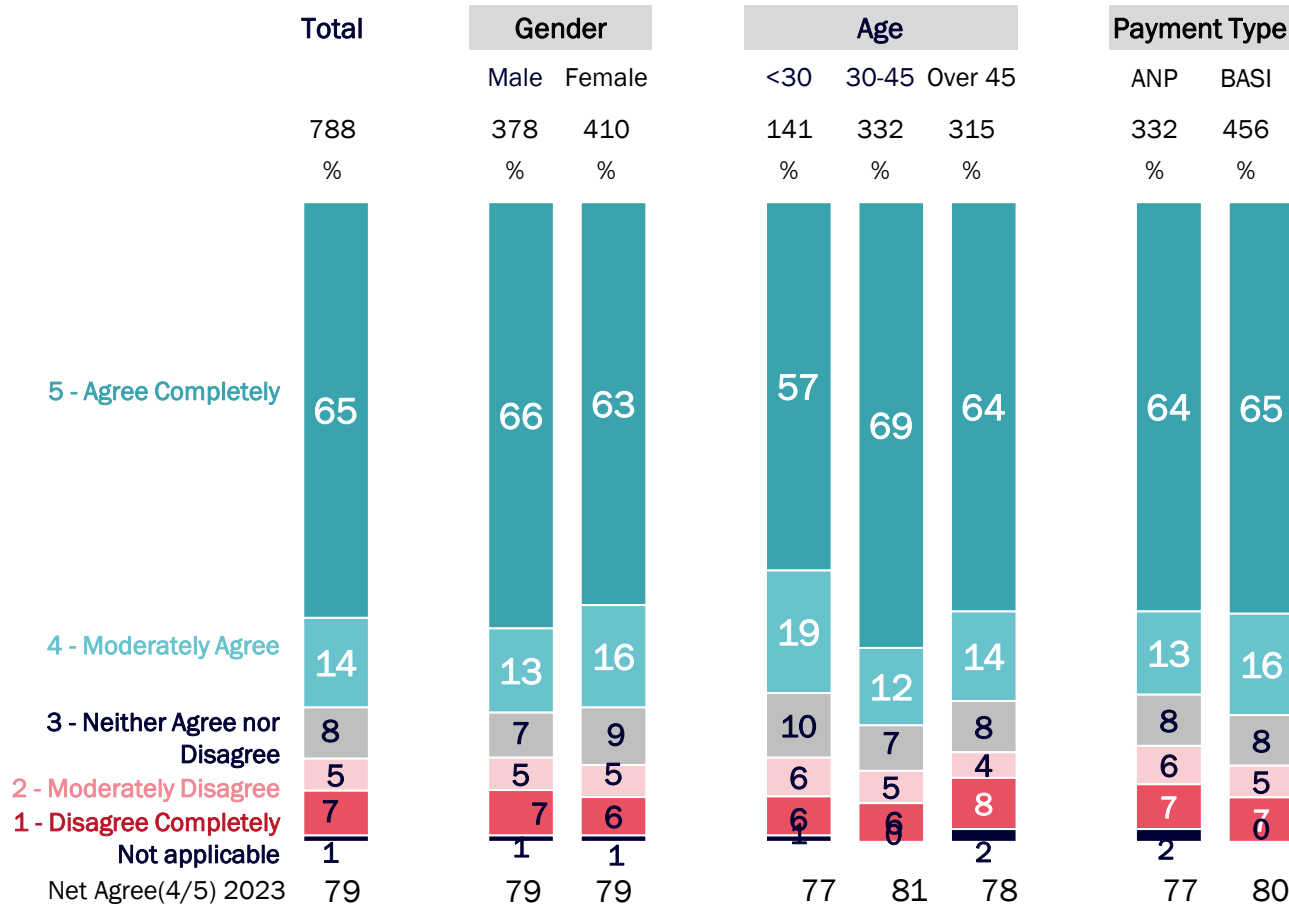
**Q.3b.1** Now thinking about **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



# Easy Location

Base: All who had face to face meetings N – 788

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total





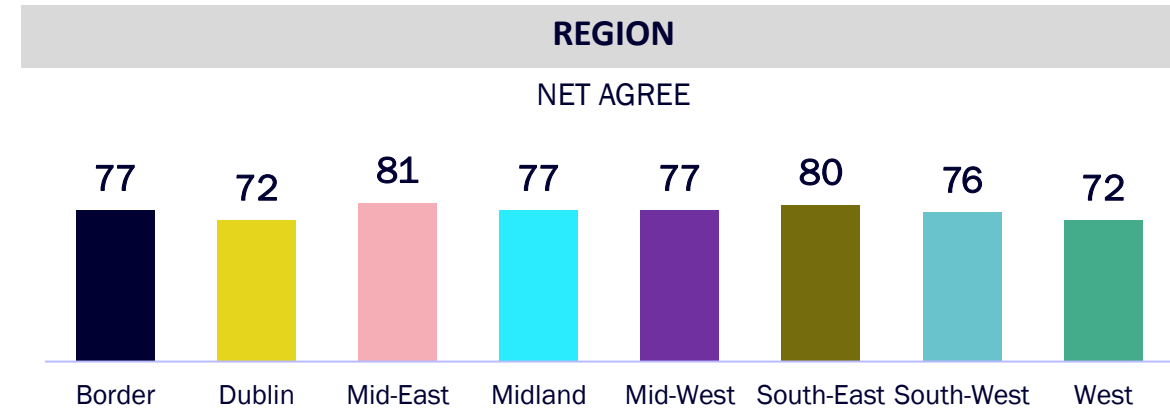
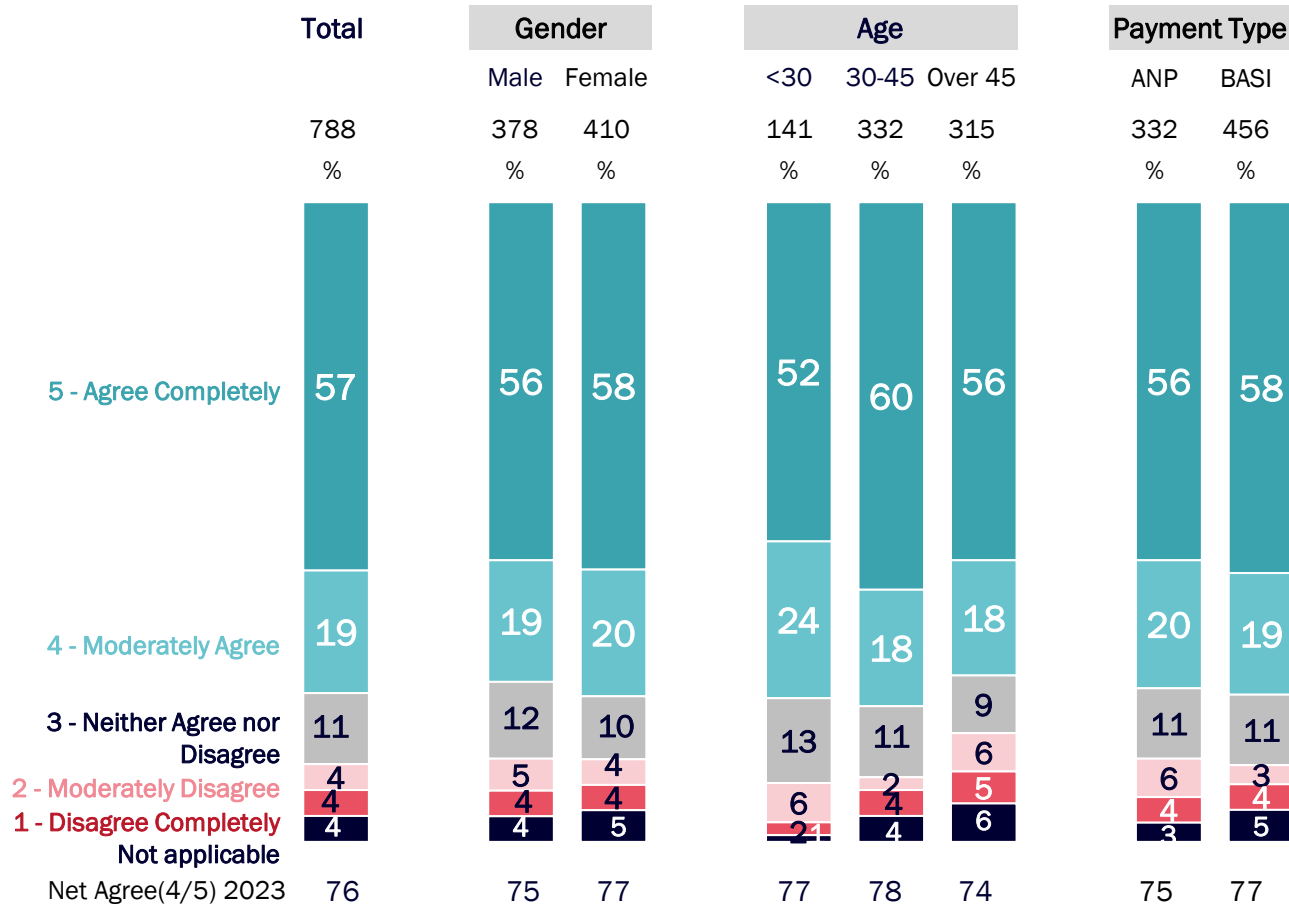
Eight in ten (79%) agreed with the statement that travelling to the Community Welfare office was easy for them. Levels of agreement varied by region with those in the Border region most satisfied at 87% and those in the West least satisfied at 70%.

**Q.3b.2** Now thinking about **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# Application Pack was Useful & Helpful

Base: All who had face to face meetings N – 788

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total





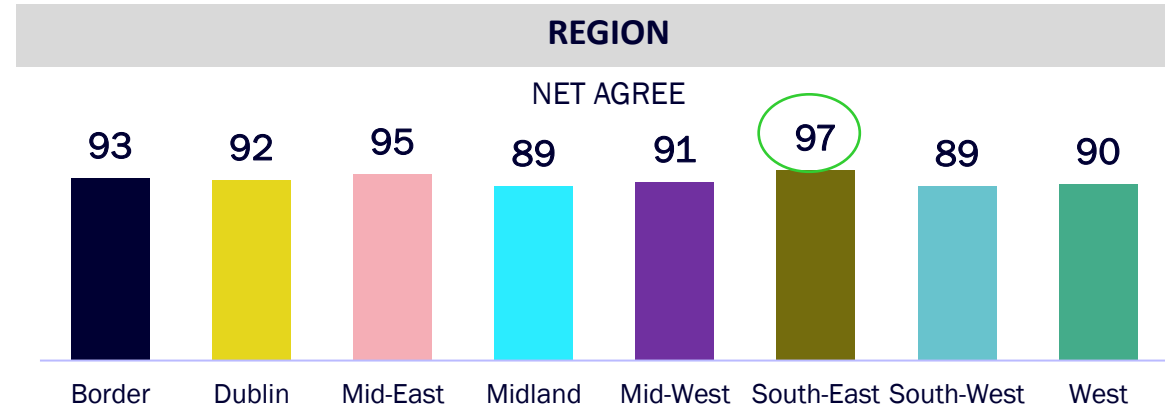
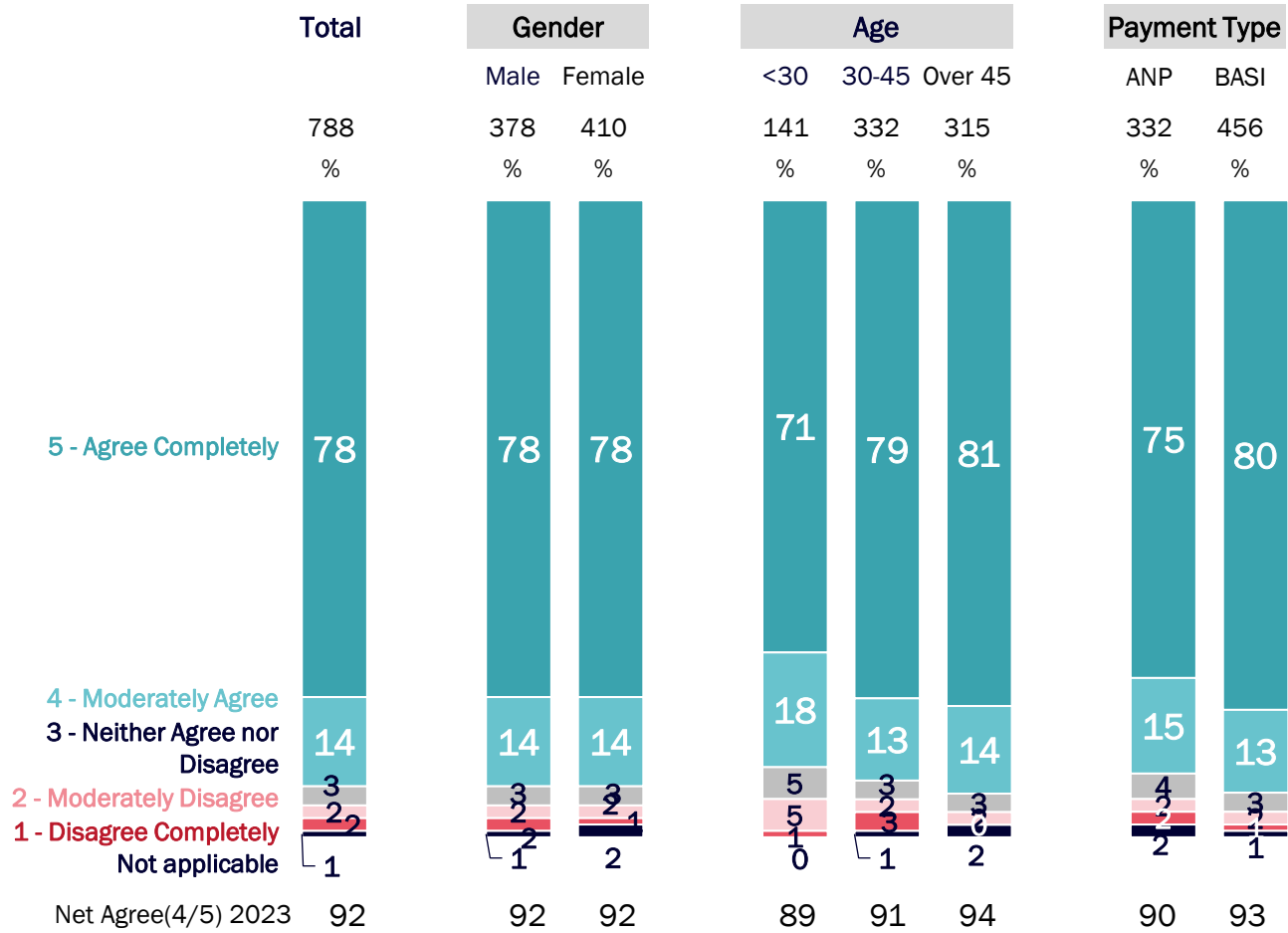
Over three-quarters (76%) agreed that they found the application pack useful and helpful. Agreement levels were more pronounced for the 30-45 years age group (78%) and those in the Mid-East (81%) and South-East (80%).

**Q.3b.3** Now thinking about **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# Easy to find

Base: All who had face to face meetings N – 788

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total





There was universal agreement that the community welfare service offices were easy to find with 92% agreeing at an overall level. This rose to 97% for the South-East.

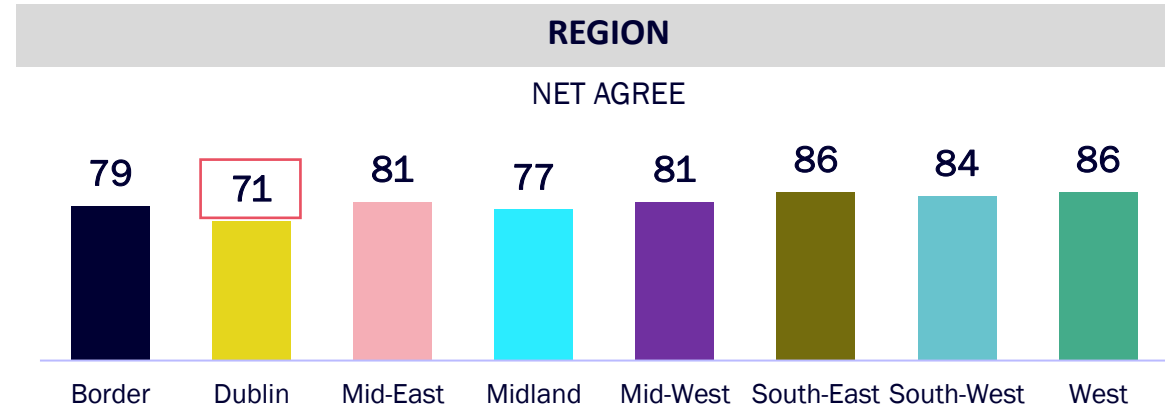
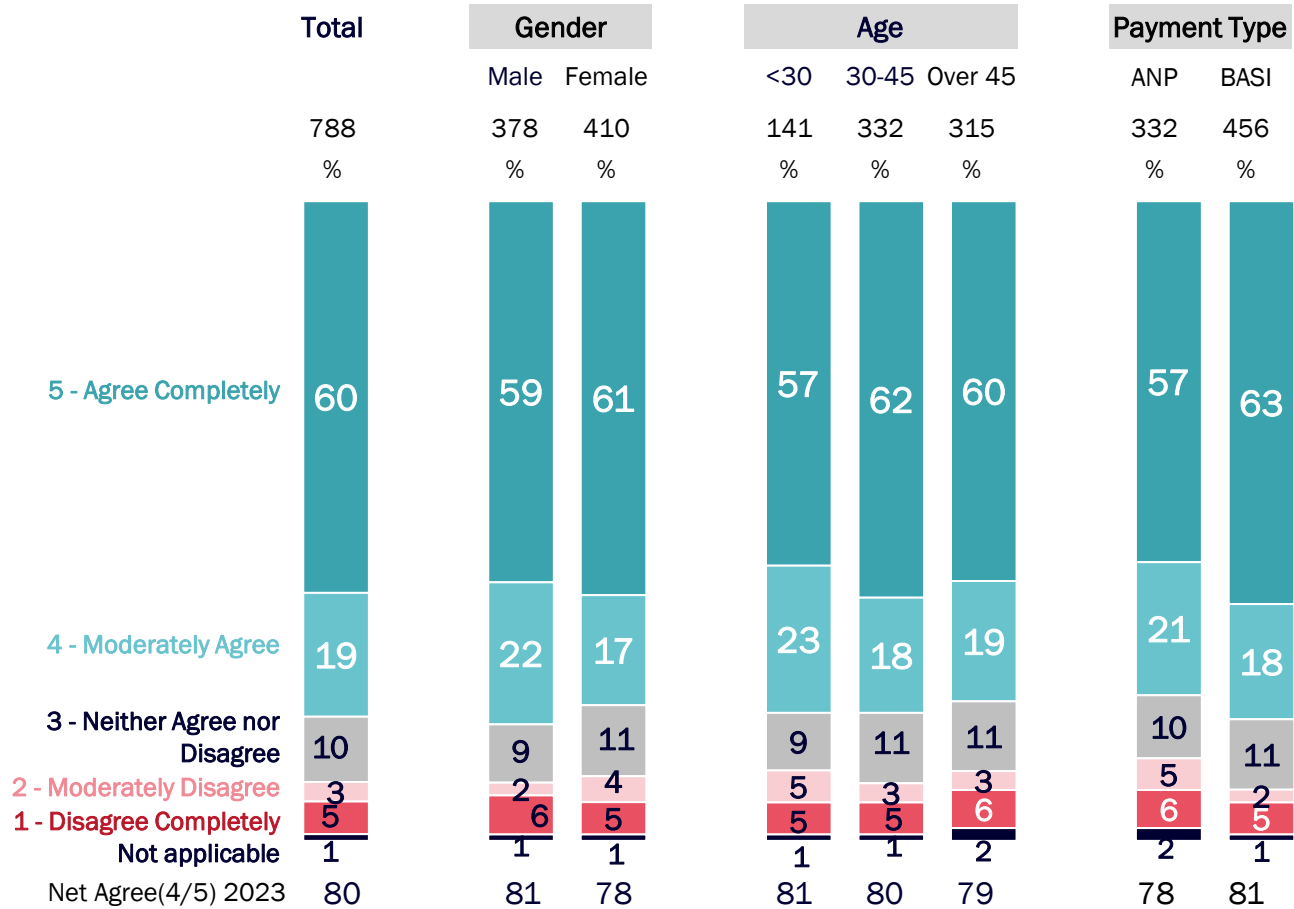
**Q.3b.4** Now thinking about **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



# Waiting times

Base: All who had face to face meetings N – 788

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total





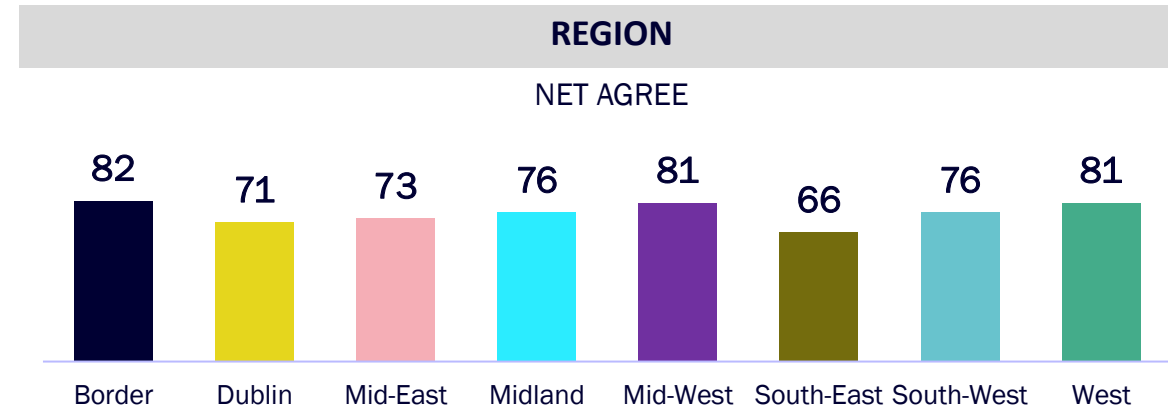
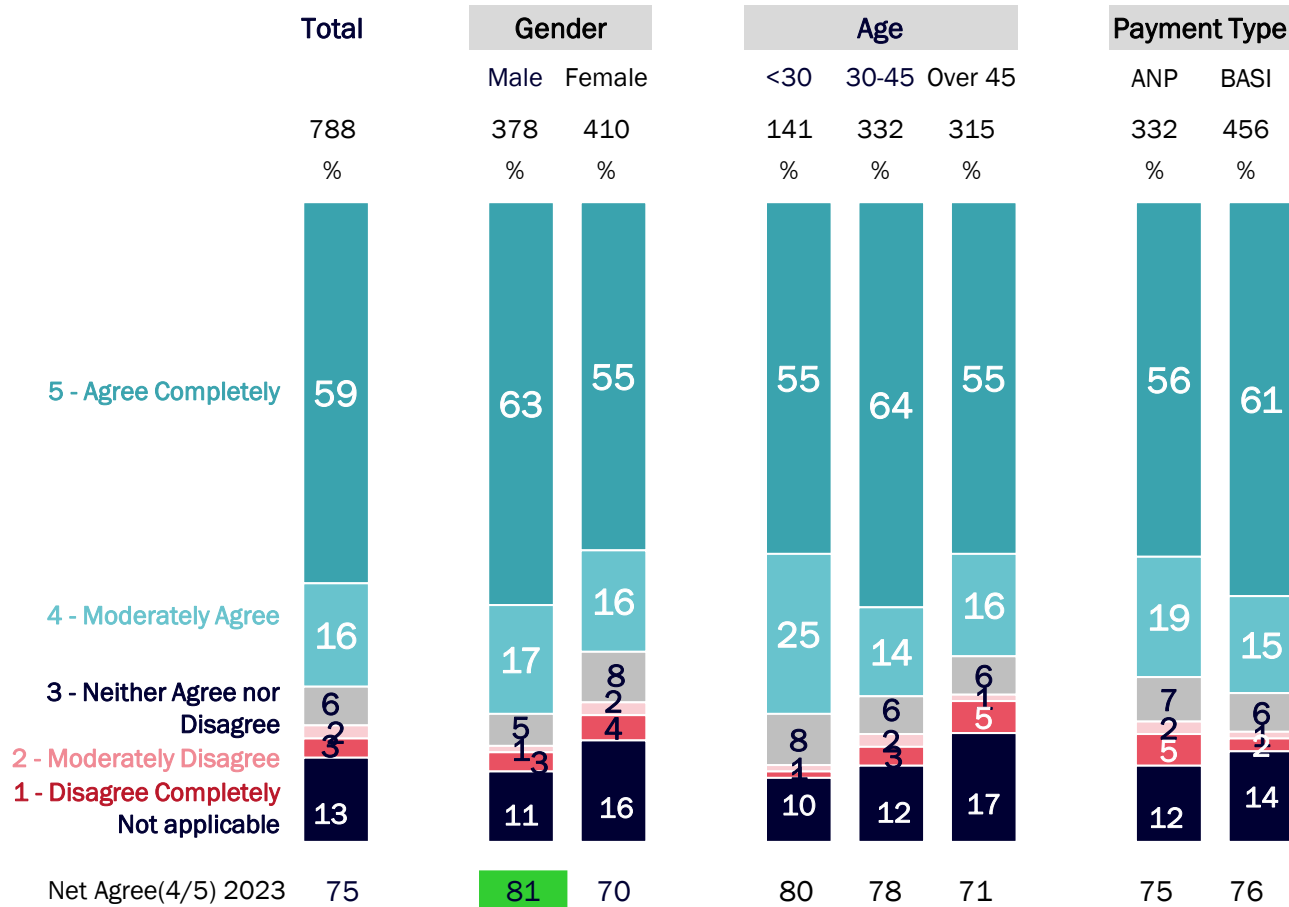
Satisfaction with waiting time is high across the demographics at 80%. It is statistically lower for Dublin at 71%.

**Q.3b.5** Now thinking about **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# Seen at Appointed Time (if pre-arranged appointment)

Base: All who had face to face meetings N – 788

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



Satisfaction with the amount of time it takes to be seen for pre-arranged appointments is also high with overall agreement at 75%. This is statistically higher for men at 81%. Note: 13% of the sample stated this was not applicable (or had yet to be seen), higher for those aged over 45 at 17%.

**Q.3b.6** Now thinking about **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.





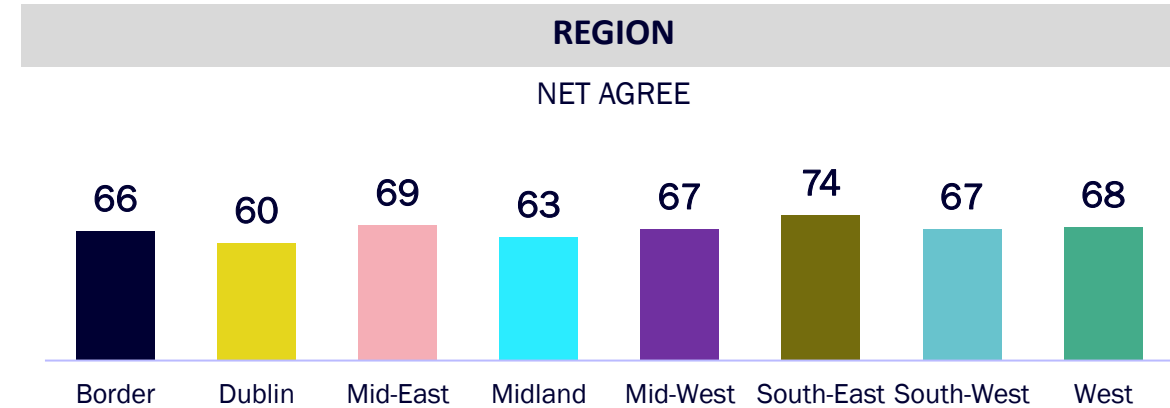
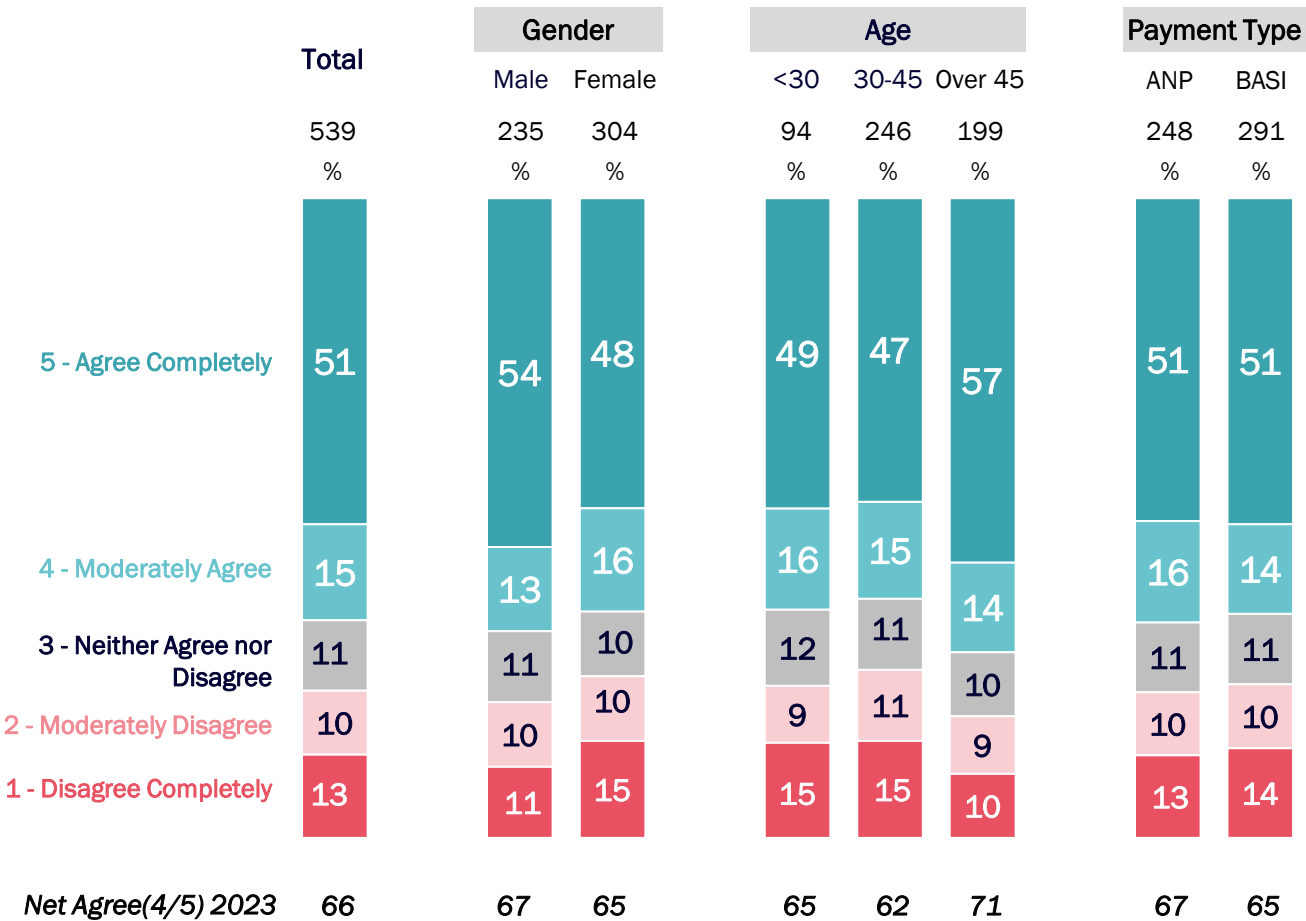
# Telephone Interaction



# I was easily able to connect with my Community Welfare Officer over the phone

Base: All Respondents who had Telephone Interaction N - 539

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



Two-thirds (66%) of those who had telephone interaction with the Community Welfare agreed they were easily able to connect with their Community Welfare officer over the phone. Agreement levels for Dublin were lower with 60% agreeing (and 33% disagreeing).

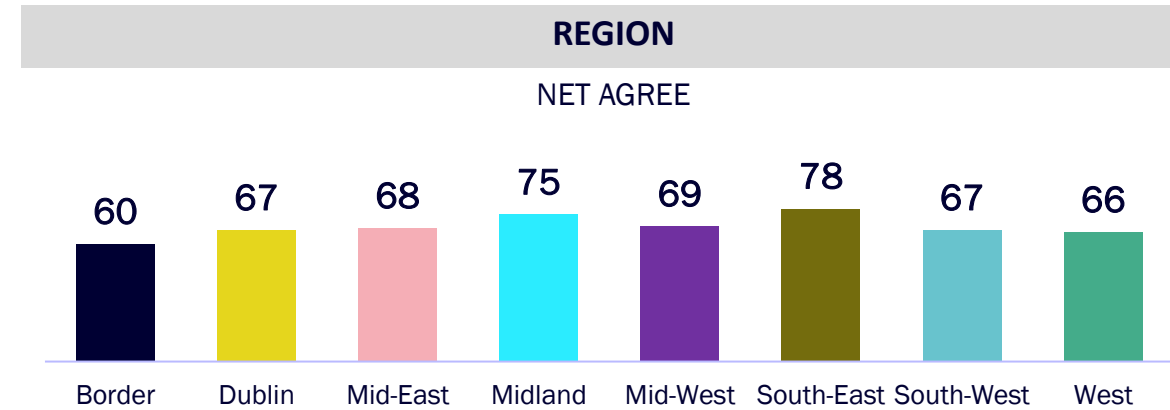
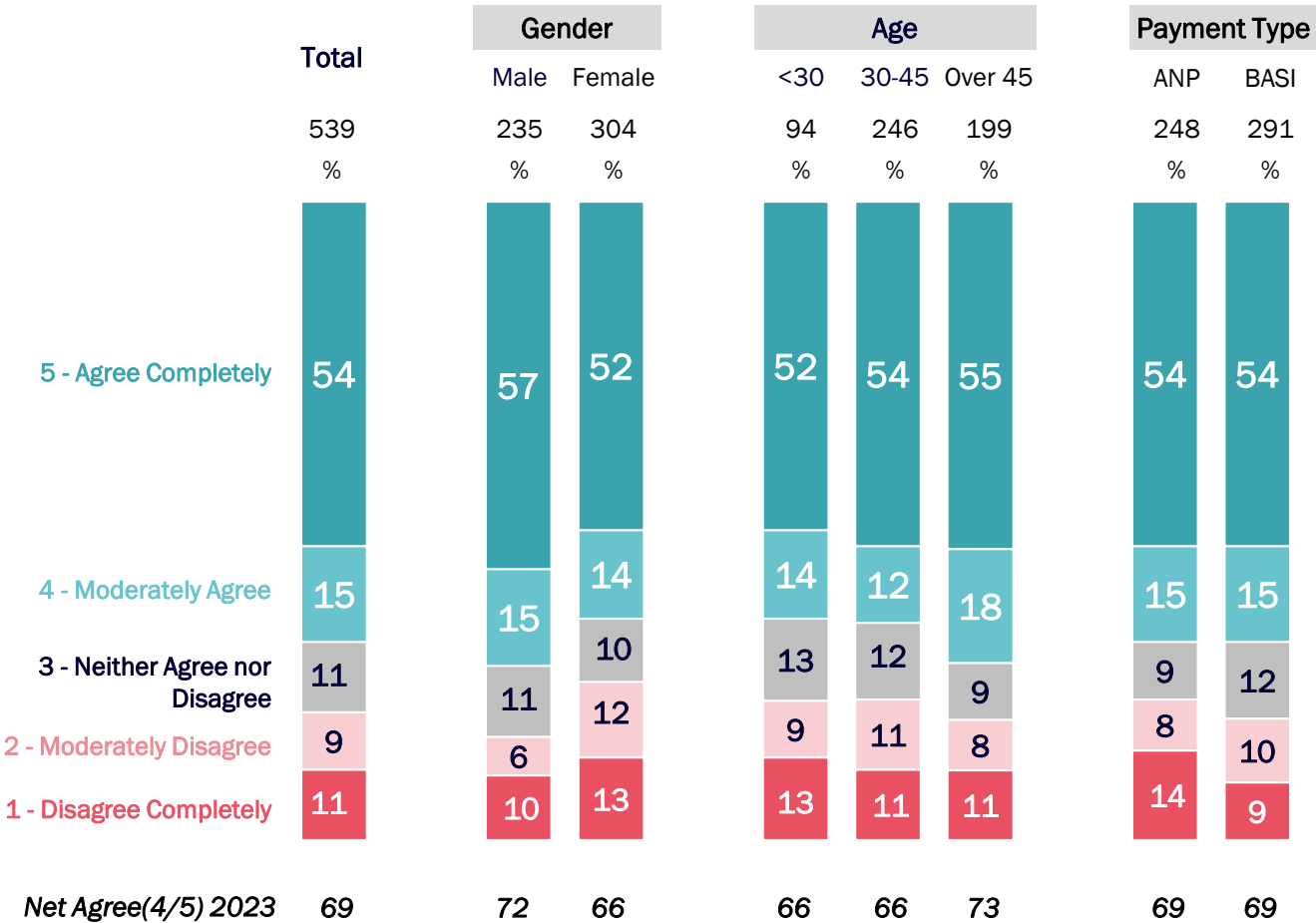
**Q.3c.1** Now thinking about your **PHONE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



# It was easy to find the Community Welfare Service phone number

Base: All Respondents who had Telephone Interaction N - 539

  Statistically higher than total  
  Statistically lower than total



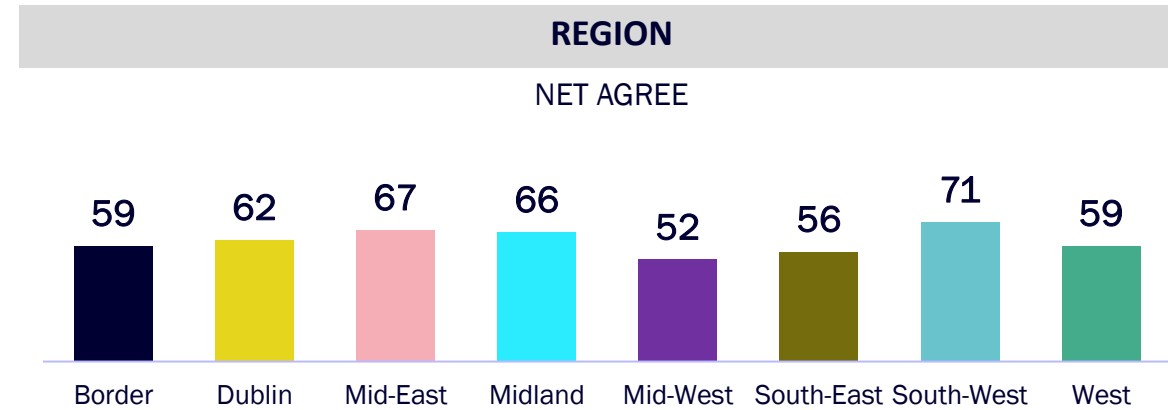
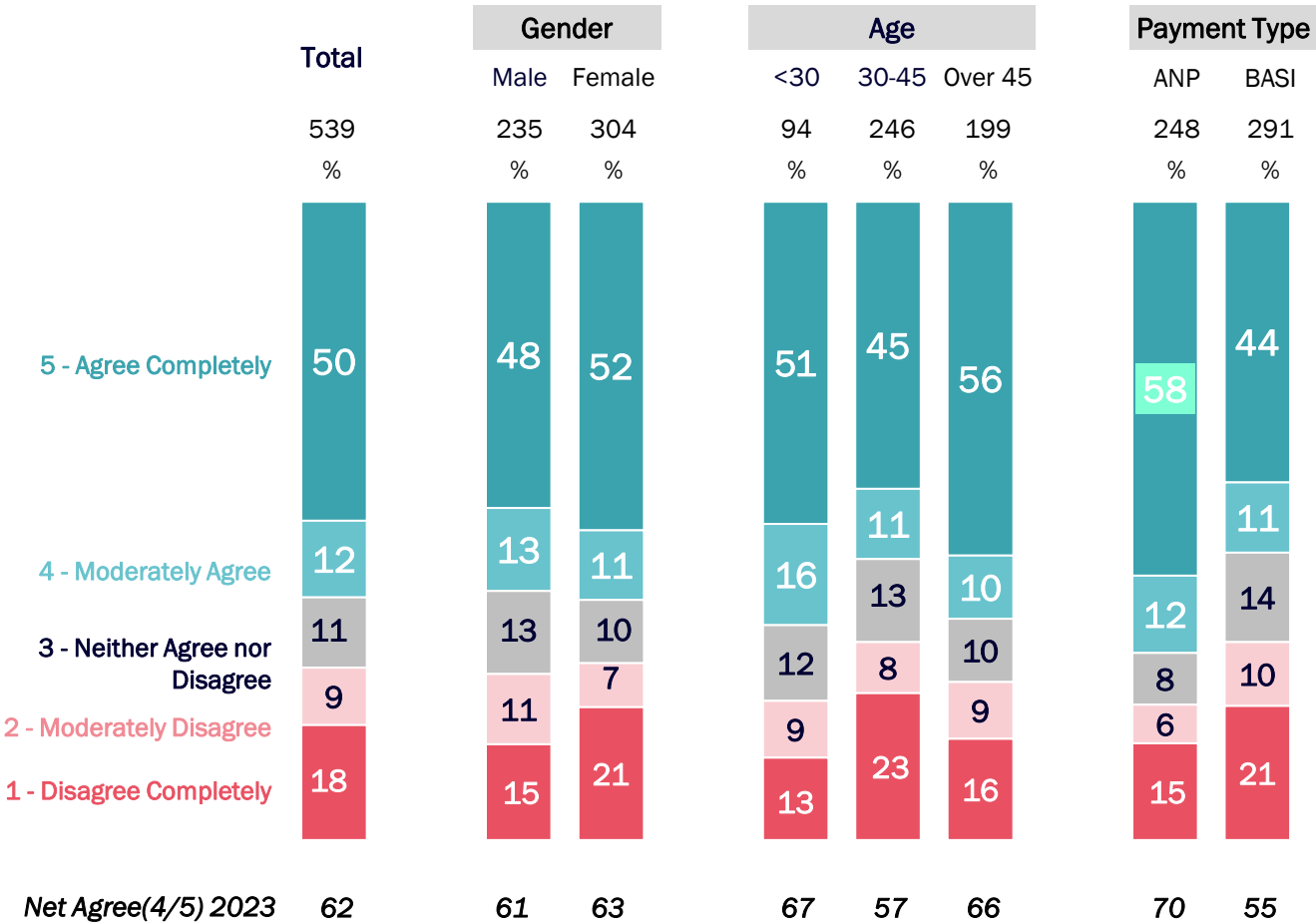
Seven in ten (69%) agreed that it was easy to find the Community Welfare Service phone number. While not statistically significant, men were likely to agree at 72% versus women (66%). Agreement was also higher for over 45's at 73% and those in the South East at 78%. The Border region had lower levels of agreement with 60% agreeing and 28% disagreeing.

**Q.3c.2** Now thinking about your **PHONE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# My issue was resolved over the phone without having to attend the office in person

Base: All Respondents who had Telephone Interaction N - 539

  Statistically higher than total  
  Statistically lower than total





62% agreed that their issue was resolved over the phone without having to attend the office in person at an overall level.

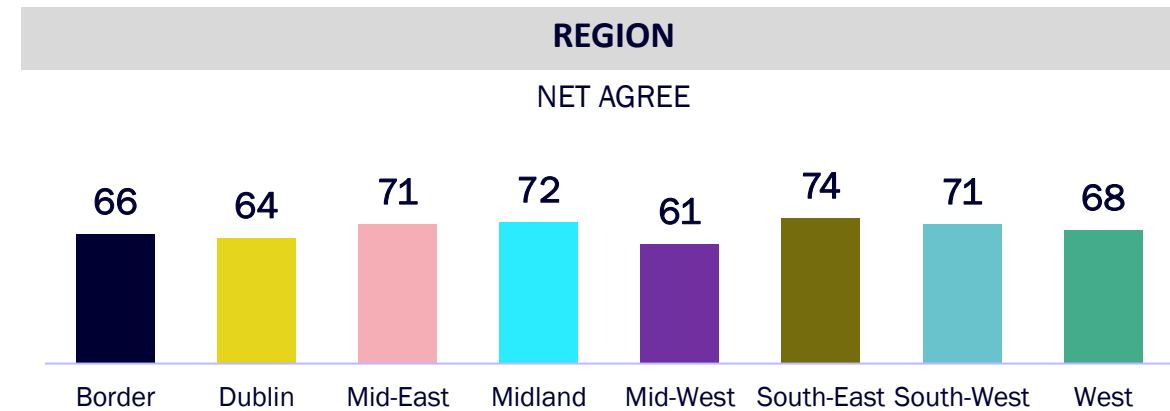
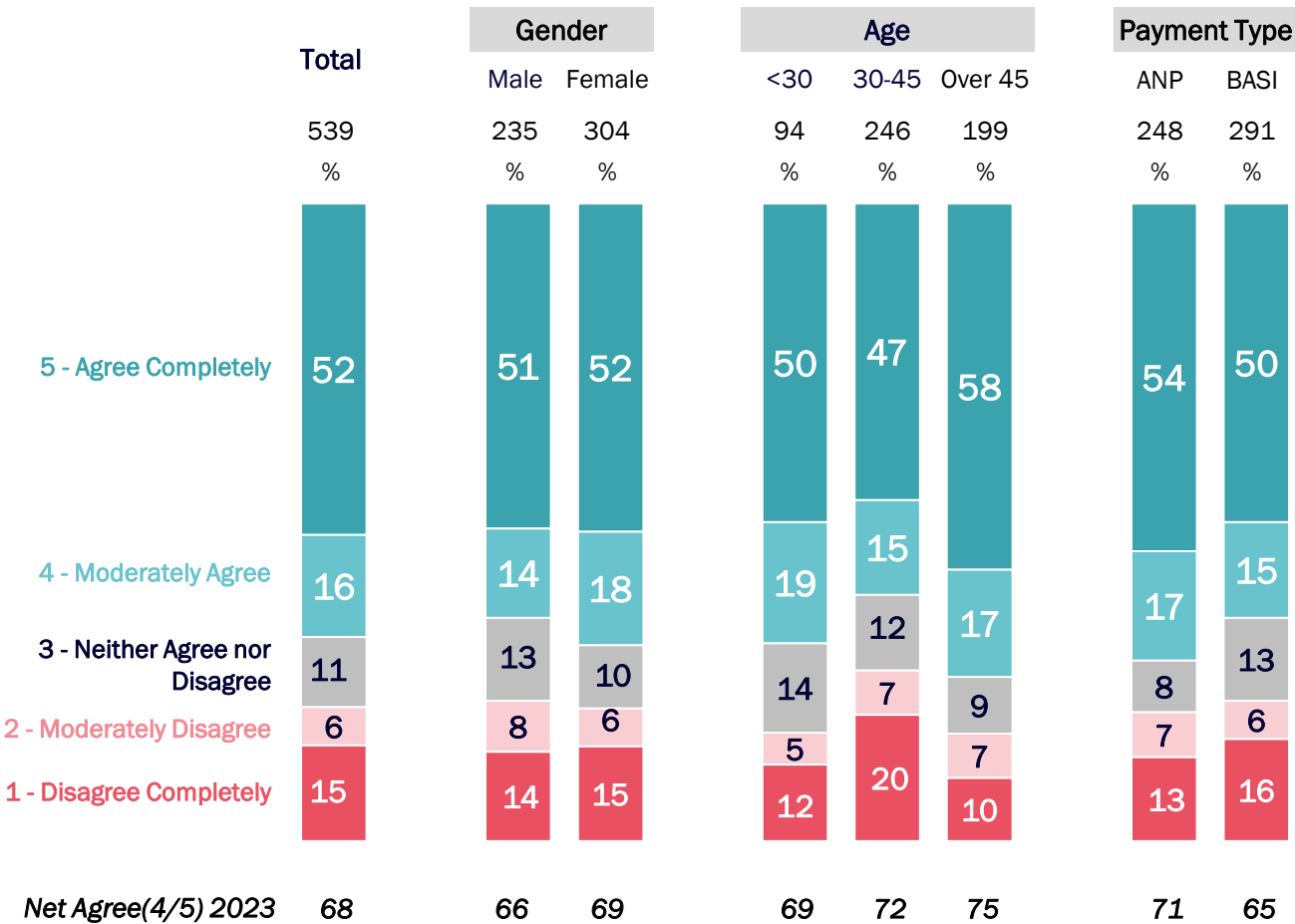
This was highest for those receiving Additional Needs Payment with 58% completely agreeing (70% agree).

**Q.3c.3** Now thinking about your **PHONE INTERACTION** with the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# I was satisfied that I was not left on hold for a long time

Base: All Respondents who had Telephone Interaction N - 539

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



68% agreed they were satisfied with not being left on hold on phone for a long time. Agreement was highest for those aged over 45 years at 75%. In terms of region, agreement was highest for those in the South-East at 74% with lower agreement for the Mid West at 61%.





**Staff**

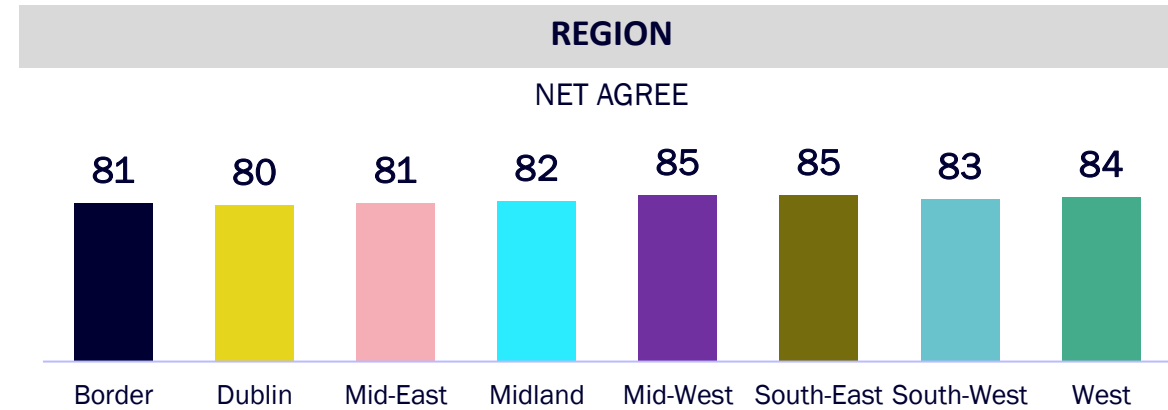
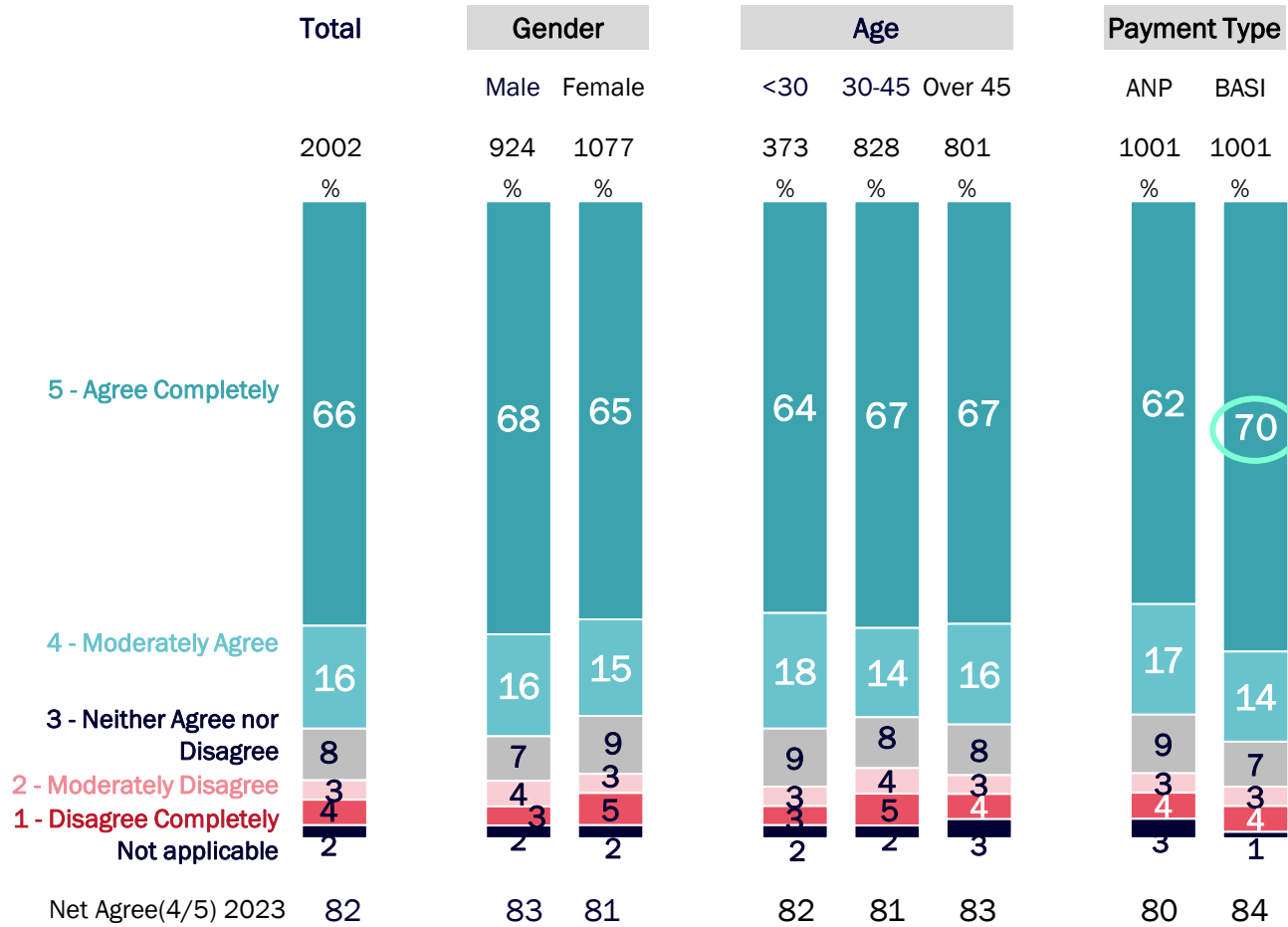




# Staff are friendly and make you feel welcome

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

○ Statistically higher than total  
○ Statistically lower than total



Satisfaction with staff friendliness and being made feel welcome is high across the board with all respondents allocating a top two box score of 80% or above. This is highest for males at 83%, Over 45's 83% and those in receipt of BASI payment 84%. Those in the Mid-West and South-East registered 85% agreement.

Q.4a.1 Now thinking about Community Welfare Service staff, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



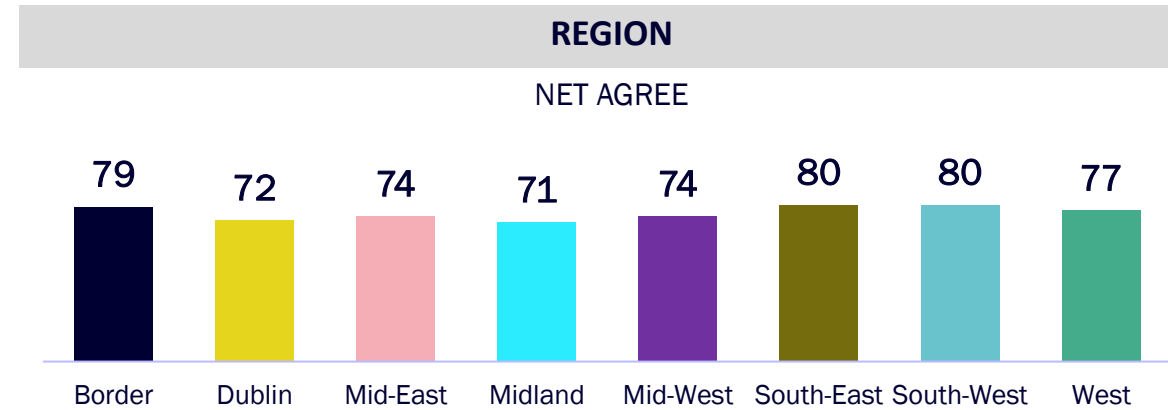
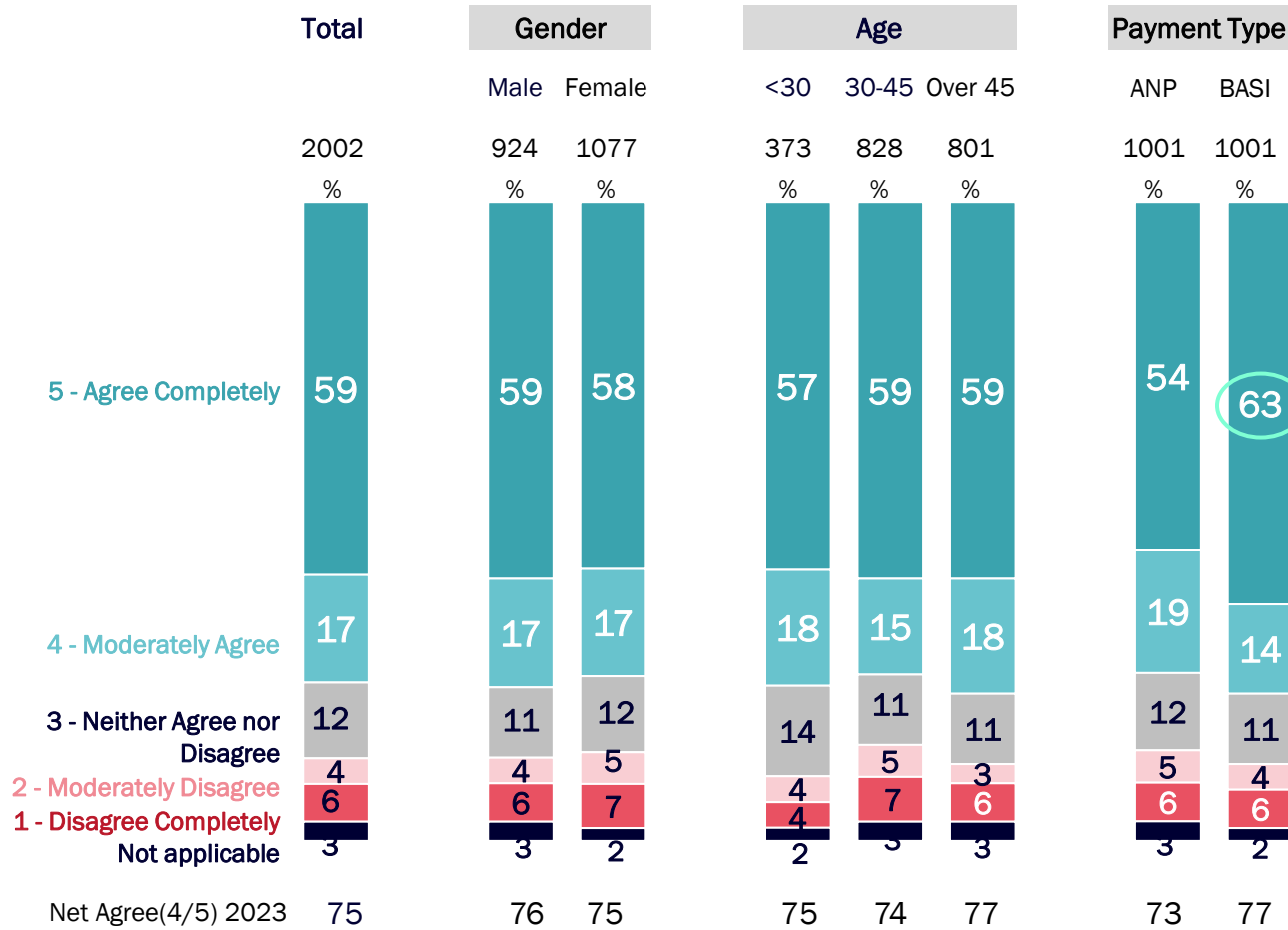
# Feel valued

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

○ Statistically higher than total  
○ Statistically lower than total



**B&A**





75% of Community Welfare respondents agree that staff make me feel valued. Those in receipt of BASI payment display higher agreement levels with 63% agreeing completely (77% any agree). Agreement levels ranged from 80% in South East and South West to 71% in the the Midlands.

Q.4a.2 Now thinking about Community Welfare Service staff, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



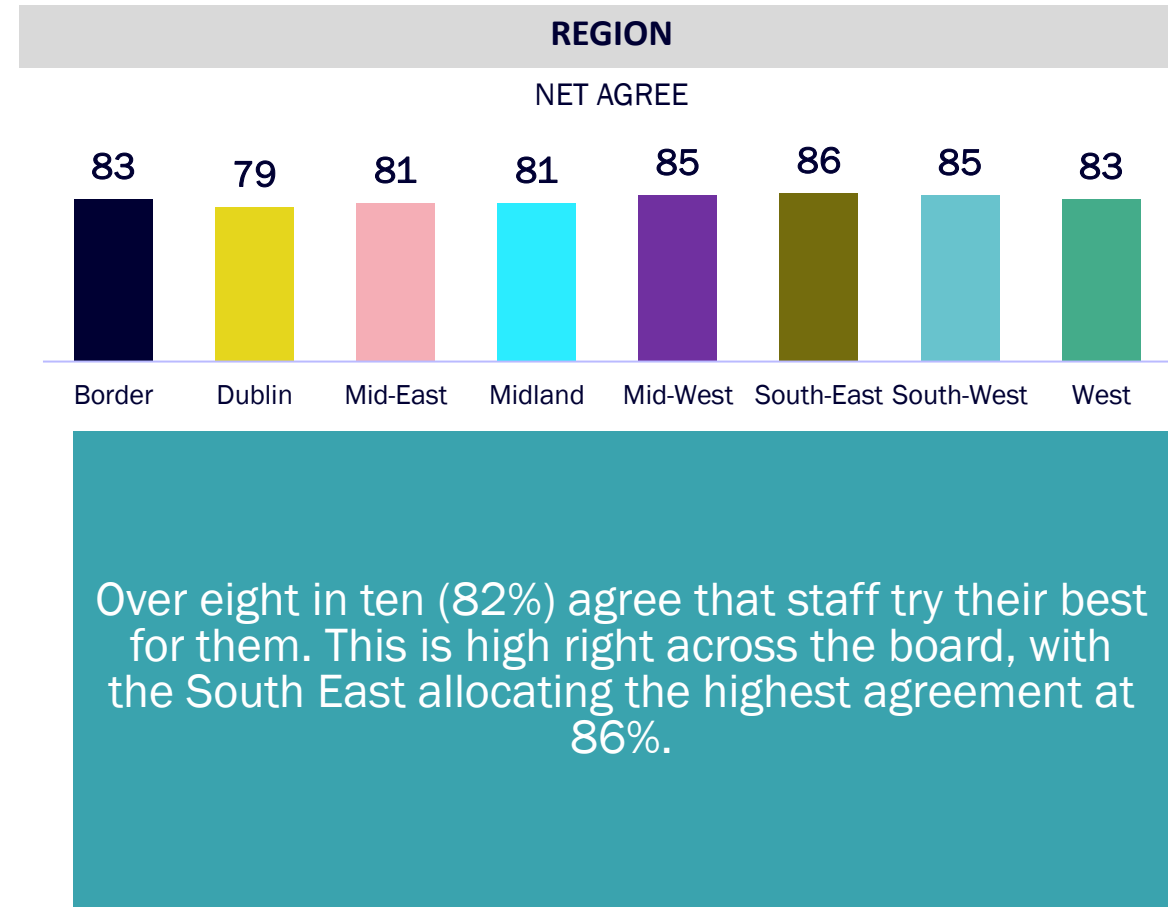
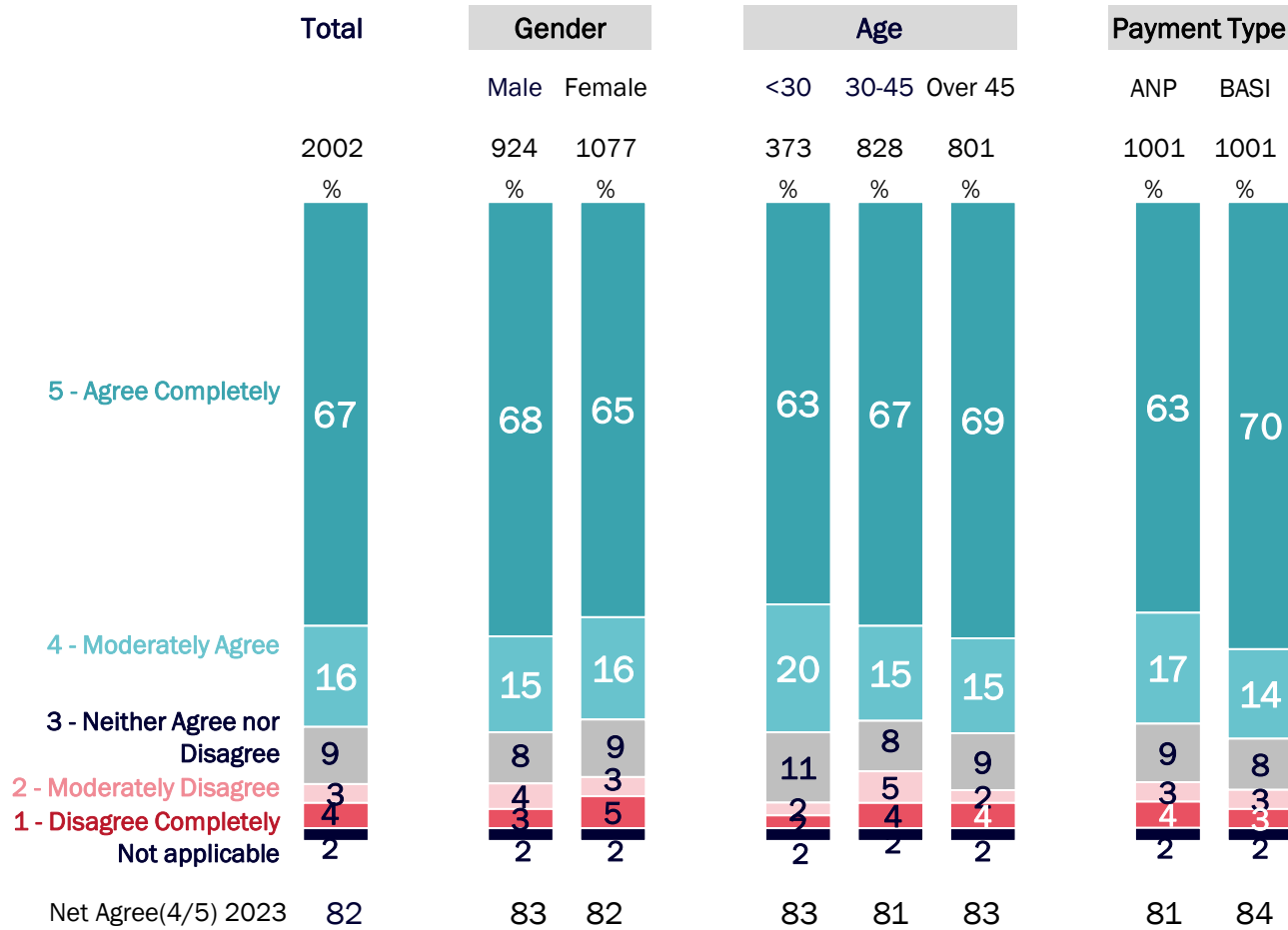
# Staff try their best for me

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



**B&A**





Q.4a.3 Now thinking about Community Welfare Service staff, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



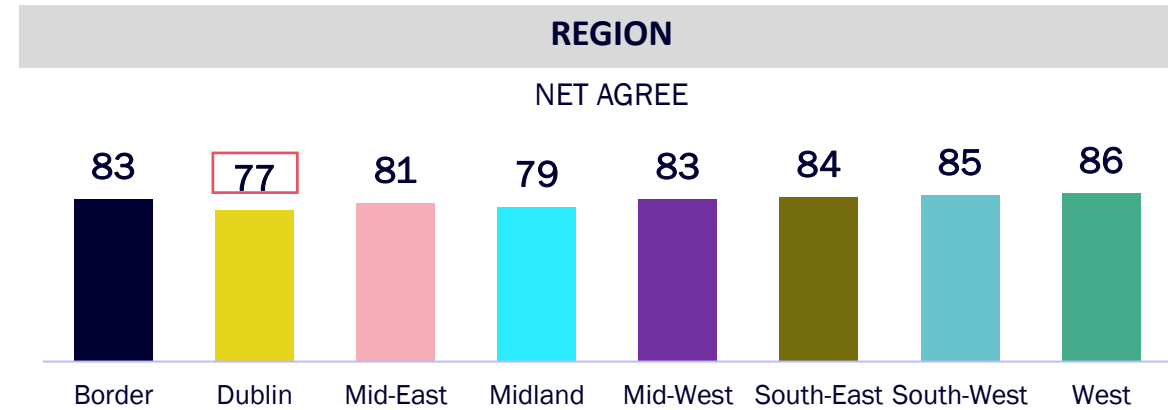
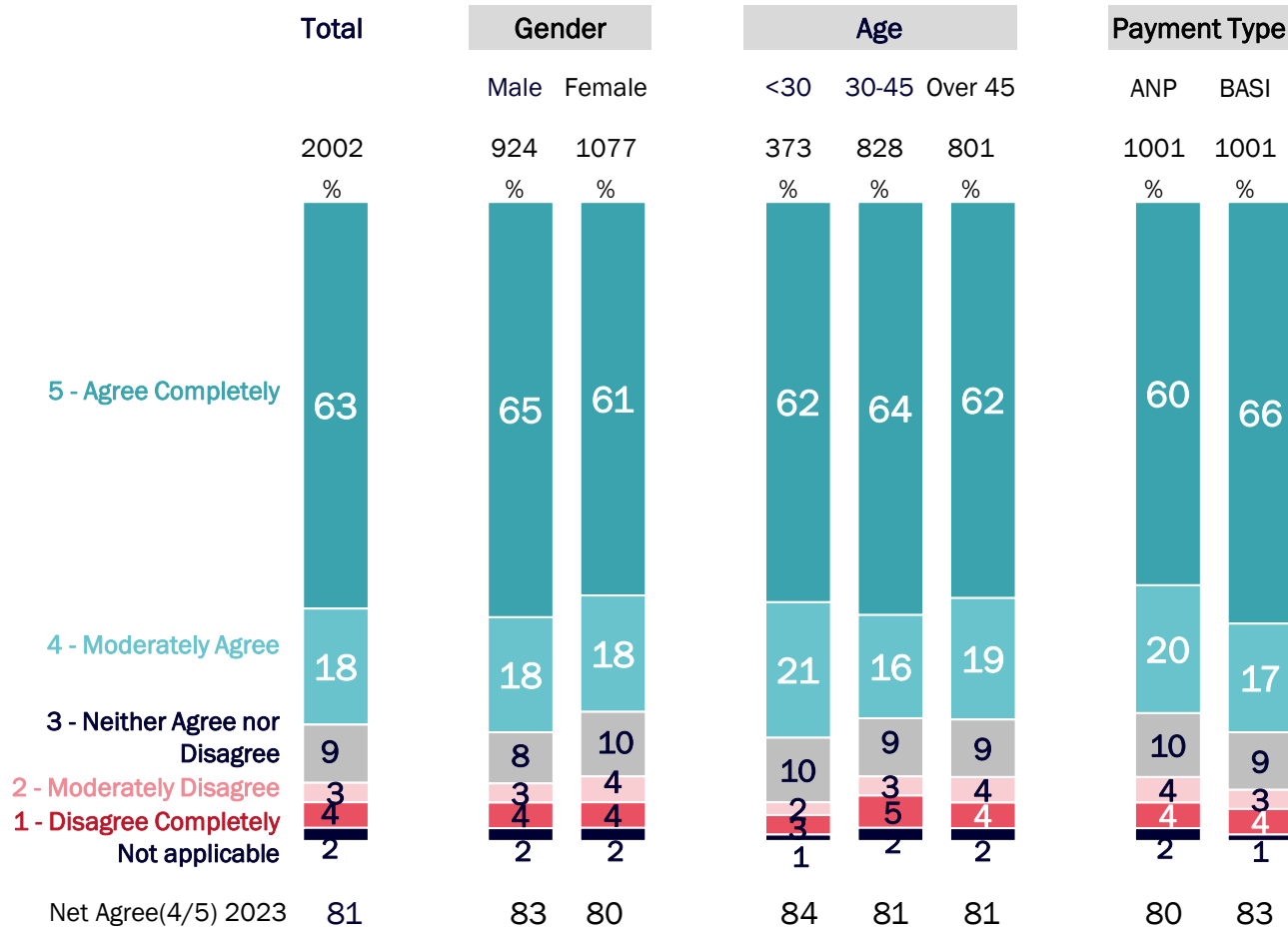
# Staff are very good at their jobs

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



**B&A**



There is also very high agreement levels with the statement staff are very good at their jobs with 84% of those aged under 30 in agreement. In terms of region, the West registered the highest agreement at 86%, followed by South-West at 85%. Dublin recorded the lowest agreement level at 77%.

Q.4a.4 Now thinking about Community Welfare Service staff, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.





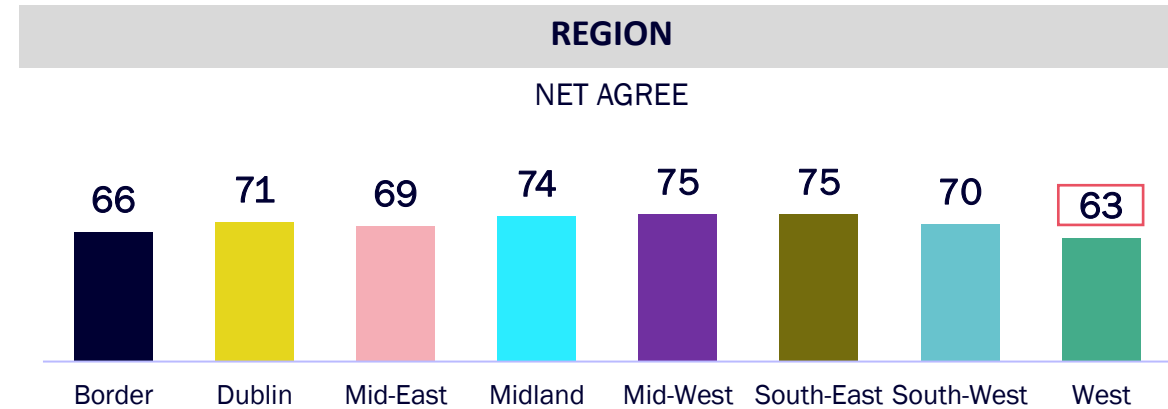
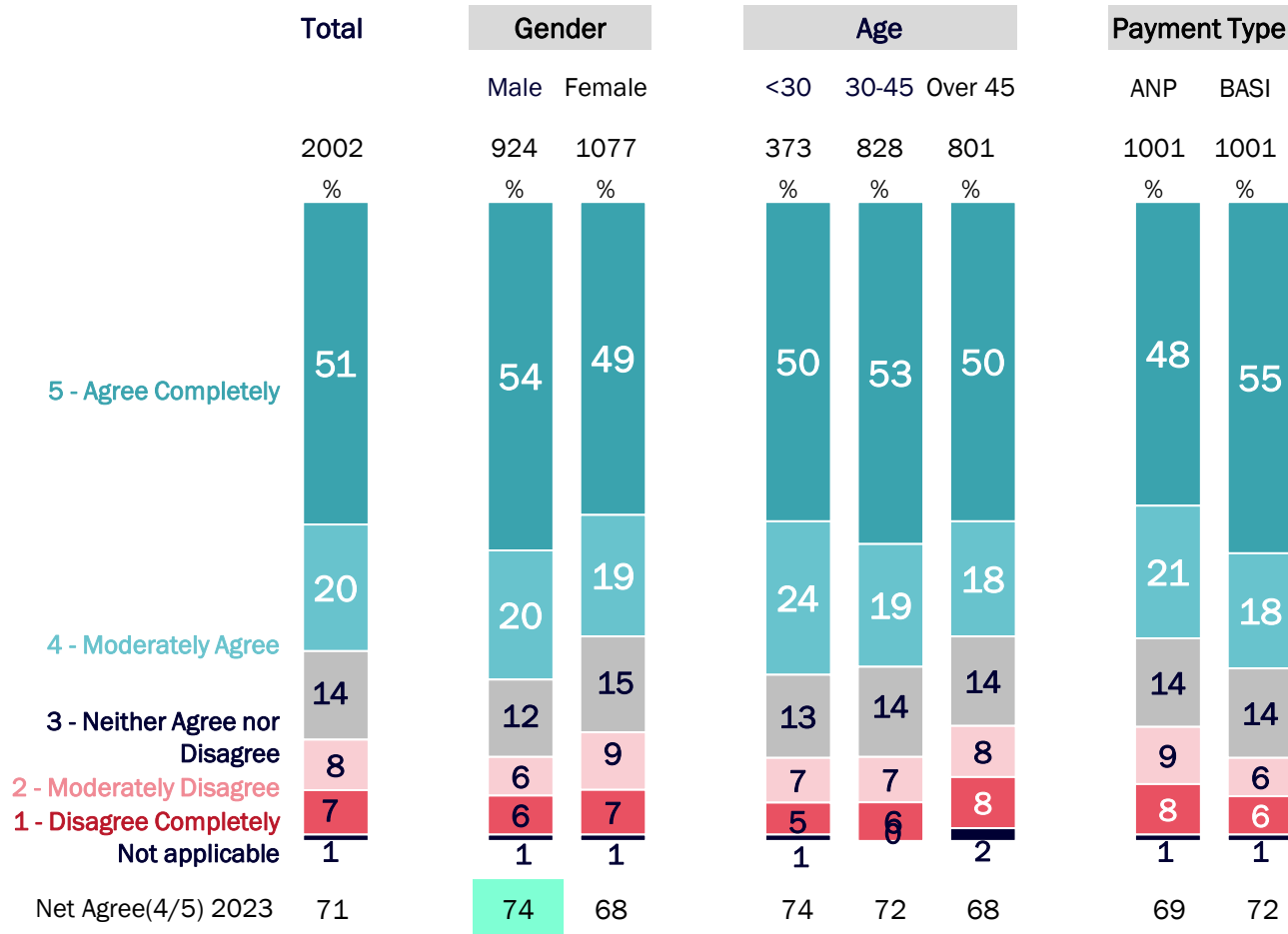
**Services**



# Information about the Community Welfare Service is easy to find

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



Just over seven in ten (71%) agreed that information about the Community Welfare Service is easy to find. This is statistically higher for male participants at 74% and statistically lower for those in the West region at 63%.

**Q.5a.1** Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

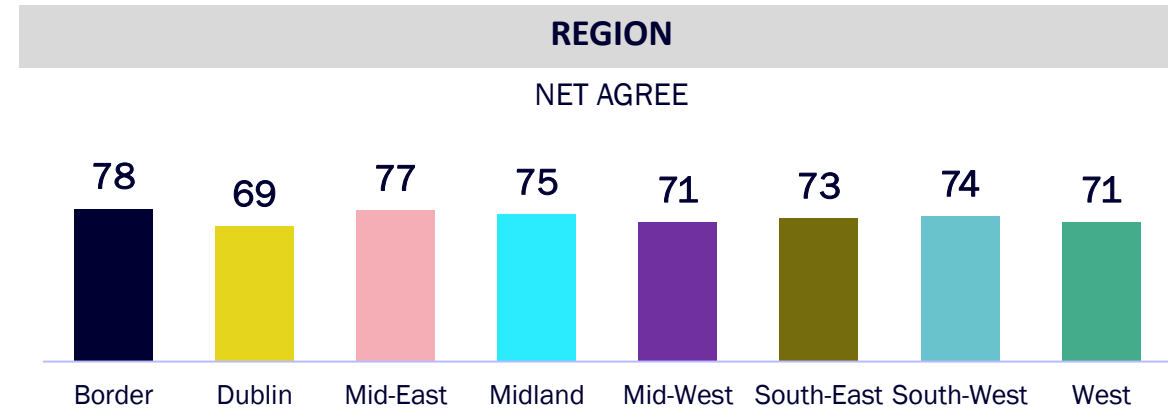
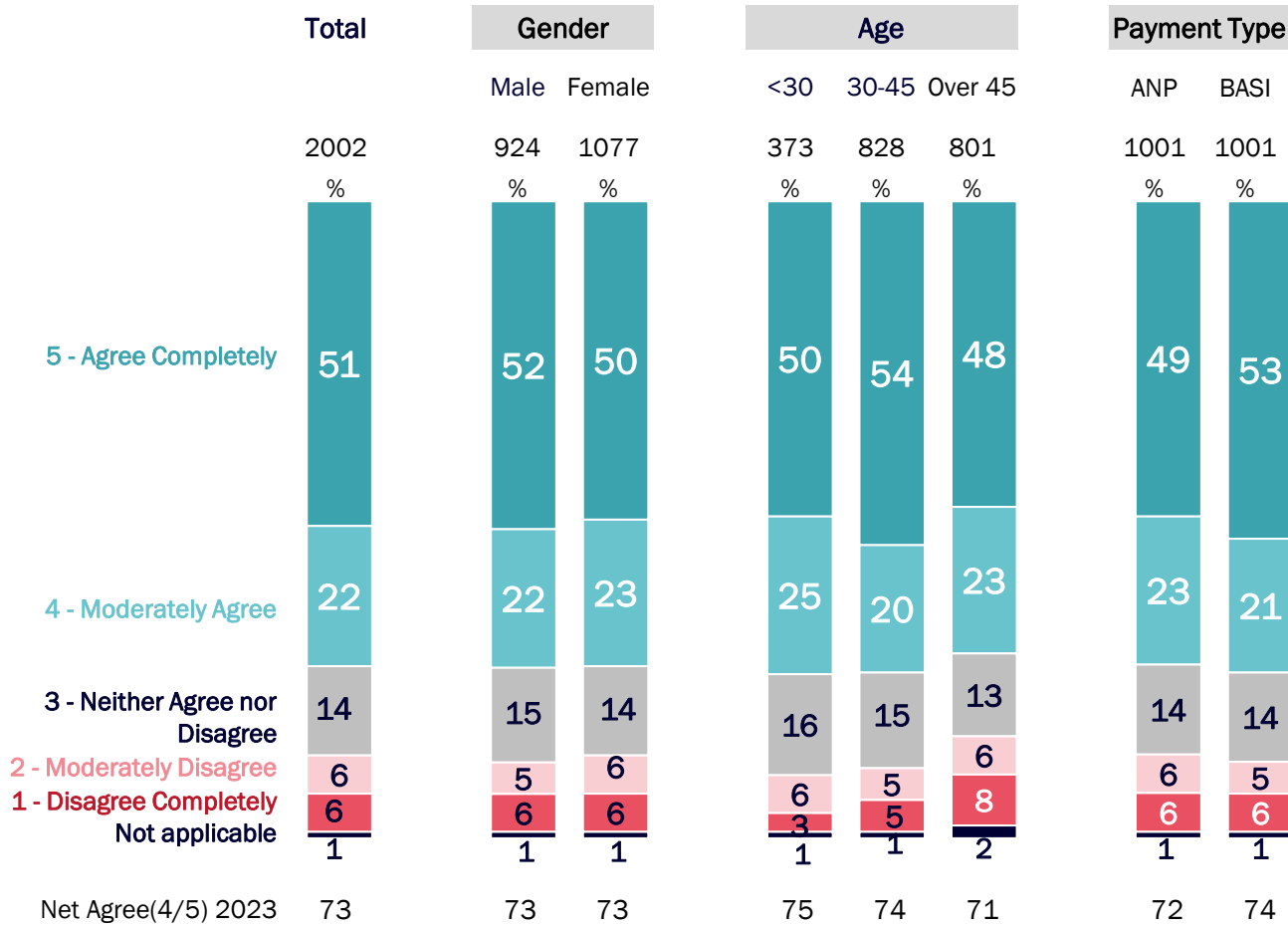


# Information about the Community Welfare Service is easy to understand



Base: All Respondents N - 2002

○ Statistically higher than total  
□ Statistically lower than total



73% agreed that information about the Community Welfare Service is easy to understand and this was highest for those in receipt of BASI payment at 74% 30–45 year olds (74%).

When reviewing by region, 78% in the Border region agree followed by those in the mid-East at 77%.

**Q.5a.2** Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

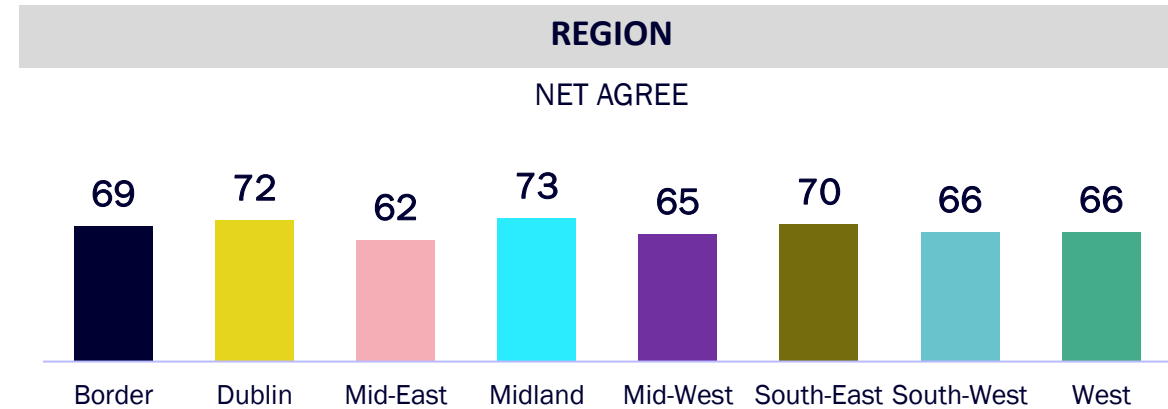
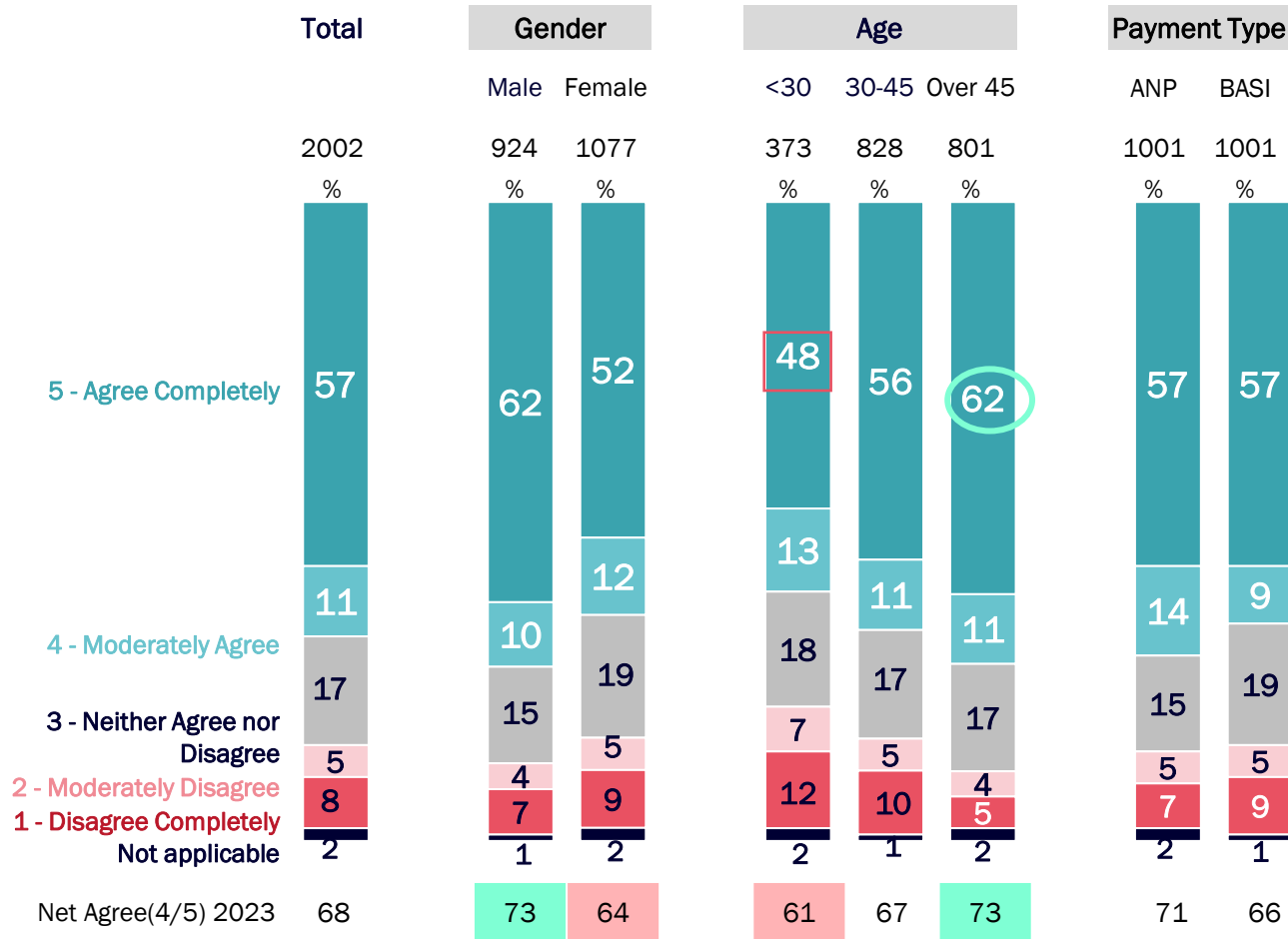


# I prefer the normal face-to-face meetings rather than meeting over the phone or online

Base: All Respondents N - 2002



○ Statistically higher than total  
□ Statistically lower than total



Differences appear in attitudes to the statement I prefer the normal face to face meetings rather than meeting over the phone. While 68% agree at a total level, this is higher for men at 73% compared to 64% of women. Age is also a factor with 73% of over 45 years agreeing compared to 61% of those aged under 30 years (62% of 45+ agree completely with just 48% of U30 who agree completely).

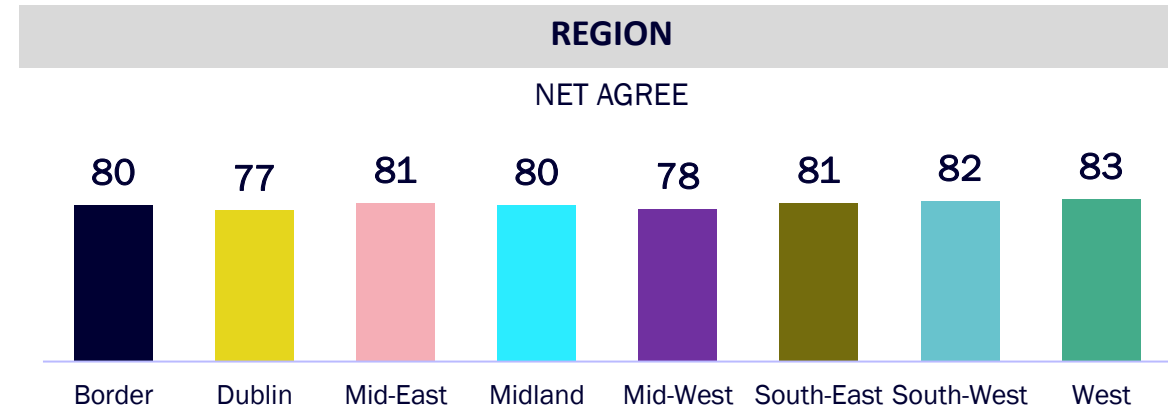
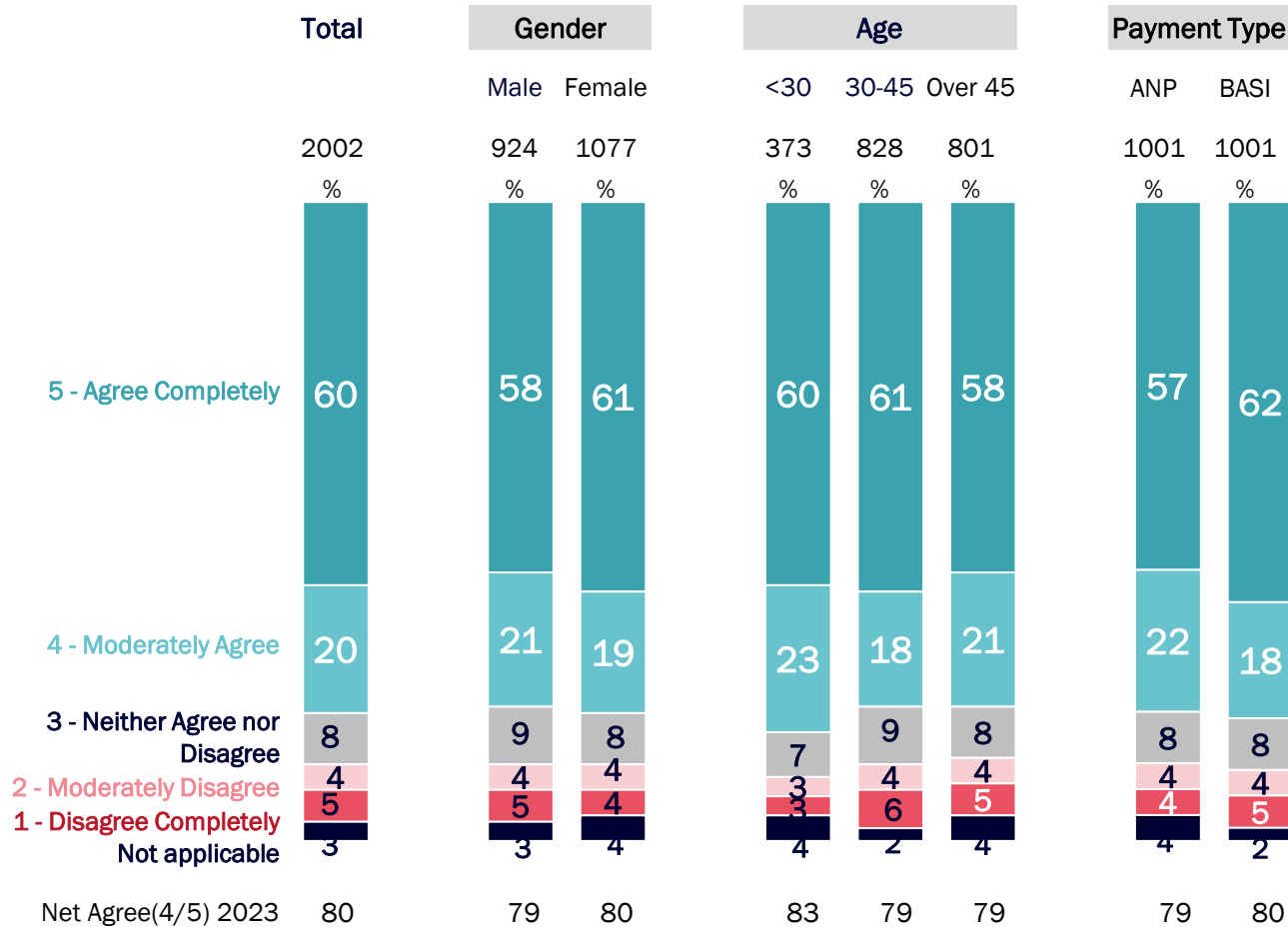
**Q.5a.3** Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



# After my first meeting with the Community Welfare Service, I had a good understanding of the process that I needed to follow

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

○ Statistically higher than total  
□ Statistically lower than total



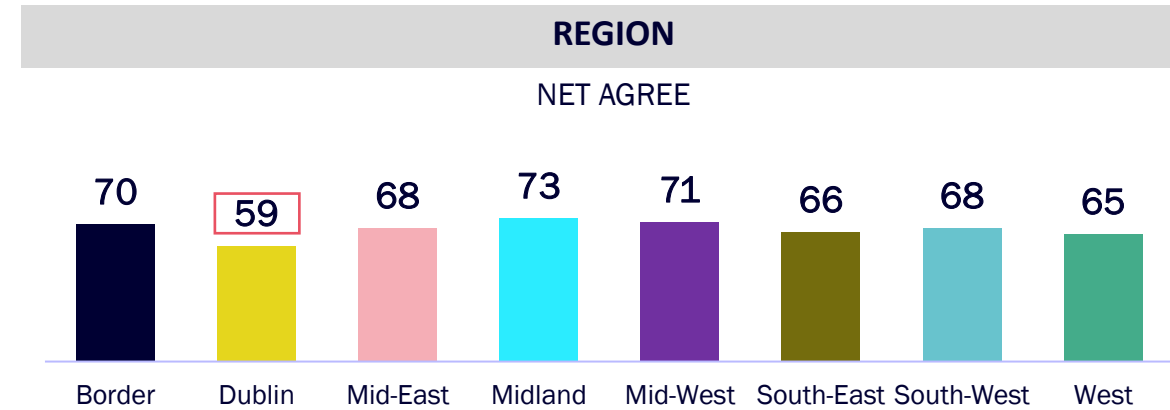
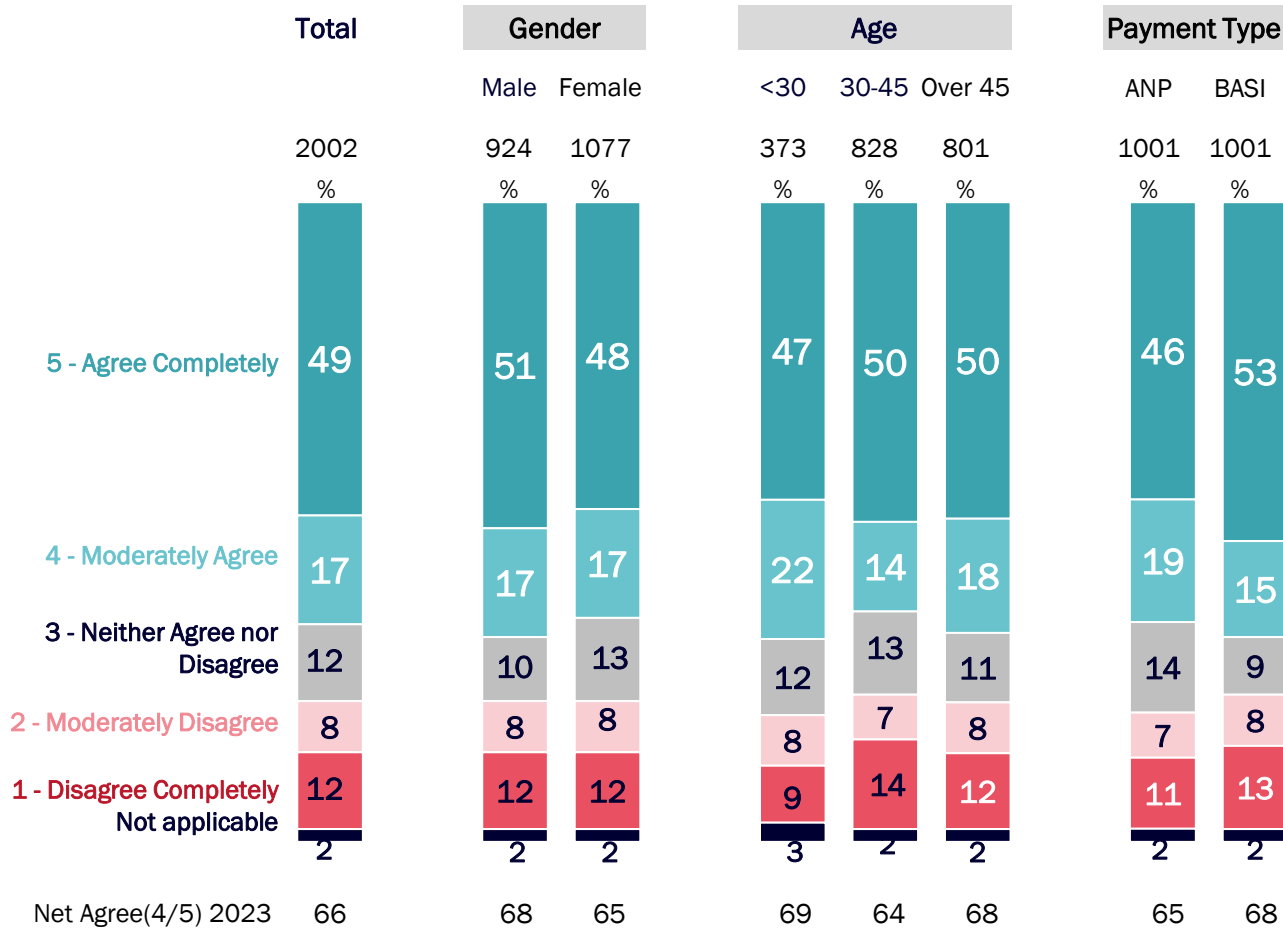
80% of all respondents agree that after their first meeting they had a good understanding of the process. Higher for U30's at 83%.

**Q.5a.4** Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# A decision on my application was made quickly

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

59 Statistically higher than total  
68 Statistically lower than total



66% agree that a decision on their application was made quickly. This was statistically lower for those in Dublin where 59% agreed.

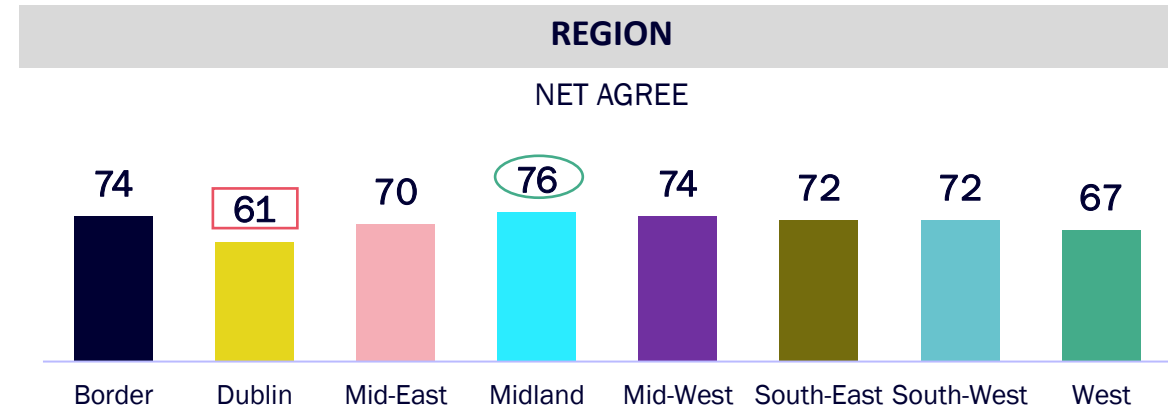
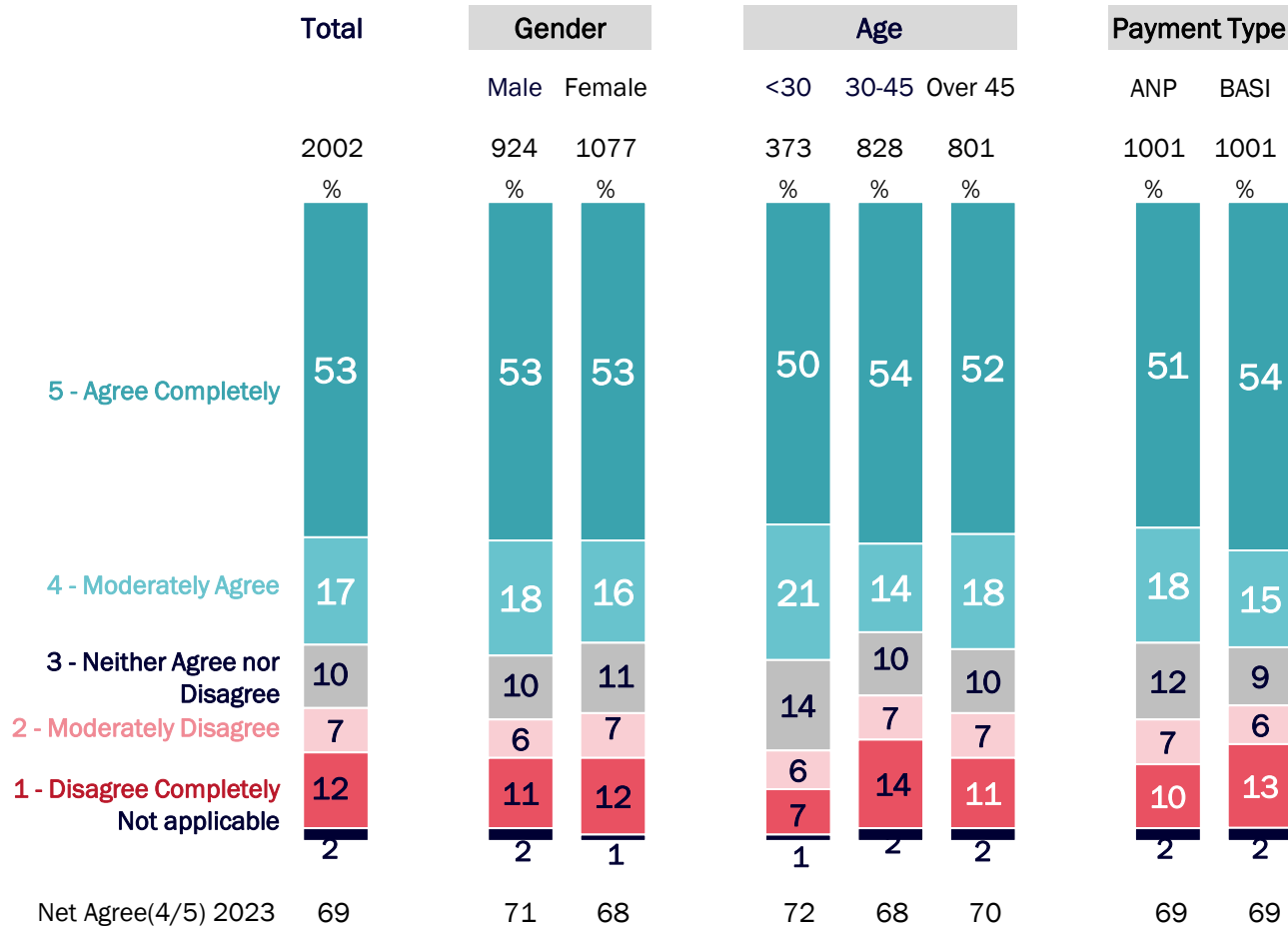
**Q.5a.5** Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.



# I was satisfied with the time taken to process my application

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

  Statistically higher than total  
  Statistically lower than total



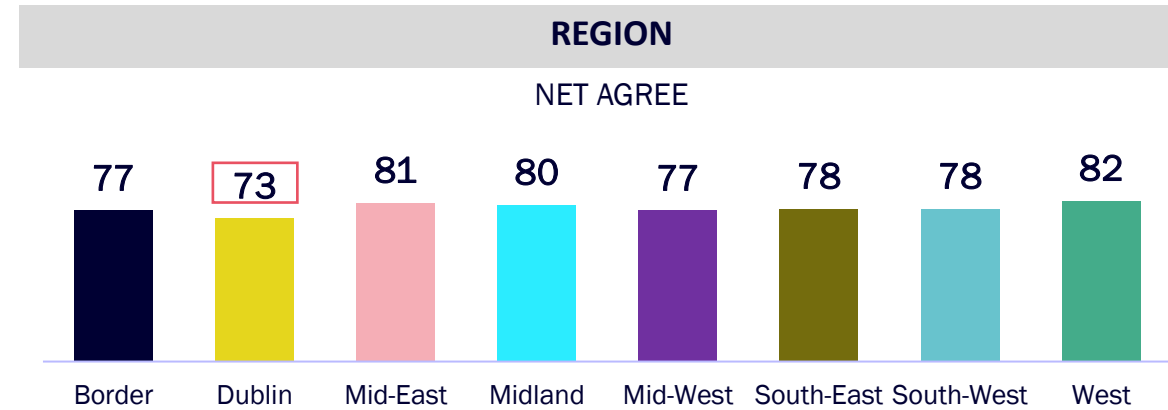
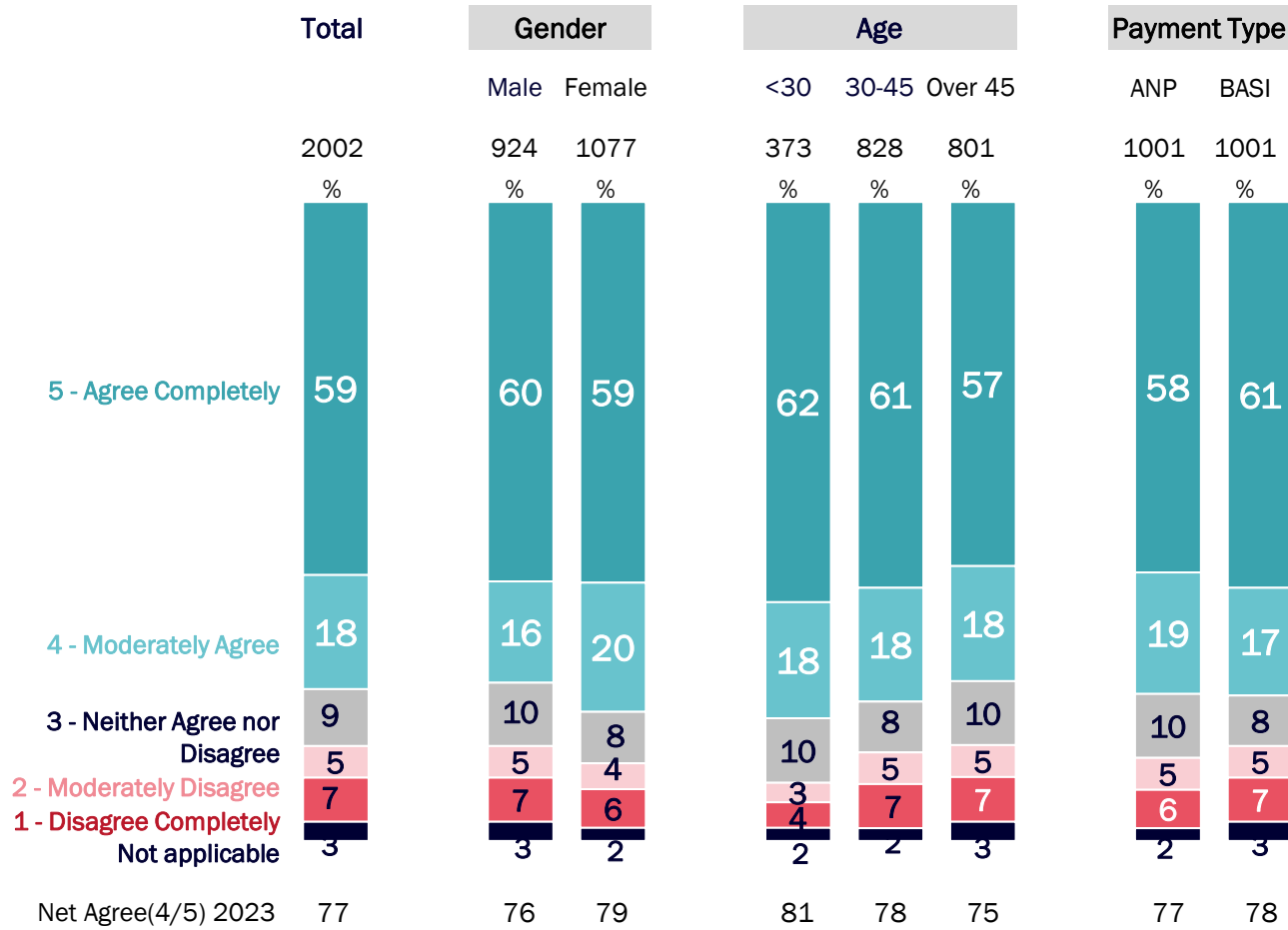
69% expressed satisfaction with the time taken to process their application. This was highest in the Midlands at 76% and lowest in Dublin at 61%.

**Q.5a.6** Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# I understood the reasons for the decision on my application

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

73 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



When asked if they understood the reason for the decision on their application, a total of 77% agreed. This was higher at 81% of those aged under 30 years and lower for the over 45 age group at 75%. A lower agreement level was registered for Dublin at 73%.

Q.5a.7 Now thinking about the Community Welfare Service, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

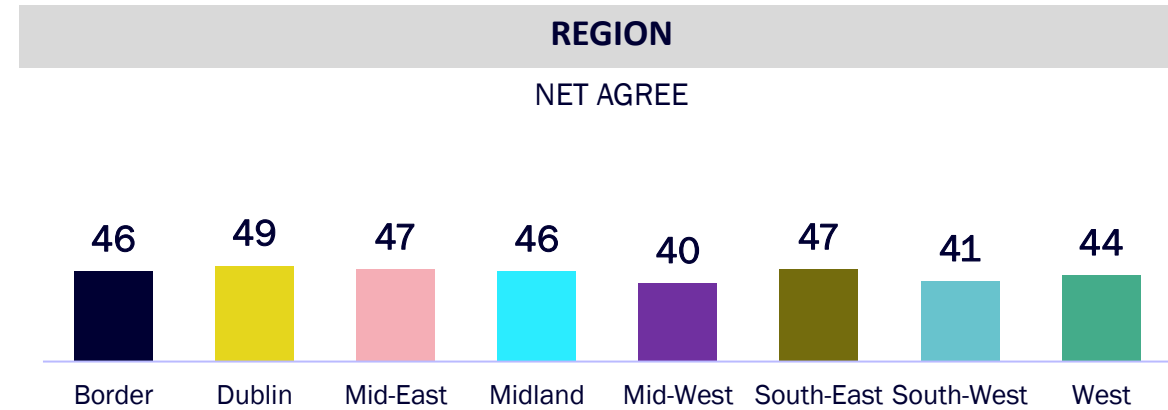
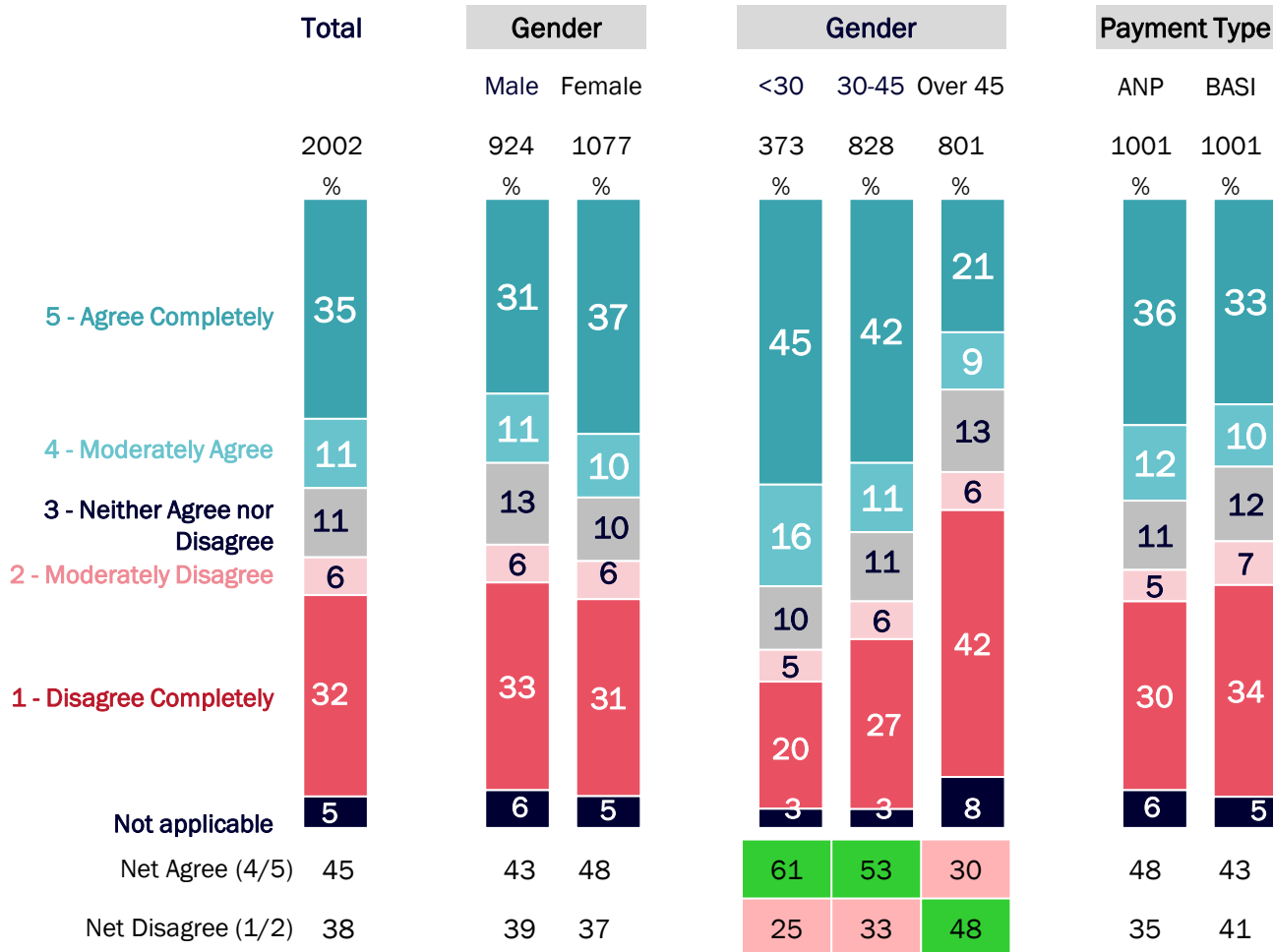


**Process**

# I would have preferred to apply for Community Welfare payments online

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

○ Statistically higher than total  
○ Statistically lower than total



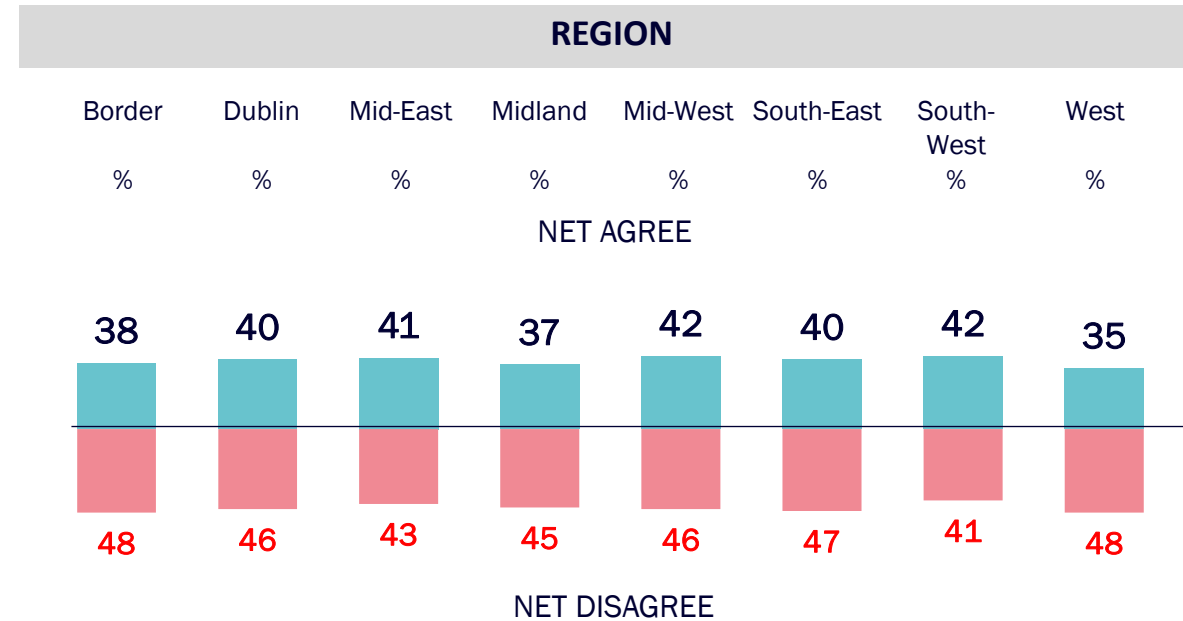
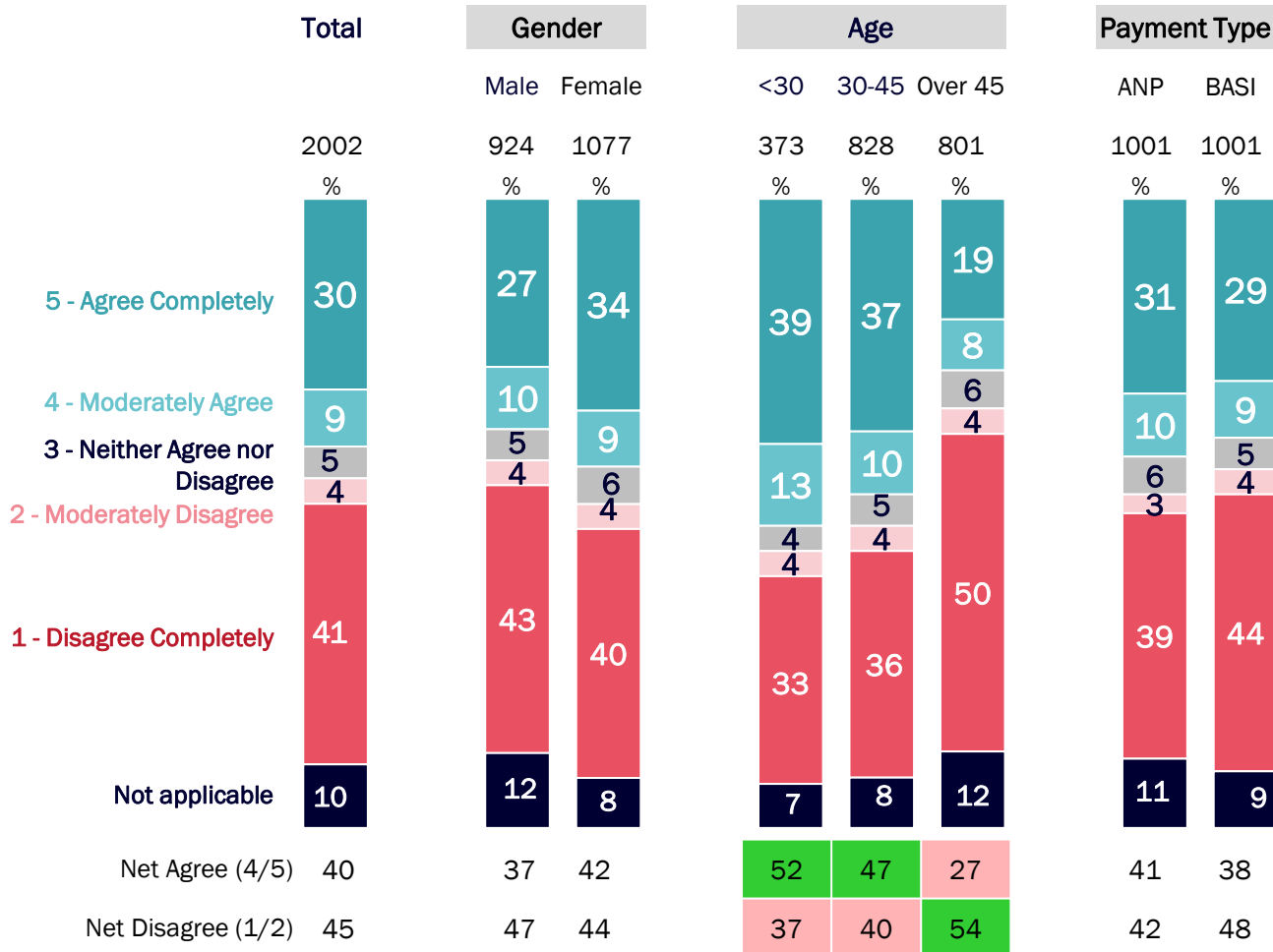
There are very evident differences for those who say they would prefer to apply for CWS payments online. 61% of those aged Under 30 agree, along with 53% of those aged 30-45 years. Amongst the older age cohort of over 45 years, only 30% agree with almost half (48%) disagreeing. These differences are significant at a statistical level.

Q.6a Now think about the possibility of applying for Community Welfare payments online. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, I will ask you to use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

# I have applied online for other social welfare payments

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total





40% of CWS respondents report they have applied online for other social welfare payments. As can be seen from the graphic, this is driven by age with 52% of Under 30's agreeing, 47% of 30-45 year olds and just 27% of those aged over 45 years.

Q.6a Now think about the possibility of applying for Community Welfare payments online. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement, I will ask you to use a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.

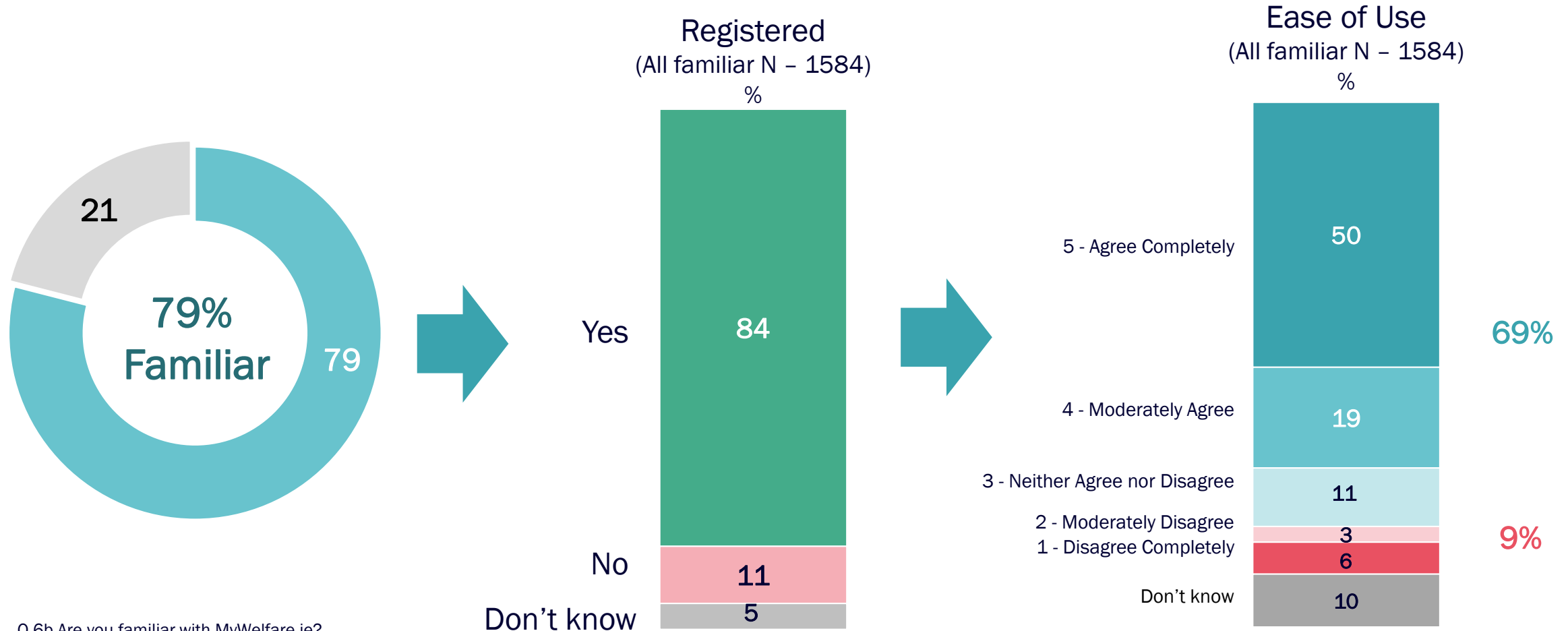
# Familiarity with Welfare.ie

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

 Statistically higher than total  
 Statistically lower than total



Almost eight in ten (**79%**) report they are familiar with Welfare.ie. Of those who are familiar, **84%** state they are registered on welfare.ie. **50%** completely agree that they have found mywelfare.ie easy to use and this rises to **69%** on a net agree basis.



Q.6b Are you familiar with MyWelfare.ie?  
 Q.6c Are you registered on MyWelfare.ie?

Q.6e Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'Agree Completely' and 1 is 'Disagree Completely'.





# Familiarity & Registration with Welfare.ie

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

FAMILIAR	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			REGION								PAYMENT TYPE	
		Male	Female	Under 30	30 to 45	Over 45	Border	Dublin	Mid-East	Midland	Mid-West	South-East	South-West	West	ANP	BASI
Base: All	2002	924	1077	373	828	801	210	498	300	195	214	194	244	147	1001	1001
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	79	76	82	87	84	70	78	79	80	83	73	76	81	83	76	83
No	21	24	18	13	16	30	22	21	20	17	27	24	19	17	24	17

REGISTERED	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			REGION								PAYMENT TYPE	
		Male	Female	Under 30	30 to 45	Over 45	Border	Dublin	Mid-East	Midland	Mid-West	South-East	South-West	West	ANP	BASI
Base: All Familiar	1584	703	880	324	698	562	164	395	240	161	157	147	198	122	756	828
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	84	83	85	88	88	77	80	82	89	82	81	86	84	87	85	83
No	11	11	10	7	8	15	11	12	5	13	14	10	11	9	11	11
Don't know	5	6	5	4	4	8	9	6	5	5	5	3	5	4	4	7

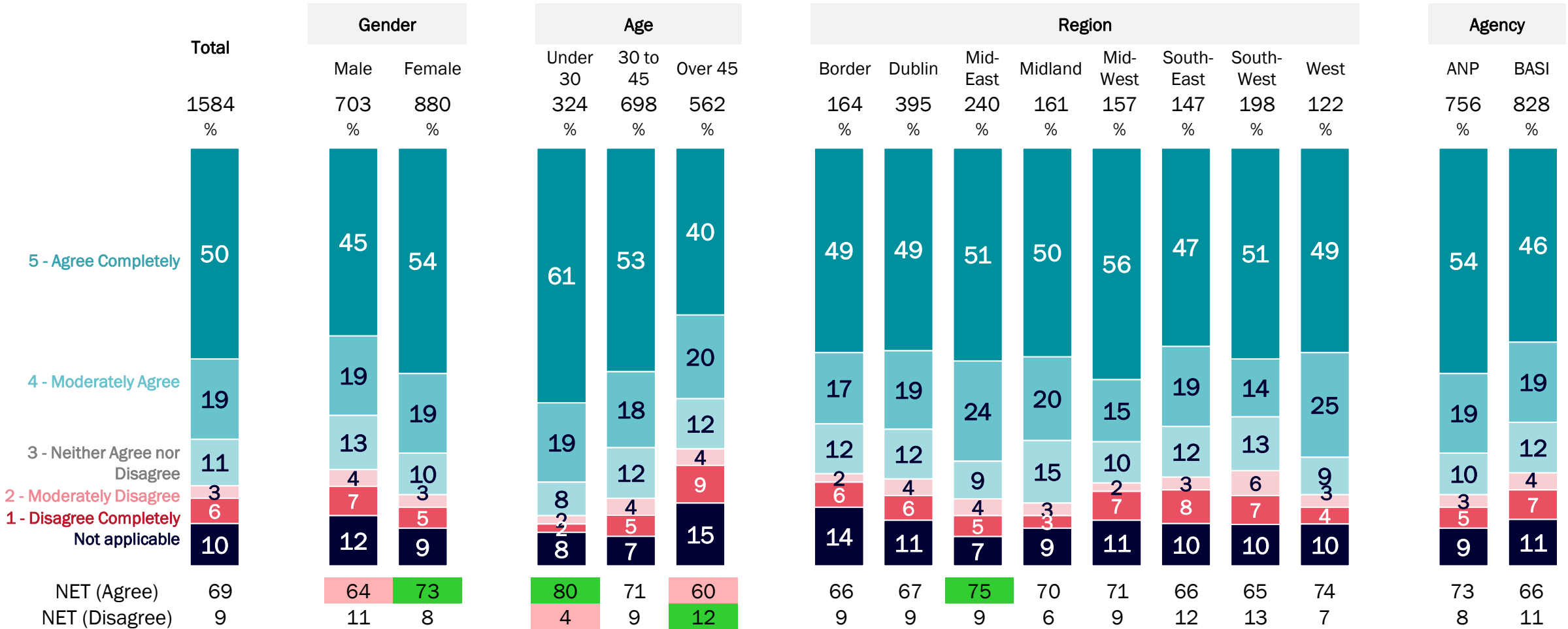
Familiarity with mywelfare.ie is higher for those aged under 45 years and those in receipt of BASI payments. Registration on mywelfare.ie is also higher for the under 45 age group and is highest for those in the Mid East region at 89%.



# Ease of Use - mywelfare.ie

Base: All Respondents familiar N - 1584

■ Statistically higher than total  
■ Statistically lower than total



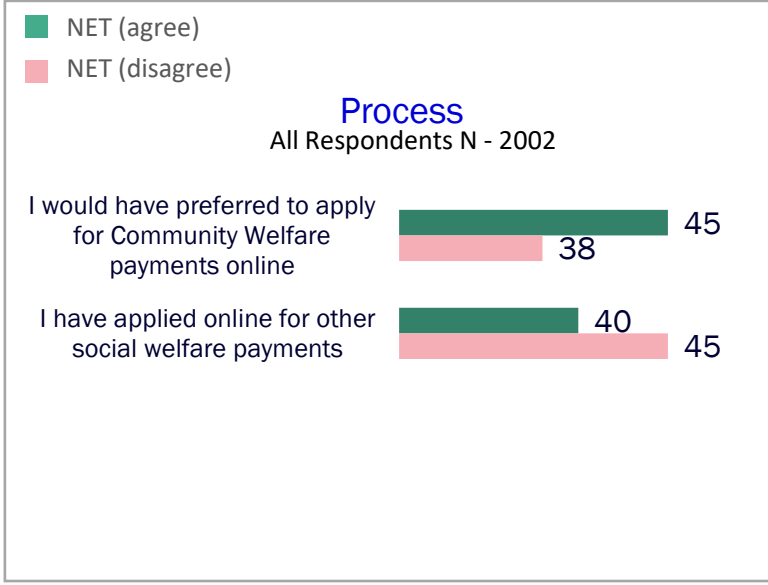
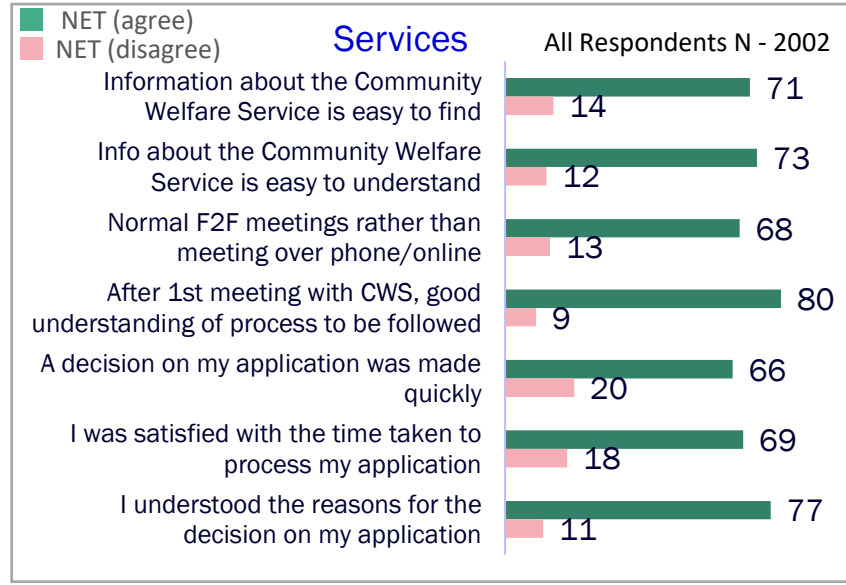
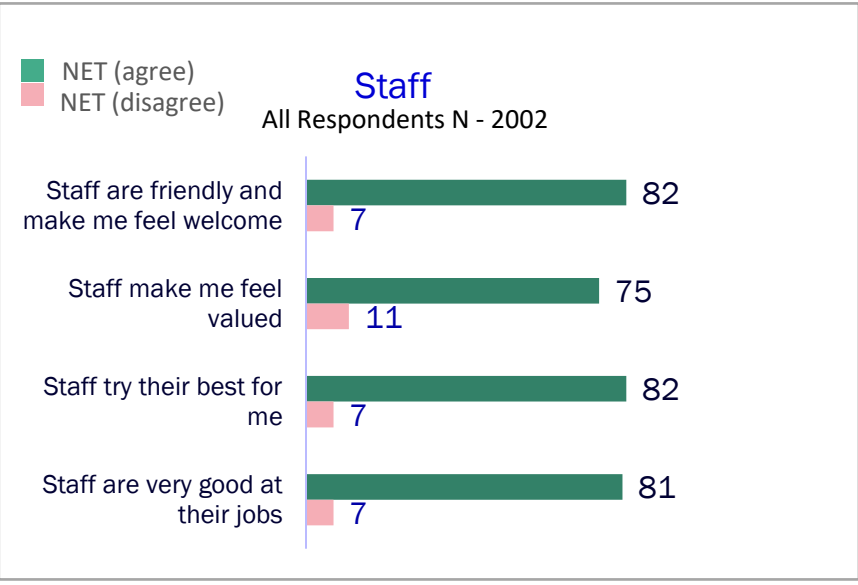
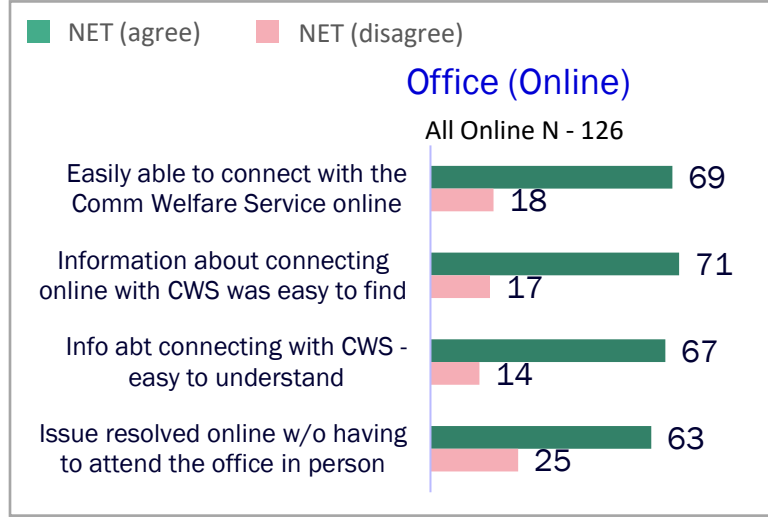
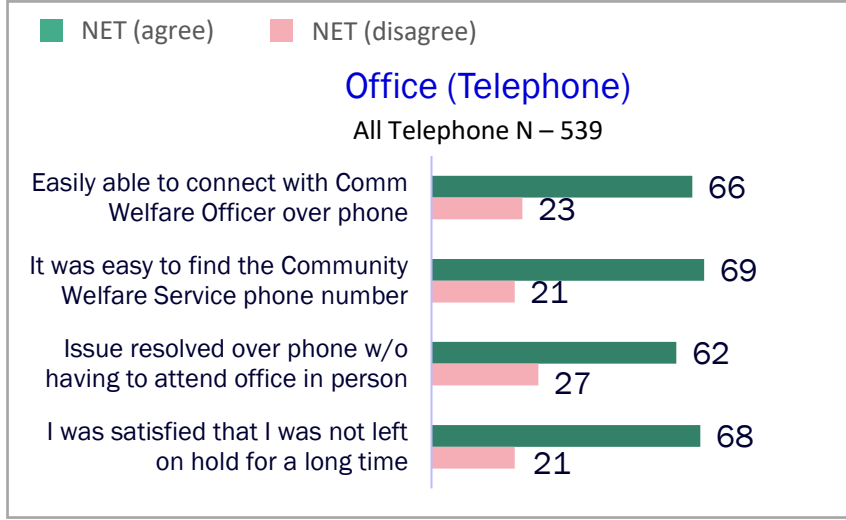
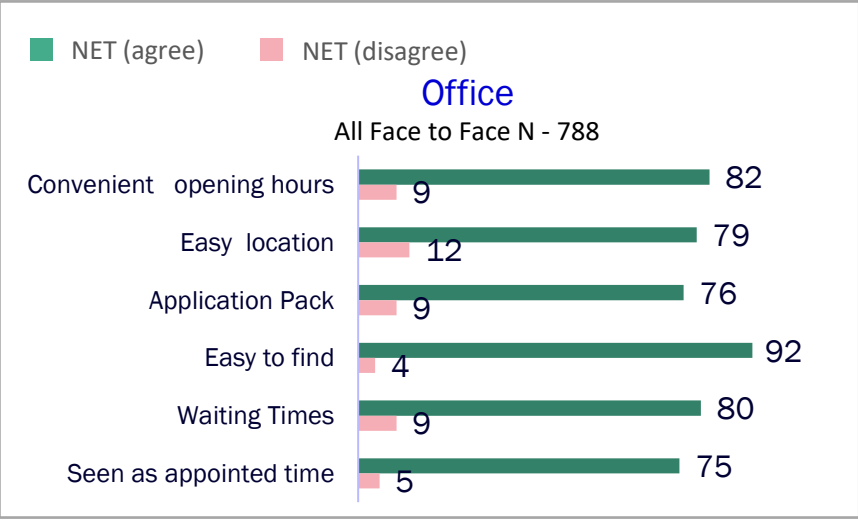
69% of all participants who are familiar with mywelfare.ie agree that the site is easy to use. This rises to 80% for the under 30 age group, 73% for females and 75% for those in the Mid East region.



# Net Positive/Negative Rating of Community Welfare Services Summary



Base: All Respondents N – 2002



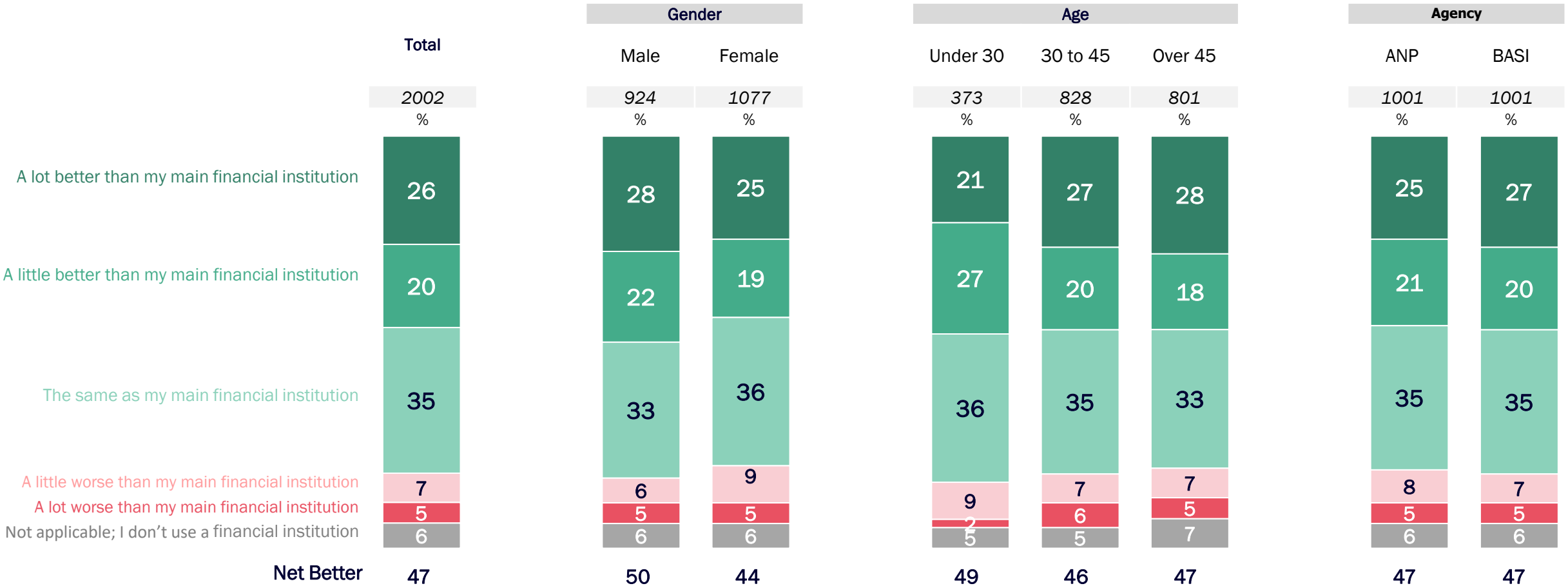
# Rating of Community Welfare services compared to Main financial Institution x demographics



Base: All Respondents N - 2002

○ Statistically higher than total  
■ Statistically lower than total

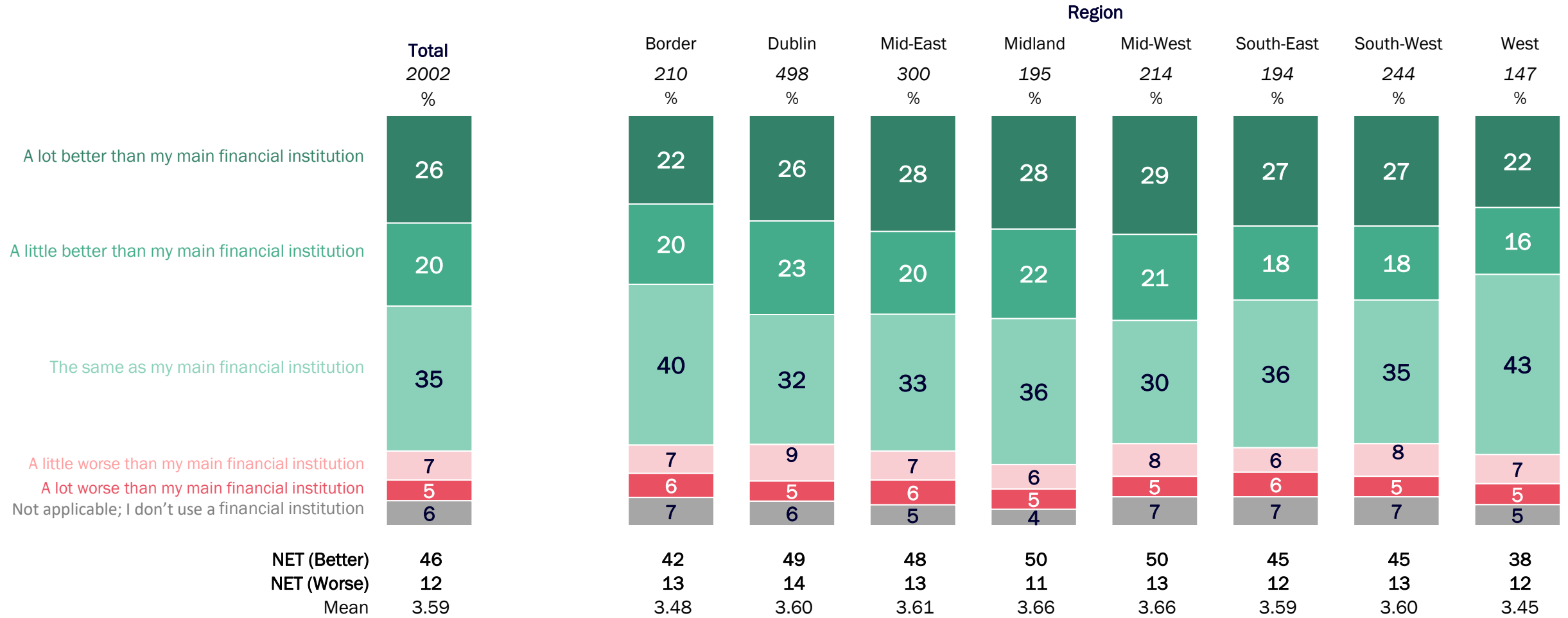
The net better score comparison rating of the Community Welfare Services compared to their main financial institution is higher for men and younger participants. 6% of the sample stated they do not use a financial institution.



# Rating of Community Welfare services vs Main Financial Institution x Area

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

There are no statistical differences between the divisional offices although the Midlands and Midwest put forward the highest net better score at 50% respectively.



# Suggested improvements to overall experience

Base: All Respondents N - 2002

	Total	Gender		Age			Agency	
		Male	Female	Under 30	30 to 45	Over 45	ANP	BASI
UNWTD	2002	924	1077	373	828	801	1001	1001
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
None/Nothing/Na/No	32	35	30	37	30	32	30	35
Improve Application Speed/Time Frame/Waiting times	12	11	13	11	14	10	11	12
Better Customer Service/attitude - treat people with respect/empathy	10	8	11	10	10	9	10	9
Clarity on entitlements/payments available/application process - better communication	8	7	8	6	9	8	9	7
Simplify/Clarify information/Better explanations/understanding/assistance - applications/forms	7	7	7	5	6	8	8	5
Easier to contact/access, Contact Number easily available/Answer phone	6	5	7	5	7	7	7	6
Face to face appointments	5	5	5	2	4	7	5	5
More local offices/staff	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	3
More online information/Live Chat Option	3	3	3	5	3	1	3	2
More assistance/money - various	3	3	3	4	2	3	4	2
Better communication between departments	2	2	2	1	3	1	2	2
Better training for staff	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1
More advertising	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
Other	5	6	4	4	6	4	4	5
Don't know/Unsure	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	7

Suggested improvements are reasonably consistent across the different groupings of gender, age and class with 35% of men reporting no improvement needed. The main improvements suggested were improve application speed/waiting times by 12%, followed by better customer service at 10%. 7% of the Over 45 years age group put forward face to face meetings.



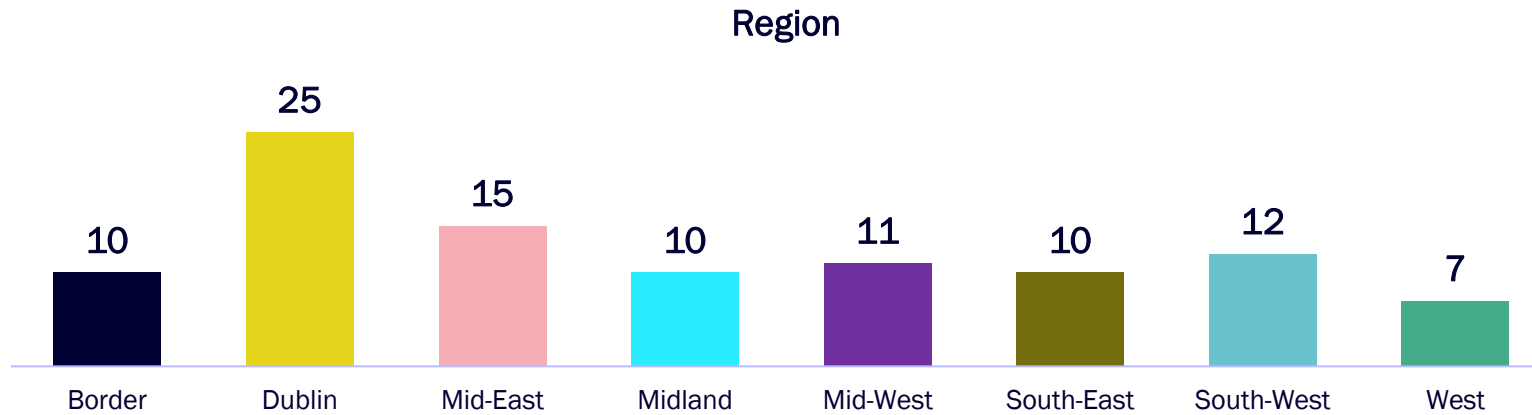
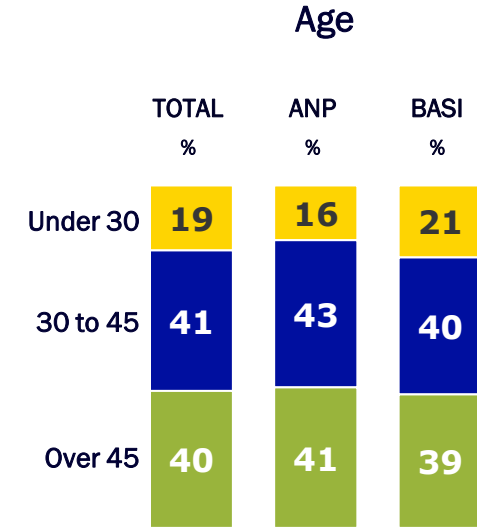
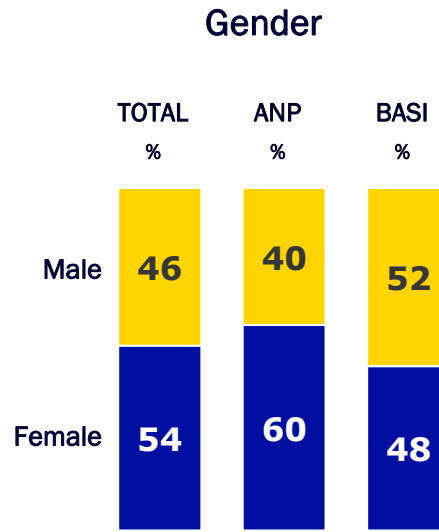
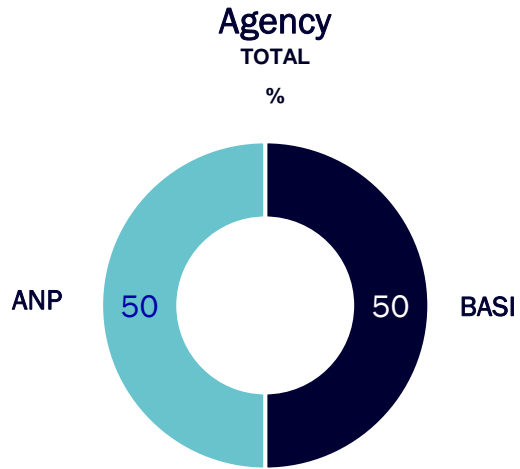


# Sample Profile



# Sample Profile

Base: All Respondents N – 2,002





# Thank You



@behaviourandattitudes



Behaviour & Attitudes



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Delve Deeper