

NAVIGATING CLEARING AND BEYOND

STUDENT EMOTIONS AND CHOICES

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THE CLEARING POOLS

MIND-CHANGERS

24,780
+15%
on 2023

DIRECT TO CLEARING

17,640
+12%
on 2023

TRADITIONAL

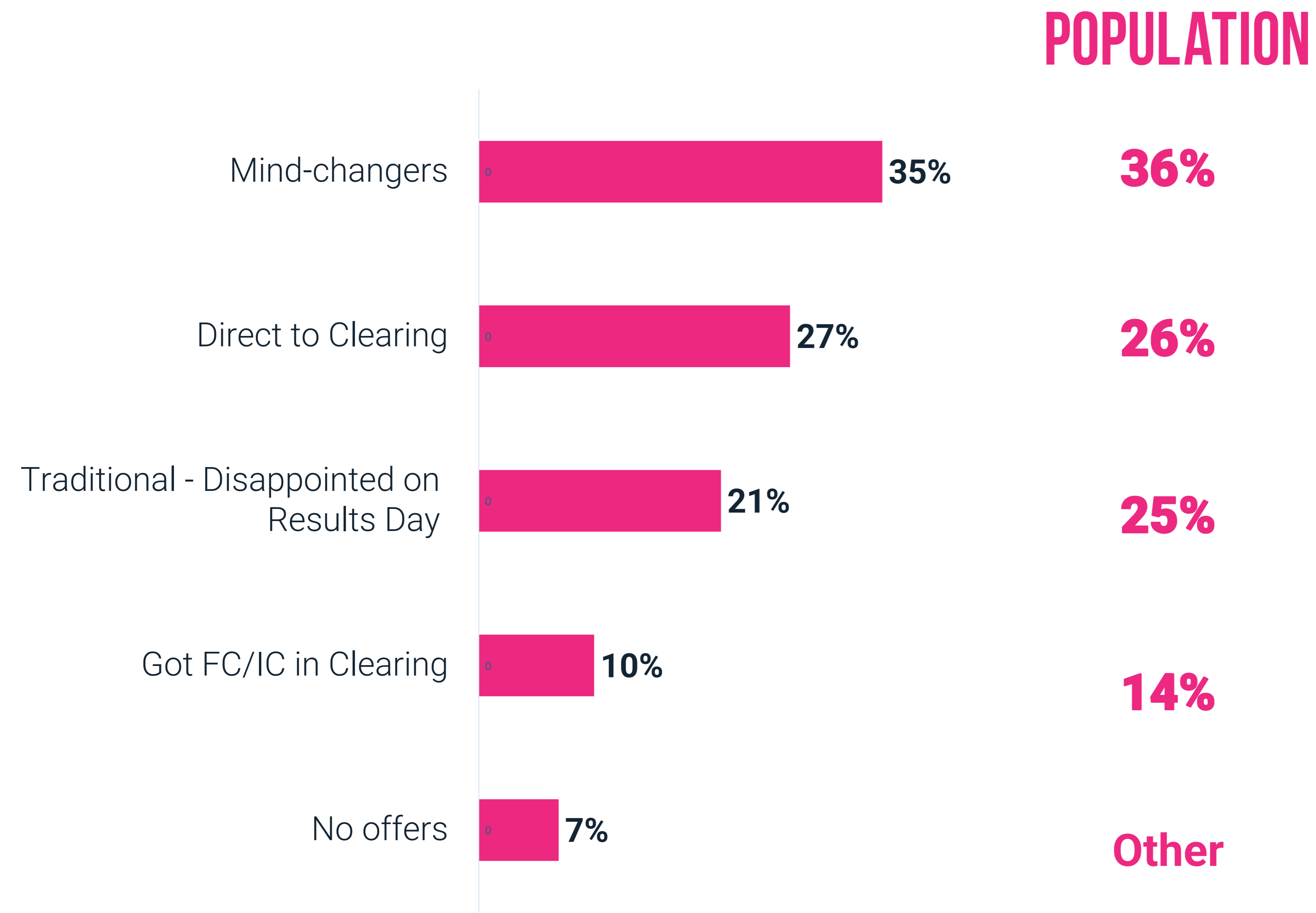
16,940
-17%
on 2023

OTHER

9,450
-10%
on 2023



REAL-TIME CLEARING SURVEYING



WHO?

- Prospective undergraduates
- 2024 entry
- Placed during Clearing
- 5,890 completed responses
- Weighted data – representative

WHEN?

- Fieldwork 16th August – 21st October 2024
- Sent to students after they are placed on a course in Clearing

KEY STATS

91%

Confident they had made the right choice for them in Clearing

(92% in 2023)

88%

Had a positive experience of finding a university or college place through Clearing

(85% in 2023)

72%

Said it was easy to find a course they wanted to study in Clearing

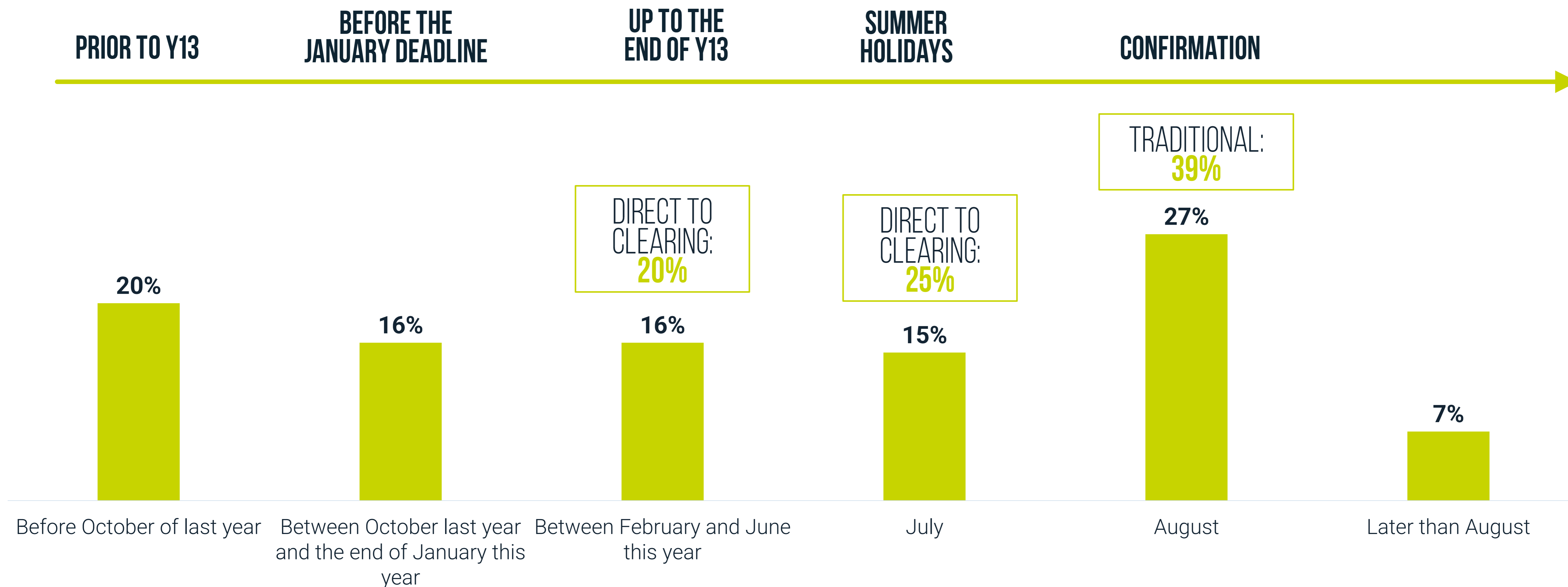
(68% in 2023)



88% HAD A GOOD OR VERY GOOD EXPERIENCE WHEN CONTACTING UNIVERSITIES

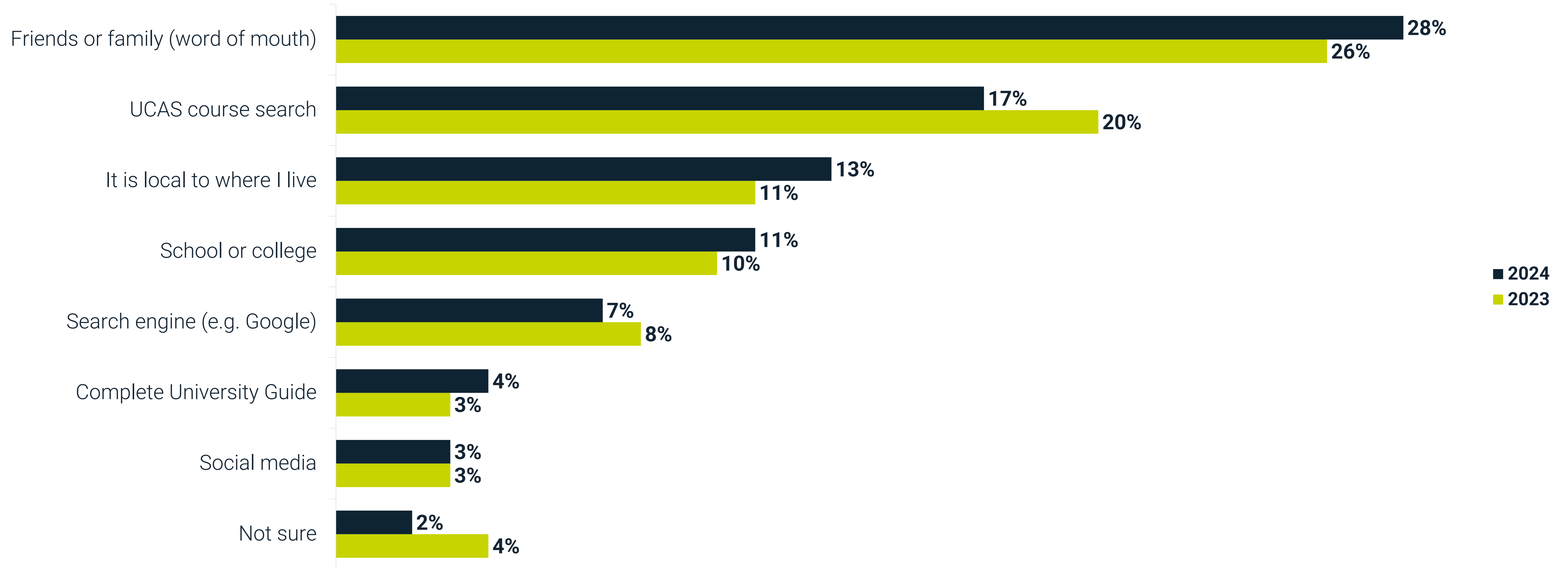


67% HAD STARTED RESEARCHING THE UNIVERSITY THEY WERE PLACED AT BEFORE AUGUST



Q: When did you start researching the university or college you were placed at through clearing? (Base 5972)

WORD OF MOUTH WAS MOST COMMONLY THE FIRST WAY RESPONDENTS FOUND OUT ABOUT THEIR CLEARING UNIVERSITY FOLLOWED BY UCAS COURSE SEARCH



Q: Where did you first hear about the university or college you found a place at in Clearing? (Single response) (Base 5,973)

PRE-CLEARING PREPARATION

63%

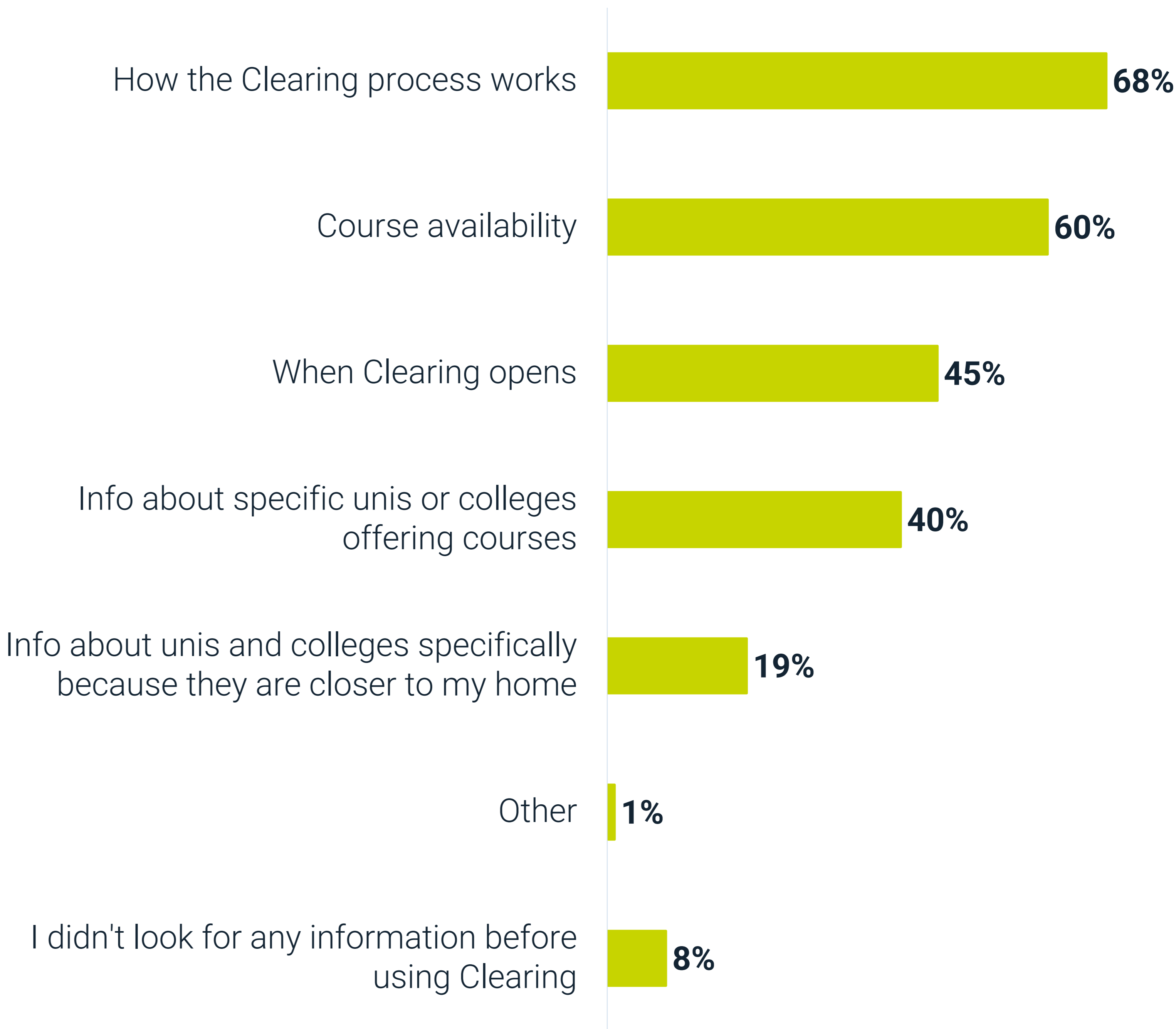
Had already researched available places and knew which universities or colleges they wanted to contact

+5% from 2021

92%

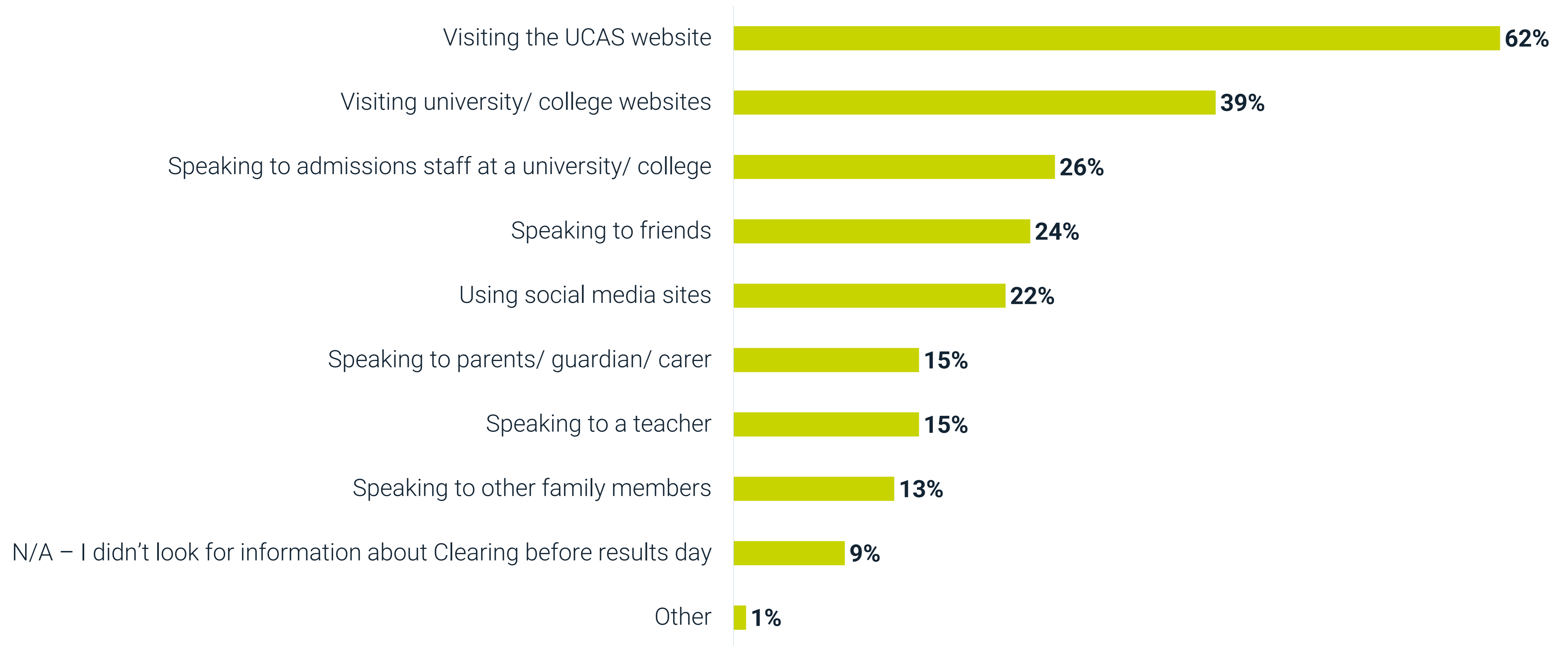
Had looked for information about Clearing beforehand

WHAT INFORMATION HAD THEY LOOKED FOR?



Q: What information did you look for about Clearing before you used the Clearing service? Multiple response (Base: 5965)

THE UCAS WEBSITE WAS THE MAIN SOURCE USED TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT CLEARING IN THE RUN UP TO RESULTS DAY



DECISION MAKING PROCESS



**WHERE THEY
GO ON THE DAY
AND WHAT THEY
ARE LOOKING
FORWARD TO**

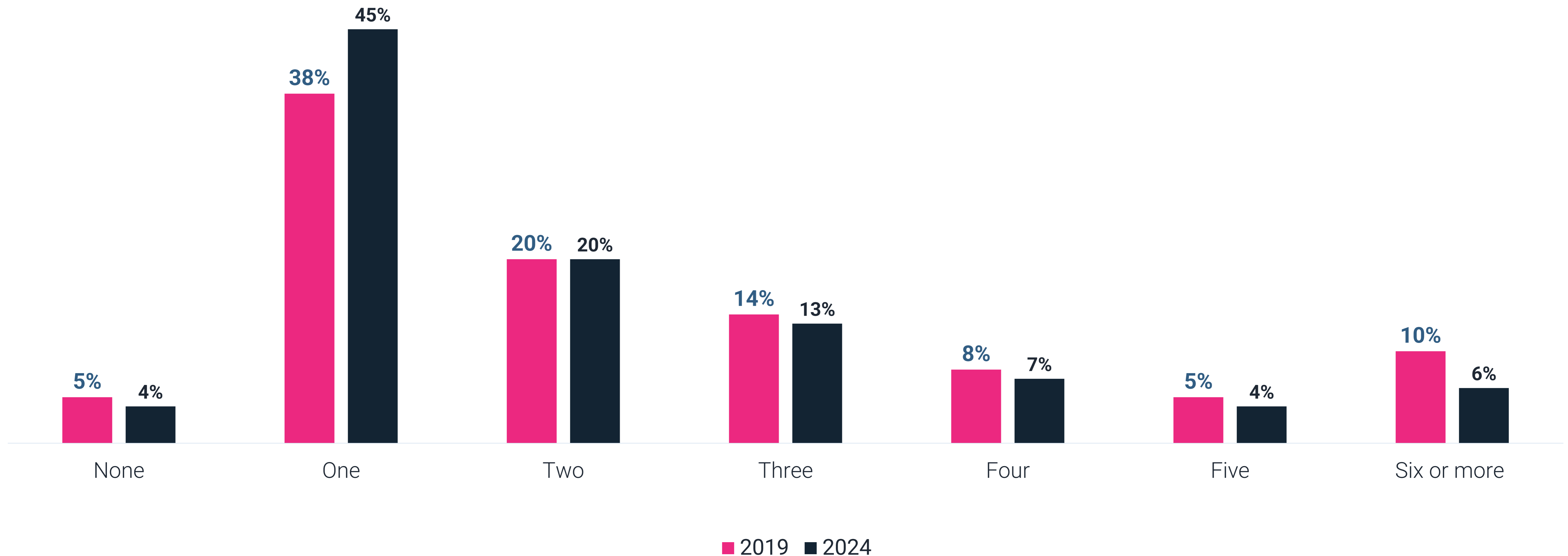


FACTORS IMPORTANT IN CLEARING UNIVERSITY CHOICE ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE CONSIDERED IMPORTANT WHEN APPLYING EARLIER IN THE CYCLE

TOP TEN Clearing survey		NET: Very important and important Clearing 2024	Importance in 2024 Applicant survey
1	The university offering my desired course	95%	N/A
2	The quality of staff/teaching	91%	1
3	The quality of the teaching facilities at the university	91%	2
4	My chance of being accepted based on my grades	86%	N/A
5	The range of modules covered by the course	84%	4
6	Good student reviews	83%	3
7	Academic support available	82%	N/A
8	Graduate prospects	82%	6
9	Likely earning potential after graduation	81%	8
10	The location in the town or city	77%	9

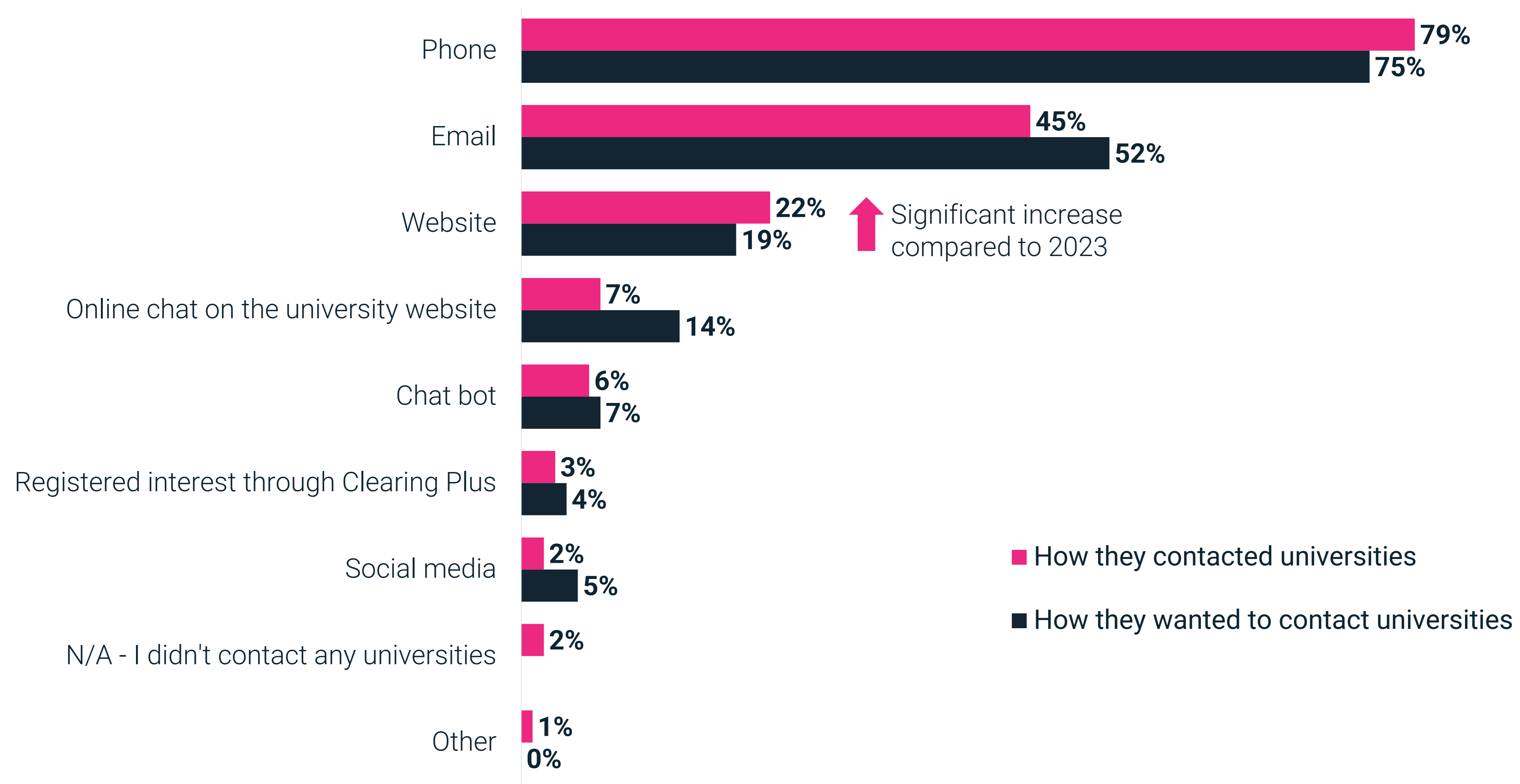
45% HAD ONLY CONTACTED ONE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE ABOUT COURSES IN CLEARING

TREND DATA: HOW MANY UNIVERSITIES OR COLLEGES... DID YOU CONTACT ABOUT COURSES IN CLEARING? 2019 TO 2024



Q: How many universities or colleges... Did you contact about courses in Clearing? (Base 2024: 59203)

THE MAJORITY CONTACTED UNIVERSITIES BY PHONE OR EMAIL TO DISCUSS FINDING A PLACE IN CLEARING. METHODS USED WERE LARGELY IN LINE WITH THE METHODS THEY WANTED TO USE

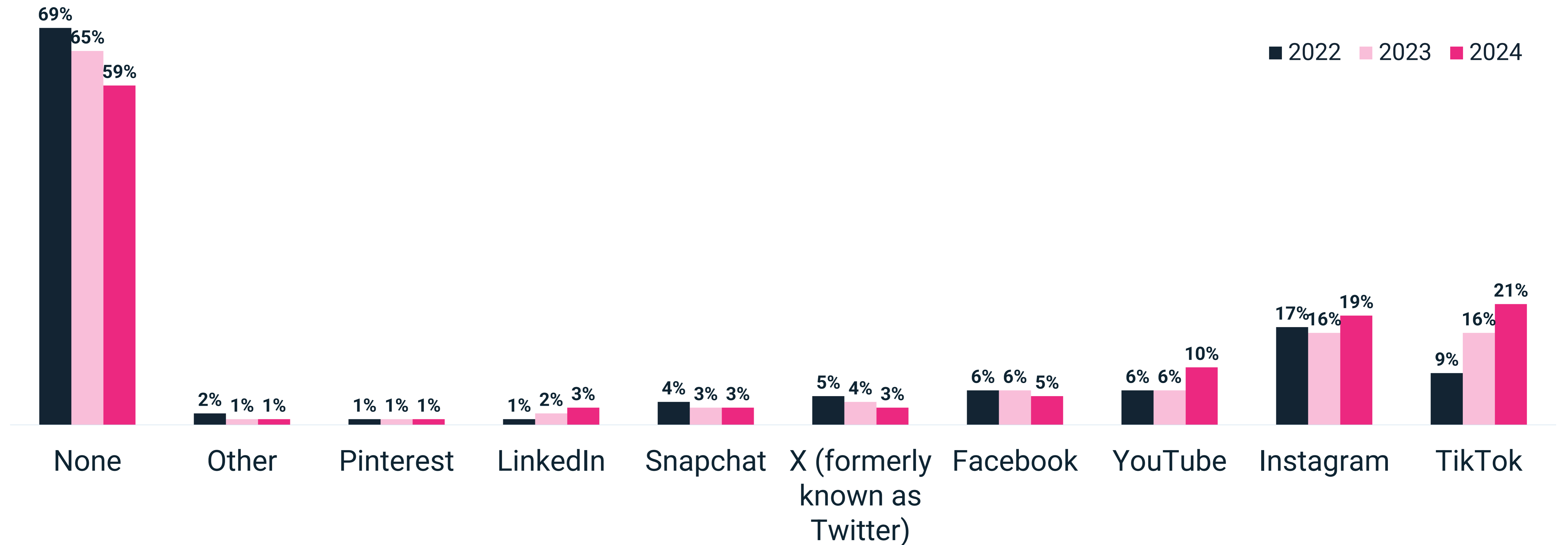


Q: How did you contact universities or colleges to discuss finding a place through Clearing? Please select all that apply.. (Base: 5913)

Q: How would you have liked to have contacted universities or colleges to discuss finding a place through Clearing? Please select all that apply. (Base 5,868)

41% OF CLEARING RESPONDENTS USED SOCIAL MEDIA TO SEARCH FOR CLEARING PLACES - TIKTOK, INSTAGRAM AND YOUTUBE SAW THE GREATEST INCREASES

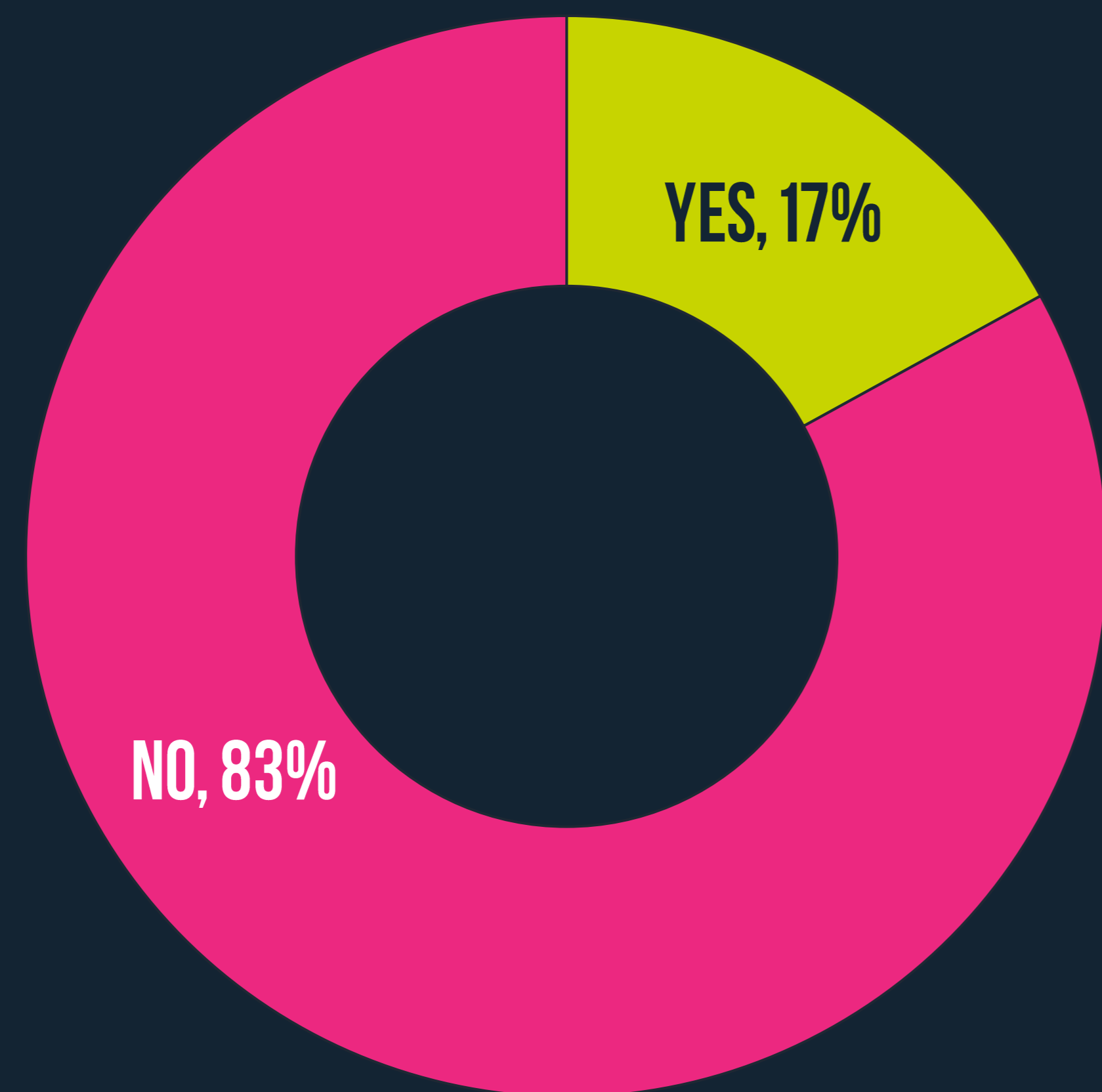
TREND DATA: SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS USED TO SEARCH FOR CLEARING PLACES



Q: Which, if any, social media platforms did you use to search for Clearing places? Please tick all that apply. (Base: 2236 who used social media)

WHAT INFORMATION IS MISSING FROM UNIVERSITIES?

Q: When you were searching for a place in Clearing, was there any information or support that you wanted from universities or colleges that you didn't get? (Base 5,865)



"The accommodation process was unclear, and some universities didn't inform me until it was too late that there would be no accommodation left for Clearing students."

"A lack of information about how long processes would take caused anxiety, especially around whether I was 100% confirmed a place."

"As I am trying to move to part time at my current job, it is extremely difficultwithout knowing rough finish times"

"I wanted more information about bursaries or financial support specific to Clearing applicants, as this was a big factor in my decision-making."

MIND-CHANGERS



**CHANGING YOUR
MIND**
**BEFORE RESULTS
DAY**



MIND-CHANGERS: PUSH FACTORS

DECLINING THEIR PREVIOUS UNI

- 31% changed their minds about the **subject** they wanted to study
- 23% change in **personal circumstances**
- 17% wanted to **live somewhere cheaper**



MIND-CHANGERS: PULL FACTORS

CHOOSING THEIR NEW UNI

- 48% preferred the **location**
- 47% preferred the **course**
- 36% better **reputation** (up from 31% in 2023)
- 30% **closer to home**
- 26% better **graduate prospects**



REPUTATION, THE FULL EXPERIENCE AND **BEING VALUED**

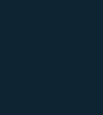
“I received better grades than I expected, so I decided to apply through Clearing for a higher-ranking university that I hadn’t initially considered.”

“It offers better future opportunities and aligns closely with my career aspirations compared to the other choice.”

“Much more diverse group of extracurriculars offered by the institution”

“The university was more responsive to my queries during the decision-making process, which made me feel valued.”

“The lecturer came highly recommended, enhancing the academic appeal.”



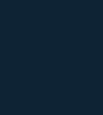
COMMUNICATION IS KEY

“Improve transparency about required grades and the likelihood of acceptance. Many students were unsure if they could reapply for a course they'd previously been rejected from or if their grades would be sufficient.”

“Universities should list their Clearing courses and requirements earlier, ideally before results day, to allow more time to research and prepare.”

“Reduce phone wait times by hiring more staff or providing additional contact methods like live chat or WhatsApp. Long delays caused frustration and stress.”

“Enhance communication during the process, such as regular updates on application status, estimated timelines for confirmation, and verbal offer follow-ups with immediate email confirmation.”



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

ENGAGE STUDENTS EARLIER AND CONSISTENTLY.

2

ADDRESS EMOTIONAL AND PRACTICAL CONCERNS.

3

PRIORITISE ACCOMODATION AND FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

4

SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIFIC NEEDS.

5

ENHANCE DIGITAL TOUCHPOINTS.

6

EMPOWER MIND-CHANGERS WITH INFORMATION.



UCAS

2025

CLEARING
SOLUTIONS

KEY DATES TO REMEMBER:

DECEMBER 2024

Get a sneak peek at our 2025 inventory.

JANUARY 2025

Access the complete Clearing inventory and 2024 Clearing report.

Don't miss our webinar: "Campaigns That Moved the Needle." TBC need to confirm with UoS

4 FEBRUARY 2025

Bookings open. Be quick—it's first-come, first-served.

14 MARCH 2025

Clearing bookings officially close.