

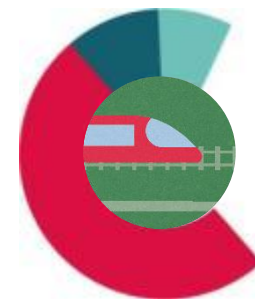


Public Attitudes Towards Decriminalisation Of Abortion



REDC

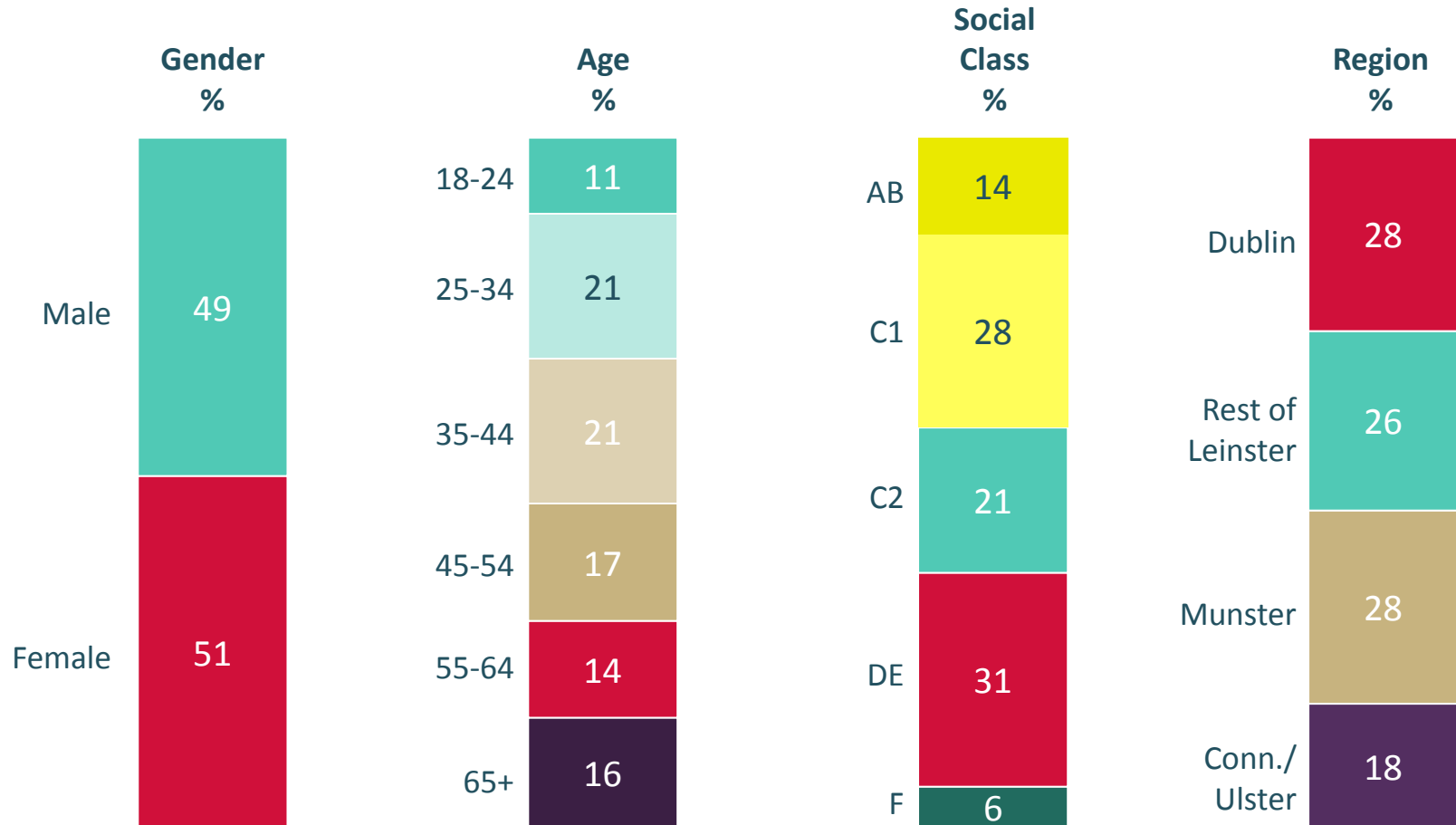
Research Methodology



- / The research was conducted in May 2015, using RED C's telephone omnibus survey, RED Express. This is the same methodology by which we conduct our regular political opinion polls for the Sunday Business Post.
- / **1,009 adults aged 18+** were interviewed over the telephone between **11th and 14th May 2015**.
- / The sample size was **quota controlled** by age, gender, socio-economic status and region in order to ensure a fully representative sample.
- / In addition to this, RED Express uses a Random Digit Dial (RDD) method across landline and mobile to ensure that ex-directory households or those with no landline are included in the sample – **ensuring maximum representation**.
- / The margin of error on a sample size of 1,000 is +/- 3%.
- / Throughout, we have highlighted demographic information of interest, with the aim of helping to inform Amnesty International Ireland's future plans and communications strategy.

Profile of Sample

(Base: All Adults Aged 18+ - 1,009)



The sample was quota controlled to ensure it is nationally representative of adults aged 18+ resident in Ireland.



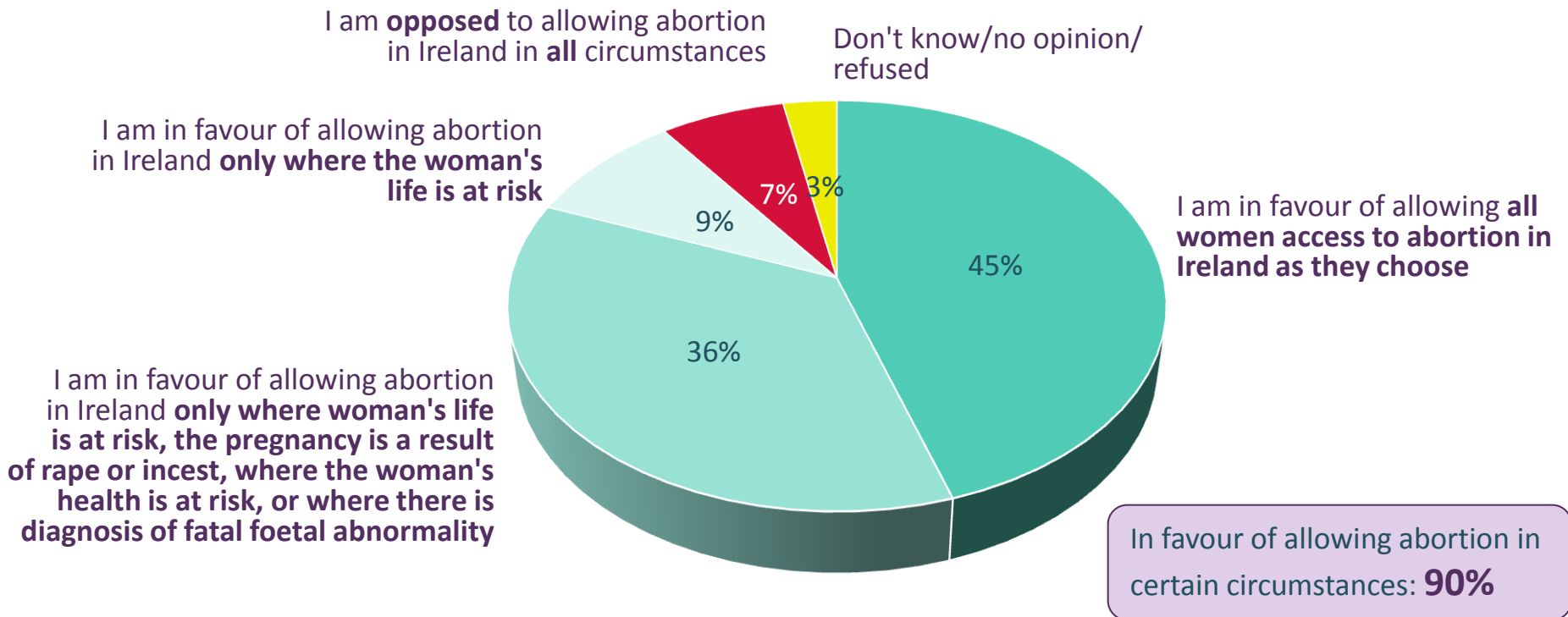


Research Findings

Attitudes Towards Allowing Abortion in Ireland

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

Which of the following best describes how you feel personally about abortion in Ireland?



There is strong claimed support in Ireland for permitting access to abortion in certain circumstances. However, it is important to remember that the issue is not currently on the public agenda to the extent to which it has been in the past and this may potentially be overstated.



Attitudes towards allowing abortion in Ireland - demographics

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

	Total (1,009)	Gender		Age						Class			Region				Area	
		Male (494)	Female (515)	18-24 (111)	25-34 (212)	35-44 (212)	45-54 (172)	55-64 (141)	65+ (161)	ABC1 (424)	C2DE (525)	F (61)	Dublin (283)	Rest of Leinster (262)	Munster (283)	Conn/ Ulster (182)	Urban (539)	Rural (439)
In favour of allowing all women access to abortion in Ireland as they choose	45%	46%	43%	45%	52%	47%	44%	44%	33%	49%	42%	38%	47%	42%	45%	44%	49%	40%
In favour where woman's life is at risk, when result of rape/incest, woman's health is at risk, or diagnosis of fatal foetal abnormality	36%	34%	38%	40%	37%	31%	39%	33%	36%	35%	36%	39%	31%	40%	35%	38%	34%	40%
In favour of allowing abortion in Ireland only where the woman's life is at risk	9%	11%	8%	6%	2%	10%	10%	10%	20%	9%	9%	14%	9%	10%	11%	8%	9%	9%
Opposed to allowing abortion in Ireland in all circumstances	7%	7%	7%	5%	6%	10%	5%	11%	6%	6%	8%	9%	8%	7%	6%	9%	6%	9%
Don't know/no opinion/refused to answer	3%	2%	4%	5%	3%	2%	2%	2%	5%	1%	5%	-	5%	-	4%	2%	2%	2%
NET: In favour of abortion in certain circumstances	90%	91%	89%	91%	91%	88%	93%	87%	89%	94%	87%	91%	87%	92%	90%	90%	92%	89%

 Over/under indexes vs. total

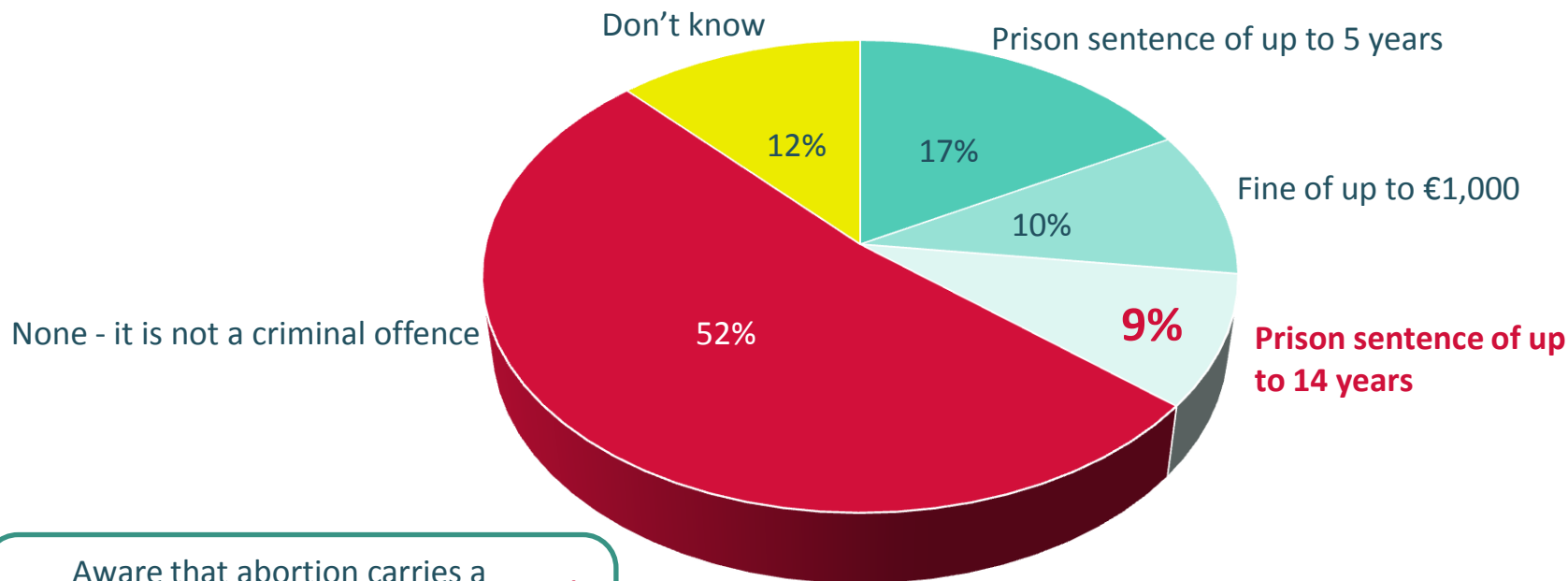
Those aged 65+ are less likely to make abortion available by choice, and are more likely to favour the status quo. Those of a higher social class are more in favour of full access, and in favour of access to abortion overall.



Awareness Of Criminalisation Of Abortion In Ireland

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

Which of the following do you think is the criminal penalty for a woman found to have had an abortion in Ireland when her life is not at risk?



Aware that abortion carries a criminal penalty **36%**
Not aware that abortion carries a criminal penalty **64%**

Under 1 in 10 are aware that a woman can potentially be imprisoned for up to 14 years for procuring an abortion in Ireland, when her life is not at risk. Two thirds are not aware that there is any criminal penalty.



Awareness Of Criminalisation Of Abortion In Ireland - Demographics

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

Which of the following do you think is the criminal penalty for a woman found to have had an abortion in Ireland when her life is not at risk?

	Total (1,009)	Gender		Age						Class			Region				Area	
		Male (494)	Female (515)	18-24 (111)	25-34 (212)	35-44 (212)	45-54 (172)	55-64 (141)	65+ (161)	ABC1 (424)	C2DE (525)	F (61)	Dublin (283)	Rest of Leinster (262)	Munster (283)	Conn/ Ulster (182)	Urban (539)	Rural (439)
Prison sentence of up to 5 years	17%	20%	15%	22%	22%	22%	16%	13%	6%	20%	16%	11%	20%	16%	19%	13%	20%	13%
Fine of up to @1,000	10%	11%	9%	12%	8%	8%	13%	9%	12%	10%	10%	5%	9%	10%	10%	11%	9%	11%
Prison sentence of up to 14 years	9%	13%	5%	8%	13%	10%	8%	11%	-	12%	7%	5%	13%	6%	9%	5%	10%	6%
None - it is not a criminal offence	52%	47%	57%	53%	48%	48%	51%	53%	61%	45%	56%	62%	46%	59%	50%	54%	49%	57%
Don't know	12%	10%	14%	4%	9%	12%	12%	15%	21%	13%	11%	17%	13%	9%	12%	16%	11%	12%
Aware that abortion carries a criminal penalty	36%	43%	29%	42%	43%	41%	37%	32%	18%	42%	33%	21%	41%	32%	38%	30%	40%	31%
Not aware that abortion carries a criminal penalty	64%	57%	71%	58%	57%	59%	63%	68%	82%	58%	67%	79%	59%	68%	62%	70%	60%	69%

  Over/under indexes vs. total

Females, older people, lower social-economic classes and rural dwellers are less likely to be aware that abortion is classified as a crime. Males and Dublin dwellers are more likely to be aware of the potential 14-year penalty.



Awareness Of Criminalisation Of Abortion In Ireland x Attitudes towards Abortion

(All adults aged 18+ - 1,009)

	Total (1,009)	Opposed (72)	In favour only if life at risk (95)	In favour if rape/FFA/health/life risk (362)	In favour of full choice (449)
Prison sentence of up to 5 years	17%	20%	20%	17%	17%
Fine of up to €1,000	10%	16%	20%	10%	6%
Prison sentence of up to 14 years	9%	12%	4%	9%	9%
None - it is not a criminal offence	52%	36%	36%	50%	61%
Don't know	12%	16%	20%	14%	7%
<i><u>Aware that abortion carries a criminal penalty</u></i>	36%	48%	44%	36%	32%
<i><u>Not aware that abortion carries a criminal penalty</u></i>	64%	52%	56%	64%	68%

 Over/under indexes vs. total

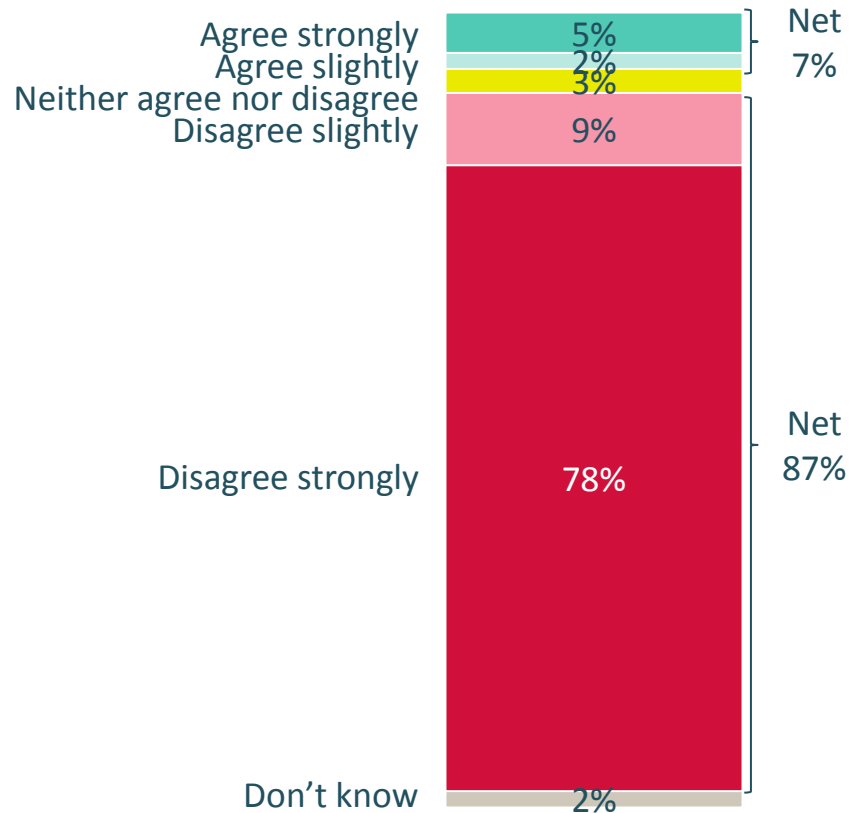
Those with more conservative attitudes towards abortion are more likely to be aware that it carries a criminal penalty, even if they are unsure of what it is. Those opposed in all circumstances are marginally more likely to be aware that it potentially carries a 14 year sentence.



Attitudes Towards 14-year Penalty For Abortion In Ireland

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

A prison sentence of up to 14 years is a reasonable penalty for having an abortion.



The vast majority of the population – almost 9 in 10 - when informed of the 14-year prison sentence, do not agree that it is a reasonable penalty for having an abortion.



Attitudes Towards 14-year Penalty For Abortion In Ireland x Demographics

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

A prison sentence of up to 14 years is a reasonable penalty for having an abortion

		Gender		Age						Class			Region				Area	
	Total (1,009)	Male (494)	Female (515)	18-24 (111)	25-34 (212)	35-44 (212)	45-54 (172)	55-64 (141)	65+ (161)	ABC1 (424)	C2DE (525)	F (61)	Dublin (283)	Rest of Leinster (262)	Munster (283)	Conn/ Ulster (182)	Urban (539)	Rural (439)
Agree strongly	5%	7%	4%	5%	6%	8%	5%	2%	4%	3%	7%	4%	7%	5%	6%	2%	5%	6%
Agree slightly	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%	5%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	5%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	3%	4%	3%	7%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	8%	1%	4%	4%	6%	2%	5%
Disagree slightly	9%	10%	7%	11%	12%	8%	8%	5%	7%	8%	9%	9%	10%	9%	7%	8%	10%	7%
Disagree strongly	78%	76%	81%	72%	76%	75%	80%	85%	82%	82%	76%	71%	78%	75%	80%	80%	80%	77%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	-	4%	1%	3%	4%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
NET: Agree	7%	9%	7%	8%	7%	10%	7%	7%	5%	6%	9%	7%	8%	10%	8%	4%	6%	9%
NET: Disagree	87%	85%	88%	83%	88%	83%	88%	90%	89%	90%	85%	80%	88%	85%	86%	89%	90%	84%

Over/under indexes vs. total

Older people are more likely to strongly disagree that the 14-year prison sentence is reasonable.



Attitudes Towards 14-year Penalty For Abortion In Ireland x Attitudes towards Abortion

(All adults aged 18+ - 1,009)

A prison sentence of up to 14 years is a reasonable penalty for having an abortion

	Total (1,009)	Opposed (72)	In favour only if life at risk (96)	In favour if rape/ FFA/health/life risk (362)	In favour as choice (449)
Agree strongly	5%	24%	10%	5%	2%
Agree slightly	2%	7%	10%	2%	-
Neither agree nor disagree	3%	12%	2%	5%	1%
Disagree slightly	9%	14%	17%	11%	4%
Disagree strongly	78%	38%	58%	76%	92%
Don't know	2%	4%	3%	1%	1%
NET: Agree	7%	31%	19%	7%	3%
NET: Disagree	87%	52%	75%	87%	96%



Over/under indexes vs. total

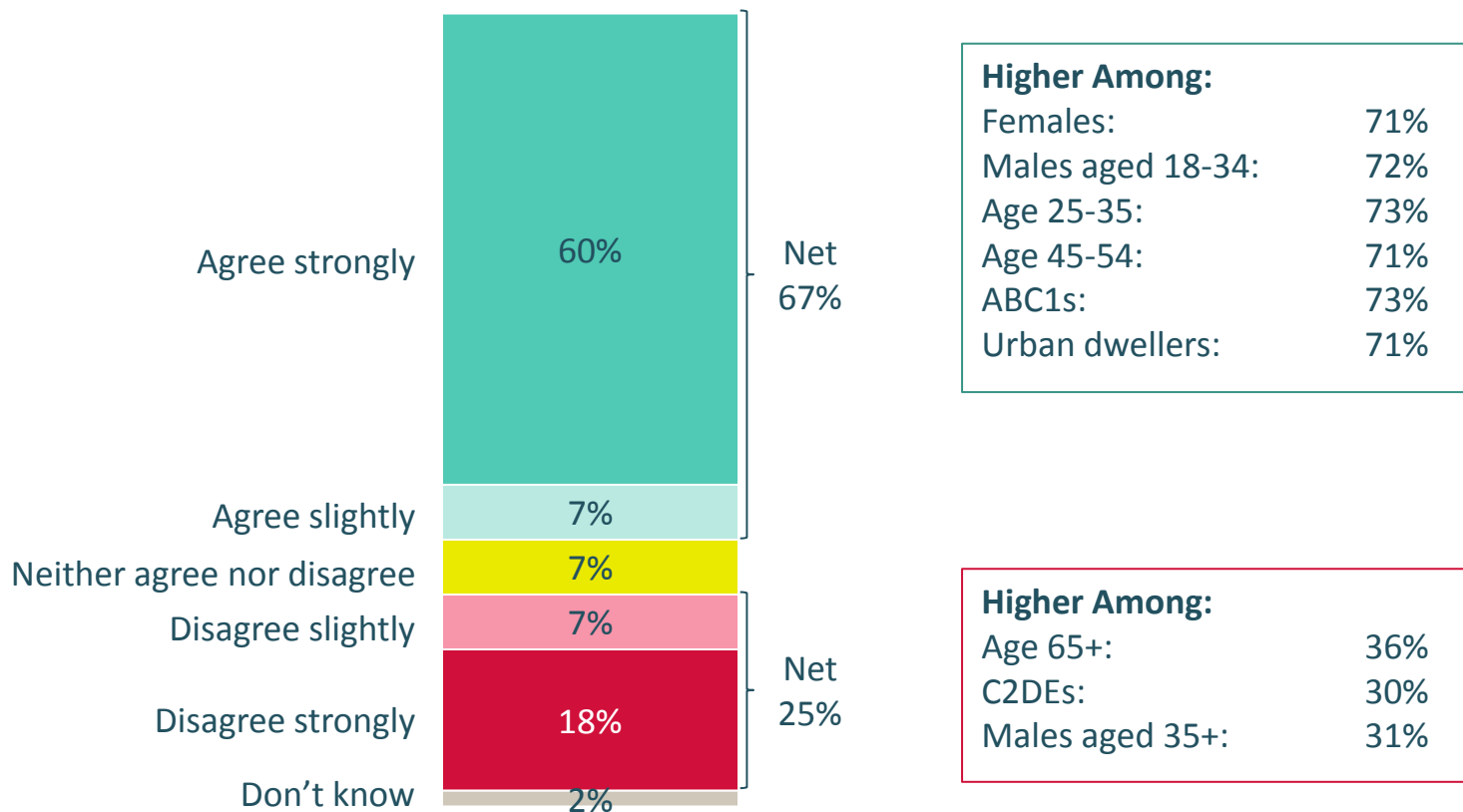
Those opposed to abortion in all circumstances are significantly more likely to agree that the 14-year penalty is reasonable. Disagreement is significantly higher among those in favour of a liberal regime.



Support For Decriminalising Abortion

(All adults aged 18+ - 1,009)

The Irish Government should decriminalise abortion, which means removing the criminal penalty for women who have abortions in Ireland.



Two thirds of the population are in agreement that abortion should be decriminalised. However, while the majority may disagree with the 14-year penalty, a significant cohort do not agree that it should be decriminalised completely.



Support For Decriminalisation of Abortion x Demographics

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

The Irish Government should decriminalise abortion, which means removing the criminal penalty for women who have abortions in Ireland.

		Gender		Age						Class			Region				Area	
	Total (1,009)	Male (494)	Female (515)	18-24 (111)	25-34 (212)	35-44 (212)	45-54 (172)	55-64 (141)	65+ (161)	ABC1 (424)	C2DE (525)	F (61)	Dublin (283)	Rest of Leinster (262)	Munster (283)	Conn/ Ulster (182)	Urban (539)	Rural (439)
Agree strongly	60%	54%	65%	60%	64%	65%	65%	54%	47%	65%	56%	54%	61%	61%	60%	55%	64%	58%
Agree slightly	7%	8%	5%	6%	10%	3%	5%	8%	8%	8%	6%	10%	6%	6%	7%	9%	7%	6%
Neither agree nor disagree	7%	8%	5%	4%	7%	8%	6%	9%	5%	6%	6%	10%	6%	7%	6%	7%	5%	7%
Disagree slightly	7%	7%	6%	9%	7%	5%	7%	4%	9%	6%	7%	4%	7%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%
Disagree strongly	18%	20%	17%	18%	12%	17%	16%	23%	27%	14%	22%	16%	19%	19%	18%	17%	16%	20%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%	-	1%	4%	1%	2%	6%	1%	1%	2%	4%	1%	2%
NET: Agree	67%	62%	71%	66%	73%	68%	71%	62%	55%	73%	62%	64%	67%	67%	67%	65%	71%	64%
NET: Disagree	25%	27%	23%	27%	19%	21%	23%	27%	36%	20%	30%	20%	26%	25%	25%	24%	22%	27%

Over/under indexes vs. total

Females, younger people, those of a higher social grade and those in urban areas are more likely to agree with decriminalisation. **Older people are more likely to strongly oppose it.**



Support For Decriminalising Abortion x Attitudes Towards Abortion

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

The Irish Government should decriminalise abortion, which means removing the criminal penalty for women who have abortions in Ireland.

	Total (1,009)	Opposed (72)	In favour only if life at risk (95)	In favour if rape/ FFA/health/life risk (362)	In favour of full choice (449)
Agree strongly	60%	29%	27%	49%	84%
Agree slightly	7%	2%	11%	11%	3%
Neither agree nor disagree	7%	5%	14%	12%	1%
Disagree slightly	7%	6%	7%	12%	2%
Disagree strongly	18%	58%	35%	15%	11%
Don't know	2%	2%	6%	1%	-
NET: Agree	67%	30%	38%	60%	87%
NET: Disagree	25%	63%	42%	27%	12%

Over/under indexes vs. total

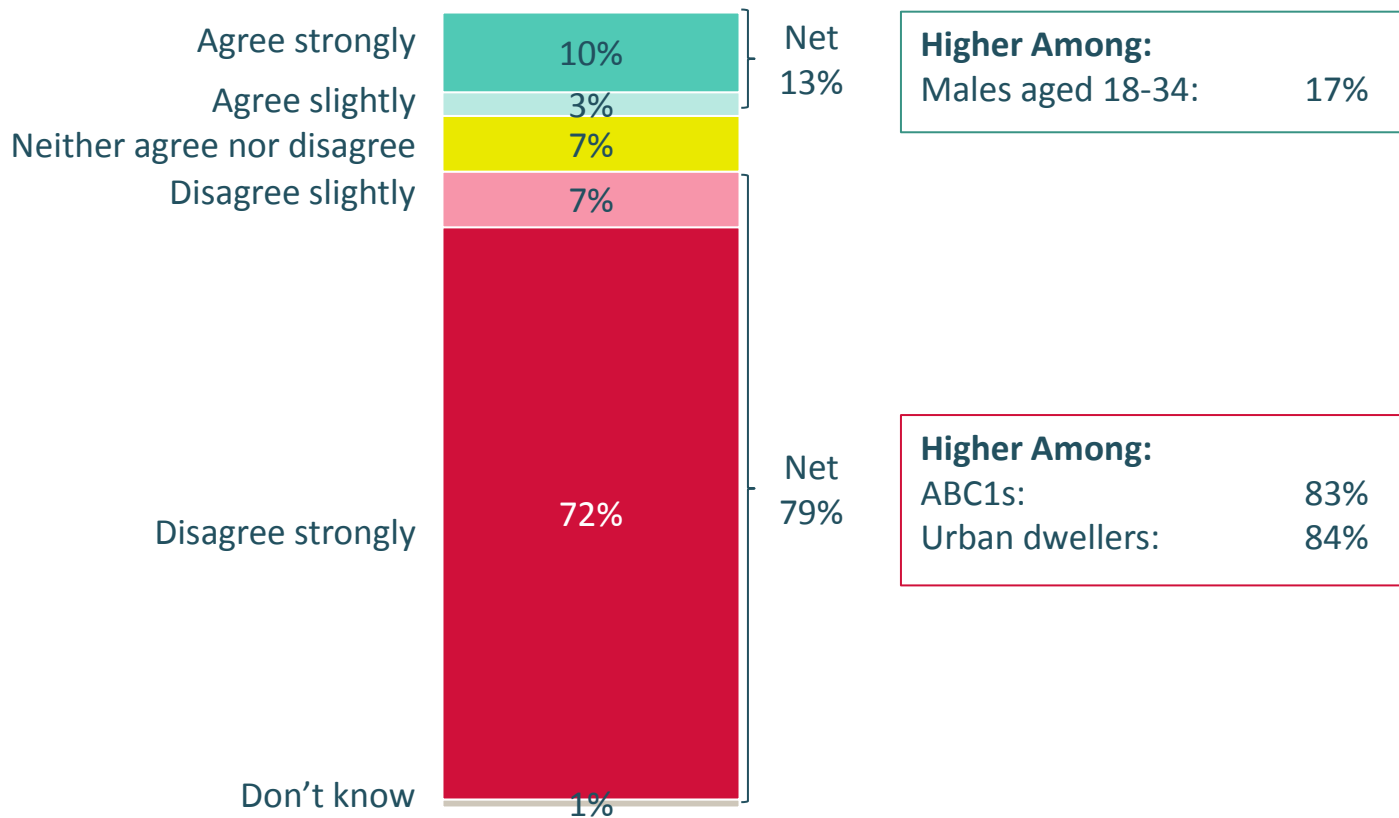
Those who are more conservative in their attitudes towards abortion are significantly less likely to agree with decriminalisation. Those in favour of allowing women the choice to access abortion are significantly more likely to strongly advocate it.



Public Opinion On Criminalising Doctors For Performing Abortions

(All adults aged 18+ - 1,009)

If a doctor performs an abortion in Ireland when the life of the woman is not at risk, it is also a crime, even where the pregnancy is a result of rape, the woman's health is at risk or there is a fatal foetal impairment. The doctor can be imprisoned for up to 14 years. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is disagree strongly and 5 is agree strongly, how much do you agree or disagree that this is a fair penalty?



4 in 5 disagree that imprisoning a doctor for performing an abortion where the woman's life is not at risk is a fair penalty. Just over 1 in 10 agree.



Public Opinion On Criminalising Doctors For Performing Abortions x Attitudes Towards Abortion

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

If a doctor performs an abortion in Ireland when the life of the woman is not at risk, it is also a crime, even where the pregnancy is a result of rape, the woman's health is at risk or there is a fatal foetal impairment. The doctor can be imprisoned for up to 14 years. On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is disagree strongly and 5 is agree strongly, how much do you agree or disagree that this is a fair penalty?

	Total (1,009)	Opposed (72)	In favour only if life at risk (95)	In favour if rape/ FFA/health/life risk (362)	In favour as choice (449)
Agree strongly	10%	37%	23%	9%	3%
Agree slightly	3%	6%	5%	3%	1%
Neither agree nor disagree	7%	10%	9%	12%	2%
Disagree slightly	7%	9%	8%	10%	3%
Disagree strongly	72%	34%	54%	66%	90%
Don't know	1%	3%	1%	-	1%
NET: Agree	13%	43%	28%	12%	4%
NET: Disagree	79%	43%	62%	77%	93%

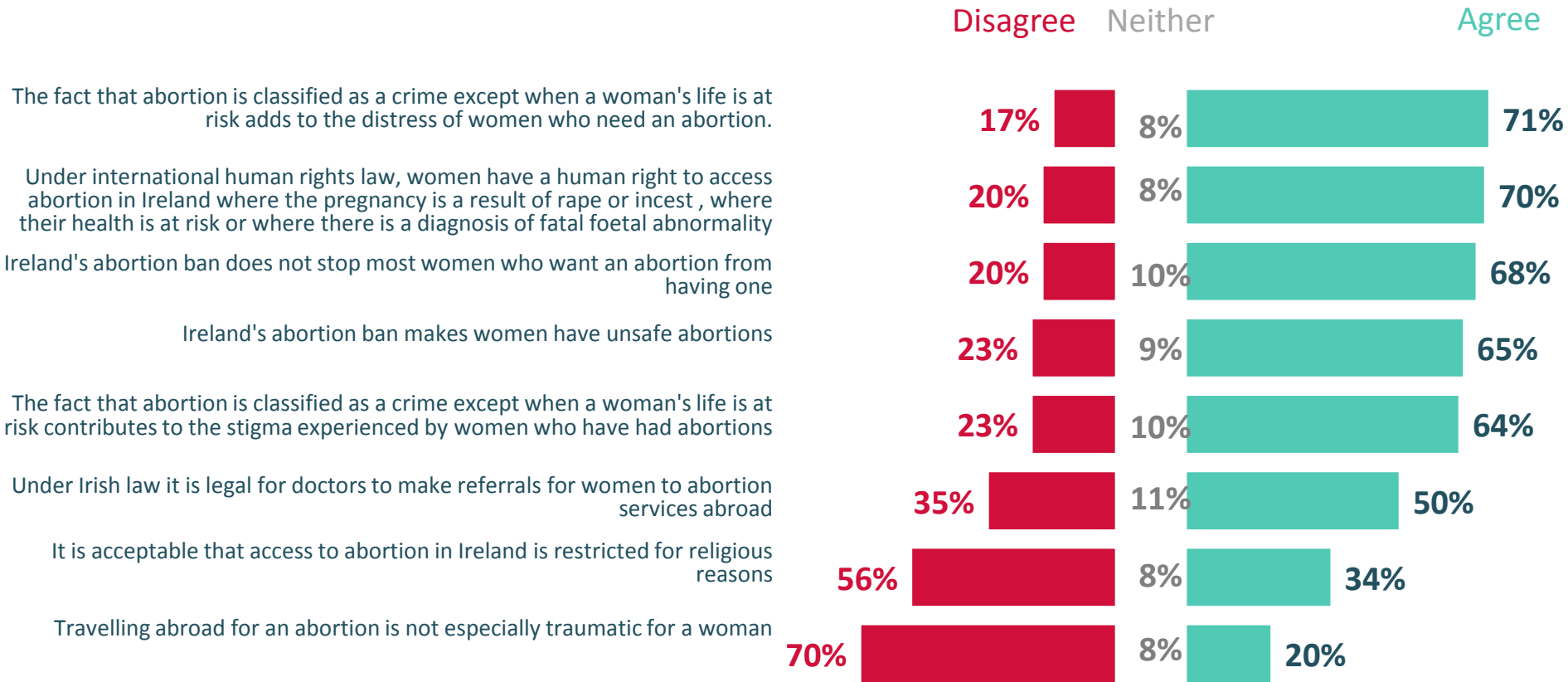
Over/under indexes vs. total

As we would expect, those in favour of increasing access to abortion are almost universally opposed to the 14-year penalty for doctors and are more likely to strongly disagree with it.



Public Attitudes Towards Abortion - Summary

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1005)



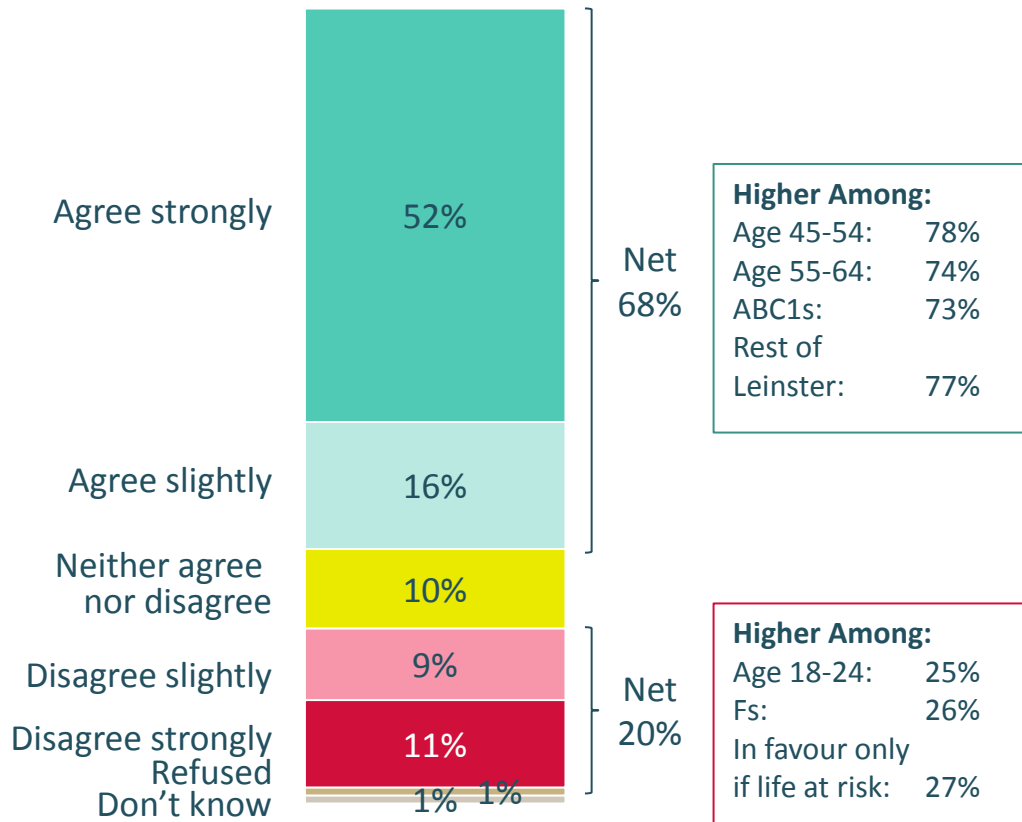
There is strong recognition of the cost to women of the current legal situation around abortion in Ireland.



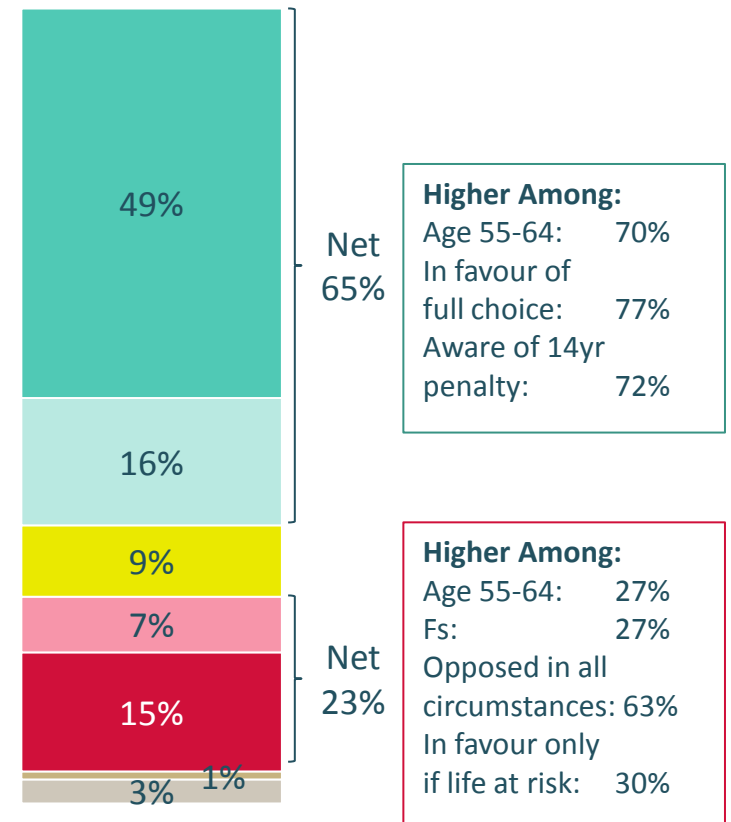
Access To Abortion In Ireland (I)

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

Ireland's abortion ban does not stop most women who want an abortion from having one



Ireland's abortion ban makes women have unsafe abortions



Older people are more likely to agree that restriction does not prevent access, but can also result in unsafe abortions. Those with more conservative attitudes are less likely to agree.

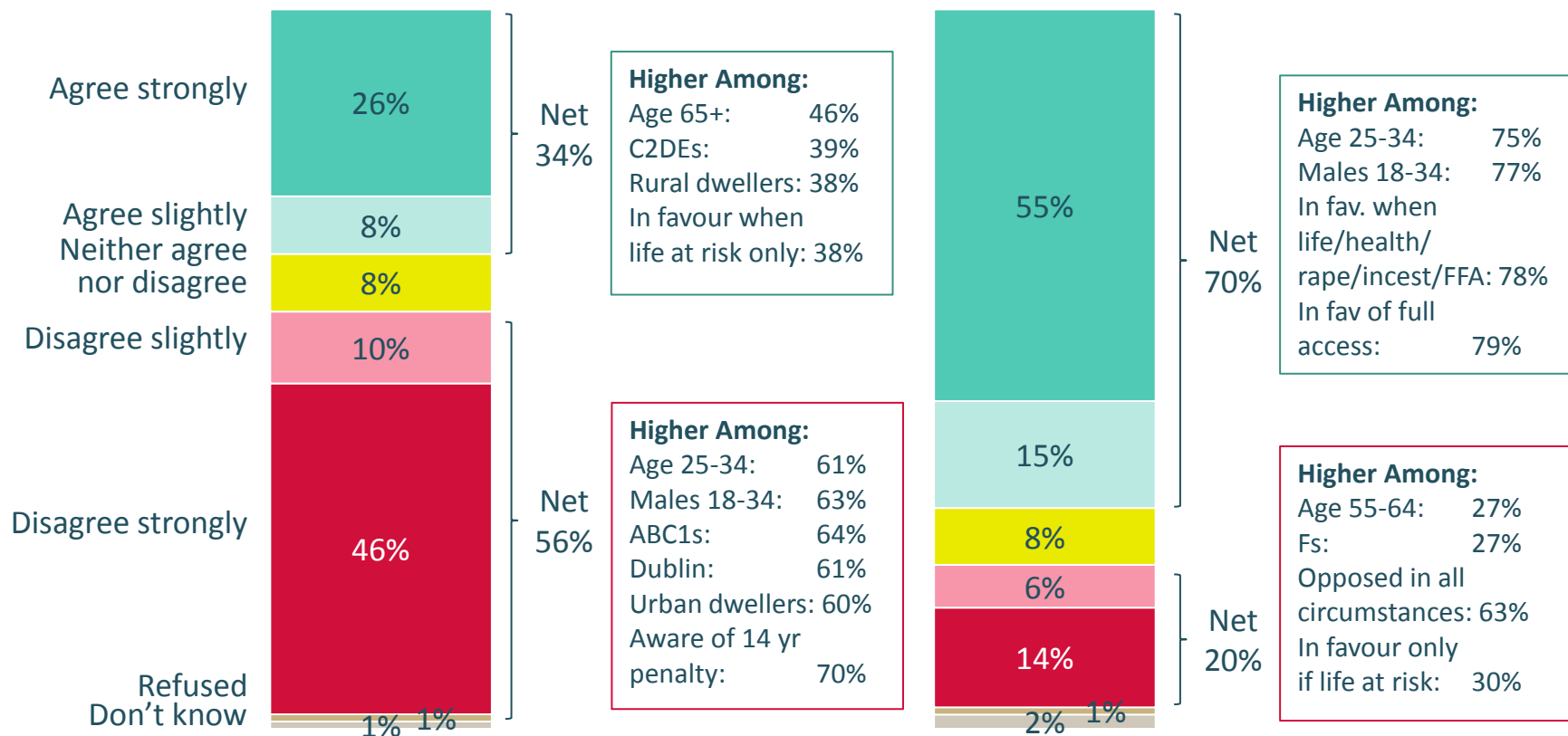


Access To Abortion In Ireland (II)

(All adults aged 18+ - 1,009)

It is acceptable that access to abortion in Ireland is restricted for religious reasons

Under international human rights law, women have a human right to access abortion in Ireland where the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest, where their health is at risk or where there is a diagnosis of fatal foetal abnormality



Older people, rural dwellers and those of a lower social grade are more likely to justify restricting access on religious grounds. Those in favour of increasing access to abortion are more likely to acknowledge the human rights of women.

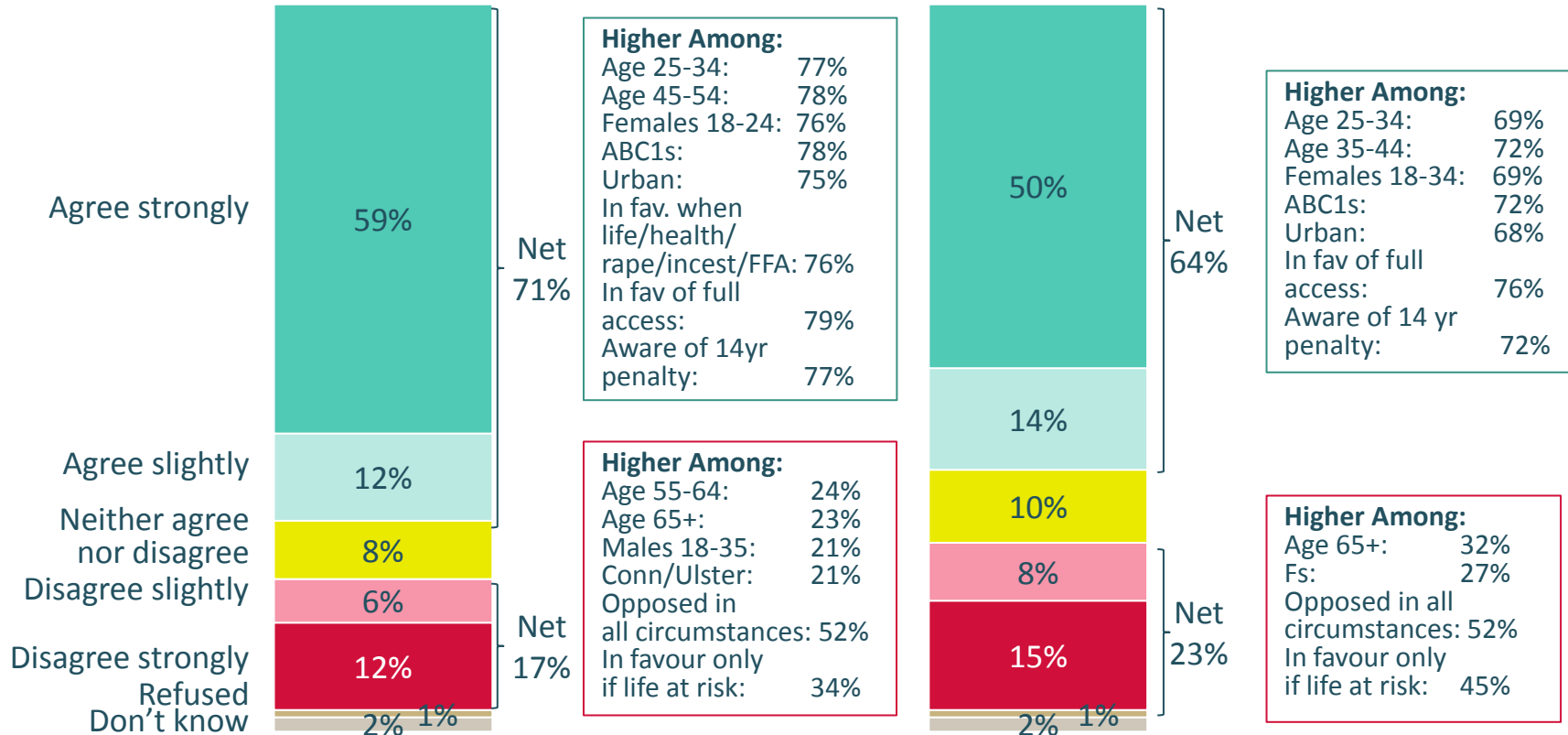


Distress And Stigma

(All adults aged 18+- 1,009)

The fact that abortion is classified as a crime except when a woman's life is at risk adds to the **distress** of women who need an abortion

The fact that abortion is classified as a crime except when a woman's life is at risk contributes to the **stigma** experienced by women who have had abortions

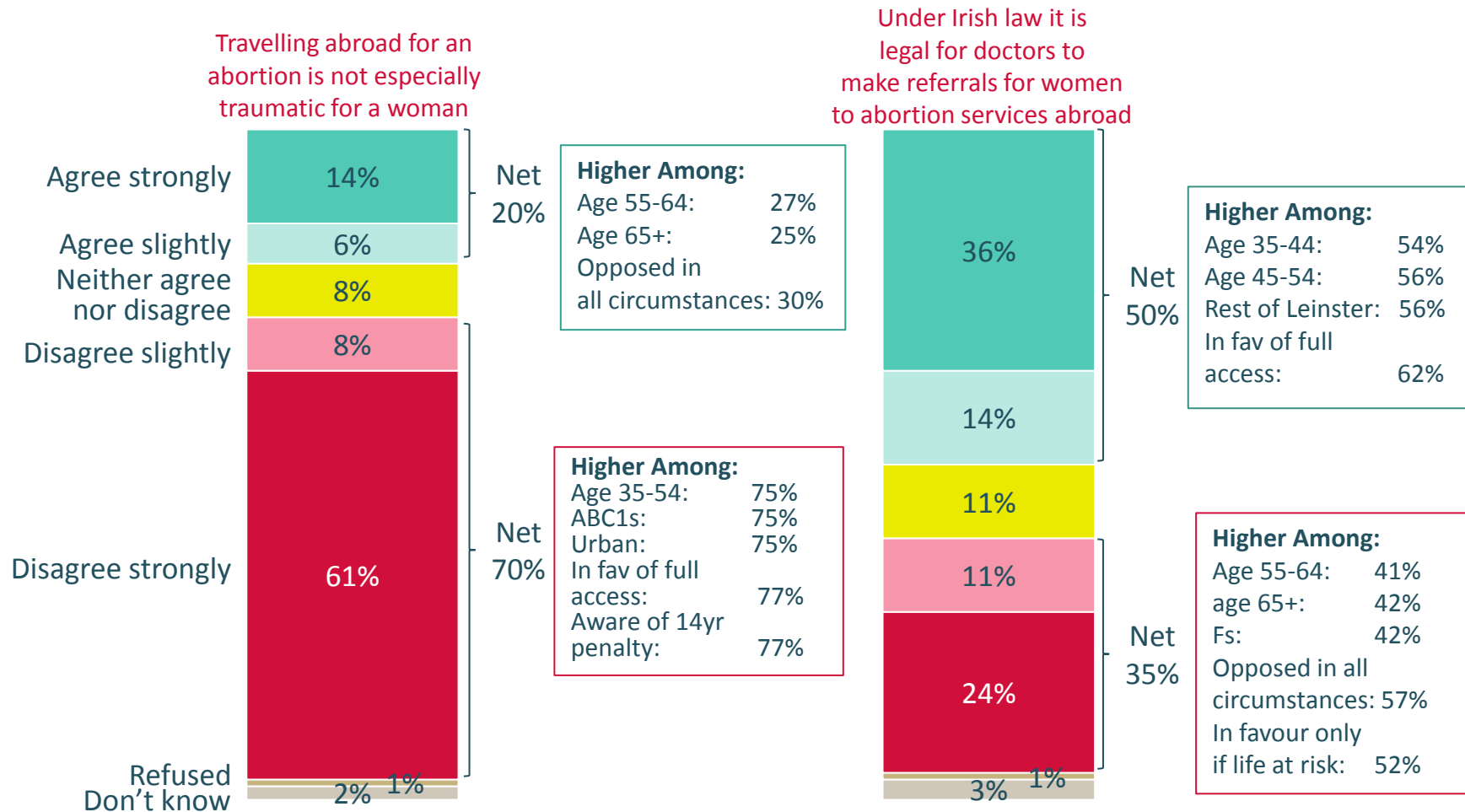


Younger people, females in particular and those favouring less restricted access are more likely to acknowledge the distress and stigma brought about by criminalising abortion.



Accessing Abortion Abroad

(All adults aged 18+ - 1,009)



Older people and those opposed to abortion are less likely to acknowledge the trauma of travelling for an abortion. Opinion is divided on whether it is legal for doctors to make referrals to services abroad.



Key Insights

- / There is strong claimed support in Ireland for permitting access to abortion in certain circumstances. However – important to bear in mind that this may potentially be overstated. Those favouring free access to abortion are more likely to be urban-based (Dublin) and of a higher social class; those favouring the status quo are more likely to be male and older.
- / Throughout the research, some strong themes emerge:
 - » older people and those of a lower social grade are less likely to be informed, and also less likely to be sympathetic
 - » Those who are in favour of maintaining restricted attitudes display less understanding than those who favour a more liberal regime; however are less likely to be aware of the implications of procuring an abortion.
 - » Just under 1 in 10 are aware of the correct criminal penalty for abortion when the life of the mother is not at risk, with two thirds unaware that it carries any criminal penalty.
- / The vast majority of the population – almost 9 in 10 - when informed of the 14-year prison sentence, do not agree that it is a reasonable penalty for having an abortion.
- / Two thirds of the population are in agreement that abortion should be decriminalised. However, while the majority may disagree with the 14-year penalty, a significant cohort (25%) do not agree that it should be decriminalised completely.
- / 4 in 5 disagree that imprisoning a doctor for performing an abortion where the woman's life is not at risk is a fair penalty. Just over 1 in 10 agree.
- / Throughout, there is very little claimed lack of knowledge (very low levels of Don't Know) confirming that opinions on this issue are strong.

**THANK
YOU**

REDC