

# Project 1 Video-sharing platform usage & experience of harms survey

Produced by: Yonder

Fieldwork: 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020

# Definitions and Clarifications

**Video Sharing Platforms:** This research explored a range of websites and apps used by people in the UK to watch and share videos online. Although the term ‘video sharing platforms’ (VSPs) is used, this research does not seek to identify which services will fall into Ofcom’s regulatory remit, nor to pre-determine whether any particular service would be classed as a VSP under the regulatory definition. It should also be noted that the platforms included in this research operate at different scales. This should be taken into consideration when comparing results from users of smaller VSPs against those from users of larger platforms.

**Site and App Content:** This research explored a range of sites and apps which have video sharing functionalities. Many of these platforms also contain a mix of video and other types of content and allow users to view and participate in a range of ways, of which video sharing is one element.

**Sources of Evidence:** Evidence in this research is self-reported by respondents who have shared their experiences, recollections and feelings about VSP usage and potential online harms experienced on VSPs. All respondents participated voluntarily and were free to withdraw their participation at any point during the research process. As such, the evidence is limited by respondents’ freedom to decide whether to participate, their ability to recall events, accuracy of that recall and which experiences they chose to disclose. This report does not seek to replicate prevalence metrics of potential online harms and reporting of those harms that may be collected by alternative means.

**Potential online harms:** A range of potential online harms on websites and apps were explored in this research. The harms are referred to as ‘potential online harm(s)’ because the research measured the types of content and behaviour that users could be exposed to online, but did not seek to assess what, if any, harm arose from this exposure. This research also considered a broader range of potentially harmful online content or experiences that VSP users could be exposed to when using these sites than the specified categories of harmful material in the VSP legislation. This approach was taken to build a holistic understanding of VSP users’ experiences on these sites

# Background and Objectives

## Understanding video-sharing platforms (VSPs)

This piece of quantitative research measures:

1. Usage levels of VSPs, including barriers to usage
2. How VSPs are used, from frequency of accessing and length of time spent through to the types of content viewed
3. Potential Online Harms experienced on VSPs in the last 3 months, the impact of the harm, what users did afterwards, and the actions (if any) taken by both users, VSPs and other bodies
4. Users' ideas on the measures VSPs could introduce to help protect them

# Methodology

## Sample

- 2,039 people aged 13-84 in the UK
- Quotas set on gender, age, socio-economic group and region

## Data collection

- Online survey interviews conducted amongst the Ofcom VSP Panel
- Conducted by Yonder
- Fieldwork from 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## Data reporting

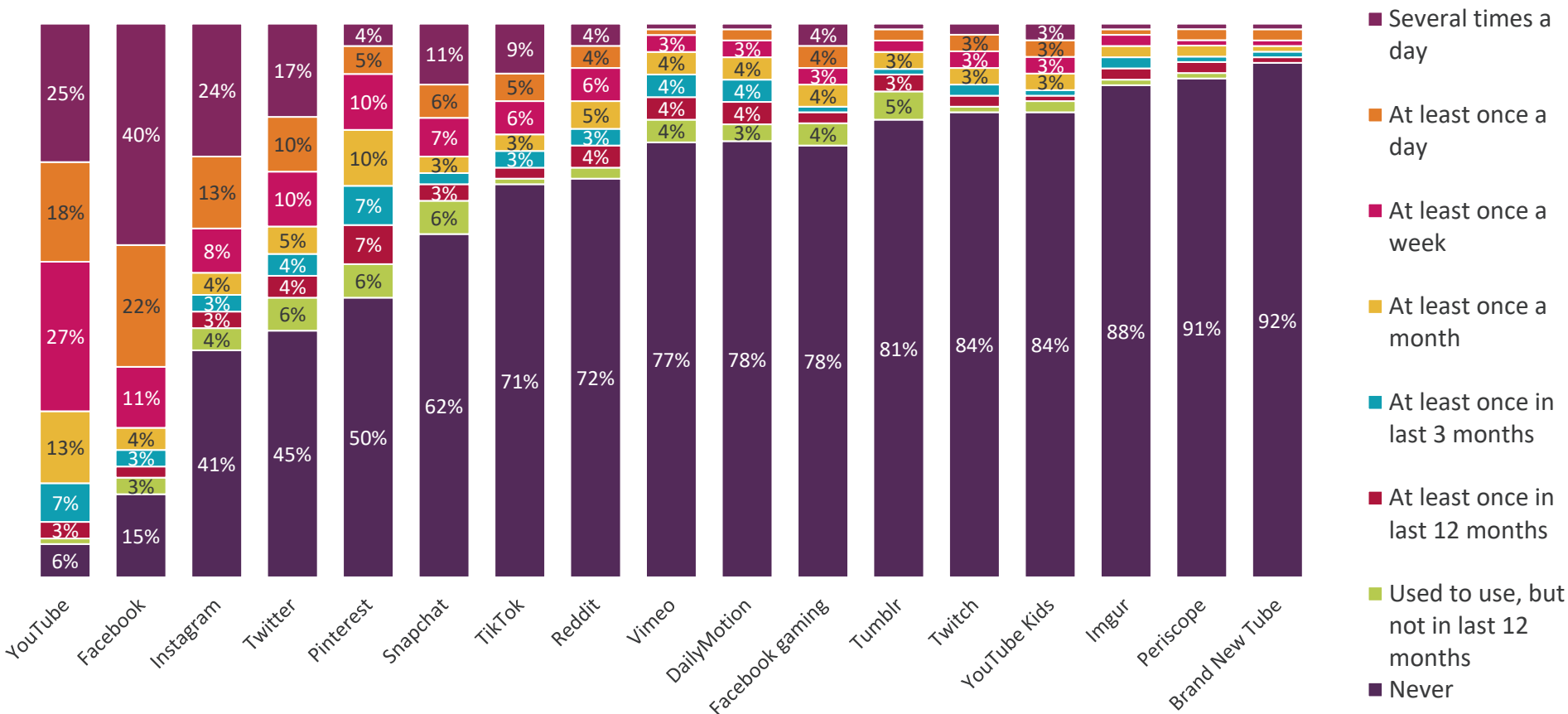
- Weighted to be nationally representative of the UK. Within the sample, 1,825 are aged 18-84 and 214 are aged 13-17. 13-84 have been weighted back to a nationally representative proportion within the dataset
- Data available in tables and SPSS
- Significance testing applied at the 95% confidence level

# Section 1

## VSP Site Usage

While YouTube is the most popular VSP, Facebook is more frequently used, as the majority of users access the site several times a day

Use of services by frequency: Part 1



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

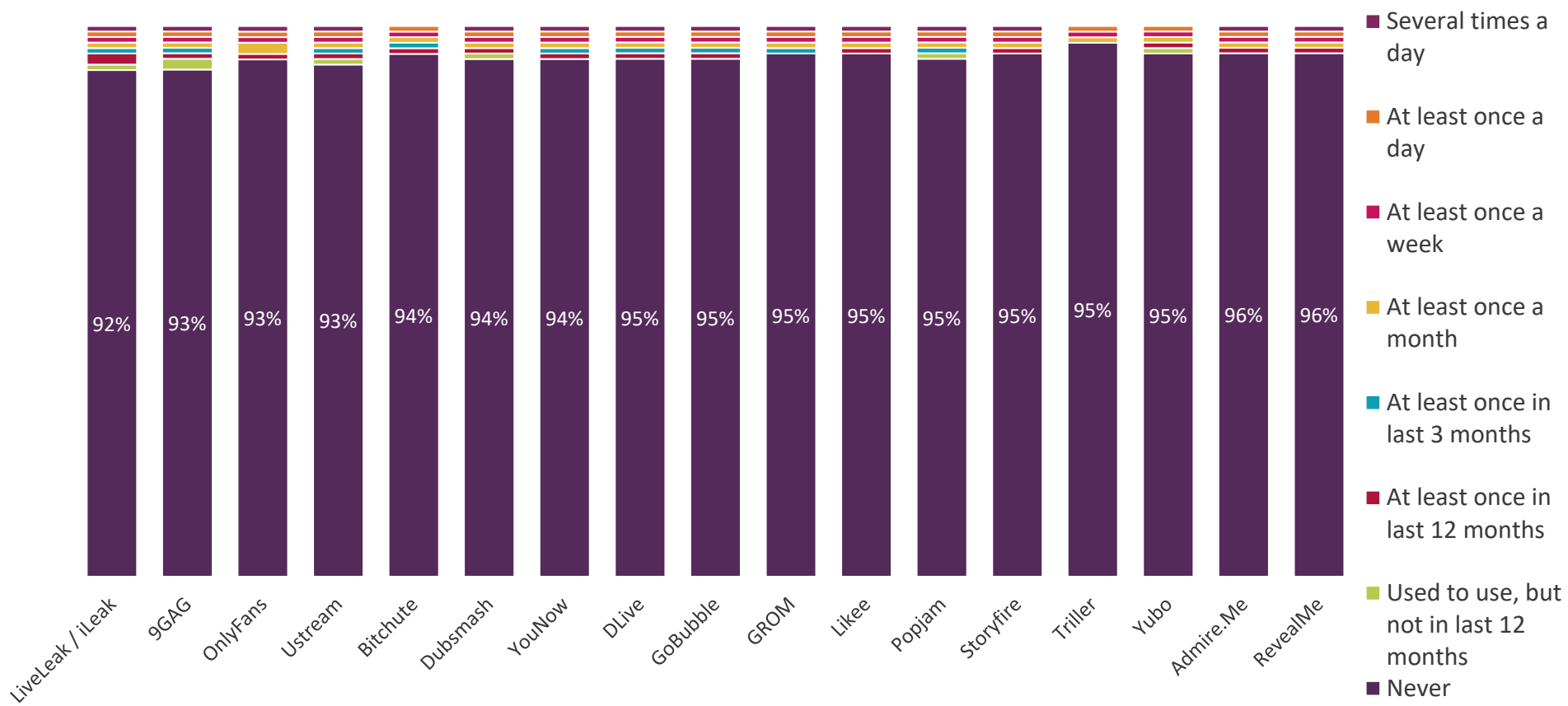
Q1. How frequently do you use or visit any of the following sites or apps that host user-generated videos (i.e. people sharing videos online)? This includes watching videos, uploading videos, commenting on videos or sending private messages on these sites or apps using any device.

Base: all, n=2,039

Data labels >2% shown

# Many of the smaller VSPs are used by a minority and are therefore not widely used among the general public

## Use of services by frequency: Part 2



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

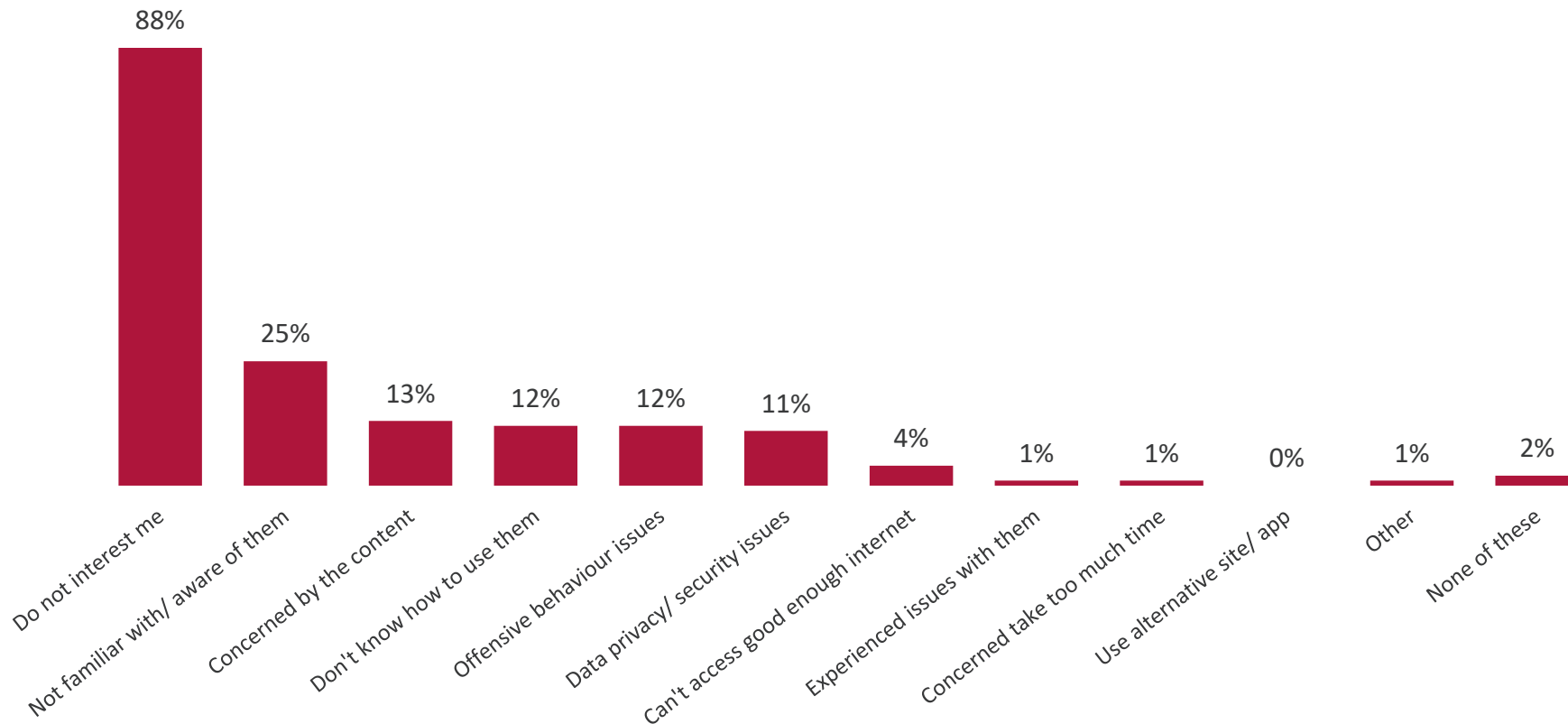
Q1. How frequently do you use or visit any of the following sites or apps that host user-generated videos (i.e. people sharing videos online)? This includes watching videos, uploading videos, commenting on videos or sending private messages on these sites or apps using any device.

Base: all, n=2,039 except for OnlyFans, Admire.Me and RevealMe which were asked to adults (18-84) only, n=1,825

Data labels >2% shown

# A lack of interest is the top barrier to VSP usage, as opposed to concerns about potentially harmful content or behaviour

## Barriers to using VSPs\*



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q11. You told us that you do not use or visit any of these sites or apps/ haven't used them in the last 12 months. Please tell us which, if any, of the following describe your reasons for this?

Base: have not used any VSPs in the last 12 months, n=59\* - CAUTION: Low base size.

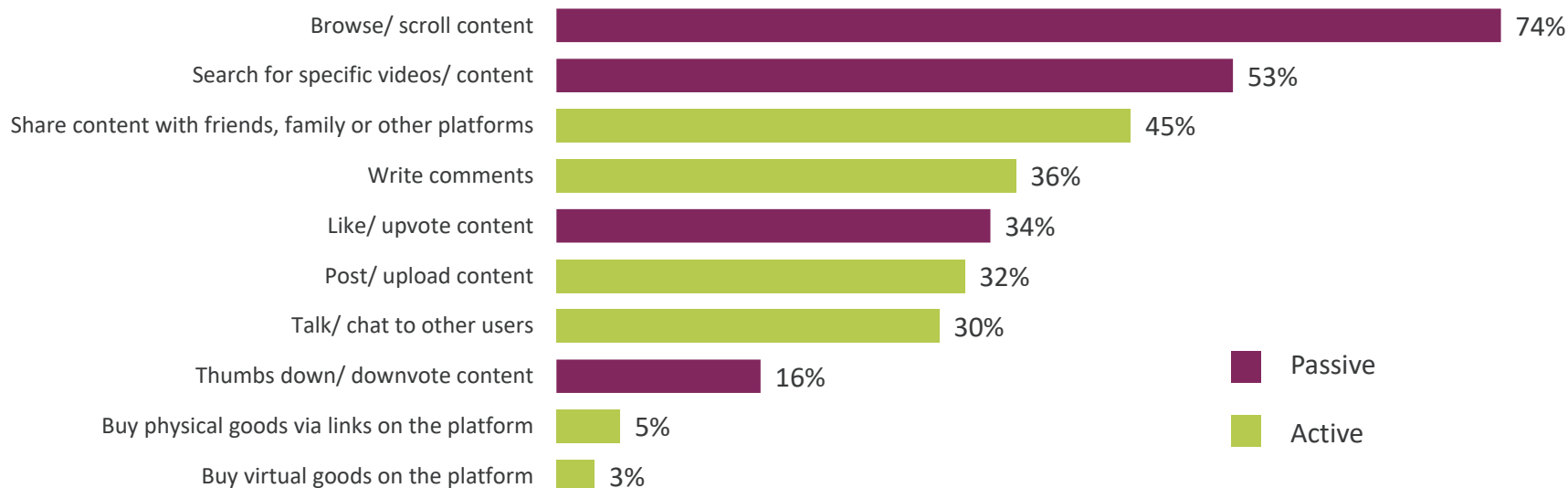


# Section 2

## Activities on VSPs

# The majority of VSP users engage in passive browsing and searching for specific content, however nearly half share content

## Activities done on VSPs



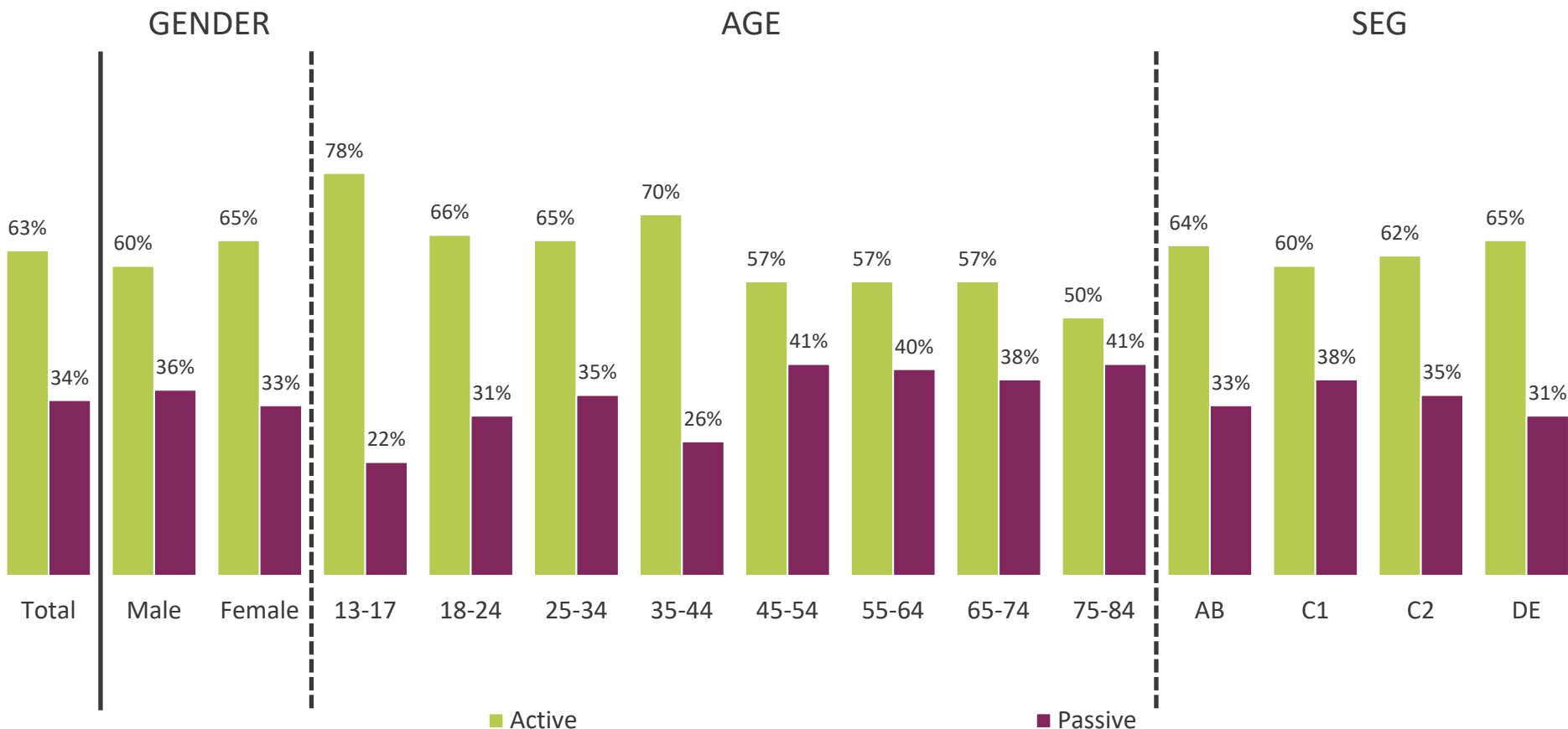
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q2. You mentioned that you have used the following video sites or apps in the last 12 months. In general, what do you tend to use these video services for?

Base: used at least one VSP in the last 12 months, n=1,980

# Most users actively engage activities, with younger people particularly likely to be much more active than passive

## Active vs. passive VSP activity: By core demographics - Part 1



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

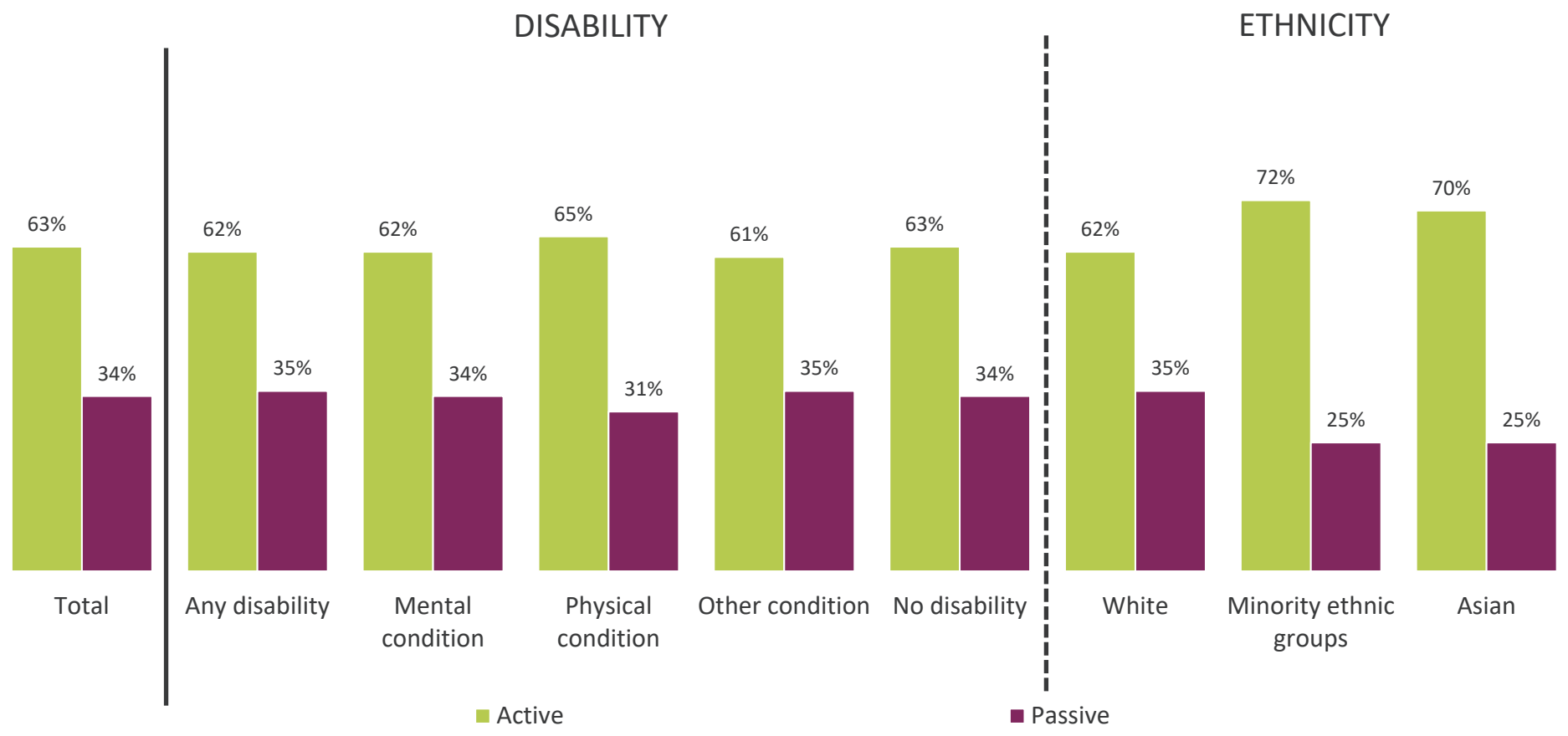
Q2. You mentioned that you have used the following video sites or apps in the last 12 months. In general, what do you tend to use these video services for?

Base: used at least one VSP in the last 12 months, Total: n=1,980; Male: n=990; Female: n=990; 13-17: n=214; 18-24: n=213; 25-34: n=312; 35-44: n=299; 45-54: n=337; 55-64: n=266; 65-74: n=218; 75-84: n=121; AB: n=563; C1: n=565; C2: n=389; DE: n=463.

# Users from minority ethnic groups are more likely to actively engage in VSP activities than those from white ethnicities



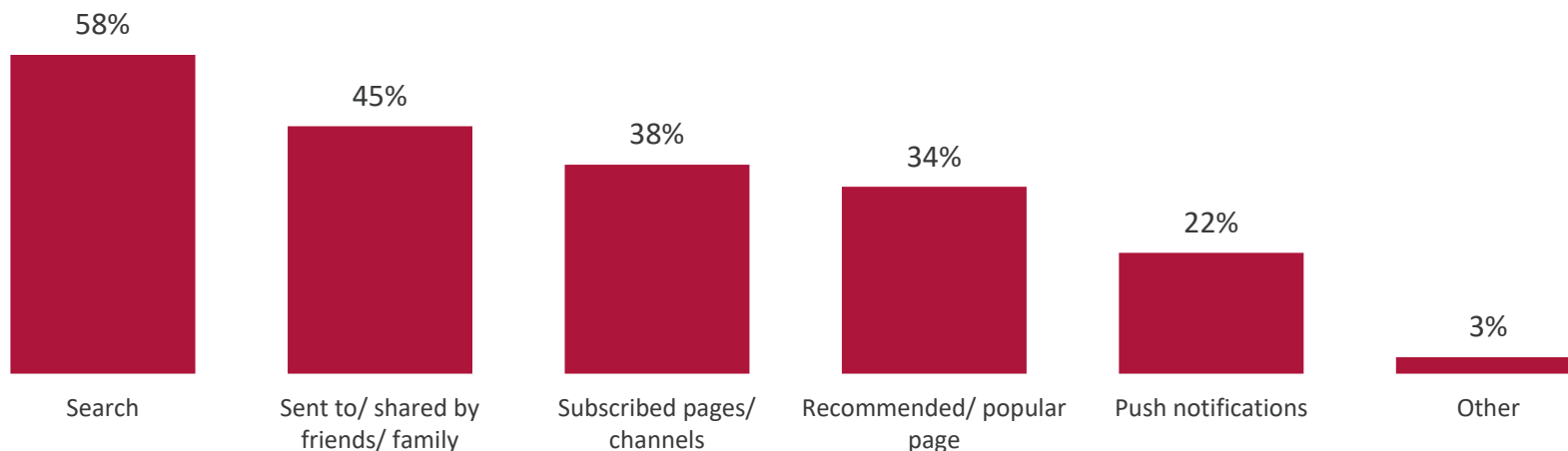
## Active vs. passive VSP activity: By core demographics - Part 2



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey  
 Q2. You mentioned that you have used the following video sites or apps in the last 12 months. In general, what do you tend to use these video services for?  
 Base: used at least one VSP in the last 12 months, Total: n=1,980; Any disability, n=405; Mental condition, n=194; Physical condition, n=256; Other condition, n=139; No disability, n=1534; White, n=1,752; minority ethnic group backgrounds, n=204; Asian, n=103. NOTE: Results for ethnicity codes Mixed, Black and Chinese/Other are not displayed as their base sizes were <n=50.

# Actively searching is the most commonly used method to find videos, followed by receiving videos from friends and family

## Methods of finding videos



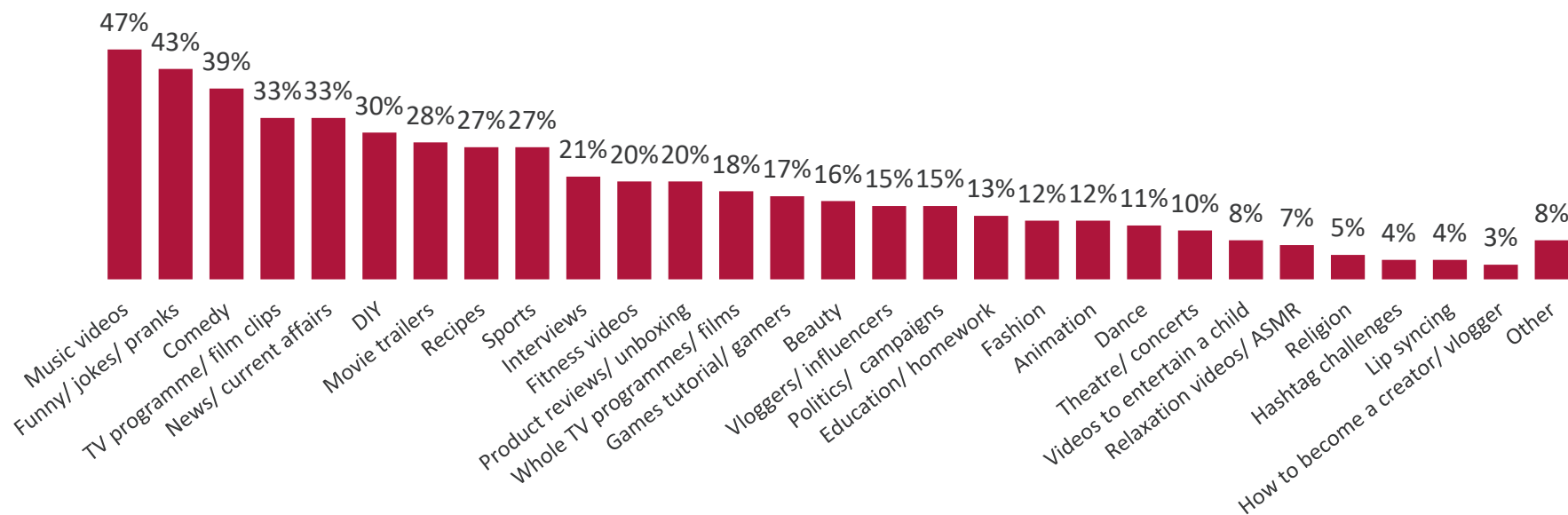
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q3. Which of the following do you use to find videos to watch when using these video sites or apps?

Base: All respondents who have used any video sites or apps in the last 12 months, n=1,980.

# Entertainment is the leading video content category, driven by music videos, funny/jokes/pranks videos and comedy

## Video content viewed



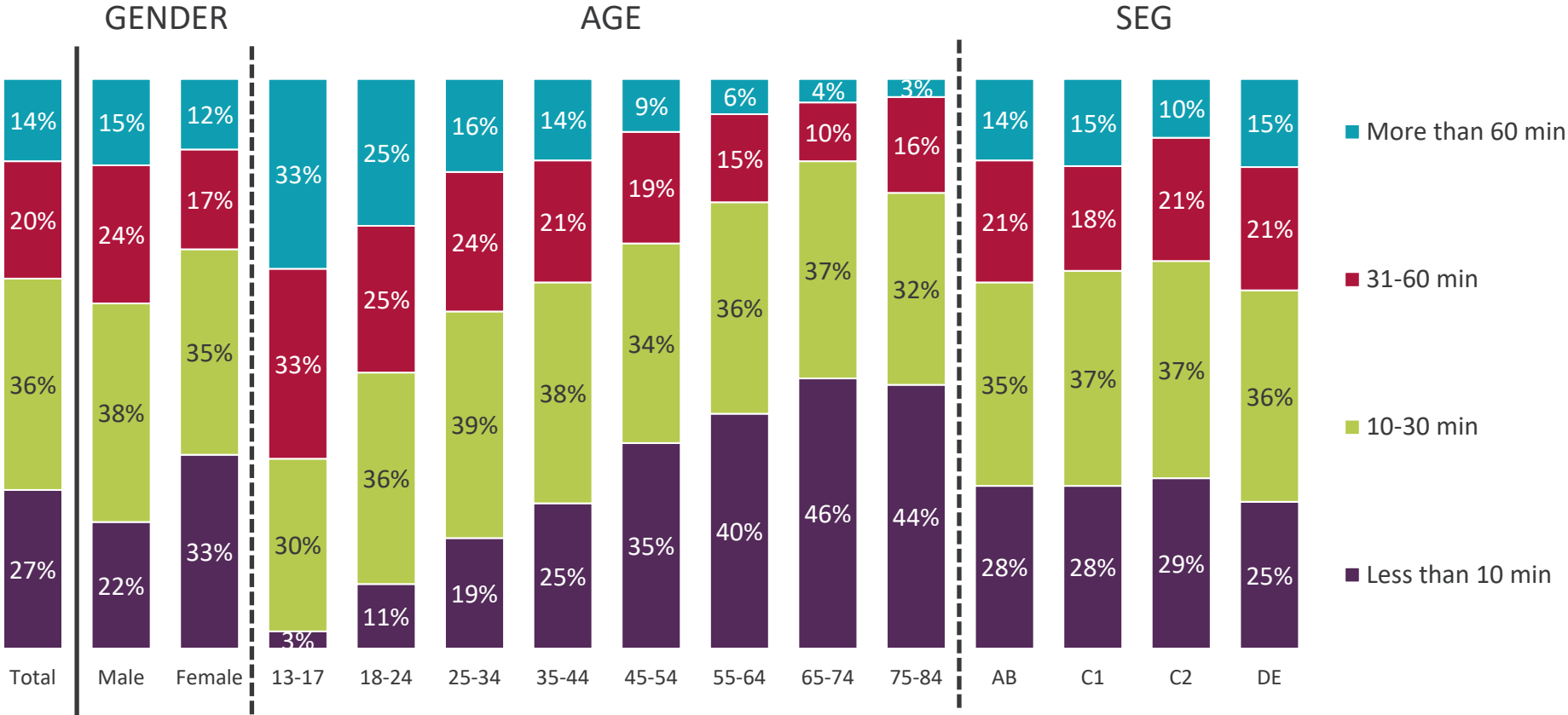
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q3b. In general, what type of videos do you watch on these video sites or apps?

Base: used at least one VSP in the last 12 months, n=1,980.

# Males and younger people tend to spend more time watching videos online than females and older people

## Time spent watching videos: By core demographics - Part 1



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

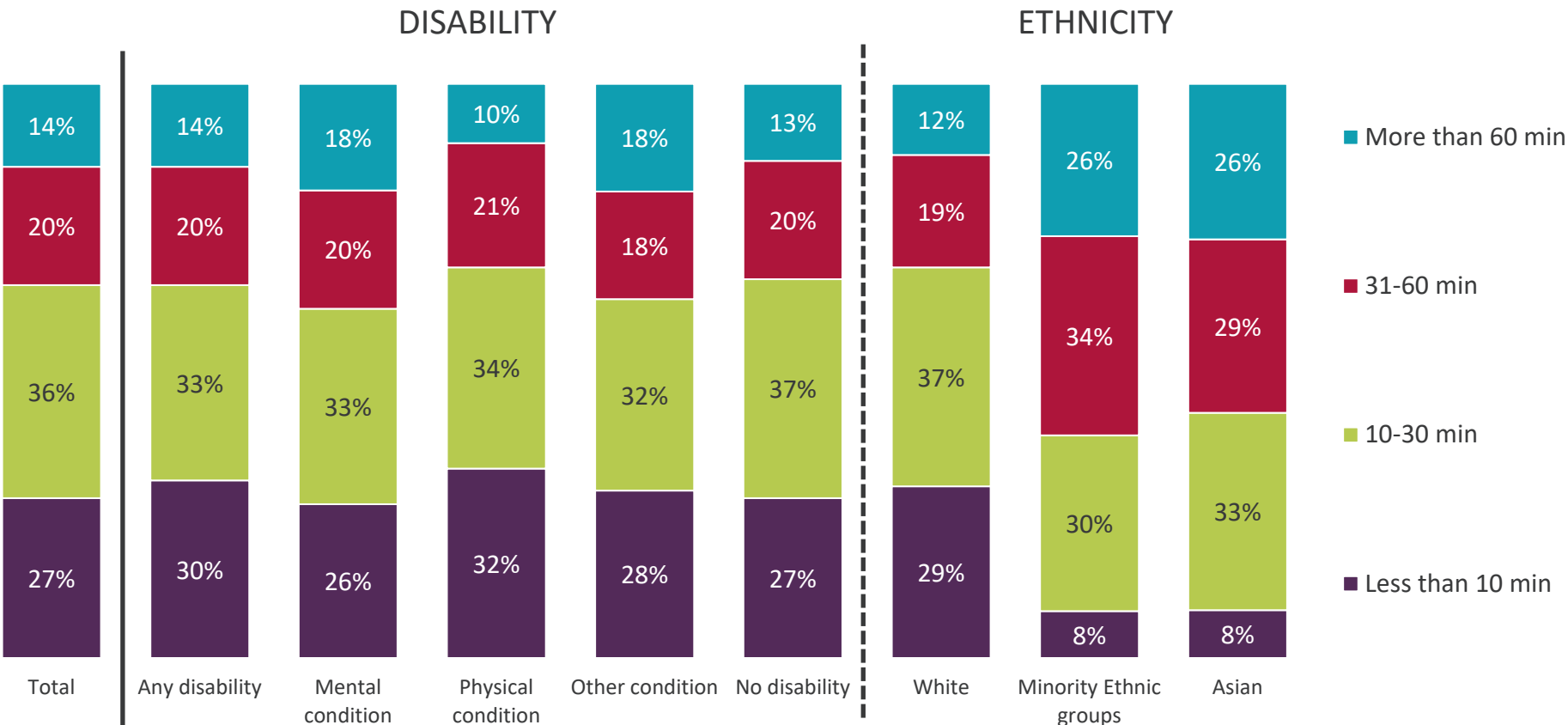
Q3c. On average, during a single day, how long do you spend watching videos when you visit these platforms?

Base: used at least one VSP in the last 12 months Total: n=1,980; Male: n=990; Female: n=990; 13-17: n=214; 18-24: n=213; 25-34: n=312; 35-44: n=299; 45-54: n=337; 55-64: n=266; 65-74: n=218; 75-84: n=121; AB: n=563; C1: n=565; C2: n=389; DE: n=463.

# Minority Ethnic group users tend to spend longer watching videos online than the average



## Time spent watching videos: By core demographics - Part 2



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey  
 Q3c. On average, during a single day, how long do you spend watching videos when you visit these platforms?  
 Base: used at least one VSP in the last 12 months, Total: n=1,980; Any disability, n=405; Mental condition, n=194; Physical condition, n=256; Other condition, n=139; No disability, n=1534; White, n=1,752; Minority Ethnic Group background, n=204; Asian, n=103. NOTE: Results for ethnicity codes Mixed, Black and Chinese/Other are not displayed as their base sizes were <n=50.

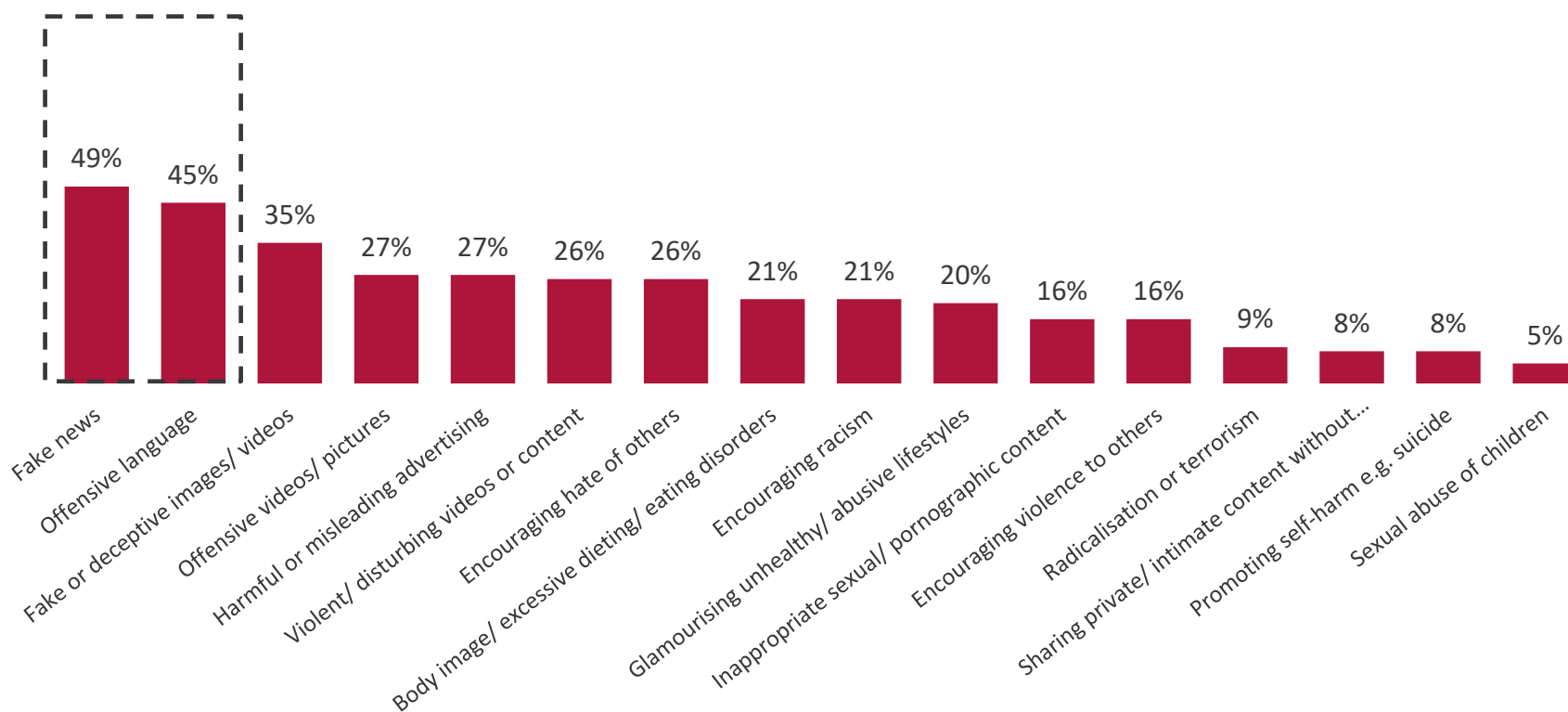


# Section 3

## Exposure to Potential Online Harms

# In the last 3 months, misinformation and offensive language were the most prevalent online content experiences that could potentially be considered harmful

Potential content harms experienced in the last 3 months: All VSPs



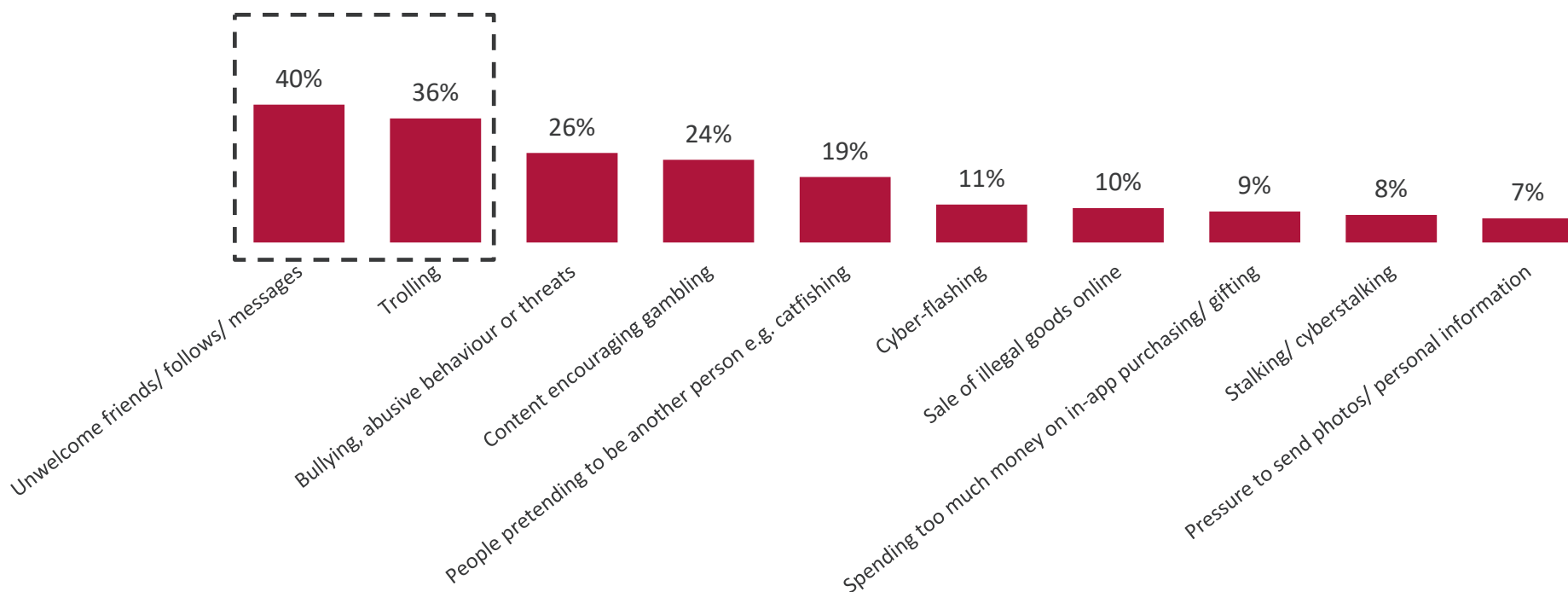
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months?

Base: used at least one VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958. NOTE: 'Videos or content depicting the sexual abuse or exploitation of children' code was not shown to those aged 13-17.

# Unwelcome friend requests/follows and trolling were the most common potential contact harms across all VSPs in the last 3 months

Potential contact & other harms experienced in the last 3 months: All VSPs



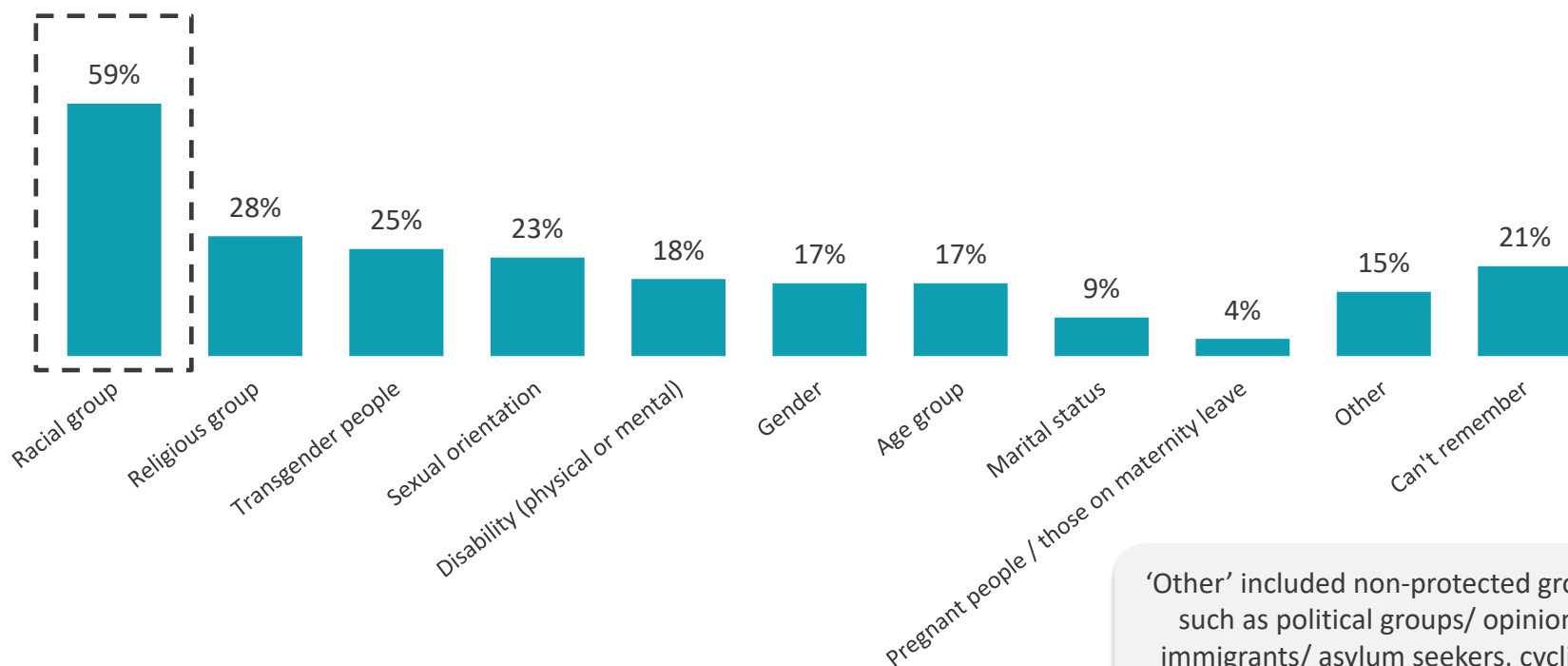
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q4. Which, if any, of the following do you remember seeing or experiencing when using [VSP] in the last 3 months?

Base: used at least one VSP in the last 3 months, n=1,958.

## Users were most likely to recall seeing or experiencing hate and/or violence towards racial groups in the last 3 months

Protected groups **hate and/or violence** was encouraged towards in the last 3 months: All VSPs



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q4a. You mentioned you saw or experienced videos or content encouraging [hate/ violence] towards others when using [VSP] in the last 3 months. Which group(s) was the videos or content encouraging hate towards others directed?

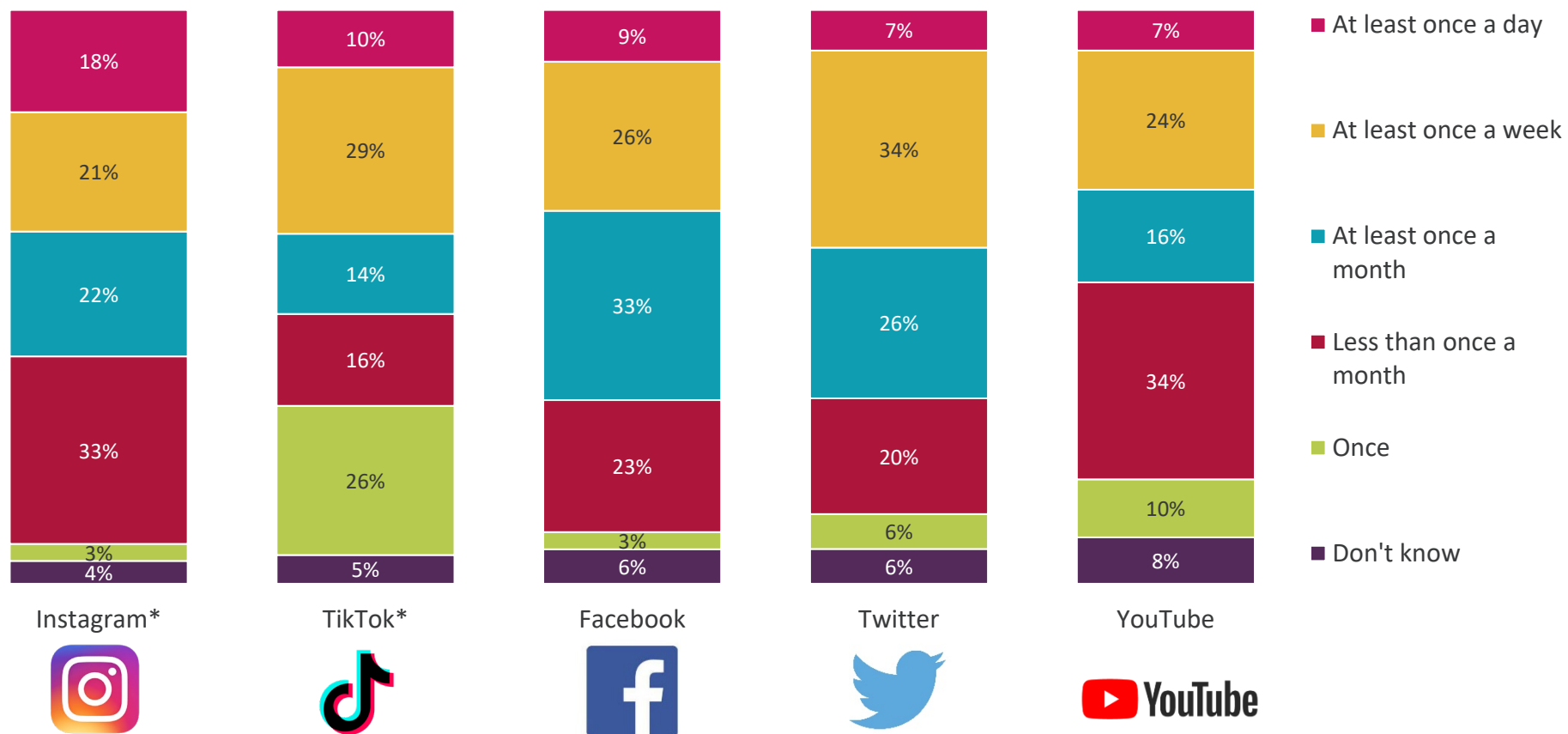
Base: experienced videos or content encouraging [hate/ violence] towards others on any VSP in the last 3 months, n=552

## Section 4

# Violent & Disturbing Content: Deep Dive

# If experienced, violent/disturbing content tended to be seen at least once a month or more, particularly on Facebook and Twitter

Frequency of experiencing violent/disturbing content: By VSP



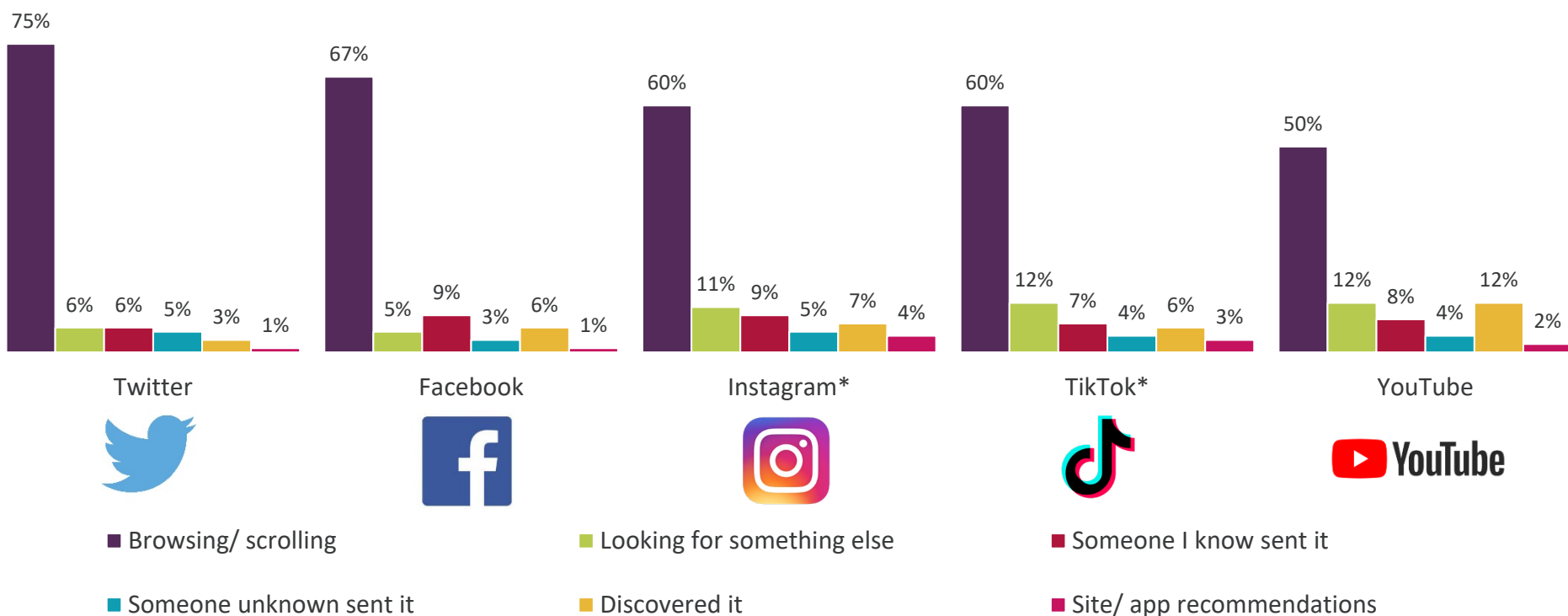
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q5. How often do you experience violent/disturbing videos or content when using [VSP]?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on the following VSPs in the last 3 months, Instagram, n=62\*; TikTok, n=67\*; Facebook, n=224; Twitter, n=111, YouTube, n=132. \*CAUTION: Low base size.

# The majority of violent/disturbing content is found when users are passively scrolling through and browsing VSP content

Method of discovering violent/disturbing content: By VSP



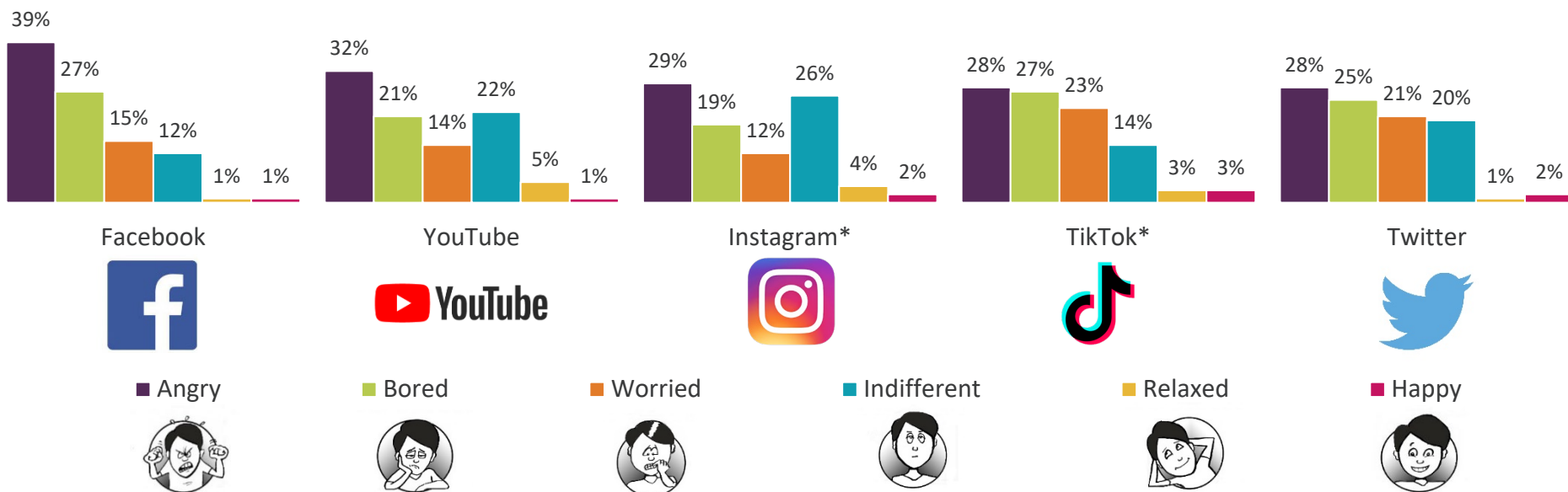
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q6. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on [VSP], how did you come across it?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on the following VSPs in the last 3 months, Instagram, n=62\*; TikTok, n=67\*; Facebook, n=224; Twitter, n=111, YouTube, n=132. \*CAUTION: Low base size.

# The majority of users felt angry after seeing or experiencing violent/disturbing content, however many also felt indifferent

Reaction to violent/disturbing content: By VSP



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q7. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on [VSP], which of the following best describes how this made you feel?

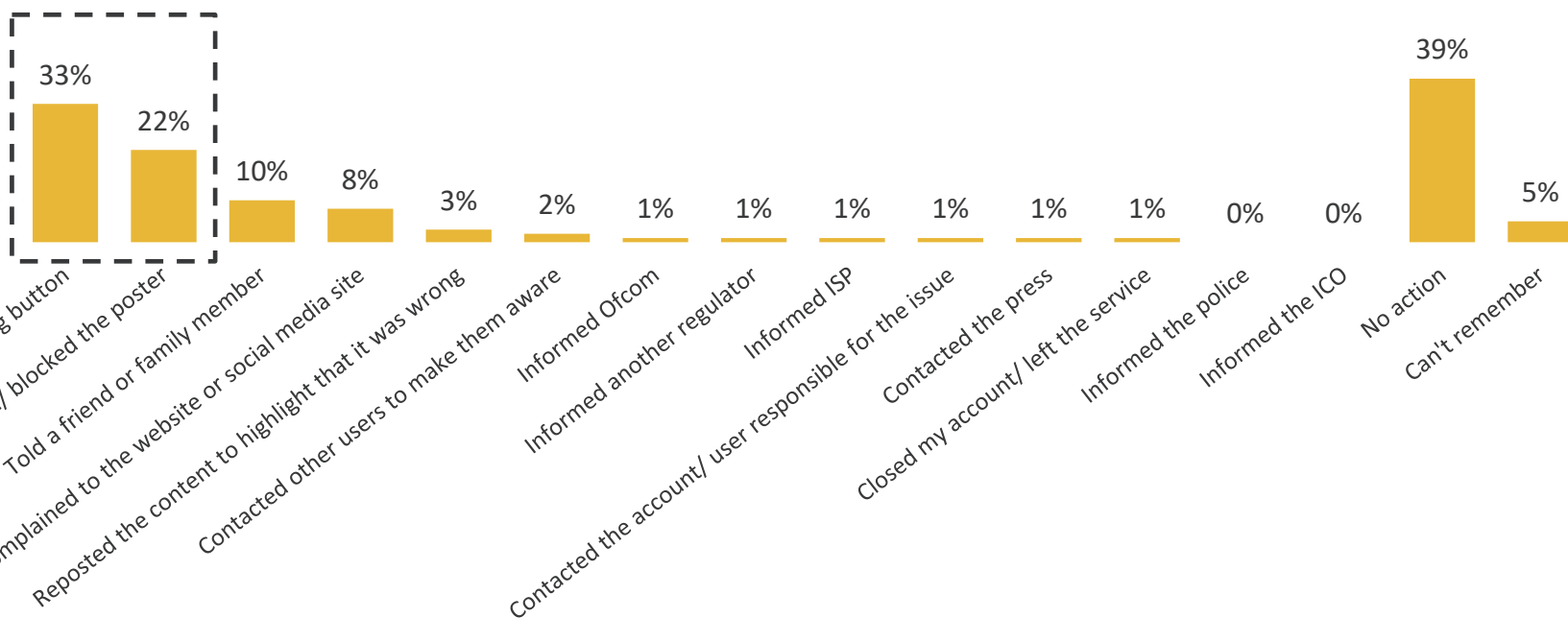
Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on the following VSPs in the last 3 months, Instagram, n=62\*; TikTok, n=67\*; Facebook, n=224; Twitter, n=111, YouTube, n=132. \*CAUTION: Low base size. NOTE: respondents chose the emoticon representing their feelings, labels were not shown to respondents.



# Just over half took action after seeing the content, primarily within the Facebook platform by reporting the content or unfriending the poster

Action taken after experiencing violent/disturbing content on Facebook

55%  
took  
action



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

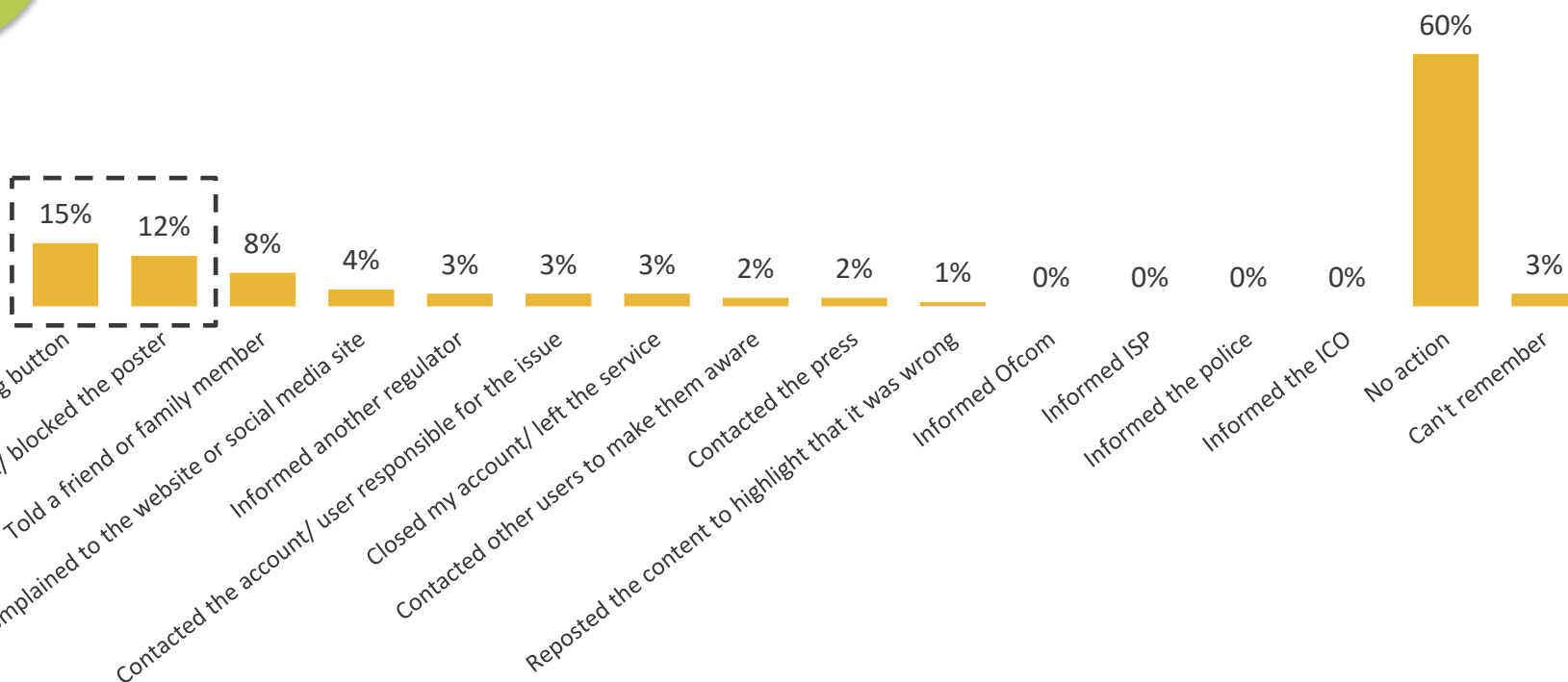
Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on Facebook, which of the following actions, if any, did you take?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on Facebook in the last 3 months, n=224.

# Nearly two in five took action on YouTube, primarily by reporting or blocking the poster, while 60% ignored the violent/disturbing content

Action taken after experiencing violent/disturbing content on YouTube

37%  
took  
action



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

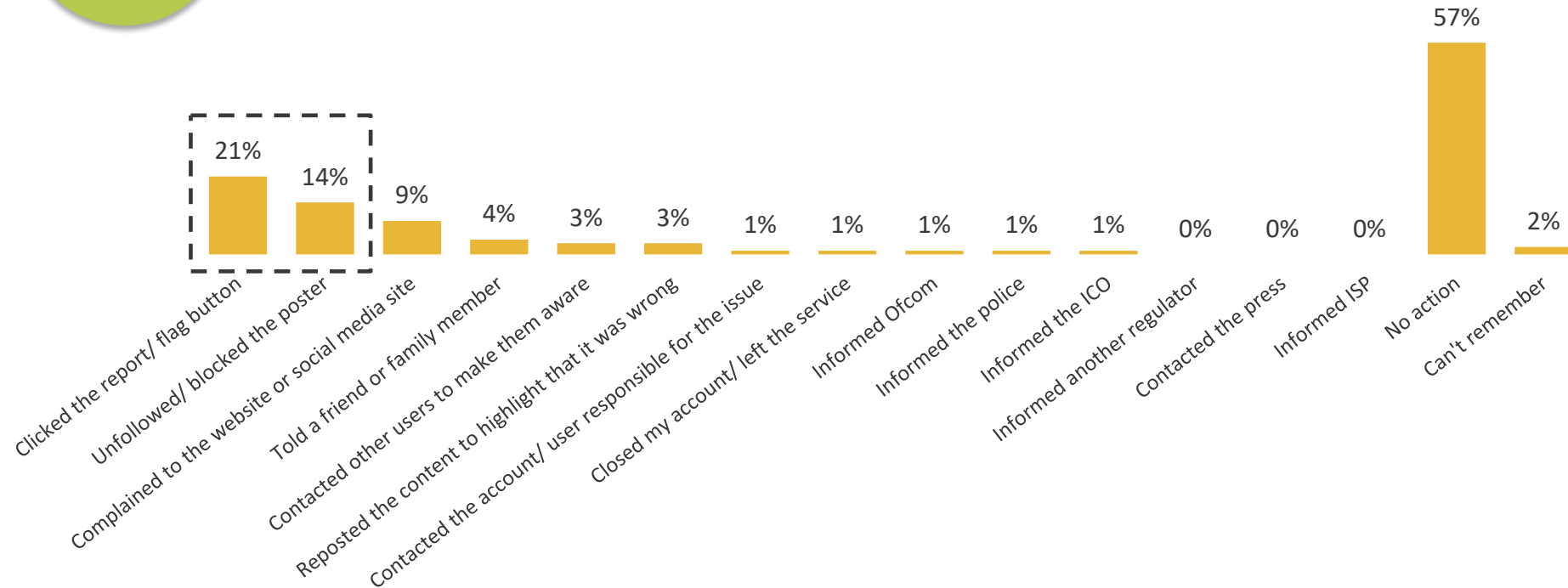
Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on YouTube, which of the following actions, if any, did you take?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on YouTube in the last 3 months, n=132.

# Just under two in five took action on Twitter, primarily by reporting the content or unfollowing the poster, while 57% took no action

Action taken after experiencing violent/disturbing content on Twitter

39%  
took  
action



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on Twitter, which of the following actions, if any, did you take?

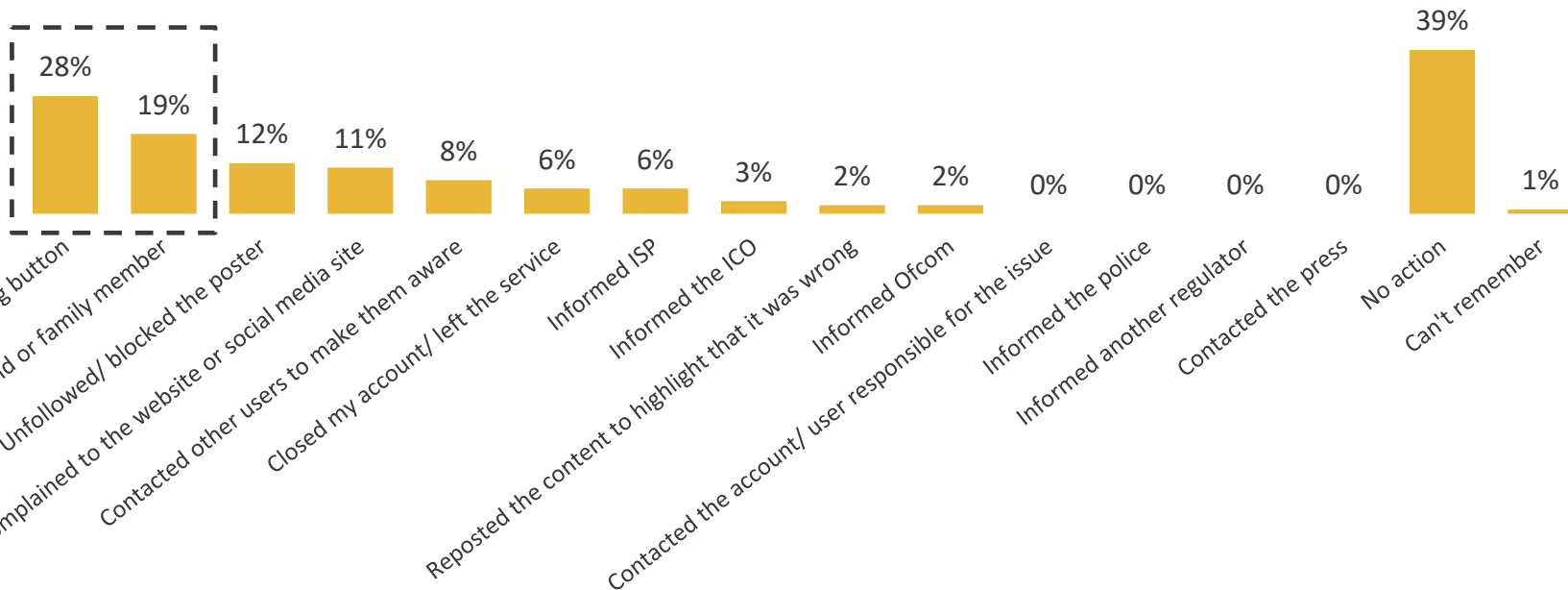
Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on Twitter in the last 3 months, n=111.

# Six in ten took action on TikTok, primarily by reporting the content or telling a friend or family member



Action taken after experiencing violent/disturbing content on TikTok\*

60%  
took  
action



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on TikTok, which of the following actions, if any, did you take?

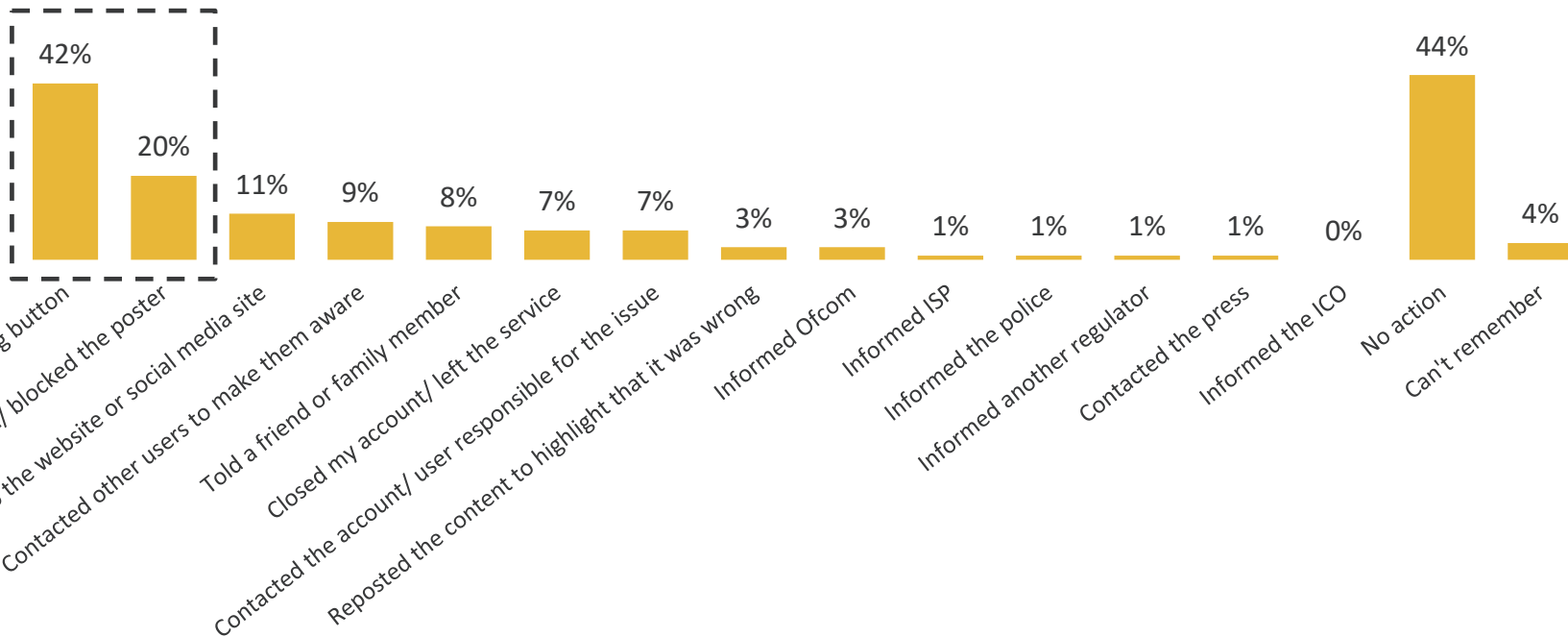
Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on TikTok in the last 3 months, n=67\* -CAUTION, Low base size.

# Just over one-in-two took action on Instagram, driven by those who chose to report the content

Action taken after experiencing violent/disturbing content on Instagram\*



52%  
took  
action



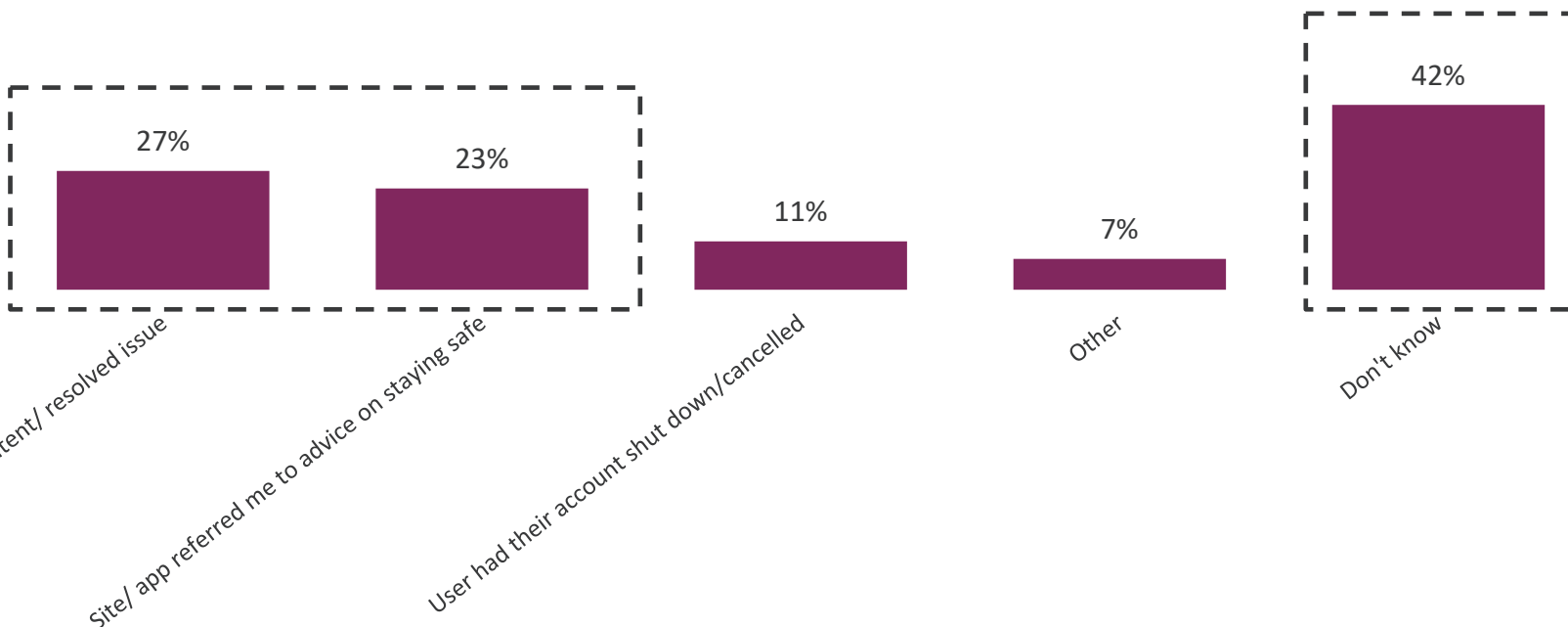
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q8. Thinking about your most recent experience of violent/disturbing content on Instagram, which of the following actions, if any, did you take?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on Instagram in the last 3 months, n=62\* -CAUTION, Low base size.

The majority of those who reported the content were unsure what happened as a result, while a quarter said the content was removed

Result of reporting violent/disturbing content on Facebook\*



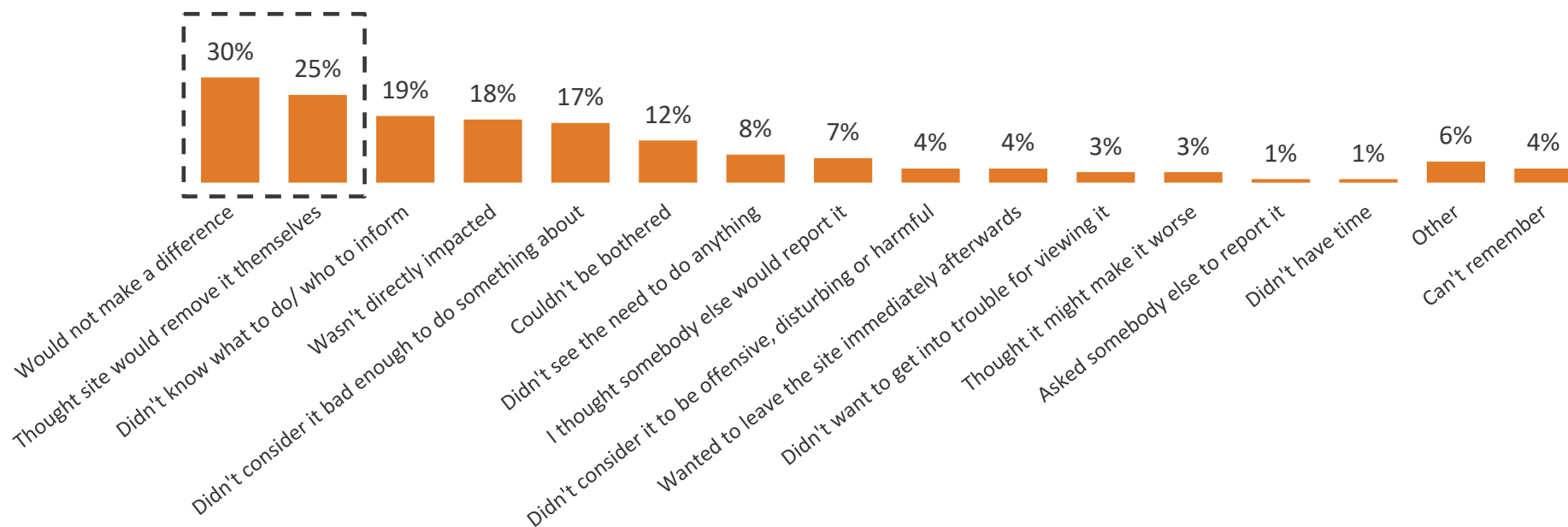
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q10. What happened when you reported violent/disturbing videos or content?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on Facebook in the last 3 months and reported it in any way, n=91\* - CAUTION: Low base size.

# A lack of confidence that their action would make a difference was the top barrier for Facebook users when it came to taking action

Barriers to action after experiencing violent/disturbing content on Facebook\*



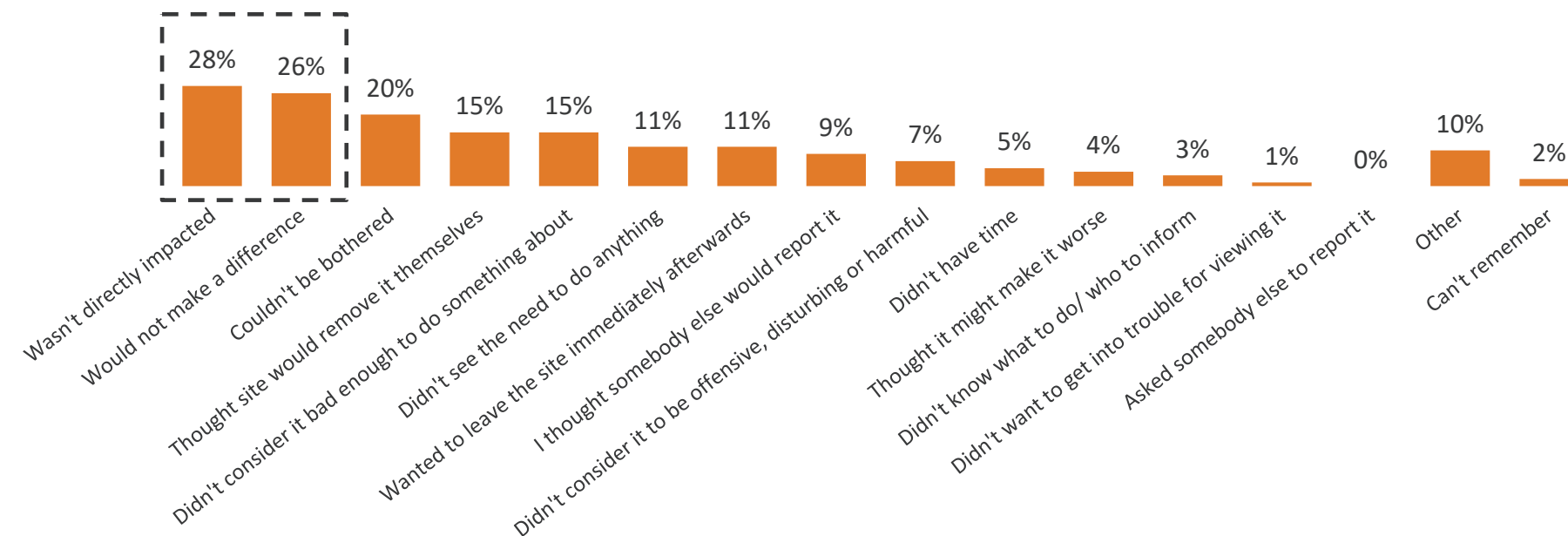
Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q9. You mentioned that you did not take any action. Why was this?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on Facebook in the last 3 months and took no action, n=91\* - CAUTION: Low base size.

# The perception that they weren't directly impacted or that their action would not make a difference were the key barriers for YouTube users

Barriers to action after experiencing violent/disturbing content on YouTube\*



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

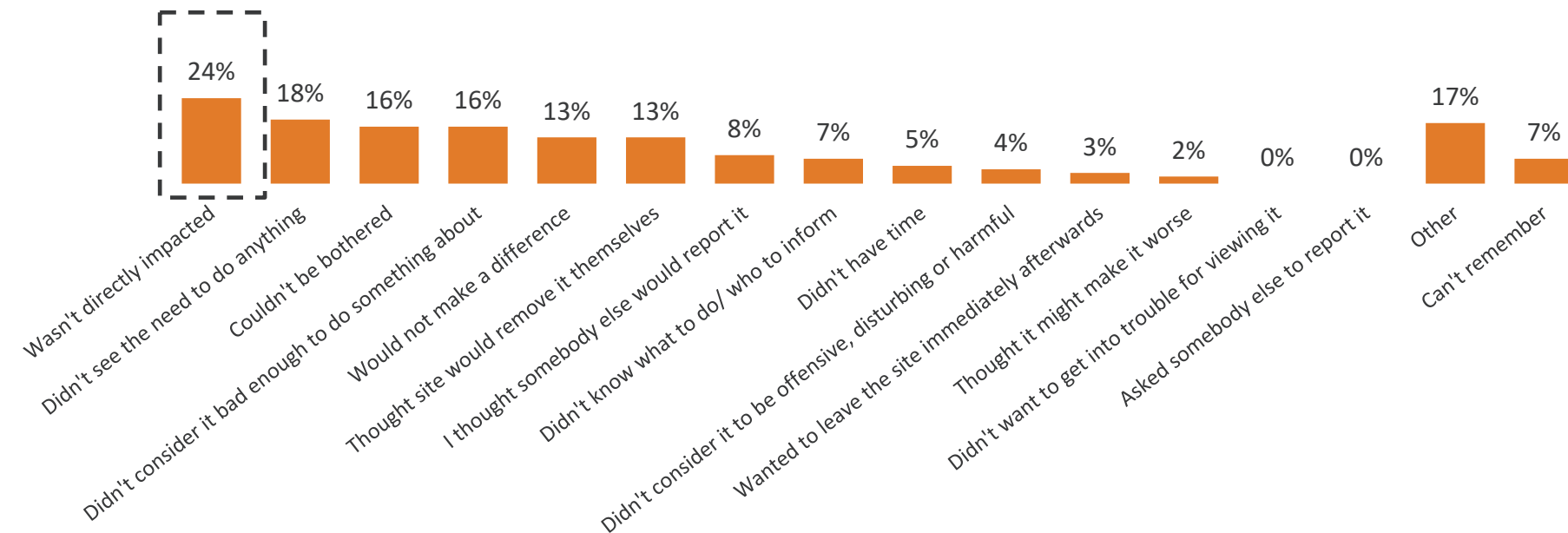
Q9. You mentioned that you did not take any action. Why was this?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on YouTube in the last 3 months and took no action, n=79\* - CAUTION: Low base size.



# The leading reason for inaction on Twitter was the perception that the user was not directly impacted by the violent/disturbing content

Barriers to action after experiencing violent/disturbing content on Twitter\*



Source: VSP Usage & Experience of Harms Survey

Q9. You mentioned that you did not take any action. Why was this?

Base: have experienced violent/disturbing content on Twitter in the last 3 months and took no action, n=64\* - CAUTION: Low base size.