

Comparing Service Quality research 2018: Reasons to complain

Fieldwork: 5 – 16 December 2018

Background and objectives

Reasons to complain

Background

Since 2009, Ofcom has been tracking the proportion of customers using a landline, broadband and mobile service who say they have had reason to complain about their provider in the previous 12 months. Pay TV was included for the first time in the 2016 wave of research. The 2018 research was conducted via a face-to-face omnibus among a representative sample of 6,399 UK adults, aged 16+. The fieldwork took place in December 2018. As such, the last 12 months refers to the 12 months prior to fieldwork (i.e. January 2018 – December 2018).

Objectives

The specific objectives are:

- To explore whether consumers have had reason to complain about their landline, fixed broadband, mobile and/or pay TV provider in the previous 12 months, and if so, what the reason was for the complaint.
- To explore whether customers with a reason to complain actually went on to make a complaint. If they did, who did they complain to, and if they did not go on to make a complaint, why not.
- Where sample size allows, to split information within each sector by communications provider.

Significance testing

All data points are tested to the 95% significance level when comparing within year, using unrounded percentage values. Year-on-year changes are tested to the 99% significance level, using unrounded percentage values.

Data tables

Quality of customer service – reason to complain data tables:

Links to the data tables can be found at:

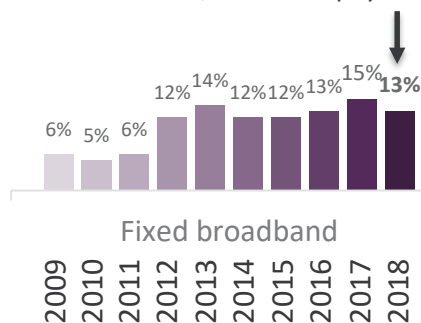
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/141208/reasons-to-complain-2019-data-tables.pdf

The proportion of broadband consumers with a reason to complain has decreased since 2017

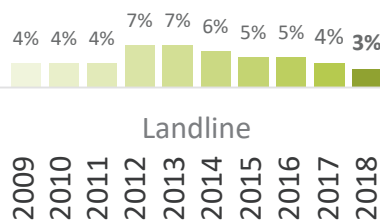
Proportion of customers who had a reason to complain in the past 12 months, whether or not they went on to make a complaint



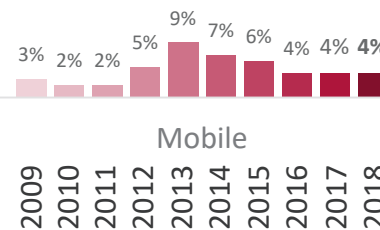
There has been an decrease in the proportion of broadband consumers with a reason to complain since 2017, with the proportion returning to 2016 levels. Fixed broadband consumers were more likely to have had a reason to complain than landline, mobile or pay TV.



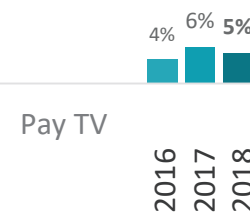
There proportion of landline consumers with a reason to complain has remained in line with 2017.



The proportion of mobile consumers with a reason to complain has remained in line with 2017.



The proportion of pay TV consumers with a reason to complain has remained stable in line with 2017.



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

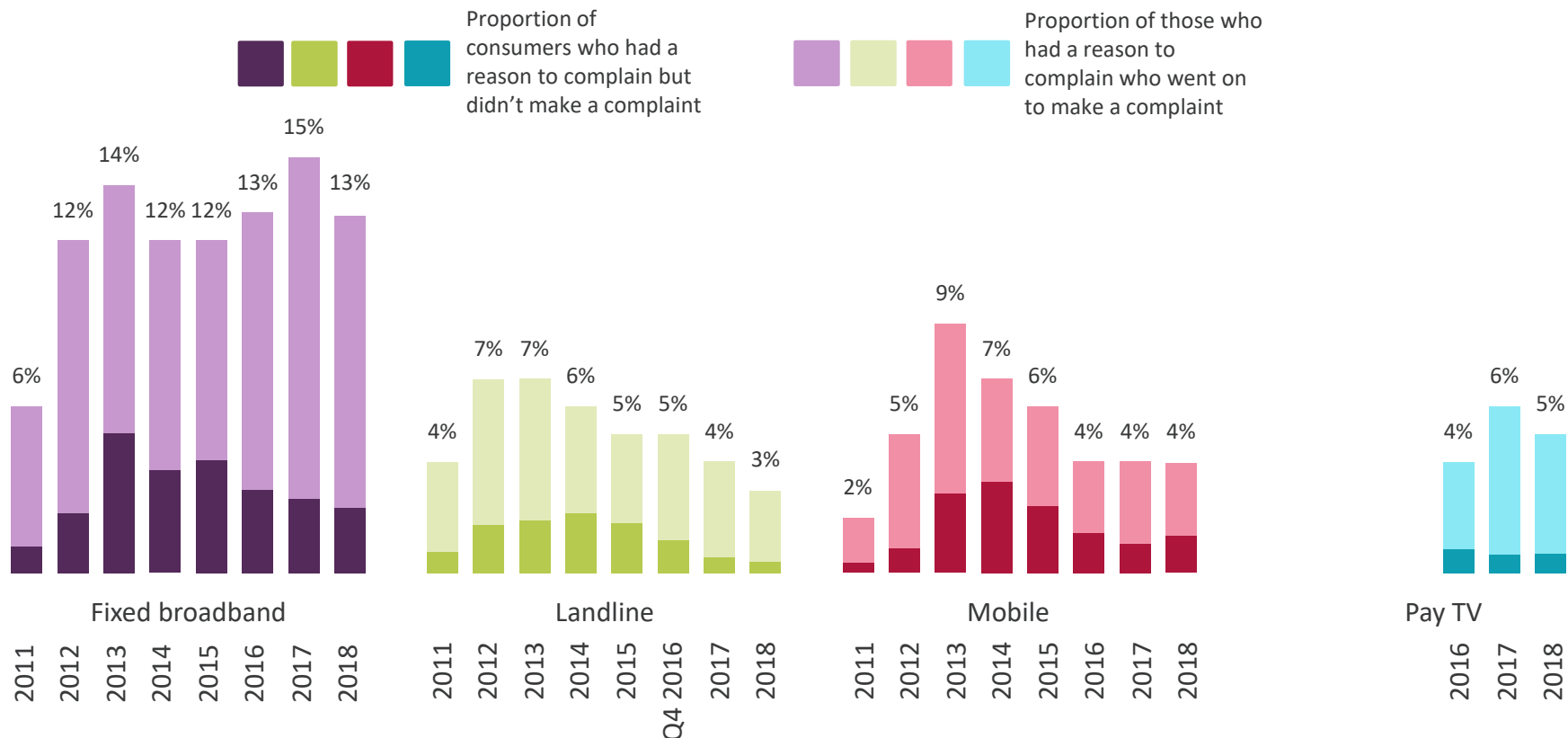
Base: All UK households 16+; 2018: broadband (5115), landline (4887), mobile (5689) and pay TV (3057); 2017: broadband (5171), landline (5227), mobile (5584) and pay TV (3243).

Q.5 Have you personally had a reason to complain about any of these services or suppliers in the last 12 months, whether or not you went on to make a complaint?

Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017/18.

In all markets, the majority of consumers with a reason to complain went on to make a complaint

Proportion of consumers with a reason to complain in the past 12 months and whether those who had a reason to complain went on to make a complaint



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

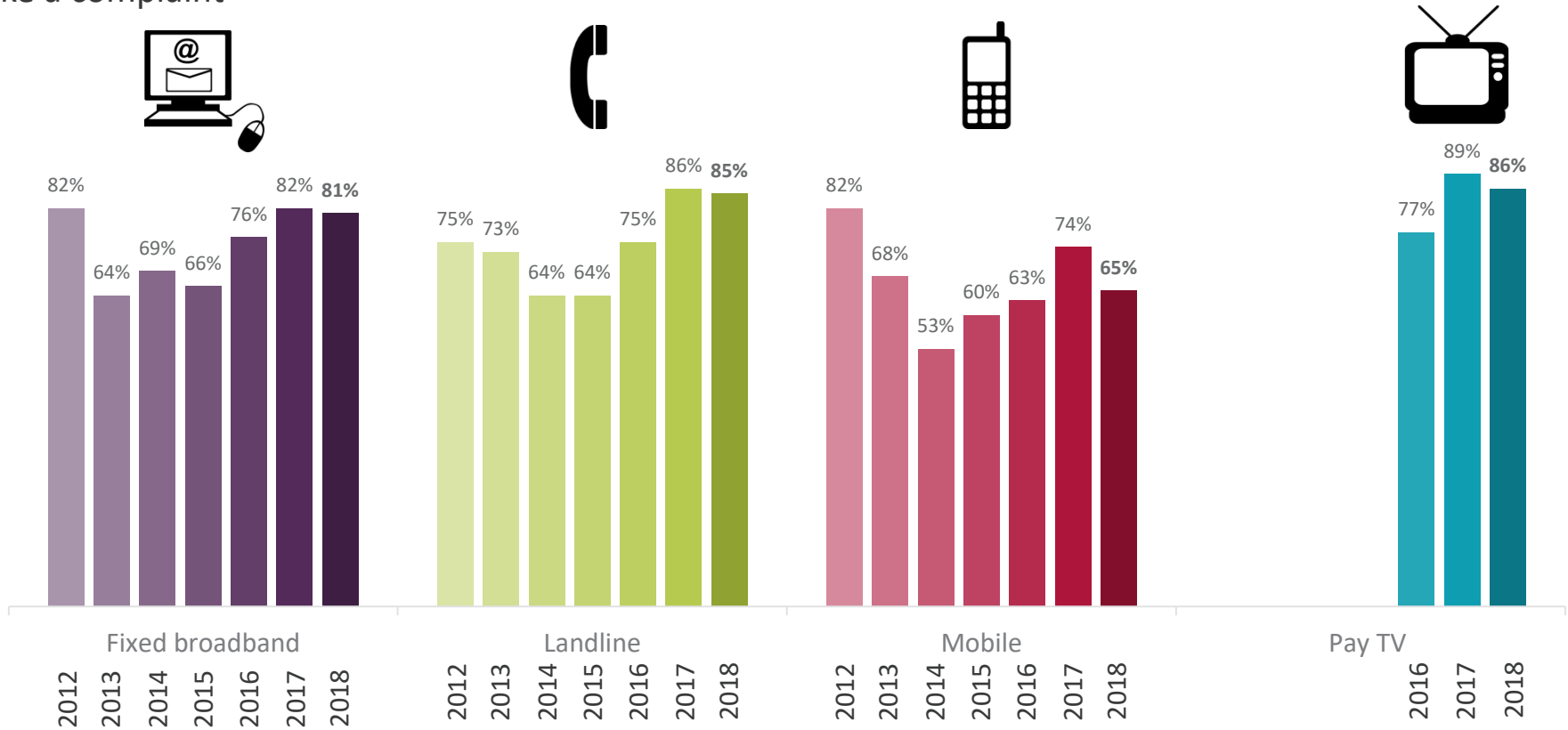
Base: All UK households 16+ 2018: broadband (5115), landline (4887), mobile (5689) and pay TV (3057). All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain 2018: fixed broadband (648), landline (178), mobile (191) and pay TV (140).

Q.5 Have you personally had a reason to complain about any of these services or suppliers in the last 12 months, whether or not you went on to make a complaint?

Q.7/Q.10/Q.13/Q.16 And have you gone ahead and made a complaint about your landline/ broadband/ mobile/ pay TV service or supplier? If so, who did you complain to?

The proportion of consumers with a reason to complain who went on to make a complaint has remained stable since last year

Proportion of customers who had a reason to complain in the past 12 months, who actually went on to make a complaint



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: : All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain; 2018: fixed broadband (648), landline (178), mobile (191) and pay TV (140); 2017: fixed broadband (757), landline (210), mobile (188) and pay TV (177).

Q.7/Q.10/Q.13/Q.16 And have you gone ahead and made a complaint about your landline/ broadband/ mobile/ pay TV service or supplier? If so, who did you complain to?

The proportion of mobile consumers with a reason to complain, who actually went on to make a complaint, is lower than in other markets

Proportion of consumers with a reason to complain who actually went on to make a complaint and to whom

	Fixed broadband	Landline	Mobile	Pay TV
	A	B	C	D
Complained	81%	85%	65%	86%
	C	C		C
Complained to provider	79%	84%	65%	85%
Complained to Ofcom	-	1%	-	1%

Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: : All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain 2018: fixed broadband (648), landline (178), mobile (191) and pay TV (140).

Q.7/Q.10/Q.13/Q.16 And have you gone ahead and made a complaint about your landline/ broadband/ mobile/ pay TV service or supplier? If so, who did you complain to?

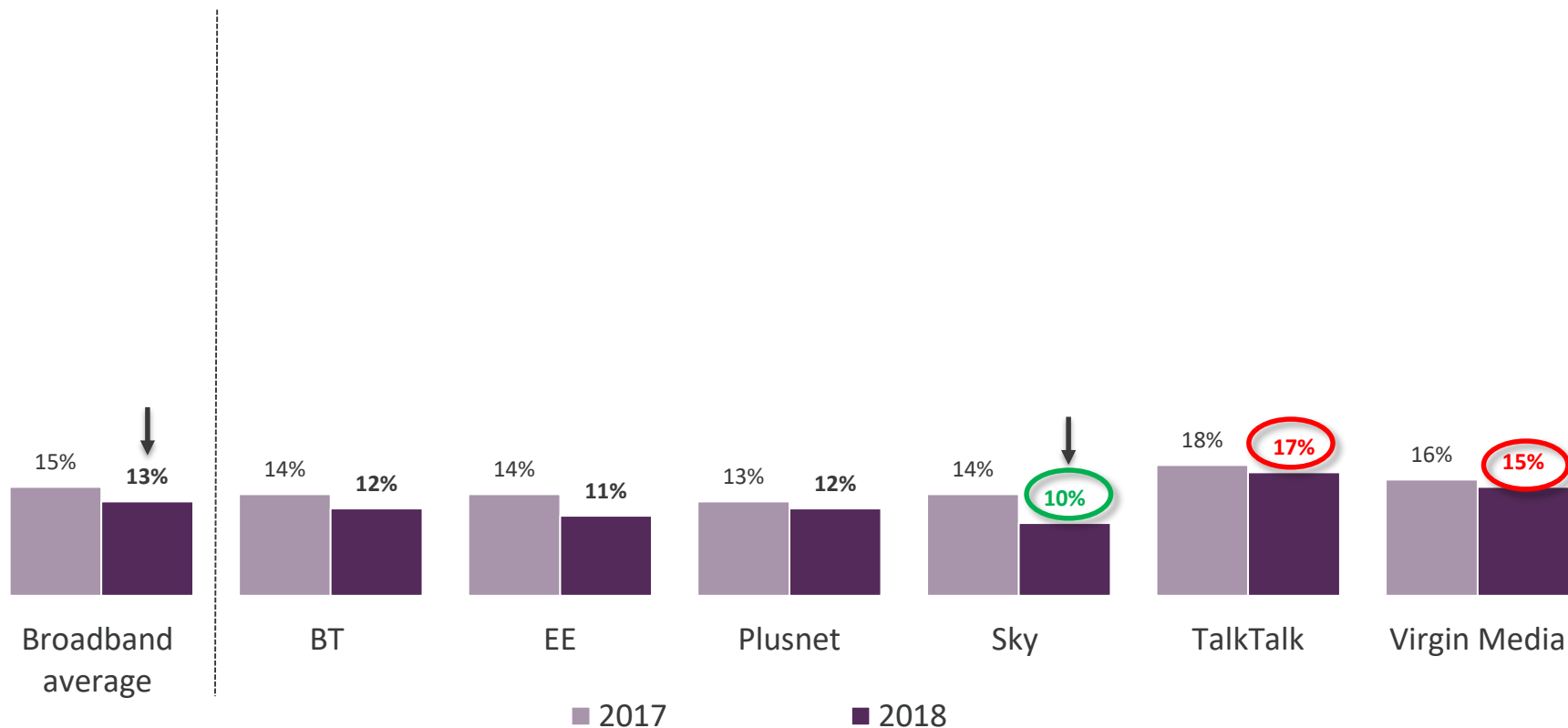
ABCD indicates that the figure for the relevant connection type is higher than the connection type signified by the corresponding letter.

Note: Percentages may not add up due to rounding and 'complained to other' category not shown.



Compared to the average, TalkTalk consumers were more likely to have had a reason to complain about their fixed broadband, whilst Sky customers were less likely to have had a reason to complain.

Fixed broadband: Reason to complain in the last 12 months, by provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: All UK households with fixed broadband 16+; 2018: average broadband (5115), BT (1270), EE (234), Plusnet (197), Sky (1240), TalkTalk (592) and Virgin Media (1280); 2017: average broadband (5171), BT (1411), EE (214), Plusnet (175), Sky (1189), TalkTalk (659) and Virgin Media (1242).

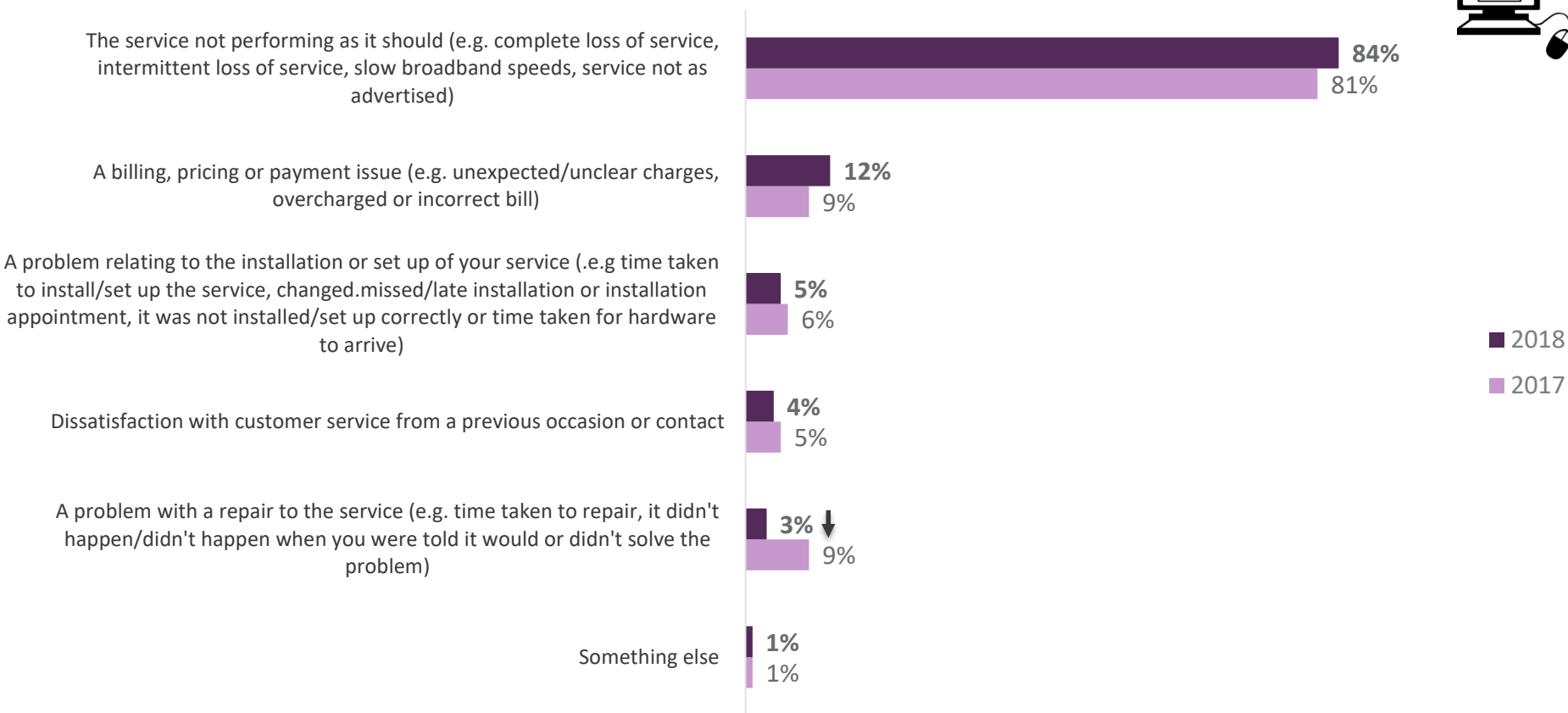
Q.5 Have you personally had a reason to complain about any of these services or suppliers in the last 12 months, whether or not you went on to make a complaint?

Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017. Red and green circles and text indicate the figure is higher or lower than the sector average.



The most common reason to complain about fixed broadband was the service not performing as it should

Reason to complain about fixed broadband service or provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain about fixed broadband; 2018 (648) and 2017 (757).

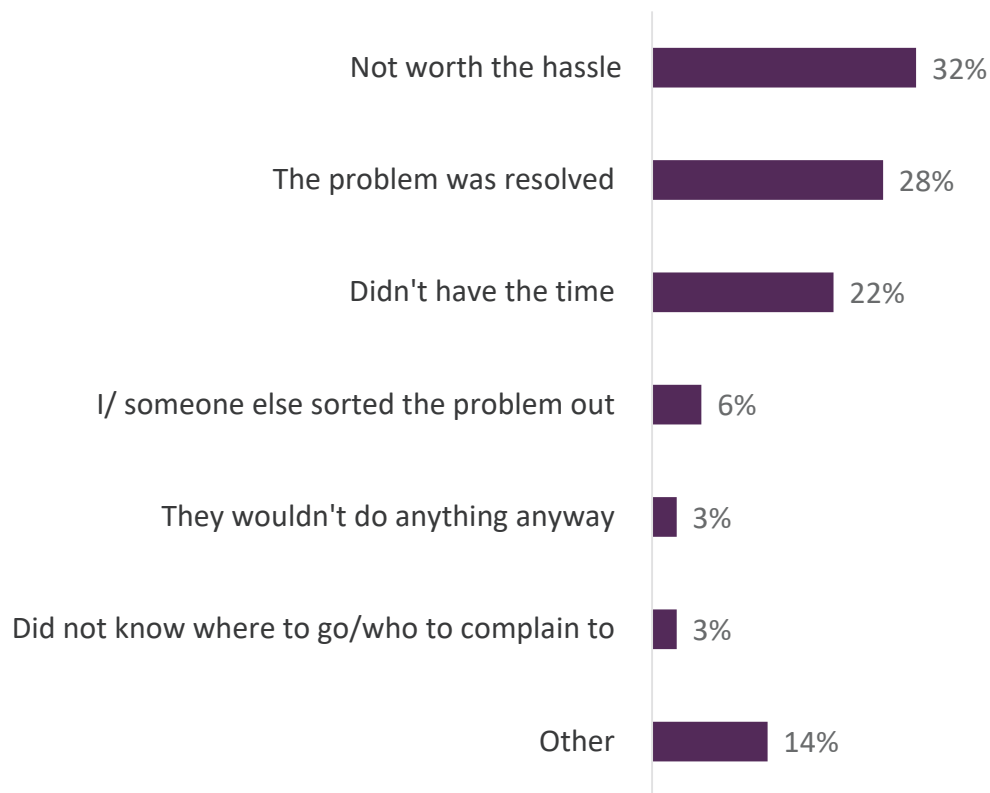
Q.12 What was the issue/s you had reason to complain about in connection with your fixed broadband internet?

Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017.



There was a range of reasons why broadband consumers with a reason to complain didn't go on to make a complaint

Reason for not making a complaint to fixed broadband provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

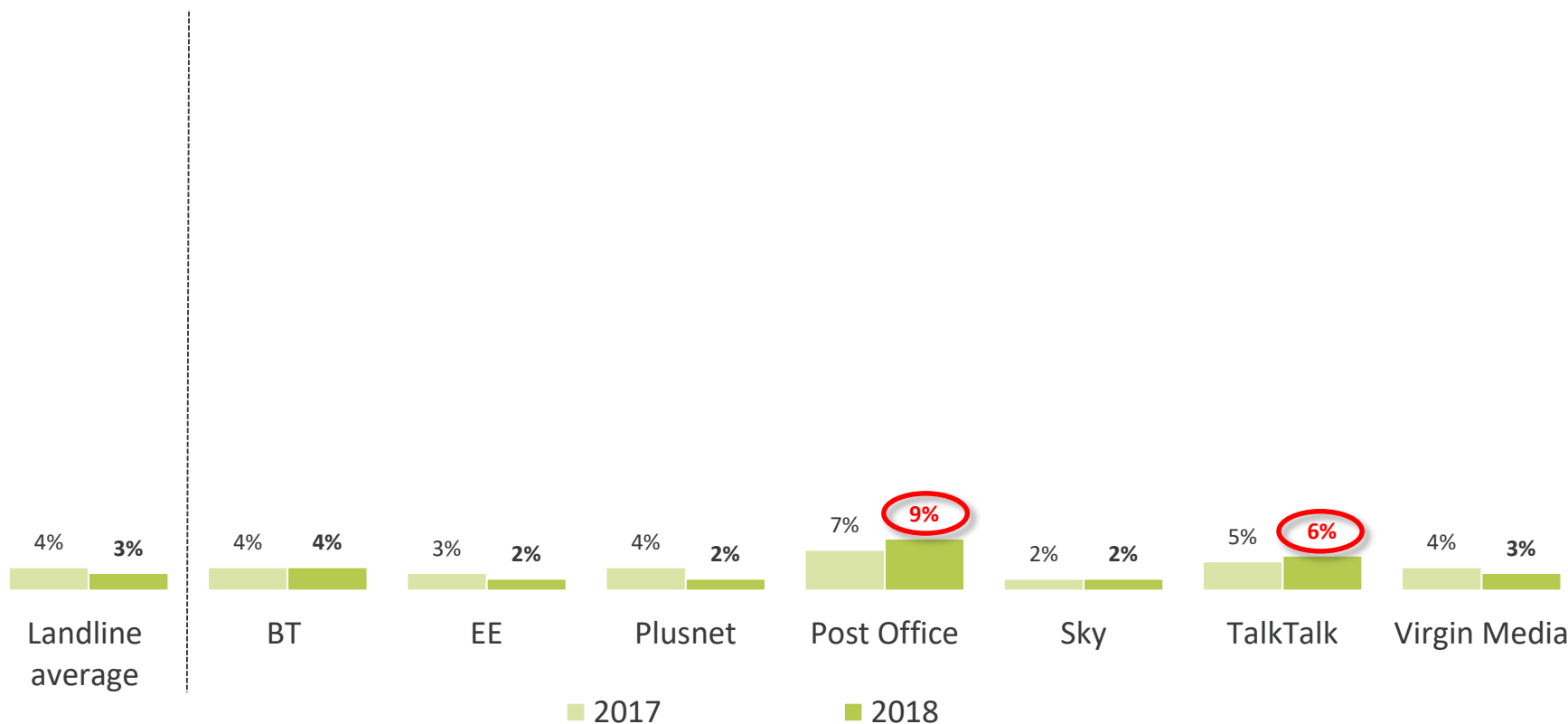
Base: All UK households 16+ who did not complain about fixed broadband; 2018 (117).

Q.14 Why didn't you make a complaint about your fixed broadband service or supplier?



Post Office and TalkTalk consumers were more likely to have had a reason to complain about their landline compared to the average, while Sky consumers were less likely

Landline: Reason to complain in the last 12 months, by provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: All UK households 16+ with a landline; 2018 average landline (4887), BT (1809), EE (189), Plusnet (143), Post Office (99)*, Sky (985), TalkTalk (531) and Virgin Media (978); 2017 average landline (5227), BT (2042), EE (181), Plusnet (132), Post Office (85), Sky (964), TalkTalk (607) and Virgin Media (1021).

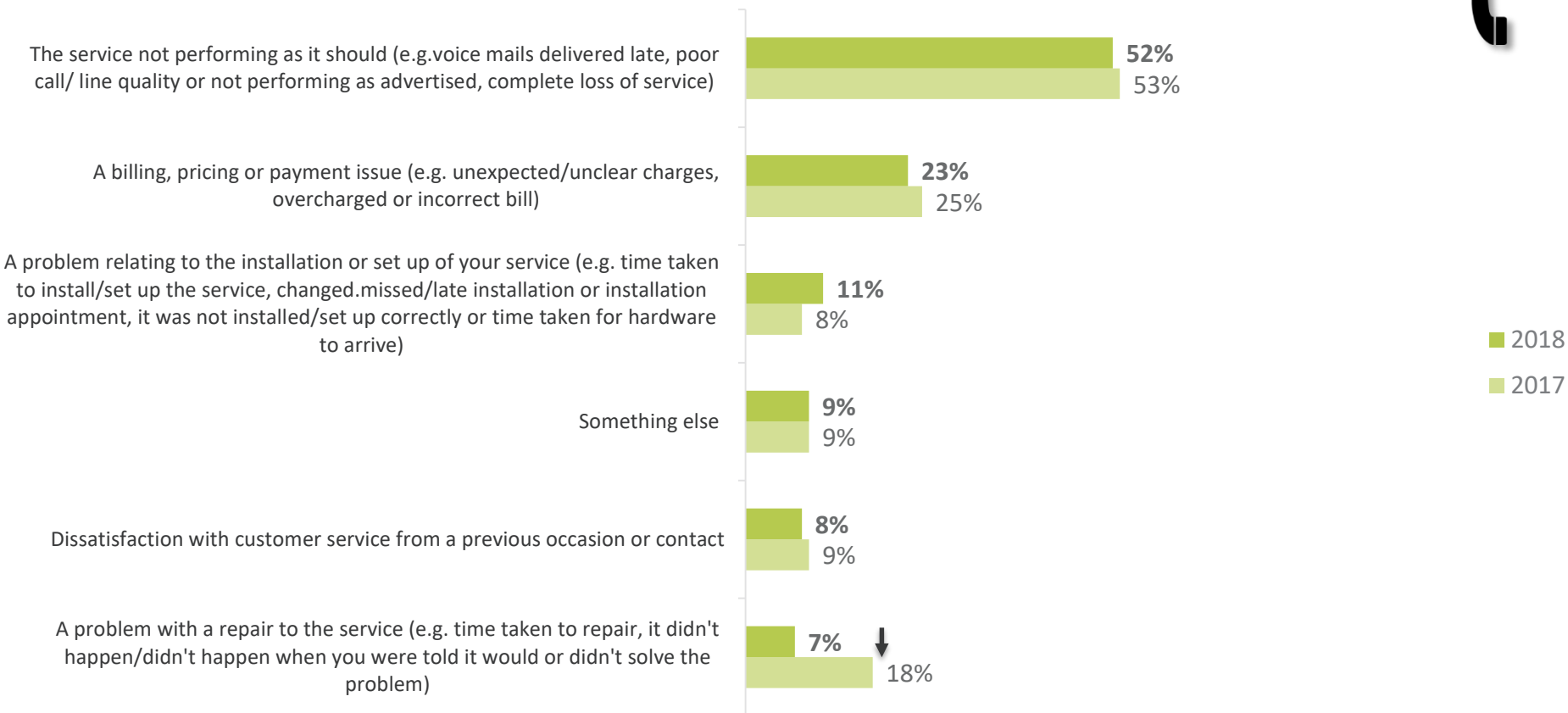
Q.5 Have you personally had a reason to complain about any of these services or suppliers in the last 12 months, whether or not you went on to make a complaint? Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017. Red and green circles and text indicate the figure is higher or lower than the sector average.

*Caution: low base size, interpret with caution.



The most common reason to complain about landline was the service not performing as it should

Reason to complain about landline service or provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

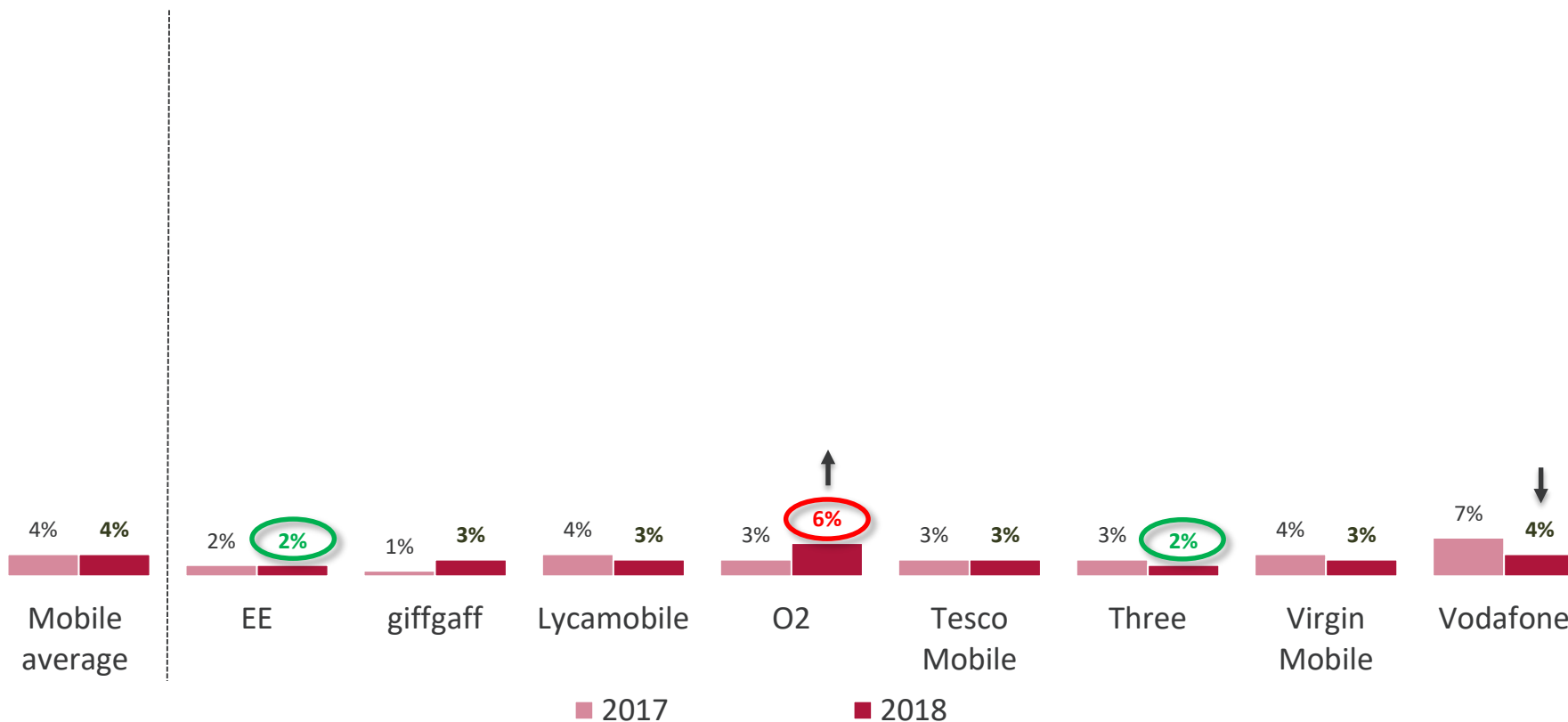
Base: All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain about landline; 2018 (178) and 2017 (210).

Q.6 What was the issue/s you had reason to complain about in connection with your landline?

Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017.

Compared to the average, O2 consumers were more likely to have had a reason to complain about their mobile.*

Mobile: Reason to complain in the last 12 months, by provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: All UK households 16+ with mobile; 2018: average mobile (5689), EE (1380), giffgaff (262), Lycamobile (83)**, O2 (1257), Tesco Mobile (474), Three (597), Virgin Mobile (428) and Vodafone (853); 2017: average mobile (5584), EE (1413), giffgaff (201), Lycamobile (57)**, O2 (1237), Tesco Mobile (491), Three (590), Virgin Mobile (387) and Vodafone (872).

Q.6 Have you personally had a reason to complain about any of these services or suppliers in the last 12 months, whether or not you went on to make a complaint?

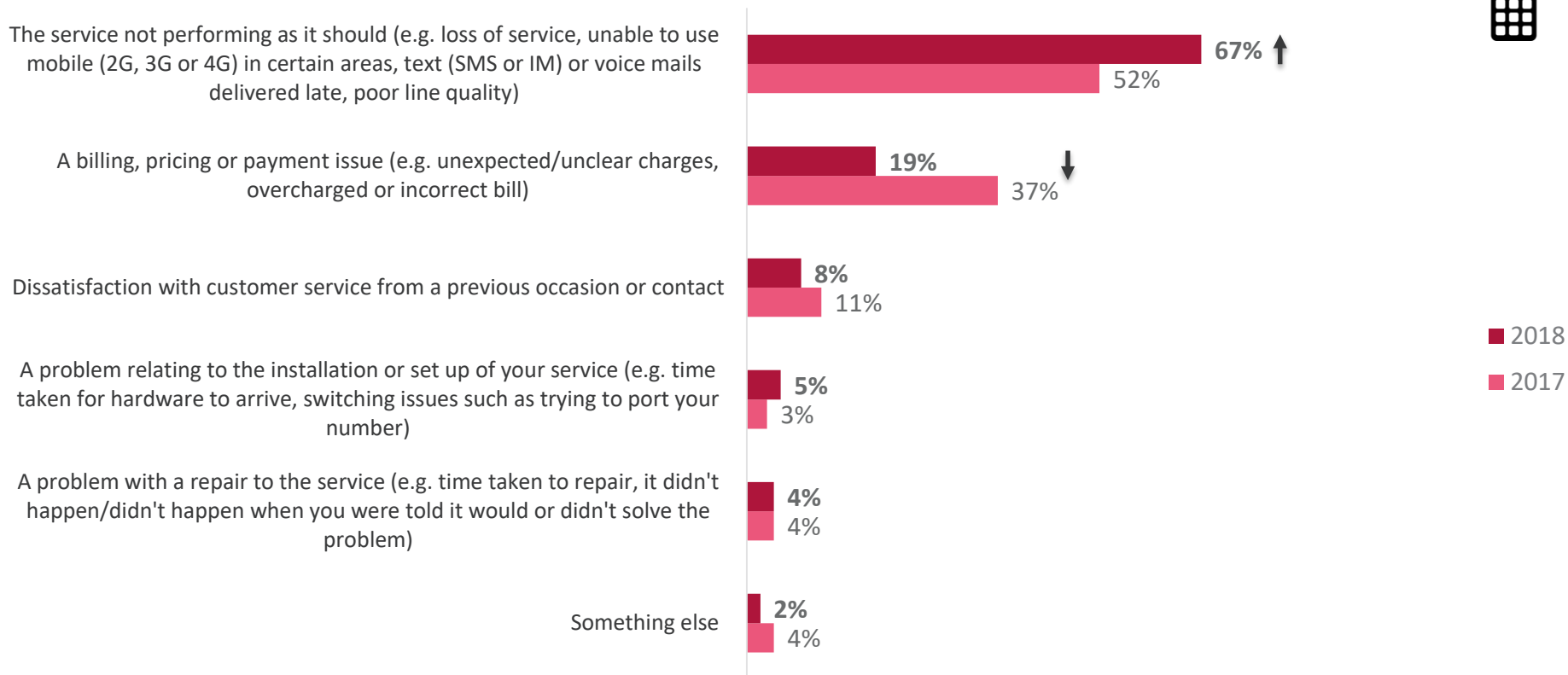
Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017. Red and green circles and text indicate the figure is higher or lower than the sector average.

* Fieldwork was conducted during the O2 data outage of 6 December 2018. This may have impacted the results shown. ** Low base size, interpret with caution.



The most common reason to complain about mobile was the service not performing as it should

Reason to complain about mobile service or provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: : All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain about mobile; 2018 (191) and 2017 (188).

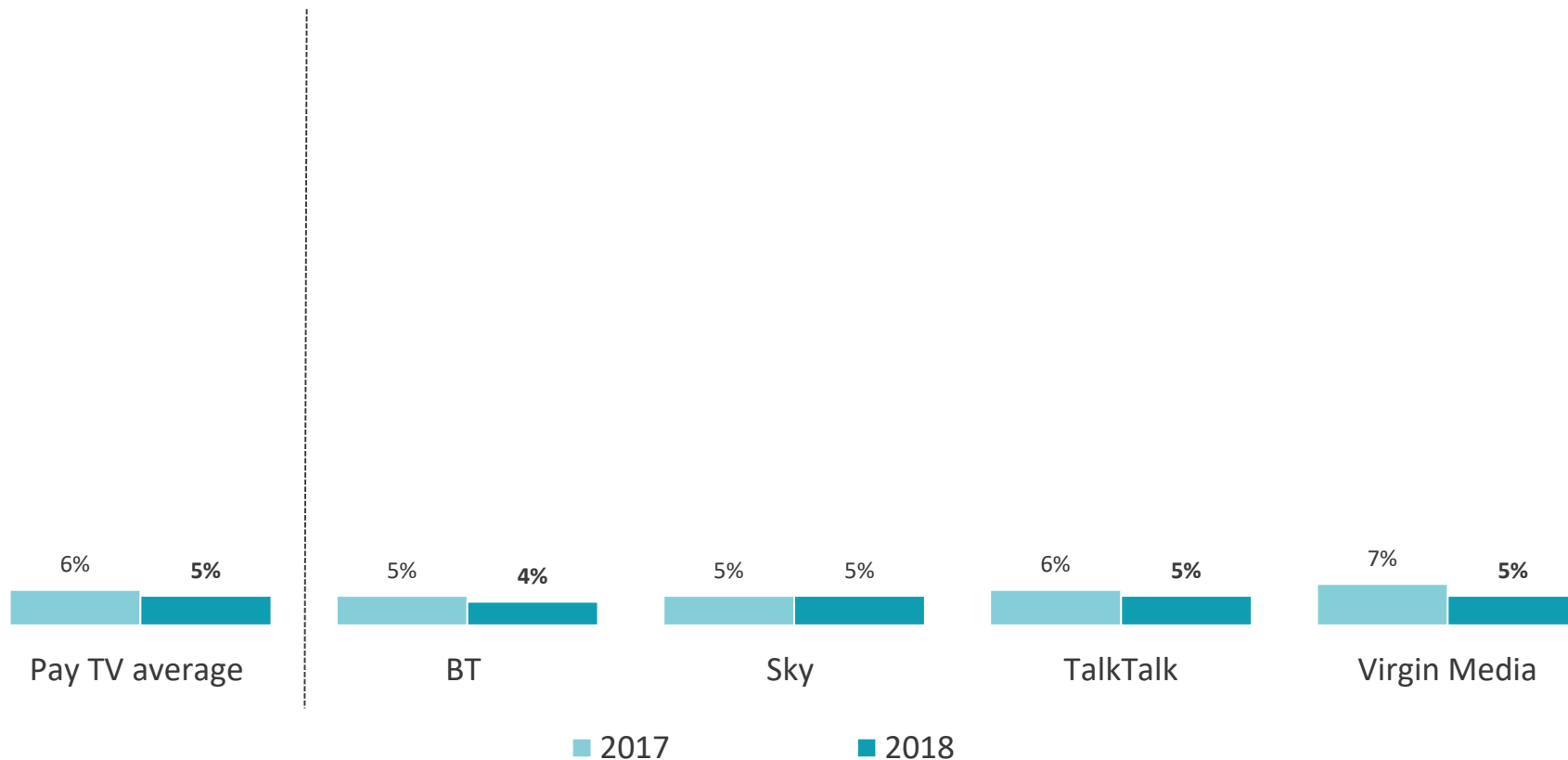
Q.9 What was the issue/s you had reason to complain about in connection with your mobile?

Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017.



The proportion of pay TV consumers with a reason to complain in 2018 did not vary by provider

Pay TV: Reason to complain in the last 12 months, by provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

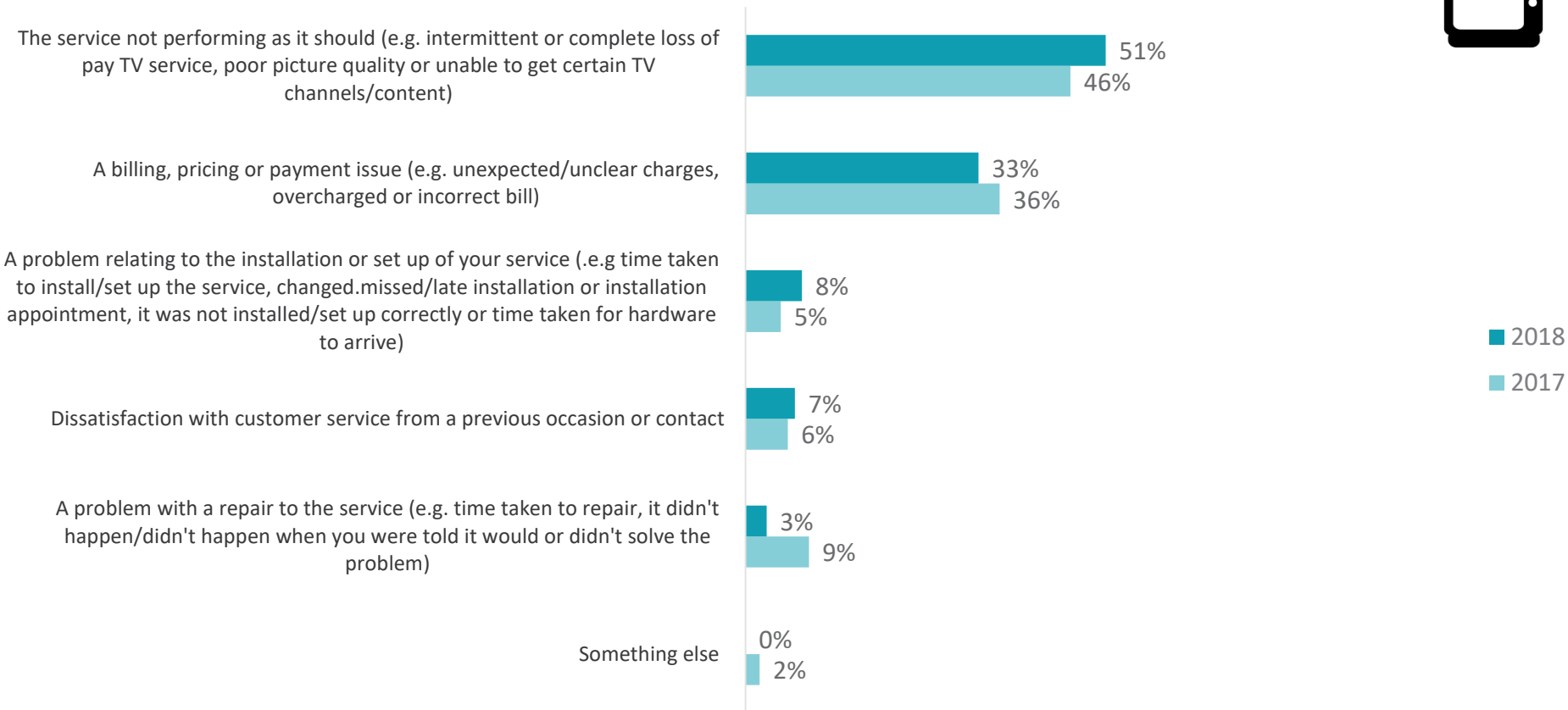
Base: All UK households with pay TV 16+; 2018: average pay TV (3057), BT (275), Sky (1624), TalkTalk (176) and Virgin Media (878); 2017: average pay TV (3243), BT (317), Sky (1783), TalkTalk (151) and Virgin Media (906).

Q.5 Have you personally had a reason to complain about any of these services or suppliers in the last 12 months, whether or not you went on to make a complaint?



The most common reasons to complain about pay TV was the service not performing as it should or a billing, pricing or payment issue

Reason to complain about pay TV service or provider



Source: Ofcom Quality of customer service research, face-to-face omnibus survey, fieldwork carried out by Kantar Media, December 2018.

Base: : All UK households 16+ who had a reason to complain about pay TV; 2018 (140) and 2017 (177).

Q.15 What was the issue/s you had reason to complain about in connection with your pay TV?

Arrows represent a significant increase or decrease compared to 2017.