



# **Shaping the Future: Educational and Career Attitudes Across Generations in Belarus**

# Methodology

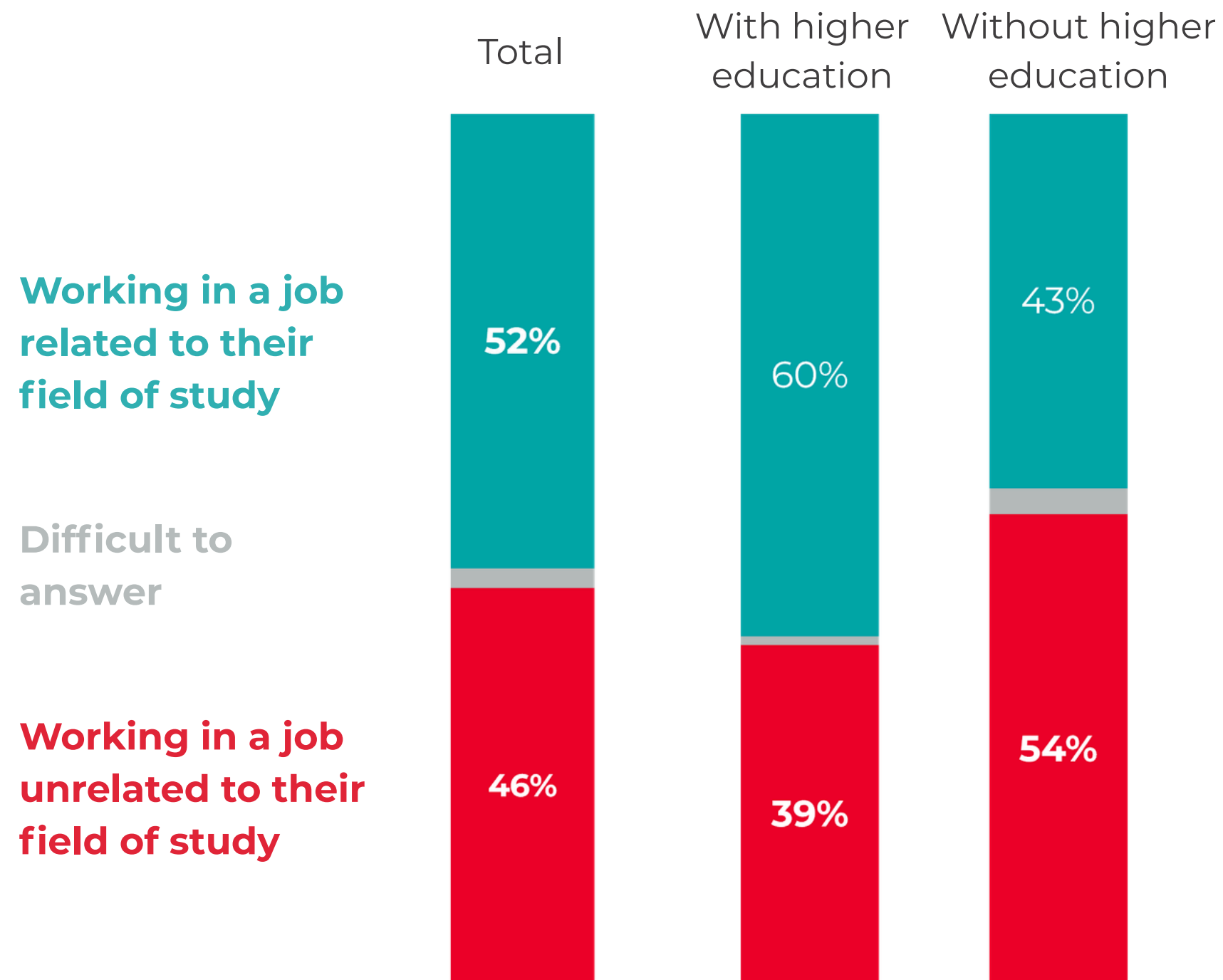
**Online surveys (CAWI):** October 2024 (n = 991), January 2025 (n = 973)

- Urban residents of Belarus
- Aged 18-64
- The samples are representative of the urban population of Belarus in terms of:
  - gender,
  - age,
  - region.

## Belarus's labor market is shifting toward intellectual work – forcing employers to compete for talent and the system to adapt

- State-owned enterprises remain overstaffed: redundant employment is estimated at 10-14% of total employment (World Bank, 2020).
- Demand for manual labor remains high: blue-collar jobs accounted for around two-thirds of registered vacancies in 2018 (World Bank, 2020).
- At the same time, Belarusian labor market shows a growing demand for intellectual occupations (IT, finance, HR, and healthcare) and higher wages in knowledge-intensive sectors, with IT and financial industries leading both vacancy growth and salary levels compared to lower-paid but faster-growing physical labor sectors (Rabota.by; Belstat, 2024-2025).
- The prevalence of manual labor vacancies, limited educational opportunities, weak support for entrepreneurship, and regional inequalities hinder the implementation of modern career strategies, especially outside major cities (World Bank, 2022; RIPO, 2022).

# Belarusians are more likely than Europeans to work in jobs unrelated to their field of study

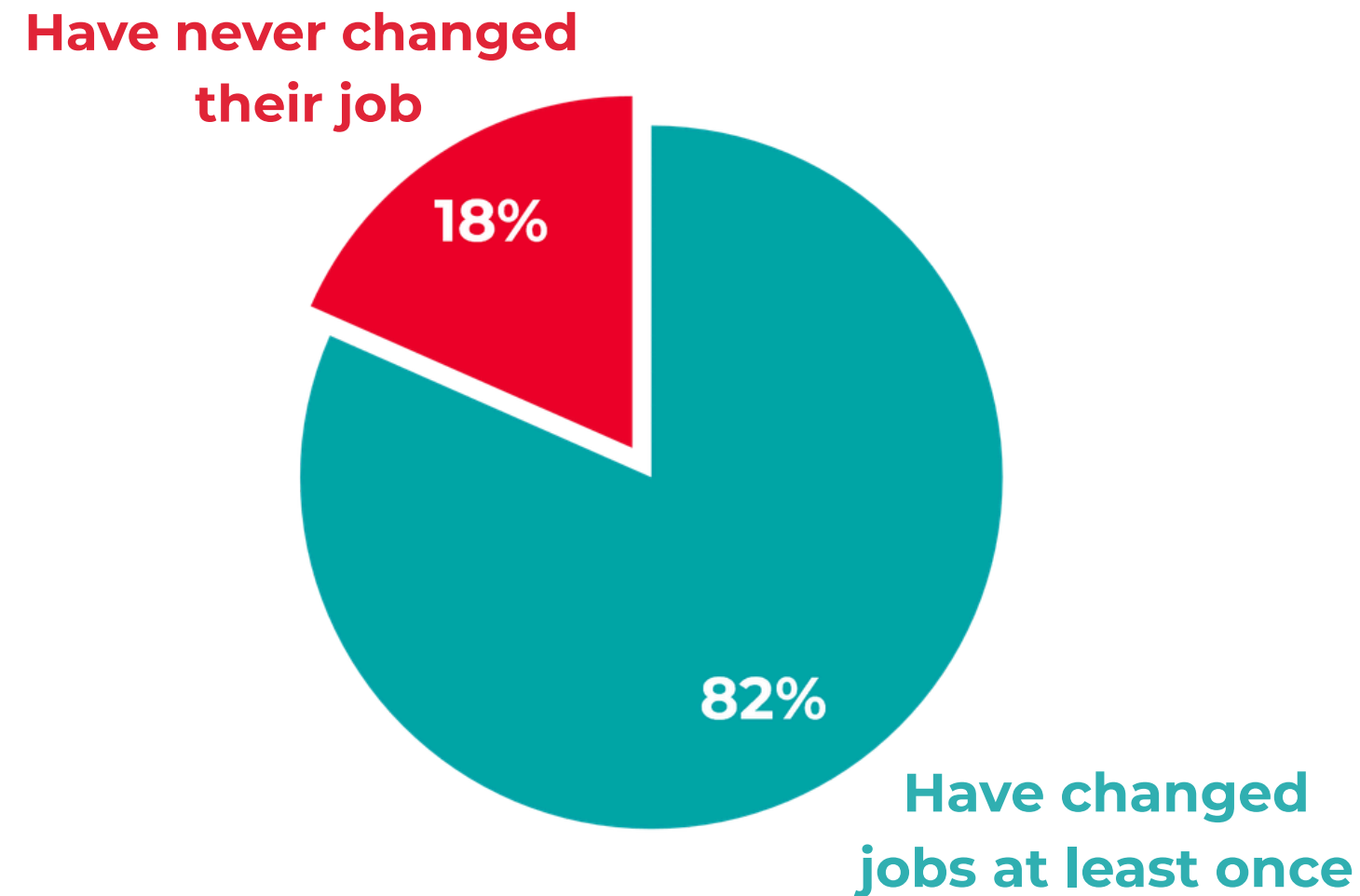


## More likely to work in their field:

- High-income earners (63%)
- Those in specialist roles — doctors, engineers, programmers (68%)
- State enterprise employees (61%)

Almost half of respondents are **working outside their field of study** (46%), **compared to an EU average** (32%) — most often people without higher education and unskilled workers (96%).

# Job mobility is common in Belarus, but stability still matters



## Highest job mobility:

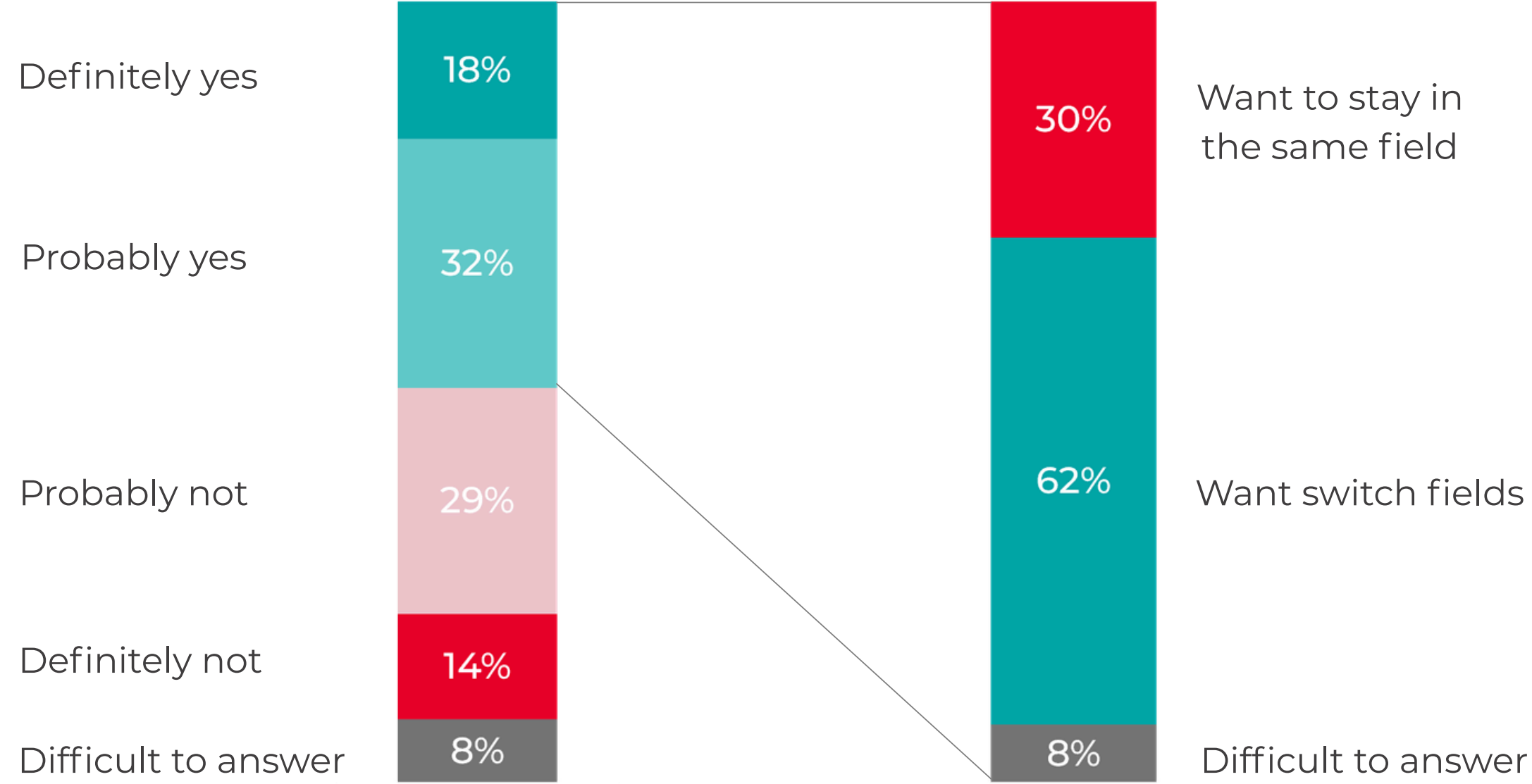
- Service workers — 95%
- Private-sector employees — 93%
- Unskilled workers — 91%

## Lowest job mobility:

- Public-sector employees — 28%
- Specialists (doctors, engineers, programmers) — 26%

Changing jobs once a year is considered **frequent** (38%), while changing jobs once every five years or more is seen as **rare** (84%). Long tenure is still viewed **positively** (40%), especially in the **public sector** (45%)

# Half of the respondents want to change their jobs, and most of them would also switch fields



**Less likely to want to change jobs:**

- Entrepreneurs (52%);
- Respondents who describe their family's financial situation as good (57%).

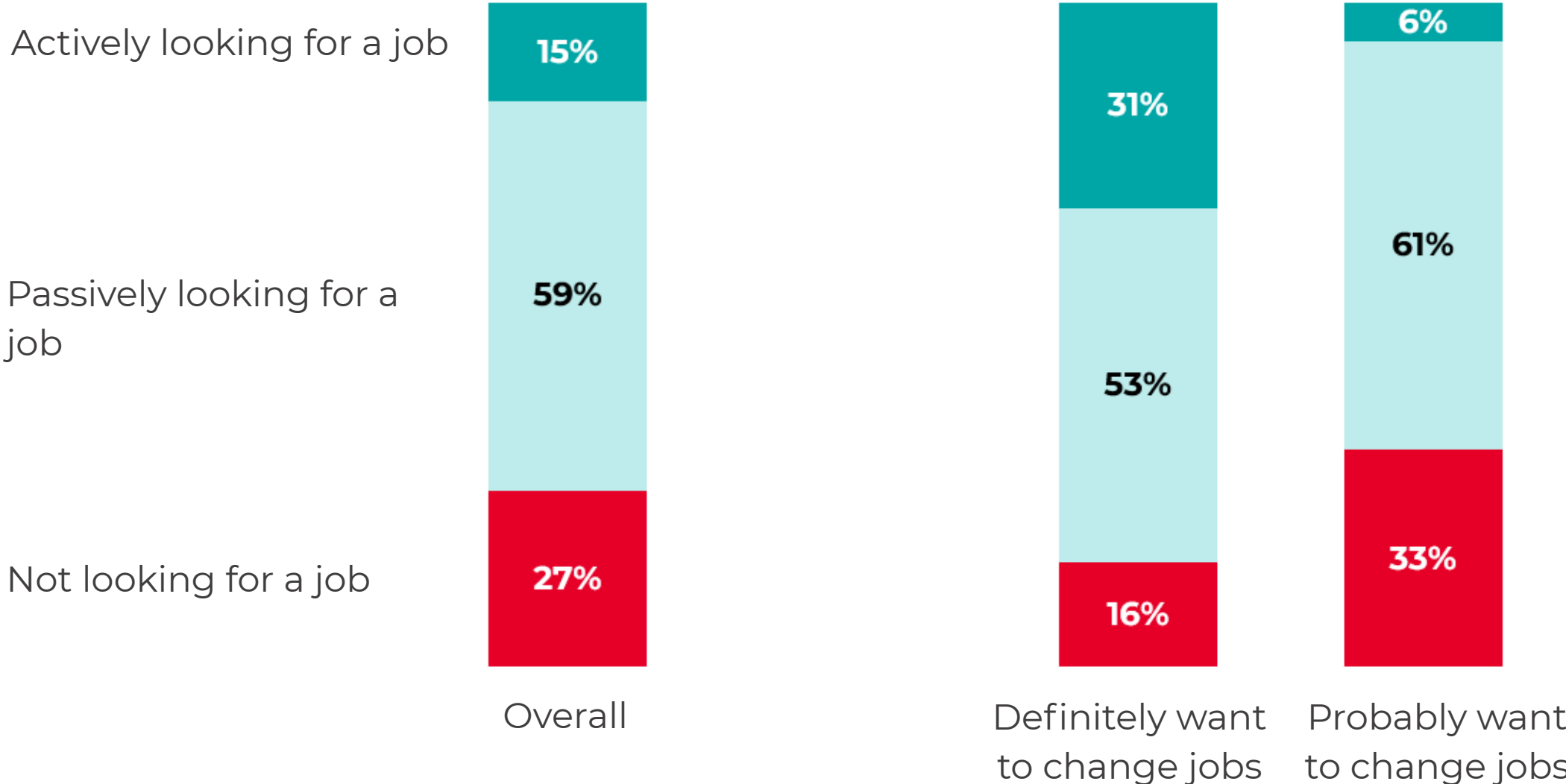
**More likely to want to change jobs:**

- Respondents who describe their family's financial situation as poor (71%);
- Women (55%, compared to 45% of men).

Among respondents who want to change jobs, **62%** also want to switch fields, especially **people with low income** (69%), those in a **poor financial situation** (69%), and **respondents with only secondary education** (91%).

# Most respondents who want to change jobs are only passively looking for a new one or not looking at all

Among those who want to change jobs, n=374

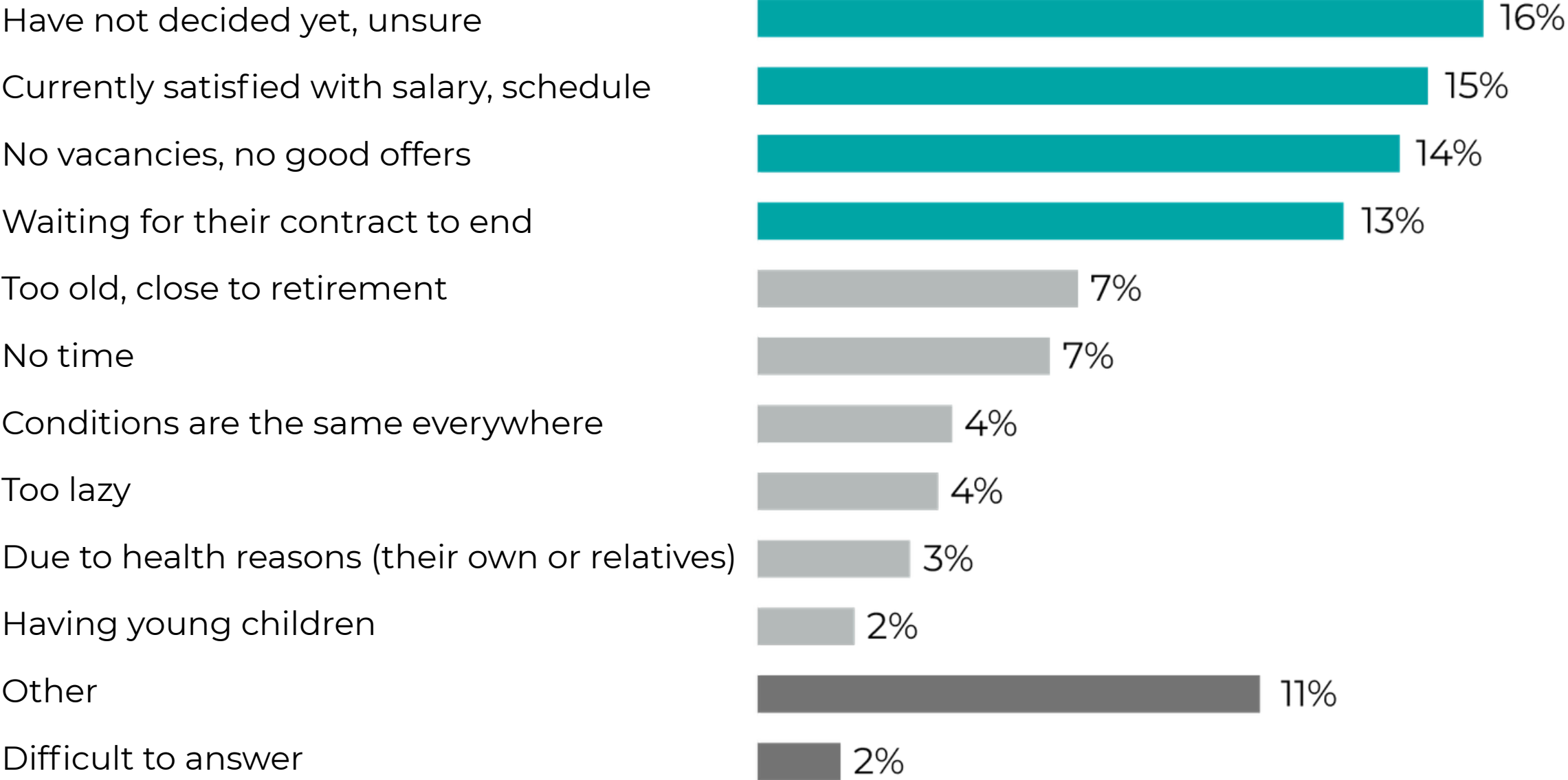


**Not looking** for a job is more common among **public-sector employees** (31%) and **state media consumers** (33%)

Those who are **more certain** about changing jobs are five times more likely to actively look for a new job than those who are less certain: **31%** compared to **6%**.

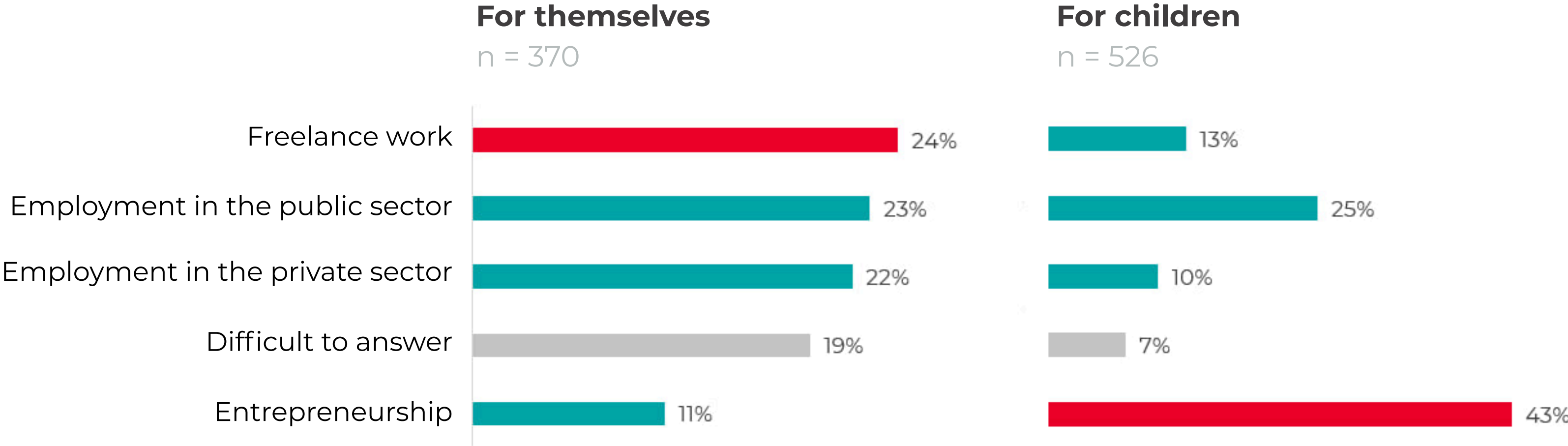
# Active job search is often delayed due to uncertainty, acceptable current conditions and lack of suitable vacancies

Among those who want to change jobs but are not actively looking, n=319



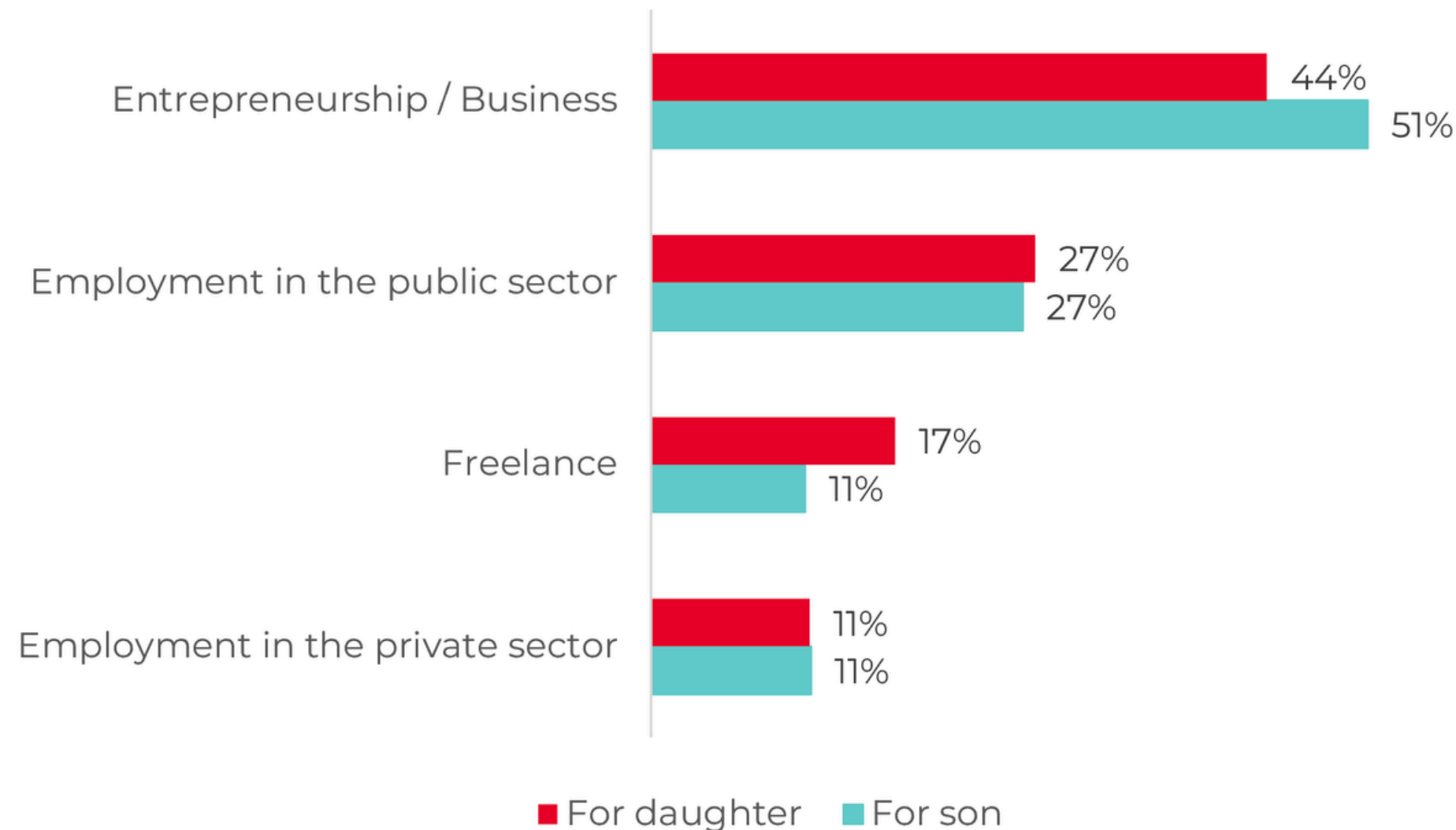
*Based on coded open-ended responses.*

# Respondents do not show a clear preference for their own career path, but favor entrepreneurship for their children



**Business is associated with dream, wealth and freedom (BEROC, 2024).**  
Parents see entrepreneurship as a path to independence and self-realization for their children and, in the current Belarusian context, as a more attractive alternative to employment.

# Parents are more likely to envision entrepreneurship for both sons and daughters



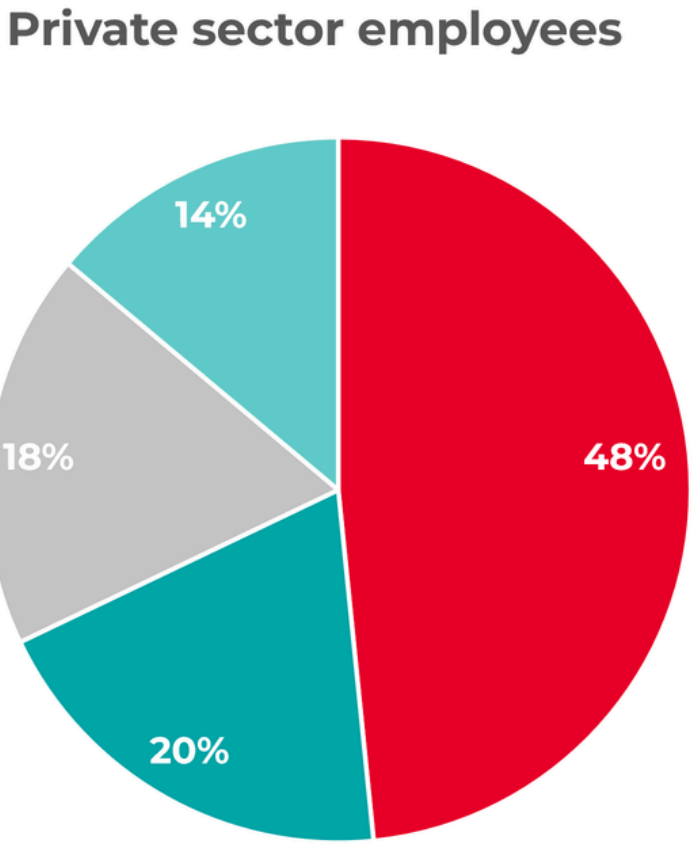
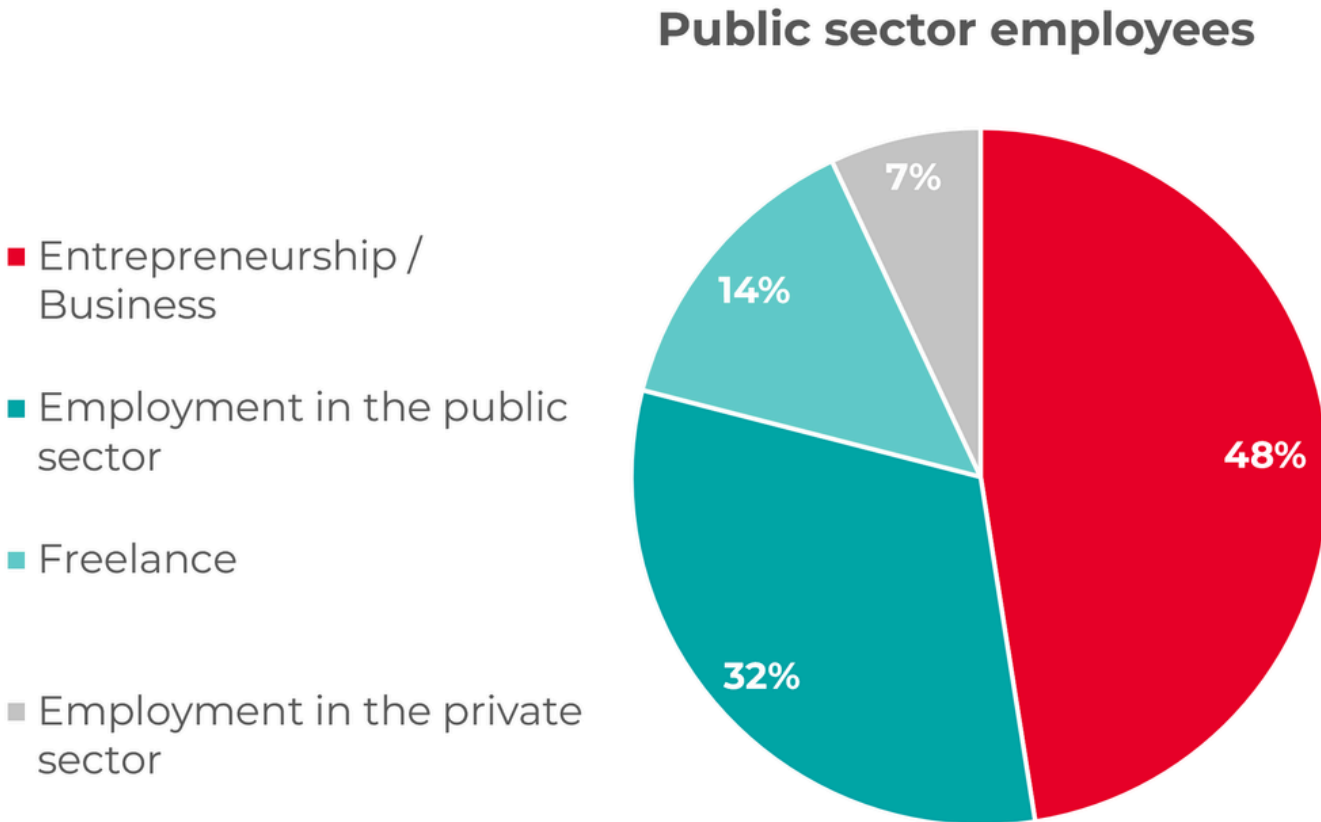
**Women prefer entrepreneurship** for sons (56%) and for daughters (47%).

**Men are more likely to prefer public-sector employment** for their children (32%) than women (23%).

Respondents with **secondary education** show a clear gender gap: **65%** would choose business for a son, compared to **36%** for a daughter.

Regionally, **Minsk** stands out: respondents there are much more likely to choose entrepreneurship for sons (60%) than for daughters (33%).

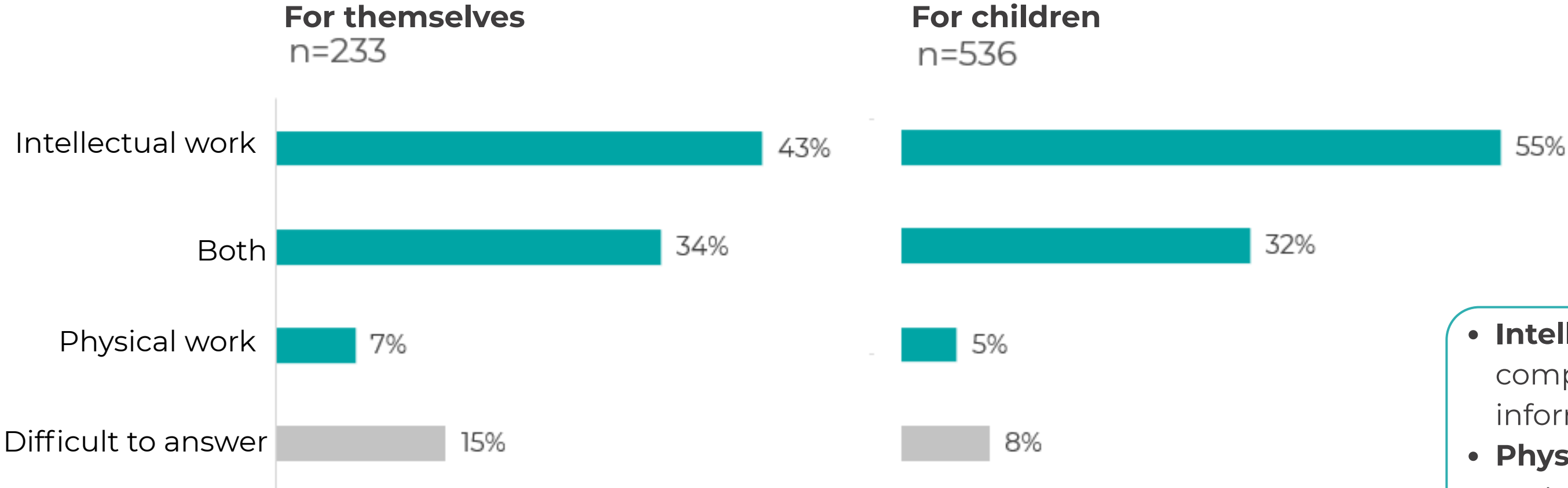
# Regardless of where parents work, entrepreneurship is the top choice for their children



- **Public-sector employees** are more likely to choose **entrepreneurship for their sons** (55%) than for their daughters (40%).
- They are also more likely to prefer **public-sector employment for their daughters** (34%) than parents working in private companies (17%).

By contrast, **private-sector employees** are more open to **entrepreneurship for daughters**: 50% choose this option, compared to 40% among public-sector employees.

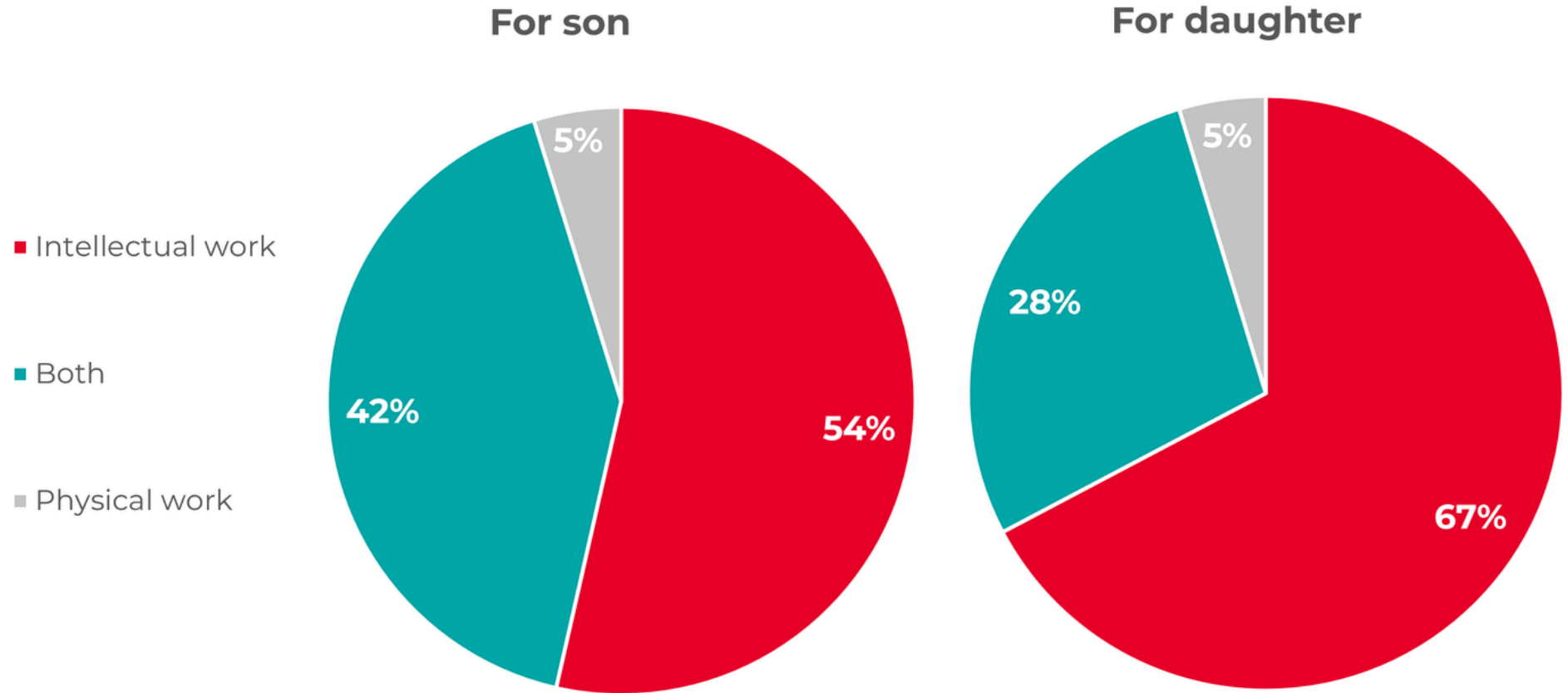
# Respondents want their children to move further toward intellectual work



- **Intellectual work** — work with computers, documents, information or abstract concepts
- **Physical work** — work with tools, materials or mechanisms
- **Both** — work combining intellectual and physical tasks

Respondents **prefer intellectual** work both for themselves and, even more strongly, for their children, while physical work is rarely considered a desirable career path.

# Intellectual work is the preferred path for both sons and daughters, but it is chosen substantially more often for daughters



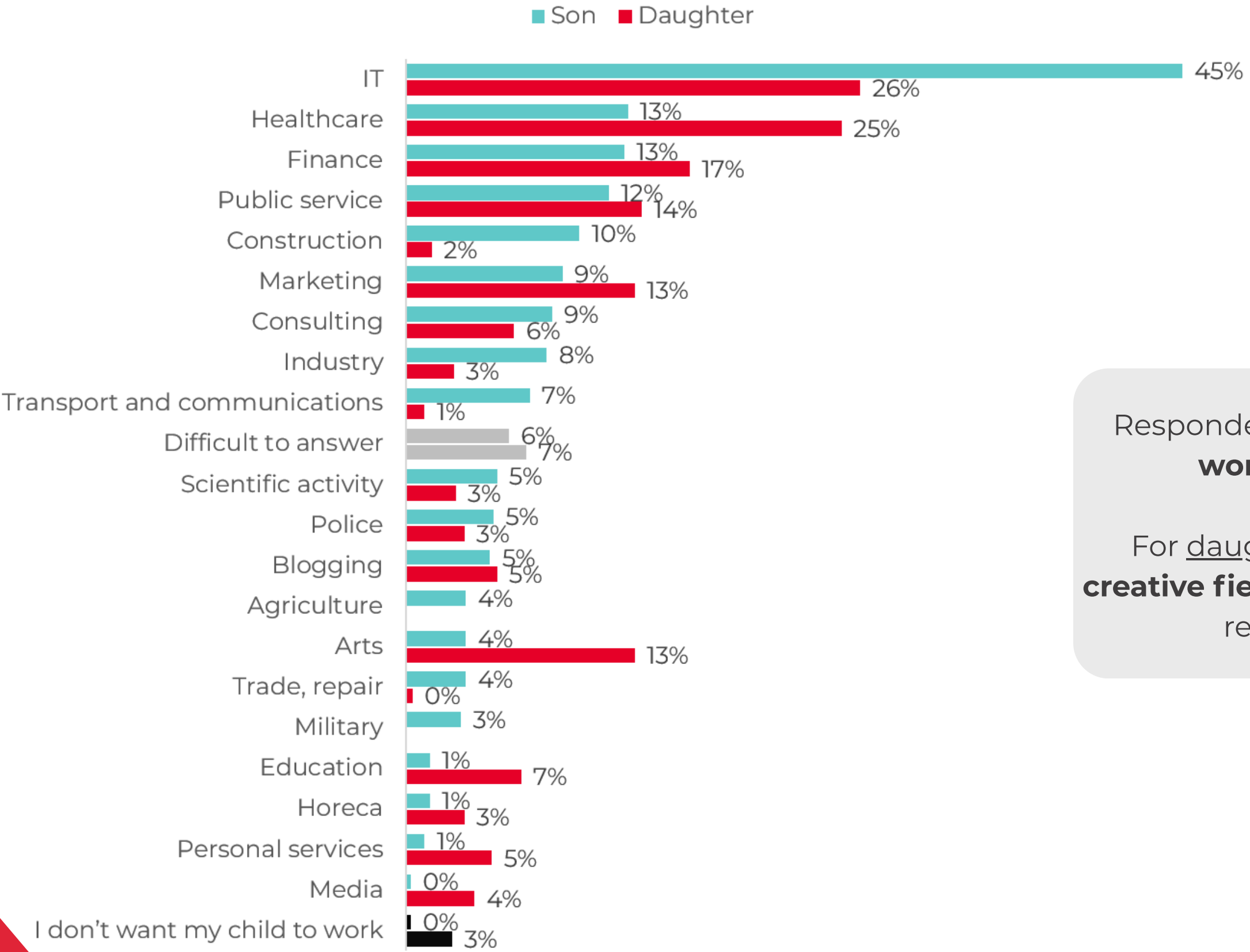
### More likely to choose intellectual work for their children:

- Higher-income respondents — 60% for sons and 71% for daughters
- Respondents engaged in intellectual work themselves

The “**both**” option is more often chosen by respondents engaged in physical work, those with secondary education and those with lower incomes, as a more universal and realistic choice.

In **Minsk**, support for **physical work** is the lowest for sons, at just 1.7%, but the highest for daughters, at 9%. Respondents who prefer **independent media** are more likely to choose intellectual work for their children, 60% for sons and 80% for daughters, and do not choose “physical work” for children at all.

# The main priorities for children's future employment are IT, medicine, finance, and the public sector



Respondents are more likely to choose **technical and physical work fields** (such as IT, construction) for their sons.

For daughters, they more often choose **physically safer and creative fields** (such as healthcare, arts and education), potentially reflecting deeply ingrained gender stereotypes.

## Summary

- Belarusians seek stability and accessibility for themselves, particularly through public-sector employment and freelance work, but prefer more promising career paths for their children, such as IT and entrepreneurship.
- Parents' preferences may reflect not only aspirations for their children's success, but also an attempt to compensate for their own professional constraints.
- A gap is emerging between respondents' career aspirations and their actual opportunities, as many struggle to realise preferences for intellectual work, higher income, and flexible employment due to age, qualifications, regional factors, and institutional constraints in the labour and training system.