

UCAS

COST OF LIVING & STUDENT CHOICES: INSIGHT AND ACTION FOR 2025

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BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

BACKGROUND

- Running for 3 years
- Understand the impact of cost of living on decision making
- The perceived impact on student experience
- Student information needs

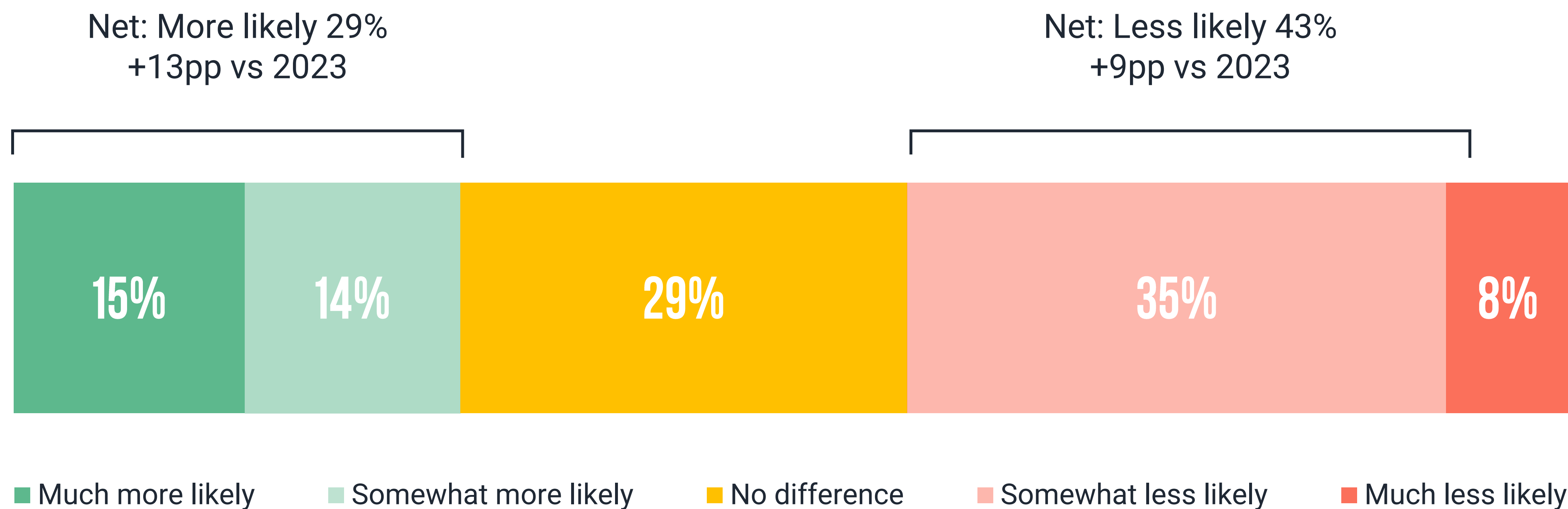
APPROACH

- Online survey
- 2024 Audience: potential applicants for 2025 entry
- Base: 1,023 UK respondents
- Fieldwork: December 2024 – January 2025



COMMITMENT TO GOING TO UNIVERSITY REMAINS HIGH, BUT COST OF LIVING IS IMPACTING INTENTION

Cost of living impact on intention to go to university



82%
committed to going
to university in 2025
(+5 pp vs 2023)

86%
Confident they
will get a place
(-3 pp vs 2023)

COURSE CONTENT IS KEY, BUT FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND WAYS TO CUT COSTS ARE INCREASINGLY BEING FACTORED INTO UNIVERSITY SHORTLISTING DECISIONS

Factors important when researching/shortlisting universities Year-on-Year rank importance

A course with content that is perfectly suited to me

Financial support available while studying

The cost of living support offered by universities

Universities that are close to home e.g. in my closest city

Universities/ courses with high graduate employment rates

Positive reviews from students

Universities with low cost accommodation

Mental health support while studying

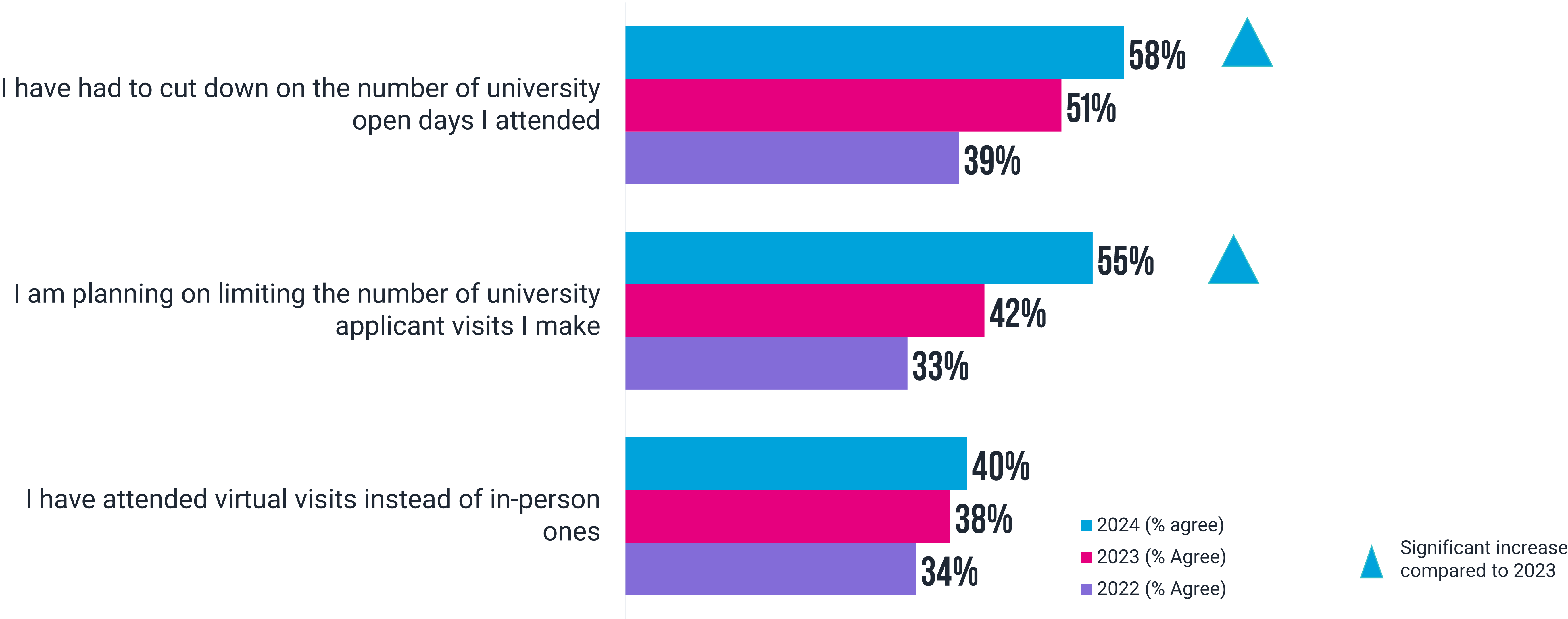
Universities with a great social scene

Universities with good quality accommodation

2022 RANK	2023 RANK	2024 RANK
1	1	1
4	4	2
12	10	3
9	5	4
3	2	5
2	3	6
13	12	7
8	11	8
7	7	9
5	8	10

73% ARE LIMITING OPEN DAY OR VISIT ATTENDANCE DUE TO COST

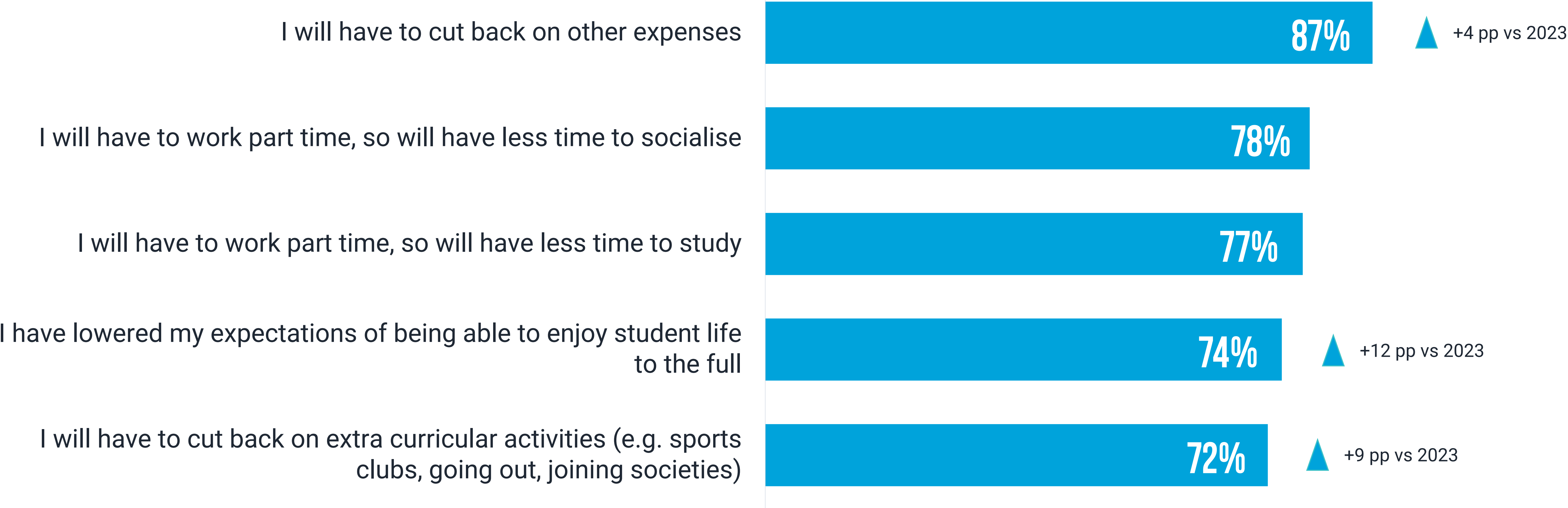
Because of the expense: % strongly or somewhat agree year on year



Q: Thinking about the cost of living, to what extent do you agree with the following? Because of the expense....UK 2024 (843), UK 2023 (723), UK 2022 (753), 2023 UK (2,182) and 2022 UK (3,102)

LOWERED EXPECTATIONS OF BEING ABLE TO ENJOY STUDENT LIFE TO THE FULL, AND PLAN TO CUT BACK ON EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND OTHER EXPENSES

Because of the cost of living increase... % agree



INFORMATION NEEDS CHECKLIST

- Financial support packages from universities
- Bursaries/ scholarships
- Student discounts
- How to budget at university
- How to find a part time job at university
- Availability of low cost accommodation

“ Setting specific budgets per day/week/month because it helps you keep on track, be able to save and keep money for whatever you want to use it on. ”

“ I did not know I could apply for funding for being cared for in my past. ”



ANY QUESTIONS?

