

IVI Institute Fertility Barometer UK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OCTOBER 2026

Research conducted by GfK, a NielsenIQ company

Published by IVI Institute in partnership with IVI Fertility and CREATE Fertility



Methodology and objectives

STUDY POPULATION

Women aged 19–49 years old
UK (~14.1M)

SAMPLE SIZE

4,000 interviews

SURVEY DATES

June 10 – July 3, 2026

SELECTION CRITERIA

Nationally representative
sample, with quotas on age,
region and education

METHODOLOGY

Online interviews (Computer
Assisted Web Interviews)

SAMPLE ERROR

±1.55 percentage points at the
95% confidence level (p=q=50%)

ABOUT THE STUDY

Fertility is an urgent social and public health issue, yet it is still discussed with little evidence on what people themselves think, want, and fear. The IVI Institute Fertility Barometer was created to close that gap.

The study was conducted by GfK, a NielsenIQ company, in collaboration with the member brands of IVI Institute and spans nine countries. It examines how people think about fertility, parenthood and family formation, and the barriers that shape reproductive decisions today. Participating brands: IVI Fertility, Everleap Fertility, ART Fertility, Genera, Create Fertility, LIVIO, and TRIO Clinics.

This report sets out findings for the United Kingdom and what they reveal about the future of family planning and motherhood.

IVI INSTITUTE Global leader in reproductive medicine

200+

locations in 15 countries

5

basic research centers

100+

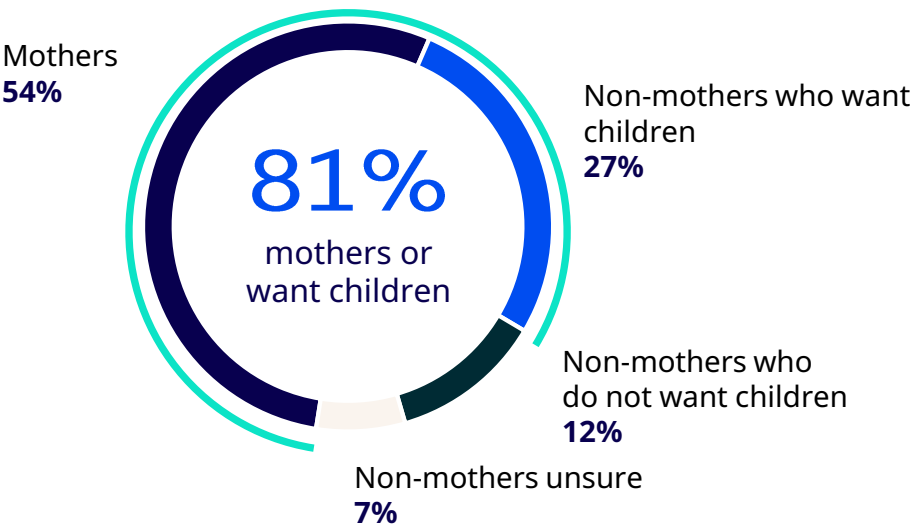
babies born every day

Motherhood remains a strong aspiration

The findings from the IVI Institute Fertility Barometer for the UK show that the desire for motherhood remains strong, 81% of women 19–49 years old are already mothers or want children. For most women in the UK, becoming a mother continues to be an important life goal, and nearly half describe it as one of their highest personal priorities.

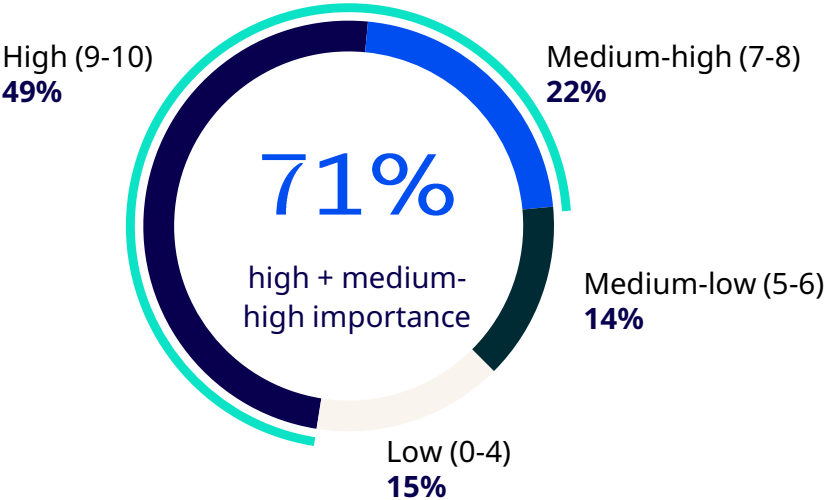
Current motherhood status

% of women (n= 4,000)



Importance of becoming a mother

% of women (n= 4,000)



[Q] Thinking about the future, would you like to have more children?
[Q] Thinking about the future, would you like to have children?
[Q] How important is becoming a mother to you?
Components may not sum exactly due to rounding

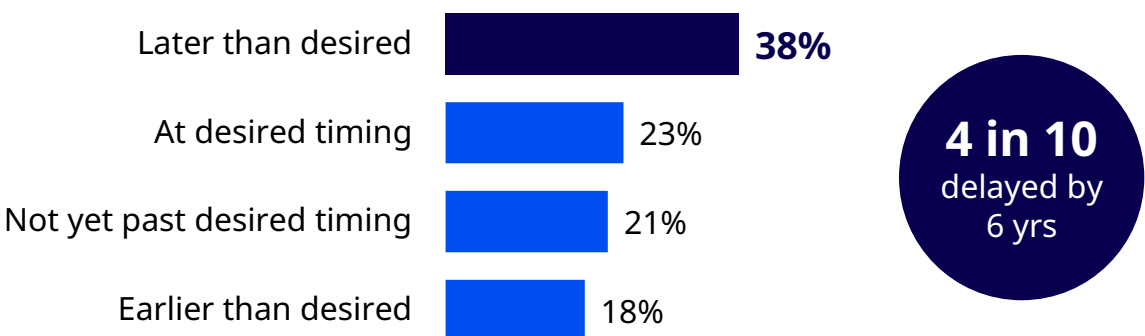
Women are having children later—and fewer than they intended

The findings reveal a gap between women’s aspirations for motherhood and their experience. Women report an ideal age of 25 for having their first child, but many become mothers later than they intended. Nearly 4 in 10 of all mothers in the UK report having children later than they originally planned.

Mothers ideally want 2.9 children but have 2.0 on average. Also suggesting a gap between women’s fertility intentions and their actual family size—not simply a declining desire for children.

Timing of first child

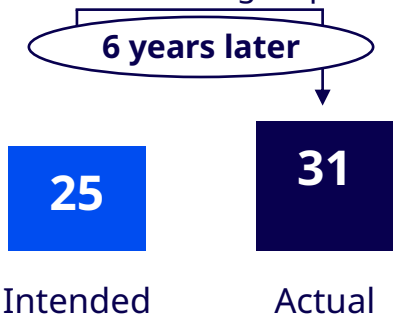
% of women who have target age (n= 2,517)



Intended vs. actual

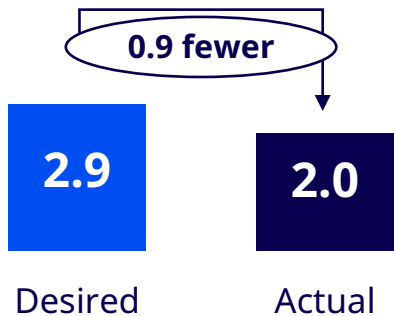
Age at first child

Later-than-desired group



Children per mother

Mothers



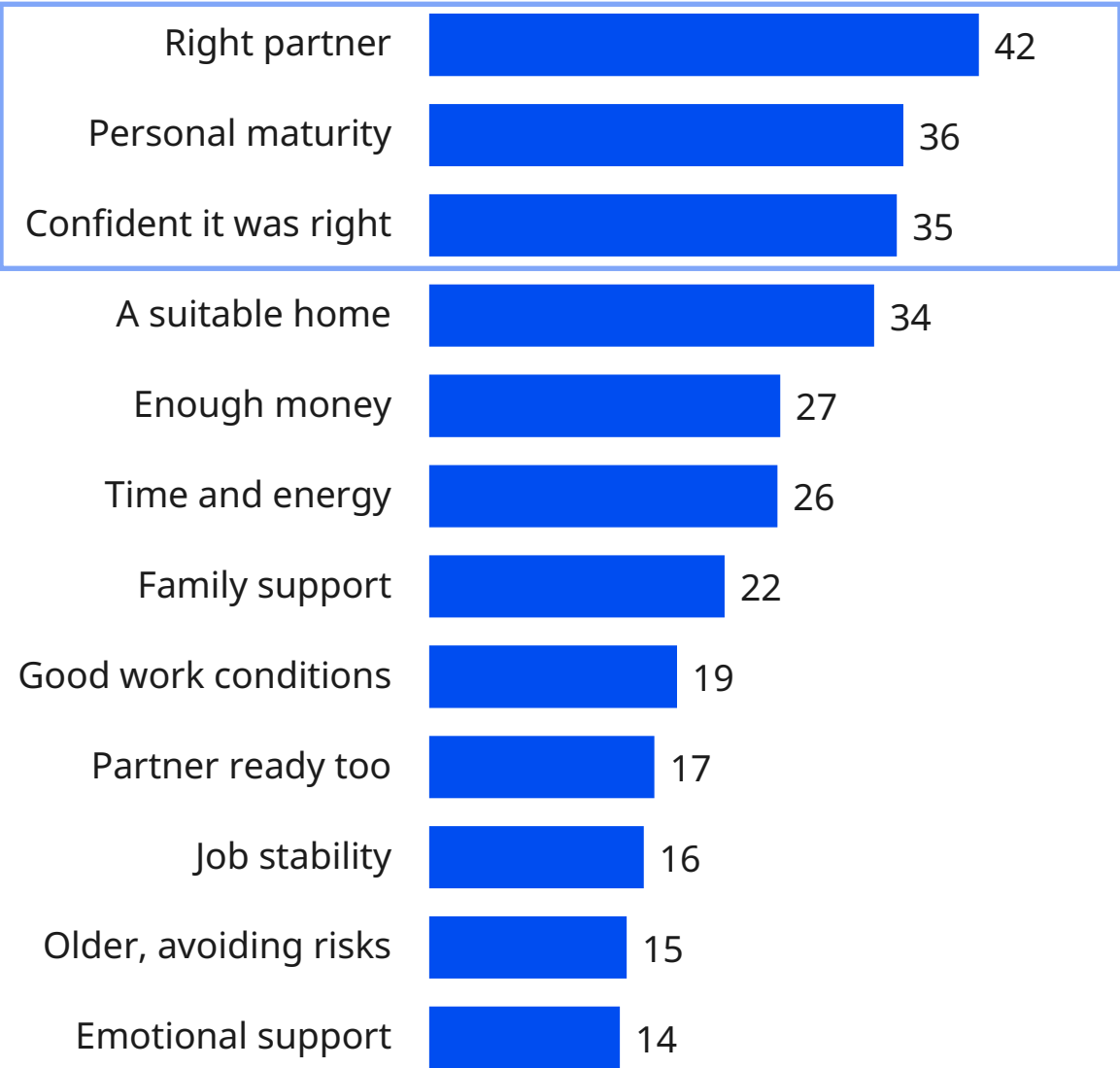
[Q] At what age would you like to or would you have liked to have gotten pregnant for the first time?
[Q] At what age did you get pregnant?
[Q] How many children would you like to have in total, including those you already have?

Women are delaying motherhood because of life circumstances

Delayed motherhood is a consequence of feeling ready rather than a lack of desire for children.

What made it the right time

already mothers or pregnant (n= 2,210)

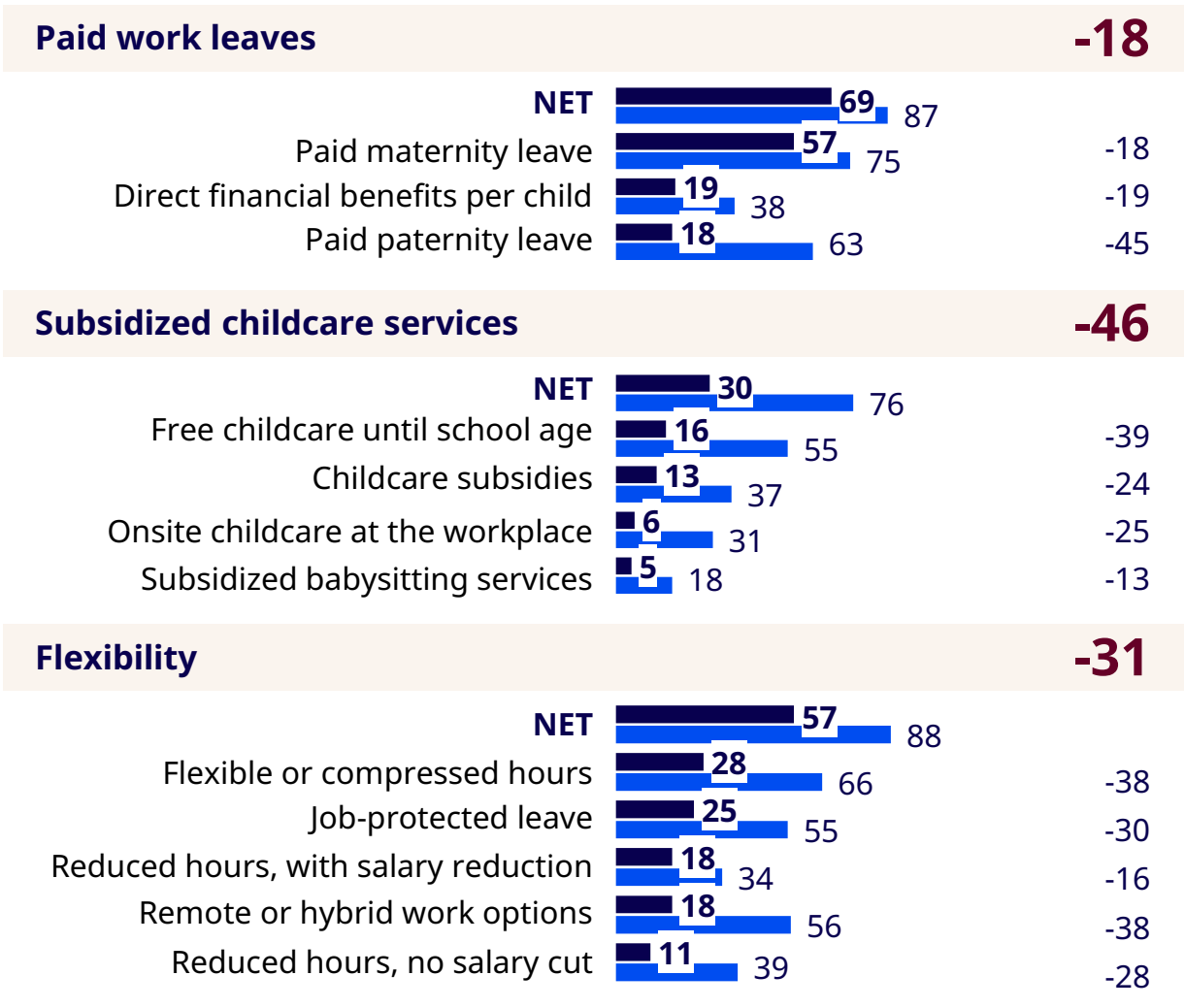


The biggest support gaps are flexibility and childcare

The findings reveal a persistent gap between the workplace and childcare support mothers need and what is available to them in practice. While access to paid leave is comparatively high, flexible working options and childcare support fall far short of demand. As these measures play a critical role in helping women balance work and family life, the shortfall represents an important challenge for mothers across the UK.

Access vs. desire for family benefits

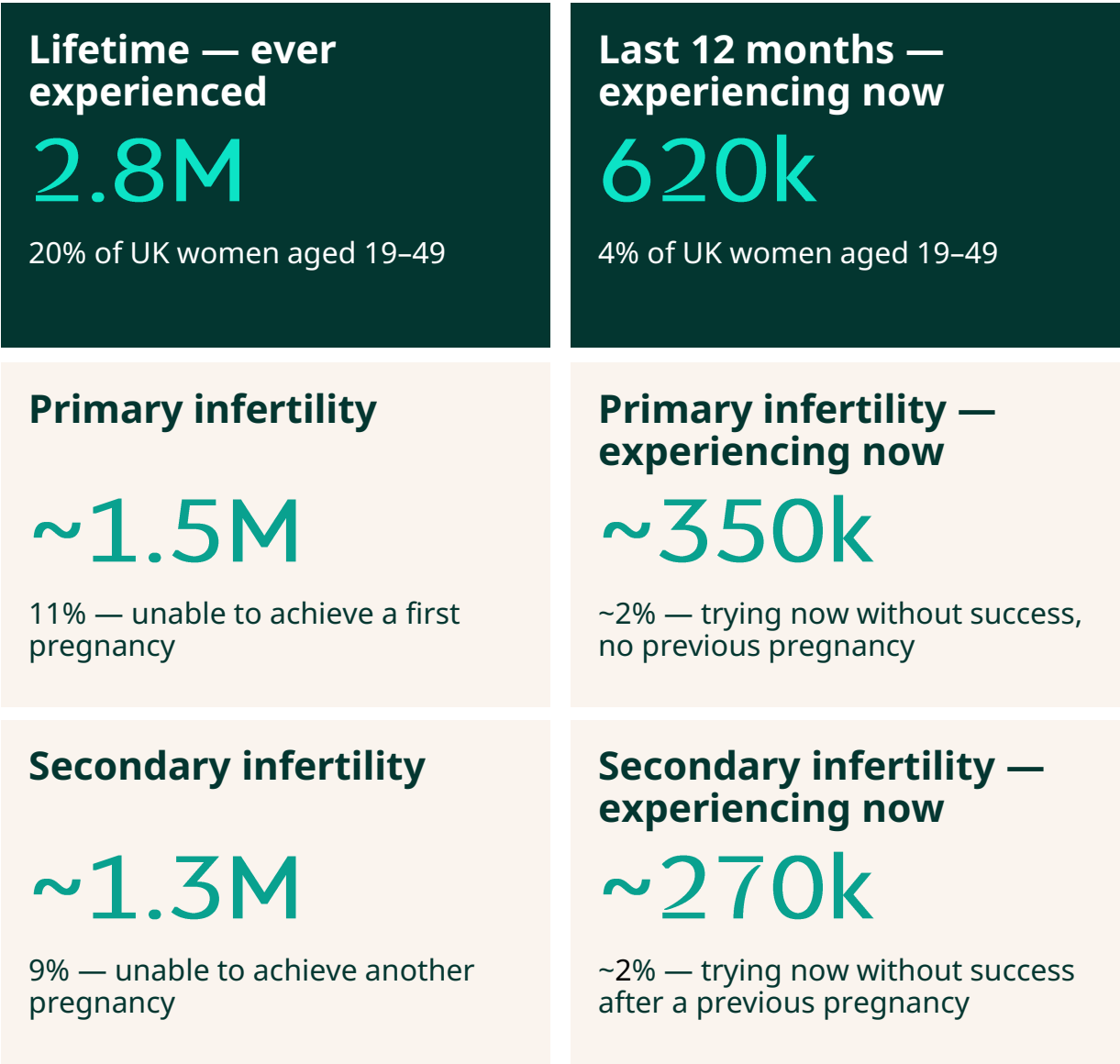
% of mothers (n= 2,145)



Gap shown at right, in percentage points ■ Accessed ■ Desired

2.8 million women in the UK have experienced infertility

The study shows that experiencing infertility is far more common than many people assume. One in five women in the UK aged 19-49 report having experienced infertility at some point in their lives – about 2.8 million women – making infertility a significant reproductive health issue in the UK.



Women who have ever experienced infertility: Women who had been trying to conceive for at least 12 months without success (current or past), plus women who had undergone infertility treatments, plus women who had experienced at least two pregnancies but no live births. Absolute figures apply percentages to ~14.1M UK women aged 19–49 (ONS, mid-2025).

Women experience a substantial toll, not routinely met with support

Experiencing infertility can have a substantial negative impact: 68% of women who have experienced it rate the impact as highly negative (7 out of 10 or higher). Yet support does not consistently match that burden—only 62% of those who consulted a doctor or health professional were offered psychological support.

Impact of fertility challenges

% who tried to conceive for 12 months without success (n= 533)
0 = has not impacted me at all • 10 = has impacted me extremely negatively



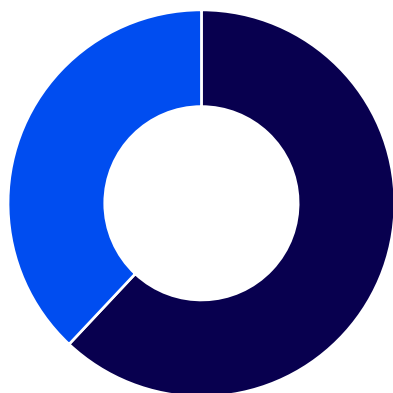
68%

rate the impact of fertility challenges at 7 or higher out of 10

■ Low (0-4) 9% ■ Med-low (5-6) 23%
■ Med-high (7-8) 36% ■ High (9-10) 32%

Psychological support offered by the clinic

% who visited a specialist and received some treatment (not only test) (n= 531)



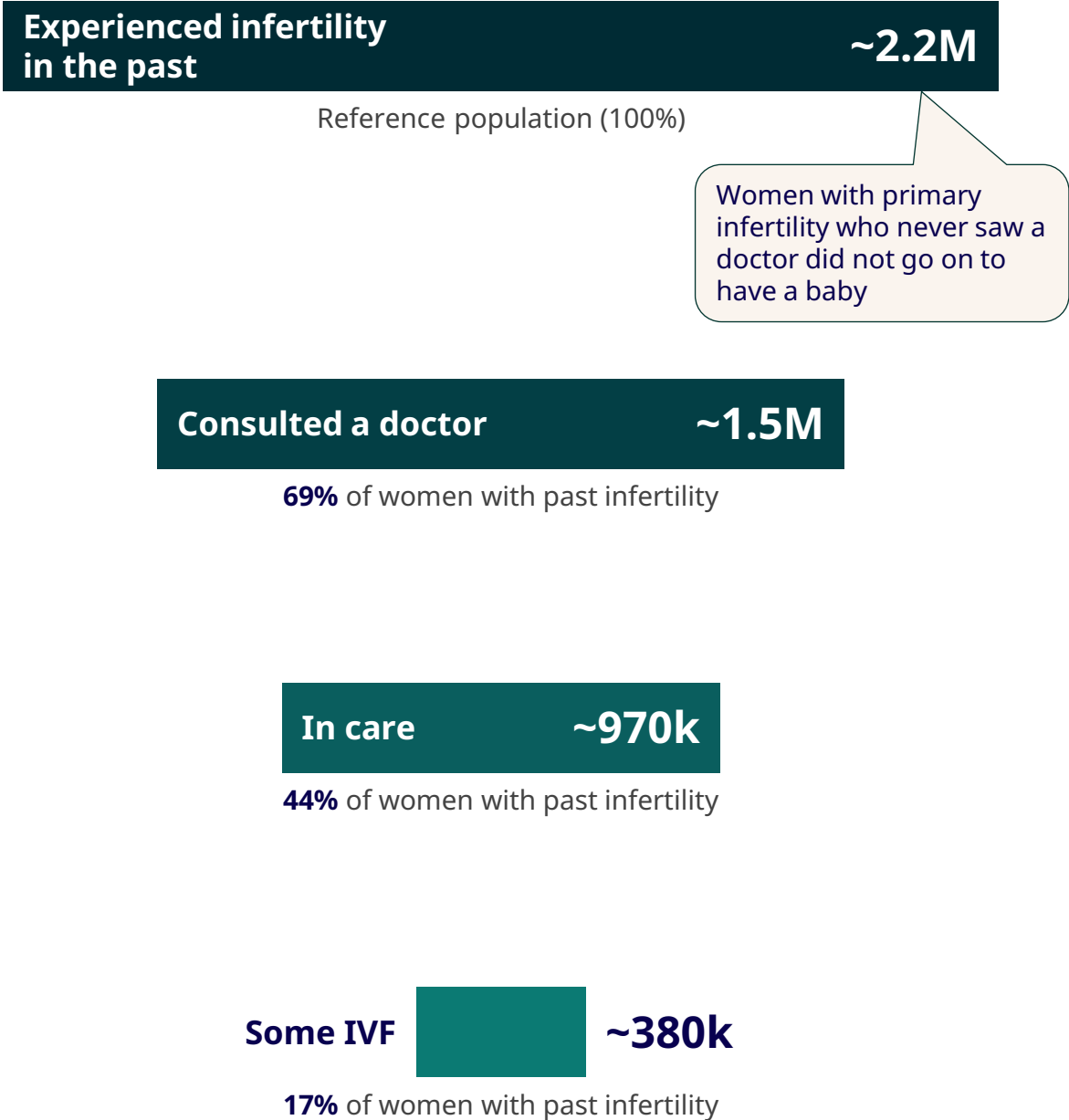
62%

were offered psychological support by the clinic during fertility treatment

■ Offered 62% ■ Not offered 38%

69% of women with past infertility consult a doctor, but only 44% start any treatment

Only 17% of women who experienced infertility in the past underwent IVF

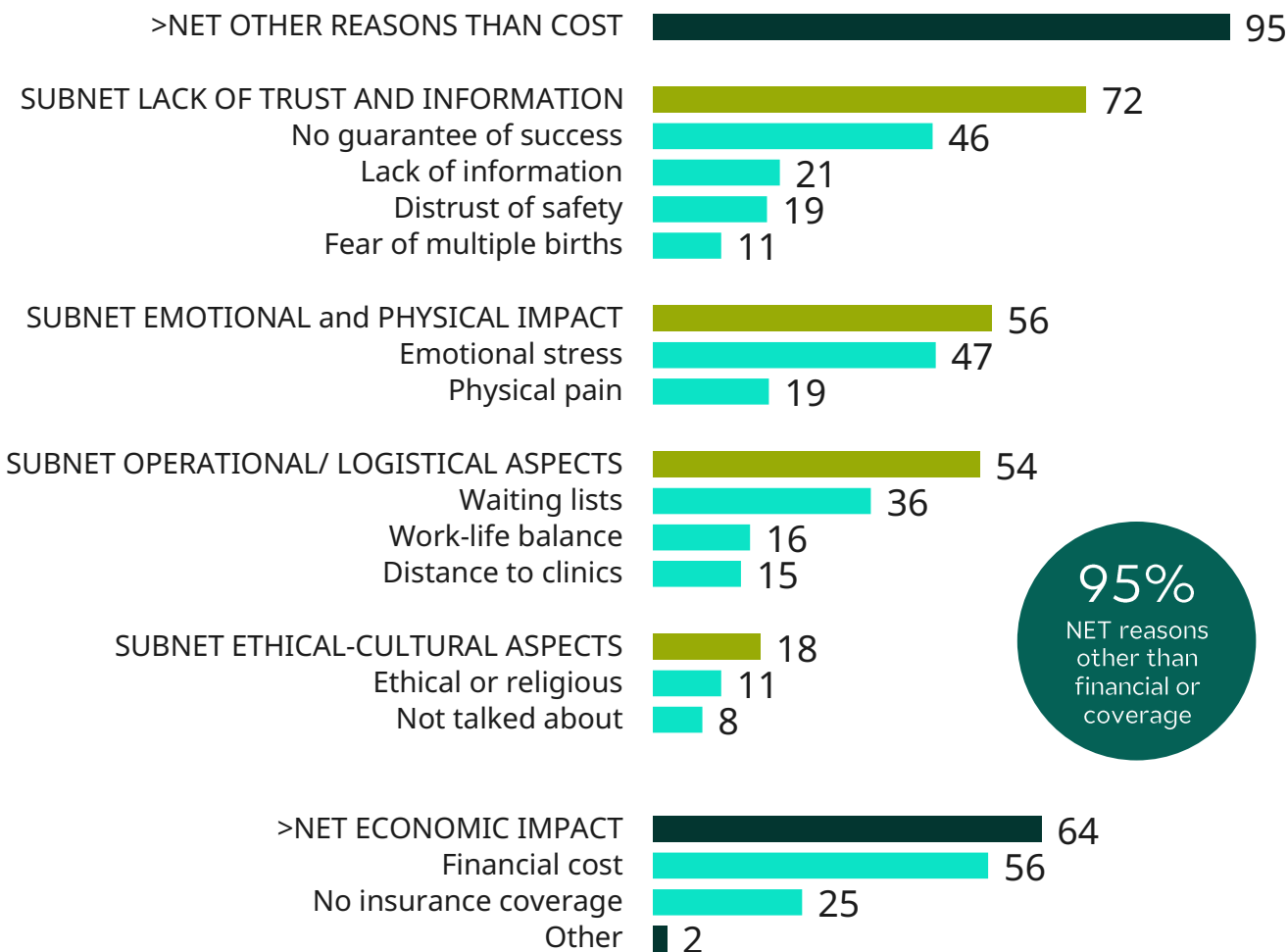


Fertility treatment: trust and information matter as much as cost

For many women, the decision to pursue fertility treatment is complex. While 64% cite cost as a barrier, an even larger share—95%—point to other reasons, from lack of trust and information to logistical and emotional challenges.

Perceived barriers to treatment

% women who have experienced infertility (n= 799)

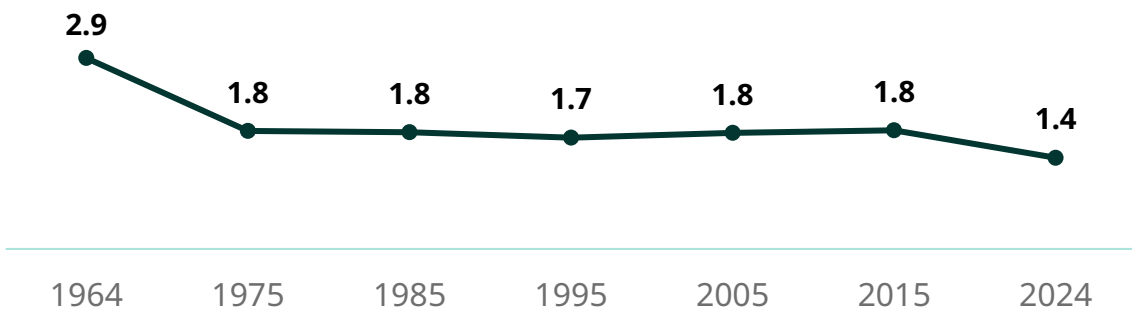


95%
NET reasons
other than
financial or
coverage

Improving access to fertility care may help address the declining birth rate

Infertility is more than a personal issue. The fertility rate in the UK has been declining, and rising rates of infertility have contributed to this problem. Reducing barriers to fertility care has potential implications for both health care and public policy.

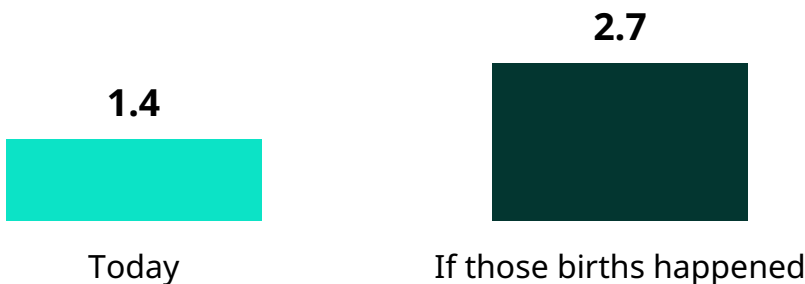
Children per woman in the UK, 1964–2024



620,000

women in the UK are experiencing infertility right now
4% of women aged 19–49

Children per woman — today vs if all women experiencing infertility now had a baby



Note: 659,856 births registered across the UK in 2024 (ONS, NRS, NISRA) = 1.40 children per woman. A further 620,000 births would total 1,279,856 — equivalent to 2.7 on the same base.

