Financial abuse in Ireland

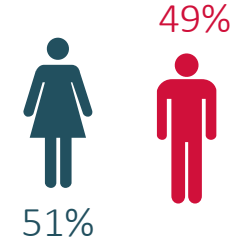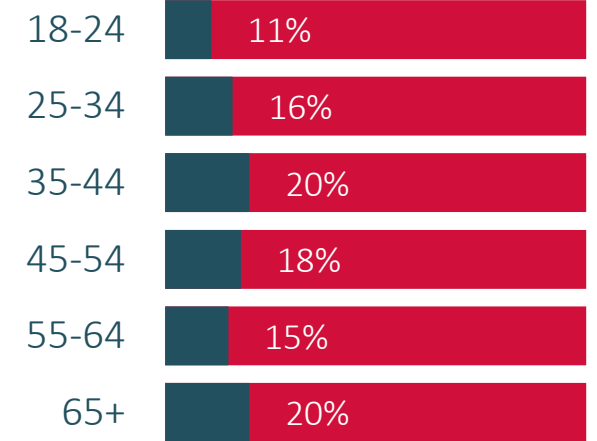November 2024
JN Ref: 754024

RED Line Methodology

- Online research was conducted with n=1,003 ROI adults aged 18+. Respondents were recruited using RED C Live, RED C's own online panel of over 40,000 members.

- Quota controls were used to ensure a nationally representative sample of ROI adults aged 18+, with interlocking quotas to provide extra confidence in sample profile.

- Data was weighted across gender, age, region and social class so as to ensure a nationally representative sample based on latest CSO projections.

- Fieldwork for this research took place between 23rd and 28th October 2024. Respondents were asked about their experience of financial abuse and the different forms they had experience with.

Gender

49%

51%

Age

18-24	11%
25-34	16%
35-44	20%
45-54	18%
55-64	15%
65+	20%

Region

Conn/ Ulster
17%

Dublin
29%

Rest of Leinster
27%

Munster
27%

Social Class

ABC1	C2DE	F
46%	48%	6%

ONLINE SURVEY
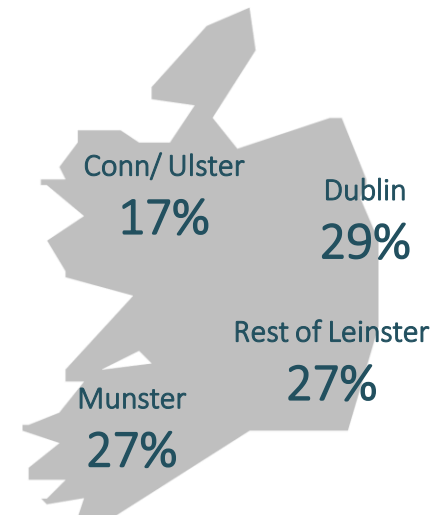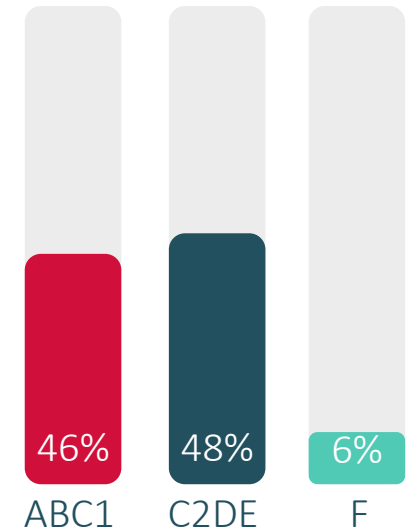
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Explanation of financial abuse shown to survey respondents:

Financial abuse is a serious form of adult abuse, often by people known to the victim, like family members or carers. It can include keeping change, taking cash, misusing bank cards, being dishonest about social welfare payments, using property without permission, and pressuring changes to property deeds, Power of Attorney, or a Will.

Key findings from the research

Just over one-in-ten people aged 18+ living in Ireland have personally experienced some form of financial abuse

One-in-five also claim to know someone that has been at the receiving end of financial abuse

Of those that have experienced / witnessed financial abuse, the abuser is usually a known individual

Four out of every five individuals that have experienced financial abuse or know of someone that has, cited incidents where the abuser was known to them or the person affected
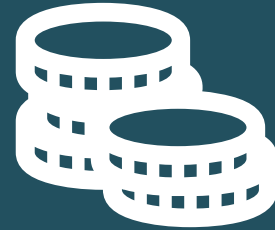
Instances of financial fraud involving cash / change are most commonly experienced

In these and many other scenarios there is a very high likelihood that the abuser is known to the person affected

One in five people aged 18+ in Ireland know someone that has experienced financial abuse and just over one in ten have experienced it themselves

Incidence of experiencing financial abuse
% of total population aged 18+
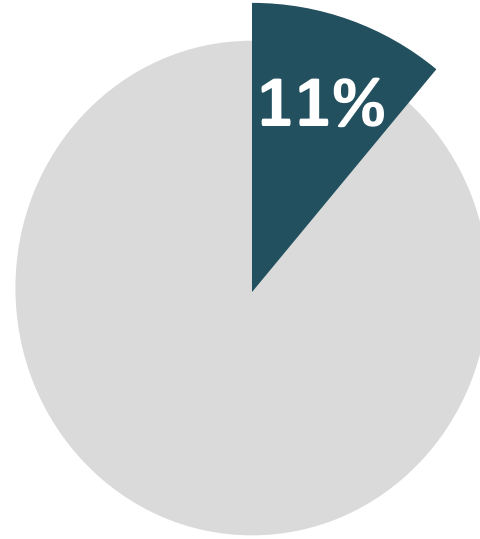
11%

Personally experienced financial abuse

20%
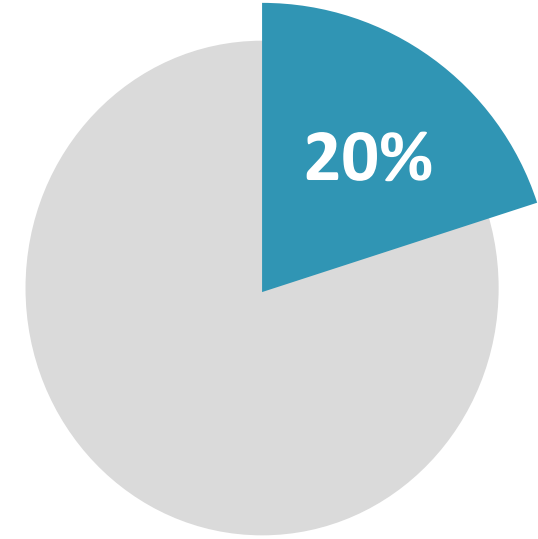
Know someone that has experienced financial abuse

30% people aged 18+ living in ROI that have personally experienced financial abuse and/or know someone that has experienced financial abuse

Women aged 35-54 most likely to experience financial abuse

Those in lower social grades (C2DE) along with those that are widowed / divorced / separated also have a high incidence of experiencing financial abuse.

Incidence of personally experiencing financial abuse
by key demographic groups
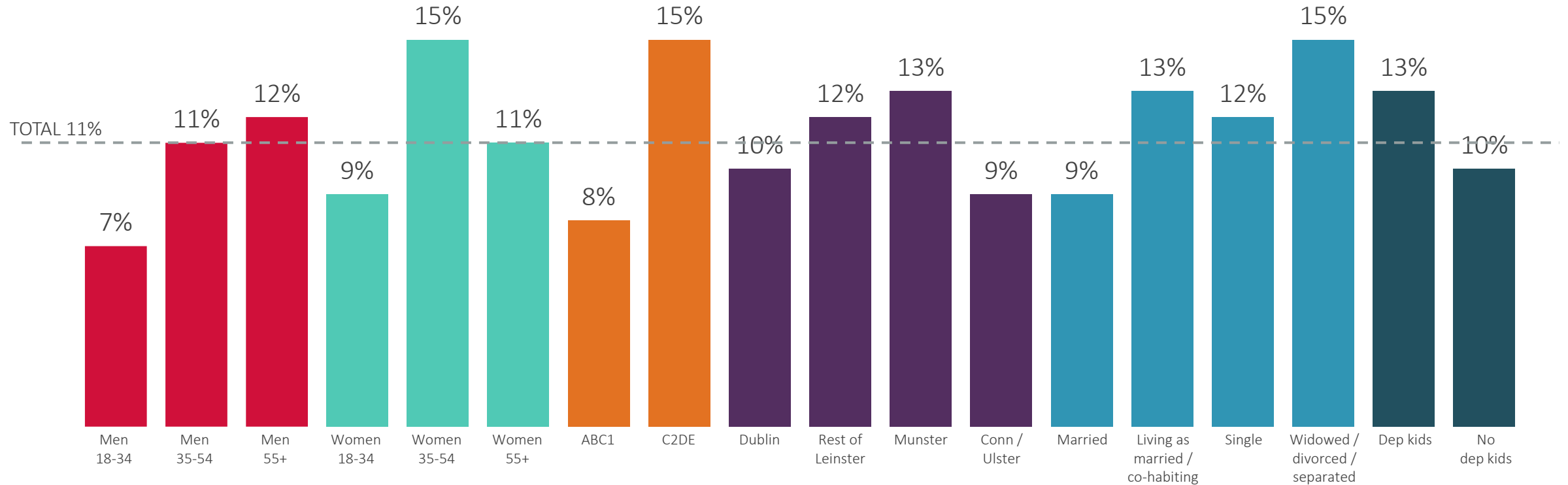
TOTAL 11%

Men 18-34	Men 35-54	Men 55+	Women 18-34	Women 35-54	Women 55+	ABC1	C2DE	Dublin	Rest of Leinster	Munster	Conn / Ulster	Married	Living as married / co-habiting	Single	Widowed / divorced / separated	Dep kids	No dep kids
7%	11%	12%	9%	15%	11%	8%	15%	10%	12%	13%	9%	9%	13%	12%	15%	13%	10%

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Financial abuse takes a variety of different forms, with incidents involving cash / change most common

Over half of those that had personally experienced financial abuse and / or knew someone that was a victim of financial abuse cited incidents where this involved cash taken, whether around the house, or change not being returned or through use of a bank card.

Type of financial abuse experienced

% of those that have personally experienced financial abuse and / or know someone that was a victim of financial abuse (n=318)

Cash was being taken from around the house	60%
Change was not being given back or returned	57%
A bank card was being misused	54%
Property or possessions were being used without knowledge or agreement	49%
An online fraud or scam occurred	48%
Online banking was being misused	40%
Social welfare payments were being misused	40%
Undue pressure was being applied to change a property deed, Enduring Power of Attorney or Will	29%
Some other experience	43%

81%

of people that have personally experienced financial abuse and/or know of someone that has experienced financial abuse identified situations where this occurred and the abuser was known to them / the victim of the abuse
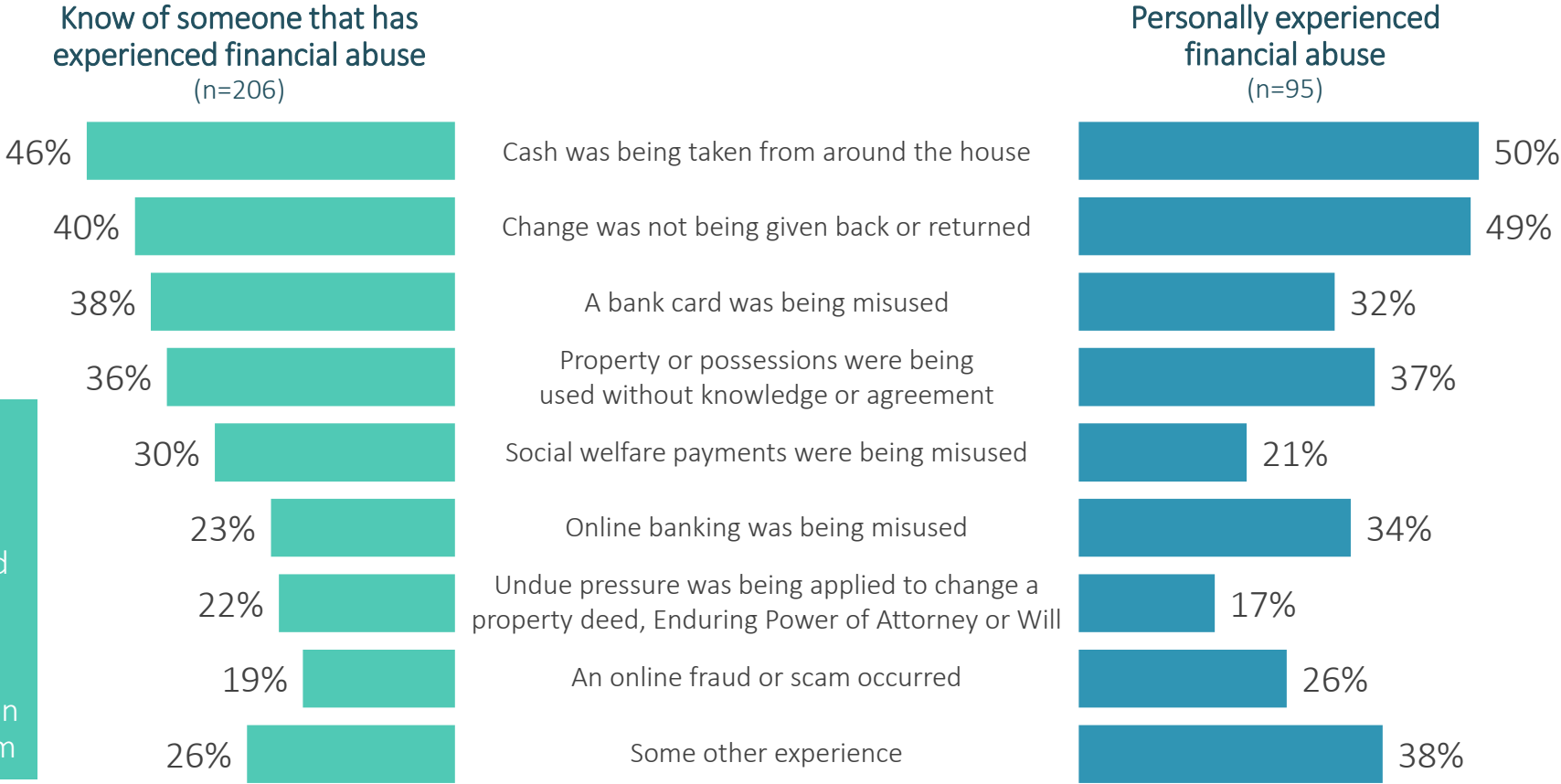
Cash frequently involved in financial abuse where abuser is known

This includes taking money from around the house and not giving back change.

Type of financial abuse experienced and where the abuser was known to the victim

Know of someone that has experienced financial abuse
(n=206)

Personally experienced financial abuse
(n=95)

	Know of someone	Personally experienced
Cash was being taken from around the house	46%	50%
Change was not being given back or returned	40%	49%
A bank card was being misused	38%	32%
Property or possessions were being used without knowledge or agreement	36%	37%
Social welfare payments were being misused	30%	21%
Online banking was being misused	23%	34%
Undue pressure was being applied to change a property deed, Enduring Power of Attorney or Will	22%	17%
An online fraud or scam occurred	19%	26%
Some other experience	26%	38%

78% of those that know someone that has personally experienced financial abuse identified at least one situation where this occurred and the person was known to the victim

85% of those that have personally experienced financial abuse identified at least one situation where this occurred and the person was known to them
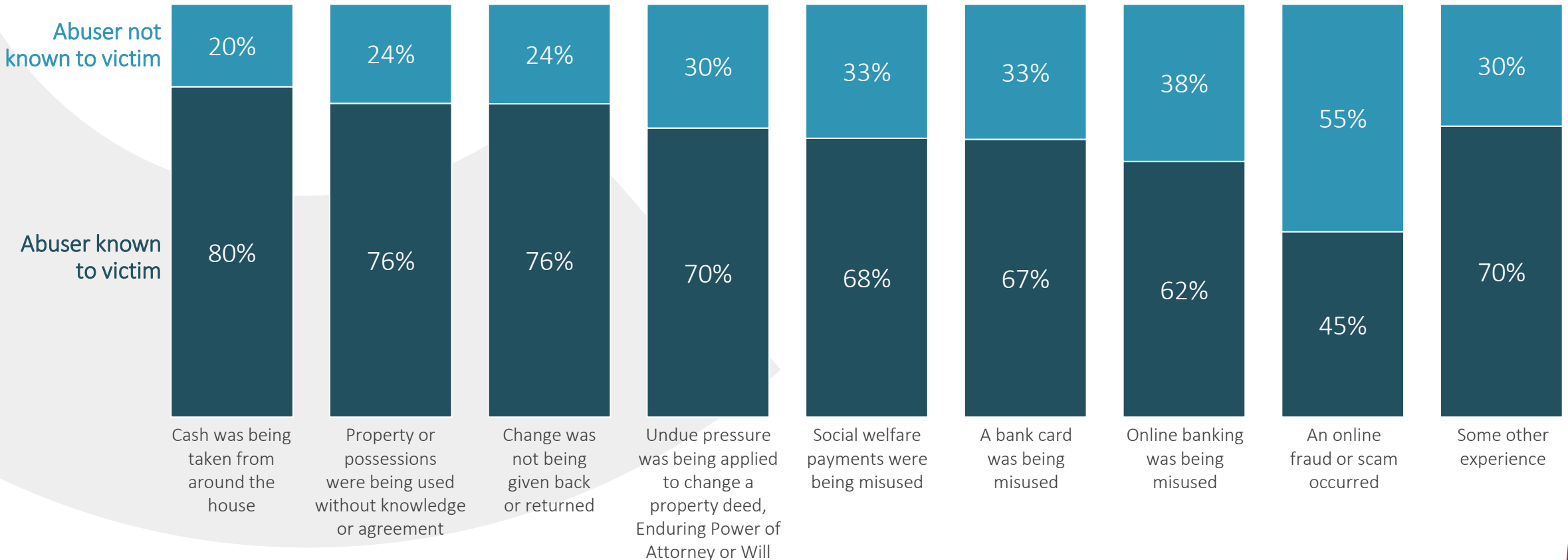
Q.2 Which of the following describe your own personal experience of financial abuse and / or what you are aware someone else experienced?

High likelihood that abuser is known in majority of situations

The one exception to this is online frauds and scams, where the abuser's identity is often not known to the person affected.

Likelihood that the abuser is known to the victim versus not being known in various situations of financial abuse

Abuser not known to victim

20%	24%	24%	30%	33%	33%	38%	55%	30%

Abuser known to victim

80%	76%	76%	70%	68%	67%	62%	45%	70%

Cash was being taken from around the house | Property or possessions were being used without knowledge or agreement | Change was not being given back or returned | Undue pressure was being applied to change a property deed, Enduring Power of Attorney or Will | Social welfare payments were being misused | A bank card was being misused | Online banking was being misused | An online fraud or scam occurred | Some other experience

Q.2 Which of the following describe your own personal experience of financial abuse and / or what you are aware someone else experienced?
Base: if personally experienced / know someone that has experienced financial abuse; n=318

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