Consumer Pulse Survey: Back-To-School 2026

Consumer, Retail & Hospitality

—

July 2026

Survey methodology

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- The survey was conducted online through a survey vendor, ensuring demographic representation as per US Census data. The collected data has a margin of error of +/- 5 percent.

Survey timings

- Survey start date: May 29, 2026
- Survey end date: June 18, 2026

Survey objective

- To assess consumer's sentiment and perception around various economic and personal financial matters.
- To analyze consumer allocation of household budgets and assess the impact of economic factors on purchasing behaviors and sentiment about tariffs.
- To evaluate anticipated spending for the back-to-school season, including apparel, sports, technology, etc. and explore changes in food and restaurant plans as children return to school.

Survey sample

- Survey polled a sample of 2,297 consumers across the United States

Executive Summary

Back-To-School Spending

+6%

Families are expected to spend $252 per child on back-to-school pruchases this year, marking a 6% increase from last year.

80%

Nearly 80% of parents say increase in spend reflects higher prices for the same school essentials and technology purchases as last year.

Family Priorities & Trade-Offs

7 in 10

Even with higher prices, seven in ten families plan to protect their children's sports participation.

51%

Half of consumers plan to dine out less frequently once school resumes.

48%

48% plan to prepare simpler weekday meals.

Health & Wellness Trends

1 in 3

Nearly one in three consumers are currently using or considering GLP-1 medications.

Driven by younger generations of Millennials (30%) and Gen Z (26%).

Millennials	Gen Z
30%	26%

Executive Summary

1

Back-To-School

- Families are expected to spend **$252 per child on back-to-school purchases this year, marking a 6% increase from 2025**
- **39% of back-to-school shoppers expect to spend more on school supplies** per child in 2026 compared to 2025
- Nearly 80% of parents say **the increase reflects higher prices for the same school essentials and technology purchases as last year** rather than a larger basket of goods
- Core school supplies, apparel, and footwear together comprise **49% share of wallet for back-to-school spending.**

2

Sports

- **70% of families are planning for sports participation** this school year.
- **Outdoor sports represent the largest share of school-related activities** at 43%, with soccer the most popular (47%), followed by baseball and softball (39%).
- Parents cite **children's growing interest in sports (42%) and physical health benefits of participation (40%)** as the primary factors driving sports spending.
- 32% of children participate in extracurricular training or tutoring, and among those, **42% take part in sports training or coaching.**

Executive Summary

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Food and restaurant

- **51% plan to dine out less frequently** as their kids go back to school.
- **80% of those dining out less attribute the cut to budget constraints**
- As kids go back to school, **41% say their grocery shopping habits will not change** while **32% of respondents expect to increase batch cooking and advance meal preparation** while purchasing more ingredients for home-cooked meals.
- **Home cooked food is the preferred choice** (40% of respondents) **for meals and snacks** for children during school days

4

GLP-1 medication

- **Nearly one in three consumers are currently using or considering GLP-1 medications, driven by younger generations** of Millennials (30%) and Gen Z (26%).
    - 79% of Baby Boomers and 67% of Gen X are not currently using or considering GLP-1 medications.
- **GLP-1 adoption is primarily driven by lifestyle or weight management needs** (70%), with higher uptake among women (75%).
- GLP-1 users report **increased spending on healthy groceries** (30%) **and nutrition products** (28%), and beauty and skincare (19%) with declines in unhealthy and indulgence categories.

Executive Summary

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Consumer spend

- Compared to Fall 2025, **Consumers plan to spend a larger share overall and online for goods such as groceries, gas and car maintenance** while cutting back on gaming and toys
- **37% of consumers report worsening financial security year-on-year**, outweighing the 27% who see improvement.
- **Consumers using Buy-Now-Pay-Later (BNPL) as their preferred payment method fell 13% YoY**, from 47% to 34%
- Consumers who use BNPL methods, **the vast majority (81%) use it for just 10%-20% of their purchases.**

6

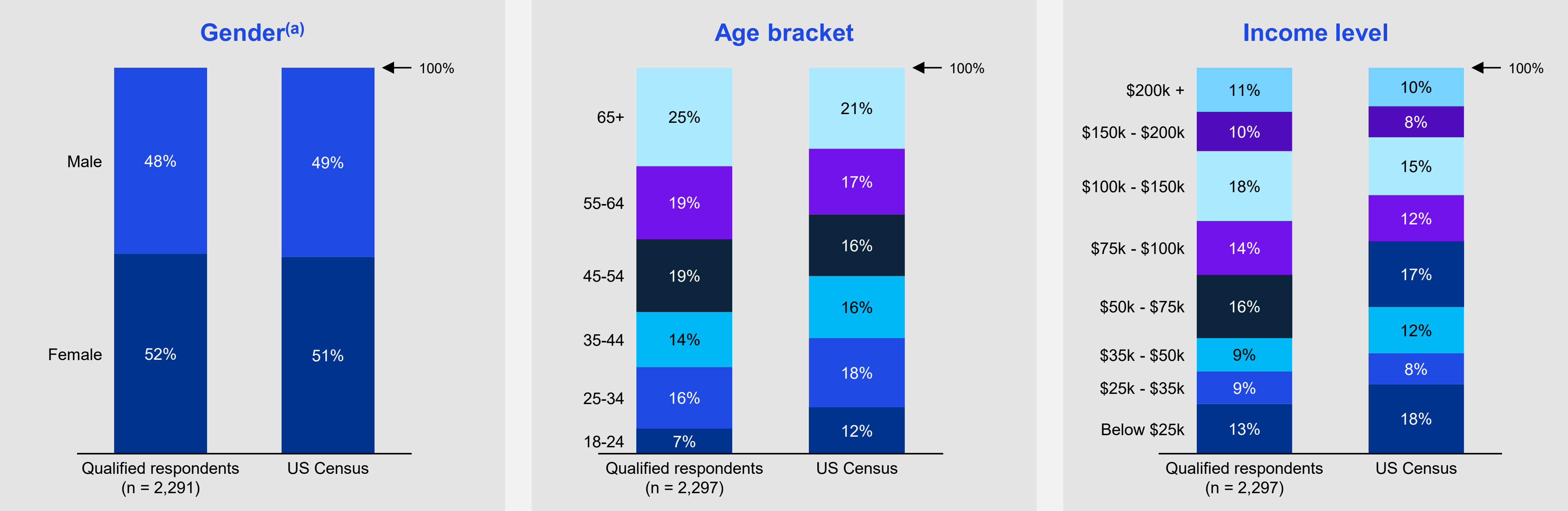
Impact of rising fuel prices

- **Fuel-driven price increases are currently widely observed** (88%), with 82% of consumers expecting these increases to **further drive higher product and service prices.**
- Consumers respond to rising fuel costs by **reducing overall spending** (42%) and **cutting discretionary activities** (37%).

Demographics

Survey sample is within +/-5 percent range compared to US census for gender, age, and income.

Respondent demographic profile (back-to-school 2026)

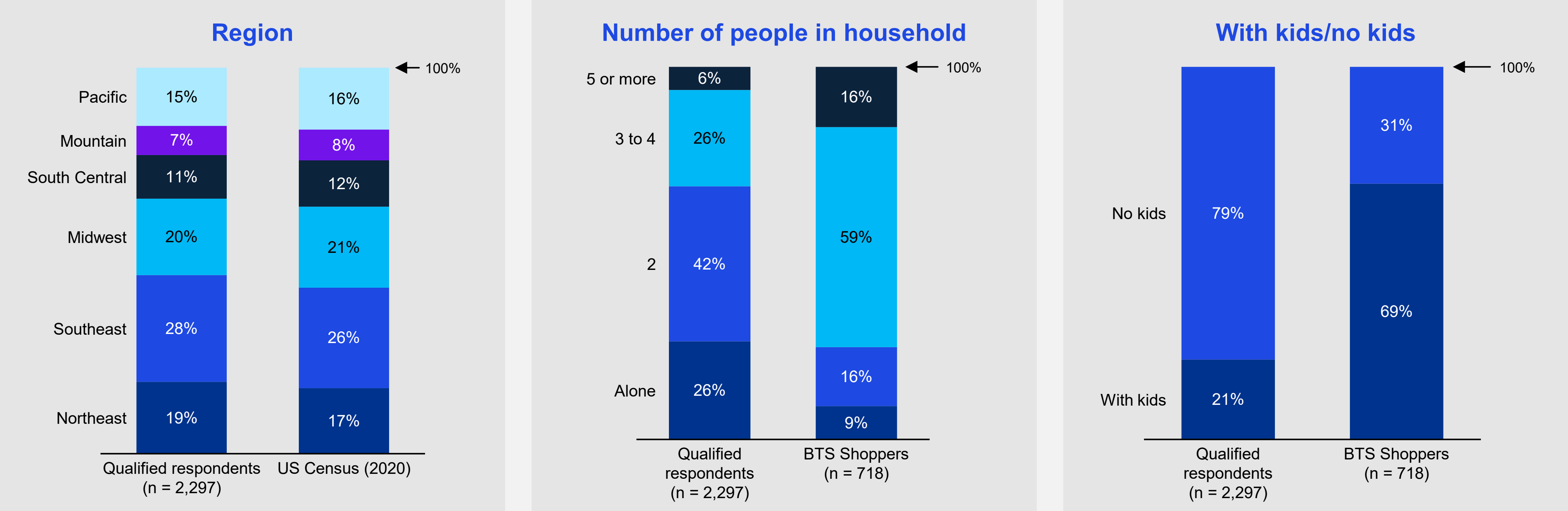


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "Please select your gender:", "Please enter your current age:", "Please select the annual income range that best describes your total household income in 2025."; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned “Prefer to self-describe”; (b) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; Census data from https://www.census.gov/

Survey sample is within +/-2 percent range compared to US census for region.

Respondent demographic profile (back-to-school 2026)



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "Please enter your current zip code:", " How many people are in your household (including yourself and any dependents that live outside the home e.g. college age children)?", "How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?"; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students

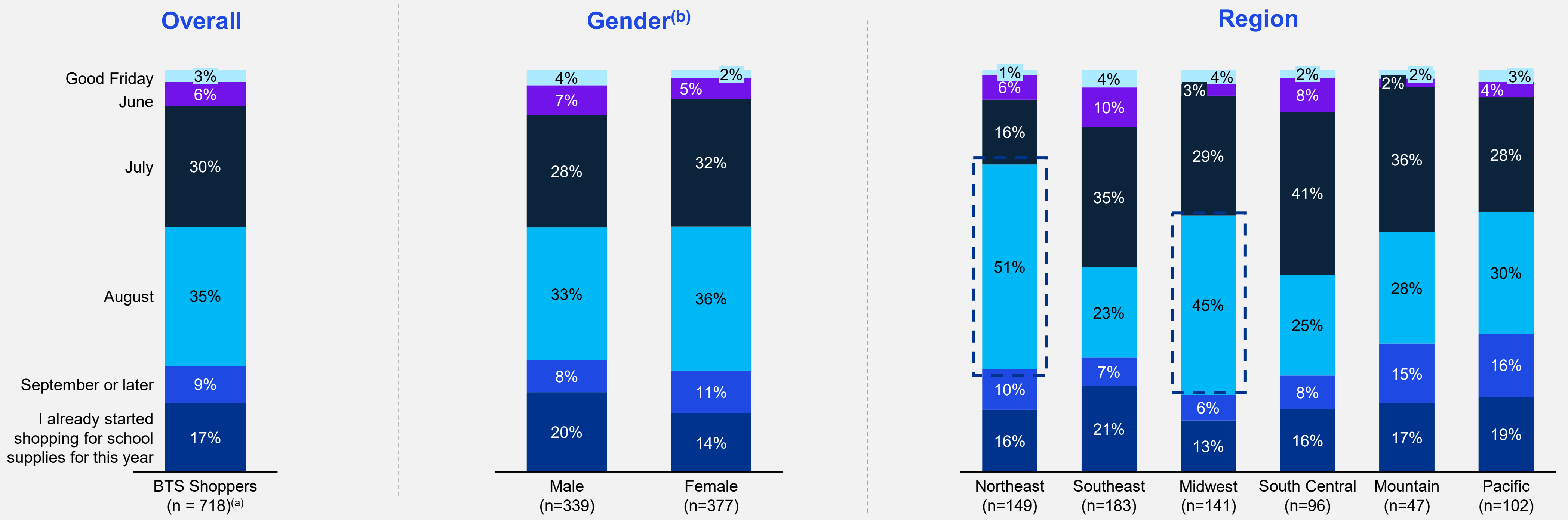
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; Census data from https://www.census.gov/

01

Back-To-School

Back-to-school shopping timing differs by region due to varying school start dates. In the Northeast and Midwest, majority of back-to-school shoppers plan to start in August.

Back-to-school shopping plans by demographic segment



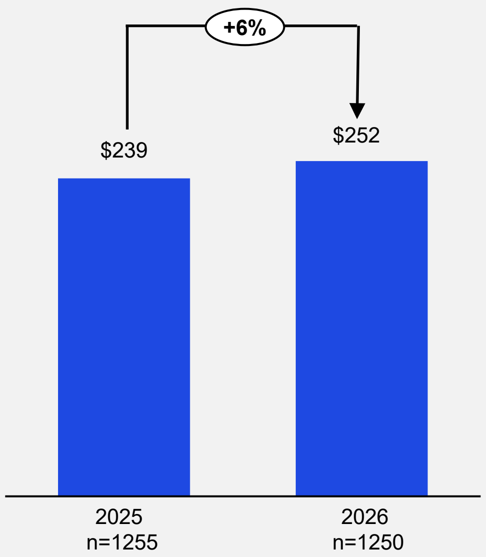
Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked “When do you plan to start shopping for back-to-school?”; and “Please enter your current zip code”; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students; (b) Respondents who selected “Prefer to self describe” have been excluded due to low sample size.

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

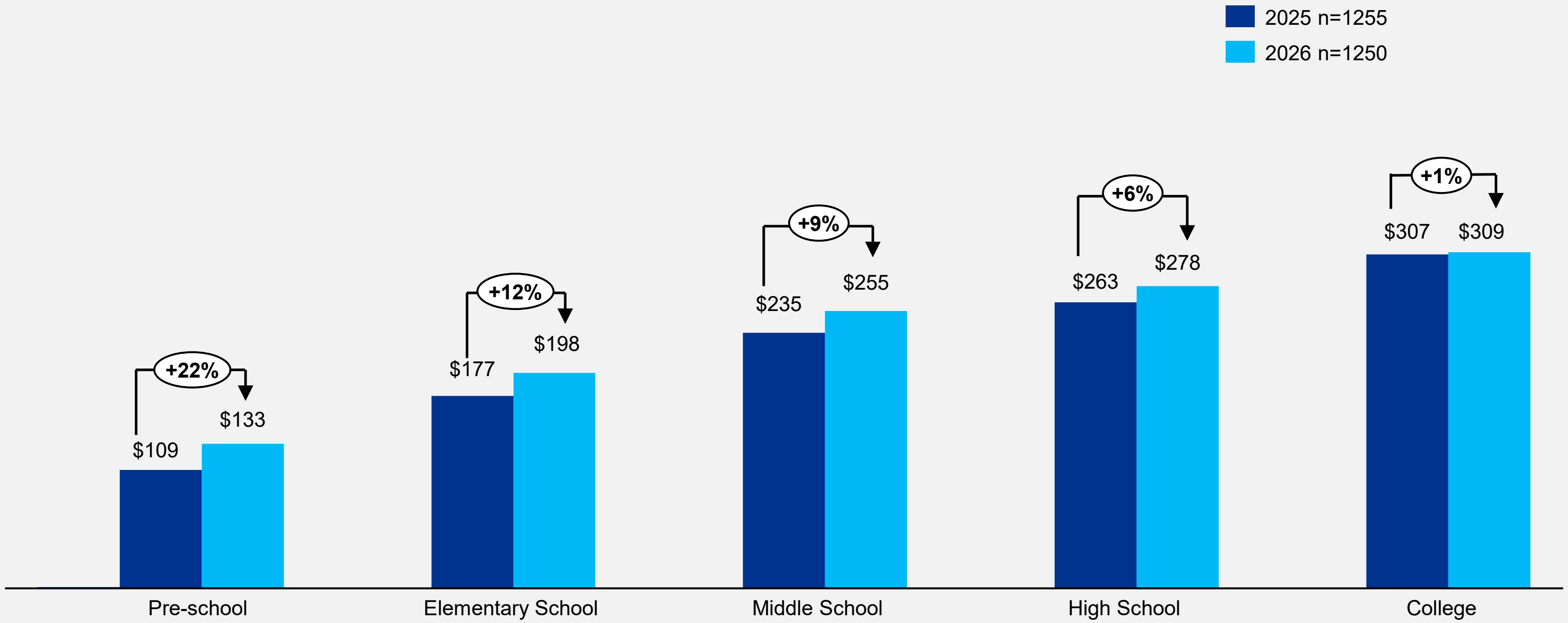
Back-to-school spend increases year-over-year due to higher prices

Back-to-school shopping spend per child (2025 vs 2026)[a]

Average spend per child



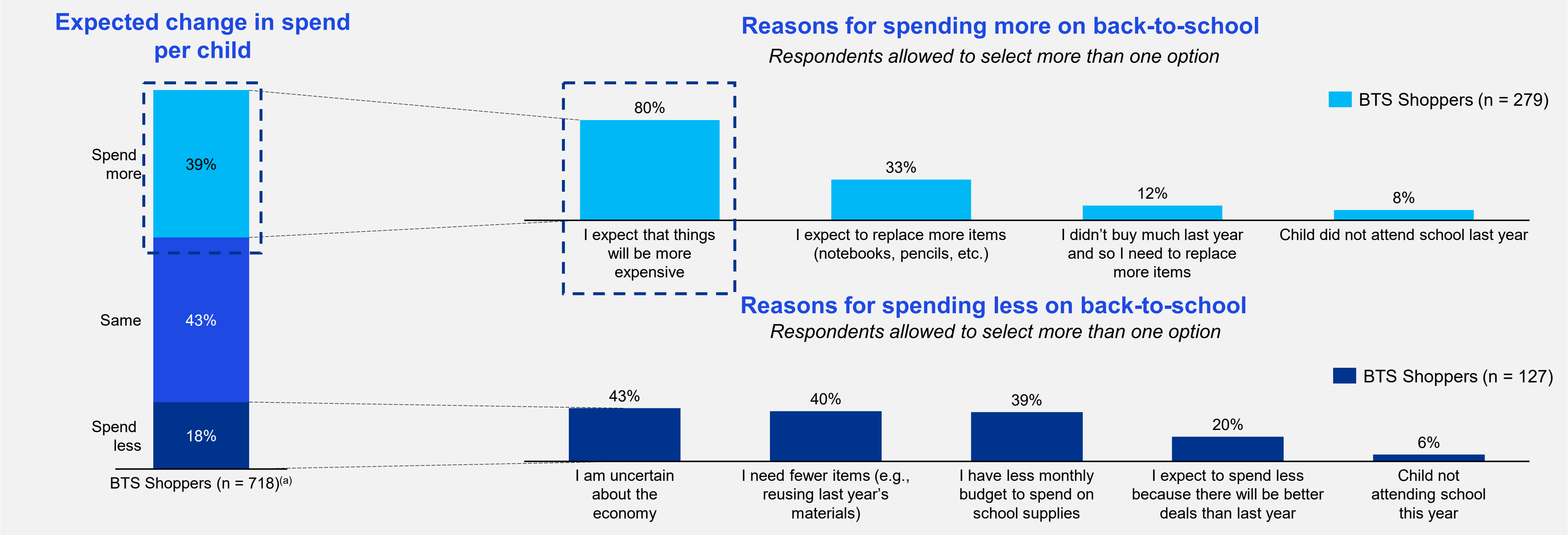
Average spend per child by academic level



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked "How much did you spend on back-to-school supplies per child last year (2025)?
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

39 percent of back-to-school shoppers expect to spend more per child on back-to-school due to higher price expectations.

Reasons for expected change in back-to-school spend per child (2026 vs 2025)

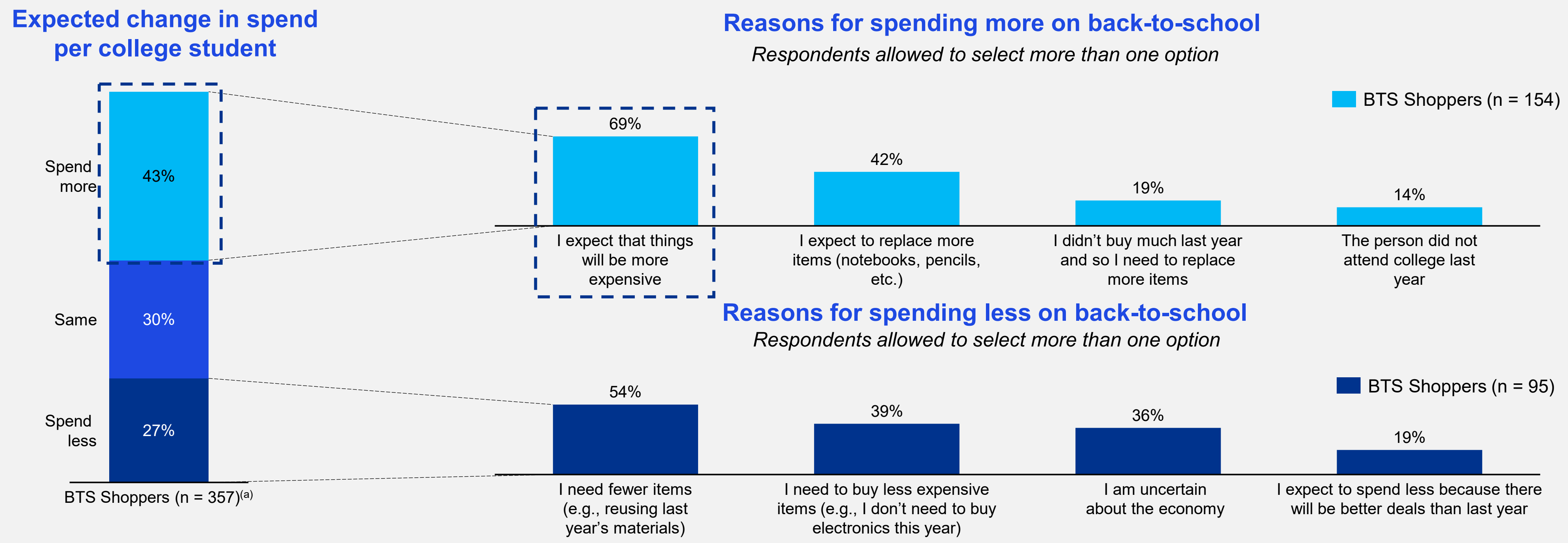


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked "How much did you spend on back-to-school supplies per last year (2025)?, How much do you plan on spending on back-to-school supplies per this year (2026)? Please include apparel/uniforms spend.", "Why do you plan to spend less per child?", "Why do you plan to spend more per child?".; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

43 percent of back-to-school shoppers plan to increase back-to-college spending in 2026 versus 2025, largely driven by expectations of price increases.

Reasons for expected change in back-to-school spend per college student (2026 vs 2025)

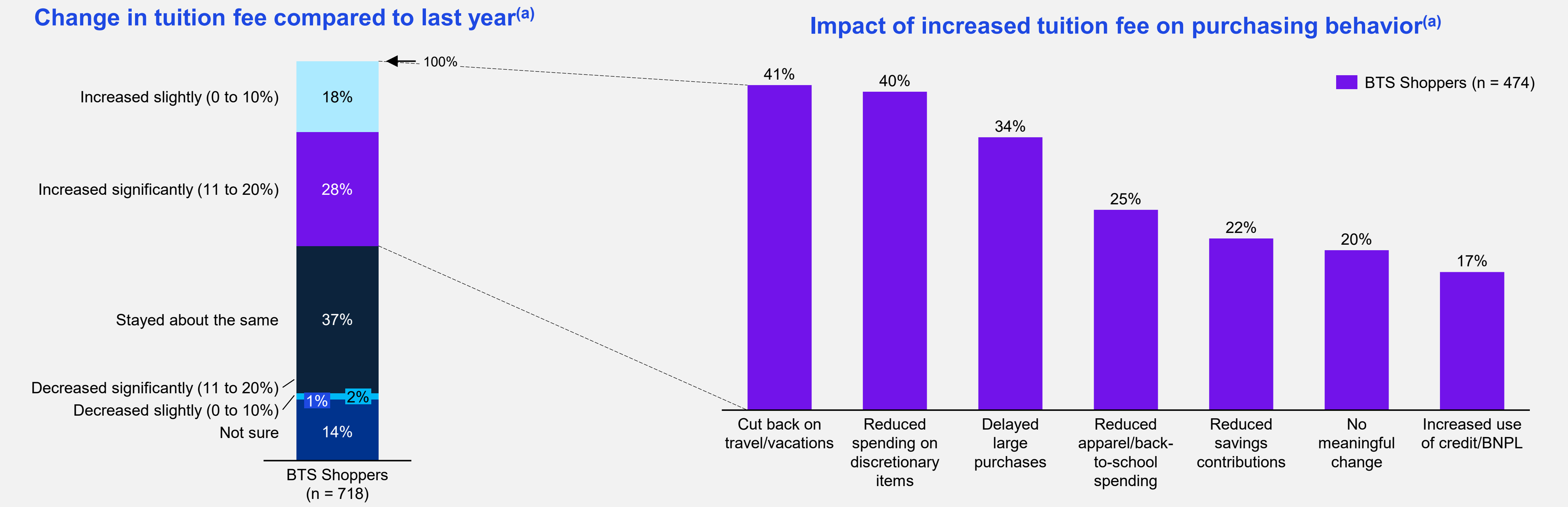


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked "You indicated that you have at least one college student in your household. How much did you spend on back-to-school supplies per college student last year (2025)?, How much do you plan on spending on back-to-school supplies per college student this year (2026)? Please include apparel/uniforms, footwear and dorm furnishings.", "Why do you plan to spend less per college student?", "Why do you plan to spend more per college student?"; (a) BTS shoppers include the 357 households with adult students in college

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

46 percent of back-to-school shoppers report an increase in the tuition fee, due to which over two-fifths are cutting back on travel and discretionary spending.

Tuition fee increase and impact on purchasing behavior

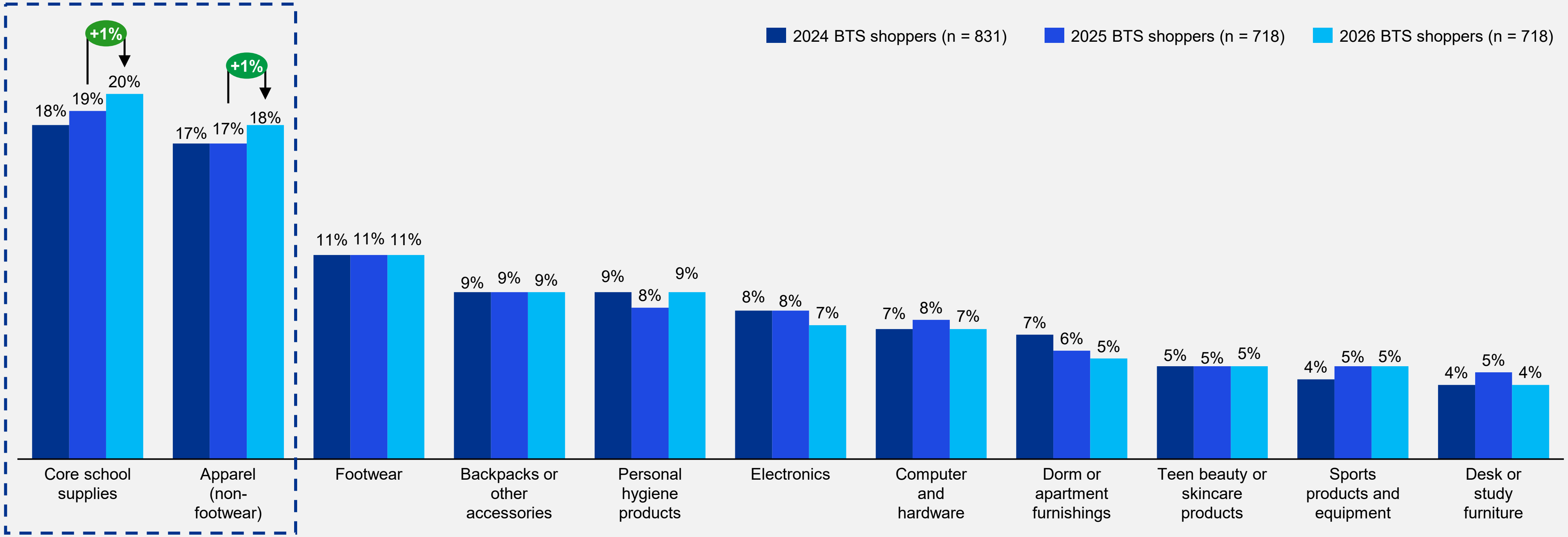


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "Compared to last year (2025), how has tuition fee changed for the student(s) in your household?"; "How has this increase in tuition fee impacted your purchasing behavior?" (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Spending patterns across back-to-school categories remain largely similar to last year with core school supplies and apparel still the top categories.

Back-to-school share of wallet by category (2026 vs 2025 vs 2024)[a][b]

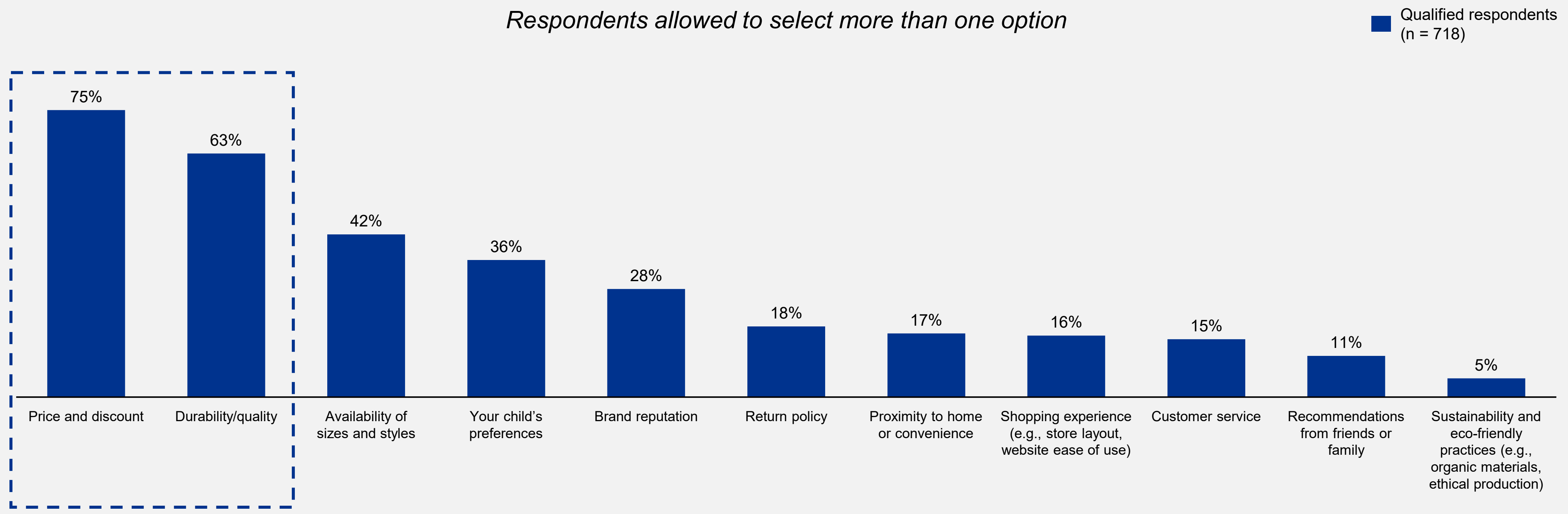


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked "What percent of your back-to-school budget did you spend on each of the following product categories last year (2025)?, What percentage of your back-to-school budget do you expect to spend on each of the following product categories this year (2026)?"; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students; (b) Numbers highlighted are not growth rates. They are an absolute increase between 2025 and 2026

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

When purchasing back-to-school clothing, consumers prioritize price and discount followed by quality.

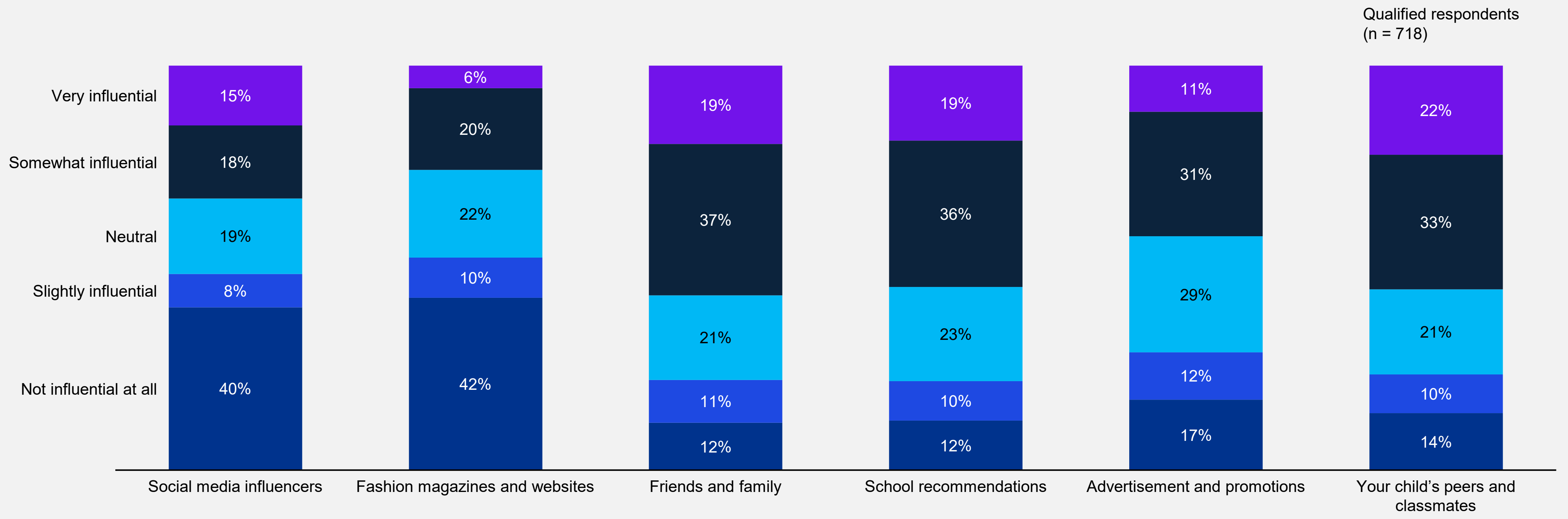
Factors for purchasing BTS clothing



Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 consumers across the United States with children. In all instances, KPMG asked: "What are the important factors for you when purchasing back-to-school clothing for your children?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Advertisements and promotions are the most influential drivers of back-to-school clothing purchases, ahead of social and fashion media.

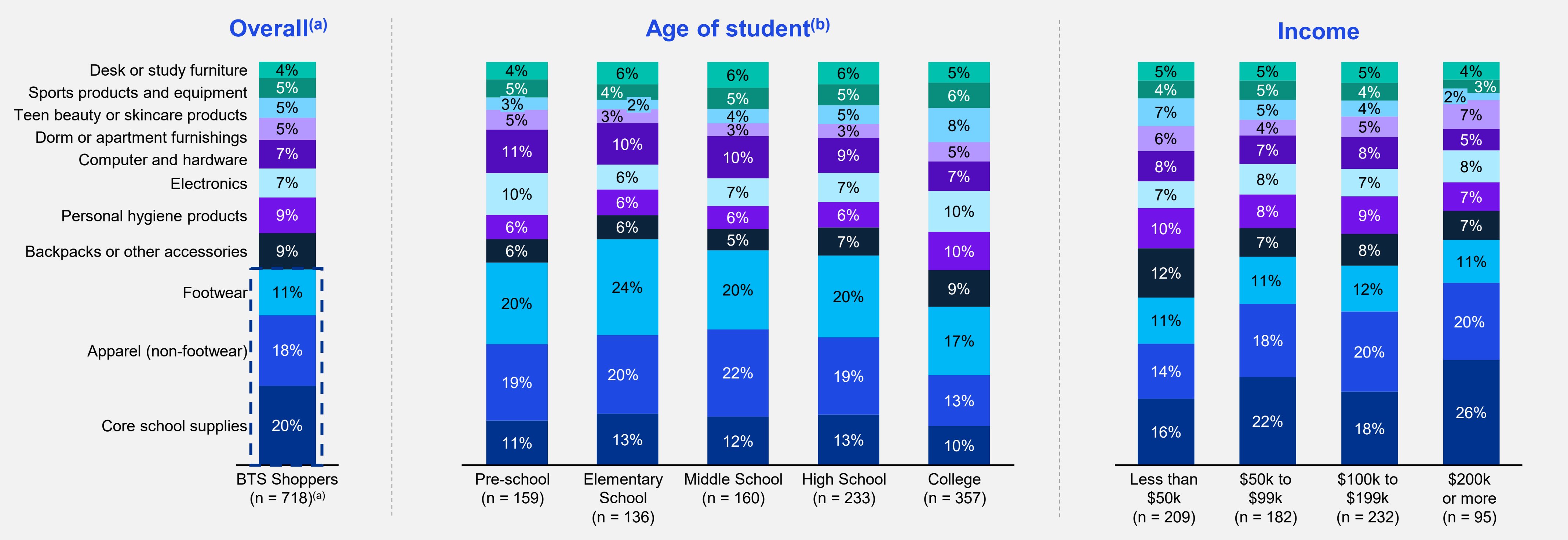
Influence of various sources on BTS clothing purchases



Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked: "How influential are the following sources on your back-to-school clothing purchases for your child?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Higher-income groups also show higher spend on apparel and footwear.

Spending choices by product category (overall, by age of student and by income group), 2026



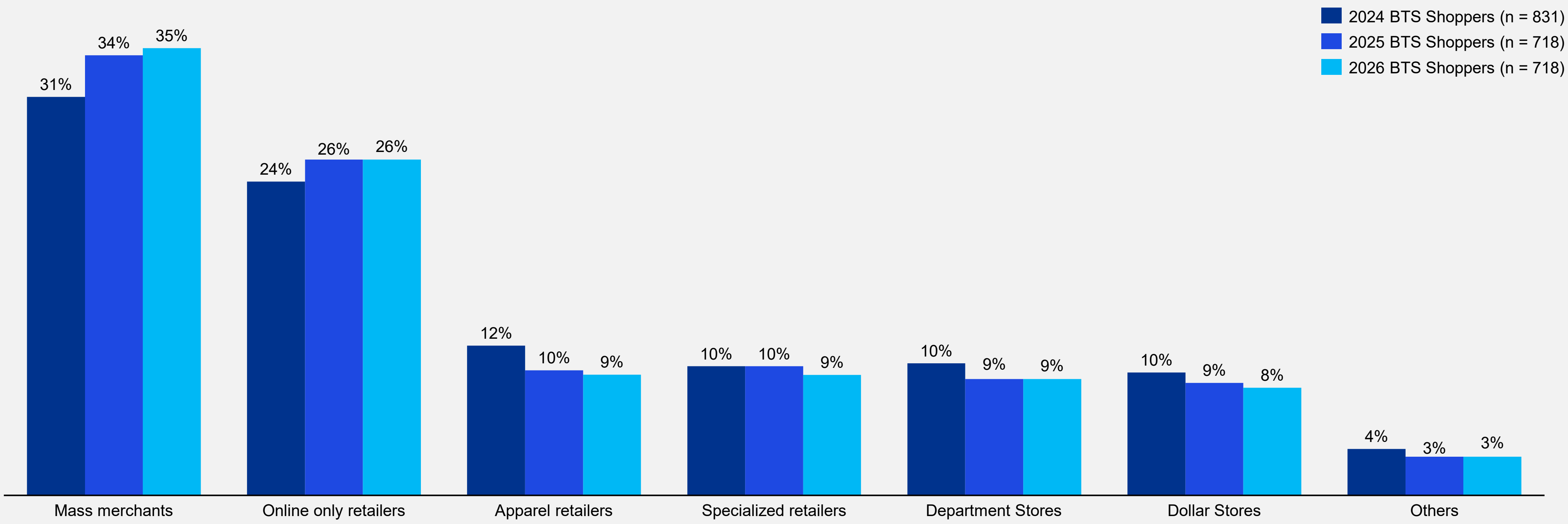
Category	BTS Shoppers (n = 718)(a)	Pre-school (n = 159)	Elementary School (n = 136)	Middle School (n = 160)	High School (n = 233)	College (n = 357)	Less than $50k (n = 209)	$50k to $99k (n = 182)	$100k to $199k (n = 232)	$200k or more (n = 95)
Desk or study furniture	4%	4%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%
Sports products and equipment	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%	3%
Teen beauty or skincare products	5%	3%	2%	4%	5%	8%	7%	5%	4%	2%
Dorm or apartment furnishings	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	5%	6%	4%	5%	7%
Computer and hardware	7%	11%	10%	10%	9%	7%	8%	7%	8%	5%
Electronics	7%	10%	6%	7%	7%	10%	7%	8%	7%	8%
Personal hygiene products	9%	6%	6%	6%	6%	10%	10%	8%	9%	7%
Backpacks or other accessories	9%	6%	6%	5%	7%	9%	12%	7%	8%	7%
Footwear	11%	20%	24%	20%	20%	17%	11%	11%	12%	11%
Apparel (non-footwear)	18%	19%	20%	22%	19%	13%	14%	18%	20%	20%
Core school supplies	20%	11%	13%	12%	13%	10%	16%	22%	18%	26%

Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked "What percent of your back-to-school budget did you spend on each of the following product categories last year (2025)?, What percentage of your back-to-school budget do you expect to spend on each of the following product categories this year (2026)?"; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students; (b) Sum of segment within age-group does not add to the total BTS shoppers since a household may have more than one student across different age groups

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Back-to-school share of wallet has increased for mass merchants and online only retailers.

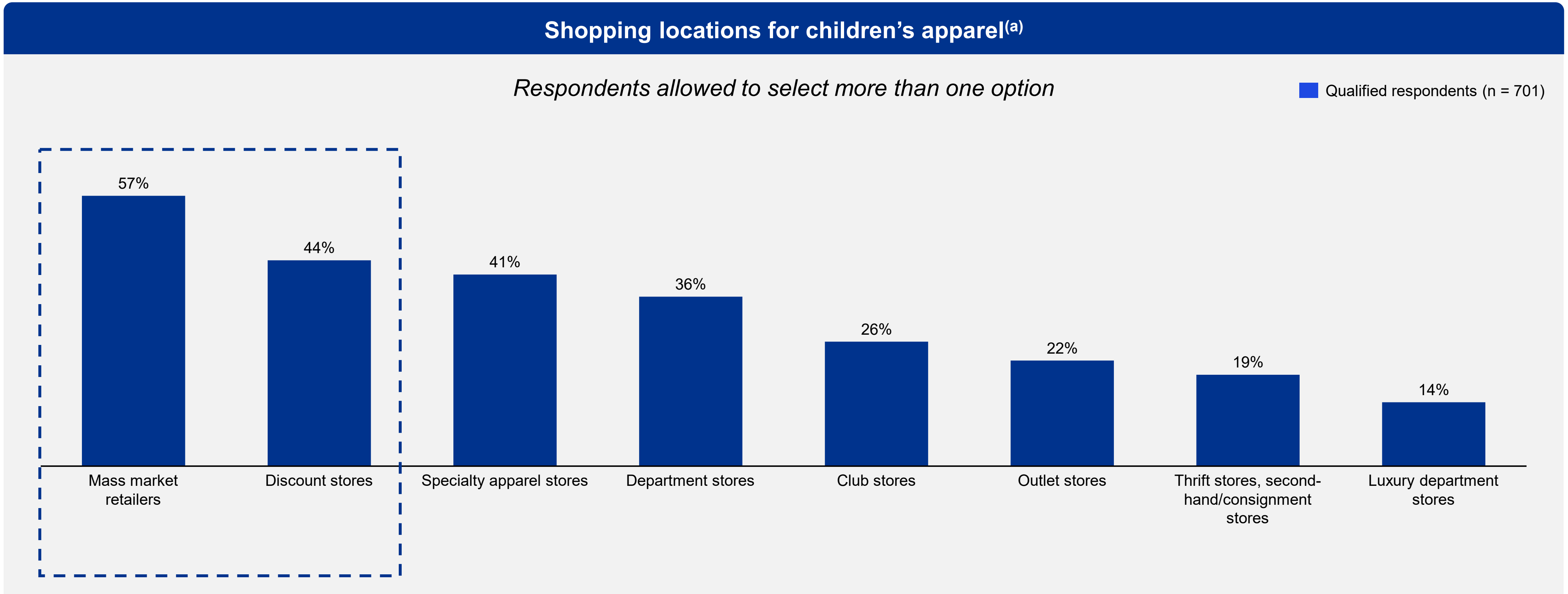
Estimated back-to-school share of wallet by retail channel (2024 to 2026)[a][b]



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, if applicable, asked "Where did you shop last year/where do you plan to shop this year for back-to-school?"; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students; (b) Survey respondents were prompted with a table to enter percent of spend by channel"

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

Mass market and discount stores continue to dominate children's apparel shopping channels, accounting for the majority of purchases (57 percent and 44 percent respectively).

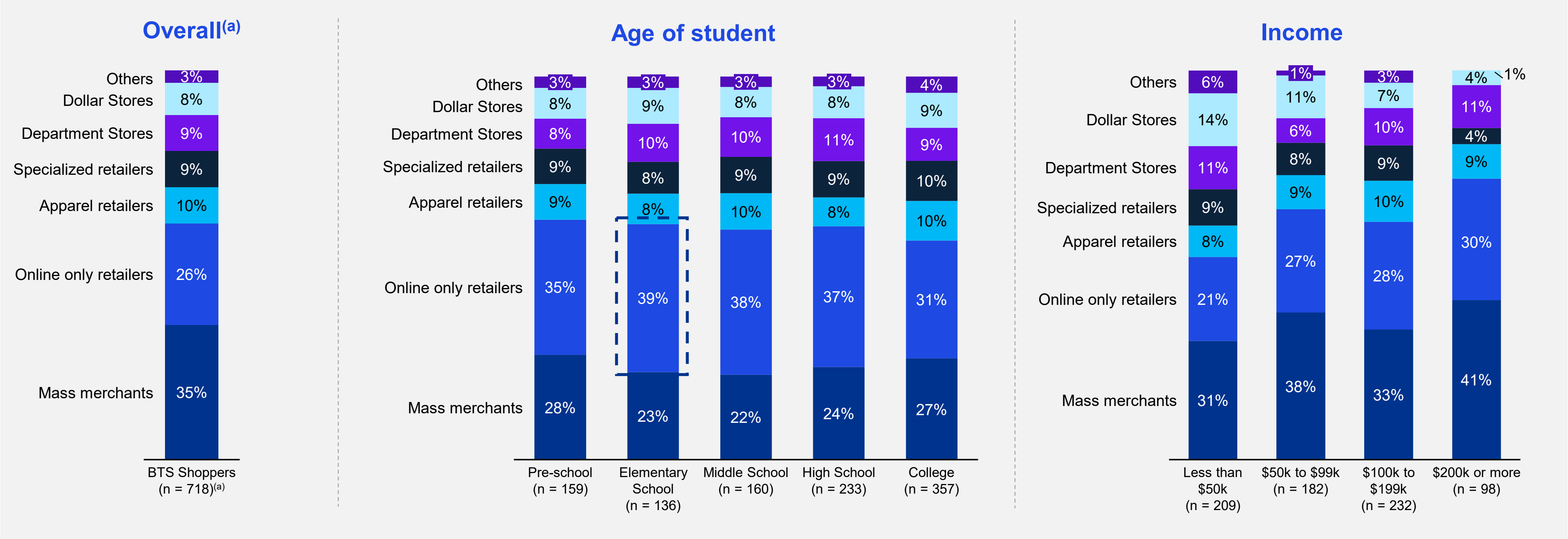


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked: "Where do you typically shop for apparel (in-store)?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Respondents from lower income category (less than $50k) are less likely to opt for online only retailers as compared to other income categories.

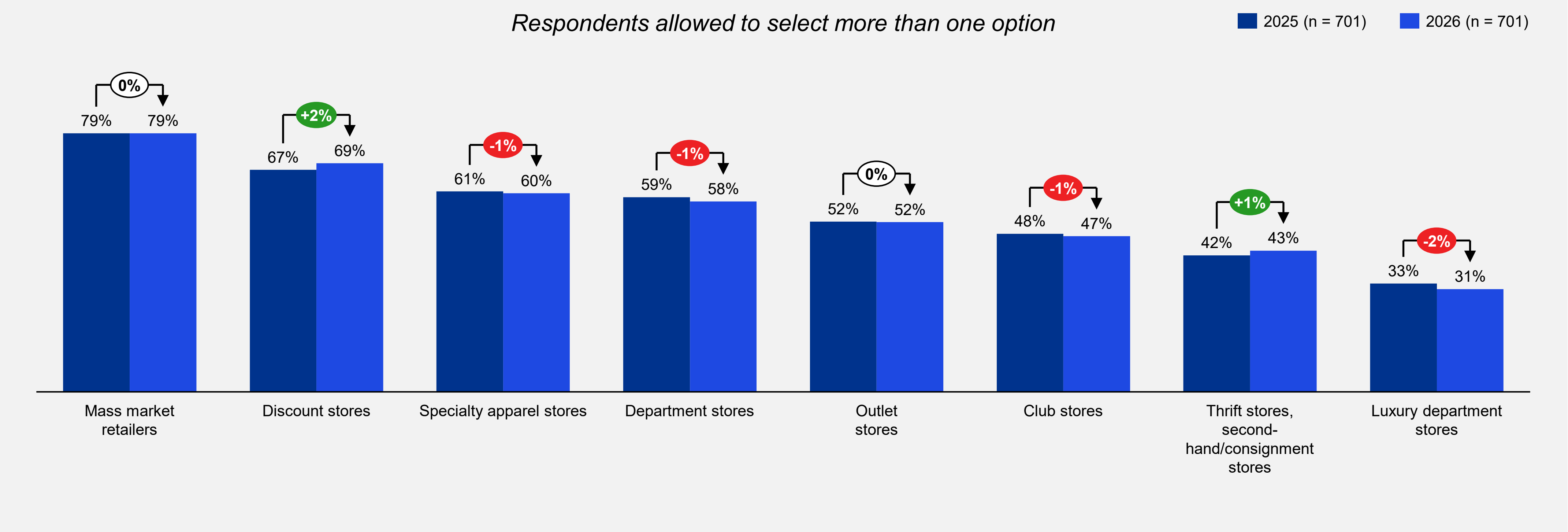
Back-to-school share of wallet by demographic segment, 2026



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, if applicable, asked "Where did you shop last year/where do you plan to shop this year for back-to-school?"; (a) BTS shoppers include the 718 households with children and/or adult students"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Compared to 2025, in-store apparel spending in 2026 is expected to remain largely consistent, with slight declines across specialty, department, club stores, and luxury stores.

In-store retailer choices: 2025 vs 2026



Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked: "Last year (2025) - What percent of your annual in-store apparel spend did you typically spend at each of the following apparel retailer types in 2025? What percent of your annual in-store apparel budget do you expect to spend at each of the following apparel retailer types in 2026?)"

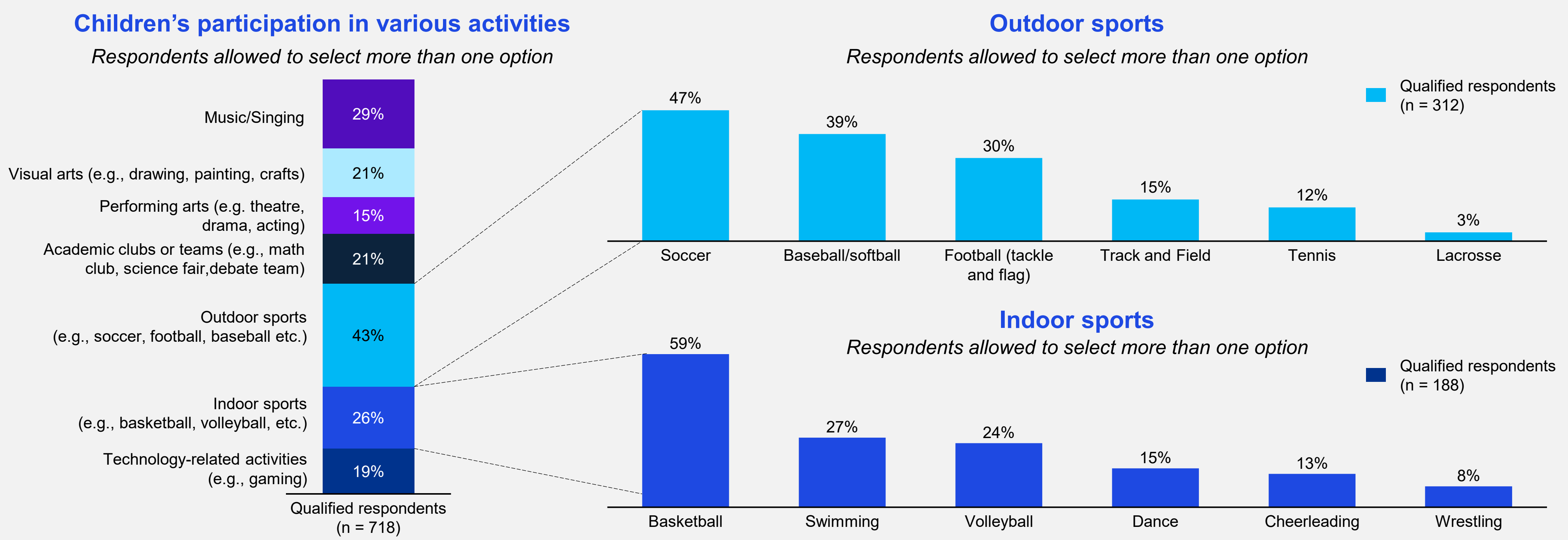
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

02

Sports Participation

Outdoor sports (43 percent) is the most common type of child activity, followed by music/singing (29 percent) and indoor sports (26 percent).

Children's participation in activities and sports[a]

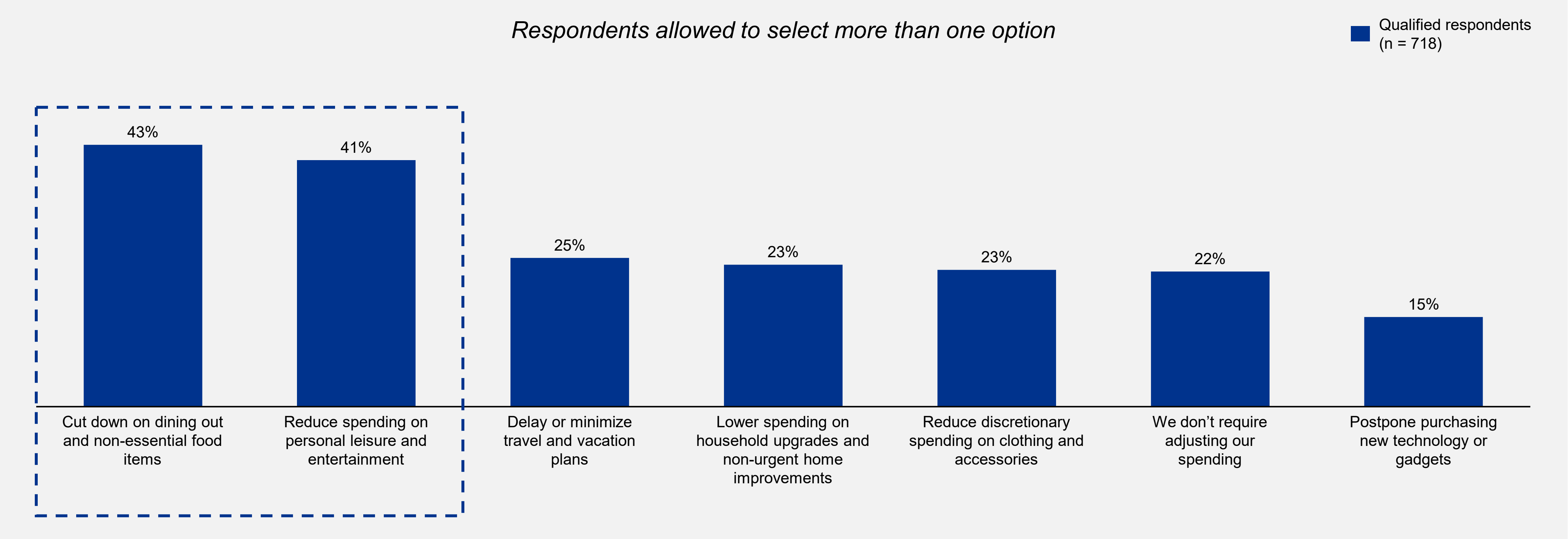


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 718 back-to-school consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked "In which of the following activities do/does your child/children participate?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Consumers are most likely to cut back on dining out, personal leisure and entertainment to ensure their child can continue participating in sports.

Areas of spending adjustment to support children's sports participation[a]

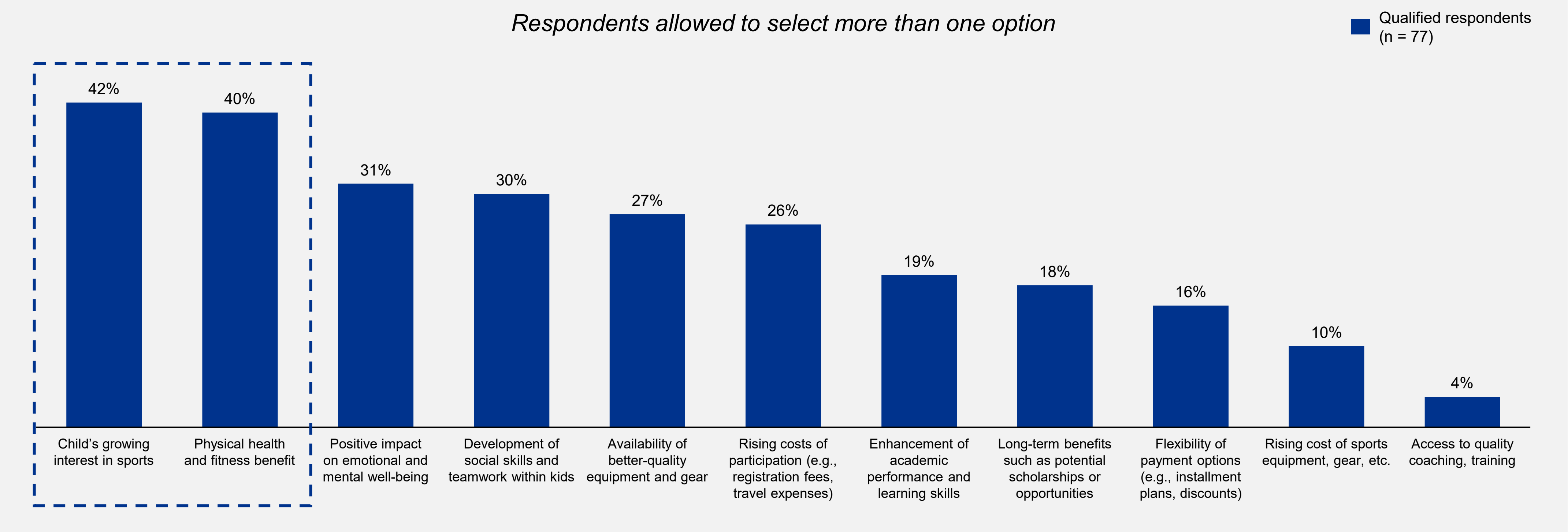


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 consumers across the United States with children. In all instances, KPMG asked: "How would you adjust spending in other areas to ensure that your child can continue participating in sports?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Child's growing interest in sports and physical health benefits are key drivers of increased sports spending in 2026.

Sport spending in 2026[a]

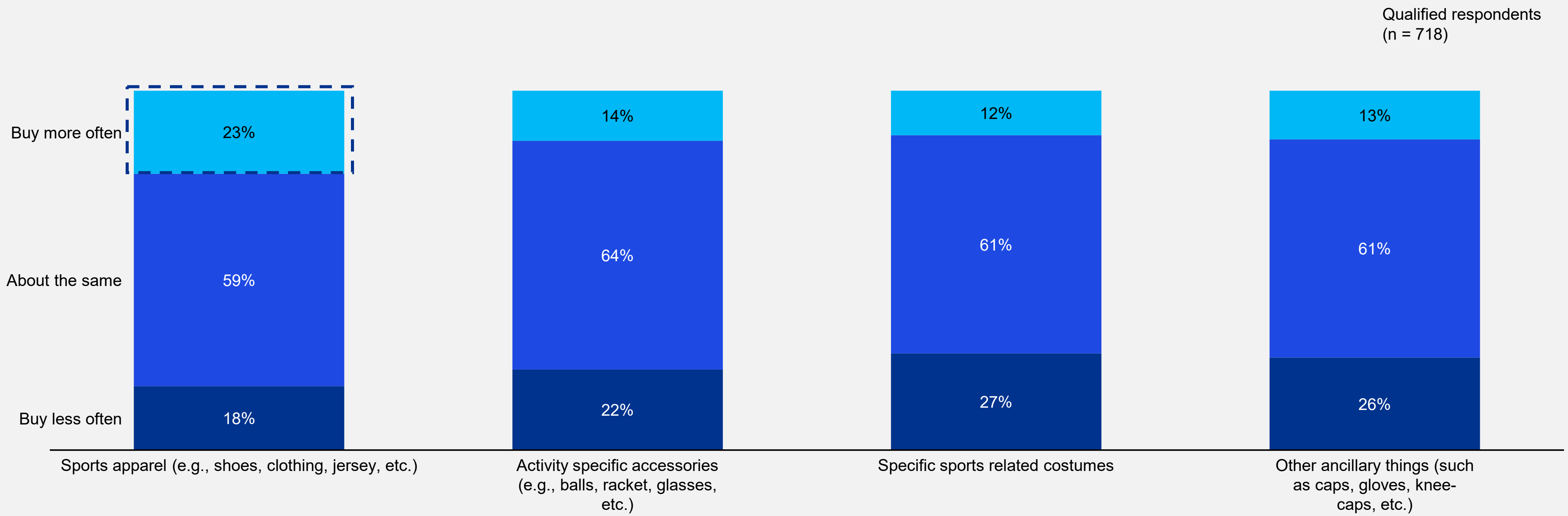


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 consumers across the United States with children. In all instances, KPMG asked: "What factors influence you to increase the sports spending for your child in 2026 as compared to 2025?"; a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Sports-related purchases remain largely consistent, with 23 percent reporting buying sports apparel more often.

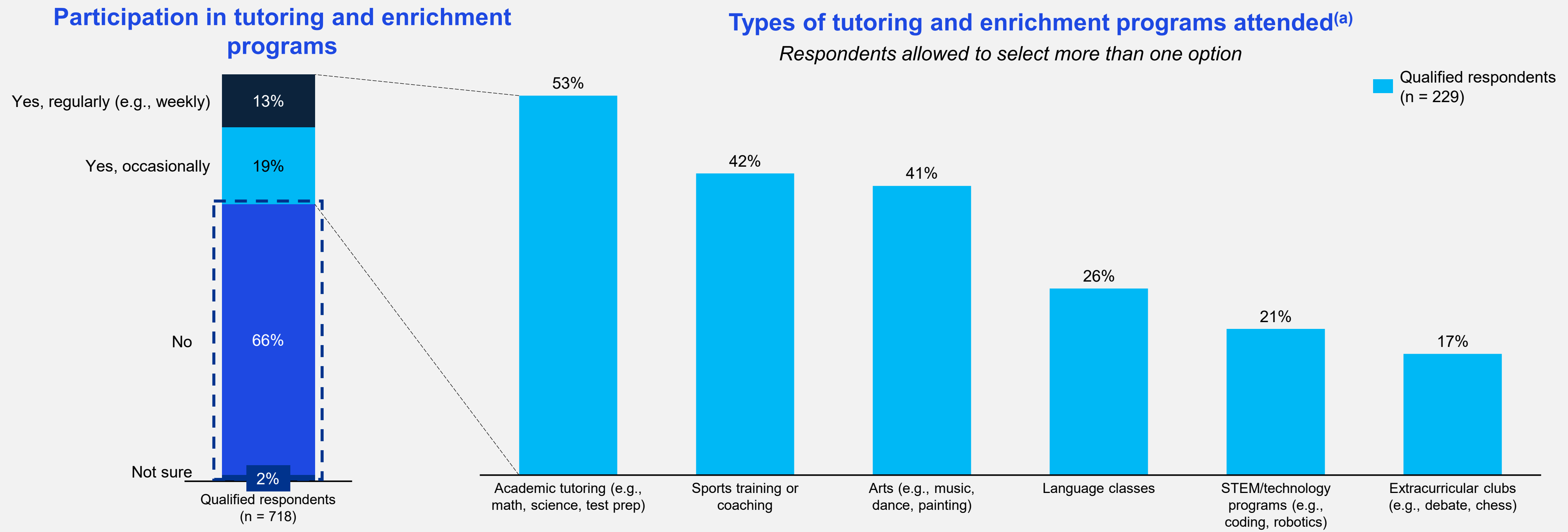
Impact of children's activities on purchase behavior of sports-related items



Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked: "Thinking about your child's activities, how has this affected how often you buy the following?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

32 percent of children participate in tutoring or enrichment programs, led by academic tutoring (53 percent), sports training (42 percent), and arts (41 percent).

Children's participation in tutoring and enrichment programs



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 718 back-to-school consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "Does your child participate in any tutoring or enrichment programs after school?" and "In which of the following activities do/does your child/children participate?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

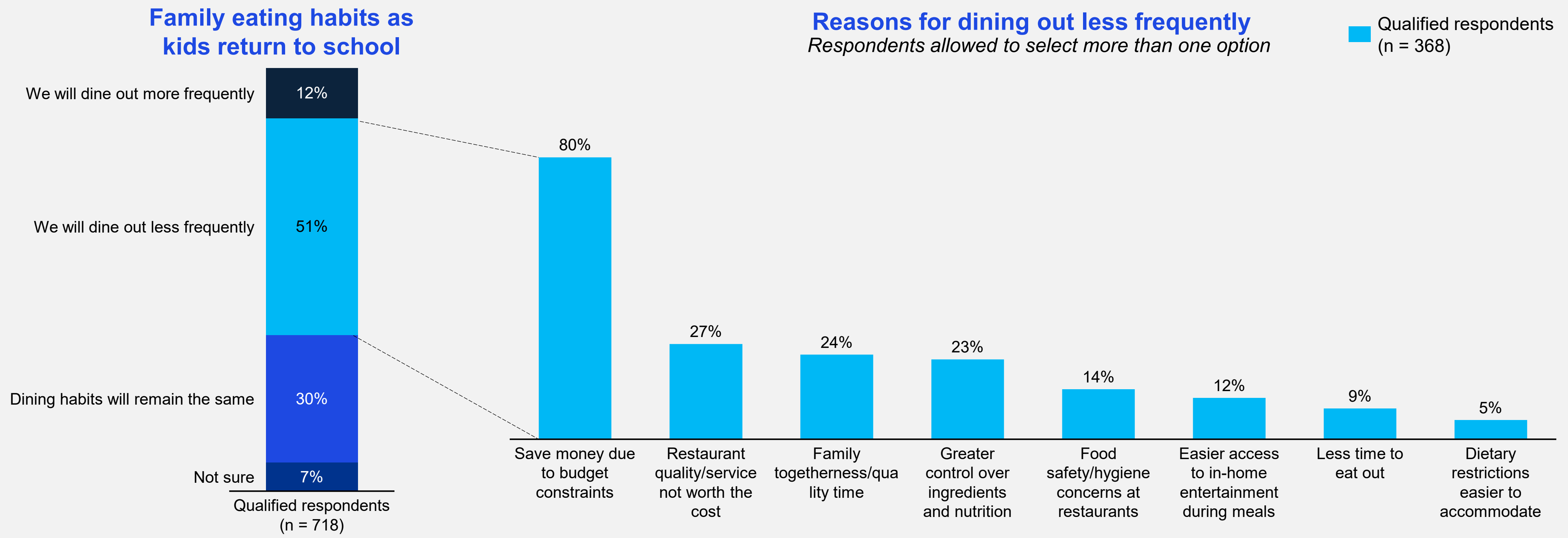
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

03

Food and restaurant

Half of the consumers plan to dine out less frequently, while only 12 percent plan to dine out more due to budget constraints.

Understanding shifts in food and dining plans as kids return to school

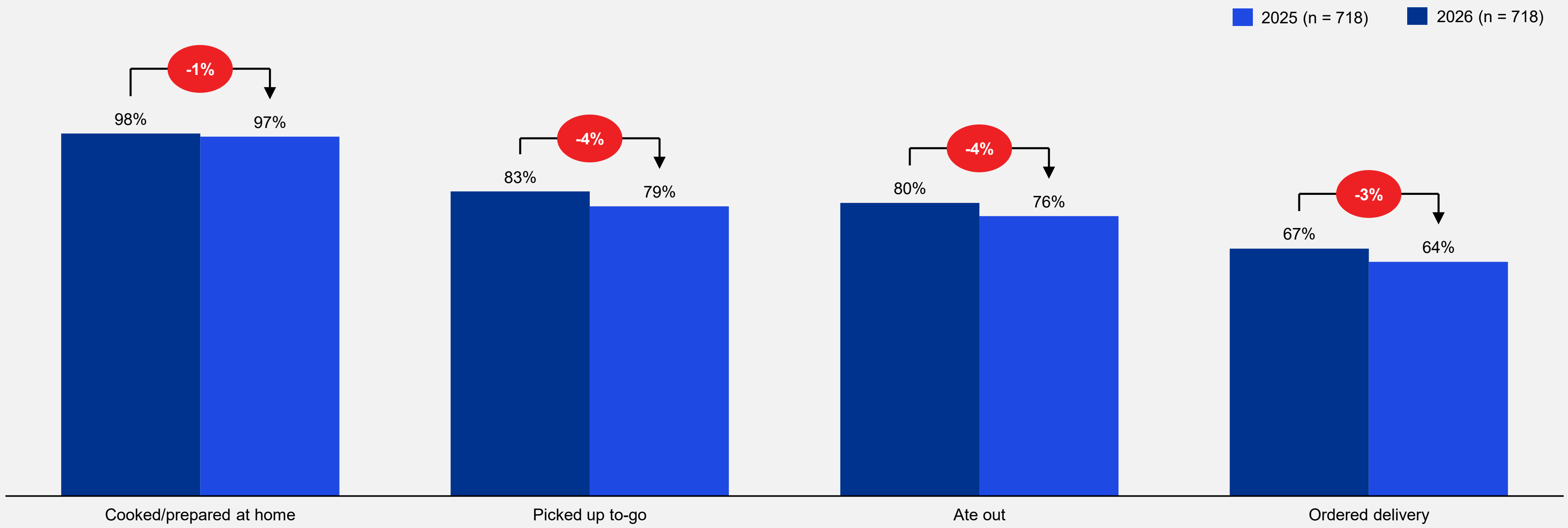


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 consumers across the United States with children. In all instances, asked "How do you expect your family's eating habits to change as kids head back to school?", and "What are the primary reasons you plan to dine out less frequently?"

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Home-prepared meals remain nearly similar, while out-of-home meal occasions decline moderately across formats.

Meal occasion mix: 2025 vs 2026

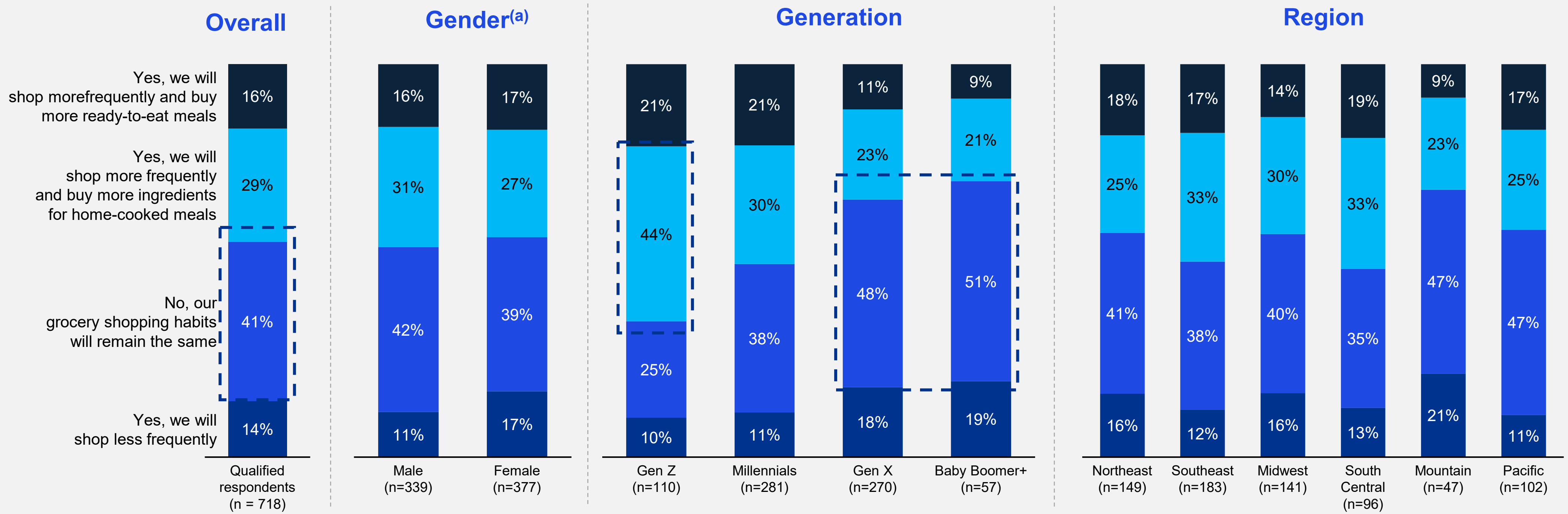


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 consumers across the United States with children. In all instances, KPMG asked: “Last year (2025) - Approximately what percentage of meals fell into each of the following categories? Approximately what percentage of meals fell into each of the following categories in 2026?)”

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

44 percent of Gen Z increase spending on home-cooked meals, while nearly half of Gen X and Baby Boomers report no change in grocery shopping habits.

Grocery shopping habits

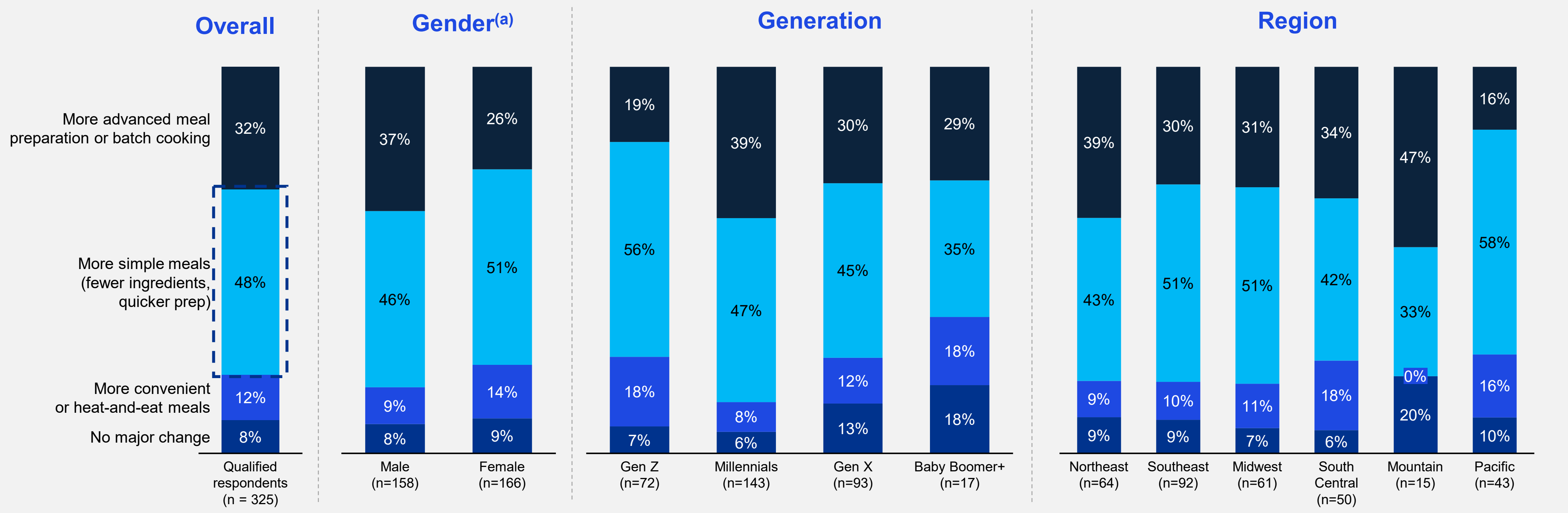


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, “Do you expect your grocery shopping habits to change as kids go back to school?”; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned “Prefer to self-describe”

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

48 percent plan simpler weekday meals post school start, while 32 percent shift toward batch cooking and advanced meal preparation.

Weekday meal preparation routine

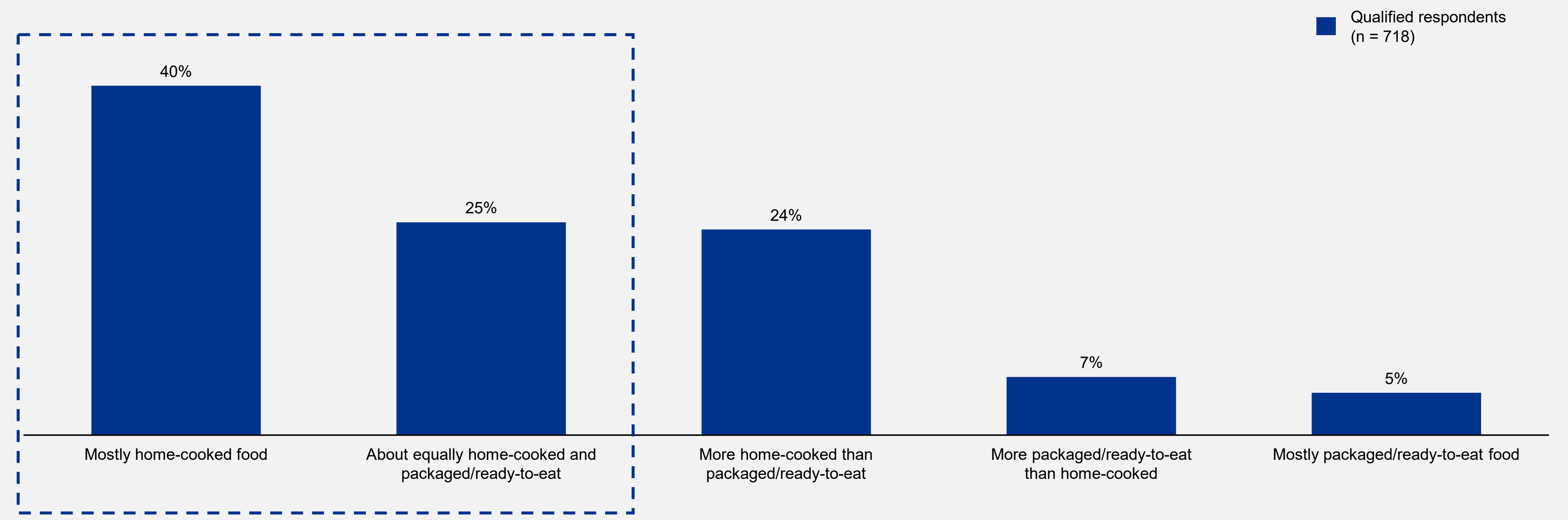


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "How will your weekday meal preparation routine change once school starts?"; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned "Prefer to self-describe"

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Home cooked food is mostly preferred for meals/snacks for children during school days with slight preference for packaged or ready-to-eat options.

Preferred type of meals/snacks for children during school days



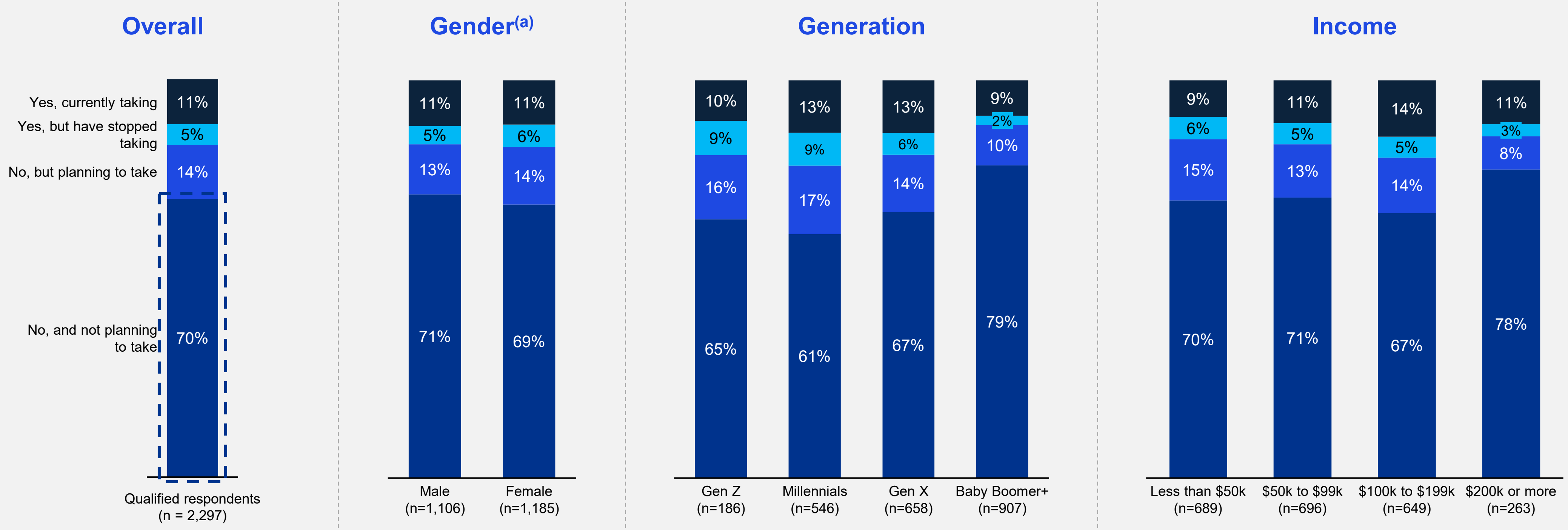
Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, “For your child(ren)’s school meals/snacks, which of the following do you typically prefer?”
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

04

GLP-1 medication

GLP-1 adoption is gaining momentum, with nearly one in three consumers using or considering usage.

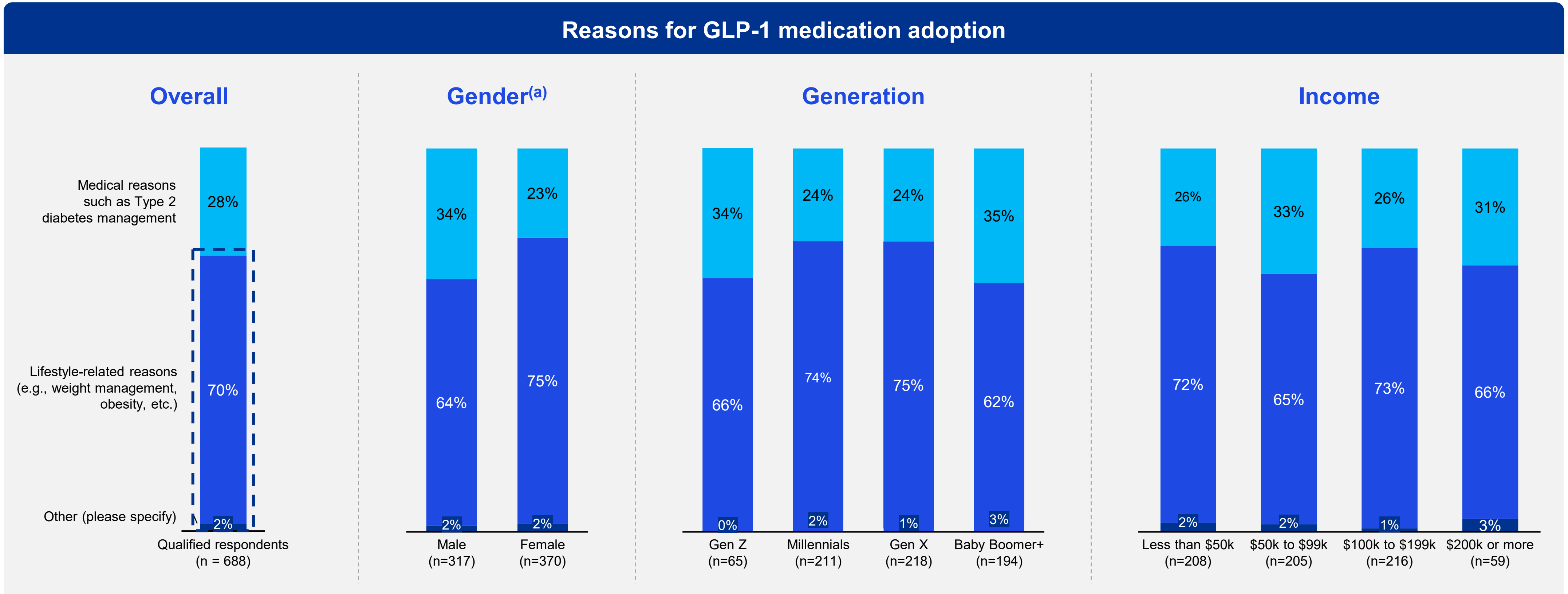
GLP-1 medication adoption



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "Have you taken any GLP-1 medication (e.g., Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro) in the past 12 months?"; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned "Prefer to self-describe"

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

GLP-1 adoption is primarily driven by lifestyle or weight management needs, with higher uptake among females (75 percent).

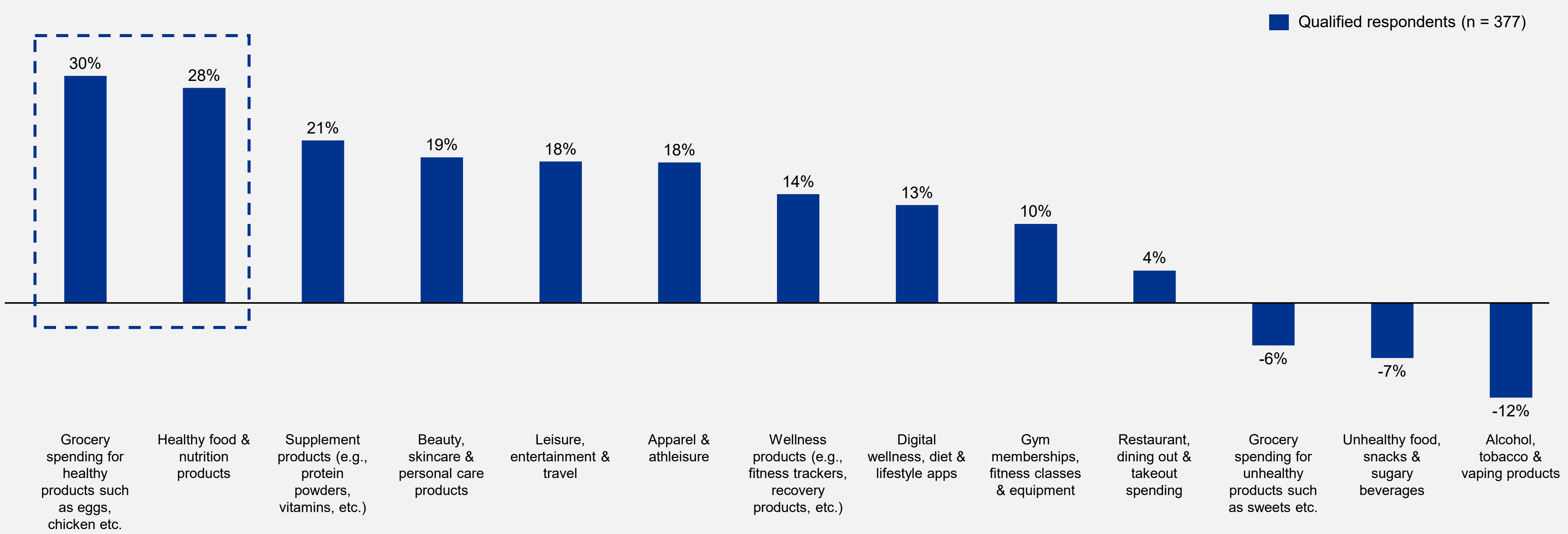


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked “What is/was your primary reason for taking or considering taking a GLP-1 medication?”; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned “Prefer to self-describe”

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

GLP-1 users report increased spending on healthy groceries (30 percent) and nutrition products (28 percent), with declines in unhealthy and indulgence categories.

Impact of GLP-1 medication on consumer spending

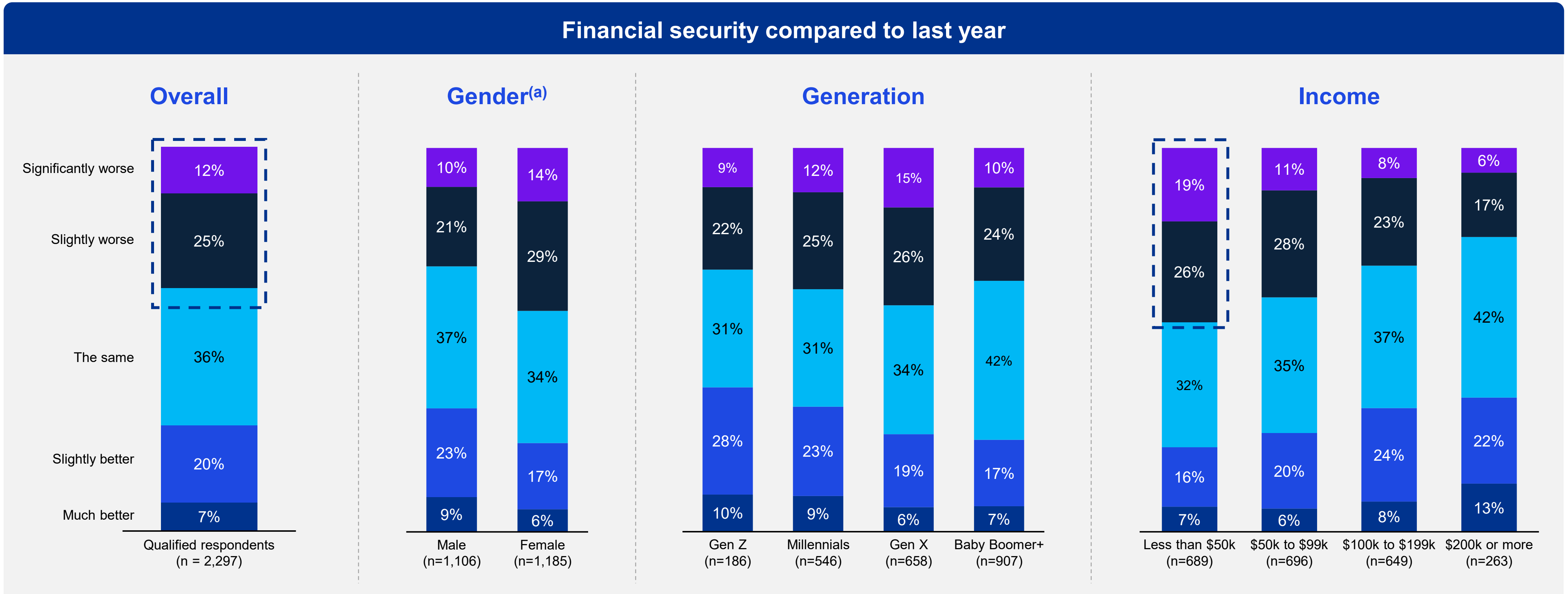


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked “By approximately what percentage has your spending changed across the following categories since taking GLP-1 medications?”
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

05

Consumer spend

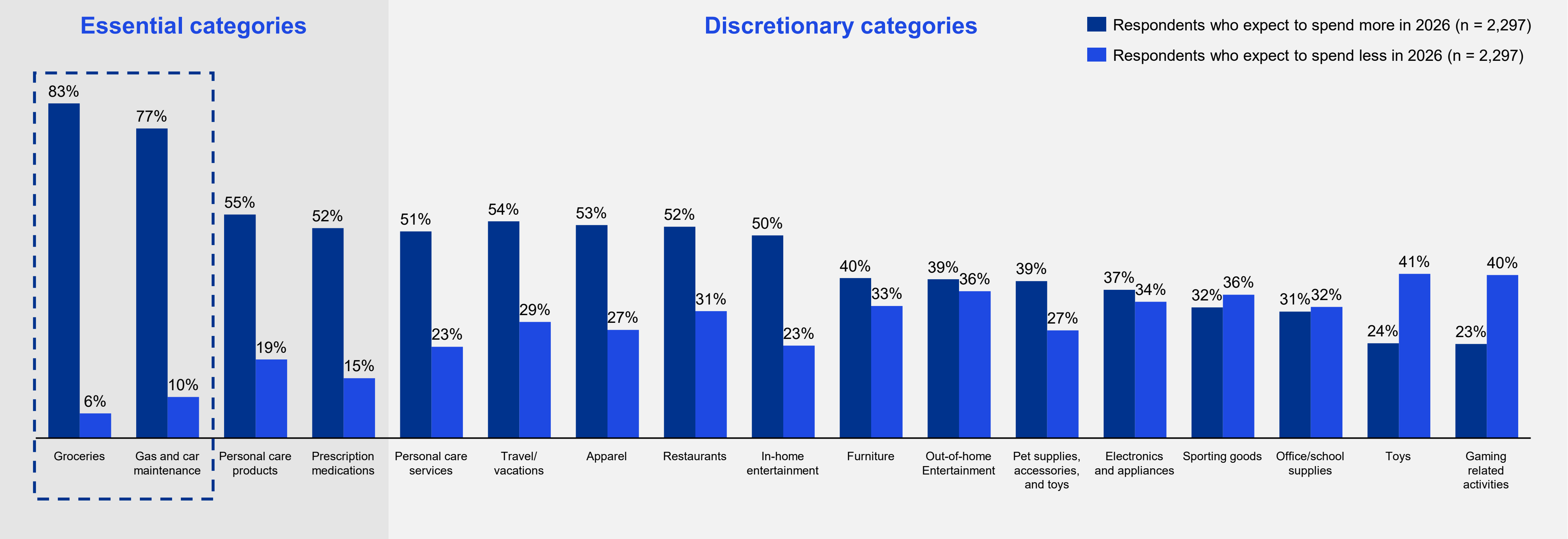
37 percent of consumers report worse financial situation than last year.



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and in all instances, asked "Compared to last year how do you feel financially this year?"; (a) Respondents who selected "Prefer to self describe" have been excluded due to low sample size
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Majority of consumers expect to increase spending in groceries and gas, while a larger share of consumers plan to cut back spending on categories like toys, gaming, office supplies, etc.

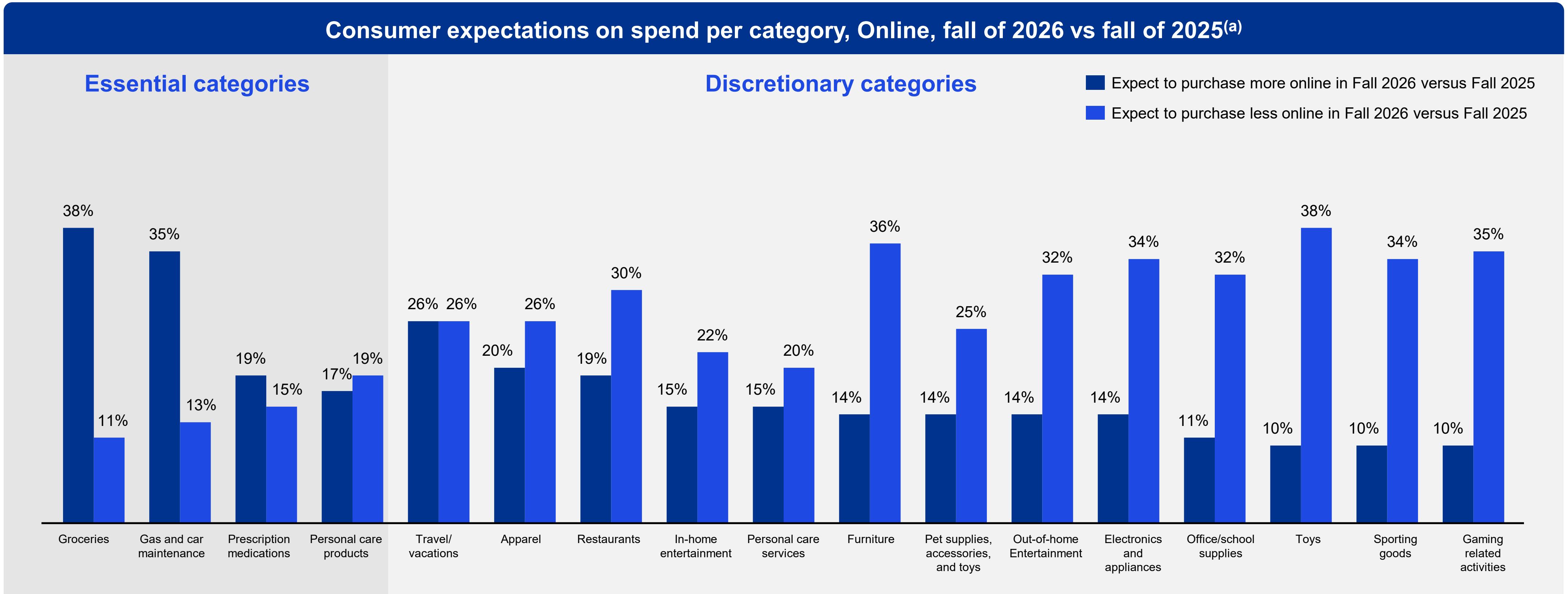
Consumer expectations on spend per category, fall of 2025 vs fall of 2026[a]



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "How much do you think your monthly household spend on each of the following products/services will change in the fall of 2025 compared to fall of 2024?"; (a) Respondents who mentioned change in their monthly household spend for a category greater than 0 are considered as respondents who expect to spend more in 2026 and respondents who mentioned change in their monthly household spend for a category less than 0 are considered as respondents who expect to spend less in 2026.

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

Consumers plan to spend a larger share online for goods such as groceries, gas and car maintenance

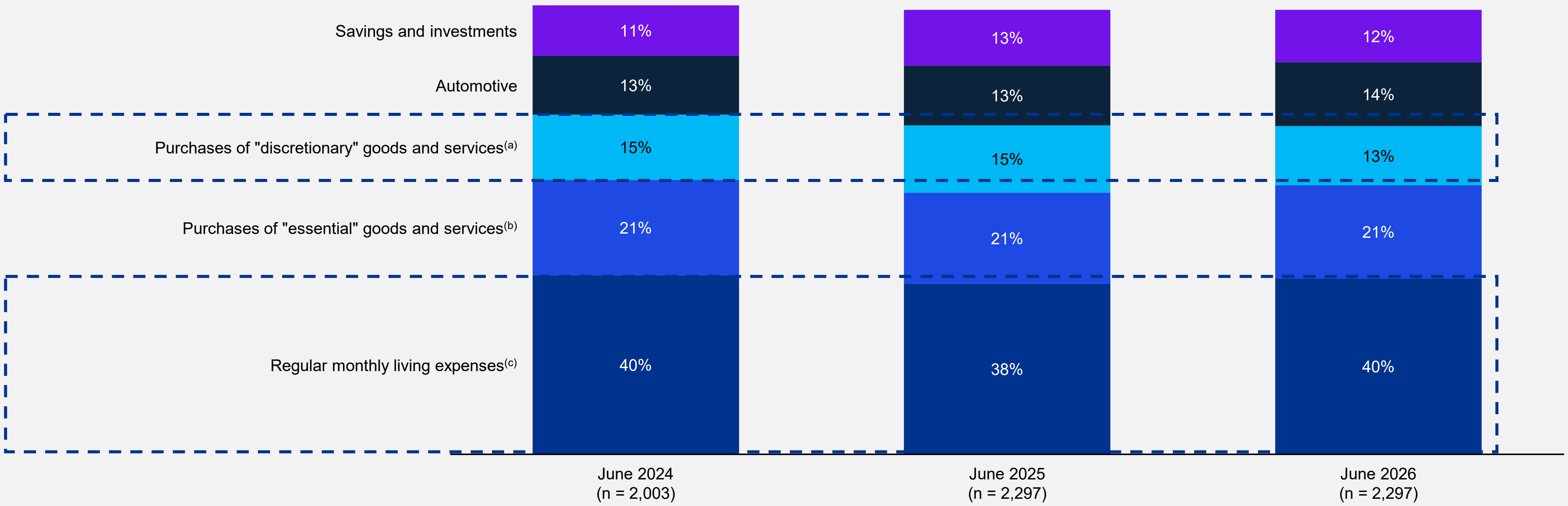


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked " In the fall of 2025 compared to the fall of 2024, do you expect to purchase more, the same, or less online for each of the following product categories?"; (a) Product categories sorted in descending order of percentage of households that expect to spend more online in Fall of 2026 vs Fall 2025 within essential and discretionary categories separately

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

Consumers in 2026 are allocating 40 percent of their income on living expenses with spend on discretionary items declining over time.

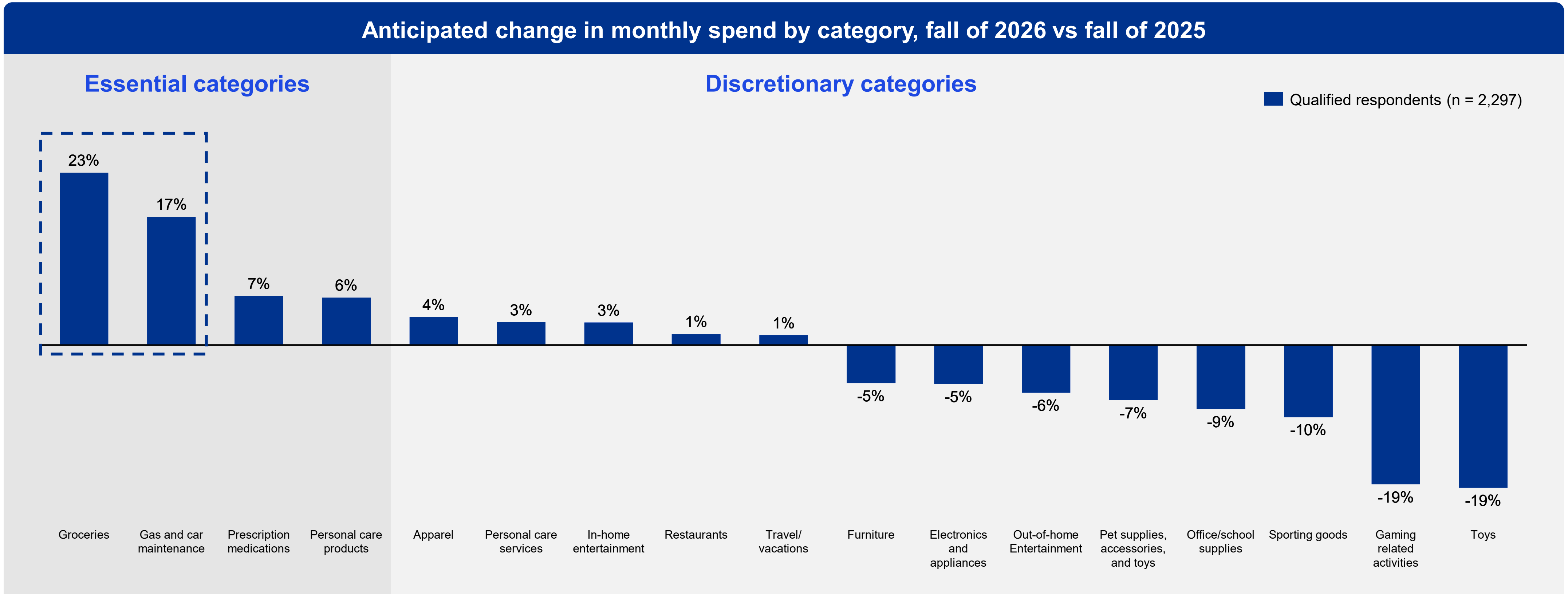
Percentage of household income spend per category, fall of 2026 - fall of 2024[d]



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "Please estimate to the best of your ability what percent of your monthly household income was spent on each of the following categories in the fall of 2025 and what percent will be spent on each of the following categories in the fall of 2026."; (a) Discretionary goods and services include restaurants, clothing, entertainment; (b) Essential goods and services include food, prescription medications, and personal care products; (c) Regular monthly living expenses include housing costs, utilities, home insurance, health insurance, and education; (d) Values for 2024 taken from 2025 Consumer Pulse Survey and values for 2025 and 2026 taken from 2026 Consumer Pulse Survey

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026, KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

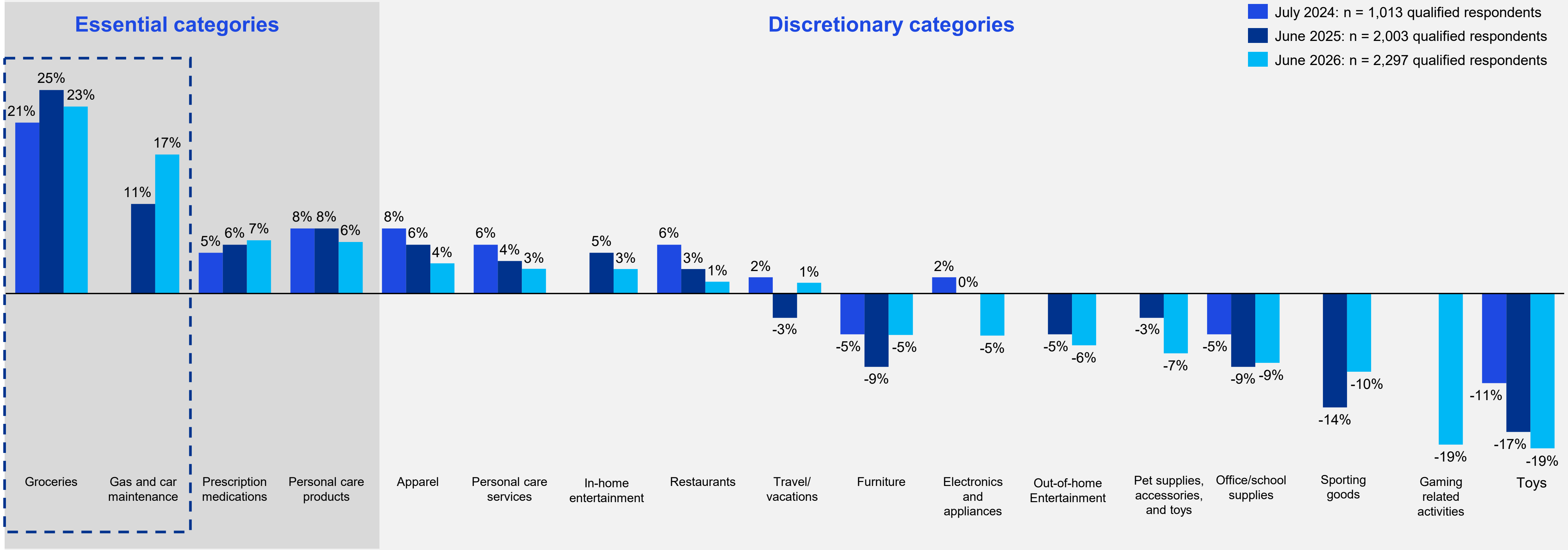
Consumers signal a bifurcated spend outlook—rising in essentials, declining in discretionary categories.



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "How much do you think your monthly household spend on each of the following products/services will change in the fall of 2026 compared to fall of 2025?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

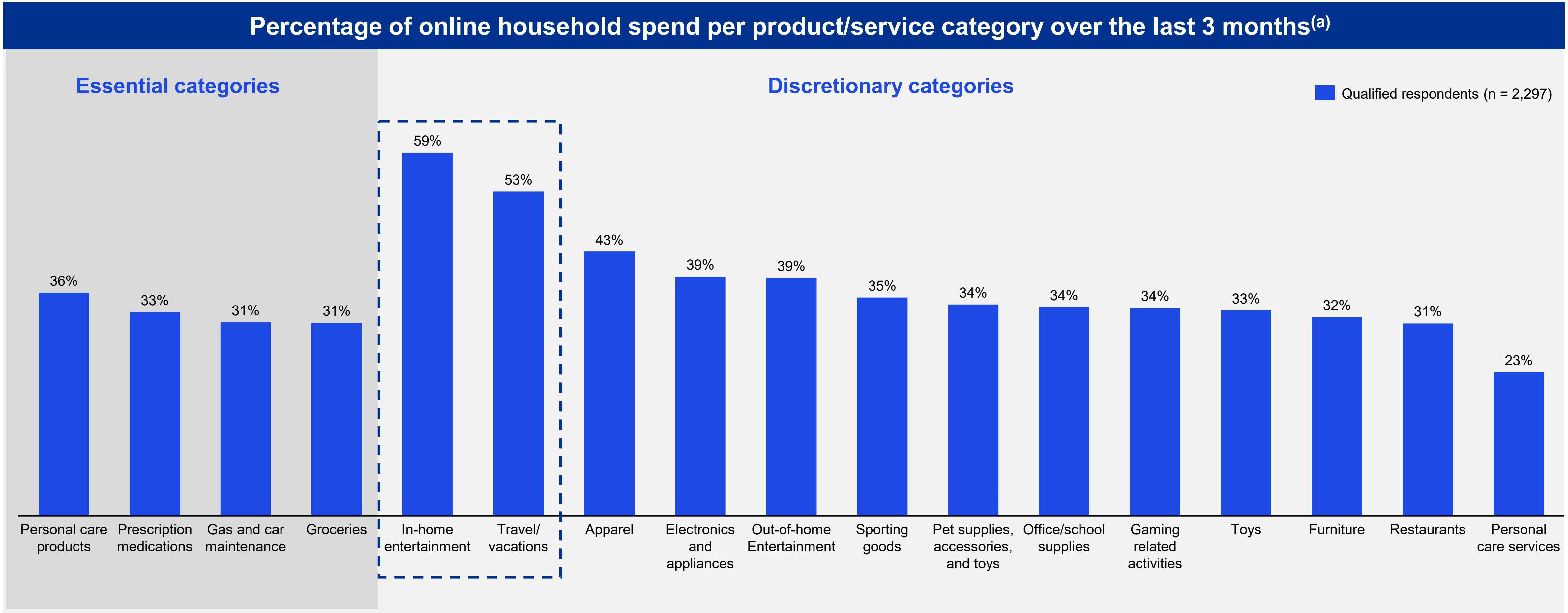
Spending on toys reduces year-over-year, highlighting the sharpest discretionary pullback across categories.

Anticipated change in monthly spend by category, fall of 2026 vs fall of 2025 vs 2024[(a)]



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "How much do you think your monthly household spend on each of the following products/services will change in the fall of 2026 compared to fall of 2025?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Over the last three months, the highest share of online spending has been in In-home entertainment and travel/vacations categories.

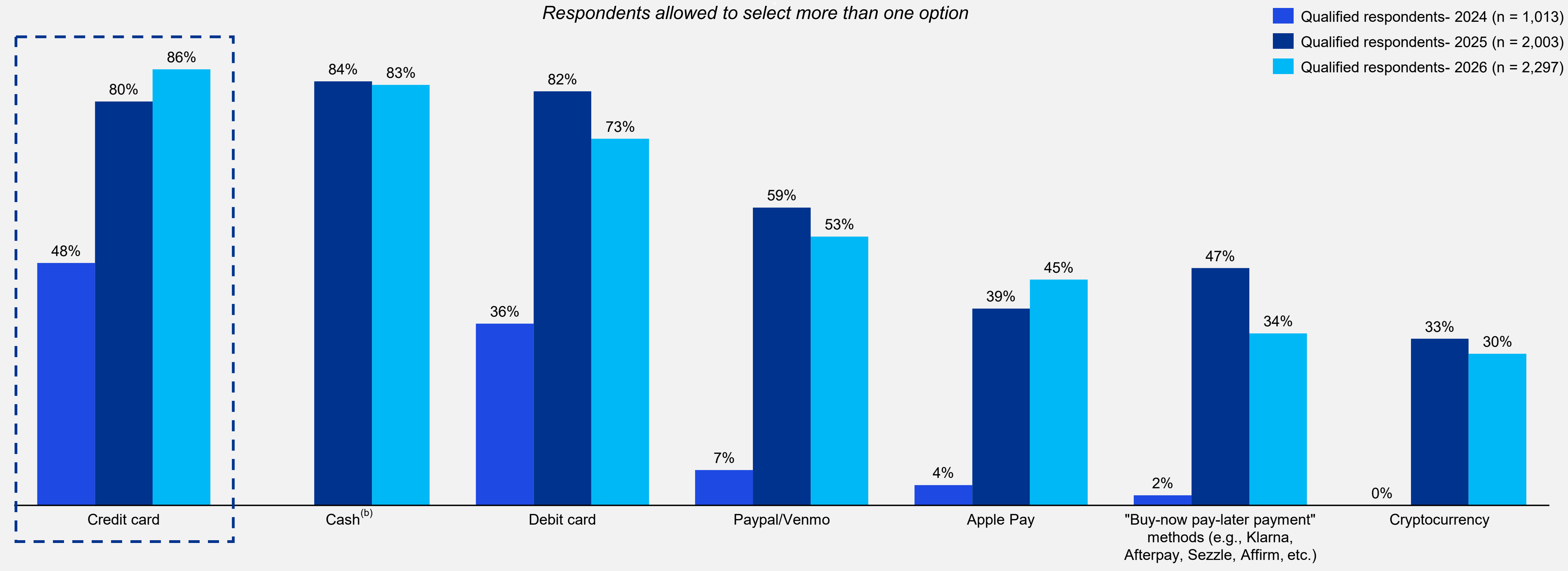


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "In the last 3 months (February through April 2026), approximately what percent of your household spend on each of the following product categories occurred online/via mobile app?"; (a) Product categories sorted in descending order of percentage of online household spend over the last three months within essential and discretionary categories separately

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Credit cards overtake cash to become the most preferred payment method year-over-year.

Preferred payment methods for purchases (2026 vs 2025 vs 2024)[a]

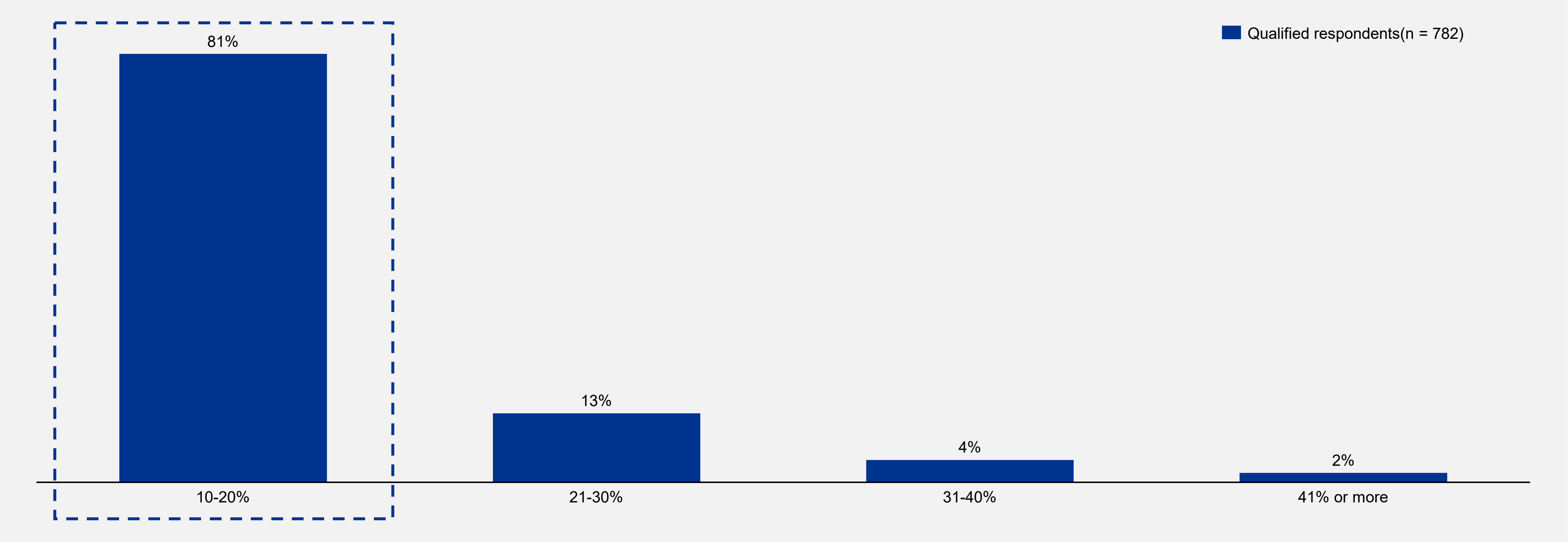


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked "How do you typically pay for purchases? Please select the payment methods that you use and rank the selected payment methods from most frequently used to least frequently used."; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses; (b) The option 'Cash' was introduced in 2025 and hence the bar is not represented for 2024

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded July 15, 2024 – July 23, 2024

Majority of consumers use buy-now-pay-later for just 10–20 percent of their purchases.

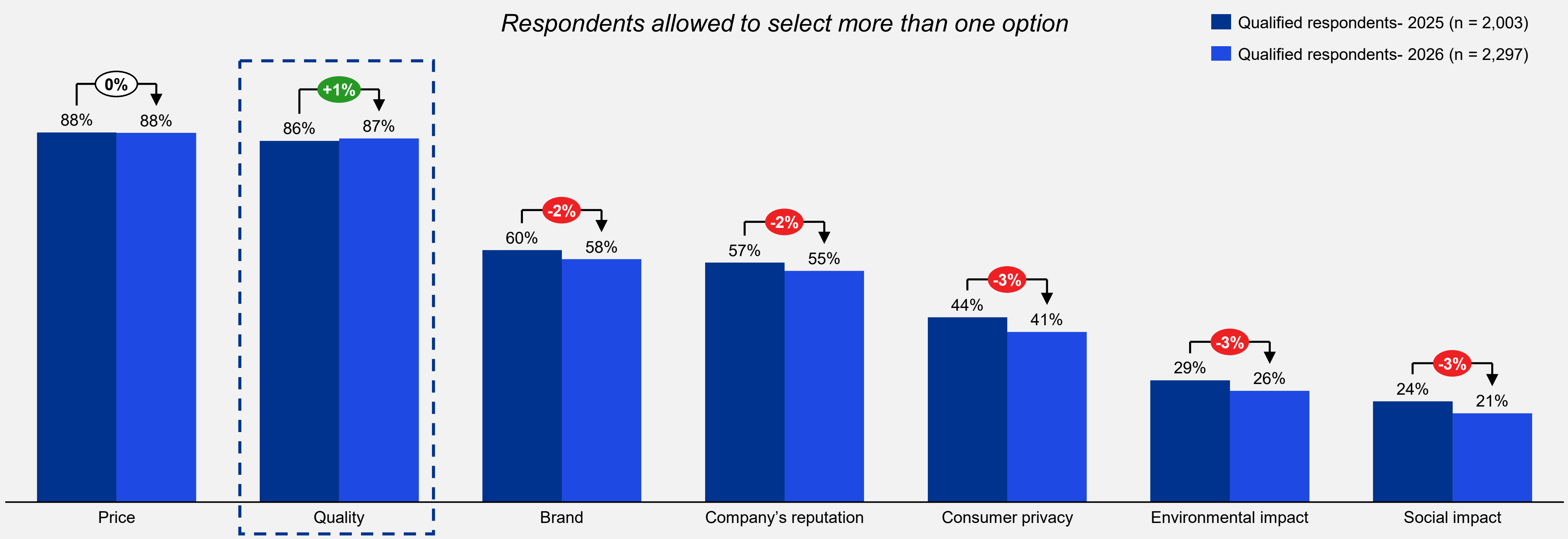
Percentage of using buy-now-pay-later options



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked “For what percent of your purchases do you use buy-now pay-later options?”
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Compared to 2025, online shoppers in 2026 place slightly more importance on quality while emphasis on environmental impact, social impact etc. has declined.

Top considerations when purchasing online/in-store (fall of 2026 vs fall of 2025)[a]



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked "When making a purchase online or in-store to what extent do you typically consider the following?"; (a) The data reflects ratings of 4 and 5 from a scale of 1= "not at all and 5 = "a great deal"

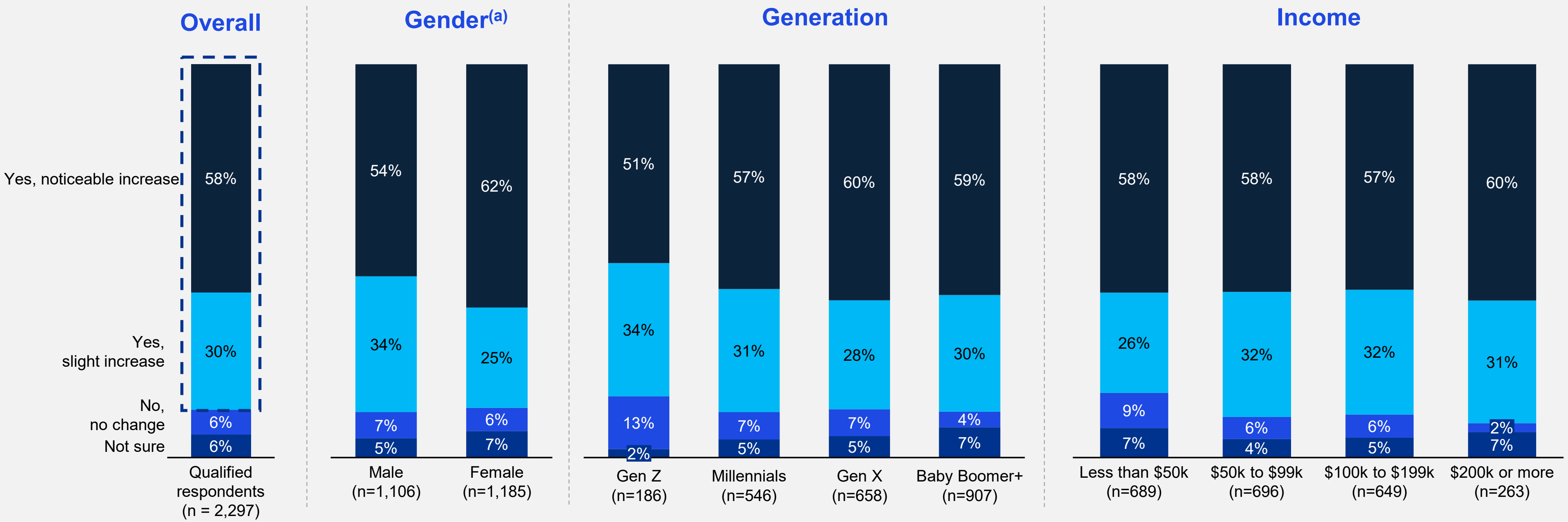
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

06

Impact of rising fuel prices

More than 80 percent of consumers report an increase in goods and services prices due to fluctuating fuel costs.

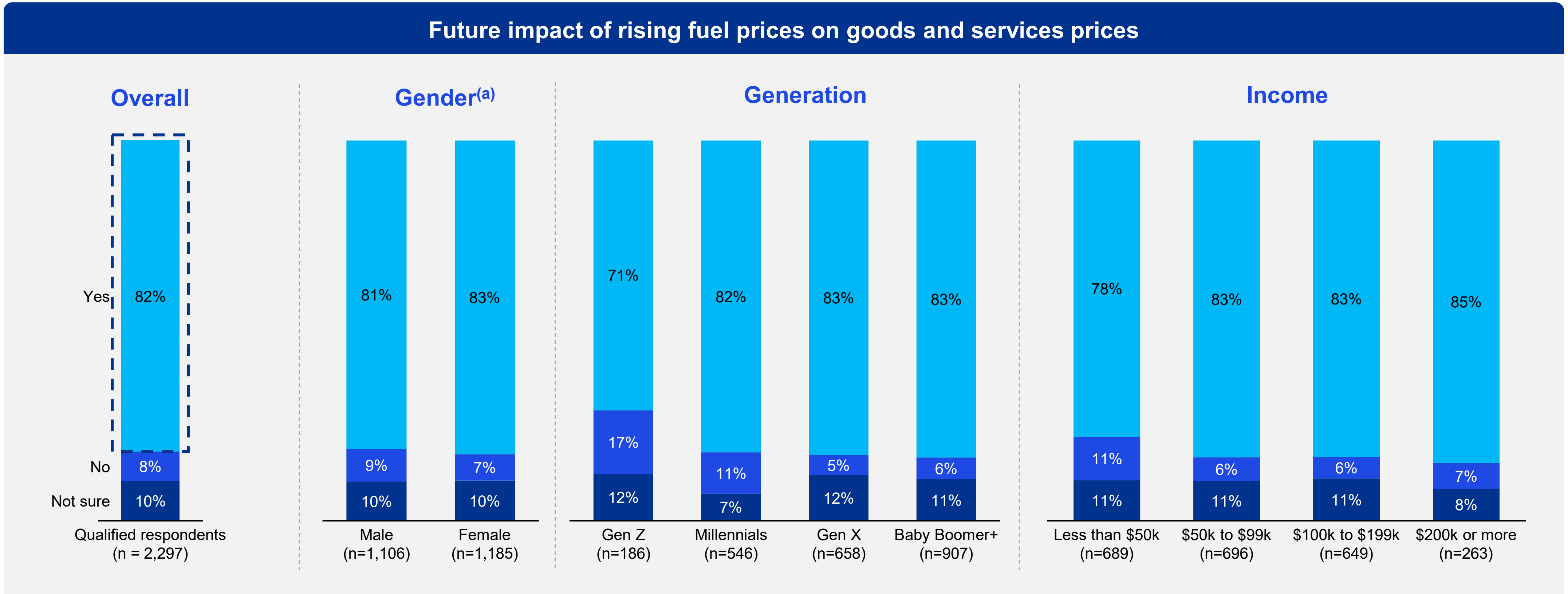
Impact of fuel prices on goods and services prices



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked “Have you noticed an increase in the prices of goods or services due to rising or uncertain fuel prices?”; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned “Prefer to self-describe”

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Most consumers (82 percent) expect rising fuel costs to further increase prices of products and services in future.

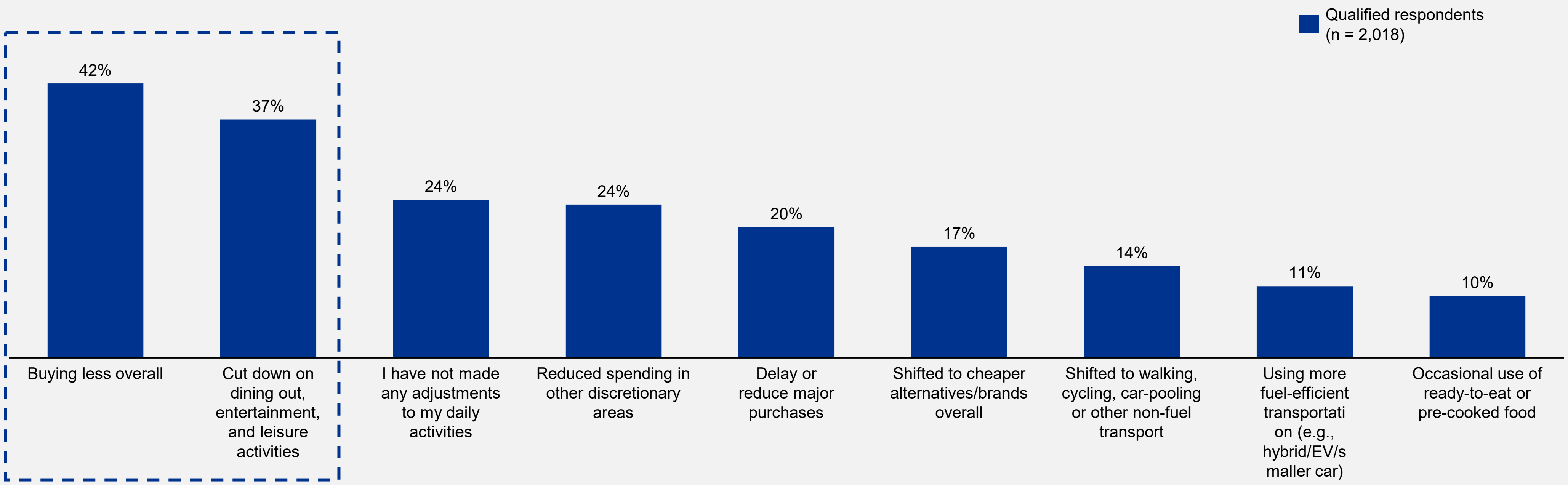


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked “Do you think rising fuel prices will result in prices of products/services increasing further in the future?”; (a) Gender identification omits respondents that mentioned “Prefer to self-describe”

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Consumers respond to rising fuel costs by reducing overall spending (42 percent) and cutting discretionary activities (37 percent).

Impact of fuel prices on consumer behavior



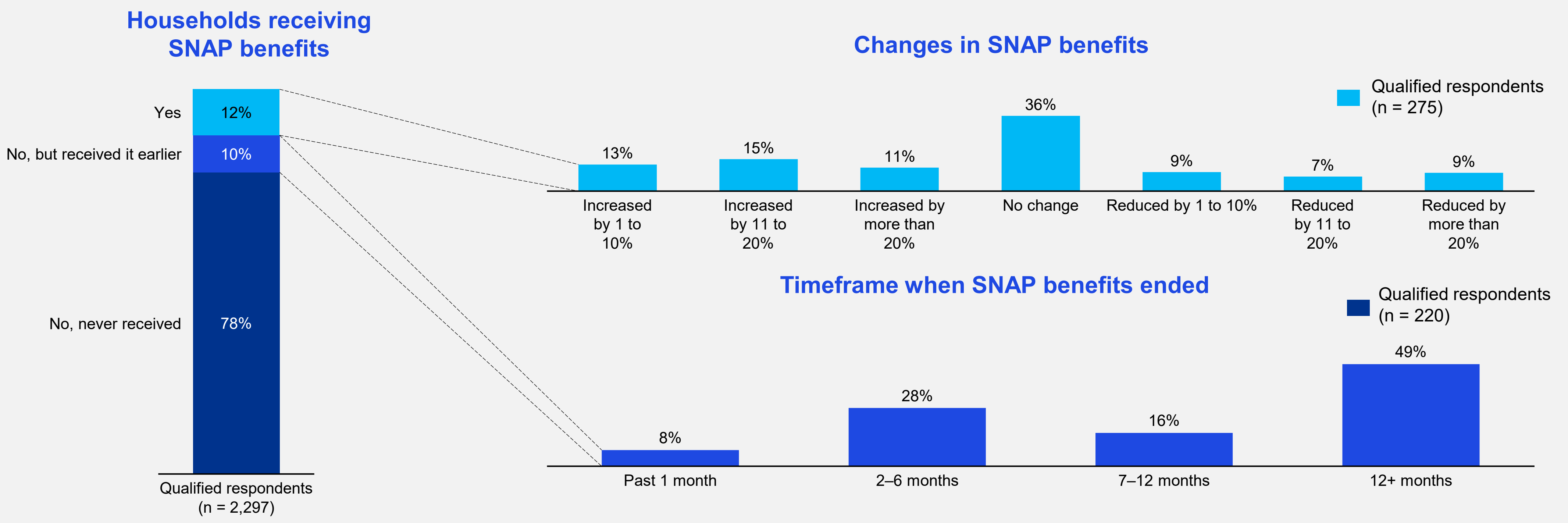
Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, “How have your day-to-day activities changed due to rising gas and fuel prices?”
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

07

Inflation

Most respondents (36 percent) report no change in SNAP benefits; among those whose benefits have ended, 49 percent indicate it has been more than a year since discontinuation.

Changes in SNAP benefits



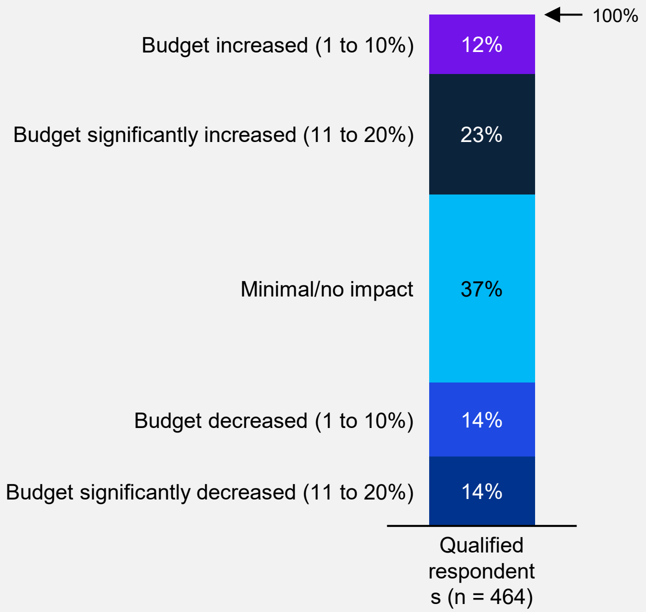
Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, if applicable, asked “Are you or anyone in your household currently receiving SNAP benefits?, Which of the following best describes your SNAP benefits situation?; When did your benefits from SNAP ended?

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

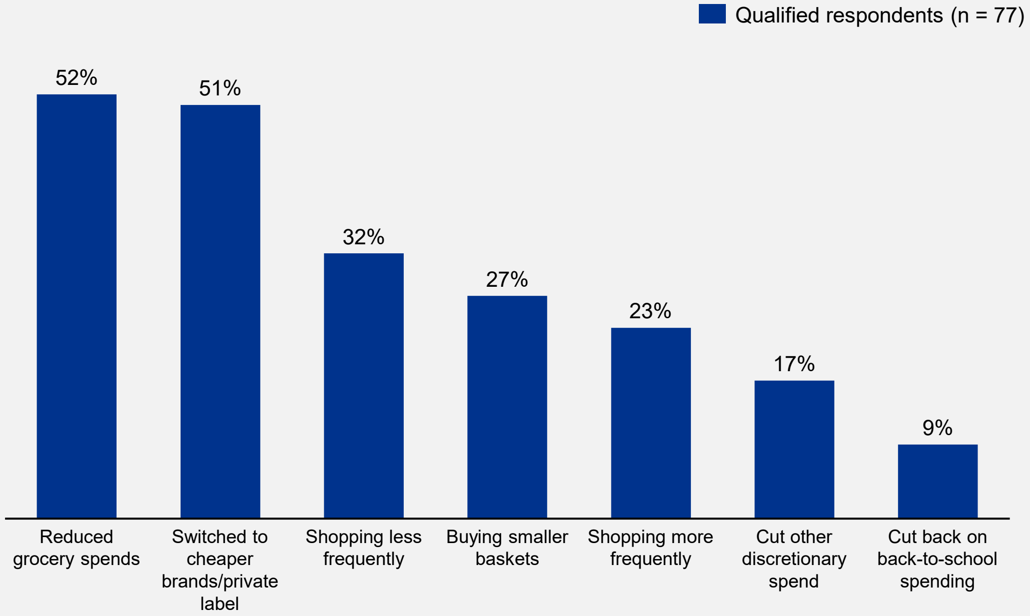
Majority report minimal impact from SNAP benefits, while only 35 percent observe budget increases; households with no benefits are cutting grocery purchases to manage spending.

Impact of SNAP benefits and changes made to the manage spendings

Impact of change in SNAP benefits on the household budget



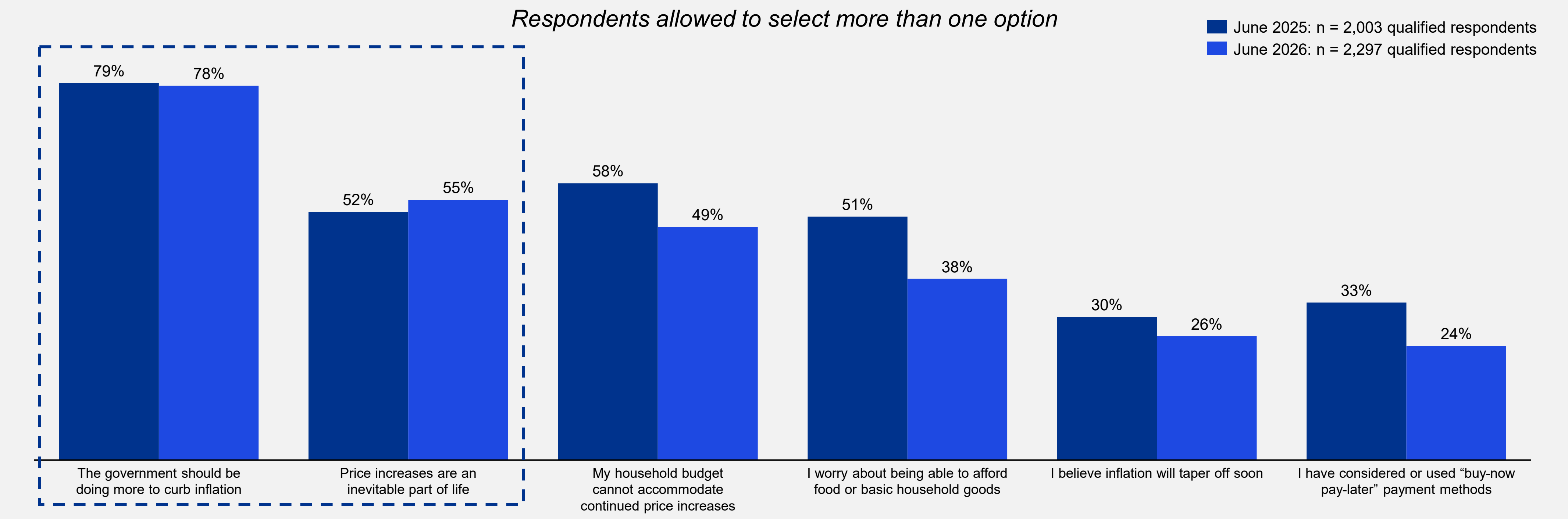
Changes made to manage spending



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked "How has this change affected your household budget?; What changes have you made to manage your spending?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Concern around inflation remains elevated, with majority of consumers continuing to expect government action and accept price increases as inevitable.

Consumer sentiment on inflation (fall of 2026 vs fall of 2025)[a]

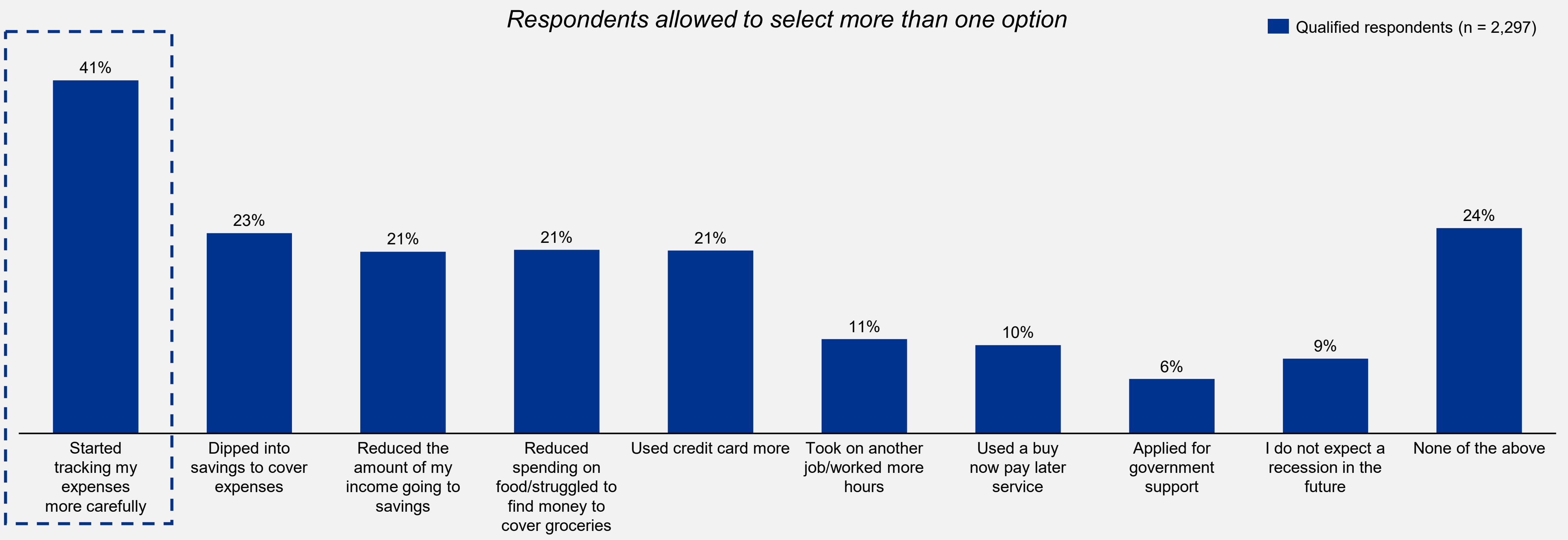


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked “To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1= strongly disagree and 7= strongly agree)”; (a) Respondents were asked to rate each of the statements on a scale of 1-7 and the above visualization represents the proportion of respondents who agree (rated 5-7) with the statement.

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

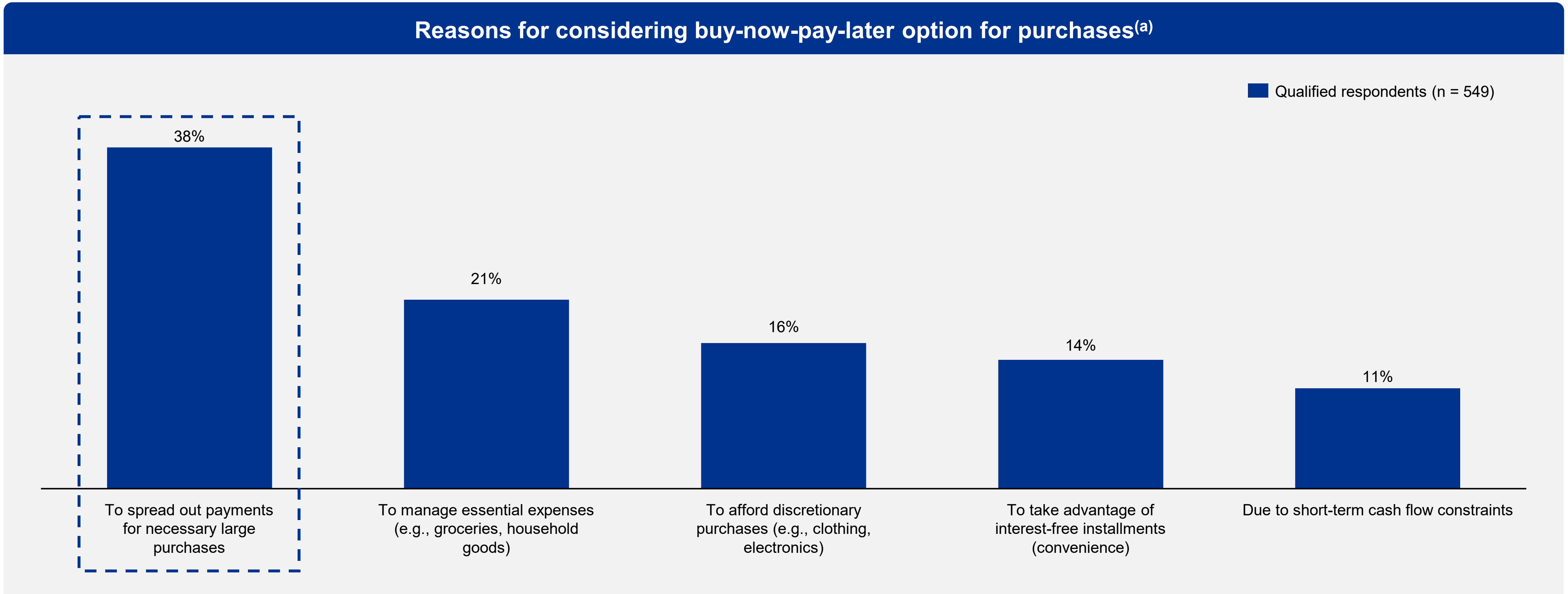
Respondents are mainly preparing for a potential recession by tracking expenses more closely.

Current measures undertaken to mitigate the impact of future recession



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked “Which of the following measures have you started taking recently to mitigate the impact of a future recession?”
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Consumers primarily consider buy-now-pay-later to spread costs of large purchases.

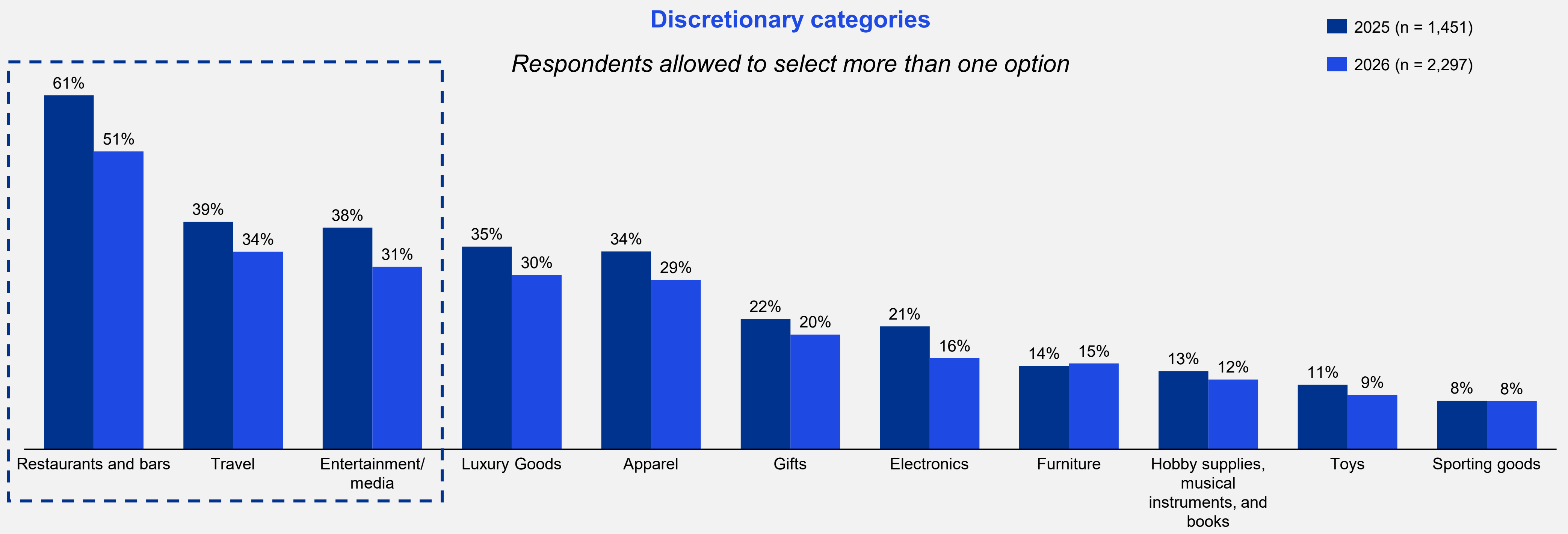


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked “What is the primary reason you have used or considered buy-now, pay-later (BNPL) options?”; (a) “Other, please specify” has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Due to inflation pressures, consumers are mostly cutting their spend on restaurants, travel, and entertainment .

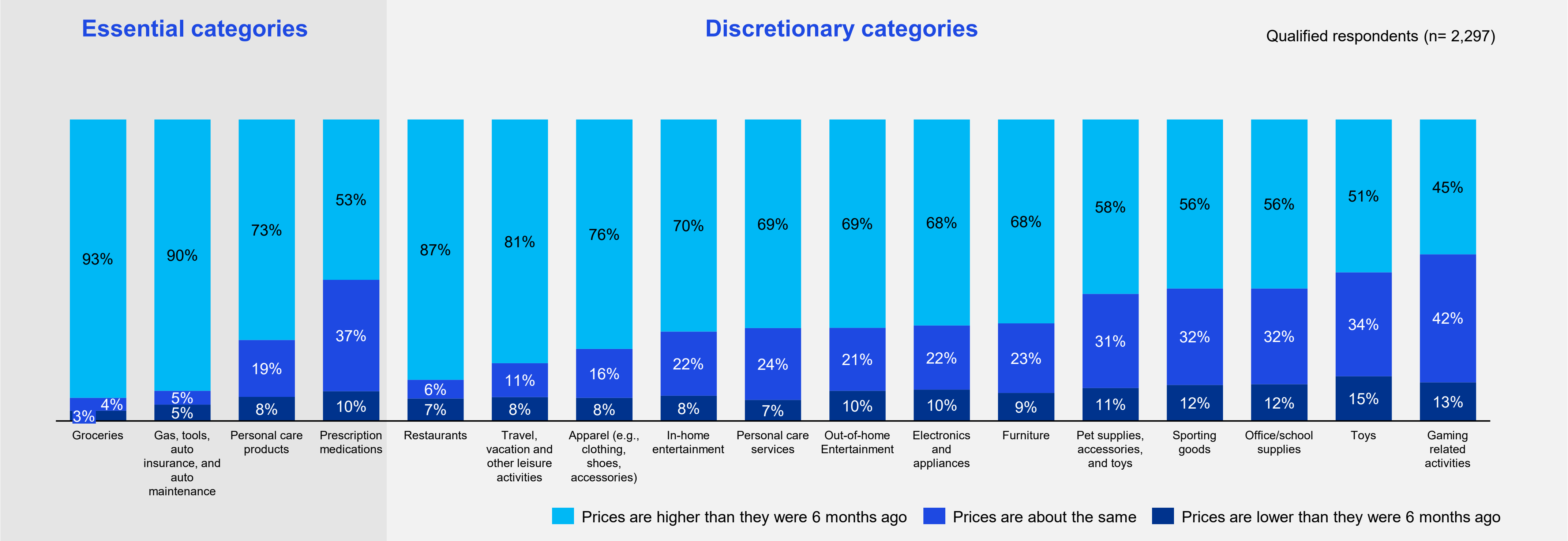
Top discretionary spending reduction categories due to inflation 2025 vs 2026



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked "Please select and rank up to 3, the top discretionary spending categories where you expect to reduce your spending the most due to inflation."
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

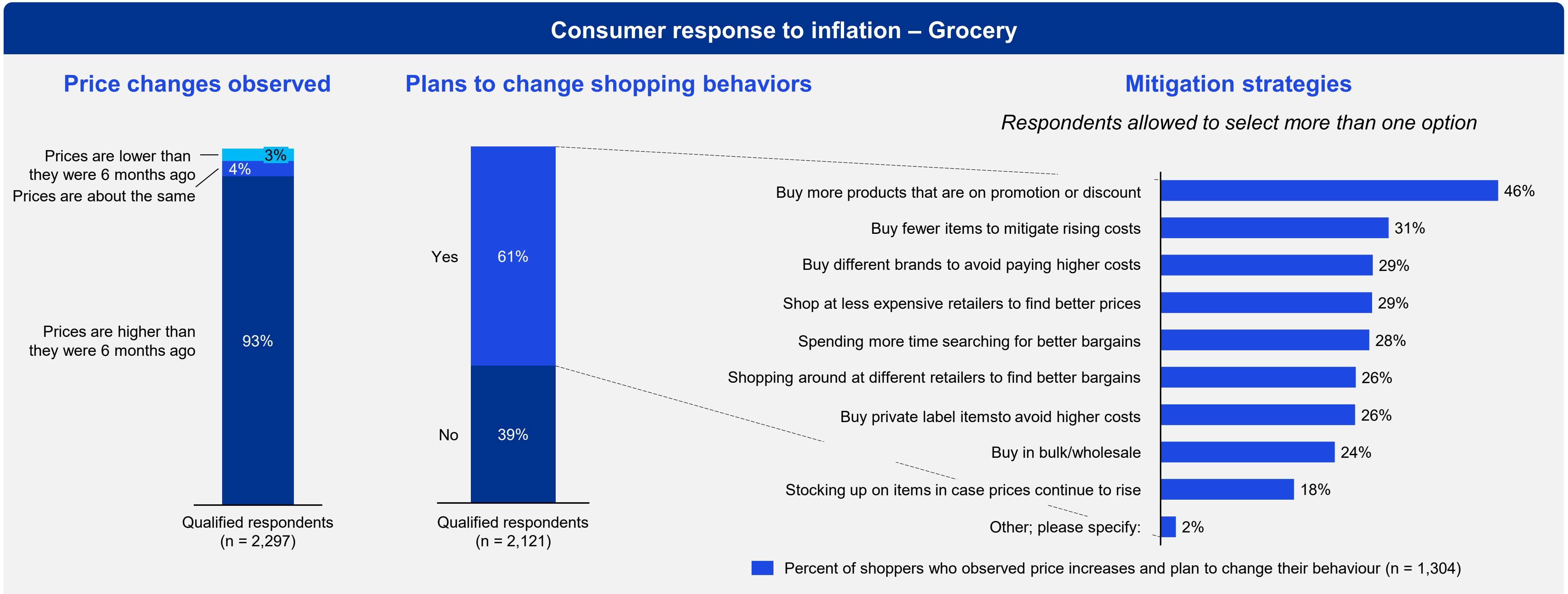
Price increases remain widespread across essential categories, while discretionary categories exhibit relatively mixed price movements.

Price variation over the last year by product category



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States and, in all instances, asked “By how much have prices changed in the following product categories over the past 6 months—are they lower, about the same, or higher?”
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

While nearly all respondents report rising grocery prices (93 percent), majority (61 percent) are actively changing shopping behavior by shifting toward discounted purchases.

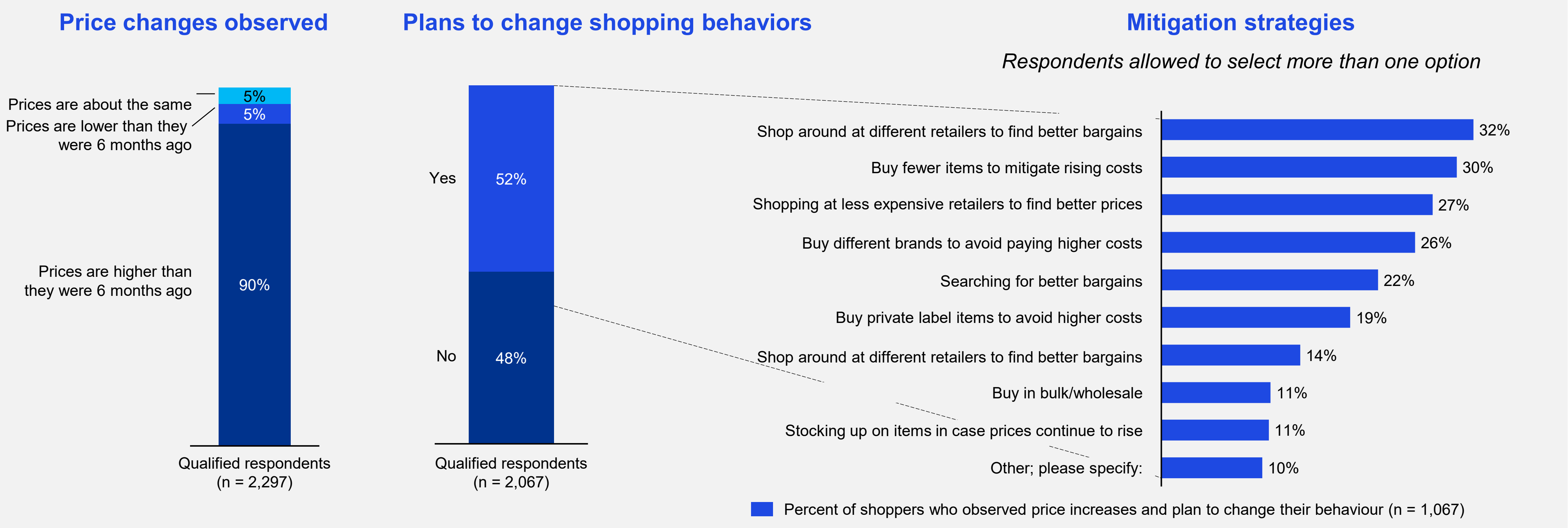


Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked "By how much have prices changed in the following product categories over the past 6 months—are they lower, about the same, or higher?.", “You indicated that you have noticed rising prices for Groceries (food and beverage), do you plan on changing your shopping behaviors to mitigate rising prices for Groceries (food and beverage)?”; How do you plan on changing your behaviors to mitigate rising prices for Groceries (food and beverage)?”

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Even as most respondents report higher prices (90 percent), behavior is evenly split, with only about half (52 percent) planning changes.

Consumer response to inflation – Gas, tools, auto insurance, and auto maintenance



Note(s): KPMG conducted a survey of 2,297 consumers across the United States, and, in all instances, asked "By how much have prices changed in the following product categories over the past 6 months—are they lower, about the same, or higher?.", "You indicated that you have noticed rising prices for Gas, tools, auto insurance, and auto maintenance, do you plan on changing your shopping behaviors to mitigate rising prices for Gas, tools, auto insurance, and auto maintenance?"; How do you plan on changing your behaviors to mitigate rising prices for Gas, tools, auto insurance, and auto maintenance?"

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

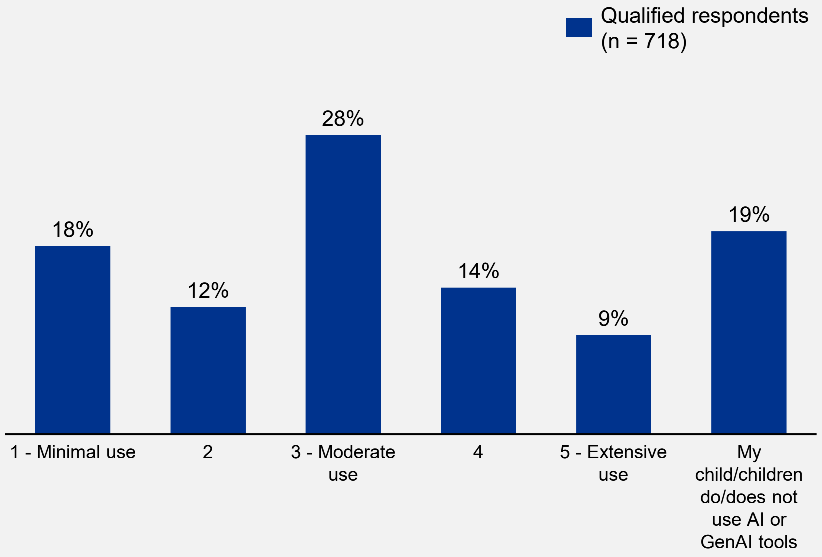
08

Technology

Laptop and tablets are the top technology investments for back-to-school needs. Moreover, around 81 percent of the parents say that their children use AI/GenAI for learning.

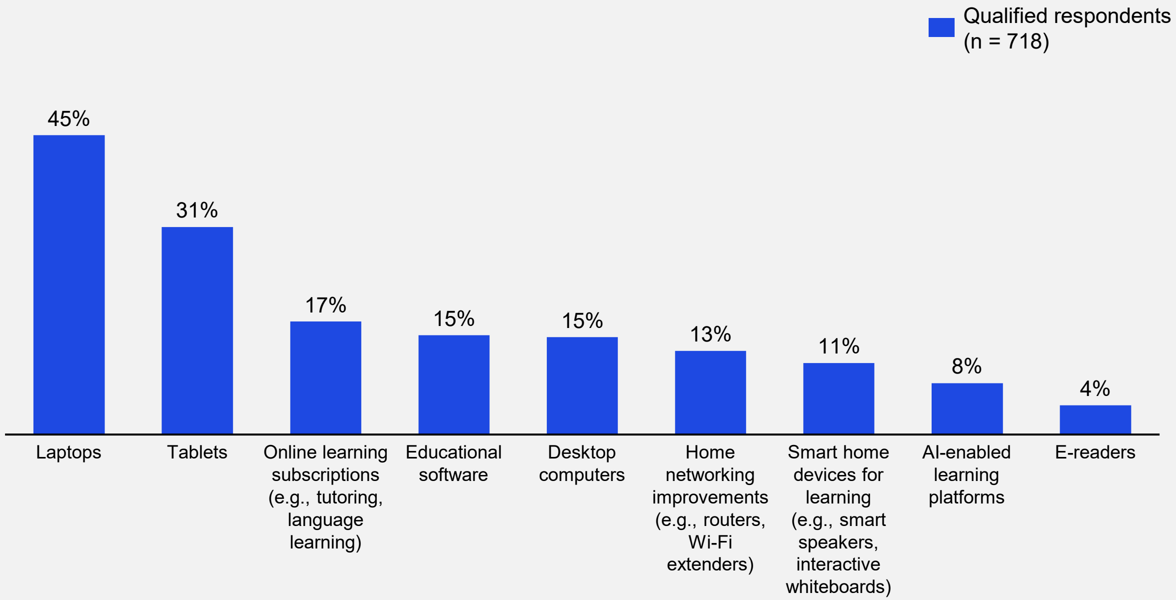
Tech investments and AI adoption for BTS shoppers

Extent of AI/GenAI tool usage in children's learning



Technology investments for BTS needs in 2026

Respondents allowed to select more than one option



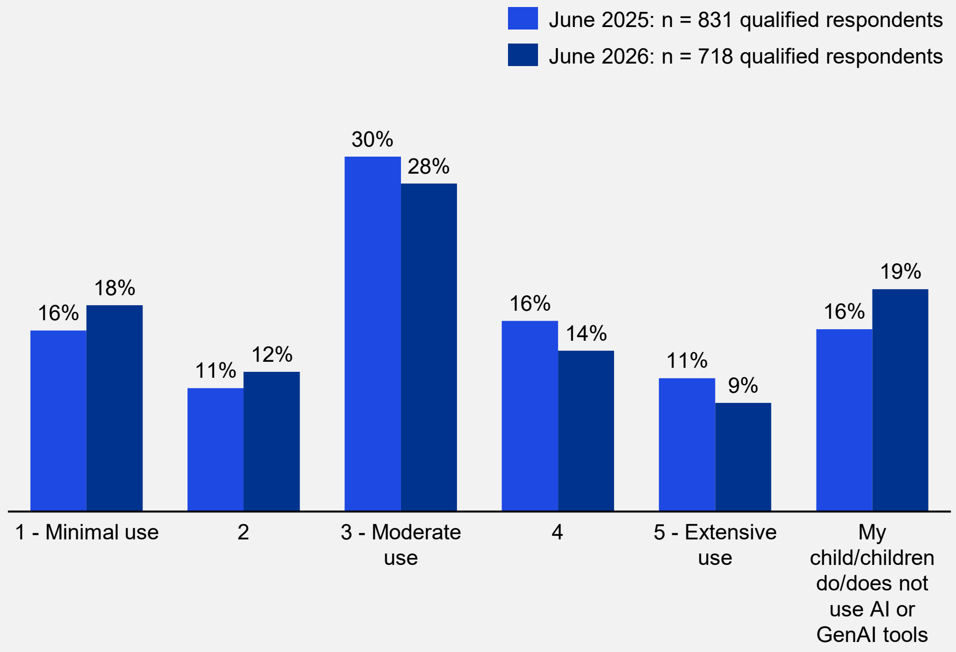
Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "On a scale of 1-5, to what extent do/does your child/children use AI or GenAI tools to support their learning?" and "What types of technology are you investing in for your child's back-to-school needs this year?"

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Laptops and tablets continue to be the top technology investments. Meanwhile, GenAI adoption remains broadly stable year-on-year, with a shift toward lighter usage.

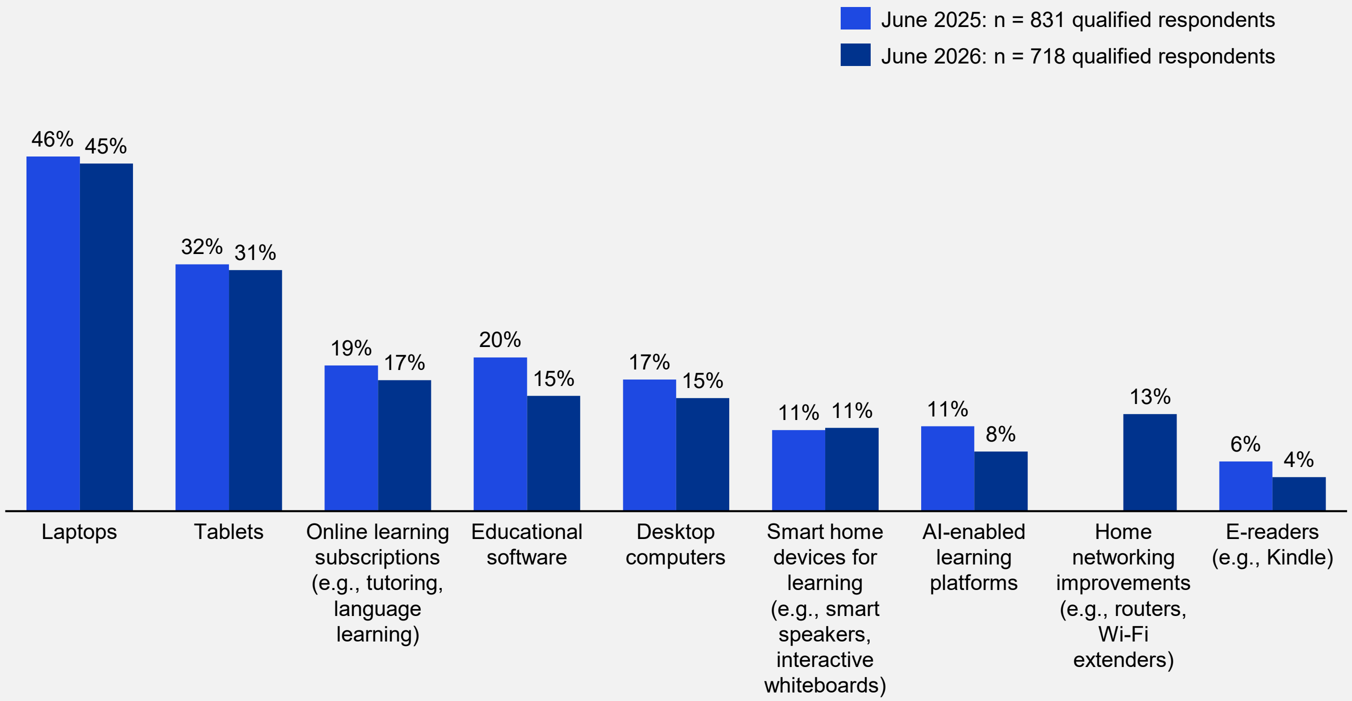
Tech investments and AI adoption for BTS shoppers (fall of 2026 vs fall of 2025)

Extent of AI/GenAI tool usage in children's learning (2025 vs 2026)



Technology investments for BTS needs (2025 vs 2026)[(a)(b)]

Respondents allowed to select more than one option

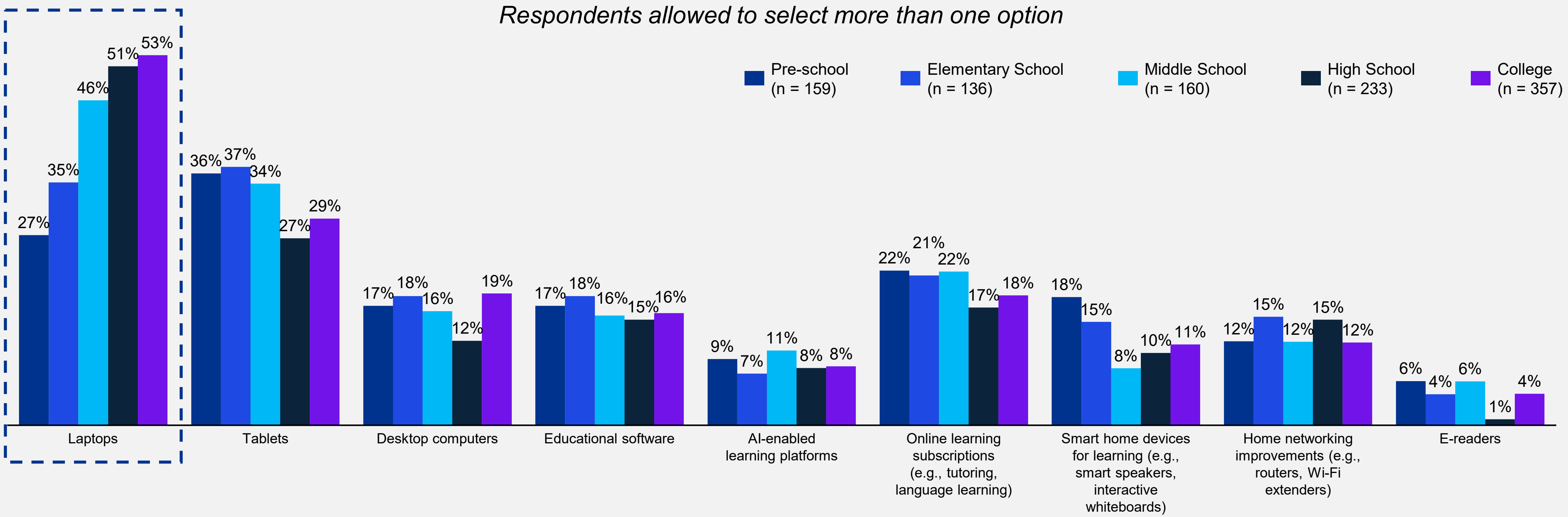


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "On a scale of 1-5, to what extent do/does your child/children use AI or GenAI tools to support their learning?" and "What types of technology are you investing in for your child's back-to-school needs this year?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses; (b) The option, "Home networking improvements (e.g., routers, Wi-Fi extenders)," was introduced in June 2026, hence the bar is not represented for 2025

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026; KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded June 6, 2025–June 13, 2025

Laptops are the leading technology investment for students, with adoption increasing as academic level rises.

Tech investments for back-to-school needs by academic level

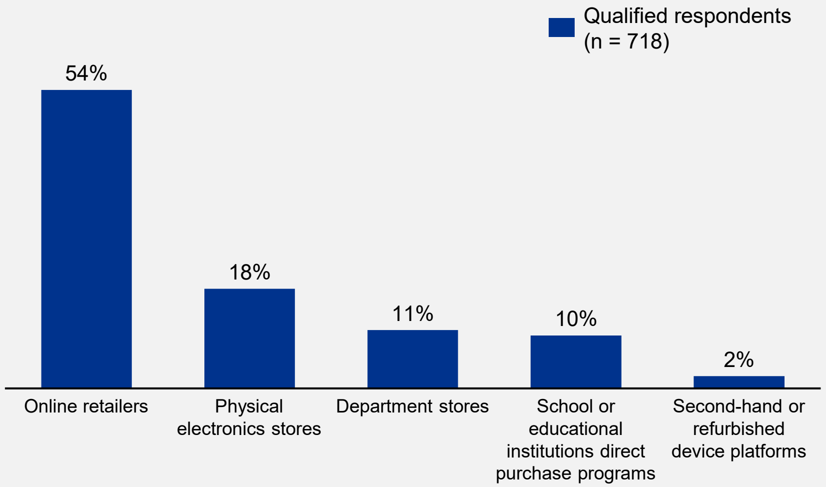


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "What types of technology are you investing in for your child's back-to-school needs this year?"
Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

54 percent purchase educational tech and learning tools online; 46 percent consider educational videos (e.g., YouTube) to be the most useful learning tool for kids at home.

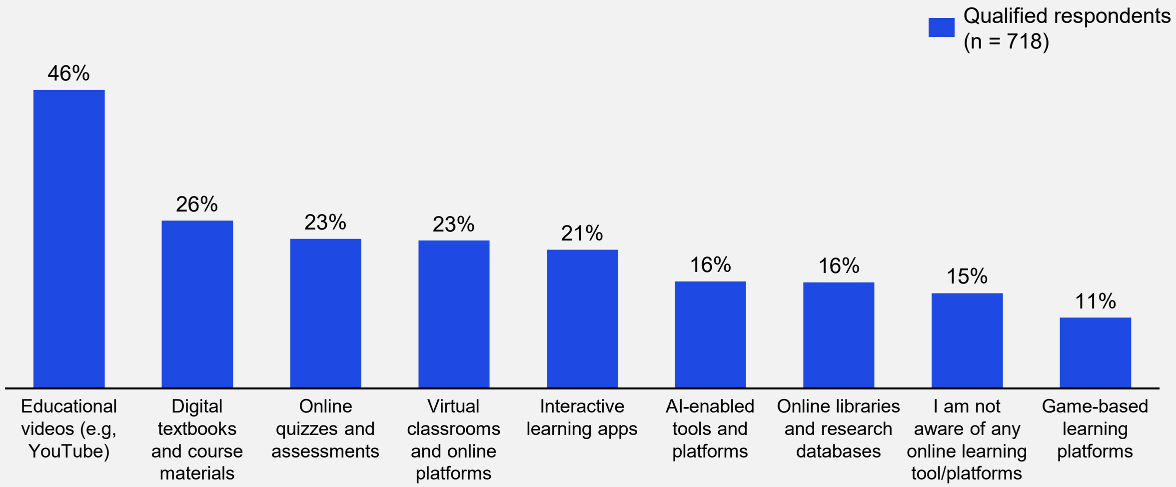
Tools, resources, and purchase channels for BTS shoppers[(a)]

Primary channel for purchasing BTS tech and learning tools



Most useful online educational tools for kids at home

Respondents allowed to select more than one option

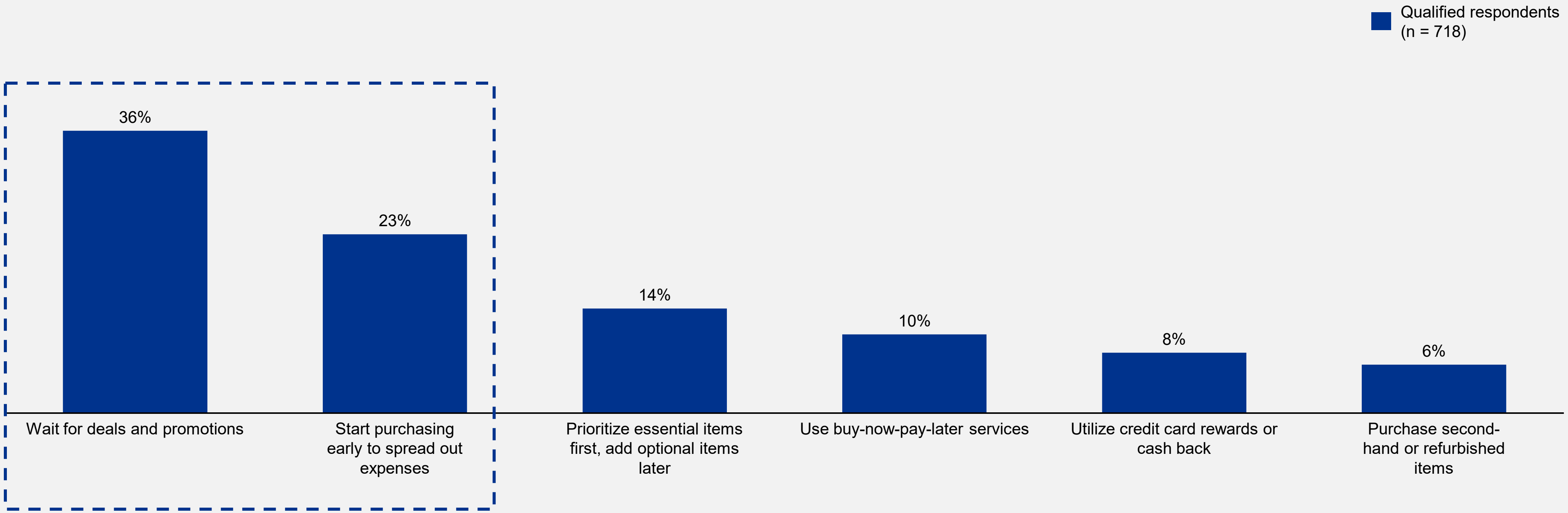


Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "Through which channels are you primarily purchasing technology and learning tools for back-to-school this year?" and "Which of the following online educational tools or resources do you find most useful for the kids in your household?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

Most consumers wait for deals to save up some money on tech related back-to-school purchases, followed by 23 percent who start purchasing early to spread out expenses.

Strategies for managing costs of BTS tech purchases[(a)]



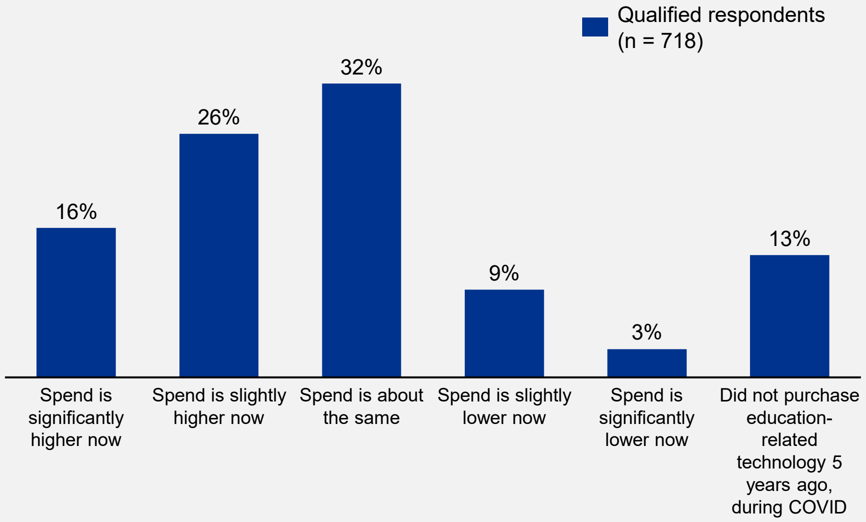
Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "What strategies do you use to manage the costs of back-to-school technology purchases?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

74 percent report education tech spend is stable or higher post-COVID, driven by replacement cycles (41 percent) and school requirements (31 percent).

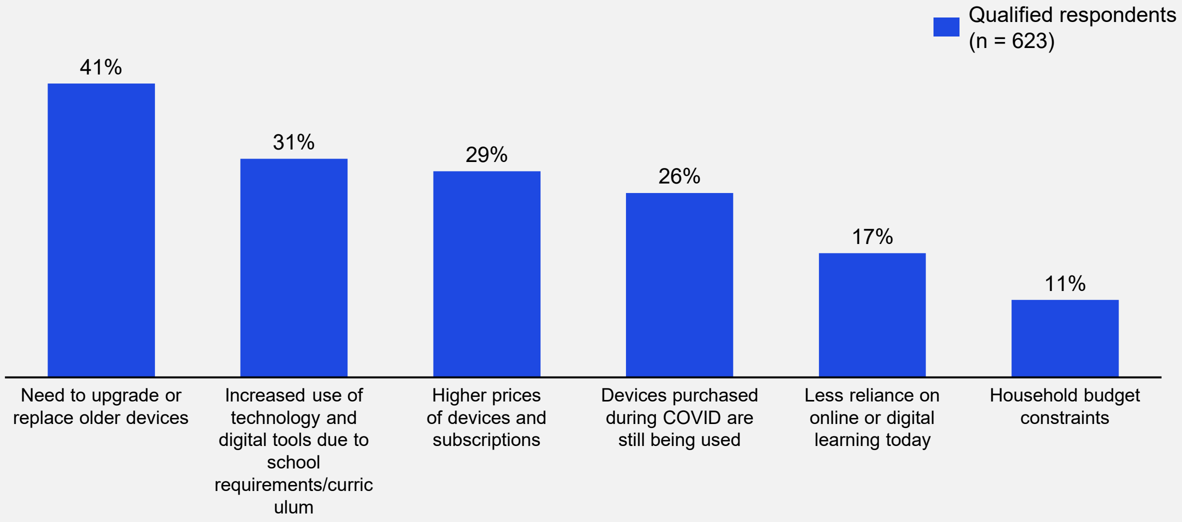
Post-COVID education tech spending and primary reasons

Household education technology spend compared to COVID period



Primary reasons for change in spend[(a)]

Respondents allowed to select more than one option



Note(s): KPMG conducted survey of a representative sample of 718 back-to-school shoppers across the United States and, in all instances, KPMG asked, "Compared to around 5 years ago (during the COVID period), how has your household's spending on technology for your child's education changed?" and "What are the main reasons for this change in your technology spending compared to 5 years ago?"; (a) "Other, please specify" has not been represented in the chart due to less responses

Source(s): KPMG Consumer Pulse Survey, fielded May 29, 2026–June 18, 2026

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