

THE
READING
AGENCY

Adult Reading 2024 Report: London in Focus

**Dr Carina Spaulding,
Head of Research & Evaluation**

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Who we are: The Reading Agency



Visit us at readingagency.org.uk

- UK-wide charity empowering people of all ages to transform their lives through reading, supporting outcomes including...
 - Life skills and learning
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Connected communities
- Programme delivery
- National campaigns
- Partnership working
- Research and evaluation

Adult Reading: The evidence driving our insights

- Persistent gap in the evidence base
- Developed survey measures using Reading Outcomes Framework
 - Reading engagement behaviours, reading confidence, and barriers and attitudes towards reading
- Nationally representative surveys
 - 2015, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024
- 11,916 total respondents (2,003 for 2024 survey)
- Statistically weighted by age, gender, region and socioeconomic status against the most recent Census data

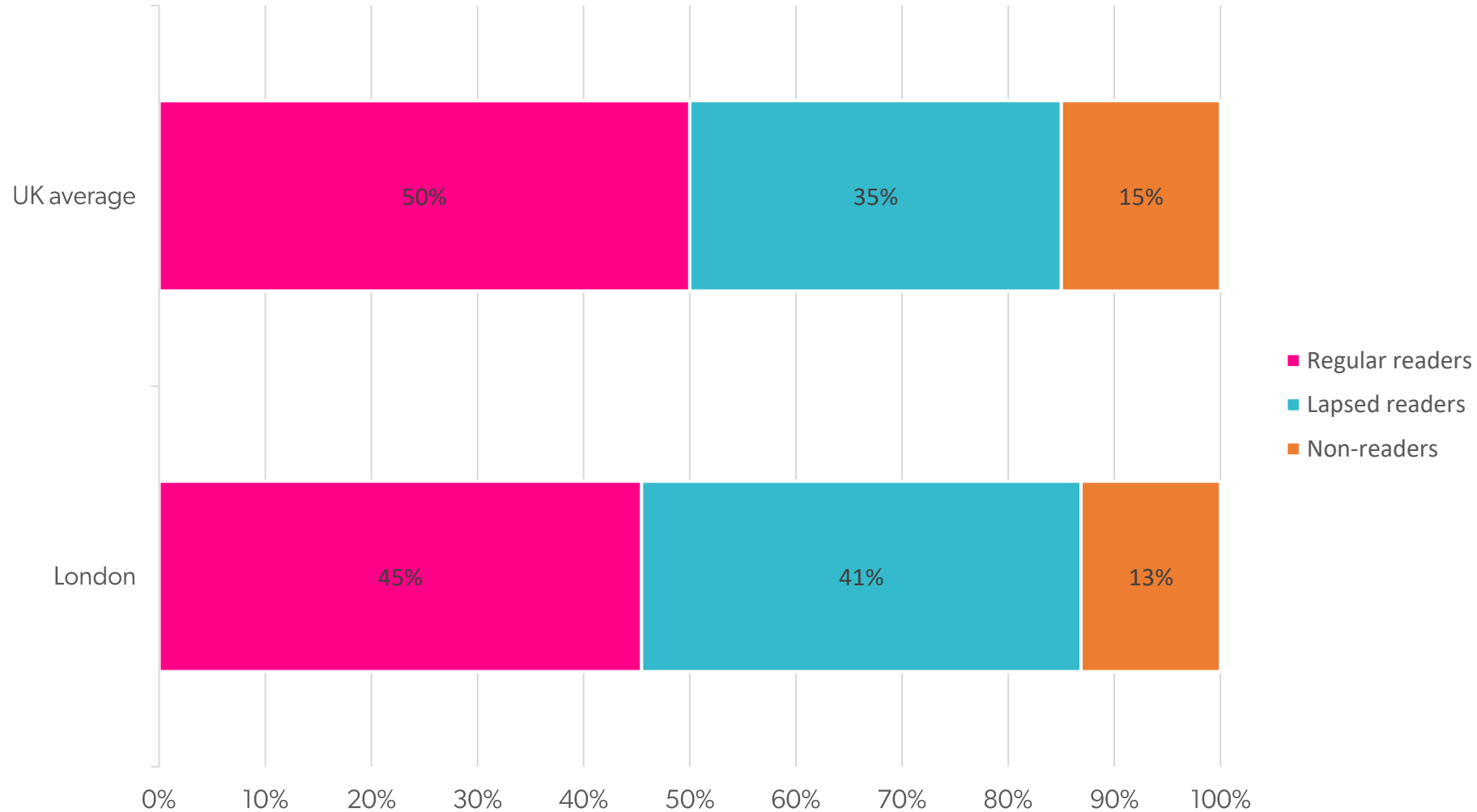


Key findings: UK adults

- Regular reading habits have fallen since 2015 – only half now read regularly
- 11% find reading 'always' or 'usually' difficult, rising to 22% of young adults
- Younger adults (aged 16-34) face the greatest barriers to reading compared to the UK average
- Regular readers report a range of positive benefits – including improved mental health and wellbeing (44%)
- Regular reading linked to higher life satisfaction and lower levels of loneliness
- London in context: fewer regular readers but more positive attitudes

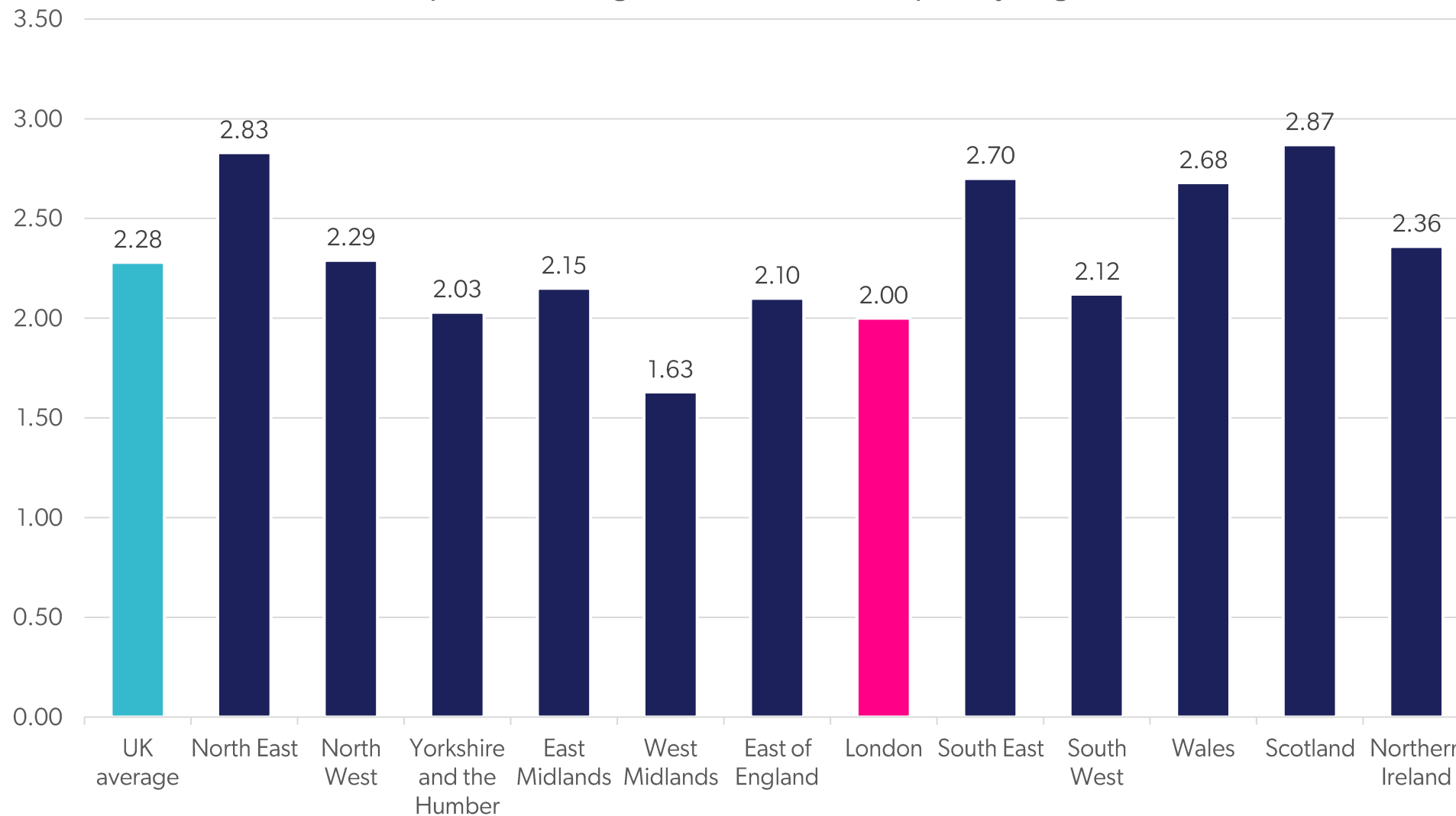
Regular reading levels: 2024

Frequency of reading: London in context

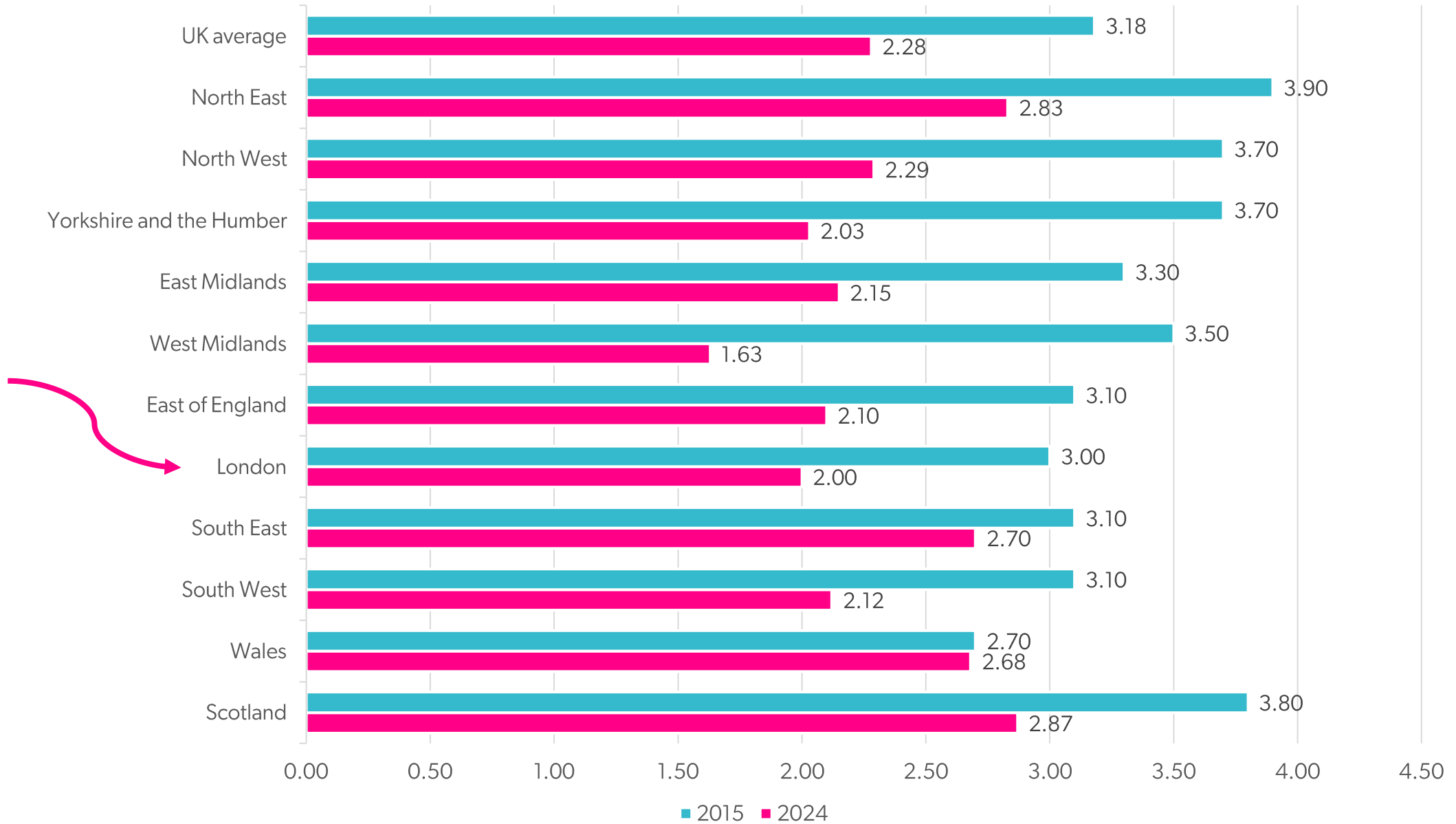


Hours spent reading by region

Hours spent reading in the last week, split by region:

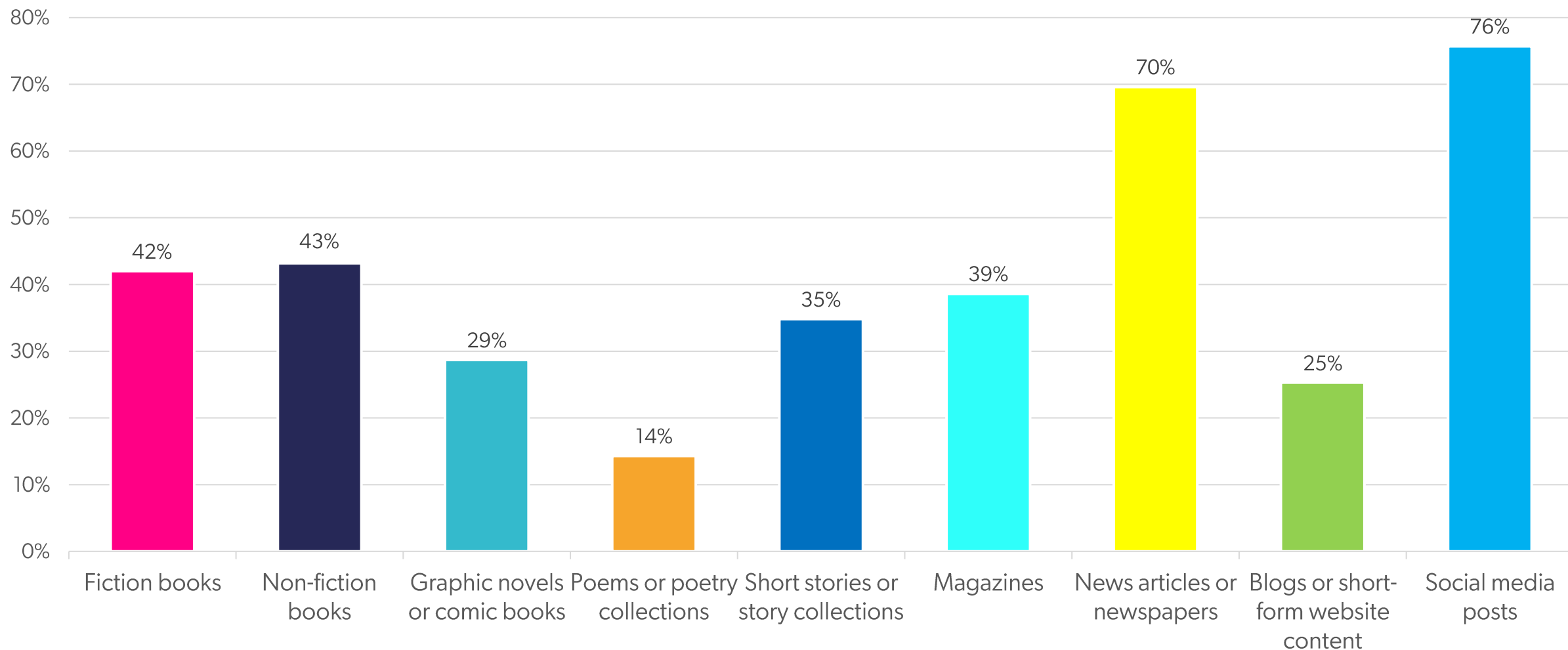


Hours spent reading in the last week, split by region: 2015 vs 2024

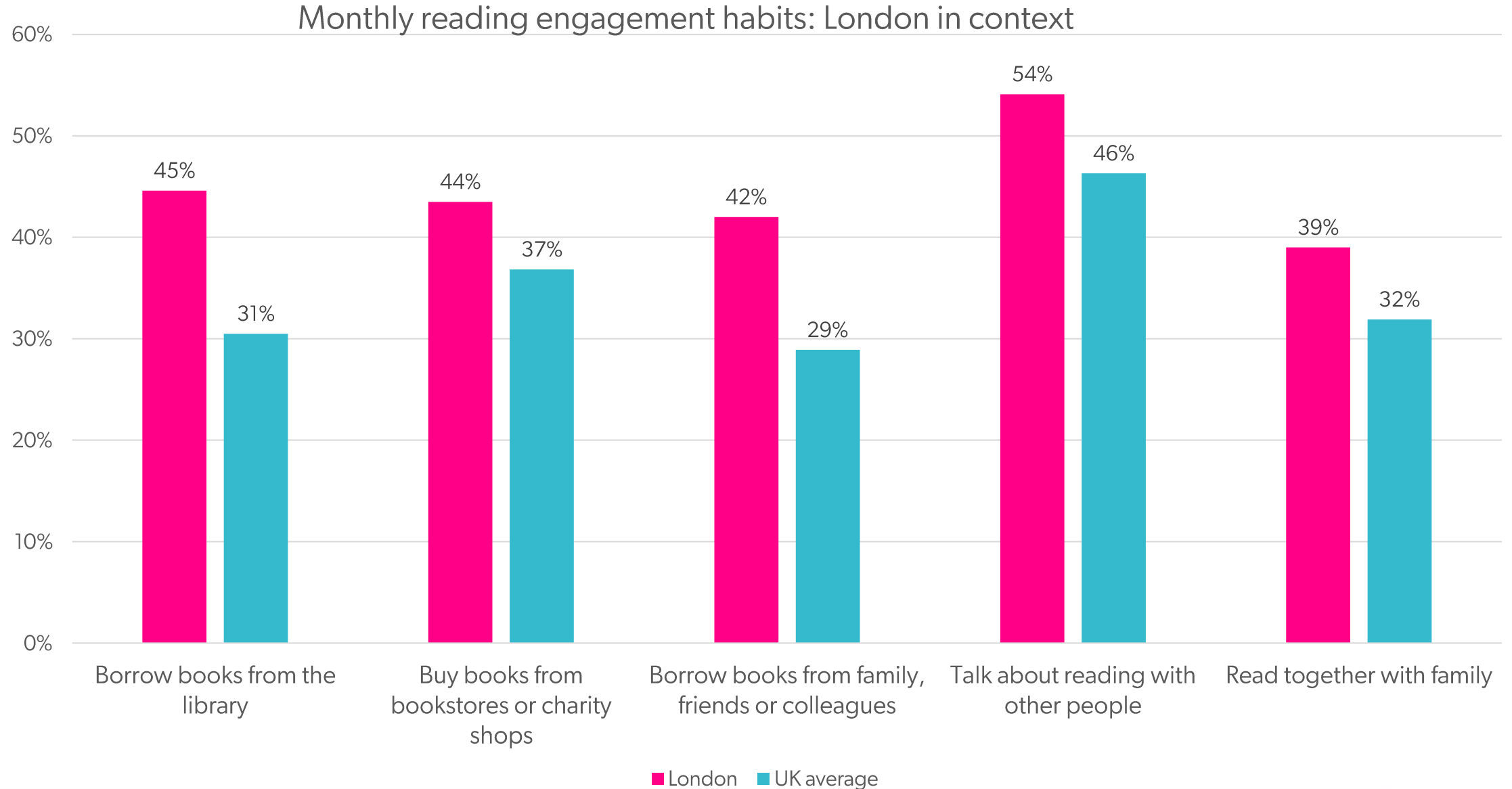


Reading engagement habits: London

Weekly reading materials: London

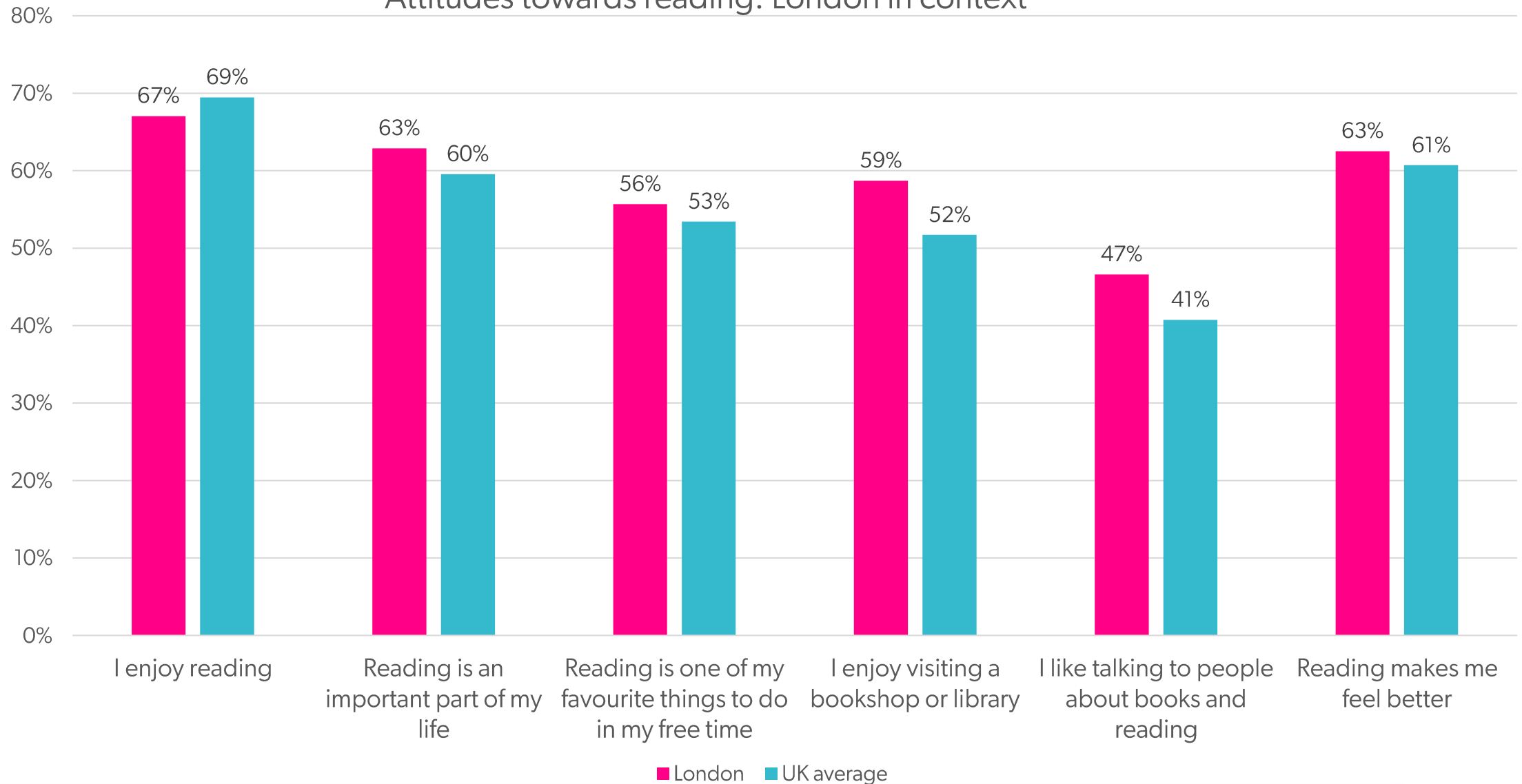


Reading engagement habits: London



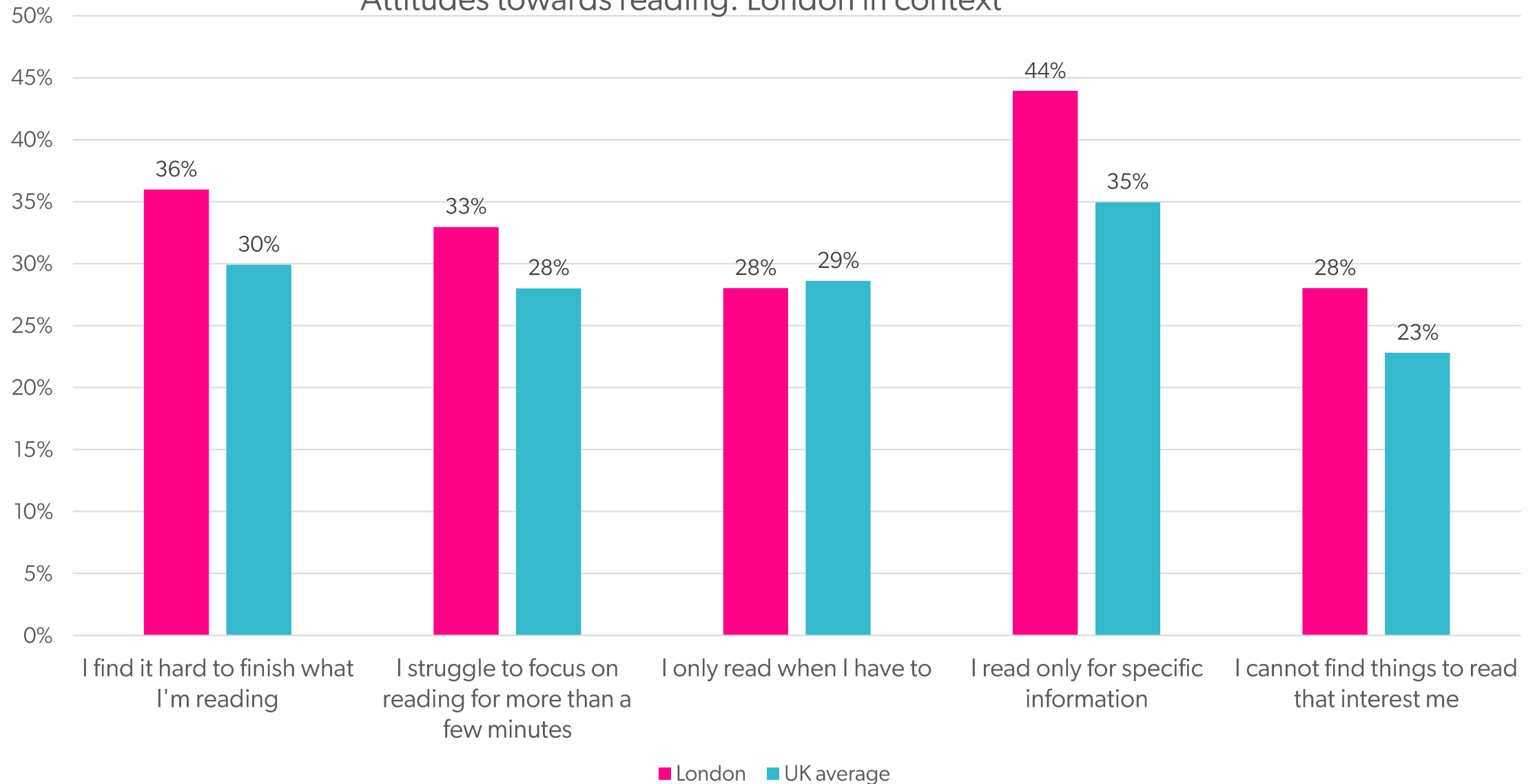
Reader identity: London

Attitudes towards reading: London in context



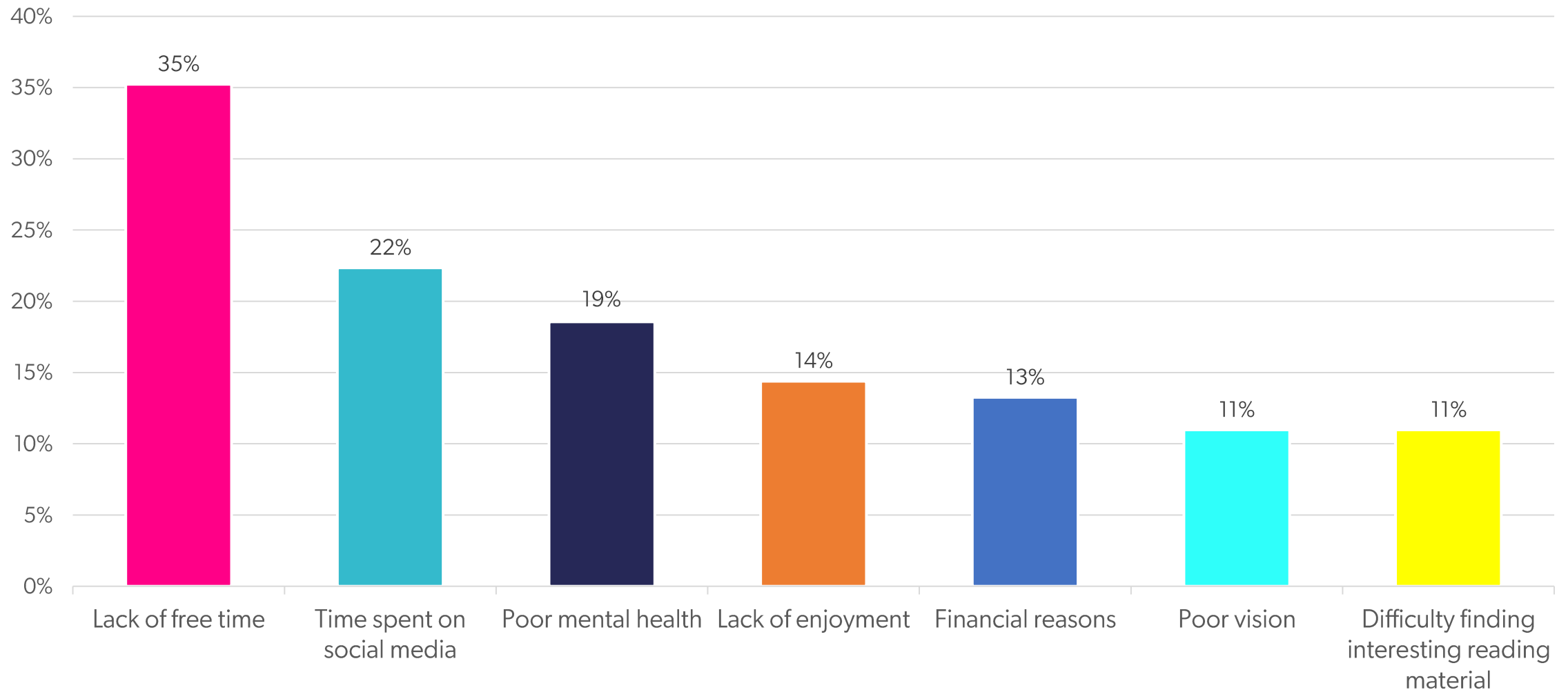
Reader identity: London

Attitudes towards reading: London in context



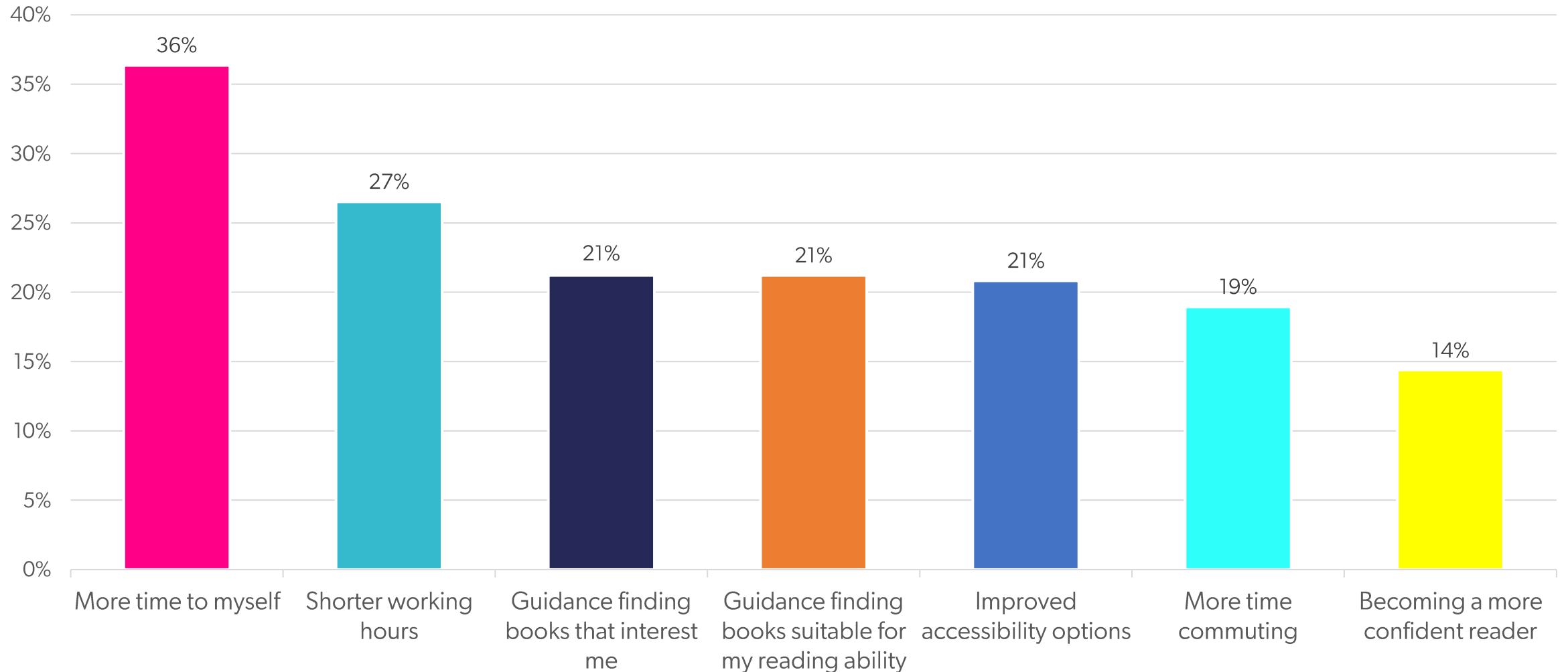
Barriers to reading: London

What stops Londoners from reading?



Support mechanisms for reading

What would help Londoners fit in more reading?



Entry points into reading

- 3 in 5 Londoners (61%) say there are 'lots of things I want to read'
- Cultural trends
 - 45% say watching films or TV shows has got them interested in reading
 - 36% say listening to podcasts or audiobooks has got them interested in reading
- Representation
 - 45% want to read more books featuring characters with experiences similar to their own, but 38% say it's difficult to find these texts
- Health and wellbeing
 - 46% want to read more books about how to manage their health and wellbeing, but 28% say it's difficult to find them

Conclusions

A region of contradictions and opportunities

- Fewer regular readers with reading frequency falling
- But... a strong appreciation for the role of reading
- Enjoy social aspects of reading and engage in them at higher rates
- Time pressures, poor mental health, poor vision and financial pressures all higher-than-average barriers
- Increased knowledge, confidence and accessibility as key enablers

Learnings

- Offering support and guidance on book selection
- Ensuring accessibility
- Harnessing power of social and community reading
- Nudging wider behaviours into regular reading habits – start small given time pressures
- Reframing what it means to 'be a reader'
- Using social and cultural conversations as an entry point

Read more or get in touch!

- You can view the reports on our website:
 - [State of the Nation's Adult Reading Reports](#)
- Questions? Need additional insights? Have a research idea you'd like to discuss?
 - Contact us at carina.spaulding@readingagency.org.uk