

10th November 2020

Accommodation for Students

Landlord Webinar



Landlord Webinar

- Presentation of approx 25 – 30 mins
- Opportunity to ask questions through zoom
- Questions are anonymous and will be answered at the end of the session
- We will distribute the presentation at the end of the session
- We will email you for feedback and to understand any other topics you would like covered



While we wait for the remaining delegates to join please feel free to connect with us on LinkedIn. Just scan the QR code using your phone.

Background

I founded afs in 2000, we are now into our 20th year!

We have helped millions of students to find accommodation.

We currently work with

40,000 landlords

3,500 letting agents

and the majority of major PBSA operators



We continue to develop and improve accommodationforstudents.com

Invested significantly into the website over the past 3 years



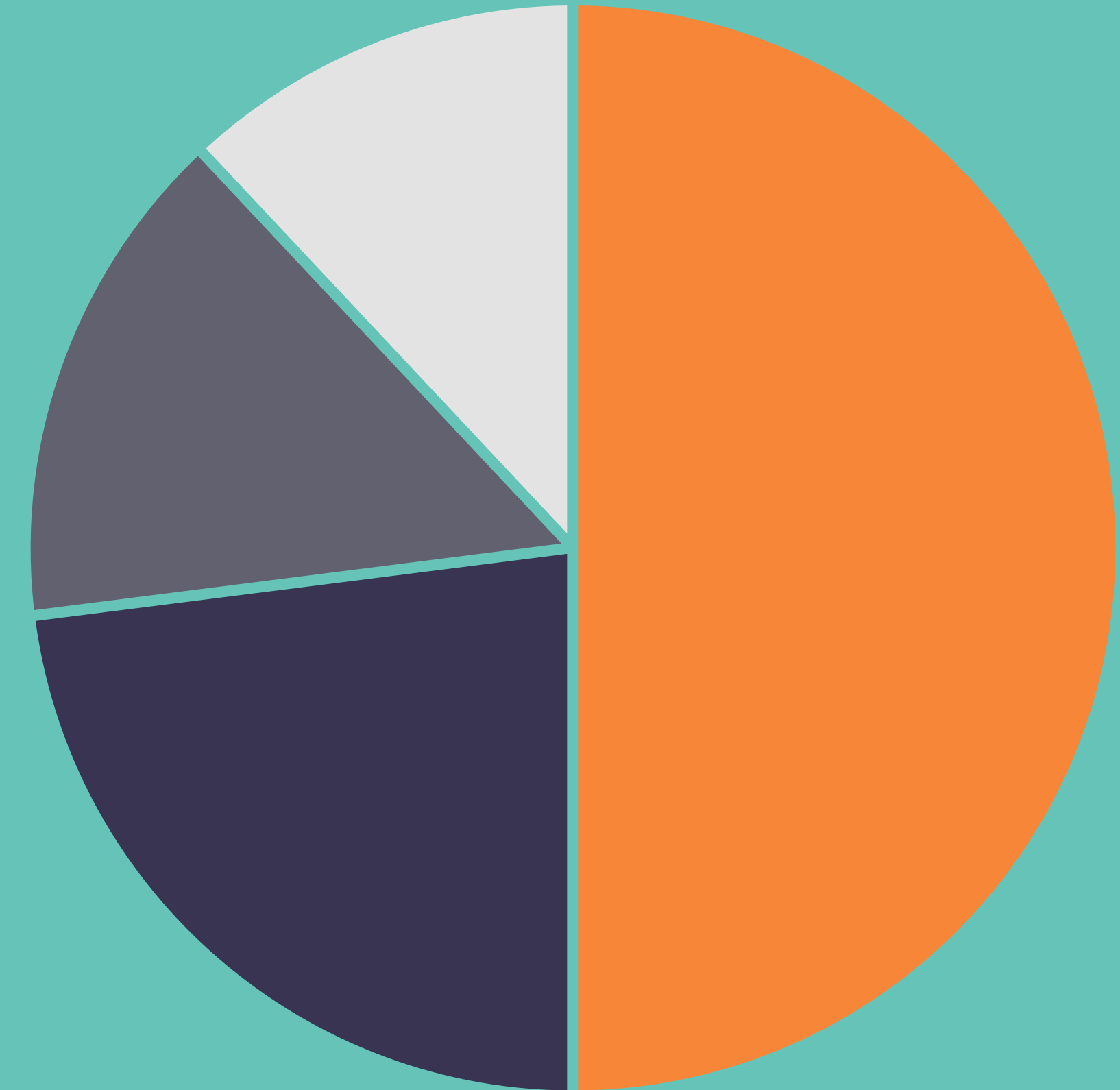
Impact of Covid 19 on Landlords and agents

30% of our landlords reported all their tenants left

Just under half tried to collect rent as normal from students that had left the property

50% had some tenants return home

23% of landlords 'very concerned about the impact'



Minor reduction

Major reduction

Not sure

No change



Impact of Covid-19 on afs

Like most businesses we experienced an impact during early lock down

This was primarily a short term reduction in webtraffic:

- We are currently **9.73%** up year to date on 2019
- March 15th to April 5th **27%** decline in traffic year on year
- 14th August to 3rd September **8.13%** decline year on year
- 40% increase in HMO enquiries

Achieved growth but two short term periods of impact

Strong financial performance - represents the underlying strength of the business and sector

Confidence in the future and have continued to invest heavily during 2020

New features and staff



Our research

- Run an ongoing programme of research
- Recently completed series of online focus groups
- Survey of students from our extensive database
- Analysed over 1000 responses
- Continuous effort to understand how students search for accommodation, what they think of it and how it can be improved
- More recently trying to understand impact of Covid 19 on the students and how it might impact on future plans



Key areas covered today

- Main purpose of the session is to share with you our recent research and offer some guidance for the next few months
- Focus on our student research;
 - Impact of Covid on the 2020/21 experience
 - Overview of current University experience
 - Latest student feedback on accommodation
 - Some practical tips for addressing key marketing challenges

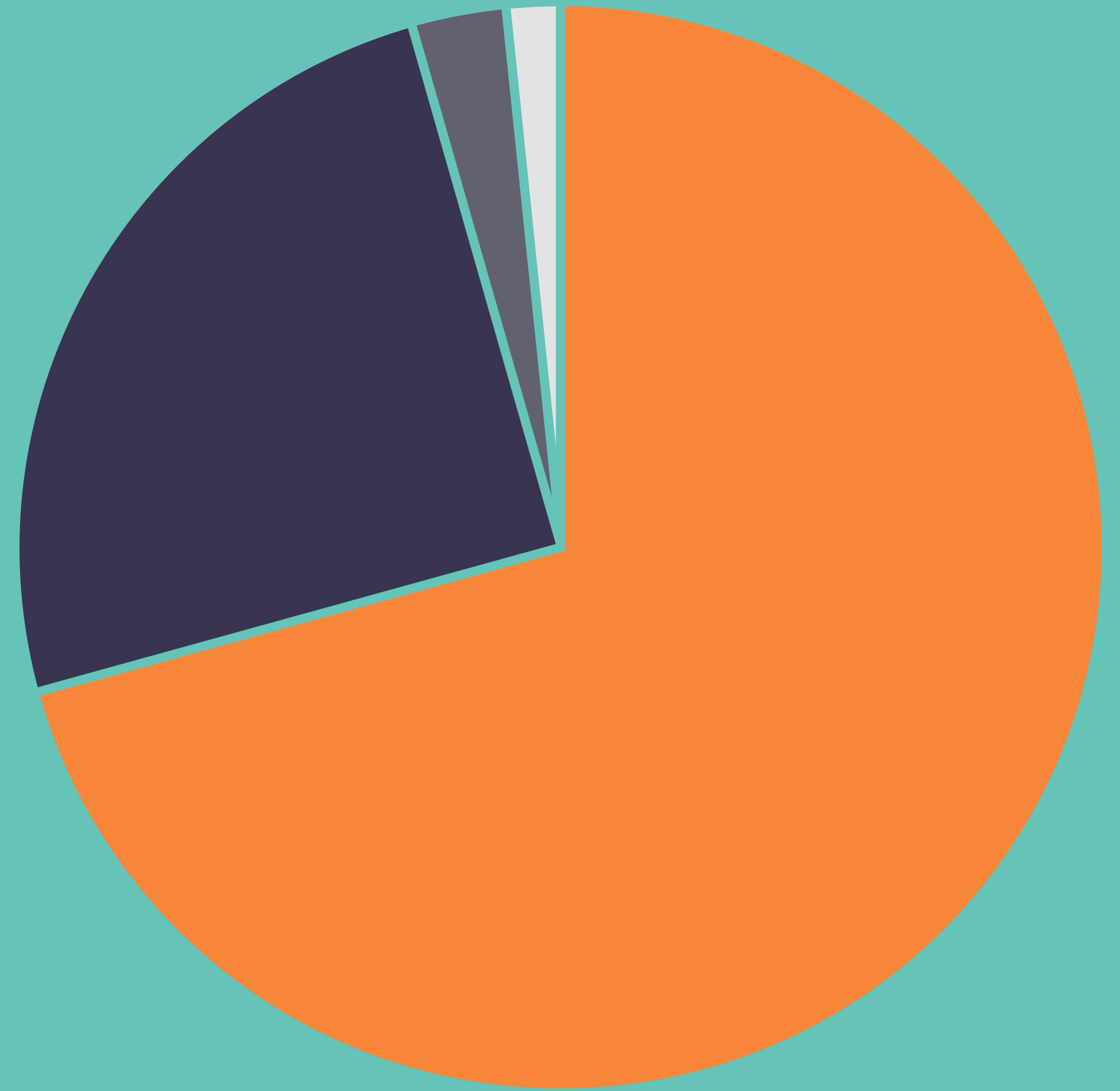
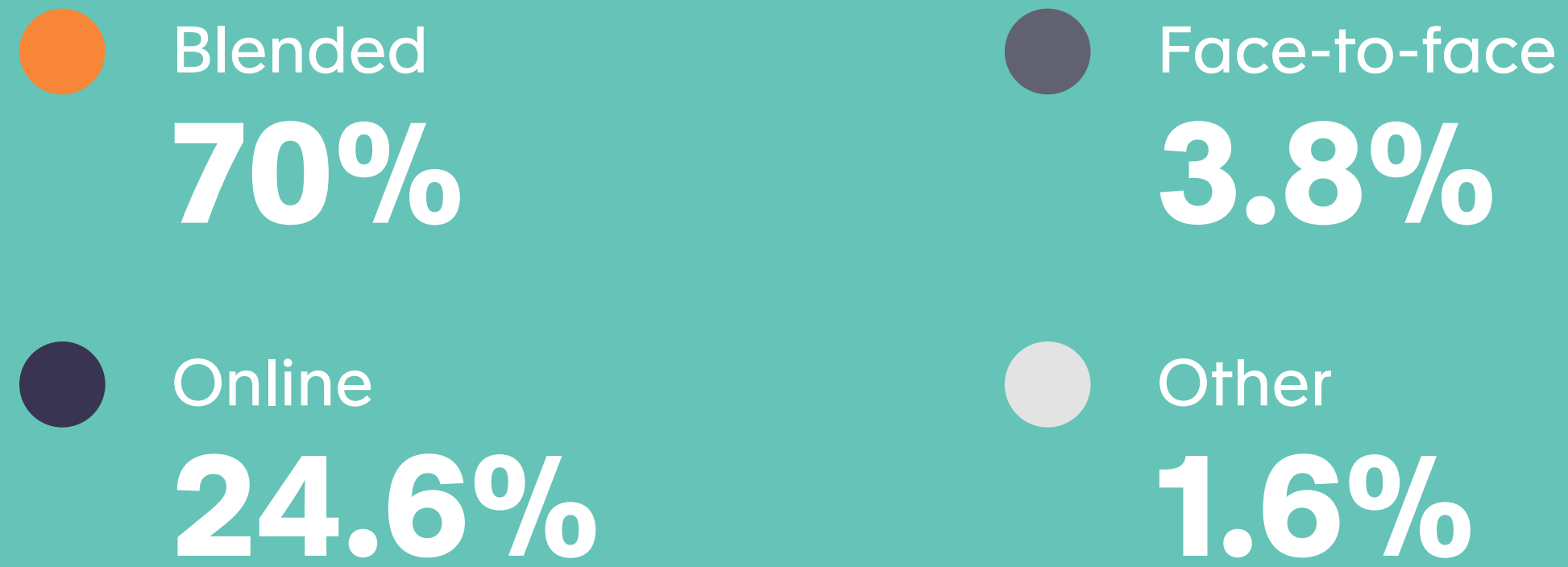


September 2020

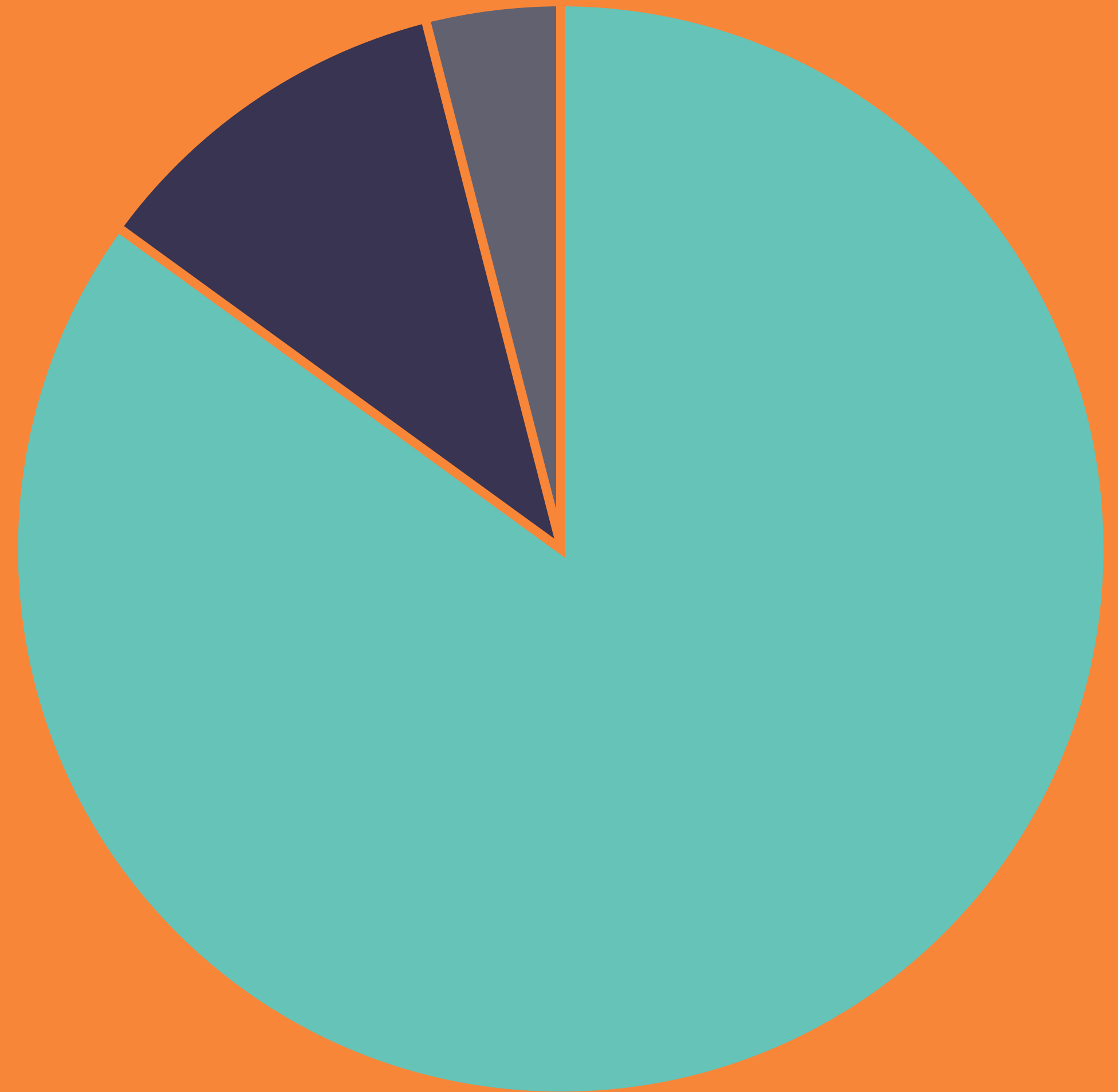
- Record number of students accepted to University places
- Includes significant increases in none EU Students
 - 4% increase in students with confirmed place
 - 9 % increase in international students with confirmed place
- UK Universities held their global appeal
- But not clear yet how many did not take up their offer
- Potentially reflected in accommodation performance
 - Knight Frank have PBSA occupancy at 76%
 - Occupancy rates below bookings as a result of 'no shows'
- 'No-shows' likely to be international students
- Significant regional variations in performance
- Potential secondary market in January for Postgraduate students



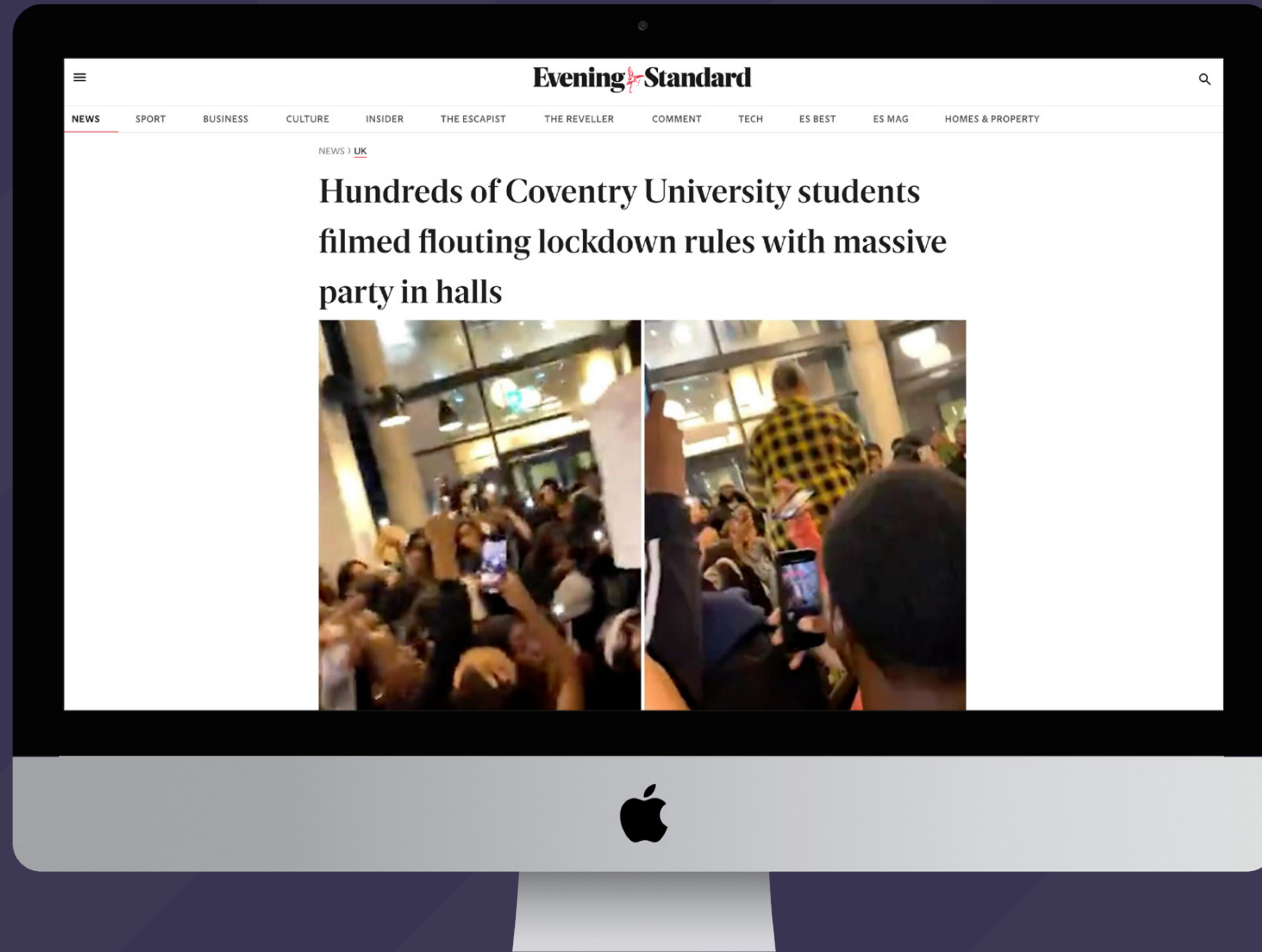
University teaching styles



Are you concerned about the impact of Covid 19 on your University experience?



This is the exception NOT the norm!

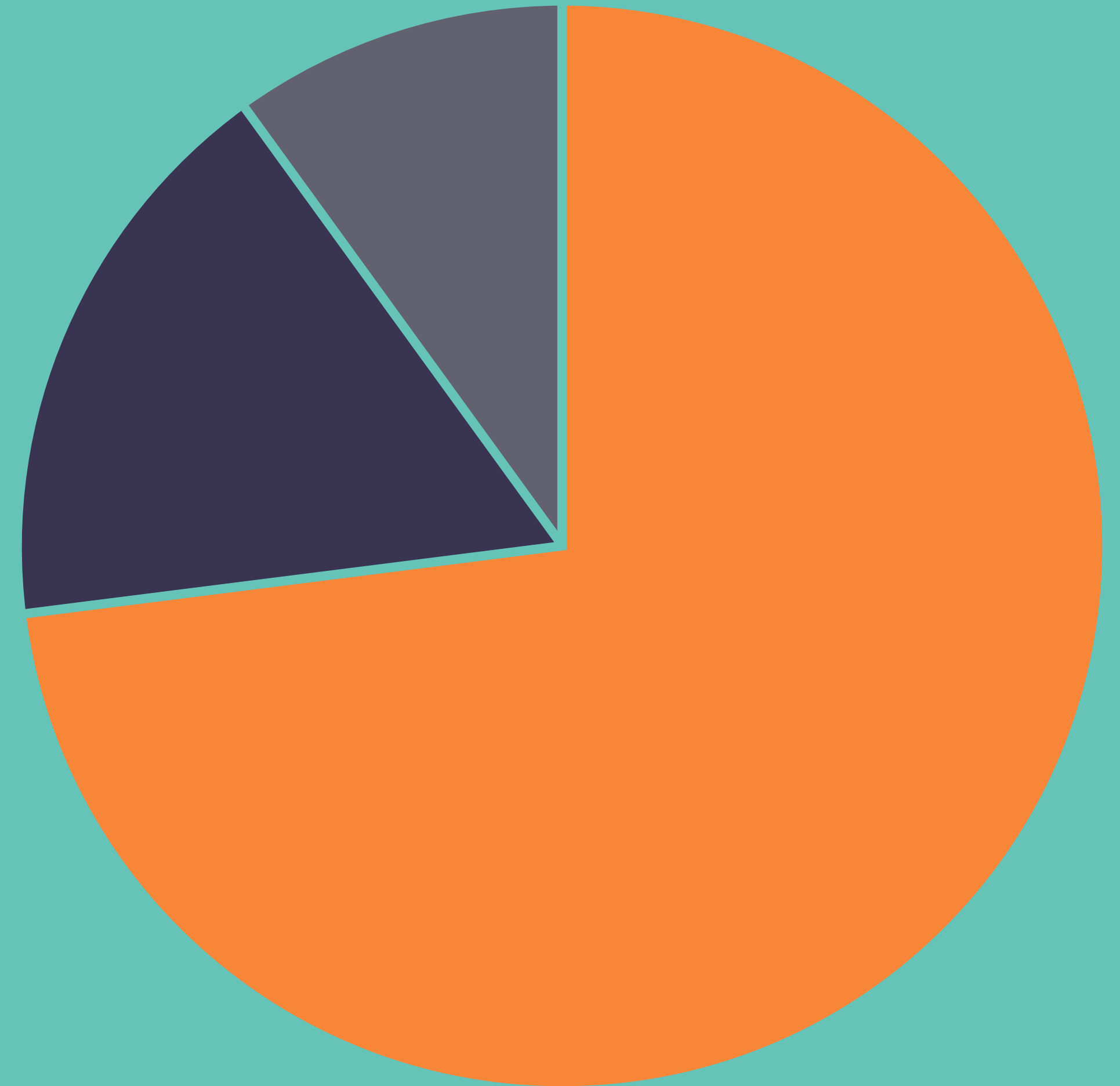


Do you think that University is good value for money?

● No
73%

● Yes
17%

● Not sure
10%



Value for money?

71.8%

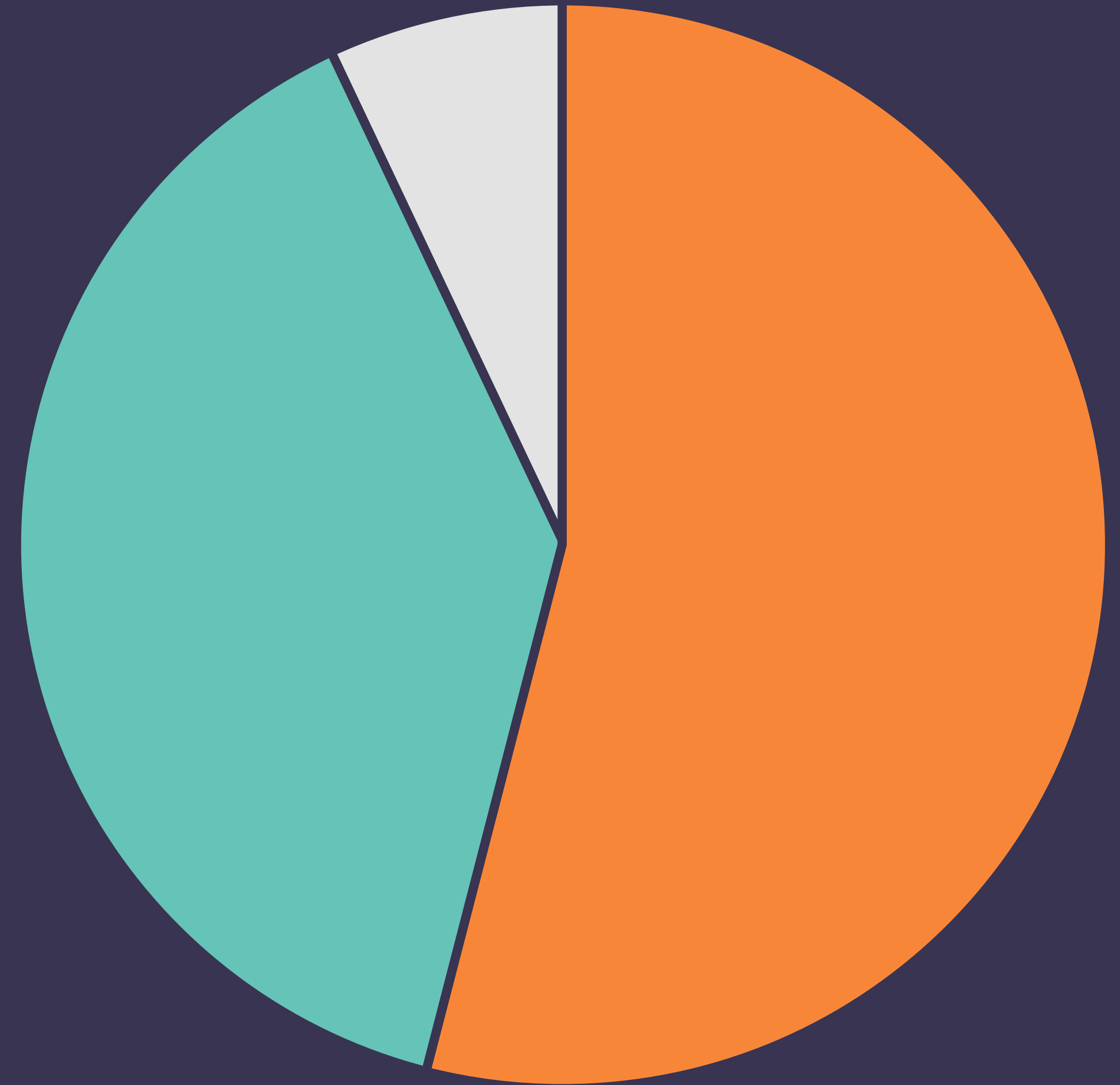
Would prefer blended or online learning
and a **reduction** in tuition fees

23%

Would prefer face to face learning and
paying **full** tuition fees

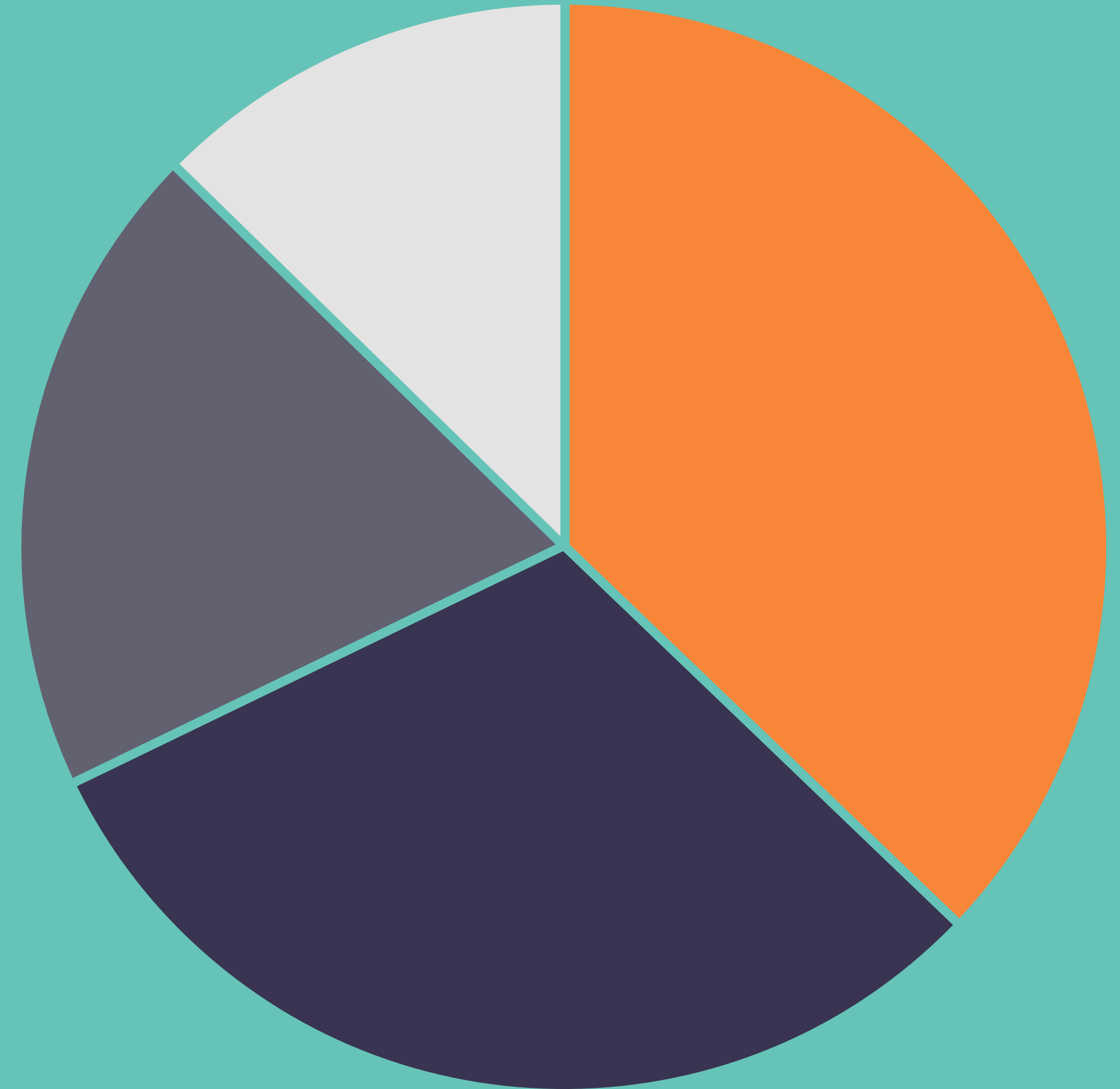


Have you considered leaving your accommodation?



Will you return home during lock down?

- Stay in accommodation **32.7%**
- Stay if my housemates stay **19.5%**
- Return home **30.7%**
- Not sure **12.7%**



Return v Stay

"As an international student from Taiwan, I'd rather return home. However, I am fine with staying in UK if I can still get food and essentials easily."

**1st year student,
University College London**

"While I would happily stay in my flat in Manchester during lockdown, I would not like to do this alone, and thus if my flat mates moved home I would do the same."

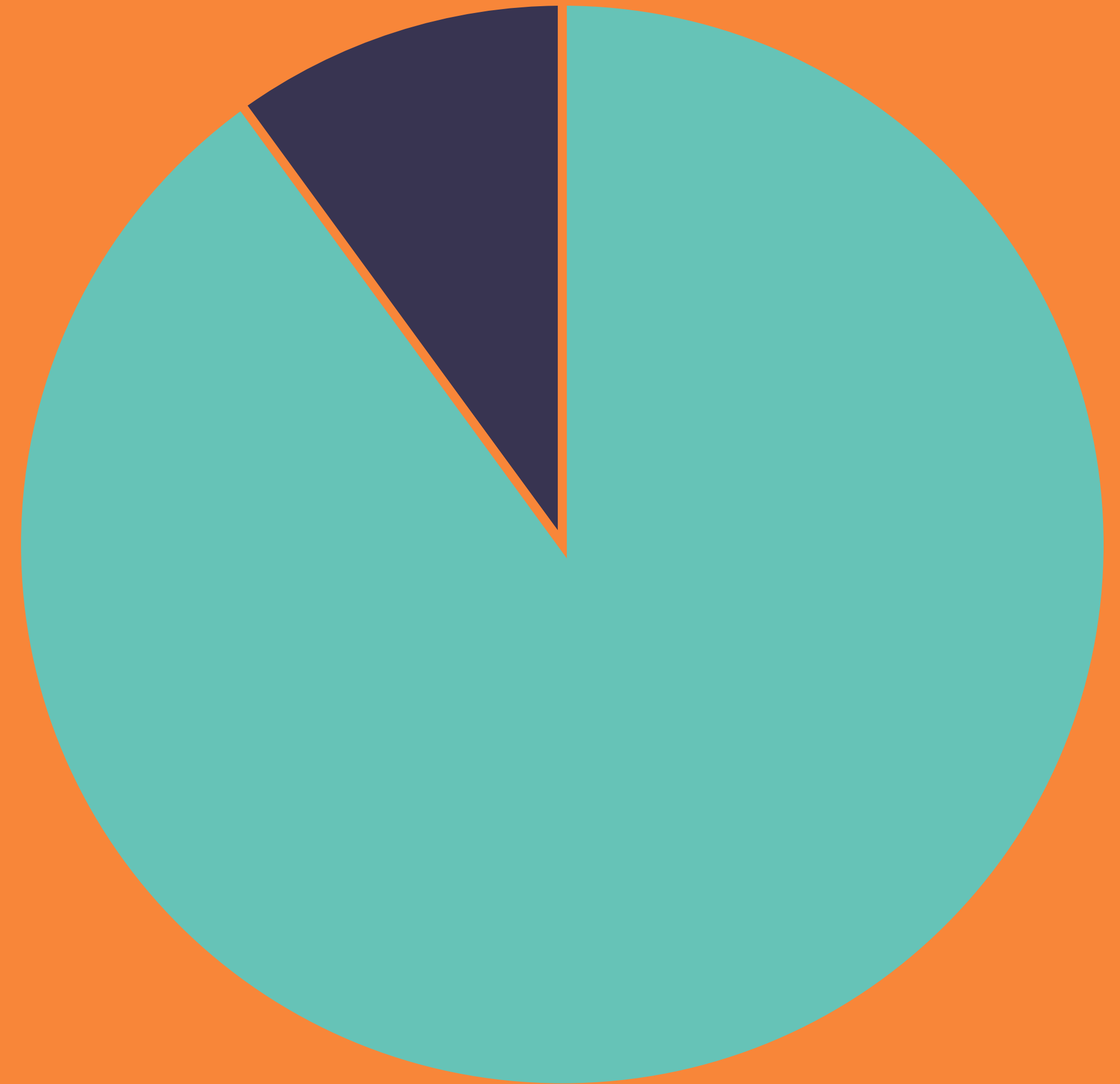
**3rd year student,
University of Manchester**

"...I will stay in my accommodation as personal preference after being home for 6 months already! As a third year in a studio I am in a 'bubble' with my old university house and am very much enjoying being back in my second home."

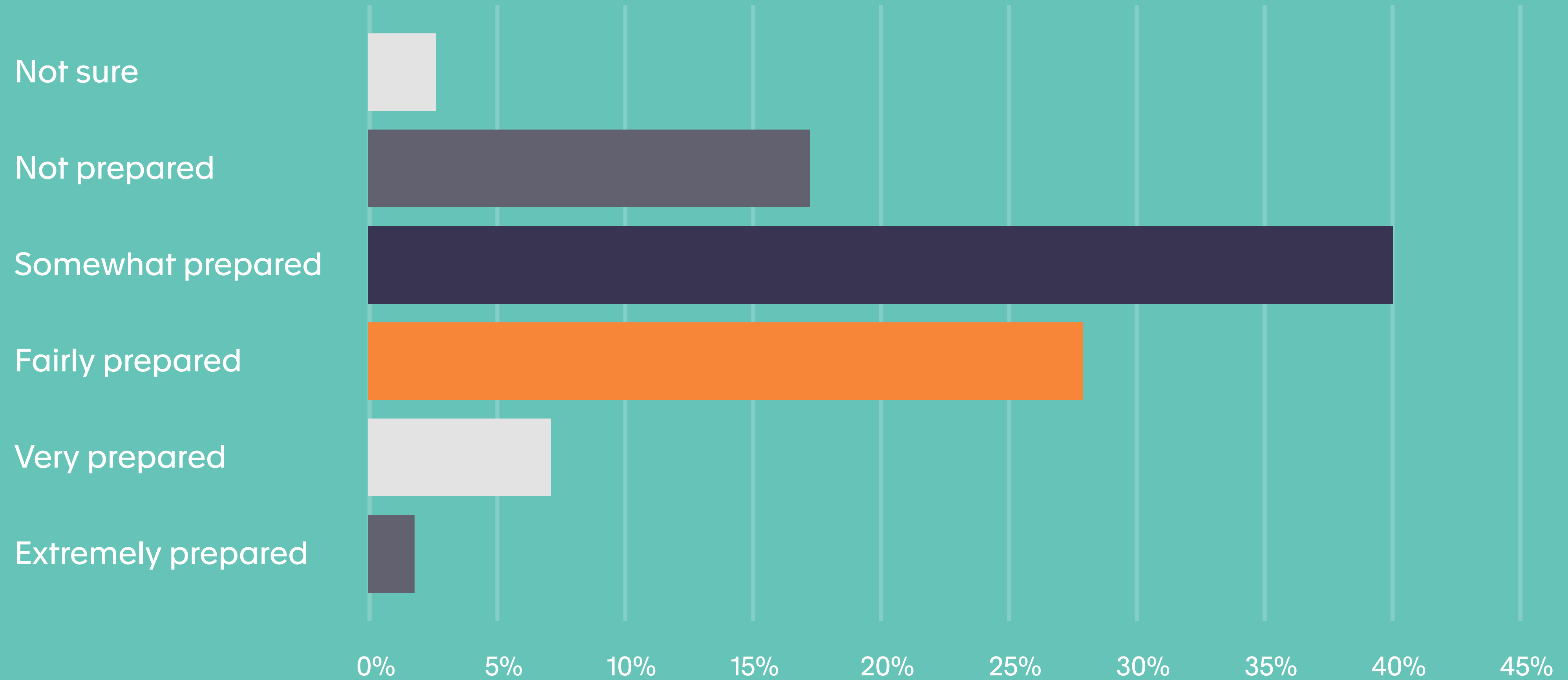
**3rd year student,
Southampton University**



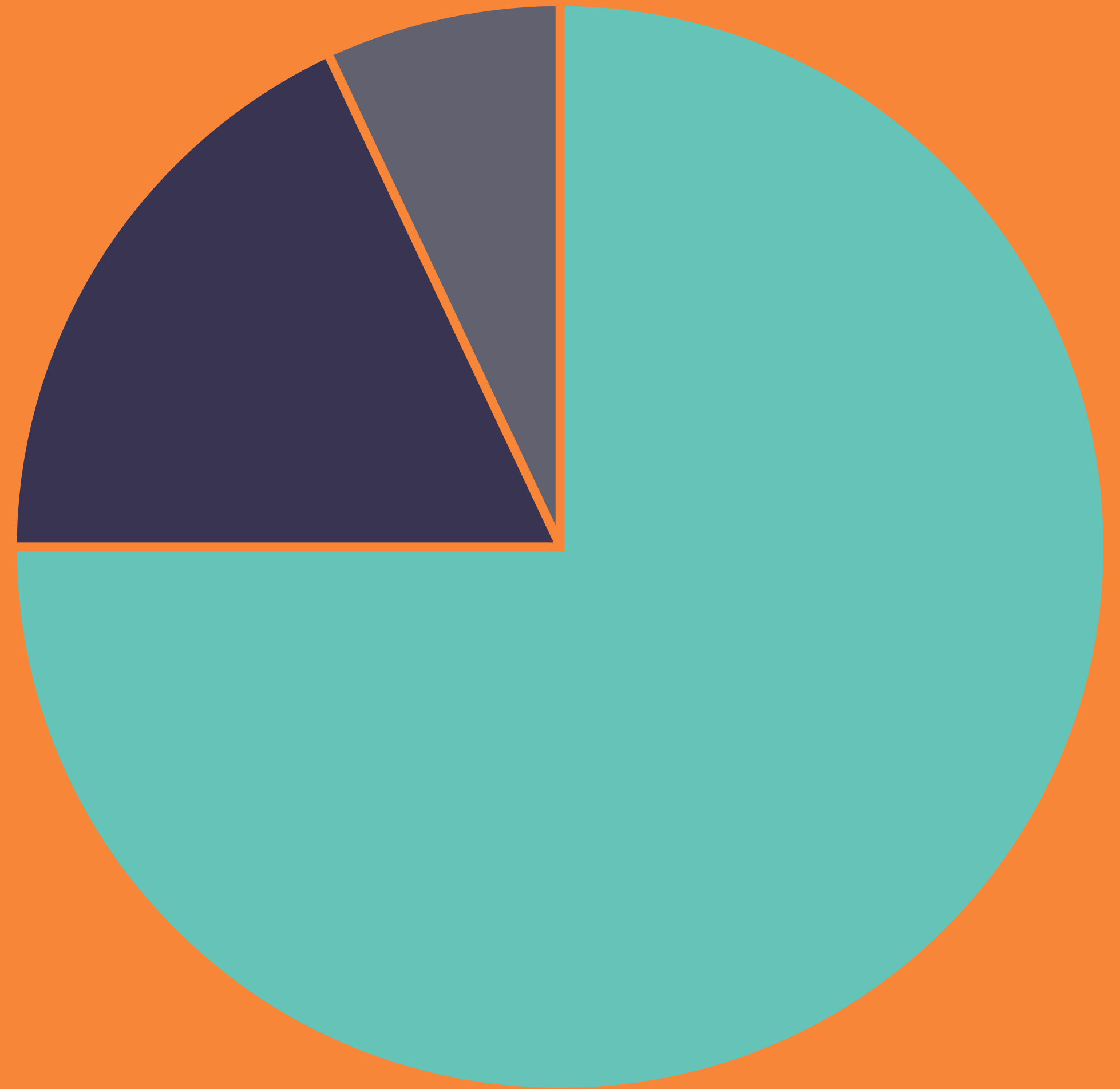
Housemates are important



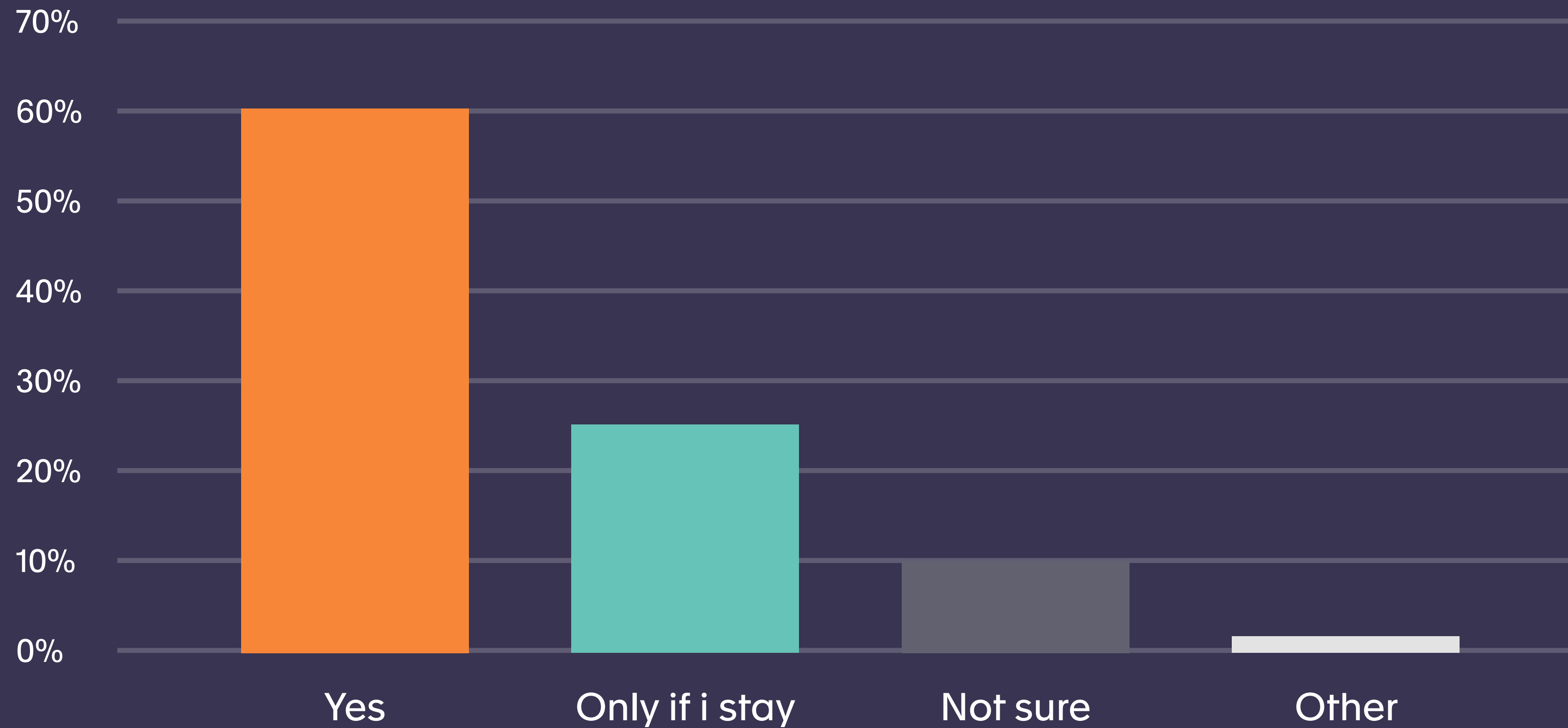
How prepared are you for the 2nd wave?



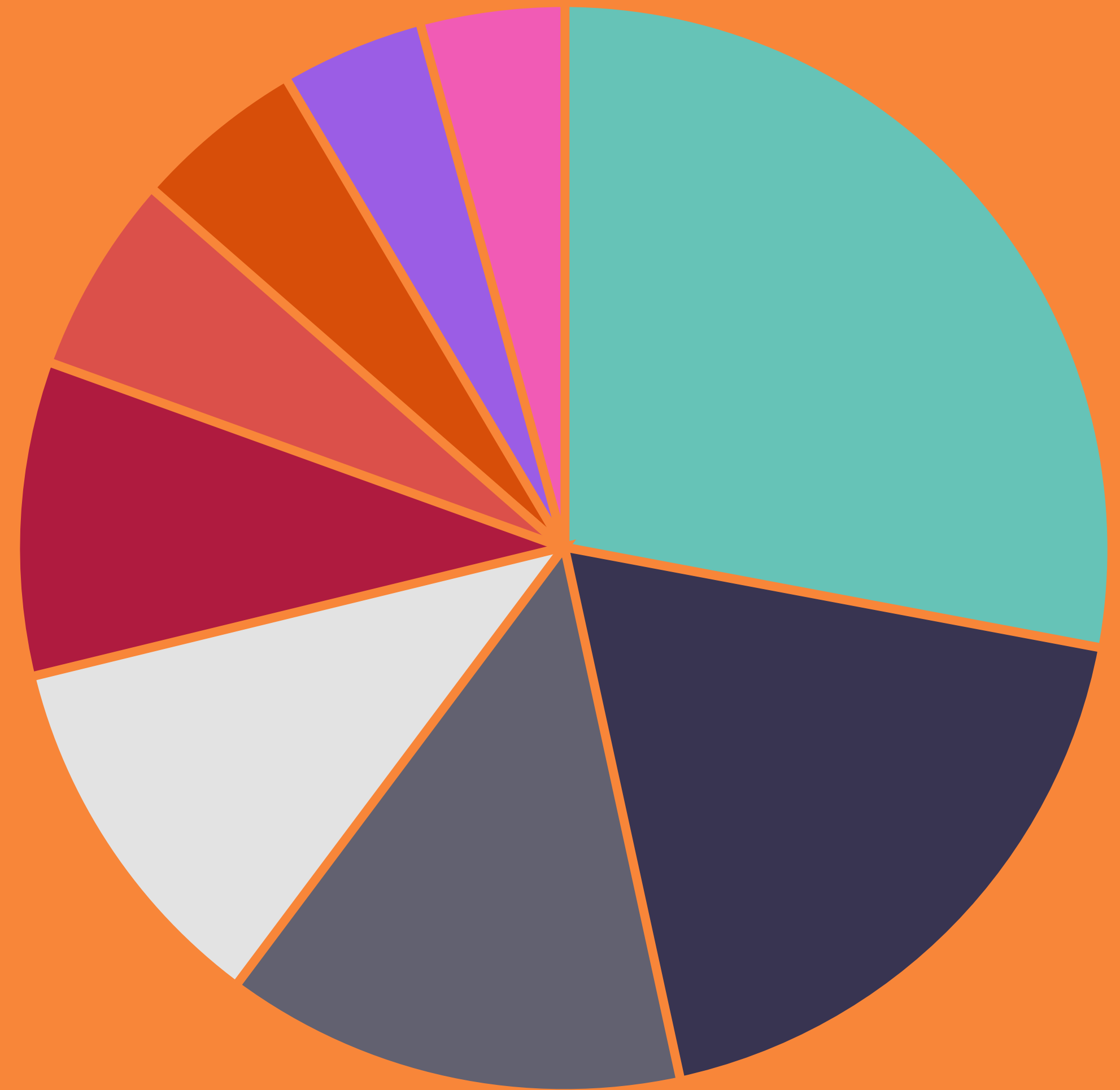
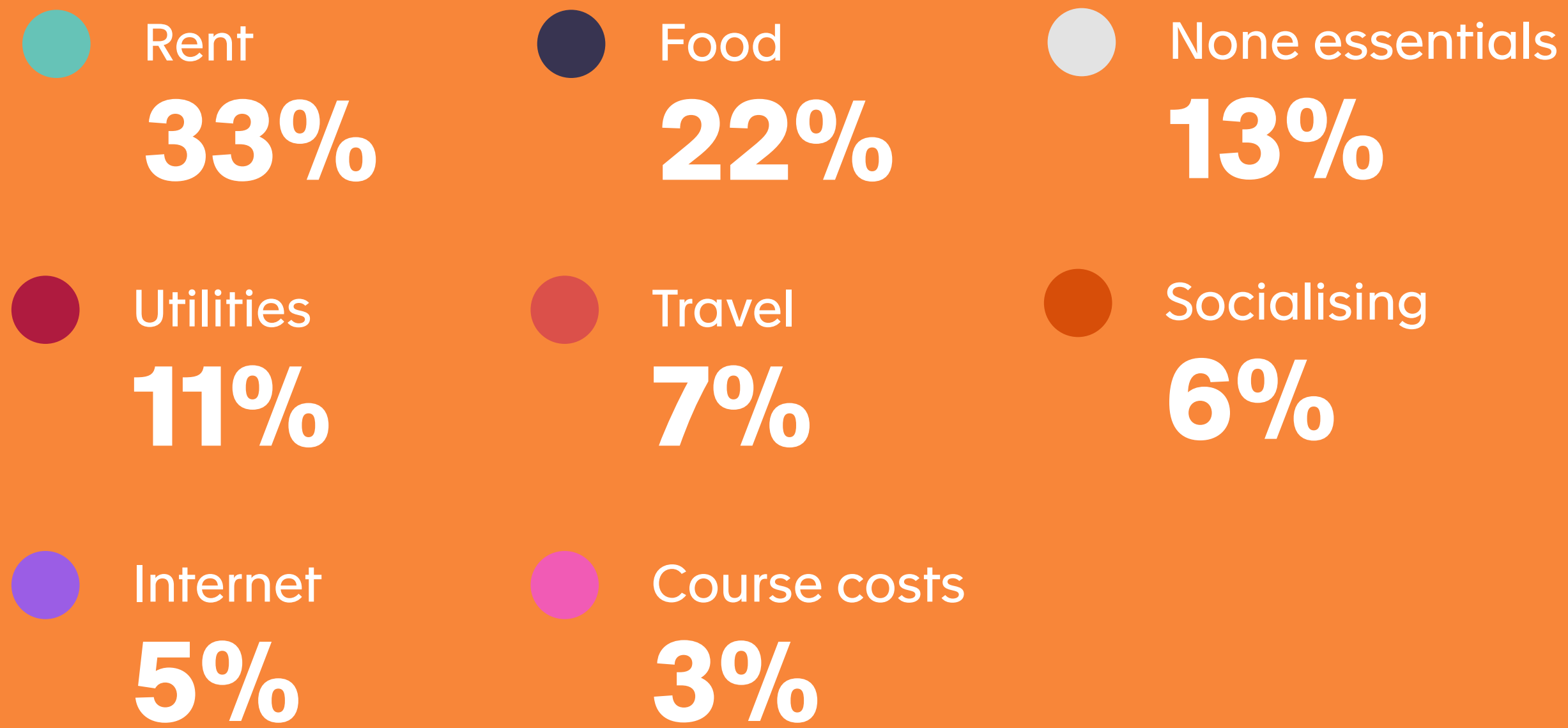
Do you think you will return to your accommodation after the Christmas break?



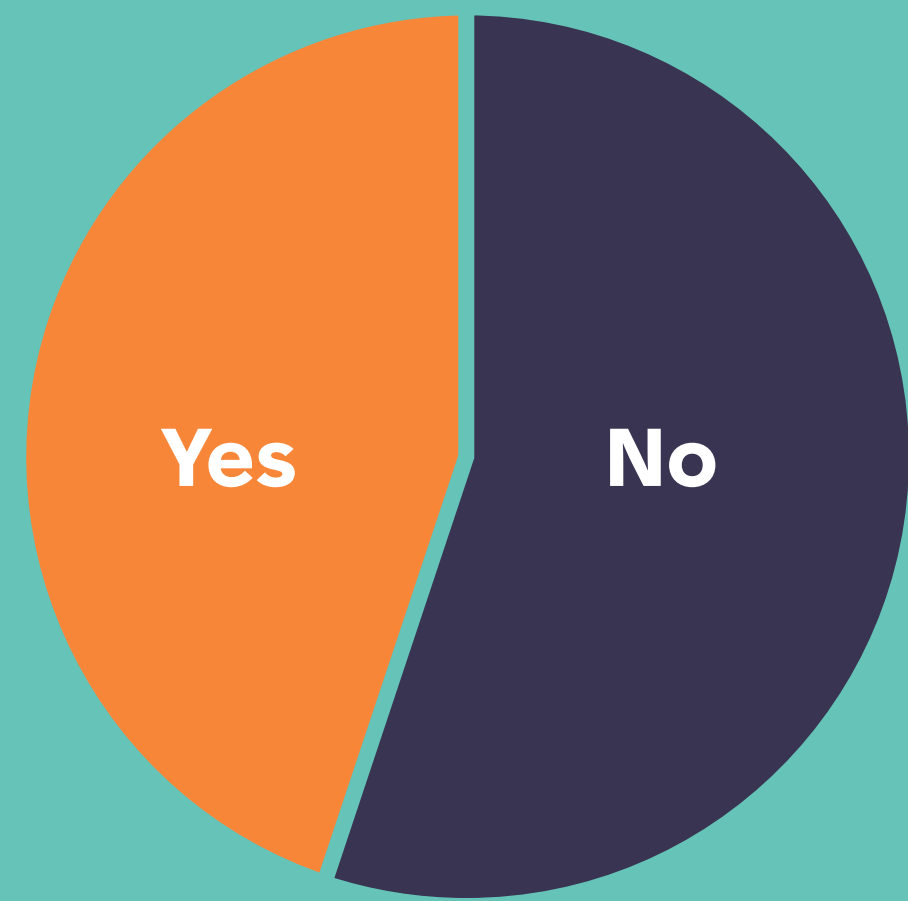
Do you plan to pay your rent this year?



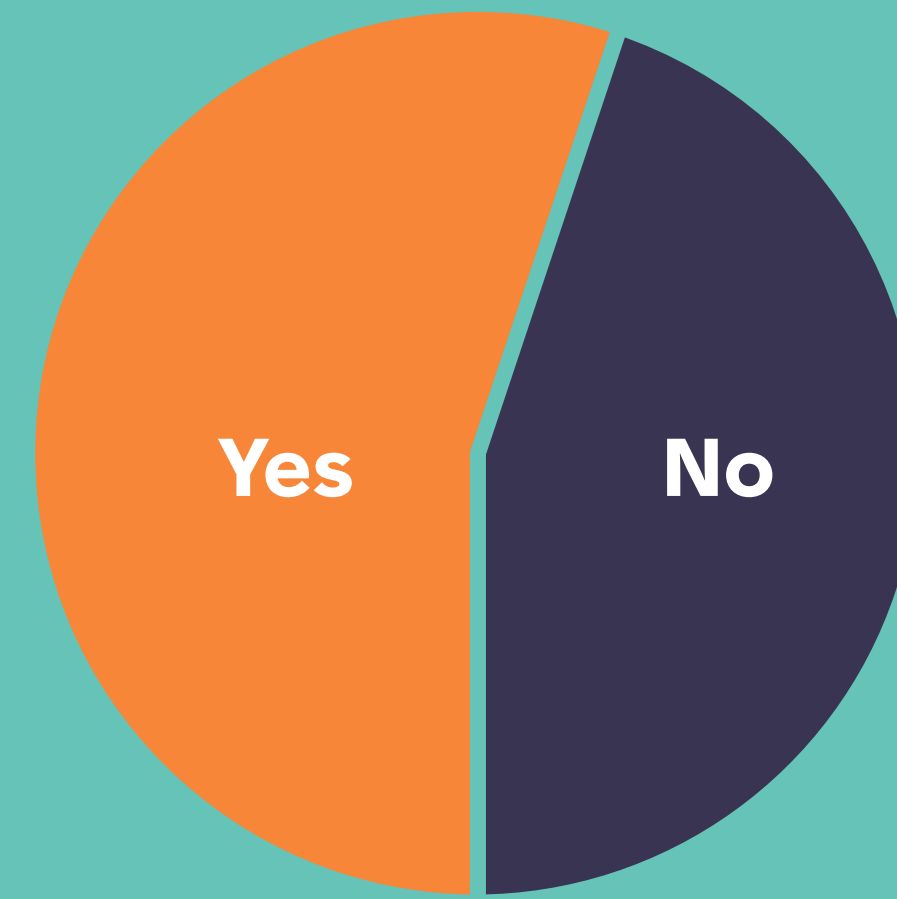
Student expenditure



Financial pressures



Did you have a part time job pre-COVID?



Are you currently looking for a part time job?



"I did not have a part-time job before covid-19. However, I am currently applying for jobs (part-time or casual) to work along my studies this year."

**3rd year student,
Loughborough University**

"Before covid I had no need to work for my uni but now I work for 4 hours everyday as a deliveroo driver."

**2nd year student,
Bristol University**

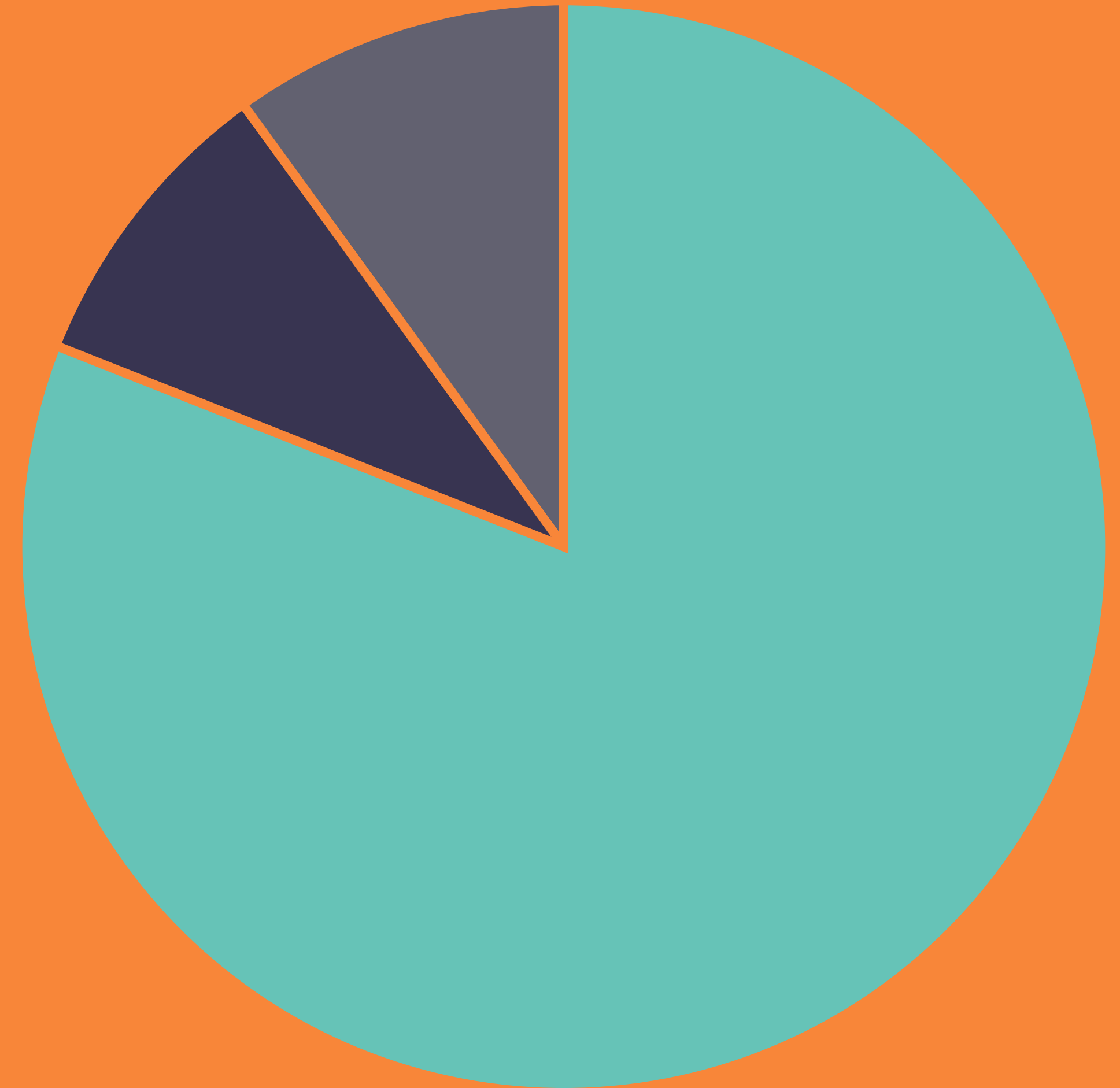


Are you happy with your current accommodation?

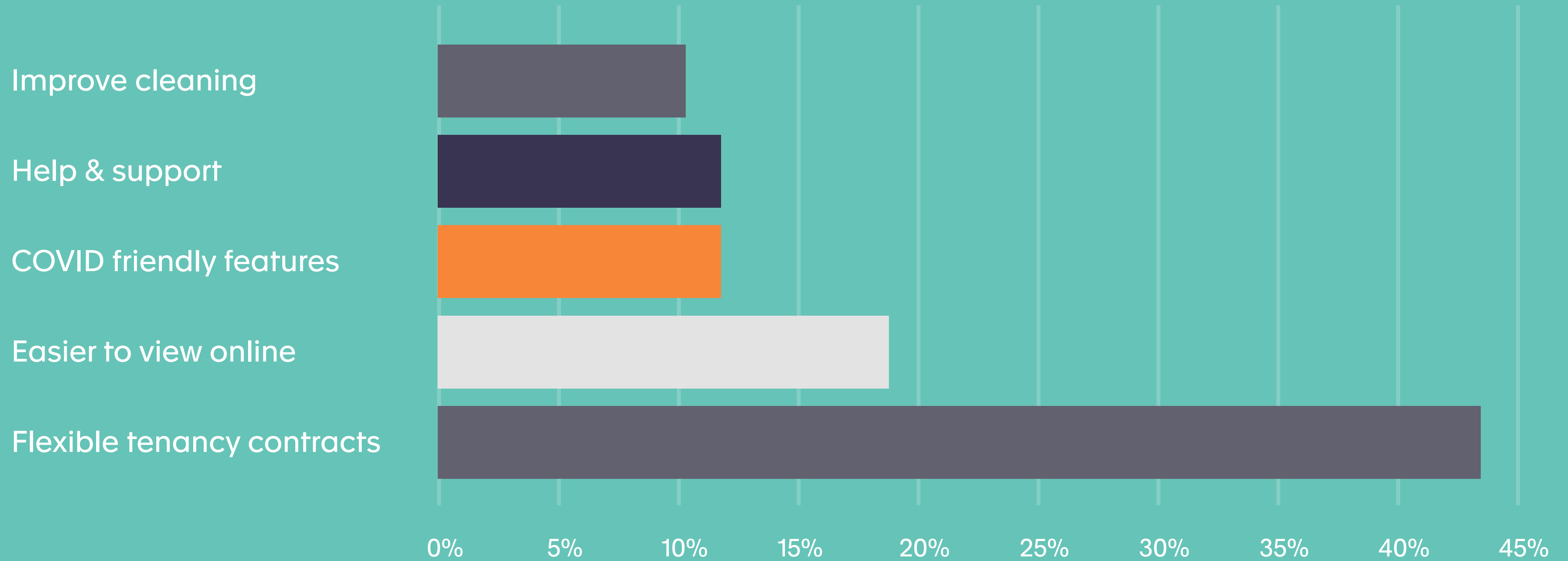
● Yes
81%

● Not sure
10%

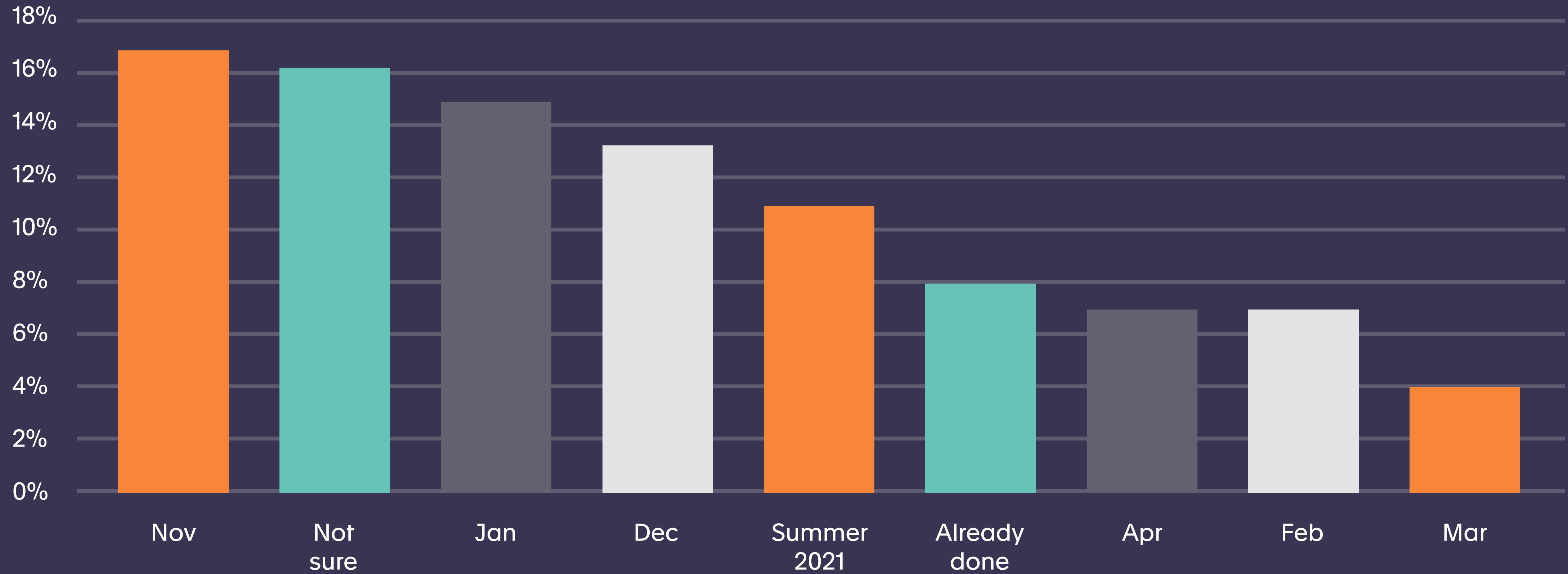
● No
9%



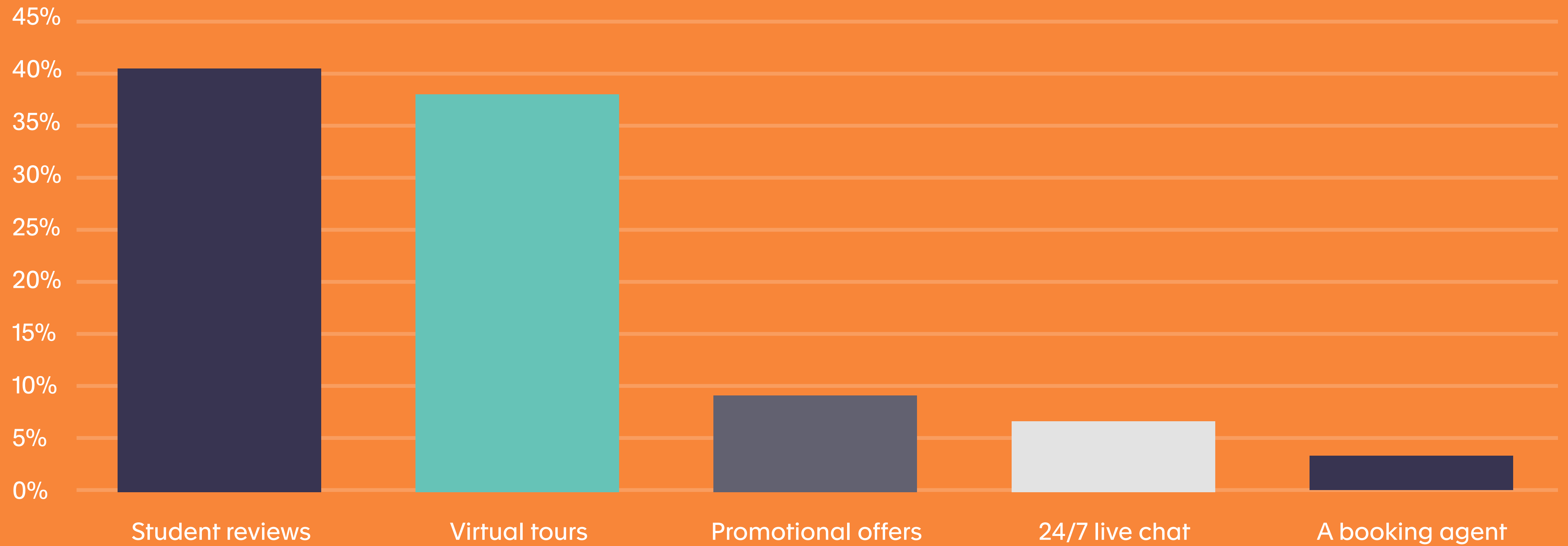
How can students be best supported in their accommodation?



When do you plan to look for accommodation for next year?



Key features



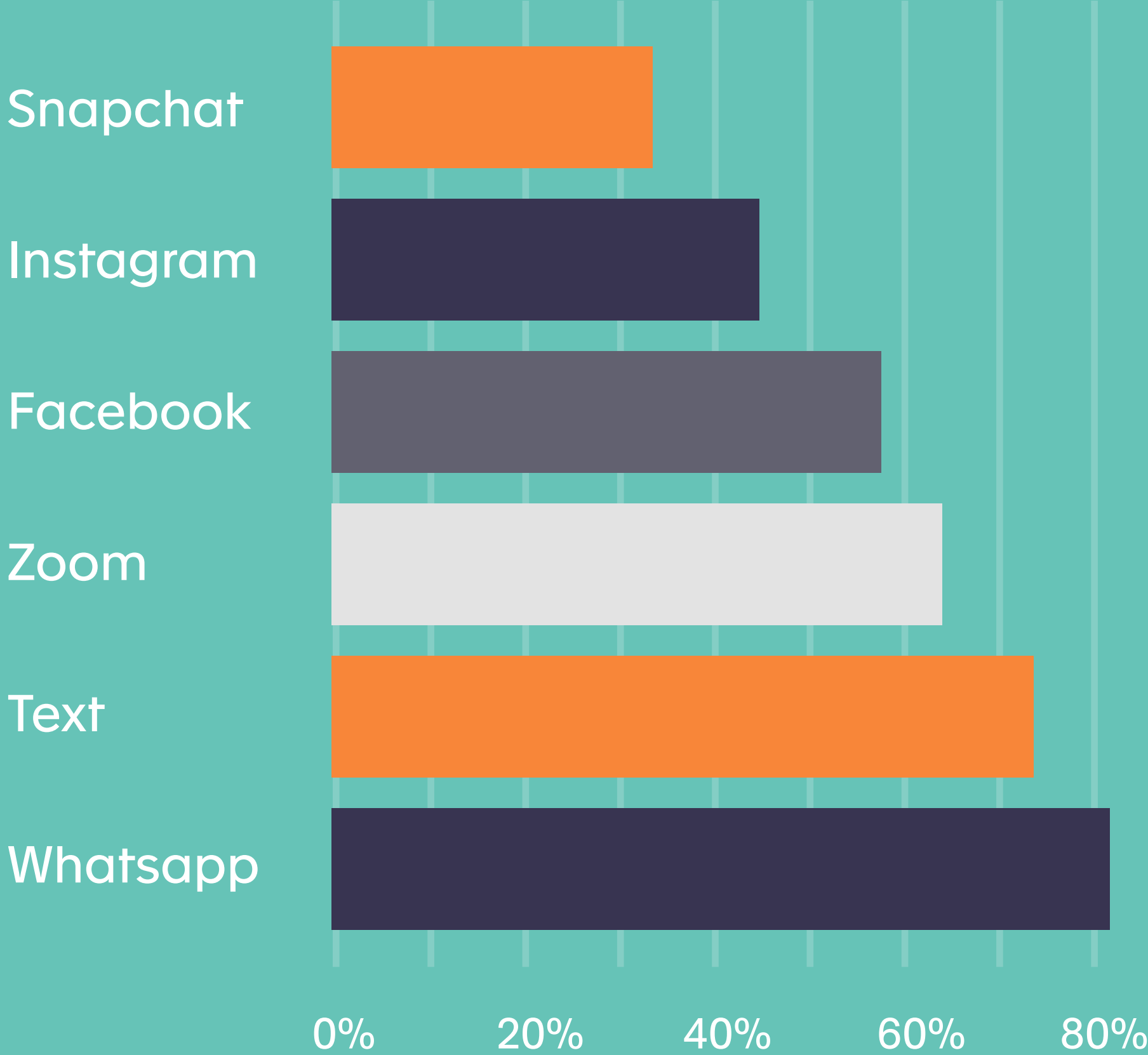
Key themes

- Explored a number of themes
- Currently a fundamental requirement to provide as much information online as possible
 - Reviews and virtual video tours becoming essential
 - 81% of students start with an online search
- Hungry for information and certainty
- If the desired flexibility can't be achieved
 - Potential for a marketing advantage here
- Students are looking for accommodation now for 2021
 - 16% undecided

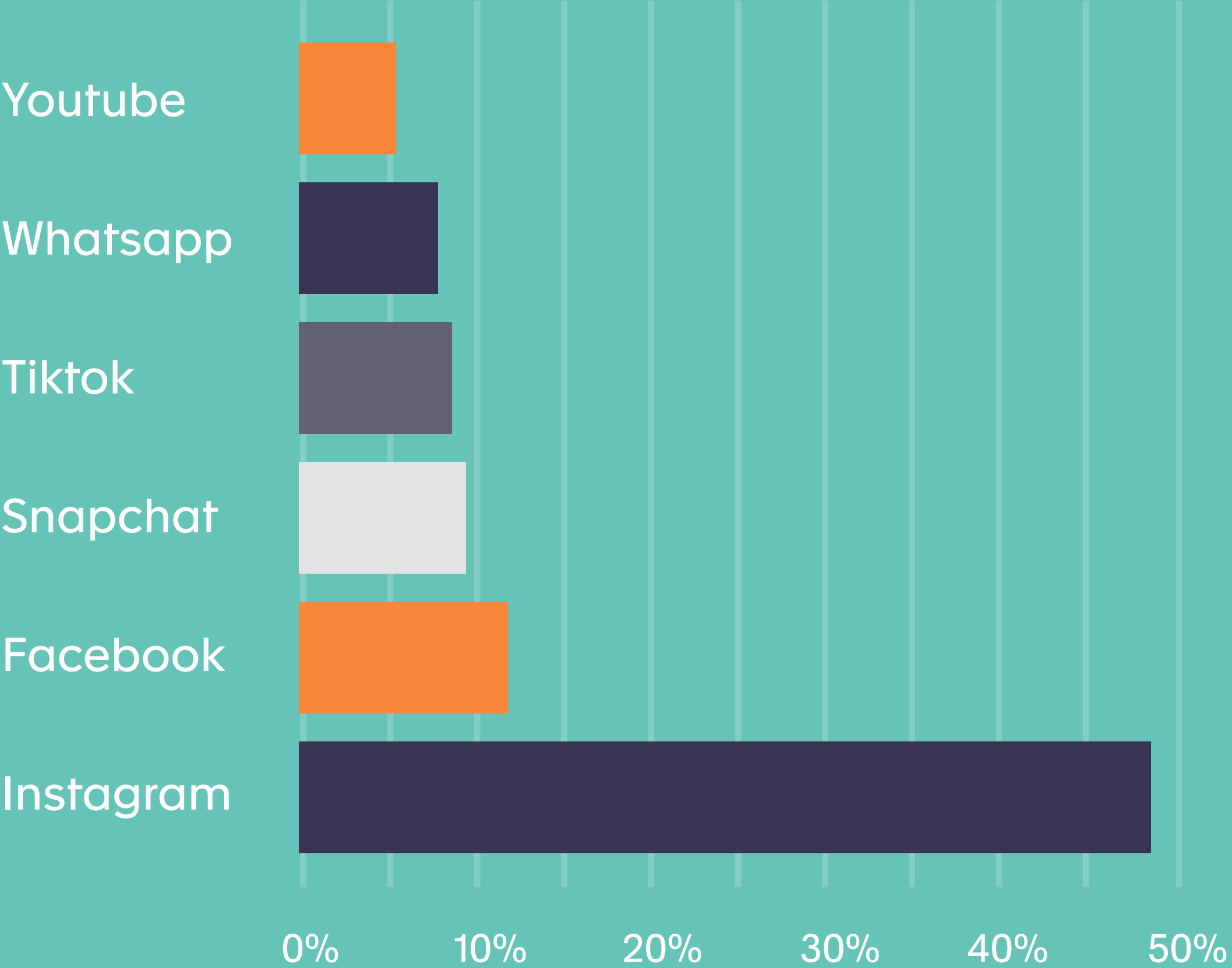


Maintaining communication with students

Keeping in touch



Most used social media



Marketing toolkit

Product

Marketing

Difficult
↑
↓
Easy

Flexible tenancy packages

Deep cleaning

Technology features

Superfast broadband

Bills inclusive

Difficult
↑
↓
Easy

Virtual tours

Social media monitoring and response

Video tours

Quality images

Enhance Covid friendly features

Student reviews

Rapid enquiry responses

Free advert on AFS

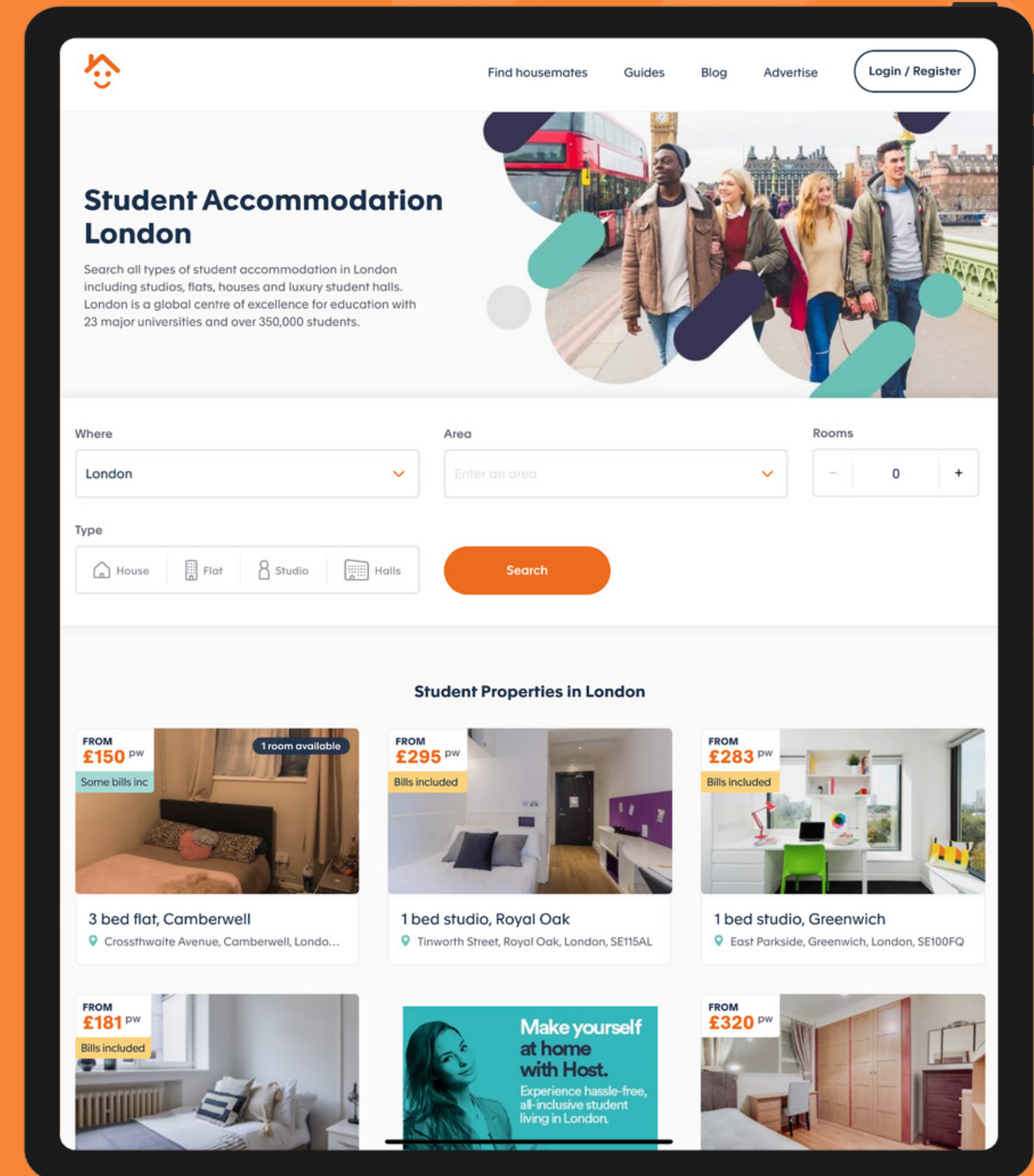
Key tips

- Increasing communication with students is critical
- Particularly for those looking for reassurance and confidence
- Natural home is social media
 - Instagram the clear leader
- AFS have recently chosen to make an investment in our own social media activity
- Increased staff count to facilitate this and begin to interact more with students



How we can help

- Most of you know us well enough to know what we do
- To celebrate our 20 years in business we are currently offering landlords old and new a free advertising credit
- We continue to think long term and invest in www.accommodationforstudents.com
- Improvements in
 - SEO
 - Property listings and advertising
 - Search and filtering
 - Live support





Welcome **Mike Phelan**

[🔗 Edit my account](#)



Add property



Properties



Enquiries



Performance



Testimonials



Invoices



The future

- UK has a world class higher education offering
- Currently has the #1 ranked University in the world
- University remains an attractive option
 - This typically endures during economic uncertainty
- There is to be a growth in the number of 18 year olds of 1 million over the next 10 years
 - Trend is towards significantly more demand for higher education



"Do it! It is the best choice you will make, it is so so intimidating and there is so much change and adaption to be made but it is the biggest transition you will possibly make in life from living at home to independence."

**3rd year student,
University of Essex**

"Time flies so fast at uni, so just do as much as possible."

**1st year student,
University of York**

"You are being given an opportunity that many people would love to have. Give yourself the chance to experience it."

**Postgraduate Student,
University of Manchester**



Thank you

