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Research on long covid

Polling Methodology Explained

Stage 1: Where do your participants come from?

Using random digit dialling and online ads Ireland Thinks has built a panel of approximately 25,000 people, the equivalent of Thomond Park Stadium who are happy to participate in our monthly polls. This is continually topped up through advertisements targeting specific demographics as and when they are needed.

Stage 2: So, these are surely highly engaged people, how are they representative?

No. For our polls our algorithm chooses 5,000 specific individuals to take part. They are chosen on the basis of their demographics and behaviours (age, gender, religious adherence, educational attainment, past voting behaviour, political interest etc.) to ensure that they are an **exact replica** of the census and within that, the most recent general election exit poll.
Note: This algorithm minimises design-effect error, meaning that cross-tabs tend to be more reliable.

Stage 3: So how do you contact them? And how do you know the right person is answering?

Participants are sent an SMS message with a unique URL to participate in the opinion poll. Over 90% of the population own a smartphone, far fewer are at-home during the day (for face to face), use land-lines, or respond to unsolicited calls, or emails. Any duplicated entries from the same URL are deleted as is the user. Respondents must also match the data we have on record for the respondent.

Note: Here we minimise social desirability bias and non-response bias.
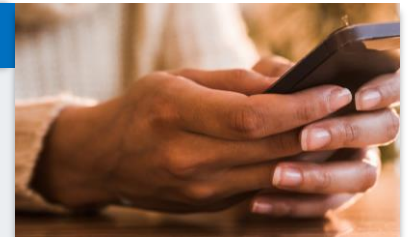
Stage 4: How long does it take? How do I know they're responding accurately?
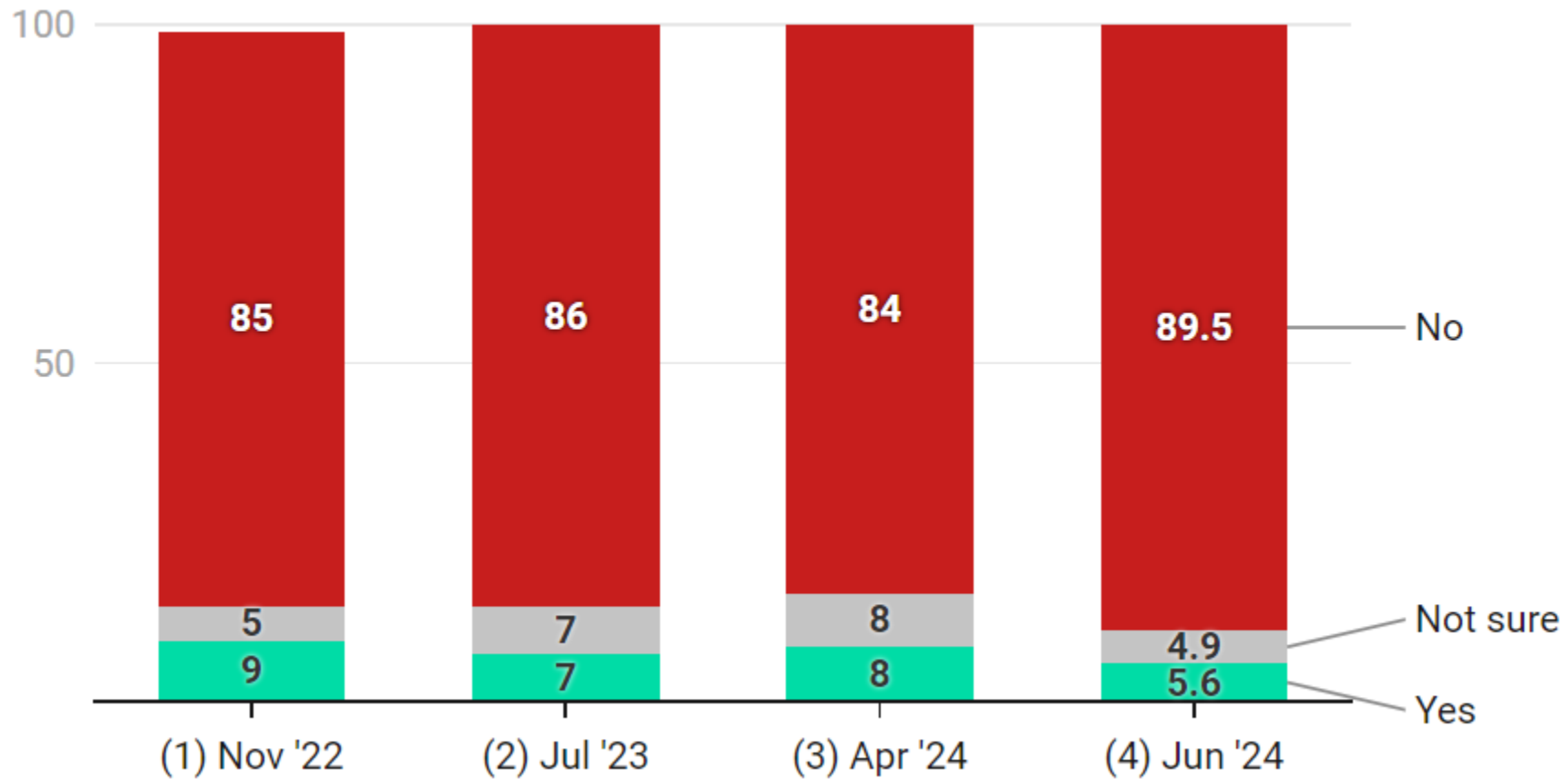
We get over 1,000 responses within 3 hours, rising thereafter. The respondents experience is central to ensuring that we have quality responses. The polls are short, enjoyable and participants are rewarded by selecting the charity that we will donate to and results are published in a national newspaper. The responses are weighted to ensure that they are exactly representative of the population in terms of the same demographics above.

Note: Finally we minimise respondent error and sampling error.

Fieldwork

Poll	Fieldwork	Sample size	Margin of error (+/-)
Nov, 2022	4th to 5th November	1,337	2.7%
Jul, 2023	5th to 18th July	1,004	3.2%
Apr, 2024	5th to 6th April	1,681	2.4%
Jun, 2024	1st to 4th June	1,024	3.1%

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Q1 - By Age and Gender (June 2024 Poll)

■ Yes ■ Not sure ■ No

Overall

| Overall | 6 | 5 | 90 |

Gender

| Female | 7 | 5 | 89 |
| Male | 4 | 5 | 91 |

Age

18-34	6	4	90
35-44	4	7	89
45-54	4	4	92
55-64	7	6	87
65+	7	5	88

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Q2 – [If Yes] How long ago did these symptoms start?

	(1) Nov 22	(2) Jul 23	(3) Apr 24	(4) Jun 24
Q1 = No/Not sure	90.4%	93%	92.1%	94.5%
less than 12 weeks	3.1%	1.9%	2%	1.3%
13-25 weeks	1.9%	1.4%	1.1%	0.8%
26-38 weeks	1.3%	0.9%	0.7%	0.8%
39-51 weeks	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%	0.2%
52-78 weeks	1.1%	0.8%	1%	0.5%
79 - 104 weeks	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	0.4%
More than 104 weeks	0.9%	0.6%	1.5%	1.3%
Total Long Covid	6.4%	5%	5.8%	4.2%

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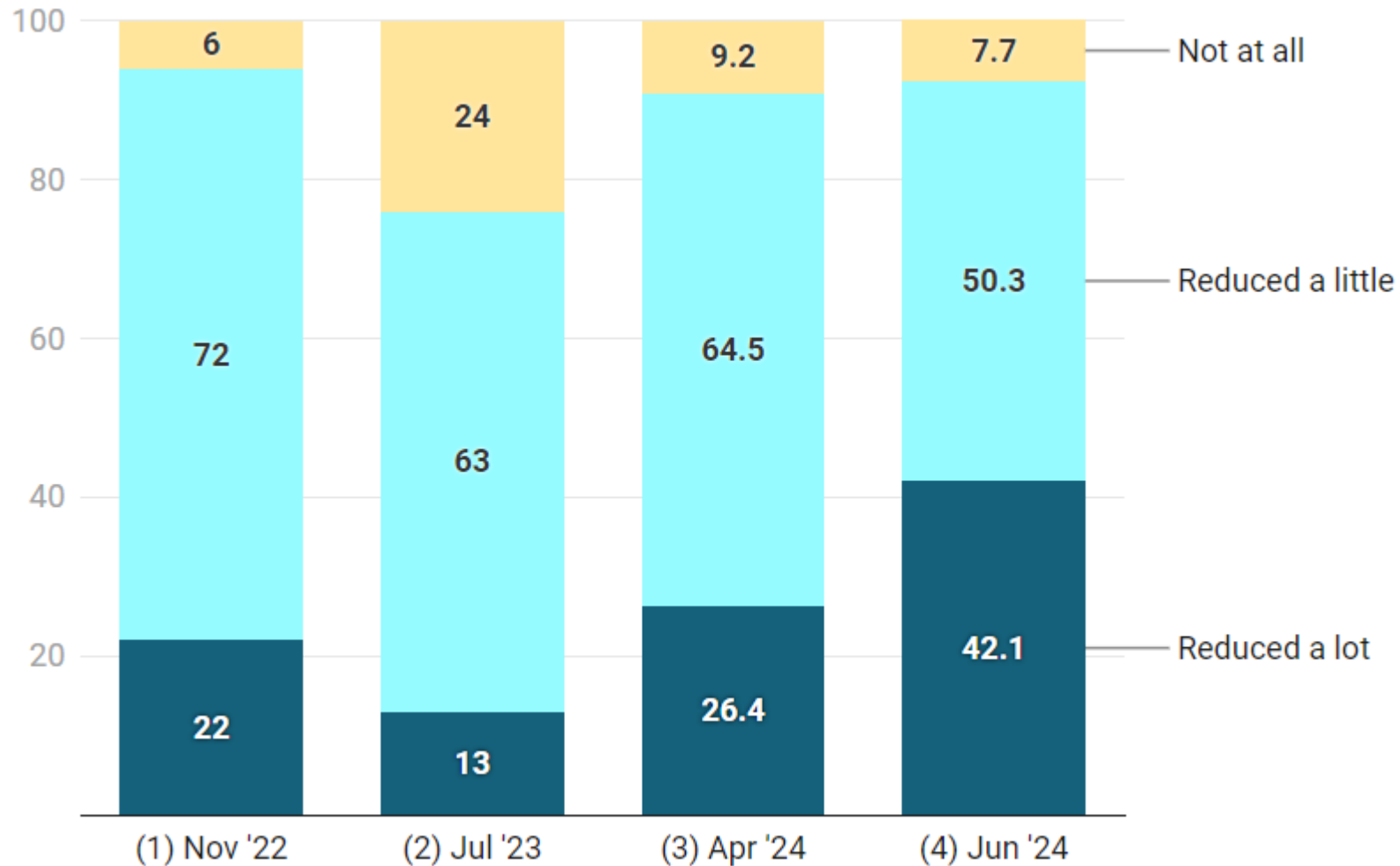Including only those with Q1 = Yes
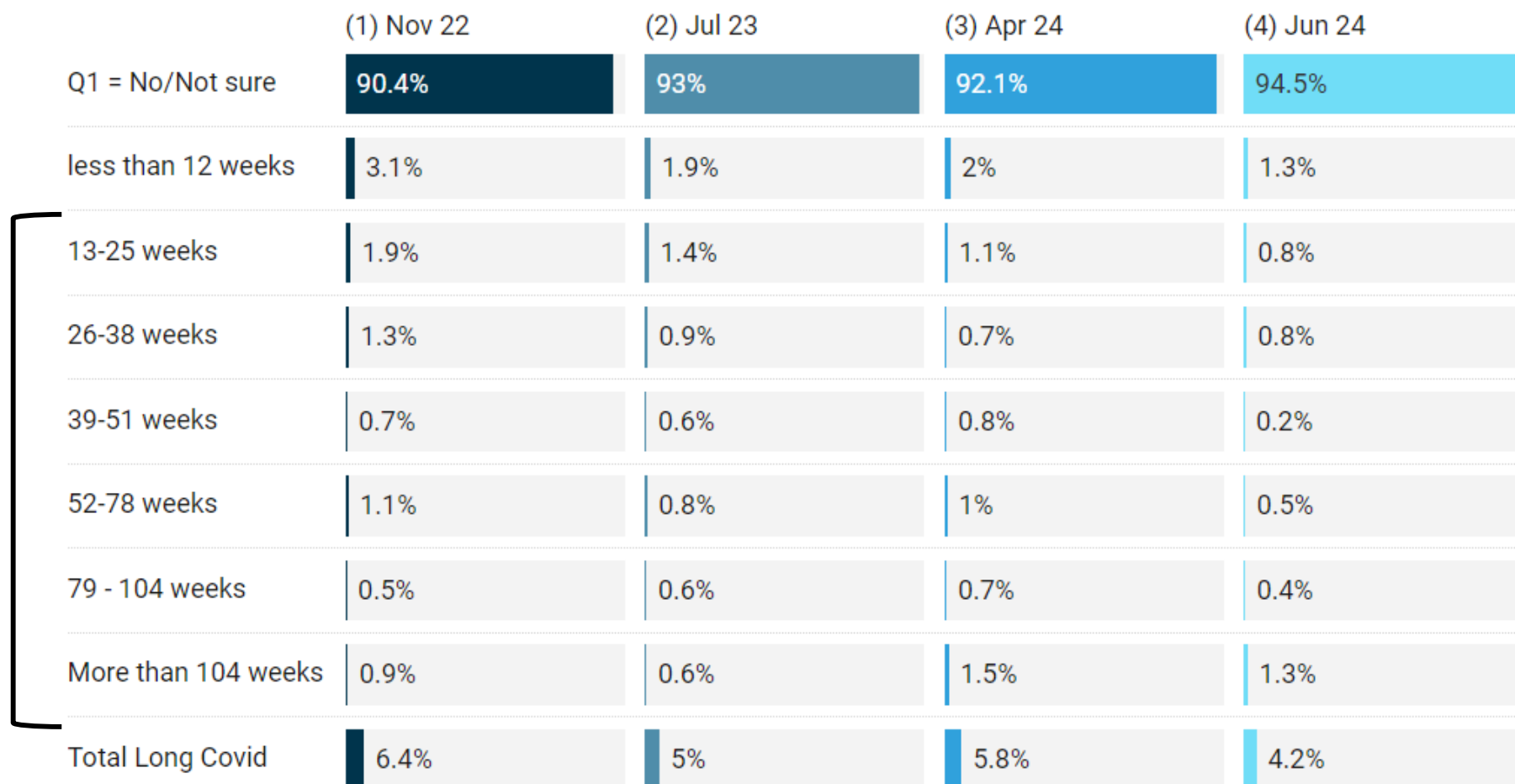
Q2 – By age and gender (June 2024 poll)

	Overall	Female	Male	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Q1 = No/Not sure	94.5%	93.2%	95.8%	94.3%	95.6%	96.1%	92.9%	93.4%
Less than 12 weeks	1.3%	2.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.3%	2.2%	1.8%	1.7%
13-25 weeks	0.8%	0.4%	1.3%	0.7%	0.0%	1.7%	1.3%	0.6%
26-38 weeks	0.8%	1.3%	0.3%	1.3%	1.2%	0.0%	0.3%	1.2%
39-51 weeks	0.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
52-78 weeks	0.5%	0.8%	0.2%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%
79-104 weeks	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
More than 104 weeks	1.3%	1.7%	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.0%	2.9%	1.7%
Total Long Covid	4.2%	4.8%	3.6%	5.7%	3.1%	1.7%	5.4%	4.9%

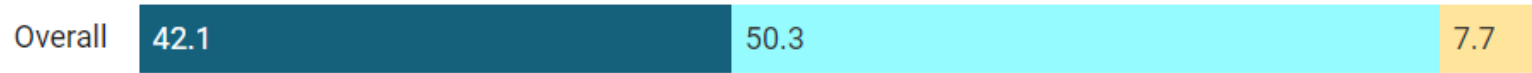*** Please note that the sample sizes are low and the data should be treated with caution**

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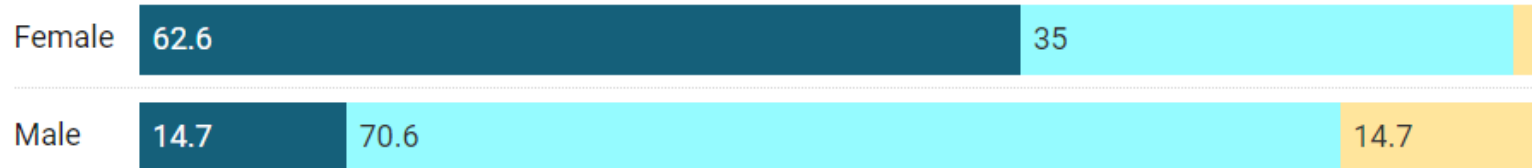# Q3 – [Q1=Yes] Have your long covid symptoms reduce your ability to conduct your daily activities?

Overall

Overall: 42.1 | 50.3 | 7.7

Gender

Female: 62.6 | 35

Male: 14.7 | 70.6 | 14.7

Age

18-34: 87 | 13

35-44: 100

45-54: 69.3 | 30.7

55-64: 29.8 | 53.3 | 16.9

65+: 32.5 | 61.1 | 6.4
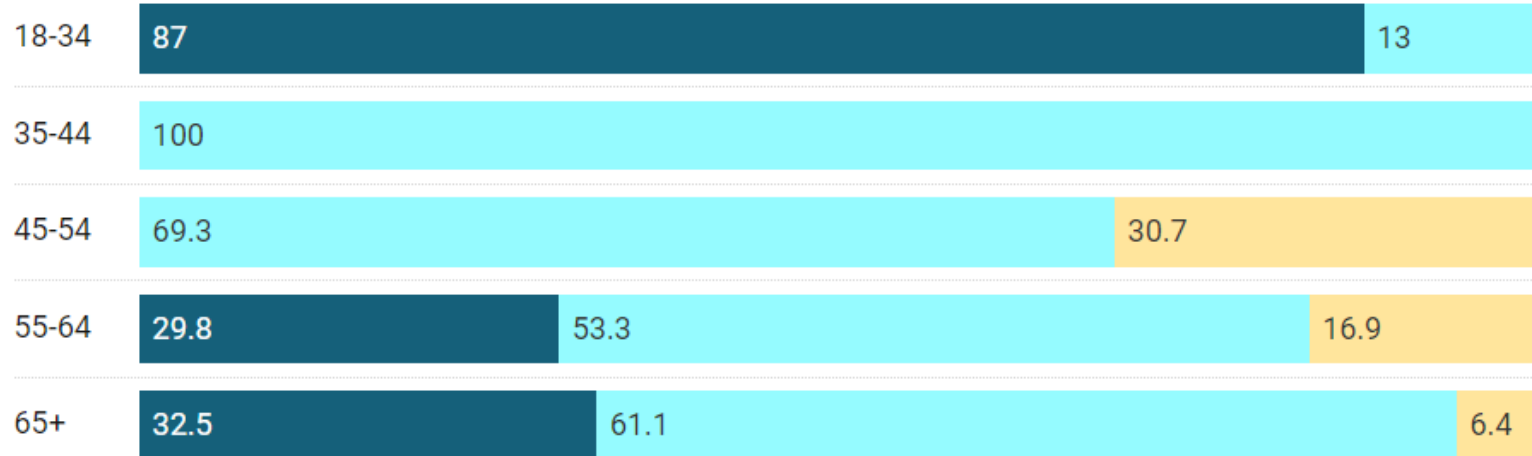
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June 2024 Poll - Including only those for which Q1 = Yes & Q2 = 13 weeks or more

Q4 – [Q1=Yes] What long covid symptoms have you experienced?

	(1) Nov '22	(2) Jul '23	(3) Apr '24	(4) Jun '24
Fatigue	83	71	78	85
Shortness of breath	58	54	55	51
Sleep problems	44	50	43	40
Memory problems	43	40	47	46
Muscle ache	38	39	39	58

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Q4 – [Q1=Yes] What long covid symptoms have you experienced?

	Fatigue	Shortness of breath	Sleep problems	Memory problems	Muscle ache
Female	86	51	25	40	64
Male	84	52	65	55	46

	Fatigue	Shortness of breath	Sleep problems	Memory problems	Muscle ache
18-34	100	36	13	56	78
35-44	100	50	71	71	0
45-54	85	71	64	15	70
55-64	74	45	50	40	58
65+	73	61	25	42	65

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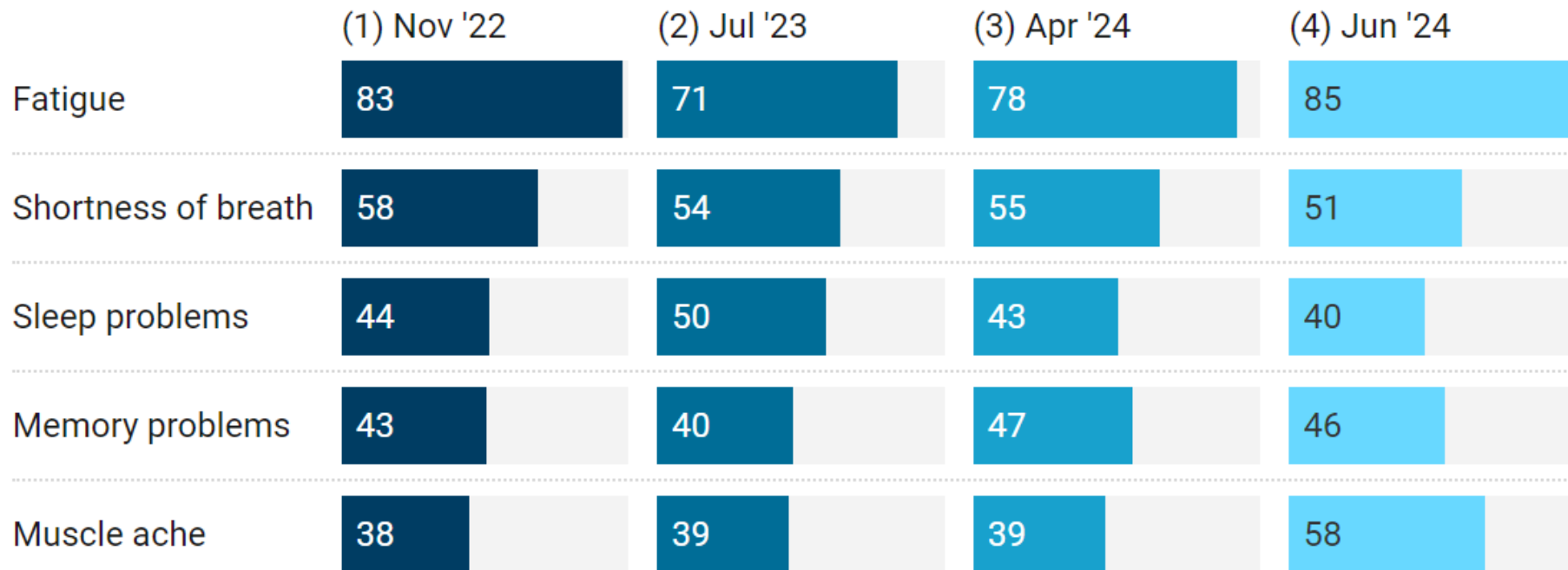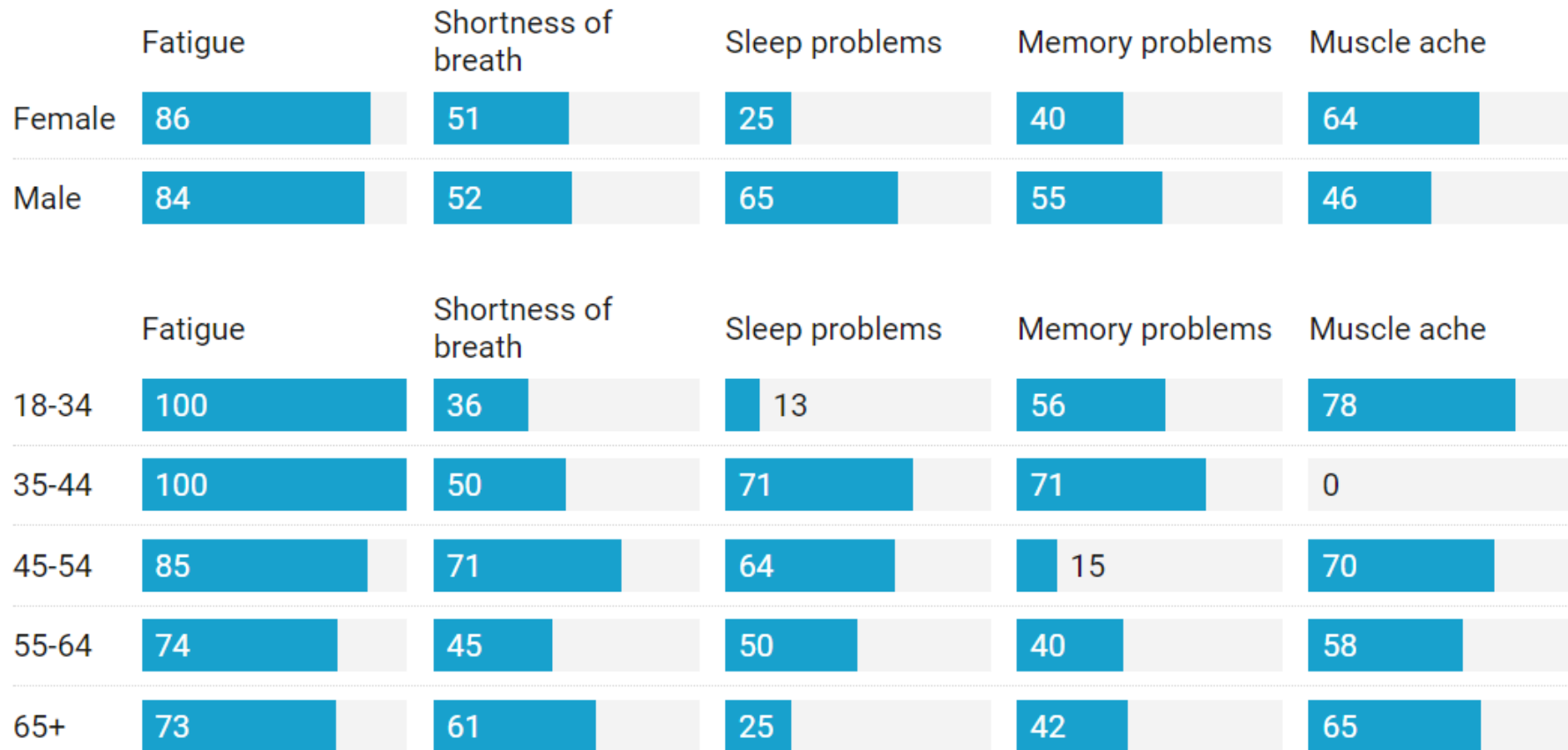
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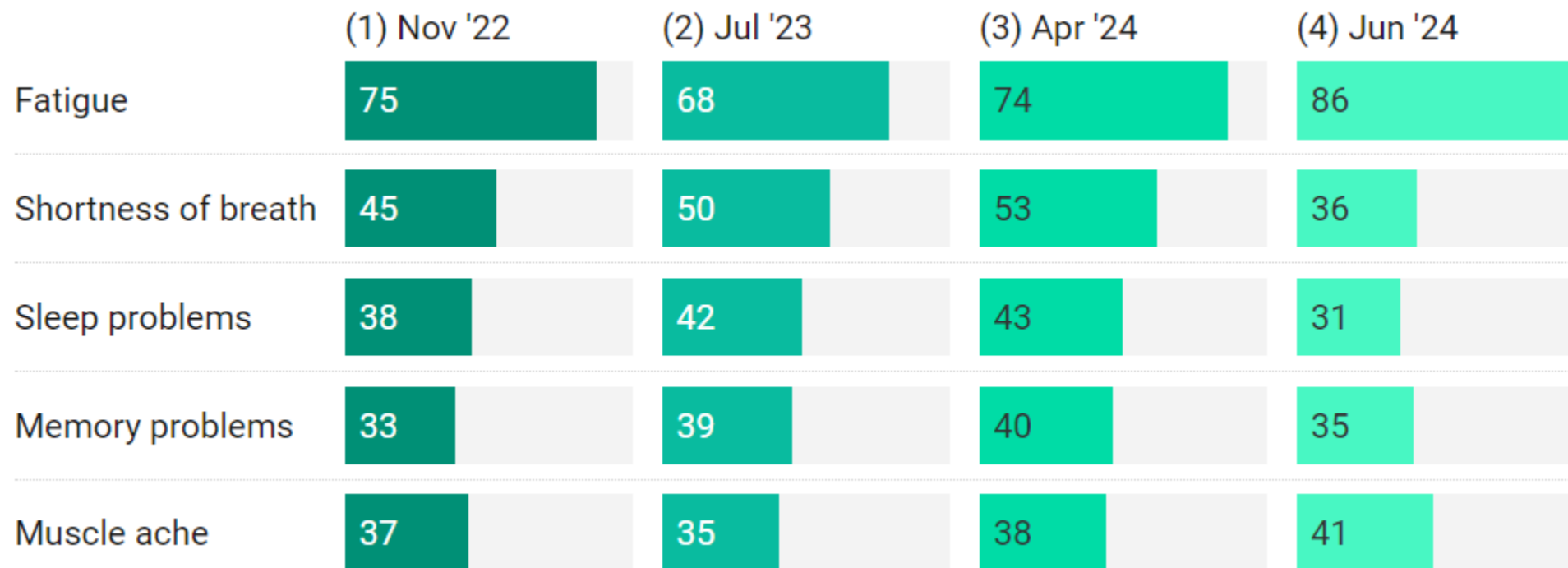
Q5 – What long Covid symptoms have you experienced for 12 weeks or more?

	(1) Nov '22	(2) Jul '23	(3) Apr '24	(4) Jun '24
Fatigue	75	68	74	86
Shortness of breath	45	50	53	36
Sleep problems	38	42	43	31
Memory problems	33	39	40	35
Muscle ache	37	35	38	41

Q5 – What long Covid symptoms have you experienced for 12 weeks or more?

	Fatigue	Shortness of breath	Sleep problems	Memory problems	Muscle ache
Female	87	32	21	30	48
Male	85	44	48	44	29

	Fatigue	Shortness of breath	Sleep problems	Memory problems	Muscle ache
18-34	100	36	13	33	43
35-44	100	22	50	71	0
45-54	100	16	29	0	34
55-64	75	37	50	41	48
65+	69	56	21	30	61
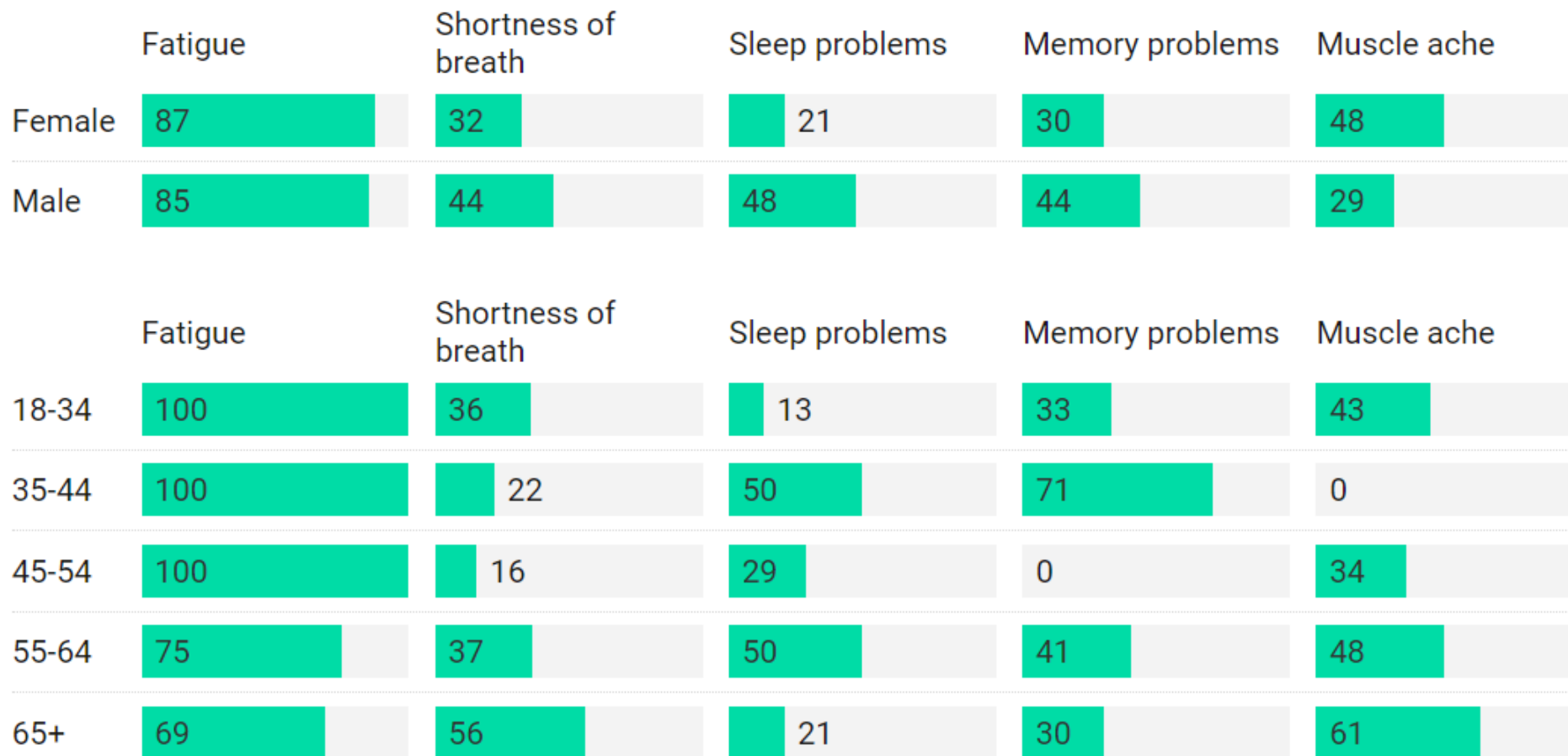
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Research services

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