

Digital Etiquette: the Reinventing Work Report

from Adaptavist

September 2022



Introduction

- For the third year in a row, Adaptavist has polled workers around the globe to gather insights regarding the state of work in our ever-changing, post-pandemic world.
- The results, gathered from close to 3,500 US, UK, Australian and Canadian respondents, provide valuable information about how workers are shaping and adapting to their new workplaces including their views on issues including hybrid vs. office work life; productivity, collaboration and isolation; communication tools; health and well-being; and the future of work.
- Report findings reflect the changing dynamic between employees and management, as well as a continuing shift in attitude toward traditional workplace constructs. While workers are going back to the office in slightly higher numbers, hybrid and remote work set-ups are here to stay. By 2022, [Gartner](#) predicted 31% of all workers worldwide would be remote (a mix of hybrid and fully remote). This year, the Adaptavist survey finds 43% working hybrid/fully remotely with an even greater number requesting choice over where they work (59%) along with the structure of their work week and the way their productivity is measured.
 - Over 58% of workers say it's time to eliminate the 40-hour work week, and close to half (47%) believe the best flexible work option would be a four-day work week. Surprisingly, nearly one-third of employees (28%) say their employer *already* offers the option of a four-day workweek.
 - They also believe the definition of productivity needs to change – close to 60% think the focus needs to be on the quality of work vs. the number of hours logged – another indicator that the workplace must continue to evolve.

Introduction (cont.)

- On the other hand, the Report also finds that while employees want more choice and control over their work lives, hybrid and remote work comes at a cost, primarily in the form of isolation, loneliness and increased workloads. Although communication tools have come a long way in the past two years, they still produce a high level of 'tool fatigue' resulting in wasted time and feelings of invisibility online with over one-third of respondents saying they are too overwhelmed with work to find time to talk to colleagues. This prompted close to 90% of workers to say that in-person connection is important, if not critical, and that connecting with colleagues was the most significant reason to go back in the office full-time.
- Paradoxically, the survey also shows that one in three workers is actively looking for a *new* job, with increased wages leading flexibility, better work-life balance and more meaningful employment as chief factors for change. This would seem to indicate the market is still poised to favour the employee, yet this research reveals a warning for job switchers. Amongst those who already left their jobs as part of the Great Resignation, more than one-third regret the decision.
- These disparities underscore the continued pendulum shifts between the old ways of doing business and the new ways people want to work.



Demographics and Methodology

Survey Scope

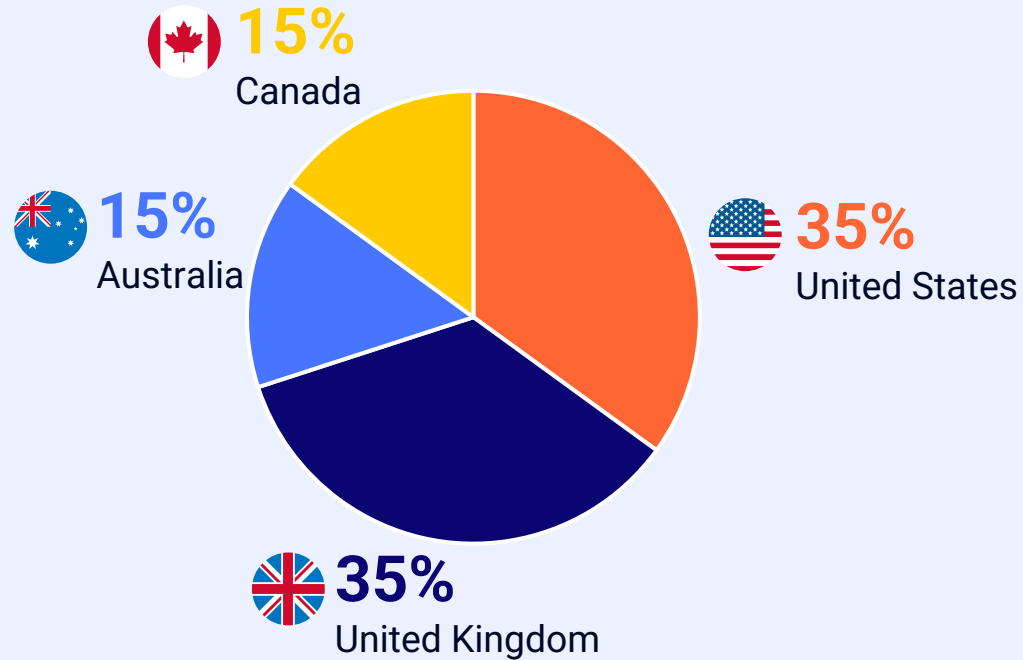
An online survey was conducted by Adaptavist, using Propeller Insights, to explore today's evolving workplace.

The international survey was conducted from June 26 - July 11, 2022, producing 3,439 total responses.

The sample was distributed among the following countries:

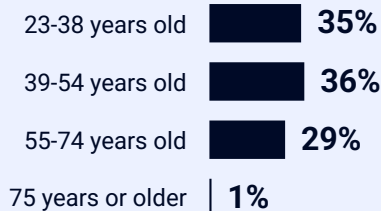
- Australia: n=507
- Canada: n=509
- United Kingdom: n=1,215
- United States: n=1,208

Results have been analysed and reported in this document, with numbers rounded up to the nearest whole number.

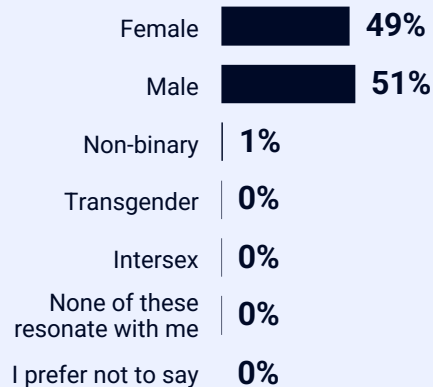


Demographics

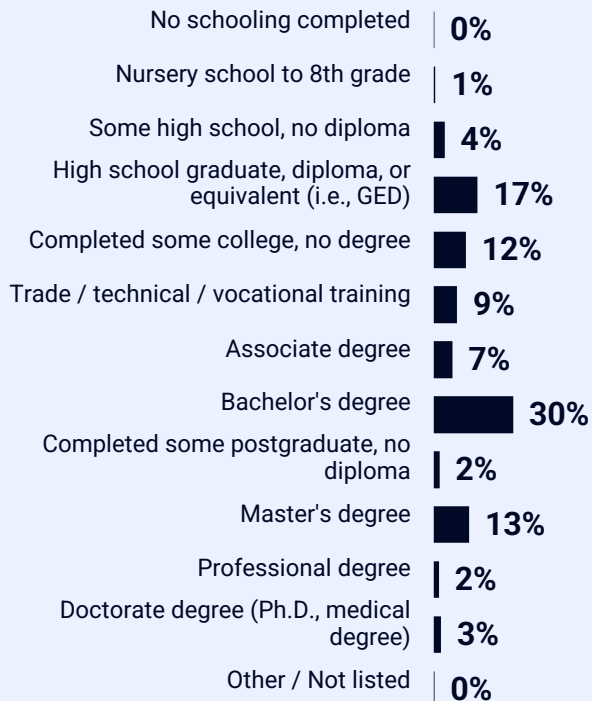
Age



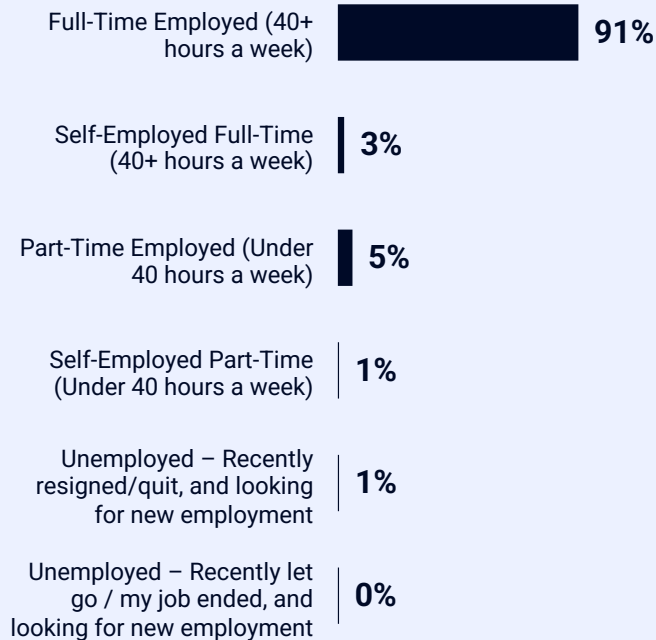
Gender



Education



Employment



What age group do you fall into?
Which of the following most accurately describes you?
What is the highest level of education you have completed?
What is your current employment status?

Demographics

Title

Part-time (I earn minimum wage)	5.4%
Part-time (I earn above minimum wage)	6.9%
Freelance (I set my hourly wage)	2.3%
Assistant / Independent Contributor / Support (I do not manage anyone)	28.2%
Junior Manager (I am responsible for managing at least 1 person)	9.3%
Manager (I manage 2-5 people - and can make recommendations or decisions on budget or resource allocation)	21.7%
Senior Manager (I manage at least 6+ people and / or have responsibility for how budget / resources for my area is allocated)	12.1%
Director (Senior managers report to me and I have authority to allocate resources independently or with limited approval needed)	5.7%
Department / Regional Head / Senior Director / Vice President (largely strategic, I manage a large team and / or make decisions that have a significant impact on my area of the business with limited approval required)	2.1%
Executive level manager (largely strategic, I have responsibility for a number of sub-divisions / departments within the business)	3.1%
C-Suite (I report directly to the board and have a largely strategic role)	3.3%

Department

Administration / Support	13.8%
Consulting	2.6%
Customer Service	12.5%
Data Science	1.6%
Engineering	5.2%
Finance	7.2%
Human Resources	5.2%
IT	14.1%
Operations	15.1%
Professional Services	7%
Sales / Marketing	5.7%
Research	1.2%
UX / UI	0.3%
Other (please specify)	8.5%

Employees

1-Self-employed	1.7%
2-4	2.5%
5-9	4.4%
10-19	6%
20-49	8.8%
50-99	11.5%
100-249	12.6%
250-499	8.1%
500-999	12%
1,000-4999	13.4%
5,000-9,999	7.4%
10,000+	11.6%

What is your title? Please select the statement which best reflects your role within the company you work for or your role as a contractor when working for others.

Which of the following best represents the industry you currently work in?

Which of the following best represents the department you work in?

How many employees are in your organization?

Demographics

Industry

Agriculture / Forestry / Fishing / Hunting	1.6%
Accounting / Finance / Banking / Insurance	9.6%
Advertising / PR / Marketing / Social Media	1.2%
Architecture / Design	1.8%
Arts / Leisure / Entertainment / Recreation	1.5%
Beauty / Fashion	1.8%
Construction	6.6%
Education - Primary / Secondary (K-12) Education	4.9%
Education - College, University, & Adult Education	4.8%
Government / Public sector / Public administration	6.8%
Hospitality / Restaurant / Food service	3.9%
Healthcare (Physical & Mental) / Social Assistance	11.3%
Information Services / Data processing	3.6%
Legal Services / Lawyer / Judge	1.1%
News / Information Industry	0.1%
Manufacturing / Production	7.5%

Military	0.2%
Non-for-profit sector	1.8%
Operations / Logistics	1.8%
Publishing	0.1%
Real Estate / Rental / Leasing	1%
Religion	0.2%
Research	0.4%
Retail / E-commerce	6.5%
Sales	2.3%
Scientific / Technical Services	1.1%
Social service	0.6%
Technology / Programming / Software	4.4%
Telecommunications	1.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	3.5%
Other (please specify)	6.4%

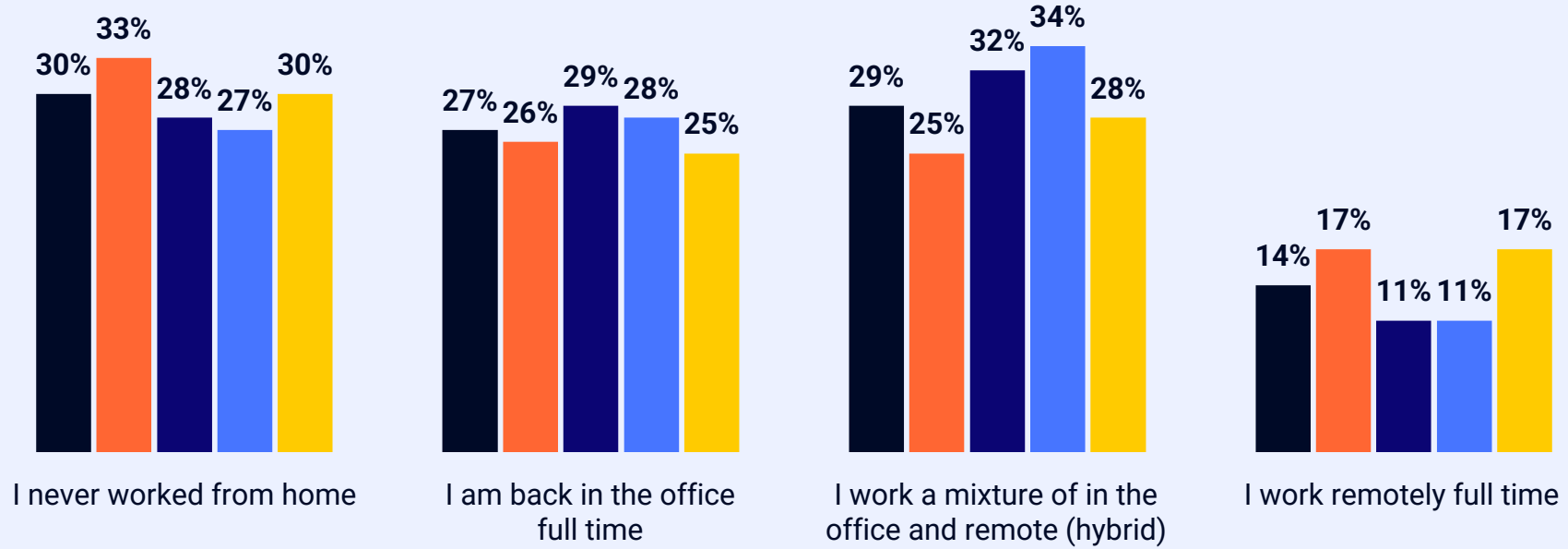
Which of the following best represents the industry you currently work in?

Survey Results



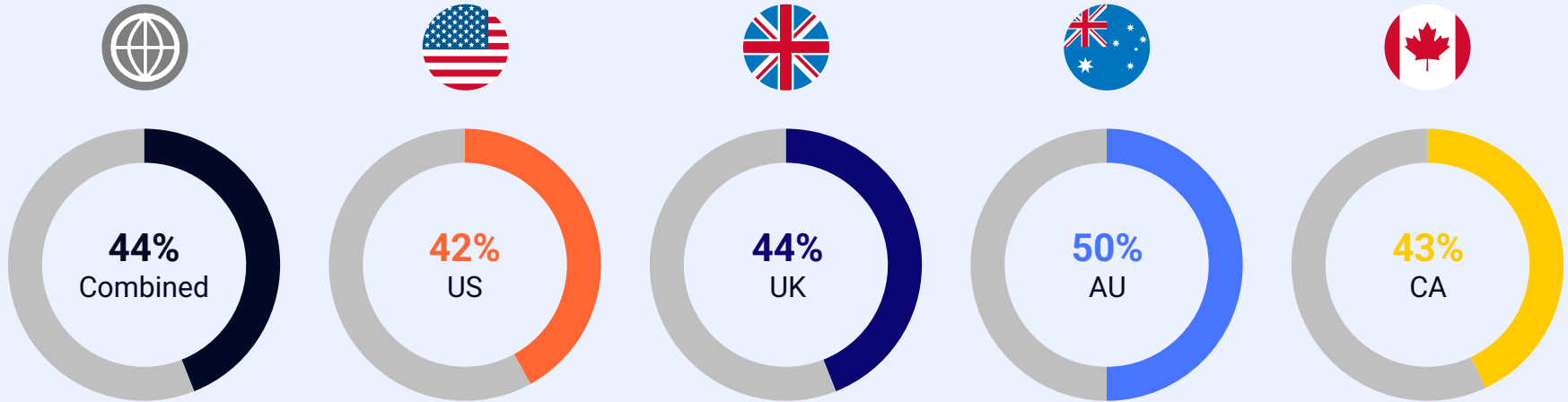
The new workplace

Over 40% of workers are hybrid or full-time remote now, especially at small and medium sized companies, while a quarter of respondents are back in the office full time – emphasising the changing workplace.

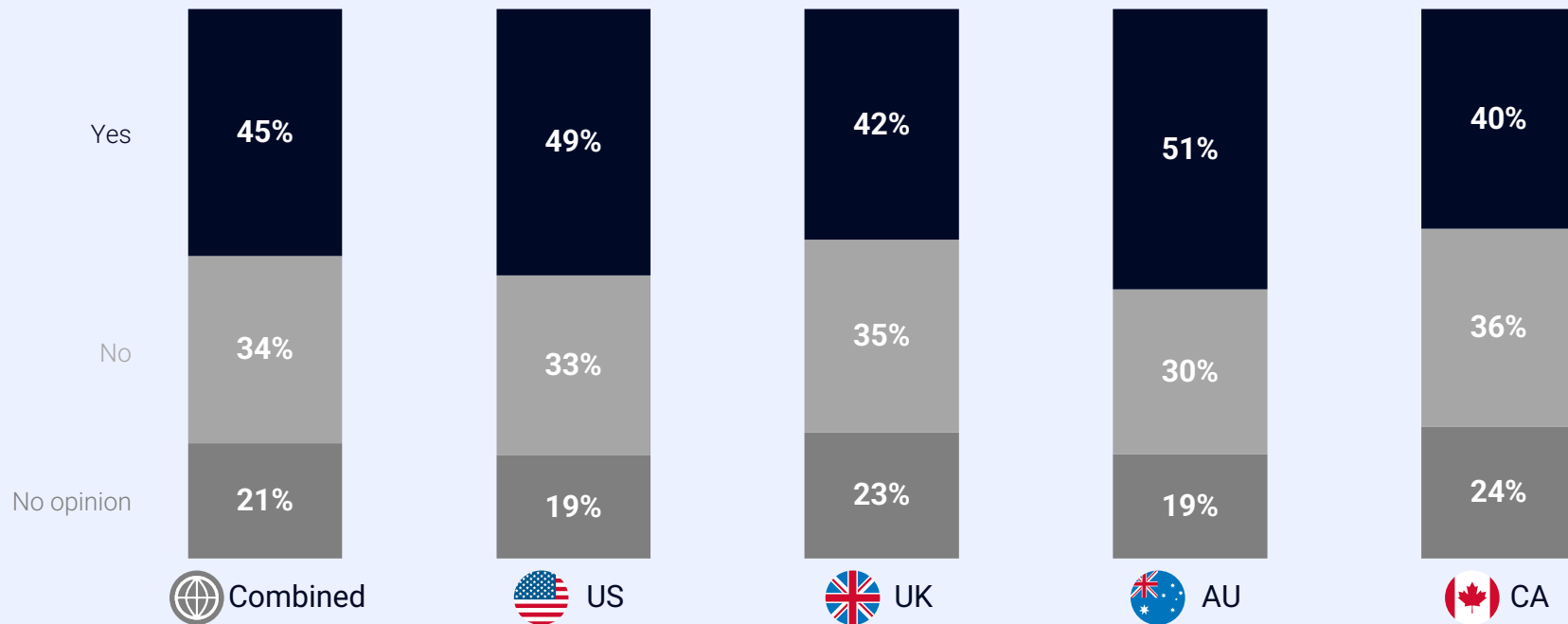


Correspondingly, roughly the same number of companies (44%) are offering hybrid or remote work options to their staff.

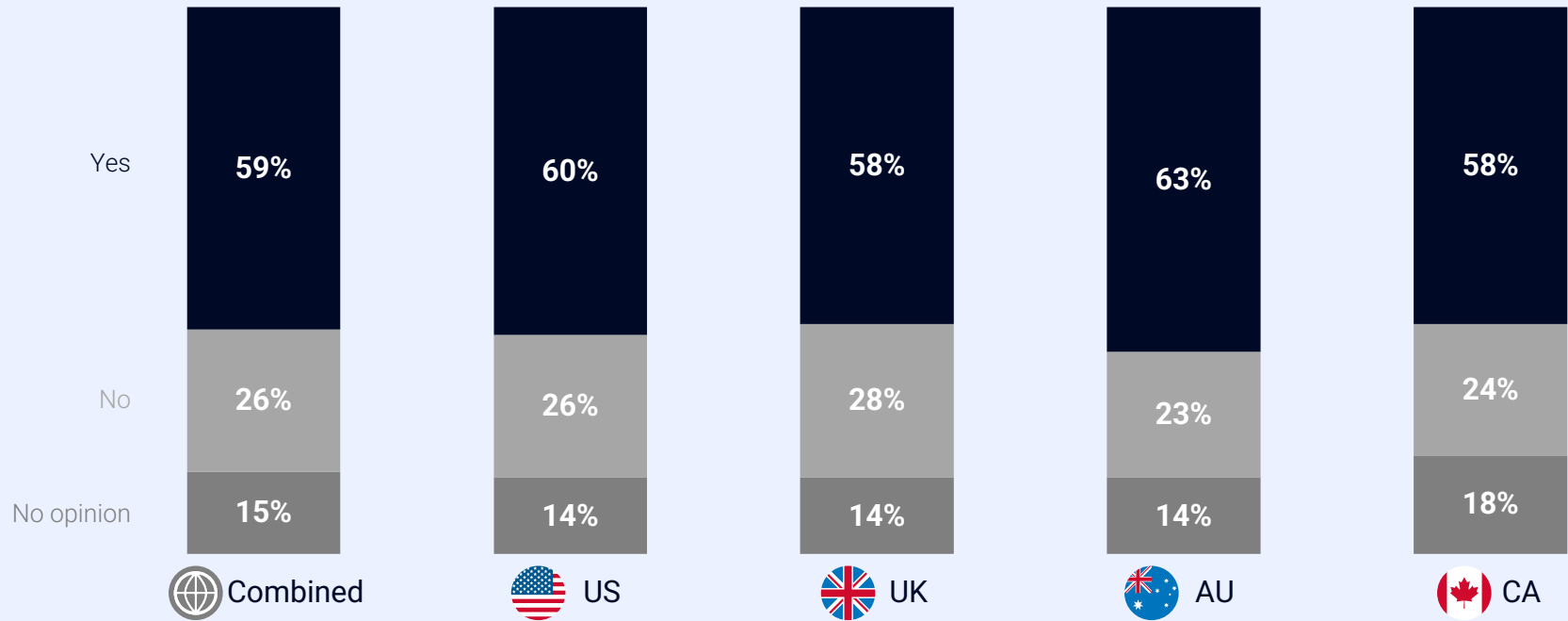
% Yes



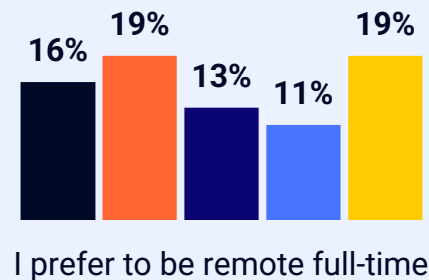
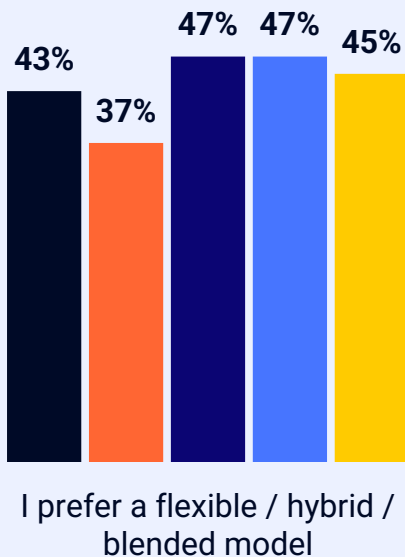
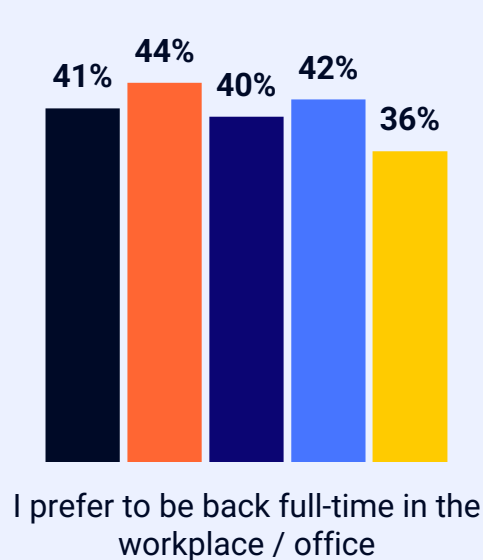
Many workers believe a return to the office is driven by company leadership.



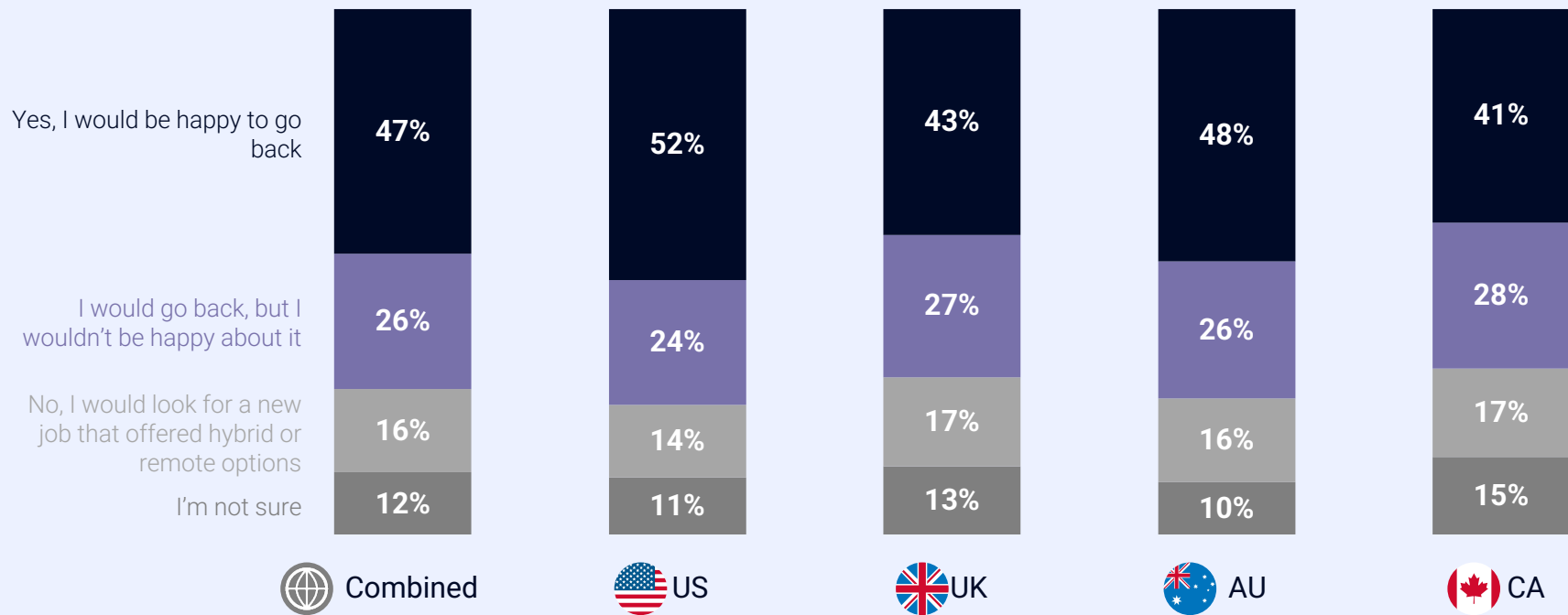
And most believe that where they work (office/hybrid/remote) should be an employee choice.



In addition, the majority of workers (59%) prefer flexibility – either hybrid or remote full-time.

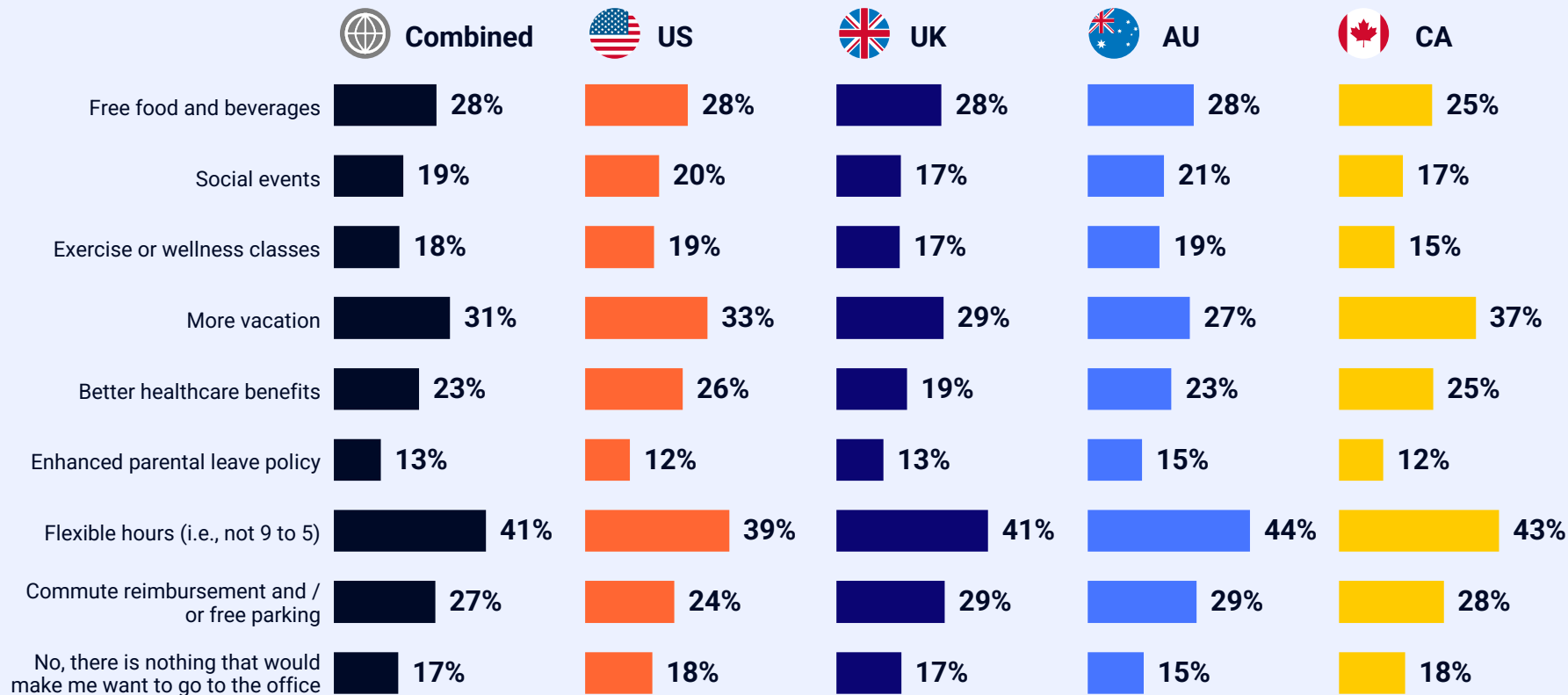


Eliminating hybrid or remote work options would create a divide among workers, leading to unhappiness and some turnover (42%).



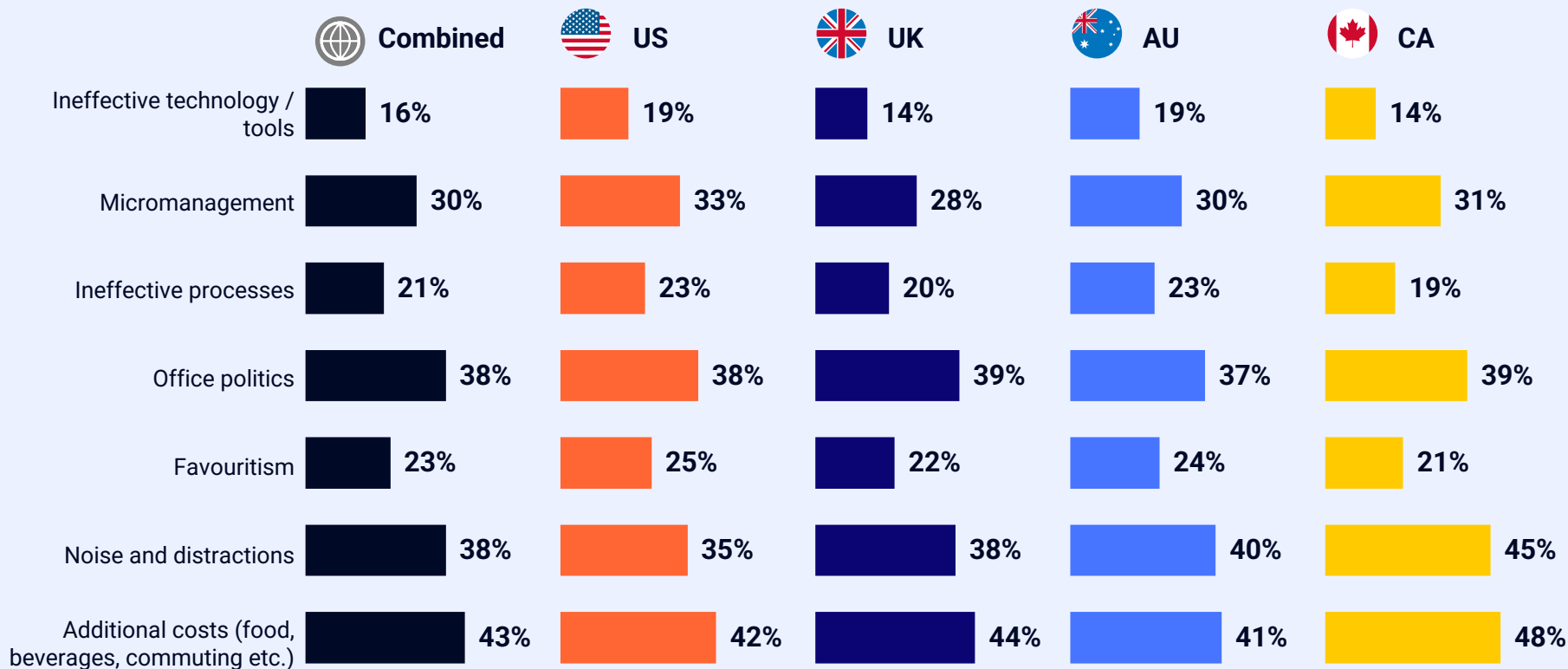
Q: If your company eliminates hybrid or remote work and offers only a 'back to the office' option as execs like Elon Musk have dictated, would you go back, or look for new opportunities?

If companies want workers back in the office, they need to create a pro-employee culture and offer 'perks' employees care about most like flexible hours, increased vacation time, and free food and beverages to help offset the cost of returning.



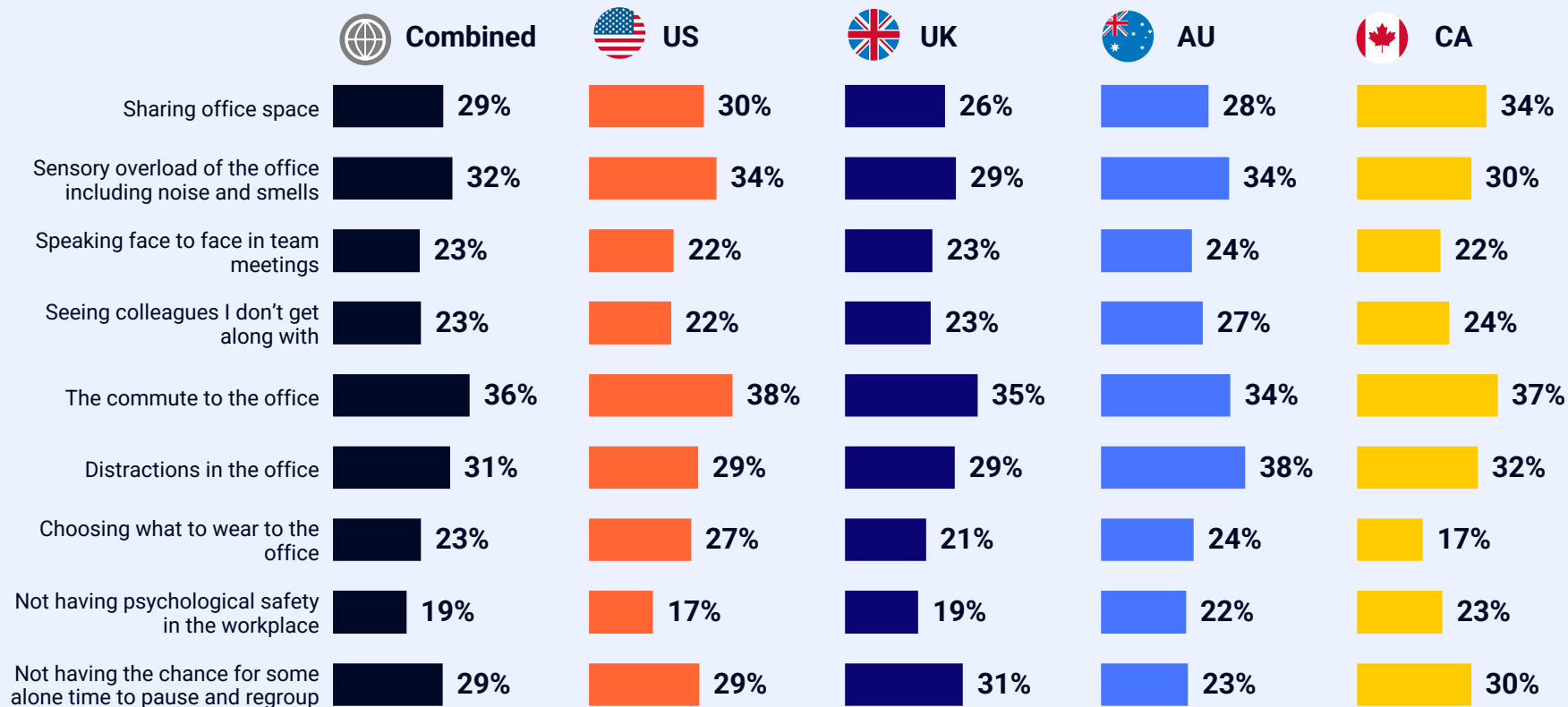
Q: Are there any 'perks' your company could offer to make you want to go back into the office full-time? (CHOOSE UP TO 3)

Companies also need to address key concerns workers have with returning to office life including daily expenses, office politics, and the ability to focus/manage noise and distractions.



Q: If your company goes back to the office full time, which workplace problems are you most worried about having to deal with again? (CHOOSE UP TO 3)

For those who already returned to the office, the commute and the quality of the office environment were the leading causes of anxiety.

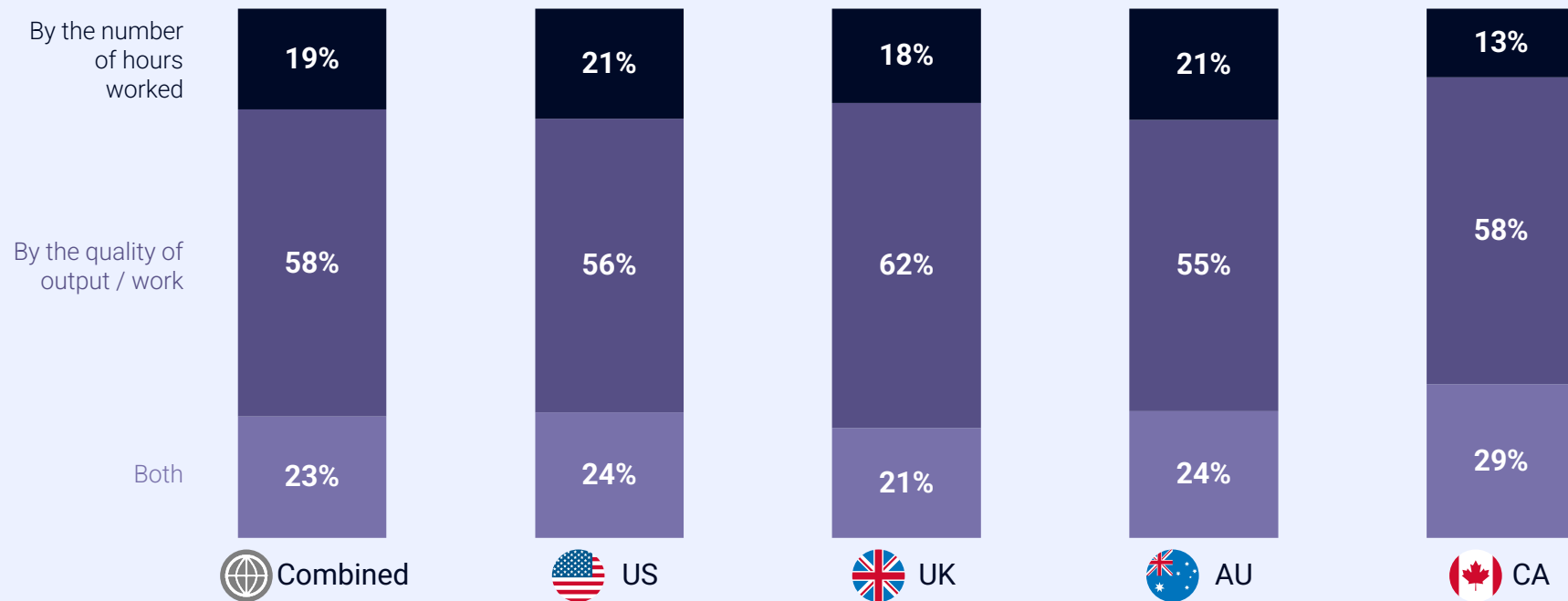


Q: What made you feel anxious [about returning to the office]? (CHOOSE UP TO 3)

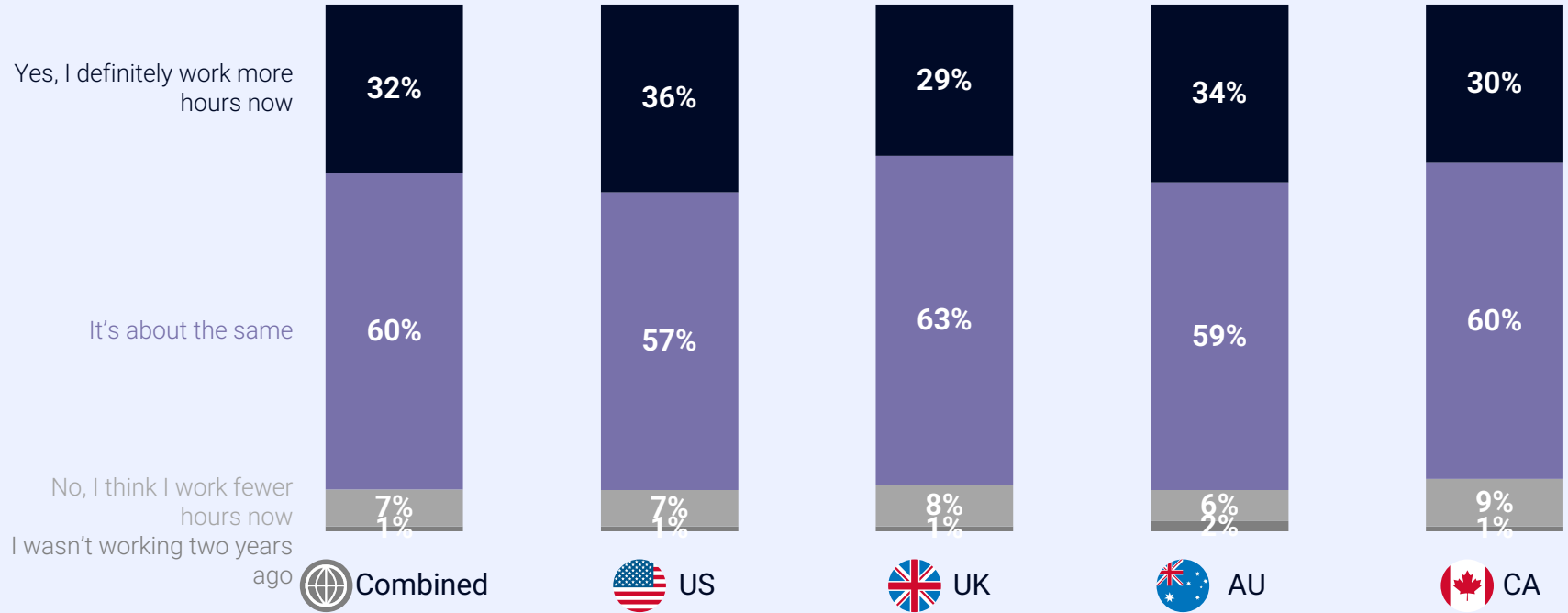


Productivity and communication tools

Workers believe the true measure of productivity prioritises quality of work over number of hours worked.

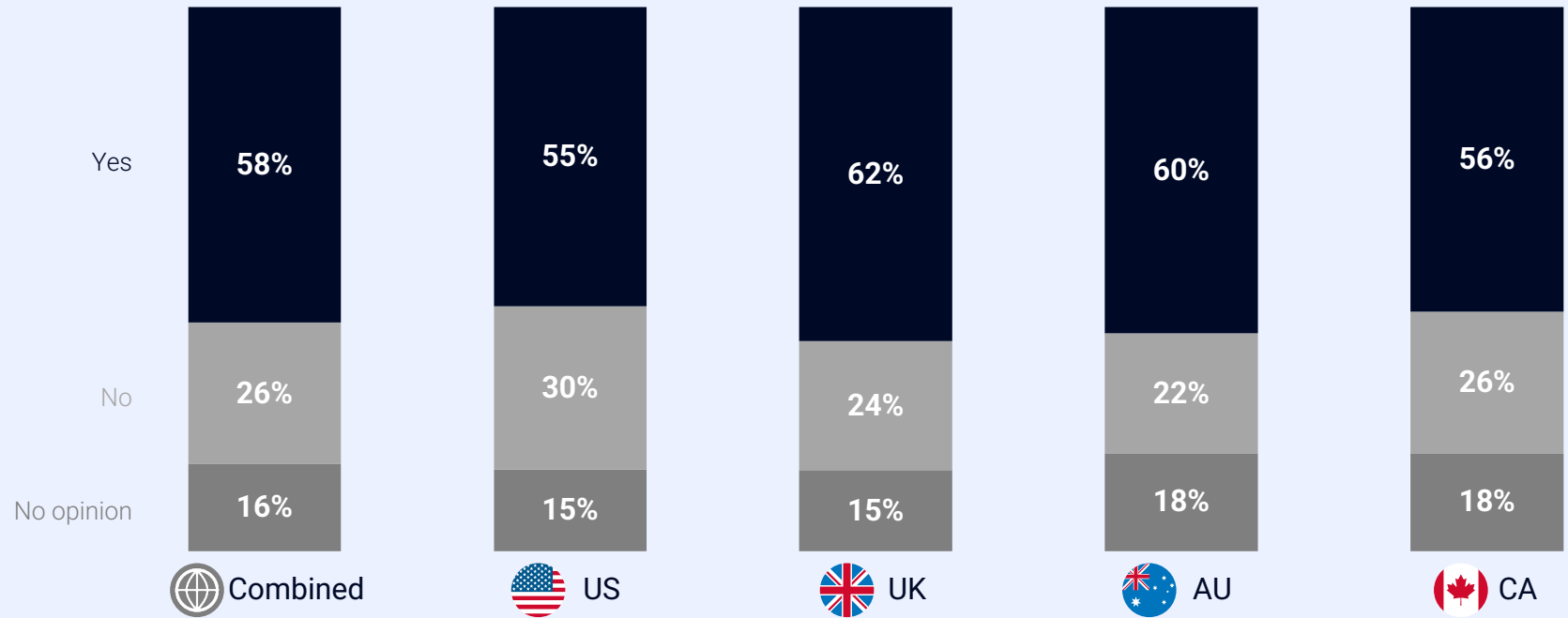


The workday has remained unchanged for most workers since the start of the pandemic, but about one third are working longer hours.

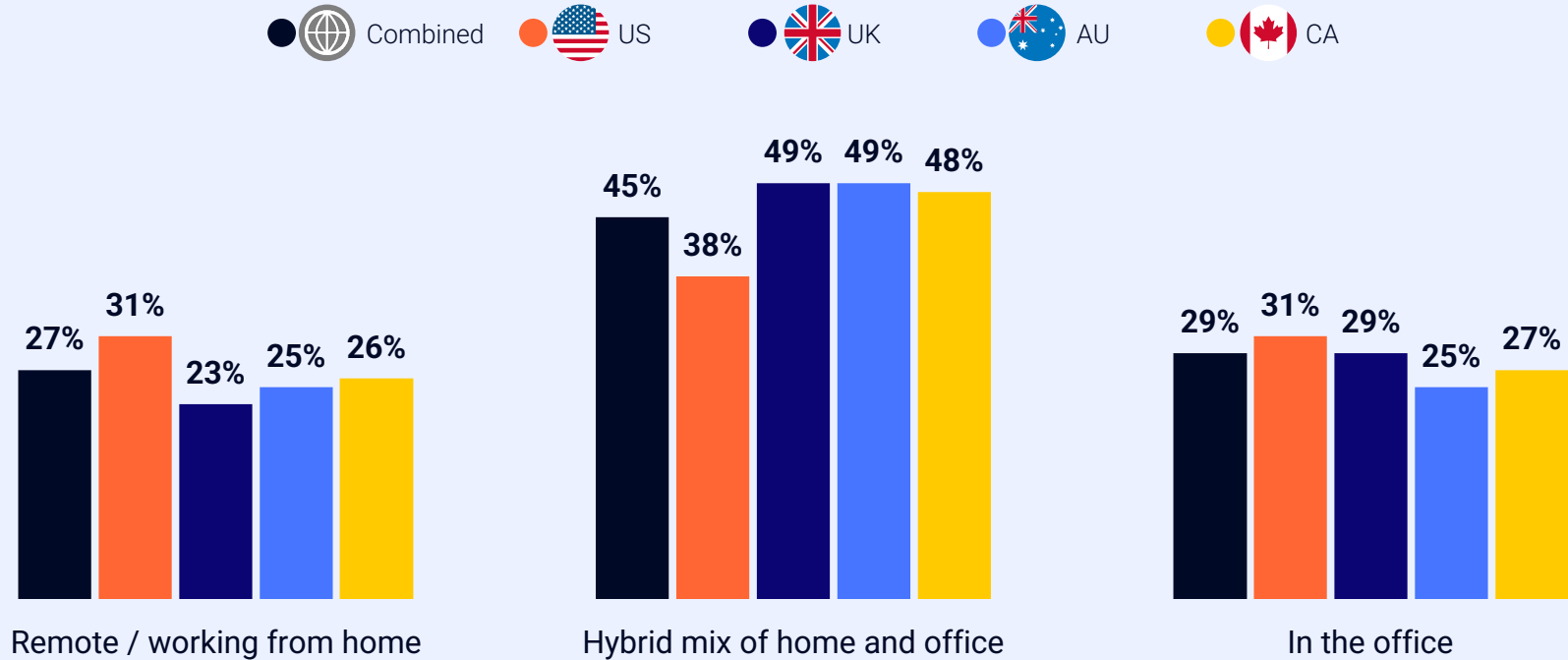


Q: Do you think that the number of hours you work per week has increased, compared to the hours you worked before the pandemic?

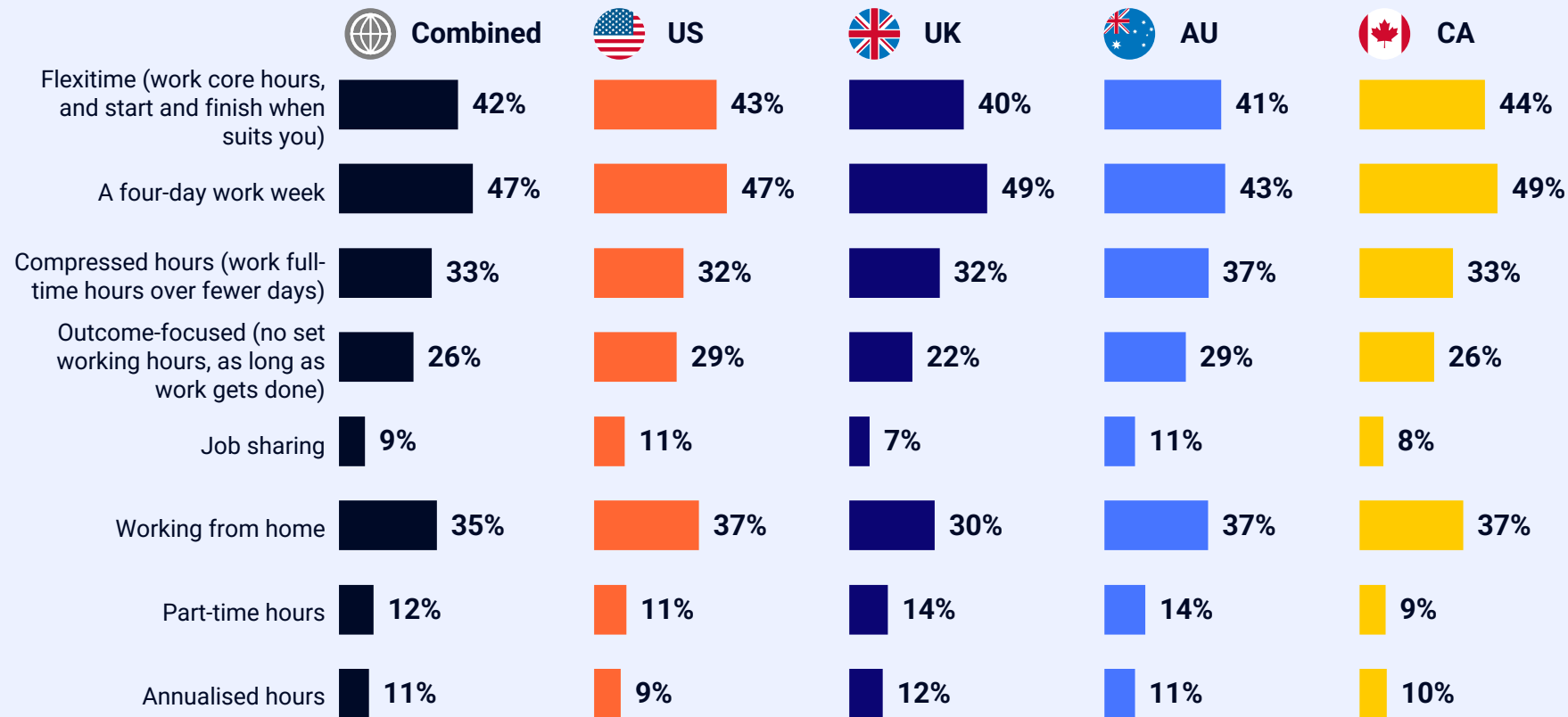
Most feel that the definition of the work week needs to change, and we should eliminate the traditional 40-hour construct.



Workers believe they are more productive in hybrid work environments, versus exclusive remote or in the office.

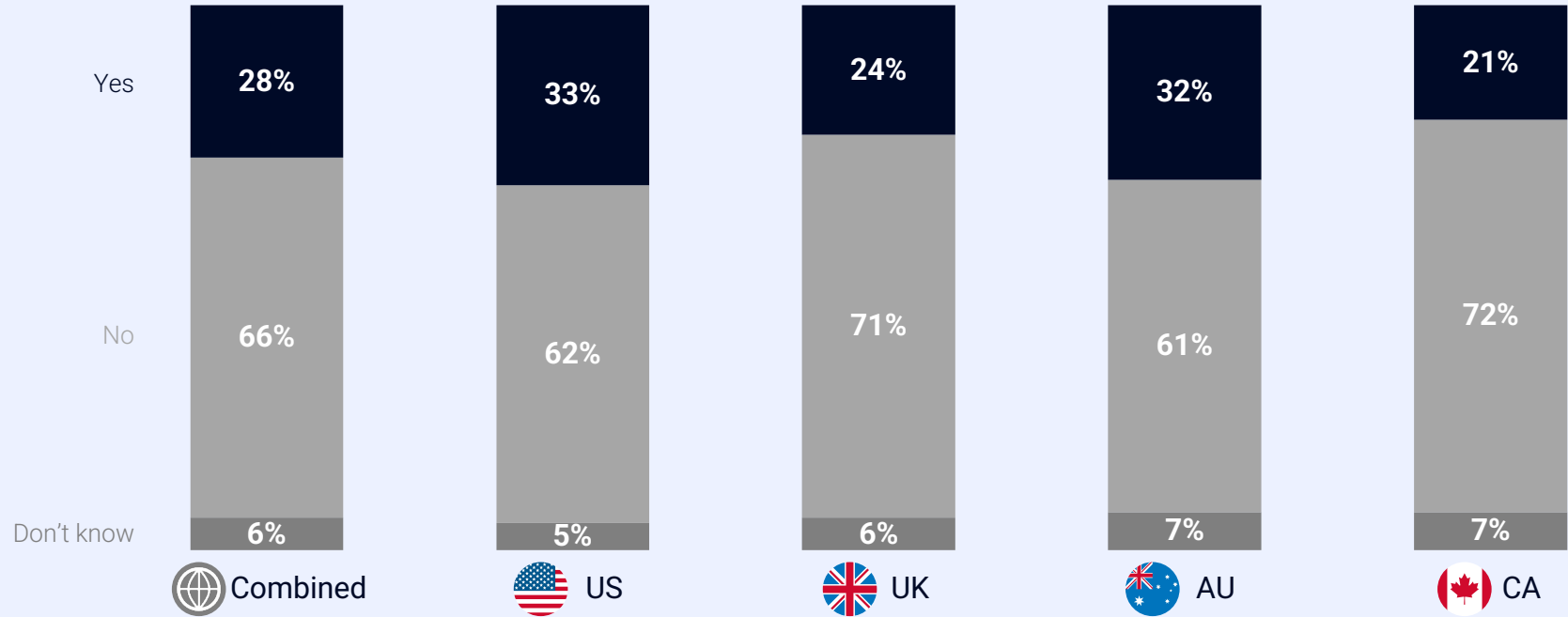


Flexible work environments should empower workers to self-manage and promote better work-life balance, with the most desired options including the four-day work week, staggered start and stop times, and working from home.



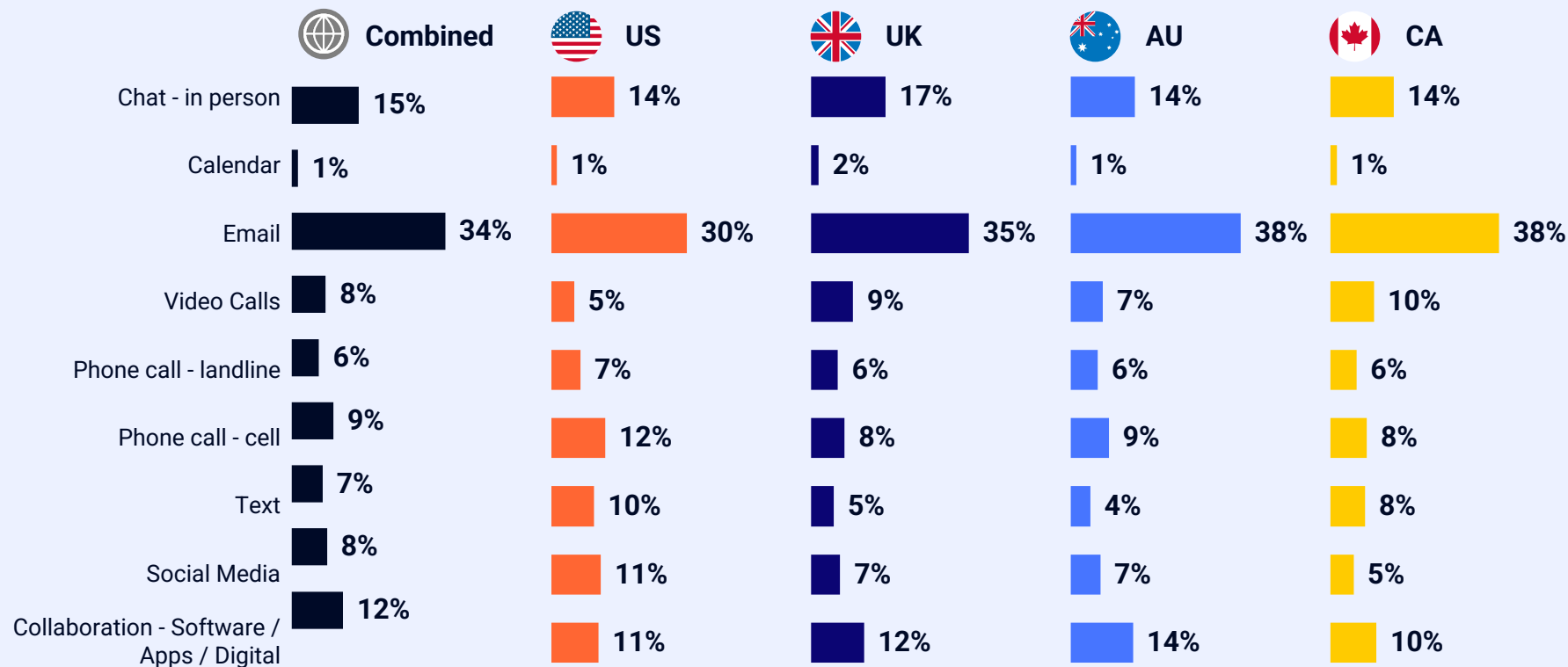
Q: If you are/were given the option to work flexibly, what type of flexibility would work best for you? Please select all that apply.

Today, over one-quarter of employers offer a four-day work week – a sizeable shift from just one year ago.

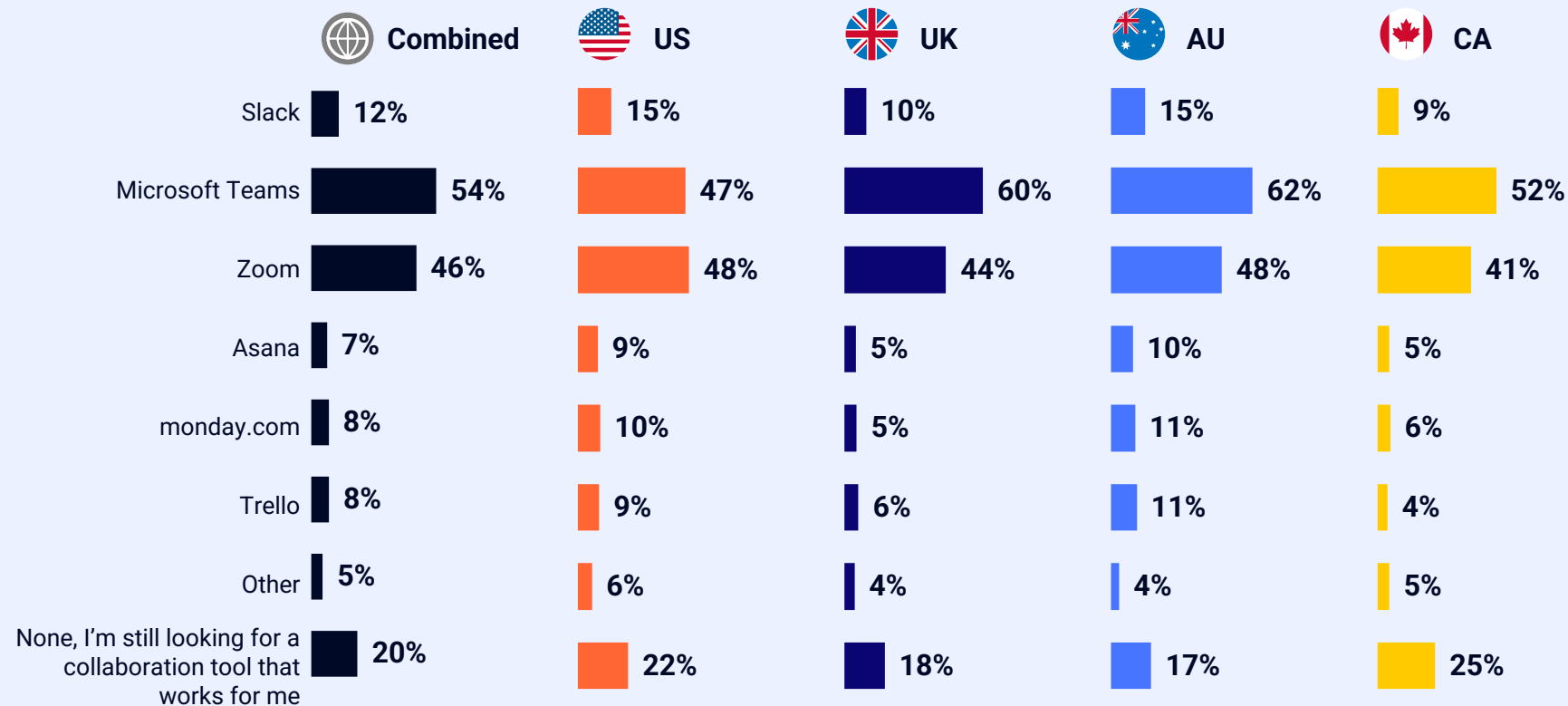


Q: Does your employer give you the option to work a four-day week?

To support productivity, the majority of respondents use email as their primary work-related communication tool, followed by in-person chats and collaboration tools. The use of collaboration tools is driven by those working in larger companies (250+ employees) and/or currently working asynchronously.

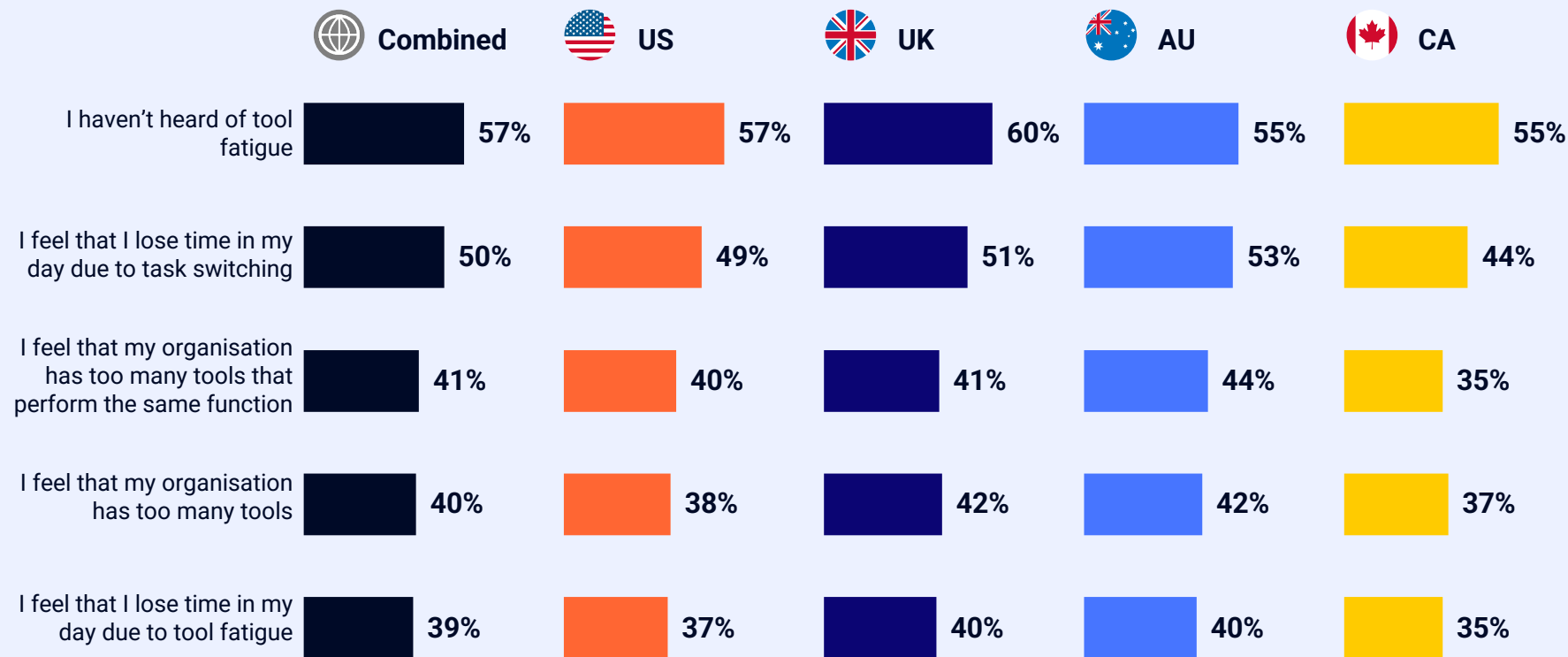


Microsoft Teams and Zoom are the essential tools for work collaboration, especially among those in companies with over 250 employees.



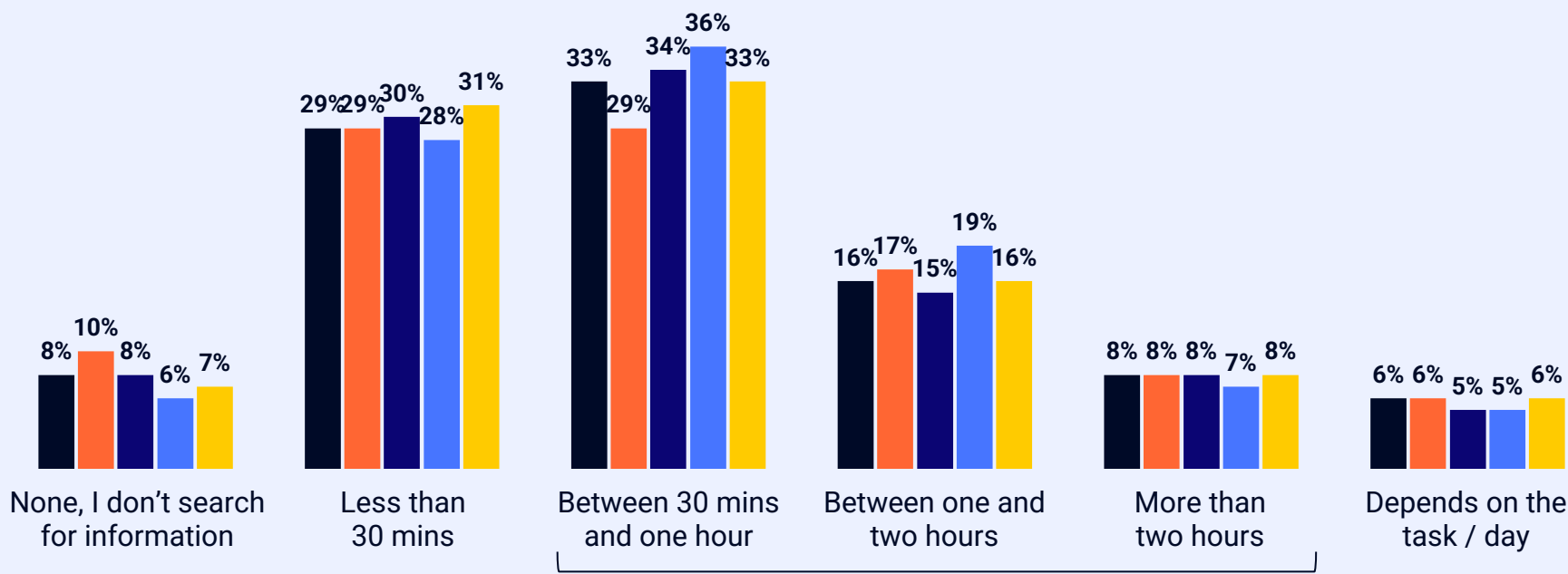
Q: Which of these digital collaboration tools can't you live without? Please select all that apply.

While not always recognising the term, workers frequently experience tool fatigue and the symptoms associated with it.



Q: How much do you agree with the following statements?

And more than half of workers are spending 30 minutes or more a day looking for information required to do their job.



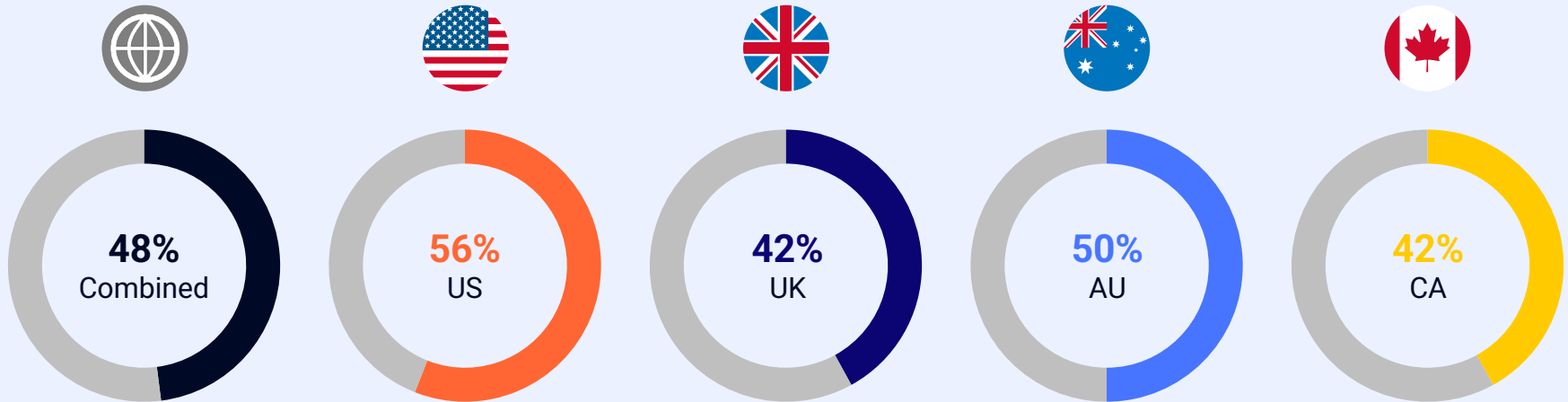
Q: Approximately, how long do you spend during the day looking for information you need to do your job (e.g., searching emails, chat conversations, saved documents, etc.)?



Collaboration, independence and loneliness

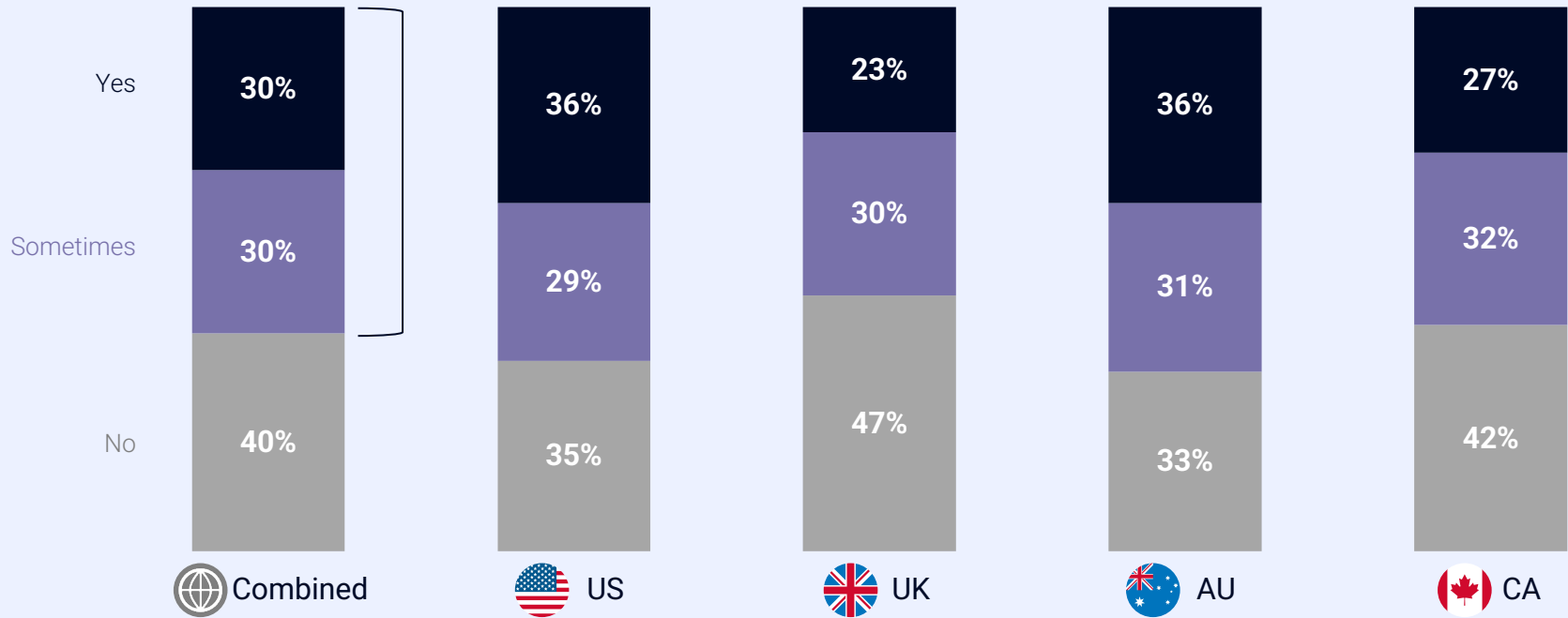
About half of workers are aware of the term “asynchronous communication” (i.e., when two or more people can communicate without the requirement that they be “present” at the same exact moment in time) – slightly more in the US.

Have Heard



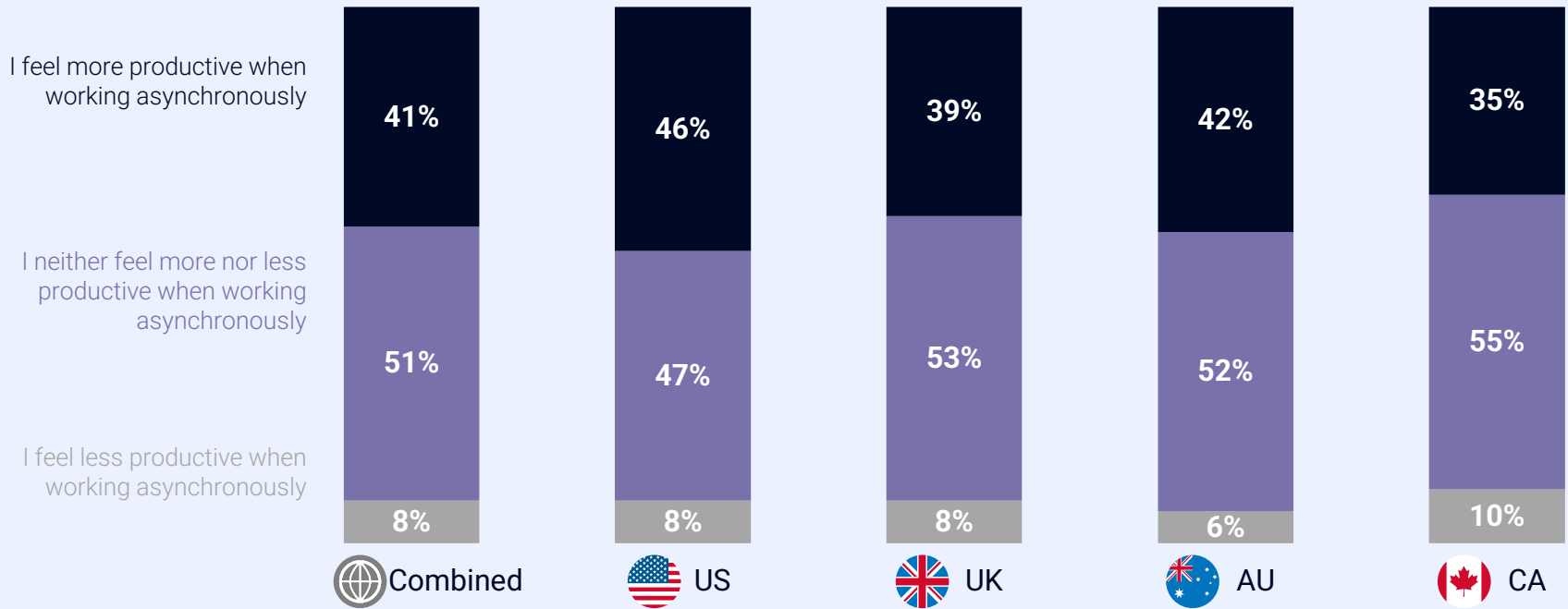
Q: Have you heard of the term 'asynchronous communication'? Asynchronous communication is when people can communicate without the requirement to be 'present' at the same moment - for example, those working in teams across different time zones.

Asynchronous collaboration and communication is part of the job for 60% of respondents.



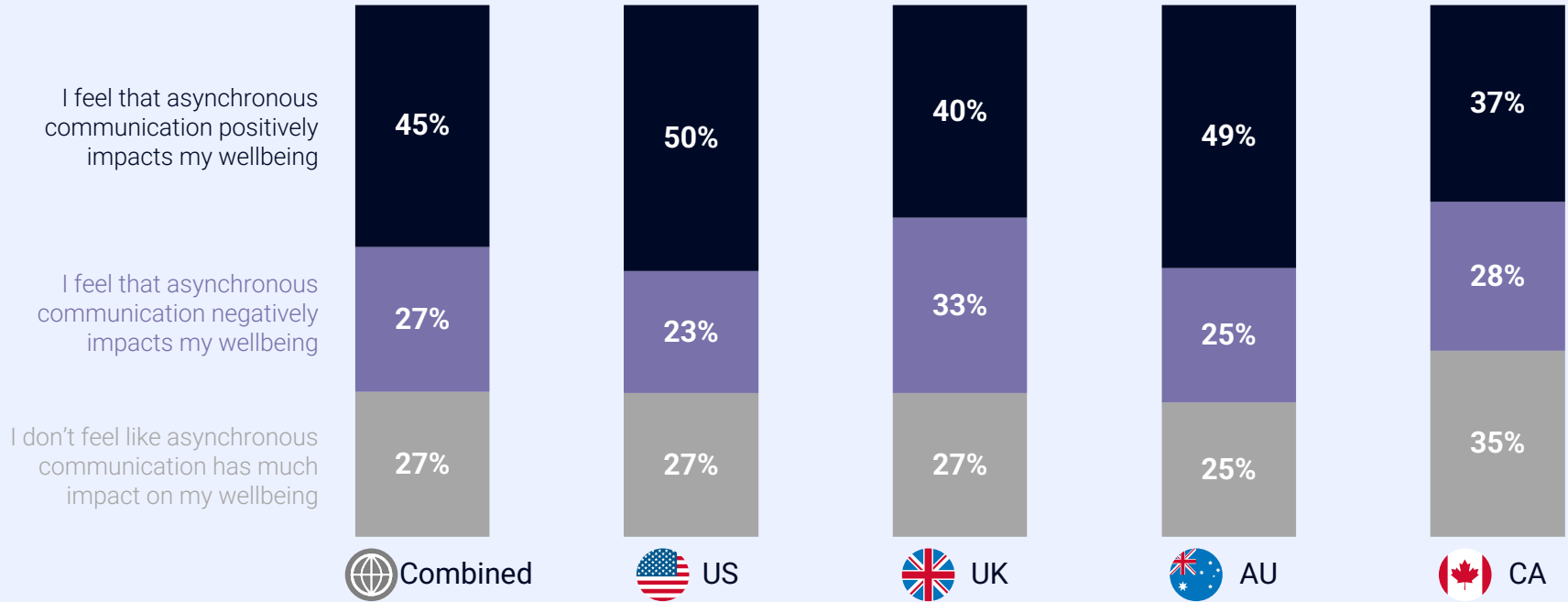
Q: Do you currently work and communicate asynchronously across your organisation (do you and your colleagues have different hours of work, across different time zones)?

Many respondents find an asynchronous work structure beneficial to their productivity.



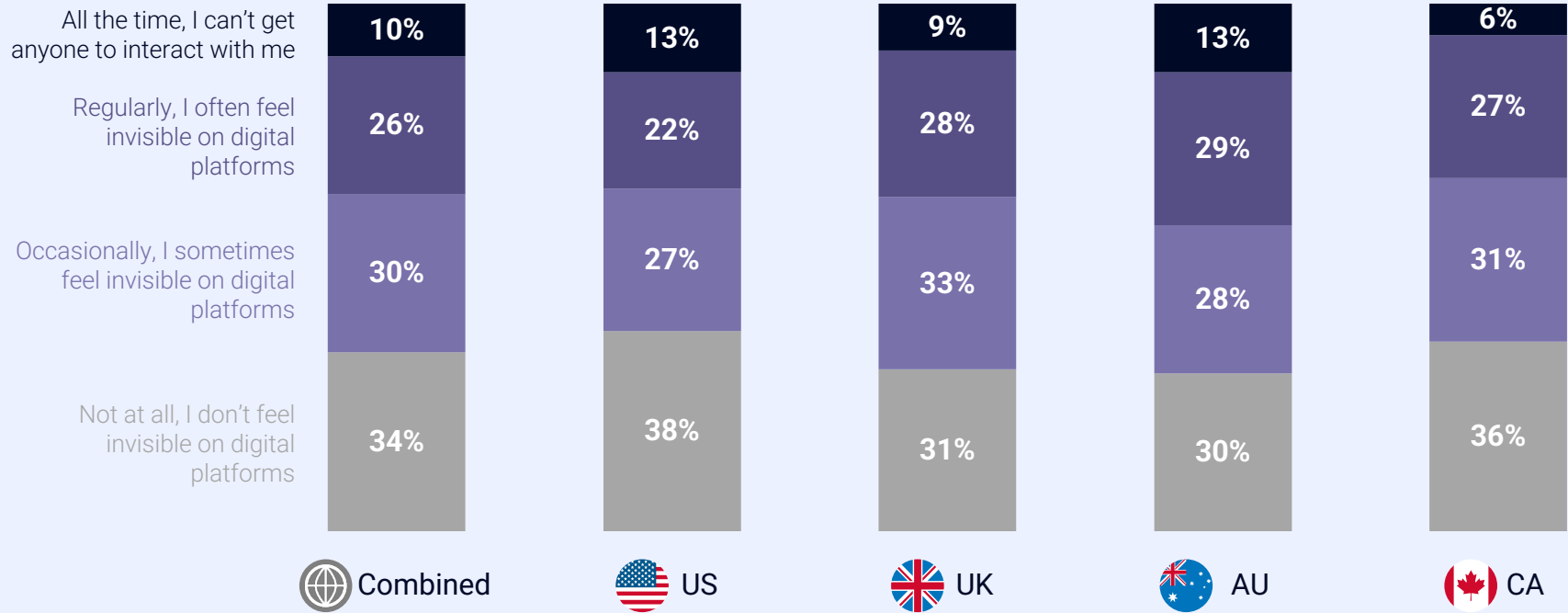
Q: Do you feel more or less productive when you work asynchronously?

And almost half of workers believe asynchronous communication positively impacts their wellbeing.



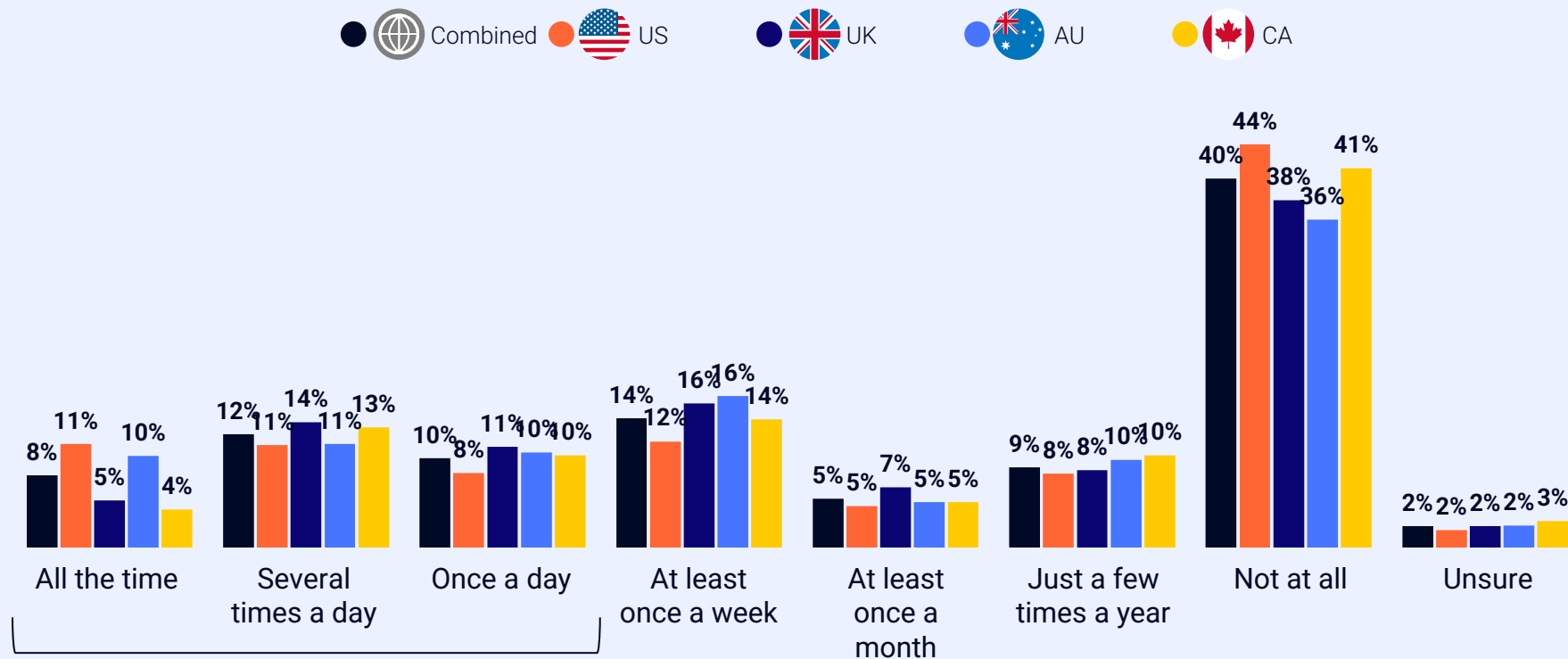
Q: Do you feel that asynchronous communication positively, or negatively impacts your wellbeing?

While the majority of global workers (66%) feel invisible at least occasionally on digital platforms, and even larger number of asynchronous workers are likely to have feelings of invisibility or isolation (77%).

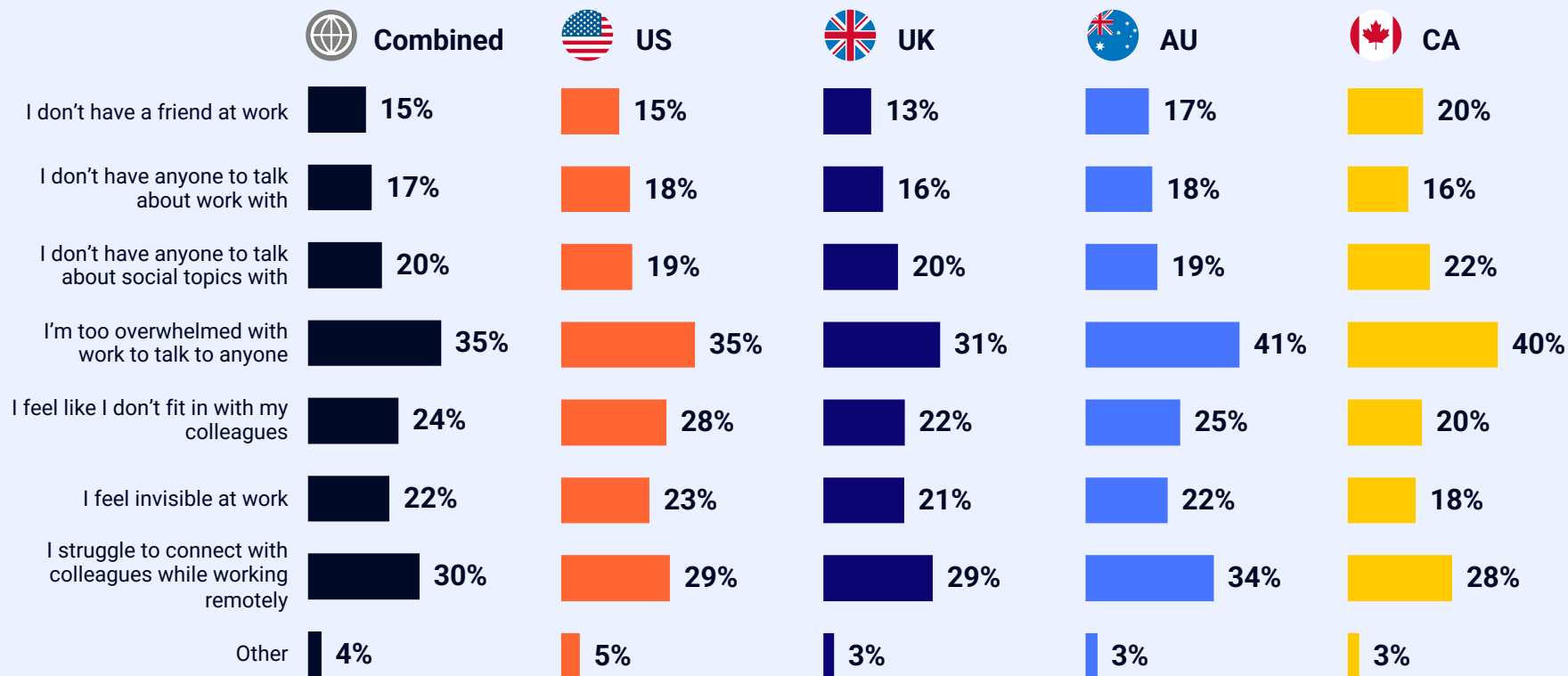


Q: Do you ever feel invisible on digital platforms despite your interactions/posts?

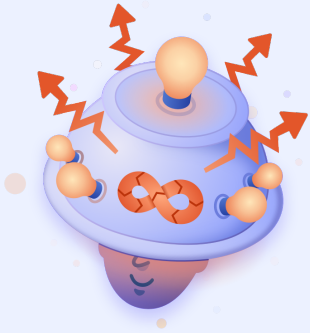
Overall, 30% of workers feel lonely every day, and asynchronous workers are most affected (39%).



That loneliness is driven by too much work, and too little interaction with colleagues.

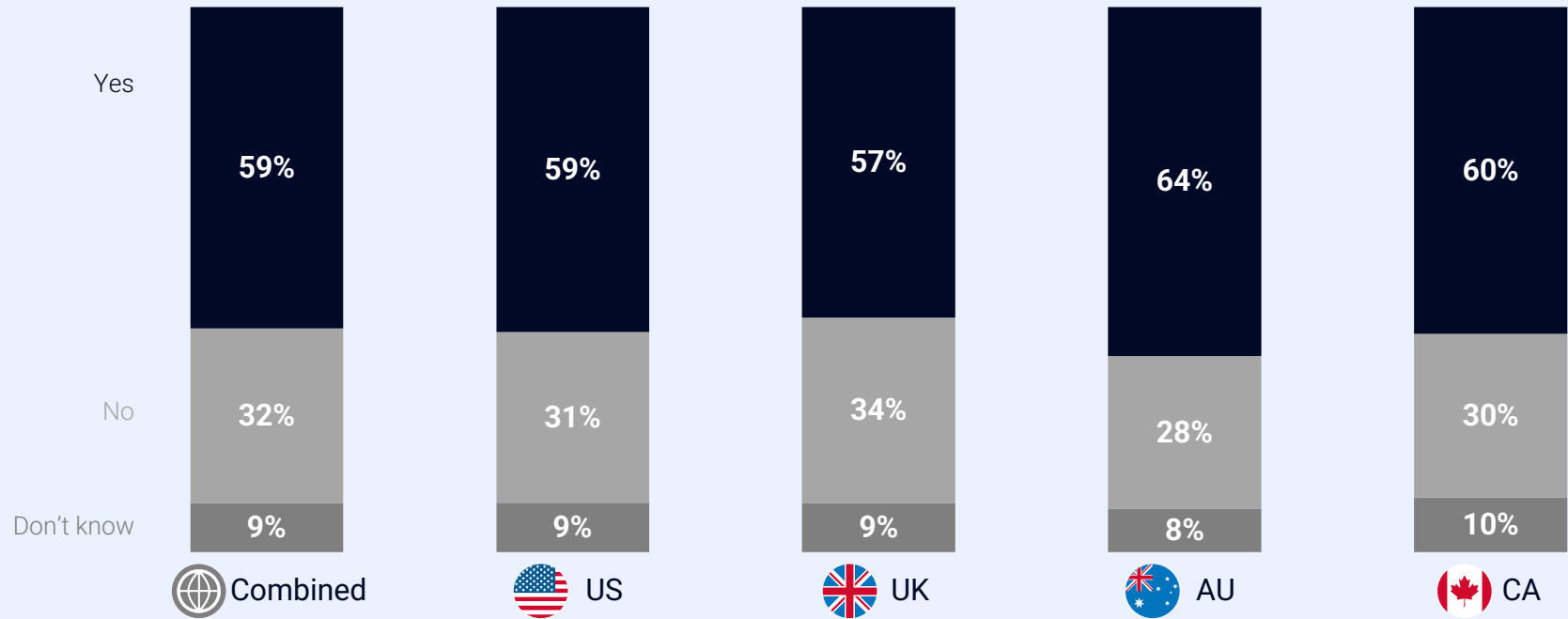


Q: What makes you feel lonely at work? Please select all that apply.

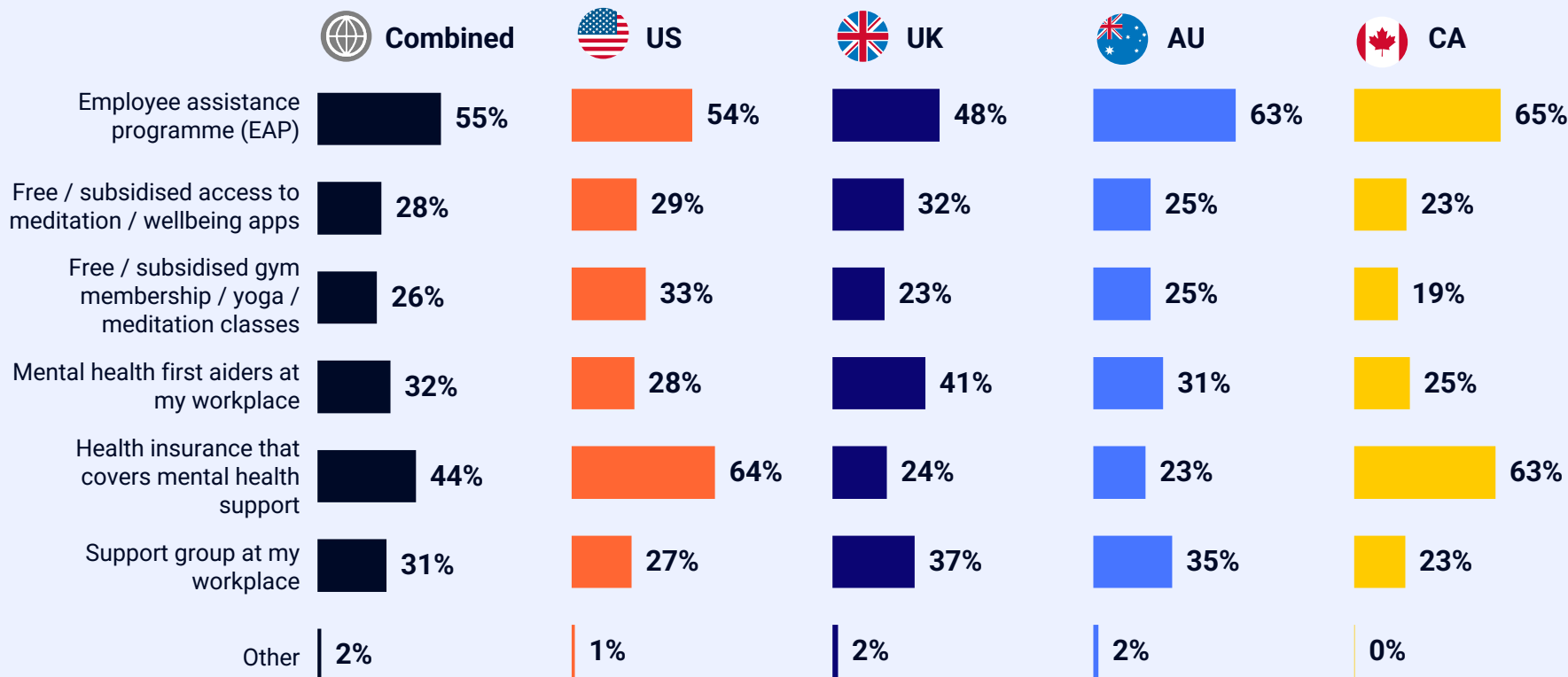


Mental health and well-being

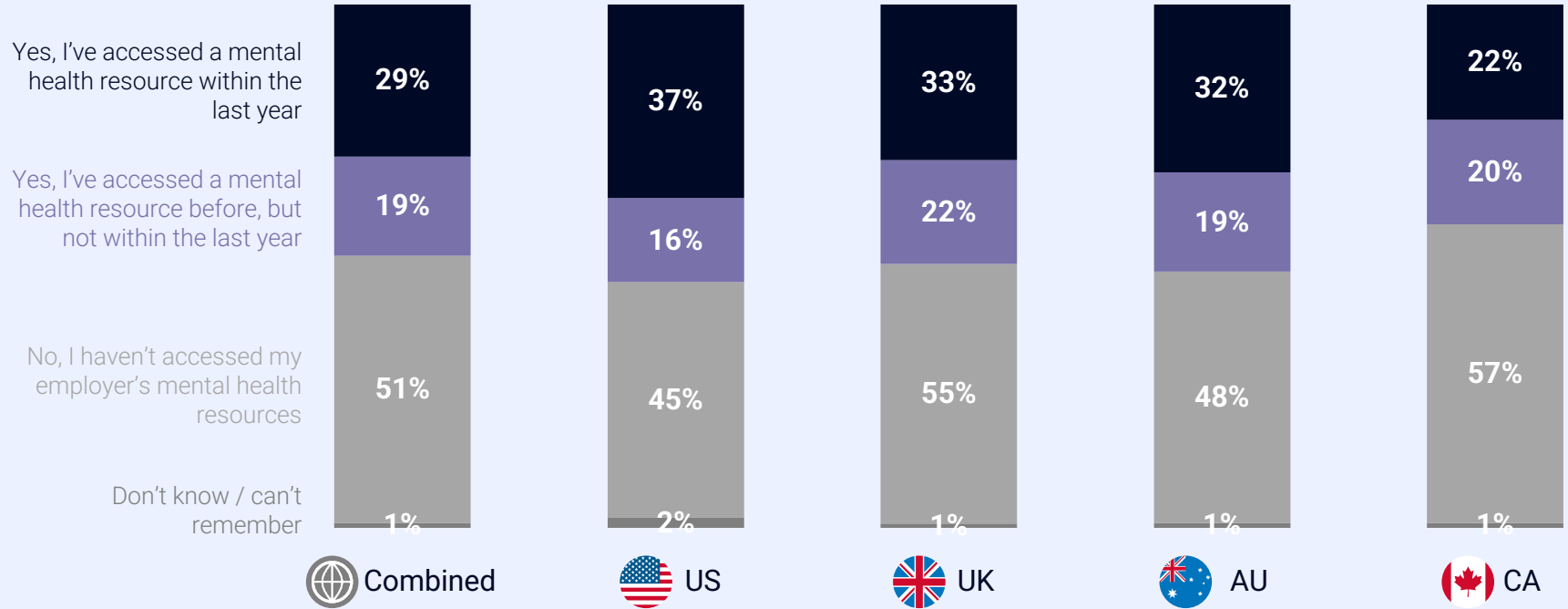
Most employers offer mental health and well-being resources as a company benefit, especially large companies.



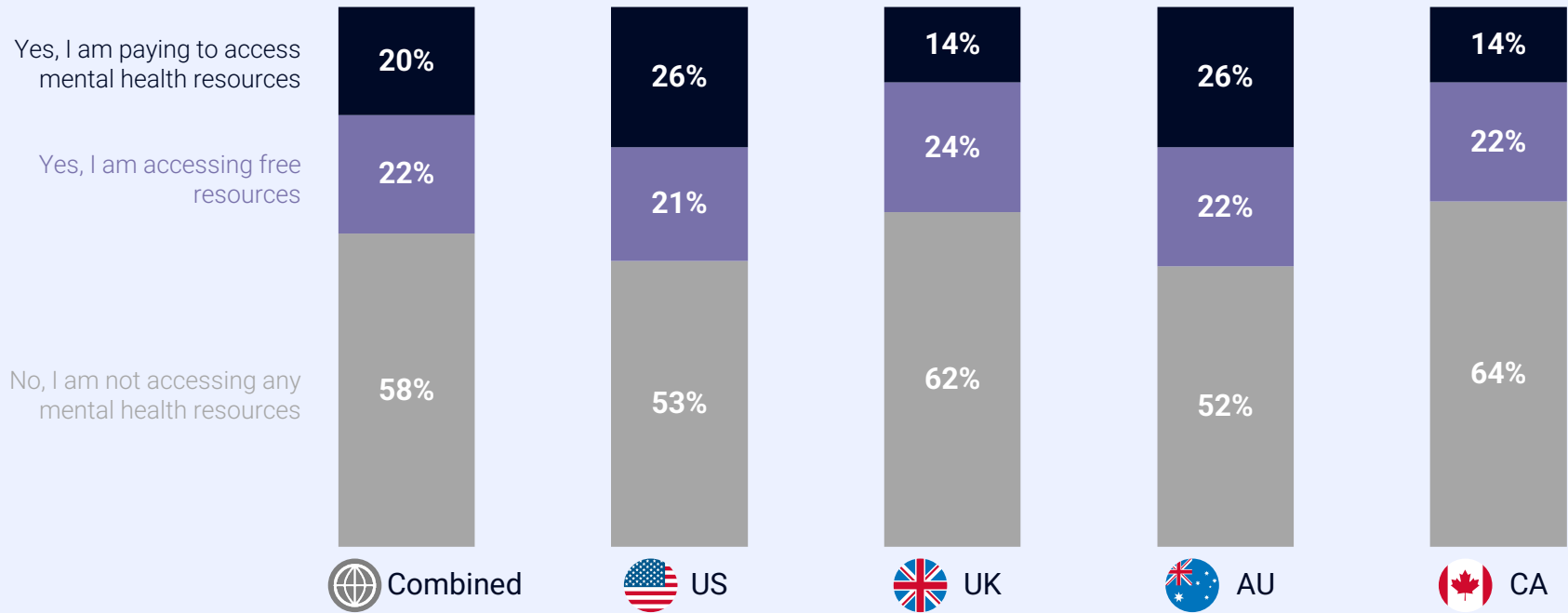
Employee Assistance Programmes and health insurance coverage are the most prevalent mental health resources offered by employers, with the latter available more in the US and Canada.



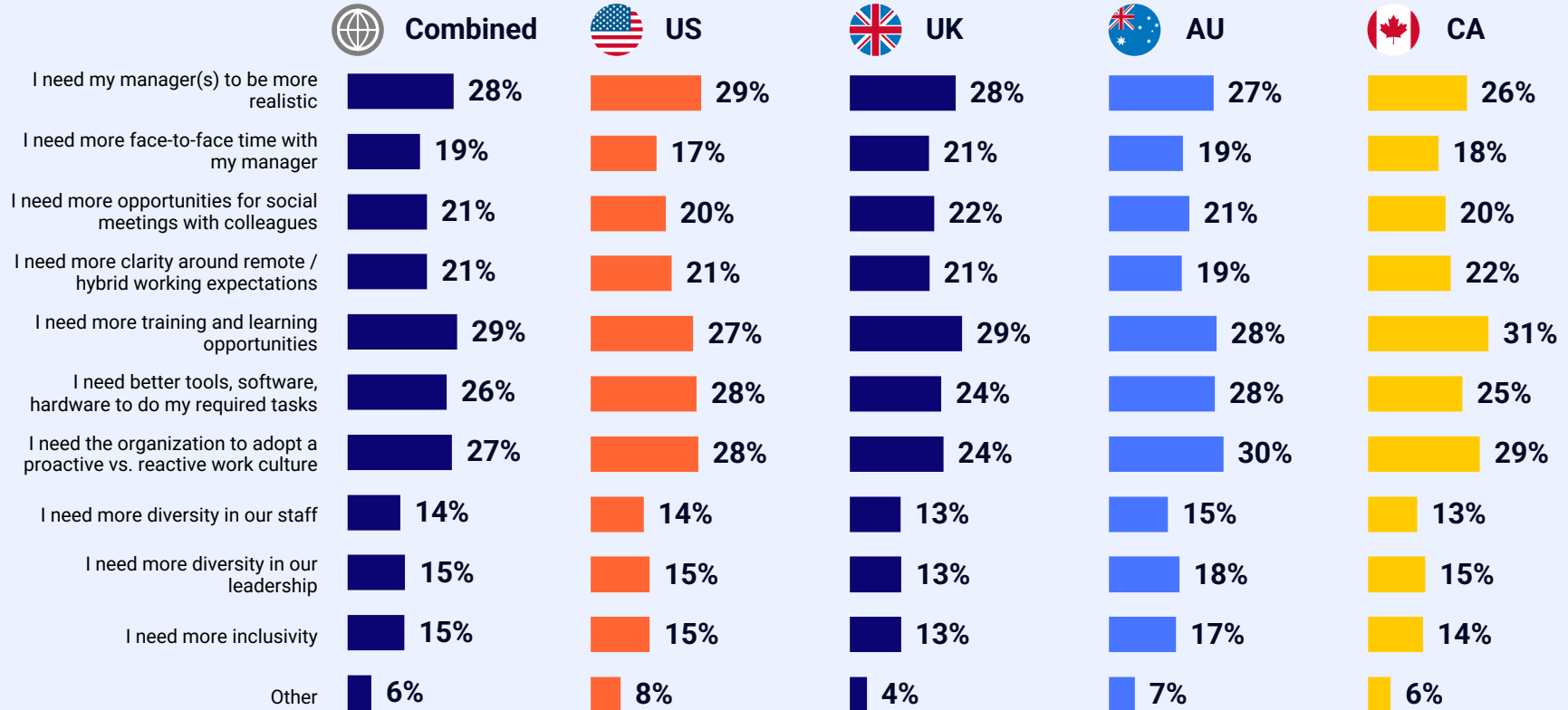
About half of workers have accessed their employers' mental health resources, and that number is even higher (76%) among those who experience loneliness daily.



And 42% access mental health resources outside of work -- which they either pay for out-of-pocket or access for free.



Long-term career support from management is as important to workers' well-being as management's ability to address more immediate needs like work tools and changing culture.

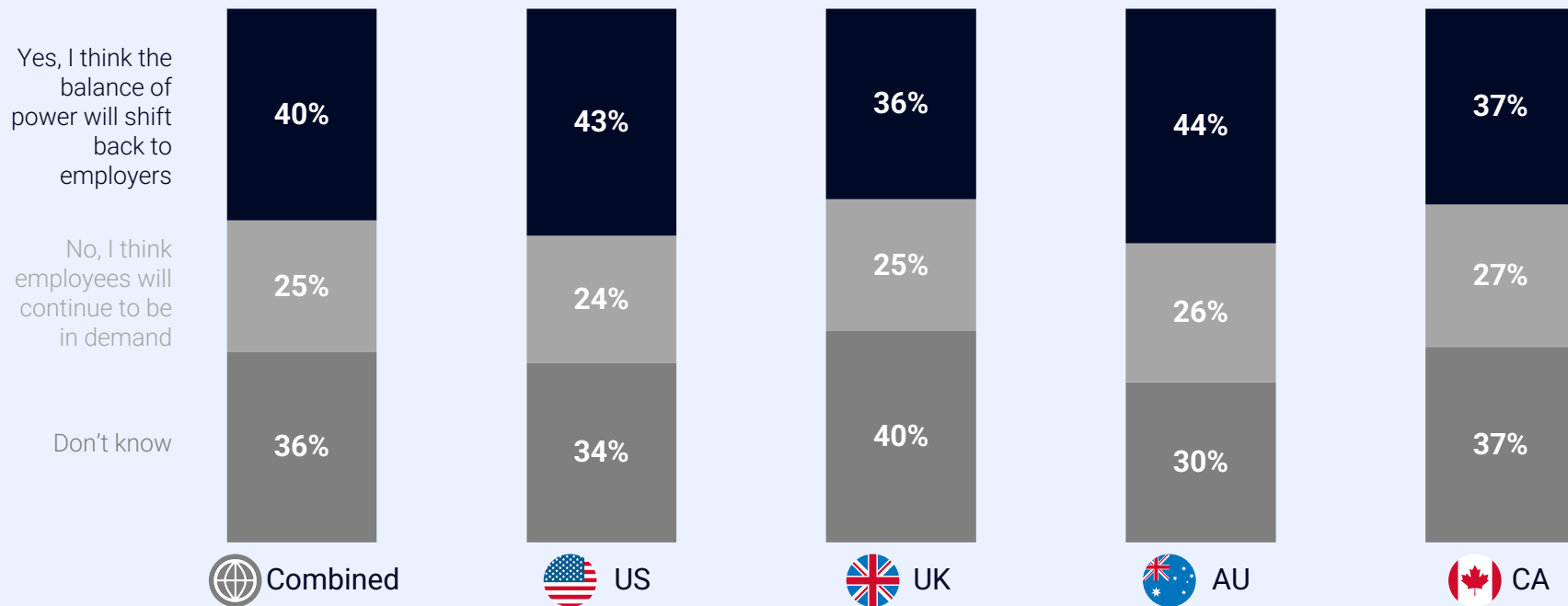


Q: If you could tell your company/manager 3 things that you need, what would they be? (CHOOSE UP TO 3)



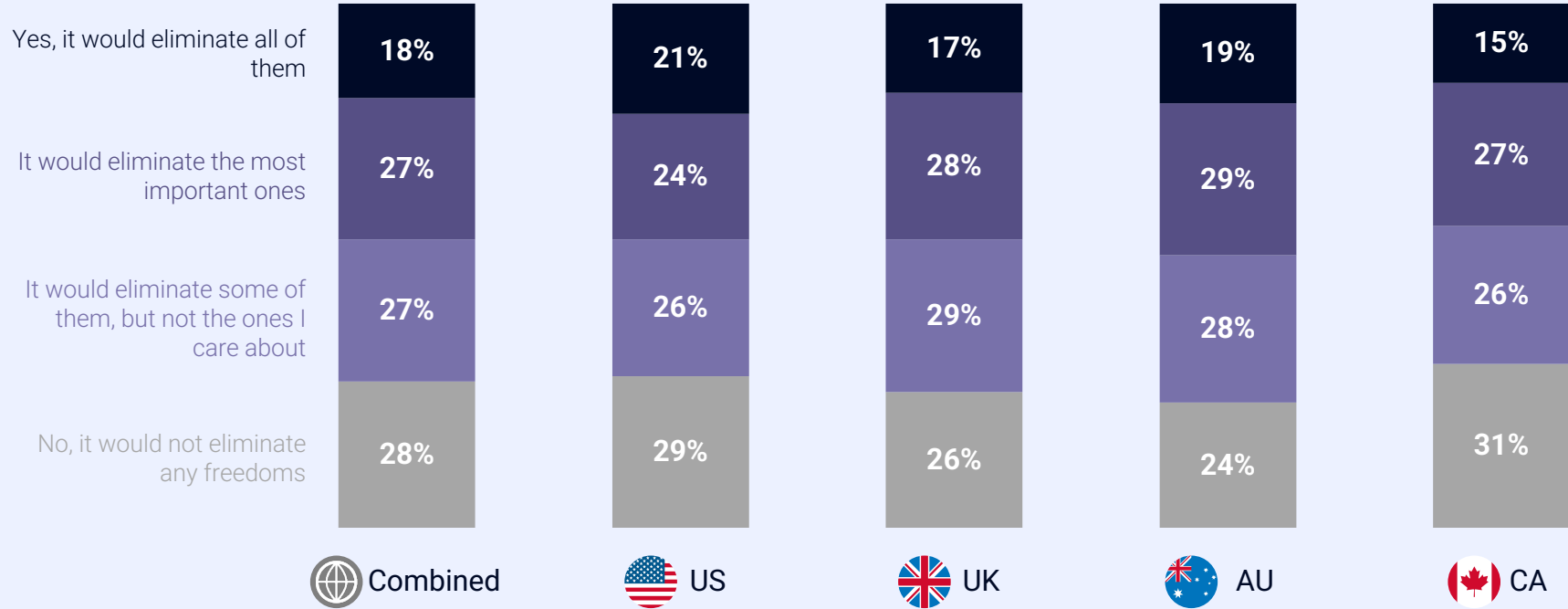
The future of work

Many believe we'll see an 'employment reset', with employers regaining the upper hand in the workplace power dynamic.



Q: For the past 2 years, it has been an employees' job market (balance of power shifted to employee vs employer). Are you concerned we'll see an employment reset (balance of power shifting back to employers)?

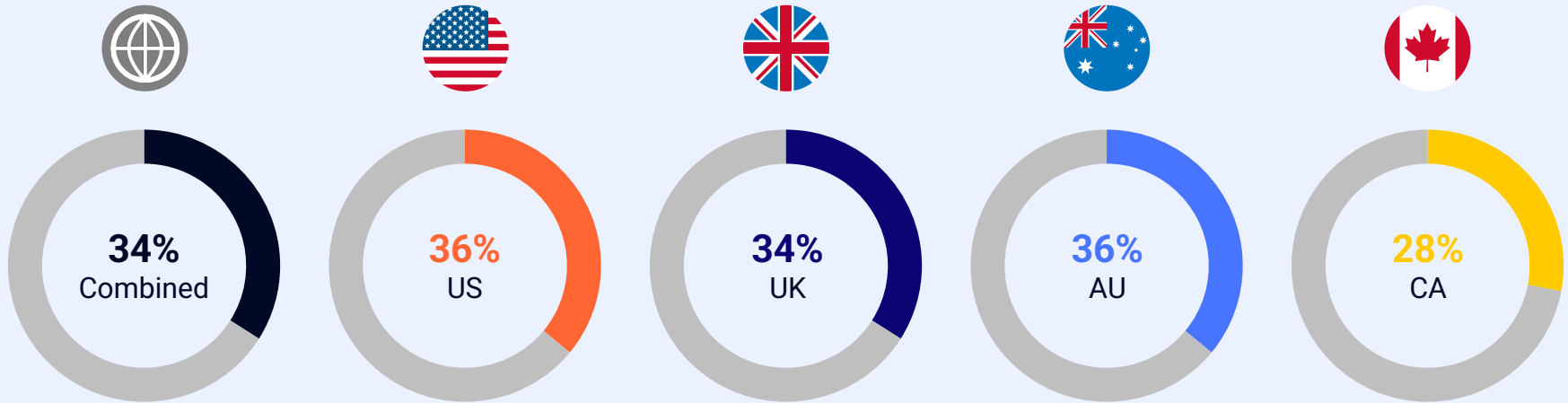
And most believe that freedoms gained as a result of remote or hybrid work structures will be scaled back.



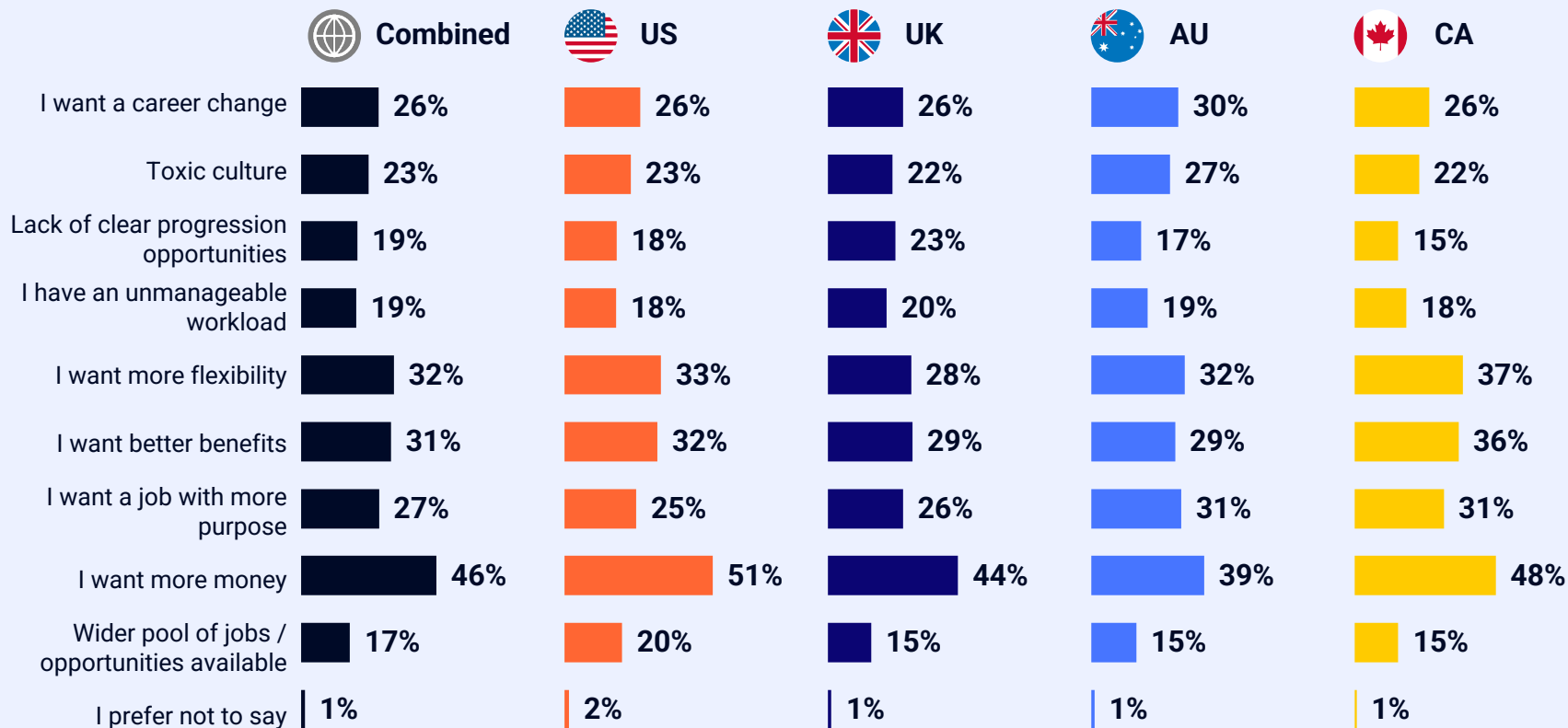
Q: Do you believe an employment reset would eliminate the freedoms you have with remote or hybrid work?

Currently, one in three workers is actively looking for a new job, with 43% of those with asynchronous work experience currently searching.

Actively Looking for a New Job

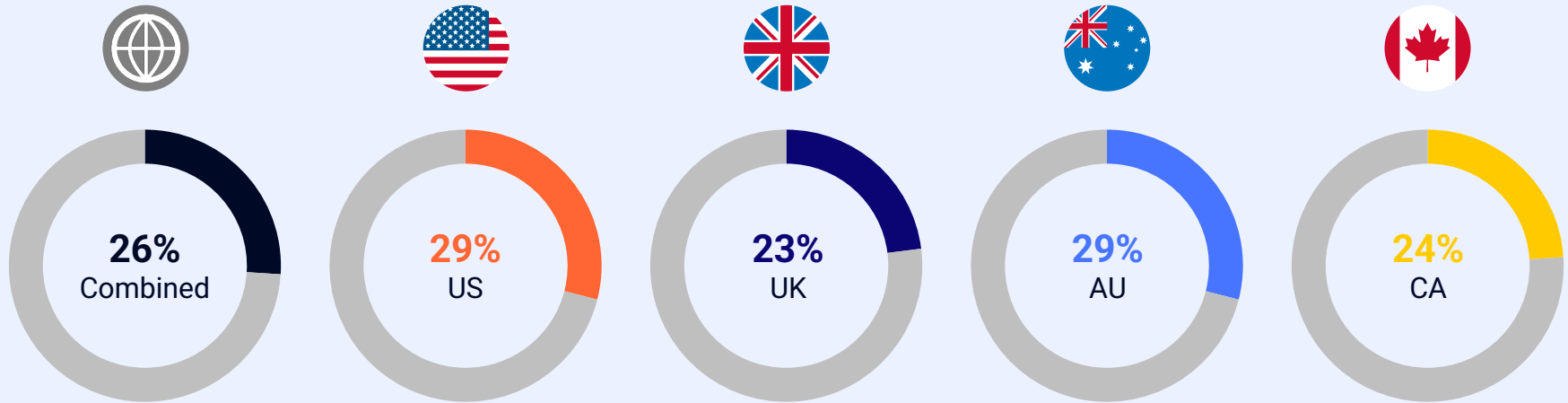


Better compensation is driving new job searches, along with flexibility, better work-life balance and more meaningful employment.

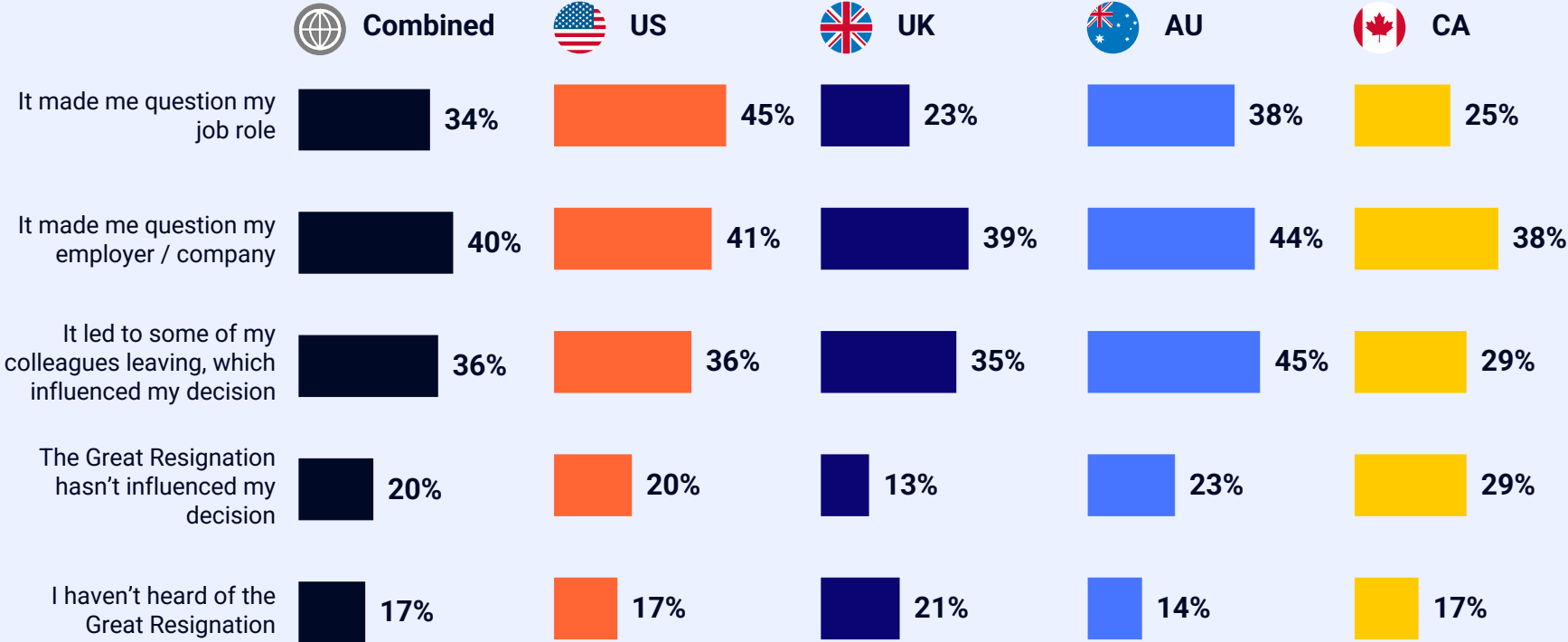


Interestingly, a quarter of workers have started a new job in the past year.

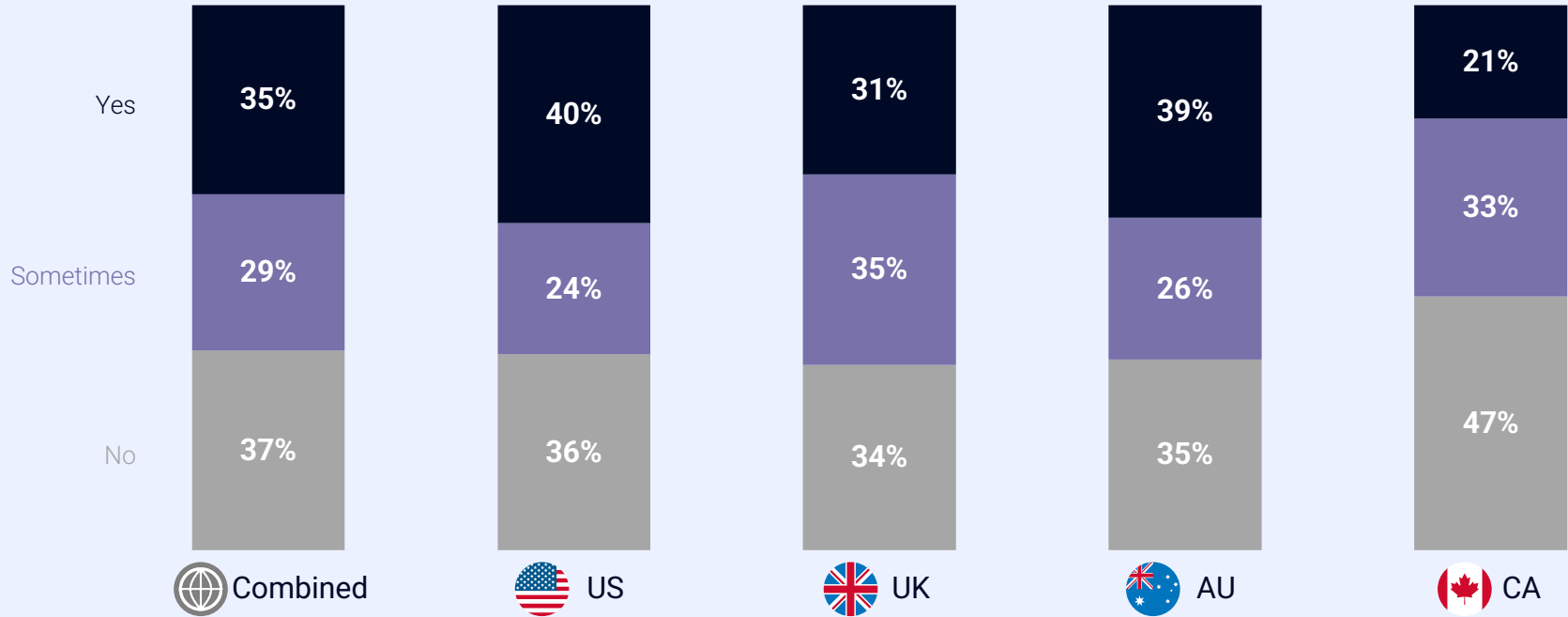
Started a New Job within the Last 12 Months



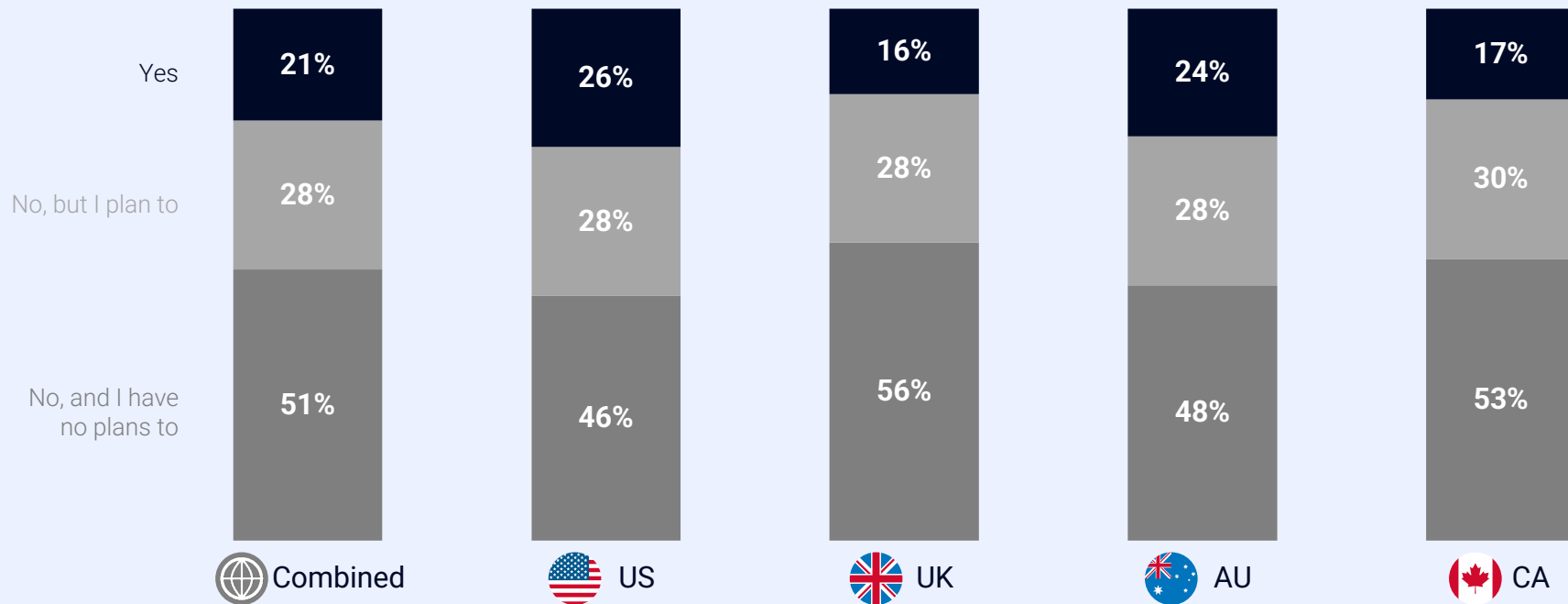
Similar to those who are currently job hunting, respondents who've recently started new jobs were influenced by the Great Resignation, making them examine their employer, job role and their colleagues' decisions to leave.



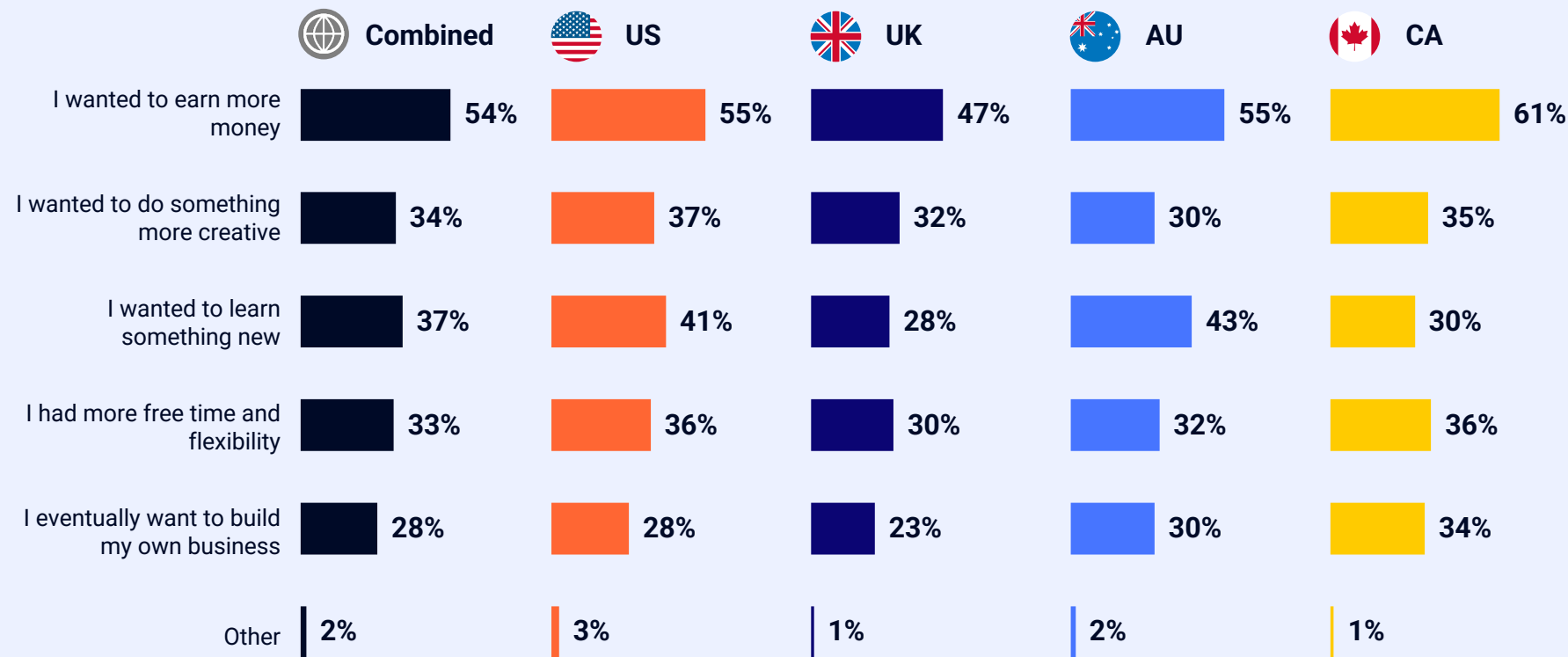
Interestingly, most workers who resigned as part of the Great Resignation movement have experienced some regret.



Almost half of workers are supplementing – or plan to supplement – their income with overtime, an additional job or ‘side hustle’.

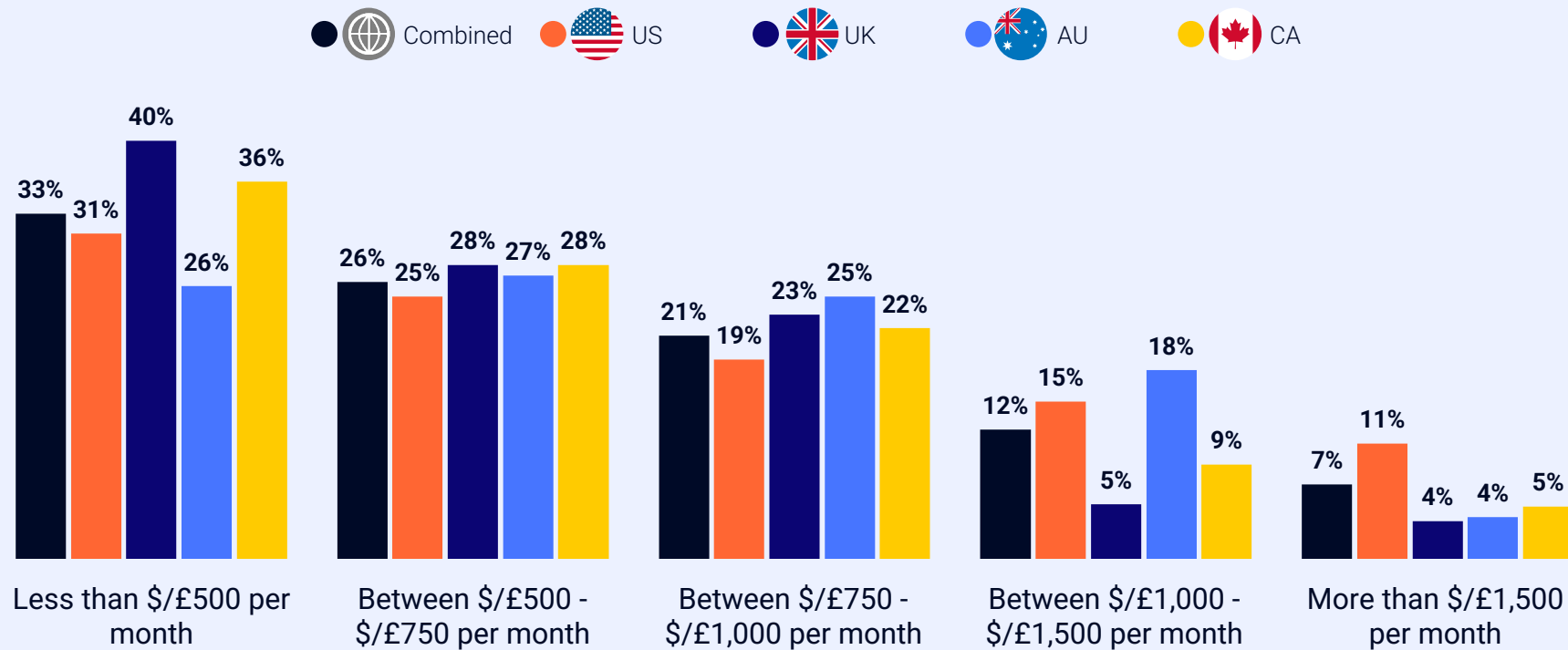


In addition to gaining income, many will use their secondary jobs to expand their skill set or launch their own business.



Q: What was the reason you accepted an additional job or taken on additional paid work? Please select all that apply.

With regard to income, most workers who took on additional paid work saw an increase of between \$/£500 – 1,000 each month. In the UK, 91% of workers with ‘side hustles’ or extra hours added up to £12,000 to their annual income.



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