

LIFE AT HOME

Proposed highlights
BELGIUM

2017
REPORT #4



[From report:]

These tensions form the five topics of the **Life at Home Report 2017**



The myth of minimalism

Why we're more likely to prioritise, than minimise



I need my space

How we negotiate around personal space and things in a shared home



Is anybody home?

The quest for mental presence within the home



The (dis)connected home

The pursuit of balance around technology at home



The deliberately unfinished home

How to have a home that stays one step ahead of your life

The myth of minimalism

Why we're more likely to
prioritise, than minimise

[From report:]

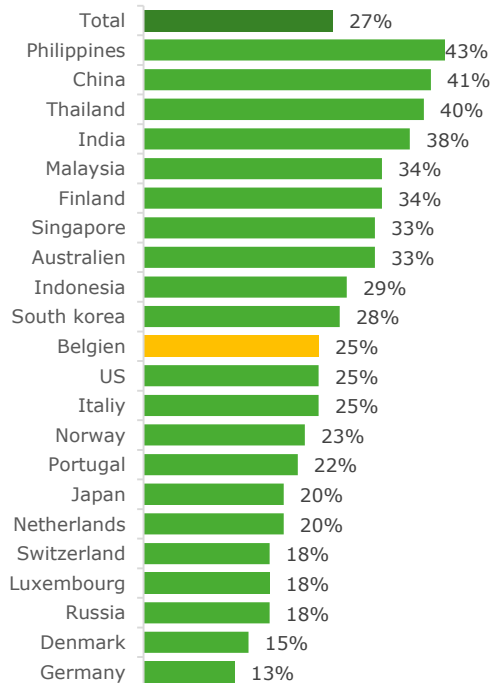
The Life at Home Report 2016 found that people said they wanted to have less stuff in their homes.

This year we dug deeper into how this was playing out.

We discovered that having “too much stuff” was the single biggest cause of stress in the home.

So we’ve explored the various coping strategies people use to try and **manage the problem of living with the many things we just can’t seem to get rid of.**

1 in 4 Belgians feel pressure by society to live more minimally



STATEMENT

“Society puts pressure on us to live more minimally”

Of those respondents in Belgium who state they live in minimal homes...

36%

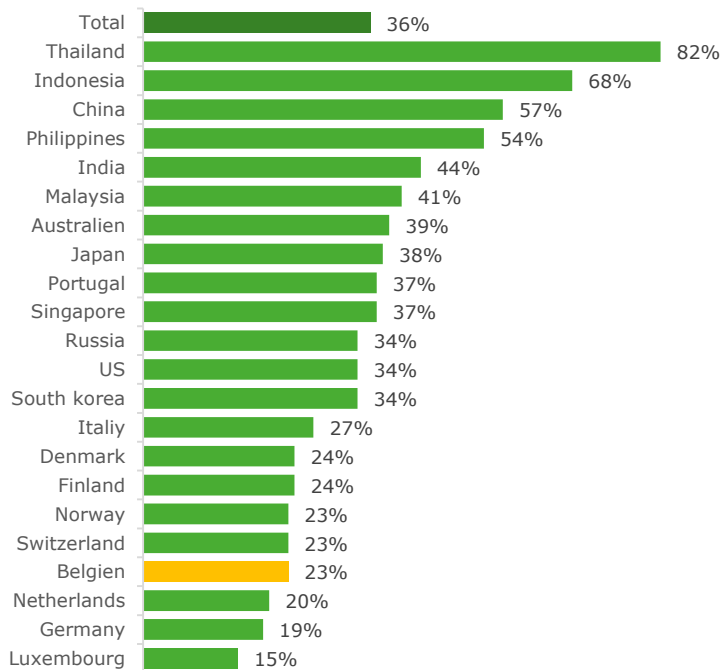
...say they **feel pressure from society to live minimally**. It can be compared to 25% overall in Belgium. Among all global respondents 27% state they feel pressure to live minimally

Q: Now let's think about the wider society in the place you live. We suspect that society expects us to live a certain way that perhaps isn't as healthy as we are led to believe. How much do you agree with the following statements? Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

Belgians are **less likely** to think of their home as minimalist

STATEMENT

“I would describe my home as minimalist”



Living minimally doesn't come without challenges. Especially when living together with other people

Of those Belgians who describe their home as minimalist AND live together with others...

45%

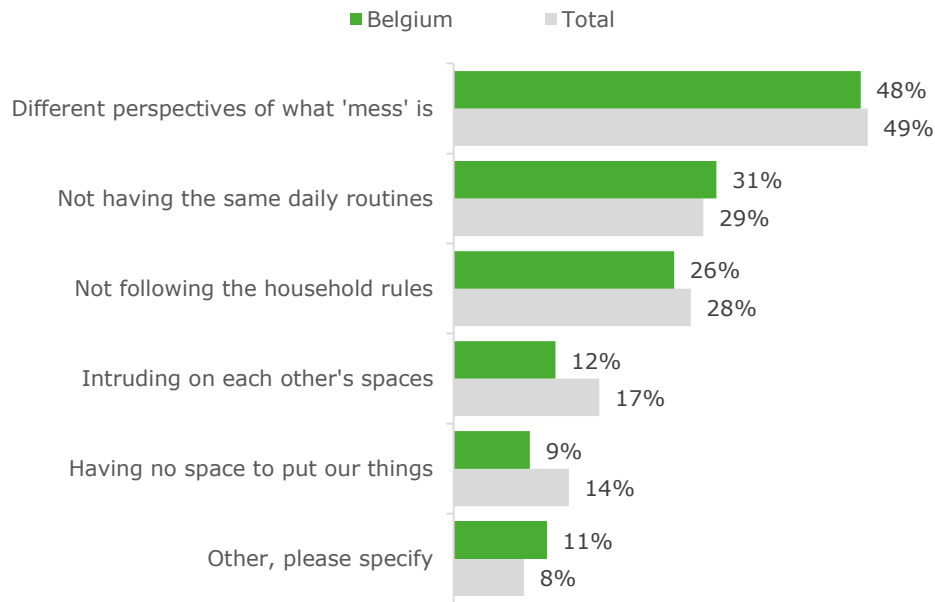
...say that they **have thrown away things owned by someone else**, compared to 31% in Belgium overall, and 48% overall globally.

34%

...say that **there are things in their homes they hate because it ruins the look and feel of the room**, compared to 23% in Belgium overall, and 38% overall globally.

Q: We know there are many different living styles, what's yours? Tell us how much you agree with the following statements: Showing share of answers 4 OR 5 (Scale 1-5, 1: Completely disagree, 5: Agree completely)

Different interpretations of mess cause most household arguments in Belgium, and in the rest of the world



Q: We'd love to understand what causes tension in our homes. Please think about what you argue about with the people who share your home:

[From report:]

Our different interpretations of mess cause **most of our household arguments**



[From report:]

Sometimes we clear things out, but more often we **prioritise**

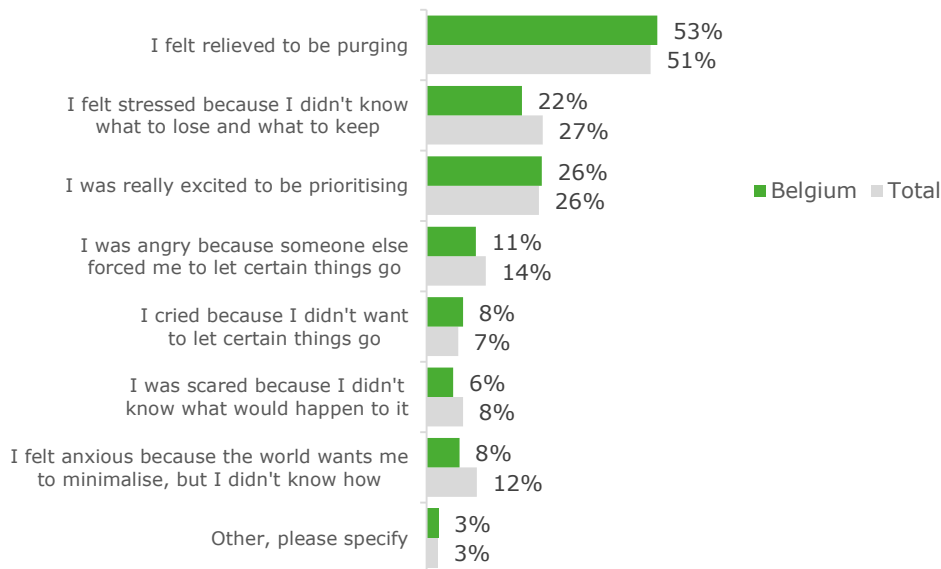
The times when we clear all our things out are rare and often sparked by a significant life event, such as a divorce or a natural disaster (like a flood).

Many forms of disruption – both big and small – can prompt us to take our homes back to basics, and a lot of people say this process provides great relief. But we can see that what passes for “clearing out” is often a process of prioritisation, in which our things are marked for storage in lock-ups, garages, attics, and even our childhood homes. It is very rarely a complete and final clear out, in the way that a minimalist might see it.

How does this make us feel, and how do we prioritise what to keep?

Above all, clearing out gives a majority of Belgians a sense of relief, even more than the global average

"How do you feel when you choose the things you live with right now, and the things you either throw away or put in storage?"



43%

Had **only** positive emotions (relief or excitement), when clearing out at home. (T:43%)

33%

had negative emotions, when clearing out at home (T:43%)

24%

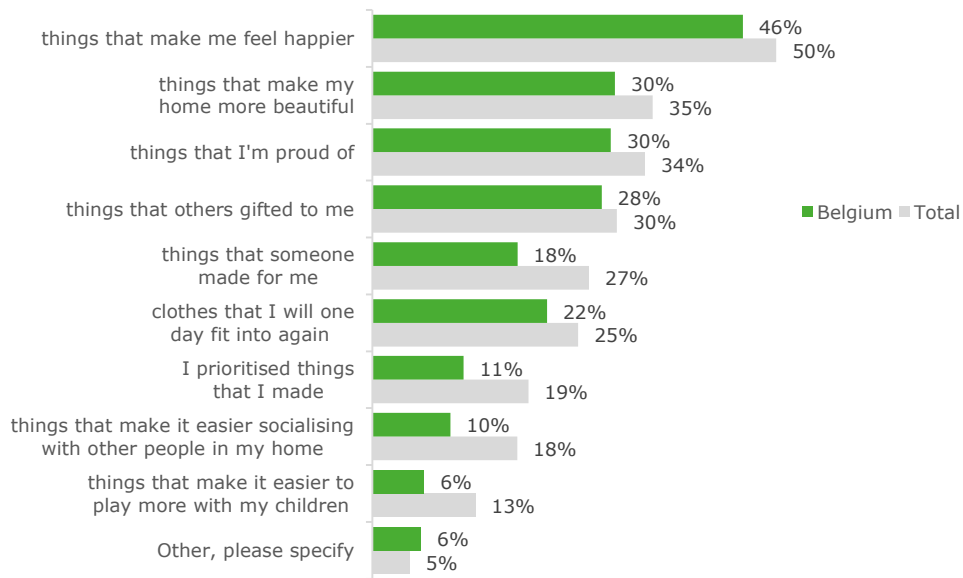
have **never** cleared out their belongings (T:14%)

Q: Now we would like to talk about the things in our home, and why some of us find it hard to prioritise. **How do you feel when you choose the things you live with right now, and the things you either throw away or put in storage?**

We prioritise things that make us happy when clearing out at home

“When deciding which of my belongings to keep, I prioritise...”

Among those who have chosen amongst or discarded any of their things:



Q: If you've ever stored or thrown away things, how did you decide which of your belongings to keep? *Chart showing those who have stored or thrown away things*

21%

of Belgians have never chosen amongst or discarded any of their belongings (T: 11%)

I need my space

How we negotiate around personal space
and things in a shared home

[From report:]

The Life at Home Report 2016 found that there was an inherent tension between space and relationships – **people longed for more privacy but also wanted to ensure home was a place that facilitated their most important relationships.**

This year, we challenged the idea of ownership of things and spaces, and how that impacts on relationships.

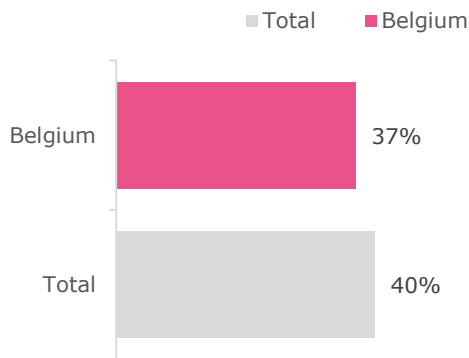
While half of us find this an easy thing to talk about, the rest of us find it awkward.

It means many of us live with compromises which make us unhappy, or we argue over boundaries which are not clearly set.

A third of all Belgians feel media are misrepresenting what living together is really like

STATEMENT

"The media never reflects the reality of sharing a home"

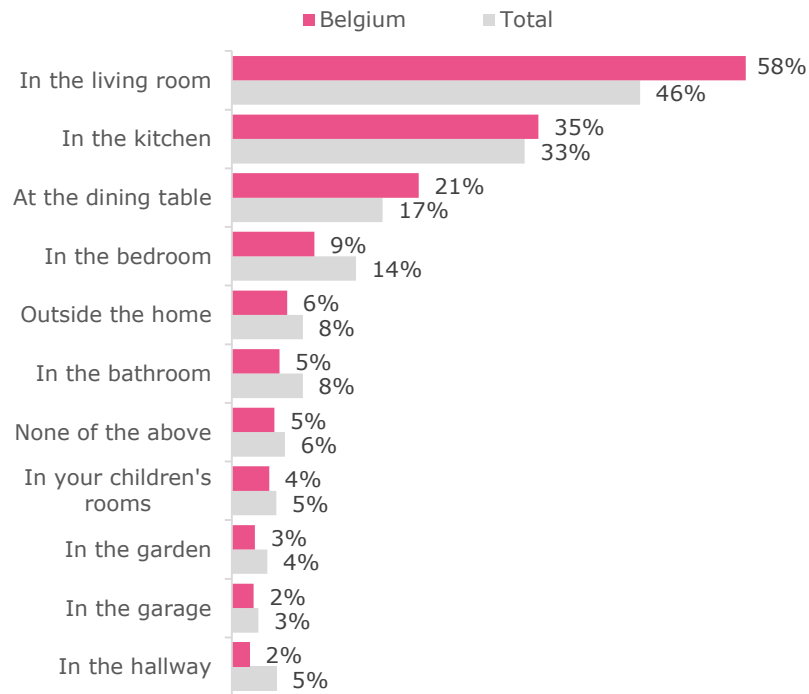


[From report:]

This leads us to consider whether the media fairly reflects our need for personal and shared spaces, **when the ideal home is usually portrayed as a shared and harmonious space**. And if allocating spaces makes us happier, overall, then maybe the picture of the ideal home needs to change.

Q: Now let's think about how we share our home with other people and how that feels. How much do you agree with the following statements?
Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

Globally we argue in the living room, especially in Belgian homes a majority argue in the living room



49%

of Belgians who live with others state they sometimes or often argue with the people they live with. (T:48%)

Q: Now think about the people you live with: do you ever have any conflicts with them? Be honest! Share of answers (Yes, often & Yes, sometimes)

11%

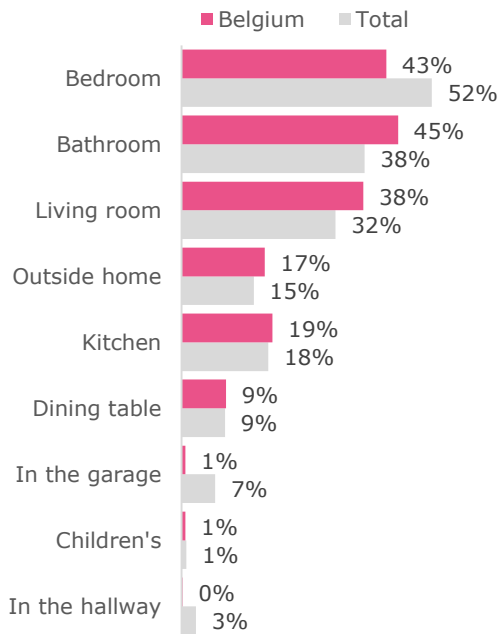
of Belgians living with others argue intruding each other's space with the people they live with (T:17%)

Q: We'd love to understand what causes tension in our homes. Please think about what you argue about with the people who share your home:

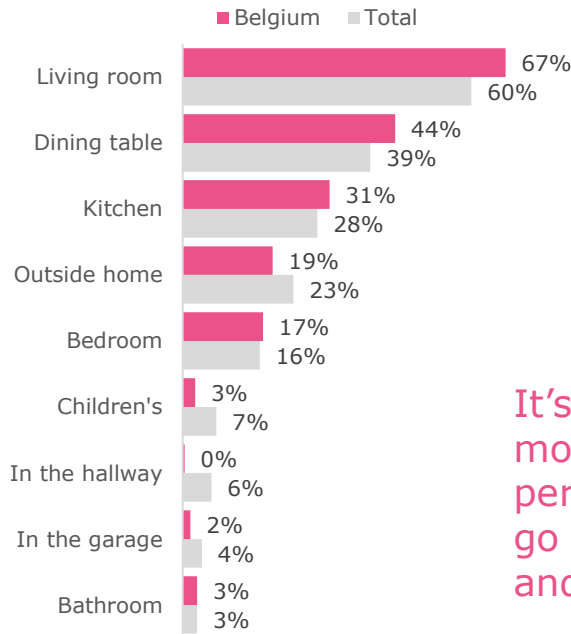
Q: In which part of the house do you most often find yourself in conflict with other people in your home?

The living room is where Belgians find their moments of presence with others

find your own **individual** presence



achieve moments of presence **with others**



It's in the living room where most arguments happen, perhaps since it is where we go for both personal time and social interactions

[From report:]

Personal spaces promote happiness in a home, and **some of us negotiate these really well**

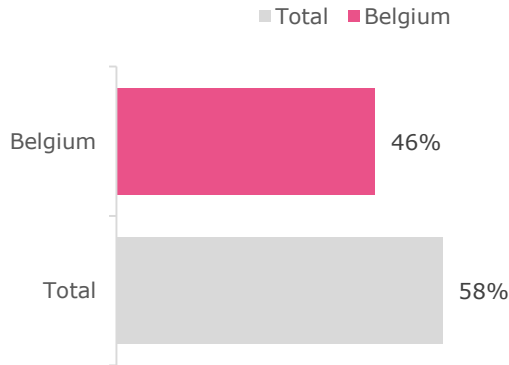
During our research, we were struck by just how clearly defined people's homes are, no matter where they are in the world. The more we talked about each space, each room, each chair, each ornament... the more we understood that almost everything and everywhere has an owner.



Almost half of all Belgians are comfortable defining their own space at home – and it gives many positive feelings

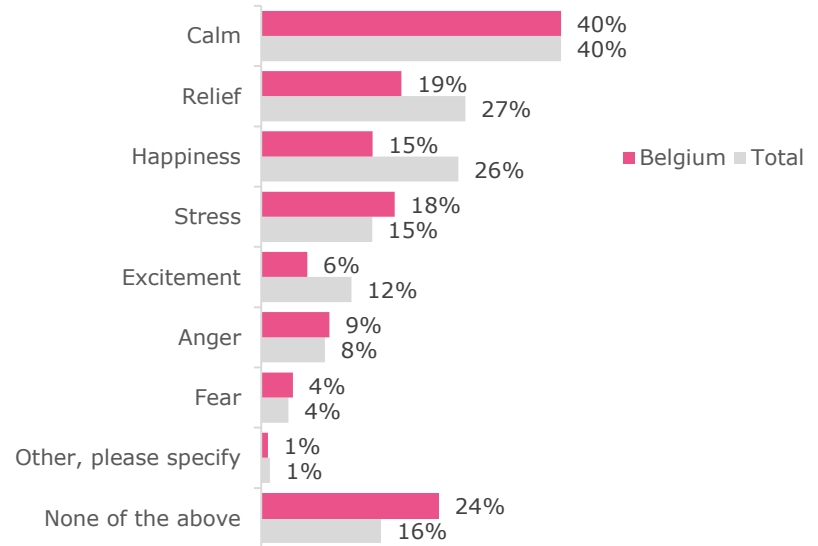
STATEMENT

"It's really easy to define our own space in our home"



Q: Now let's think about how we share our home with other people and how that feels. How much do you agree with the following statements? Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

Feelings associated with claiming ones space at home:

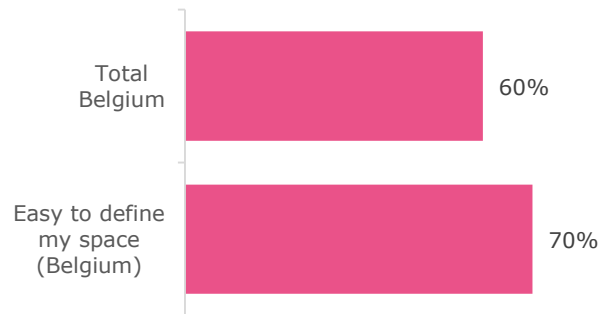


Q: Next, we'd like to know how you feel about claiming your 'own space' in your home. Think about when you staked a claim on certain spaces in your home. **What feelings do you associate with the action of claiming your own individual space?**

An ability to claim one's space can improve how satisfied we are with our homes and the people we live with

Those that easily define their own space are more likely to feel **satisfied with their home**

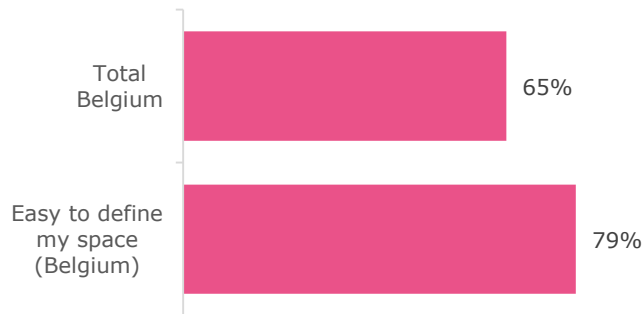
Scale 0-10; 10:extremely satisfied, 0: extremely unsatisfied



Q: Now we would like to understand how happy you are with the different aspects of your life. Taking everything into account, tell us how SATISFIED you are with the following: **My home**

...and more likely to feel **satisfied with the people they live with**

Scale 0-10; 10:extremely satisfied, 0: extremely unsatisfied

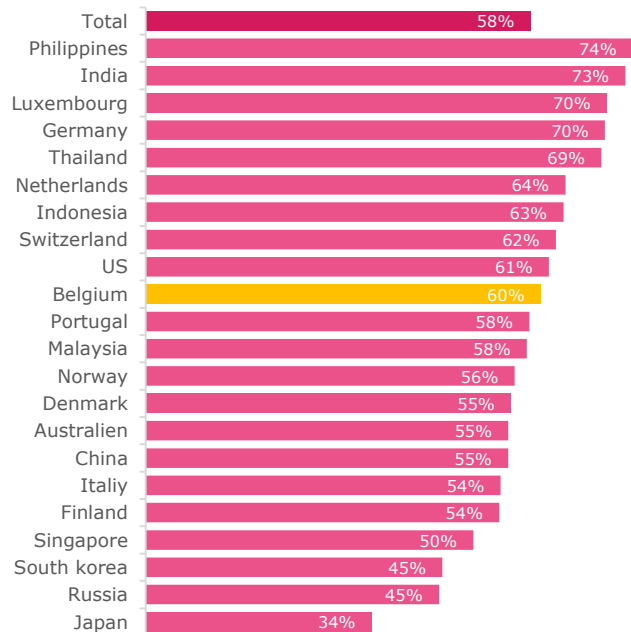


Q: Now we would like to understand how happy you are with the different aspects of your life. Taking everything into account, tell us how SATISFIED you are with the following: **The people I live with**

6 in 10 Belgians feel satisfied with their home and nearly 7 in 10 with the people they live with

Feel satisfied with **their home**

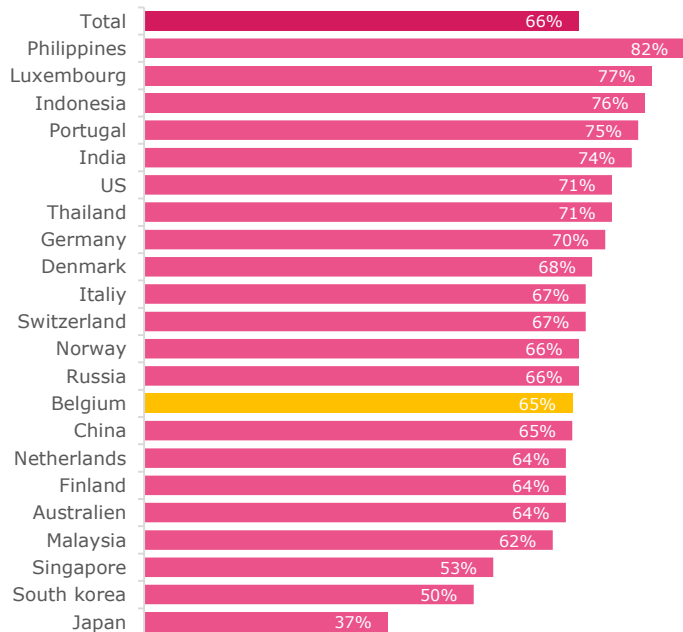
[Chart showing share of answers 8-10. Scale 0-10;
10:extremely satisfied, 0: extremely unsatisfied]



Q: Now we would like to understand how happy you are with the different aspects of your life. Taking everything into account, tell us how SATISFIED you are with the following: **My home**

Feel satisfied with **the people they live with**

[Chart showing share of answers 8-10. Scale 0-10;
10:extremely satisfied, 0: extremely unsatisfied]



Q: Now we would like to understand how happy you are with the different aspects of your life. Taking everything into account, tell us how SATISFIED you are with the following: **The people I live with**

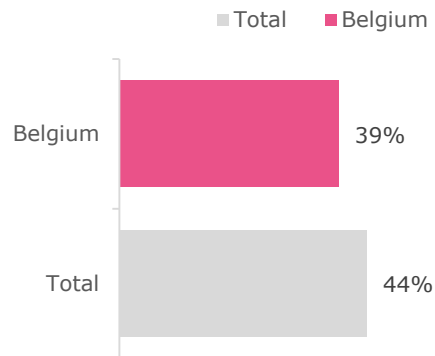
[From report:]

Hardest of all is when we move into someone else's space

During our home visits, we met a significant number of people who had moved into the homes of their partners. We found that this situation, although relatively common, is harder for people to adjust to than moving into a home that is new for everyone.

STATEMENT

"It feels 'wrong' to define your own spaces when you move into someone else's home "



Q: Now let's think about how we share our home with other people and how that feels. How much do you agree with the following statements?
Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

Moving **into another's space** is also harder in some countries

Key:

- 60-79%
- 40-59%
- 20-39%

71% of people in INDONESIA
59% of people in PHILIPPINES
58% of people in INDIA
55% of people in THAILAND
53% of people in MALAYSIA
53% of people in ITALY
52% of people in SINGAPORE
50% of people in CHINA
47% of people in AUSTRALIA
46% of people in PORTUGAL
43% of people in USA
41% of people in NORWAY
40% of people in NETHERLANDS
39% of people in BELGIUM
38% of people in LUXEMBOURG
34% of people in RUSSIA
33% of people in FINLAND
30% of people in SWITZERLAND
28% of people in JAPAN
27% of people in DENMARK
26% of people in GERMANY
21% of people in SOUTH KOREA



39%
of people in
Belgium

[From report:]

Cohabiting means learning to **live with stuff we might hate**

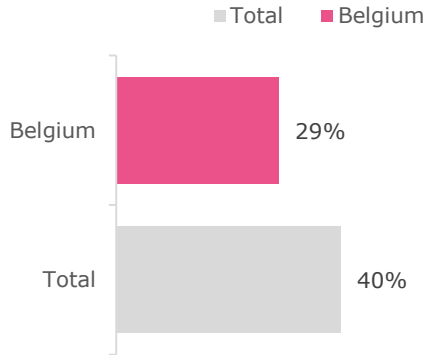
Globally **40%** of people say that they live with things they hate but can't throw away because they belong to someone else.



Living with other people's things that we hate can have a negative effect on our well-being

STATEMENT

"There are some things in my home I hate but I can't throw away, because they don't belong to me "



Q: Now let's think about how we share our home with other people and how that feels. How much do you agree with the following statements? Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

Respondents in Belgium who live with things they hate are more likely to have negative feelings about their home

31%

...say they **feel stressed** when thinking about their home, compared to 21% of all Belgians

38%

...say they **feel tired** when thinking about their home, compared to 31% of all Belgians

Clothes the most common item to be thrown away secretly in Belgium homes

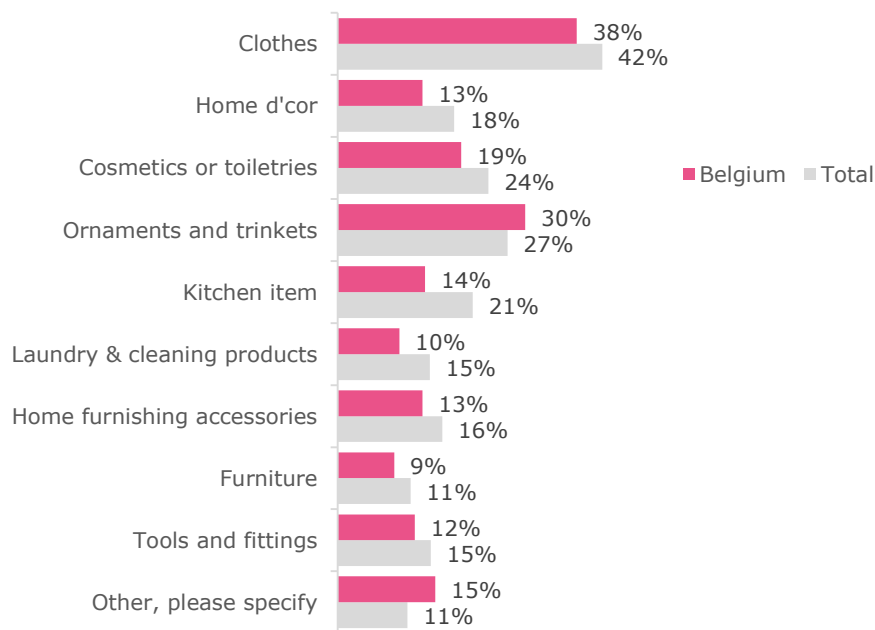
3 in 10

Belgians have thrown away things that belonged to someone they lived with, without telling them*
(31%, global average: 40%)

** Share of respondents that have thrown away one or more items in the chart to the left*

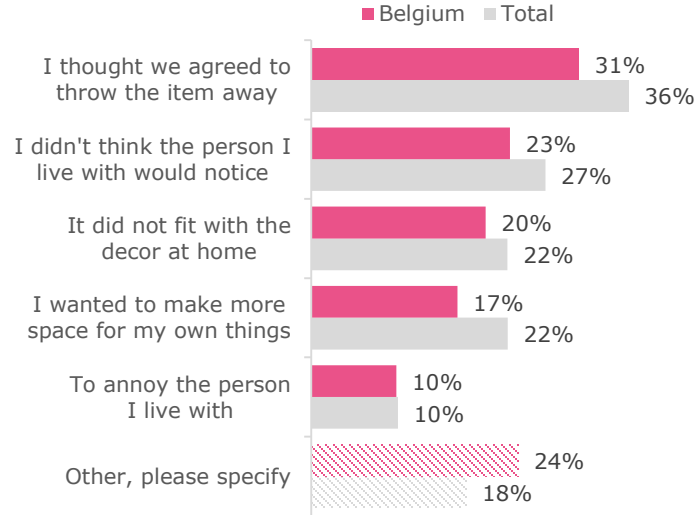
Q: Have you ever thrown something away owned by someone else you lived with, without telling them? If so, what item(s) did you throw away?

Among those who have thrown away other people's things:



17% of Belgians have thrown away others' things to make room for their own things

Among those who have thrown away other people's things:



Q: Why did you throw these item(s) away without telling them? Be honest!



1 in 2 Belgians have things at home that they hide out of sight from others

1 in 2

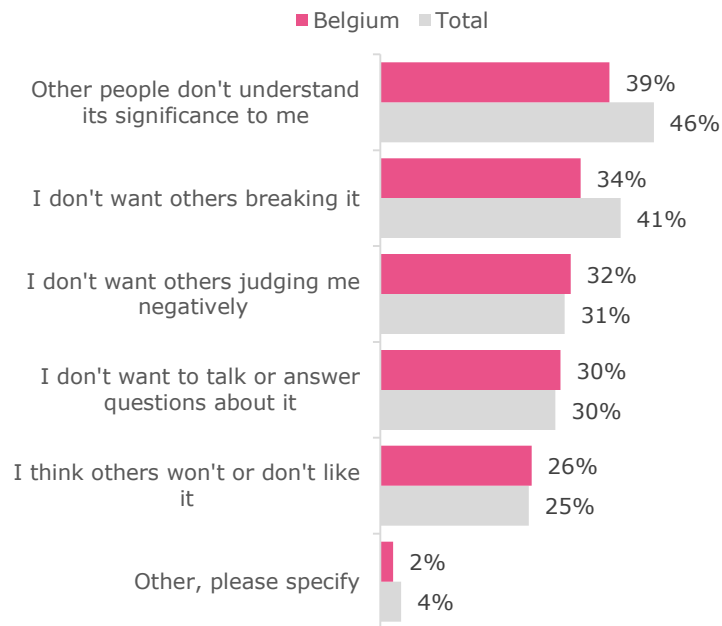
Belgians have things at home that they hide out of sight from others*

(52%, global average: 70%)

** Share of respondents that have stated one or more reasons for storing things out of sight at home*

Q: We'd like to know a little more about why we store or hide things away from other people. Please select all the reasons you store something out of sight in your home

Among those who have stored or hid away things:



Is anybody home?

The quest for mental
presence within the home



14%

of Belgian respondents
state they never feel
mentally present at home

What is **presence**?

[From report:]

We spend a lot of time being physically present in our homes, but we enjoy them most when we are also *mentally* present.

By “mental presence” we mean:

- Being in the here-and-now
- Engaging with an activity or another person with our whole heart
- Moments in which we are consciously enjoying our homes

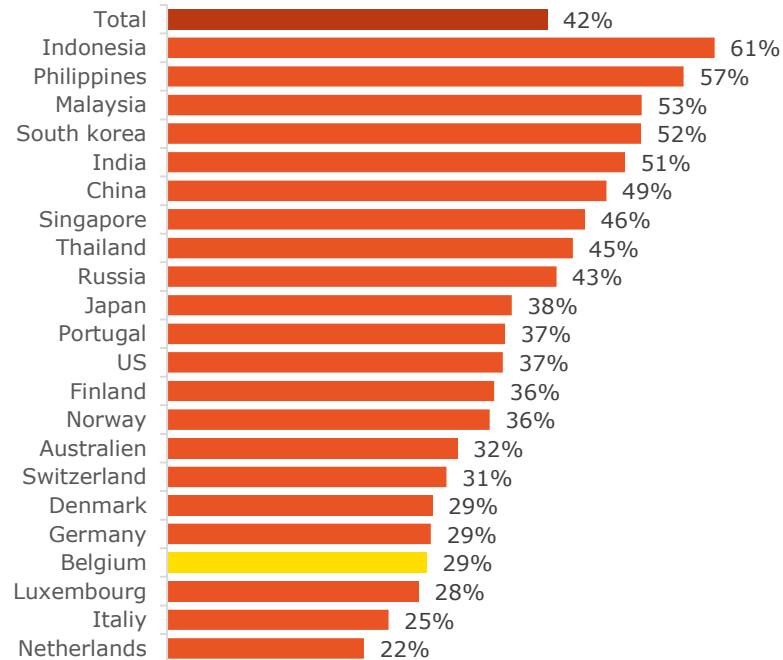
However we describe it, it’s a feeling we love and one that we seek out, because we enjoy our life at home far more when we feel *mentally* present there.

Q: Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements. I never feel mentally ‘present’ in my home.

Time together can be a rare commodity



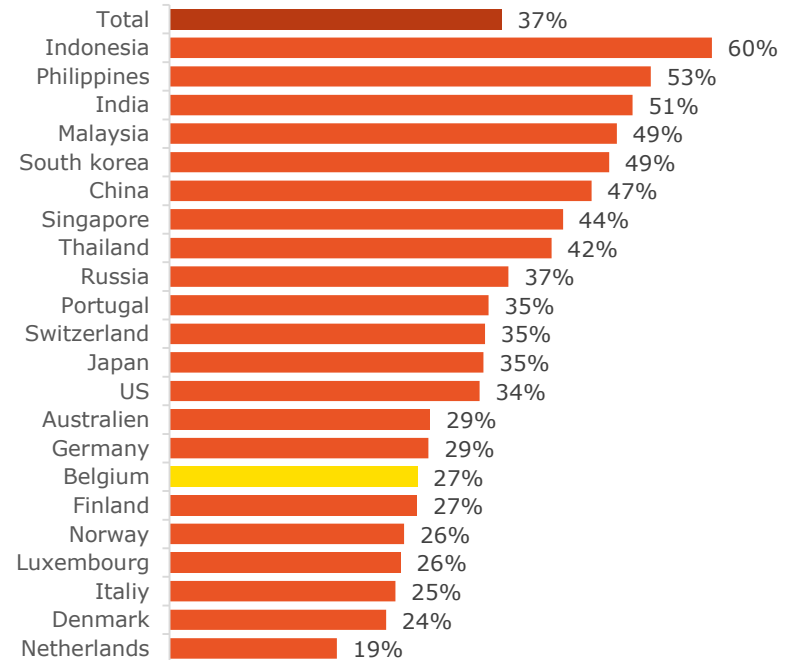
"I feel I should spend more time with **my children**"



Base: Have children

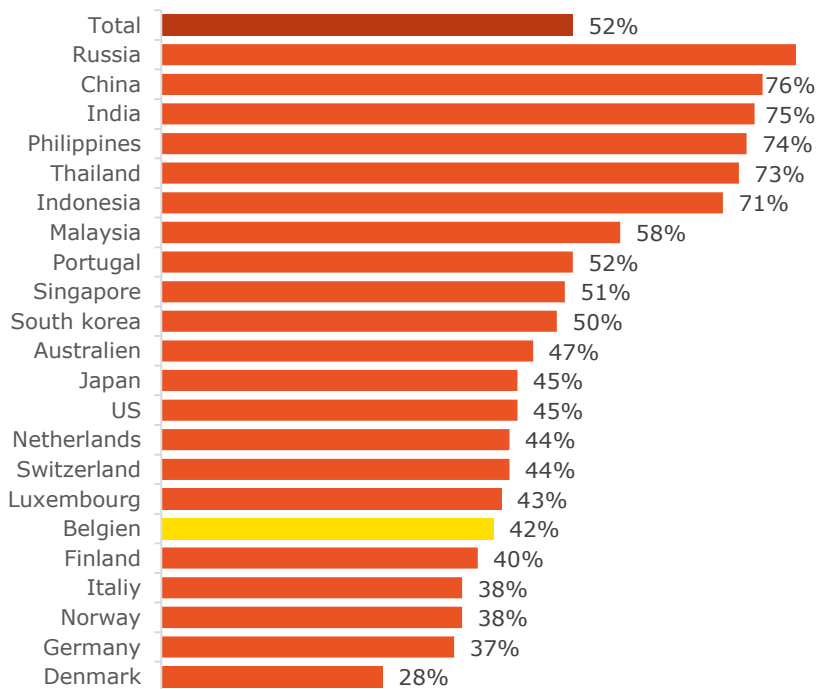


"I feel I should spend more time with **my partner**"



Base: Married or in domestic partnership

For many, technology can be a remedy for lack of time, and allow us to connect more often to home and those we care about...



STATEMENT

"Because of tech, I can be more in touch with home, wherever I am"

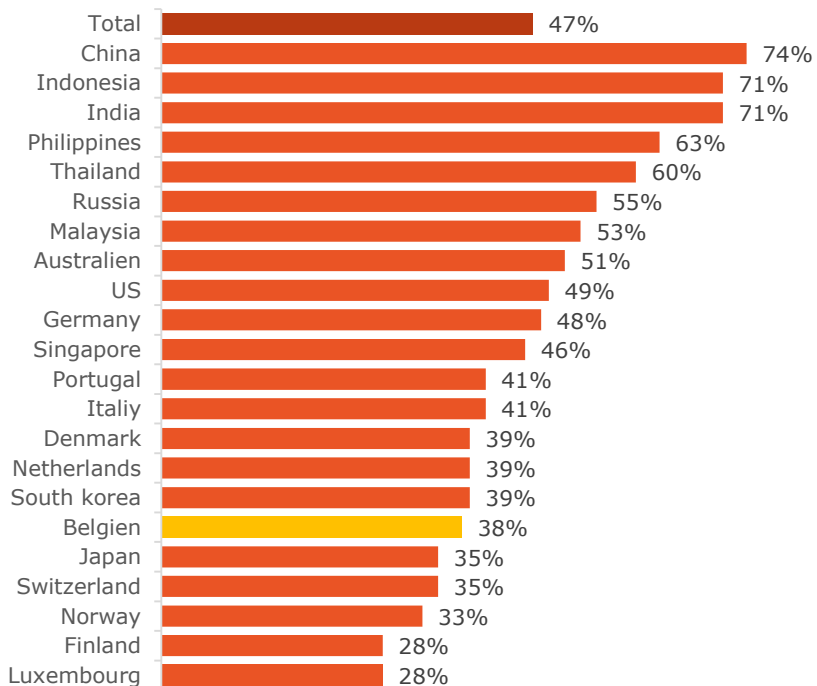
12%

Of Belgians say that keeping in contact with friends and family online is more important than being able to invite them home
(T: 21%)

12%

Of Belgians say that a good Wi-Fi connection is more important in order to nurture relations at home, than is social space
(T: 19%)

...but the connected nature of our lives can create FOMO (Fear of missing out) which can be an obstacle to presence at home



STATEMENT

"It's important to still feel connected to the wider world when I'm at home"

[From report:]

"FOMO feels increasingly real, and it can have a strong pull away from being totally in the moment at home. Wondering what else is happening while you're not there lessens the enjoyment that people have in their homes.

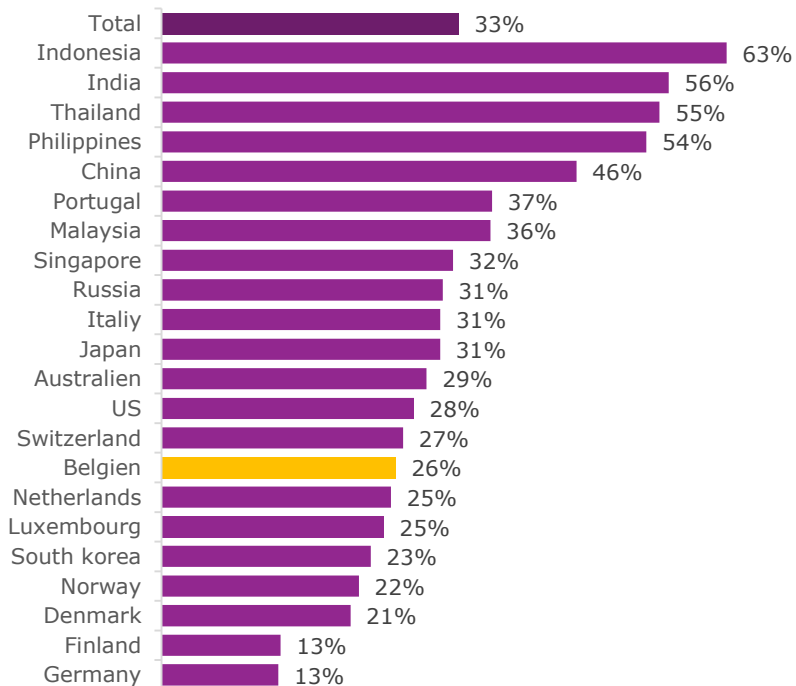
Despite this we still believe it's important to be connected when at home, but the connected nature of our lives means we can give into our FOMO.

The more present we are to those outside the home, the less present we are to those within it."

(Dis)connected

The pursuit of balance around
technology at home

1 in 4 Belgians struggle with balancing their use of technology at home



STATEMENT

"It's a challenge for me to find the right balance when using tech in the home"

14%

Of Belgians feel guilty about the time they spend on social media
(T: 17%)

8%

Of Belgians feel stressed if they do not visit social media every day
(T: 11%)

The struggle for balance is more pronounced among parents

 **31%** of **Belgian** parents*...

...say that it is a challenge to find the right balance when using tech at home (Average Belgium: 26%). It can be compared to the global average for parents*, 44% .

** Have children 7 years old or younger*



The attitudes to tech in the home vary greatly across the globe – Belgians are generally more sceptic than others



Q: Continuing with our love/hate relationship with home technology, how do you feel about the following statements?
 Scale: [1-5; Disagree strongly:1 to Agree strongly:5]. Showing share of answers 4 OR 5

Many Belgians put up rules to help balance the use of tech at home, 1 in 2 parents don't allow phones at the dinner table

"No phones are allowed at the dinner table"

"I put time limits on screen usage at home"

"I allow use of technology as a reward for positive behavior"

Belgium

45%

27%

17%

Global average

47%

30%

30%



Belgian parents with children

49%

(Global average 52%)

39%

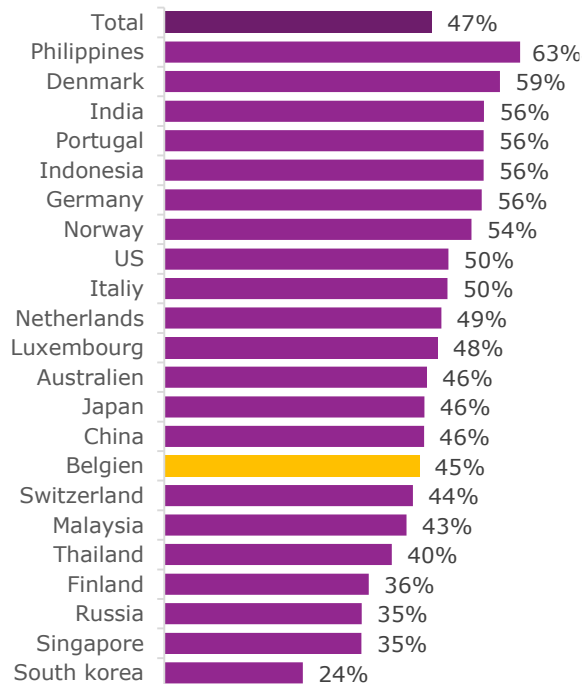
(Global average 38%)

37%

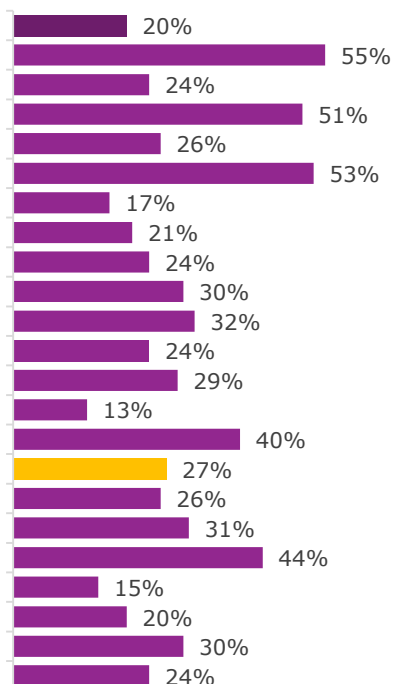
(Global average 40%)

Tactics to handle tech at home look very different globally

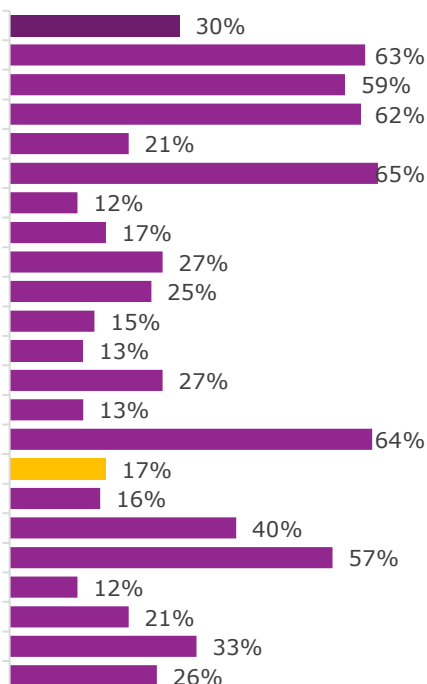
"No phones are allowed at the dinner table"



"I put time limits on screen usage at home"



"I allow use of technology as a reward for positive behavior"



The deliberately unfinished home

How to have a home that stays one step ahead of your life

Our homes need to **change and evolve** **with our lives**

[From report:]

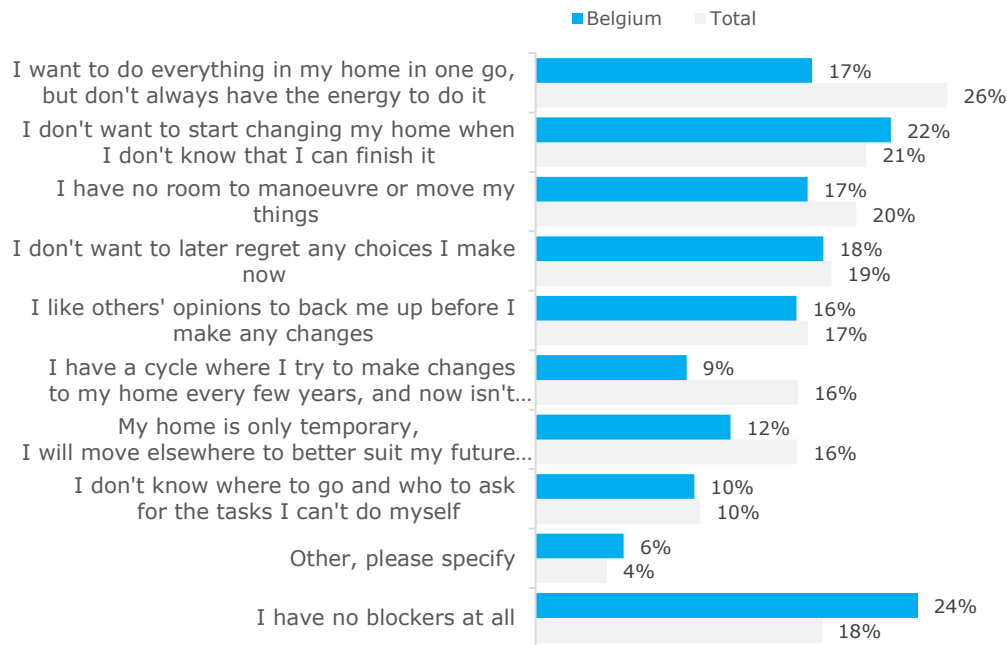
Throughout our research, we found that many people aspire to have a “forever home”. But life is not static – children grow up, needs change – and “forever” can look different depending on the time of day.

As psychologist Roy Langmaid says “**our identity is an emerging property – so should be our home.**” When we open ourselves to a home that constantly evolves, we are better equipped to manage the changes in our lives, too.

But there are battles when it comes to creating an ever-changing home. We are at the whim of the forces within and outside our home that feel beyond our control, and for many of us accepting and embracing these changes requires a completely new perspective.



The main barrier to change in Belgian homes is a fear of not being able to finish what you start



...1 in 4 Belgians state they have no blockers to making changes in their homes

Belgians with no barriers to change are more satisfied with their homes



...1 in 4 Belgians state they have no blockers to making changes in their homes



Among those respondents in Belgium who state they have no barriers to making changes in their homes..

61%

...say they are **satisfied with "the way I live"**. It can be compared to all Belgian respondents 50%.

Share of answers 8-10; Scale 0-10.

67%

...say they are **satisfied with "the things they own"**. It can be compared to all Belgian respondents 51%.

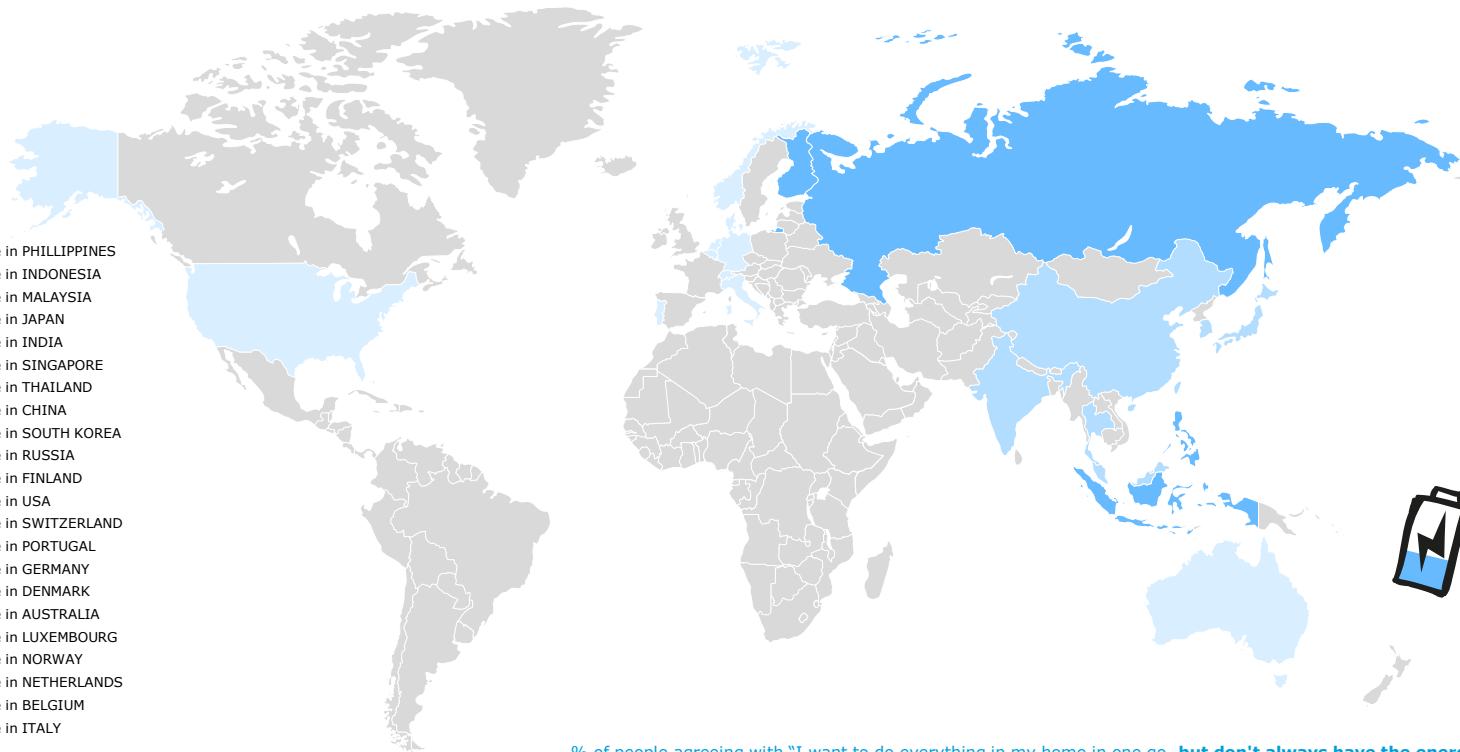
Share of answers 8-10; Scale 0-10.

Across the globe a **lack of energy** can get in the way of change

Key:

- 40-54%
- 25-39%
- 10-24%

46% of people in PHILIPPINES
38% of people in INDONESIA
34% of people in MALAYSIA
34% of people in JAPAN
34% of people in INDIA
33% of people in SINGAPORE
32% of people in THAILAND
31% of people in CHINA
25% of people in SOUTH KOREA
25% of people in RUSSIA
25% of people in FINLAND
21% of people in USA
21% of people in SWITZERLAND
21% of people in PORTUGAL
21% of people in GERMANY
21% of people in DENMARK
21% of people in AUSTRALIA
20% of people in LUXEMBOURG
19% of people in NORWAY
19% of people in NETHERLANDS
17% of people in BELGIUM
12% of people in ITALY



17%
of people in
Belgium

% of people agreeing with "I want to do everything in my home in one go, **but don't always have the energy to do it**"
(Share of answers 4 OR 5 on scale 1-5; 5:Agree strongly, 1:Disagree strongly)

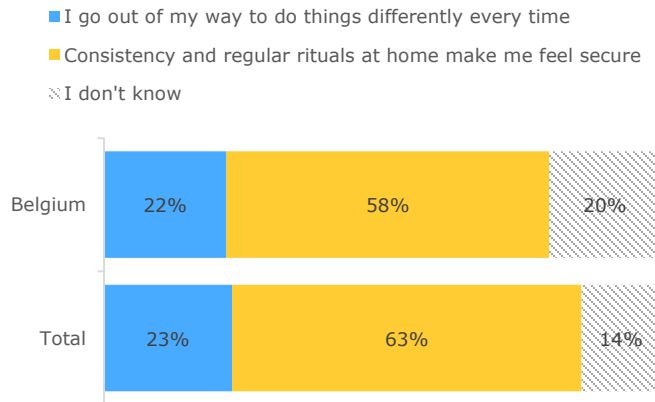
We handle change differently, in Belgium **one in five** state they always go out of their way to **do things differently**

[From report:]

We have discovered that there are two types of people in the world when it comes to how we handle change: **drivers** and **drifters**.

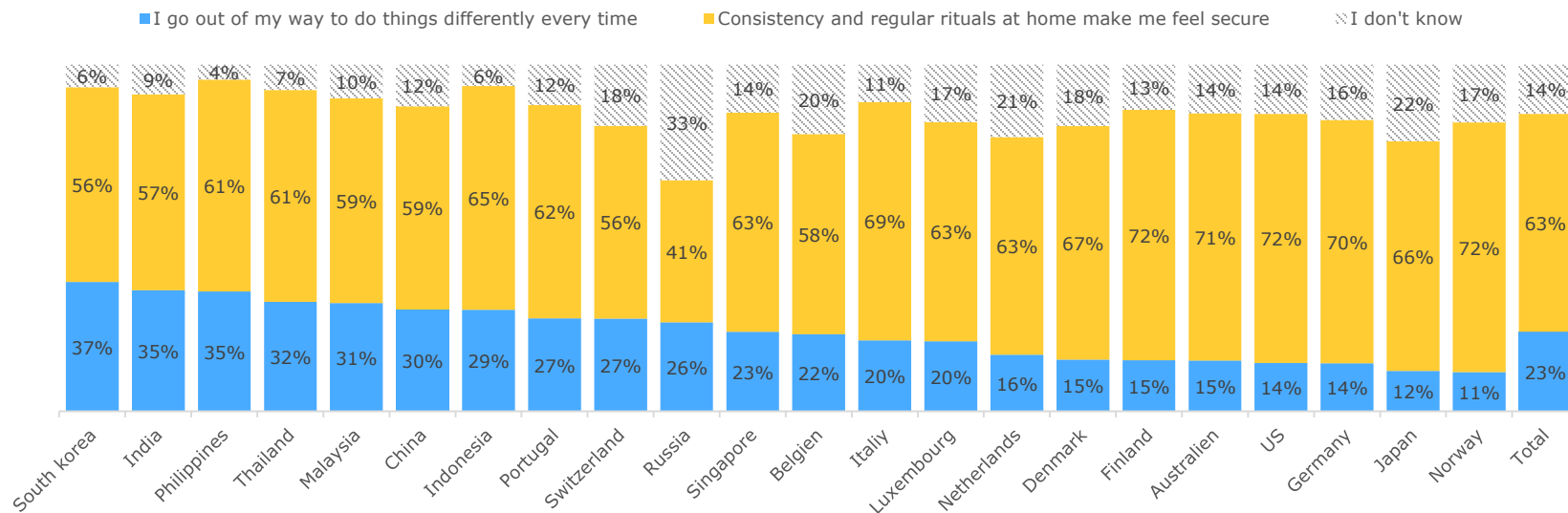
Drivers go out of their way to do things differently every time. They like to experiment, explore and embrace or create change

Drifters say consistency and regular rituals at home make them feel secure. They prefer stability, regular routines and feel uncertain about what change means.



Q: We all have very different attitudes to change; we'd love to know what type of person you think you are. **Thinking about yourself, which of the following two personality types do you identify with more?**

Globally **one in four** consider themselves to be drivers, embracing change in each aspect of life

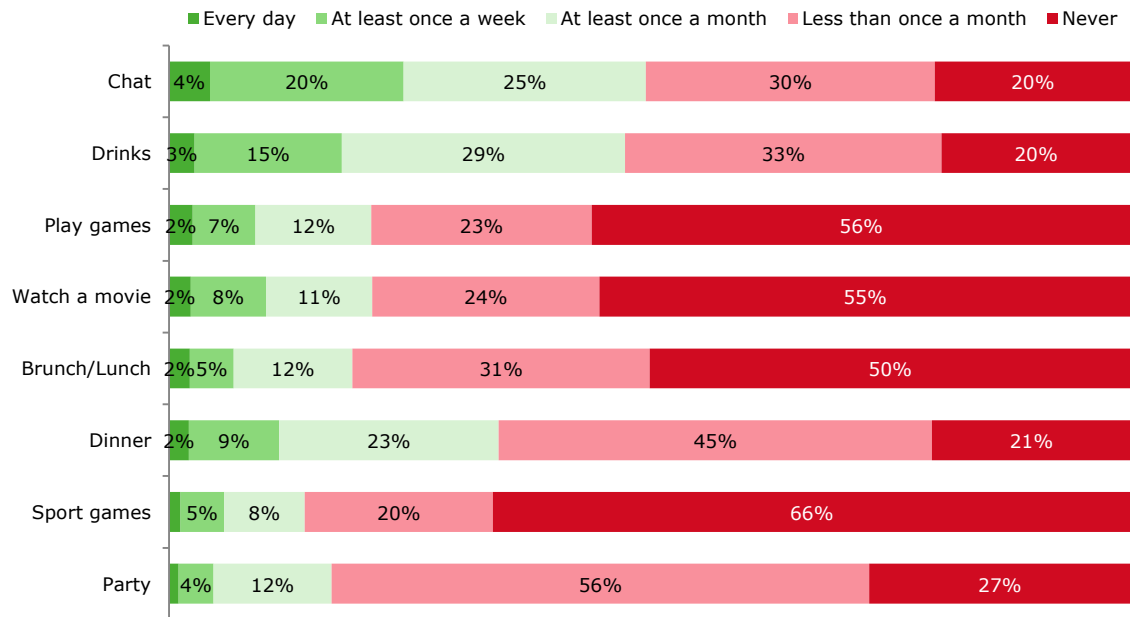


Q: We all have very different attitudes to change; we'd love to know what type of person you think you are. Thinking about yourself, which of the following two personality types do you identify with more?

Market specific questions

1 in 4 in Belgium say they have people over at least once a week for talking and catching up

Q: How frequently do you invite people to your home for the following occasions?



Belgian men say they invite people over for more reasons and more often than the **women**



37%

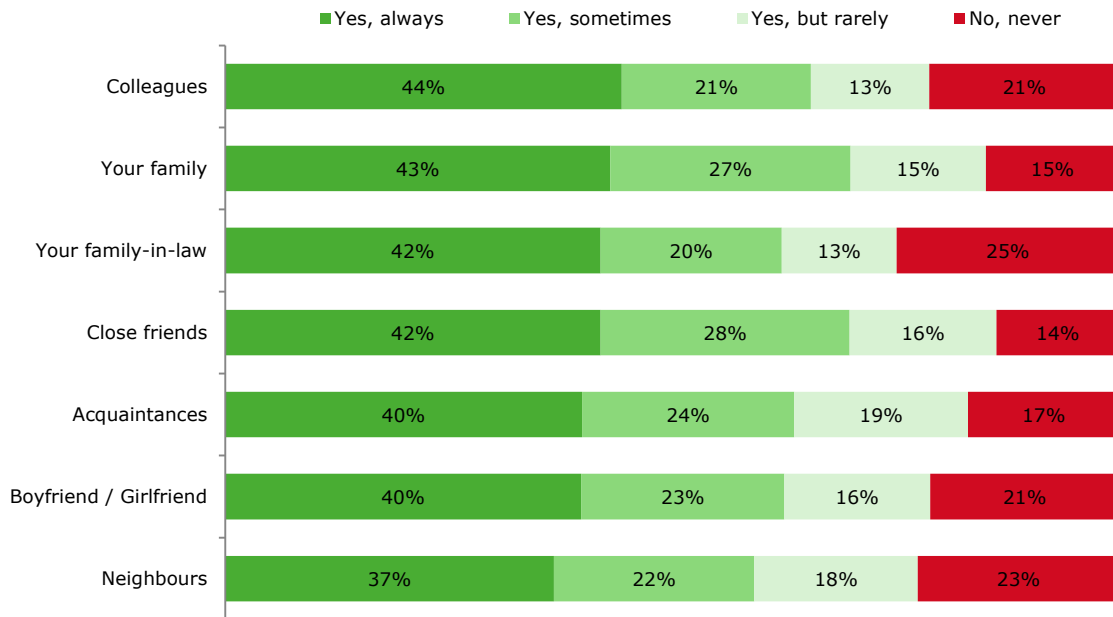
invite people over for **dinner** at least once a month, compared to **32%** of the women

52%

of the men invite others over for **drinks** at least once a month, compared to only of the women **43%**

Most common to tidy up when our colleagues and family are visiting

Q: If you receive the following type of guests over, do you tidy up?
Scale [Yes, always; Yes, sometimes; Yes, but rarely; Never]



Belgian women clean up more often than the men



48%

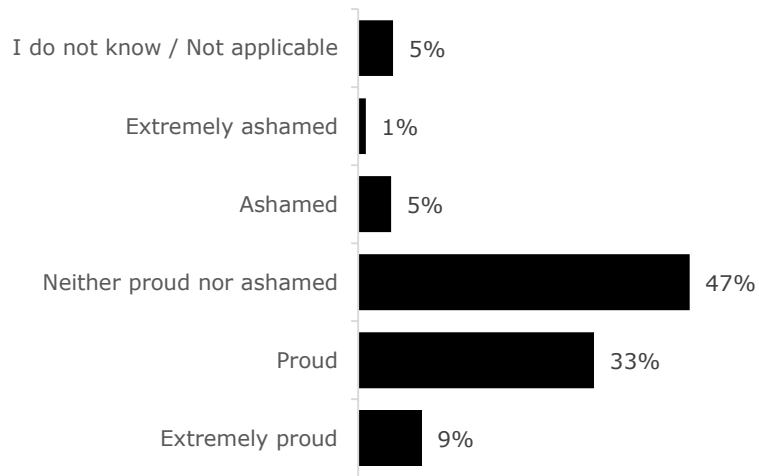
of the women say they always clean up when **family-in-law** is visiting, compared to only **37%** of the men

50%

of the women say they always clean up when **colleagues** are visiting, compared to only **39%** of the men

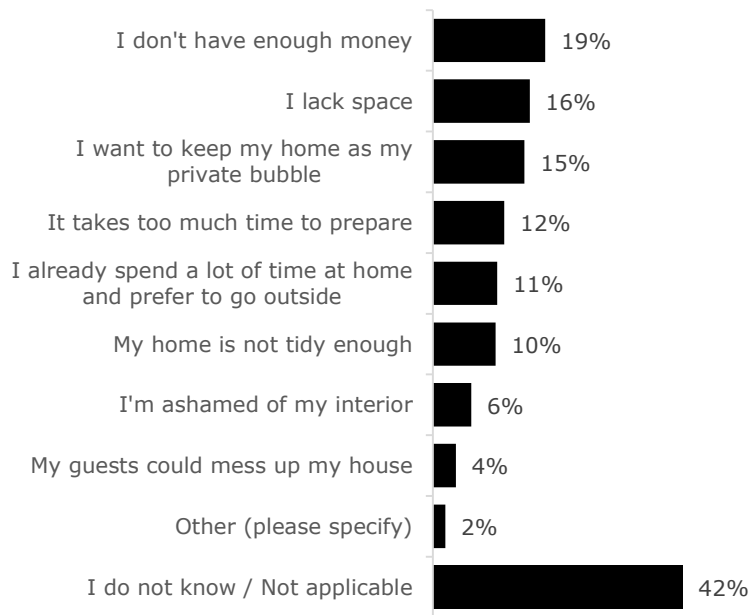
4 out of 10 Belgians say they feel proud of their interior, when inviting people over

Q: How do you feel about your interior when you invite people?



1 in 6 have decided against having guest due to lack of space

Q: Have you ever decided against having guests over for any of the following reasons?



Among **Belgian women**



15%

say they have decided against having guest since "It takes too much time to prepare", compared to only **9%** among the men

Among **parents with young children**



23%

say they have decided against having guest since "I already spend a lot of time at home and prefer to go outside"

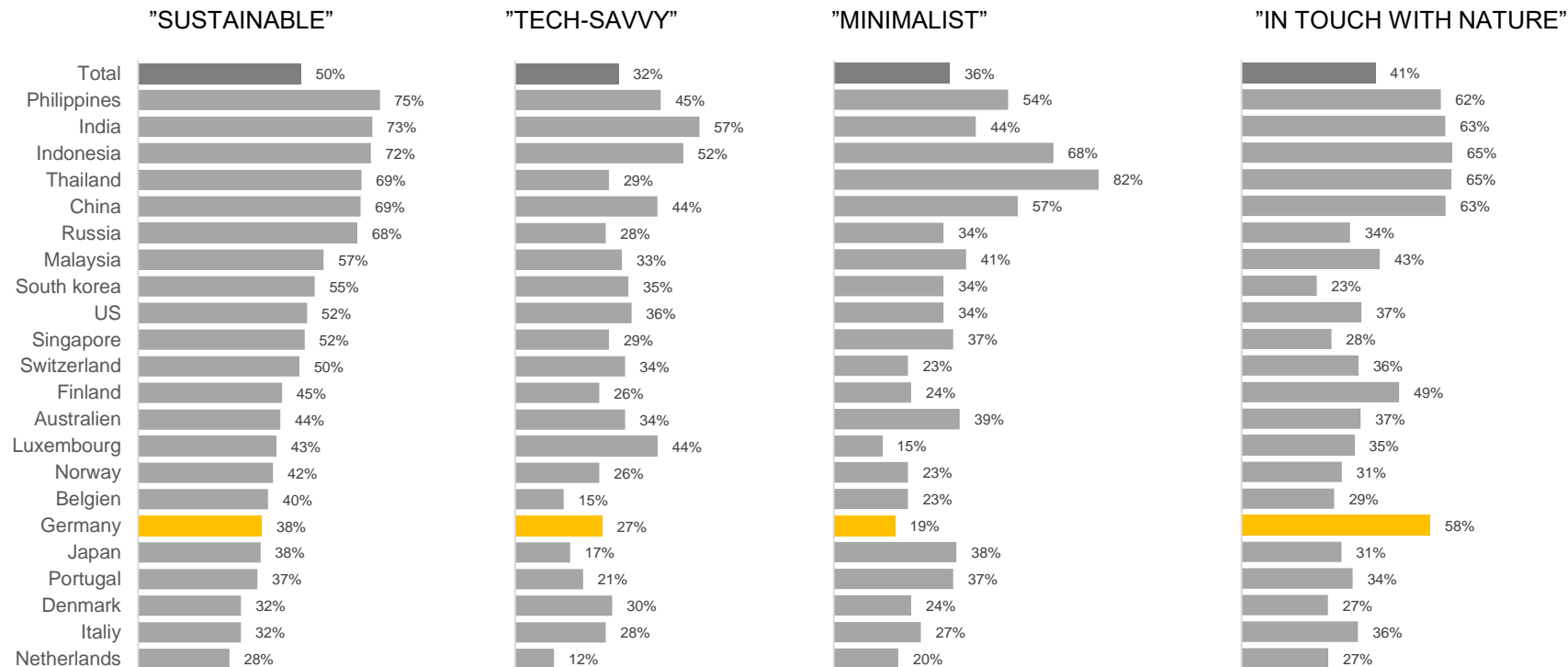
Appendix

Questions excluded
from the main story

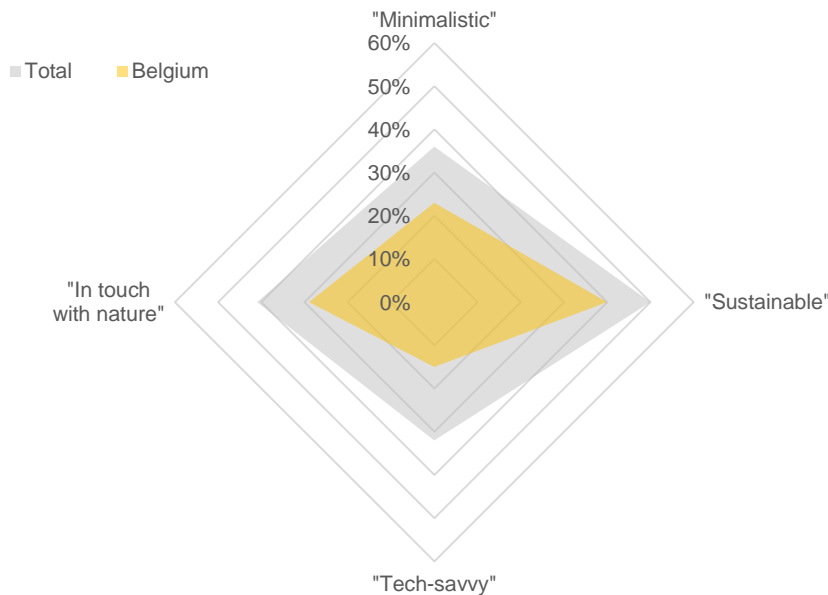
Descriptions of ones home vary across markets

Q: We know there are many different living styles, what's yours? Tell us how much you agree with the following statements: "I would describe my home as..."

Showing share of answers 4 OR 5 (Scale 1-5, 1: Completely disagree, 5: Agree completely)



Belgians less likely than average to describe their home as "tech-savvy" or "minimalistic"

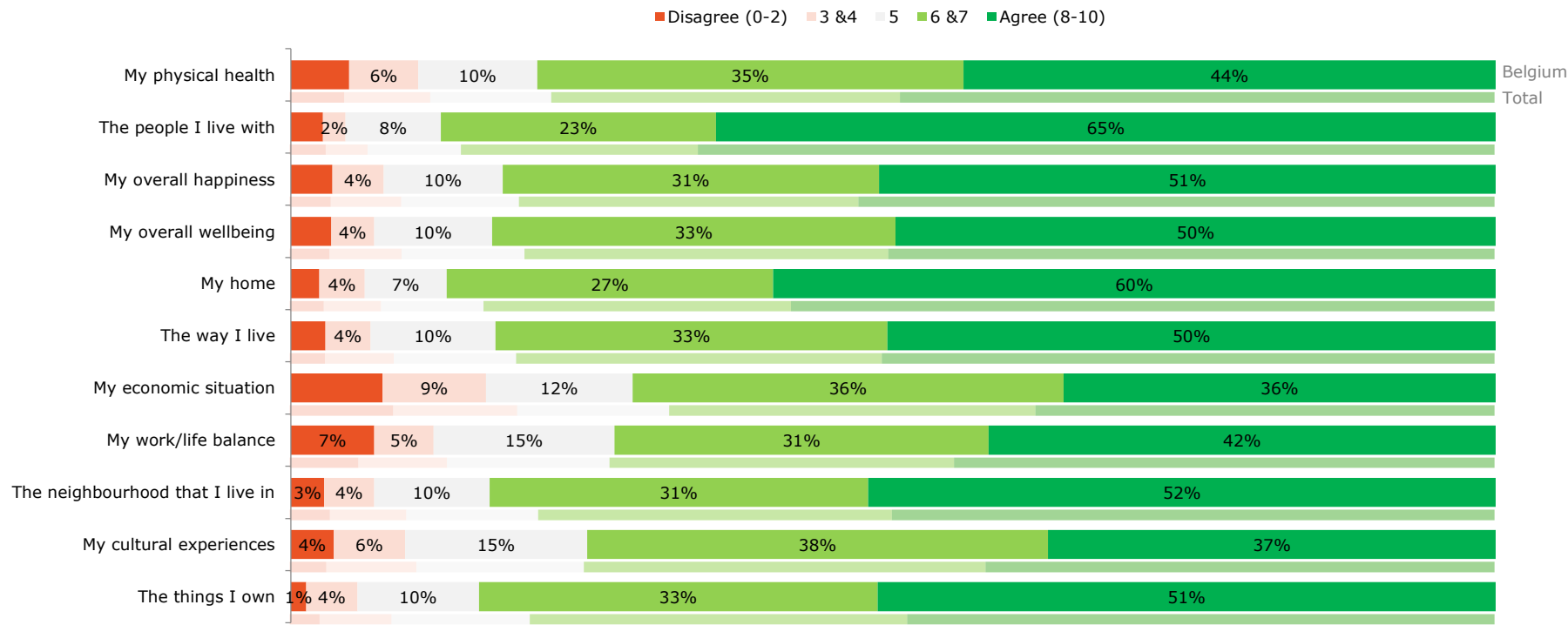


- Only 15% Belgians describe their home as **"Tech-savvy"** compared to nearly 1 in 3 (32%) on average in all our surveyed markets.
- Further only 23% state they live in **minimalistic** housing. Compared to 36% of all global respondents.

Q: We know there are many different living styles, what's yours? Tell us how much you agree with the following statements: "I would describe my home as..."

Showing share of answers 4 OR 5 (Scale 1-5, 1: Completely disagree, 5: Agree completely)

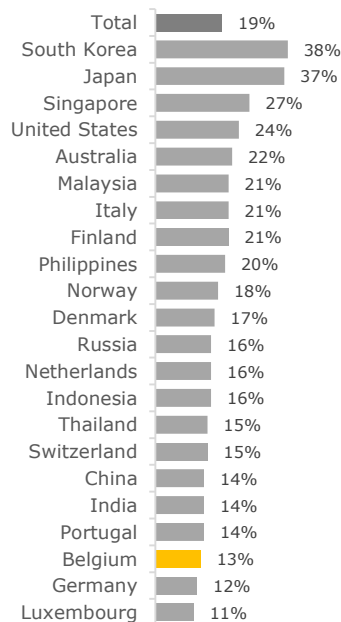
A majority of Belgian are satisfied with their homes



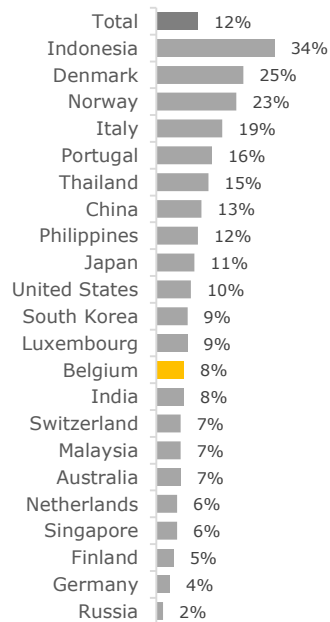
Q: Now we would like to understand how happy you are with the different aspects of your life. Taking everything into account, tell us how SATISFIED you are with the following: Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely].

1 in 3 Belgians describe themselves as “emotional”

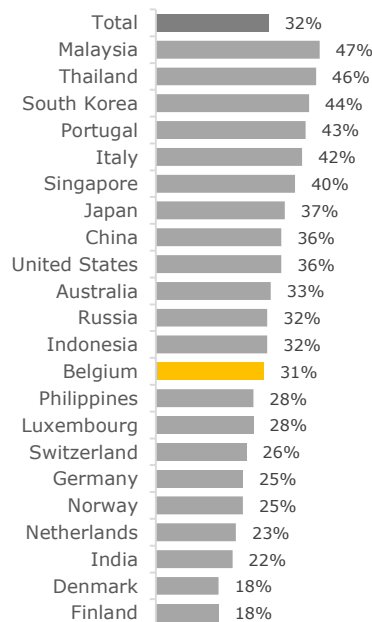
INTROVERTED



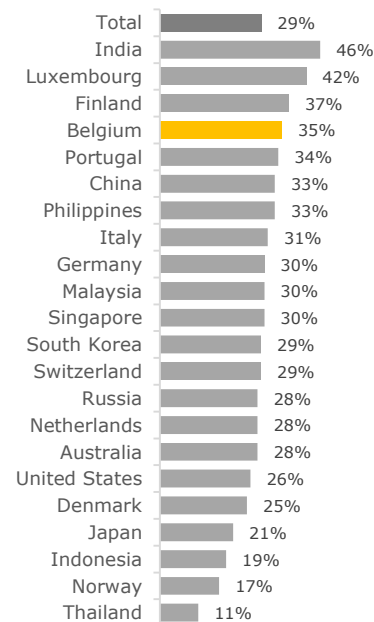
EXTROVERTED



RATIONAL



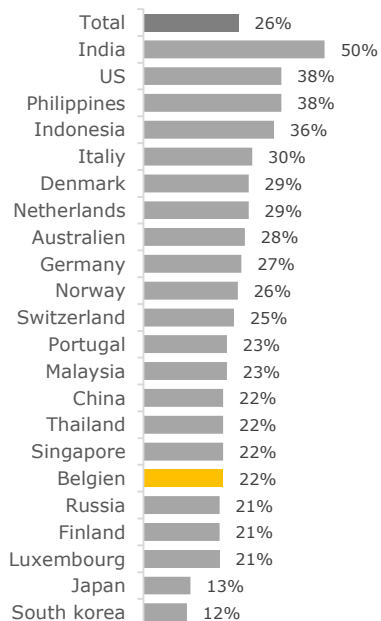
EMOTIONAL



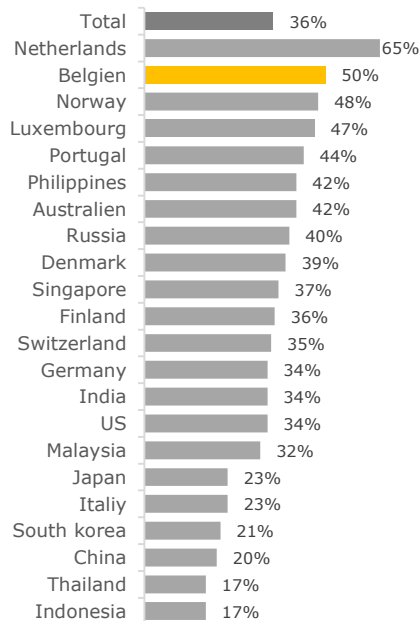
Q: And how would you describe yourself?

Belgians consider themselves to be fair

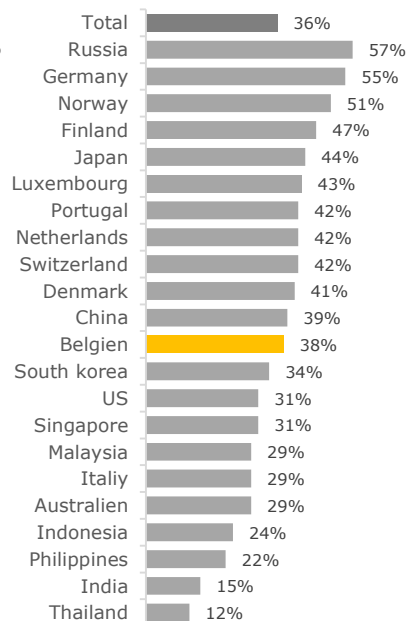
CREATIVE



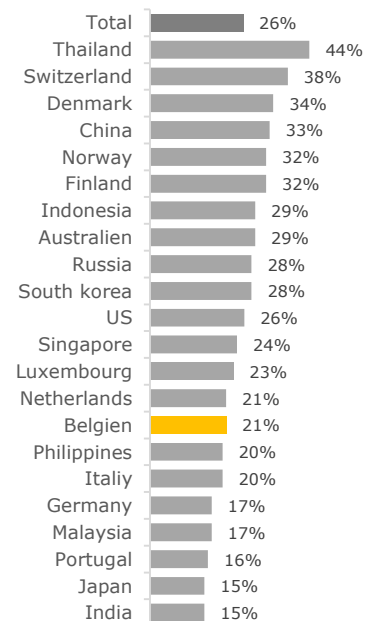
FAIR



CONSCIENTIOUS

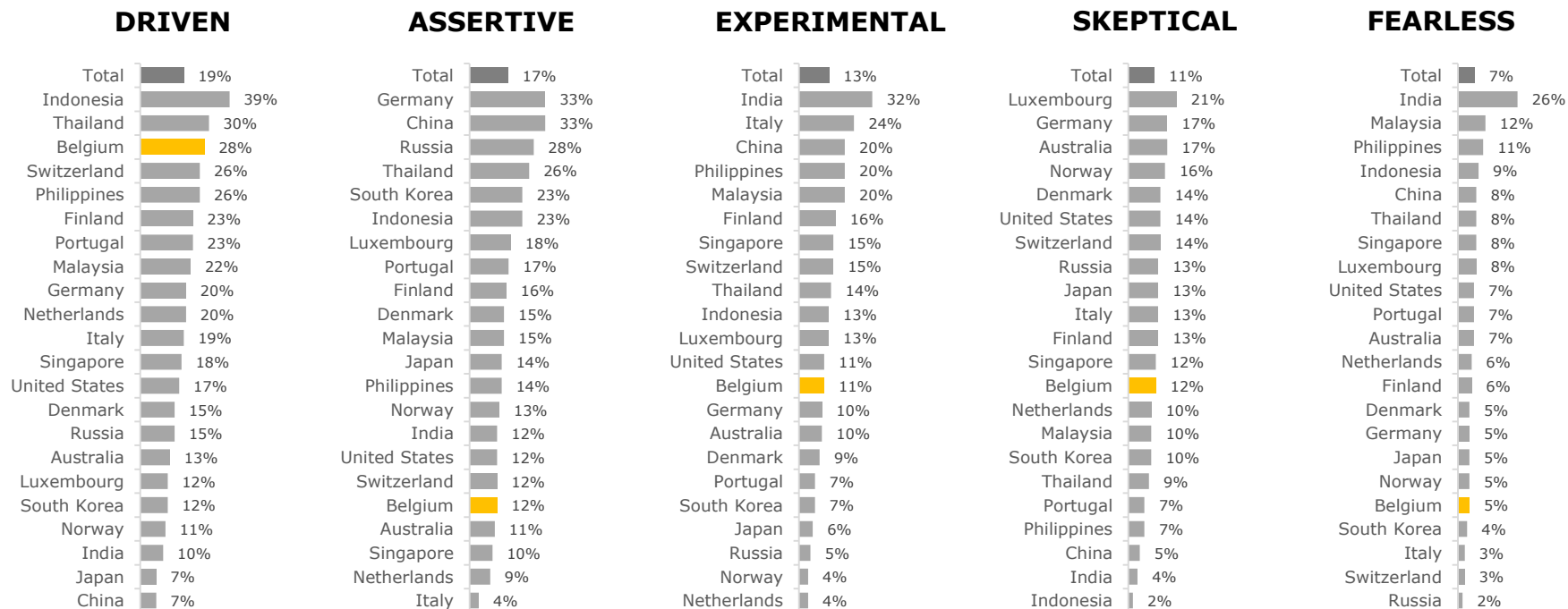


EMPATHETIC



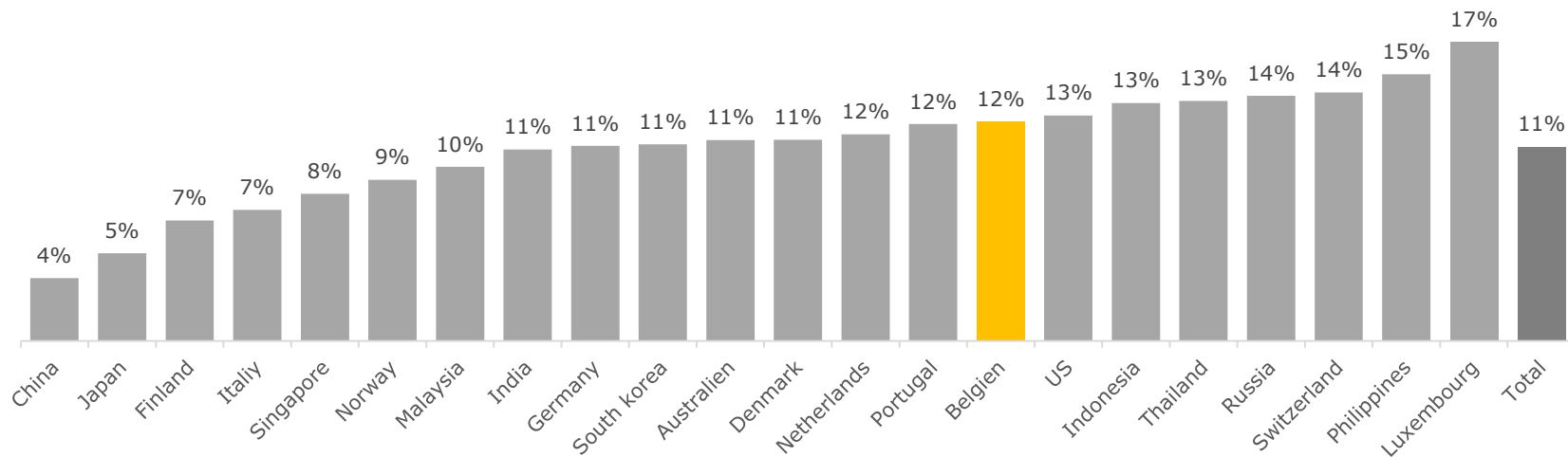
Q: And how would you describe yourself?

Belgians more likely than most nationalities to describe themselves as “driven”



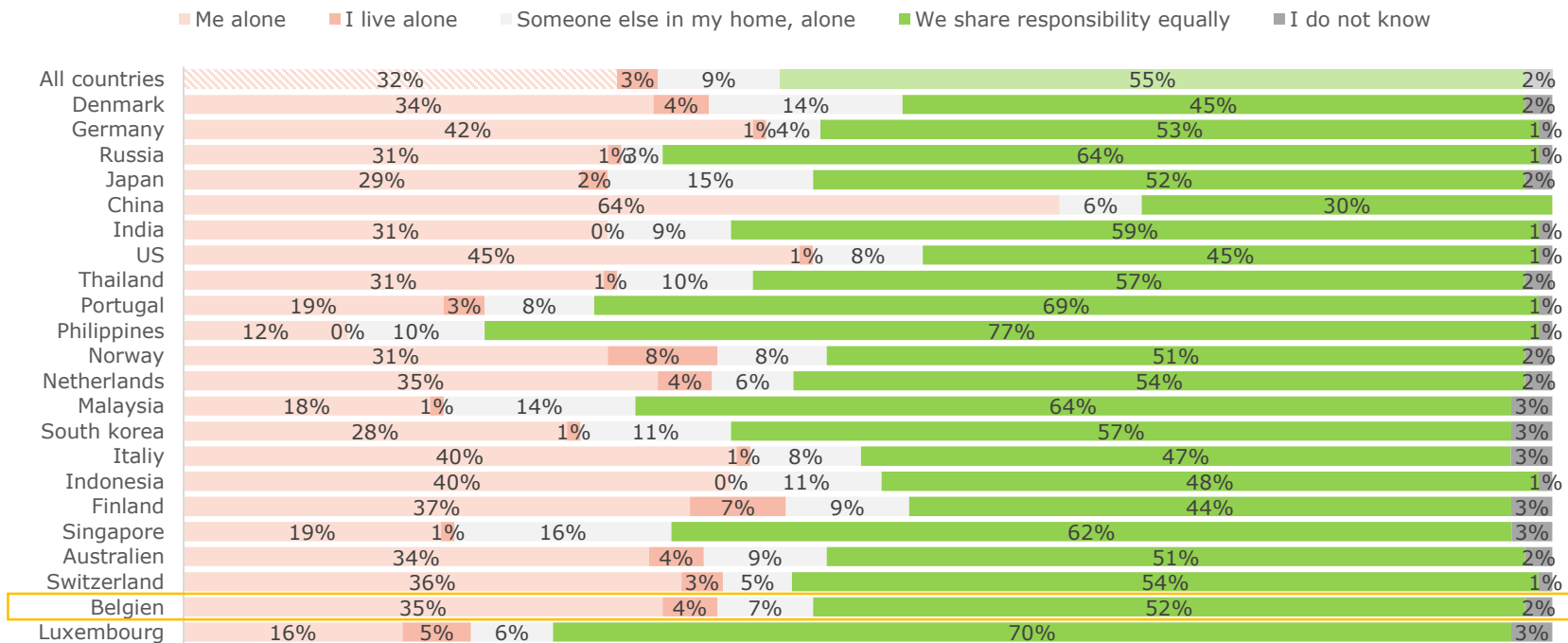
Q: And how would you describe yourself?

1 in 10 Belgians state the way they live differ from the established norms



Q: Now, think about how you live in your home – the combination of people you live with, and the way you live. Would you say you live in a way that differs from the perceived or established 'norms' in your country/culture? Chart showing share that answered: [Yes]

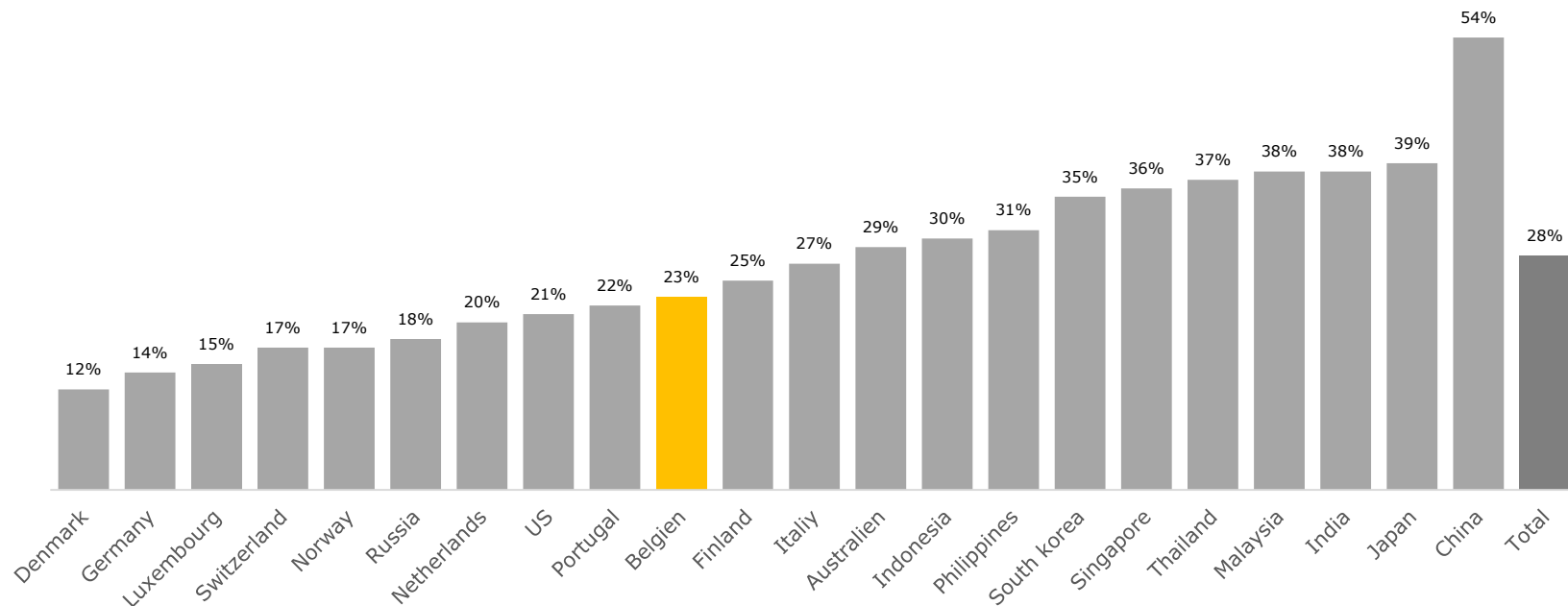
A majority of people in Belgium decide on household furnishing together



Q: And by the way, who has the final say on your household furnishings?

1 in 4 Belgians say there are other peoples things that they hate because it ruin the look and feel

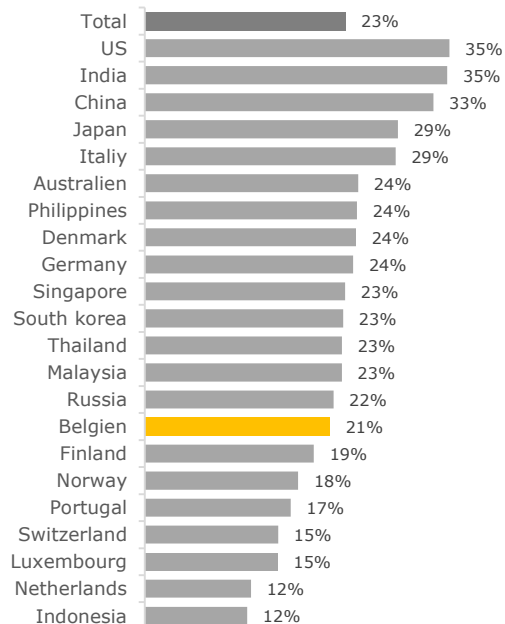
"I hate other people thing because it ruin look and feel"



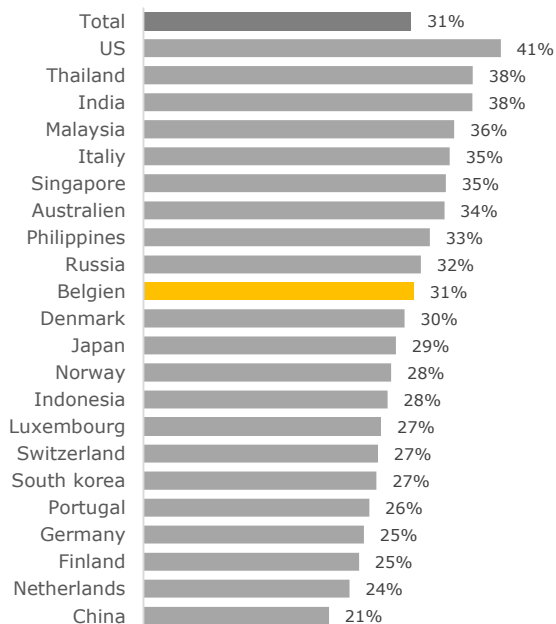
Q: Now let's think about how we share our home with other people and how that feels. How much do you agree with the following statements? I hate other people's things in my home because it ruins the look and feel of the room. Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

2 out of 10 say they feel ashamed when thinking about their home

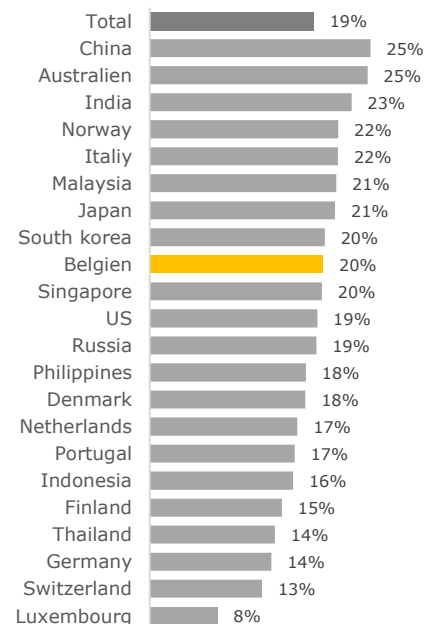
STRESSED



TIRED

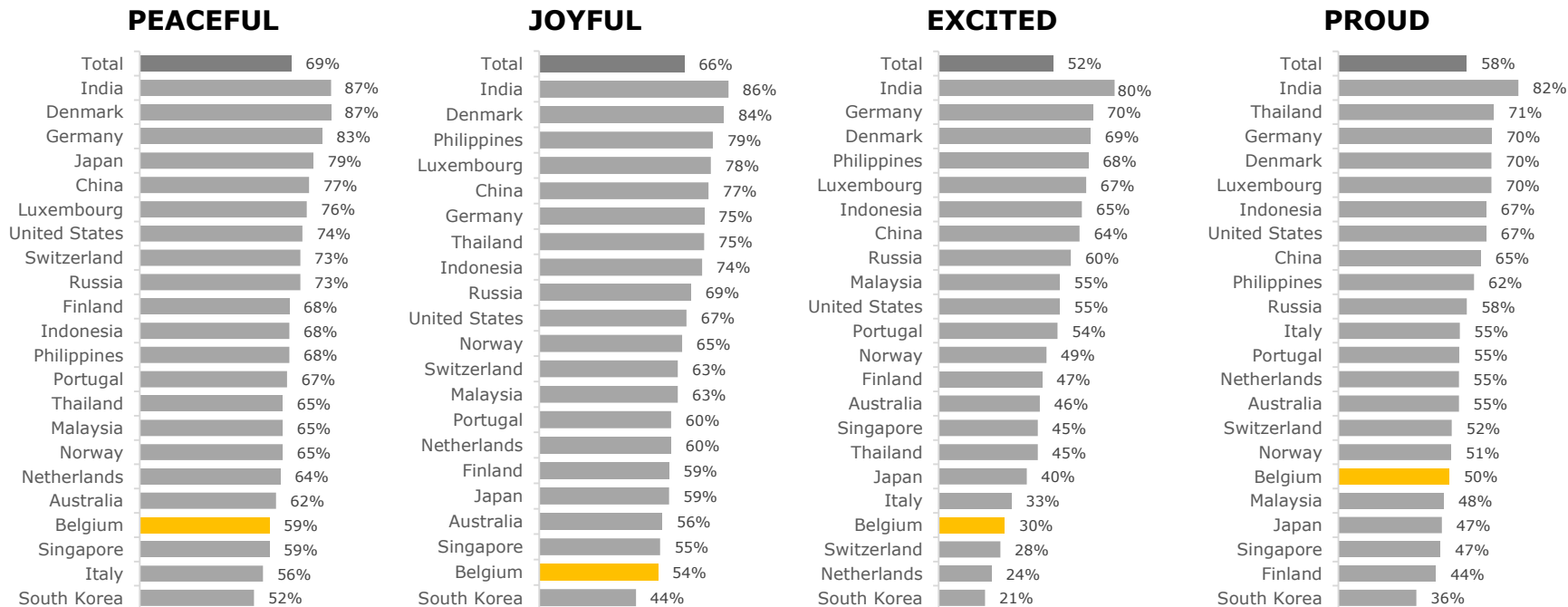


ASHAMED



Q: We'd love to capture the first sensation you feel when you think about the current state of your home, and how it serves your purposes. How do you feel when you think about your home right now? Please indicate which of the below is closest to how you feel: [Scale Enormously, Very, Little, Don't know]. Chart showing share of answers [Enormously, Very].

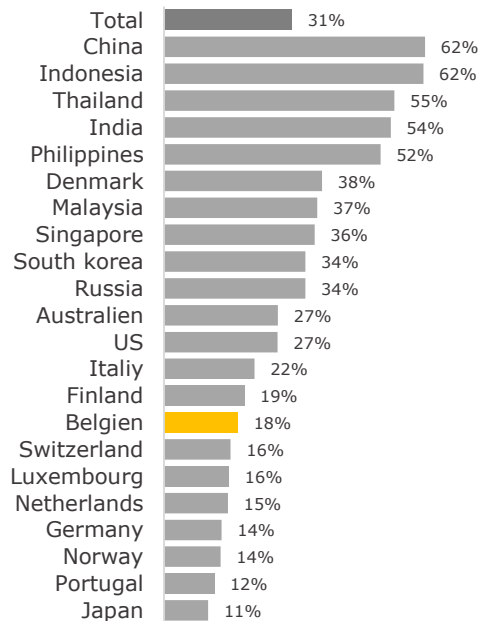
6 out of 10 Belgians feel “**peaceful**” when thinking about their home, but only 3 in 10 feel “**excited**”



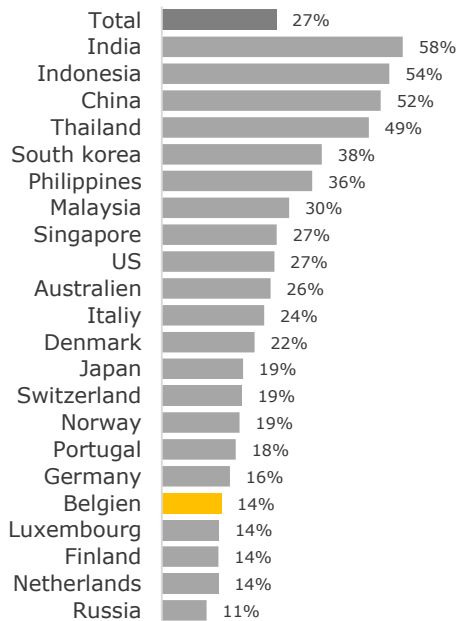
Q: We'd love to capture the first sensation you feel when you think about the current state of your home, and how it serves your purposes. How do you feel when you think about your home right now? Please indicate which of the below is closest to how you feel: [Scale Enormously, Very, Little, Don't know]. Chart showing share of answers [Enormously, Very].

Belgians are less keen on using social media in all parts of the home than the other markets

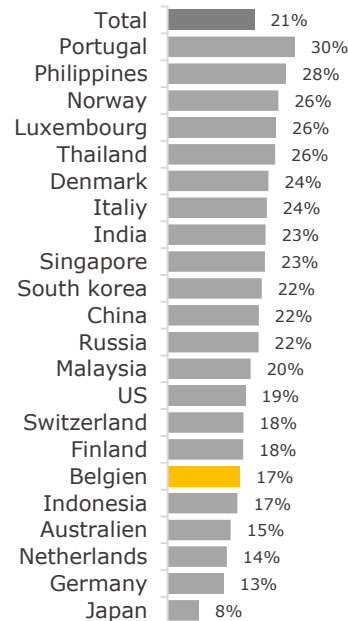
"I believe that the role of the living room has played out its role"



"I use technology to control technology"



I use social media in all parts of my home e.g. in the toilet/bathroom

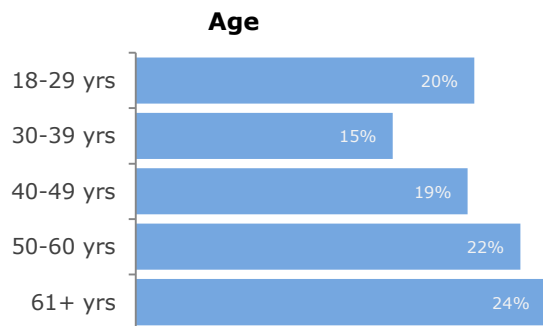
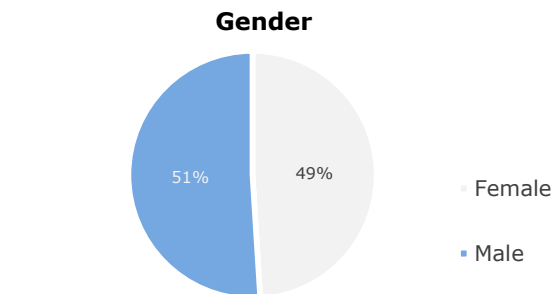


Q: Which of the following statements would you agree to? | How do you feel about the following statements
Scale [1-5, 1: Disagree completely, 5: Agree completely]. Chart = share of answers 4 OR 5.

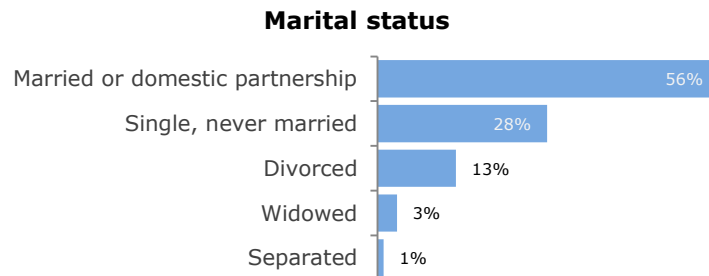
Background variables

Basic demographic data

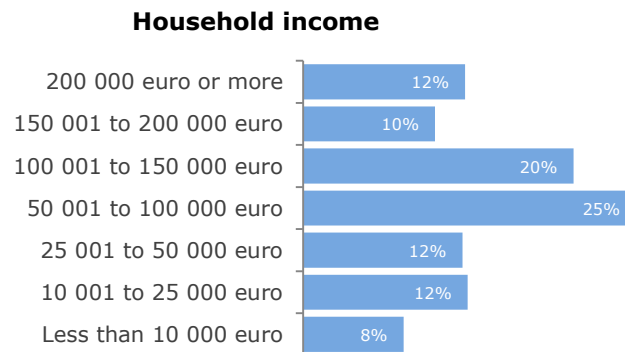
Q: Please indicate your...



Q: What is your marital status?



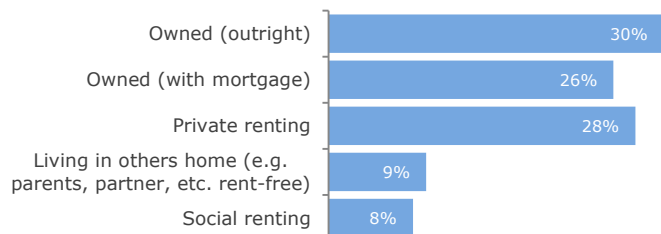
Q: What is your household yearly income?



Location and housing background variables

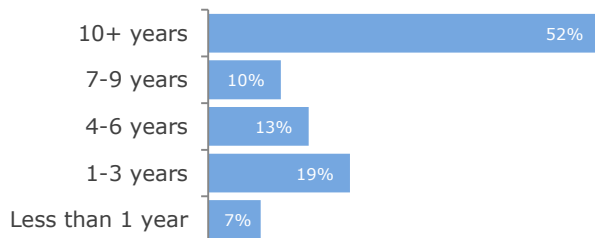
Q: In what type of housing do you currently live in?

Type of housing



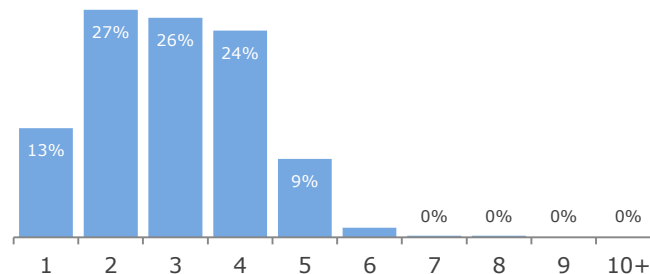
Q: How long have you been living in your current home?

Living in current household for...



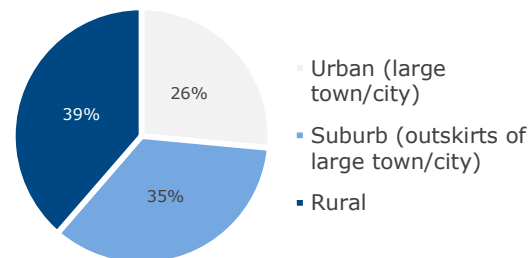
Q: Number of people in your household, including you:

Number of people in household



Q: Which of these best corresponds to the location in which you live?

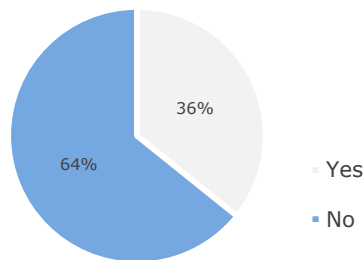
Geographic area



Household background variables

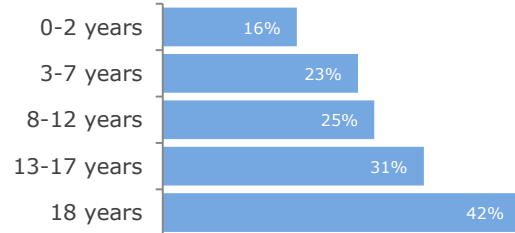
Q: Do you have children living in your household?

Children living in household



Q: Number of children in your household:

Age of children



Q: We know that increasingly, people are living in different combinations at home. Still thinking about the people you live with, which of the following living situations do you identify with?

Living situation

