



Breast Screening Awareness & Attitudes

Market Research 2023

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An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

HE Background

- 3,700 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed annually in Ireland.
- Breast screening involves having a mammogram of your breasts. A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast used to find breast cancer when it is too small to see or feel.
- BreastCheck invites women aged 50-69 for screening every 2 years. The programme is delivered nationally by four static sites (two in Dublin, one in Cork and Galway) and 21 mobile units.
- Understanding public knowledge and awareness around breast cancer and breast cancer screening is important.





Methodology

2021

- Online National Representative Survey in Ireland (N=2,000)
- Fieldwork conducted between Sept-Oct 2021
- Of the 2,000 respondents, 348 females (50-69 years) were eligible to answer questions on breast cancer and breast cancer screening.

2023

- Online National Representative Survey in Ireland (N=1,011)
- Fieldwork conducted between Feb-March 2023
- Of the 1,011 respondents, 530 females (50-69 years) were eligible to answer questions on breast cancer and breast cancer screening.

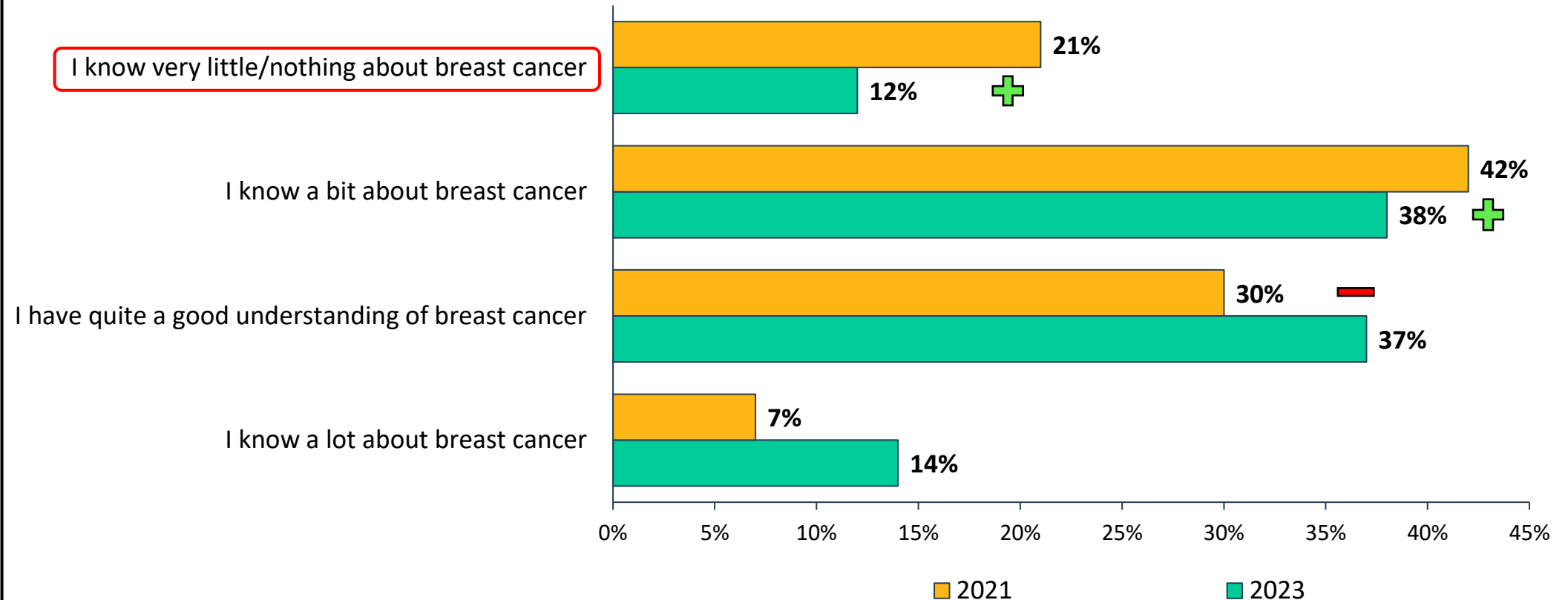
Aim: To identify and explore womens' perceptions of breast screening in Ireland and what drives and inhibits them to attend screening.

Where possible, results from the survey were compared to a similar research survey conducted in 2021



Knowledge about breast cancer

Q. How would you describe your level of knowledge about breast cancer? (n=530)



12% claim to know little or nothing about breast cancer, down from the levels recorded in 2021 where 21% claim to have very little/no knowledge.



Factors that increase breast cancer risk

Q. What factors do you think can increase your risk of developing breast cancer?

Factors that can increase risk

93% thought family history

84% referenced previous lump/breast cancer

↑ 74% in 2021

83% thought smoking

70% referenced alcohol

↑ 58% in 2021

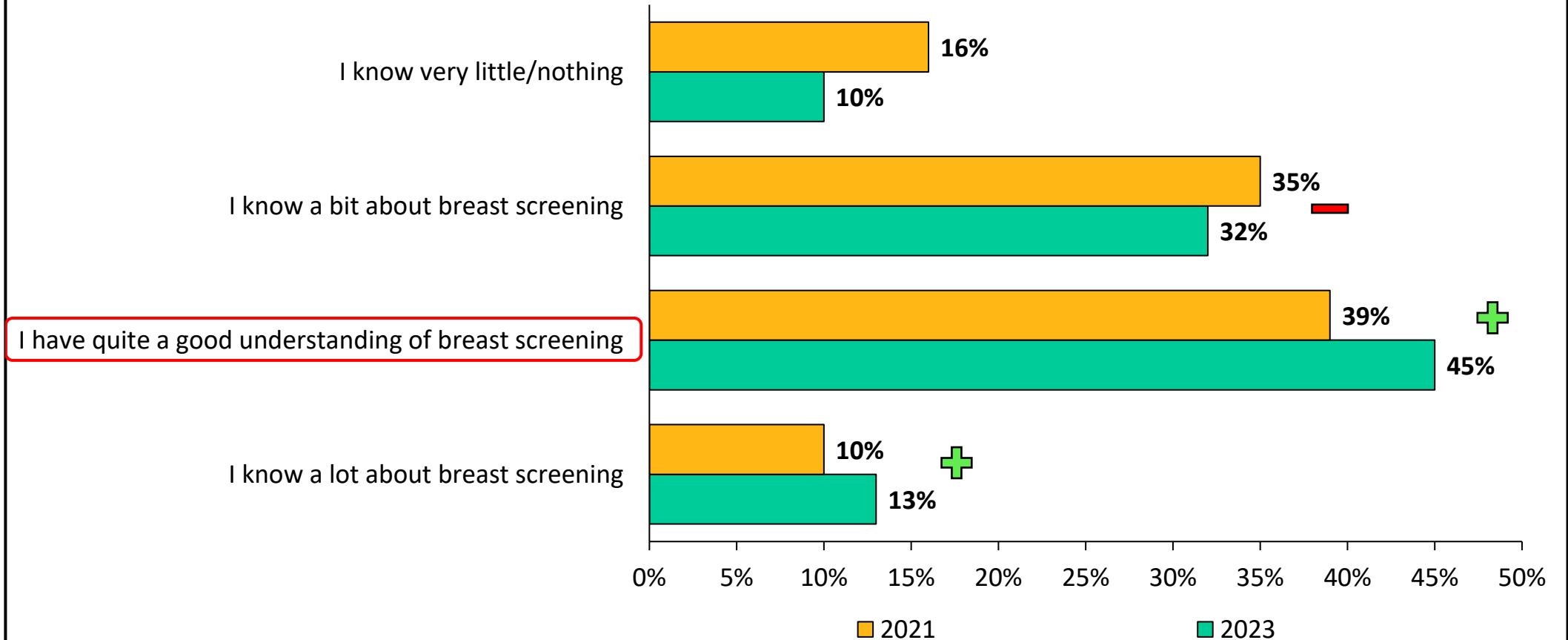
67% said being overweight

84% referenced previous lump/breast cancer and 70% referenced alcohol as factors that can increase risk of developing breast cancer, an increase since 2021.



HE Knowledge about breast screening

Q. How would you describe your level of knowledge about breast screening? (N=530)

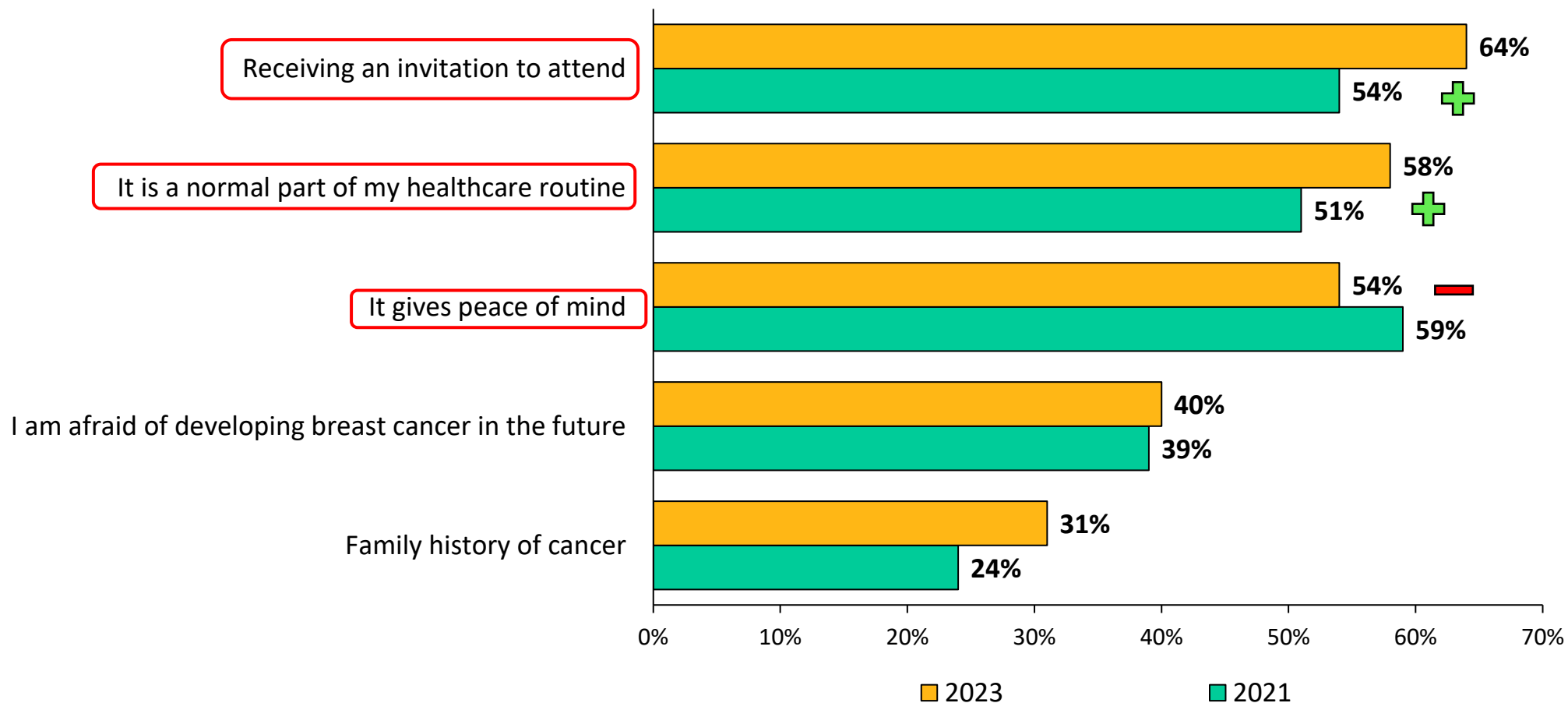


45% claim to have a good understanding of breast screening, up from the levels recorded in 2021 where 39% claim to have a good understanding.



Motivators to attending breast screening

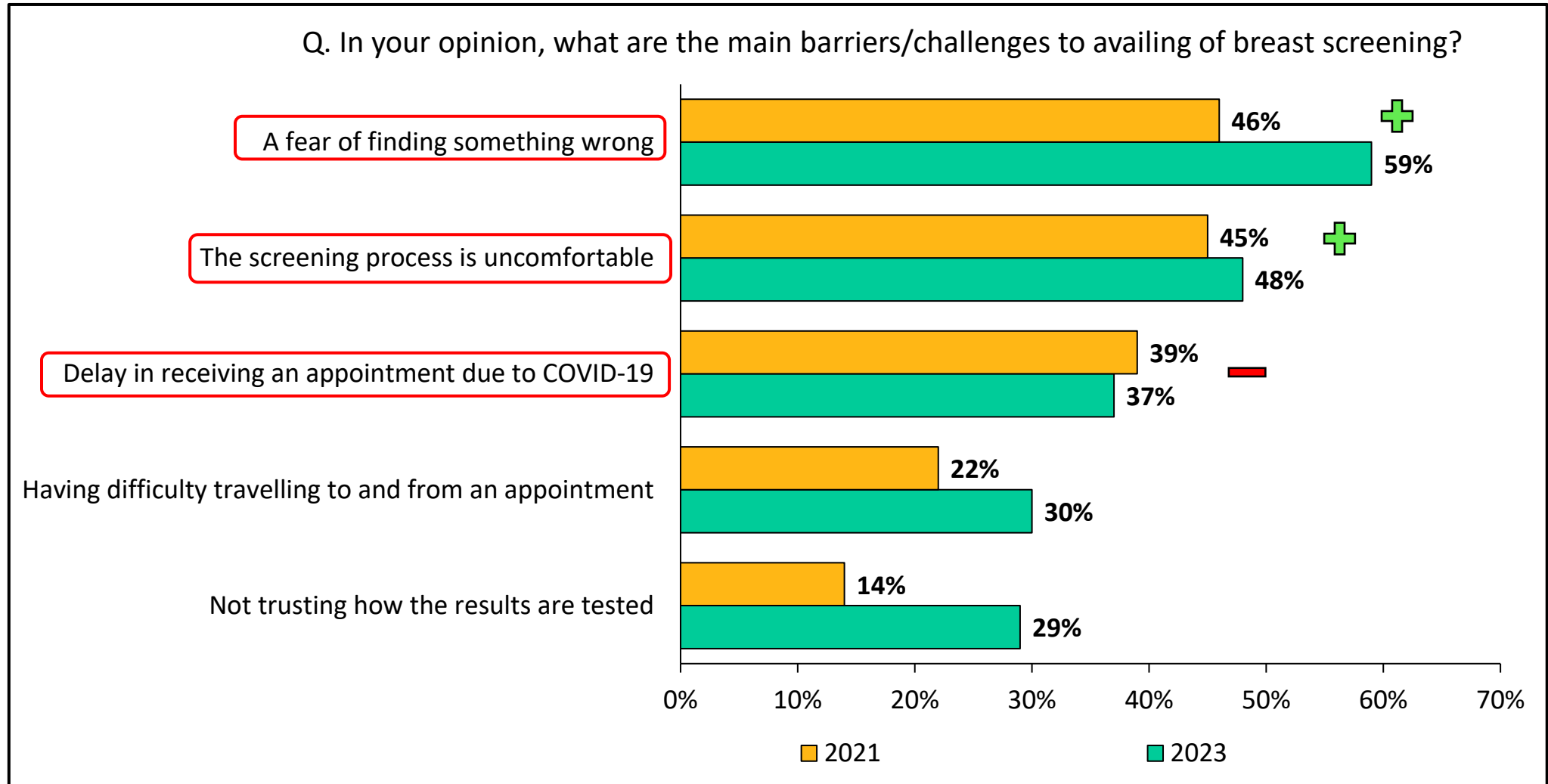
Q. In your opinion, what are the main motivations to attend breast screening?



Receiving an invitation, healthcare routine and giving peace of mind remain the key motivators to availing of breast screening in 2021 and 2023.



Barriers to attending breast screening



The fear of finding something wrong, the screening process being uncomfortable and delay in receiving an appt. due to COVID-19 remain the key barriers to availing of breast screening in 2021 and 2023.



Summary of key findings

- ✓ Since the last survey, there is a decrease in the proportion of respondents that claim to know little or nothing about breast cancer (2023: 12% vs 2021: 21%).
- ✓ There is an increase in the proportion of respondents who have a good understanding of breast cancer (2023: 37% vs 2021: 30%).
- ✓ There is an increase in the proportion of respondents that believe having a previous lump/breast cancer can increase your risk of developing breast cancer (2023: 84% vs 2021: 74%) and an increase in the proportion of respondents that referenced alcohol (2023: 70% vs 2021: 58%) as a factor for increasing breast cancer risk.
- ✓ Almost half now claim to have a good understanding of breast screening (2023: 45% vs 2021: 39%).
- ✓ Receiving an invitation, part of normal healthcare routine and giving peace of mind remain the key motivators to availing of breast screening in 2021 and 2023.
- ✓ The fear of finding something wrong, the screening process being uncomfortable and delay in receiving an appointment due to COVID-19 remain the key barriers to availing of breast screening in 2021 and 2023.