

SURVEY FUTURES

SURVEY DATA COLLECTION
METHODS COLLABORATION

Mode differences in the composition of consenters to requests for data linkage

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Overview



- Work in progress!
 - (Please don't cite without checking first)
- Outlining the problem and analytical approach
- Initial investigations using two consents
- Emerging findings
- Next steps



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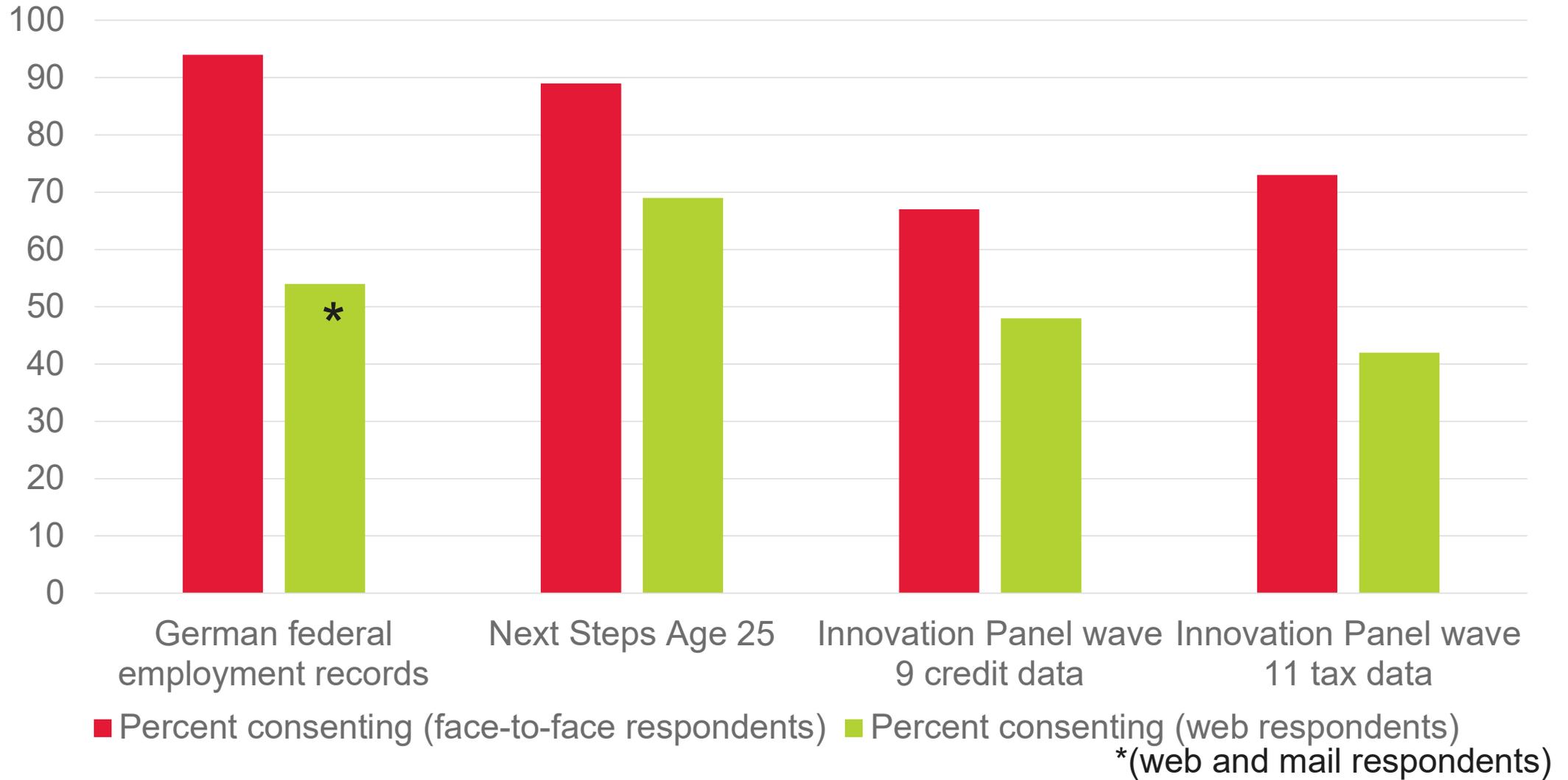


Context and motivation

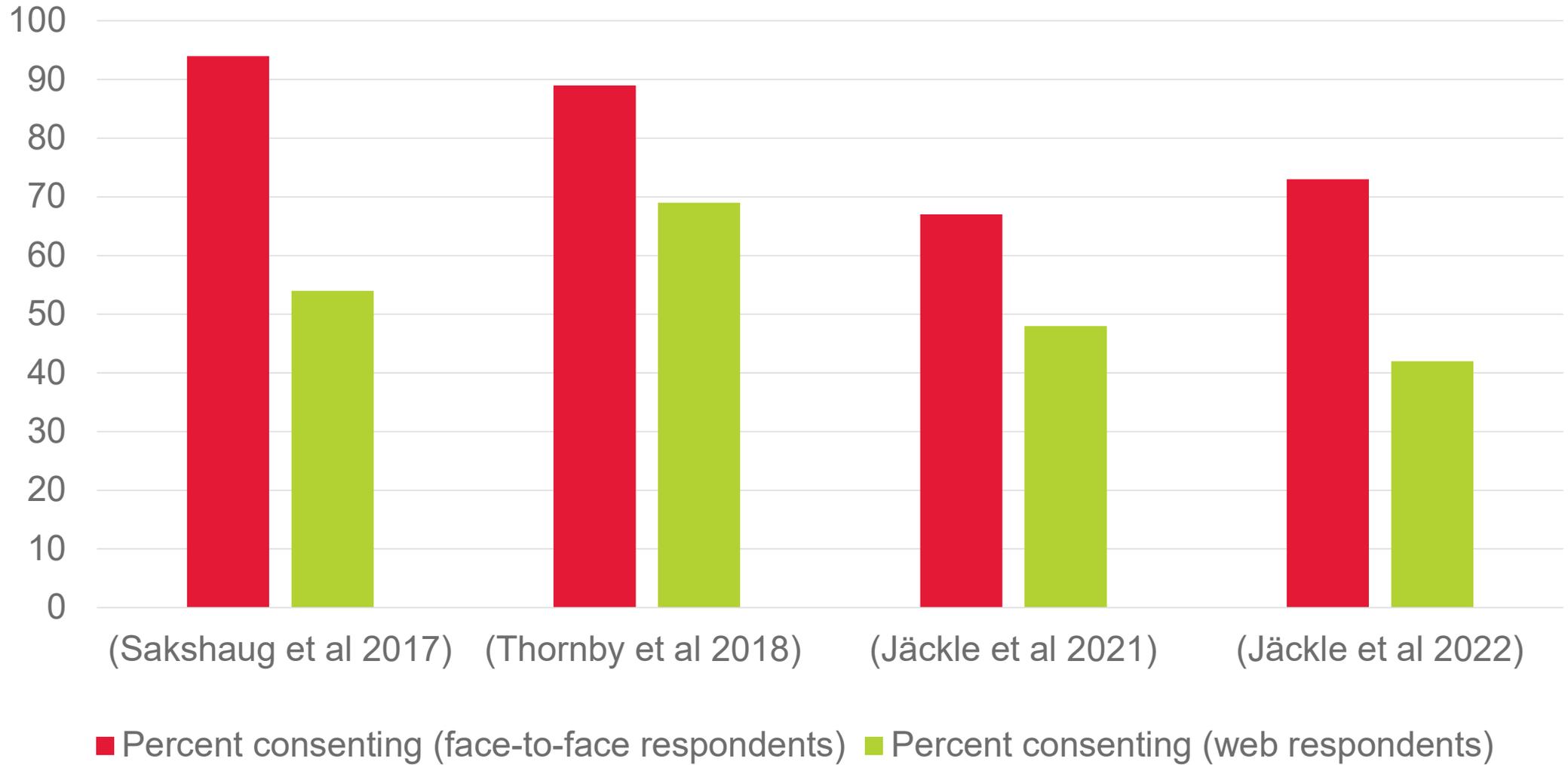
- Many surveys link to administrative records.
- Respondent consent typically sought for linkage.
- And many surveys use web as a primary mode of data collection.
- ... But respondents substantially less likely to consent online than in-person.



Context and motivation



Context and motivation



Research questions

Are web consenters just a **smaller** set or also a **different** set of respondents than face-to-face consenters?

And if there are differences, how much of that is due to **differential response** vs **differential consent** among respondents?



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DATA AND METHODS



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Understanding Society Innovation Panel



- Annual interviews
- Around 2200-2900 respondents per wave.
- Probability sample of GB households. All 16+ eligible for interview.
- Ongoing mixed mode experiment.
 - Households randomly allocated to FTF-first or web-first.
 - Some respondents complete in the other mode.



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(University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research, 2025)

Criteria for selecting consents

- Lots to choose from...
- ... but not so many where the analysis is (relatively) clean.
- Most of the sample in-scope
 - So: not previously asked
- Mixed mode random allocation in place
 - FTF vs. web mixed mode commenced IP5
 - And not during COVID (face-to-face interviewing suspended), IP13 and IP14
- Manageable impact of other experiments on the consent question



Consents analysed so far



- Financial services and credit file data linkage: IP9 (2016)
 - Financial Conduct Authority (FCA, the UK regulator of financial services) and data FCA can get from regulated firms.
- Tax data linkage: IP11 (2018)
 - HMRC records (HM Revenue & Customs, the UK's tax authority)
 - Question wording and question location experiments, the latter of which varied between modes.



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Analysis sample

- Cases where mode of response = mode of allocation
- Enables inference to a hypothetical single-mode study.
 - Assumption: those who respond in their non-allocated mode would be non-responders if only response option was their allocated mode.
- Tax: exclude the face-to-face cases allocated to different location (early in questionnaire) so only comparing like-with-like.



Methods

- Comparison of consenters across range of characteristics
 - By mode
 - How much do the proportions of consenters in each category vary between face-to-face and web respondents?
- Same analysis for respondents
 - How much of the variation in consent is already present in respondents?



Methods

- Comparison of consenters (respondents) across range of characteristics:
 - Sex
 - Age
 - Ethnicity
 - Equivalised household income
 - Highest qualification
 - Employment status
 - Housing tenure
 - Cars in household
 - Long-standing illness or disability
 - Lives with spouse or partner
 - Dependent child(ren) in household
 - Region
 - Urban or rural area



INITIAL FINDINGS



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IP9 Financial services / credit consent

	FTF	Web	Total
Number responding in allocated mode	545	1042	1587
Of whom, number consenting	415	503	918
% consent (conditional on allocated mode response)	76%	48%	58%



Example analysis: Housing tenure

	FTF n	FTF %	Web n	Web %	Difference pp
Owned outright					
Owned with mortgage					
Rented or other					
TOTAL	415		503		



Example analysis: Housing tenure

	FTF n	FTF %	Web n	Web %	Difference pp
Owned outright	157				
Owned with mortgage	160				
Rented or other	98				
TOTAL	415		503		



Example analysis: Housing tenure

	FTF n	FTF %	Web n	Web %	Difference pp
Owned outright	157	37.8			
Owned with mortgage	160	38.6			
Rented or other	98	23.6			
TOTAL	415	100	503		



Example analysis: Housing tenure

	FTF n	FTF %	Web n	Web %	Difference pp
Owned outright	157	37.8	170		
Owned with mortgage	160	38.6	255		
Rented or other	98	23.6	78		
TOTAL	415	100	503		



Example analysis: Housing tenure

	FTF n	FTF %	Web n	Web %	Difference pp
Owned outright	157	37.8	170	33.8	
Owned with mortgage	160	38.6	255	50.7	
Rented or other	98	23.6	78	15.5	
TOTAL	415	100	503	100	

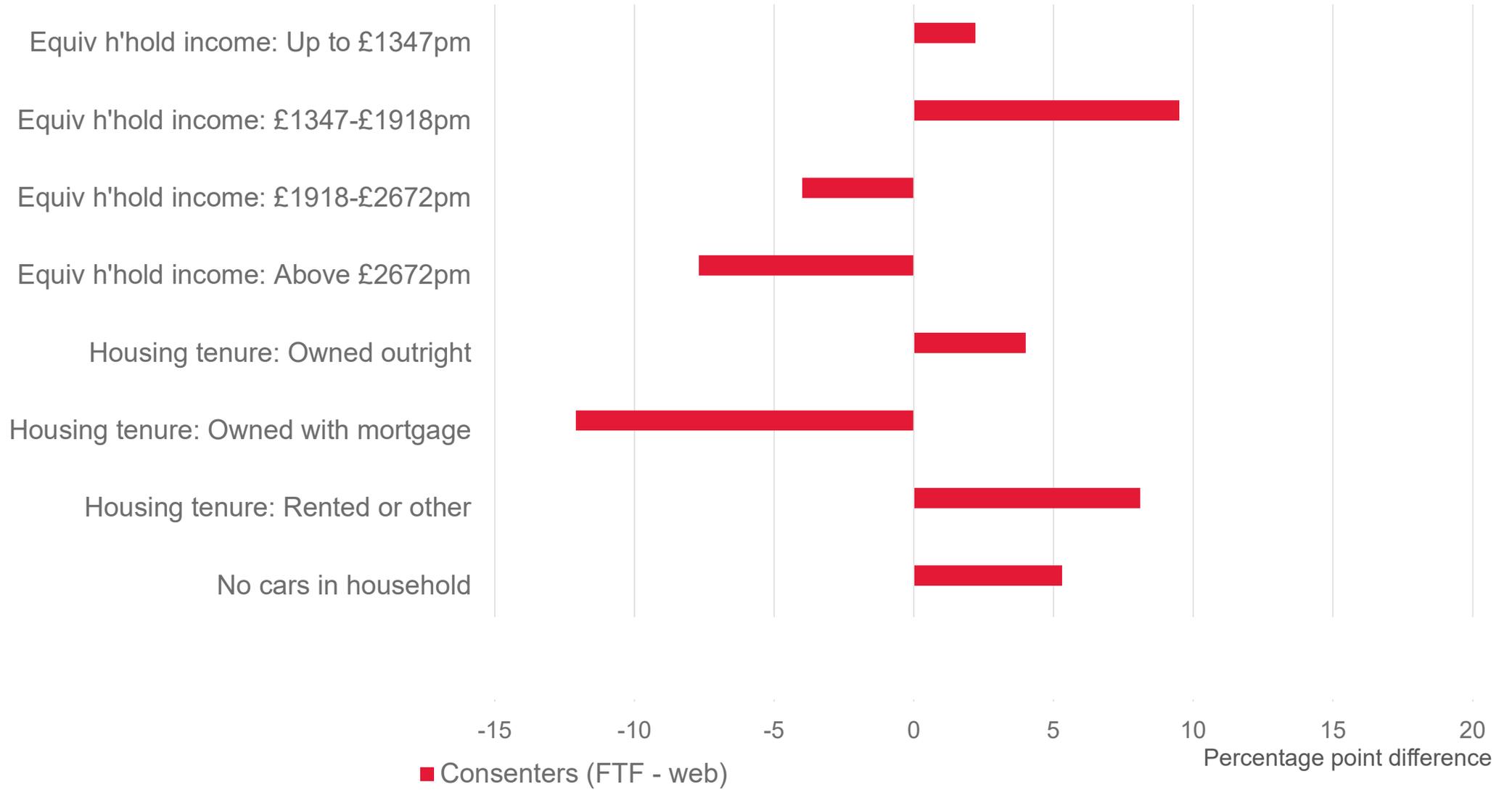


Example analysis: Housing tenure

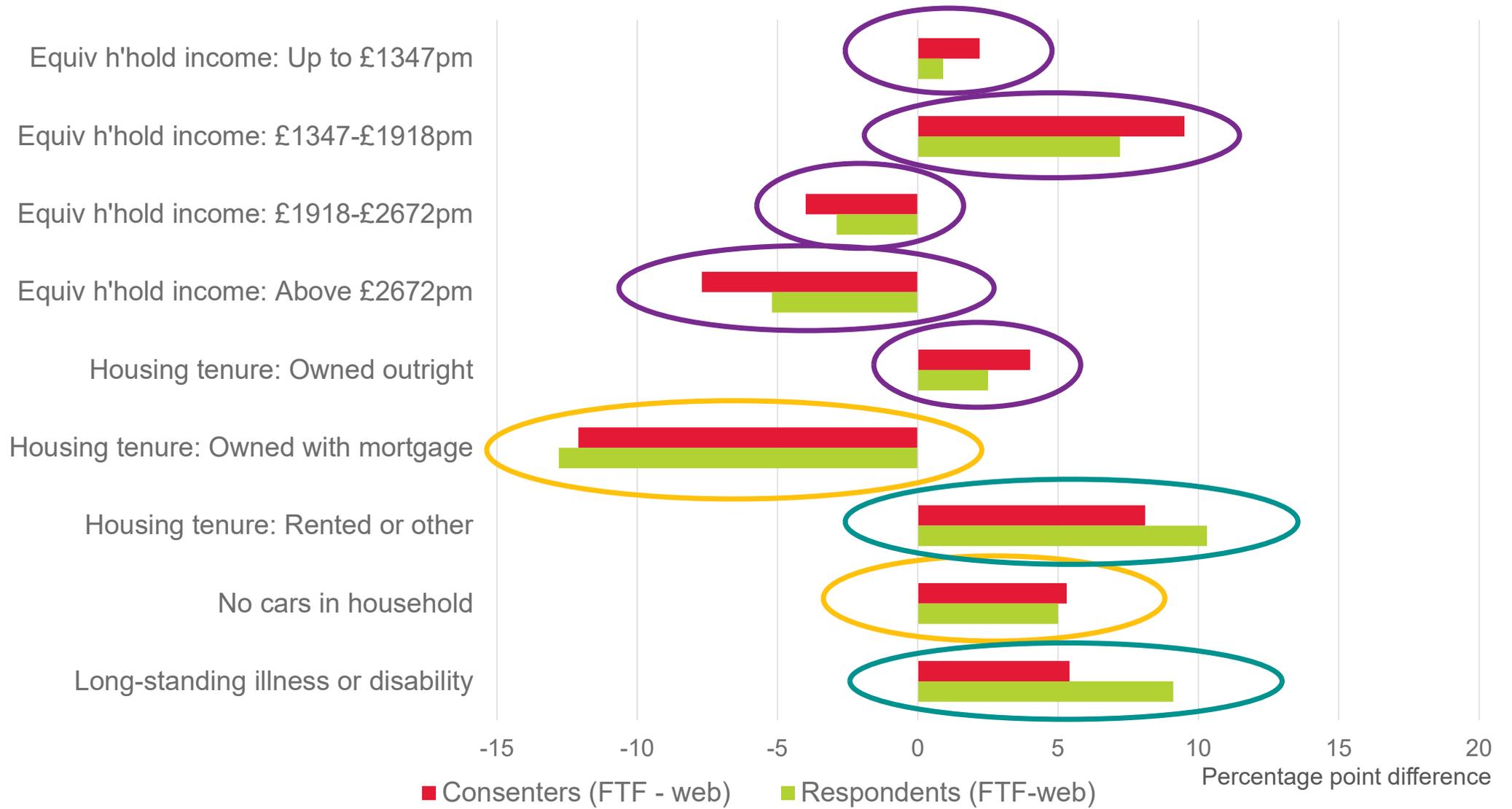
	FTF n	FTF %	Web n	Web %	Difference pp
Owned outright	157	37.8	170	33.8	4.0
Owned with mortgage	160	38.6	255	50.7	-12.1
Rented or other	98	23.6	78	15.5	8.1
TOTAL	415	100	503	100	



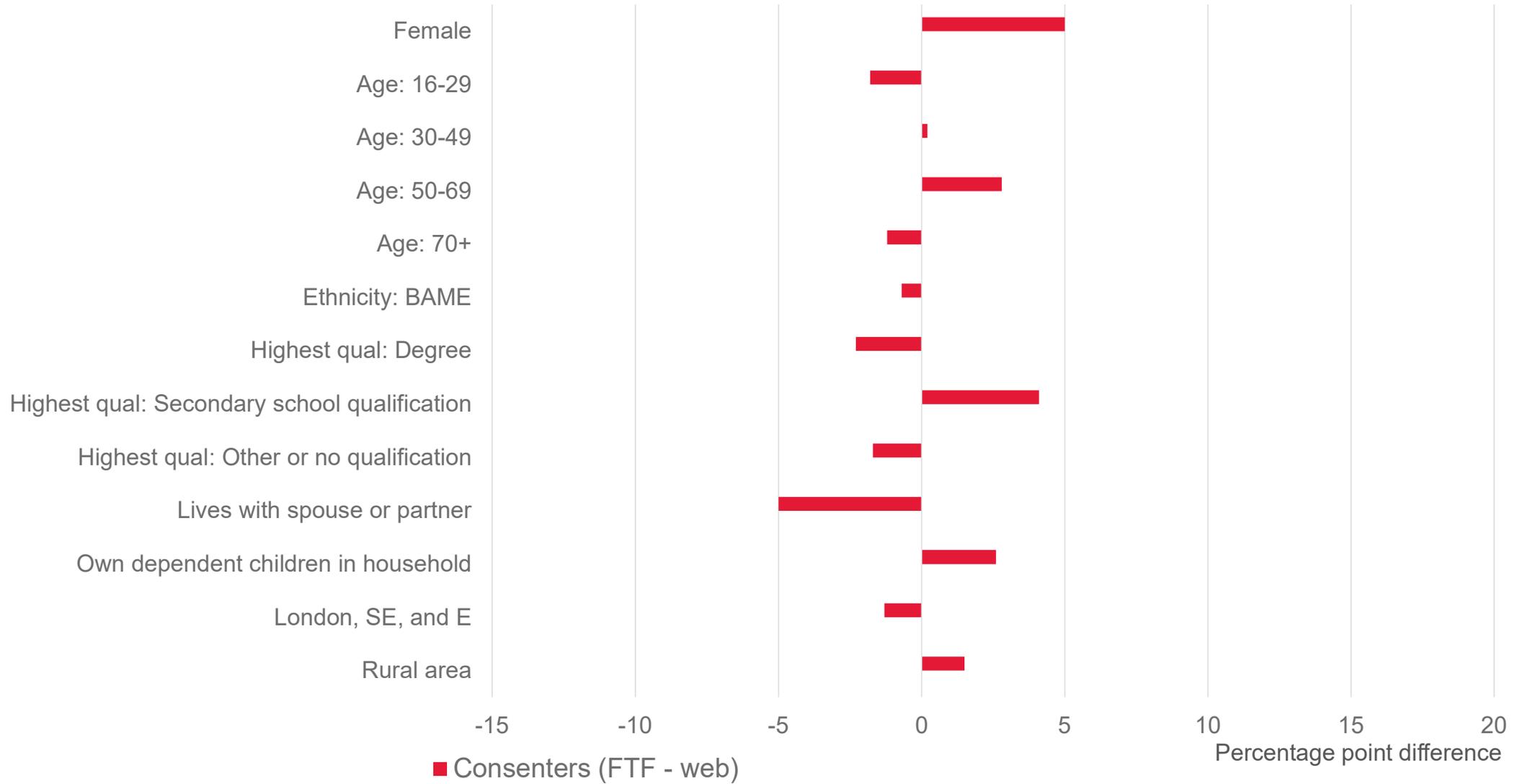
IP9 Financial services / credit consent



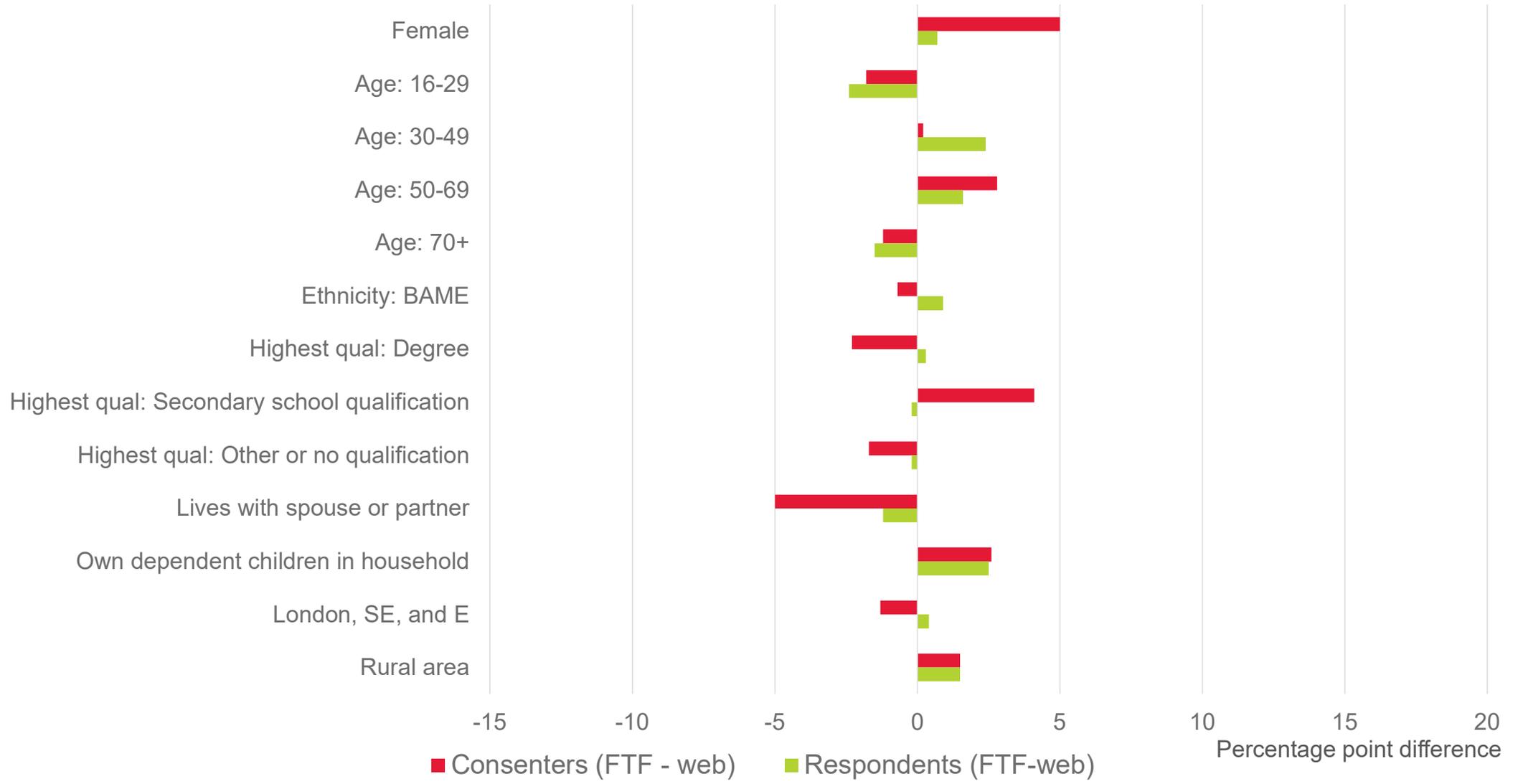
IP9 Financial services / credit consent



IP9 Financial services / credit consent



IP9 Financial services / credit consent



IP9 credit consent findings

- The composition of web consenters **is different** than face-to-face consenters.
- Some of the difference is already present when comparing web and face-to-face **respondents**.
 - But not all.
 - And in some respects, consenters exhibit **smaller** mode differences than respondents.



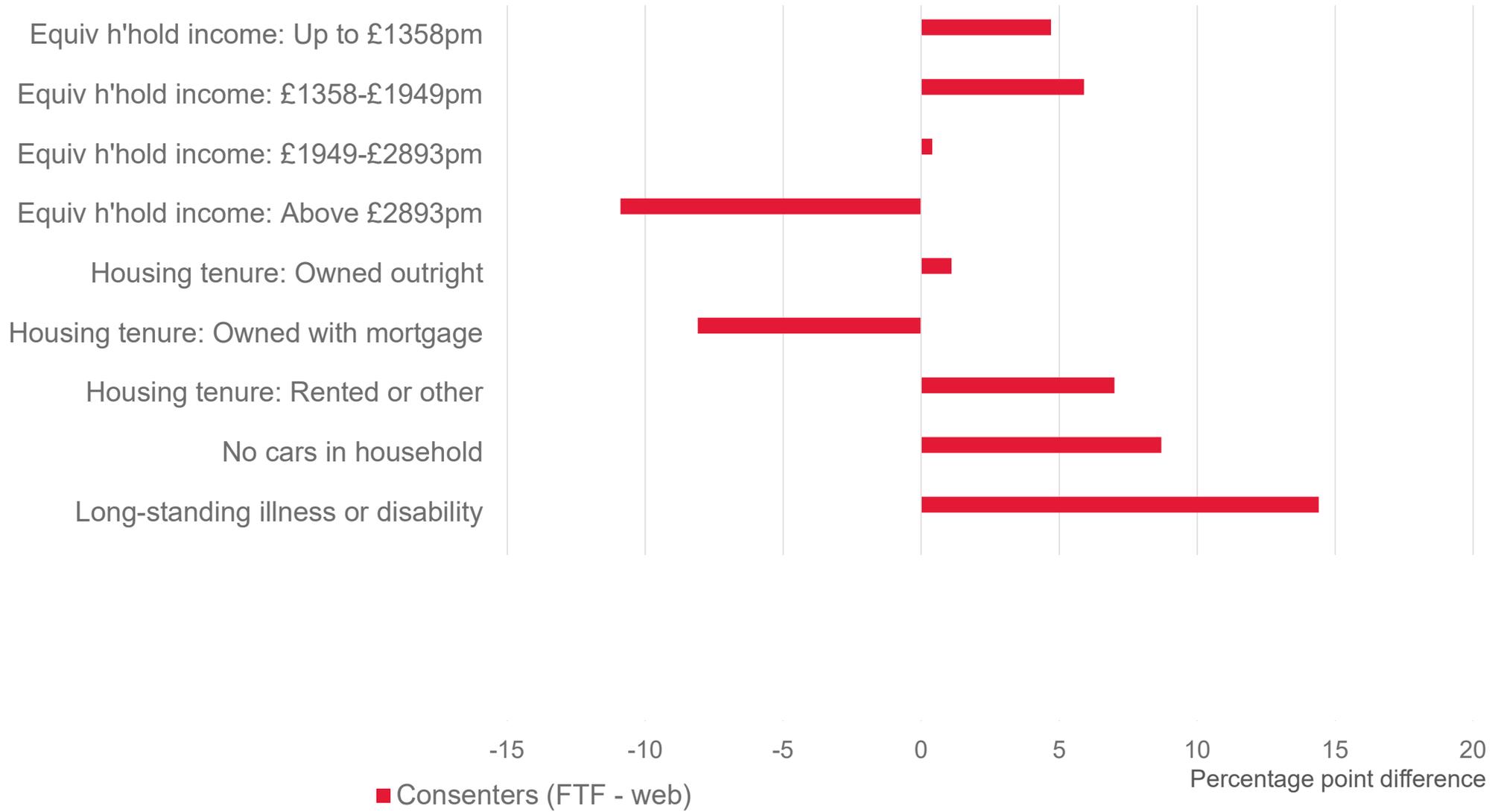
IP11 Tax data consent

	FTF	Web	Total
Number responding in allocated mode	* 515	1169	1684
Of whom, number consenting	353	497	850
% consent (conditional on allocated mode response)	69%	43%	50%

* After excluding FTF cases allocated to consent question early in questionnaire.

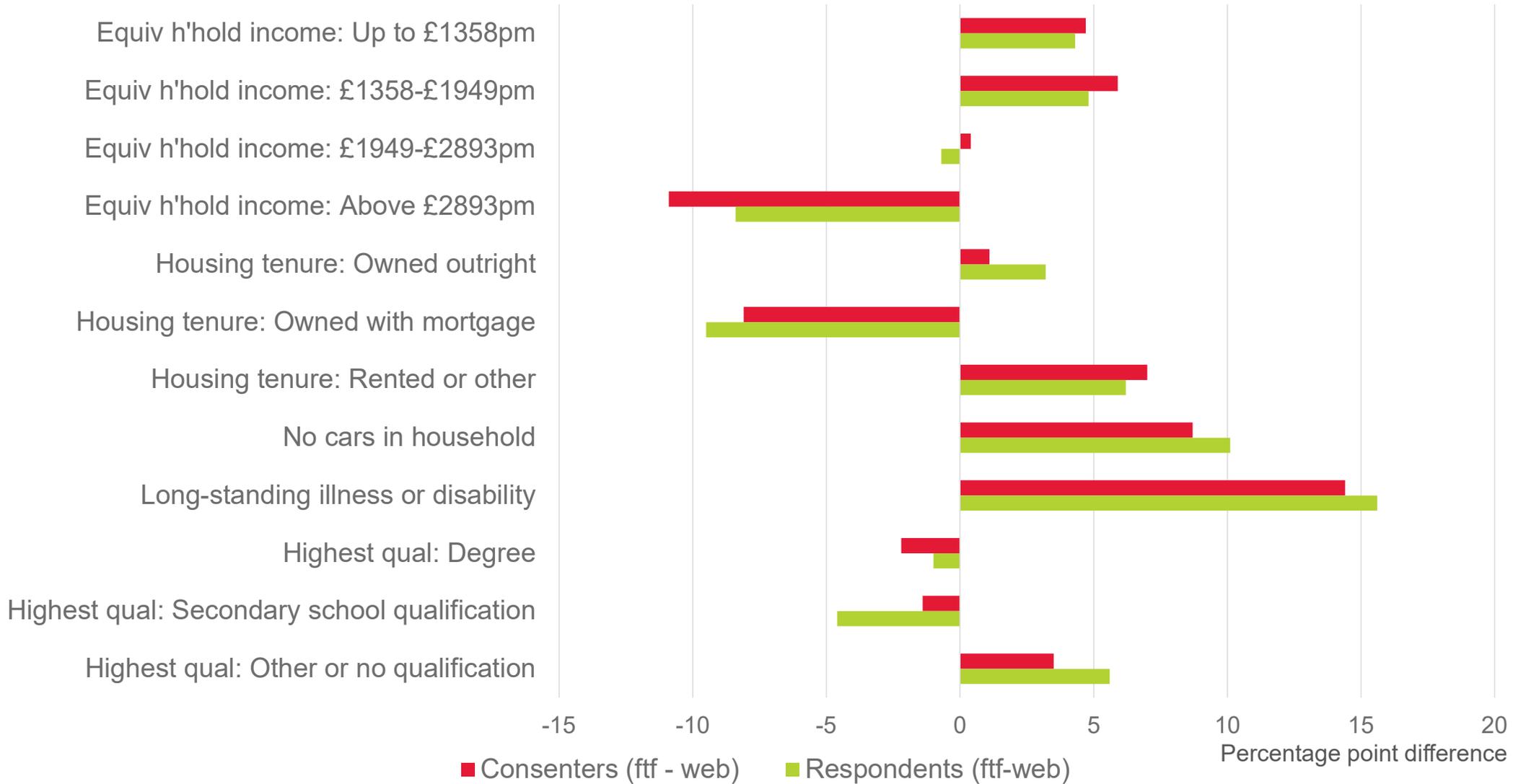


IP11 Tax data consent

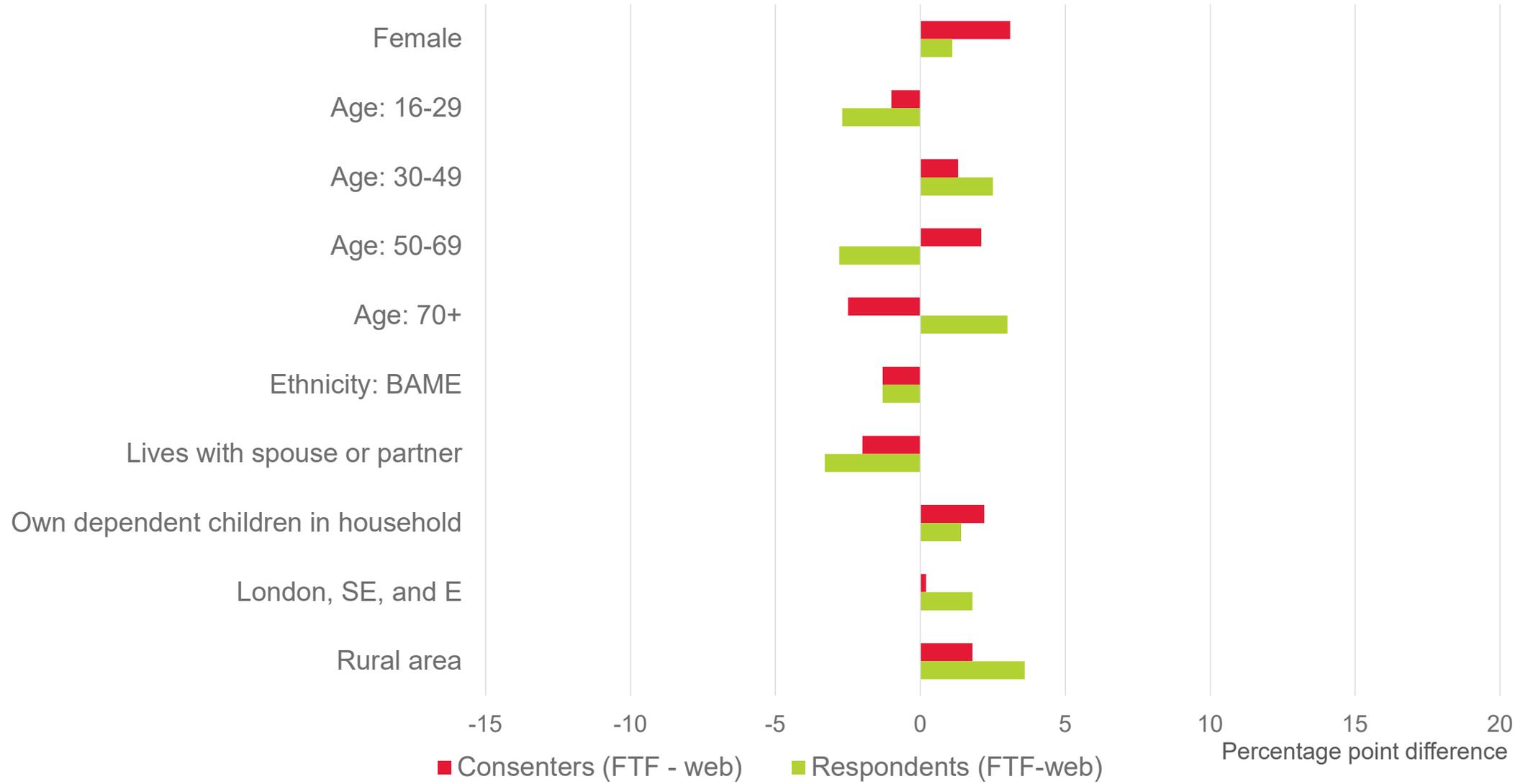


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IP11 Tax data consent



IP11 Tax data consent



IP11 tax consent findings

- The composition of web consenters is different than face-to-face consenters.

- Some of the difference is already present when comparing web and face-to-face respondents.

- But not all
- And in some respects, consenters exhibit smaller mode differences than respondents.

DITTO!

Additional finding: consistency in most significant characteristics

	Credit consent	Tax consent	IP9 response	IP11 response
Income	✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing tenure	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cars in household	✓	✓	✓	✓
Qualifications	-	-	-	✓
Disability	-	✓	✓	✓
Sex; Age; Ethnicity; Employment; Living with partner; Dependent children in household; Region; Urbanity	-	-	-	-

Next steps

- Do the same findings hold with consents outside of the financial domain?
- Other analysis approaches



Thank you for listening



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