

Young adult transitions and well-being in z-proso

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Young adulthood

~ third decade of life

developmental period
characterised by social change
and role transition

- “Big five” transitions:
 - Moving away from parents’ home
 - Romantic union formation
 - Becoming a parent
 - Finishing education
 - Obtaining full-time employment
 - *(Achieving financial independence)*

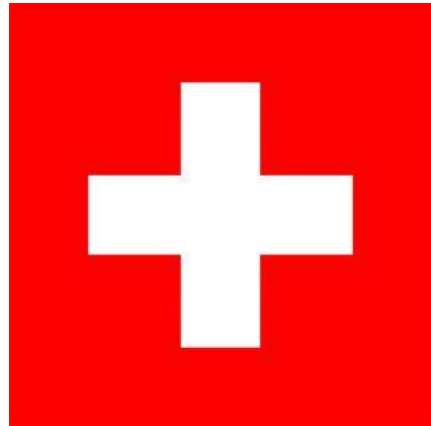
Young adult transition

Mastering transitions → more positive well-being

Previous literature is:

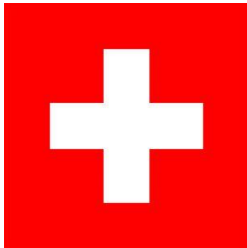
- Focused on specific transitions
- Often set in the U.S.
- Neglects historical societal trends and potential inequalities in „achieving“ these transitions

How to code
young adult
transitions in
Switzerland
in 2024?



Good to know:

- Complex vocational and educational system. Most start out with vocational school, and many seek continuing education in their 20ies and 30ies.
- Housing expensive – moving away from parents is not easy to afford.
- Obligatory military or social service for males.
- Average parental age at first childbirth is 31+.
- Marriage viewed as „optional“ in 20ies.



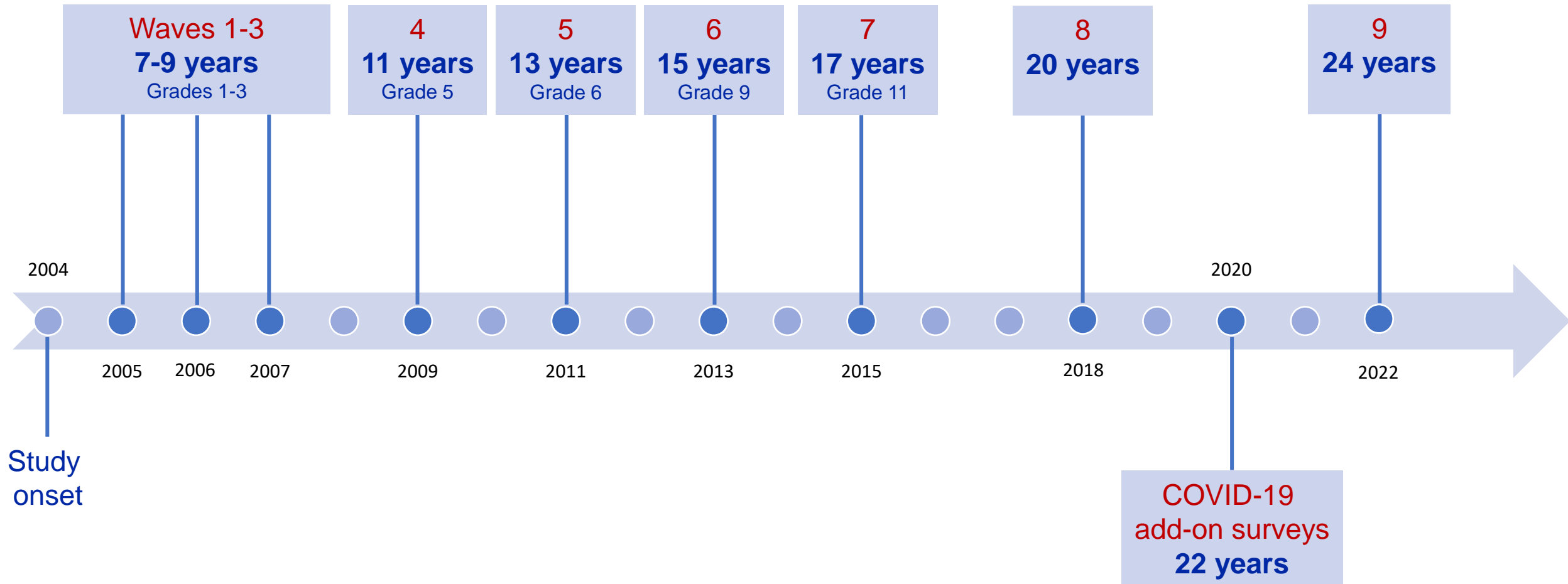
Research questions

- 1) Is achieving these markers that have historically been considered markers of adulthood associated with a subjective feeling of being adult in the 21st century in a Western European context?
- 2) Are there inequalities in who achieves these transitions?
- 3) Is mastering more transitions by age 24 associated with increased well-being?

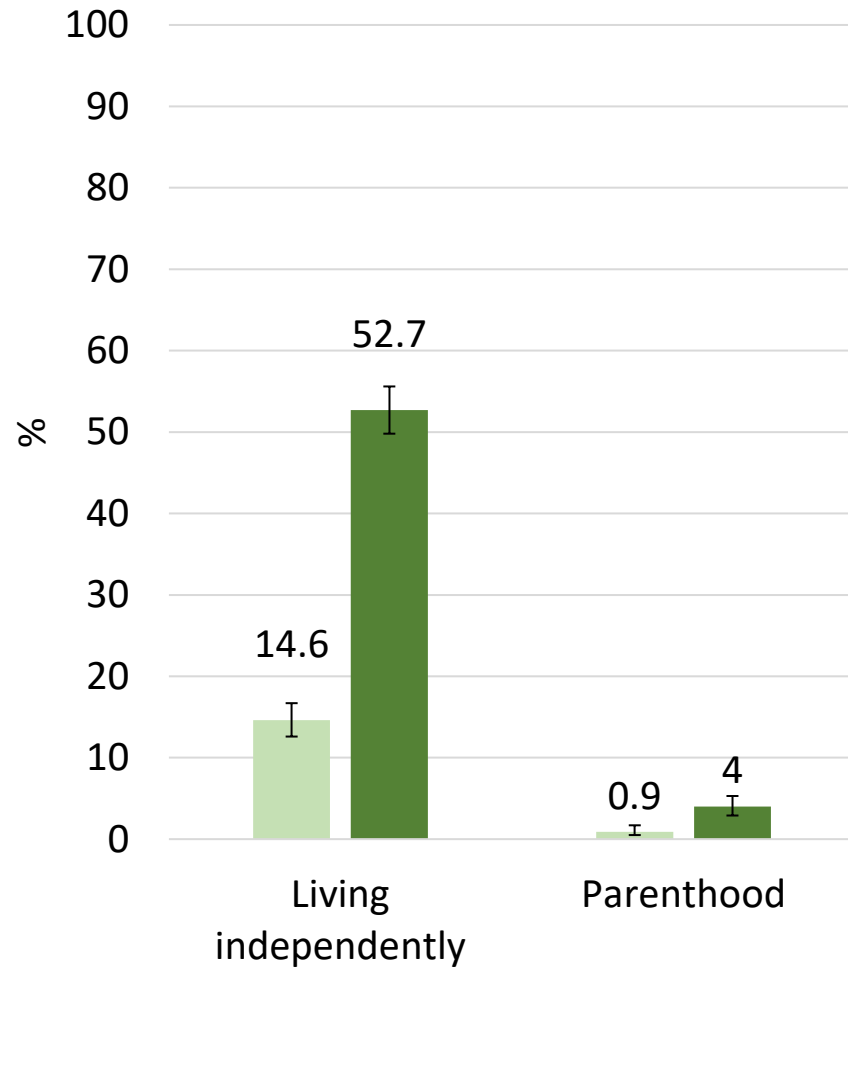
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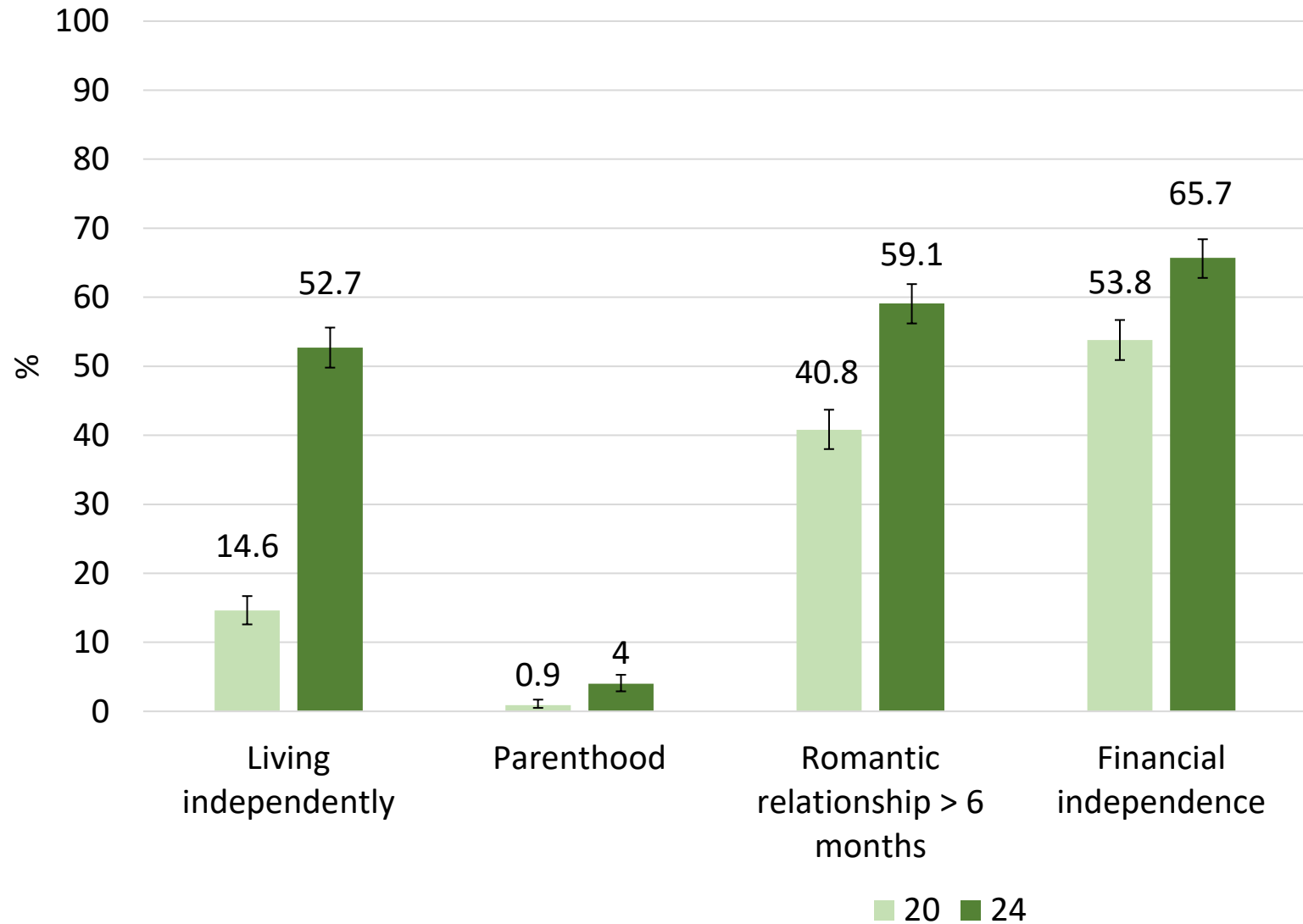
z-proso study design



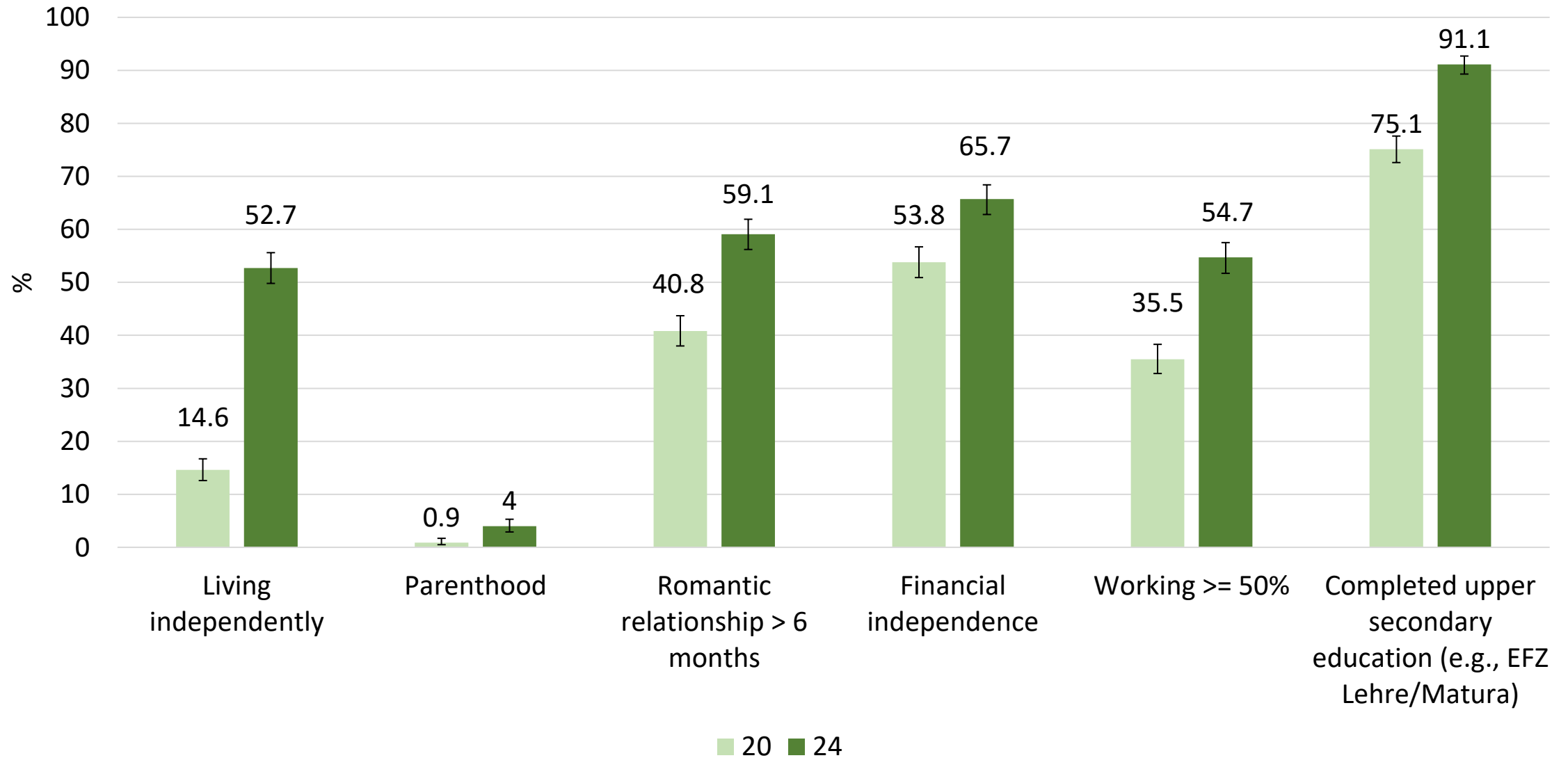
Transition markers, ages 20 and 24



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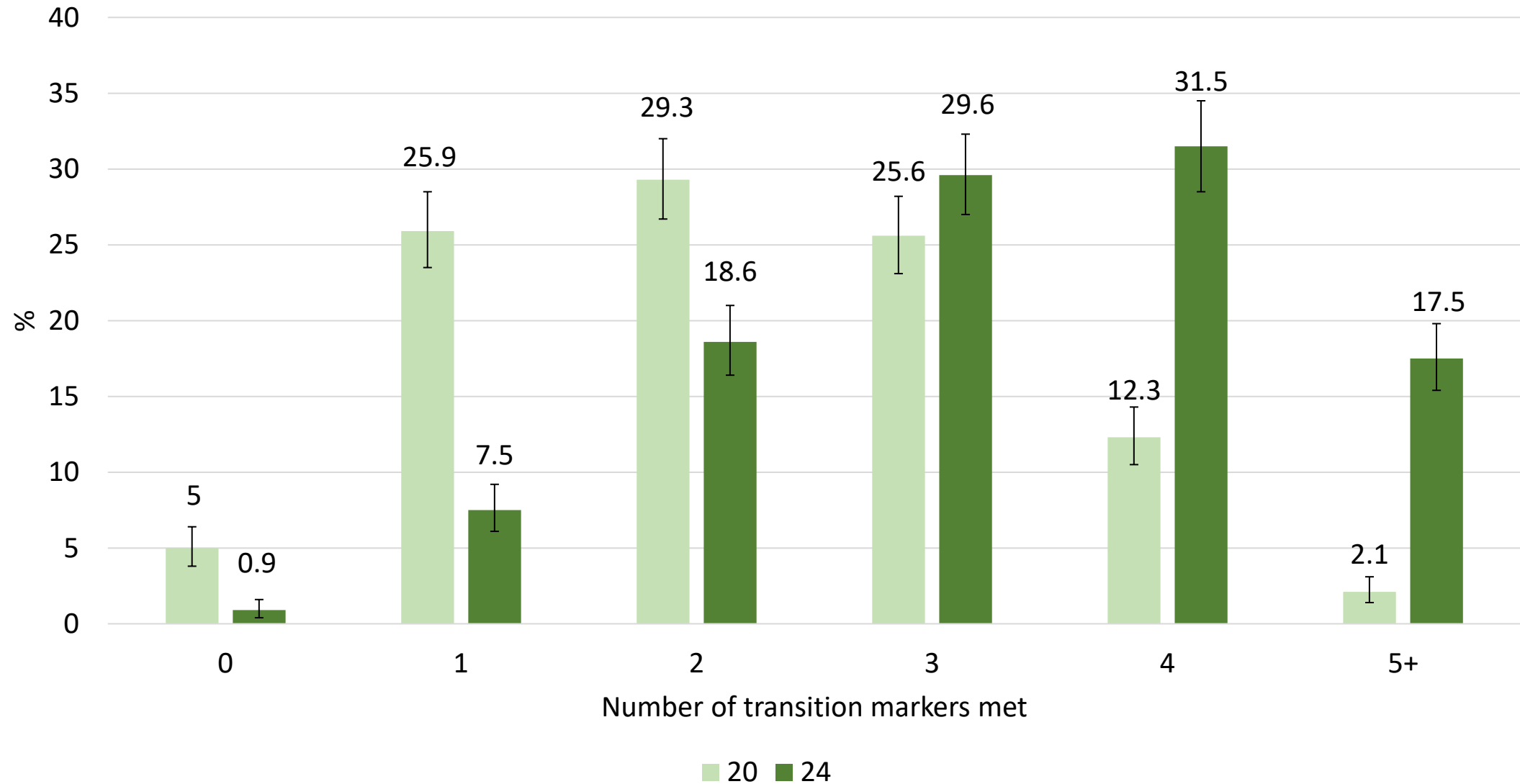


Transition markers at ages 20 and 24 years

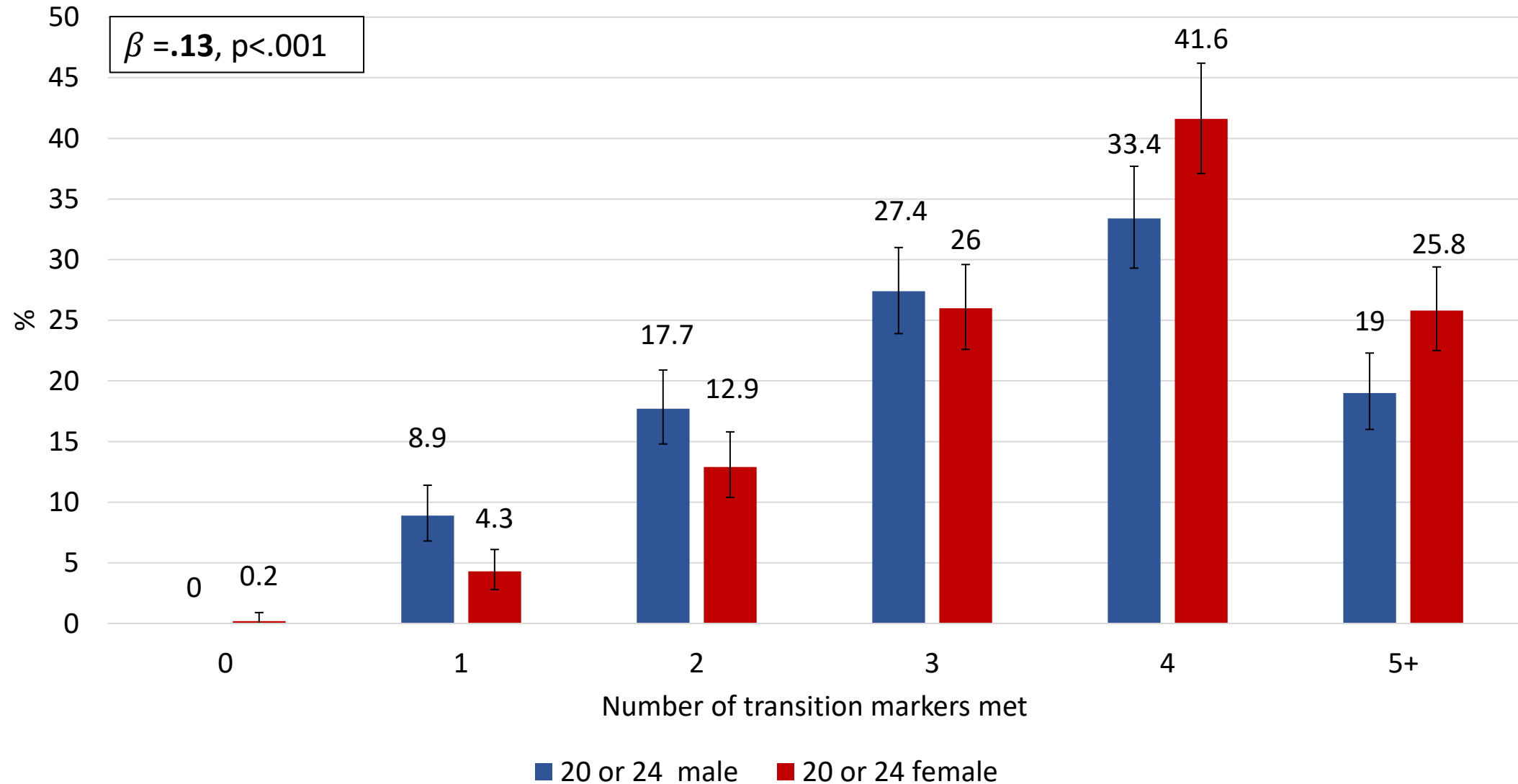
- **Living independently from parents**
(0 = living with parents; 1= living with peers, partners, alone, or other)
- **Parenthood**
(0= no children of one's own; 1= children of one's own)
- **Romantic relationship longer than 6 months**
(0= no romantic relationship > 6 months in past year; 1= romantic relationship > 6 months in past year)
- **Financial independence from parents**
(0 = financial support from parents; 1= no financial support from parents)
- **Working at least 50%**
(0 = works less than 50% a week; 1 = works at least 50% a week, incl. if still in education)
- **Completed upper secondary education**
(0 = did not complete EFZ apprenticeship/Matura; 1 = completed at least an EFZ apprenticeship or Matura)

Cumulative scores: number of transitions at ages 20 and 24

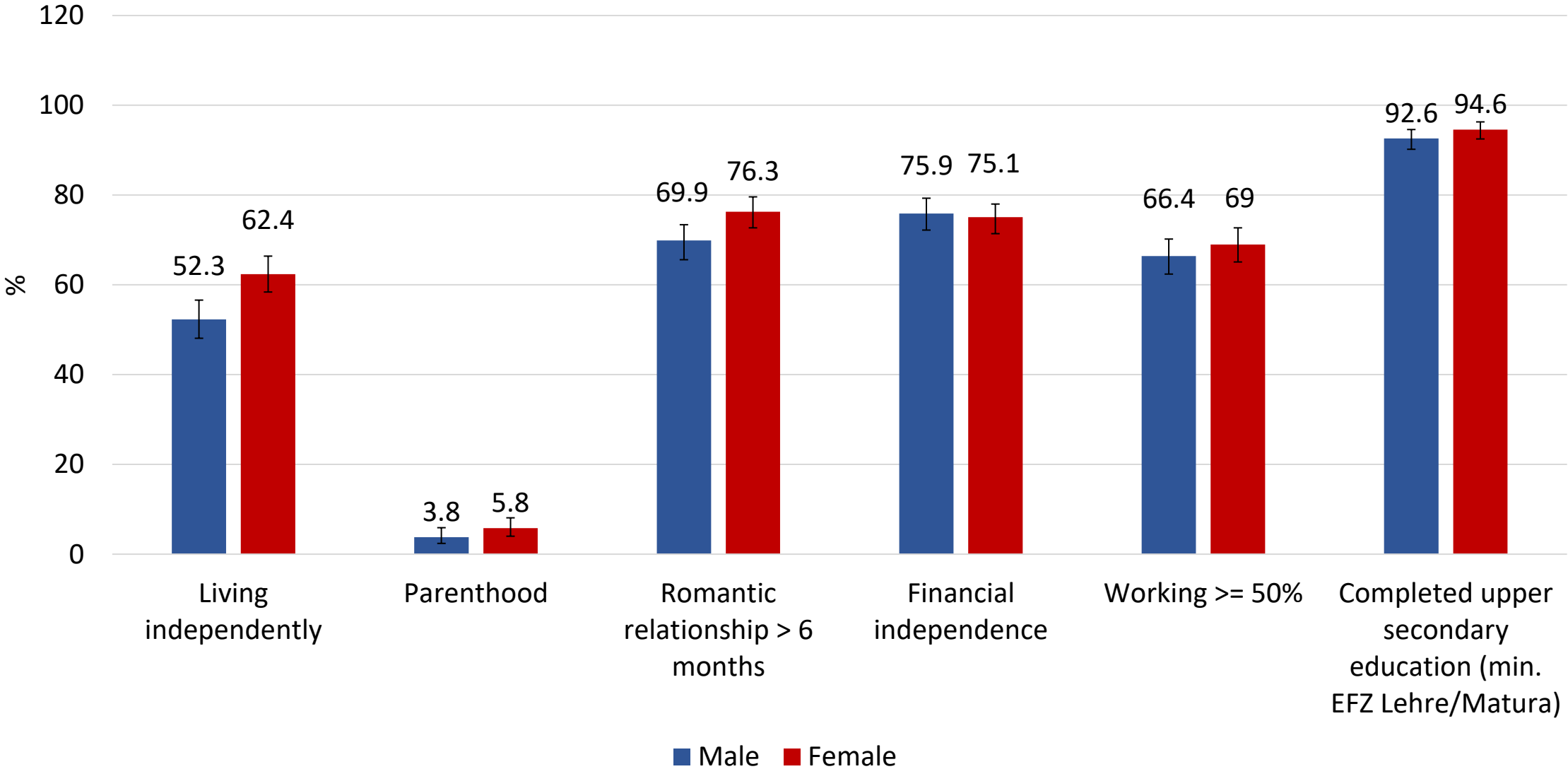
Cumulative transition scores



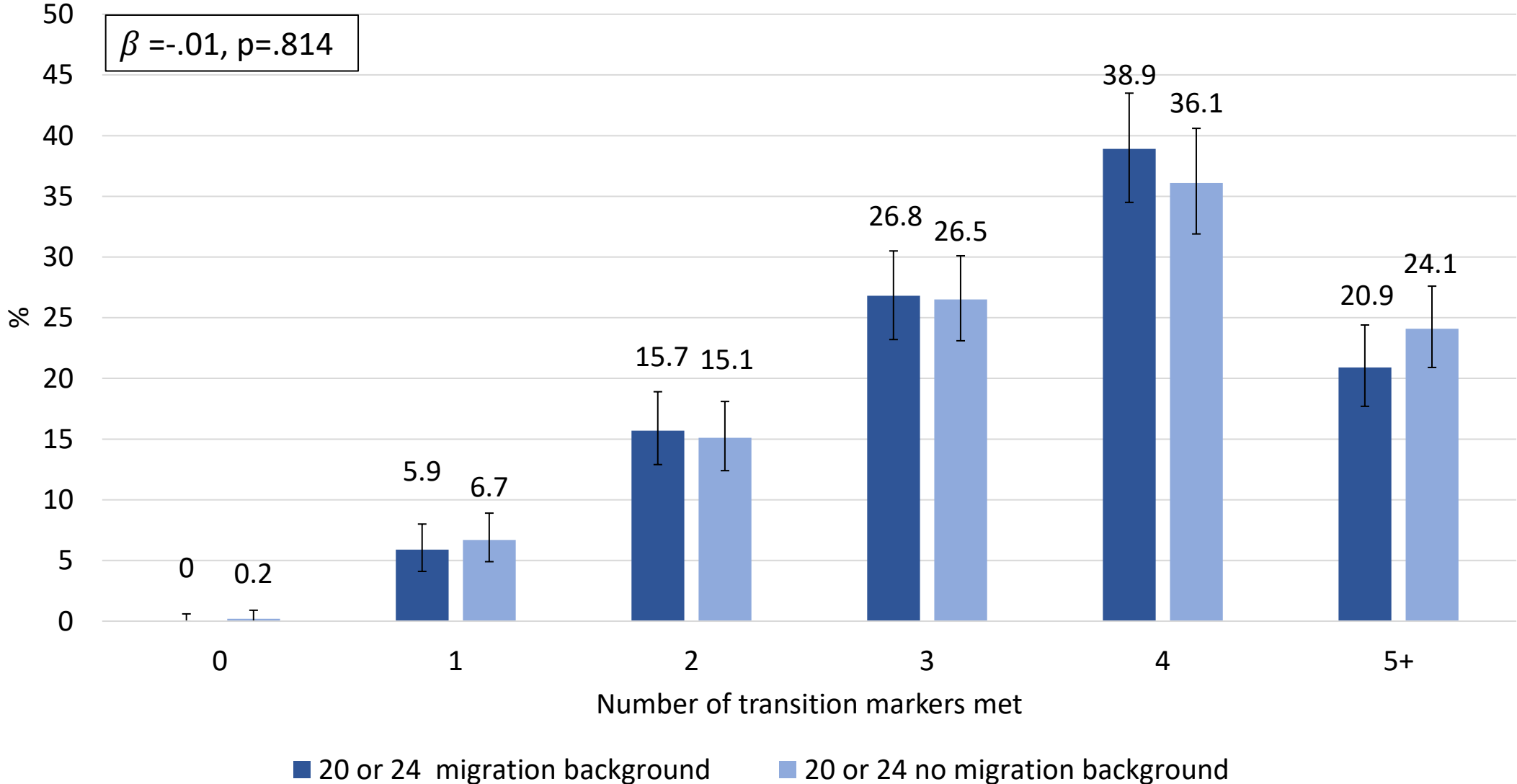
Cumulative transition scores by sex



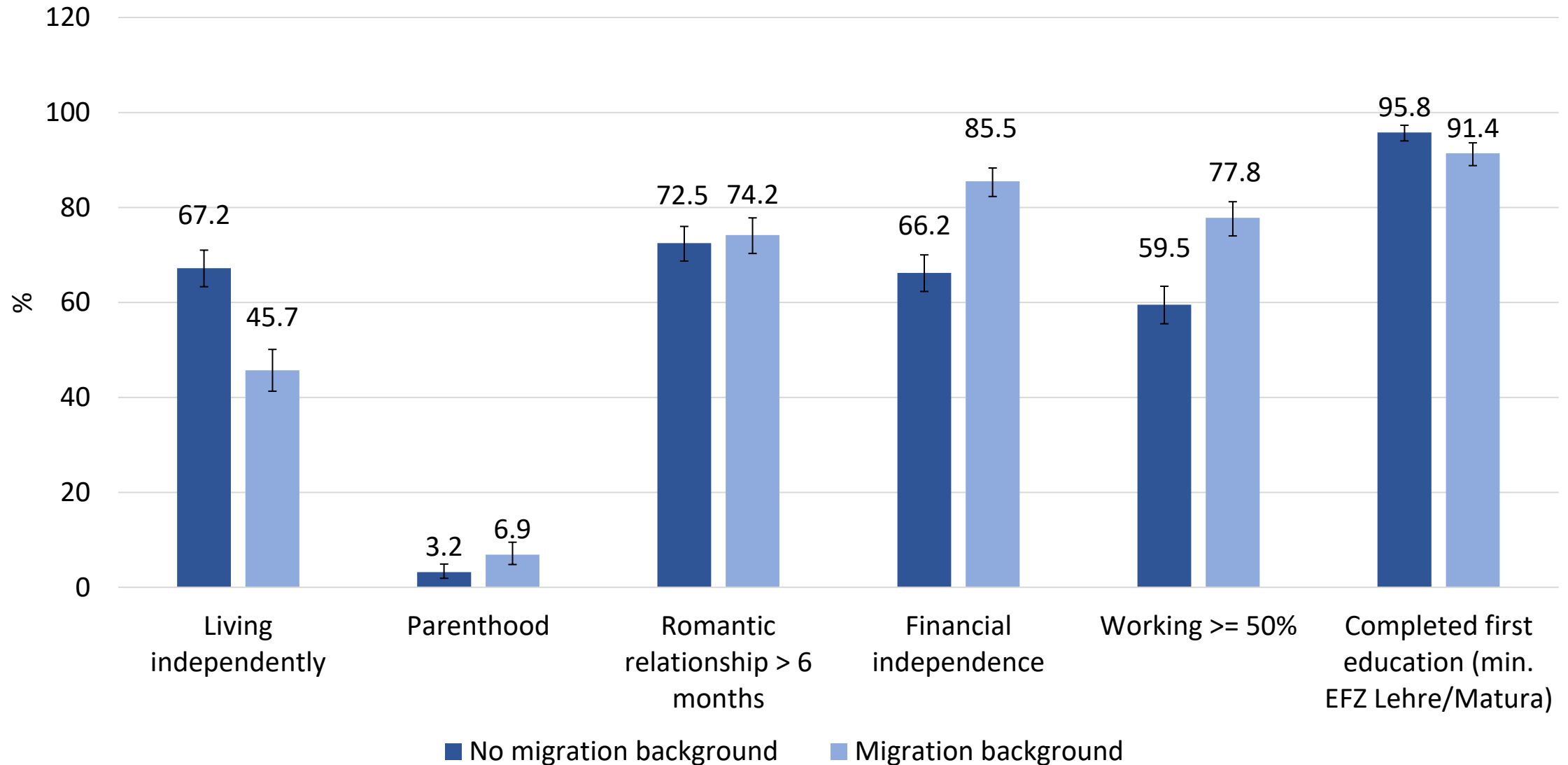
Transition markers by sex (age 20 or 24)



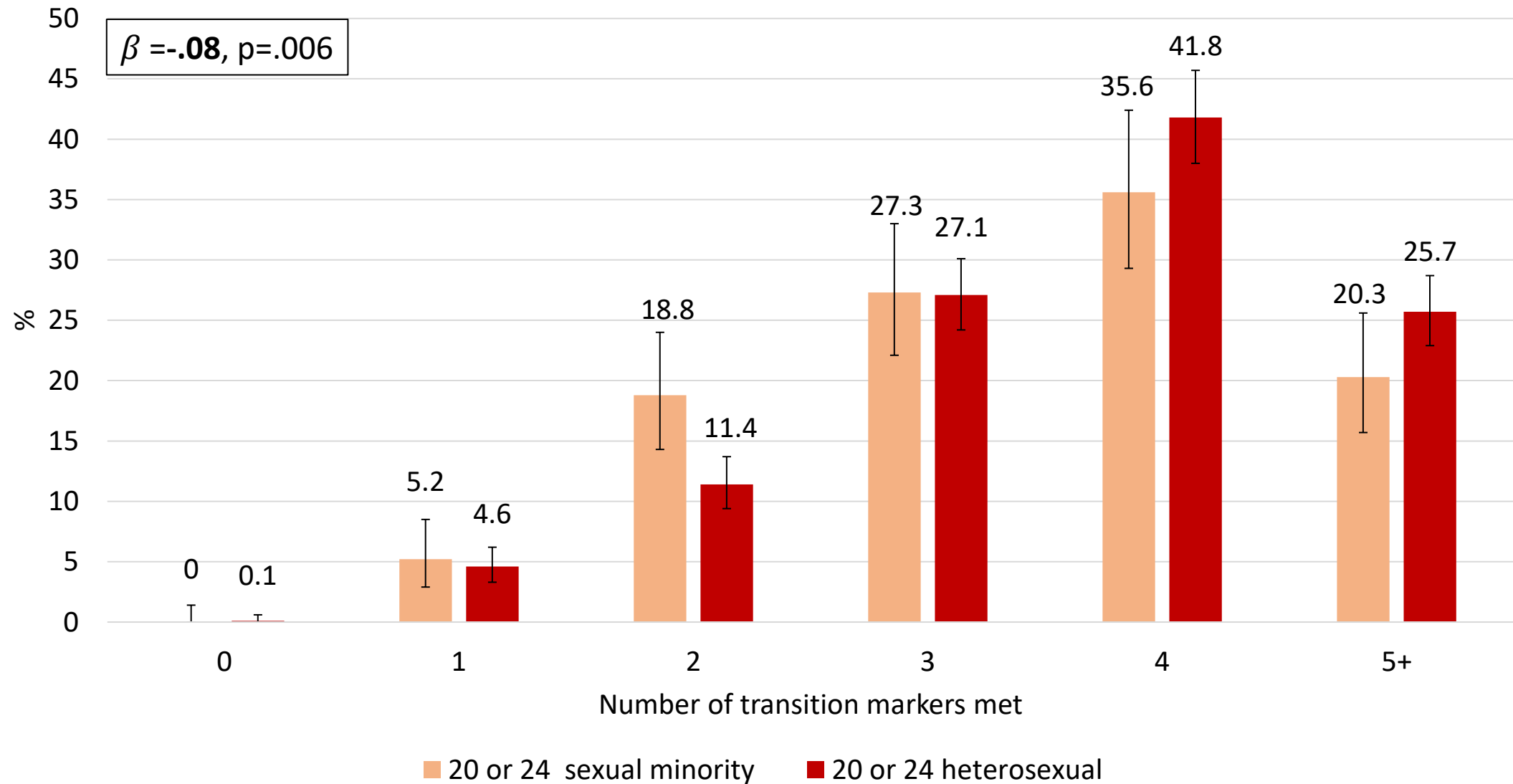
Cumulative transition scores by migration background



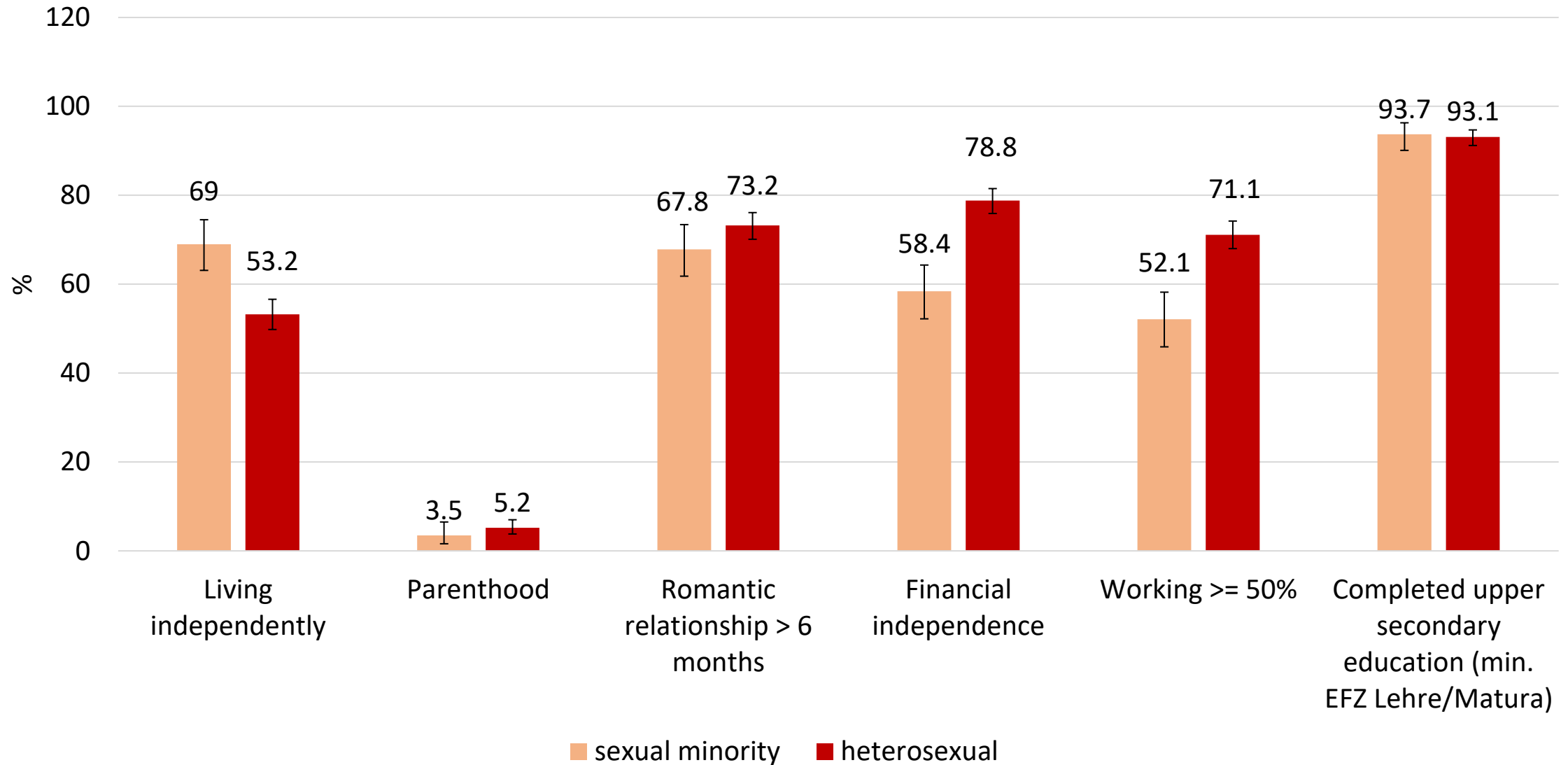
Transition markers by migration background (age 20 or 24)



Cumulative transition scores by sexual minority status



Transition markers by sexual minority status (age 20 or 24)



Outcomes, age 24 years

Self in society

- **Perceived adult status:**
I feel more adult-like than X out of 100 of my peers.
- **Perceived exclusion from society:**
6 items, scale 1-4

Externalizing and delinquent behaviors

- **Delinquency:**
24-item binary checklist of behaviors
- **Substance use:**
Simultaneous polysubstance use
- **Aggression:**
9 items, scale 1-5

Internalizing symptoms and self-harm

- **Internalizing symptoms:**
13 items, scale 1-5
- **Self-harm:**
Any self-injury on purpose during previous month

Predicting age 24 outcomes with:

Main Predictors: Cumulative transitions at ages 20 and 24

CONTROLS

Socio-demographics

- Parental migration background
- Sex
- Parental socio-economic background

Outcomes at ages 15-17 & risk and promotive factors ages 15-17

- Substance use
- Delinquency
- Self-harm
- Aggression
- Internalizing Symptoms
- Bullying victimization
- Bullying perpetration
- Self-control
- School engagement
- Social support from adult
- Social support from peers
- Parental involvement

Outcome at age 20

Results of multiple regression models

Outcome at Age 24	Measure	Cumulative transitions age 24		*adjusted for age 20 transitions
		Effect size	Significance	
Self in society				
Feeling adult-like	(β , p)	0.09	0.004	
Perceived exclusion from society	(β , p)	-0.07	0.013	
Externalizing and deviant behaviors				
Delinquency	(β , p)	-0.08	0.004	
Sim. Polysubstance use	(β , p)	-0.07	0.015	
Aggression	(β , p)	-0.04	0.141	
Internalizing symptoms and self-harm				
Internalizing symptoms	(β , p)	-0.08	0.006	
Self-harm	(OR, 95% CI)	0.77	0.59-0.99	

Which transitions matter?

Individual transitions consistently associated:

- Working > 50%
- Romantic relationship of > 6 months
- Living independently

Individual transitions NOT consistently associated:

- Becoming a parent (but n very low)
- Financial independence
- Completing upper secondary education

Conclusions

- Sociodemographic differences in who makes the traditional young adult transitions by the mid-20s
- Cumulative young adult transitions are associated with improved well-being:
 - Self in society
 - Delinquent behaviors and substance use
 - Internalizing symptoms and self-harm
- Living independent from parents, having a stable romantic relationship, and having a significant involvement in the labor market are especially important

No pattern of interaction effects

- No particular benefits for those who started out with lower well-being
- No sex-differences in associations

Future Directions

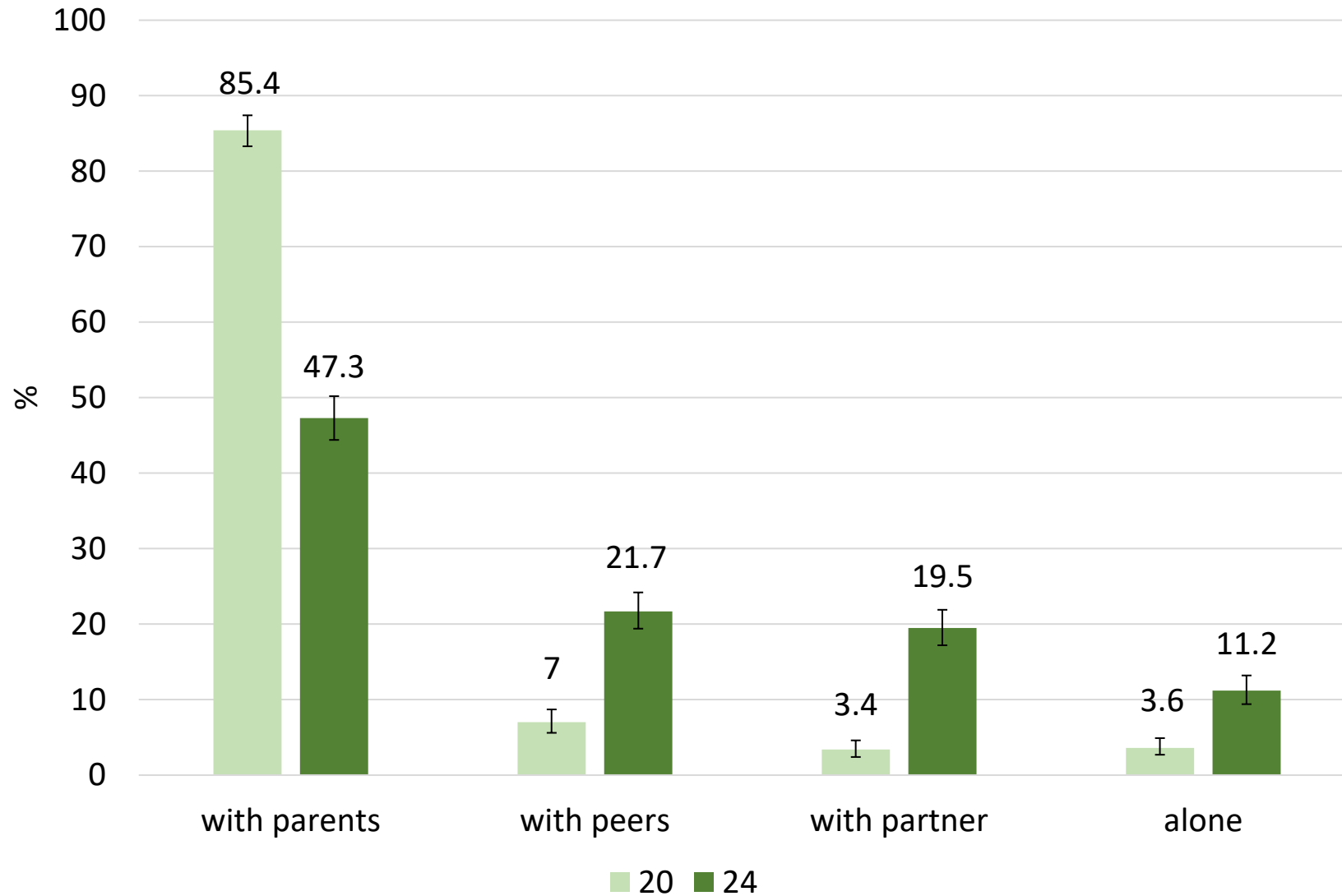
- Propensity score approach to account for systematic differences in mastering transitions
- We need to evaluate findings again at later ages (e.g., age 28, 32)
- The timing of young adult transitions may matter
- Need to continually rethink the significant milestones of young adulthood in a changing world
 - Young adults increasingly make choices to delay or to forego some of the milestones that were traditionally considered markers of adulthood – research needs to keep up with these developments.



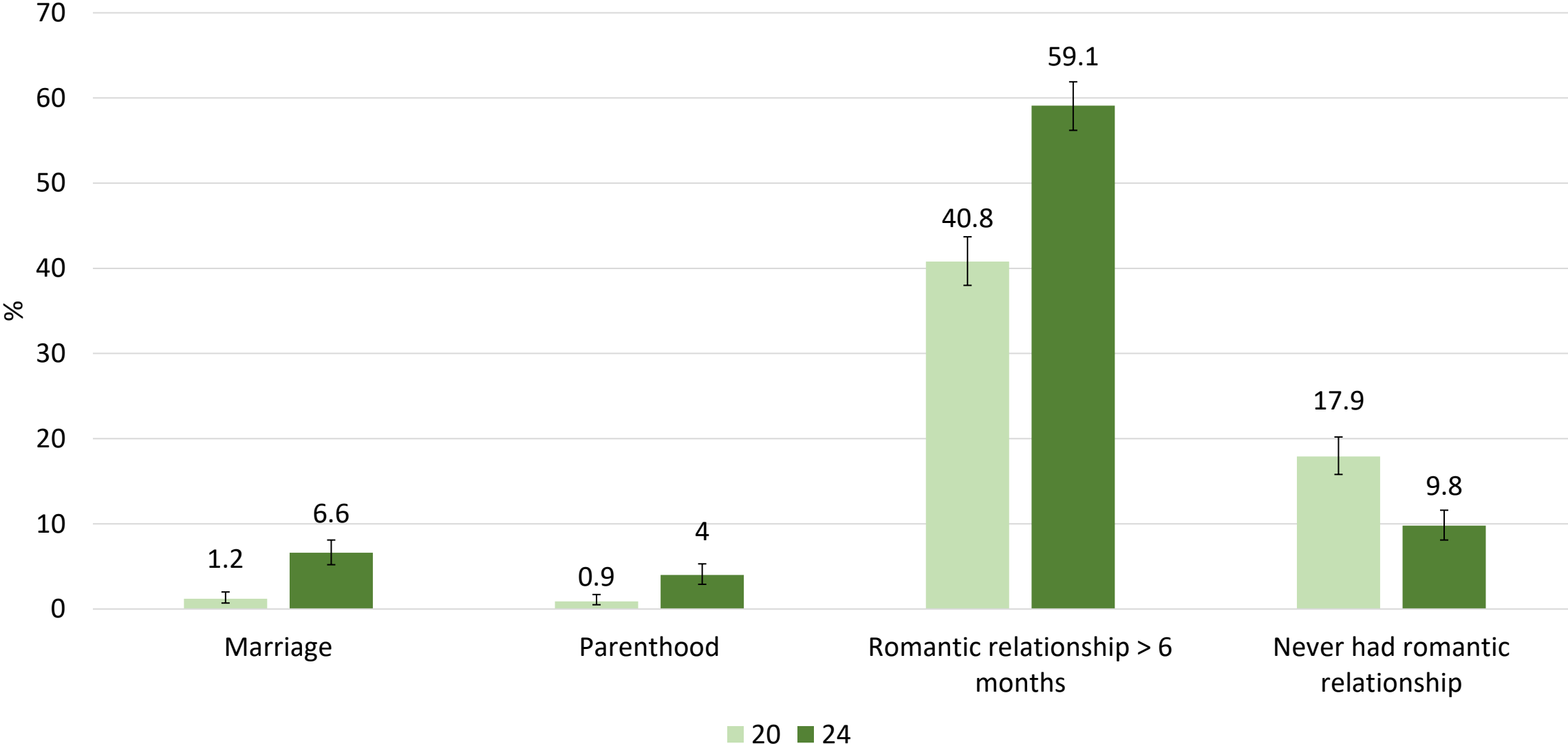
Thank you for your attention

APPENDIX

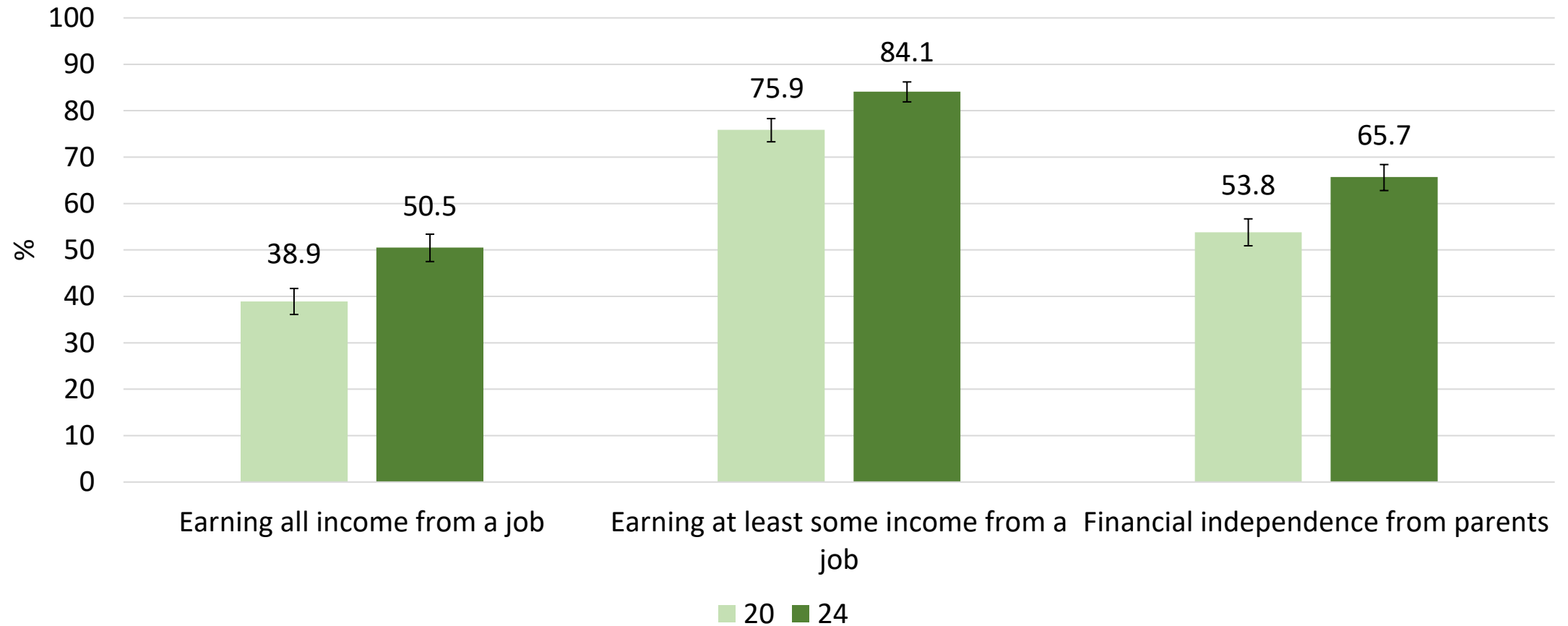
Living situation in young adulthood



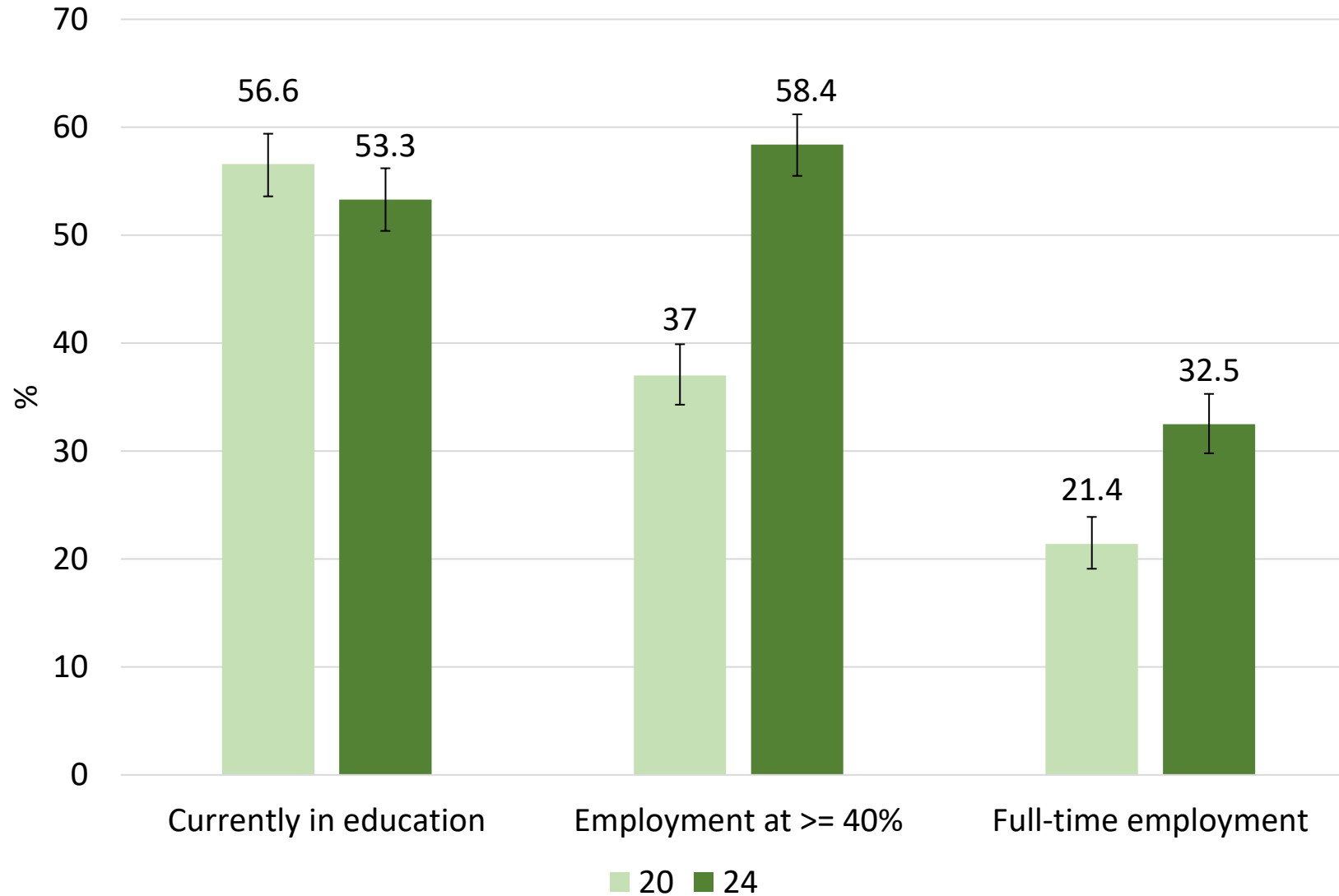
Romantic relationships and role transitions



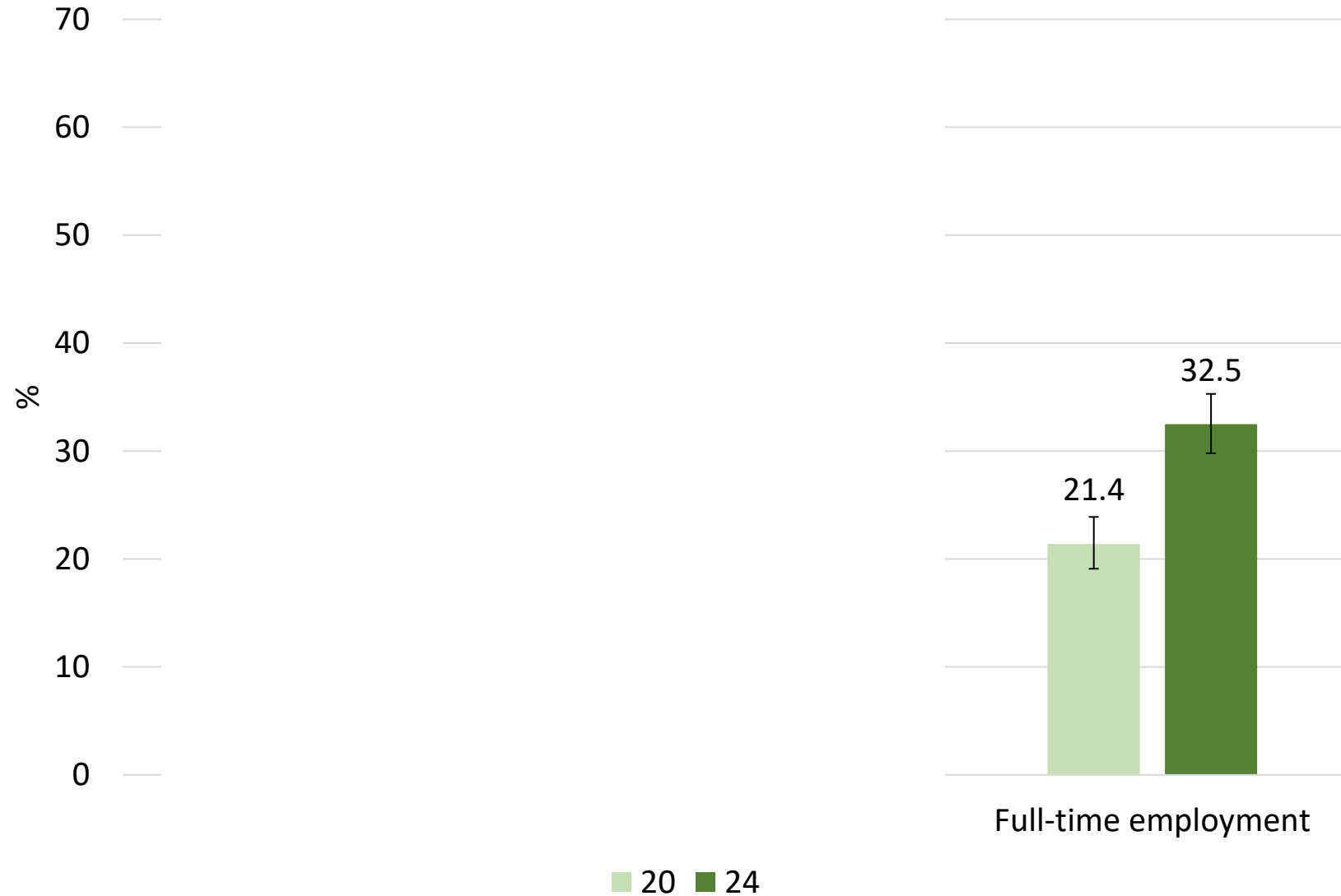
Financial well-being



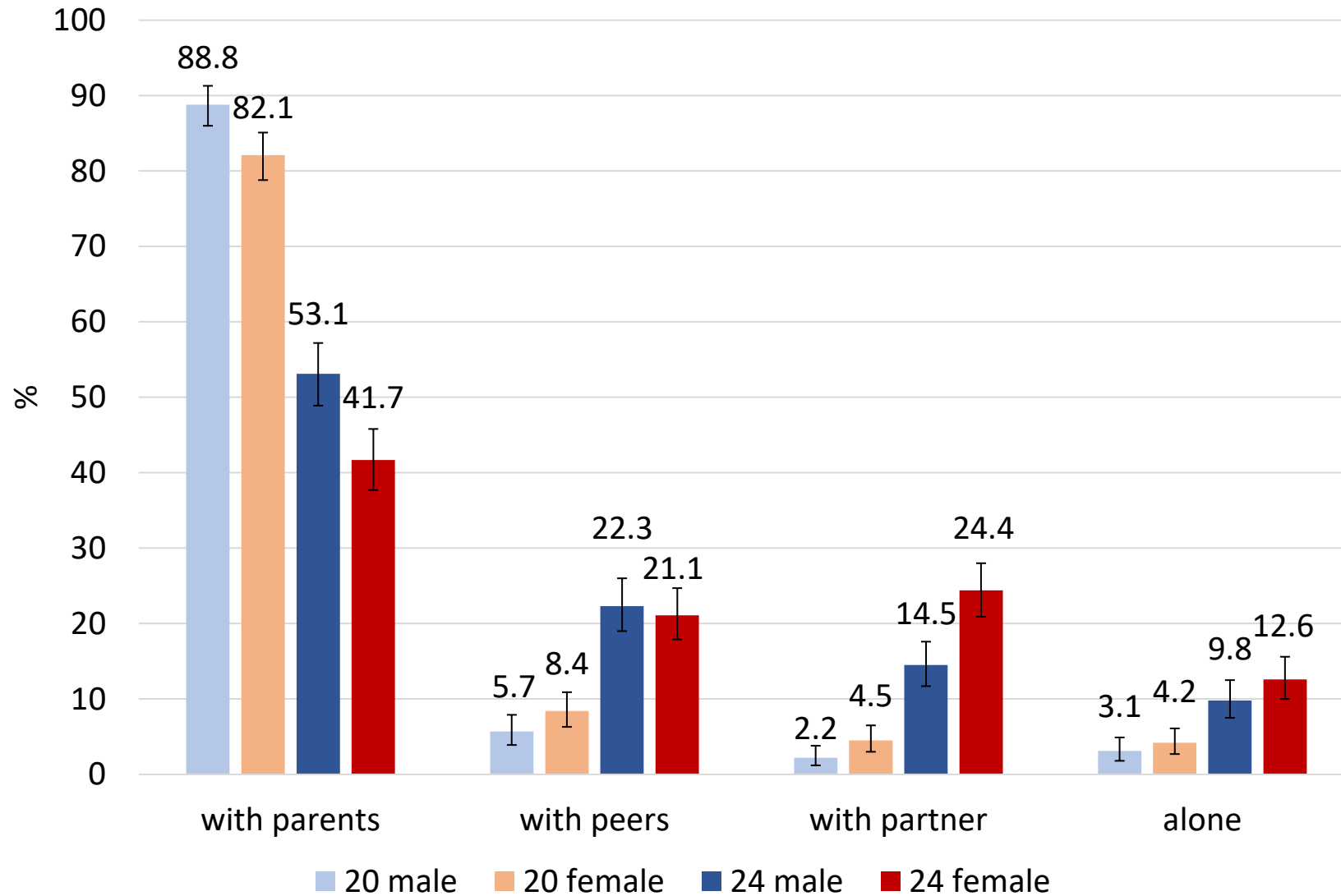
Education and employment



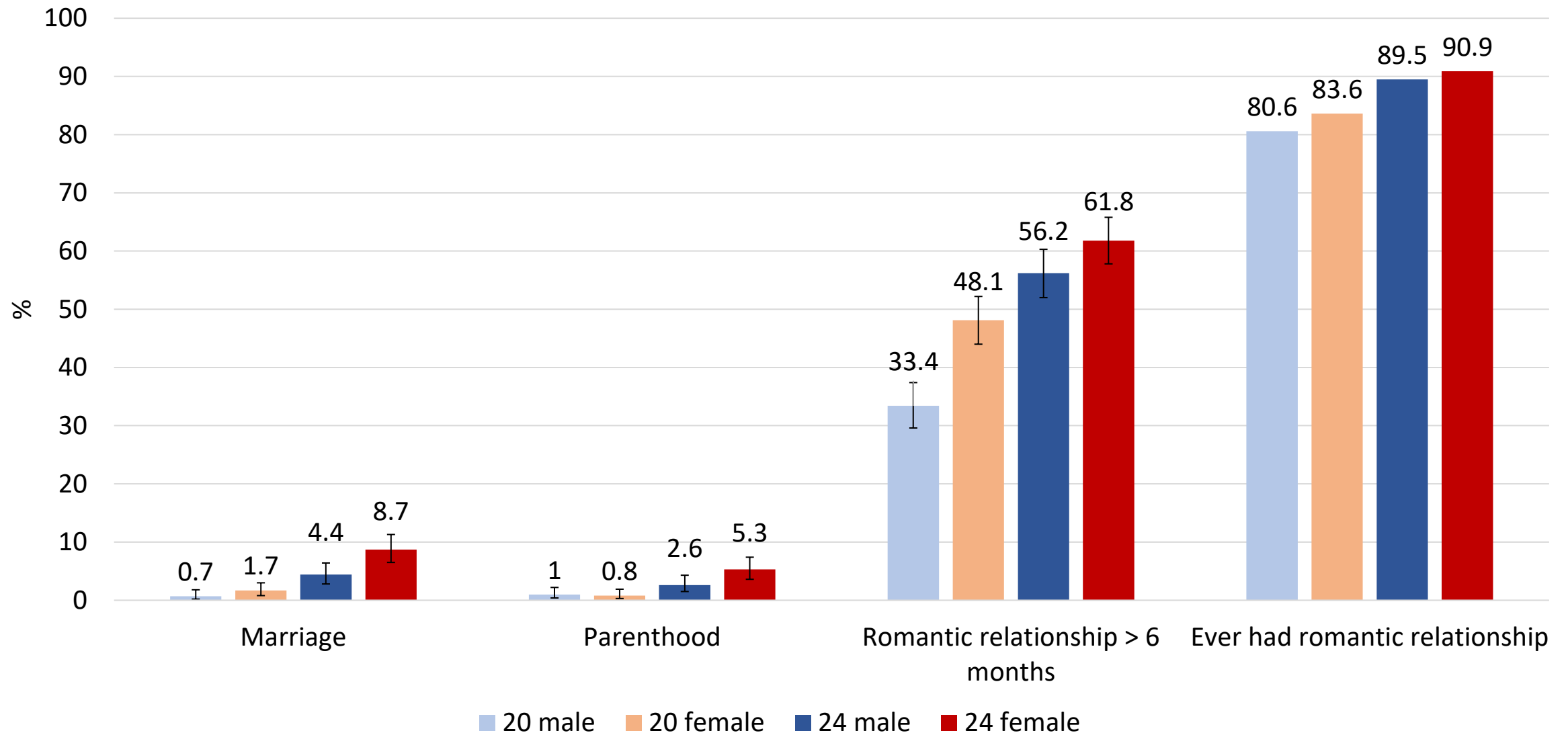
A note on education and employment



Living situation by sex



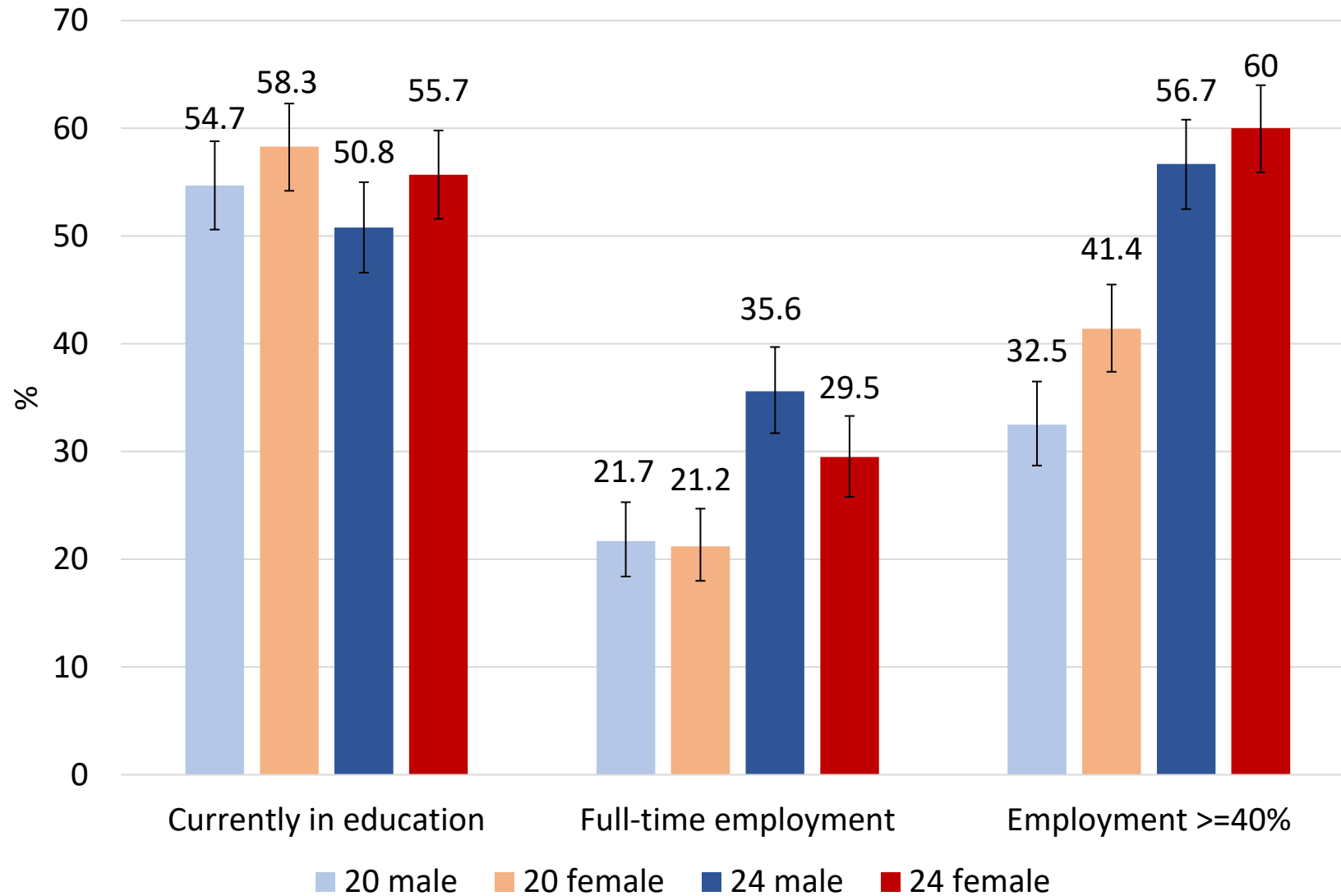
Romantic relationships and role transitions by sex



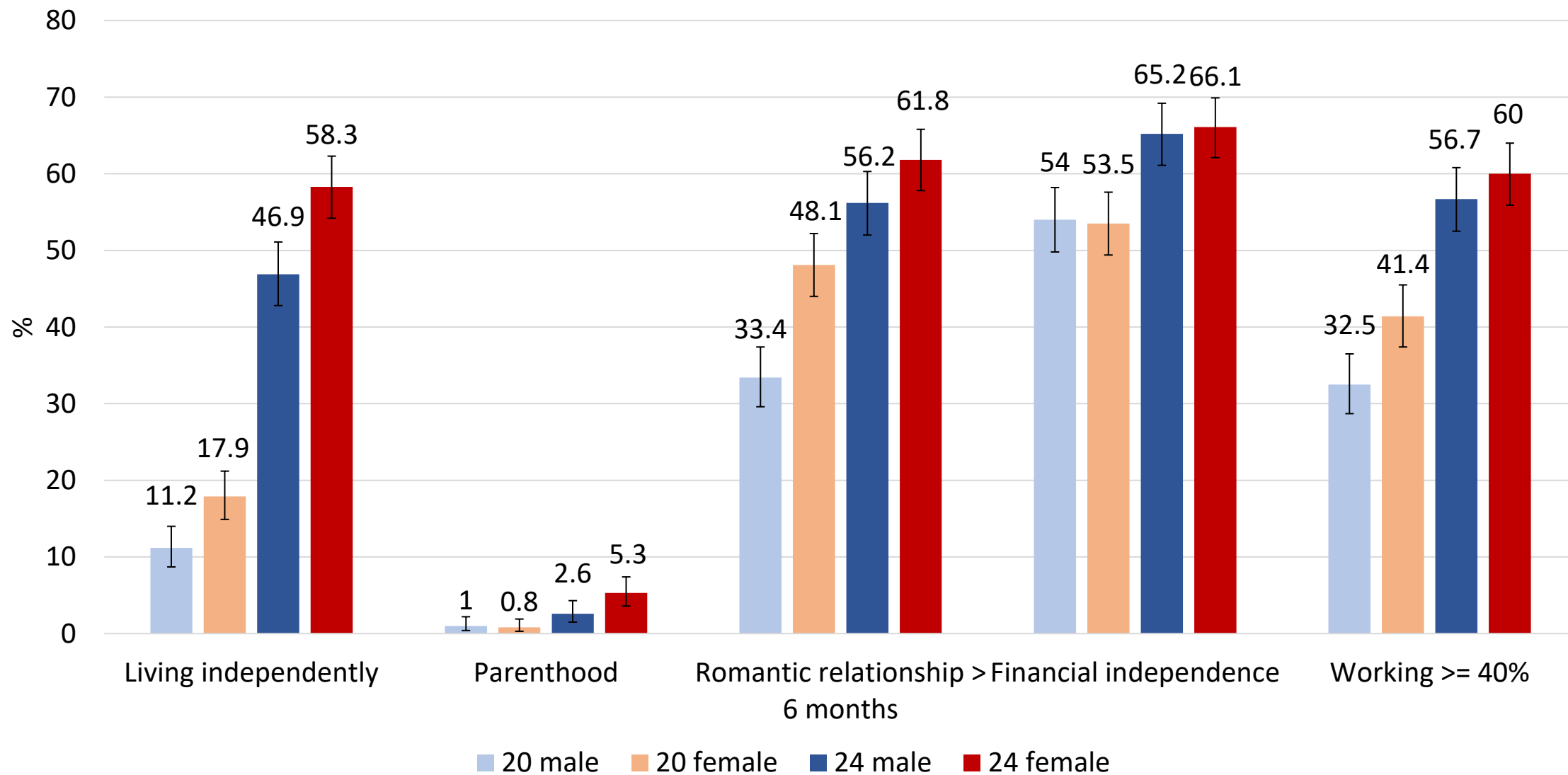
Financial well-being by sex



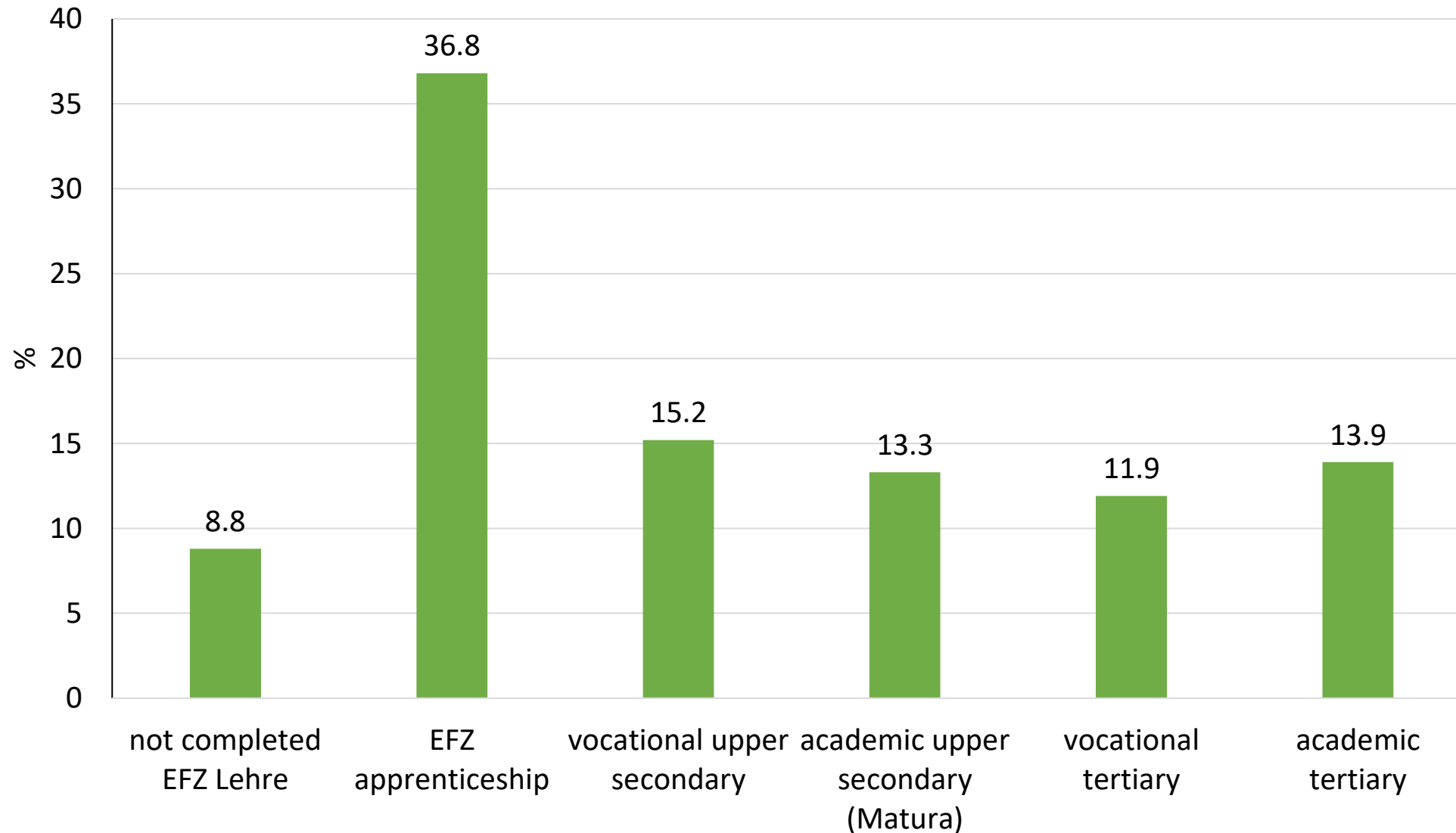
Education and employment by sex



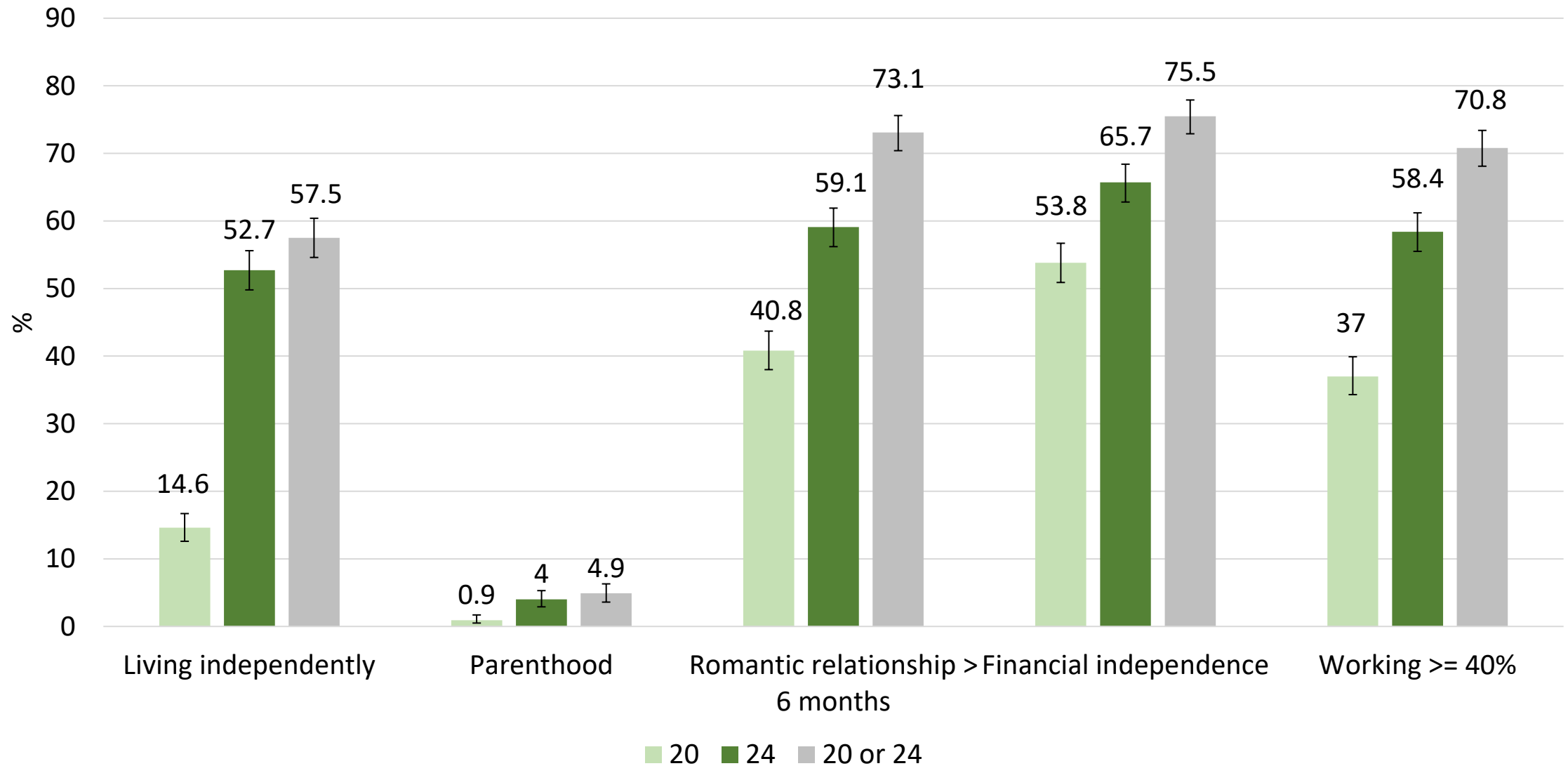
Transition markers, ages 20 and 24, by sex



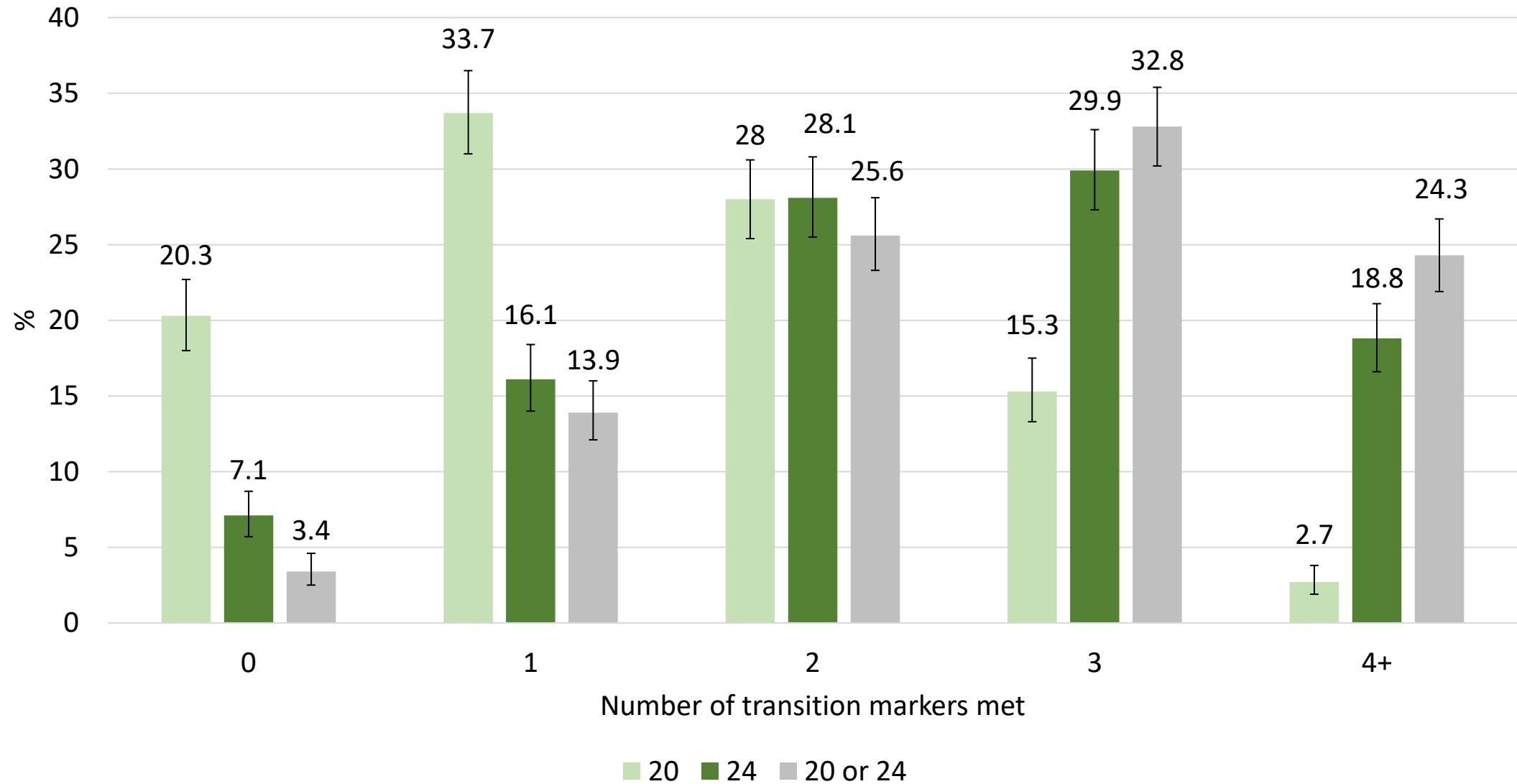
Highest completed education at age 22



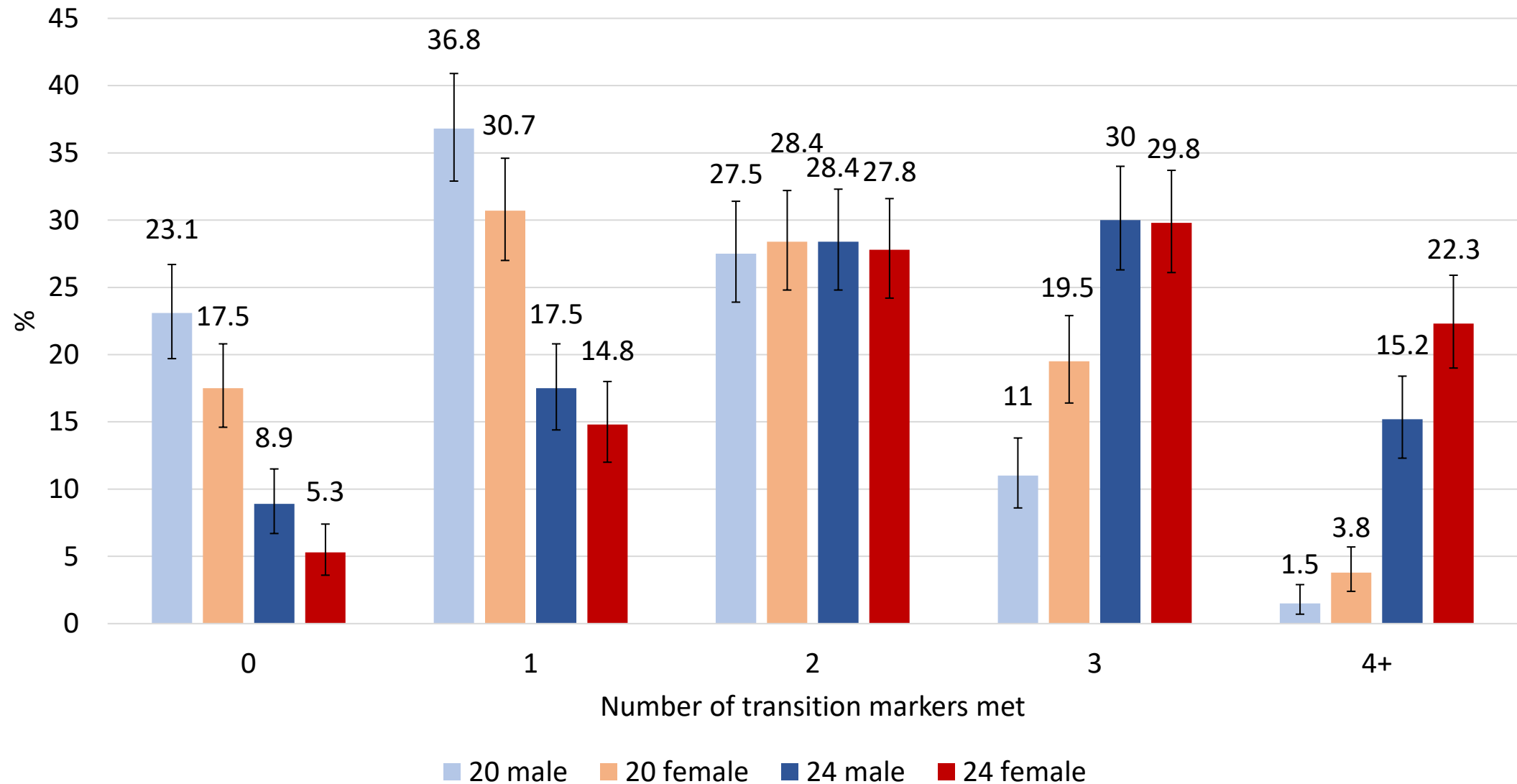
Transition markers, ages 20 and 24



Cumulative transition scores



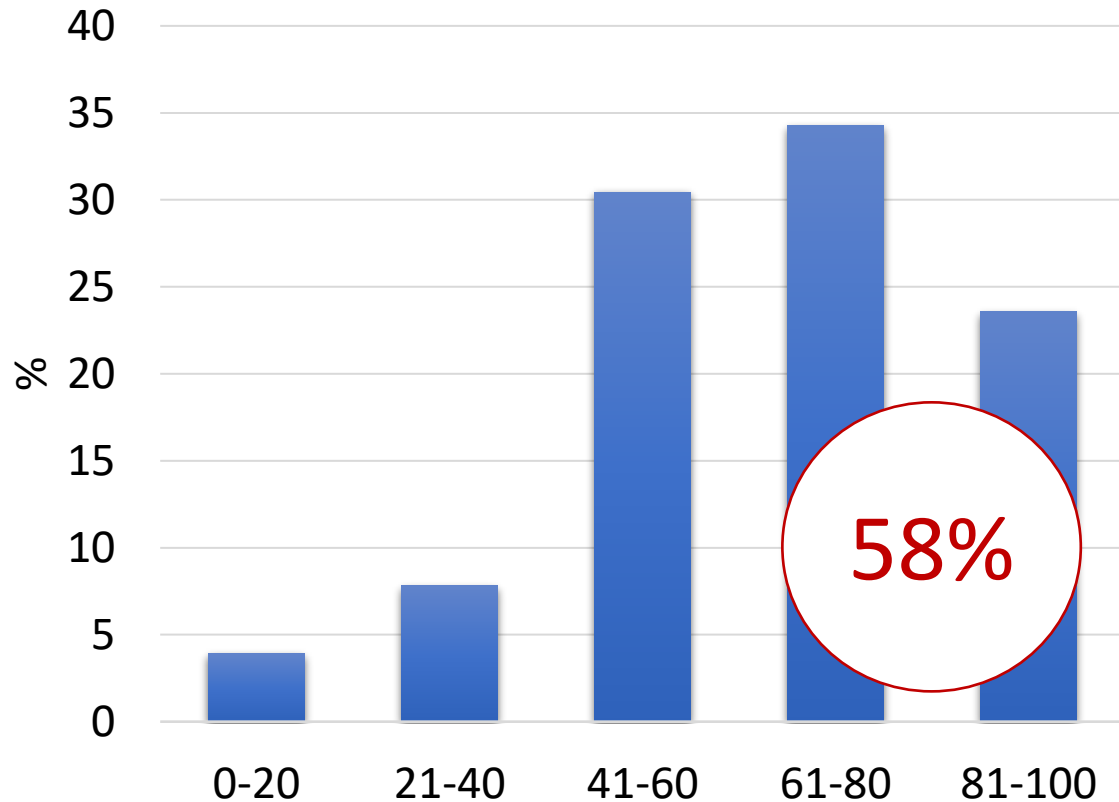
Cumulative transition scores by sex



Do they feel like adults?

I feel more adult-like than ... out of 100 of my peers.

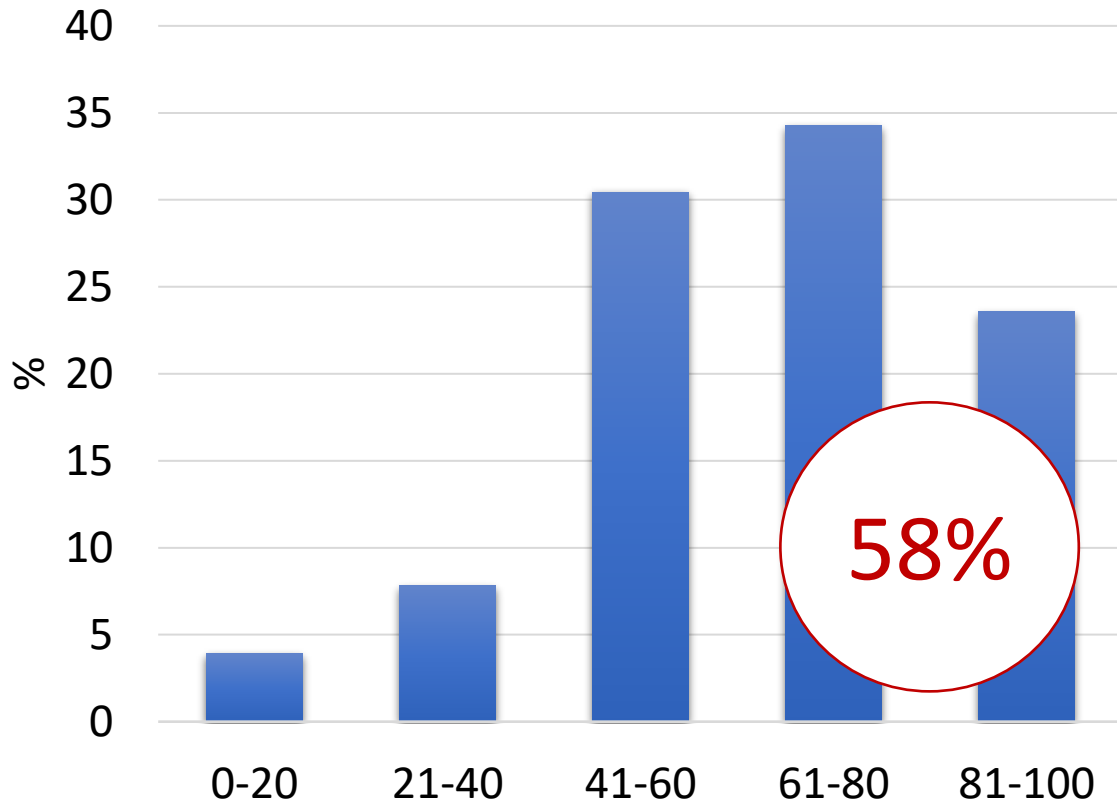
Age 20 years



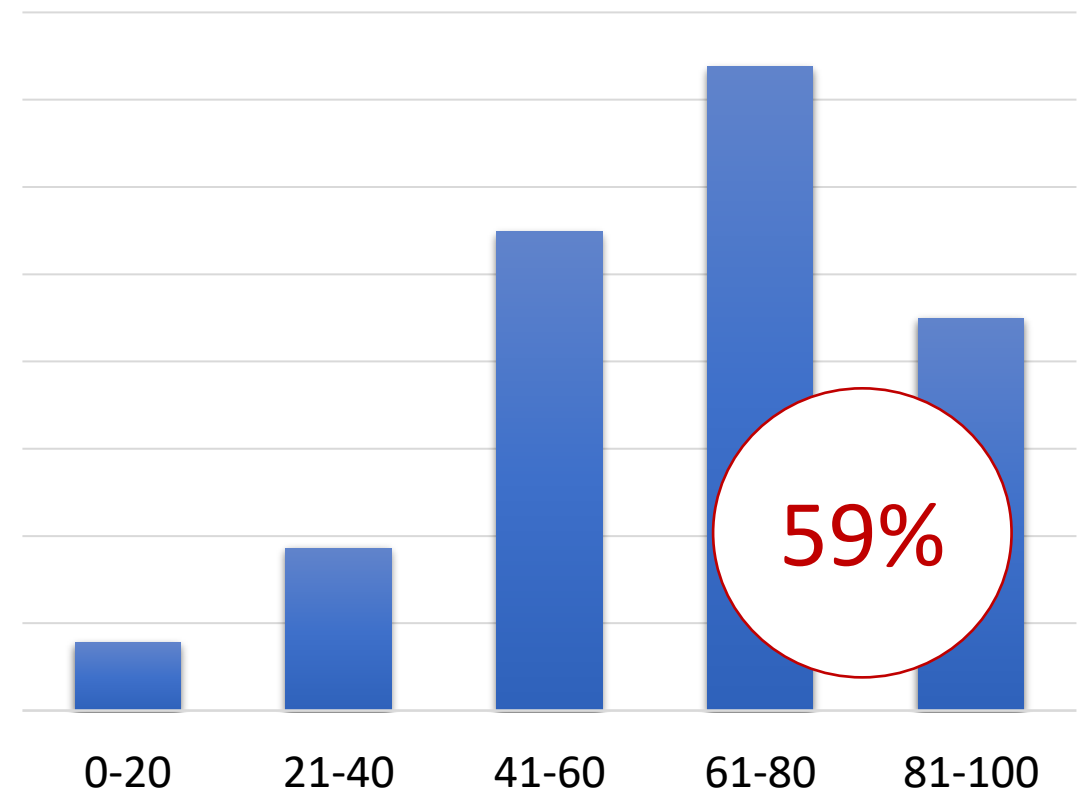
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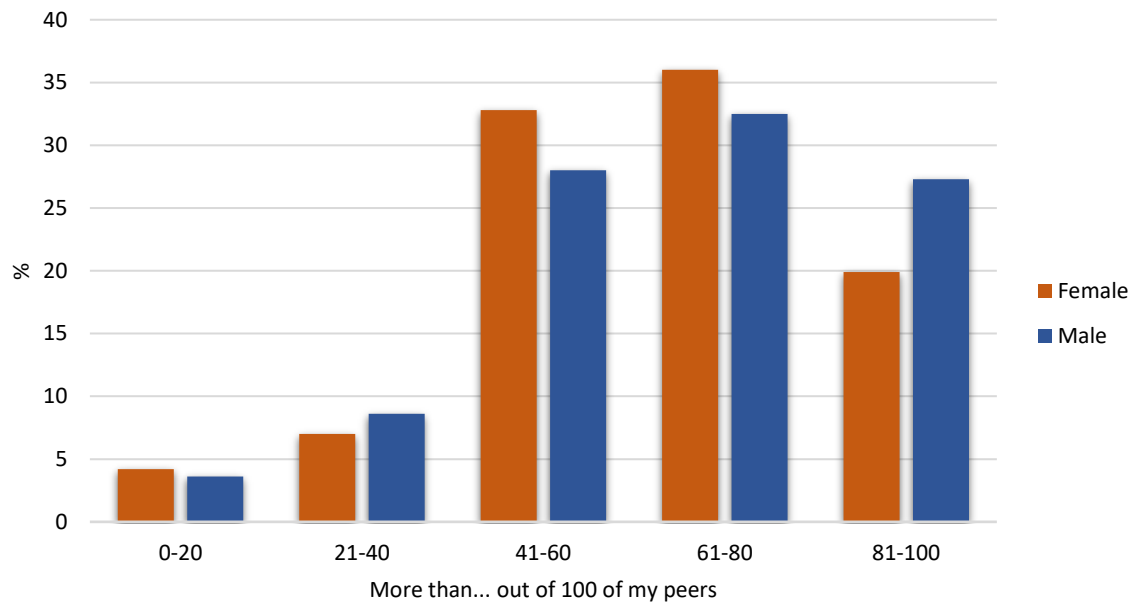


Age 24 years

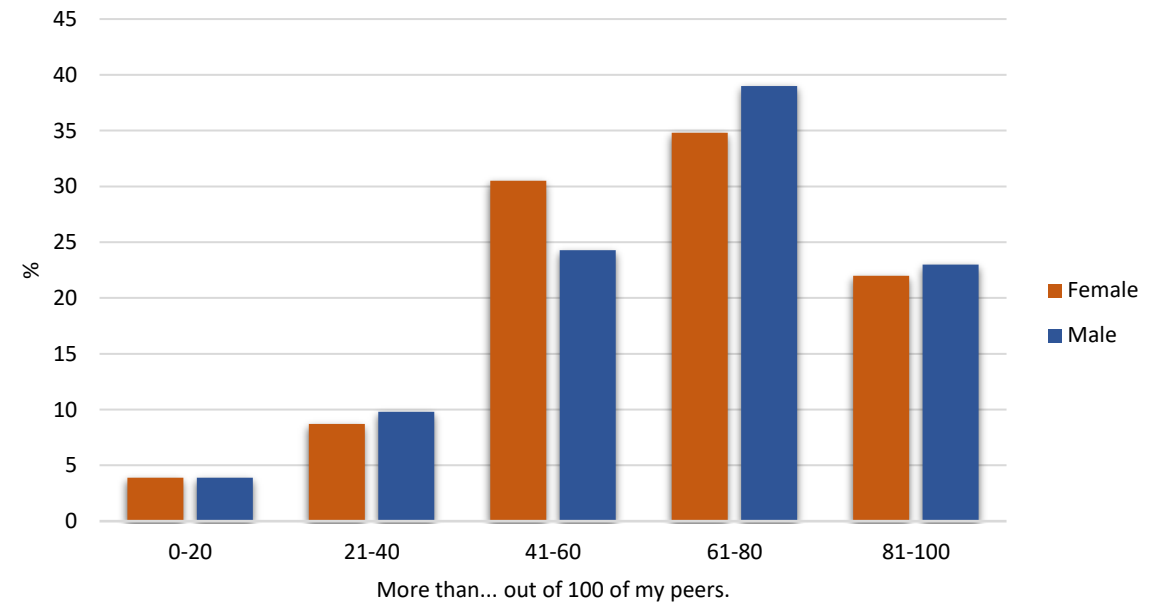


Do they feel like adults? By sex

Age 20



Age 24



Mean score comparisons: *n.s.*