

# Service delivery trends and characteristics of women seeking early abortion care during the Covid-19 pandemic: results of an analysis of service activity data from the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA)

ALISON SPILLANE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY, TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

IRISH FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION, DUBLIN, IRELAND

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**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin



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An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn



# Context

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## Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018

- Abortion on request up to 12 weeks
- Limited access thereafter

## Study situated in two IFPA clinics in Dublin, Ireland

- Jan 2019: IFPA early abortion service established
- Mar 2020: Telemedicine abortion introduced (Covid-19 pandemic)

## About me

- PhD student, School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin
- Senior Policy and Research Officer, IFPA
- Project funded by the Irish Research Council
- No conflict of interest

# How many abortions?

Legal ground	Abortions
Risk to life/health	9
Emergency	2
Fatal foetal anomaly	53
On request (<12 weeks)	4513
<b>Total</b>	<b>4577</b>

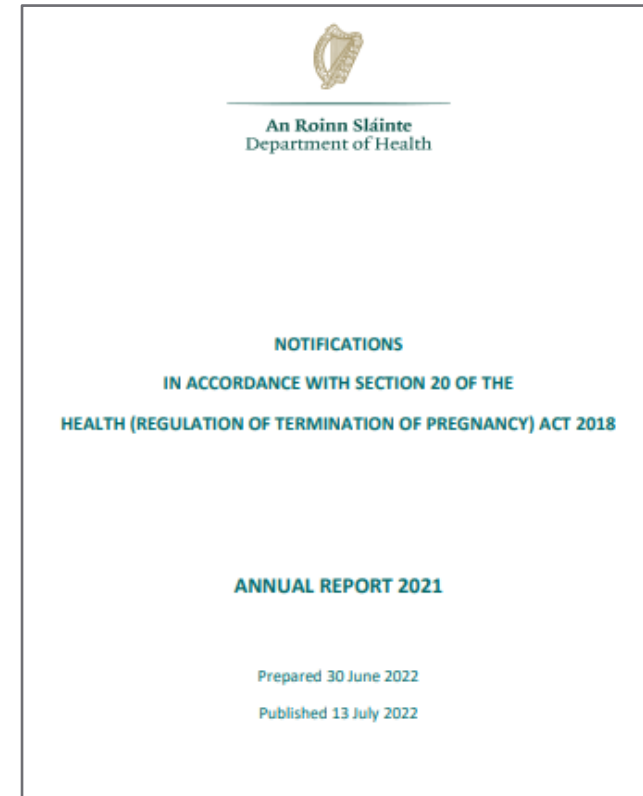
*Source: Department of Health*

**“approximately 6700”**

*Source: Health Service Executive*

**Total**

**???**



# Do abortion numbers matter?

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- Year 4 of service delivery
- Relatively novel model of abortion care

“Effective monitoring and evaluation are essential for measuring abortion quality and trends, as a basis for policy dialogue and evidence-based decision-making to further improve service delivery and quality”.

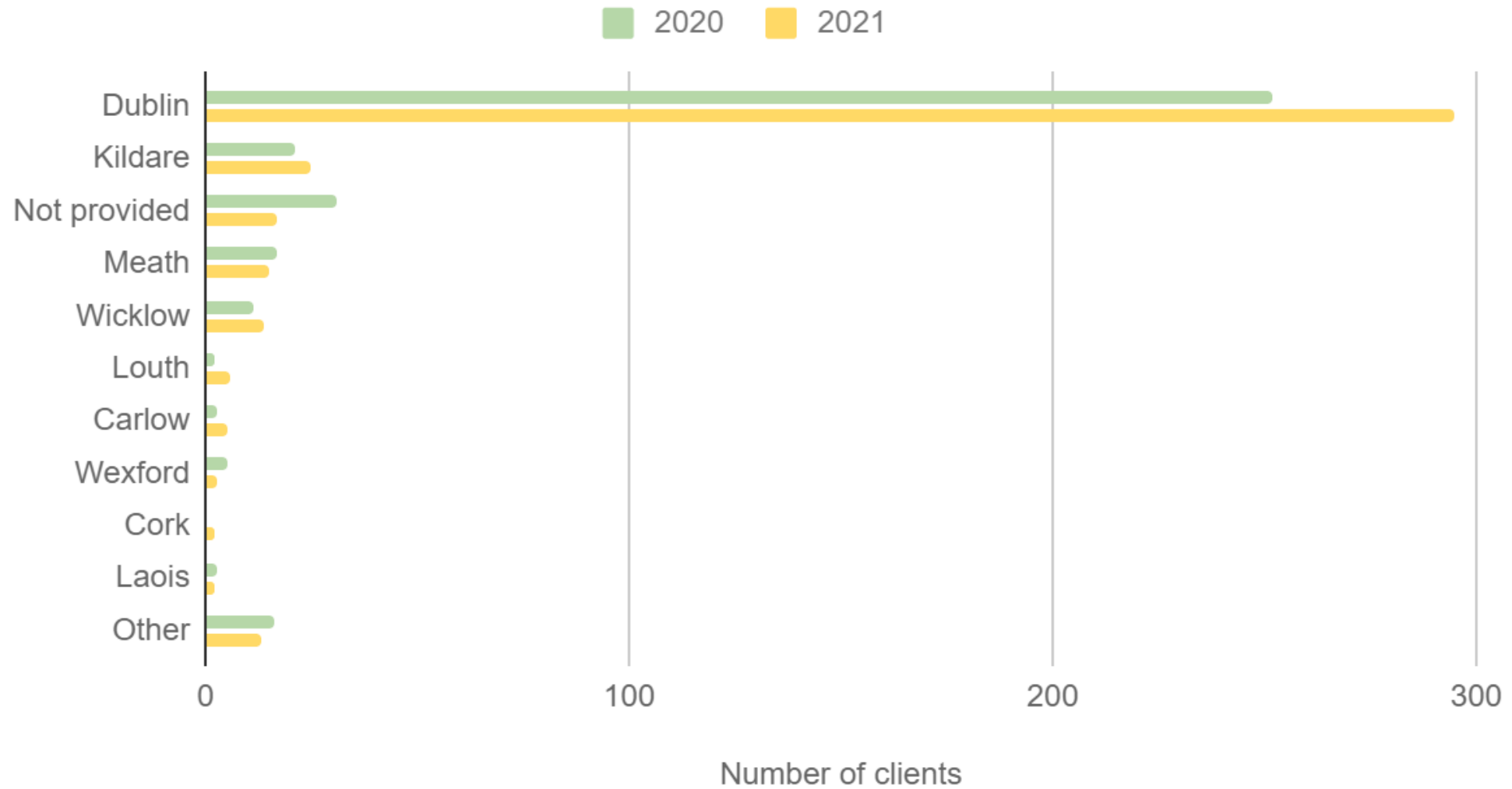
WHO Abortion care guideline (2022)

# IFPA service activity dataset

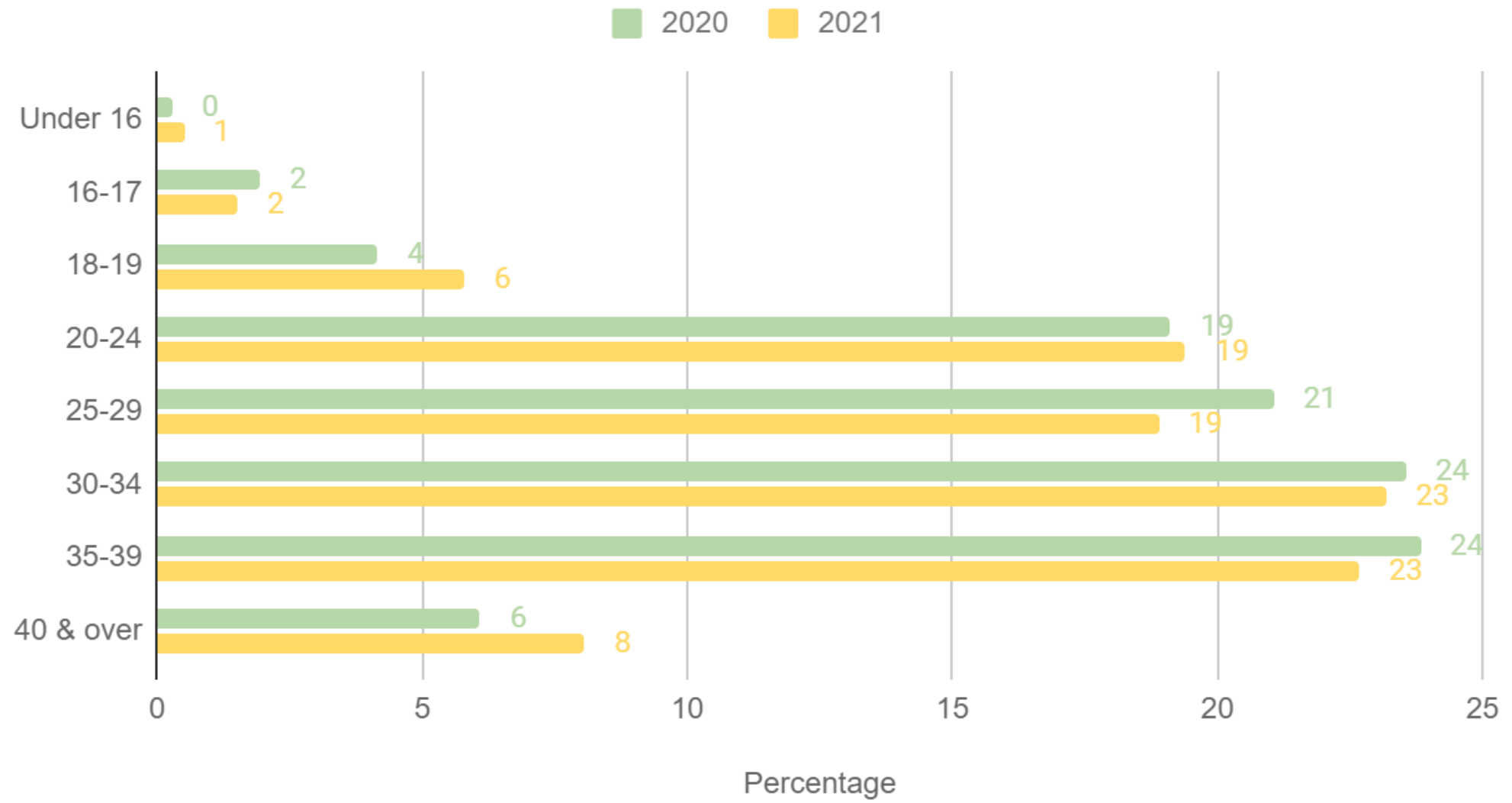
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- 758 women
  - 361 in 2020
  - 397 in 2021
- Largest and most detailed quantitative dataset currently available

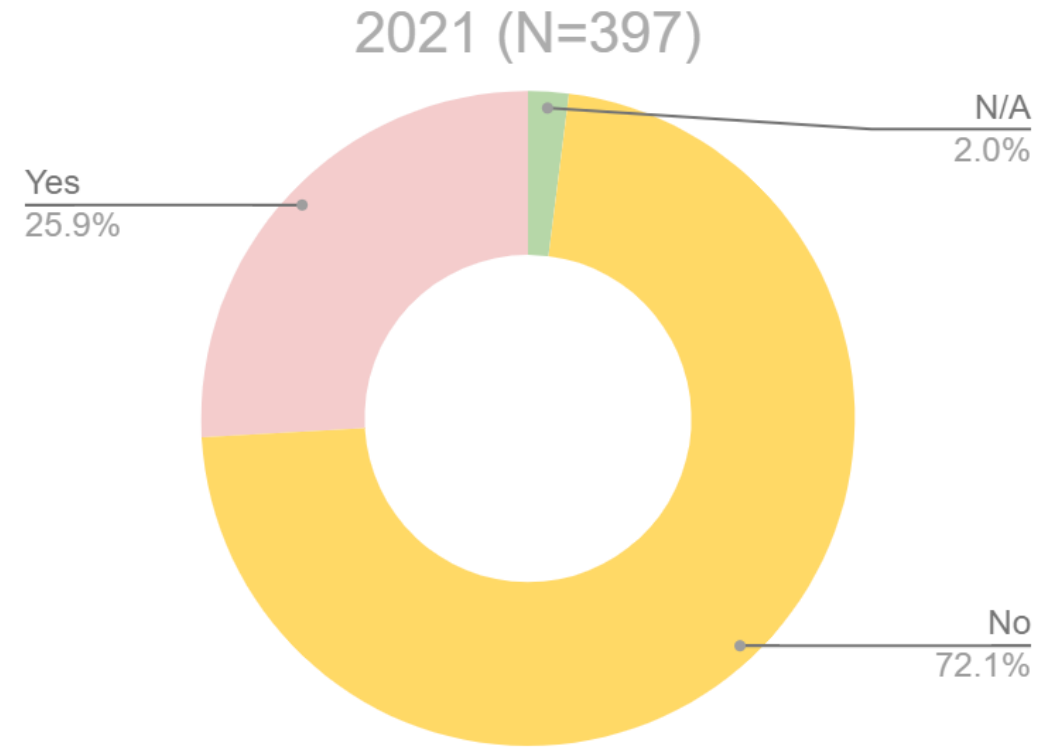
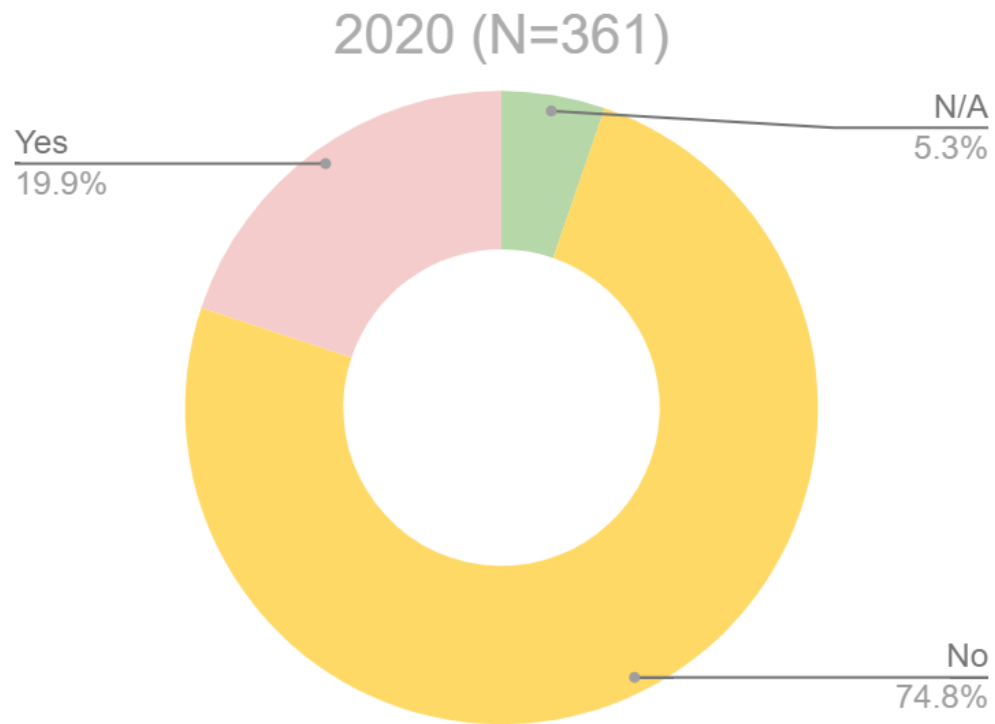
# County of Residence



# Age at presentation

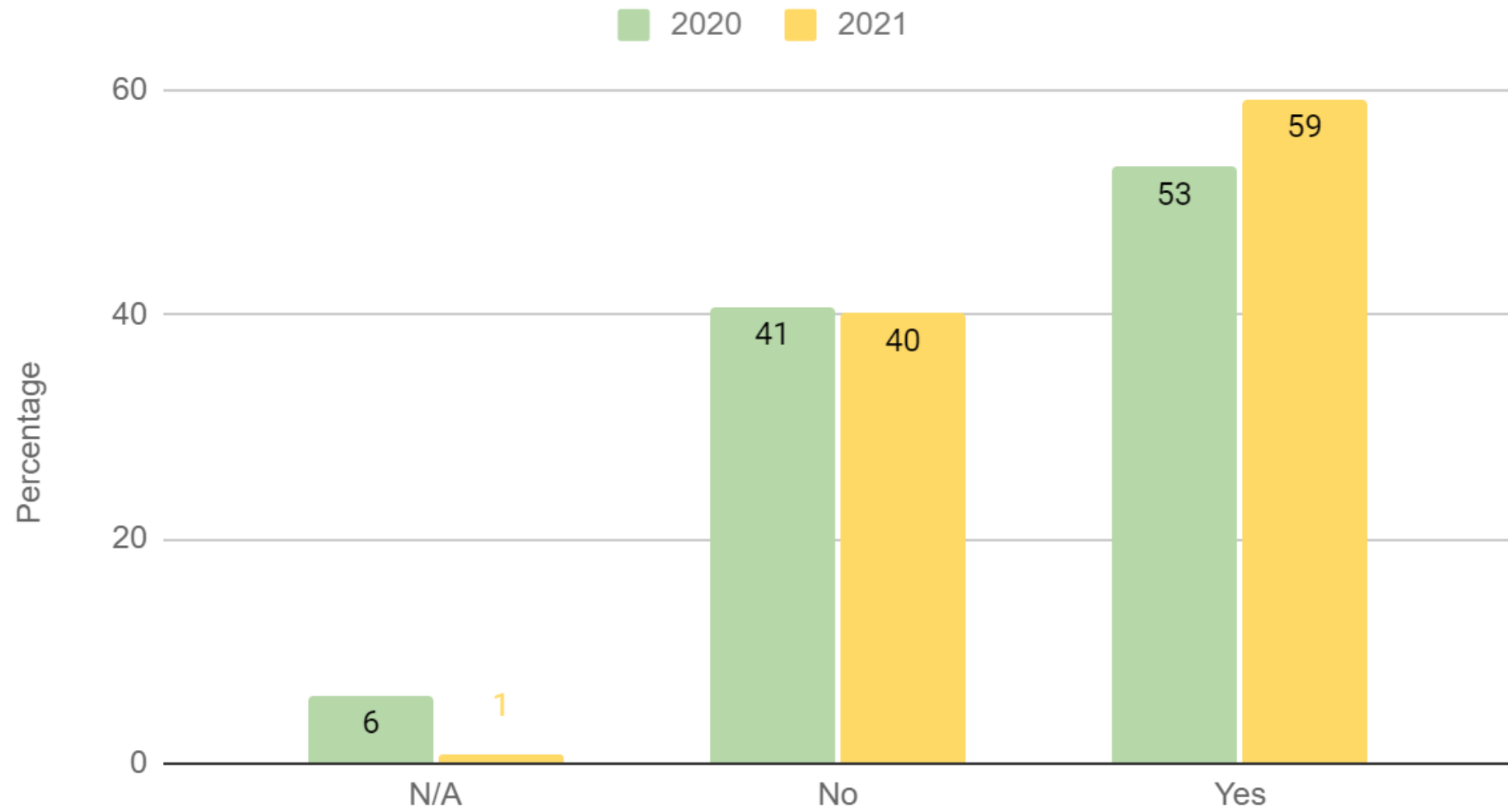


# Contraception usage at conception

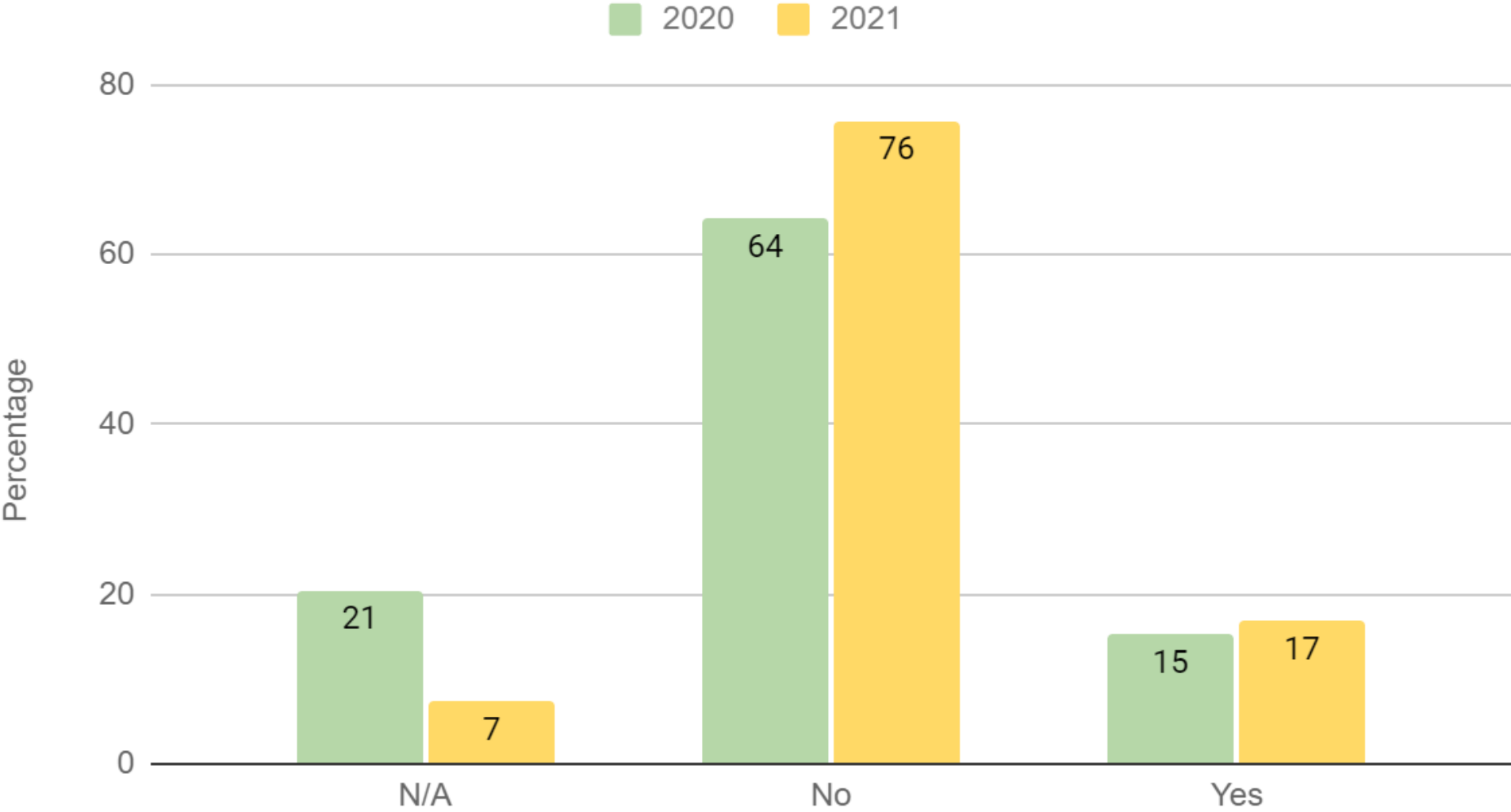




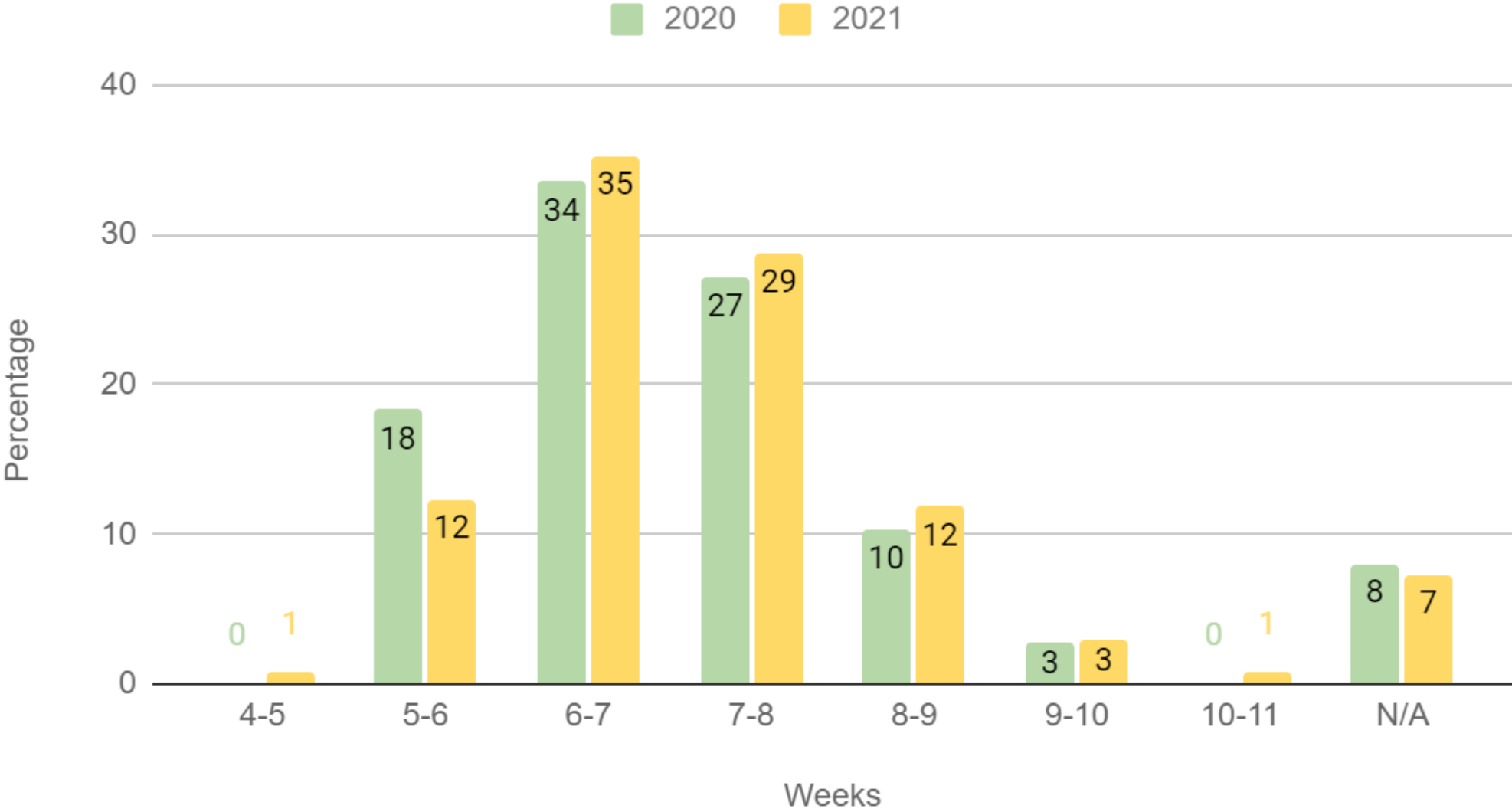
# Parity



# Previous TOP

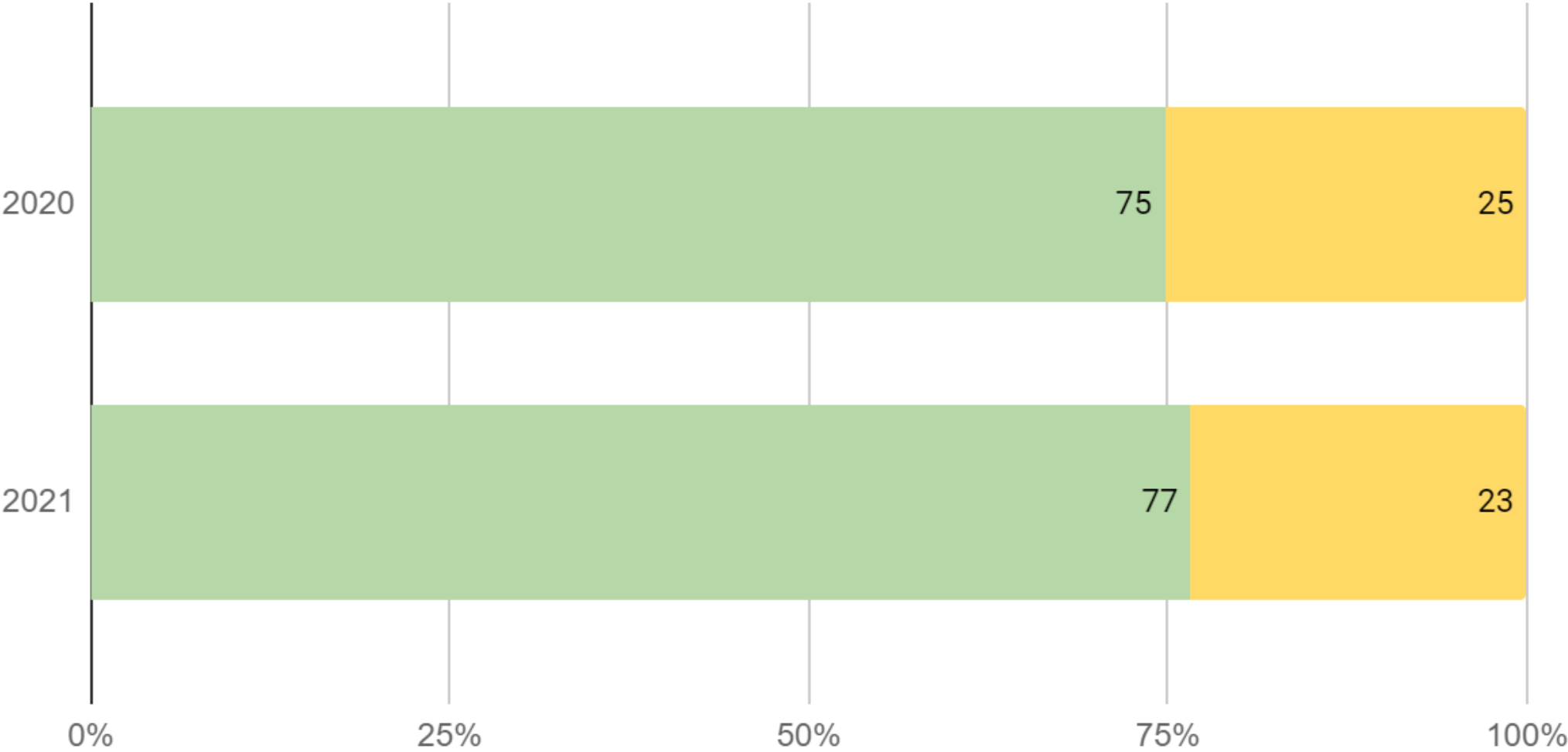


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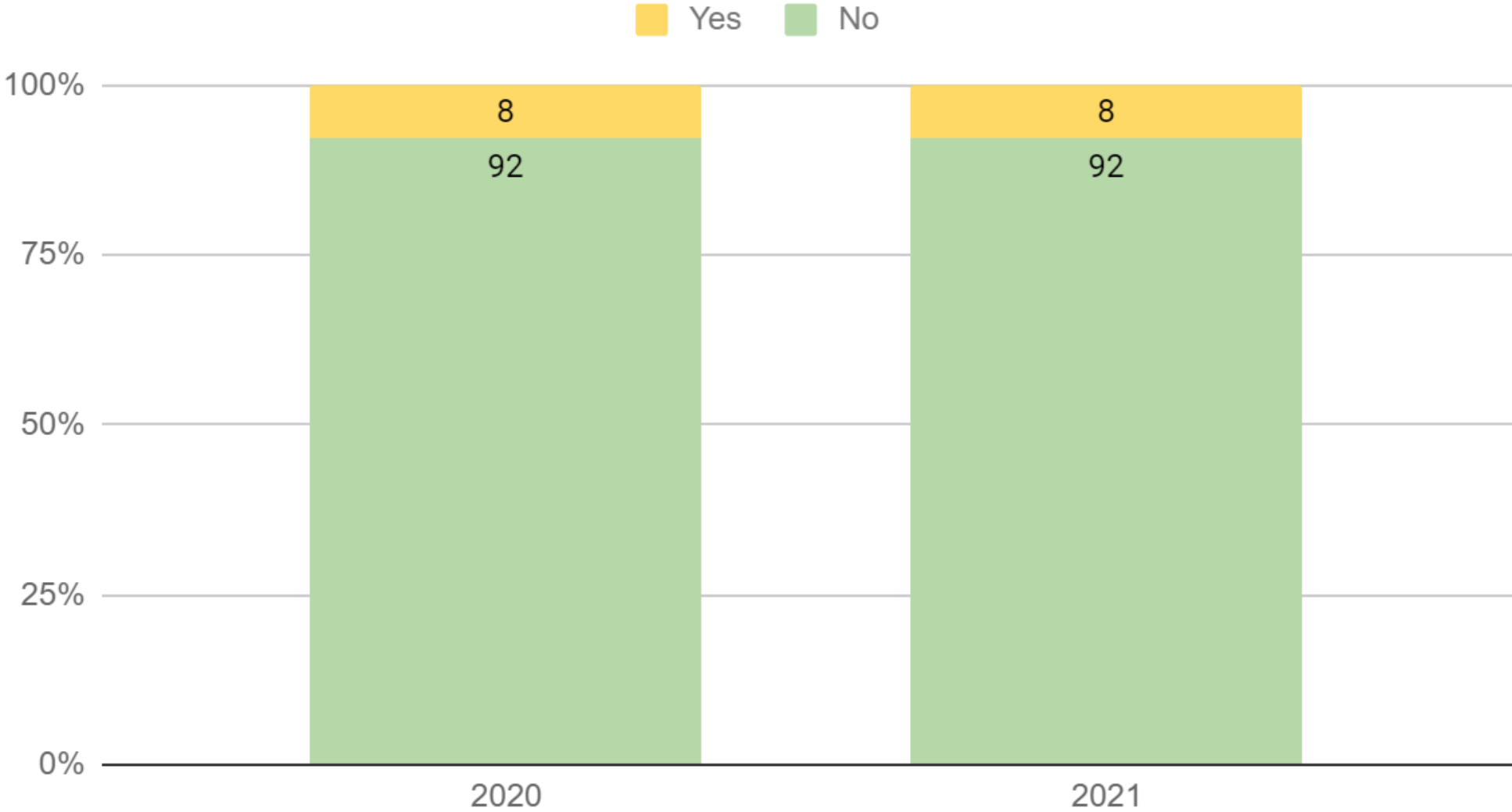


# Referrals for ultrasound scanning

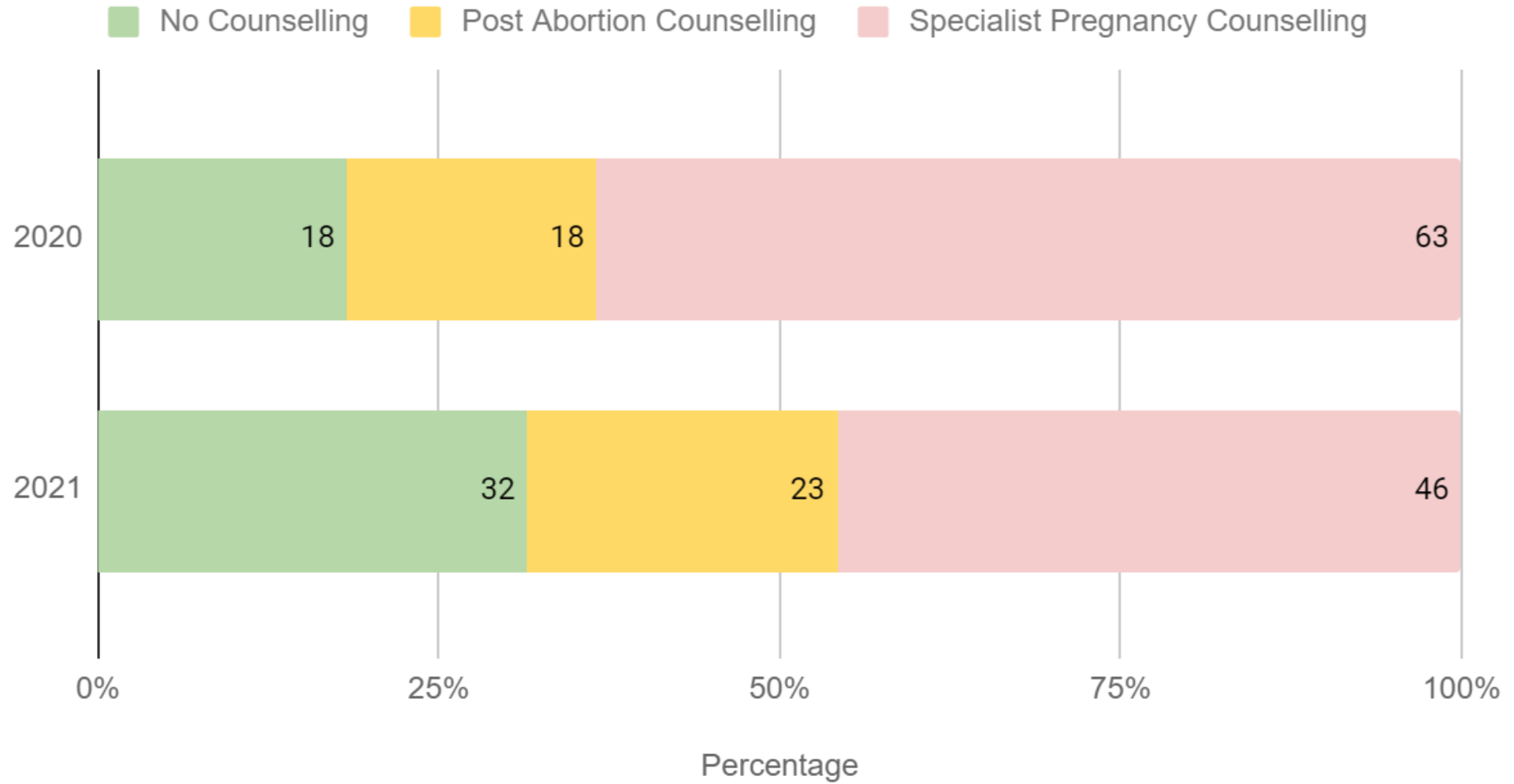
No Yes



# Referrals for hospital-based abortion care



# Counselling services



# Conclusion

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## ❑ Next steps for the IFPA

- Study limitations
- Challenges re data on outcomes

## ❑ Next steps for policymakers

- Overhaul of national-level data collection mechanism
- Less stigma, more data!

# Acknowledgements

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- ❑ Dr Caitriona Henchion, Irish Family Planning Association
- ❑ Maeve Taylor, Irish Family Planning Association
- ❑ Dr Catherine Conlon, Trinity College Dublin
- ❑ Cindy Chin Zi Cian, Irish Family Planning Association
- ❑ David O'Daly
- ❑ Rhian Lewis, Women on Web
- ❑ Róisín Venables, Irish Family Planning Association