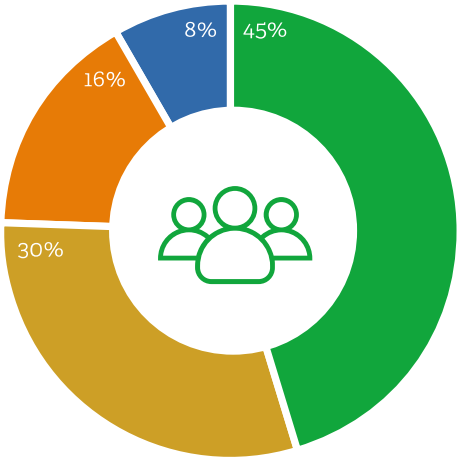
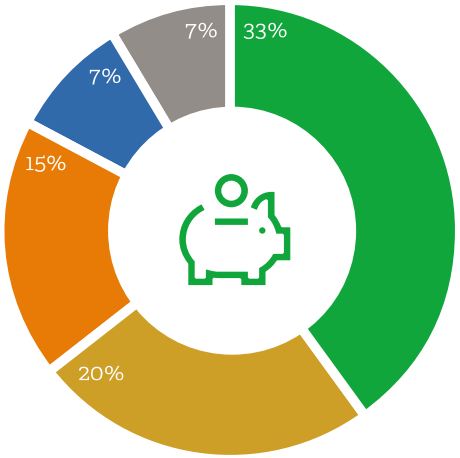
Profile of respondents

Disciplinary profile

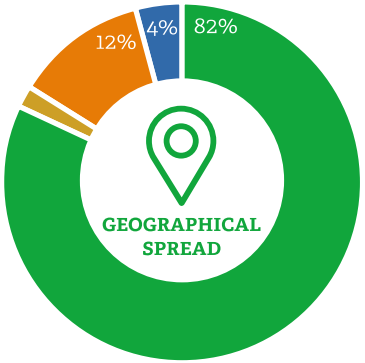


- **REF Panel A** (Health, biomedical and biological sciences)
- **REF Panel B** (Physical sciences and engineering)
- **REF Panel C** (Social sciences)
- **REF Panel D** (Arts and humanities)

Main source of funding



- **UKRI**
- **Institution**
- **Charities**
- **EU / ERC**
- **NIHR**



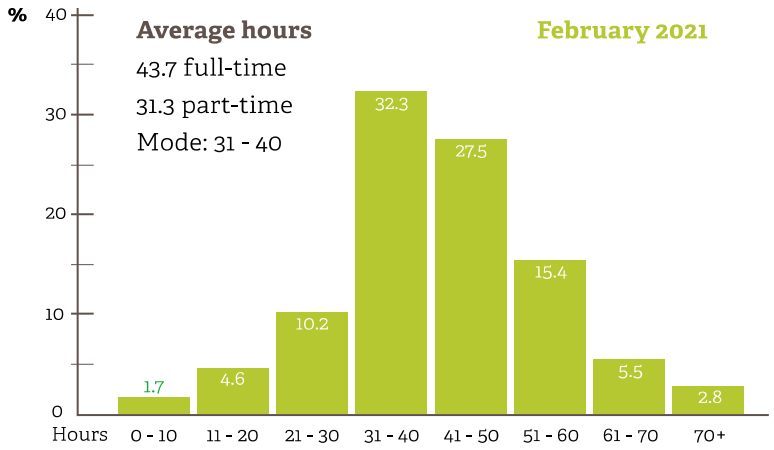
- **England**
- **Northern Ireland**
- **Scotland**
- **Wales**

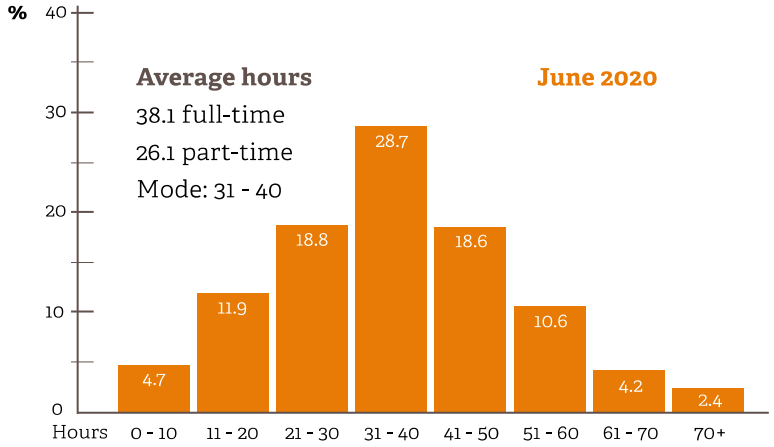
- **42%** principal investigator or grant holder
- **89%** employed in HEIs;
  6% in a research institute;
  6% in other organisations
- **66%** from Russell Group institutions (% within HEIs)

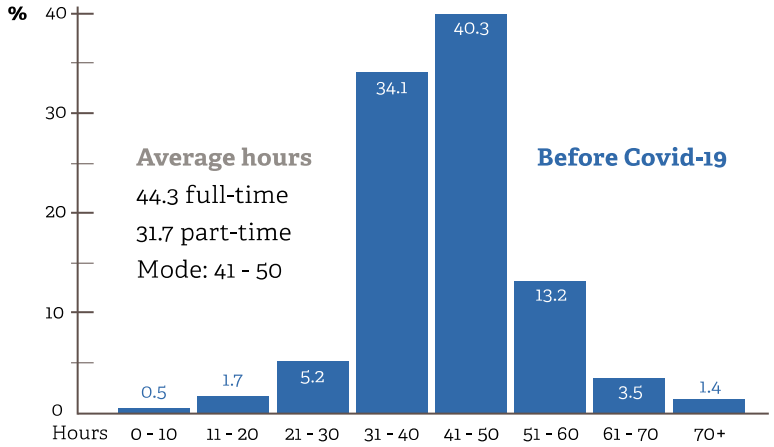
Comparison of respondents

	Wave 1 total[1] HEI/RI only	Wave 2 responses	Wave 2[2] hours worked sub-sample	Wave 2[3] hours per activity sub-sample	HESA[4] 2018/19	HESA contract levels
N	**9,189**	**1,347**	**1,222**	**843**	**260,130**	
Senior	29%	29%	28%	31%	20%	A-I
Mid-career	29%	25%	26%	26%	16%	J
Research staff	28%	29%	31%	29%	21%	K-M
PGR[5]	14%	14%	15%	14%	43%	PGR
Panel A	40%	45%	45%	44%	32%	
Panel B	32%	30%	31%	31%	29%	
Panel C	18%	16%	15%	16%	22%	
Panel D	9%	8%	8%	7%	17%	
Other	2%	1%	2%	2%	–	
Female	49%	52%	51%	50%	46%	
Male	46%	46%	47%	48%	54%	
Other	1%	1%	1.6%	2%	0.2%	
Prefer not to say	4%	1%	0.7%	–	–	
UK	65%	67%	68%	68%	62%	
EU	20%	20%	19%	19%	16%	
Rest of world	12%	12%	13%	12%	21%	

1. Total Wave 1 responses for comparison purposes. All Wave 1 data reported are the individually matched Wave 2 respondents.
2. Sub-sample of respondents fully reporting hours worked at three points in time. See slides 14 - 15.
3. Sub-sample of respondents fully reporting hours worked and breakdown of activity at three points in time. See slides 17 - 22.
4. Based on HESA PGR data and academic staff data on 'research only' or 'research and teaching' contracts. Career stages extrapolated from contract levels.
5. PGRs were not a target population in the Wave 1 survey.







vitae
realising the potential of researchers

Overall, average hours worked in February 2021 comparable to pre-Covid-19 levels

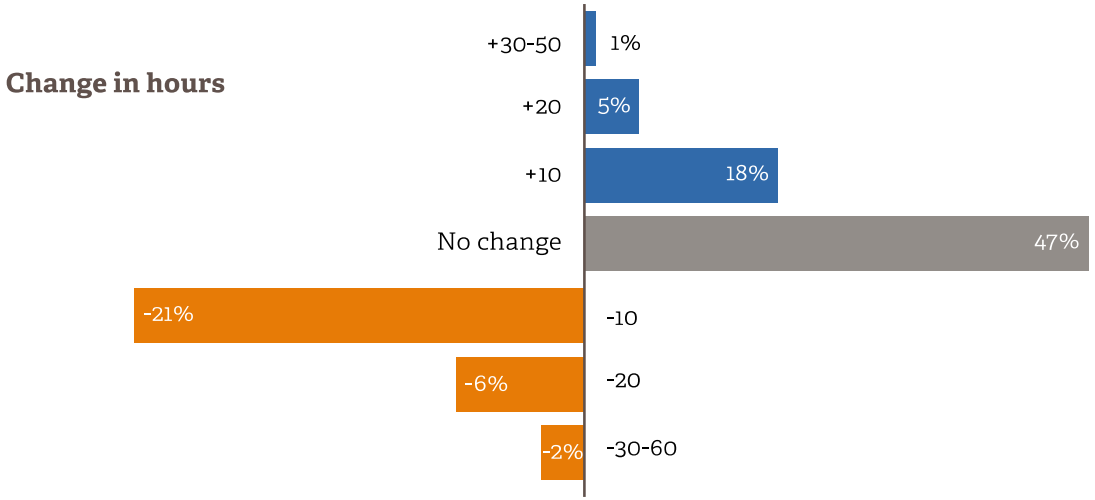
However higher proportions of researchers (24%) were working more than 50 hours in Feb 2021 compared with June 2020 (17%) and pre-Covid (18%).

While fewer researchers (17%) were working less than 30 hours in Feb 2021 compared to June 2020 (45%), but still more than pre-Covid (7%).

N=1222*

* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

Almost half of researchers had returned to their pre-Covid working hours



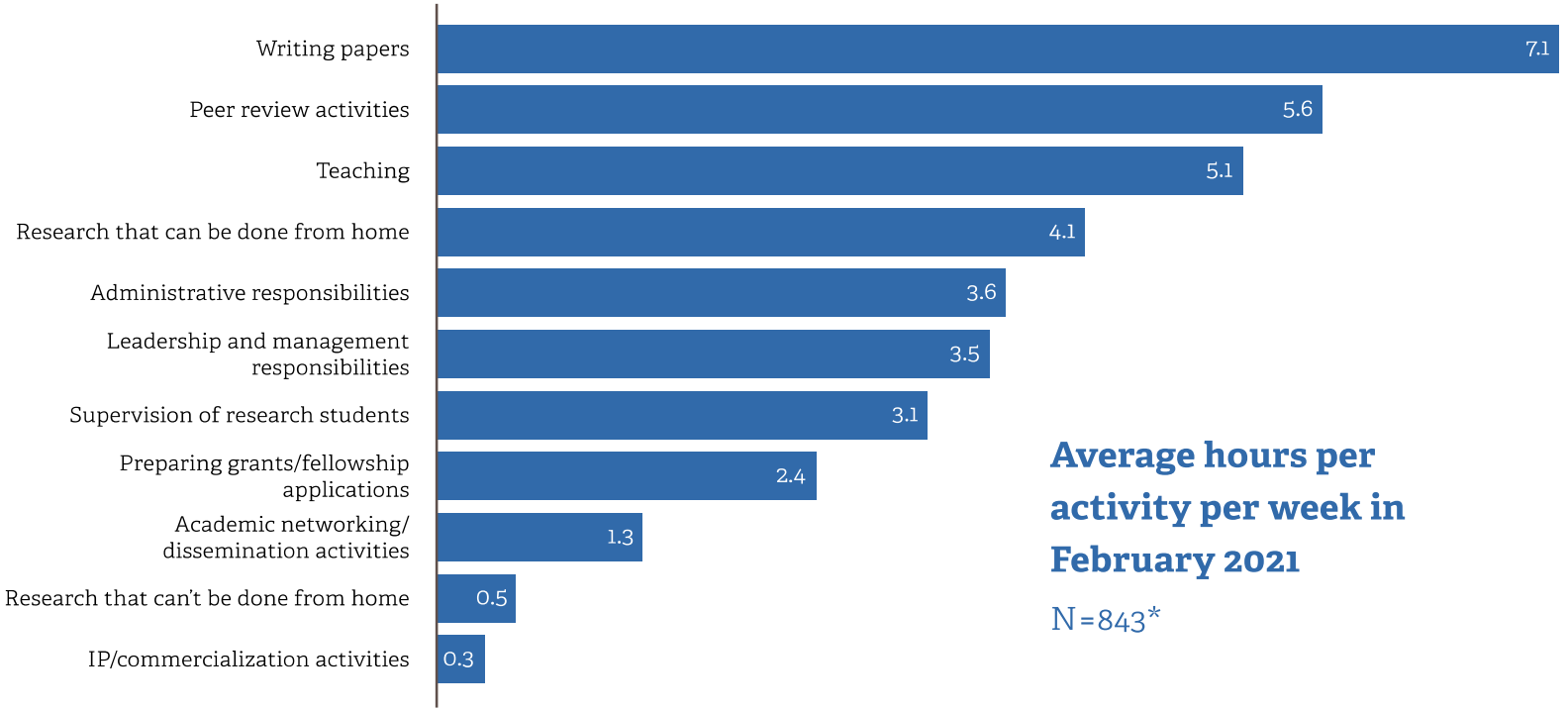
Change in individual working hours Feb 2021 compared before Covid-19 restrictions,** N=1222*

- **Overall 29% had decreased their hours, while 24% had increased their hours compared to pre-Covid levels.**
- **PGRs and research staff most likely to report an overall decrease in working hours (37% and 36%), than mid-career and senior staff (25%).**
- **Mid-career and senior staff most likely to likely to report an overall increase in working hours (30%), than PGRs and research staff (15% and 20%).**
- **Researchers with caring responsibilities more likely to report an overall decrease in working hours (35%) and less likely to have returned to pre-Covid hours (43%) than those without (26% and 48%).**

* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

** Individual records were matched with Wave 1 data.

Writing papers and peer review activities constituted a third of researchers' working hours in February 2021

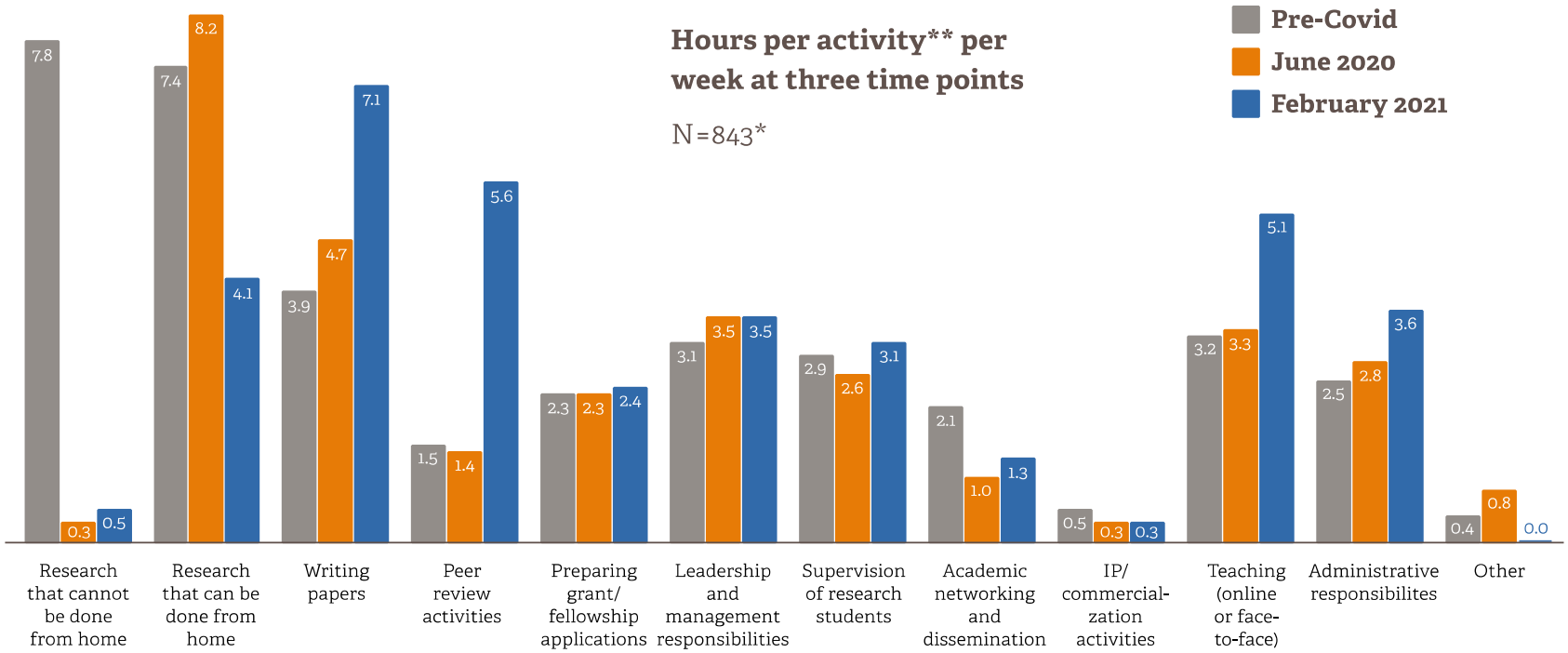


Average hours per activity per week in February 2021

N=843*

* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

Research from home in February 2021 had halved from June 2020 and pre-Covid levels



No evidence of an increase in research that can't be done at home since June 2021. Time spent writing papers (7.1 hrs), peer reviewing (5.6 hrs), teaching (5.1 hrs) and admin (3.6 hrs) continued to increase.

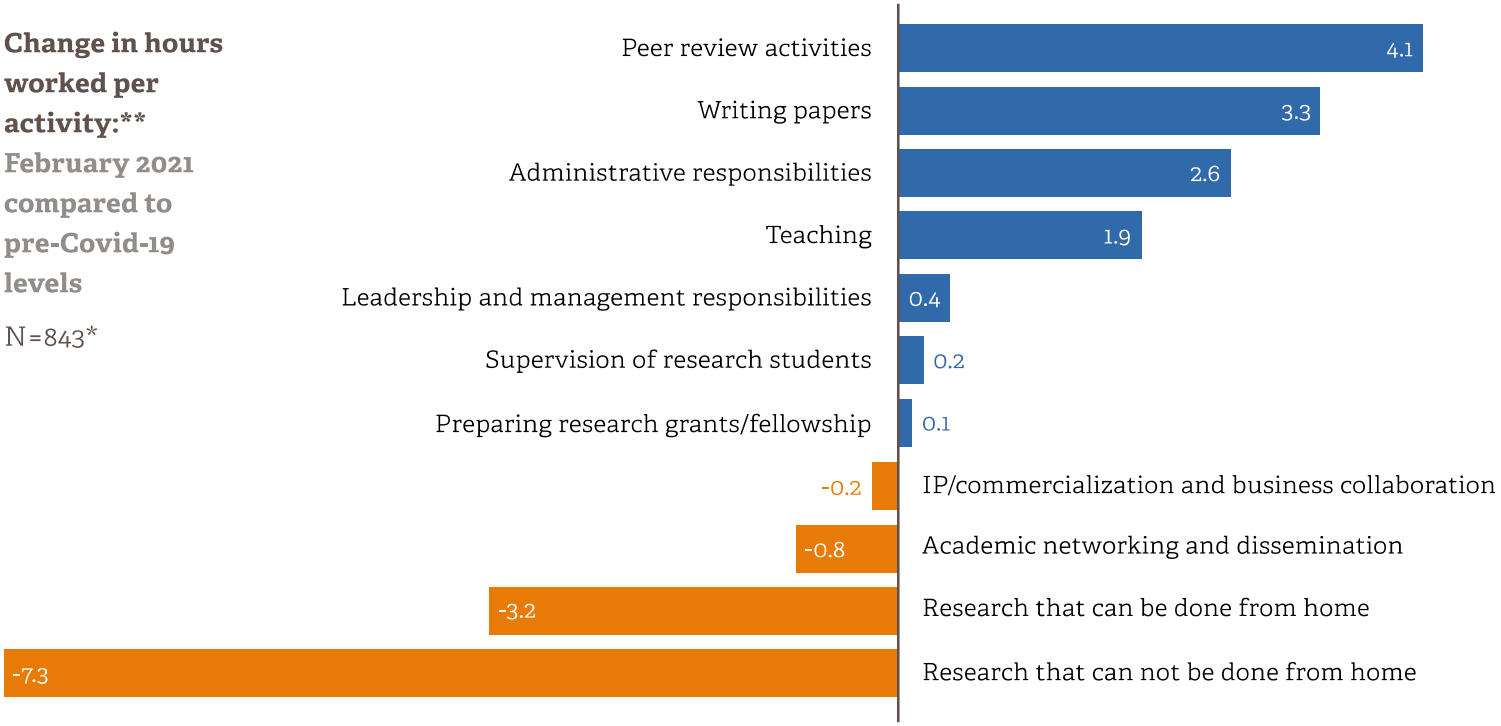
* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

** 'Peer review of papers' and 'grant proposals'; and 'research grant' and 'non-grant administrative activities', have been combined for comparability with Wave 1.

Time lost to research replaced by peer review activities, writing papers and administration

Change in hours worked per activity: February 2021 compared to pre-Covid-19 levels**

N=843*



* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

** 'Peer review of papers' and 'grant proposals'; and 'research grant' and 'non-grant administrative activities', have been combined for comparability with Wave 1.

Less research being done at home than in June 2020

Change in hours worked per activity: February 2021 compared to June 2020**

N=843*

Researchers reported doing less research at home (4.2 hrs) and spending more time on peer review activities (reviewing grants and papers, 4.2 hrs), writing papers (2.4 hrs) and teaching (1.8 hrs) in February 2021 than in June 2020.

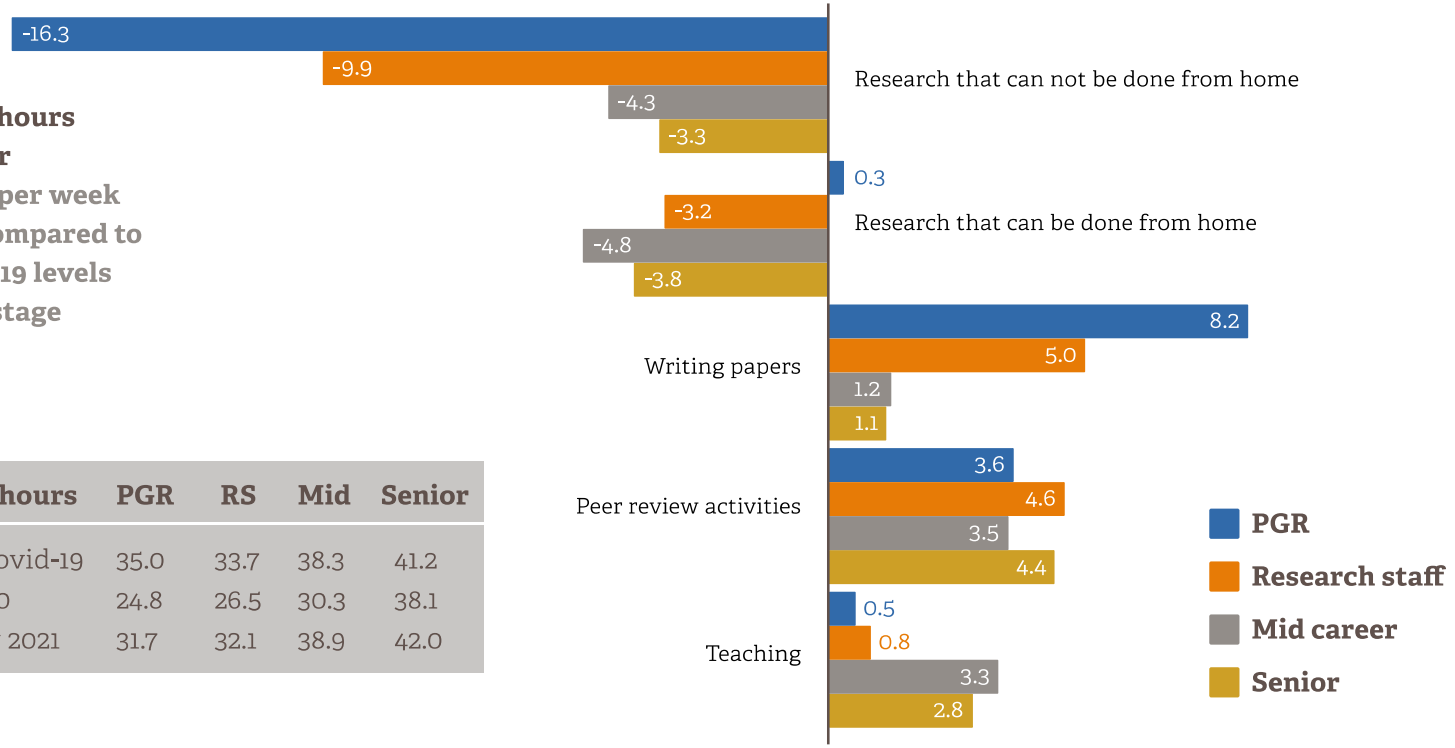
* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

** 'Peer review of papers' and 'grant proposals'; and 'research grant' and 'non-grant administrative activities', have been combined for comparability with Wave 1.

PGRs and research staff most heavily affected by lack of access to research facilities: February 2021 compared to pre-Covid-19 levels*

Change in hours worked per activity per week Feb 2021 compared to pre-Covid-19 levels by career stage**

N=843*



Average hours	PGR	RS	Mid	Senior
Before Covid-19	35.0	33.7	38.3	41.2
June 2020	24.8	26.5	30.3	38.1
February 2021	31.7	32.1	38.9	42.0

PGRs reported spending 16 hours less on workplace-based research and 8 hours more on writing papers in February 2021 than pre-Covid. All other career stages reported spending more than 3 hours less on research that can be done from home.

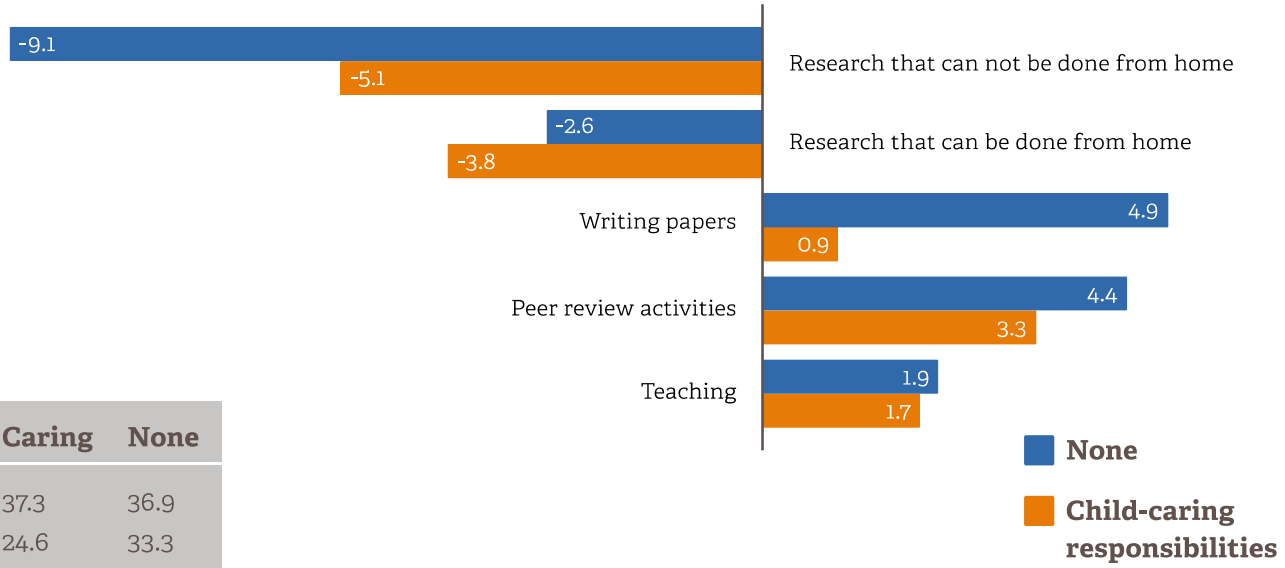
* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

** 'Peer review of papers' and 'grant proposals'; and 'research grant' and 'non-grant administrative activities', have been combined for comparability with Wave 1.

Researchers with child-caring responsibilities almost back to pre-Covid working hours

Change in hours worked per activity per week February 2021 compared to pre-Covid-19 levels by caring responsibilities**

N=843*



Average hours	Caring	None
Before Covid-19	37.3	36.9
June 2020	24.6	33.3
February 2021	34.4	37.5

Researchers without and with child-caring responsibilities reported workplace-based research falling to near zero hours in February 2021 from pre-Covid levels (9.6 and 5.5 hours, respectively).

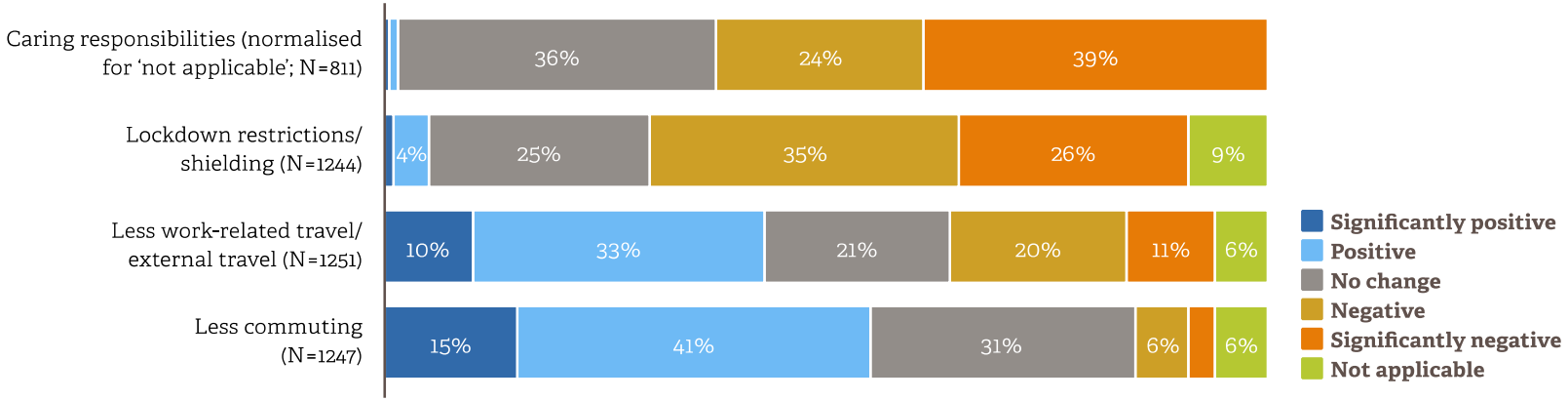
Researchers with child-caring responsibilities were spending similar number of hours writing papers as pre-Covid (4 hrs) compared to non-carers who had more than doubled their time writing papers compared to pre-Covid (3.6 hrs).

* This sub-sample consists of all respondents who answered completely questions on their working hours at three timepoints: Pre-Covid-19, June 2020 and February 2021. The profile of these respondents is similar to the overall sample and given in slide 12.

** 'Peer review of papers' and 'grant proposals'; and 'research grant' and 'non-grant administrative activities', have been combined for comparability with Wave 1.

Lockdown and caring reduced time for research, but most benefited from less travel and commuting

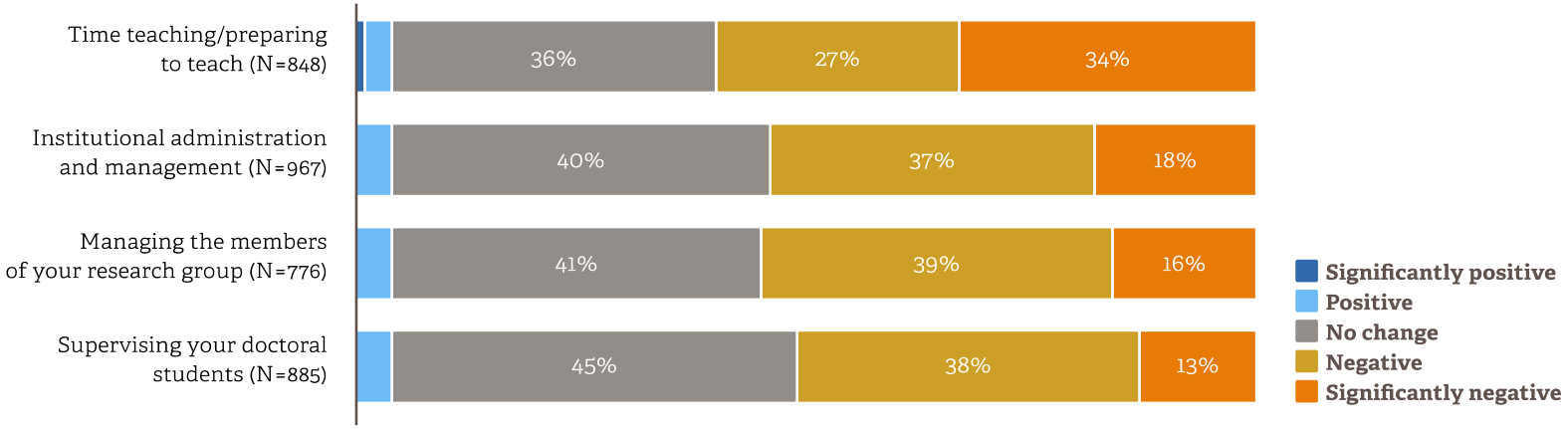
What consequences are Covid-19 restrictions on the following activities having on your time for research?



- **61% of researchers reported lockdown or shielding had negatively impacted on their time for research (26% significantly).**
- **Overall 63% reported that caring responsibilities had a negative impact on time for research; 39% significantly. This negative impact rises to 88% for researchers with child-caring responsibilities. The negative impact of caring responsibilities increased to 57% and 48% for mid-career and senior researchers. This compares with 44% of researchers being concerned in Wave 1 about less capacity for research due to caring responsibilities; 27% significantly.**
- **56% of researchers reported that less commuting and 43% less work-related travel had positive impacts on their time for research. These benefits increased at each career stage (64% commuting and 57% work-related travel for senior researchers).**
- **For 31% of researchers the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on work-related travel had negatively impacted on time for research. In Wave 1 86% of these researchers were concerned about having to postpone or cancel important conferences/meetings.**
- **Between 21% - 36% researchers reported no impact on their time for research due to the effect of Covid-19 restrictions on these activities. There were no notable gender or REF Panel differences.**

More than half reported a negative impact of Covid-19 restrictions on other work activities reduced their time for research

What consequences are Covid-19 restrictions on the following activities having on your time for research?



- **Between 50% - 60%* reported the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on teaching, institutional admin, doctoral supervision and line management activities had negatively impacted on their time for research. However, between 36% - 45% reported no impact on their time for research due to the effect of Covid-19 on these activities.**
- **34% reported significantly negative impacts of Covid-19 on teaching responsibilities. This increased to 50% of mid-career researchers. Panels C and D reported higher significantly negative impacts on teaching (43%; 47%) than other Panels. In Wave 1 44% were concerned about less time for research due to their increased teaching load.**
- **62% of mid-career and senior researchers reported a negative impact of institutional administration. Negative effects were more common in Panels C (67%) and D (66%).**
- **Generally researchers with child-caring responsibilities were more likely to report a negative impact of Covid-19 restrictions on teaching (68%), supervision (57%) and administration (58%). There were no notable gender differences.**