

# Survey of Londoners 2019 Food Insecurity in Southwark

Knowledge & Intelligence Section

Southwark Public Health Division, Place & Wellbeing

August 2019

# The Survey of Londoners was designed to improve our understanding of social integration and economic fairness

## SURVEY OF LONDONERS: OVERVIEW

The Survey of Londoners was commissioned by the Mayor of London to better understand the lives of people living in London and covered a range of topic areas. The survey was designed to provide:

- Measures of **social integration** for both London as a whole and key sub-groups.
- Measures of **economic fairness** and financial inclusion.
- Estimates of **food insecurity** in London.
- Improve our access to **equality and diversity** data, and how the measures vary across the city and between population groups.

Southwark Public Health Division funded a boost sample to the survey to enable us to report borough specific results. Findings from the survey will support a number of local policy priorities, including:

- Food security.
- Loneliness and social isolation.
- Social regeneration.

### Reference

1. Greater London Authority 2019. Survey of Londoners: Headline Findings.

# 680 adults in Southwark responded to the Survey of Londoners with 6,601 adults responding across London

## SURVEY OF LONDONERS: OVERVIEW

**The survey aims to improve the social evidence base for London, providing a resource to the Greater London Authority, London Boroughs and other partners.**

- The survey was a representative population survey of 6,601 adults aged 16 and over.
- Southwark requested a “boost sample” to enable the reporting of results specific to our borough.
- The sample was drawn from the Postcode Address File and was designed to provide estimates for major demographic groups, such as age, ethnicity and sexual orientation.
- The survey used an online-first methodology, followed by paper questionnaires and a small number of face-to-face reminders, with field work taking place between October 2018 and March 2019.
- The questions used were drawn from established surveys where possible, with new questions tested prior to use.

Table 1: Responses to Survey of Londoners

Area	Number of respondents
Southwark	680
South East London	1,698
London	6,601

### Reference

1. Greater London Authority 2019. Survey of Londoners: Headline Findings.

# There has been a growing awareness and recognition of food security in recent years

**1.6 MILLION**

The number of three-day emergency food supplies given to people in crisis by Trussell Trust food banks in the financial year 2018-2019.



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Food banks

**Food banks scramble to stop a million children going hungry over holidays**

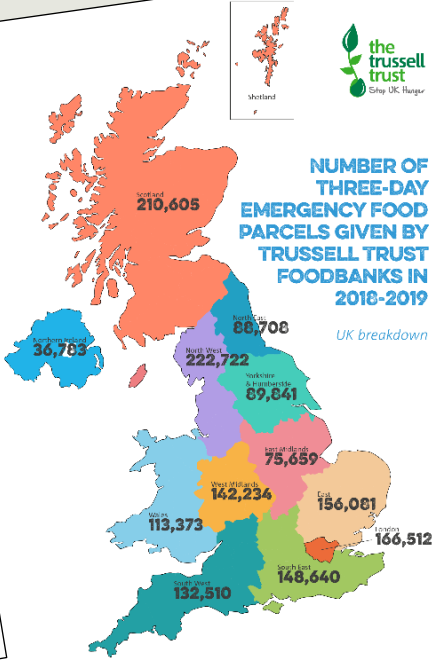
More families turn to food parcels to make up for loss of free school meals, extra childcare costs and benefit payment delays

Harriet Sherwood  
@harrietsherwood  
Sun 23 Jul 2019 09:00 BST  
5,198



Church and community food banks are preparing for their busiest summer yet, providing meals for children during the school holidays as an increasing number of families struggle with delays in benefit payments.

The Trussell Trust, which supports more than 1,200 food banks, many based in churches, said demand over the next few weeks could exceed last year's record of 87,496 food parcels during the summer holidays. The 2018 figure was a 20% increase on the same period the previous year.



**BBC NEWS**

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**Family & Education**

**Food bank supplies help record numbers**

By Sean Coughlan  
BBC News family and education correspondent

25 April 2019



Daphne Aikens runs a food bank charity in west London that feeds 300 people each week

Baked beans, tinned fish and canned fruit are carried out of a church in west London by neatly-dressed people in their 30s and 40s.

# Five questions are used to assess food security, based on an approach used by the US Department of Agriculture

## APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

### Food security questions:

- “The food I/we bought just didn’t last, and I/we didn’t have money to get more”
- “I/we couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals”

[Response: Often/Sometimes/Never]

- In the last 12 mths, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skips meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?
- In the last 12 mths, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn’t enough money for food?
- In the last 12 mths, were you ever hungry but didn’t eat because there wasn’t enough money for food?

[Response: Yes/No]

Points for each answered question were summed, and total scores divided into 3 categories

Score:	0–1	<b>High or marginal food security</b>
	2–4	<b>Low food security</b>
	5–6	<b>Very low food security</b>

# Survey for Londoners 2019 included a boost sample for Southwark (n680)

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR SOUTHWARK RESPONDENTS

- Almost a quarter (23%) of Southwark respondents had low or very low food security
- More Southwark black respondents had low or very low food security (46%), compared with white respondents (9%)
- In Southwark, worse food security was linked to social-renting tenancy and deprivation (44% social renters vs 14% private renters and 8% owner-occupiers)
- In Southwark, being 'often lonely' was linked to worse food security (52%)
- Southwark respondents with dependent children had higher levels of poor food security (44%), compared with respondents without dependents (18%)
- Over half of Southwark unemployed and long-term sick/disabled non-workers had poor food security
- Southwark workers earning less than £24,300/yr had significantly worse food security than those earning more than £37,900.
- Southwark respondents with burdensome debt had over four-fold food insecurity levels compared with comfortable re-payers.

### Reference

1. Greater London Authority 2019. Survey of Londoners

# Almost one-quarter of Southwark respondents had low or very low food security

## RESULTS: FOOD SECURITY OVERALL

**Almost a quarter (23%) of Southwark respondents had low or very low food security.**

- This equates to approximately 74,500 residents (based on 2018 population estimate)
- Comparable to south-east London (22%) and London (21%) levels

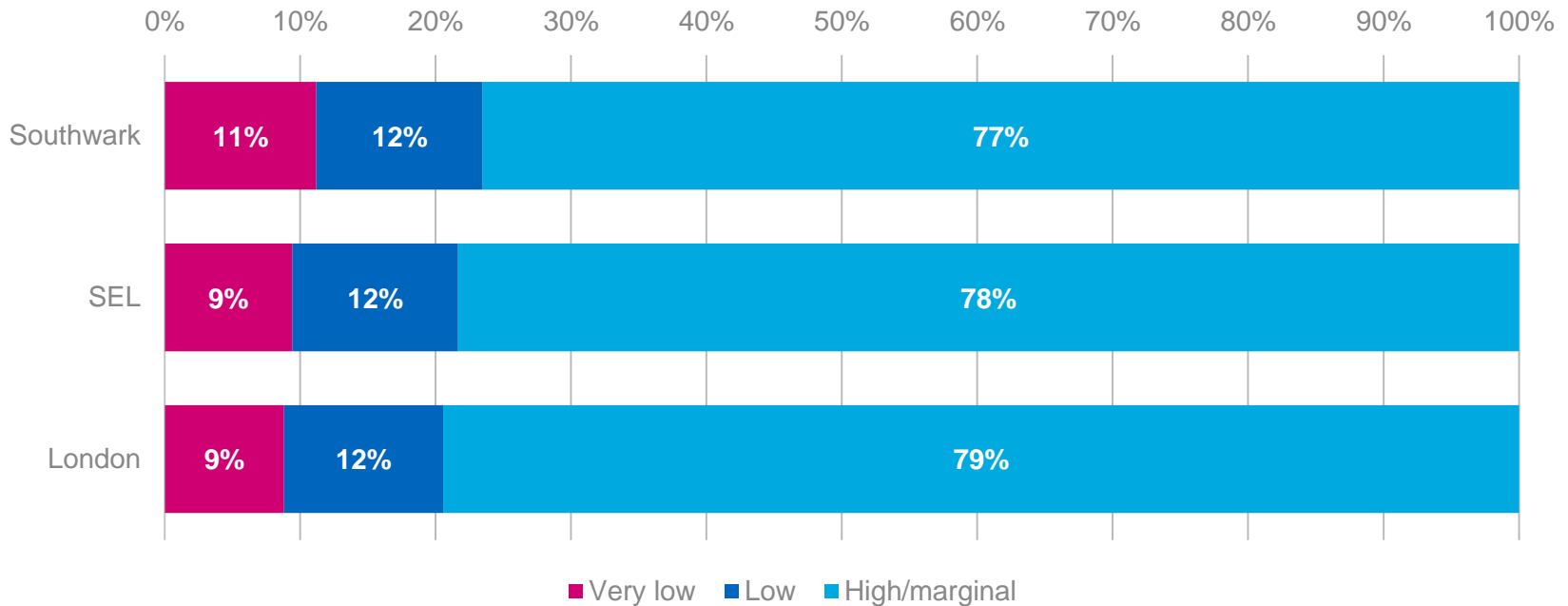


Figure 5: Respondents' food security status, for Southwark, south-east London and London

# Almost half of black respondents had low or very low food security

## RESULTS: FOOD SECURITY DEMOGRAPHICS

**More Southwark black respondents had low or very low food security (46%), compared with white respondents (9%)**

- Also seen in south-east London and London

**In London, women and younger people had worse food security**

- Not seen in Southwark

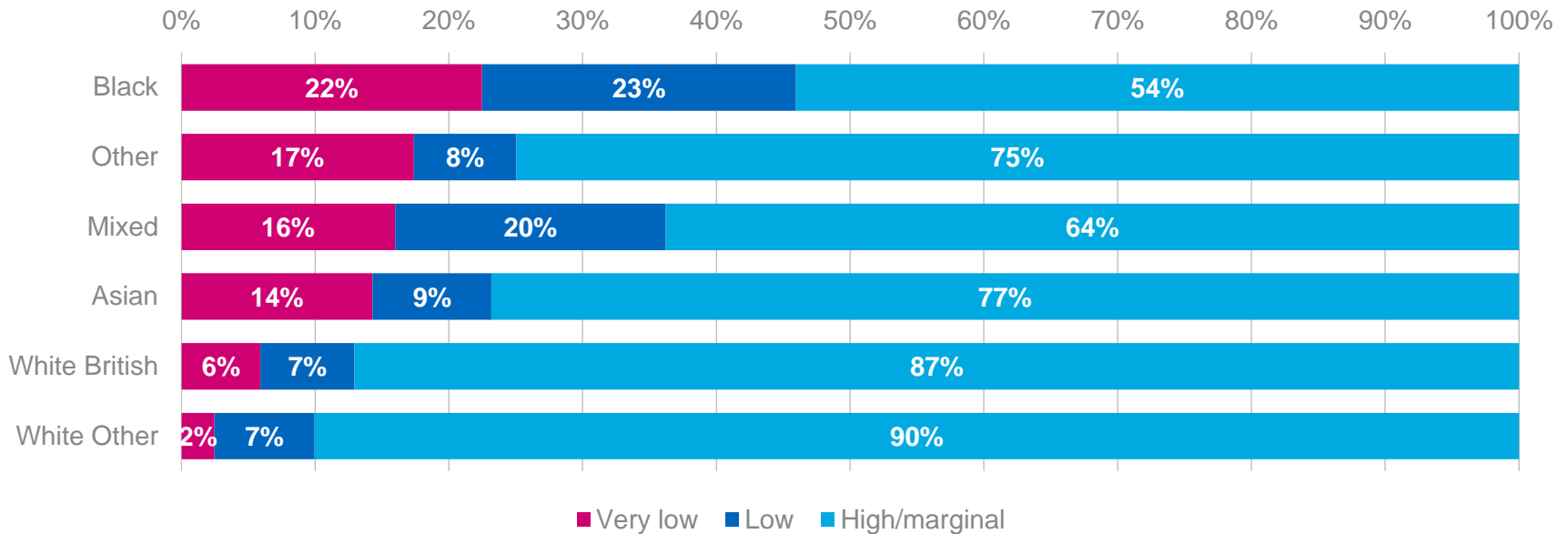


Figure 6: Southwark respondents' food security status by ethnic group



# Those with poor food security are more likely to be lonely or socially isolated

## RESULTS: PHYSICAL, MENTAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

**Overall 8.8% of respondents in Southwark reported feeling lonely (almost 22,700 residents). In Southwark, being 'often lonely' was linked to worse food security**

- Low or very low food security in:
  - 52% of 'often lonely' people
  - 30% of 'sometimes lonely' people
  - 10% of 'rarely lonely' people

**Physical and mental health long-term conditions were linked to worse food security in south-east London and London, but not in Southwark**

- Low or very low food security – Physical LTC:
  - 37% in SEL
  - 28% in London
- Mental LTC:
  - 37% in SEL
  - 37% in London

# Parents with dependent children are more likely to have poorer food security

## RESULTS: PARENTS

**Southwark respondents with dependent children had higher levels of poor food security (44%), compared with respondents without dependents (18%).**

- Higher levels also found for south-east London (30%) and London (27%) parents.
- Higher levels seen in parents of 4–5 children versus parents with fewer children.
- Higher levels seen in single parents versus non-single parents in south-east London (55%) and London (42%), but not in Southwark.

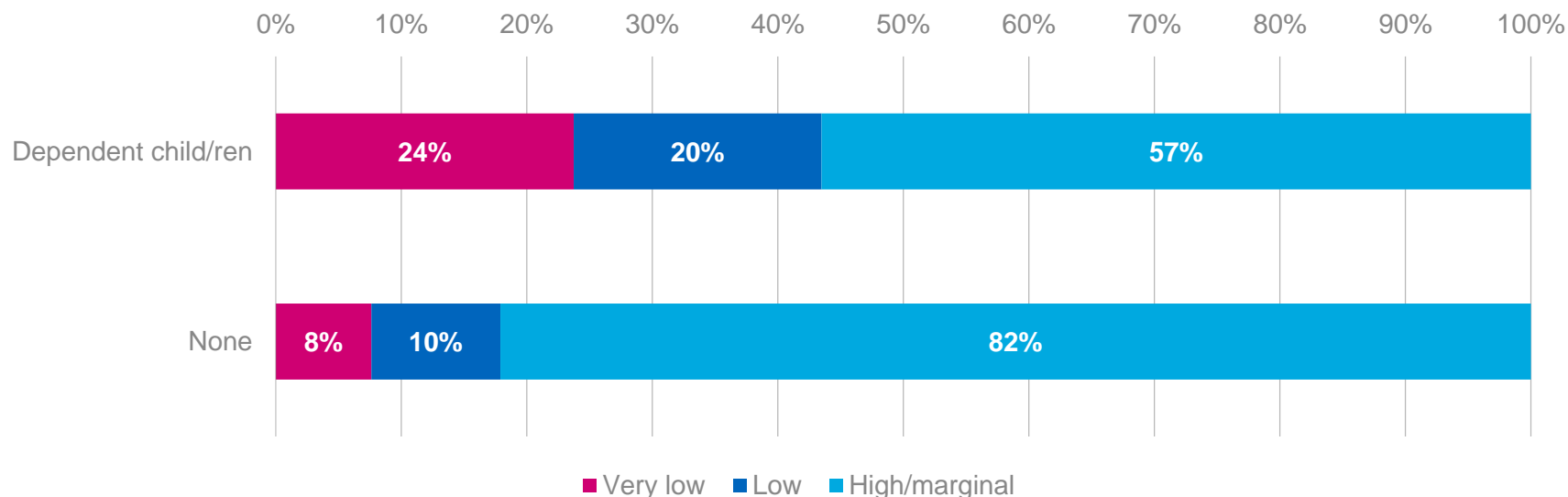


Figure 7: Southwark respondents' food security by dependent child status

# Over half of Southwark unemployed and long-term sick respondents had low or very low food security

## RESULTS: EMPLOYMENT

**Over half of Southwark unemployed and long-term sick/disabled non-workers had poor food security:**

- Low or very low food security in 56% of unemployed and 66% of sick/disabled non-workers.

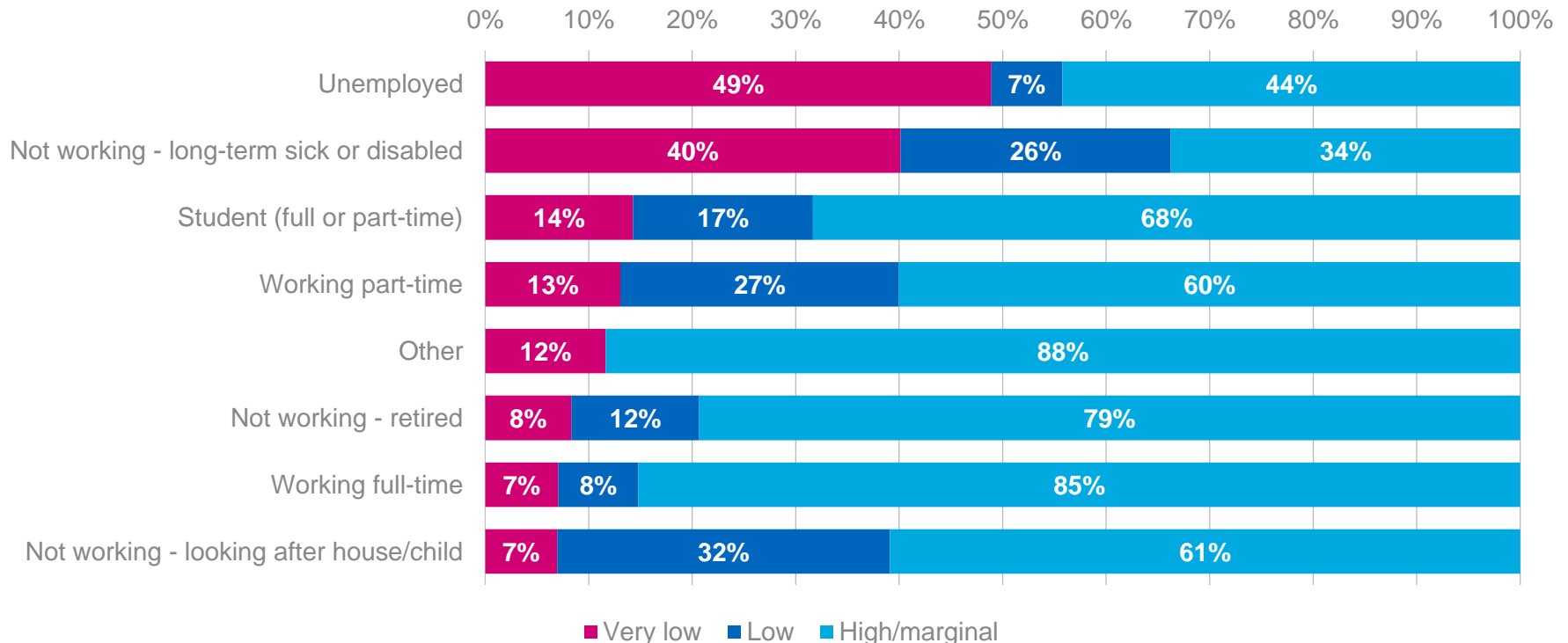


Figure 8: Southwark respondents' food security by employment status

# Two-thirds of the poorest-paid Southwark respondents were food-insecure

## RESULTS: INCOME

**Southwark workers earning less than £24,300/yr had significantly worse food security than those earning more than £37,900.**

- For <£14,900 earners, more than two-thirds had very low (37%) or low (32%) food security.

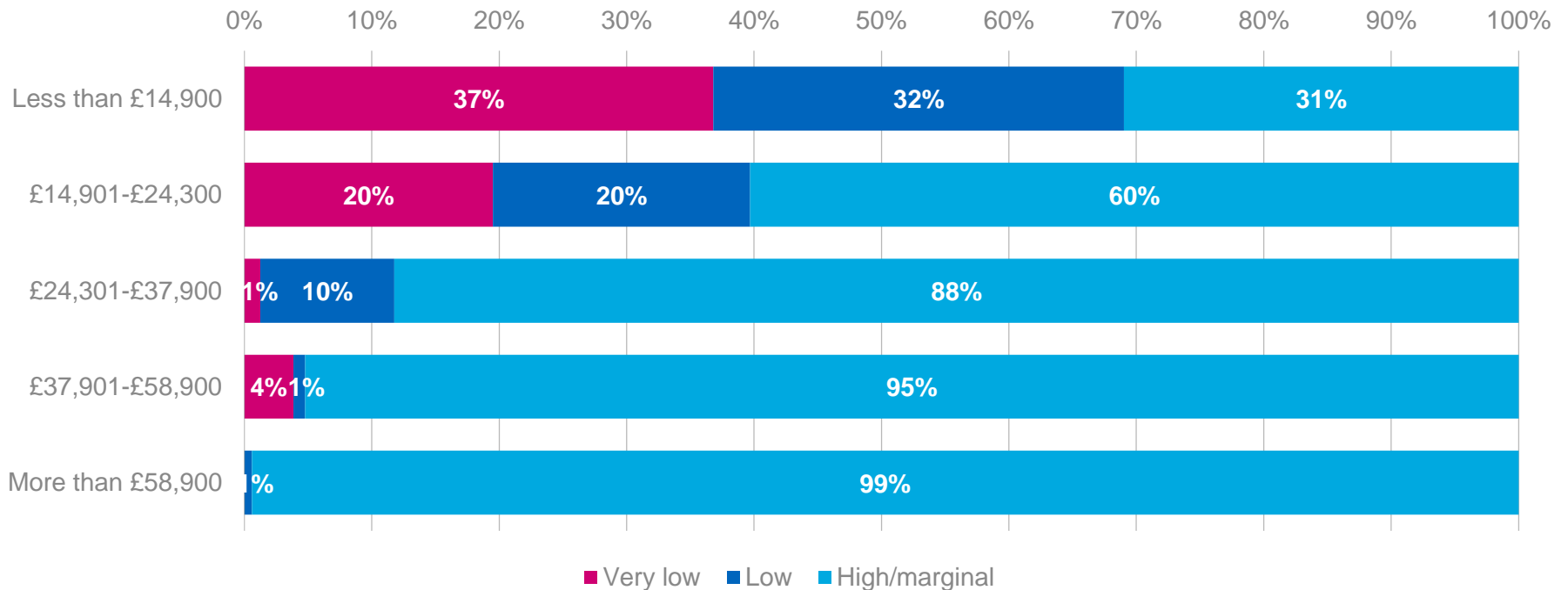


Figure 9: Southwark respondents' food security by income

# Around half of those with burdensome levels of debt have low or very low food security

## RESULTS: DEBT BURDEN

**Southwark respondents with burdensome debt had over four-fold food insecurity levels compared with comfortable re-payers.**

- Burdensome debt: 51% had low/very low food security
- Non-burdensome debt: 11% had low/very low food security

**Food insecurity levels were similar in Southwark, south-east London and London, for debtors (31%, 30% & 29%, respectively) and for burdened debtors (51%, 49% & 47%, respectively).**

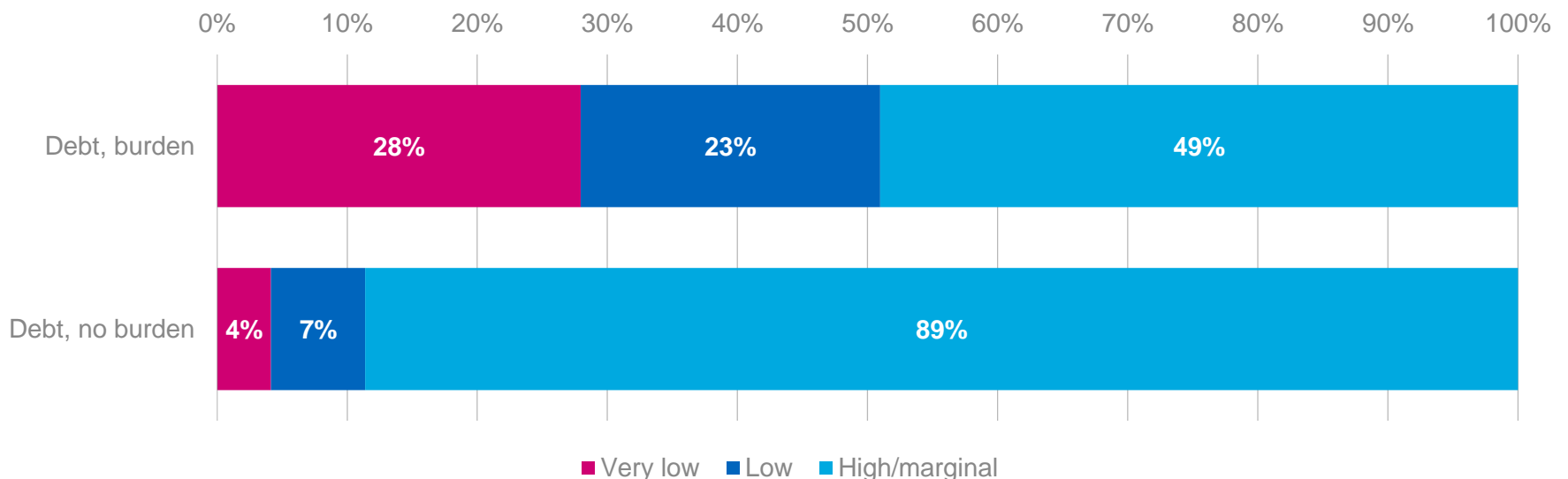


Figure 10: Southwark respondents' food security status by debt burden

# Food insecurity is also linked to social renting and deprivation

## RESULTS: TENANCY AND DEPRIVATION

**In Southwark, worse food security was linked to social-renting tenancy and deprivation.**

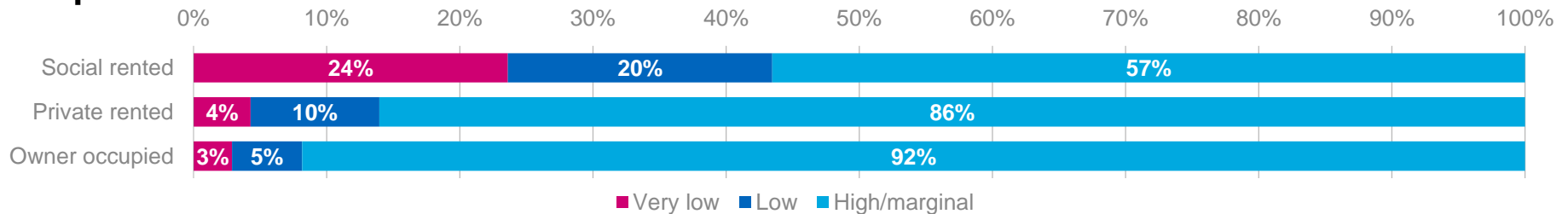


Figure 11: Southwark respondents' food security status by tenancy type

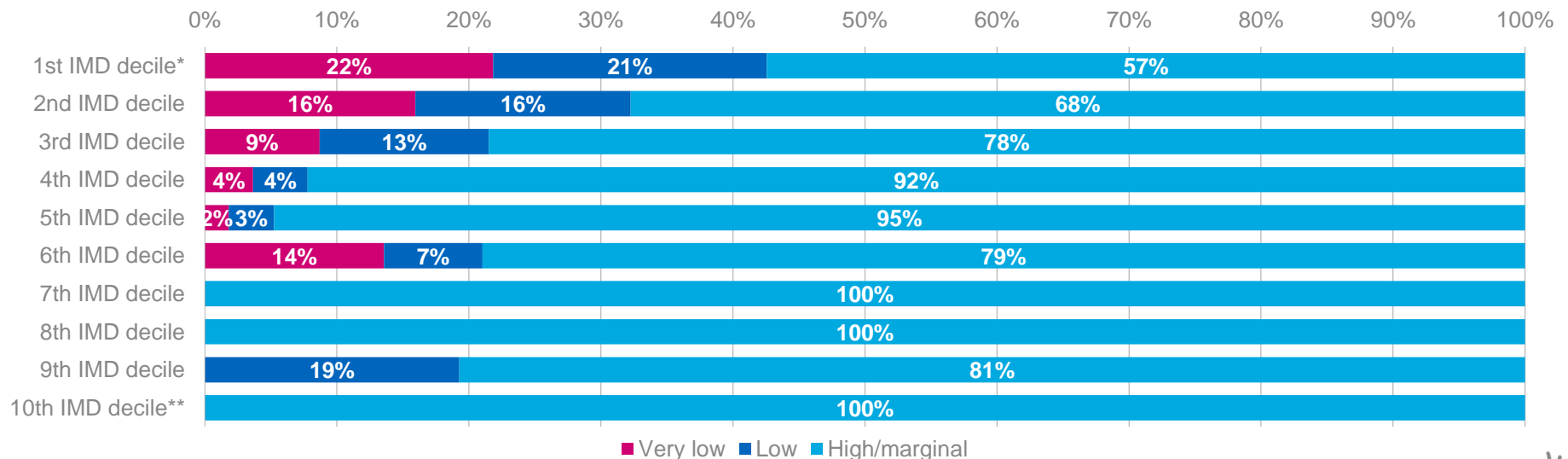


Figure 12: Southwark respondents' food security status by English deprivation decile.

\*Most deprived; \*\* least deprived.

# Southwark food insecurity linked to black ethnicity, parenthood, unemployment and other economic factors

## SUMMARY: FOOD INSECURITY

**In Southwark, low or very low levels of food security were linked to:**

- Black ethnicity (46% vs white British 9%)
- Loneliness ('often' 52% vs 'rarely' 10%)
- Parenthood (43% vs none 18%)
- Unemployment (56%) and sick/disabled non-working (66%) (versus FT work 15%)
- Low income (<£15K 69% vs £38K–59K 5%)
- Burdensome debt (51% vs non-burdensome debt 11%)
- Social rented tenancy (44% vs owner-occupier 8%)
- Deprivation (1<sup>st</sup> decile 43% vs 10<sup>th</sup> decile 0%)

**Find out more at**  
[southwark.gov.uk/JSNA](https://southwark.gov.uk/JSNA)

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