



Childcare Matters

What the public thinks about
childcare in Northern
Ireland



Overview



- Background
- Research design
- Views on childcare policy
- Public image of childcare
- Searching for and using childcare
- Review of key points
- Concluding comments

Background



- £4bn Sure Start, early years and childcare investment in England
- €575 million childcare investment in Republic
- 2003 – NI childcare study, partly commissioned by DEL

Research design



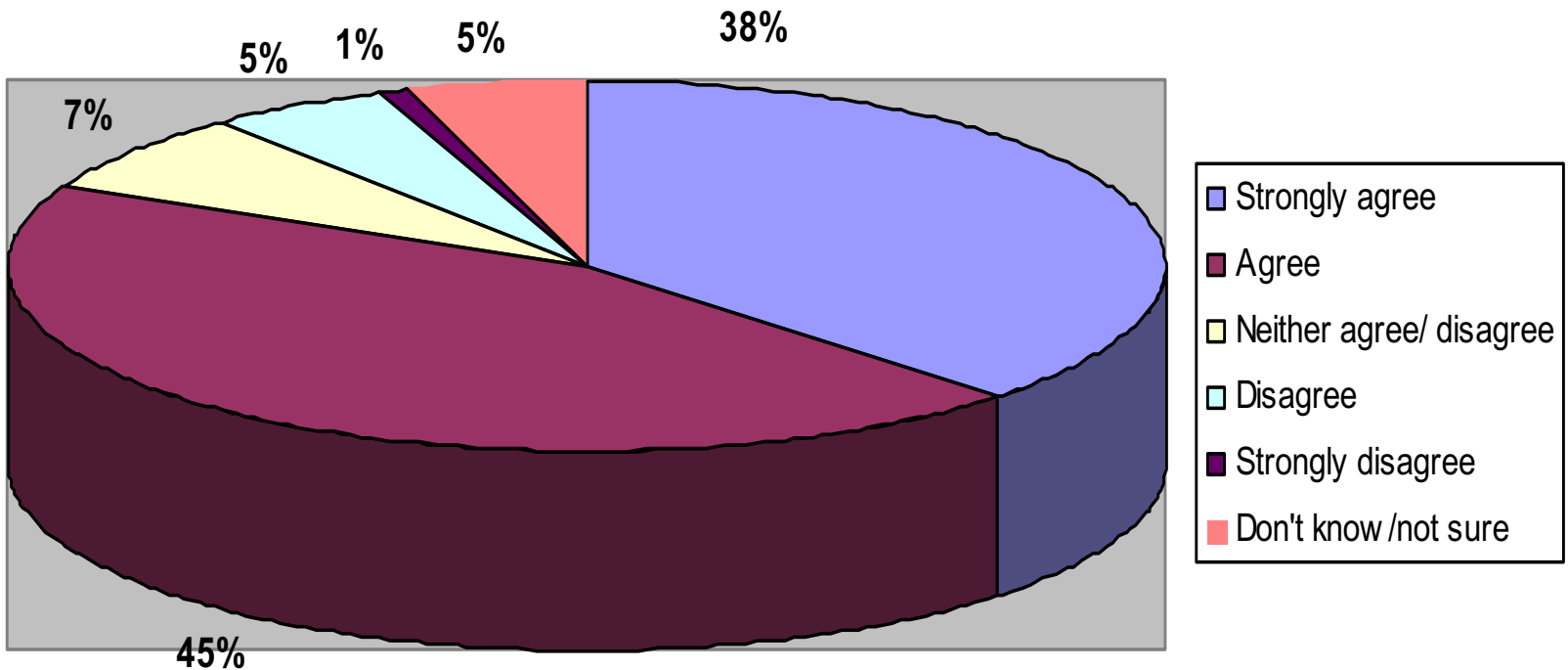
- Ipsos MORI survey
- 1,024 adults questioned
- part of Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey
- face-to-face interviews carried out in Nov and Dec 2007



Views on childcare policy

Figure 1: "Good quality, affordable childcare should be priority for NI Executive"

Base: all respondents (1,024)





The public image of childcare

Figure 2: perceptions of quality of nurseries and childminding

Base: all respondents (1,024)

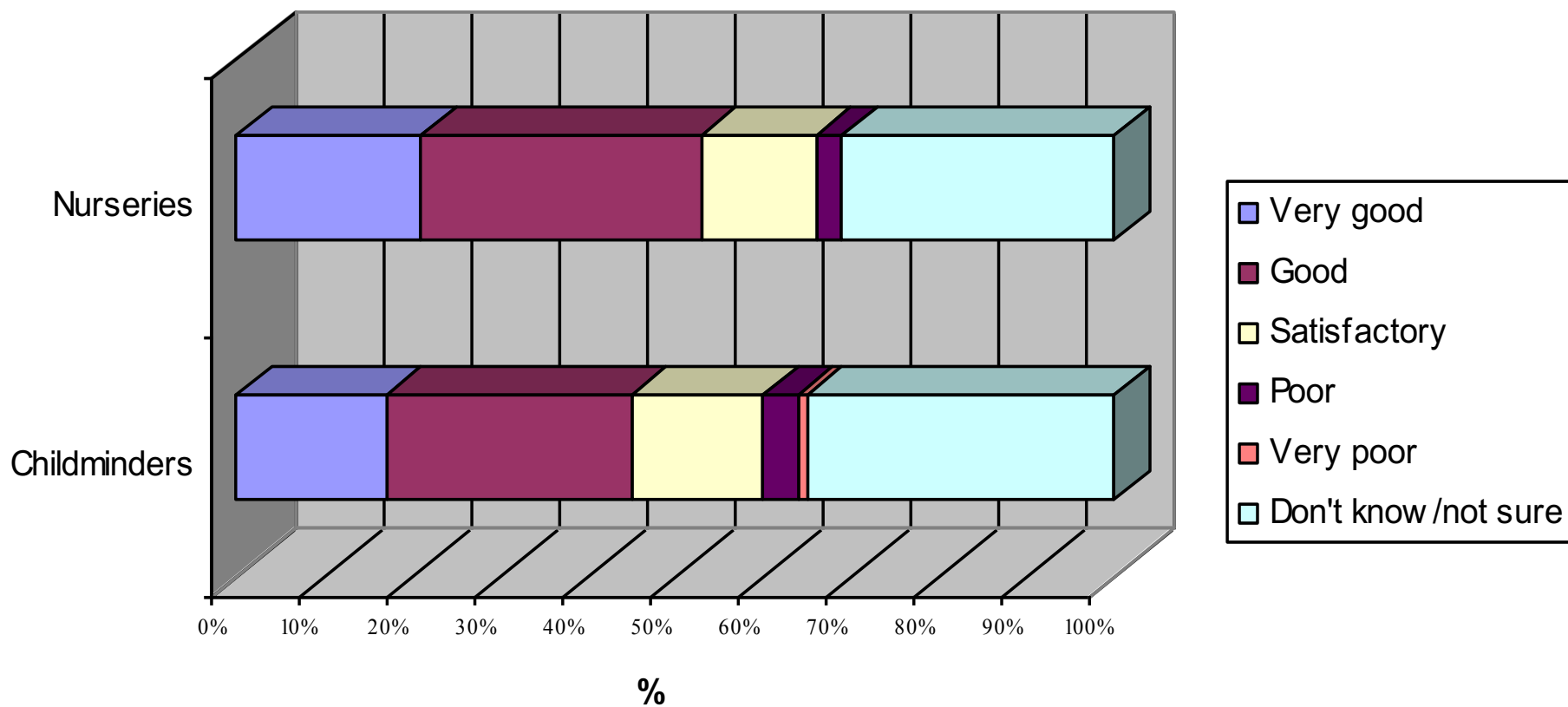


Figure 3: perceptions of quality of nurseries and childminding

Base: all parents (318)

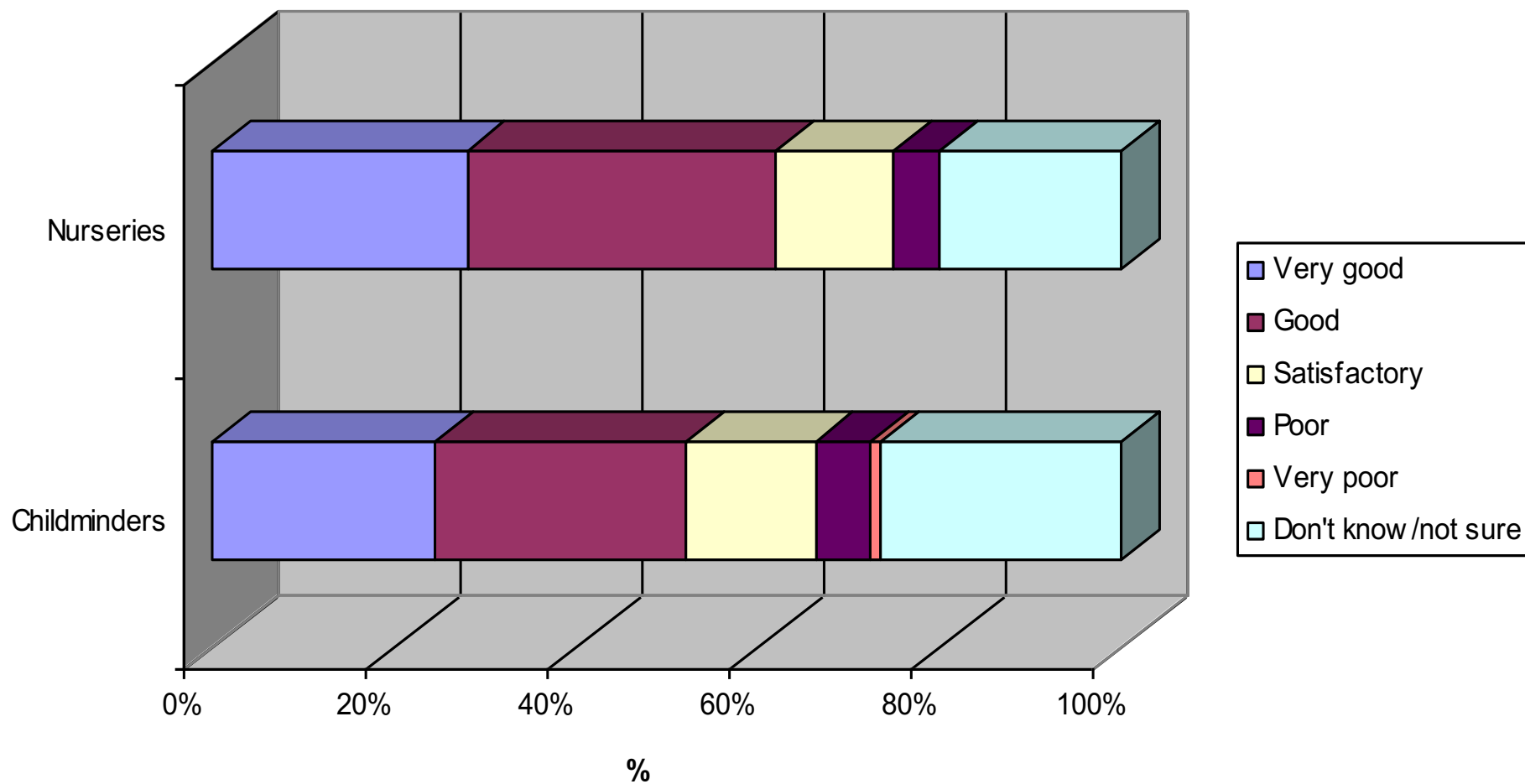


Figure 4: perceptions of quality of childminding

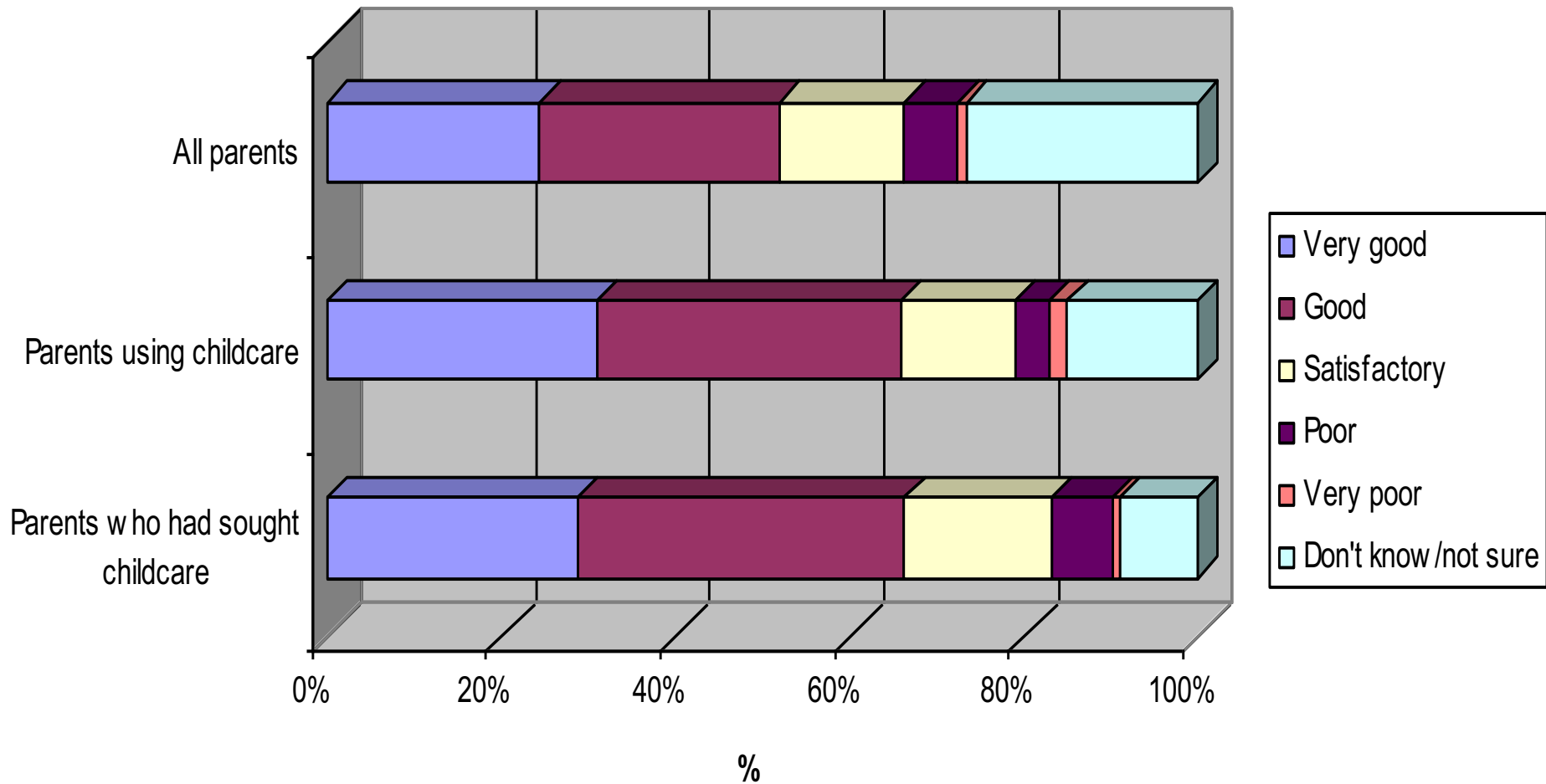
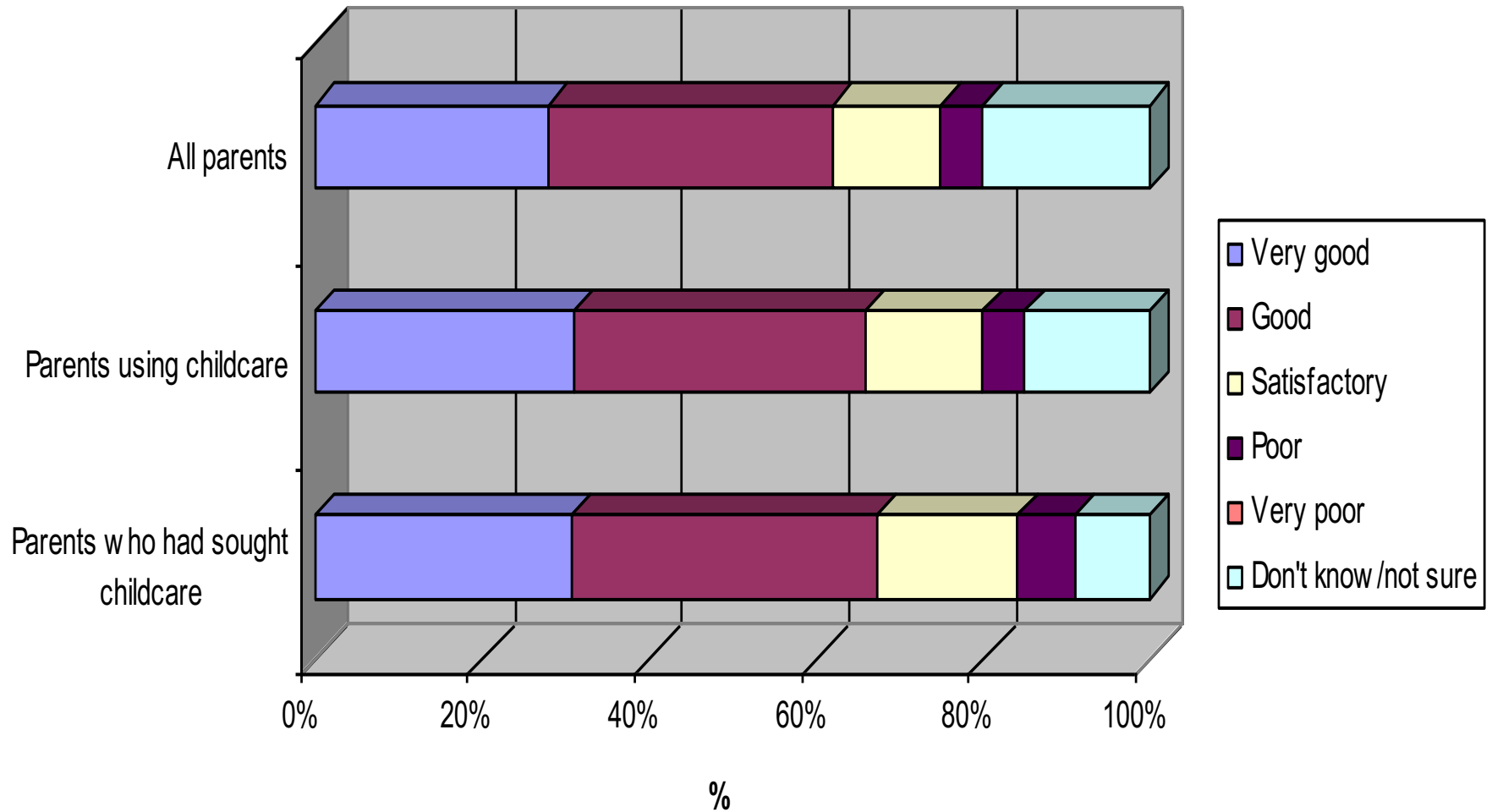


Figure 5: perceptions of quality of nurseries





Searching for and using childcare

Who uses childcare?



- 37% of all parents
- 41% of working parents
- 31% of non-working parents
- 44% of ABC1 parents
- 32% of C2DE parents

Figure 6: Ease of search for childcare

Base: parents who looked for childcare in previous 3 years (95)

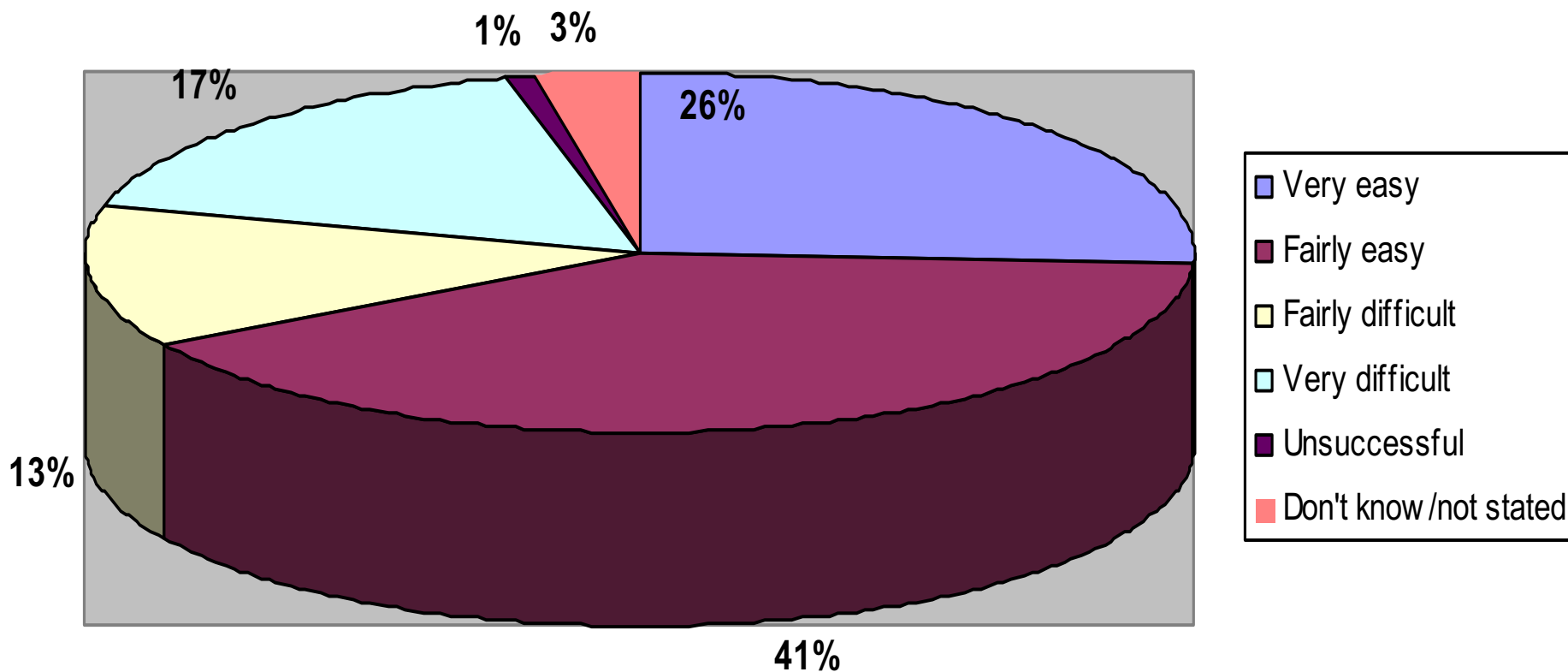
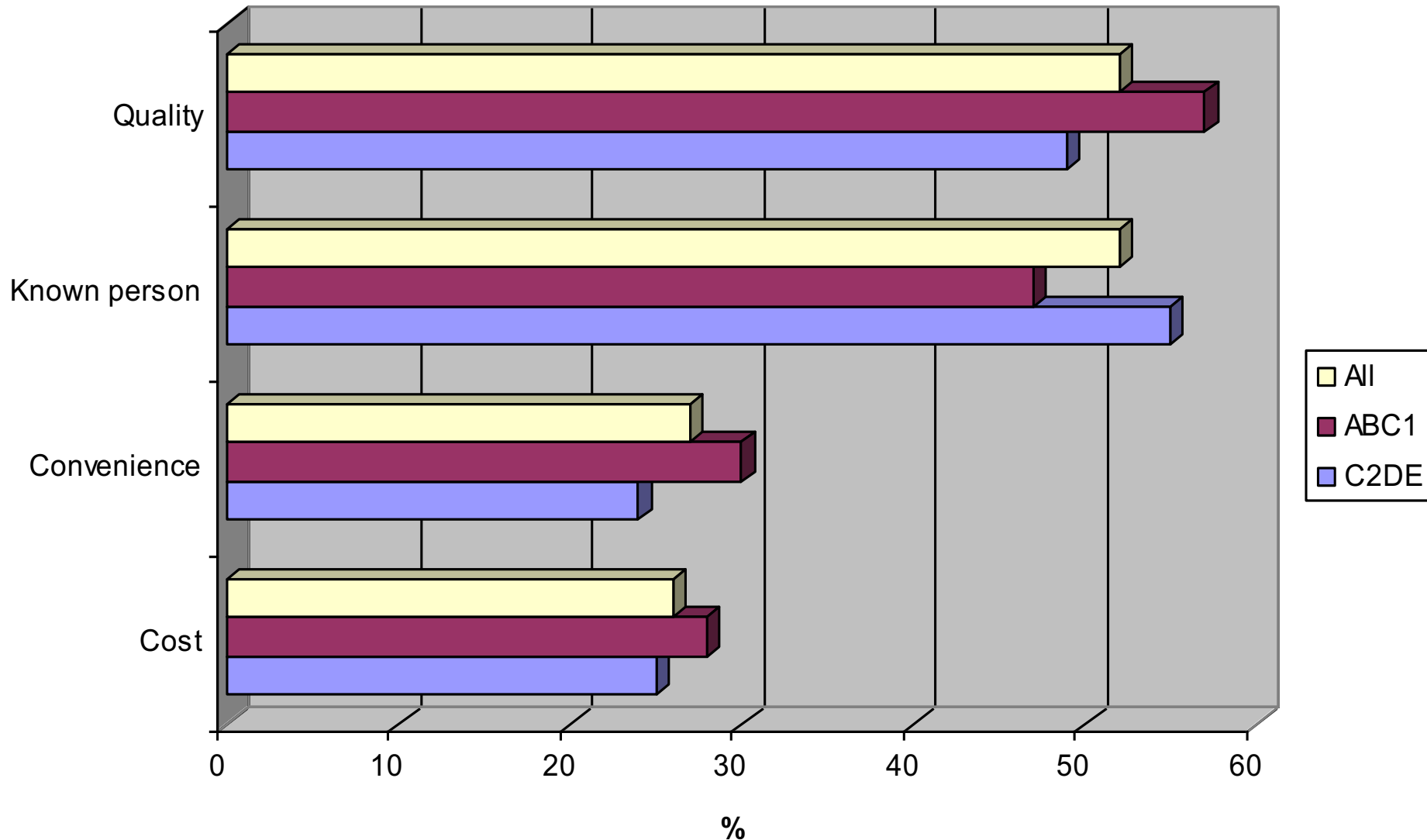


Figure 7: Factors in looking for childcare

Base: all parents (318)



Preferred method of finding childcare



- **Word of mouth recommendation – 74%**
- Phoning childcare information organisation – 11%
- Using adverts in papers or shops– 4%
- Using internet – 1%

Key points



- 83% thought the Northern Ireland Executive should give priority to the provision of good quality, affordable childcare
- 30% of parents who had recently looked for childcare said they had found their search 'fairly' or 'very' difficult –
- 52% of parents said quality of care was important factor
- nurseries viewed more favourably than childminders in terms of perceived quality of care they were perceived as providing
- strong preference for care provided by someone who knows the child
- word of mouth recommendation was by far the most favoured method of finding childcare



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