

Special Report

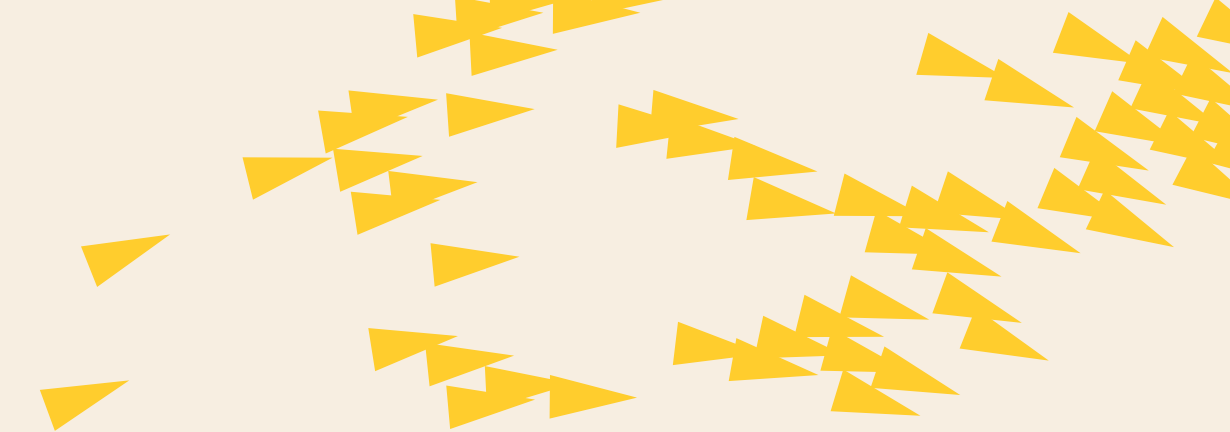
# Women and Property

Bridging the Generational Divide



Women play a pivotal role in shaping the property industry, and understanding their contributions and challenges is essential for fostering a more inclusive and equitable market. With an increasing focus on gender equality and empowerment, it has never been more important to delve into the dynamics of women in property.





## Introduction

Cotality's sixth annual Women and Property Report explores property ownership by Australians across gender and age groups. The report reveals both challenges and opportunities faced by demographic groups, with a focus on Australian women.

Cotality's data suggests that affordability pressures may be reshaping long-held aspirations, particularly among younger women who face greater difficulty accumulating the savings required to enter the property market.

Property ownership is a foundation of long-term financial security and wellbeing. Early entry gives Australians more time to build wealth, offering more options later in life as well as the stability that comes with secure housing. This is especially concerning for younger women, who remain less likely than men to own property.

These findings raise important questions for policymakers, industry leaders and financial institutions about how to better support young Australians – and particularly women – in achieving property ownership if it remains a national goal.

## Summary Points



Property ownership increases with age and income – disadvantaging women over men as the income gap widens mid-career



Younger people (and particularly younger women) consider property ownership less important – suggesting some may be giving up on the Australian dream



Barriers to entry include cost, the ability to save for a deposit and limited knowledge of the process



For some younger women, just starting the process is a challenge (beyond the financial burden)



Sustainability is a key priority for younger Australian home-owners, particularly women, although costs limit their ability to make major upgrades

## Survey methodology

This report makes use of a survey methodology to better understand some of the nuances of home ownership among males and females in Australia, as well as across different age generations of the population.

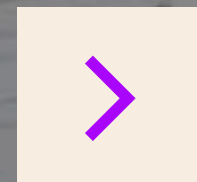
The survey was commissioned by Cotality and conducted by Loneran Research in accordance with the ISO 20252 standard. Loneran Research surveyed 1,003 Australians aged 18+, with questionnaires distributed throughout the country, including both city and non-capital city areas. The survey was conducted online amongst members of a permission-based panel, between 9 January and 15 January 2026. After interviewing, the data was weighted to the latest population estimates sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The survey method allows investigation of the motivations, barriers and attitudes towards home ownership, and how this differed between males and females, and across generations.



Special Report

# Key Findings



Key Finding #1

# Property ownership increases with age and income...

Property ownership increases with age. Three-quarters of Baby Boomers own the home they live in, either outright or with a mortgage, compared with just 35% of Gen Z.

A similar share of Gen Z and Millennials rent – around one-third each – and renting becomes less common with age, falling to under one-quarter of Baby Boomers. Gen Z are also the most likely to still live with parents (around 30%).

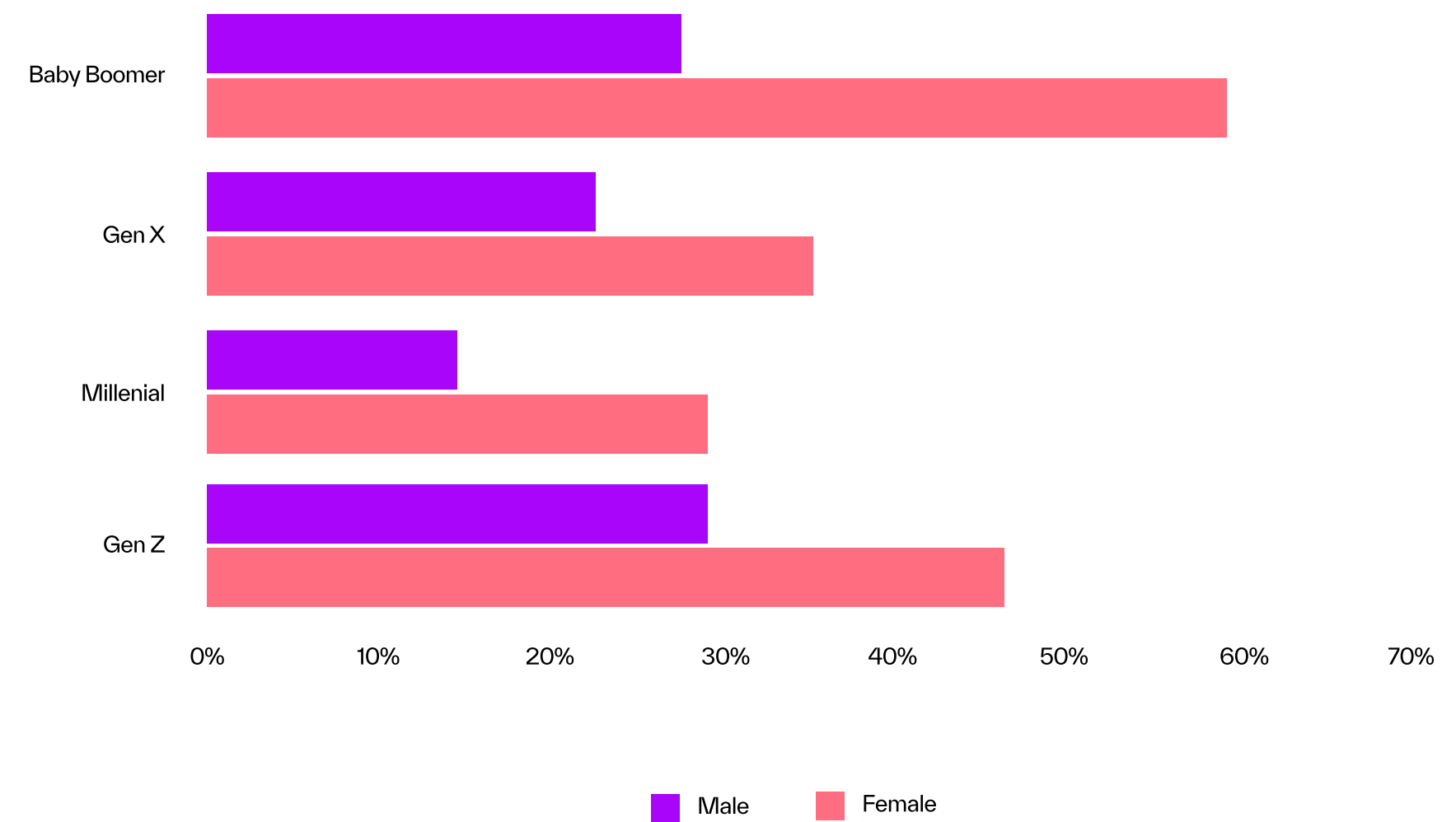
Almost two-thirds of respondents overall own their home. Meanwhile, 15% own one or more residential investment properties and 5% own non-residential investment property.

The largest share of residential investment property ownership is among Millennials, with around one-quarter holding an investment property. Gen X, Gen Z and Baby Boomers show lower rates. Across all age groups, men are more likely than women to own investment properties.

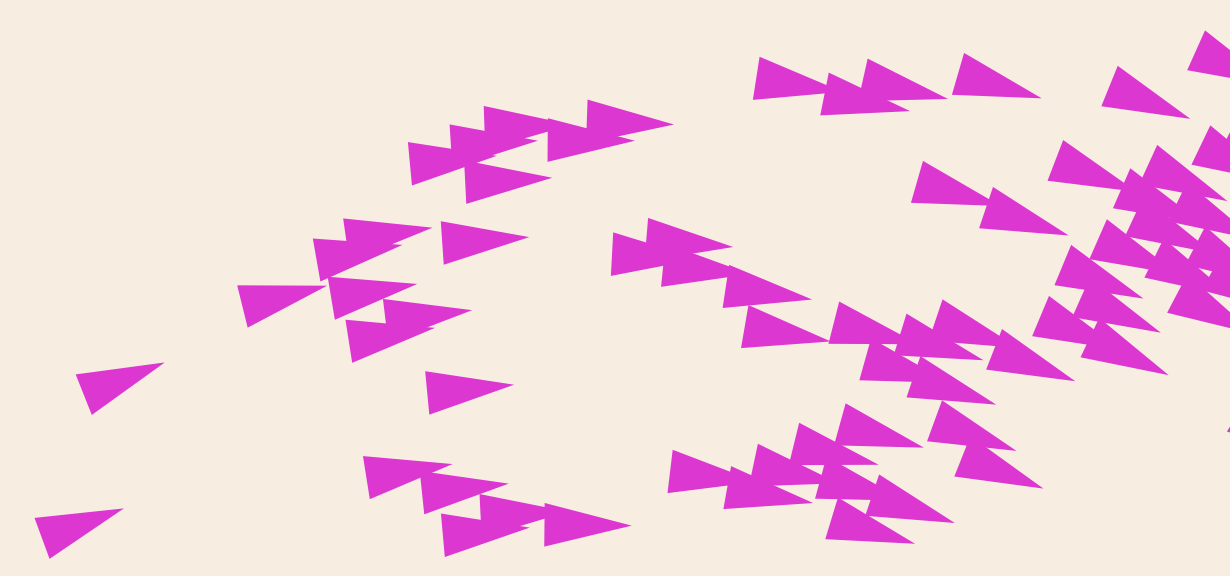
Among other investment assets, just over half have superannuation, three-in-ten own shares and one-in-five hold cryptocurrencies. One-third reported having no investments at all, with the largest share being Baby Boomers, followed by Gen Z.

Male respondents were more likely than women to hold investments across all cohorts, except for a slightly higher share of Millennial women with superannuation. Women across all age groups were far more likely to report no investments at all.

**Chart 1**  
Share of respondents with no other (non-property) investments



# Income disparity across our age cohorts... disadvantaging women over men as the income gap widens mid career



Around half of Gen Z respondents were employed full-time – similar to Gen X – while Millennials had the highest full-time employment (around two-thirds).

Baby Boomers were more likely to be retired, with over four-in-five no longer working.

Gen Z were more likely to be in part-time or casual roles (just over 20%) and more likely to be unemployed or studying. Gen Z women, in particular, were more likely to be in part-time work than men.

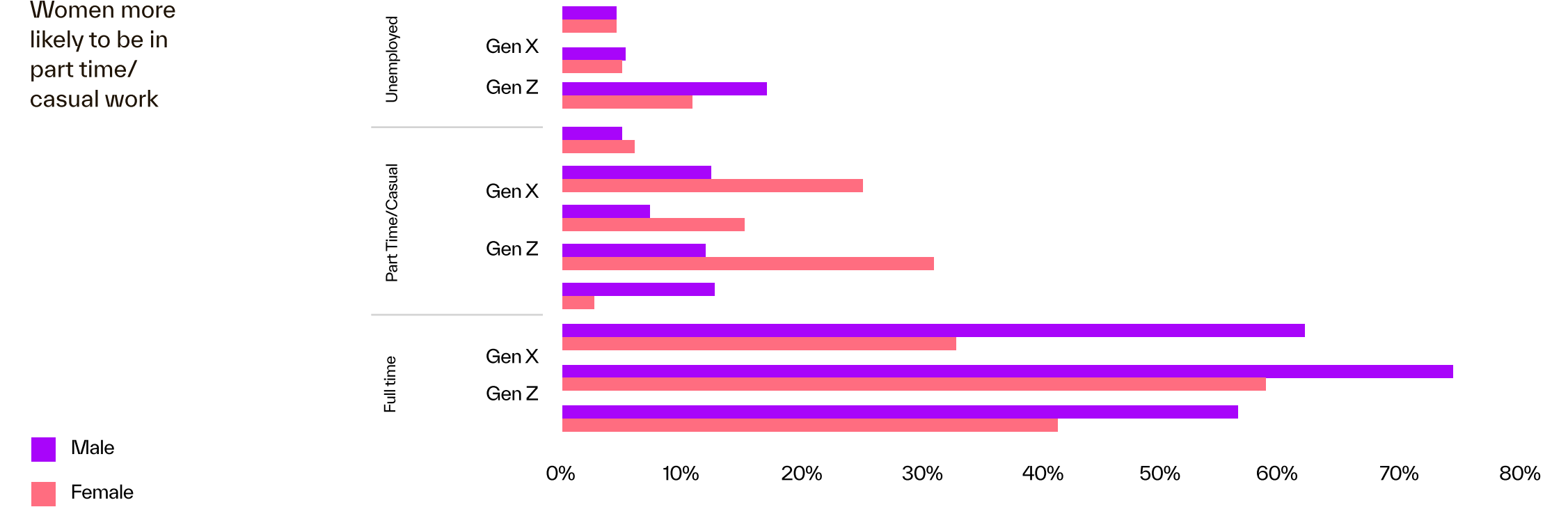
This translates into income differences. While most Gen Z women and men earn under \$100k, a larger share of women earn at the lower end of this range, with almost three-in-ten earning under \$40k compared with one-in-five men.

Lower incomes make it harder to save for a deposit and meet loan serviceability requirements.

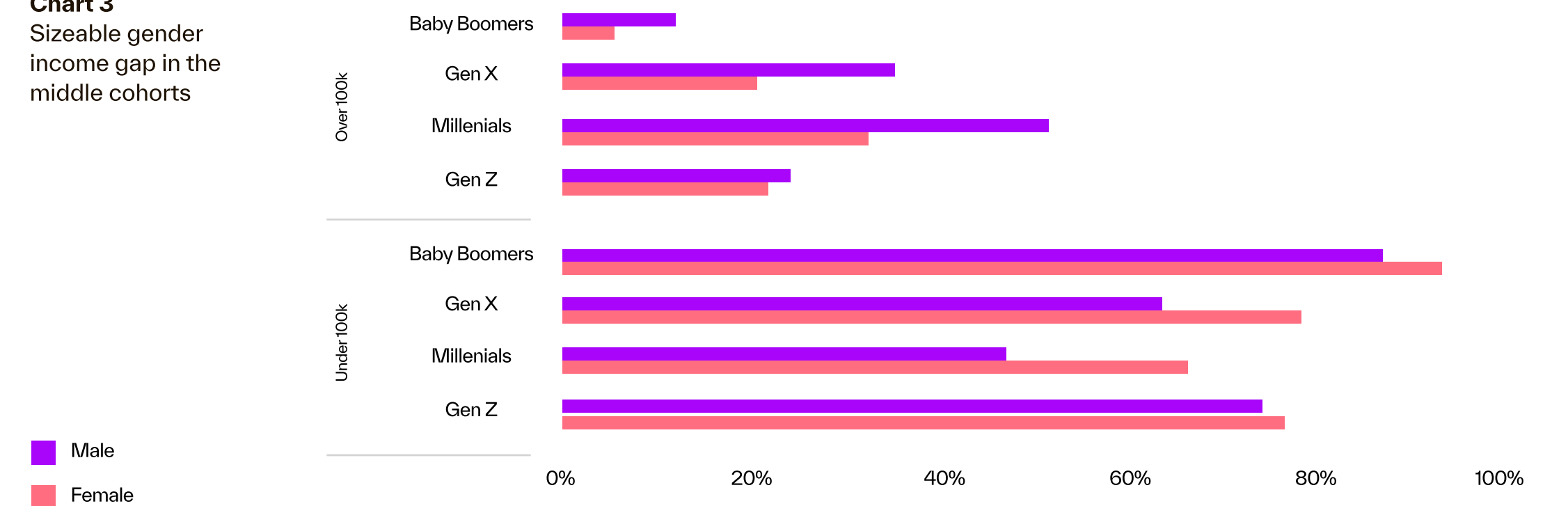
Around 86% of non-property owners earn less than \$100k, with slightly more women in this category. In contrast, 60% of those owning two or more properties earn more than \$100k.

The gender wage gap widens in mid-career. Among Millennials, two-thirds of women earn less than \$100k, compared with under half of Millennial men. Given the rising age of first-home buyers, this income disparity disadvantages women at the crucial point of entering the market

**Chart 2**  
Women more likely to be in part time/casual work



**Chart 3**  
Sizeable gender income gap in the middle cohorts



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Key Finding #2

## Younger women consider property ownership as less important...

Views differ sharply by age. Three-quarters of Baby Boomers and almost as many Gen Xers consider property ownership very important, with women slightly more likely to prioritise it.

Among Millennials and Gen Z, the importance drops significantly. Fewer than four-in-ten Gen Z respondents consider property ownership highly important, with women again rating it lower than men.

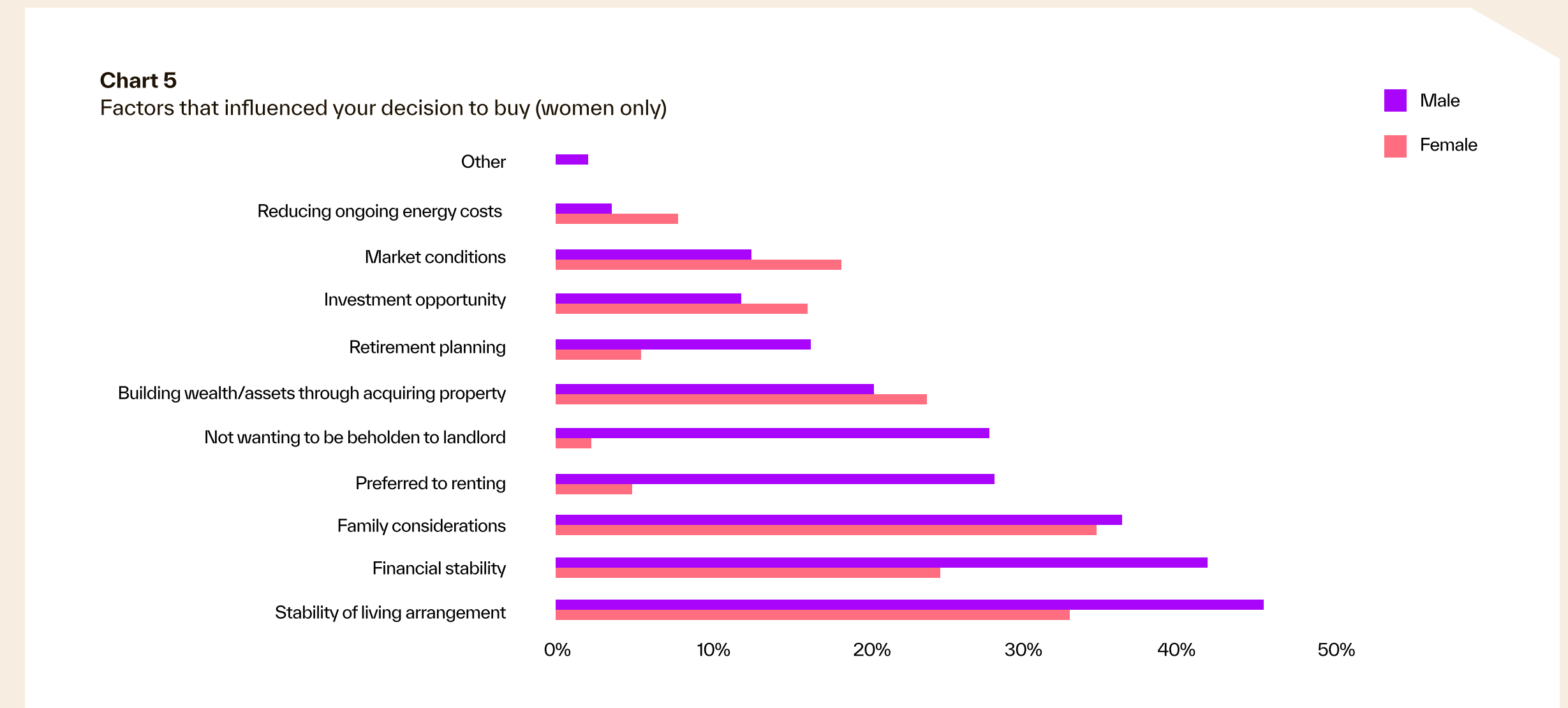
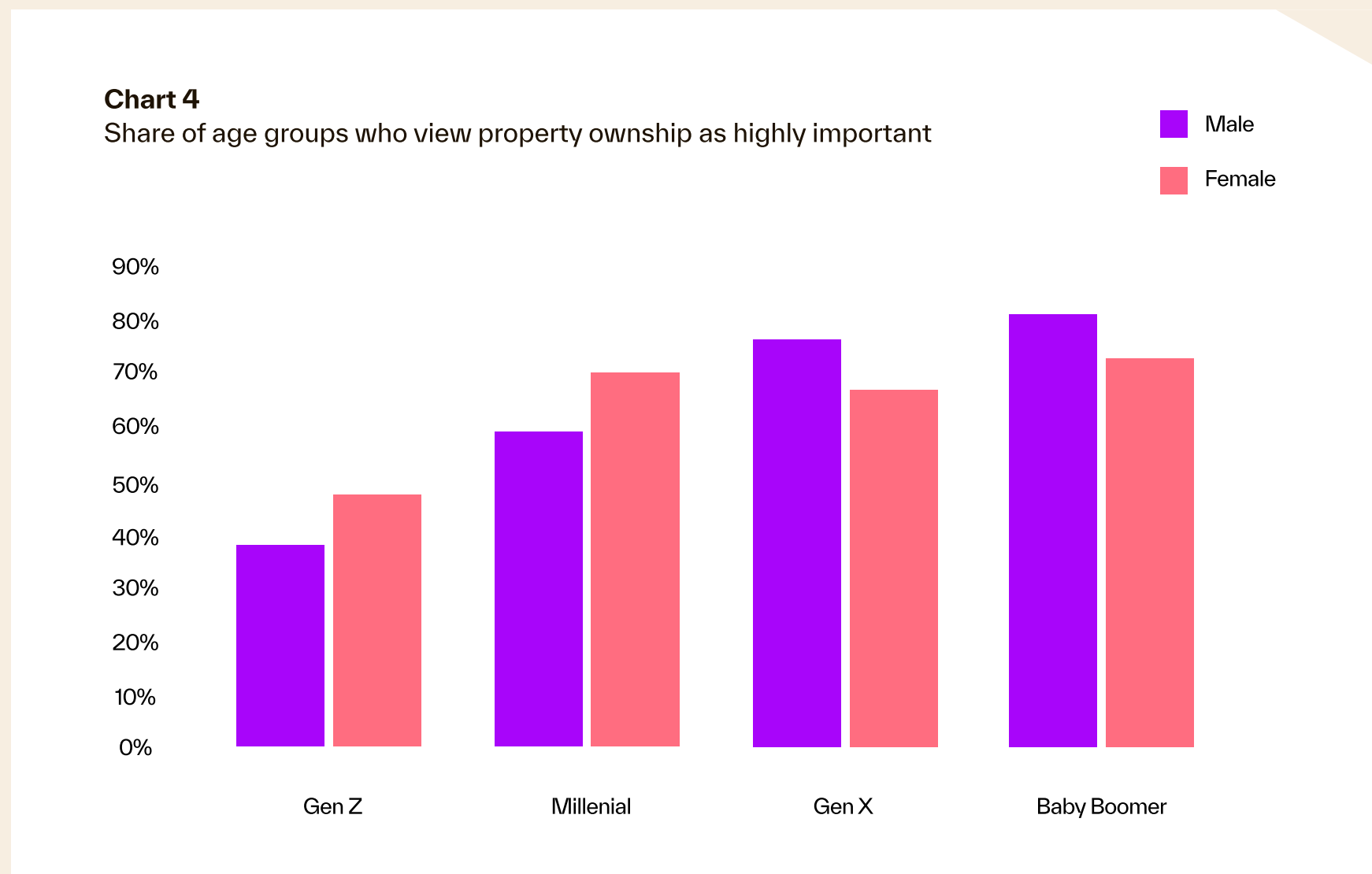
While this may reflect life stage, declining affordability may also be discouraging younger cohorts from aspiring to buy, particularly Gen Z

## ...and those that buy have different influences to other age groups

For those who have purchased property, the key influences were financial stability (40%), stable living arrangements (39%), family considerations (34%) and a preference not to rent (27%).

Gen Z property owners placed less weight on these factors. Notably, only 5% of female Gen Z buyers said they preferred owning to renting, a striking contrast to older cohorts.

Gen Z were more likely to cite market conditions, reducing energy costs, investment opportunities and building wealth as motivators.



Key Finding #3

## Barriers to entry are both financial and knowledge based

Among Gen Z women, almost two-thirds say they lack the savings needed for upfront costs, compared with half of Gen Z men.

Two-in-five Gen Z women say they are not ready or looking to buy – higher than Gen Z men.

Mortgage qualification is a larger issue for older cohorts, with around one-quarter of Millennial, Gen X and Baby Boomer women reporting difficulty, compared with one-in-ten Gen Z.

Gen Z are also less likely to know how to start the property-buying process: one-quarter of men and one-in-five women lack understanding, compared with less than 10% of older groups – highlighting an opportunity for education.



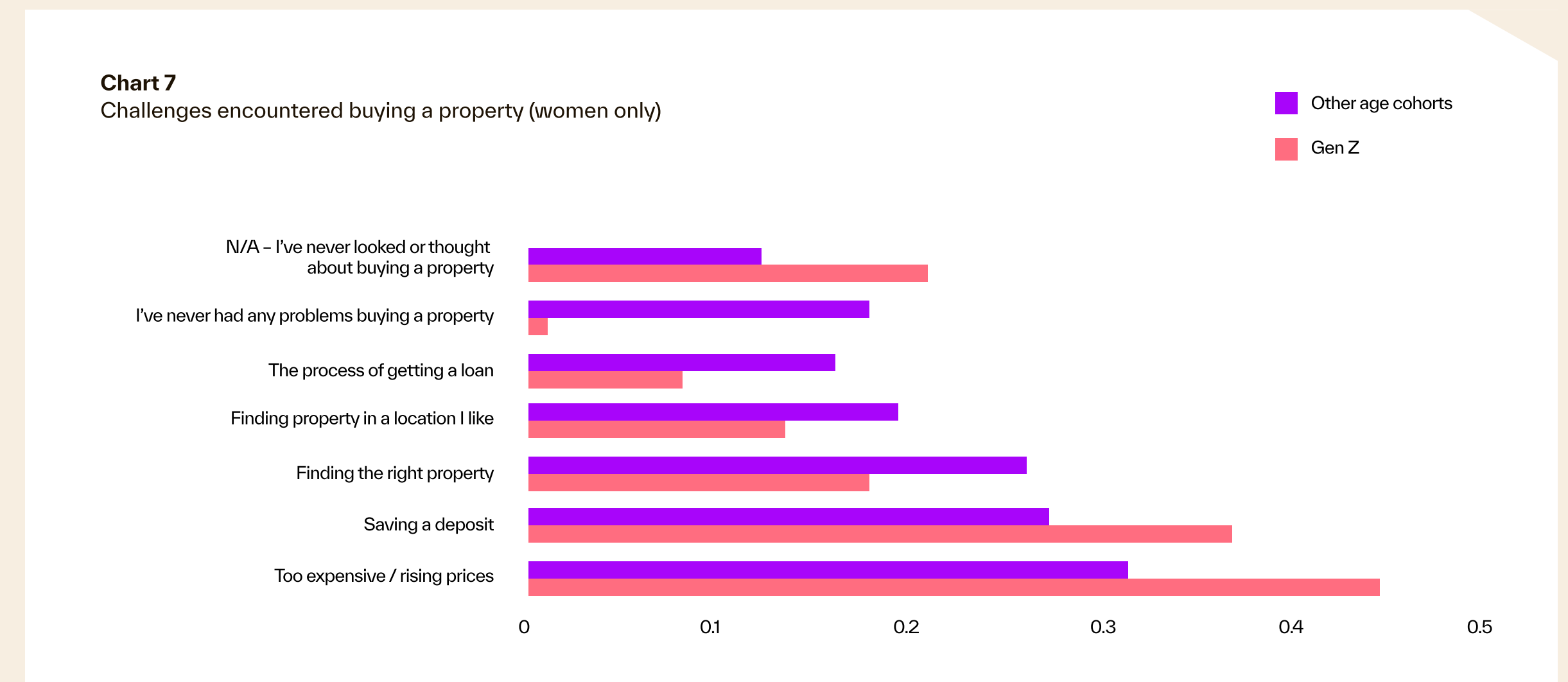
Key Finding #4

## For some younger women, just starting the process is a challenge (beyond the financial burden)

Younger women face the greatest challenges. Almost half of Gen Z women say prices are too high or rising too quickly, compared with one-third of other cohorts.

Two-in-five Gen Z women struggled to save a deposit, compared with one-quarter of other women. Gen Z were also more likely to experience competition from other buyers.

Only 1% of Gen Z women said they had never encountered issues when buying, compared with two-in-five Baby Boomer women. One-in-five Gen Z women say they haven't looked or thought about buying at all.



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Key Finding #5

## Sustainability is a key priority for younger Australian home owners, particularly women, although costs limit their ability to make major upgrades

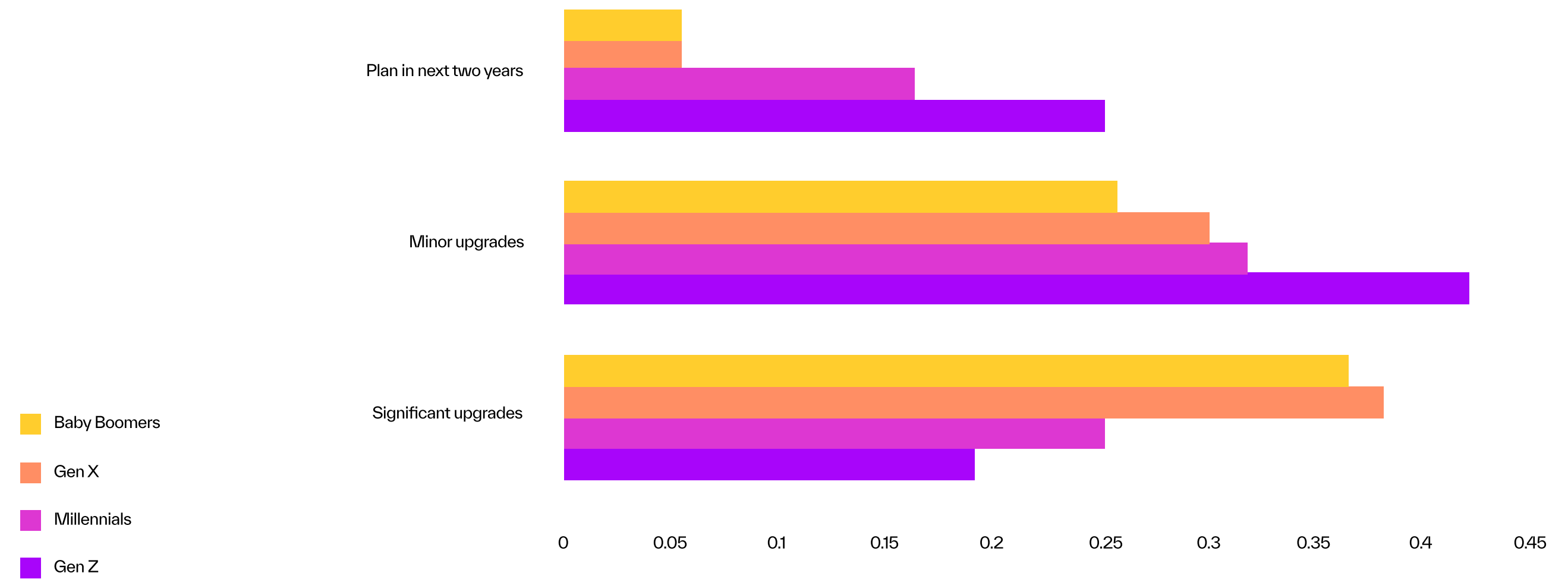
Improving home sustainability is important to Australians: over three-in-five home owners have made sustainability upgrades, with similar shares among men and women.

Men were more likely to make significant upgrades (solar panels, double glazing, insulation). Women were more likely to make minor or low-cost improvements, such as LED conversions or draft proofing.

Among women, Gen Z were the most active in making minor upgrades, with this falling as age increased. Major upgrades were more common among Baby Boomers, likely reflecting greater disposable income.

One-in-four Gen Z women plan to make sustainability upgrades in the next two years, showing strong underlying demand. A similar share of Gen Z men also intend to upgrade.

Chart 8  
Sustainability upgrades



## Conclusion

This year's *Women and Property Report* highlights widening disparities in income, investment capability and access to home ownership — challenges that fall disproportionately on younger women. At the same time, it reveals strong aspirations among women to build wealth, improve their homes and contribute to a more sustainable housing future. Ensuring women are supported into property ownership remains a critical national priority.

