

# Housing needs and preferences of Indigenous users of community resources in Montreal

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de l'Île-de-Montréal

Québec



McGill  
UNIVERSITY

MMFIM

# Funding

- Montreal Urban Aboriginal Strategy NETWORK
- Movement to end Homelessness in Montreal
- *Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones*
- McGill University and the Research Centre of the Douglas Mental Health University Institute also contributed to the realization of this study via their support for the principal investigator.

# Project steering committee

- Adrienne Campbell, Executive Director, Projets autochtones du Québec
- Rachel Deutsch, Coordinator of the Homelessness and Justice Program, Native Women's Shelter of Montreal/First Peoples Justice Center of Montreal
- James McGregor, (then) Executive Director, Movement to end homelessness in Montreal
- Tealey Normandin, Outreach Worker, Native Women's Shelter of Montreal
- Brett Pineau, Executive Director, Native Friendship Centre of Montreal

# Other acknowledgments

- Anita Tso and Natalie Buckingham, volunteers
- Staff and service users who helped formulate the questionnaire through their participation in focus groups
- Survey respondents!

# Introduction: Why this study?

- Over-representation of Indigenous people (especially Inuit) among the homeless population in Montreal (I Count MTL 2015)
- Net migration of Inuit towards southern cities, notably Montréal
- Difficulties many Indigenous people experience integrating into urban settings
- Fundamental role of housing in quality of life

# Overall study goal

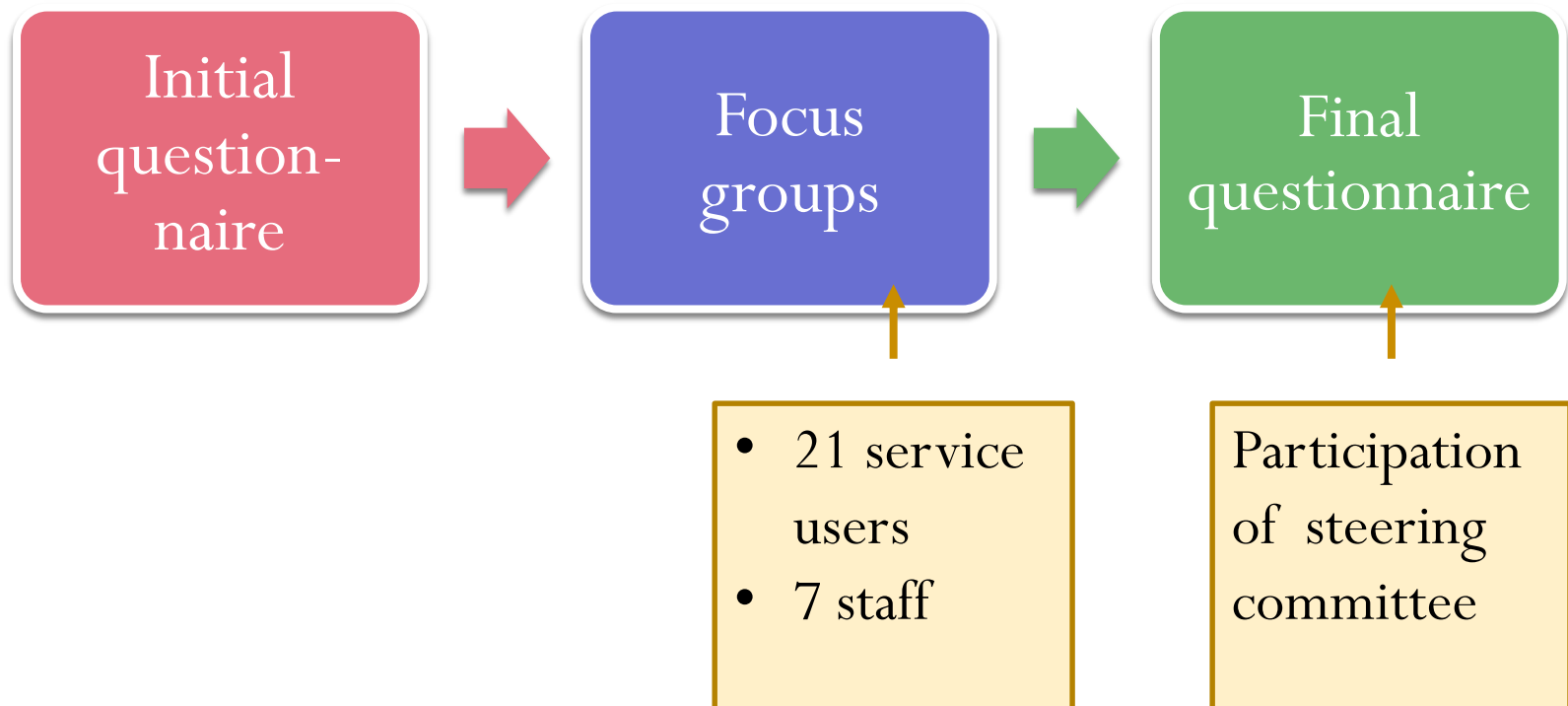
## **ANSWER THE QUESTION:**

*"What are the expressed housing needs and preferences of Indigenous people who use the services of the following community organizations: (1) Chez Doris, (2) Face à Face, (3) Ivirtivik, (4) The Open Door, (5) The Montreal Native Friendship Center, (6) Montreal Native Women's Shelter, (7) Plein Milieu and (8) Projets autochtones du Québec? "*

## More specifically...

- What do precariously housed or homeless Indigenous people consider to be desirable housing situations?
- What is their residential profile?
- What services do they use, and what services do they express a need for?
- How do responses to these questions differ according to First Nations vs Inuit identity, men vs women?

# Methodology: questionnaire development



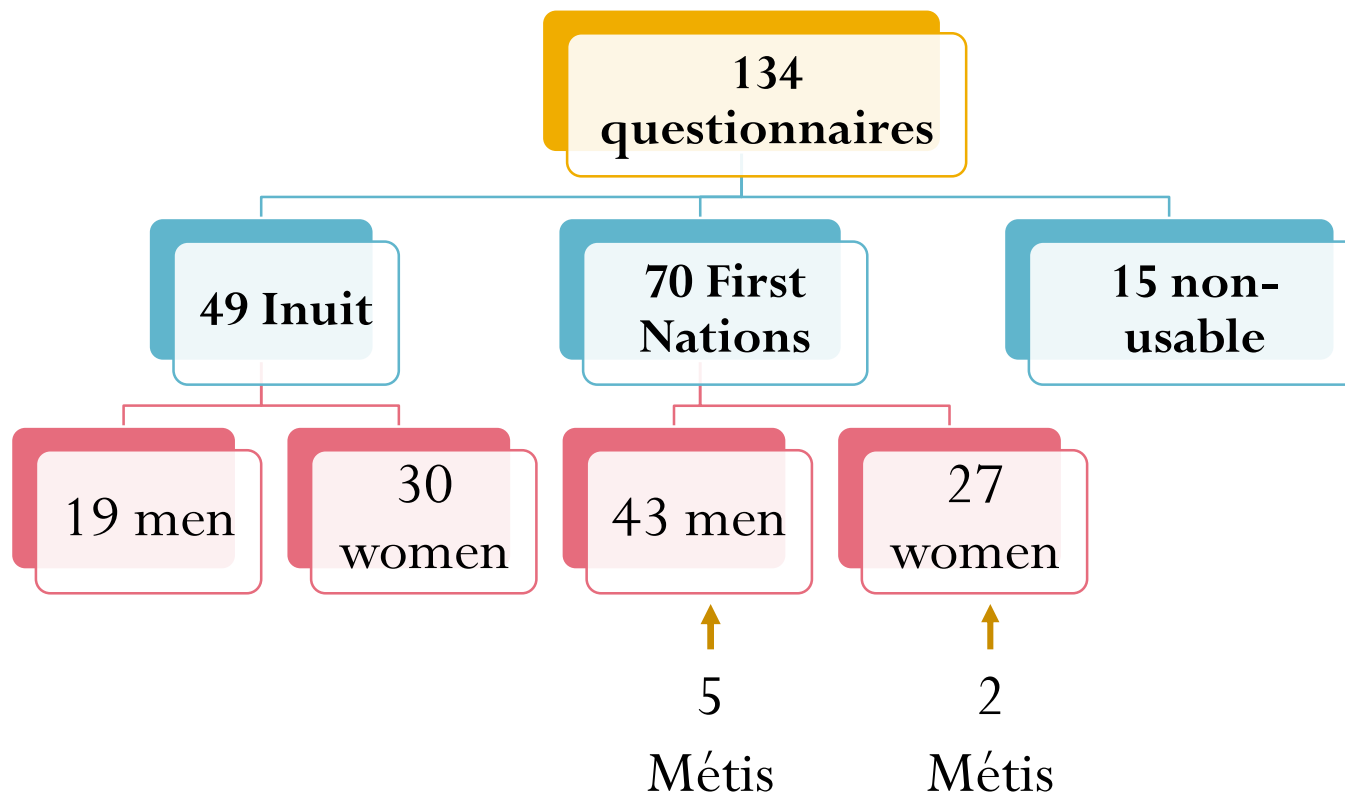


Staff and volunteers administered questionnaire in the 8 organizations

134 participants

- Convenience sample
- As many service users as we could interest in participating

# How the 134 questionnaires were classified

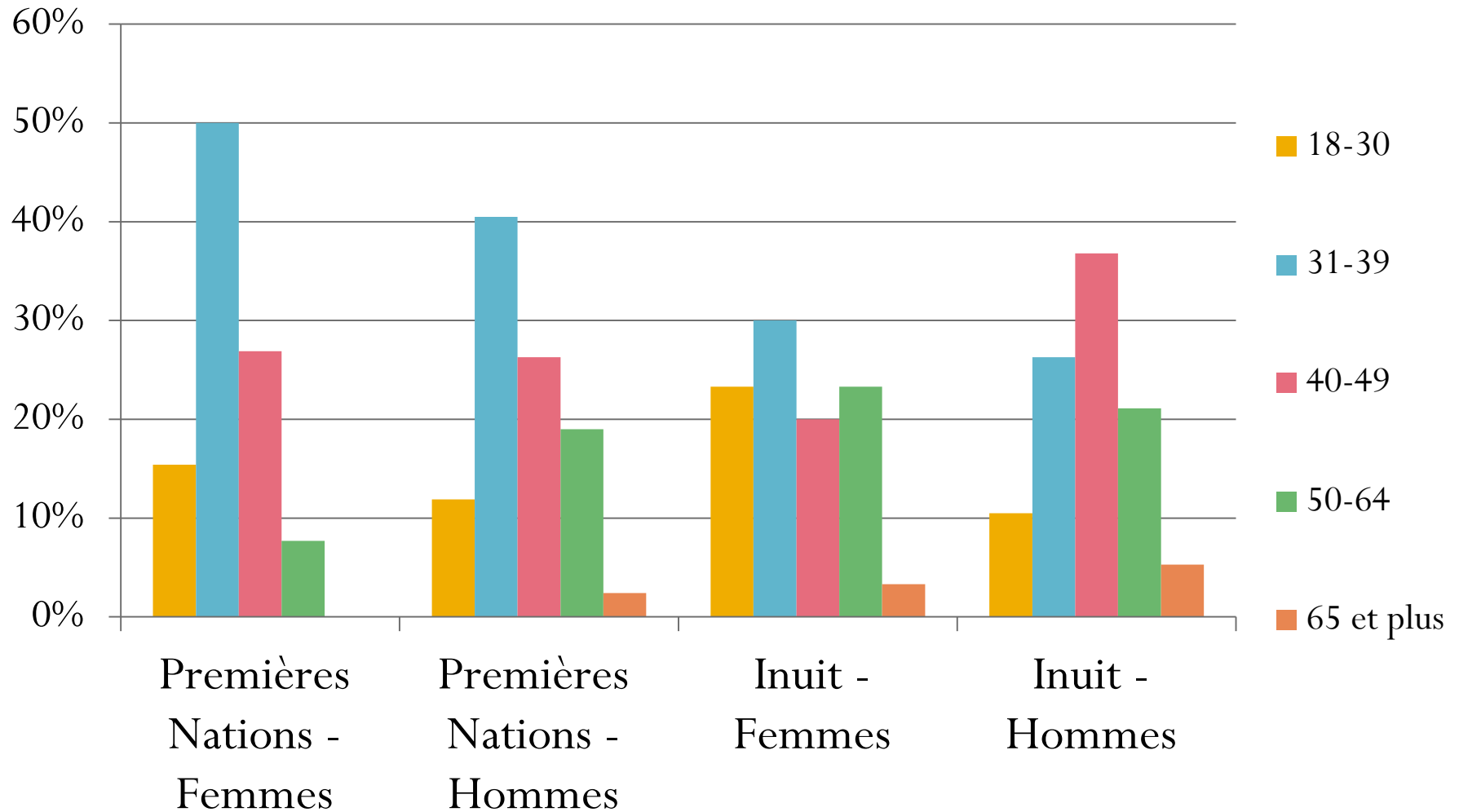


# Ethics approval

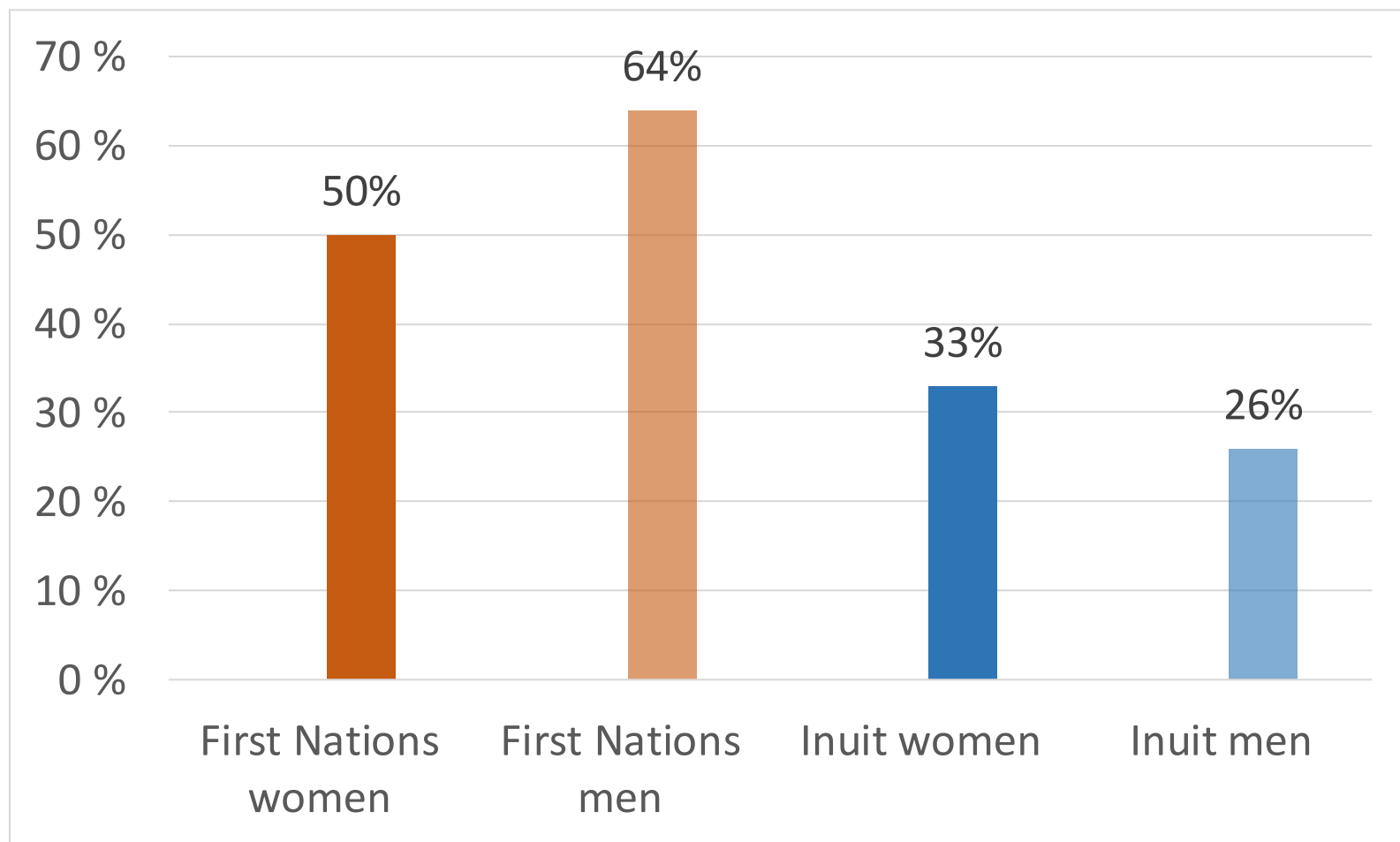
**Douglas Mental Health University Institute  
Research Ethics Board**

# Results

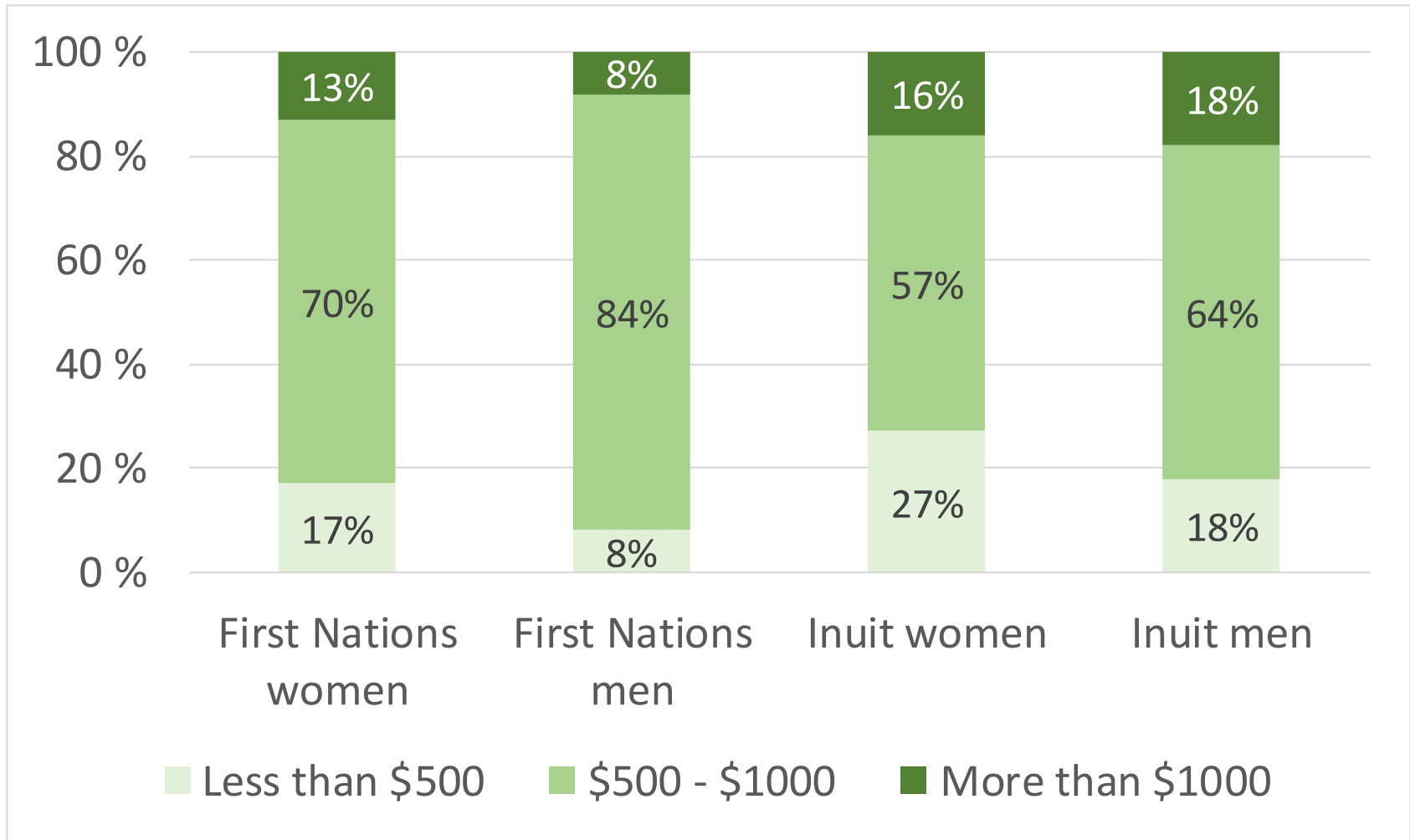
# Inuit respondents, men especially, were older



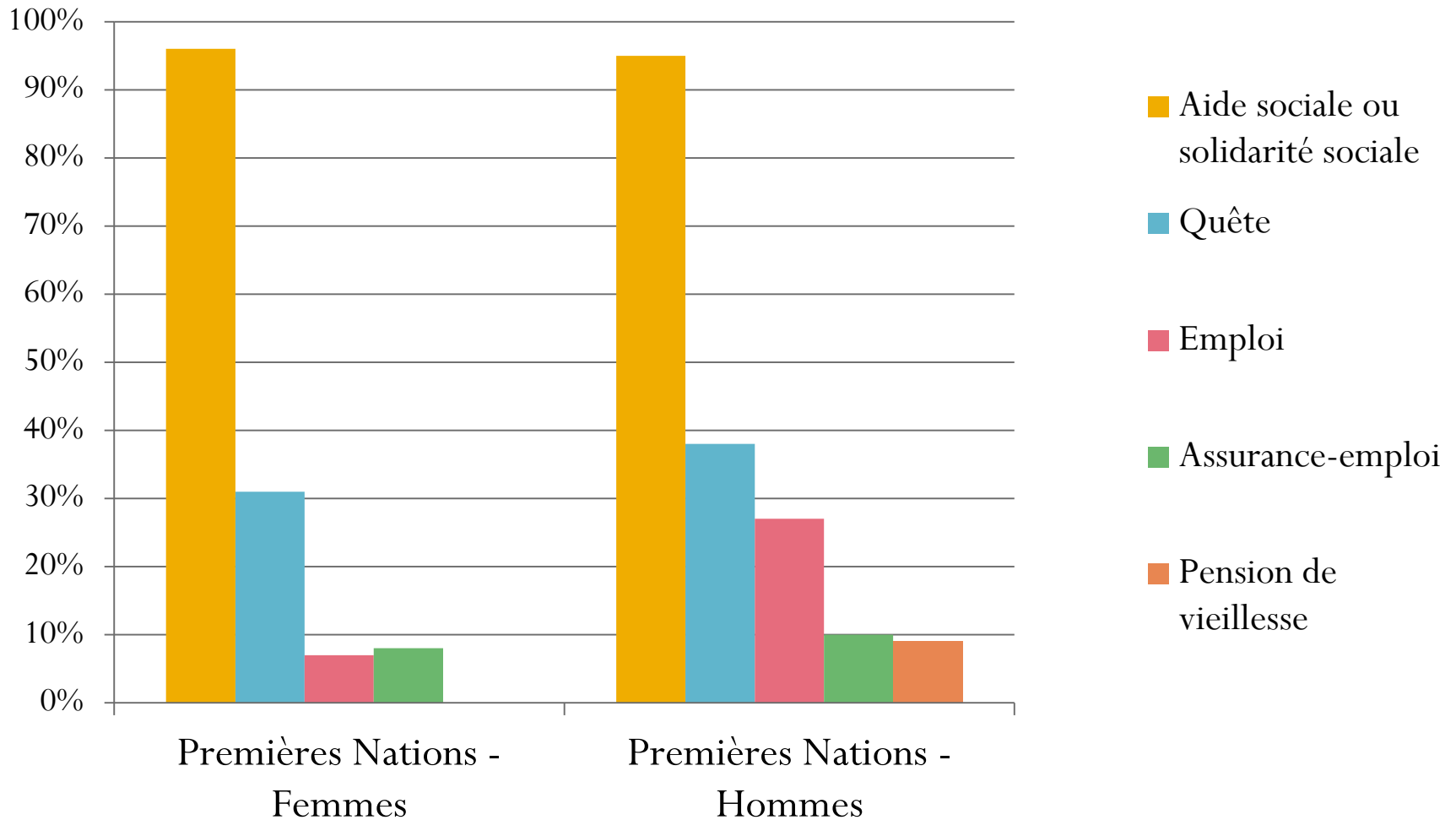
# Inuit less likely to speak French



# Inuit, especially women, more likely to report very low monthly incomes

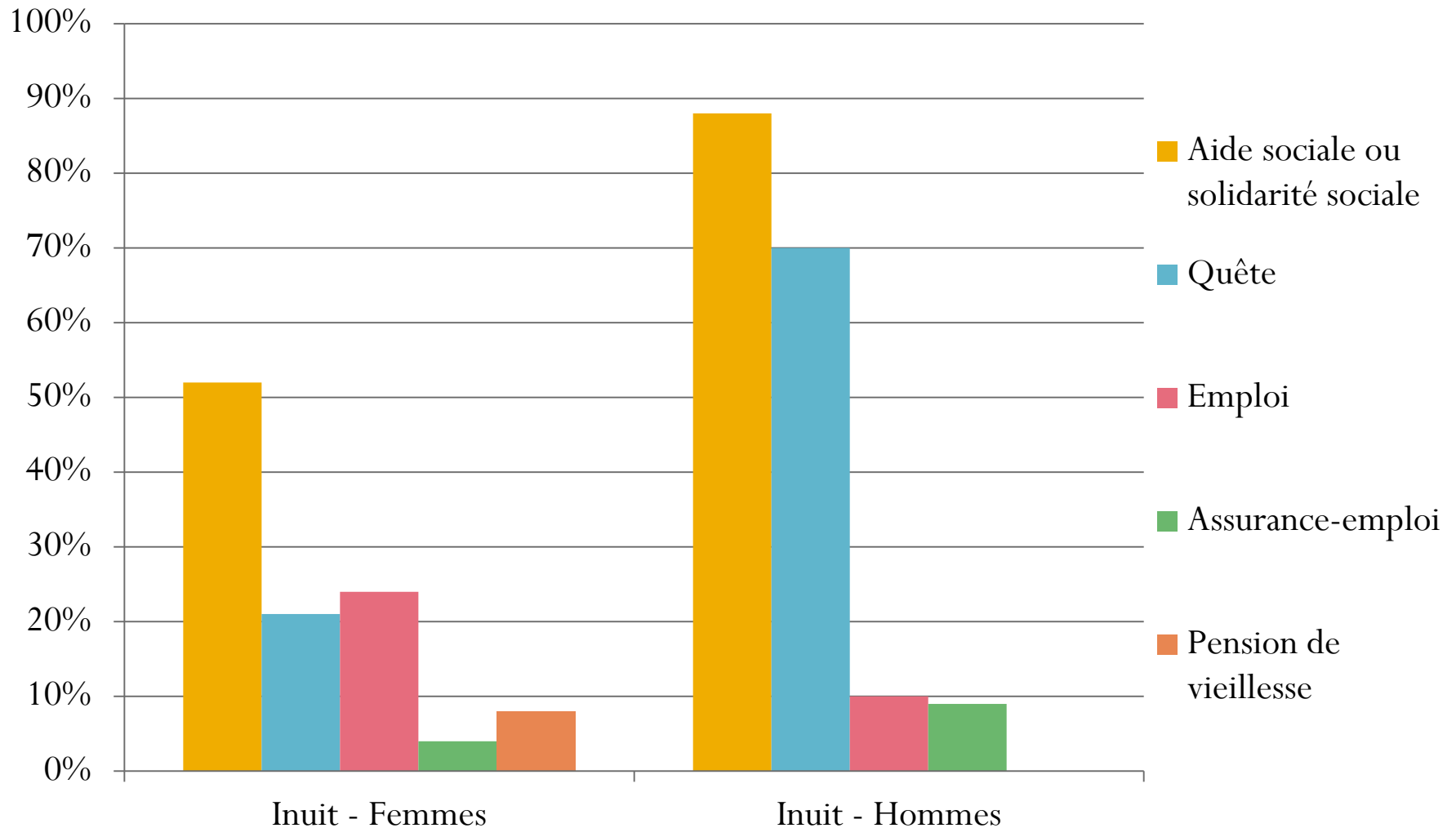


# Income sources : First Nations

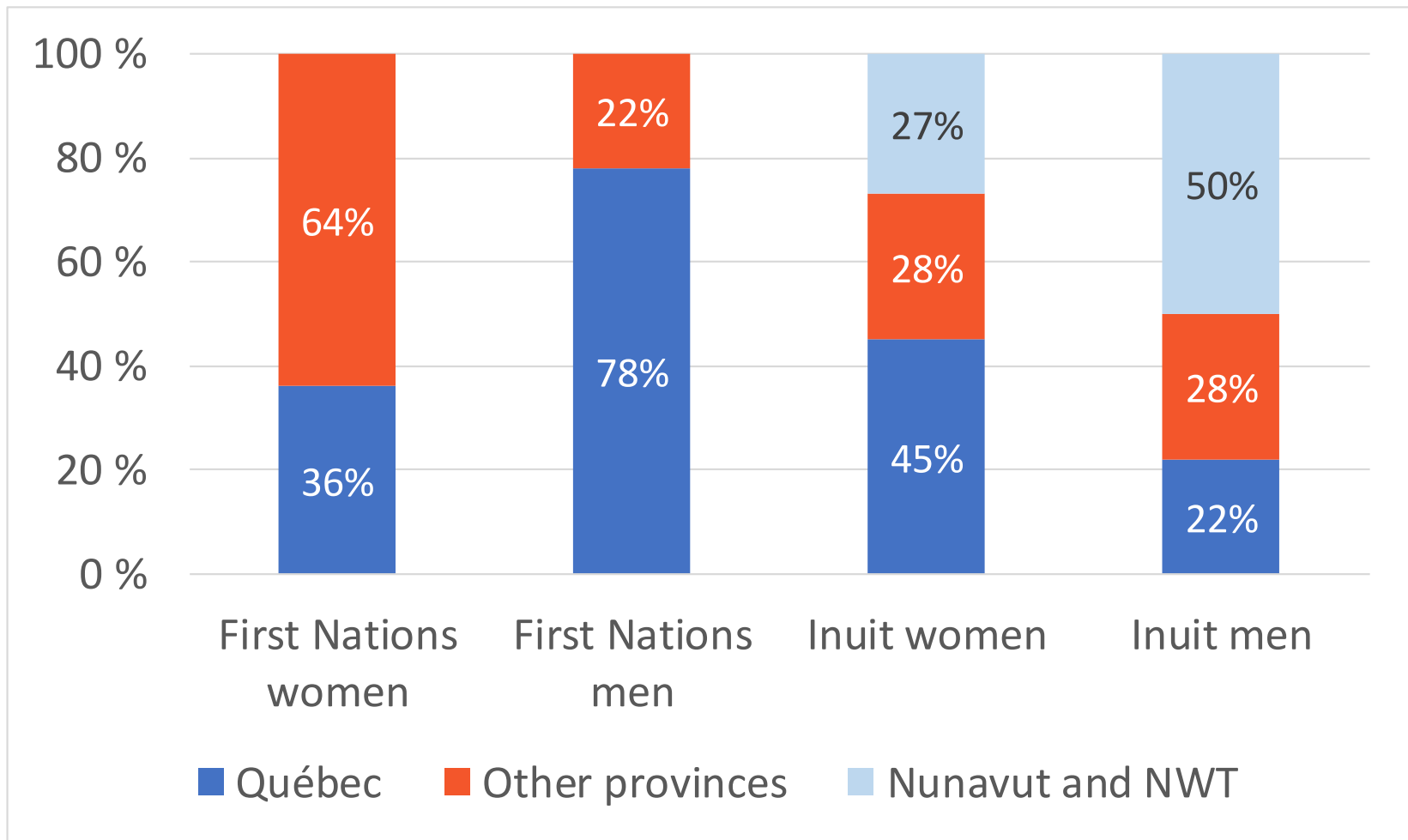




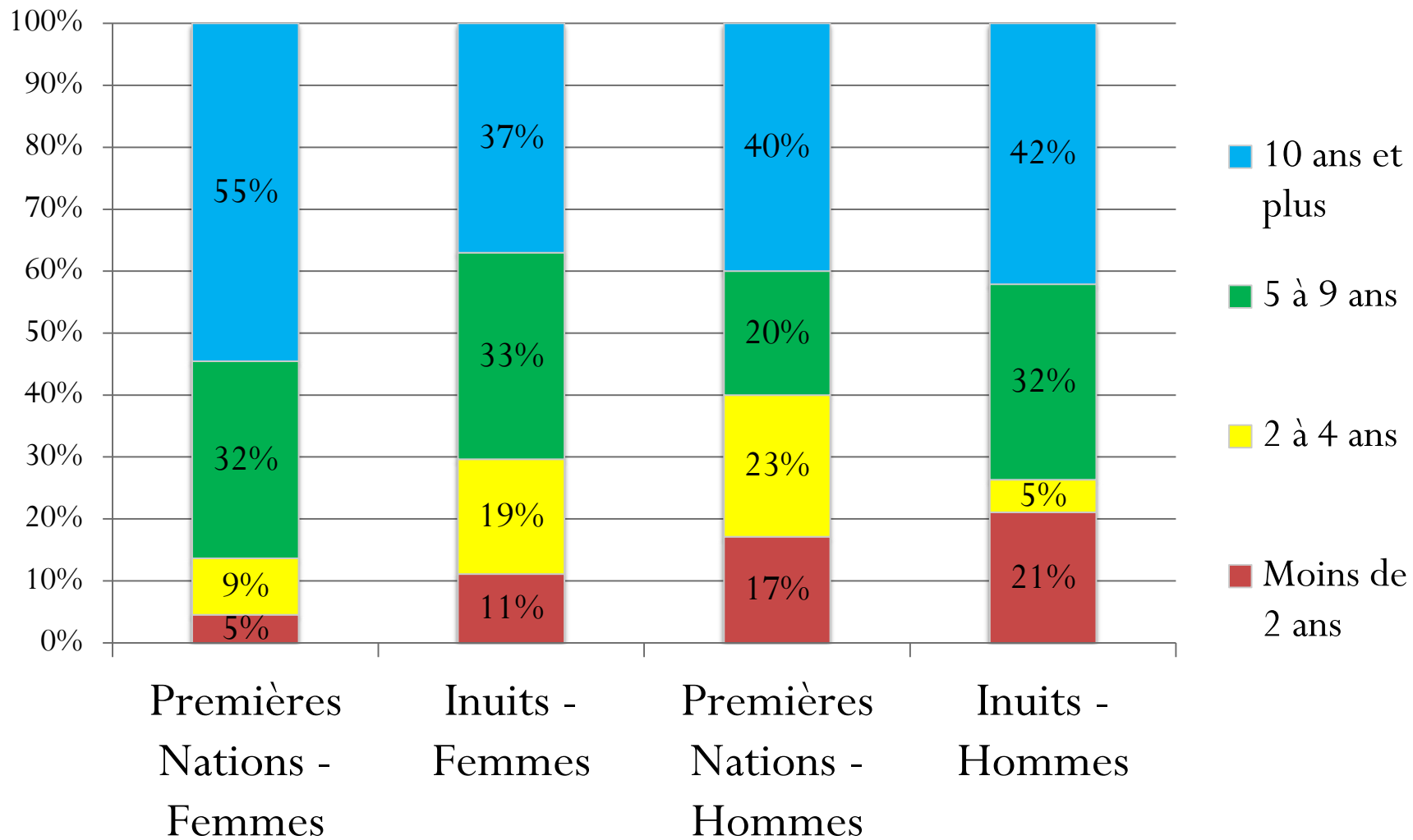
# Income sources: Inuit



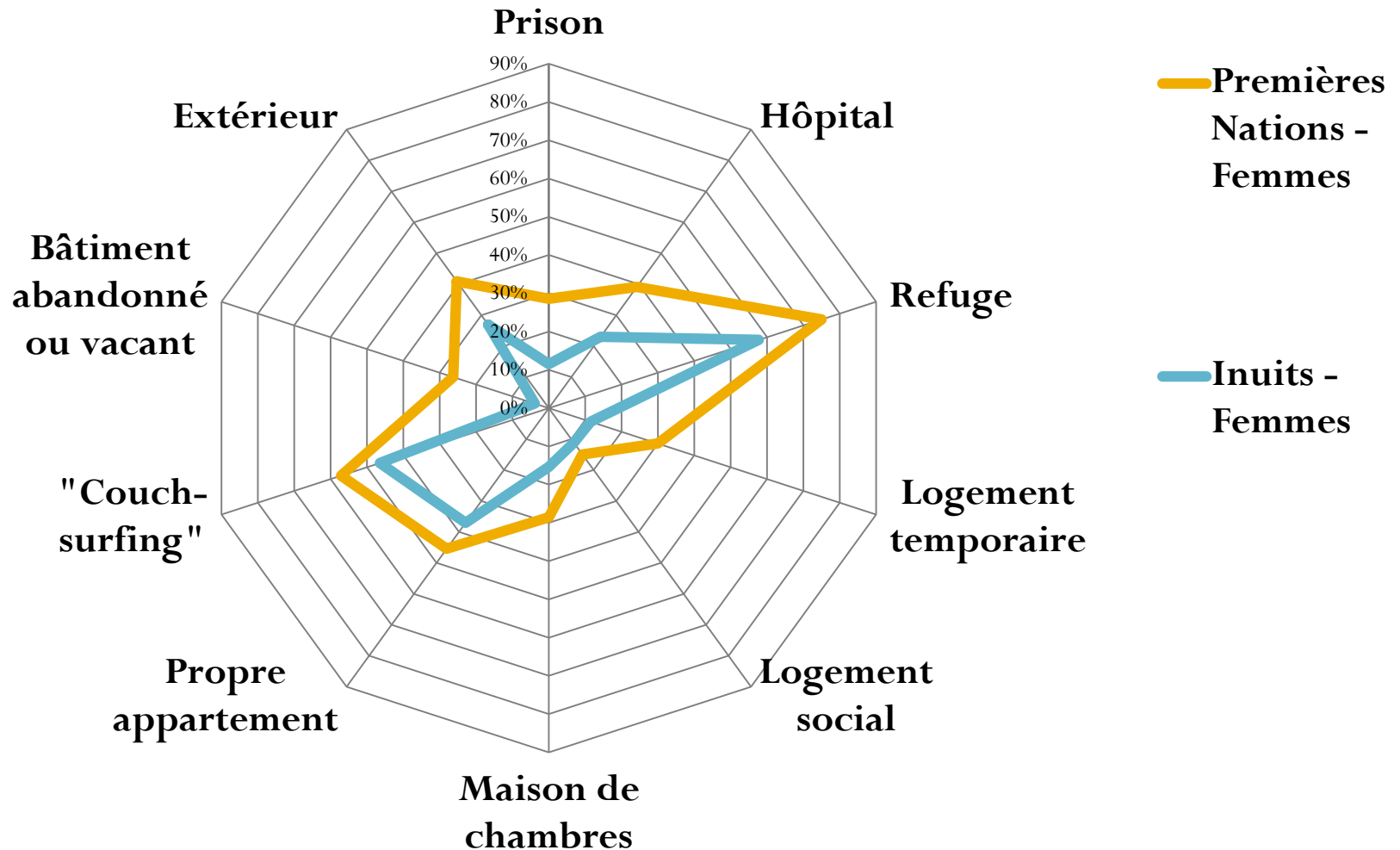
# FN men much more likely to come from Québec; Inuit men often from NWT and Nunavut



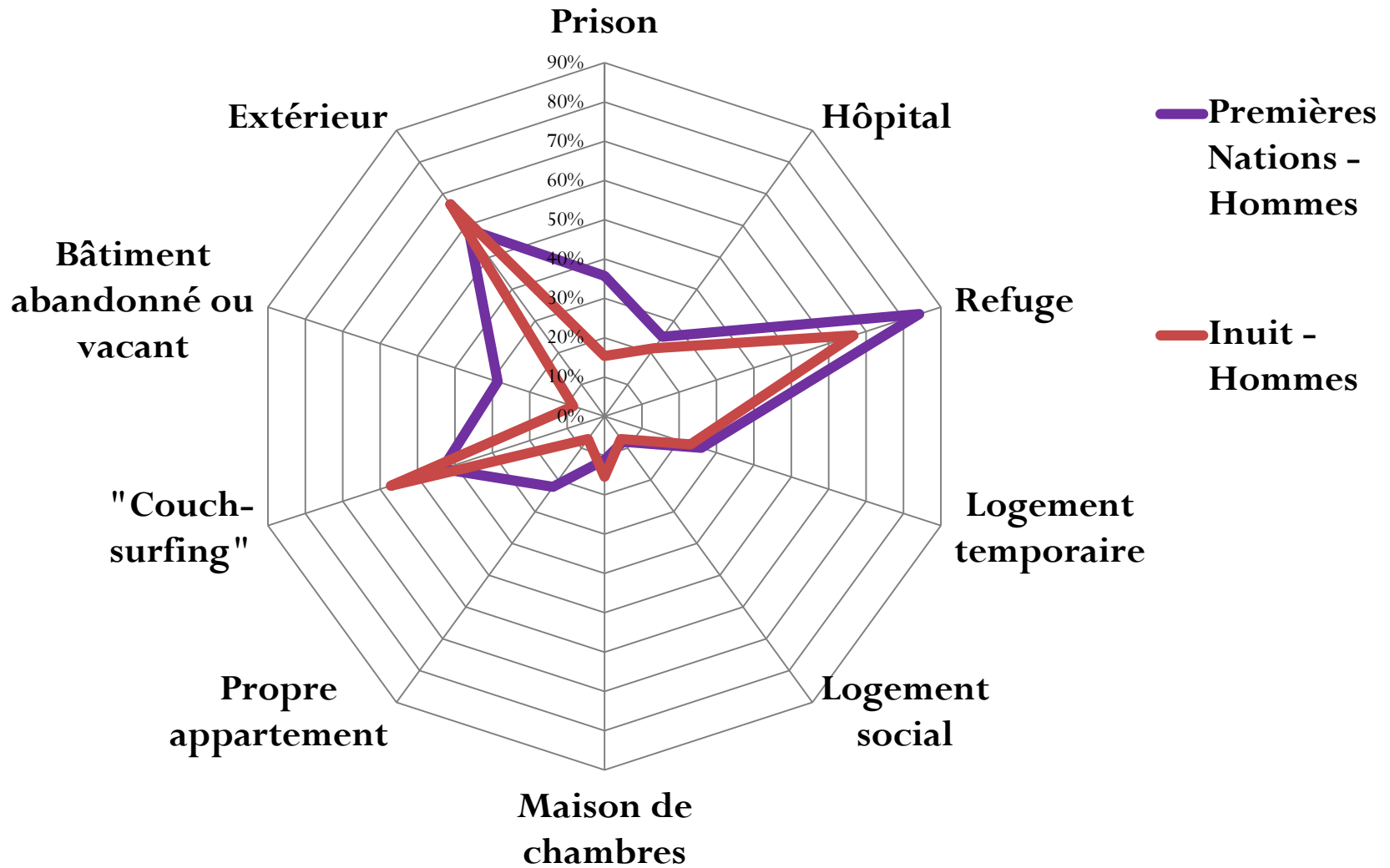
# Most respondents in Montreal for 5 years or more – esp FN women



# FN women in more types of places than Inuit women in past 6 months

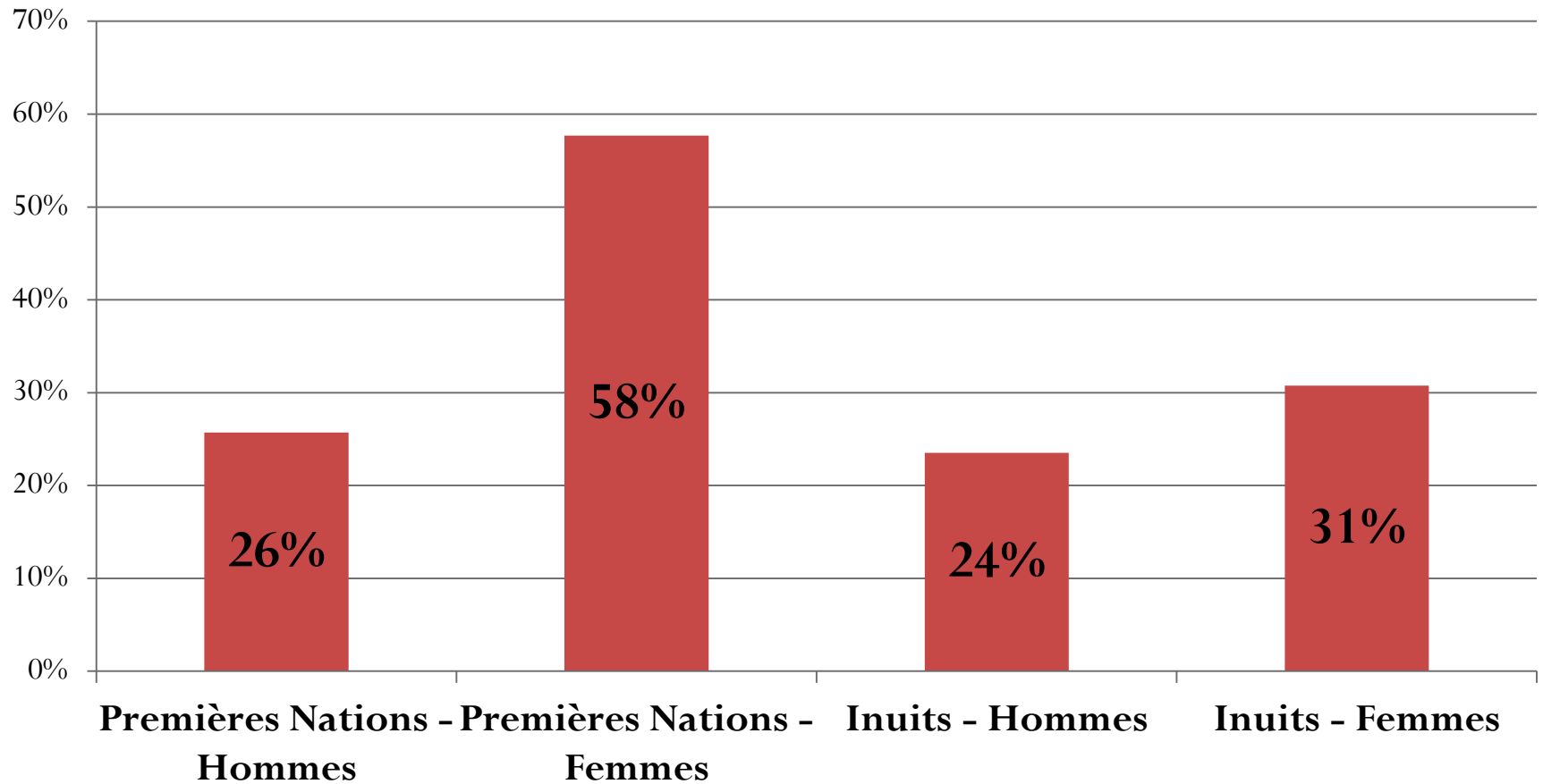


Similar pattern for men, except Inuit more often in couch surfing or outside

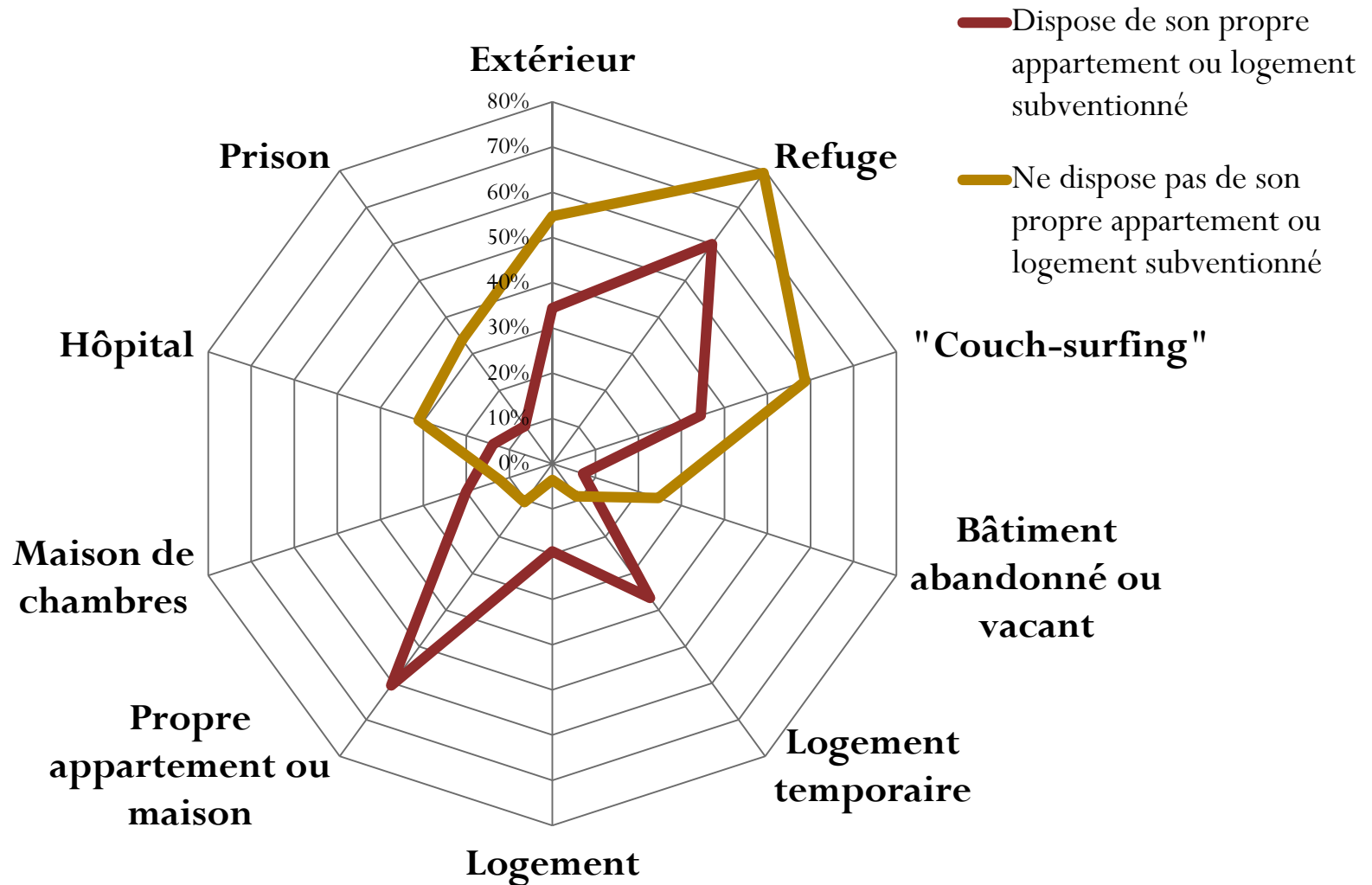


# Women, especially FN, more likely to have their own place to stay

Do you currently live in your own apartment, house or subsidized housing?

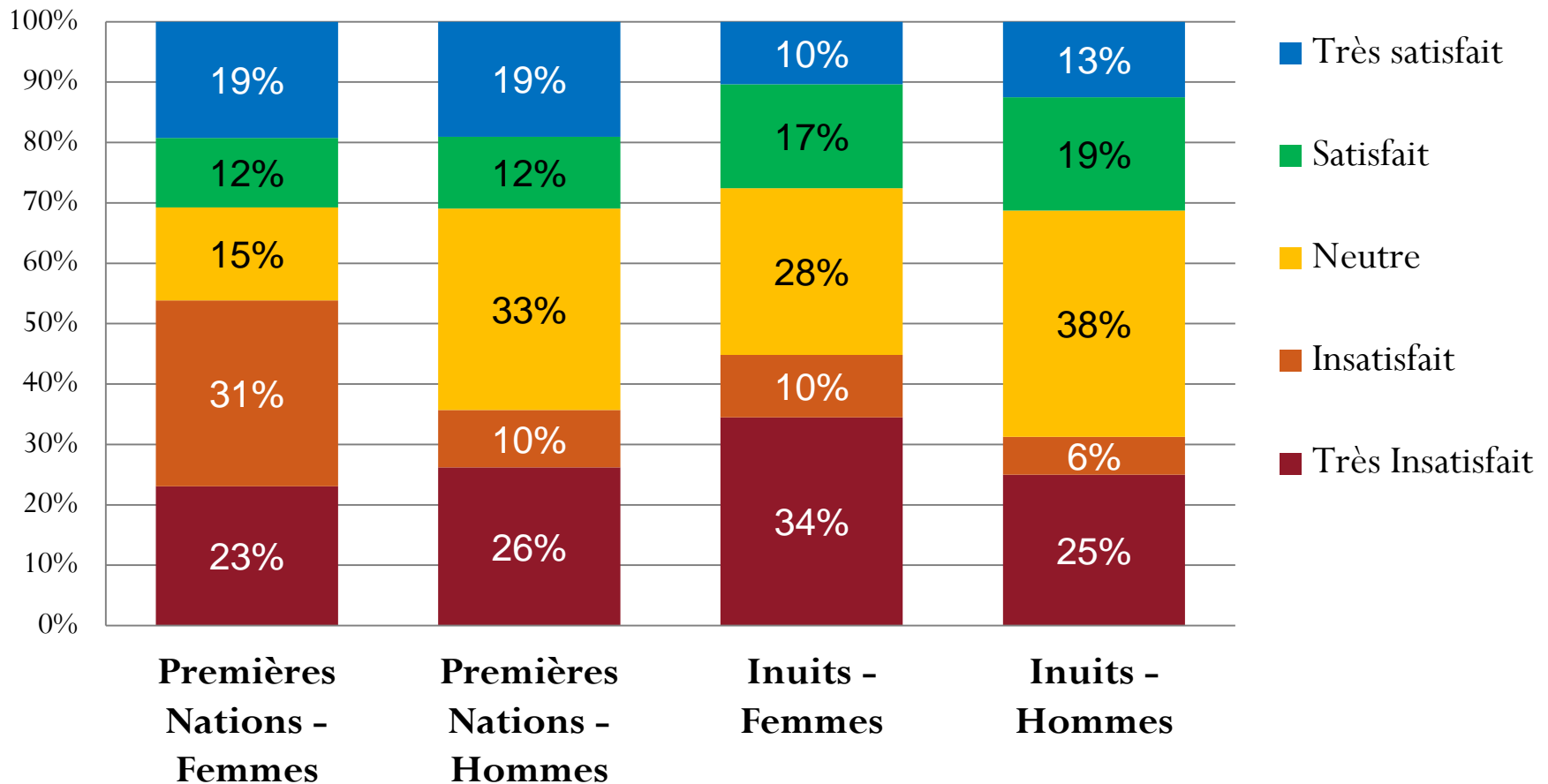


# People with their own place less often in prison, hospitalized in past 6 months



# Few satisfied with current housing

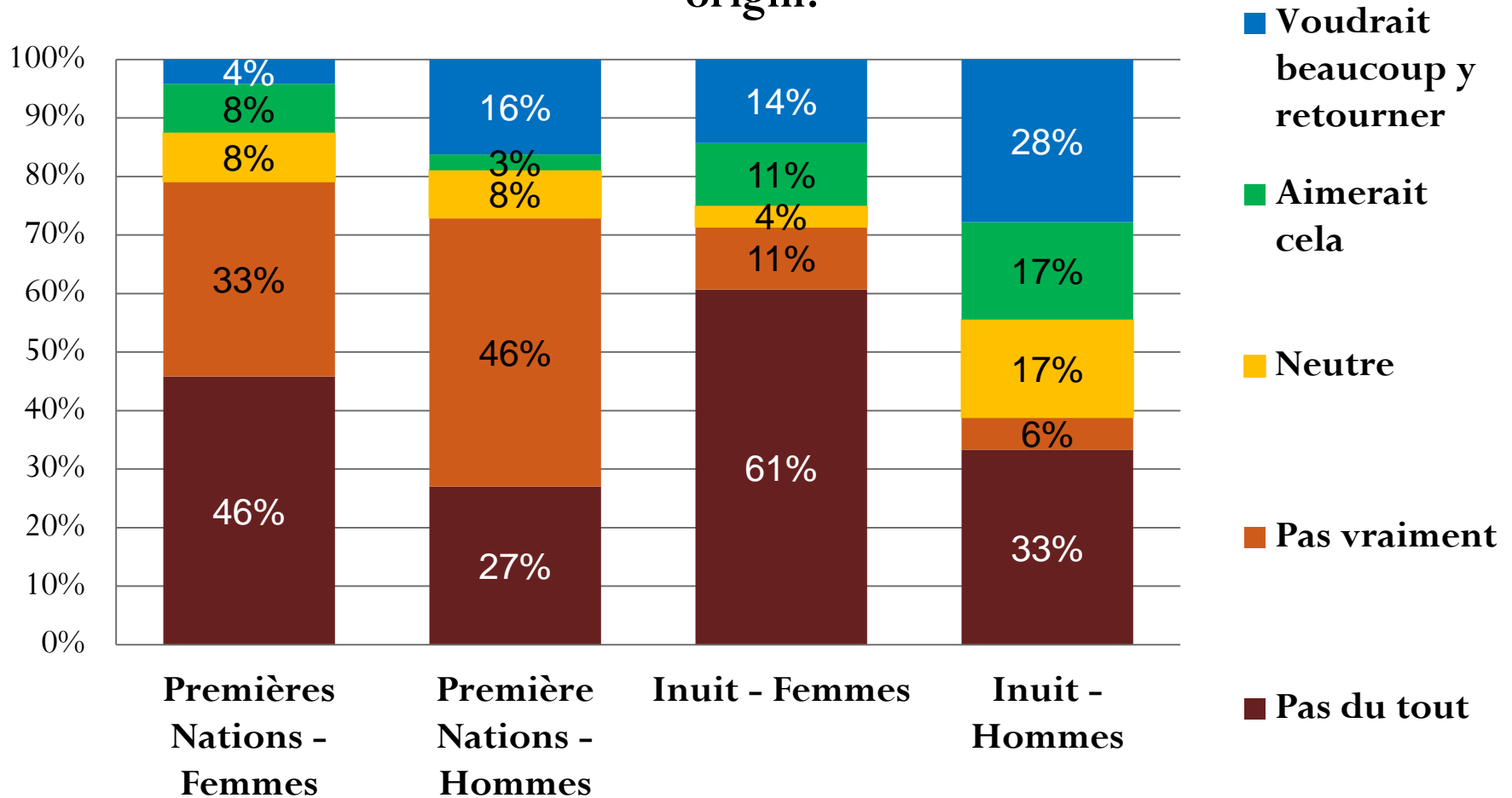
How do you feel with regards to your current housing situation?





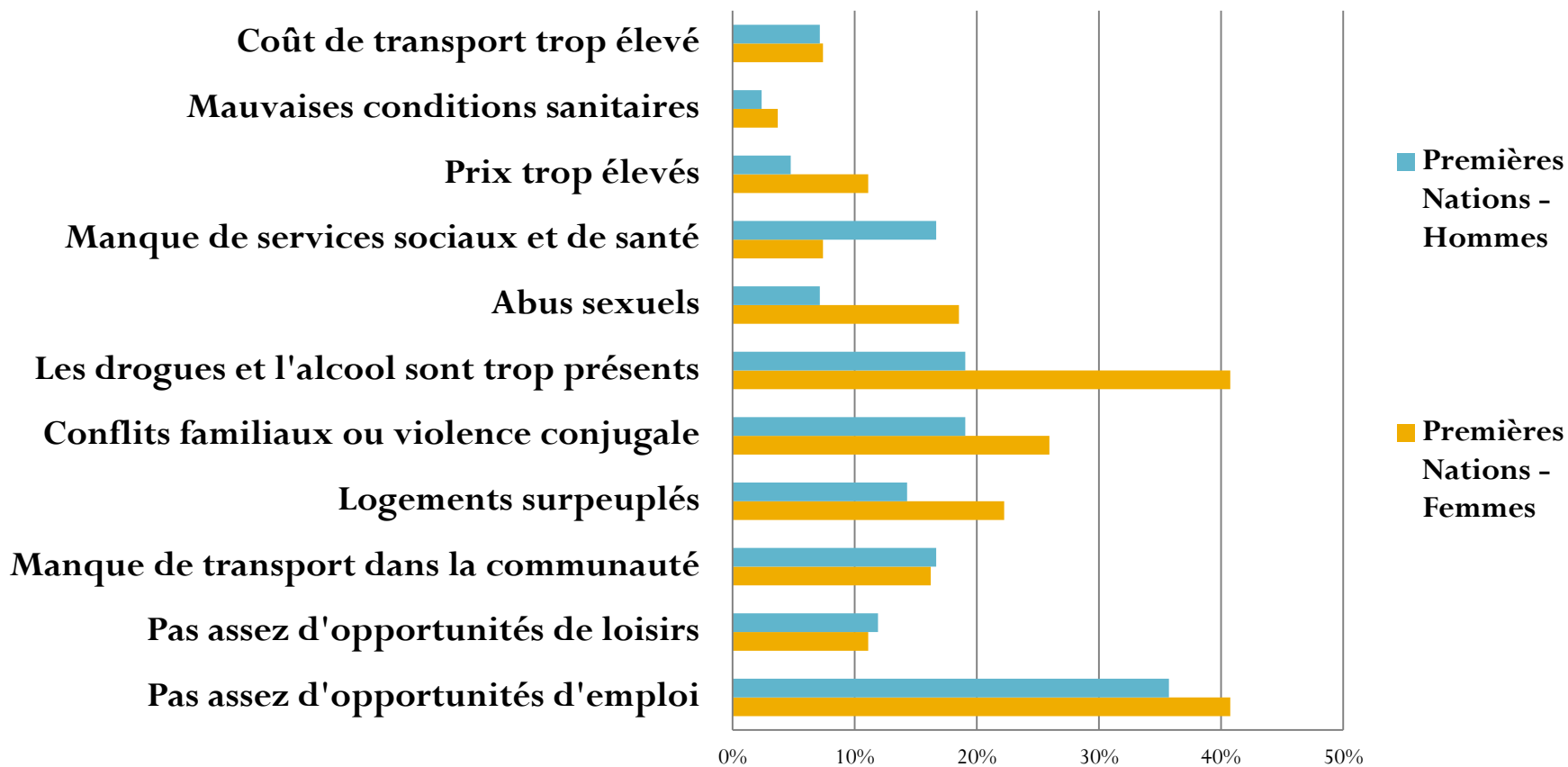
# Inuit men most likely to want to return to community of origin

To what extent would you like to return to your community of origin?



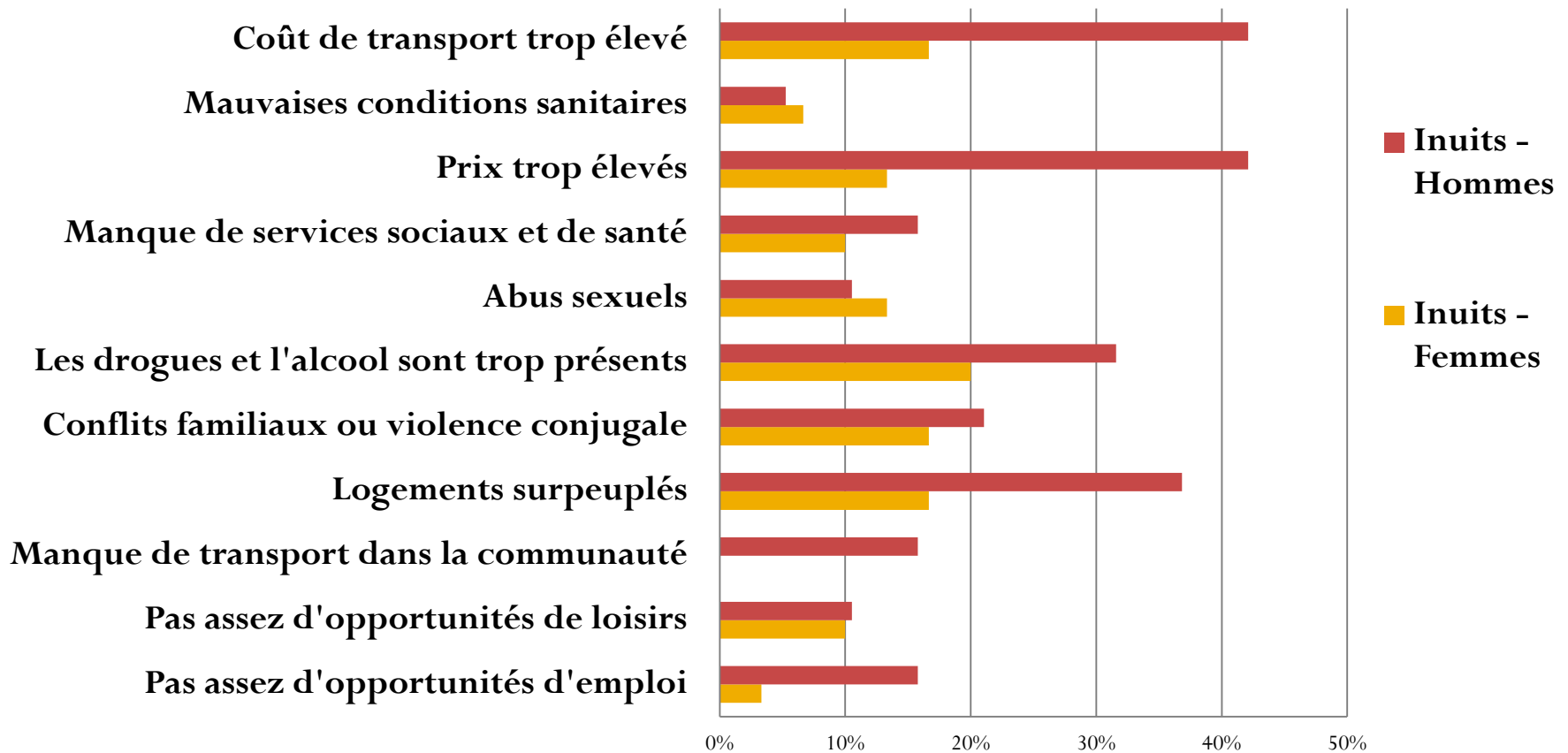
# Reasons for not returning – First Nations

What are the reasons why you have not gone back to live there, if any?



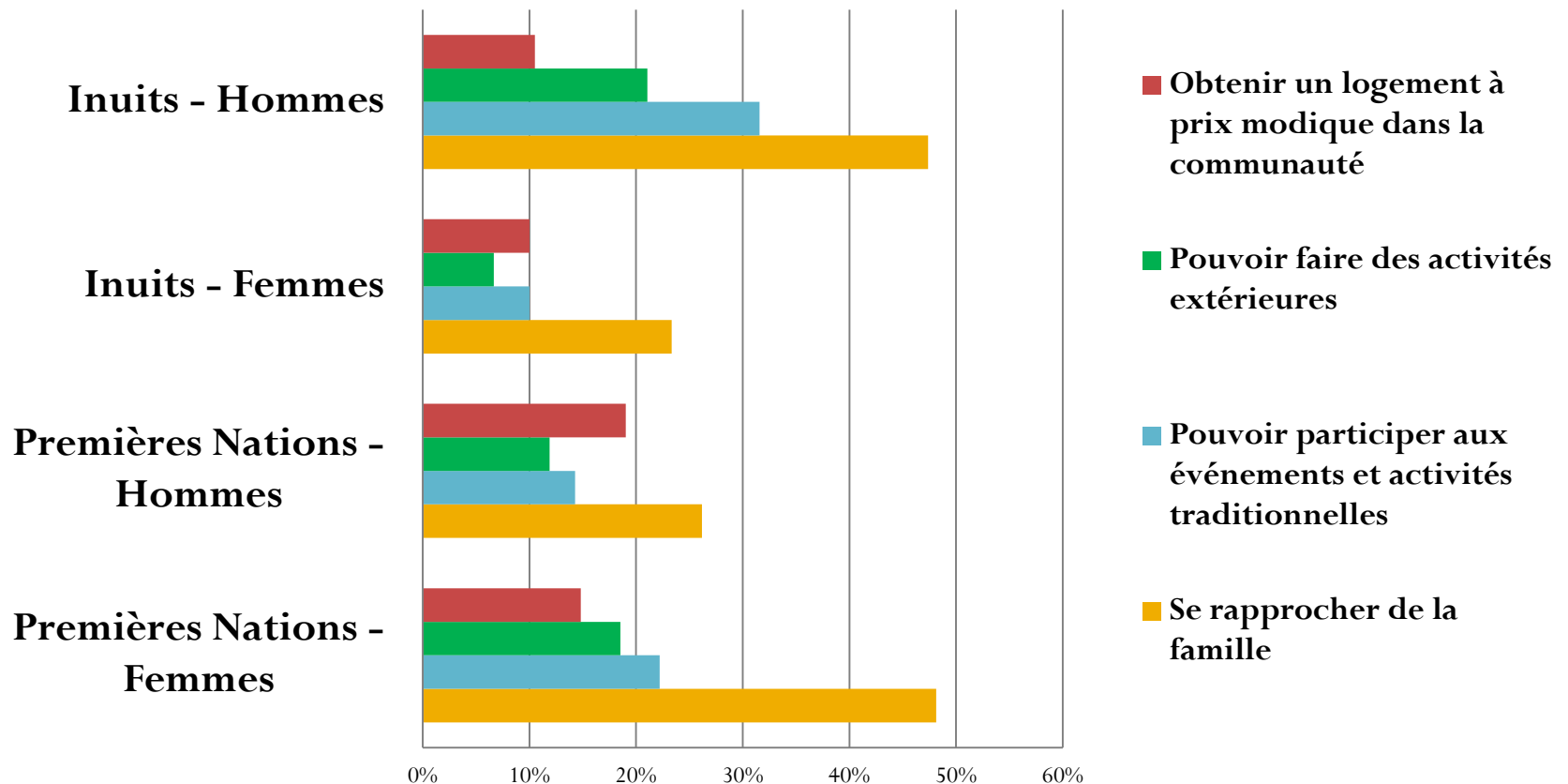
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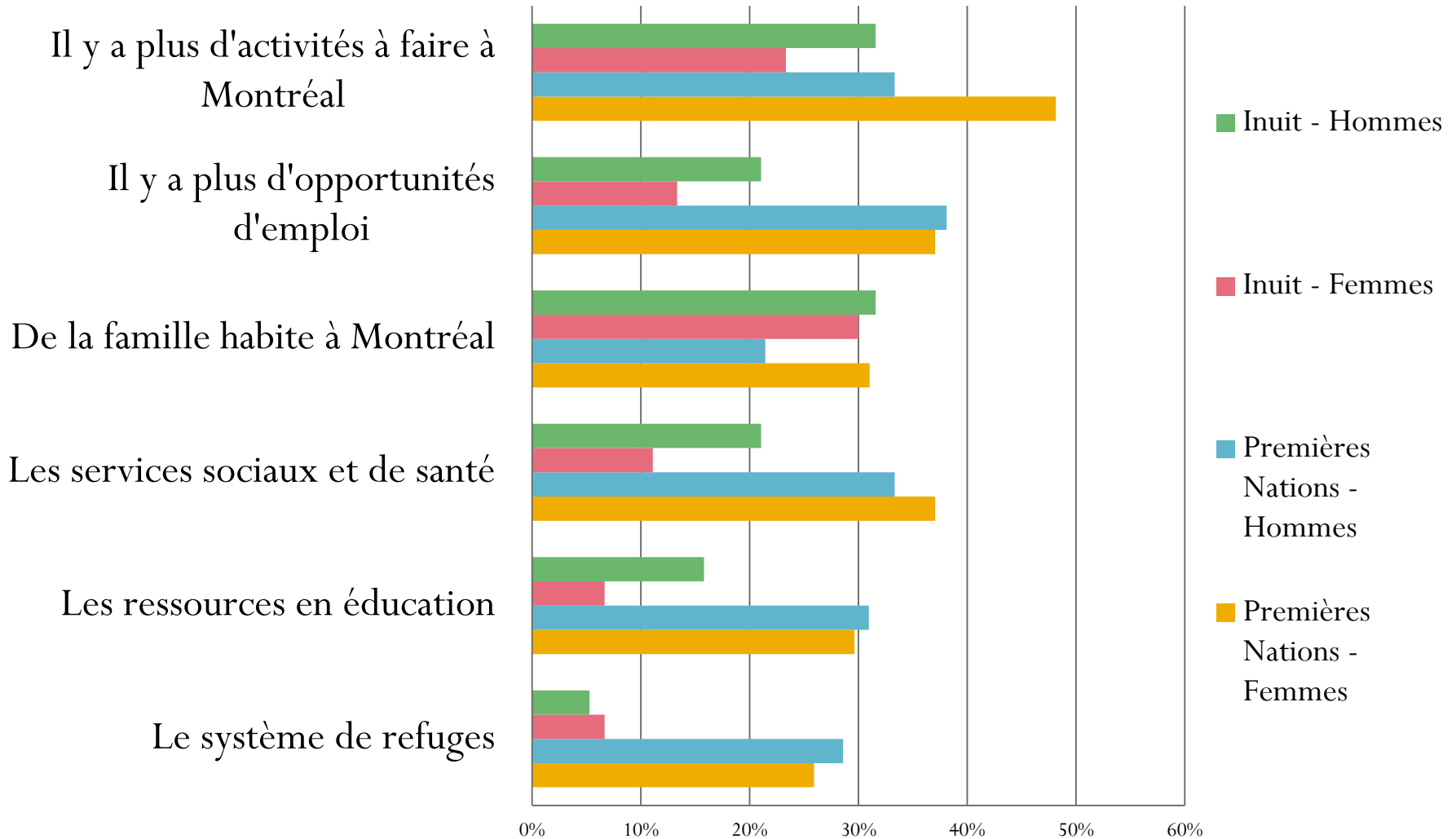


# Reasons for returning

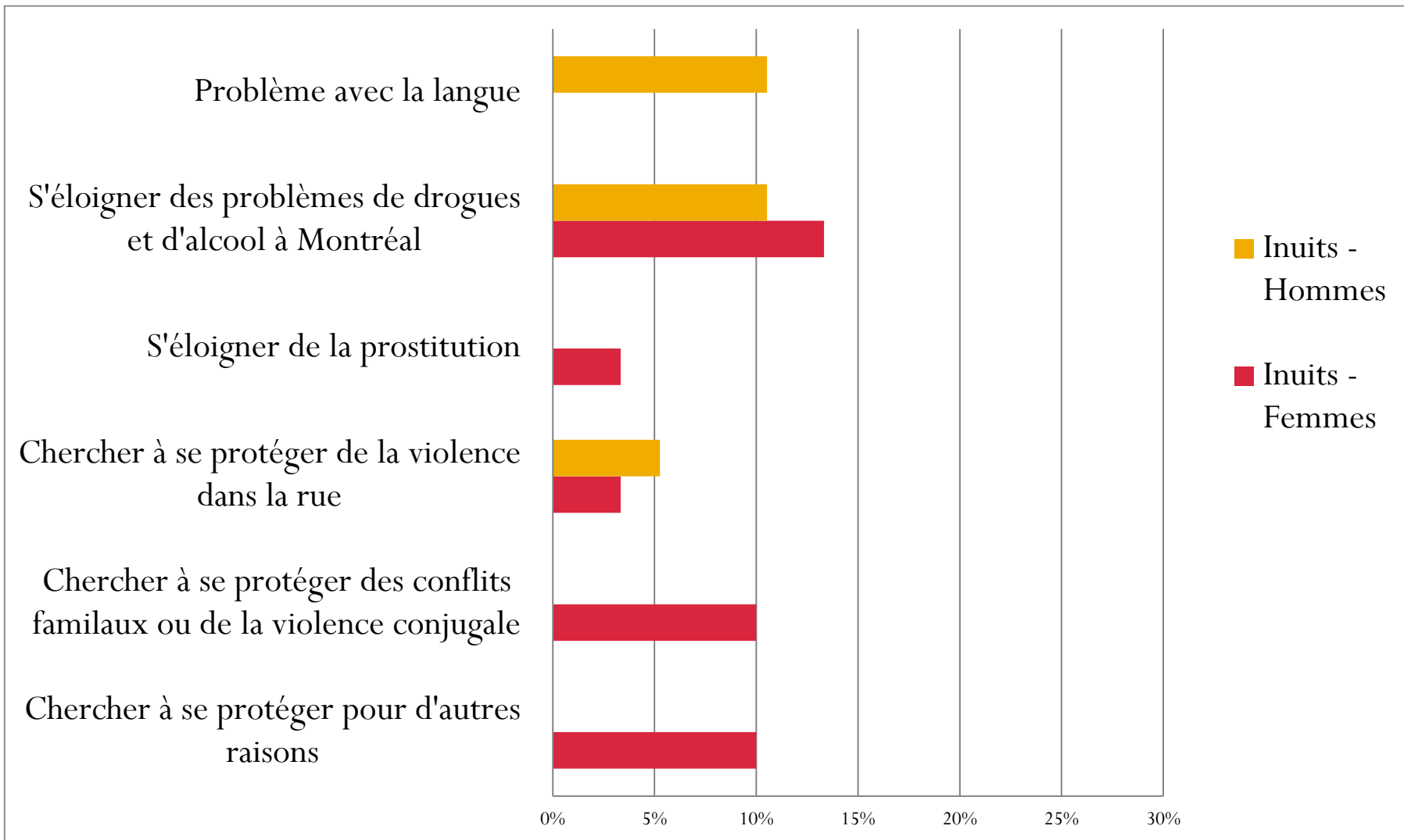
What are the reasons that would make you want to go live in your community, if any?



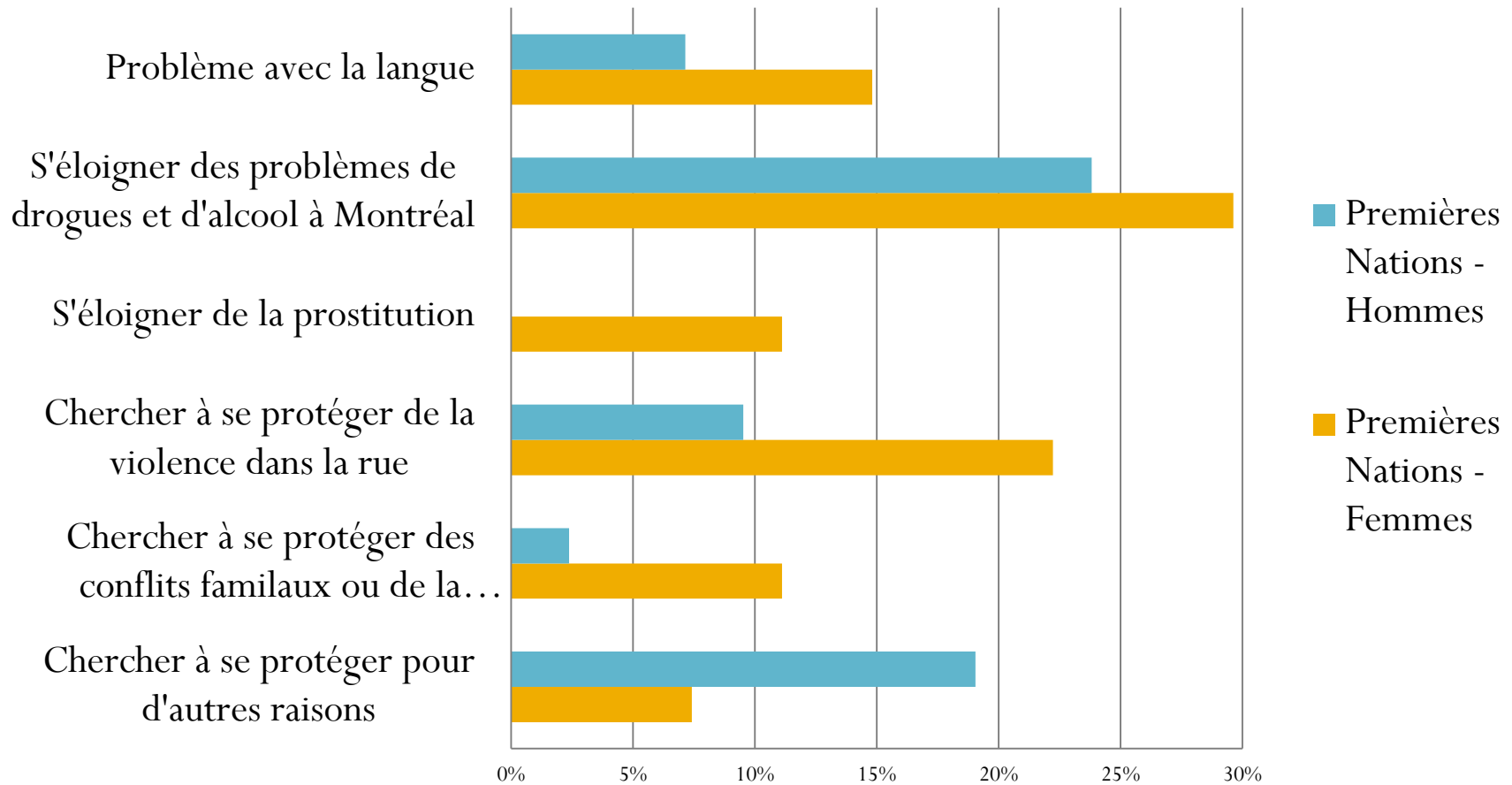
# Reasons to stay in Montreal



# Reasons to want to leave Montreal - Inuit

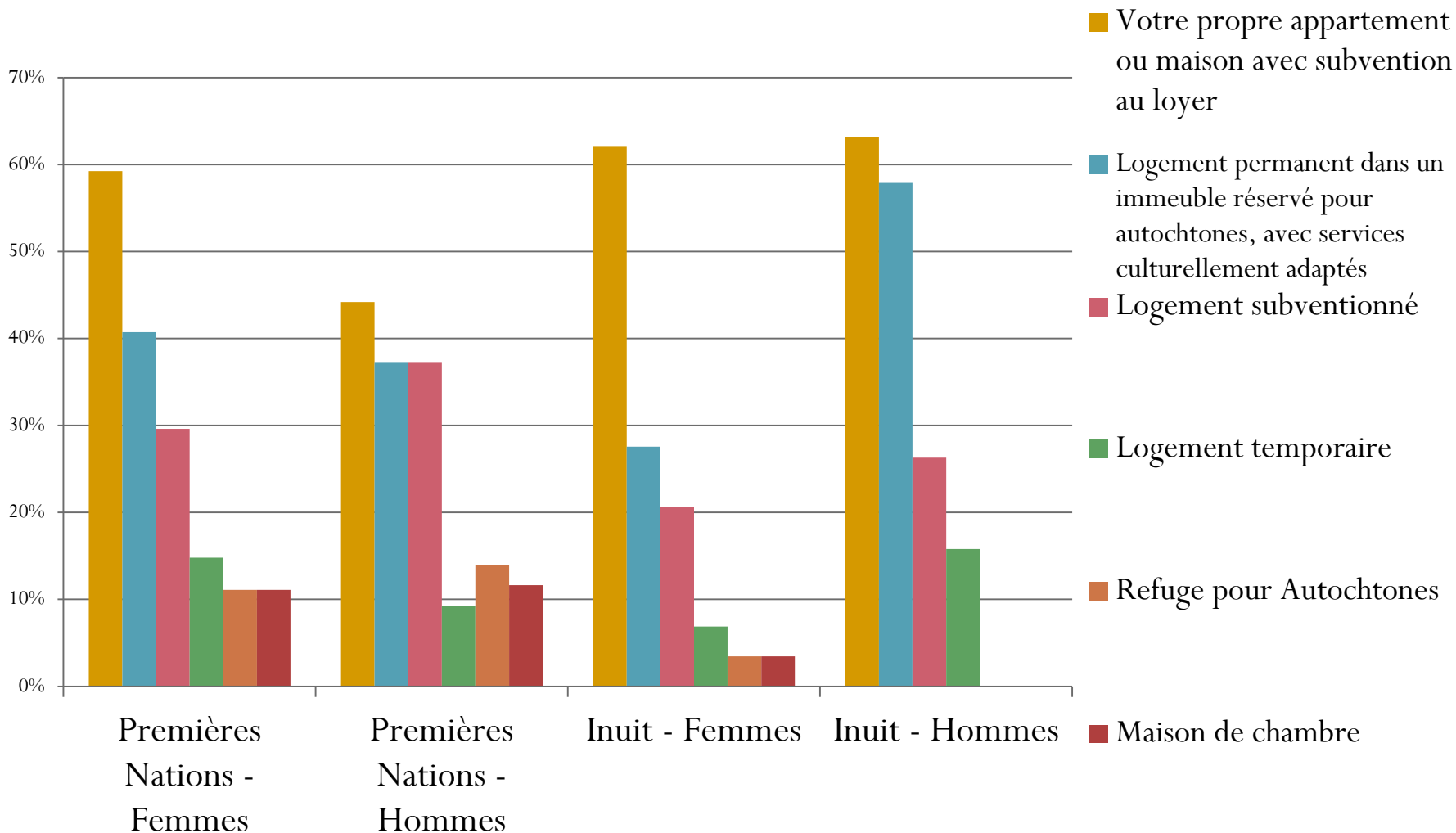


# Reasons to want to leave Montreal – First Nations



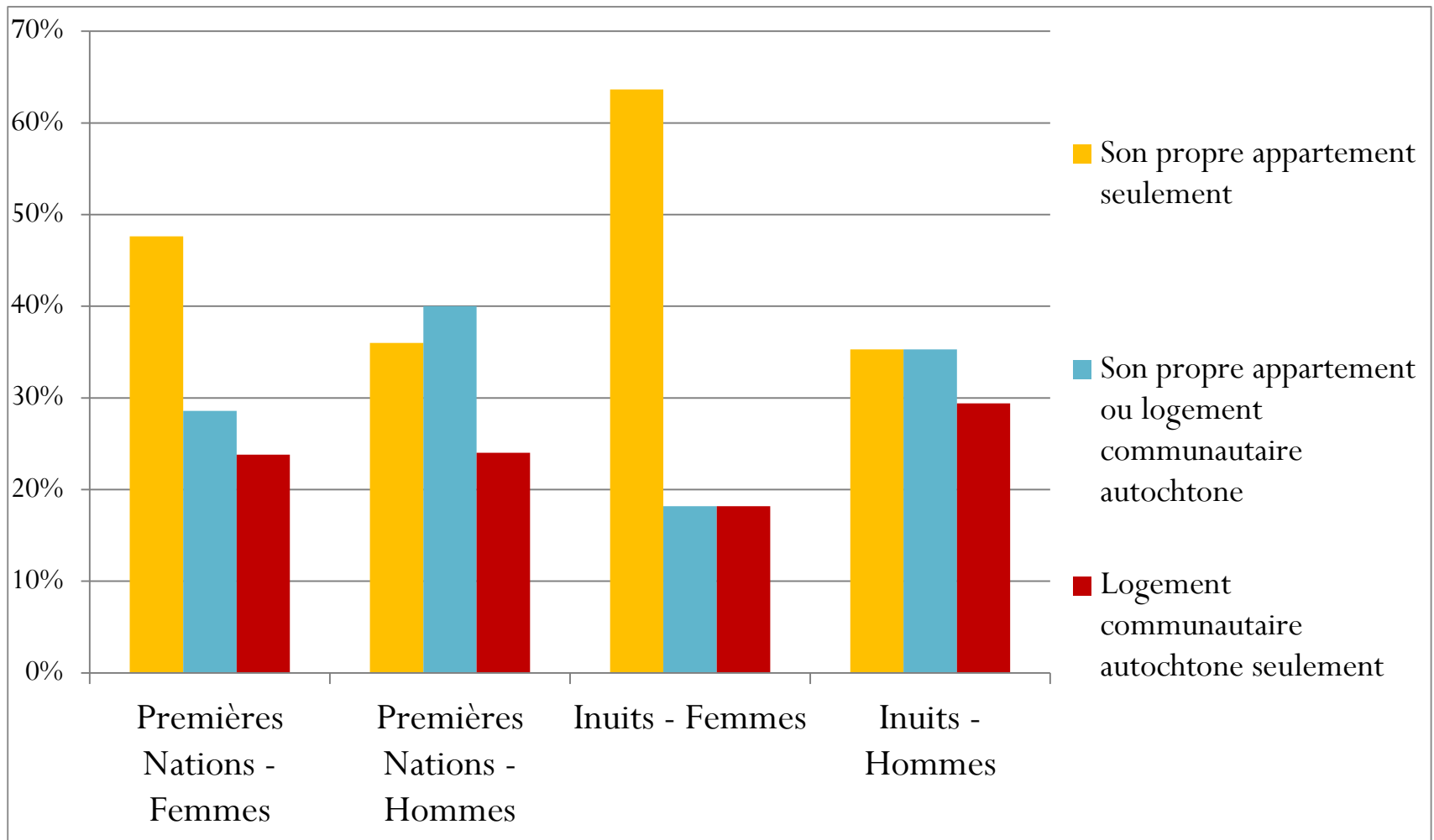
# Housing preferences

In Montreal, what type of housing would you want to live in, ideally?

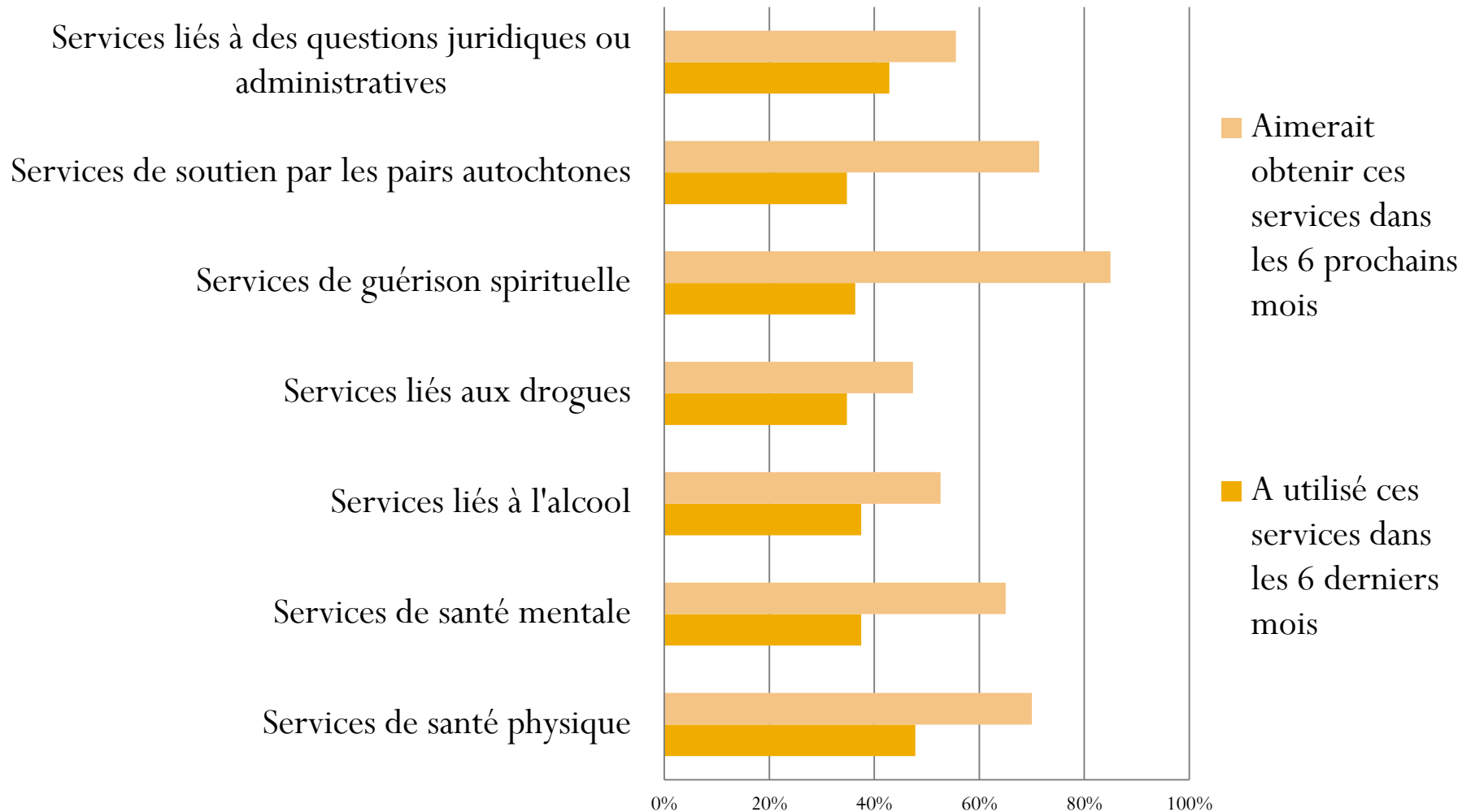




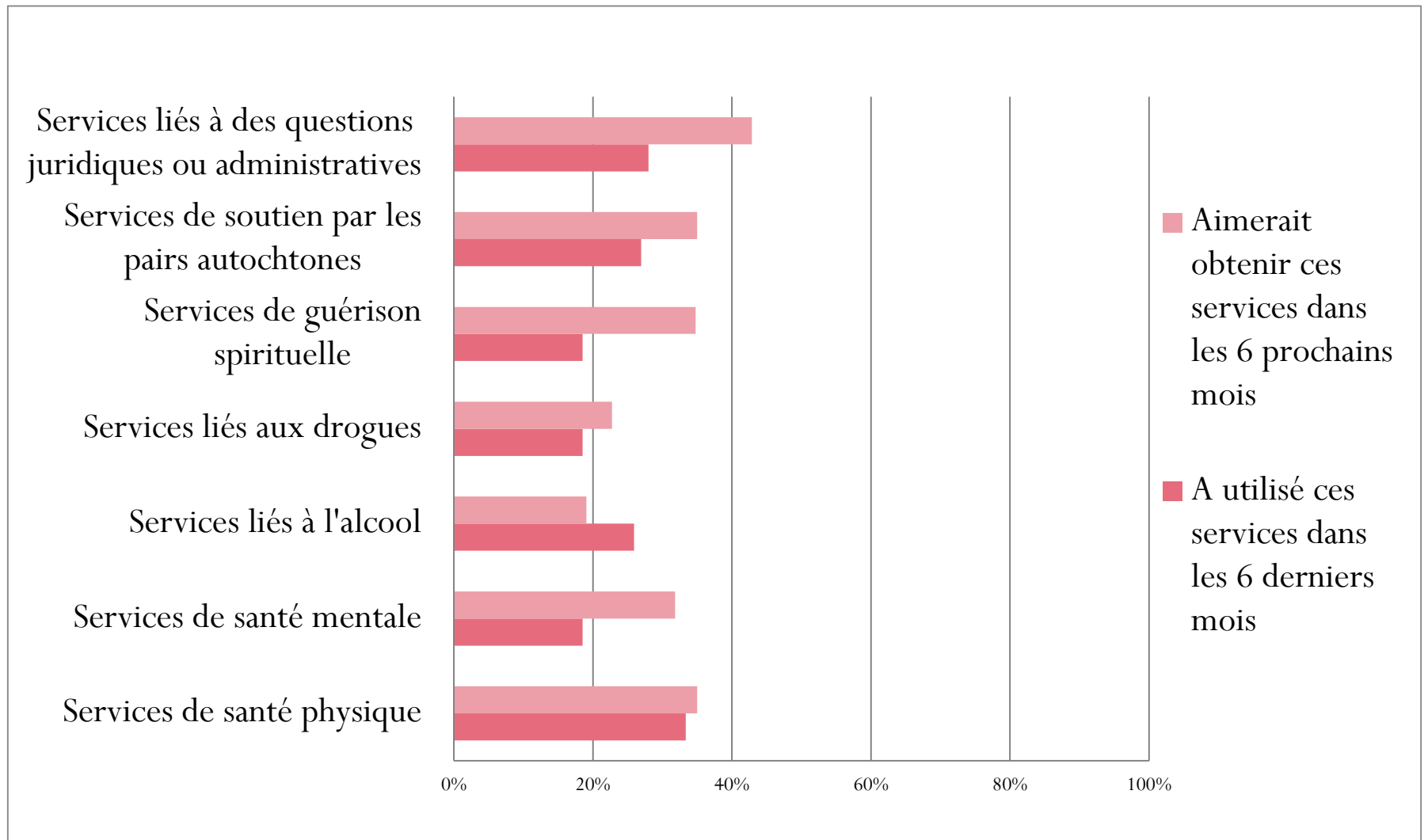
# Housing preferences – own place vs Indigenous group housing



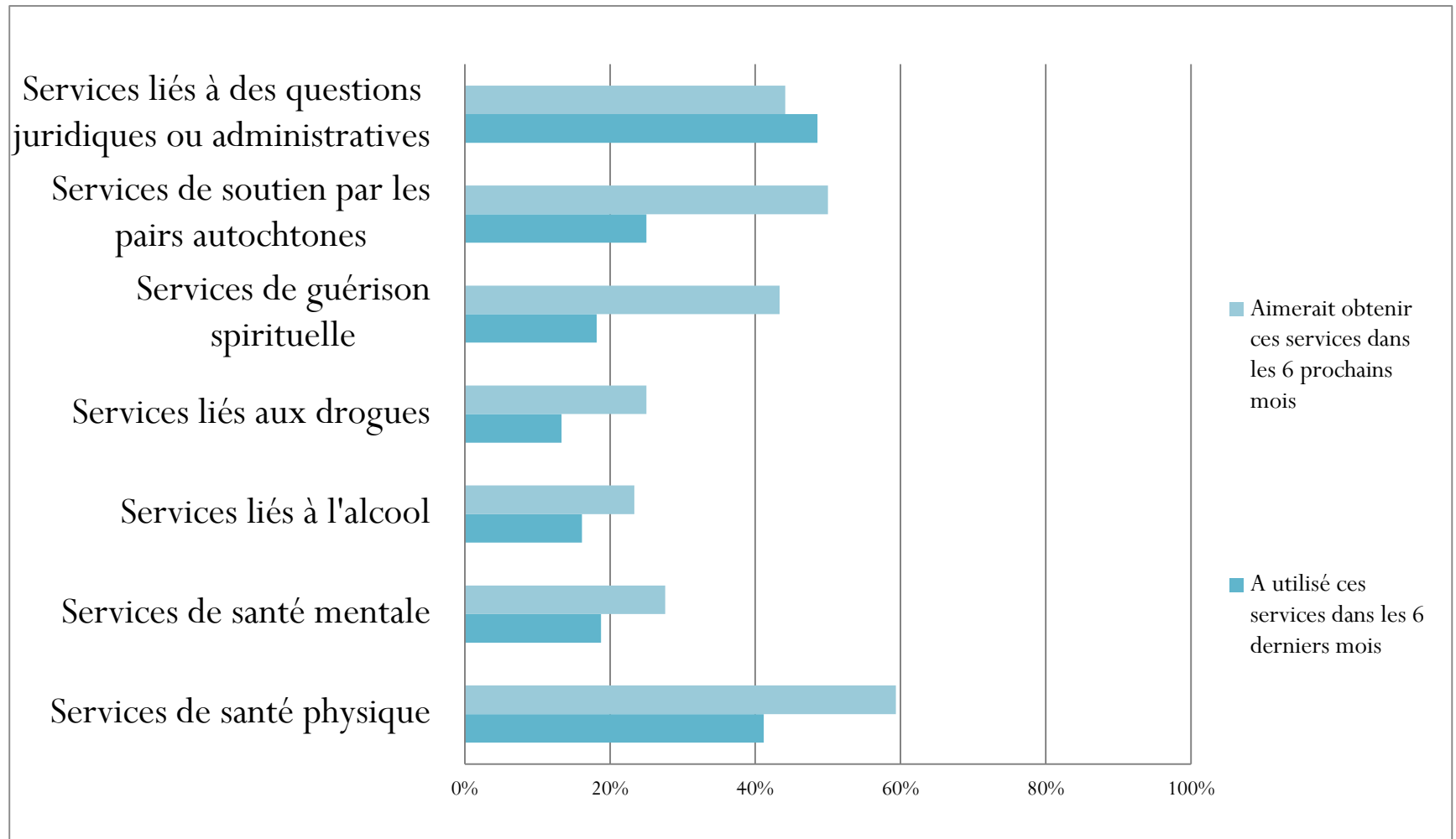
# Desired vs recently used services : First Nations women



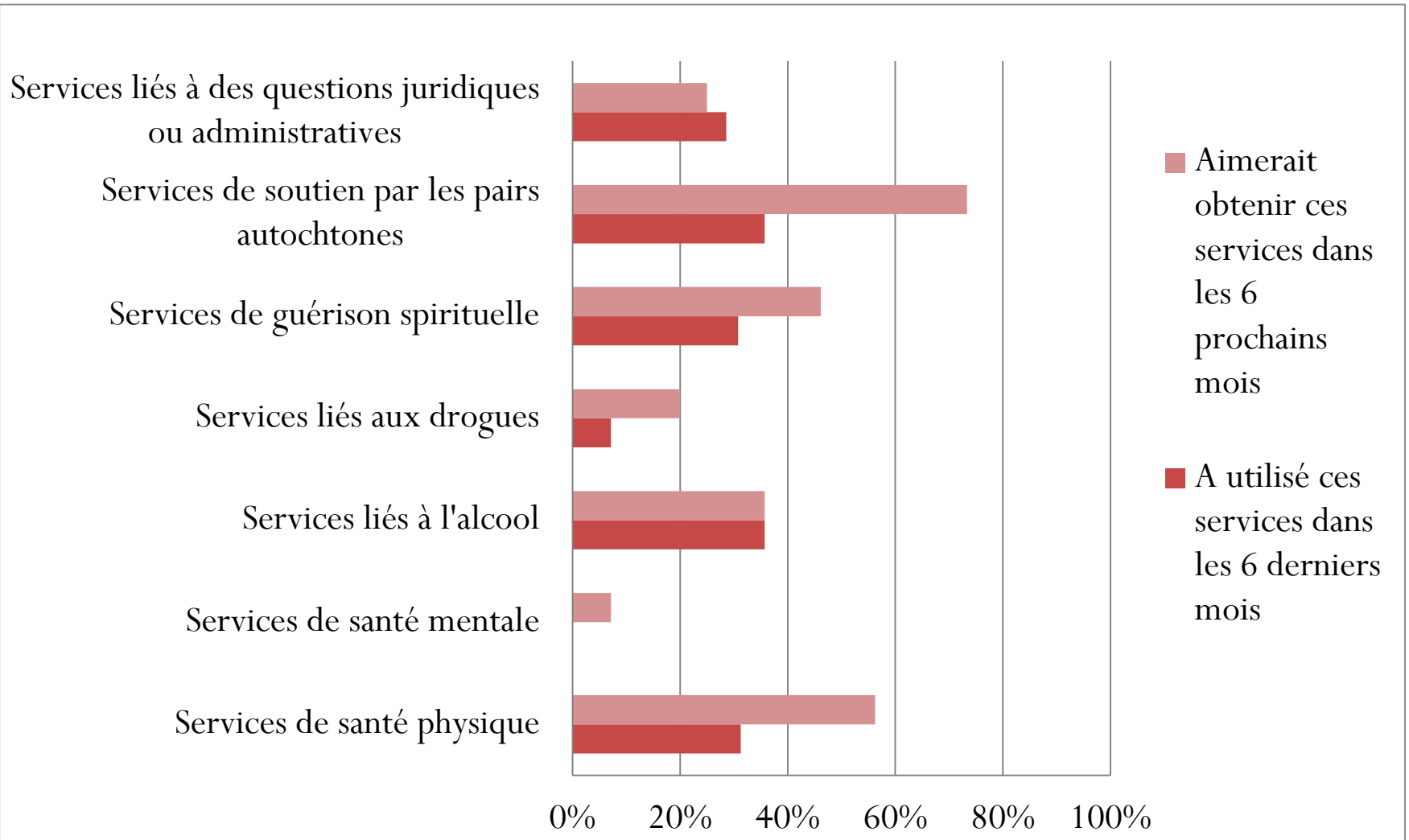
# Desired vs recently used services : Inuit women



# Desired vs recently used services : First Nations men

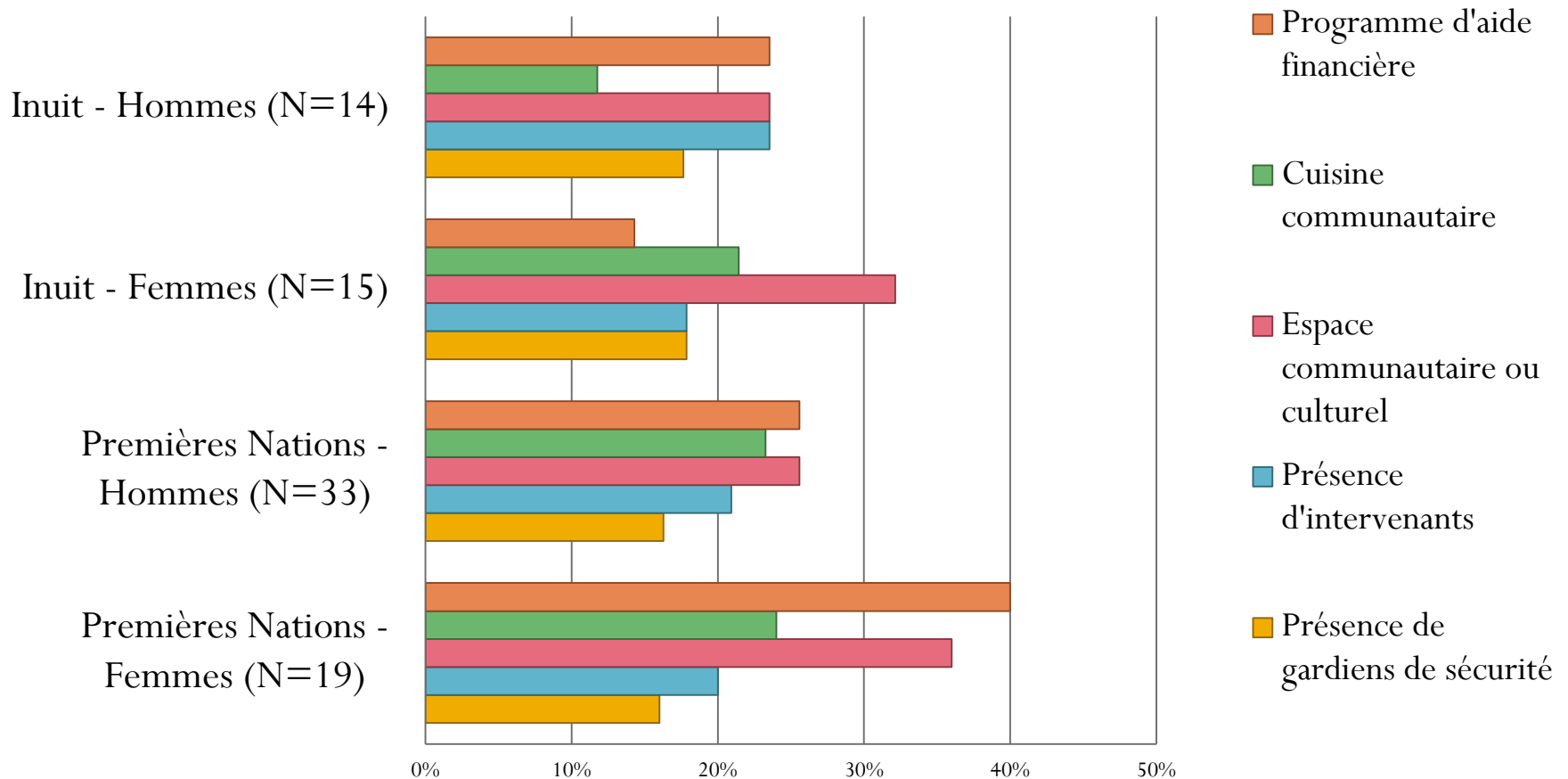


# Desired vs recently used services : Inuit men



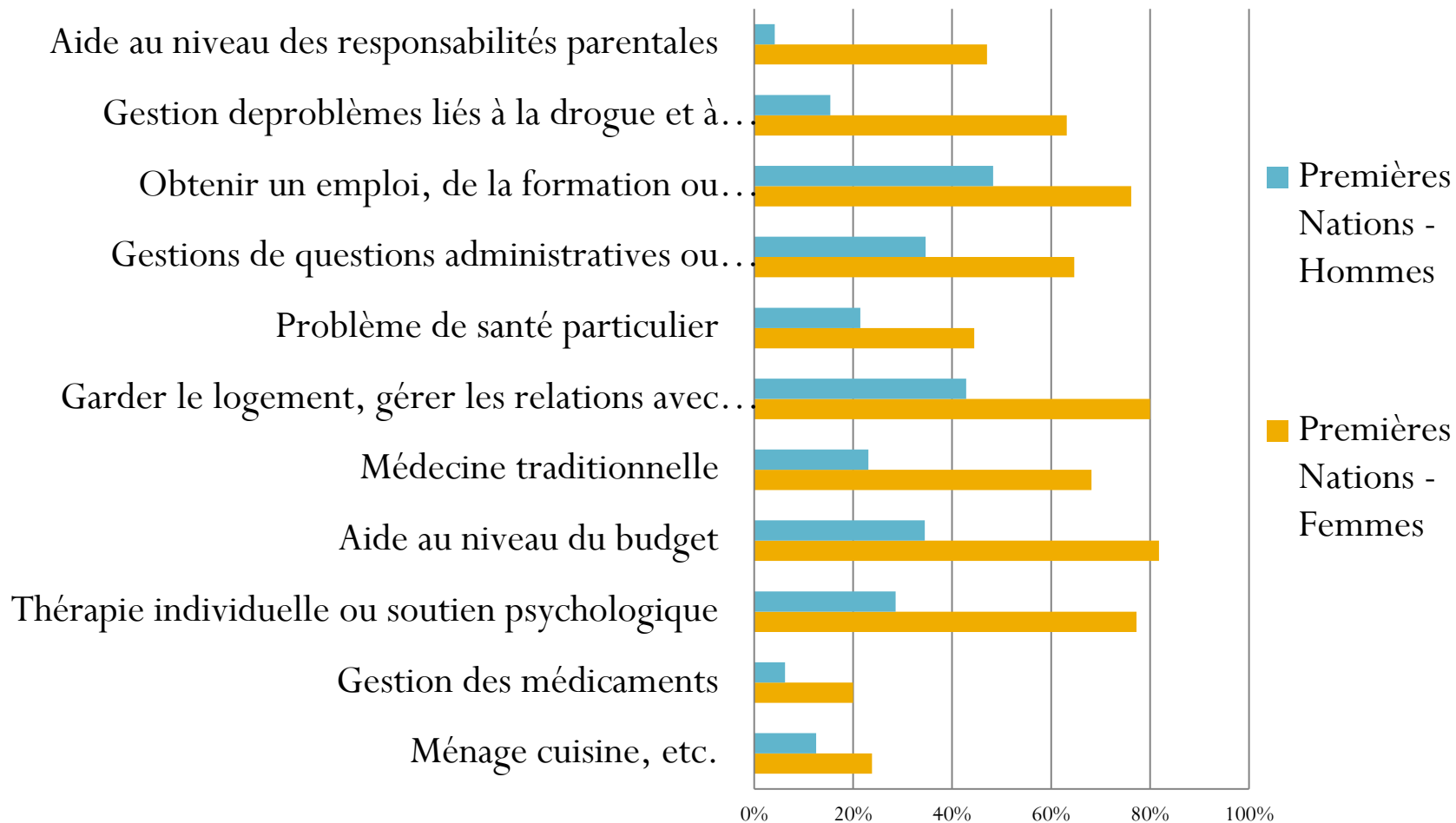
# If in group housing, services desired

What services would you like to be able to access in your building?



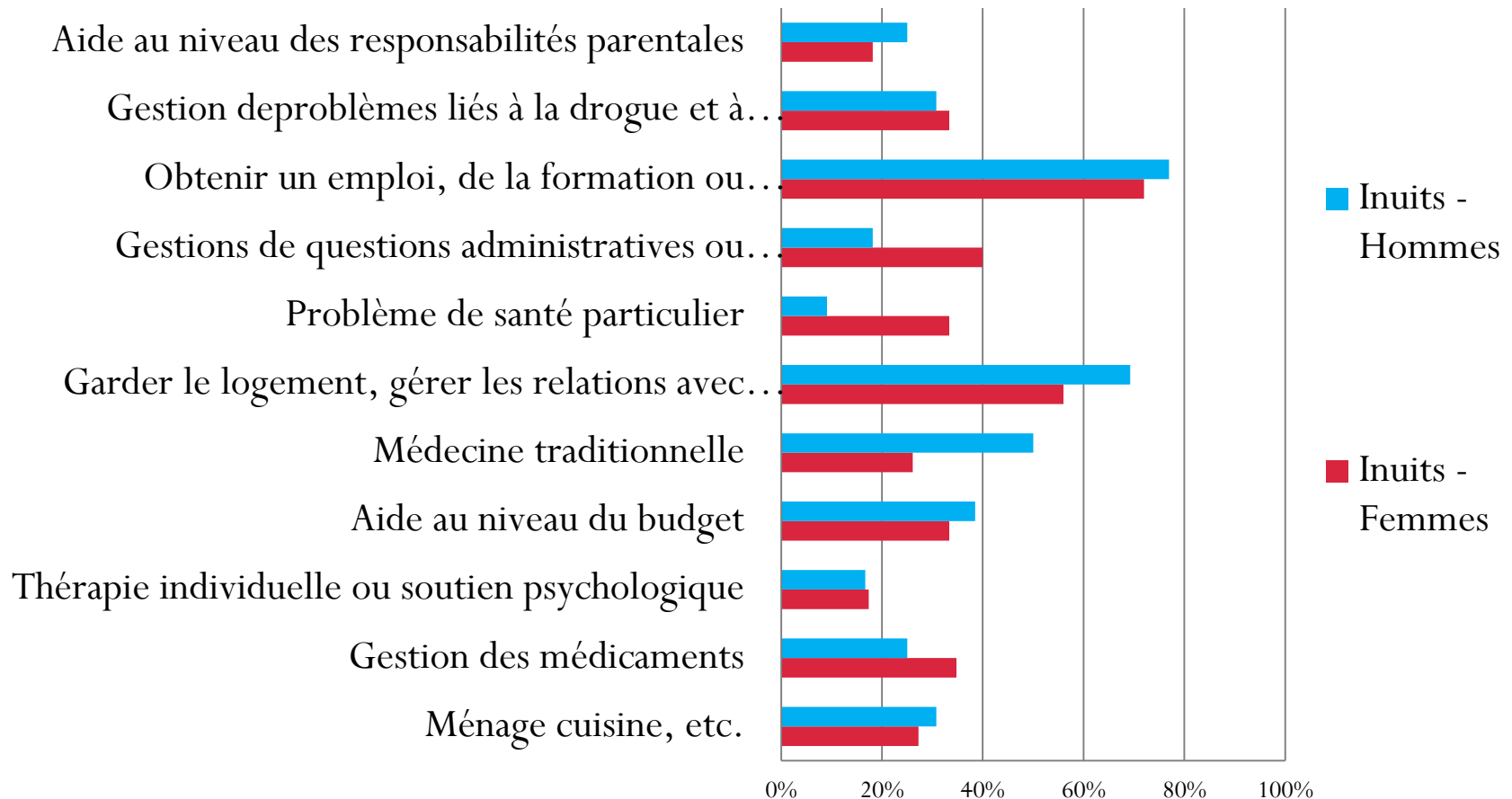
# Services needed from support workers if in own apartment – First Nations

If you had your own apartment, would you need to receive help from support workers for any of the following?



# Services needed from support workers if in own apartment – Inuit

**If you had your own apartment, would you need to receive help from support workers for any of the following?**





# Conclusions – Demographic profiles

- Inuit somewhat older, less likely to be able to speak French – greater contrast among men
- Inuit, especially women, more likely to have very low incomes, fewer on social assistance or disability benefits

# Conclusions – relation with Aboriginal community

- Inuit men the most likely to want to return (about 45% vs 15-25% for other groups)
  - To be with family, traditional and outdoor activities
- Yet name more different reasons for not having returned
  - Transportation cost, high prices, drugs and alcohol, overcrowded housing

# Conclusions – Housing Preferences

- 2 most often chosen options: one's own apartment with rent subsidy and Permanent housing in a building reserved for Inuit or First Nations people, with culturally-sensitive supports
- Women, especially Inuit women, most likely to prefer their own apartment
- Housing for Inuit or First Nations with culturally-sensitive supports most often chosen by people 50 and over

# Comment

- Your own apartment with rent subsidy not necessarily same as Housing First
  - Support by case workers that is part of Housing First not always easily accepted
- Nonetheless Housing First programs for Indigenous people exist and function well in Montreal (The Open Door, Chez Doris)

# Conclusions concerning desires for services

- Greater gap between services accessed and desired for:
  - Spiritual healing services
  - Support by Indigenous peers
  - Physical and mental health services
- Within congregate housing: Community and cultural services, financial help

# Study strengths

- Questionnaire developed via focus groups with Indigenous participants
- Considerable efforts to include as many service users as possible

# Study limitations

- Fairly small sample
- Representativity difficult to assess

# Main implications

- Communities clearly need significant support – especially Inuit, women in particular
- Facilitating return and improving conditions in the north might slow migration of Inuit men in particular to the south
- Different groups express different preferences for Indigenous-specific congregate housing vs having your own place – both modalities likely need further development



# Thank you

Full report in French and abridged  
version in English available at:

<http://reseaumtlnetwork.com>

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