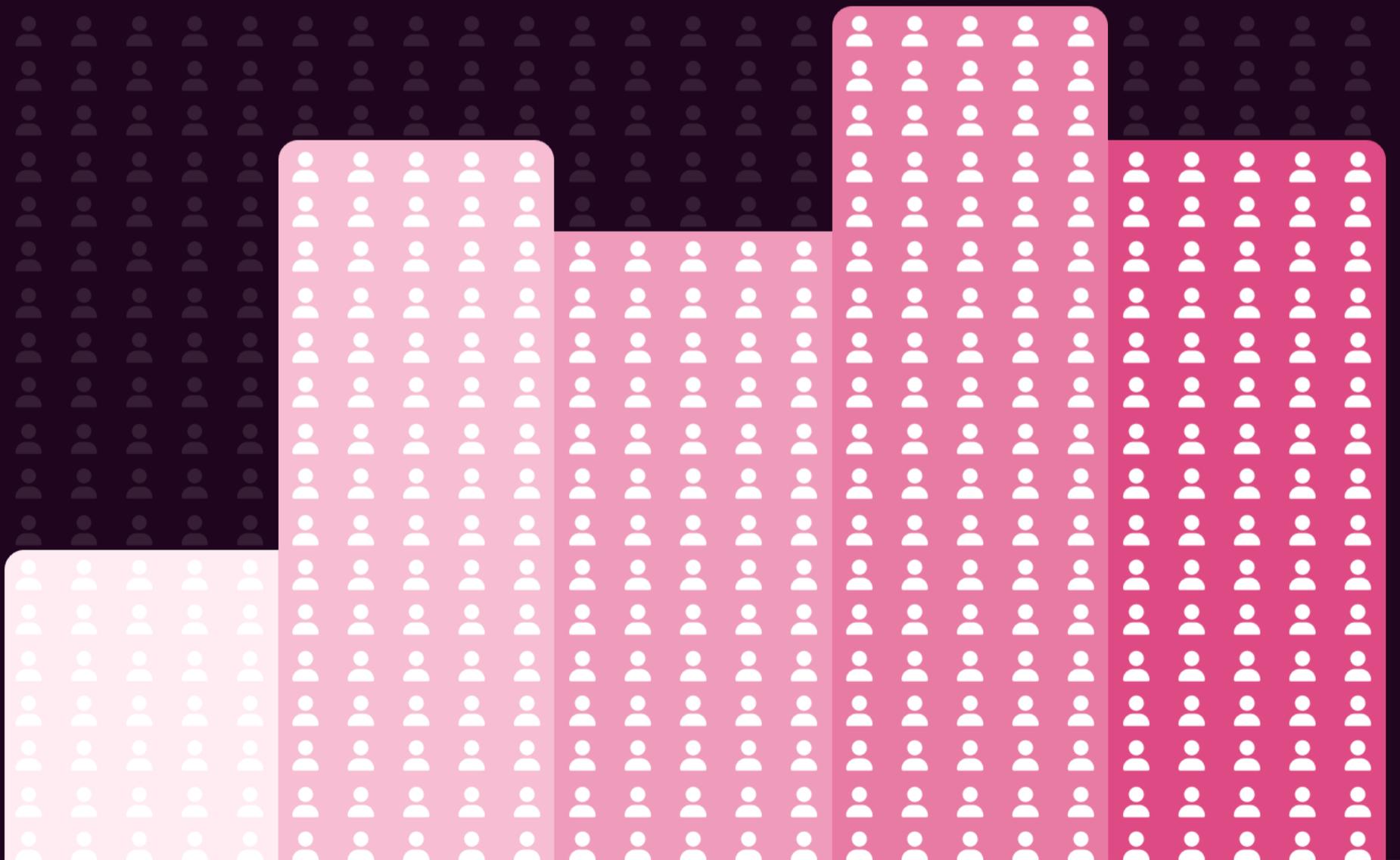


Cross-border shoppers: What they really want

1,000 UK shoppers reveal what drives – and deters – their international purchases in 2025.



Cross-border commerce is booming, but shopper confidence is fragile.

- Top international purchase deterrents remain **fees, time, and trust**
- **49%** have purchased from international retailer in last 6-12 months
- Repeat custom is possible with **transparency** and **easy returns**

What this report covers:

- (04) Consumer attitudes toward buying from non-UK brands**
- (06) What shoppers expect from international delivery**
- (08) Building trust with international shoppers**
- (10) Returns expectations for international purchases**
- (12) Recent cross-border shopping habits**
- (14) How consumers rate cross-border shopping**
- (15) Survey conclusion**

Keeping pace with booming cross-border

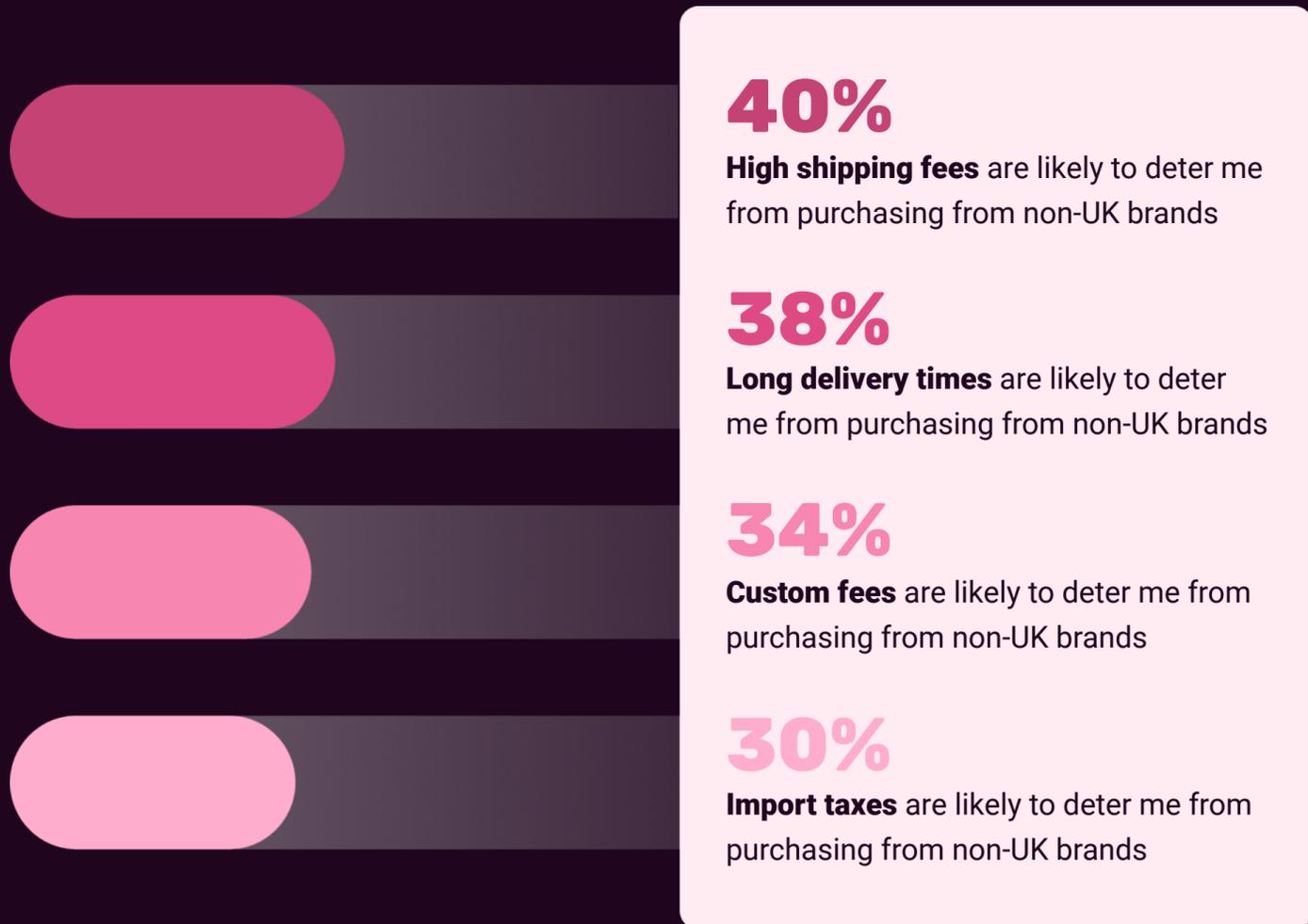
As online retail expands beyond borders, shoppers demand fast delivery, clear pricing, and frictionless returns.

This report presents findings from a survey of 1,000 UK consumers, revealing how they think, feel, and act when buying from overseas. From shipping expectations to trust signals and returns pain points, our data pinpoints where retailers can remove friction, build confidence, and convert more global customers.

So, whether you're expanding internationally or optimising existing cross-border channels, these insights show where the greatest risks and opportunities lie.

The cross-border confidence killers

Q1. When it comes to purchasing from non-UK brands, which of the following statements do you agree with?



What this means for you:

- Show duties and taxes up front – transparency converts
- Offer free-shipping thresholds to offset additional cost
- Provide checkout information that guarantees delivery dates

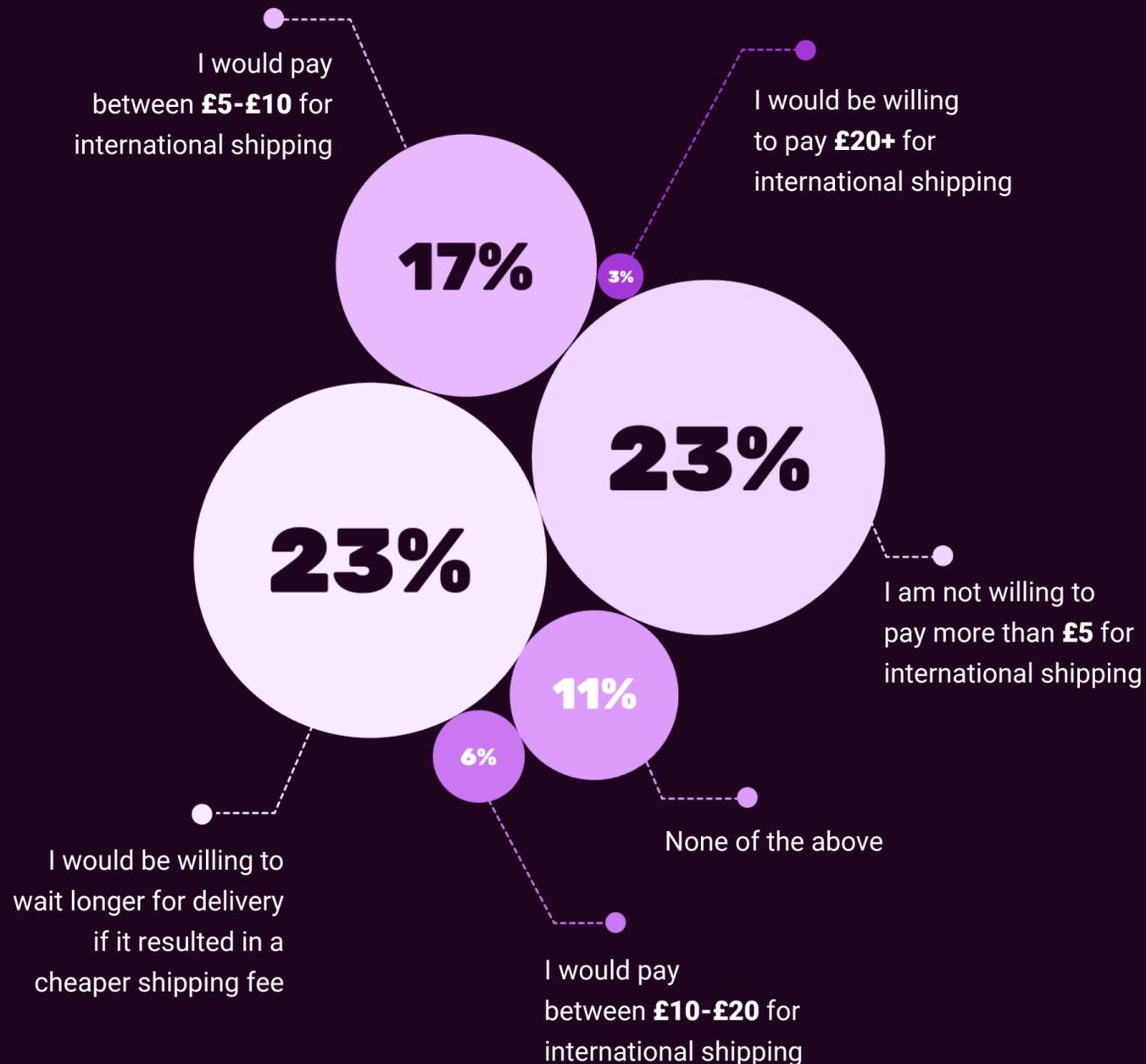
Top tip:

High shipping fees, long delivery times, and unexpected import costs are major deal-breakers for cross-border shoppers. To stay competitive, international retailers should offer affordable, fast delivery options and be upfront about any additional charges.



The speed versus spend equation

Q2. When it comes to shipping and delivery when buying from an international retailer, which of the following statements do you agree with?



£10.02 average

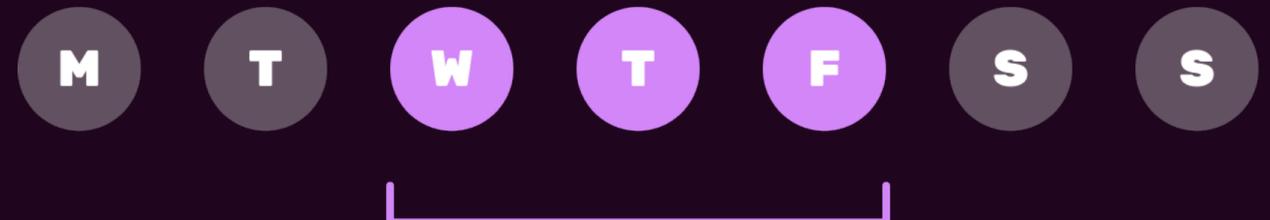
35%

are happy to wait **6+ days** for delivery



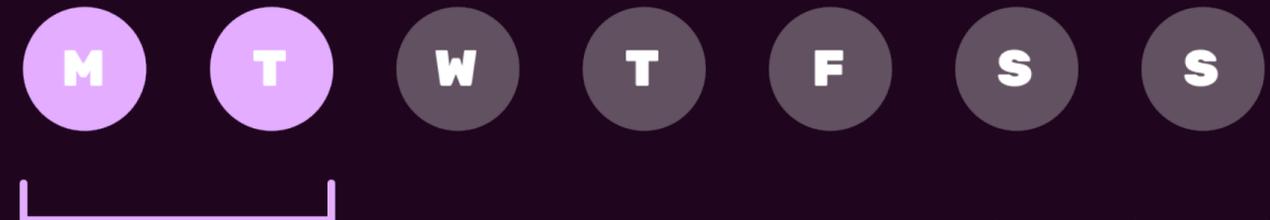
34%

say their ideal delivery time is **3-5 days** as a maximum



7%

say their ideal delivery time is **1-2 days** as a maximum



5 days average (to nearest whole number)

How to act on this:

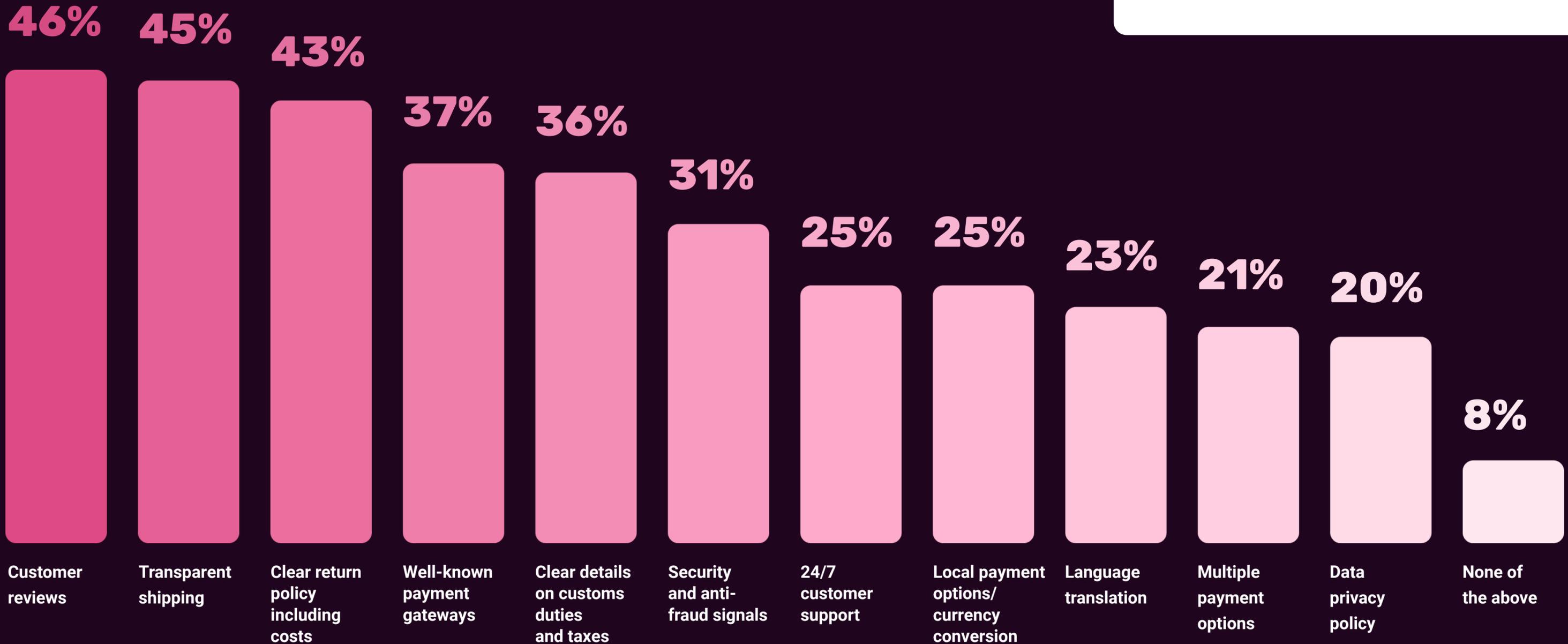
- Offer two-tier delivery: Economy (lower cost, slower) and Premium (fast-track)
- Display specific delivery windows (arrives in X days) – transparency wins
- Test threshold free shipping offers (spend £X for free shipping)

Building trust on a global stage

Q3. What would make you trust an international retailer more?

Four trust levers for your business

1. Transparent costs
2. Secure payments
3. Localised service
4. Simple returns



The returns reality check

Q4. When it comes to returns when buying from an international retailer, which of the following statements do you agree with?



22%

would be more likely to shop again from an international brand if they offer **fast and free returns**

19%

have returned an item from an international order but found the experience to be **complicated**

14%

have returned an item from an international order and found the experience to be **easy**

11%

have returned an item from an international order but found that the refund took **too long**

I've never returned an item from an international order because...

13%

It was too much effort

9%

It was too expensive

5%

Another reason

3%

The store didn't allow it

What this all means for you:

- Simplify returns with printable or QR labels
- State your refund timeline clearly ('within 28 days')
- Subsidise returns for high-margin SKUs

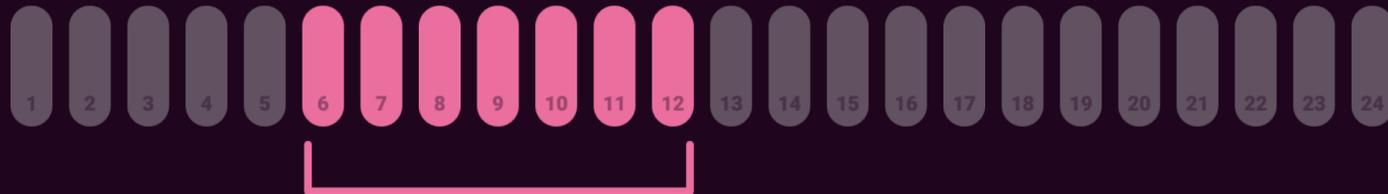
! A frictionless returns process is your best retention lever.

The current demand landscape

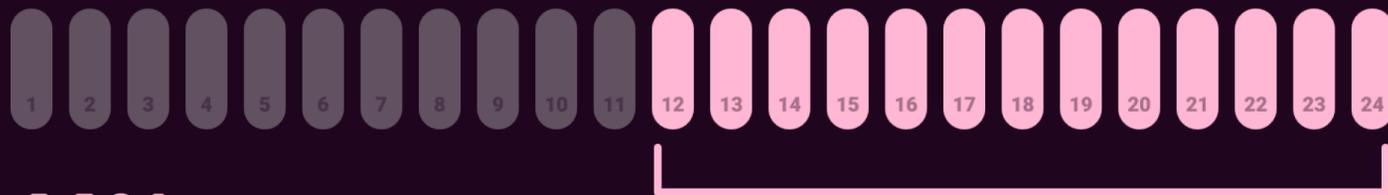
Q5. In the last 6-12 months, have you purchased a product online from a retailer based in another country?



79%
have bought from an international retailer **in the past**

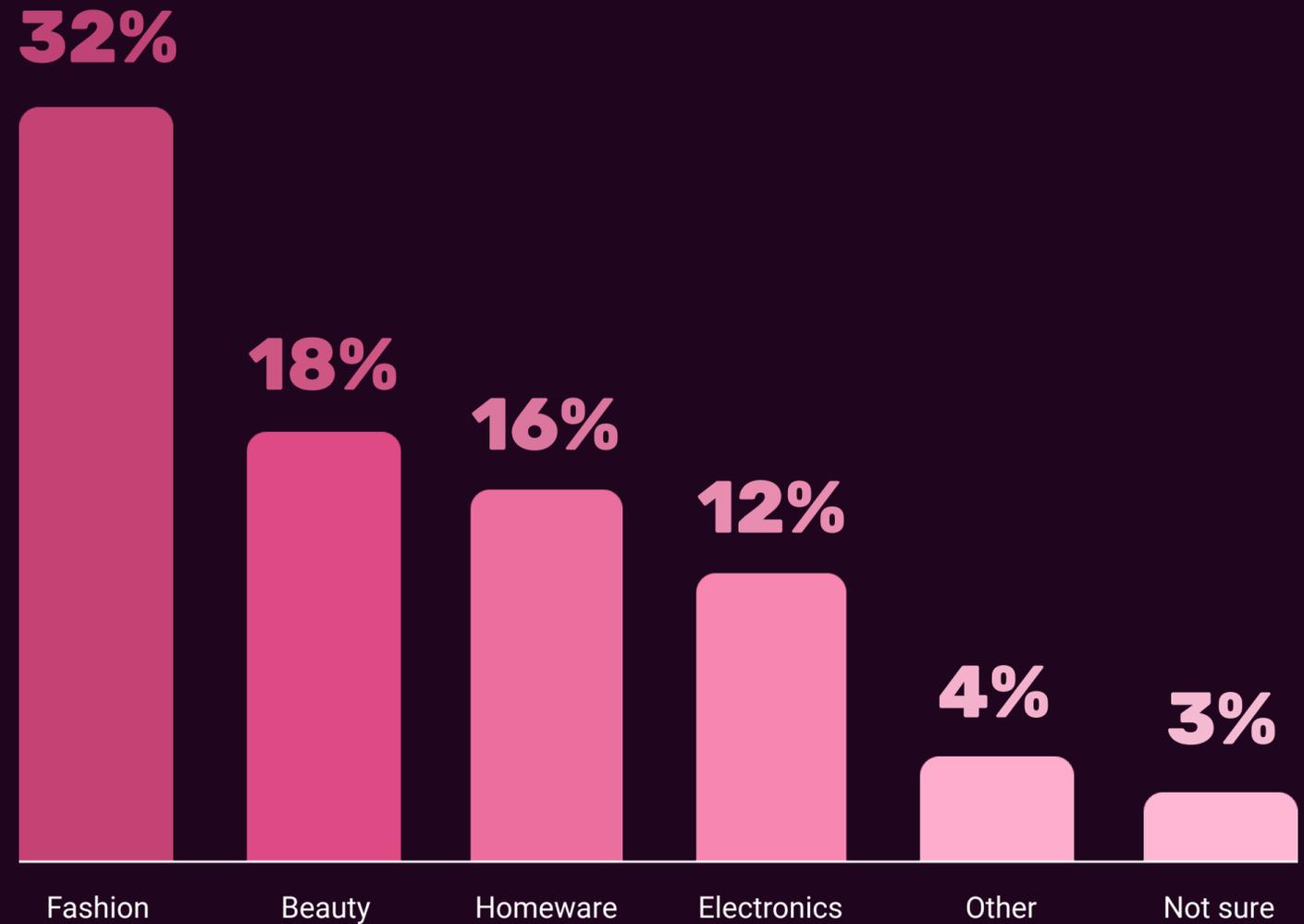


49%
have bought from an international retailer in the last **6-12 months**



16%
have bought from an international retailer more than **12 months ago**

International purchasing data by sector:



Snapshot summary:

Most consumers (79%) have purchased from an international retailer in the past, with 49% buying in the last 6-12 months. The demand is there, but trust must be maintained to drive repeat purchasing. Think: clear returns policies, dedicated customer support, secure payment options, and total transparency on additional fees.

Avoiding friction: How customers see international commerce

How did you find the experience of shopping with an international retailer(s)?



Lose customers with:

- Customs surprises
- Slow shipping
- Complicated returns

Trial these fixes:

- Use Delivery Duty Paid (DDP) models or pre-clearance
- Offer unified tracking updates
- Automate duties/tax calculation at checkout

Your three-step cross-border playbook

- **Be transparent:** Cost clarity = higher conversion
- **Be predictable:** Deliver on your promises
- **Be reassuring:** Simple returns = long-term loyalty

International commerce demand exists; earning it depends on how quickly you build trust with potential customers.

Clear communication on shipping, returns, and reviews are your fastest ways to build this trust, and a quick, free returns process is your best bet to drive repeat custom.

The way to implement this?

- International commerce expertise to get ahead of fees and regulations
- A global fulfilment network to place stock close to buyers and facilitate simple returns
- Leading technology and integrations to make life easier for your customers

The good news is: we can offer it all.

Hey, we're fulfilmentcrowd

Established over 30 years ago, we're a global fulfilment provider that thrives in helping fast-growing, omnichannel brands reach their full potential.

Driven by our in-house technology, our fulfilment services help over 250 brands cut costs, scale effortlessly, reduce carbon impact, and deliver brilliant customer experiences.

With a sustainable business model that reaches all corners of the globe, we remove the barriers of international commerce to help leading brands better serve customers – wherever they are.

Want to grow, globally? Get in touch.

Get in touch: hello@fulfilmentcrowd.com | fulfilmentcrowd.com