Change in social detachment in older age in England

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ELSA Wave 5 Launch
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What is social detachment?

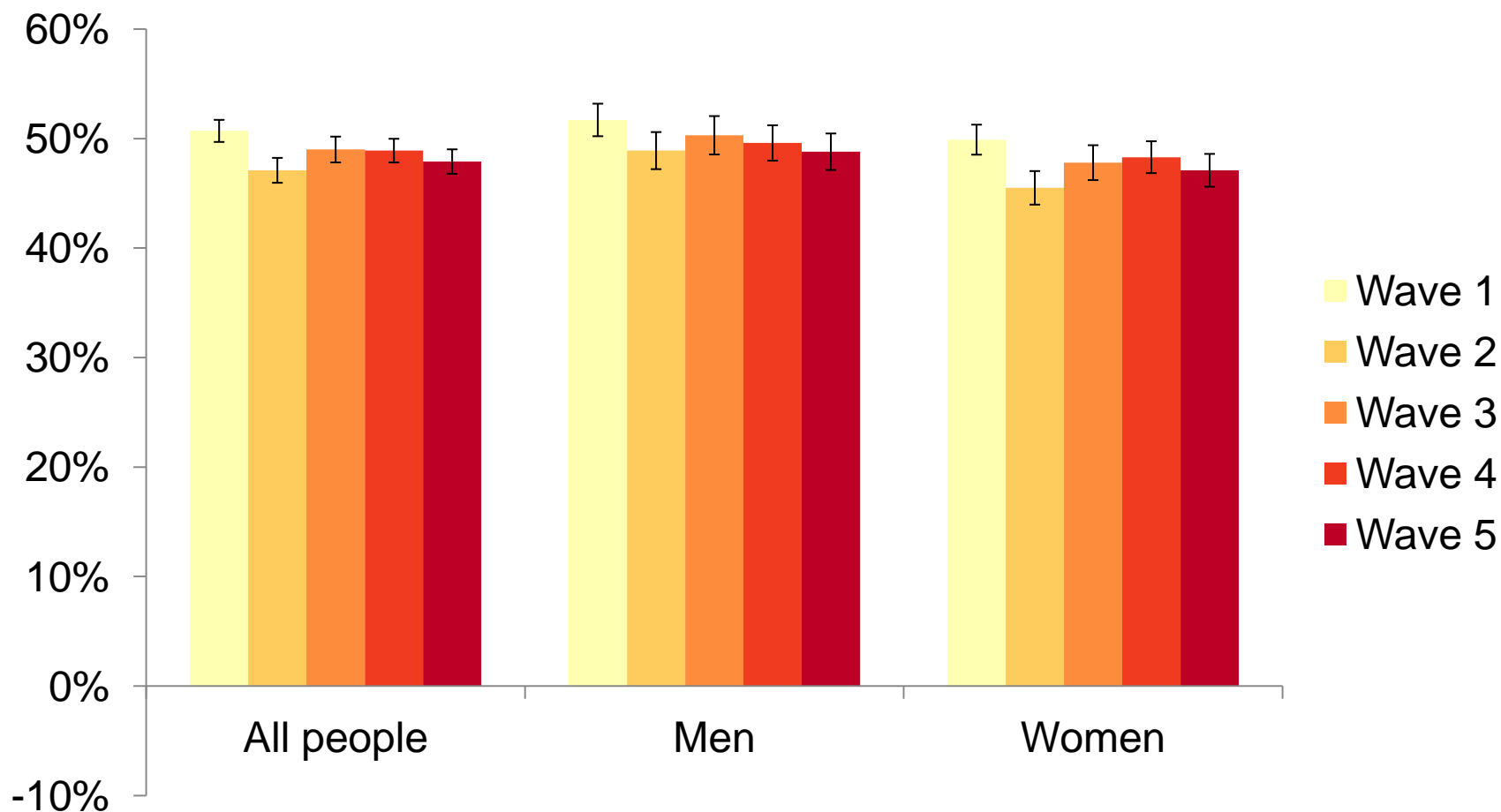# Social detachment and successful ageing

Measuring social detachment

- English Longitudinal Study of Ageing
  - Longitudinal data from sample of people aged 50 and over
  - 5 Waves biennial since 2002/03
  - Cross-sectional & longitudinal analysis

- Social detachment domains
  - Civic participation
  - Leisure activities
  - Cultural engagement
  - Social networks

Civic participation

- Define individuals as detached from civic participation if they:

    - Not member of political organisation

    - Not member of neighbourhood association

    - Not a member of church or religious group

    - Not a member of a charitable association

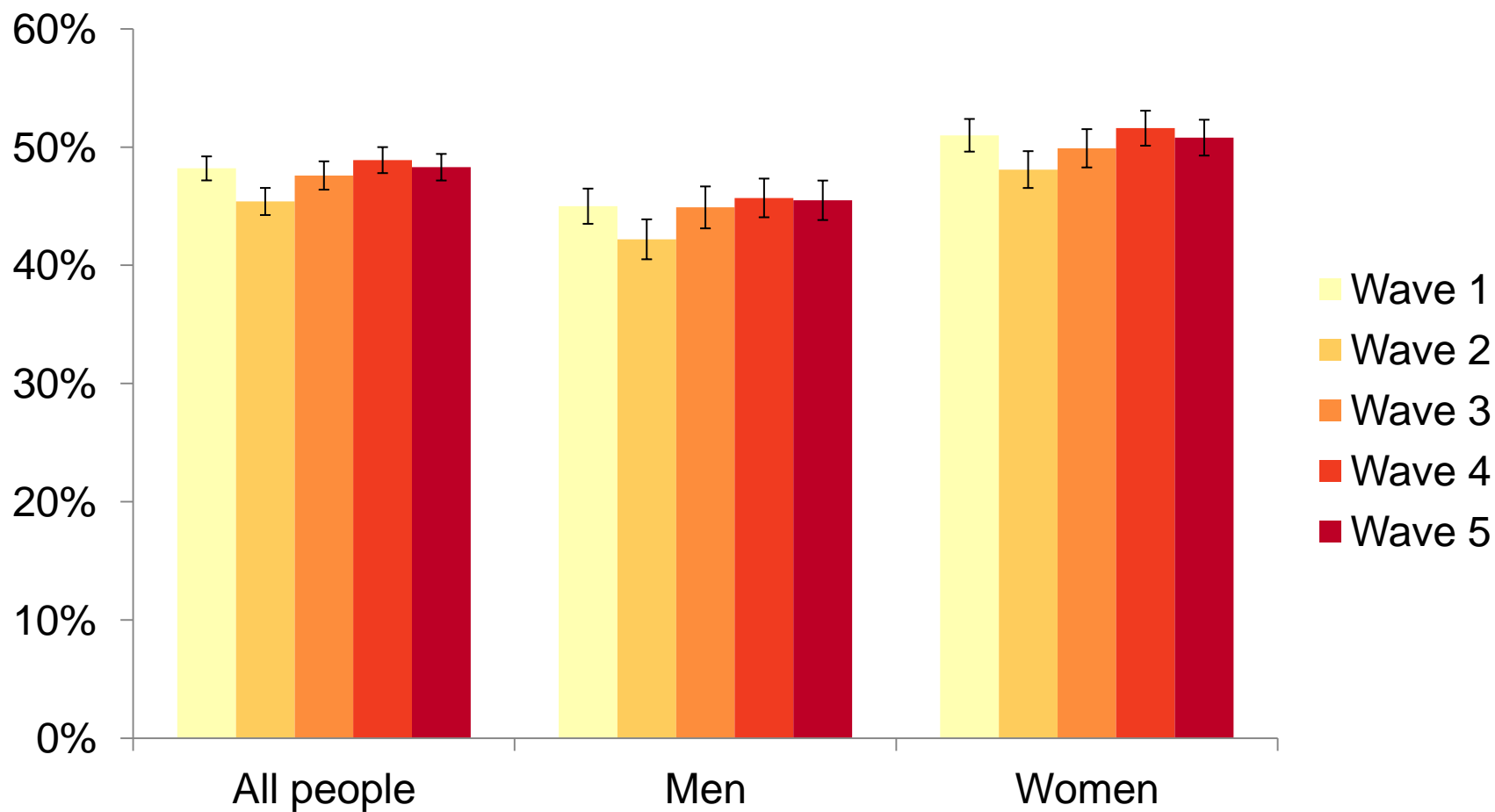   - Did not do voluntary work at least once in the last year

Prevalence of civic participation detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5

Leisure activities

- Define individuals as detached from leisure activities if they are not a member:

  – Education, arts or music group or evening class

  – Social club

  – Sports club, gym or exercise class

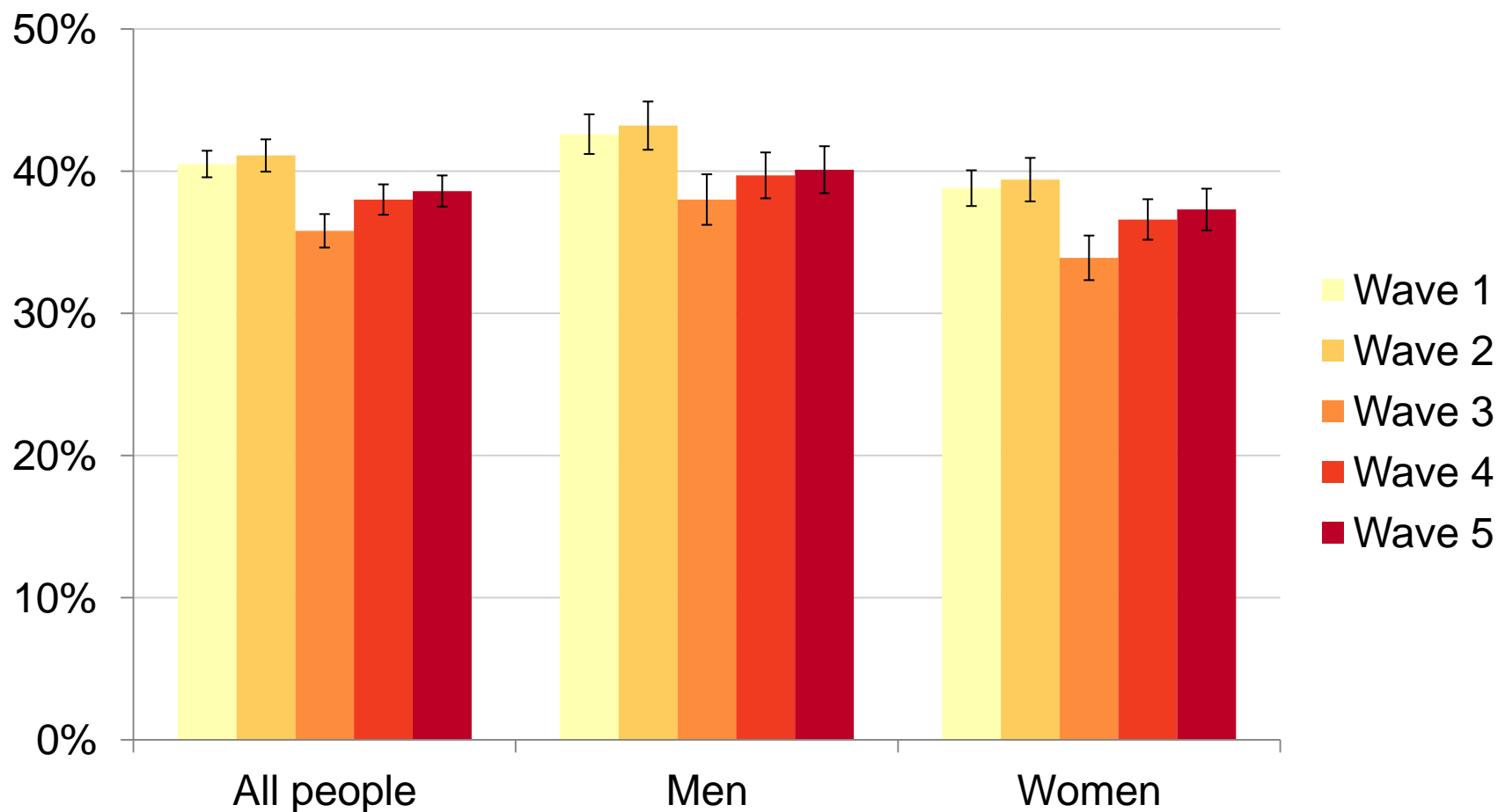 – Other organisation, club or society

Prevalence of leisure activities detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5

Cultural engagement

- Define individuals as detached from cultural engagement if, in the last year, they did not:

  – Go to the cinema

  – Go to an art gallery or museum
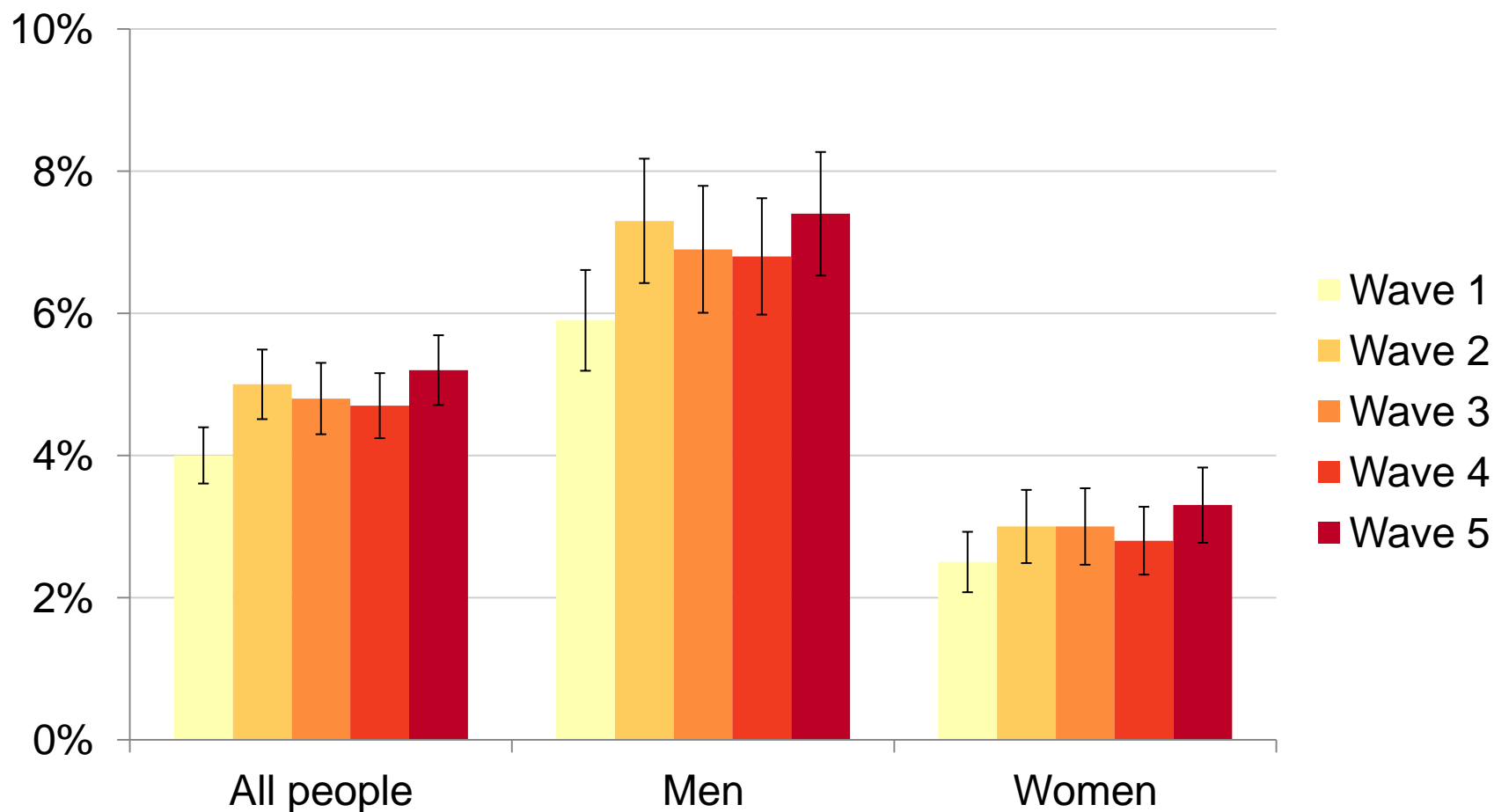
  – Go to the theatre, a concert or the opera

Prevalence of cultural engagement detachment by sex, cross-sectional w1-5
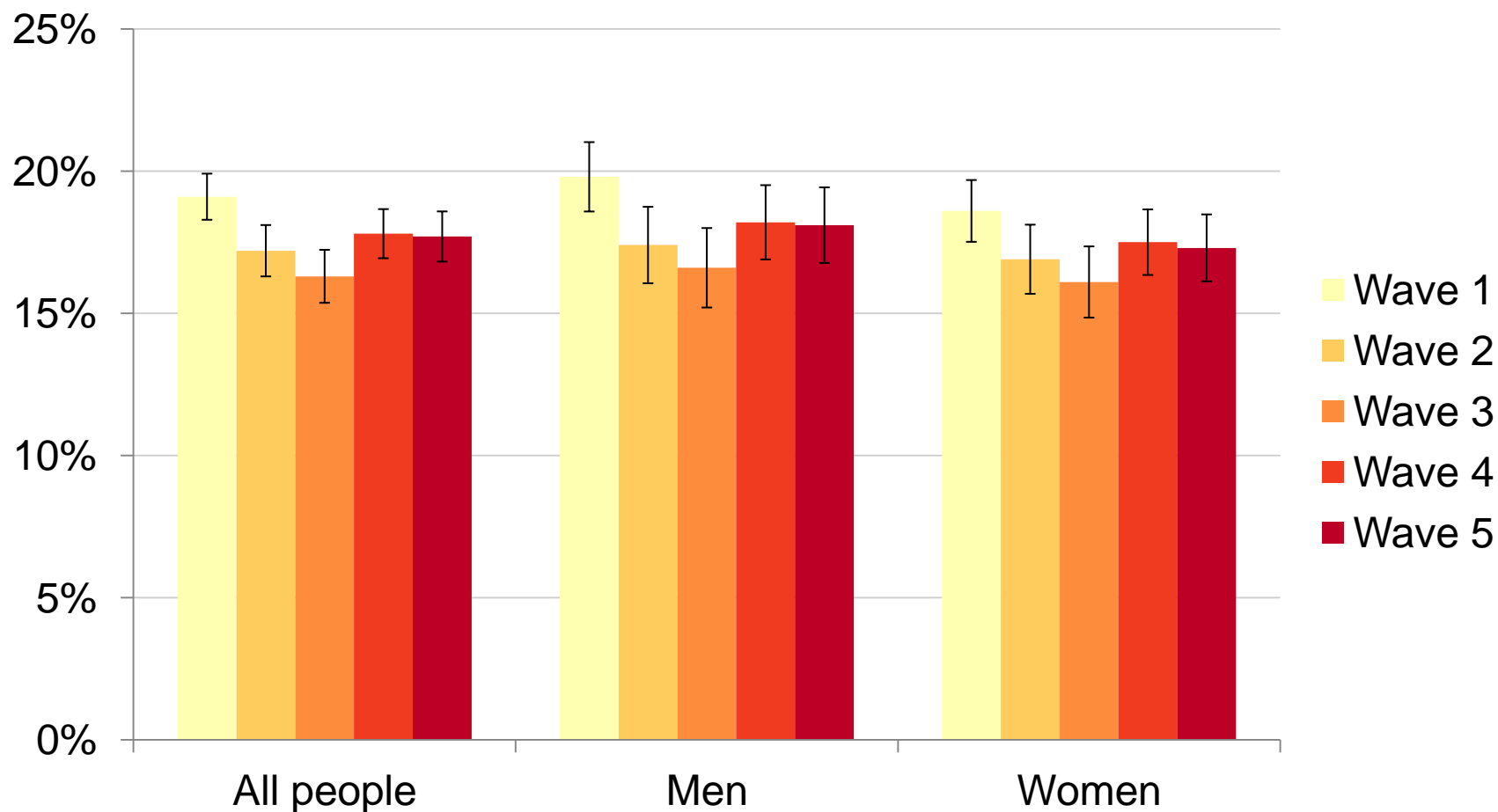
Social networks

- Define individuals as detached from social networks if they:

  - Do not have any children, family or friends

  - Have children, family or friends but have contact with them (meeting, phone or write) less than once a week

Prevalence of social networks detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5

Prevalence of more than two domains of social detachment by sex, cross-sectional waves 1-5
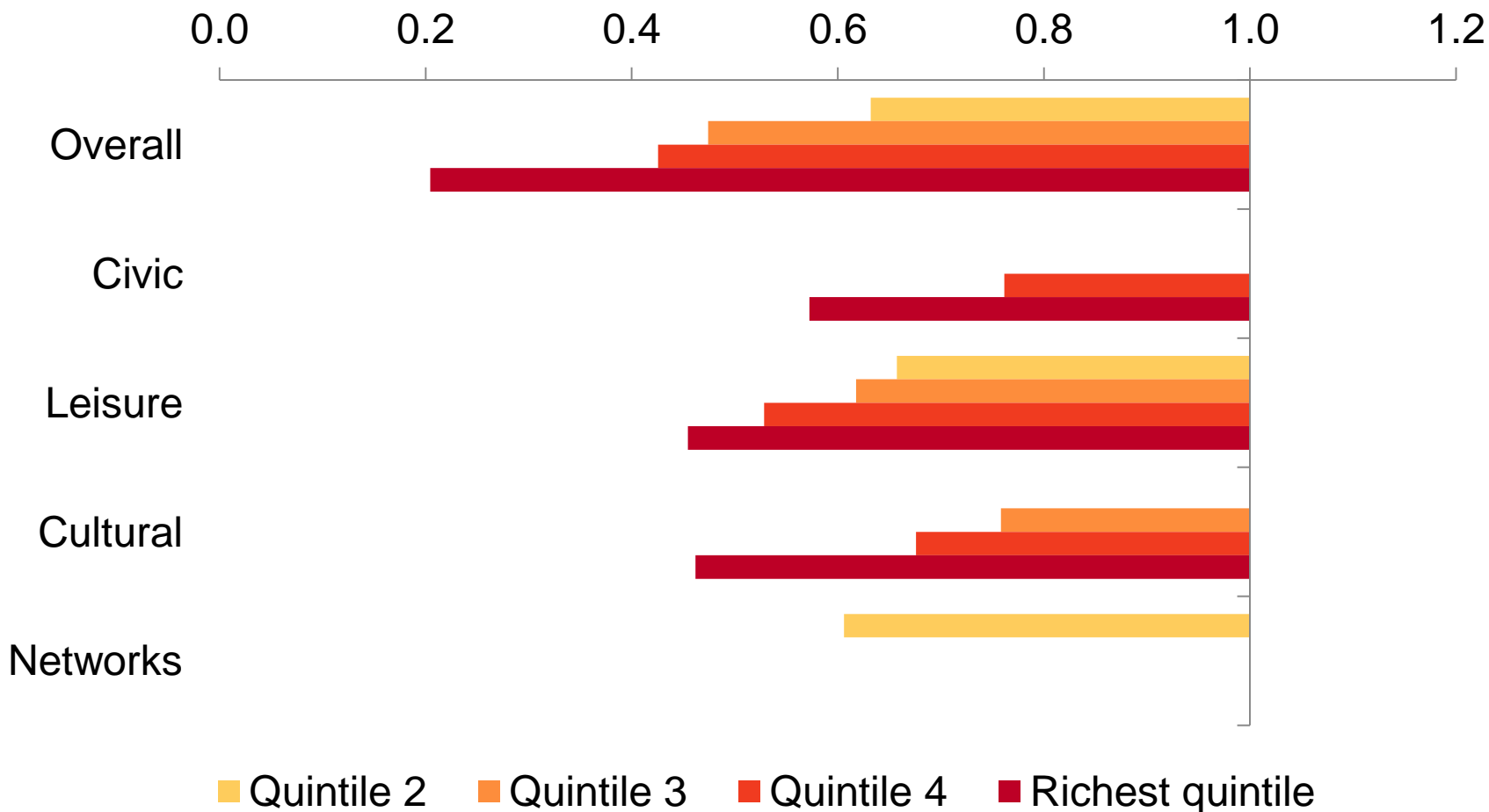
Longitudinal analysis

Social detachment trajectories

Prevalence of social detachment domains by trajectory, longitudinal change waves 1-5

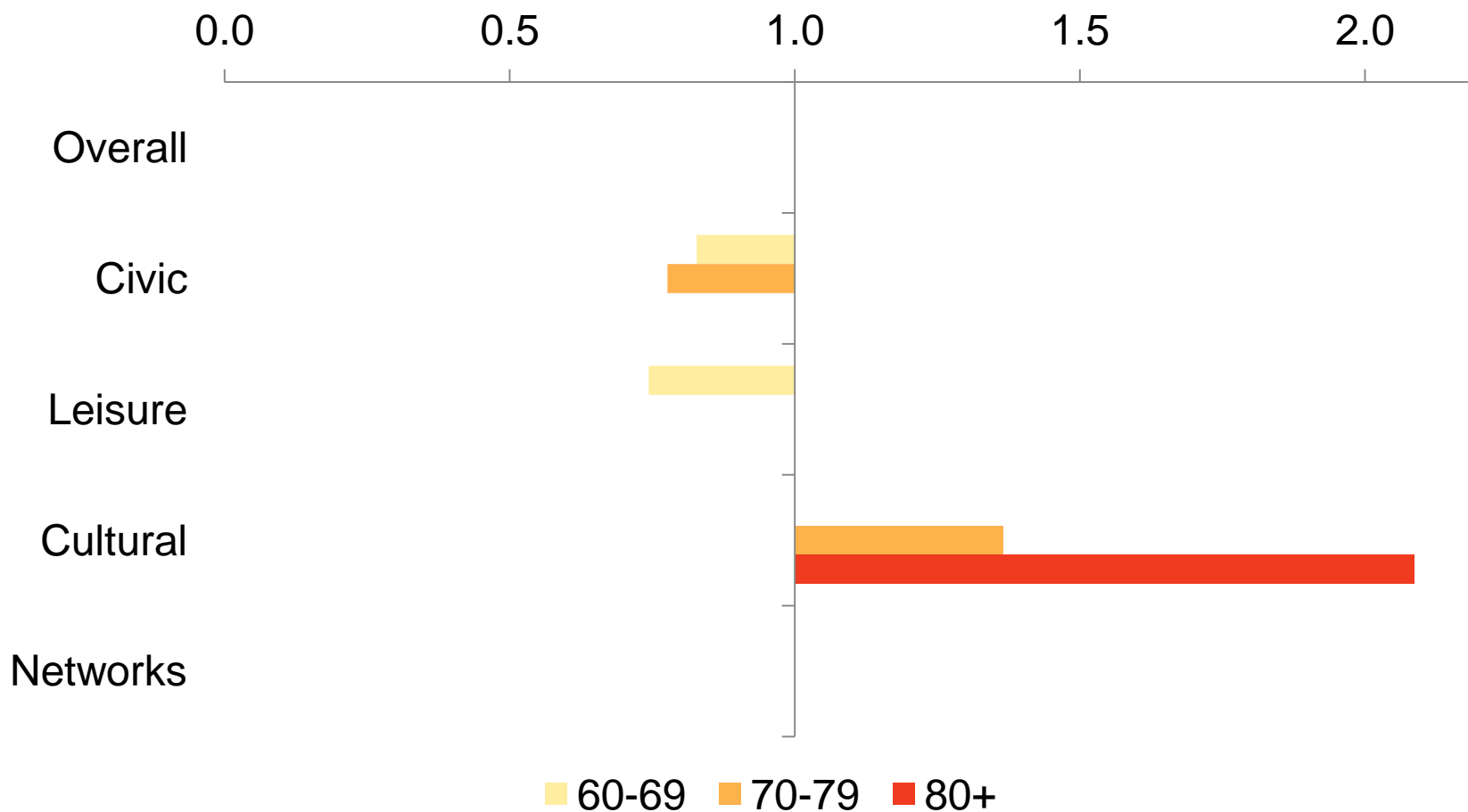| %	Civic participation	Leisure activities	Social networks	Cultural engagement	Social detachment
Never detached	39.8	37.9	89.9	49.5	78.3
Always detached	18.3	18.1	0.5	11.7	2.4
Improve	10.2	7.4	2	5.8	3.1
Decline	9.7	12.7	2.2	13.6	5.7
Improve then decline	7.9	7.4	0.6	5.3	2
Decline then improve	7.1	10.3	3.5	8.3	5.6
>2 transitions	7.1	6.2	1.2	5.8	2.8

Wealth

Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by wealth quintile and domain (**reference category: poorest wealth quintile**)

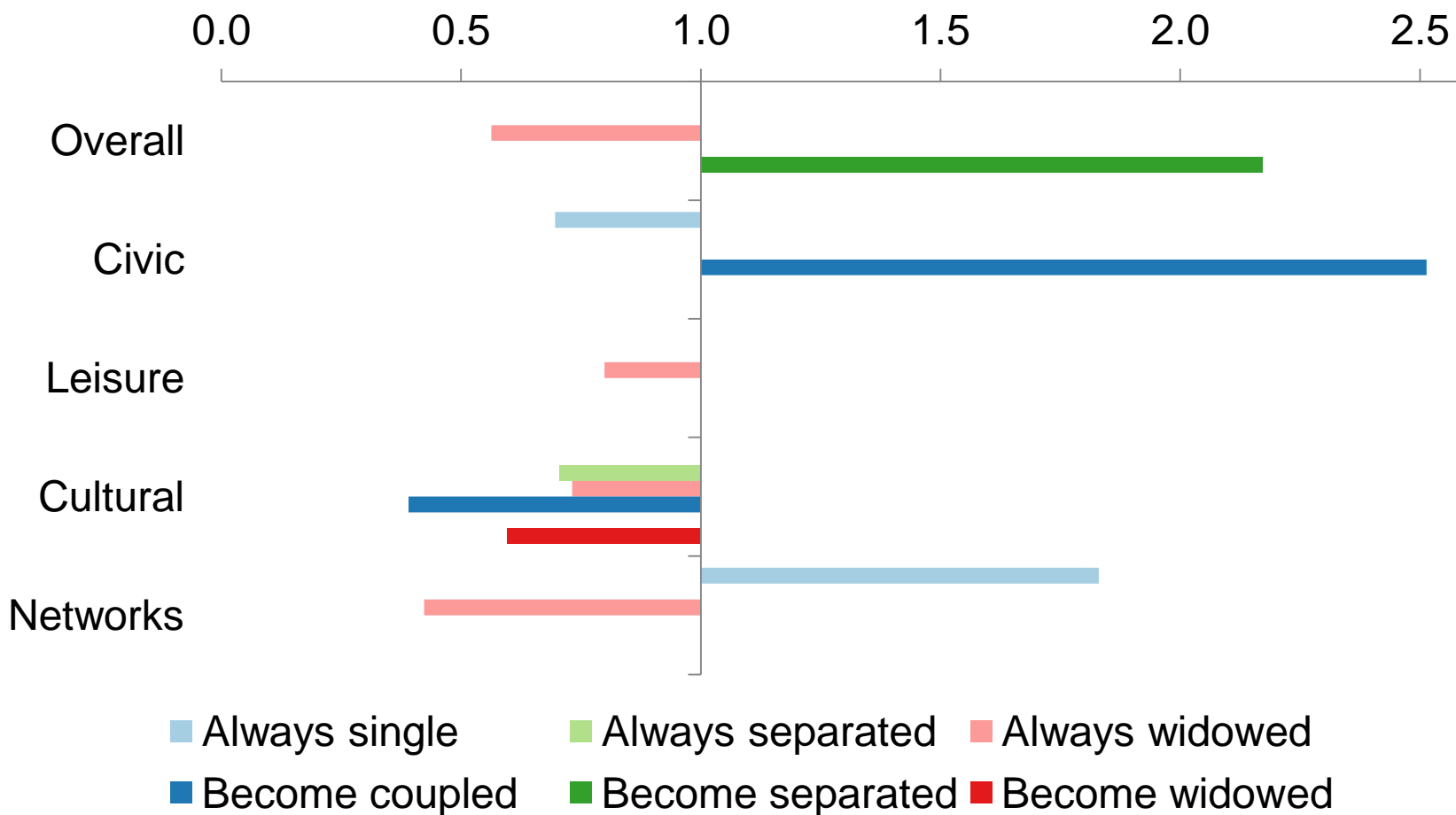■ Quintile 2   ■ Quintile 3   ■ Quintile 4   ■ Richest quintile

Age

Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by domain and age group (**reference category: aged 50–59**)
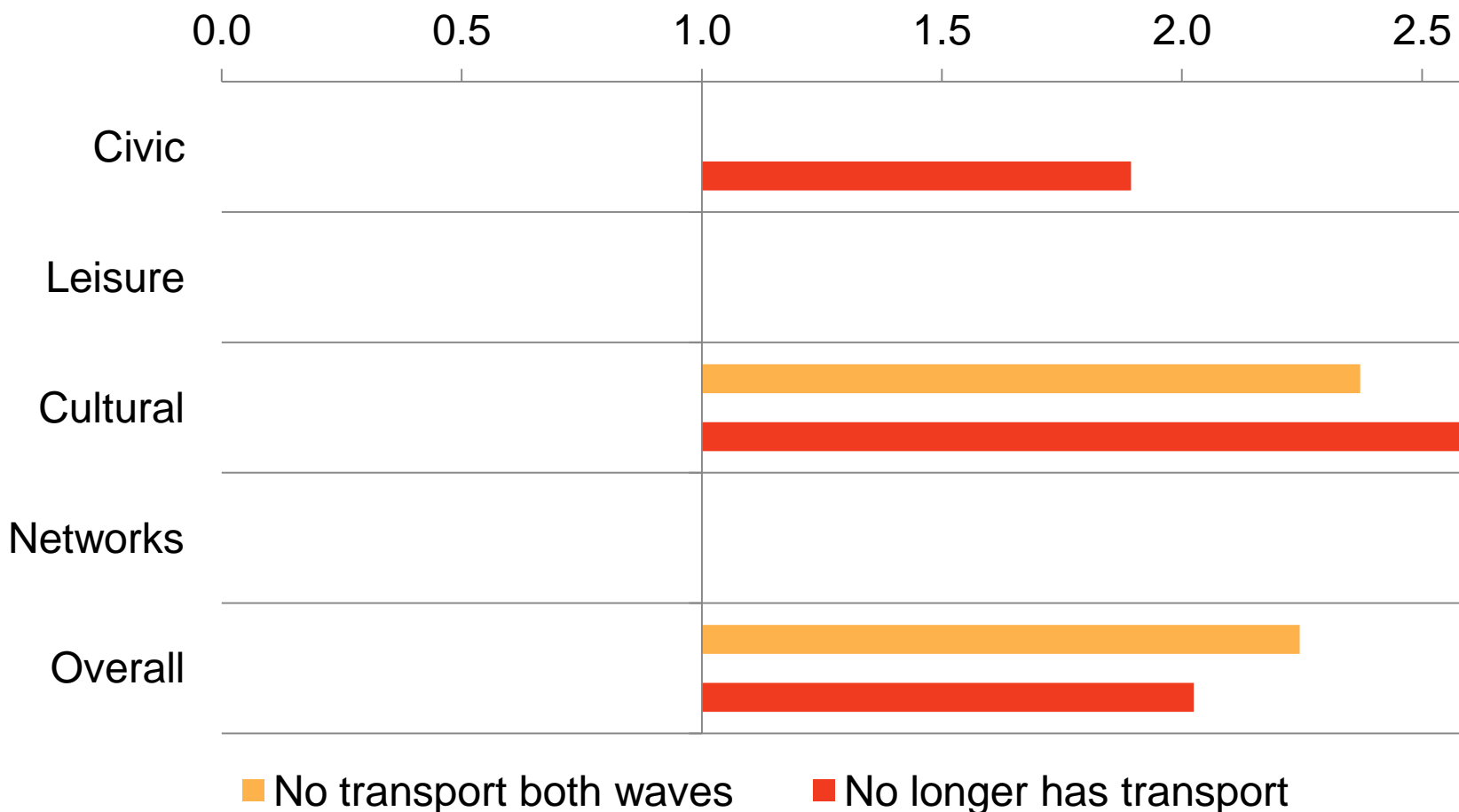
Change in martial status

Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by domain and change in marital status (**reference category: always in a couple**)

Change in access to transport

Significant odds ratios of movement into detachment by domain and change in access to transport status (**reference category: access to transport**)

■ No transport both waves   ■ No longer has transport

Summary of findings

- The prevalence of social detachment remained relatively stable in older age population since 2002

- However, individual change in social detachment domains is volatile

- Poorer wealth is the strongest driver of movement into social detachment

- Becoming separated or loosing access to transport increases likelihood of moving into social detachment

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