



A U S T R A L I A N
L O C A L
G O V E R N M E N T
A S S O C I A T I O N



A U S T R A L I A N L O C A L G O V E R N M E N T A S S O C I A T I O N A L G A

*Presentation to
National General Assembly 2010*

Update on strategy to include Local Government in the Australian Constitution



A U S T R A L I A N L O C A L G O V E R N M E N T A S S O C I A T I O N

A L G A

Background

- 2 previous unsuccessful attempts to include LG in the Constitution – 1974 and 1988
- 2007: Rudd Govt elected with a commitment to pursue a referendum
- 2008: ALGA Local Government Constitutional Summit
- 2009: Issue placed on the agenda of the ACLG
- July 2009: ALGA Board commenced a strategy to seek a referendum and build the case for change



History of referenda in Australia

- There have been only 8 successful referenda in Australian history
- 26 Referenda held since WWII
 - 17 under ALP governments (1 win)
 - 9 under Coalition governments (4 wins)
- 1967 Nexus referendum: loud dissident voices can still stop bipartisan support.



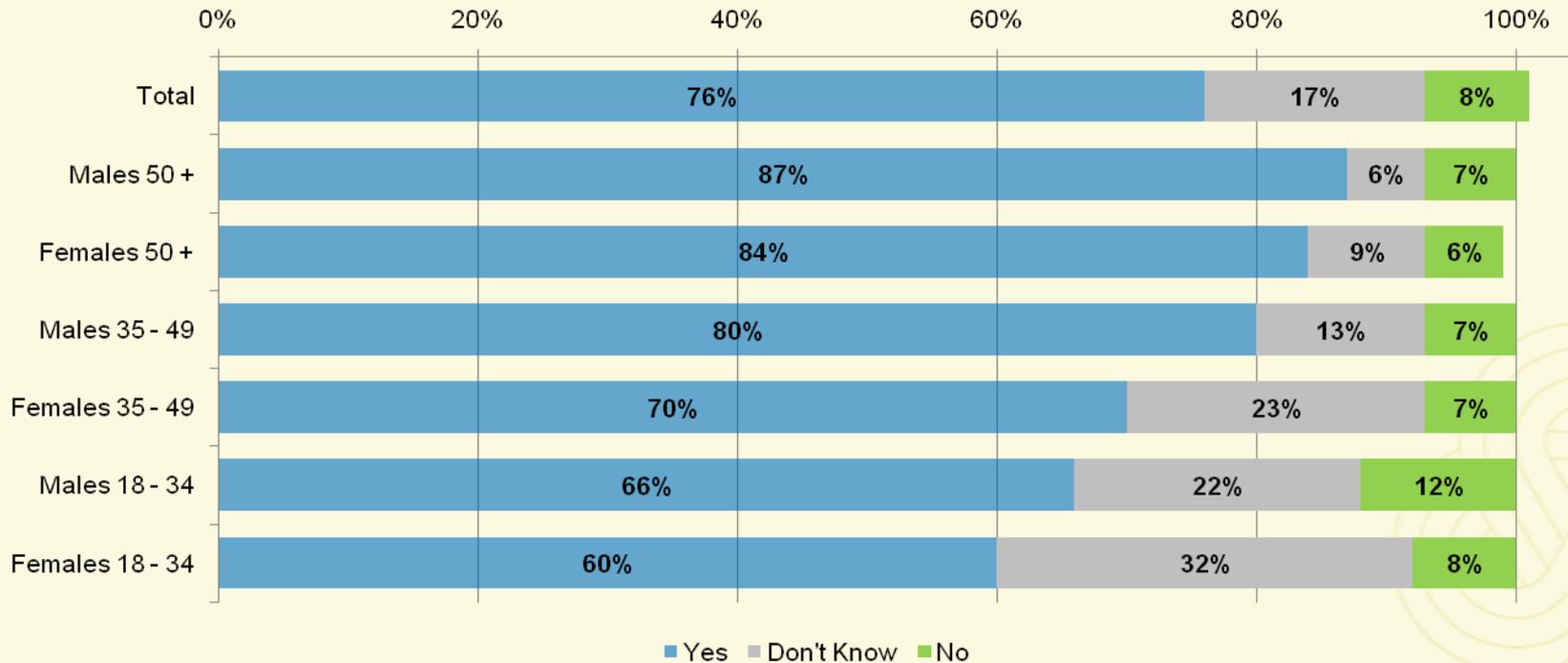
ALGA's strategic framework

- Developed and adopted a three phase strategy
- Set-up Phase (completed) involved substantial market research conducted by Millward Brown Firefly in August 2009 on the public's perceptions of the Constitution and local government
 - **Qualitative:** 8 focus groups across 4 states
 - **Quantitative:** 1,500 respondents across Aust
- Research results formed the basis of Phase 1 and Phase 2 for engagement of key politicians at federal and state level.



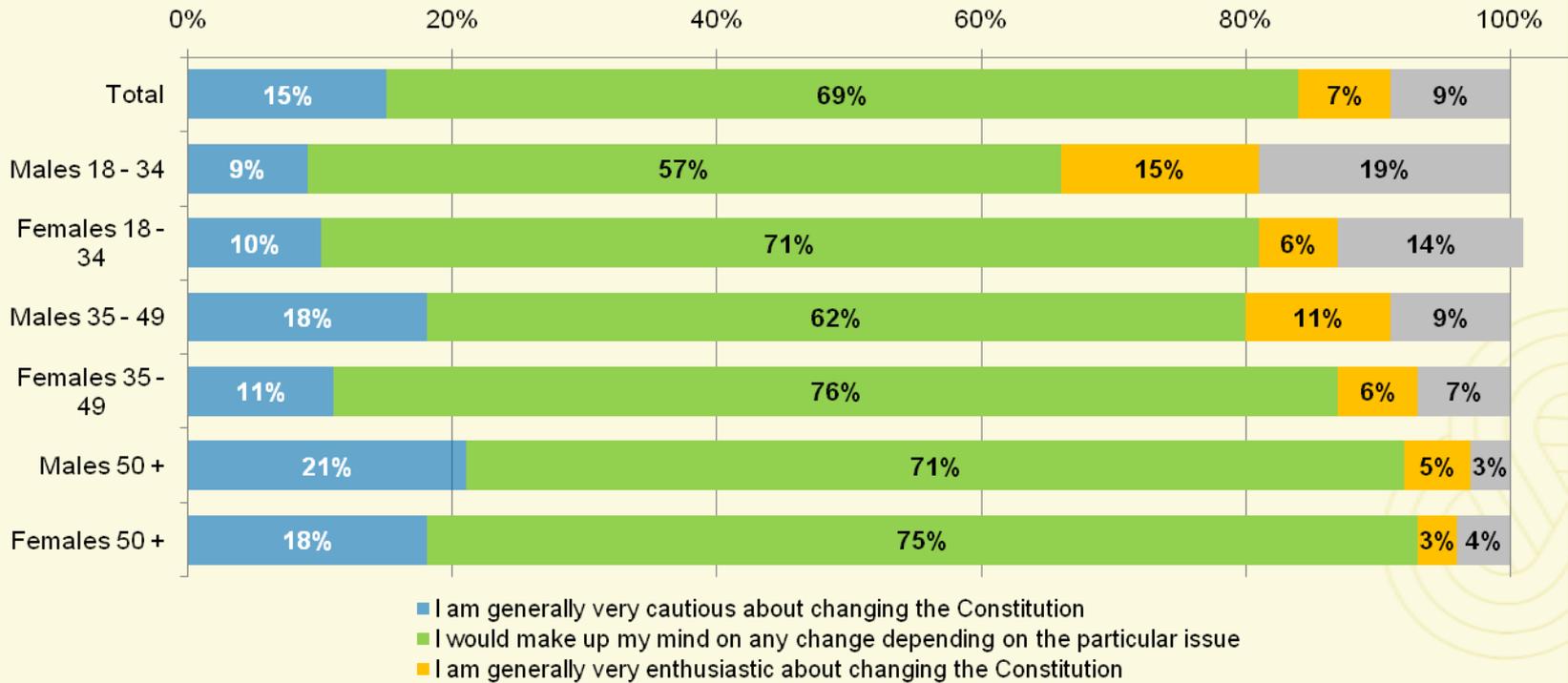
Does Australia have a Constitution?

Question: Does Australia have a Constitution?



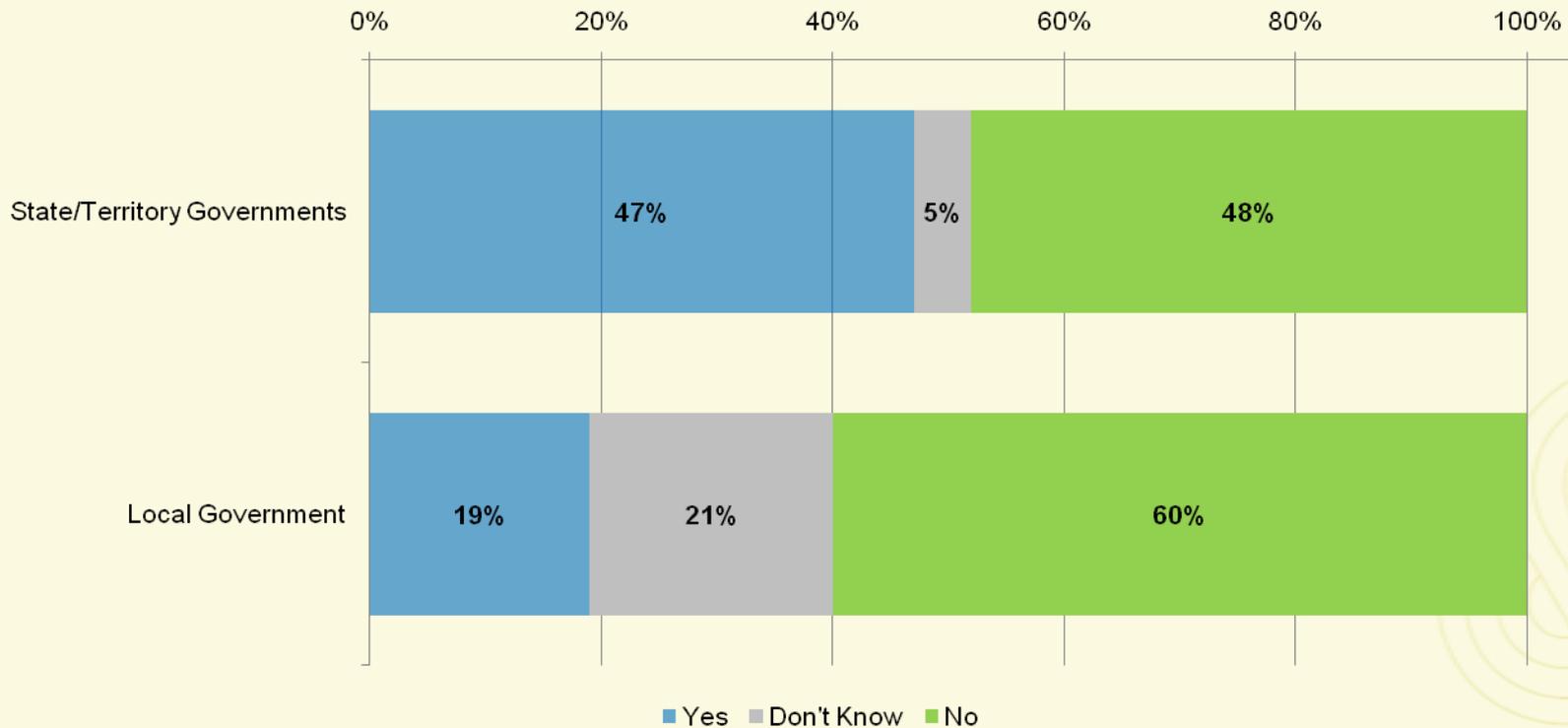
Attitude towards changing the Constitution

Question: *In Australia, in order for the federal Constitution to be changed, there must be a national referendum, which is a vote held to approve or reject the proposed changes. How would you describe your attitude to changing the Constitution?*



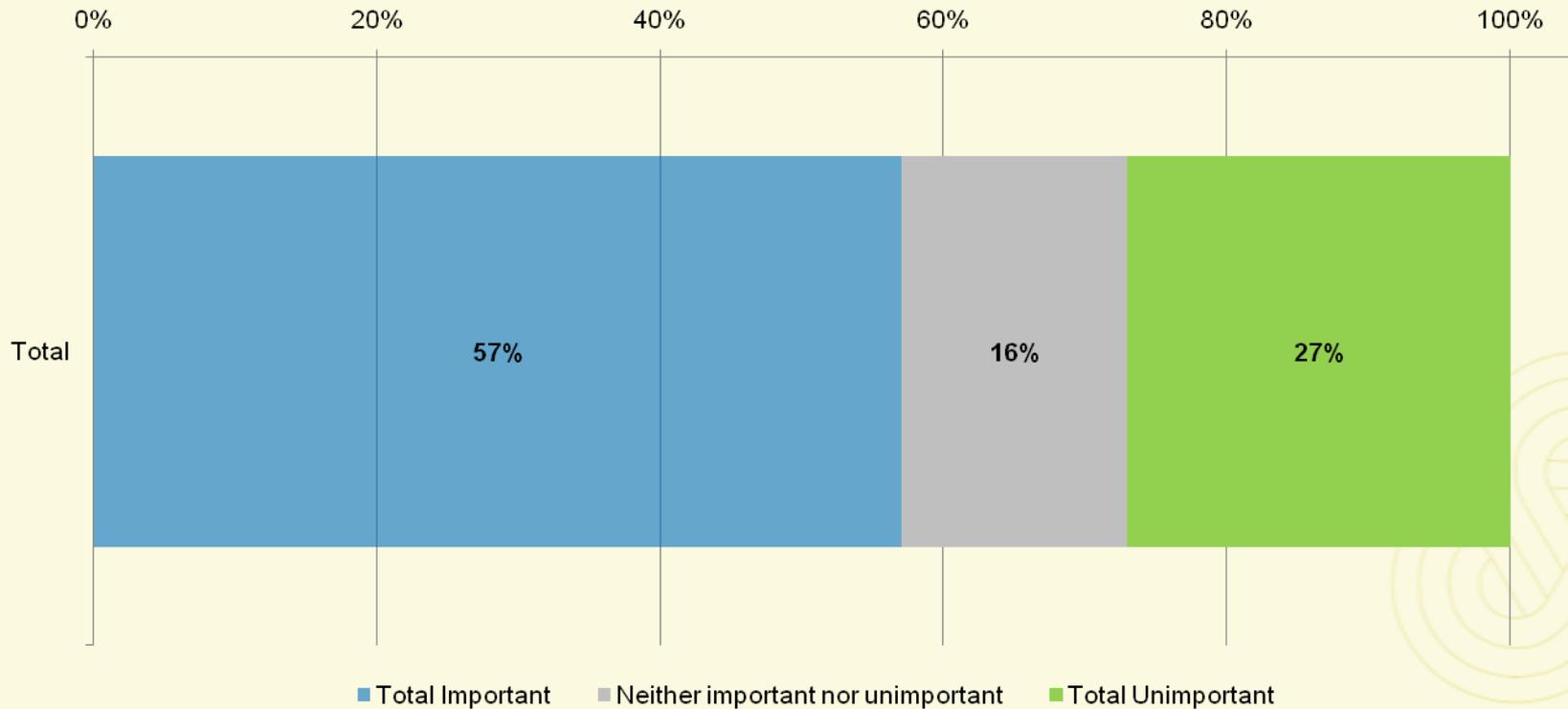
Awareness of recognition

Question: Are state/territory governments currently recognised in the Australian Constitution?
Is local government currently recognised in the Australian Constitution?



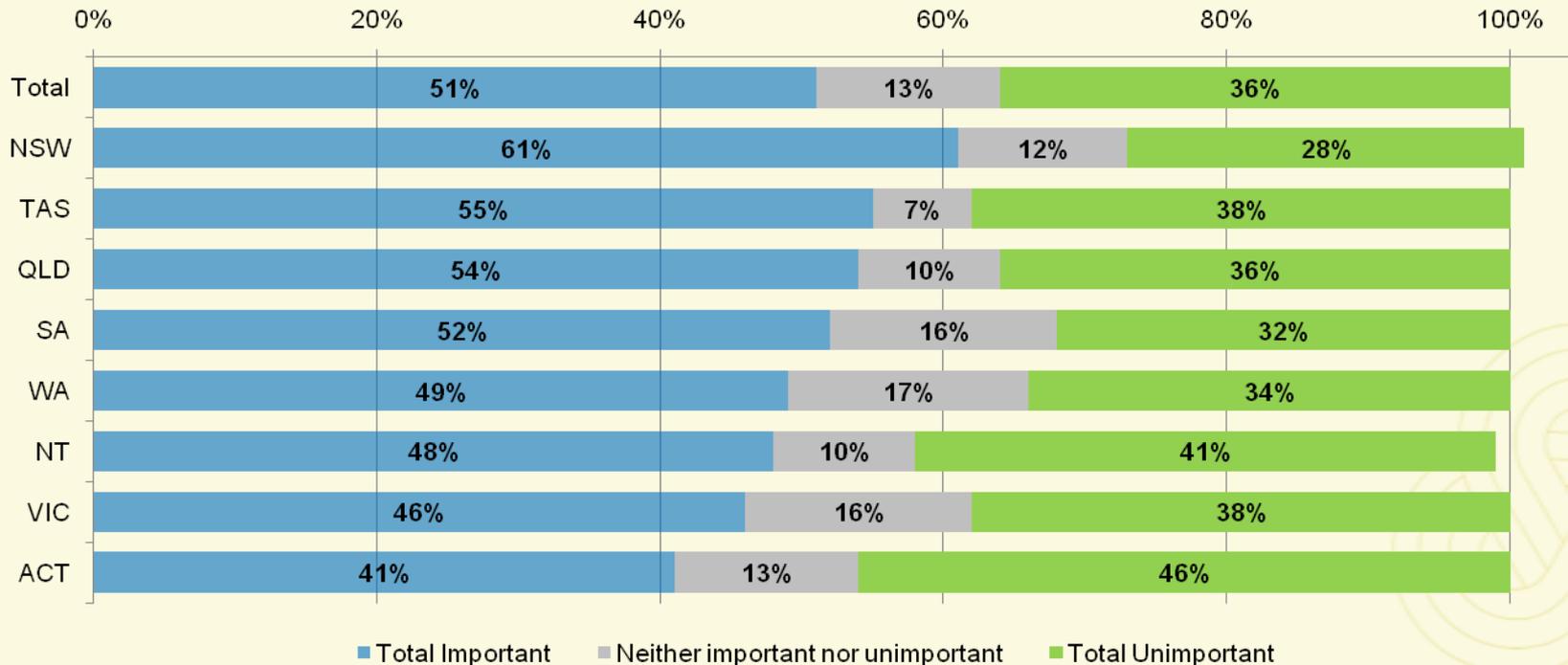
Importance of local government

Question: How important or unimportant would you say the role of local government is in Australia?



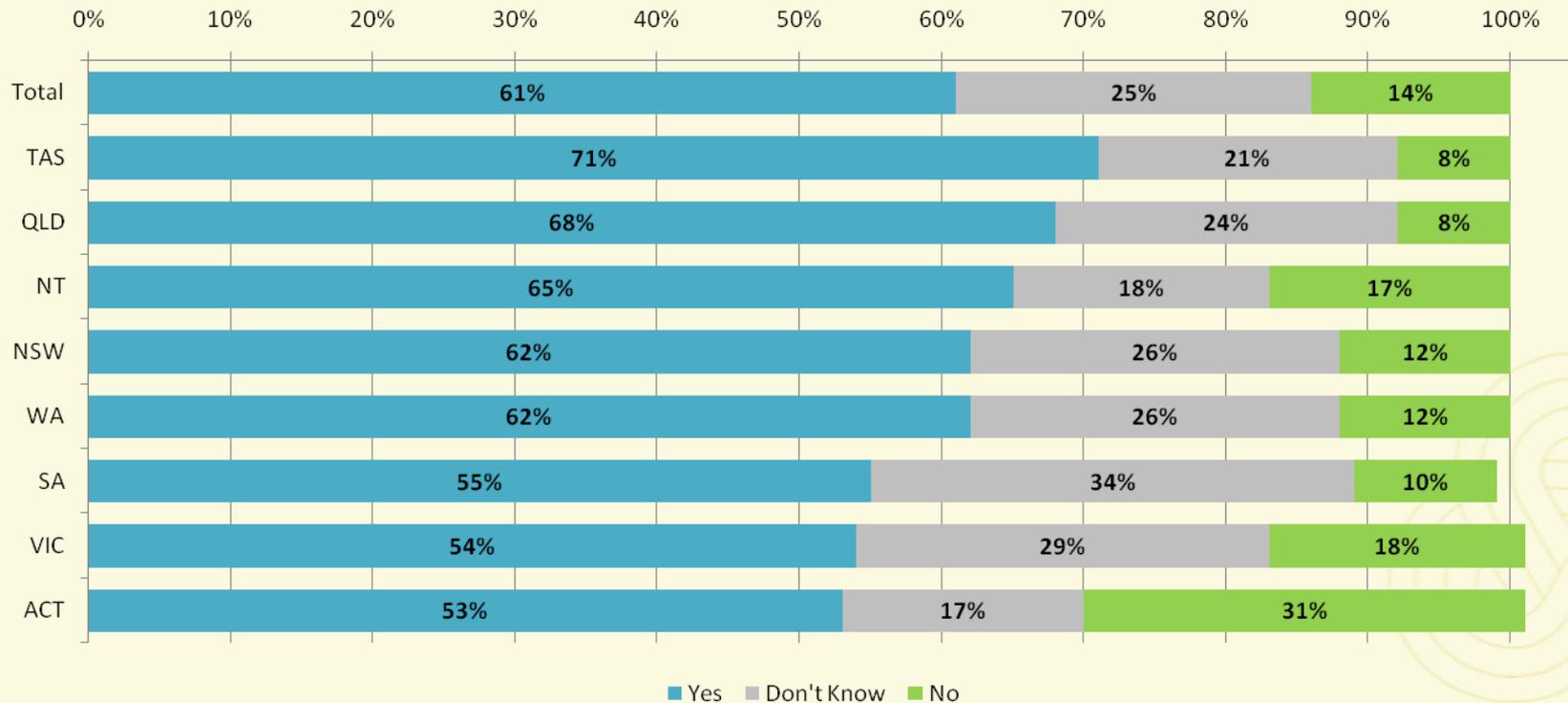
Importance of local government (by state/territory)

Question: How important or unimportant would you say the role of local government is in your state?



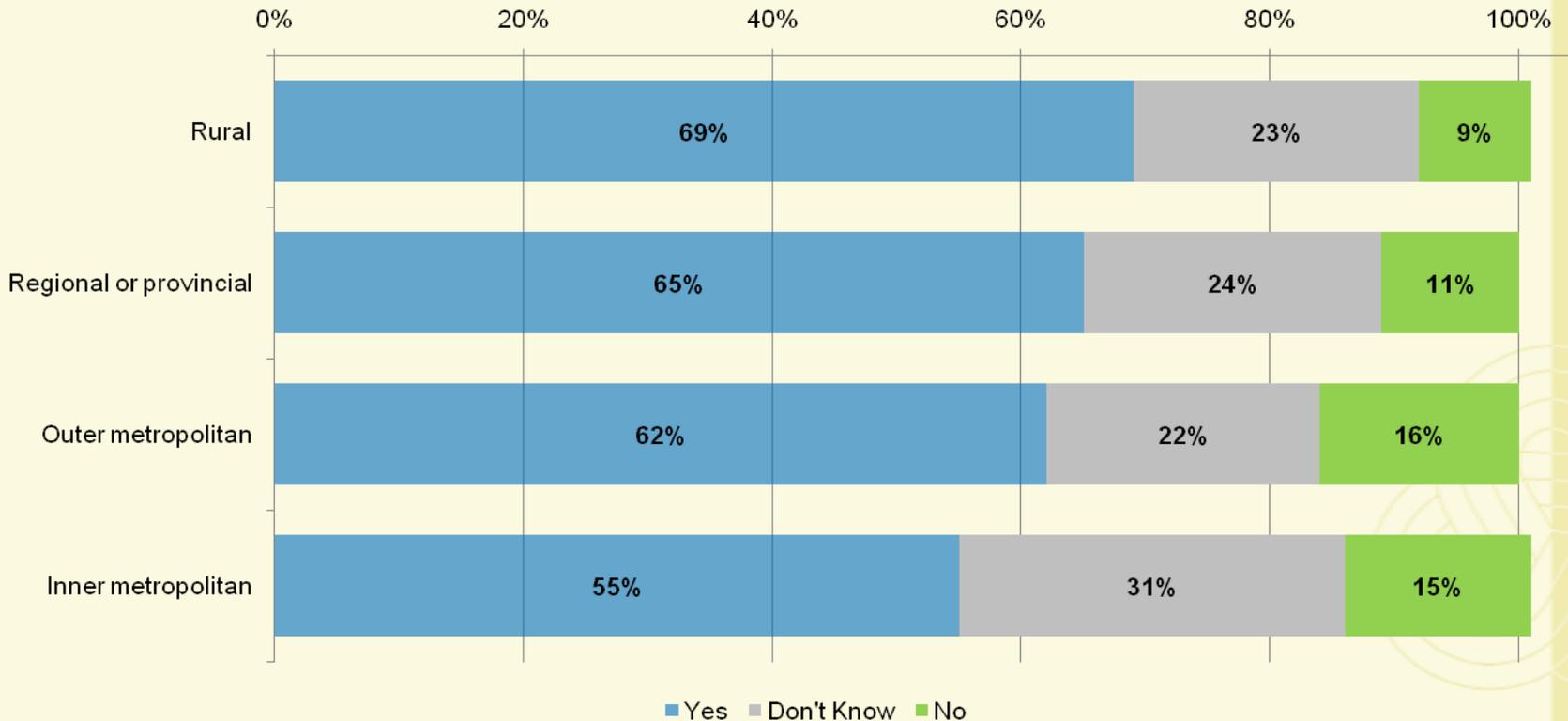
Support for recognition of LG

Question: *Do you believe that the Australian Constitution should recognise and protect the existence of local government?*



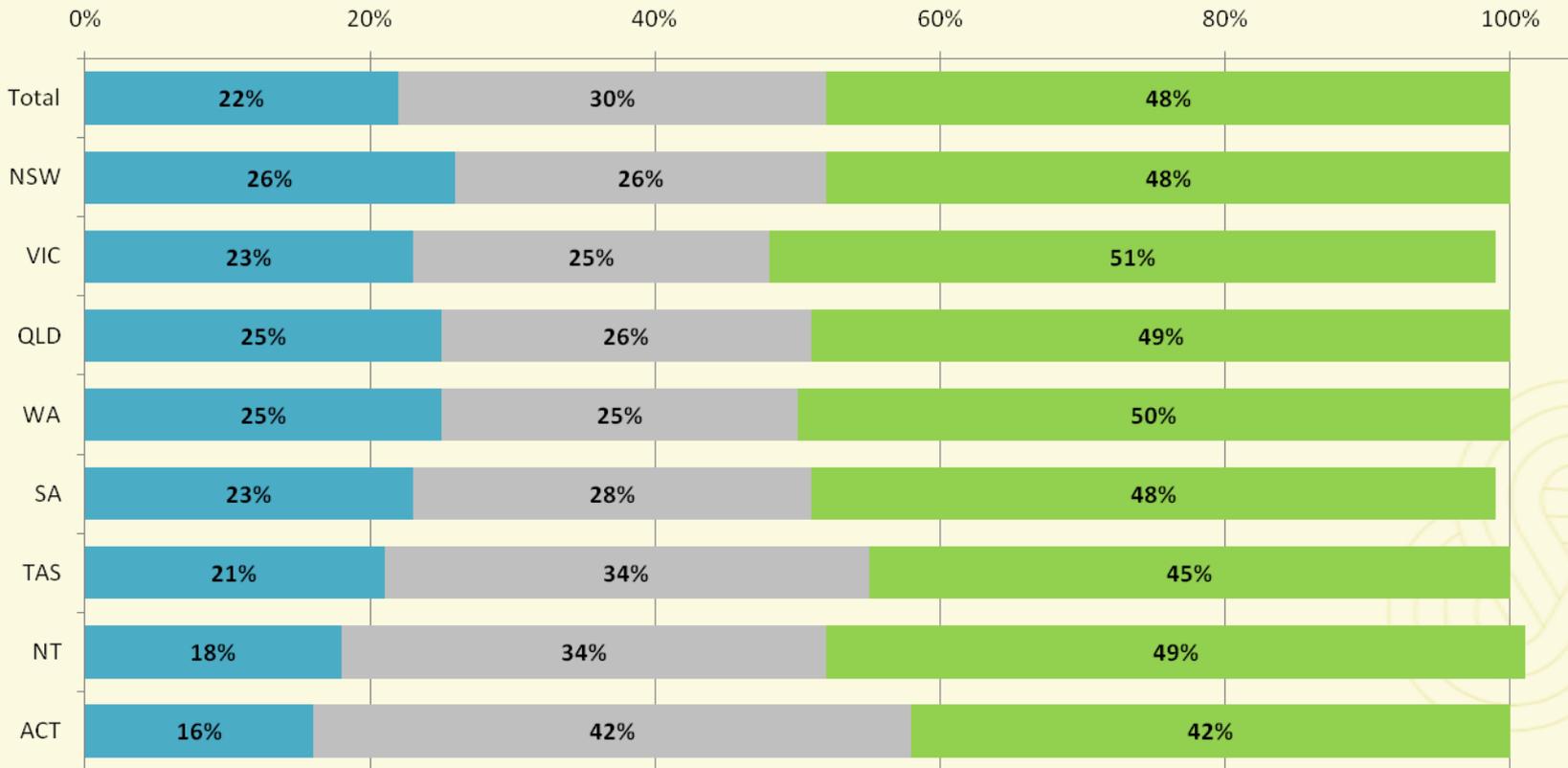
Support for recognition of LG (by council type)

Question: *Do you believe that the Australian Constitution should recognise and protect the existence of local government?*



Timing for a referendum

Question: Thinking about both the Global Financial Crisis and a constitutional referendum, do you think the current timing for such a debate would be...



■ The right time to build for the future ■ A normal part of government process ■ Self-indulgent, as there are more important issues right now

