

Partisanship, polarisation and social cohesion in Australia

McKinnon Poll | Susan McKinnon Foundation

August 2024





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Background, objectives and methodology





Background and objectives

The Susan McKinnon Foundation's (SMF) aspiration is for Australia to have the world's most effective government, focused on the long-term interests of the Australian community. The SMF incubates, delivers and supports practical improvements to how government works.

To this end, the SMF has developed the McKinnon Poll Research Program, a pilot program aimed at encouraging better policymaking by providing a richer and more in-depth understanding of public opinion as an input into the policymaking process.

The program does this by commissioning high quality public opinion research on topics that are of significant policy interest, but where there is potentially a gap between actual public opinion and policymakers' understanding of public opinion.

Phase 1 of the Program was a research pilot program funded by the Susan McKinnon Foundation and undertaken in 2021 through the newDemocracy Foundation. This initial pilot indicated an appetite for, and interest in, such research among policymakers at both state and federal level.

Phase 2 is an extended pilot program that seeks to refine the methodology and establish the impact of systematic, independent, and high-quality public opinion research on policy dialogue, policy development and government decision-making in Australia.

JWS Research has been commissioned to conduct public opinion research as part of this program.

Our first poll focused on public attitudes to social support in Australia, with a focus on aged care, the NDIS and childcare. The second one looked at views on electoral reform, the third examined attitudes towards employment in Australia, while the fourth poll explored public perceptions of housing in Australia.

This fifth poll explores public perceptions of partisanship, polarisation and social cohesion, covering the following issues:

- Attitudes towards democracy in Australia
- Attitudes toward undemocratic practices
- How partisan (or not) the Australian public is
- The degree to which partisan animosity exists
- The degree to which Australians feel comfortable discussing difficult or controversial issues and how polarised they feel Australia is
- The degree to which Australians feel a sense of belonging and their attitudes towards the level of cohesion in Australia.



Susan McKinnon Foundation

The Susan McKinnon Foundation was established in 2015 by Sophie Oh and Grant Rule to make a positive and enduring contribution to the Australian community. The Foundation is named after Grant's mother, who instils the values of service and positive contribution in those around her.

About the Susan McKinnon Foundation

Starting from nothing, Grant built Australia's largest SMS technology business. Following the billion-dollar sale of that business in 2021, Sophie and Grant committed the majority of their wealth to philanthropy and expanded the Foundation.

Drawing upon their own experiences working in the public and private sectors, Sophie and Grant decided the best way to make a lasting difference to Australia was to help to enhance the capability and effectiveness of our democratic institutions and government.

Sophie and Grant believe that through smarter decision making, improved policy development and better service delivery, governments at all levels in Australia can create a society that is fairer, more prosperous, and has greater opportunity for all.

Through the Foundation we incubate, deliver and support practical improvements to help Australia achieve a more fit-for-purpose political, policy and service delivery system. We work with Australians from each part of the political spectrum – parliamentarians, public service leaders, policy influencers and everyday citizens.

At present the Foundation's major funding and partnering initiatives include The McKinnon Institute for Political Leadership, the McKinnon Prize in Political Leadership, and the e61 economic research institute amongst others.

Our work concentrates on three interconnected areas:



Developing effective elected representatives

We believe positive leadership is crucial in a high-functioning democracy.



Creating robust state institutions

We believe strong, effective and apolitical public institutions are vital assets for a thriving democracy.



Encouraging constructive policy dialogue

We believe that good policy making is rigorous, non-ideological and implementation focused.



Research methodology



JWS Research has been commissioned to conduct public opinion research as part of this program.

JWS Research is an independent, privately and wholly Australian-owned research firm.

Established more than a decade ago, JWS Research has grown quickly to become an industry leader and one of the most respected firms in Australia for providing research-based advice to the government and business sectors, particularly on complex and challenging issues.

JWS Research is engaged by senior levels of business and government across Australia because they provide robust research and critical analysis to underpin strategic decision making and actions.

JWS pride themselves on their commitment to research design integrity to produce quality results and insights for their clients.

Qualitative

In-depth interviews and focus group discussions

n=6 in-depth interviews conducted via video conferencing with expert stakeholders

- Stakeholders comprised a range of experts on partisanship and polarisation.
- Approximately 45 minutes in duration.
- Conducted 30th April to 16th May 2024.

n=6 focus group discussions conducted via video conferencing

- Among adult Australians eligible to vote in Australian elections from across the country.
- Segmented by political affiliation (right-wing vs left-wing voters), level of engagement in politics (somewhat vs not at all engaged) and CALD background (Chinese vs other).
- 90 minutes in duration.
- Conducted 23rd May to 3rd June 2024.

Quantitative

Online survey

n=3,000 Australians aged 18 years and over

- Survey quotas on age, gender and location, and weighting applied at the analysis stage to actual age / gender / location proportions based on ABS census data.
- The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=3,000 is +/-1.8% at the 95% confidence level.
- Differences of +/-1% for net scores are due to rounding.
- 15 minutes in length.

Conducted 16th to 28th July 2024.

Where possible, results have been compared to previous surveys, also conducted among 3000 Australian adults in August, June and May 2023, and September 2022.

The research was conducted in compliance with AS-ISO 20252.

Detailed qualitative methodology



Qualitative research in the form of **six online group discussions** were conducted with 43 people from metropolitan areas and regional locations across Australia. A mix of genders and ages were included in each group. The group discussions were structured as follows:

Voting intentions	Right-wing voters – 1 group	Left-wing voters – 1 group
Engagement in politics	Somewhat engaged in politics – 1 group	Not at all engaged in politics – 1 group
CALD background	People of Chinese ancestry – 1 group	People of other CALD backgrounds – 1 group

Six to eight participants took part in each group discussion.

Note: Qualitative research is exploratory in nature, and so the qualitative findings within this report are indicative only and are not necessarily fully representative of the target populations.



Reporting notes: segment definitions

The following tables show the definitions of key respondent segments described throughout the report:

Segment	Description
Generation Z	Aged 18 to 24 years
Millennials	Aged 25 to 39 years
Generation X	Aged 40 to 54 years
Boomers	Aged 55 to 74 years
Post-War	Aged 75 years and over
University	Highest level of education completed is a Post Graduate Degree, Graduate Diploma / Certificate or Bachelor Degree
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse – born in a non-English speaking country or speak a language other than English at home
HHI <\$60K	Household annual income before tax less than \$60,000
HHI \$60K-\$100K	Household annual income before tax between \$60,000 and \$99,999
HHI \$100K-\$160K	Household annual income before tax between \$100,000 and \$159,999
HHI \$160K+	Household annual income before tax \$160,000 or more



Reporting notes: segment definitions (cont'd)

The following tables show the definitions of key respondent segments described throughout the report:

Segment	Description
ALP voters	Would give first preference vote to the Labor Party if a Federal election were held today
LNP voters	Would give first preference vote to the Liberal Party, Liberal National Party, the LNP or The Nationals if a Federal election were held today
Greens voters	Would give first preference vote to the Greens if a Federal election were held today
Other/independent voters	Would give first preference vote to Pauline Hanson's One Nation, United Australia Party, Climate 200 / Teals, another independent or another party if a Federal election were held today
Marginal seat	Federal electorates with a two-candidate preferred result at the last election of less than 6.0%
Left and progressive	A group identified through segmentation analysis that self-identifies as politically left leaning with progressive social views
Centre and moderate	A group identified through segmentation analysis that considers themselves politically centrist with moderate social views
Right and conservative	A group identified through segmentation analysis that self-identifies as politically right leaning with conservative social views
Moderate outliers	A group identified through flag analysis that supports (at least probably) undemocratic activities and agrees (at least somewhat) politics influences their relationships. Refer to p47 for a detailed explanation
Extreme outliers	A group identified through flag analysis that strongly supports undemocratic activities and strongly agrees politics influences their relationships. Refer to p47 for a detailed explanation
Unable to express real views	Experienced or been concerned about "Feeling like I can't express my real views" in the last five years
Feeling unwelcome and unsafe	Experienced or been concerned about "Feeling unwelcome in my community due to my views" or "My safety in areas where there are protestors" in the last five years
Conflict due to different opinions	Experienced or been concerned about "Conflict with friends or family due to expressing different opinions" or "Conflict with colleagues or peers due to expressing different opinions" in the last five years



Reporting notes: index calculations

Explanation of index scores:

An **index score** has been calculated for some scaled measures in this report (e.g. *very good* to *very poor* performance ratings).

The index score is represented as a score out of 100.

To calculate this score, the **survey percentage result** for each scale category (excluding can't say responses) is multiplied by an **index factor** to produce an **index value** for each category. These values are then summed to produce the **index score**, equating to 59 in this example.

Rating category	Survey percentage	Index factor	Index value (percentage x factor)
<i>Very good</i>	11%	100	11
<i>Good</i>	34%	75	26
<i>Average</i>	38%	50	19
<i>Poor</i>	10%	25	3
<i>Very poor</i>	6%	0	0
<i>Can't say</i>	2%	-	-
Index score			59

Detailed findings



Expert insights





Experts believe partisanship in Australia is in decline

Preceding the focus group discussions and quantitative survey, six in-depth interviews with expert stakeholders from industry, academia and government were conducted to gauge their views on partisanship and polarisation.

As for partisanship, there is agreement among experts that, while partisans might come across as louder (mainly because they have more social media platforms to voice their opinions and can thus reach a bigger audience), Australians are actually less partisan nowadays in comparison to the past. The evidence they give for this change is the noticeable decline in party membership numbers and an increase in the numbers of swing voters.

Experts also agree the decline in partisanship in Australia is primarily related to:

- Australians' growing disillusionment with traditional political parties and their perceived inability to effectively address issues that impact Australians' lives
- an increasing focus on issue-based politics.
 - Experts believe that the passion for or concern about a particular issue can trump a person's adherence to a party's overall agenda.

There is a belief that the decline in partisanship, and particularly the shifting away from the traditional two-party system, enhances voter choice, thereby strengthening democracy.

"If you look at it [partisanship] in terms of membership of political parties and people sticking with the votes they've always had, you'd have to say [that Australia is] less partisan ... The amount of swing voters each election is getting bigger and bigger."

"There are obviously a series of issues which are going to swing people in the middle one way or the other where people will feel strongly about the issue."

"I think the voices of those that are partisan are louder than they have ever been due to social media."

"Most people don't feel like politics has made a difference to their lives, and you can argue black and blue that it absolutely has. But they don't see it. So, if they don't think it's made a difference, they don't see it as the answer."

"[Moving away from a two-party system in Australia offers] places people can park their vote if they're really angry about an issue that's away from their party but somewhere safe. The TEALS is the best example of that ... They don't have to do a grudge vote ... It is probably quite healthy for democracy."





International politics and reversion to tribalism seen to drive polarisation in Australia

Experts identify several factors that influence polarisation in Australia. These include:

- international politics
 - Experts note that the multicultural fabric of Australian society means some **international debates** (e.g. Sikh-Hindu tensions, the Israel-Hamas conflict) are playing out in Australia. Some also express their concern that this might increase anti-immigration sentiment.
 - While experts agree Australians are not as divided on social and political issues as Americans are, they believe the **extreme political polarisation in the US** has a negative impact on Australia.
- reversion to tribalism
 - Some experts identify an uptick in tribalism among some communities in Australia and warn this tribalism may rival people's attachment to the nation, weakening social cohesion. Experts argue democracies need to focus on protecting individual's rights, not enshrining 'little tribal conglomerates.'
- social media
 - Social media platforms are said to act as echo chambers and fuel polarisation.

Experts mention several issues that divide Australians, noting that vested interest groups tend to fuel division and angst around these issues.

The Israel-Hamas conflict is cited as an international divisive issue, with some experts noting that it has triggered a level of polarisation they have never witnessed before. Other international polarising issues include tensions between China and Taiwan and the Sikh-Hindu tensions over Khalistan.

The referendum on the Voice to Parliament, the Wakeley church stabbing of bishop Mari Emmanuel and Cumberland Council's ban of a same-sex parenting book are cited as examples of domestic and local polarising issues.

It is believed that, while divisive issues tend to have the most significant impact on affected communities, 'people in the middle' also face consequences in that they often feel pressured (but at the same time uncomfortable) to pick a side of the debate, leading them to avoid or disengage from those conversations altogether.

"The most important thing in Australia was to be an Australian. The challenge at the moment is that people are starting to go back into their own tribes, into a community that's validating their feelings and emotions. And that's not necessarily helpful because they're getting a singular view rather than multiple views and then picking the view that is most informed or most fact based."

"There are activists out there who are trying to polarise and provoke outrage ... And the media amplifies that."

"The conflict in Israel and Gaza is the most polarising issue of the 21st century and continues to be highly polarising in the sense that it's one that people are just encamped in their trenches and don't talk to each other."

"Sometimes it's kind of the people in the middle who may be personally impacted in terms of what they feel they can or can't say ... people who have a sense of fear that leads to lack of participation and engagement in things simply because those loud voices are dominating the discourse, and it's either one side or the other; you can't be in the middle".





Encouraging a donkey vote, misusing funds and online astroturfing are examples of undemocratic practices in Australia

Experts define undemocratic practices as those 'trying to undermine or dispute elections, and democratic processes' through 'attacks on democratic institutions themselves.'

They identify several undemocratic practices in Australia, including:

- undermining trust in electoral institutions
- misusing funds meant for a specific purpose
- online astroturfing that deceives and manipulates public opinion.
- vilifying politicians
- mistranslating political campaign materials.

"There was something the other day where by one of the senators had used that comms allowance to do a phone poll ... Your comms allowance can't be used to solicit votes."

"[There are] Facebook groups that are sort of the absolute astroturf and, because it's a Facebook group, there's no rules ... With party stuff, everything has to be authorised. So it's masquerading as an authentic community voice that's absolutely funded and run by the party."

"There's cheeky alternate translations on things that benefit some communities ... a large cohort of Arabic speaking communities or Mandarin speaking communities ... And I think, even the China Taiwan issue, there's sometimes where material is put into language that can be a misrepresentation of what those things are ... [It's done] quite deliberately or quite targetedly."

"A secretary of a very large community organisation ... instructed the parishioners there to rebel against the Commonwealth and State government for not representing the interests of the people of Palestine. He effectively told them that the most powerful way to pay them back is to ... do a donkey vote ... I thought, 'Goodness gracious, like you're encouraging thousands of parishioners there not to take the democratic right that some countries around the world are desperately fighting for.'"



State of play





Ratings of the Australian Government performance continue to decline

The Albanese Government's performance rating has dropped slightly (index score of 50, down from 53 in August 2023). This is slightly lower than the index scores for state / territory government (52) and local government (56), which remain on par with the results recorded in August 2023 (index scores of 53 and 56 respectively).

While 'good' or 'very good' ratings of the performance of local councils and state / territory government have largely remained the same (40% and 37%, similar to 41% and 38% in August 2023 respectively), ratings for the performance of the Australian Government have slightly dropped (34%, down from 38%).

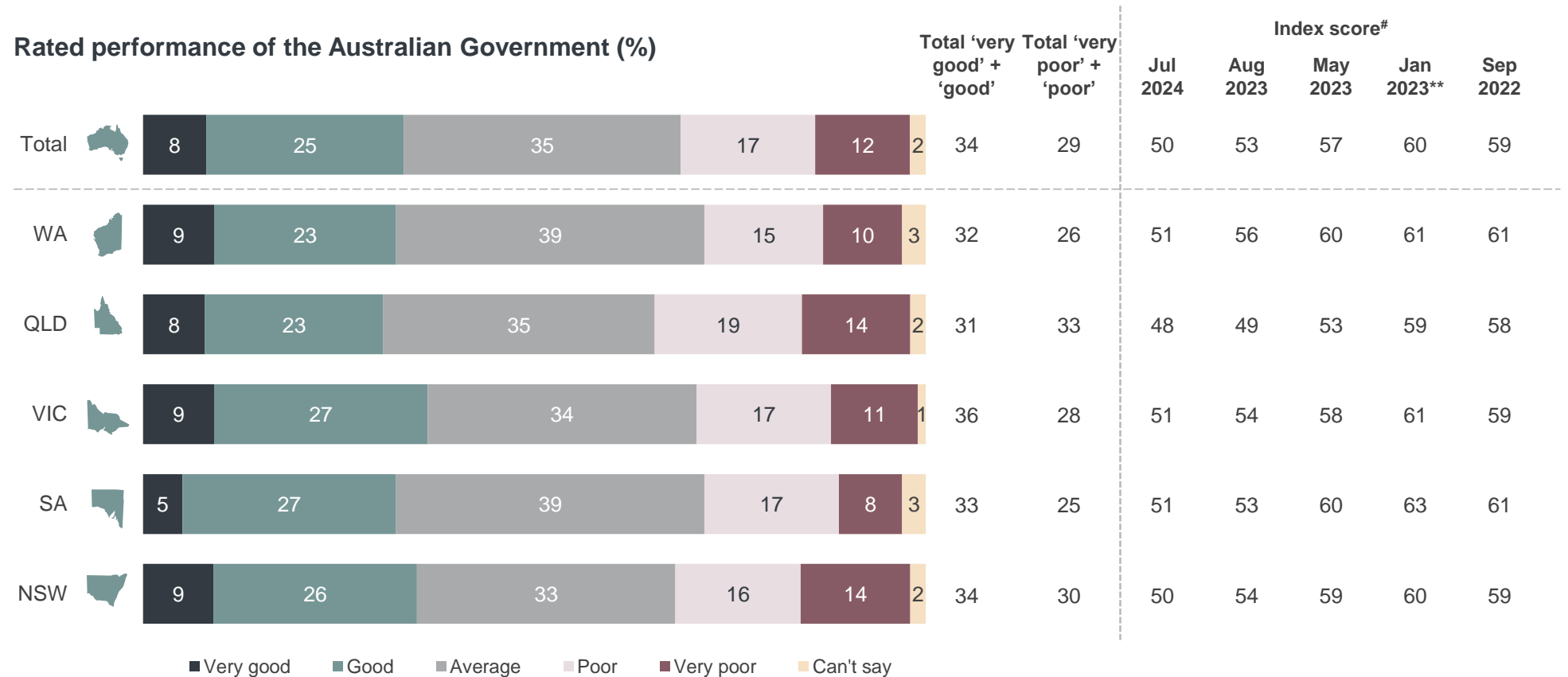
The performance of the WA, SA and NSW governments continue to be rated higher than the national average for state / territory governments (index scores of 61, 58 and 56 respectively vs. 52), while the performance ratings of the VIC and QLD governments continue to be rated lower than average (47 and 46 respectively).

- The proportion of people residing in WA, SA and NSW who rate the performance of their state as 'poor' or 'very poor' is significantly lower than the national average (14%, 16% and 19% respectively, vs. 26%), whereas significantly more people residing in VIC and QLD rate the performance of their governments as 'poor' or 'very poor' (36% and 35% respectively).

There are significantly more WA residents who rate the performance of their local council as 'good' or 'very good' than the national average (47% vs. 40%) and significantly less WA residents who rate it as 'poor' or 'very poor' compared to the national average (14% vs. 21%).



Decline from Jan 2023 peak performance of Australian Government has occurred in all states



[#] For an explanation of how index scores are calculated refer to the research methodology section of this report.

^{**} January 2023 survey conducted among Australian eligible voters.

Q1. How would you rate the current performance of each of the following?

Base: All respondents – Jul 2024 (n=3,000); Aug 2023 (n=3,000); May 2023 (n=3,000); Jan 2023 (n=3,000); Sep 2022 (n=3,000).



Boomers and Post-War most critical of the Australian Government's performance, in contrast to Gen Z and Millennials

Rated performance of the Australian Government – by demographics (%)

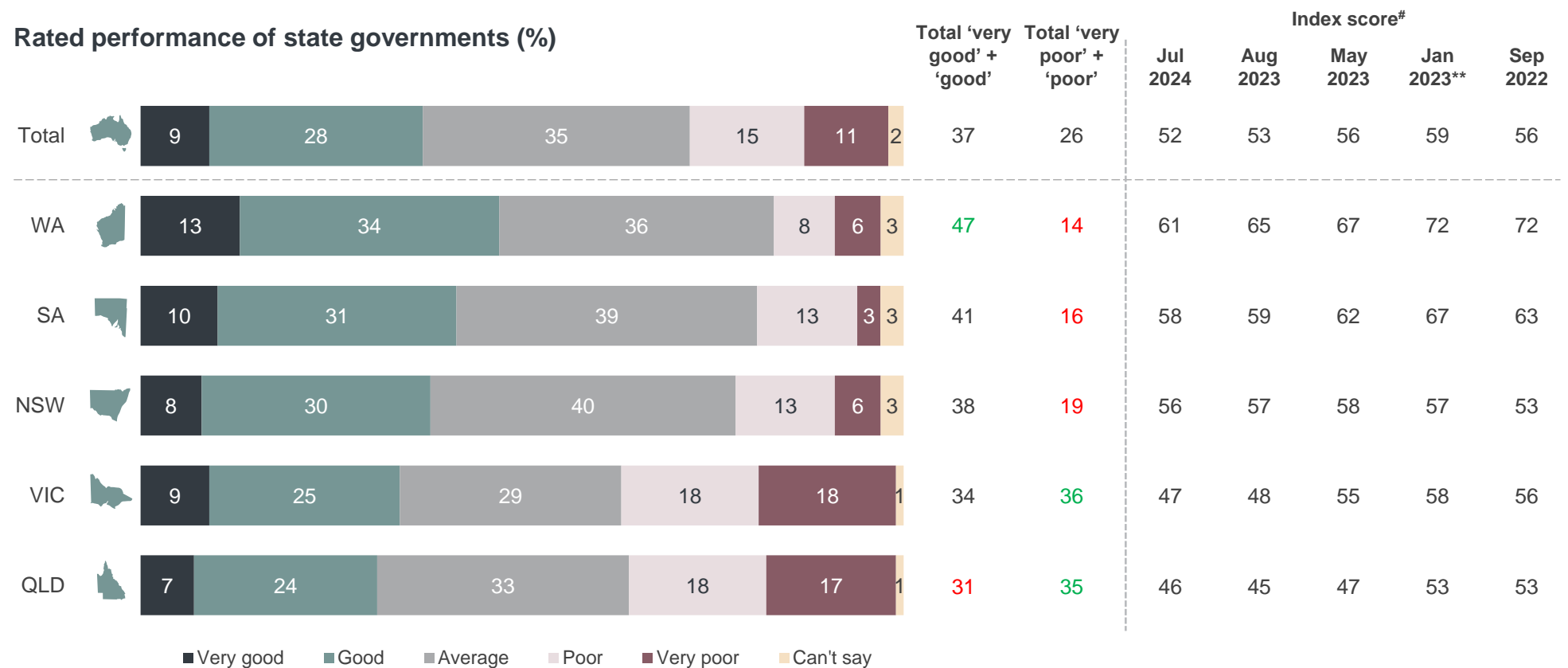
	Total	Men	Women	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Post-War	Inner urban	Middle to outer urban	Urban fringe	Large regional city or town	Other regional or rural
Total 'very good' + 'good'	34	36	32	36	37	32	30	28	38	34	32	34	25
Average	35	32	38	39	35	35	32	35	37	36	28	35	35
Total 'very poor' + 'poor'	29	30	28	23	25	30	37	36	23	28	36	31	37

	Total	Marginal seat	University	CALD	HHI <\$60K	HHI \$60K-\$100K	HHI \$100K-\$160K	HHI \$160K+	ALP voters	LNP voters	Greens voters	PHON voters	Other/ind. voters
Total 'very good' + 'good'	34	32	39	38	33	36	36	36	61	21	38	9	29
Average	35	35	34	35	37	31	36	33	33	33	36	29	43
Total 'very poor' + 'poor'	29	31	27	25	29	31	28	30	6	46	25	61	28

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
 Q1. How would you rate the current performance of each of the following?
 Base: All respondents – Aug 2023 (n=3,000).



State government good performance is rated significantly higher in WA, lower in QLD



[#] For an explanation of how index scores are calculated refer to the research methodology section of this report.

^{**} January 2023 survey conducted among Australian eligible voters.

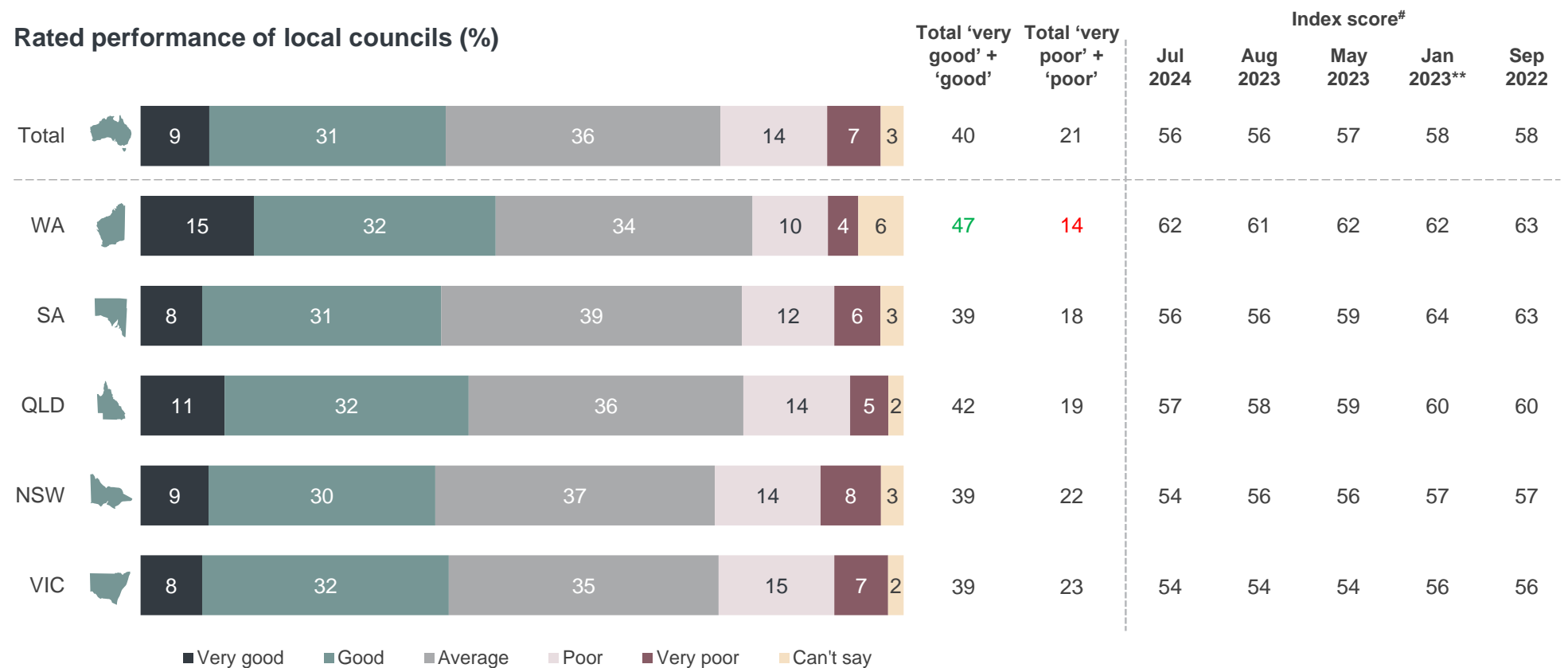
Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q1. How would you rate the current performance of each of the following?

Base: All respondents – Jul 2024 (n=3,000); Aug 2023 (n=3,000); May 2023 (n=3,000); Jan 2023 (n=3,000); Sep 2022 (n=3,000).



Local council good performance is rated significantly higher in WA



[#] For an explanation of how index scores are calculated refer to the research methodology section of this report.

^{**} January 2023 survey conducted among Australian eligible voters.

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

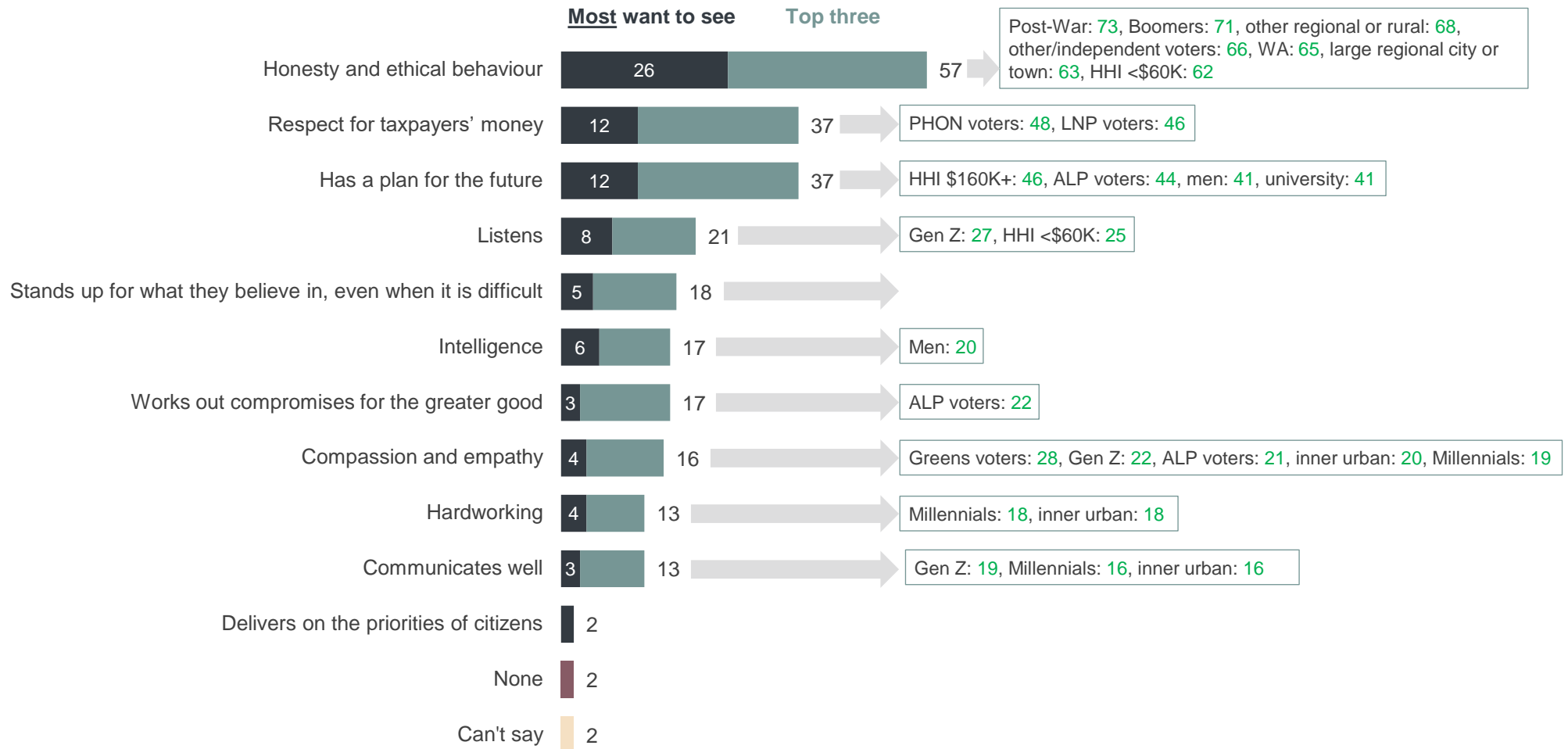
Q1. How would you rate the current performance of each of the following?

Base: All respondents – Jul 2024 (n=3,000); Aug 2023 (n=3,000); May 2023 (n=3,000); Jan 2023 (n=3,000); Sep 2022 (n=3,000).



Honesty and ethical behaviour is the most sought-after quality in Australia's political leaders

Preferred qualities to be seen in Australia's political leaders (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

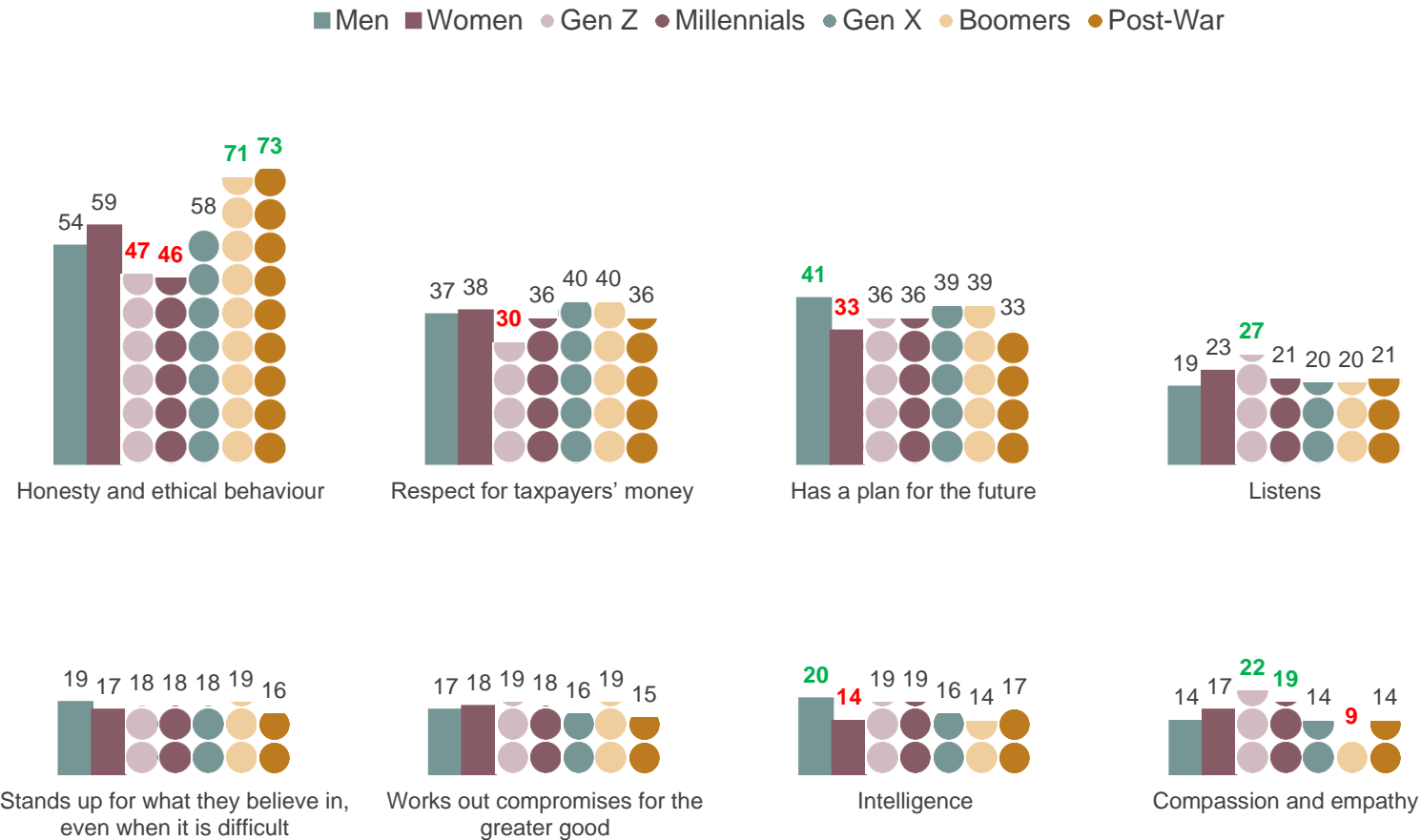
Q1a. What are the qualities you most want to see in Australia's political leaders? Please select your top three qualities, in order of preference.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Prioritisation of honesty and ethics in political leaders is significantly higher among Boomers and Post-war

Preferred qualities to be seen in Australia's political leaders (% top three)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q1a. What are the qualities you most want to see in Australia's political leaders? Please select your top three qualities, in order of preference.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).

Boomers, Post-War and regional residents significantly more likely than average to prioritise honesty and ethics

Preferred qualities to be seen in Australia's political leaders – by demographics

(% most want to see)

	Total	Men	Women	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Post-War	Inner urban	Middle to outer urban	Urban fringe	Large regional city or town	Other regional or rural
Honesty and ethical behaviour	26	24	28	12	20	28	36	39	18	28	27	27	33
Respect for taxpayers' money	12	11	13	10	12	12	13	9	11	11	13	15	13
Has a plan for the future	12	13	10	13	11	14	11	8	13	11	16	11	9
Listens	8	7	8	13	7	8	5	7	10	8	6	5	7
Intelligence	6	8	5	6	8	4	6	8	7	8	3	6	6
Stands up for what they believe in, even when it is difficult	5	6	5	5	5	4	6	5	5	5	5	6	4
Compassion and empathy	4	4	4	7	6	3	3	3	6	4	4	2	3
Hardworking	4	4	3	6	5	3	2	3	5	3	4	3	2
Works out compromises for the greater good	3	3	4	5	4	3	4	2	4	4	2	4	2
Communicates well	3	4	3	6	4	3	1	3	4	4	2	3	2
Delivers on the priorities of citizens	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	2
None	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	2
Can't say	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q1a. What are the qualities you most want to see in Australia's political leaders? Please select your top three qualities, in order of preference.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Respect for taxpayers' money a significantly higher priority for LNP and PHON voters, lower among ALP and Greens

Preferred qualities to be seen in Australia's political leaders – by demographics

(% most want to see)

	Total	Marginal seat	University	CALD	HHI <\$60K	HHI \$60K-\$100K	HHI \$100K-\$160K	HHI \$160K+	ALP voters	LNP voters	Greens voters	PHON voters	Other/ind. voters
Honesty and ethical behaviour	26	27	24	22	29	24	24	23	28	24	28	26	33
Respect for taxpayers' money	12	12	12	11	10	13	14	14	8	17	6	19	9
Has a plan for the future	12	10	15	14	9	11	12	15	16	11	12	7	6
Listens	8	9	7	8	9	7	7	7	8	7	10	7	8
Intelligence	6	6	7	7	6	5	7	7	6	7	6	8	7
Stands up for what they believe in, even when it is difficult	5	4	5	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	6	6	6
Compassion and empathy	4	4	4	4	5	6	5	2	5	2	7	2	4
Hardworking	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	2
Works out compromises for the greater good	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	5	5	2	5	1	4
Communicates well	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4
Delivers on the priorities of citizens	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	<0.5	1	2	3	1
None	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	<0.5	1	2	3	1
Can't say	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	1

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

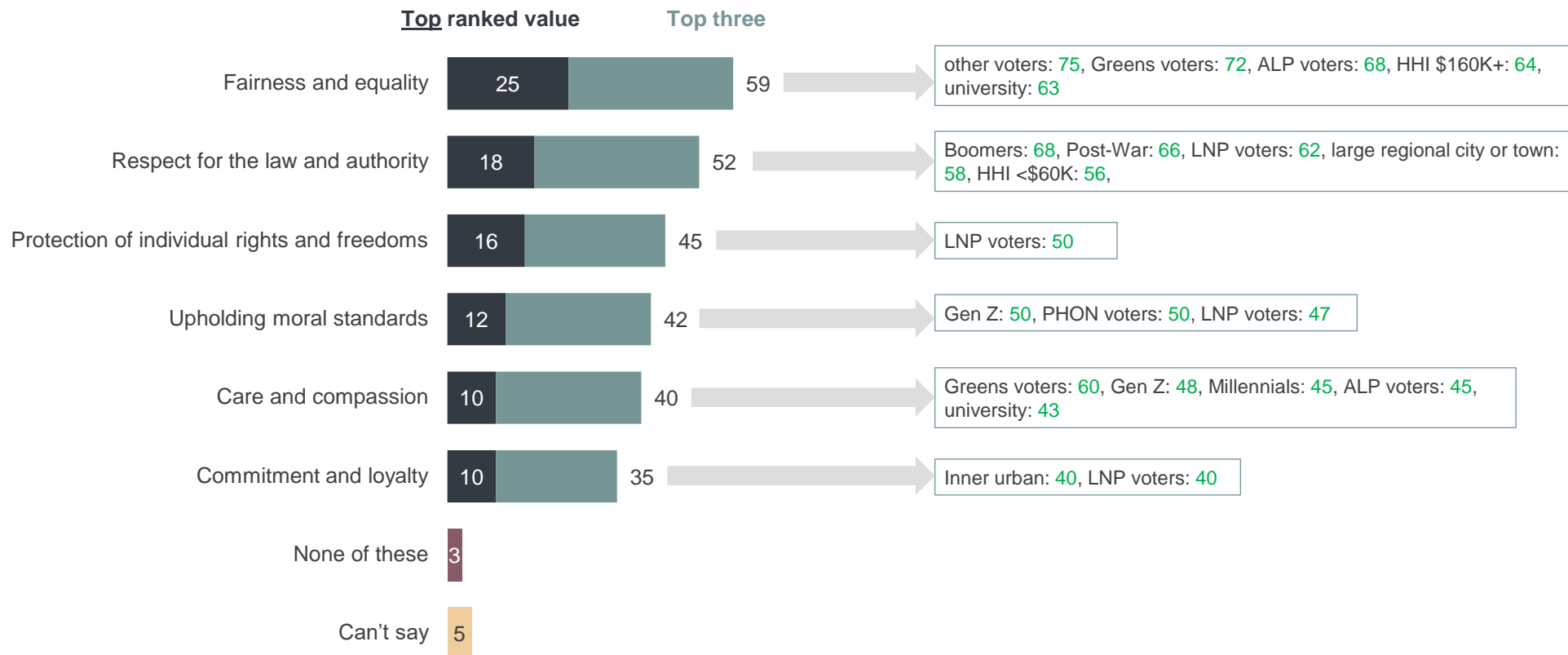
Q1a. What are the qualities you most want to see in Australia's political leaders? Please select your top three qualities, in order of preference.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



One in four Australians want political parties, leaders and candidates to prioritise fairness and equality foremost

Preferred values for Australia's political parties, leaders and candidates to represent or prioritise (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

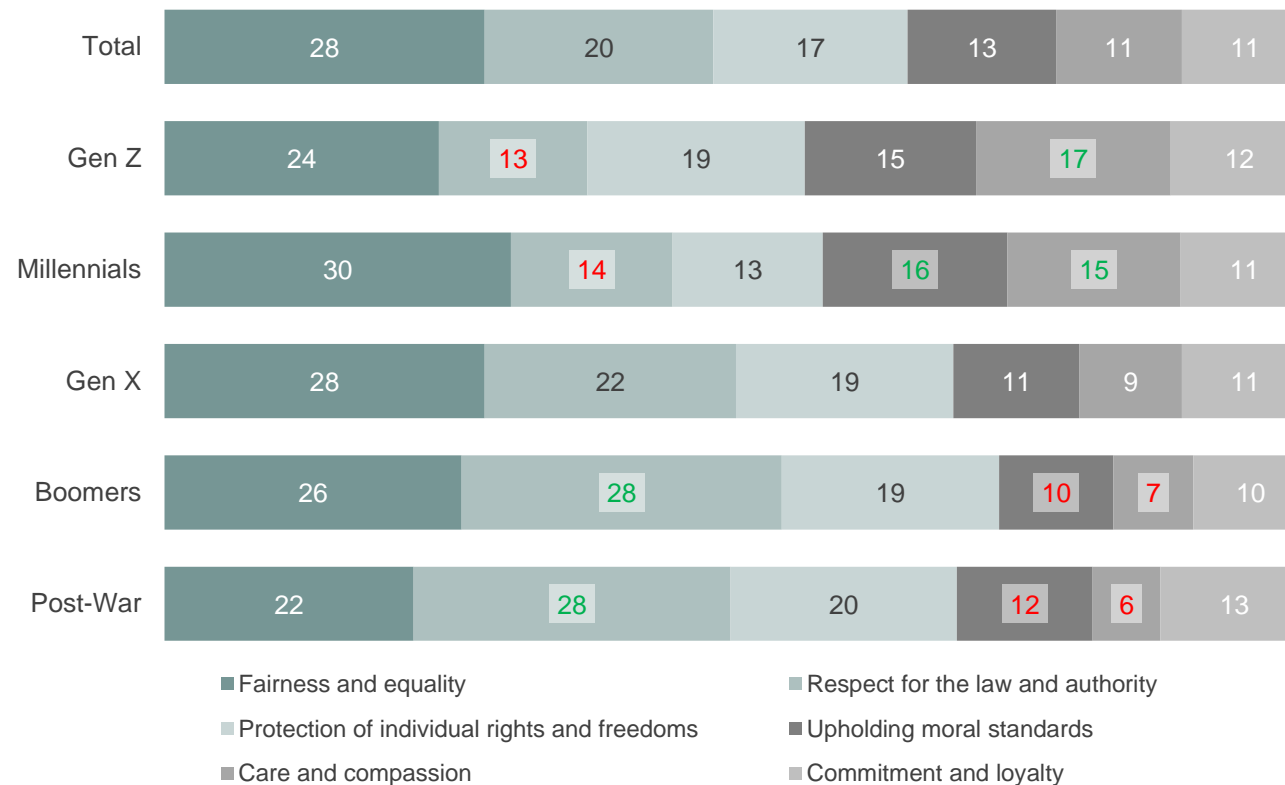
Q20a. Which of these values do you most want Australia's political parties, leaders and candidates to represent or prioritise? Please rank the following six values in order of preference.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Fairness and equality is the most unifying value across lifestages

Preferred values for Australia's political parties, leaders and candidates to represent or prioritise – by demographics (% top ranked value – excluding 'none of these' and 'can't say')



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

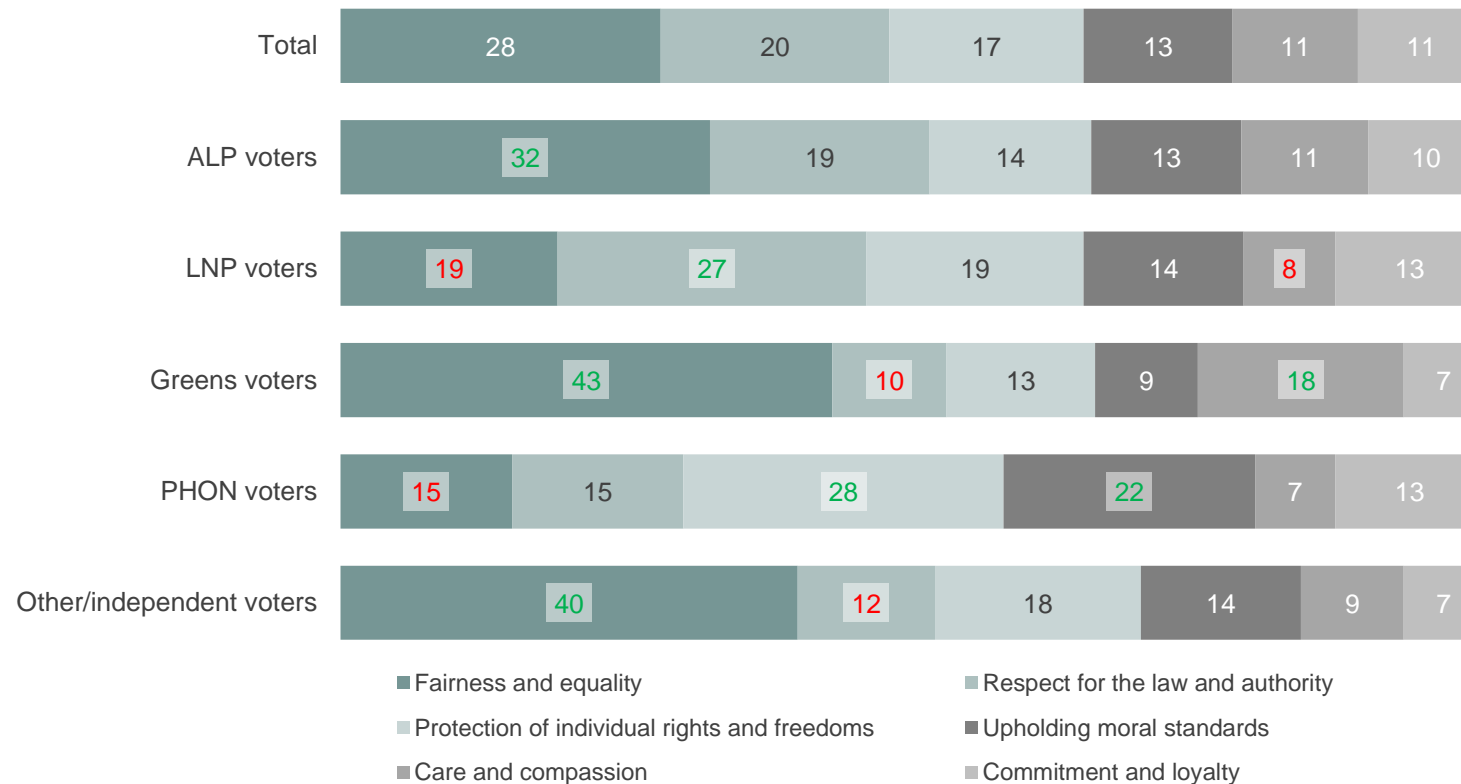
Q20a. Which of these values do you most want Australia's political parties, leaders and candidates to represent or prioritise? Please rank the following six values in order of preference.

Base: All respondents excluding 'none of these' and 'can't say' (n=2,739).



Split by party between the prioritisation of fairness and equality and respect for law and authority

Preferred values for Australia's political parties, leaders and candidates to represent or prioritise – by demographics
(% top ranked value – excluding 'none of these' and 'can't say')



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q20a. Which of these values do you most want Australia's political parties, leaders and candidates to represent or prioritise? Please rank the following six values in order of preference.

Base: All respondents excluding 'none of these' and 'can't say' (n=2,739).



Cost of living, and hospitals and healthcare still viewed as the most burning issues, but by significantly fewer people

Cost of living continues to be the most important issue that Australia is facing and should do something about – 66% (down significantly from 74% in August 2023) rate it among the top five most important issues, and three in 10 rate it as the most important issue. Hospitals and healthcare remains the second most important issue (44% rate it among the top five most important issues, significantly lower than 48% in August 2023).

Rounding out the top five are the economy and jobs (33%), supply and affordability of housing (31%), and crime, law and order (also 31%).

This year has also seen a significant decrease compared to August 2023 in the importance attributed to:

- interest rates (24% rate it among the top five most important issues, down from 34%)
- the environment and climate change (23%, down from 30%)
- aged care and our ageing population (23%, down from 26%)
- government debt (11%, down from 13%)
- Indigenous issues (6%, down from 8%).

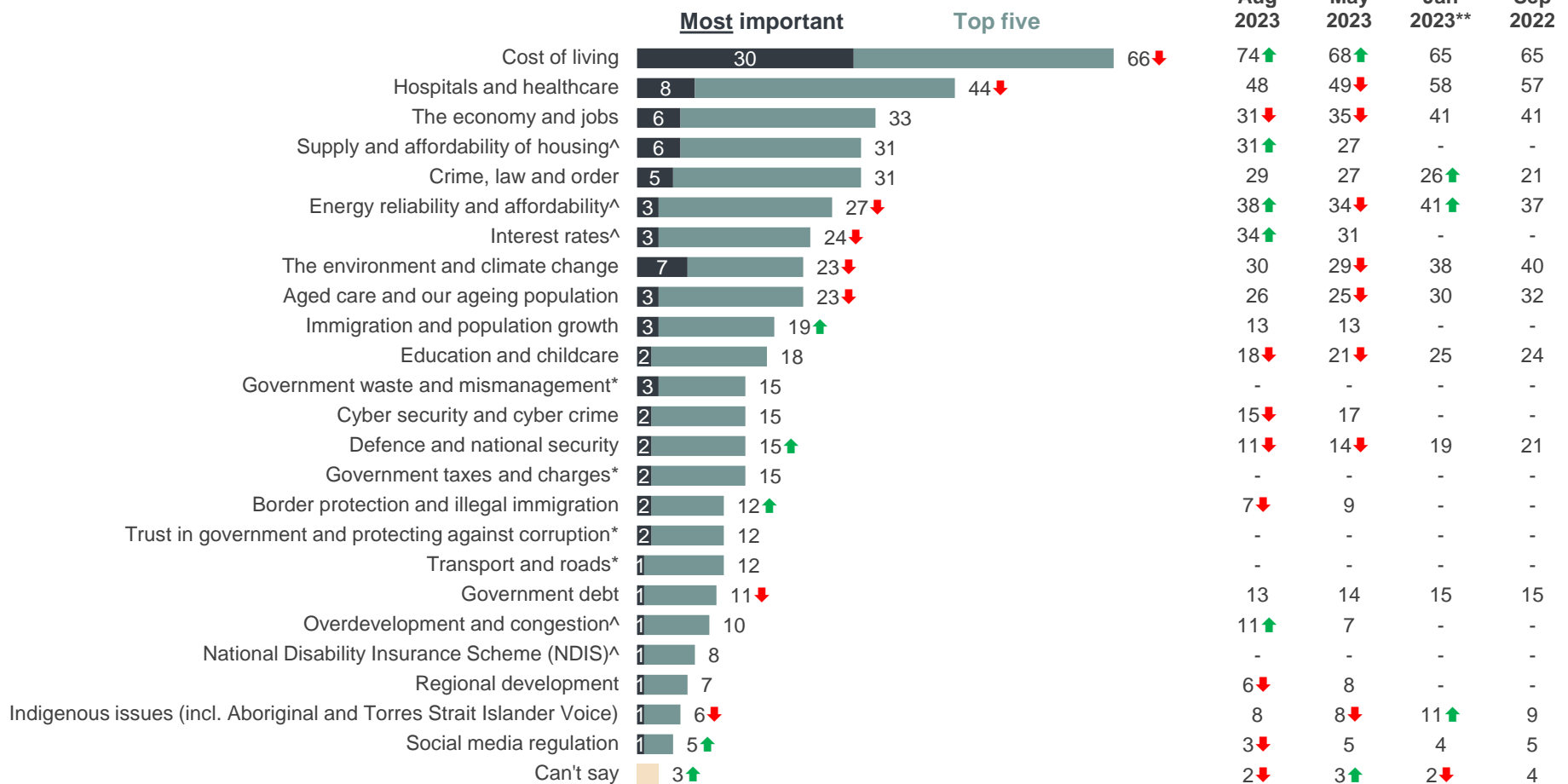
By contrast, issues that have increased significantly in importance this year include:

- immigration and population growth (19%, up from 13%)
- defence and national security (15%, up from 11%)
- border protection and illegal immigration (12%, up from 7%)
- social media regulation (5%, up from 3%).



Cost of living still most important, but abating, amid rising concerns over immigration, defence, and border protection

Most important issues facing Australia today (%)



*Added in Jul 2024.

^Wording change in Jul 2024

**January 2023 survey conducted among Australian eligible voters.

Significantly higher ↑ / lower ↓ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence interval.

Q2. What are the most important issues facing Australia today and into the future that we should be doing something about? Please select your top five issues, in order of importance.

Base: All respondents – Jul 2024 (n=3,000); Aug 2023 (n=3,000); May 2023 (n=3,000); Jan 2023 (n=3,000); Sep 2022 (n=3,000).



A significantly smaller majority of Australians continue to think inflation is above 2-3% and expect it to remain so

A significantly smaller majority of Australians (66% vs. 70% in August 2023) think the current inflation rate is above the RBA target of 2-3%. This includes 35% who think it is a lot above the target (significantly lower on last year) and 31% who think it is a little above the target (significantly higher on last year).

- Boomers and Gen X (76% and 69% respectively), LNP and other/independent voters (71% and 75% respectively) and men (71%) are significantly more likely to think the current inflation rate is above the target.
- In contrast, people residing in Victoria (62%), women (61%), Millennials and Gen Z (58% and 57% respectively) are significantly less likely to do so.

Just over half of Australians (52%) expect the inflation rate to be above the RBA target of 2-3%. This is significantly lower compared to August 2023 (down nine percentage points).

- This proportion is significantly higher among Boomers (59%) and LNP voters (59%), but significantly lower among ALP voters (49%).

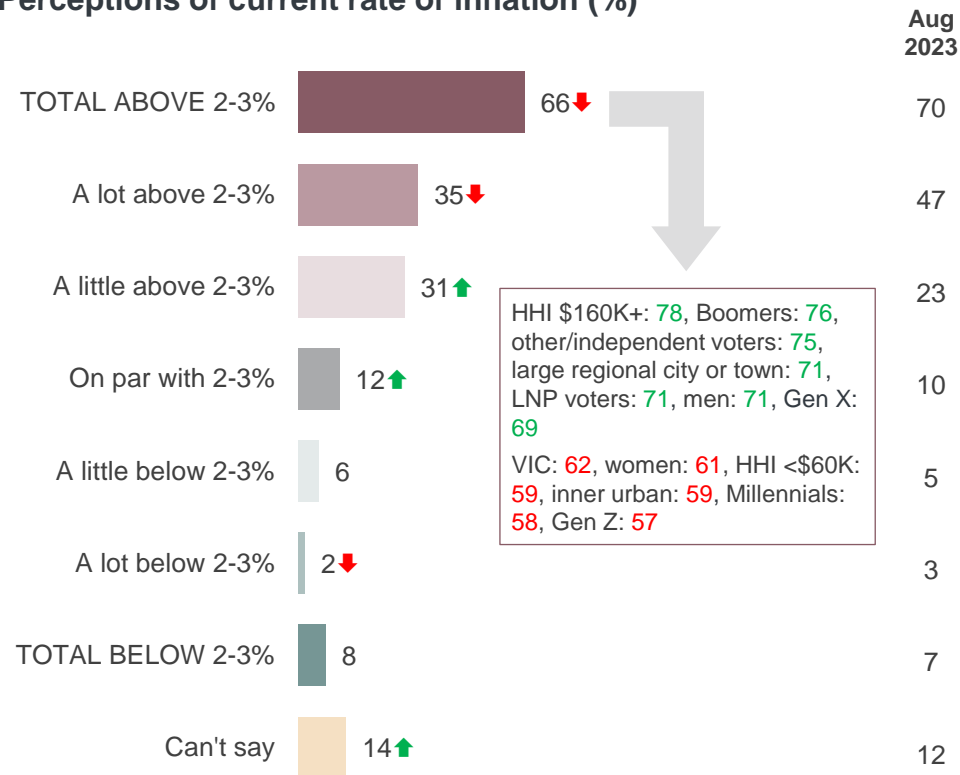
As for Australians' perceptions of the importance of low unemployment versus low inflation, 46% prioritise keeping inflation low over keeping unemployment low. This is almost four times as many as those who prioritise keeping unemployment low over keeping inflation low (12%).

- Extreme and moderate outliers (78% and 53% respectively), Right and conservative (53%), LNP voters (51%), men and Millennials (both 49%) are significantly more likely to place higher importance on low inflation than low unemployment, and Post-War (35%) are significantly less likely to do so.
- Greens voters (17%) and Post-War (16%) are significantly more likely to place higher importance on low unemployment versus low inflation. In contrast, Millennials (9%) are significantly less likely to do so.

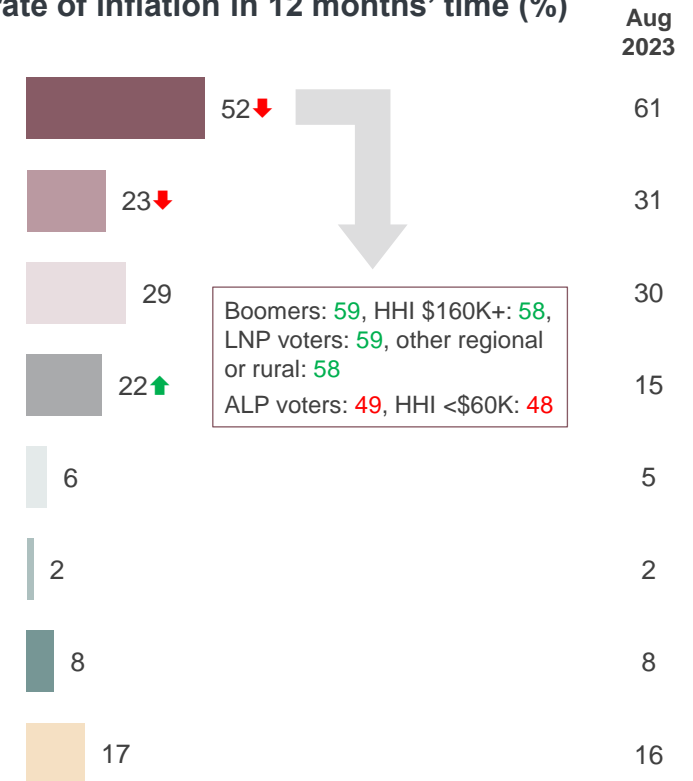


Significant decline in current and expected inflation above 2-3% since August 2023

Perceptions of current rate of inflation (%)



Expected rate of inflation in 12 months' time (%)



Significantly higher ▲ / lower ▼ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence interval.

Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q4a. The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) has an inflation target of keeping inflation between 2-3%, on average, over time. What do you think the current rate of inflation is? (It's okay if you're not sure. We're interested in your impressions.) / Q4b. What do you think the current rate of inflation is? (It's okay if you're not sure. We're interested in your impressions.)

Q5. And what do you expect the inflation rate to be in 12 months' time?

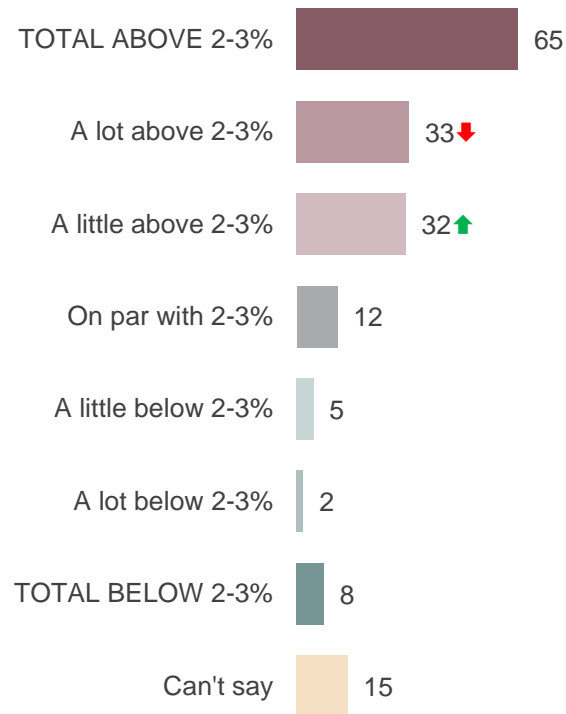
Base: All respondents – Jul 2024 (n=3,000); Aug 2023 (n=3,000).



Those not shown RBA inflation target significantly more likely to perceive current rate of inflation as a lot above 2-3%

Perceptions of current rate of inflation (%)

(when given reference of RBA target)



Aug
2023

68

44

25

10

5

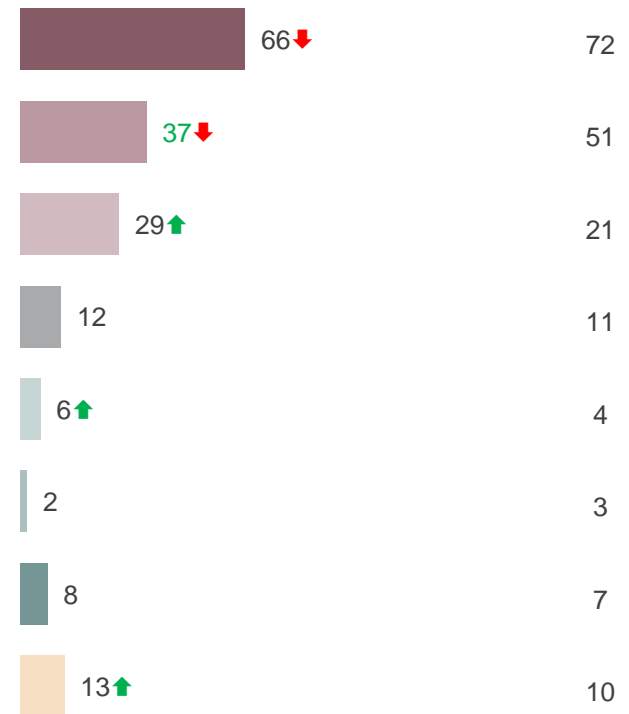
2

7

14

Perceptions of current rate of inflation (%)

(when not given reference of RBA target)



Aug
2023

72

51

21

11

4

3

7

10

Significantly higher ↑ / lower ↓ than the previous wave at the 95% confidence interval.

Significantly higher / lower than those given reference of RBA target at the 95% confidence interval.

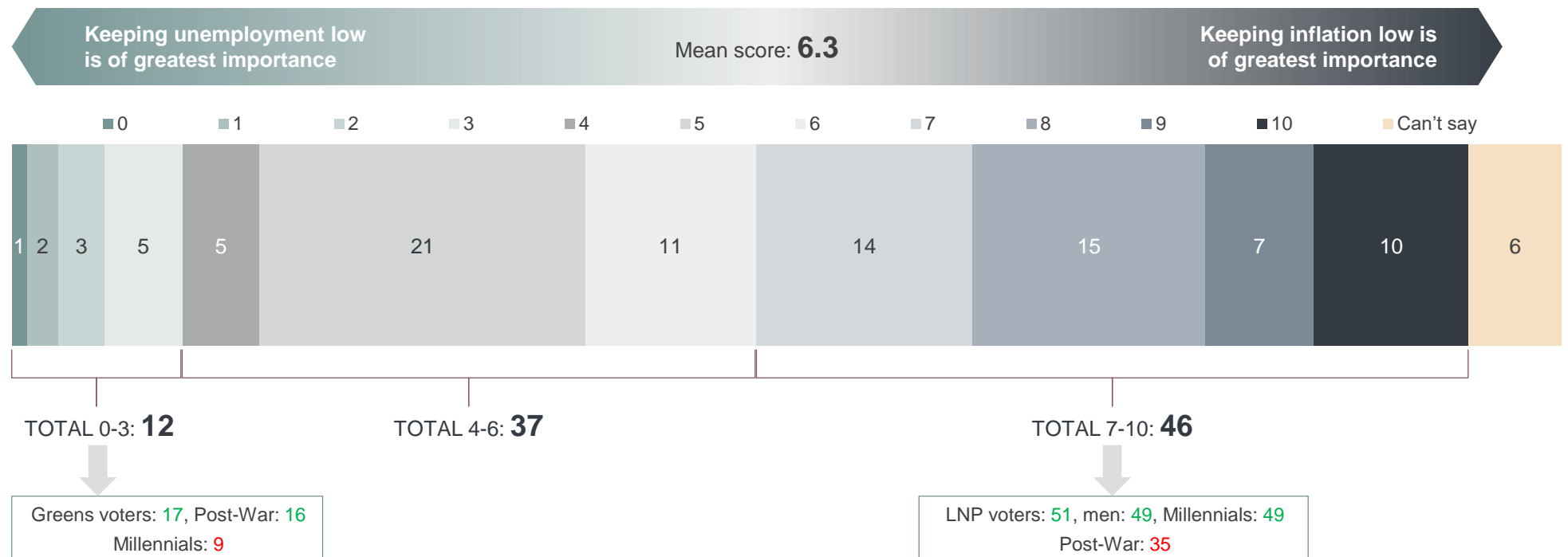
Q4a. The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) has an inflation target of keeping inflation between 2-3%, on average, over time. What do you think the current rate of inflation is? (It's okay if you're not sure. We're interested in your impressions.) / Q4b. What do you think the current rate of inflation is? (It's okay if you're not sure. We're interested in your impressions.)

Base: Split sample of all respondents: Given reference of RBA target 2024 (n=1,506) 2023 (1,500); not given reference of RBA target 2024 (n=1,494) 2023 (1,500).



Australians tend to prioritise low inflation ahead of low unemployment

Importance of low unemployment versus low inflation (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q6. On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'keeping unemployment low is of greatest importance' and 10 is 'keeping inflation low is of greatest importance', how much would you prioritise low unemployment versus low inflation?

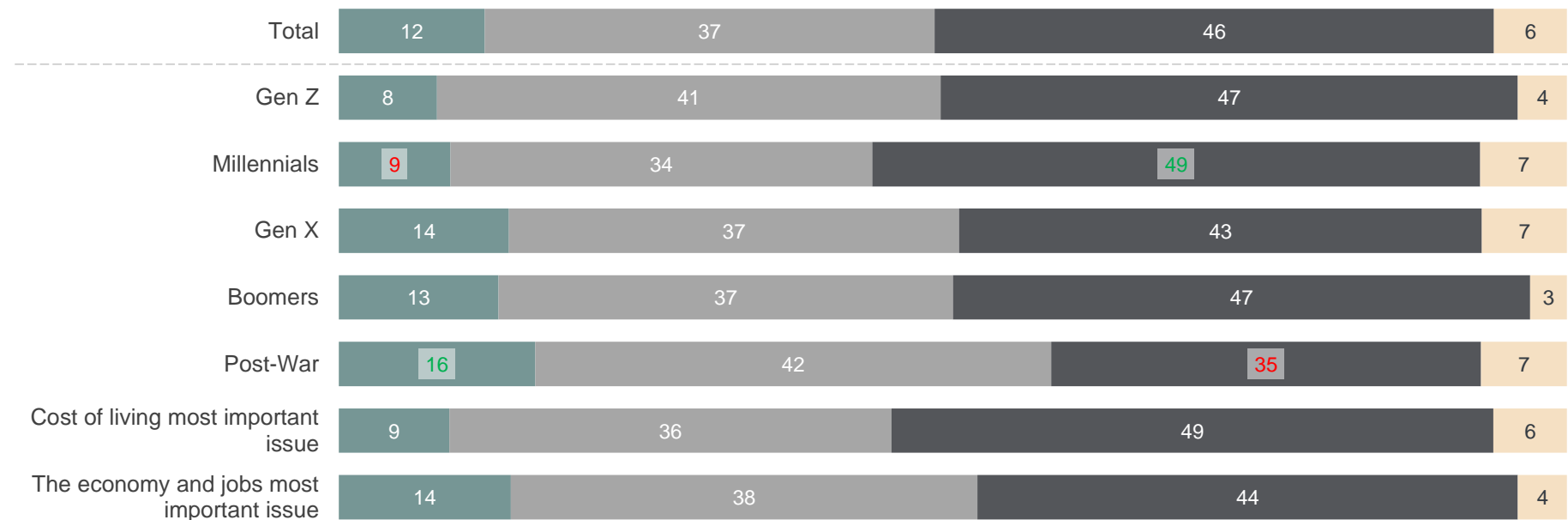
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Millennials most focused on keeping inflation low, Post-War most focused on low unemployment

Importance of low unemployment versus low inflation (%)

(0-10 scale)



■ Keeping unemployment low is of greatest importance (TOTAL 0-3) ■ Neutral (TOTAL 4-6) ■ Keeping inflation low is of greatest importance (TOTAL 7-10) ■ Can't say

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q6. On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'keeping unemployment low is of greatest importance' and 10 is 'keeping inflation low is of greatest importance', how much would you prioritise low unemployment versus low inflation?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).

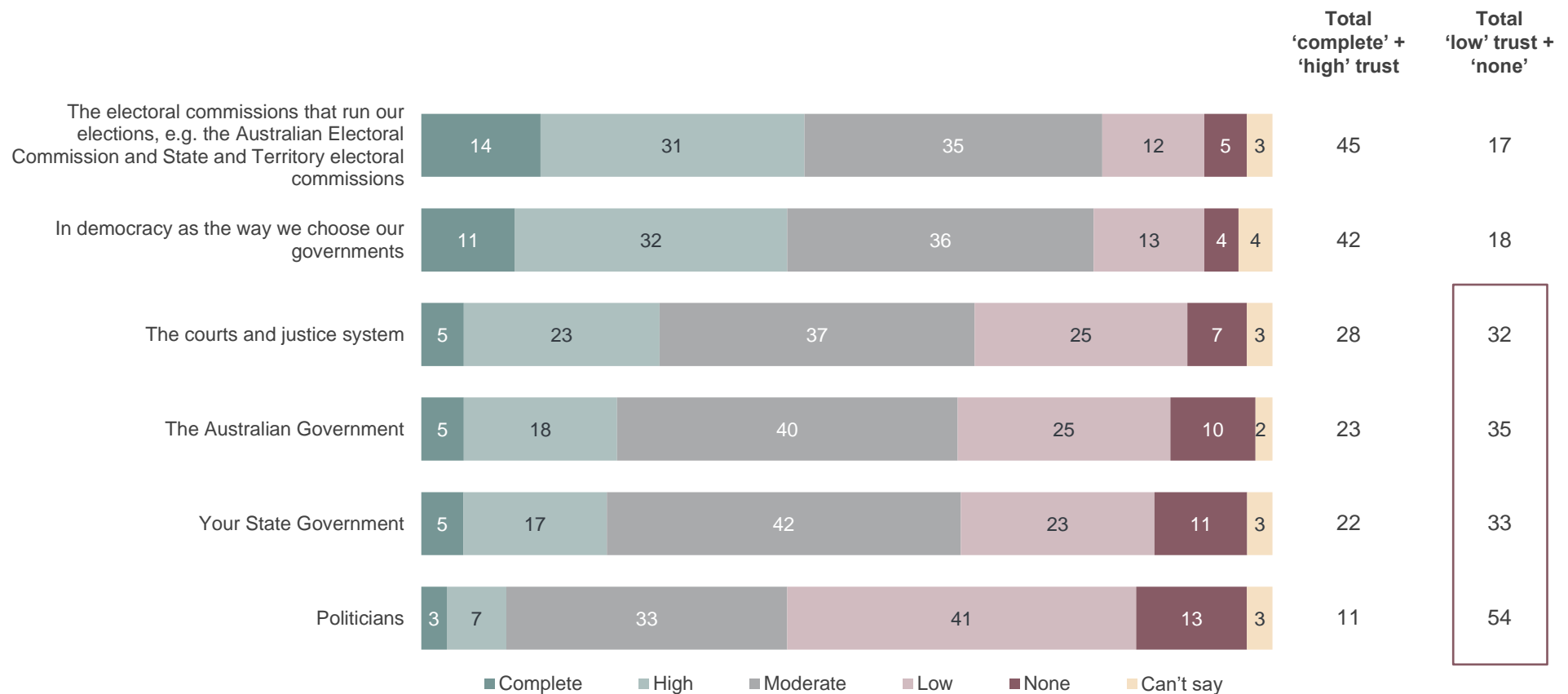
Political partisanship



More people trust than distrust electoral commissions and democracy; the opposite is true for politicians, government and courts



Extent of trust (%)

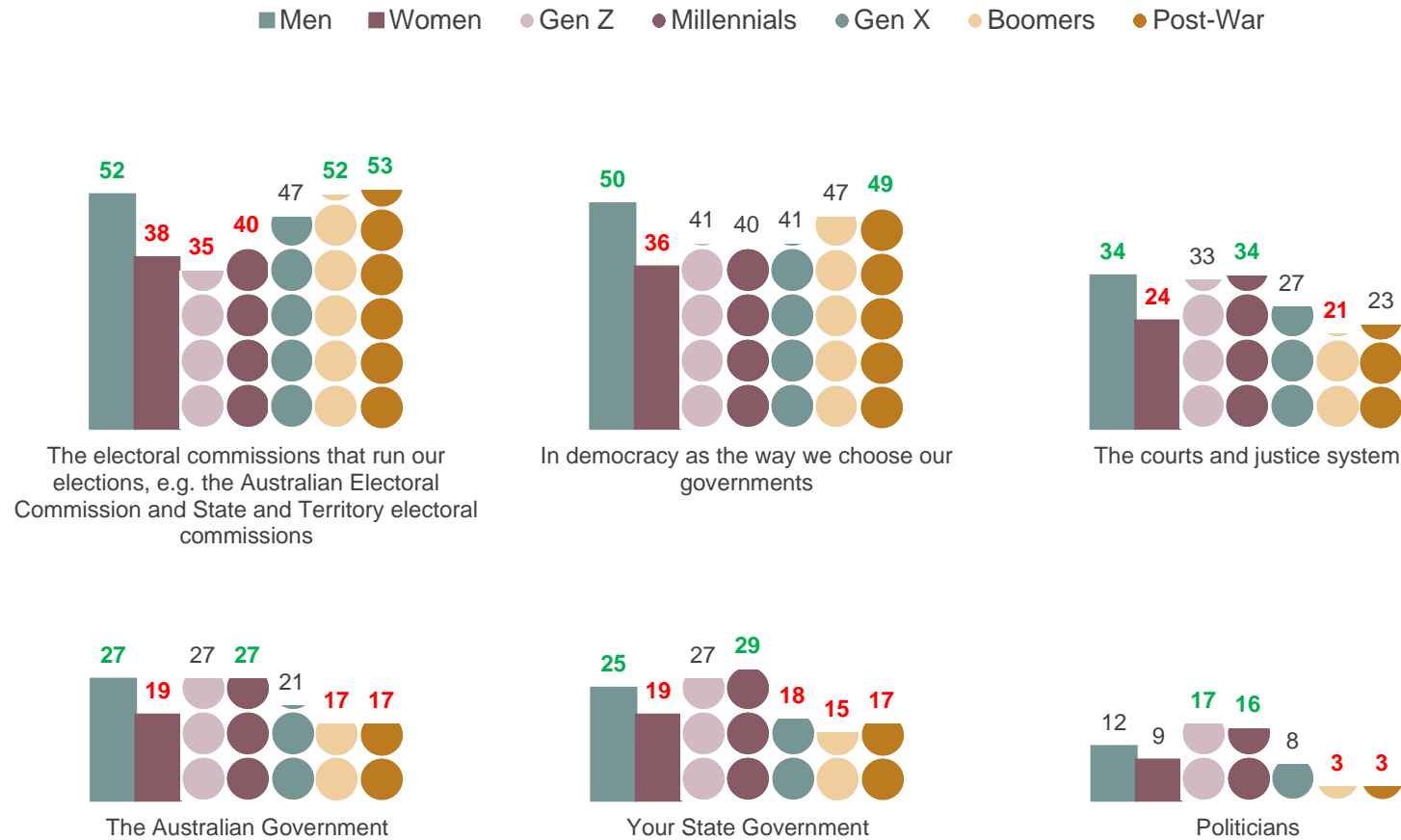


Q8c. How much trust do you have in each of the following?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Trust in democracy is similar across lifestages; only Post-War are significantly more trusting than average

Extent of trust (% 'complete' + 'high' trust)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
Q8c. How much trust do you have in each of the following?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Trust in democracy is similar across lifestages; only Post-War are significantly more trusting than average

Extent of trust – by demographics (% total 'complete' + 'high' trust)

	Total	Men	Women	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Post-War	Inner urban	Middle to outer urban	Urban fringe	Large regional city or town	Other regional or rural
The electoral commissions that run our elections	45	52	38	35	40	47	52	53	42	45	47	50	43
In democracy as the way we choose our governments	42	50	36	41	40	41	47	49	43	43	42	45	39
The courts and justice system	28	34	24	33	34	27	21	23	37	28	26	22	22
The Australian Government	23	27	19	27	27	21	17	17	31	22	22	19	15
Your State Government	22	25	19	27	29	18	15	17	31	21	18	19	15
Politicians	11	12	9	17	16	8	3	3	19	9	10	6	5

	Total	Marginal seat	University	CALD	HHI <\$60K	HHI \$60K-\$100K	HHI \$100K-\$160K	HHI \$160K+	ALP voters	LNP voters	Greens voters	PHON voters	Other/ind. voters
The electoral commissions that run our elections	45	45	49	42	42	43	46	53	59	46	43	26	53
In democracy as the way we choose our governments	42	41	47	40	40	45	44	48	54	45	42	28	49
The courts and justice system	28	27	34	34	26	29	31	34	40	24	35	13	27
The Australian Government	23	20	25	28	23	24	23	25	42	16	23	7	16
Your State Government	22	21	26	27	22	25	24	22	37	17	27	8	15
Politicians	11	9	12	12	10	12	13	10	16	9	8	8	8

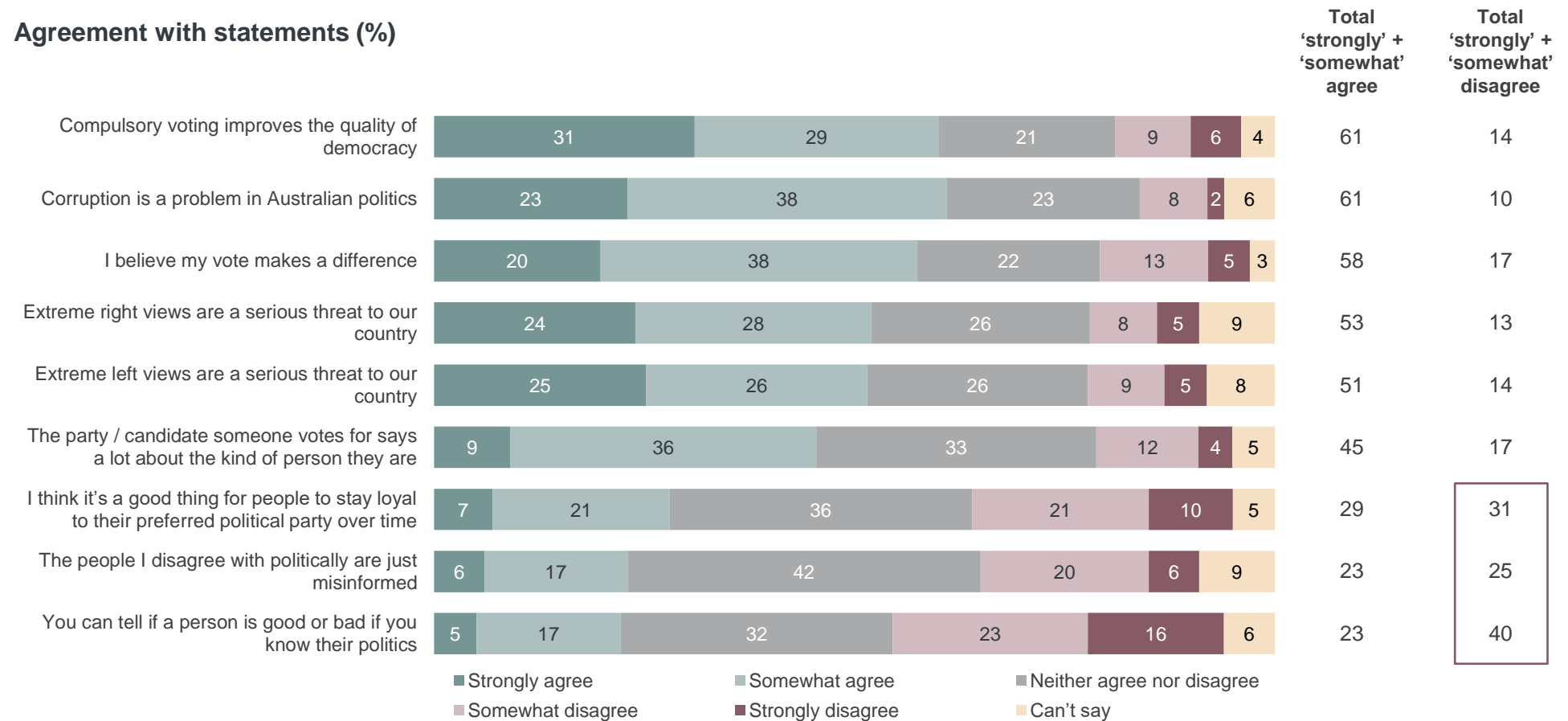
Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q8c. How much trust do you have in each of the following?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Six in 10 agree compulsory voting improves democracy but corruption in Australian politics is seen as a problem

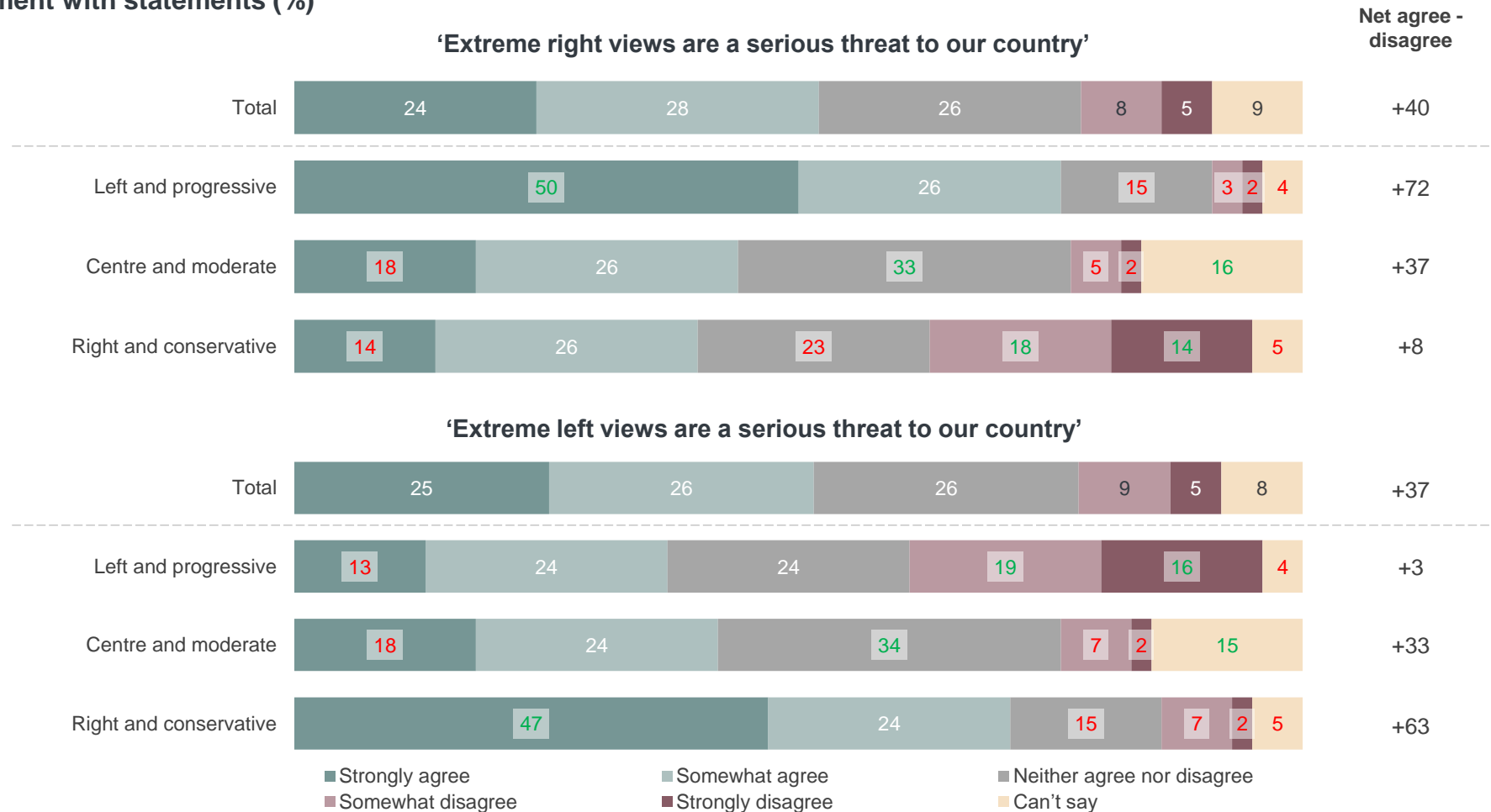


Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



The self-selected 'Left' and 'Right' believe extreme views from the other side are the threat

Agreement with statements (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Gen Z and Millennials are least likely to appreciate the benefit of compulsory voting

Agreement with statements – by demographics (% total 'strongly' + 'somewhat' agree)

	Total	Men	Women	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Post-War	Inner urban	Middle to outer urban	Urban fringe	Large regional city or town	Other regional or rural
Compulsory voting improves the quality of democracy	61	60	61	55	57	59	68	69	61	62	55	63	59
Corruption is a problem in Australian politics	61	61	62	55	60	61	66	61	60	59	64	64	65
I believe my vote makes a difference	58	58	58	62	55	56	58	67	60	57	56	61	53
Extreme right views are a serious threat to our country	53	55	50	51	53	50	57	50	53	53	56	55	46
Extreme left views are a serious threat to our country	51	57	45	46	49	47	56	63	51	51	53	51	49
The party / candidate someone votes for says a lot about the kind of person they are	45	46	44	49	50	42	40	40	51	43	45	42	41
I think it's a good thing for people to stay loyal to their preferred political party over time	29	28	29	32	30	23	28	35	35	28	28	27	21
The people I disagree with politically are just misinformed	23	26	21	33	29	19	18	15	33	21	23	20	18
You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics	23	24	21	35	30	19	12	11	34	22	21	16	13

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Major party voters significantly more likely than average to view long-term party loyalty positively

Agreement with statements – by demographics (% total 'strongly' + 'somewhat' agree)

	Total	Marginal seat	University	CALD	HHI <\$60K	HHI \$60K-\$100K	HHI \$100K-\$160K	HHI \$160K+	ALP voters	LNP voters	Greens voters	PHON voters	Other/ind. voters
Compulsory voting improves the quality of democracy	61	59	64	60	63	62	63	62	73	64	66	45	67
Corruption is a problem in Australian politics	61	63	61	59	61	62	61	63	57	63	68	77	72
I believe my vote makes a difference	58	54	61	62	58	57	58	62	66	60	64	43	54
Extreme right views are a serious threat to our country	53	52	58	53	52	54	55	59	66	47	69	32	67
Extreme left views are a serious threat to our country	51	49	53	52	50	52	54	54	48	65	35	63	50
The party / candidate someone votes for says a lot about the kind of person they are	45	44	50	46	44	48	46	50	50	45	60	40	50
I think it's a good thing for people to stay loyal to their preferred political party over time	29	31	27	30	34	31	30	24	34	35	26	23	18
The people I disagree with politically are just misinformed	23	23	26	26	19	26	28	25	27	24	28	28	21
You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics	23	23	26	29	20	25	26	23	24	21	35	24	23

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Compulsory voting seen to positively increase engagement in the political process

The majority of Australians (61%) 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agree that compulsory voting improves the quality of democracy.

Overall, the practice of compulsory voting is thought to strengthen Australian democracy by helping to:

- increase voter turnout, thus broadening representation and providing a better indication of public opinion
- encourage voters to better educate themselves about candidates, issues and policies, and increasing their engagement in the political process.

That said, other Australians, particularly people who are not at all engaged in politics, have less favourable views of compulsory voting. They tend to see it as a violation of free choice (i.e. the freedom not to express their opinion), with some noting this can push people to choose candidates randomly, forfeiting the purpose of an election.

Australians also spontaneously comment on:

- preferential voting
 - Overall, there is a sense that preferential voting is a complex system that is often found difficult to complete and can thus result in an inauthentic representation of a voter's preferences.
- the current system of paper ballots.
 - Some would like to see Australia embrace an online blockchain voting system, as they believe this can result in greater transparency and help to prevent vote tampering.

"Really positive. I think it means that everyone gets a say... turnout is usually, what, over 90% compared to in the US or a lot of other countries where it's probably sits around that 50% to 75%, which is not as many people voting." (CALD, Chinese)

"[It's] mind numbing why we haven't used digital blockchain voting. Other countries are doing that where the results can't be tampered with, and they're out there for the public to see openly ... The fact that it's all done behind closed doors, and we have to, like, trust the checkers, doesn't sit well with me." (Left-wing voter)

"There's literature suggesting that it [compulsory voting] is good for getting ... people to vote, which probably makes it a positive and something that ought to be working well." (Left-wing voter)

"My daughter's turning 14, and she was saying, 'Why do we have to vote?' In America, you get to choose if you want to vote or not, and we were saying, 'Yeah, you're right.' It should be if you feel passionate enough, go out and vote. We're going along and voting ... so we don't get a fine ... If we don't want to enroll to vote, we shouldn't be forced to." (Not at all engaged)

"I actually worked at the federal elections ... The majority of people voting actually vote correctly ... [so] it [mandatory voting] probably does work." (Not at all engaged)

"A lot of my friends, including me, don't understand the full preference allocating system. It's fine if you can identify your preferences and choose them. But when you don't do that, then the party chooses its own preferences, makes its own choices, and they may not be aligned at all with you." (Left-wing voter)



Australians believe party loyalty weakens Australian democracy

Less than three in 10 Australians (29%) 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agree that it's a good thing for people to stay loyal to their preferred political party over time.

While party loyalty is thought to manifest in various ways, including wearing a party's pin, handing out their pamphlets or becoming a party member, Australians primarily understand party membership to mean **blind allegiance** to a political party.

Notably, Australians believe party loyalty weakens Australian democracy. This is because they tend to associate party loyalty with:

- voter ignorance
 - Party loyalists are seen to ignore or discount arguments and evidence that run counter to their party's position. Australians believe party loyalty hinders the exchange of ideas and finding common ground.
- a lack of party accountability
 - Australians believe party loyalty can lead to a lack of accountability, as politicians use it to shield themselves from criticism or responsibility.
- a two-party system that is not representative of diverse opinions.
 - It is believed that, while the two-party system can promote governmental stability, it does not represent the diverse opinions and interests of Australians.

Australians feel party loyalty is not as common as it used to be with voters increasingly questioning their alignment with the party often initially introduced to them via their family.

"It [being loyal to a party] could be membership, it could be buying the pin, it could be financial support. It could just be conversations with people."
(Right-wing voter)

"Just going, 'I'm a liberal person' is a bit of a lazy vote. 'I'm just voting liberal because that's the way I've always done it' means to me they're not really thinking about what they want out of that vote."
(Somewhat engaged)

"This is gonna sound very offensive, but I was gonna say the word 'stupid' because ... you're just doing it mindlessly."
(Right wing voter)

"You have some parties that go, 'Yeah, we're gonna do this, this and that. And then they actually come into power, and they do none of those things.'"
(Not at all engaged)

"[Party] loyalty is dangerous at times. Voting for the same people because it's what you always do without consciously thinking about it ... [being] loyal no matter what, that feels really wrong and not good for the outcome in the future for society." (Left-wing voter)

"It's [party loyalty is] changing. My parents' generation voted what their parents voted for. That's like their values that they'll talk about growing up. But I feel like everyone I know has gone and developed their own opinions ... so there's less loyalty to probably your family and less loyalty towards political parties." (Left-wing voter)

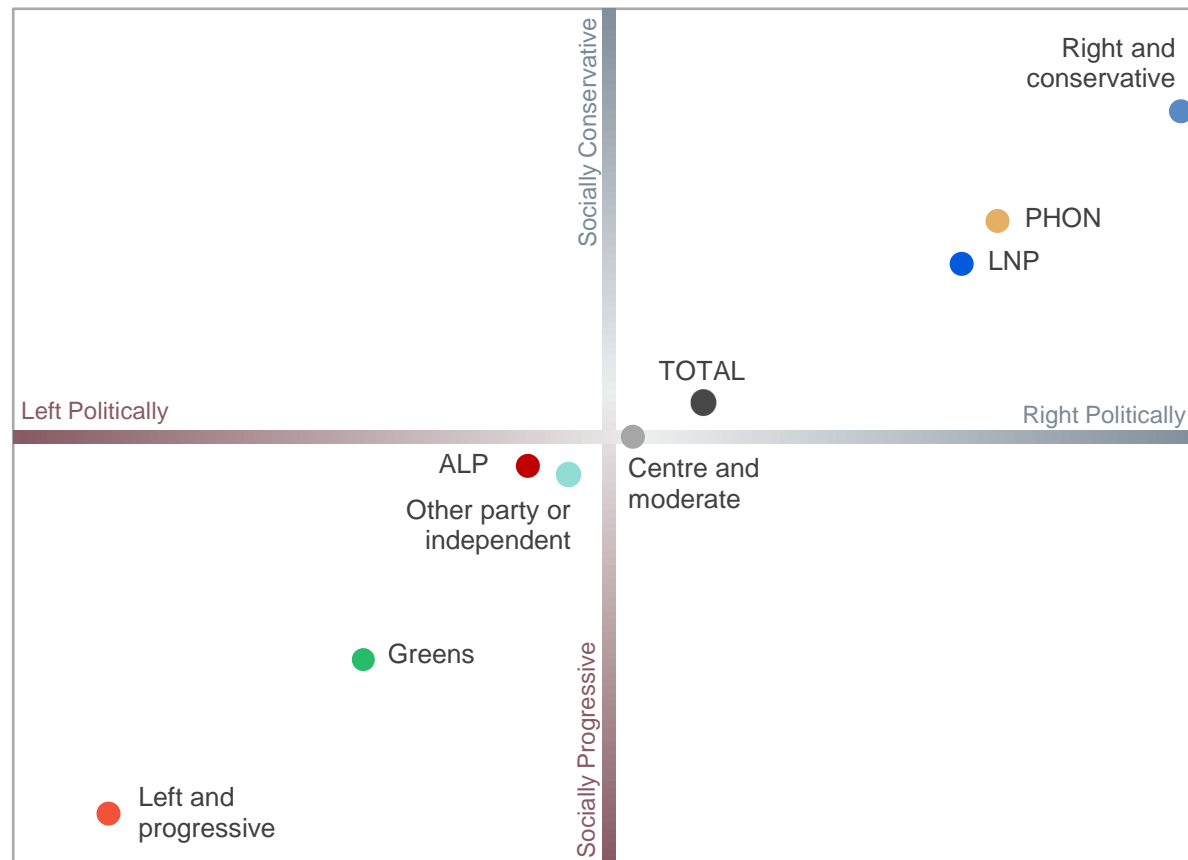




Overall, Australian adults self-declare as sitting right of centre and slightly more conservative than progressive

Self rating on political views and views on social issues

(mean score on scale of 0-10)

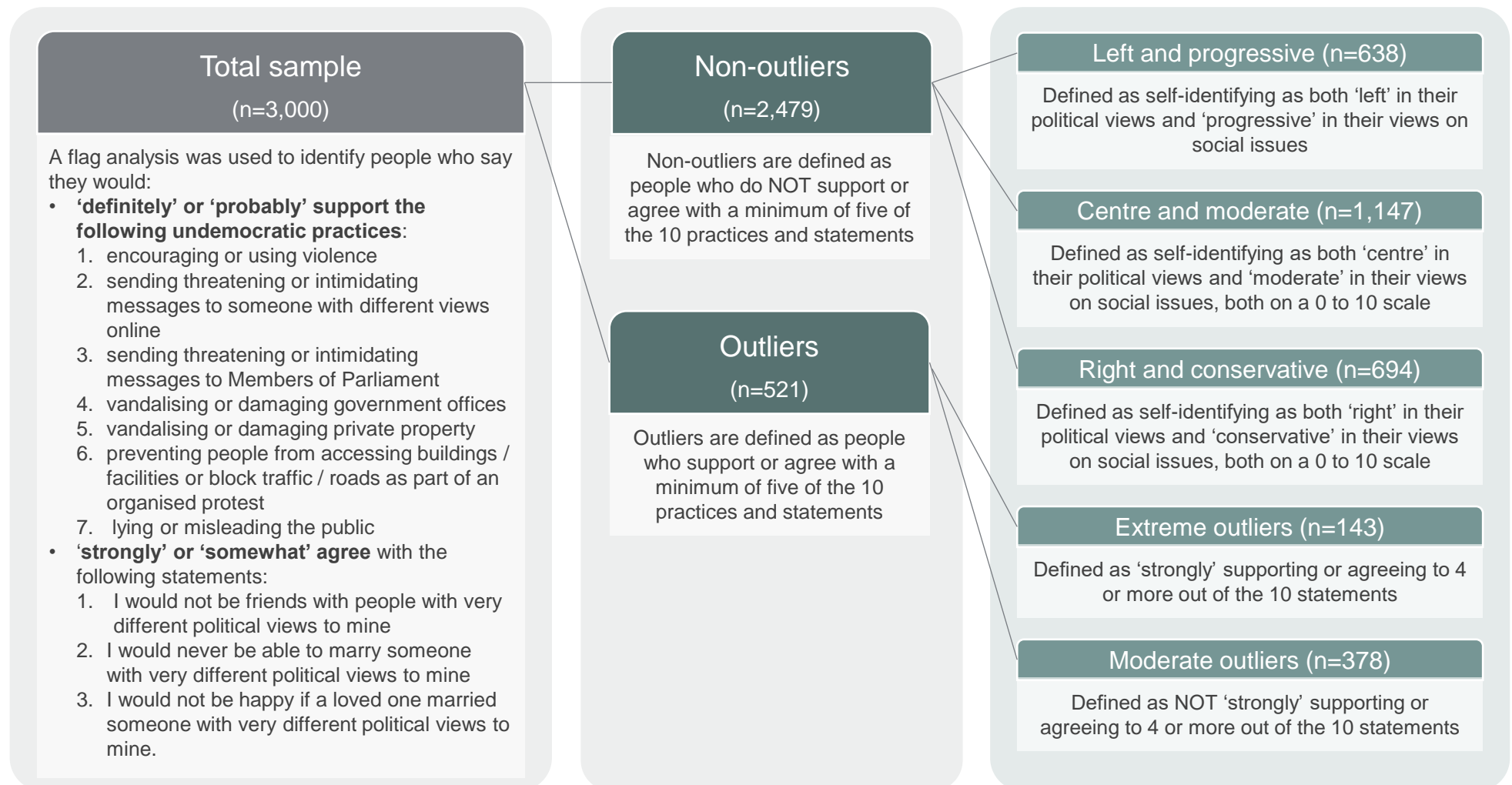


Q8a. Thinking about your political views. In politics, people sometimes talk about the 'left' and the 'right'. Where would you place yourself on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means the 'left', 5 means the 'centre' and 10 means the 'right'? / Q8b. Thinking about your views on social issues, where would you place yourself on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means 'very progressive', 5 means 'moderate' and 10 means 'very conservative'?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



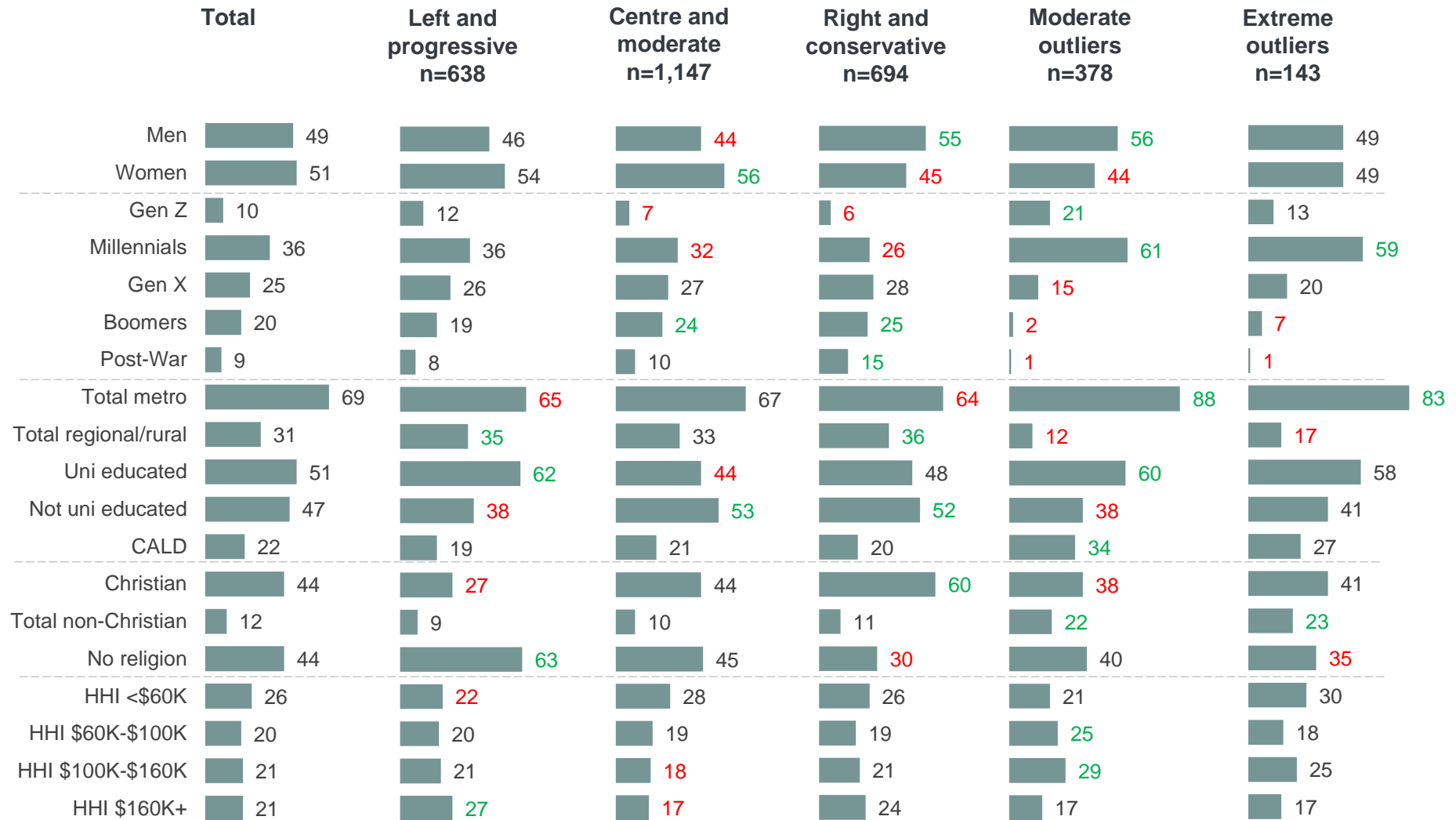
Segmenting the Australian public

Using a combination of flag analysis and Principal Component Analysis (PCA), we have grouped the Australian public into five categories, based on where Australians position themselves on the spectra of politics and social issues, their support for undemocratic practices, and their agreement to engage in a relationship with people whose political views are misaligned with their own.





Segment profiles (%)

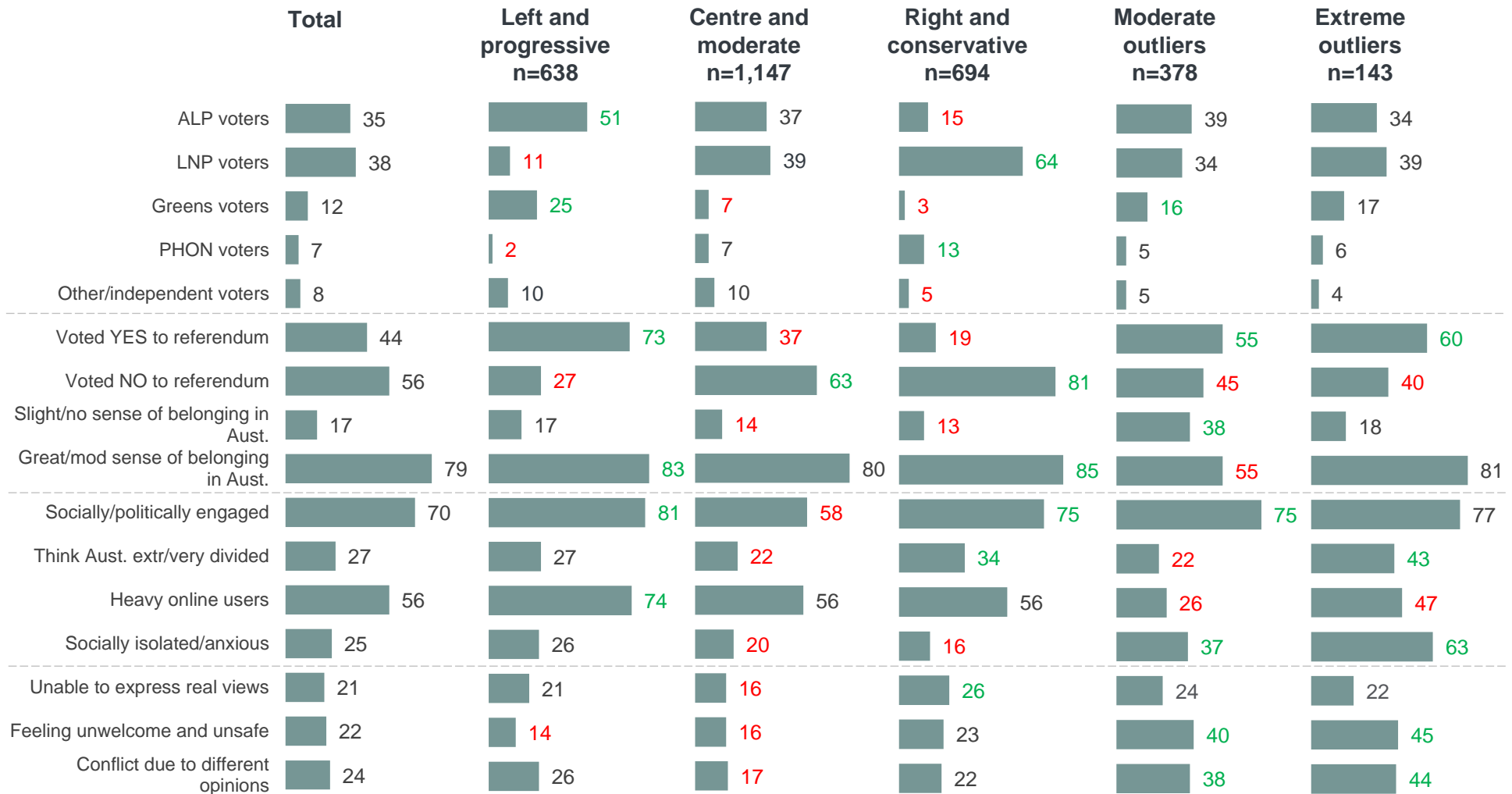


Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000); Left leaning and progressive (n=638); Centre and moderate (n=1,147); Right leaning and conservative (n=694); Moderate outliers (n=378); Extreme outliers (n=143).



Segment profiles (%)



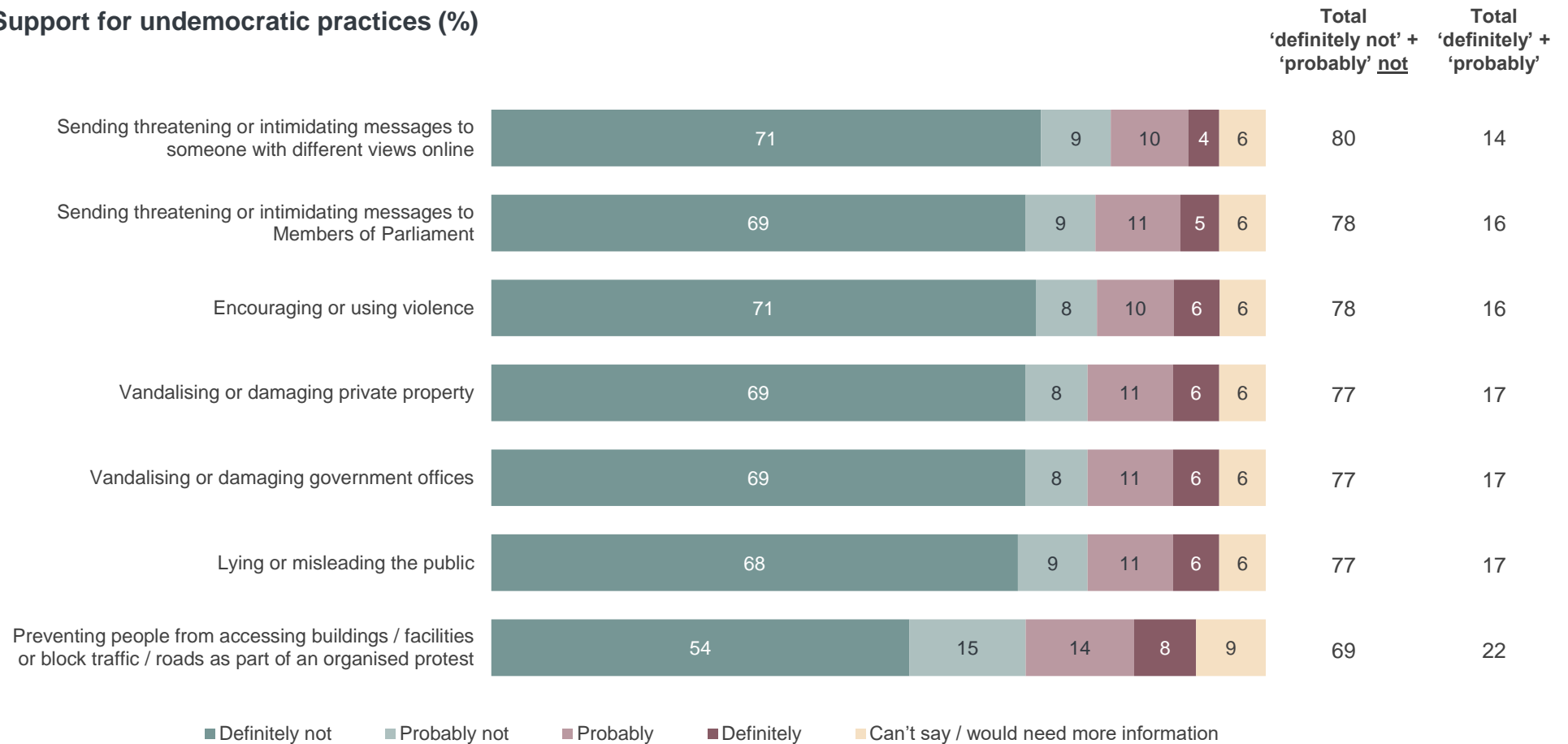
Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000); Left leaning and progressive (n=638); Centre and moderate (n=1,147); Right leaning and conservative (n=694); Moderate outliers (n=378) ; Extreme outliers (n=143).



At least one in ten Australians support all manner of undemocratic practices to advance a cause they care about

Support for undemocratic practices (%)



Q40. Would you support any of the following activities to advance a cause that you care about?

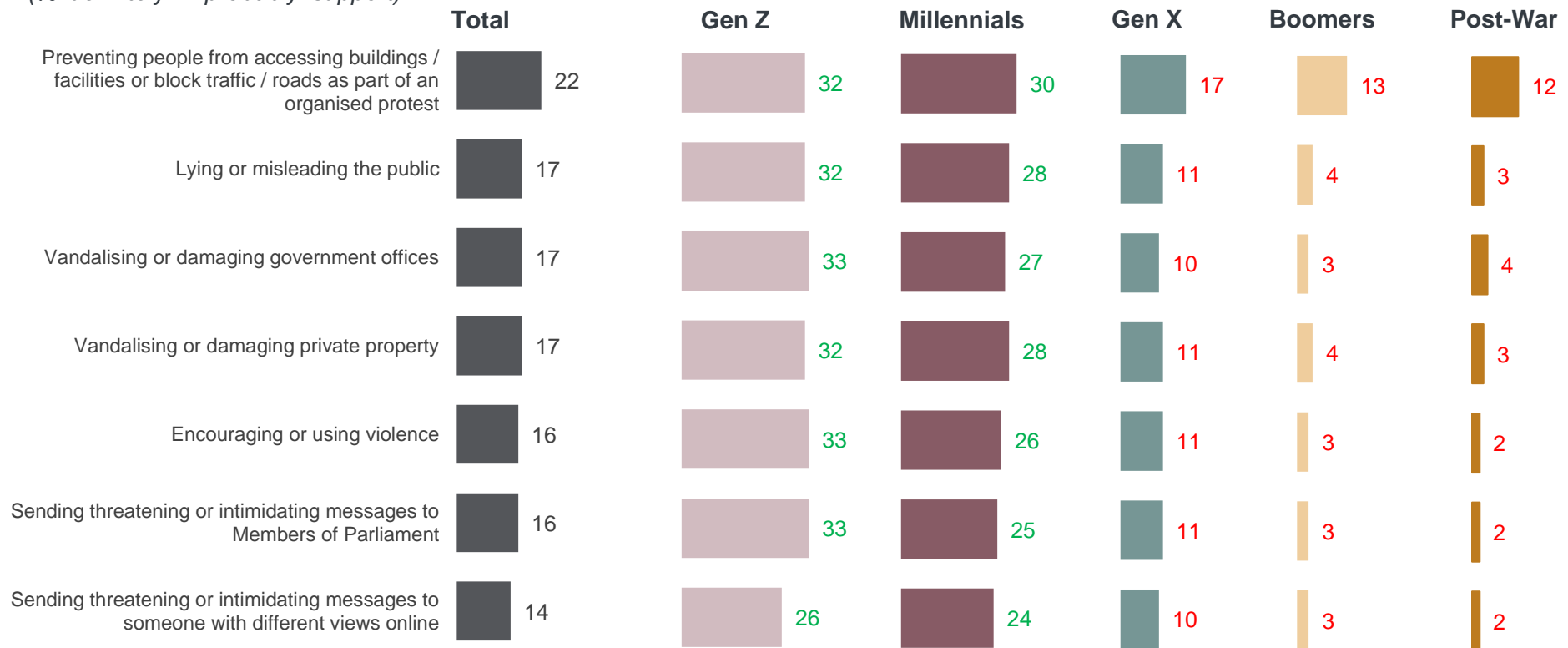
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Support for undemocratic practices correlates with lifestage; Gen Z most supportive, Post-War least

Support for undemocratic practices

(% 'definitely' + 'probably' support)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q40. Would you support any of the following activities to advance a cause that you care about?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



In contrast to 'Outliers', the majority of 'Left', 'Centre' and 'Right' Australians do not support undemocratic practices

'Total support' versus 'Total not support' with statements across different profiles (%)



Q40. Would you support any of the following activities to advance a cause that you care about?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Using or inciting violence is where Australians draw the line on free speech and right to protest

A majority of Australians say they would 'definitely' or 'probably' not support any of the undemocratic practices listed (e.g. encouraging or using violence) to advance a cause that they care about. That said, at least one in five Australians say they would. This support is significantly higher among Gen Z and Millennials, people living in inner urban areas, people of CALD backgrounds, and moderate and extreme outliers.

Freedom of speech is a value that many Australians hold dear. While they consider free speech to be the bedrock of democracy and believe limits on free speech should be few and far between, they also acknowledge that the right to free speech is not absolute.

Overall, there is consensus among Australians that the following scenarios are examples of free speech that has gone too far:

- the use of and incitement to violence
 - Using or inciting to violence is viewed as a red line that should not be crossed. For many, this is the turning point where free speech ends and lawbreaking begins. What is defined as violence, however, is not always clear to all.
- hate speech and incitement to hatred.
 - Hate speech and incitement to hatred, particularly if based on someone's cultural background, are also viewed as red flags of free speech going too far. Australians of CALD backgrounds are particularly concerned about the impact such practices can have on them feeling safe in Australia.

Some Australians feel there should also be limits on free speech when it comes to harassing and intimidating others or disrupting society. There is a view that cyberbullying and the use of abusive/intimidating language, for example, infringes upon other people's right to feel safe in their community. Some believe the right to protests should be limited if protests are disruptive.

"I don't really support the idea of a government stepping in when someone is expressing their views. If their actions say otherwise, absolutely step in."
(Left-wing voter)

"My concern is that with a lot of the free speech that we've got at the moment, the environment doesn't make me feel safe." (CALD, other)

"When you disrupt society, that's when the line is drawn. It's like the Just Stop Oil people destroying art like hundred-year-old paintings or attempting to destroy them."
(Somewhat engaged)

"I think crossing the line that's at hate speech or violence, anything violent, and targeting people in certain positions because of their backgrounds." (CALD, Chinese)

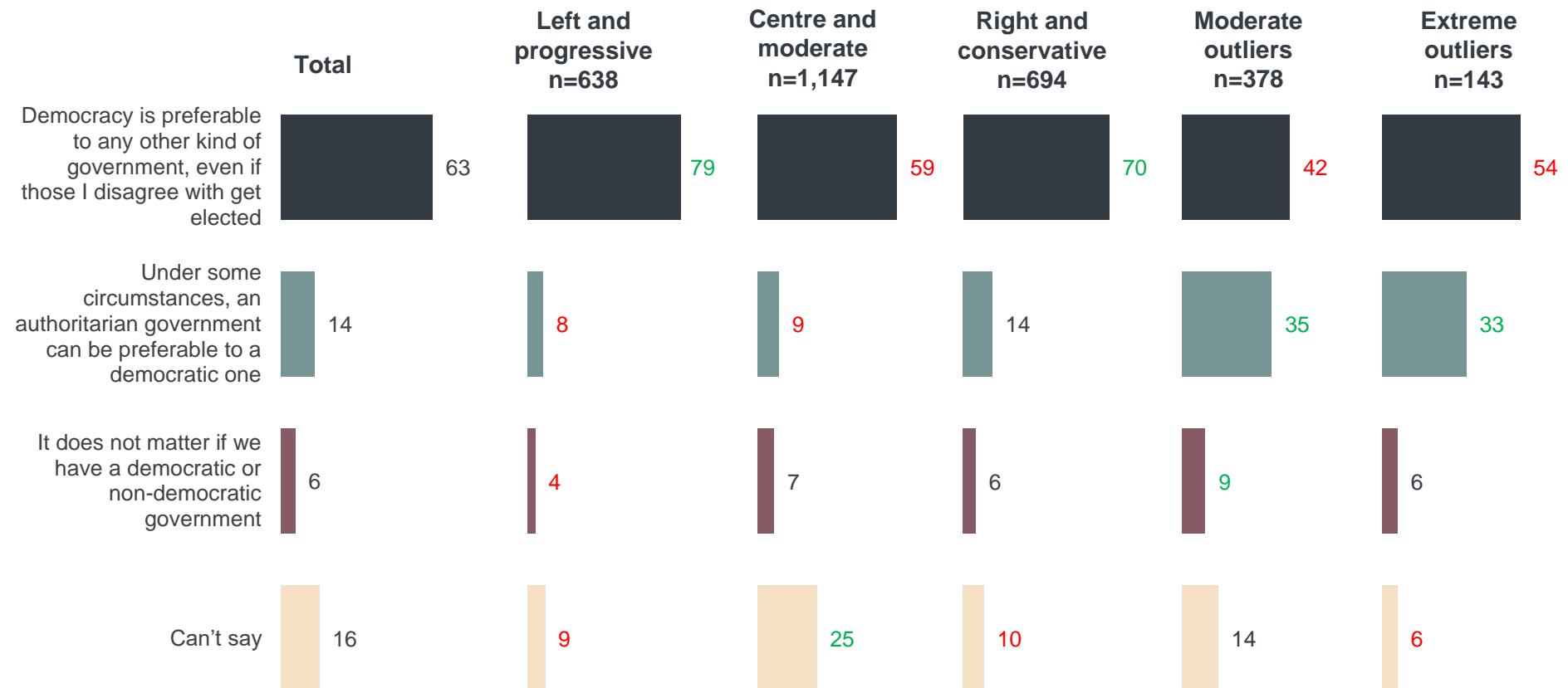
"What do you term violence? You know, cyberbullying has plenty of records of people that have been cyber bullied to commit suicide, is that violence?" (Not at all engaged)





‘Outliers’ significantly more open to an authoritarian government under some circumstances

Personal view about democracy across different profiles (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

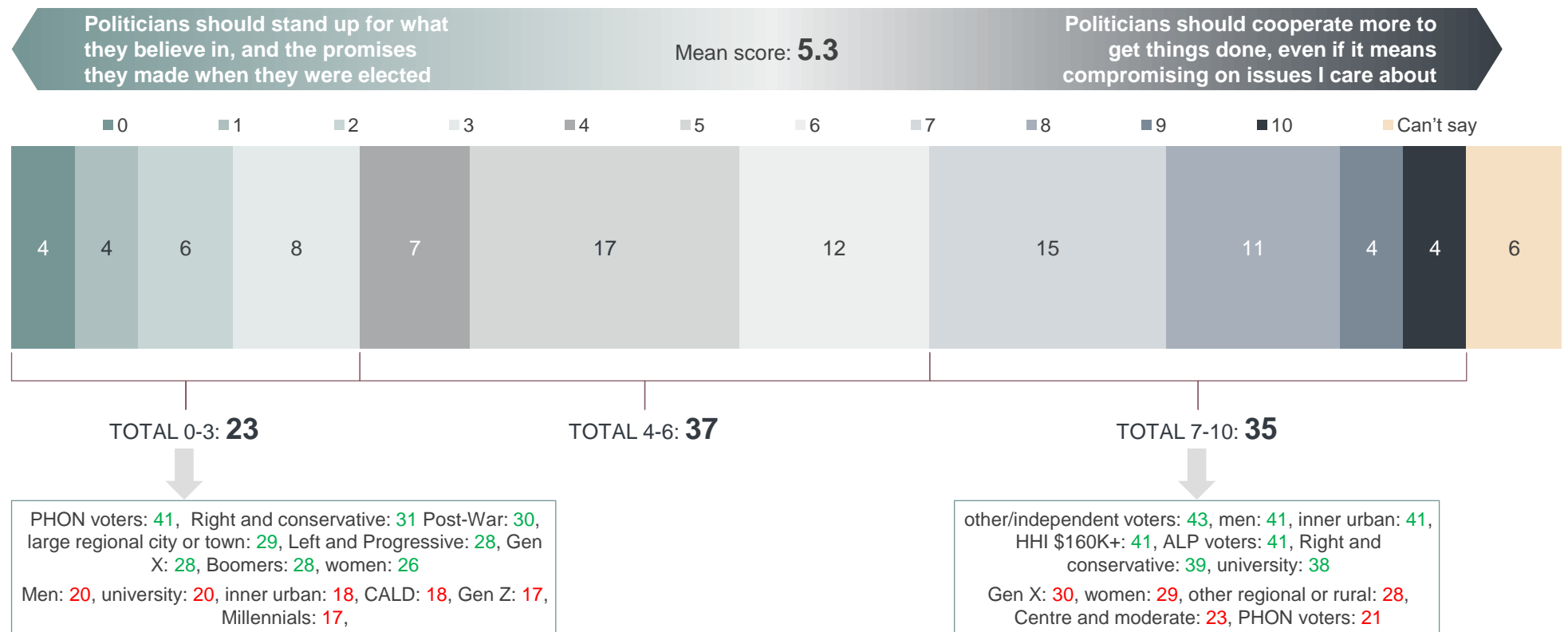
Q9a. Below are some statements about democracy. Please indicate which one of the three statements comes closest to your own personal view about democracy.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Australians prioritise politicians cooperating to get things done slightly ahead of upholding their beliefs and promises

Prioritisation of beliefs versus compromises (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q39. On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'Politicians should stand up for what they believe in, and the promises they made when they were elected' and 10 is 'Politicians should cooperate more to get things done, even if it means compromising on issues I care about', how much would you prioritise beliefs versus compromises?

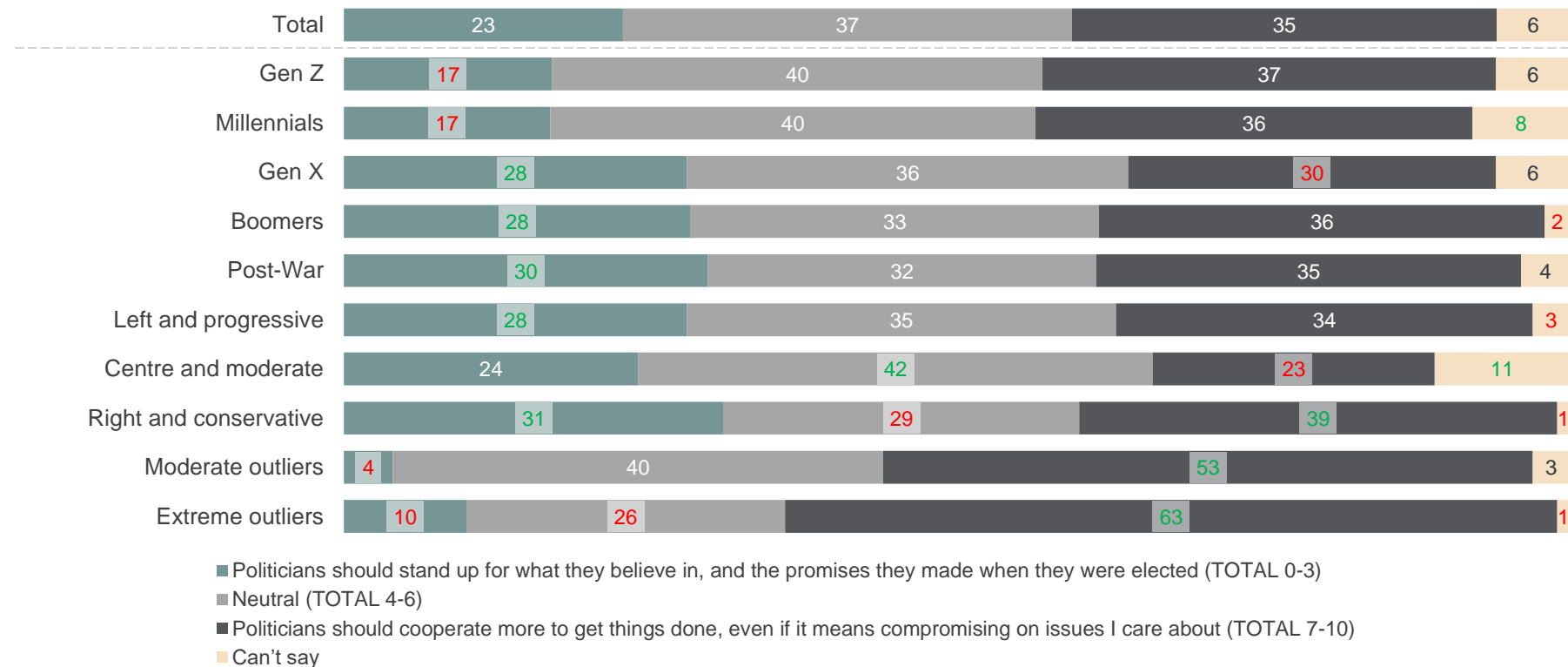
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



‘Outliers’ followed by self-declared ‘Right conservatives’ more likely to prioritise co-operation

Prioritisation of beliefs versus compromises (%)

(0-10 scale)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q39. On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is 'Politicians should stand up for what they believe in, and the promises they made when they were elected' and 10 is 'Politicians should cooperate more to get things done, even if it means compromising on issues I care about', how much would you prioritise beliefs versus compromises?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Voters are influenced by a variety of factors that indicate which party benefits themselves the most in each election

Voters in Australia use different strategies to decide who to vote for.

Some, particularly people who are not at all engaged in politics, make an arbitrary selection on the ballot paper or cast a 'donkey vote' on election day.

The voting decision of others is influenced by one, or a combination of, the factors below:

- a trustworthy 'adviser'
 - Some seek out the guidance of people who they trust and consider more knowledgeable about politics (e.g. parents, partners, friends).
- general beliefs about parties' and candidates' values
 - Some Australians vote for the party whose values appear to align most with their own. This is because, unlike party policies which are said to change over time, a party's core values are deemed stable.
 - Some vote for leaders who they perceive to possess qualities such as integrity, which Australians think guards against corruption and ensure candidates keep their campaign promises.
- a party's stance on specific issues
 - Some Australians say they use their vote to support a party/candidate who has advanced/intends to advance policies of most concern to them (e.g. immigration, housing, energy).
- voters' opposition to a political party they dislike.
 - Some voters support a political party or candidate based primarily on their dislike for another/the opposing party.

Some voters opt to vote for the party which offers the most personally-relevant benefits.

"I'm just gonna vote for the one [party] that most aligns with my values."
(Left-wing voter)

"I've often just gone in, got my name ticked off and done a donkey vote. Sometimes I do talk to my husband, and he might be able to convince me one way or the other of a certain party." (Not at all engaged)

"I come from a working [class] background. I feel for the people in communities that don't have as much or that need representation. I'm a very strong union member. So, if I have to choose the camp, for me, it'll be Labor." (Left-wing voter)

"Unless we have a party that's willing to actually do something [about housing and immigration] and be very brave, then I think my vote just goes to some independent or somebody that has some fresh idea." (CALD, Chinese)

"I care about integrity. I remember over the last few years, there were lots of reports about corruption investigations. I don't want that. I really hate that." (CALD, other)

"I would vote Labor because I'm trying to support the ousting of the blue-ribbon liberals in this area. But if it wasn't for that, I'd probably just stick with the Greens myself." (Left-wing voter)

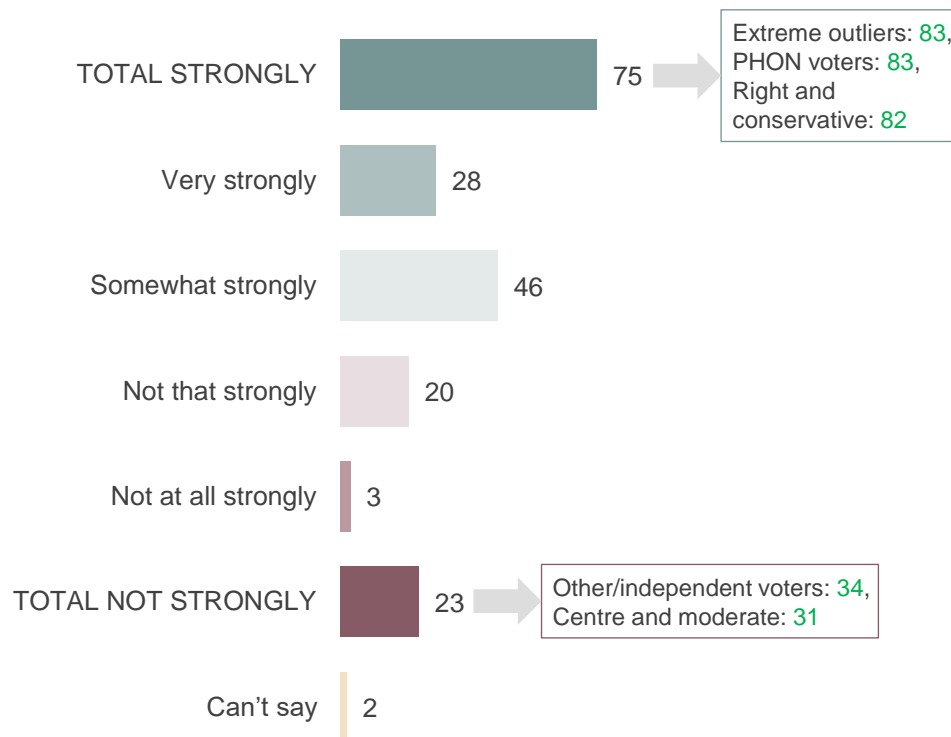
"If Labor offers more benefits to me, I'll vote Labor. If Liberal offers more benefits during election, I'll vote for them. I'm a swinging voter; whichever side offers the most value for me and my family, I'll head in that direction. It might be reduced taxes or increased community-based activities, or better maintaining roads, or something with hospitals and education, if they increase funding to them." (Not at all engaged)



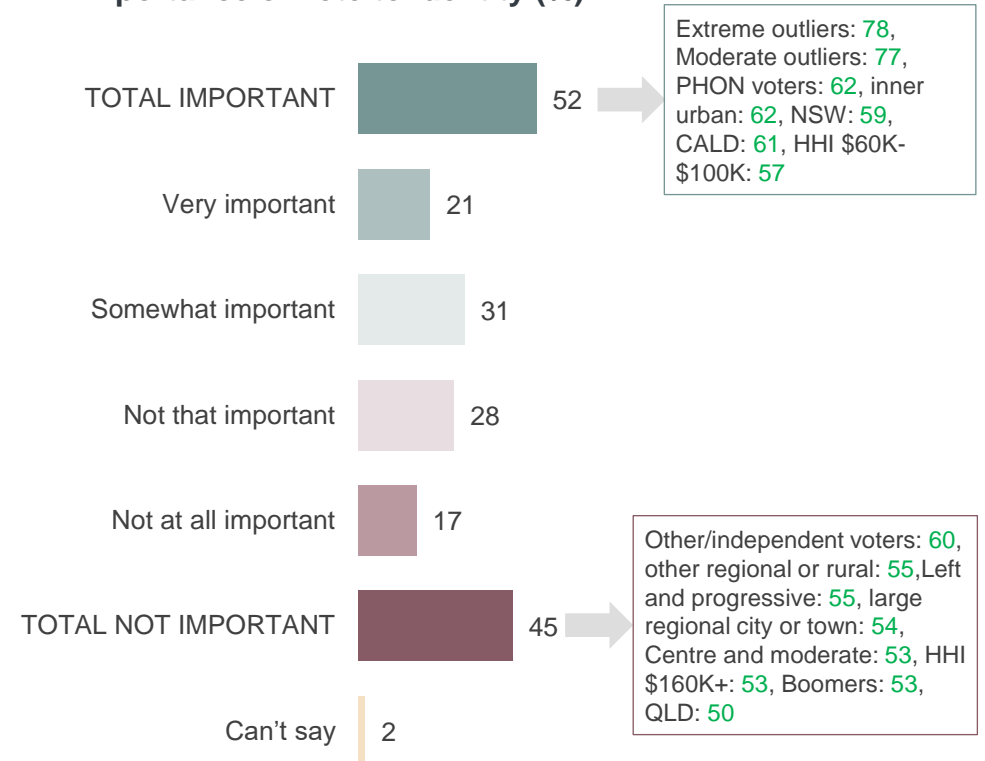


Strength and importance of identification with vote is highest among right leaning, conservative and PHON voters

Strength of identification vote (%)



Importance of vote to identity (%)



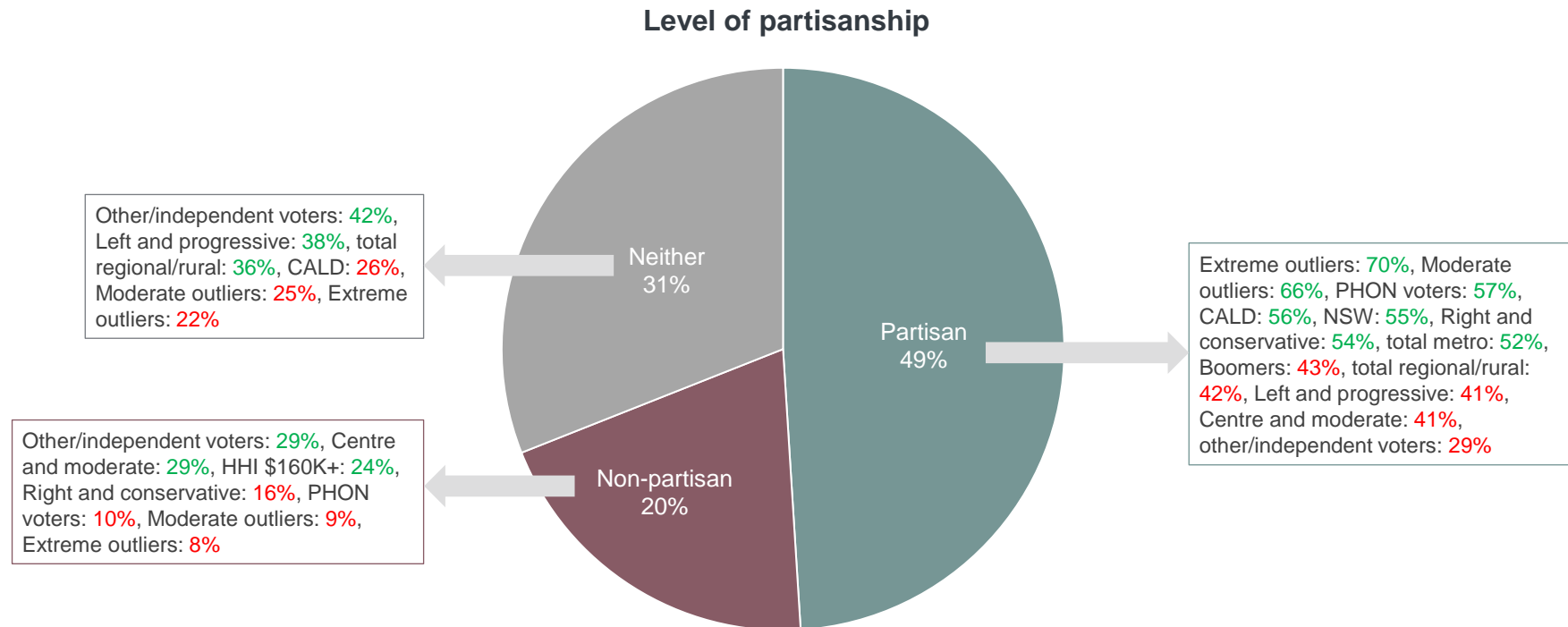
Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q17. How strongly do you identify with the [INSERT "the" PARTY / IND NAME / "the Teal independents" / "the Muslim independents" VOTE FOR IN Q16 / Q16a]?

Q17a. How important is it to your identity to be a [INSERT PARTY / IND NAME VOTE FOR IN Q16 / Q16a] voter?

Base: Eligible voters who indicated first preference (n=2,368).

Half of the Australian population is partisan



Partisan – defined as ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ strongly identifying with the party they vote for **and** a voter of their party being ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ important to their identify

Non-partisan – defined as ‘not that strongly’ or ‘not at all strongly’ identifying with the party they vote for **and** a voter of their party being ‘not that important’ or ‘not at all important’ to their identify

Neither – defined as not being ‘engaged’ or ‘not engaged’, that is, either qualifying for only one and not the other criteria, neither criteria or responding ‘can’t say’ to either or both questions

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q17. How strongly do you identify with the [INSERT “the” PARTY / IND NAME / “the Teal independents” / “the Muslim independents” VOTE FOR IN Q16 / Q16a]?

Q17a. How important is it to your identity to be a [INSERT PARTY / IND NAME VOTE FOR IN Q16 / Q16a] voter?

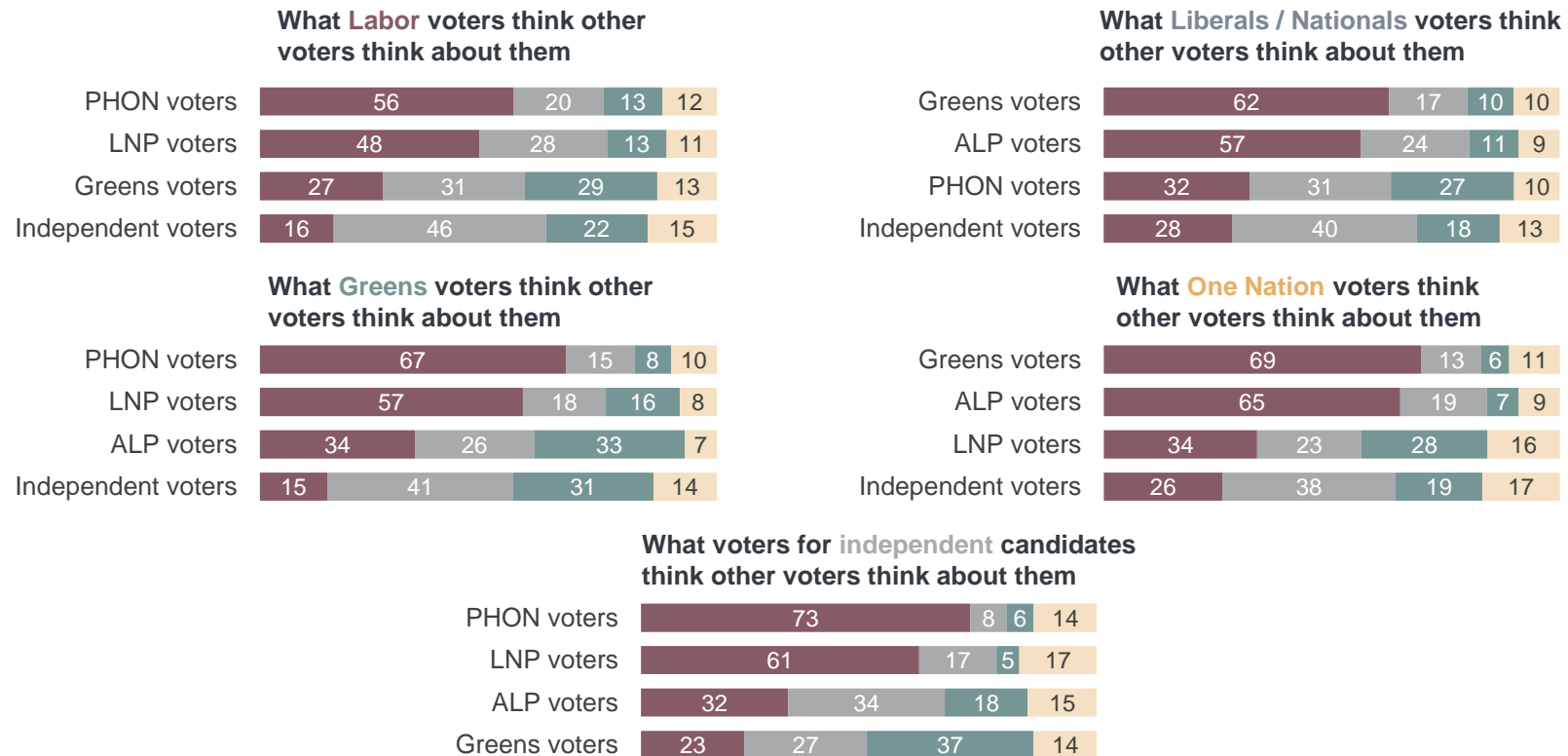
Base: Eligible voters who indicated first preference (n=2,368).



Labor, Greens and Independent voters don't think PHON or LNP voters like them; the feeling is mutual

What voters think other voters think of them (%)

■ Total 'don't like them that much' + 'don't like them at all' ■ No view either way ■ Total 'like them a lot' + 'like them a little' ■ Can't say

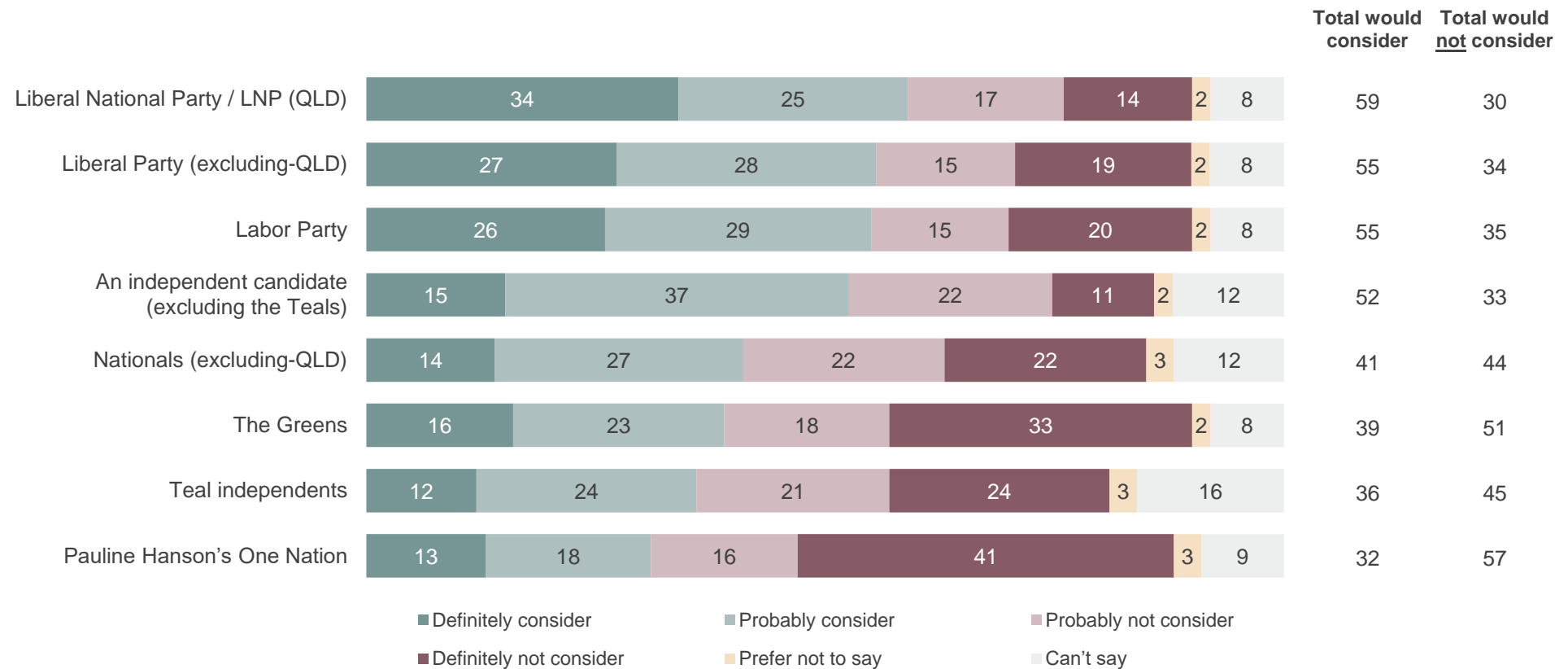


Q17b. / Q17c. / Q17d. / Q17e. / Q17f. What do you think Liberals / Nationals voters / Labor voters / Greens voters / One Nation voters / voters for independent candidates think about [INSERT PARTY VOTE FOR IN Q16/a] voters?
Base: LNP voters (n=925); ALP voters (n=837); Greens voters (n=297); PHON voters (n=175); Independent voters (n=55).



There is no broad consideration for any one party

Likelihood to vote for parties or candidates in a federal election (%)



Q12. How likely are you to consider each of these political parties / candidates if you were deciding who to vote for at a federal election?

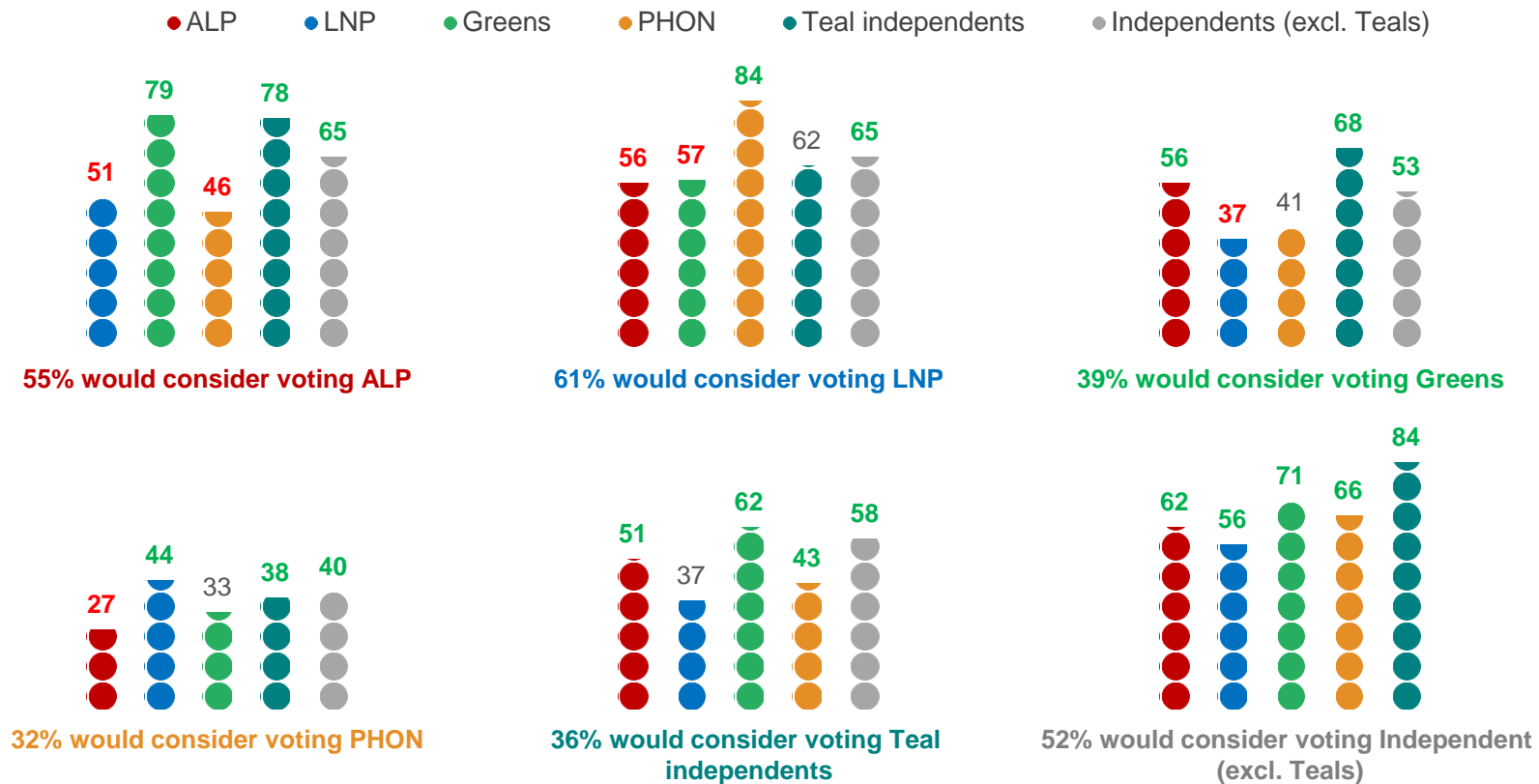
[IF NOT VOTER IE CODE 2-3 IN D2: It's okay if you're not enrolled, we're interested in your general impressions as someone who lives in Australia.]

Base: All respondents (n=3,000); Excl. QLD (n=2,402); QLD (n=598).

Independent candidates attract the most consistent voting consideration across voters of all party allegiances



Considerations of parties (% among those who would 'definitely' + 'probably' consider voting for particular party)



Significantly *higher* / *lower* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q12. How likely are you to consider each of these political parties / candidates if you were deciding who to vote for at a federal election?

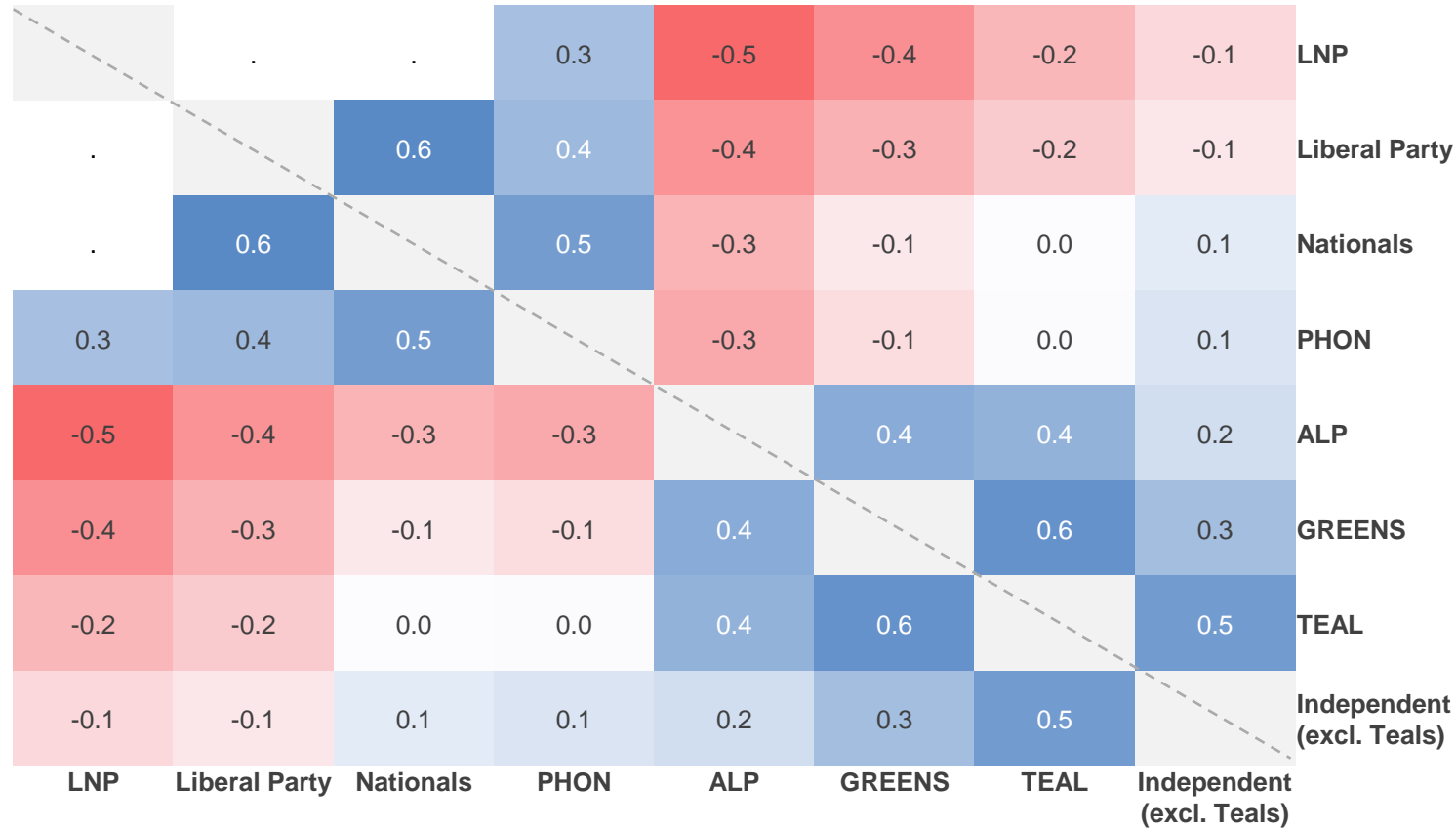
[IF NOT VOTER IE CODE 2-3 IN D2: It's okay if you're not enrolled, we're interested in your general impressions as someone who lives in Australia.]

Base: Consider voting for party – ALP (n=1,654); LNP (n=1,818); Greens (n=1,186); PHON (n=951); Teal independents (n=1,086); Independent (excl. Teals) (n=1,571).

LNP voters just as unlikely to consider voting for Labor as Labor voters are unlikely to consider voting for the LNP



Likelihood of considering other parties



Q12. How likely are you to consider each of these political parties / candidates if you were deciding who to vote for at a federal election?

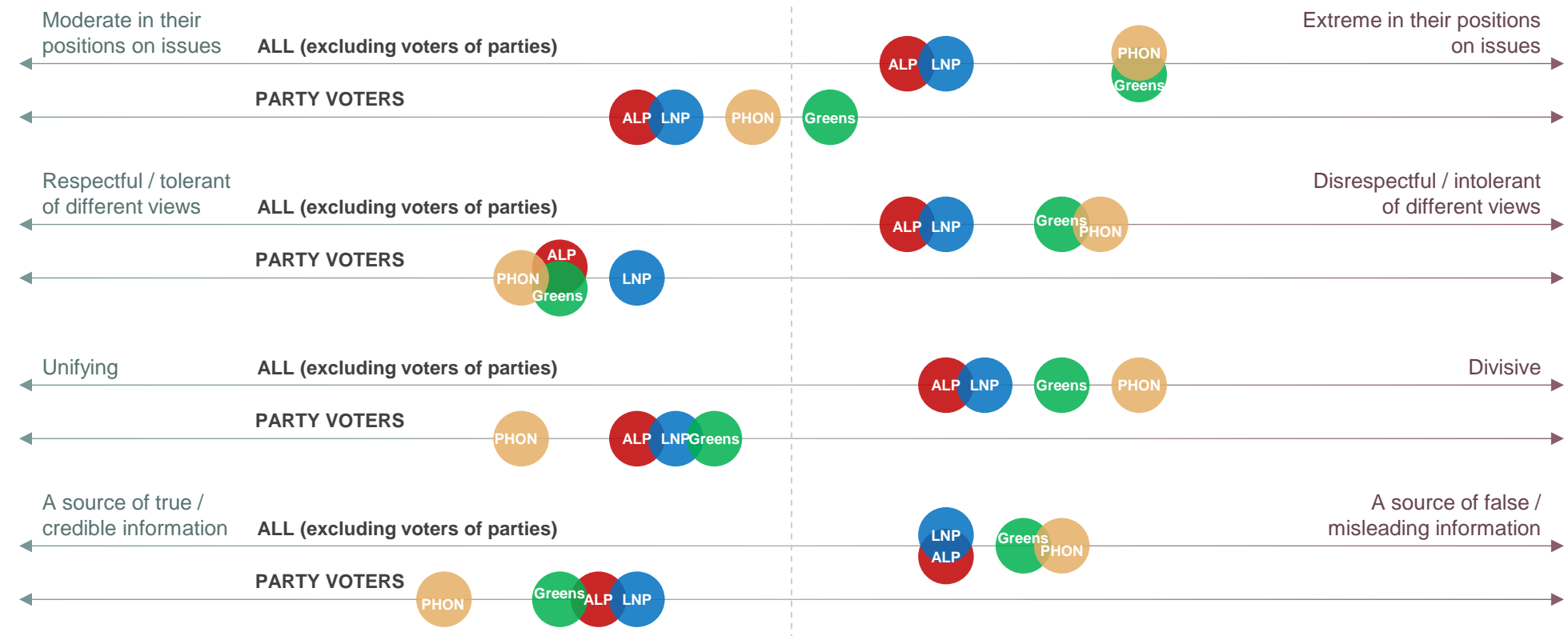
[IF NOT VOTER IE CODE 2-3 IN D2: It's okay if you're not enrolled, we're interested in your general impressions as someone who lives in Australia.]

Base: All respondents (n=3,000); Excl. QLD (n=2,402); QLD (n=598).

Perceptions differ widely between voters and the wider population

Description of party

(mean score, sliding scale)



Q14a./Q14b./Q15. Thinking about different political parties in Australia. How would you describe...

Base: All respondents excl. ALP voters (n=2,163); excl. LNP voters (n=2,075); Split sample excl. Greens voters (n=841); excl. PHON voters (n=916).

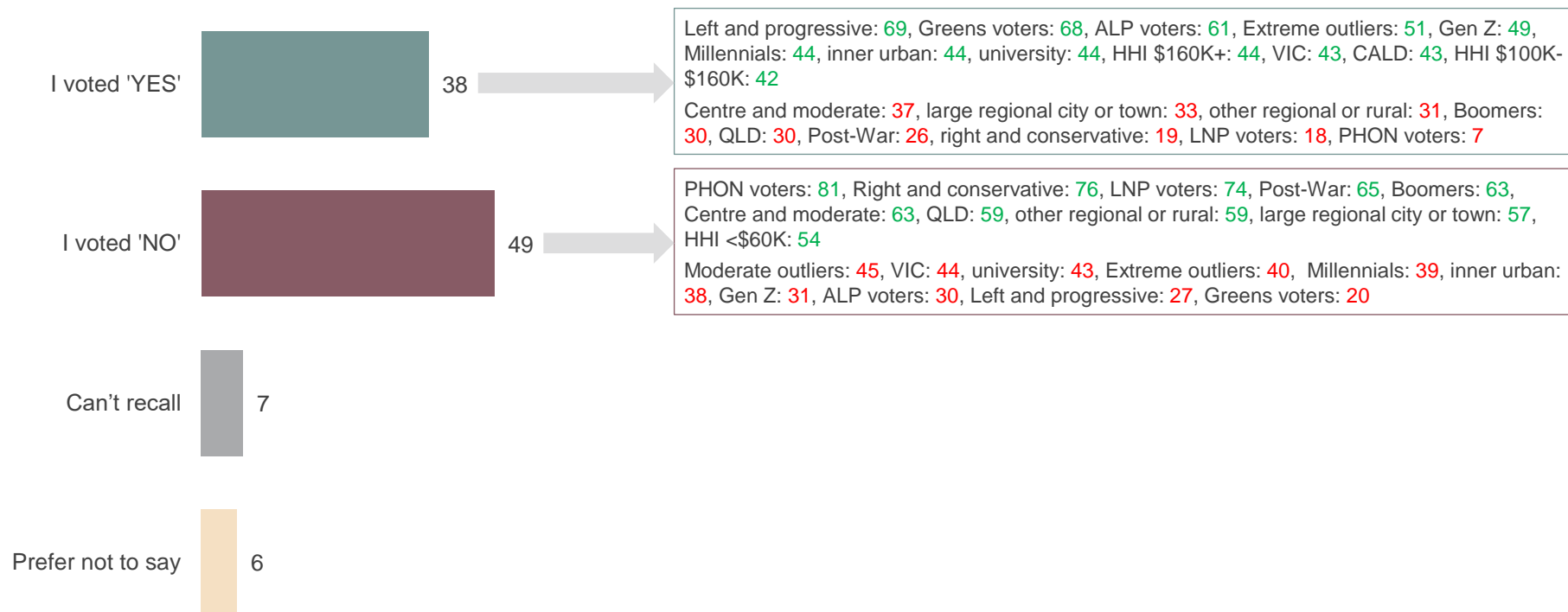
Issues polarisation





At least six in ten left-leaning, progressive, Greens and ALP voters say they voted YES in last year's referendum

Vote in referendum to introduce an Indigenous Voice to Parliament (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

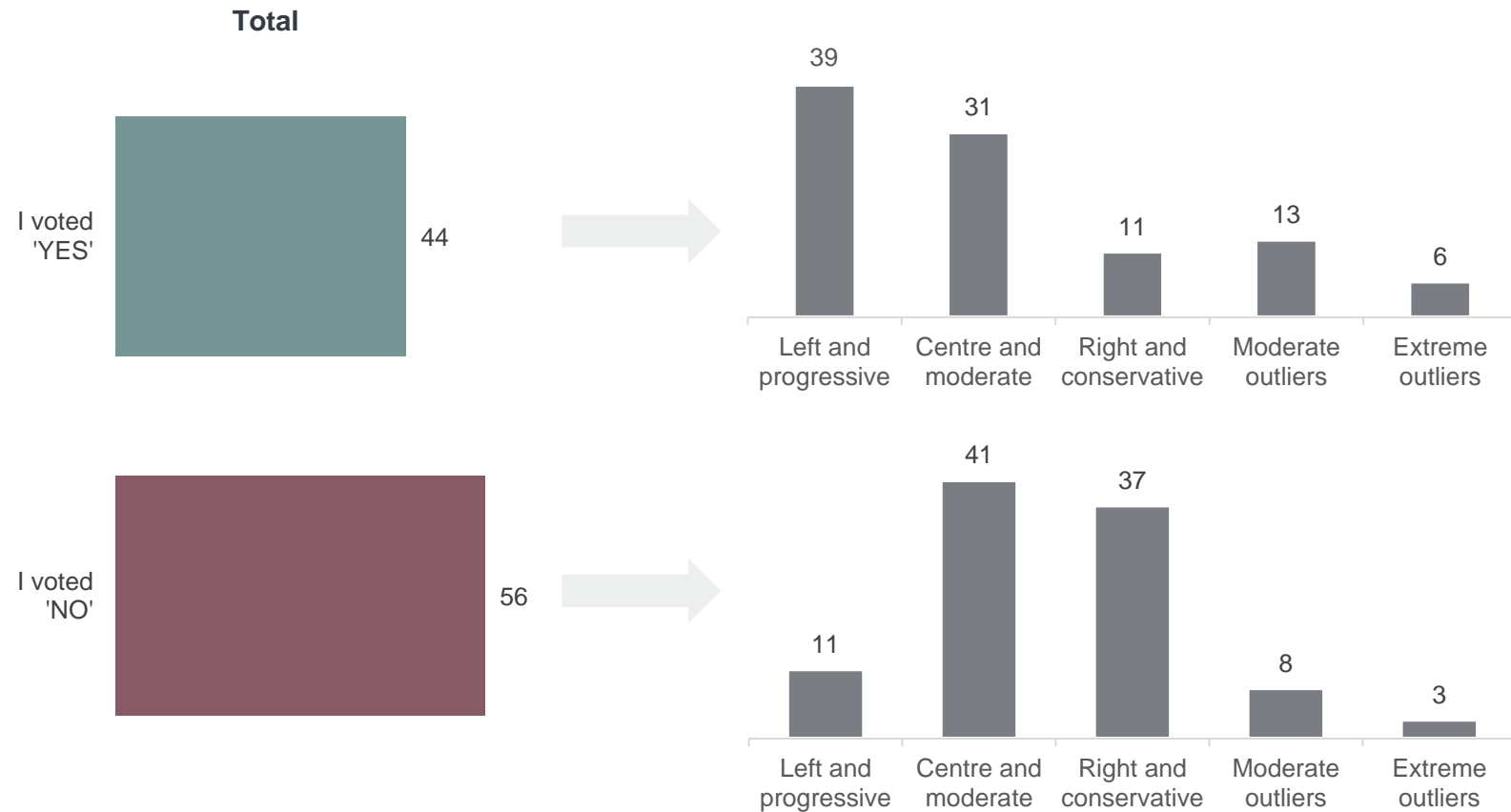
Q20. In the referendum held last year to introduce an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, how did you answer the referendum question: "Do you approve this alteration to the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice?"

Base: Eligible voters (n=2,817).



‘Left progressives’ mostly voted YES in last year’s referendum, while ‘Centre moderates’ and ‘Right conservatives’ voted otherwise

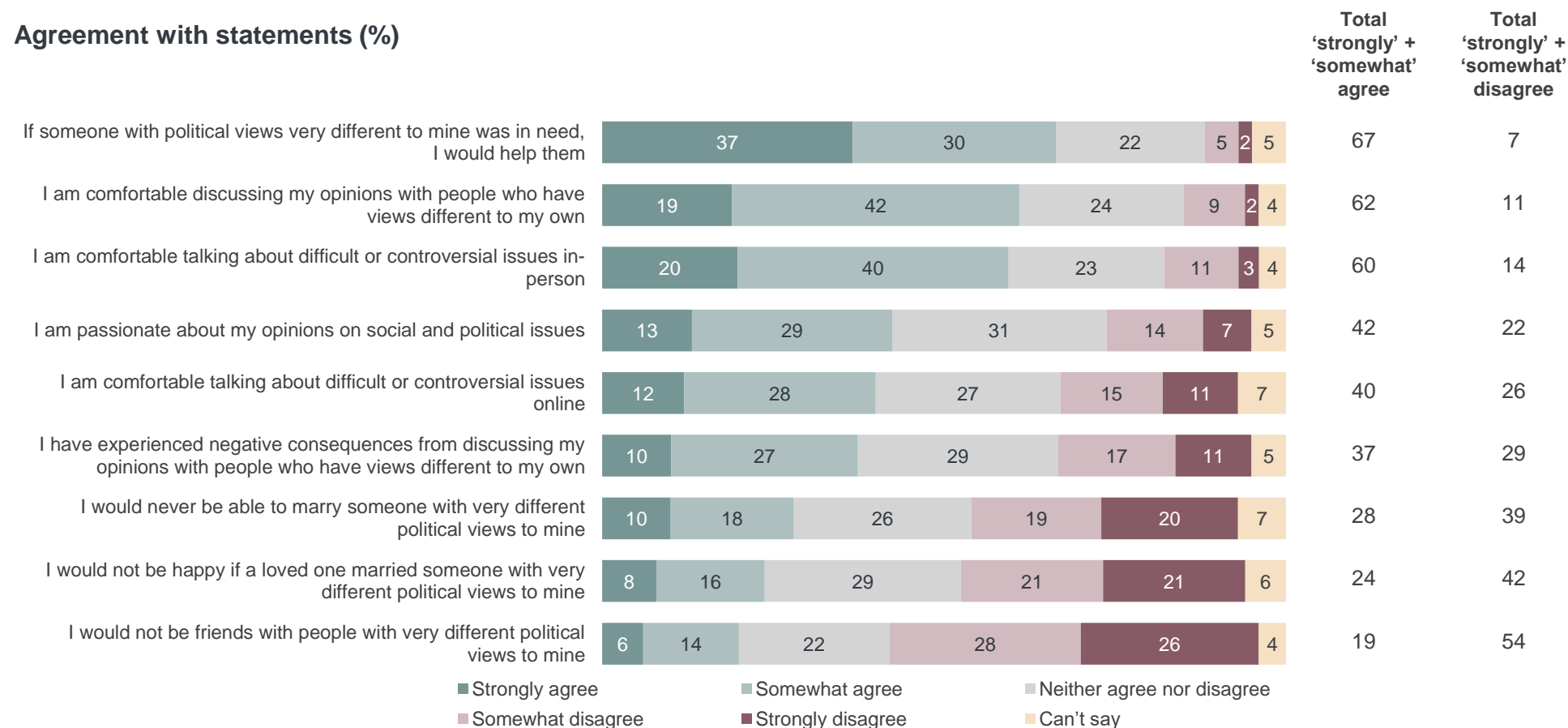
Different profiles among referendum outcome (%)



Q20. In the referendum held last year to introduce an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, how did you answer the referendum question: "Do you approve this alteration to the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice?"

Base: Eligible voters excluding Can't recall and prefer not to say (n=2,450).

Most people are tolerant of friendships with people holding different political views

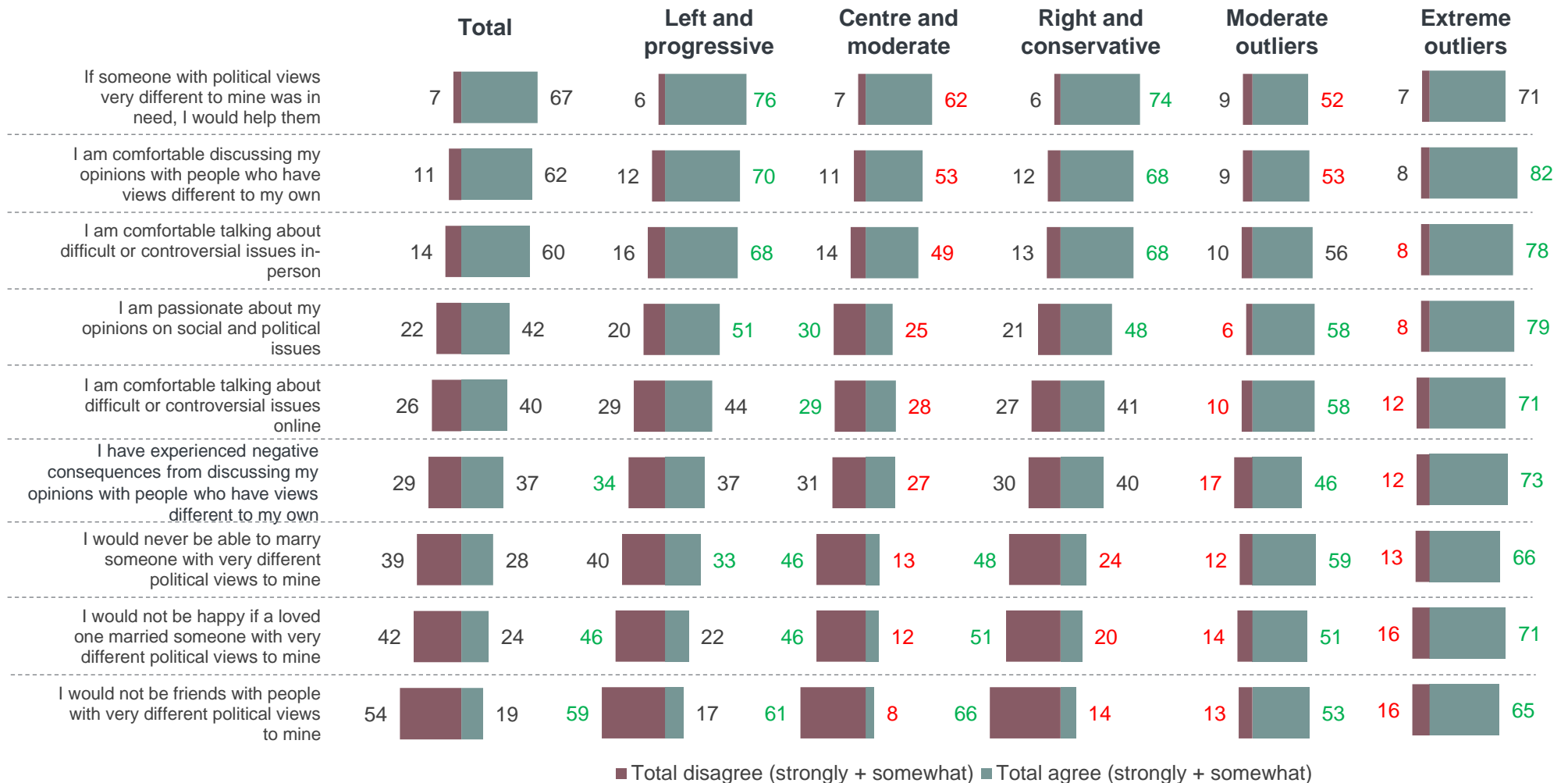


Q22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



‘Outliers’ most likely to allow political views to influence their relationships

‘Total disagree’ versus ‘Total agree’ with statements across different profiles (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
Q22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Religion and politics are no-go topics among people who disagree with feeling comfortable discussing controversial topics

At least six in 10 agree that they feel comfortable:

- discussing their opinions with people who have views different to their own (62%)
- talking about difficult or controversial issues in-person (60%).

Knowing their interlocutor has an open-mind and is respectful is considered a prerequisite for engaging in these types of conversations.

However, there are Australians who feel uncomfortable engaging in, let alone initiating, a conversation about some controversial topics, particularly with people outside their circle of trust (which typically includes family and close friends).

Examples of such issues include, but are not limited to:

- religion
- same-sex marriage
- abortion
- politics
- the Indigenous Voice referendum.

The Israel-Hamas conflict also comes up spontaneously as a topic which Australians feel uncomfortable talking about with others, mainly because they feel that:

- they don't know enough about this conflict
- they are not immediately impacted by it and thus have less legitimacy to comment on it and / or are likely to be judged for doing so
- their opinion is unlikely to have a real impact on the resolution of a conflict which is 'so far away and out of scope'.

Among people of Chinese ancestry, there is a tendency to avoid talking about things that might, even indirectly, come across as depicting China in anything less than a favourable light.

"I'll talk to anyone about anything as long as I know that they're happy to talk about it and that they're generally as open minded as me." (Left-wing voter)

"I'm not gonna start spouting my opinions on abortion rights in a work meeting, but amongst friends and such, I would probably discuss those matters." (Somewhat engaged)

"If I say, 'This country is really nice to live in ... some Chinese people who might have never been outside of China and don't know what other countries are like they get upset if we say another country is better.'" (CALD, Chinese)

"Religion [is a no-go topic] ... So many people have different beliefs." (Not at all engaged)

"[I avoid talking about] Middle East issues [Israel-Hamas conflict] at the moment. It's probably an ignorance thing; I don't totally understand both sides." (Somewhat engaged)





Talking about controversial issues seen by some as costly and pointless

Australians who tend to avoid discussing controversial issues identify several reasons for doing so. One key reason is **the desire to avoid conflict**. Specifically, this avoidance behaviour is primarily driven by the perception that discussing these topics:

- can lead to heated arguments (given these topics often involve deeply held beliefs and strong emotional reactions) and result in a negative impact on themselves (e.g. being subject to personal attacks) and their relationships (e.g. breaking up with a friend)
- can end up offending others.

It is also believed that talking about a controversial topic is likely to be pointless. People believe controversial topics involve opinions which not only vary widely but can often be extreme. As such, having a constructive dialogue and reaching an understanding is deemed unlikely.

Others, particularly those who are not at all engaged in politics, note they avoid discussing these topics because they do not have an interest in, or feel they know little, about them.

"I don't want to engage in the repetitive cycle of 'you think this' and 'I think this' and we're never gonna meet in the middle. I just don't find that beneficial at all." (Left-wing voter)

"I'm always worried I'm going to offend someone if I say the wrong thing." (Not at all engaged)

"If I know that that person already thinks the opposite of me, it's a moot point to even go there." (Right-wing voter)

"With things like religion and politics, I sort of tend to steer clear of most of that and remain reasonably neutral because I don't really have much of an opinion on either of those topics." (Not at all engaged)

"You don't wanna give anyone a reason to put an arrow on your back." (Right-wing voter)

"It got to the point where I thought, well, what's the point of having this conversation? We're just gonna argue for no reason and then the only conclusion has been pissing off each other." (Not at all engaged)





Australians believe social media platforms inflame polarisation

Only four in 10 Australians (40%) are comfortable talking about difficult or controversial issues online.

Australians consider social media an unsafe space for sharing views overall. Voicing an opinion about even neutral topics such as parenting can be met with fierce backlash from people online.

Sharing a post about a controversial topic is thought to be even riskier. Some note that even celebrities are not immune to online abuse and harassment for expressing their opinion about a controversial issue or even remaining silent about it.

With algorithms skewing the content people see online to favour what they like, social media platforms appear to act as echo chambers that reinforce one's own beliefs and simultaneously exclude the voices of others.

These filter bubbles – coupled with the fact that social media platforms allow users to post anonymously and reward them rather than hold them accountable for posting content that garners attention (including extreme posts) – are thought to **breed extreme views** and conspiracy theories and **enhance polarisation**.

Notably, some people of CALD backgrounds are concerned that hostile discussions online may influence behaviour offline. Having witnessed hostile interactions on social media in relation to the Israel-Hamas conflict, they are worried about demonstrations sparked by the war turning violent. They are concerned that people may feel more emboldened to act aggressively and that this violent behaviour can put them at harm risk.

"[Social media is] just not a safe place at all, not in the slightest ... It's so easy to be toxic on the internet. When it comes to potentially polarising issues that can cause conflict, it's gonna be far more extreme than if it happened in real life because ... you are almost anonymous." (Not at all engaged)

"It [social media] can be a megaphone for a conspiracy theory."
(Right-wing voters)

"Politicians are posting recently about global [the Israel-Hamas] conflict and then the comment sections are extremely hostile ... It makes me scared, if in real life I run into people that are discussing these sorts of topics in a park, like if there's protests, I'd be quite scared for my personal safety. Seeing how aggressive they were online, I'd be like, 'Oh, they might harm me in person.'" (CALD, other)

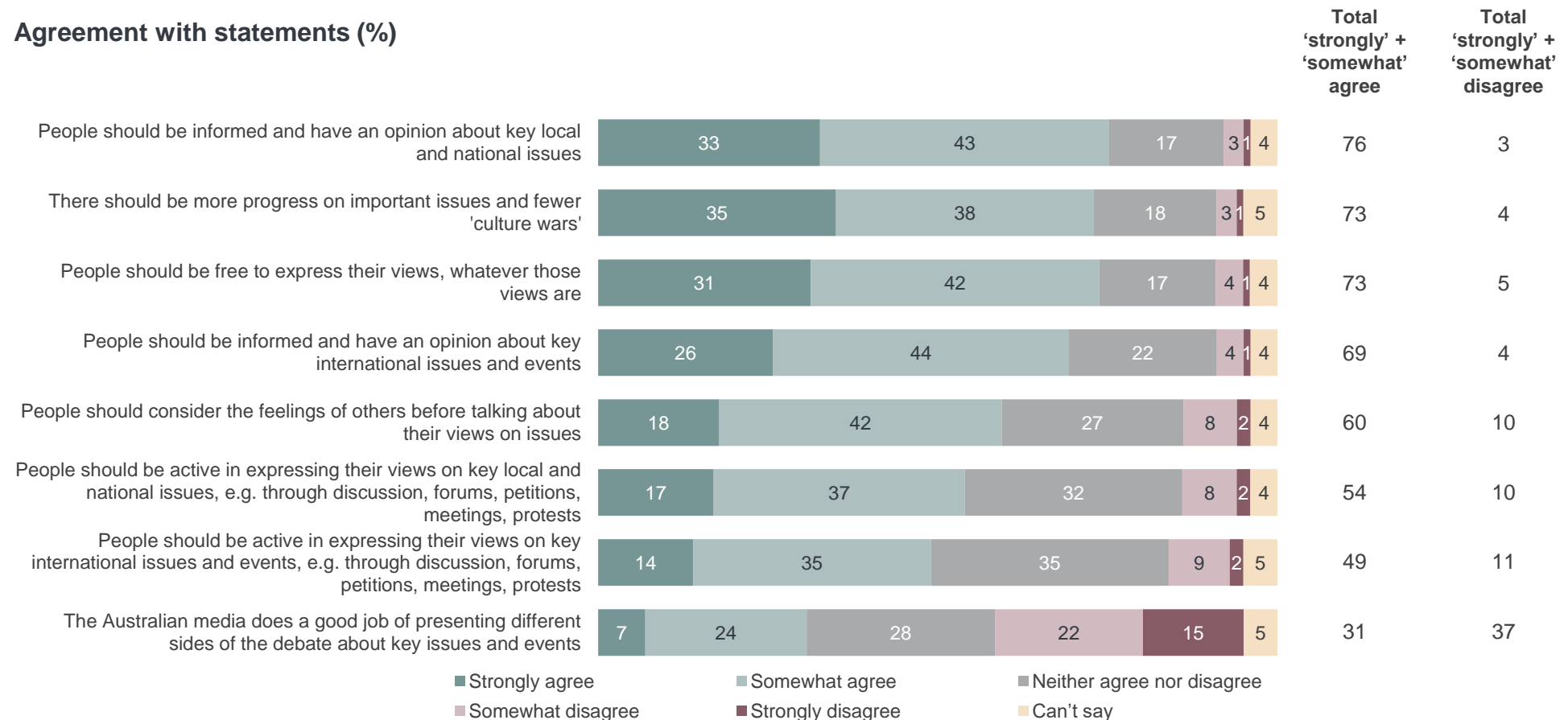
"If these people were able to be identified, their views would be far less left or right, [far less] extreme. But it's the anonymous [nature of posting]. They think they have the right to say or write what they like without consequences."
(Somewhat engaged)

"Extreme views [are related to] social media because you'll have access to lots of other people, you can get an extreme view. In an environment you wouldn't be exposed to social media you wouldn't be able to find many people to support that point of view. But now we can find that group of people who really reinforce that whether it's good or bad."
(Right-wing voter)

"You see celebrities who get criticised for speaking about a certain topic and about how they view things. And, if they don't speak about it, then people are like, 'Why aren't you speaking out about this topic? You have this platform.'" (Not at all engaged)



The majority agree people should be free to express their views on issues, more so domestic rather than international issues



Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
 Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Boomers, Post-War and regional residents more likely to agree on progress vs. 'culture wars', in contrast to Gen Z, Millennials and inner urban residents

Agreement with statements – by demographics (% total 'strongly' + 'somewhat' agree)

	Total	Men	Women	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Post-War	Inner urban	Middle to outer urban	Urban fringe	Large regional city or town	Other regional or rural	Marginal seat	University	CALD
People should be informed and have an opinion about key local and national issues	76	76	76	66	69	74	89	88	73	74	73	83	76	76	76	72
There should be more progress on important issues and fewer 'culture wars'	73	74	71	64	64	72	86	87	67	73	76	79	75	74	73	69
People should be free to express their views, whatever those views are	73	73	74	66	66	74	84	84	69	72	77	80	74	75	73	70
People should be informed and have an opinion about key international issues and events	69	71	68	65	65	67	77	80	68	69	68	75	67	68	72	66
People should consider the feelings of others before talking about their views on issues	60	57	62	58	60	56	63	63	62	60	60	62	53	58	63	59
People should be active in expressing their views on key local and national issues, e.g. through discussion, forums, petitions, meetings, protests	54	56	52	50	52	52	57	59	55	55	51	53	51	53	57	56
People should be active in expressing their views on key international issues and events, e.g. through discussion, forums, petitions, meetings, protests	49	52	46	46	48	48	51	53	52	50	45	49	43	49	51	52
The Australian media does a good job of presenting different sides of the debate about key issues and events	31	31	31	34	36	28	26	23	39	31	28	26	22	31	33	38

Significantly *higher* / *lower* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



‘Extreme outliers’ are far more likely than ‘Moderate outliers’ to believe people should actively express their views

Agreement with statements – by demographics (% total ‘strongly’ + ‘somewhat’ agree)

	Total	HHI <\$60K	HHI \$60K-\$100K	HHI \$100K-\$160K	HHI \$160K+	ALP voters	LNP voters	Greens voters	PHON voters	Other/ind. voters	Left and progressive	Centre and moderate	Right and conservative	Moderate outliers	Extreme outliers
People should be informed and have an opinion about key local and national issues	76	77	79	76	78	81	80	80	74	81	85	70	83	65	79
There should be more progress on important issues and fewer 'culture wars'	73	75	71	75	76	76	78	74	71	84	82	68	78	59	82
People should be free to express their views, whatever those views are	73	74	75	75	74	77	78	67	80	80	75	71	83	59	76
People should be informed and have an opinion about key international issues and events	69	68	69	73	72	75	72	75	73	75	78	63	75	59	81
People should consider the feelings of others before talking about their views on issues	60	60	61	59	63	67	60	65	44	66	67	55	57	59	78
People should be active in expressing their views on key local and national issues, e.g. through discussion, forums, petitions, meetings, protests	54	53	53	58	57	59	54	63	57	51	63	44	59	48	78
People should be active in expressing their views on key international issues and events, e.g. through discussion, forums, petitions, meetings, protests	49	49	50	53	51	55	48	61	53	47	57	40	51	51	70
The Australian media does a good job of presenting different sides of the debate about key issues and events	31	34	33	35	28	37	34	31	19	25	24	25	27	55	64

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Israel-Hamas conflict frequently cited as an international issue that is polarising and disruptive

Close to seven in 10 Australian (69%) 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agree that people should be informed and have an opinion about key international issues and events.

This proportion drops to 49% when it comes to agreeing ('strongly' or 'somewhat') that people should be active in expressing their views on key international issues and events. The negative impact the playing out of international disputes in Australia is having on Australians' lives can, at least partly, explain this drop.

The Israel-Hamas conflict is cited frequently as an example of an international issue that is negatively impacting both individuals and communities in Australia.

- The Israel-Hamas conflict is said to create tensions and distance between family members and / or friends who hold different perspectives on the conflict.
- Some consider the pro-Palestinian protests and the setting up of encampments on university campuses across Australia to be disruptive. While they support people's right to freedom of speech, they feel this right should not trump what they view as the right to sit an exam in an environment that is free of background noise.

Furthermore, less than a third of Australians (31%) 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agree that the Australian media does a good job of presenting different sides of the debate about key issues and events.

"The Israel[-Hamas conflict], they're doing protests in university. I can see them coming to the library and then set up tents on campus, which is just not that right. Everyone should have the freedom of speech, but ... I don't mind silence for testing."
(CALD, Chinese)

"I work on a union-based construction site ... and they [pro-Palestinian protesters] actually put up a pro-Palestinian flag at the top of the crane as, I guess, the union stance. To me, that's like passively aggressively crossing a line because I don't think they should force corporations into taking a stance, especially in such a public space, because it's right in the middle of the city, so, you know, everyone could see it. So, that didn't sit well with me." (CALD Chinese)

"Palestine versus Israel ... that actually has had much more of an impact on people I know than I ever thought it would. I saw extended family on the weekend and that side of the family are descendants of Auschwitz survivors ... I made some comment about the Middle East, and they launched into this really extreme anti-Palestine view, which shocked me."
(Left-wing voters)

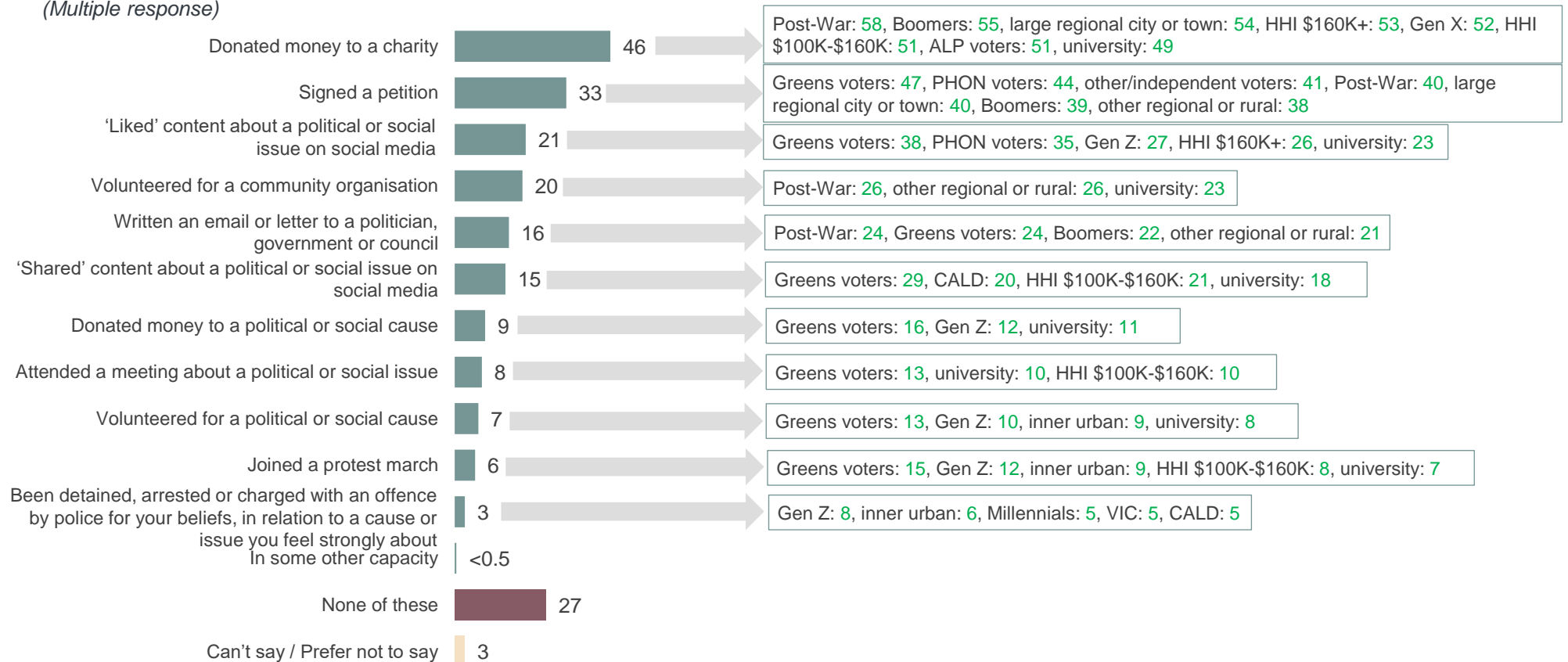




Australians most likely to take action in the form of donations and signing petitions; Greens voters are most active

Done in the last five years (%)

(Multiple response)



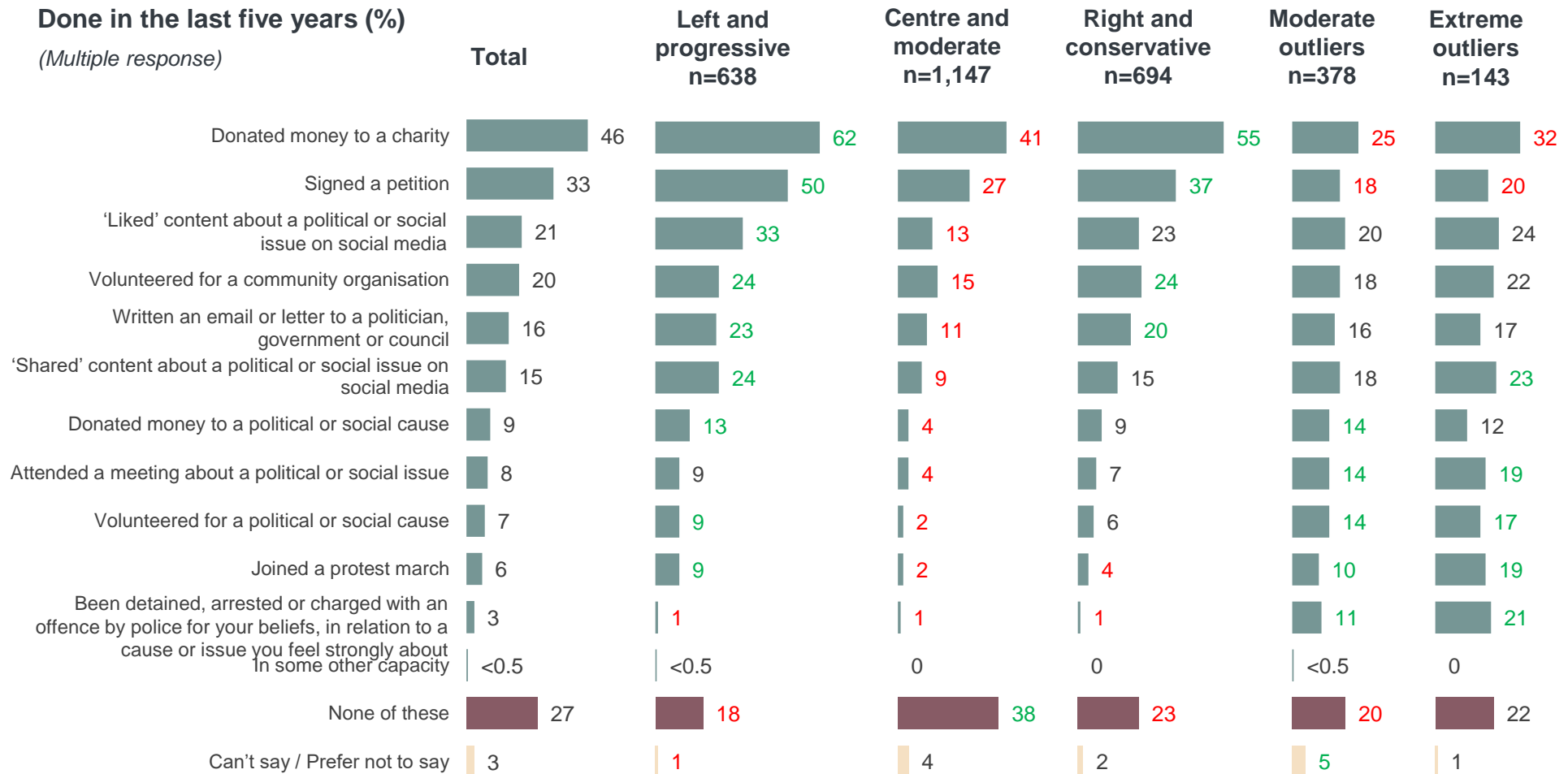
Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q23a. Have you done any of the following in the last five years? Please select all that apply.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Self-declared ‘Left progressives’ and ‘Right conservatives’ significantly more likely than average to take action



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

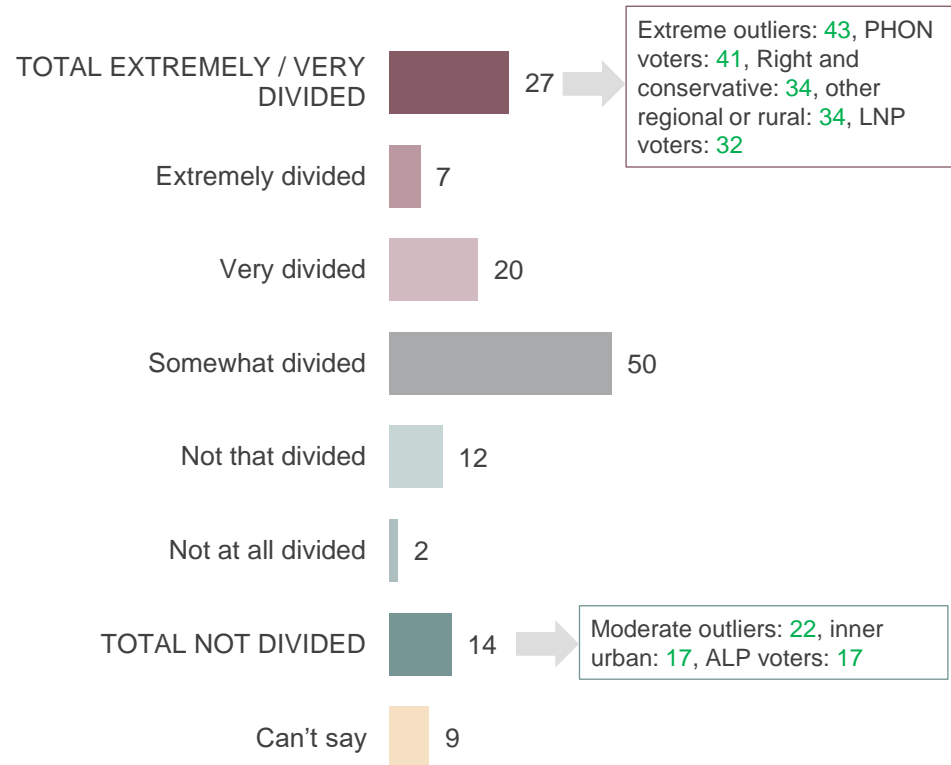
Q23a. Have you done any of the following in the last five years? Please select all that apply.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).

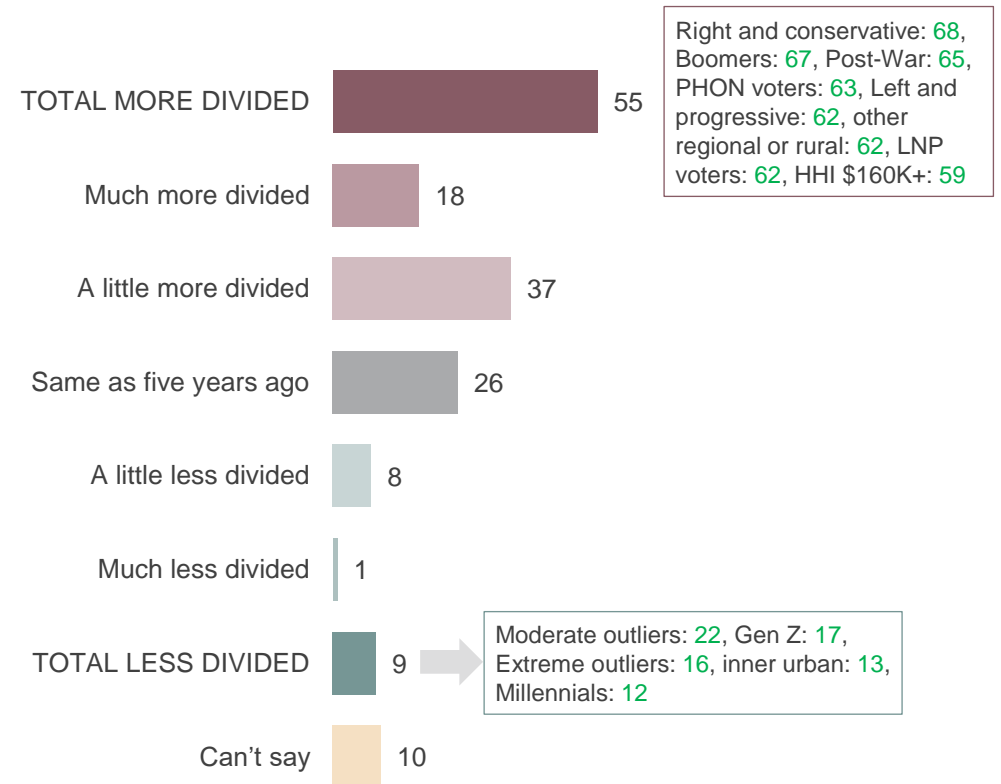


More than half of Australians believe the nation is more divided than five years ago

How divided Australians are on key political, economic and social issues (%)



How divided Australians today are compared with five years ago (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

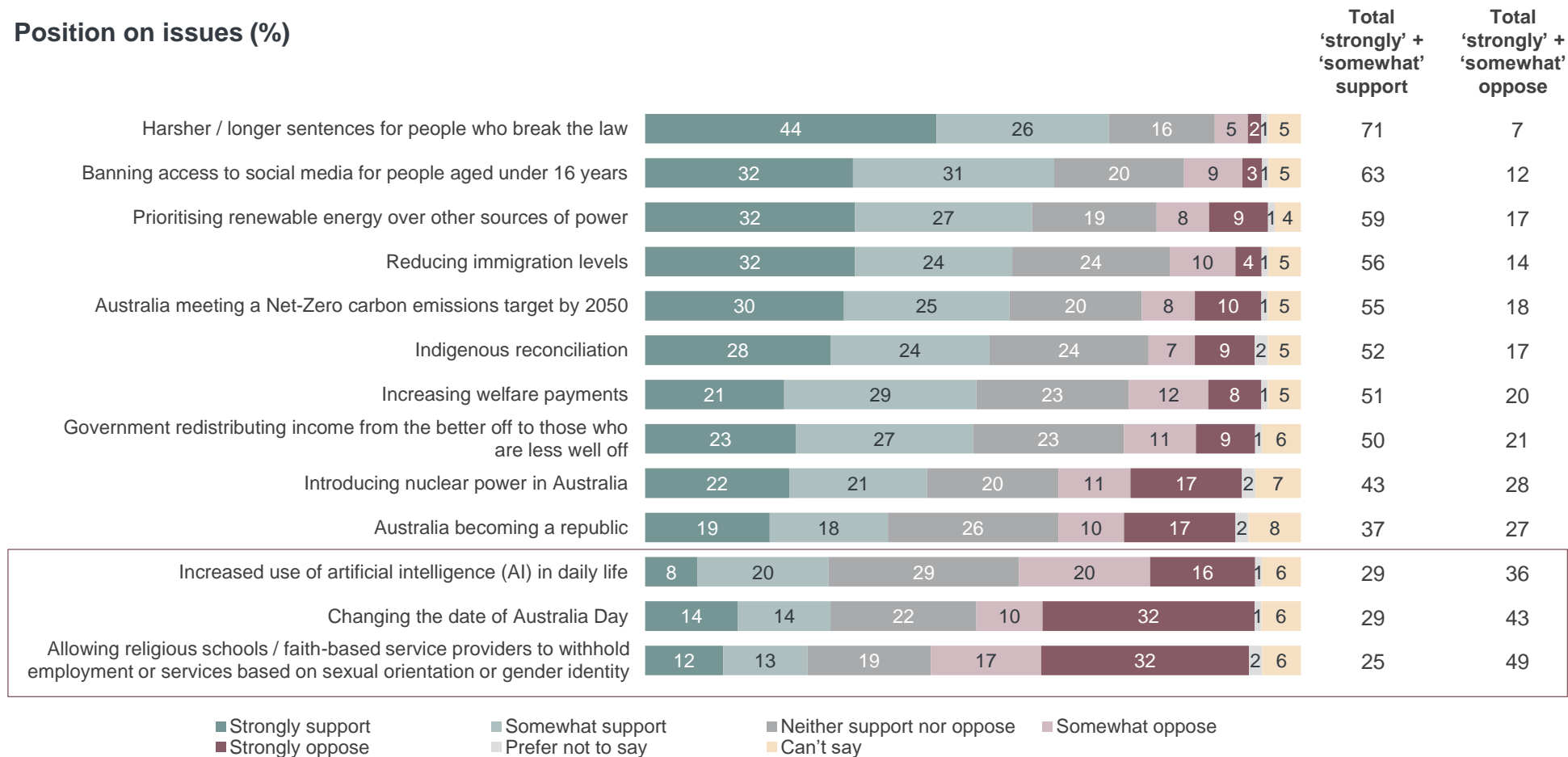
Q24. Overall, how divided do you think Australians are on key political, economic and social issues? / Q25. Compared with five years ago, do you think Australians today are more divided, less divided, or about the same as before?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Strong support for harsher sentencing, social media bans for under 16's and prioritisation of renewable energy

Position on issues (%)



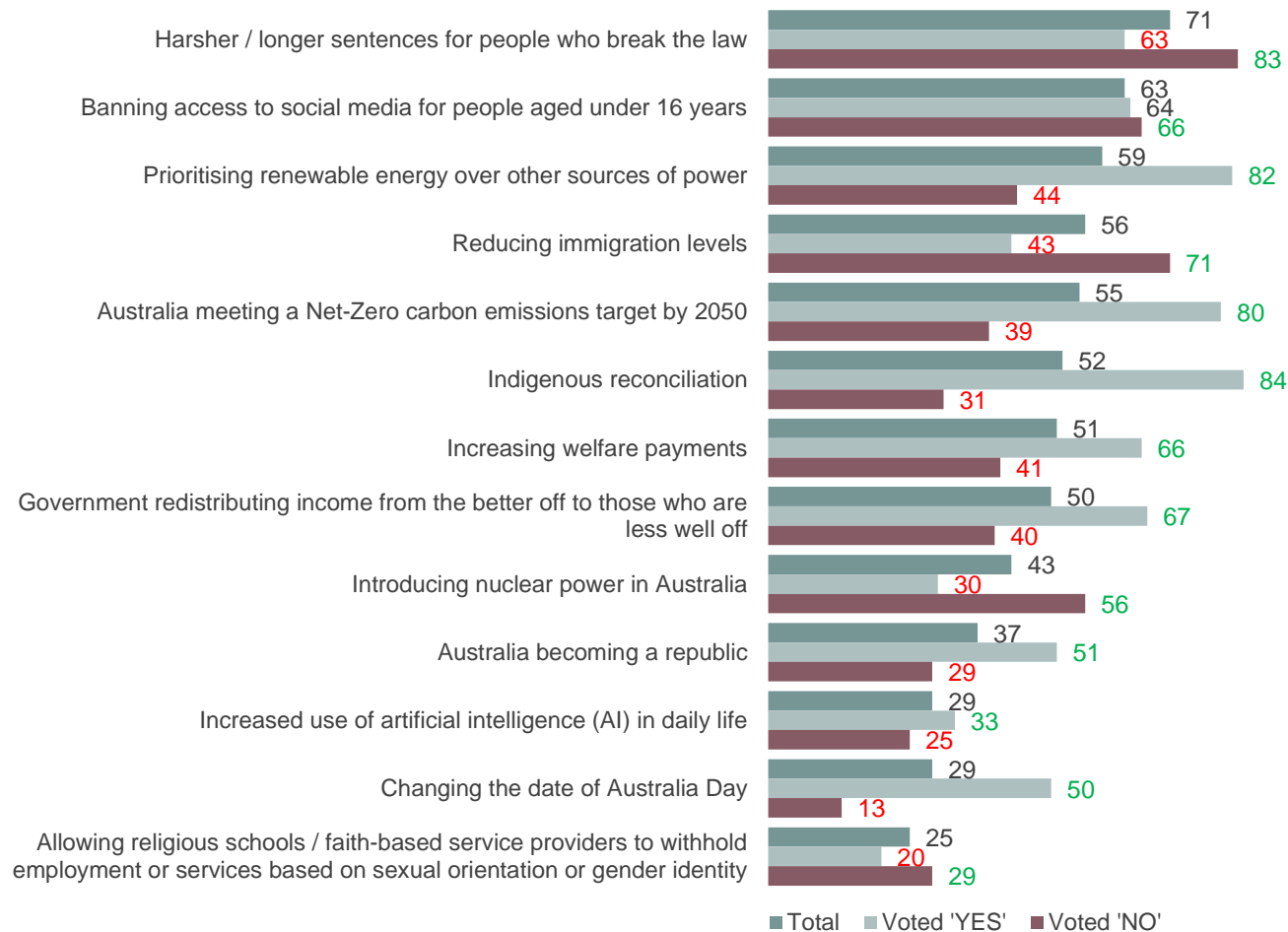
Q29. Which of the following best describes your position on the following issues?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



‘No’ voters in last year’s referendum support harsher sentencing, reducing immigration, and nuclear power

Position on issues (% ‘strongly’ + ‘somewhat’ support)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

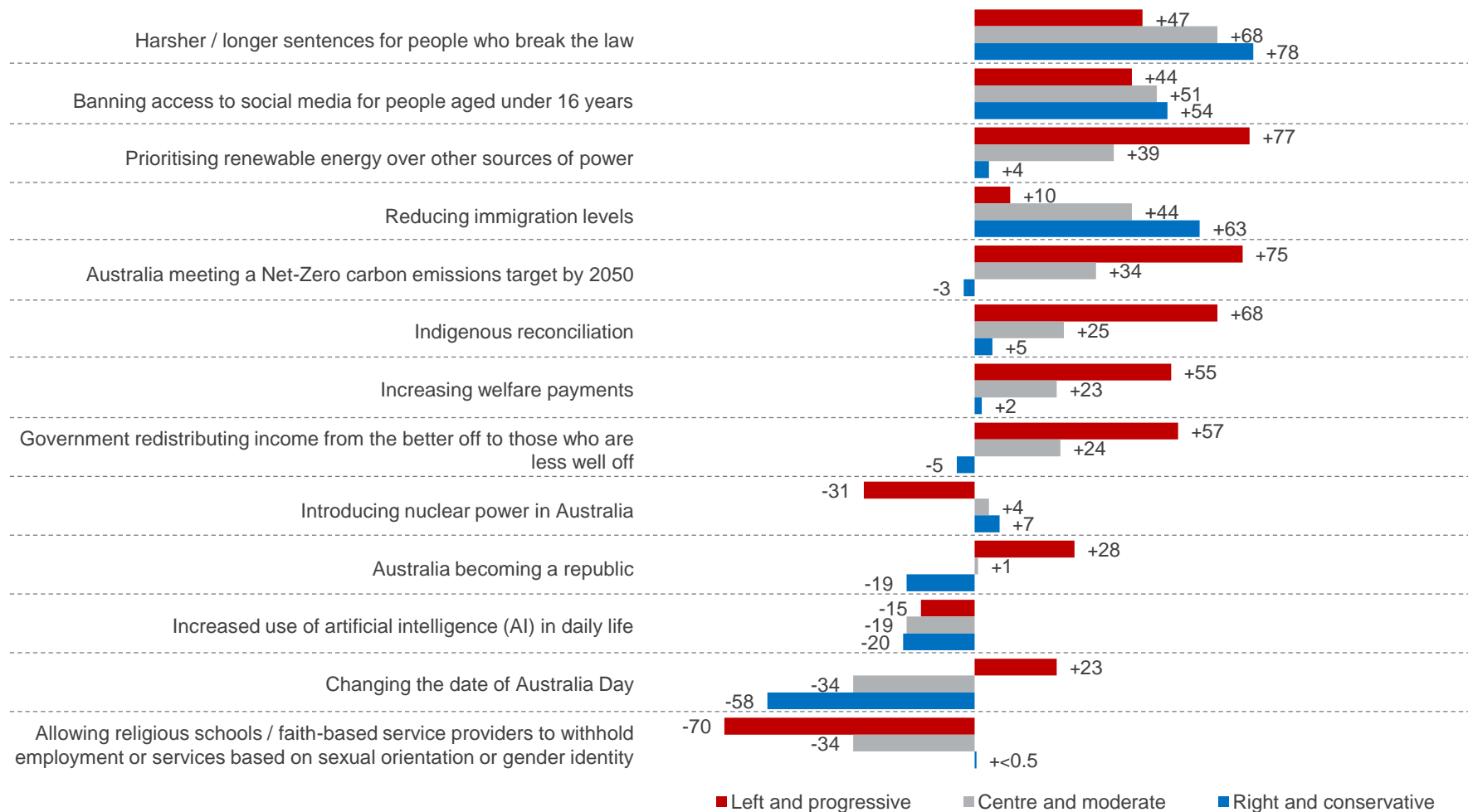
Q29. Which of the following best describes your position on the following issues?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000); voted 'YES' in referendum (n=1,072); voted 'NO' in referendum (n=1,378).

Self-declared 'Right', 'Centre' and 'Left' Australians are largely in agreement on harsher sentencing, social media bans and AI



Position on issues (net support - oppose)



Q29. Which of the following best describes your position on the following issues?

Base: Left and progressive (n=638); Centre and moderate (n=1,147); Right and conservative (n=694).

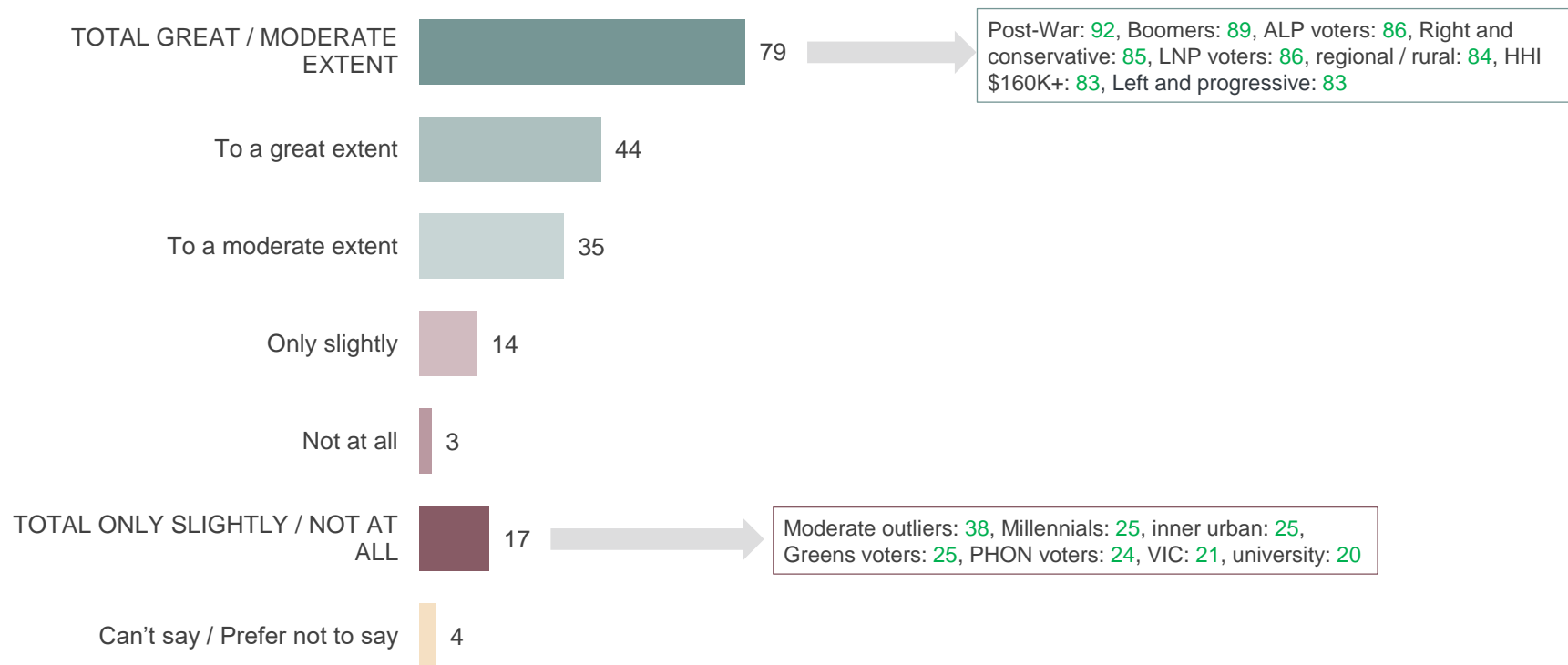
Social cohesion





The majority of Australians feel a sense of belonging

Sense of belonging in Australia (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q32a. Overall, how divided do you think Australians are on key political, economic and social issues?

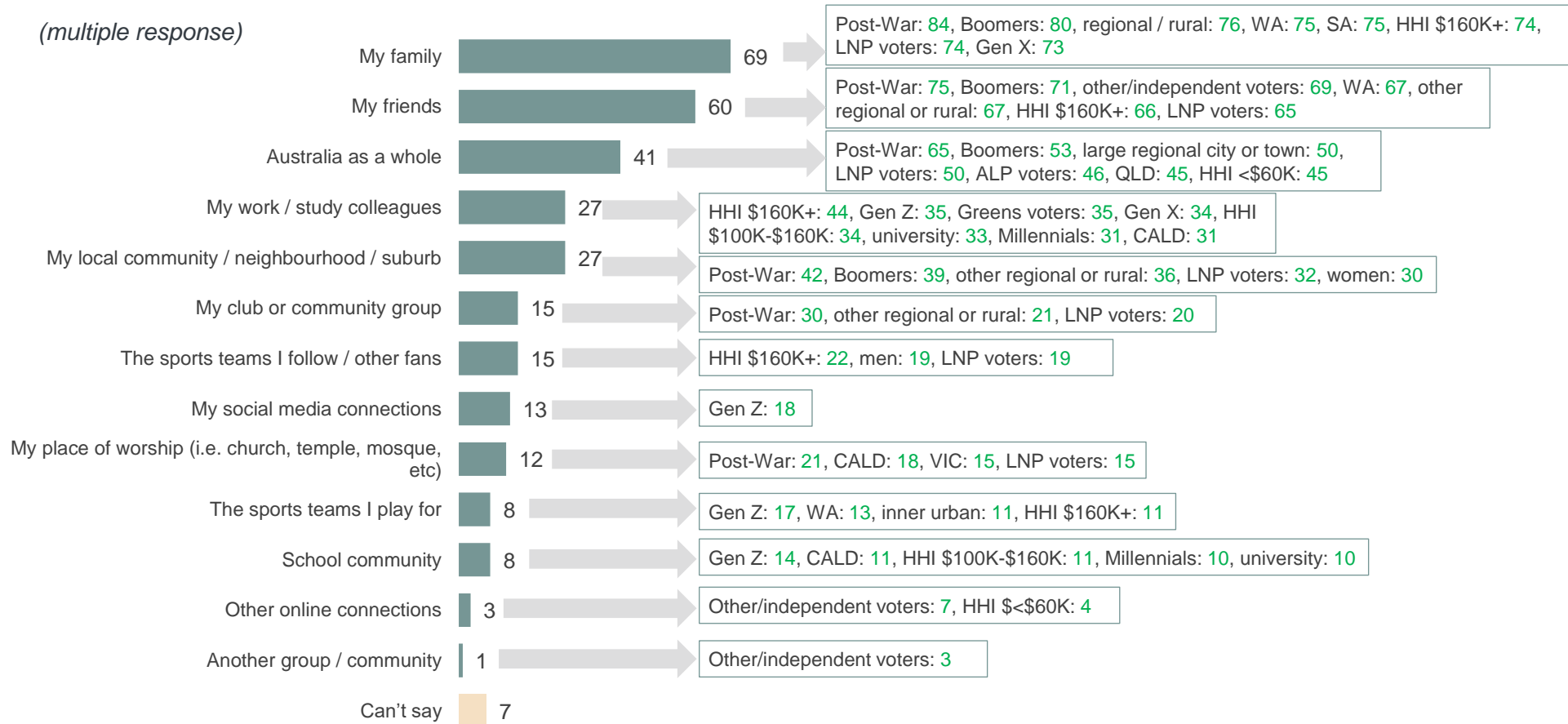
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Australians feel the greatest sense of belonging among family and friends

Groups / communities where strongest sense of belonging felt (%)

(multiple response)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

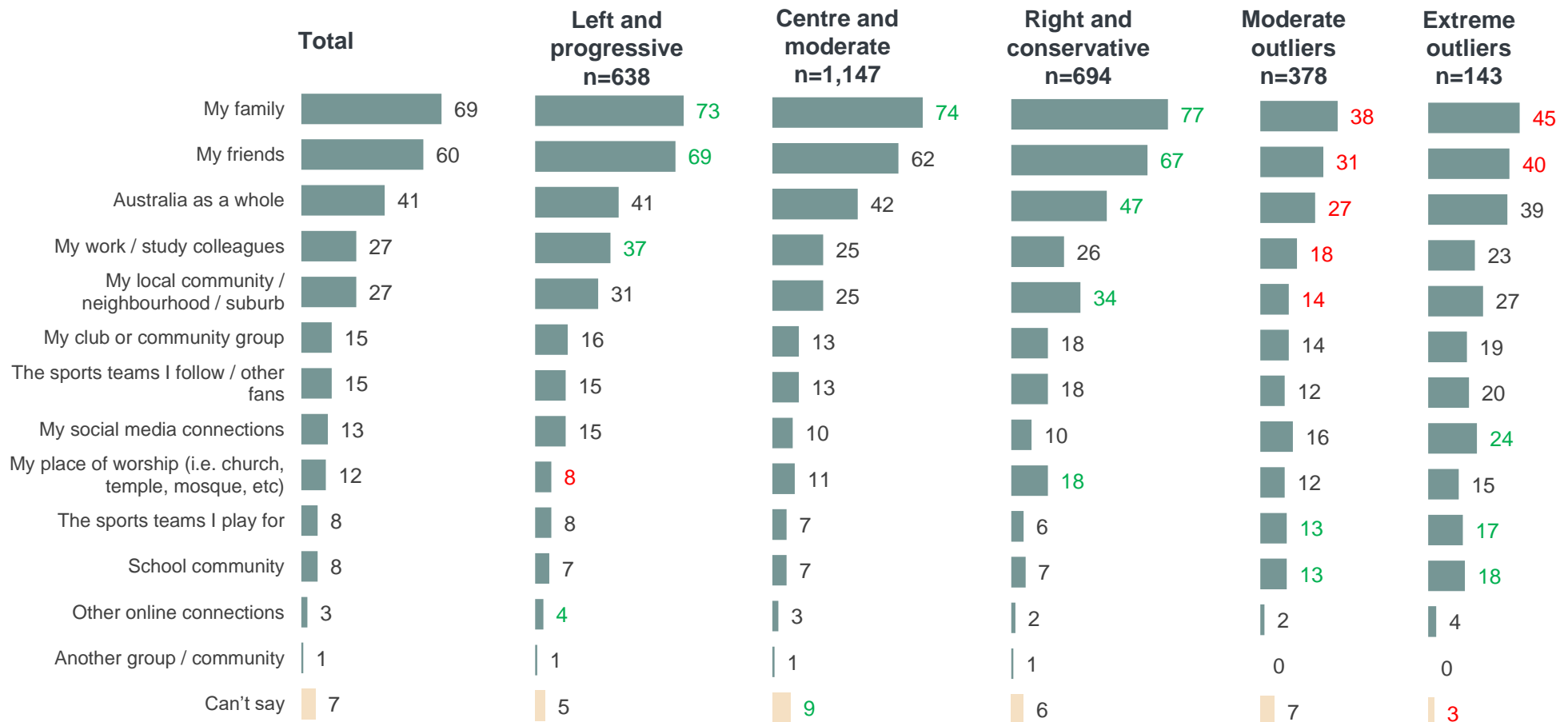
Q32b. From the list below, select the groups / communities where you feel a strong sense of belonging? Please select all that apply

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



‘Outliers’ are significantly less likely than average to feel a strong sense of belonging with family and friends

Groups / communities where strongest sense of belonging felt (%) (multiple response)



Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q32b. From the list below, select the groups / communities where you feel a strong sense of belonging? Please select all that apply

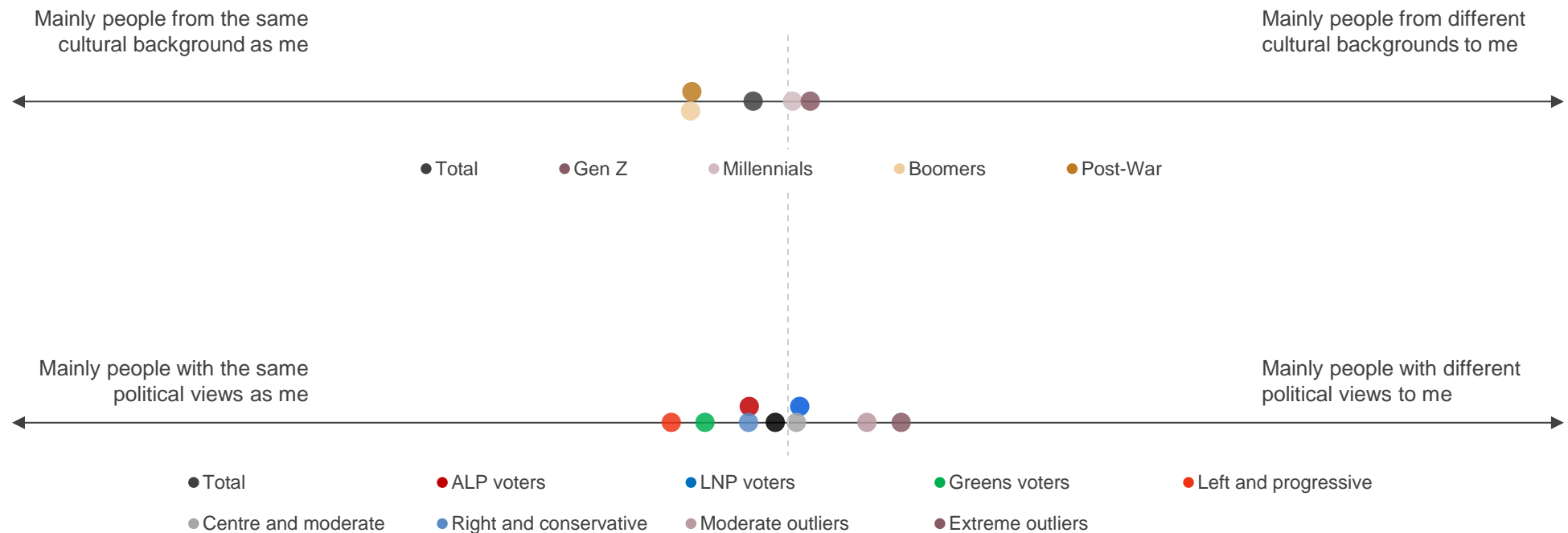
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Gen Z and Millennials socialise more with people with the same political and religious views, less from same culture

Description of friends and social circle*

(mean score, sliding scale)



*Results shown are significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

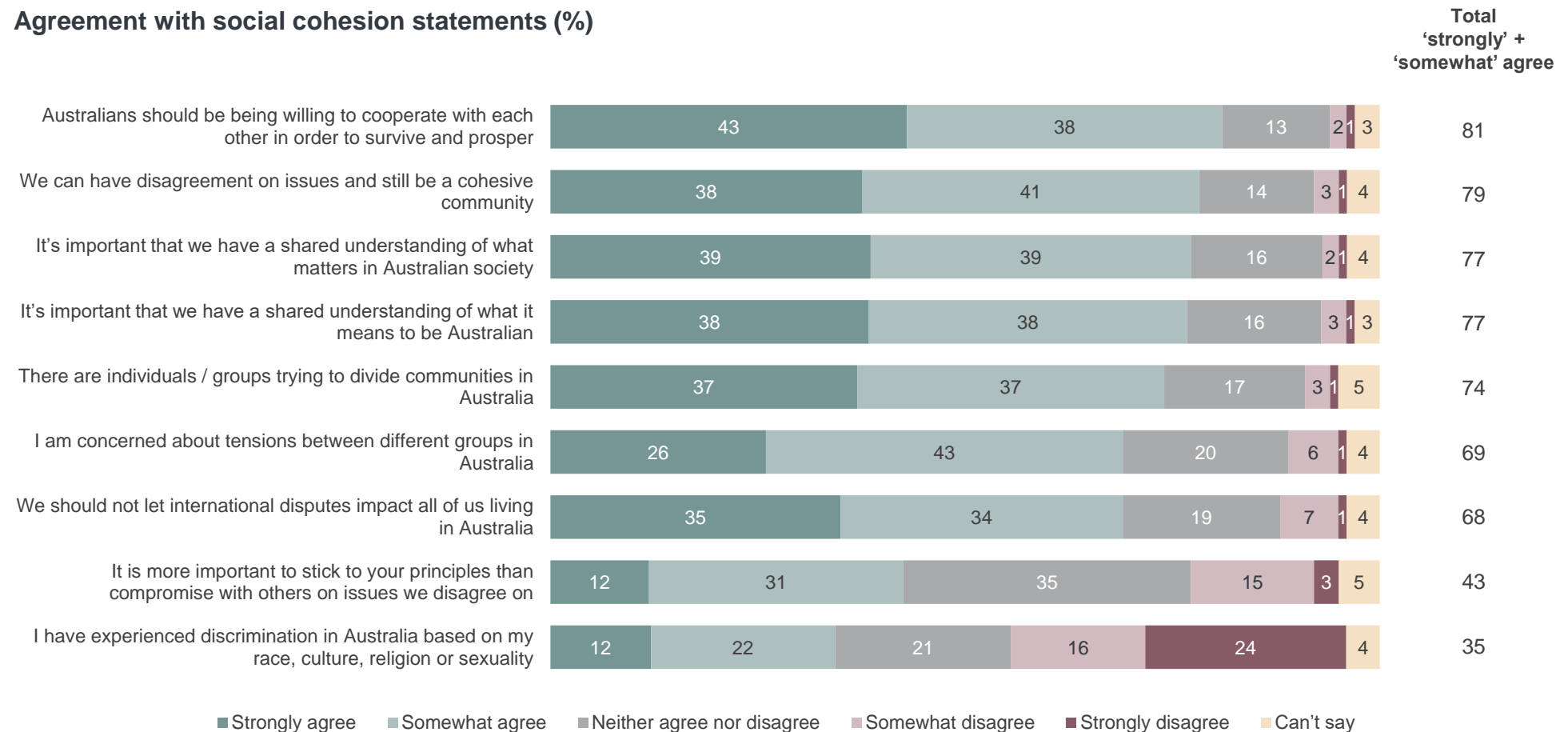
Q33. How would you describe your friends and social circle? Use the slider to indicate where your social group sits for each of the following. It's okay if you're not sure, we are just after your impressions.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Australians agree we should cooperate; few believe it is more important to stick to principles than compromise

Agreement with social cohesion statements (%)



Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

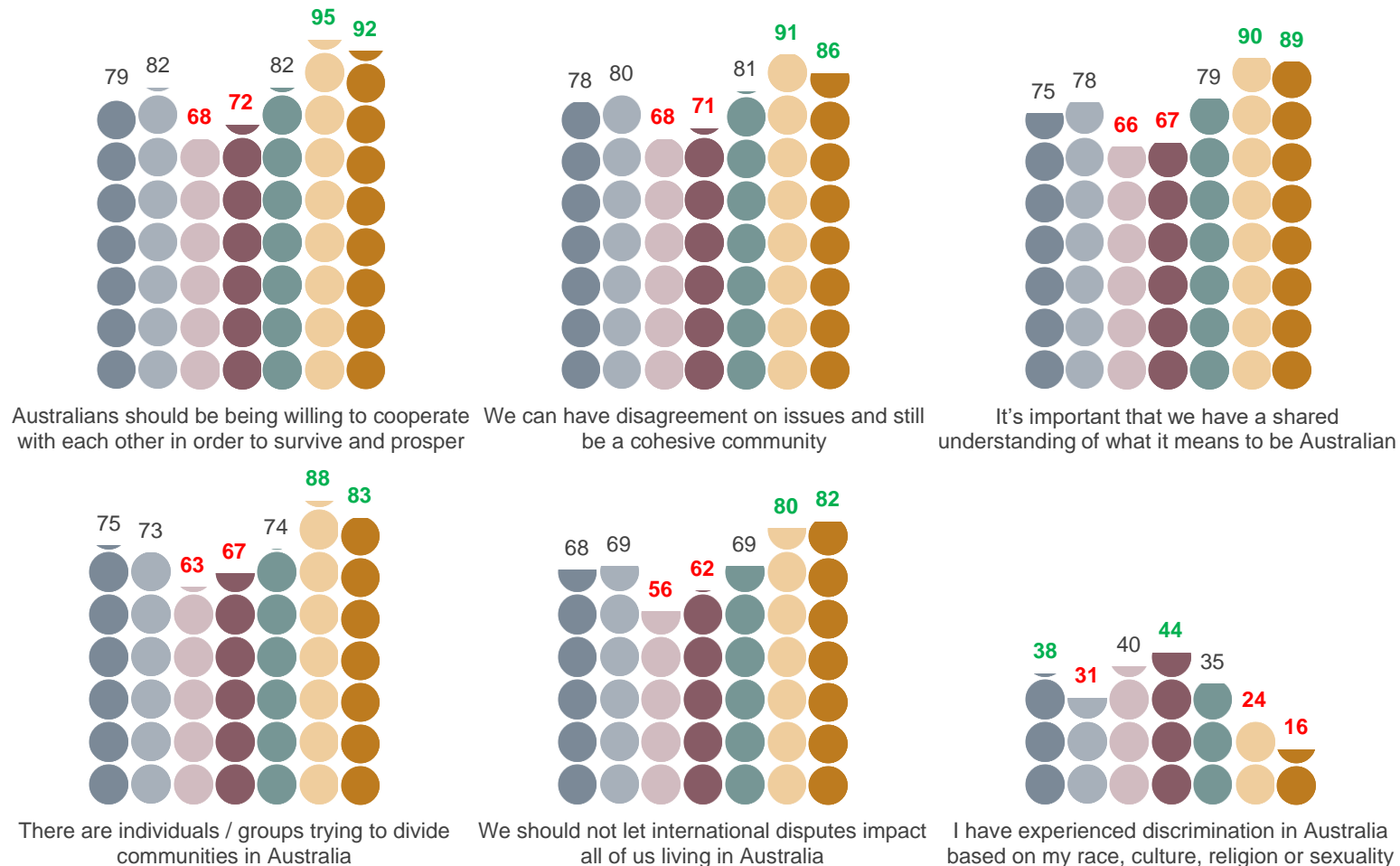
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Boomers and Post-War far more so than Gen Z and Millennials have higher ideals on social cohesion

Agreement with social cohesion statements – by demographics (% total 'strongly' + 'somewhat' agree)

● Men ● Women ● Gen Z ● Millennials ● Gen X ● Boomers ● Post-War



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Gen Z and Millennials differ significantly with Boomers and Post-War in their attitudes towards social cohesion

Agreement with social cohesion statements – by demographics (% total 'strongly' + 'somewhat' agree)

	Total	Men	Women	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Post-War	Inner urban	Middle to outer urban	Urban fringe	Large regional city or town	Other regional or rural	Marginal seat	University	CALD
Australians should be being willing to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper	81	79	82	68	72	82	95	92	74	81	79	87	86	82	81	74
We can have disagreement on issues and still be a cohesive community	79	78	80	68	71	81	91	86	71	79	79	84	85	81	79	72
It's important that we have a shared understanding of what matters in Australian society	77	76	79	63	68	79	93	90	71	78	77	84	79	79	76	72
It's important that we have a shared understanding of what it means to be Australian	77	75	78	66	67	79	90	89	71	76	78	82	80	79	75	73
There are individuals / groups trying to divide communities in Australia	74	75	73	63	67	74	88	83	66	74	76	79	82	75	74	66
I am concerned about tensions between different groups in Australia	69	68	69	58	62	68	83	80	64	67	68	77	72	72	69	62
We should not let international disputes impact all of us living in Australia	68	68	69	56	62	69	80	82	63	70	70	72	70	72	67	64
It is more important to stick to your principles than compromise with others on issues we disagree on	43	44	42	44	43	37	44	51	46	44	38	39	38	42	43	45
I have experienced discrimination in Australia based on my race, culture, religion or sexuality	35	38	31	40	44	35	24	16	43	33	33	31	28	35	41	49

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



‘Left progressives’ and ‘Right conservatives’ agree Australians should be willing to cooperate with each other

Agreement with social cohesion statements – by demographics (% total ‘strongly’ + ‘somewhat’ agree)

	Total	HHI <\$60K	HHI \$60K- \$100K	HHI \$100K- \$160K	HHI \$160K+	ALP voters	LNP voters	Greens voters	PHON voters	Other/ind. voters	Left and progressive	Centre and moderate	Right and conservative	Moderate outliers	Extreme outliers
Australians should be being willing to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper	81	83	79	80	85	85	84	79	80	91	92	79	86	56	76
We can have disagreement on issues and still be a cohesive community	79	79	78	80	83	84	82	78	80	86	90	76	84	56	82
It’s important that we have a shared understanding of what matters in Australian society	77	79	77	78	80	81	84	76	81	81	83	76	86	56	80
It’s important that we have a shared understanding of what it means to be Australian	77	80	77	77	78	79	84	72	82	72	78	74	87	60	83
There are individuals / groups trying to divide communities in Australia	74	76	71	75	80	75	83	74	80	78	82	69	82	58	82
I am concerned about tensions between different groups in Australia	69	71	69	68	71	71	75	67	73	75	73	64	77	55	81
We should not let international disputes impact all of us living in Australia	68	71	72	68	67	68	78	59	77	71	63	68	79	57	78
It is more important to stick to your principles than compromise with others on issues we disagree on	43	43	44	45	43	43	50	40	51	38	33	36	51	50	75
I have experienced discrimination in Australia based on my race, culture, religion or sexuality	35	31	33	38	41	36	32	42	41	32	35	28	31	48	69

Significantly *higher* / *lower* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q35. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

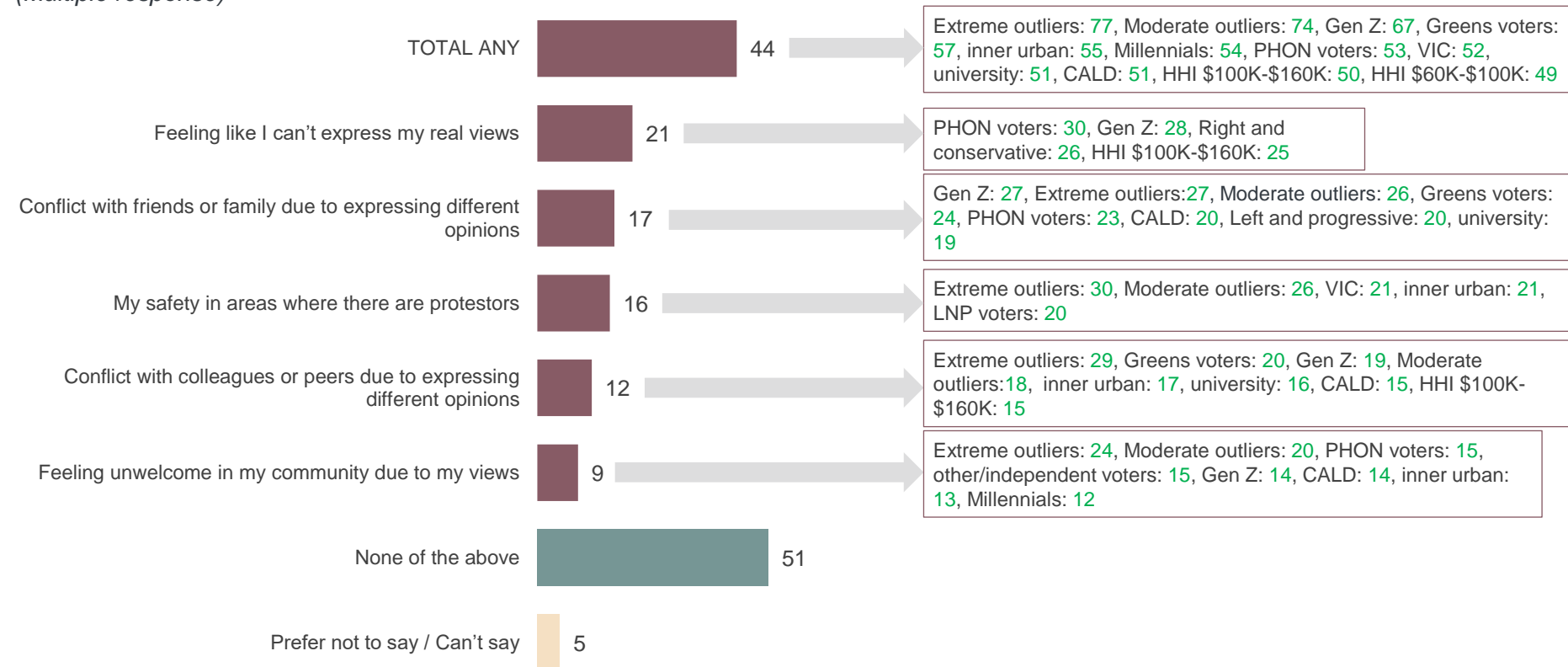
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



One in five Australians feel like they have not been able to express their real views over the last five years

Experienced or been concerned about in the last five years (%)

(Multiple response)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

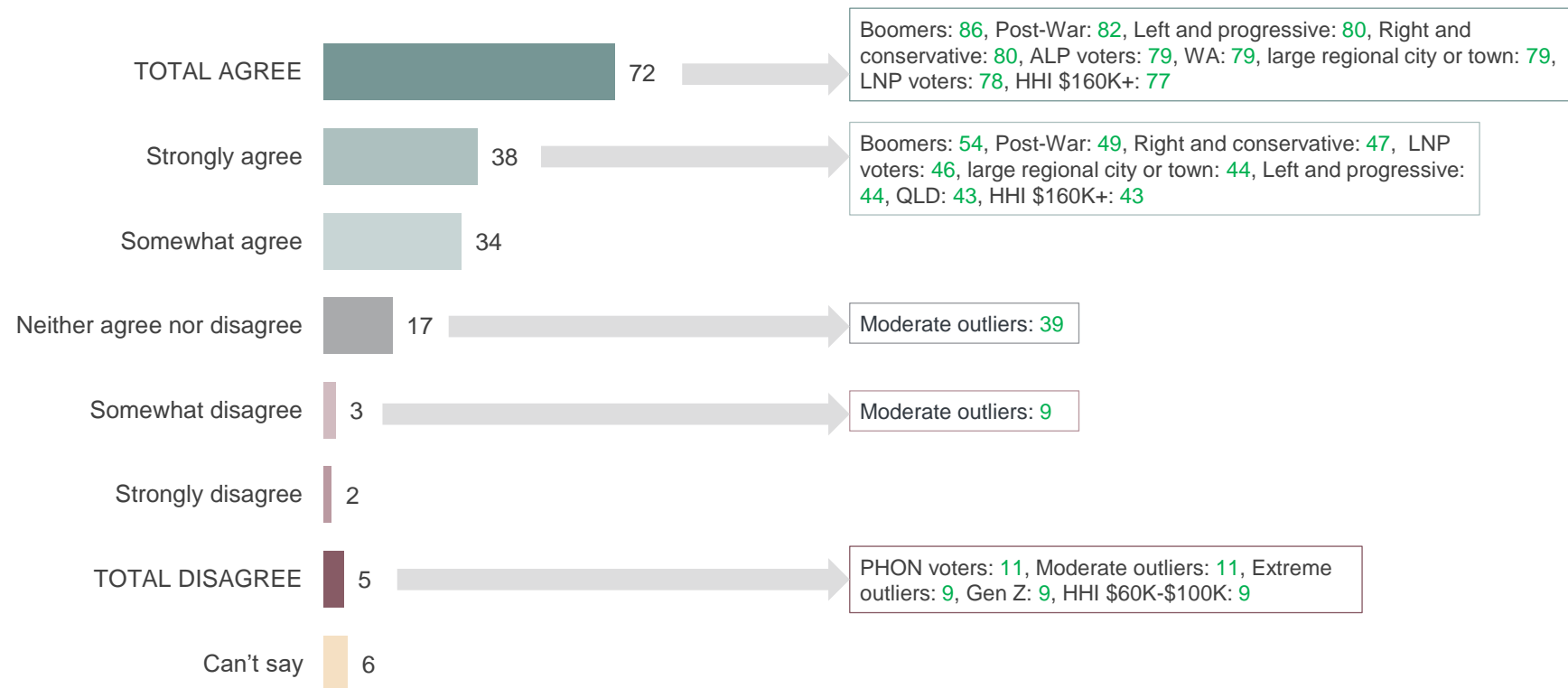
Q38. Which of the following have you experienced or been concerned about in the last five years? Please select all that apply

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Strong agreement among Australians that the Government needs to take action on extreme views and intolerance

Agreement that the Government should take further action to address extreme views and intolerance in our community (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q41. Do you agree or disagree that the Government should take further action to address extreme views and intolerance in our community?

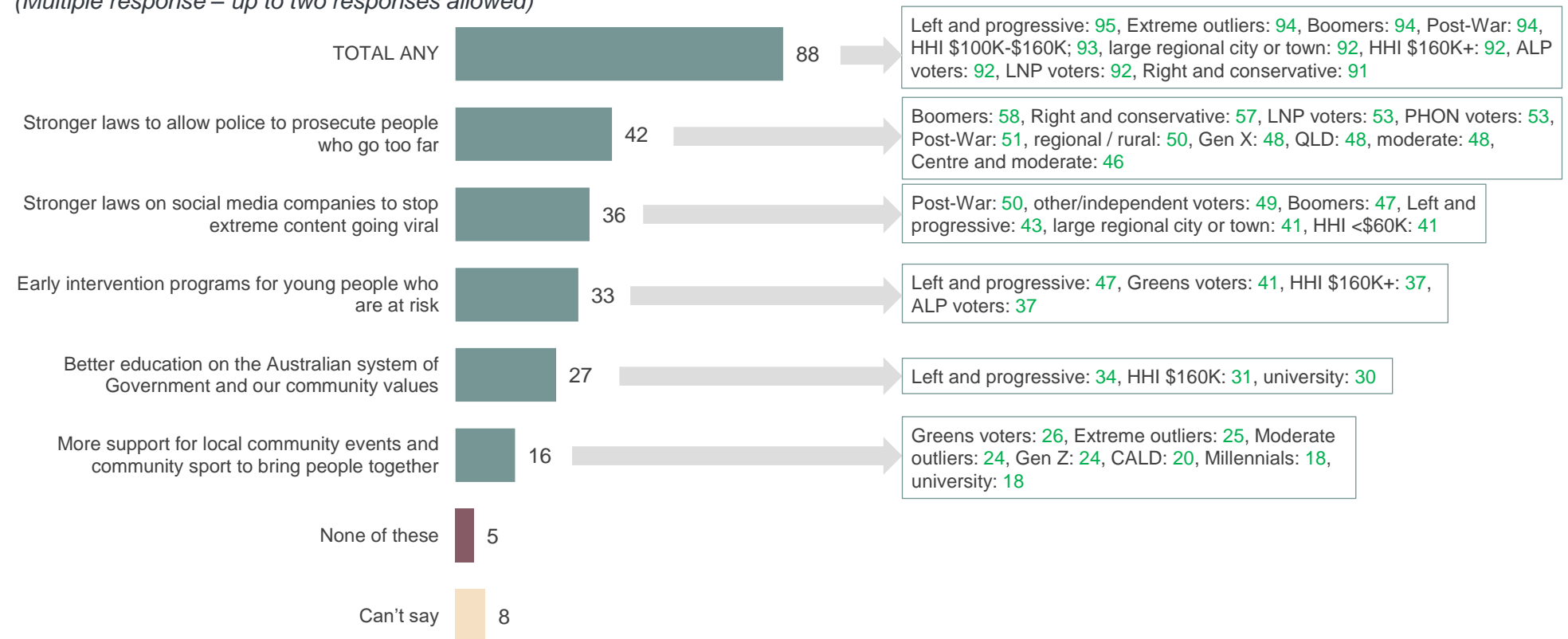
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



More people believe stronger laws rather than intervention and education will be effective on intolerance

Actions most effective to address extreme views or intolerance in our community (%)

(Multiple response – up to two responses allowed)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q42. Which of these actions do you think would be **most** effective to address extreme views or intolerance in our community? Please select up to **two**.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Australians want more resources to go towards improving accountability and community safety online and in person

A majority of Australians (72%) 'strongly' or 'somewhat' agree that the Australian Government should take further action to address intolerant and extreme views in our community. The majority of Australians think that stronger laws are most effective in addressing extreme views. This includes 42% who want to see an increase in police powers to prosecute those who go too far, and 36% who desire stronger laws on social media platforms to stop extreme content going viral.

Australians cherish the right to freedom of speech. However, they are also concerned about what they perceive as an increase in extreme views and feel the Australian Government needs to be more proactive in addressing these.

While some people are unsure of what the best course of action might be, others offer several ways in which the Australian Government could tackle the issue. These include both online and offline strategies such as:

- enhancing regulation of social media platforms
 - It is believed that holding social media platforms accountable for the spread of extreme views can help create a safer and more respectful online space.
- increasing online surveillance of people with extreme ideologies
 - While some believe this could be an effective strategy, others highlight the need to balance it with respecting democratic values and human rights.
- increasing accountability in person through policing
 - Some would like to see the police be more proactive in preventing violence during demonstrations, protecting demonstrators, and maintaining order.
- increasing education on Australian values.
 - Australians believe that teaching Australian values at a grassroots level can improve social cohesion and help reduce the amount of polarising content spread through social media.

"I really think that as much as it'll be hated, the Government should do more. It's hard to say what they should do because there's never gonna be a right answer."
(CALD, other)

"I think it just comes down to social media and accountability ... Are they made accountable? Are the powers at be enforcing repercussions and accountability?"
(Left-wing voter)

"Everyone's got a right to freedom of speech in Australia and freedom to demonstrate but why the authorities were stupid enough to let the two [pro-Palestine and pro-Israel] demonstrations get near each other or why they weren't protected, I don't understand. That's a failure of bureaucracy."
(Left-wing voter)

"Grassroots programs are effective. Education plays a big part [in reducing extreme community views]. If you're educated, then you're able to tell the difference between right and wrong and have the ability to empathise with other people."
(CALD, other)

"I hope ASIO is onto these guys [violent protesters]. I hope someone's doing phone tapping and computer monitoring because a lot of innocent people are going to get hurt otherwise." (Left-wing voter)



Media

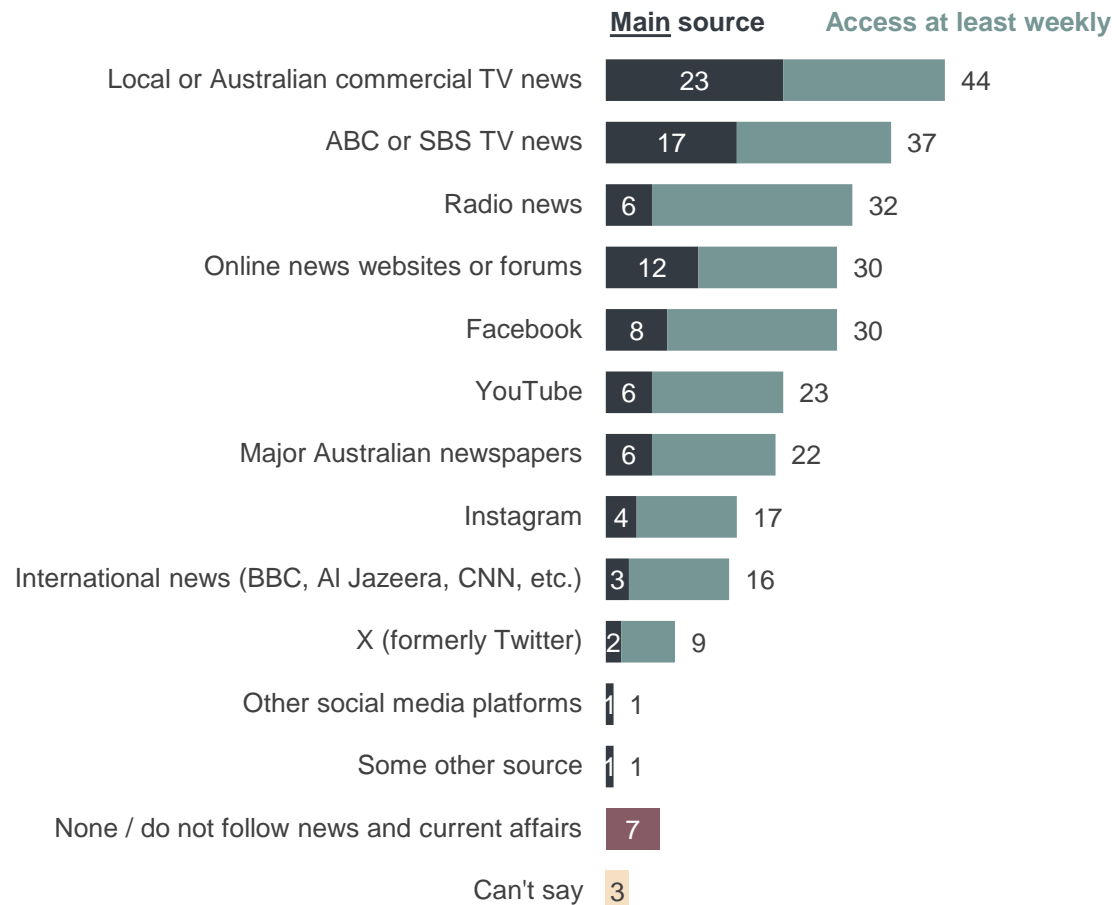




More than four in ten people access Australian commercial TV at least weekly to follow news and current affairs

Sources of news and current affairs (%)

(Multiple response)



Q31a. Thinking about different sources of news. Which, if any, of the following do you access at least weekly to follow news and current affairs? Please select all that apply.

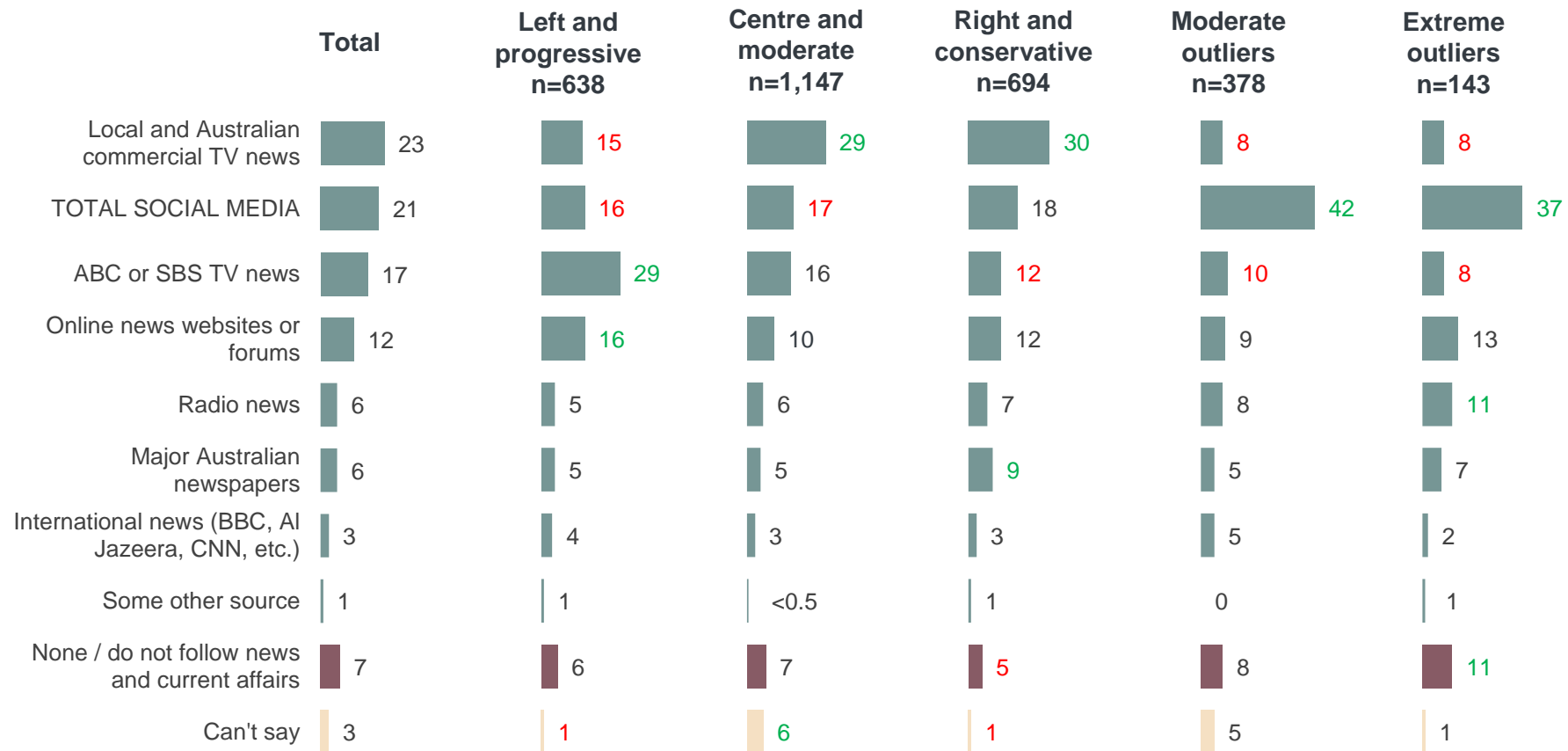
Q31b. And which is your main source of news and current affairs?

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Social media is significantly more likely to be the main source of news and current affairs for 'Outliers'

Main source of media across different profiles (%)



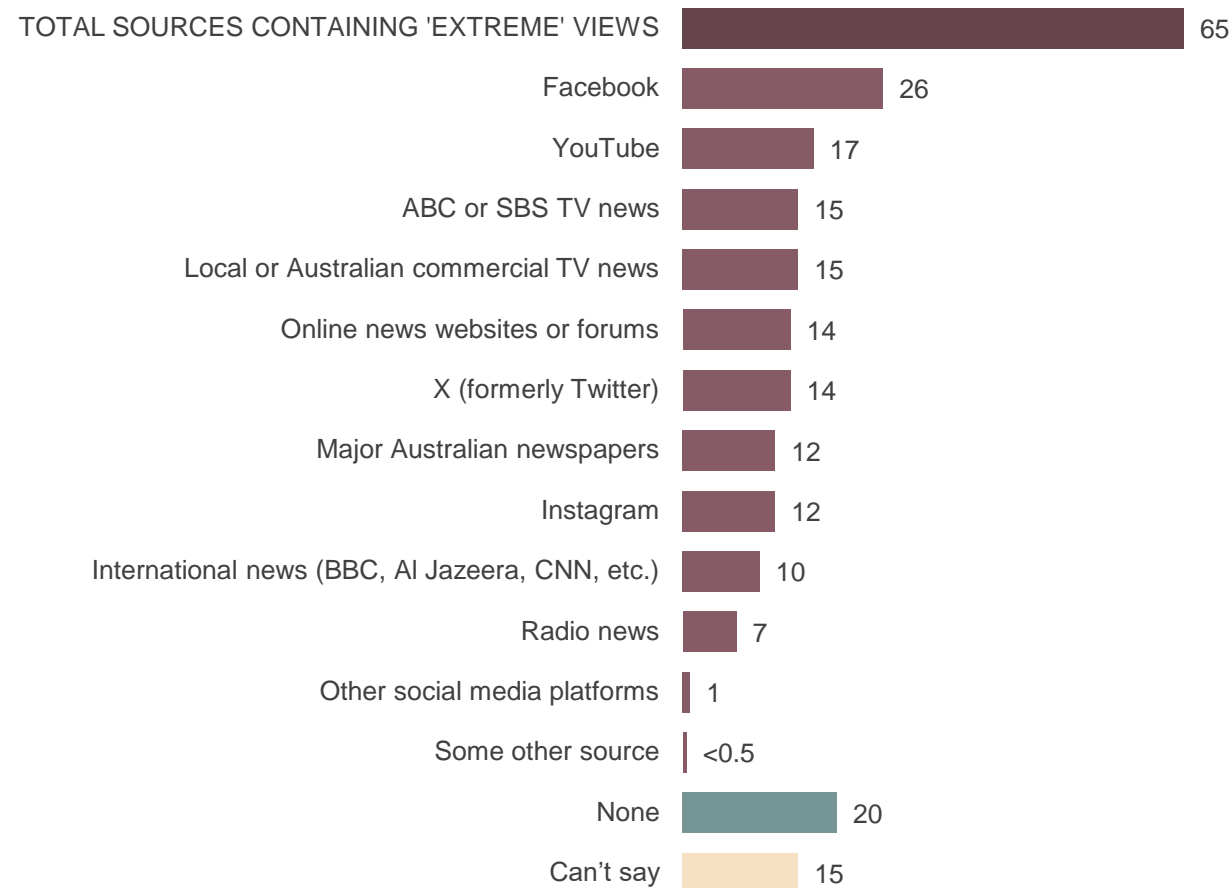
Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
Q31b. And which is your main source of news and current affairs?
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).



Two thirds of Australians have come across ‘extreme’ views in news stories, opinion pieces, or posts

Sources of news and current affairs containing ‘extreme’ views (%)

(Multiple response)

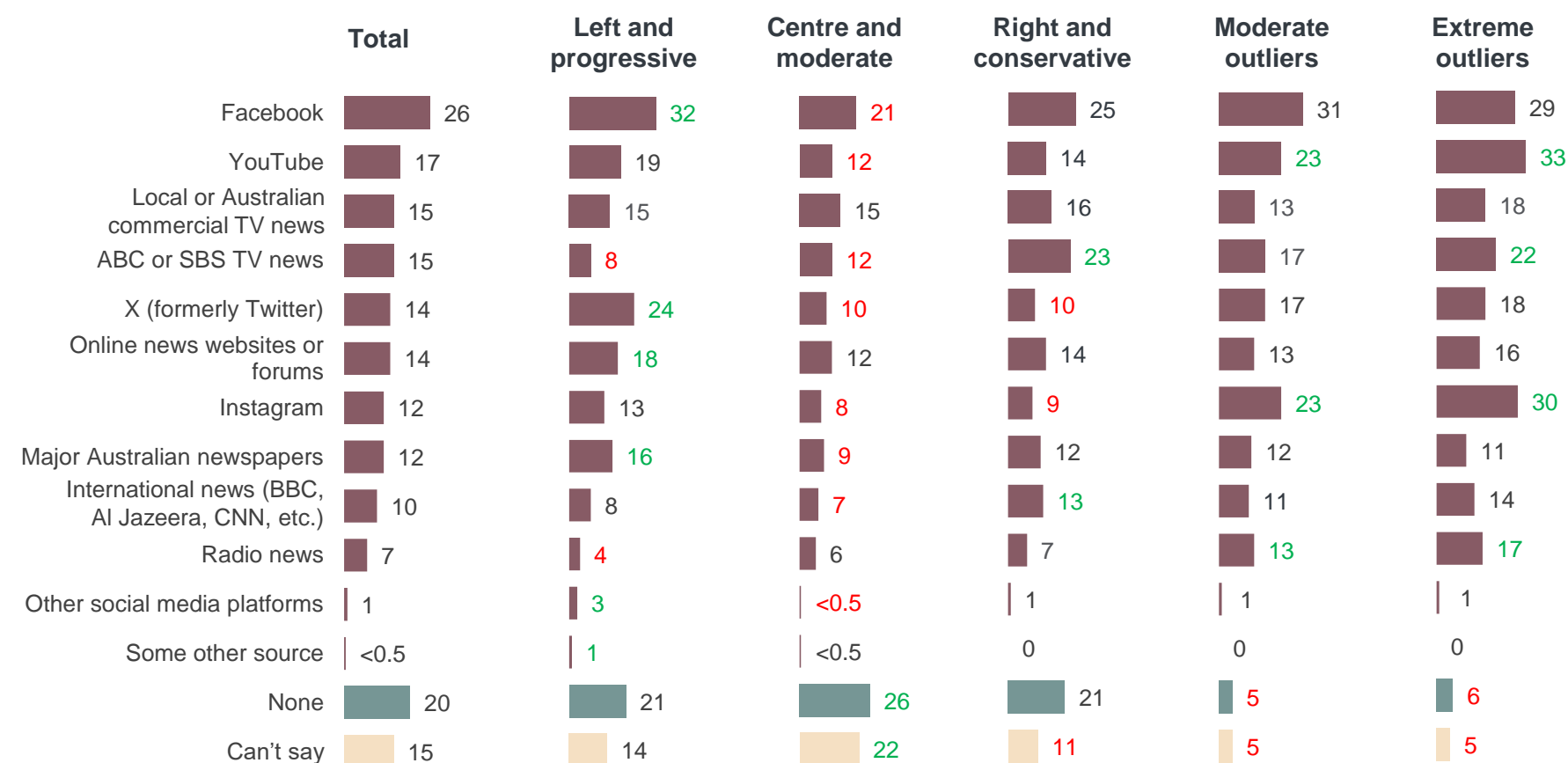


Q32. On which, if any, of the following have you personally come across news stories, opinion pieces, or posts containing views which you would call 'extreme'? Please select all that apply.
Base: Follow news (n=2,746).

‘Extreme outliers’ most likely to encounter extreme content on YouTube, Instagram, and ABC or SBS TV news



Sources of news and current affairs containing ‘extreme’ views (%) (Multiple response – among those that follow news)



Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

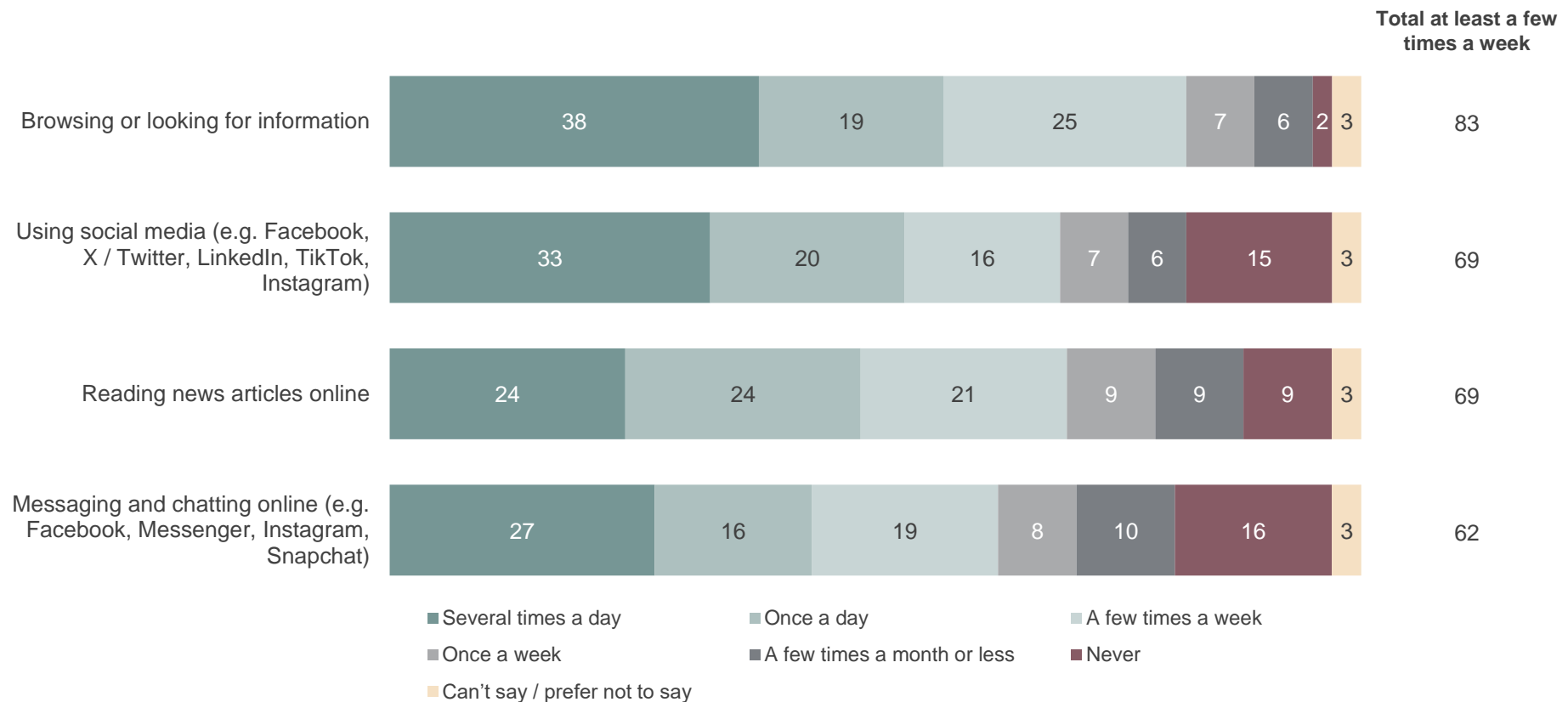
Q32. On which, if any, of the following have you personally come across news stories, opinion pieces, or posts containing views which you would call 'extreme'? Please select all that apply.

Base: Follow news (n=2,746).



More than half of Australians use the internet daily to browse or look for information, or to access social media

Frequency of internet activities undertaken (%)



Q32c. The next questions ask about your use of the internet. This includes work and personal use. Please indicate how often you undertake each of the following activities.
Base: All respondents (n=3,000).

‘Outliers’ mostly online and on social media at least a few times a week



‘Several times a day or more often’

	Total	Left and progressive	Centre and moderate	Right and conservative	Moderate outliers	Extreme outliers
Browsing or looking for information	38	53	38	40	13	25
Reading news articles online	24	32	23	25	10	23
Using social media	33	47	33	31	12	27
Messaging and chatting online	27	40	26	24	11	28

‘At least once a day (Daily)’

	Total	Left and progressive	Centre and moderate	Right and conservative	Moderate outliers	Extreme outliers
Browsing or looking for information	58	72	56	61	34	51
Reading news articles online	48	54	45	54	35	53
Using social media	53	65	53	52	33	57
Messaging and chatting online	43	55	40	41	31	55

‘At least a few times a week’

	Total	Left and progressive	Centre and moderate	Right and conservative	Moderate outliers	Extreme outliers
Browsing or looking for information	83	91	80	85	73	82
Reading news articles online	69	77	63	73	68	74
Using social media	69	78	65	64	68	77
Messaging and chatting online	62	71	58	58	67	73

‘Never’

	Total	Left and progressive	Centre and moderate	Right and conservative	Moderate outliers	Extreme outliers
Browsing or looking for information	2	1	2	2	1	2
Reading news articles online	9	6	12	9	5	6
Using social media	15	12	18	21	3	4
Messaging and chatting online	16	14	19	22	4	5

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q32c. The next questions ask about your use of the internet. This includes work and personal use. Please indicate how often you undertake each of the following activities.

Base: All respondents (n=3,000).

Appendix: Demographics



Demographics



Gender	%
Men	49
Women	51
Prefer to self-describe	<0.5
Prefer not to say	<0.5

Age	%
18-24 years / Gen Z	10
25-44 years / Millennials	36
40-59 years / Gen X	25
60-74 years / Boomers	20
75+ years / Post-War	9

Area	%
Inner urban	26
Middle to outer urban	33
Urban fringe	10
Large regional city or town	16
Other regional or rural	15

State / Territory	%
NSW	32
VIC	26
QLD	20
WA	10
SA	7
TAS / NT / ACT	5

Education	%
Post Graduate Degree	15
Graduate Diploma / Certificate	7
Bachelor Degree	29
Advanced Diploma / Diploma	11
TAFE / Technical Certificate	16
Completed High School	14
Part High School or Primary School	5
Prefer not to say / Can't say	2

Religion	%
Christianity	41
Islam	3
Hinduism	3
Buddhism	3
Judaism	1
Something else	2
Prefer not to say	5
No religion	42

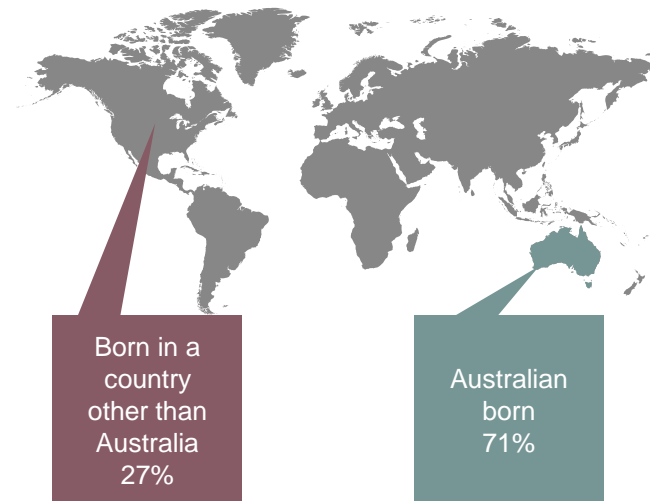
Household income p/a pre-tax	%
TOTAL <\$60,000	26
Less than \$20,000	3
\$20,000-\$39,999	11
\$40,000-\$59,999	11
TOTAL \$60,000-\$100,000	20
\$60,000-\$79,999	11
\$80,000-\$99,999	9
TOTAL \$100,000-\$160,000	21
\$100,000-\$119,999	9
\$120,000-\$139,999	6
\$140,000-\$159,999	6
TOTAL \$160,000+	21
\$160,000-\$179,999	4
\$180,000-\$199,999	5
\$200,000 or more	12
Prefer not to say / Can't say	13

Demographics (cont'd)

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD): 22%

Country of Birth

England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland	6%
India	3%
New Zealand	3%
Other Europe	2%
China	1%
Malaysia	1%
Hong Kong	1%
Germany	1%
Other Asia	1%
United States of America, Canada	1%
Philippines	1%
Vietnam	1%
Greece	1%
Italy	1%

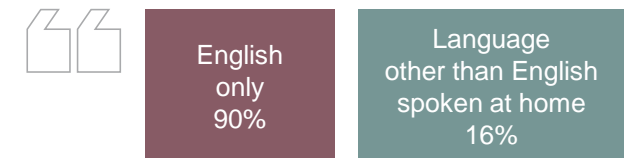


Other countries mentioned by less than 1% of respondents include South Africa, Sri Lanka, Middle East, Mexico, Central and South America, Pakistan, Other Pacific / Oceania, Nepal, Other Africa, Republic of Korea, and Iraq.

Note: this not an exhaustive list of countries mentioned.
2% prefer not say.

Languages

(multiple responses)



Mandarin	3%	Greek	1%
Cantonese	2%	Spanish	1%
Hindi	1%	Filipino/Tagalog	1%
Vietnamese	1%	Tamil	1%
Italian	1%	Urdu	1%

Other languages mentioned by less than 1% of respondents include Arabic, Punjabi, Korean, and Nepali.

Note: this not an exhaustive list of languages mentioned.

2% prefer not say.



Demographics (cont'd)

Enrolled to vote	%
Yes	94
No	5
Not sure	1

First preference vote*	%
LNP	39
ALP	35
Greens	12
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	7
Teal independent	2
Jacqui Lambie Network	1
Animal Justice Party	<0.5
United Australia Party (UAP)	<0.5
Liberal Democratic Party	<0.5
Katter's Australian Party (KAP)	<0.5
Centre Alliance	<0.5
Muslim independent	<0.5
Great Australian Party	<0.5
Western Australia Party	<0.5
Victorian Socialists	<0.5
Australian Federation Party	<0.5
Another party	1
Another independent	<0.5

How often feel...	Often %	Sometimes %	Rarely %	Never %	Can't say / Prefer not to say %
I often feel anxious and worried	15	33	32	17	3
I feel left out	9	31	35	23	3
I lack companionship	12	27	30	28	3
I feel isolated from others	10	29	33	25	3

Feel well and in good health	%
TOTAL YES	78
Yes, definitely	31
Yes, probably	47
Probably not	15
Definitely not	5
TOTAL NO	19

*Excluding 13% who are 'not sure' and 2% prefer not say.



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