



SEC Newgate "Mood of the Bush" Report Tasmania

June 2023

Introduction

Select regional results from SEC Newgate's Mood of the Nation tracking survey providing timely insights on community attitudes and priorities

1. Unprompted issues that are concerning regional Australians right now.
2. National mood via the emotions people have experienced in the last few weeks.
3. Regional priorities of importance.
4. The quality of life in regional Australia.
5. Support for regional development initiatives.
6. Attitudes to the renewable energy transition and other energy initiatives.
7. Water management for the Murray-Darling Basin.

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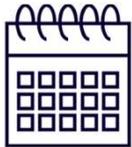


Research Methodology



Tracking survey

The 11th wave of this bi-monthly tracking study.



Fieldwork dates

23rd - 28th June 2023.



Online survey

Participants sourced from an ISO accredited market research panel.



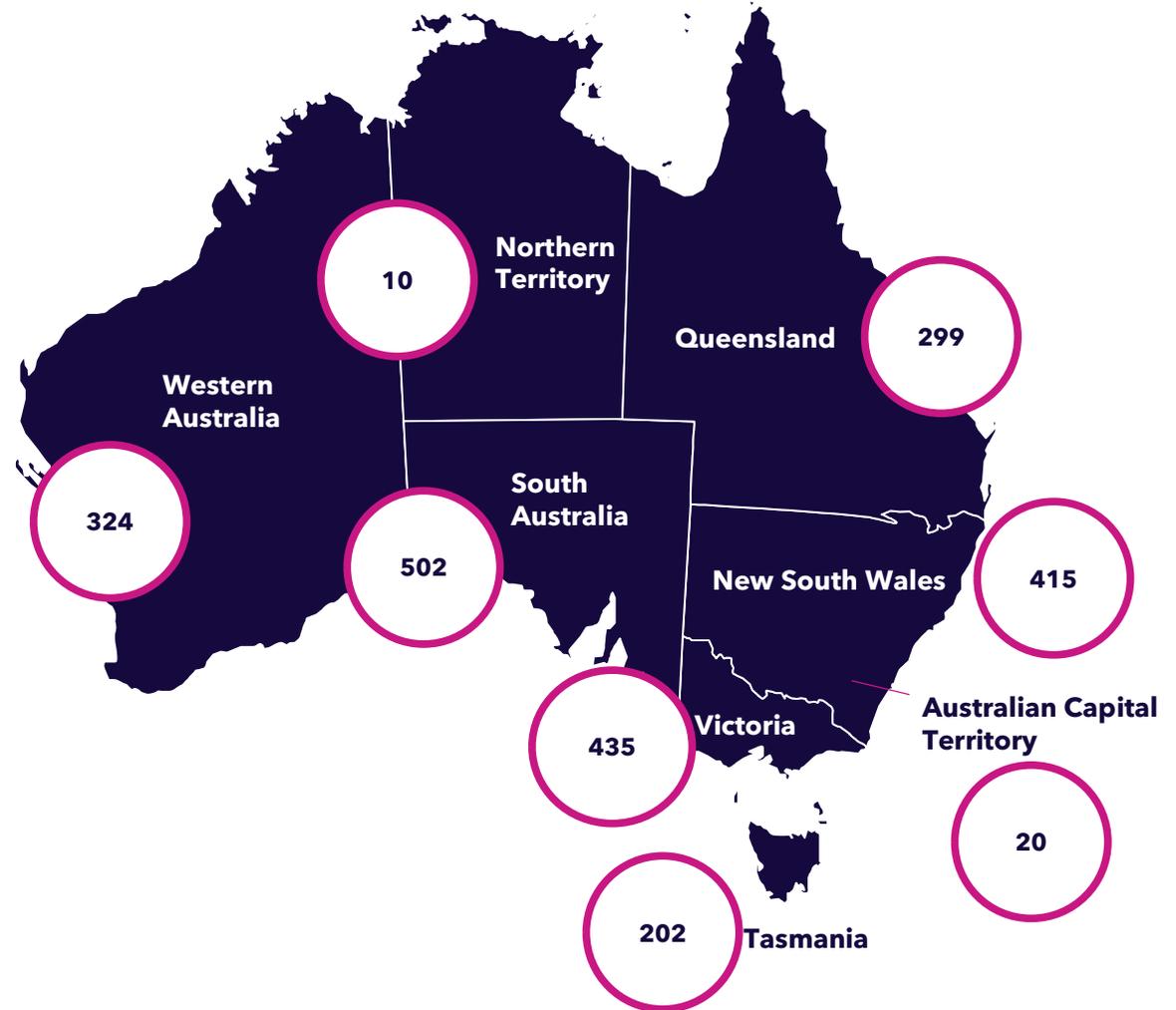
Representative sample

n=2,207 Australians aged 18+, including 1,241 in Regional Australia, and 202 in Tasmania.

Margin of error on total sample +/- 2.1% (95% confidence interval).

Quotas set on gender, age and location. Data weighted to ABS Census population statistics on age, gender, location and occupation.

Sample breakdown by location (n)



Key Findings

- 1. Almost one in five living in Hobart would consider moving to a more regional or rural area in the next two years** (18%). This increases to a quarter (25%) who would consider the move within the next ten years.
- 2. Cost of living tops the list of unprompted priorities in Tasmania.** This is by far the biggest concern (57% mentioning it unprompted) with housing affordability (41%) and healthcare (31%) also key concerns.
- 3. A clear service gap exists between Tasmania and regional areas of Australia.** From roads to rail to hospitals, those living in Tasmania are, across most service and infrastructure types, less likely than those in metropolitan areas of Australia to rate them as being at least 'good'. Housing affordability, quality of rail infrastructure and access to employment are amongst the most pressing service needs.
- 4. Despite this service gap, most in Tasmania rate their quality of life as being at least good - but the overall mood is down.** Three quarters (75%) say their overall quality of life is good or better. But it is also clear that people are increasingly feeling stressed and overwhelmed, with 60% selecting more negative than positive emotions to describe how they have been feeling in recent weeks.
- 5. Strong support for regional development initiatives.** Support was the highest for investing in adequate phone and internet coverage (88%), having incentives to encourage essential workers to move to regional areas (79%), and investing in new transport infrastructure to better connect the regions and cities (78%).
- 6. Almost three quarters support establishing a government-run fund to ensure insurance is affordable** in regional areas that are prone to extreme weather events (72%).
- 7. Majority support for the transition to renewables.** Two thirds (68%) in Tasmania feel positive about the renewables transition, while only 10% feel negative about it. More than half (53%) feel it is going too slowly and only 11% feel it is moving too fast.
- 8. Reasonable support towards Federal Government climate commitments.** Two thirds (67%) support the target to reduce carbon emissions by 43% by 2030, and 64% support committing to net zero by 2050, both of which are significantly higher than in other regional areas.
- 9. Divided views on energy infrastructure development in regional areas,** with similar numbers believing that landholders should accept renewable energy infrastructure if they are fairly compensated, vs those believing that regional communities have a right to oppose such infrastructure if it adversely affects property values or their quality of life.
- 10. Prioritising town water supply and farm efficiency programs considered the key focus for Murray Darling water management.** 50% in Tasmania think allocating enough town water is the top priority followed by prioritising environmental flows (31%) and food and fibre production (20%). There is also a clear preference to prioritise investment for farm efficiency programs (58% feel this should be the main priority), although slightly lower than the broader country. Only 13% in Tasmania feel that water buy-backs should be prioritised.



Research Findings

Unprompted Issues of Concern in Tasmania

Cost of living is the primary issue of concern among those living in Tasmania, although less so than in other parts of the country. This is followed by housing affordability and healthcare, both of which are more of a concern than for the broader country.



% MENTIONING EACH			
ISSUE	TASMANIA	AUS REGIONAL	AUS
Cost of living	57	68	69
Housing affordability	41	30	32
Healthcare	31	14	14
Grocery prices	13	13	12
Government performance	12	10	9
Energy prices	11	13	12
Labour/skills shortage	11	4	3
Climate change	10	11	9
Interest rates	9	19	23
Economy	9	5	7

The Top-10 Priorities in Tasmania

The main priorities for those in Tasmania are investing more in healthcare, addressing the cost-of-living, and increasing the availability of affordable rental housing.

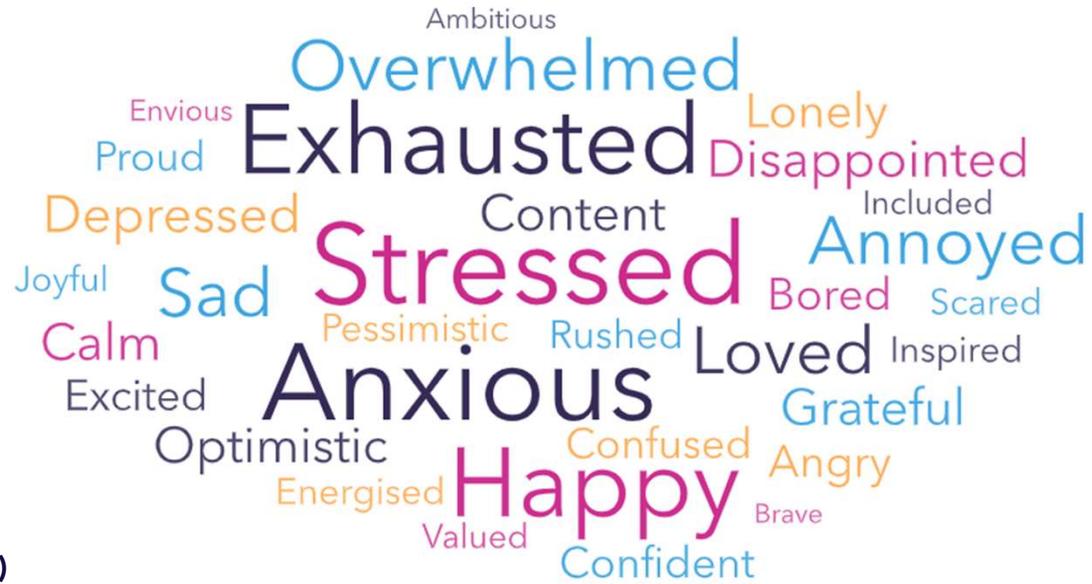
TASMANIA (% RATED "EXTREMELY IMPORTANT")		
	Investing more to ensure quality affordable healthcare for all Australians	68
	Reducing cost increases for household bills and other essential expenses	65
	Increasing the availability of affordable rental housing	64
	Strengthening pensions, welfare payments and support for vulnerable people	54
	Protecting the natural environment, habitats and wildlife	53
	Reducing crime and antisocial behaviour	51
	Strengthening our response to violence against women	50
	Strengthening our economy	47
	Investing more to improve the aged care sector	46
	Keeping interest rates low	44
	Improving pay and conditions for workers	43

Mood of Tasmania- Our Feelings in Recent Weeks

The mood in Tasmania is fairly sombre, with only 37% selecting more positive emotions than negative emotions, from a balanced list of 32. This is largely similar to the national results.

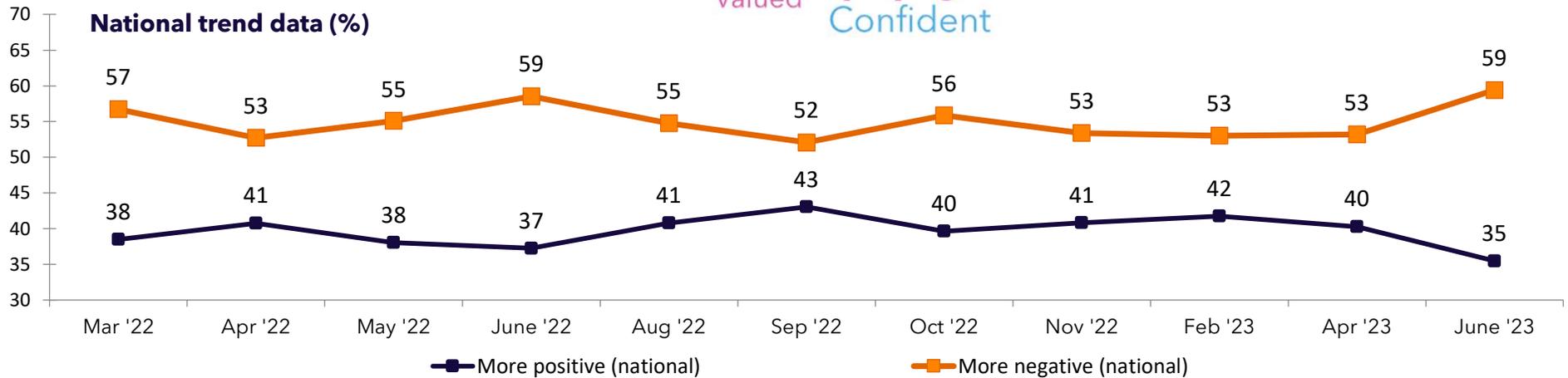
60%
of people in
TASMANIA were
feeling more
negative

vs 59% across
Australia



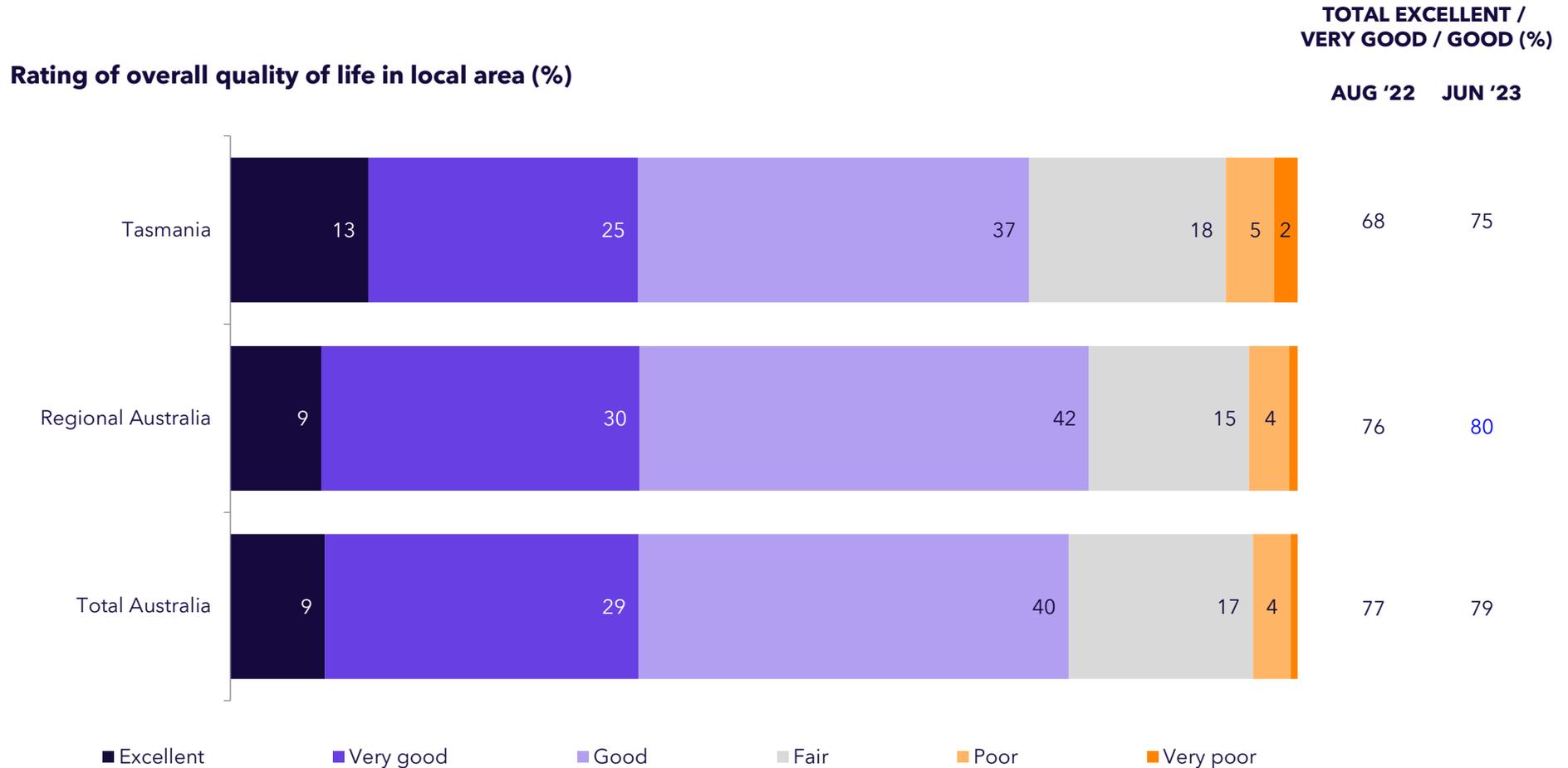
37%
of people in
TASMANIA were
feeling more
positive than
negative

vs 35% across
Australia



Overall Quality of Life in People's Local Area

Three quarters rate their quality of life as being at least good in Tasmania. This is largely in line with results in other areas across Australia.

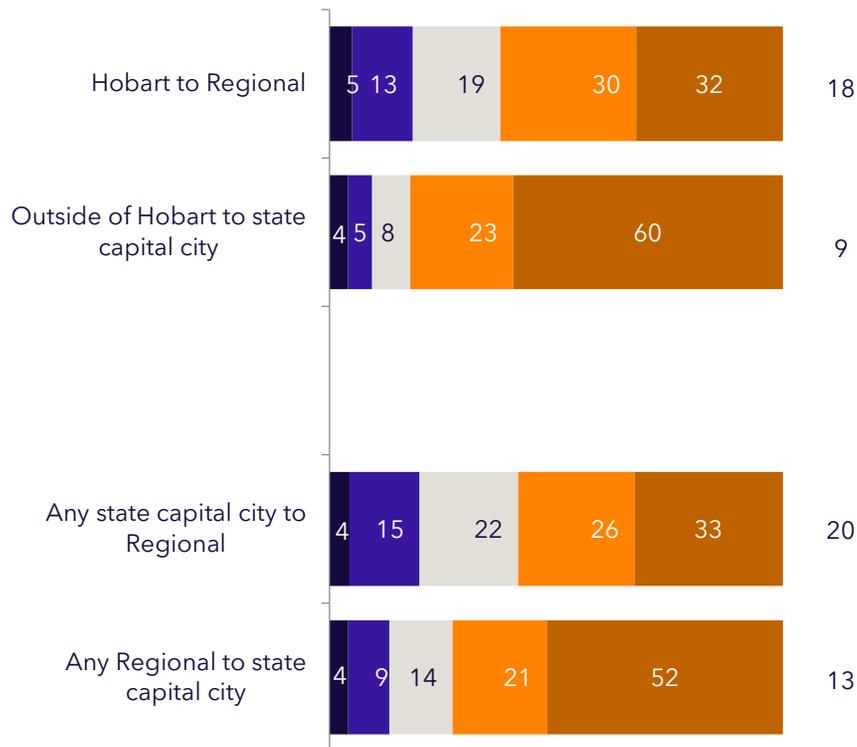


Consideration for Moving To and From Regional Areas

One in five living in Hobart (18%) say they would consider moving to a regional or rural area in the next 2 years, with around a quarter (25%) considering the move within 10 years. Among those living outside of Hobart less only 9% say they would move to a capital city area in the next 2 years and 11% in 10 years.

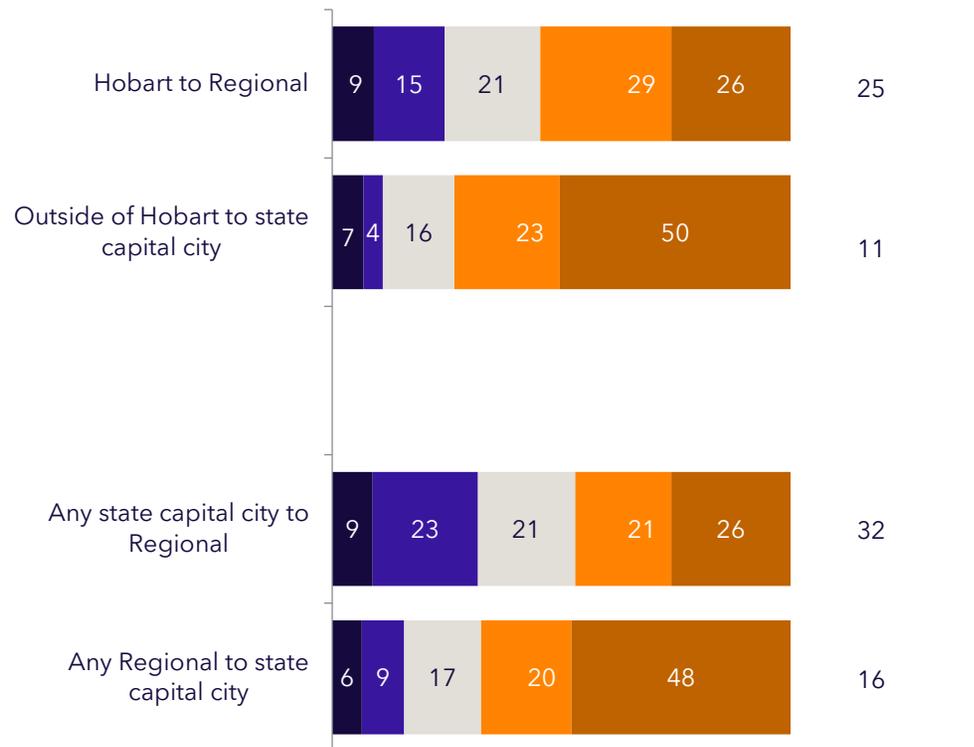
Likelihood of moving in next 2 years (%)

TOTAL DEFINITELY / PROBABLY WOULD (%)



Likelihood of moving in next 10 years (%)

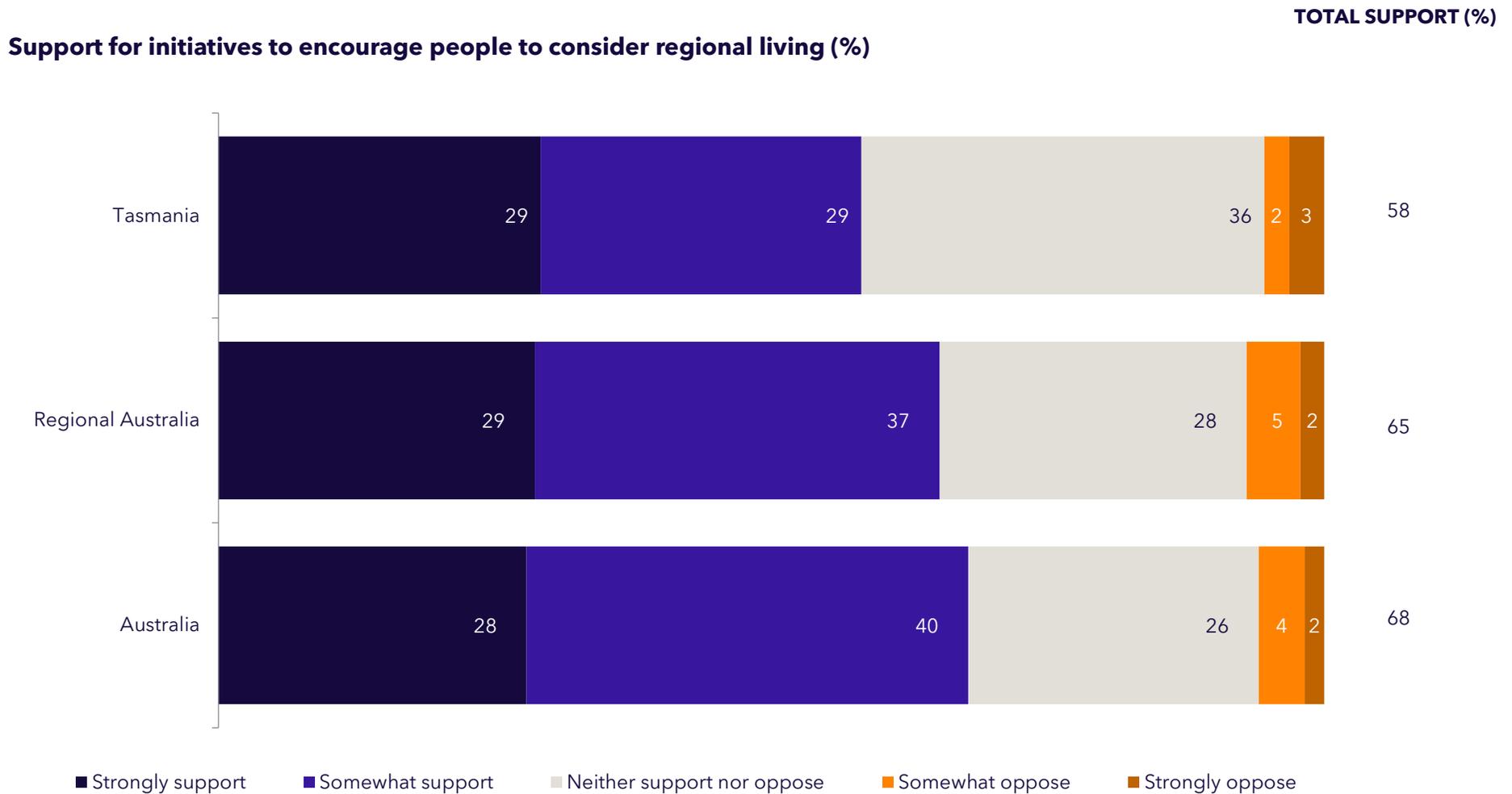
TOTAL DEFINITELY / PROBABLY WOULD (%)



Definitely would
 Probably would
 May or may not
 Probably would not
 Definitely would not

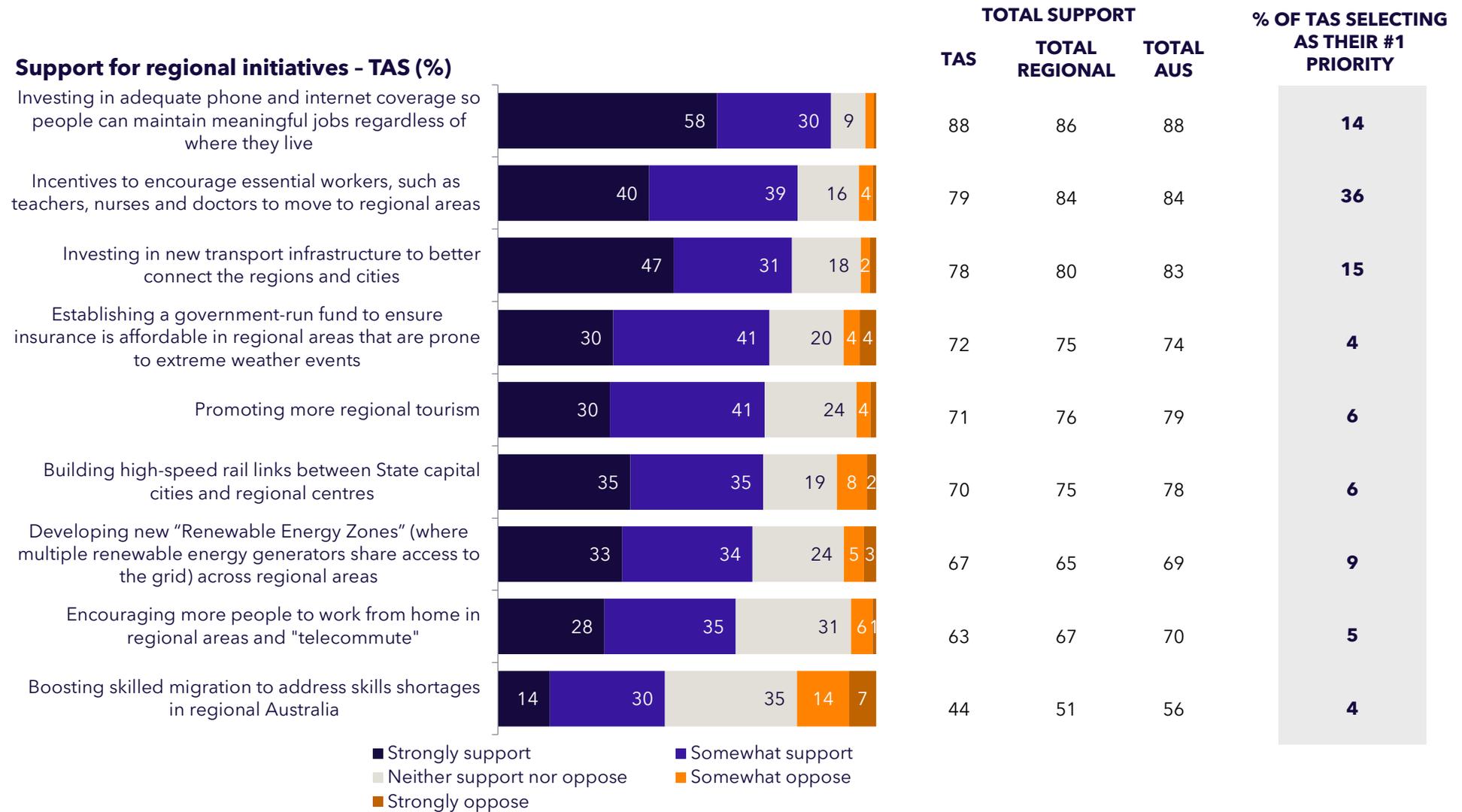
Government Incentives to Encourage Regional Living

About six in ten living in Tasmania support policies, programs and incentives that encourage more people to consider moving to regional and rural Australia.



Support for Regional Development Initiatives

The initiatives with the highest level of support Tasmania were investing in adequate phone & internet coverage, incentives for essential workers and investing in transport infrastructure.



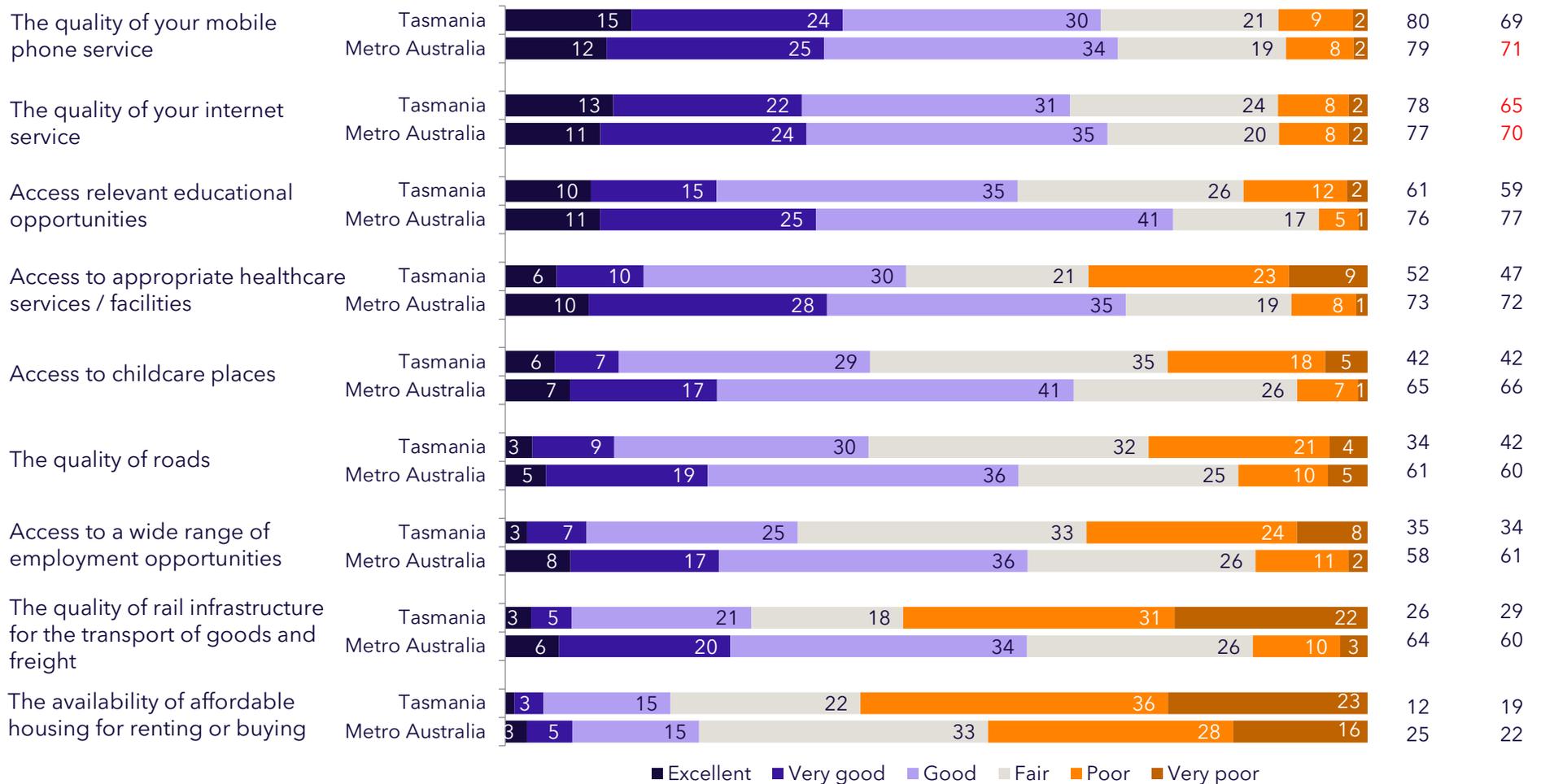
Service Access and Quality in Tasmania

There is a clear service gap between Tasmania and metropolitan areas of Australia, with the quality of roads, rail infrastructure, rental availability and employment amongst key service needs.

TOTAL EXCELLENT / VERY GOOD / GOOD

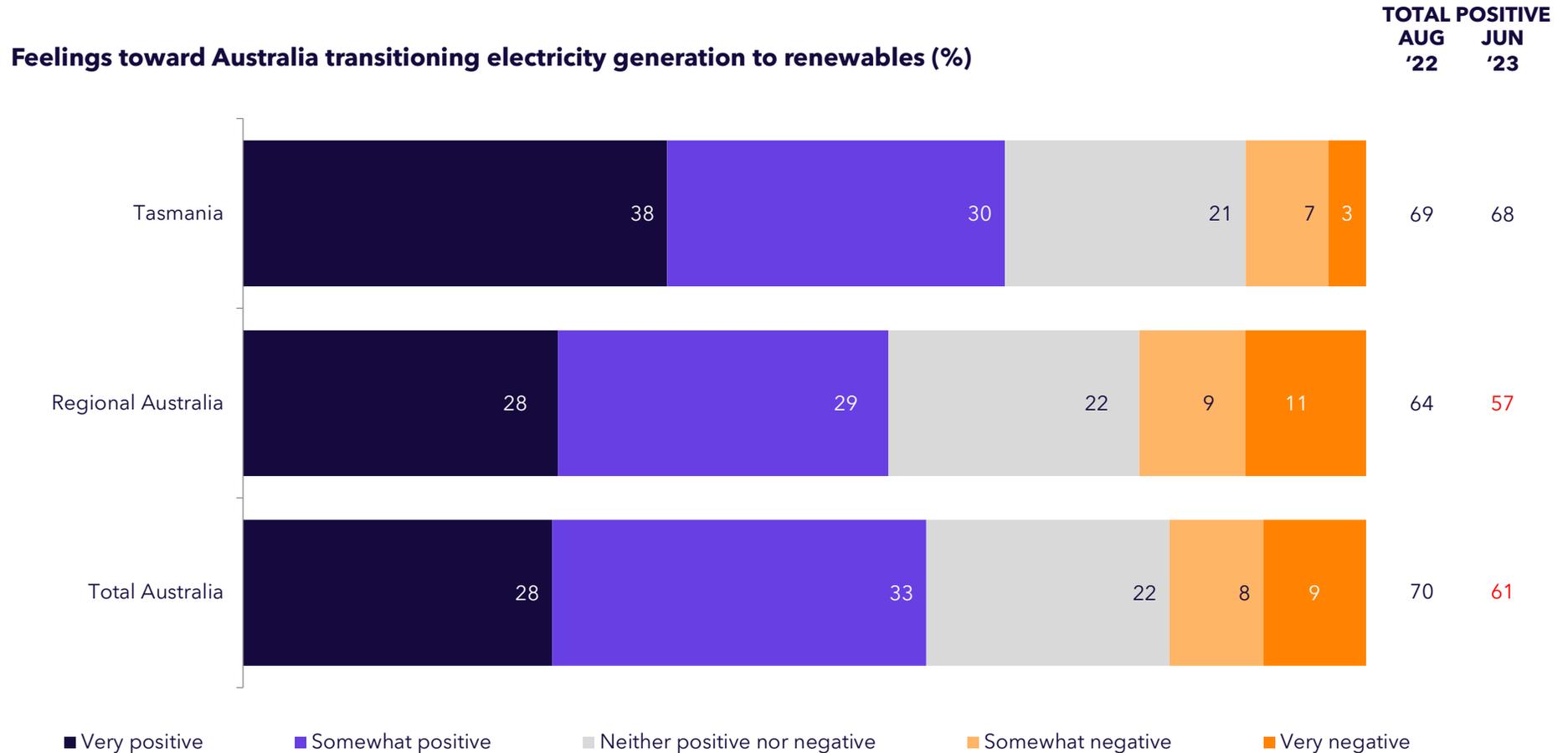
Local area ratings (%)

AUG '22 JUN '23



Tasmanian Attitudes to the Transition to Renewables

7 in 10 of those living in Tasmania feel positive about Australia transitioning its electricity generation to renewables, which is higher than for the broader country.

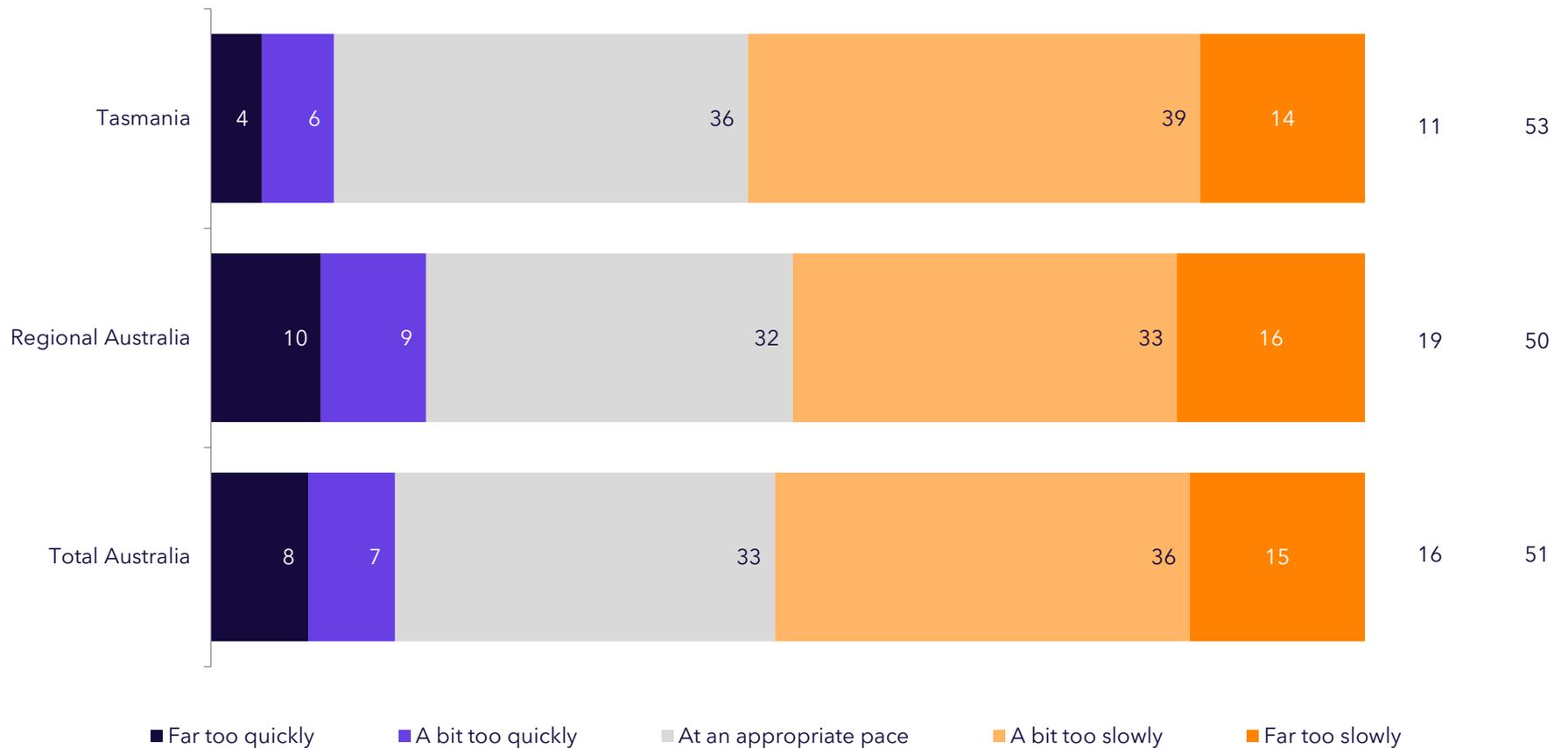


The Speed of the Renewable Energy Transition

Only 1 in 10 Tasmanians believe Australia's transition to renewable energy sources is moving too quickly, with about half thinking it is moving too slowly.

The pace of Australia's transition to renewables (%)

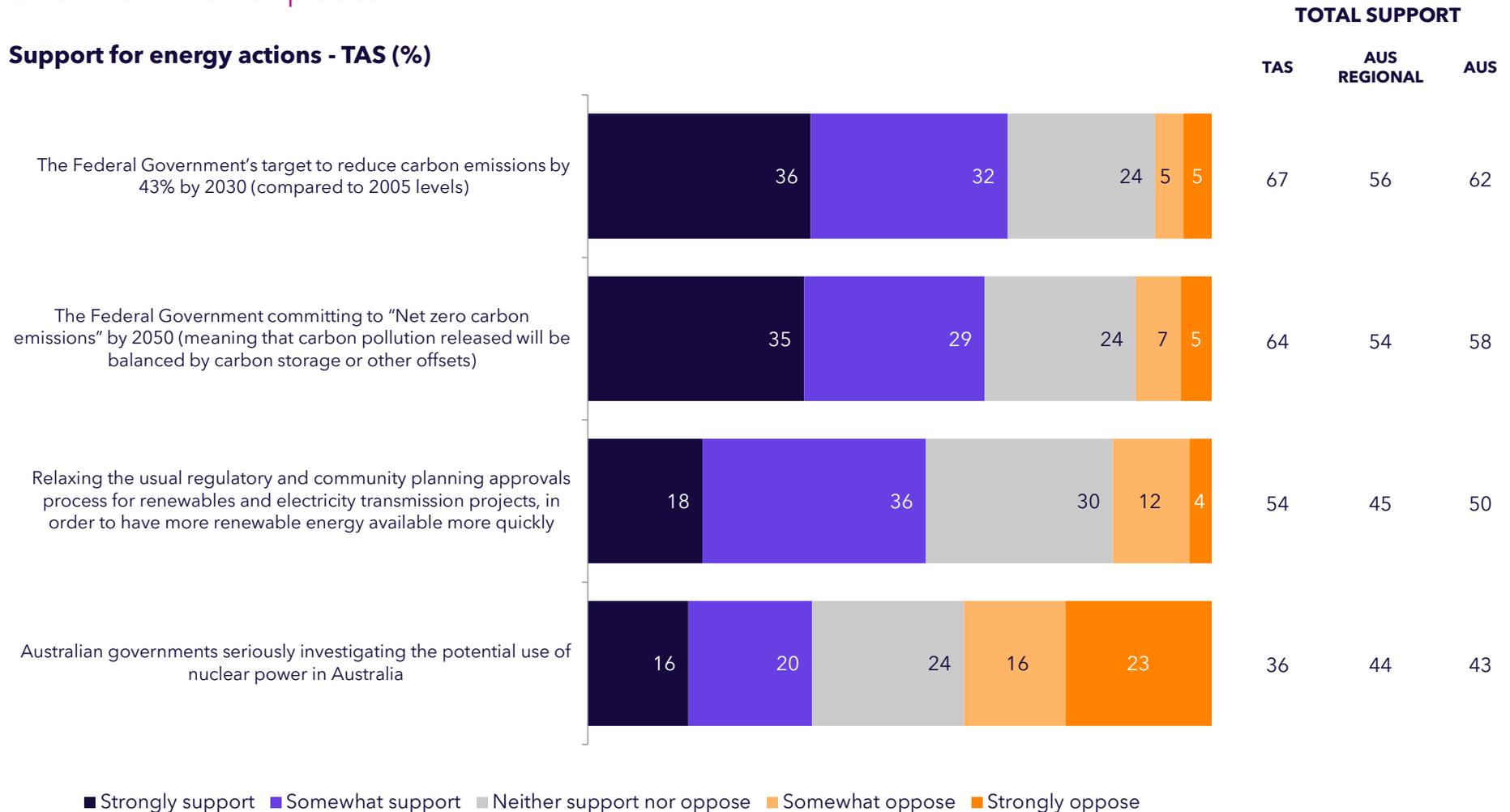
TOTAL TOO QUICKLY TOTAL TOO SLOWLY



Support for Energy Actions

Two thirds of those living in Tasmania support the Federal Government’s 2030 carbon targets and 2050 net zero ambition, with support higher than the rest of the country. Support for investigating nuclear is lower than in other places.

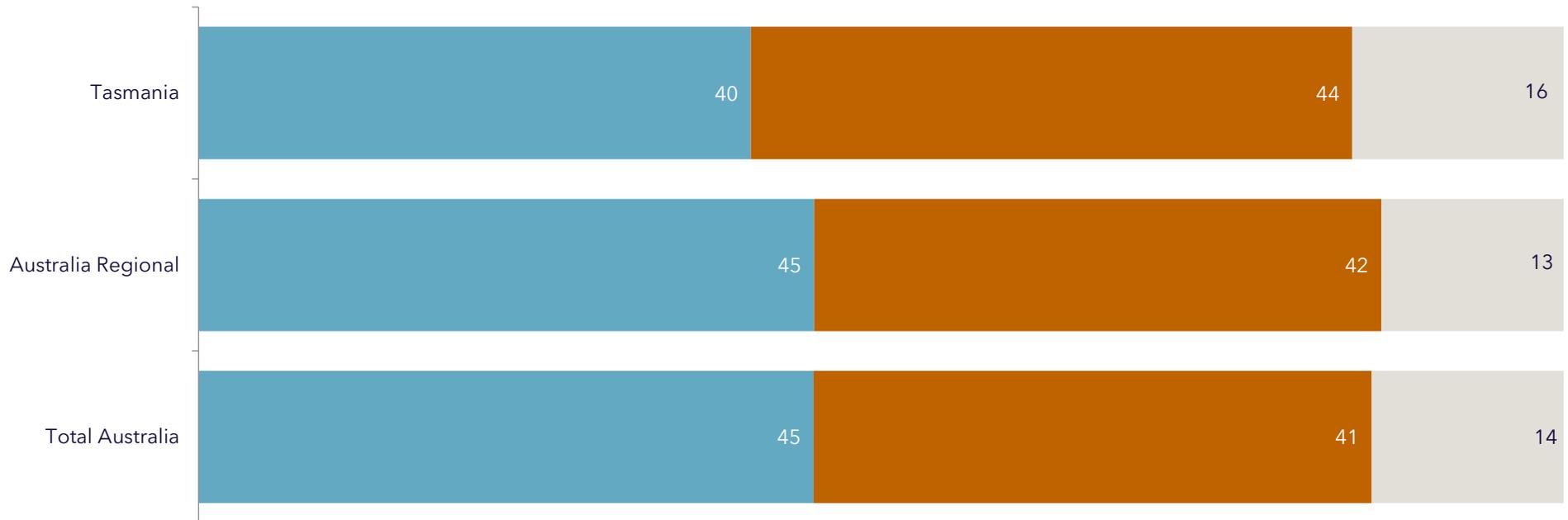
Support for energy actions - TAS (%)



Views on Regional Energy Infrastructure

Opinion is evenly divided in Tasmania as to whether landholders should accept renewable energy infrastructure if they are fairly compensated, or whether regional communities have a right to oppose such infrastructure if it adversely affects property values or their quality of life.

Preferred views of the following renewable energy infrastructure options (%)

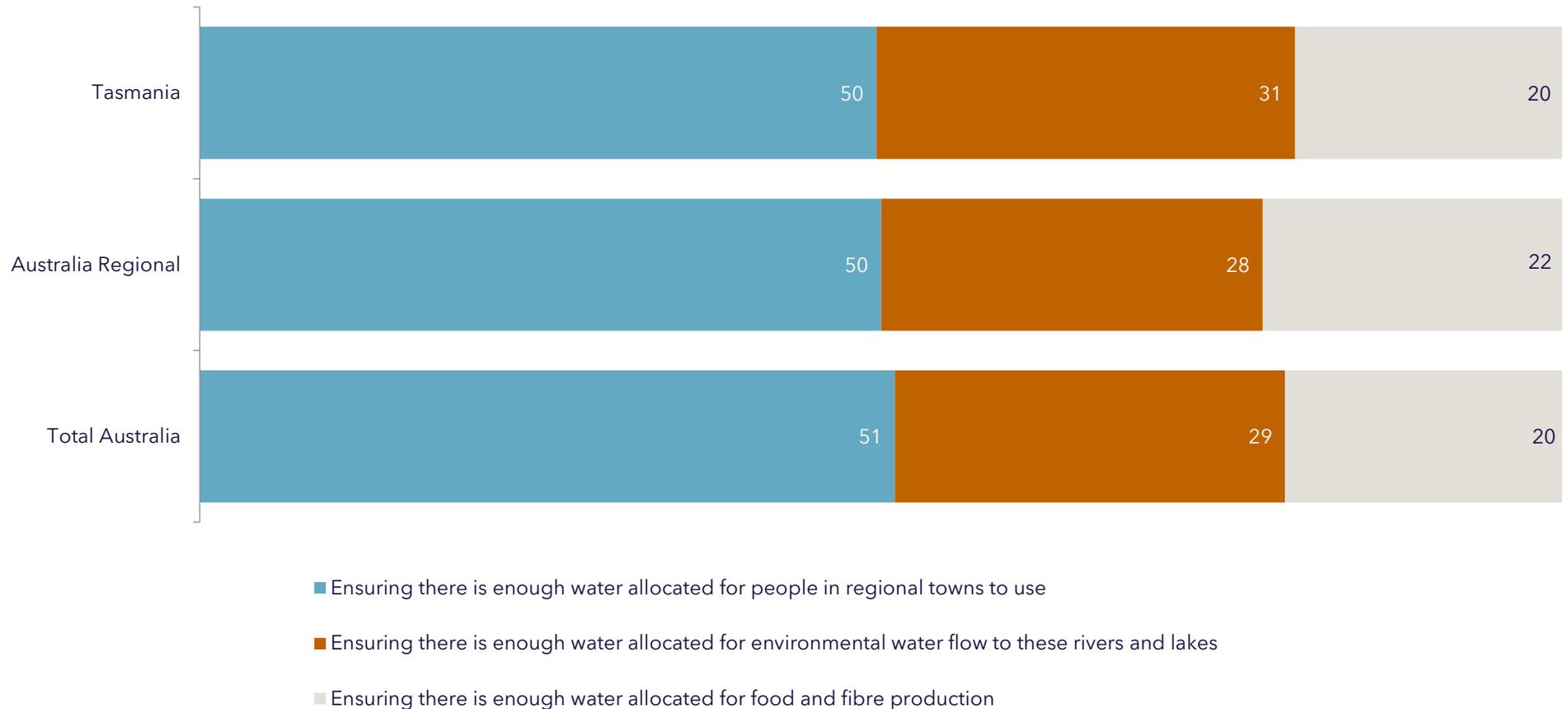


- As long as the landholders with new infrastructure on their land are being fairly compensated then regional communities should accept that these projects are a necessary part of the energy transition
- Regional communities have a right to oppose new renewable energy infrastructure if they feel it adversely affects their quality of life or property values
- Don't know

Priorities for the Murray-Darling Basin

Ensuring there is enough water allocated for people in regional towns was considered the top priority, followed by allocation to environmental flows for rivers and lakes. Only 2 in 10 think the top priority should be for allocating water for food and fibre production.

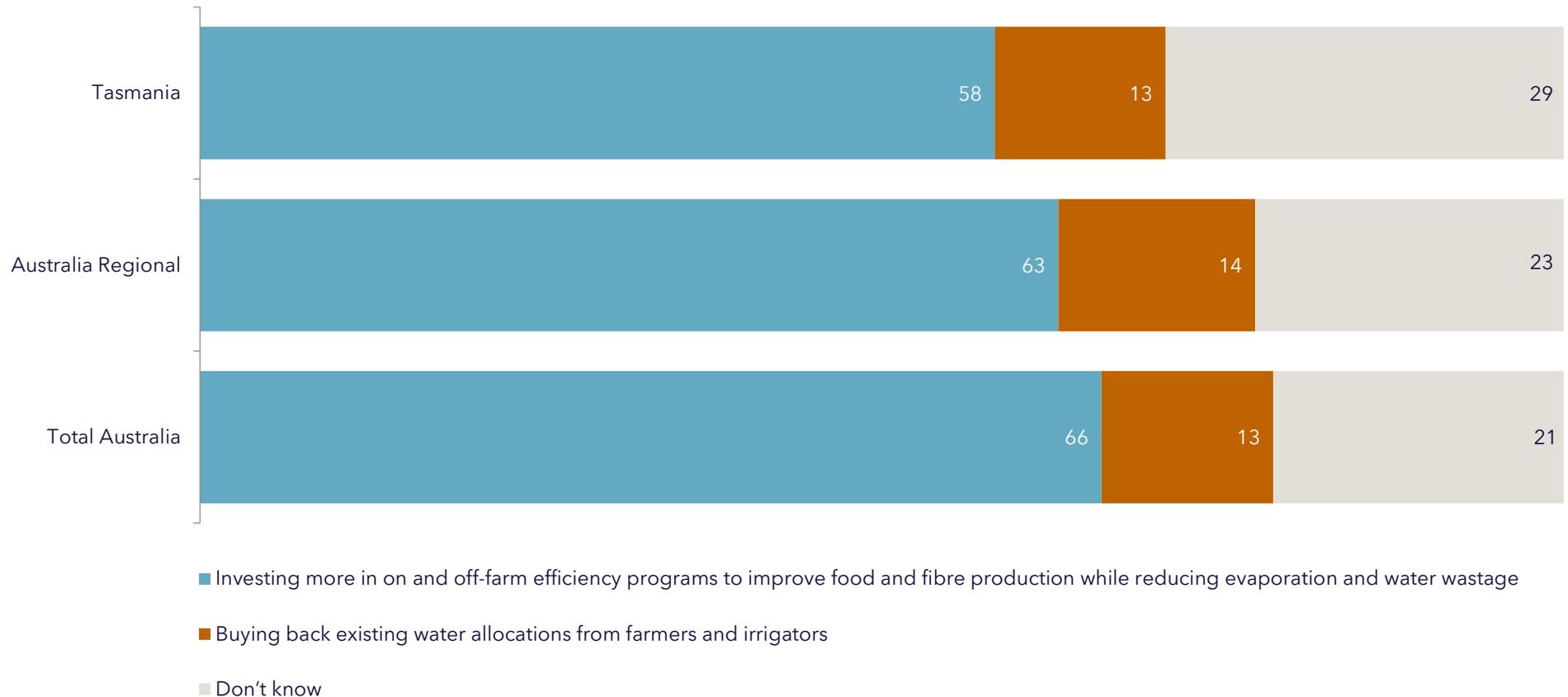
Preferred priority for governments as they manage the Murray-Darling Basin - Ranked 1st (%)



Options to Manage Murray-Darling Water

Across Tasmania there was a preference for the Government to prioritise investment for on-farm efficiency programs (58% feel this should be the main priority) vs 13% who feel that water buy-backs should be the main priority.

Preferred priority for government to manage water usage in the Murray-Darling Basin (%)





Appendix

Sample Profile

NATIONAL											
	TOTAL	METRO	REGIONAL	MALE	FEMALE	ANOTHER GENDER	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
NSW	415	214	201	206	209	0	52	79	110	103	71
VIC	435	233	202	215	217	3	56	86	120	97	76
QLD	299	98	201	146	153	0	36	55	80	72	56
SA	502	302	200	248	253	1	60	104	140	123	75
WA	324	119	205	146	176	2	31	83	106	60	44
TAS	202	0	202	100	100	2	24	43	50	51	34
ACT	20	0	20	10	10	0	4	4	5	3	4
NT	10	0	10	5	5	0	1	3	3	2	1
TOTAL	2207	966	1241	1076	1123	8	264	457	614	511	361



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