



# Public service reform: Taking the public with you

Summer 2010

**Ipsos MORI**



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# Where the public are at

3

- Strong belief in universal provision – and anxiety about postcode lotteries
- Like the *idea* of greater control and localism
- Most will need more than a “nudge” to go further on individual responsibility/big society
- Divided over need for fiscal consolidation, but believe huge efficiency savings are possible
- Bold leadership required: service reconfiguration, debate and technology?

# 1. The current situation

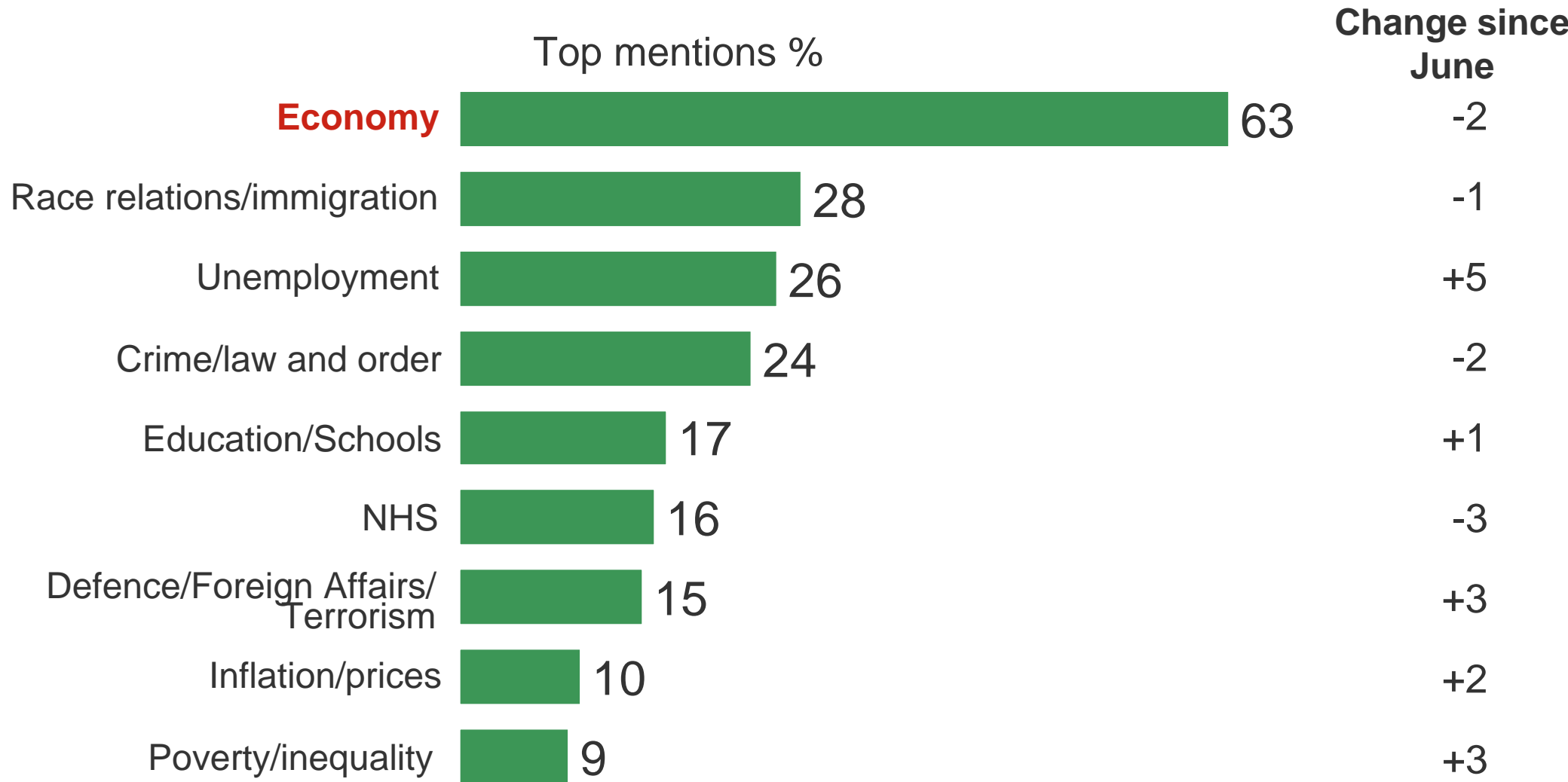
“The most urgent task facing this coalition is to tackle our record debts, because without sound finances, none of our ambitions will be deliverable.”

Coalition agreement (May 2010)

# The public agrees that the economy is by far the most urgent task facing the country

6

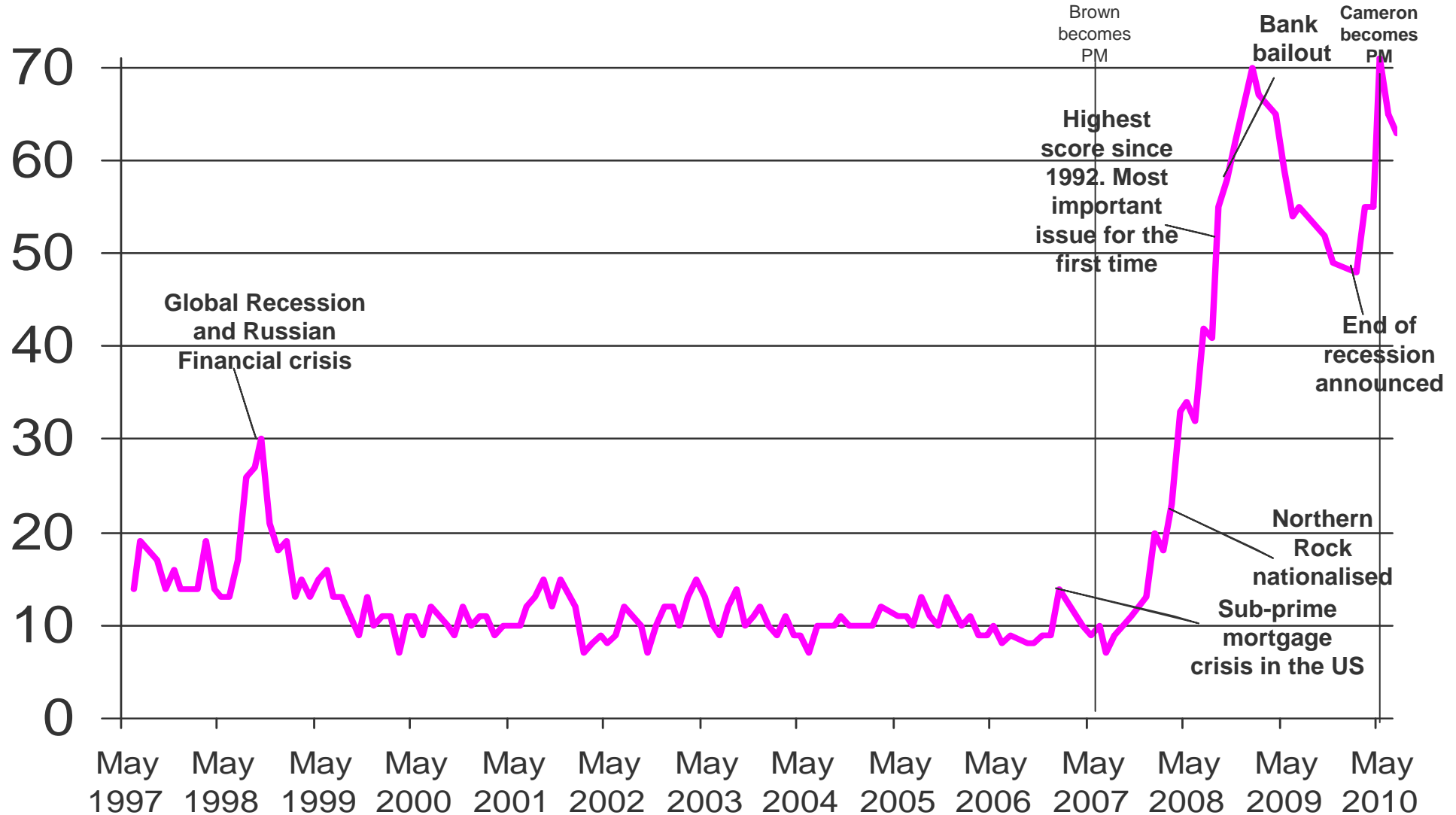
*What would you say is the most important issue facing Britain today?  
What do you see as other important issues facing Britain today?*



# Concern about the economy is high

7

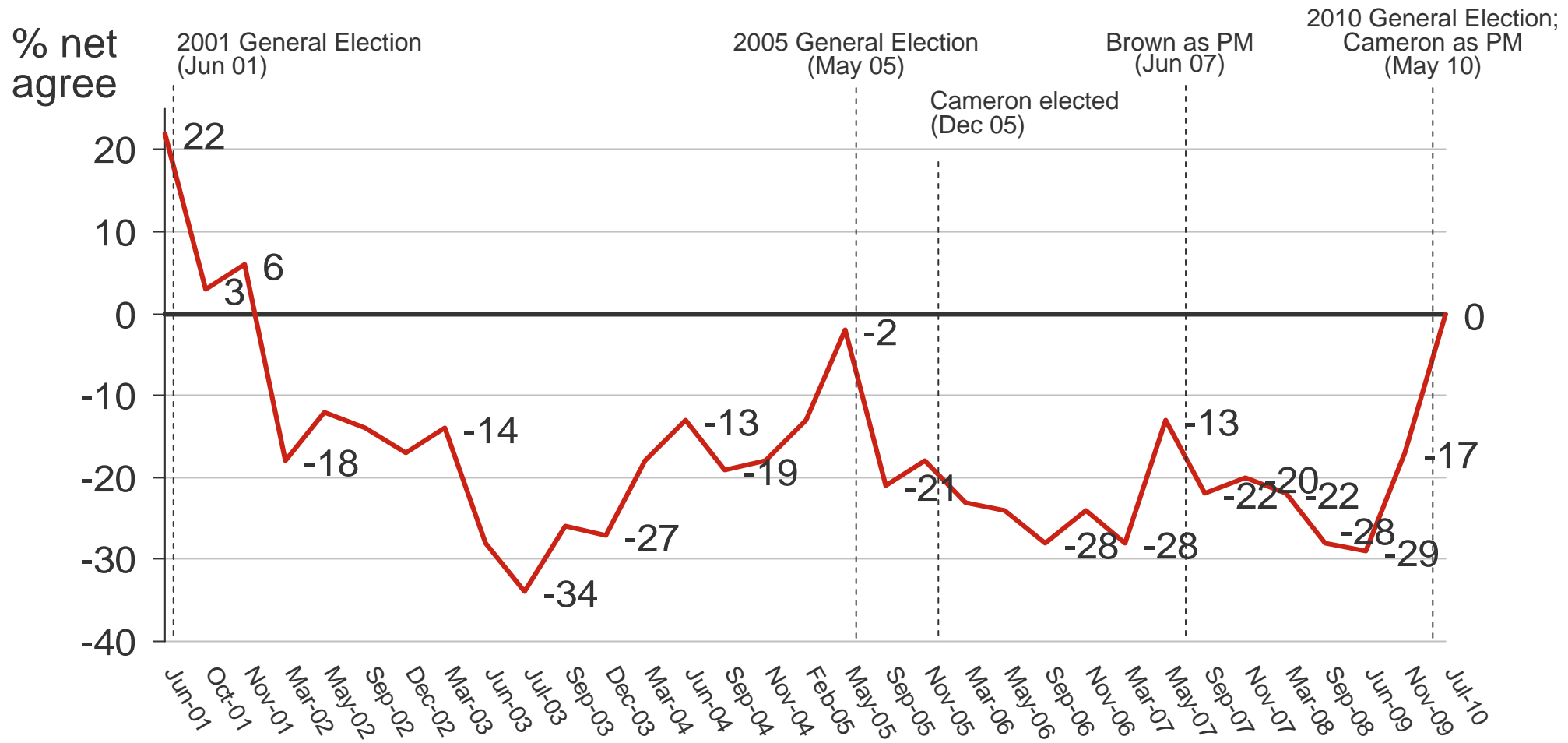
*What do you see as the most/other important issues facing Britain today?*



# Confidence in the long term impact of policies has risen

8

*Do you agree or disagree... "In the long term, this government's policies will improve the state of Britain's public services"*

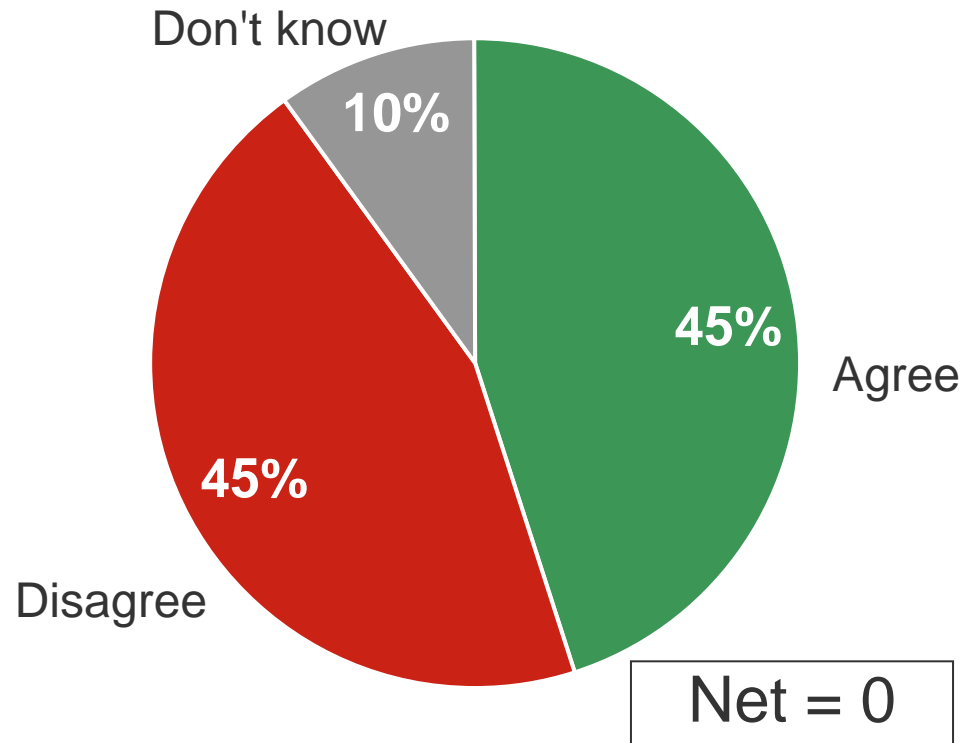




# Although the public opinion remains split

9

*Do you agree or disagree... "In the long term, this government's policies will improve the state of Britain's public services"*



Base: 1,009 British adults 18+. Fieldwork dates: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

## 2. The need for cuts

"The coalition has agreed that £6bn of savings to non-front line public services should be made this financial year...

And the work that David Laws and I have already done in the Treasury has convinced us that it [cutting £6bn] is also achievable without affecting the quality of key public services."

Speech by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne MP, on the OBR and spending announcements (17 May 2010)

# The public still believe that greater efficiency can do it

12

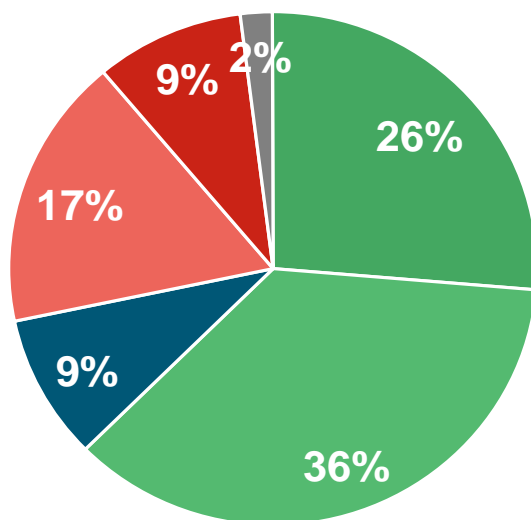
*Making public services more efficient can save enough money to pay off the very high national debt we now have, without damaging services the public receive*

■ Strongly agree  
■ Tend to disagree

■ Tend to agree  
■ Strongly disagree

■ Neither / nor  
■ Don't know

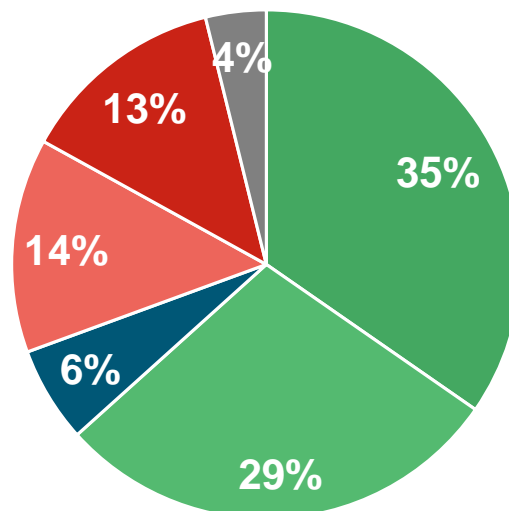
Nov '09



Net agree = +36

Base: 1,006 British adults, 13th-15th November 2009

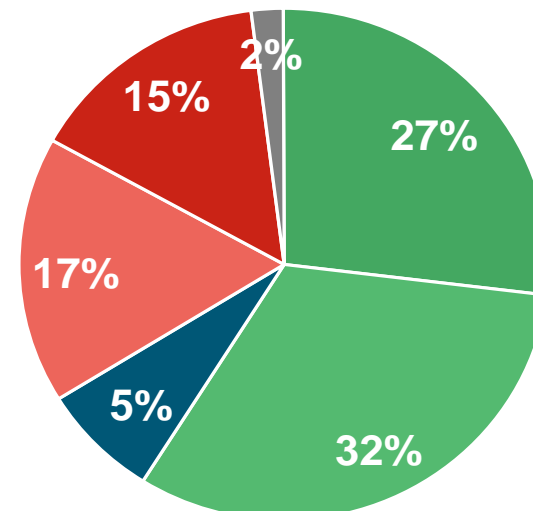
March '10



Net agree = +37

Base: 1,503 British adults 18+, 19th-22nd March 2010

June '10



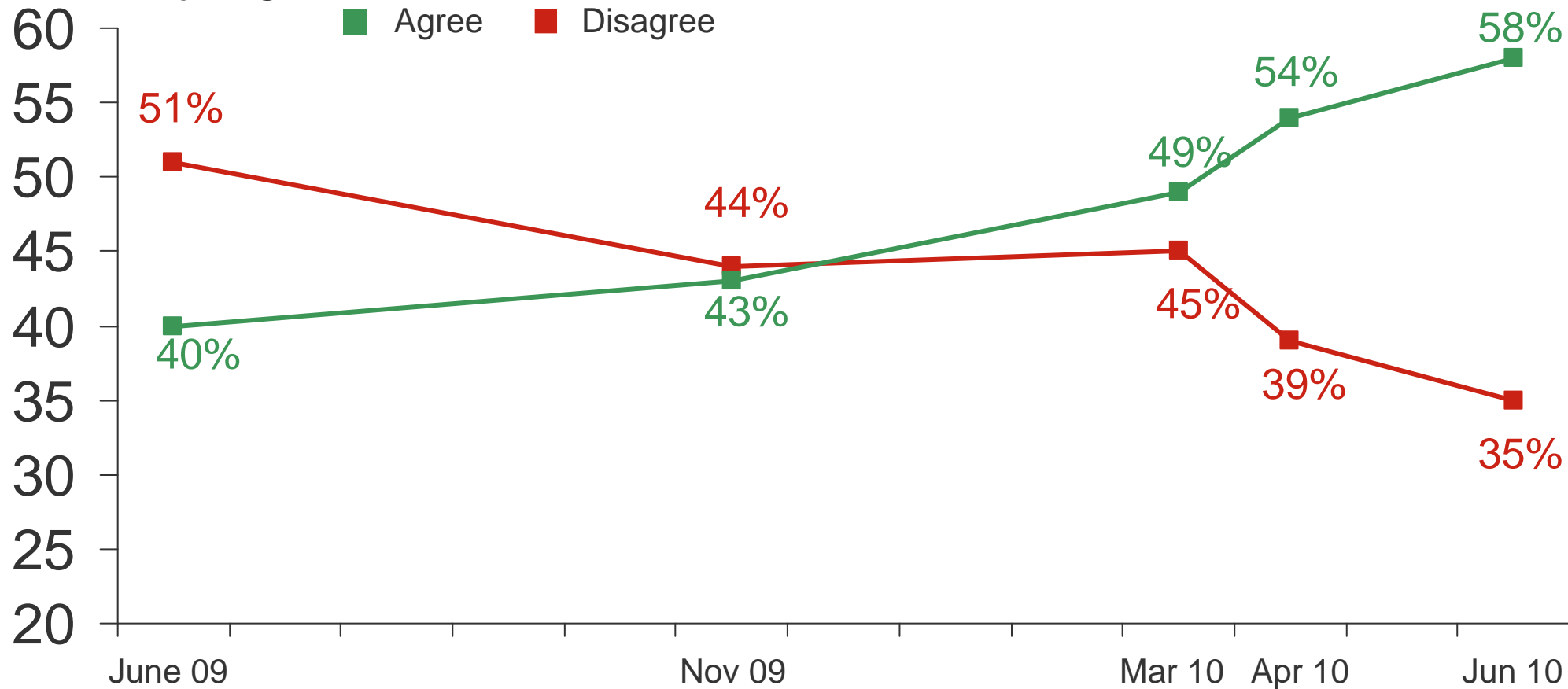
Net agree = +27

Base: 1,002 British adults 18+, 18th-20th June 2010

# But growing realisation that spending cuts are necessary

13

*There is a real need to cut spending on public services in order to pay off the very high national debt we now have*



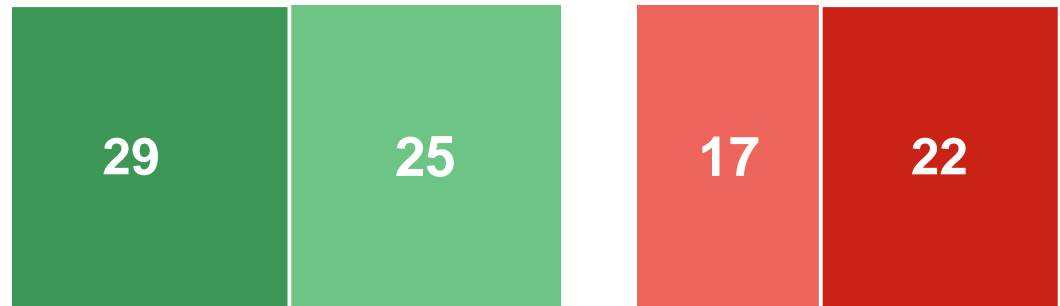
# While more now see need for cuts, less keen on cuts to services *they* use

14

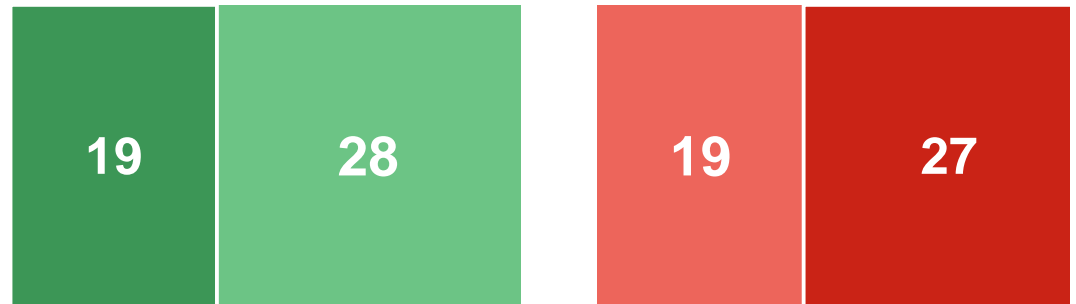
*To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:*

■ % Strongly agree   ■ % Tend to agree   ■ % Tend to disagree   ■ % Strongly disagree

There is a real need to cut spending on public services in order to pay off the very high national debt we now have



I am personally happy to accept less from public services than I currently get in order to pay off the very high national debt we now have\*



Base: 631 British adults 18+.  
Fieldwork: 18-19 April 2010

\*Base: 622 British adults 18+  
Source: Ipsos MORI/Economist

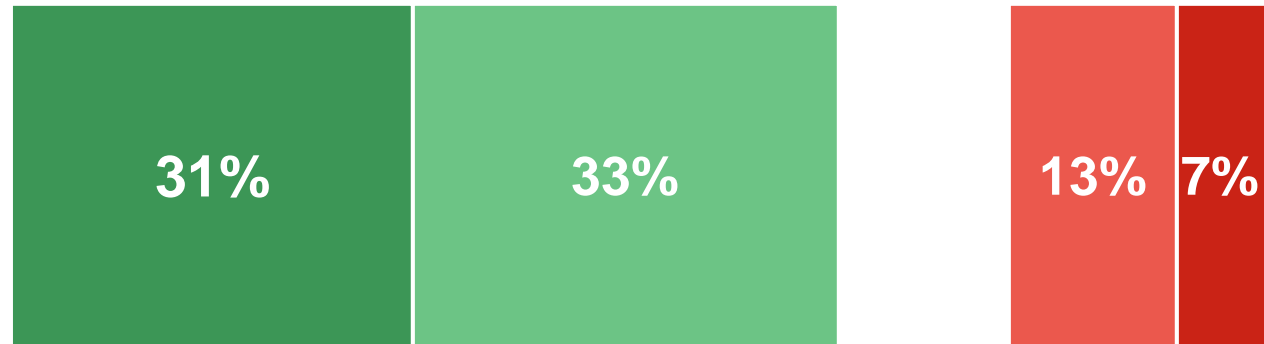
# Many think government has done too much, but also worry it won't do enough in future

15

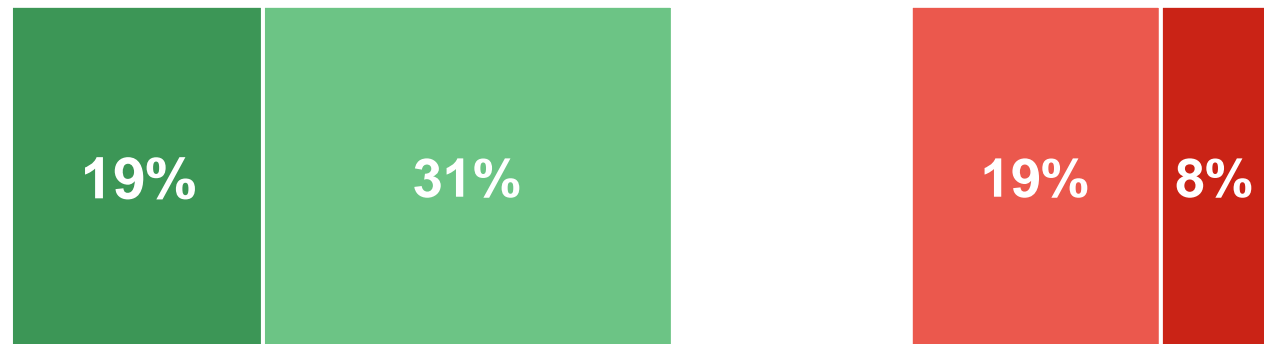
*Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement:*

■ Strongly agree    ■ Tend to agree    ■ Tend to disagree    ■ Strongly disagree

In recent years government and public services have tried to do too much, and people should take more responsibility for their own lives (*Base: 512*)



I am worried that government and public services will do too little to help people in the years ahead (*Base: 490*)



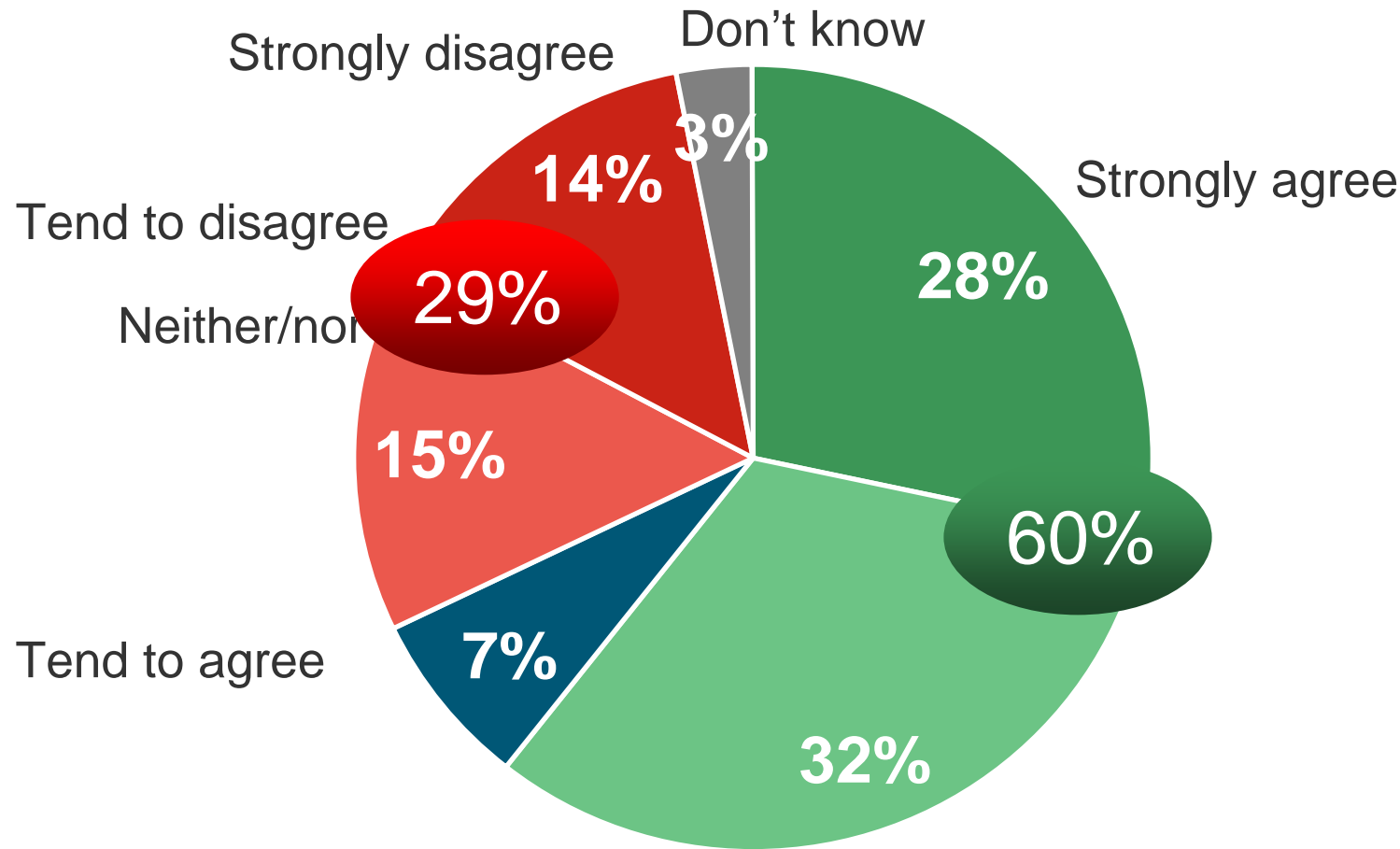
Base: 1,002 adults in Great Britain aged 16+. Split sample between the two statements.  
Fieldwork dates: 13-19 May 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

# Three in five believe the coalition is being honest about the state of the public finances

16

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that the government is being honest about the state of Britain's public finances*



Base: 1,002 British adults 18+, 18th-20th June 2010

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI/Reuters Political Monitor





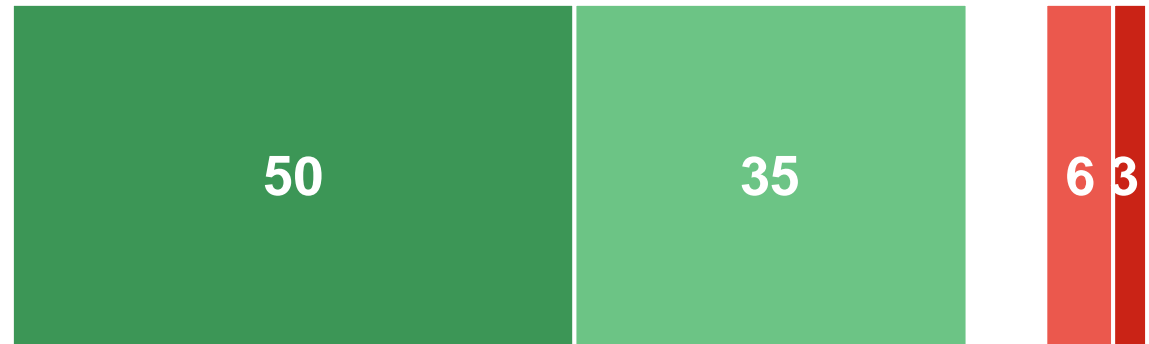
# Most in favour of Britain showing the world it can live within its means – although put off by prospect of cuts

17

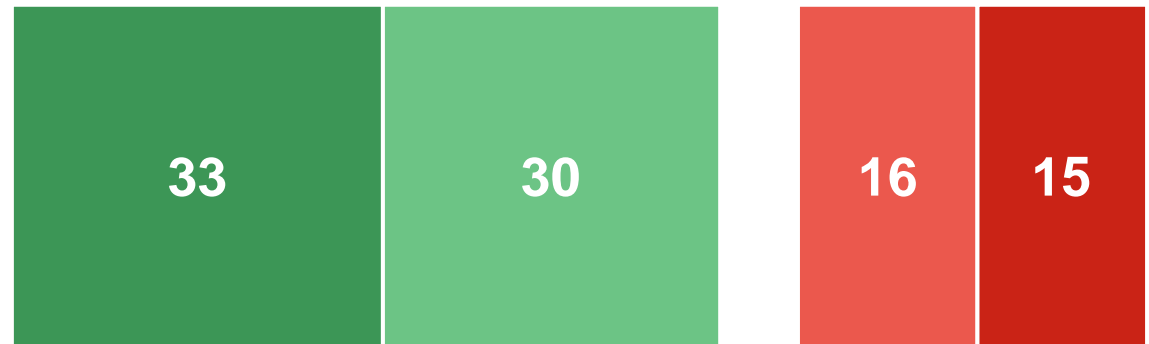
*Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of these arguments about public services and public spending*

■ Strongly agree    ■ Tend to agree    ■ Tend to disagree    ■ Strongly disagree

It is important for Britain to show the world that it can live within its means



It is important for Britain to show the world that it can live within its means, even if that means big cuts to our public services



Base: 1,002 British adults 18+, split sample c.500 each. 18th-20<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI/Reuters Political Monitor



### 3. Views on different ways of cutting the deficit

"This emergency Budget deals decisively with our country's record debts.

It pays for the past. And it plans for the future. It supports a strong enterprise-led recovery. It rewards work.

And it protects the most vulnerable in our society.

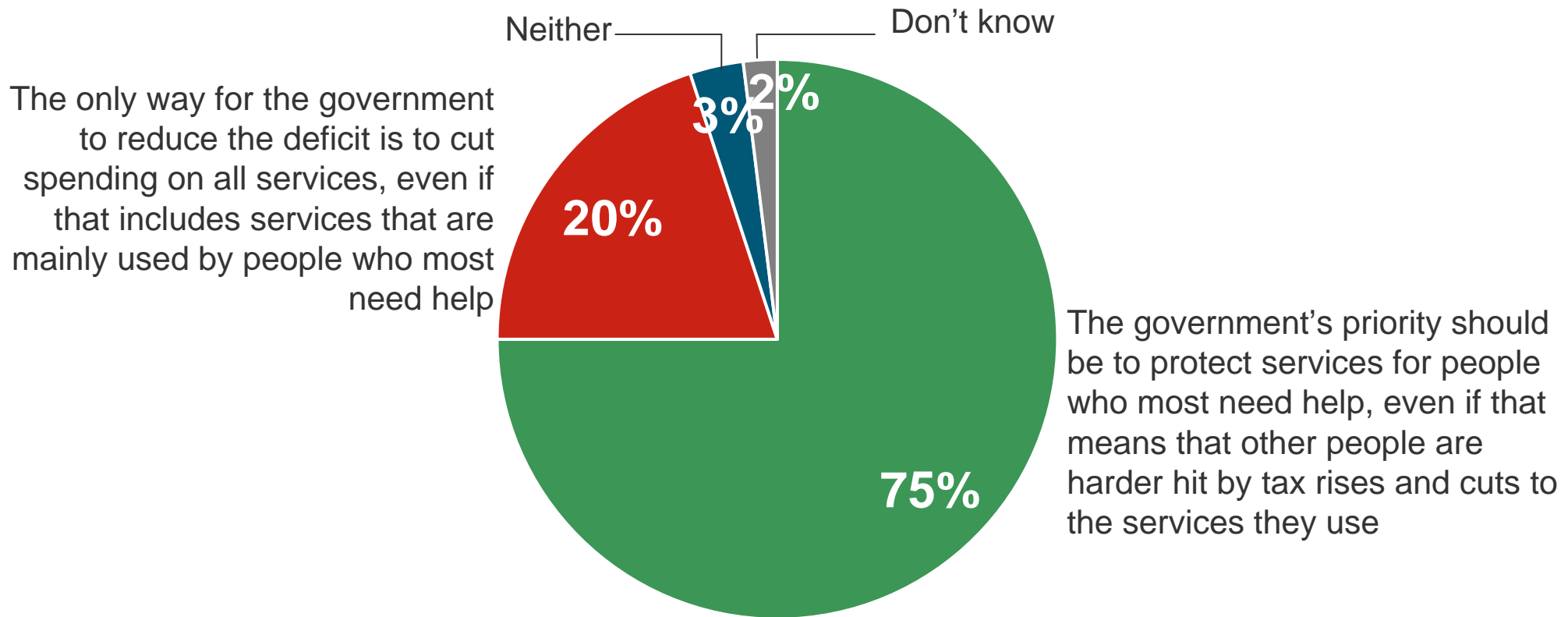
Yes it is tough; but it is also fair.

Budget statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne MP (22 June 2010)

# Most prioritise the protection of services for those who need them most

20

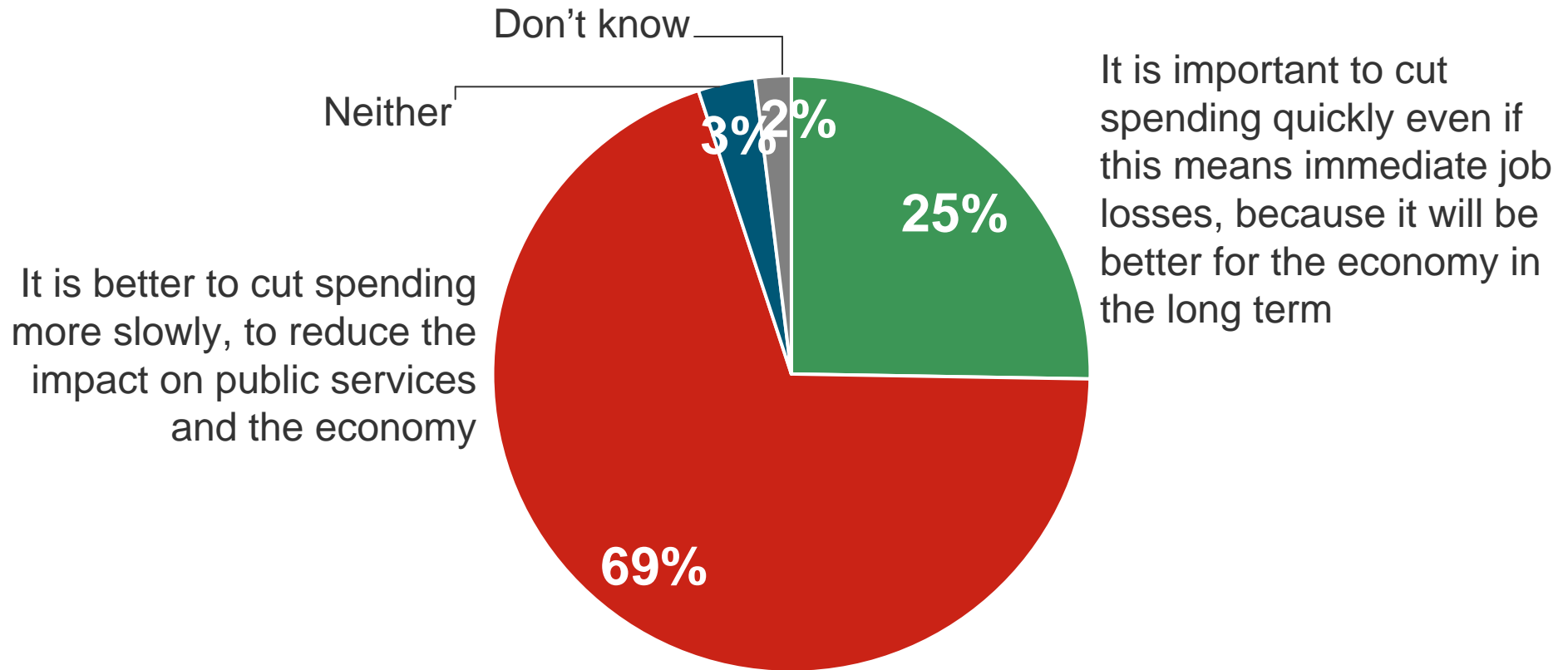
*Which of these comes closest to your opinion about how the government goes about reducing the deficit?*



# How quickly should spending be cut?

21

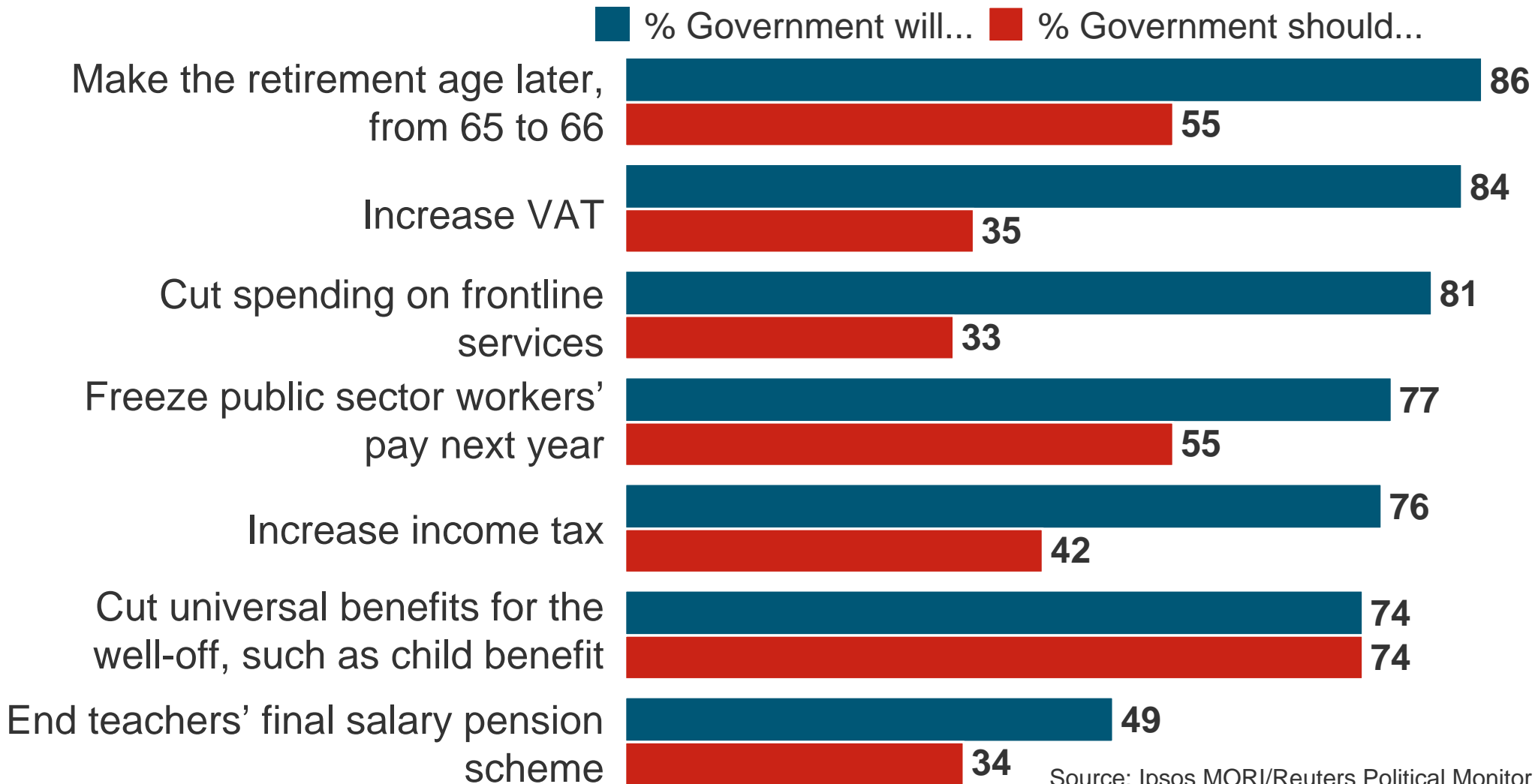
*And which of these comes closest to your opinion about how the government goes about reducing the deficit?*



# Views on different ways of reducing the deficit

22

*Do you think the government will or will not. . .?  
And do you think that the government should or should not..?*

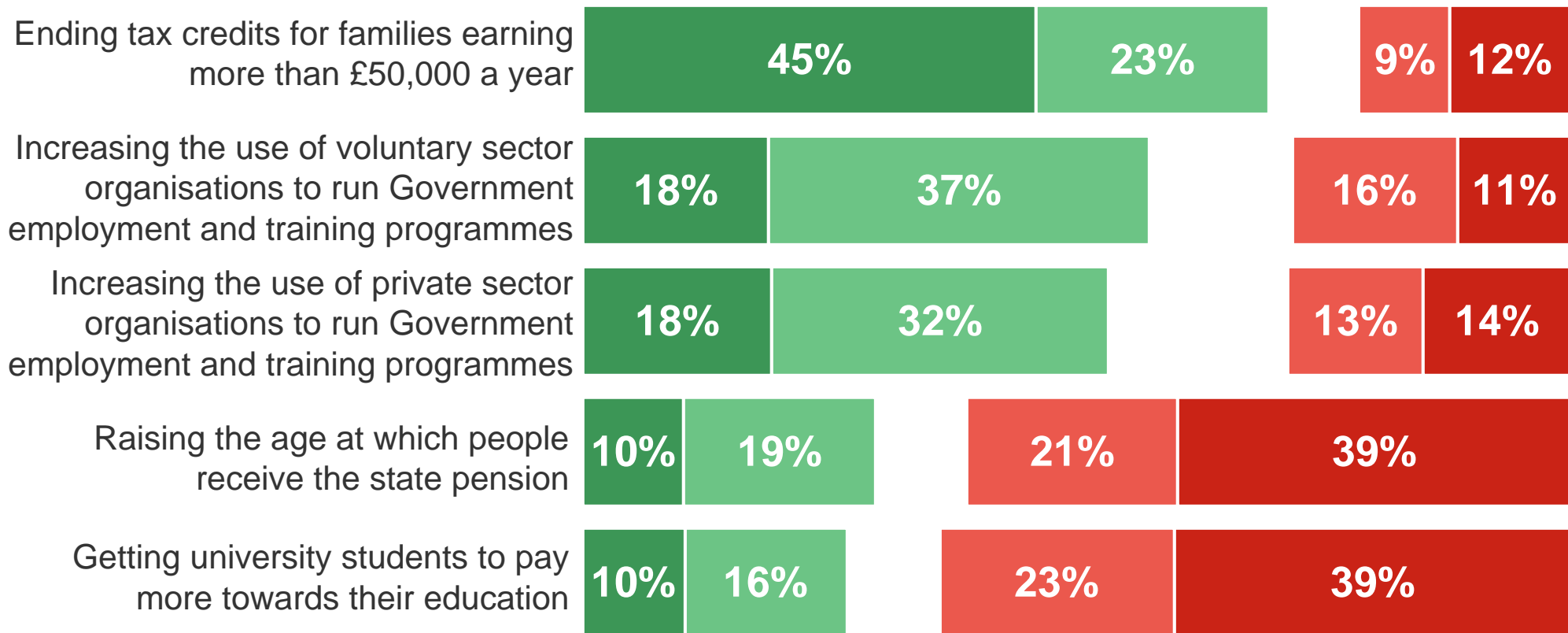


# Support for ending tax credits for high earners

23

*To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following ways of reducing the deficit? Do you...*

■ Strongly support   ■ Tend to support   ■ Tend to oppose   ■ Strongly oppose



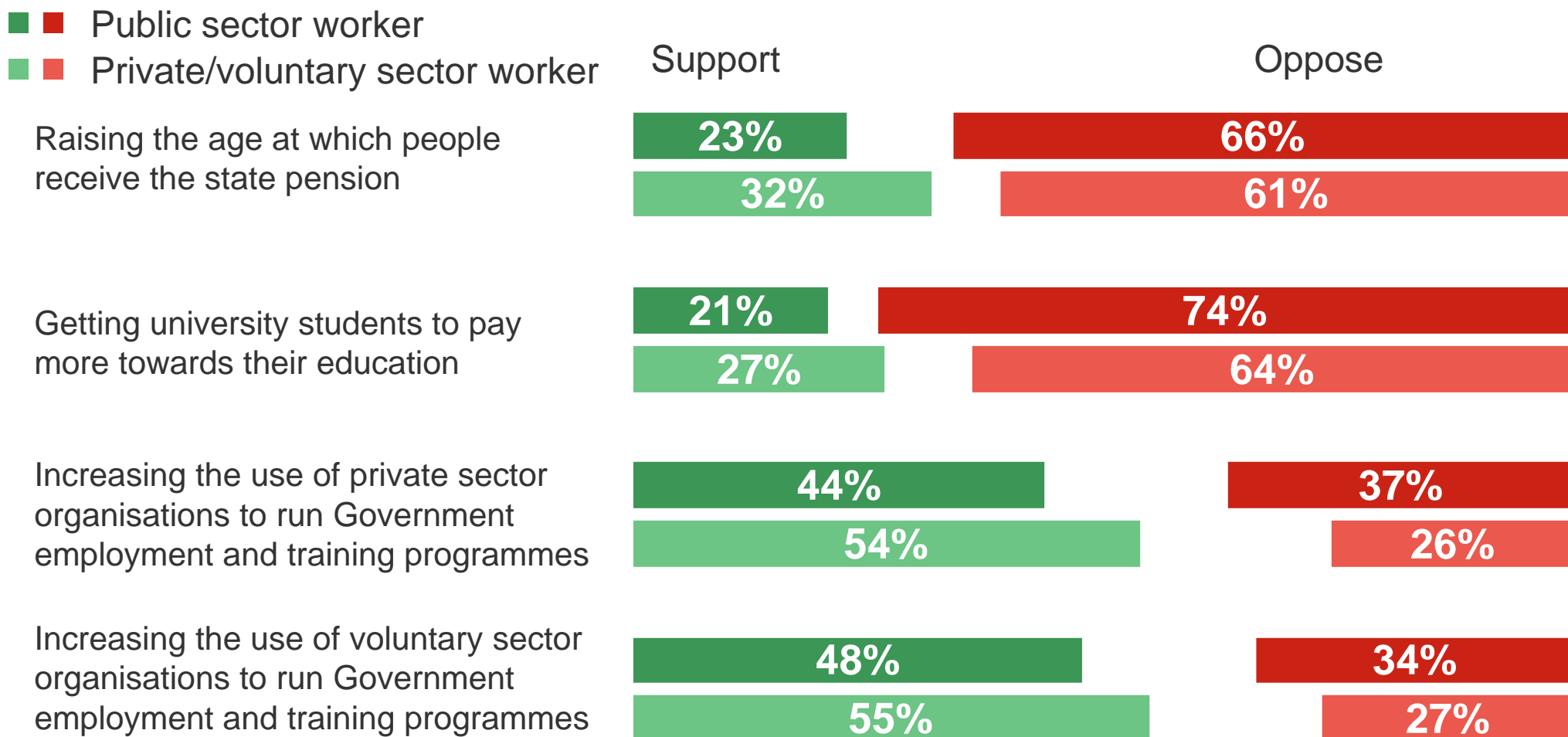
Base: 1,002 adults in Great Britain aged 16+. Fieldwork dates: 13-19 May 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

# Public sector workers compared to private/voluntary sector

24

*To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following ways of reducing the deficit?*



Base: 268 adults in Great Britain aged 16+ in work. Fieldwork dates: 13-19 May 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI



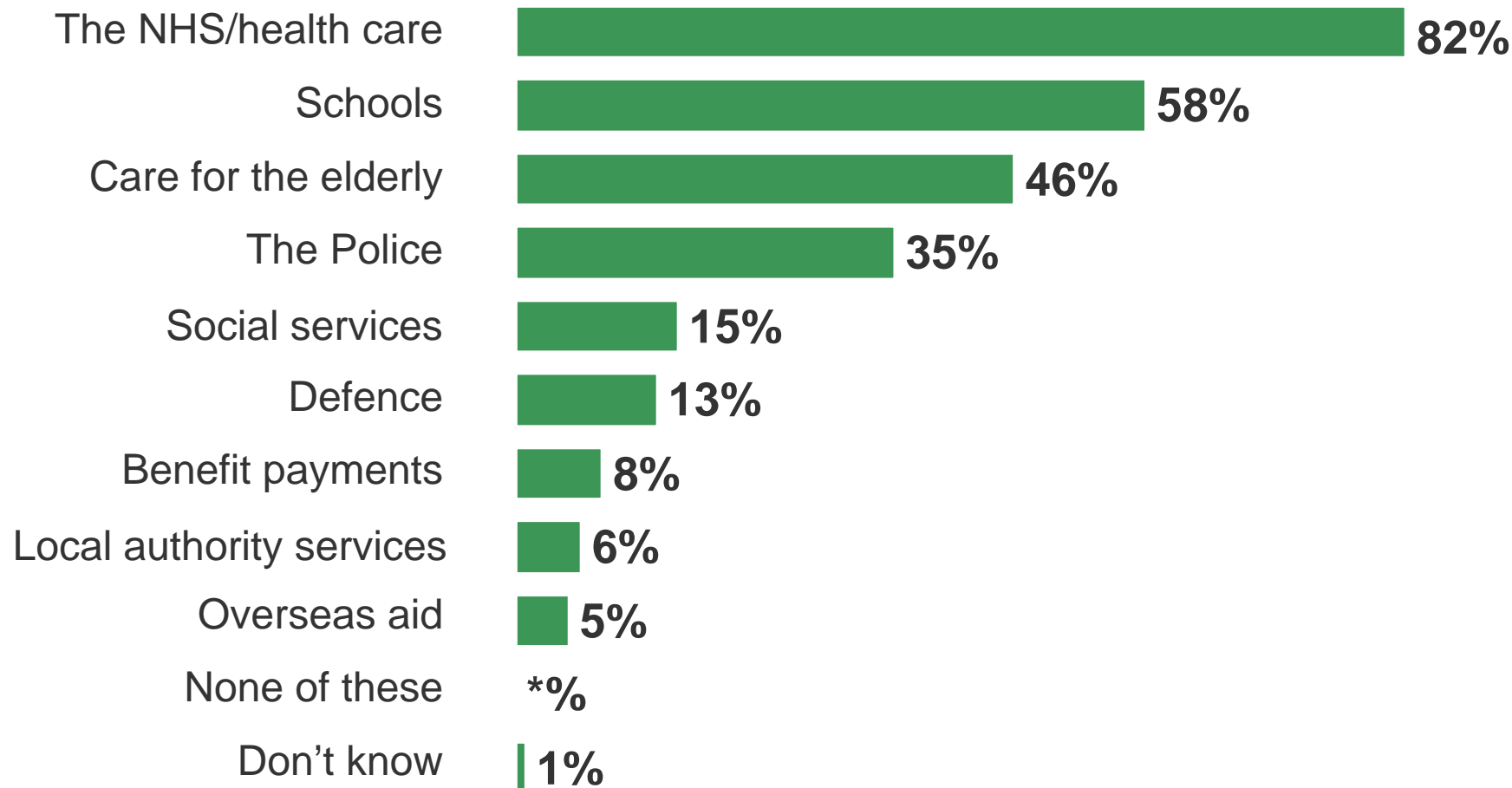
“The departments for health, defence and international development will also make savings but they will be reinvested in their front lines.”

Speech by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne MP, on the OBR and spending announcements (17 May 2010)

# The public agree that the NHS and schools should be 'ring-fenced'

26

*Which TWO or THREE, if any, of the following main areas of public spending do you think **should be protected from any cuts**?*



Base: All who think some services should be protected (773), June 2009

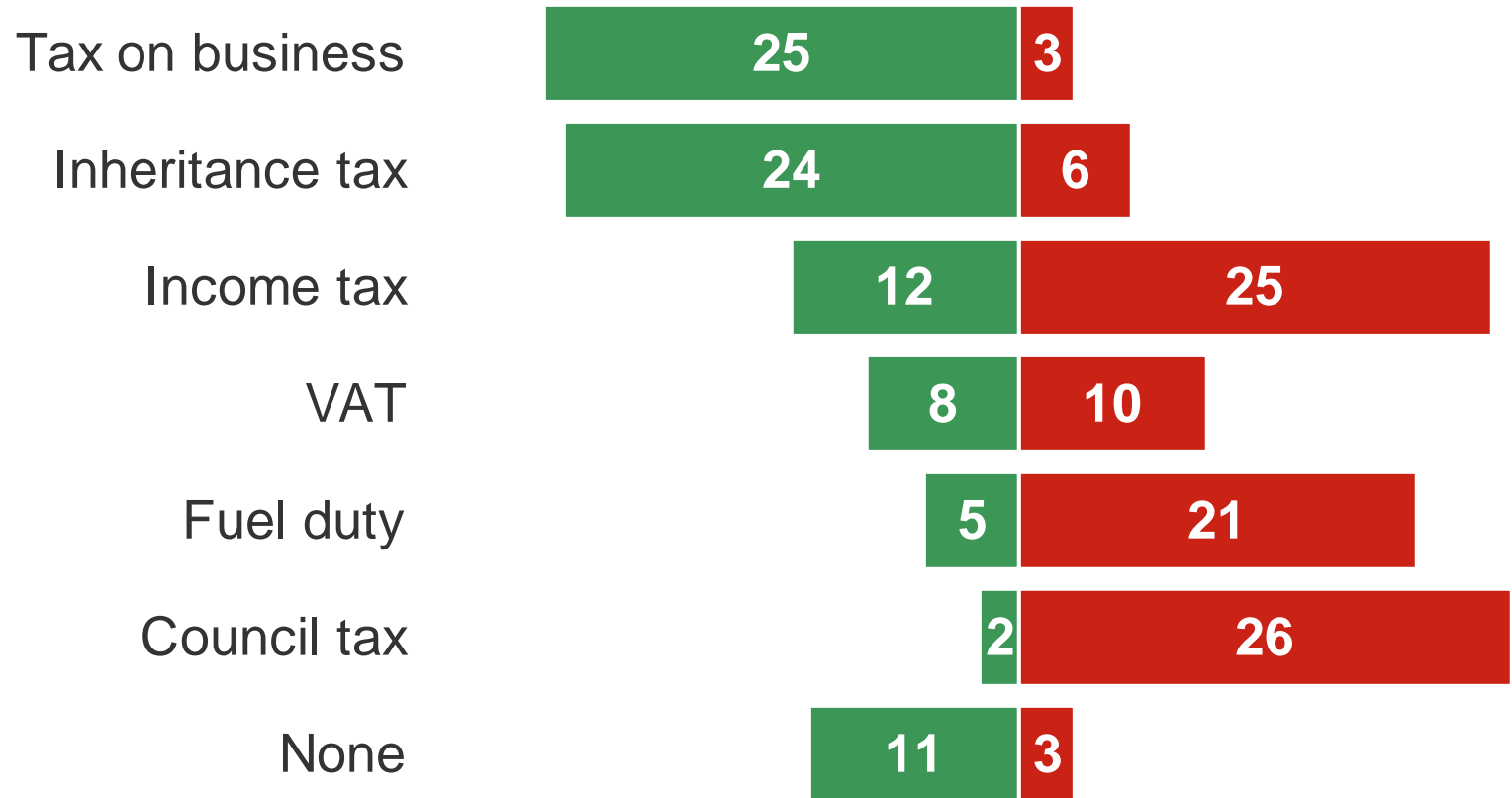
Source: Ipsos MORI Public Spending Index

# But, if you have to tax, don't tax me!

27

*In order to bring the nation's debts under control, many experts think it is highly likely that the level of taxation will increase in future. If taxes were to rise, which of these, if any, would you be most/least in favour of being increased?*

■ % Most ■ % Least



Base: 1,041 online British adults aged 16-64, September 2009

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI/ RSA



- Strong opposition to user charging, esp. for core services e.g. GP
  - Concern about unintended consequences – will people who need services avoid them because of having to pay?
  - Administrative burden of making it work in practice – e.g. if means testing and variable charging were required
- But are those who can see advantages – in particular, higher earners and infrequent users of public services
  - Potential to drive service improvements and reduce perceived dependency
  - ‘Fairer’ for infrequent users?
  - Resistance to user charging on top of existing tax burden – would need to be linked to systemic change

# To illustrate...

29

*User charging could work if we were paying less tax... I'm happy to pay a lot higher when I use it as a one off. But I'm not going to pay my taxes and then have user charging, that's ridiculous*

Male, Net contributor to public services,  
London

*I've called the police about three times in my life. I don't drive, I don't intend to drive. So in theory, this sounds kind of good for my lifestyle*

Female, 25-39, Oxford

Do the public want to  
have a say in decisions  
about spending cuts?

# Two in five want to either have more of a say or get actively involved in how decisions about spending cuts are made

31

*Which of these statements comes closest to your attitude towards how decisions about cuts to public services are made?*

I'm not interested in knowing how decisions about cuts to public services are made, as long as the government consults relevant experts

22

I would like to know how decisions about cuts to public services are made, but I don't want to be involved beyond that

36

I would like to have more of a say in how decisions about cuts to public services are made

29

I would like to become actively involved in how decisions about cuts to public services are made

11

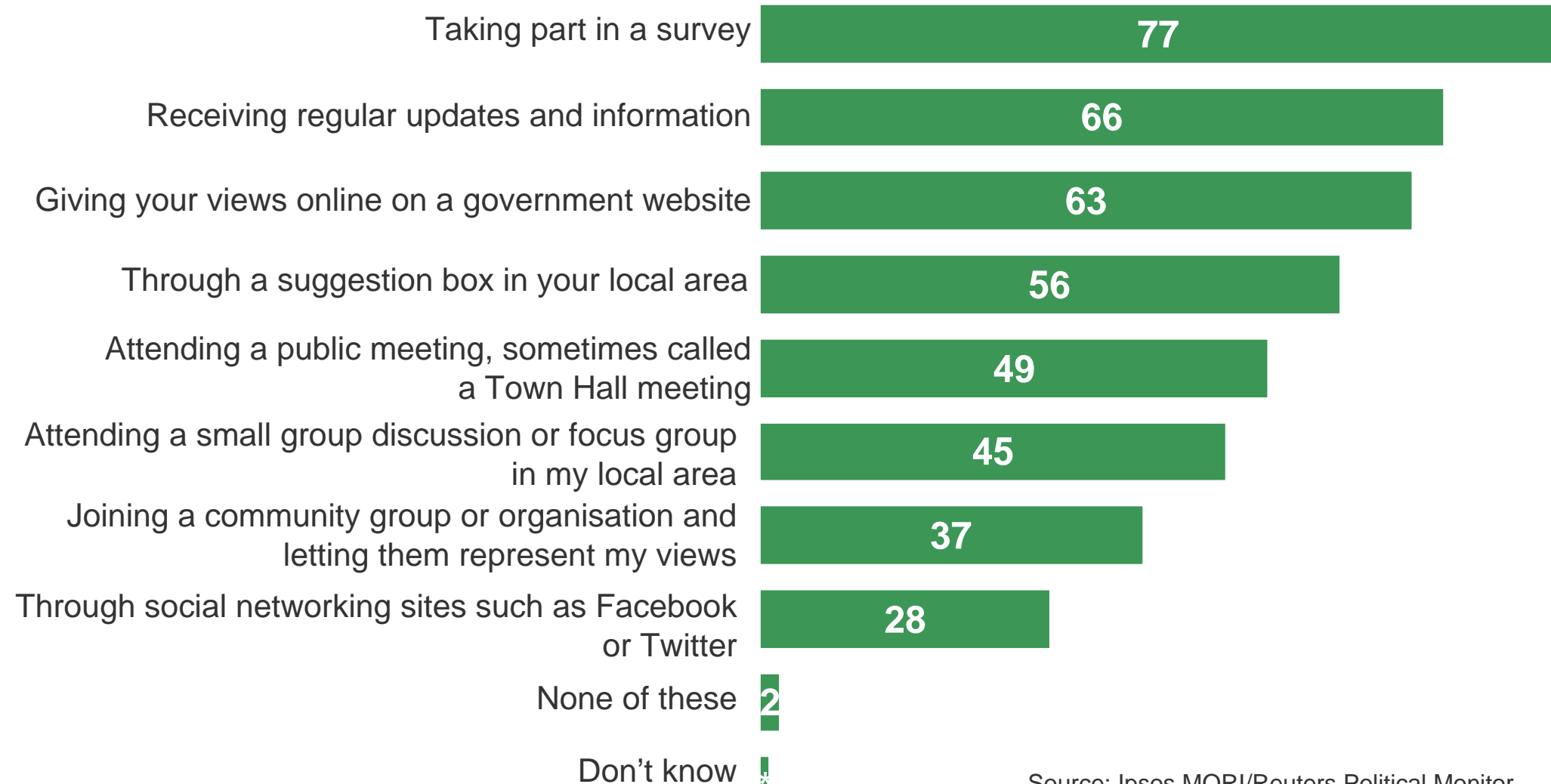
Don't know

2

# How people say they would prefer to participate

32

*Which of these statements comes closest to your attitude towards how decisions about cuts to public services are made?*





## 4. The options for public service reform

# #1: Local control and decentralisation

"...the days of big government are over; centralisation and top-down control have proved a failure.

We believe that the time has come to disperse power more widely in Britain today; to recognise that we will only make progress if we help people to come together to make life better."

Coalition agreement (May 2010)

People are in favour of  
greater local control in  
principle – but are  
concerned about  
fairness

# What do people value in public services?

37

- Security is at the core
  - Unwilling to countenance risks to 'safety net'
  - Of course we want flexibility, responsiveness and other desirable features – but are more willing to trade these off
- Fairness is also key but not straightforward – different meanings
  - Uniform provision
  - Minimum standards
  - Looking after 'deserving' vulnerable

*When unexpected things come up, something that's out of your hands, you need help. You need to know that the support, the guidance, the help is there when you need it most.*

Male, 25-39, Oxford

*On one side of the street I'm in TN23, then in TN24, TN23 can have something and TN24 can't. Now, when it comes to public services, the word public should be across the board*  
Male, 40-64, Kent

Source: Ipsos MORI/2020 Public Services Trust, 2010

# Want more local control – but worried about local variation

38

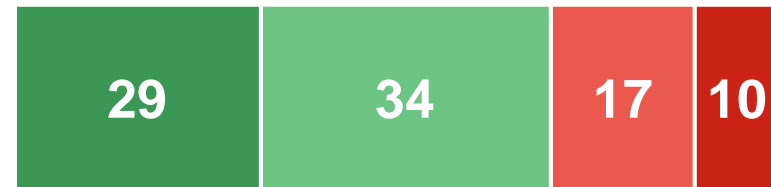
*To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:*

■ % Strongly agree   ■ % Tend to agree   ■ % Tend to disagree   ■ % Strongly disagree

**People should have more control over how public services are provided locally**



**People should have more control over how public services are provided locally, *even though it will mean that the services residents receive will vary between local areas\****



Base: 631 British adults 18+.

Fieldwork: 18-19 April 2010

\*Base: 622 British adults 18+

Source: Ipsos MORI/Economist

# Local control initially welcomed, but implications worry people

39

- Greater localism (area budgets, co-ops etc) welcomed in theory
  - Give more control to people who understand areas
- But concerns about how it would work in practice
  - How would decisions be when people disagree?
  - What happens if (when) things go wrong?
  - Interest group capture?
  - Do people have time to be involved?

*See, it sounds like a really good idea, but you still need someone looking over it... making sure it's all equal. If only the pushy parents are there, what about the other people?*  
Female, 25-39, Oxford

*They've got to have a national standard. There's got to be a baseline that they have to work to, but then councils that have this amount of money, so long as the standards are met, they can actually have the flexibility to use that money in a way that community needs.*

Male, 40-64, Kent

# Directly accountable local leadership?

40

- Electing leaders of local public services has spontaneous appeal
  - Having a say over how local services are run
- Also holds out promise of improved accountability
- And putting a human face to a particular service
- But concerns around practicalities
  - Would the public know enough to make an informed choice?
  - Some concerns about the expertise and suitability of candidates
  - Low turnout?

*If there is a name there for the PCT but if you do not know the person, how do you know how to vote for the person?*

Female, 65+, Kent



- Local control welcomed in principle
  - Makes intuitive sense to people that those who live and work in a local area are best placed to understand its needs
- But more cautious about reforms when think through further
- ‘Empirical streak’ – will be important to demonstrate local control can work in practice
- Top-down vs bottom-up approaches to decentralisation
- And desire for reassurance about national standards

## #2: Recasting the relationship between citizen and state

"We want local communities not only to have greater ownership of local problems, but to have more power to change them.

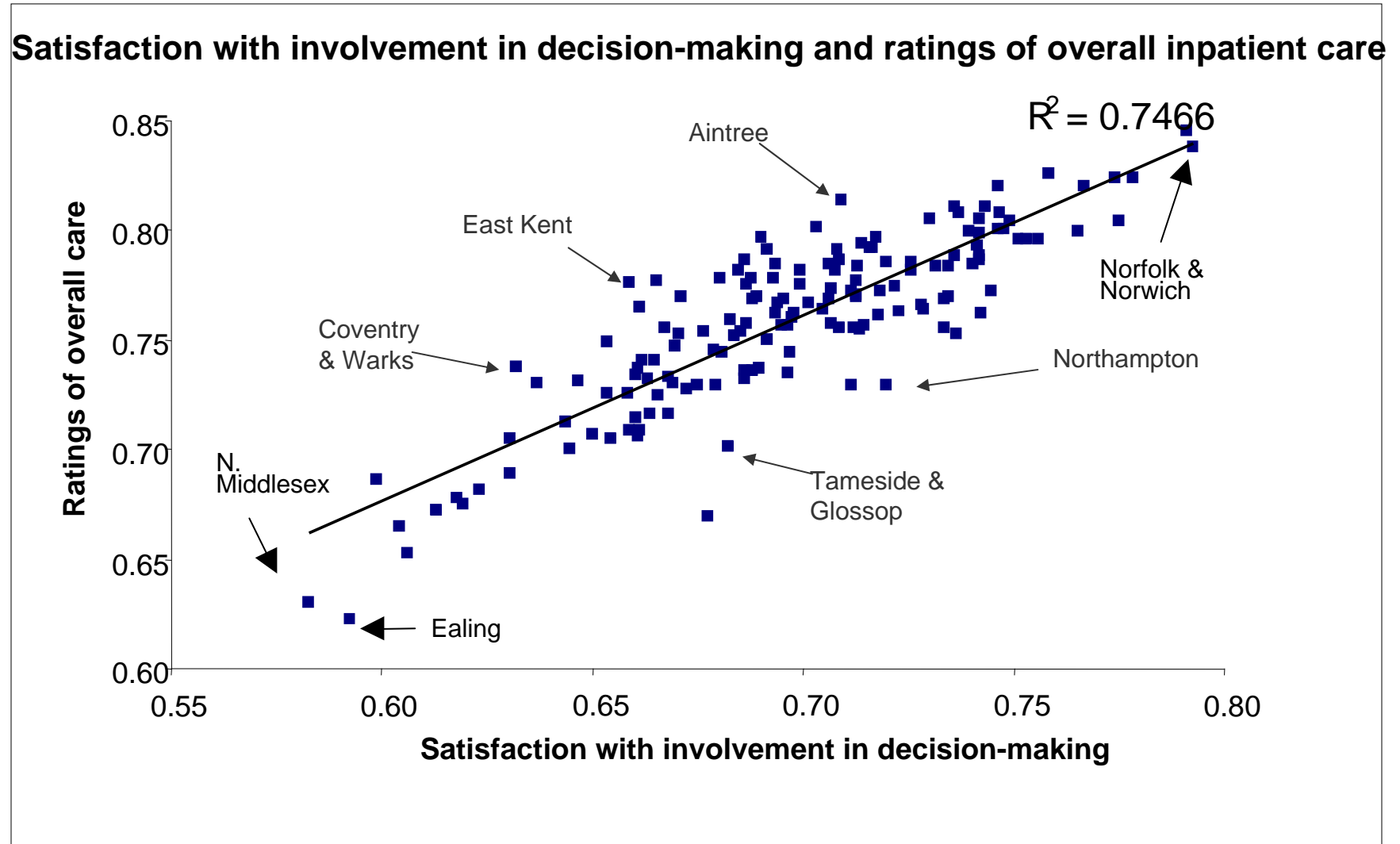
We want public services to be answerable to those who use them, so that it is parents, patients and community groups who shape how they work and what they do."

Speech by Francis Maude MP, 'Leading your charity through a time of change' (9 June 2010)

Evidence suggests that  
people taking more  
responsibility for  
getting involved can  
make a real  
difference...

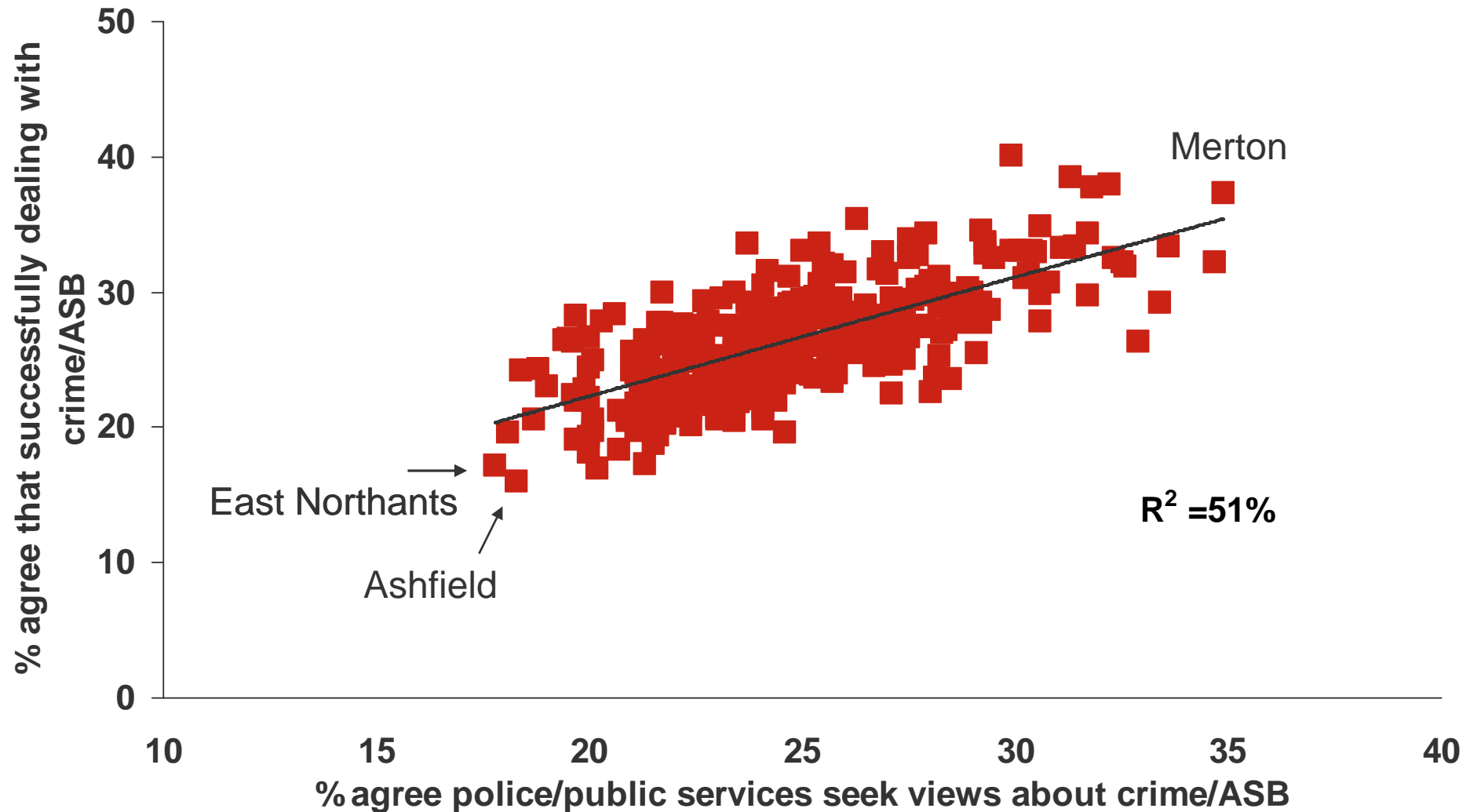
# Correlation between being involved in decision-making and happier patients

45



# Those who feel consulted are also more likely to feel issues are being successfully dealt with

46



Base: All valid responses, Place Survey 2008/09 (Excludes City of London)

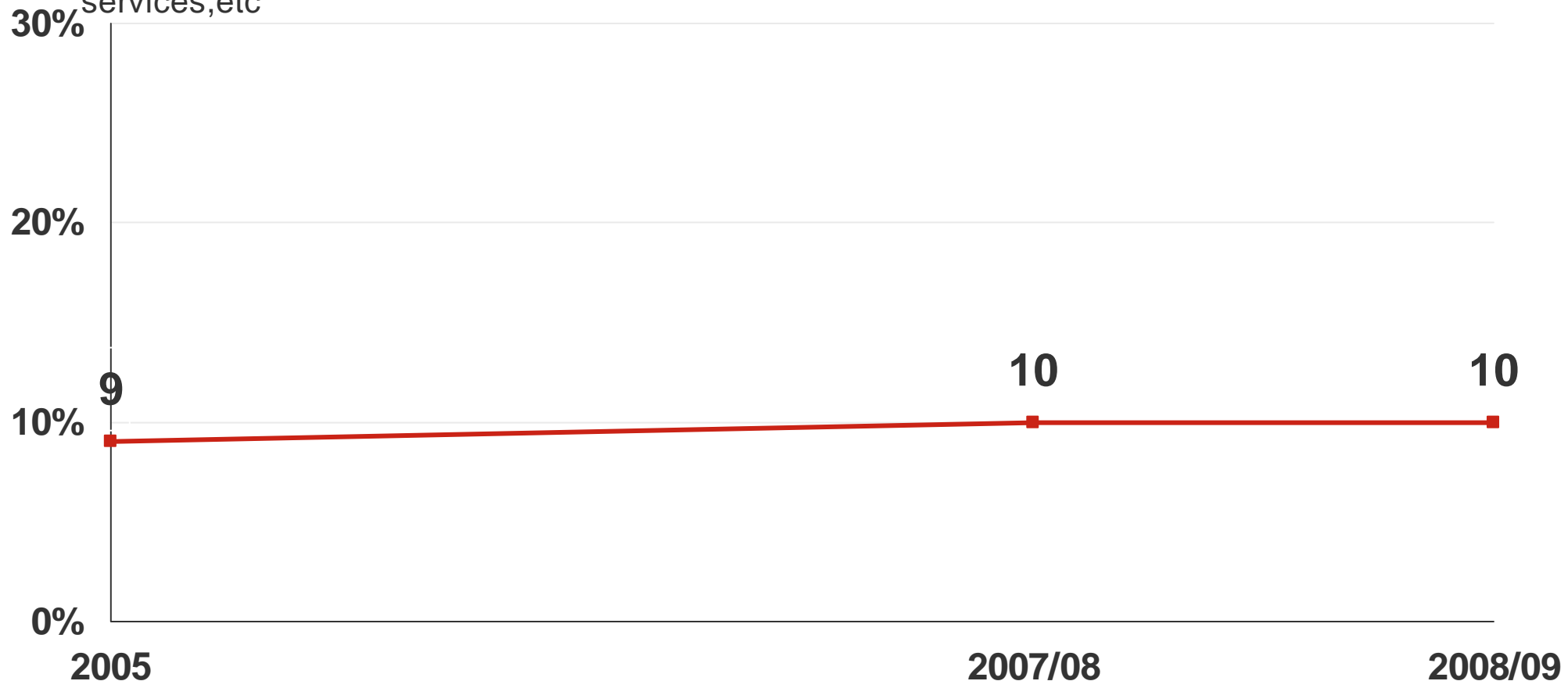
Source: Ipsos MORI

# But currently only a small proportion usually get involved in civic activism

47

Proportion who have participated in at least one listed activity in past 12 months

— Civic activism activities: becoming a local councillor, school governor, volunteer Special Constable or Magistrate or participating in local residents groups on issues such as health, crime, education, services, etc

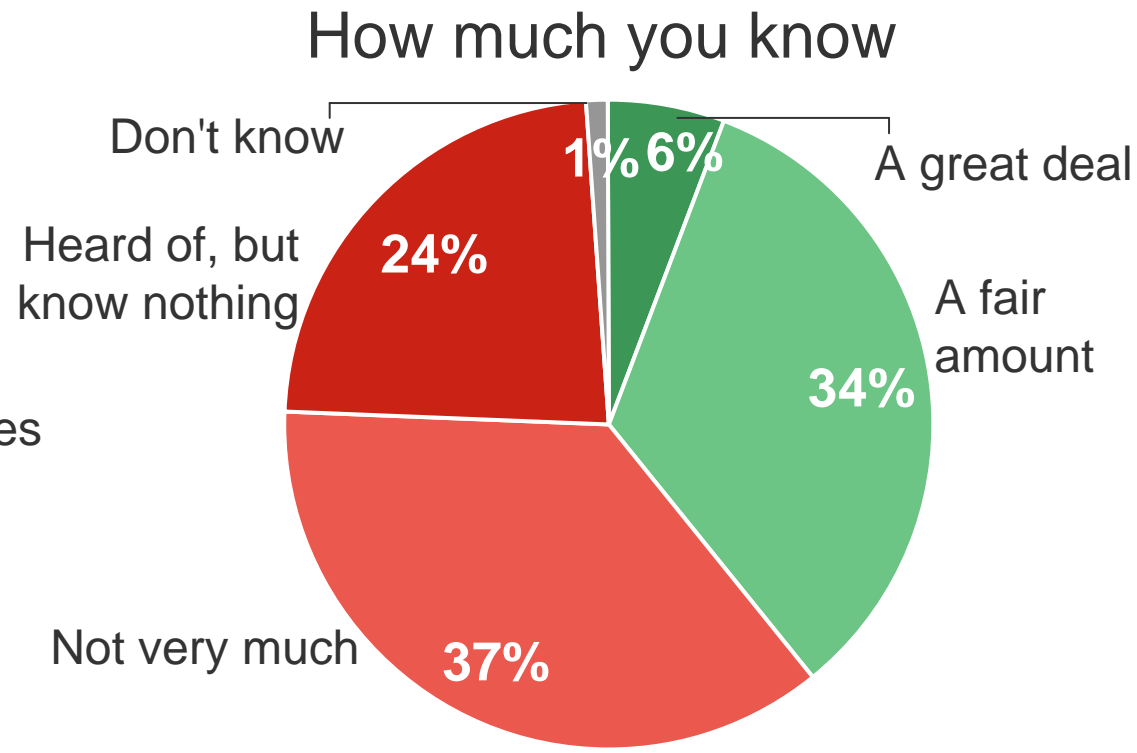
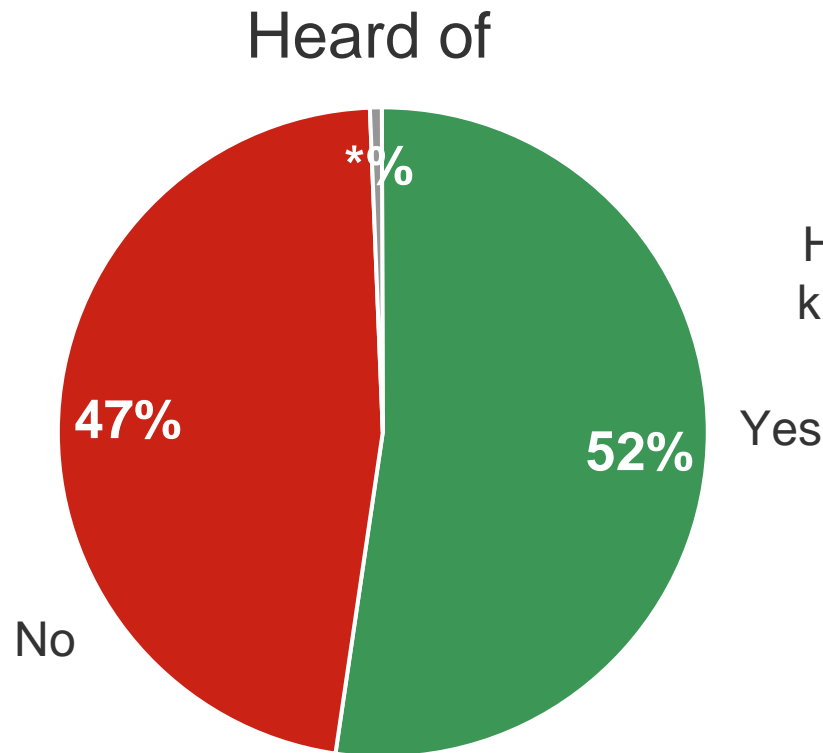


Base: All valid responses from core sample in England (~8,000 surveyed per wave)  
Source: Citizenship Survey

Many have heard about the 'Big Society', but few know a lot about it – although awareness and knowledge have increased since May

48

- Q During the recent election campaign David Cameron and the Conservative Party talked about their plans to create a “Big Society” in Britain. Do you remember hearing anything about this, or not?
- Q How much, if anything, do you feel you know about their plans for a “Big Society”?



Base: 1,009 British adults 18+ 544 British adults 18+ who remember hearing about 'Big Society'.

Fieldwork dates: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> July 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI/Reuters Political Monitor



# "People" should get more involved – though the government is responsible too

49

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:*

■ % Strongly agree   ■ % Tend to agree   ■ % Tend to disagree   ■ % Strongly disagree

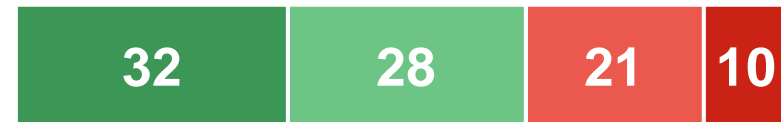
People in Britain should get more involved in helping improve our public services and local areas



I should get more involved in helping improve our public services and local areas\*



The government is responsible for improving public services and local areas, they shouldn't be calling on the public to help\*\*



Base: 417 British adults 18+.

\*Base: 420 British adults 18+

\*\*Base: 416 British adults 18+

Fieldwork: 18-19 April 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI/Economist

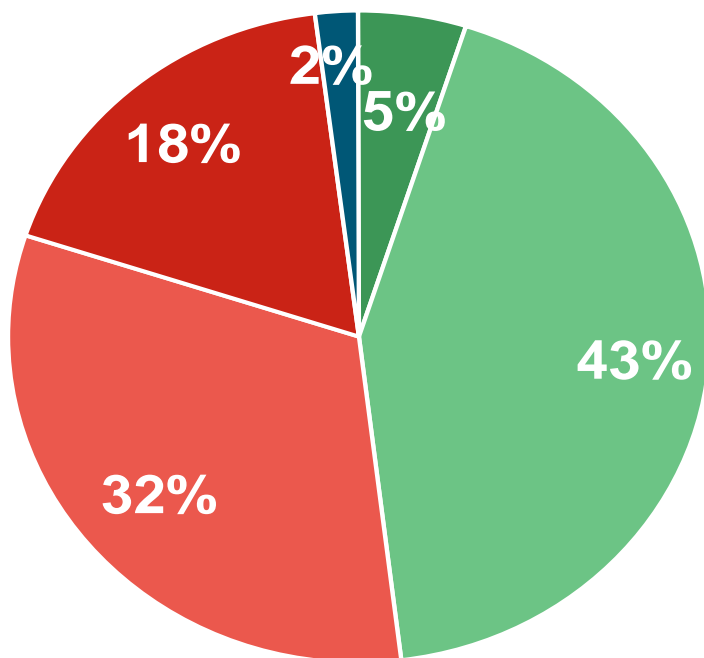
# Around half say they would get more involved locally

50

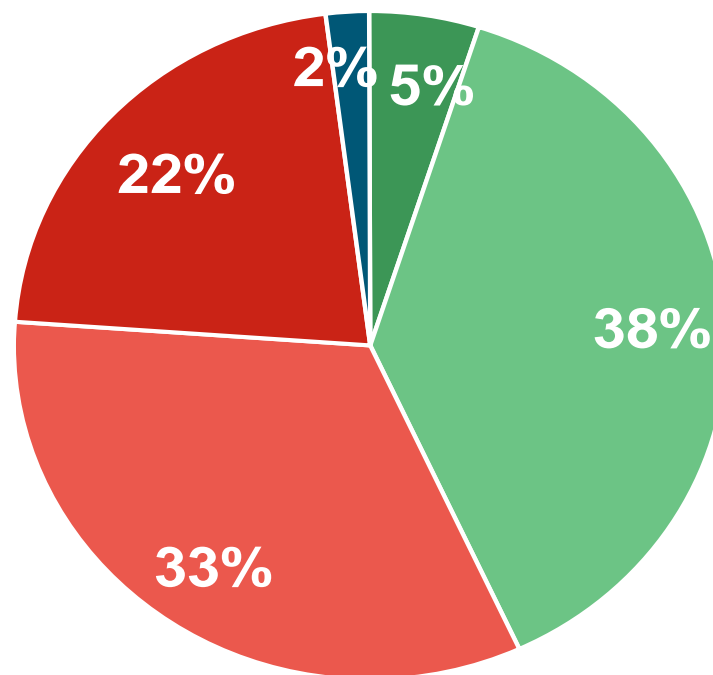
*To what extent, if at all, would you like to be involved in decision making in . . . .*

■ Very involved ■ Fairly involved ■ Not very involved ■ Not involved at all ■ Don't know

**Your local area?**



**The country as a whole?**



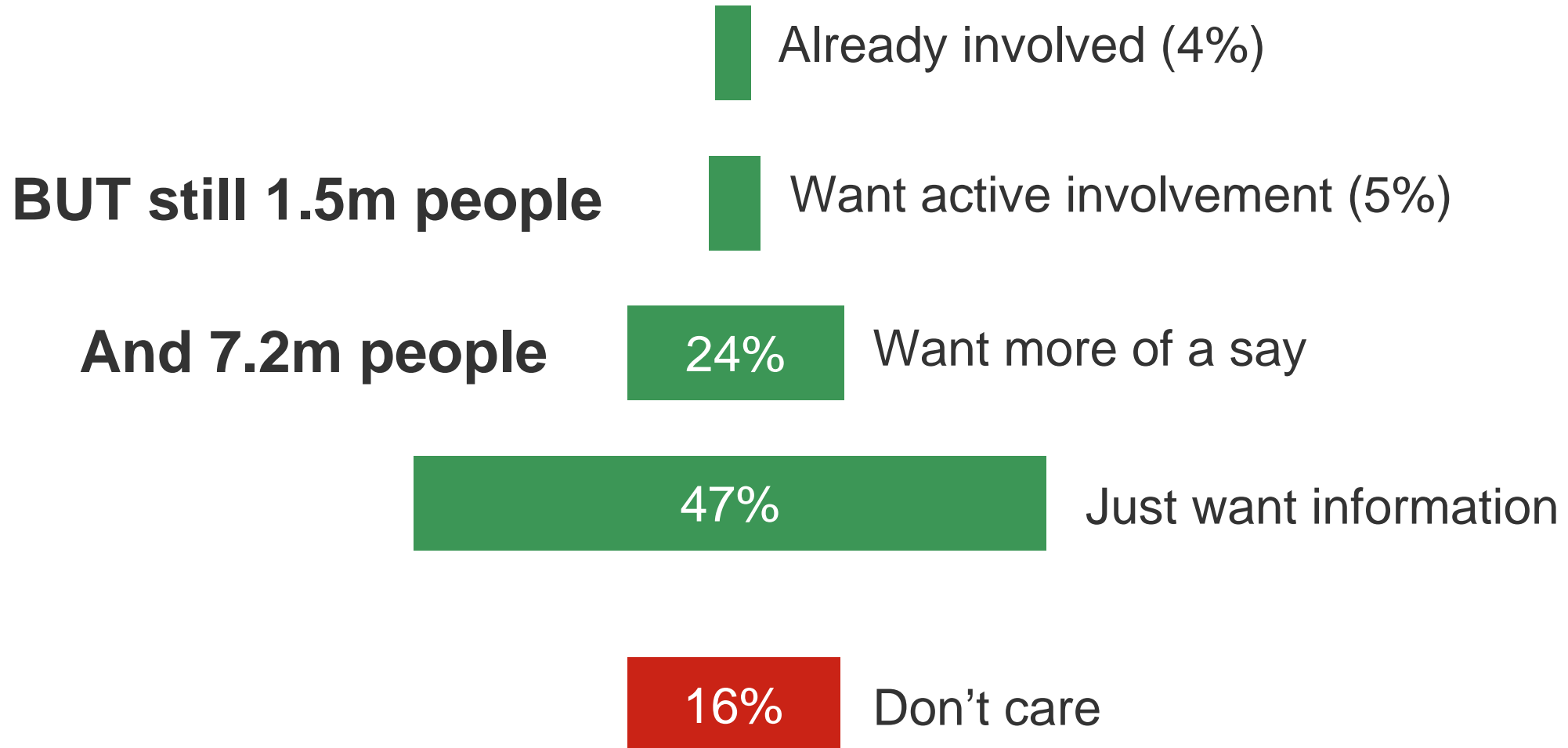
Base: 1,051 British adults 18+. Fieldwork dates: 11th - 17th December 2008

Although when asked in more detail, 5% want active involvement, 24% want a say and the rest happy with information or don't care...

# ...BUT that's still nearly 9 million people who say they want to influence more

52

*Levels of involvement/interest in involvement in local services*

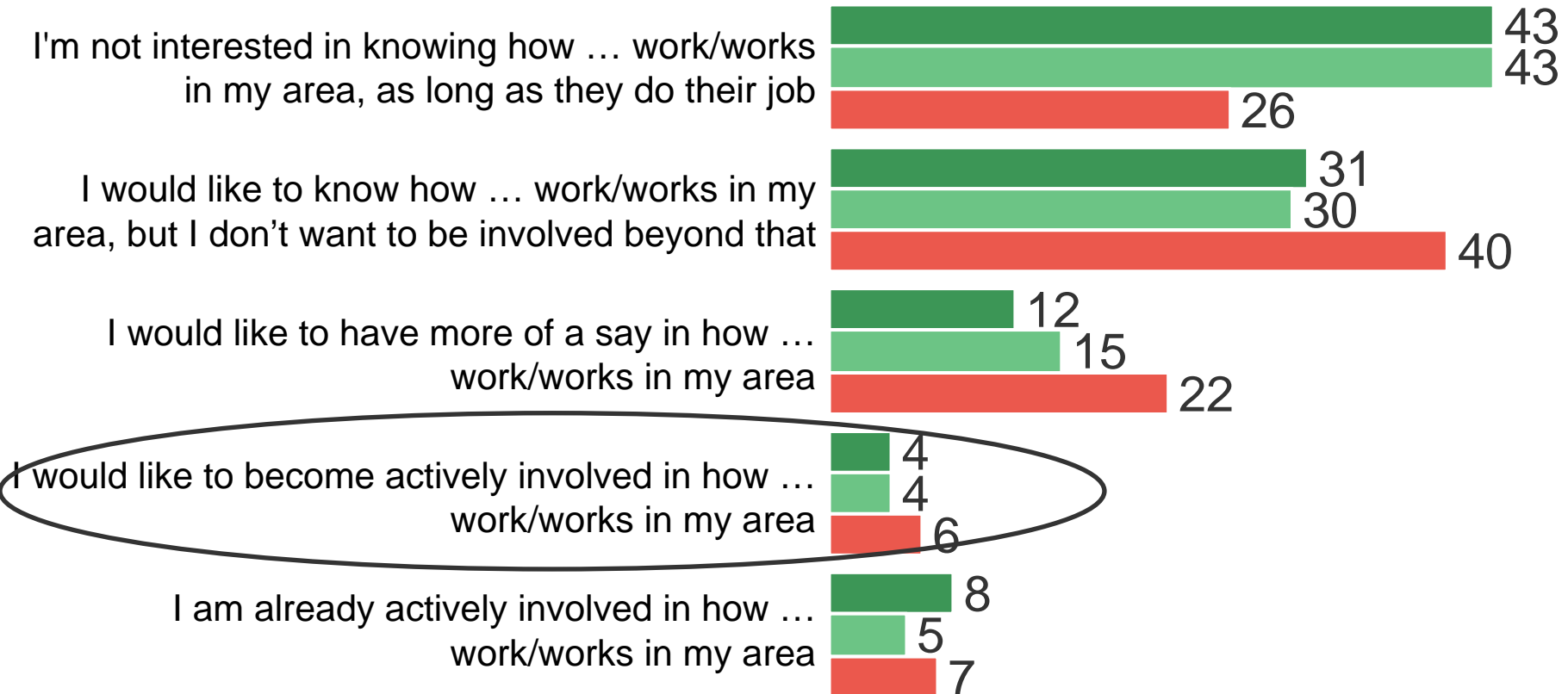


# Few say they want active involvement – though more willing where feel it will make a difference?

53

*Which of these statements comes closest to your own attitude towards how ... work/works in your area?*

■ % Primary Schools ■ % Secondary Schools ■ % The health service



Base: 1,002 adults in Great Britain aged 16+. Fieldwork dates: 13-19 May 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

# Few say they want active involvement – though more willing where feel it will make a difference?

54

*Which of these statements comes closest to your own attitude towards how ... work/works in your area?*

■ % Primary Schools ■ % Secondary Schools ■ % The health service



I would like to know how ... work/works in my area, but I don't want to ...

I would like to have ...

I would like to become active ...

I am already active ...

work/works in my area

*If I knew that an organisation was going to get money that me and the organisation could use then I would definitely get involved... I would be prepared to try something that we feel would work.*

*Female, 18-30, Afro-Caribbean, Birmingham*

Base: 1,002 adults in Great Britain aged 16+. Fieldwork dates: 13-19 May 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

- Most will need more than a “nudge” to go further on individual responsibility/big society
  - But many examples of successful behaviour change in health, local government...
- Want to feel *able* to influence – but more challenging to involve people in practice
- About tapping into reserves of interest in services that people care about most?
  - Potential for involvement if feel makes a difference
- Think about who you start with
  - Which groups are you trying to engage?

# #3: Alternative service providers and channels



“We will support the creation and expansion of mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises, and enable these groups to have much greater involvement in the running of public services.”

Coalition agreement (May 2010)

There is general support for greater involvement from the voluntary and private sectors – especially in non-core services – but some need to be convinced

# Mixed views of private sector involvement - and low awareness of voluntary/charity sector capabilities

59

- Private sector seen as efficient by some
  - But concerns about the impact of the profit motive
  - Previous experiences not always good
- Low awareness and misunderstanding of third sector role
  - Do they have the right skills?
  - Can volunteers really provide services?

*With the best will in the world, a voluntary person is not as skilful at the job as someone who was employed and paid to do the job, we would hope anyway.*

Male, 65+, Kent

*A lot of services would obviously be better if there was competition...but there has got to be certain services that are provided no matter what and don't work for a profit, they have a conscience.*

Female, 16-24, London

# Charities and not for profits are top-of-mind for more emotive service attributes

60

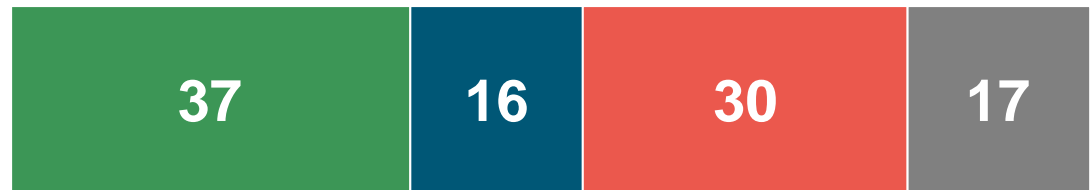
*Some charities and some private companies receive funding from government to provide certain public services, such as healthcare services, care for the elderly, services for disabled people etc. Other public services are provided directly by public authorities such as the NHS or local councils. **Of these three types of service provider, which one do you think would be BEST at...***

■ % Charities / NFP orgs   ■ % Private companies   ■ % Public authorities   ■ % Don't know

**Providing a caring and compassionate service**



**Understanding what service users need**



Base: 1,001 British adults, 20-26 November 2009

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI



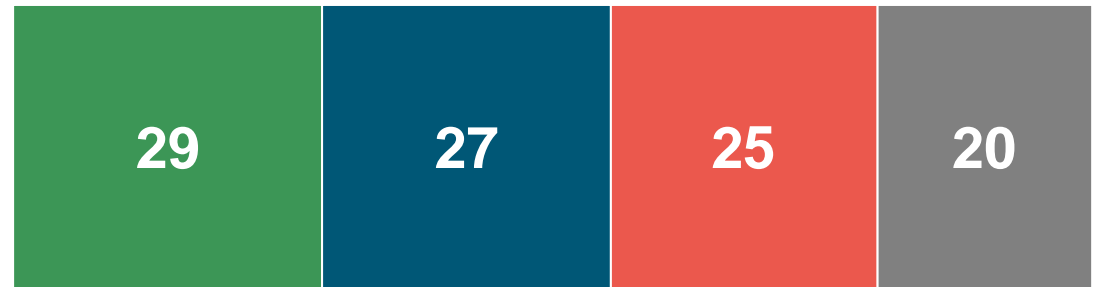
# Attitudes to best provider for quality of service are more mixed

61

*Some charities and some private companies receive funding from government to provide certain public services, such as healthcare services, care for the elderly, services for disabled people etc. Other public services are provided directly by public authorities such as the NHS or local councils. **Of these three types of service provider, which one do you think would be BEST at...***

■ % Charities / NFP orgs ■ % Private companies ■ % Public authorities ■ % Don't know

**Providing the best quality of service for the money**



**Providing a professional and reliable service**



Base: 1,001 British adults, 20-26 November 2009

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI



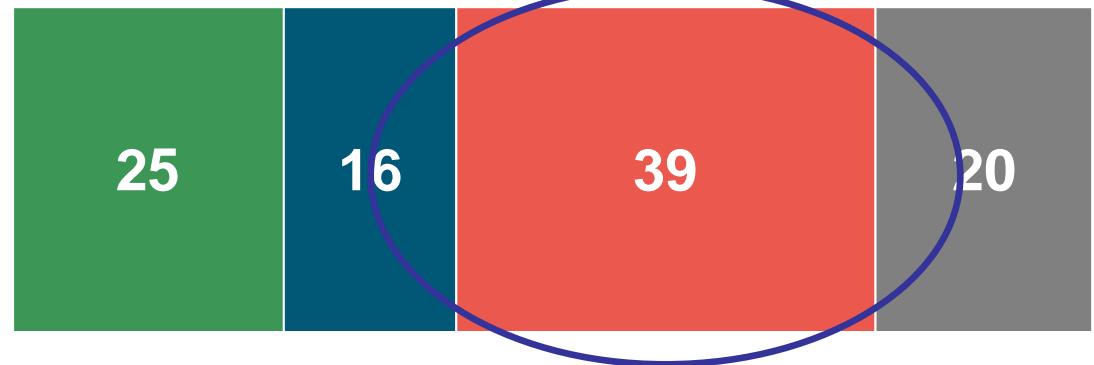
# ...and charities / NFPs do need to fit into context of wider service provision

62

*Some charities and some private companies receive funding from government to provide certain public services, such as healthcare services, care for the elderly, services for disabled people etc. Other public services are provided directly by public authorities such as the NHS or local councils. **Of these three types of service provider, which one do you think would be BEST at...***

■ % Charities / NFP orgs   ■ % Private companies   ■ % Public authorities   ■ % Don't know

**Deciding exactly what type of service should be provided**



Base: 1,001 British adults, 20-26 November 2009

Ipsos MORI

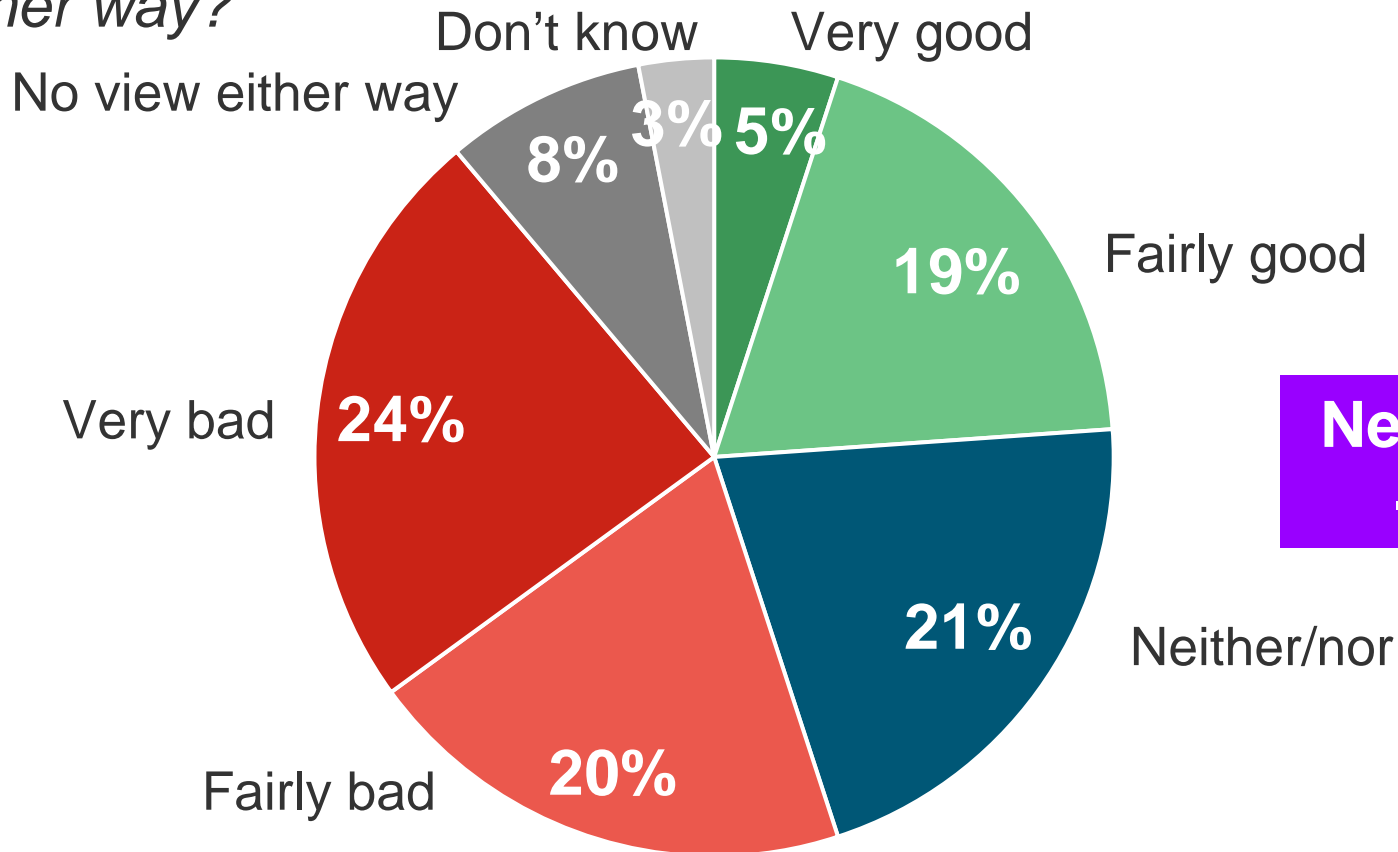
Source: Ipsos MORI



# Schools - the public are not positive about alternative providers to the local council

63

*Some people have suggested that more schools in the future could be run directly by private companies, religious groups, charities or groups of parents, rather than being run by the local council as they generally are now. How far do you believe this is a good or bad idea, or do you have no view either way?*



**Net good:  
-20%**

Base: 1,211 adults aged 15+ in England, 5-11 March 2010; Ipsos MORI Capibus for NASUWT/Unison

- Desire for public sector to deliver services well
  - Can be hard to see value in switching to alternative providers
- But is support for voluntary/private sector doing more
  - e.g. running employment/training programmes
- Private sector broadly seen as effective
  - But concerns about profit motive
- Little awareness of voluntary sector playing a role in service delivery
- More acceptable for non-core services?
  - e.g. less positive on alternative providers of schools



# #4: Navigating public services

"We'd empower consumers by giving them real choice in the public services they use. Where practical, we'd do this through individual budgets, placing commissioning power in the hands of the citizen and opening up provision to a diversity of providers."

Philip Hammond MP, *Understanding Society* (Ipsos MORI winter 2009)

People like the idea of  
being given more control  
– as long as they can  
make informed choices

# Individual budgets welcomed – but concern about some not being able to take advantage

68

- Recognition that this allows individuals to take more control over a specific service
  - Better way to address the complexity of individuals' circumstances
- Works best when individuals are capable of navigating services well?
  - Informed choice seen as important
  - Perceived need for guidance and advice to enable good decision-making
  - Some concern about fraud

*I know a little girl who gets direct payments and I know her father doesn't use that money, I know all these things are audited, but he doesn't use that money... he goes to a separate company to get the care, but he also pays somebody privately... it's a bit of a dodgy grey area*

Female, 40-64, Kent

# Idea of citizen advisors received positively – reflects desire for guidance in navigating services <sup>69</sup>

- Resonates with much of what people value in public services
  - Reassurance that they are able to receive what they are entitled to
  - Appeals to sense of fairness – since seen to benefit those who are more vulnerable and may need additional help to access services
- Idea of interacting with an independent expert welcomed
  - Responsiveness to individual circumstances and needs
  - ‘Human face’ of public services
- Added bureaucracy and cost are concerns for some

*Most people don't know what they should be getting really. With this, you get what you're entitled to*

Female, 40-64, Stockport

*What I'm against is a whole swathe of advisors mushrooming up. I'm keen that the expense is kept to a minimum so the maximum goes into the actual project*

Male, 40-64, Oxford

- Policy ideas that offer help and guidance in navigating public services viewed positively
  - Public keen to see responsiveness and flexibility of service
  - Direct human interaction welcomed – reflects view that services (& customer service more widely) increasingly don't provide this
- But recognition that trade-offs have to be made in difficult fiscal climate
  - Potential to improve relationships between services and those who use them – but cost and bureaucracy?
  - 'Nice to have' rather than core to delivering good services?

# #5: Delivering more with less

"We need to put priority on the things that matter most to patients. We need to see the service from the patients' point of view, to listen to patients, to shift power down through the system – and, where possible, to put power and control into the hands of patients themselves."

Speech by the Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP, Secretary of State for Health, 'My ambition for patient-centred care' (8 June 2010)



**High-performance public services also tend to be those that are focused around users' needs...**

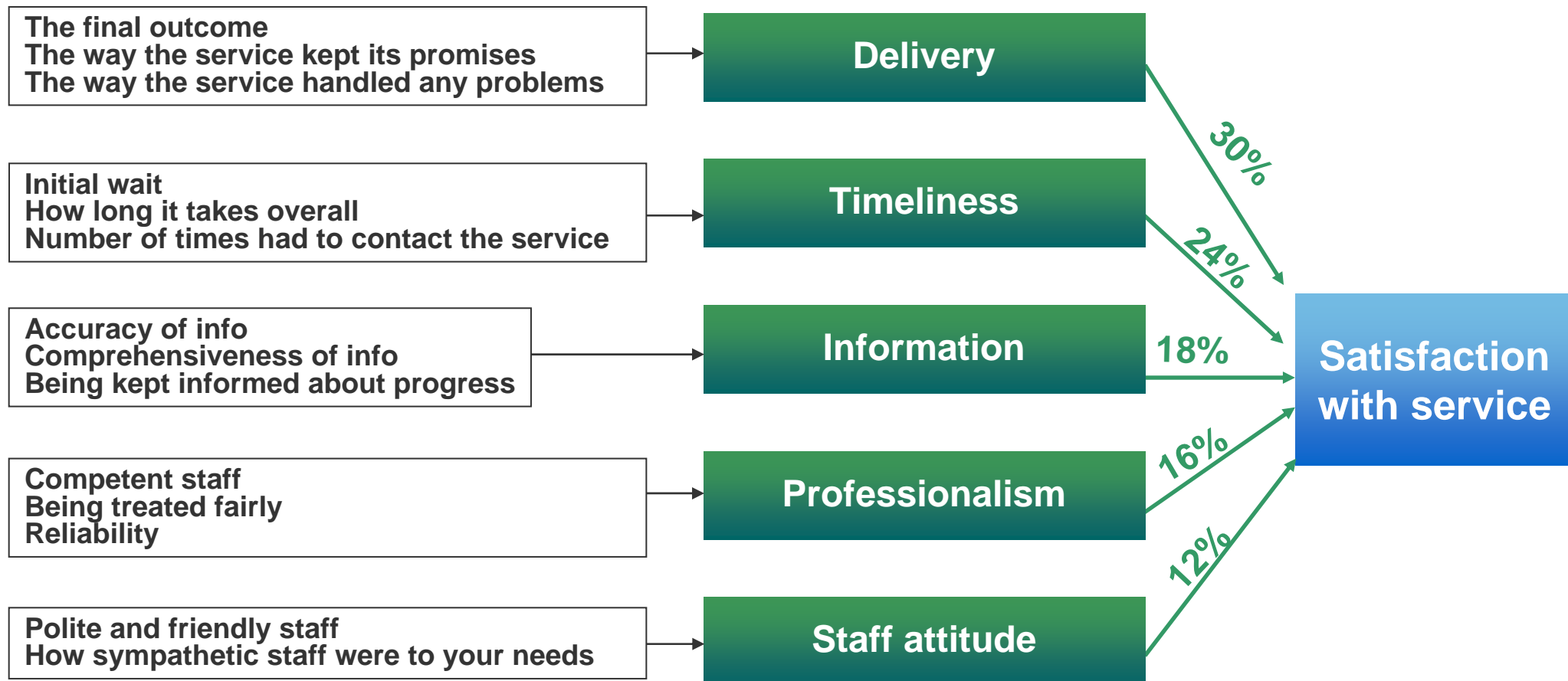
**...which means we need to understand what makes most difference to users' views**

# Public services need to give users what they need quickly and clearly, and with a human face

74

## Main elements

## Drivers



Source: Ipsos MORI

# In the NHS it's about dignity, involvement and cleanliness

75

$R^2 = 90.9\%$

Ratings of overall inpatient care

***So by itself dignity and respect explains over half of patients' experience***

**Acutes**

**59%**

Dignity & respect

**28%**

Involved in decisions

**13%**

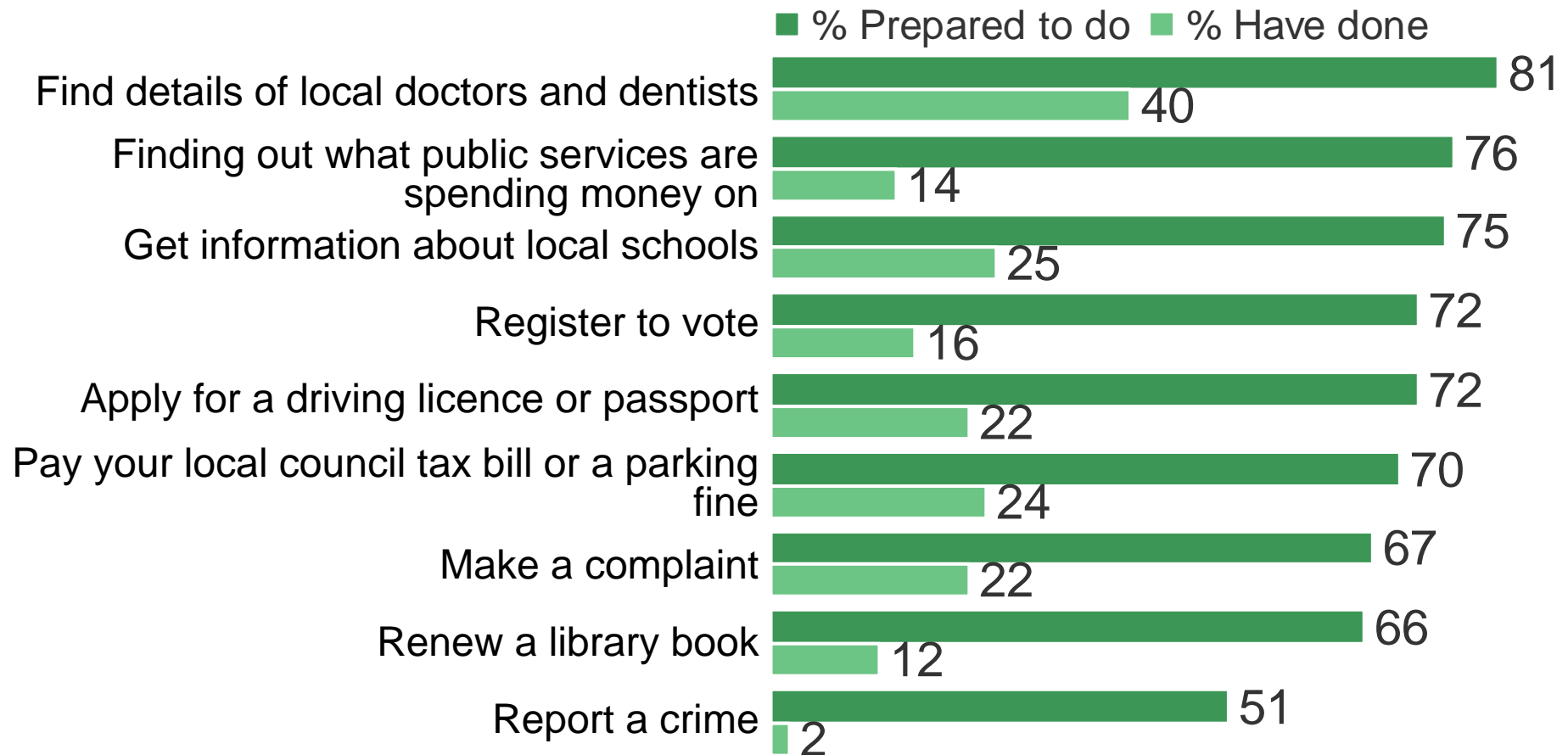
Cleanliness of room  
& ward

# Scope for encouraging users to use more efficient channels – but need to understand what drives them

76

Q Thinking about public services, which, if any, of the following would you be prepared to do online?

Q And which have you actually done online in the last 6 months?



Base: 1,002 adults in Great Britain aged 16+. Fieldwork dates: 13-19 May 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

- Prioritisation and simplifying/streamlining services are important themes in times ahead
  - Working better with partners to provide joined-up, more efficient services – eg Total Place
- Focusing on what users want and need from services remains essential
  - Can be a virtuous circle – helping to drive efficiencies
  - Track customer views => enables you to focus on what makes most difference
- Important to understand where there is most potential for public to accept changes that drive efficiencies
  - Both in how services are delivered and how they interact with them

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