

Answers to Questions on Notice

Australian Catholics for Equality

Proof Hansard Transcript | Page 13+14 | Monday, 23 January 2017

Question:

CHAIR: I will just go quickly to questions. I would invite short answers, because we have got three senators here to ask questions and only 15 minutes, so we will try to be fairly brief. Mr Oh, you have made of comments there about the majority of Catholics supporting your position. I am just wondering how you have come to that figure and how you have measured that?

Mr Oh: Over several polls. I think poll after poll has suggested very clearly that Australian Catholics—I think the Crosby Textor one was one and the Compass one was another one in the lead-up to the election. In my work in ministry, that has also been the case. With parishioners and people who we have worked with—whether they are parents, friends or colleagues within Catholic communities—that has been an ongoing reality.

CHAIR: Catholics for Equality, could you give the committee an understanding of how many people you represent and how many are members of your organisation?

Mr Oh: Catholics for Equality is a grassroots movement. We have represented organisers all over Australia. We are largely based online, but we also meet collectively with the Rainbow Catholics InterAgency for Ministry. The Rainbow Catholics InterAgency for Ministry is a collective of different groups that includes a parents and friends group, a clergy group, other Catholic organisers and LGBTIQ organisers who are Catholic, of course.

CHAIR: Sure. I am trying to get some context here. We clearly have the organisational side of the Catholic church appearing tomorrow in Sydney, who represent some hundreds of thousands of Australians. I am just trying to get a feel for how many people your organisation represents.

Mr Oh: Sure.

CHAIR: I am happy to take that on notice if you cannot tell me offhand. Dr Mayman, can I come to your comment about your role as a celebrant. I am interested that you mentioned that you have the discretion to decide not to conduct a marriage if you have concerns. I think you cited awareness of abuse as one reason for not conducting a marriage. Is that correct?

Australian Catholics for Equality **Community Members:**

Australian Catholics for Equality are community members from the diverse spectrum of Australian society that celebrates the gifts and the lived experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) Catholics as part of our lives.

As a Catholic grassroots community movement we share news, information, resources in advocating for the rights and the dignity of LGBTIQ members of our community. We provide forums where we are able to discuss the issues affecting LGBTIQ members of our Australian Catholic community beyond that of the conversation around civil marriage equality.

We count amongst our community members the majority of Catholics (67%) who **strongly support** civil marriage equality according to the Crosby/Textor Same-sex Marriage Research 2014 as attached with this clarification. These are the Catholic voices who are often silenced or ignored by both church and civic leaders. *Australian Catholics for Equality* allows such a space and avenue for solidarity, interaction and visibility.

On a singular campaign in regards to the protection of the anti-LGBTIQ bullying *Safe Schools program*, we had over 500 community members who supported the initiative, over 2,000 community members that helped us in our campaign which reached over 115,000 people on Facebook alone.

Amongst our community members are Catholics who have been directly discriminated against because of their LGBTIQ identity or for their support of LGBTIQ-affirming causes, including those Catholics who have support civil marriage equality.

A community of *Australian Catholics for Equality* exists to provide a space where community development through conversations, sharing of information and community organizing is possible in order to advance the health, wellbeing and human rights of LGBTIQ persons.

You will find our community page on <https://australiancatholicsforequality.org/>

and via Facebook on <https://www.facebook.com/australiancatholicsforequality/>



CROSBY | TEXTOR
RESEARCH STRATEGIES RESULTS

Same-Sex Marriage Research 2014

Summary Results

27th June 2014

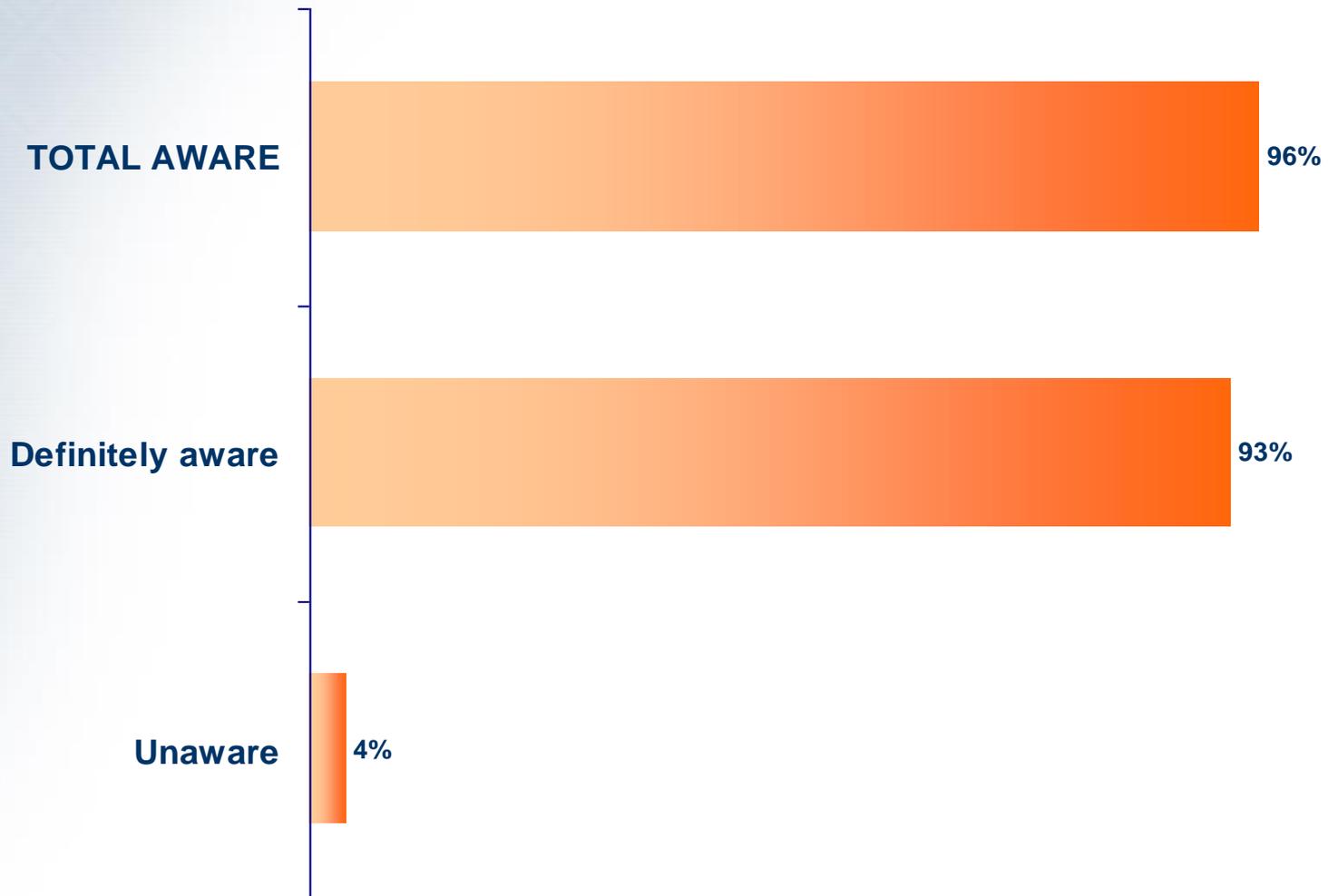


Summary Methodology

- These findings are based on quantitative research conducted independently by Crosby|Textor between 12th – 22nd June.
- Telephone (CATI) survey using trained and accredited fieldwork staff.
- A questionnaire used to measure awareness and importance of, and support or opposition to, same-sex marriage (and a conscience vote in it).
- N.B. The questionnaire was carefully designed to avoid any ordering bias effects, with only geo-demographic / lifestyle questions preceding the above.
- n=1000+ sample of voters (adults aged 18+ years) nationwide, with random samples at the regional cluster level, i.e. local rather than only national.
- +/-3.1% max. margin of error (at the 95% confidence level).
- Quotas on area, age, sex, etc., and weighted to AEC population estimates.

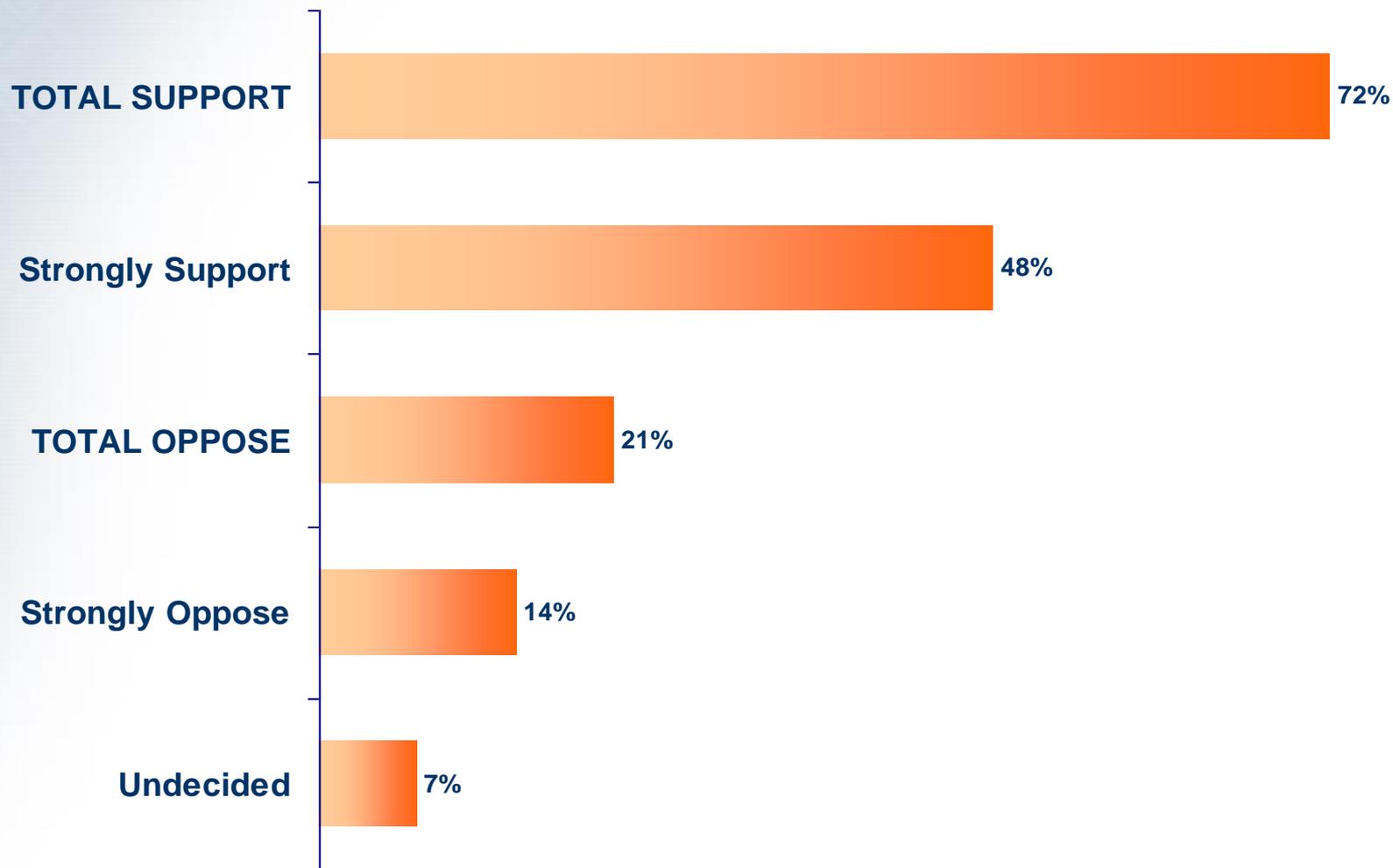


Awareness that same-sex marriage is not yet legal in Australia is almost universal. Only 4% of the population are unaware of this fact.



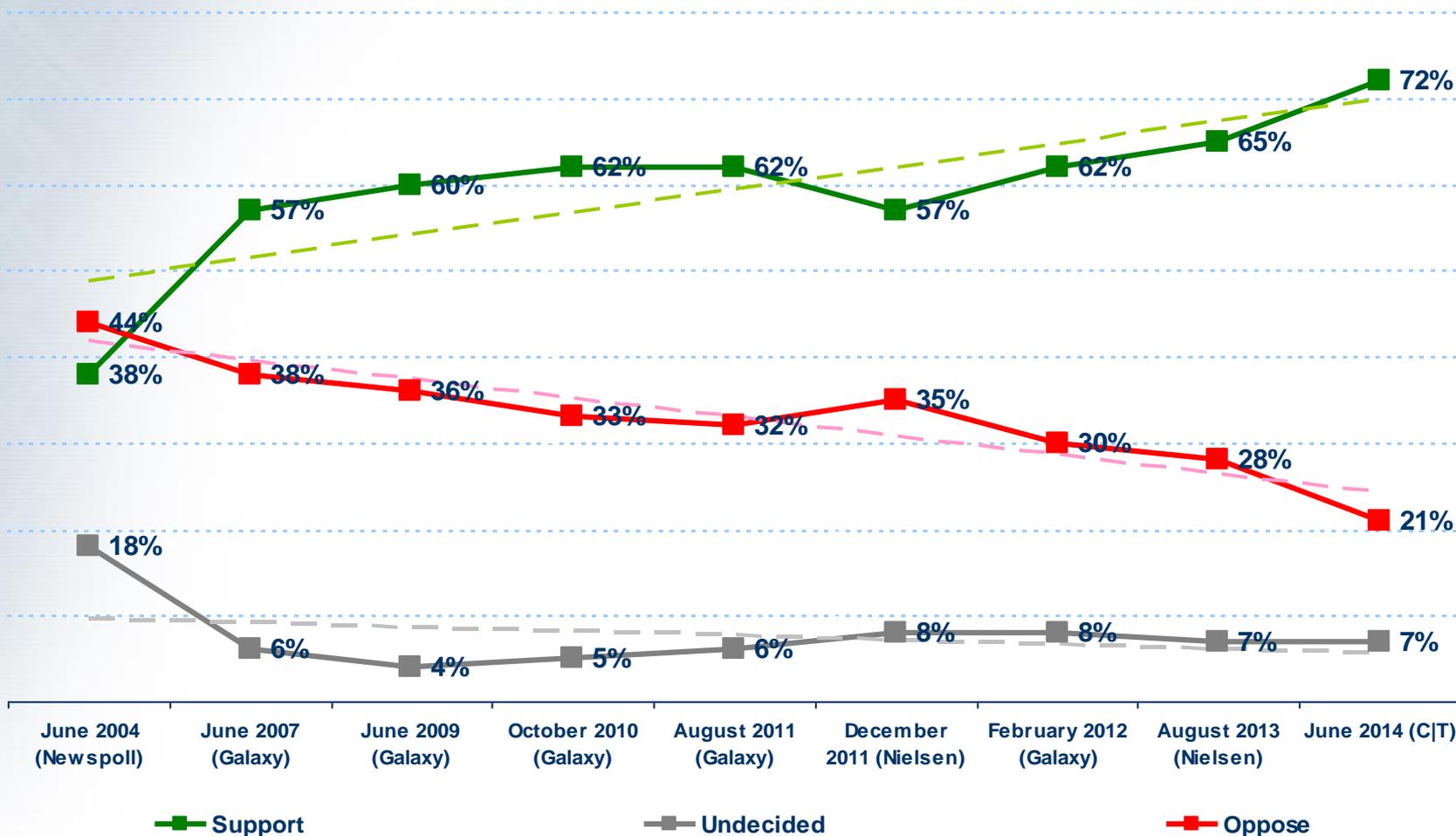


Support for same-sex marriage is in the majority, with nearly three-quarters supporting, and almost half strong supporters. Only around a fifth are opposed to any degree.





This is the highest level of total support and lowest level of opposition ever recorded in a national poll (noting varying question wording), and represents a clear trend.



Q) Based on what you know at this point in time, would you support or oppose allowing same-sex couples to marry in Australia?

N.B. Various wording used in previous published polls



This table shows the level of total support for same-sex marriage in various geo-demographic and lifestyle groups, with more supporting than opposing in all of these groups.

Overall support 72%

Very Strong Support (>75%)

- Female 18-34 (90%)
- Female 35-54 (88%)
- 18-34 years (85%)
- Employed part-time (85%)
- 35-44 years (85%)
- Have dependent children (85%)
 - Females (83%)
 - Students^ (81%)
- Male 18-34 (81%)
- Non-religious (81%)
- University educated (80%)
- 35-54 years (79%)
- Never married (79%)
- Employed (79%)
- Know someone gay (76%)
- NSW (75%)

Strong Support (>67%)

- Non-Christian religious (75%)
- Employed full-time (74%)
- Unemployed^ (74%)
- 45-54 years (73%)
- Home duties^ (73%)
- Technically educated (73%)
- Anglo / European (72%)
- Non-Anglo (72%)
- Victoria (72%)
- Aware not legal (72%)
- SA (71%)
- Female 55+ (69%)
- WA (68%)
- Ever married (68%)
- Catholic (67%)

Supporters (<67%)

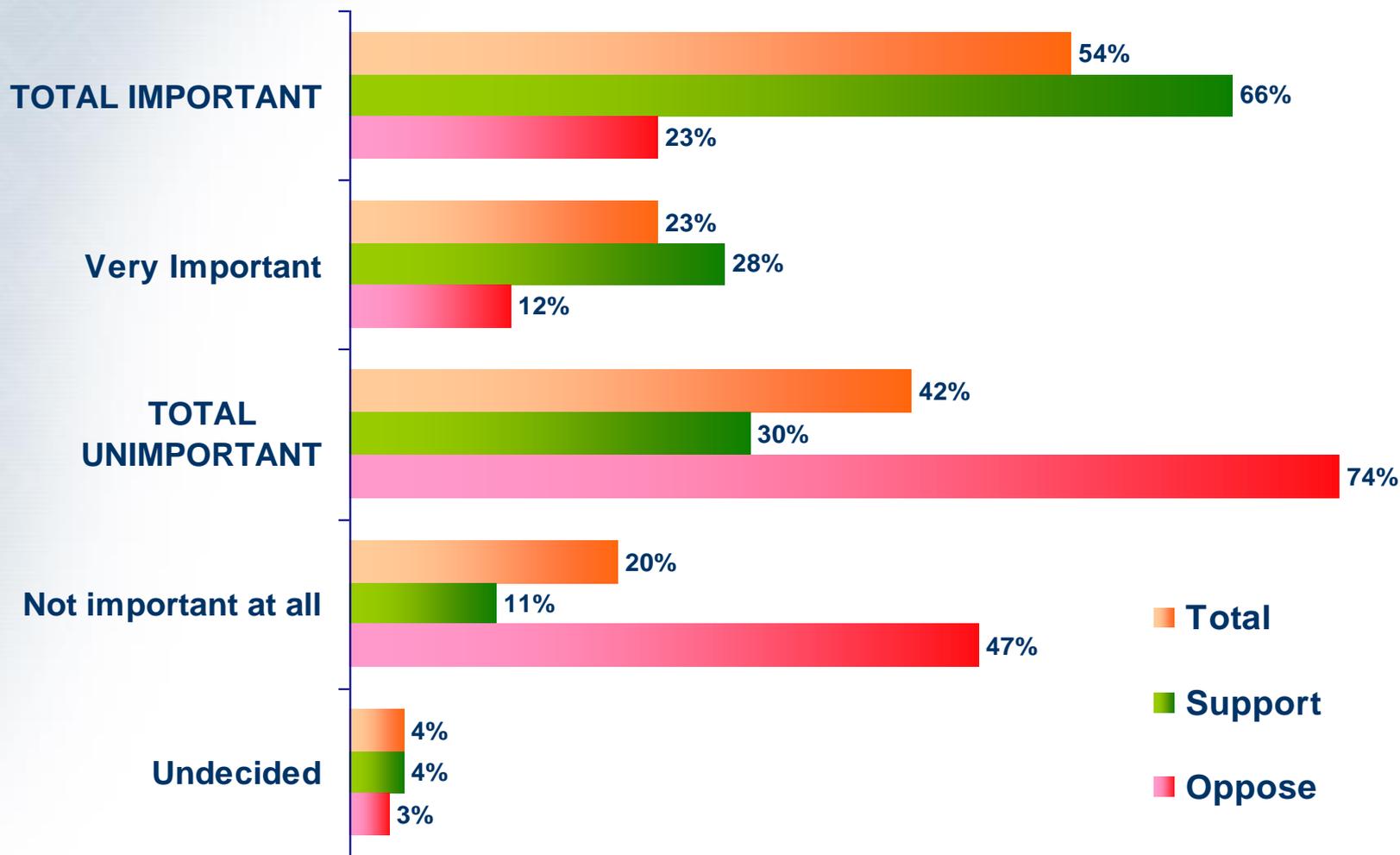
- Male 35-54 (66%)
- No children (64%)
- School educated (63%)
- Not employed (62%)
- 55-64 years (61%)
- Males (61%)
- Tasmania (60%)
- Unaware not legal (59%)
- Christians (59%)
- Anglican / CoE / Uniting (57%)
- 55+ years (54%)
- Retired / pension (52%)
- Don't know gay* (50%)
- Other Christian* (49%)
- 65+ years* (48%)
- Male 55+* (42%)

Q) Based on what you know at this point in time, would you support or oppose allowing same-sex couples to marry in Australia?

^ Groups <n=60 sample (<n=30 have been omitted) * More people support than oppose in these groups

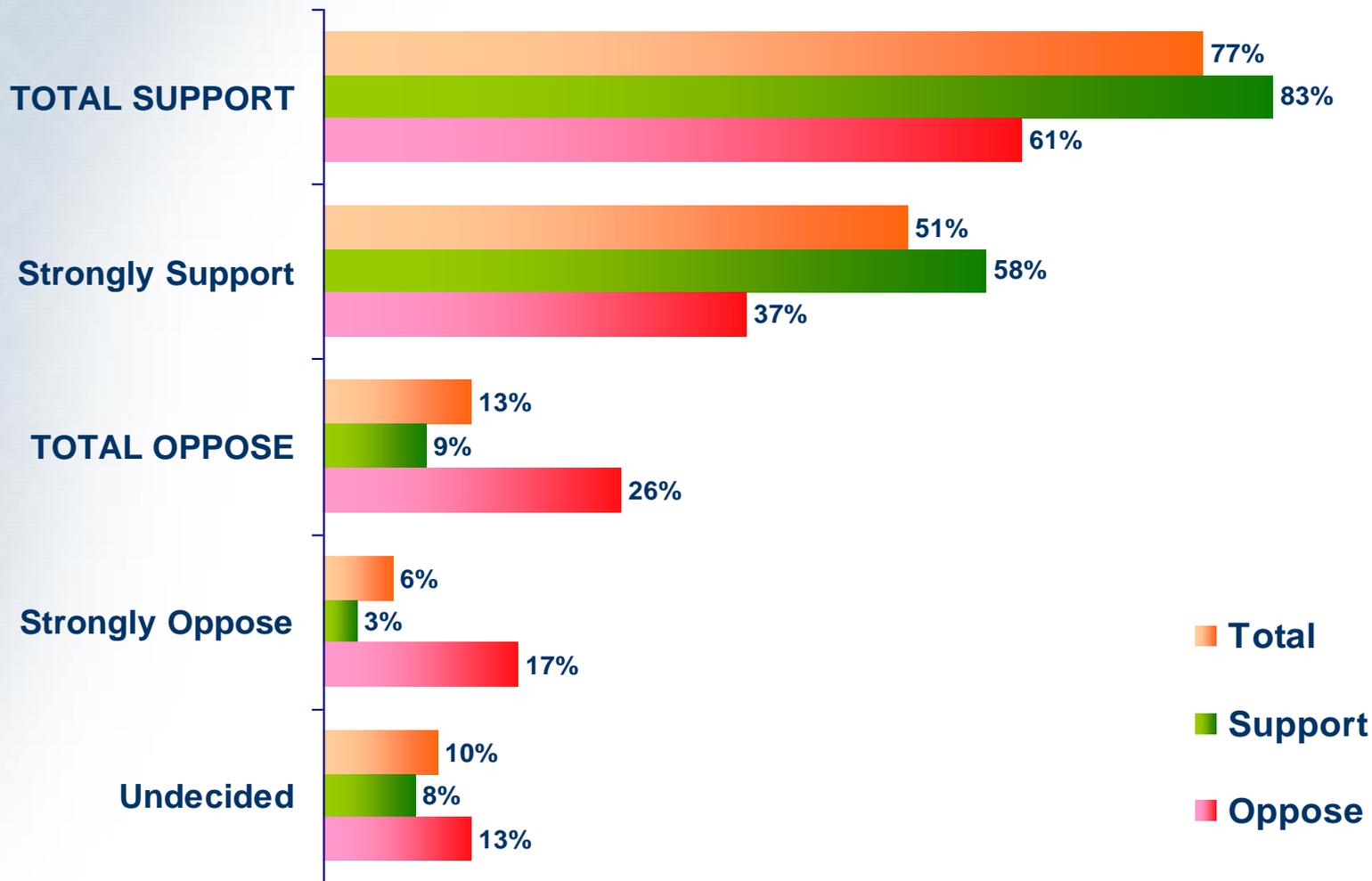


Whilst this is an important issue for a majority of those supporting same-sex marriage, it is not important to most of those opposing it.





Critically, even more people support a conscience vote on same-sex marriage than support legalisation itself. This includes a majority of those opposed to same-sex marriage.



Q) Political parties can either decide upon policy as a block, where every MP votes for their party's policy, or they can allow a conscience vote, where MPs are allowed to vote according to their own views and those of their local electorates. ...would you support or oppose Australia's Federal political parties allowing their MPs a conscience vote on the issue?



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