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# Recycling Policies and Challenges in Michigan Communities:

## Insights from local leaders statewide

Presented at the  
Michigan Recycling Coalition  
Annual Recycling and Organics Conference  
May 13, 2022

# Presentation Outline

- Overview of MPPS survey program
- Michigan local leaders' general attitudes about recycling
- Leaders' attitudes about recycling in their jurisdictions
- Who has recycling services and who doesn't?
- What are the main challenges local governments face and what resources do they think would help?

# The Michigan Public Policy Survey

- **Census survey** – all 1,856 counties, cities, villages, and townships
- **Respondents** – chief elected and appointed officials  
(County Board Chairs & Administrators, Mayors & City Managers, Village Presidents & Managers, Township Supervisors and Clerks)
- **Administered** – online and via hardcopy
- **Topics** – a wide range over more than a decade including: fiscal health, budget priorities, impacts of COVID-19 on Michigan communities, roads, public safety, water infrastructure, intergovernmental cooperation, employee policies, labor unions, local energy policies, Great Lakes, citizen engagement, much more.



# MPPS is not a typical opinion poll

- **70+%** response rates
- **Transparency**
  - ~ Questionnaires online
  - ~ Pre-run data tables online
  - ~ Sharing of (anonymized) datasets with other researchers
- **Expert advisors on questionnaire content**
- **Research partnership with Michigan local government associations and others**
  - ~ MAC, MML, & MTA
  - ~ The Fall 2021 wave was funded in part by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

# How many local jurisdictions responded to the Fall 2021 MPPS?

(in the field October-November 2021)

**73%** of all statewide – **1,356** governments total

## By Population Size

72% of <1500 – 521  
71% 1500-5000 – 494  
78% of 5001-10,000 – 130  
75% of 10,001-30,000 – 119  
84% of >30,000 – 92

## By Region

69% in the Upper Peninsula – 142  
76% in the Northern LP – 241  
75% in the Central West – 269  
67% in the Central East – 232  
74% in the Southwest – 221  
75% in the Southeast – 251

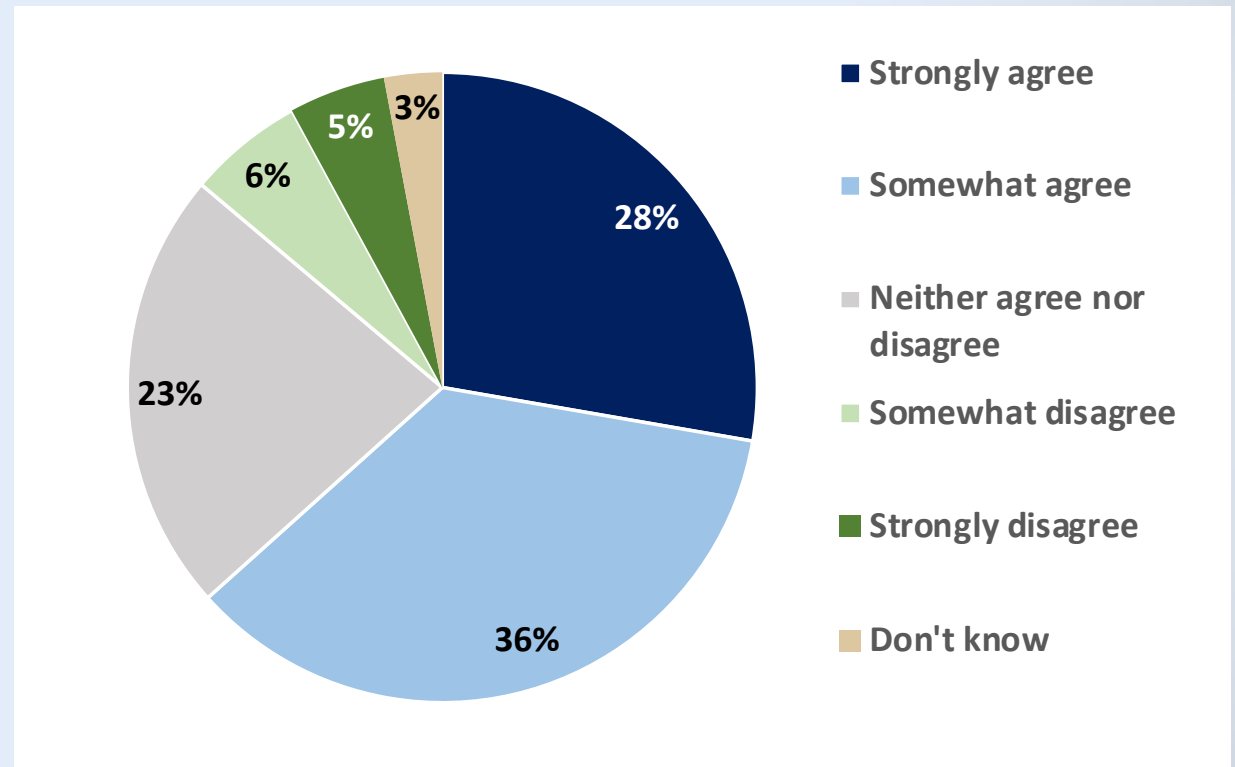


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# 64% support idea of sustainability

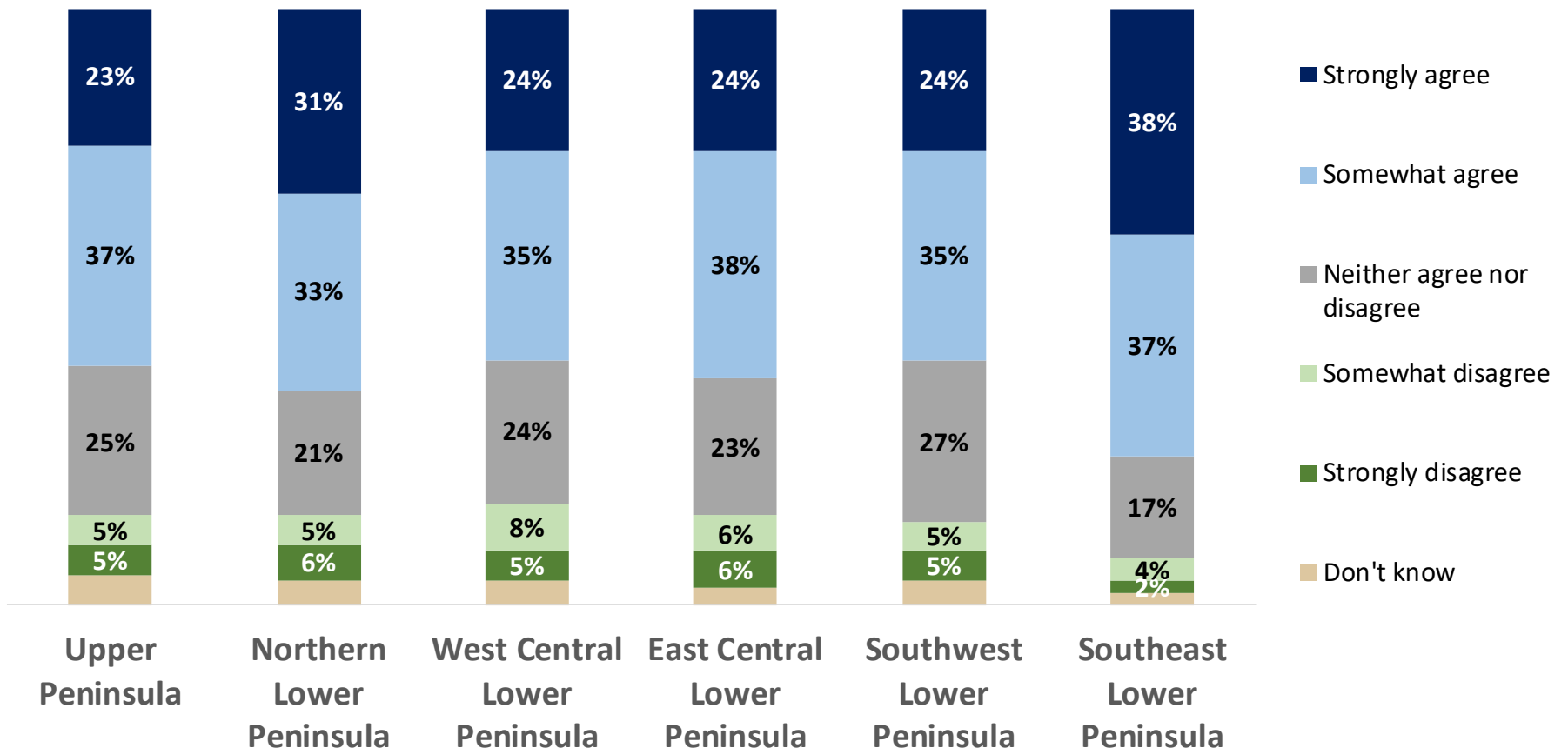
Do you agree or disagree that promoting environmental sustainability and the concept of “being green” are important aspects of local government leadership?





# Widespread regional support for sustainability

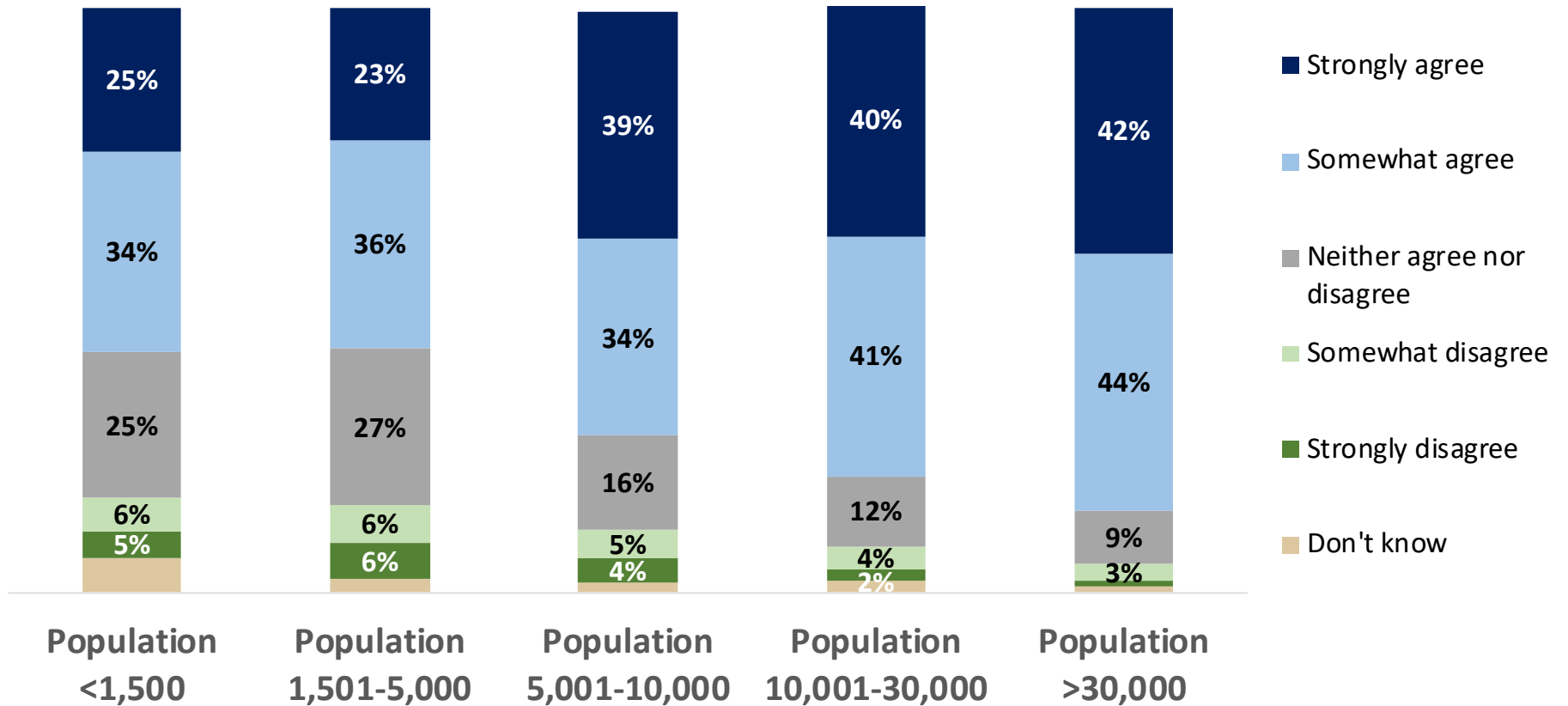
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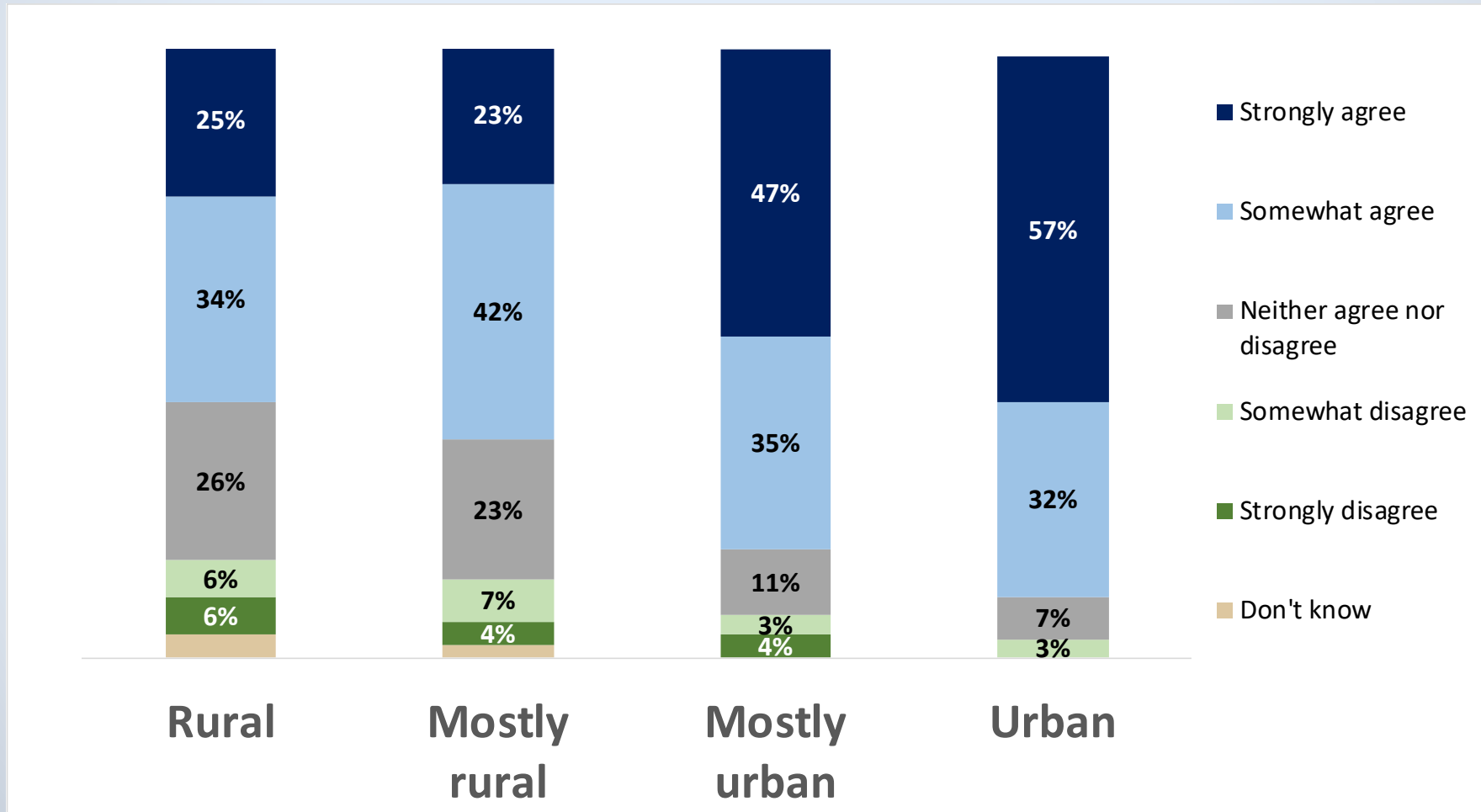
# Majority in all sizes support sustainability

Do you agree or disagree that promoting environmental sustainability and the concept of “being green” are important aspects of local government leadership?



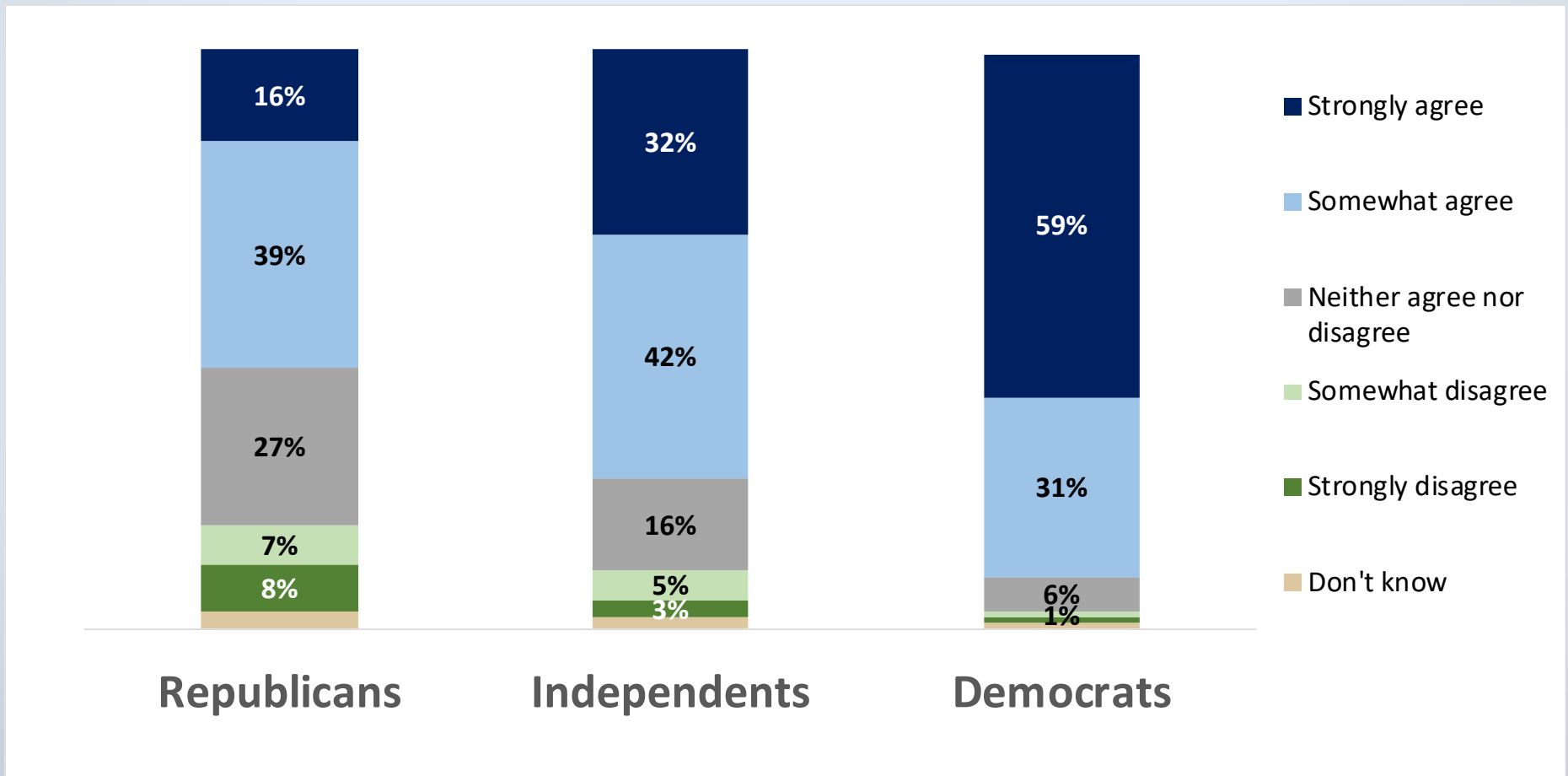
# Majority in rural communities support sustainability

Do you agree or disagree that promoting environmental sustainability and the concept of “being green” are important aspects of local government leadership?



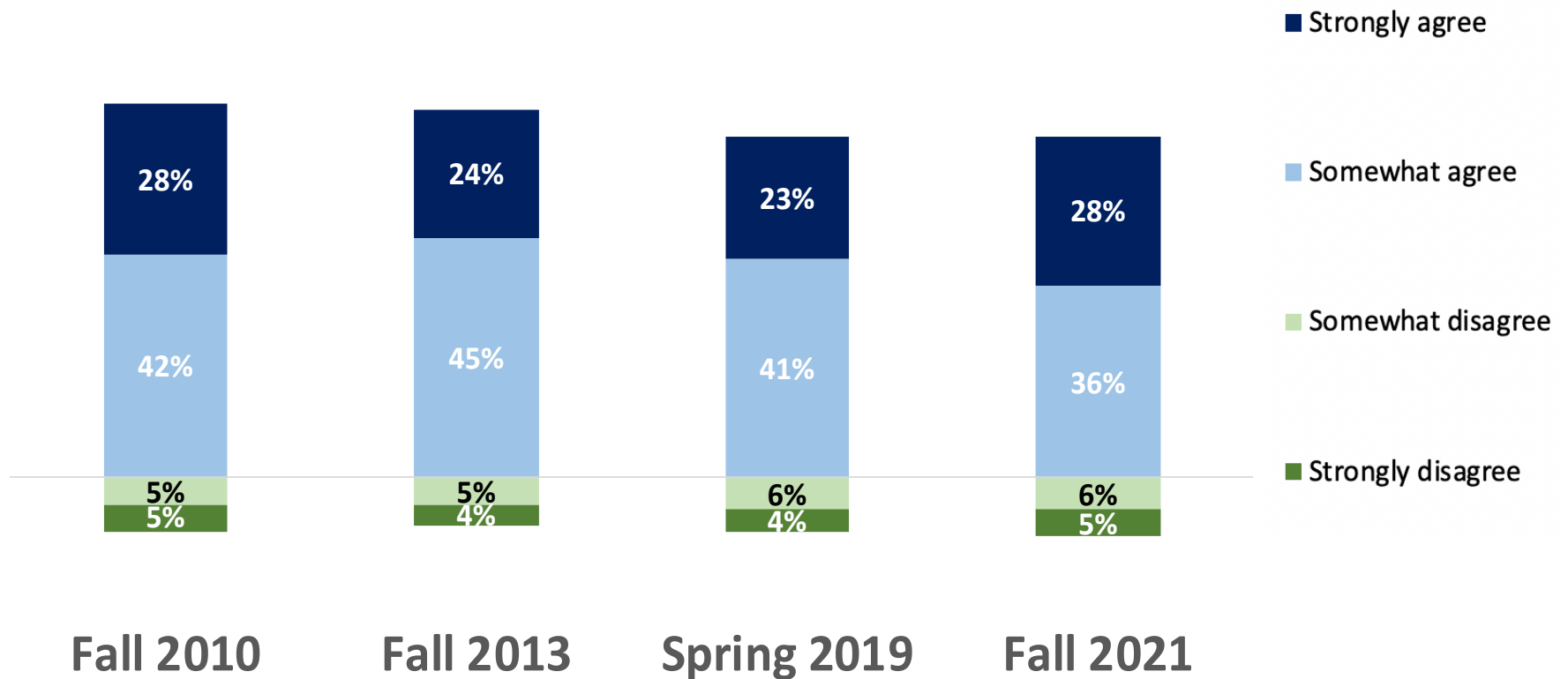
# Majority of **all** partisans support sustainability

Do you agree or disagree that promoting environmental sustainability and the concept of “being green” are important aspects of local government leadership?



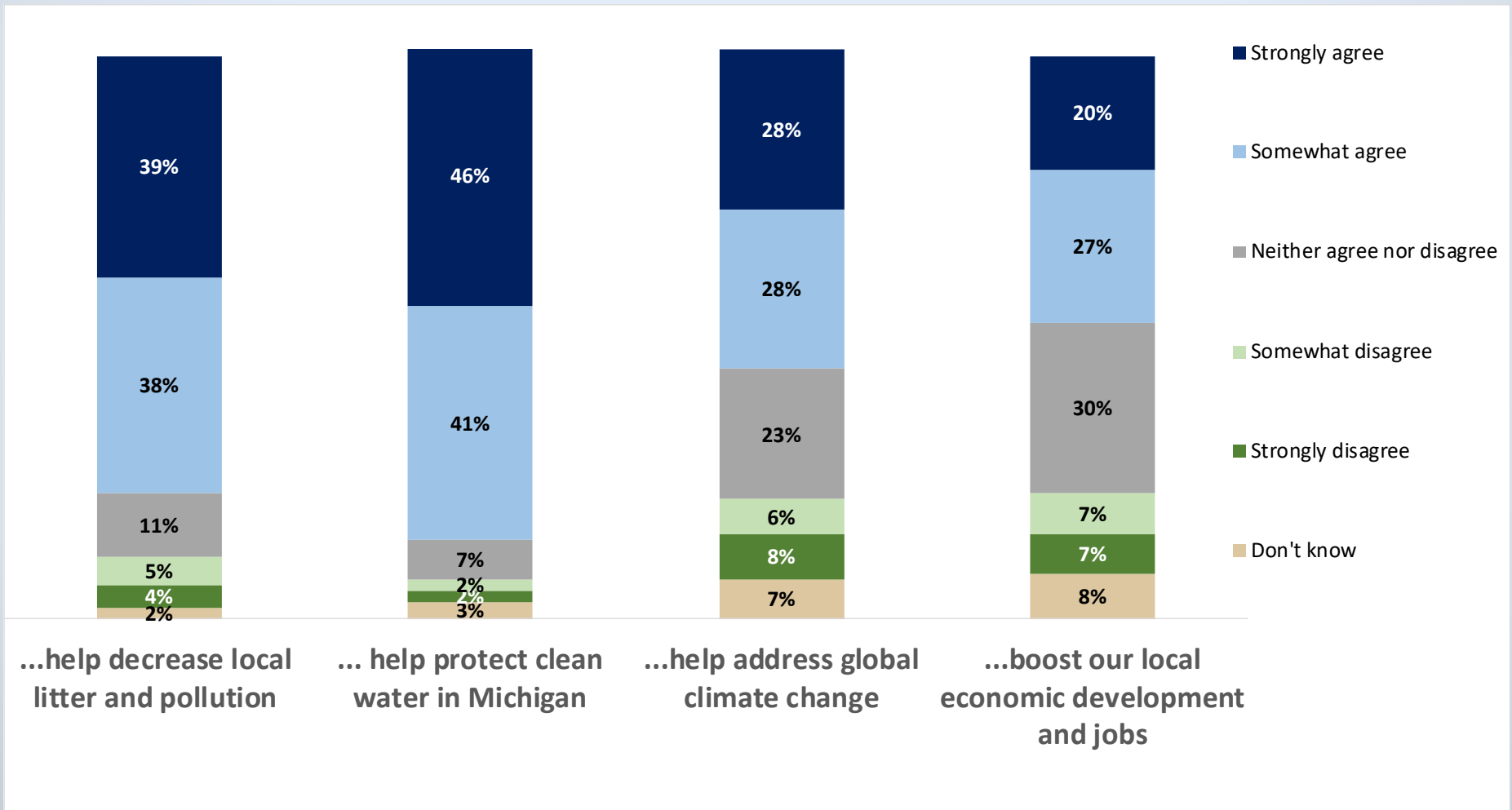
# Consistent support for sustainability over time

Do you agree or disagree that promoting environmental sustainability and the concept of “being green” are important aspects of local government leadership?



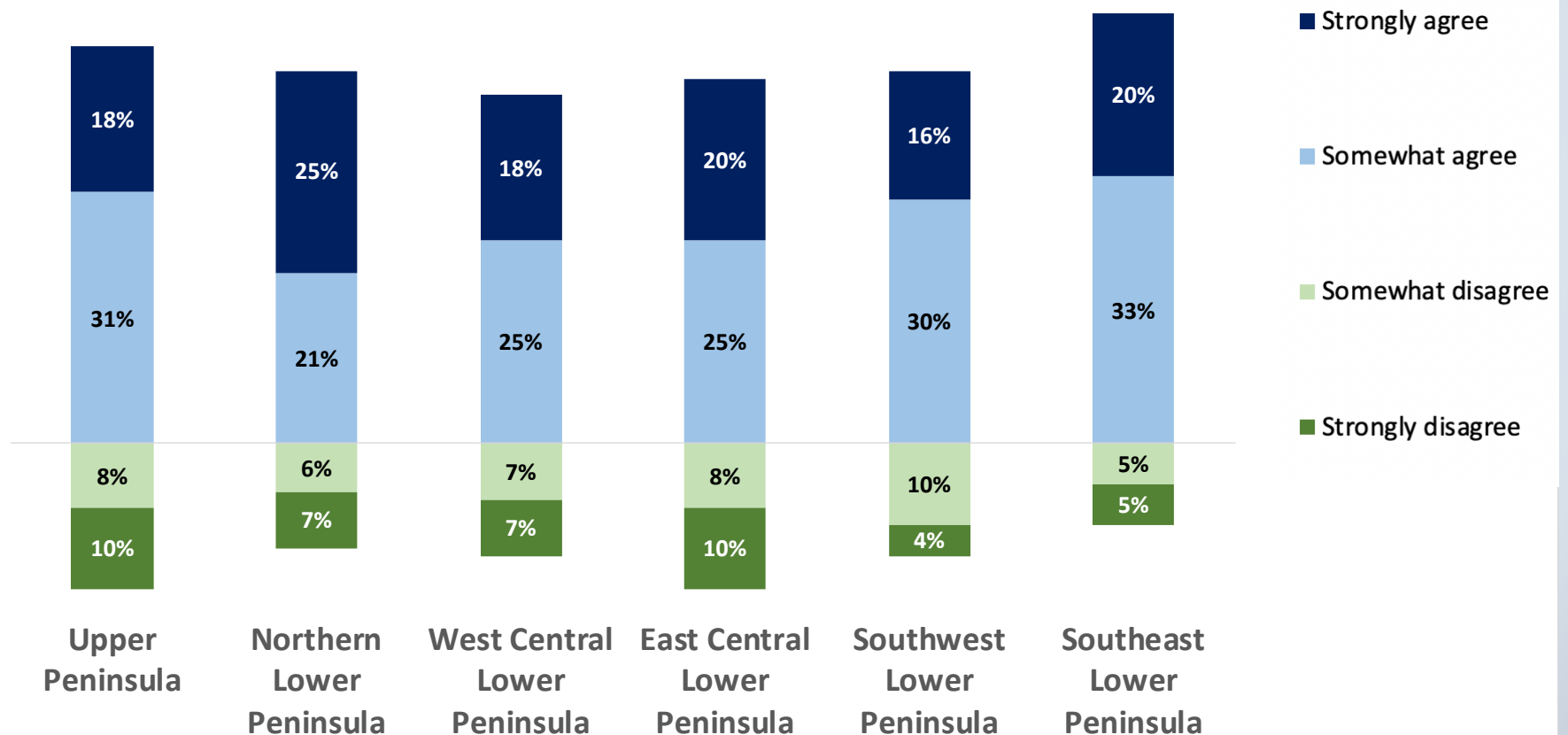
# 87% agree recycling protects clean water

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
Recycling programs can...



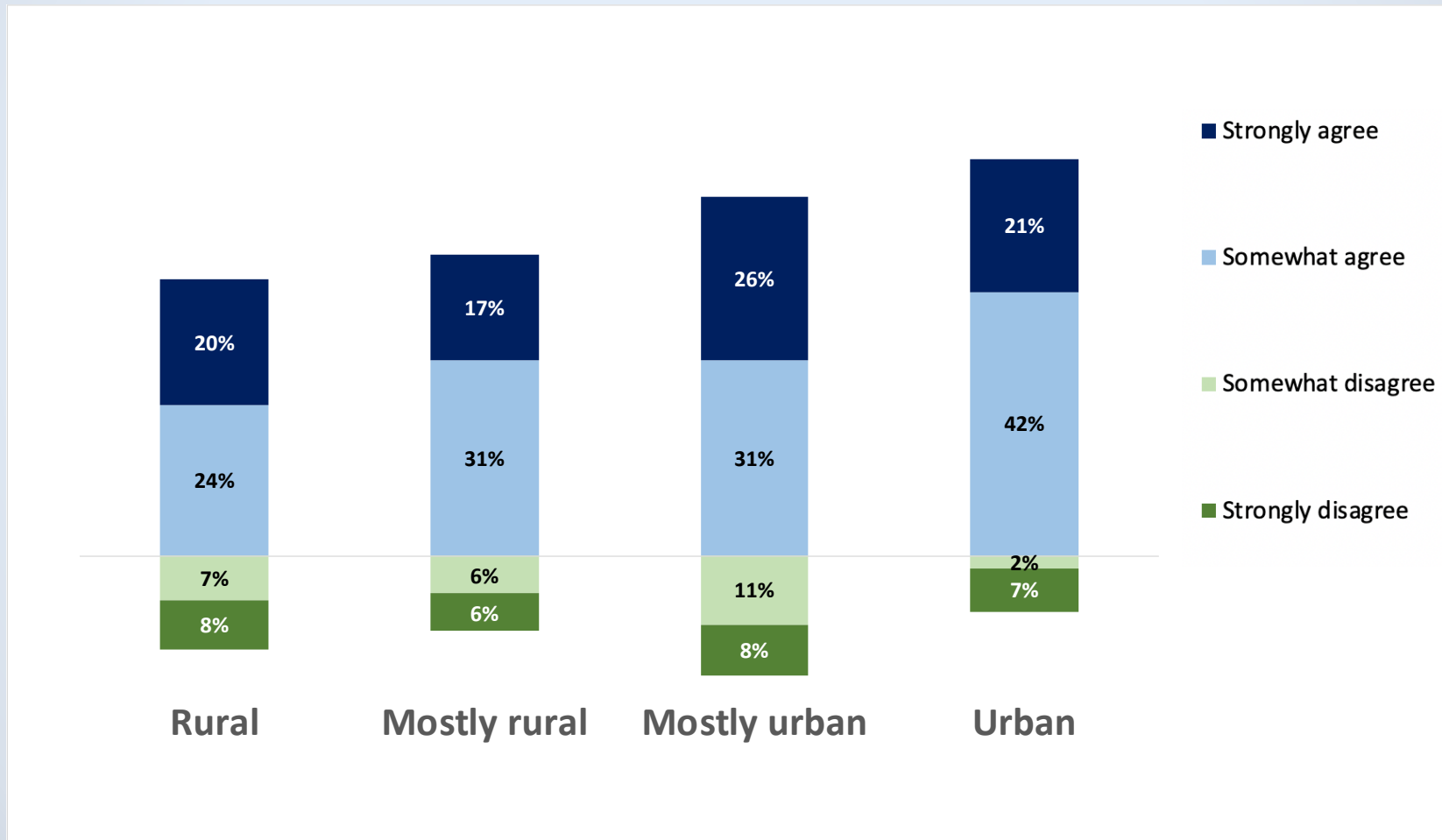
# All regions agree **recycling boosts economic development**

Agree/disagree: New state and regional recycling efforts could boost our local economic development and job growth.



# Urban-rural agree **recycling boosts economic development**

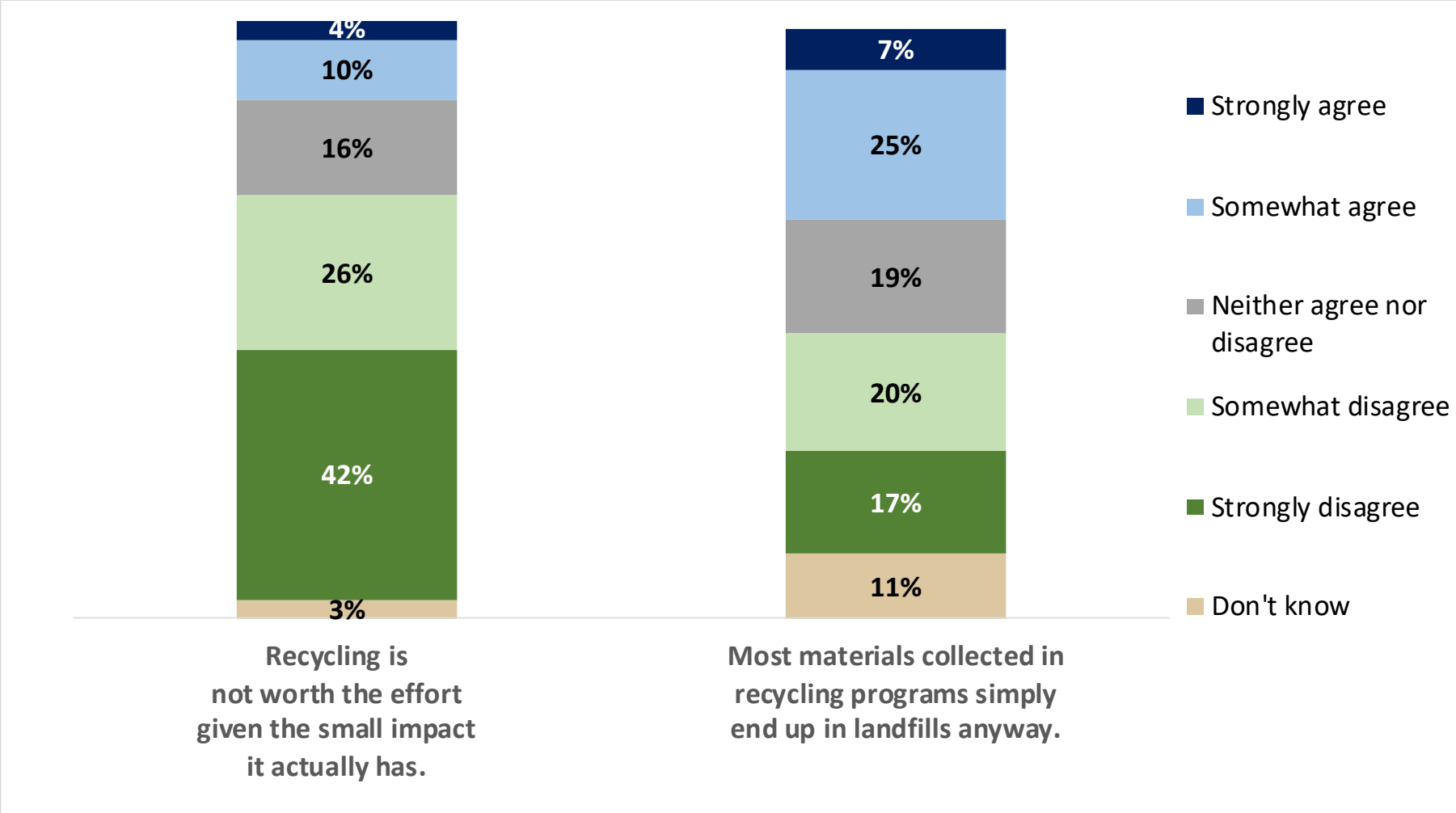
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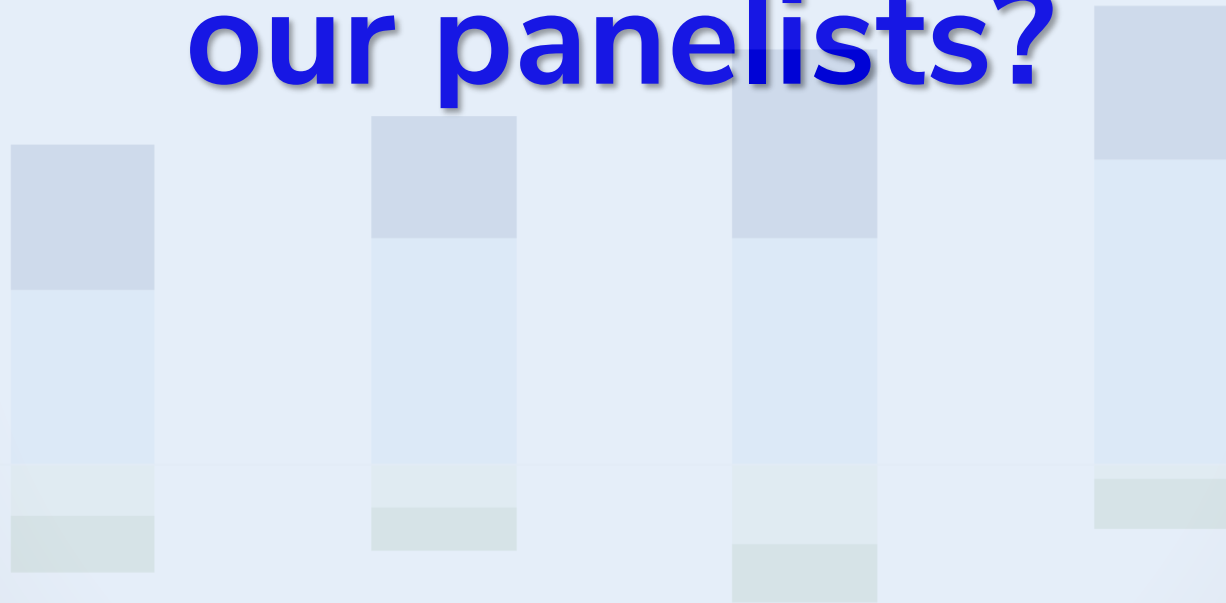


# 68% believe recycling is worth the effort

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



# Does any of this surprise our panelists?

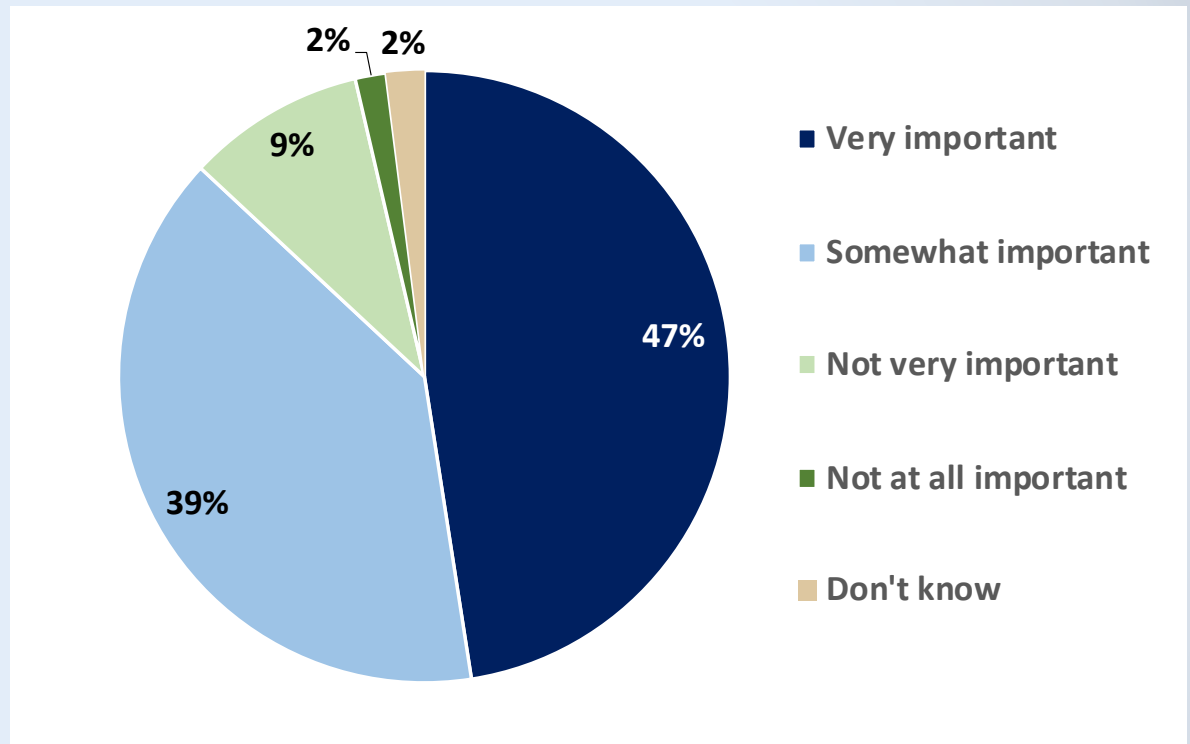


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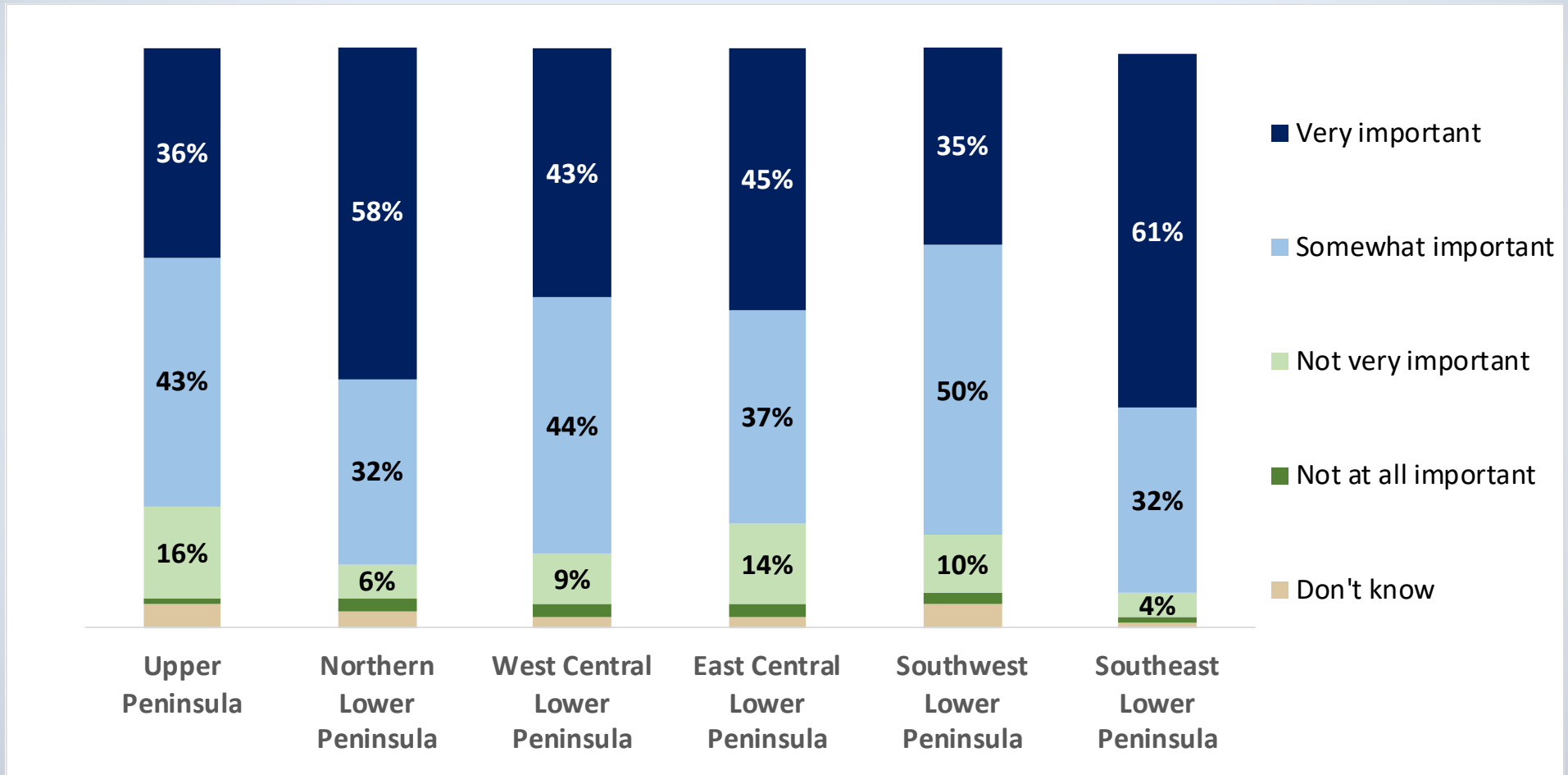
# 86% say recycling important to community

Some Michigan communities invest significant resources in recycling and waste management services. Others play little or no role and aren't particularly interested in these topics. Thinking overall about issues around waste collection and recycling, how important, if at all, would you say [recycling is] to members of your community?



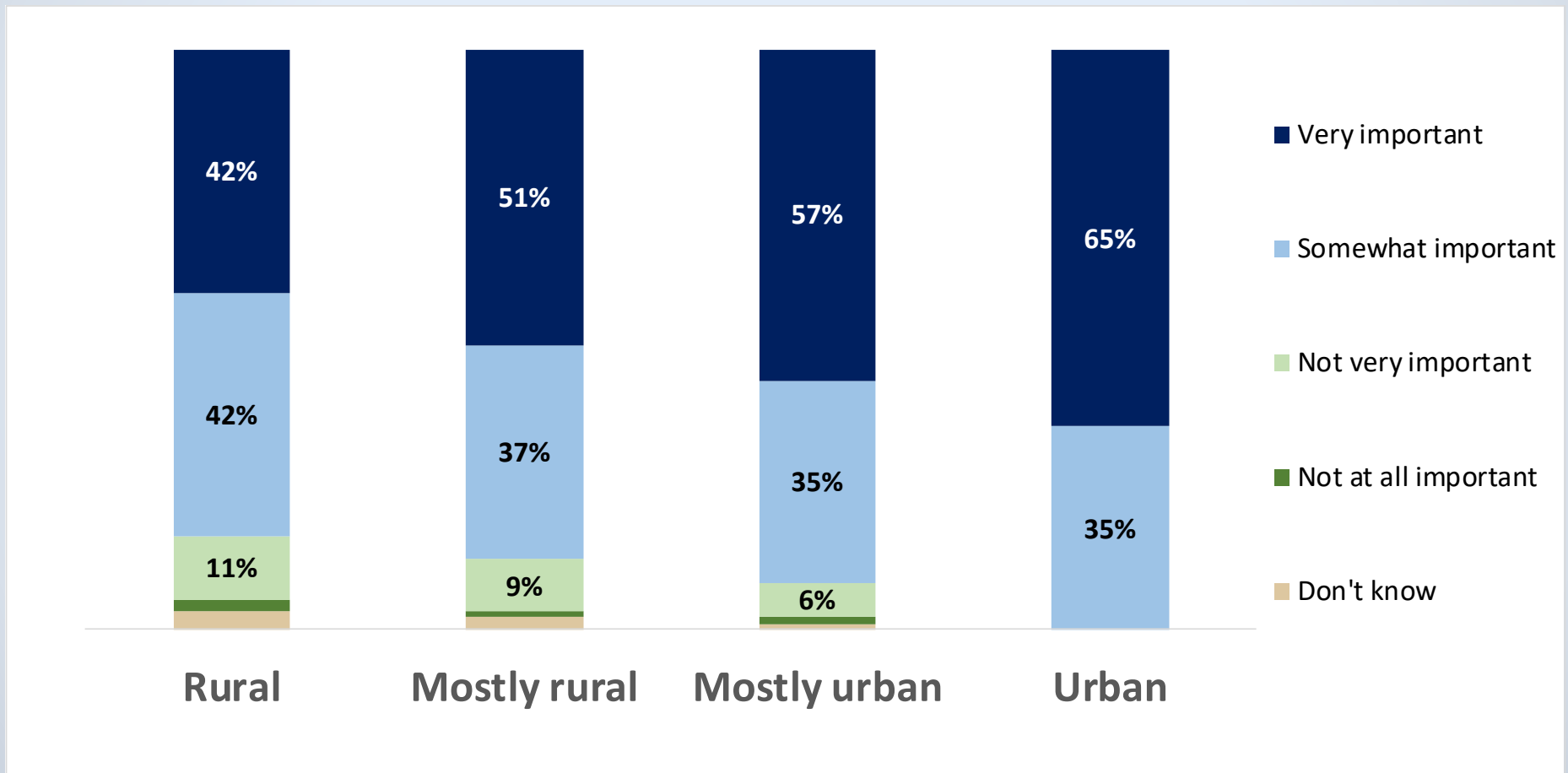
# Local importance high across all regions

...how important, if at all, would you say [recycling is] to members of your community?



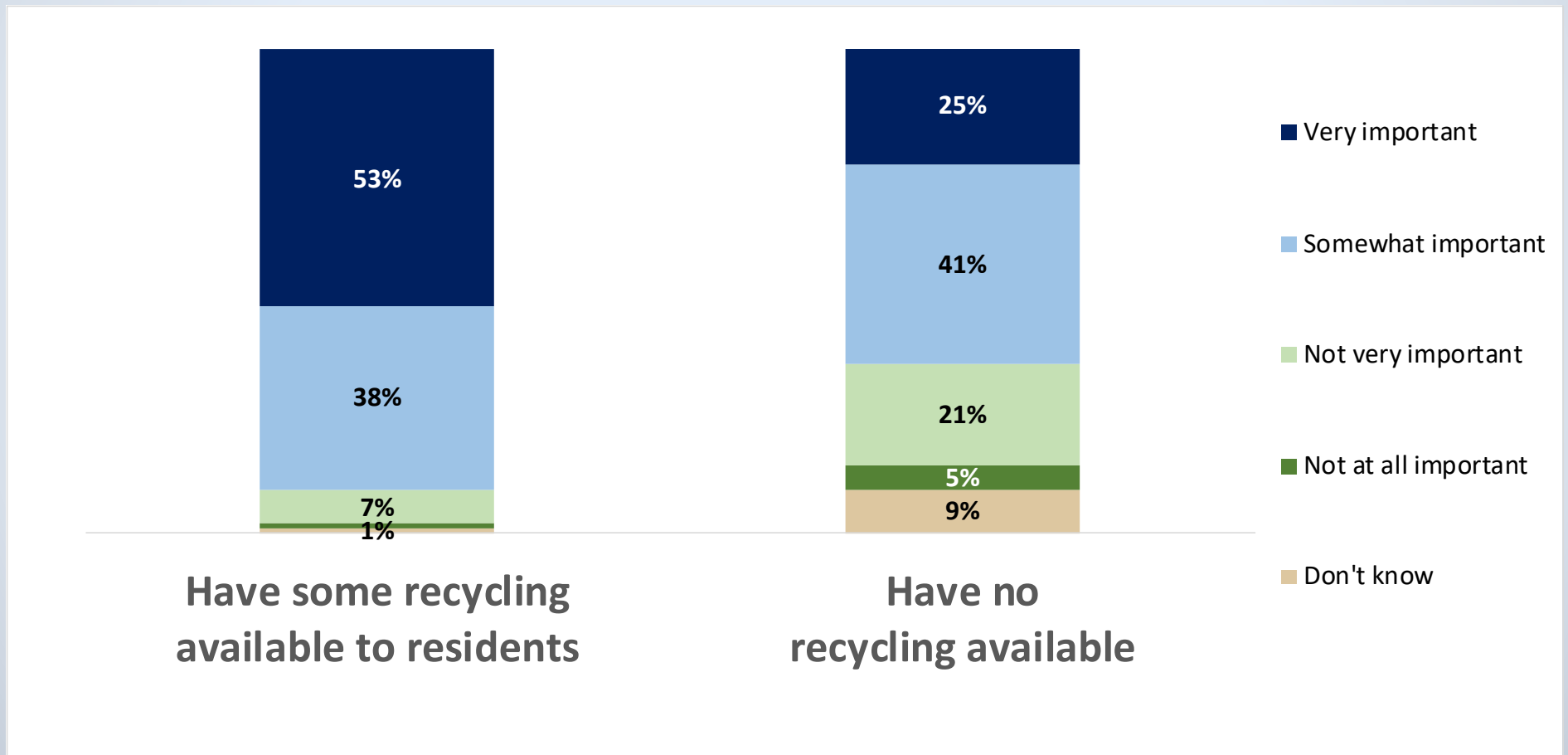
# 84% rural leaders say important to community

...how important, if at all, would you say [recycling is] to members of your community?



# 66% of leaders with no recycling say it's important to community members

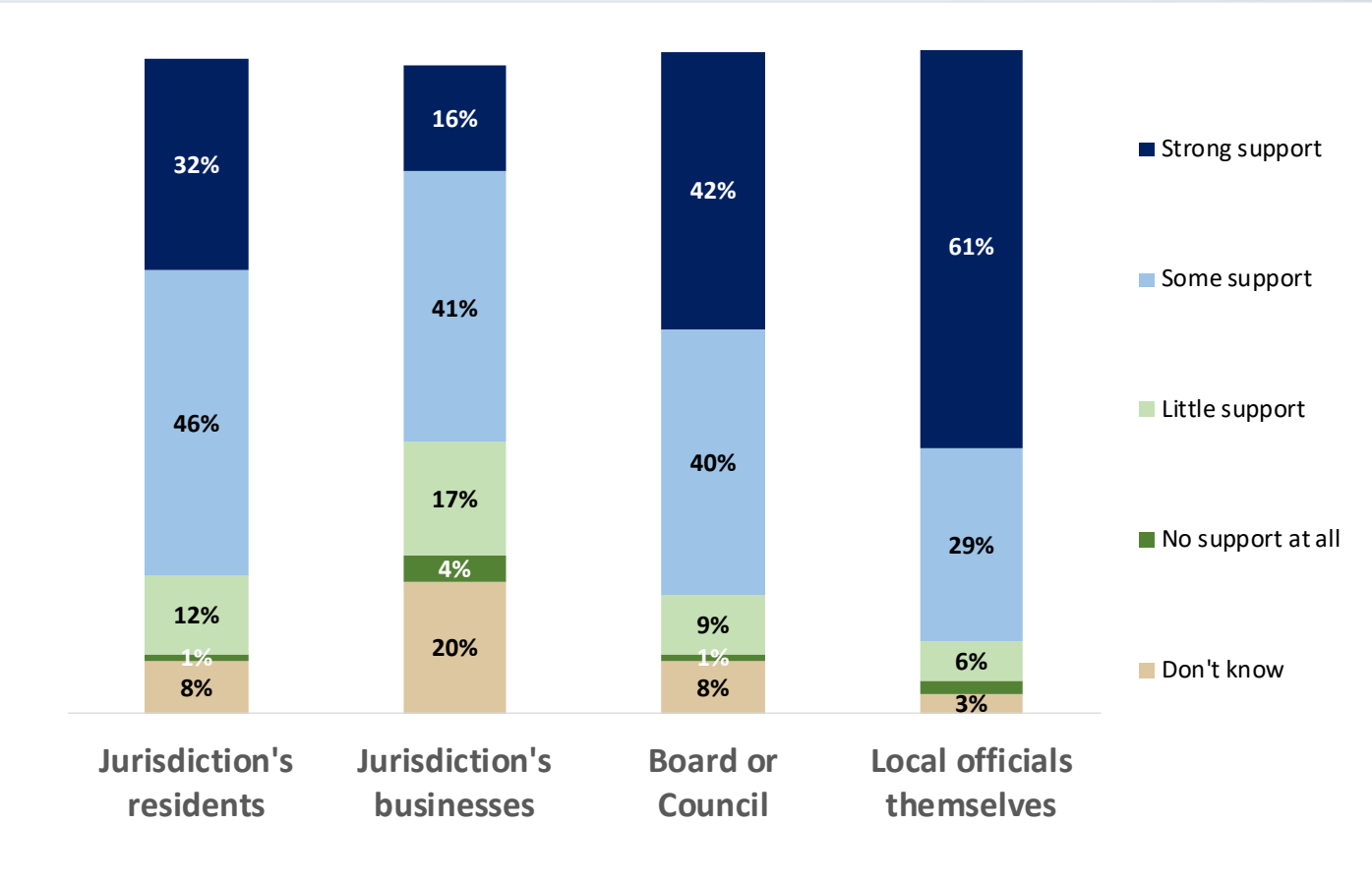
...how important, if at all, would you say [recycling is] to members of your community?





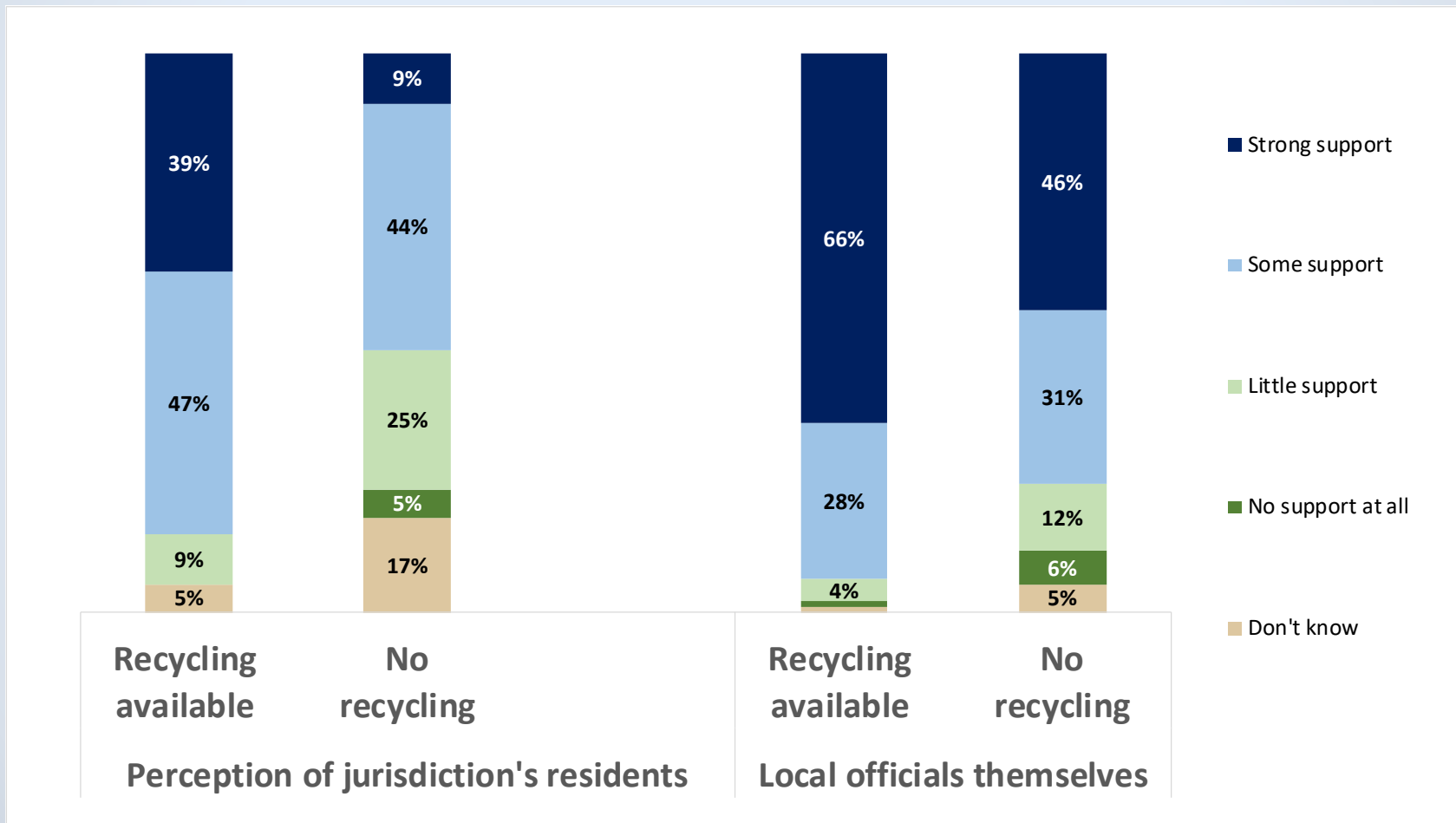
# 76% believe their residents support local recycling

Whether or not there are currently recycling services or programs available to residents and/or businesses in your jurisdiction, how much support for local access to recycling, if any, would you say there is among the following groups?



# 53% with no recycling believe their residents support it

...how much support for local access to recycling, if any, would you say there is among the following groups?





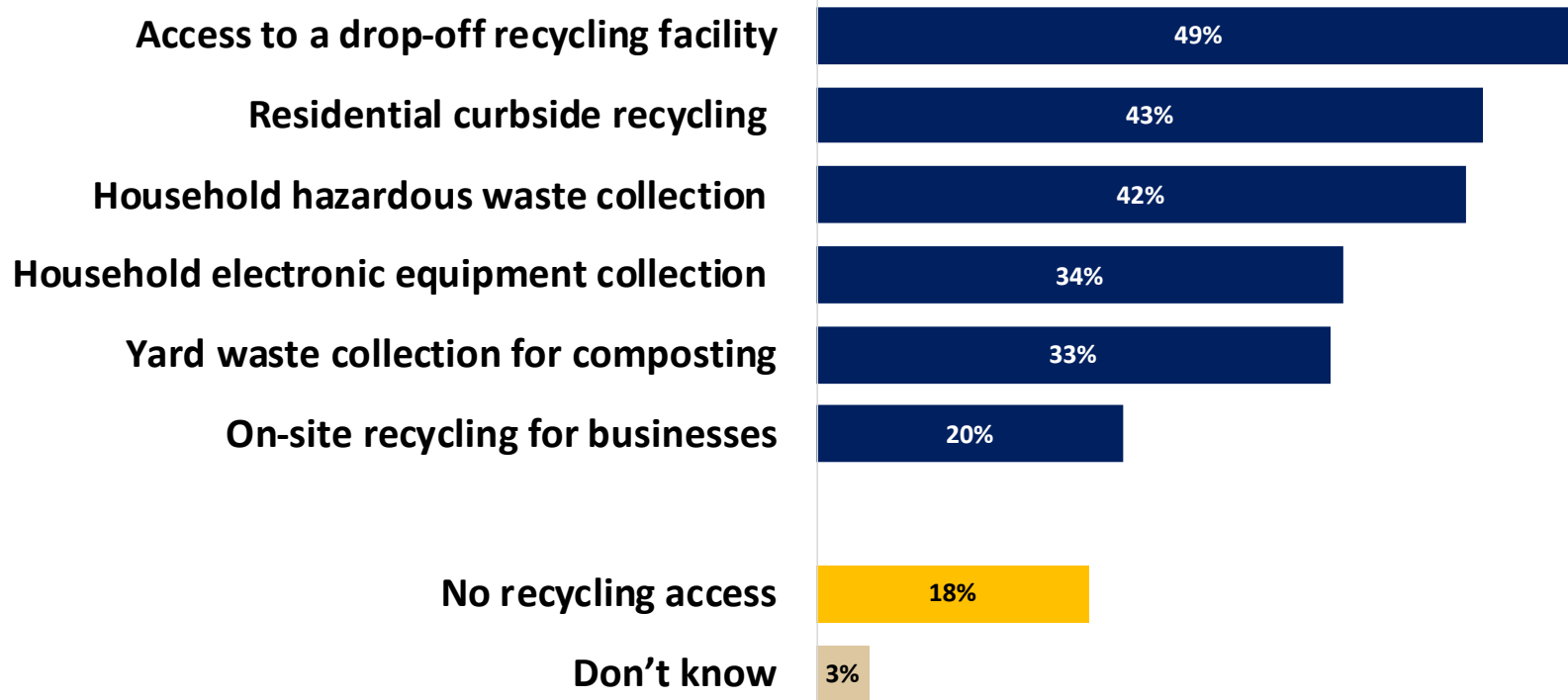
# What do you think, panelists?

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# What services do **leaders say** are available locally?

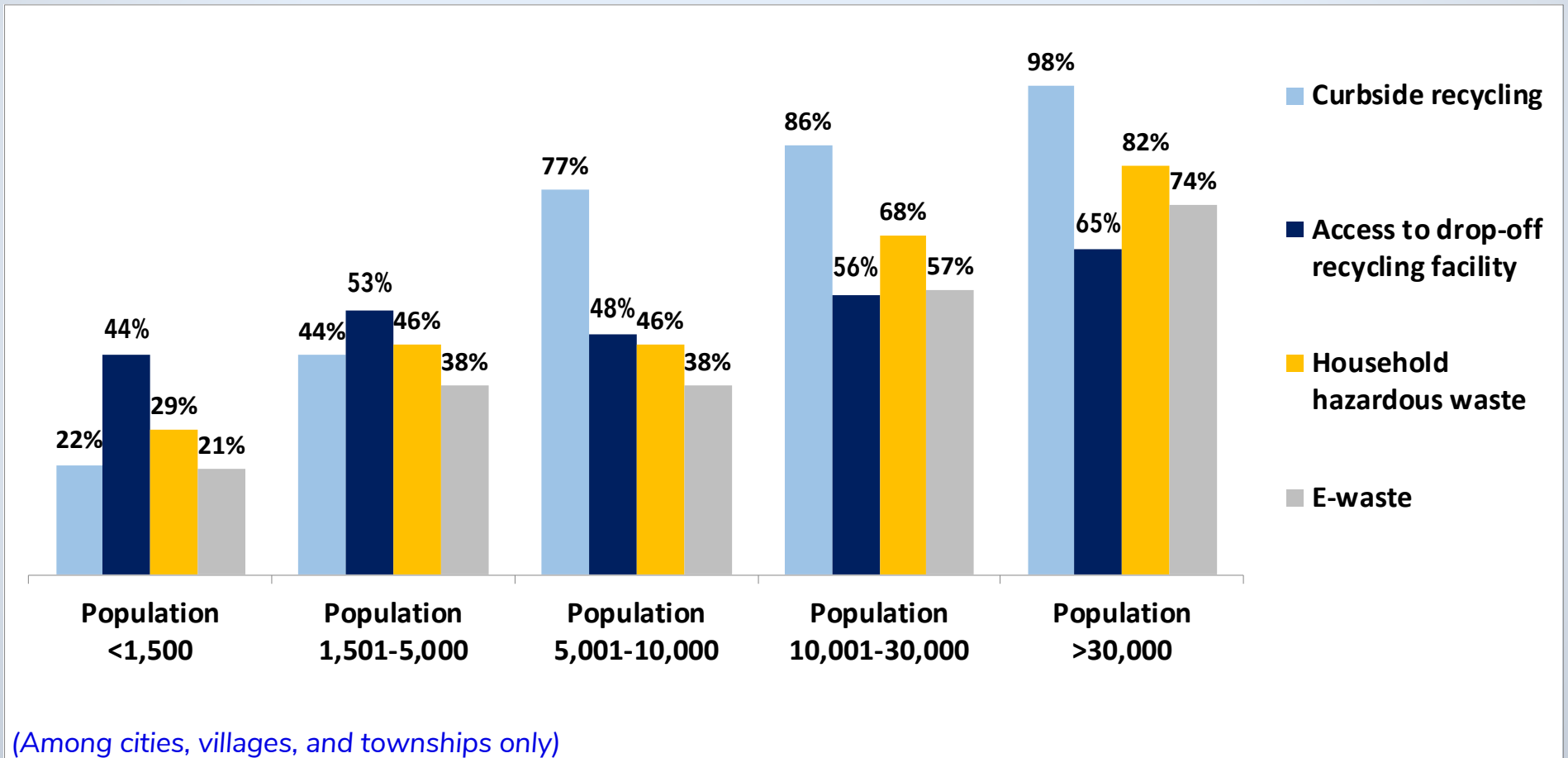
*As far as you know*, are the following types of recycling services or programs currently provided within your jurisdiction, either by your own government or through joint agreements or by other providers (including private providers)?



*(Among cities, villages, and townships only)*

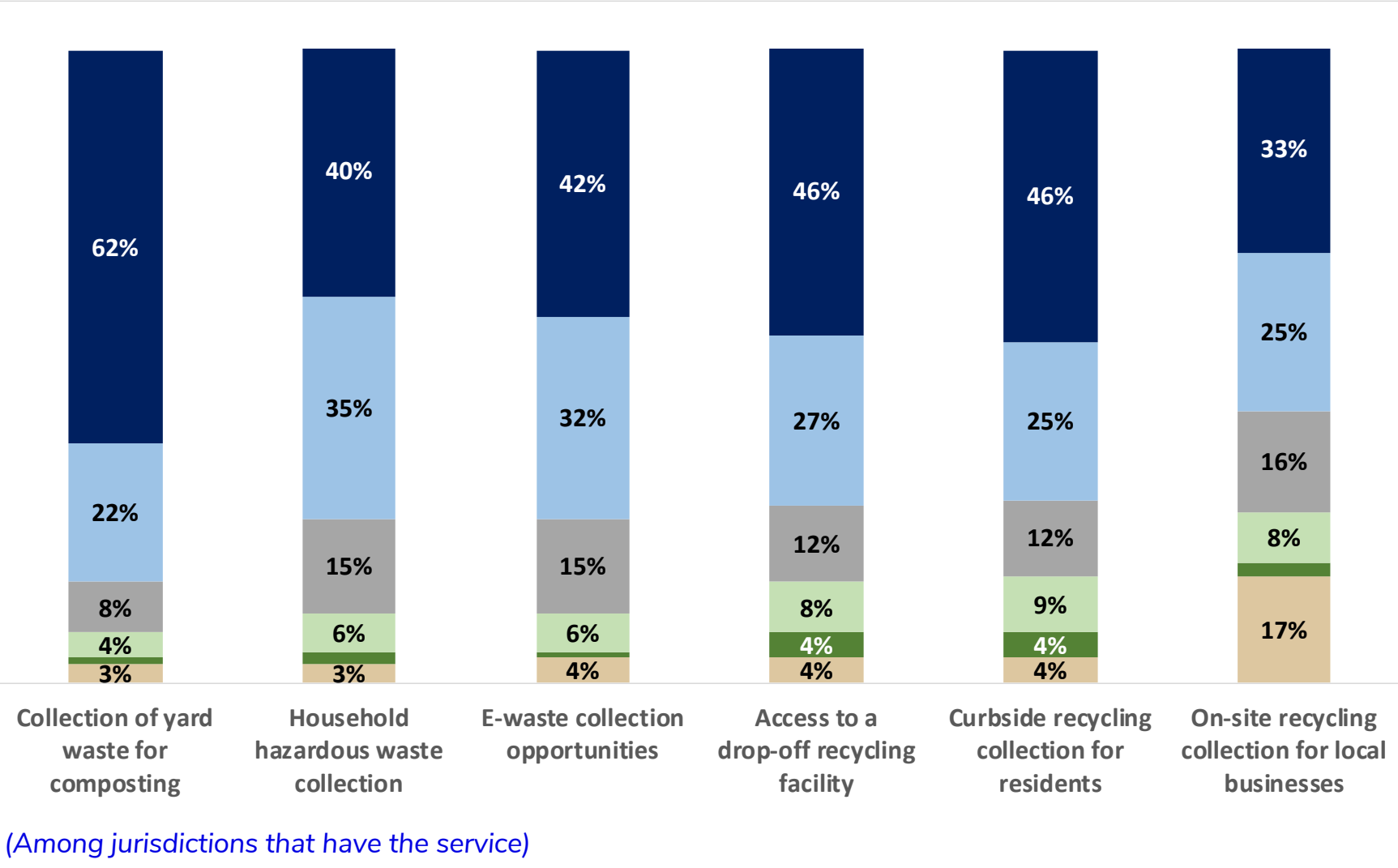
# Smaller jurisdictions see lower service availability

As far as you know, are the following types of recycling services or programs currently provided within your jurisdiction, either by your own government or through joint agreements or by other providers (including private providers)?



# Leaders generally **satisfied** with available recycling **services**

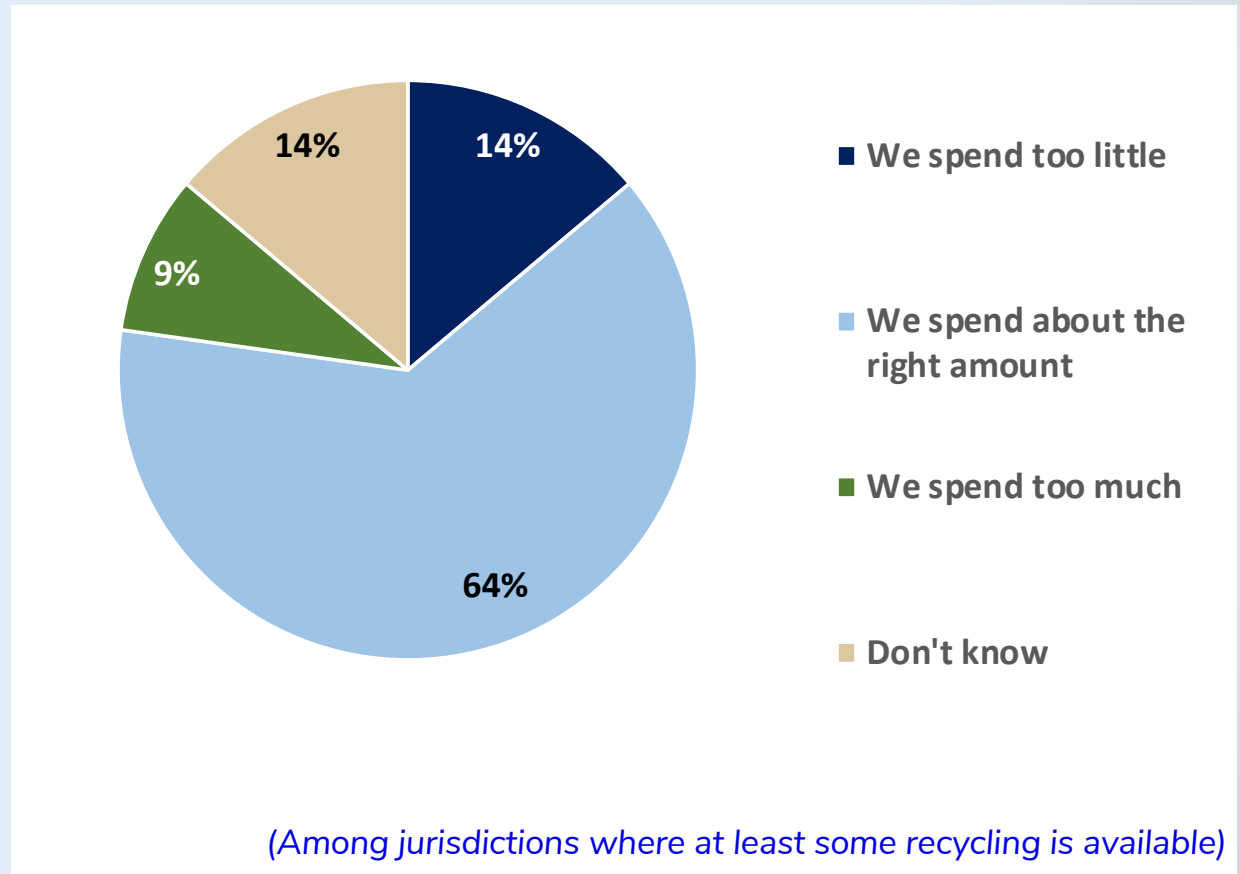
... how satisfied are you, as a jurisdiction official, with the current provision of these programs within your jurisdiction?





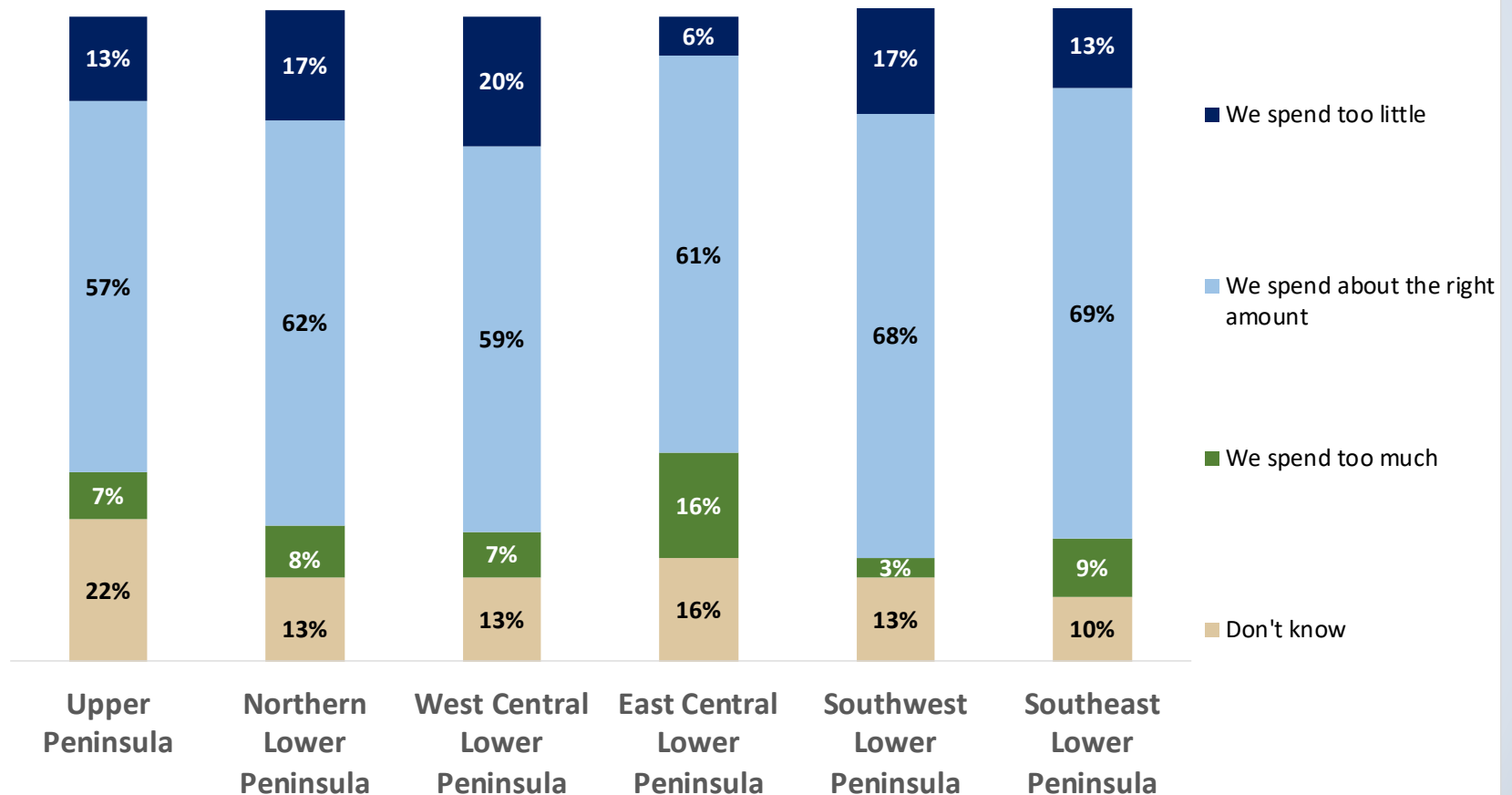
# Most think their government is spending the right amount on recycling

Regardless of whether your jurisdiction's government provides any funding support for local recycling services and/or to pay for private service provision, do you feel your jurisdiction itself currently spends too much, about the right amount, or too little on recycling programs and efforts?



# Regional variation on views of local funding

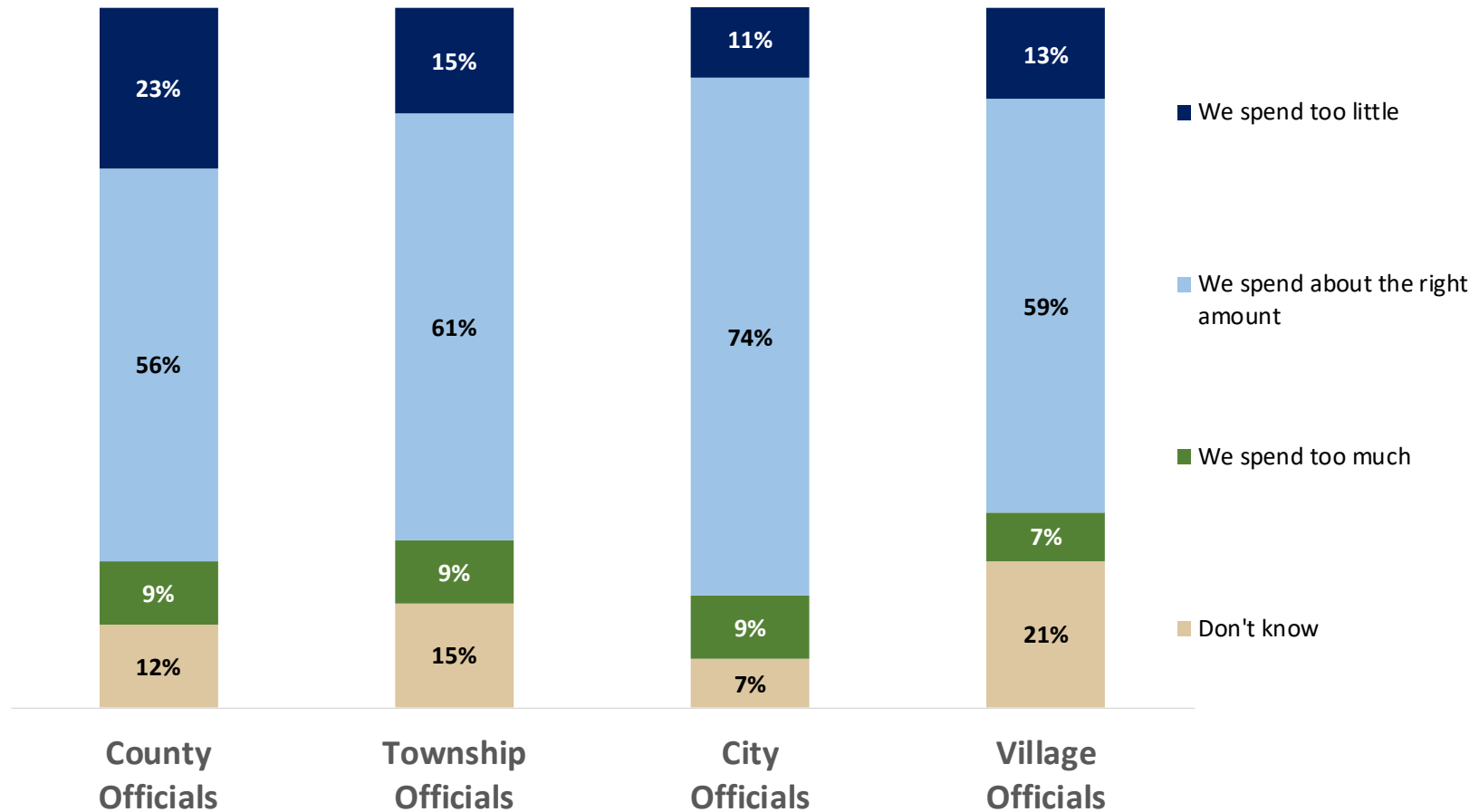
...do you feel your jurisdiction itself currently spends too much, about the right amount, or too little on recycling programs and efforts?



(Among jurisdictions where at least some recycling is available)

# Counties most likely to say they spend too little

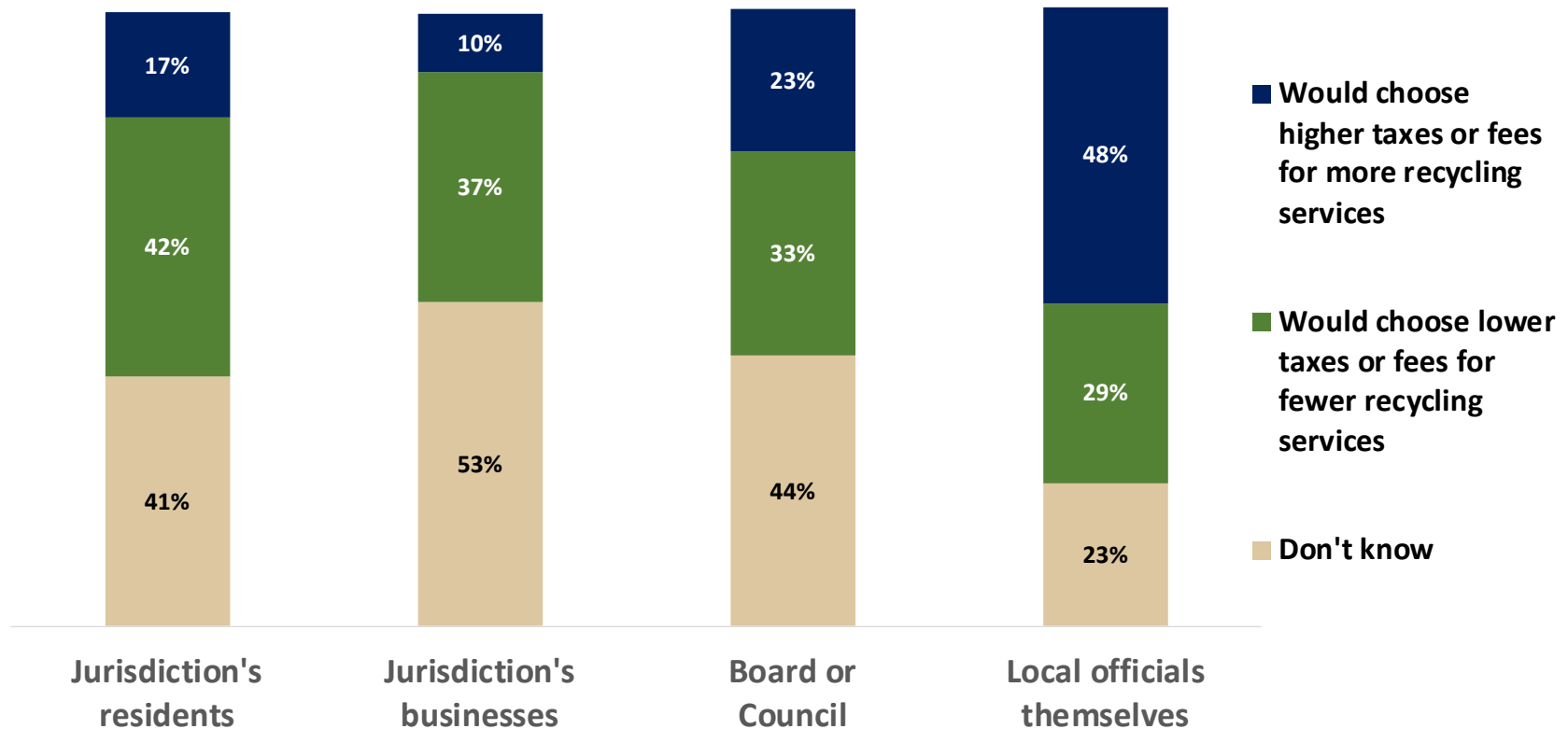
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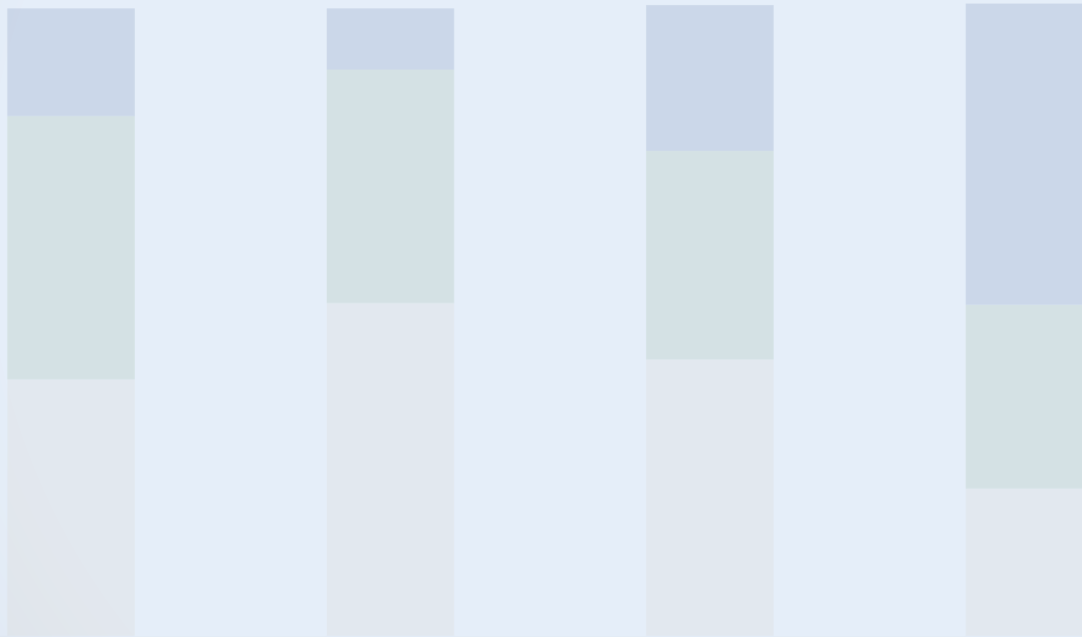
# Uncertainty about local preferences for recycling taxes and fees

...do you think the following groups would be more likely to choose higher taxes or fees for more (or improved) services, or would they choose lower taxes or fees and have fewer (or no) recycling services?



(Among jurisdictions where at least some recycling is available)

# Back to our panelists...

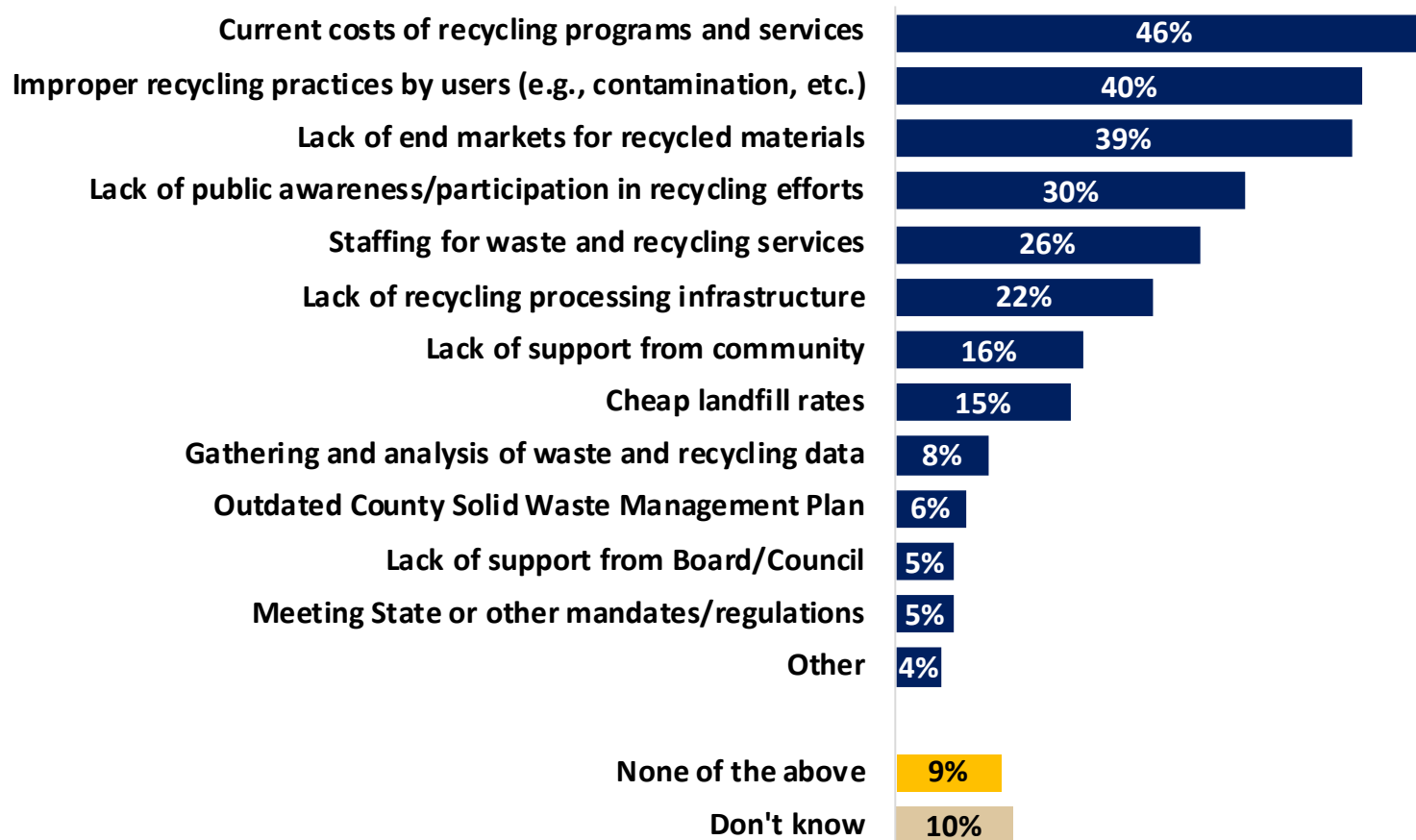


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## Cost seen as biggest challenge for those with recycling access

As far as you know, which of the following factors, if any, are challenges for recycling within your jurisdiction?

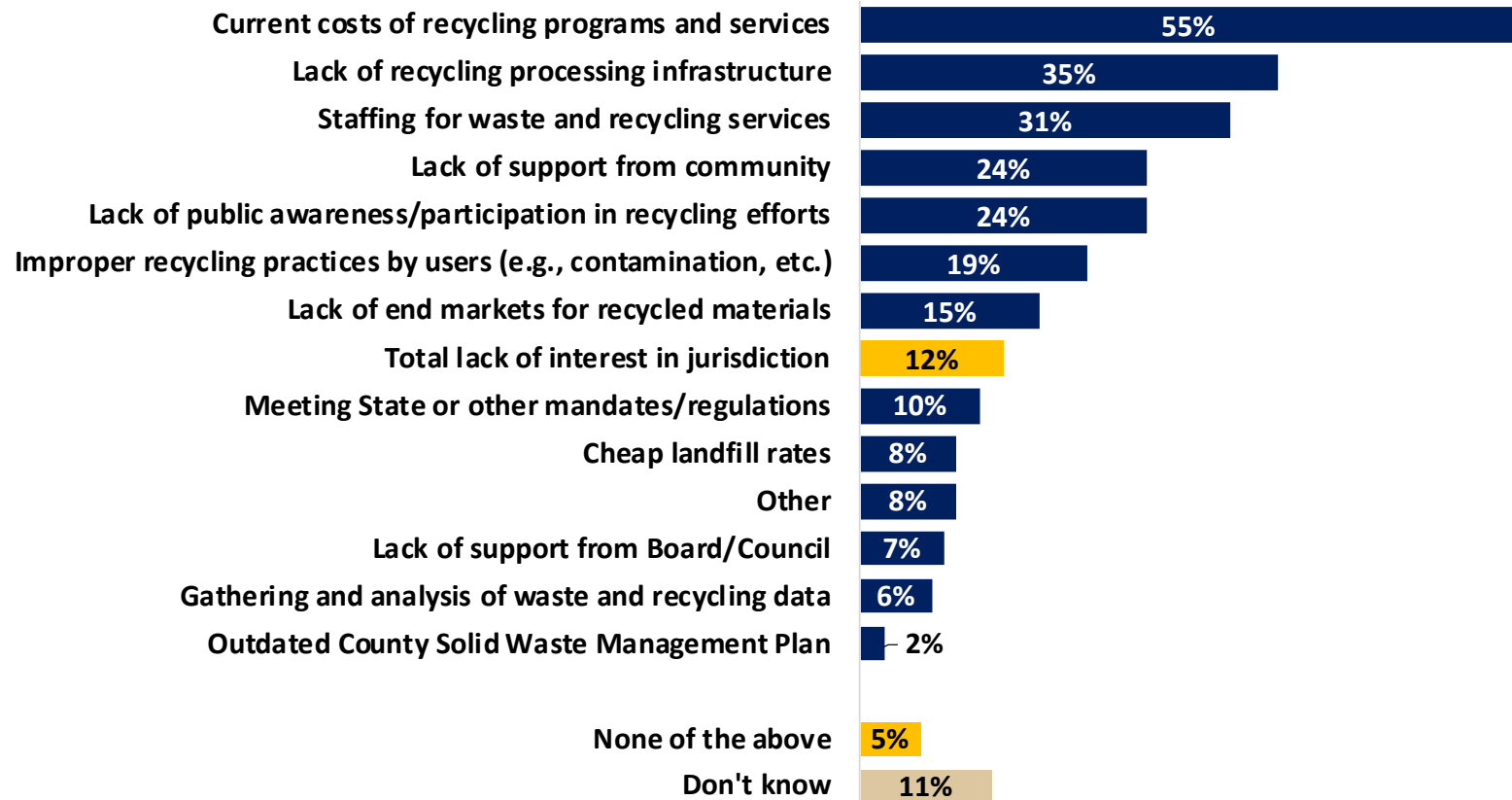


*(Among jurisdictions where at least some recycling is available)*



## Cost seen as biggest barrier for those without recycling access

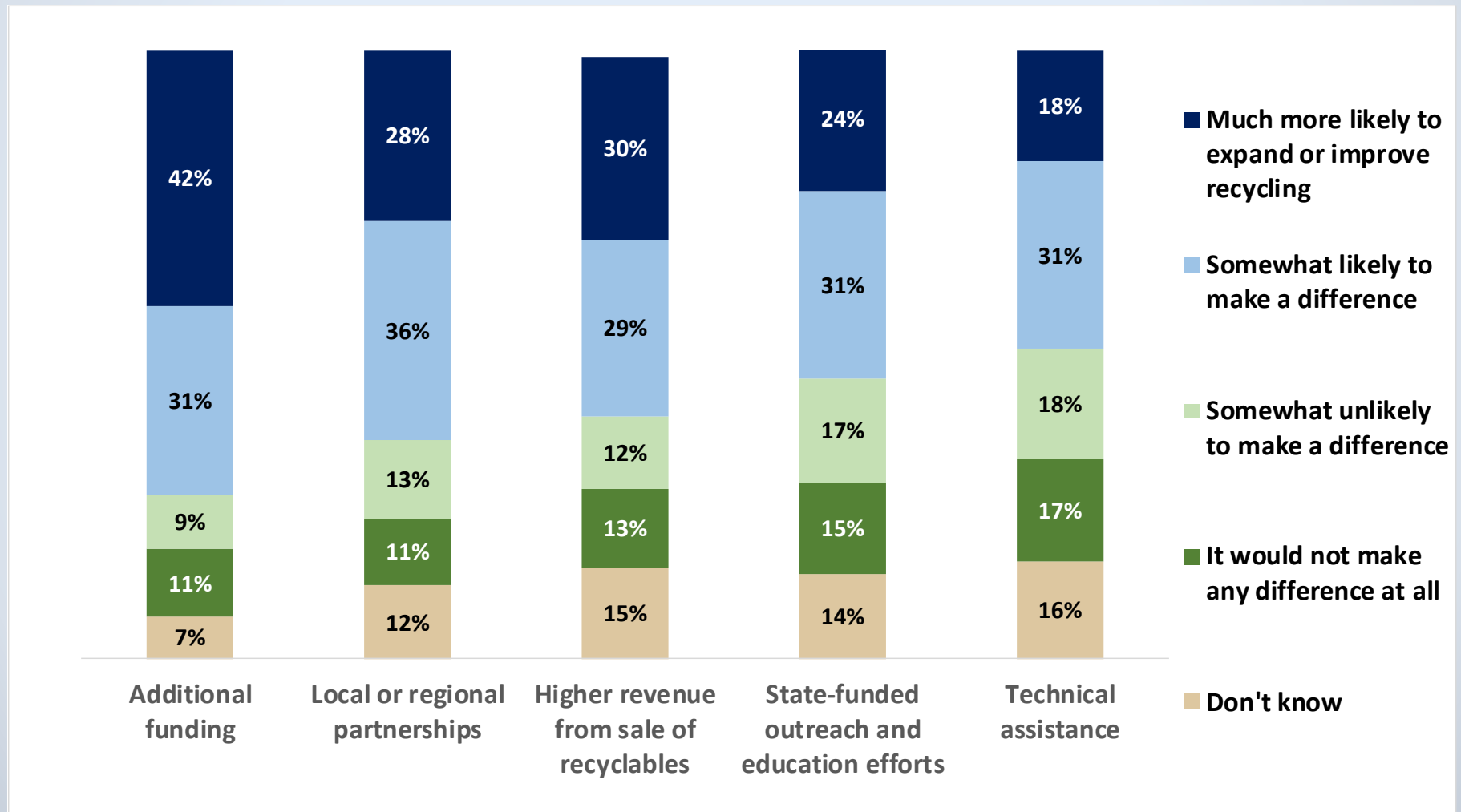
Which of the following factors, if any, would you say are reasons your jurisdiction is not engaged in recycling efforts (including services by private providers)?



(Among jurisdictions where no recycling is available)

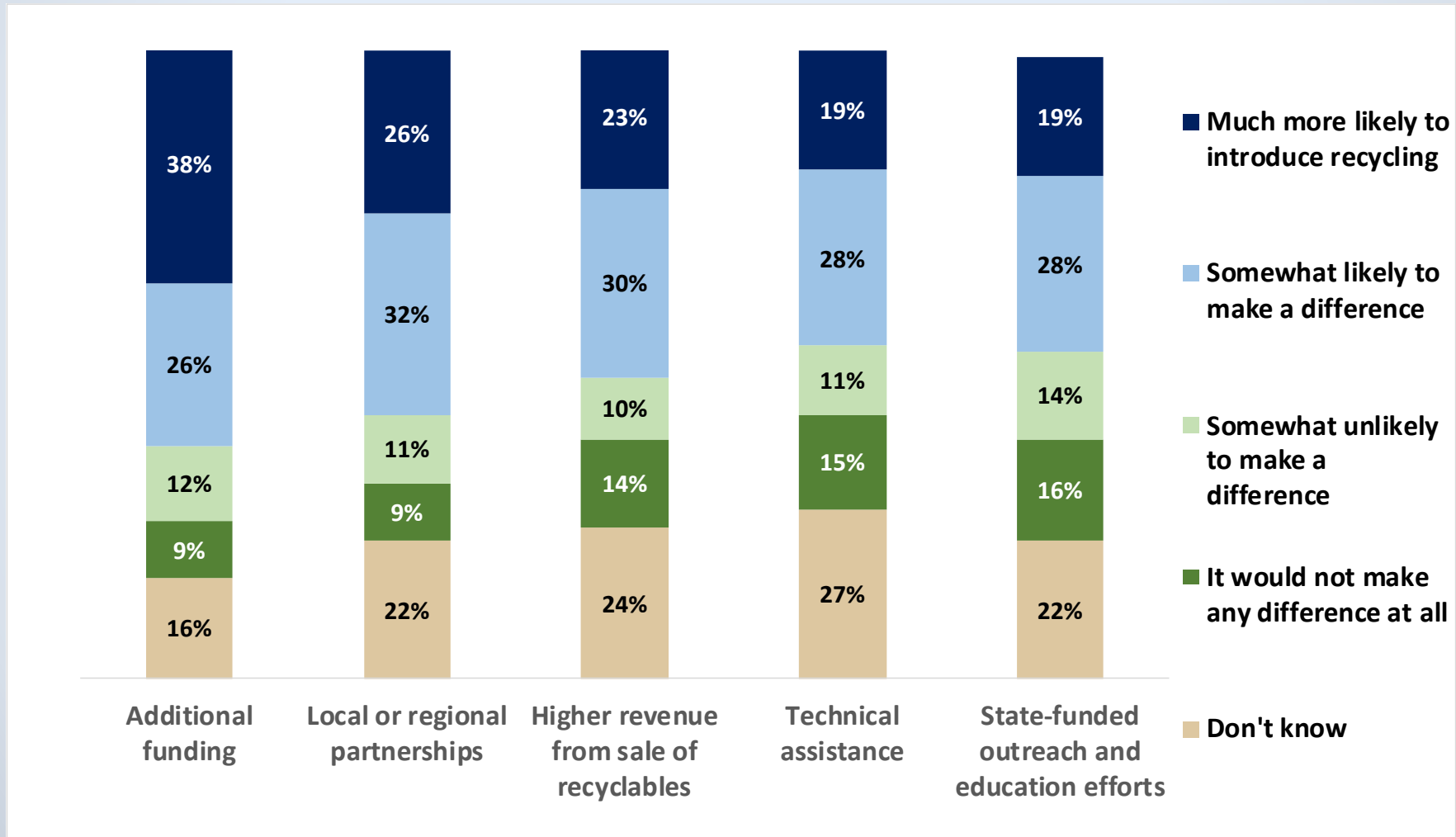
# Resources that make expansion more likely

If the following resources were available, would your jurisdiction's government be more likely to expand or improve recycling services, or would it not make a difference?



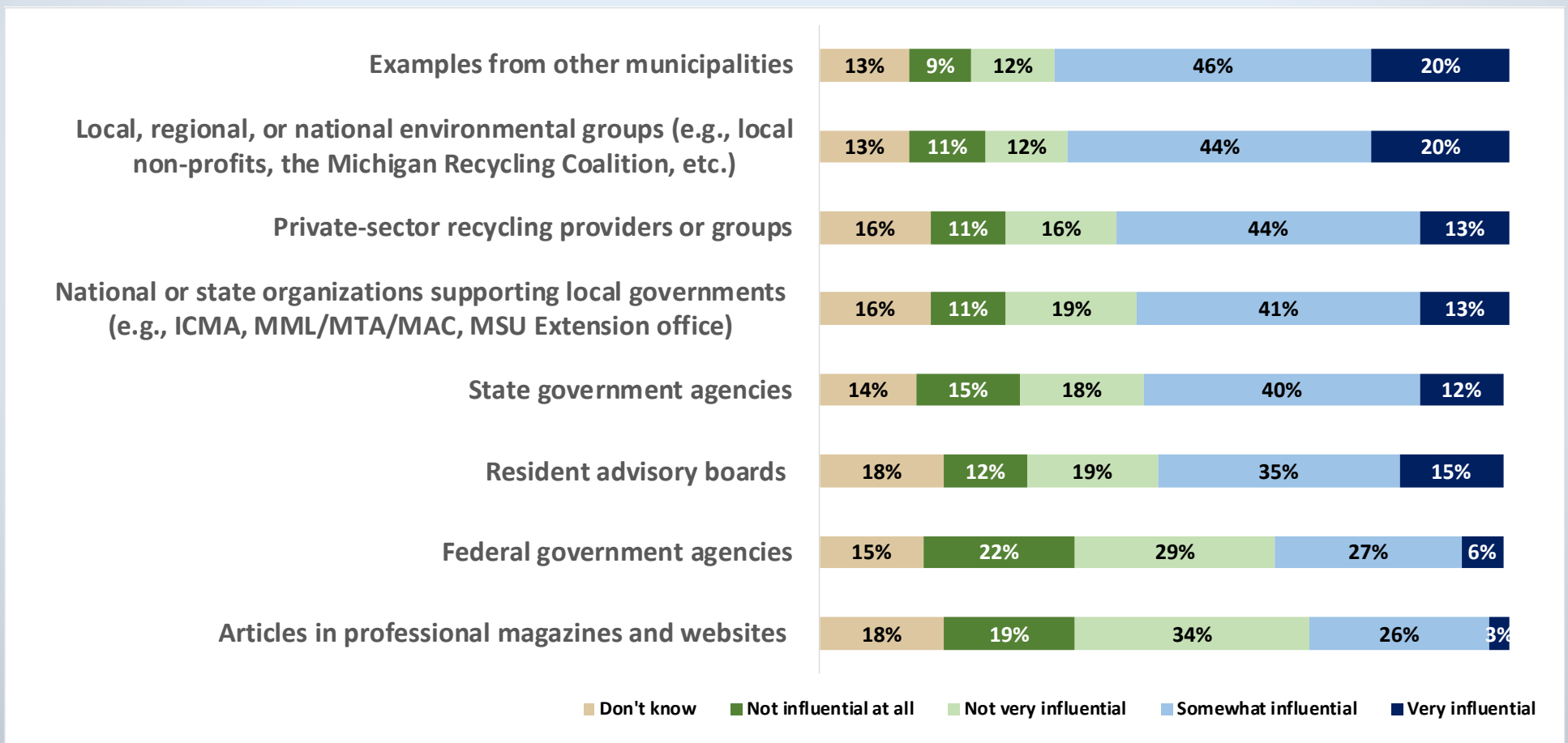
# Resources that make **introduction more likely**

If the following resources were available, would your jurisdiction's government be more likely to introduce recycling services, or would it not make a difference?



# MRC and environmental groups among most influential sources of information about recycling

Whether or not your jurisdiction is currently engaged in recycling efforts, which of the following sources of information are or would likely be influential in your decision making?





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# Now we're interested in your thoughts...

And for additional information on MPPS recycling data~

Web: [www.closup.umich.edu](http://www.closup.umich.edu)

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Twitter: [@closup](https://twitter.com/closup)

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