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# Australian Constitutional Values Survey 2010

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## Results Release 1

Prepared for and by

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## METHODOLOGY & FUNDING

### Sample

- Conducted nationally in Australia by Newspoll Limited among **1,201** respondents (2008) and **1,100** respondents (2010)
- Respondents aged 18 years and over.
- Respondents were selected via a stratified random sample process which included:
  - a quota being set for each capital city and non-capital city area, and within each of these areas, a quota being set for groups of statistical divisions or subdivisions;
  - random selection of household telephone numbers using random digit dialling (RDD);
  - random selection of an individual in each household by a "last birthday" screening question.

### Interviewing

- Conducted by telephone over the period of **1-8 May 2008** and **1-14 March 2010** by fully trained and personally briefed interviewers.
- To ensure the sample included those people who tend to spend a lot of time away from home, a system of call backs and appointments was incorporated.

### Weighting

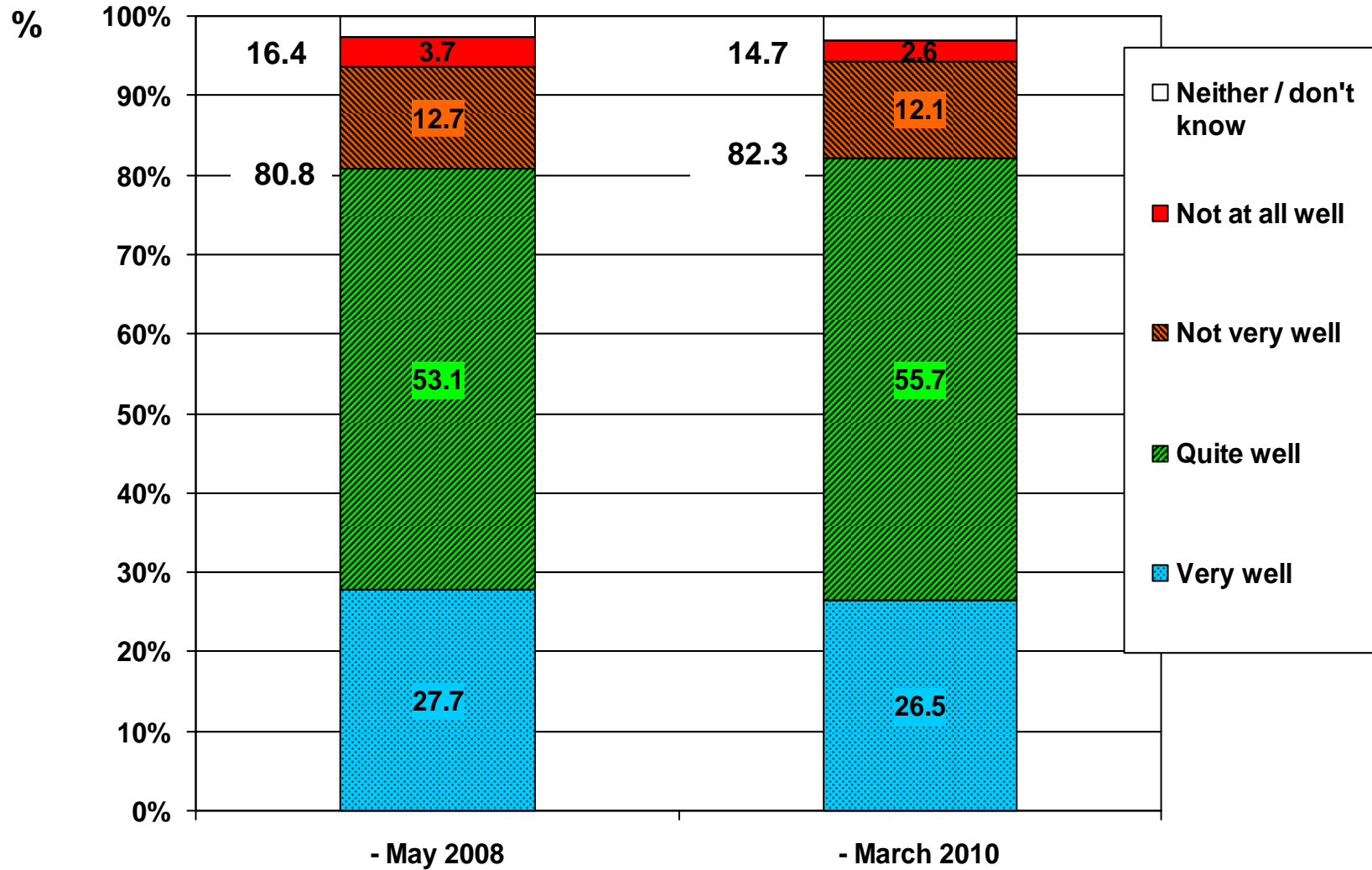
- To reflect the population distribution, results were post-weighted to:
  - Australian Bureau of Statistics data on age, highest level of schooling completed, sex and area;
  - federal voting intention (using the previous two Newspoll voting intention surveys) (2008 only).
- Results presented as weighted, showing population estimates represented by the respondents, expressed in thousands. The percentages are based on these weighted figures.

### Funding

- Funded by the Australian Research Council, Discovery Project DP0666833, led by Griffith University, with Charles Sturt University, University of New England and the University of Melbourne.

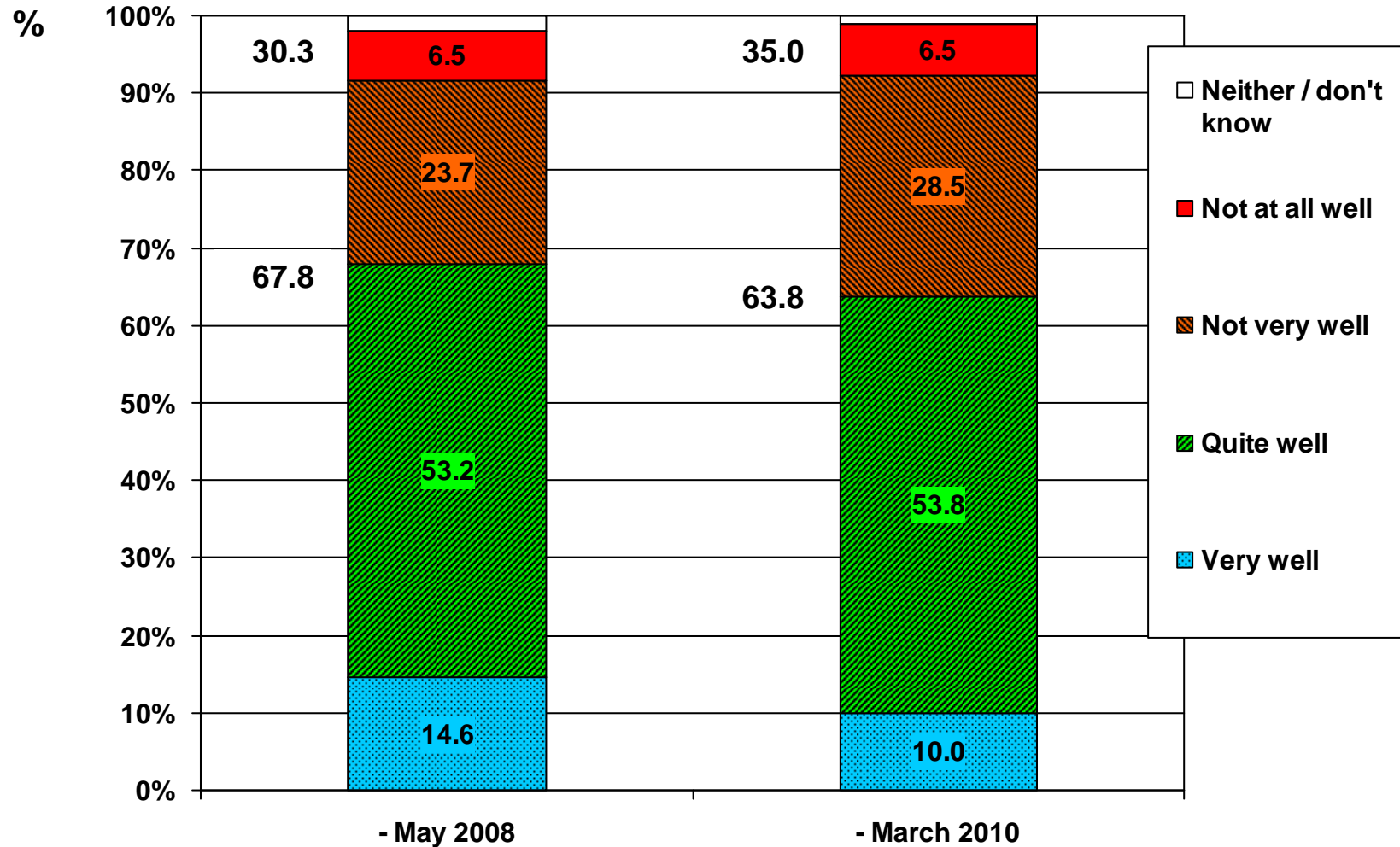
# Australians' satisfaction with democracy

How well do you think democracy works in Australia today?



## Australians' satisfaction with how three-levelled system works (in general)

As you probably know, Australia has a system of government with **three** main levels - there's the **federal** government, **state** government and **local** government, that is, local councils. Overall, how well would you say this system of government works in Australia?



Overall attitudes to federal system	May 2008	Mar 2010
The current system of government, with three main levels, <b>does not work well</b>	30%	35%
The current system with three main levels, works well – but system does <b>not deliver</b> <u>legislative diversity, innovation, or collaboration</u> well	39%	40%
Did not respond negatively to above, but <u>legislative diversity, ability to innovate, division of power, or ability to elect different parties at different levels</u> , is <b>undesirable</b>	17%	15%
<b>Total respondents with a negative view of the present system, in practice or principle</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>90%</b>

## Satisfaction with three-levelled system by state

As you probably know, Australia has a system of government with **three** main levels - there's the **federal** government, **state** government and **local** government, that is, local councils. Overall, how well would you say this system of government works in Australia?

	<b>May 2008</b> (n=1201)	<b>March 2010</b> (n=1100)	<b>NSW</b> (n=285)	<b>Vic</b> (n=220)	<b>Qld</b> (n=204)	<b>SA</b> (n=146)	<b>WA</b> (n=164)	<b>Tas</b> (n=46)	<b>ACT</b> (n=17)	<b>NT</b> (n=18)
<b>Not at all well</b>	6.5%	6.5%	10.9	3.1	7.2	3.7	2.5	8.0	0.0	5.4
<b>Not very well</b>	23.7%	28.5%	29.2	26.7	35.6	25.7	18.3	31.7	32.4	20.2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>25.6</b>
<b>Quite well</b>	53.2%	53.8%	50.3	56.7	49.7	57.4	62.4	53.1	56.0	60.2
<b>Very well</b>	14.6%	10.0%	8.5	12.3	6.5	12.3	14.3	7.2	11.6	14.2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>67.8%</b>	<b>63.8%</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>60.3</b>	<b>67.6</b>	<b>74.4</b>

## Australians' view of select attributes of the [federal] system

### 'Different levels of government being able to collaborate on solutions to problems'

A desirable or undesirable feature of a system of government with different levels?

	May 2008	March 2010	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	NT
<b>Desirable</b>	91.5%	92.1%	90.7	94.2	90.4	90.5	95.8	85.5	100.0	100.0
<b>Undesirable</b>	6.5%	5.7%	6.3	4.7	7.0	8.1	1.6	12.6	0.0	0.0

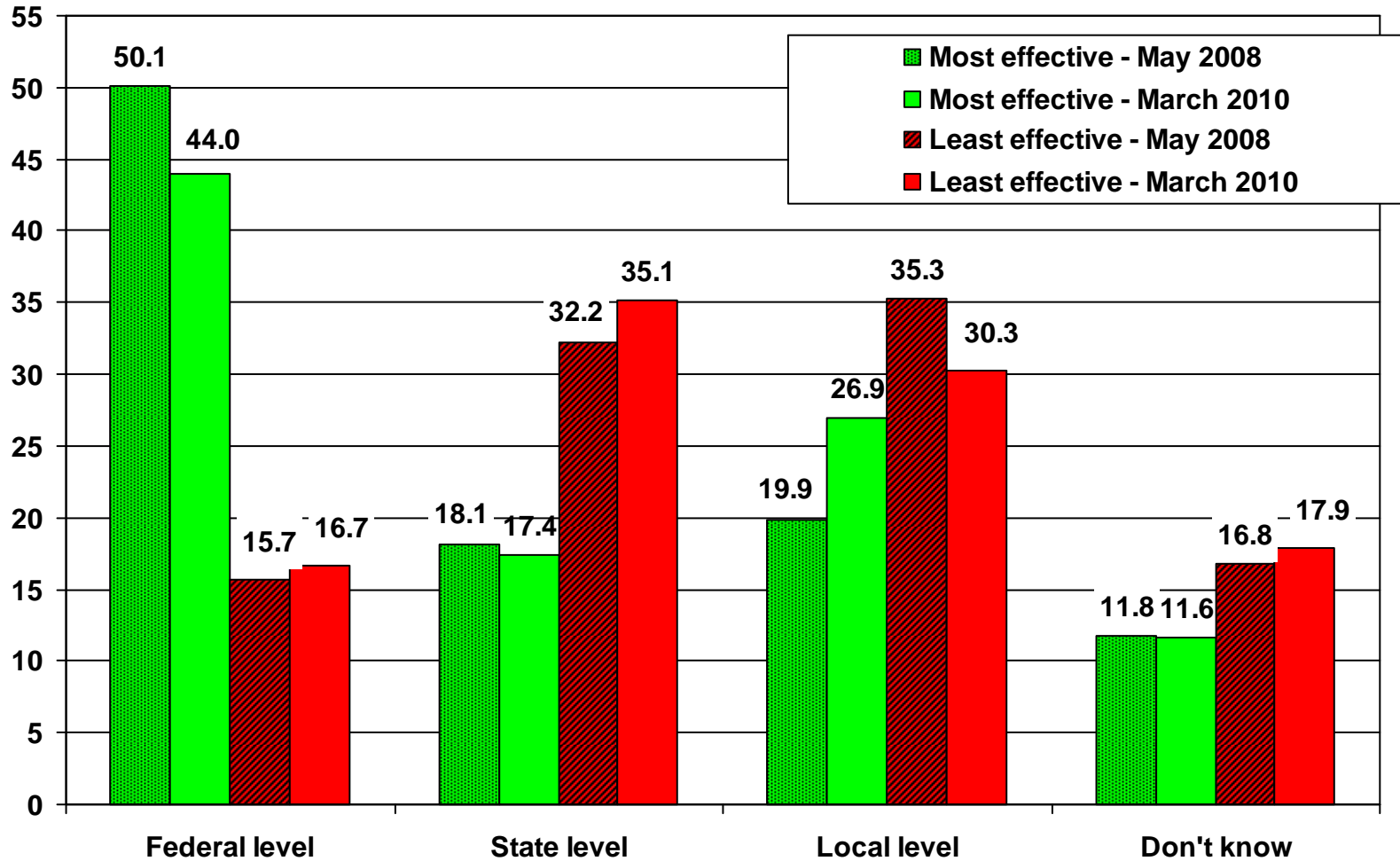
If desirable, how well does our system of government currently do it?

(as a % of all respondents)

	May 2008	March 2010	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	NT
<b>Not at all well</b>	7.8%	8.2%	10.5	7.2	8.3	9.9	4.3	1.8	4.8	4.3
<b>Not very well</b>	40.0%	43.7%	43.7	45.5	40.8	42.2	40.7	55.2	45.6	67.9
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>54.2</b>	<b>52.7</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>52.1</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>57.0</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>72.2</b>
<b>Quite well</b>	32.4%	29.9%	26.6	30.9	33.4	23.3	38.1	23.7	34.9	21.0
<b>Very well</b>	9.5%	8.6%	8.2	9.5	6.4	12.9	8.9	4.9	14.3	4.9
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>38.5%</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>25.9</b>

## Perceived relative effectiveness of levels of government

If you think about how **effective** each level of government is in doing its **particular** job, which **one** % level - federal, state or local - do you think currently does its job the **most** effectively?





## Perceived relative effectiveness by state

If you think about how effective each level of government is in doing its particular job, which one level - federal, state or local - do you think currently does its job the most effectively?

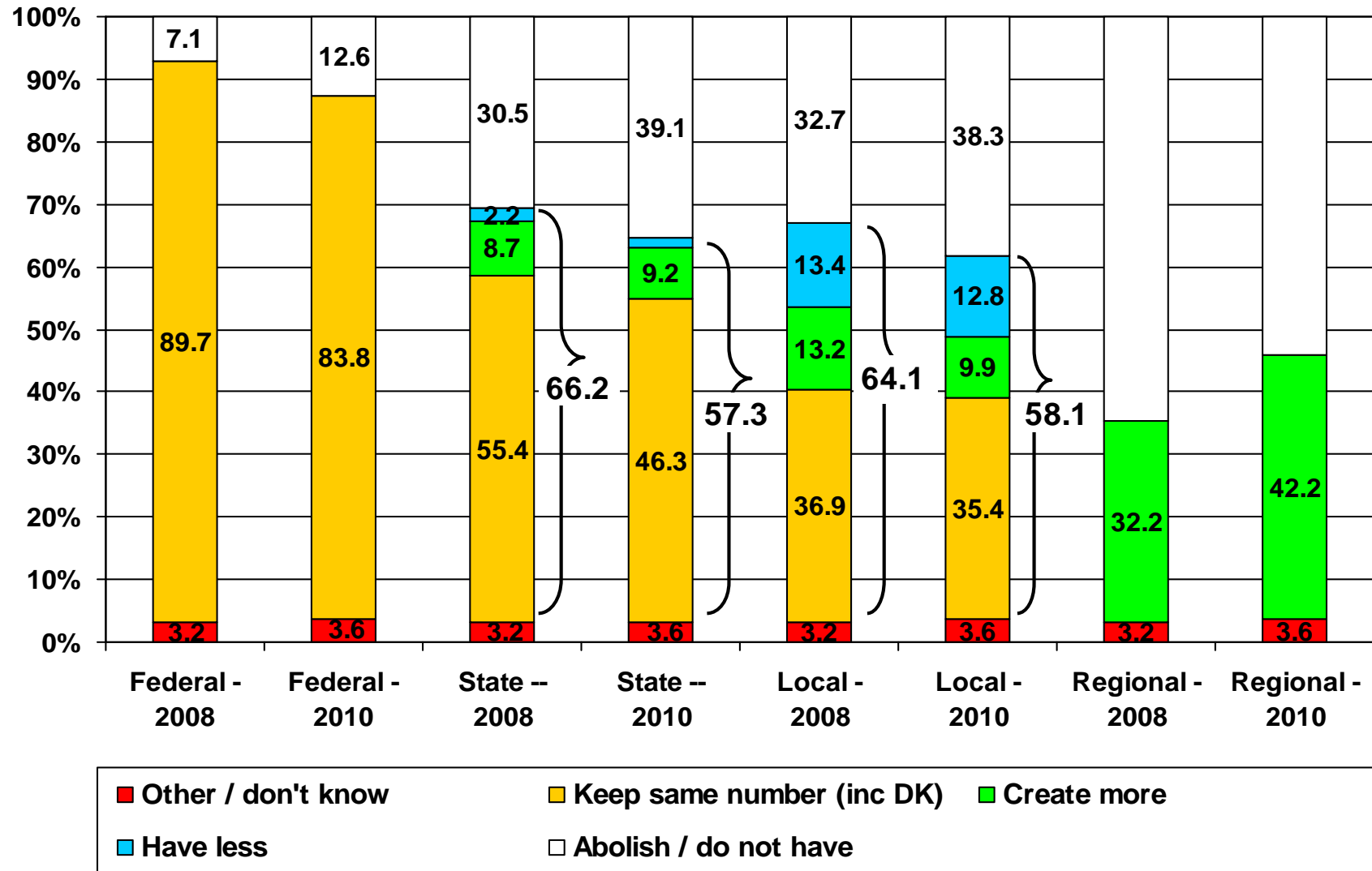
	May 2008	March 2010	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	NT
<b>Most effective</b>										
Federal level	50.1%	44.0%	50.7	44.0	39.2	38.9	33.2	55.0	57.2	33.9
State level	18.1%	17.4%	9.4	18.2	16.3	26.0	36.7	11.0	28.4	15.9
Local level	19.9%	26.9%	8.9	15.0	10.6	10.7	14.9	8.3	4.9	24.8
<b>Least effective</b>										
Federal level	15.7%	16.7%	11.8	18.7	16.8	21.8	28.2	11.4	0.0	10.2
State level	32.2%	35.1%	47.3	25.0	41.8	25.5	16.4	44.6	14.3	27.3
Local level	35.3%	30.3%	19.1	18.0	16.5	16.5	16.0	16.3	25.6	24.8

## Constitutional values – which levels of government should be doing what?

Thinking of the federal government as being the **highest** level of government, and state and then local as being **lower** levels of government. Which **one** of the following comes closest to your view about where decisions should be made?

	May 2008	March 2010	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	NT
'It is better for decisions to be made at the lowest level of government competent to deal with the decision'	51.8%	44.5%	33.7	48.8	54.3	42.0	46.1	41.7	62.1	76.5
'It is better for as many decisions as possible to be made at the higher levels of government'	41.1%	49.0%	59.0	47.2	37.0	53.0	45.3	56.5	33.1	23.5
Don't know	7.2%	6.5%	7.4	4.0	8.7	5.0	8.6	1.8	4.8	.0

## The future – who would have what levels of government, 20 years from now?

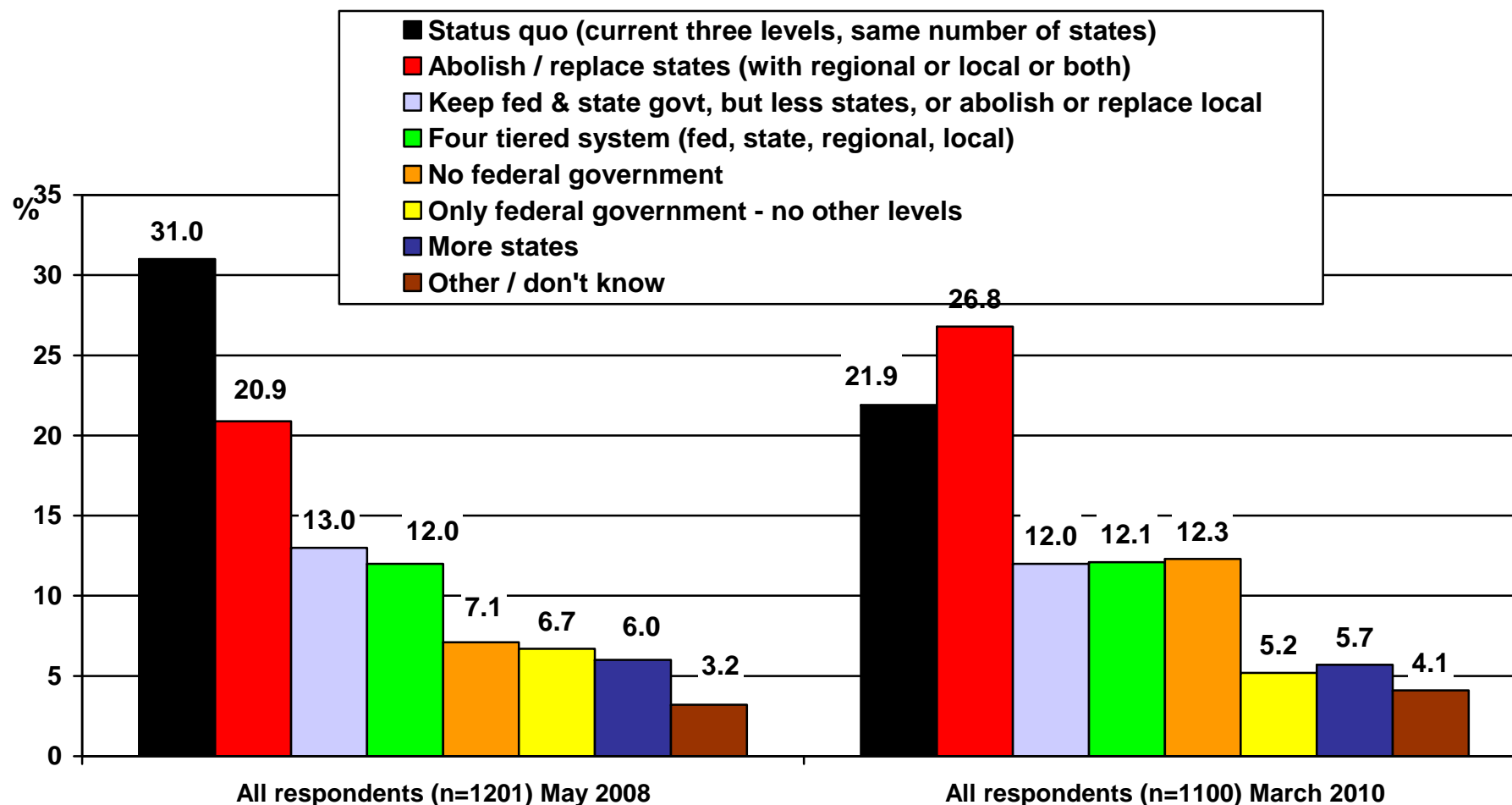


## Major preferences for our system of government, 20 years from now

	Australia		NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	NT
	2008 n=1201	2010 n=1100								
<b>Keep system the same</b>	31.0	<b>21.9</b>	19.0	28.2	14.9	28.2	28.5	22.7	0.0	16.0
<b>Reform the system</b>	65.8	<b>74.5</b>	75.5	69.6	82.6	66.8	68.6	75.5	100.0	76.0
<b>Don't know</b>	3.2	<b>3.6</b>	5.5	2.2	2.5	4.4	2.9	1.8	0.0	8.0
	100.0	<b>100.0</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>How reform?</b>										
<i><b>Abolish federal government*</b></i>	7.1	<b>12.3</b>	10.8	9.7	19.8	9.5	13.1	12.3	4.8	0.0
<i><b>Abolish state governments*</b></i>	30.5	<b>39.1</b>	44.0	32.6	48.4	35.9	24.3	32.5	49.6	25.2
<i><b>Abolish local government*</b></i>	32.7	<b>38.3</b>	44.5	34.1	39.5	33.3	30.4	43.8	42.6	18.6
<i><b>Create more states*</b></i>	8.7	<b>9.3</b>	5.4	9.1	13.6	2.6	12.0	12.5	35.7	25.9
<i><b>Create regional government*</b></i>	32.2	<b>42.2</b>	44.4	40.1	44.7	28.8	42.2	37.1	60.6	52.3

Source: Australian Constitutional Values Survey, conducted by Newspoll for Griffith University, Charles Sturt University, University of New England and University of Melbourne, May 2008 and March 2010. \*Options do not sum to 100% as not mutually exclusive. Not all options shown. See [www.griffith.edu.au/federalism](http://www.griffith.edu.au/federalism)

## Major combinations of preferences for our system of government, 20 years from now



Source: Australian Constitutional Values Survey, conducted by Newspoll for Griffith University, Charles Sturt University, University of New England and University of Melbourne, May 2008 and March 2010. Percentages vary from Table due to combination analysis (e.g. both 'Abolish/replace states' and 'Only federal government' are combinations involving no state level of government; 'Four tiered system' includes four tiers with more states; etc).