

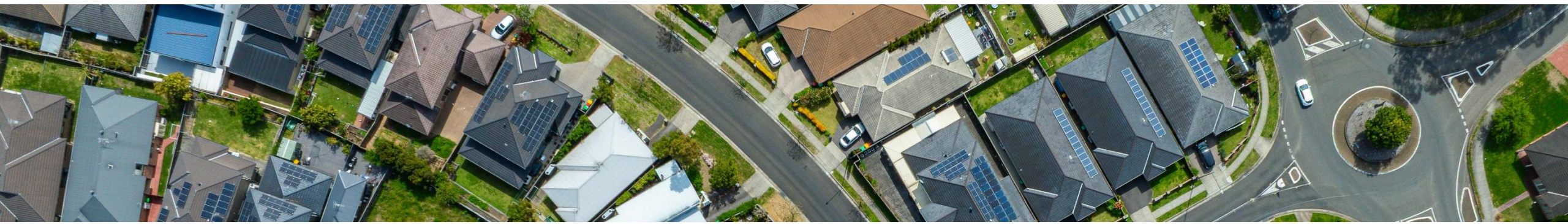


NSW Landlords Research

MINIMUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS FOR RENTALS

RESEARCH REPORT - JUNE 2026





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Background and objectives

Energy Consumers Australia (ECA) is the national voice for both residential and small business energy consumers. The organisation works with consumers to ensure they have their values, expectations and needs met through a modern, flexible and resilient energy system.

ECA has commissioned SEC Newgate to undertake this research to develop a robust evidence base on the perspectives of residential landlords in New South Wales, as governments consider minimum energy efficiency standards for rental properties. The study aims to generate policy-relevant insight into landlord attitudes, decision-making and responses to potential reforms.

While improving the energy efficiency of rental housing can reduce costs, improve comfort and support emissions reduction, the sector has consistently lagged owner-occupied housing. This reflects a mix of structural barriers and practical concerns - particularly around upfront costs, payback periods and implementation complexity. These challenges are especially pronounced in NSW given the age of housing stock, prevalence of apartments and tight rental market conditions.

This research focuses on understanding what drives landlord behaviour - identifying key barriers, motivators and areas of support - to inform advocacy that is both effective and workable. The findings will support ECA in shaping policy settings that improve outcomes for renters while remaining practical and balanced for landlords.

Research methodology



Online survey

Participants sourced from an ISO-accredited online market research panel, with fieldwork conducted over the 28th May - 5th June 2026.



Representative sample

n = 500 Landlords based in NSW with an investment property located in NSW

The total sample size of 500 is associated with an overall margin of error of approximately +/- 4.4% at the 95% confidence interval.

To maximise representativeness of the sample, quota targets were set on key characteristics of the landlord population, and based on known incidences regarding:

- Age - using data provided by the Australian Taxation Office
- Gender - using data from previous SEC Newgate research studies
- Number of investment properties - using data provided by the Australian Taxation Office
- Location (metropolitan vs regional) - using ABS 2021 census population data with appropriate adjustments made



Segmentation

The landlord segmentation was designed to identify distinct attitudinal groups based on how landlords think about property investment and the balance between cost, responsibility, and tenant outcomes. A Latent Class Analysis (LCA) approach was used to uncover underlying patterns in responses across 15 carefully selected variables, capturing views on investment priorities, perceived obligations, risk tolerance, and openness to energy efficiency improvements. The intent was not simply to describe landlords demographically, but to understand belief systems that drive decision-making. This enables more targeted policy design, communication, and engagement strategies tailored to the motivations and barriers of each segment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive summary (1/2)

Support exists for minimum efficiency standards in rentals, but many landlords need convincing

1. Slightly over half of all landlords support minimum efficiency standards in rental properties, with only a quarter opposed

A majority of NSW landlords (51%) support standards, with much fewer opposing (24%) and a further 25% undecided at this time. This represents a movable 'middle ground' of opinion that can shift depending on how the policy is framed and delivered.

2. Landlords recognise the benefits, but don't see them flowing to themselves

There is clear recognition that standards would improve outcomes for tenants and the community, but far fewer see a benefit for landlords. This creates a disconnect - the case for standards is understood, but it is not yet personally compelling.

3. Cost is the primary lens through which standards are judged

Upfront cost and uncertain returns dominate how landlords think about standards. While environmental and tenant benefits are recognised, overall sentiment is driven by expected financial impact.

4. Questions about standard implementation are also holding landlords back

Landlords are not just concerned about cost - other barriers include uncertainty about what standards would require, finding an appropriate time to make upgrades, and how they would be implemented in real properties. Any lack of clarity would be a further headwind for support.

5. There is a clear base to build from - but it is not yet consolidated

Support for standards, recognition of benefits and a large undecided group indicate there is a pathway to broader acceptance - provided concerns around cost, clarity and implementation are addressed.

Executive summary (2/2)

What drives landlord behaviour?

1. Landlord behaviour is reactive, and not driven by efficiency goals

Most landlords do not actively upgrade for energy efficiency. Improvements are more likely when something triggers action - such as a system needing replacement or a clear regulatory requirement.

2. Improvements are concentrated in major systems, not whole-of-home upgrades

Recent upgrades are most likely to involve heating, cooling and hot water systems, with far less activity in areas like insulation or draught proofing. This shows improvements are partial and tied to specific items, rather than comprehensive.

3. Landlords are likely to respond in ways that protect their financial position

Many landlords expect to increase rents, defer upgrades, or reassess investment if costs rise (although fewer indicate they would sell). This reflects a consistent pattern - decisions are made to manage financial impact, not to optimise energy performance.

4. The majority of landlords sit in the middle - open, but cautious

A smaller segment of landlords are already supportive and engaged, and another are firmly opposed. However, most landlords sit between these positions - not rejecting standards but looking for reassurance that they are reasonable and workable.

5. Policy design will determine whether the middle moves or hardens

Given views are not fixed, how standards are introduced will shape outcomes. Clear, phased and predictable requirements are more likely to bring the middle group along, while cost shocks or complexity risk reinforcing opposition.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen the perceived financial case for landlords

Support is likely to be weaker where landlords do not see a personal benefit. Making the financial case clearer - through incentives, expected returns, or property value - will help build support for minimum standards.

2. Reduce uncertainty through clear, simple requirements

Concerns are not just about cost, but about what is required and how to act. Clear standards, practical guidance and straightforward pathways will be critical to turning passive support into follow-through.

3. Anchor standards to how landlords already make decisions

Most landlords act when systems need replacing, not in anticipation of efficiency gains. Aligning standards to these trigger points (e.g. at replacement or tenancy change) will reduce resistance and make compliance feel more achievable.

4. Design for the mainstream, not the extremes

Most landlords are not firmly opposed, but they are cautious. Keeping requirements simple, flexible and achievable will help build support, rather than losing them through complexity or perceived burden.

5. Phase implementation to build acceptance over time

Given sensitivity to cost, a staged approach will allow landlords to adjust and reduce the likelihood of pushback. Gradual implementation is more likely to consolidate support than a rapid or rigid rollout.

6. Tailor communication to different landlord mindsets.

Landlords are not a single audience, but these differences aren't always visible in practice. Therefore, communications should vary in framing and emphasis across channels - combining clear, practical guidance for the mainstream with financially grounded messaging, and approaches that reinforce support while managing resistance.

Support for a minimum standard exists today, but consolidating it will depend on minimising cost pressures, increasing clarity, and aligning standards to the points where landlords are most likely to act

NSW LANDLORD ATTITUDINAL SEGMENTATION

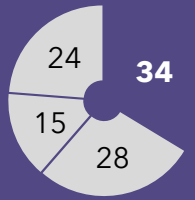
Landlord sentiment is not uniform - landlords differ significantly in how they view and respond to standards. Segmenting the landlord population helps identify where support can be built and where resistance is likely to remain.



Pragmatic Landlords

Open to change – so long as it's fair, practical and doesn't go too far.

Represents 34% of the
NSW landlord population



Pragmatic landlords represent the moderate, mainstream centre of the market. They are broadly supportive of the direction of travel - around 6 in 10 are positive about the renewables transition and support net zero - and are some of the most likely to feel the current balance between landlords and tenants is about right, indicating a relatively neutral starting point.

They prioritise a mix of tenant and commercial considerations, placing high importance on ensuring property is in a good state of repair (92%), ensuring tenant requests for repairs or upgrades are met (86%), ensuring the property can be maintained at a comfortable temperature (77%), alongside rental return and capital growth (both 76%). Energy efficiency sits as a secondary but still meaningful priority.

Cost remains a constraint (92% see upfront cost as a barrier), but resistance is not ideological - around half support minimum standards and most accept a role for government.

Demographically, they look like a fairly typical landlord cohort - slightly more likely to be single-property owners, urban, and relatively well educated. Ultimately this is a group driven less by ideology and more by a desire for policies that feel reasonable, balanced, and workable in practice.

How they see standards

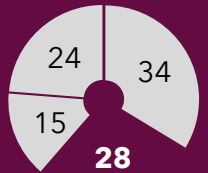
They are cautiously supportive:

- 52% support and 10% oppose MEERS
- 76% agree government has a role in mandating standards
- 61% agree landlords have a responsibility to ensure properties are energy efficient



Investment-driven Landlords

Represents 28% of the
NSW landlord population



I'll move when the numbers stack up – otherwise this just looks like cost and risk.

Investment-driven Landlords approach energy efficiency through a clearly defined financial and risk lens. While they are not strongly opposed to climate action in principle (a slim majority support net zero and the transition), they are more likely to feel the system is stacked against them, with 72% saying the balance of rights favours tenants.

Their priorities are firmly commercial - 98% prioritise rental return and 100% capital growth - while environmental considerations carry relatively little weight (24% prioritise emissions reduction).

This is also the segment most constrained financially: 75% have a mortgage on their property, 52% are negatively geared, and nearly 1 in 4 report financial difficulty, which helps explain why almost all (99%) cite upfront cost and ROI uncertainty as barriers.

They are highly responsive to incentives (over 9 in 10 say rebates or increased value/rent would encourage action), but in the absence of these, support for policy is likely to be limited. However, this group is not rejecting change outright - they are asking whether it is financially justified, fairly structured, and worth the risk.

How they see standards

They are clearly more skeptical:

- 41% support and 33% oppose MEERS
- Only 21% think landlords would be positively affected, while 57% think landlords would be negatively affected



Resistant Landlords

This is government overreach – and I’m the one expected to pay for it.

Represents 15% of the
NSW landlord population



Resistant Landlords are the most clearly defined resistant and oppositional segment, with obvious ideological concerns. They are significantly less aligned with the climate agenda - only 20% support the renewables transition or net zero, while around 6 in 10 are opposed or feel negative. Further, they are much more likely to feel landlords are disadvantaged (60% say tenant rights dominate).

Unlike other groups, energy efficiency and environmental outcomes are not intrinsic motivators. Just 7% see efficiency as important, and 5% prioritise emissions reduction, making this fundamentally a non-engaged segment on the issue itself. Although cost barriers are high (94% cite upfront cost), what distinguishes this group is that incentives are less persuasive - only around 60% say financial levers would encourage them. Opposition also runs deeper, with 67% opposing minimum standards.

Demographically, they are most likely to be multi-property landlords, suggesting greater exposure to compliance costs at scale, and show a mix of relatively high incomes but are just as likely to be feeling financial pressure as other groups.

While this segment is unlikely to become supportive, resistance may be reduced by emphasising fairness, flexibility and practical benefits over environmental outcomes. Maintaining support among the much larger pragmatic majority may be a better use of effort than trying to convert the most resistant voices.

How they see standards

They are the segment most likely to reject the whole agenda:

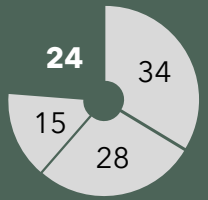
- 23% support and 67% oppose MEERS
- 79% think landlords would be negatively affected
- 61% negative about the renewables transition
- 61% oppose net zero
- Only 7% think it is important to ensure a rental property is as energy efficient as possible
- Only 23% agree government has a role to play in mandating standards



Responsible Landlords

This is part of being a good landlord – set the standard and I'll meet it.

Represents 24% of the
NSW landlord population



Responsible Landlords are the most engaged and supportive segment, viewing energy efficiency as part of being a good landlord and quality housing, rather than just regulatory compliance.

They are strongly aligned with the broader policy direction (75% support net zero and the energy transition, and 79% support minimum standards) and are unique in integrating tenant outcomes, property quality, and environmental benefits as core priorities -100% prioritise energy efficiency and comfort, 98% tenant needs, and 89% emissions reduction. 99% also say it's important that the property is kept in a good state of repair.

They are also the most accepting of regulation, with 84% agreeing that government has a role to play in mandating a standard. 75% say landlords have a responsibility to ensure efficiency, and they are significantly more optimistic about outcomes for landlords, tenants, and the broader community.

Importantly, their profile suggests they are well placed to act: they are more likely to be sole decision-makers (63%), more likely to own properties outright (39%), and more likely to have properties in very good or excellent condition (78%), indicating stronger control and asset quality.

While cost is still a barrier (97% cite upfront cost), this group is fundamentally receptive and most likely to respond to clear standards, practical support, and a pathway to implementation.

How they see standards

This is the one segment that sees standards as constructive:

- 79% support and 6% oppose MEERS
- 95% think it is important to minimise energy bills for the tenant
- 86% think tenants would be positively affected with the introduction of MEERS
- 75% agree landlords have a responsibility to ensure properties are energy efficient
- 61% think landlords themselves would be positively affected



Segment engagement considerations



Pragmatic landlords (34% of total)

Make it feel normal, manageable, and already consistent with what good landlords do

- Lead with fairness and balance - position standards as a reasonable minimum, not a major change
- Keep it simple and practical - clear requirements, plain-English guidance, and examples of what typical upgrades look like
- Emphasise everyday benefits (comfort, liveability, maintaining property quality), not policy or emissions
- Phase implementation and avoid any sense of sudden change or compliance shock



Resistant landlords (15% of total)

Reduce resistance and making compliance feel contained and predictable

- Emphasise minimum requirements only - avoid any perception of overreach or overcapitalisation
- Highlight flexibility and choice in how standards can be met
- Provide certainty and time - long lead times, clear rules, no unexpected changes
- Reduce friction through low admin burden and simple compliance processes



Investment driven landlords (28% of total)

Frame as a commercial decision - where the numbers stack up, action follows

- Put financials front and centre - incentives, rebates, tax settings and cost offsets need to be highly visible
- Show clear and credible return - rent uplift, value protection, vacancy reduction, and payback periods
- Position upgrades as risk management and future-proofing, not just improvement
- Provide tools to assess the decision - calculators, worked examples, financing options



Responsible landlords (24% of total)

Enable and reinforce - they are already on side and more ready to move

- Provide clear standards and definition of “what good looks like”
- Offer practical support to act - guidance, assessments, trusted suppliers, tools
- Position standards as modern landlord practice and a natural step forward
- Create opportunities to go beyond minimum and be recognised as leading practice landlords

DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS

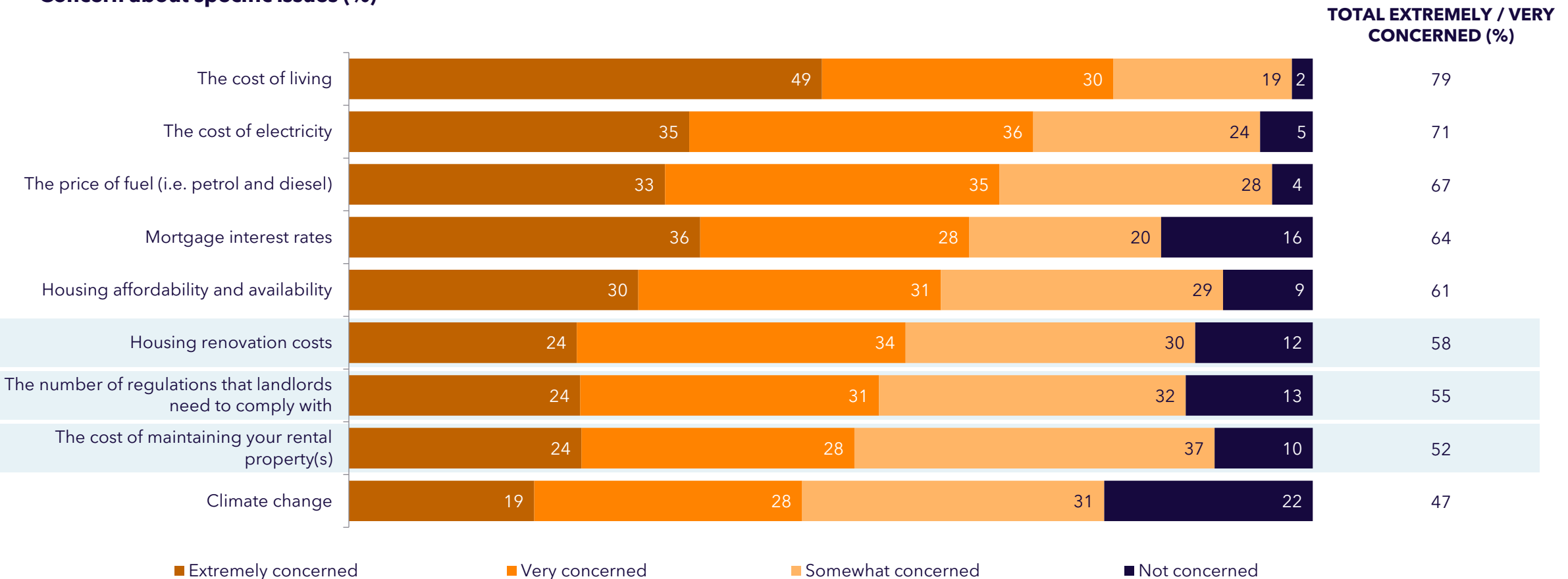
Contextual issues and concerns of landlords



Contextual issues and concerns

Among NSW landlords, concern is the highest in relation to the cost of living broadly, as well as the cost of electricity and fuel. However, property-related costs and regulations still register strongly, with more than half being extremely or very concerned about these issues. This points to the difficulty of building support for new minimum efficiency standards.

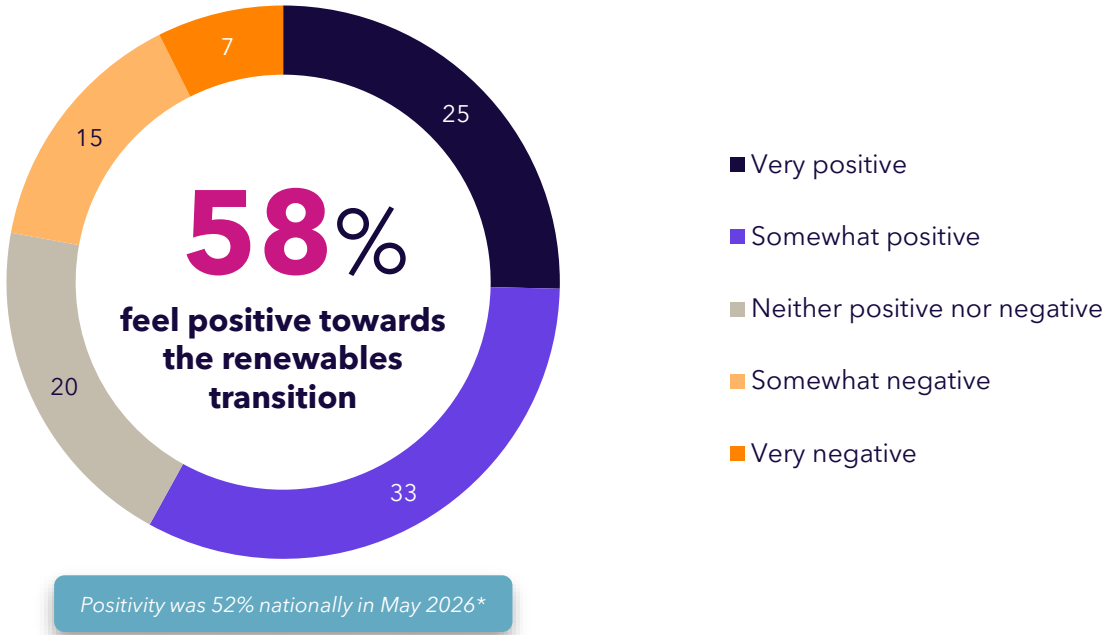
Concern about specific issues (%)



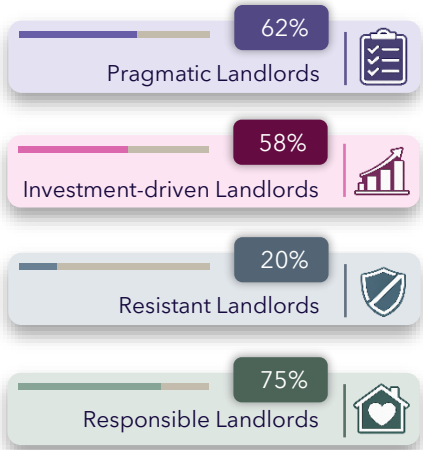
Sentiment towards renewable energy transition

NSW landlords overall are a lot more likely to feel positive (58%) than negative (22%) towards the renewable energy transition. However, this sentiment splits sharply by segment - and these ideological differences help explain who supports, and who resists, minimum energy standards.

Sentiment towards transition (%)



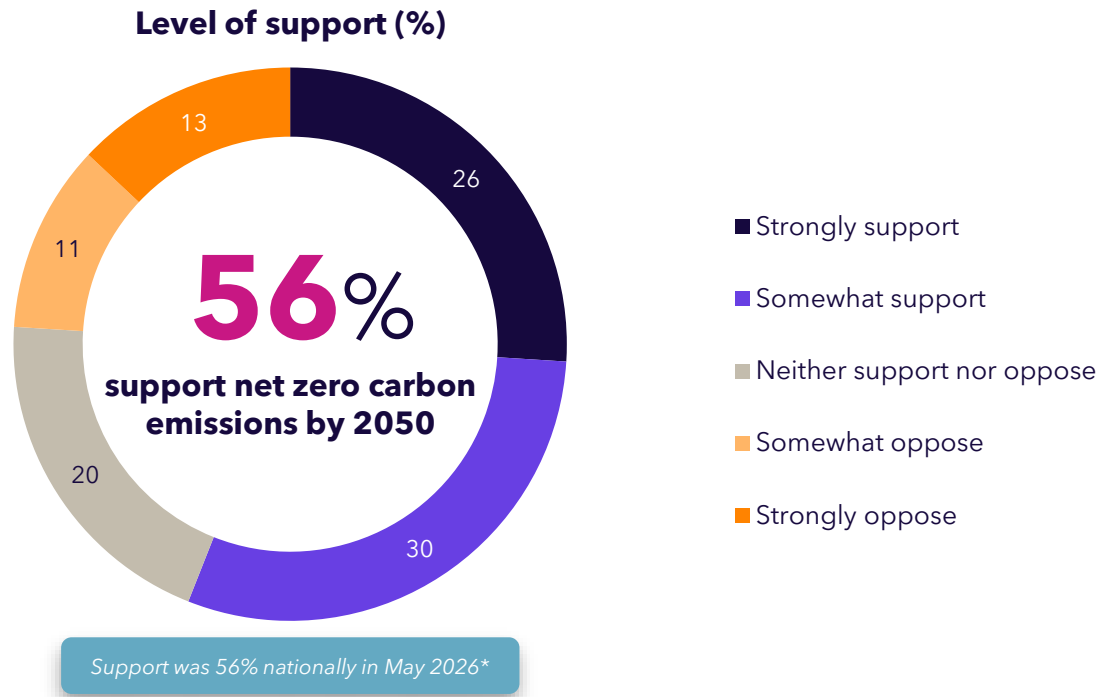
Feel positive towards transition by segment



TOTAL (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS
Positive	58	57	60	64	53	60	52	57	61	72	40
Negative	22	25	19	14	30	21	27	20	27	15	41

Support for net zero by 2050

Similarly, there is majority support (56%) for the 2050 net zero carbon emissions target among NSW landlords, with only 25% opposing it. This highlights the relative importance of energy efficiency in meeting this target, but does not necessarily translate into support for a minimum efficiency standard. Again, segment differences remain pronounced.



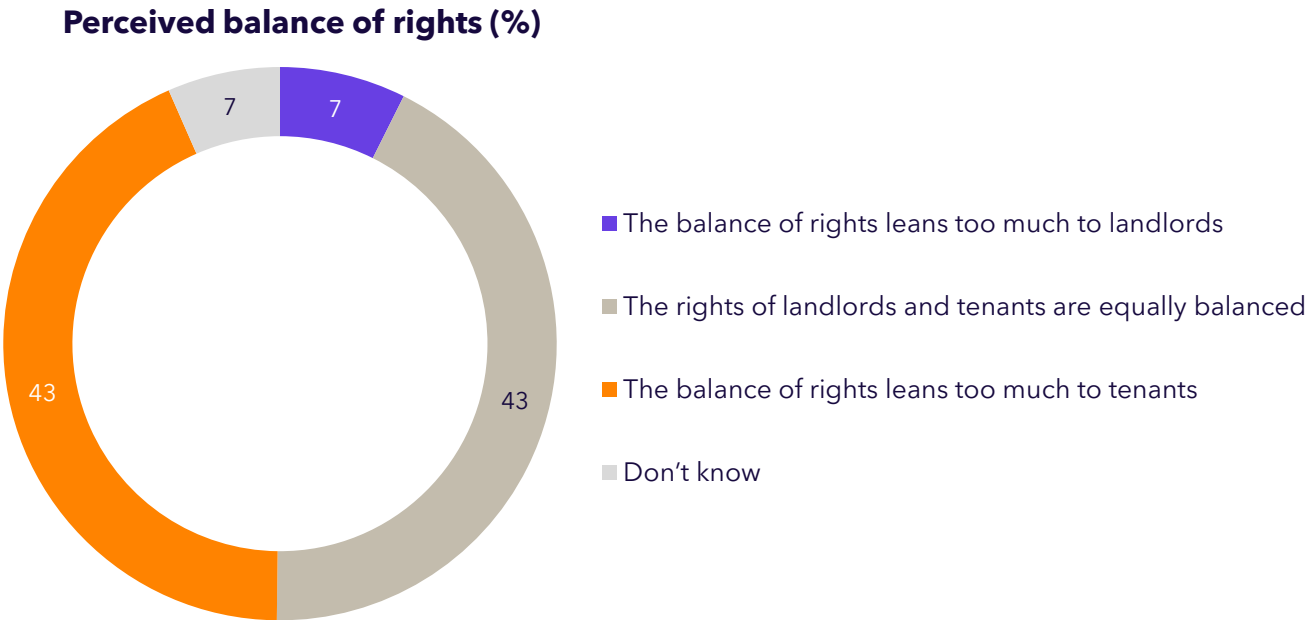
Support for net zero by segment



TOTAL (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Support	56	56	55	62	50	59	41	57	52	69	35	83	7
Oppose	25	29	19	16	32	23	33	23	30	15	48	4	79

Perceptions of landlord vs tenant rights

Views are evenly split overall as to whether the rights of landlords and tenants are equally balanced (43%), or whether the balance leans too much to tenants (also 43%). However, this split masks a fundamental divide in how different landlord cohorts define fairness - shaping their openness to further standards and requirements.



Leans too much to tenants by segment



TOTAL (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
The balance of rights leans too much to landlords	7	8	7	11	4	8	5	8	5	11	3	9	5
The rights of landlords and tenants are equally balanced	43	48	37	50	36	42	46	41	47	49	27	44	35
The balance of rights leans too much to tenants	43	39	48	36	50	43	44	42	45	35	66	39	58



Landlord property engagement



Property management approach

The vast majority of landlords (87%) have a real estate agent managing their rental property, and are relatively evenly split as to whether they prefer to have as little involvement as possible (46%) or stay involved as much as they can (41%). Regardless, this highlights that real estate agents will be critical to how any minimum standard is delivered and experienced in practice.

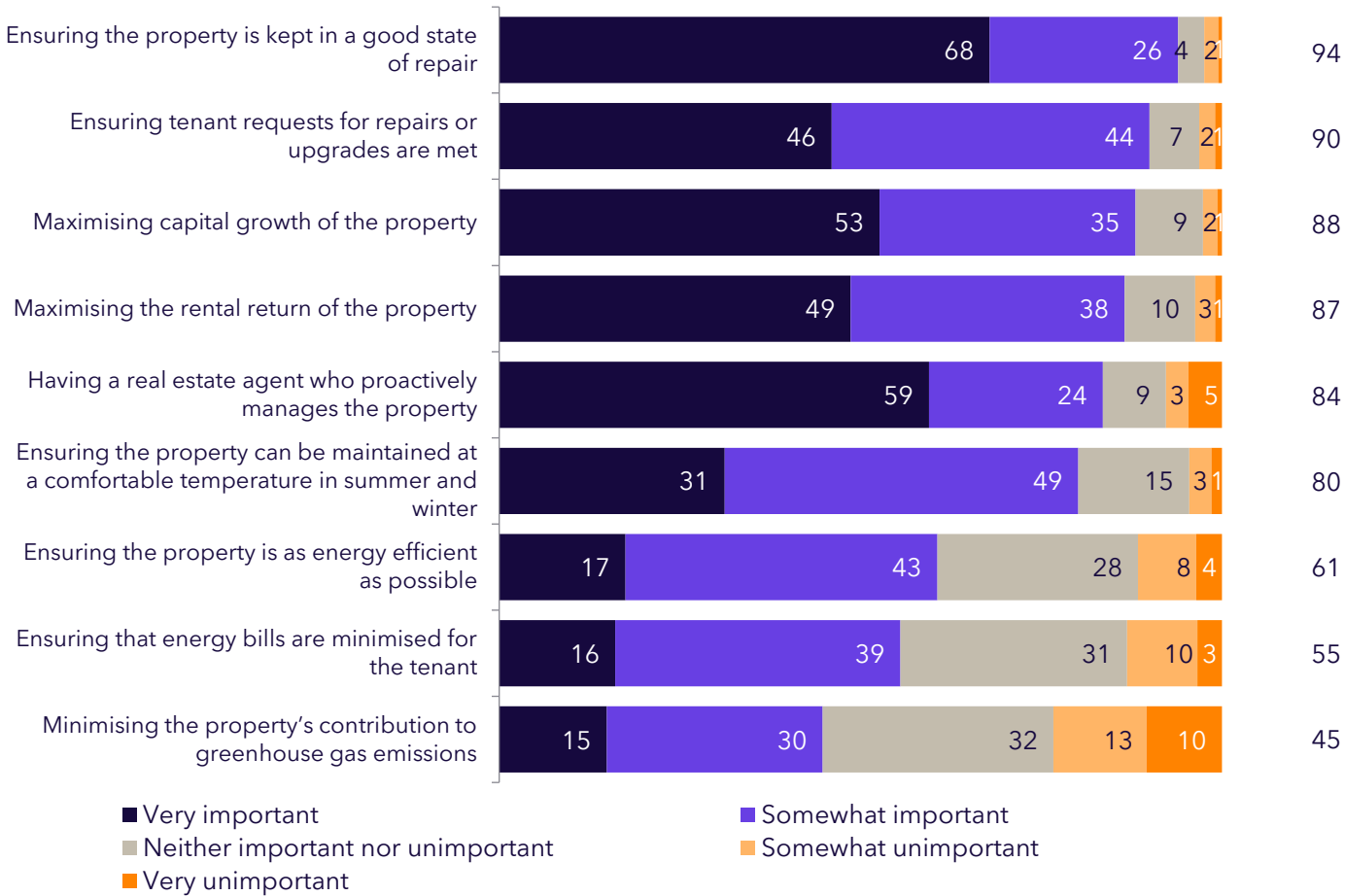


(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Have someone managing, and prefer to have as little involvement as possible	46	48	44	48	44	47	41	46	47	47	47	45	38
Have someone managing, but prefer to stay involved as much as they can	41	39	42	39	42	41	39	38	47	38	41	40	50
Manage investment property by themselves	13	13	14	13	13	12	20	16	6	15	12	15	12

Priorities when managing investment property

Core property fundamentals - maintenance, tenant management and returns - dominate landlord priorities, while energy efficiency and emissions sit lower in the hierarchy. This suggests standards will land most effectively when framed in terms of property value, performance and upkeep routines.

Importance of investment property factors (%)



TOP 3 CONCERNS BY SEGMENT

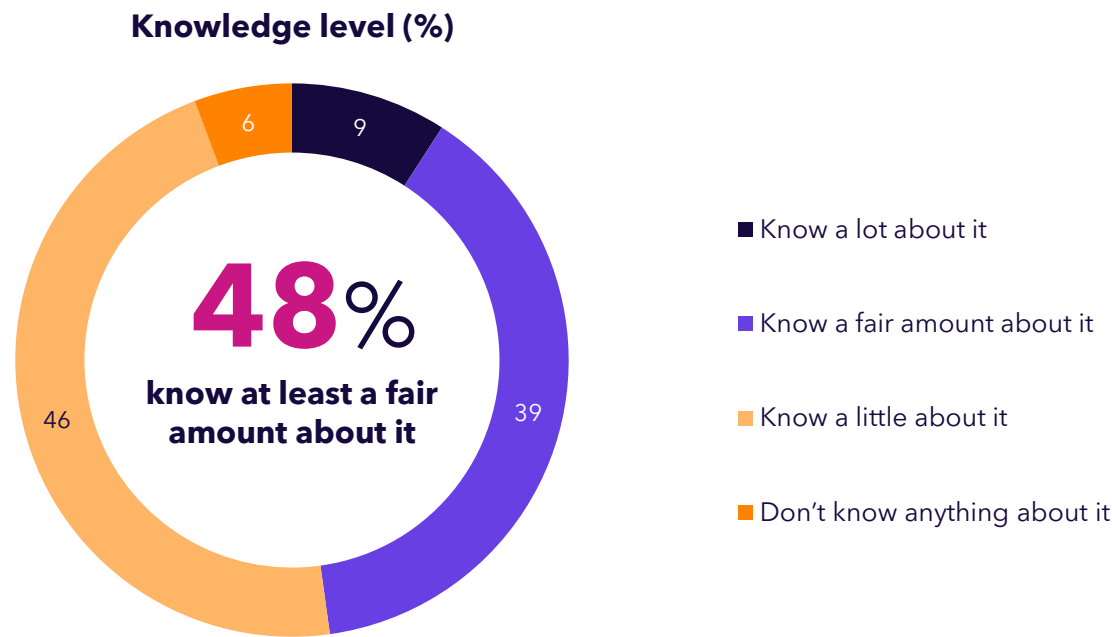
Pragmatic Landlords	Investment-driven Landlords
Ensuring the property is kept in a good state of repair	Maximising capital growth of the property
Ensuring tenant requests for repairs or upgrades are met	Maximising the rental return of the property
Having a real estate agent who proactively manages the property	Ensuring the property is kept in a good state of repair
Resistant Landlords	Responsible Landlords
Ensuring the property is kept in a good state of repair	Ensuring the property is as energy efficient as possible
Ensuring tenant requests for repairs or upgrades are met	Ensuring the property can be maintained at a comfortable temperature in summer and winter
Maximising the rental return of the property	Ensuring the property is kept in a good state of repair

Landlord sentiment and behaviour regarding energy efficiency

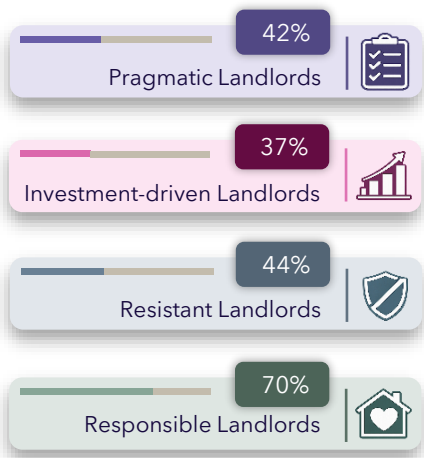


Knowledge of energy efficiency

About half of NSW landlords (48%) feel they understand energy efficiency well, with only 9% believing they know a lot about it. This knowledge gap is closely tied to support for minimum standards, with knowledge levels much higher among those who support such a standard.



Know at least a fair amount by segment

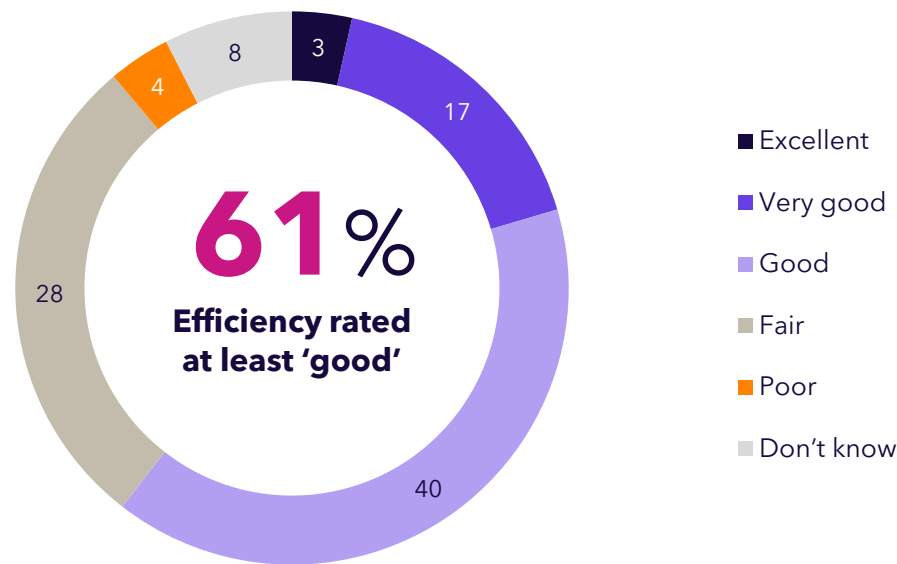


(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Know a lot / fair amount about it	48	53	41	50	46	49	43	47	49	57	36	52	48
Know little / nothing about it	52	47	59	50	54	51	57	53	51	43	64	48	52

Energy efficiency of investment property

While a clear majority of NSW landlords (61%) believe their property meets at least a 'good' standard of energy efficiency, far fewer rate it as very good (17%) or excellent (3%), highlighting the gap that minimum standards would need to address. While not statistically significant, ratings are directionally higher for freestanding houses, while Responsible Landlords are much more likely to rate their investment property as at least 'good'.

Self-rated energy efficiency of investment property (%)



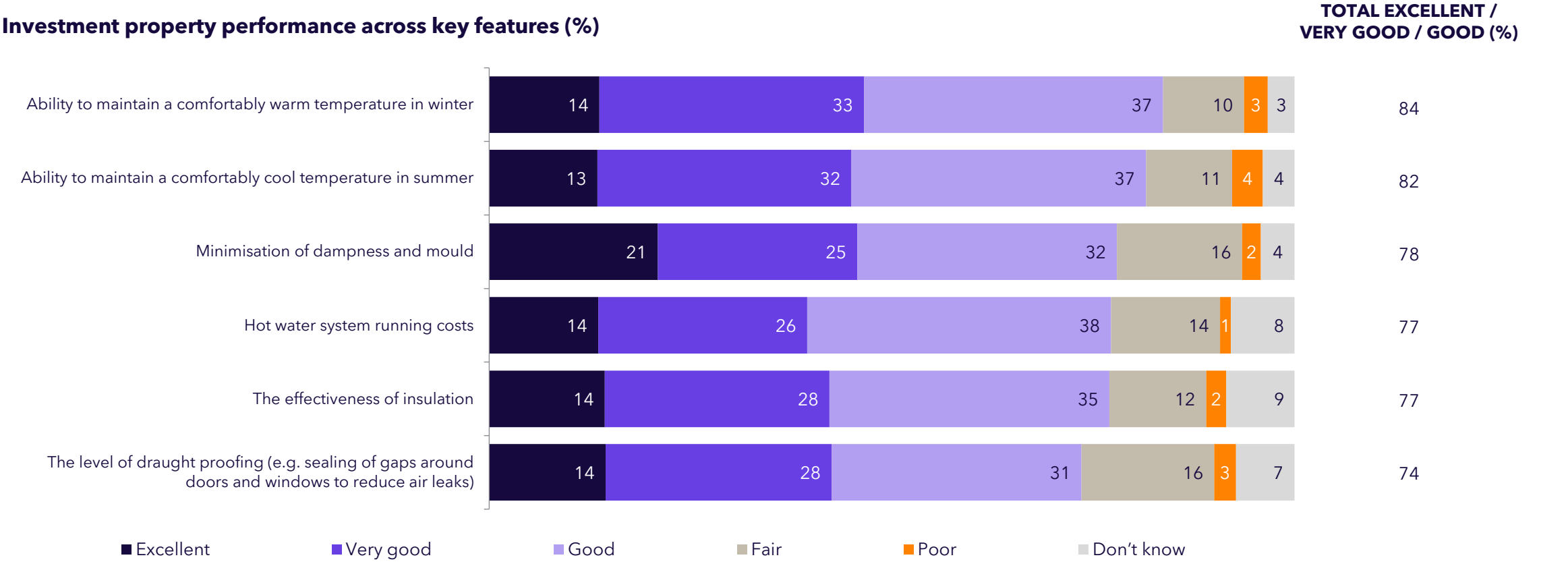
Efficiency at least 'good' by segment



(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES*	FREESTANDING HOUSE	SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE	APARTMENT/ UNIT
Excellent / very good / good	61	63	58	67	55	59	67	60	62	65	58	57
Fair / poor	32	33	31	28	35	34	25	32	33	30	36	32

Performance of investment property features

While most individual property attributes are rated at least 'good', few rate any feature as being 'excellent'. Self-assessed performance is strongest for heating and cooling, while ratings are lower for hot water system running costs, insulation, and draught proofing. This reinforces that a minimum standard should carefully consider prioritising where improvement is most needed.

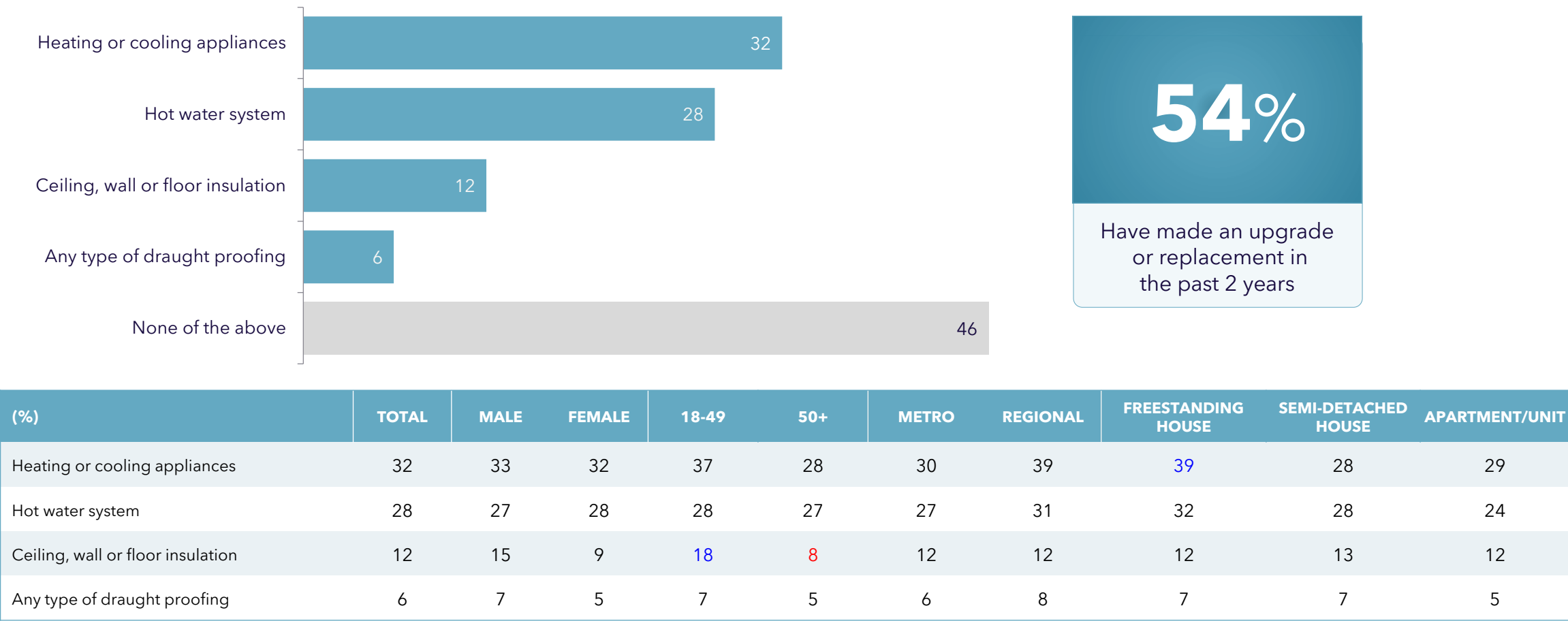


Freestanding homes were more likely to be directionally higher on all these aspects - although not always statistically significant (see appendix). However, statistically significant differences were noted for freestanding homes in relation to maintaining a comfortably cool temperature in summer, as well as hot water system running costs (more likely to be rated as at least 'good')

Upgrades made to investment property

Despite a majority reporting recent upgrades (54%), investment is skewed toward appliances, with relatively little activity in insulation and draught proofing where efficiency gains could potentially be the greatest.

Investment property upgrades in last two years (%)



Reasons for heating or cooling upgrades

Heating and cooling upgrades are largely reactive, with relatively little evidence of landlords upgrading proactively to improve energy efficiency.



Main reason for heating or cooling upgrades (% among those who replaced or upgraded their heating/cooling)



(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	FREESTANDING HOUSE	SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE*	APARTMENT/ UNIT
Because it stopped working or needed fixing	51	49	53	50	51	54	42	49	53	52
To improve the energy efficiency of the property	9	13	4	11	6	7	14	8	10	10
To improve the comfort for your tenant	26	25	27	24	28	24	29	34	21	17
To make the property more attractive for prospective tenants	14	13	16	14	15	15	13	8	16	21

Reasons for hot water upgrades

As with heating and cooling, hot water upgrades are primarily reactive, but even more so, with breakdowns dominating and relatively few upgrades driven by efficiency.

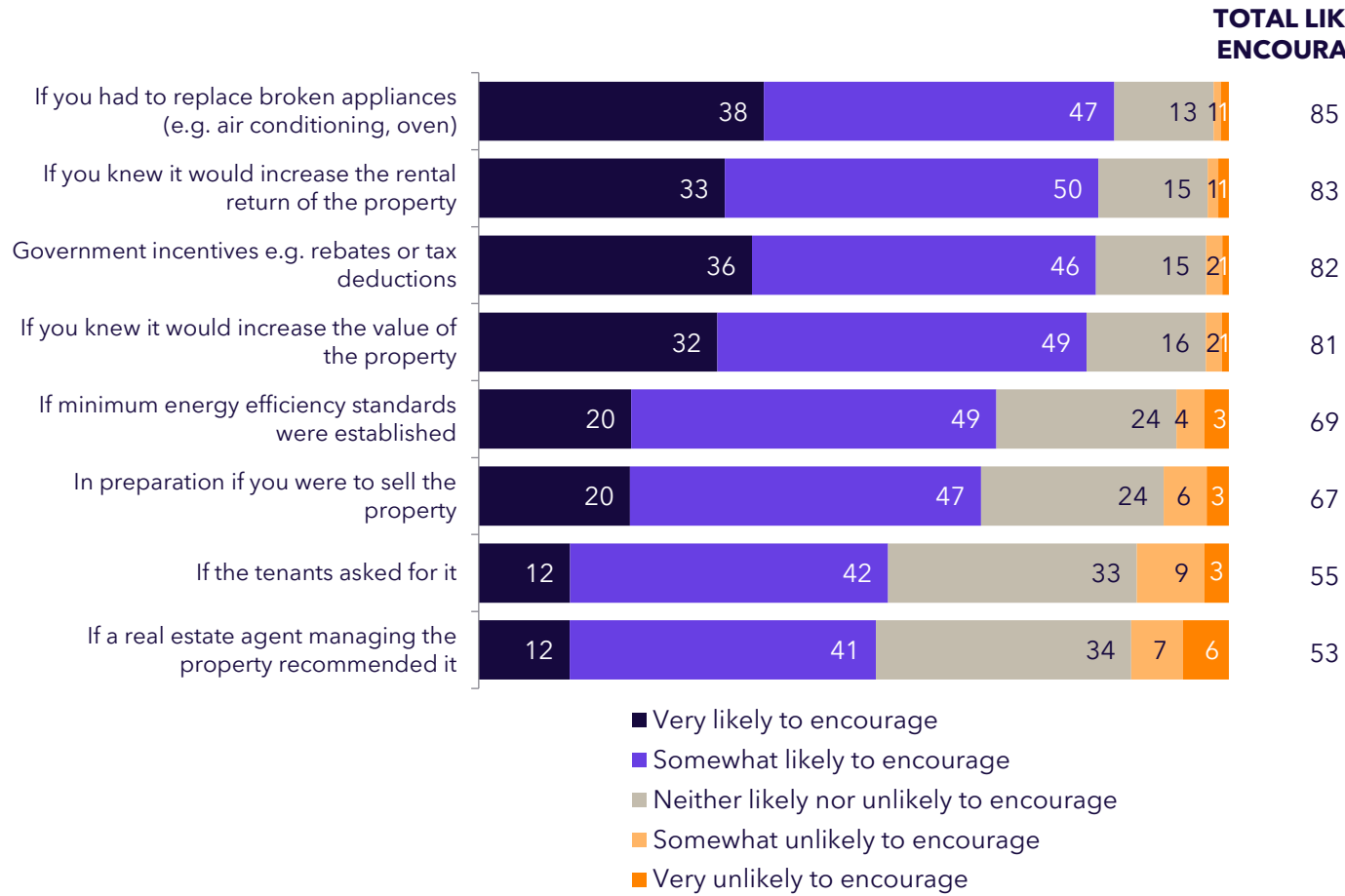


(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL*	FREESTANDING HOUSE	SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE*	APARTMENT/UNIT*
Because it stopped working or needed fixing	67	57	78	53	80	68	62	70	58	67
To improve the energy efficiency of the property	15	22	7	24	7	15	18	13	17	17
To improve the comfort for your tenant	9	12	6	11	7	11	4	10	15	5
To make the property more attractive for prospective tenants	7	7	6	10	4	6	10	5	10	7

Drivers for energy efficiency upgrades

Topline results show a clear hierarchy - that landlords respond most to unavoidable events and financial upside, with softer prompts (tenants, agents) playing a secondary role, highlighting where intervention is likely to be most effective.

Drivers for encouraging energy efficiency upgrades (%)



TOP 3 DRIVERS BY SEGMENT	
Pragmatic Landlords If you had to replace broken appliances (e.g. air conditioning, oven) Government incentives e.g. rebates or tax deductions If you knew it would increase the value of the property	Investment-driven Landlords If you knew it would increase the rental return of the property Government incentives e.g. rebates or tax deductions If you knew it would increase the value of the property
Resistant Landlords If you had to replace broken appliances (e.g. air conditioning, oven) If you knew it would increase the rental return of the property If you knew it would increase the value of the property	Responsible Landlords If you knew it would increase the value of the property If you had to replace broken appliances (e.g. air conditioning, oven) Government incentives e.g. rebates or tax deductions

Responsiveness varies materially by underlying attitudes - with those feeling positive towards the transition and in support of MEERS more likely to be encouraged by any of these factors (see appendix)

Landlord sentiment towards minimum energy efficiency rental standards

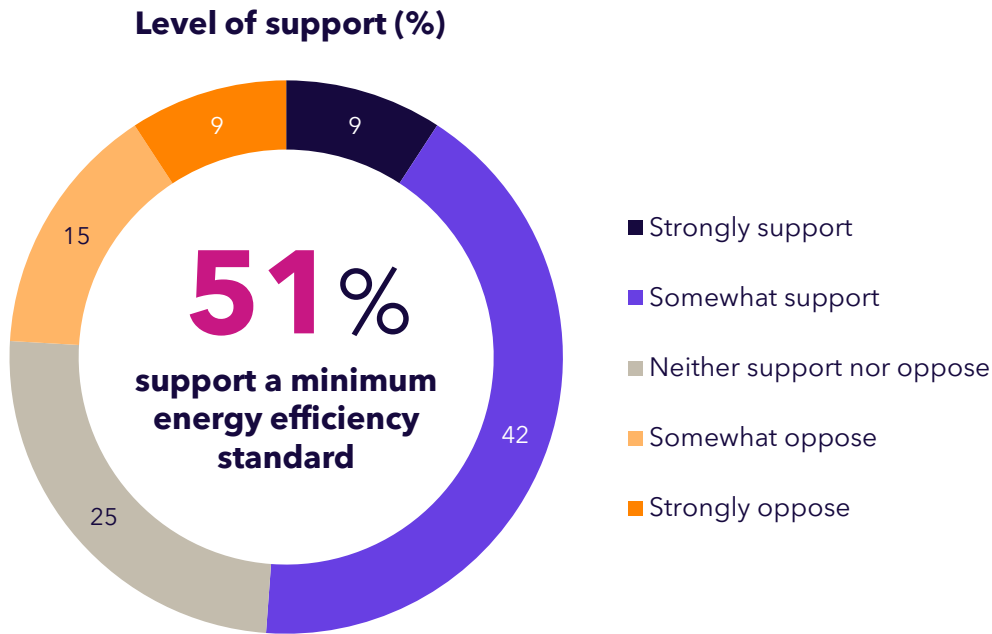


Support for minimum energy efficiency standards for rental properties

There is majority support (51%) for minimum standards regarding energy efficiency in rental properties, with only half as many (24%) opposing a standard and 25% neither supporting or opposing – all of which gives a solid mandate for action. However, there are stark difference by landlord segment, with the framing and implementing of a standard crucial to building support across all groups.

D1. Some believe rental homes should have to meet a minimum energy efficiency standard before they can be rented out. For example, a rental home might have to have ceiling insulation, efficient heating or cooling, and/or meet a certain rating of how comfortable the home is and how cheap it is to run.

Would you support or oppose a minimum efficiency standard for rental properties in New South Wales?



TOTAL (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	PRAGMATIC LANDLORDS	INVESTMENT-DRIVEN LANDLORDS	RESISTANT LANDLORDS	RESPONSIBLE LANDLORDS
Support	51	53	50	57	46	51	54	52	49	64	35	52	41	23	79
Oppose	24	27	20	22	26	25	22	23	26	16	45	10	33	67	6

Reasons for opposing minimum energy efficiency standards

Upfront cost concerns dominate opposition (29%), with many landlords feeling they cannot absorb the expense of compliance given existing financial pressures. Some expect that any additional costs would ultimately be passed on through higher rents. Many also spoke of landlords being stretched enough already, and a general sense that regulation was overreach.

Reasons for opposing a minimum energy efficiency standard for rental properties in NSW (coded % among those opposed)

- 29%** **Upfront upgrade costs are too high:** Many landlords say the initial cost of meeting minimum standards would be prohibitively expensive, particularly where major upgrades or installations are required.
- 17%** **Landlords already financially stretched:** There is a strong sense that landlords are already under financial pressure from interest rates, maintenance and other property costs, making additional requirements difficult to absorb.
- 16%** **Government overreach:** Some oppose the idea on principle, arguing that decisions about property standards should sit with owners rather than government.
- 11%** **Costs would be passed on through higher rents:** Many expect that any additional costs would ultimately be passed on to tenants through rent increases, reducing affordability.
- 7%** **No financial return for landlords:** Some believe upgrades would not deliver a meaningful return, with limited rental uplift or ability to recover the investment.
- 7%** **Strata / building constraints:** A smaller group highlight practical limitations, noting that certain property types—particularly strata or apartments—make upgrades difficult or outside landlord control.
- 5%** **Too much regulation / red tape:** Some see the proposal as another layer of regulation, adding to an already high compliance burden for landlords.
- 3%** **Unfair if applied retrospectively:** There is a view among some that it is unreasonable to impose new requirements on existing properties that were compliant when purchased, and that standards should only apply to new builds.

"Setting minimum standards puts landlords at a disadvantage given the cost-of-living crisis and high interest rates. Landlords are carrying the burden of a bad economy and poor economic decisions"

"Inflation and interest rates already causing landlords to face significant financial impacts. It'll be extremely hard to also fork money out to renovate to the "minimum energy efficiency standards" for rental properties in New South Wales"

"... the cost to achieve a minimum energy efficiency would be incredibly expensive and would ultimately be borne by the tenant by way of higher rent. Plus, its none of the governments business how I manage my property. When it was built it was done so within the required standards. They should just bugger off"

"It would be just another layer of red tape. These sort of things have turned out to be counterproductive in those countries that have tried them"

"Minimum standards would require investment which in turn would push rental prices up. And there is absolutely no doubt those responsible for installing the requirements would overcharge for the service knowing it was compulsory"

"I don't think it's feasible in all properties, especially old apartments. Rental apartments are only part of strata and therefore may not be possible. In houses maybe but I don't trust government to set appropriate standards that are financially sustainable for owners"

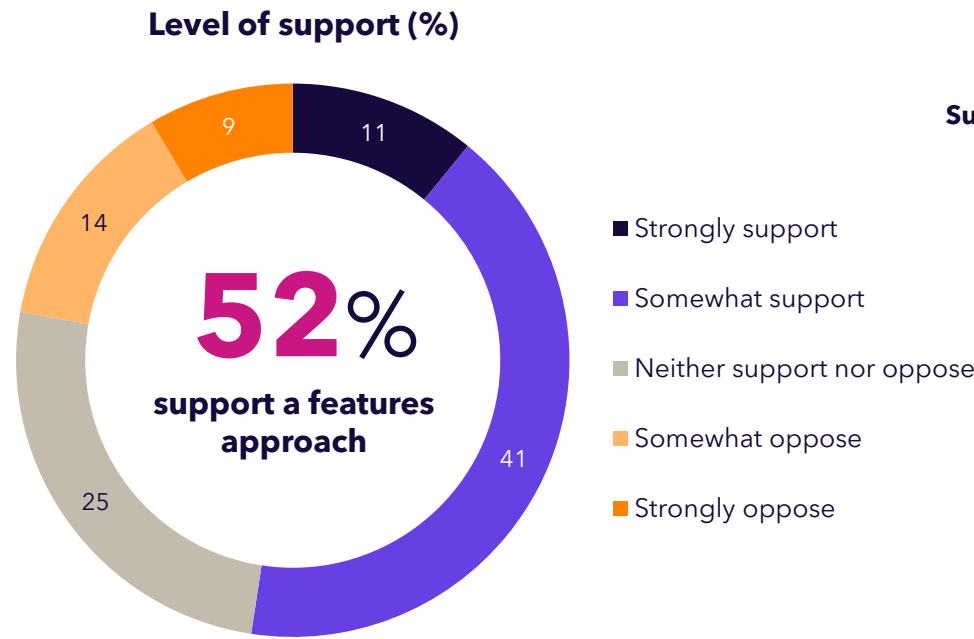
Support for feature-based approach

There is majority support for a features-based approach (52%), with relatively limited opposition (22%). However, similar to support for the broader concept of a standard, while more engaged and pragmatic landlords are supportive, 'Resistant' landlords are much less convinced.

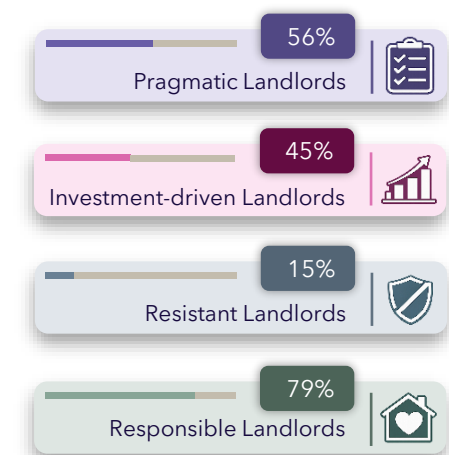
D3. One type of energy efficiency standard is called a **features approach**. It could require rental homes to have:
One or more energy efficiency features installed either by a certain year or before a new lease is signed. Efficiency features could include insulation, draught proofing, reverse cycle air conditioning systems, heat pump hot water systems.

And/or a new energy efficiency system or feature **only** when an old, inefficient system reaches the end of its life and needs replacing.

Would you support or oppose a minimum efficiency standard using a **features approach** for rental properties in New South Wales?



Support features-based standards by segment



TOTAL (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Support	52	53	52	56	49	52	54	52	53	81	15	66	31
Oppose	22	26	18	21	23	23	20	21	25	3	69	13	44

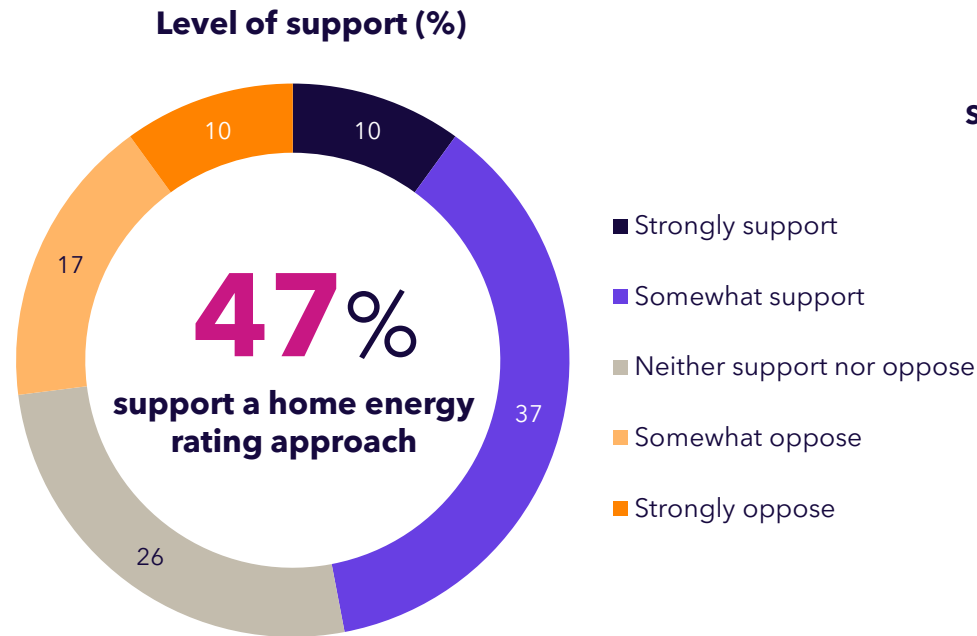
Support for rating-based approach

A rating-based approach attracts fractionally less consensus (47% support vs 27% oppose), with attitudes again sharply divided - from strong backing among 'Responsible' landlords to limited support among 'Investment-driven' and 'Resistant' landlords.

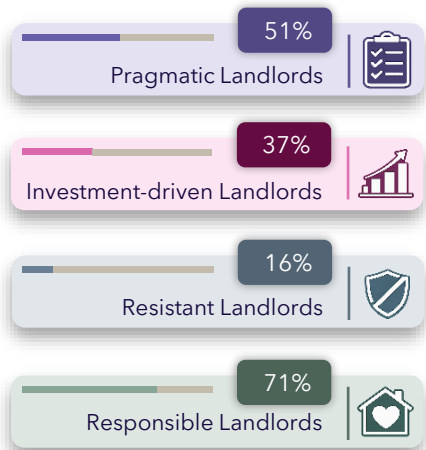
D4: One type of energy efficiency standard is called a **home energy rating approach**. It could require:
Rating rental homes' energy performance on a 0-100 scale, which would consider heating and cooling performance, household energy use and whether solar panels and storage batteries are installed.

And/or rental homes to achieve a minimum rating by a set time or a specified point in the lease process (e.g. advertising or signing a new tenancy).

Would you support or oppose a minimum efficiency standard using a **home energy rating approach** for rental properties in New South Wales?



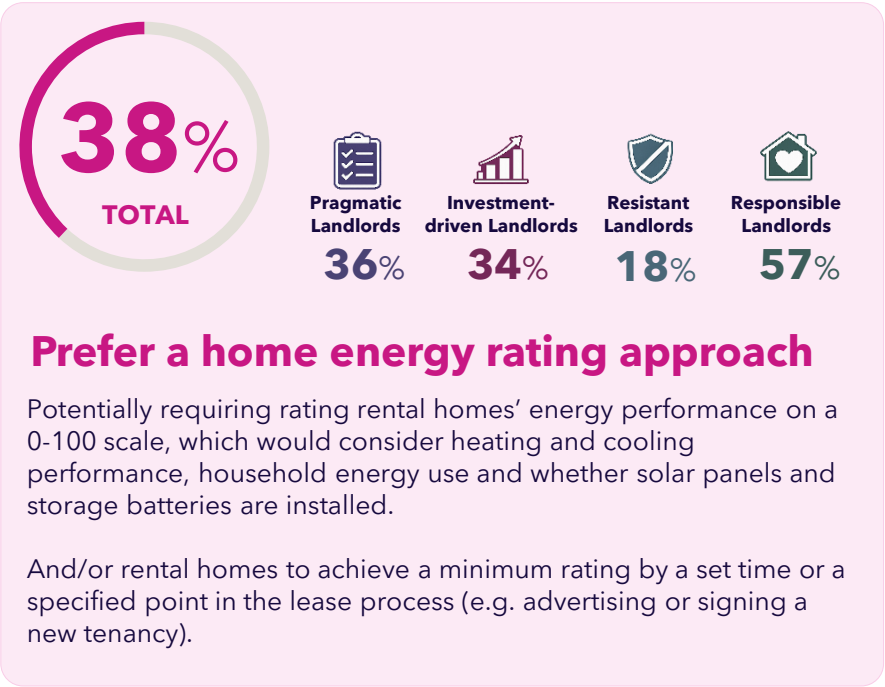
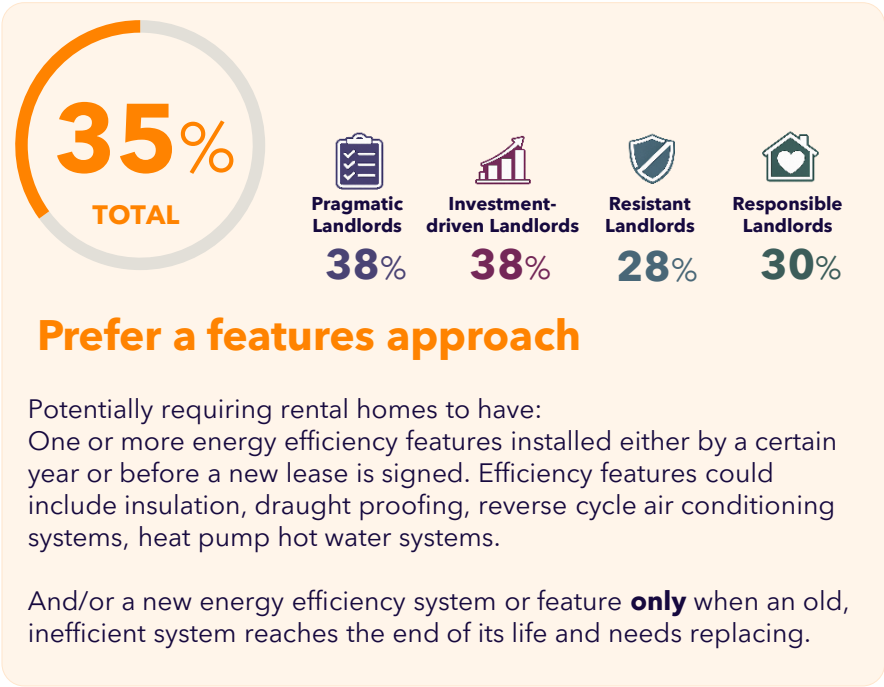
Support rating-based approach by segment



TOTAL (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Support	47	48	46	52	42	47	46	48	44	75	7	62	21
Oppose	27	28	25	24	29	27	25	26	29	6	75	18	51

Preferred standards approach

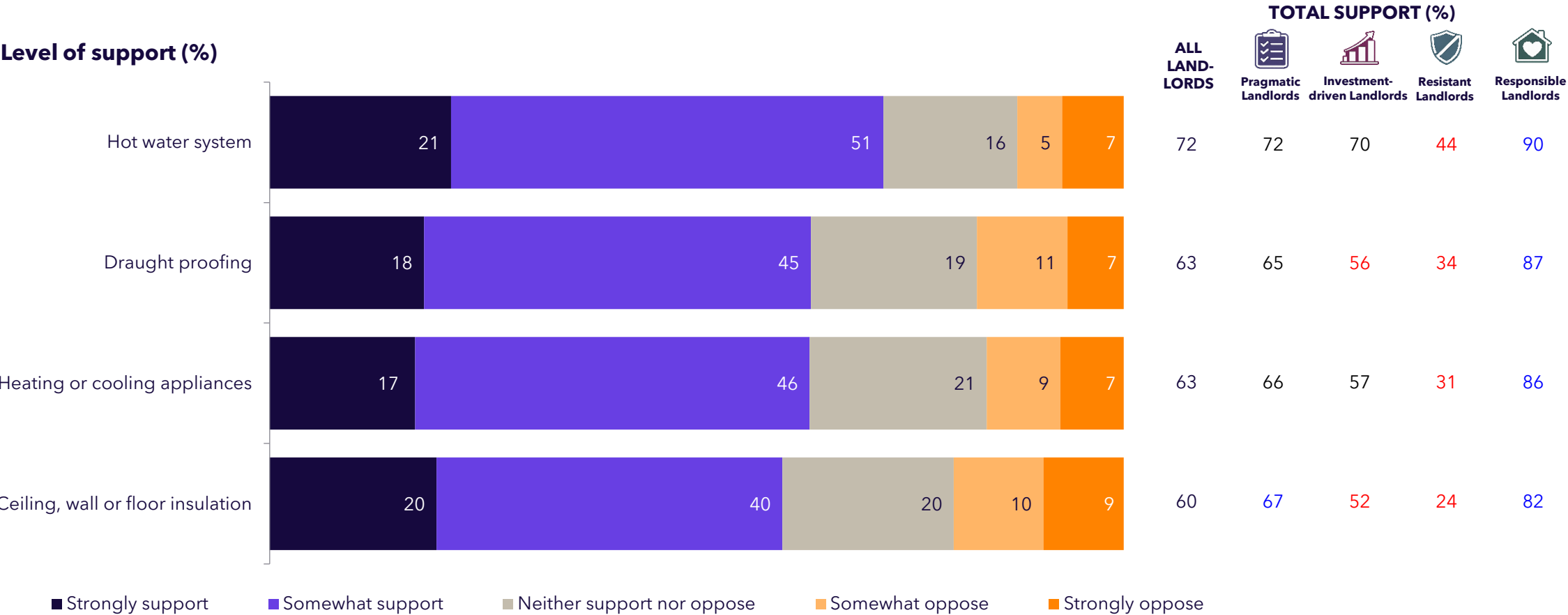
Both approaches attract comparable levels of support in principle, but when forced to choose, landlords show a very slight preference for a rating-based model. This suggests they may feel that it is clearer or more workable as a system. Importantly, neither approach is rejected outright, indicating both remain viable pathways for policy.



(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Features approach	35	27	44	36	33	33	39	33	39	37	34	36	35
Home energy rating approach	38	41	33	43	33	38	36	40	33	51	10	47	20
Neither / can't choose	28	32	22	21	34	28	24	27	28	12	55	17	45

Support for specific feature minimum standard

Despite broader concerns about overall minimum standards, standards for individual features attract strong support - indicating landlords are more comfortable with specific, practical upgrades than more abstract policy approaches, with consistently high backing across all features.

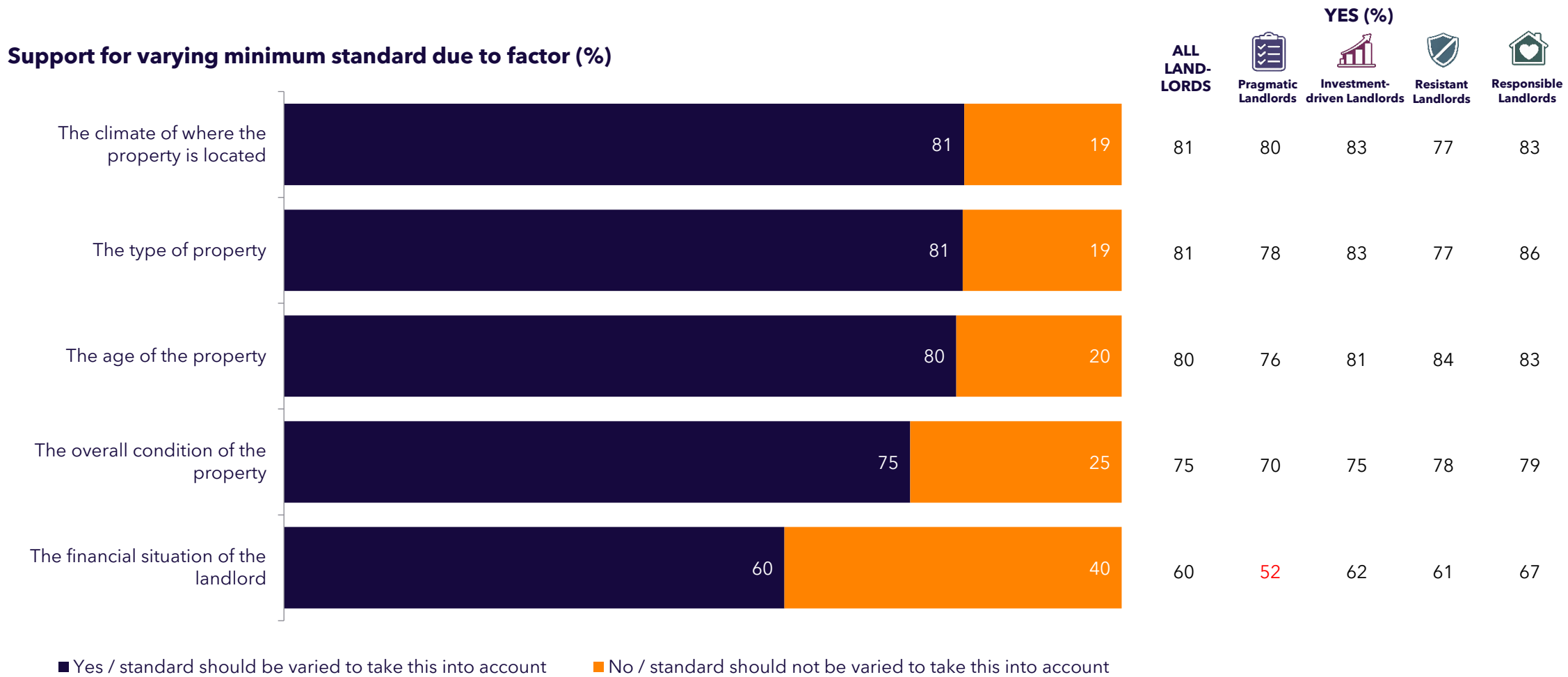


Support for minimum standards for each attribute was higher among those already supportive of MEERS, and consistently stronger among those positive towards the transition (see appendix).

Support for varying a minimum standard

There is broad consensus that standards should be tailored to the property itself, with consistently high support across factors such as climate and property type, but more mixed views on whether landlord financial circumstances should be considered.

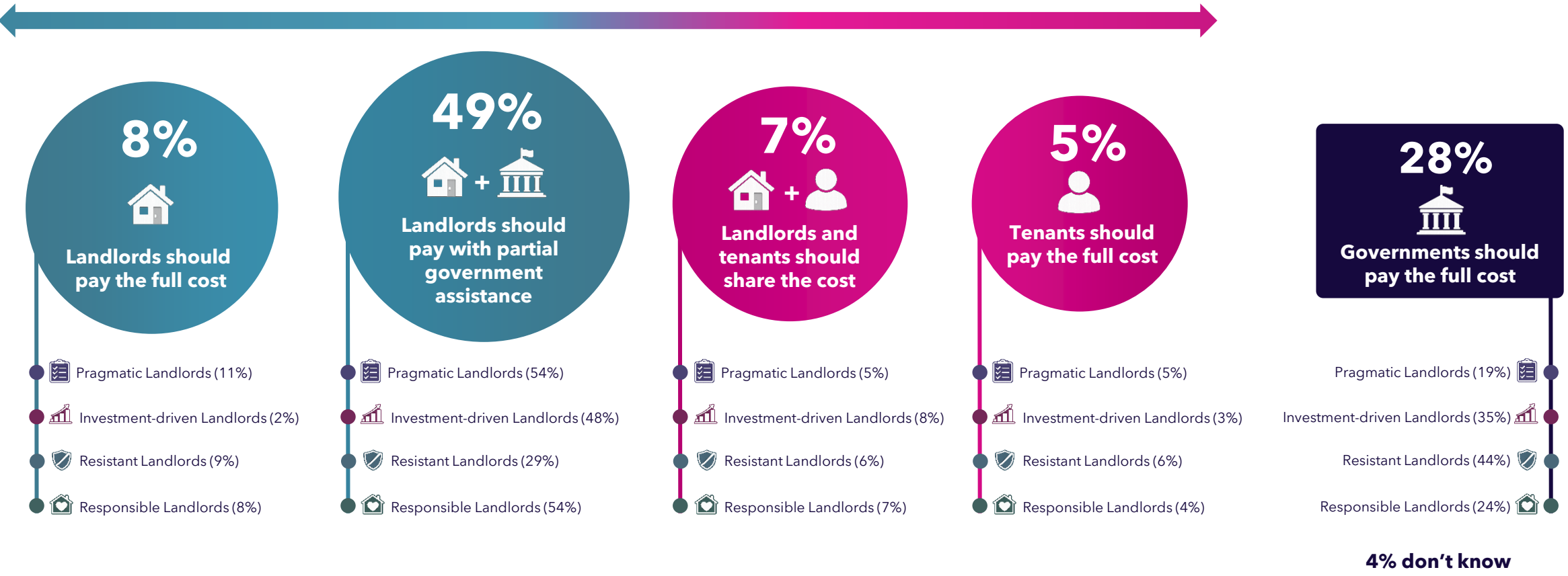
Support for varying minimum standard due to factor (%)



Responsibility for energy efficiency upgrade costs

Landlords are more likely to favour a shared approach to upgrade costs (49%) involving government support, while a further 28% believe government should carry the full cost - highlighting strong expectations of public contribution. This suggests that any policy is likely to face resistance unless it includes a clear and credible role for government support.

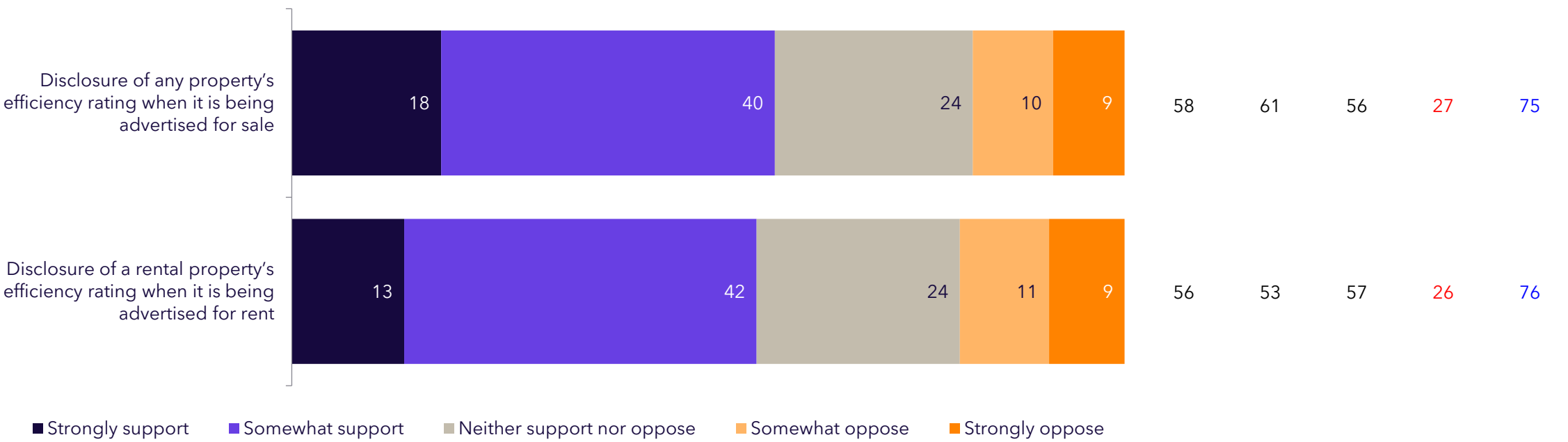
Responsibility for energy efficiency standard upgrade costs (%)



Support for sale and rental disclosure requirements

Support for disclosure requirements reaches a majority across both contexts, with little opposition overall - although, backing is stronger among 'Responsible' landlords and more limited among 'Resistant' landlords.

Support for efficiency disclosure at the following times (%)



TOTAL SUPPORT (%)



TOTAL SUPPORT (%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Disclosure when advertised for sale	58	57	60	62	55	57	61	58	57	80	24	69	41
Disclosure when advertised for rent	56	55	56	58	54	55	61	57	54	81	22	66	39

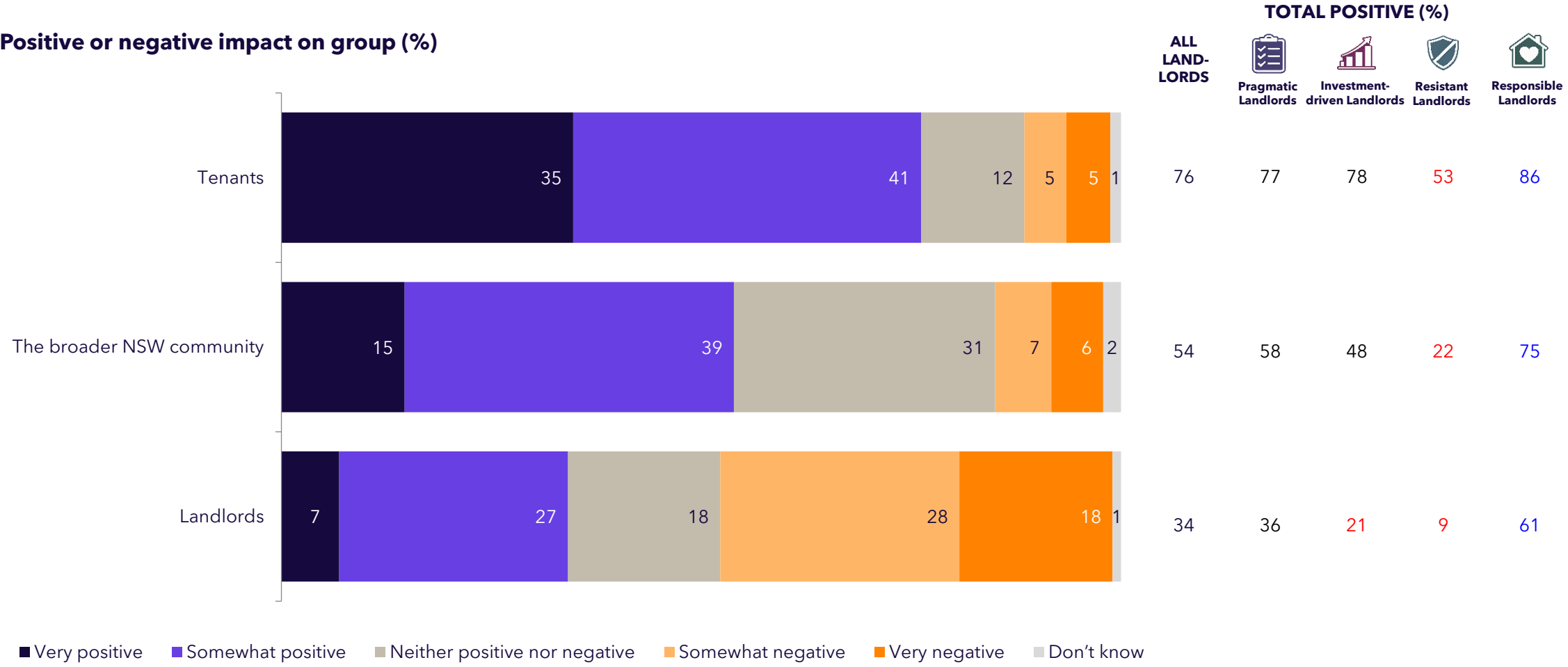
Landlord impact of minimum energy efficiency standards



Community impact of a minimum energy efficiency standard

Three quarters see a minimum standard as being a positive for tenants, and a little over half for the broader community. This drops to 34% thinking it is a positive for landlords themselves, with 47% viewing it negatively. Therefore, building support will require demonstration of clearer personal upsides for landlords, while mitigating perceived downsides.

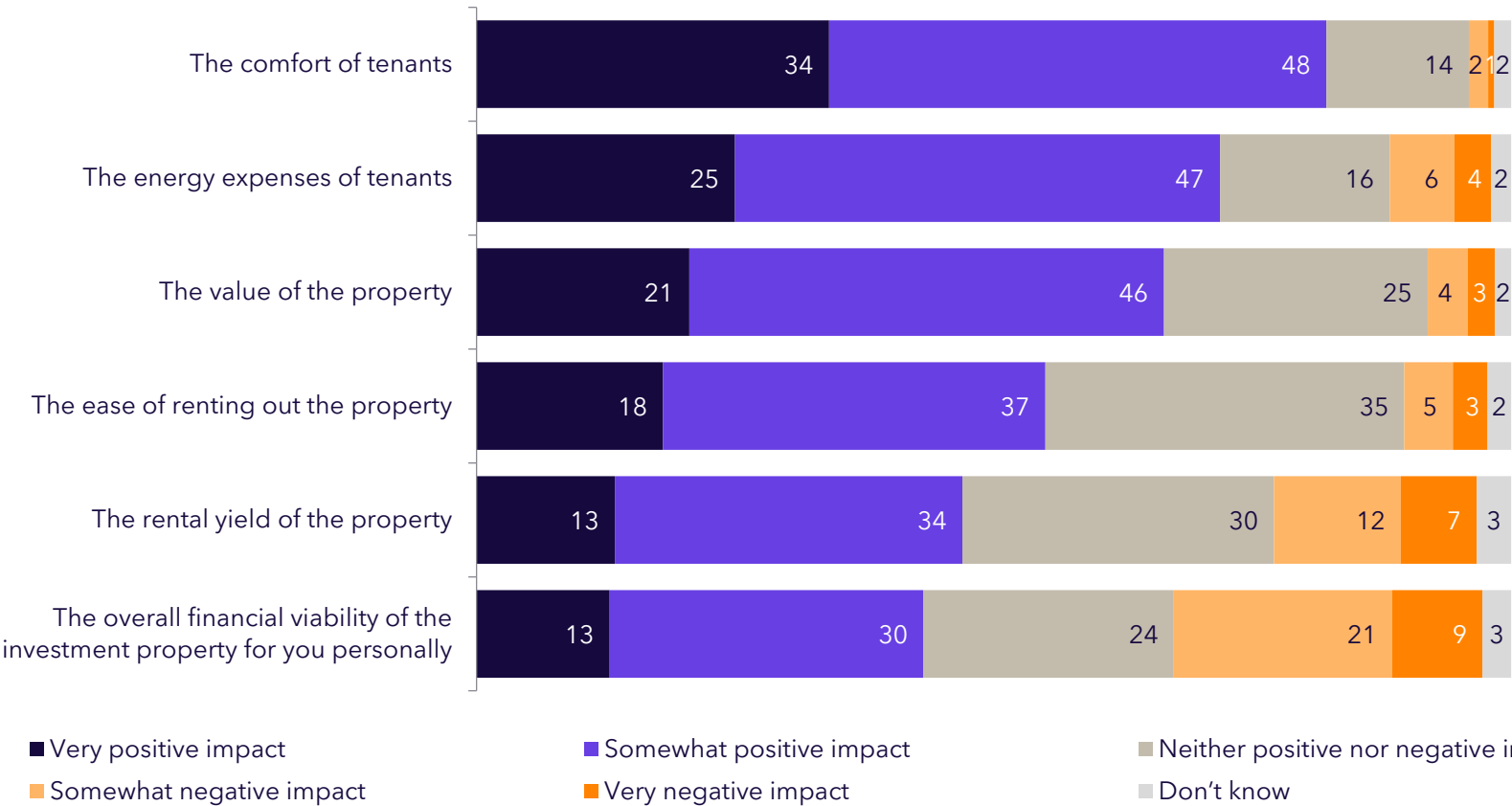
Positive or negative impact on group (%)



Broader impacts of a minimum energy efficiency standard

Landlords widely recognise the benefits of minimum standards for tenants, particularly in comfort (82%) and energy costs (72%). However, perceived positive impacts are a lot softer when it comes to their own outcomes - especially rental yield (47%) and financial viability (43%). This again emphasises that support will depend on strengthening confidence in the financial case for landlords.

Perceived impact of standard (%)



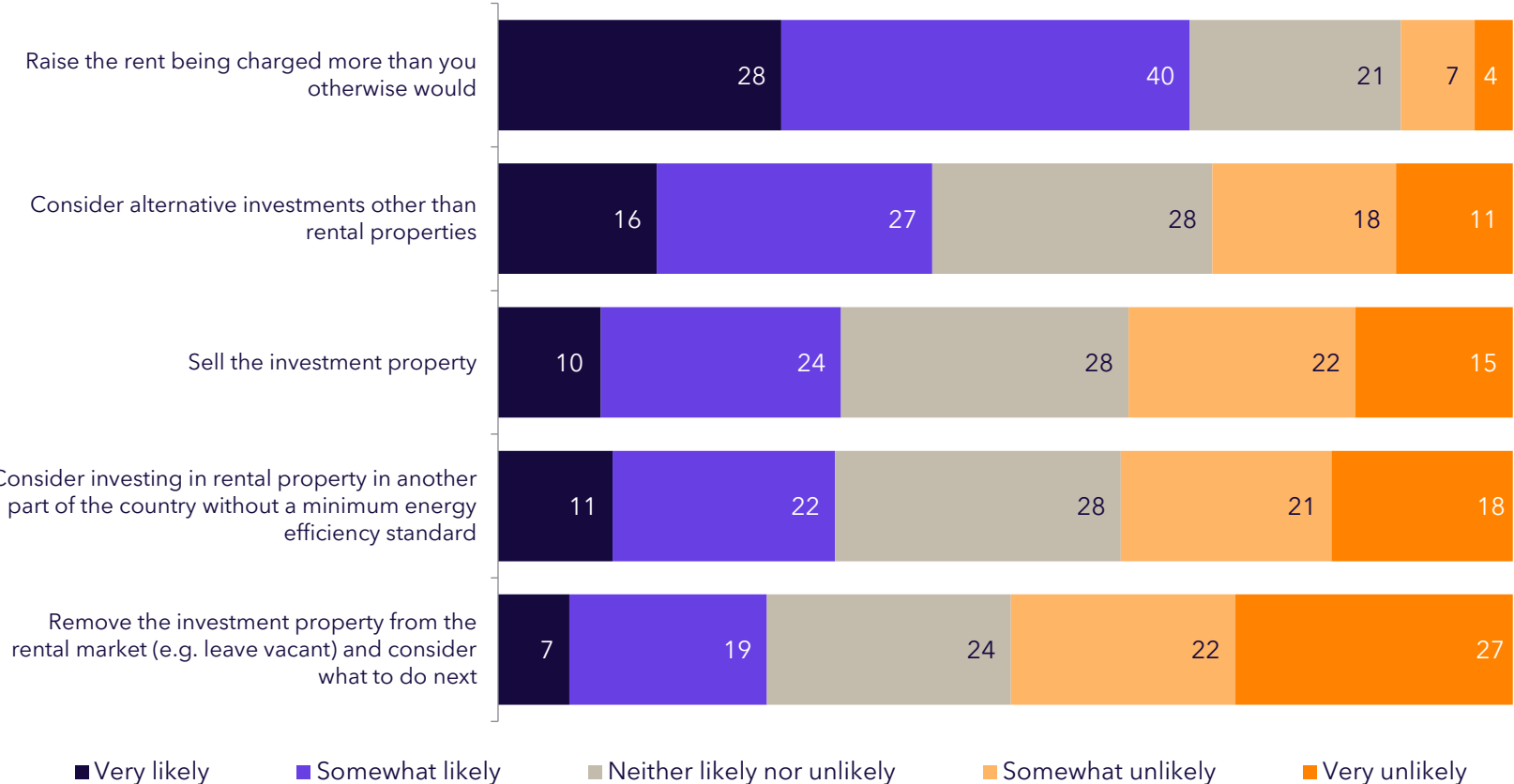
TOTAL POSITIVE IMPACT (%)

ALL LAND-LORDS	Pragmatic Landlords	Investment-driven Landlords	Resistant Landlords	Responsible Landlords
82	82	81	65	94
72	71	66	60	87
66	69	61	34	89
55	56	47	28	79
47	47	41	14	75
43	38	36	16	76

Landlord response to a minimum energy efficiency standard

Rent increases are the most likely landlord response, with a clear majority saying they would charge more. At the same time, actions such as selling or leaving the market are less likely – but still a possibility for many. The impact is therefore more likely to be felt through higher rents than reduced supply.

Likelihood of action (%)



TOTAL LIKELY (%)				
ALL LANDLORDS	Pragmatic Landlords	Investment-driven Landlords	Resistant Landlords	Responsible Landlords

68	47	84	85	68
43	30	53	51	45
34	25	41	42	33
33	17	42	43	39
26	15	26	38	35

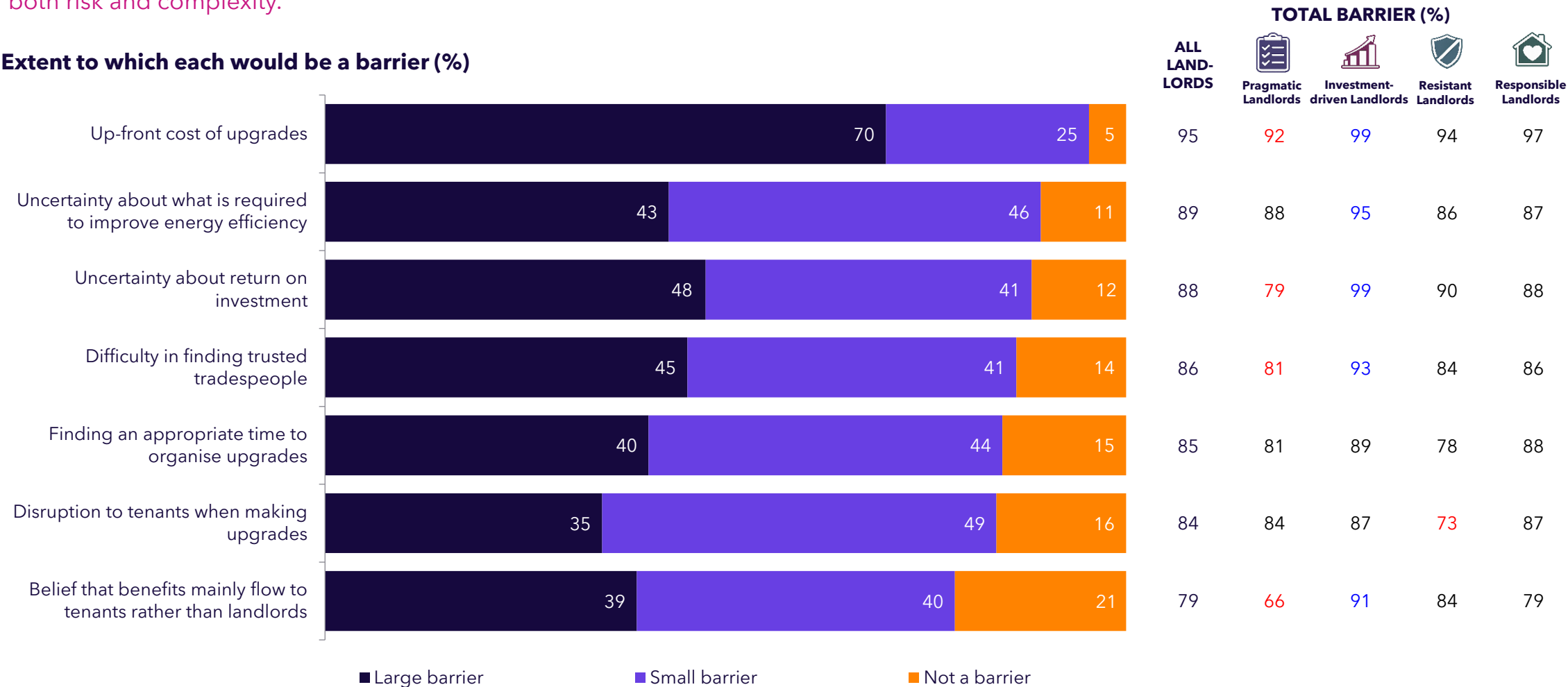
Motivators and barriers for landlords



Barriers to making energy efficiency upgrades

Upfront cost is the dominant barrier, but it sits alongside broad uncertainty and practical constraints. Most landlords also cite unclear requirements, uncertain returns and difficulty organising upgrades. Addressing cost alone is unlikely to be enough - support needs to reduce both risk and complexity.

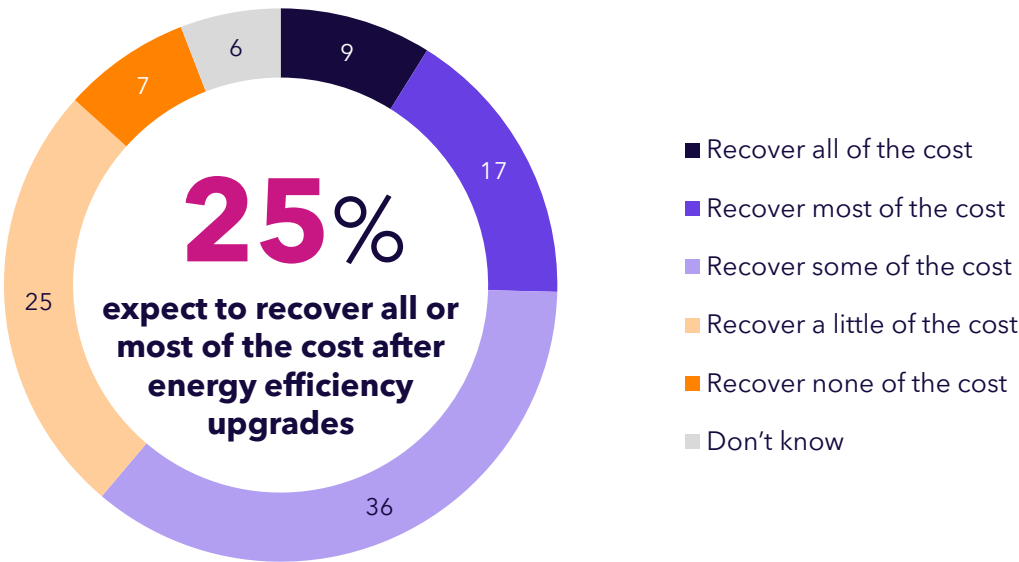
Extent to which each would be a barrier (%)



Expectations of cost recovery for efficiency upgrades

Confidence in cost recovery is limited, with just 25% expecting to recover all or most of their investment in efficiency upgrades. Most expect only partial recovery, or none at all. This again reinforces that building support will depend on strengthening confidence in the financial return of making upgrades.

Expected cost recovery (%)



Recover all / most of the cost by segment

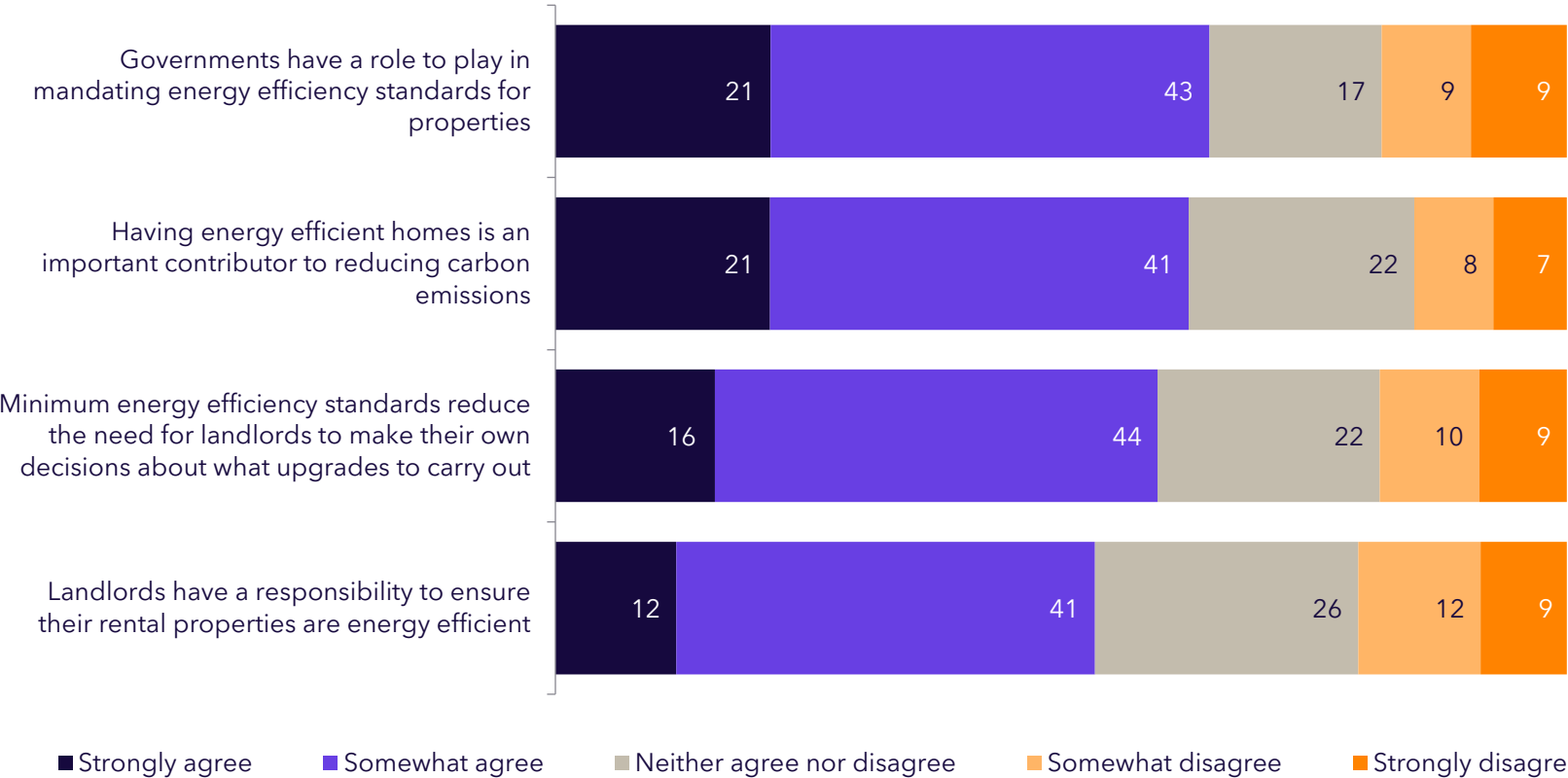


(%)	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	18-49	50+	METRO	REGIONAL	1 INVESTMENT PROPERTY	2+ INVESTMENT PROPERTIES	SUPPORT MEERS	OPPOSE MEERS	POSITIVE ABOUT TRANSITION	NEGATIVE ABOUT TRANSITION
Recover all / most of the cost	25	31	19	27	24	25	26	22	35	27	23	25	26
Recover some of the cost	36	37	34	35	37	35	39	36	34	42	27	38	35
Recover little / none of the cost	33	28	39	33	33	34	30	36	25	27	44	32	34

Attitudes towards efficiency standards

Attitudes towards standards are broadly positive overall, with around two thirds agreeing government has a role to play. There is also majority agreement on the environmental benefits and the value of setting clear standards. However, support is not universal - highlighting the importance of how these measures are framed and delivered.

Attitudes towards aspects of efficiency standards (%)

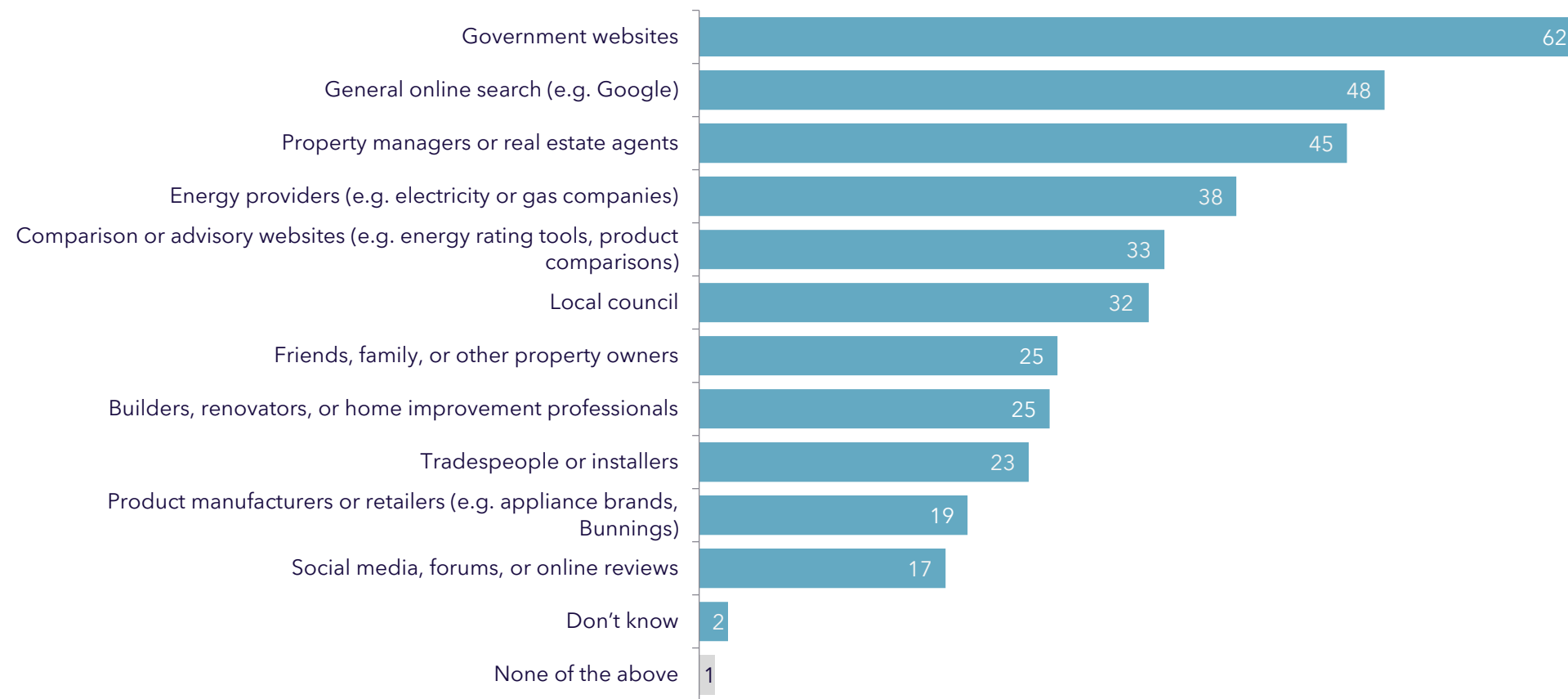


ALL LAND- LORDS	TOTAL AGREE (%)				
					
	Pragmatic Landlords	Investment-driven Landlords	Resistant Landlords	Responsible Landlords	
	65	76	56	23	84
	63	72	54	27	81
60	62	57	32	76	
53	61	41	24	75	

Information sources for energy efficiency upgrades

Government websites would be the most relied on for information, nominated by over six in ten landlords (62%). This is followed by online search (48%) and property managers or agents (45%), reinforcing the role of both formal and intermediary channels. Effective engagement will depend on ensuring clear, consistent messaging across these trusted sources, while also supporting less central channels that play a complementary role.

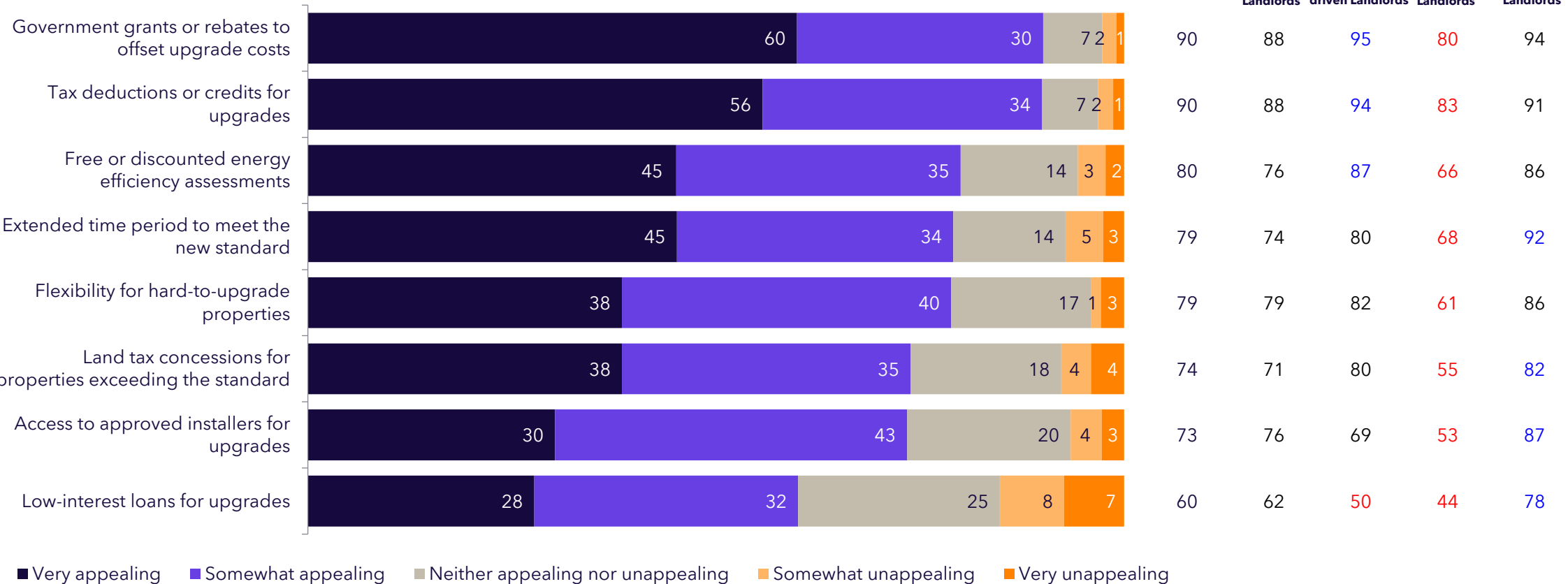
Information sources for energy efficiency upgrades (%)



Potential support measures for landlords

There is near-universal appeal for support measures, led by financial incentives to offset upgrade costs. Non-financial types of support also have strong backing, including flexibility and practical assistance. Maximising support will depend on combining financial relief with measures that reduce complexity.

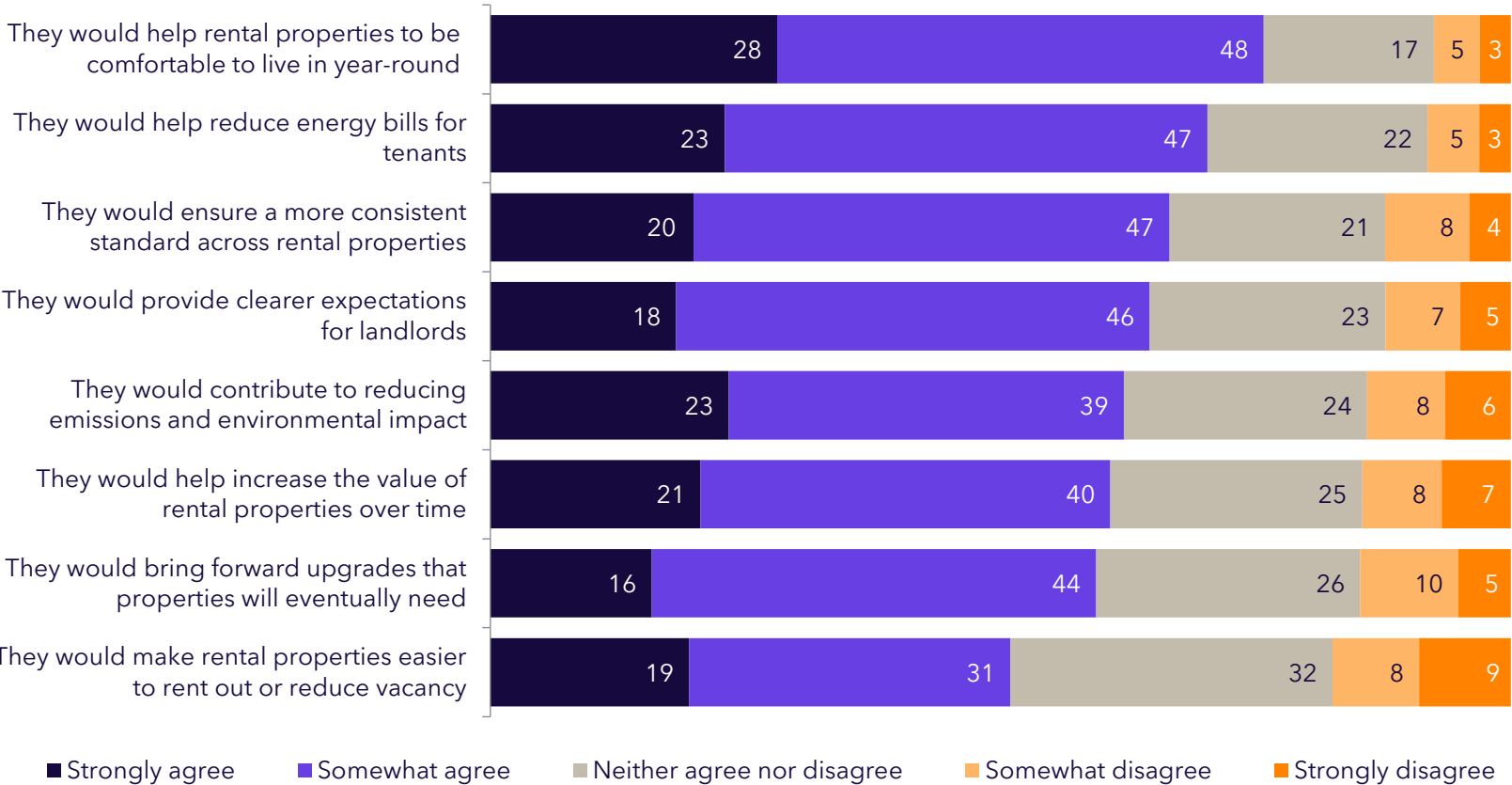
Appeal of support measures (%)



Reasons for supporting an energy efficiency standard

Support for minimum standards is underpinned by a wide range of perceived benefits. Agreement is highest for tenant-focused outcomes, supported by operational benefits like consistency and clearer expectations. This suggests the case for a minimum standard is strongest when combining tenant, environmental and practical benefits, with an eye on what resonates the most with different landlord segments.

Level of agreement with statements (%)



TOTAL AGREE (%)

ALL LAND-LORDS	Pragmatic Landlords	Investment-driven Landlords	Resistant Landlords	Responsible Landlords
----------------	---------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------	-----------------------

76	80	72	50	90
70	73	66	51	83
67	69	65	32	86
65	73	58	26	84
62	68	55	25	84
61	54	61	37	84
59	60	57	21	84
51	49	47	23	74



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