

SPCA Dog Breeding

Pet Owners Perceptions about Dog Breeding
and Purchasing a Puppy

January 2026



INSIGHTS HQ

Overview

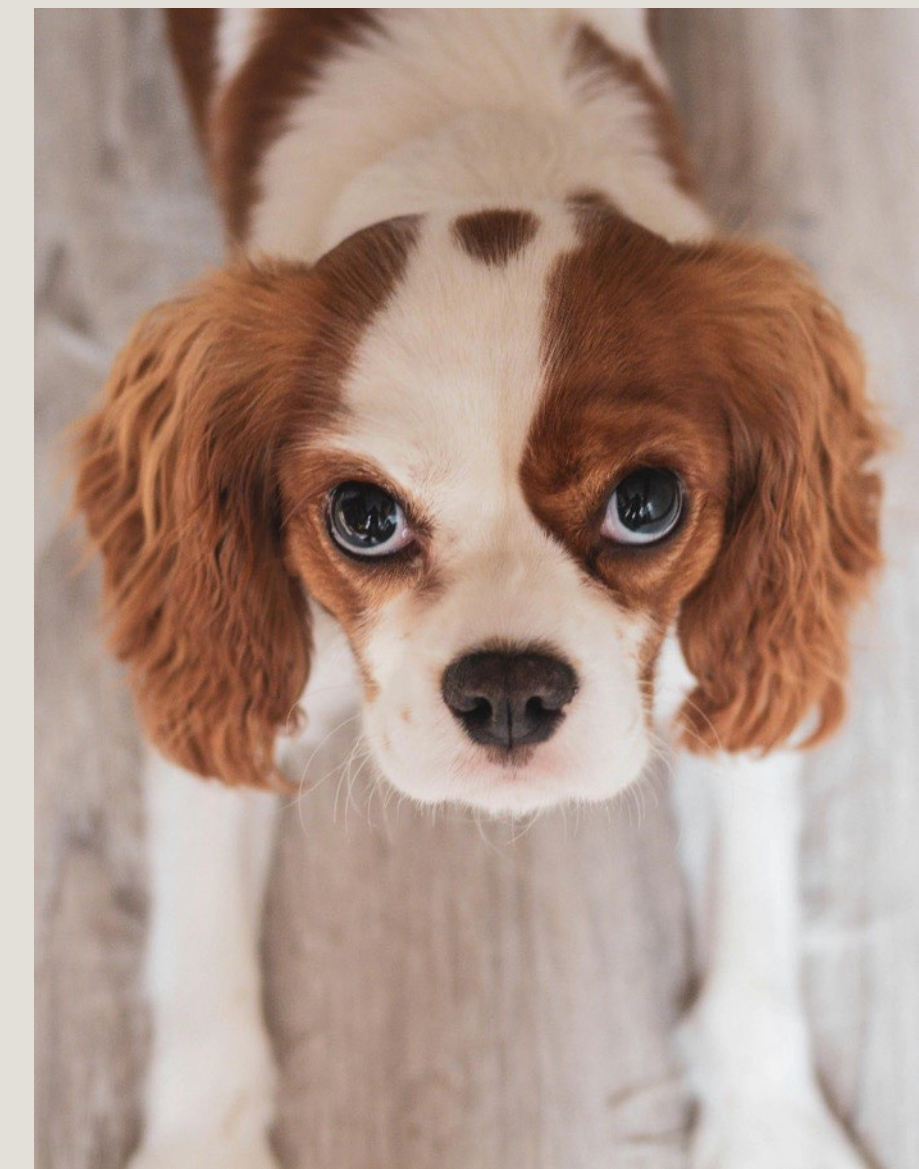
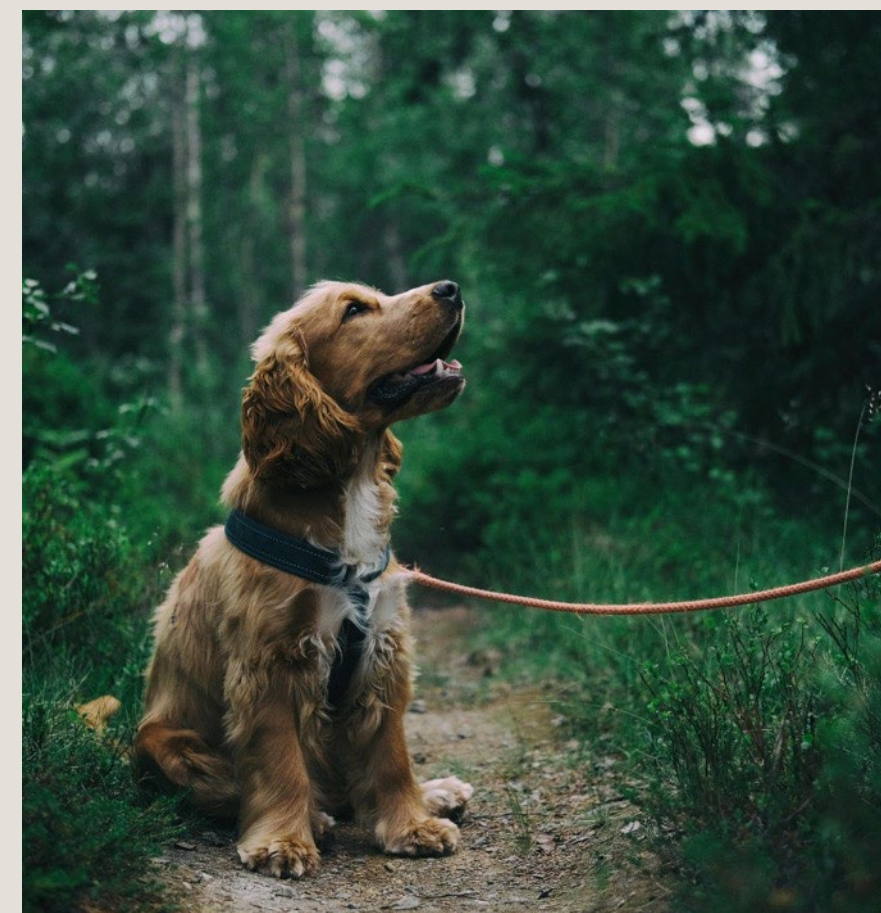
Objective

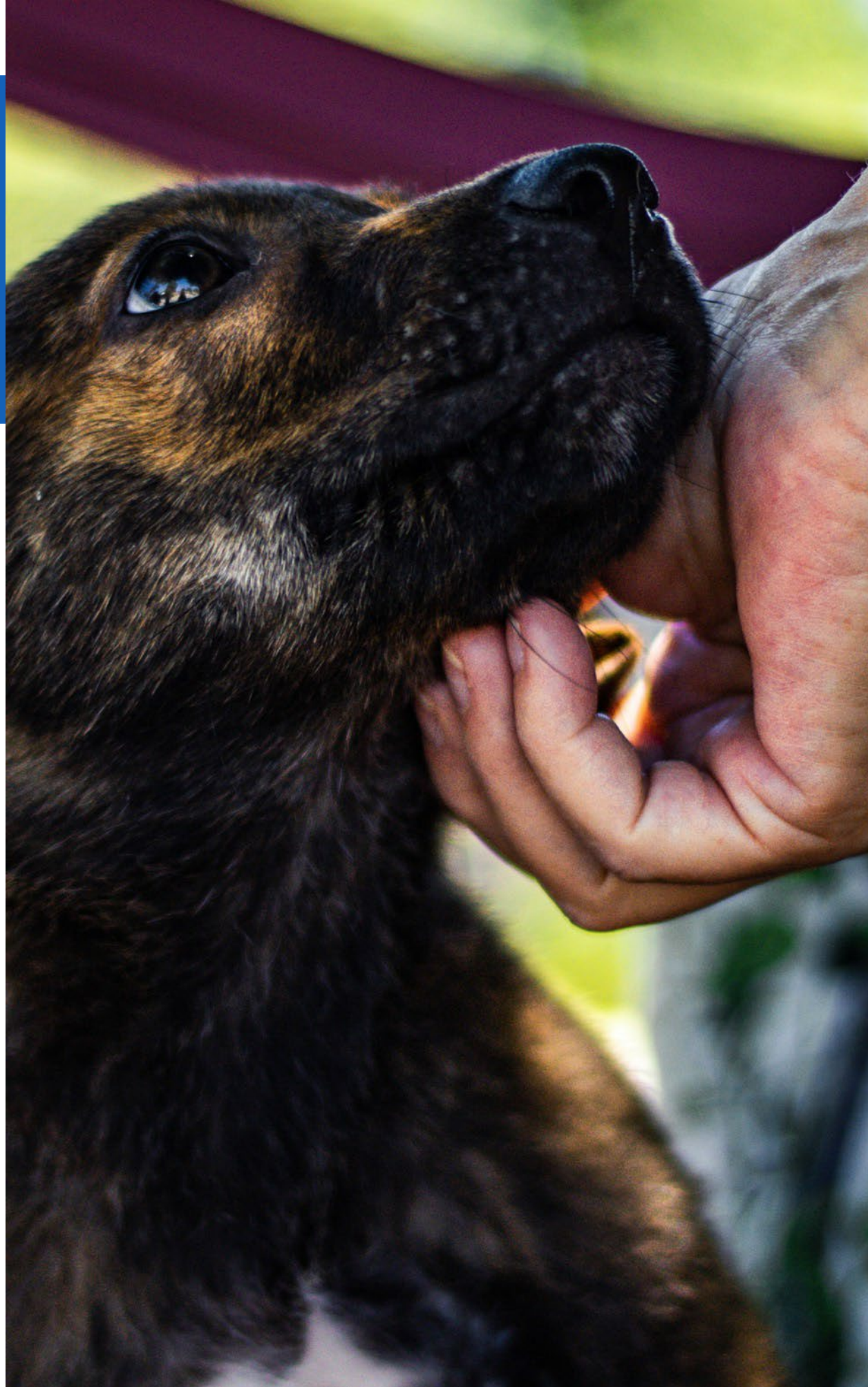
An online survey was commissioned to ask about dog breeding to:

- Evaluate potential interventions that address dog overpopulation, including roaming dogs
- Quantify current awareness, perceptions and attitudes around the sale and breeding of dogs in New Zealand

Approach

- Online survey of n=1,038 completes using my2cents platform
- Data collection between Dec 2025 to Jan 2026 weighted to reflect New Zealand's national demographics





Overview

New Zealanders support tighter regulation of dog breeding, reflecting concerns that breeders are not adequately regulated. There is widespread support for dog breeding regulations, incentives to desex, dog breeder licencing and updating the Dog Code of Welfare.

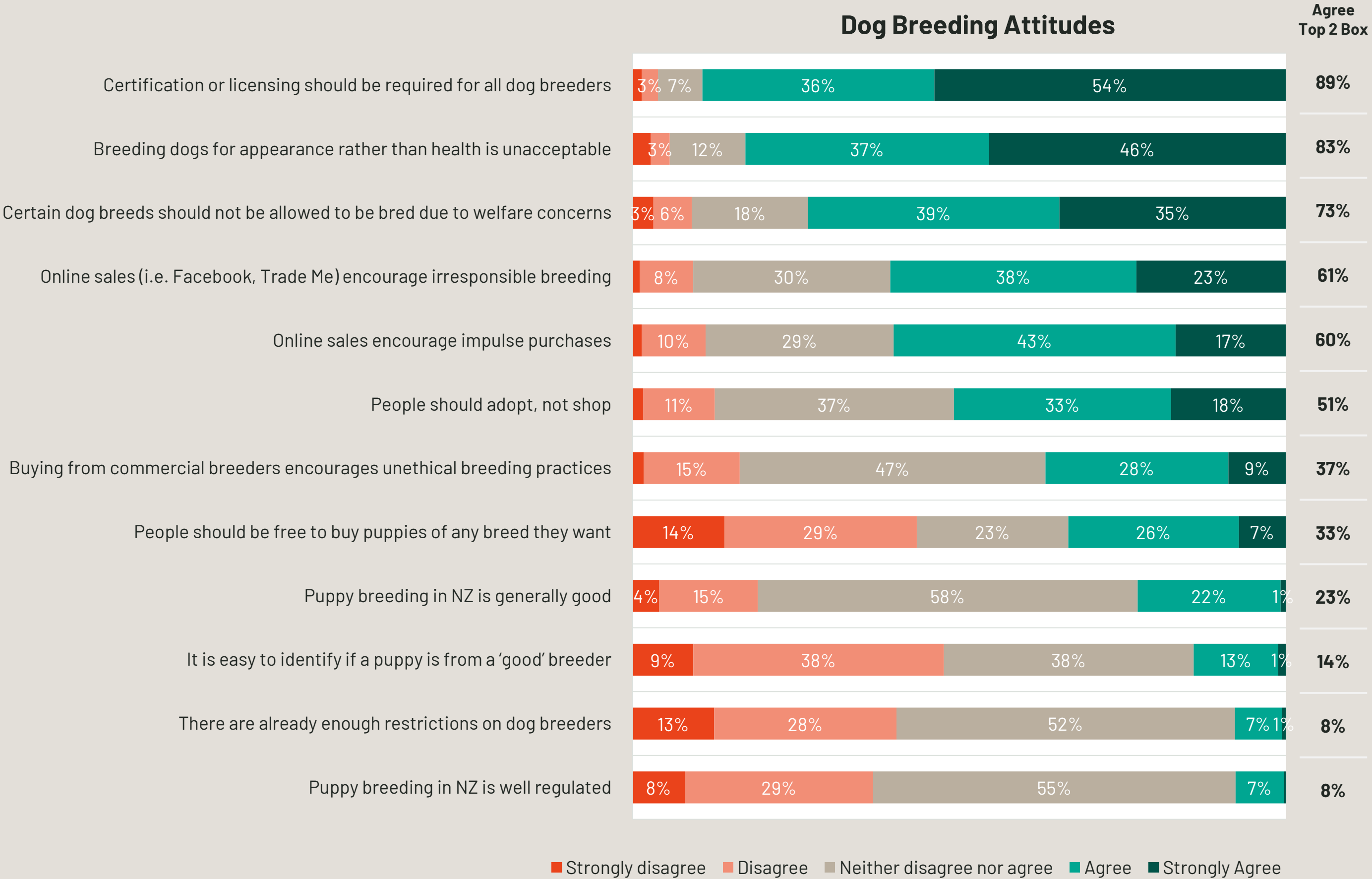
Most believe these initiatives would reduce irresponsible breeding. Support is weakest for banning online sales, with concerns it could hinder access to reputable breeders, especially among current dog owners.

Responsible Ownership and Breeding



Attitudes

New Zealanders are supportive of more restrictions on dog breeders as they believe the industry is not currently well regulated.



Attitudes – Demographic Differences

% higher than average
% lower than average

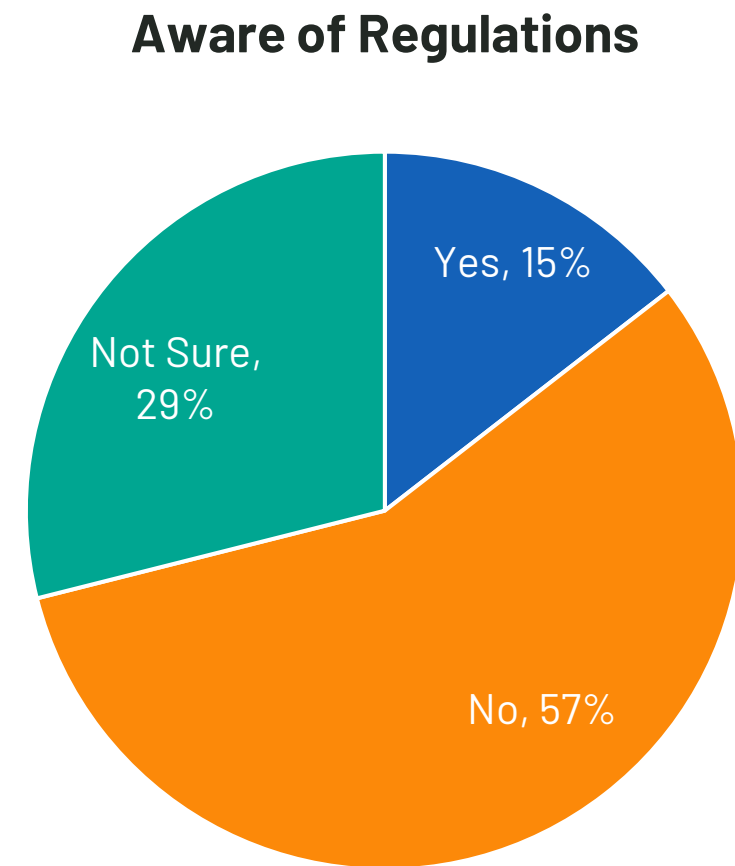
Strongly Agree + Agree	Total	AGE					GENDER		DOG OWNERSHIP						
		Under 35 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years	Male	Female	Dog Owner	1 Dog	Multiple Dogs	Puppy Owner	Mixed Breed	Bred Dogs	No Pets
Base n=	1038	250	157	241	224	166	532	506	342	247	95	143	60	83	364
Certification or licensing should be required for all dog breeders	89%	90%	88%	88%	88%	91%	88%	91%	90%	90%	89%	86%	84%	88%	89%
Breeding dogs for appearance rather than health is unacceptable	83%	85%	74%	82%	86%	84%	80%	86%	86%	85%	89%	83%	84%	83%	80%
Certain dog breeds should not be allowed to be bred due to welfare concerns	73%	69%	63%	75%	76%	86%	75%	71%	70%	70%	71%	68%	65%	70%	75%
Online sales (i.e. Facebook, Trade Me) encourage irresponsible breeding	61%	58%	63%	60%	58%	66%	58%	63%	60%	58%	64%	55%	61%	51%	57%
Online sales encourage impulse purchases	60%	54%	60%	61%	66%	66%	56%	64%	58%	60%	53%	51%	42%	58%	59%
People should adopt, not shop	51%	59%	54%	44%	41%	47%	48%	53%	44%	47%	34%	40%	48%	35%	50%
Buying dogs from commercial breeders encourages unethical breeding practices	37%	42%	43%	33%	26%	34%	32%	42%	39%	38%	40%	37%	44%	32%	33%
People should be free to buy puppies of any breed they want	33%	45%	35%	31%	25%	19%	34%	33%	44%	45%	42%	42%	50%	37%	30%
Puppy breeding in NZ is generally good	23%	23%	19%	22%	22%	27%	23%	23%	31%	34%	23%	33%	24%	40%	21%
It is easy to identify if a puppy is from a 'good' breeder	14%	13%	15%	13%	14%	16%	14%	14%	23%	22%	23%	27%	26%	28%	11%
Puppy breeding in NZ is well regulated	8%	10%	6%	8%	4%	9%	7%	8%	11%	14%	3%	13%	5%	19%	8%
There are already enough restrictions on dog breeders	8%	6%	8%	9%	10%	9%	8%	8%	8%	10%	4%	7%	5%	8%	8%

Dog Breeding Regulations

Only 15% of people are aware of dog breeding regulations in New Zealand.

Three quarters of people believe dog breeders should be regulated.

There is little knowledge on how many dog breeders follow responsible breeding guidelines.



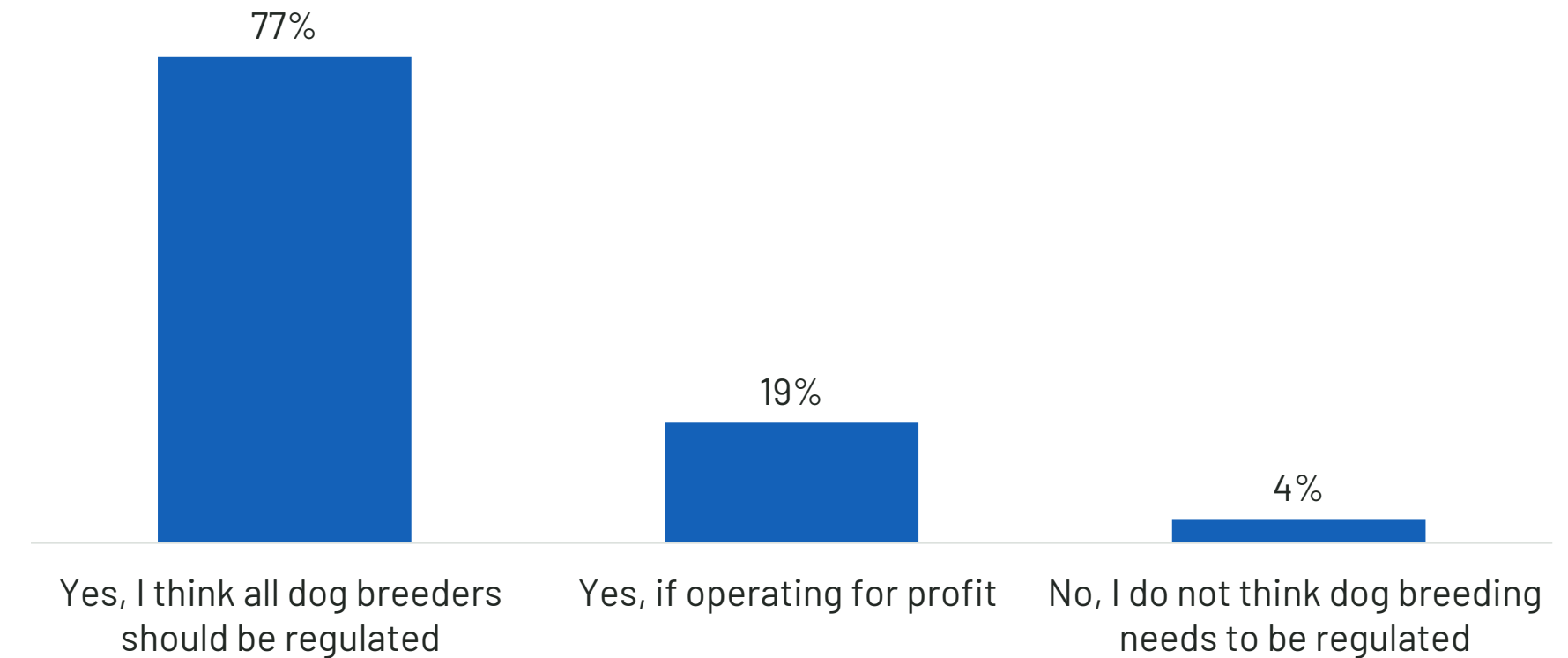
Q. Are you aware of any dog breeding regulations in NZ?

Q. Do you feel that dog breeding should be regulated? (i.e. Dog breeders can be subject to government rules to ensure that dogs are bred responsibly)

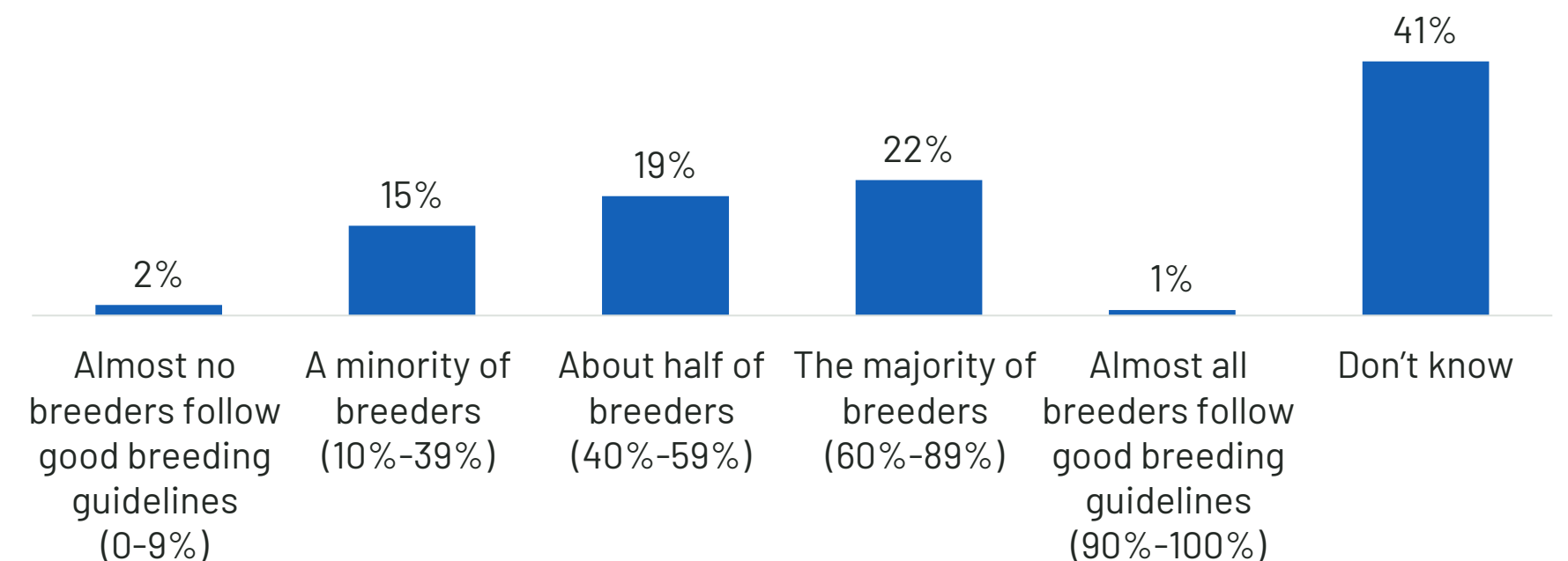
Q. What proportion of dog breeders in NZ who breed dogs intentionally and for profit do you think follow responsible breeding guidelines?

Base n=1,038

Should Dog Breeding be Regulated?

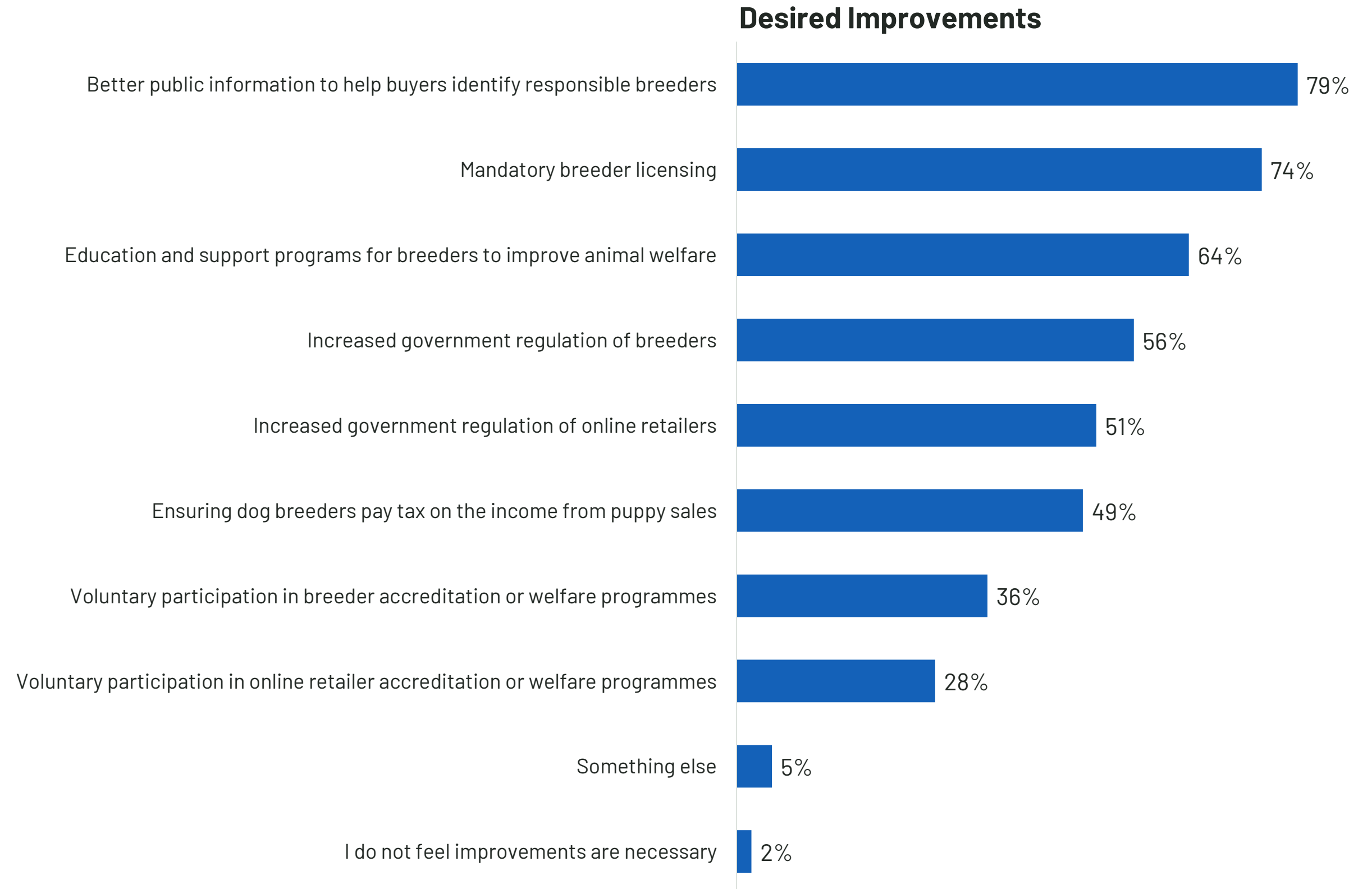


What Proportion of Dog Breeders are Regulated?



Desired Improvements

People would like better public information to help identify responsible breeders and mandatory breeder licensing.

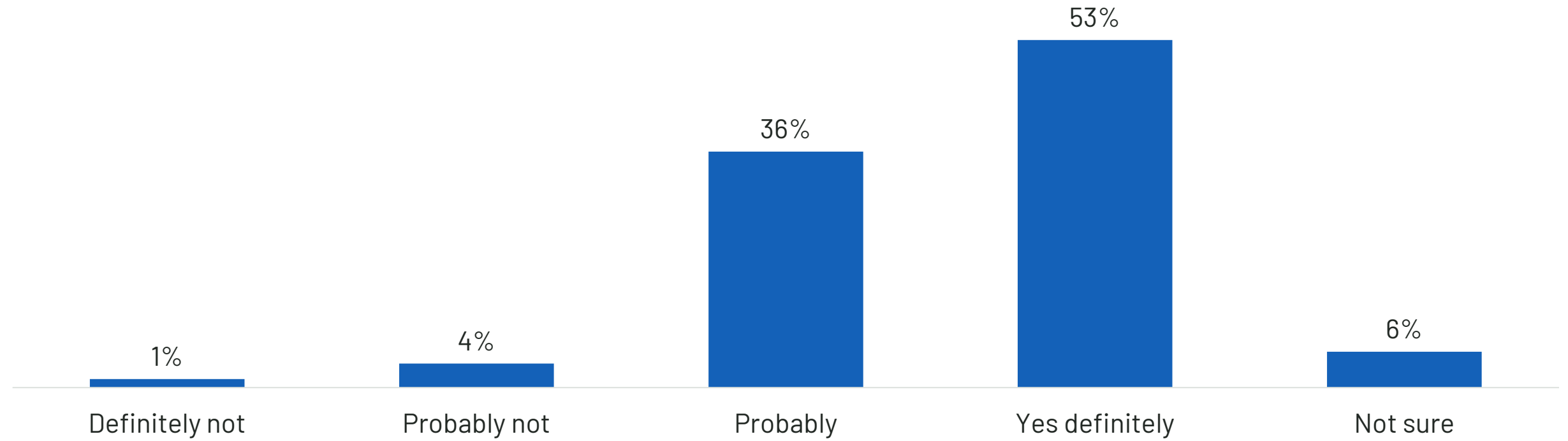


Q. What changes or improvements would you like to see in dog breeding in New Zealand? Please select any you would like to see implemented. Base n=1,038

Vote for Legislation

Legislation for dog breeders is supported by almost all New Zealanders (90%). Women are the most likely to support legislation.

Likely to Support Legislation



Support	Total	AGE					GENDER		DOG OWNERSHIP						
		Under 35 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years	Male	Female	Dog Owner	1 Dog	Multiple Dogs	Puppy Owner	Mixed Breed	Bred Dogs	No Pets
Base n=	1038	250	157	241	224	166	532	506	342	247	95	143	60	83	364
Probably, Definitely would Vote for Legislation	90%	89%	85%	92%	88%	93%	87%	92%	92%	92%	90%	88%	84%	92%	86%

% higher than average
% lower than average

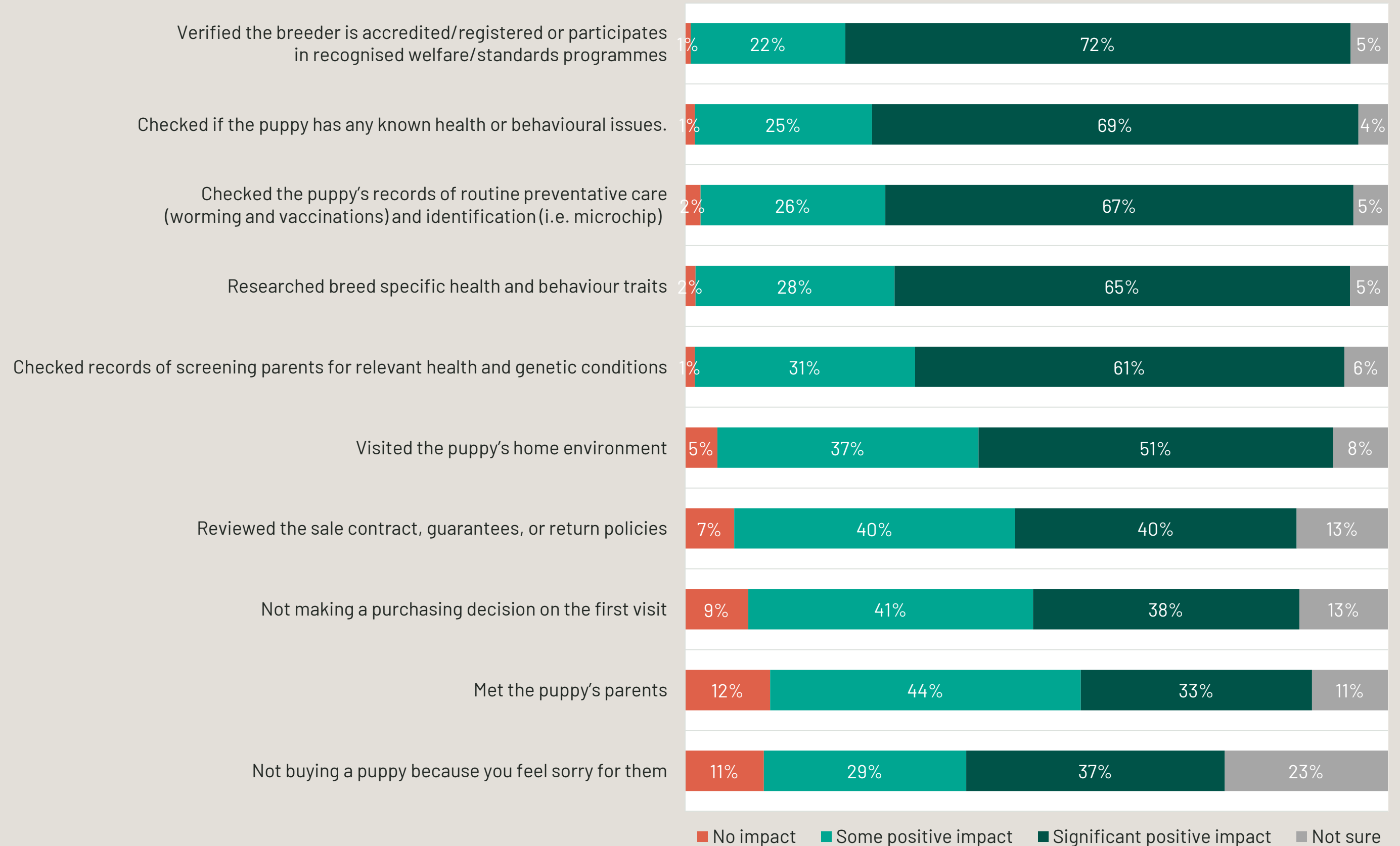
Bred Dogs includes Registered Pedigree, Purebred, Designer

Q. Would you vote for legislation that regulates breeding of dogs and sale of puppies? This would mean dog breeders can be subject to government rules to ensure that dogs are bred responsibly.
Base n=1,038

Purchasing a Puppy

While people believe all actions would have impact, accreditation would give people the most confidence in promoting responsible dog breeding.

Promote Responsible Breeding



Promote Responsible Breeding – Demographic Differences

% higher than average
% lower than average

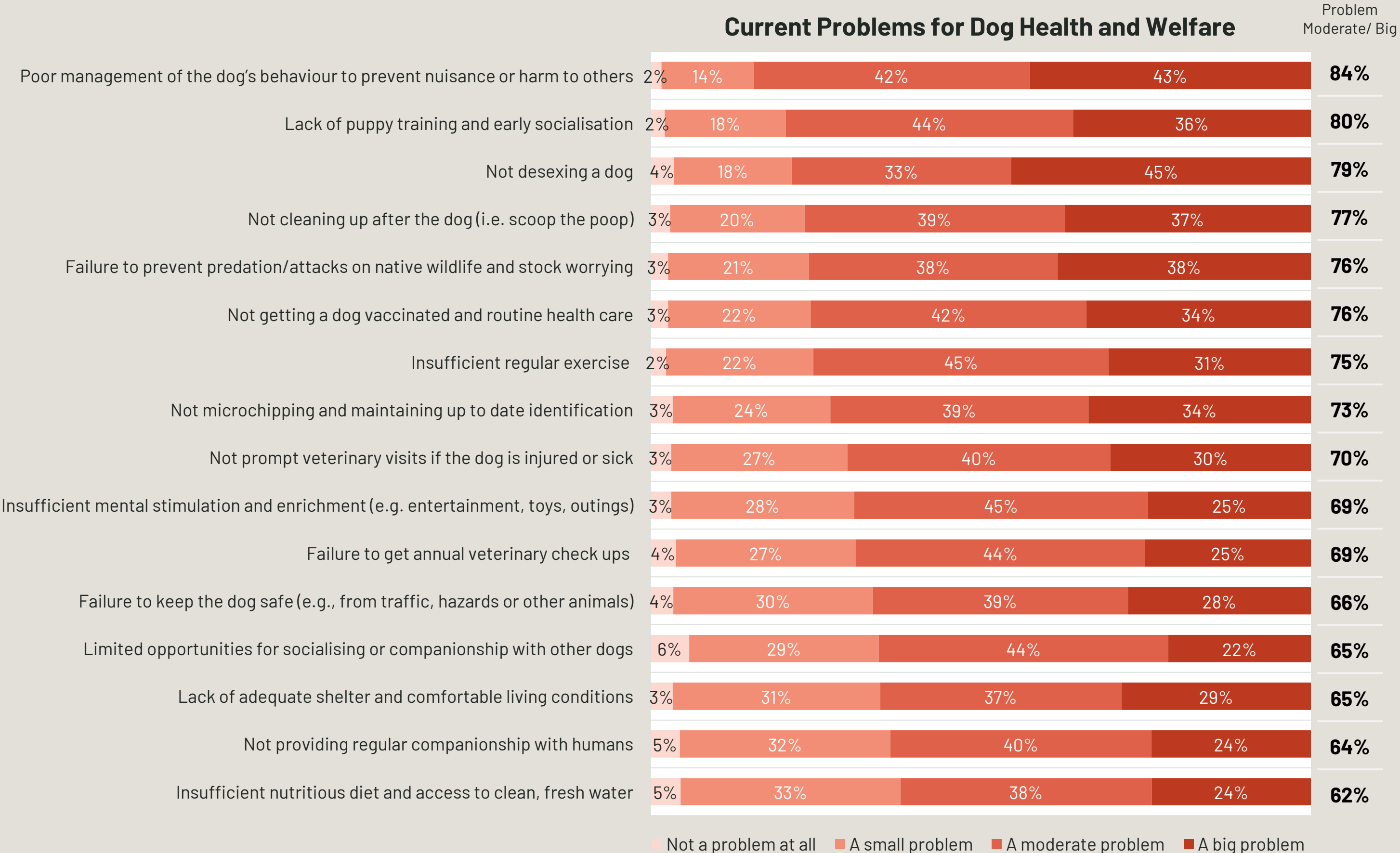
Significant Positive Impact	Total	AGE					GENDER		DOG OWNERSHIP						
		Under 35 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years	Male	Female	Dog Owner	1 Dog	Multiple Dogs	Puppy Owner	Mixed Breed	Bred Dogs	No Pets
Base n=	1038	250	157	241	224	166	532	506	342	247	95	143	60	83	364
Verified the breeder is accredited/registered or participates in recognised welfare/standards programmes	72%	71%	66%	70%	73%	79%	69%	75%	73%	75%	69%	67%	71%	65%	69%
Checked if the puppy has any known health or behavioural issues	69%	68%	65%	66%	71%	77%	66%	72%	71%	72%	68%	67%	68%	65%	66%
Checked the puppy's records of routine preventative care (worming, vaccinations) and identification (microchip)	67%	67%	60%	65%	65%	75%	64%	69%	63%	64%	62%	63%	66%	61%	67%
Researched breed specific health and behaviour traits	65%	70%	60%	59%	62%	66%	59%	71%	69%	66%	76%	69%	68%	69%	60%
Checked records of screening parents for relevant health and genetic conditions	61%	62%	58%	61%	57%	64%	57%	65%	63%	62%	67%	65%	61%	67%	59%
Visited the puppy's home environment	51%	50%	51%	48%	53%	51%	47%	54%	55%	54%	57%	51%	52%	50%	47%
Reviewed the sale contract, guarantees, or return policies	40%	40%	35%	43%	40%	42%	36%	44%	41%	38%	46%	37%	32%	41%	40%
Not making a purchasing decision on the first visit	38%	40%	46%	34%	32%	36%	36%	40%	42%	37%	53%	44%	51%	39%	36%
Met the puppy's parents	33%	36%	27%	33%	31%	35%	26%	40%	40%	43%	34%	42%	46%	39%	29%
Not buying a puppy because you feel sorry for them	37%	38%	33%	36%	35%	41%	37%	36%	42%	40%	48%	40%	40%	39%	35%

Bred Dogs includes Registered Pedigree, Purebred, Designer

Responsible Ownership

People believe the biggest concerns are management of a dog's behaviour, lack of puppy training and socialization and not desexing a dog.

People are more confident dogs are getting basic care like water, human interaction and shelter.



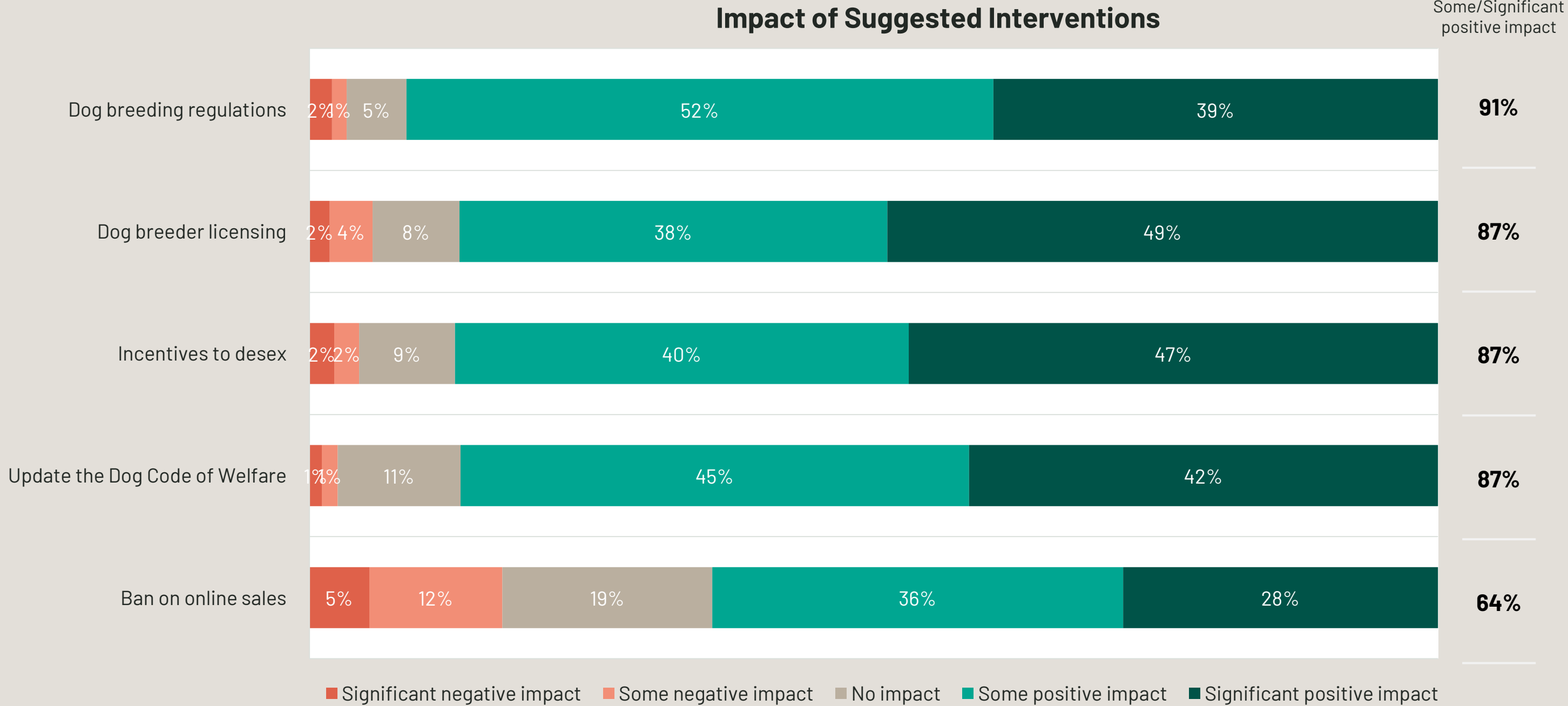
Interventions



Intervention Impacts

The large majority of people believe the interventions listed would help address irresponsible breeding.

The lowest support is for banning online sales with a third saying there would be no impact or a negative impact.

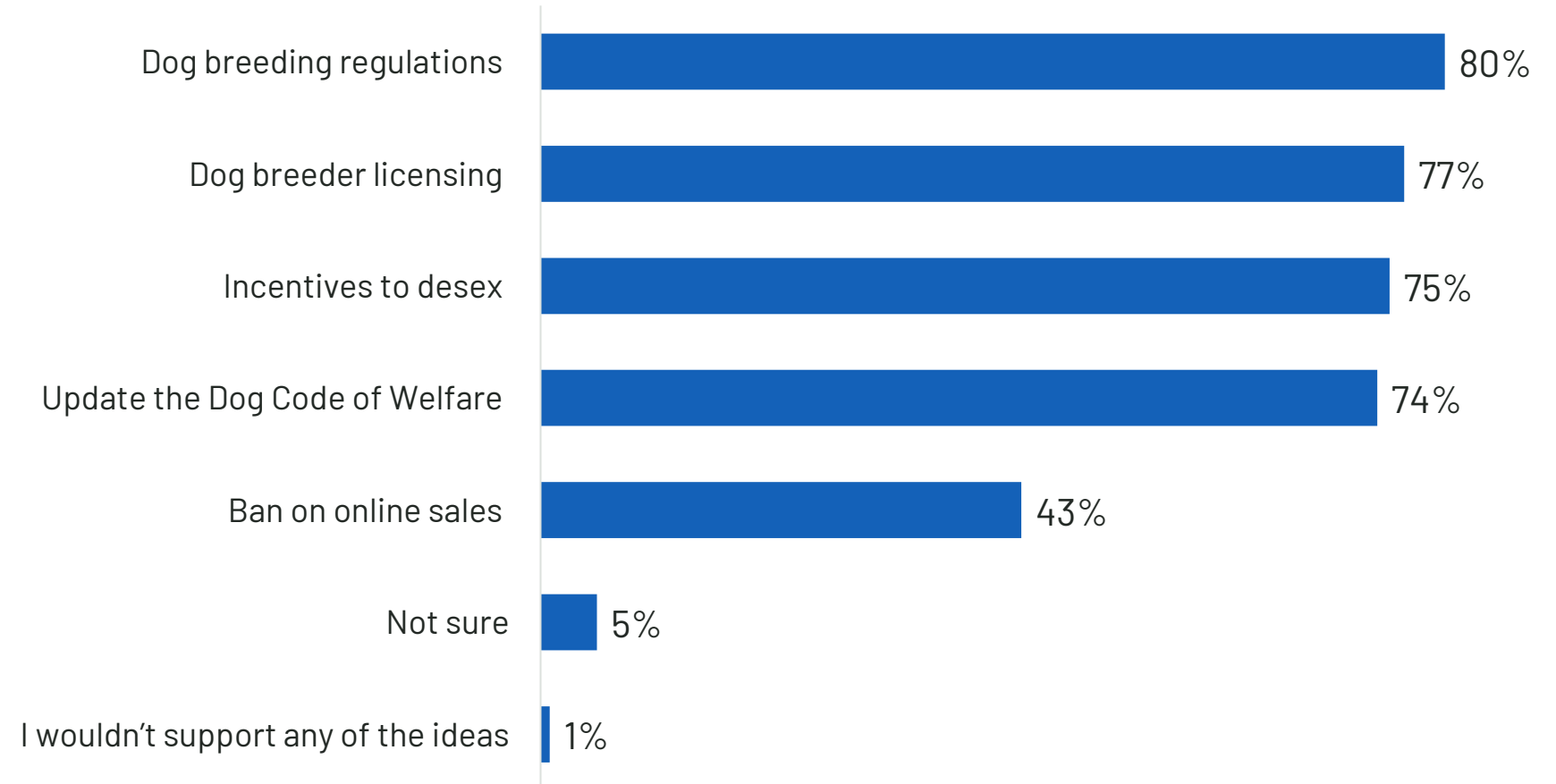


Intervention Support

Women express greater support for interventions. Dog and puppy owners have the highest support for incentives to desex.

Dog and puppy owners are less likely to support a ban of online sales.

Desired Improvements



	Total	AGE					GENDER		DOG OWNERSHIP						
		Under 35 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65+ years	Male	Female	Dog Owner	1 Dog	Multiple Dogs	Puppy Owner	Mixed Breed	Bred Dogs	No Pets
Base n=	1034	249	157	241	223	164	530	504	342	247	95	143	60	83	362
Dog breeding regulations	80%	83%	79%	84%	77%	76%	78%	83%	84%	84%	83%	79%	79%	79%	76%
Dog breeder licensing	77%	79%	79%	77%	74%	74%	77%	76%	75%	75%	76%	70%	70%	69%	77%
Incentives to desex	75%	70%	76%	80%	78%	78%	70%	81%	80%	76%	90%	84%	88%	81%	69%
Update the Dog Code of Welfare	74%	73%	76%	72%	75%	79%	70%	78%	75%	72%	81%	69%	75%	64%	73%
Ban on online sales	43%	37%	44%	40%	47%	52%	39%	46%	38%	38%	38%	31%	31%	32%	44%
I wouldn't support any of the ideas	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Not sure	5%	6%	4%	3%	6%	7%	6%	5%	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	8%

Q. Which of the initiatives would you support? Base n=1,034

% higher than average
% lower than average

Bred Dogs includes Registered Pedigree, Purebred, Designer

Demographics

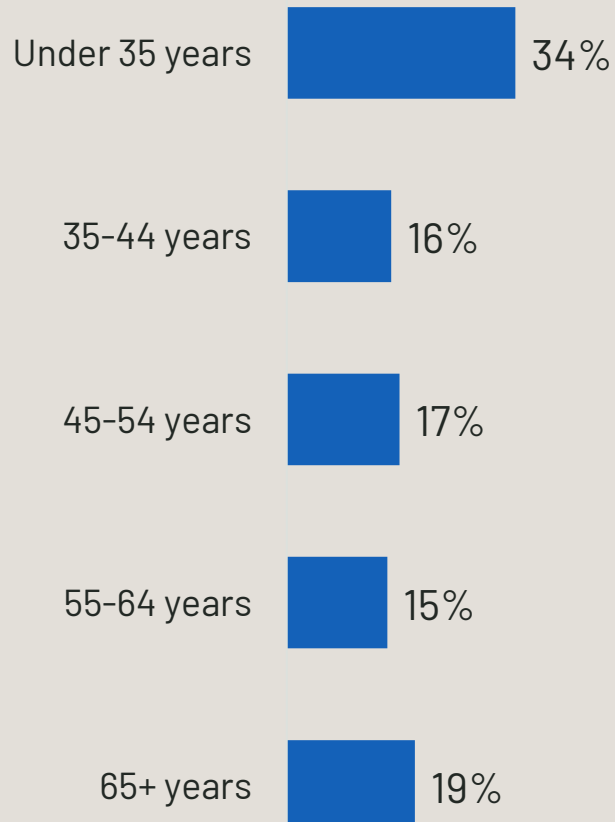


Sample demographics

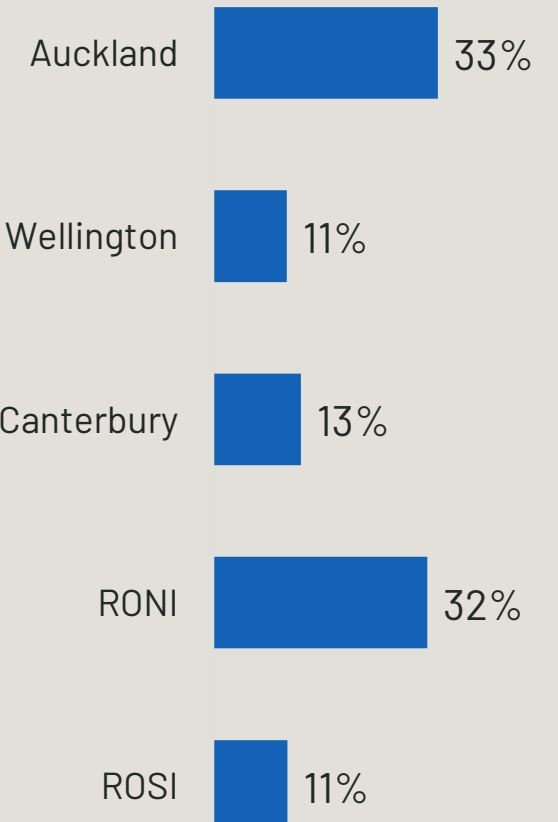
Gender



Age



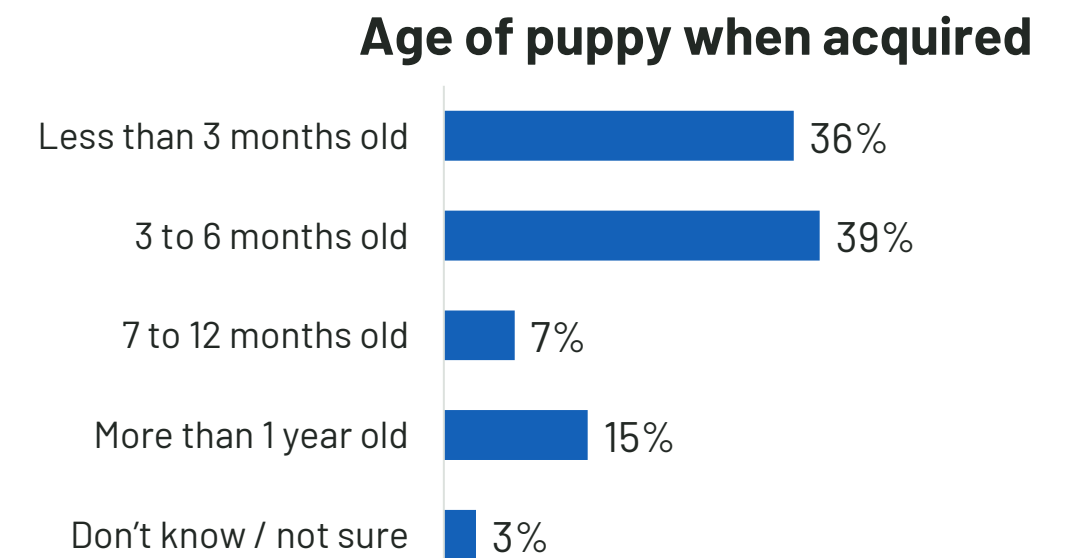
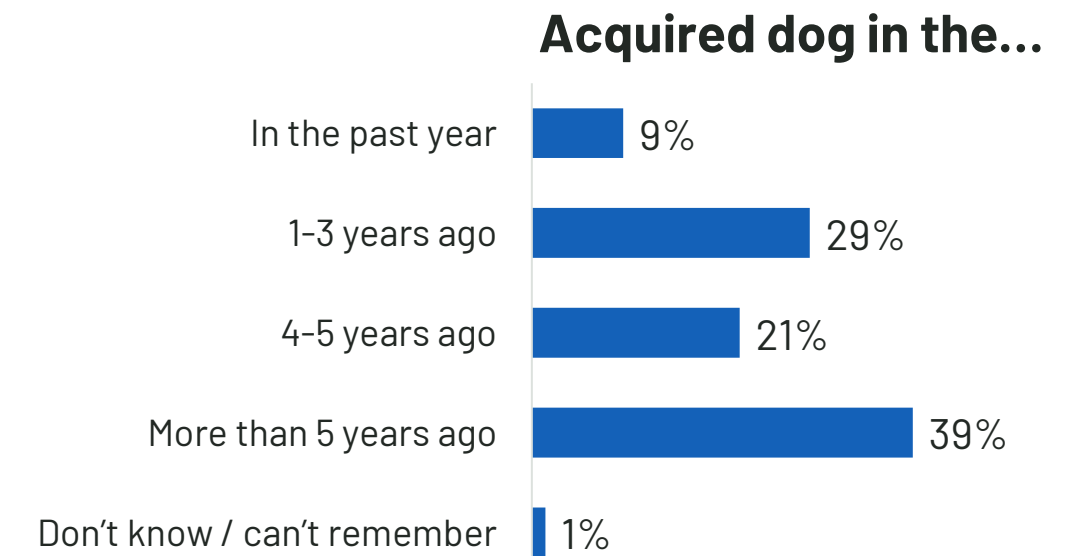
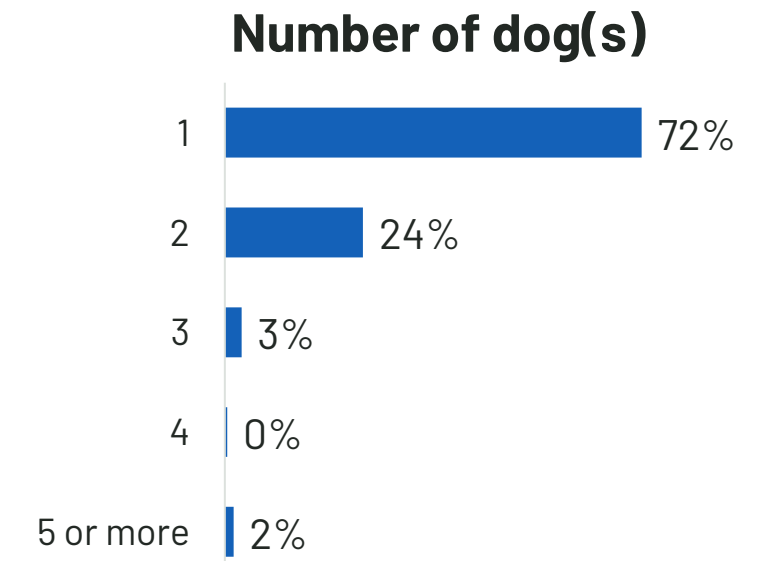
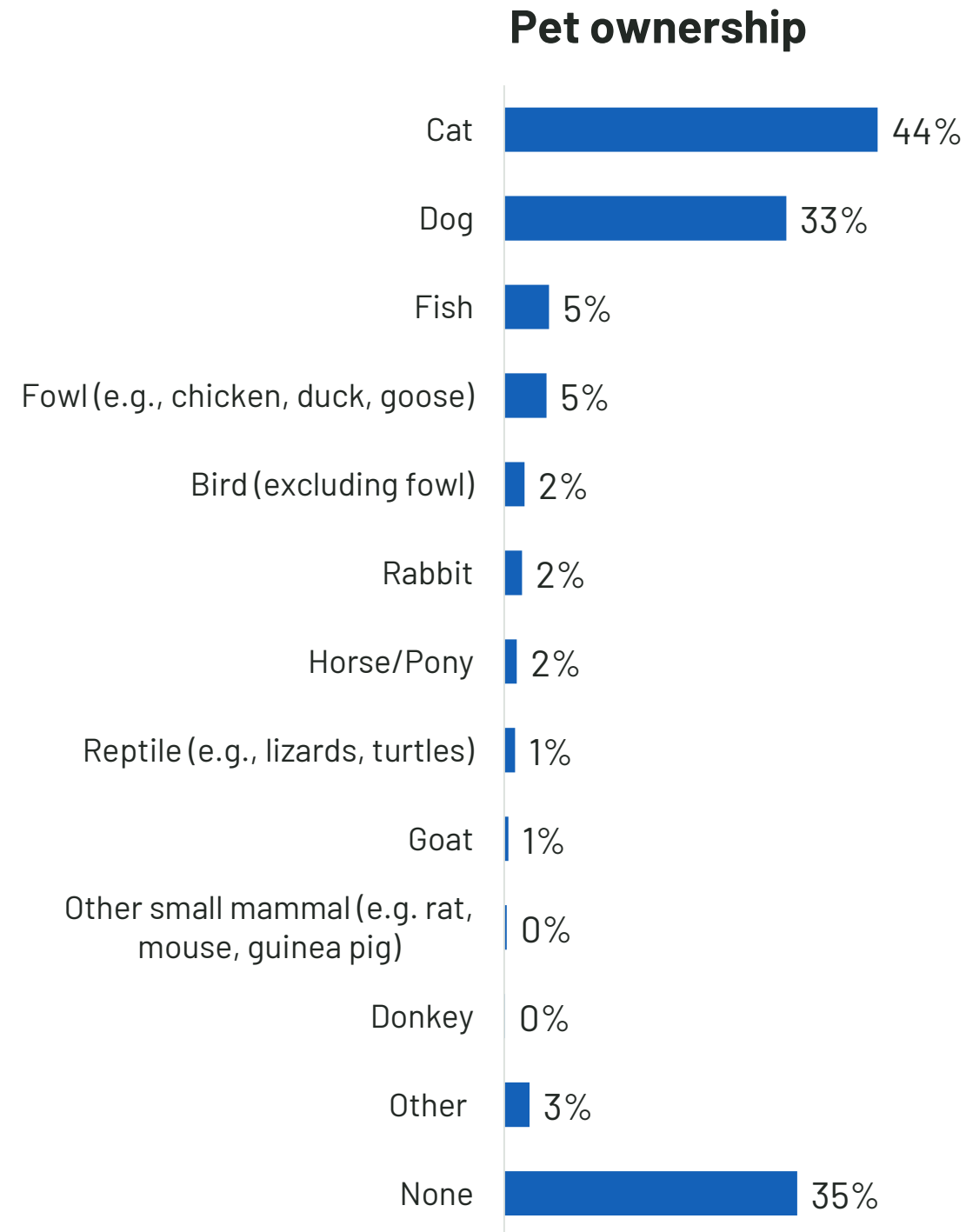
Region



Pet Ownership

A third of New Zealanders own a dog with the majority having only 1 but just over a quarter having multiple dogs in the household.

Three quarters of dog owners got their dog when they were 6 months of age or younger.



Q. Which of these pets, if any, do you have? Base n=1038

Q. How many dogs do you currently have? Base n=342 Q. How long ago did you get your dog? Base n=342 Q. How old was your dog when you got them? Base n=342

Thank You

CONTACT

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