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Public Opinion – Dealing with the Past and Tribunals of Inquiry

44102399 November 2009



Prepared For: Commission For Victims And Survivors

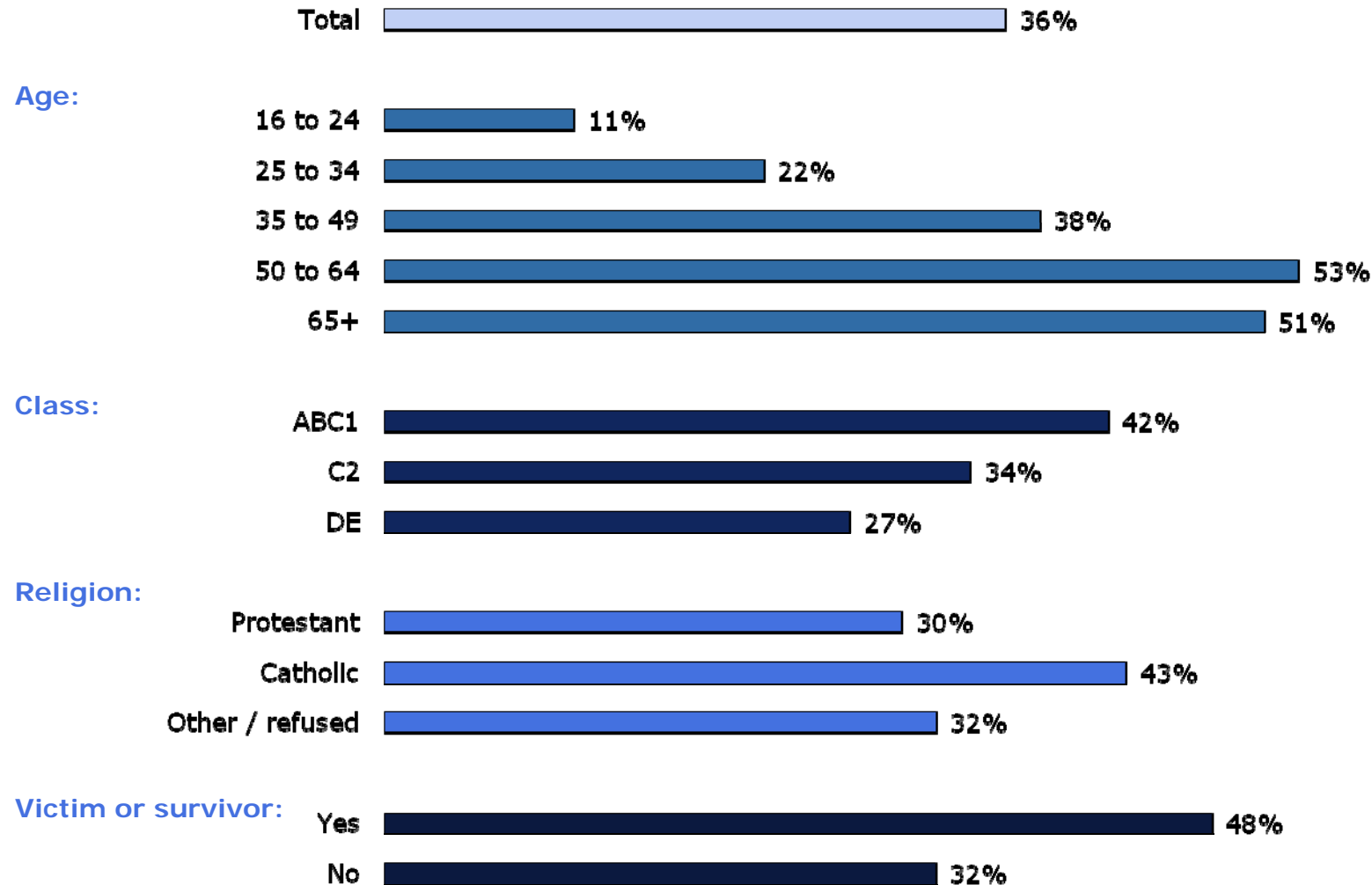
Prepared By: Millward Brown Ulster Limited

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Aim of the Project

- The overall aim of this project is to determine the public's (i) knowledge of, (ii) attitude to Tribunals of Inquiry, and (iii) the main recommendations of the Consultative Group on the Past.
- The results of this survey will be used as a benchmark, where possible, for future years assessments of public opinion which will be commissioned beyond this exercise.
- The scope of the survey should be:
 - i. Approximately 1000 individuals (18+) surveyed across NI and across gender, age, class and region;
 - ii. Interviews should be carried out face to face and ahead of any other questions in a compendium type survey;
 - iii. 12-15 questions of varying length;
 - iv. The interview should last no more than 45 minutes.

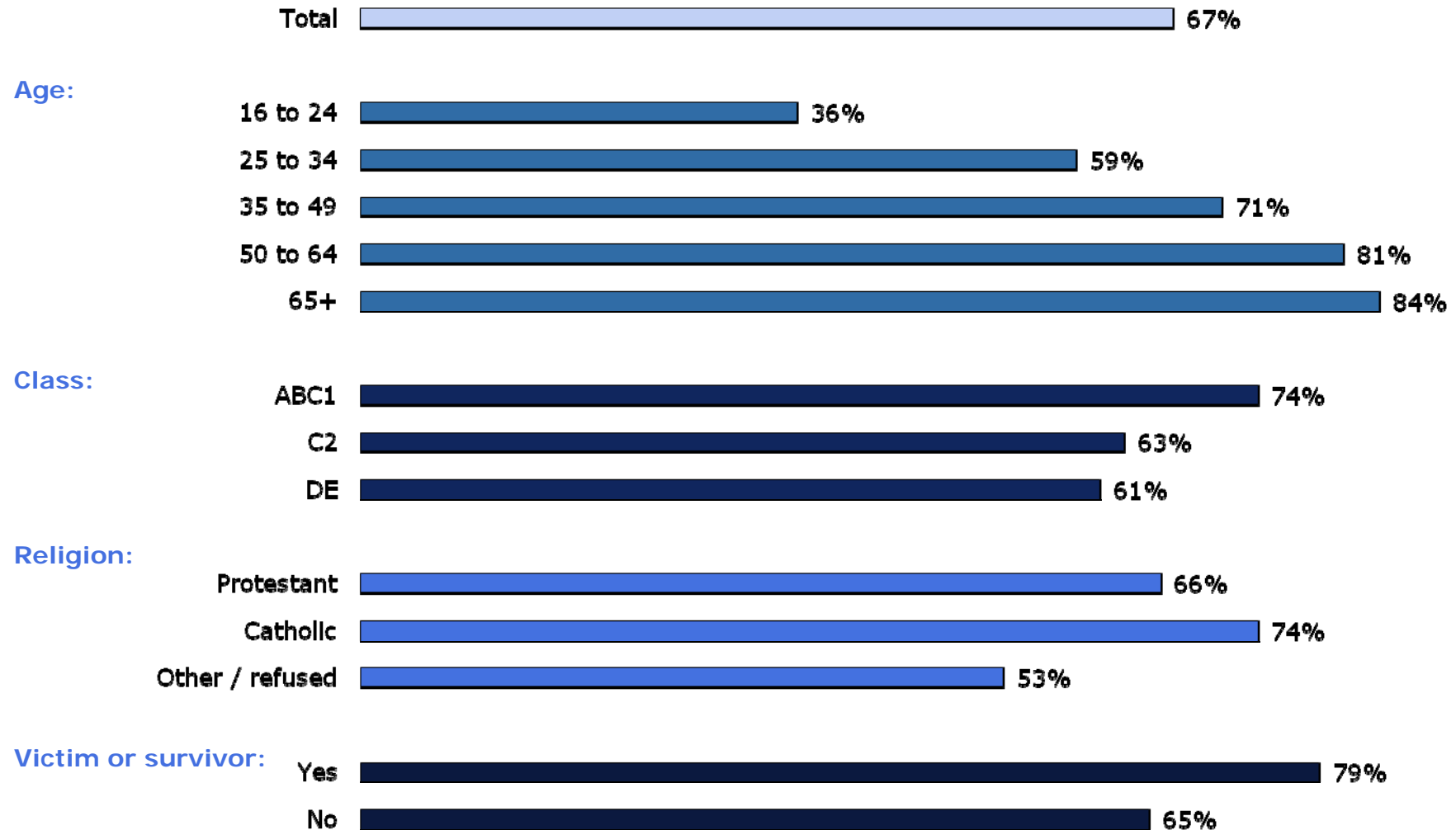
Just over 1 in 3 claimed to have heard of the Consultative Group on Dealing with the Past.



Q.7 Heard of consultative group of the past before today?

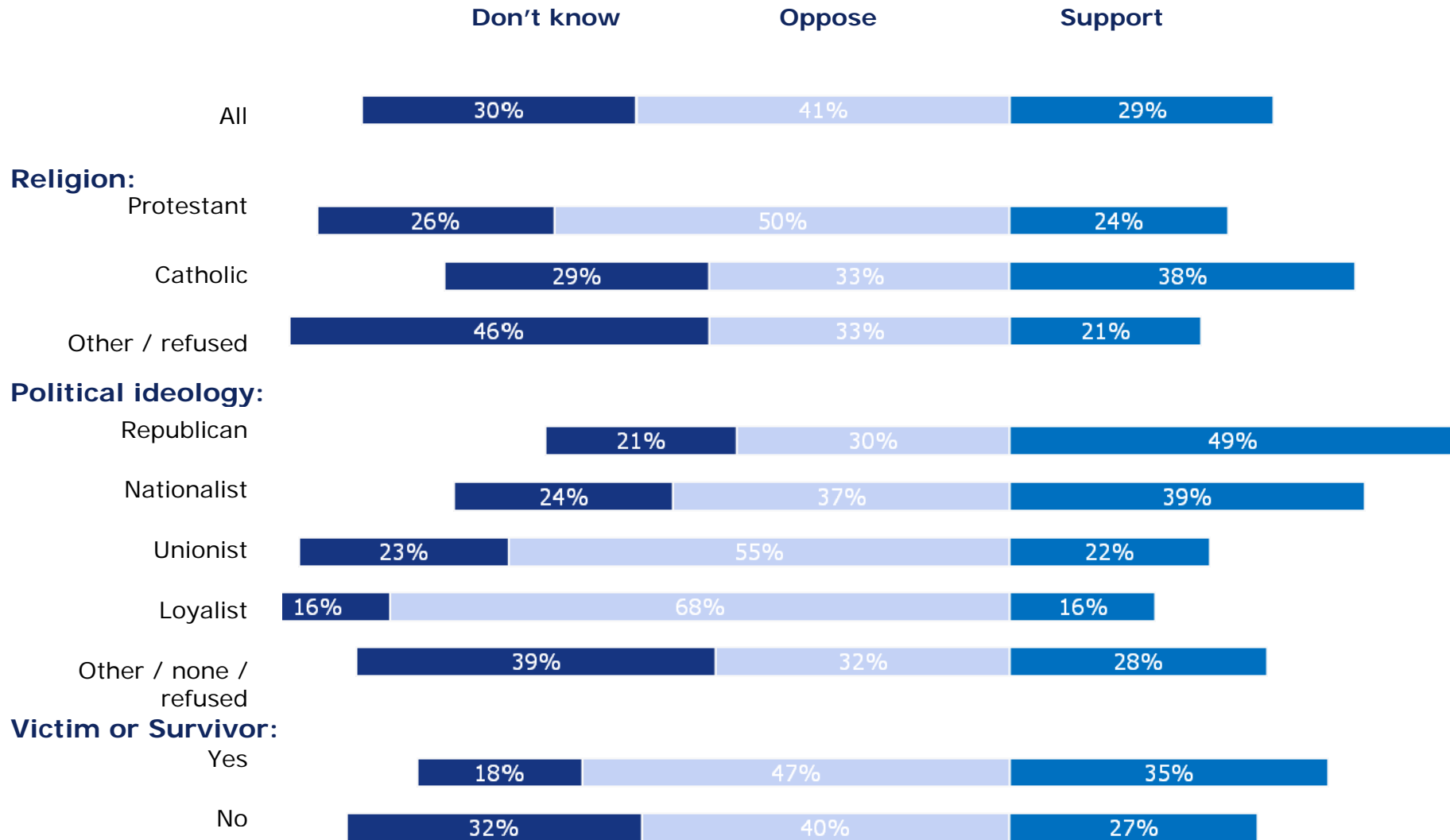
3 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

However two thirds had heard of the recommendation to make payments of £12,000 to the families of the bereaved



Q.8a Recall hearing about recommendation of making payment of £12,000 to the families of the bereaved? [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

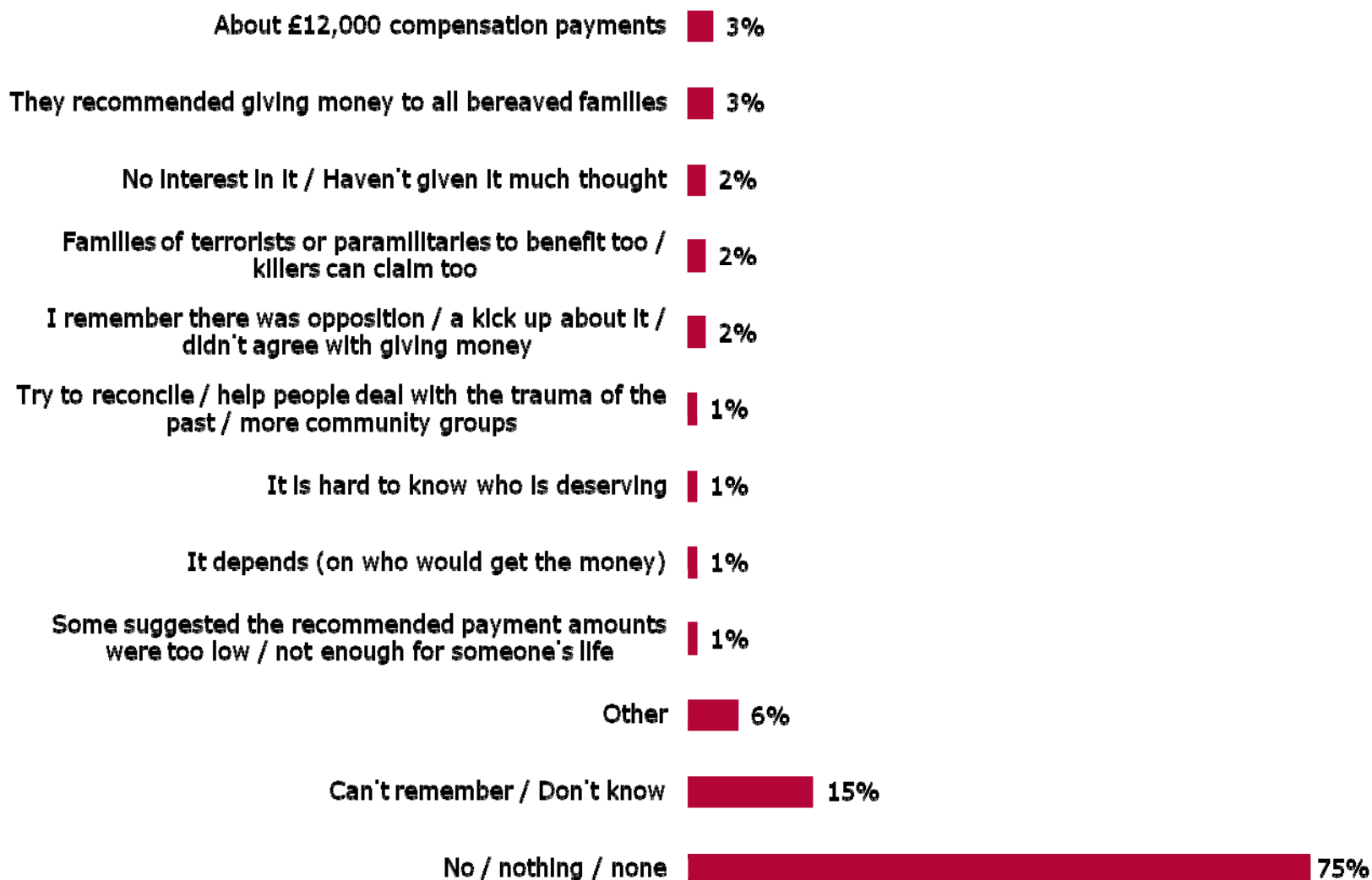
Overall the idea of a recognition payment to all bereaved families was more likely to be opposed than supported although a significant number (30%) were unsure. Support was greater however amongst Catholics, those who considered themselves Republican and slightly higher amongst those who considered themselves a victim or a survivor



Q.8b Support or oppose idea of recognition payment to all bereaved families

5 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

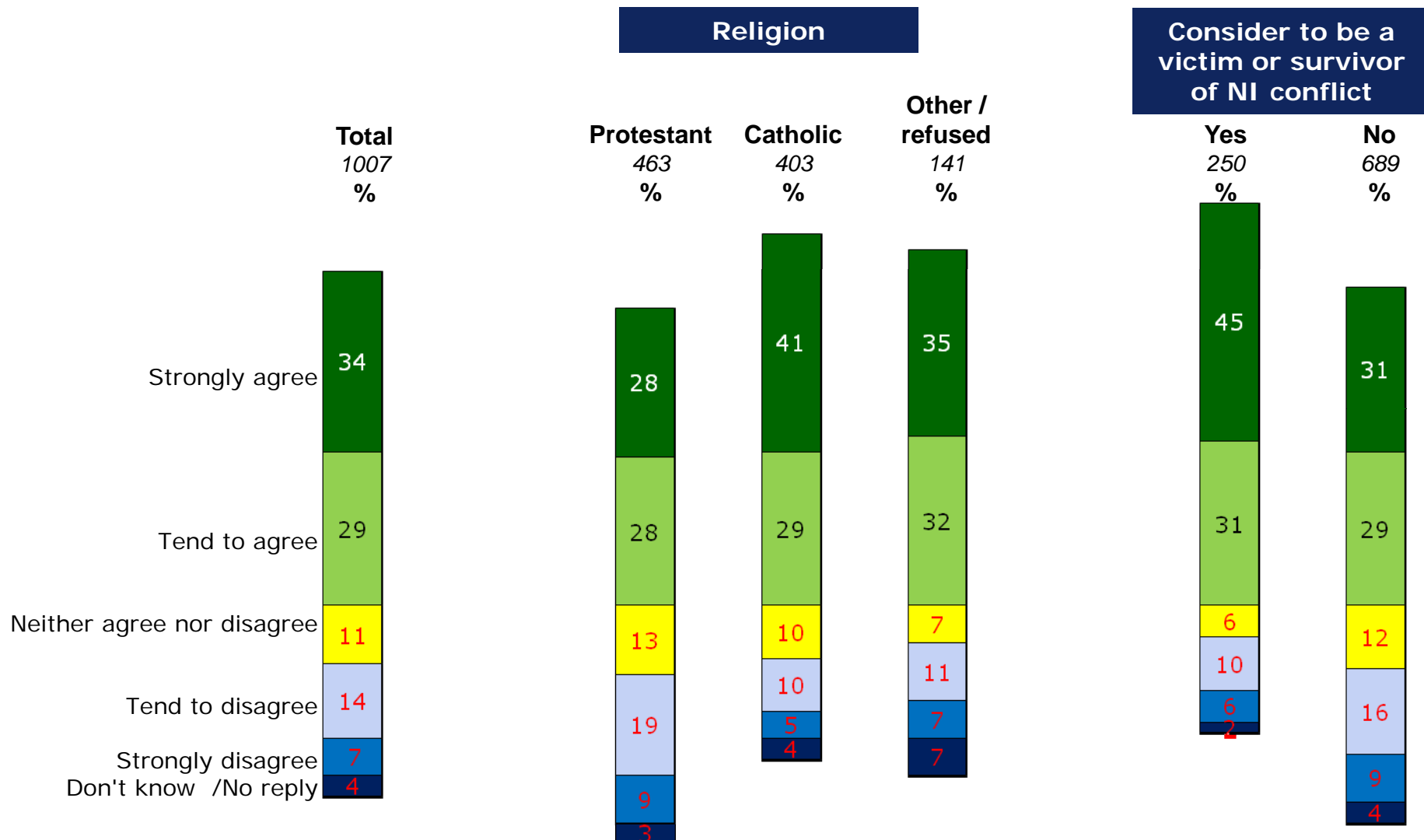
Few could recall any of the other 30 recommendations, in fact most replies were still referring to the recognition payment



Q.9 Recall anything about any of other recommendations?

[Base: All Respondents – 1007]

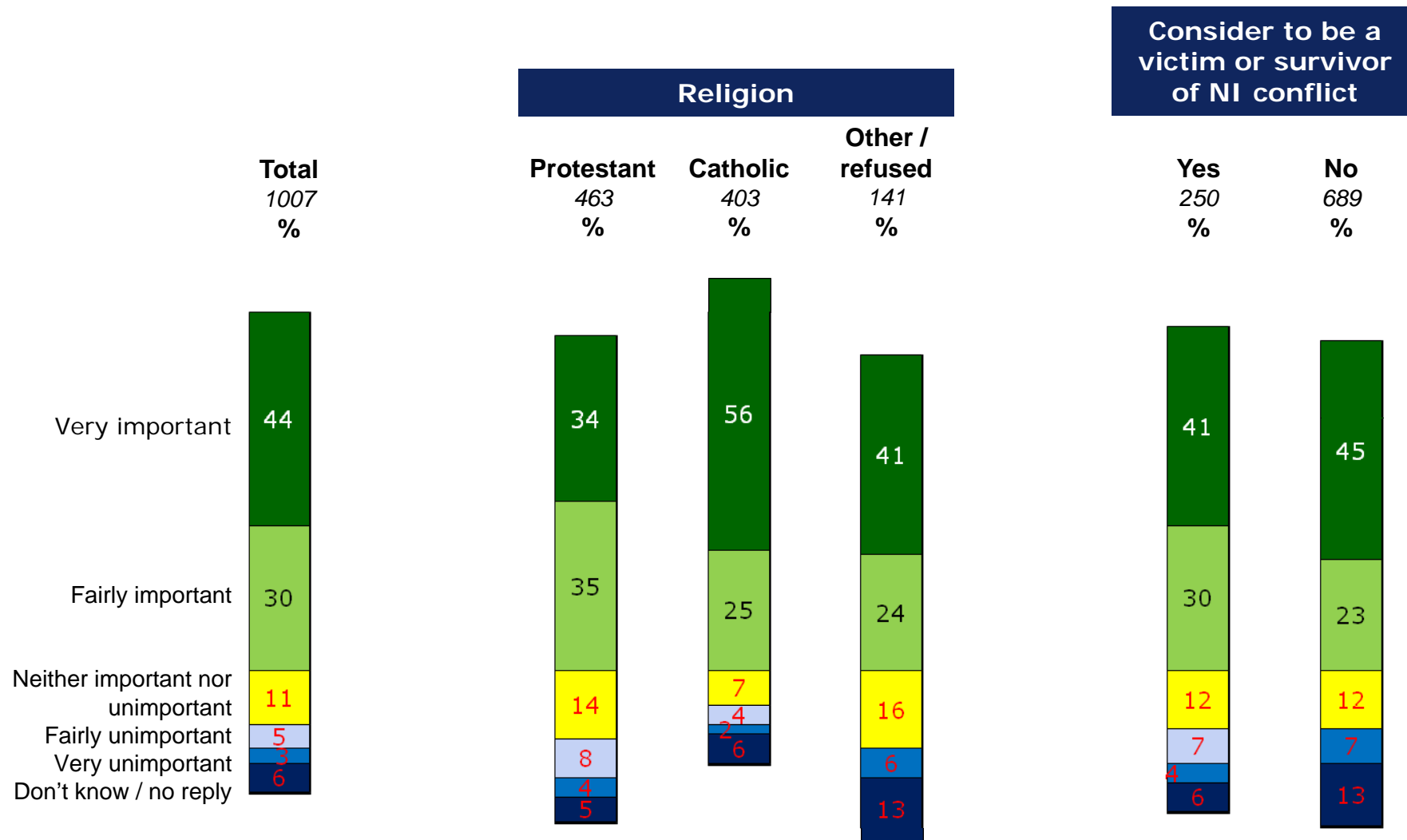
More than 6 in 10 respondents at least tended to agree that Northern Ireland needs to deal with the past in order to move on. Catholics were slightly more likely to agree as were those who considered themselves to be a victim or survivor



Q.10 Agreement that NI needs to deal with the past in order to move on

7 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

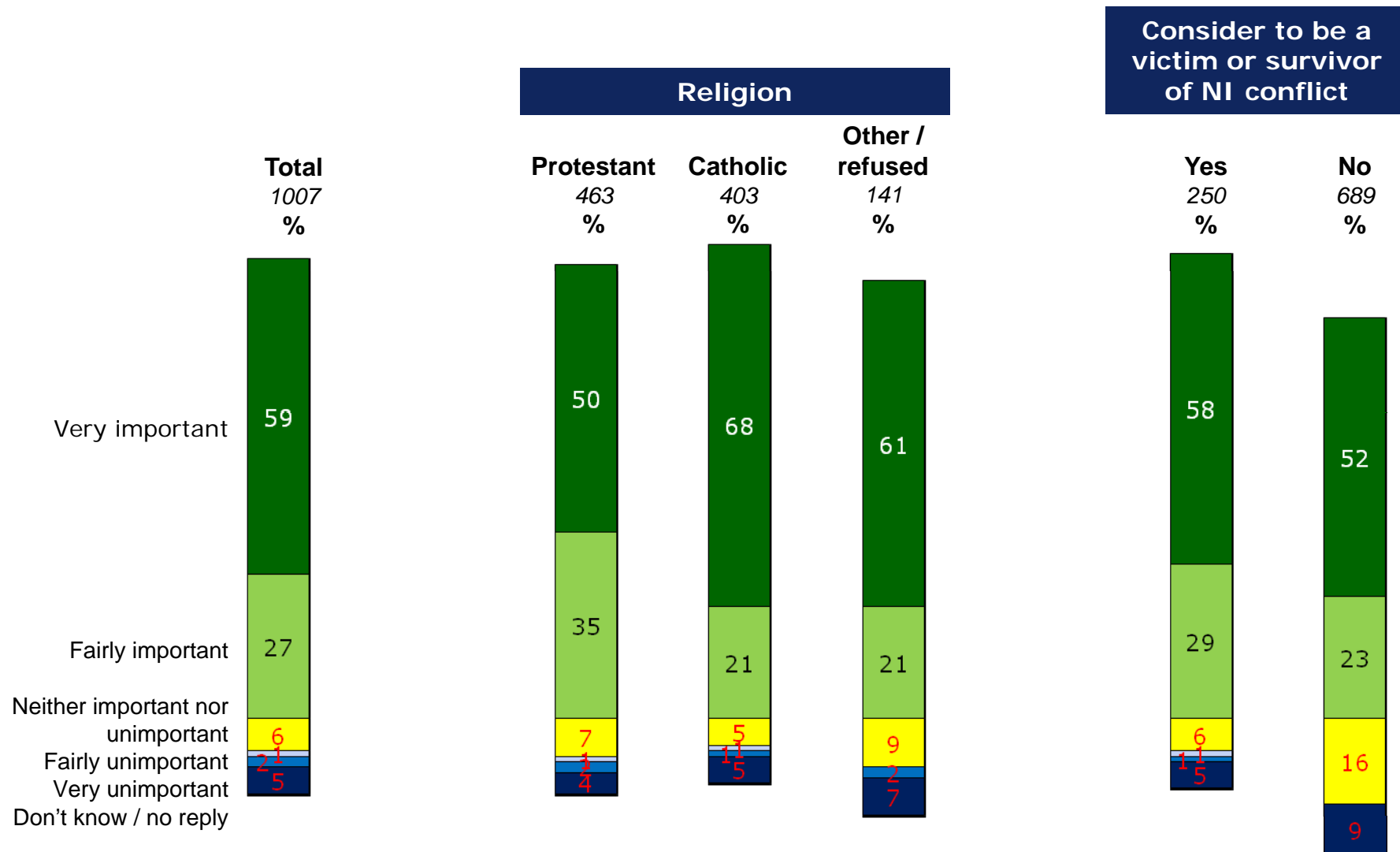
Even more agreed that it was important to deal with the past in a way that promotes reconciliation



Q.11 Importance of dealing with the past in a way that promotes reconciliation in our society

8 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

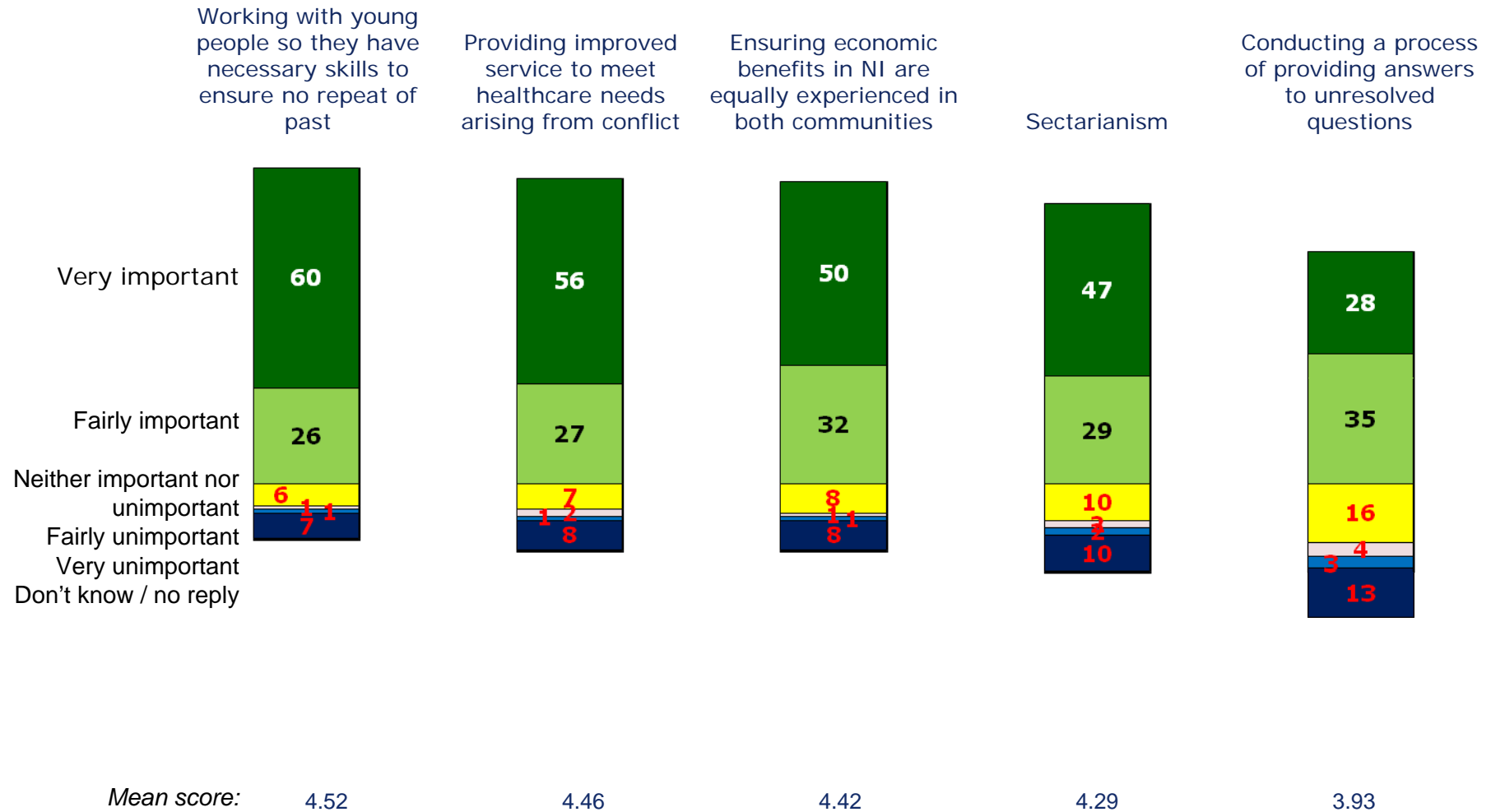
High importance was placed on the idea of forgiveness and its importance in dealing with the past, with almost 9 in 10 rating this as important



Q.12 Importance of forgiveness in dealing with the past

9 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

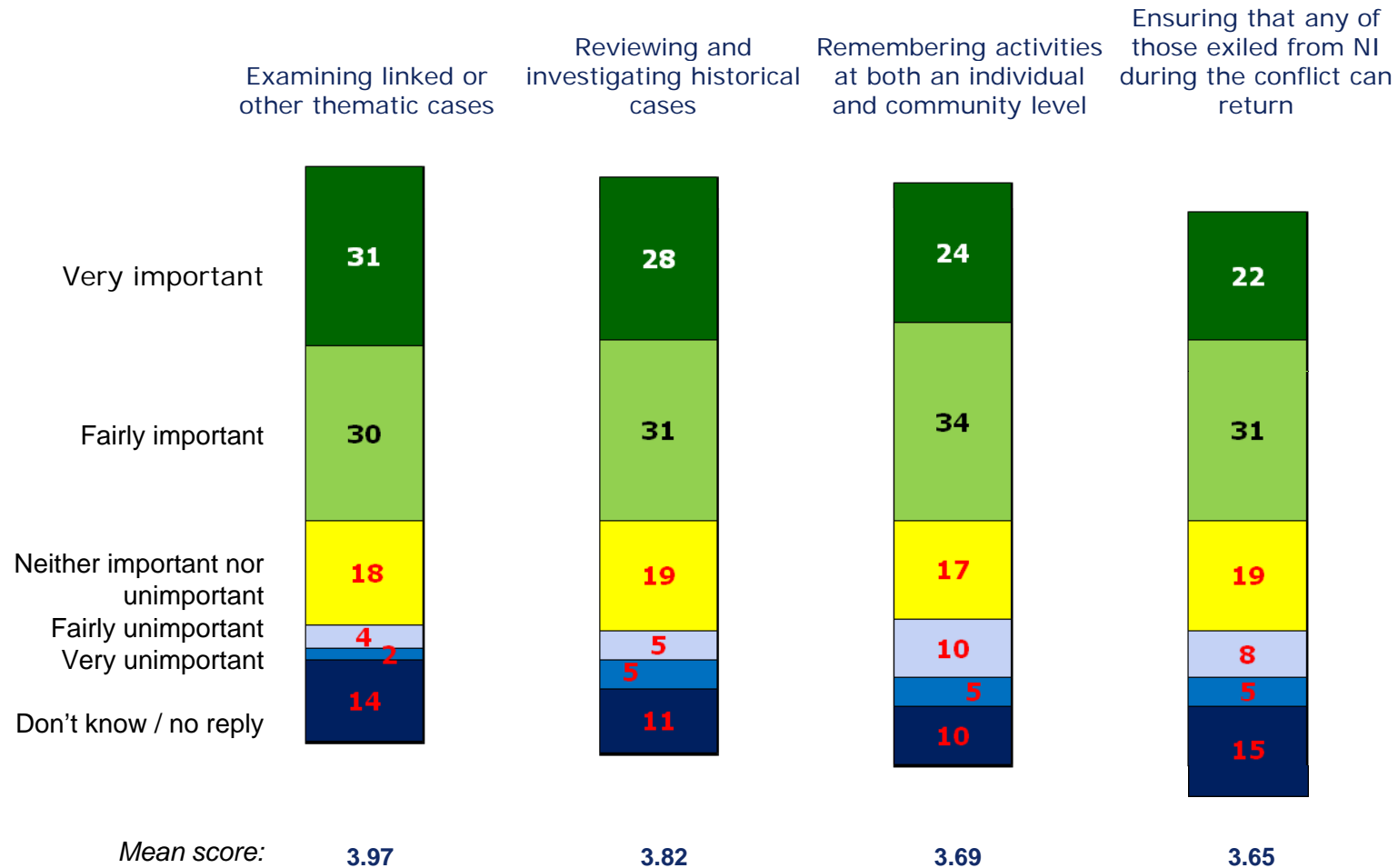
Greatest importance was placed on the proposed Legacy Commission in dealing with societal issues such as working with young people to provide them with the skills to ensure there is no repeat of the past, the provision of improved service to meet healthcare needs, ensuring that economic benefits were equally experienced and tackling sectarianism



Q.13 Importance of process dealing with each issue

10 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

All remaining issues read to respondents were much more likely to be considered important than unimportant albeit a little less so than those above



Q.13 Importance of process dealing with each issue (contd)

11 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

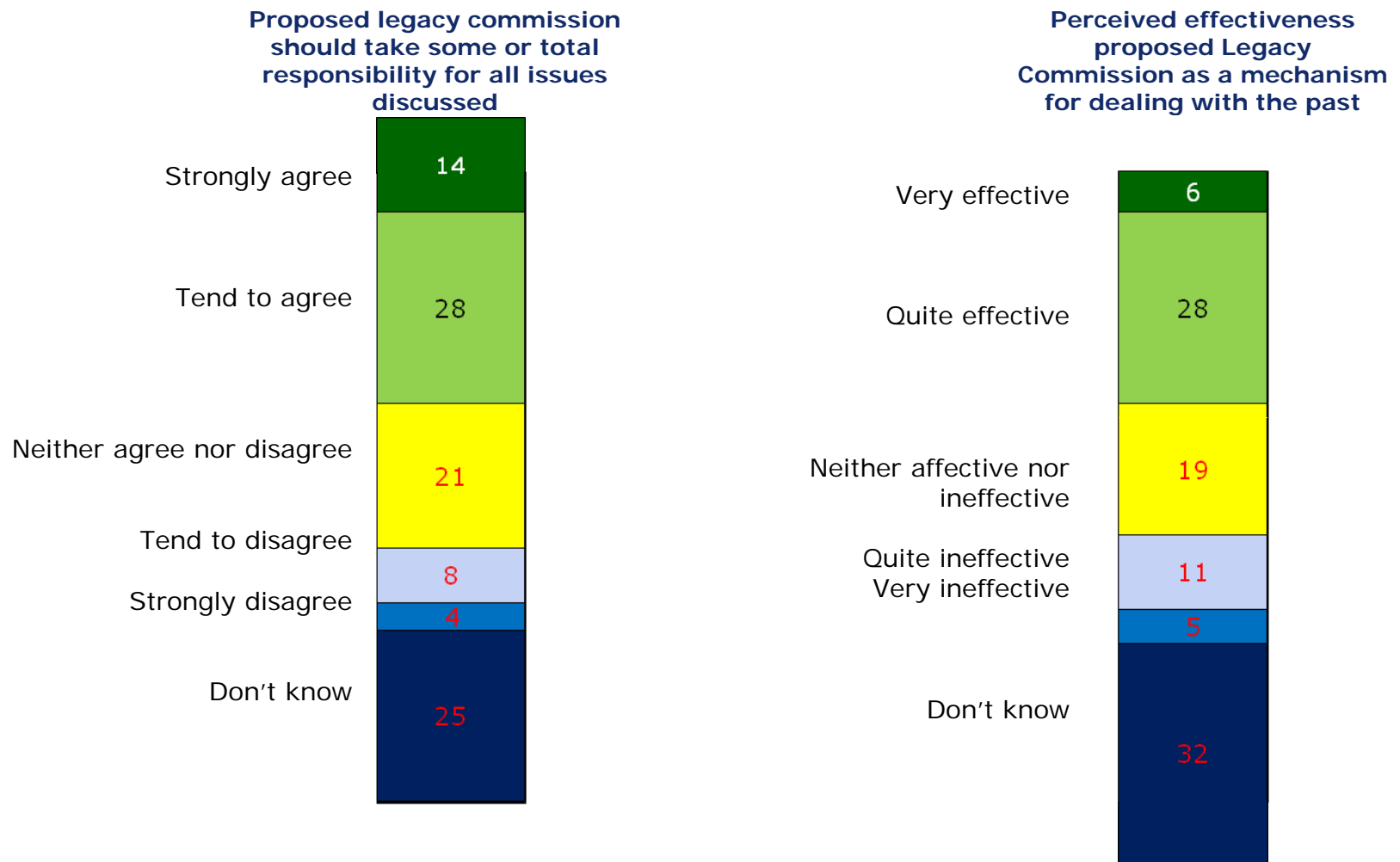
The view that any future examinations of thematic cases should take place in public as opposed to private was very much supported



Q.14 Think examinations should take place in public or private

12 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

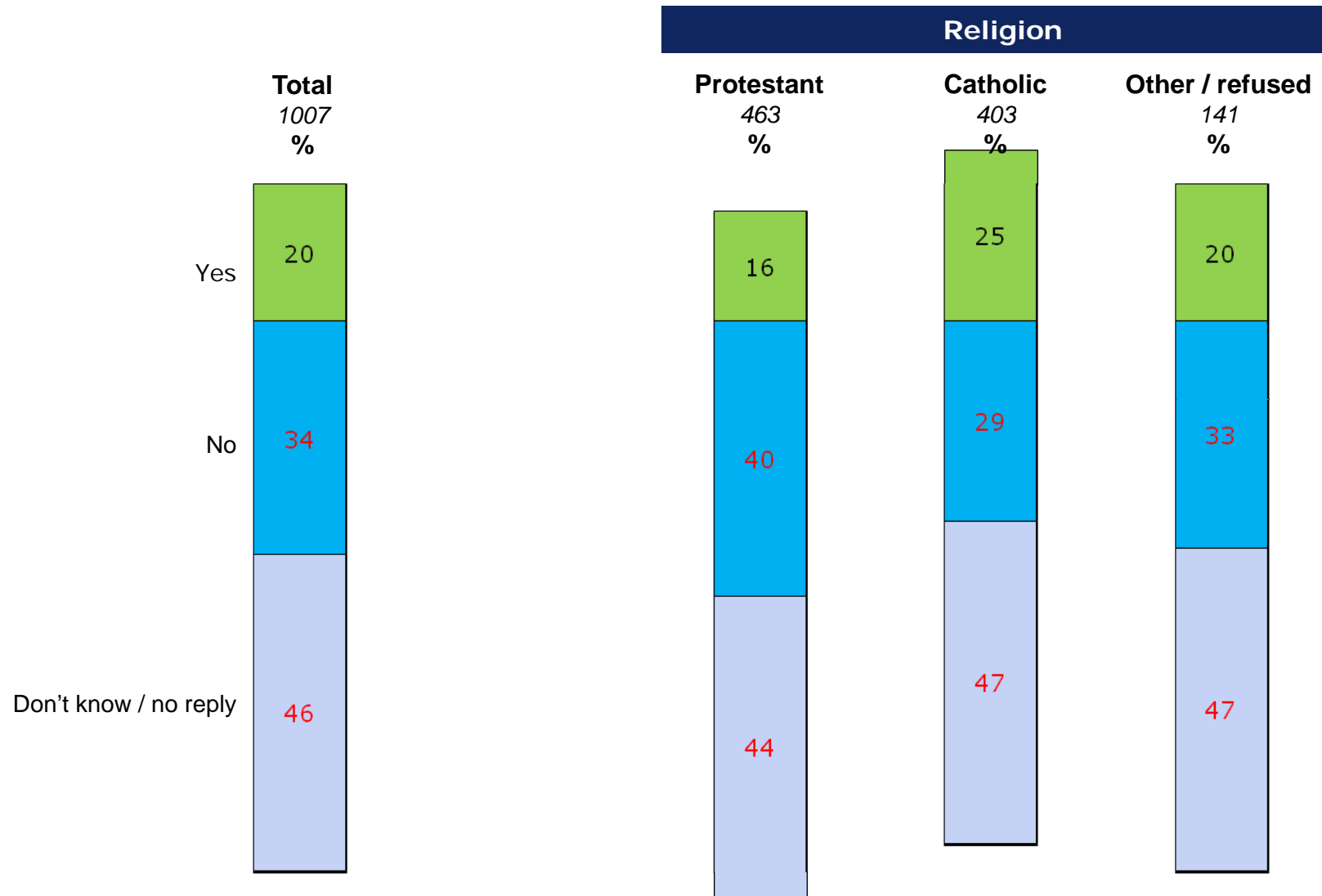
Respondents did still appear unsure about the establishment of the proposed Legacy Commission to take at least some of the responsibility for these issues, although for those with a clear opinion, the number agreeing was greater than those disagreeing. Again respondents were unsure about the effectiveness of this proposed Legacy Commission in dealing with the past



Q.15 Agreement that proposed legacy commission should take responsibility for issues and
Q.16 Perceived Effectiveness of Proposed Legacy Commission as a mechanism for dealing

13 with the past. [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

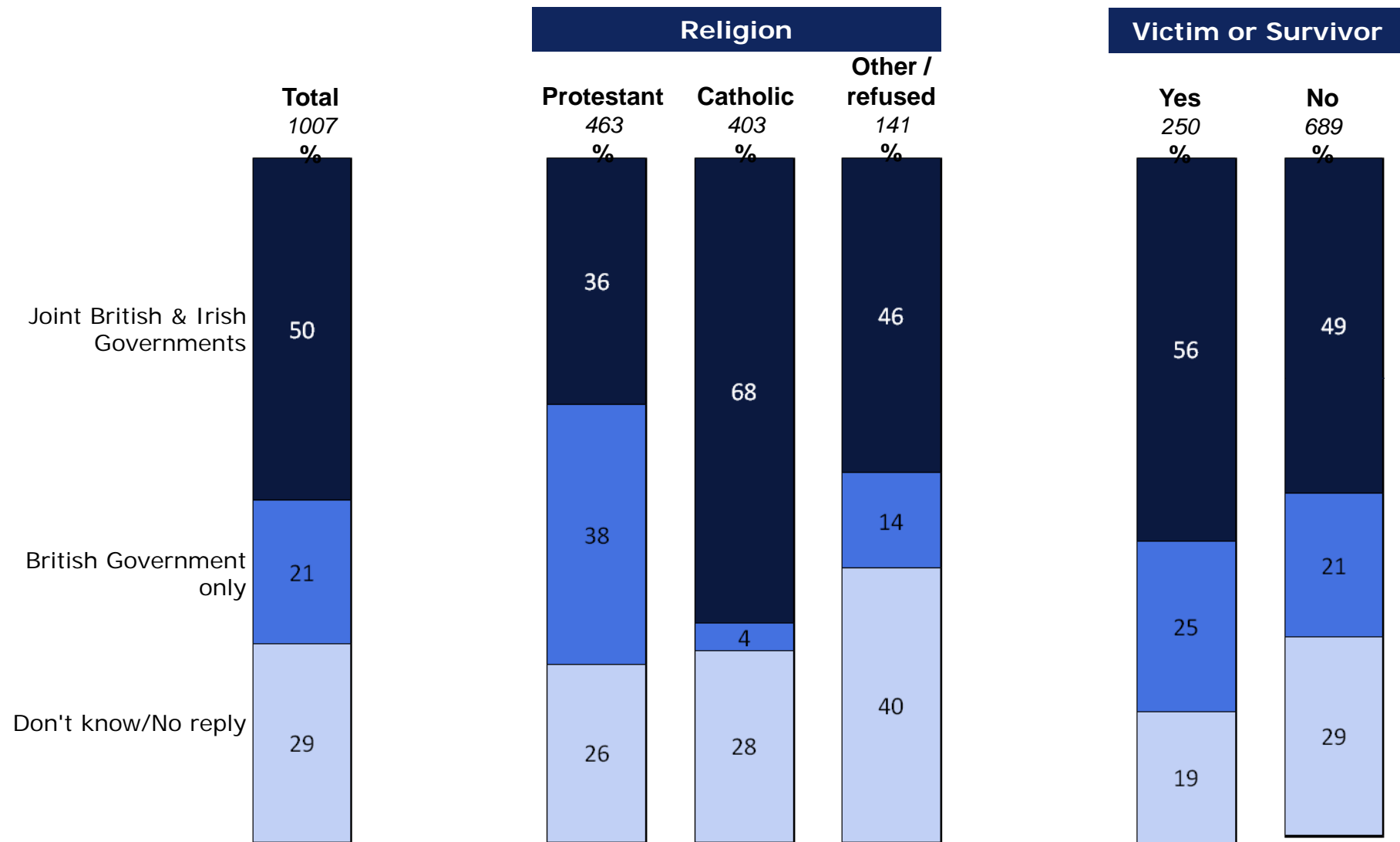
Only 1 in 5 felt that the proposed Legacy Commission can be truly independent, although 1 in 2 respondents were unsure



Q.17 Believe that such a legacy commission can be truly independent

14 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

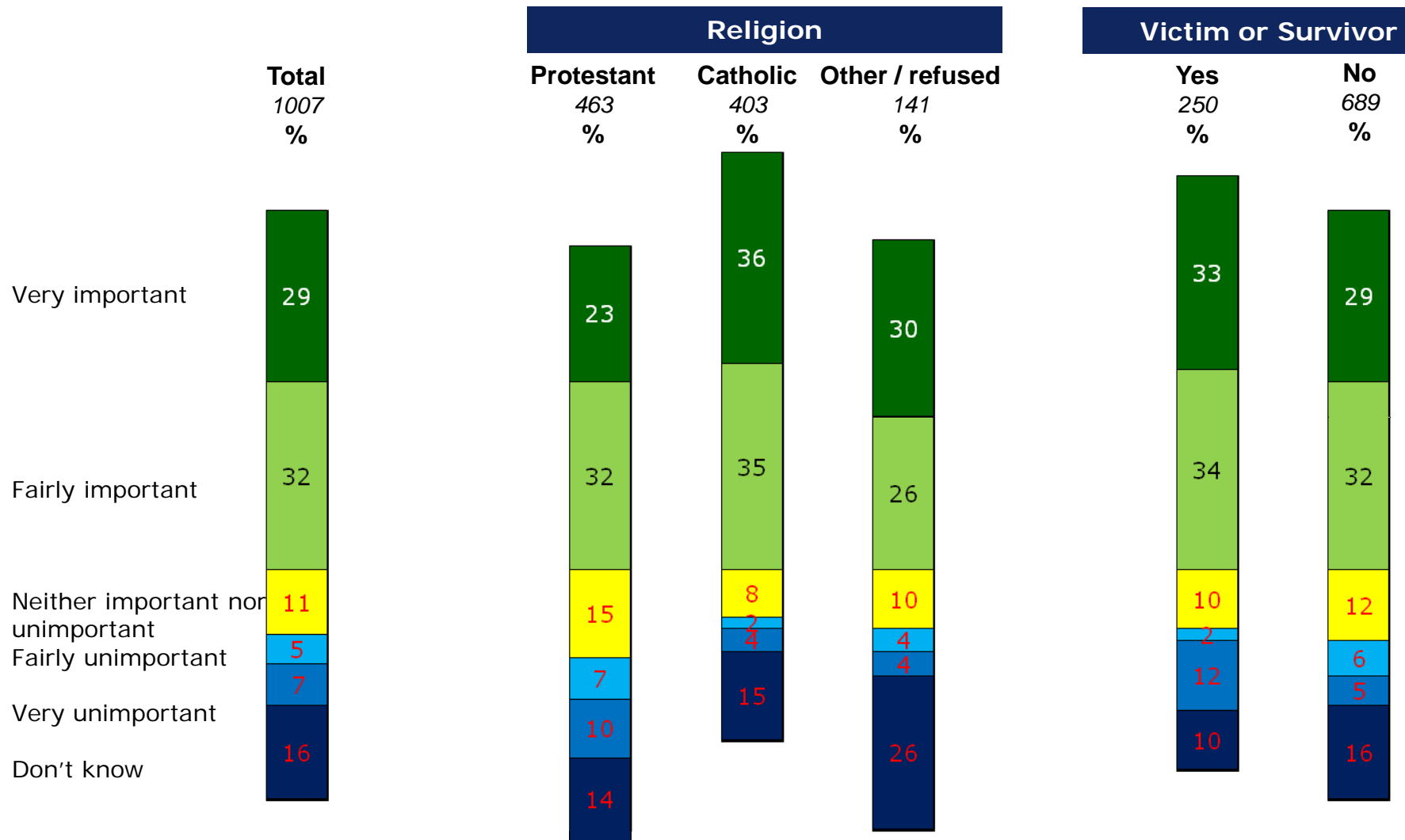
Half of respondents believed that the Legacy Commission should be run jointly by the British and Irish Governments. This was much higher amongst Catholics



Q.18 Who think should run legacy commission if established

15 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

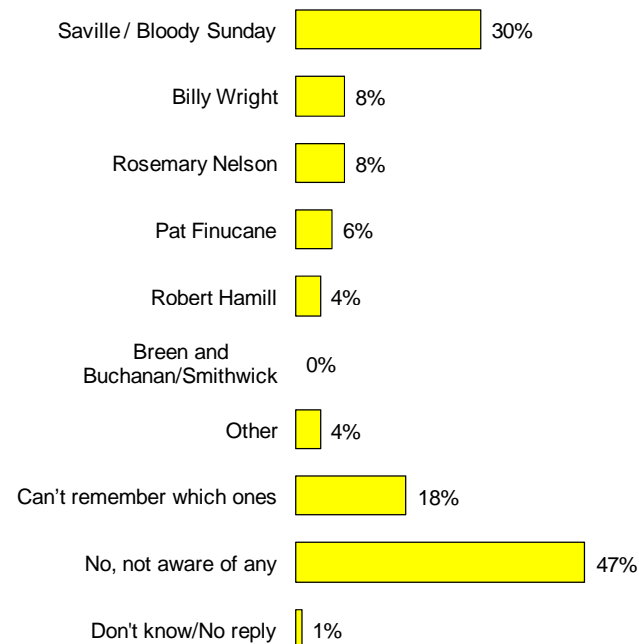
Just over 6 in 10 respondents thought it was important that the experience of other countries who have experienced conflict should be drawn on in setting up and running a legacy commission



Q.19 Importance of drawing experience of other countries who have experienced conflict in setting up and running a legacy commission

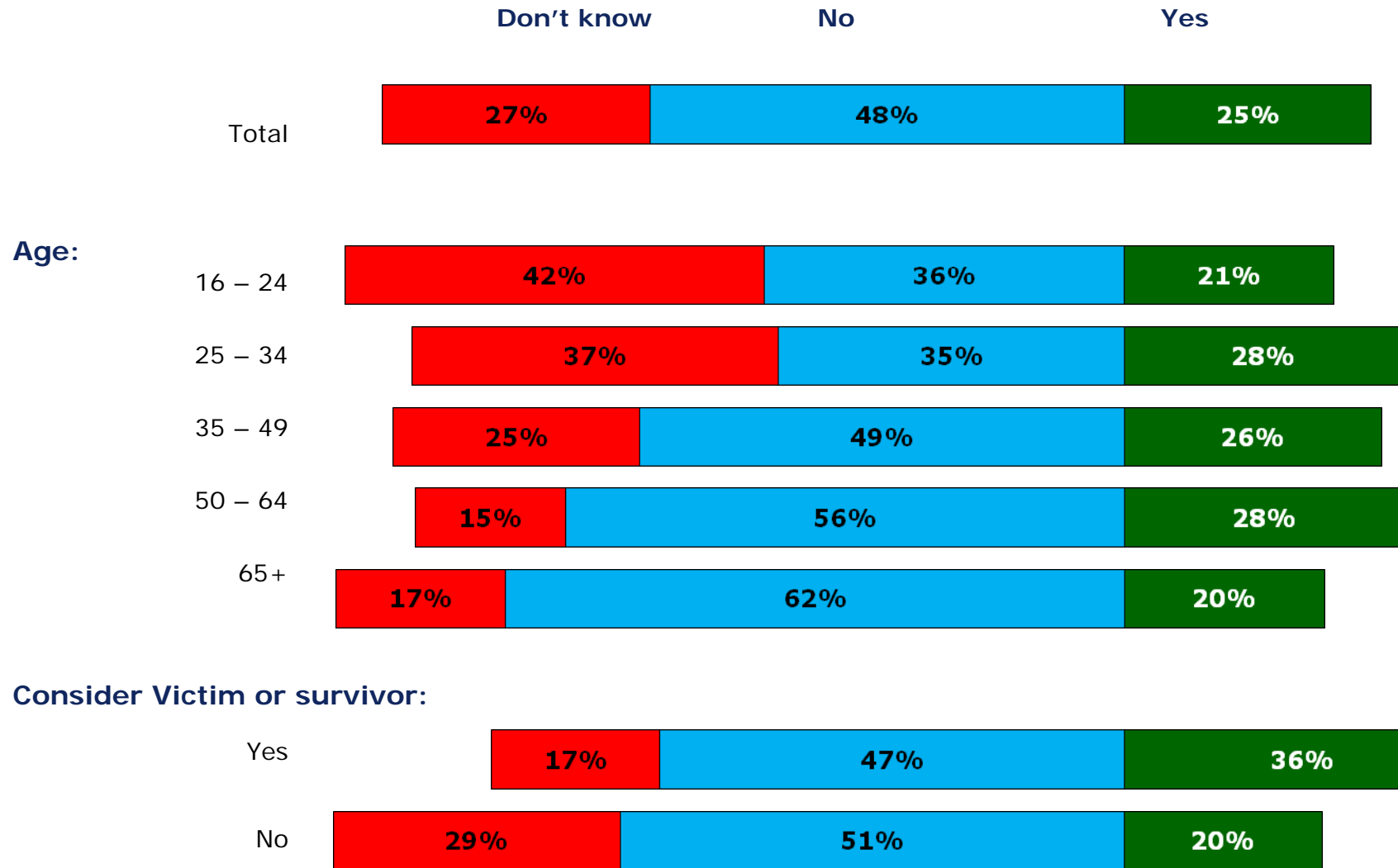
[Base: All Respondents n=1007]

Around half of respondents were not aware of any Public Tribunals currently taking place, with a further 1 in 5 not being able to recall the actual name of one. Otherwise the Saville or Bloody Sunday enquiry was most likely to be cited



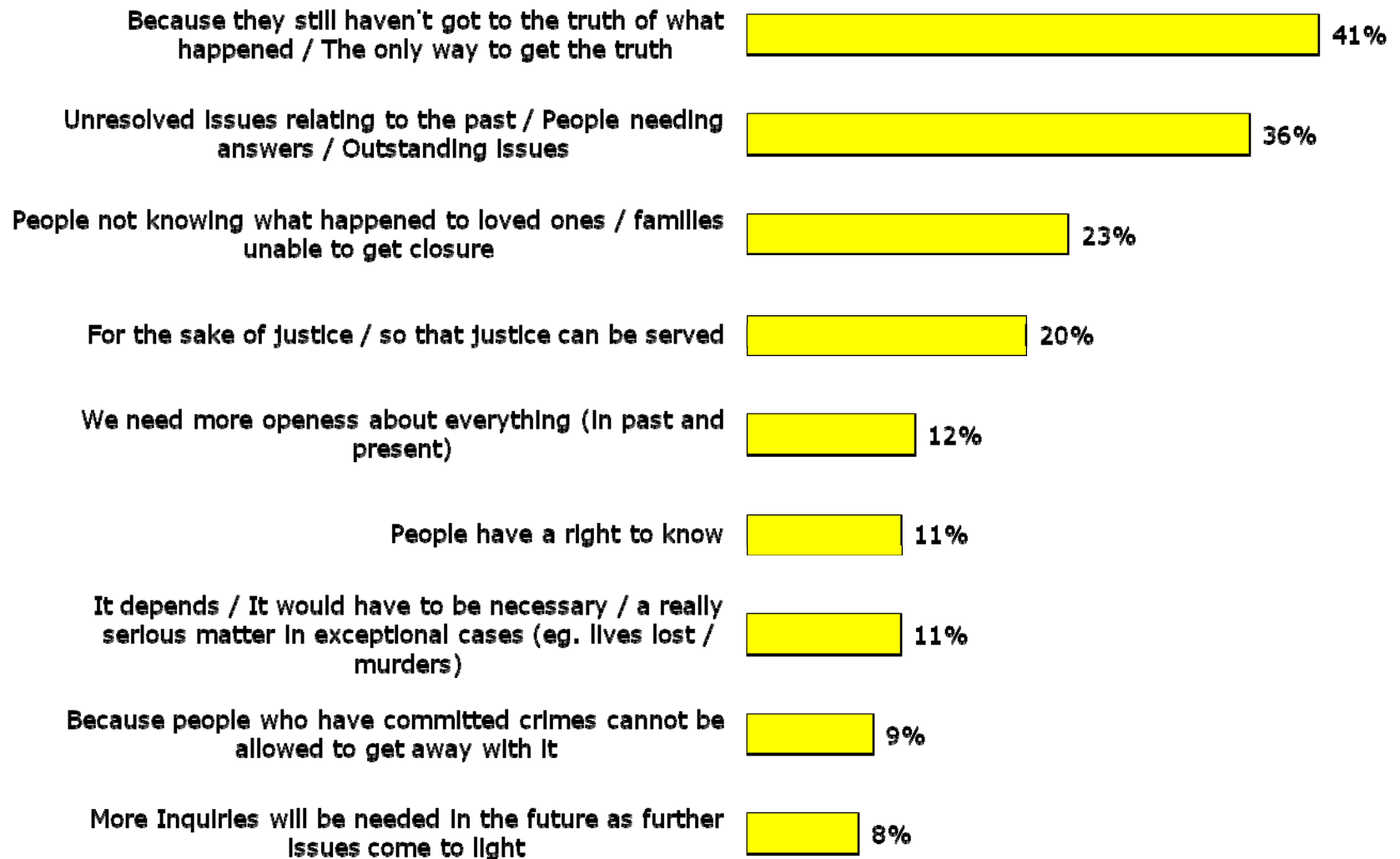
Q.1 Spontaneous awareness of Public tribunals currently on-going in NI.
[Base: All Respondents – 1007]

Overall a quarter of respondents felt there should be further Tribunals of Inquiry, with about half saying no to any more. Those who consider themselves to be victims were more likely to think there should be more. Younger people were less likely to have an opinion.



Q.2 Do you think there should be any further public tribunals of inquiry such as these (list read out)? [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

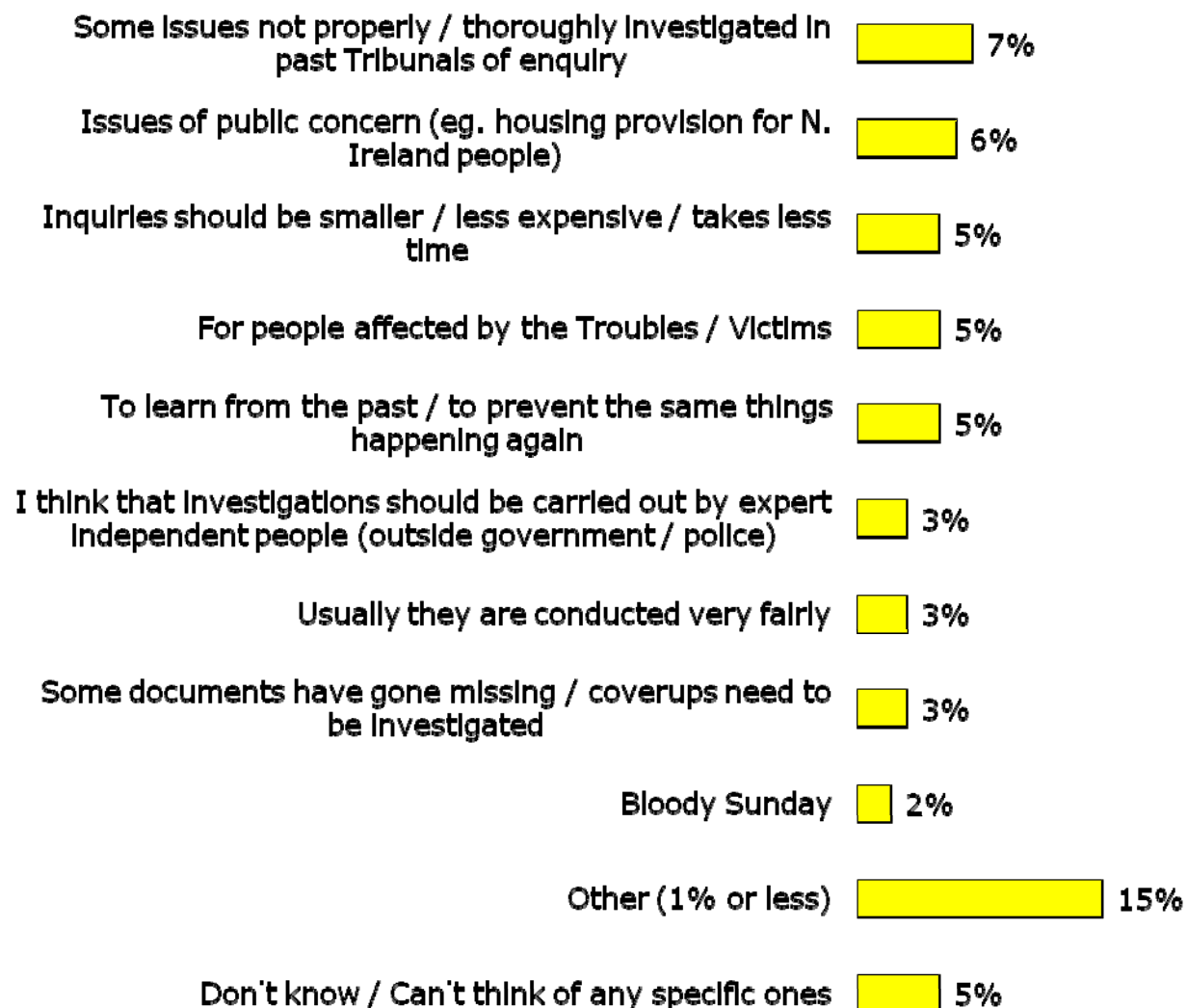
Of those supporting further Tribunals, respondents in the main felt there should be further Tribunals because people still needed to find out the truth, that there were still unresolved issues



Q.2b Why do you say that?

¹⁹[Base: All who think there should be further public Tribunals of Inquiry n=253]

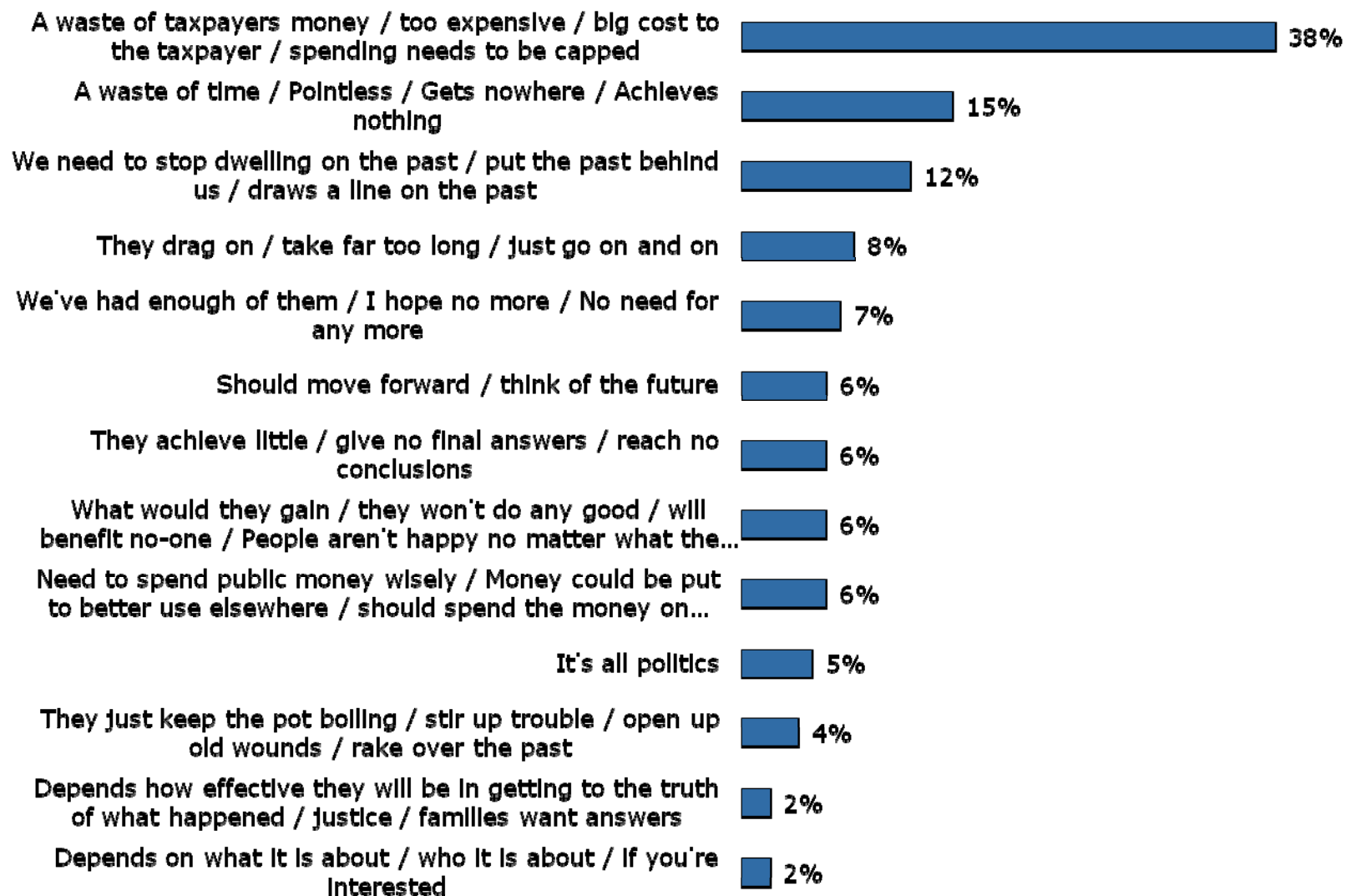
Reasons for having more Tribunals of Inquiry continued



Q.2b Why do you say that (contd)?

²⁰[Base: All who think there should be further public Tribunals of Inquiry n=253]

Expense was the most frequently cited reason for respondents not supporting having any further Tribunals

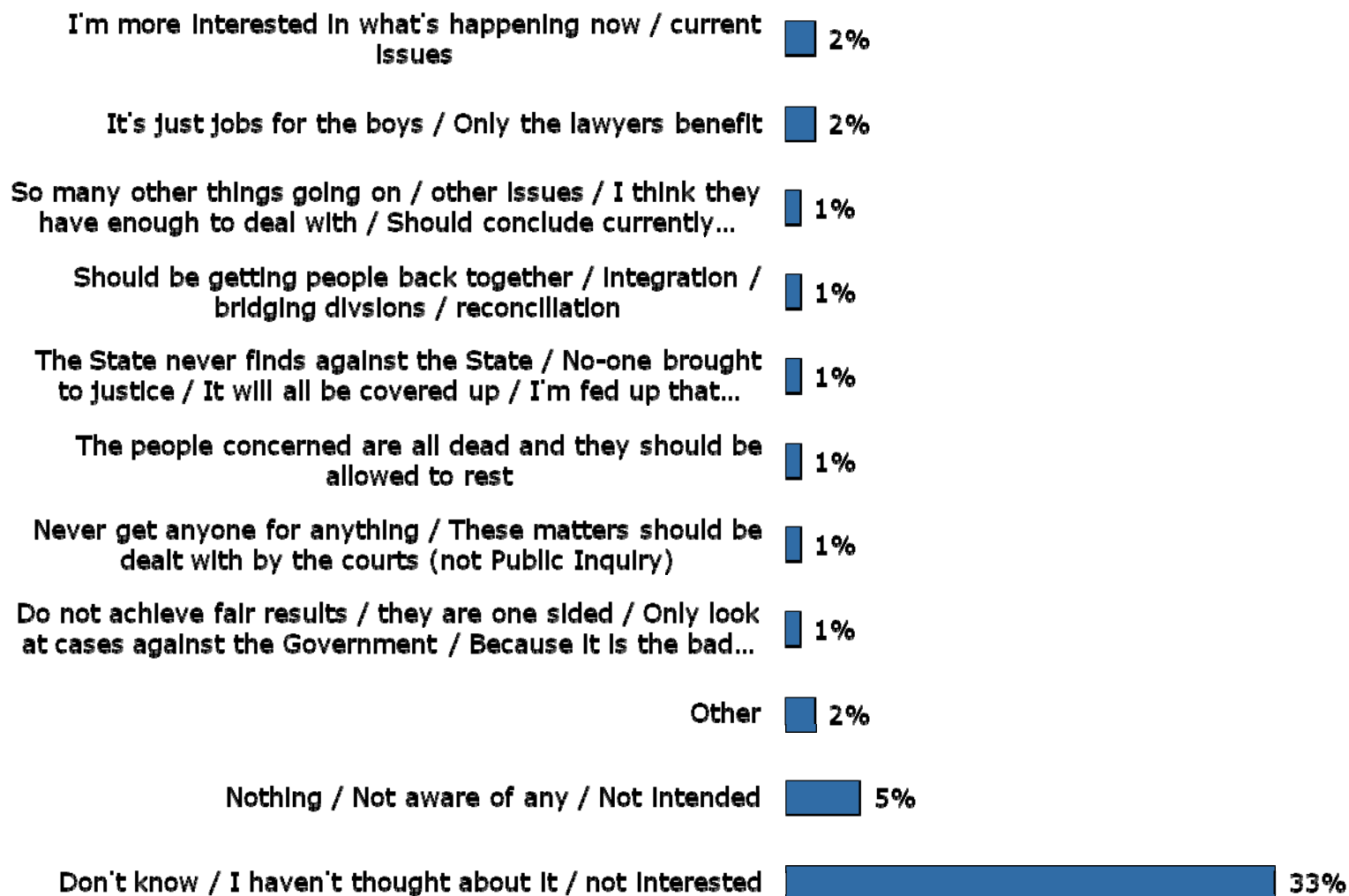


Q.2c Why do you say that?

[Base: All who don't know or don't think there shouldn't be further public

²¹Tribunals of Inquiry n=754]

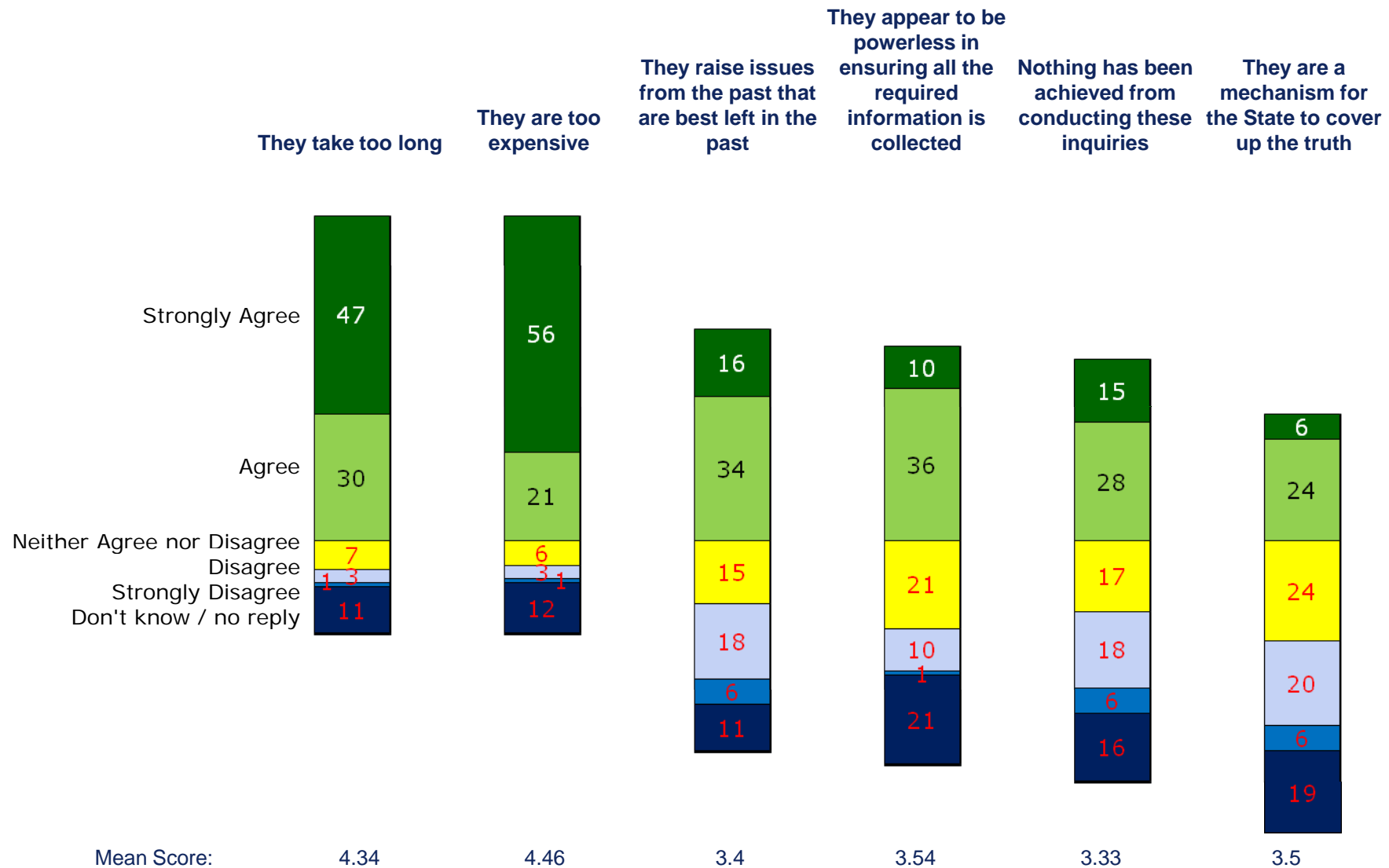
Reasons for not supporting any further Tribunals of Inquiry continued



Q.2c Why do you say that (contd)?

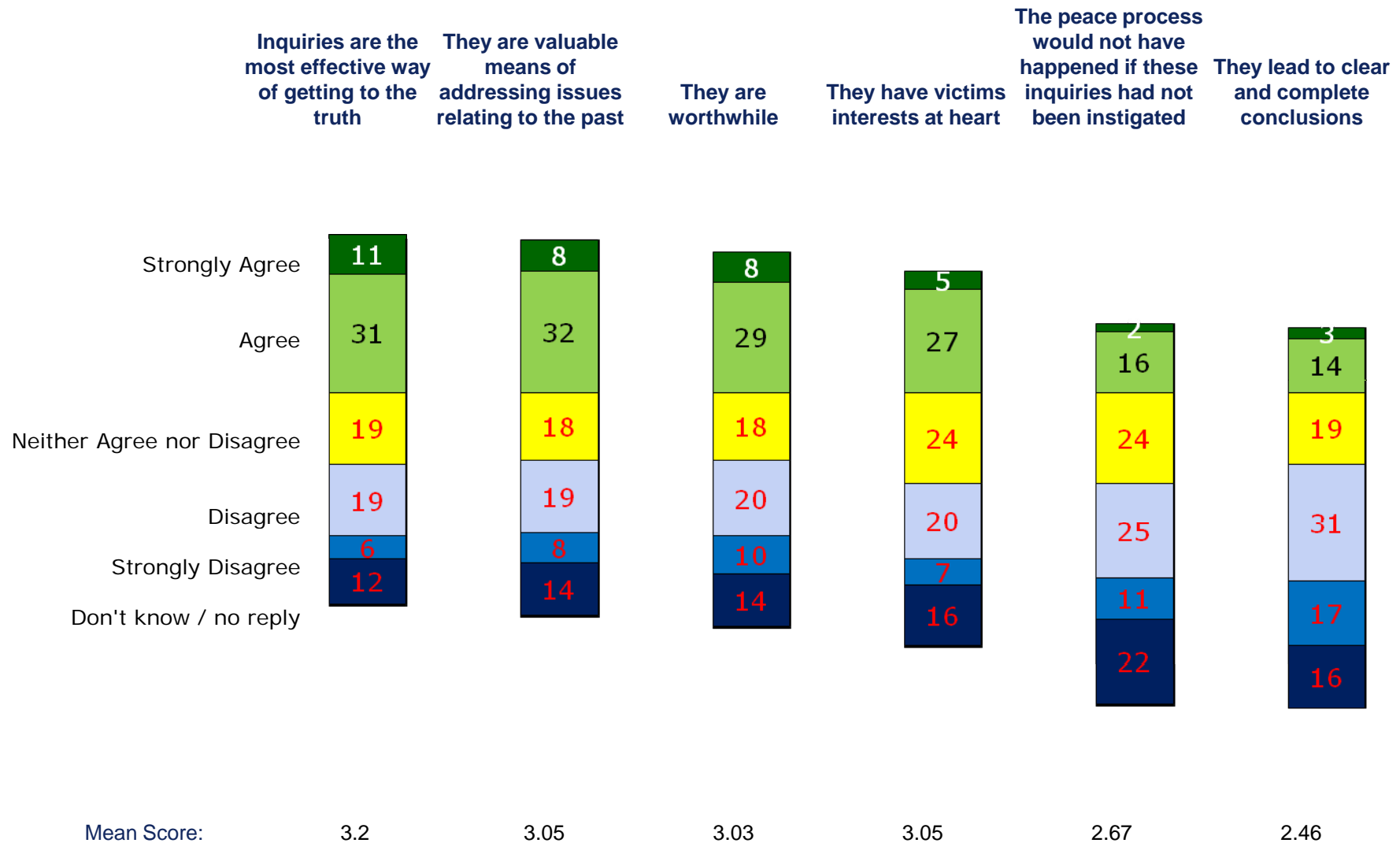
[Base: All who don't know or think there shouldn't be further public Tribunals of Inquiry n=754]

There was overwhelming agreement that the Public Tribunals take too long and are too expensive.



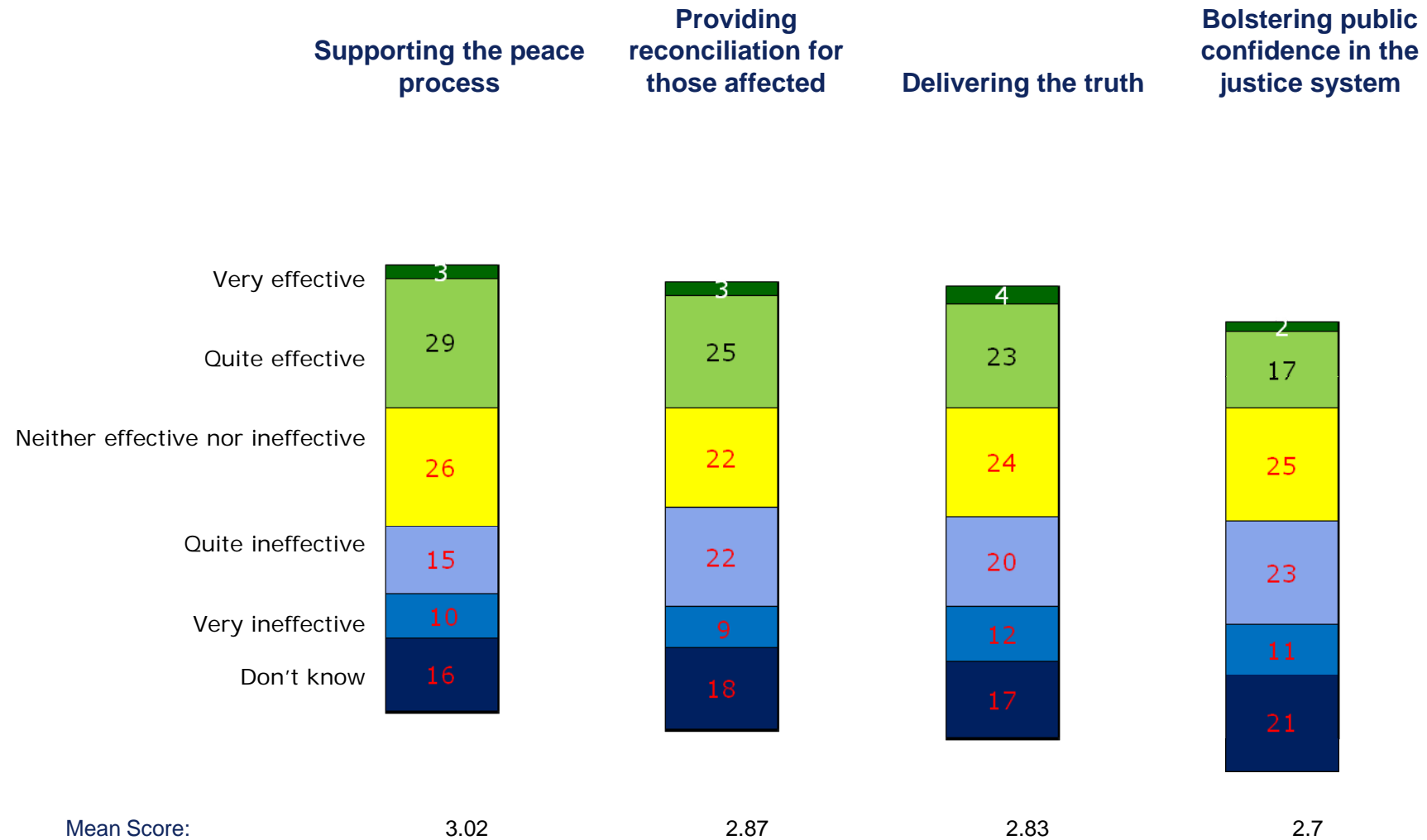
Q.3 Level of Agreement with statements about Public Tribunals of inquiry
 23[Base: All Respondents n=1007]

Otherwise opinion of Tribunals was more divided, although respondents were more likely to disagree that they lead to clear and complete conclusions



Q.3 Level of Agreement with statements about Public Tribunals of inquiry (contd)
²⁴[Base: All Respondents n=1007]

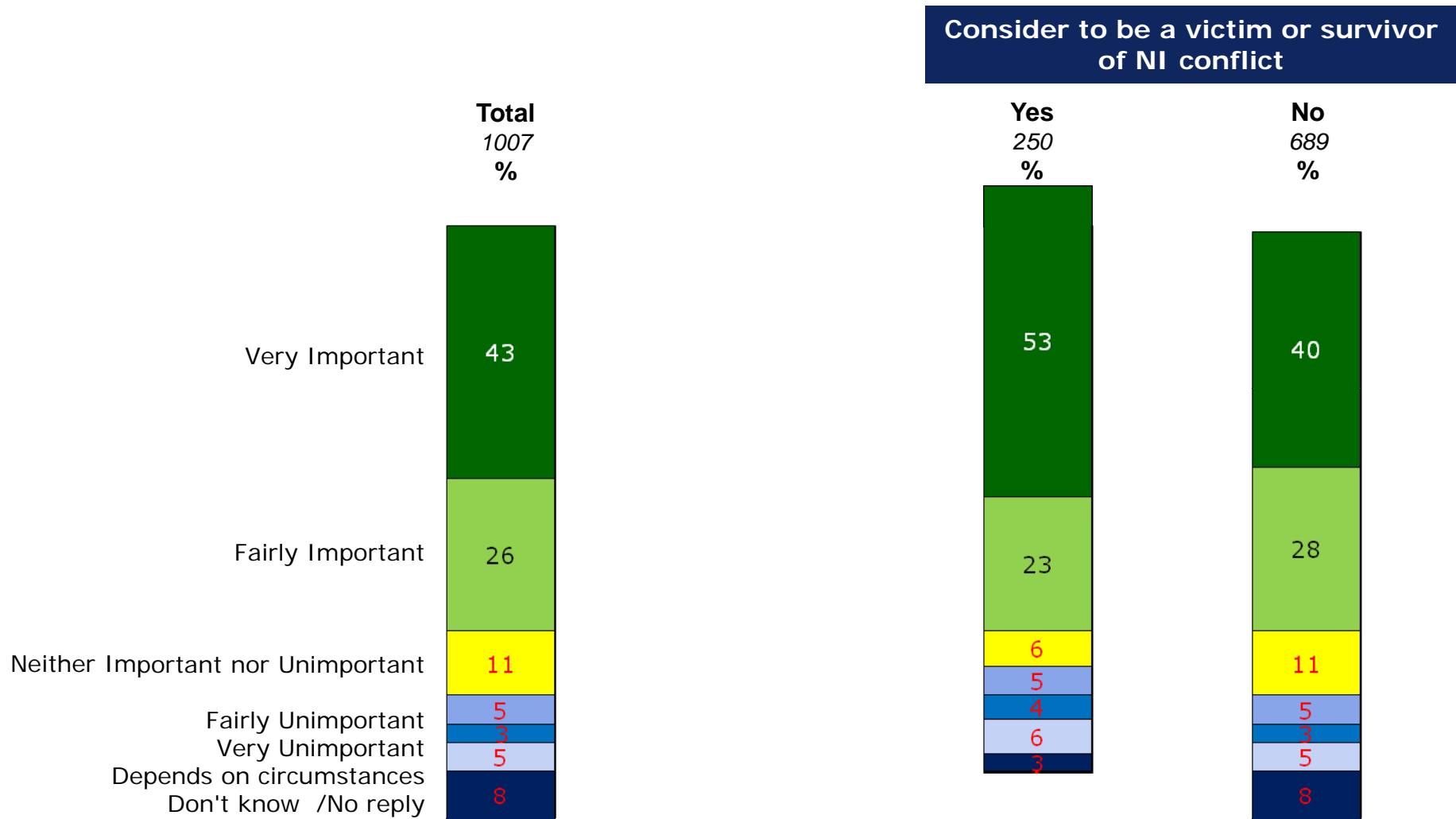
Opinion of the effectiveness of Tribunals was also divided, although few thought they were very effective. Many respondents were unsure or chose a middle ground.



Q.4 Level of Effectiveness of Public Tribunals with regard to ...

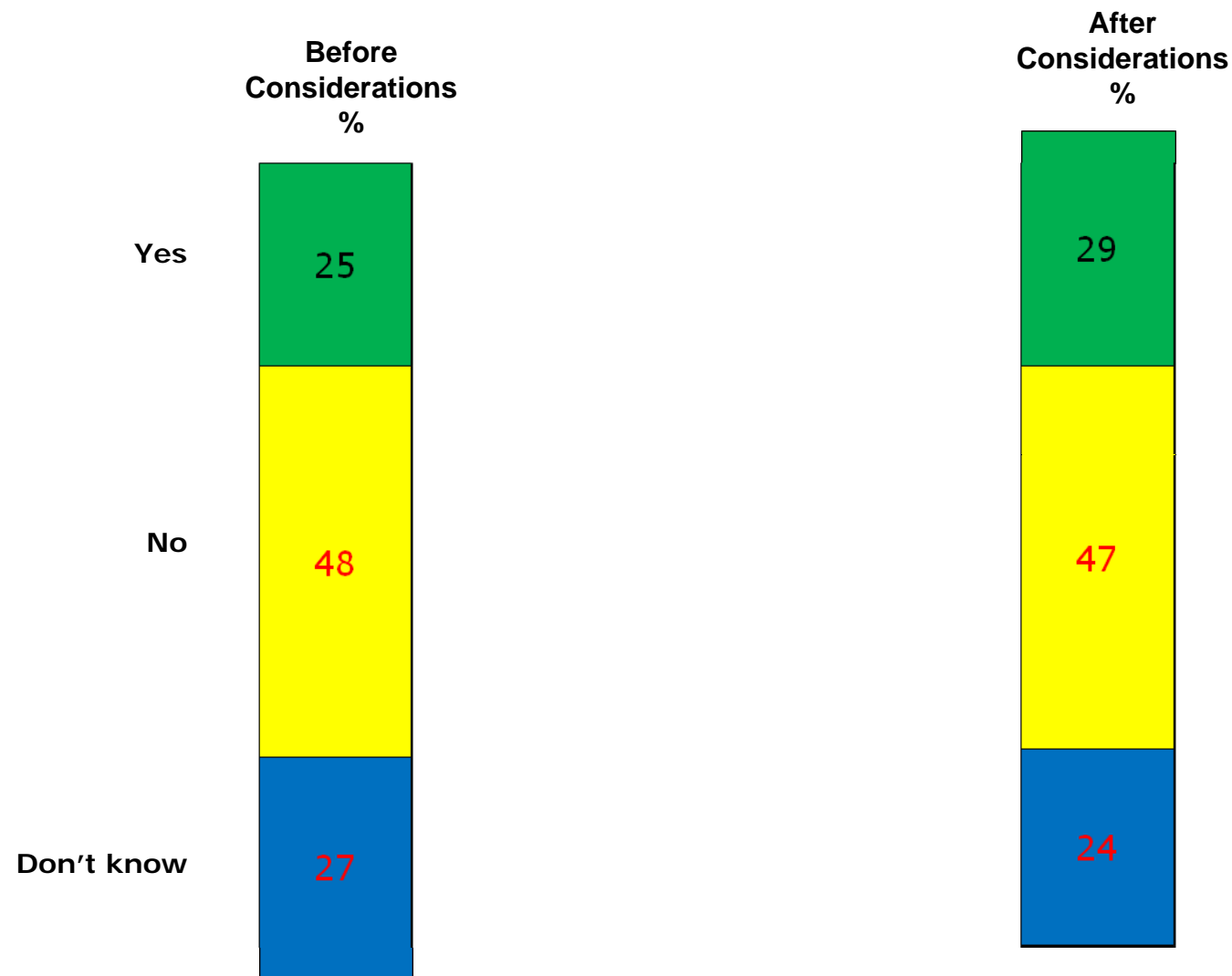
25 [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

The majority of respondents (69%) did feel it was important that Tribunals are held in public, this was slightly higher amongst those who considered themselves to be victims or survivors.



Q.5 How important or unimportant do you feel it is that investigations into events of past are held in public? [Base: All Respondents n=1007]

Opinion about future Tribunals was largely unchanged after further probing about their views on details of the process



Q.6 Do you think there should be any further public tribunals of inquiry after 27 considerations? [Base: All Respondents n=1007]