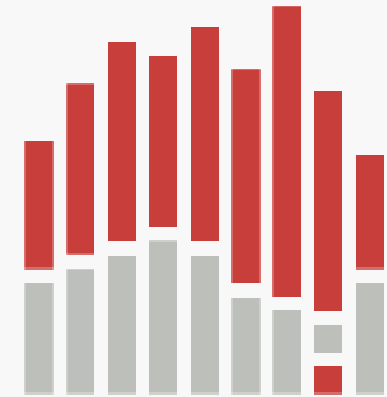

Attitudes to Maternity Leave in Australia

Research prepared for

National Foundation for Australian Women
Unions NSW
Commission for Children and Young People
Catalyst Australia
YWCA Australia



Auspoll

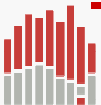
09 April 2009





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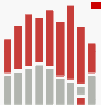


Introduction

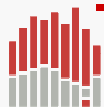
This research survey was conducted online in April 2009 with a total sample of 1703 Australian residents, segmented to be representative of the national population by age, gender and residential location.

The total sample of 1703 provides an error margin of +/- 2.4% at a 95% confidence level. This means that for a result of 50%, we can be 95% confident that the actual result would be between 47.6% and 52.4%.

For full respondent profile details, please see the appendix at the end of this report.



Attitudes to Maternity Leave: Key Findings



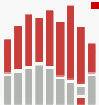
Key Findings Overview

The research highlights widespread agreement that the Government should introduce funding for paid parental leave, as part of the next Federal Budget.

67%, or 2 out of 3 respondents, support the broad proposal that all women should have access to government funded maternity leave. Perhaps unsurprisingly, support for maternity leave is most widespread among women and younger people. However even most men (60%) and 45-54 year olds (57%) believe funding for maternity leave should be available. 55-64 year olds are the only age group mostly opposed to the proposal, with 54% saying no.

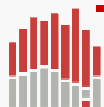
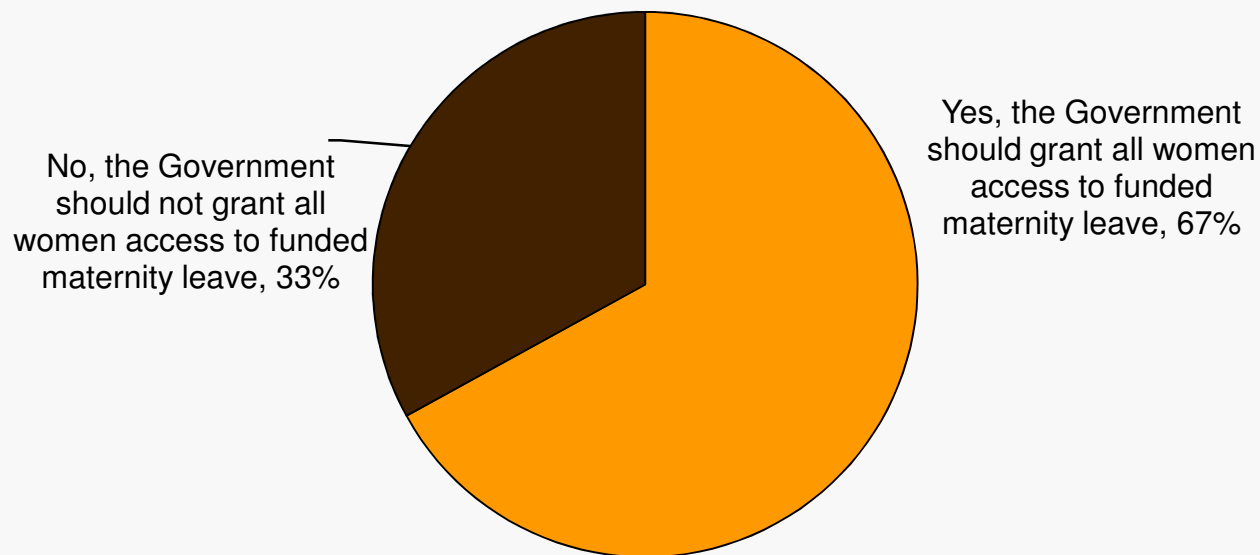
There is even higher support for the specific choice of funding parental leave for all Australians rather than funding a tax cut for those earning more than \$180,000 per year. Interestingly, widespread support is also evident across a range of household income brackets. 82% of all respondents would prefer the Government to fund parental leave in the next budget, and similar levels of agreement exist among households with annual incomes of up to \$40,000 (84%) and for households earning \$80,000 or more (79%).

Slightly more contentious is the issue of whether favourable tax reductions should be available to mothers re-entering the workforce. While there is again broad support for this among all respondents (82%), men (24%) are twice as likely as women (12%) to oppose this proposal, as are people without children (21%) compared to those with (13%). Similarly, older people (45 years and above) are more likely to oppose such tax cuts than younger people (34 years and below).



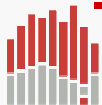
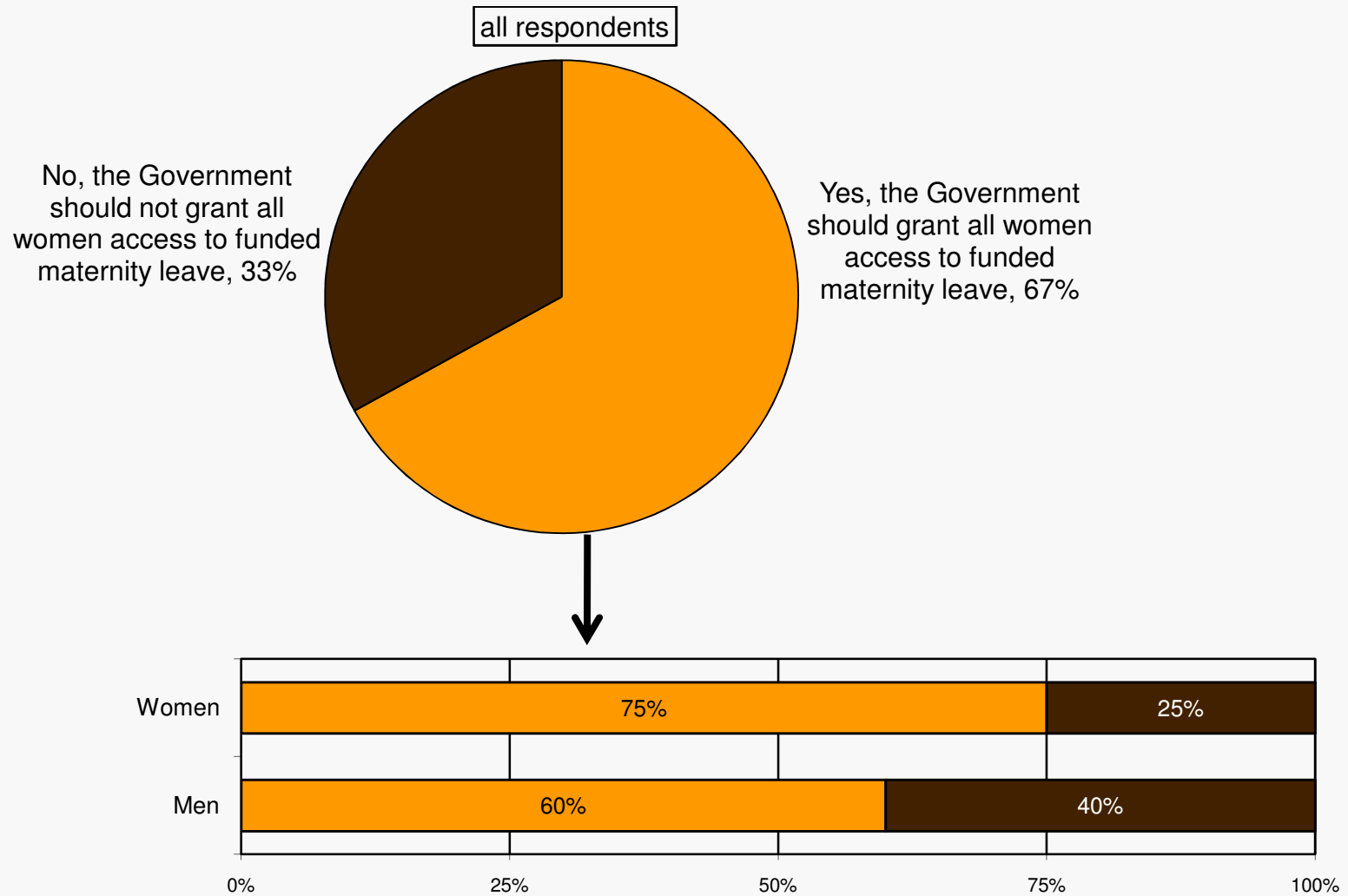
2 out of 3 Australians believe the Government should use the next Federal budget to grant women access to funded maternity leave

all respondents



Q: Should all women in Australia be granted access to government funded maternity leave in the upcoming Federal budget?

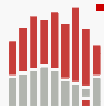
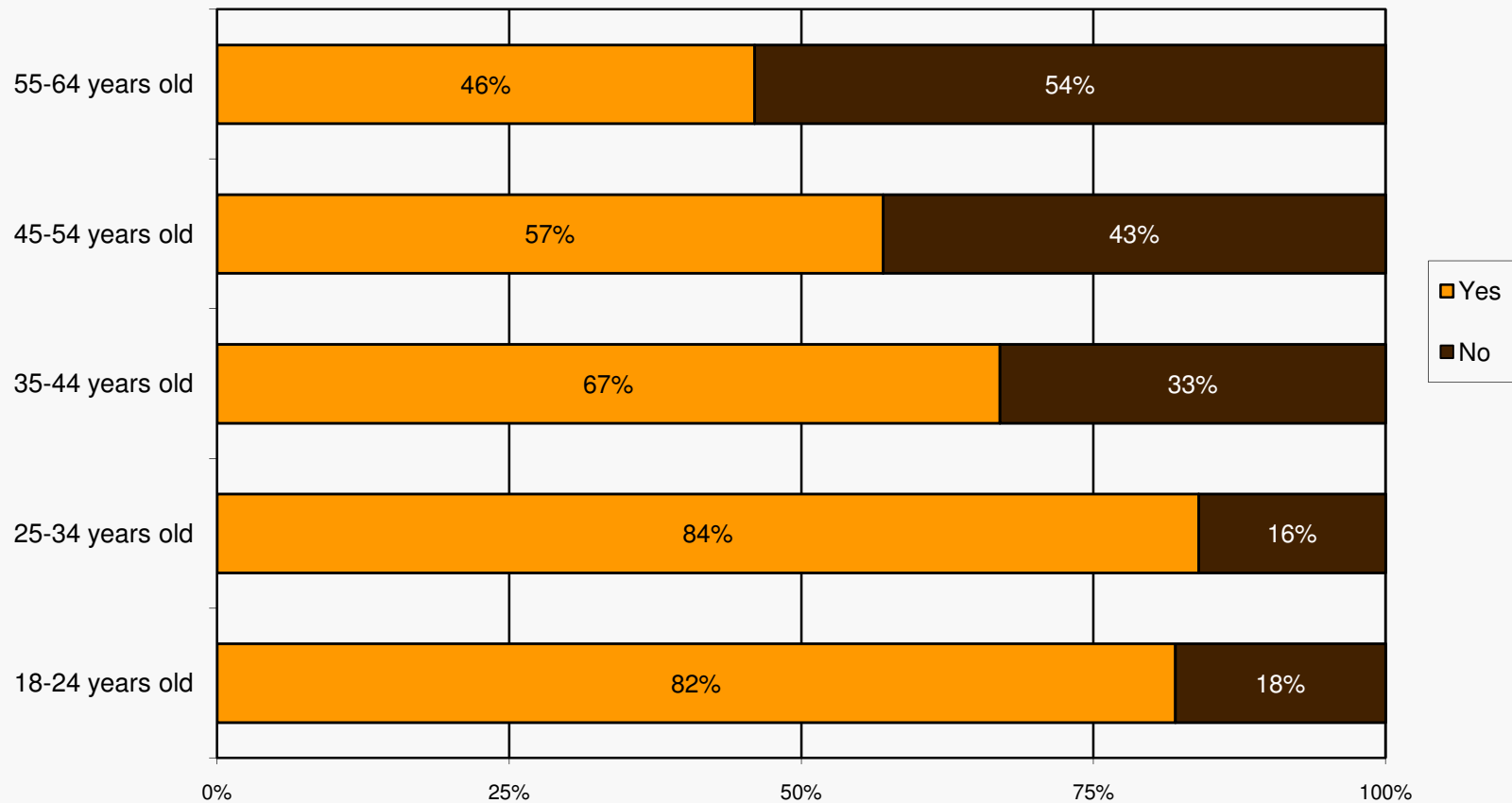
There is strong support across both men and women for funded maternity leave in Australia



Q: Should all women in Australia be granted access to government funded maternity leave in the upcoming Federal budget?



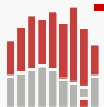
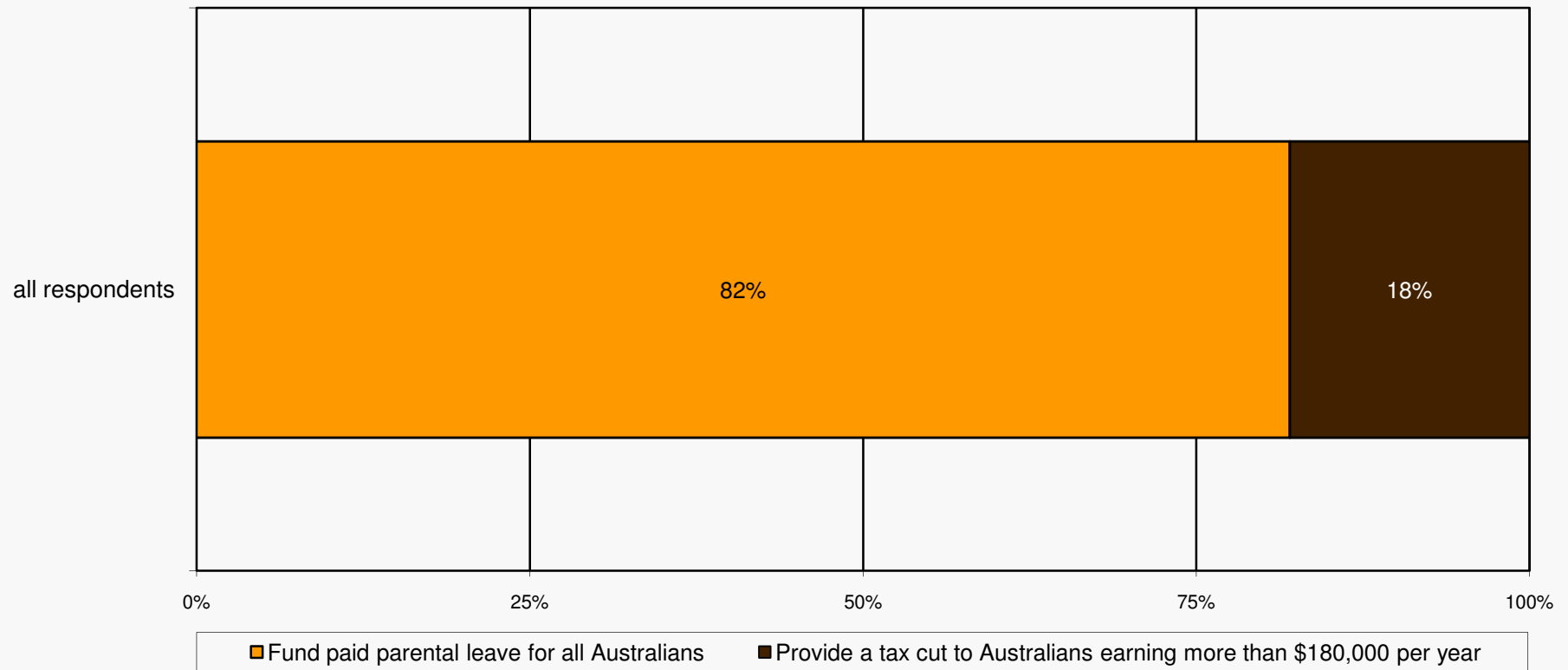
There is more widespread support for funded maternity leave among younger people in Australia



Q: Should all women in Australia be granted access to government funded maternity leave in the upcoming Federal budget?

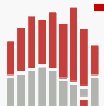
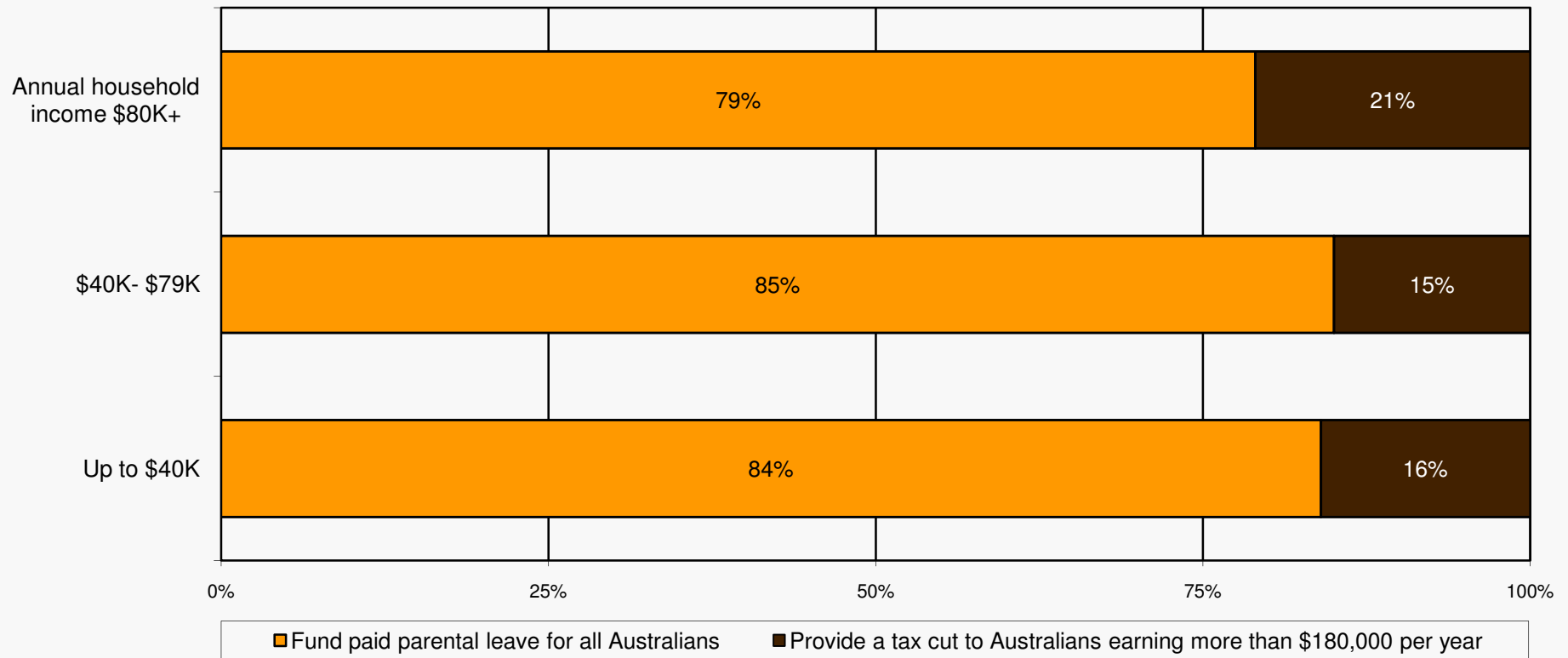


4 out of 5 Australians would prefer the next Federal budget to fund parental leave rather than tax cuts to high income earners



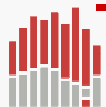
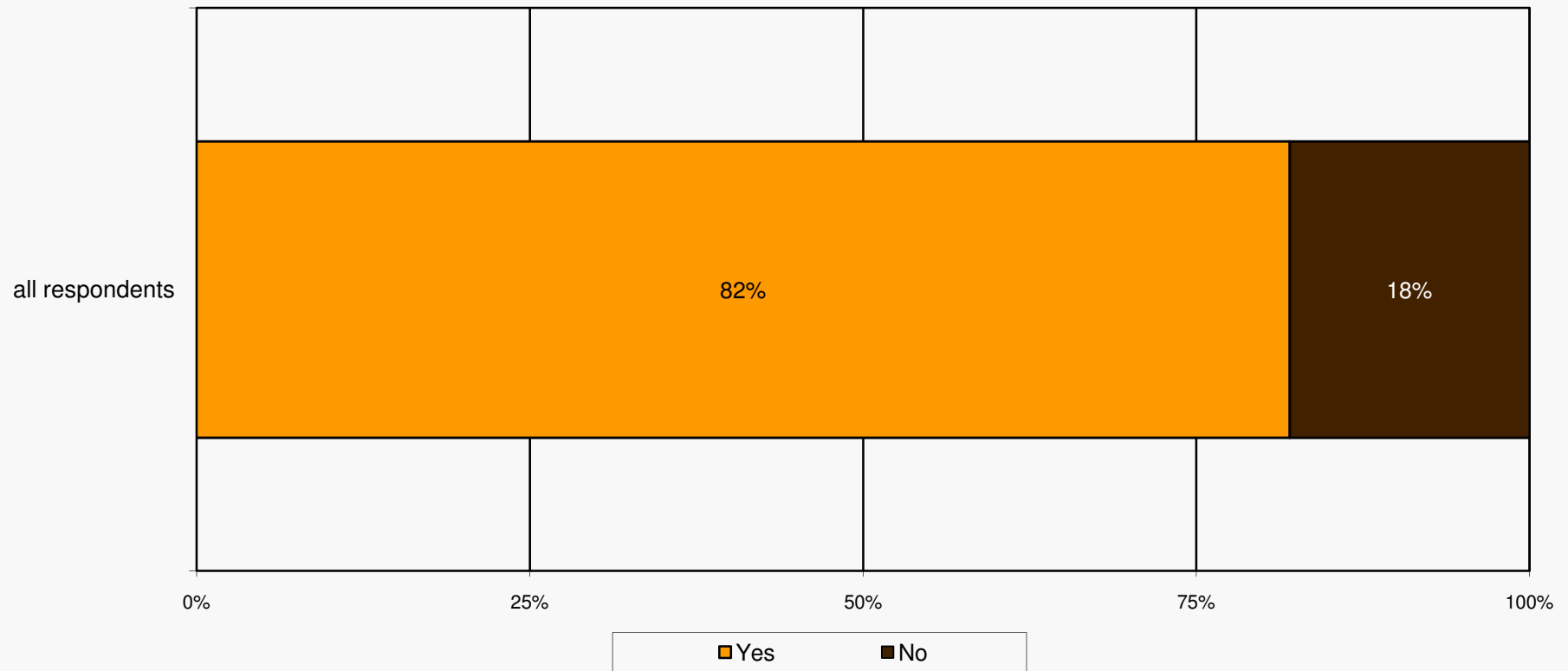
Q: In the budget, would you prefer the Federal Government to....?

There is strong preference across income brackets for the funding of parental leave rather than tax cuts to high income earners



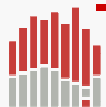
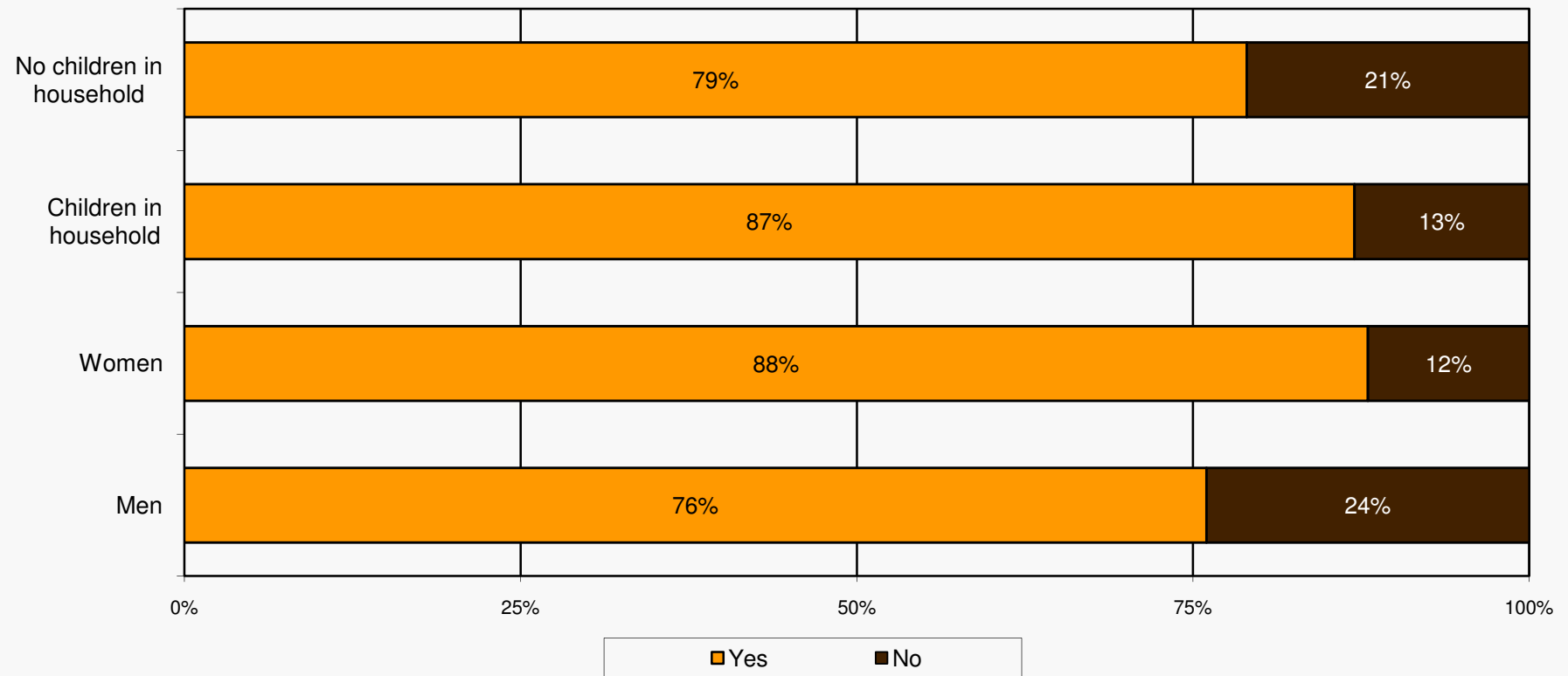
Q: In the budget, would you prefer the Federal Government to....?

4 out of 5 Australians believe effectively high tax rates for mothers re-entering the workforce should be reduced



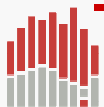
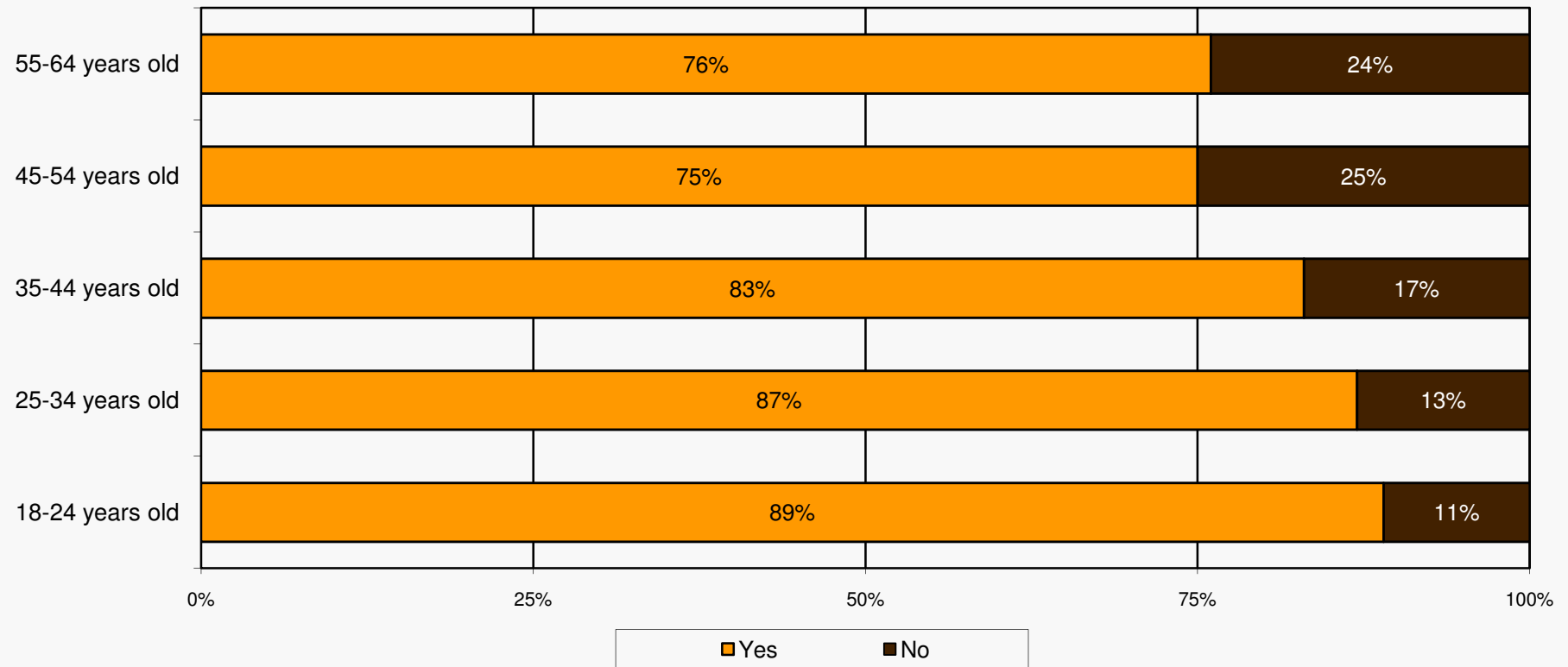
Q: In Australia, many women with children, who re-enter the workforce, lose their government benefits and get taxed on their earnings. This combination means that, in some cases, they are only 50c better off for every dollar they earn. In effect, they are being taxed at a rate of 50%. Do you think the Government should reduce the rate of tax in these situations?

There is strong support for reducing tax rates for mothers re-entering the workforce, regardless of gender or family status



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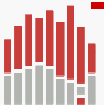
There is strong support for reducing tax rates for mothers re-entering the workforce, regardless of age



Q: In Australia, many women with children, who re-enter the workforce, lose their government benefits and get taxed on their earnings. This combination means that, in some cases, they are only 50c better off for every dollar they earn. In effect, they are being taxed at a rate of 50%. Do you think the Government should reduce the rate of tax in these situations?



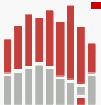
Appendix – Respondent Profiles



Age and Gender

Segment	Respondents
18 to 24	221
	13%
25 to 34	409
	24%
35 to 44	426
	25%
45 to 54	375
	22%
55 to 64	272
	16%
Male	
Male	851
	50%
Female	
Female	852
	50%

- Total respondents = 1703
- All figures are rounded. Accordingly, total percentages may not equal 100



Area of residence

Segment	Respondents
Metropolitan	1107
	65%
Regional	596
	35%
State	
New South Wales	562
	33%
Victoria	426
	25%
Queensland	332
	20%
South Australia	136
	8%
Western Australia	162
	10%
Other	85
	5%

- Total respondents = 1703
- All figures are rounded. Accordingly, total percentages may not equal 100



Household income and family status

Segment	Respondents
\$0 - \$39,999	358
	21%
\$40,000 - \$79,999	579
	34%
\$80,000 +	562
	33%
Segment	Respondents
Children in household	681
	40%
No children in household	1022
	60%

- Total respondents = 1703; Note: 13% of respondents declined to provide income bracket
- All figures are rounded. Accordingly, total percentages may not equal 100

