

States of Jersey
States Assembly



États de Jersey
Assemblée des États

Privileges and Procedures Committee, PPC

Election Reform Survey Results Presentation

Prepared for PPC sub committee and Lisa Hart

05.12.19



Presentation outline



Research Aim and Objectives

The research project **aim** was to conduct independent professional research and explore islanders views on potential election reform. This was aimed to supplement the information that the PPC has gathered, plus the various reports that have been reviewed.

Specific **objectives** included exploring:

- A broad range of islanders views on the current States Assembly composition
- The perceived equity and fairness of the current system
- The PPC proposed changes for reform to the composition and election of the States Assembly

Outcome: provide insights and key information from a broad range of islanders on the PPC proposed electoral reforms, prior to the States Assembly debate.

Project Scope and Sample

Scope:

Those eligible to vote in Jersey



Sample:

Recruitment took place through a mix of channels:

- 4insight's representative general public panel of over 2,800
- Random sample street selection

A mix of socio-demographics was achieved with a total of 614 responses being captured.

After data cleaning, e.g. removing repeat responses or short partials, a total of **529** data cases were recorded and analysed in the phase 2 survey (details in next slide)

Methodology

PHASE 1

A qualitative methodology was first used in order to gain depth knowledge of perceptions and views of islanders, helping to provide insight as well inform the design of the quantitative phase 2.

6 focus groups were held in October 2019;

In total the groups involved 47 respondents took part. Each focus group lasted 90-100 minutes and was conducted to an agreed discussion/topic guide with some stimulus materials to inform, after elicitation of awareness levels and perceptions, prior to decision making. Some projective techniques were included to explore emotional views in addition to the rational, e.g. first words association. The key members of your team watched the research live in our professional observation studios through the one way mirrors. This viewing also enabled your team to add any extra questions just before the groups closed. All groups were recorded and professionally analysed.

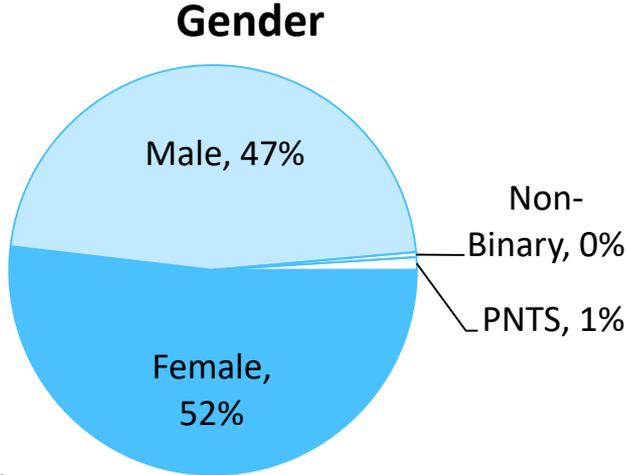
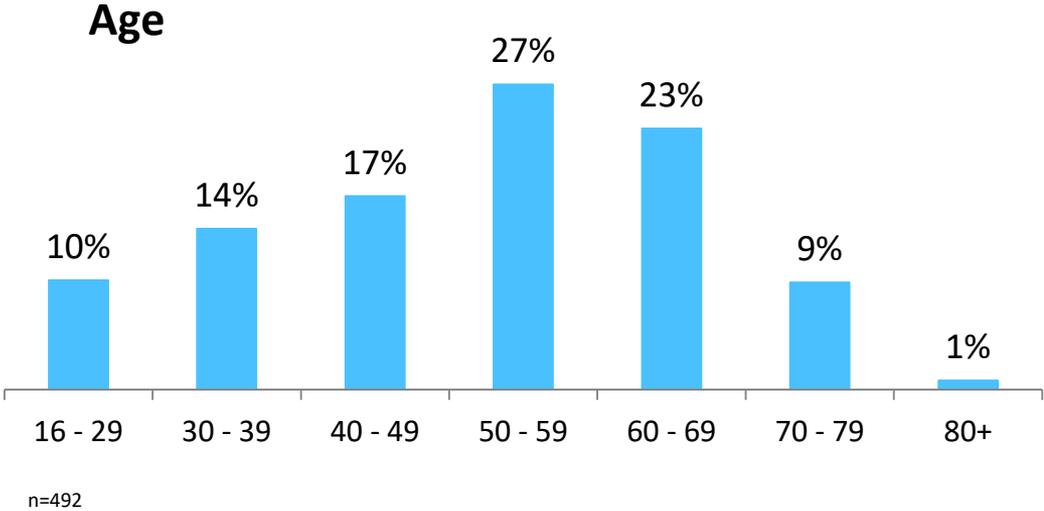
PHASE 2

A survey structured questionnaire was designed and agreed, aiming to quantify opinions held by islanders. It was programmed into 4insight's professional software, then the survey link was soft launched to 10-15 people verifying its' operation before a full launch via varied channels.

The online survey was optimised for easy completion on smartphone, tablet, laptop and PC.

Random selection CAPI street interviews, (121) were additionally conducted by our interviewers to survey any demographic gaps and those less digitally confident. This mixed methodology improves the survey robustness.

Survey Demographics: Age & Gender

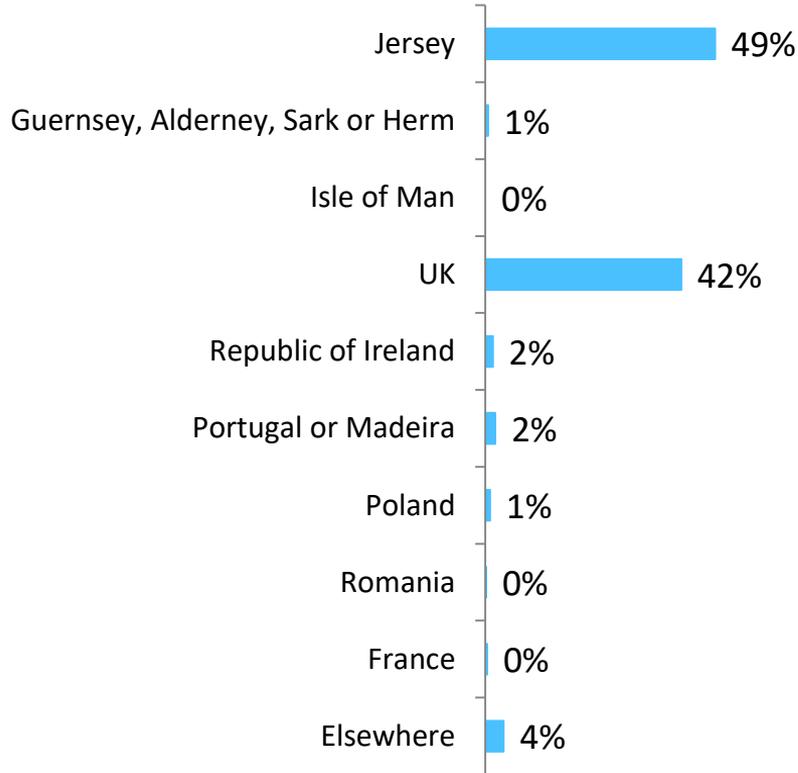


Note:

- rounding has been used to the nearest number
- due to the nature of the survey respondents were not forced to answer all questions

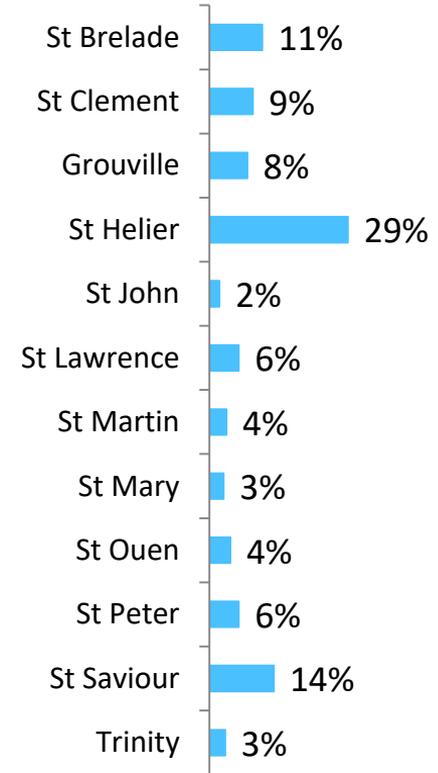
Survey Demographics: Place of Birth & Parish

Q. Where were you born?



n=487

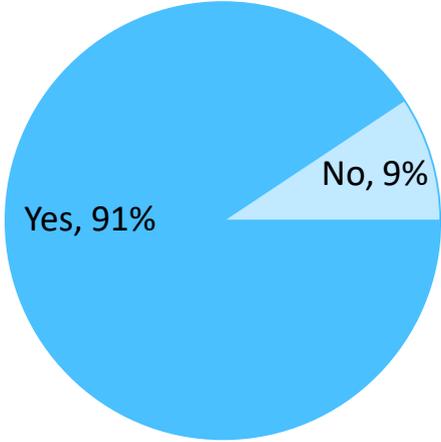
Q. Which Parish do you live in?



n=338

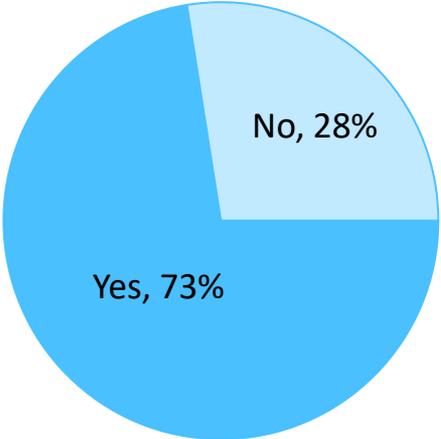
Survey Demographics: Voting habits

Q Are you registered to vote?



n=518

Q Did you vote in the 2018 election?



n=524

Detailed Results

Information given...

Currently our States Assembly is composed of 49 members;



8 Senators elected on an island wide basis, (yellow)

12 Connetables/Constables on a parish basis, (blue)

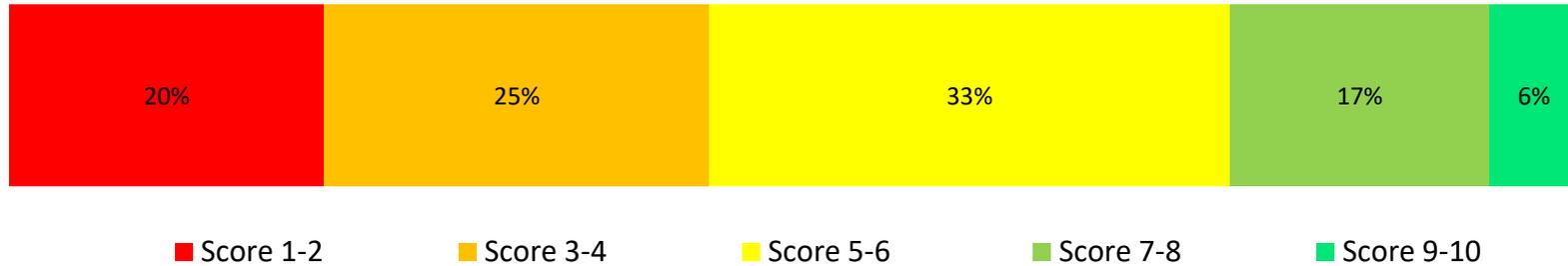
29 Deputies elected on a parish/district basis, (green)

In our last election in 2018, 14 members were re-elected without a contest.

45% feel dissatisfied with current composition, 23% satisfied.

Mean score of 4.65 out of 10

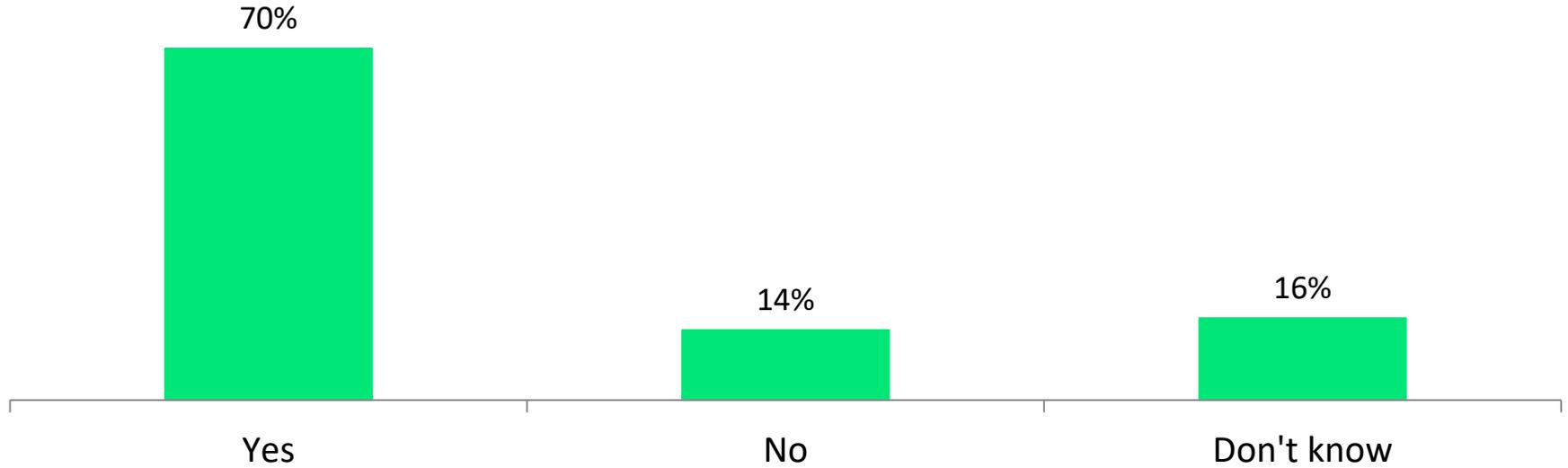
Q. On a scale from 1-10 how do you feel about the current composition? *Please indicate on a scale of 1-10, 1 being extremely dissatisfied and 10 being very satisfied*



Mean score 4.65

70% believe our system should change

Q Do you believe our system should change?

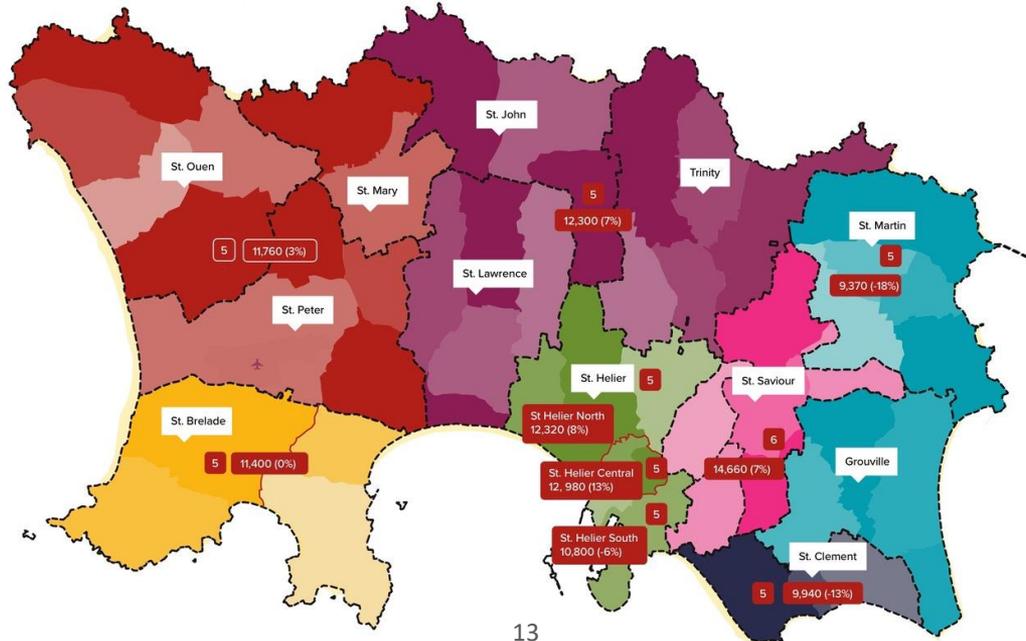


Information given...

Many reviews and reports have stated that we should have a simplified election system where:

- Each elector has the same number of votes.
- Each vote holds the same value.
- Constituencies are of equal size in terms of population.
- There is a contest for each seat with every candidate facing an election.

PPC's proposition to address the above is that we have just one type of member in our States Assembly, voted in 9 roughly equal sized (number of Islanders) districts with 5 member positions per district (other than St Saviour, which would have 6).



Information given...

PPC Opinion:

- Parishes forming a new electoral district - like St Ouen, St Mary & St Peter - do not 'merge' or 'combine' or cease to be independent parishes with their own character and identity and administration.
- For the purposes of an election, once every 4 years, they simply come together to vote.
- So whereas St Ouen currently elects two representatives they will now elect 5.
- 5 representatives shared between 3 parishes.

PPC Opinion: we have under-representation in some parishes:

- The Constable of St Mary represents a constituency of almost 2,000 and the Constable of St Helier represents 36,000 however they have equal voting power in the Assembly.
- St Mary returns 1 Deputy and 1 Constable.
- Grouville and St Peter also each return 1 Deputy and 1 Constable but they both have twice the population of St Mary - Grouville and St Peter are under-represented.
- St Helier, St Brelade and St Clement are all under-represented.

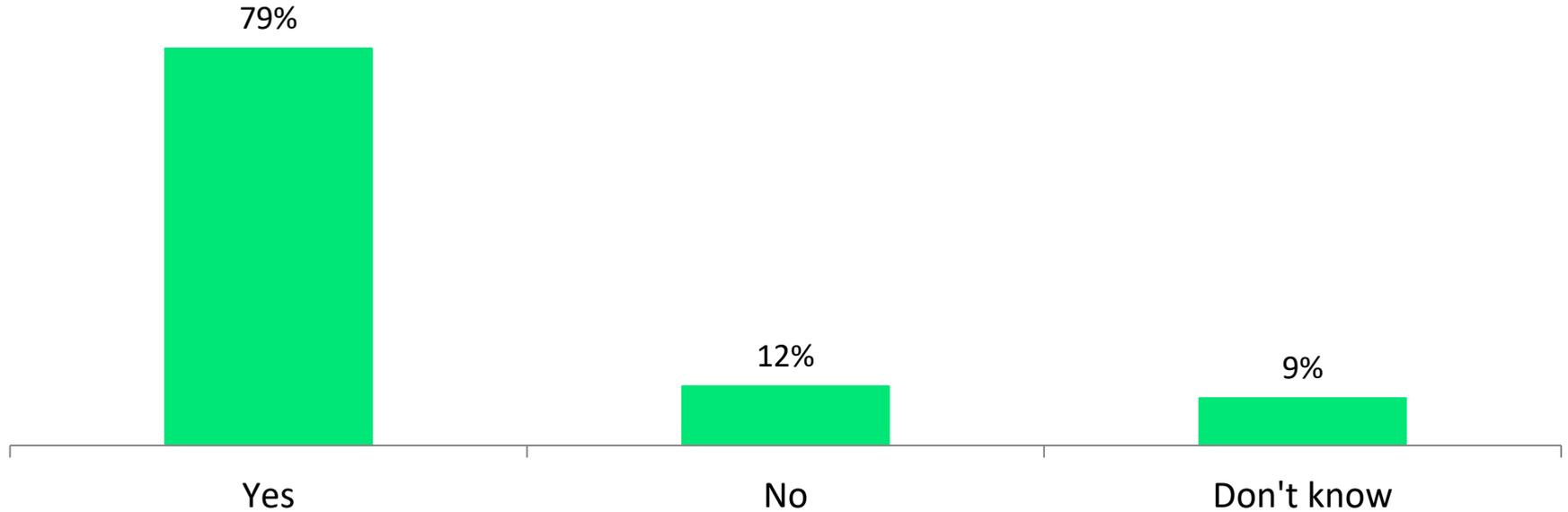
PPC's proposition would require Constables wishing to be voting Members of the States to stand for election in one of the 9 new districts. That would be their choice. However, all Constables would retain honorary non-voting Membership of the States and be able to contribute to debates and participate in committee work if they choose to do so.

If all States Members were voted for on an island-wide basis, like the current 8 Senators, there would be a ballot paper of perhaps 100 names, from which a choice of 40+ has to be made. This can result in random selection at the ballot box, or voters opting for names and faces they recognise, potentially disadvantaging new/unknown candidates. Such big ballots are considered undemocratic.

PPC's proposition is for a single category of 46 members in total, 3 fewer than the current system.

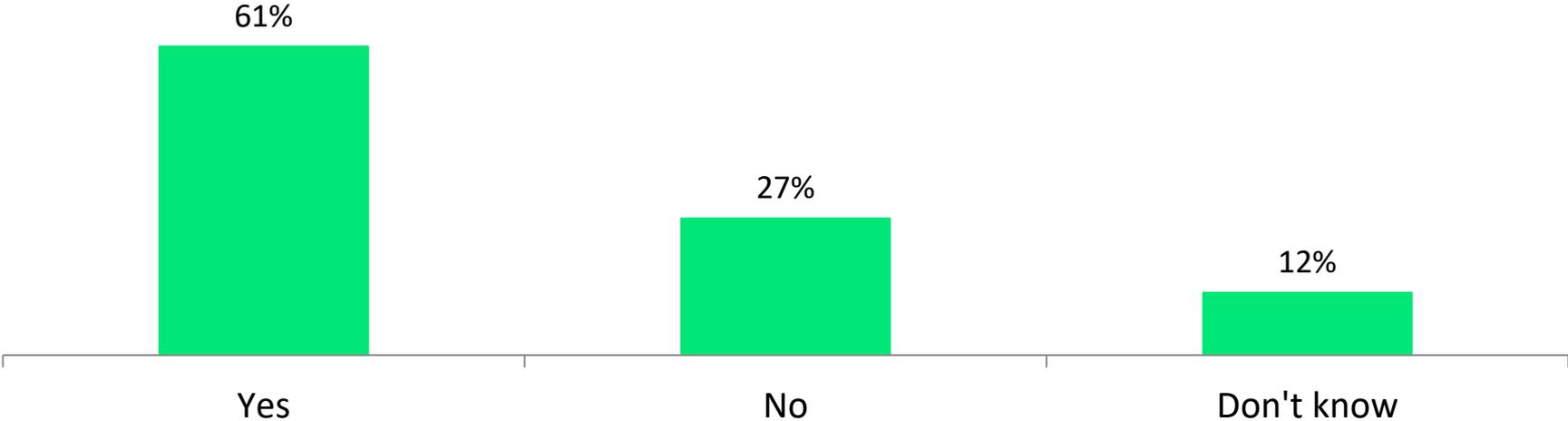
79% think electoral reform should prioritise giving each elector a vote of equal value

Q Do you think that any electoral reform should prioritise giving each elector a vote of equal value?



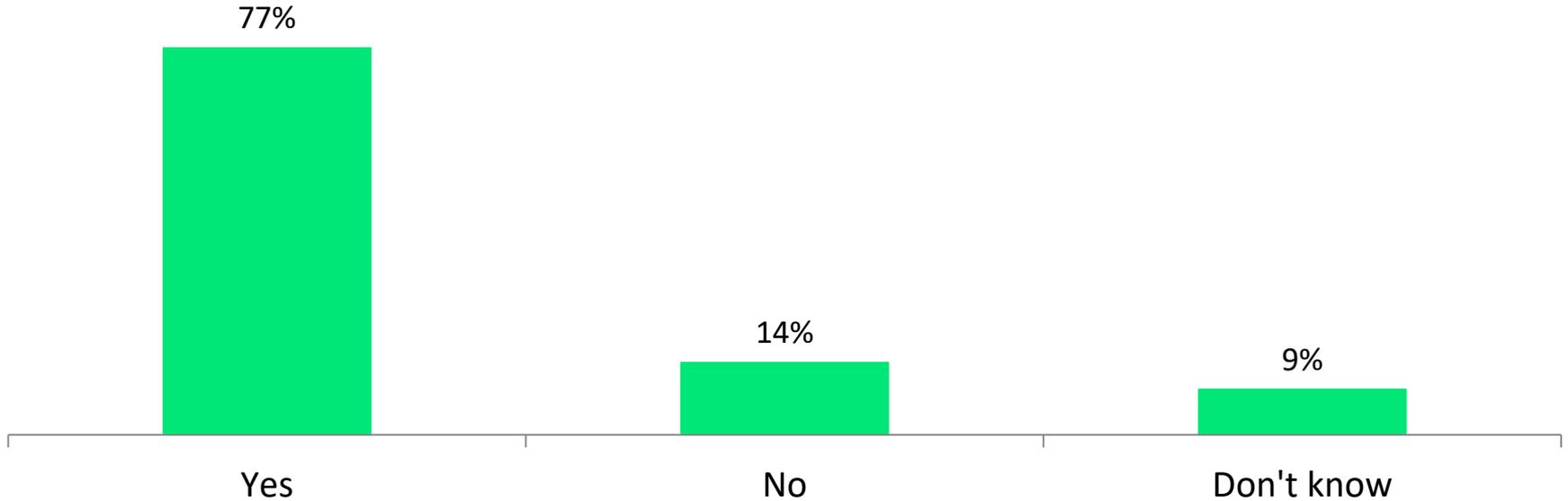
61% believed there should be just one type of States Assembly member

Q Do you think we should have just one type of States Assembly member?



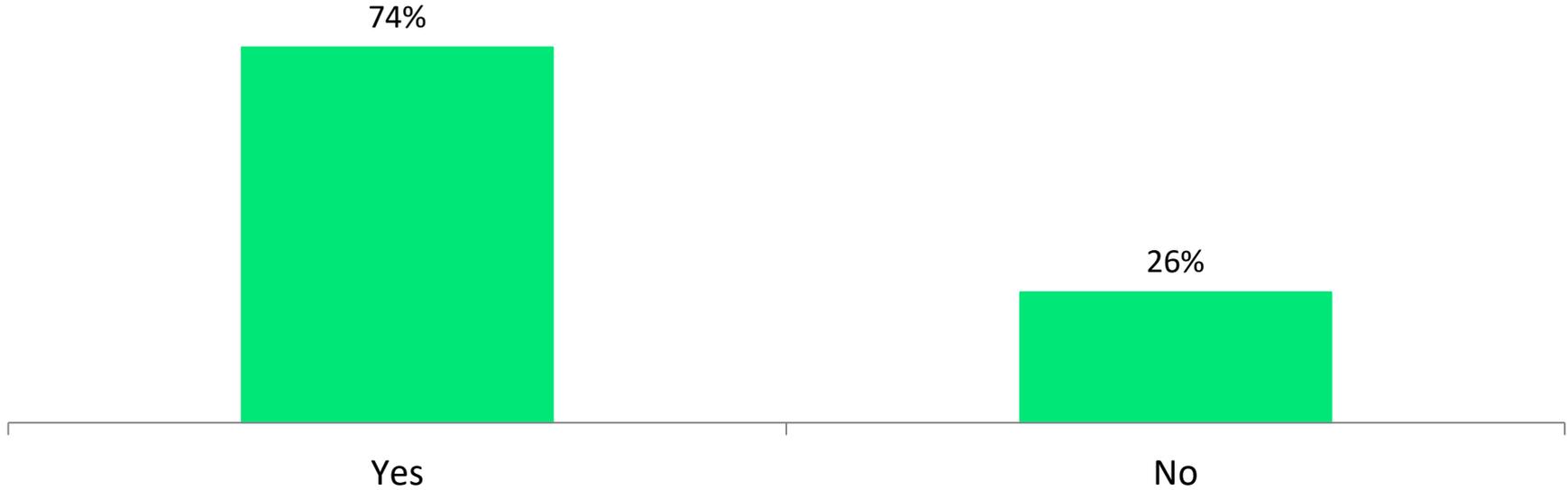
77% felt changes should strive to eliminate politicians being elected unopposed

Q Is it important that any changes should strive to eliminate politicians being elected unopposed without facing a contest?



74% were overall in favour of the PPC proposition

Q Overall are you in favour of this PPC proposition?



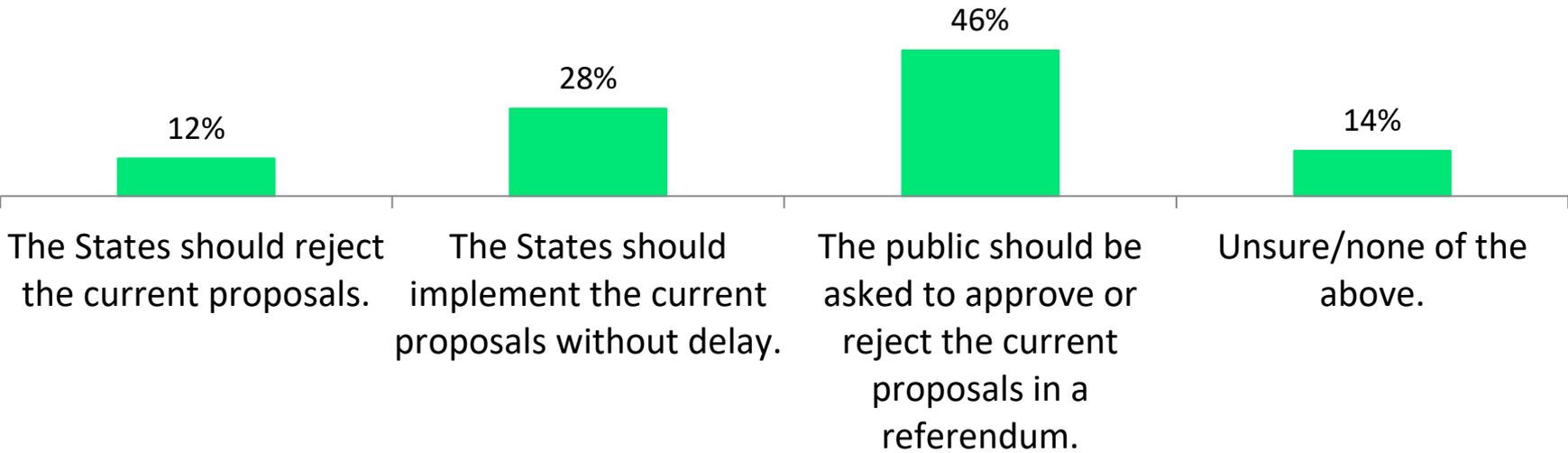
Younger respondents were more likely to agree, 87% under 40 versus 69% over 60

Information given...

The PPC proposals could qualify for a referendum - a general vote by the electorate public on a single political question which has been referred to them for a decision. This would be in the form of a straightforward yes or no answer. However, it is important to recognise no referendum is legally binding on the States of Jersey.

46% feel the public should be given a referendum on the proposals, 28% stated they should be implemented without delay

Q Do you think...?



Conclusions and Recommendations

Survey Conclusions

- 45% feel dissatisfied with current composition of States Assembly, 23% satisfied
- 70% believe our system should change
- 79% think that electoral reform should prioritise giving each elector a vote of equal value
- 61% believed there should be just one type of States Assembly member
- 77% felt changes should strive to eliminate politicians being elected unopposed
- **74% were overall in favour of the PPC proposition with younger respondents more likely to be in favour, 87% of those under 40 years old, (versus 69% over 60)**
- 46% feel the public should be given a referendum on the proposals, 28% stated they should be implemented without delay



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