



Empowering Communities: Navigating the path to Renewable Energy Zones

Australia's National Science Agency



Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water



What I will cover

- Narratives
- Recent survey results
- CSIRO's plans

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“Humans think in stories rather than in facts, numbers, or equations, and the simpler the story, the better.”

Some quotes

- “windmills are causing whales to die in numbers never seen before.”
- “one-third of Australia’s prime agricultural land could be taken over by renewable energy projects, particularly solar.”
- “Not only do wind turbines act as the perfect bushfire-starters, their presence precludes the best and safest method of fire-fighting”
- “decommissioned wind turbine blades have been secretly dumped in a shallow grave in a forest in far north Queensland”

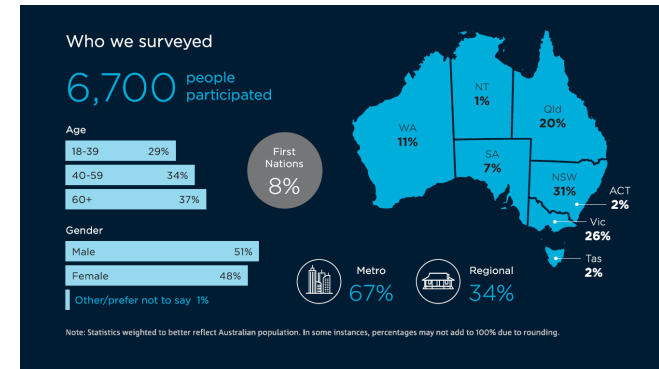


Competing narratives

- There are plenty of negative narratives about the energy transition
- What are the **positive narratives** around the energy transition?

What I will cover

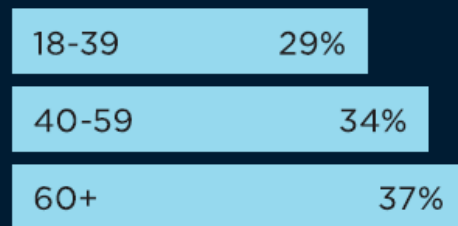
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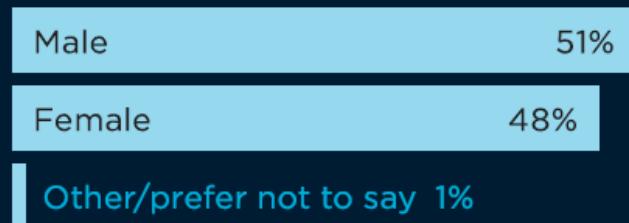
Who we surveyed

6,700 people participated

Age



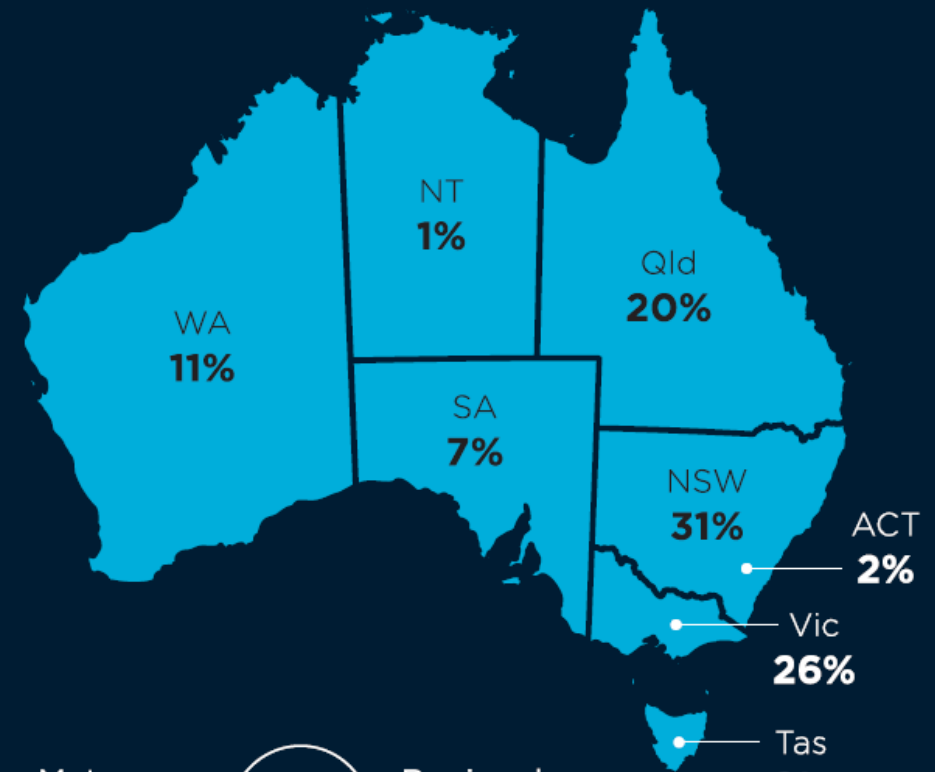
Gender



Metro
67%



Regional
34%



Note: Statistics weighted to better reflect Australian population. In some instances, percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

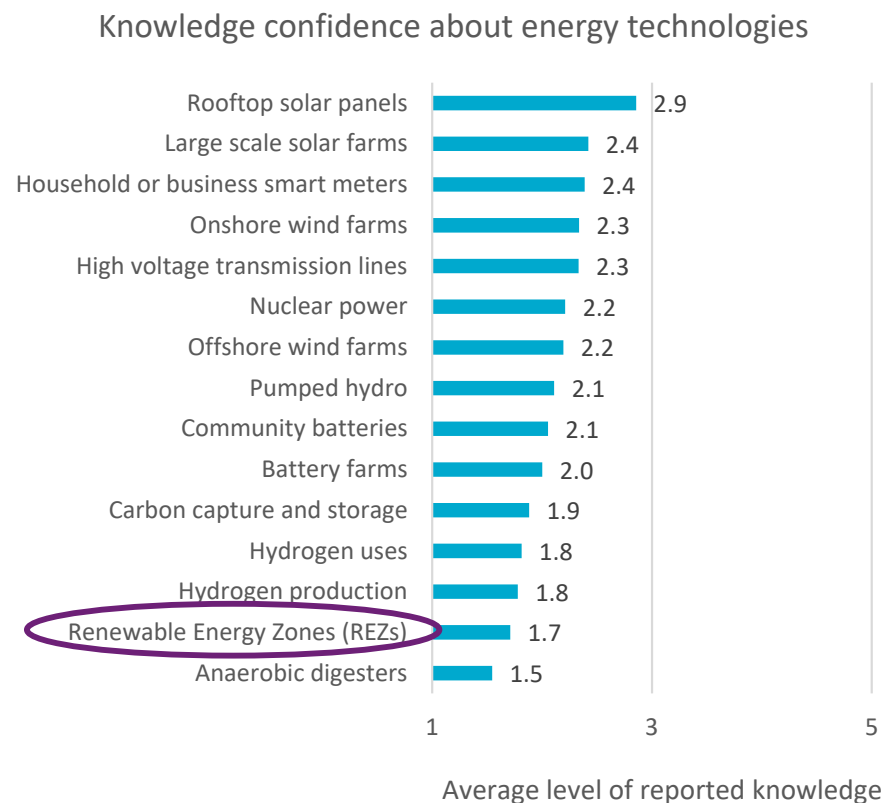
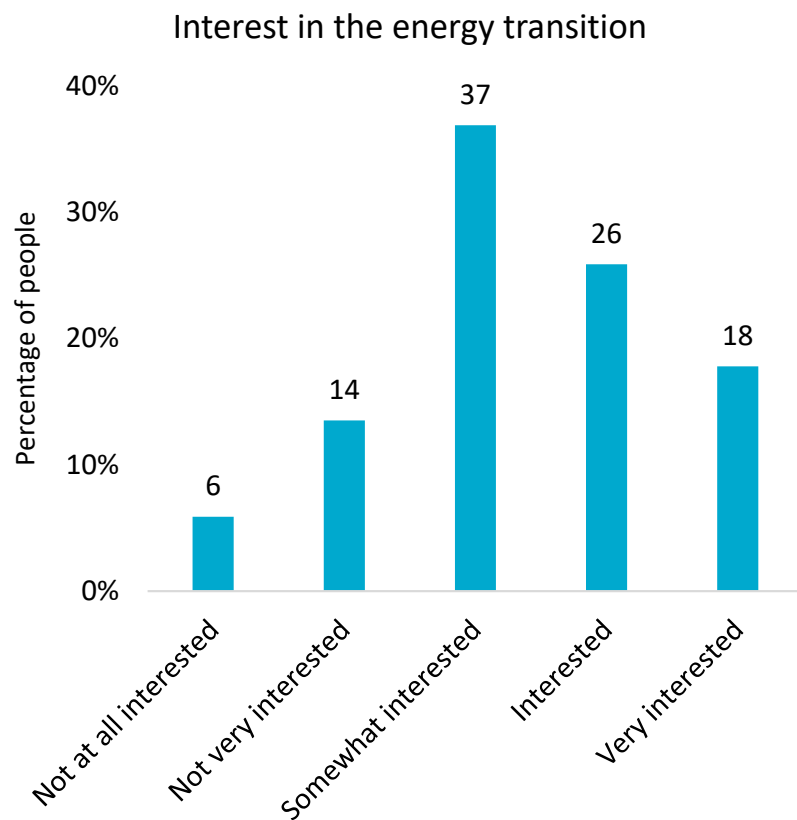
Attitudes towards the energy transition



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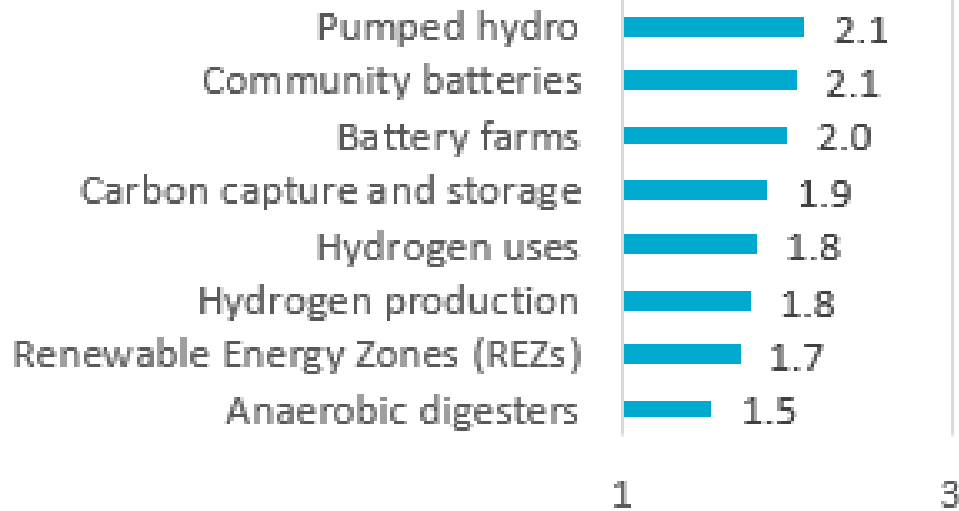


High interest in the transition but low knowledge

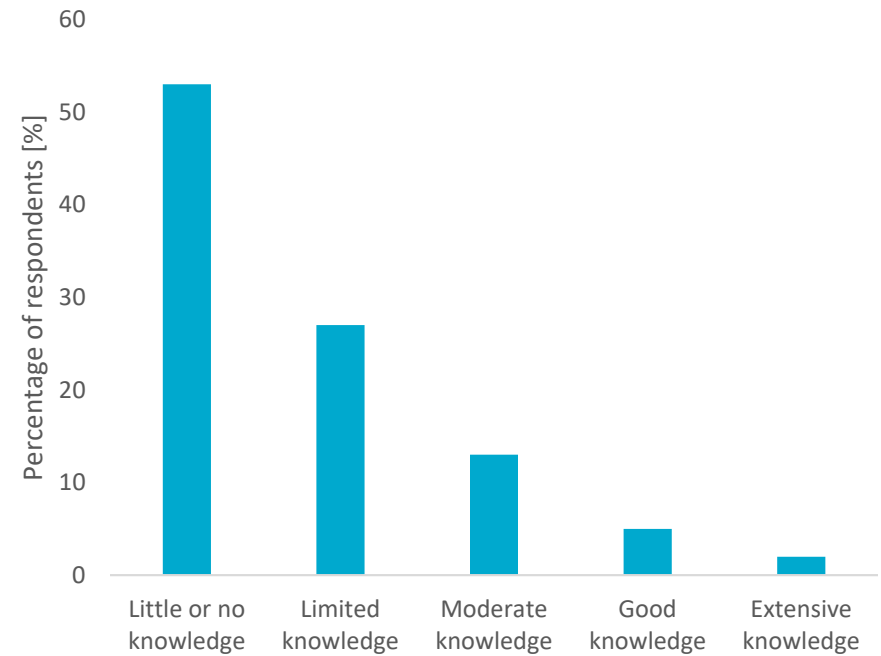


Note: 1 = little or no knowledge, 5 = extensive knowledge

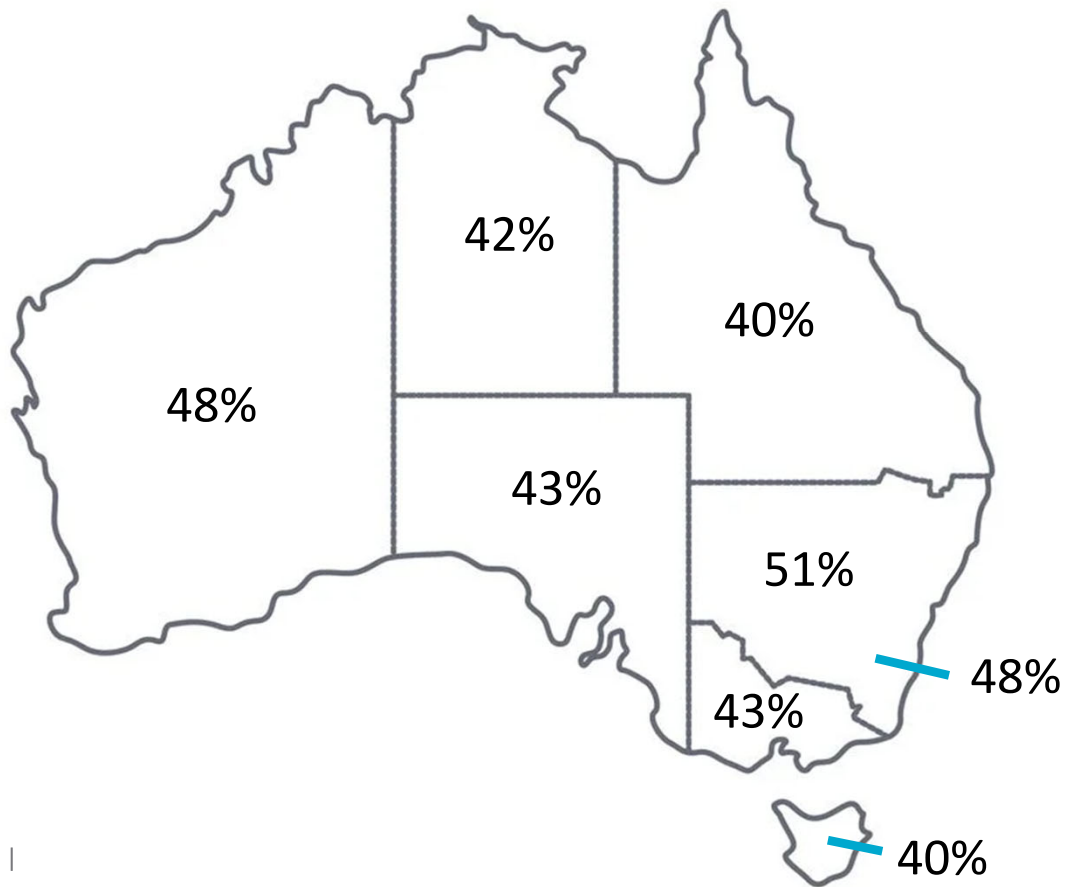
REZ knowledge is relatively low



Knowledge of Renewable Energy Zones



REZ knowledge varies across states



Nationally, 46% of people report some knowledge of REZs

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Attitudes towards renewable energy infrastructure

- Solar farms
- Onshore wind farms
- Offshore wind farms
- Transmission infrastructure

Reject - Tolerate - OK - Approve - Embrace



Transmission lines are seen less favourably

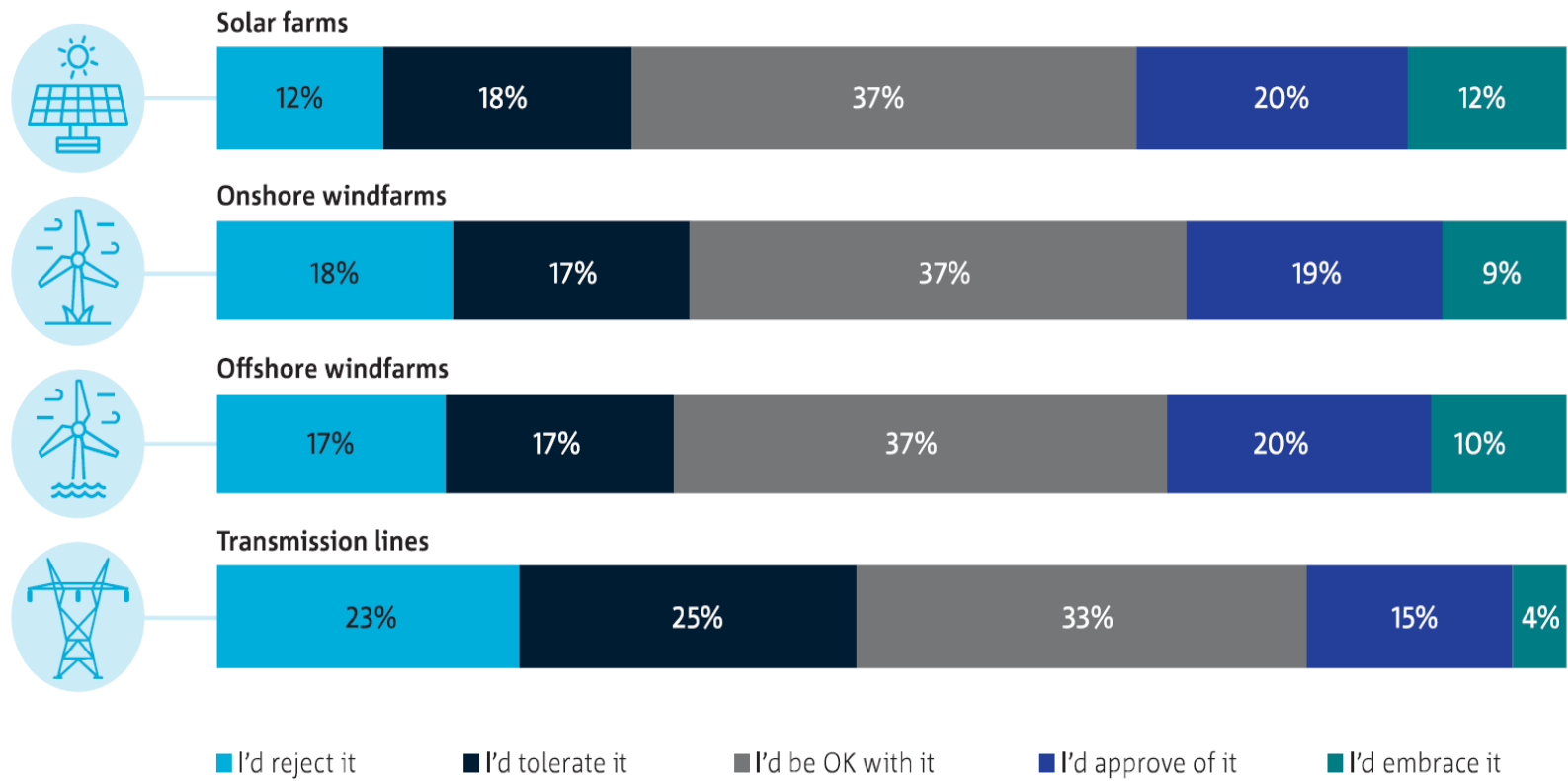


Figure 5 Overall attitude to living near renewable energy infrastructure by type

Out-of-town residents view energy infrastructure less favourably

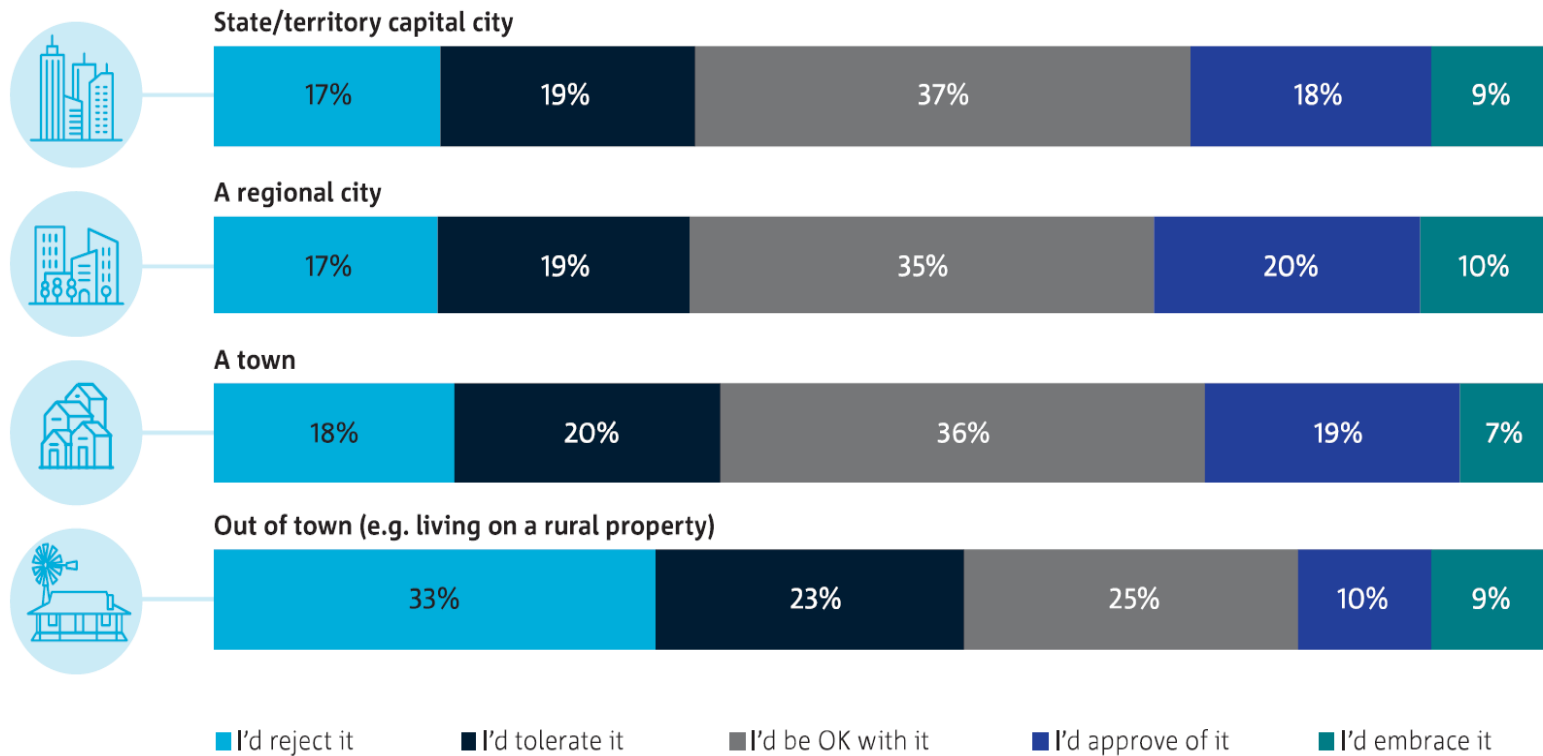
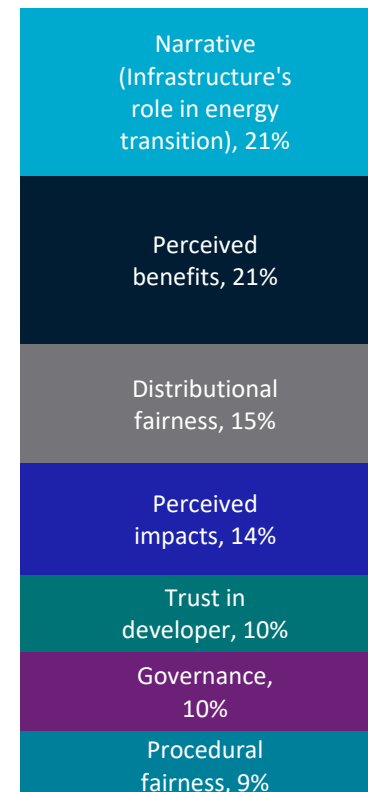


Figure 4 Overall attitude to living near renewable energy infrastructure by location

Drivers of social acceptance

- The narrative
 - recognising the importance of the infrastructure for the energy transition
- Perceived benefits
 - both local and societal benefits
- Distributional fairness
 - perceptions of benefits vs. impacts.

Relative importance of factors driving acceptance



Some key findings

GENERAL ENERGY TRANSITION ATTITUDES

- Most people want change and support an energy transition
- Affordability and reliability a priority
- The public understanding of the different energy technologies is low, but they are interested to know more

ATTITUDES TOWARDS RENEWABLE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

- A spread of views towards living near renewable energy infrastructure, with most people in the middle
- People are on board, but they have concerns
- Favourable attitudes can't be taken for granted
- The **key driver** in people's perceptions is the narrative



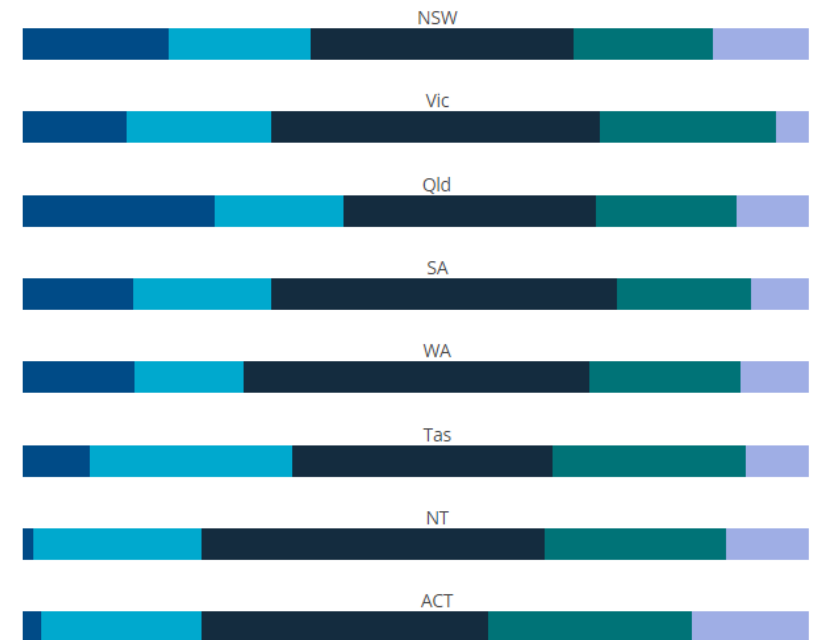
Data visualisation tool

- Available on the survey website:
<https://research.csiro.au/energytransition/>

Overall attitude toward living near infrastructure

We asked people to report their overall attitude towards living near renewable energy infrastructure.

Compare by Graph by Infrastructure type

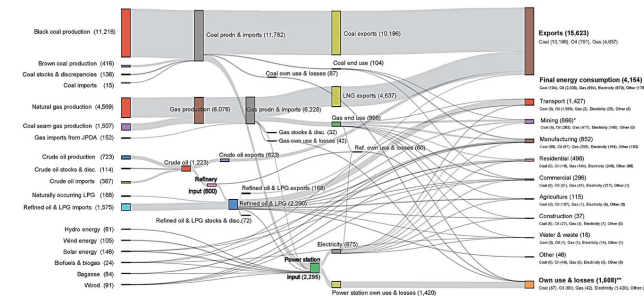


■ I'd reject it ■ I'd tolerate it ■ I'd be OK with it ■ I'd approve of it ■ I'd embrace it

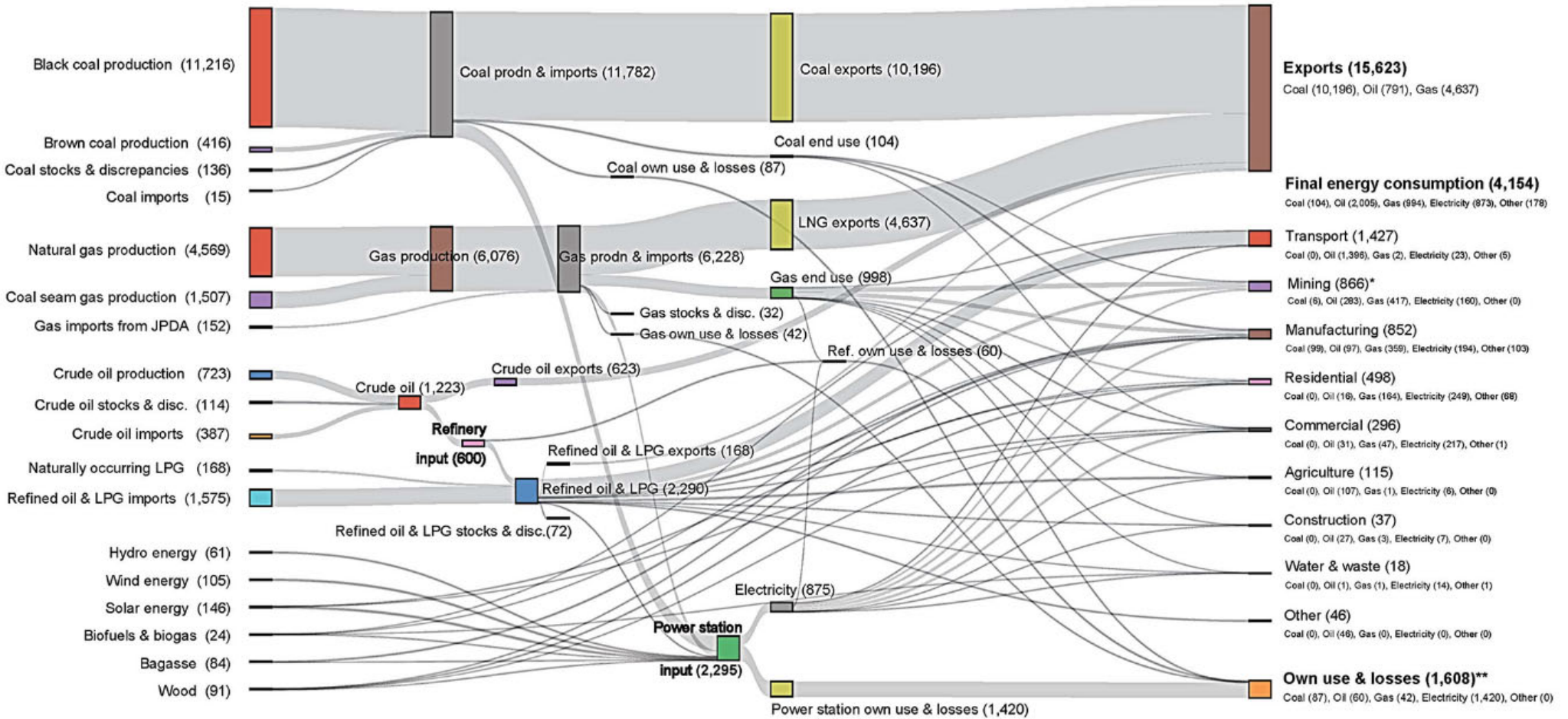
Chart from the Energy Transition Survey - www.csiro.au/energy-transition

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Energy system transformation





CSIRO's Smart Energy Mission



National Energy Analysis Centre



Energy Transformation
Digital Hub



Community Energy
Living Lab



Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water



We need to clarify our narratives

CSIRO

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Australia's National Science Agency

