

**2 IN 3 FAMILIAR WITH THE
ISSUES OF ORPHANED OR
ABANDONED WELLS**

**CONCERN ABOUT THE WELLS IS
MIXED**

**CONCERN INCREASES AFTER
BEING TOLD ABOUT RISKS TO
WATER, AIR AND SOIL
QUALITY**



DETAILED RESULTS

ORPHANED & ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS

**A SURVEY OF RESIDENTS LIVING NEAR WELLS IN ALBERTA,
SASKATCHEWAN AND BRITISH COLUMBIA**

CONDUCTED FOR CLEAN ECONOMY FUND

MARCH 2023

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS FROM CANADA'S LEADING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
AND MARKET RESEARCH EXPERTS

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted by phone with 1,000 residents aged 18 and over, living in BC, AB and SK close to orphan, abandoned or inactive oil/gas wells, from February 28 to March 15, 2023, with a combination of targeted sampling and random digit dialling.

The margin of error for this survey is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched BC, AB and SK's population according to age, gender, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABACUS DATA



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This survey investigates public awareness and concerns about orphaned and abandoned oil and gas wells among residents of three Canadian provinces who live close to these wells. Key findings show that a majority of residents are at least somewhat familiar with the issue, with only 17% being unfamiliar. Familiarity is relatively consistent across provinces, although younger residents and women tend to be less familiar with the topic.

Approximately half of the respondents are aware of orphaned or abandoned wells near their homes, with slightly higher awareness in Saskatchewan and British Columbia than in Alberta. After providing more information about the wells, 20% of previously unaware respondents recalled hearing, seeing, or reading about them. Overall, 41% of residents express some level of concern about these wells being close to their communities, with younger residents and those less familiar with the issue tending to be less concerned.

The greatest concerns among respondents are related to the potential impacts of these wells on water quality, soil pollution, and nature, rather than climate change. The study finds that learning about the impact of the wells on water quality or soil is likely to have the greatest impact on changing their level of concern. Most respondents hold the oil and gas industry responsible for the costs of decommissioning wells, but when it comes to identifying the cause of the abandoned wells, opinions are more divided between the sector, the federal government, and the provincial government.

The majority of residents believe that none of the key players (provincial government, federal government, or oil and gas sector) are doing enough to minimize the risks associated with these wells. The federal government is perceived as the least proactive, with 65% of respondents feeling that they are not doing enough, followed by the oil and gas sector (60%) and the provincial government (54%).

RESULTS

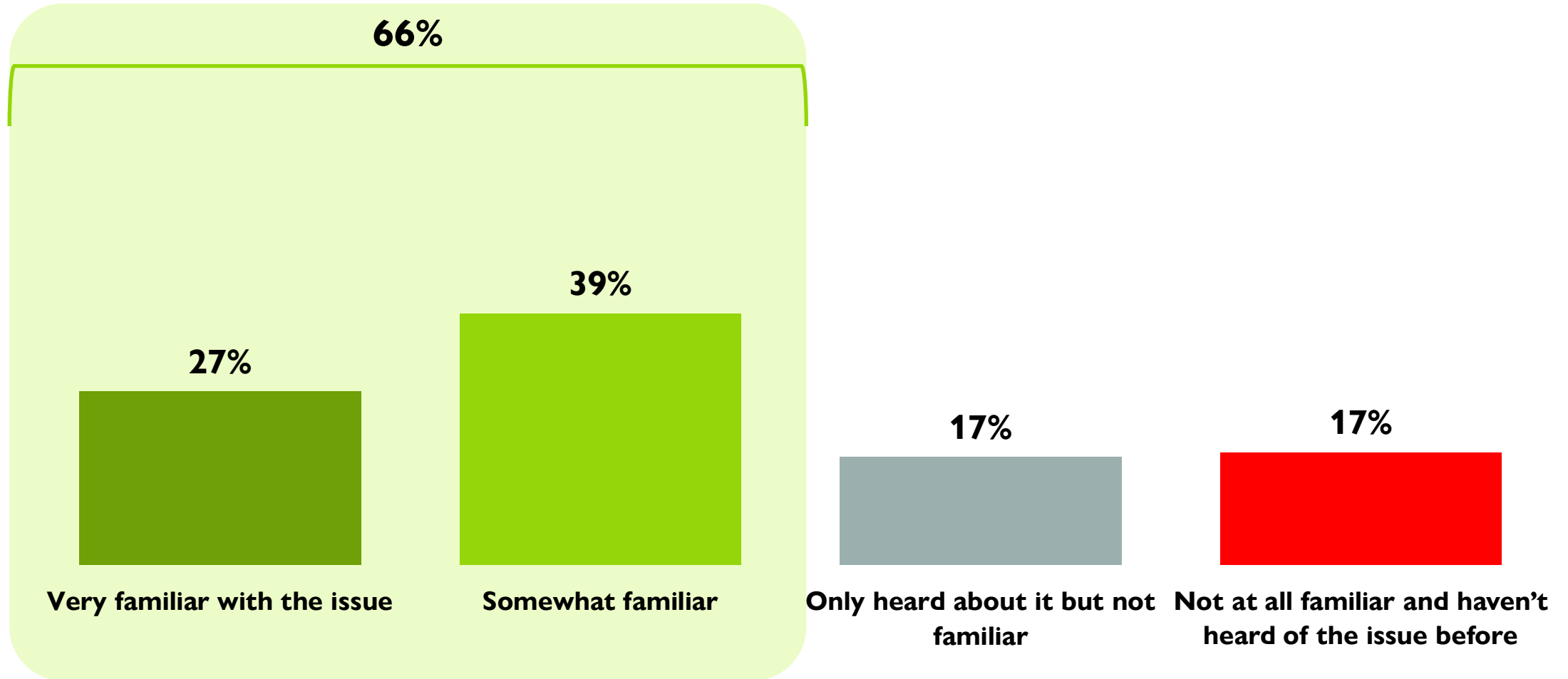
ABACUS DATA



KEY FINDINGS

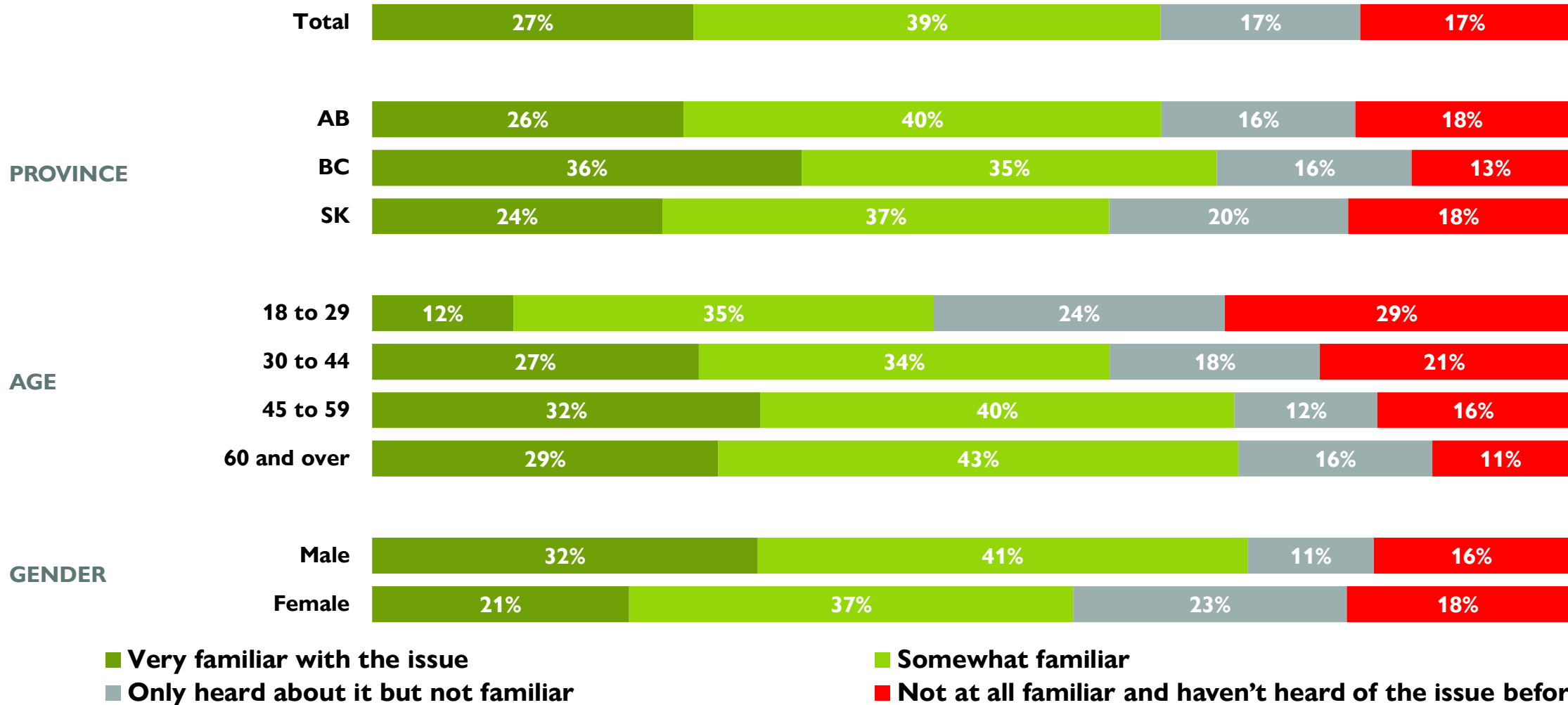
- Most residents in the survey area say they are at least somewhat familiar with the issue of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. 17% say they haven't heard of the issue before being asked about it in the survey.
- Familiarity is fairly consistent across the three provinces. Younger residents are less familiar with the issue than older ones. Men are more likely to say they are familiar with the issue than women.
- About half of residents report being aware of orphaned or abandoned wells being located near their home. Those surveyed in SK and BC are slightly more likely to report being aware than those in Alberta.
- When those who are unaware of wells being located near their home are prompted with more details, 1 in 5 say recall hearing, seeing, or reading anything about orphaned or abandoned wells.
- When all residents are asked their level concern about these orphaned or abandoned wells being close to their community, 17% report being very concerned and another 24% say they are somewhat concerned. 21% are a little concerned while 39% say they aren't concerned at all.
- Younger residents, those in Saskatchewan, those less familiar with the issue, and those who support the UCP in Alberta are less concerned than other respondents.

FAMILIARITY WITH ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS?



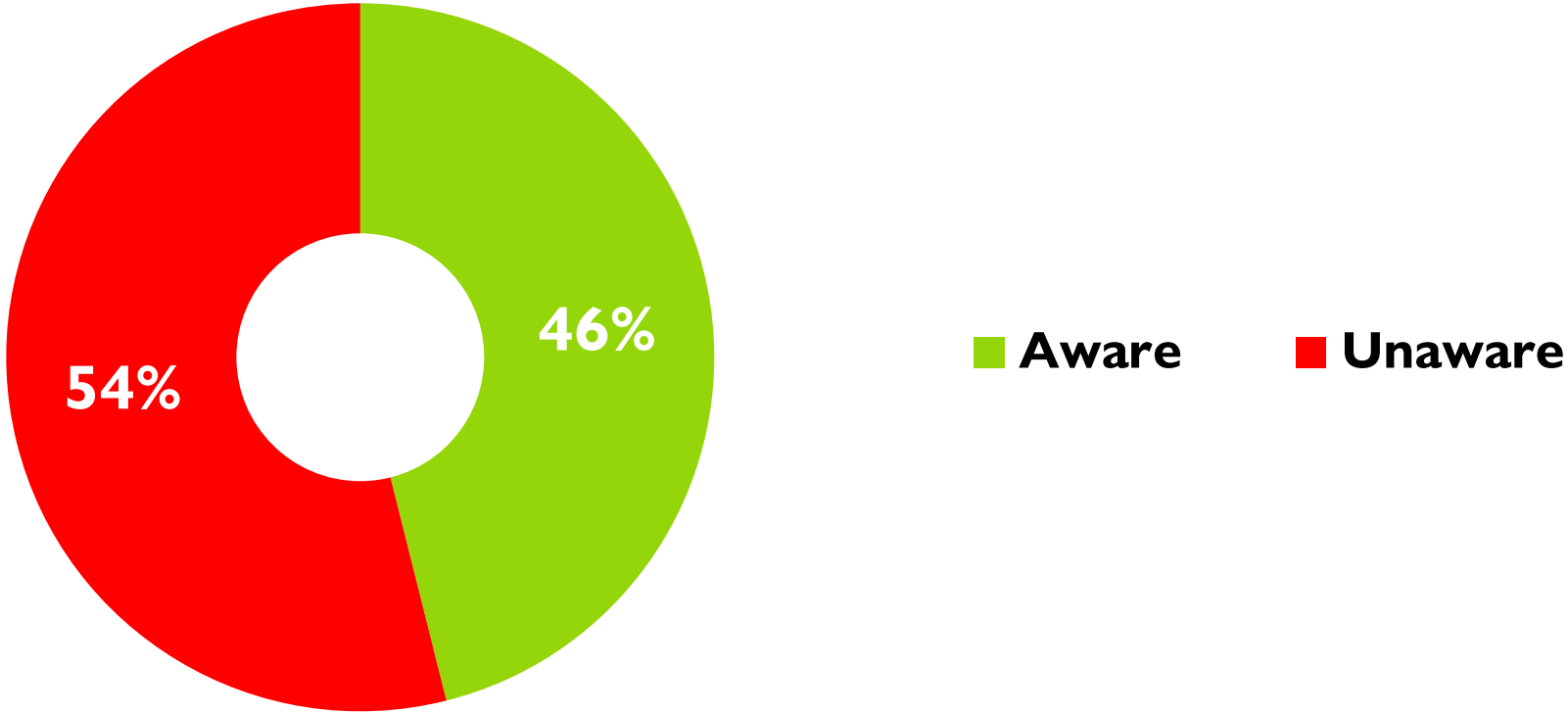
How familiar would you say you are with the issue of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells in Canada? Are you...

FAMILIARITY WITH ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS?



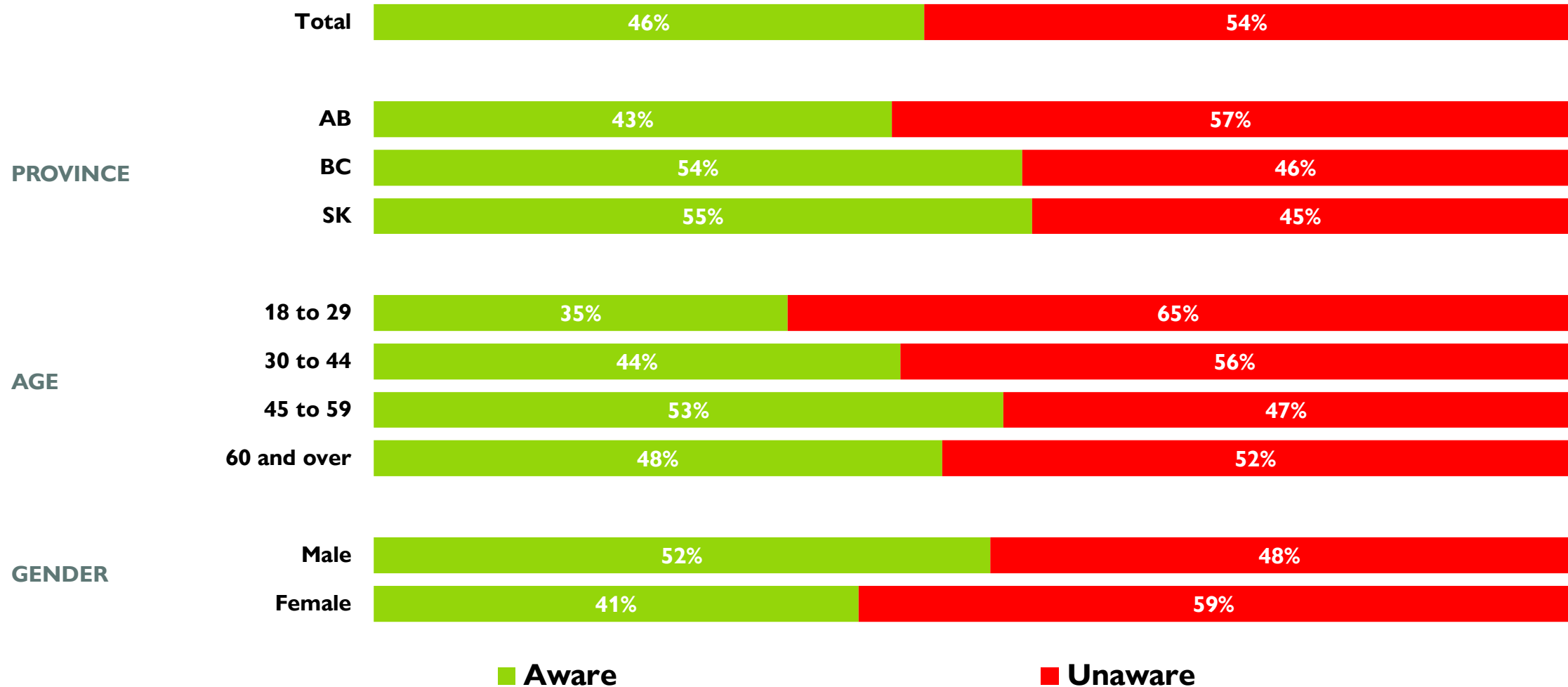
How familiar would you say you are with the issue of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells in Canada? Are you...

AWARE OF ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS NEAR YOUR HOME?



Are you aware of orphan or abandoned oil and gas wells near to your home?

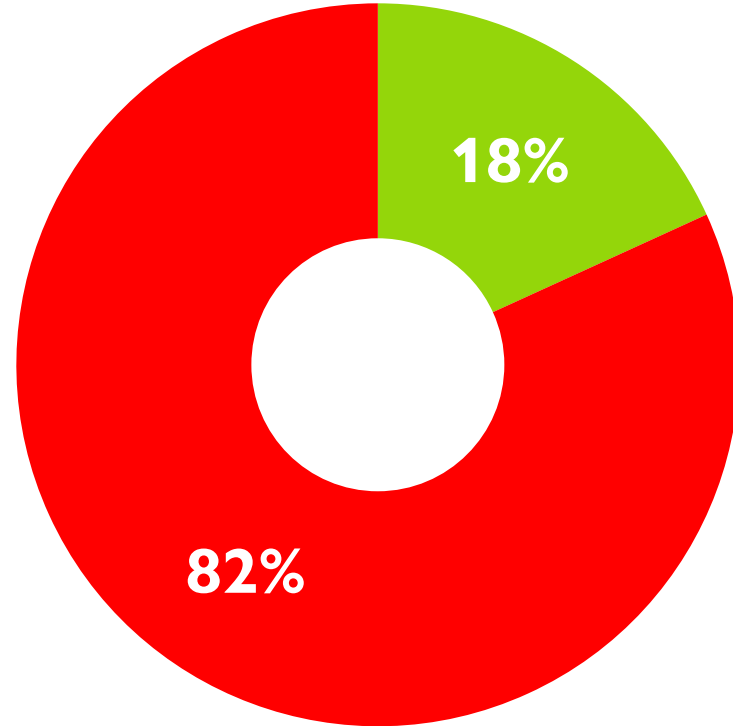
AWARE OF ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS NEAR YOUR HOME?



Are you aware of orphan or abandoned oil and gas wells near to your home?

READING ANYTHING ABOUT ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS?

There are currently about 19,000 oil and gas wells in Canada that are considered orphan or abandoned. These are wells that are no longer in use but that have not yet been reclaimed or remediated. In most cases, they pose environmental risks, including by emitting methane into the air.



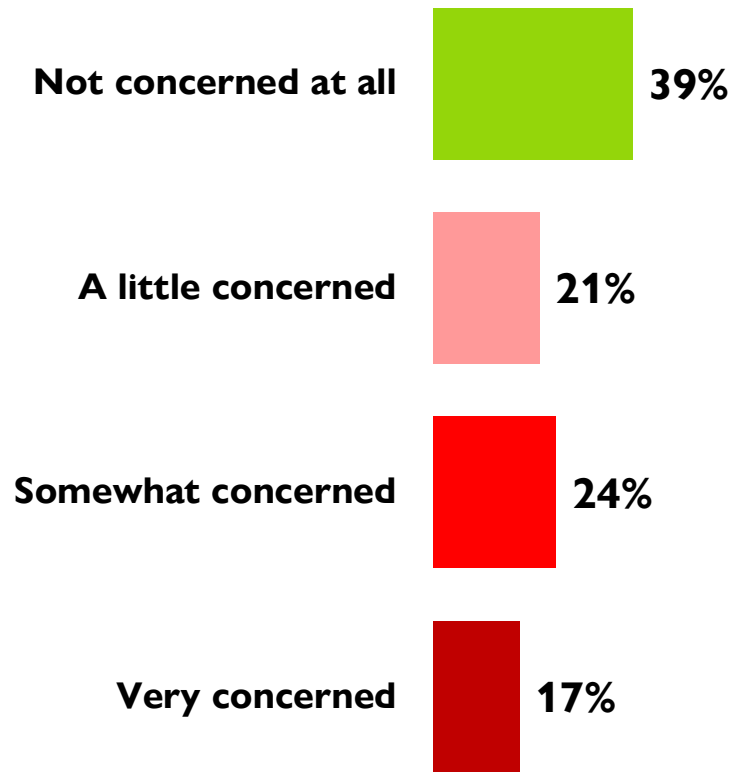
■ Yes

■ No

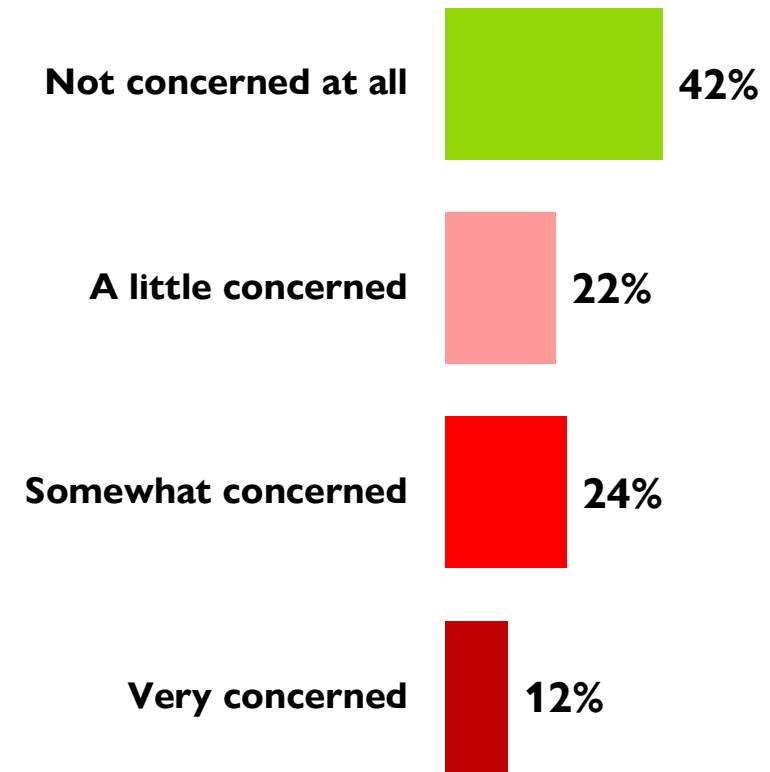
[if unaware] Based on this information, do you recall hearing, seeing, or reading anything about orphan or abandoned oil and gas wells now?

CONCERNED ABOUT...

Abandoned oil/gas wells close to your community



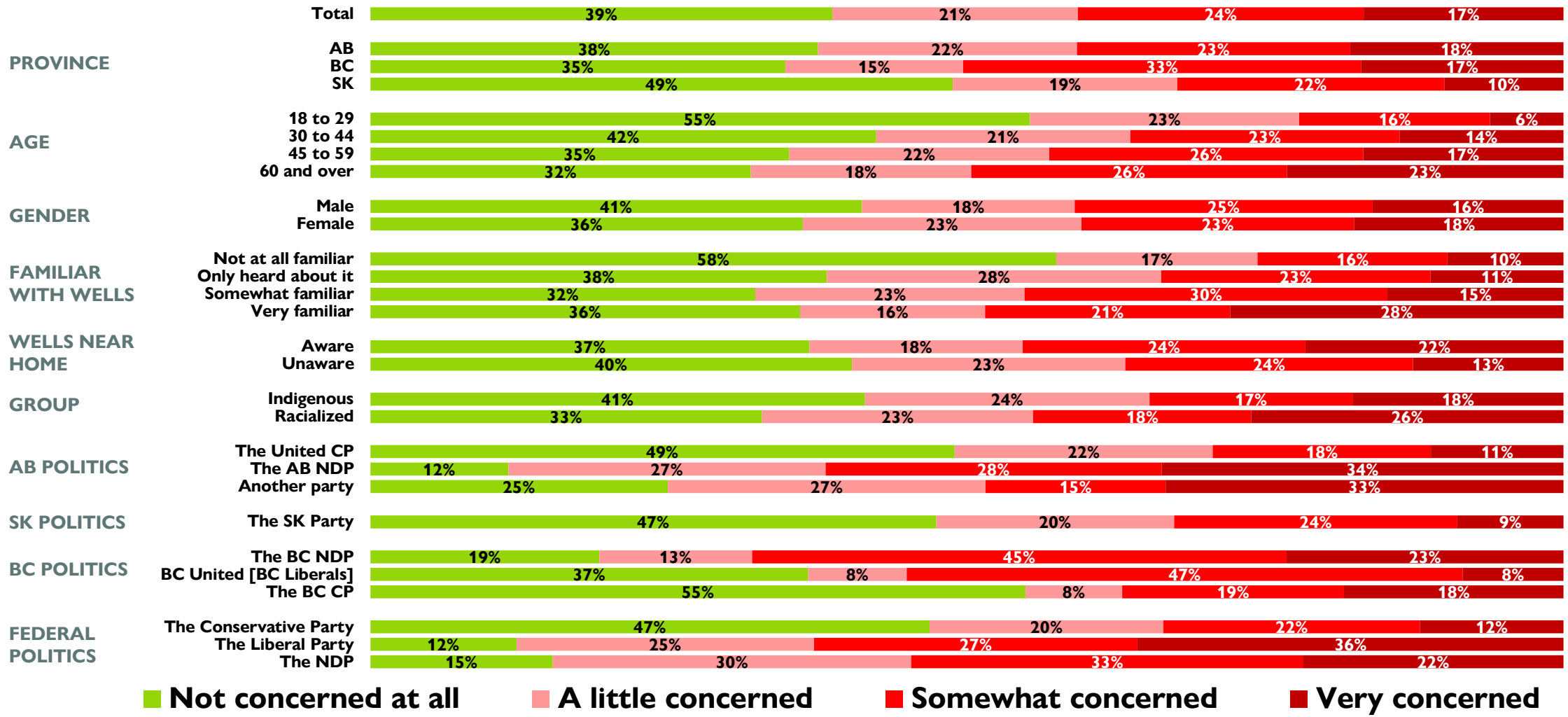
200,000 inactive oil/gas wells



To what extent are you concerned or not concerned about the presence of these orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells? Are you... I In addition to these orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells, there are approximately 200,000 inactive oil and gas wells, which are wells that are not currently being used to produce oil or gas. How concerned are you about the presence of inactive oil and gas wells?

CONCERNED ABOUT...

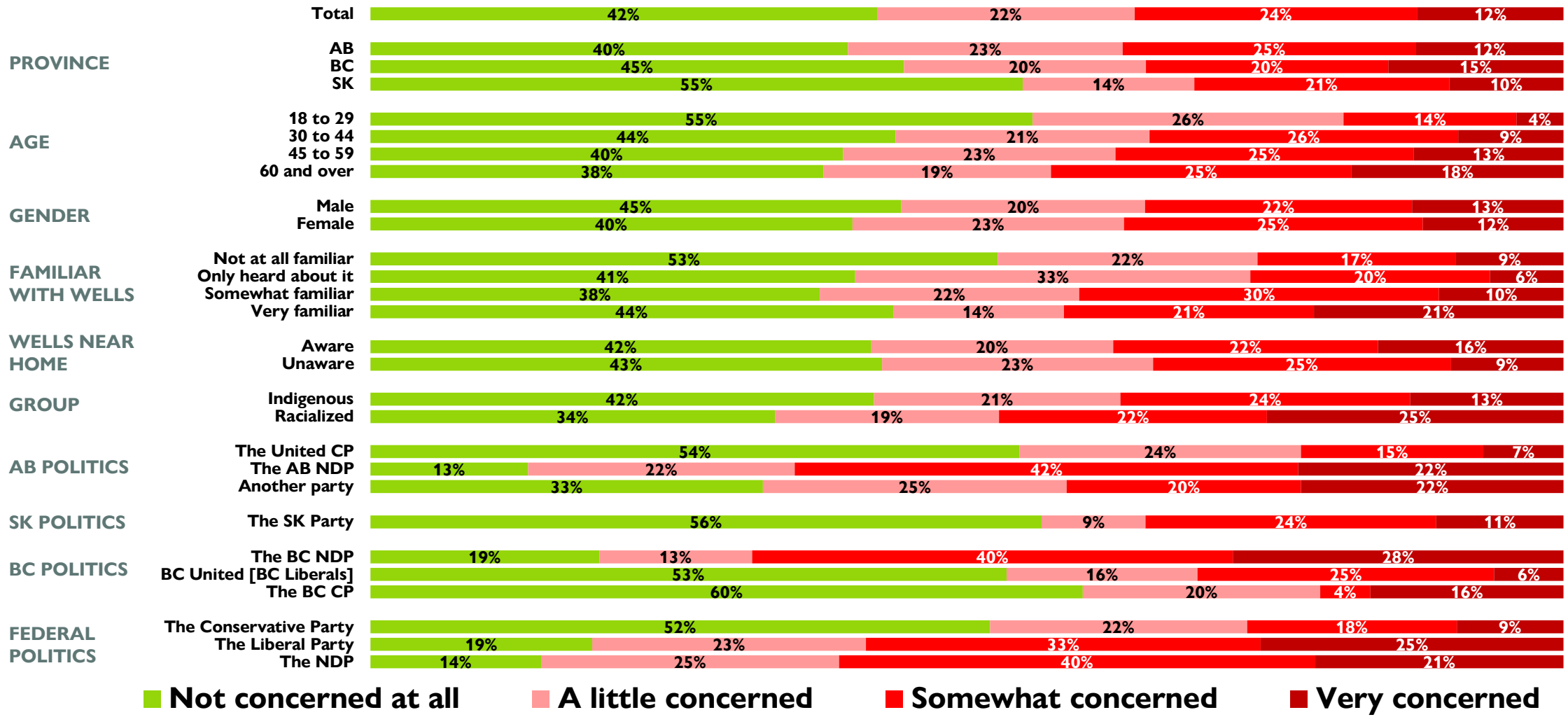
ABANDONED OIL/GAS WELLS CLOSE TO YOUR COMMUNITY



To what extent are you concerned or not concerned about the presence of these orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells? Are you...

CONCERNED ABOUT...

200,000 INACTIVE OIL/GAS WELLS



In addition to these orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells, there are approximately 200,000 inactive oil and gas wells, which are wells that are not currently being used to produce oil or gas. How concerned are you about the presence of inactive oil and gas wells?

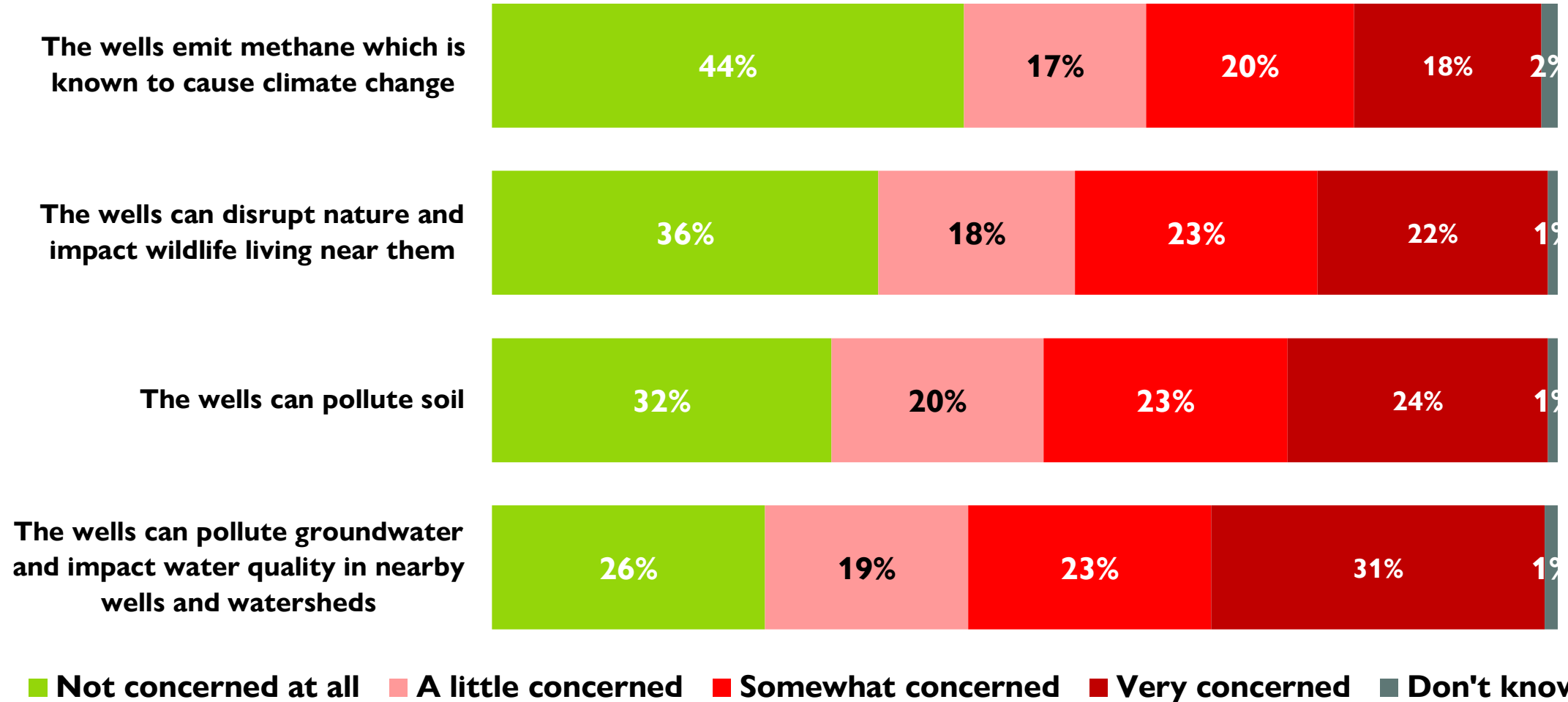
REASON FOR BEING CONCERNED

- Concerns about abandoned and inactive gas wells revolve around environmental and health risks, lack of proper maintenance and monitoring, potential contamination, and the possibility of leaks.
- Many believe that oil companies should be held responsible for cleaning up and reclaiming the land, as they initially profited from these wells.
- There are also concerns about the aesthetic impact on the landscape, the hindrance to agricultural and land use, and the burden on taxpayers who may ultimately have to fund the cleanup.
- Some respondents mention methane emissions as a specific concern, while others are worried about the impact on the environment, wildlife, and nearby communities.

KEY FINDINGS

- When prompted with several concerns raised by scientist and asked how they feel about them, concern was more likely to be expressed when it came to the impact of wells on water quality, soil pollution, and impacts on nature than the impact on climate change.
- Among those who are either unconcerned or only a little concerned about the wells overall, learning about the impact on water quality and soil is likely to have the great impact on changing their views.
- Most residents believe the oil and gas industry are most responsible for the cost of decommissioning wells. The remaining responses are split between the federal and provincial governments and others.
- But when it comes to who believes caused the abandoned wells, 39% blame the sector most, 28% blame the federal government while 15% blame their provincial government.
- There is also widespread belief that none of the players involved: the provincial government, the federal government, or the oil and gas sector is doing enough to minimize the risk of these wells. However, more feel the federal government is not doing enough (65%) than the two other groups (provincial government 54%, the sector 60%).

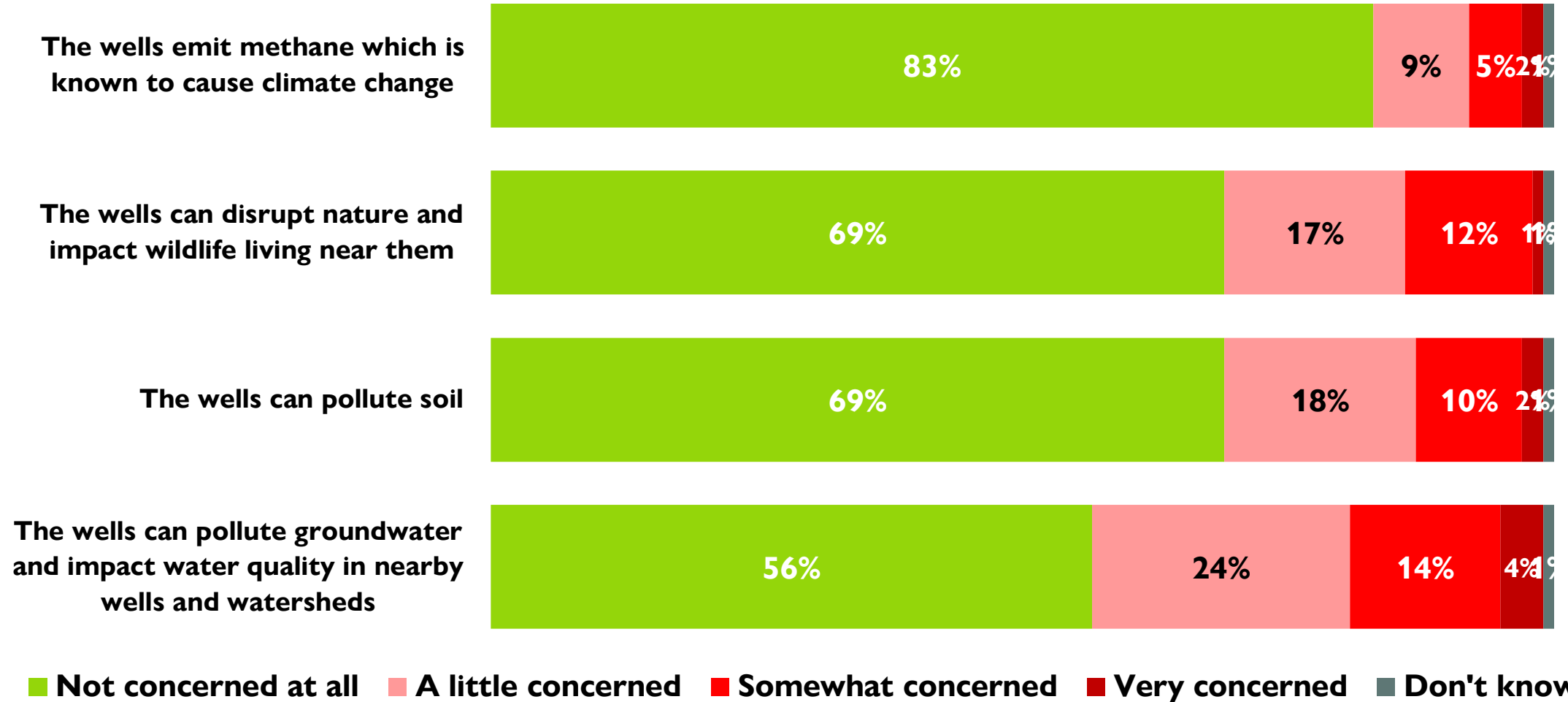
HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...



Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...

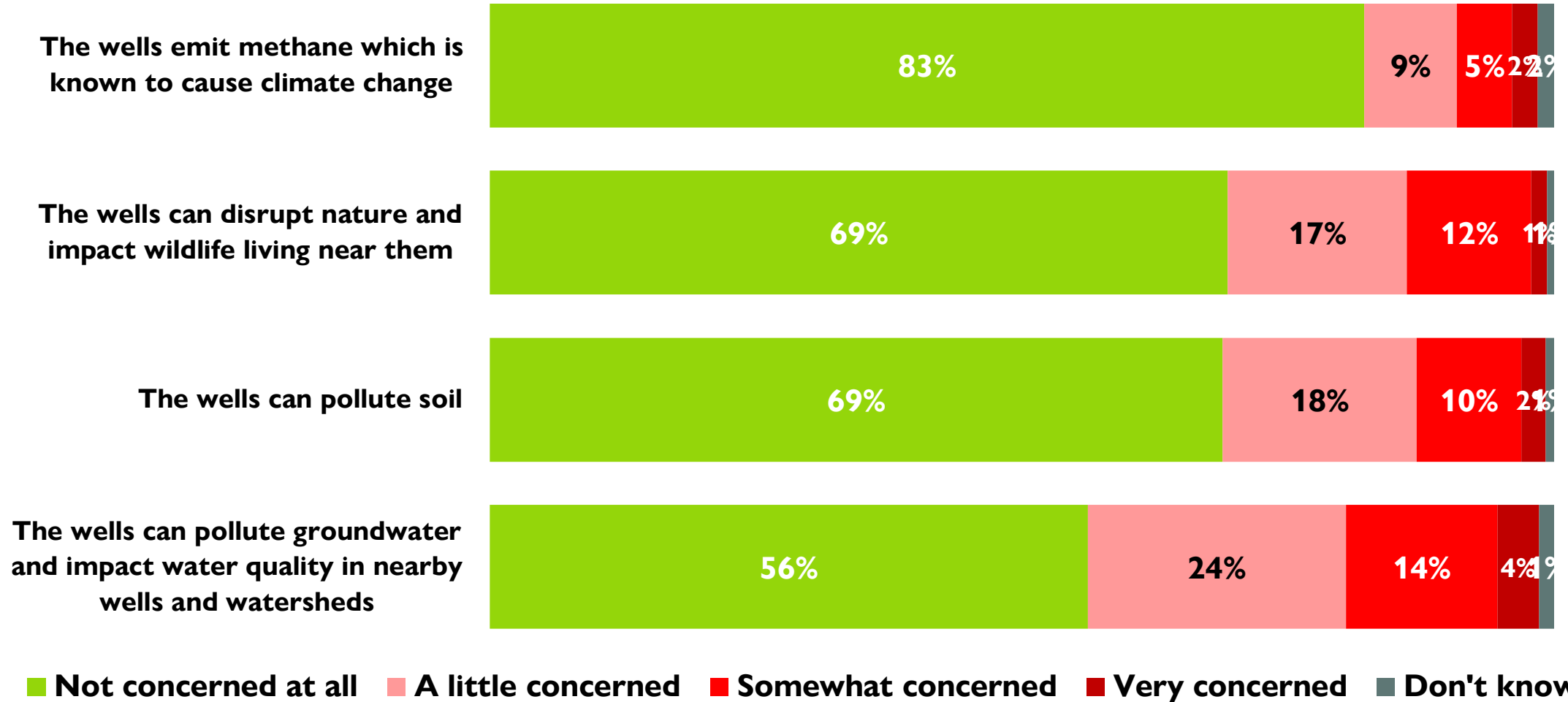
AMONG THOSE ORIGINALLY UNCONCERNED ABOUT THE WELLS OVERALL



Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...

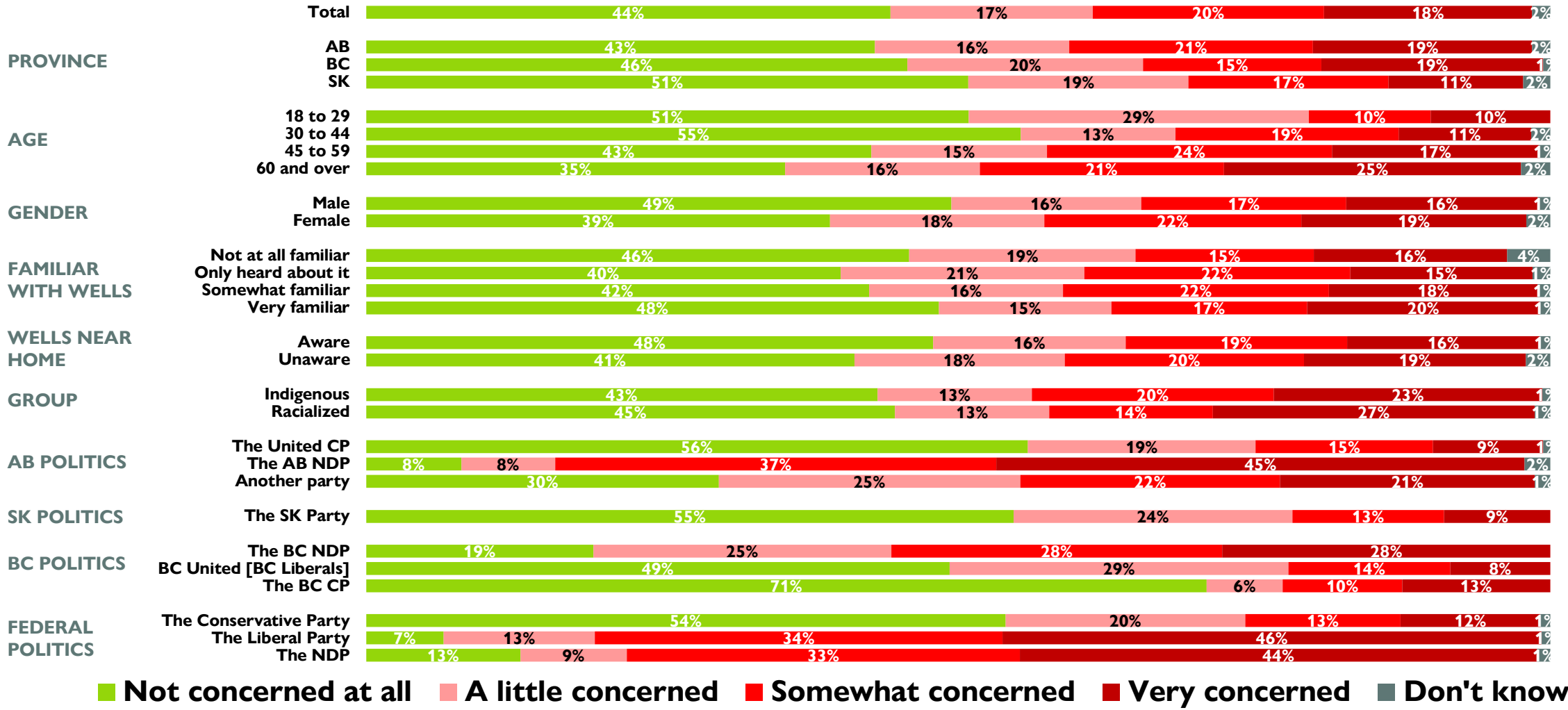
AMONG THOSE ORIGINALLY "A LITTLE" CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELLS OVERALL



Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...

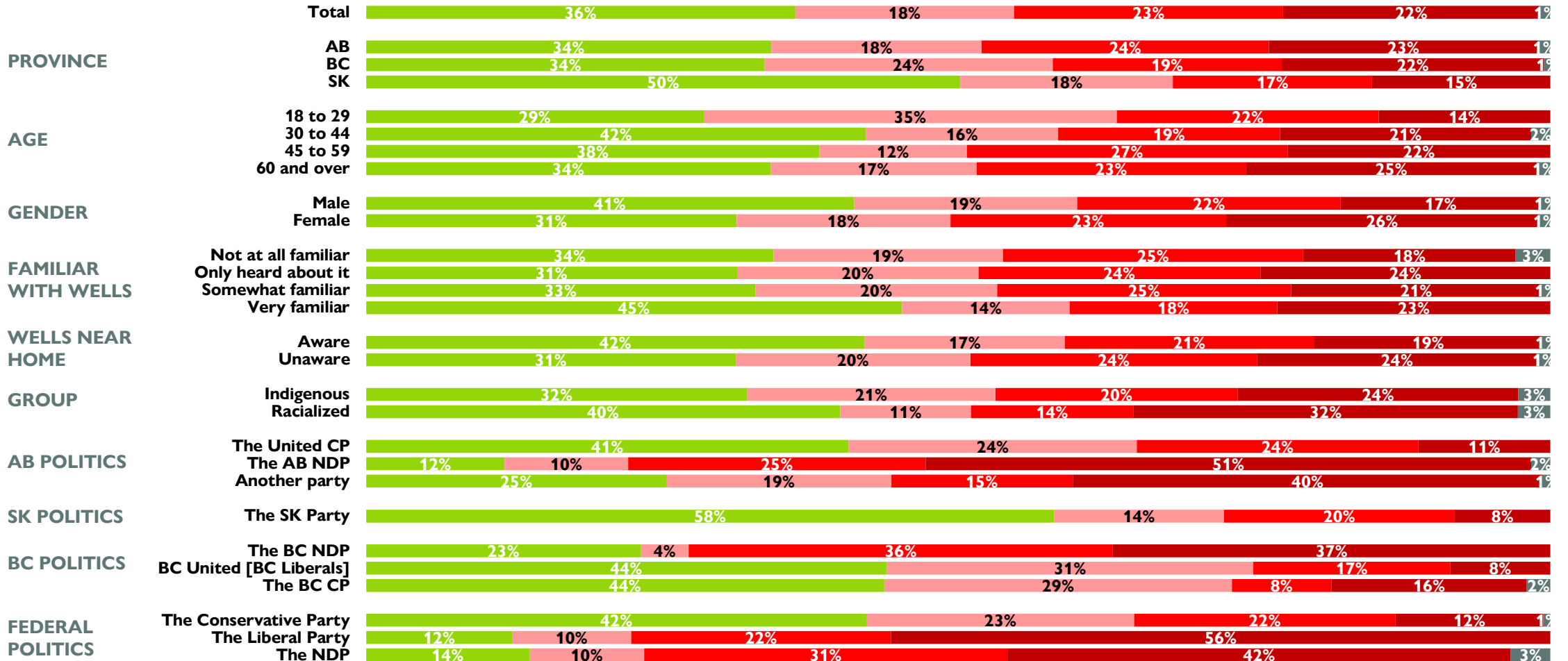
THE WELLS EMIT METHANE WHICH IS KNOWN TO CAUSE CLIMATE CHANGE



Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...

THE WELLS CAN DISRUPT NATURE AND IMPACT WILDLIFE LIVING NEAR THEM



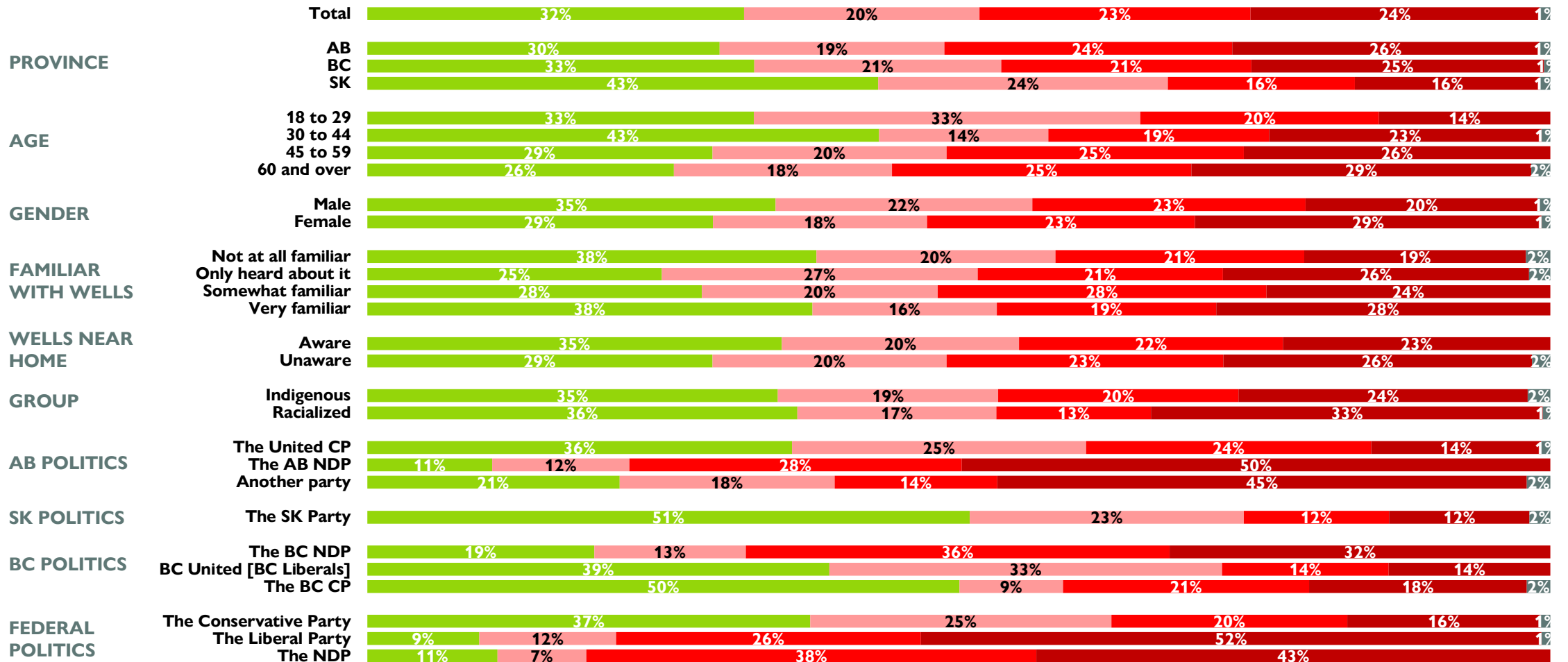
■ Not concerned at all ■ A little concerned ■ Somewhat concerned ■ Very concerned ■ Don't know



Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...

THE WELLS CAN POLLUTE SOIL



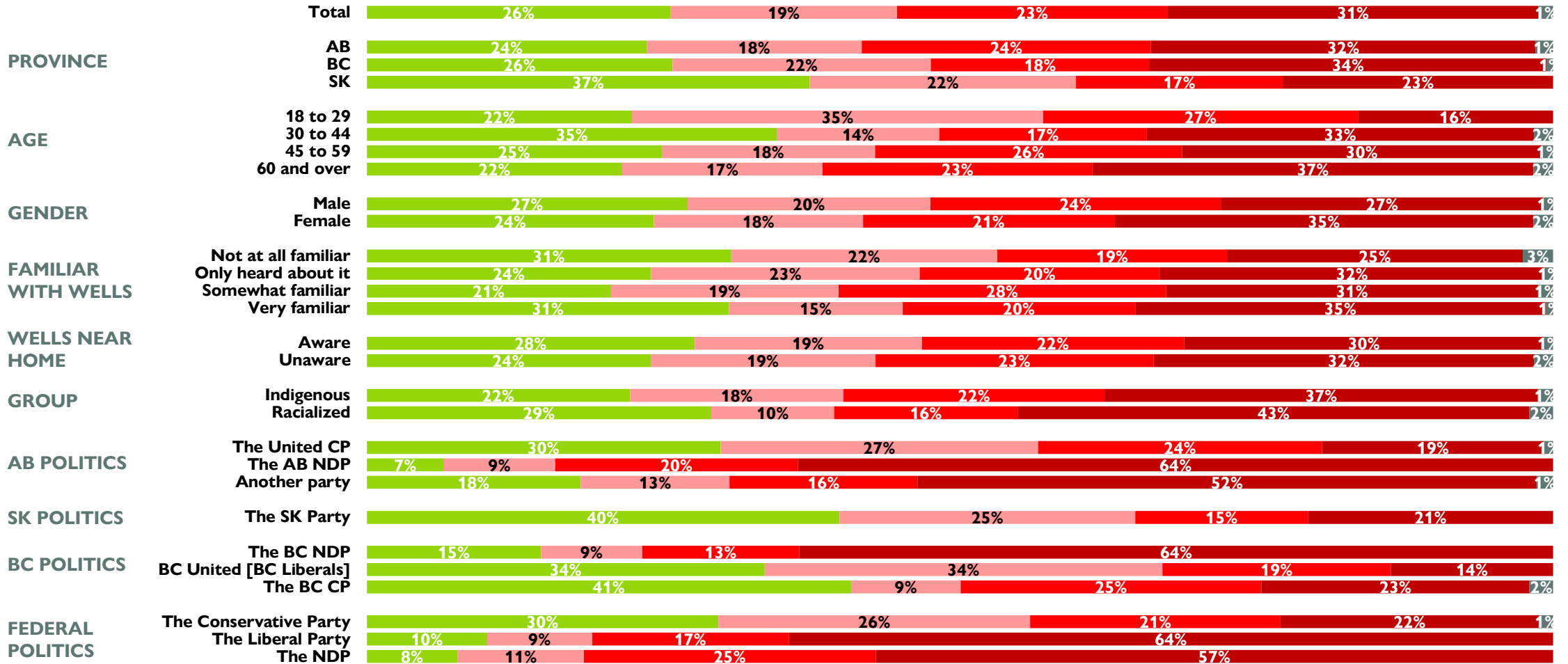
■ Not concerned at all ■ A little concerned ■ Somewhat concerned ■ Very concerned ■ Don't know



Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU WITH...

THE WELLS CAN POLLUTE GROUNDWATER AND IMPACT WATER QUALITY IN NEARBY WELLS AND WATERSHEDS



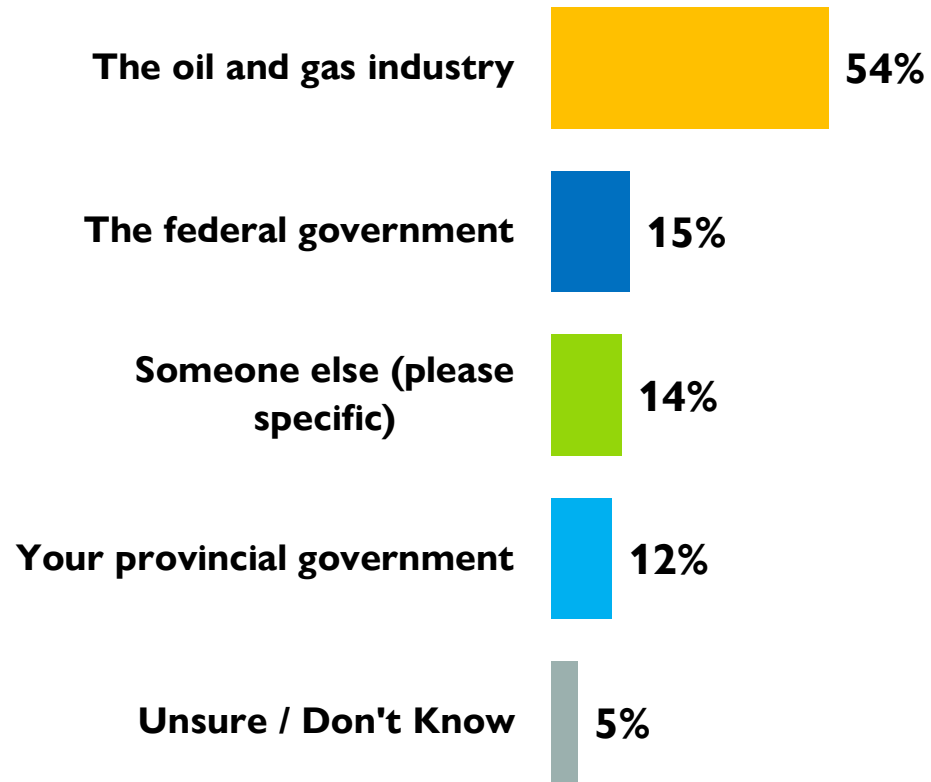
■ Not concerned at all ■ A little concerned ■ Somewhat concerned ■ Very concerned ■ Don't know



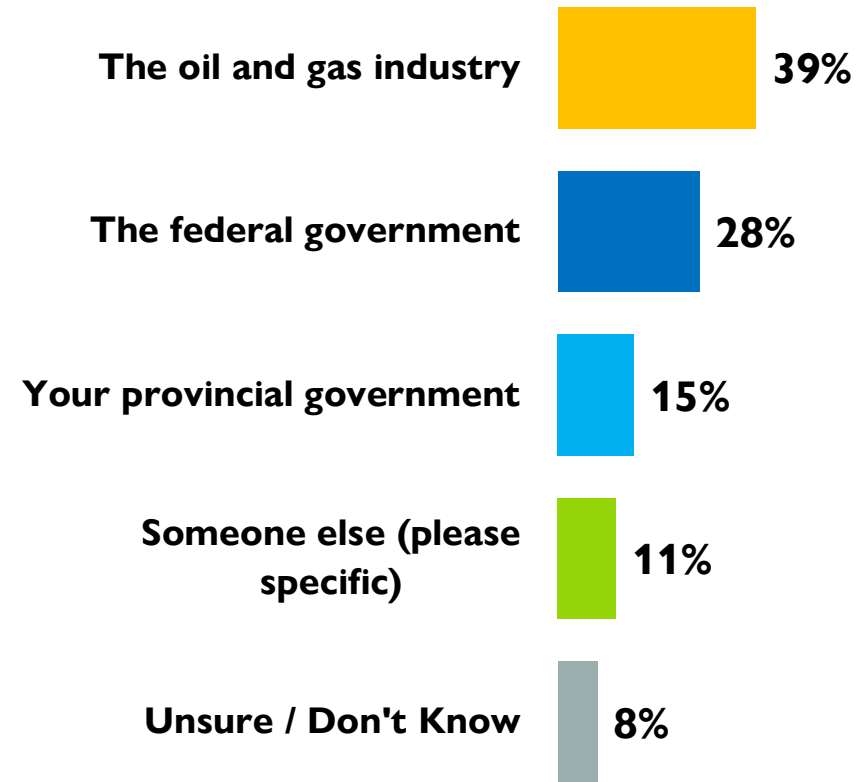
Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impact of orphan and abandoned oil and gas wells. How concerned are you about the following?

WHICH GROUP IS MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR...

The cost of decommissioning wells



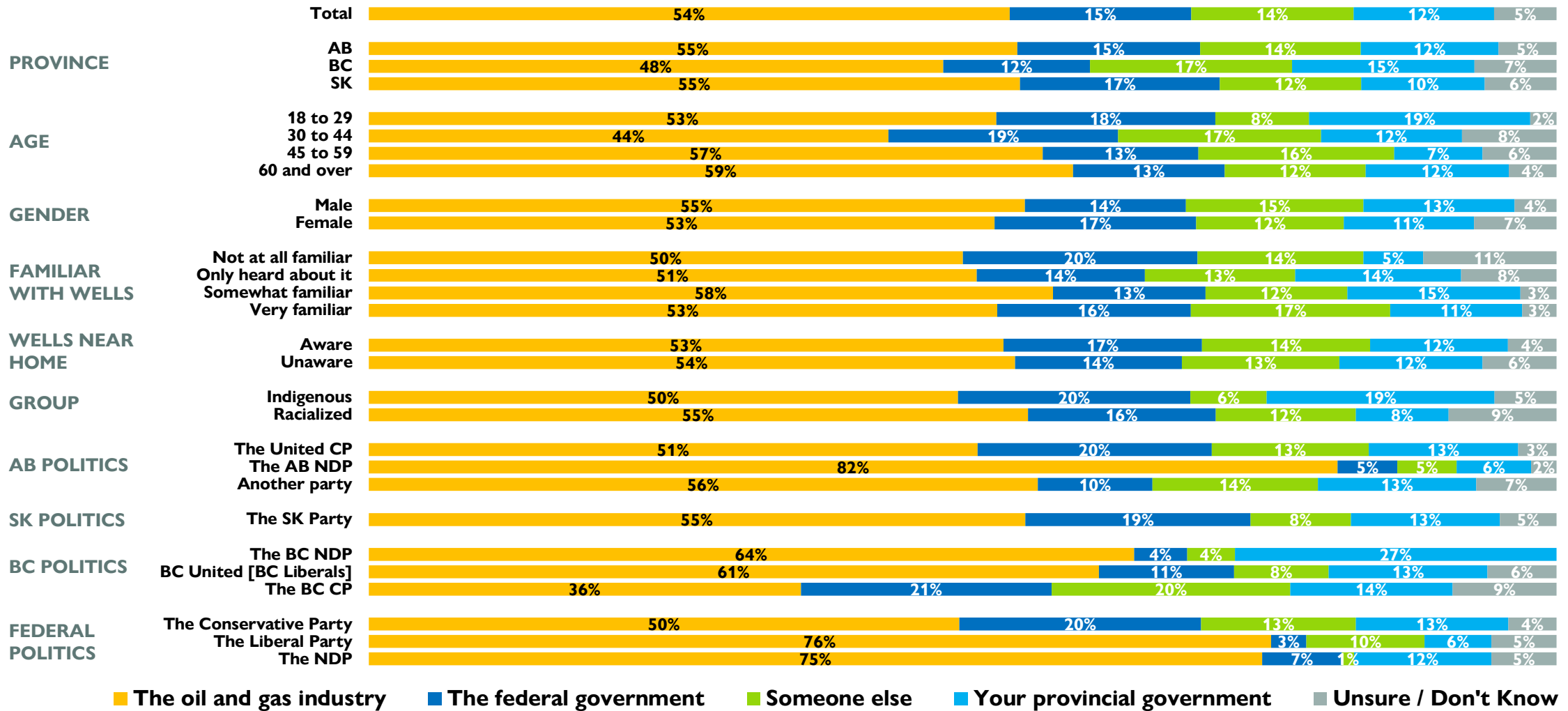
Causing abandoned wells issues in [province]



Orphan wells are wells whose owner has gone bankrupt. Which of the following groups do you think should be most responsible for the cost associated with decommissioning these wells and making them safe? | Which of these groups do you feel is MOST responsible for causing the orphan and abandoned wells issue in?

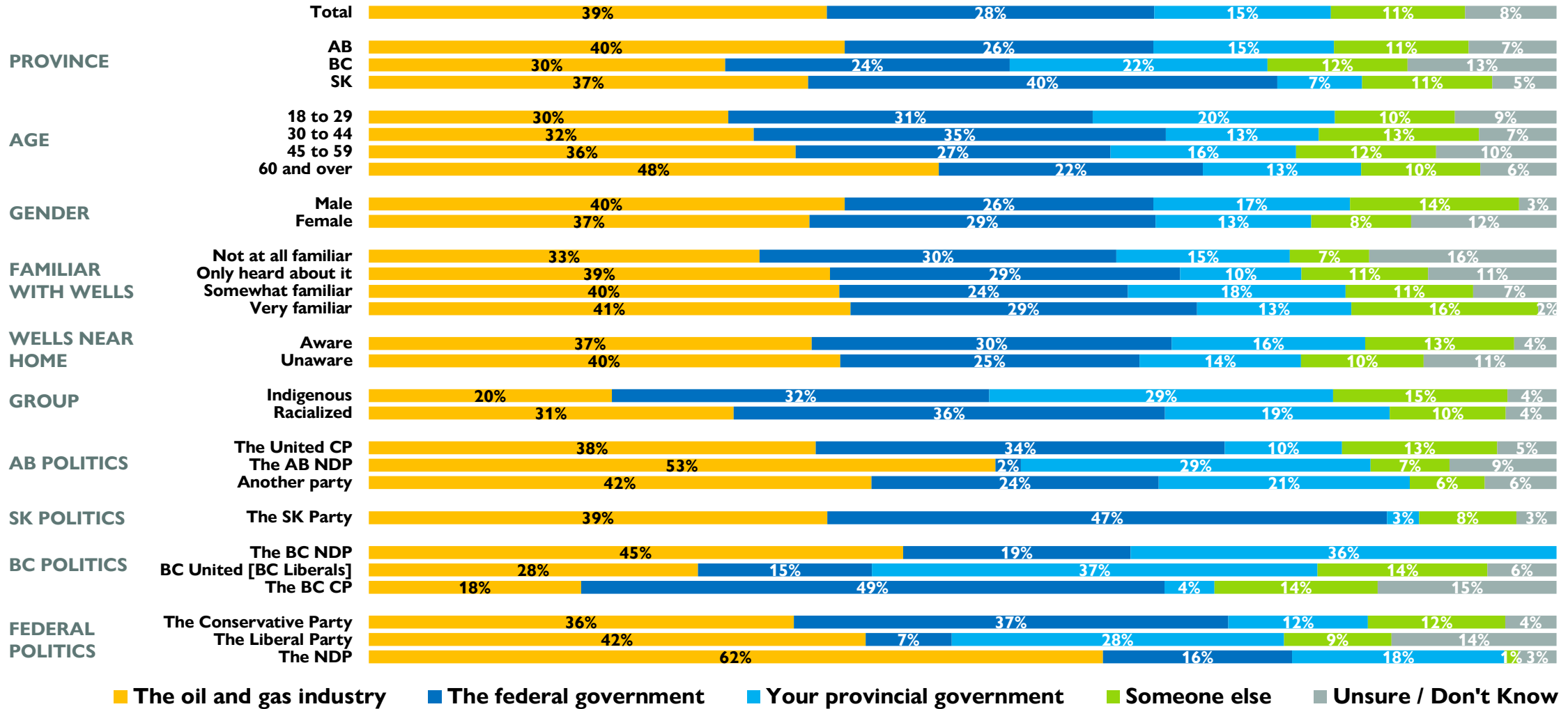
WHICH GROUP IS MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR...

THE COST OF DECOMMISSIONING WELLS



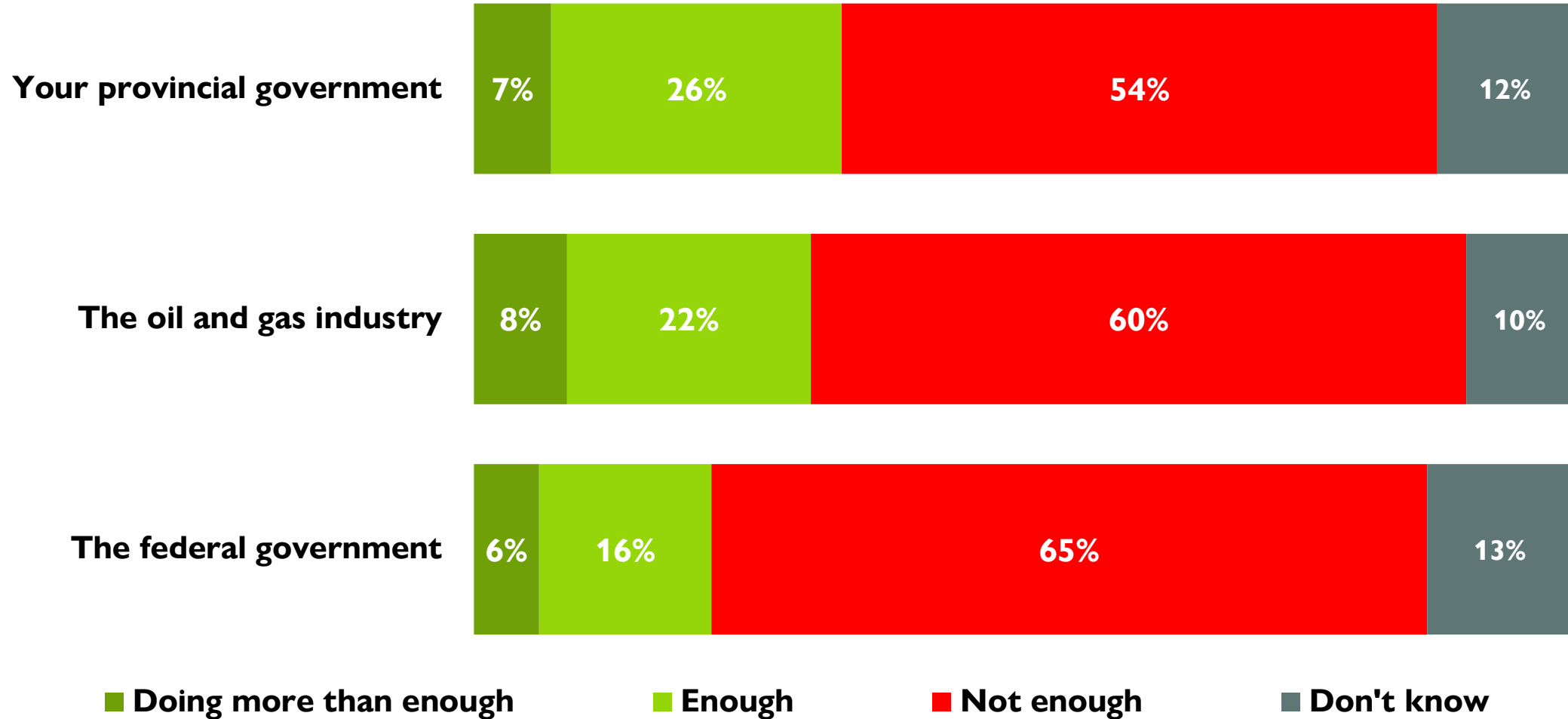
Orphan wells are wells whose owner has gone bankrupt. Which of the following groups do you think should be most responsible for the cost associated with decommissioning these wells and making them safe?

WHICH GROUP IS MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR... CAUSING ABANDONED WELLS ISSUES IN [PROVINCE]



Which of these groups do you feel is MOST responsible for causing the orphan and abandoned wells issue in?

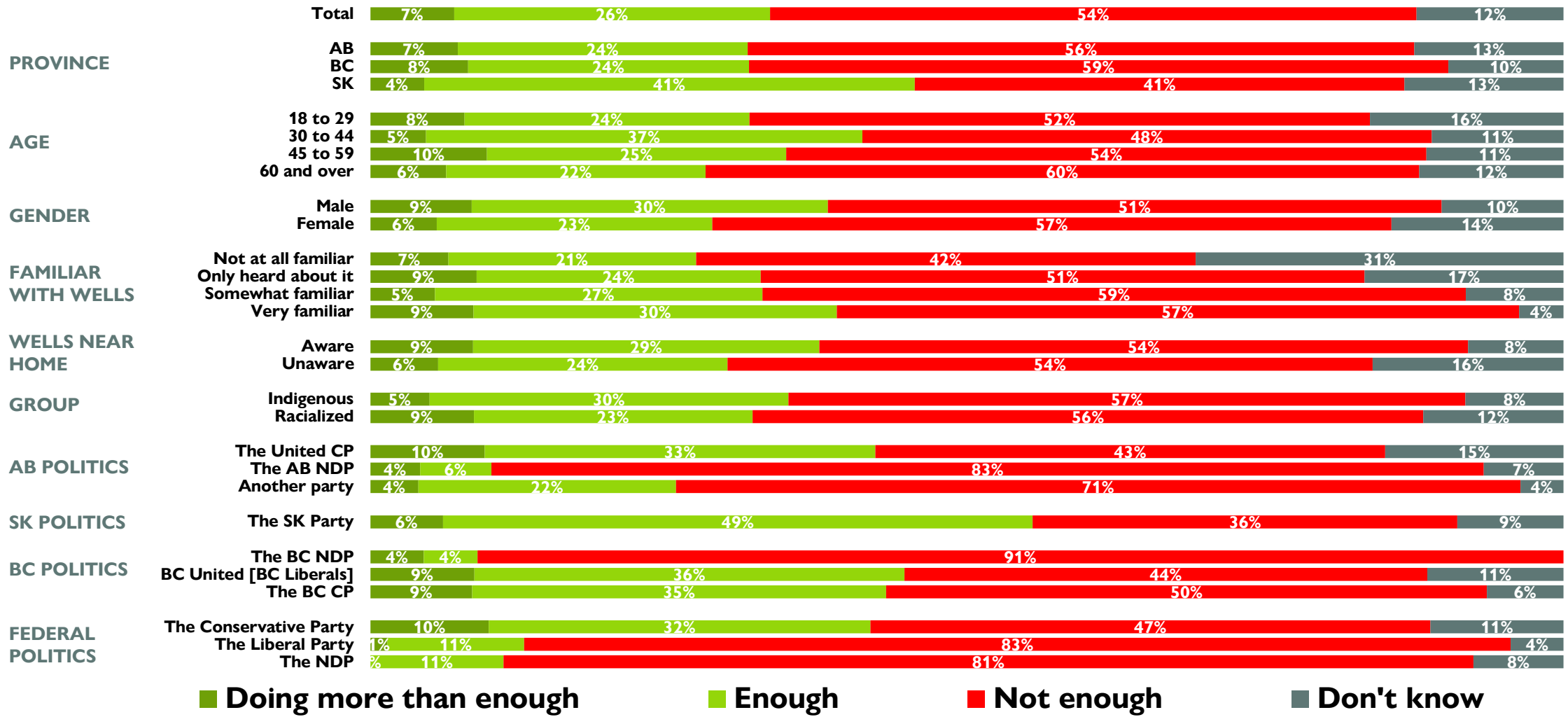
WORK ON MINIMIZING THE RISK OF OIL/GAS WELLS



For each of the following, please tell me whether you think it is doing more than enough, enough, or not enough to minimize the risk of orphan oil and gas wells to people and the environment around them?

WORK ON MINIMIZING THE RISK OF OIL/GAS WELLS

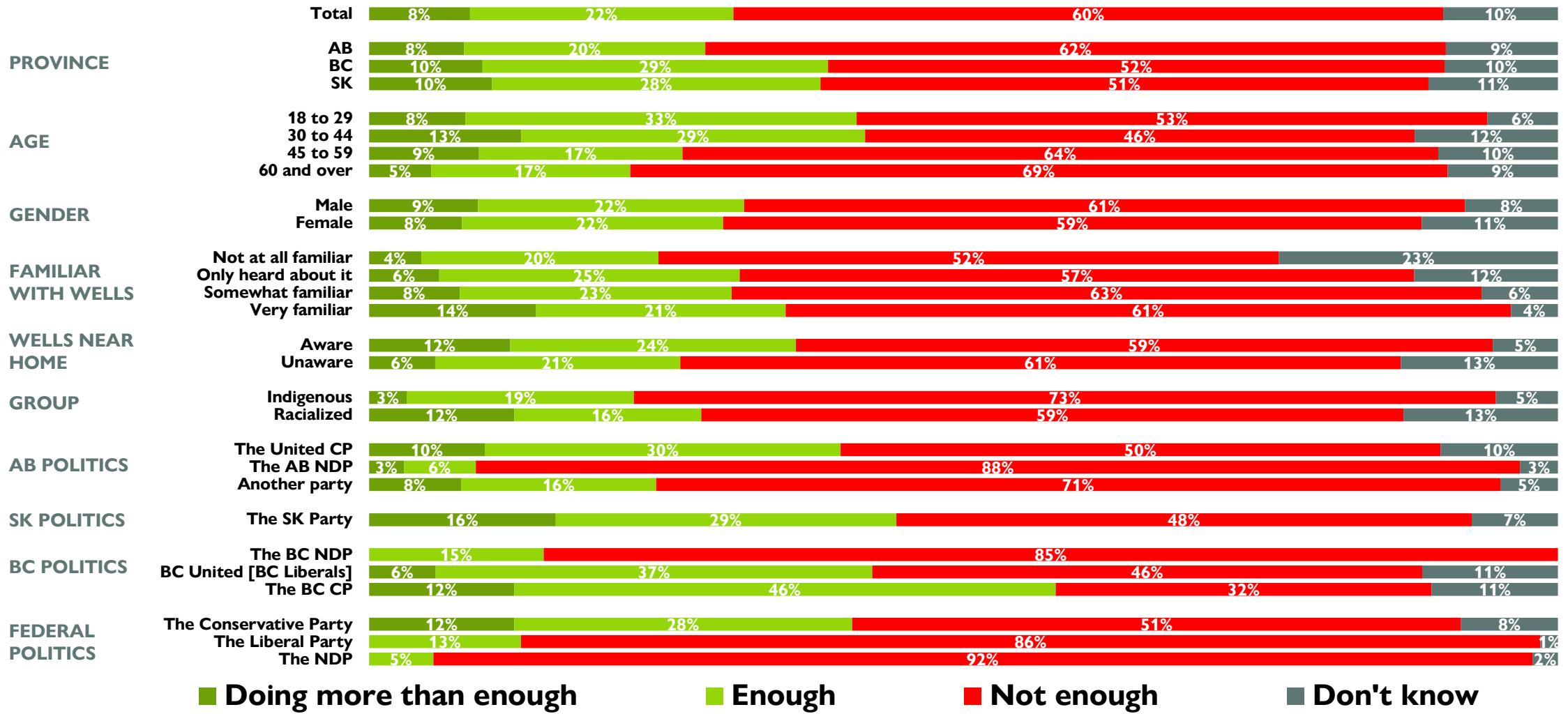
YOUR PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT



For each of the following, please tell me whether you think it is doing more than enough, enough, or not enough to minimize the risk of orphan oil and gas wells to people and the environment around them?

WORK ON MINIMIZING THE RISK OF OIL/GAS WELLS

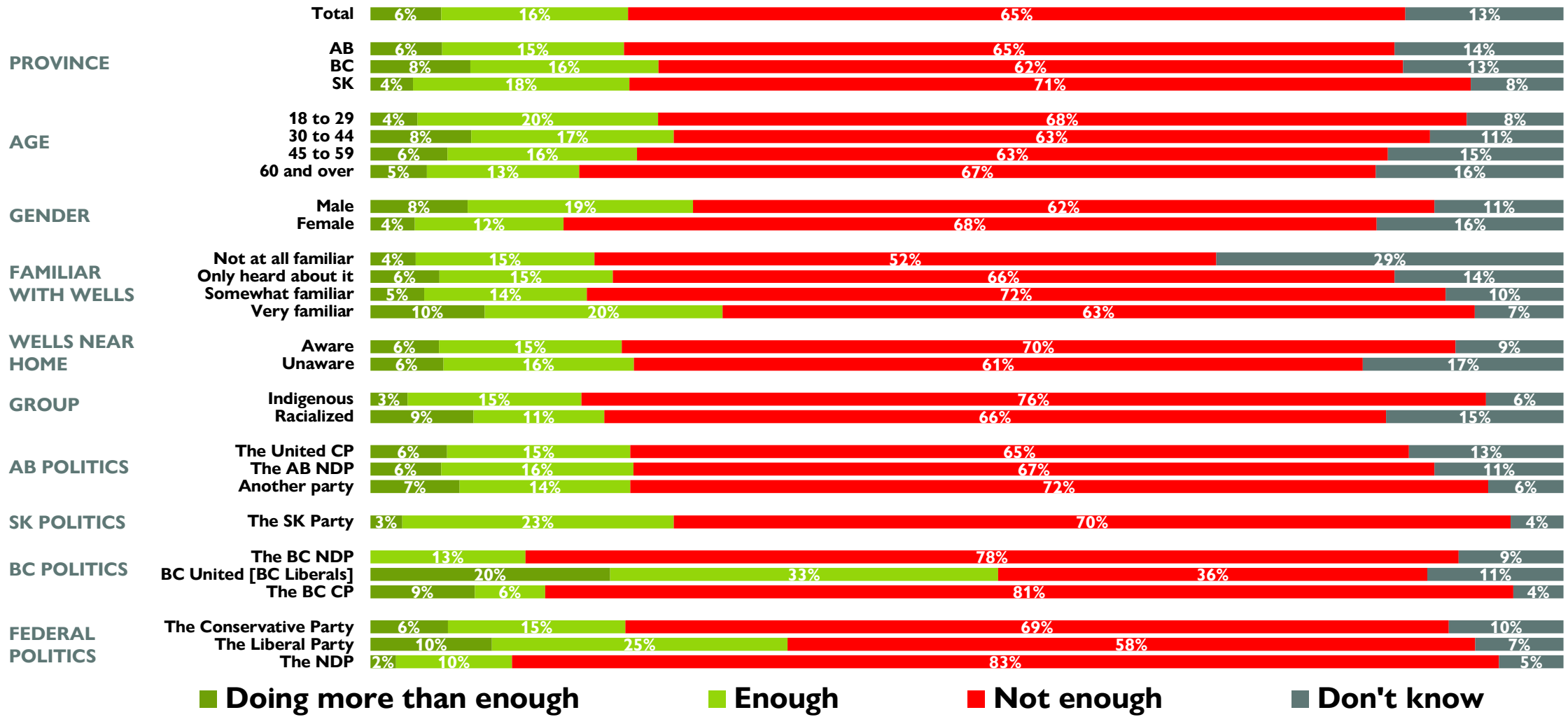
THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY



For each of the following, please tell me whether you think it is doing more than enough, enough, or not enough to minimize the risk of orphan oil and gas wells to people and the environment around them?

WORK ON MINIMIZING THE RISK OF OIL/GAS WELLS

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



For each of the following, please tell me whether you think it is doing more than enough, enough, or not enough to minimize the risk of orphan oil and gas wells to people and the environment around them?

THANK YOU.

DAVID COLETTO
CHAIR & CEO

DAVID@ABACUSDATA.CA

