



# The Great Barrier Reef

WWF International



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# Background and method

- This report presents findings from a survey conducted by YouGov on behalf of WWF International
- The objective of the study was to investigate public attitudes to industrialisation in relation to World Heritage Sites and the Great Barrier Reef specifically, in certain key World Heritage Committee member countries. The countries included in the study were: the UK, Germany, Finland, Poland, Colombia and South Korea.
- A quantitative survey of 6,134 adults (around 1,000 in each country) was undertaken online between 14<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults (aged 18+) in each country.

# Executive summary (1)

## General views on World Heritage Sites

- Pollution (69%), industrial activities (65%) and climate change (62%) are thought to be the greatest threats to natural World Heritage Sites – across all countries surveyed.
- Virtually all respondents (94%) believe it is important to protect World Heritage Sites from damage caused by industrial activity - there was no individual country where less than 90% believed this.
- Eight in ten are concerned about damage being caused to World Heritage Sites as a result of industrial activity – highest in Colombia, South Korea and Poland, lowest in Finland.
- When asked who should play a part in protecting natural World Heritage Sites, the government of the country the site is in is seen to have key responsibility (79%), but 65% also mention UNESCO.
- More than half (52%) believe industrial activities that have impacts within World Heritage Sites should not be allowed under any circumstances, 37% believe these should be allowed in certain circumstances and two per cent in all/any circumstances. Those in Colombia were most likely to say industrial activities should not be allowed at all, while those in South Korea were least likely
- More than half (54%) also believe financial institutions should not provide funding for industrial activities that have impacts within World Heritage Sites under any circumstances, three in ten believe these are acceptable in certain circumstances and four per cent in all/any circumstances.
- Just under three in ten would stop buying from a company that was involved in industrial activities that had impacts within a World Heritage Site.

# Executive summary (2)

## Industrial activity around the Great Barrier Reef

- Only one in five had heard anything about industrial activities within the GBR World Heritage Site prior to taking the survey – lowest in the UK and Finland.
- Close to two thirds are either outraged or concerned by planned industrial expansion – this proportion was significantly lower in Finland. Very few (7%) believe there are more important issues to worry about in Australia – although this was significantly higher in South Korea (15%).
- Over eight in ten (83%) are concerned about the Great Barrier Reef being damaged by industrial activities – higher among those who were already aware of the activities (90%). Concern was highest in Colombia, and lowest in the UK and Finland (but still around three quarters in these countries)
- Six in ten feel more negatively towards the Australian Government due to plans for expansion of industrial activity around the Reef – highest in Colombia and otherwise fairly consistent by country
- Plans for expansion of industrial activity around the Reef have an overall negative impact on public opinion of all involved parties:
  - Six in ten feel more negative towards the Australian Government
  - A third feel more negative towards UNESCO
  - Two thirds feel more negative towards companies carrying out industrial activities
  - Six in ten feel more negative towards financial institutions providing funding
- Very few felt more positive towards these organisations, with the exception of UNESCO (16% feel more positive). Generally, Colombia was most likely to feel more negative.

# Executive summary (3)

## Industrial activity around the Great Barrier Reef (cont.)

- More than half (55%) believe industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries of the GBR should not be allowed under any circumstances. Around a third think these should be allowed under certain/any circumstances – significantly higher in South Korea (46%)
- Only 15% had heard anything about dumping of dredge spoil within the boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef prior to the survey. Around half support a ban on dumping of dredge spoil – generally slightly higher among those who were already aware of the issue.

## Taking action

- All potential actions that other governments could take were supported by a large majority:
  - Over three quarters support calling on UNESCO to maintain strong oversight until the reef's health is secured
  - Two thirds support calling on the Australian government to significantly increase protections for the reef, even if this creates diplomatic tensions or has negative consequences for trade – higher among men than women.
  - Almost three quarters support declaring support for protection of the Reef and other World Heritage Sites through official statements
  - Seven in ten support holding the Australian government accountable to WHC decisions
  - Three quarters support their government ensuring that companies based in their country adhere to best practice in relation to World Heritage Sites
  - Over two thirds support making World Heritage Sites in their country off-limits to industrial activities
  - Over seven in ten support encouraging other countries to make natural World Heritage Sites off-limits to industrial activities
  - Very few respondents opposed any of these potential measures. Support was generally highest in Colombia.

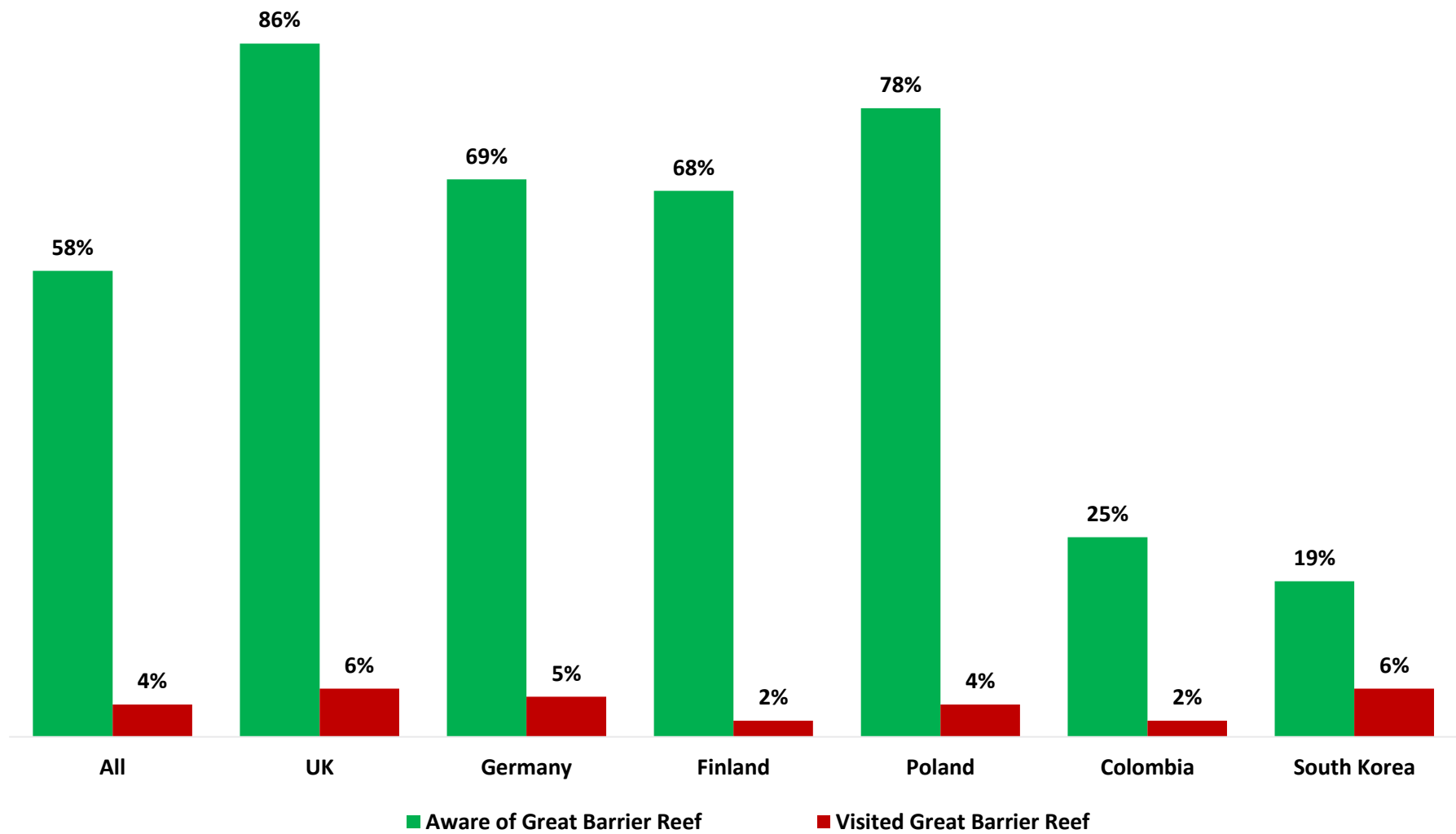
# Executive summary (4)

## Impact on likelihood to visit the Great Barrier Reef

- For many respondents (44%), planned expansion of industrial activity makes no difference to their likelihood to visit the Great Barrier Reef in the future. However a fifth felt they would be less likely to visit as a result, and the same proportion that they would be more likely. Possibly, those stating 'more likely' think the situation may motivate them to visit in the relatively near future, before the Reef's condition worsens further.

# General views on World Heritage sites

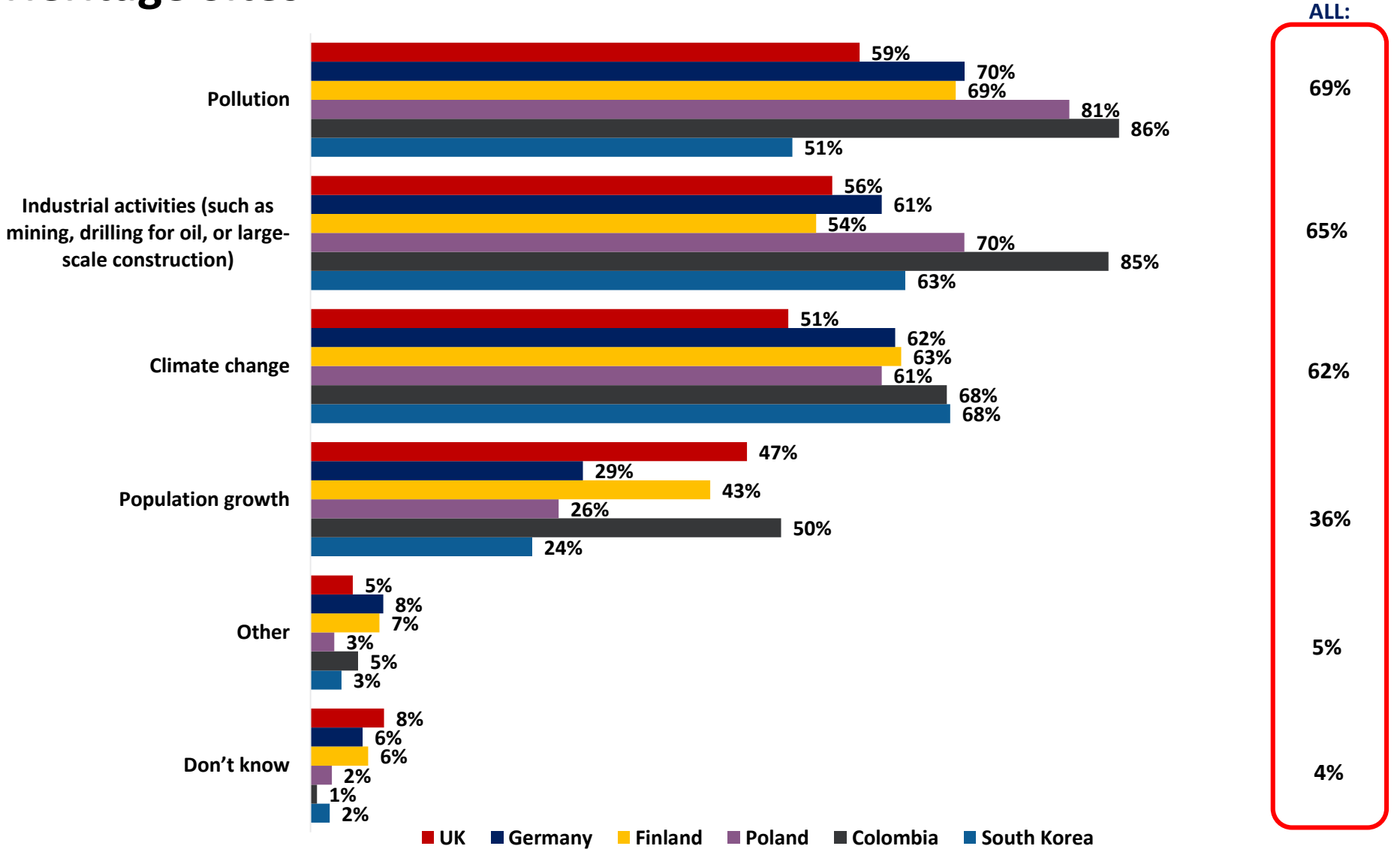
# Over half were aware of the GBR before the survey – few had previously visited



A1. Which, if any, of the following natural World Heritage Sites have you heard of before taking this survey? Please tick all that apply.  
A2. Which, if any, of the following natural World Heritage Sites have you personally visited? Please tick all that apply.  
Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)



# Seven in ten believe pollution is the greatest threat to World Heritage Sites

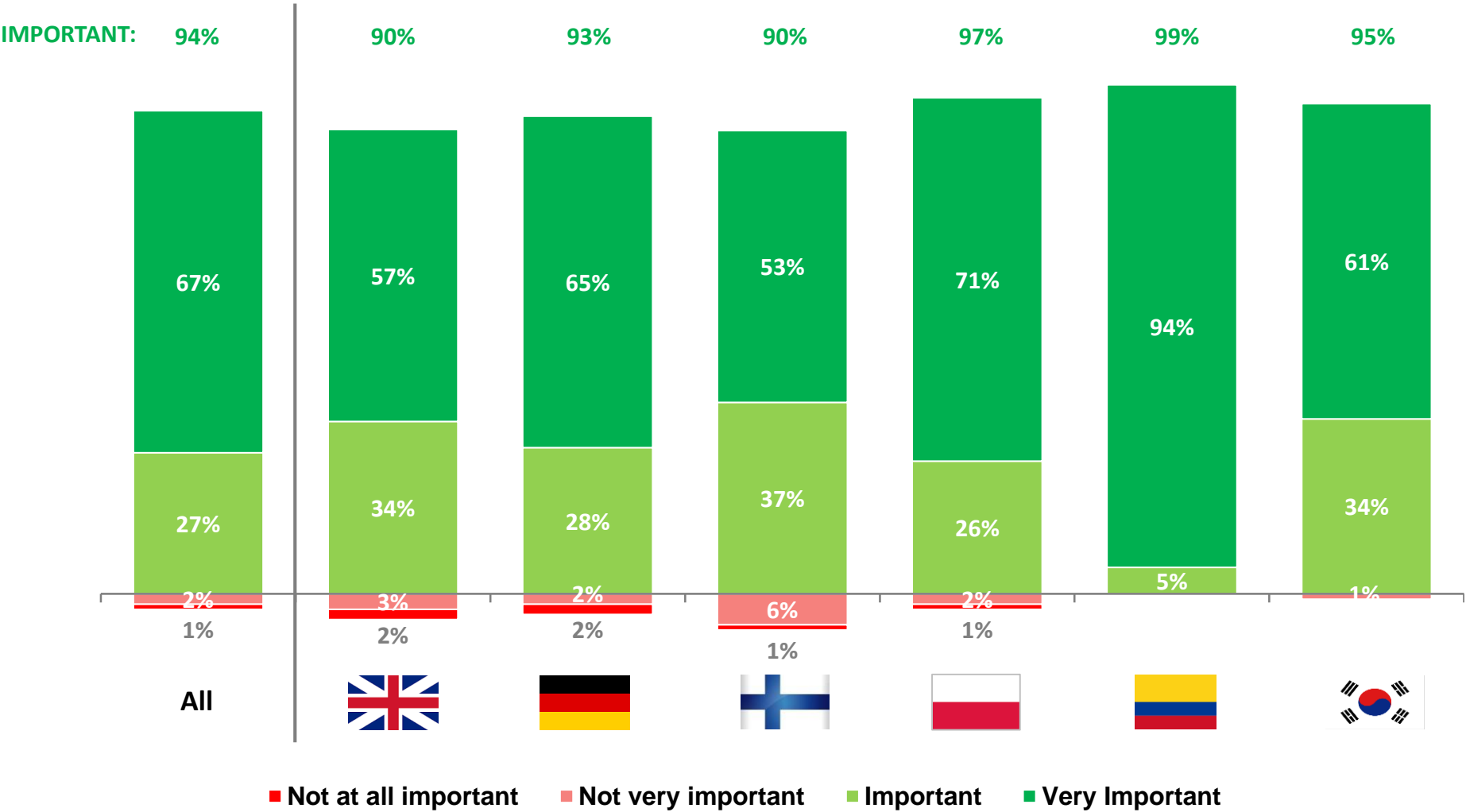


A3. Which, if any, of the following do you think are the greatest threats to natural World Heritage Sites? Please tick all that apply.  
Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)  
Figures for Not applicable have not been shown

# Pollution, climate change and industrial activities are seen as key threats

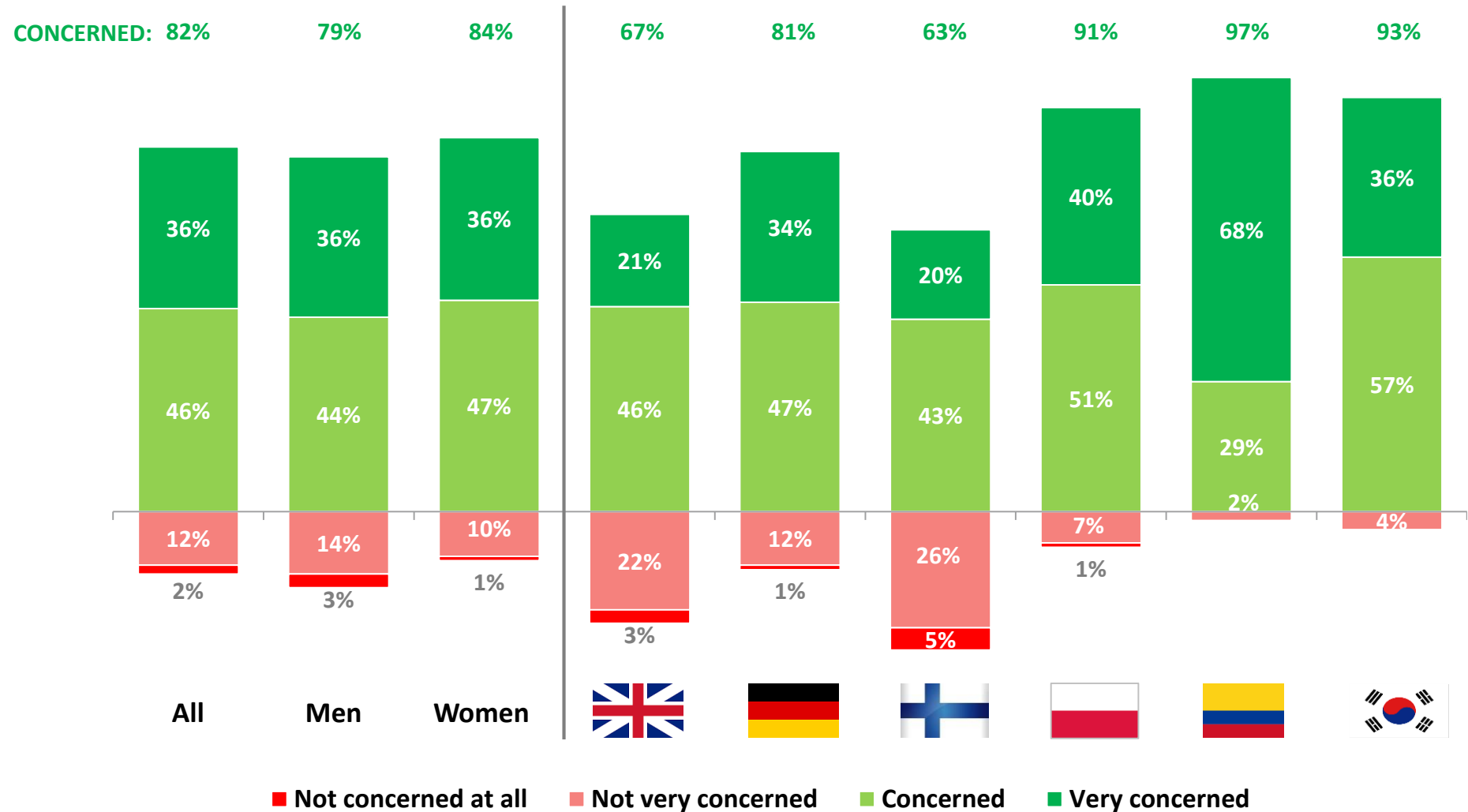
- For all committee members, pollution was at the top of the list, however:
  - Colombia was significantly more likely than other committee members to cite pollution (86%) and industrial activities (85%) as threats
  - UK (47%) and Finland (43%) were more likely than Germany, Poland and South Korea to state population growth (29%, 26% and 24%)
  - Germany was more likely than UK and Finland to state industrial activities (61% compared with 56% / 54%)
- Very few (3%) believed there were no particular threats to natural World Heritage Sites. The UK was more likely than other committee members to state this (6%)
- Men were more likely to mention population growth (39% vs 34% of women, whereas women focused more on industrial activities (67% vs 62%), climate change (65% vs 59%) and pollution (72% vs 67%).

# Over nine in ten believe it is important to protect natural World Heritage Sites from damage due to industrial activity

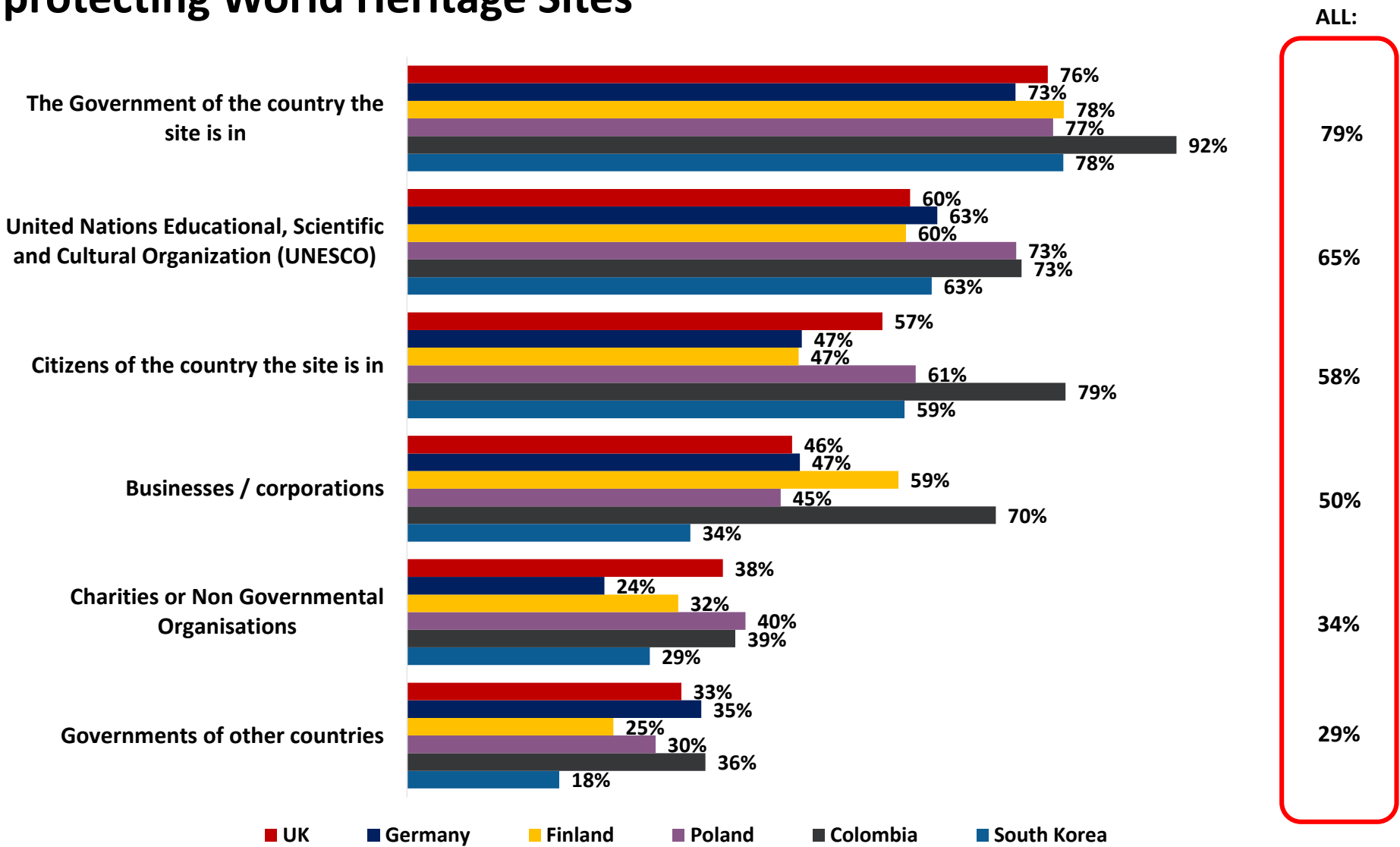


11 A4. How important do you think it is to protect natural World Heritage Sites from damage caused by industrial activities (such as mining, drilling for oil, or large-scale construction)?  
Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)

# Eight in ten are concerned about damage being caused to World Heritage Sites as a result of industrial activity

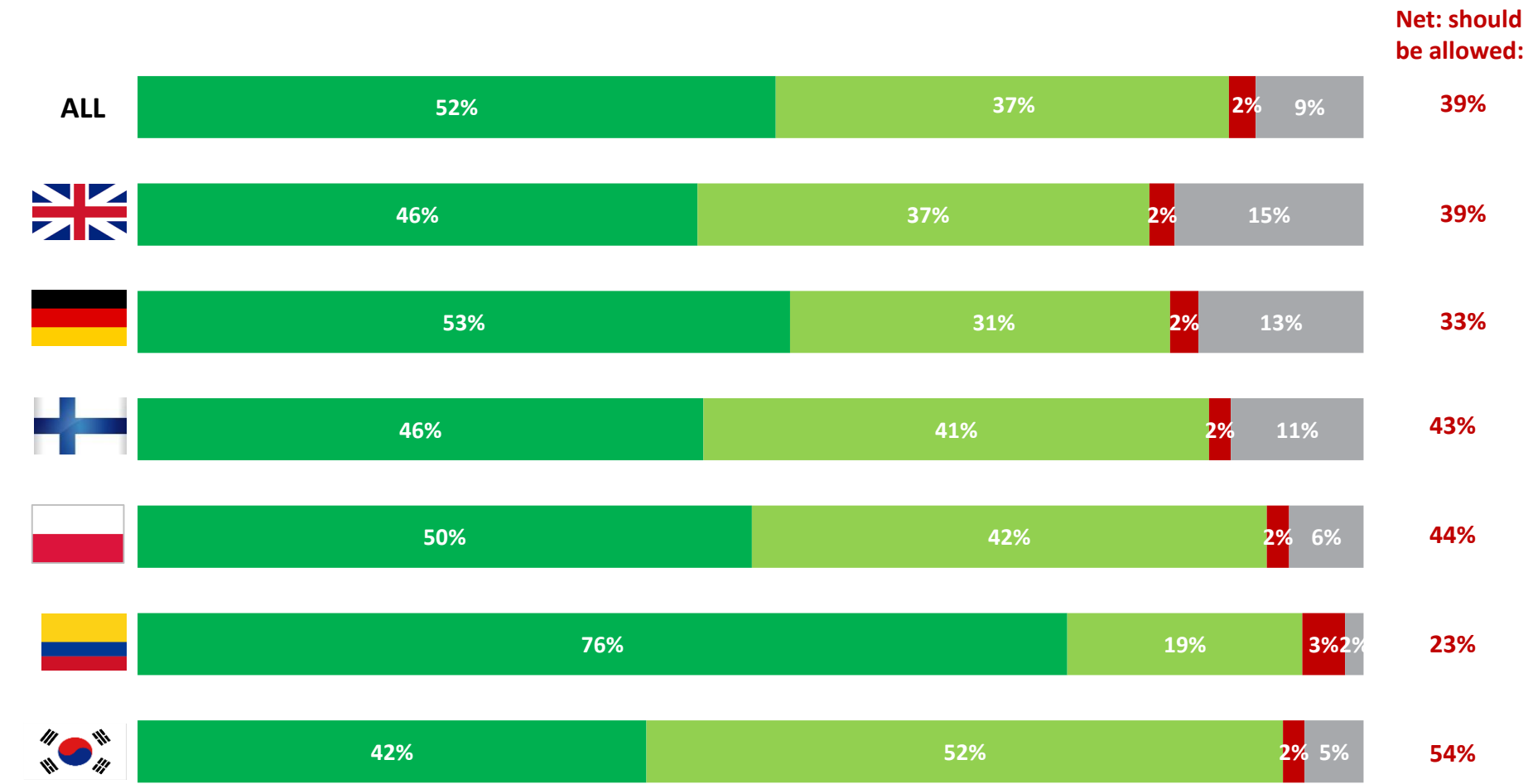


# Government dominates when asked who should play a part in protecting World Heritage Sites



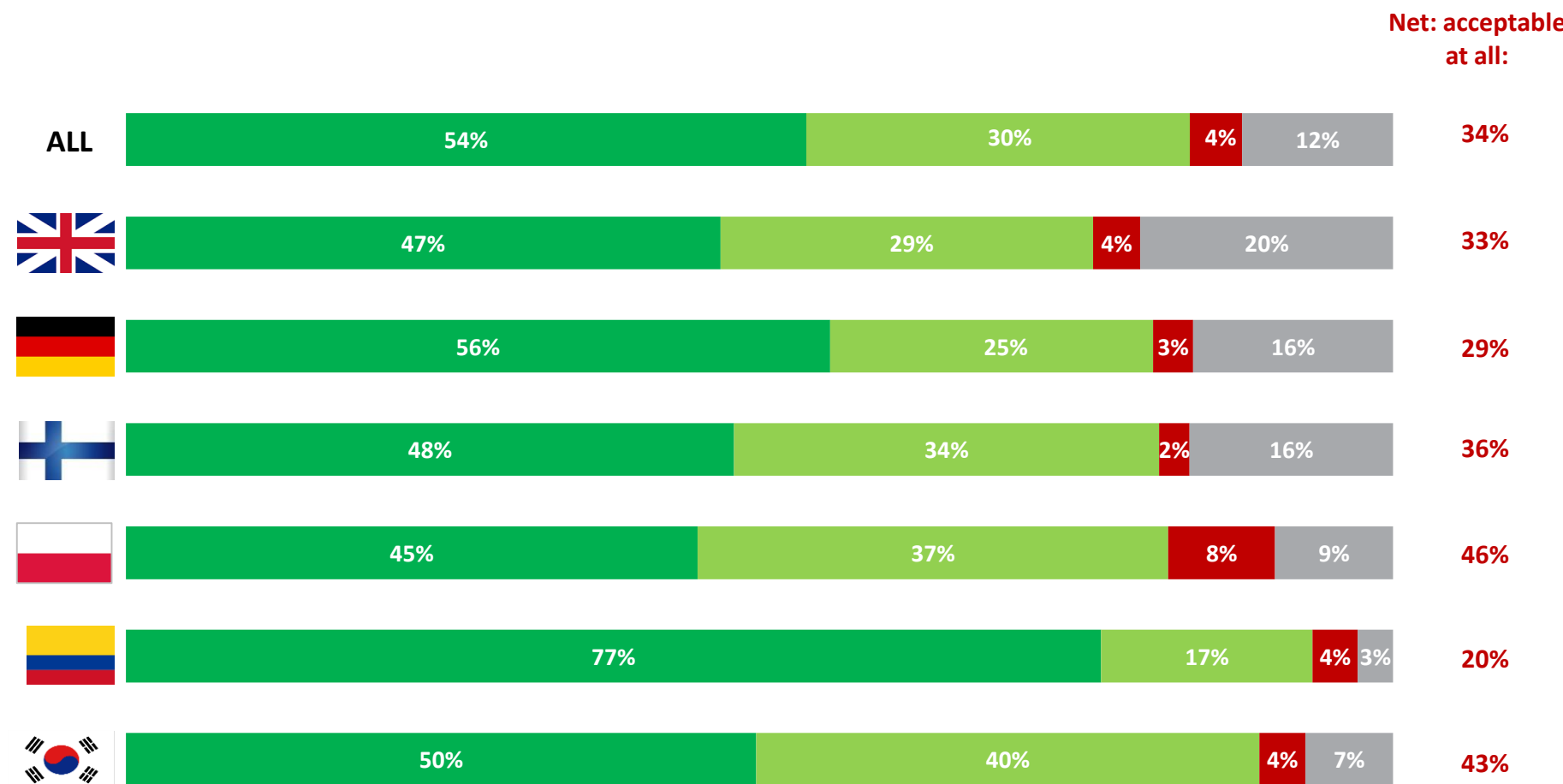
A6. Which, if any, of the following do you think should play a part in protecting natural World Heritage Sites from damage caused by industrial activities (such as mining, drilling for oil, or large-scale construction)? Please tick all that apply.  
Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)  
Figures for Not applicable & Don't know have not been shown

# More than half believe industrial activities that impact within the boundaries should not be allowed under any circumstances



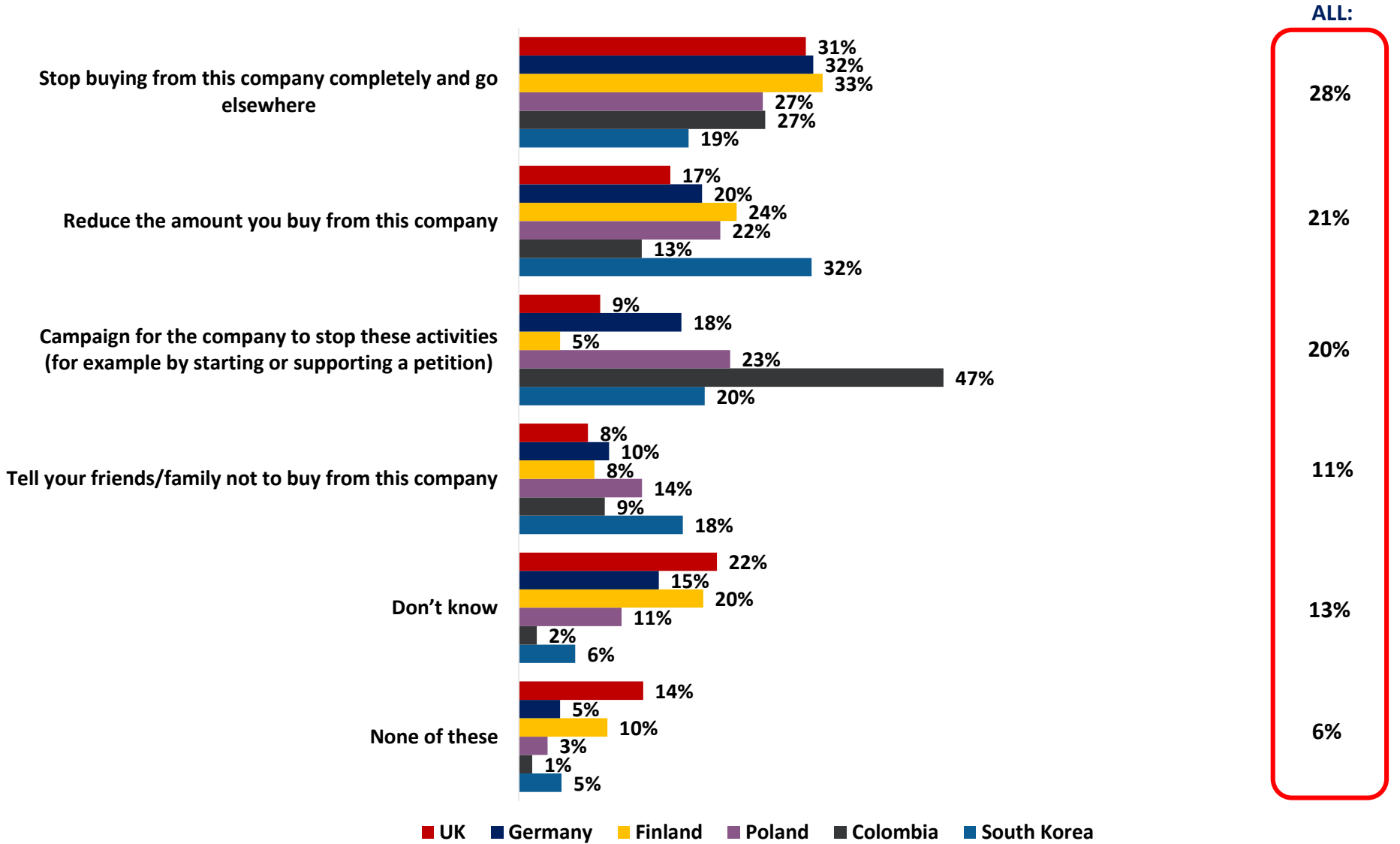
- Industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries of World Heritage Sites should not be allowed under any circumstances
- Industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries of World Heritage Sites should be allowed under certain circumstances
- Industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries of World Heritage Sites should be allowed under all/any circumstances
- Don't know

# More than half also believe financial institutions should not provide funding for these industrial activities under any circumstances



- Banks/financial institutions should not provide funding for industrial activities...under any circumstances
- It is acceptable for banks/financial institutions to provide funding for industrial activities...under certain circumstances
- It is acceptable for banks/financial institutions to provide funding for industrial activities...under all/any circumstances
- Don't know

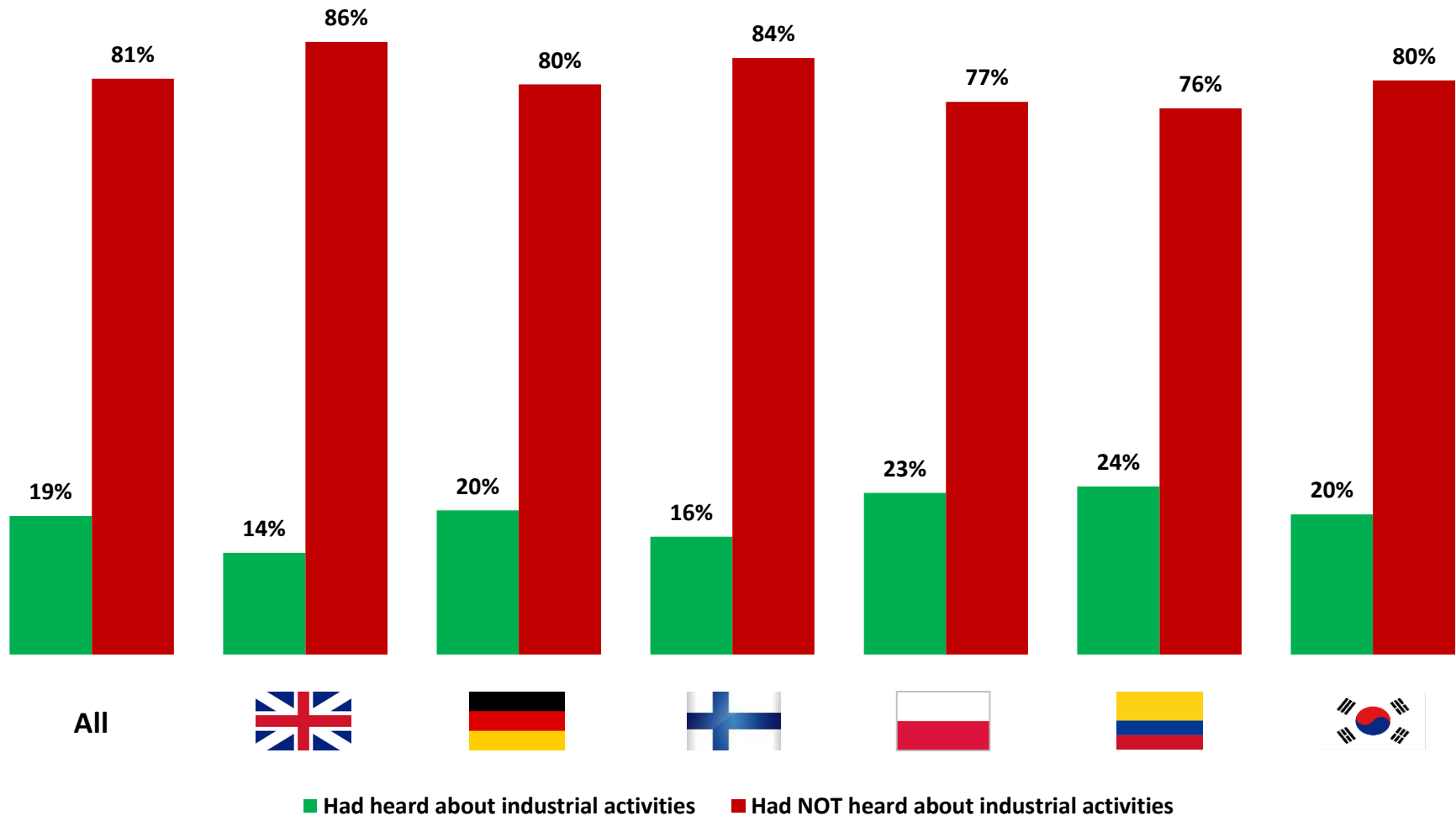
# Just under three in ten would stop buying from a company that was involved in industrial activities that had impacts within a WHS



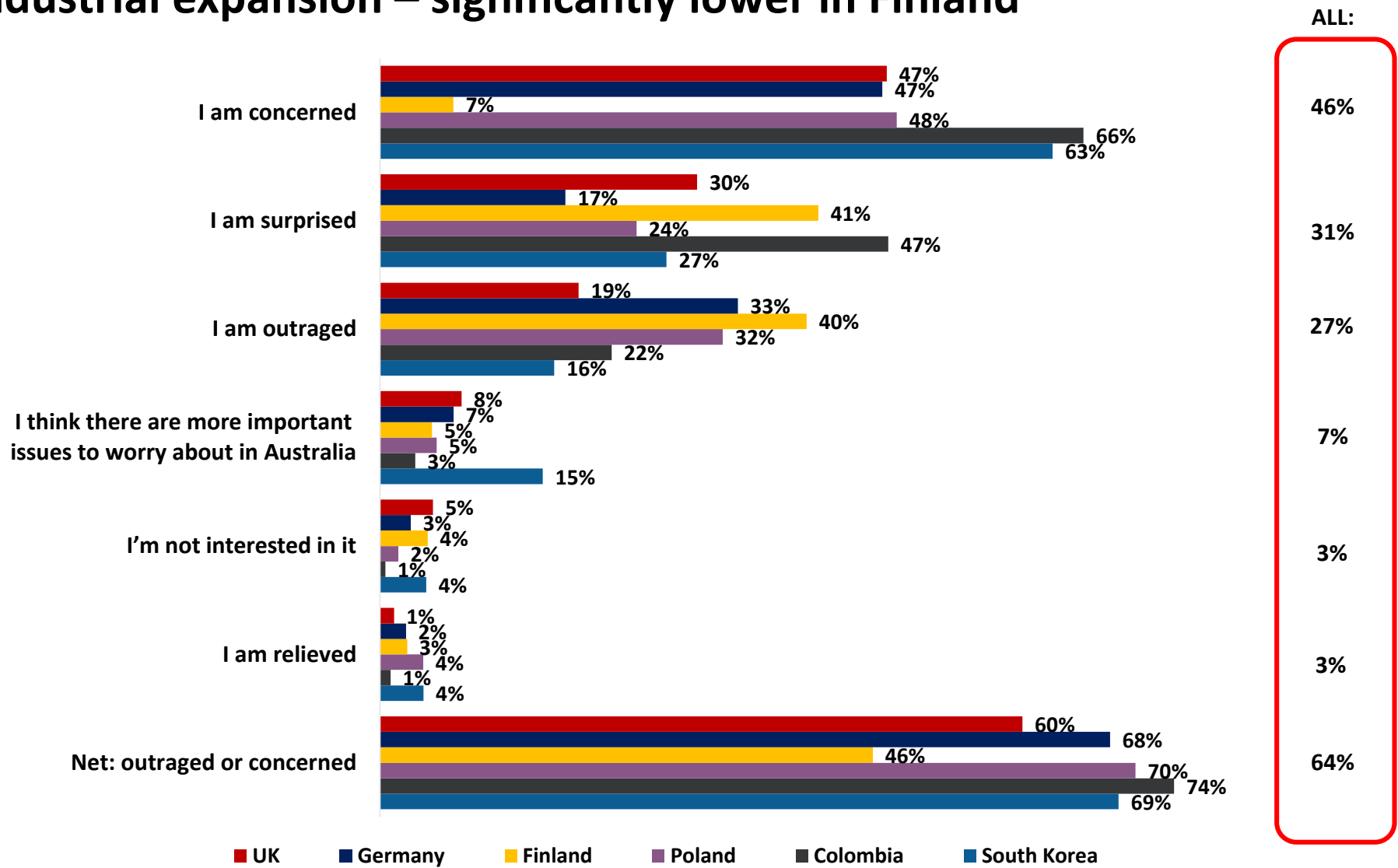


# Industrial activity around the Great Barrier Reef

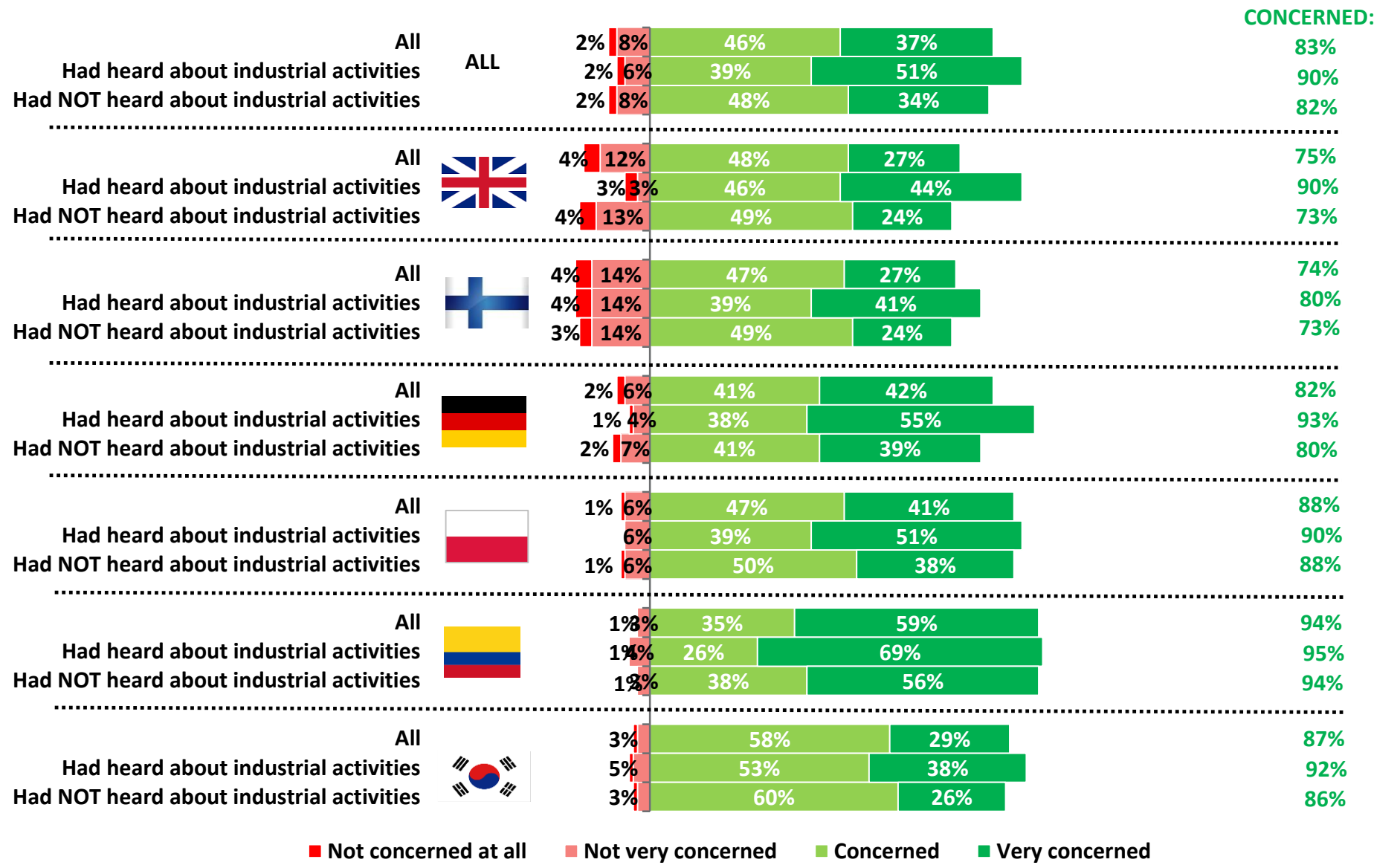
# Only one in five had heard anything about industrial activities with the GBR World Heritage Site prior to taking the survey



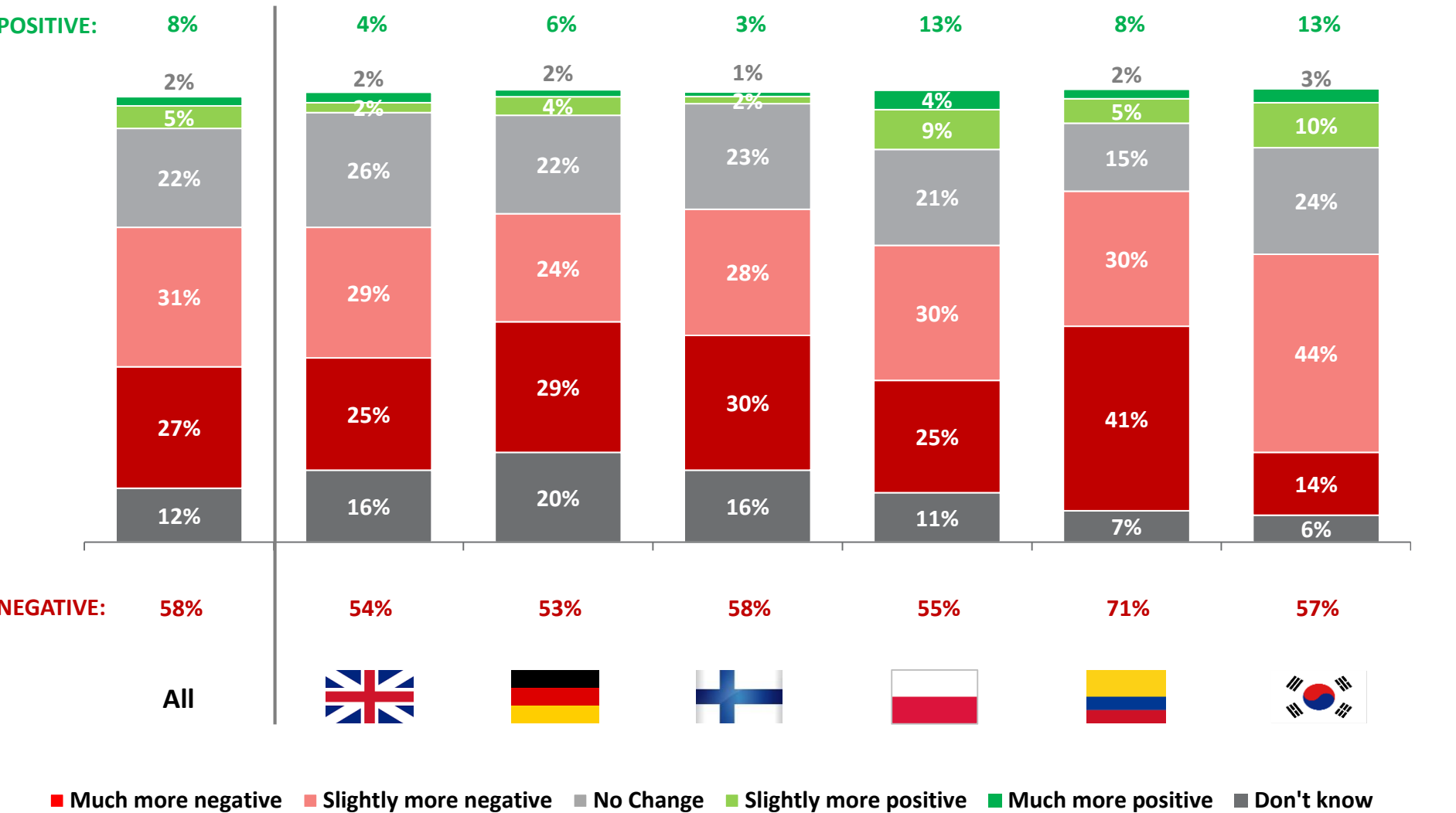
# Close to two thirds are either outraged or concerned by planned industrial expansion – significantly lower in Finland



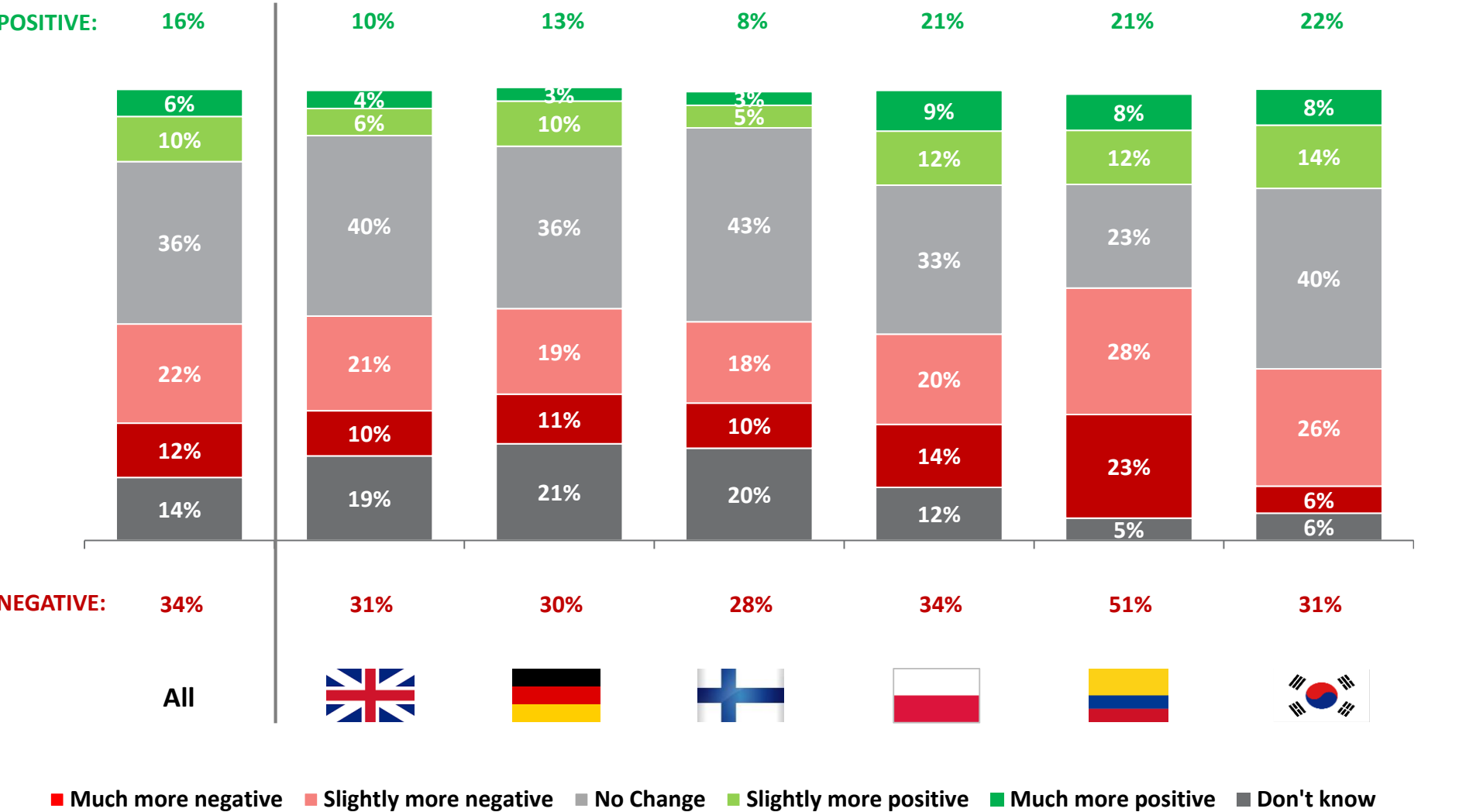
# Over eight in ten are concerned about the Great Barrier Reef being damaged, particularly those who were already aware of the activities



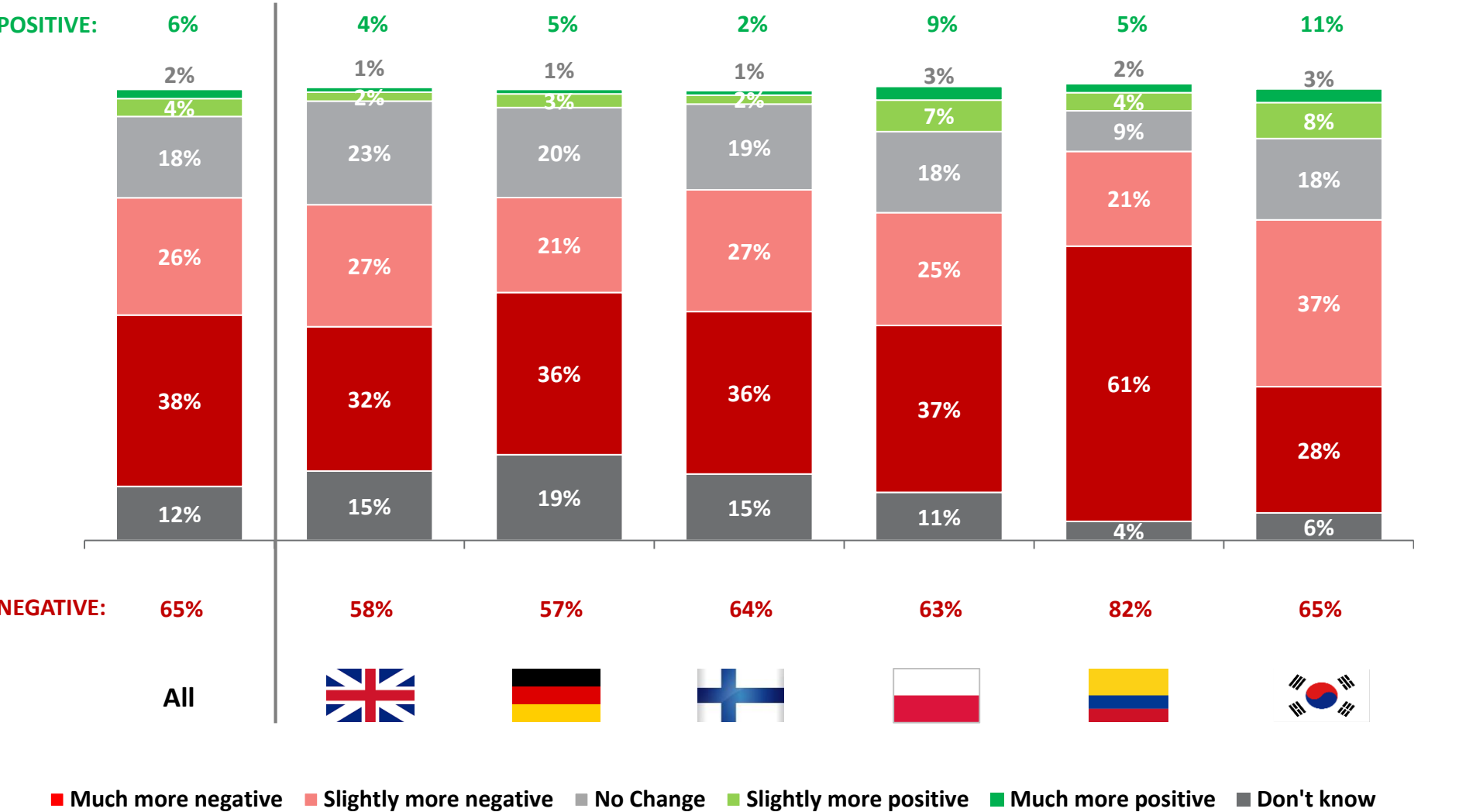
# Six in ten feel more negatively towards the Australian Government due to plans for expansion of industrial activity around the Reef



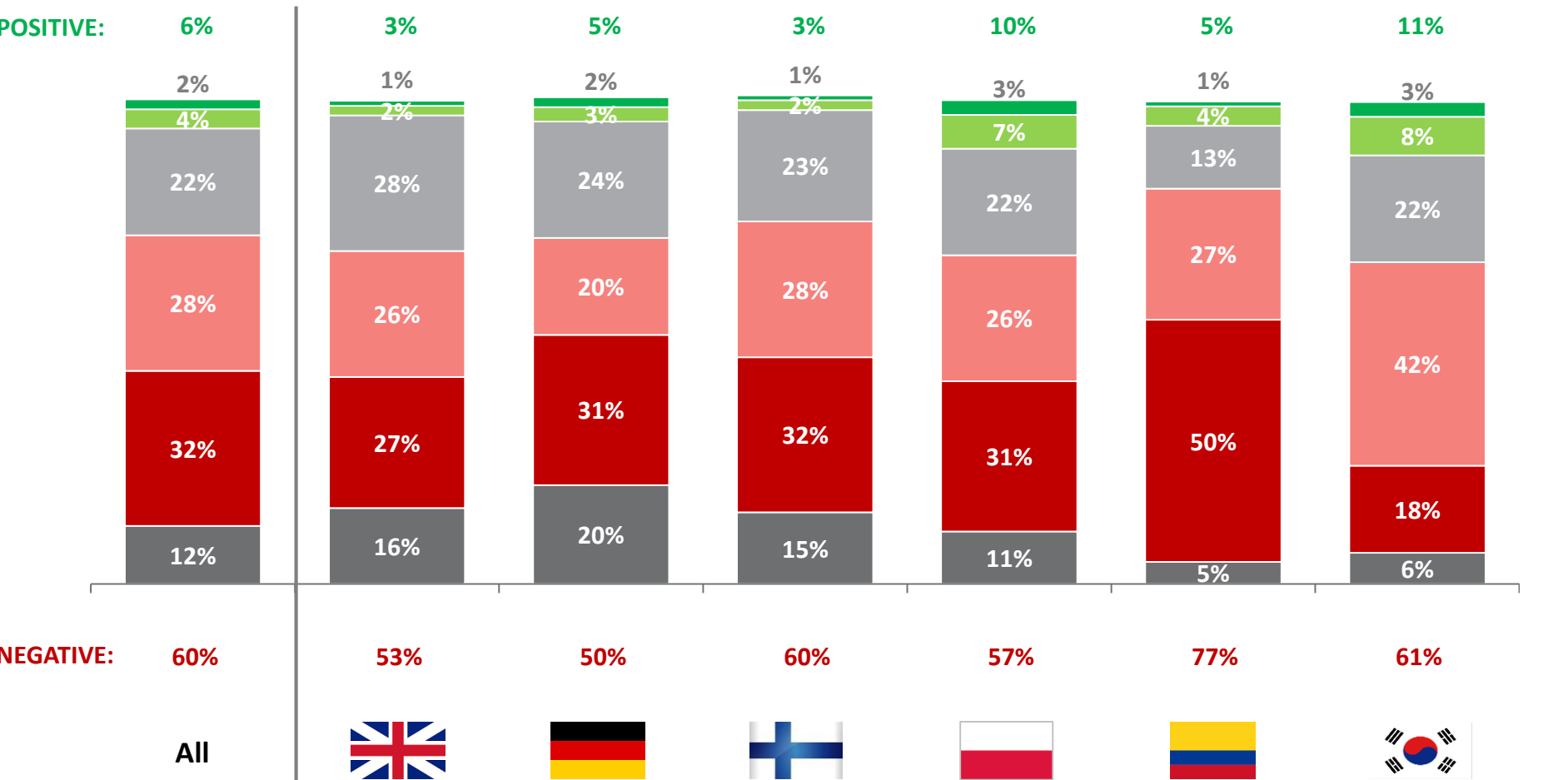
# A third feel more negatively towards UNESCO due to plans for expansion of industrial activity around the Reef



# Two thirds feel more negatively towards companies carrying out industrial activities within the Great Barrier Reef due to these plans



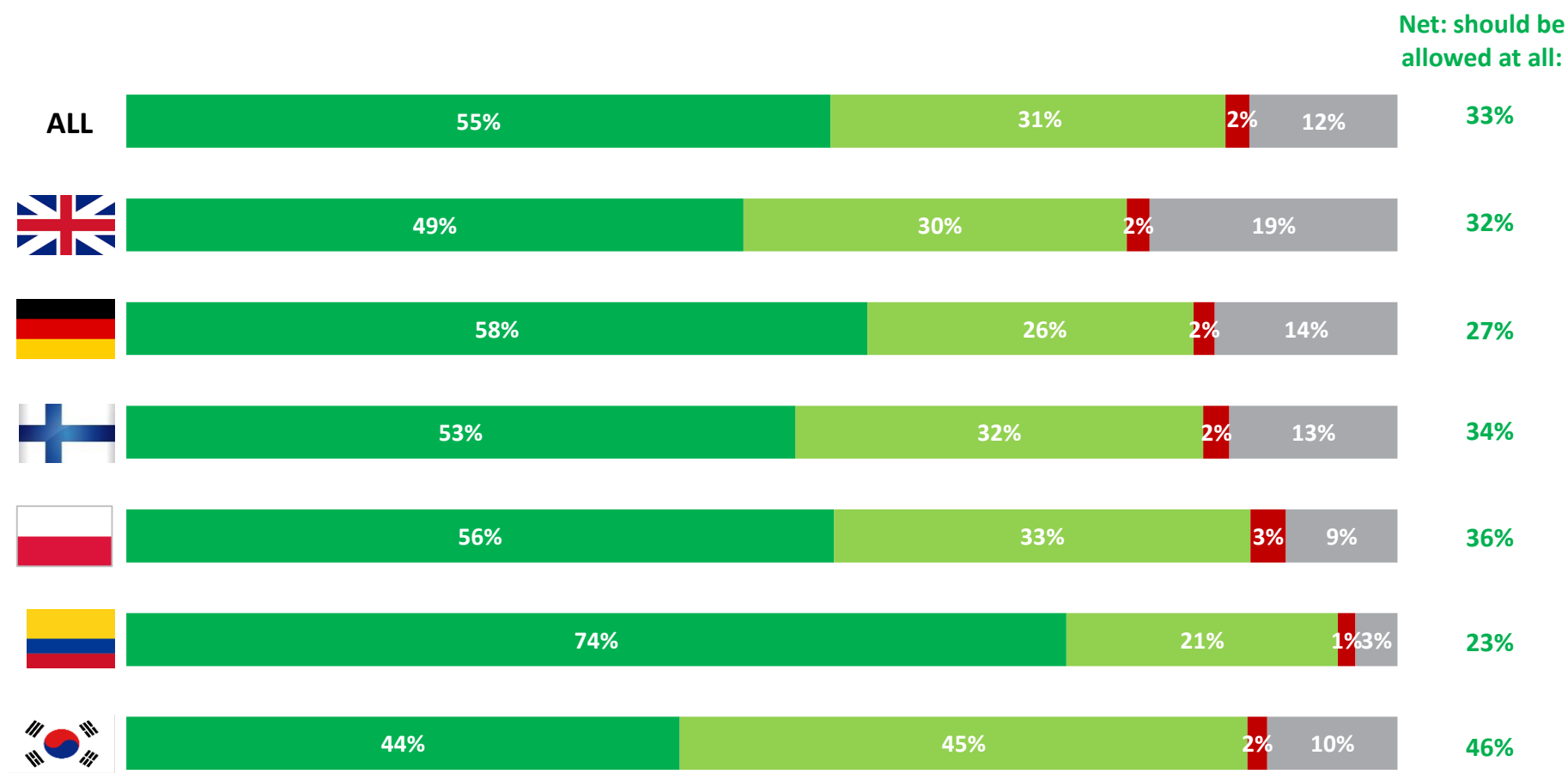
# Six in ten feel more negatively towards banks/financial institutions providing funding for industrial activities within the Great Barrier Reef



■ Much more negative ■ Slightly more negative ■ No Change ■ Slightly more positive ■ Much more positive ■ Don't know

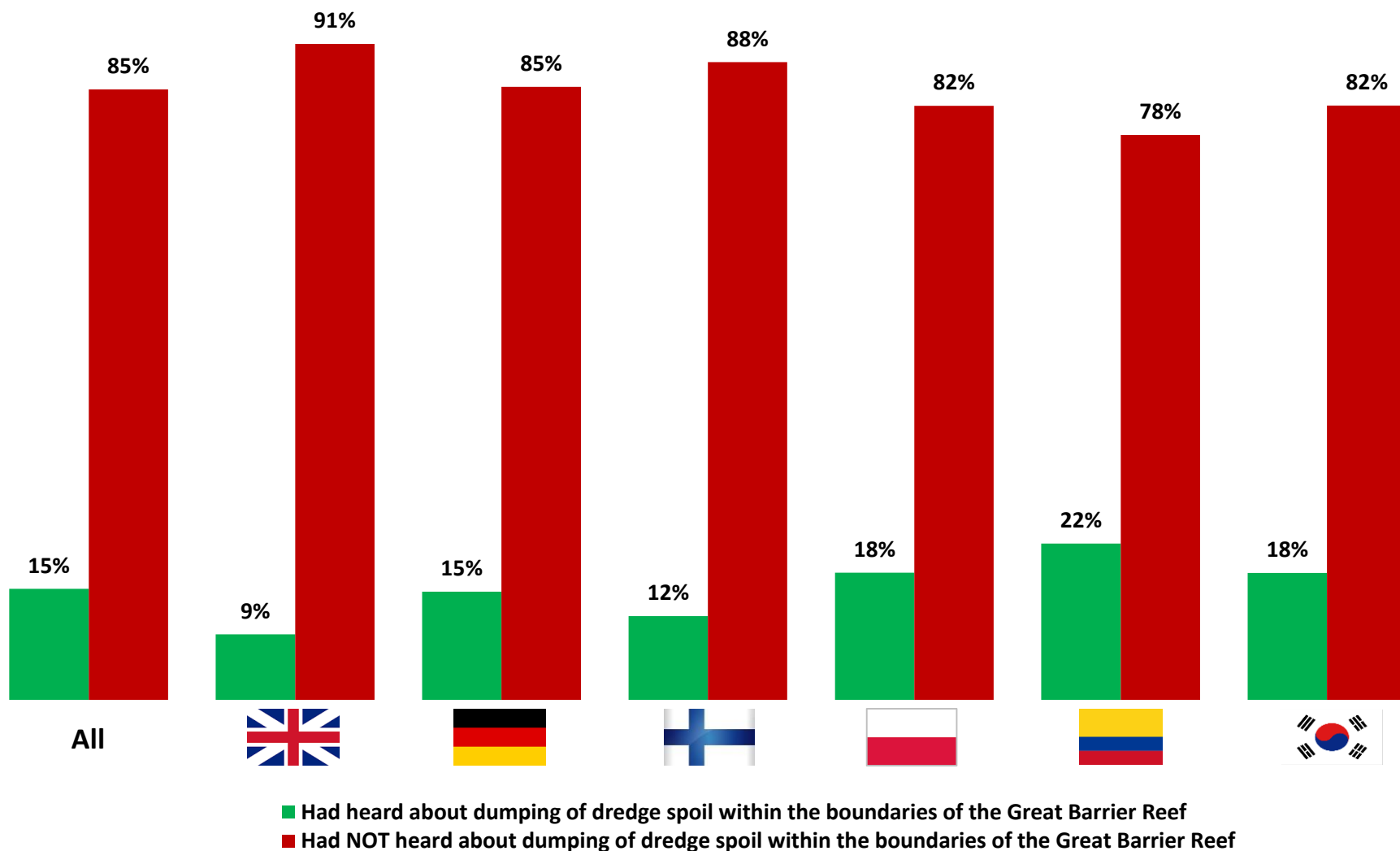


# More than half believe industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries of the GBR should not be allowed under any circumstances

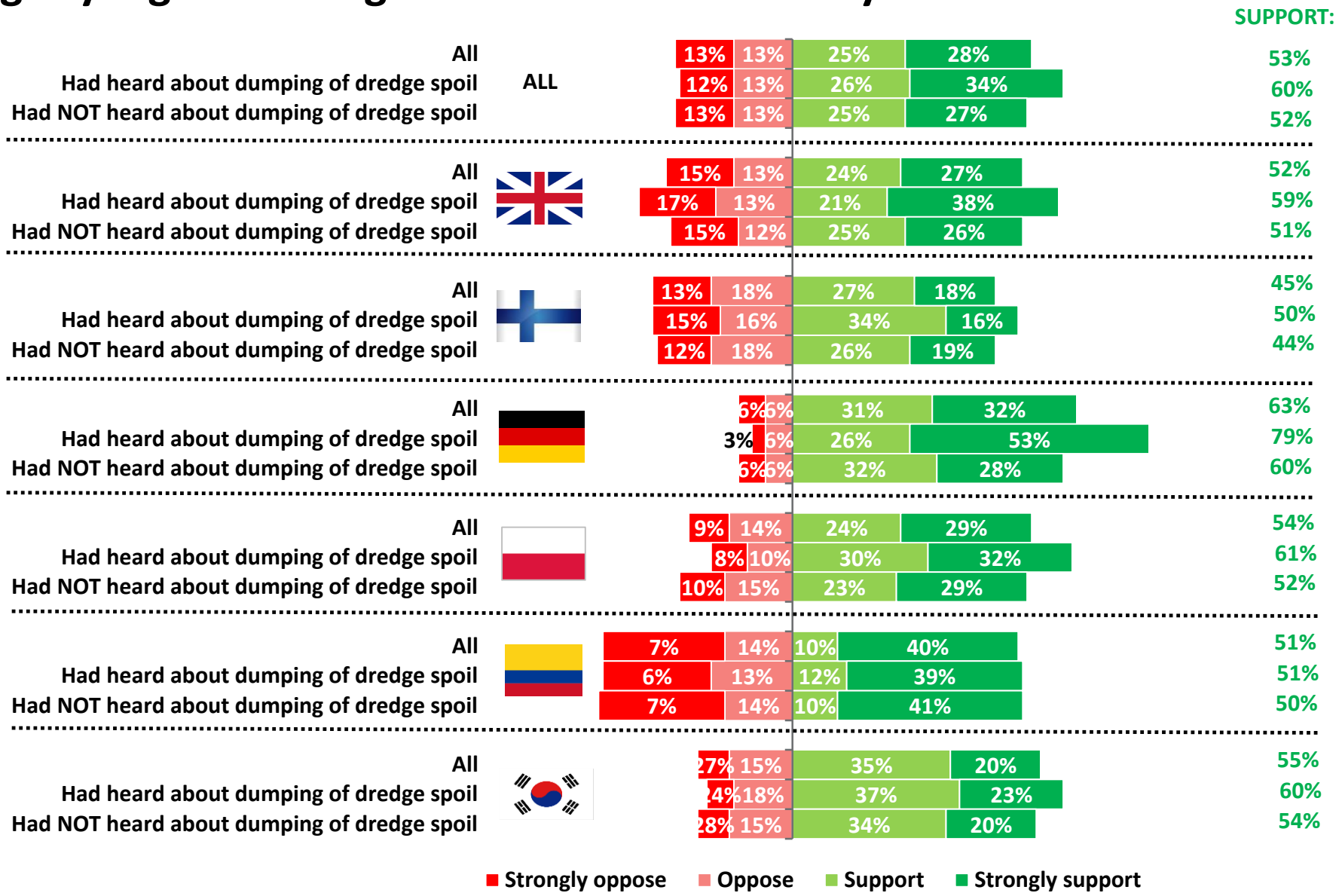


- Industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries...should not be allowed under any circumstances
- Industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries...should be allowed under certain circumstances
- Industrial activities that have impacts within the boundaries...should be allowed under all/any circumstances
- Don't know

# Only 15% had heard anything about dumping of dredge spoil within the boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef prior to the survey

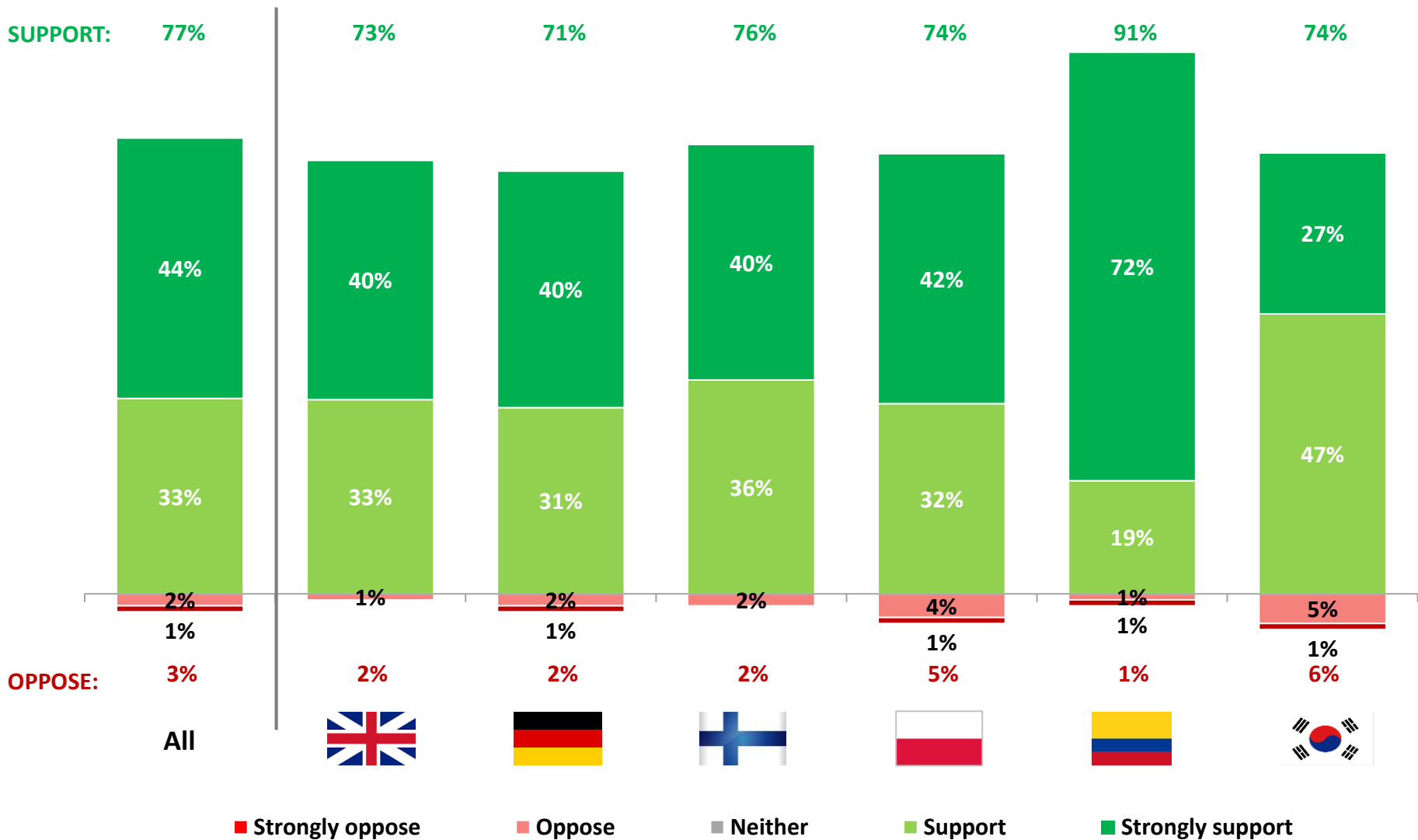


# Around half support a ban on dumping of dredge spoil – generally slightly higher among those who were already aware of it



# Taking Action

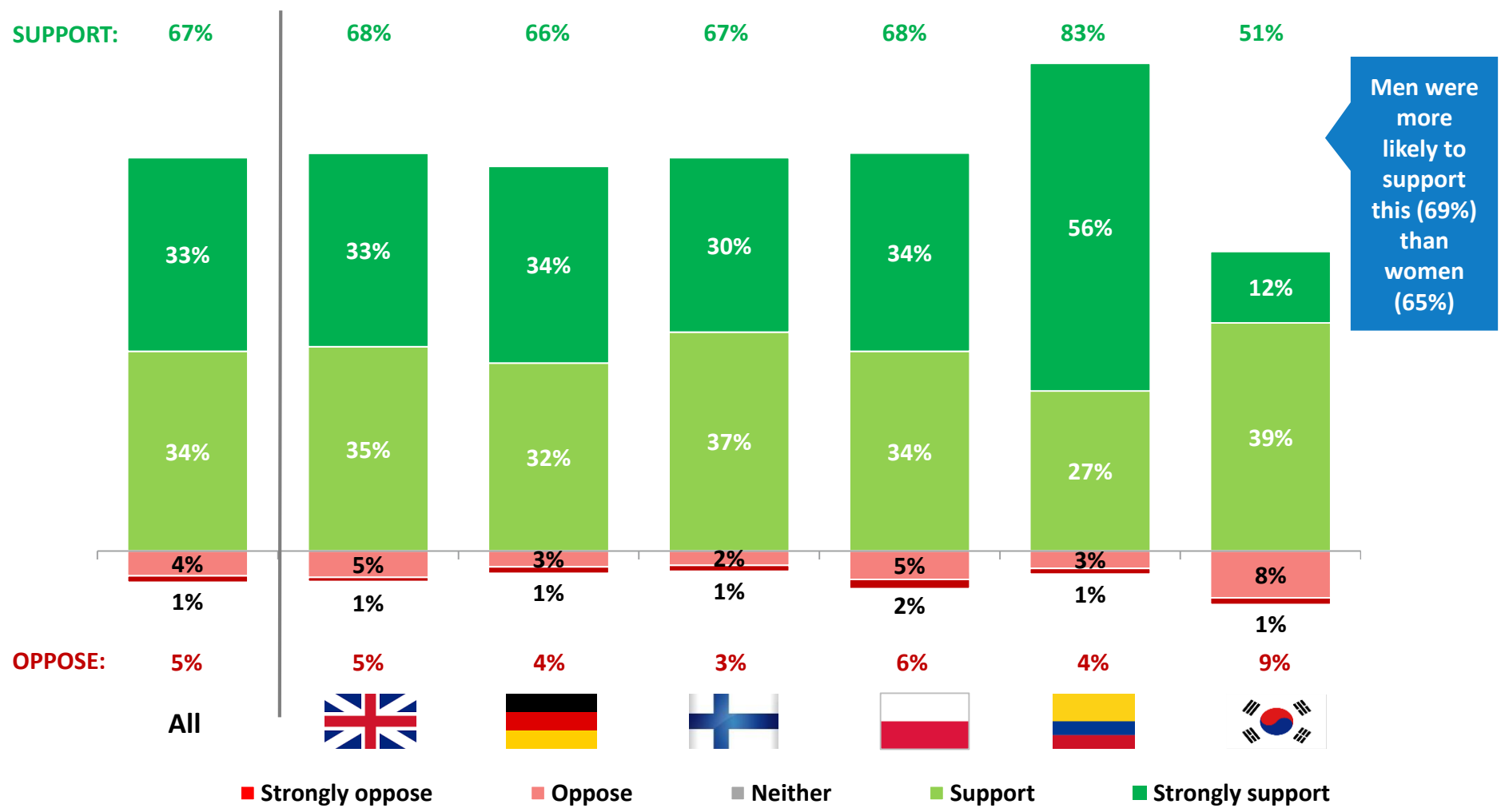
# Over three quarters support their government calling on UNESCO to maintain strong oversight until the reef's health is secured



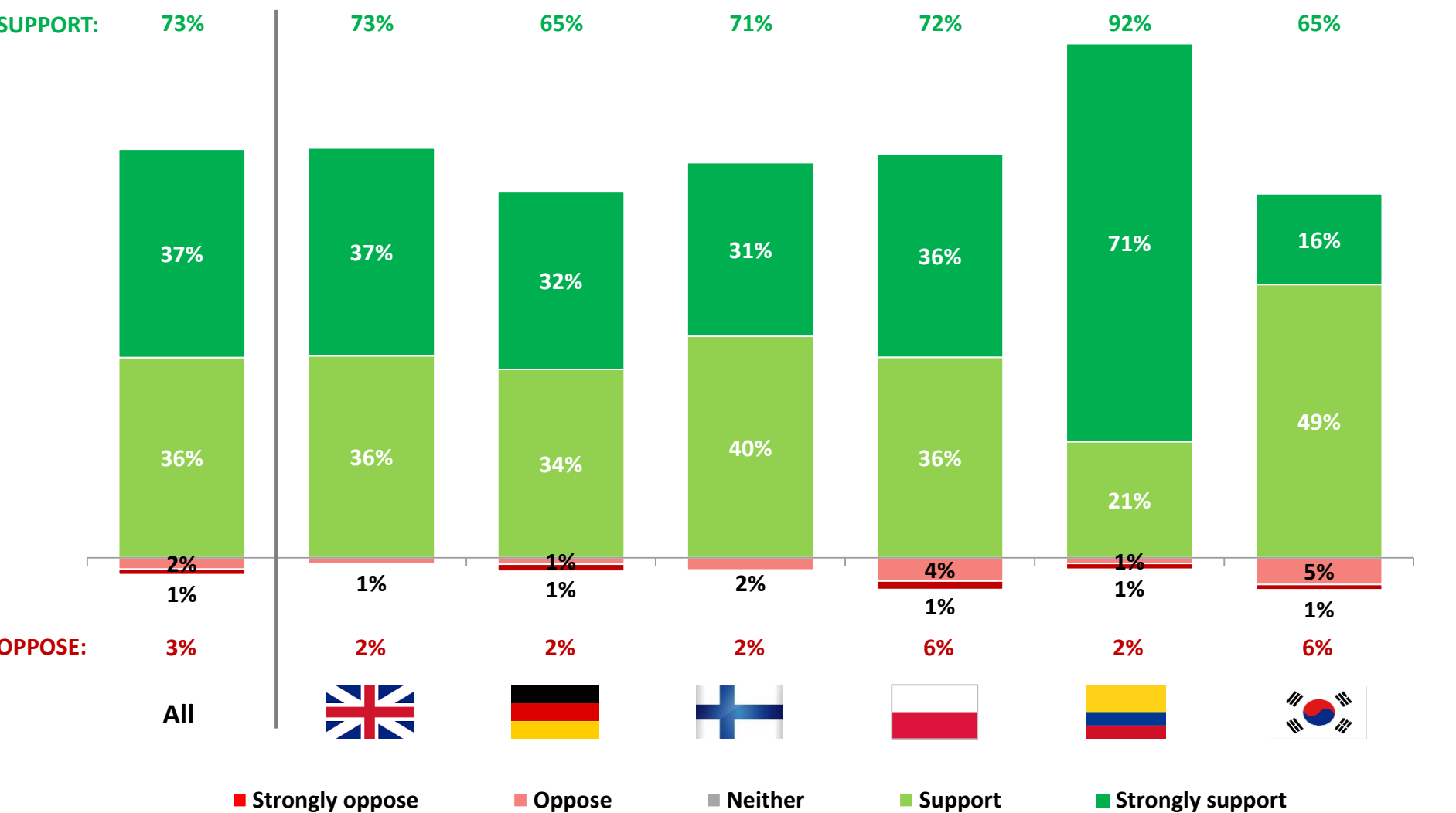
B8\_1 Your country is one of the 21 current members of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. Your government is therefore involved in making decisions on the protection and management of World Heritage Sites, including the Great Barrier Reef. To what extent do you support or oppose your government calling on UNESCO to maintain strong oversight of the condition of the Reef until its health has been secured

Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)

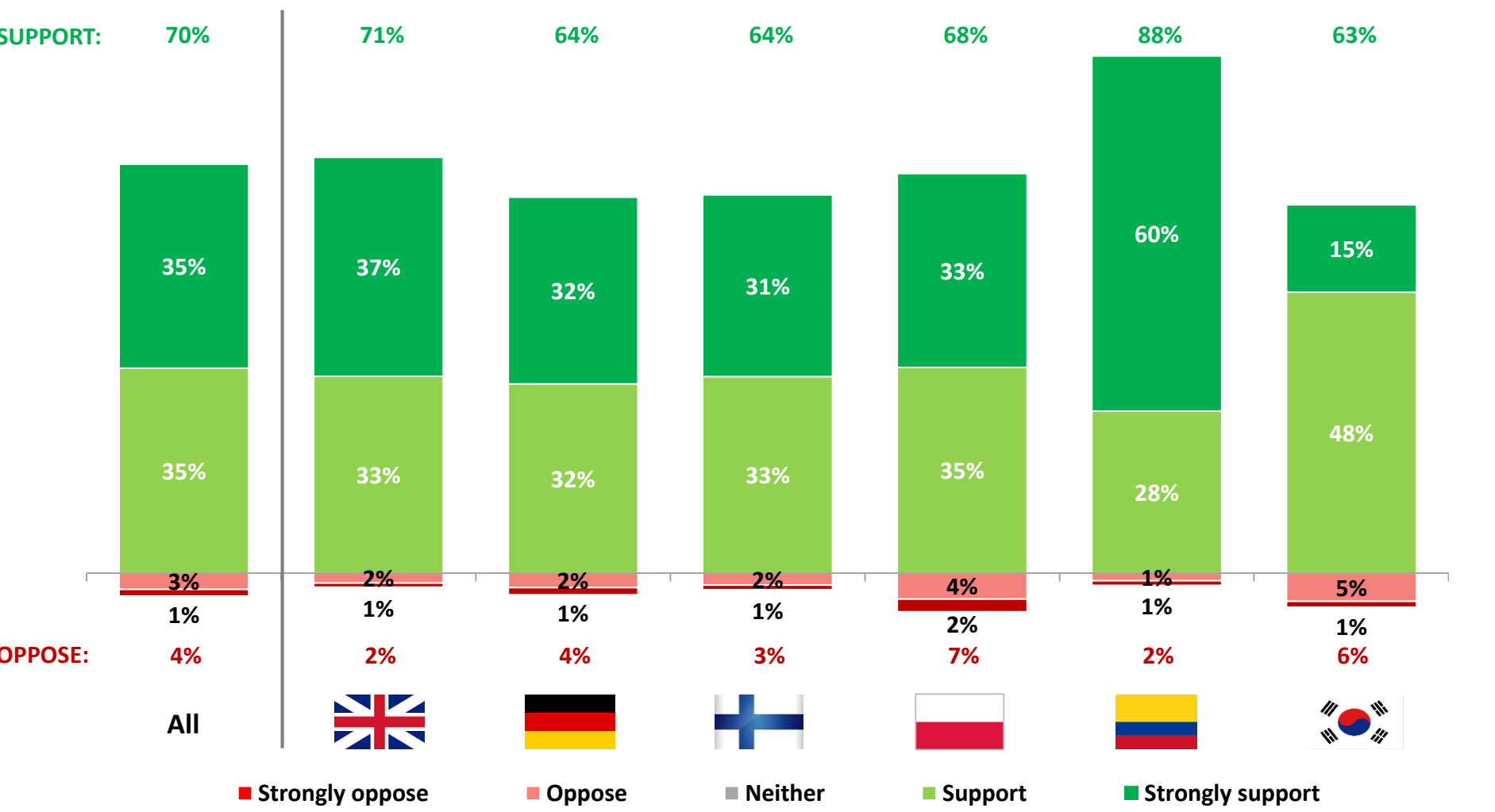
# Two thirds support directly calling on the Australian government to significantly increase protections for the reef, even if this creates diplomatic tensions or has negative consequences for trade



# Almost three quarters support their government declaring support for protection of the Reef and other WH Sites through official statements



# Seven in ten support their government holding the Australian government accountable to the guidelines of WHC decisions

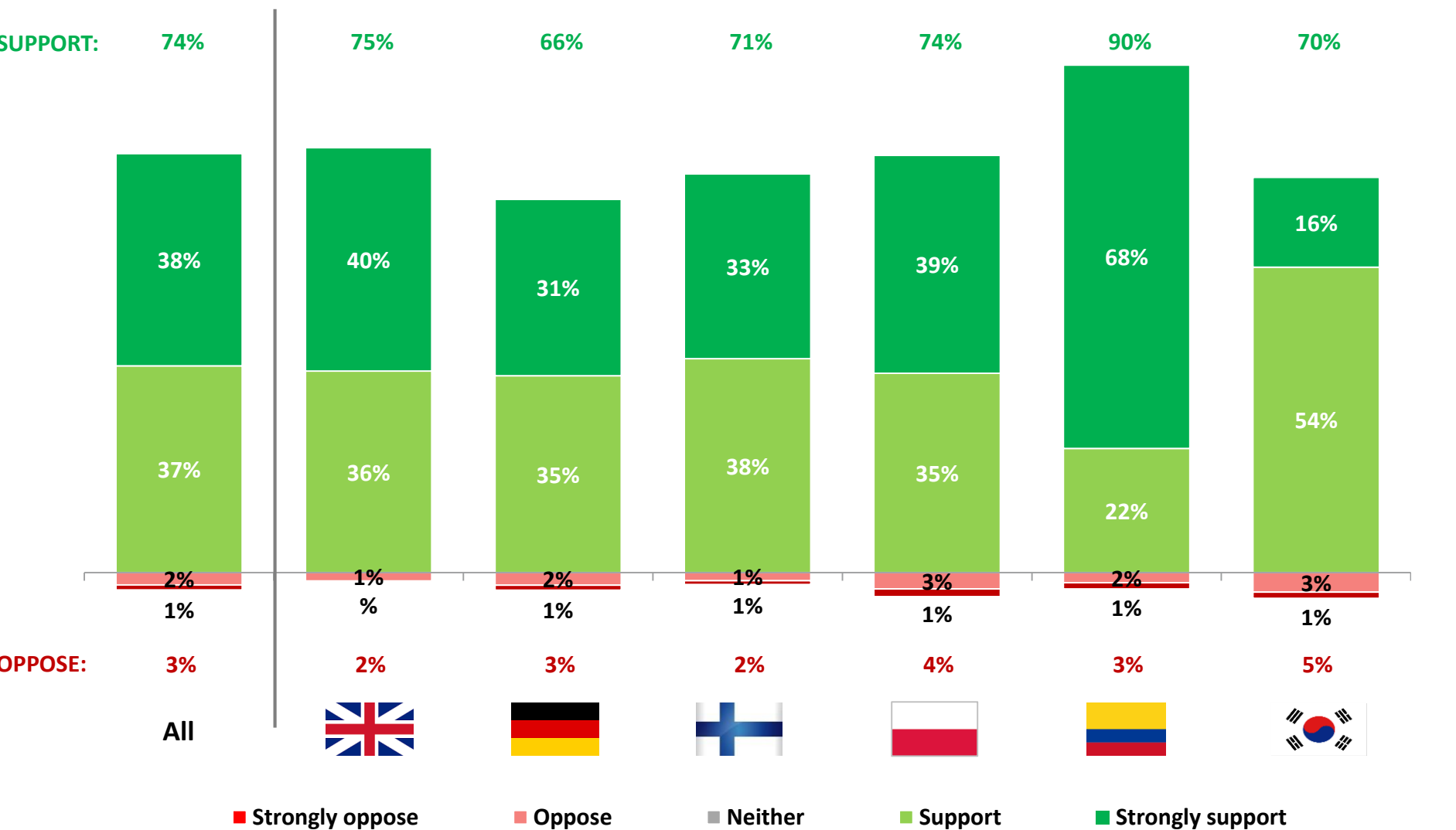


B8\_4. Your country is one of the 21 current members of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. Your government is therefore involved in making decisions on the protection and management of World Heritage Sites, including the Great Barrier Reef. To what extent do you support or oppose your government holding the Australian government accountable to the guidelines of World Heritage Committee decisions (for example by voting for additional protection or better management of the Reef)?

Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)



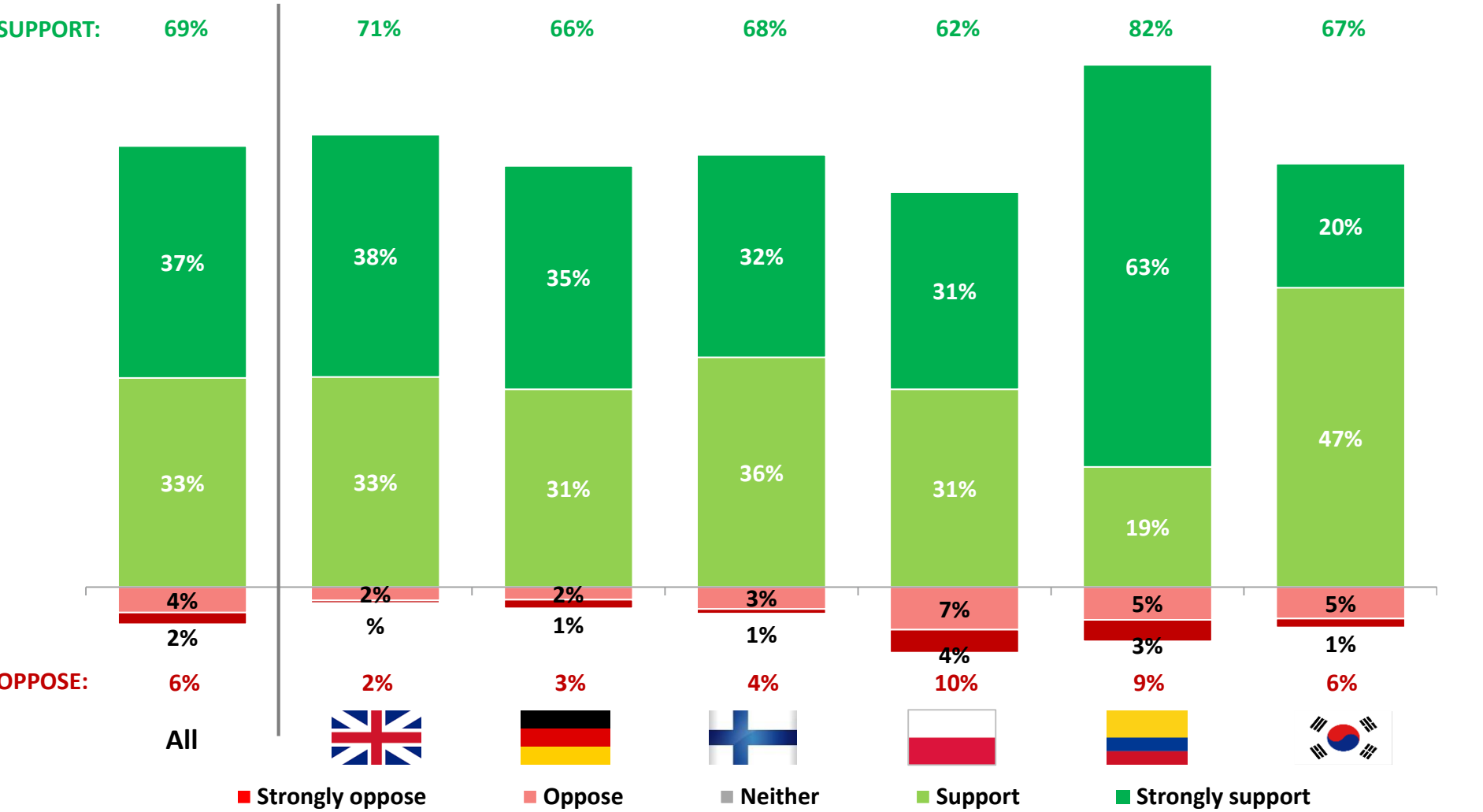
# Three quarters support their government ensuring that companies based in their country adhere to best practice in relation to World Heritage Sites



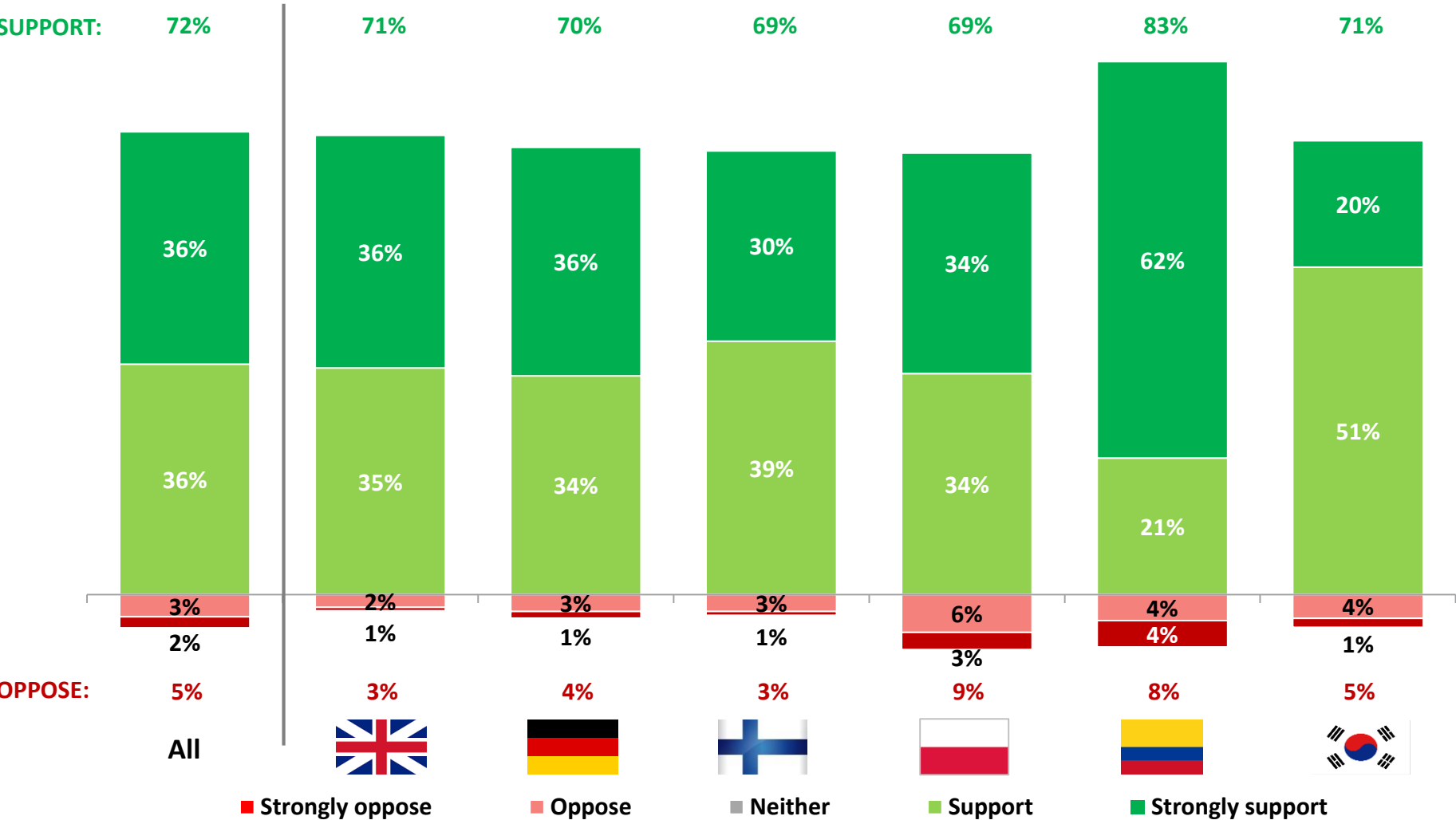
B8\_5 Your country is one of the 21 current members of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. Your government is therefore involved in making decisions on the protection and management of World Heritage Sites, including the Great Barrier Reef. To what extent do you support or oppose your government Ensuring that companies based in your country adhere to guidelines or best practice procedures in relation to natural World Heritage Sites

Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)

# Over two thirds support their government making natural World Heritage Sites in their country off-limits to industrial activities



# Over seven in ten support encouraging other countries to make natural World Heritage Sites off-limits to industrial activities



B8\_7. Your country is one of the 21 current members of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. Your government is therefore involved in making decisions on the protection and management of World Heritage Sites, including the Great Barrier Reef. To what extent do you support or oppose your government encouraging other countries to make natural World Heritage Sites off-limits to industrial activities (such as mining, drilling for oil or large-scale construction)?

Base: All (n=6134) UK (n=1055), Germany (n=1062), Finland (n=1005), Poland (n=1001), Columbia (n=1006), South Korea (n=1005)

# Impact on likelihood to visit the Great Barrier Reef

# For many respondents, planned expansion of industrial activity makes no difference to likelihood to visit the GBR – a fifth would be less likely

