

BACKGROUND

- Shelter Medicine is an emerging area of veterinary medicine, not yet formally established in Portugal
- In 2018 policy changed and public (municipal) animal shelters became limited admission shelters
- Private animal shelters (associations) are gaining importance in admitting stray animals from municipal shelters
- No overall information on animal shelters is publicly available

OBJECTIVES

1. To characterise animal shelters at national level
2. To compare public and private animal shelters regarding resources (installations, feed, staff), animal welfare and disease

METHODS



Fig. 1 Geographical distribution of completed questionnaires (n= 33)

- A questionnaire was developed and approved by the Ethics Committee of ICBAS-CHUP
- The link of the questionnaire was emailed to 97 Municipal and 65 private Associations on 1st February 2021
- Preliminary results refer to the 33 completed questionnaires on 15th February 2021 (Fig. 1 and 2)

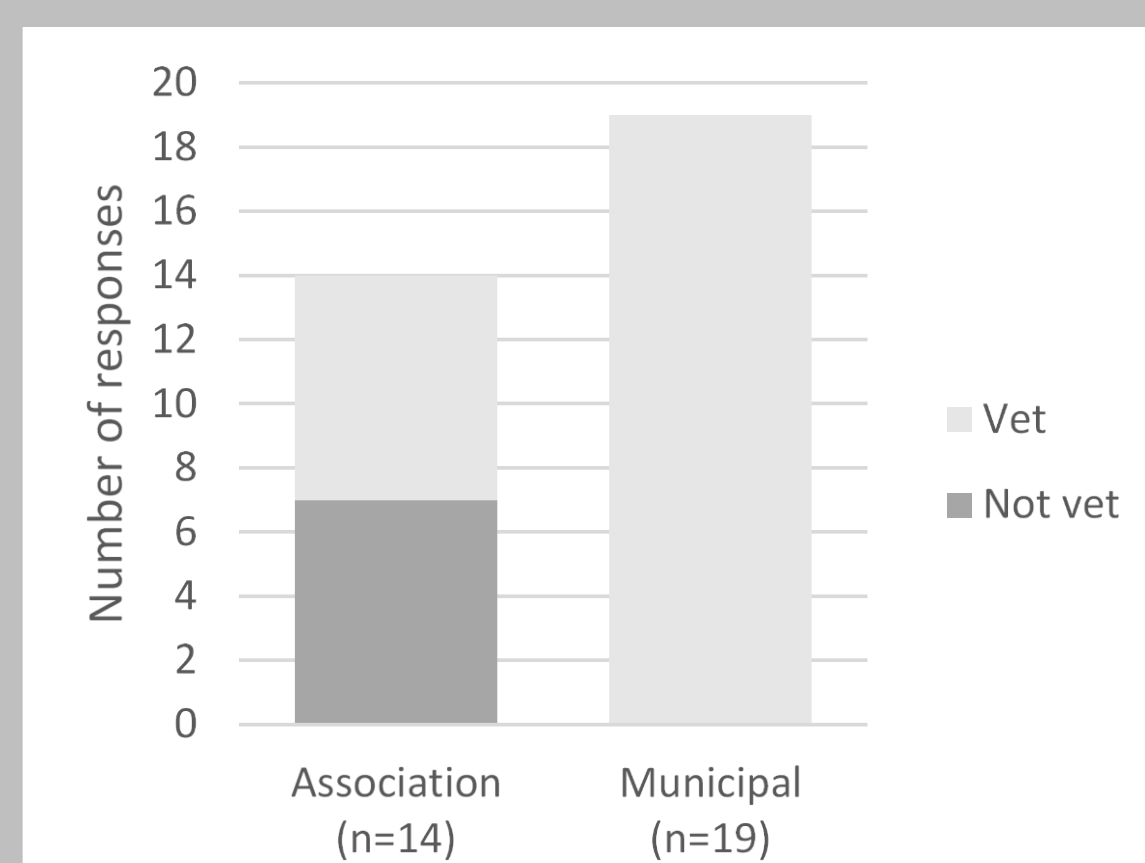


Fig. 2 Respondents of the questionnaire

RESULTS

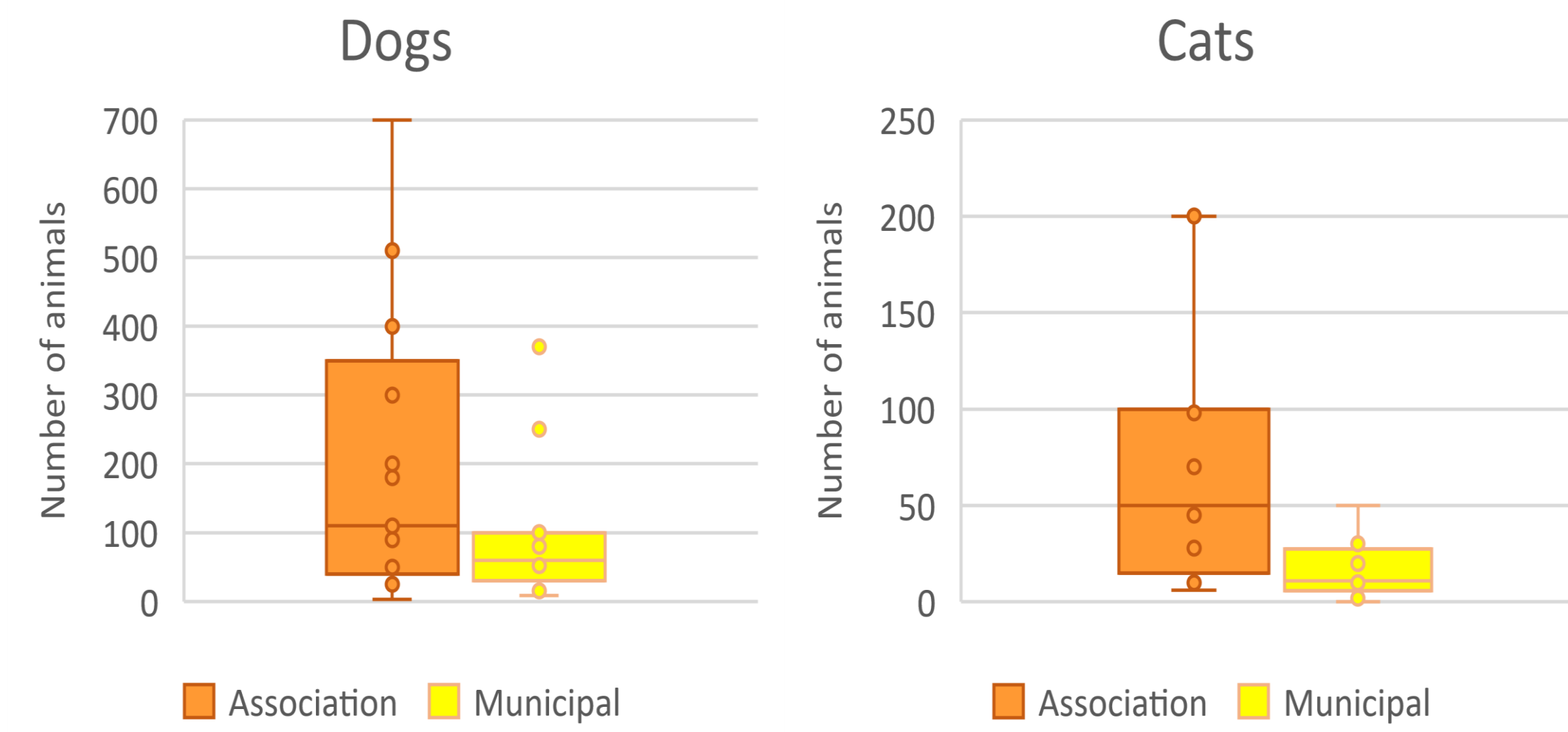


Fig. 3 Estimated number of animals currently in the shelter

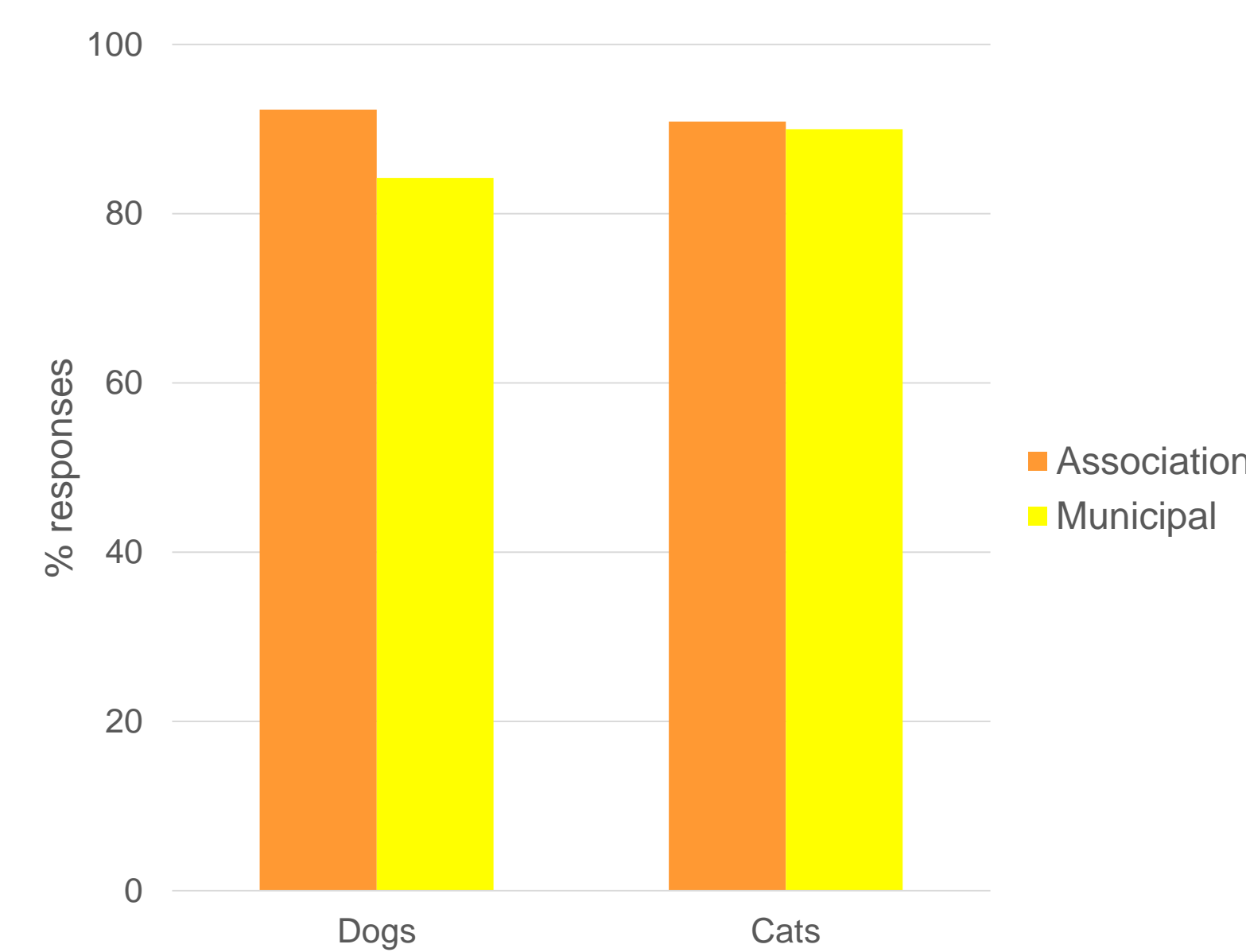


Fig. 6 High vaccination cover of animals in shelter (over 80% animals vaccinated)

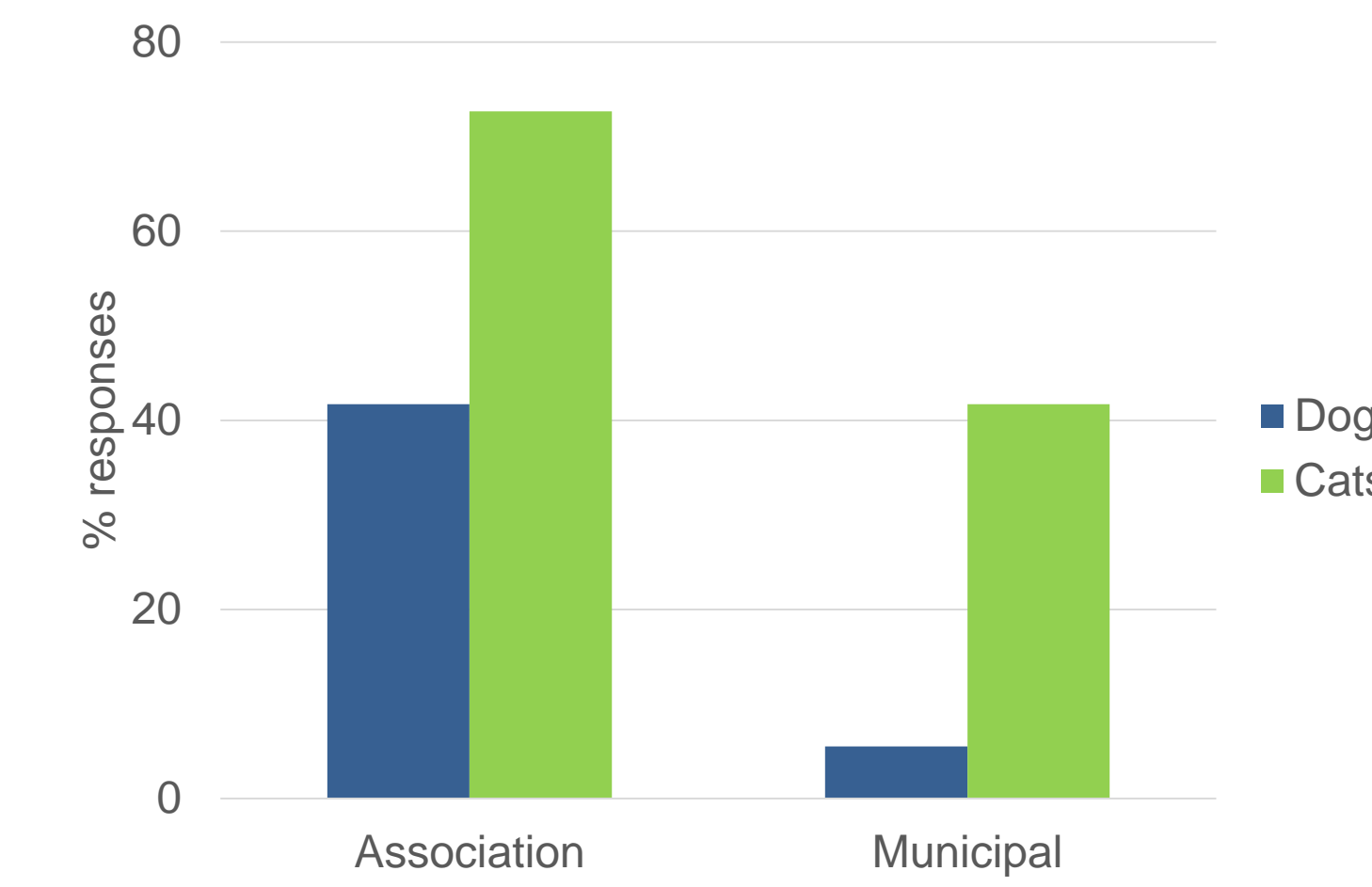


Fig. 4 Environmental enrichment in cages/animal areas

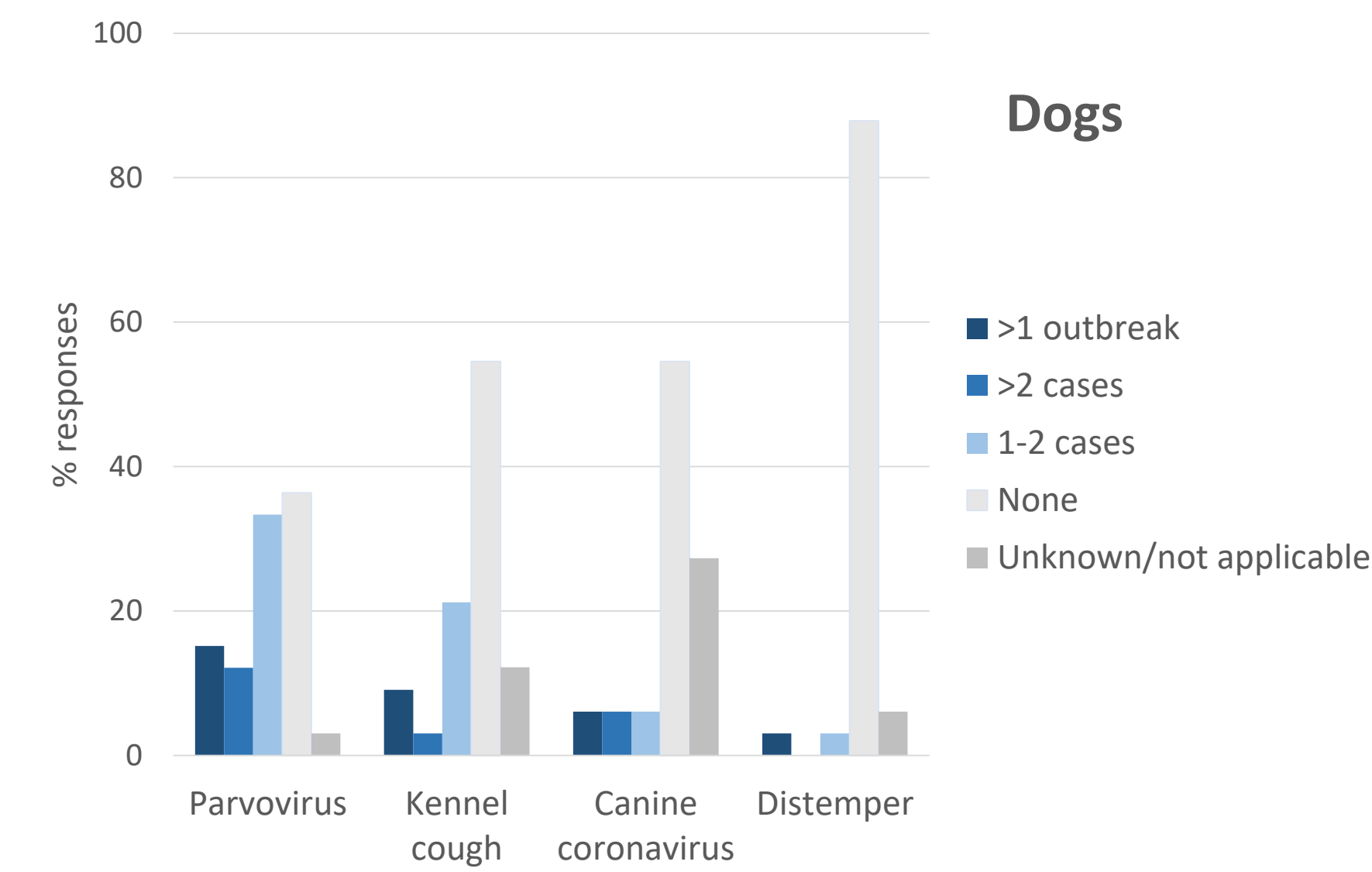


Fig. 7 Occurrence of canine infectious diseases in the past 12 months

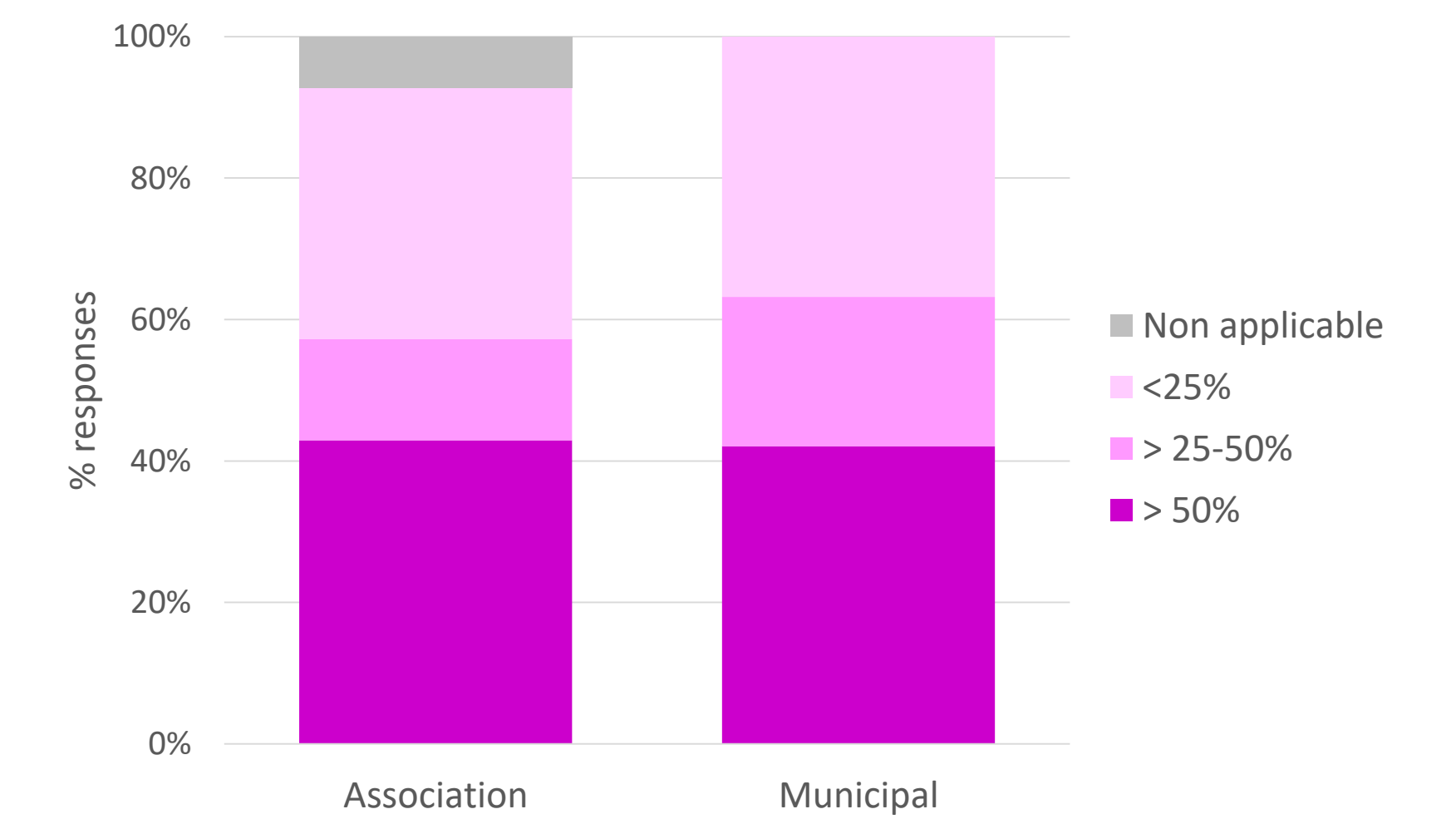


Fig. 5 Long-term housing: Dogs in shelter over 1 yr

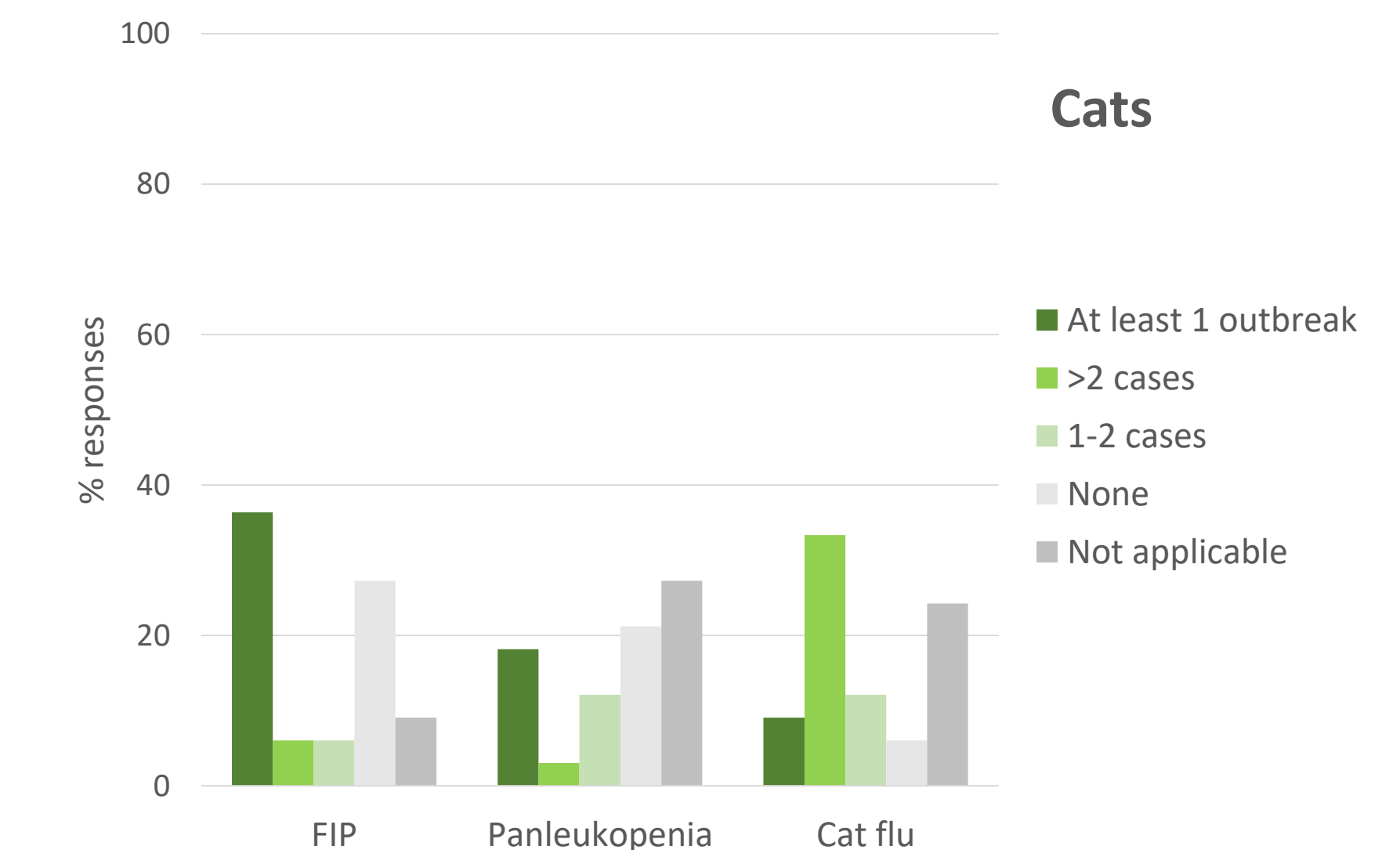


Fig. 8 Occurrence of feline infectious disease in the past 12 months

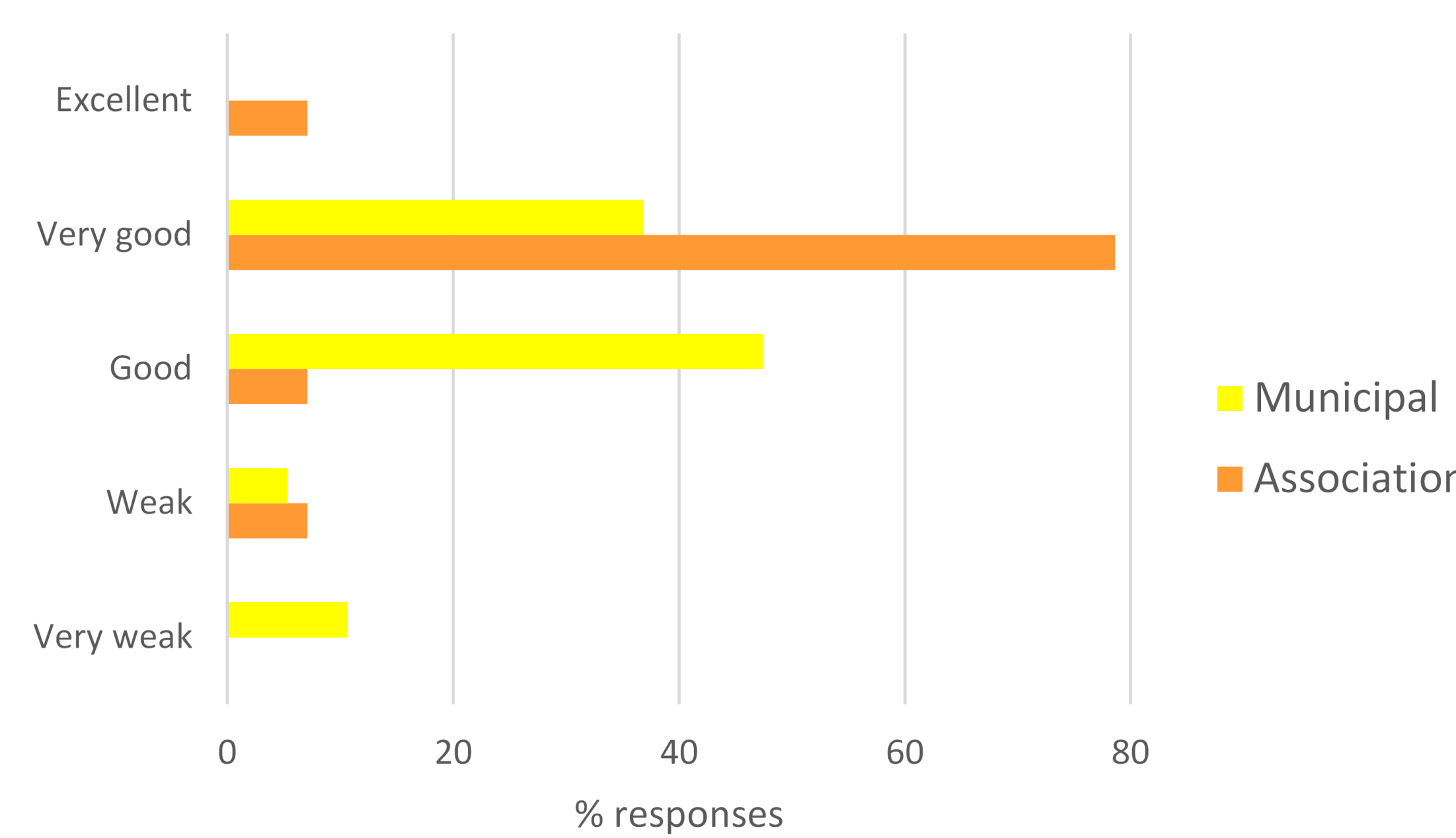


Fig. 9 Overall quality rating of the animal shelter by the respondent

CONCLUSIONS

1. Differences between shelter types

- * SIZE -> Associations host more animals than Municipal shelters
- * WELFARE -> Associations offer more enriched housing
- * QUALITY -> Associations rated better than Municipal shelters

2. Similarities between shelter types

- * VACCINATION -> Very high vaccination cover
- * INFECTIOUS DISEASES -> Low/sporadic occurrence
- * WELFARE -> Excessive length of stay (longterm-housing)

3. Limitations of study

- * Response bias – Voluntary participation
- * Difficult to reach target audience, especially Associations

4. Next steps

- * Increase response rate -> Send reminder
- * Analyse results