

THE ROAD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Safety Performance Indicators 2024

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Performance Indicators | 2024 |
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RSA Safety Performance Indicators 2024



Research Background & Objectives



Self declared safe and unsafe driving behaviour



Acceptability of safe and unsafe driving behaviour



Enforcement



Summary & Conclusions

Safety Performance Indicators 2024

This 2024 research for the Road Safety Authority tracks a series of Road Safety Performance Indicators which were first benchmarked in 2021 and have been annually tracked since.

These indicators cover the areas of:

- Self-declared safe and unsafe behaviour in traffic;
- Acceptability of safe and unsafe traffic behaviour;
- Enforcement.

Survey data on these indicators facilitates measuring the progress and effectiveness of road safety initiatives; and contribute to the understanding of the different issues that influence overall road safety performances.

The 2024 online survey comprised a nationally representative sample of 1,008 motorists aged 17+ who are regular drivers* ('at least a few days a month'); quota controlled in terms of gender, age, region and area.

Fieldwork was conducted in November 2024.



*Note: Definition of regular drivers changed in 2023; driving 'at least a few days a month' was included in the 2023 survey while in previous years (2022 and 2021) only those driving at least once a week were included. In 2024, 4% stated they drive 'at least a few days a month'.

RSA Safety Performance Indicators 2024: Demographic Profile

A nationally representative sample of motorists who are regular drivers*.

Gender	Male	51%
	Female	49%
Age	-35 years	27%
	35-49 years	33%
	50-64 years	24%
	65+ years	15%
Social Class	ABC1	53%
	C2DE	47%

Region	Dublin	27%
	Leinster	29%
	Munster	25%
	Conn/Ulster	19%
Area	Urban	61%
	Rural	39%

*Drive at least a few days a month

Sample of Analysis
Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

RSA Safety Performance Indicators 2024: Driving Characteristics

A nationally representative sample of motorists who are regular drivers*.

Frequency of driving a car	At least 4 days a week	76%
	1 to 3 days a week	20%
	A few days a month	4%
Licence Type	Full-Irish issued	92%
	Full-other country issued	3%
	Learner licence	5%
Type of Road Driven (weekly+ use)	Urban/suburban roads	88%
	Country roads	71%
	Major roads/motorways	62%
	Other	28%

Sample of Analysis

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

*Drive at least a few days a month

SELF DECLARED SAFE AND UNSAFE DRIVING BEHAVIOUR

Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour

The below behaviours were presented to respondents, who were asked how often they may have done each within various time periods.

Drive after drinking alcohol	Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving
Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)	Drive when you were so sleepy that you had trouble keeping your eyes open
Use a handheld mobile phone while driving	Use any other handheld mobile device (e.g., a tablet/iPad) while driving
Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine)	Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability
Transport children under 150cm (4 ft 11) without using child restraint systems (e.g., child safety seat, booster seat)	Transport children over 150cm (4 ft 11) without wearing their seatbelts



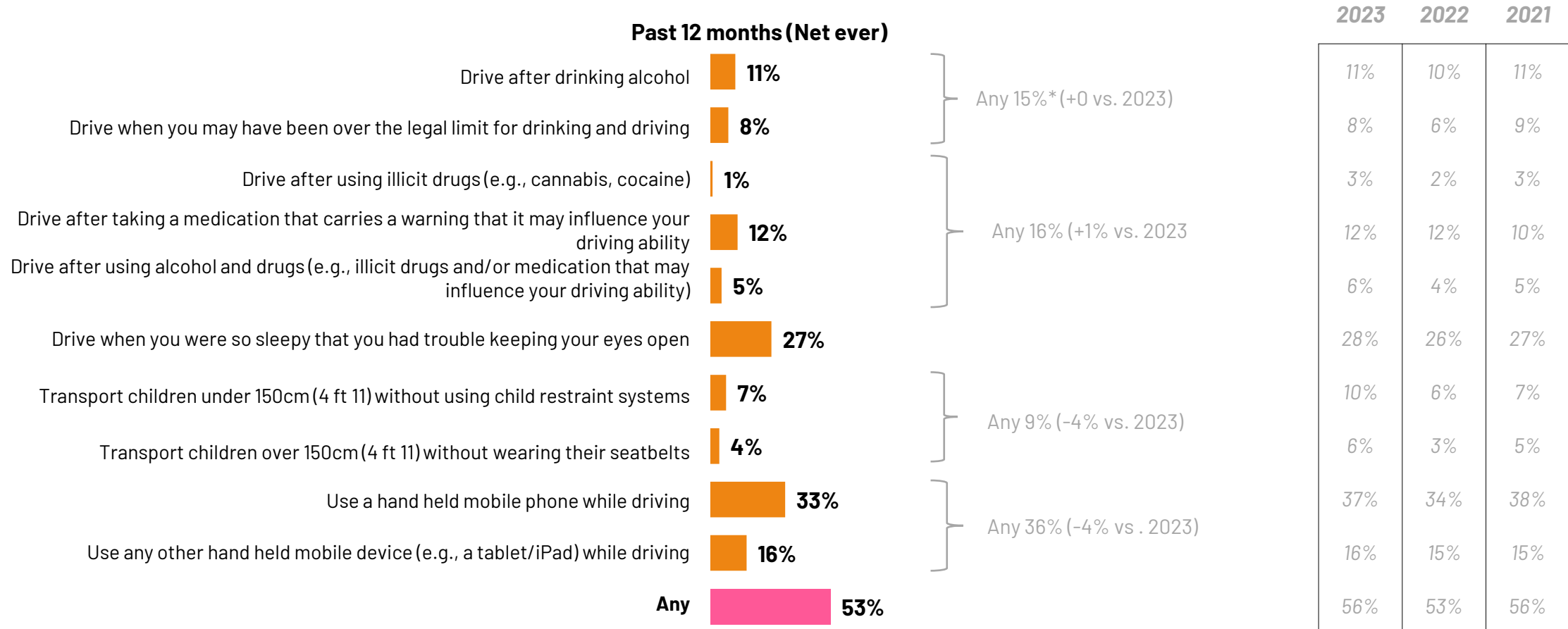
Q.4a) Over the last 12 months, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER ...?

Q.4b) Thinking now of a typical 30-day period, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER..?

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour past 12 months

Over half of monthly drivers have done at least one of the unsafe behaviours in the past 12 months. The most common behaviour being driving while struggling to keep 'eyes open' and using a hand-held phone while driving. The combined mobile phone related behaviors show an encouraging decline year on year



Q.4a Over the last 12 months, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER ...?

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour past 12 months

The incidence of monthly drivers who have done at least one of the unsafe behaviours in the past 12 months is significantly higher among young adults and those under 50 years, and ABC1s. Unsafe mobile use while driving is particularly linked to age.

	Total	Gender		Age				Social Class		Region		Area	
		Male	Female	-35	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1F	C2DE	Dublin	Ex Dublin	Urban	Rural
Base	1008	496	512	264	326	259	159	556	452	238	770	648	360
Use a hand-held mobile phone while driving	33%	38%	28%	42%	43%	22%	14%	43%	23%	39%	31%	36%	29%
Drive when you were so sleepy that you had trouble keeping your eyes open	27%	30%	24%	28%	31%	27%	16%	30%	23%	25%	28%	26%	29%
Use any other hand-held mobile device (e.g., a tablet/iPad) while driving	16%	19%	12%	24%	17%	9%	7%	21%	10%	23%	13%	19%	11%
Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability	12%	14%	10%	15%	12%	12%	7%	12%	12%	15%	11%	14%	10%
Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving	8%	11%	4%	10%	10%	4%	6%	10%	6%	9%	7%	8%	7%
Drive after drinking alcohol	11%	15%	7%	9%	12%	10%	14%	13%	8%	12%	11%	11%	11%
Transport children under 150cm (4 ft 11) without using child restraint systems (e.g., child safety seat, booster seat)	7%	7%	6%	8%	11%	2%	2%	10%	4%	7%	7%	8%	6%
Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)	5%	7%	3%	6%	7%	3%	2%	5%	4%	6%	4%	6%	2%
Transport children over 150cm (4 ft 11) without wearing their seatbelts	4%	5%	3%	8%	5%	1%	1%	4%	3%	6%	3%	5%	3%
Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine)	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
ANY	53%	58%	48%	60%	62%	44%	34%	61%	44%	57%	52%	54%	51%
ANY Alcohol	15%	21%	9%	17%	17%	12%	15%	19%	11%	19%	14%	17%	13%
ANY Mobile	36%	41%	32%	47%	46%	24%	17%	46%	26%	44%	34%	40%	31%
ANY Drugs/Meds	16%	19%	12%	20%	16%	14%	8%	16%	16%	19%	14%	18%	12%
ANY Transport Children	9%	9%	8%	12%	13%	3%	2%	11%	6%	10%	8%	10%	7%

Q.4a Over the last 12 months, how often did you as a CAR DRIVER ...

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

Significantly higher than total
Significantly lower than total



Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour past 12 months

The extent of the overlap across the unsafe behaviours is again extensive.

Past 12 months	Total	Past 12 months														
		ANY Alcohol	Drive after drinking alcohol	Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving	ANY Drugs/Meds	Drive after using illicit drugs	Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability	Drive after using alcohol and drugs	Drive when you were so sleepy that you had trouble keeping your eyes open	ANY Transport Children	Transport children under 150cm (4 ft 11) without using child restraint systems	Transport children over 150cm (4 ft 11) without wearing their seatbelts	ANY Mobile	Use a hand held mobile phone while driving	Use any other hand held mobile device	ANY
Base	1008	152	112	76	156	13	120	49	269	87	69	37	363	332	157	530
ANY Alcohol	15%	100%	100%	100%	43%	59%	29%	100%	29%	29%	25%	44%	27%	27%	26%	29%
Drive after drinking alcohol	11%	73%	100%	60%	29%	50%	21%	63%	23%	20%	20%	27%	20%	20%	20%	21%
Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving	8%	51%	41%	100%	25%	54%	17%	60%	16%	19%	18%	23%	16%	17%	15%	14%
ANY Drugs/Meds	16%	44%	41%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	33%	31%	32%	38%	26%	26%	22%	29%
Drive after using illicit drugs	1%	5%	5%	8%	8%	100%	4%	13%	3%	6%	8%	6%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability	12%	23%	22%	28%	78%	42%	100%	34%	27%	22%	22%	29%	21%	21%	18%	23%
Drive after using alcohol and drugs	5%	31%	27%	37%	31%	54%	13%	100%	9%	13%	14%	17%	8%	9%	7%	9%
Drive when you were so sleepy that you had trouble keeping your eyes open	27%	51%	56%	55%	56%	58%	61%	48%	100%	41%	47%	34%	45%	48%	45%	51%
ANY Transport Children	9%	17%	16%	22%	17%	47%	16%	25%	13%	100%	100%	100%	16%	16%	24%	17%
Transport children under 150cm (4 ft 11) without using child restraint systems	7%	12%	12%	16%	14%	47%	13%	20%	12%	79%	100%	53%	12%	12%	20%	13%
Transport children over 150cm (4 ft 11) without wearing their seatbelts	4%	12%	10%	12%	10%	20%	10%	14%	5%	46%	31%	100%	8%	9%	12%	8%
ANY Mobile	36%	64%	66%	75%	61%	60%	62%	63%	62%	66%	64%	76%	100%	100%	100%	69%
Use a hand held mobile phone while driving	33%	60%	61%	72%	56%	53%	58%	61%	59%	59%	57%	71%	91%	100%	80%	63%
Use any other hand held mobile device	16%	27%	28%	30%	22%	37%	23%	25%	26%	42%	46%	47%	43%	38%	100%	30%
ANY	53%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q.4a Over the last 12 months, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER ...?

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

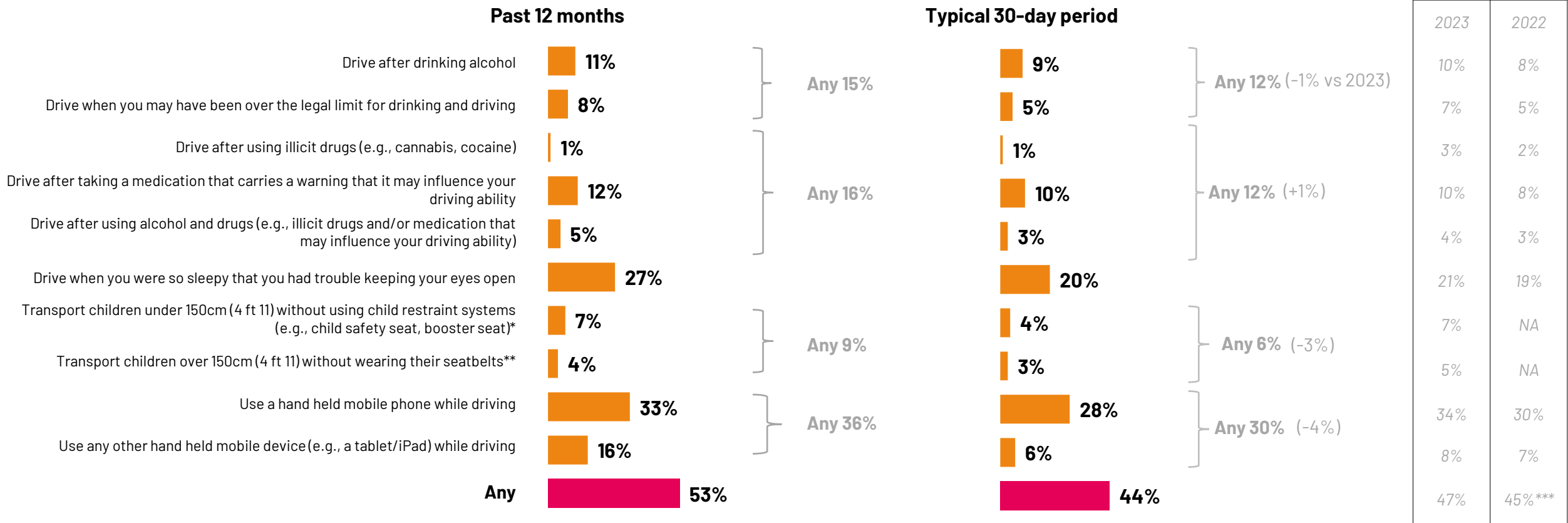
Significantly higher than total

Significantly lower than total



Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour past 12 months & typical 30-day period

44% of drivers do at least one of the errant road behaviours in a typical 30-day period. The national incidence within this time period also shows a positive decline year on year, primarily a function again of reduced mobile phone related behavior.



Q.4a Over the last 12 months, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER ...?

Q.4b Thinking now of a typical 30-day period, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

*Past 30 days unsafe behaviour only asked to those who transported children under 150cm in the last 30 days (Base: 459)

**Past 30 days unsafe behaviour only asked to those who transported children over 150cm in the last 30 days (Base: 412)

***2022 'Any' calculation based on slightly different criteria - both filters noted in footnotes above introduced in 2023.

Past 12 months and typical 30-day period Segmentation of Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour

The incidence of likely unsafe behaviours over the past 12 months & typical 30-day period is aggregated using the scoring system below to facilitate comparison across all Monthly Drivers and key demographic groups:

	Never				(almost) always	Don't know
Drive after drinking alcohol	0	2	5	8	10	0
Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving	0	3	8	12	15	0
Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine)	0	3	8	12	15	0
Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability	0	2	5	8	10	0
Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)	0	3	8	12	15	0
Drive when you were so sleepy that you had trouble keeping your eyes open	0	2	5	8	10	0
Transport children under 150cm (4 ft 11) without using child restraint systems (e.g., child safety seat, booster seat)	0	2	5	8	10	0
Transport children over 150cm (4 ft 11) without wearing their seatbelts	0	2	5	8	10	0
Use a hand held mobile phone while driving	0	2	5	8	10	0
Use any other hand held mobile device (e.g., a tablet/iPad) while driving	0	2	5	8	10	0

Segment	Aggregate Score
Low	0 - 4
Medium	5 - 18
High	19+

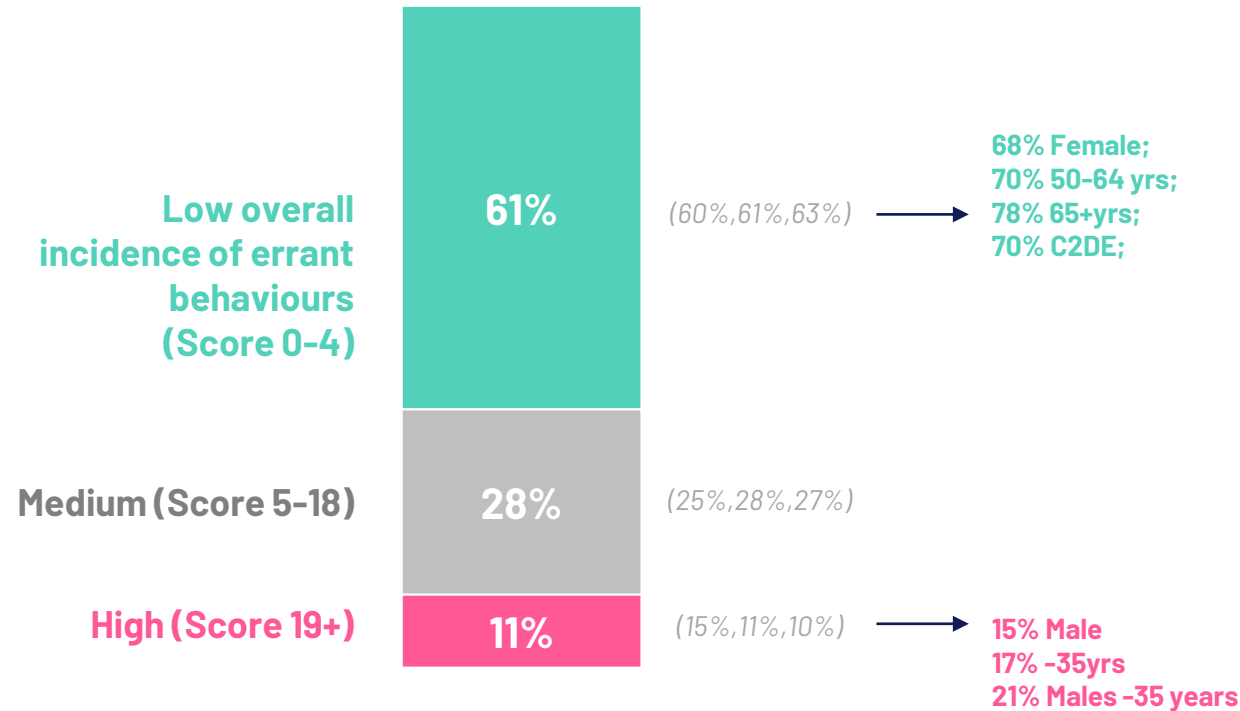
Base: All Monthly Drivers N - 1,008

The full sample of weekly drivers divides into 3 main groups of increasingly exhibited unsafe behaviours; the total aggregated scores are as follows:



Segmentation of Self Declared Safe and Unsafe Driving Behaviour past 12 months & past 30 days

11% of monthly drivers qualify for the high segment for overall errant behaviours, which is a decrease of 4 pts on last year; however, this incidence rises to over 1 in 5 of male drivers under 35 years.



Q.4a+Q.4b Aggregate Score
Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

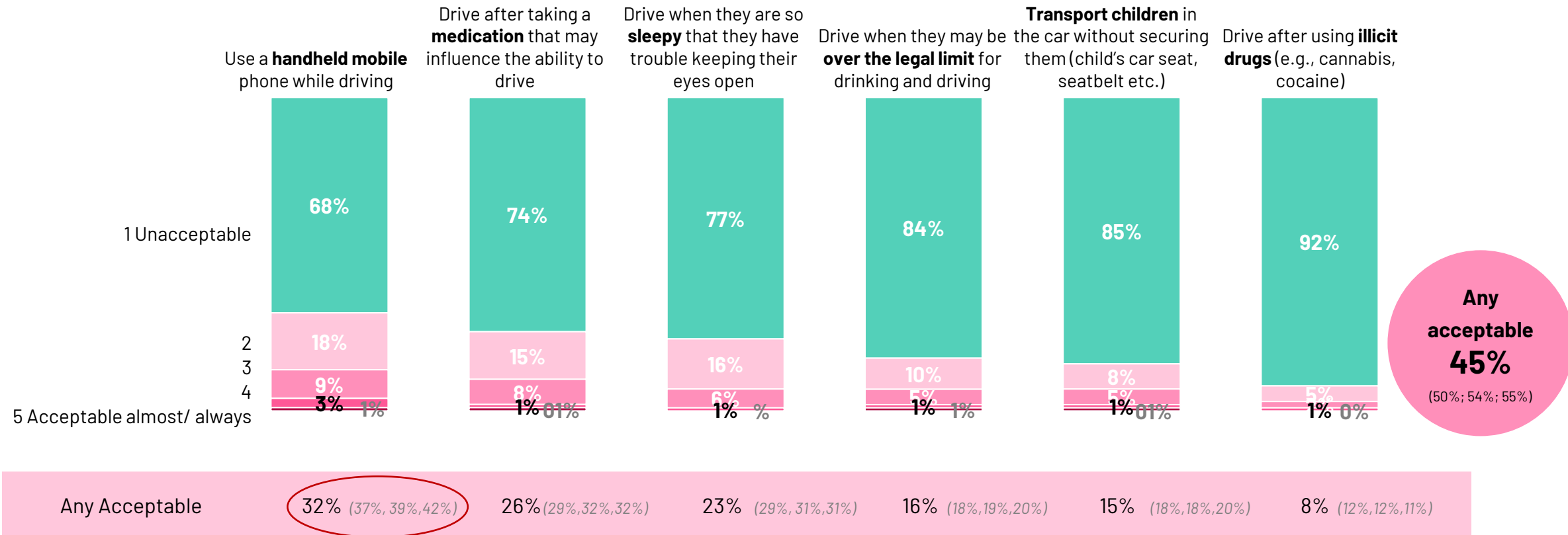


ACCEPTABILITY OF SAFE AND UNSAFE DRIVING BEHAVIOUR

Social Acceptability of Unsafe Driving Behaviour

How acceptable where you live for car drivers to...

Encouragingly, perceived social acceptability is lower this year across each unsafe driving behaviour, most notably for mobile phone use and fatigue. Note however that 16% still consider to 'Drive when they may be over the legal limit for drinking and driving' is still acceptable on some level where they live.



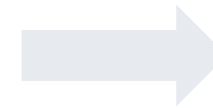
Q.5a Where you live, how acceptable would most other people say it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

Social Acceptability of Unsafe Behaviour - How acceptable where you live for car drivers to...

45% of monthly drivers do perceive at least one of the behaviours as being 'acceptable' where they live. The correlation between perceived social acceptability and personal behaviour is confirmed by overall social acceptability peaking among the High and Medium segments.

Any Acceptable (2-5)



72% High Segment
66% Medium Segment
30% Low Segment

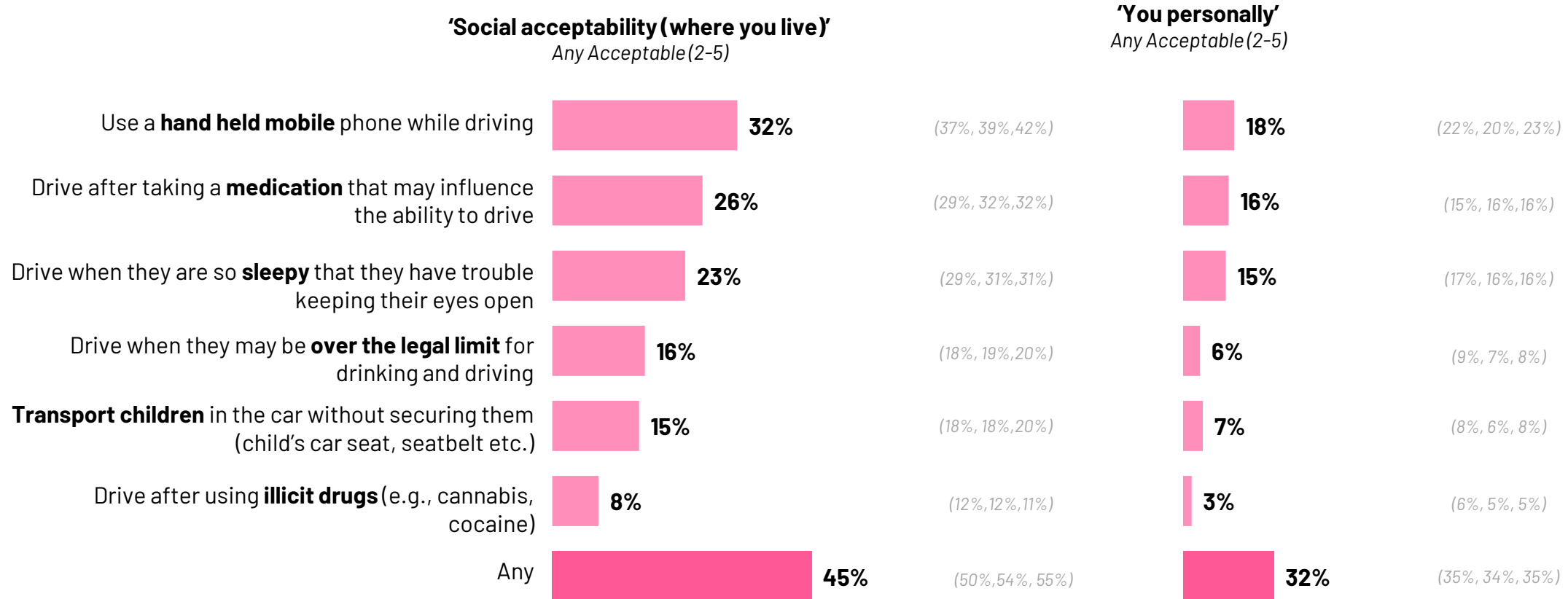
Q.5a Where you live, how acceptable would most other people say it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

Base: All Monthly Drivers N - 1,008

Social & Personal Acceptability of Unsafe Driving Behaviour

How acceptable for car drivers to...

45% of monthly drivers perceive at least one of the behaviours as 'acceptable' where they live; although high, this incidence has decreased 10ppts since 2021. Personal acceptability is again significantly more evident among the High segment where the incidence more than doubles.



68% High Segment
50% Medium Segment
17% Low Segment

Q.5a Where you live, how acceptable would most other people say it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...
Q.5b How acceptable do you, personally, feel it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...
Base: All Monthly Drivers N - 1,008

Social & Personal Acceptability of Unsafe Driving Behaviour

How acceptable for car drivers to...

For both social and personal acceptability, motorists in the under 35 years age category index significantly higher than the national average; 43% of young adult motorists view at least one of the behaviors as personally acceptable versus the national incidence of 32%.

		'Social Acceptability (where you live) Any acceptable (2-5)	'You personally' Any acceptable (2-5)
		Any 45%	Any 32%
Gender	Male	48%	36%
	Female	41%	27%
Age	-35	53%	43%
	35-49	44%	34%
	50-64	40%	25%
	65+	37%	18%
Social Class	ABC1F	49%	37%
	C2DE	39%	26%
Region	Dublin	42%	34%
	Ex Dublin	46%	31%
Area	Urban	43%	34%
	Rural	47%	29%

Q.5a Where you live, how acceptable would most other people say it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

Q.5b How acceptable do you, personally, feel it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

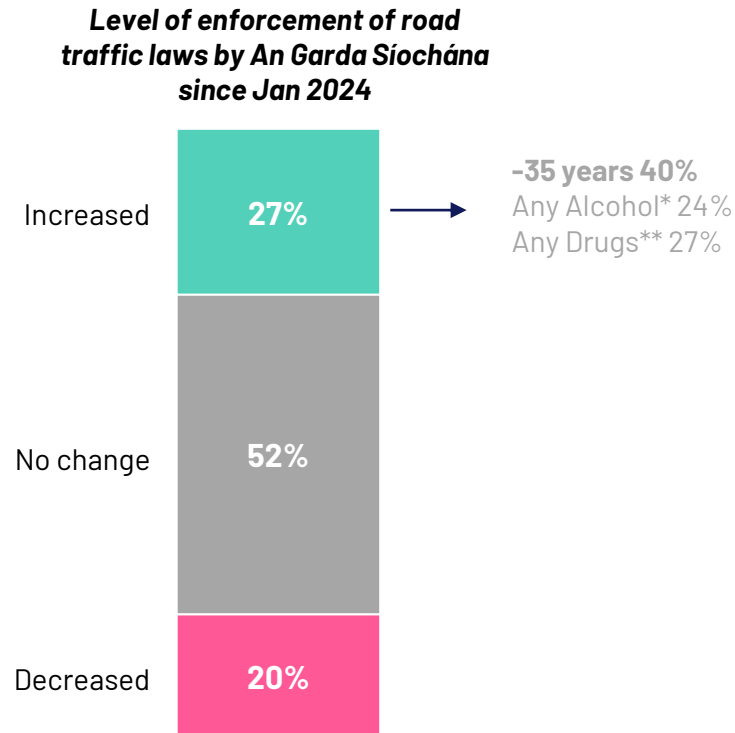
Base: All Monthly Drivers N = 1,008

ENFORCEMENT

GARDA

Level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána since Jan 2024

27% of regular motorists think the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by the Guards has increased since January 2024; this perception of increased enforcement peaks among young adult motorists.



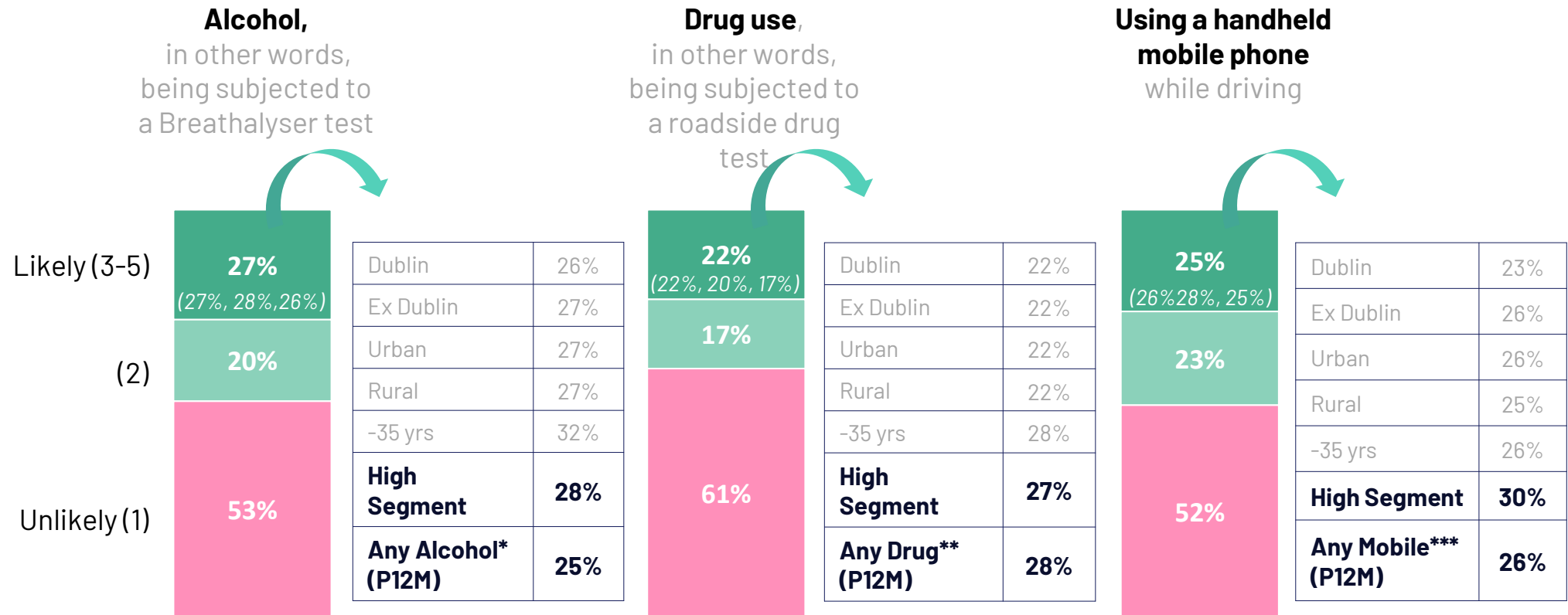
* 'Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Drive after drinking alcohol/ Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving/ Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)

** 'Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine)/ Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability/ Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)

Q.9 Do you think that the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána has increased or decreased since January 2024
Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

Enforcement: Perceived Likelihood of Being Checked by Police for...

The perceived likelihood of being checked by the police is largely similar across each of the three forms of checks. Among the errant drug group, perceived likelihood of being checked for drug use is relatively high; however, for the alcohol and mobile phone related errant groups the perceived likelihood is largely consistent with the national average.



*'Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Drive after drinking alcohol/ Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving/ Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)

**'Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine)/ Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability/ Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)

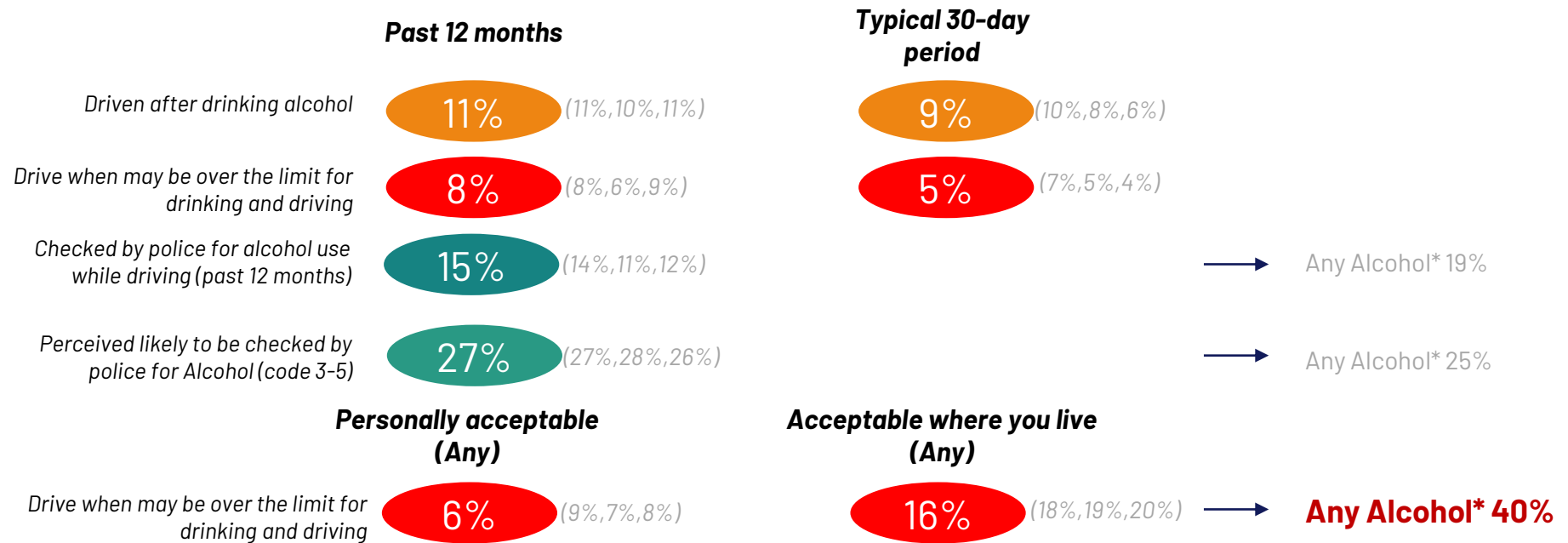
***'Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Use a hand held mobile phone while driving/ Use any other hand held mobile device (e.g., a tablet/iPad) while driving

Q.6 On a typical journey, how likely is it that you (as a CAR DRIVER) will be checked by the police for ...

Base: All Monthly Drivers N - 1,008

Driving after Drinking Alcohol: Summary

15% of the errant alcohol group (drove after drinking in the past 12 months) have been checked by police for alcohol use while driving in the past 12 months - the highest incidence to date in the research series. The perceived social acceptability for drinking and driving among this group is extremely high in comparison to the national average (40% vs 16%).



Q.4a Over the last 12 months, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER ...?

Q.4b Thinking now of a typical 30-day period, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER

Q.5a Where you live, how acceptable would most other people say it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

Q.5b How acceptable do you, personally, feel it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

Q.6 On a typical journey, how likely is it that you (as a CAR DRIVER) will be checked by the police for ...

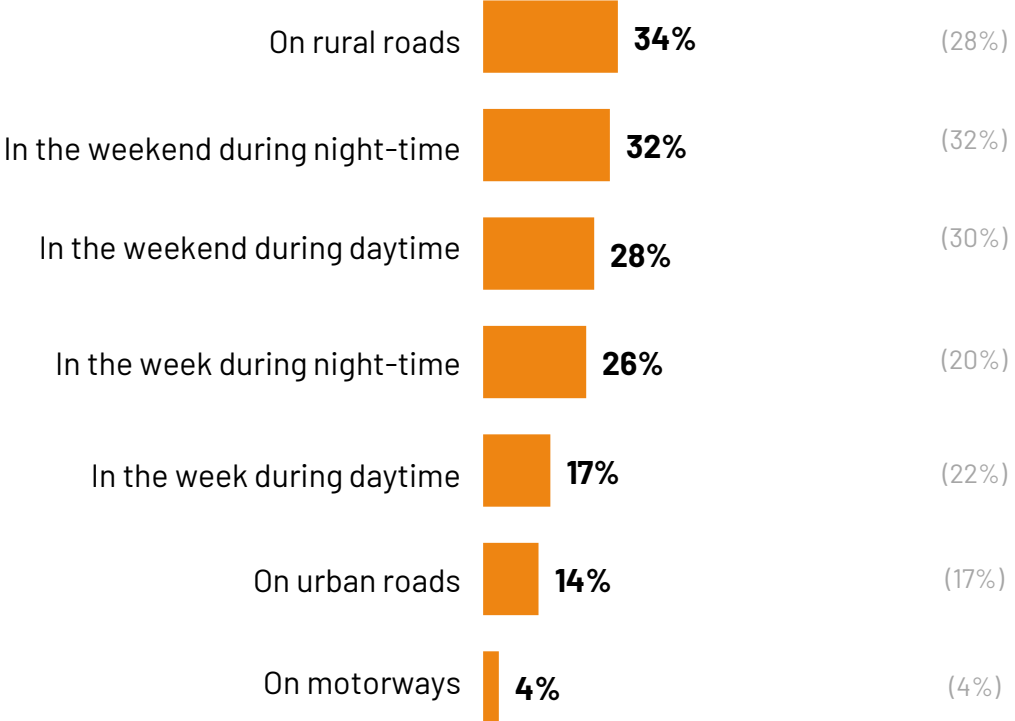
Q.7 In the past 12 months, how many times have you been checked by the police for using alcohol while DRIVING A CAR (i.e., being subjected to a Breathalyser test)?

Base: All Monthly Drivers N - 1,008

*'Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Drive after drinking alcohol/ Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving/ Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)

Location and Time of Driving Over the Legal Limit for Alcohol

Rural roads appear the key road type for those who drive while over the limit; there is also an emphasis on this behavior during the weekend. Note how the claimed incidence during weekend night-time and weekend daytime is similar.



Q.4c You said that you have driven a car when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving. Was this ...?

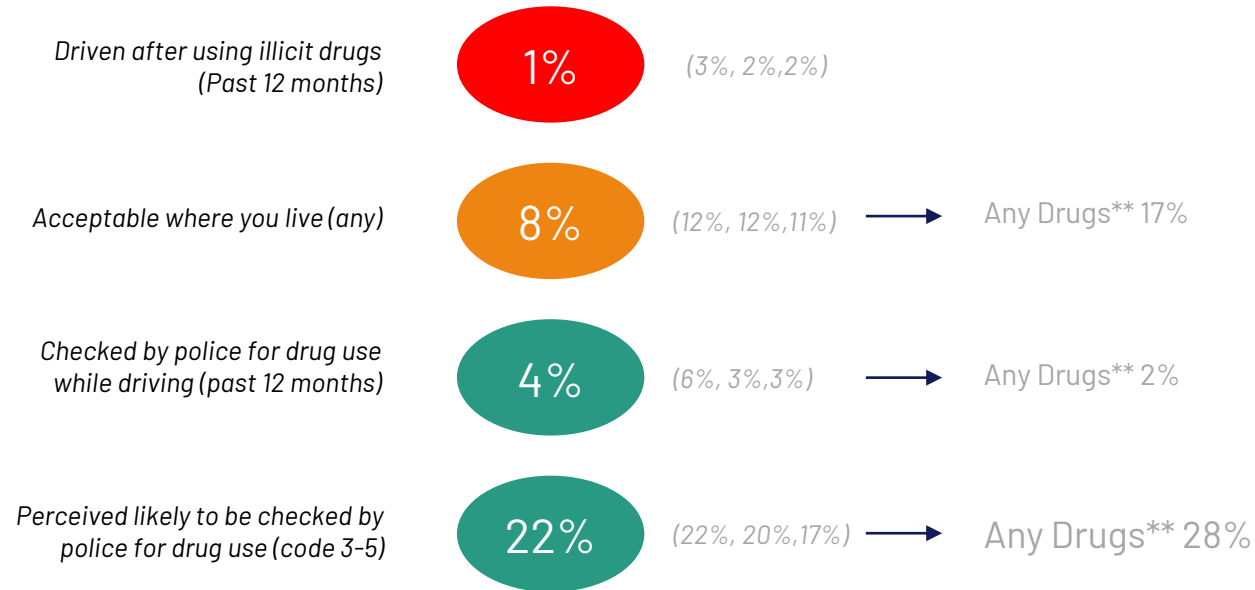
Base: All have driven when over the legal limit for drinking/driving N = 76

(2023)



Illicit Drugs & Driving: Summary

The 'drugs' group are more likely to perceive they will be checked by police; their perception of the social acceptability of drug driving is higher than the national average.



Q.4a Over the last 12 months, how often may you have done each of the following as a CAR DRIVER ...?

Q.5a Where you live, how acceptable would most other people say it is for a CAR DRIVER to ...

Q.8 In the past 12 months, how many times have you been checked by the police for the use of drugs while DRIVING A CAR (i.e., being subjected to a roadside drug test?)

Q.6 On a typical journey, how likely is it that you (as a CAR DRIVER) will be checked by the police for ...

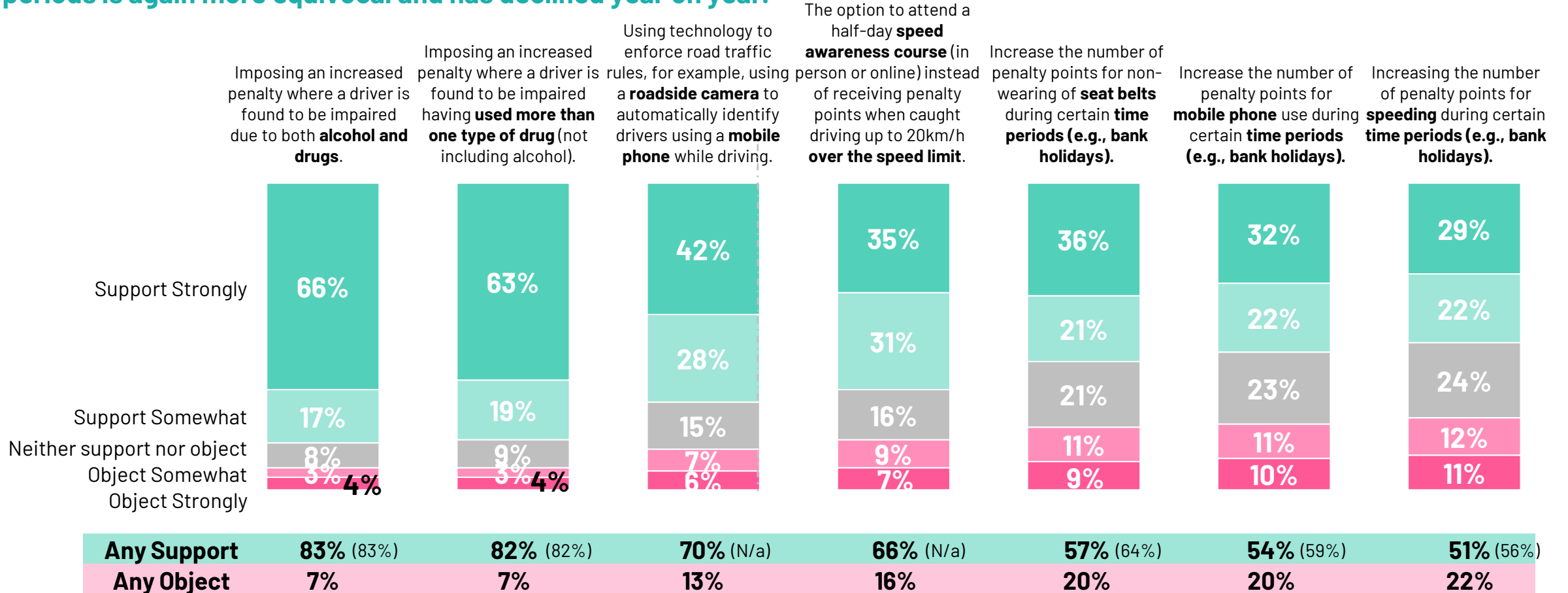
Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

(2023, 2022, 2021 figure)

**Ever' in past 12 months: Any - Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine)/ Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability/ Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)

Support for Increasing Penalties

Support for penalty increases peaks in relation to drivers impaired due to alcohol and/ or drug use; and is also relatively high for the use of roadside cameras to identify in car mobile phone use. Support for increasing penalties during certain time periods is again more equivocal and has declined year on year.



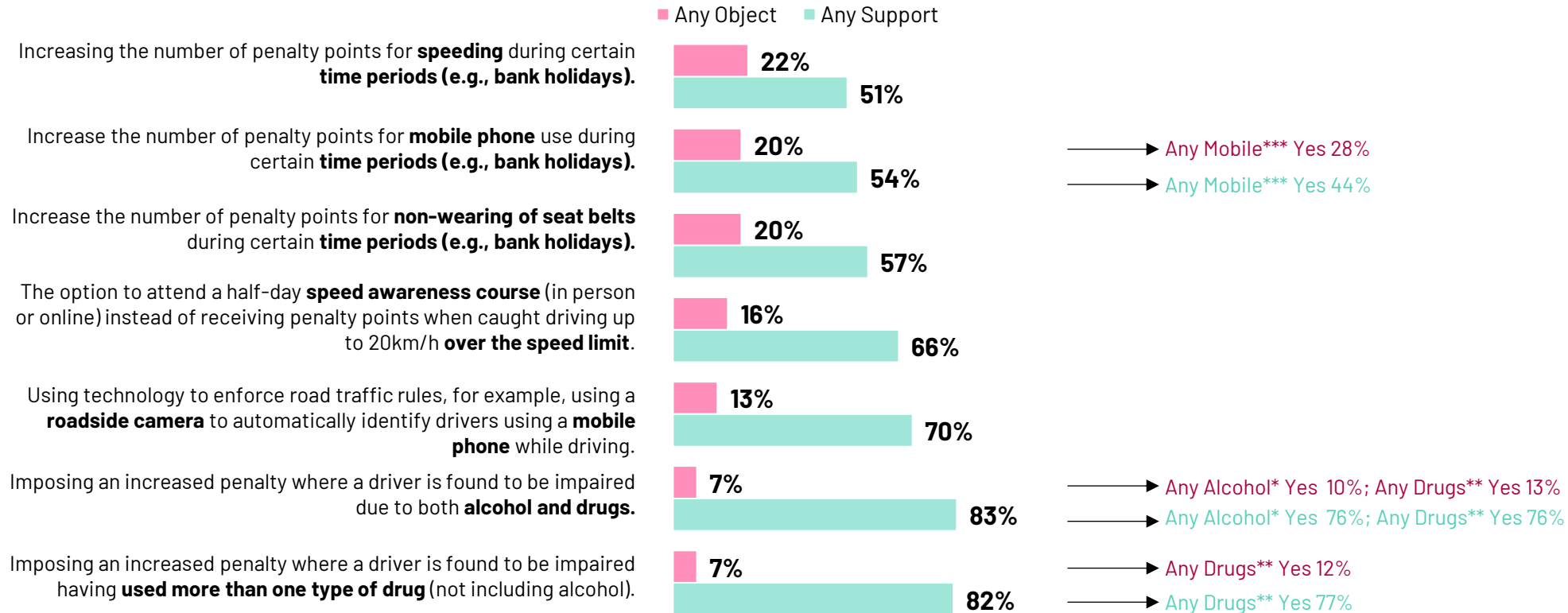
Q.10 To what extent do you support or object to the following (response 1-5 Likert Scale, strongly object to strongly support)

(2023)

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

Support for Increasing Penalties

For each of the alcohol, drugs and mobile phone related penalties, support is lower among those who report engaging in the relevant behaviour; however, even in these case, there is a positive balance of support ('any support' - 'any object') for increasing the penalties among these cohorts.



*Any Past 12 Months (Drive after drinking alcohol or Drive when you may have been over the legal limit for drinking and driving)
 **Any Past 12 Months (Drive after using illicit drugs (e.g., cannabis, cocaine) or Drive after taking a medication that carries a warning that it may influence your driving ability or Drive after using alcohol and drugs (e.g., illicit drugs and/or medication that may influence your driving ability)
 *** Any Past 12 Months (Use a hand held mobile phone while driving or Use any other hand held mobile device (e.g., a tablet/iPad) while driving)

Q.10 To what extent do you support or object to the following (response 1-5 Likert Scale, strongly object to strongly support)

Base: All Monthly Drivers N – 1,008

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

RSA Safety Performance Indicators 2024: Summary

TOPIC	HEADLINE RESULTS	Comment:
SELF DECLARED SAFE AND UNSAFE DRIVING BEHAVIOUR (ANY)	53% (-3%) Past 12 Months 44% (-3%) Typical 30-day period 11% (-4%) High Segment	<i>44% of regular drivers do at least one of the errant road behaviours in a typical 30-day period. The national incidence within both the 12 month and 30-day time periods shows a positive decline year on year.</i>
ACCEPTABILITY OF SAFE AND UNSAFE DRIVING BEHAVIOUR (ANY SCORE 2-5)	45% (-5%) Social Acceptability 32% (-3%) Personal Acceptability	<i>Encouragingly, perceived social acceptability is lower this year across each unsafe driving behaviour, most notably for mobile phone use and fatigue</i>
ENFORCEMENT: PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF BEING CHECKED BY POLICE... (LIKELY 3-5)	27% (+0) for Alcohol 22% (+0) for Drugs 25% (-1%) for Mobile handheld	<i>The perceived likelihood of being checked by the police is largely similar across each of the three forms of checks. Among the errant drug group, perceived likelihood of being checked for drug use is relatively high.</i>



Safety Performance Indicators 2024: Key Learnings



44% of drivers do at least one of the errant road behaviours in a typical 30-day period. The national incidence within this time period shows a positive decline year on year, primarily a function of reduced mobile phone related behavior.



11% of monthly drivers qualify for the high segment for overall errant behaviours, which is a decrease of 4 ppts on last year; however, this incidence rises to over 1 in 5 of male drivers under 35 years.



Encouragingly, perceived social acceptability is lower this year across each unsafe driving behaviour, and the overall incidence has decreased 10ppts since 2021. However, 16% still consider drink driving to be acceptable on some level where they live.



For both social and personal acceptability, motorists under 35 years index significantly higher than the national average. Personal acceptability is also significantly more evident among the High segment where the incidence more than doubles.



27% of regular motorists think the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by the Guards has increased since January 2024; this perception of increased enforcement peaks among young adult motorists.



Support for penalty increases peaks in relation to drivers impaired due to alcohol and/ or drug use; and is also relatively high for the use of roadside cameras to identify in car mobile phone use. Support for increasing penalties during certain time periods is again more equivocal.

THANK YOU

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