

THE ROAD SAFETY AUTHORITY

National Secondary Roads
Pre – Intervention National Survey:
Change of Speed Limit
(from Km/h 100 to 80 Km/h)

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RSA

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of Speed Limit on National Secondary
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National Secondary Roads Pre – Intervention National Survey: Change of Speed Limit (from Km/h 100 to 80 Km/h)



Research Background & Objectives



Speeding



Road type reviews



Speed limit checks and types



Awareness & support for speed limits



Key learnings

Research Background & Objectives

This survey was designed to measure awareness and support for upcoming changes to speed limits on Irish roads.

While the main focus was on the speed limits pertaining to national secondary roads, measures were also included in relation to local roads, regional roads, national primary roads, and motorways.

In addition, the survey measured general and specific behavior in relation to speeding, and experience of speed limit checks by both An Garda Síochána and Safety Cameras. Comparisons, where especially relevant are made with the pre-intervention national survey of changes of speed limits on rural roads conducted in 2024.

The research comprised a nationally representative online survey of 1,226 motorists aged 17+:

- Quota controlled in terms of gender, age, region and area.
- Fieldwork was conducted in November 2025.

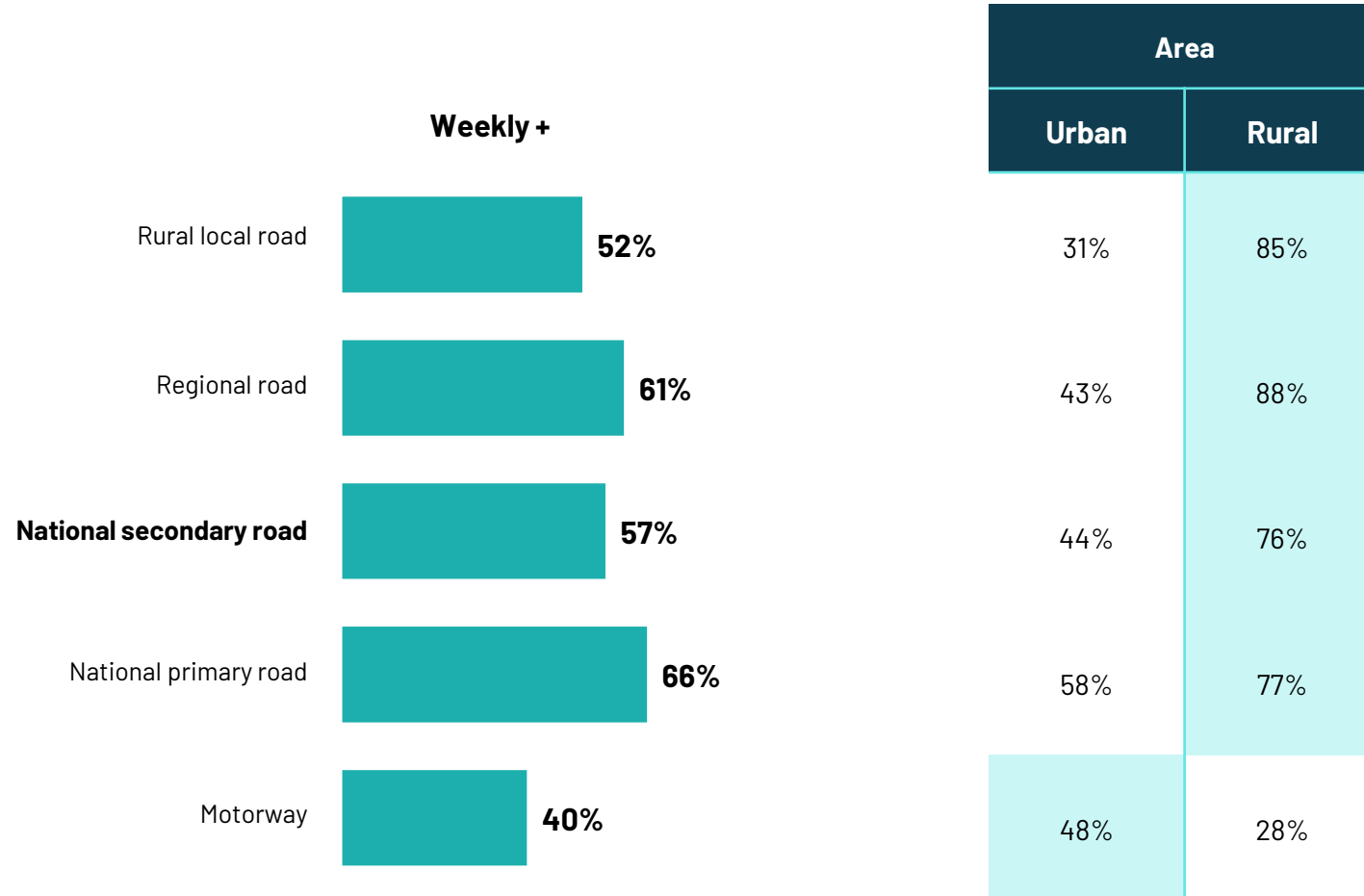
Sample Profile

Gender	Male	51%	Region	Dublin	27%
	Female	49%		Leinster	29%
Age	-24 years	7%		Munster	25%
	25-34 years	20%		Conn/Ulster	19%
	35-49 years	33%	Area	Urban	60%
	50-64 years	25%		Rural	40%
65+ years	15%	License Type	Learner permit	5%	
Social Class	ABC1		53%	Full License - Irish issued	92%
	C2DE		47%	Full license - other country issued	3%

Sample of Analysis
Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Road Type: Frequency of Driving (Weekly+)

57% of Irish car-drivers drive on National Secondary roads on an at least weekly basis, rising to 76% among rural residents.



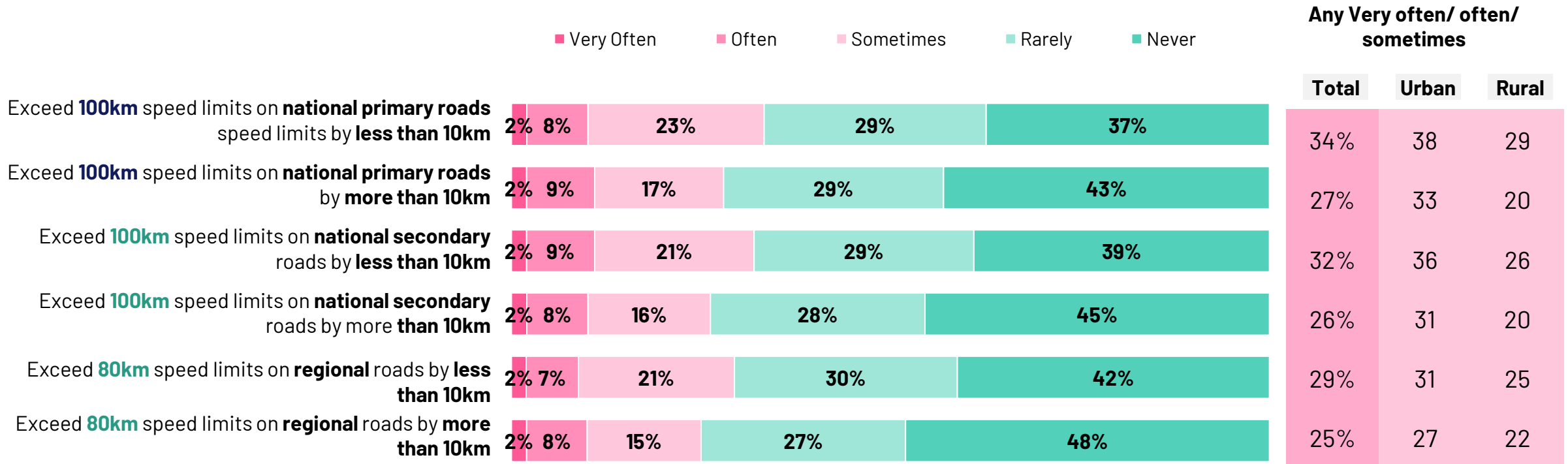
Q4a. Now please indicate how frequently you drive on each of them as a **CAR DRIVER**.

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

SPEEDING

Speeding: 80 Km/h & 100 Km/h speed limits

Self-reported speeding is a consistent issue across different road types, though drivers report being more compliant on roads with lower speed limits suggesting a correlation between the posted limit and driver behaviour.

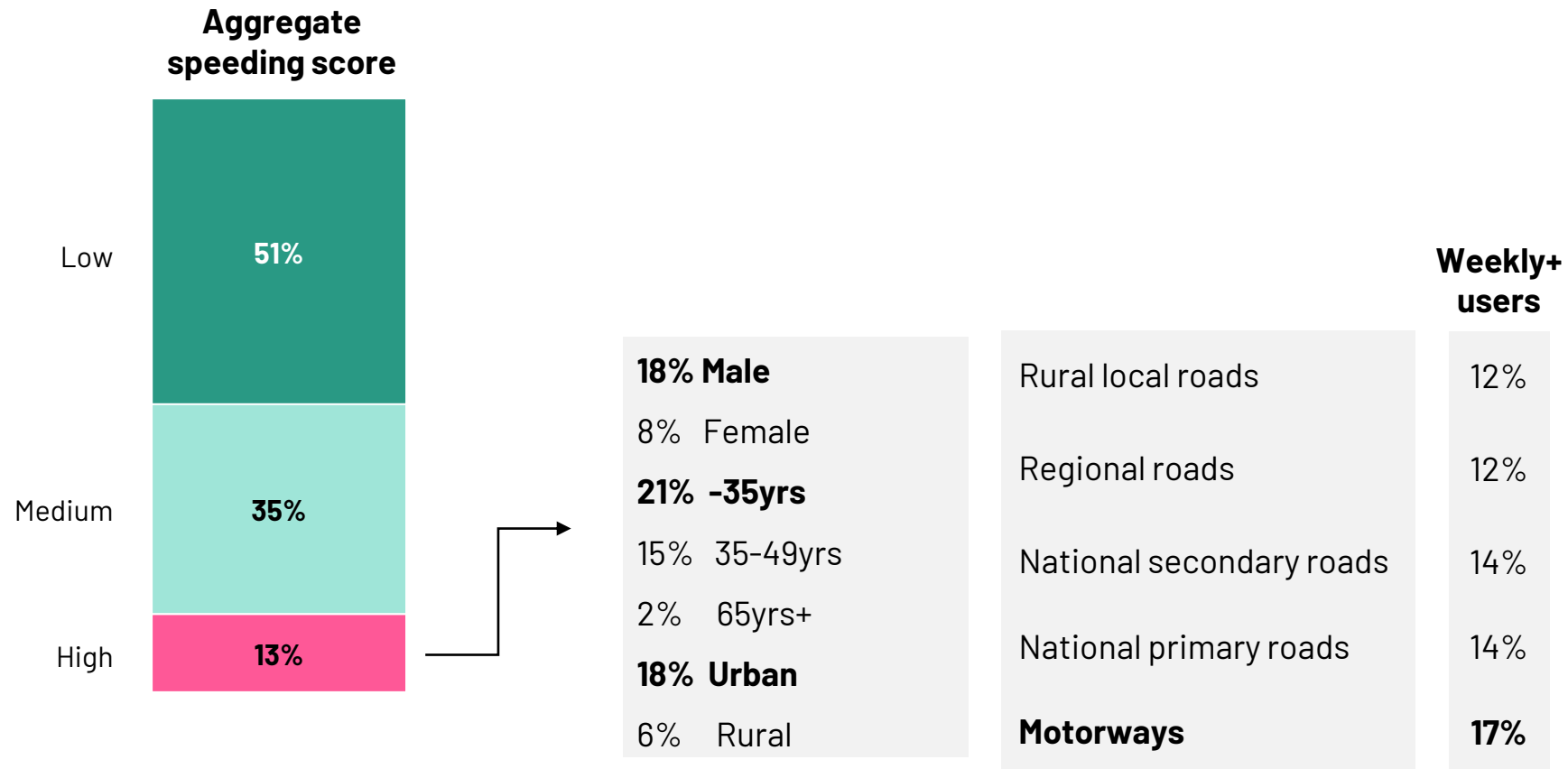


Q.5a How often do you do each of the following activities on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very often' and 5 is 'Never'?

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Speeding: 80 Km/h & 100Km/h Speed Limits (Overview)

13% of motorists are classified as 'high speeders,' a behaviour most prevalent among young male and urban drivers. Frequent motorway use is a strong predictor, with 17% of weekly motorway users falling into this high-risk group.

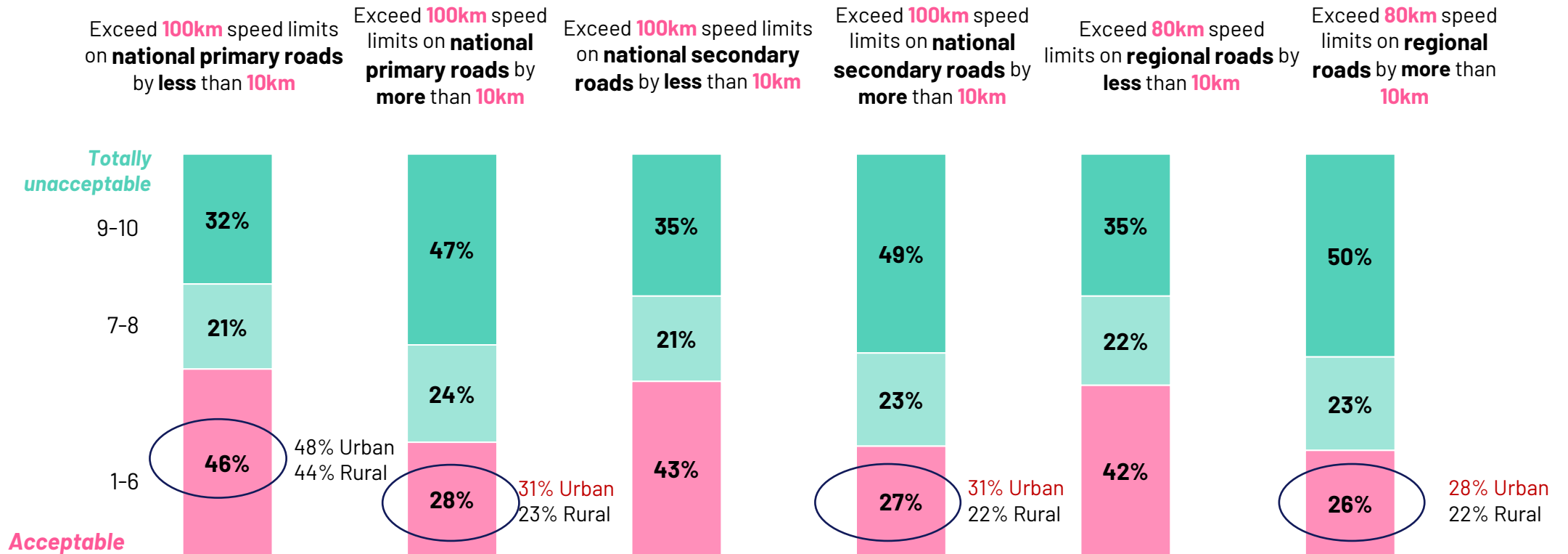


Q.5a How often do you do each of the following activities on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very often' and 5 is 'Never'?

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Acceptability of speeding: 80 Km/h & 100 Km/h

Levels of perceived acceptability of speeding are significant and almost identical across each of national primary, secondary and regional roads. There is also a clear geographical divide, with urban residents showing a consistently higher acceptance of speeding.



Q.5b Please see below various types of driving behaviour. For each one, indicate how acceptable or unacceptable you think it is for drivers to do these things.
Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

ROAD TYPE REVIEWS



Road Type Reviews

Survey respondents were asked to indicate what they thought the speed limit was for each of the following roads. For this question, the specific roads were identified by a photo image (rather than by road title).








Q.2a We are now going to show you some road types in rural areas, for each of these, can you indicate which you think is the speed limit?

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Recognition of speed limit by Road Type

There is significant confusion among motorists regarding current speed limits, with correct identification being generally low. Crucially, half of all drivers already believe the speed limit on National Secondary roads is 80 km/h, a very positive signal for future acceptance & support. Nearly half of Irish Motorists correctly identified the speed limit for HGVs.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate what they thought the speed limit was for each of the following roads. For this question, the specific roads were identified by a photo image (rather than by road title).

					
	Rural local road	Regional road	National secondary road	National primary road	Motorway
50 km/or lower	50	28	10	15	7
60 km/h	40	43	15	17	6
80 km/h	10	27	52	35	13
100 km/h	0	1	23	33	32
120 km/h	-	0	0	0	42
Correct (among weekly+ users)	48%	32%	25%	36%	43%

46% of Irish motorists correctly identified the speed limit for HGVs on National Secondary roads at 80km/h

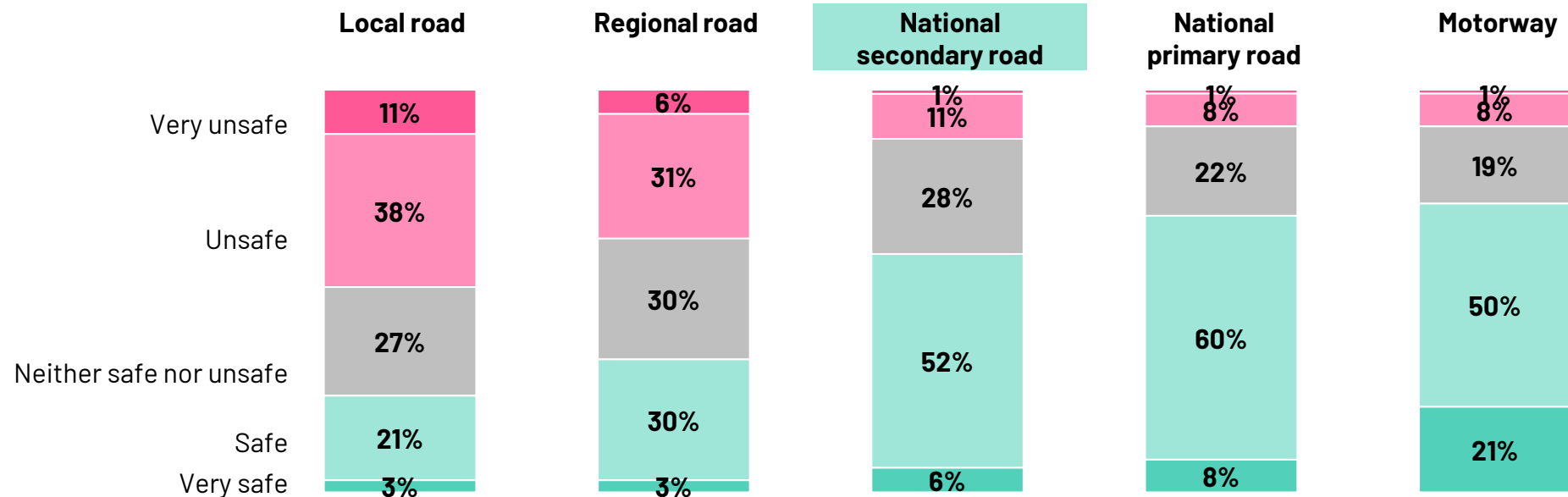
Q.2a We are now going to show you some road types in rural areas, for each of these, can you indicate which you think is the speed limit?

Q.5c Thinking specifically about National Secondary Roads, what is the legal maximum speed limit for a Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV or truck)?

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Perceived Safety of each Road Type

National Secondary roads are perceived as significantly safer relative to local or regional roads. This perception of relative safety is stronger still among weekly users of these roads. Compared to the 2024 research, the perceived safety of local roads has increased considerably, showing an encouraging trend for speed limit changes.



NET Unsafe	49% (43%)	38% (32%)	13% (11%)	9% (9%)	9% (7%)
NET safe	24% (30%)	32% (39%)	59% (64%)	68% (71%)	71% (78%)

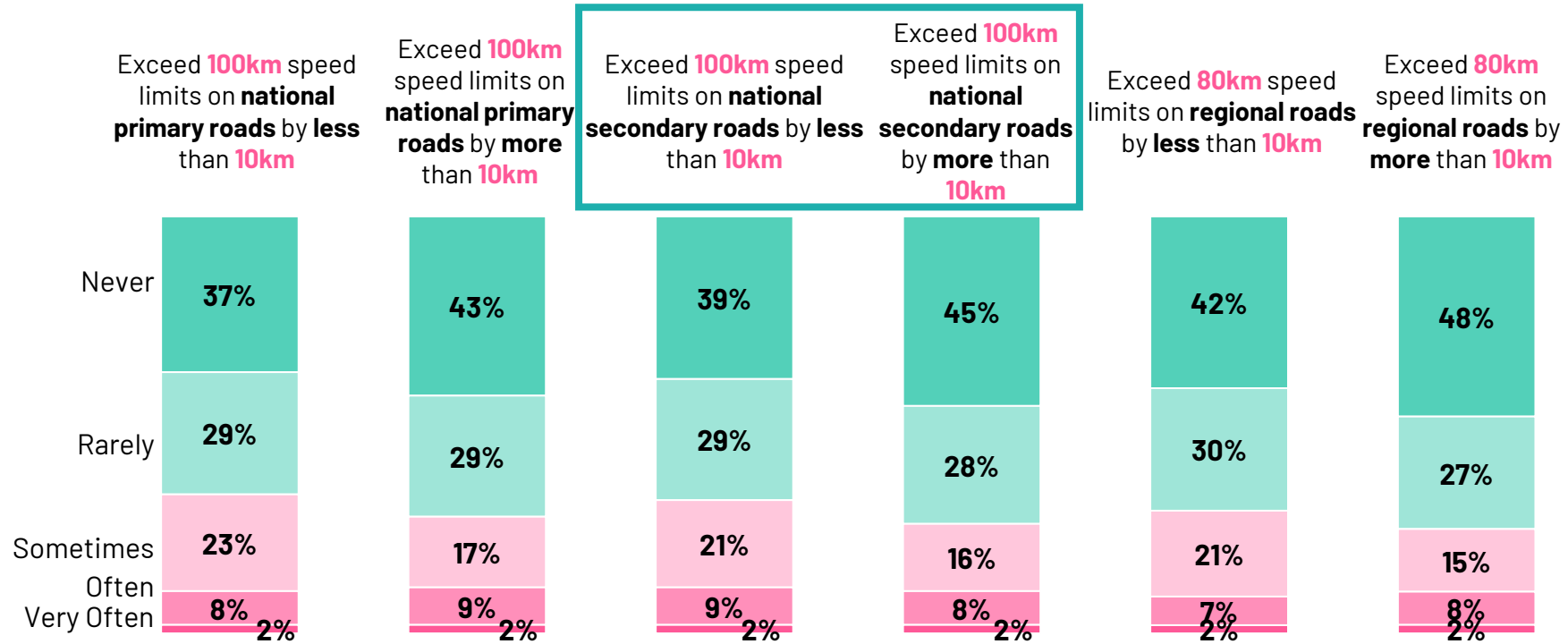
Pre-Intervention Local Roads 2024	NET safe	16%	30%	56%	67%	74%
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Q.3 Now that you have reviewed the characteristic of each road type, how would you rate these roads use in terms of safety as a CAR DRIVER?
Please scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "very unsafe" and 5 is "very safe". The numbers in between can be used to refine your response.

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Speeding per Road Type

Self-admitted speeding on National Secondary roads is common, with one in three drivers indicating regular low-level speeding and one in four reporting high-level speeding.



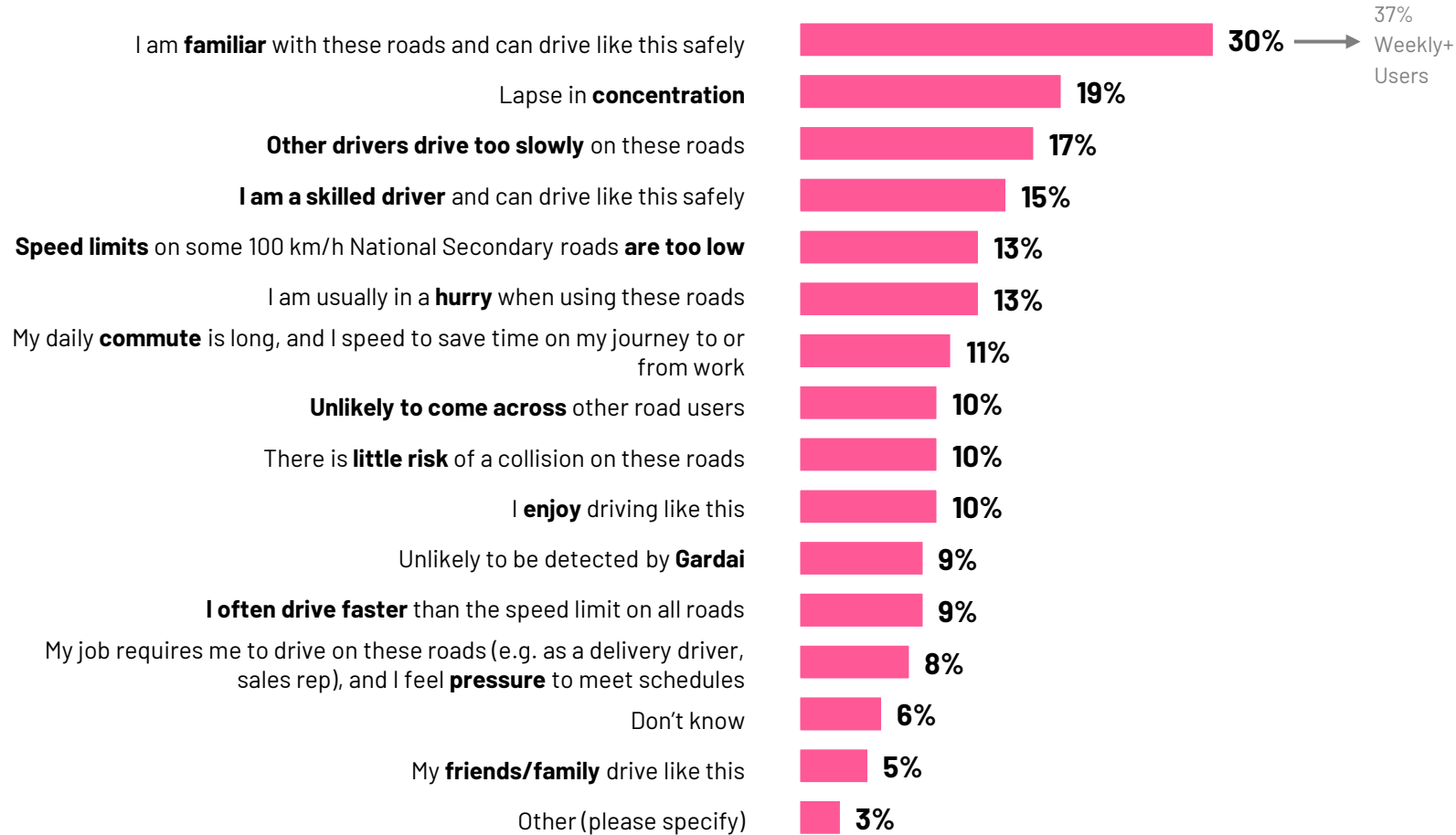
ANY very often/often/sometimes (TOTAL)	34%	27%	32%	26%	29%	25%
ANY very often/often/sometimes (WEEKLY USERS)	38%	28%	36%	27%	29%	24%

Q.5a How frequently do you do each of the following activities on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Never' and 5 is 'Very Often'?

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Reasons for speeding – National Secondary Roads

Overconfidence and inattention are the primary drivers of speeding on National Secondary roads, with familiarity cited as the top reason.



37% Weekly+ Users

Pre-Intervention Local Roads 2024

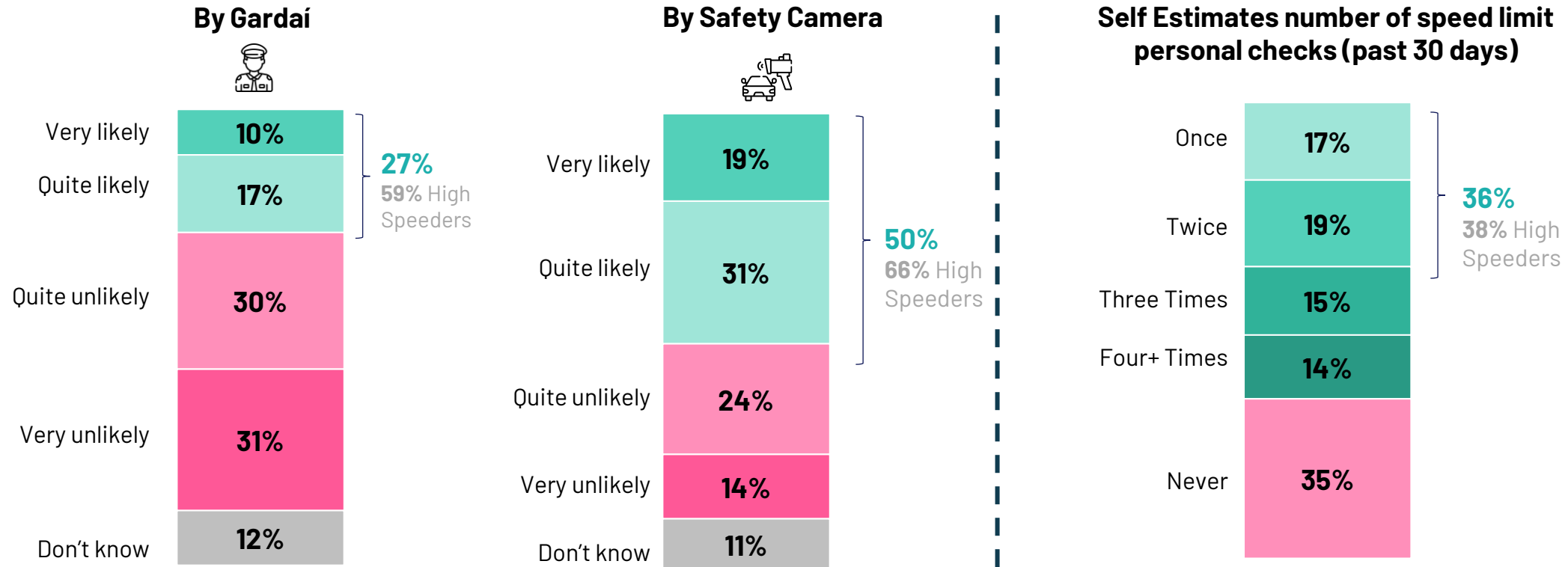
36%
12%
10%
19%
n/a
14%
n/a
17%
13%
8%
12%
9%
n/a
7%
9%
2%

Q. 5b You indicated that you speed, at least sometimes, on national secondary roads, which of the following would you say are reason(s) you speed on these roads?

Base: Speed very often – sometimes on national secondary roads N – 417

Speed Limit Checks by Gardaí and Safety Cameras

Motorists perceive the threat of being caught for speeding by a safety camera as nearly double that of a physical Garda check. This highlights the significant role of automated enforcement in influencing driver perception and behaviour. High speed drivers are far more likely to believe they will be checked for speeding by the authorities.



Q.16 In a typical week, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that you would be checked by the Gardaí for driving within the speed limits?

Q.16b In a typical week, how likely or unlikely do you think it would be that you would be checked by a safety camera for driving within the speed limits?

Q.16c Now we would like you to think about the journeys you undertook in the past 30 days. To the best of your knowledge, how many times have you actually been checked by a safety camera for driving within the speed limits?

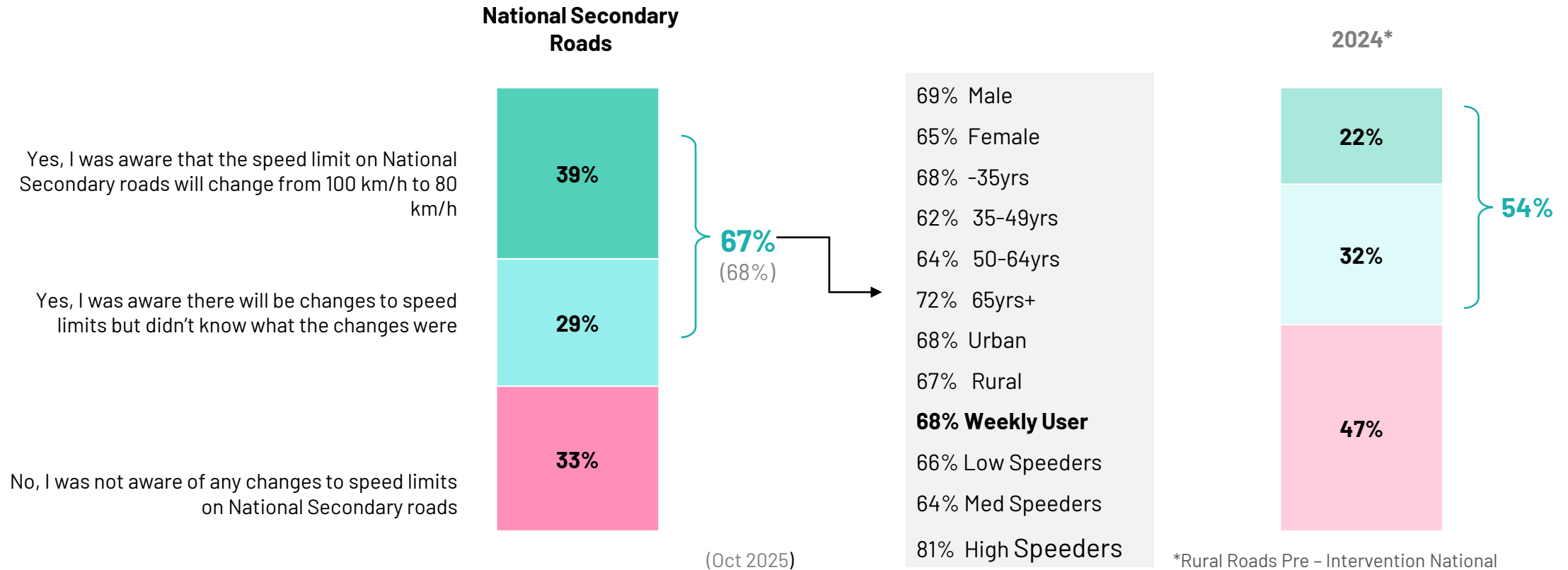
Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

AWARENESS & SUPPORT FOR SPEED LIMITS



Speed Limits: Awareness of Changes

Two-thirds of motorists are aware that changes are coming to speed limits on National Secondary roads. While there is room for increased understanding of the exact details of the change among Irish Motorists, there has been a significant increase since November 2024.

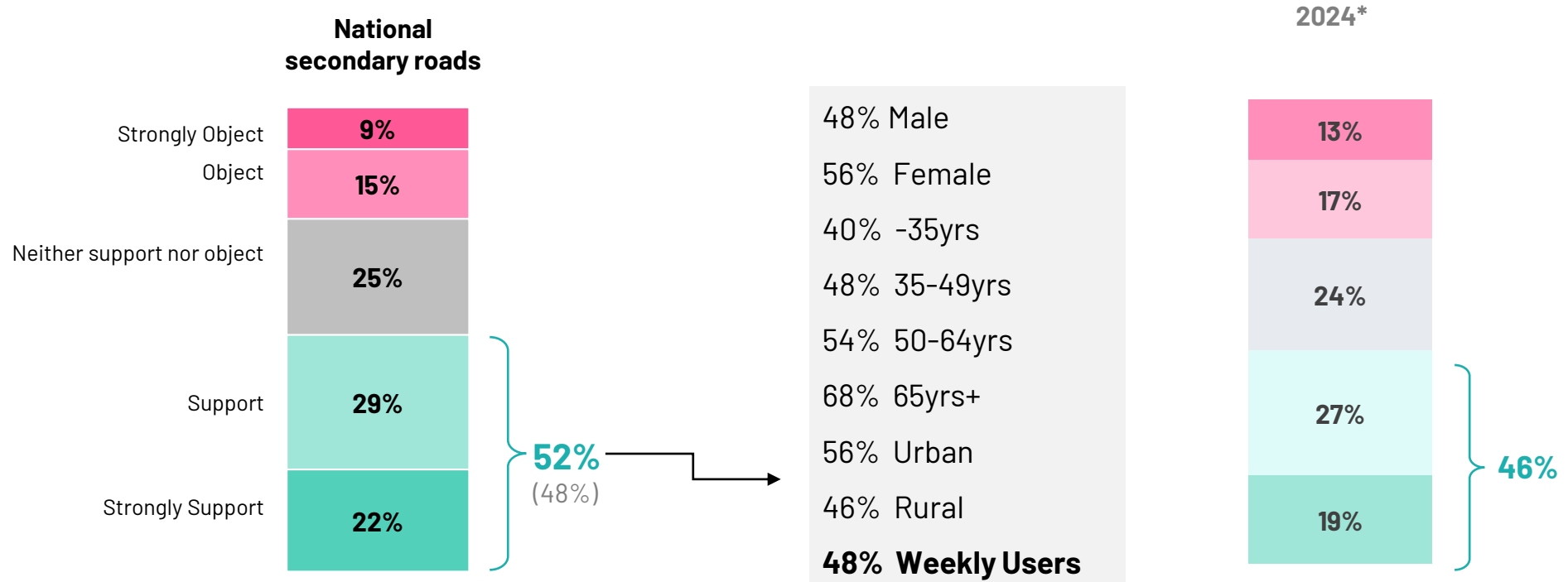


*Rural Roads Pre - Intervention National Survey 2024

Q.6 Changes are due to be made to speed limits in 2026 on National Secondary Roads which will mean the speed limits on these roads will be reduced from 100 km/h to 80 km/h. Were you aware of this?
Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Speed Limits: Support for Changes

A majority of Irish motorists, at 52%, support the reduction of the speed limit on National Secondary roads. This support is not uniform, being weaker among rural residents and those who use these roads most frequently. Support shows an increase from 2024.



(Oct 2025)

*Rural Roads Pre - Intervention National Survey 2024

Q.7 To what extent do you support or object to the reduction of the speed limit on national secondary roads from 100 km/h to 80 km/h? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly object and 5 strongly support.

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

Speed Limits: Support for Changes

52% of Irish motorists support the reduction of the speed limit on National Secondary roads. This support is not uniform, being weaker among rural residents and those who use these roads most frequently. Support shows an increase from 2024. Interestingly, the High speeding group are more representative of the total population than the Medium group and are less likely to object.

Summary 2025	Total	Gender		Age				Social Class		Region		Area		SRV TOTAL		
		Male	Fe-male	-35	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1F	C2DE	Dublin	Out-side Dublin	Urban	Rural	Low	Med	High
	1226	631	595	248	404	356	212	712	514	301	925	814	412	649	431	146
Support	52%	48%	56%	42%	48%	54%	68%	50%	54%	61%	48%	56%	46%	63%	38%	45%
Object	23%	28%	18%	26%	26%	25%	14%	27%	19%	15%	26%	21%	27%	18%	30%	27%

Summary 2024	Total	Gender		Age				Social Class		Region		Area		SRV TOTAL		
		Male	Fe-male	-35	35-49	50-64	65+	ABC1F	C2DE	Dublin	Out-side Dublin	Urban	Rural	Low	Med	High
	1263	623	640	305	421	283	184	672	591	309	954	798	465	610	502	151
Support	46%	41%	52%	35%	46%	51%	58%	45%	48%	50%	45%	48%	44%	57%	40%	26%
Object	30%	37%	23%	37%	32%	28%	20%	32%	28%	23%	33%	27%	35%	17%	39%	52%

Q.7 To what extent do you support or object to the reduction of the speed limit on **national secondary roads** from 100 km/h to 80 km/h? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means strongly object and 5 strongly support.

Base: All Motorists N - 1,226

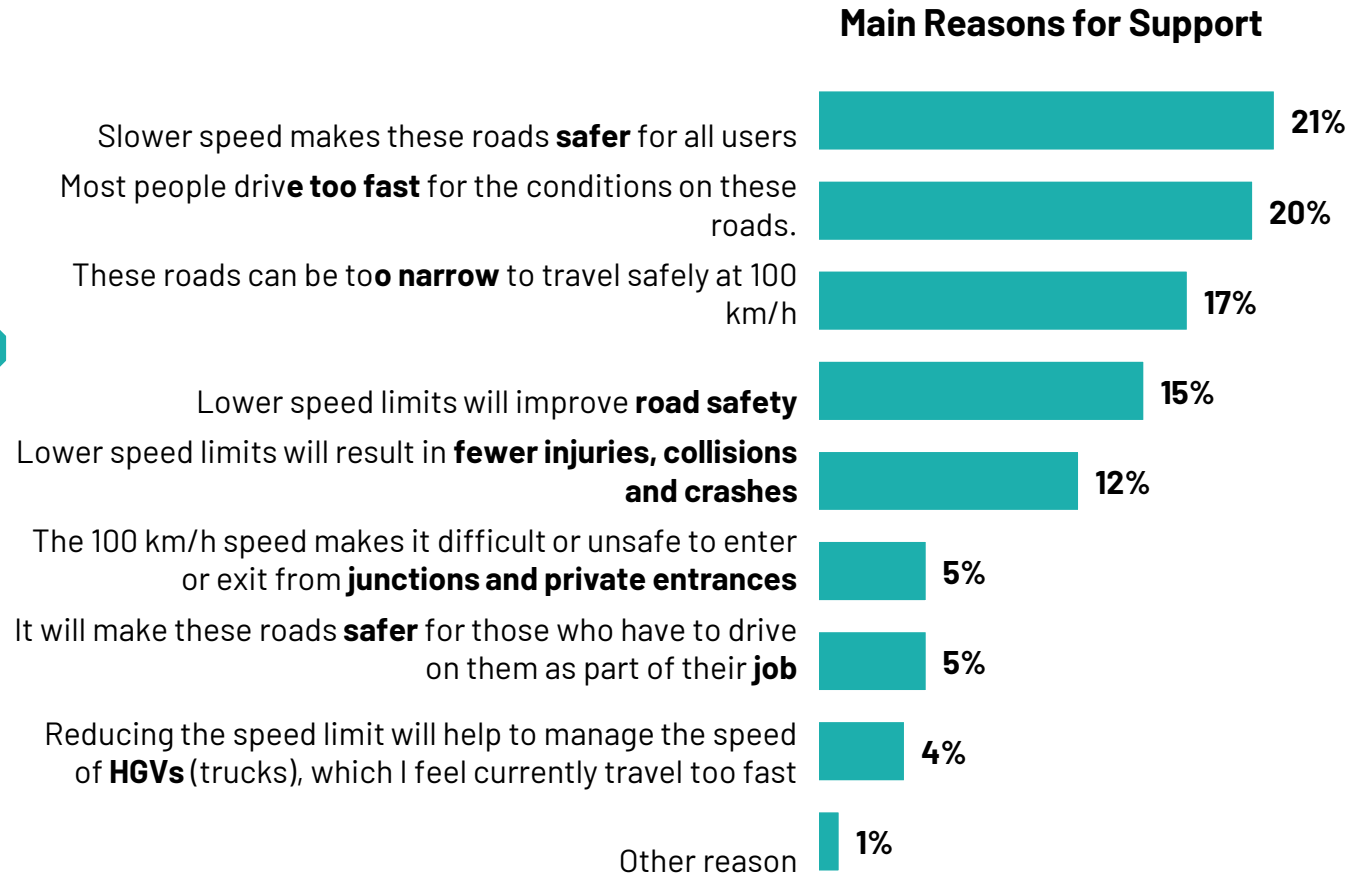
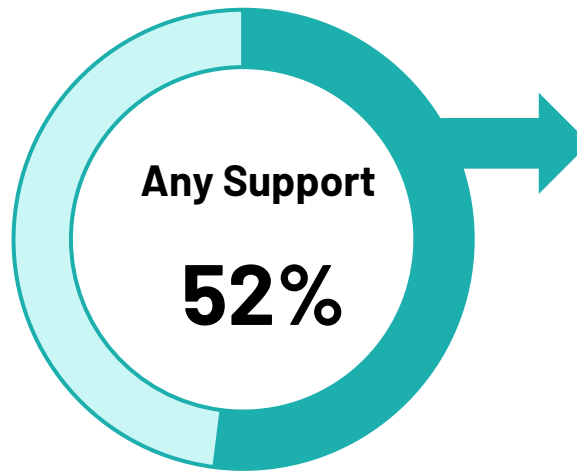
*Low base size

Support Statistically higher
Object Statistically higher



National Secondary Roads Speed Limits: Reasons for Support for Change (80 kmph)

The foundation of support for the change is a strong belief that it will enhance safety for all road users. Key reasons cited include the perception that current driving speeds are inappropriate for the road conditions and that the roads are too narrow.



Pre-Intervention Local Roads 2024
12%
31%
n/a
13%
8%
n/a
n/a
n/a
1%

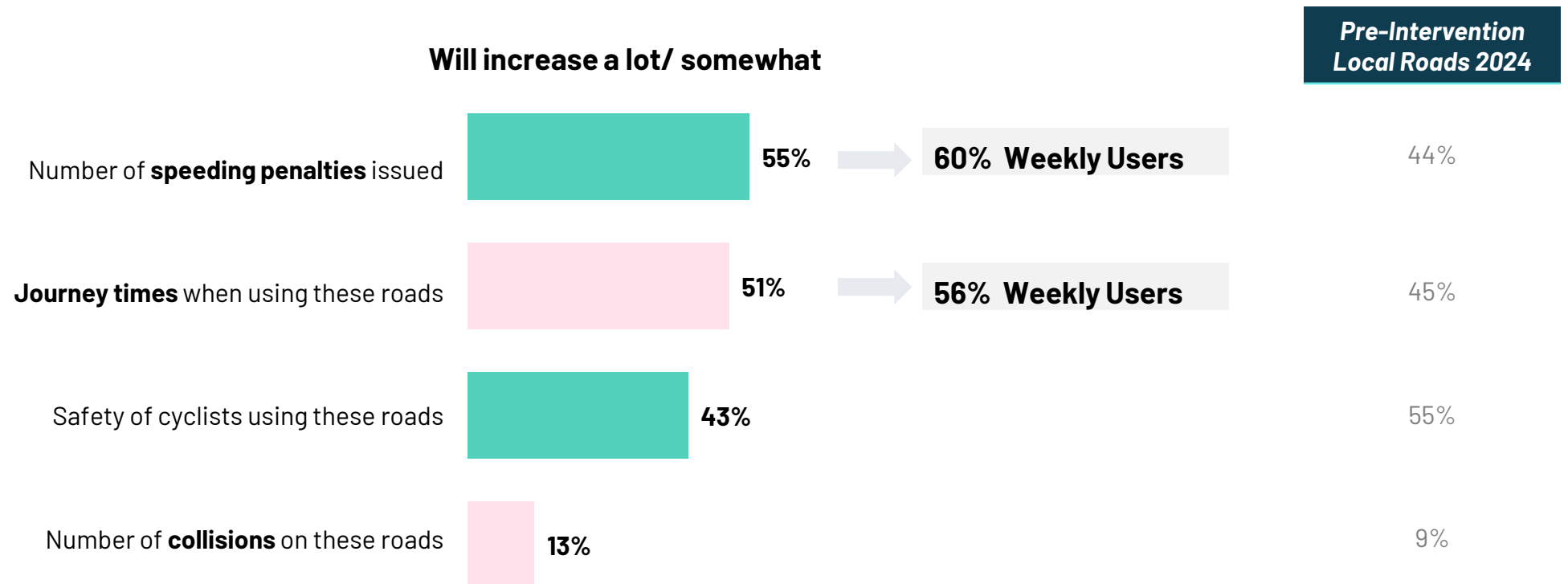
Q.10a You previously indicated you support the speed limit reductions on national secondary roads. What is the main reason for this?

Q.10b And are there any other reasons?

Base: All Motorists supporting speed limit reductions on National Secondary Roads N - 643

National Secondary Roads Speed Limits Change (60km/h) – Effects

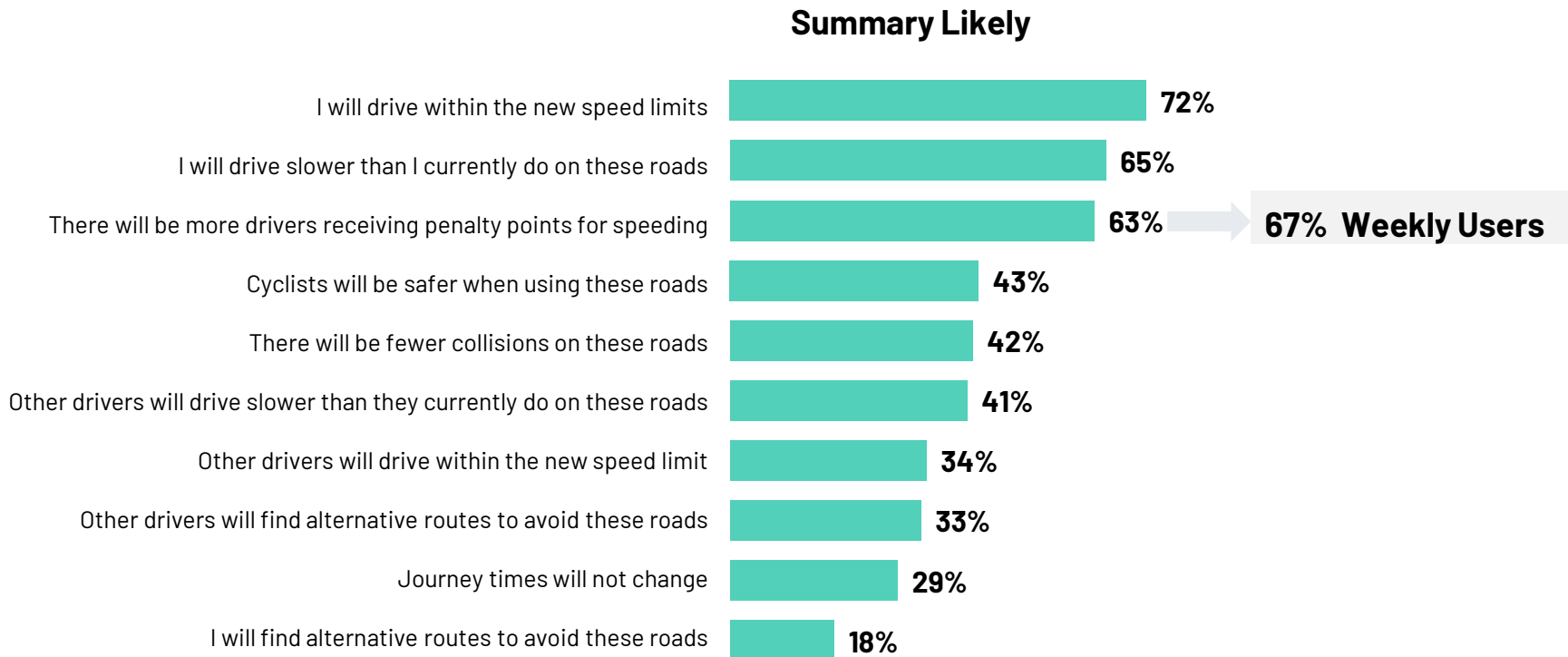
Motorists anticipate a mix of consequences from the speed limit change, including longer journey times and more speeding penalties. Expectation of these results for national secondary roads is greater than it was in the Rural roads research 2024.



Q.8 When speed limits on National Secondary roads are changed to 80 km/h, what effect do you think it will have on the....? –
Base: All Motorists N – 1,226

National Secondary Roads Speed Limits Change (80km/h) – Likely Driver Changes

A large majority of motorists express a personal commitment to adhering to the new 80 km/h speed limit. There is significant scepticism, however, about whether other drivers will show the same level of compliance. Compared to the change for rural roads, there is a higher expectation that more penalty points will be given out for speeding on these roads.



Pre-Intervention Local Roads 2024
73%
65%
50%
n/a
50%
41%
31%
34%
32%
17%

Q.9 When speed limits on **National secondary roads** are changed to 80 km/h, how likely or unlikely do you think it would be that.....?
 Base: All Motorists N – 1,226
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KEY LEARNINGS



National Secondary Roads: Attitudinal Changes vs 2024

In relation to attitudinal changes to national secondary roads since 2024, the summary picture is positive: support for speed limit changes on these roads has risen by 6% (to 52%) with Awareness increasing by 13% (to 67%). The levels of correct identification of the existing speed limit and the perceived safety of national secondary roads have remained much the same.

Support for Speed Limit Change

Awareness of Speed Limit Change

Correct identification of Speed limit (100km/h)

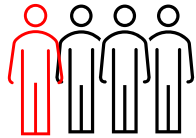
Perceived Safety of National Secondary Roads

National Secondary Roads	
2025	2024
52%	46%
67%	54%
24%	23%
59%	56%

*Based on statements asked to all motorists n 926



National Secondary Roads Pre - Intervention National Survey: Change of Speed Limit Key Learnings



Speeding on National Secondary roads is a significant issue. One in three drivers admits to low-level speeding, while a concerning one in four admits to exceeding the 100 km/h limit by a more substantial margin



Levels of perceived acceptability of speeding are significant and almost identical across each of national primary, secondary and regional roads. There is also a clear geographical divide, with urban residents showing a consistently higher acceptance of speeding.



While two-thirds of motorists have a general awareness of the upcoming changes, fewer than 40% know the specific details of the change from 100 km/h to 80 km/h. However, specific awareness has increased by 13ppts since 2024.



A slim majority of 52% support the speed limit reduction, this has increased 6ppts since 2024. This support is fundamentally rooted in safety, with the primary rationale being a belief that current speeds are too fast and therefore unsafe.



Drivers express a strong personal intention to follow the new 80 km/h limit, with 72% claiming they will comply. However, there is a significant trust deficit, with widespread scepticism that other motorists will show the same level of compliance.

THANK YOU

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