

RSA

National Survey of Pedestrians 2024

J. 245546

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RSA National Survey of Pedestrians 2024



Pedestrian Profile



Pedestrians & Motorists:
Assessment of Respective
Road Behaviour



Focus on Pedestrian Road
Behaviour



Pedestrians
Behavioural: Safety
& Acceptability



New Developments



Key Learnings

Research Background & Objectives



The RSA's core objective is to save lives and prevent injuries by reducing the number and severity of collision on Irish roads; and this National Survey of Pedestrians has been conducted to identify road safety policy measures which could improve pedestrian safety.

The research assessed general pedestrian behaviour and that specific to key road types; as well as establishing attitudes to 30km/h speed limits and infrastructural changes.

The survey was conducted online with a nationally representative sample of pedestrians aged 16+ who 'walk for at least 5 minutes at a time on public streets or roads (in urban or country areas)' on an at least monthly basis. A sample of motorists was also identified in the survey.

The sample was quota controlled and weighted in terms of gender, age, region and area to reflect the profile of pedestrians from previous nationally representative RSA research (RSA Campaign National Survey August 2023).

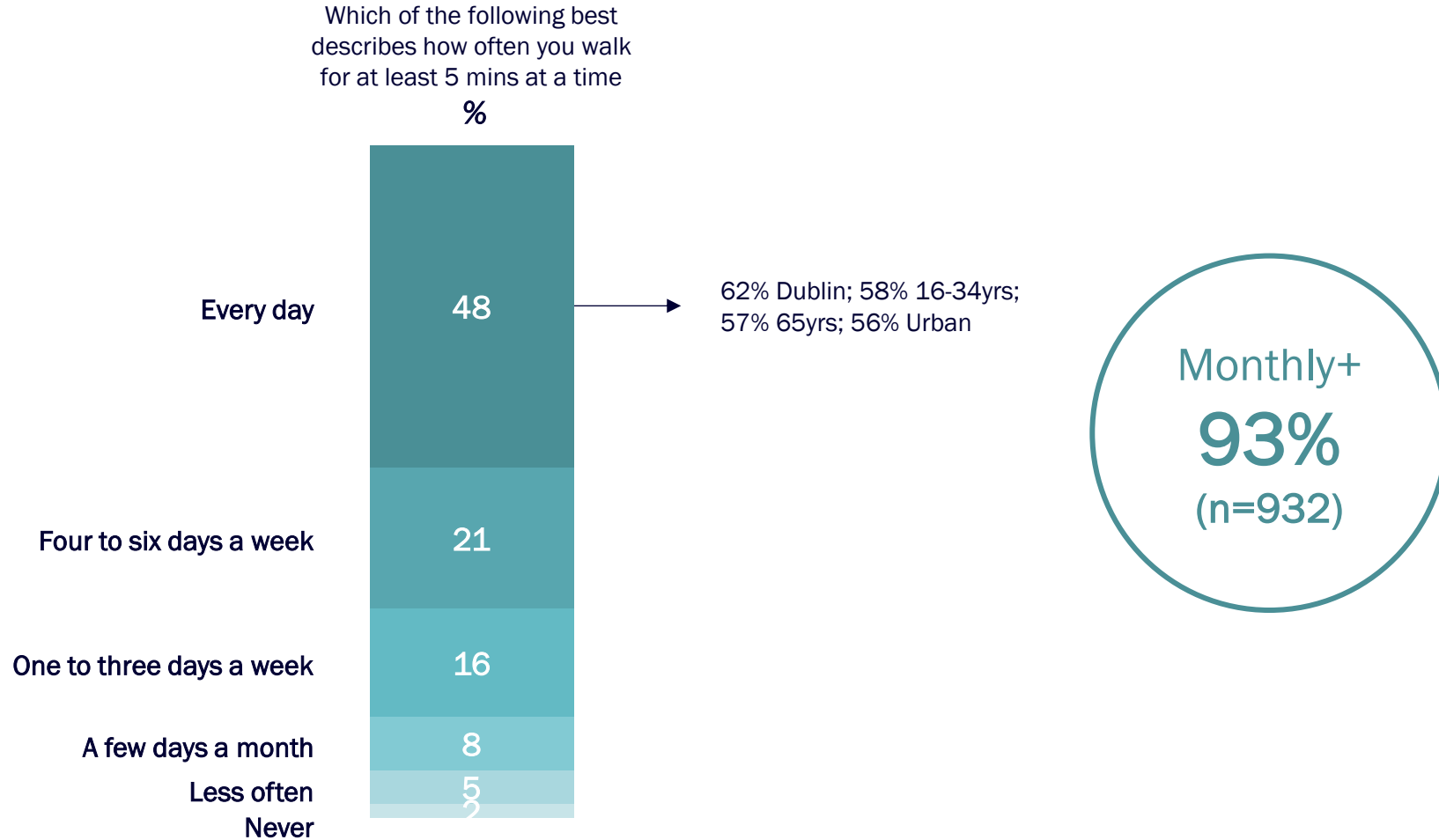
The fieldwork was conducted during April & May 2024 and delivered a sample of 932 pedestrians.



Pedestrian Profile

RSA National Survey of Pedestrians 2024

Base: All adults N - 1,005



93% (932) of respondents indicated at least monthly pedestrian behaviour and were therefore eligible for the inclusion in the pedestrian survey.

RSA National Survey of Pedestrians 2024: Demographic Profile

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

		All	Exclusive* (N-145)
		%	%
Gender	Male	51	41
	Female	49	59
Age	-35 years	27	46
	35-49 years	34	22
	50-64 years	24	23
	65+ years	15	9
Social Class	ABC1	53	40
	C2DE	47	60
Region	Dublin	27	44
	Rest of Leinster	29	23
	Munster	25	19
	Conn/Ulster	19	13

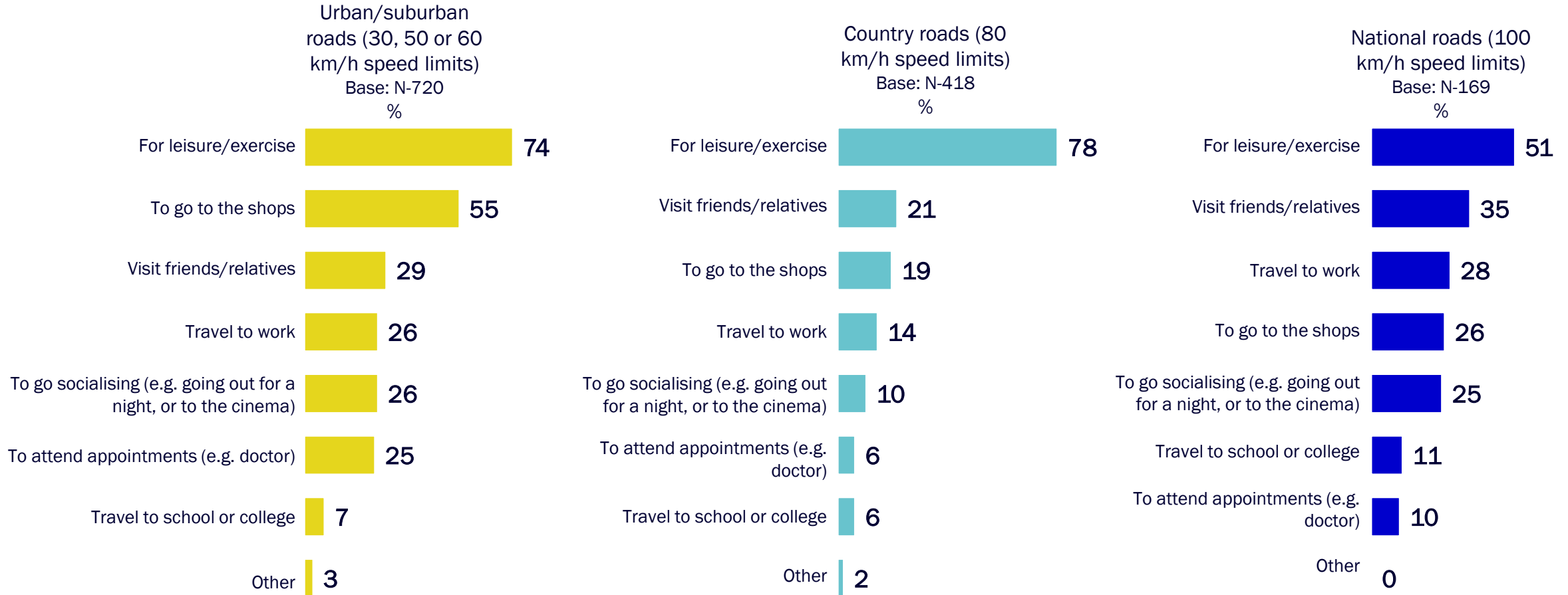
		All	Exclusive* (N-145)
		%	%
Area	Urban	61	78
	Rural	39	22
Road Type Usage (Monthly+)	Urban/Suburban	76	77
	Country	48	37
	National	18	29
	Greenways	46	54
Other Travel mode usage (Weekly+)	Motor vehicle	81	-
	Cycle	12	9
	PPT (e.g. e-scooter)	5	1
	Public transport	29	56
	Other	9	25

The overall Pedestrian profile largely conforms to the national adult profile as well the profile of adult pedestrians identified in previous nationally representative RSA research (RSA Campaign National Survey August 2023). ‘Exclusive’ Pedestrians are younger, more female and more urban; they are also higher users of public transport.

* ‘Exclusive Pedestrians’ defined by not also being a motorist

Reason for Walking by Road Type

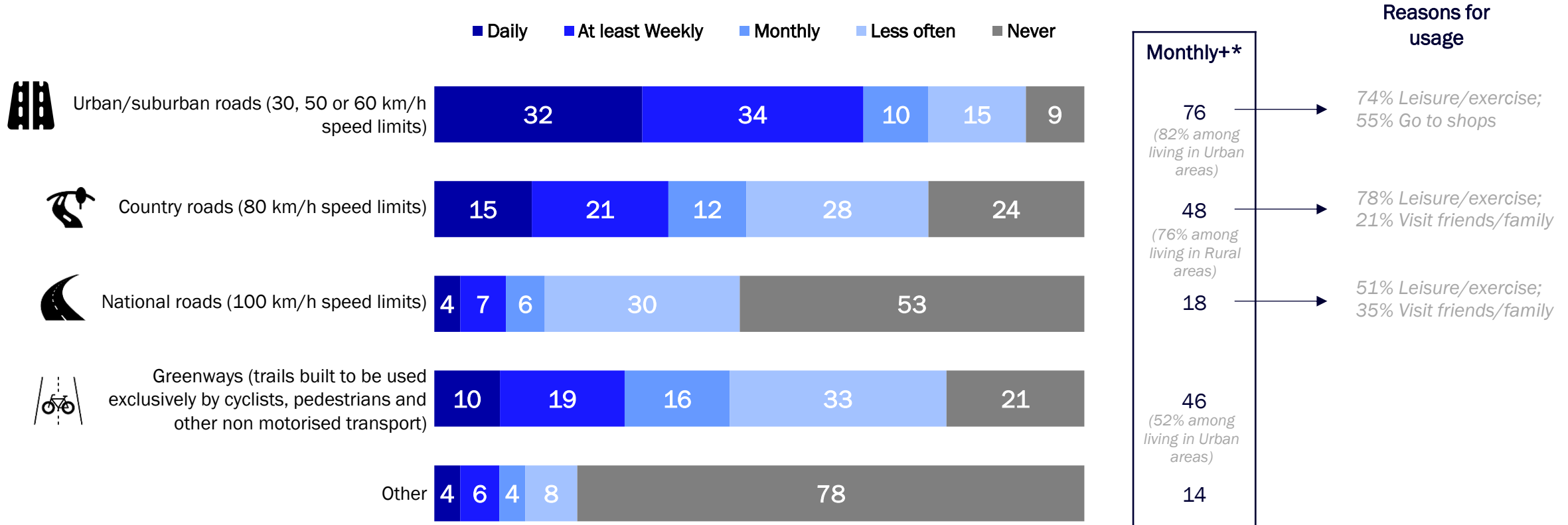
Base: Pedestrians who use each road type at least monthly



For leisure or exercise is main reason for using each road type. To go to the shop and to visit friends or relatives are also common reasons.

Pedestrian Use by Road Type

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

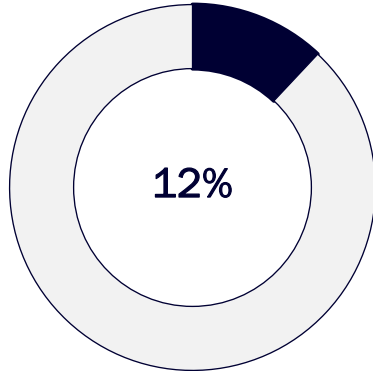


While 3 in 4 pedestrians walk on urban/ suburban roads on an at least monthly basis, almost half do so on country roads (both road types exhibiting an expected bias whether the pedestrian lives in an urban or rural areas).

Collision Involvement (Past 3 Years)

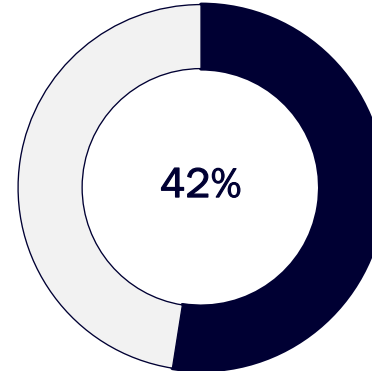
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

Road collision



Yes as a Pedestrian	2%
Yes as a Cyclist	2%
Yes as a Car driver (or passenger)	8%
Yes as a Motorcyclist	1%
Yes as a user of a powered personal transporter (e.g. e-scooter)	1%
Yes as another road user	-

'Near miss'



Yes as a Pedestrian	11
Yes as a Cyclist	6
Yes as a Car driver (or passenger)	30
Yes as a Motorcyclist	2
Yes as a user of a powered personal transporter (e.g. e-scooter)	2
Yes as another road user	2

22% National roads use monthly+; 21% 'Exclusive Pedestrian'; 18% -35yrs

While 42% of pedestrians indicate they have been involved in a 'near miss' in the past three years, this primarily relates to their experience as a driver or passenger. The incidence of a near miss as a pedestrian is much higher amongst those who regularly walk on national roads, and those who are 'exclusive' pedestrians.

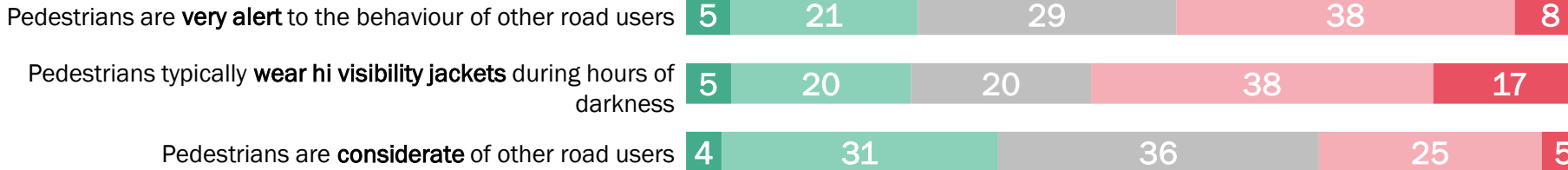
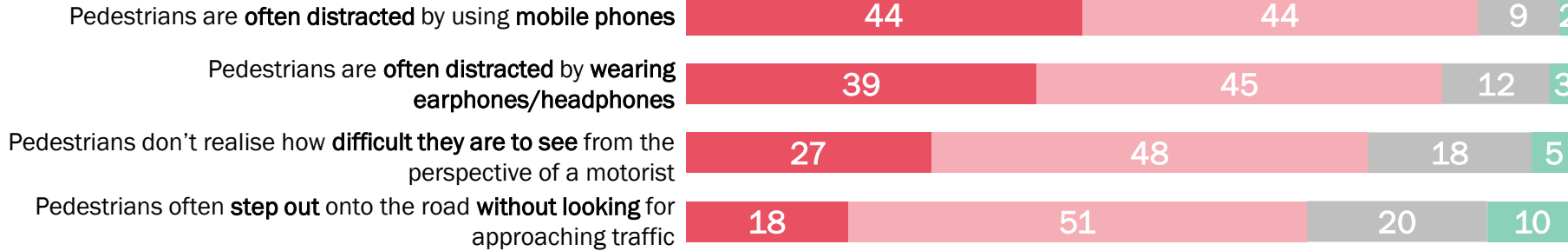




Pedestrians & Motorists: Assessment of Respective Road Behaviour

Pedestrians: Self-Assessment of Road Behaviour

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

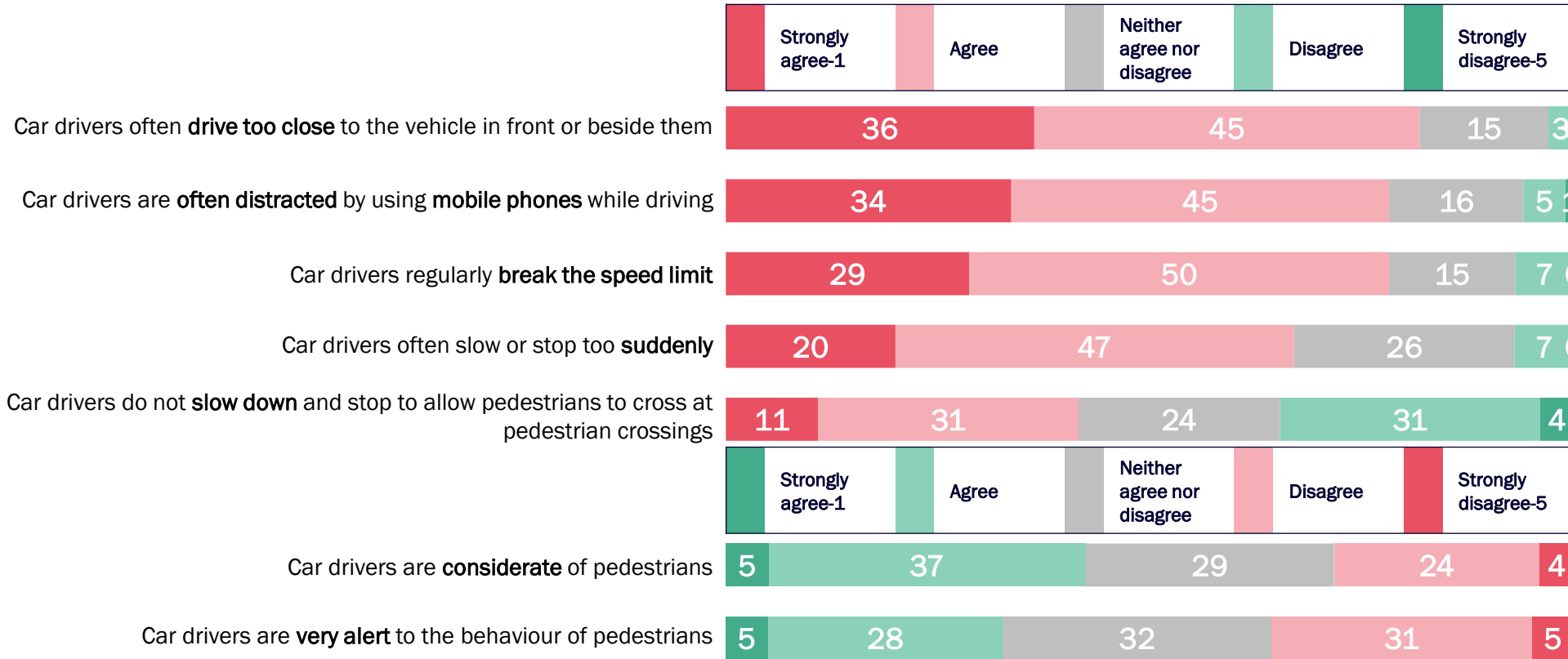


Net Agree – Pedestrians*		
All	Every-day	'Exclusive'
%	%	%
88	80	85
84	85	81
75	73	61
69	68	54
26	28	38
25	24	22
34	38	49

Pedestrians assessment of their own road user group is consistently self-critical – only 34% agree that ‘pedestrians are considerate of other road users’; 88% agree that pedestrians are often distracted by using their mobile phones; and 75% agree pedestrians don't realize how difficult they are to see for motorists.

Motorists: Self-Assessment of Road Behaviour

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



Net Agree - Pedestrians		
All %	'Exclusive' %	Motorists 'Exclusive'* %
81	73	79
78	73	67
78	73	73
67	63	63
41	45	45
42	34	37
33	34	25

Pedestrians' assessment of car drivers is equally critical: 78% of pedestrians agree that drivers regularly break the speed limit, and that they are often distracted by using their phones; only 42% of pedestrians agree that car drivers are considerate of pedestrians.



Focus on Pedestrian Road Behaviour (incl. by road type)

Pedestrians: Behaviour by Road Type - Summary

Base: Pedestrians who use each road type at least monthly

Regular Behaviour (Always-5/Often-4)



Urban/ Suburban Roads

(N-720)
%

34

Listen to any type of device through **earphones/ headphones** while walking on the street or road

13

Walk down the street or road when you may have had **too much to drink**

17

Read or write a message or check social media/news/notifications on your **mobile phone** while walking on the street or road

32

Run to get across the road

7

Walk while being **distracted**, so that a car has to stop or beep at you

39

Wear reflective gear such as a **high visibility** jacket or vest or belt when walking during hours of darkness

Country/ National Roads

(N-456)
%

32

Listen to any type of device through **earphones/ headphones** while walking on the street or road

13

Walk down the street or road when you may have had **too much to drink**

17

Read or write a message or check social media/news/notifications on your **mobile phone** while walking on the street or road

27

Run to get across the road

11

Walk while being **distracted**, so that a car has to stop or beep at you

58

Wear reflective gear such as a **high visibility** jacket or vest or belt when walking during hours of darkness



When the frequency of common pedestrian behavior is assessed on separate types of road, the similarities in behavior are striking. Only in relation to the wearing of reflective/ high visibility gear does regular behavior on 'country and national roads' differentiate itself.

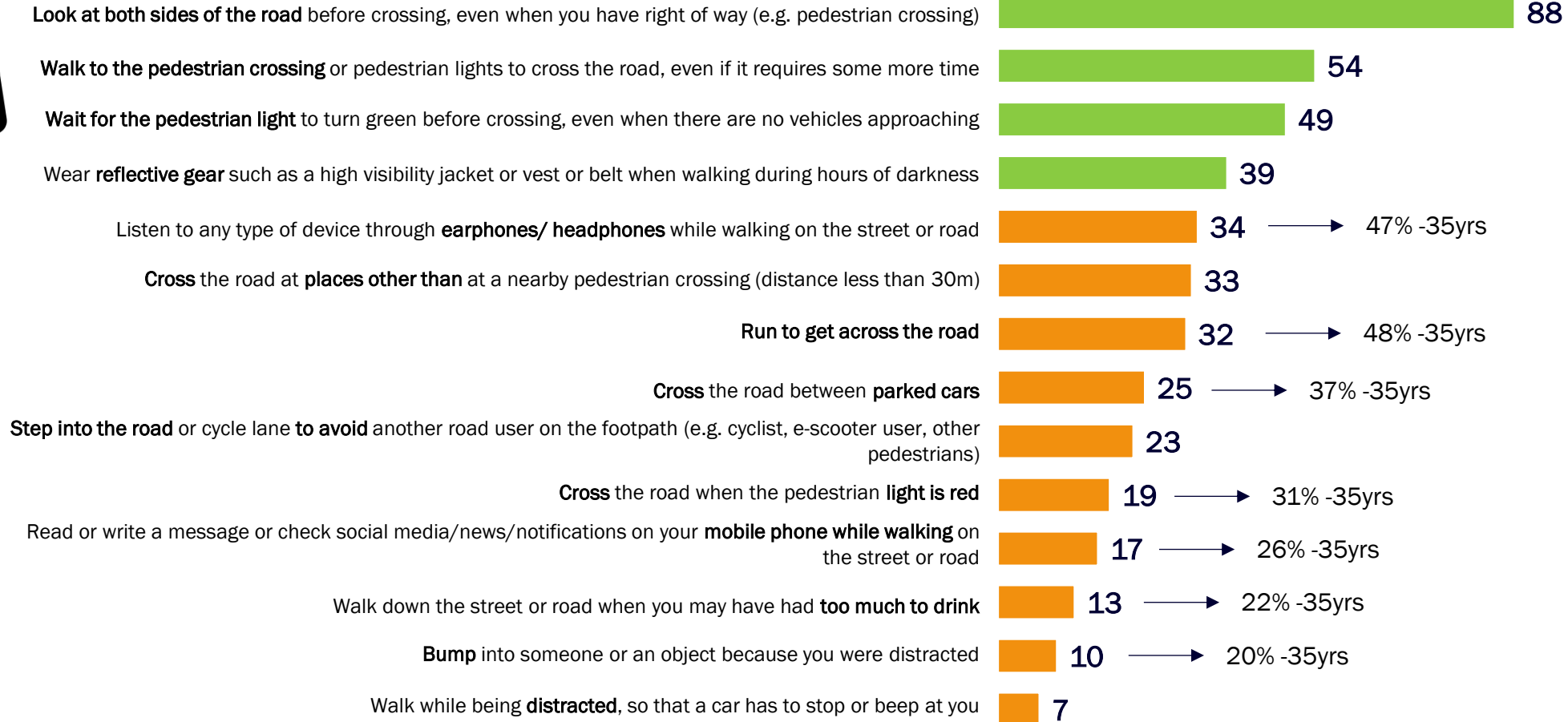


Pedestrians: Behaviour on Urban/Suburban Roads

Base: Pedestrians who use urban/suburban roads at least monthly N - 720



Regular Behaviour (Always-5/ Often-4)
%



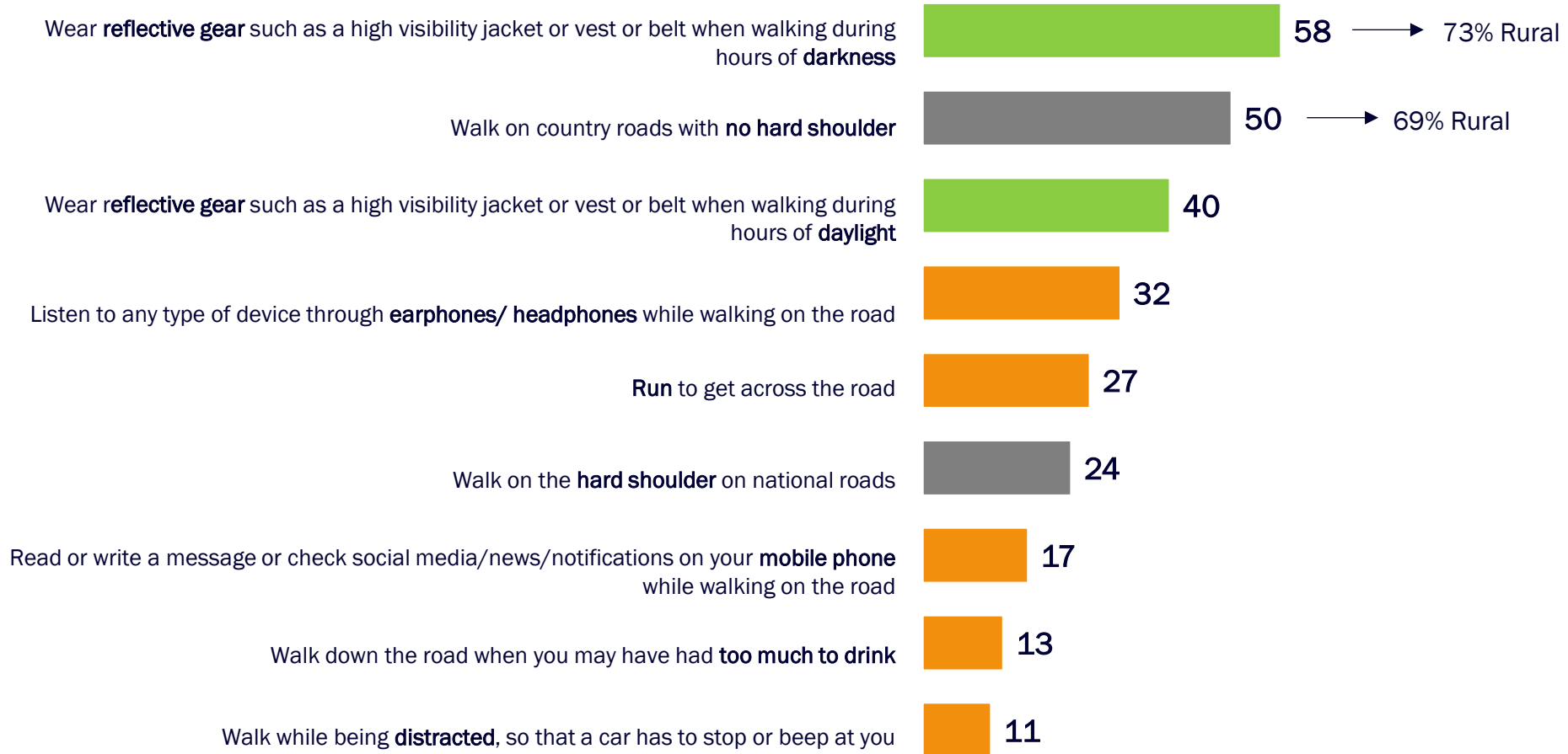
Pedestrian behavior on urban/ suburban roads exhibits a broad range of errant characteristics: only 54% of urban pedestrians regularly walk to the pedestrian crossing if it requires some more time; and one in four regularly cross the road between parked cars. The pattern of errant behavior is consistently more evident among young adult urban pedestrians.

Pedestrians: Behaviour on Country/ National Roads

Base: Pedestrians who use Country/National Roads at least monthly N - 456



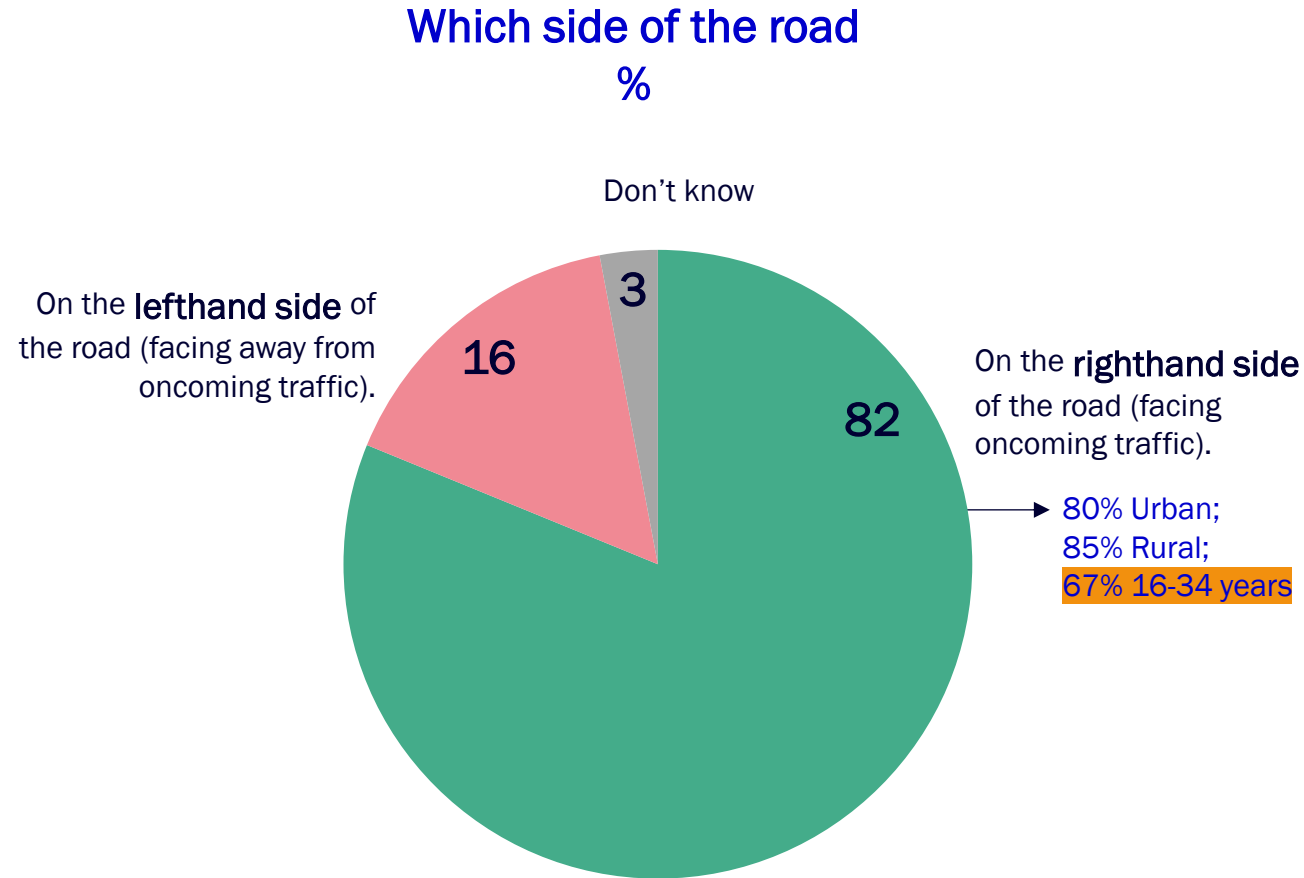
Regular Behaviour (Always-5/ Often-4) %



The pattern of regular errant behaviour is also evident on Country/ National roads. Encouragingly the regular wearing of reflective gear when dark rises to 73% of those in rural areas.

Which side of the road are you supposed to walk as a pedestrian if there is no footpath?

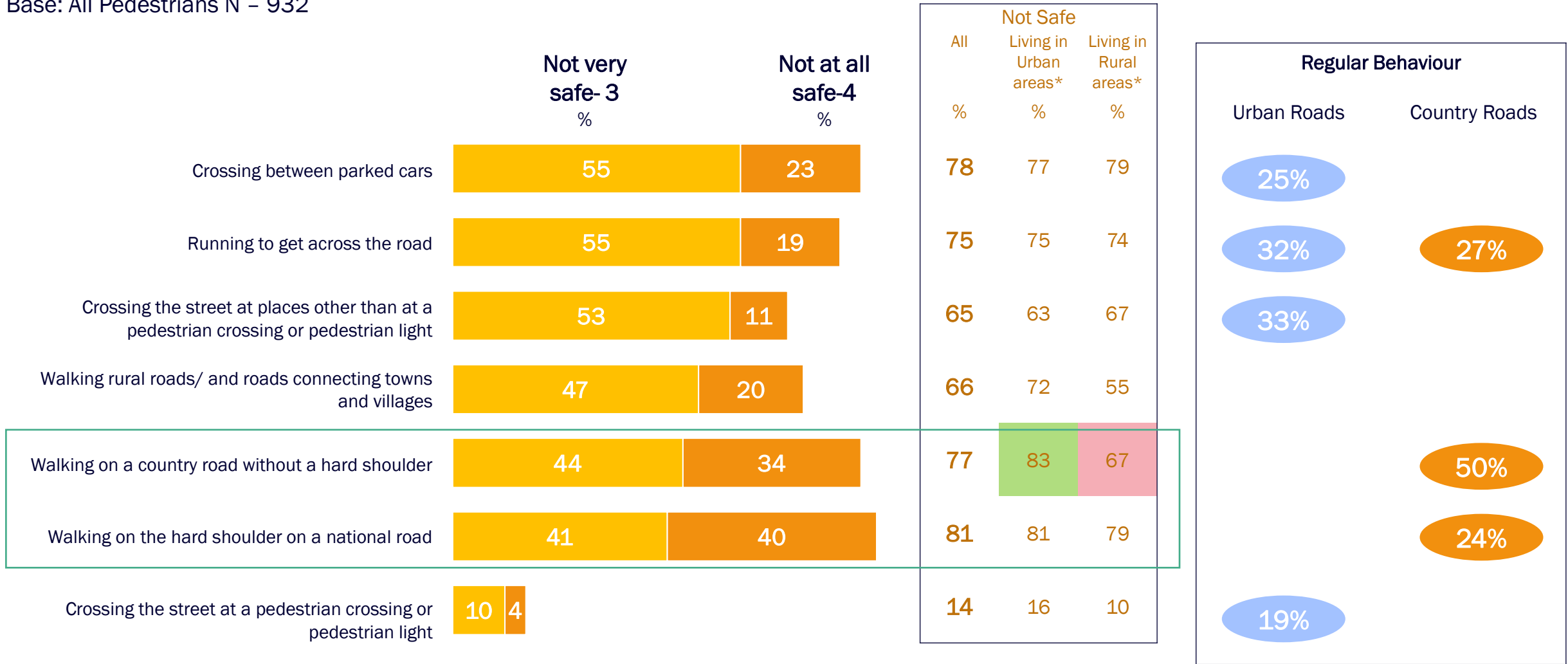
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



82% of pedestrians appreciate they should walk on the right hand side of the road (facing oncoming traffic) if there is no footpath; with this response largely consistent across both urban and rural pedestrians.

Perceived Safe & Unsafe Pedestrian Behaviour

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



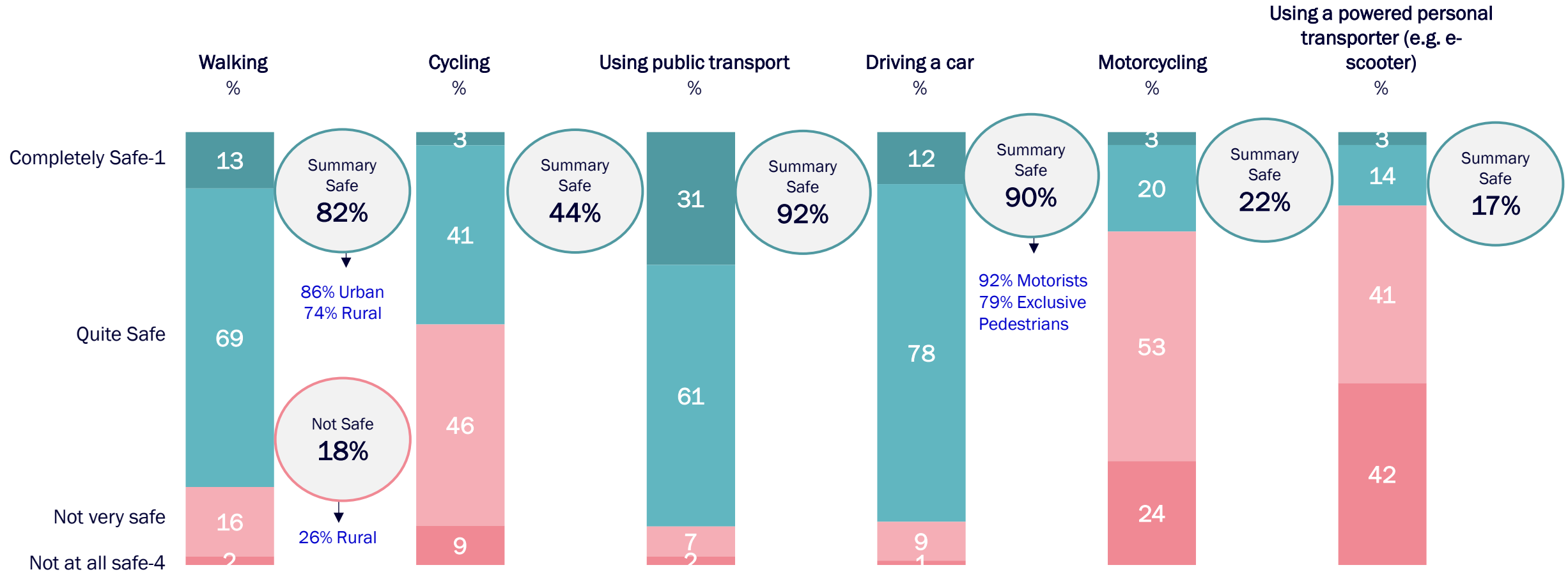
The perceived safety of pedestrian behaviours often correlates to claimed regular behaviour. Note that 67% of rural pedestrians consider it unsafe to walk on a country road without a hard shoulder.



Pedestrians Behavioural: Safety & Acceptability

Perceived Safety of Transport Modes

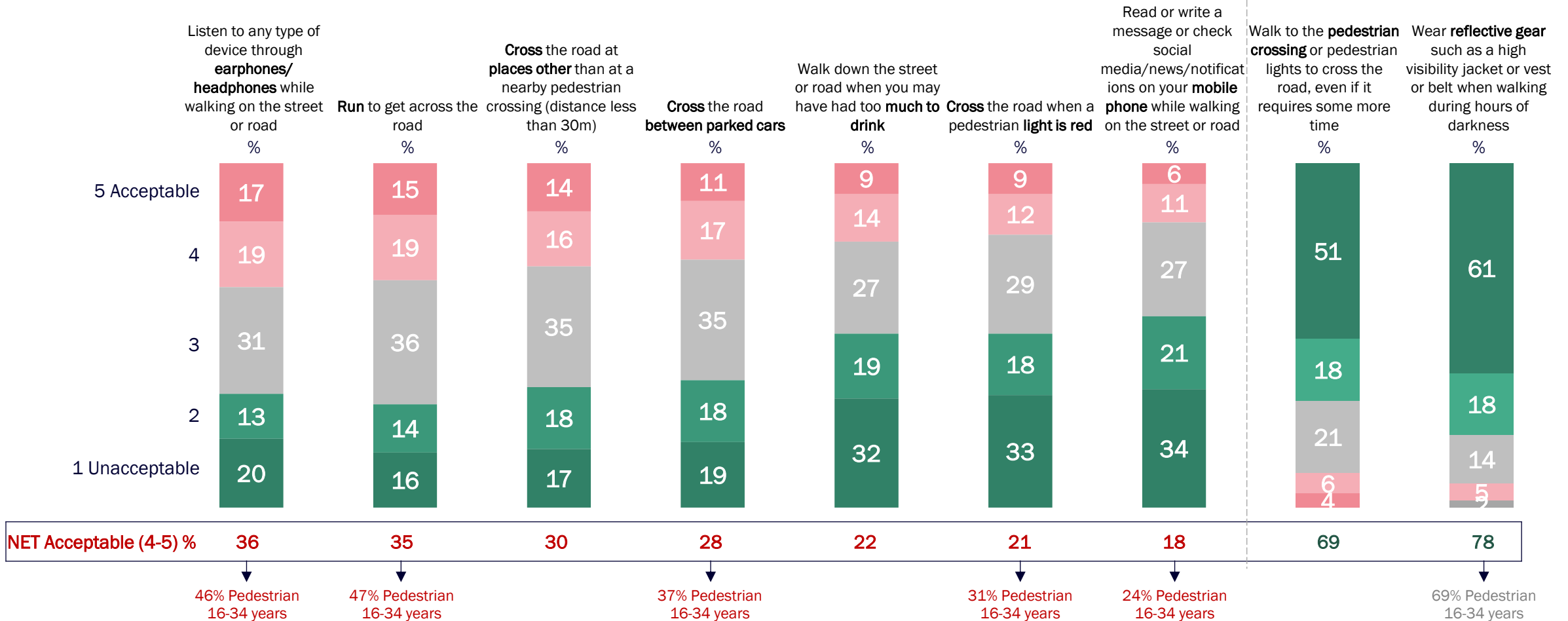
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



Pedestrians consider both the use of public transport and driving a car to be on balance safer than walking. 26% of rural pedestrians consider walking 'not' safe.

Social Acceptability Of Unsafe Behaviour – “Where you live”

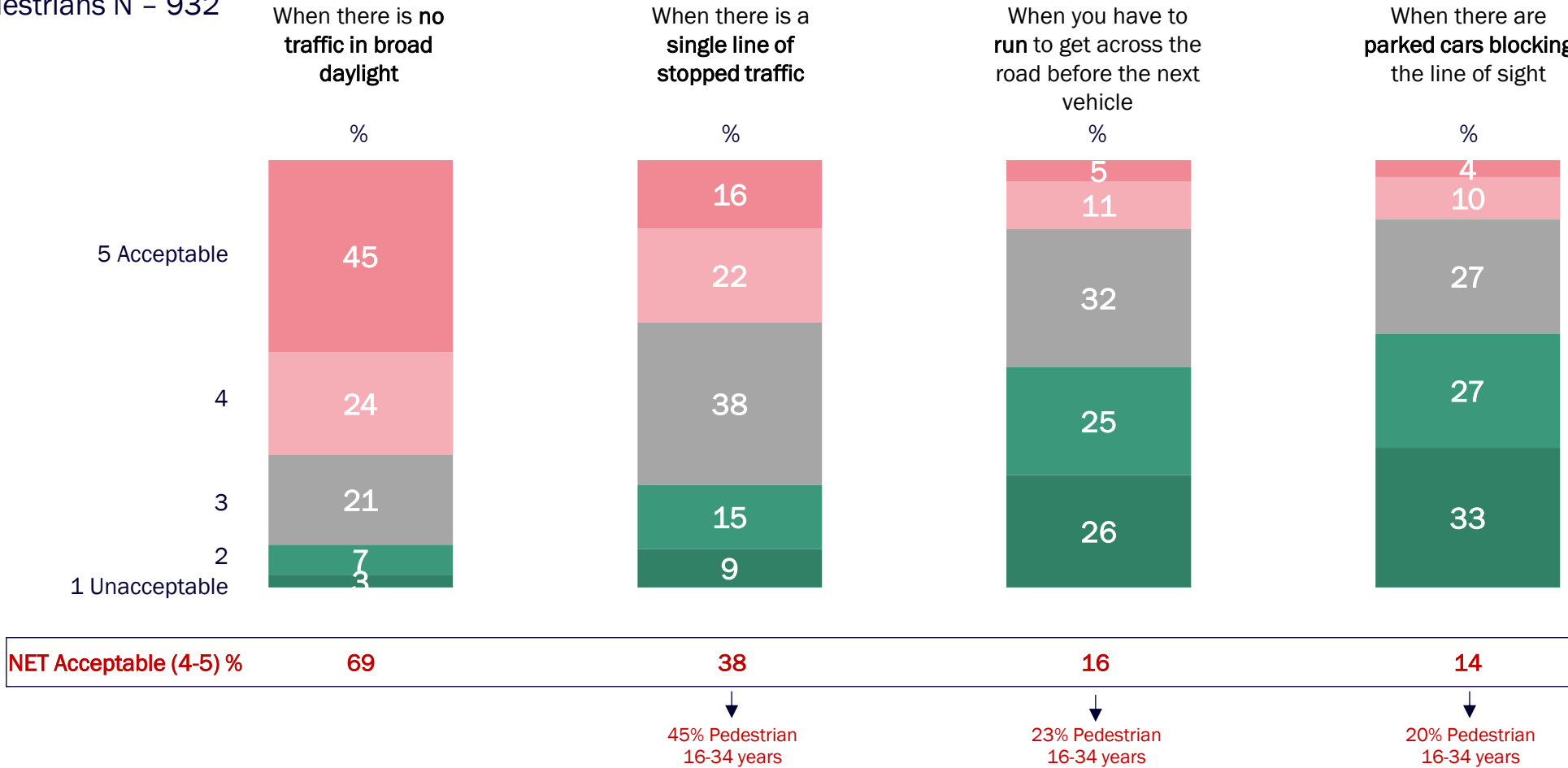
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



C. 1 in 3 pedestrians believe it is ‘acceptable’ where they live to both run across the road, and to cross the road at places other than nearby pedestrian crossings. The social acceptability of errant pedestrian behavior is consistently higher among young adult pedestrians (16-34 years).

Social Acceptability: Crossing of Urban Roads (where there is no pedestrian crossing or lights)

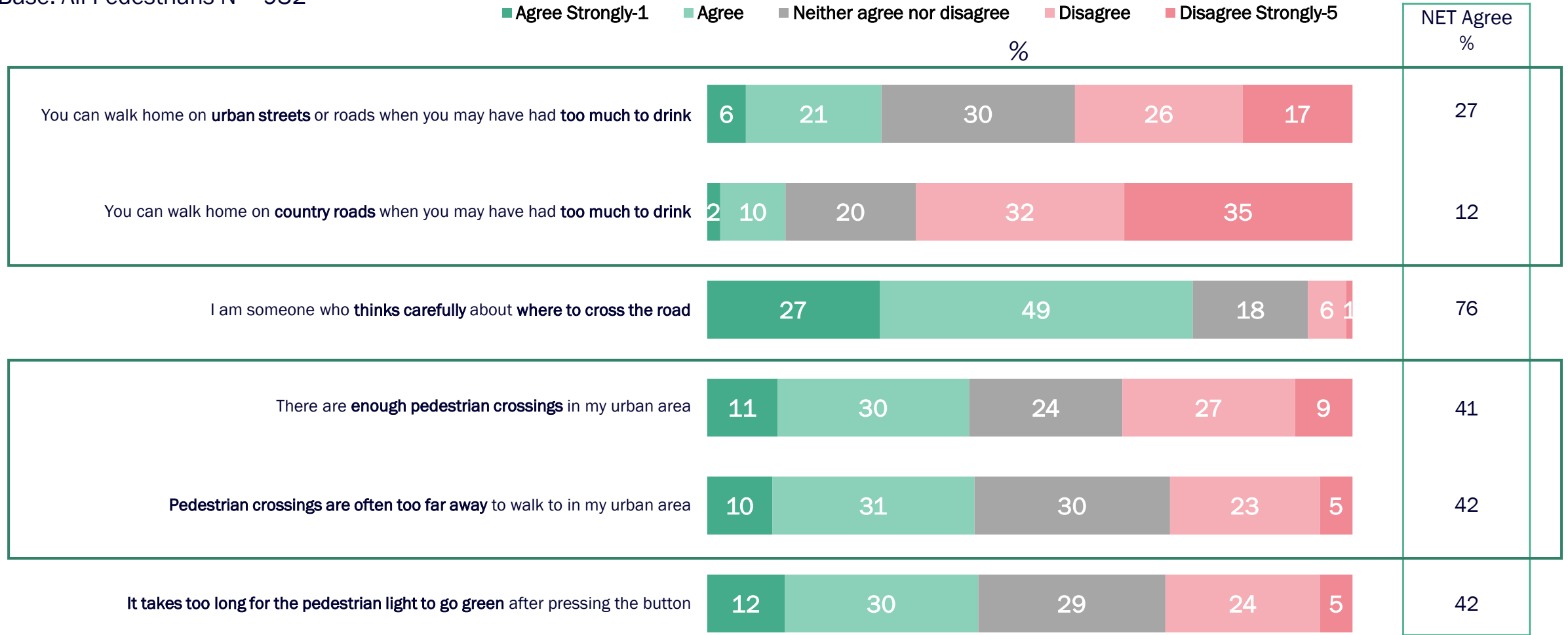
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



The attitudes of pedestrians to the crossing of urban roads may be particularly noteworthy in relation to crossing when there is a single line of stopped traffic: 38% of pedestrians consider this ‘acceptable’ where they live, rising to 45% of young adult pedestrians.

Attitudinal Statements: Pedestrian's Own Behaviour

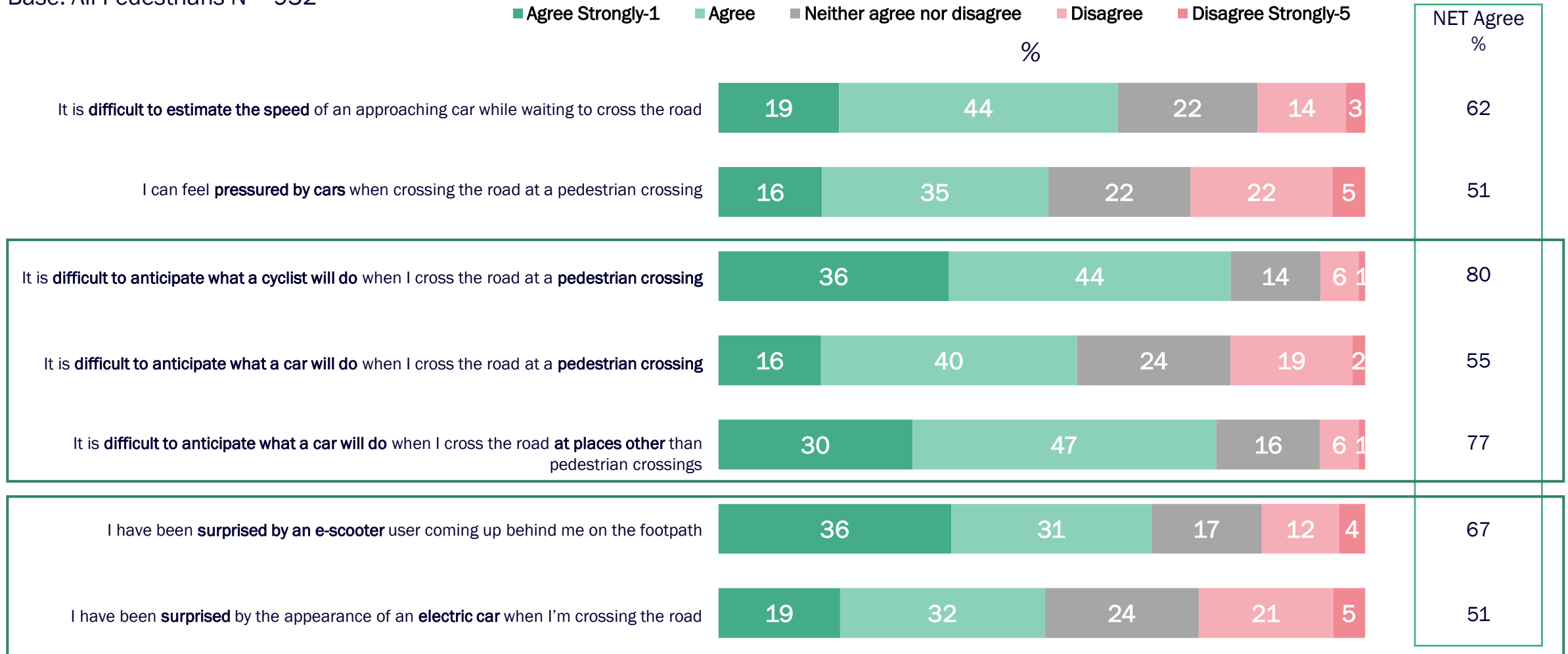
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



Pedestrian are much more likely to think it acceptable to be a 'drunken pedestrian' on urban streets than country roads. Separately, only 11% of pedestrians strongly agree 'there are enough pedestrian crossings in my urban area'.

Attitudinal Statements: Pedestrian Behaviour in Relation to Other Road Users

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



Pedestrians find it more difficult to anticipate what a cyclist will do at a pedestrian crossing than a car and more than half of all pedestrians agree they have already been surprised by an E scooter or an electric car when crossing the road.

Attitudinal Statements: Pedestrian's Own Behaviour & Pedestrian Behaviour in Relation to Other Road Users

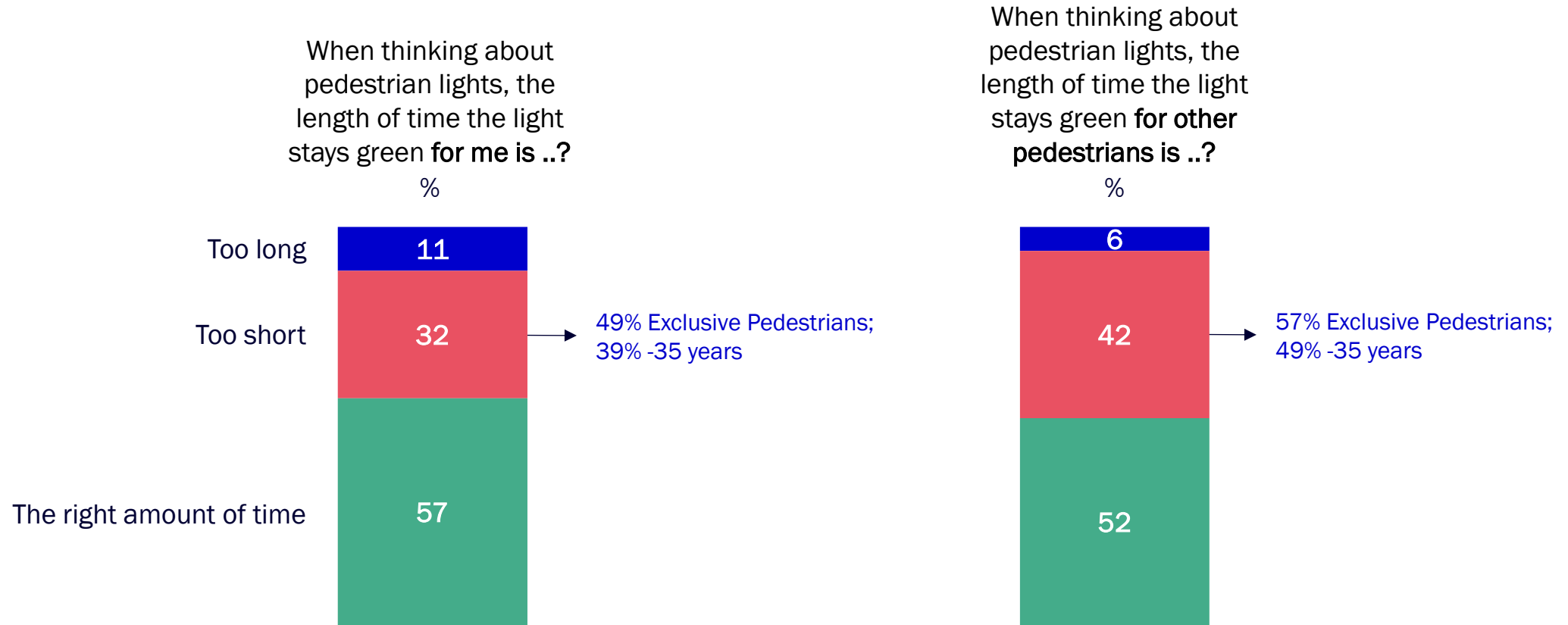
Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

NET AGREE (5-4)	Total	Gender		Age			Area		Region	
		Male	Female	16-34	35-64	65+	Urban	Rural	Dublin	Excl Dublin
		932	451	481	275	482	175	698	234	274
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
You can walk home on urban streets or roads when you may have had too much to drink	27	34	20	33	27	17	28	25	32	25
You can walk home on country roads when you may have had too much to drink	12	15	10	20	10	7	13	11	15	11
It is difficult to estimate the speed of an approaching car while waiting to cross the road	62	56	68	59	62	68	60	66	58	64
I am someone who thinks carefully about where to cross the road	76	72	81	65	79	85	73	81	73	77
I can feel pressured by cars when crossing the road at a pedestrian crossing	51	42	60	55	49	48	47	58	44	54
It is difficult to anticipate what a cyclist will do when I cross the road at a pedestrian crossing	80	78	82	71	84	85	78	84	79	80
It is difficult to anticipate what a car will do when I cross the road at a pedestrian crossing	55	50	61	53	57	55	53	60	49	58
It is difficult to anticipate what a car will do when I cross the road at places other than pedestrian crossings	77	73	81	68	78	87	76	79	71	80
I have been surprised by an e-scooter user coming up behind me on the footpath	67	65	68	57	69	76	72	56	71	65
I have been surprised by the appearance of an electric car when I'm crossing the road	51	47	55	45	54	51	49	55	47	53
There are enough pedestrian crossings in my urban area	41	46	35	40	41	40	44	35	53	35
Pedestrian crossings are often too far away to walk to in my urban area	42	41	43	45	39	45	39	46	40	42
It takes too long for the pedestrian light to go green after pressing the button	42	43	41	51	39	36	45	37	51	38
None	3	3	2	5	2	1	3	1	2	3

Interestingly, across the broadest range of attitudes there are rarely significant differences between urban and rural pedestrians: Rural pedestrians are more likely to feel pressured at pedestrian crossings; while Urban pedestrians are more likely to have been surprised by an E scooter; otherwise their sentiments are largely similar.

Pedestrian lights - the length of time the light stays green....

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



32% of pedestrians consider that the length of time the light stays green at a pedestrian light is 'too short'.





New Developments

Support for 30km/h speed limits

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

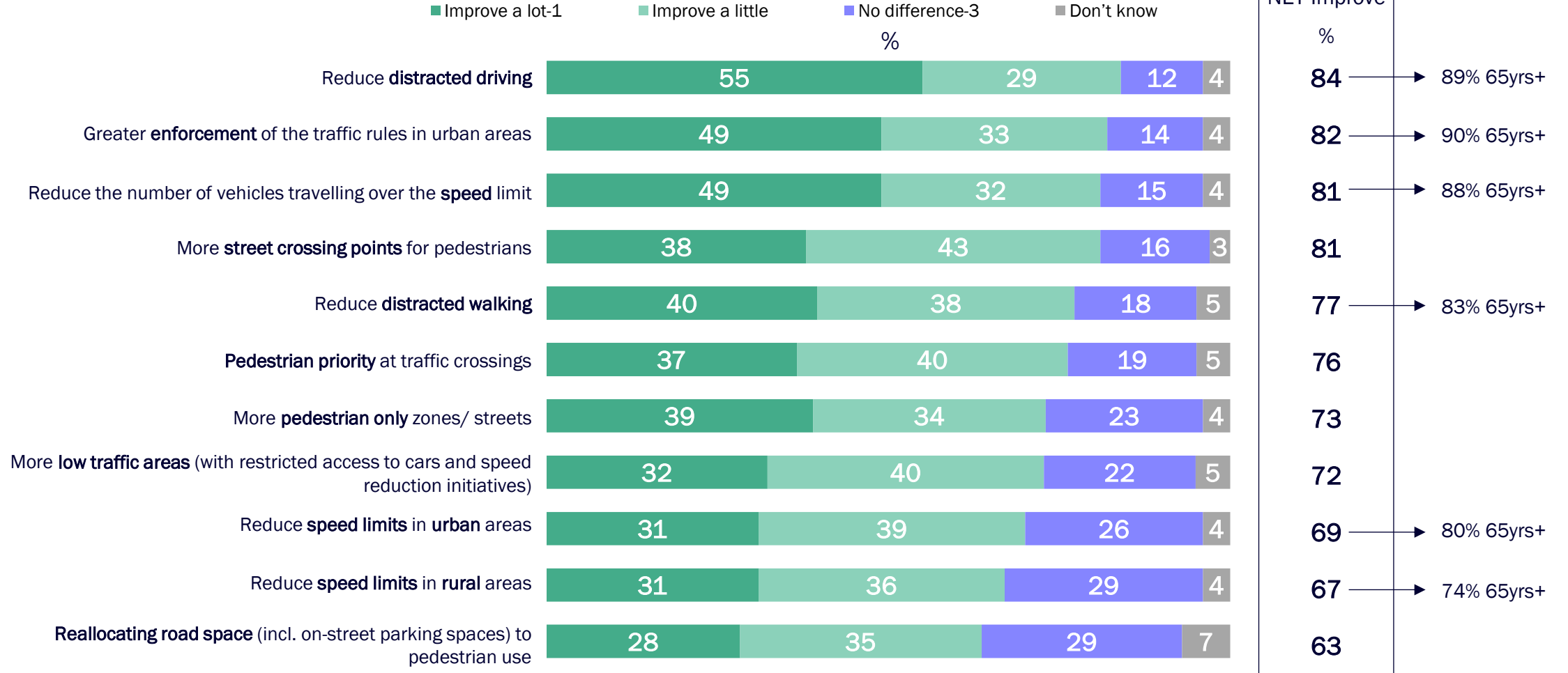


Support for the introduction of 30 km/h speed limits continues to vary by road type –peaking for the introduction on city centre roads. 54% of pedestrians support the introduction on roads in towns/ villages/ suburbs.

(RSA National Survey 2023, Base: All Adults)

Infrastructural changes for Improving Pedestrian Safety

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



The general response to the proposed infrastructural changes is consistently positive. The biggest predicted improvement relates to reducing distracted driving; followed by greater enforcement, reducing speeding, and more street crossing points. While older pedestrians are often more likely to envisage improvements, few other demographic differences are evident in relation to the impact of the changes.

Any Other Comments

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932



Road users can be very inconsiderate and are often distracted. Mobile phone use is very prevalent amongst road users.

There's too much cycling lanes and they can be confusing for drivers.

Improve public transport

Younger people are much more likely to be lost in their phones while walking

Walking in Dublin City Centre is very unpleasant, crowded, junction bottle necks

Yes, be visible when dark outside and be careful

Road works are very distracting

Signage to make walkers aware when using their phones while walking.

Pedestrians must be visible....wear hi-vis jacket/vest

The use of scooters on footpaths is very dangerous.

Too many vehicles parked on footpaths

There should be a national standard for pedestrian crossings and traffic signals. At the moment there are too many different patterns and systems in use around the country and Councils have too much discretion to do things differently. The process should be identical everywhere.

More awareness in regards promoting the well-being of pedestrians



Any Other Comments (Coded)

Base: All Pedestrians N – 932

Experience of being a pedestrian %



10% mentioned comments in relation to drivers' behaviours.



Key Learnings

RSA National Survey of Pedestrians 2024



Pedestrians consider both the use of public transport and driving a car to be on balance safer than walking. 26% of rural pedestrians consider walking 'not' safe.



Pedestrians assessment of their own road user group is consistently self-critical – only 34% agree that 'pedestrians are considerate of other road users'. Pedestrians' assessment of car drivers is equally critical.



When the frequency of common pedestrian behaviour is assessed on separate types of road, the similarities in behavior are striking. Pedestrian behavior on urban/suburban roads exhibits a particularly broad range of errant characteristics.



The pattern of errant behavior is consistently more evident among young adult pedestrians; as is the perceived social acceptability of errant behavior.



Pedestrian attitudes reveal a series of notable distinctions: they are much more likely to think it acceptable to be a 'drunken pedestrian' on urban streets than country roads; they find it more difficult to anticipate what a cyclist will do at a pedestrian crossing than a car; more than half of all pedestrians agree they have already been surprised by an E-scooter or an electric car when crossing the road.



The general response to the proposed infrastructural changes is consistently positive. The biggest predicted improvement relates to reducing distracted driving; followed by greater enforcement, reducing speeding, and more street crossing points.



Appendix

Motorist Sample Profile

Base: All Motorists N – 860

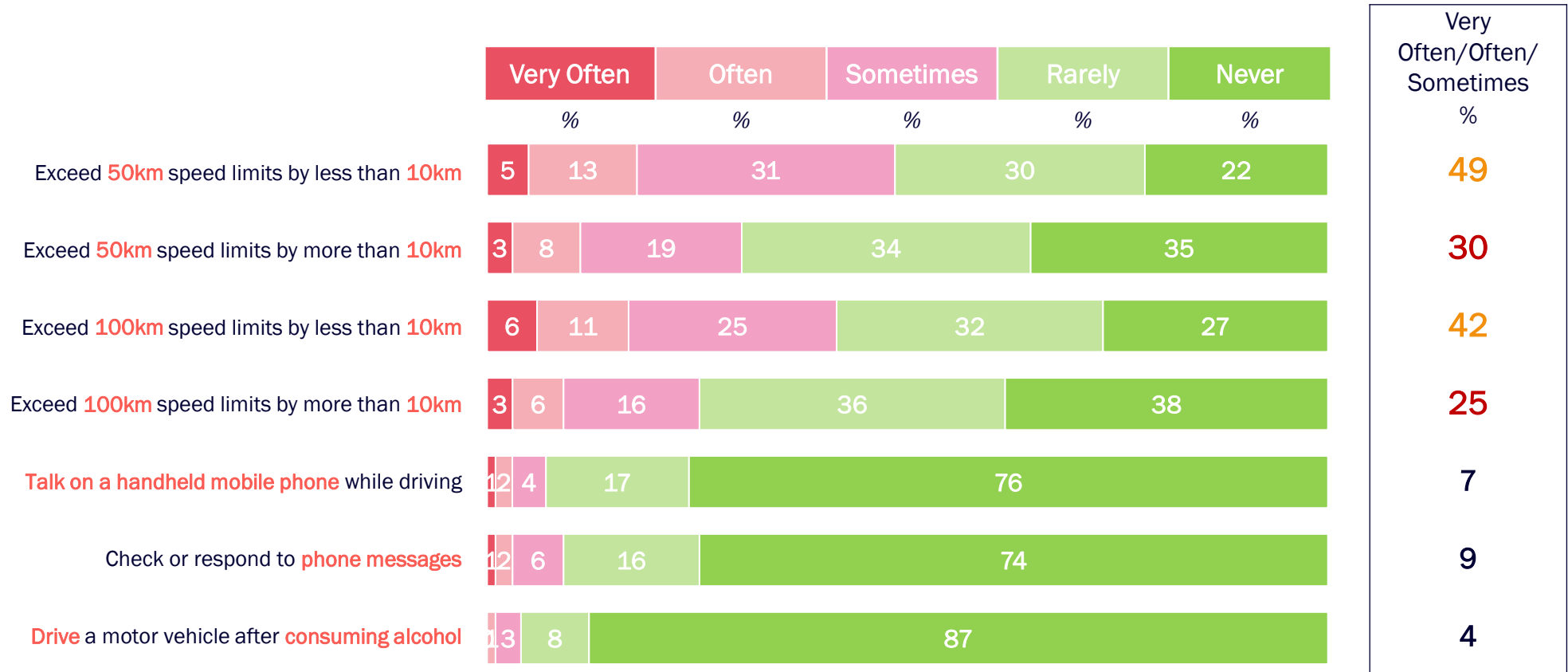
		%
Gender	Male	52
	Female	48
Age	-35 years	26
	35-49 years	28
	50-64 years	25
	65+ years	20
Social Class	ABC1	53
	C2DE	47
Region	Dublin	27
	Ex Dublin	73
Area	Urban	63
	Rural	37

		%
Licence Type	Full-Irish issued	91
	Full-other country issued	2
	Learner licence	7
Type of Road Driven (weekly+ use)	Urban/suburban roads	92
	Country roads	79
	National Roads	76
	Major roads/motorways	45
Speed Composite Score	Other	11
	SRV Low	54
	SRV Med	41
	SRV High	5

As referenced, there is considerable overlap between the pedestrian and motorist sample with similar demographic profiles. The biggest difference is between the profile of the motorist sample and that of 'exclusive' pedestrians.

Speeding & Rule Violation

Base: All Motorists n – 860



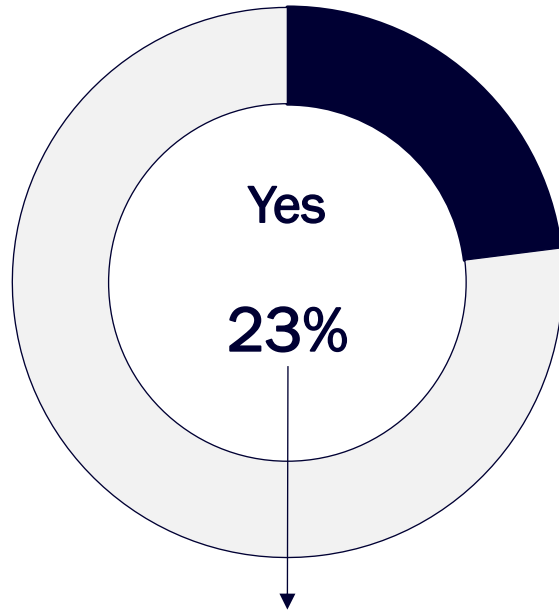
The Speeding & Rule Violation measure confirms the relationship between low and high level speeding irrespective of the speed limit: for example – 49% of motorists often low-level speed on 50km roads, while a similar 42% low-level speed on 100km roads.



Motorists Pulling into the Side of a High Speed Road and Exiting their Vehicle

Base: All Motorists N – 860

Any such occasion
past 3 years



Yes, due to a breakdown	7
Yes, due to a puncture	8
Yes, due to illness	5
Yes, for another reason	7



Last such occasion was daylight hours or at night time? (196)	
During daylight hours	88%
At night time	12%

Last such occasion was on a road with or without hard shoulder? (196)	
On a road with a hard shoulder	87%
On a road without a hard shoulder	13%

23% of motorists have had to pull into the side of a high-speed road and exit their vehicle in the last three years.



Q24 In the last three years, has there ever been an occasion, as a driver, where you had to pull into the side of a high-speed road and exit your vehicle for any reason?

Q.24b On the last occasion, was this during daylight hours or at night time?

Q.24c On the last occasion, was this on a road with a hard shoulder or without a hard shoulder*?

Thank You

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Delve Deeper