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# Riding a bike in regional NSW Survey March, 2021

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*Report prepared for better understanding cycling in Bathurst Regional Council area.*

# Summary

Over a million people (13%) in NSW ride a bike at least once a week, regional rates slightly higher.

This study asked how people in regional NSW are using bikes, what would encourage more riding, and how well road users know road rules relating to people on bikes. An online survey of 1325 (87% regional/rural, 92% car owners, 80% bike owners) found:

- Attitudes to bikes mostly very favourable for communities and individuals: Bikes good for regional communities – wellbeing, tourism, and make towns ‘seem more desirable’; Most individual bike use is for recreation, and physical, mental and social wellbeing: 40% think they will ride a bike more often in future: Authorities should encourage coexistence on roads.
- Interactions with motor vehicles and driver attitudes are main deterrents to riding. Belief in own ability also important for non-riders. Many ways for authorities to encourage riding – infrastructure (lanes and separation) tops list, but signage, education, law enforcement and other displays of bike acceptance and legitimacy are all important.
- Some subgroups have low awareness of road rules pertaining to bikes. Lowest awareness where danger is highest, roundabouts. More analysis of segments needed.
- Draft model for strategic interventions shows Infrastructure and Culture/Human factors influence bike rider Confidence and Risk perceptions.

# Background to survey



Over a million people (13%) in NSW ride a bike at least once a week, regional rates slightly higher than Sydney (Munro & Gardner 2019)

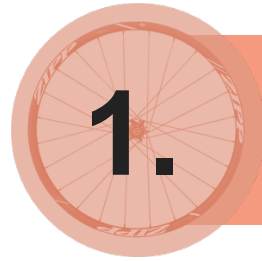
Cycling participation rates generally fall with age (Munro & Gardner 2019)

NSW regional cities and towns often have ideal topography and distance, and roads often wider and quieter for cycling (Cooper & Leahy 2017)

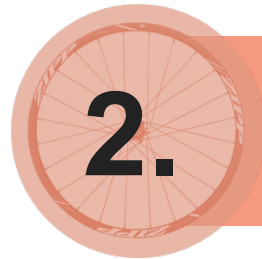
Cycling attracts tourists and professional tree changers to regional centres (Cooper & Leahy 2017)

Cycling more popular for recreation than transport in regions (Cooper & Leahy 2017) but NSW participation survey identified a large number of people aged over 15 who are 'interested in riding for transport' but do not presently (Munro & Gardner 2019)

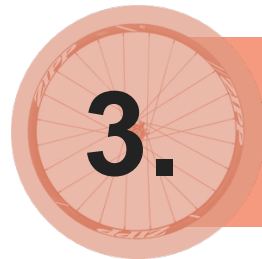
# Research questions



1. How are people using bikes in regional NSW – what activities do they pursue and how often?

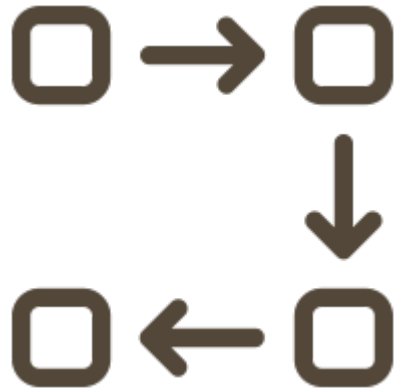


2. What discourages riding a bike? What would encourage more riding?



3. How well do road users know road rules relating to people on bikes?

# Method



**Fieldwork:** December 20' – January 21'.

**Online survey** 10 minute survey hosted on Qualtrics by CSU and ILWS.

**Survey distributed** by email and Facebook.

Social media targeted community groups, cycling-related groups, buy and sell groups in regions; BRC paid for targeting in Bathurst to cover a radius of 50 kilometres.

# Sample

The sample was slightly skewed to male participants, with a good spread of age groups, 87% were from rural and regional towns.

	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	773	58.3
Female	546	41.2
Another term	4	.3
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	42	3.2
25-29	68	5.1
30-39	222	16.8
40-49	282	21.3
50-59	363	27.4
60-69	268	20.2
70-79	77	5.8
80 or above	3	.2

	Frequency	%
<b>Home location</b>		
Large city (more than 100,000 population)	171	12.9
Regional city (10,000 - 99,999)	832	62.8
Regional town (1000 - 9,999)	234	17.7
Rural village (999 or less)	84	6.3

	Frequency	%
<b>Main locations</b>		
Albury	67	5.1
Orange	168	12.7
Dubbo	74	5.6
Bathurst/Blayney	390	29.4
Other NSW	626	47.2
Total	1325	100

	Frequency	%
<b>Employment status</b>		
Working full time	797	60.2
Working part-time	190	14.3
Student	26	2.0
Looking after home/family full time	30	2.3
Unemployed	26	2.0
Retired	229	17.3

A1.To start off with, can you please tell us which of the following age groups do you fall into? A2.And, which of the following best describes your current gender identity? A3.Which postcode area do you mainly reside in? Z1.Which of the following best describes your work situation? Z5 Please select the descriptor below that best describes where you currently live?

Base: total sample n=1325

# Vehicle ownership

Almost all (92%) owned a car and four-out-of-five (80%) owned a bicycle. 13% owned a motorcycle, and only 9% owned an electric bike.

Sample n	Albury	Orange	Dubbo	Bathurst/ Blayney	Other NSW	Total
Pushbike	48	147	60	276	532	1063
E-bike	7	13	8	23	74	125
Car	58	155	68	367	571	1219
Motorcycle	5	25	13	66	72	181

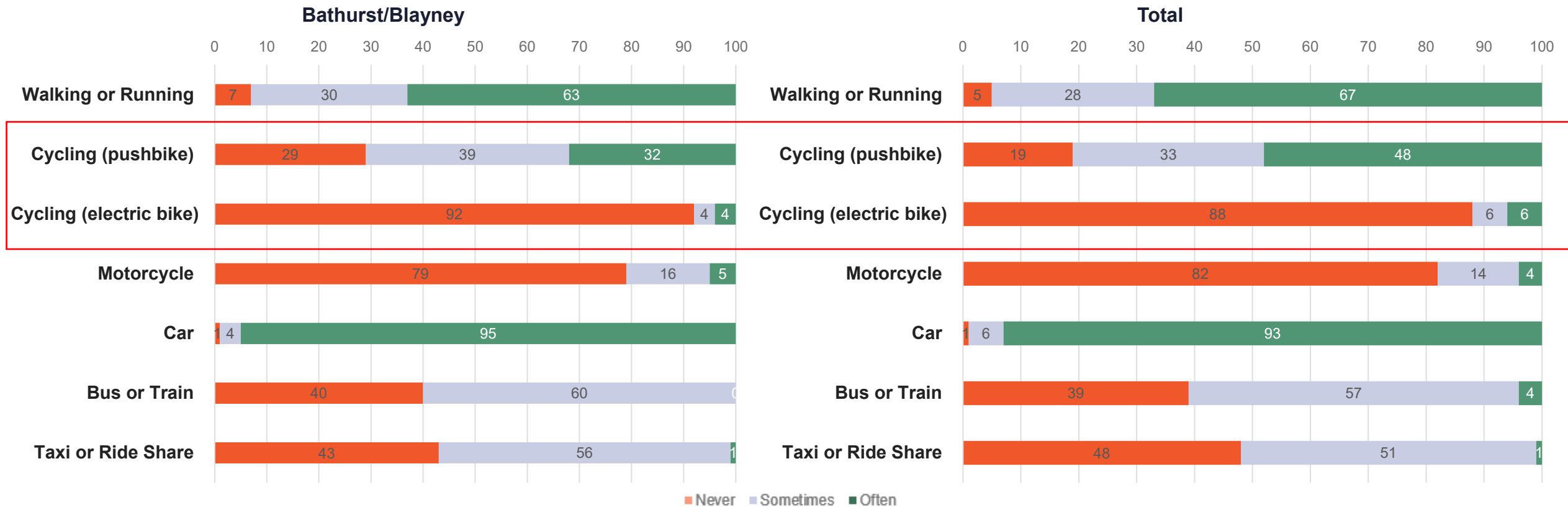
B1: To start off with, which of the following **modes of transport** do you **personally own**? *Please select all options that are relevant*

Base: total sample n=1325

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# Current use

Overall, almost half of the sample cycled often (daily or a few times a week). This was significantly lower in Bathurst where only one-in-three reported cycling often.



B2: How often would you say you currently use the following as modes of transport (commuting and/or recreational purposes)? We understand you may not personally own some of these modes of transport but could have access to them through borrowing, sharing platforms or friends.

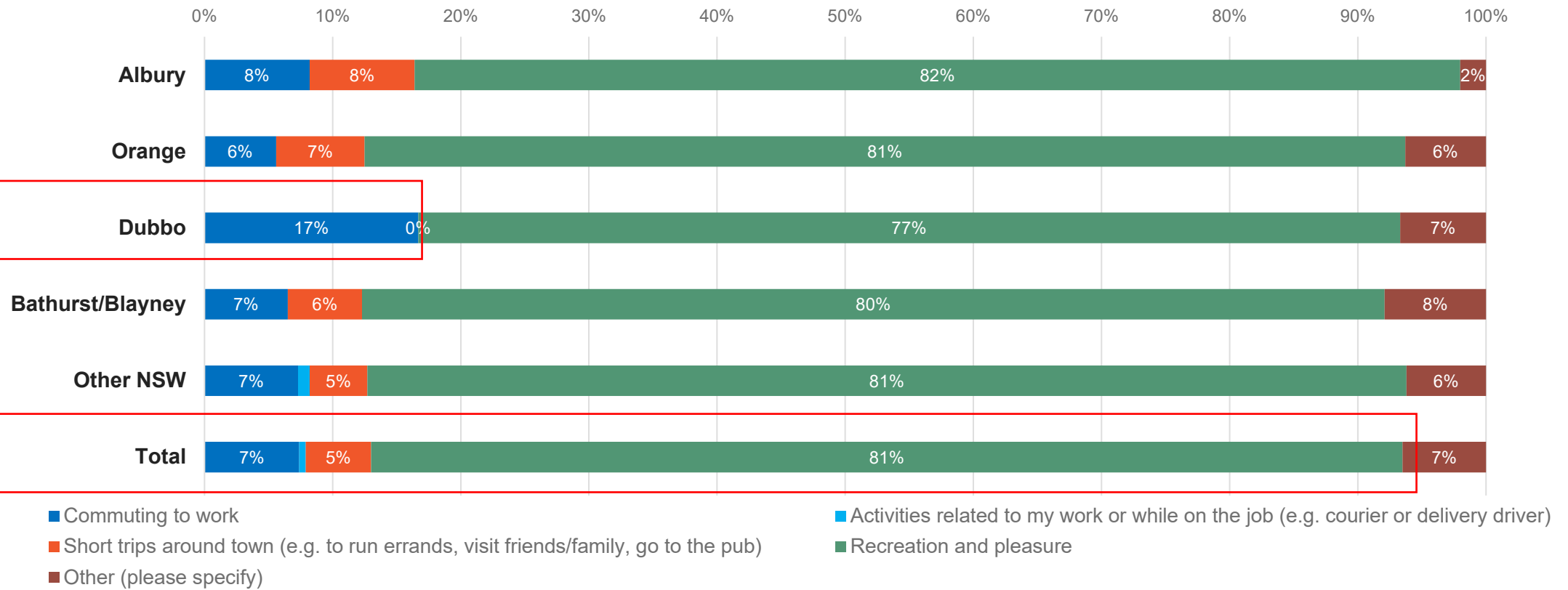
Base: Bathurst/Blayney n= 390, Total sample n=1325

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# Main use of bicycle

Recreation appeared to be the main use with 4-in-5 reporting it as their main usage occasion (81%), however, 17% in Dubbo used it as a vehicle for commuting.



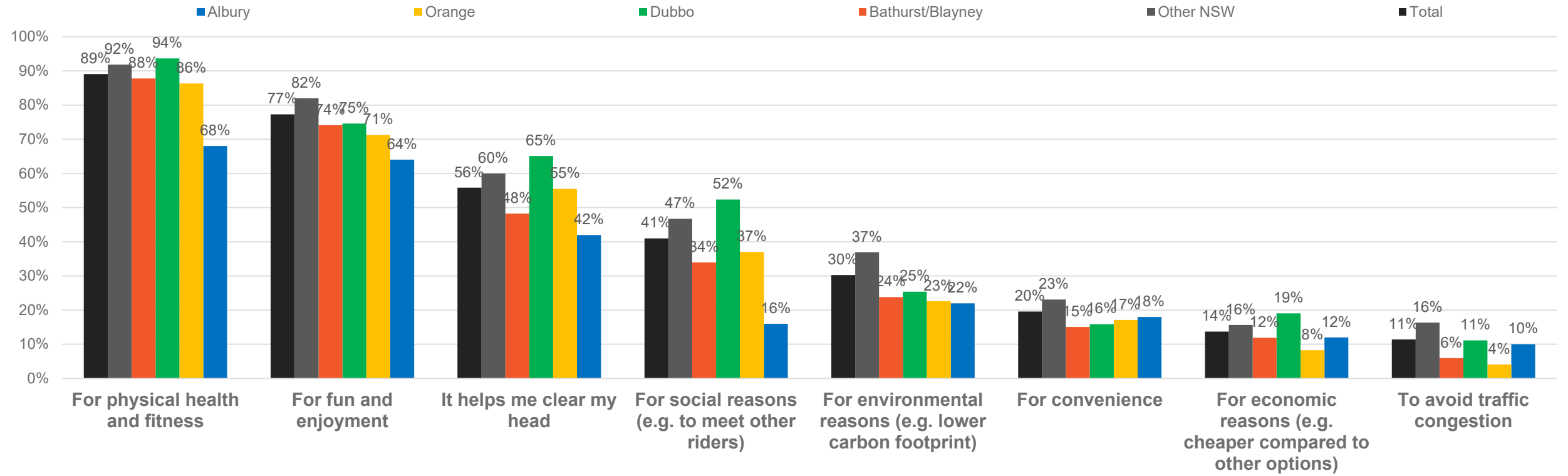
D1b: Which of the following would you say is the main way you use your bicycle – that is the one you do most often on your bicycle?

Base: Those who ride n=1061

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# Reasons for riding a bike

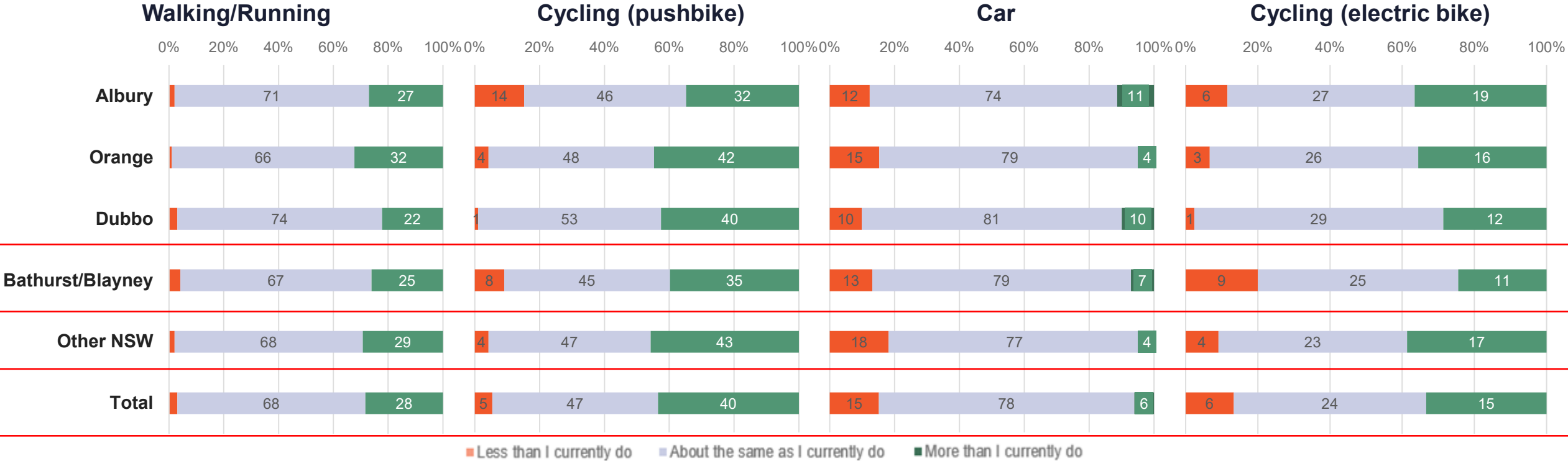
People ride mostly for reasons of wellbeing – physical & mental health, social and fun!  
Environment, savings and convenience are also important.



D4: Keeping in mind the main way you use your bicycle, which of the following reasons capture why you choose to ride a bicycle (pushbike or electric bike)? Select all that apply. Base: Those who ride. Total sample n=1095. Chart excludes options with less than 5% total response.

# Future

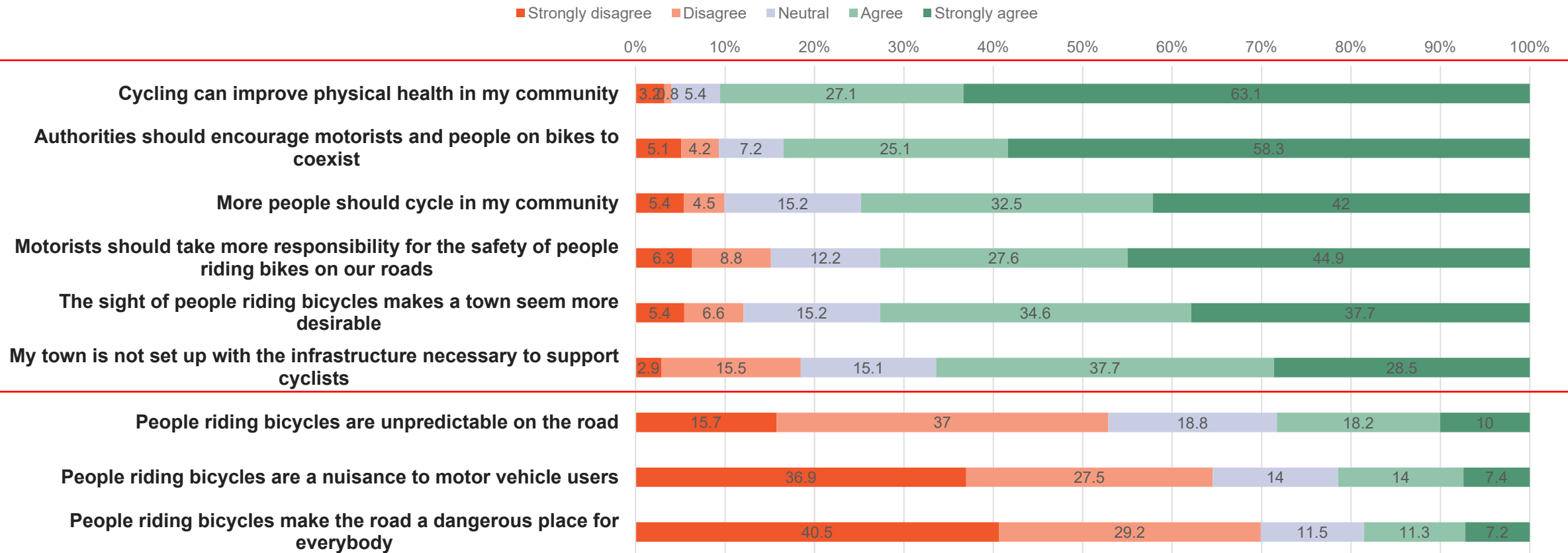
Move towards active transport with people believing they will cycle, walk, e-bike more – with cycling showing the greatest increase (40% overall and 35% in Bathurst). 15% indicate they will drive less.



B3: Thinking about the future, how often do you think you will use the following for commuting and/or recreational purposes?  
 Base total sample n=1288 – 1313. Chart excludes those who selected not applicable.

# Attitudes to bikes and cycling

More than 70% consistently believed bikes made towns desirable, improved health, that more should cycle. Similar proportion acknowledging motorists should take responsibilities for bikes, and authorities should encourage co-existence. However, infrastructure presents a challenge.



We would now like to ask you a few questions about what you think about cycling and people who ride bicycles (cyclists) in general. In this context, we are interested in your opinion about cycling for recreation and as a means of commuting.

Base Total sample: n=1325

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# Level of comfort while riding in their postcode

Less than half of all riders feel comfortable. Close to 1-in-3 riders in Bathurst report being uncomfortable while riding in their postcode area.

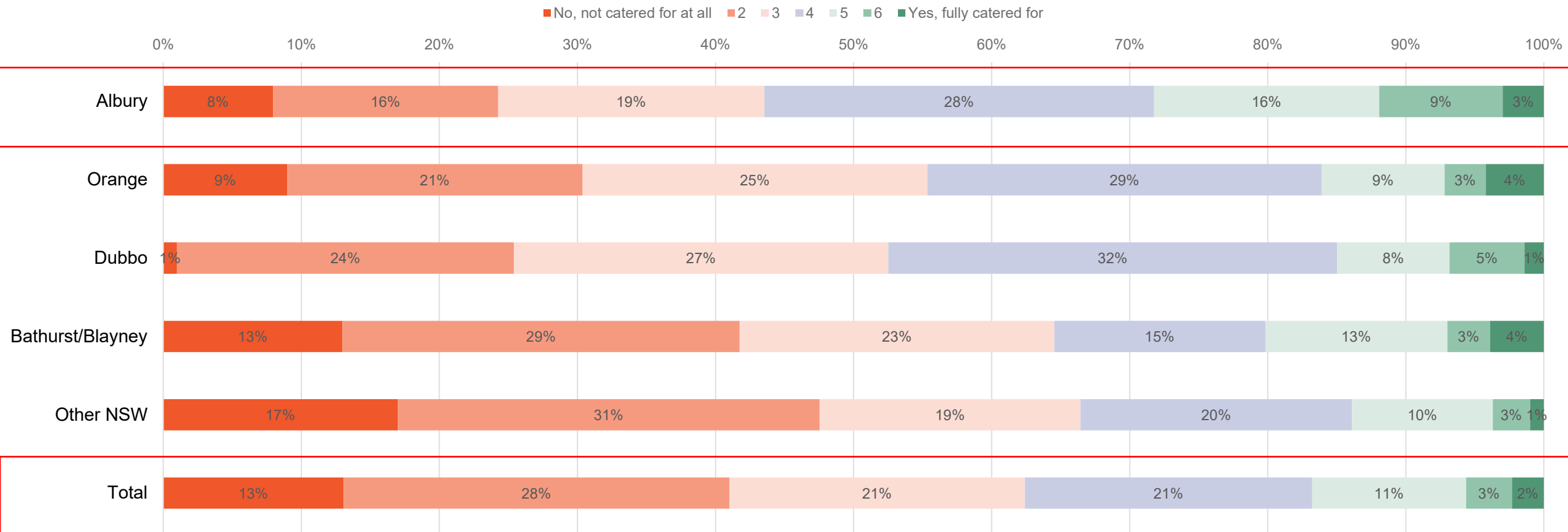


C4: How comfortable do you feel when riding within your postcode area?

Base: Those who ride n=1077 Chart excludes those who have not ridden in their area in the past 12 months.

# Assessment of riding infrastructure in their postcode

**63% believe cycling is not catered for in their area. Albury however appears to be better with 29% believing cycling is well catered for.**

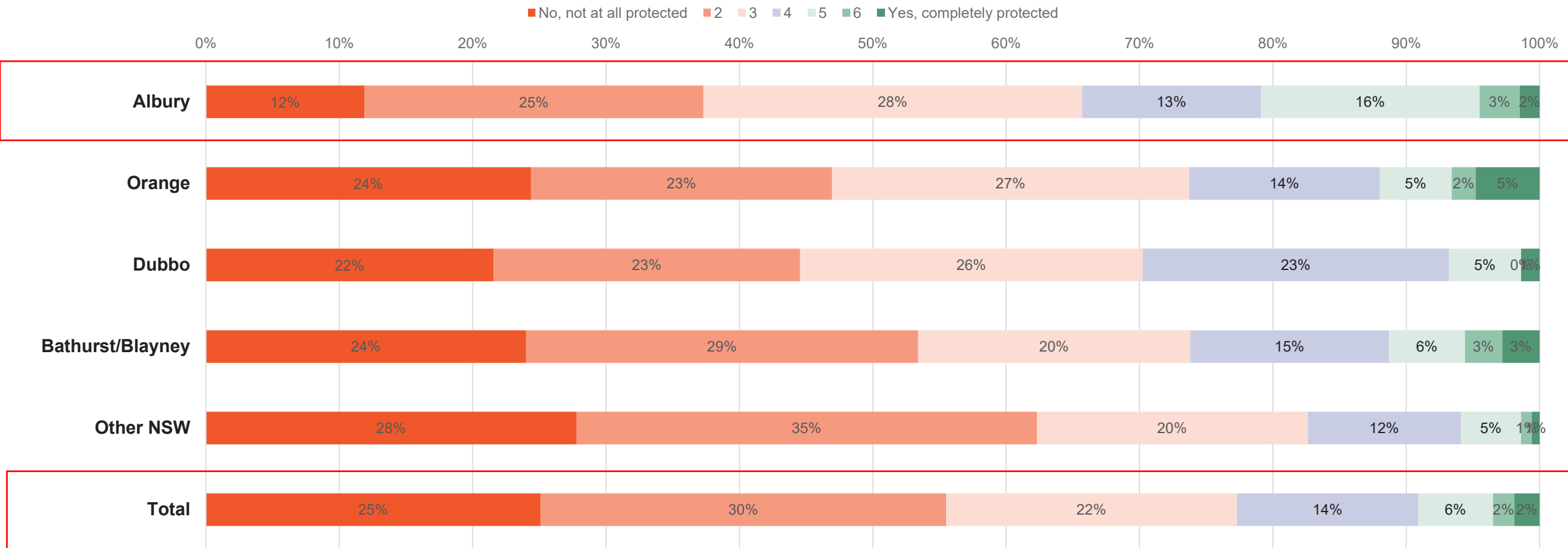


C6: Thinking about your postcode area, how well do you feel the facilities and infrastructure cater for the needs of cyclists?

Base: Total sample n=1320

# Level of protection while riding in their postcode

Overall, more than half report not feeling protected while riding (55%). This is similar to the results for Bathurst/Blayney. Albury again report a better cycling environment with only 37% saying they feel unprotected.



C7: And how strongly do you feel people on bicycles are protected on the roads in your postcode area?

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Those who do not ride



# Sample: Those who do not ride

This group a similar profile to whole sample, fewer from large cities

	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	92	40
Female	137	60
Another term	0	0
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	16	7
25-29	25	11
30-39	47	20
40-49	43	19
50-59	46	20
60-69	37	16
70-79	14	6
80 or above	2	1

	Frequency	%
<b>Home location</b>		
Large city (more than 100,000 population)	11	5
Regional city (10,000 - 99,999)	146	64
Regional town (1000 - 9,999)	48	21
Rural village (999 or less)	24	11

	Frequency	%
<b>Main locations</b>		
Albury	17	7
Orange	22	10
Dubbo	11	5
Bathurst/Blayney	104	45
Other NSW	76	33

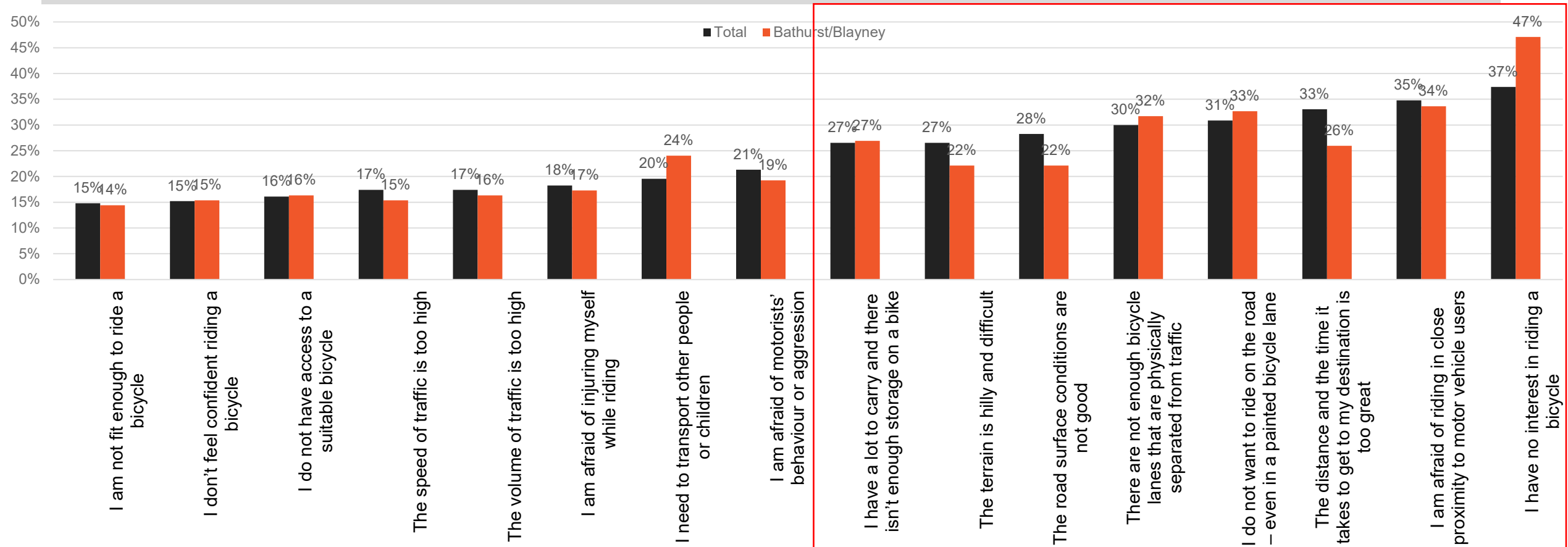
	Frequency	%
<b>Employment status</b>		
Working full time	132	57
Working part-time	33	14
Student	6	3
Looking after home/family full time	13	6
Unemployed	3	1
Retired	34	15

A1.To start off with, can you please tell us which of the following age groups do you fall into? A2.And, which of the following best describes your current gender identity? A3.Which postcode area do you mainly reside in? Z1.Which of the following best describes your work situation? Z5 Please select the descriptor below that best describes where you currently live?

Base: total sample n=230

# Top reasons for not riding

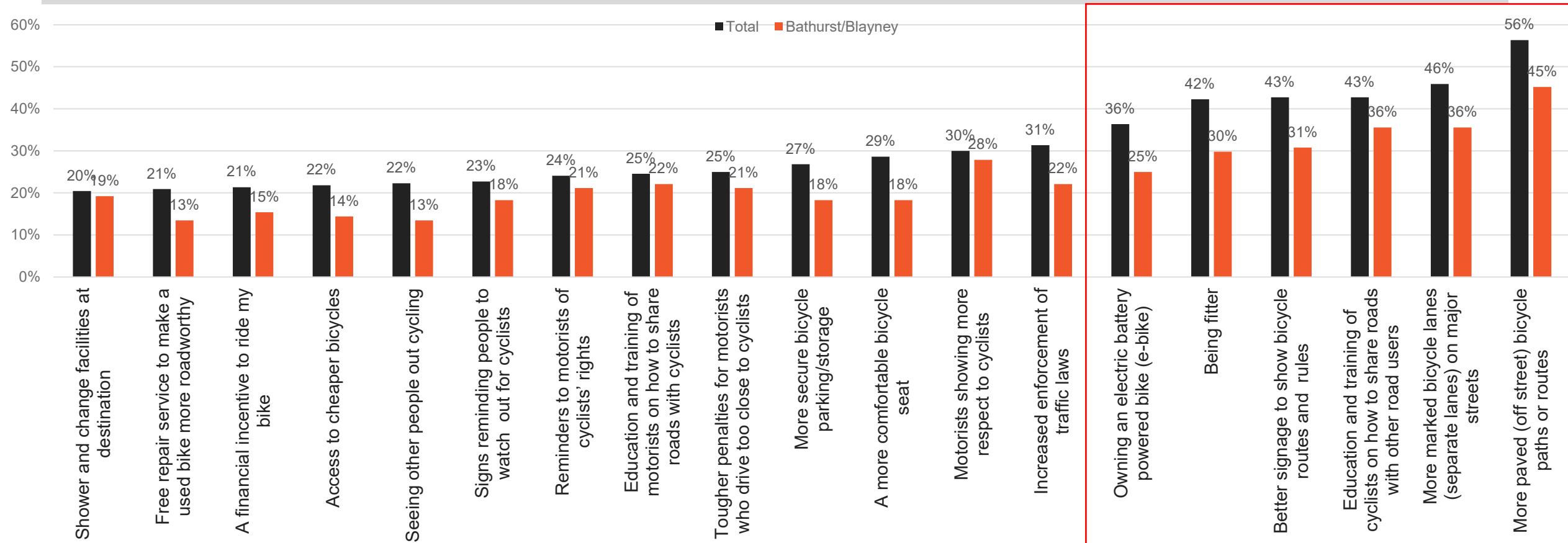
Main reason for lack of riding is no interest. Other key reasons include fear of traffic, lack of infrastructure, and the practicality of it. Personal fitness & confidence also deterrents.



D2a: You mentioned you do not ride a bicycle (pushbike or electric). Looking at the list below, which of the following would you say are your three main reasons for not riding a bicycle as a form of transport (recreation or commuting)? Base: total sample n=230, Chart excludes options with a total response of below 15%.

# Encouragements to start

Separated and marked cycle ways would encourage greater interest, along with education and signage. Also improved capacity to keep up – being fitter and e-bikes.



D3a. And, looking at the list below, which of the following would you say would encourage you to cycle/start cycling in general? Please respond to each option indicating if it would encourage you to cycle more, or would not have any impact Base: total sample n=230, Chart excludes options with a total response of below 20%.  
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Those who ride

# Sample: Those who ride

Large majority of sample ride, similar profile.

	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	681	62
Female	409	38
Another term	4	0.5
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	26	2
25-29	43	4
30-39	175	16
40-49	239	22
50-59	317	29
60-69	231	21
70-79	63	6
80 or above	1	0

	Frequency	%
<b>Home location</b>		
Large city (more than 100,000 population)	160	15
Regional city (10,000 - 99,999)	686	63
Regional town (1000 - 9,999)	186	17
Rural village (999 or less)	60	6

	Frequency	%
<b>Main locations</b>		
Albury	50	5
Orange	146	13
Dubbo	63	6
Bathurst/Blayney	286	45
Other NSW	550	50

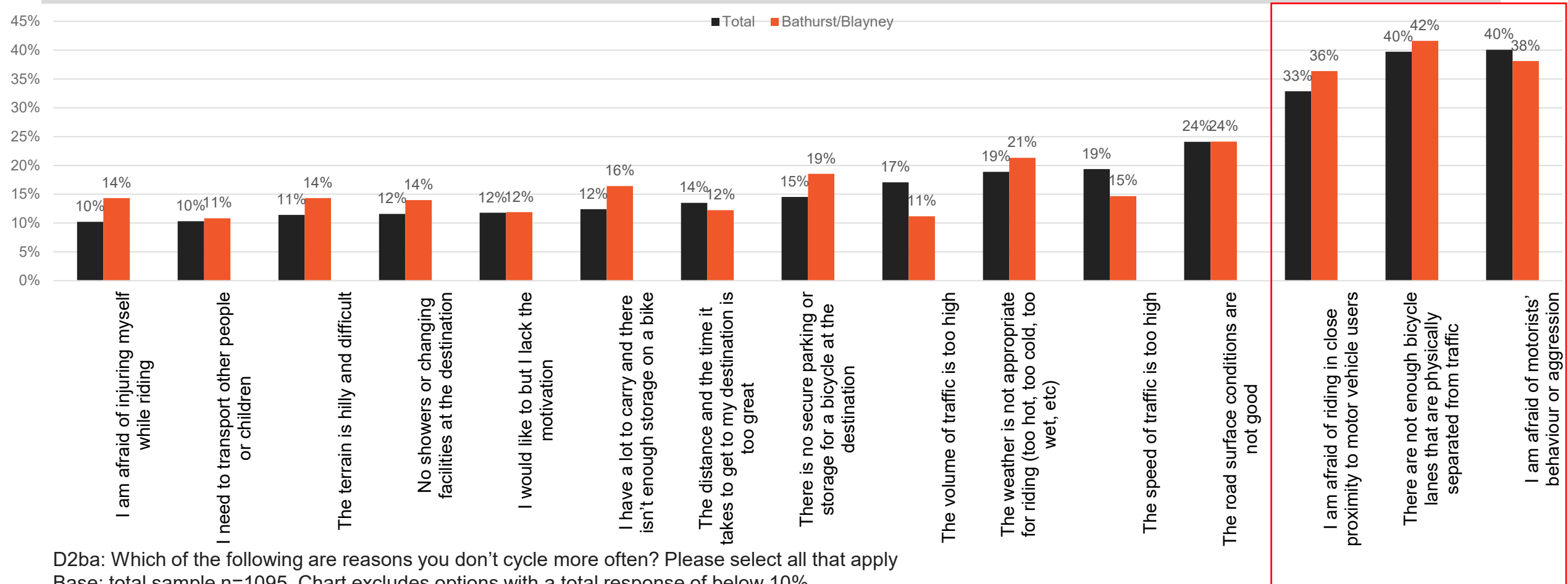
	Frequency	%
<b>Employment status</b>		
Working full time	665	61
Working part-time	157	14
Student	20	2
Looking after home/family full time	17	2
Unemployed	23	2
Retired	195	18

A1.To start off with, can you please tell us which of the following age groups do you fall into? A2.And, which of the following best describes your current gender identity? A3.Which postcode area do you mainly reside in? Z1.Which of the following best describes your work situation? Z5 Please select the descriptor below that best describes where you currently live?

Base: total sample n=1095

# Top reasons for not riding more

Motorist aggression and interaction with motor vehicles are the main reasons for not riding more.

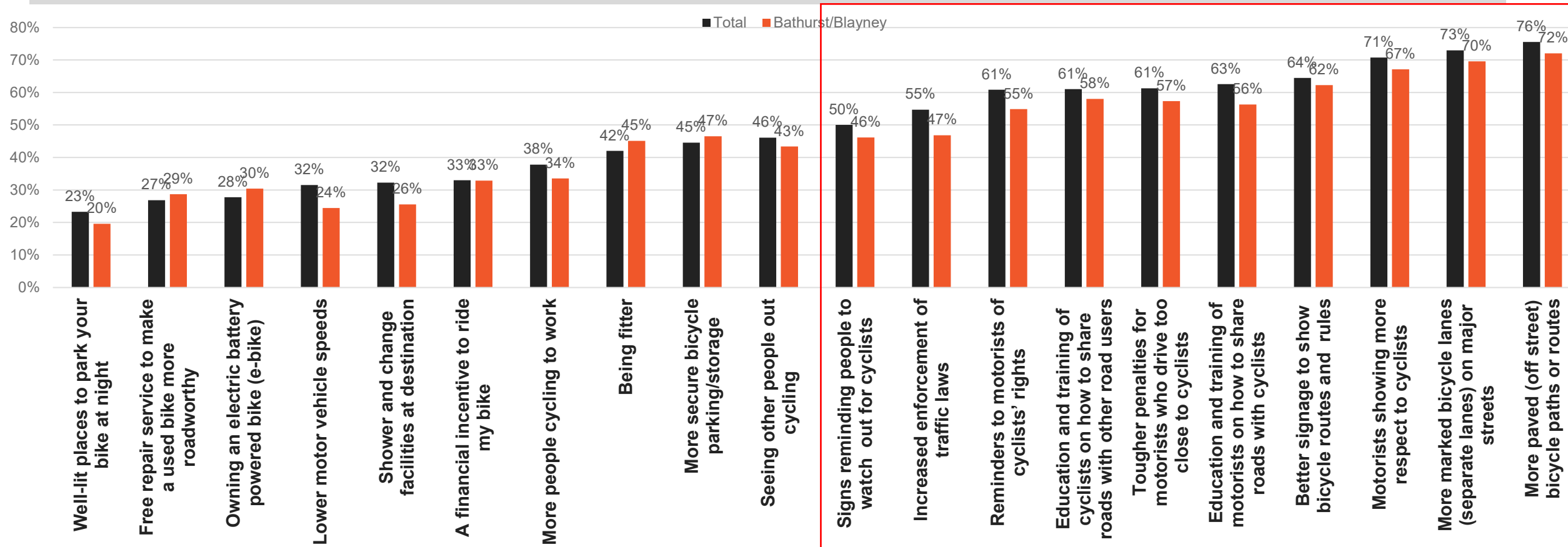


D2ba: Which of the following are reasons you don't cycle more often? Please select all that apply

Base: total sample n=1095, Chart excludes options with a total response of below 10%.

# Encouragements to ride more

Separate lanes, education, enforcement and signage along with more respect from motorists would encourage more cycling. Signs, law enforcement, education and reminders also important.



D3a. And, looking at the list below, which of the following would you say would encourage you to cycle/start cycling in general? Please respond to each option indicating if it would encourage you to cycle more, or would not have any impact Base: total sample n=1095, Chart excludes options with a total response of below 20%

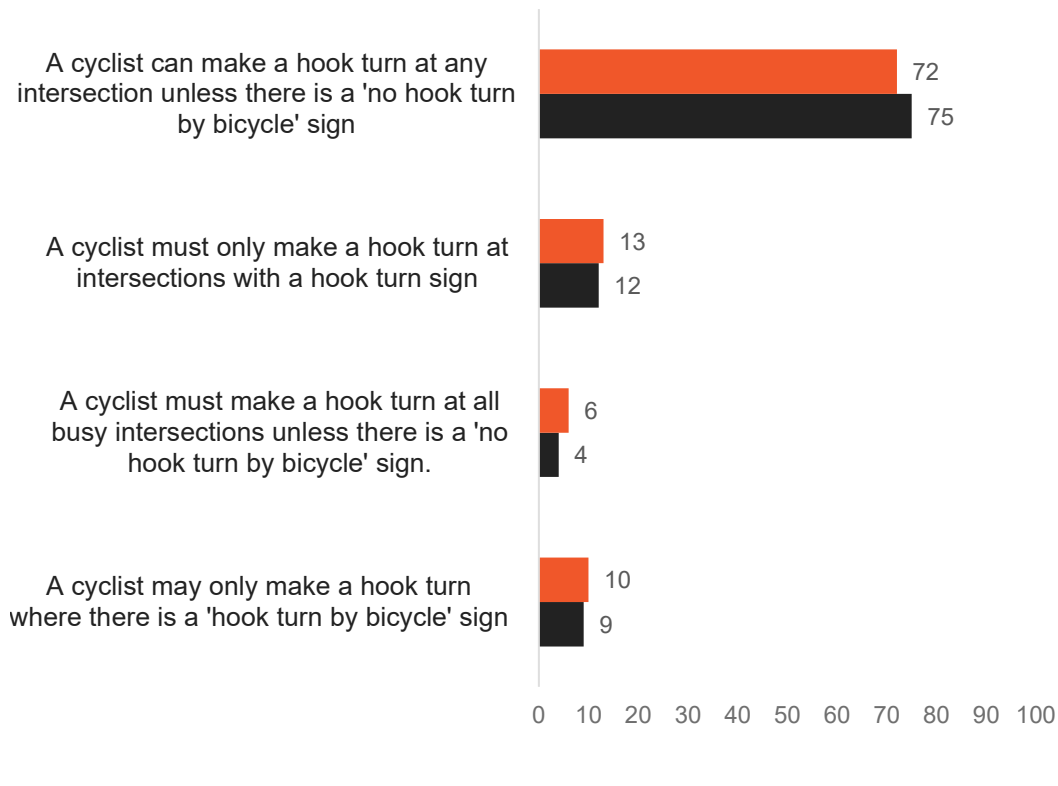
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Riding knowledge

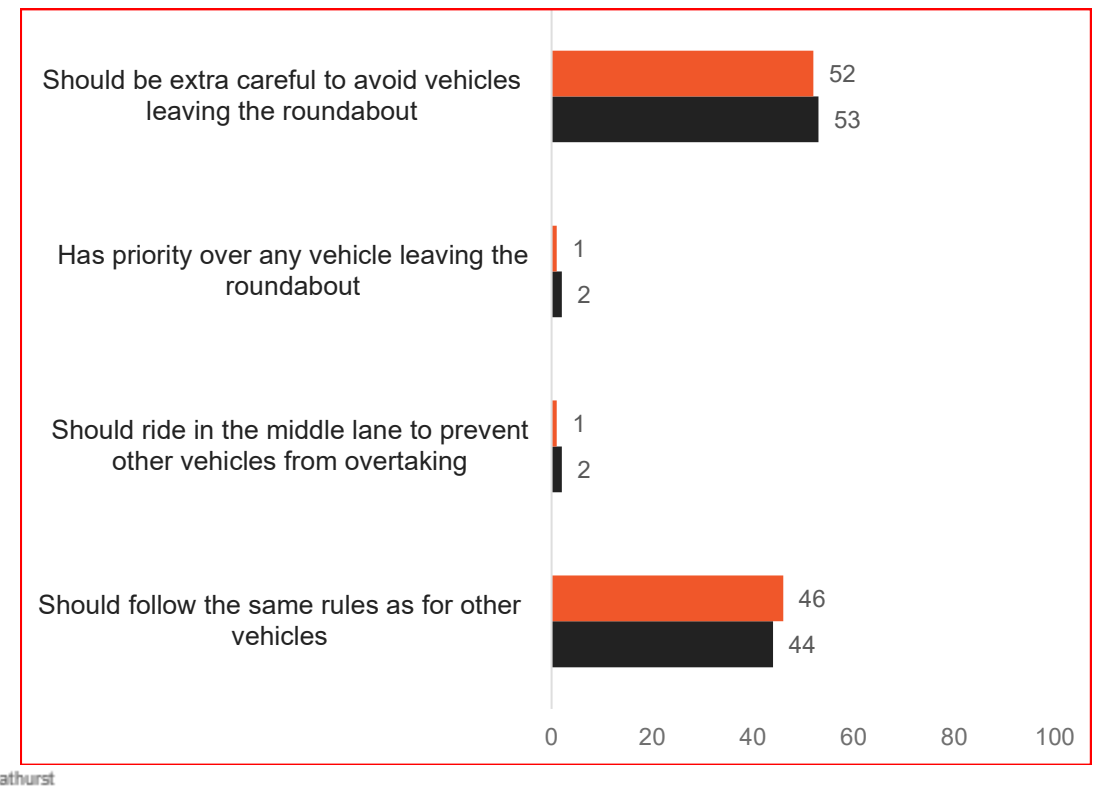


# Cycling road rules

## E2a. Which of the following is correct?



## E2b. When riding around a roundabout, the rider of a bicycle ...?

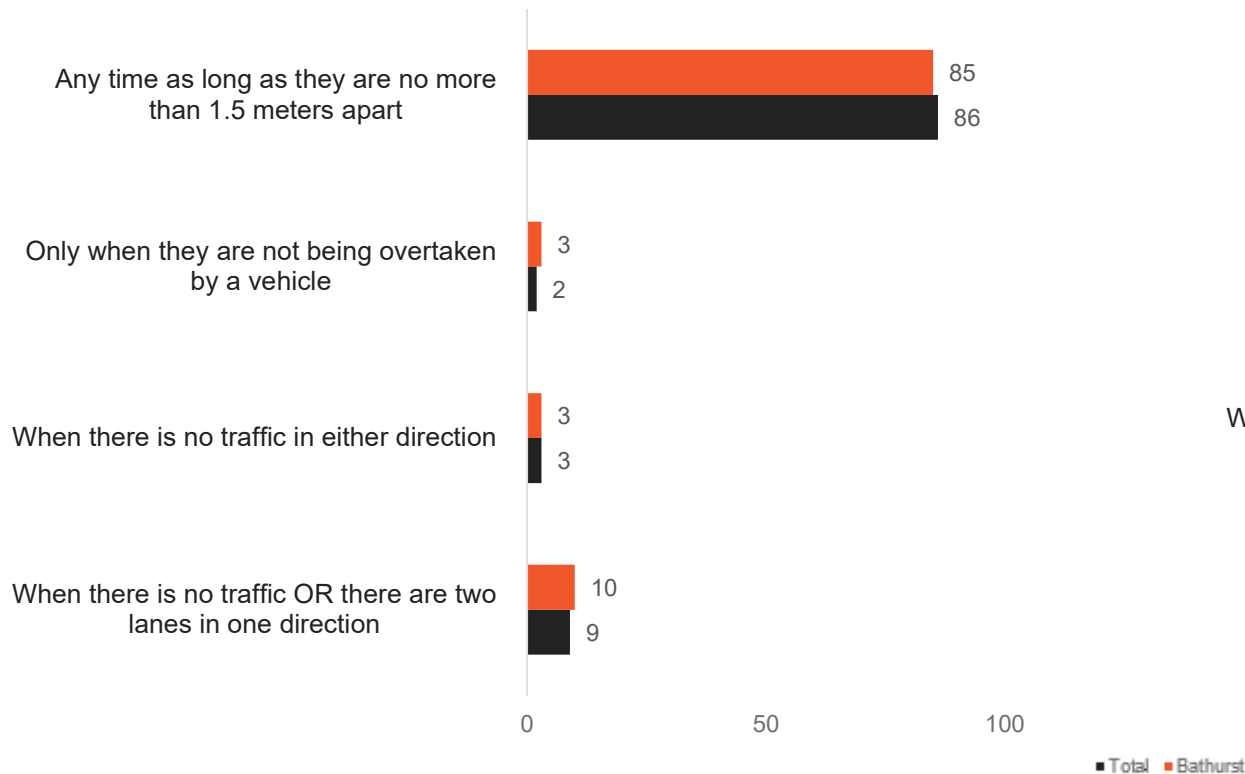


E2. We now have a few questions on road rules as they apply to cyclists. Please reach each question carefully, and pick a response you believe is the most accurate. These questions are designed to help test, and refresh your knowledge of the NSW road rules for cyclists. E2a. Which of the following is correct? E2b. When riding around a roundabout, the rider of a bicycle ...? Please select only one option

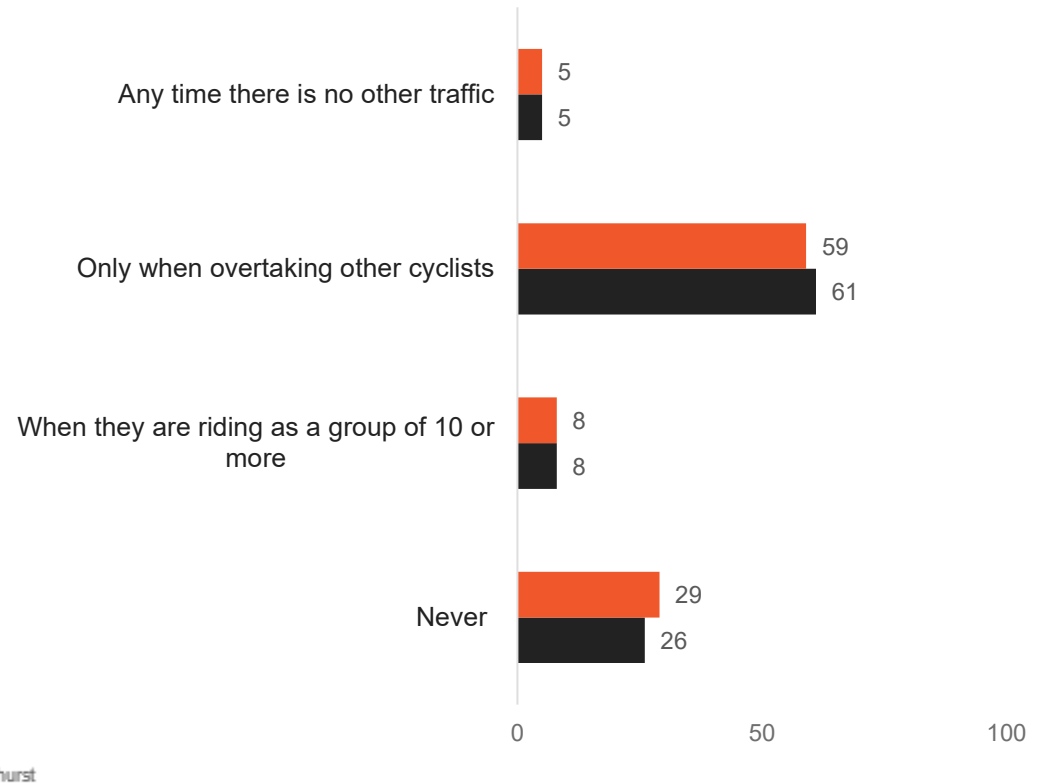
Base: total sample n=1325

# Cycling road rules

E2c. When may cyclists ride two abreast on roadways?



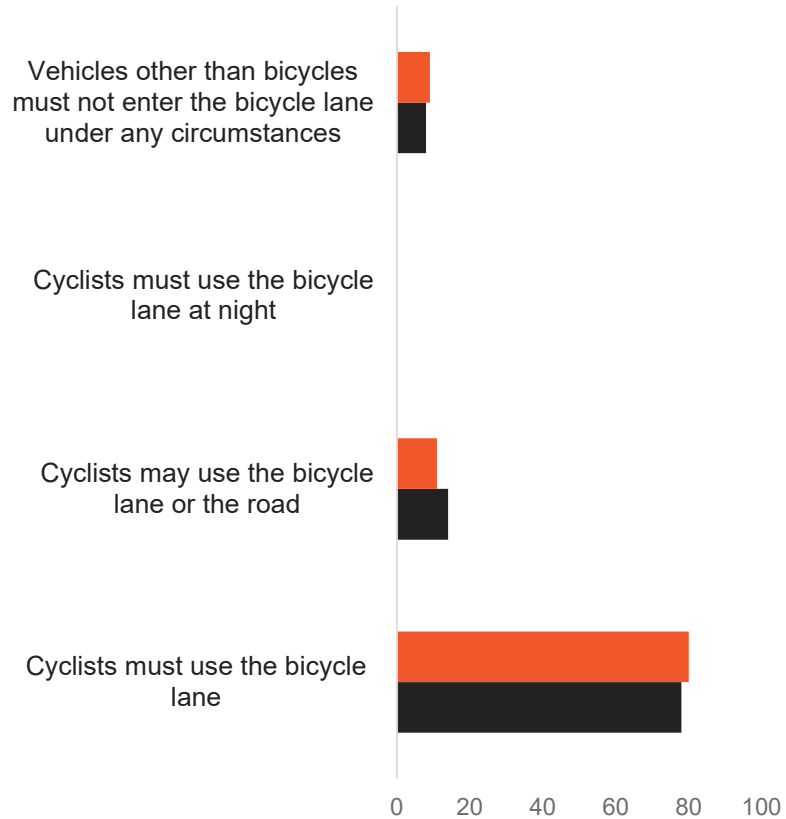
E2d. When may cyclists ride more than two abreast on roadways?



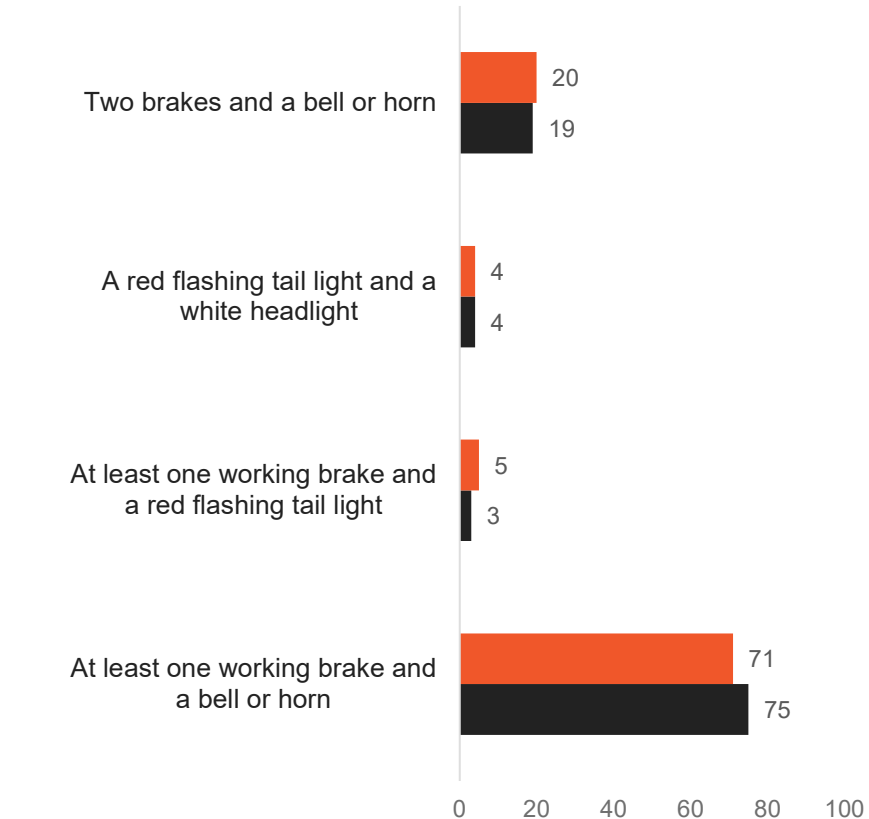
E2. We now have a few questions on road rules as they apply to cyclists. Please reach each question carefully, and pick a response you believe is the most accurate. These questions are designed to help test, and refresh your knowledge of the NSW road rules for cyclists. E2c. When may cyclists ride two abreast on roadways? Please select only one option E2d. When may cyclists ride more than two abreast on roadways? Please select only one option Base: total sample n=1325

# Cycling road rules

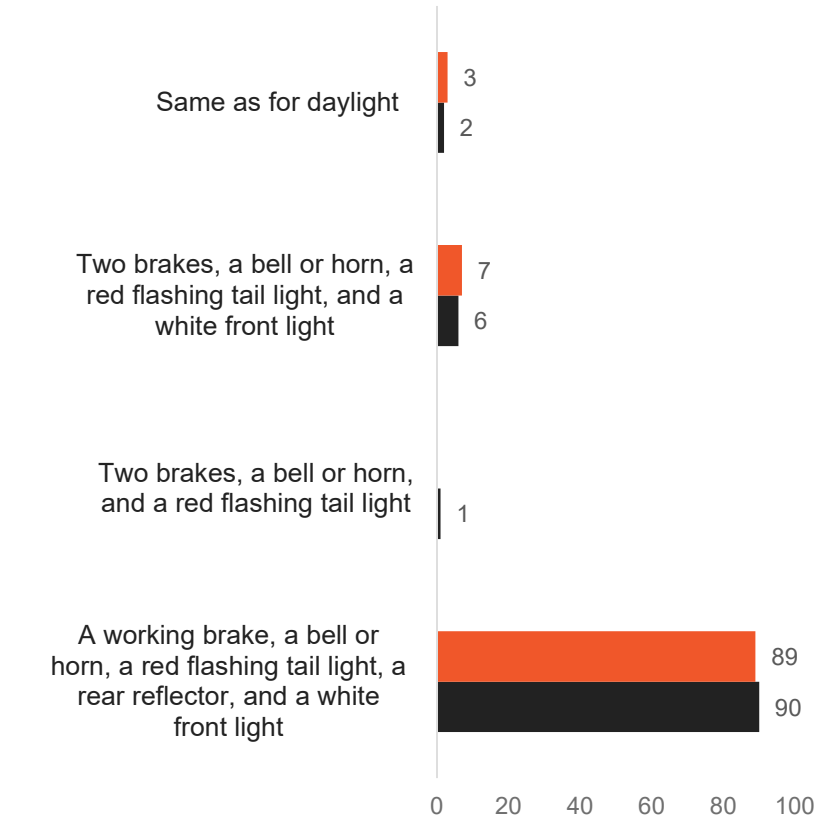
E2e.If there is an official and usable bicycle lane on a road



E2f.What equipment is required on bicycles on the road during daylight?



E2g.What equipment is required on bicycles on the road at night?



E2.We now have a few questions on road rules as they apply to cyclists. Please reach each question carefully, and pick a response you believe is the most accurate. These questions are designed to help test, and refresh your knowledge of the NSW road rules for cyclists. E2e.If there is an official and usable bicycle lane on a road ...Please select only one option E2f.What equipment is required on bicycles on the road during daylight? Please select only one option E2g.What equipment is required on bicycles on the road at night? Please select only one option

Base: total sample n=1325

# Sample: Knowledge

**18-24, large city, Orange, both car and bike - best sub group knowledge**  
**25-39, rural village, Albury, never cycle – worst sub group knowledge**

Row %	Perfect	High	Medium	Low
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	43	34	19	4
Female	37	33	26	4
Another term*				
<b>Age</b>				
18-24	48	29	19	5
25-29	34	31	32	3
30-39	35	36	22	8
40-49	44	29	23	4
50-59	41	34	23	3
60-69	42	37	17	5
70-79	42	35	21	3
80 or above*				

Row %	Perfect	High	Medium	Low
<b>Ownership</b>				
Car only	31	33	29	8
Cycle only	38	31	28	2
Both	43	34	20	4

Row %	Perfect	High	Medium	Low
<b>Home location</b>				
Large city (more than 100,000 population)	47	30	19	3
Regional city (10,000 - 99,999)	40	36	21	4
Regional town (1000 - 9,999)	41	29	25	6
Rural village (999 or less)	37	30	26	7

Row %	Perfect	High	Medium	Low
<b>Main location</b>				
Albury	34	28	31	6
Orange	46	34	17	3
Dubbo	43	41	15	1
Bathurst/Blayney	38	34	23	5
Other NSW	41	33	22	5

Row %	Perfect	High	Medium	Low
<b>Usage</b>				
Cycle Never	30	35	28	7
Cycle	43	33	21	4

A1.To start off with, can you please tell us which of the following age groups do you fall into? A2.And, which of the following best describes your current gender identity? A3.Which postcode area do you mainly reside in? Z1.Which of the following best describes your work situation? Z5 Please select the descriptor below that best describes where you currently live? B1.To start off with, which of the following modes of transport do you personally own? Please select all options that are relevant. B2.And, how often would you say you used the following as modes of transport (commuting and/or recreational purposes) before the COVID19 lockdowns? We understand you may not personally own some of these modes of transport but could have access to them through borrowing, sharing platforms or friends. Please select one option in each row. Perfect = all right, High= 1-3 wrong, Medium 4-5 wrong, and Low 6-7 wrong.

Base: total sample n=1325 \*less than 5 respondents

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# Conclusions

# Riding a bike in regional NSW



1.

Bikes used mostly for recreation and wellbeing. 40% want to ride a bike more often. Bikes believed good for regional communities – wellbeing and tourism. Authorities should encourage coexistence.



2.

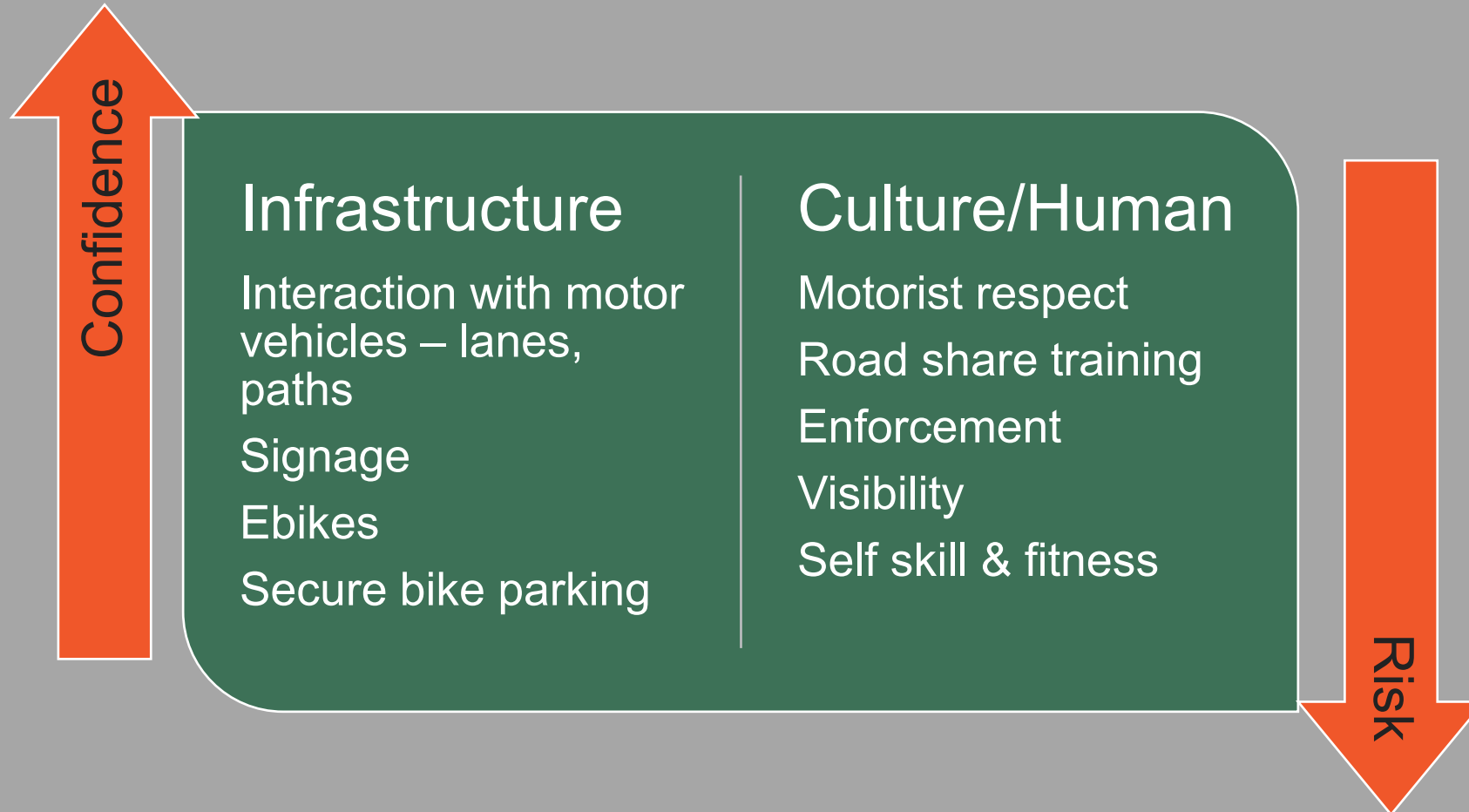
Interactions with motor vehicles and driver attitudes are main deterrents to riding. Personal efficacy also important for non-riders. Many ways for authorities to encourage riding – infrastructure (lanes and separation) top list, but signage, education, law enforcement and other displays of bike legitimacy are important.



3.

Some subgroups have low awareness of rules pertaining to bikes. Lowest awareness where danger highest, roundabouts.

# Infrastructure and culture influence confidence and perceptions of risk that determine willingness to cycling





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# Thank you



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