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Community attitudes to transportation

Commuting behaviour and attitudes to government involvement and policies

RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED FOR:

Australasian Railways Association

Australian Conservation Foundation

Australian Local Government Association

Bus Industry Confederation

Cycling Promotion Fund

Heart Foundation

International Public Transport Association

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Introduction and methodology

This report presents the results of a survey among Australians to determine their perceptions of public transport, including their current usage levels and attitudes towards improving public transport infrastructure and access.

The survey was conducted between the 21st and 24th of June, 2011. It was conducted online with respondents drawn from a professional market and social research panel.

The overall sample size was 1510, segmented and weighted to be nationally representative of Australia's population by gender, age and residential location.

The accuracy of the results at an overall level (after weighting) is +/- 2.5% at the 95% confidence interval. This means, for example, that if the survey returns a result of 50%, there is 95% probability that the actual result will be between 47.5% and 52.5%.

Note: All percentage figures in this report are rounded. Accordingly, totals may not add up to 100%.



Key findings

Research narrative

Travel modes used for commuting and barriers to the use of public transportation

- ▶ Nearly two thirds of Australians (62%) regularly commute to work or an educational institution. The vast majority of these people currently travel by car (71% use this as their main mode of transportation) while only around a quarter (23%) use public transport as their main mode of transportation, only 2% bicycle, and only 3% walk.
- ▶ People typically choose their main mode of transport on the basis of trade-offs between financial cost and convenience (mostly in terms of the time it takes them to commute).
- ▶ Others are precluded from using public transport due to a complete lack of availability, or a need to use a car for work purposes; while concerns for the environment, and a desire to be healthy, are secondary drivers for some.
- ▶ To understand the barriers to using various transport modes we asked people why they chose not to use each of them for their regular commute.
- ▶ Results show that the main barriers to public transport usage for commuting relate to the reach, capacity and efficiency of the current public transport system.
- ▶ Respondents particularly noted the time it takes them to commute using public transport, the lack of convenience relative to car usage, and the lack of availability of services in general, as the most important barriers to them using public transport.
- ▶ Cost, reliability, the need of a car for work purposes, and the amenity of public transport, were relatively less important barriers to public transport usage.

Barriers to the use of cars, bicycles and walking as main travel modes for commuting

- ▶ Most people don't see walking to work as a viable option for commuting; 84% of respondents noting that the distance and time it takes as key reasons why they do not walk to work, while weather conditions, and the need for a car for work purposes, are distant secondary reasons.
- ▶ Barriers to the use of bicycles when commuting also included distance, as well as bike ownership, although safety concerns, lack of fitness, and the need for a car for work purposes are significant secondary barriers to usage.
- ▶ Barriers to car usage, and hence reasons why people choose other transportation modes, are mostly related to traffic congestion, cost (mostly of parking and petrol), and the lack of available parking.
 - ▶ Concern for the environment, and the desire to exercise or stay healthy, are secondary reasons why people do not use a car, noted by 11% and 6% of people respectively.

Attitudes to government involvement in public transportation and other measures to reduce traffic congestion

- ▶ Support for government action to improve public transport is very strong and this reflects the desire amongst many to use public transportation if it was faster and more convenient. In this regard:
 - ▶ 87% support the government improving public transport so people use it instead of driving their cars;
 - ▶ 82% support the Federal Government increasing the funding for public transport overall;
 - ▶ 70% support the Federal Government becoming more directly involved in the planning of public transport in Australia's major cities; and
 - ▶ 63% support the Federal Government setting a target and introducing policies to achieve a 10% shift from cars to public transport, walking and cycling by 2020.

- ▶ In addition to the measures noted above there is also strong support for the government to reduce traffic congestion on Australian roads through:
 - ▶ Improving city planning to make public transport, cycling and walking simple and convenient options (85% support this); and
 - ▶ Investing in smart technology that monitors traffic congestion and improves traffic flows when congestion occurs (85% support this).

- ▶ The introduction of congestion charging is more controversial, although results show that people are somewhat more likely to support (43%) than oppose (37%) this measure.
- ▶ Similarly, support for a move to a user-pays system of road network funding is evenly divided, with 35% supporting a move to a user-pays system and 36% opposing it.

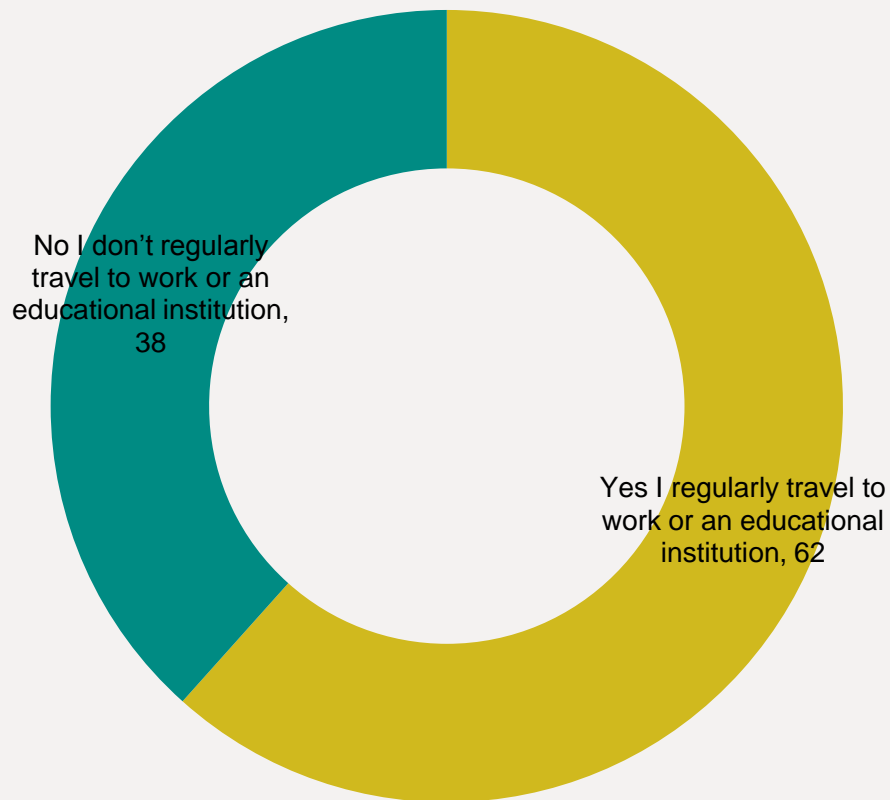
Effects of transportation policies on voting intention, expectations for climate change policies and attitudes to truck usage on our roads

- ▶ Results also emphasise the political salience of traffic congestion with 36% of respondents saying they would be more likely to vote for a party that went into the next election with a major plan for reducing traffic congestion and only 3% saying this would make them less likely to vote for a Federal political party.
- ▶ The vast majority of respondents also believe that measures to address climate change should be linked to transportation infrastructure with 72% agreeing that if the carbon tax is successfully introduced, then some of the revenue should also be used to help fund improved infrastructure for low-carbon transport like public transport, cycling and walking.
- ▶ The research also showed that most people want changes in the way that trucks use the roads. In this regard:
 - ▶ 68% support the introduction of truck-only lanes on major arterial roads;
 - ▶ 61% support restricting truck movements in cities to non-peak periods;
 - ▶ 53% support banning the use of very large trucks in cities; while
 - ▶ 33% support making trucks pay more for the use of roads in daylight hours (34% oppose this).

Commuting behaviour and barriers to the use of various travel modes

Around two thirds of people regularly travel to work or an educational institution

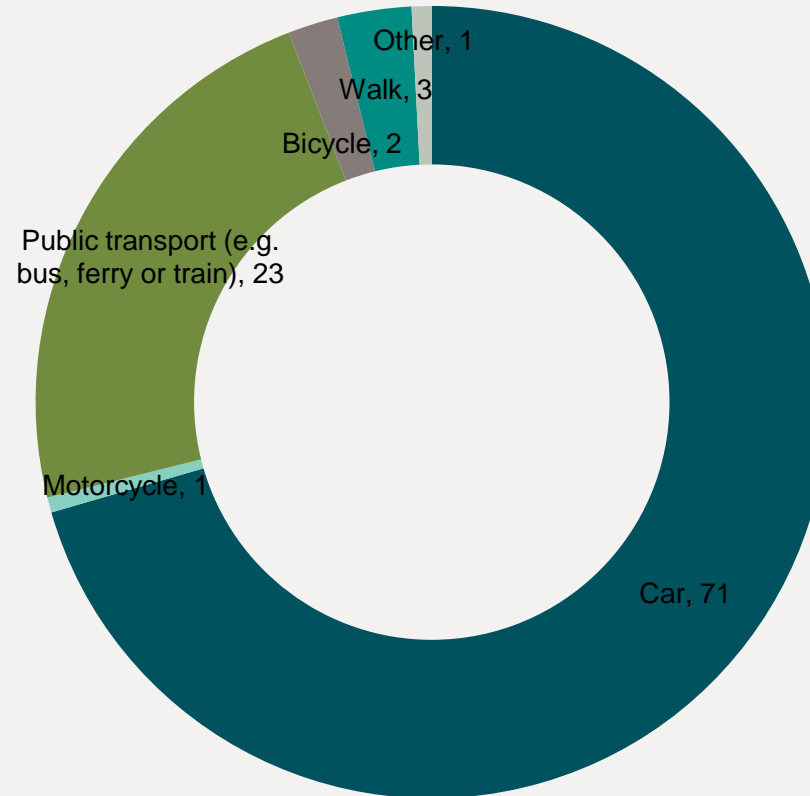
All respondents



Just under two thirds of Australians say that they regularly travel to work or an education institution.

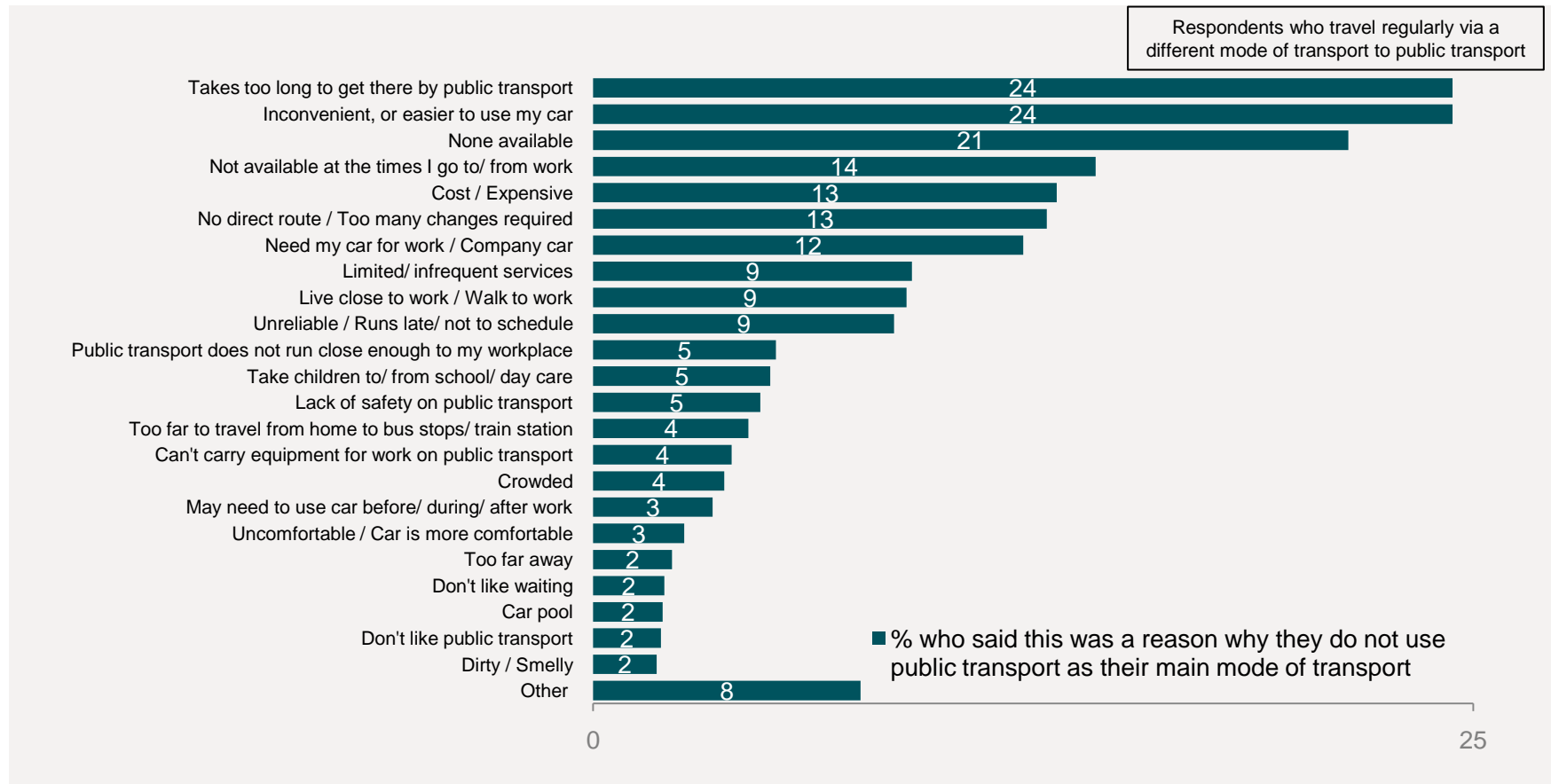
The car is the main mode of transport people use for commuting to work or an educational institution

Respondents who regularly travel to work or an education institution



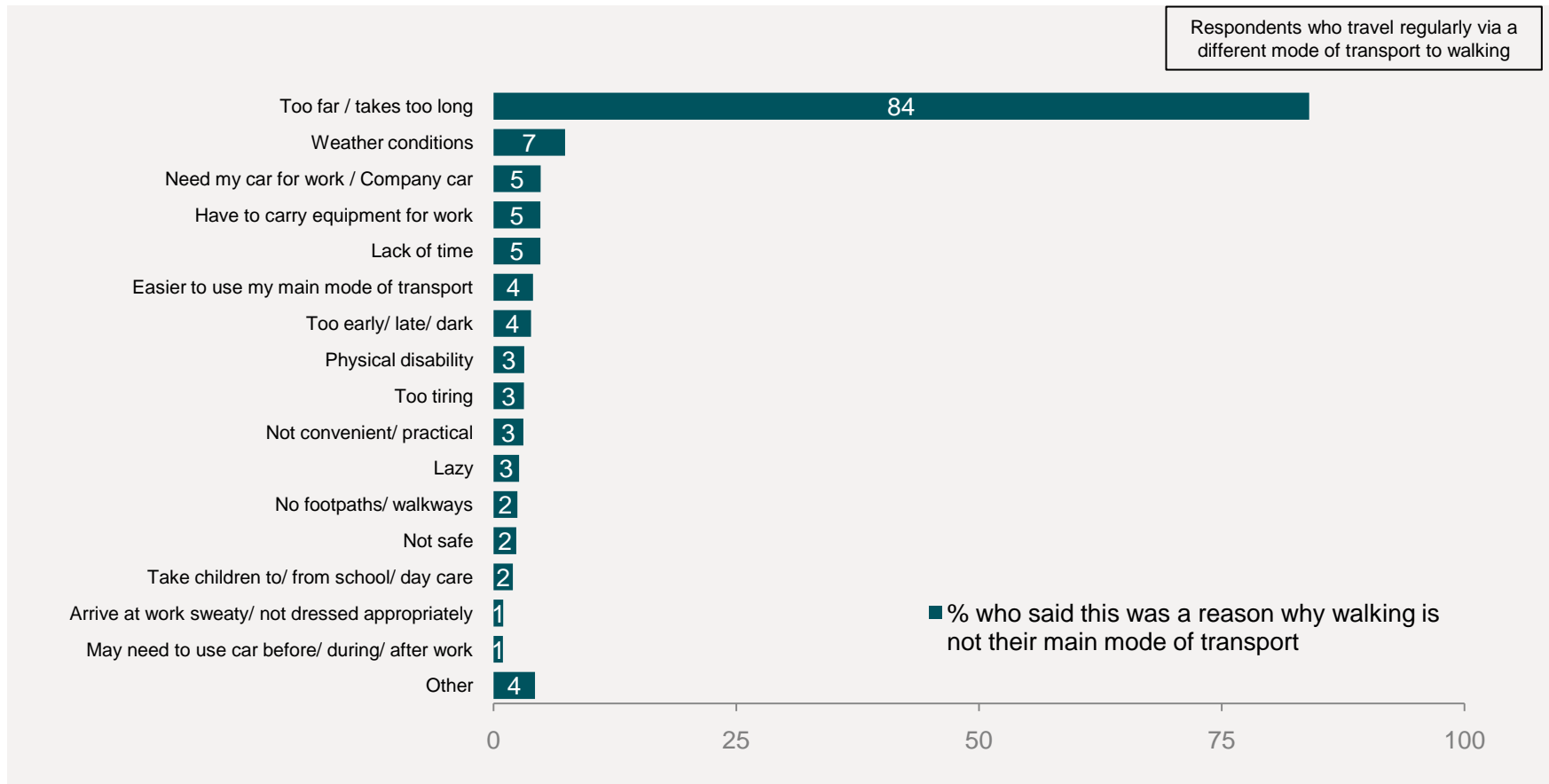
Almost three quarters of respondents say they travel via car to work or an educational institution, while only around a quarter use some form of public transport.

Barriers to the use of public transport as people's main mode of transportation



The length of time that it takes to use public transport, availability and convenience are key reasons why people do not use public transportation as their main mode of transportation.

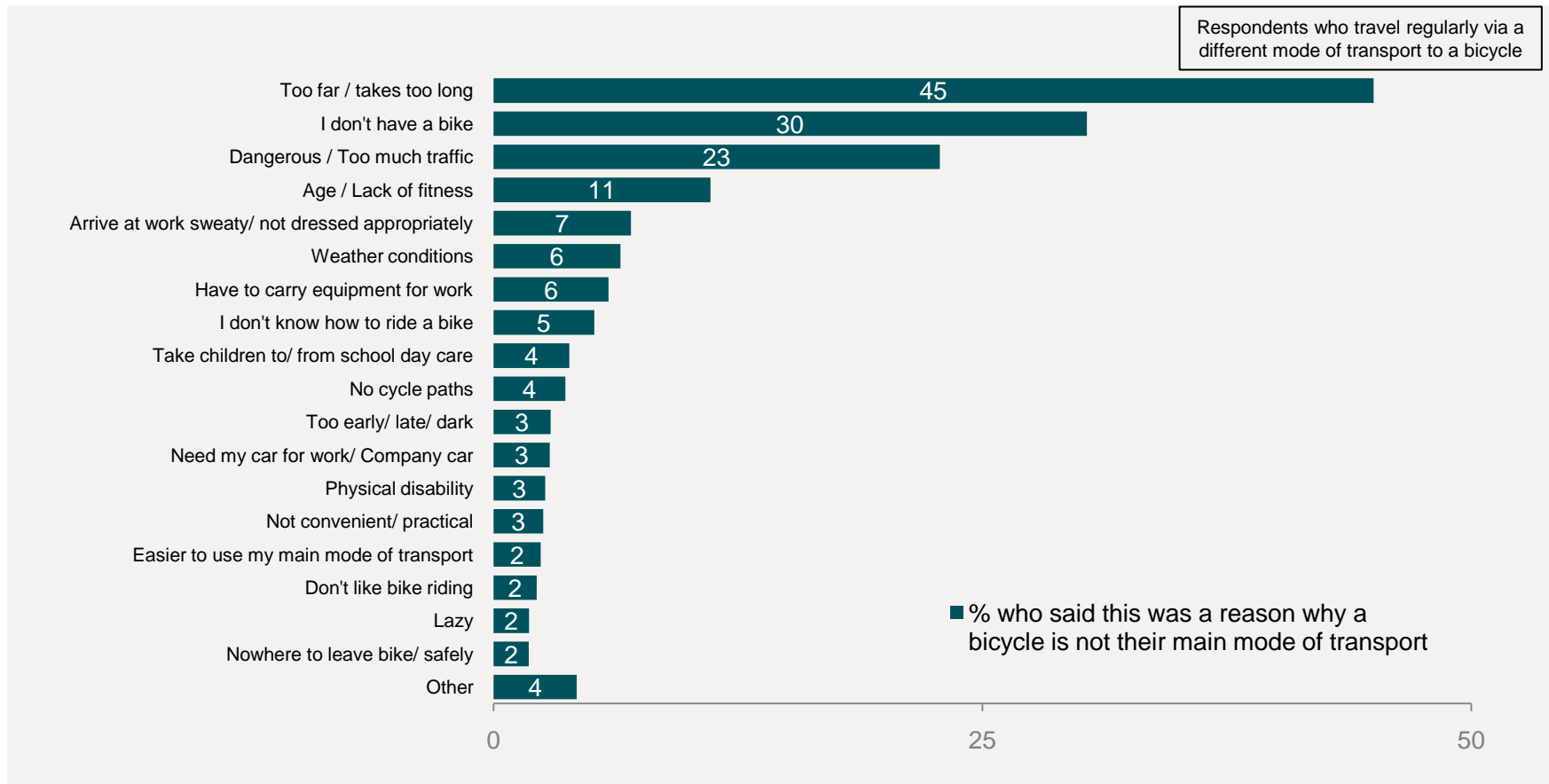
Barriers to walking as people's main mode of transportation



The distance, and the time it would take to walk to work, are the main reasons why people choose not to walk as their main mode of transportation.

Weather conditions, and the need for a car to use at work, are other reasons why people don't walk to work.

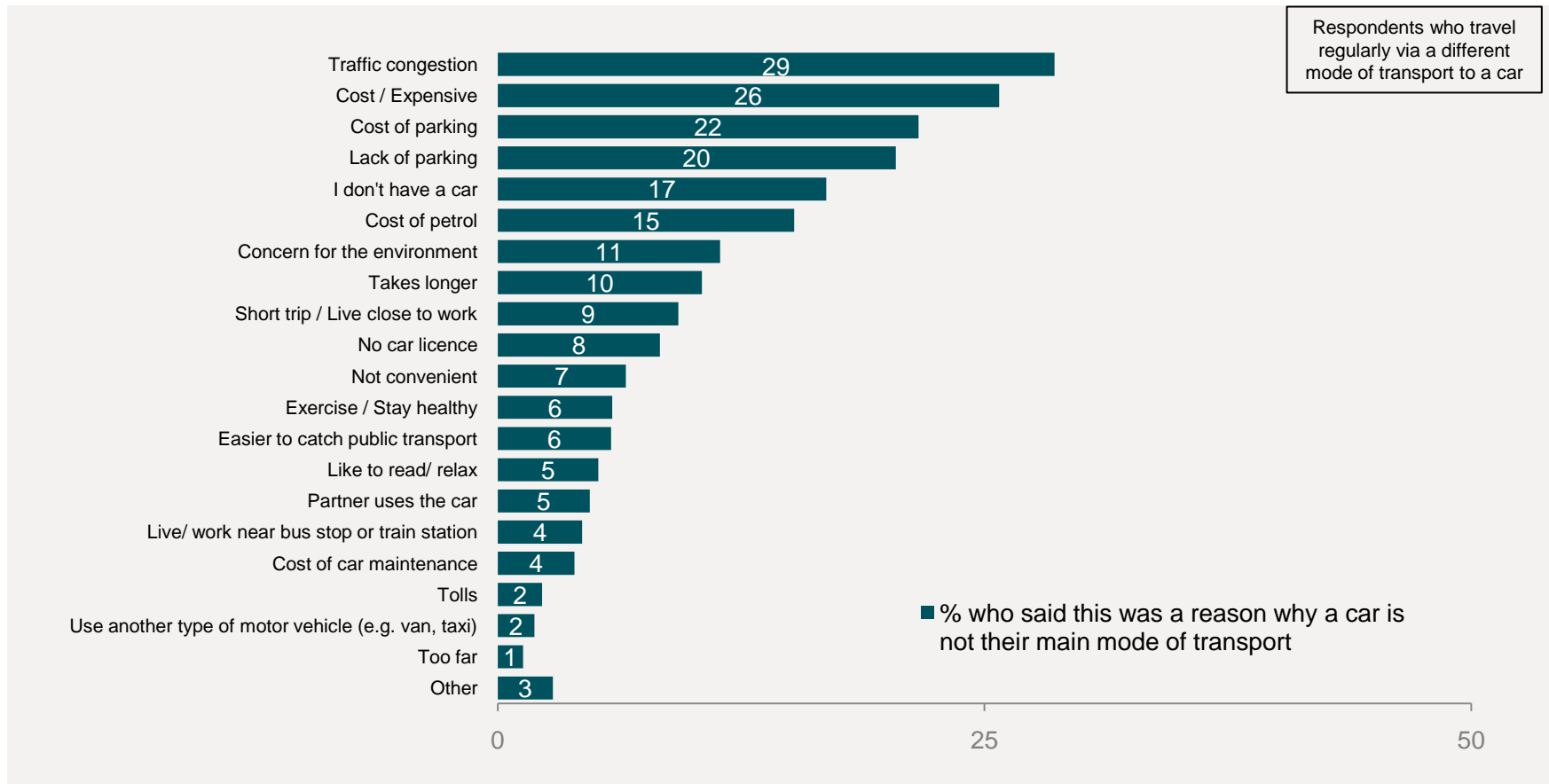
Barriers to bicycling as people's main mode of transportation



Distance to work and bike ownership are the main barriers to bicycle usage.

Safety was also mentioned by around a quarter of respondents as a reason why they do not use a bicycle as their main mode of transport.

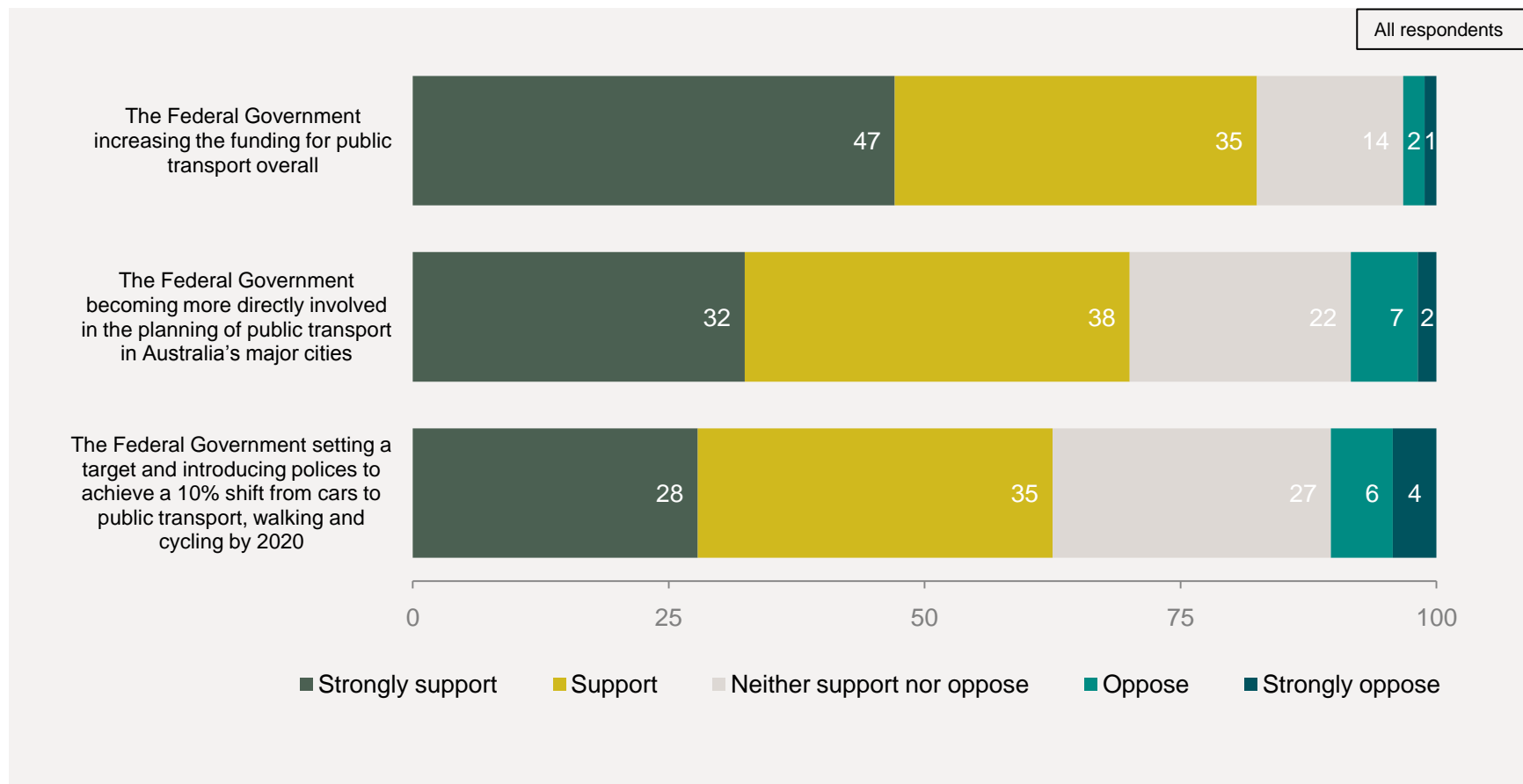
Barriers to using a car as people's main mode of transportation



Congestion and cost are the main reasons why people choose not to use their car as their main mode of transport. Concern for the environment, and a desire to be healthy are amongst secondary reasons why people do not use a car.

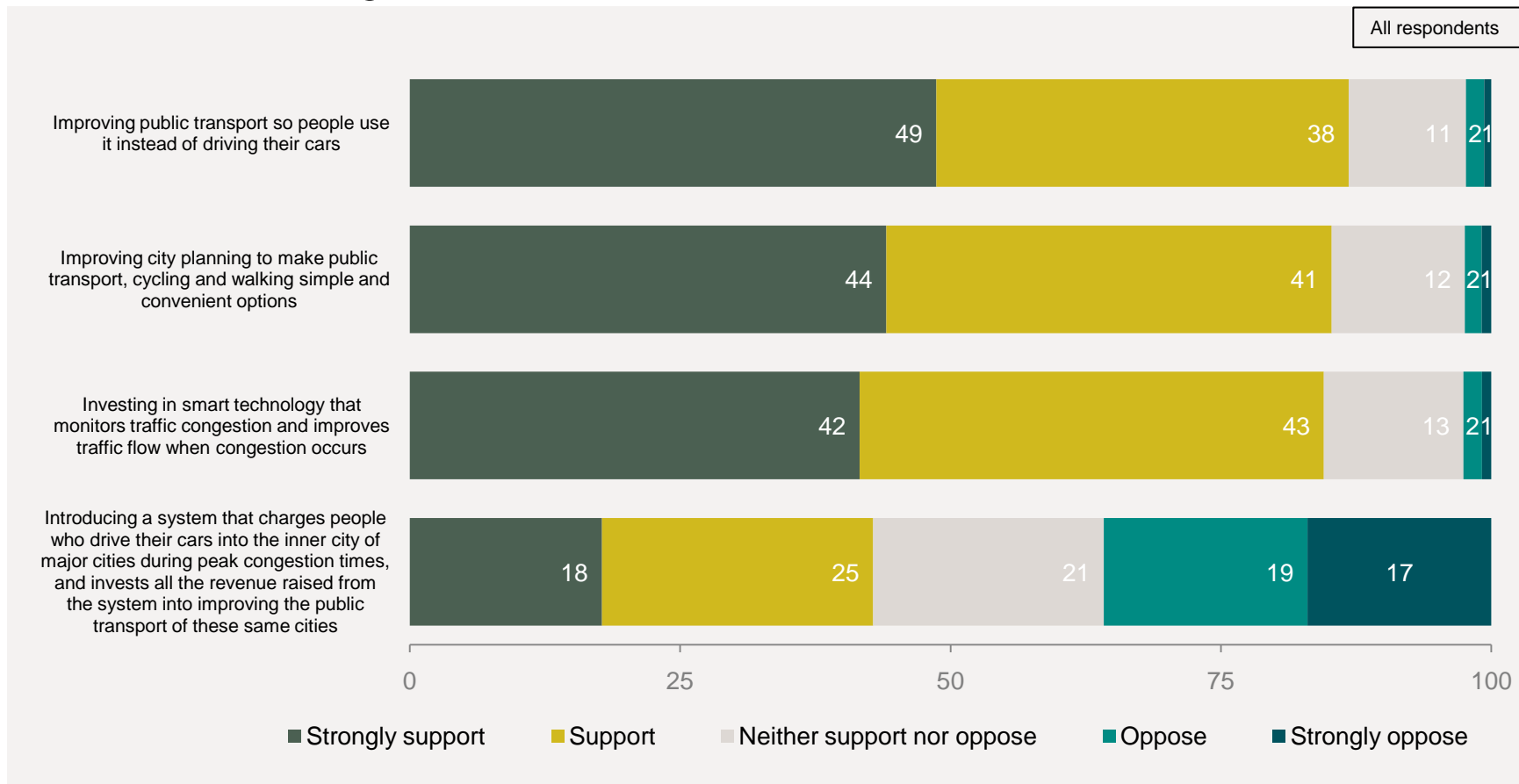
Attitudes to government involvement and policies

Most people would like the Federal Government to increase funding for public transport



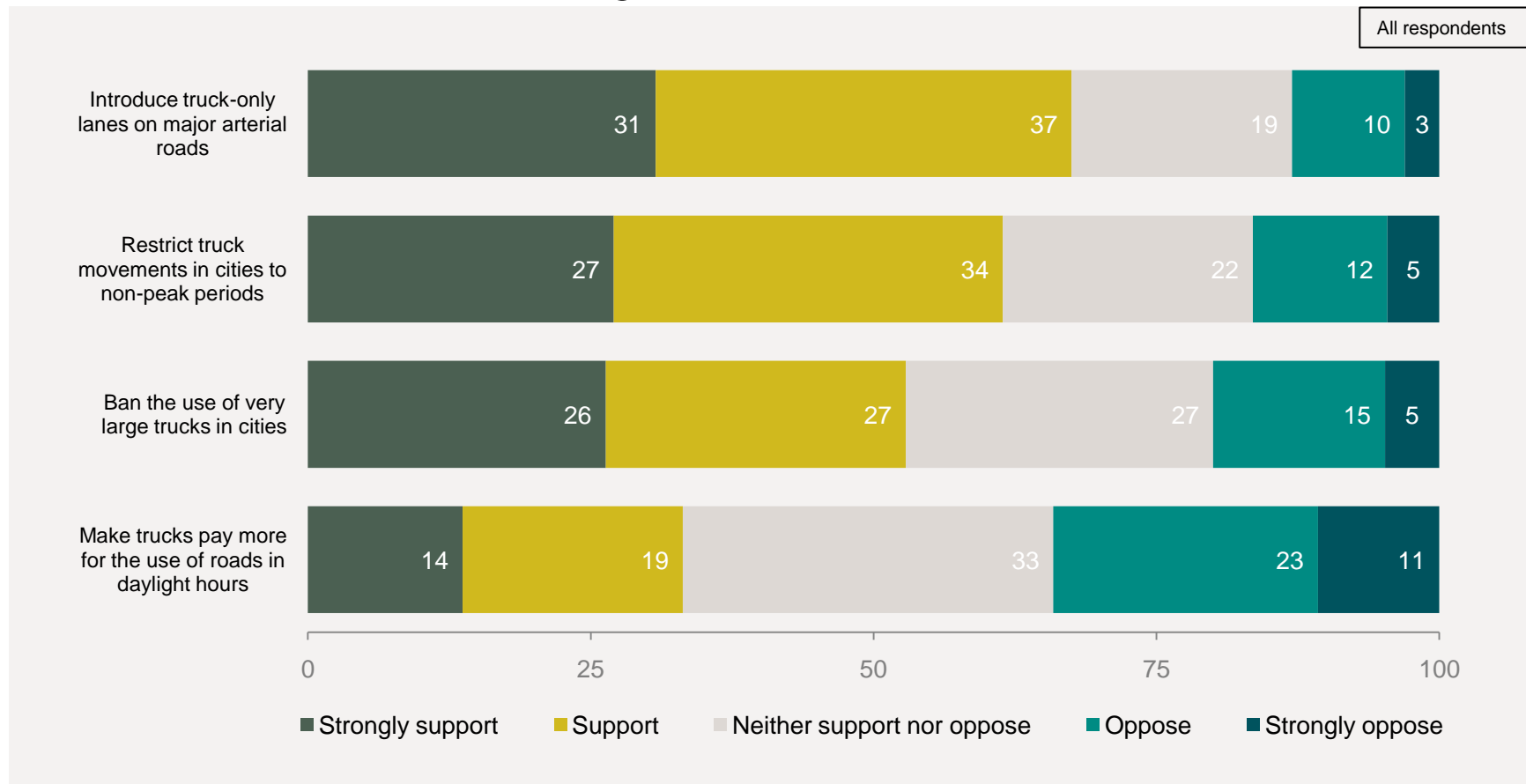
Most also support the Federal Government becoming more involved with the planning of public transport, and introducing policies to achieve a 10% shift from cars to public transport, walking and cycling by 2020.

Most support the government improving public transport, improving city planning, and investing in smart technology to reduce traffic congestion



There is mixed support for introducing an inner-city congestion charge although more support than oppose this measure.

More than two thirds of Australians would like to see the introduction of truck-only lanes on major arterial roads and other restrictions on truck usage

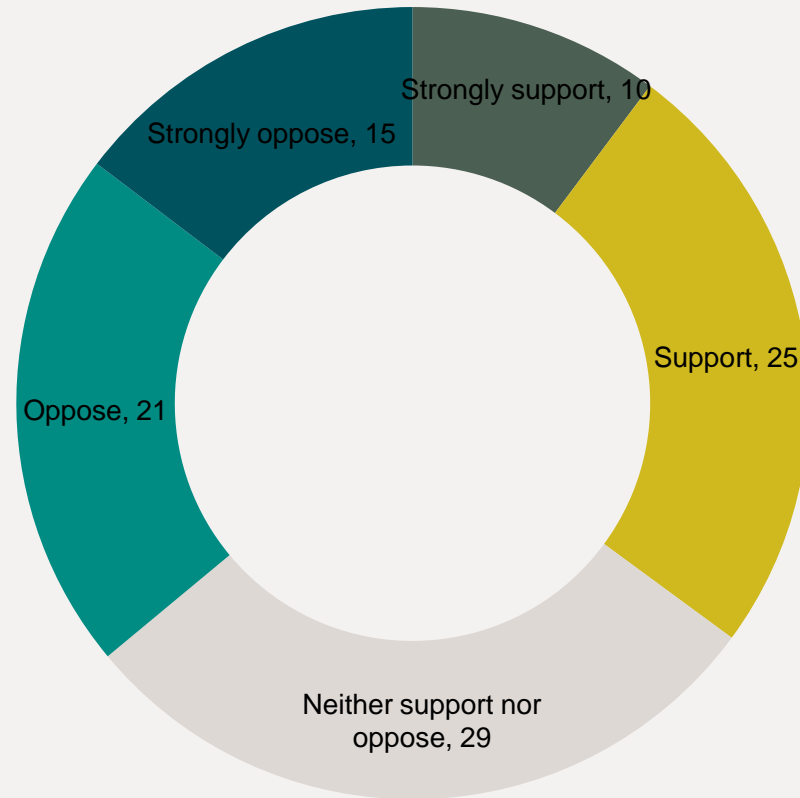


Most would also like to restrict truck movements to non-peak periods and to ban the use of very large trucks in cities.

There is less support for making trucks pay more to use roads during daylight hours.

There is mixed support for a user-pays system for road network funding

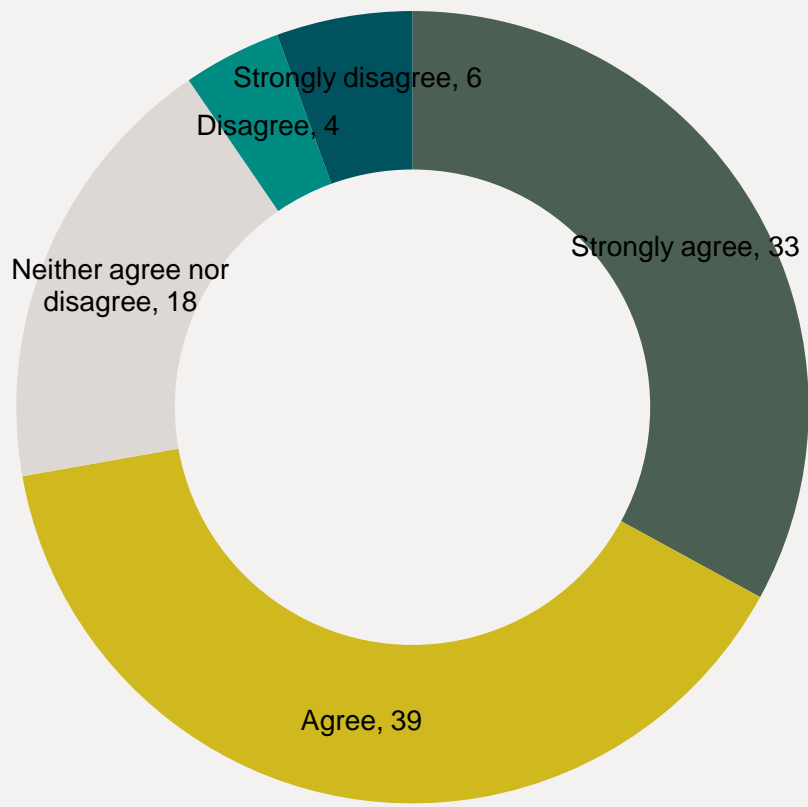
All respondents



Australians are divided over a user-pays system, with almost equal numbers supporting the system as opposing it. More than one in four are still undecided.

Almost three quarters of Australians agree that if the carbon tax is successfully introduced, some of the revenue should be used to fund low-carbon transport infrastructure

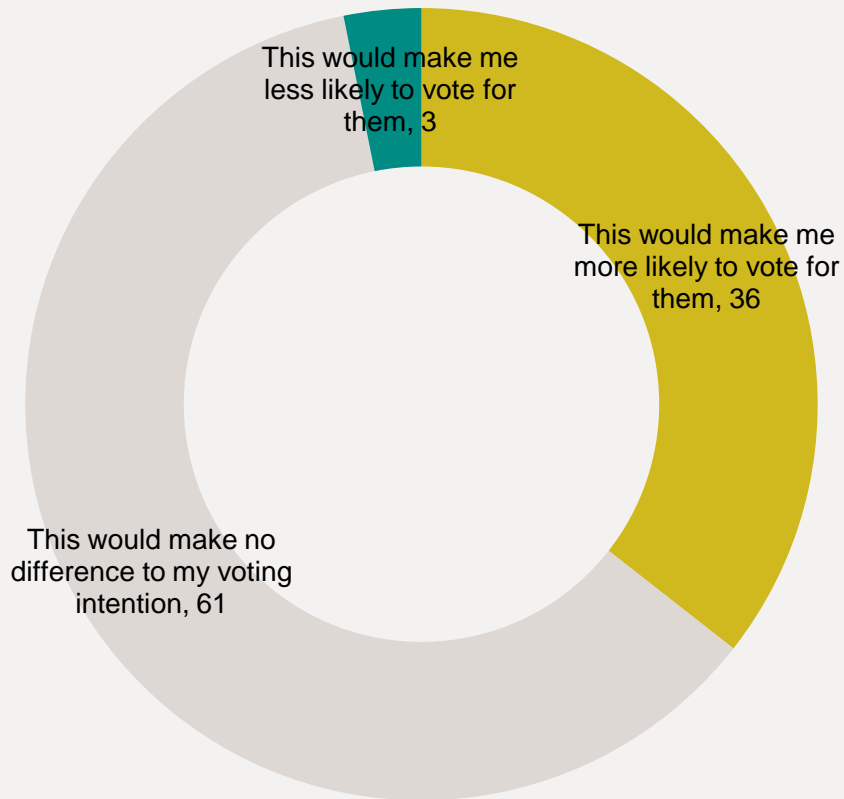
All respondents



Only one in ten disagrees that some of the revenue should be used to help fund infrastructure for public transport, cycling and walking.

A commitment to reducing traffic congestion is more likely to be a vote winner, rather than a vote loser

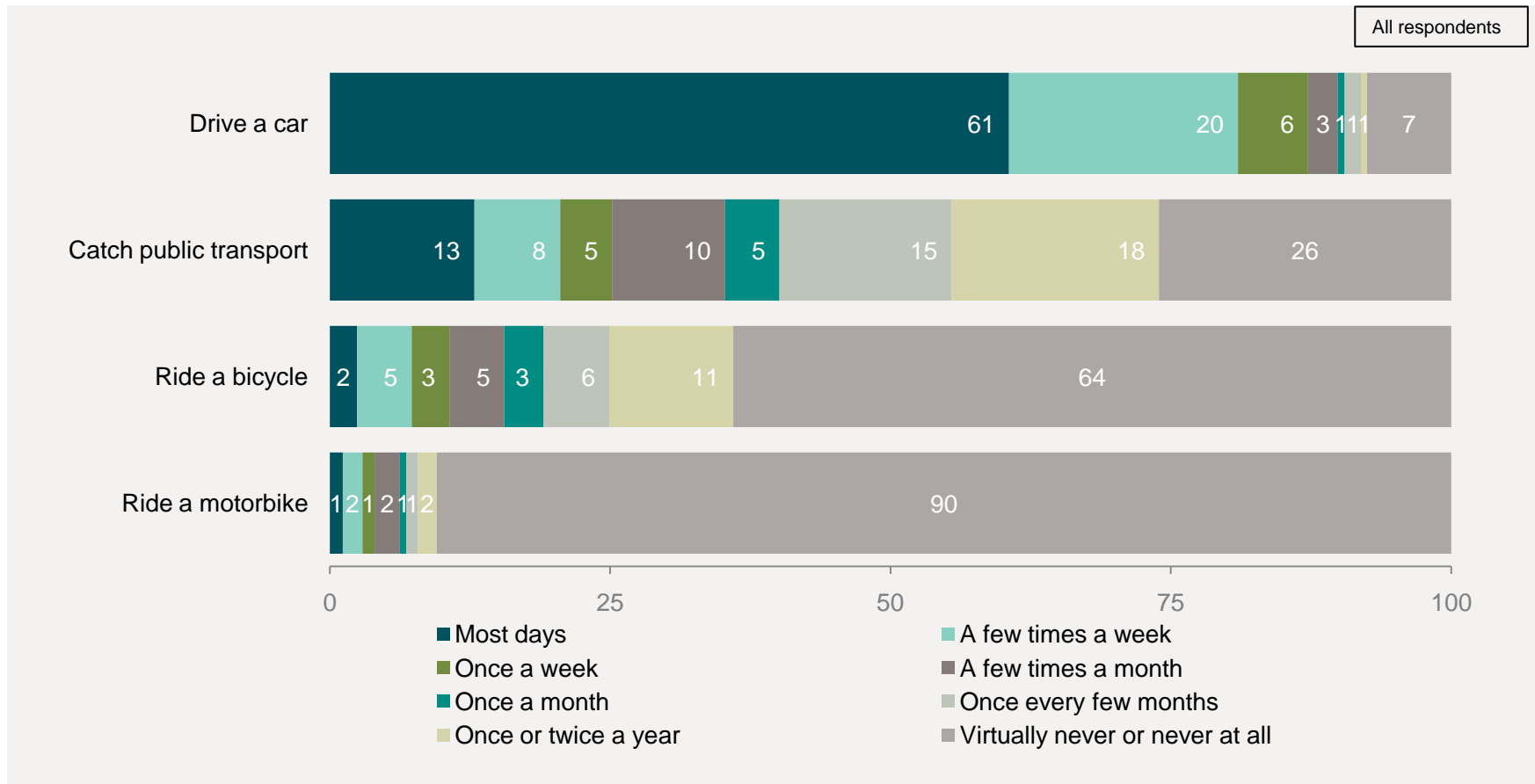
All respondents



A commitment to reducing traffic congestion is more than ten times more likely to be voter winner than a voter loser in the next federal election.

Respondent profile

Most people say they travel by car most days



Usage of bicycles and motorbikes is generally low.

Age and gender

Sample sub-segment	% of sample	# in sample
Male	50	756
Female	50	754
18-29 years	14	212
30-39 years	18	279
40-49 years	22	332
50-59 years	22	338
60-69 years	17	256
70+ years	6	93

Total sample = 1,510. Please note that percentages have been rounded, and may not equal 100%.

Location



Sample sub-segment	% of sample	# in sample
NSW	32	486
VIC	27	403
QLD	17	263
SA	9	131
WA	10	148
Other	5	79
Metro	70	1052
Rural	30	458

Total sample = 1,510. Please note that percentages have been rounded, and may not equal 100%.

Household annual income



Sample sub-segment	% of sample	# in sample
Less than \$20,000	8	128
\$20,000 - \$39,999	17	252
\$40,000 - \$59,999	15	226
\$60,000 - \$79,999	13	203
\$80,000 - \$99,999	12	177
\$100,000 - \$119,999	9	131
\$120,000 - \$149,999	6	97
\$150,000 - \$249,999	4	64
\$250,000 or more	1	15
Prefer not to say	14	217

Total sample = 1,510. Please note that percentages have been rounded, and may not equal 100%.

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