

progressive

Road Safety Scotland Annual Seminar
Road Safety Users:
RITS Drivers attitudes and behaviours tracker

Transport Scotland

23rd March 2022



RITS background



The RITS Drivers Attitudes and Behaviours Tracking Study has been running since 2010. The target audience for the research is a representative sample of drivers across Scotland. A boost sample of young drivers is also consulted annually.

Study set up to:

- provide a consistent **monitor of driver attitudes and behaviours** across Scotland
- **evaluate the impact of various road safety campaigns** run by the Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland.



The tracking study allows Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government and partners to assess longer term trends in a robust and consistent way.

Each year two waves of research are conducted – 22 waves have been completed between 2010 and 2022.

Method summary



Research method:

W1 to W18 – F2F in-home interviews; W19 to W22 Online survey

Quantitative survey

Online survey administered in partnership with panel providers. Prior to 2020 data collected by F2F in-home interviews.

Sample – nationally representative of drivers in Scotland

Sample size:

Main sample – 500 per wave (twice a year)

Young driver boost sample – 150 per wave (once a year)

Margin of error (calculated at the 95% confidence level):

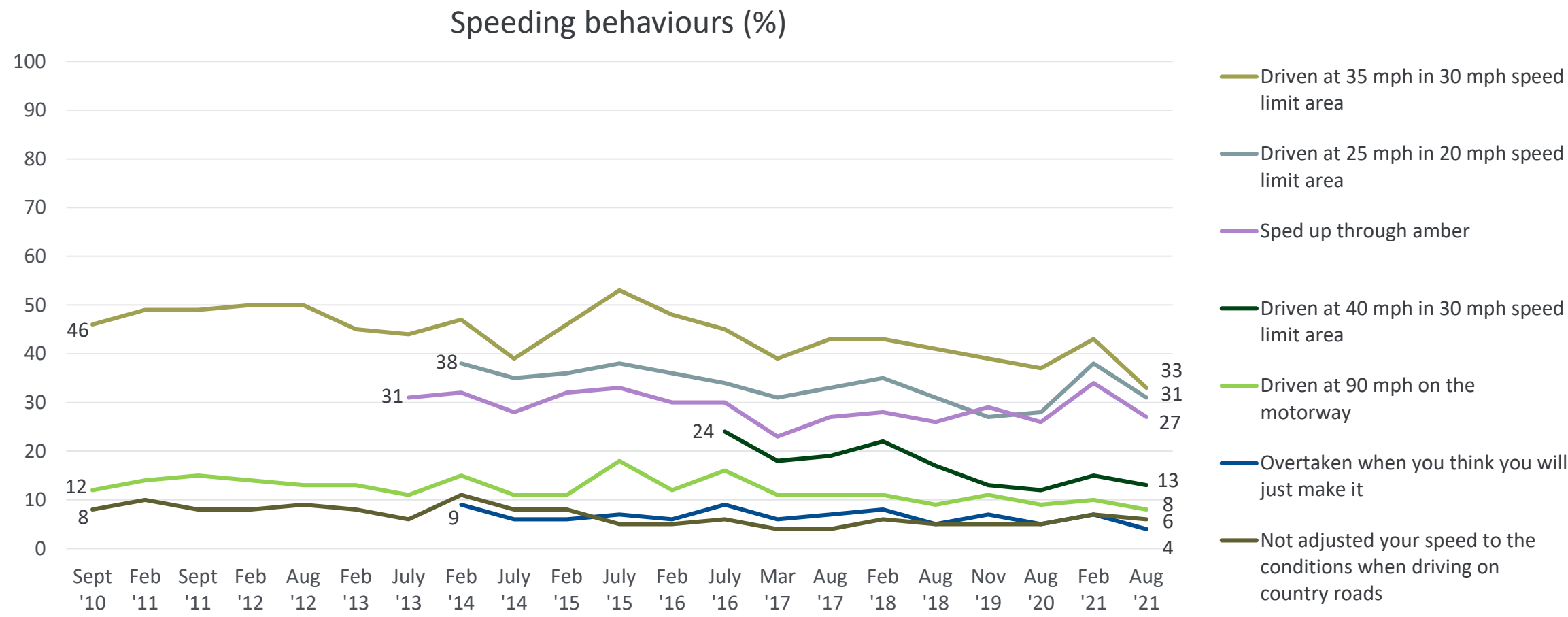
Main sample - between $\pm 0.84\%$ and $\pm 4.23\%$

Young drivers boost sample - $\pm 1.47\%$ and $\pm 7.38\%$

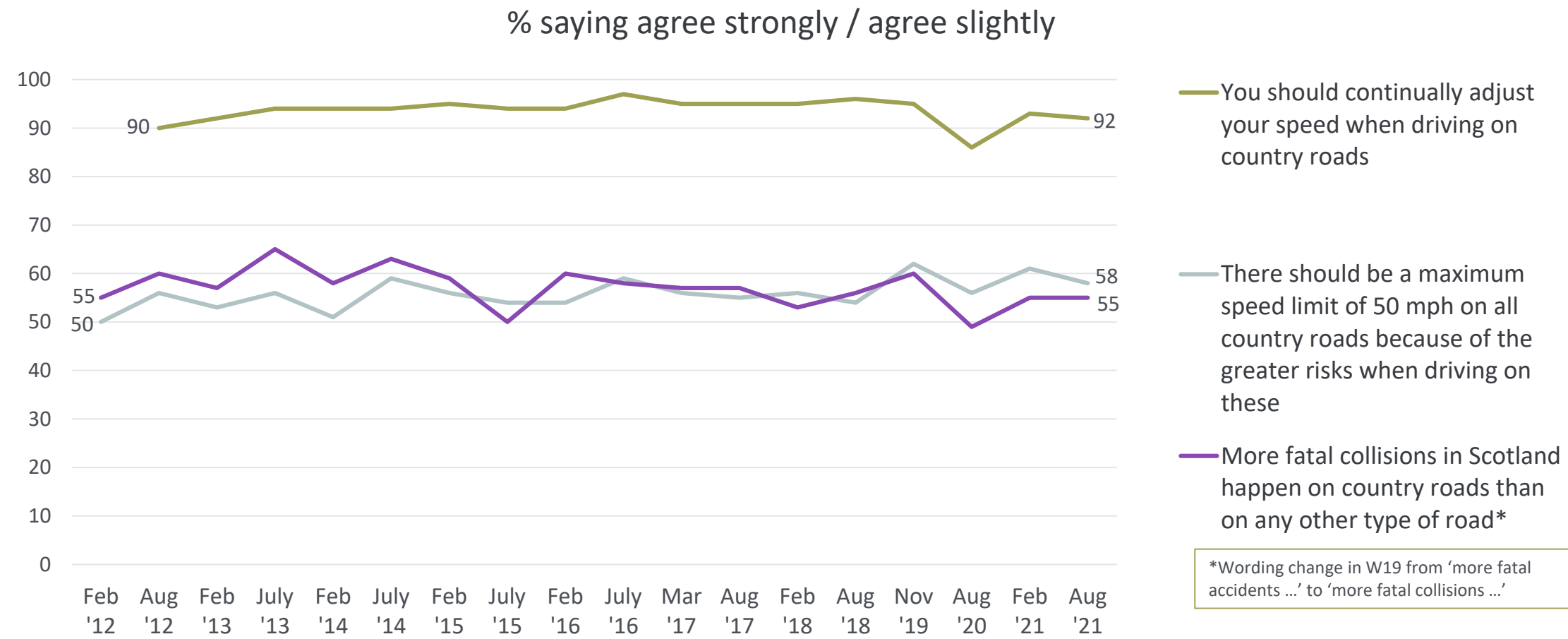
Fieldwork: February and August annually

Speeding and road safety cameras

Long term trends show a slow but steady reduction in some speeding behaviours - particularly driving at 35 mph or 40 mph in a 30 mph area. A small core of drivers persist with the most serious negative behaviours.



Despite some variation from year to year, the long term trend shows consistency – the vast majority agree that you should continually adjust your speed on country roads and over half agree that there should be a 50 mph limit on country roads and that there are more fatal collisions on country roads.



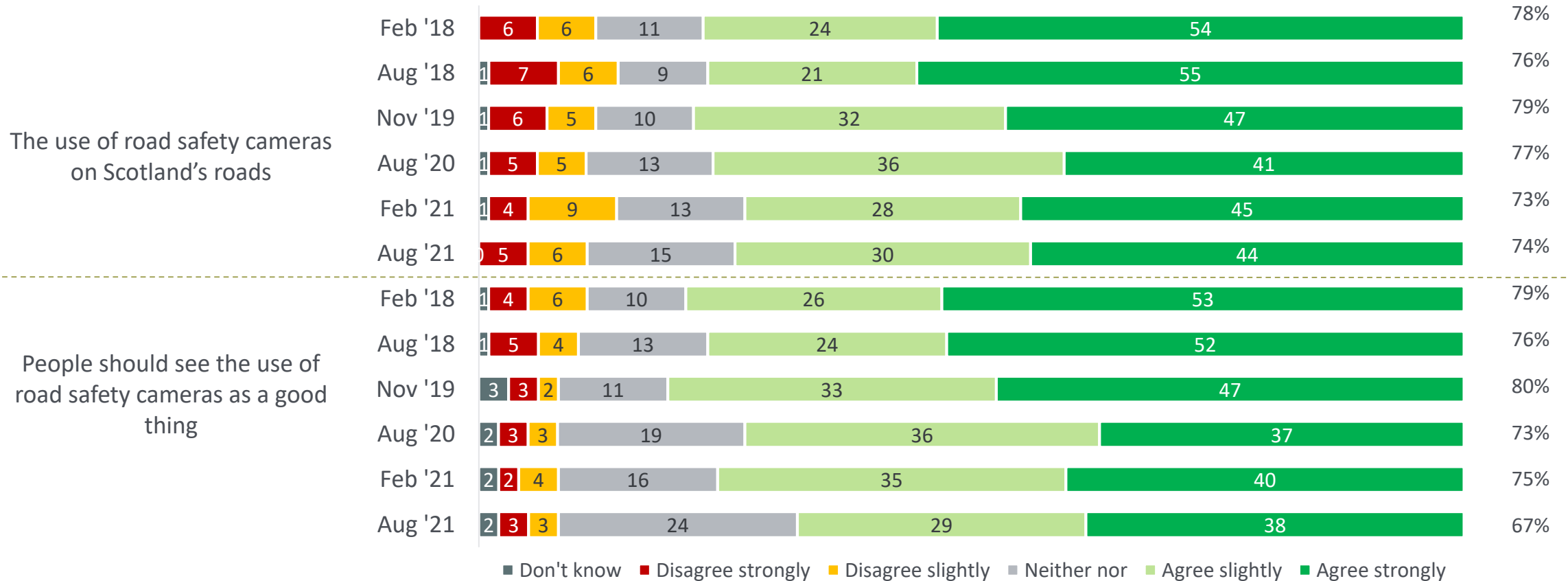
Q3. We are interested in your views about driving. You will now see some statements other people have made about this. How much do you agree or disagree with each?

Attitudes towards road safety cameras have been consistently positive – three quarters agree with their use in principle, and two thirds think they should be seen as a good thing.



Agreement with statements about road safety cameras (%)

Net agree

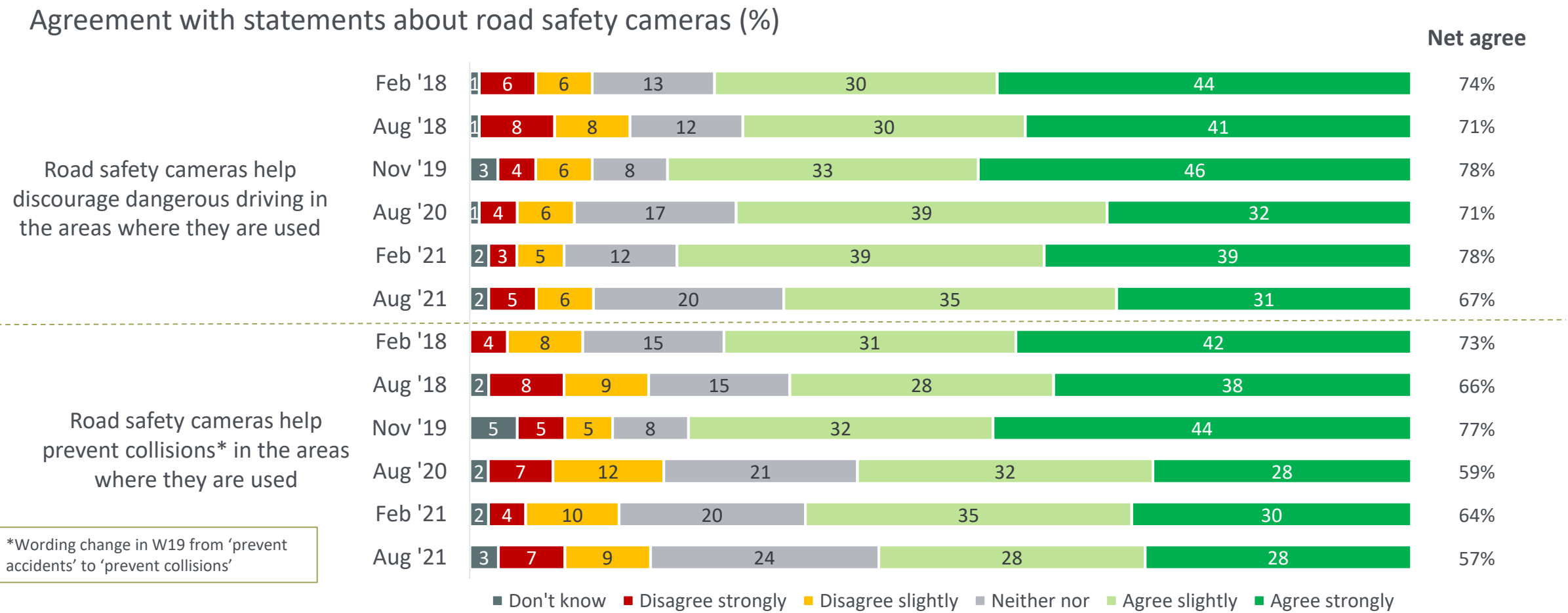



Q10. How much do you agree or disagree with the use of road safety cameras on Scotland's roads?

Q11. Here are some statements people have made about road safety cameras in general, including both speed cameras and red traffic light cameras. For each one please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement

Base (all main W21): 536

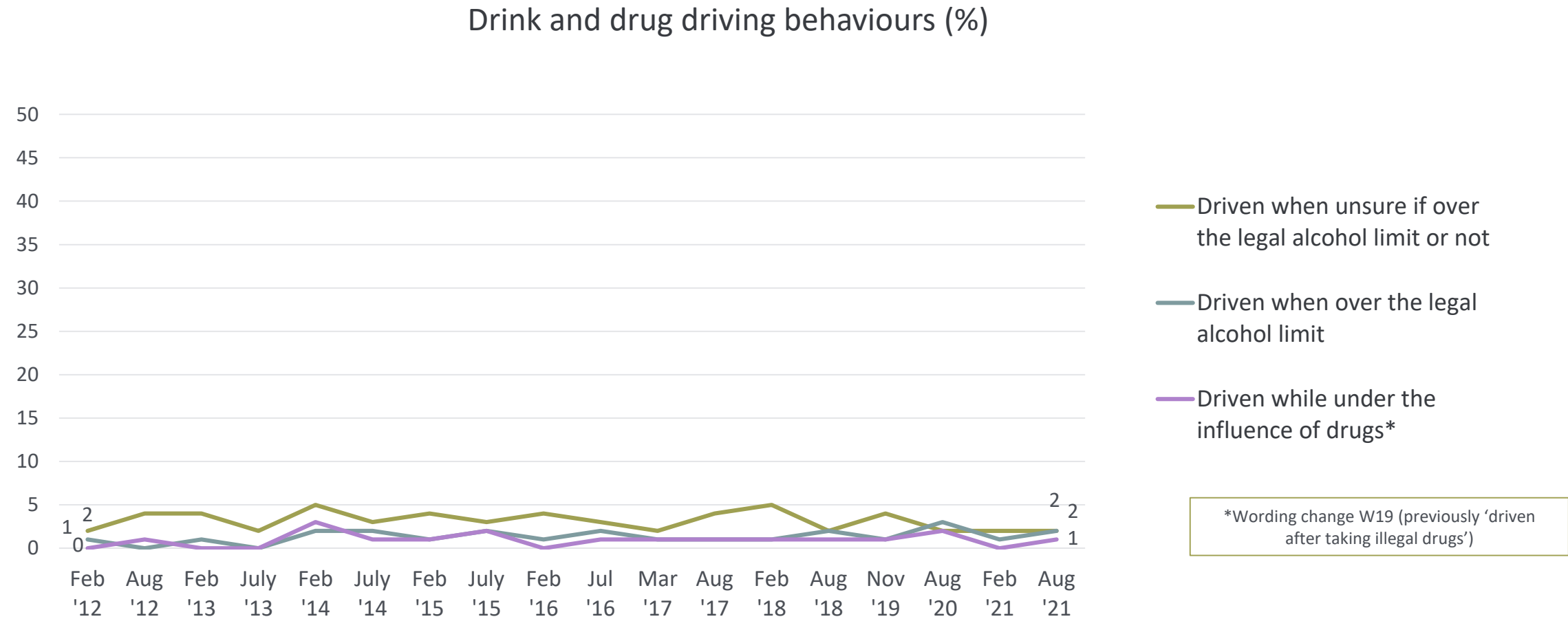
The majority of drivers also consistently agree that road safety cameras help discourage dangerous driving and prevent collisions, although fewer agreed with these views in the August '21 wave.



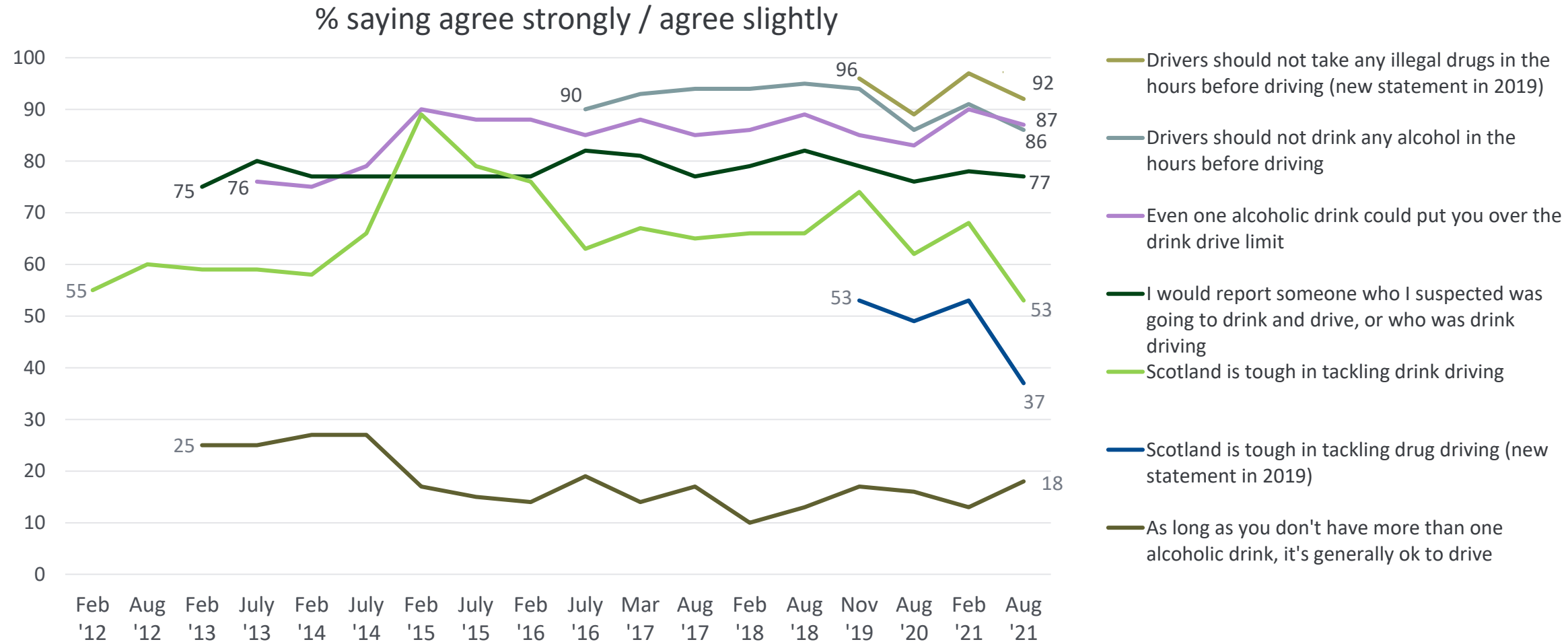


Drink and drug driving


Only a very small minority admitted to drink or drug driving. The trend over time is very consistent.



Attitudes to drink and drug driving have fluctuated over the years – often coinciding with changes in legislation. Agreement that Scotland is tough in tackling drink and drug driving declined in Aug '21 – perhaps due to news stories about Scotland's difficulties in dealing with drug issues at the time of the survey.



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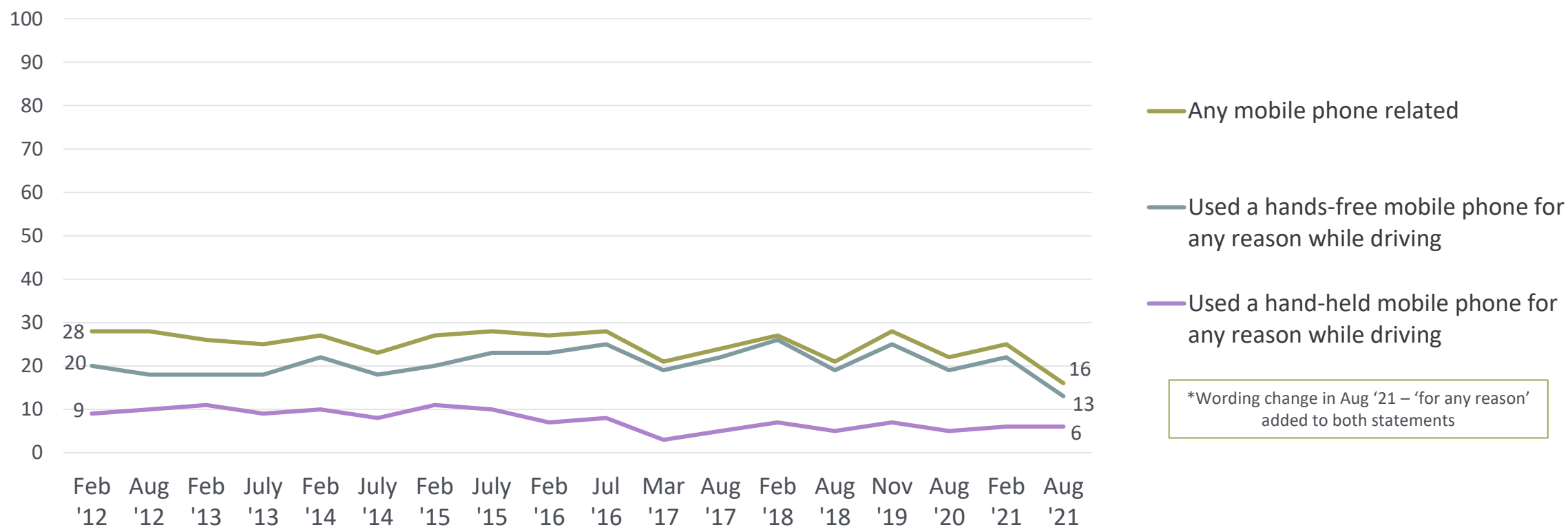


Mobile phones

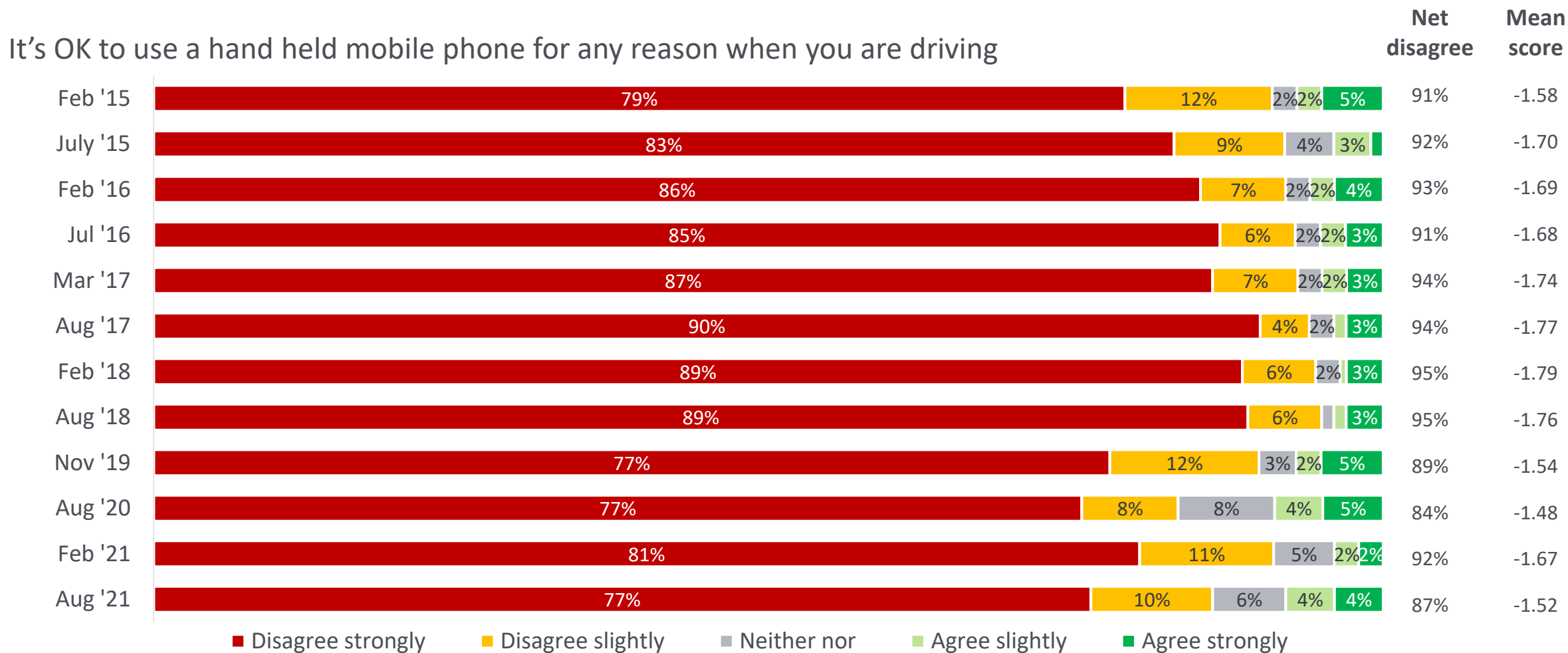
Use of mobile phones when driving has been fairly stable over time, however, proportion using a hands-free mobile phone decreased to its lowest level in Aug '21.



Mobile phone behaviours (%)



The vast majority of drivers consistently disagree strongly that it's OK to use a hand-held mobile when driving.



*Wording change in Aug '21 – 'for any reason' added to statement

Q3. We are interested in your views about driving. You will now see some statements other people have made about this. How much do you agree or disagree with each?
<2% not shown.

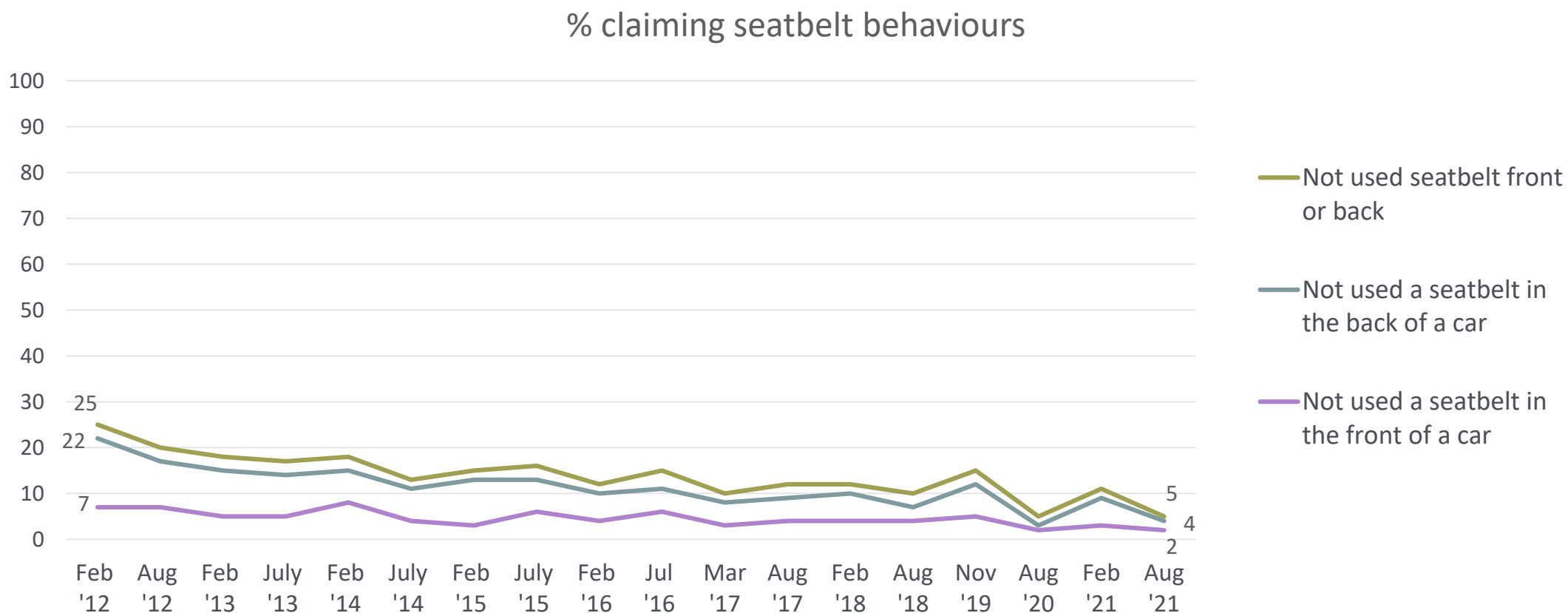
Base (all main W21): 536

14



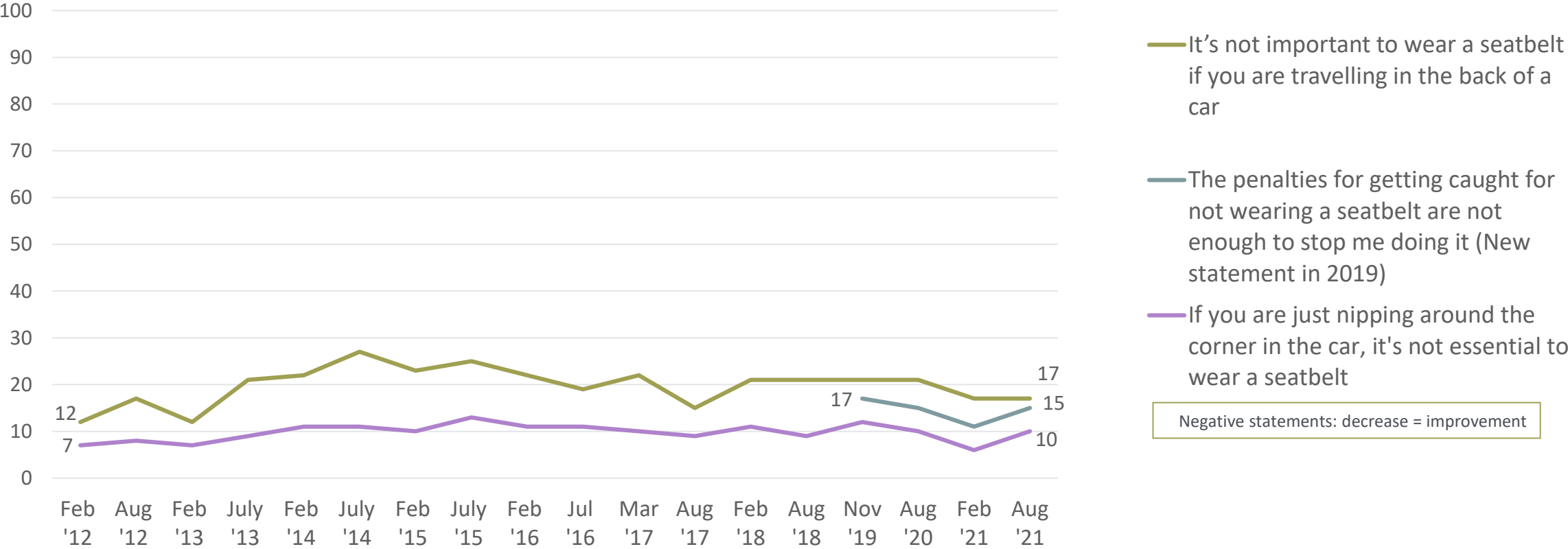
Seatbelts

There is evidence of a long-term trend towards adherence to wearing seatbelts. In recent waves only a very small minority admitted to having not worn a seatbelt in the last 12 months.



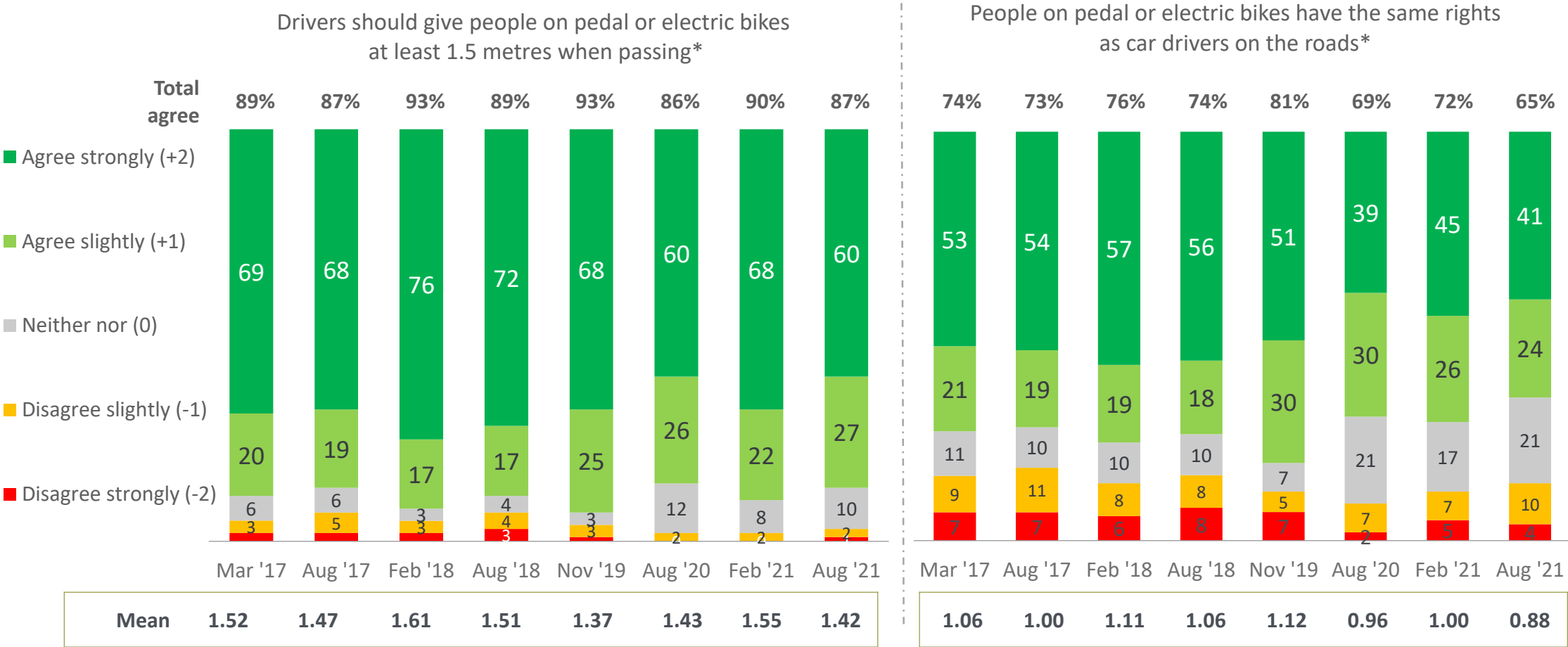
Although few would admit to doing it, around one in six agreed that it's not important to wear a seatbelt in the back of a car.

% saying agree strongly/agree slightly



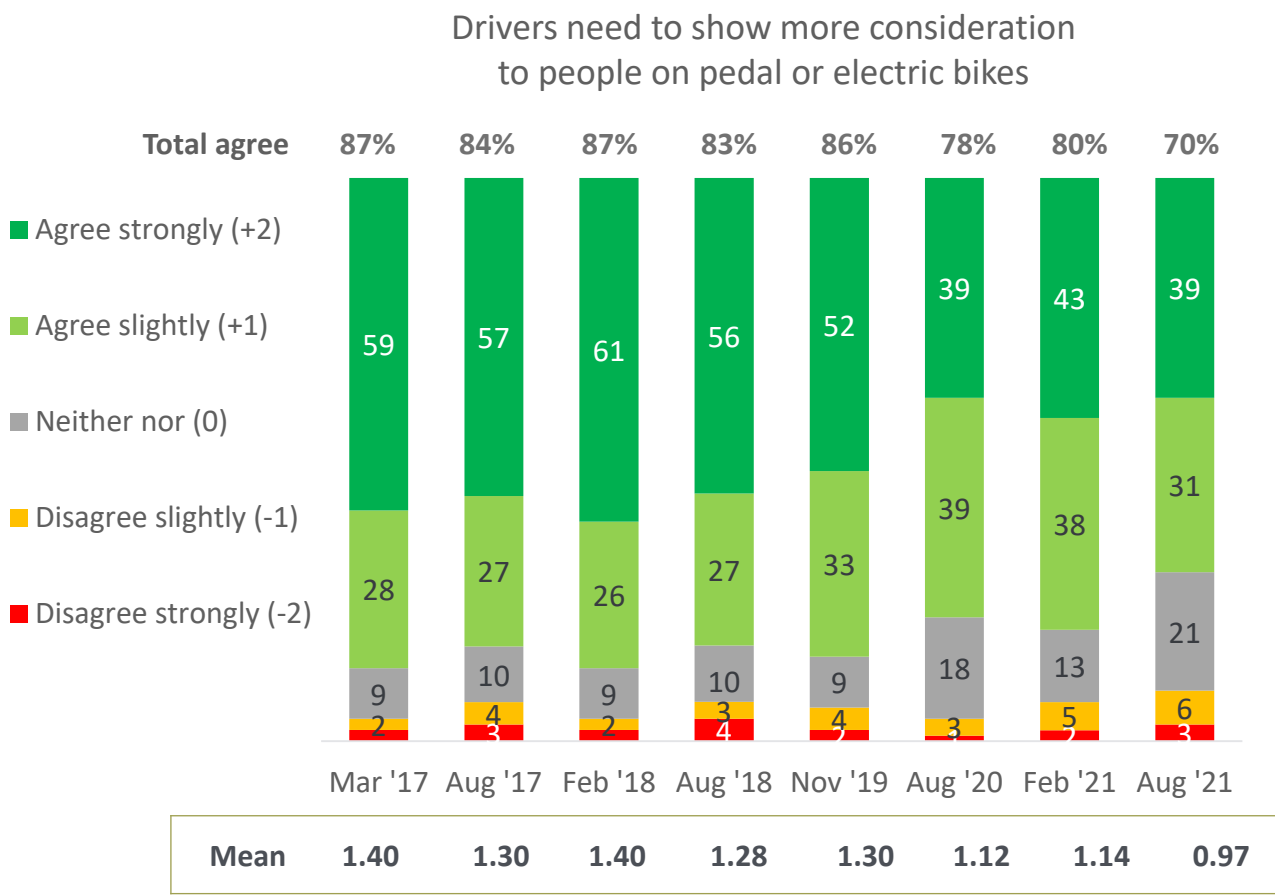
Vulnerable road users – attitudes to people cycling

Attitudes to people cycling are consistently positive: the majority of drivers agree that they should give people on bikes 1.5m space and that they have the same rights on the roads as drivers. There's scope for improvement in proportions strongly agreeing.



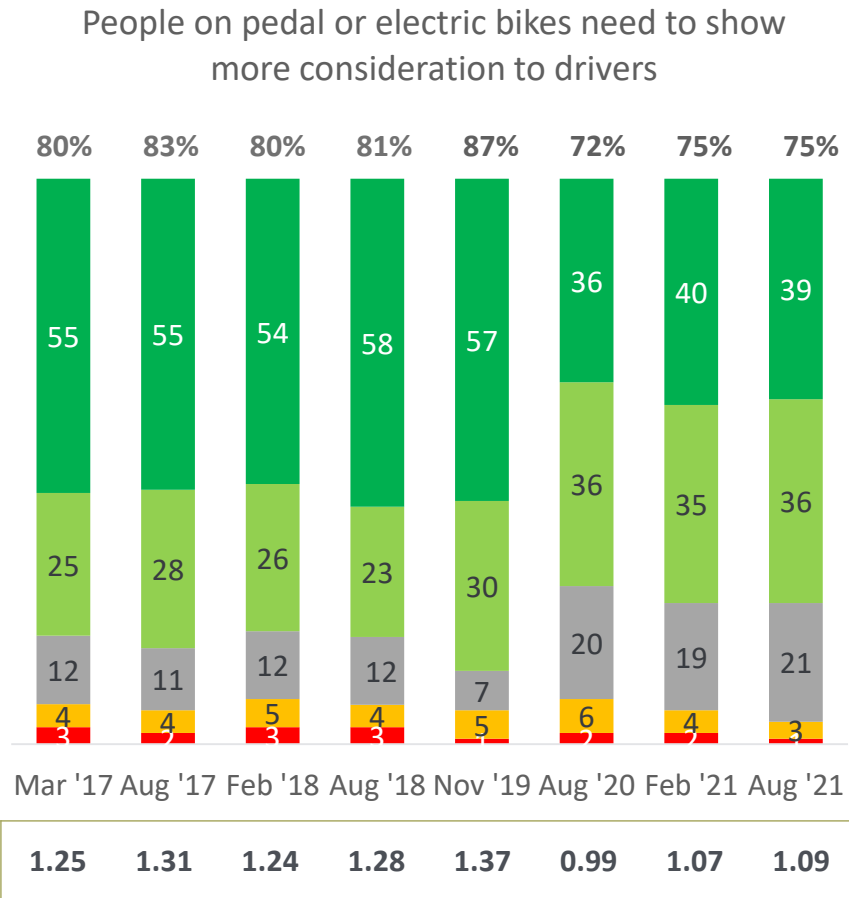
* Electric bikes added and distance changed from 'car's width' to 1.5 metres in Nov 2019.

There has also been agreement over time that both drivers and people on bikes should be more considerate to each other. Both perceptions dipped in 2020 – possible pandemic effect.

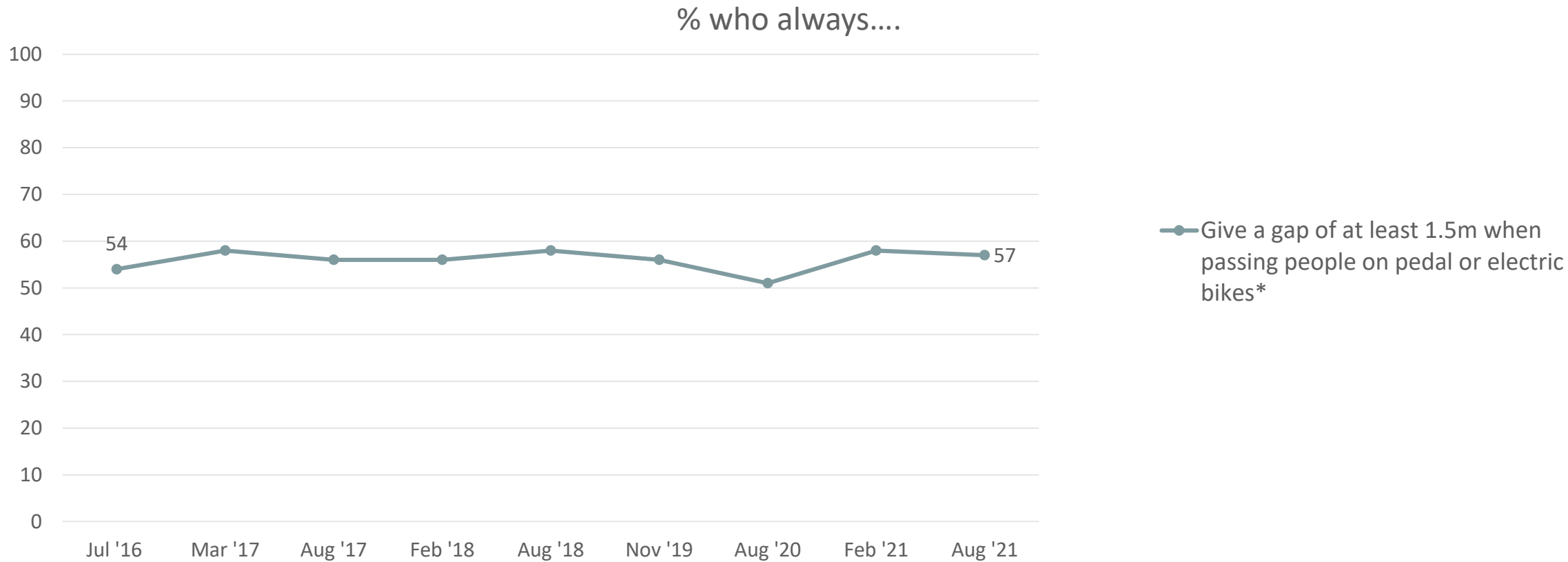


* Electric bikes added to statements in Nov 2019.

Q5: How much do you agree or disagree that.....



Despite strong agreement for the need to give a gap of at least 1.5 metres when passing people on bikes, consistently, only just over half of drivers reported that they ‘always’ do so.



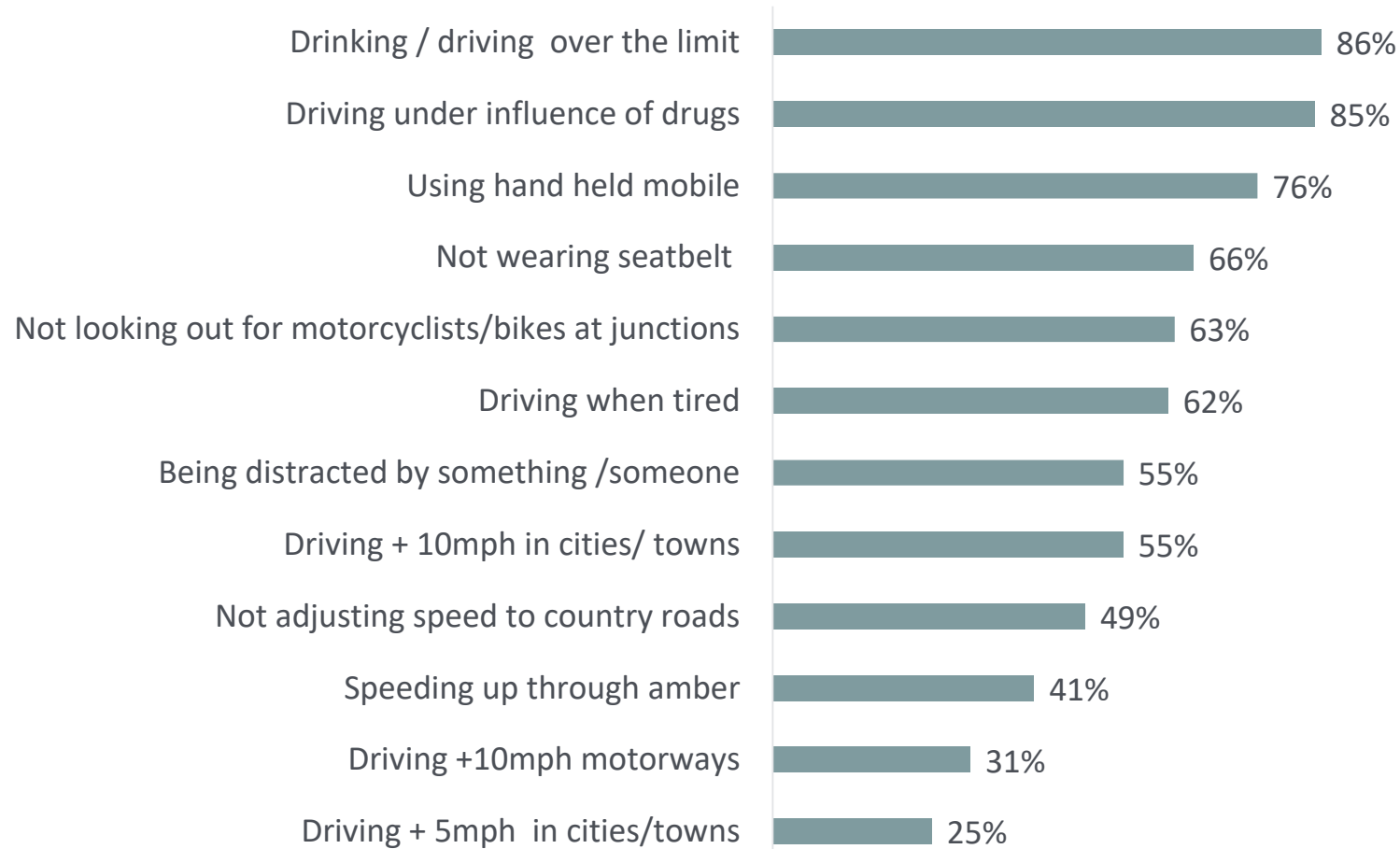
*Statement changed from ‘car’s width’ to 1.5 metres in Nov 2019.

Perceived seriousness of driving behaviors

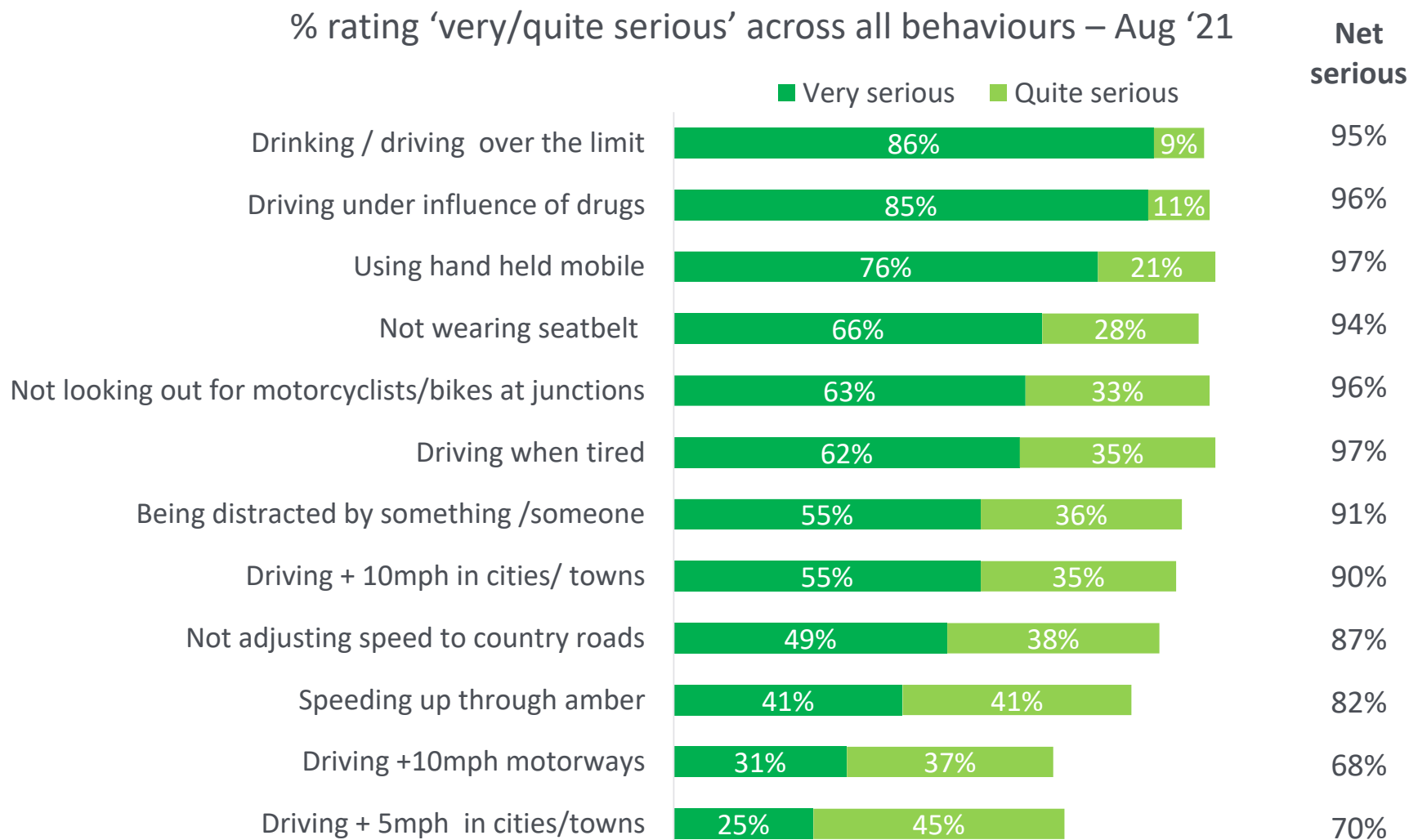
The rank order of the most serious offences has tended to be very consistent over the waves – **drink and drug driving** and **using a hand-held mobile** are the most likely to be considered very serious, with **speeding offences** lowest in the list



% rating 'very serious' across all behaviours – Aug '21



Looking at the numbers rating each behaviour very and quite serious, it's clear that significant proportions (around 3 in 10) do not consider speeding on motorways or in towns/cities as serious.





Summary and conclusions

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- The RITS research provides a valuable monitor of claimed behaviours and attitudes amongst Scotland's drivers
- Trends are often only apparent in a longitudinal study such as this – annual fluctuations are caused by a variety of factors
- Some key trends identified have included:
 - Fewer drivers claiming to speed in 30 mph areas
 - General support for road safety measures, such as a 50 mph limit on country roads and road safety cameras
 - Agreement on the seriousness of drink and drug driving, but some recent declines in perceptions of Scotland being tough in tackling these behaviours
 - Increasing claimed adherence to wearing seatbelts
 - Decreasing proportion claiming to have driven when tired or sleepy
- But, there continues to be a core of drivers who persist with negative behaviours and attitudes, and a significant minority still do not see speeding as a serious offence.

Thank you



Contact

Diane McGregor

diane.mcgregor@progressivepartnership.co.uk

Jonnie Felton

Jonnie.felton@progressivepartnership.co.uk

Progressive Partnership

Q Court, 3 Quality Street
Edinburgh,
EH4 5BP

0131 316 1900

info@progressivepartnership.co.uk