



**RITS: Driver attitudes and behaviours tracker**  
Wave 23 – August 2024  
Transport Scotland  
September 2024



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Project background



Method and sample



Research findings:

- Speeding
- Drink and drug driving
- Mobile phones
- Seatbelts
- Vulnerable road users
- Distraction / health / age / fatigue
- Advertising and marketing awareness



Summary and conclusions

# Method & sample

## Research method:

### Online survey (panel)

#### Quantitative survey

Online survey administered in partnership with panel providers Cint, Dynata and Norstat (ensuring 'fresh' sample vs. previous wave of survey). Prior to 2020, data collected by F2F in-home interviews\*

Drivers living in Scotland were targeted; however, no quotas were set on demographic profile. Weighting was used to adjust profile for consistency with previous waves of the tracker.



Sample size: 508

Margins of error\*\* (calculated at the 95% confidence level):

Main sample - between  $\pm 0.87\%$  and  $\pm 4.35\%$

Fieldwork conducted 12<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024.

#### Analysis and reporting

Only statistically significant differences are reported (at 95% level) – indicated with red and green circles.   Only significant differences between W22 and W23 are highlighted.


Where figures do not add to 100% this is due to multi-coded responses or rounding.

Data has been weighted to match the previous waves of the tracker. Interlocking weighting was used for age and gender. Data was also weighted by socio-economic group.

Bases vary by question depending on routing. All bases shown are unweighted bases.

\* Potential considerations for data due to method change in August 2020 are outlined in Appendix IV.

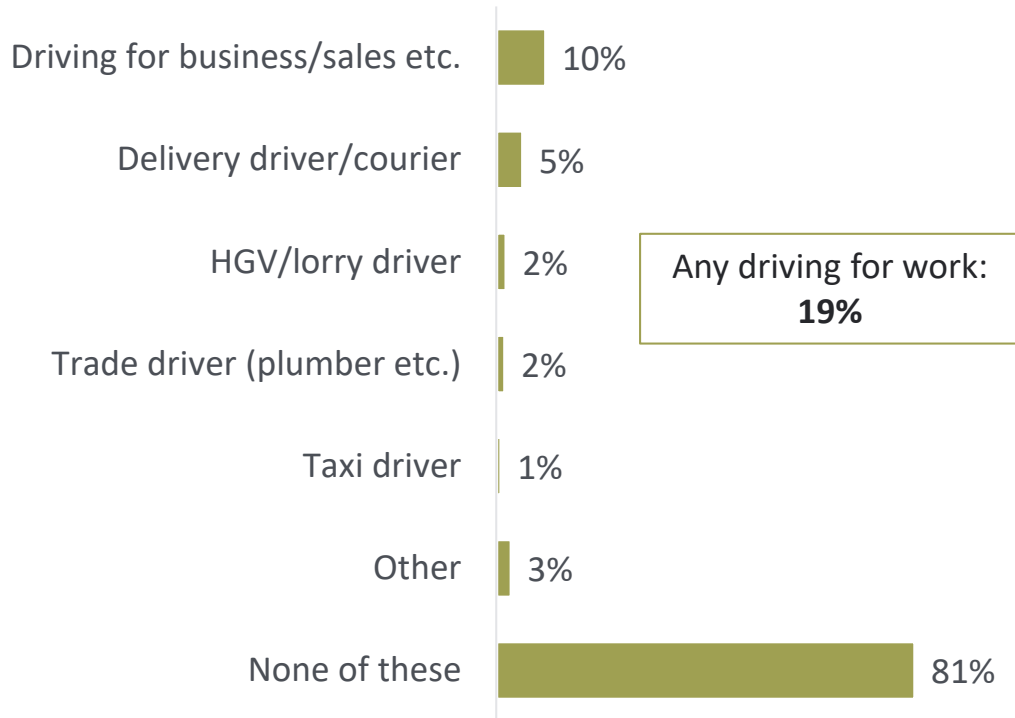
\*\* Respondents to online panel surveys are self-selecting rather than being randomly selected using probability sampling. This means that we cannot provide statistically precise margins of error or significance testing as the sampling type is non-probability. Statistical testing and margins of error should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample.



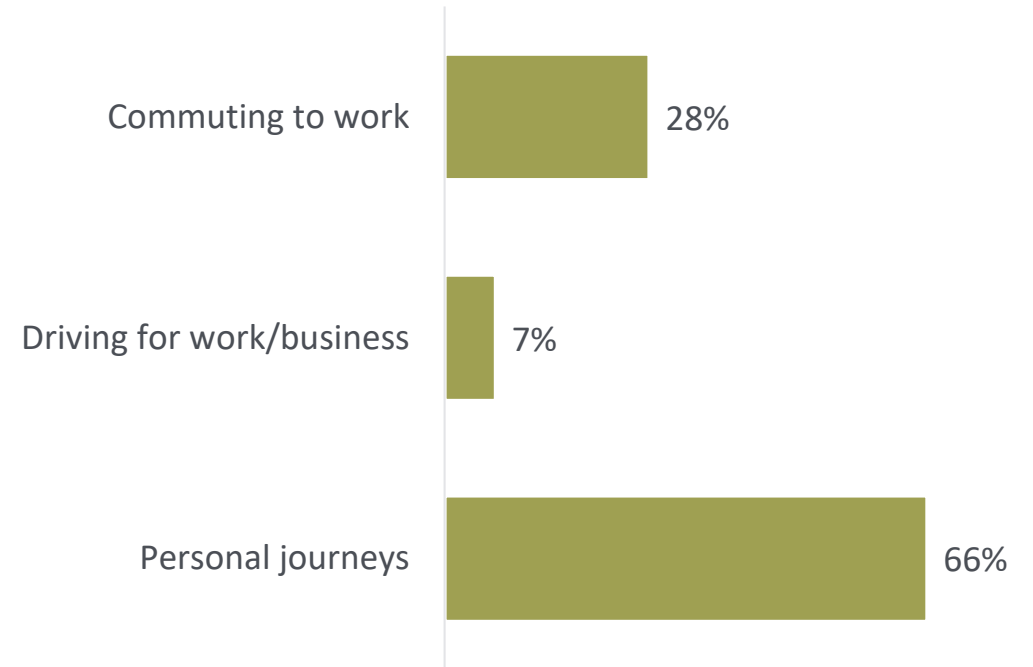
# Driver types


Almost one in five drivers do a form of driving for work – most commonly for business/sales purposes. However, less than one in 10 say that driving for work/business is their main type of driving, with personal journeys the leading reason for driving.

### Whether drivers do any type of driving for work



### Most common type of driving drivers do



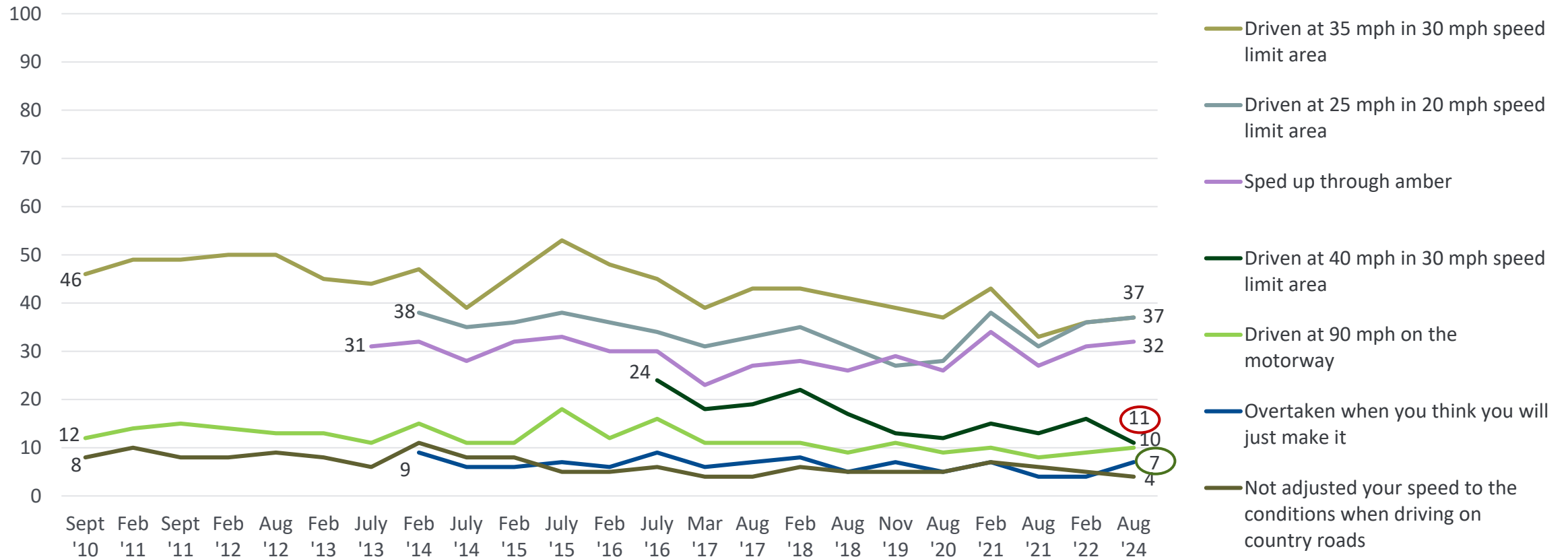


# Speeding



Speeding behaviours in Aug '24 were broadly in line with previous years, with the most common being driving at 5 mph over the speed limit in 20 and 30-mph speed limit areas. The proportion reporting they drive at 40 mph in a 30-mph zone fell to its lowest incidence level this year, continuing long term trend.

Speeding behaviours (%)





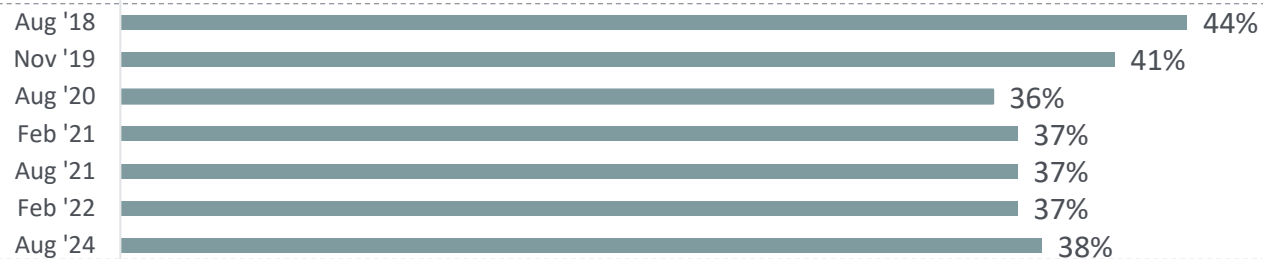
As in Feb '22, drivers in Aug '24 were least likely to keep to 20 mph speed limits – around a third reported they always adhere to it. However, only around two fifths reported that they always keep to 30, 40 or 50 mph speed limits, which has been broadly consistent since Aug '20.

% claiming to **always** ...

Keep to **20** mph limits



Keep to **30** mph limits



Keep to **40** mph limits



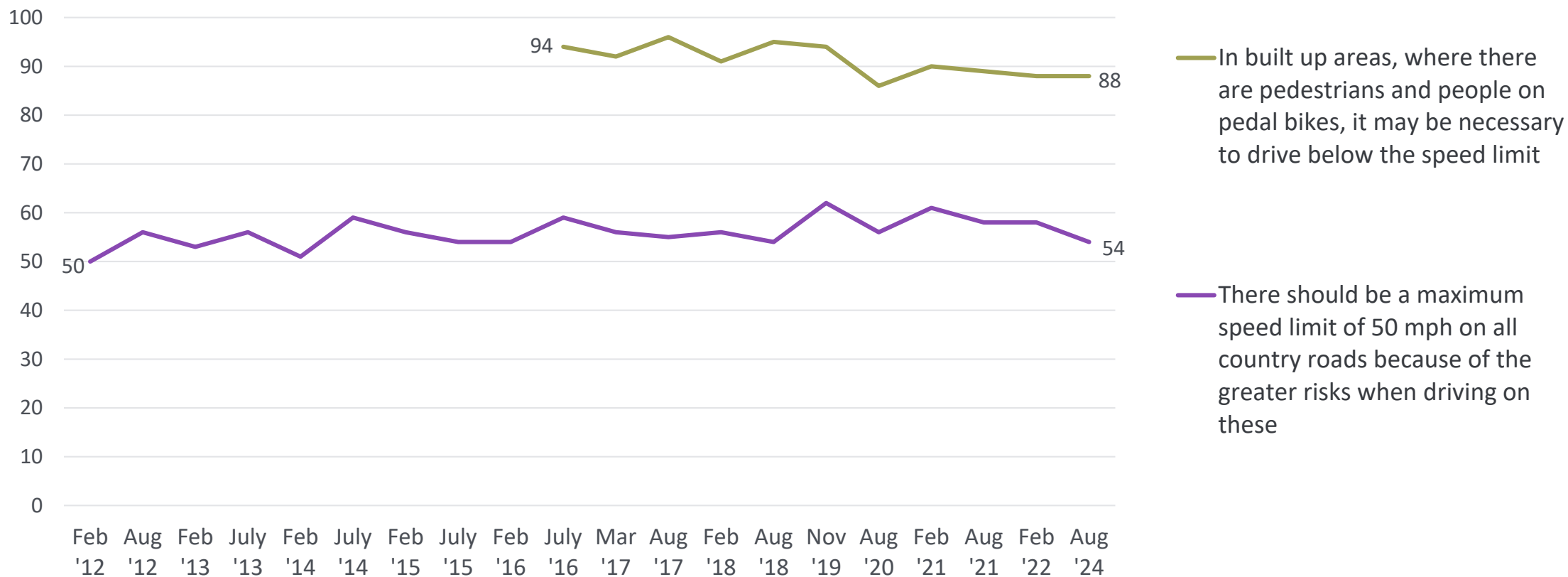
Keep to **50** mph limits





Agreement with statements about driving speeds on different types of roads continues to be consistent in Aug '24. The vast majority agree that in built up areas, it may be necessary to drive below the speed limit, and around half agree that there should be a maximum speed limit on all country roads.

% saying agree strongly / agree slightly

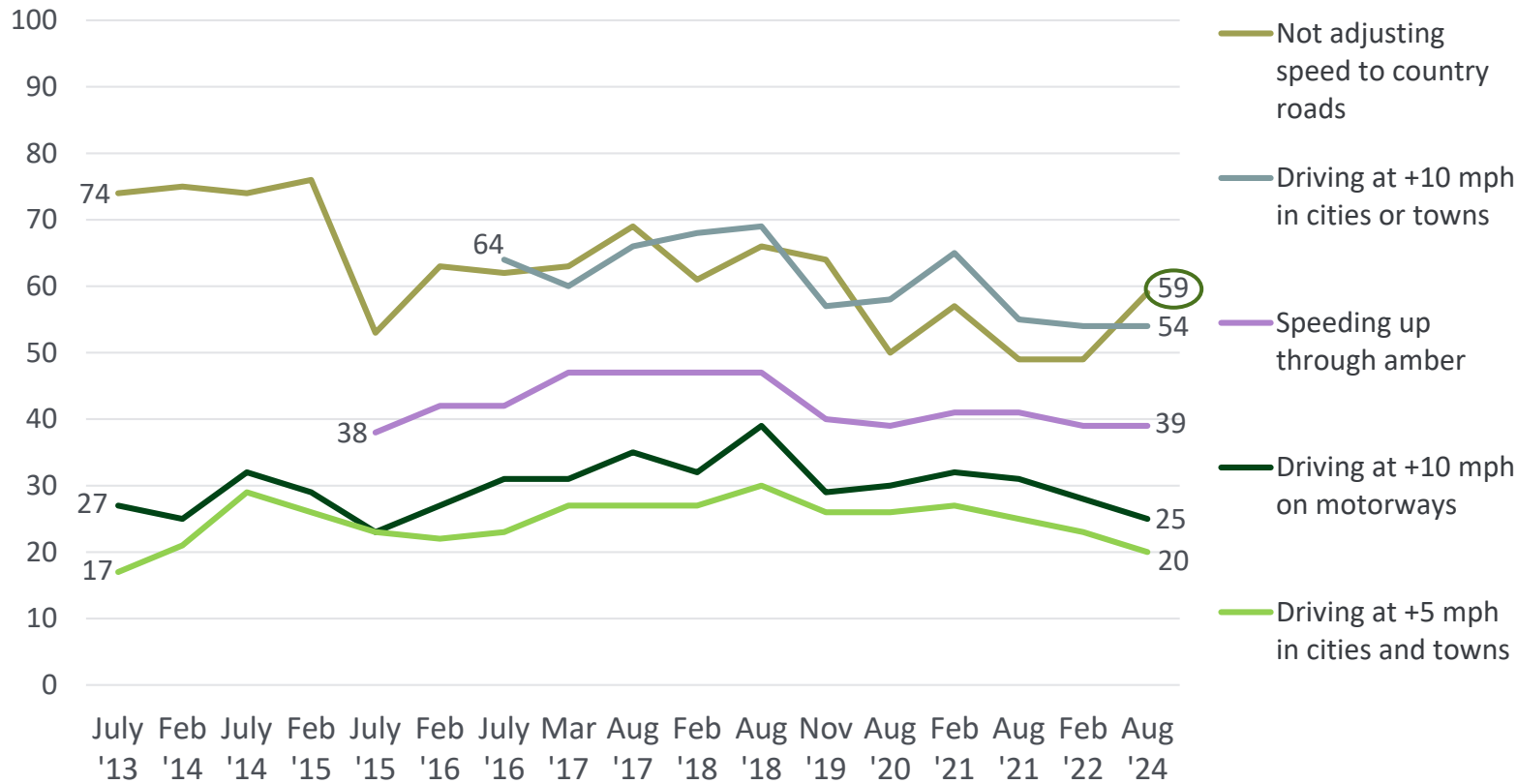


Q3. We are interested in your views about driving. You will now see some statements other people have made about this. How much do you agree or disagree with each?

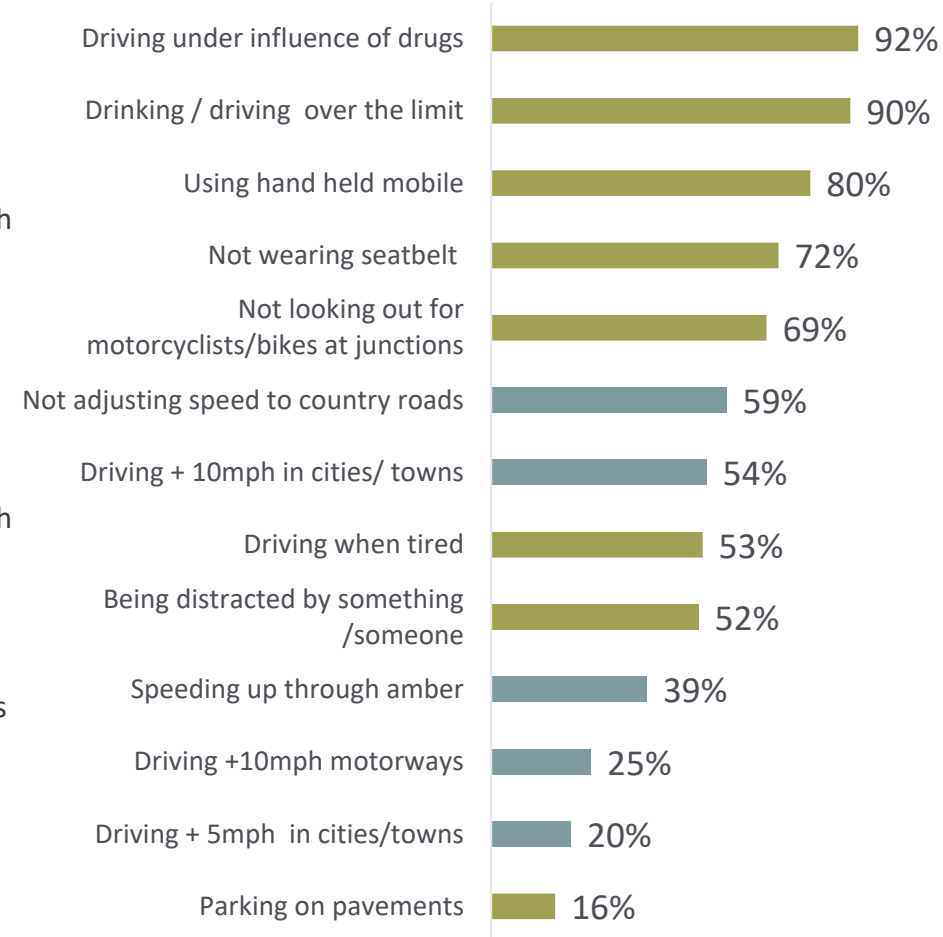


Results in Aug '24 broadly mirrored those in previous waves, with driving at +5 mph in cities/towns and +10 mph on motorways considered to be among the least serious speeding behaviours. Not adjusting speeds on country roads was, however, more likely to be considered very serious in Aug '24 compared to recent waves.

% rating speeding behaviours as 'very serious'



% rating 'very serious' across all behaviours – Aug 2024

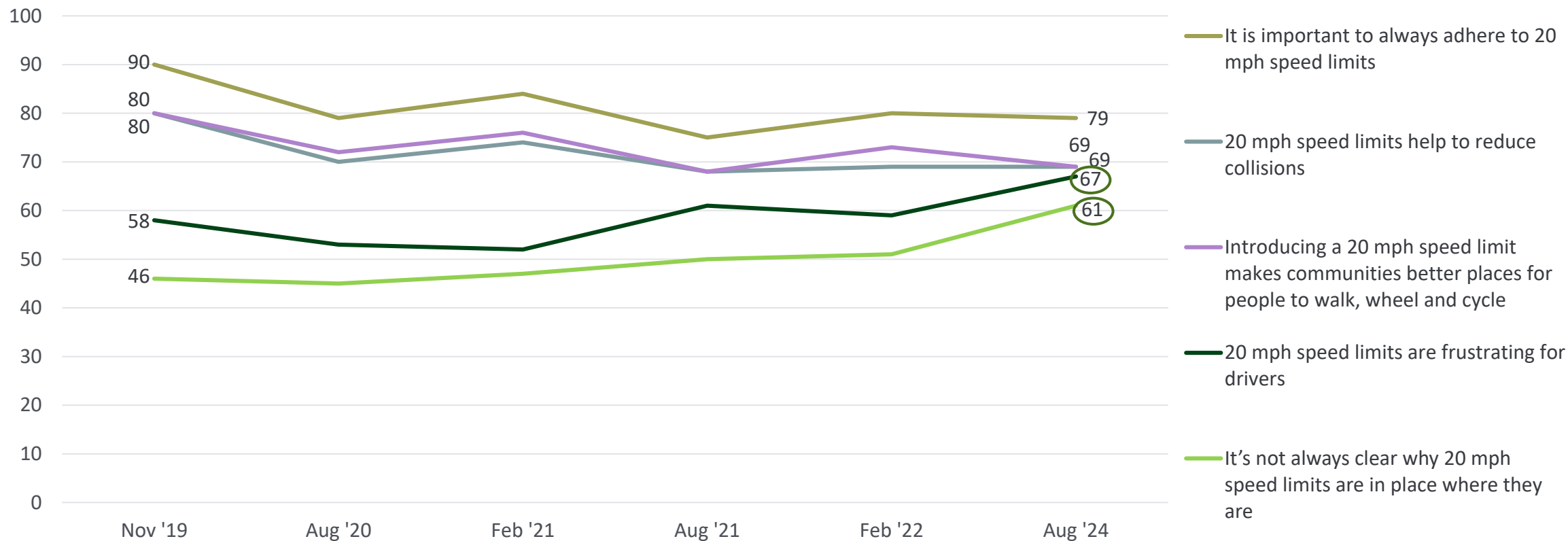


Q5. How serious do you think each of these are in terms of the risks to the safety of drivers, their passengers and/or other road users?



While drivers continue to agree that it's important to adhere to 20 mph speed limits and that these limits help to reduce collisions, in Aug '24, there was an increase in agreement that these limits can be frustrating for drivers, and that it's not always clear why these limits are in place. This may, in part, reflect the higher incidence of these speed limits.

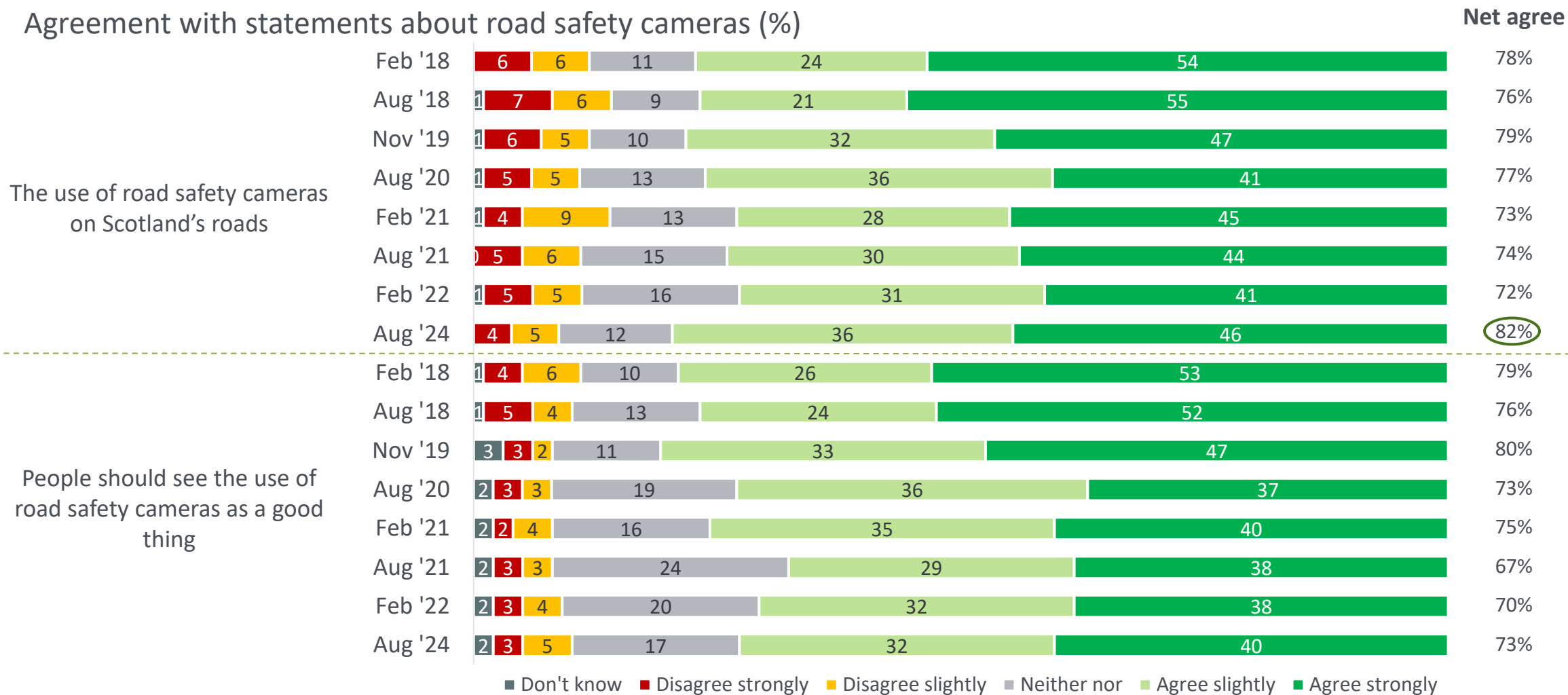
Agreement with statements about 20 mph speed limits (%)





Agreement with the use of cameras in general was at its highest level in Aug '24, giving some indication that drivers are becoming more positively predisposed to the use of these speed control measures. It is worth noting that during the fieldwork period, a public information campaign about safety cameras was active.

### Agreement with statements about road safety cameras (%)



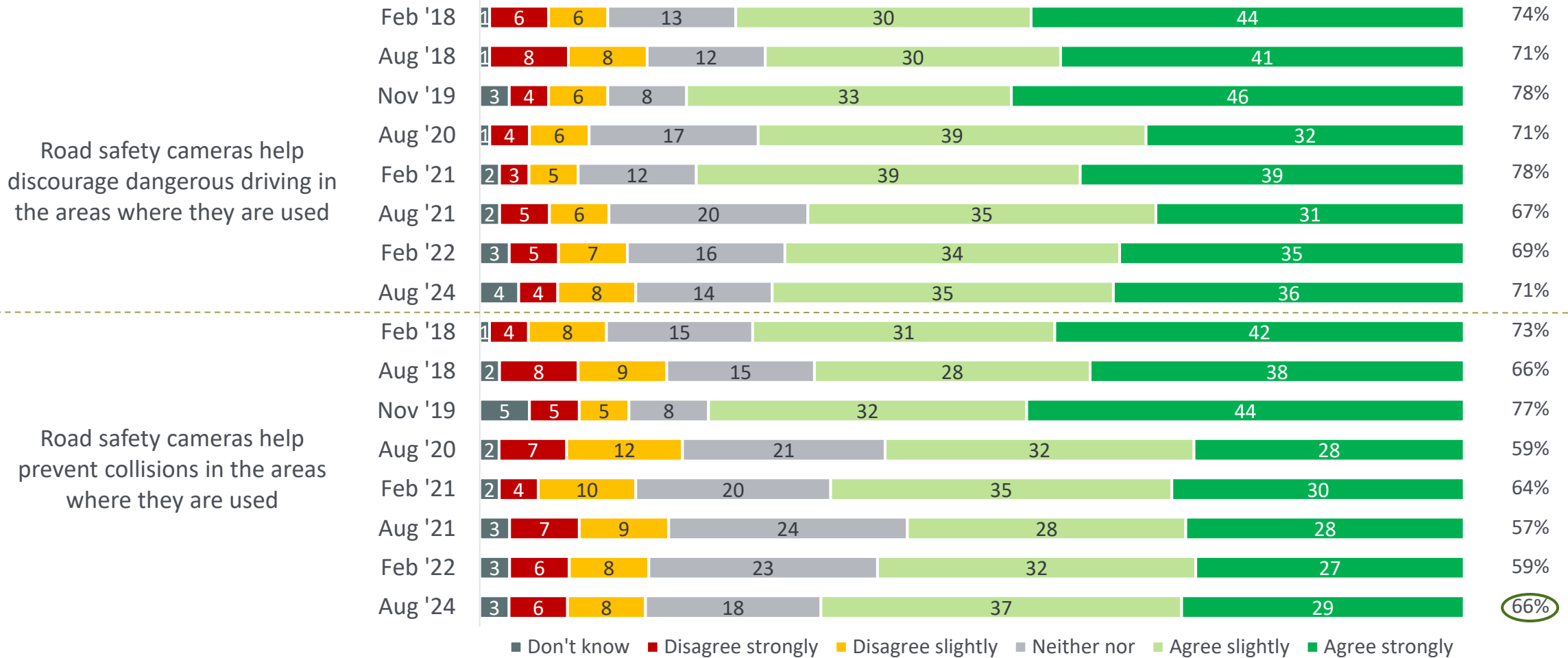
Q11. How much do you agree or disagree with the use of road safety cameras on Scotland's roads? Q12. Here are some statements people have made about road safety cameras in general, including both speed cameras and red traffic light cameras. For each one please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement



Most drivers continue to agree that road safety cameras help discourage dangerous driving and prevent collisions where they are used, but more supported the idea that they help prevent collisions in Aug '24.

Agreement with statements about road safety cameras (%)

Net agree



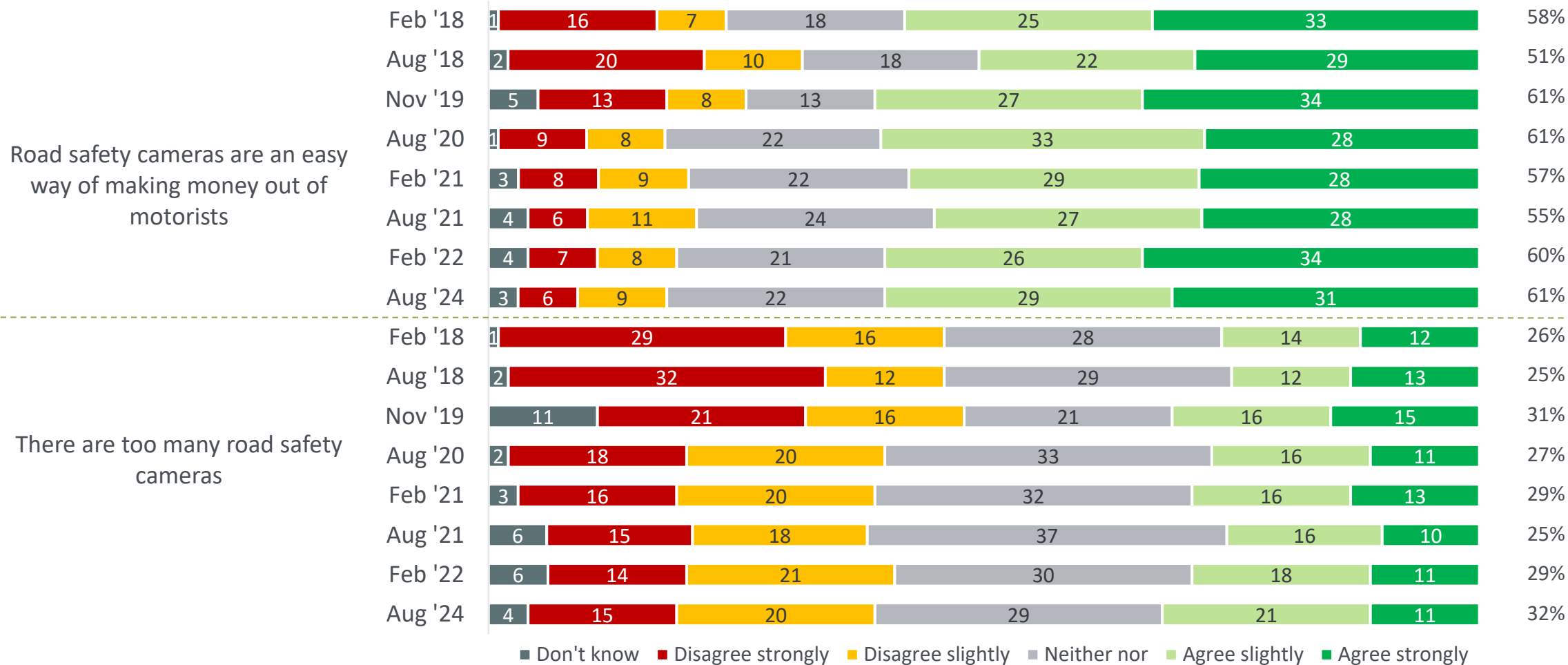
Q12. Here are some statements people have made about road safety cameras in general, including both speed cameras and red traffic light cameras. For each one please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement




Despite the positive associations with speed cameras, most drivers continue to feel they are an easy way of making money out of motorists. Opinion was split on whether there are too many speed cameras - drivers were equally likely to agree and disagree with this statement.

### Agreement with statements about road safety cameras (%)

Net agree



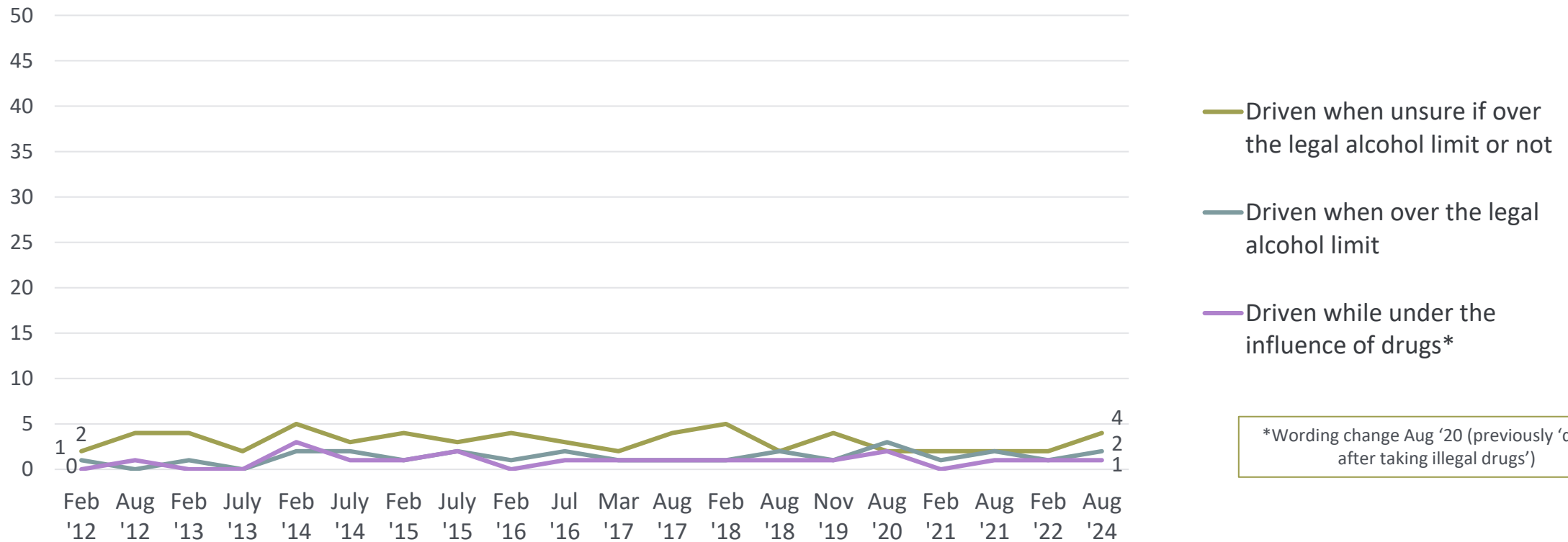
Q12. Here are some statements people have made about road safety cameras in general, including both speed cameras and red traffic light cameras. For each one please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement

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# Drink and drug driving

Only a very small minority of drivers admit to drink or drug driving. The trend remains consistent over time.

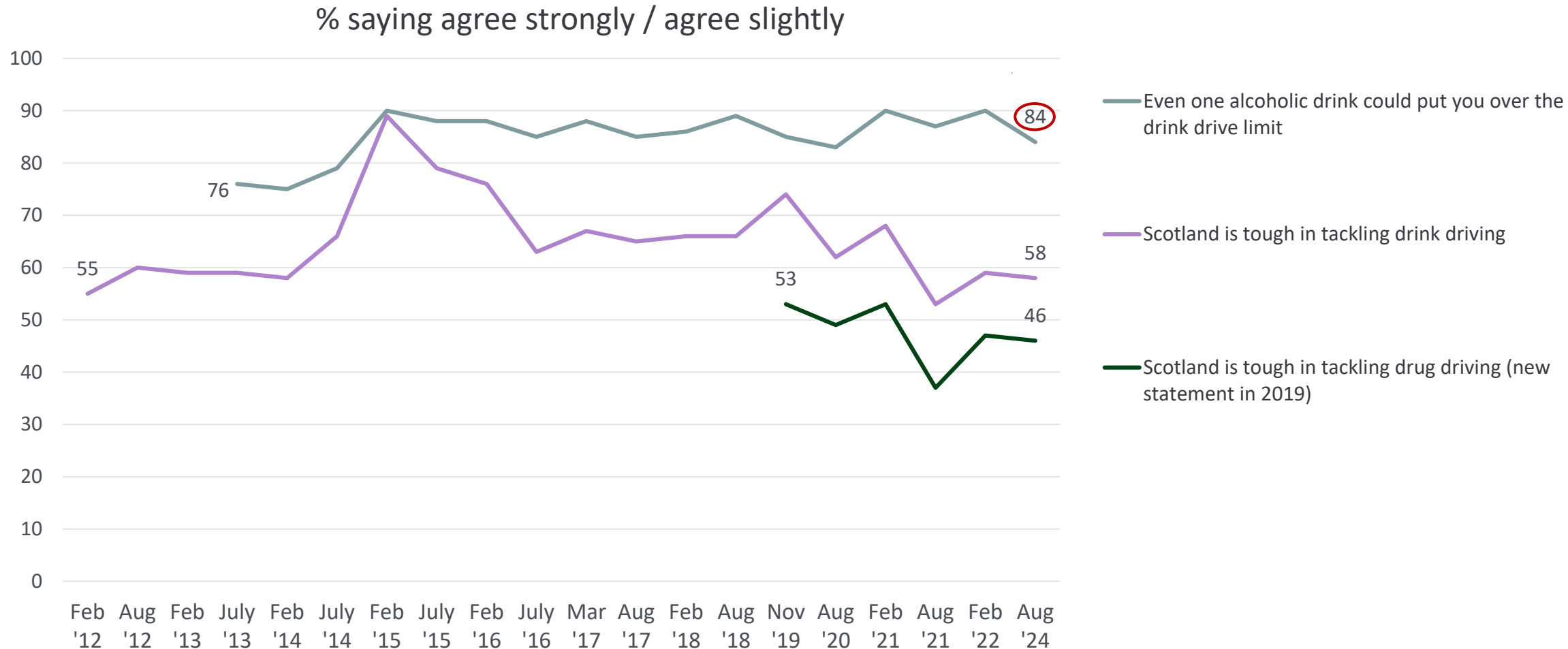
Drink and drug driving behaviours (%)



\*Wording change Aug '20 (previously 'driven after taking illegal drugs')



Findings in Aug '24 are consistent with Feb '22 in terms of Scotland being tough on drink and drug driving. Fewer drivers agree that one alcoholic drink could put someone over the drink drive limit compared to Feb '22, although this proportion has fluctuated between 83% to 90% since 2015.

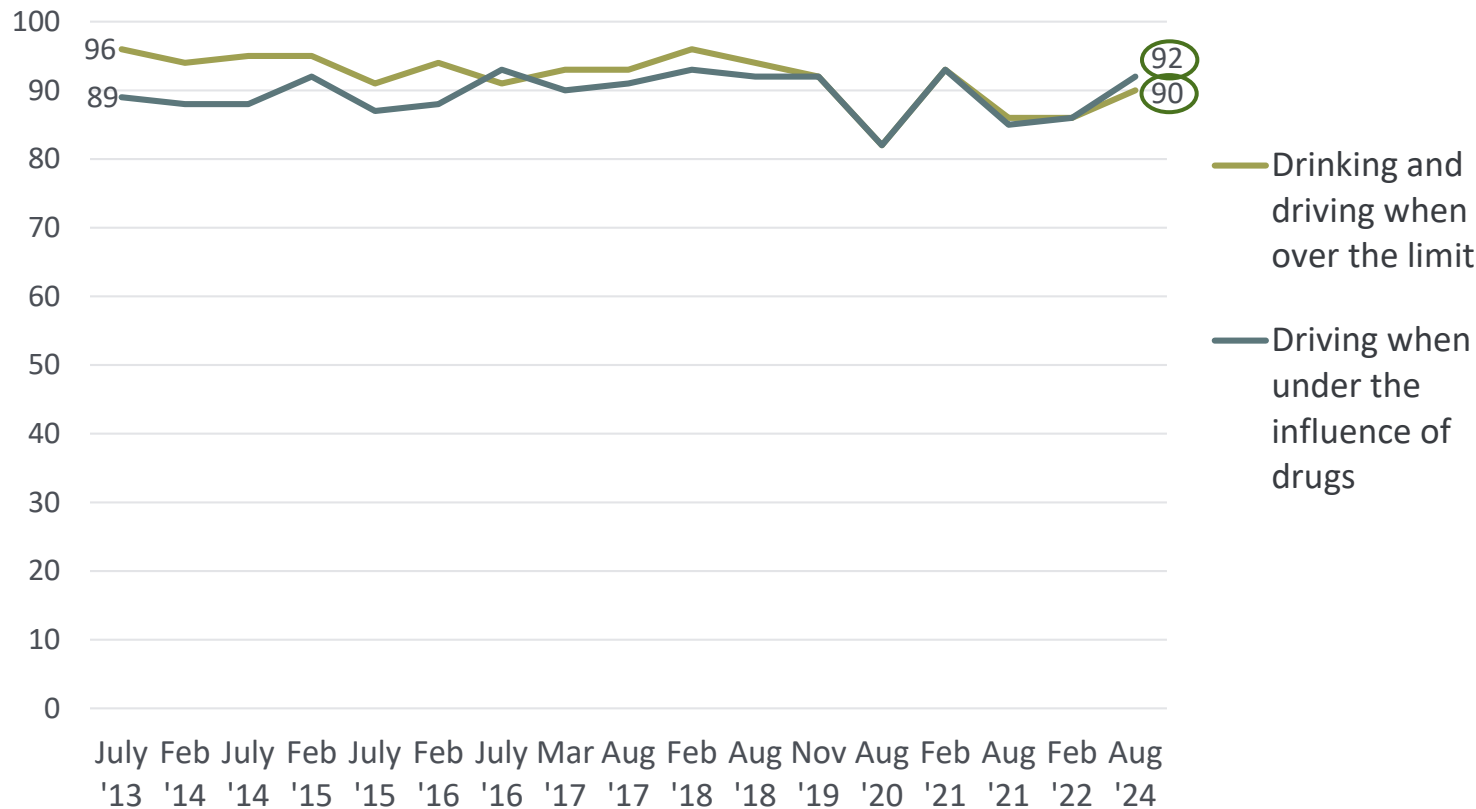


Q3. We are interested in your views about driving. You will now see some statements other people have made about this. How much do you agree or disagree with each?

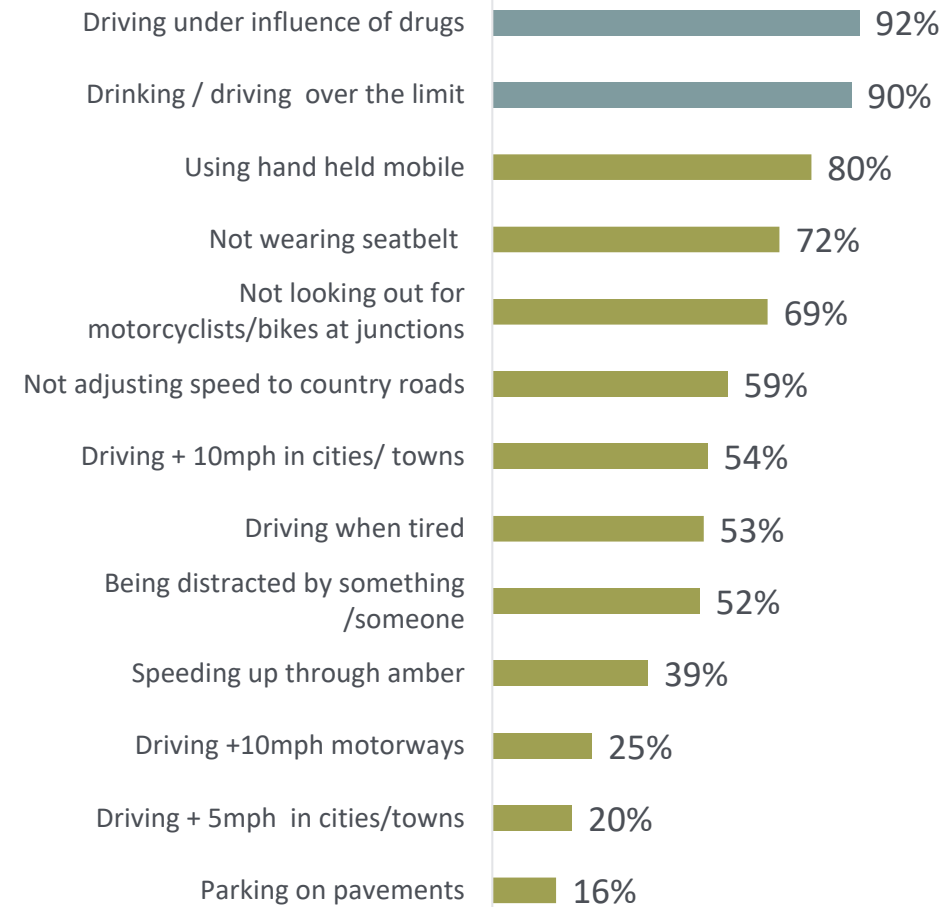



The proportion considering drink and drug driving to be very serious rose in Aug '24 compared with Feb '22 – these remain the most serious negative driving behaviours (around nine in 10 believing they are 'very serious' behaviours).

% rating drink/drug driving as 'very serious'



% rating 'very serious' across all behaviours – Aug 2024

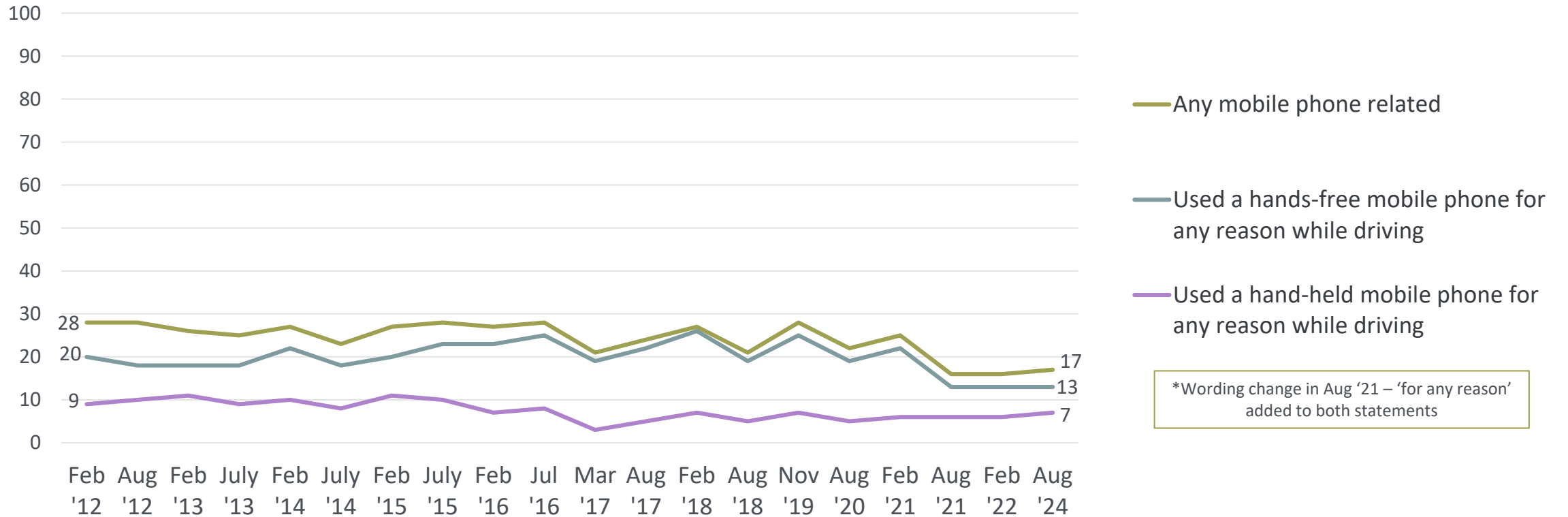


A vertical olive-green line is positioned to the left of the text.

# Mobile phones

Behaviours in relation to the use of mobile phones in cars have been consistent for the past few years. Around one in 6 (17%) use either a hands-free or hand-held mobile, with hands-free mobiles being more commonly used.

Mobile phone behaviours (%)

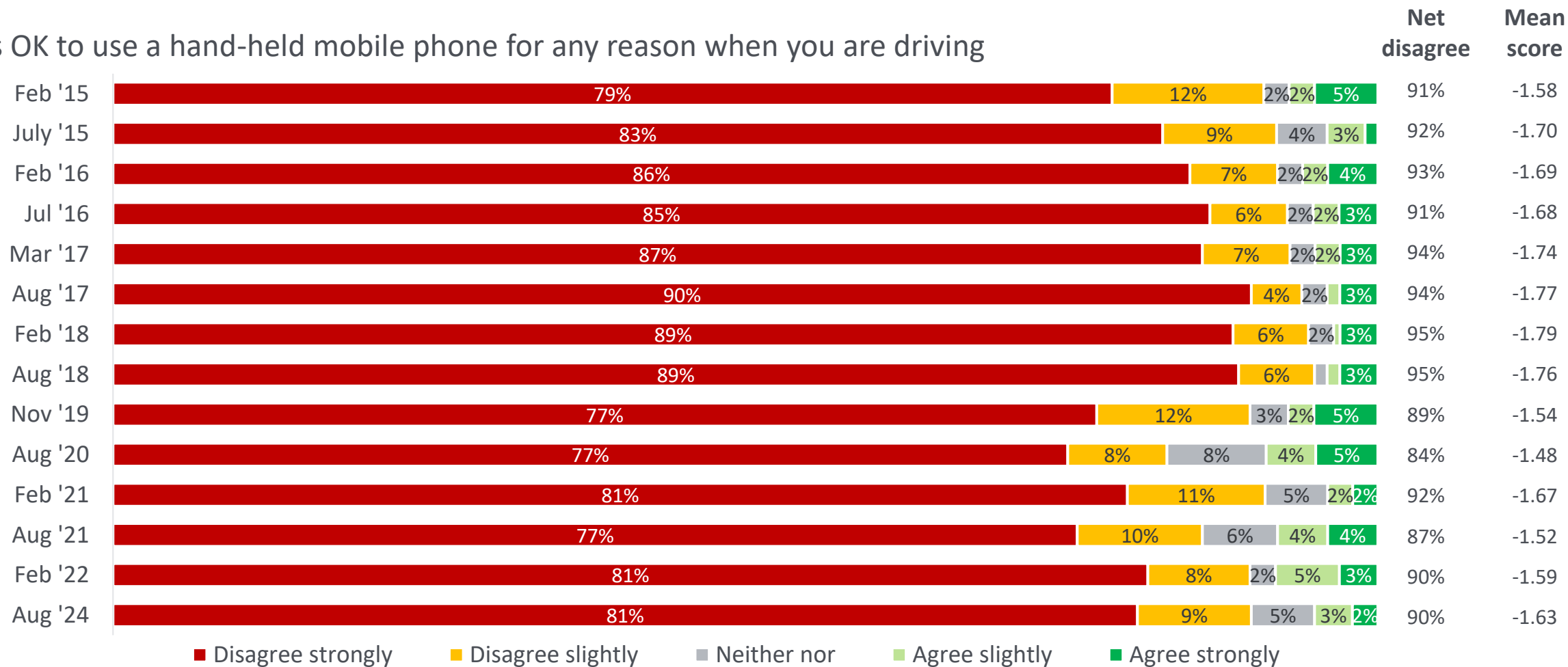


\*Wording change in Aug '21 – 'for any reason' added to both statements



Again, results regarding the acceptability of using a hand-held phone while driving are remarkably consistent over time – the majority strongly disagree with the premise.

It's OK to use a hand-held mobile phone for any reason when you are driving



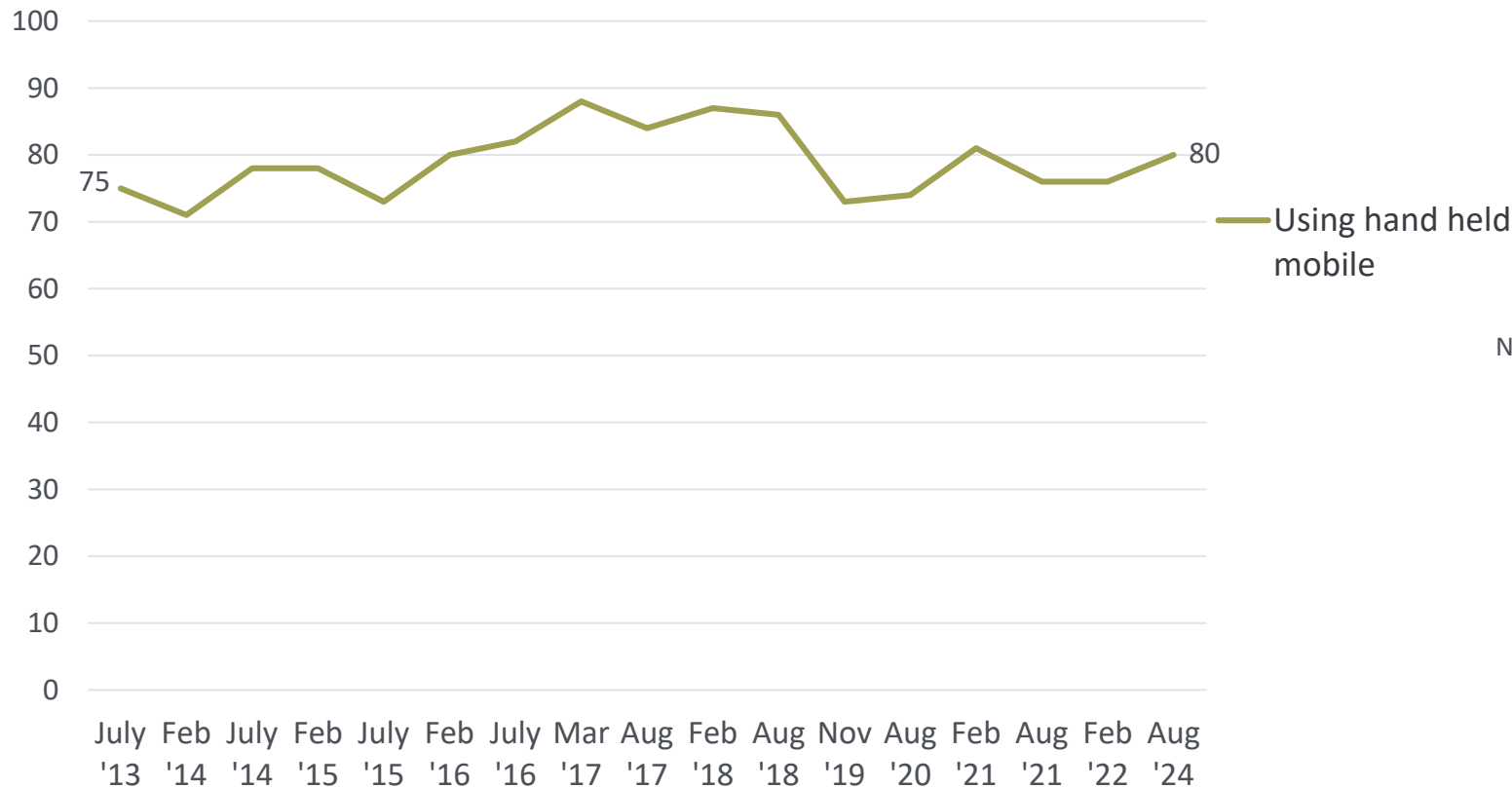
\*Wording change in Aug '21 – 'for any reason' added to statement

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.

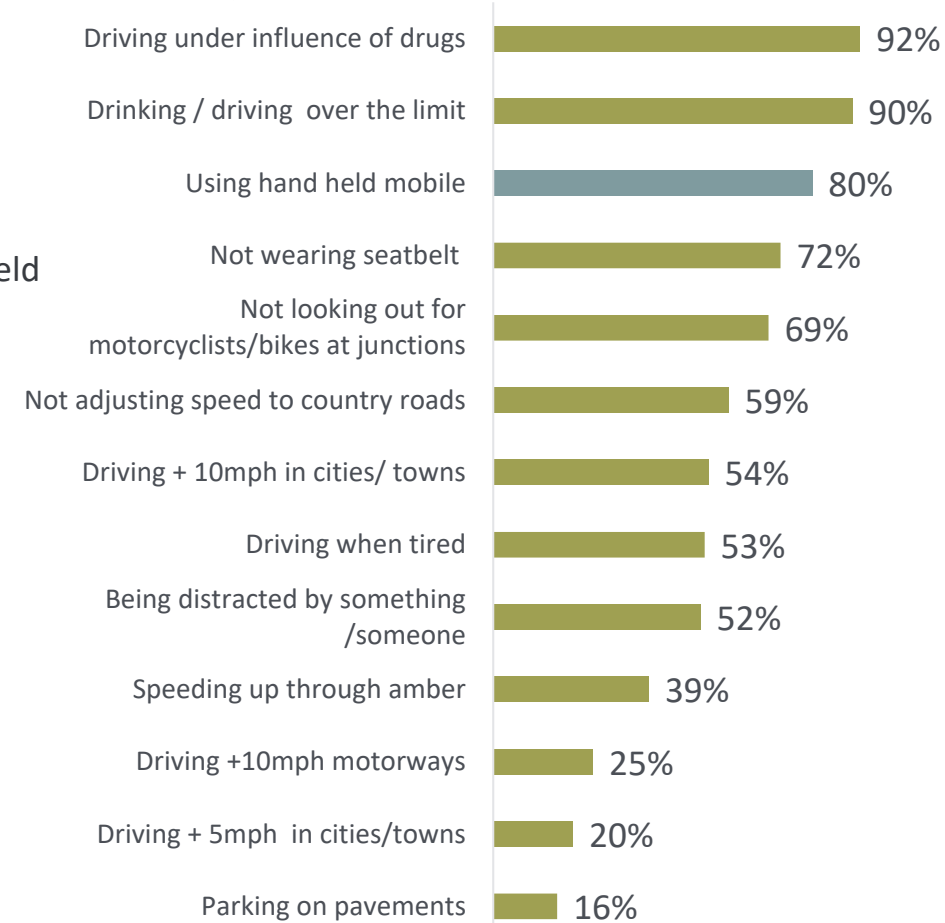
Base (all main W23): 508

Further evidencing the consistency in the results regarding use of mobile phones, it remains the third-most 'very serious' driving behaviour according to drivers (four in five consider it to be 'very serious').

% rating using a hand-held mobile phone for any reason as 'very serious'



% rating 'very serious' across all behaviours – Aug 2024

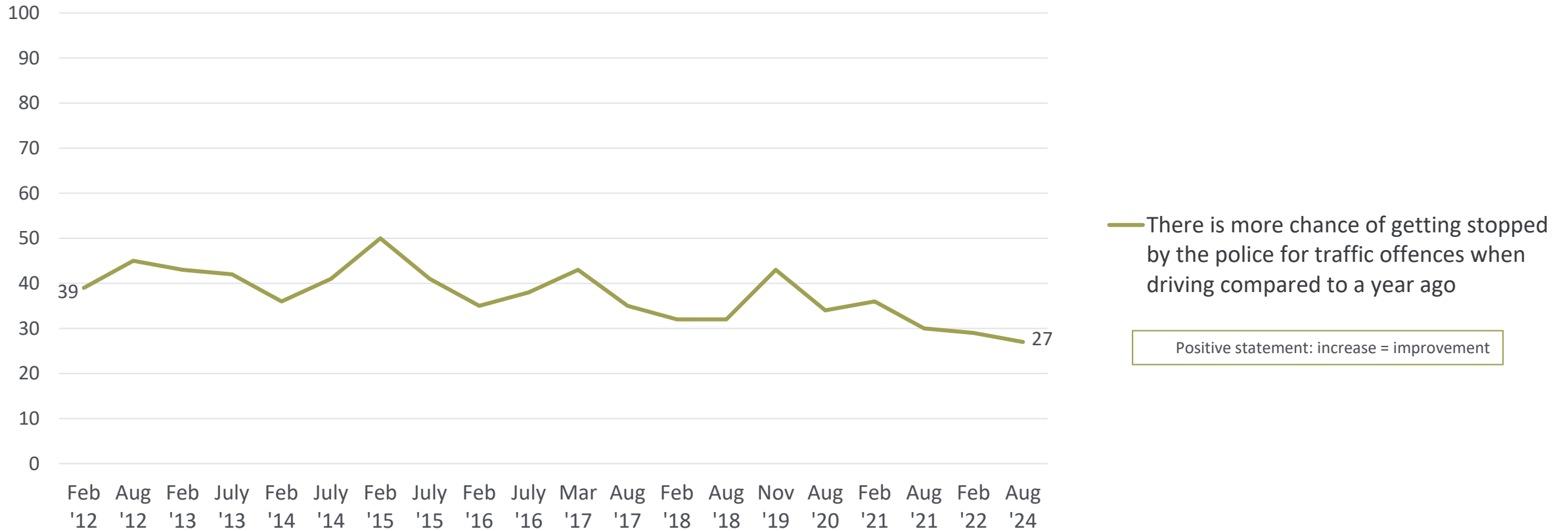


Base (all main W23): 508



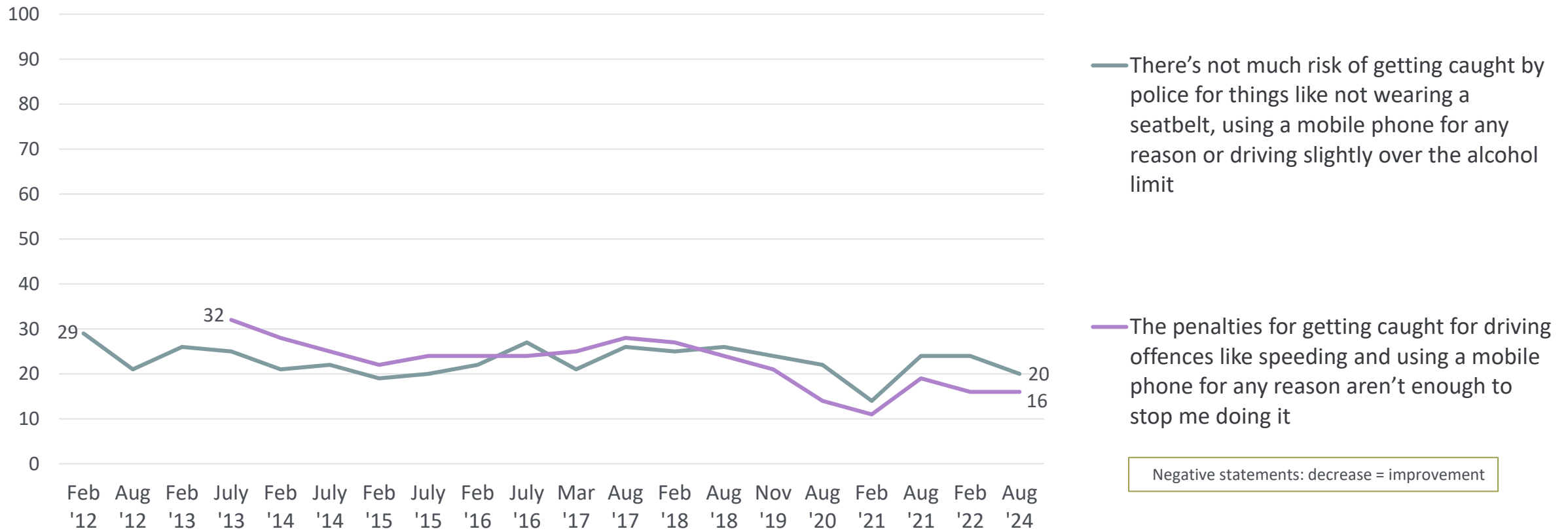
Results in Aug '24 are consistent with recent years of the study – around one in four agree there is more chance of getting stopped for traffic offences compared to a year ago. However, the longer-term downward trend in this perception continues (from 39% in 2012 to 27% in 2024), which is concerning.

% saying agree strongly / agree slightly



Results in Aug '24 for the statements about driving offences and mobile phones are consistent with recent years of the study. However, the longer-term downward trends here are positive, suggesting fewer drivers agree that there's not much risk of getting caught by the police for not wearing a seatbelt.

% saying agree strongly / agree slightly



Negative statements: decrease = improvement



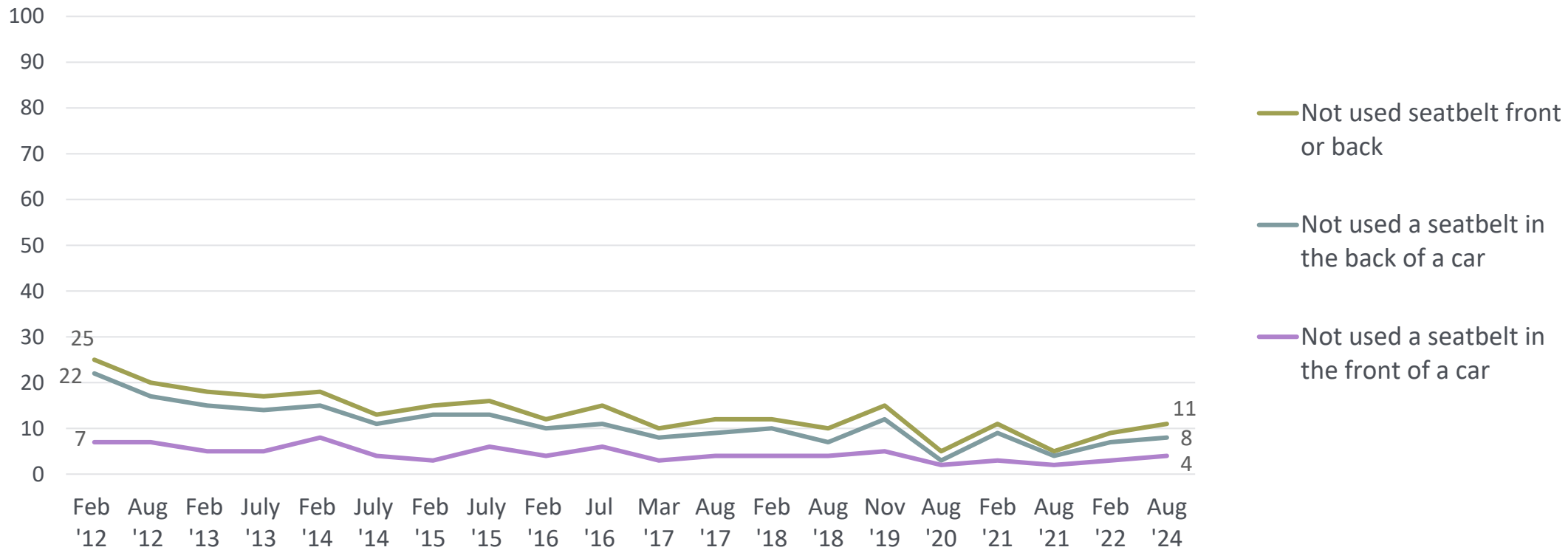
A vertical olive green line on the left side of the slide.

# Seatbelts



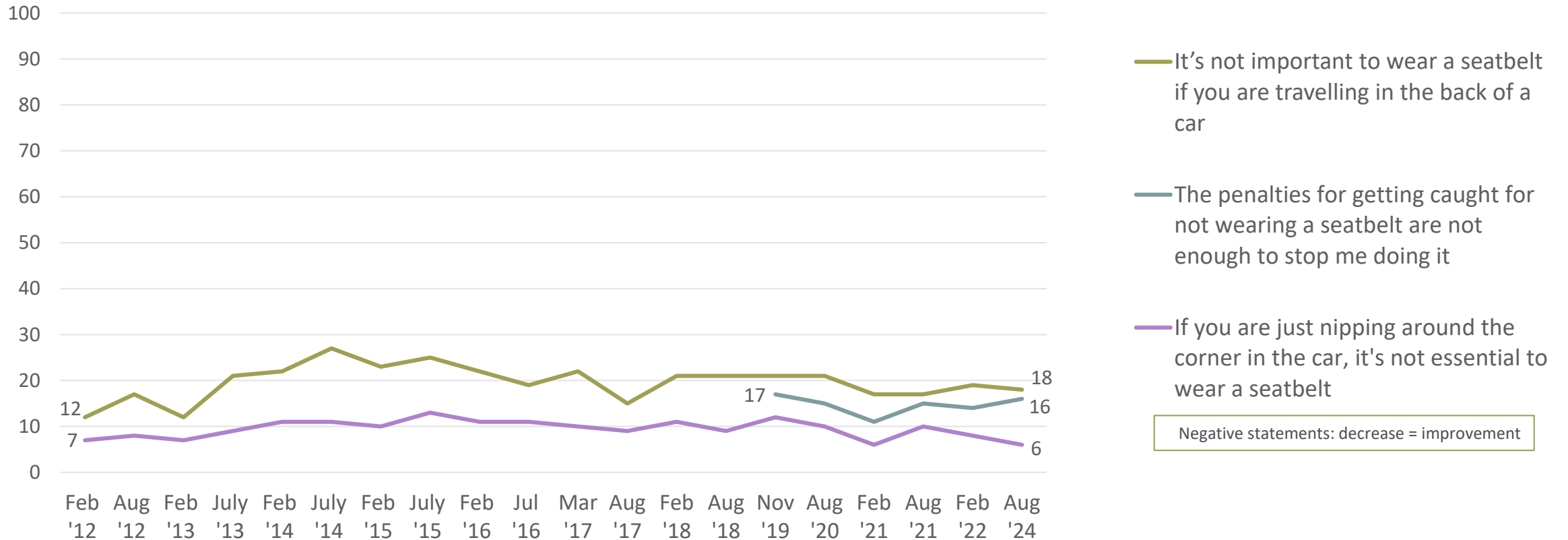
Although there were no differences in Aug '24 compared with Feb '22, the proportion of drivers reporting they have not used a seatbelt in the front or back of the car has increased since Aug '21. This trend will need to be monitored to ensure non-seatbelt use does not reach the levels observed in the early years of the study.

% claiming seatbelt behaviours



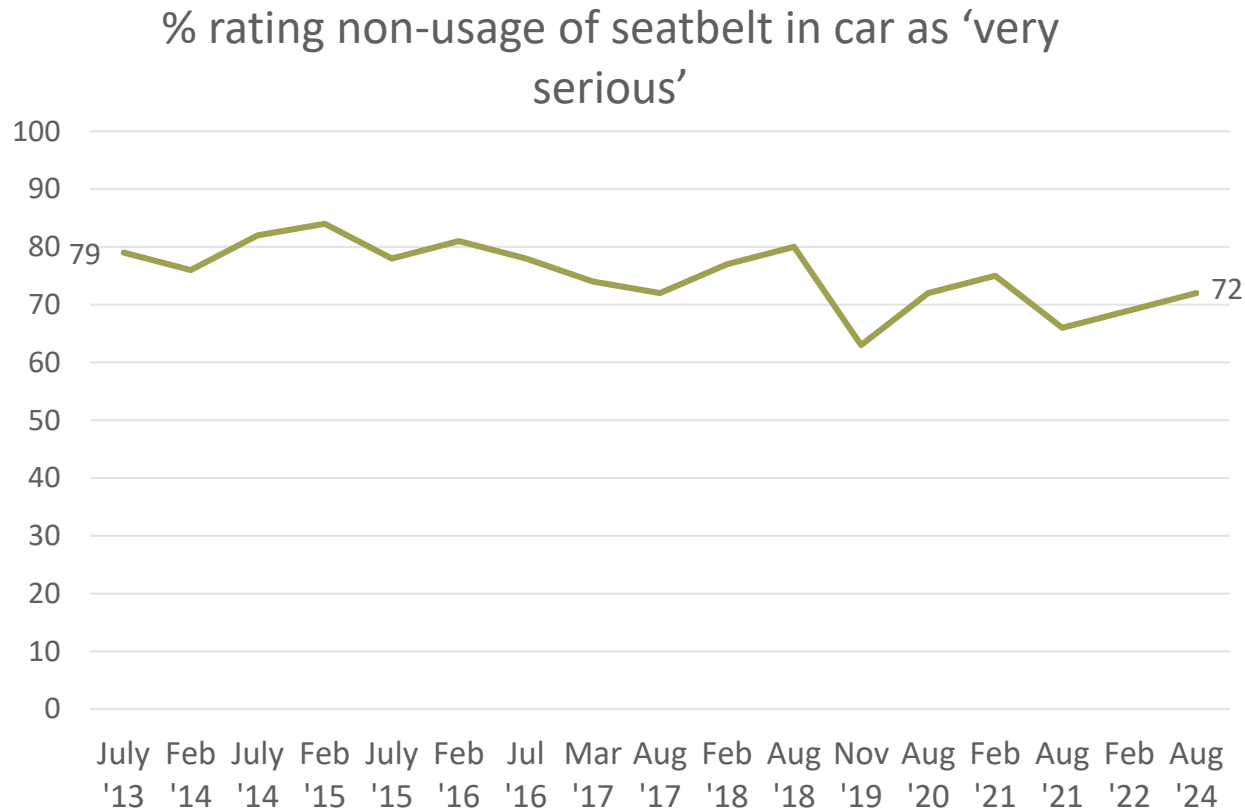
Agreement with statements about not wearing a seatbelt was generally low, although around one in five drivers continue to agree that it's not important to wear a seatbelt in the back of a car. Findings in Aug '24 are consistent with previous waves.

% saying agree strongly/agree slightly

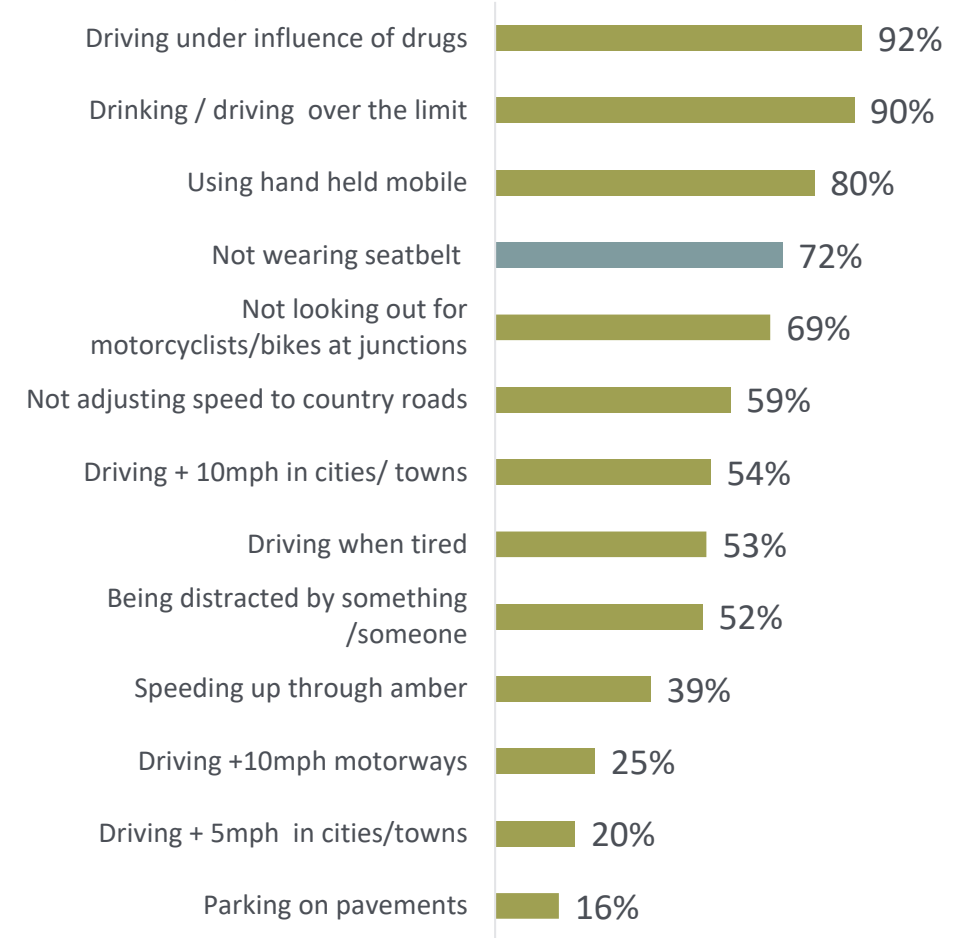




Just under three quarters of drivers describe not wearing a seatbelt in a car as very serious. It was considered the fourth-most serious driving behaviour in Aug '24, as it has been for the past few years of the study.



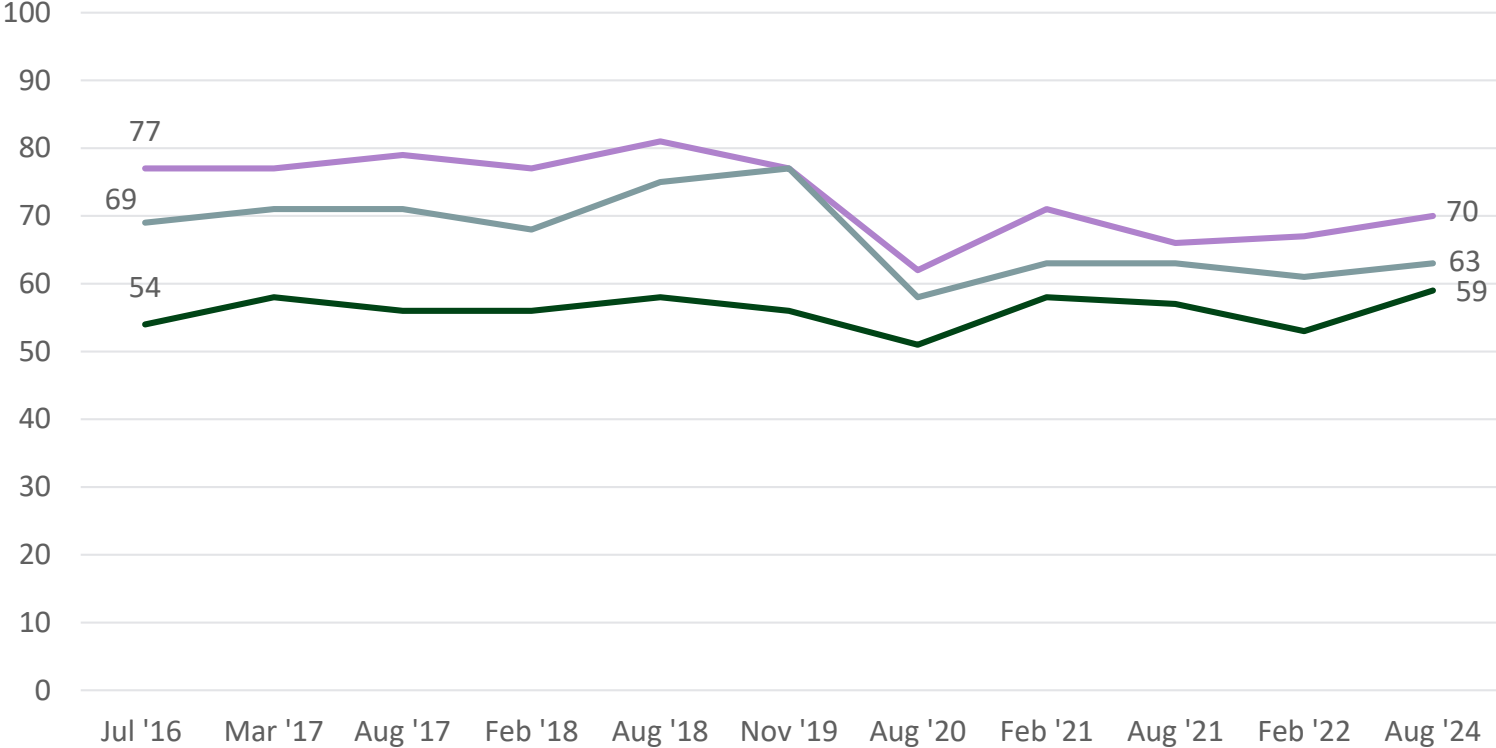
**% rating 'very serious' across all behaviours – Aug 2024**



# Vulnerable road users

Findings in Aug '24 were consistent with recent years of the study, with most drivers reporting they always accommodate vulnerable road users in different driving situations.

% who always....



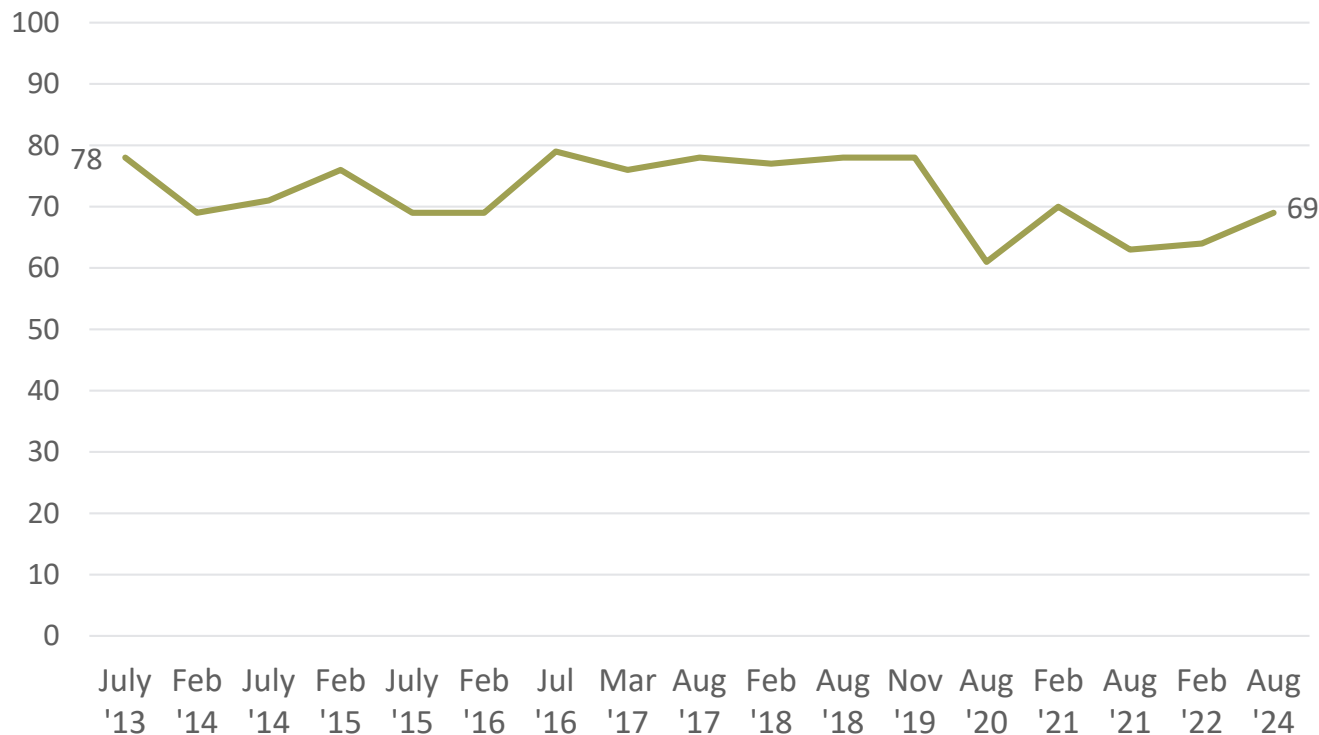
- Make sure you check for pedestrians at junctions or when turning a corner\*
- Make sure you check for people on pedal or electric bikes at junctions or when turning a corner\*
- Give a gap of at least 1.5m when passing people on pedal or electric bikes\*\*

\*'Or when turning a corner' added to statements in Aug 2024  
 \*\*Statement changed from 'car's width' to 1.5 metres in Nov 2019



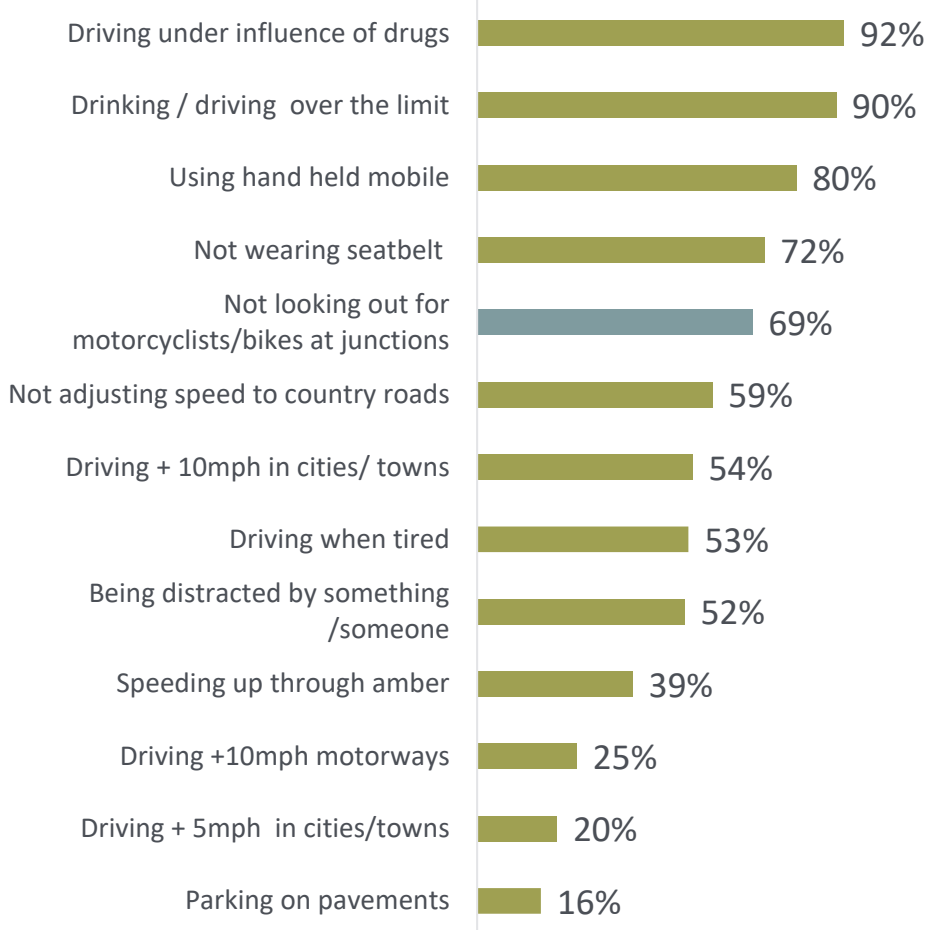
Around two-thirds of drivers consider not looking out for motorcyclists/people on pedal or electric bikes at junctions to be ‘very serious’ – this is broadly consistent with recent waves of the study but is lower than results prior to Aug '20 (when over three-quarters considered this behaviour to be ‘very serious’).

% rating not looking out for motorcyclists/people on pedal or electric bikes at junctions as ‘very serious’\*

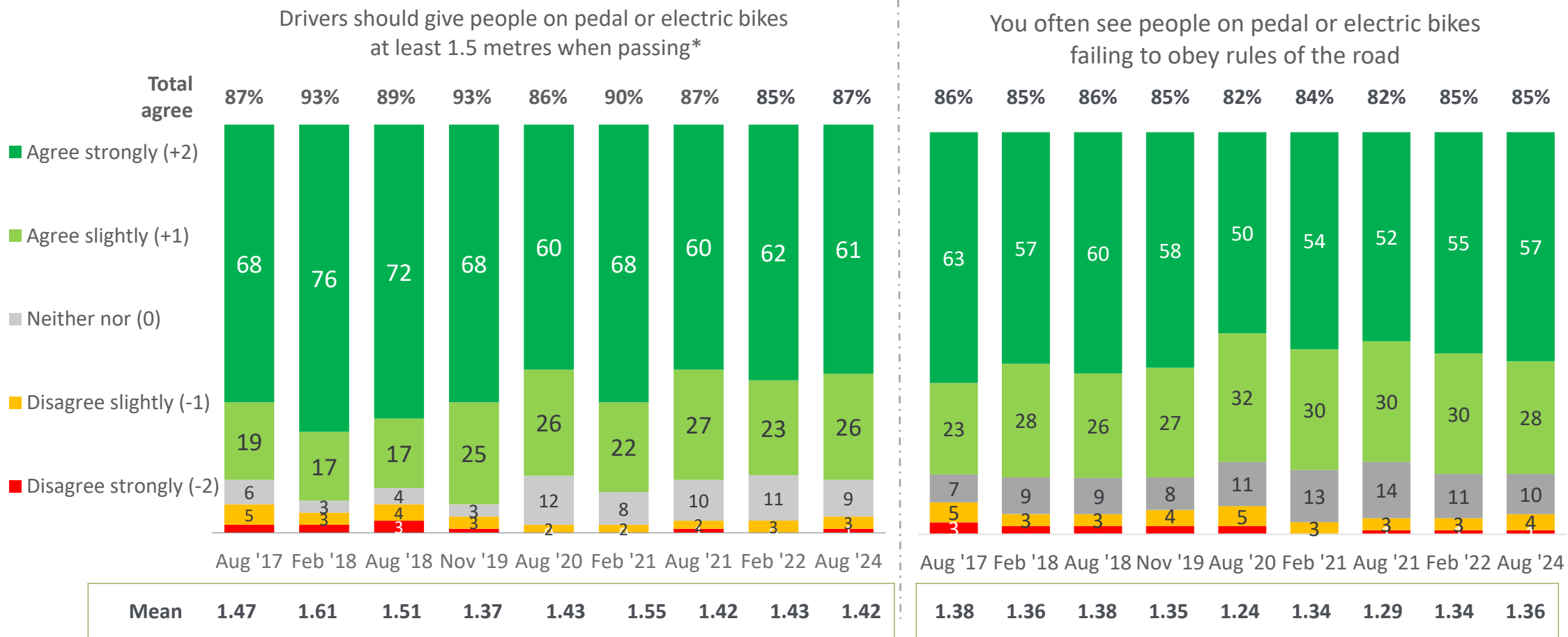


\* Electric bikes added to statements in Nov 2019.

% rating ‘very serious’ across all behaviours – Aug 2024



Most drivers agree that they should give people on pedal/electric bikes 1.5 metres and that people on pedal/electric bikes fail to obey the rules of the road. This is consistent with findings in recent waves, although the proportion that strongly agree with the statement about safe passing cyclists has decreased over the longer term.

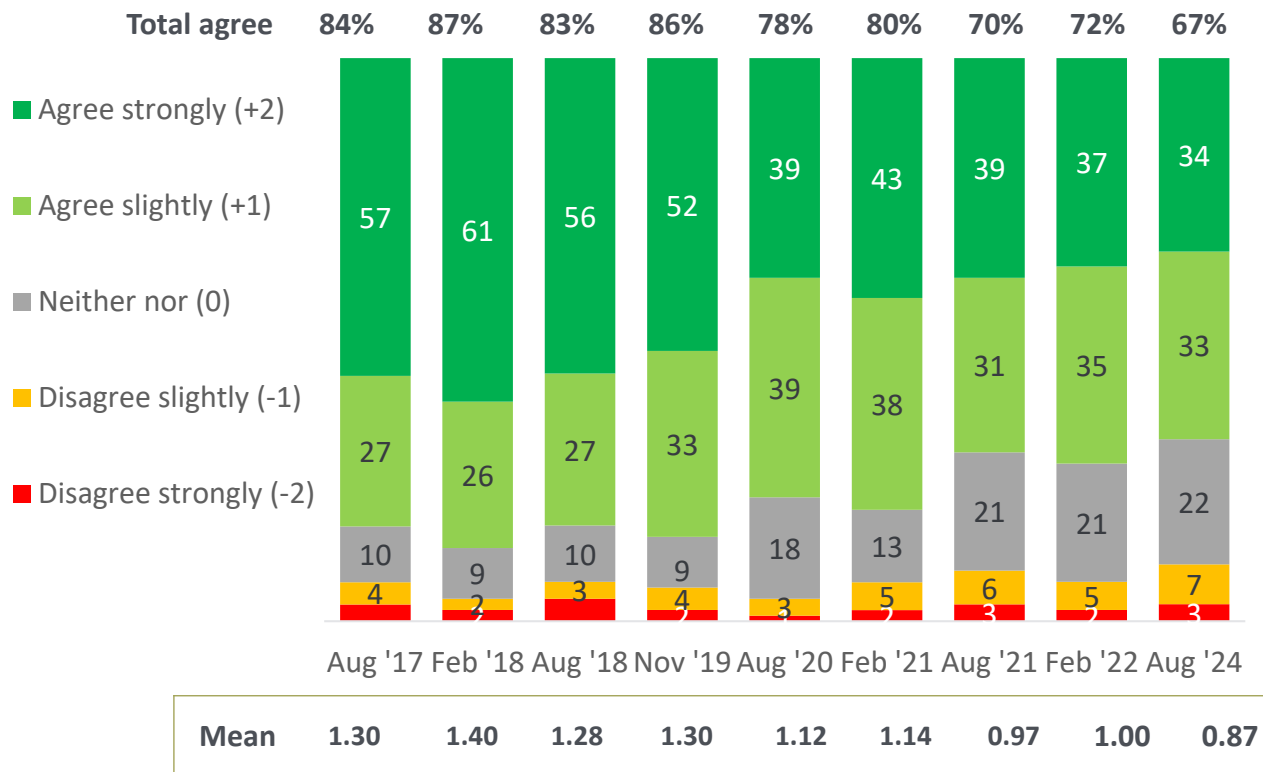


\* Electric bikes added, and distance changed from 'car's width' to 1.5 metres in Nov 2019.



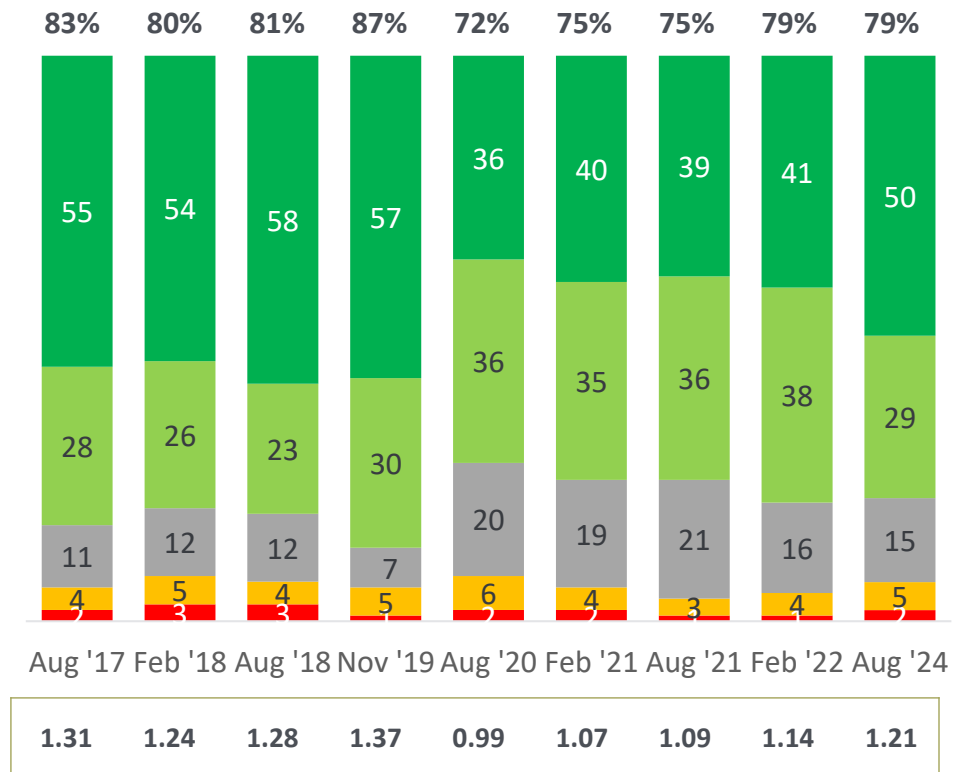
Although most agree that both drivers and people cycling should be more considerate of each other, respondents were more likely to agree that people cycling should show more consideration to drivers than vice-versa. The gap in agreement between both statements is at its highest in Aug '24.

Drivers need to show more consideration to people on pedal or electric bikes



\* Electric bikes added to statements in Nov 2019.

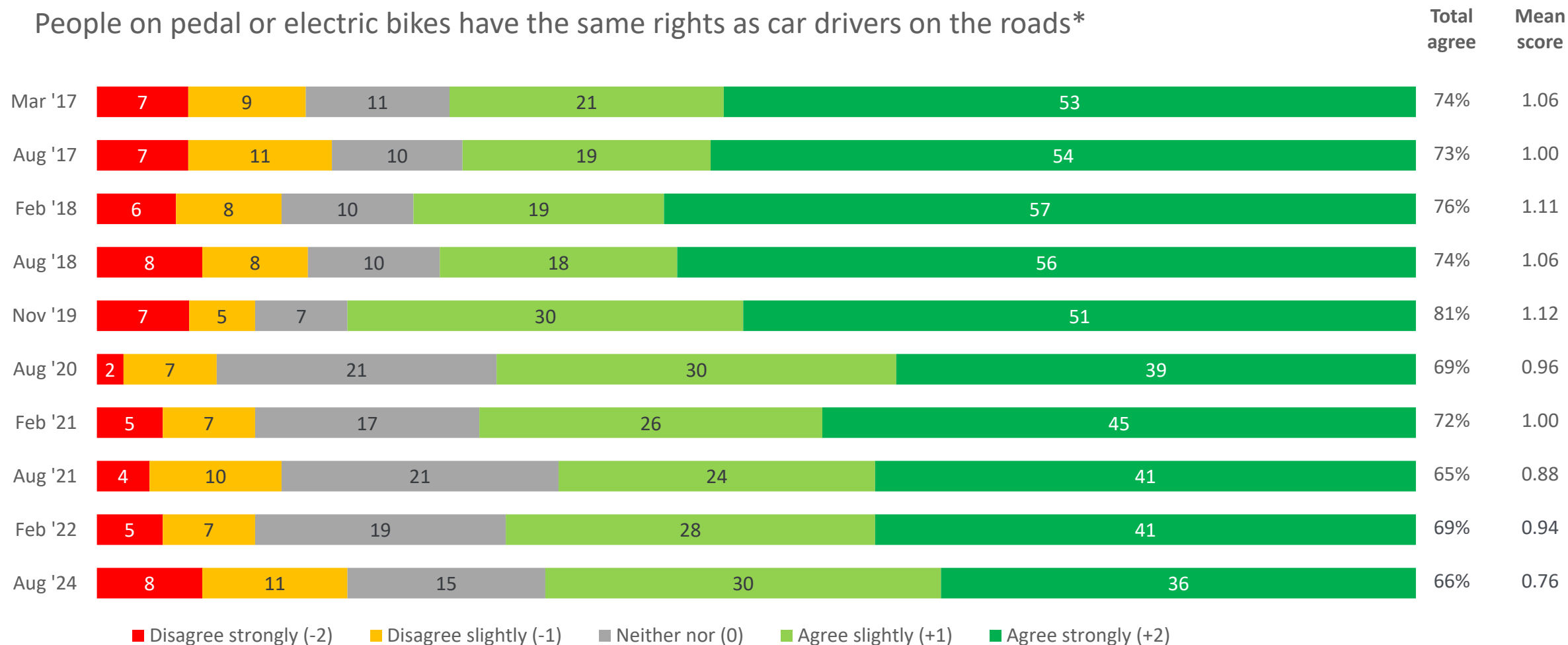
People on pedal or electric bikes need to show more consideration to drivers





Although results in Aug '24 were consistent with recent waves (roughly two thirds agree with the sentiment that people on bikes have the same rights as cars on the roads). However, significantly more actively disagree with the statement (up to 19% in Wave 23).

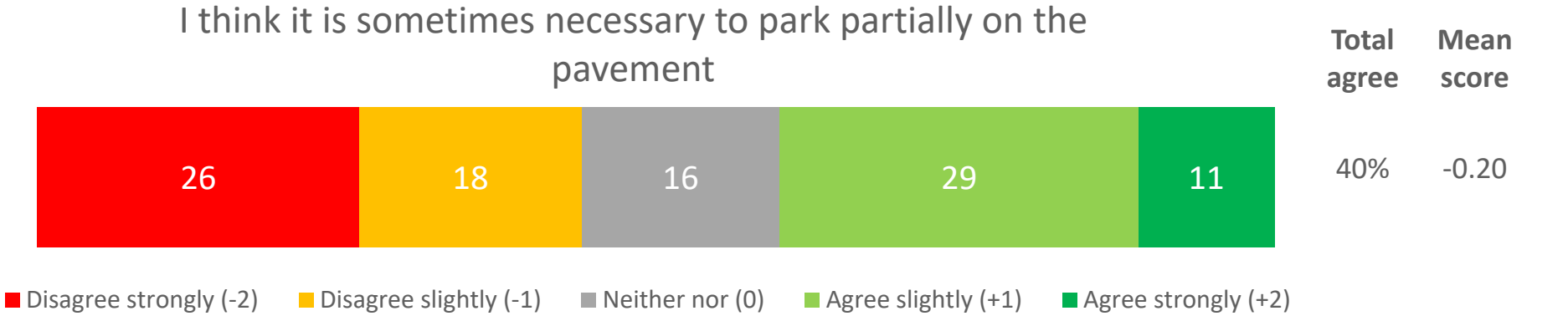
People on pedal or electric bikes have the same rights as car drivers on the roads\*



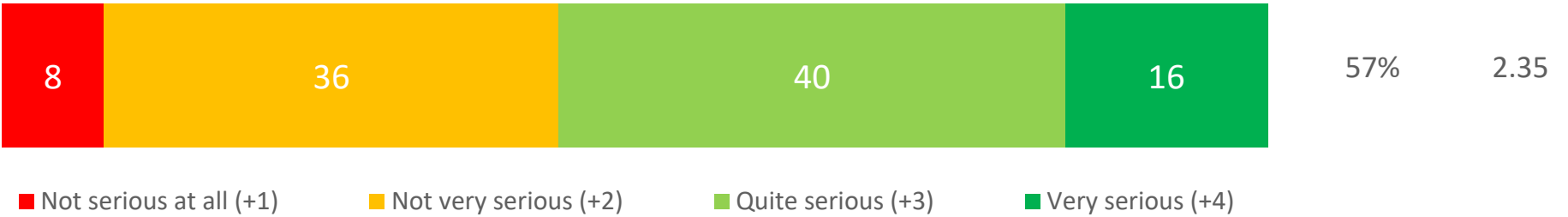
\* Electric bikes added to statements in Nov 2019.

Pavement parking is a fairly common driving behaviour – a quarter of drivers reported having done this over the last 12 months. There were mixed views on its acceptability - two in five think it is sometimes necessary to park on the pavement and a similar proportion think it is not a serious driving behaviour.

25% of drivers reported they had pavement parked in last 12 months



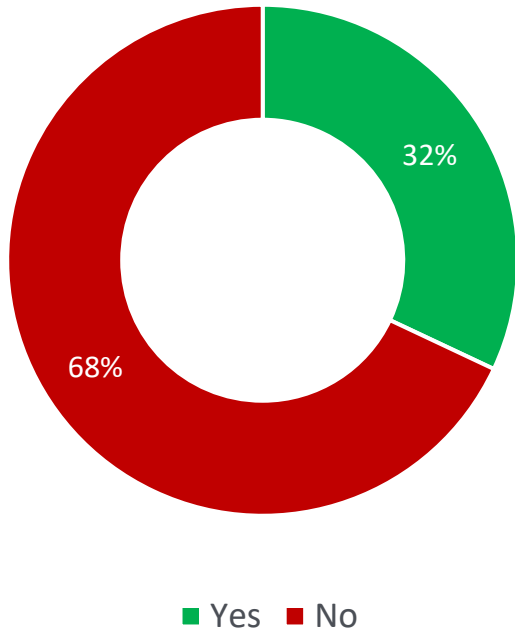
Seriousness of parking on pavements to the safety of drivers and other road users



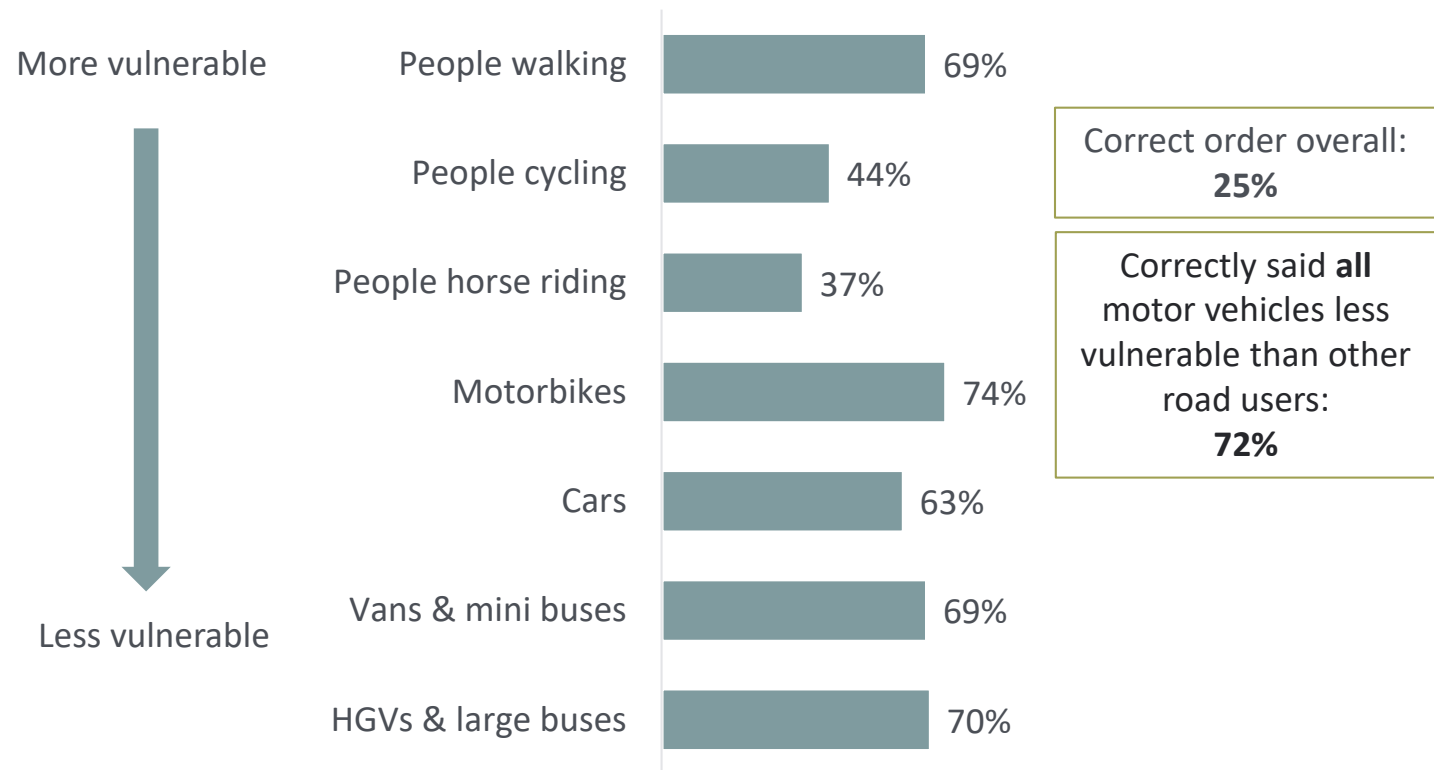
Q3. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.  
 Q5. How serious do you think each of these are in terms of the risks to the safety of drivers, their passengers and/or other road users?  
 Q6. Which of the following have you done at all in the last 12 months, even if only on one occasion or for a short distance?

Overall, one in three drivers have heard of the hierarchy of road users. Relatively few correctly predicted the order of the hierarchy, although this mainly reflected the high proportion of drivers that switched the order of people cycling/horse riding. Most believe motor vehicles to be less vulnerable than other road users.

Proportion of drivers that have heard of the hierarchy of road users



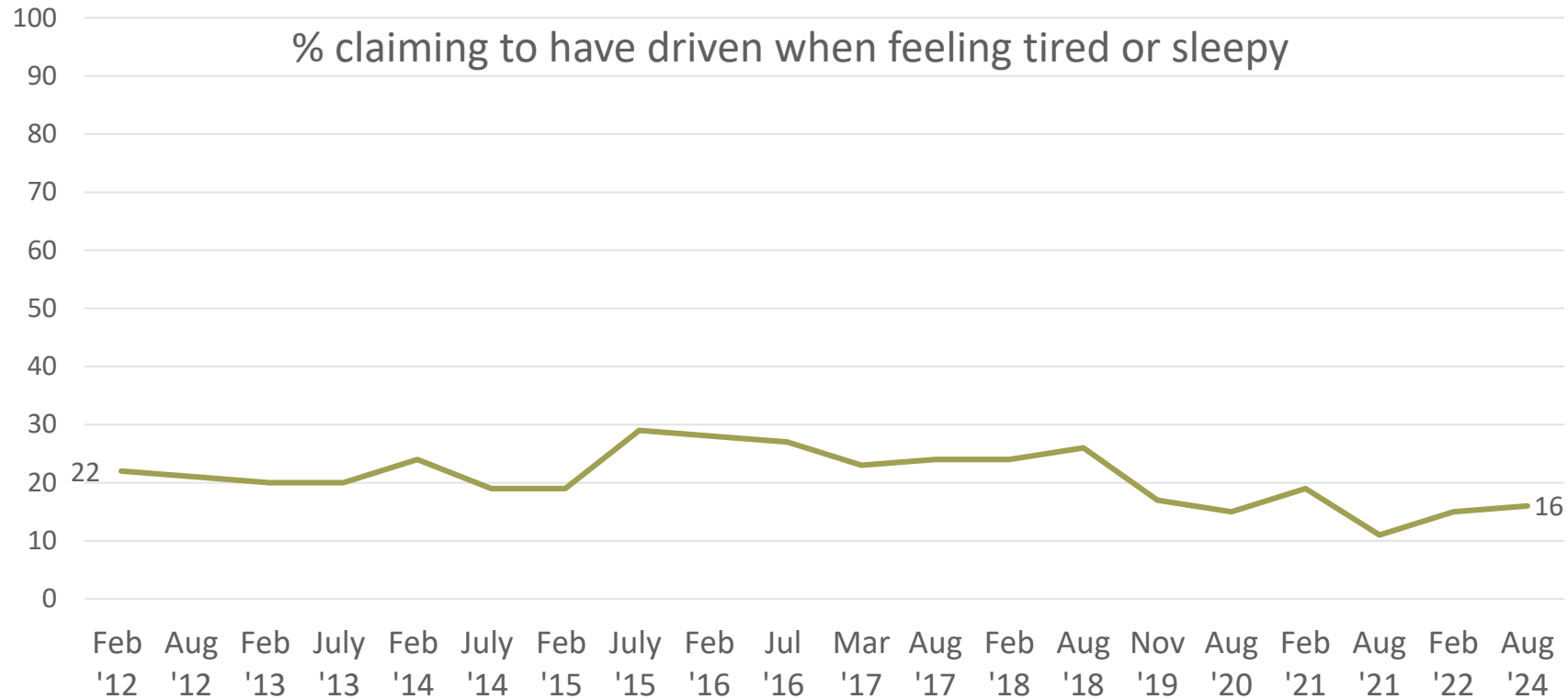
Proportion of drivers that placed each category in the correct position in the hierarchy



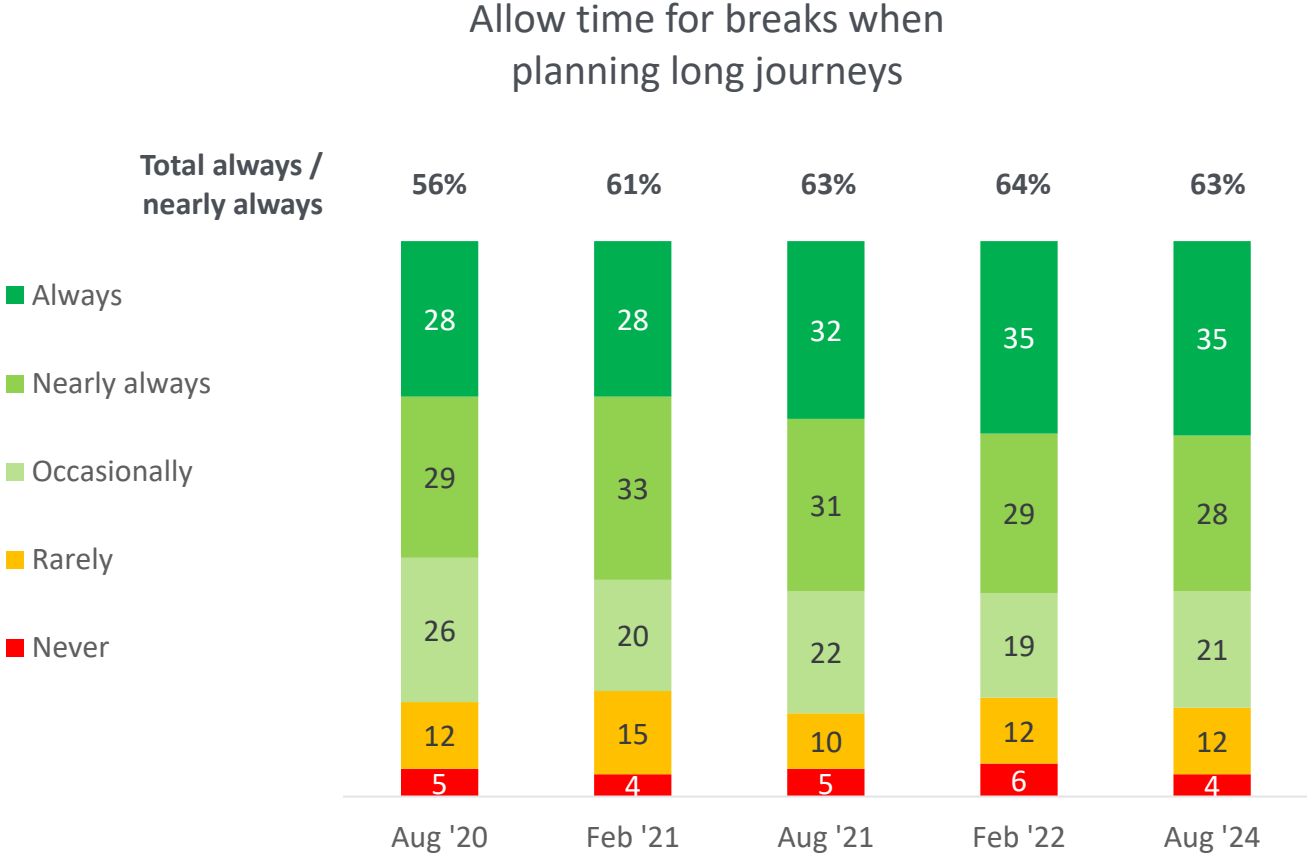
Distractions / health /  
age / fatigue / safety



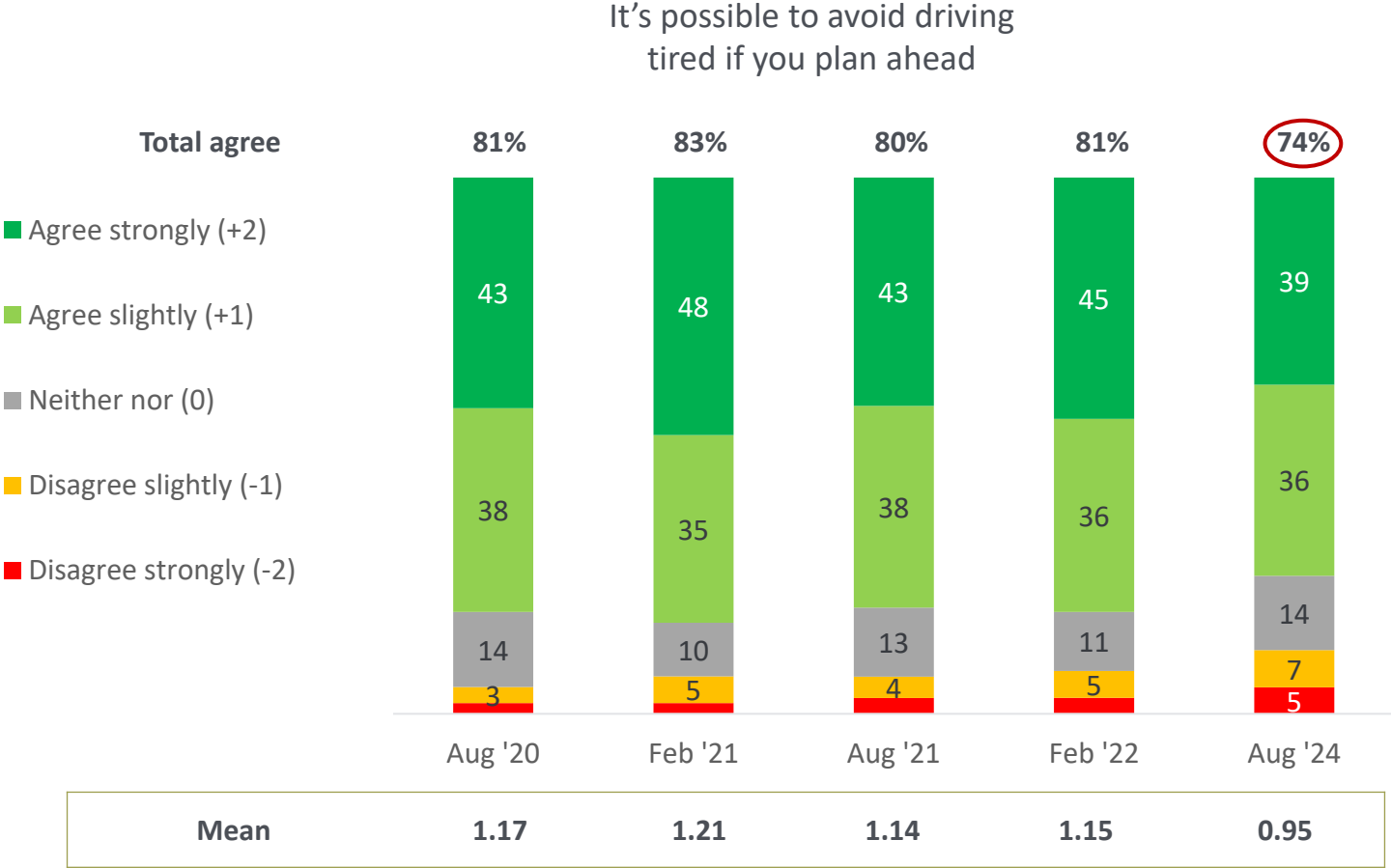
Around one in seven reported that they have driven when feeling sleepy or tired in the last year. This figure is consistent with findings in recent waves of the study.



Most drivers plan breaks during long journeys, and the proportion that always, or nearly always do so, has been consistently just over six in ten since Feb '21.



Despite most agreeing that it is possible to avoid driving tired if you plan ahead, the proportion agreeing fell to its lowest level in Aug '24.

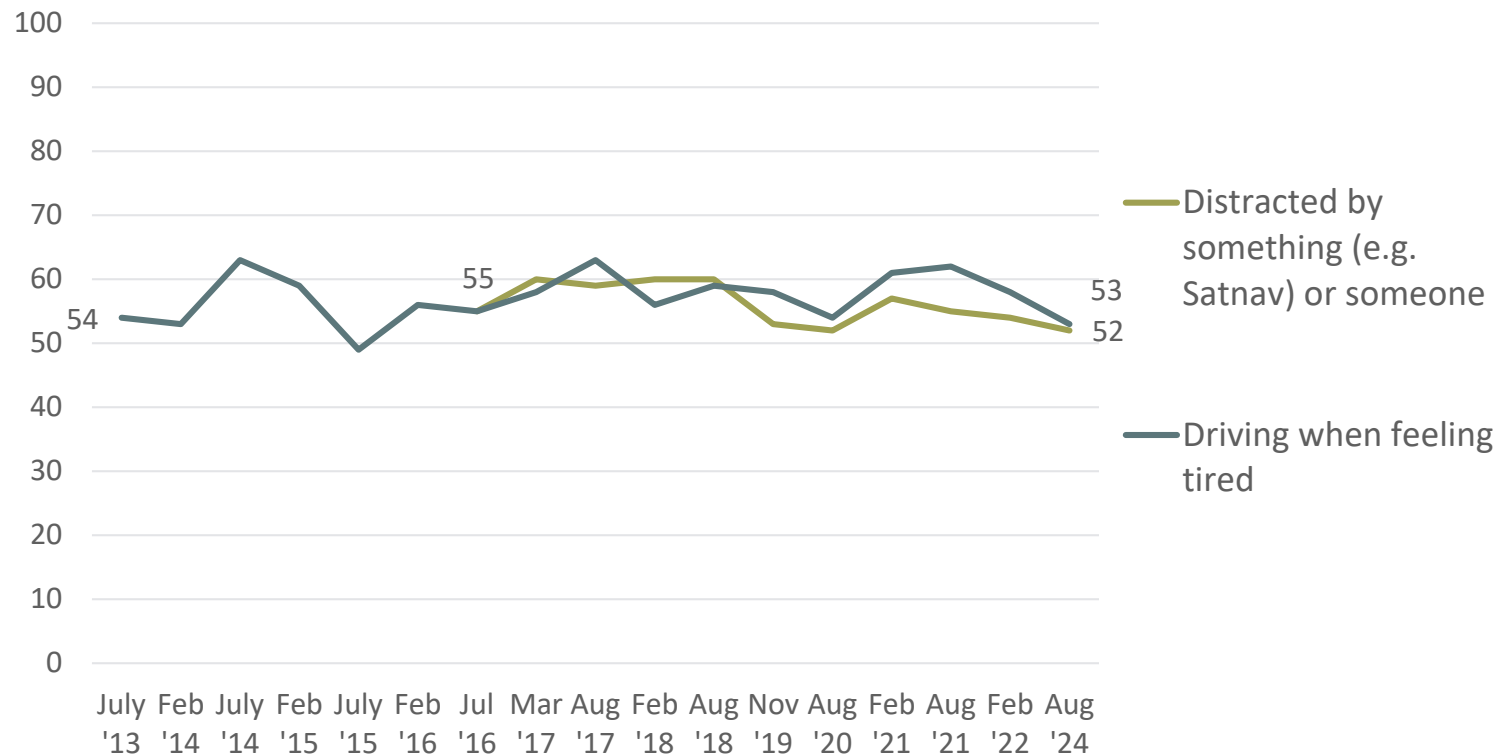




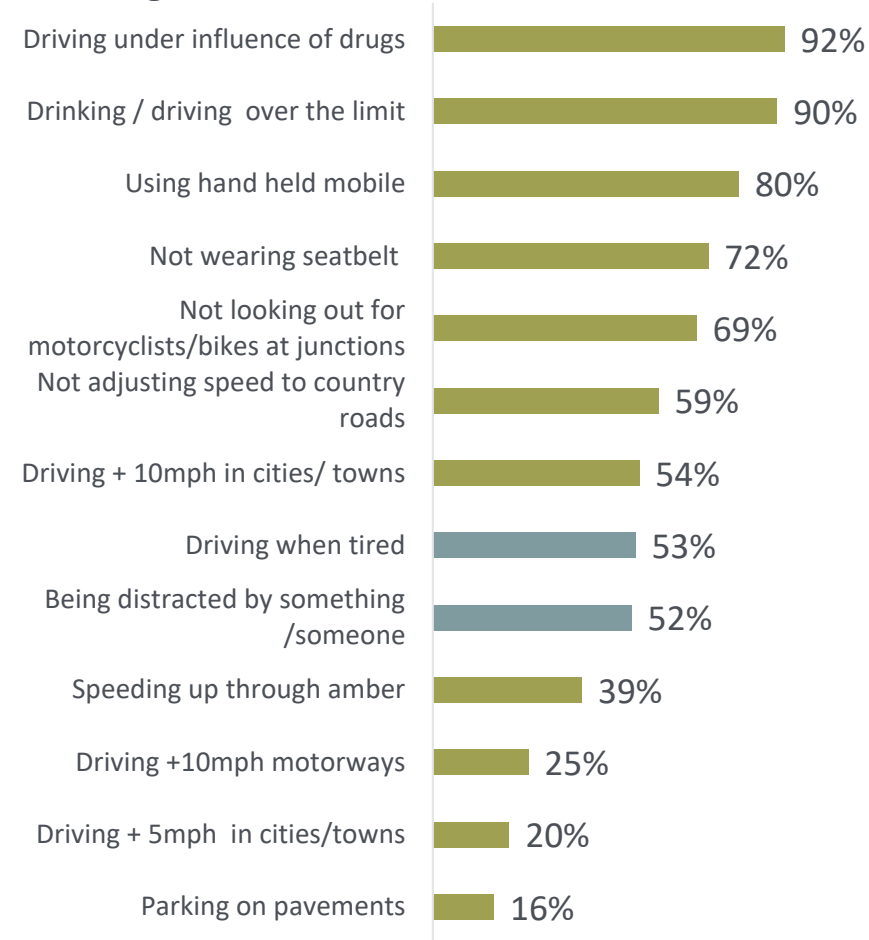


Around half of drivers consider the risk of losing concentration (either through tiredness or distraction) a ‘very serious’ driving behaviour. However, these types of driving behaviours are generally considered to be among the least serious (alongside various speeding behaviours).

% ratings of being distracted by something and by being tired as ‘very serious’



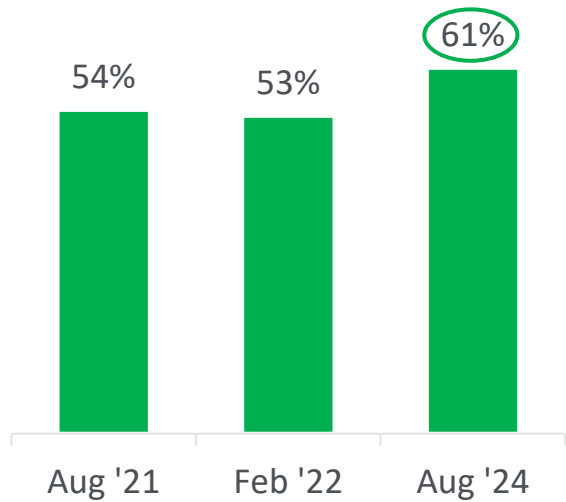
% rating ‘very serious’ across all behaviours – Aug 2024



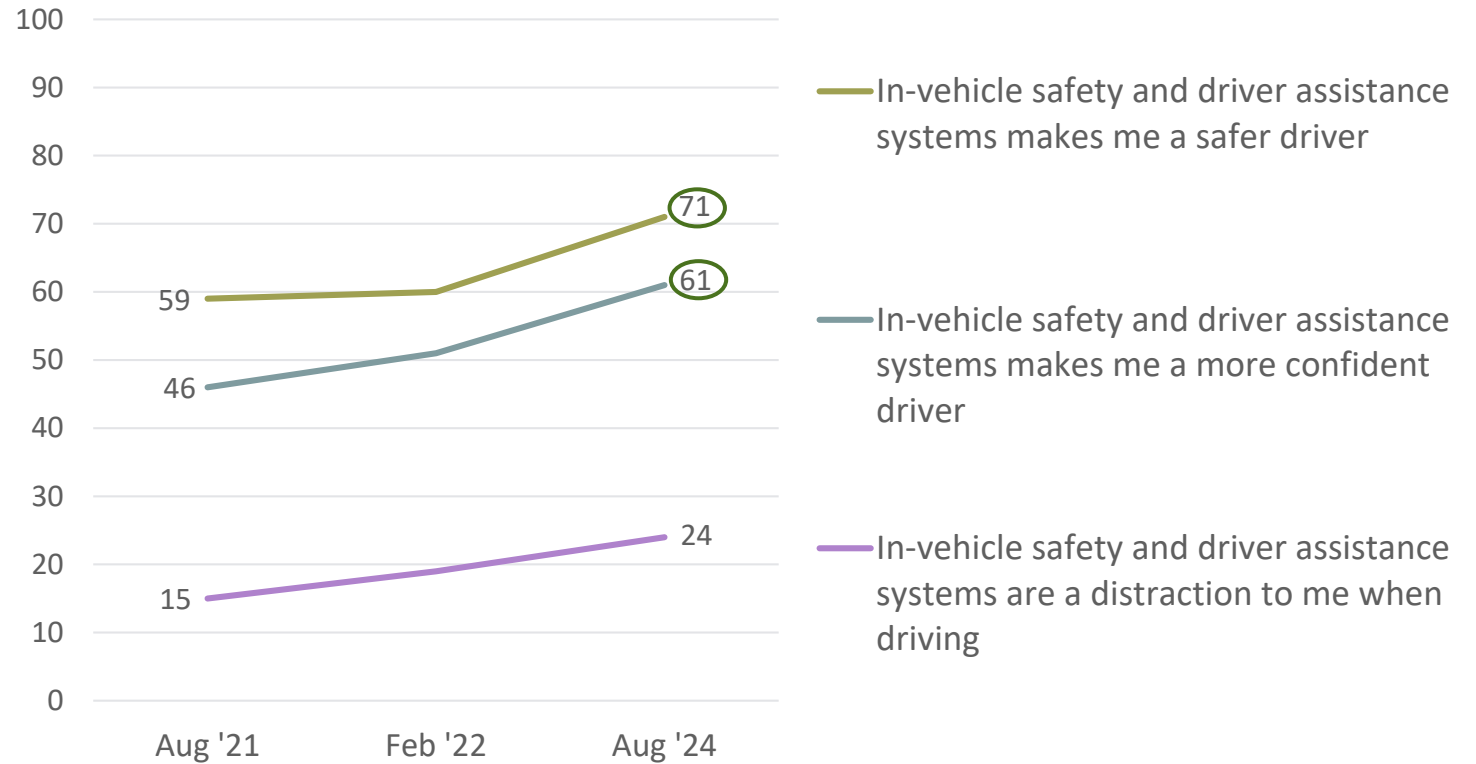


In Aug '24, three in five drivers reported they have a car with an in-vehicle assistance system – this was higher than in previous waves of the survey. Drivers who have these systems in their car are becoming more positive about the impact of these systems on their driving, particularly from a safety and confidence perspective.

Own a car with in-vehicle safety and driver assistance systems?



% saying agree strongly/agree slightly

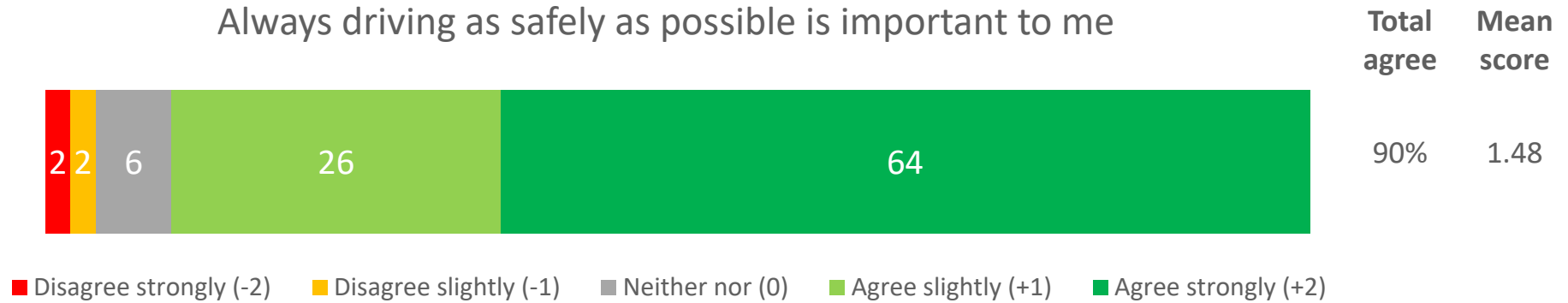


Q13. Does the car that you drive have in-vehicle safety and driver assistance systems?  
 Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements on drive-assist technology?

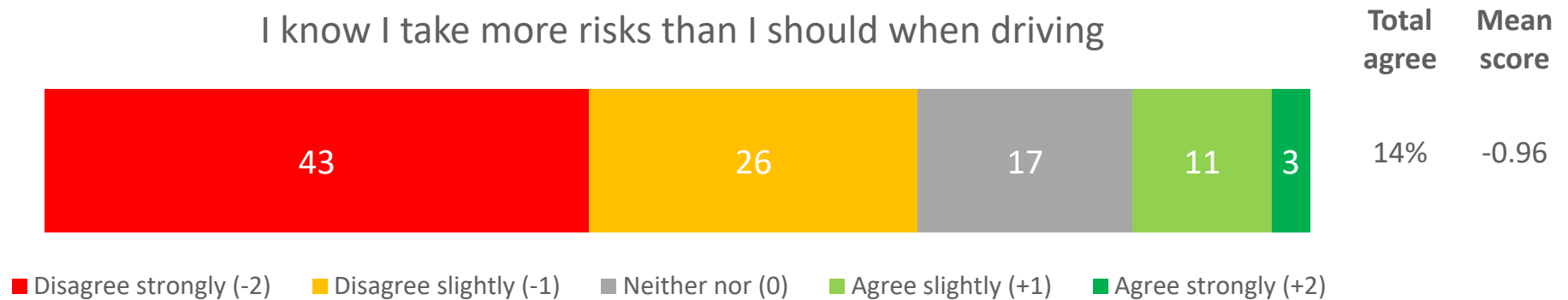


When it comes to driving safely, the vast majority of drivers consider it be something important to them. However, a notable minority know they take more risks than they should when driving, which highlights a slight discrepancy between some drivers' attitudes and behaviours.

Always driving as safely as possible is important to me



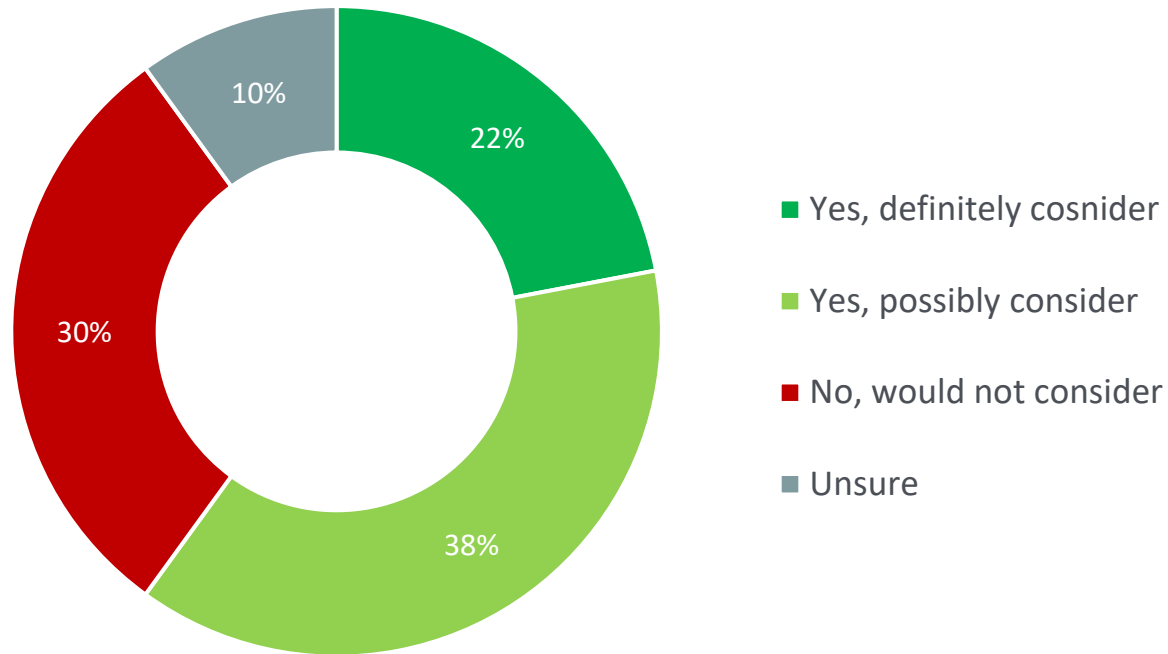
I know I take more risks than I should when driving





Most drivers have a positive attitude to black boxes - six in ten would consider having a black box fitted to their car for lower insurance premiums, with over a fifth willing to definitely consider this option.

Proportion of drivers that would consider having a black box fitted to their car for a lower insurance premium

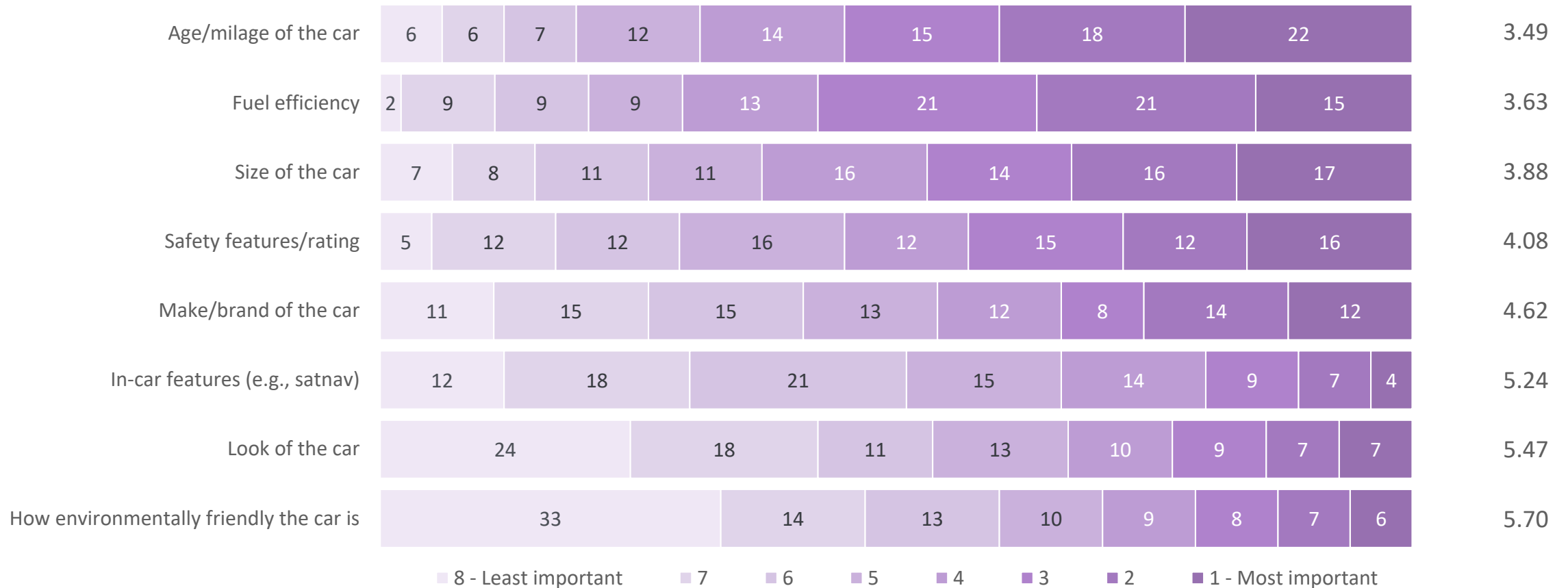


On average, the safety features of a car were ranked as the fourth most important factor considered when buying. In total, just over two fifths rated safety in their top three factors, with mileage, fuel efficiency and the size of the car more likely to be important factors.



Most important factors when buying a new/used car

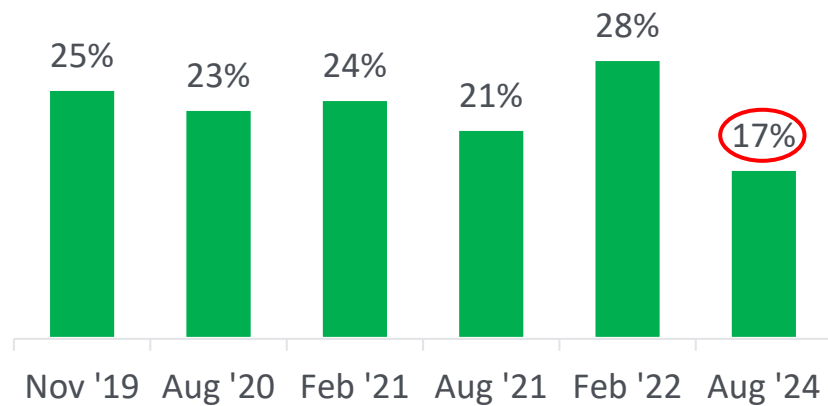
Average ranking position (1 is most important)



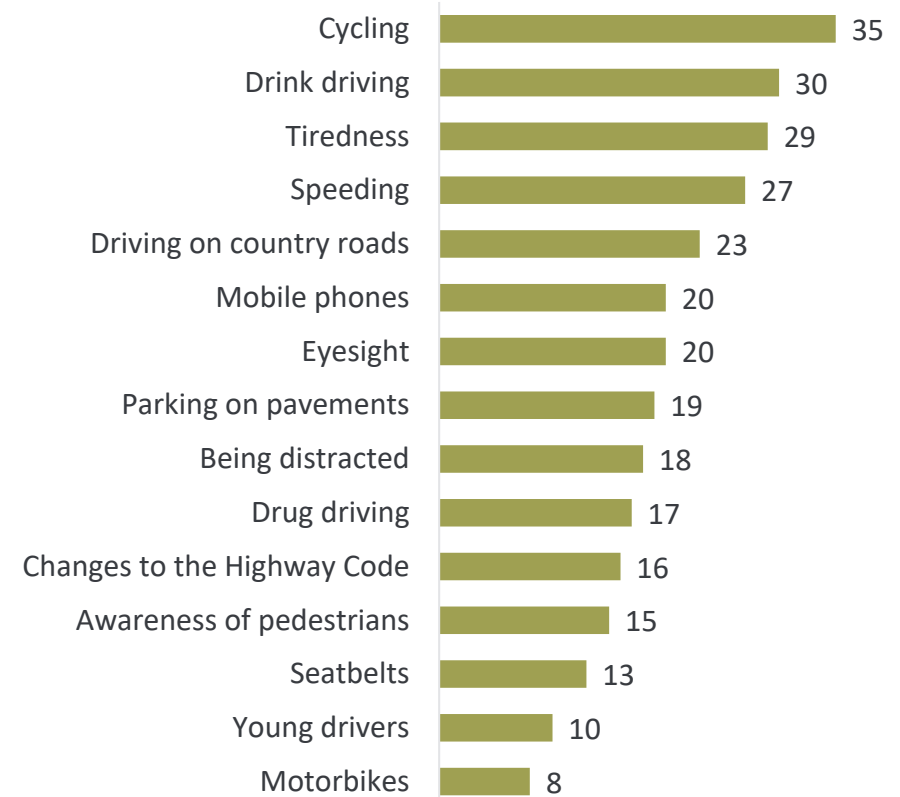
# Advertising and marketing awareness

Significantly fewer drivers had seen or heard marketing on topics relating to driving/road safety this year (compared with previous years). Those who had seen or heard marketing most commonly recalled ads relating to cycling, drink driving, tiredness and speeding.

Seen or heard any advertising or marketing on topics relating to driving or road safety?



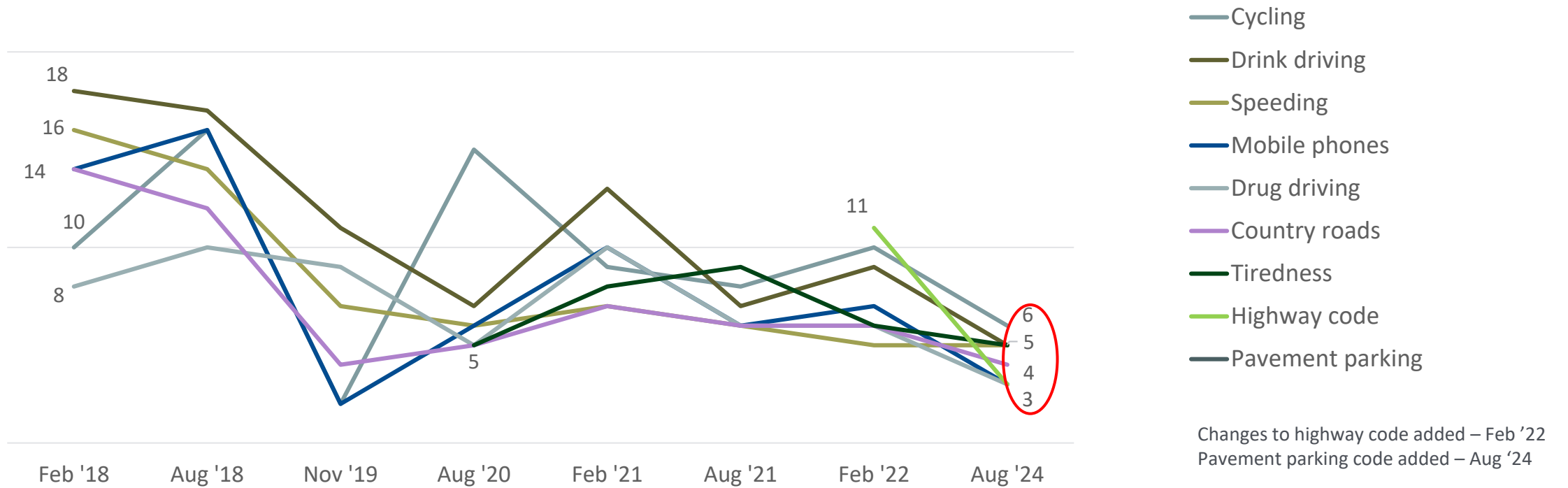
Topic of advertising / marketing (%)






Given the relatively low proportion of drivers that had seen any form of advertising in Aug '24, there was a drop in the proportion of drivers that had seen advertising on specific topics. The only topics where recall has not changed was around speeding, tiredness and country roads; recall of all other topics decreased this year.

% driving / road safety advertising seen recently





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# Subgroup differences

Younger people generally have a more relaxed attitude to, and are more likely to engage in, negative driving behaviours such as speeding, drink/drug driving and the use of seatbelts and mobile phones.



### Age

#### Speeding

Results suggest that younger people (aged <35) generally have a more relaxed attitude to speeding, and they are more likely to admit to some key speeding behaviours. For instance, they are less likely than older people to agree (aged 65+) that it may be necessary to drive below the speed limit in built up areas (78% vs. 93%), and they are less likely to think it is very serious for people to speed up through an amber light (25% vs. 46%).

#### Drink/drug driving

Differences in views around drink/drug driving are noteworthy because while younger people are less likely than older people to think it is very serious to drive under the influence of alcohol (75% vs. 97%) and drugs (80% vs. 98%), they are more likely to agree that Scotland is tough in tackling drug driving (54% vs. 36%).

This might reflect that this group is more likely to drive under the influence of drugs (and are, as such, targeted by police for roadside screening) – 6 of the 7 people who said they had driven under the influence of drugs in the last 12 months were from the 17-34 age group.

#### Seatbelts

Younger people's attitudes and behaviours regarding seatbelt use are also more relaxed. For instance, they are more likely than older people to agree that if they are just nipping round the corner, it's not essential to wear a seatbelt (14% vs. 3%).

#### Mobile phones

Younger people are much more likely than older people to use mobile phones in the car, both hand-held (17% vs. 1%) and hands-free (20% vs. 7%), and they are also more likely to agree that the penalties for getting caught for driving offences like using a mobile phone is not enough to stop them doing it (23% vs. 11%).

Results from the survey indicate that women are safer drivers in many aspects of their driving – they are less likely to speed, more likely to show consideration to vulnerable road users such as cyclists, and allow for breaks every two hours when planning long journeys.



## Gender

### Speeding

The results here suggest that men have a riskier attitude to speeding than women. They are less likely than women to agree that there should be a maximum speed limit of 50 mph no country roads (48% vs. 62%) and that it may be necessary to drive below the speed limit in built up areas (84% vs. 92%). Men are also less likely to agree that driving as safely as possible is important to them (85% vs. 94% of women). Women are also more likely to always keep to various speed limits (including 50 mph – 47% vs. 37%).

### Vulnerable road users

Women often demonstrate safer behaviours around vulnerable road users than men. For instance, they are more likely than men to always give a gap of 1.5 metres when passing people on pedal or electric bikes (67% vs. 53% of men), and they are more likely to always or nearly always check for people on pedal or electric bikes at junctions/when turning a corner (94% vs. 88%).

### Distractions / health / age / fatigue / safety

Women are typically more likely than men to take issues like distraction, tiredness, and safety seriously when driving. They are more likely to always or nearly always allow time for breaks every two hours when planning long journeys (69% vs. 59%), and consider driving when tired (95% vs. 90% of men) and being distracted when driving (95% vs. 88%) a serious risk to the safety of other drivers/road users.

There were few consistent differences between drivers in different socio-economic groups, urban vs. rural settings, and regions of Scotland. The story around speeding was most clear, with drivers in rural settings and North Scotland generally more speed conscious than those drivers in urban settings and East Scotland.

ABC1C2DE



### Other subgroups (SEG, urban vs. rural setting, region)

#### Speeding

While there are no differences by SEG, there are some notable differences by urban vs. rural setting when it comes to speeding habits. Rural drivers are generally more speed conscious than urban drivers. For instance, they were more likely than urban drivers to say it is very serious if people drive at 10 mph above the speed limit in cities or towns (66% vs. 53%). They were also more likely than urban drivers to always keep to various speed limits (including 50 mph – 55% vs. 40%) and agree that introducing a 20-mph speed limit makes communities better places for people to walk/wheel/cycle (81% vs. 66%). There are also some interesting regional differences in speeding habits (possibly reflecting the urban and rural populations in each region) – drivers in North Scotland are more likely than those in East Scotland to keep to various speed limits, including 20 mph speed limits (82% vs. 69%).

#### Mobile phones

When it comes to mobile phone use, drivers in higher SEGs (24%), and drivers in East Scotland (23%) are more likely than those in lower SEGs (11%) and North Scotland (13%) to say they have used a mobile phone (hand-held or hands-free) while driving at some point in the last 12 months. Interestingly, though, there were no differences between these groups in terms of how acceptable they found using a mobile phone in the car, or how serious this behaviour is in terms of the safety risk to other road users.

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# Summary and conclusions

# Summary and conclusions

## Speeding

- Speeding habits in Aug '24 are broadly consistent with previous waves of the study with some notable exceptions.
- As in previous years, the most common speeding behaviours remain driving 5 mph over the speed limit in areas where a lower speed limit is in place (e.g., 20 or 30 mph), and to reinforce this, the proportion reporting they always keep to 20 mph limits is lower than the proportion reporting they always keep to 50 mph limits.
- In terms of positive changes over time, fewer drivers are reporting they have driven at 40 mph in a 30-mph speed limit area this year, more are rating not adjusting your speed to country roads as a very serious behaviour, and drivers are feeling more positive about some aspects of safety cameras (e.g., that they help prevent collisions where they are used).
- Less positively, however, is the proportion of drivers that have overtaken when they think they will just make it, and drivers' views of 20 mph speed limits have become more negative, with more considering them frustrating and agreeing that it's not always clear why they are in place.

## Drink and drug driving

- A few things have changed in terms of drivers' views around drink and drug driving in Aug '24.
- While incidence of drink and drug driving remains extremely low, fewer drivers agreed that even one alcoholic drink could put you over the drink drive limit.
- Positively, more drivers think it is very serious to drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol in Aug '24.

# Summary and conclusions

## Mobile phones

- There haven't been any changes in terms of drivers' attitudes and behaviours towards the use of mobile phones in cars.
- There remains a significant minority of drivers that have used a hands-free or hand-held mobile phone while driving despite the vast majority strongly disagreeing that it's OK to use a hand-held mobile phone while.
- Views on the risks around getting caught for traffic offences such as using a mobile phone remain the same – while most agree that the penalties for getting caught for driving offences are enough to stop them committing these offences, few agree that there is more chance of getting stopped by the police for traffic offences now compared to a few years ago.

## Seatbelts

- Views around the use of seatbelts in a car remain unchanged. Only a minority have not used a seatbelt in the front or back of the car over the last 12 months, and very few agree that it's not important to wear a seatbelt in scenarios such as if you are travelling in the back of a car.

## Vulnerable road users

- Attitudes towards vulnerable road users have broadly remained the same in Aug '24, with most drivers checking for pedestrians and people on bikes in various driving scenarios. Not looking out for motorcyclists and bikes at junctions remains one of the more serious driving behaviours according to drivers.
- New to this wave, however, views on pavement parking suggest drivers are less likely to consider road users who may need to use the whole pavement – for instance wheelchair users or people with a pushchair. It is considered the least serious driving behaviour in terms of road user safety, and many agree it is sometimes necessary to park partially on the pavement.

# Thank you

The logo for Progressive Partnership, featuring the word "progressive" in a lowercase, sans-serif font inside a solid olive-green circle.

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