Safer speeds on local streets: Messaging survey report

COMMON CAUSE AUSTRALIA

Victoria walks

MAV
MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

This report was prepared by Dr Eleanor Glenn of Common Cause Australia, with input from Victoria Walks and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

Survey overview

- October 2024 online survey
- A 15-minute quantitative survey of 2,258 people representative of the adult population of Victoria by age, gender and location
- The survey comprised four parts:

1. **Demographic questions,** which allowed us to identify typical characteristics of our audience segments: Supporters, Persuadables and Opponents.

2. **Attitudinal questions,** to gauge existing attitudes to safer speeds as well as responses to values-based messages and information. This included A/B split tests where half of the sample saw version A of a message, the other half saw version B, and all were then asked a question gauging support for safer speeds. This allowed us to measure the difference in support between A and B to isolate the impact of word and/or image choice.

3. **Dial tests**: Respondents were randomly assigned to hear two of four 30-second audio messages while a slider button was displayed on their screen. While listening to each message, respondents moved the slider up for things they agreed with or liked, and down for things they disagreed with or disliked. This allowed us to isolate the words and phrases that boost or reduce support for safer speeds.

4. **Repeat questions**: Respondents were again asked a few key attitudinal questions that they initially answered at the start of part 2. This allowed us to measure changes in levels of support before and after hearing our case for safer speeds in the survey questions and dial messages.

Survey sample

2,258 responses

Comprising: **1,210** 'base survey' responses, representative of the adult population of Victoria by age, gender, and location

+

1,048 'boost survey' responses across each of five council areas:
Inner metro, rest of metro, interface, regional cities, regional shires.

The boost samples were weighted to be representative of the adult population of Victoria by age, gender, and location – allowing the 'base' and 'boost' samples to then be added together to give a total sample of 2,258 representative responses.

For quality control purposes**, we excluded respondents who failed more than one test question throughout the survey (e.g. "to ensure you are paying attention, please select 'strongly disagree'"). As the survey was designed to be taken in 12-15 minutes, we excluded respondents who completed it in 8 minutes or less. We also excluded those who either flatlined or zigzagged from top to bottom throughout the dial tests. **The total of 2,258 responses comprises fully completed surveys that passed quality control.

Councils by region

Inner Metro	Rest of Metro	Interface	Regional cities	Regional shires	
Darebin	Banyule	Cardinia	Ballarat	Alpine	Mansfield
Hobsons Bay	Bayside	Casey	Greater Bendigo	Ararat	Mitchell
Maribyrnong	Boroondara	Hume	Greater Geelong	Bass Coast	Moira
Melbourne	Frankston	Melton	Greater Shepparton	Baw Baw	Moorabool
Merri-bek	Glen Eira	Mornington Peninsula	Horsham	Benalla	Mount Alexander
Moonee Valley	Greater Dandenong	Nillumbik	Latrobe	Buloke	Moyne
Port Phillip	Kingston	Whittlesea	Mildura	Campaspe	Murrindindi
Stonnington	Knox	Wyndham	Wangaratta	Central Goldfields	Northern Grampians
Yarra	Manningham	Yarra Ranges	Warrnambool	Colac Otway	Pyrenees
	Maroondah		Wodonga	Corangamite	Queenscliffe
	Monash			East Gippsland	South Gippsland
	Whitehorse			Gannawarra	Southern Grampians
				Glenelg	Strathbogie
				Golden Plains	Surf Coast
				Hepburn	Swan Hill
				Hindmarsh	Towong
				Indio	Wellington
				Loddon	West Wimmera
				Macedon Ranges	Yarriambiack

Summary

Currently, public support is much higher for 40km/h than 30km/h, although there was **a very significant boost in support for 30km/h** by the end of the survey, across all regions.

Many **persuadable** people shifted to agree with our propositions for 30km/h. Compared with the start of the survey, many more chose 30km/h as the right speed for local streets at the end of the survey.

Many **supporters** shifted from ‘agree’ to ‘strongly agree’ with 30km/h.

With the exception of stronger support in **Inner Metro**, responses were quite similar across the regions. There was also strong support in **Regional Cities** by the end of the survey.

Safety, particularly for children, was supported as a key reason for bringing in 40 and 30km/h zones.

Creating nicer neighbourhoods was also important.

Support for 30km/h was strongest in **existing school zones,** followed by extended school zones, shopping strips, dining strips, inner city residential streets, and suburban residential streets.

Audience segments

Survey respondents were grouped into *Supporter, Persuadable* and *Opponent s*egments based on early survey questions measuring support for 40km/h or 30km/h speed limits.

24%

Supporter

58%

Persuadable

18%

Opponent

Our messages are designed to **enthuse supporters** and **move persuadables** to a supportive position, to bring the vast majority of people on board.

Note: The percentages above reflect segmentation of the sample for the purposes of analysis. This is not to say, for example, that 18% of Victorians are Opponents, but that 18% of this sample were grouped as such for the purposes of analysis.

Demographic Variance

(+) figures represent the difference between that segment (Supporter, Persuadable or Opponent) and the result for the entire sample on that demographic.

Supporter

People are **more** likely to be in the Supporter segment if they:

- Ride a bike/ e-bike/ scooter weekly or more frequently (+11)
- Are from an inner-metro council (+8)
- Vote ALP (+7) or Green (+3)
- Are from metro area (+6)
- Have children aged under 18 (+6)

Persuadable

The characteristics of this group largely reflect the averages of the overall sample.

Opponent

People are **more** likely to be in the Opponent segment if they:

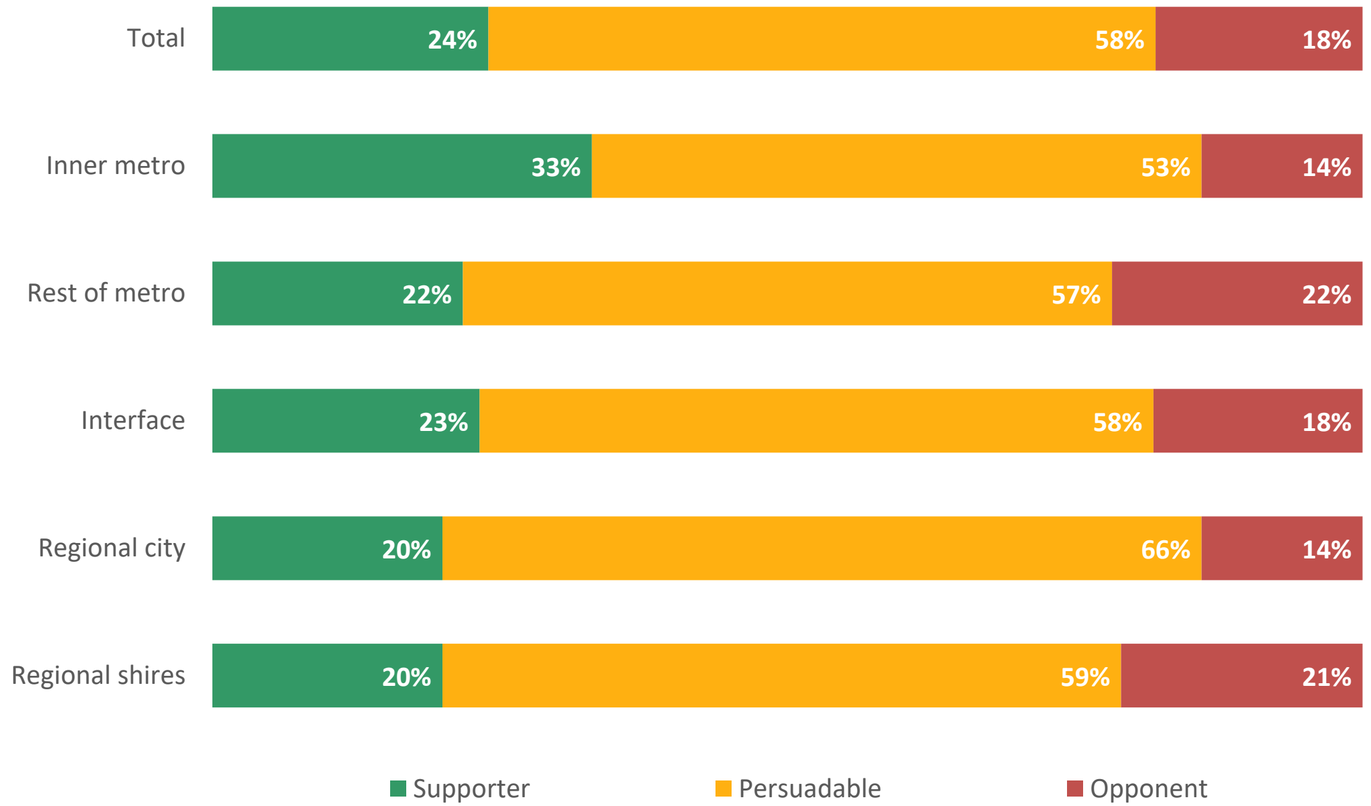
- Vote Coalition (+10)*
- Identify as a man (+9)
- Do not have children aged under 18 (+8)
- Are 65+ (+8) or 55-64 (+7%)**
- Ride a bike/e-bike/ scooter less frequently than weekly (+7)
- Are from ‘rest of metro’ i.e. outside inner metro (+6)

*ALP (-12) & Greens (-8) are much less likely to be Opponents

**25-34-year-olds are much less likely to be Opponents (-7)

Demographics

Supporters, Persuadables and Opponents, by region



Similar percentages across regions, with more Supporters in Inner metro.

Persuadables in all regions, especially Regional cities, became more supportive throughout the survey.

Travel behaviours

How do you usually travel on regular short trips from home (e.g. for leisure, to get to work, or to visit people nearby)?

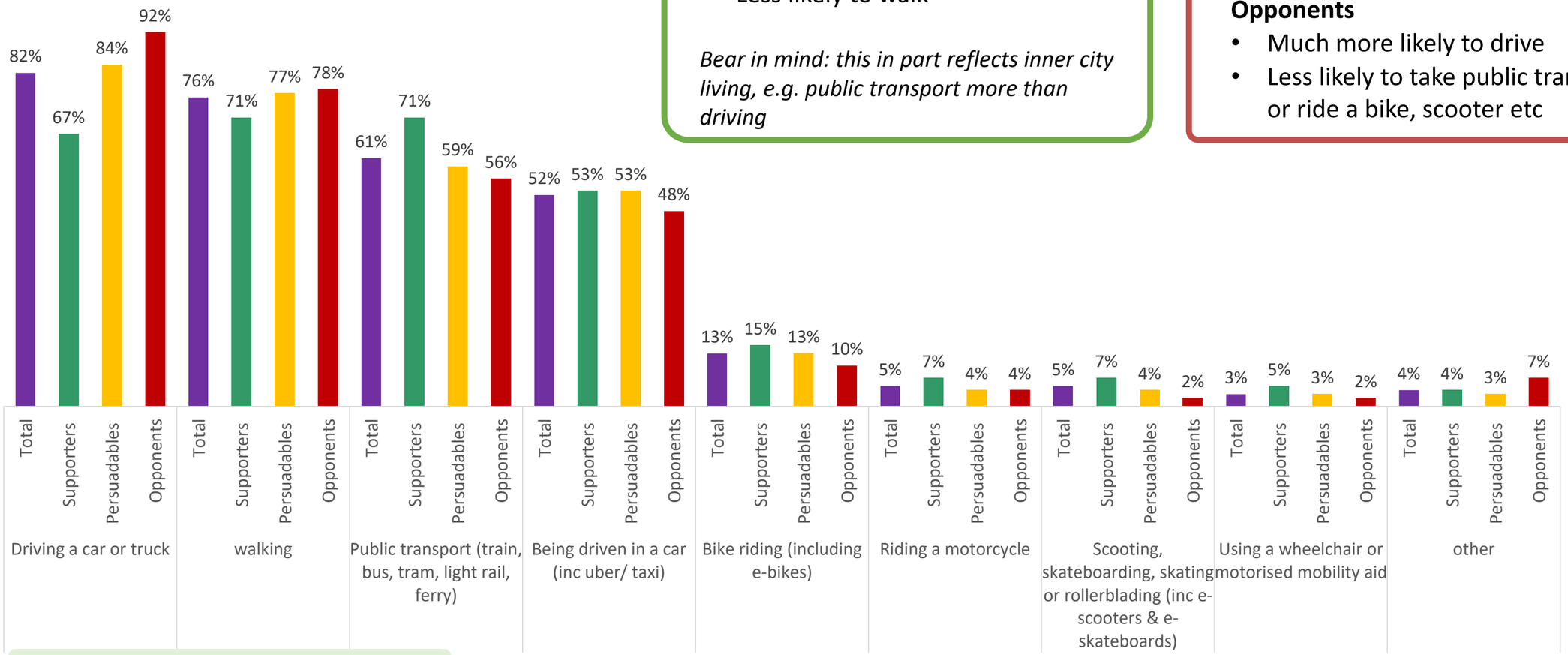
Supporters

- Much less likely to drive a car or truck
- Much more likely to take public transport
- More likely to ride a bike, e-bike, scooter, e-scooter, skateboard etc
- More likely to ride a motorcycle
- Less likely to walk

Bear in mind: this in part reflects inner city living, e.g. public transport more than driving

Opponents

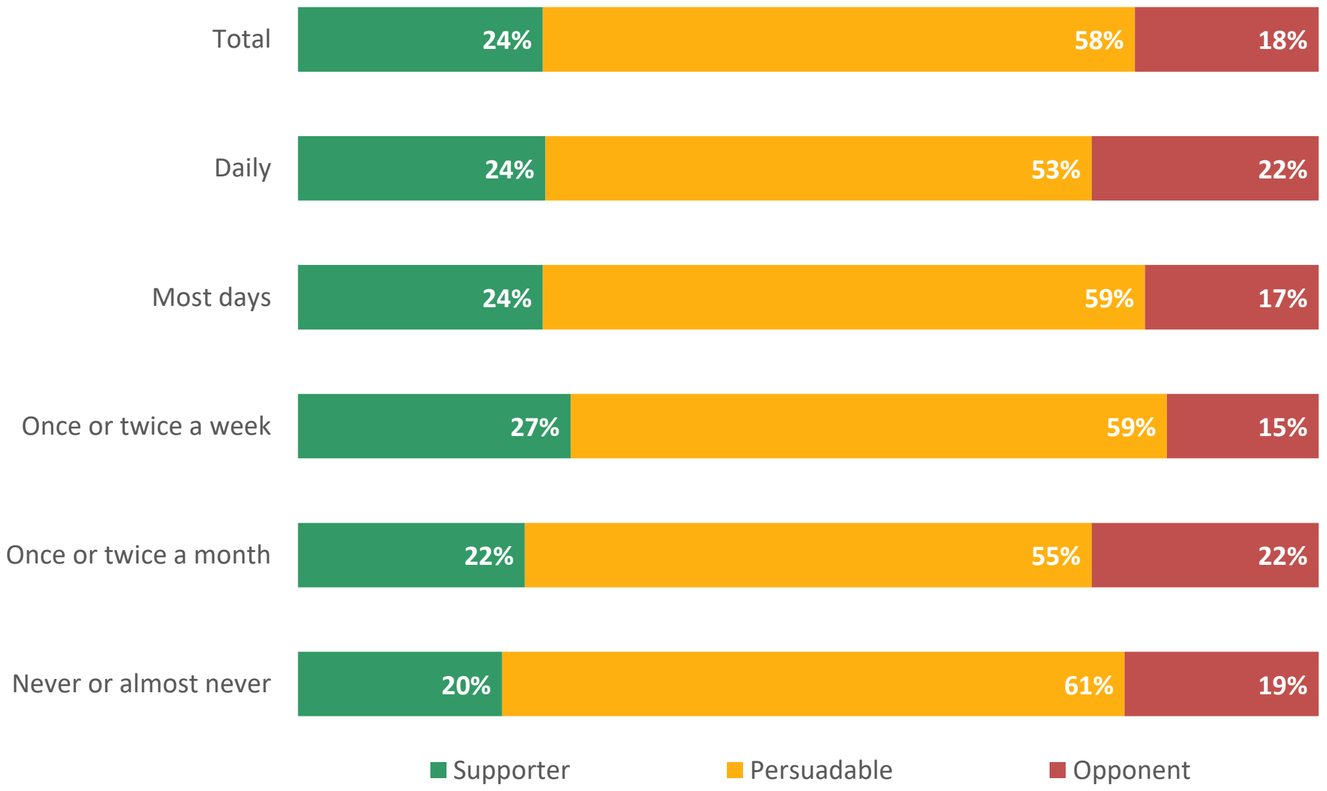
- Much more likely to drive
- Less likely to take public transport or ride a bike, scooter etc



Percentage of respondents who selected each travel mode among their top three

Travel behaviours

Frequency of travelling through areas of 40 km/h or less



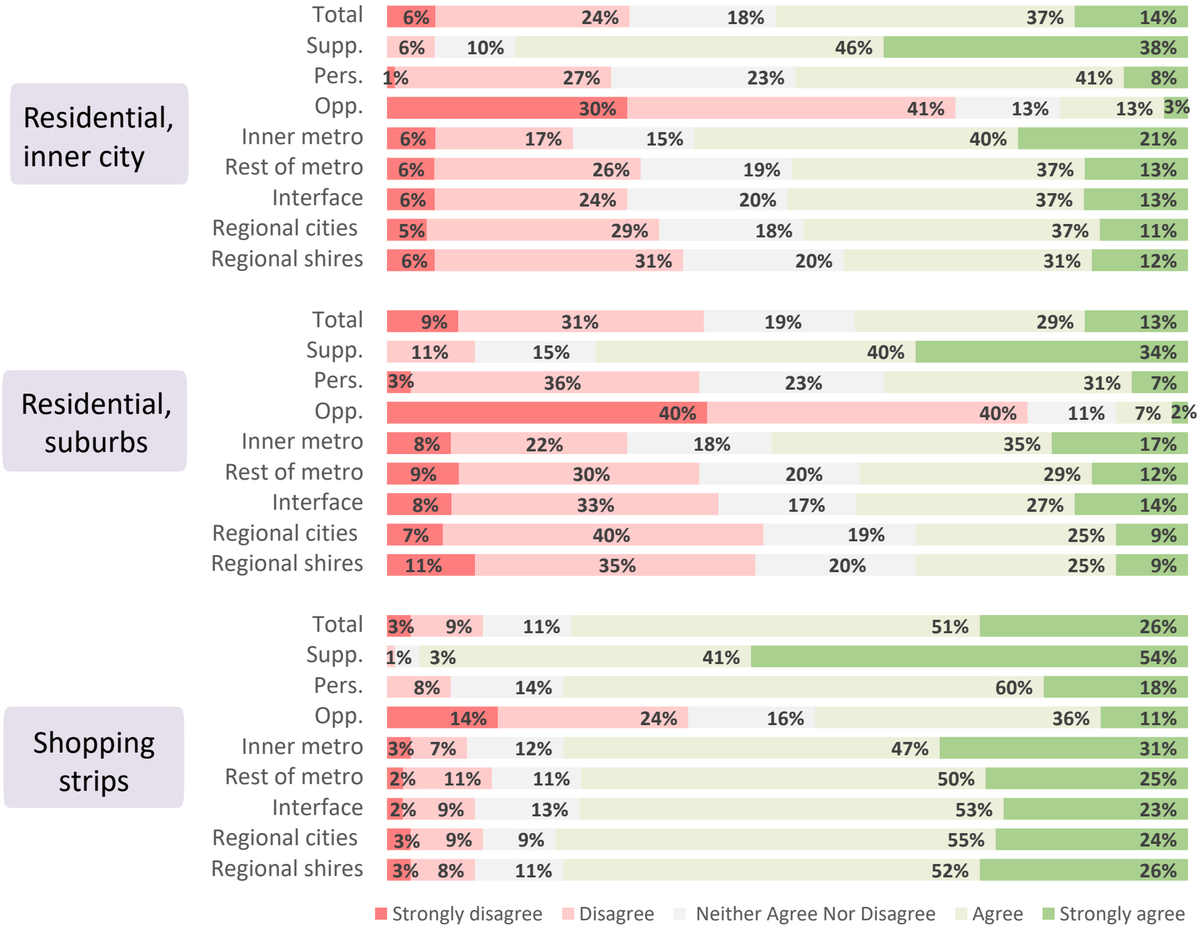
Surprisingly, not much difference between Supporters, Persuadables and Opponents.

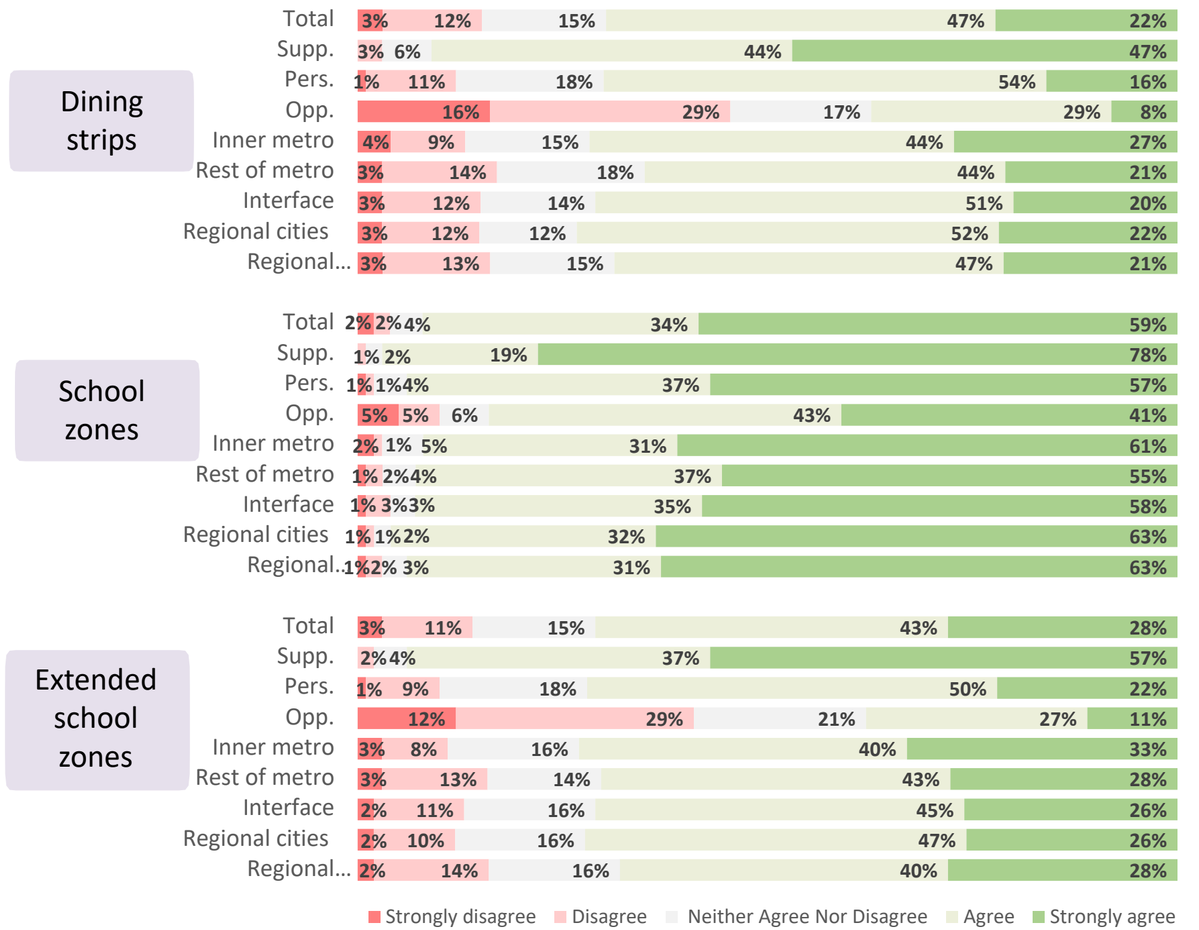
A sizeable proportion of Opponents travel through such areas daily.

There is a very slight dip in the number of Supporters and increase in Persuadables amongst people who ‘never or almost never’ travel through these areas.

Where 40 km/h is appropriate

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below?
The following types of streets should have a speed limit of 40km/h:

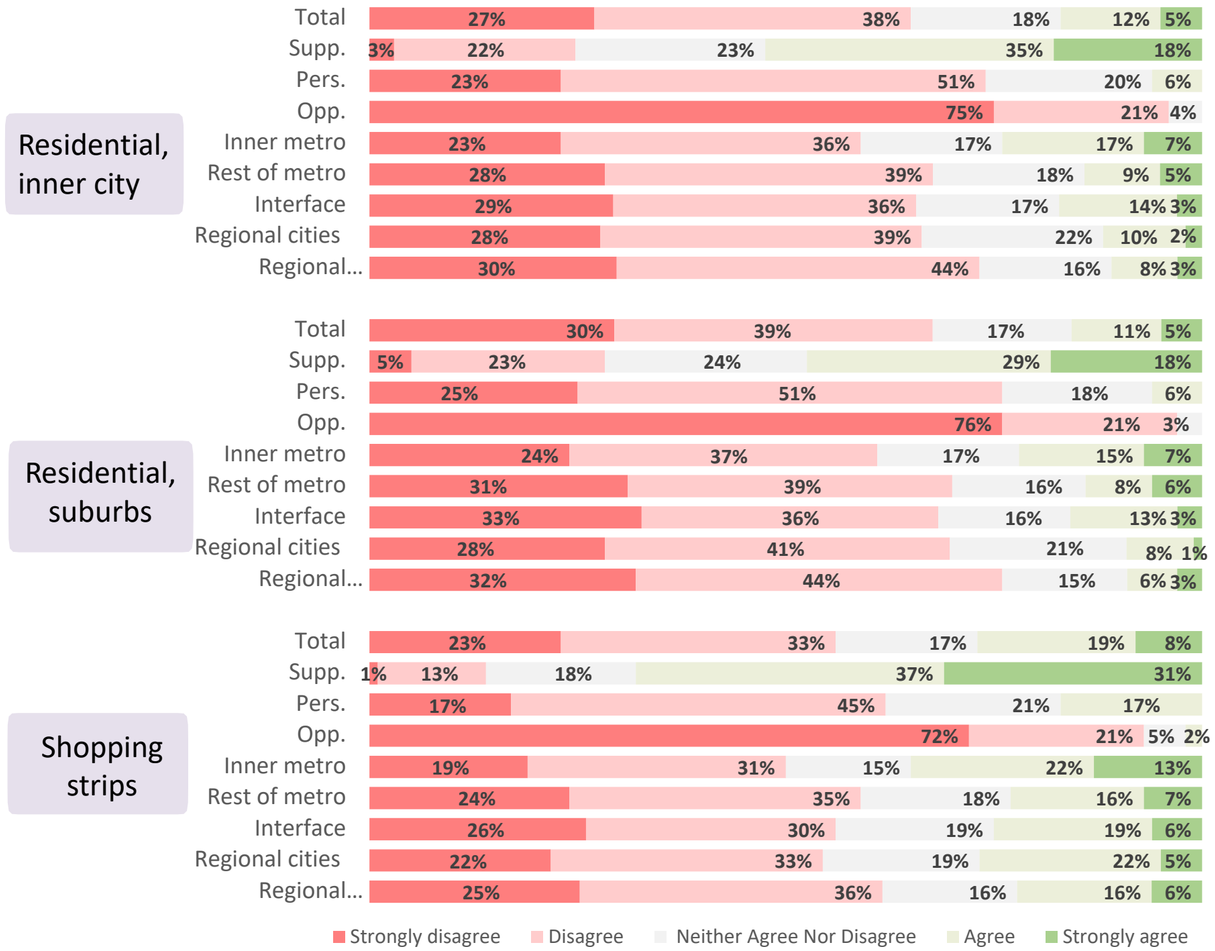


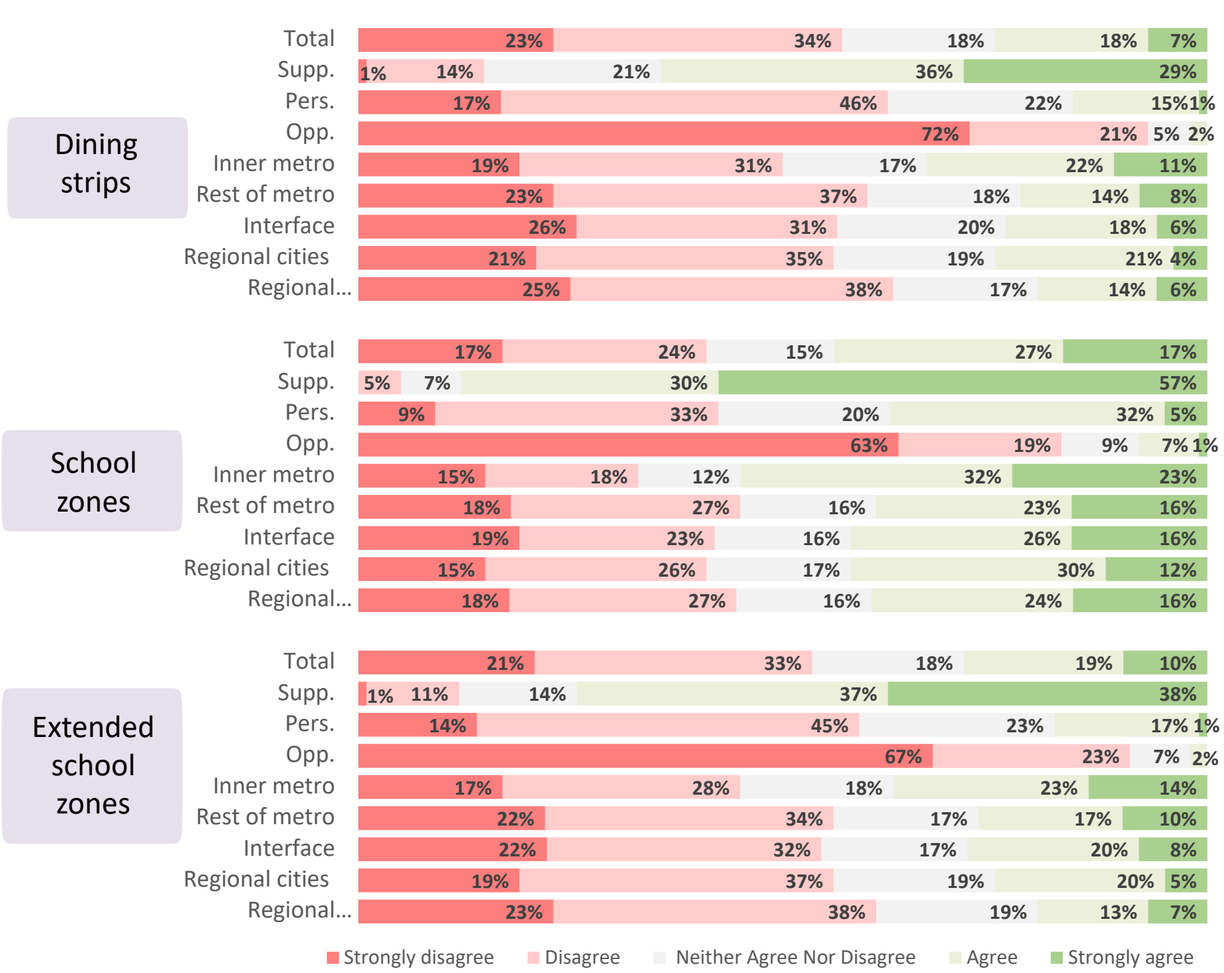


Where 30 km/h is appropriate

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below?

The following types of streets should have a speed limit of 30km/h:





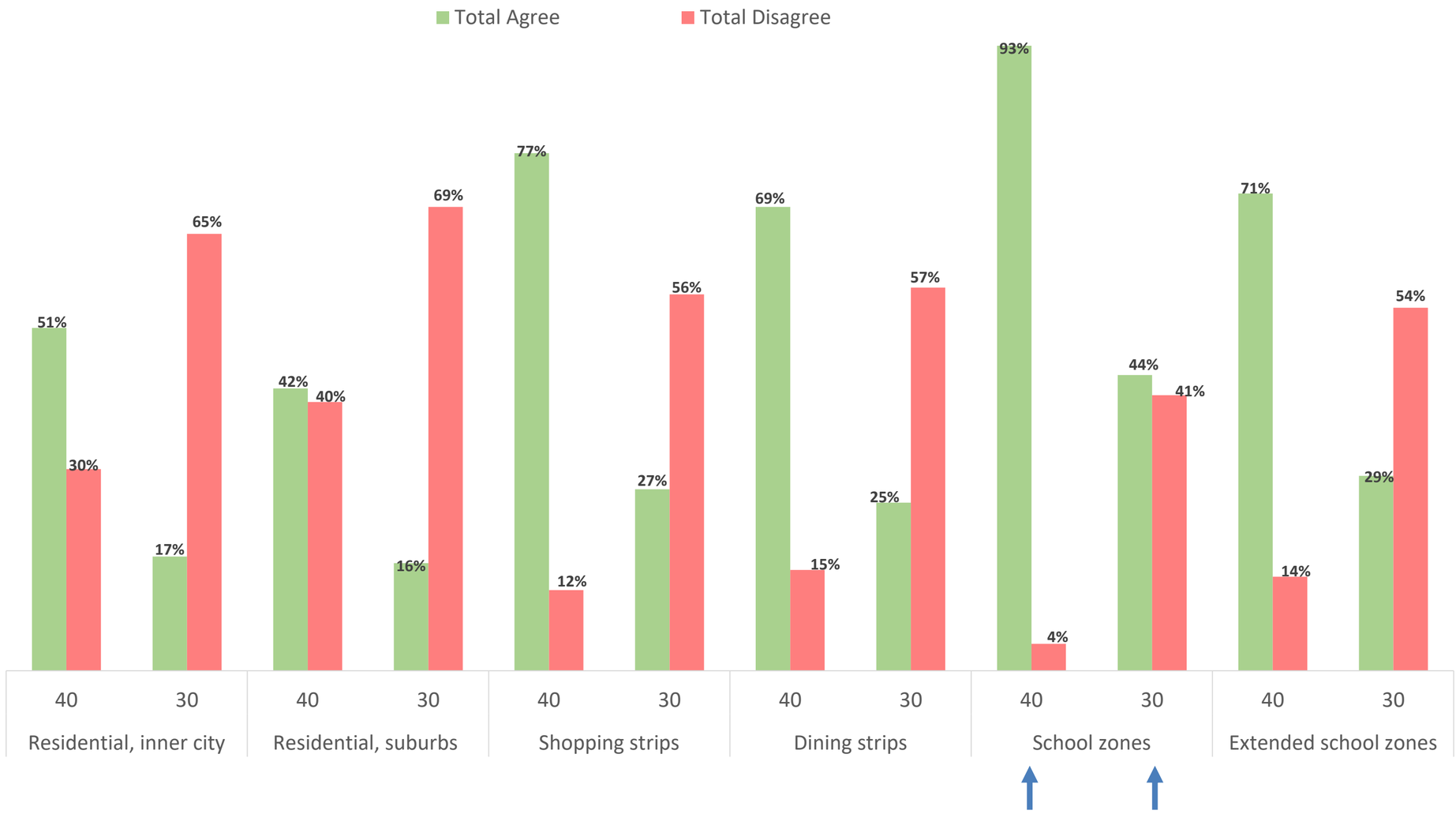
40 km/h vs 30 km/h

Chart explainer

- The following chart summarises the results of the previous two questions asking about the types of streets suited to 40km/h and 30km/h, in which respondents could choose: “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “agree” or “strongly agree”.

- In the chart, the percentage of respondents who chose “agree” or “strongly agree” has been combined to give a percentage “total agree”. Similarly, “disagree” or “strongly disagree” have been combined to show “total disagree”.

40 km/h vs 30 km/h



As a starting point, before any messaging on safer speeds:

- Clear support for 40km/h on all types of streets except residential streets in the suburbs, where approximately even numbers support and oppose
- Support drops considerably for 30km/h, although there is slim support for school zones to be 30 rather than 40km/h.

However, note the very significant increase in support for 30km/h by the end of the survey.

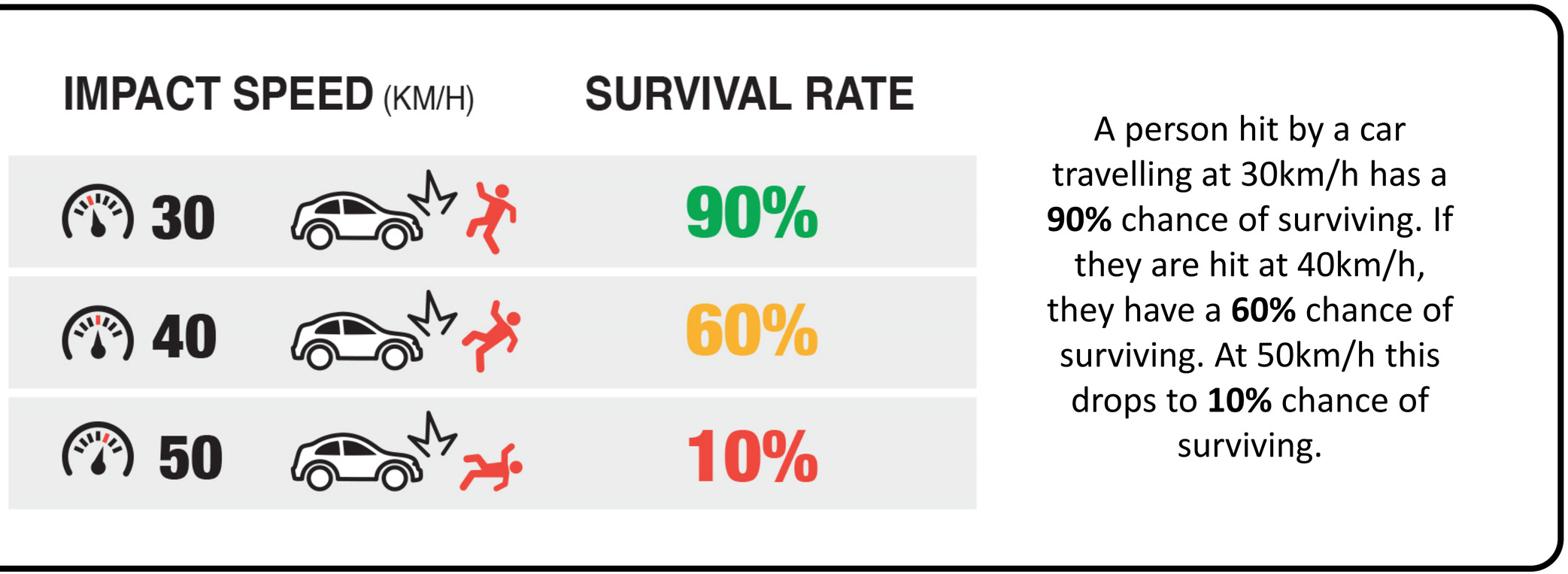
‘Split test’ explainer

- **50% see Option A, 50% see Option B.**

- A split test reveals if particular frames, examples or words are more effective than others.
- In a split test, a randomised 50% of respondents see one version of a message, while the remaining 50% see another version.
- For most questions, we measure the difference in the levels of **agreement** and **disagreement** between version A vs B.
- In the following question, we compare the percentage of respondents who choose **50km/h, 40km/h or 30km/h** as being the most appropriate speed for local streets.

Safety visuals and facts

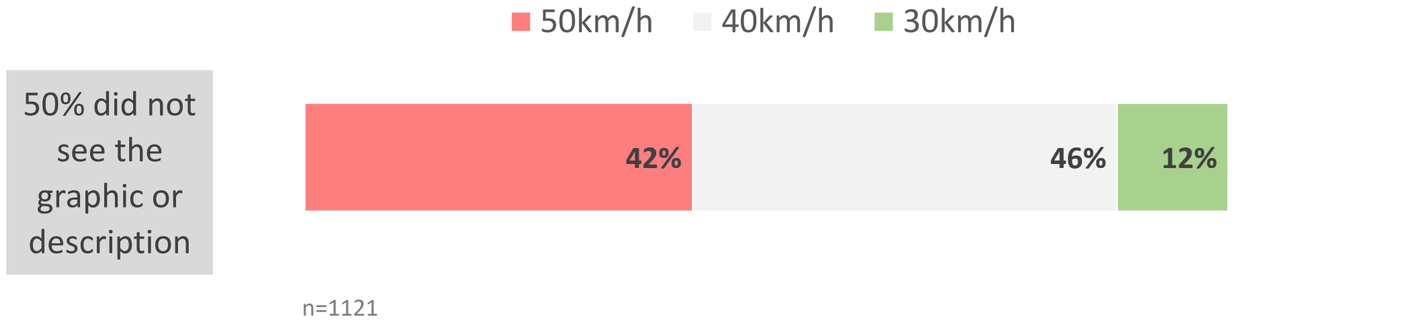
50% of respondents saw the pedestrian survival graphic and written description, shown below.
50% did not see either the graphic or description.
Both groups were then asked: Which option below seems MOST RIGHT to you? Local streets shared by people walking, bike riding and driving should have a speed limit of: 50km/h, 40km/h, 30km/h. Only one speed limit could be chosen.
By comparing the two groups' responses, we can see the impact of the graphic and description in shaping people's views about the appropriate speed limit on local streets.



A person hit by a car travelling at 30km/h has a **90%** chance of surviving. If they are hit at 40km/h, they have a **60%** chance of surviving. At 50km/h this drops to **10%** chance of surviving.

Safety visuals and facts

[Either with or without the graphic and written description]
Which option below seems MOST RIGHT to you?
Local streets shared by people walking, bike riding and driving should have a speed limit of: 50km/h, 40 km/h, 30 km/h.



IMPACT SPEED (KM/H)	SURVIVAL RATE
30	90%
40	60%
50	10%

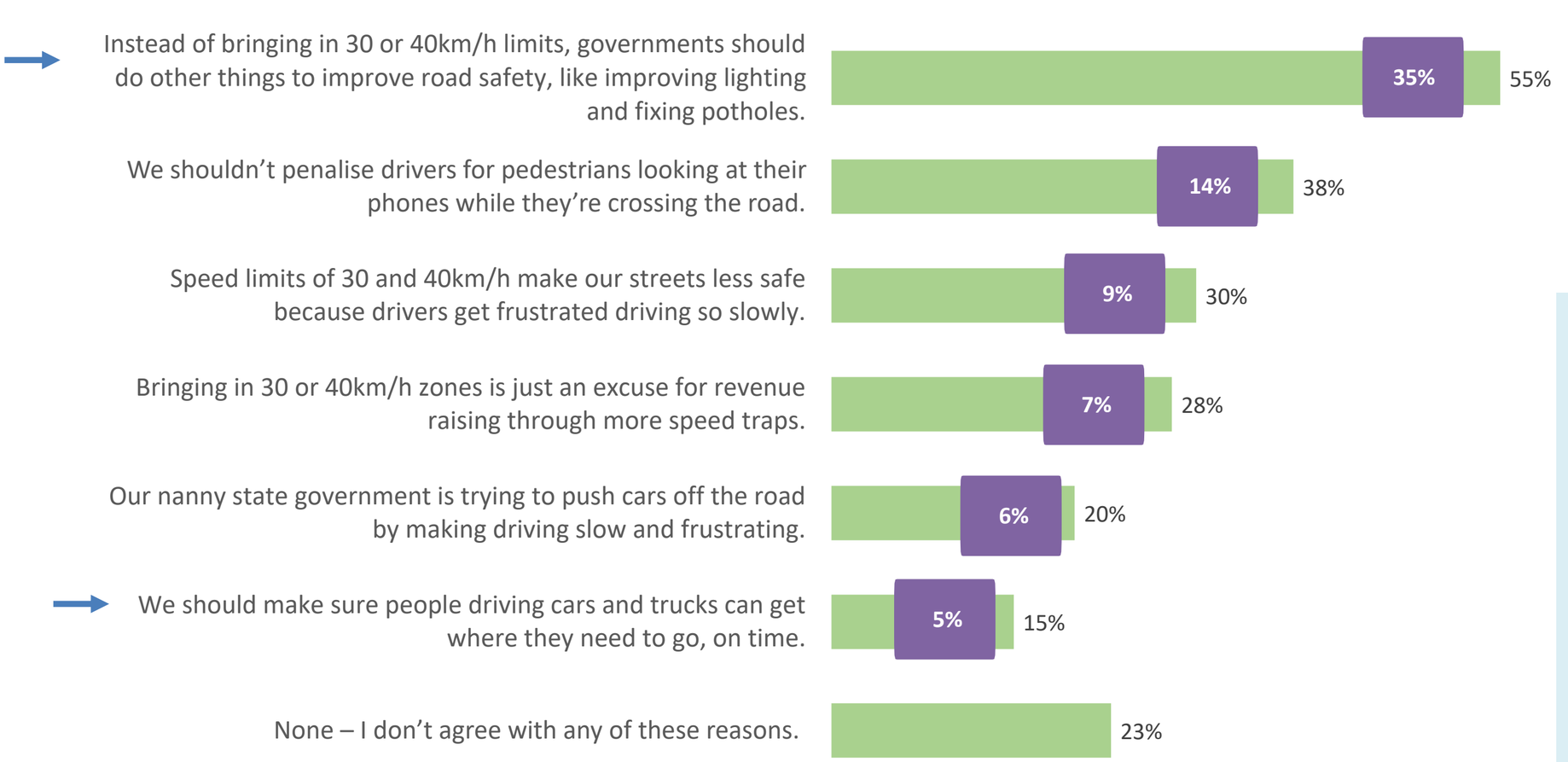
A person hit by a car travelling at 30km/h has a **90%** chance of surviving. If they are hit at 40km/h, they have a **60%** chance of surviving. At 50km/h this drops to **10%** chance of surviving.

46% of respondents who saw the graphic and description chose 30km/h as the appropriate speed limit for local streets – **34% more** than those who did not see the graphic or description.

NOTE: Group A who did not see the graphic in this question were shown it in the next question (not displayed in these slides). The levels of support for 30km/h expressed by groups A and B were then statistically identical (within 2%), again demonstrating the impact of the graphic in bringing people on board.

Reasons for *opposing* 40 & 30km/h speed zones

Respondents were shown the following six statements (in randomised order), followed by the question:
Which of the following reasons **against** creating 40 or 30km/h speed zones do you agree with?
Choose UP TO THREE that you agree with the MOST



This chart shows the % of the total sample who **chose** each reason

Purple boxes show the % who ranked this reason as no.1

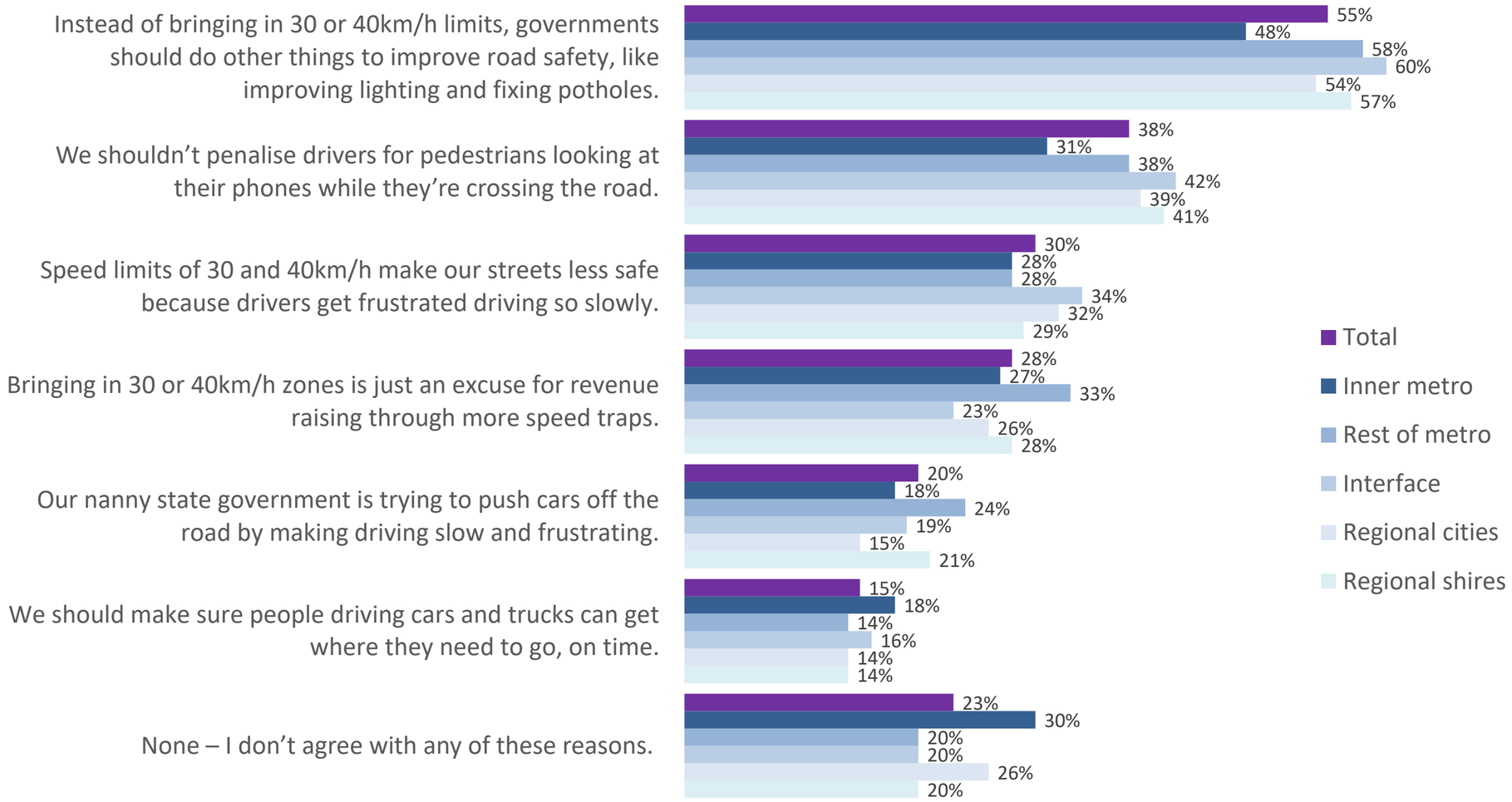
"Governments should do other things to improve road safety, like improving lighting and fixing potholes" received the highest level of agreement.

A statement about enabling drivers to "get where they need to go, on time" received the lowest support.

Nearly a quarter of respondents (our supporters) chose: "I don't agree with any of these reasons".

Reasons for opposition – by region

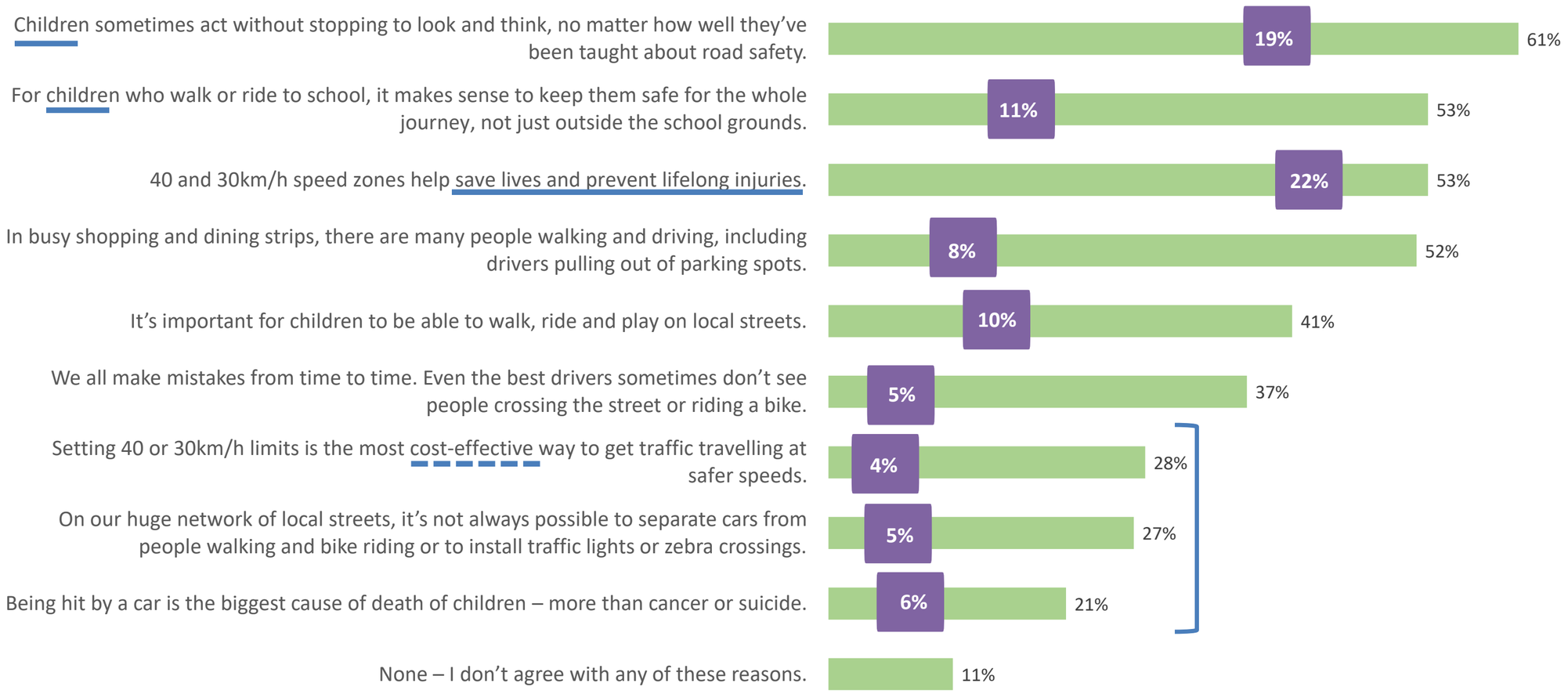
Which of the following reasons **against** creating 40 or 30km/h speed zones do you agree with? Choose UP TO THREE that you agree with the MOST



Percentage of respondents in each council region who agreed with each reason

Reasons for *supporting* 40 & 30km/h: need

Which of the following reasons **for** creating 40 or 30km/h speed zones do you agree with?
Choose UP TO SIX that you agree with the MOST

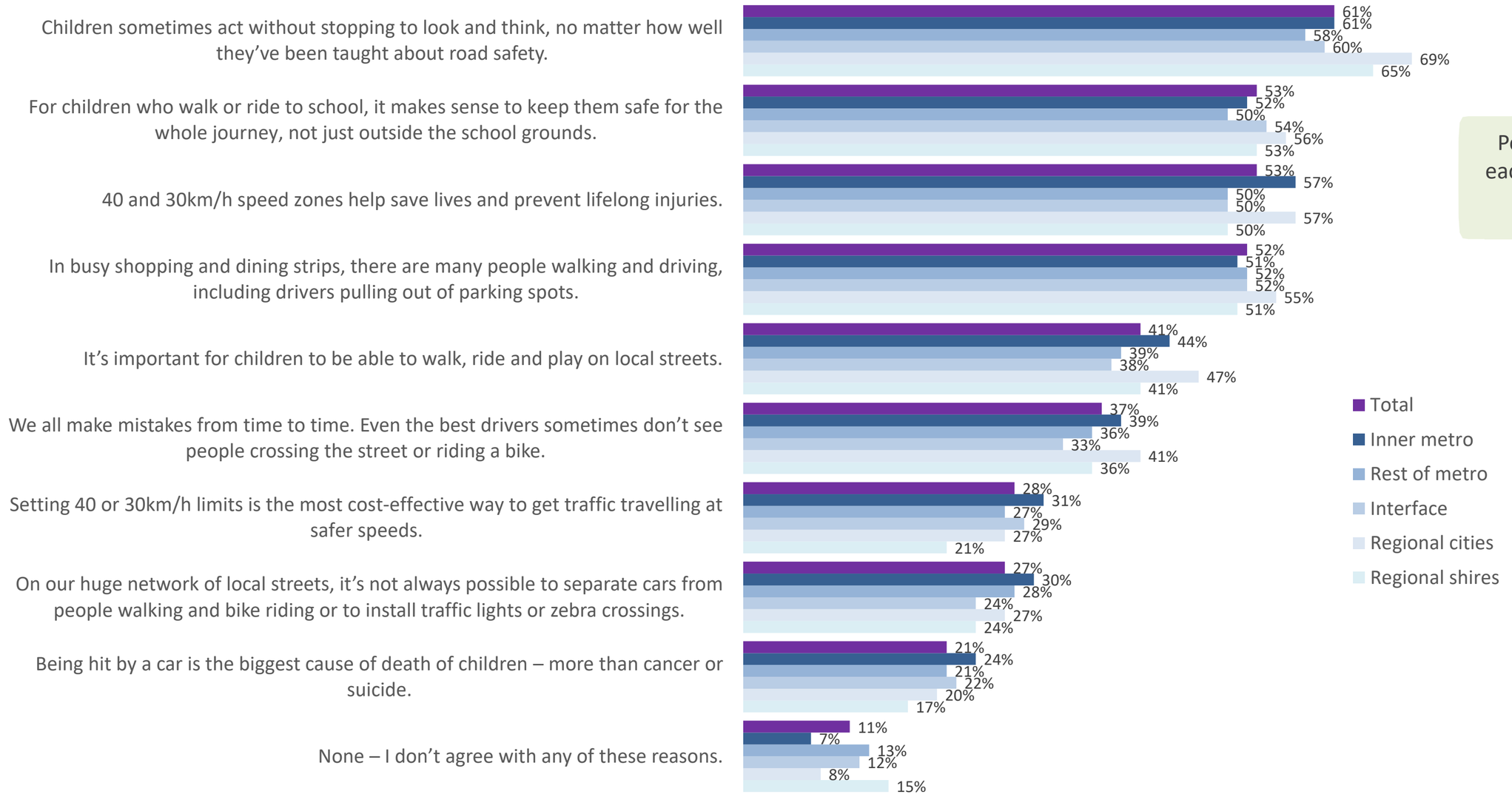


This chart shows the % of the total sample who **chose** each reason

Purple boxes show the % who ranked this reason as no.1

This set of reasons focuses on the **need** for safer speeds.
Safety reasons, especially for children, were chosen as the most important.
(Except "biggest cause of death of children": perhaps not believed)
Cost-effectiveness was chosen much less frequently than safety.

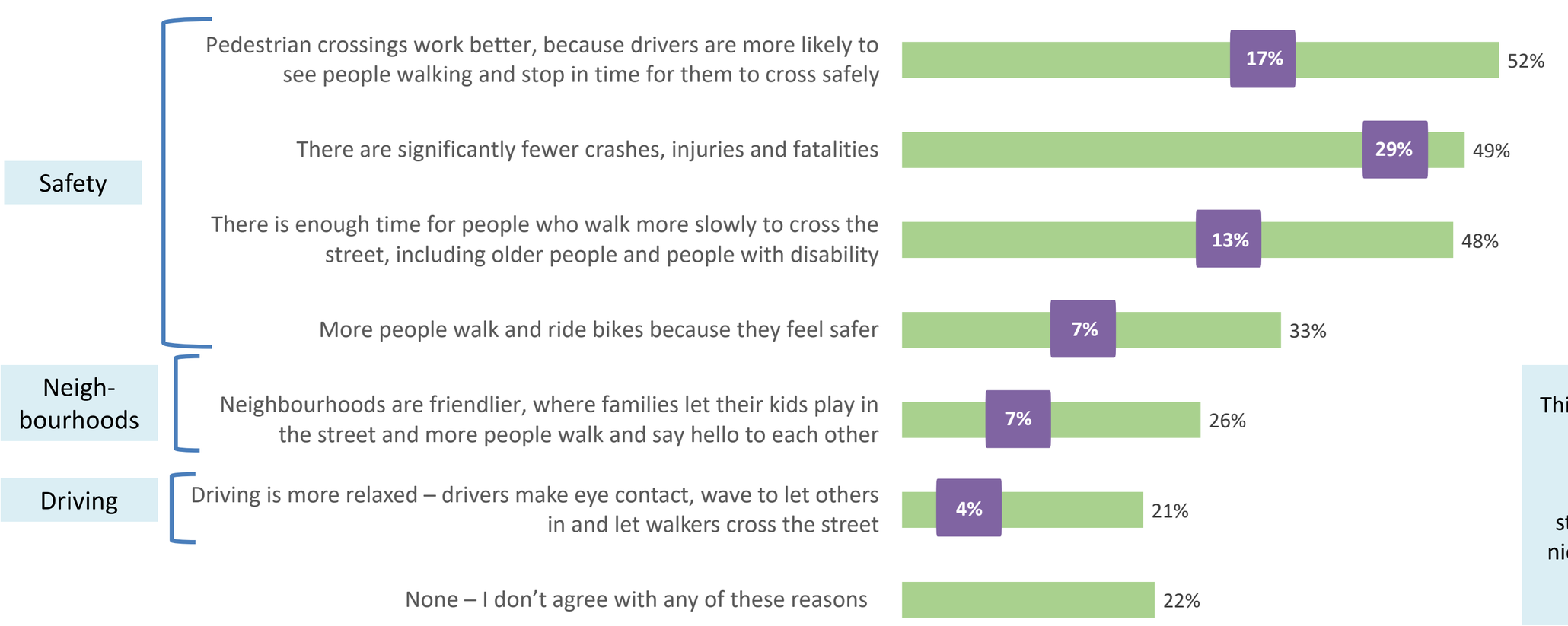
Reasons for support (need) – by region



Percentage of respondents in each council region who agreed with each reason

Reasons for supporting 30km/h zones: benefits

The following are reasons some people support 30km/h zones in local streets.
Please choose UP TO FOUR reasons you believe are the most important.
In areas where the speed limit is 30km/h:



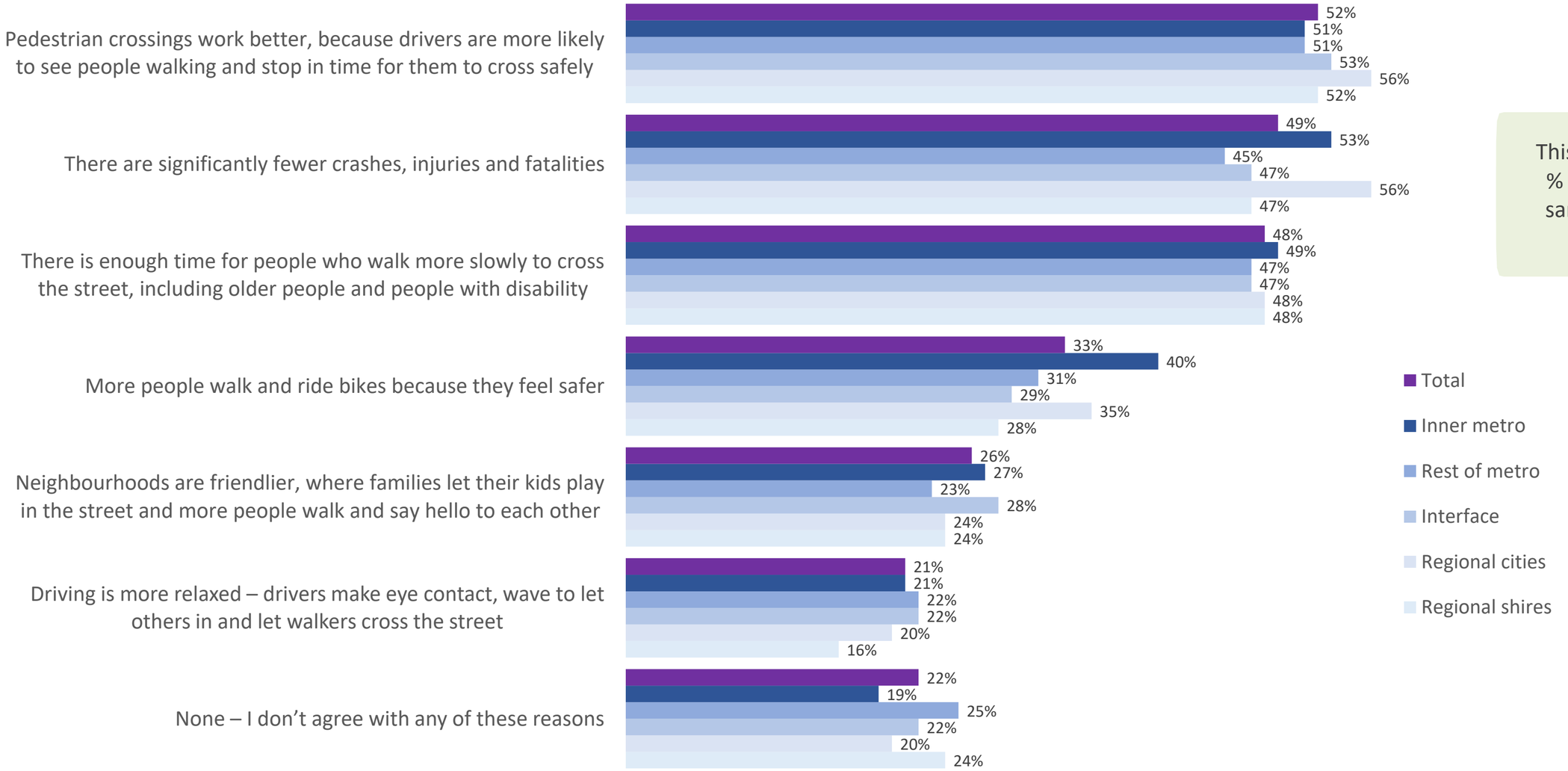
This chart shows the % of the total sample who **chose** each reason

Purple boxes show the % who ranked this reason as no.1

This set of reasons focuses on the **benefits** of safer speeds.

Safety benefits received the strongest support, followed by nicer neighbourhoods, and then driving culture.

Reasons for support (benefits) – by region



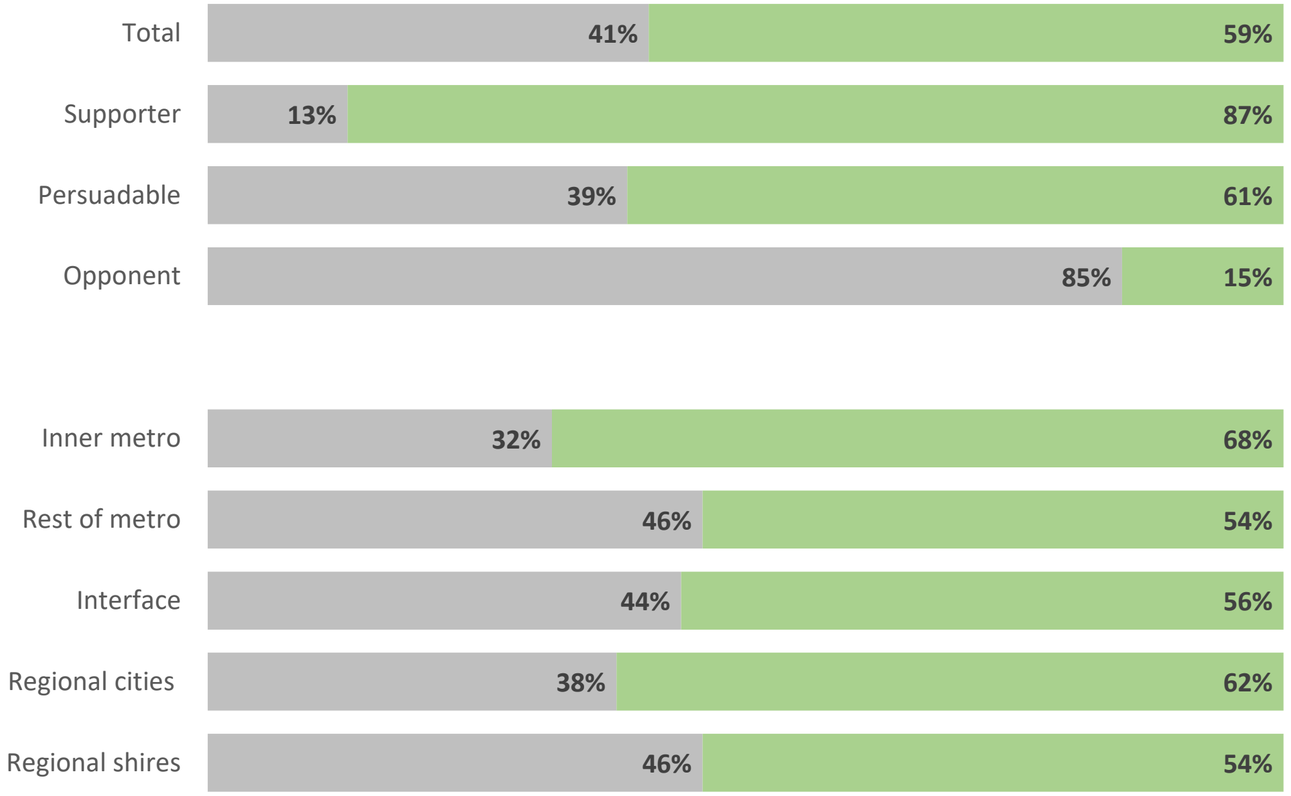
This chart shows the % of each regional sample who **chose** each reason

‘Don’t slow us down’ vs ‘people’s lives’

In this ‘forced choice’ question, respondents were shown two statements and asked “Which statement sounds MOST RIGHT?”
Statement order was randomised.

[INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY + DON’T SLOW US DOWN]

Rather than governments slowing car drivers down, people walking and bike riding should do everything they can to keep themselves safe on our streets.



[GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY + PEOPLE’S LIVES]

Governments should do everything they can to keep people walking and bike riding safe on our streets, because people’s lives are worth more than faster car travel.

‘Reduce speed limits’ vs ‘set safer speeds’

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

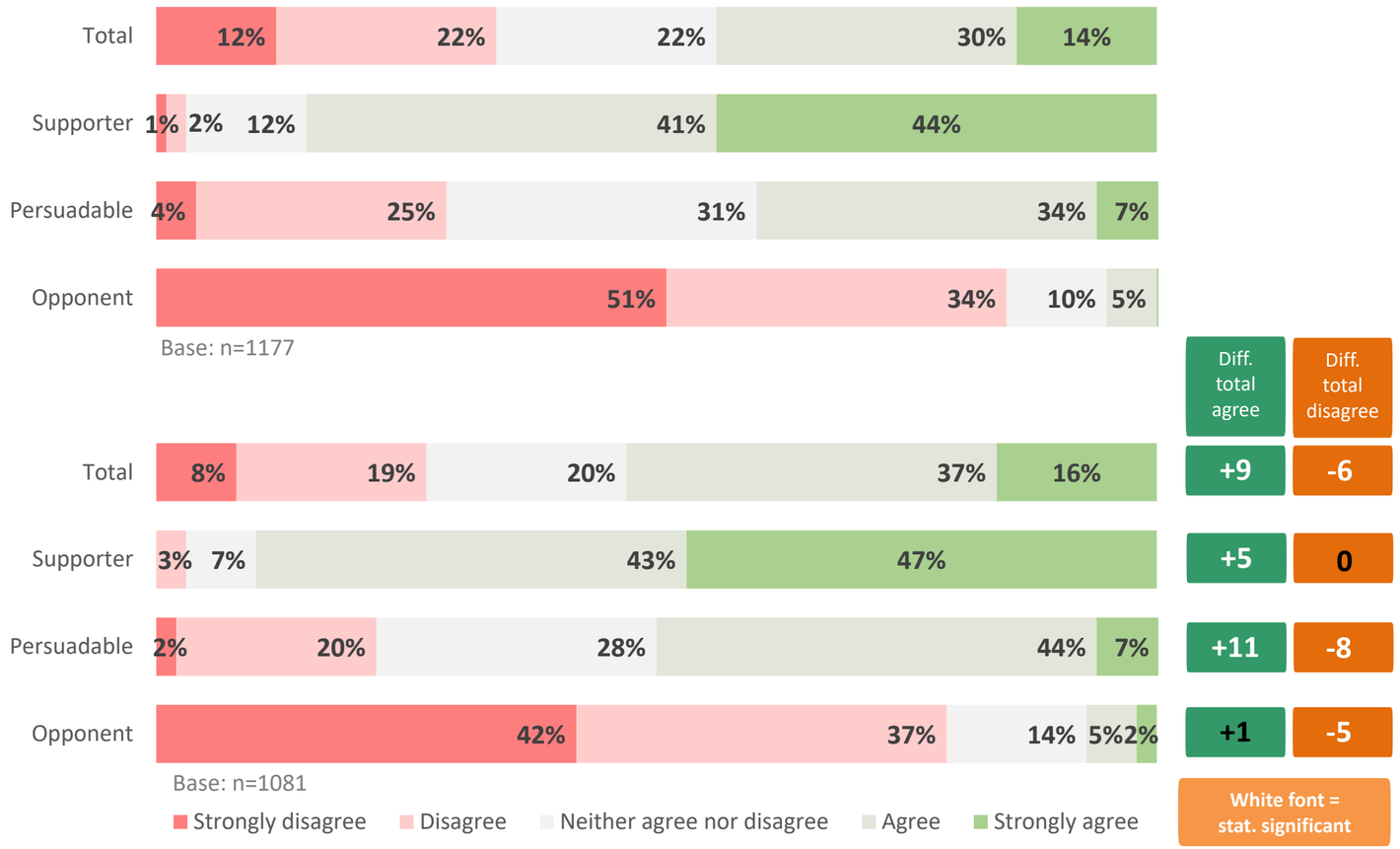
Split-test

50% saw

[REDUCE SPEED LIMITS]
We need to reduce speed limits to 40 or 30km/h on local streets.

50% saw

[SET SAFER SPEEDS]
We need to set safer speeds of 40 or 30km/h on local streets.



More support for “set safer speeds” over “reduce speed limits”.

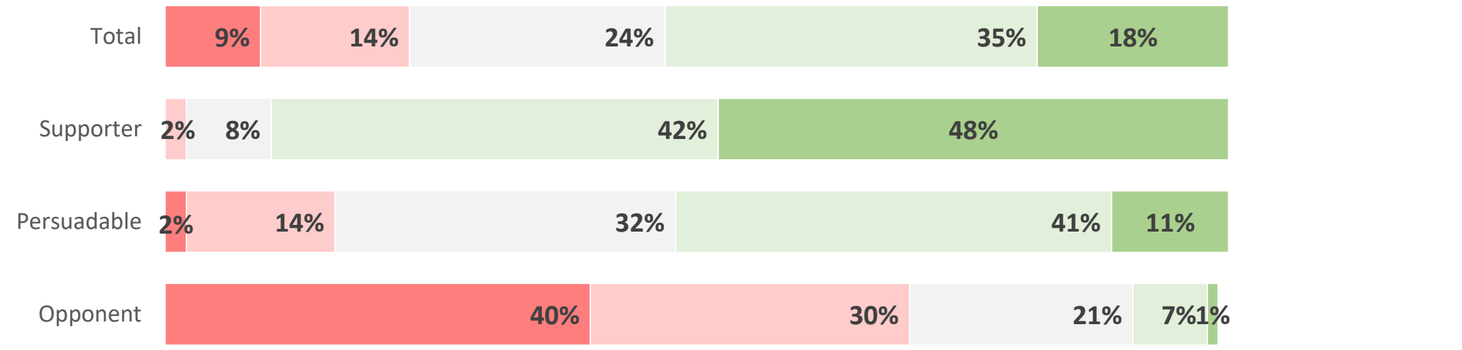
‘Speed limits’ vs ‘speed zones’

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Split-test

50% saw

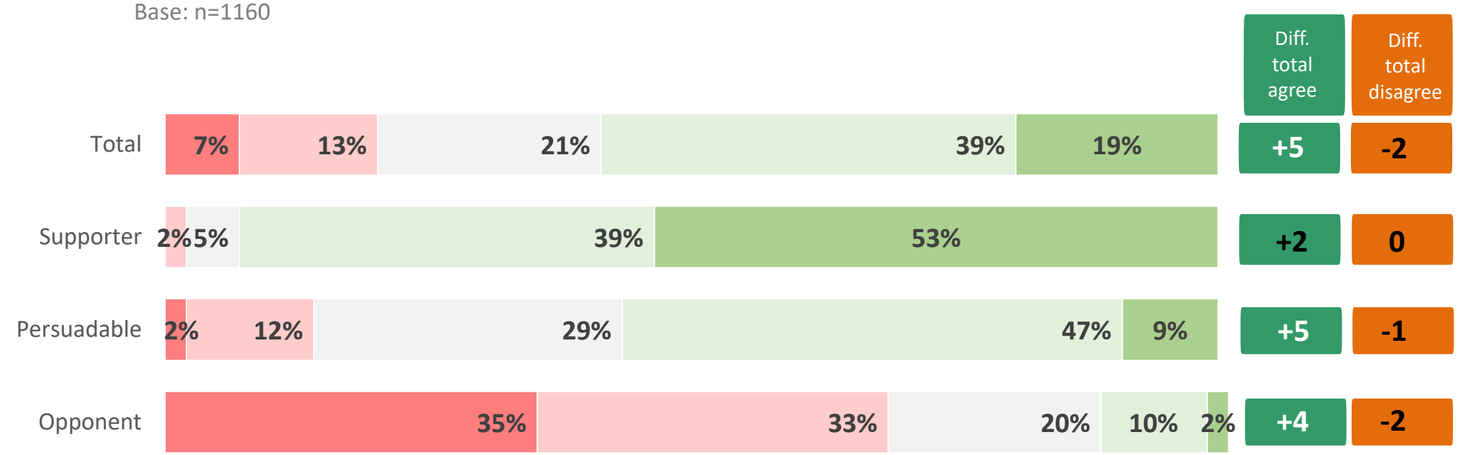
[LIMITS]
30km/h speed limits help keep everyone safe.



Base: n=1160

50% saw

[ZONES]
30km/h speed zones help keep everyone safe.



Base: n=1098

White font = stat. significant

Slightly more support for “zones” over “limits”

Images help

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
I would be more supportive of safer speed zones if they made my local area more attractive.

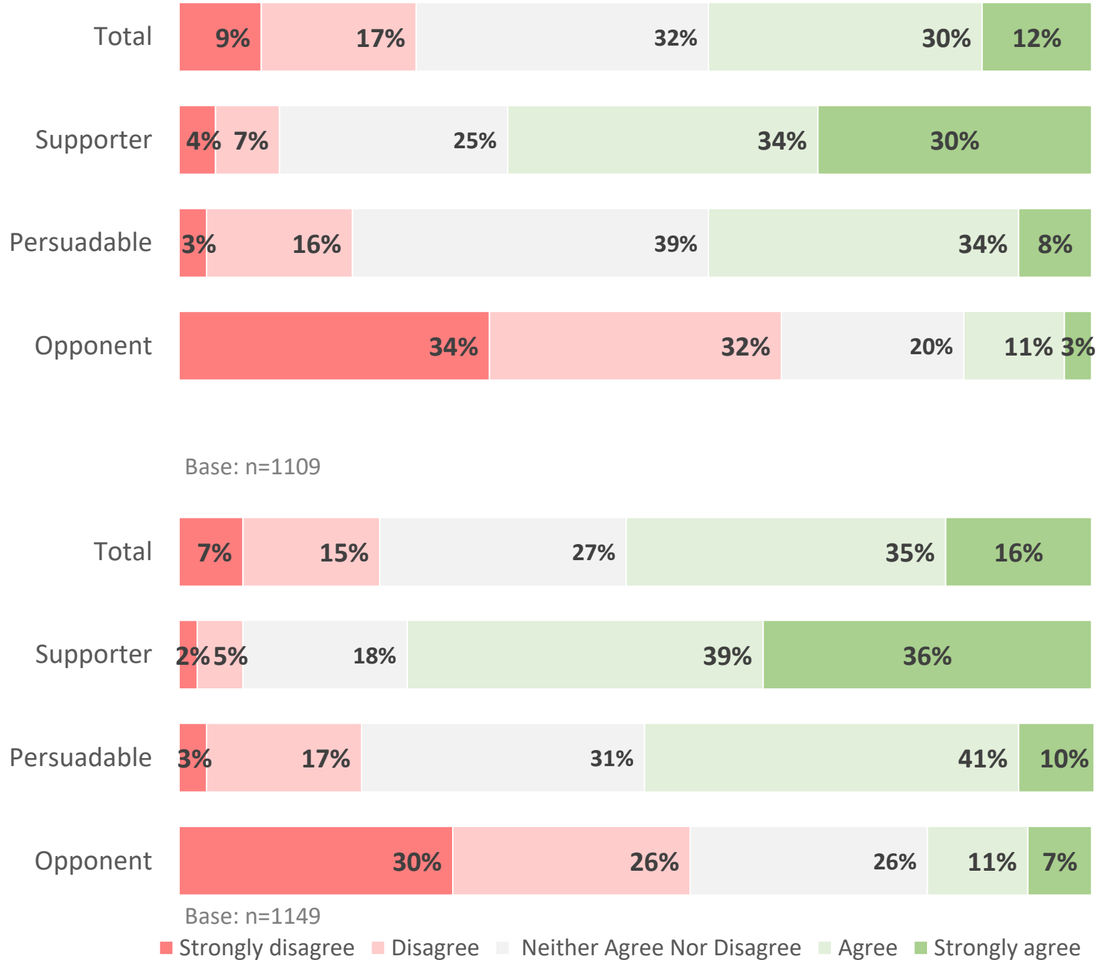
Split-test

Safer speed zones (40 and 30km/h) sometimes include street upgrades, with new landscaping and tree plantings that make local streets more attractive.

50% only saw the written statement

Safer speed zones (40 and 30km/h) sometimes include street upgrades, with new landscaping and tree plantings that make local streets more attractive.

50% saw the picture and statement



Diff. total agree	Diff. total disagree
+9	-4
+11	-4
+9	0
+4	-11

White font = stat. significant

More support for safer speeds in response to the version with the image

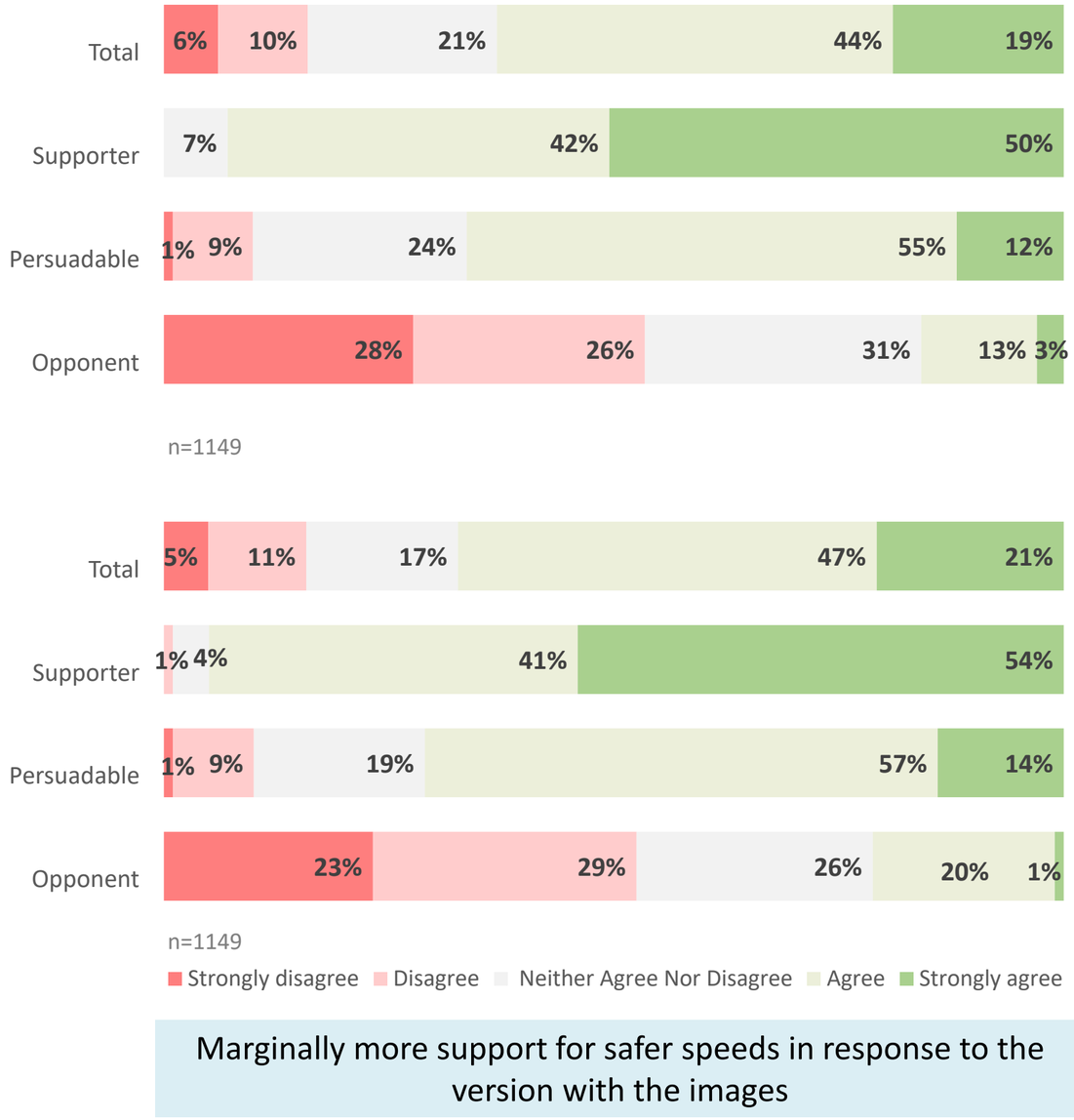
Images help

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Streets with speed limits of 40 or 30km/h help everyone to get around safely.

Split-test

50% did not see any pictures

50% saw two pictures



Diff. total agree	Diff. total disagree
+4	-1
+2	+1
+5	-1
+6	-2

White font = stat. significant

Marginally more support for safer speeds in response to the version with the images

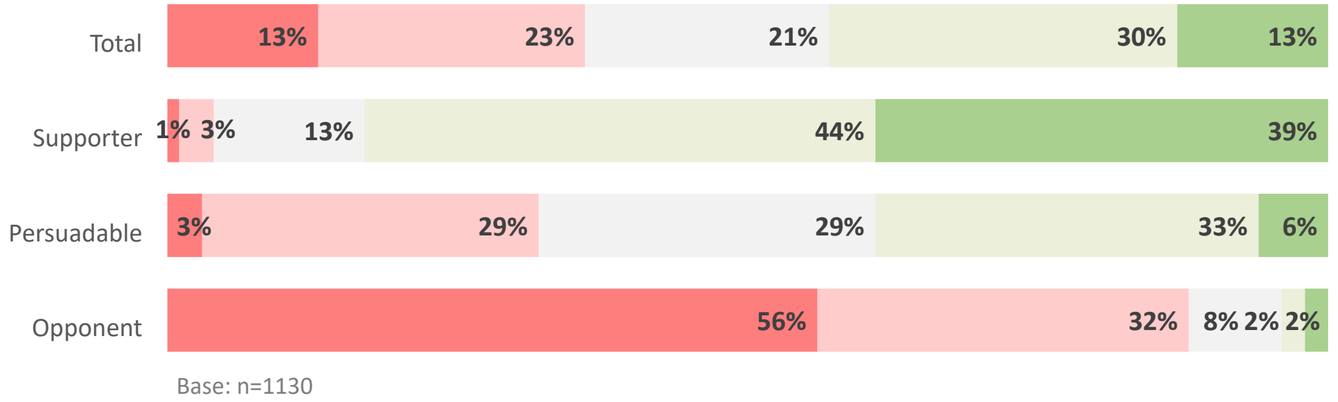
People using a wheelchair

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Split-test

50% saw:

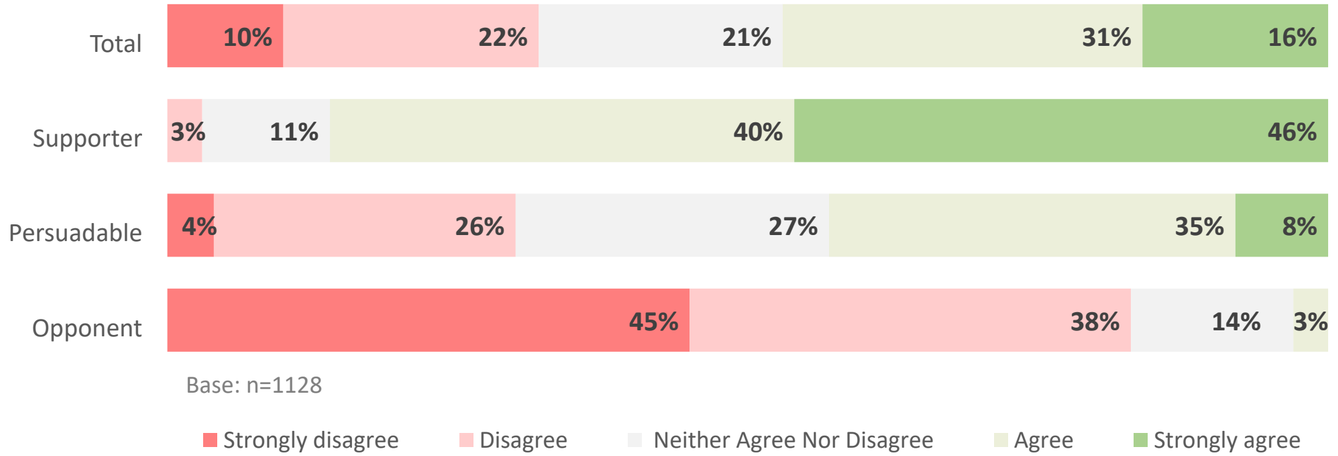
To help people walking or riding a bike to move around safely, more local streets should have a speed limit of 30km/h.



Base: n=1130

50% saw:

To help people walking, **using a wheelchair** or riding a bike to move around safely, more local streets should have a speed limit of 30km/h.



Base: n=1128

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree

	Diff. total agree	Diff. total disagree
Total	+3	-4
Supporter	+3	-2
Persuadable	+4	-2
Opponent	-1	-4

White font = stat. significant

Trends show more support and less opposition.

There was a statistically significant increase in “strongly agree” amongst supporters (hidden by combining “strongly agree” and “agree” into “total agree”).

‘Higher chance of survival’ vs ‘Less chance of dying’

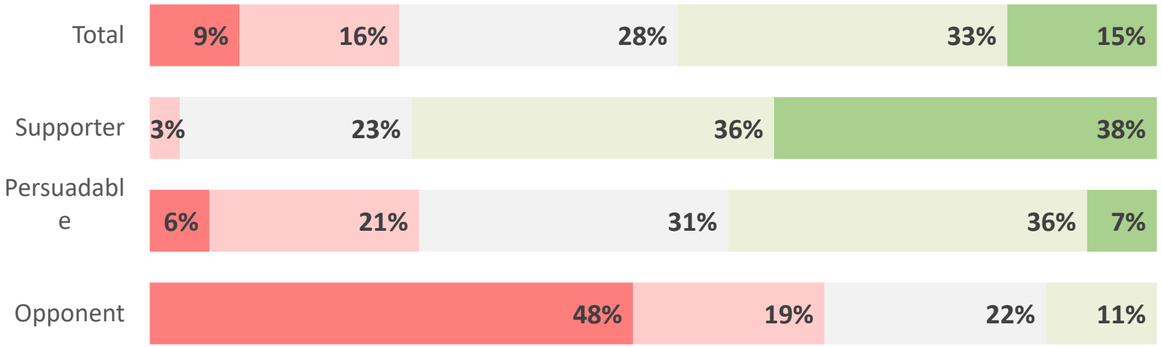
This question was asked only of those respondents who were explain of children aged under 18

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
If cars were travelling at 30 rather than 50km/h, **I would encourage my children to walk more.**

Split-test

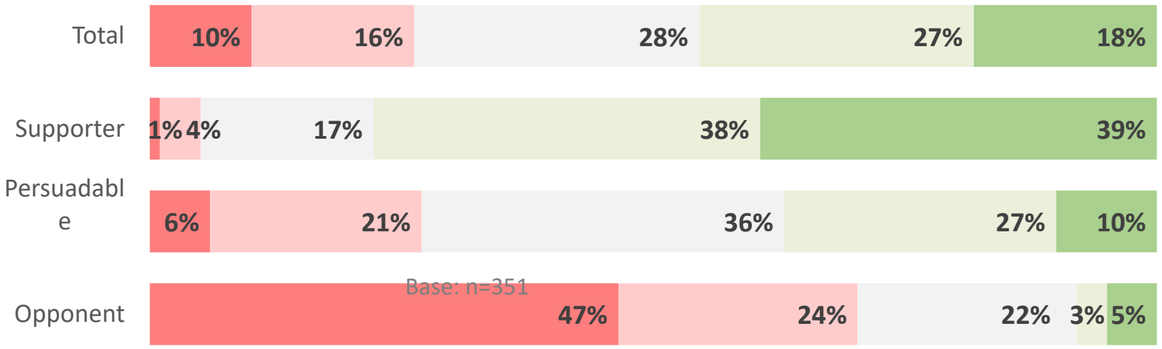
50% saw:

If a person is hit by a car at 30km/h, they have much lower chances of **dying** than if hit at 50km/h.



50% saw:

If a person is hit by a car at 30km/h, they have much higher chances of **surviving** than if hit at 50km/h.



	Diff. total agree	Diff. total disagree
Total	-2	+2
Supporter	+3	+3
Persuadable	-7	0
Opponent	-4	+4

White stat. sig

In this specific case of parents encouraging their children to walk more, “lower chances of dying” was slightly more effective than “higher chances of surviving”.

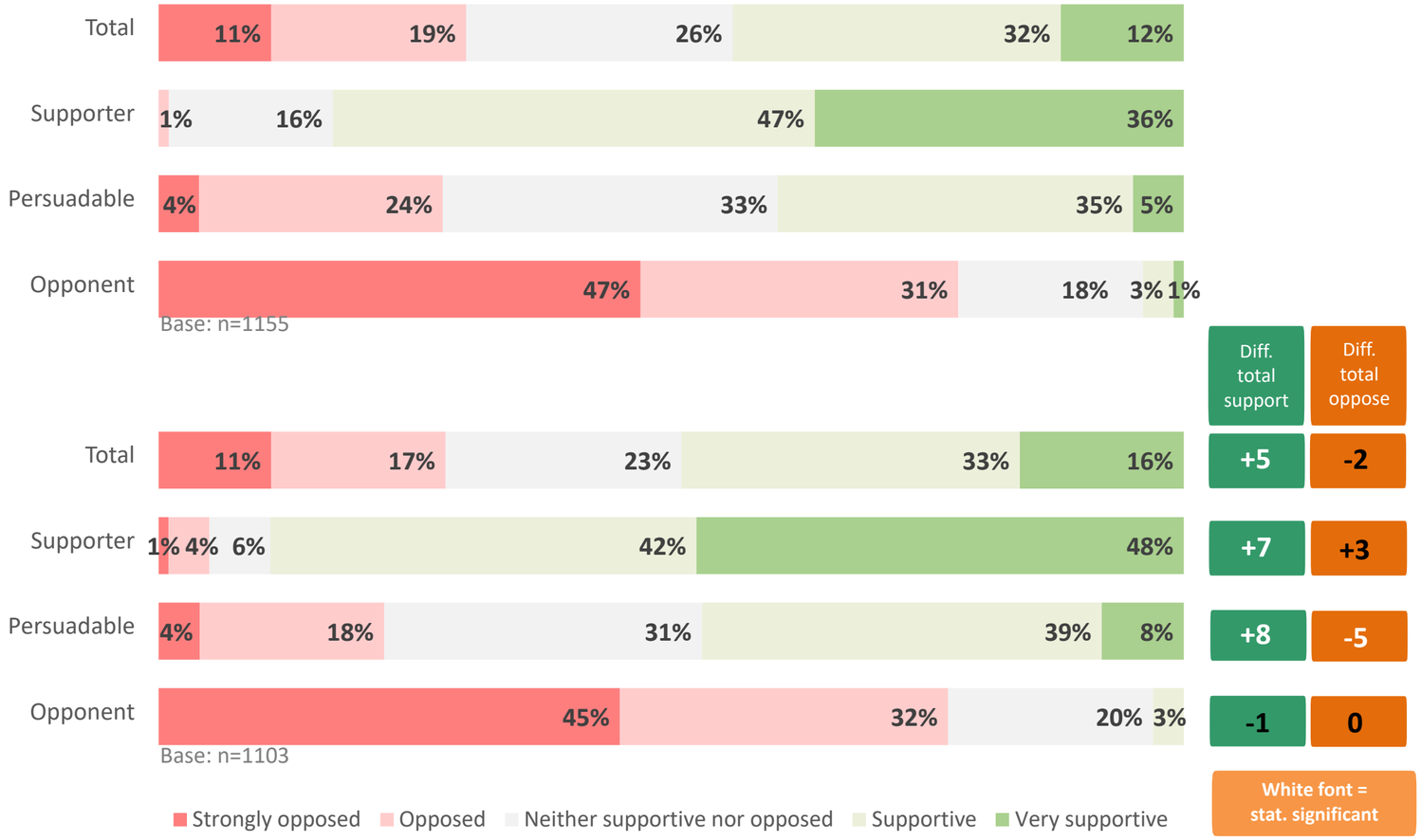
However, in public communications we would still recommend using “surviving”. In order to encourage walking as an activity it is not helpful to pair together the concepts of “walking” and “dying”.

‘We’ll get used to it’ vs ‘Just like we’ve got used to seat belts’

Split-test

Please select the option that best represents how this statement makes you feel about 30km/h speed limits on local streets.

50% saw:
After a few months, most people get used to driving in areas with 30km/h limits. Many people go from being unsure to supporting these zones because they are so much calmer to drive through and safer for everyone.



50% saw:

Safer speed limits of 30km/h are like seat belt laws. The laws were unpopular when they were first introduced, but now we recognise their value in saving lives. In 20 years time, we will value safer speed zones in the same way.

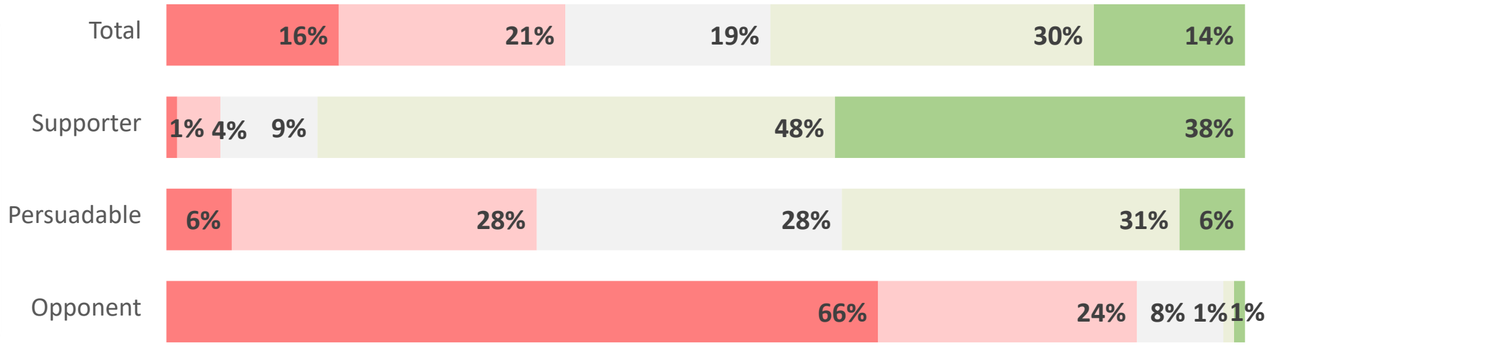
The precedent of ‘just like seat belt laws’ was slightly more effective at generating support for 30km/h speed limits over ‘people get used to 30km/h’ – but both statements resulted in quite high levels of support amongst Supporters and Persuadables.

‘Journey time’ vs ‘walking & riding health benefits’

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I support more 30km/h speed zones in Victoria.

Split-test

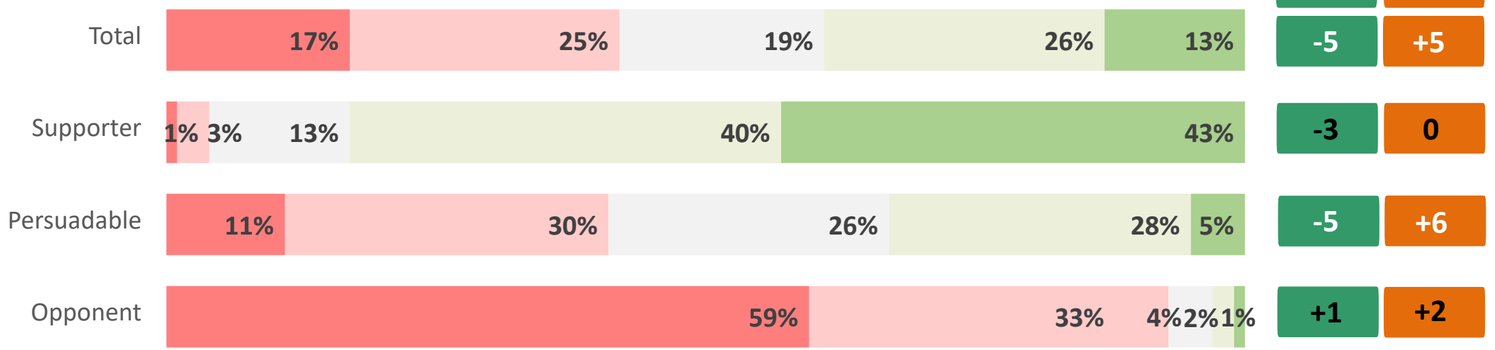
50% saw:
Research shows 30km/h speed limits add only a few seconds to car journeys on local streets.



Base: n=1185

50% saw:

Research shows 30km/h speed limits encourage more walking and bike riding, which are great for our mental and physical health.



Base: n=1073

	Diff. total agree	Diff. total disagree
Total	-5	+5
Supporter	-3	0
Persuadable	-5	+6
Opponent	+1	+2

White font = stat. significant

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree

‘Journey times’ performed marginally better than ‘walking and riding for health benefits’ (perhaps the ‘health benefits’ link to safer speeds was not as clear and compelling).

However, note that safety performed much better than journey times in the earlier questions about reasons for bringing in 30km/h.

General & abstract vs personal story

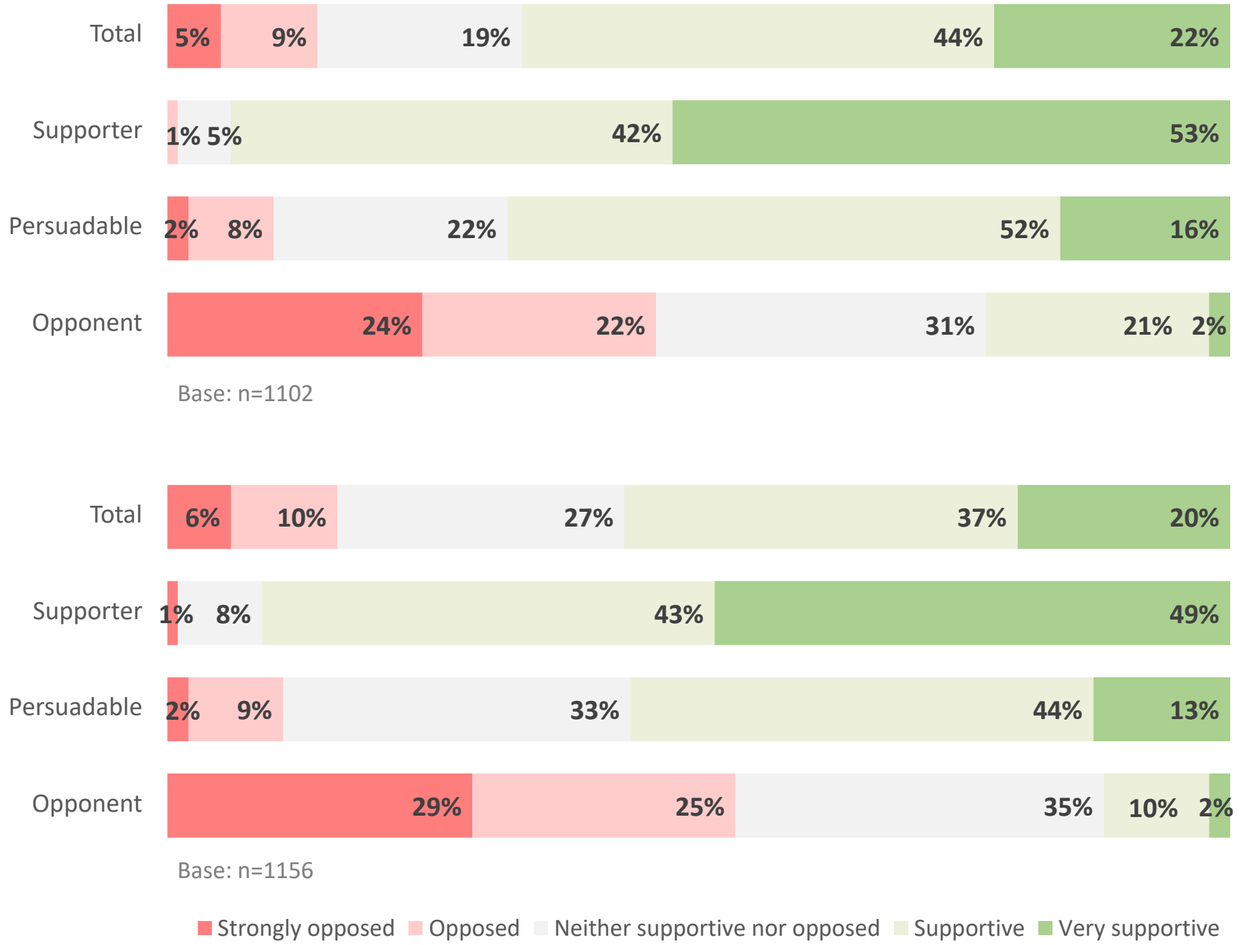
Please select the option that best represents how this statement makes you feel about 30km/h speed limits on local streets.

Split-test

50% saw:
Driving at 30 instead of 50km/h gives car drivers extra reaction time and stopping time to avoid hitting a person crossing the street.

50% saw:

"I hit a person who was crossing the street – I didn't see them until it was too late. If I was driving at 30 instead of 50km/h, I might have seen them and stopped in time." – Sam



	Diff. total support	Diff. total oppose
Total	-10	+2
Supporter	-4	0
Persuadable	-12	0
Opponent	-11	+7

White font = stat. significant

In split tests on many topics, first-person stories told by real or fictional people nearly always perform better than abstract third-person messages.

Here, we found the opposite.

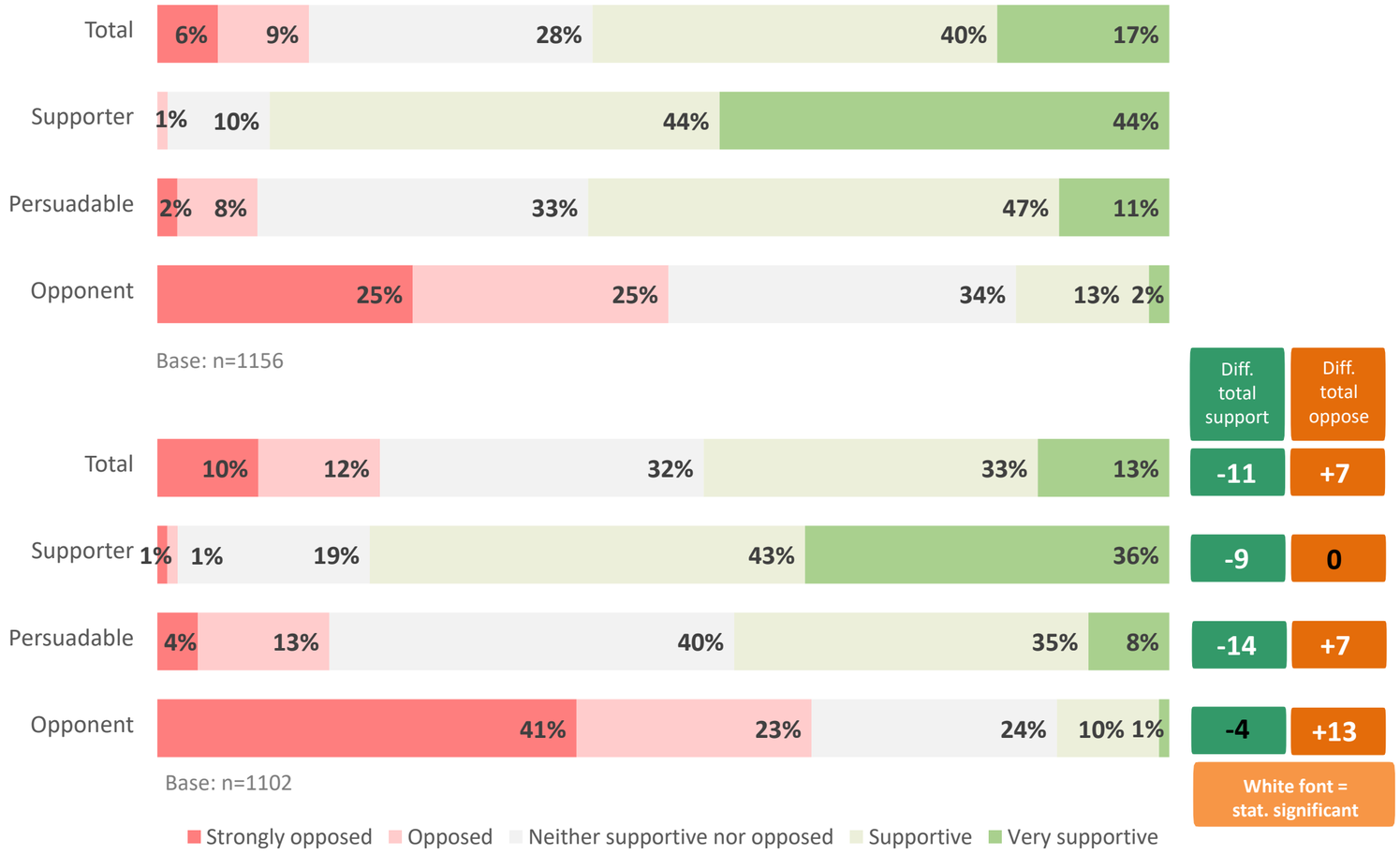
Based on focus group findings, this particular personal account may have been perceived as suggesting driver blame - a 'guilt trip'.

Research findings vs Positive personal experience

Please select the option that best represents how this statement makes you feel about 30km/h speed limits on local streets.

Split-test

50% saw:
Research shows that where the speed limit between home and school is 30km/h, more parents are happy to let their kids walk to school.



50% saw

"Now that the speed limit between our home and school is 30km/h, I'm happy to let my kids walk to school." – Sam.

Similar to the previous question, this particular personal account garnered less support than the abstract statement – perhaps because the latter is a good normalising statement ("more parents").

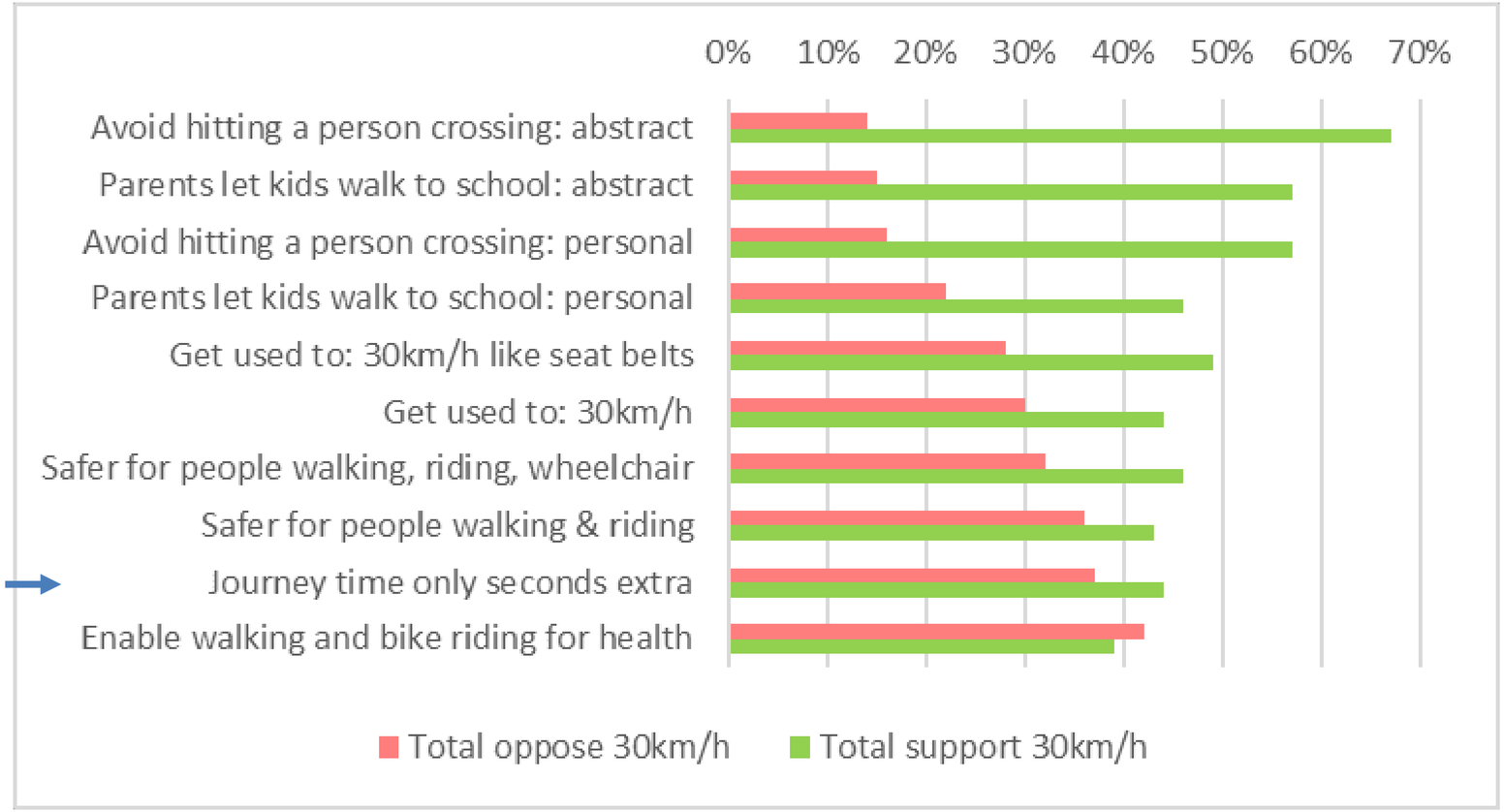
Note that amongst Supporters and Persuadables, **both statements** (abstract and personal) generate much stronger support for 30km/h than opposition.

Again, **children's safety** is an important reason for bringing in safer speeds.

Reasons for 30km/h: summary of split-test statements

This chart shows total levels of support for, and opposition to, 30km/h zones in response to different split-test messages. It shows:

- The effectiveness of messages about **safety**, especially **children's safety**.
- The weakness of the message that safer speeds will only add seconds to vehicle journey times. The reasons at the top of the chart around safety are much more compelling reasons to bring in 30km/h.



Dial Tests

‘Dial test’ explainer

Respondents were randomly assigned to hear two of four 30-second audio messages while a slider button (a ‘dial’) was displayed on their screen. While listening to each message, respondents moved the slider up for things they agreed with or liked, and down for things they disagreed with or disliked.

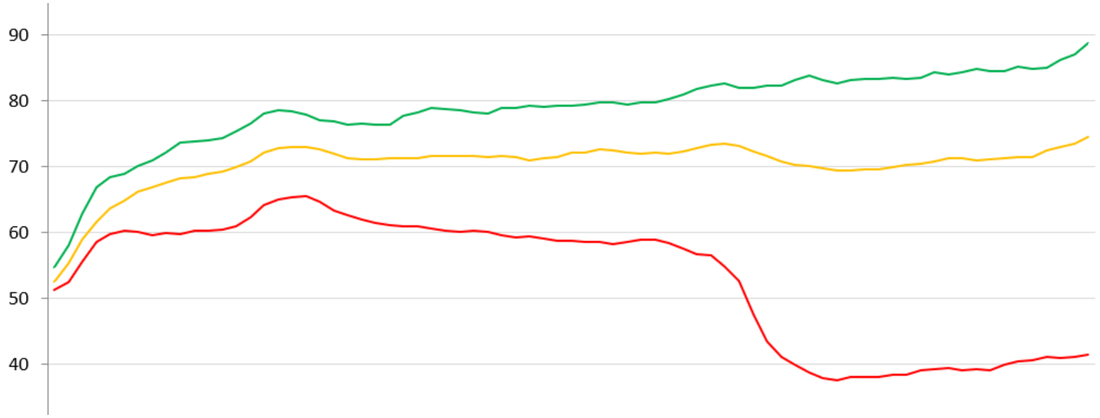
For each message, this allowed us to:

- generate a **graph** of the average moment-by-moment scores of Supporters, shown in green, Persuadables in orange and Opponents in red, between 0 (complete disagreement) and 100 (complete agreement)
- identify **words and phrases that boosted or reduced support** for safer speeds.

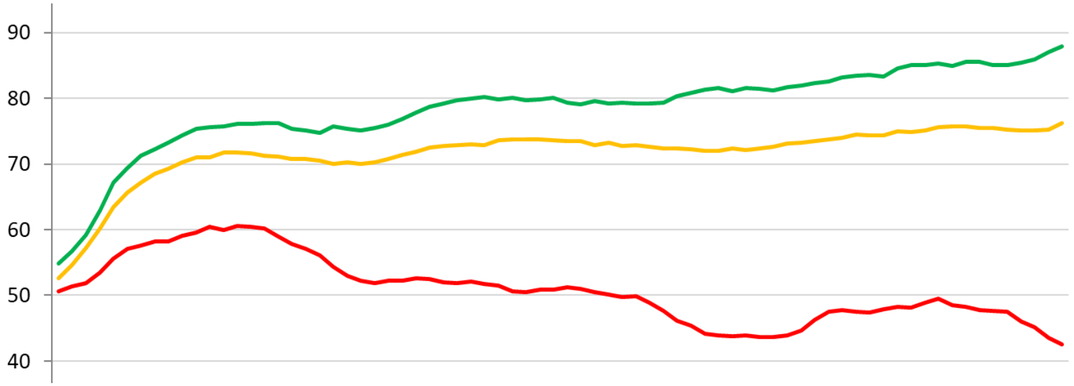
At the completion of each message, respondents were also asked to rate how convincing they found the message, on a scale from 0 to 100. The average scores for each audience segment of Supporters, Persuadables and Opponents are shown overleaf.

How convincing, out of 100? Very similar results across all four messages

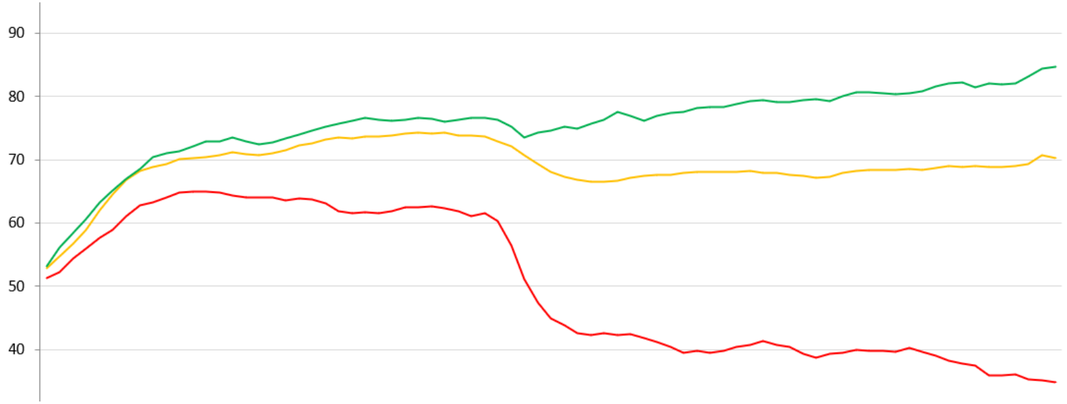
‘Together’ 86 69 35



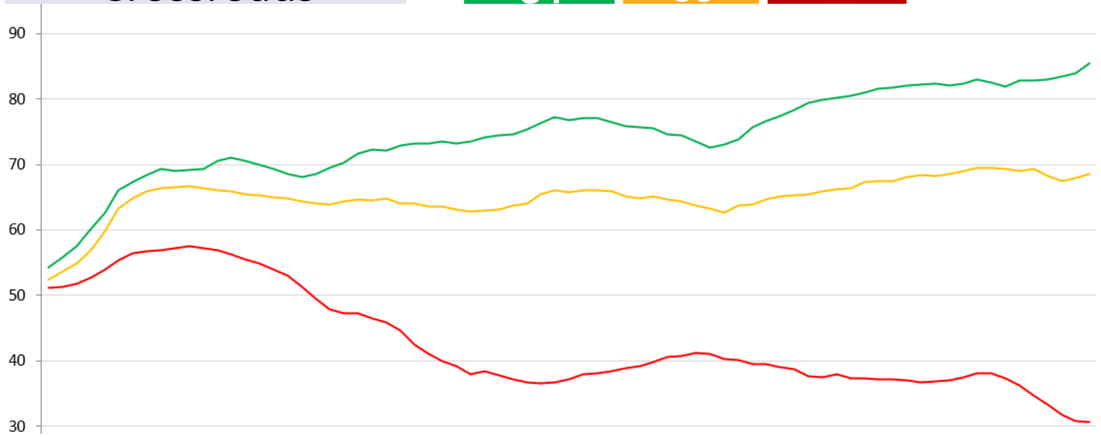
‘Equity’ 86 70 35



‘Neighbourhoods’ 83 67 33



‘Crossroads’ 84 66 33



‘Together’

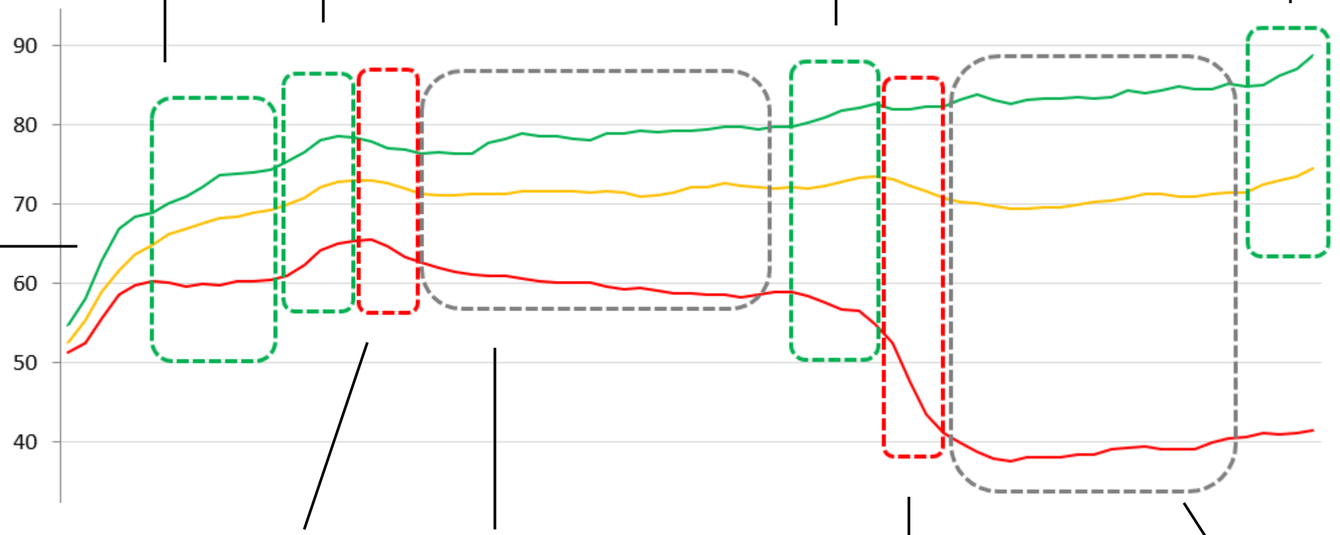
Supporters and Persuadables dial up at “people of all ages and abilities move around on our streets”, while Opponents flatline

All up at “we want our loved ones to come home safely”

Supporters and Persuadables up at “it’s much easier to look after each other”; Opponents down

A strong finish for Supporters and Persuadables: “create streets that are safer for everyone”

All dial up at the inclusive, positive vision: “Let’s keep everyone safe on our streets”



All dial down slightly at the problem: “we all make mistakes from time to time…”

Supporters and Persuadables recover at “…and that shouldn’t cost us our health or our lives”

Persuadables dial down at “when we’re travelling at 40 or 30km/h” (Supporters flatline and Opponents dive)

All gradually track up at “It’s one more way we take care of each other, helping to save lives and prevent lifelong injuries”

Moment-by-moment analysis of a dial message.

The most effective phrases result in both Supporters and Persuadables dialing up.

All four dial messages were analysed in this way in order to generate the insights overleaf.

Dial test insights

Concepts and wording that **boosted support** amongst Supporters and Persuadables

- Beginning with inclusive (“everyone”) and visionary statements that are hard to argue against, e.g. “Let’s keep everyone safe”; “Everyone should be able to move around our streets safely”; “Everyone should be able to enjoy the places where they live, work and play”
- Safety, including showing that “safer speed zones” or “40 and 30km/h zones in Victoria” work well: “crashes, injuries and fatalities have dropped significantly.”
- Inclusiveness: “Whether we’re walking, bike riding or driving.”
- Equity: children and older people: “We need to plan for the 8 year old and the 80 year old…”
- Equity, linked to walking and riding: “Walking and bike riding are essential for many people to move around, including children, older people, people with disability, and people who can’t afford to own a car.”
- Paint the picture of nicer neighbourhoods: “enjoy”; “where people walk their dogs, connect with their neighbours and enjoy outdoor dining in vibrant town centres”; “where it’s much safer and more pleasant to walk, ride a bike or drive.”
- We have the solutions: “safer speed zones that have been proven to work, where it’s much safer and more pleasant…”
- (slight boost) people driving “treat each other with more patience and respect”
- NOTE: responses to the dial messages show there is no need to offer self-interest ‘rewards’ to people driving. e.g. see effectiveness of “everyone” and equity messages.

Concepts and wording that **reduced support** amongst Supporters and Persuadables

- Problems, especially pointing to driving being a problem, e.g. “we all make mistakes from time to time“; “many people say car traffic goes too fast in their local area”; “…mostly designed streets for cars to travel fast. Too often this has come at the expense of human lives”; “causes more harm.”
- Mentioning the specifics of what we mean by “safer speeds”, i.e. “40 or 30km/h” – although support quickly recovers when we point to the significant drops in crashes, fatalities and injuries.
- In general, Supporters like change but Persuadables (and especially Opponents) don’t, e.g. “it’s time to reset speeds”. “Reset” highlights change, so it is better to use “set” as in the earlier survey questions.

Movement: From survey start to end

‘Movement’ explainer

Shifts in levels of support for safer speeds were measured by comparing initial responses with final responses to a few key questions.

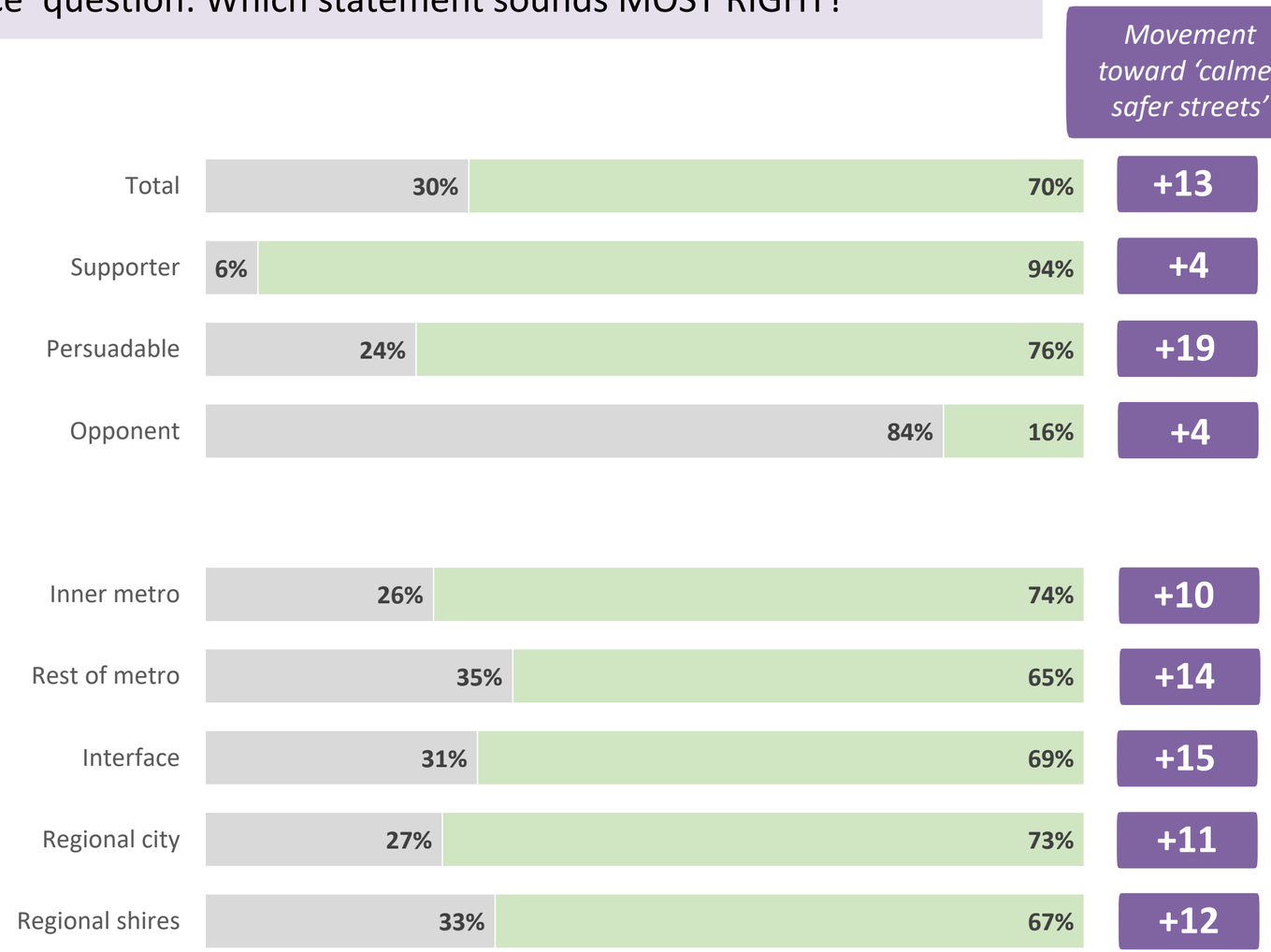
Throughout the survey, respondents were exposed to our case for safer speeds: a range of values-based reasons for bringing in safer speeds, as well as two audio messages that Supporters and Persuadables found quite convincing.

At the end of the survey, all respondents were again asked a few key attitudinal questions they had answered near the start of the survey before we presented our case. This allowed us to measure changes in levels of support before and after hearing our case.

Driving there quickly vs calmer safer streets

‘Forced choice’ question: Which statement sounds MOST RIGHT?

[GETTING THERE QUICKLY]
We need to keep 50km/h speed limits on local streets, so that people driving can get where they need to go quickly.



[CALMER SAFER STREETS]
We need calmer local streets with safer speed limits (40 or 30km/h), so that more people can walk or ride bikes safely.

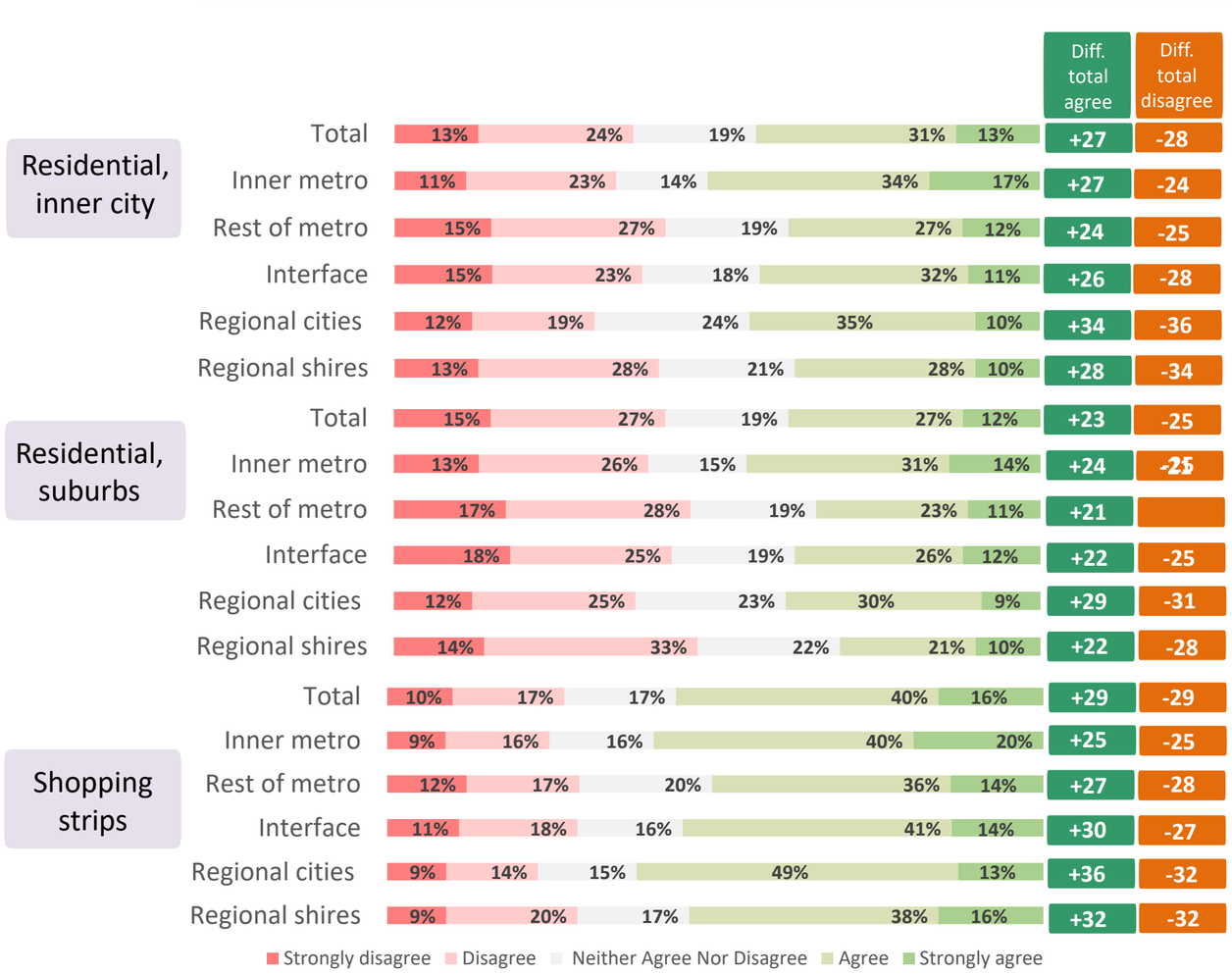
Results show a very clear preference for 40 and 30km/h when framed in terms of calmer safer streets and supporting more people to walk and ride, against ‘drivers getting there quickly’.

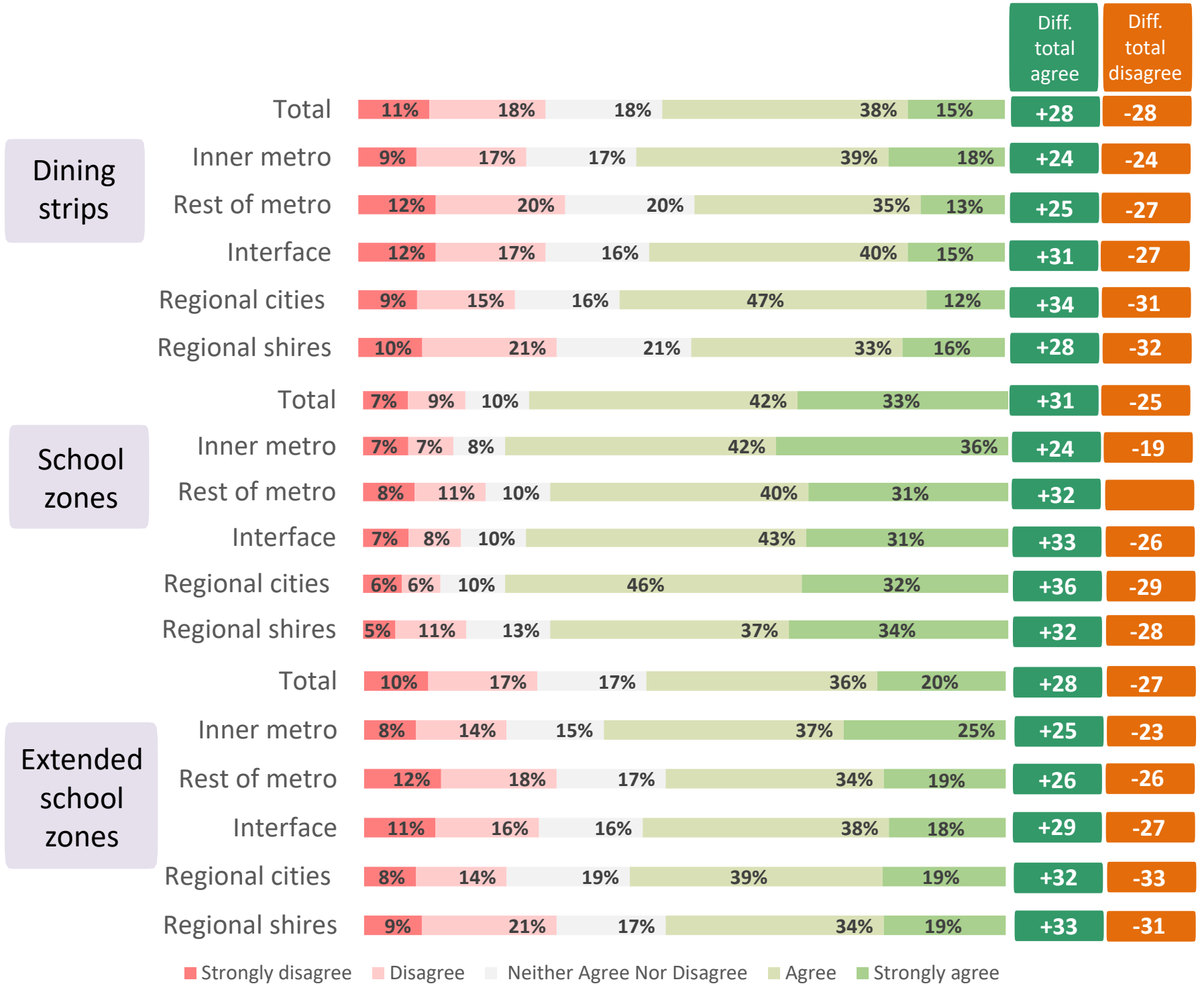
Large boosts in support by the end of the survey, across all regions.

Where 30 km/h is appropriate

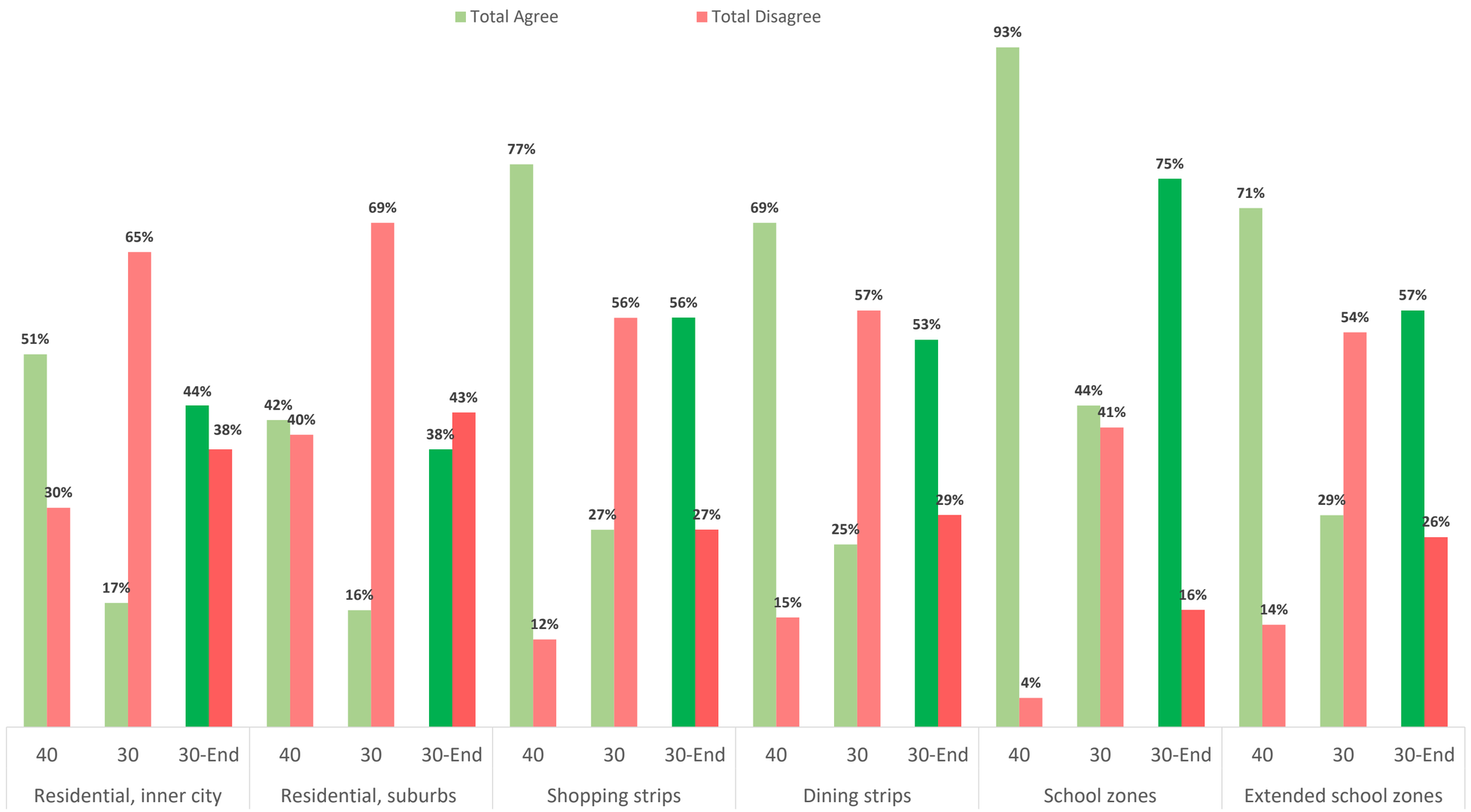
Very large increases in agreement and reductions in disagreement, in **all regions**, across **all types of streets.**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below?
The following types of streets should have a speed limit of 30km/h:





40 vs 30km/h: where appropriate



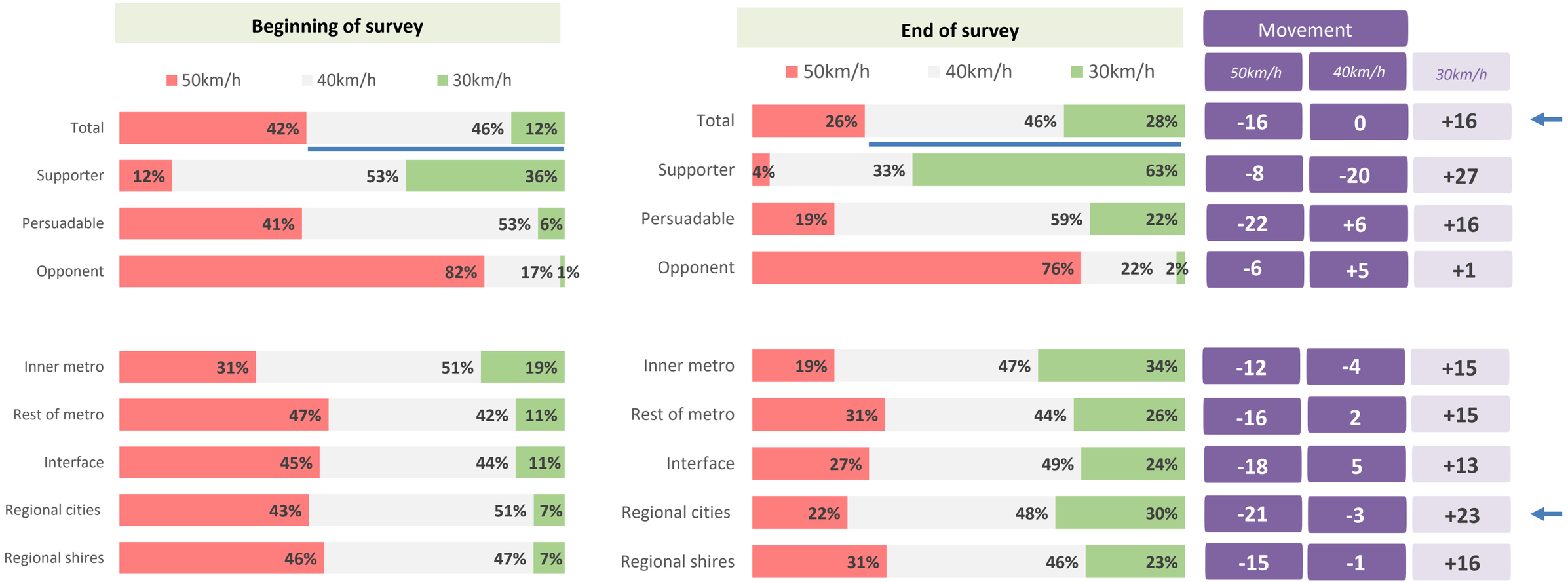
‘40’ and ‘30’ = responses at start of survey
‘30-End’ & bolder colours = at end of survey

By the end of the survey there is a huge boost in ‘agree’ and reduction in ‘disagree’ with 30km/h limits for all types of streets.

Much more support for 30km/h

Purple boxes show the shift in preference for these speeds, at the end of the survey.

Which option below seems MOST RIGHT to you?
Local streets shared by people walking, bike riding and driving should have a speed limit of: 50km/h, 40 km/h, 30 km/h



The ‘acid test’: a forced choice question requiring people to choose only one answer. At the start of the survey, there is strong support in Inner Metro for 40 and 30km/h. In the other regions, support is fairly evenly spread between 50 and 40km/h, with much lower levels of support for 30km/h. **By the end of the survey**, there are 13-23% increases in support for 30km/h across all regions**. Overall, safer speeds are strongly preferenced: 40km/h (46%) and 30km/h (28%) giving a total of 74%**, compared with 50km/h (26%).

Messaging recommendations

Safer speeds of 40 and 30km/h is **a relatively new issue** for many people (slightly less so in Inner Metro, where support is already higher). The survey shows very conclusively that **people are open to considering the reasons for and benefits of safer speeds**. This is what our messaging should focus on. In more detail:

- Safety first. Safety is the most compelling reason for 40 and 30km/h.
- Use the diagram showing safety stats (pedestrian survival) at 30, 40, 50 km/h. It generates strong support for 40 and especially 30km/h even though we're mentioning those specific speeds.
- Follow a values-based messaging approach, starting with inclusive, visionary statements that are hard to argue against, e.g. "Let's keep everyone safe".
- Talk about 'safer speeds' wherever possible. Support drops when we mention '40 or 30km/h' – although it quickly recovers when linked with the significant drops in crashes, fatalities and injuries.
- Use images to illustrate what safer streets look like, and the people who benefit from them.
- Children's safety and independence is a winner; strong support for safer speeds in school zones.
- Mentioning older people and people with disability also boosts support
- Creating nicer neighbourhoods is an important reason for bringing in 40 and 30km/h.
- Avoid: guilt inducing, or 'guilt trip' "I hit someone crossing the street".

- Short simple explanations help, e.g. *" pedestrian crossings work better <u>because</u> drivers are more likely to see people walking and stop in time for them to cross safely."*
- The impact on driver journey times is not something helpful to highlight and so shouldn't be our lead statement, but a short statement and simple explanation could follow later in our communication. e.g. *"… and safer speeds have very little impact on car journey times <u>because</u> xyz" (cars are already going quite slowly here; stopping at intersections and lights is what slows us down).*
- We can also recast driver journey times*: "People's lives are more important than drivers getting around quickly".* Survey propositions about 'drivers getting where they need to go quickly' performed poorly when put head-to-head against safety propositions.

This report is part of the *Safer Speeds Communication Toolkit* prepared by Dr Eleanor Glenn, from Common Cause Australia, Duane Burtt (Project Manager) and Dr Ben Rossiter of Victoria Walks, and Geoff Oulton from the Municipal Association of Victoria, March 2025.

Victoria Walks Inc is a walking health promotion charity. Our vision is healthier, connected communities through more people walking more every day.

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