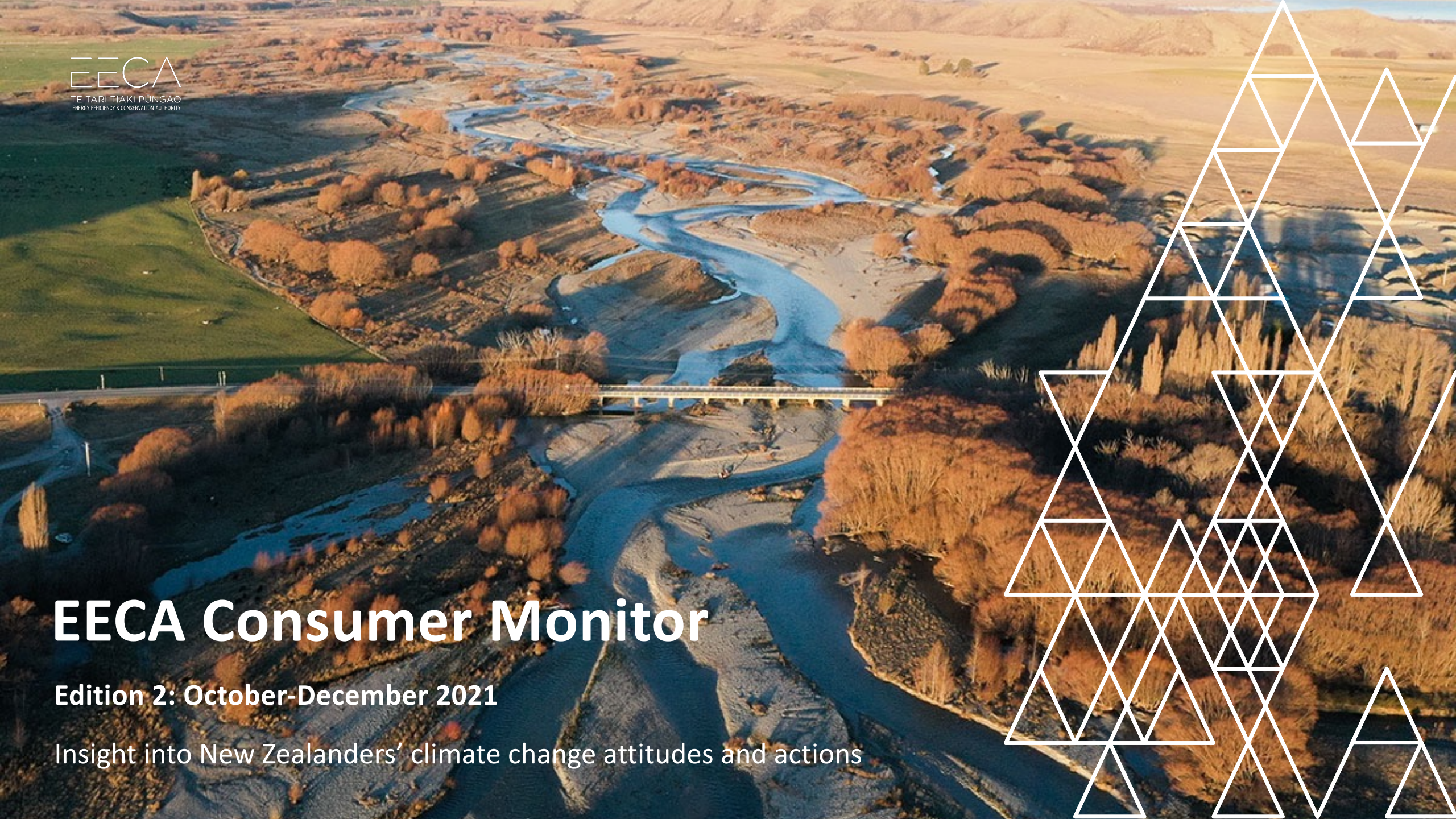


EECA Consumer Monitor

Edition 2: October-December 2021

Insight into New Zealanders' climate change attitudes and actions

Background

EECA's market research programme monitors the mood of the nation relating to climate change, energy emissions and efficiency and topics like electric vehicles.

We use insights from three key sources to track New Zealanders' response to key issues and initiatives relevant to EECA and to track how we're going vs our strategic focus areas.

1. CONSUMER MONITOR

Every quarter, we survey 750 adult New Zealanders to track their beliefs, behaviours and attitudes to climate change and energy. The representation of these respondents is ensured across age, gender and region.

3. BUSINESS MONITOR

Every six months, we survey 500 New Zealand businesses, sampling business decision makers who are responsible for energy, transport or HR decisions. This report is available separately.

2. CULTURAL OVERLAY AND RADAR

Every quarter, we review New Zealanders' comments on articles from mainstream news sources, and social media. A 'non-filtered' approach to understand how New Zealanders' views are changing via listening to day-to-day conversations. Natural language processing and machine learning is used to achieve this.

This research is conducted by TRA. TRA is an insight agency that combines understanding of human behaviour with intelligent data capability to help clients navigate uncertainty and answer complex problems.

Overview

Our belief in climate change is at a historic high. Actions to highlight the issue do seem to be having an effect.

But disruptions from COVID-19 and immediate financial pressures mean New Zealanders are less likely to prioritise climate change. Near term pressures are outweighing what can be seen as a longer term issue.

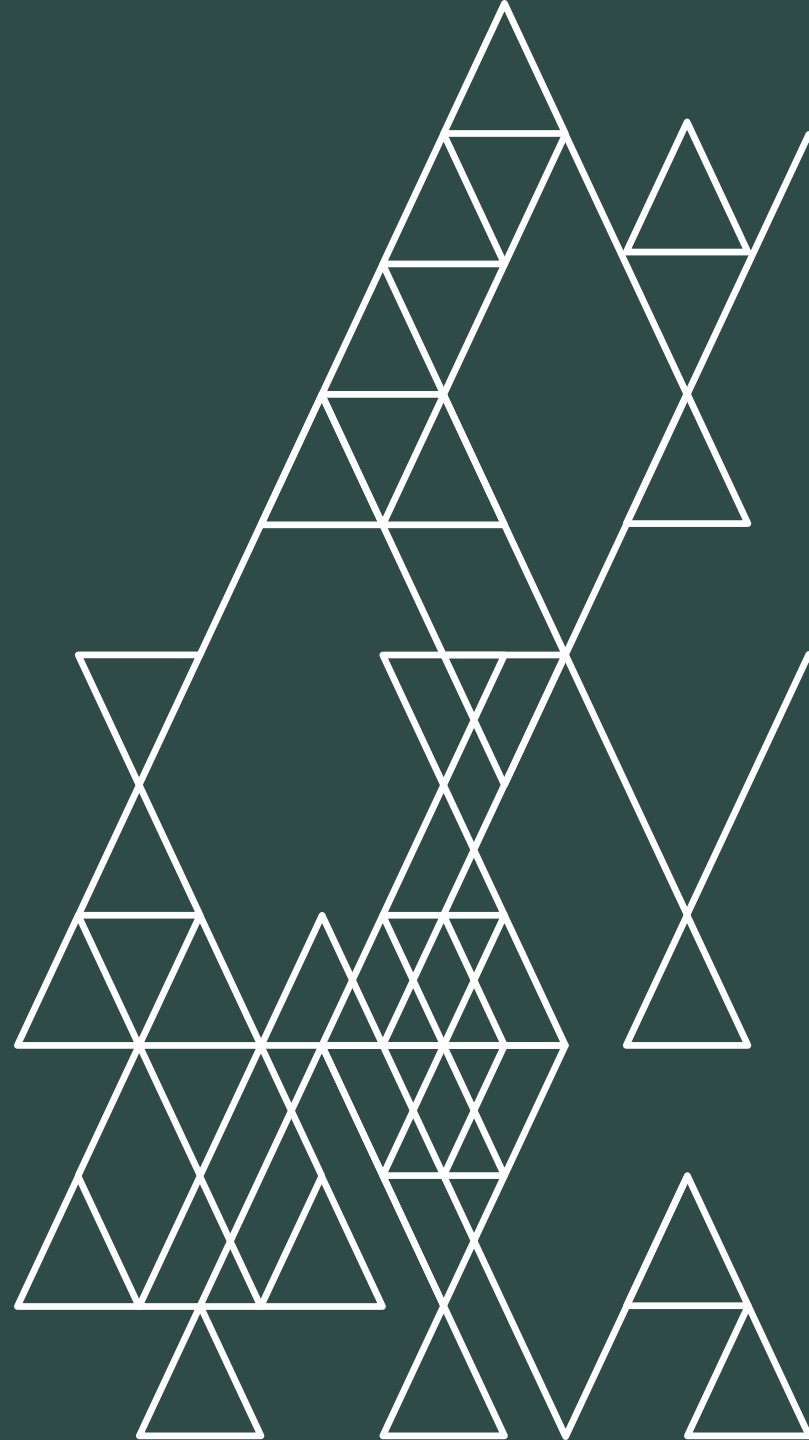
While these financial pressures present a challenge for New Zealanders being able to prioritise climate change, they also mean that people are taking actions that control emissions. We see increases in limiting use of petrol/diesel vehicles and flights - but a corresponding decrease in limiting energy use at home.

The challenge will be how we can link these behaviours to their positive effect on climate change. And then use this link to reinforce these behaviours, form habits, or take further actions.

There is still a widespread and persistent lack of understanding as to which actions have most impact on climate change. Transport will be a key area to focus on. More and more people say they are limiting their use of transport, but knowledge of transport's impact on climate change is not growing.

We must continue to guide people on the small steps they can take and, importantly, reinforce the impact that they have on climate change. Capitalising the opportunity from behaviour that is occurring naturally is a priority.

Current New Zealand Landscape



The landscape over the last six months …

COVID-19, policy changes, protests and natural disasters are the key media stories in the last six months

2021
NIWA reports that 2021 was New Zealand's hottest year on record, passing the previous record set in 2016. There were no months that experienced below average temperatures over the course of the year

JUL 1st - 31st
Hottest July ever on record globally. Extreme flooding in Germany and China. Fires in California.

JUL 18th
Flooding in Westport, the worst in decades

JUL 23rd
Trans-Tasman bubble suspended

SEP 21st
Auckland moves to Level 3

OCT 31st – NOV 12th
The COP 26 UN Climate Change Conference took place in the UK, attended by New Zealand's climate change minister James Shaw

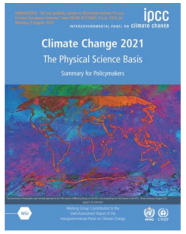
NOV 12th
The government announced climate standards for new government buildings.

Dates survey was live: 18 Oct to 7 Dec

JUL 1st
Clean Car Discount begins

JUL 12th
COVID-19 vaccinations become mandatory for all border staff including Port and Airport workers

AUG 6th
IPCC 2021 report released



AUG 17th
NZ moves to Level 4 Lockdown

SEP 7th
NZ (except Auckland) moves to Level 2

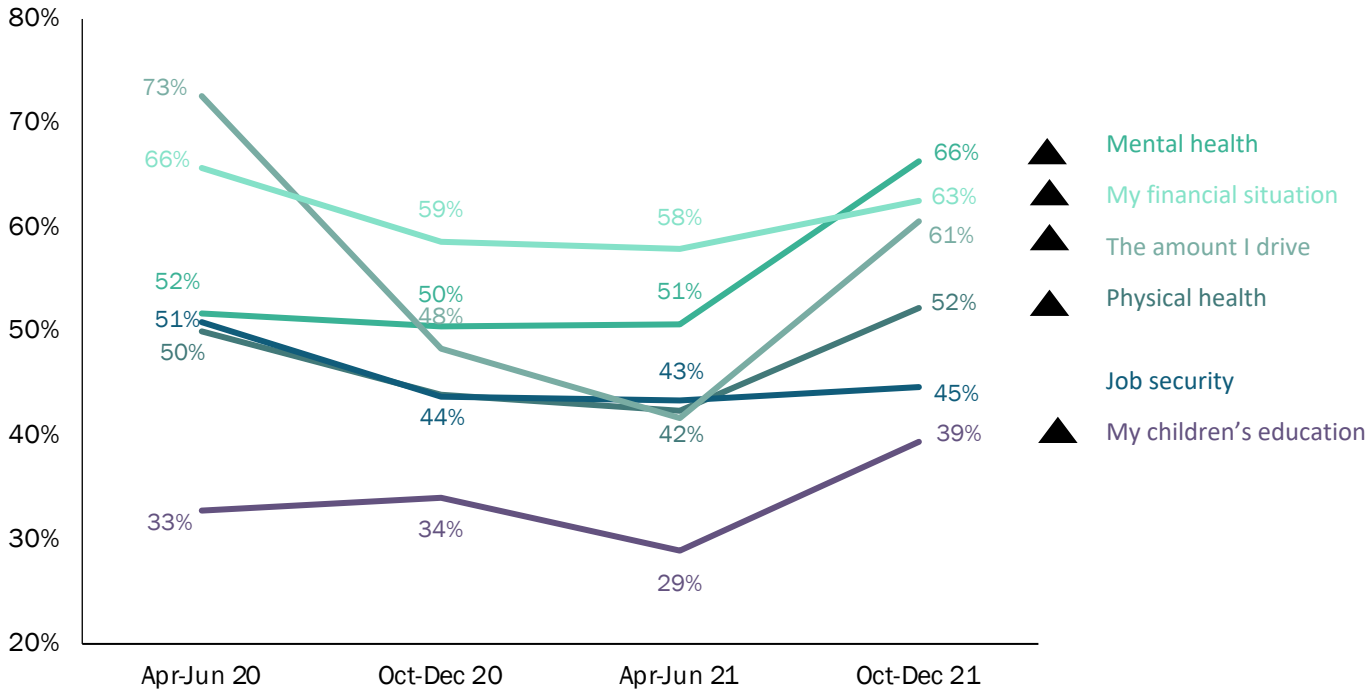
OCT - NOV
Other areas join Auckland at Alert Level 3 for periods of time, including parts of the Waikato and Northland

DEC 2nd
All of NZ moved to the COVID-19 Protection Framework / the traffic light system where New Zealanders are legally required to provide their Vaccine Pass to enter places that have vaccination requirements in place

Key:
- Significant national/global event
- Fieldwork dates for collecting survey data

There’s a rebound in the pressure New Zealanders are feeling from COVID-19

Impact of COVID-19 over time (6 monthly data points)



The impact of COVID-19 has increased significantly since the last quarter across a range of issues, most dramatically in relation to how much people drive and concerns over mental health.

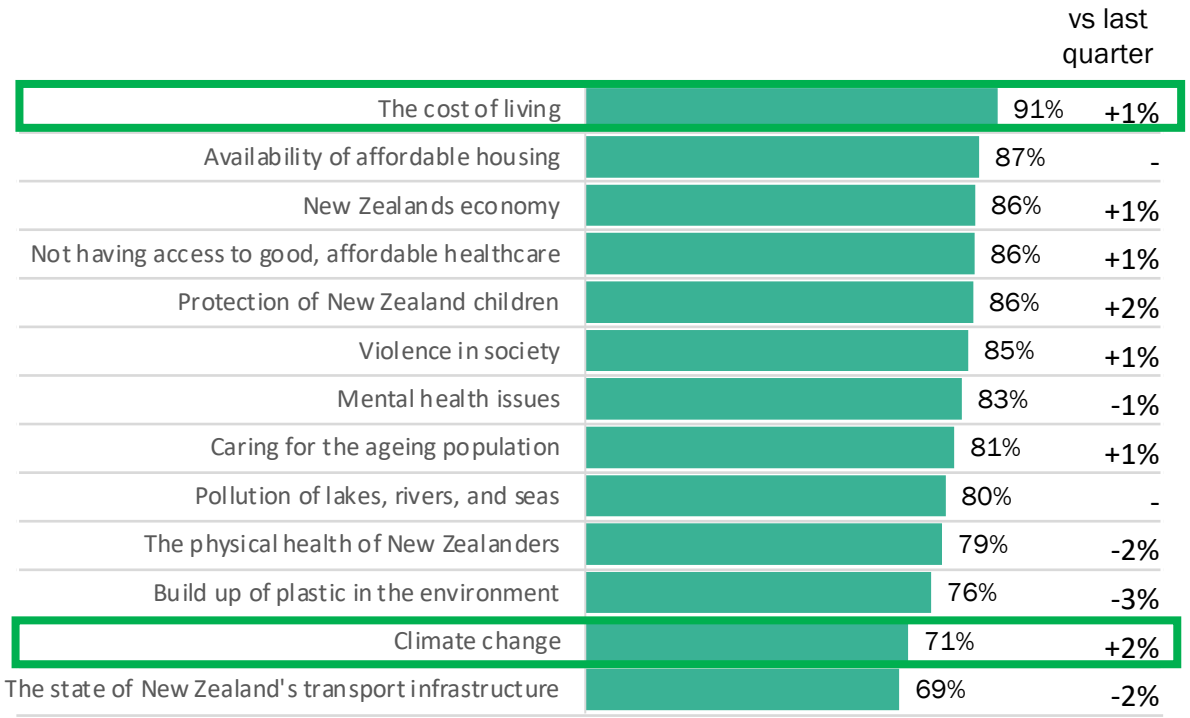
Some issues were at a record high, including concerns with mental health, physical health and children’s education.

Statistically significant change compared to previous time period ▲▼

C19_CURRENT *- And in which of these ways is the COVID-19 situation impacting you currently NET Some impact / A significant impact / a huge impact.* ***Base:*** *Total Sample – 3MR (n=787).*

Climate change continues to be deprioritised over more immediate concerns like the cost of living and affordable housing

Importance of issues to New Zealanders



The cost of living saw a 1 point lift in people saying it is an important issue for New Zealand. However, when looking at those saying it is very important, this becomes a 4 point increase.

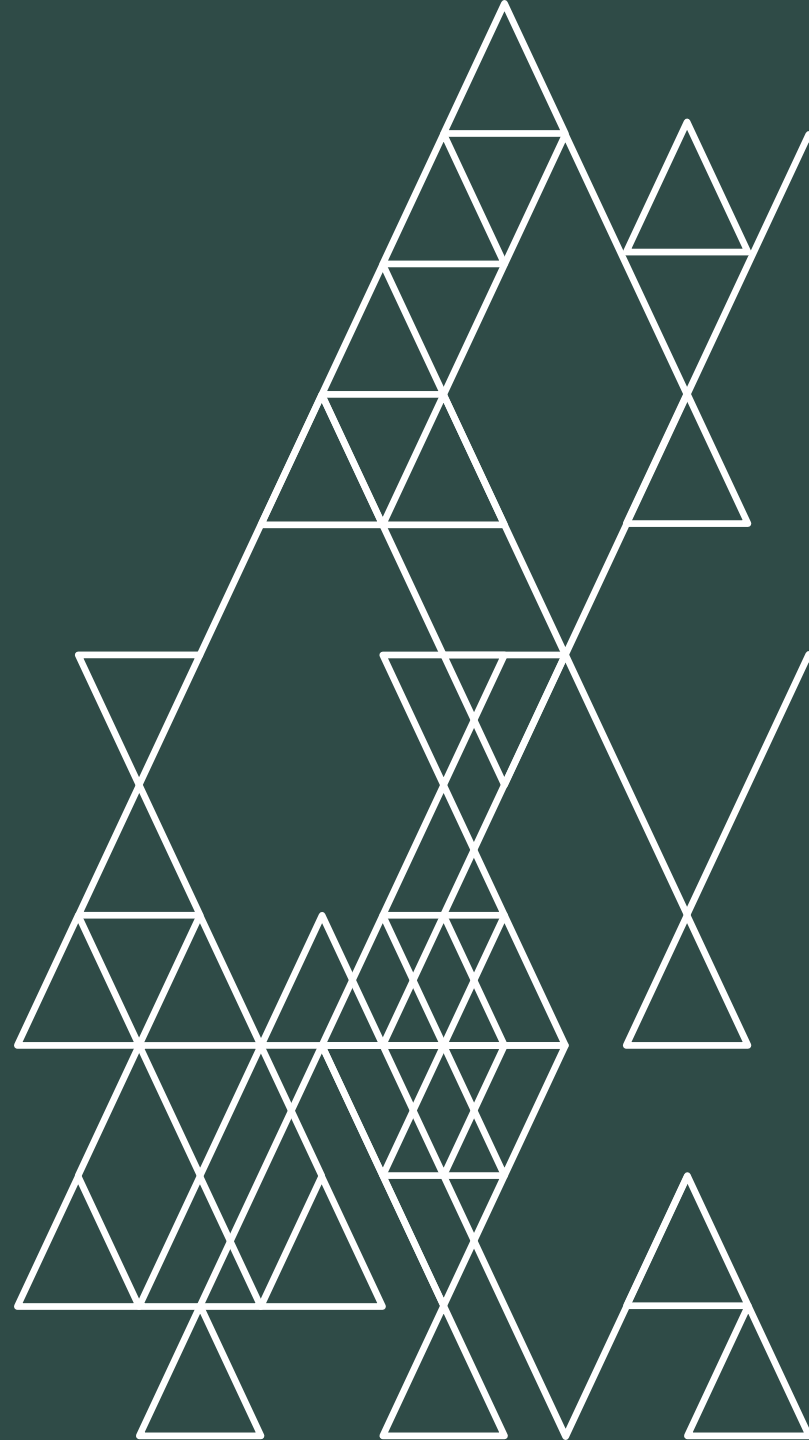
Climate change sees a 2 point lift as an important issue for New Zealand – however, there was a 2 point decrease in people saying it is very important.

Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter ▲▼

GENERAL_ISSUES *How important do you consider each of the following issues to be for New Zealand? (Important / Very important)* ***Base:*** *Total Sample - 3MR (n=778).*

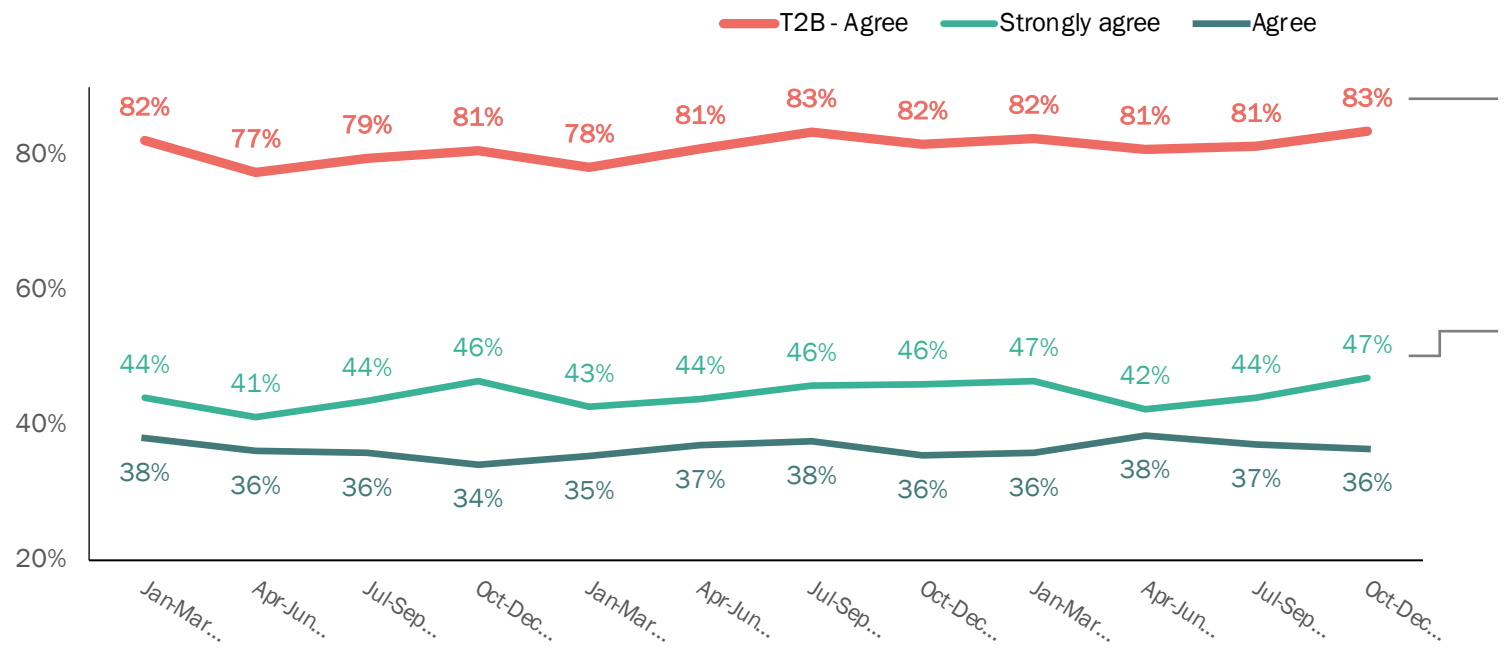
Hearts and Minds

Understanding New Zealanders' climate change beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.



New Zealanders' belief in climate change is trending up slowly

Climate Beliefs: Climate change is real (Agree/Strongly Agree)



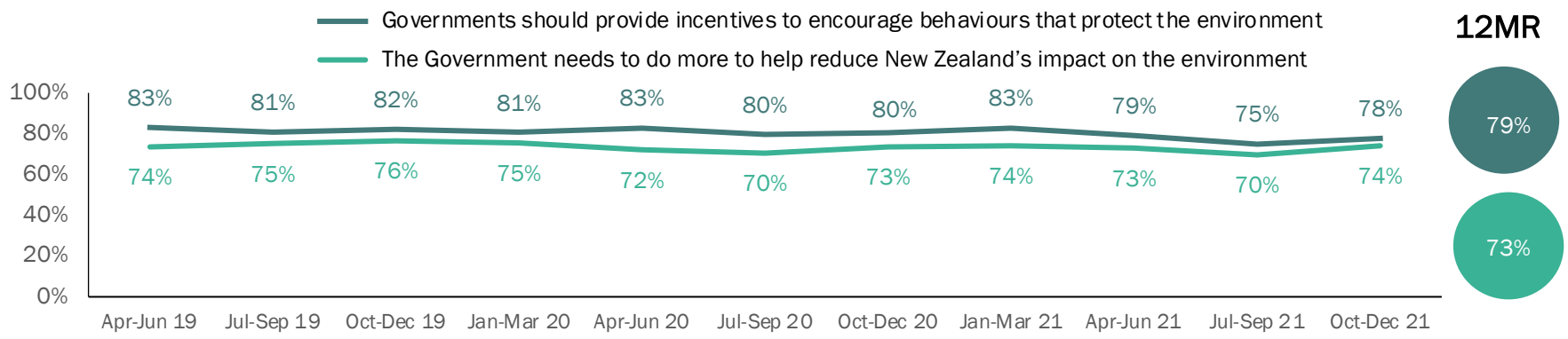
At 83.49%, the 2-point shift over the past 3 months is not statistically significant. But nevertheless, 83% is the highest level of belief recorded, and significantly higher than the historic average of 81%.

Strength of agreement has also recovered: at 47%, the proportion who strongly agree is significantly higher than six months ago.

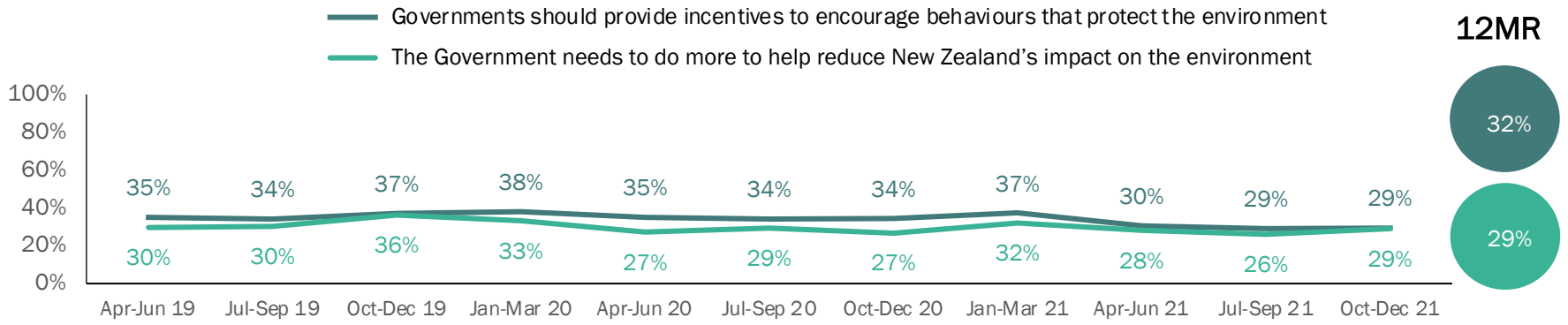
CLIMATE_BELIEFS Climate change is real. Base: Total Sample - 3MR (n=787).

The majority of New Zealanders agree that the government needs to do more

New Zealanders' level of comfort with institution-led system change (Agree / Strongly Agree)



New Zealanders' level of comfort with institution-led system change (Strongly Agree)



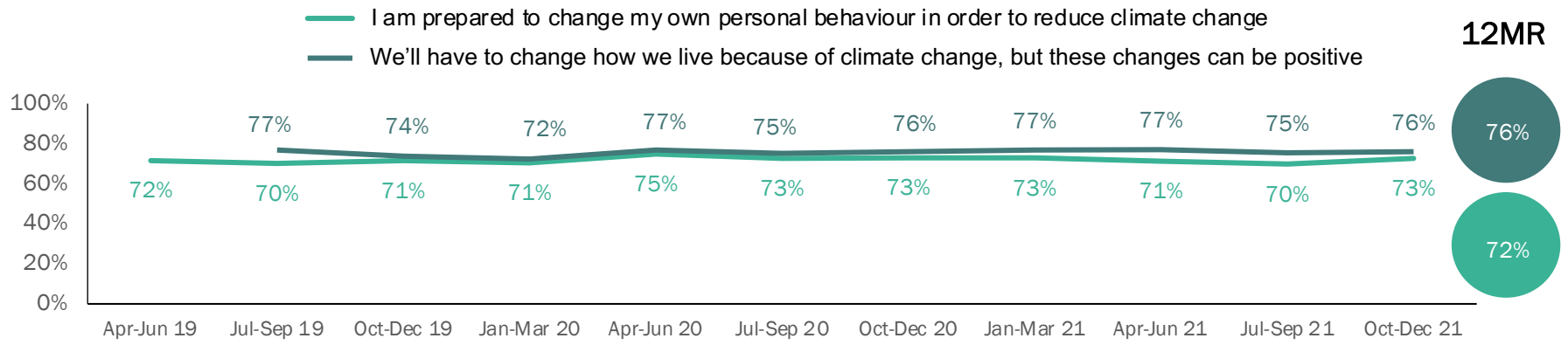
Overall support for government intervention is showing signs of recovery after a dip over the past six months.

CLIMATE_BELIEFS How much do you agree or disagree that... Governments should provide incentives to encourage behaviours that protect the environment (Agree / Strongly Agree for the top graph, Strongly Agree for the bottom graph); The Government needs to do more to help reduce New Zealand's impact on the environment (Agree / Strongly Agree for the top graph, Strongly Agree for the bottom graph); Base: Total Sample - 3MR (n=787).

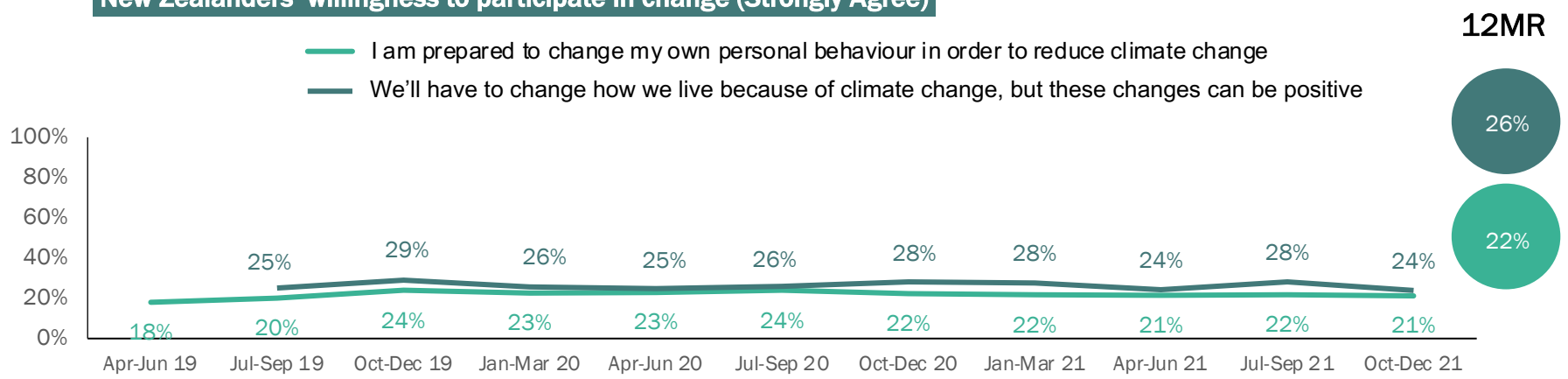
Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter ▲▼

And New Zealanders' willingness to change their behaviour remains stable

New Zealanders' willingness to participate in change (Agree / Strongly Agree)



New Zealanders' willingness to participate in change (Strongly Agree)



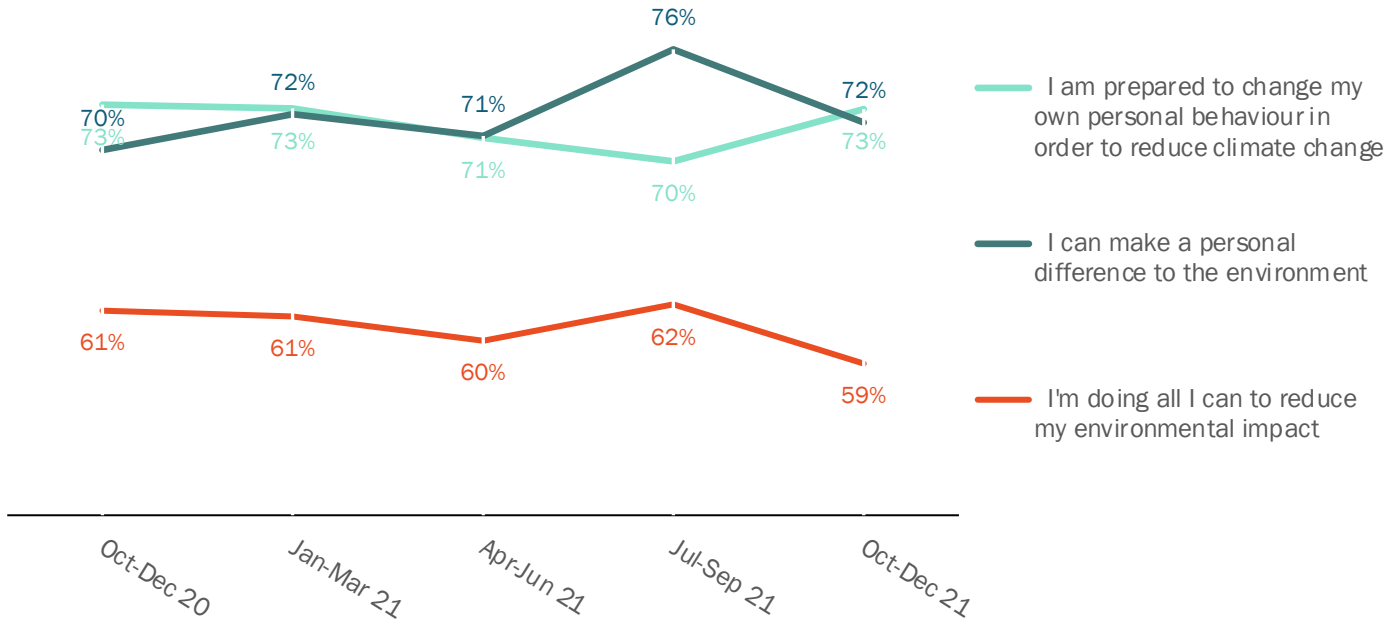
CLIMATE_BELIEFS How much do you agree or disagree that... We'll have to change how we live because of climate change, but these changes can be positive (Agree / Strongly Agree for the top graph, Strongly Agree for the bottom graph); I am prepared to change my own personal behaviour in order to reduce climate change (Agree / Strongly Agree for the top graph, Strongly Agree for the bottom graph); Base: Total Sample - 3MR (n=787).

Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter

And while there's awareness we need to act, people aren't necessarily feeling empowered

We're left with a sort of latent and untapped willingness to act

Climate beliefs relating to personal action (Agree/Strongly Agree)



New Zealanders' preparedness to change their own behaviour has regained ground after a slight dip – nearly three-quarters of us are prepared to change.

But at the same time, feeling that they can make a personal difference shows a decline after a rise last quarter (a significant dip at 90% confidence interval). Sentiment that 'I'm doing all I can to reduce my environmental impact' has also softened slightly.

CLIMATE_BELIEFS. How much do you agree or disagree with below statements? (Agree / Strongly Agree)

Base: n=777

A persistent lack of understanding of which actions have most impact on climate change

There has been little change in what actions people think are most impactful and which actions they're taking. Consistently people think recycling has most impact

Actions perceived as most impactful

		vs last quarter
Recycling as much as possible	56%	-4
Avoiding the use of plastic	45%	-7
Reducing our use of petrol or diesel powered vehicles	40%	+4
Choosing to buy products with a low carbon footprint	35%	=
Choosing energy efficient appliances	24%	-1
Using less energy at home	18%	-2
Choosing energy efficient lights	15%	-2
Reducing our flights	15%	+1
Buying organic food	5%	=

Actions taken regularly

		vs last quarter
Recycled as much as possible	84%	=
Chosen energy efficient lights	69%	-4
Chosen energy efficient appliances	61%	=
Limited my energy use at home	56%	-4
Avoided the use of plastic	44%	-4
Limited my flights	51%	+3
Limited my use of petrol or diesel powered vehicles	35%	+1
Chosen to buy products with a low carbon footprint	31%	-2
Bought organic food	18%	-1

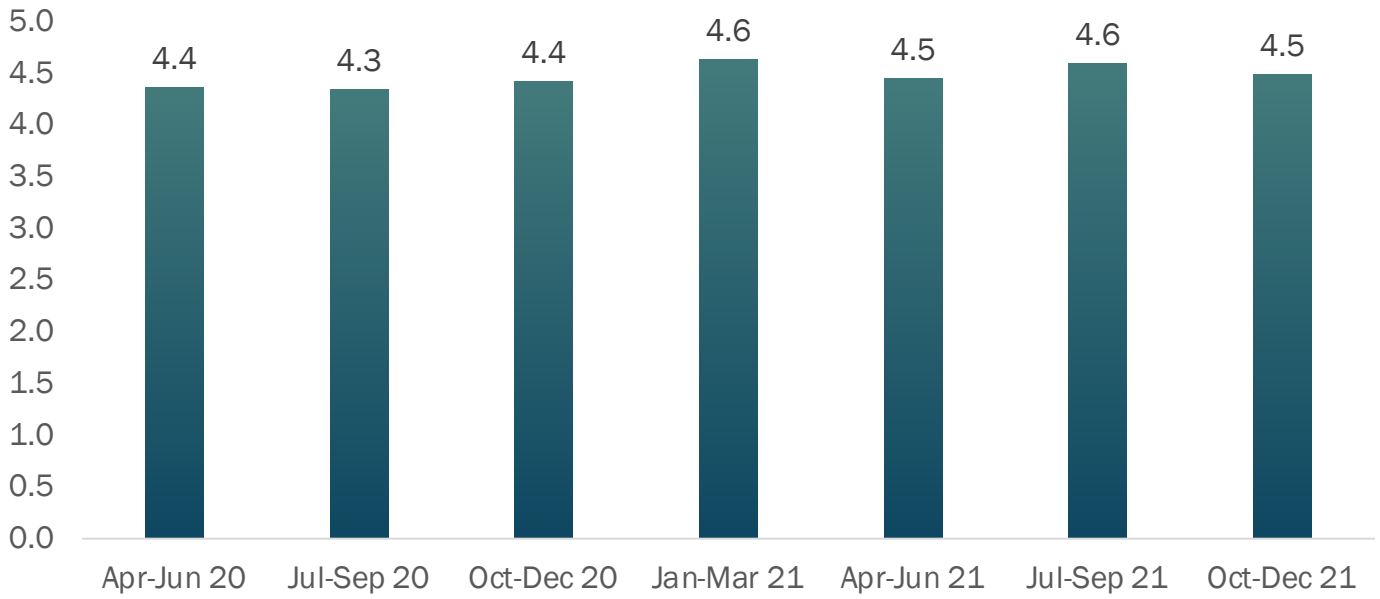
CLIMATE_EFFECT_New - Which of these actions do you think would have the greatest impact on reducing climate change, if done by all New Zealanders? (Top 3) Base: Total Sample - 3MR (n=787).

CLIMATE_ACTIONS. Which of the following actions do you take in order to reduce your climate change impact? (Always / Almost Always); Base: n=754 New Zealanders.

Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter

The average number of climate actions taken regularly has been fairly static over the last two years

Average number of climate actions taken (always / almost always) by quarter*



*Note: the average was taken from a constant list of nine climate-related actions

The nine actions tracked in this study, in order of how common they are (take regular action):

- Recycled as much as possible (84%)
- Chosen energy efficient lights (69%)
- Chosen energy efficient appliances (61%)
- Limited my energy use at home (56%)
- Limited my flights (51%)
- Avoided use of plastic (48%)
- Limited my use of petrol- or diesel-powered vehicles (35%)
- Chosen to buy products with a low carbon footprint (31%)
- Bought organic food (18%)

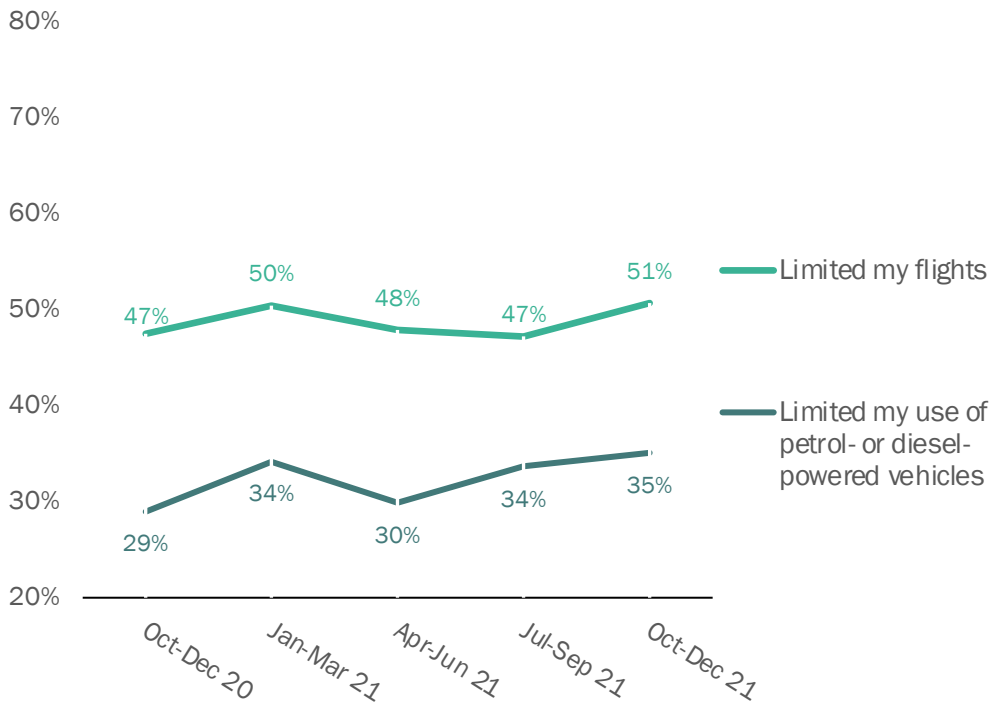
CLIMATE_ACTIONS. Which of the following actions do you take in order to reduce your climate change impact? NET Always / Almost always

Base: n=787

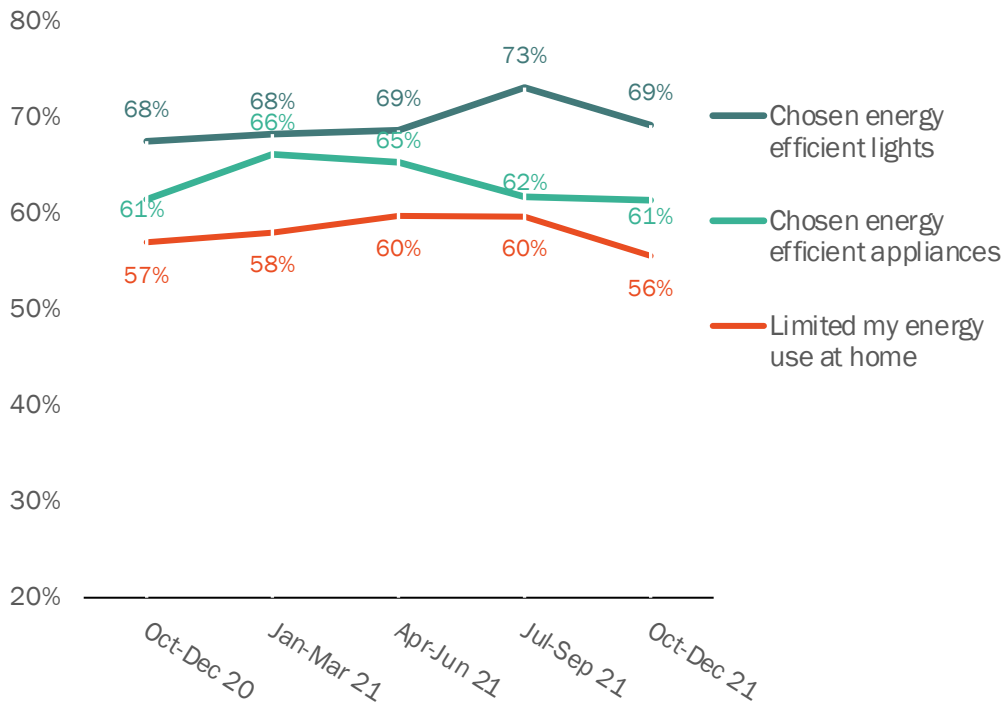
However, lockdowns and COVID-19 disruptions have impacted people's specific climate behaviours – in both positive and negative ways

Spending more time at home and closed borders means more action to reduce transport use, but less action around reducing home energy use

Transport-related actions



Home Energy-related actions



CLIMATE_ACTIONS. Which of the following actions do you take in order to reduce your climate change impact? NET Always / Almost always

Base: n=787

Believing in climate change is not necessarily a key driver to action

Average number of actions taken…

New Zealand average

Disagree / neutral that climate change is real
(represents 17% of the population)

Even non-believers are still taking action regularly

Agree / strongly agree climate change is real
(represents 83% of the population)

*Note: the average was taken from a constant list of nine climate-related actions

CLIMATE_BELIEFS. How much do you agree or disagree with below statements?

CLIMATE_ACTIONS. Which of the following actions do you take in order to reduce your climate change impact? NET Always / Almost always

Base: n=777

Half of New Zealanders lack access, base knowledge and motivation on finding out how to reduce their carbon emissions

This has increased in the last quarter - a trend likely related to increased pressures from COVID draining New Zealander's attention/capacity in this space.

I know where to access information about how to reduce and measure my carbon emissions (Agree / Strongly Agree)

40%
Down 4 points vs. last quarter

14% ▼
Down 8 points vs. last quarter

I have a good level of knowledge about how to reduce my carbon emissions (Rated their knowledge 8-10 out of 10)

23%
Down 3 points vs. last quarter

I actively look for information about how to lower my carbon emissions (Actively / Often Actively)

7%
Down 3 points vs. last quarter

Selected/Agreed with all three of these statements

51%
Up 5 points vs. last quarter

Selected/Agreed with none of the three statements

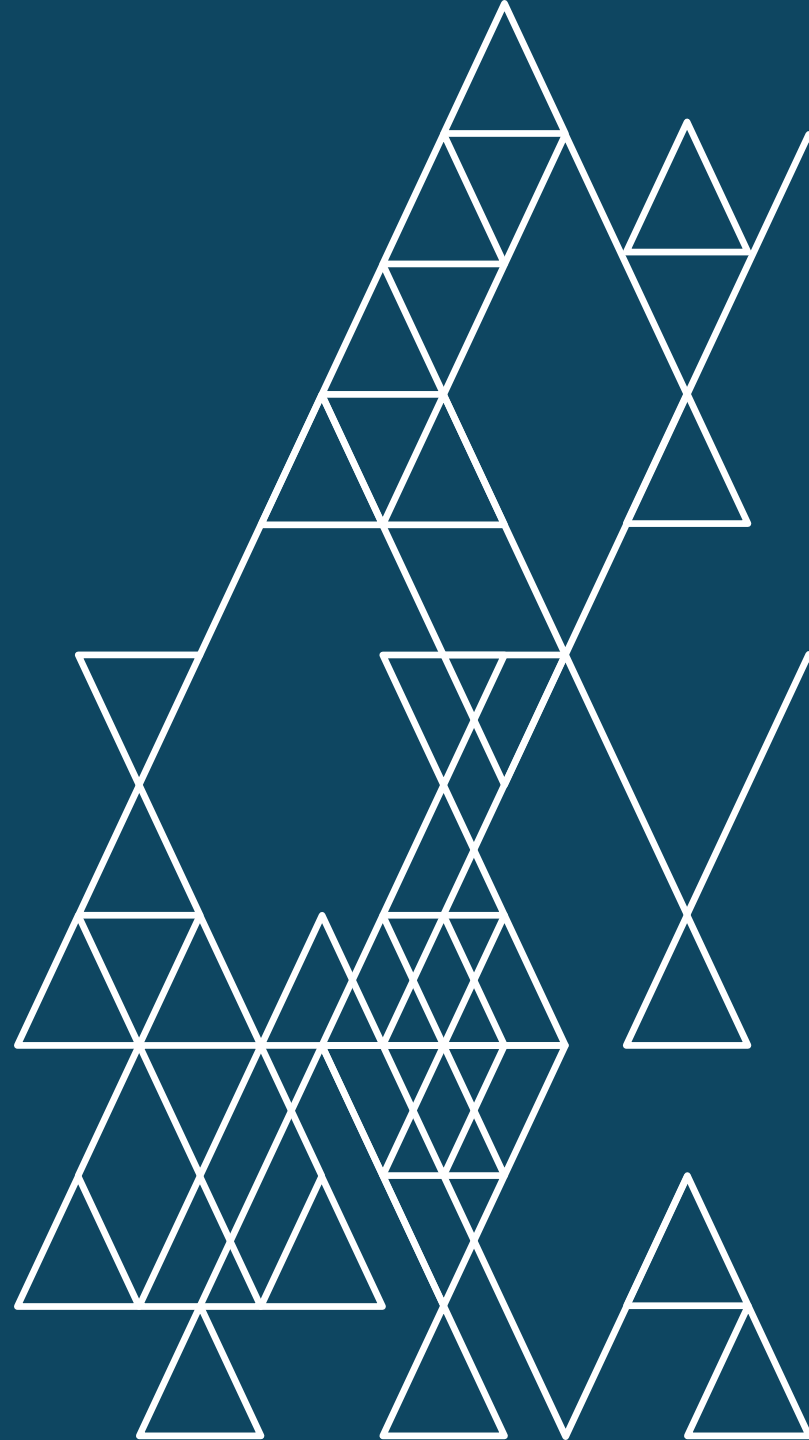
INFO_RATE: On a scale of 0 - 10, how would you rate your level of knowledge about how you can reduce your carbon emissions? (NET 8-10) INFO_ABILITY: How much do you agree/disagree that you know where to access information about how to measure and reduce your personal carbon emissions? (NET Agree/Strongly Agree). INFO_INTEREST: What best describes your level of interest in finding information or advice that can help you lower your carbon emissions? (NET Actively/Often Actively look). Base: 787

Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter ▲▼

Increasingly people are confronted with climate change – more and more of us believe it’s a thing. And we say we’re increasingly prepared to act.

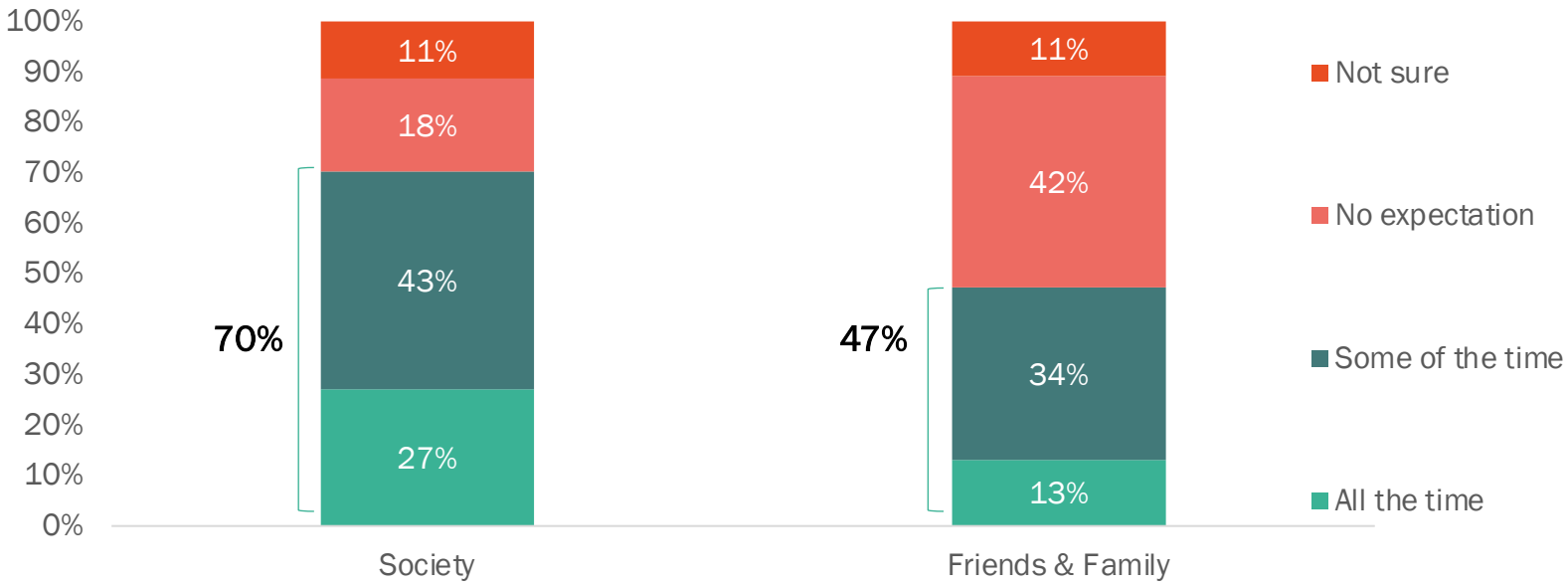
But we’re also increasingly disorientated – we don’t know what to do, where to start, we're dealing with COVID, and we’re feeling overwhelmed.

This translates into a sort of inertia when it comes to climate action, with any changes over time seemingly more circumstantial rather than directly underpinned by New Zealanders joining up dots between their behaviour and climate impact.



People are more likely to feel pressure to act from society than they are friends and family

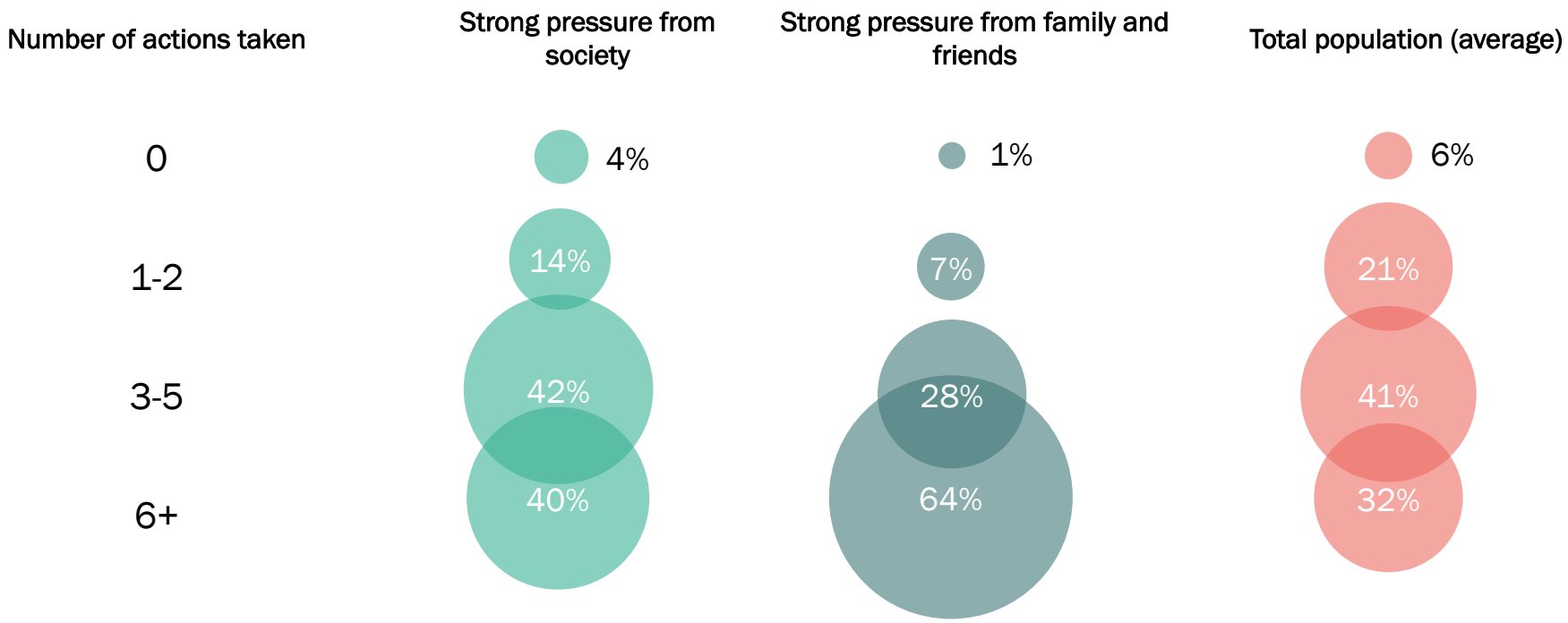
How much do you feel that society/friends and family expects you to make changes to reduce your climate change impact?



SOCIAL_NORM_SOC: How much do you feel that society expects you to make changes to reduce your climate change impact? SOCIAL_NORM_FF: And how much do you feel that your friends and family expect you to make changes to reduce your climate change impact? Base: 787

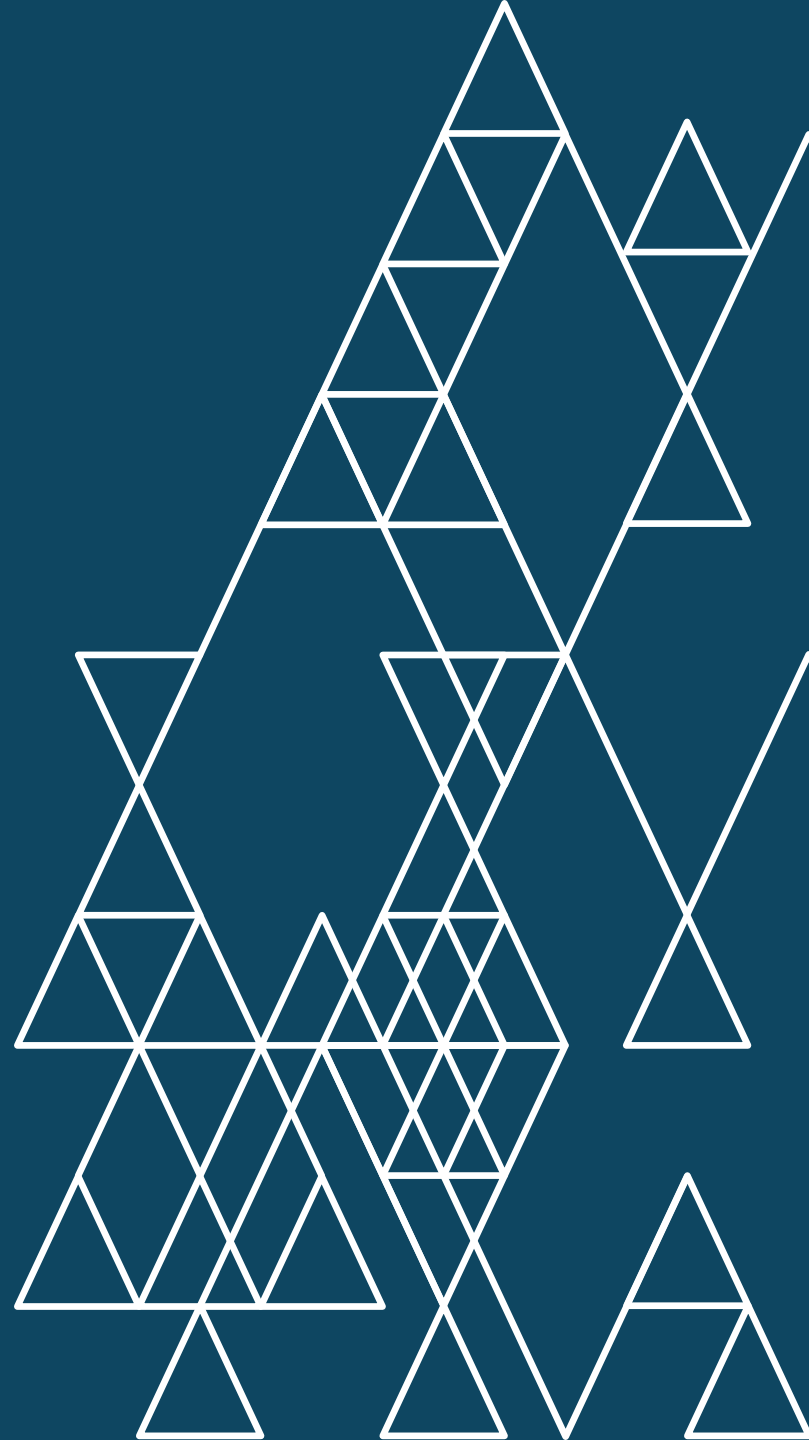
But pressure from friends and family has a greater influence on how people act

Number of actions taken by expectation to reduce climate change impact



SOCIAL_NORM_SOC: How much do you feel that society expects you to make changes to reduce your climate change impact? SOCIAL_NORM_FF: And how much do you feel that your friends and family expect you to make changes to reduce your climate change impact? *CLIMATE_ACTIONS. Which of the following actions do you take in order to reduce your climate change impact? Options: Driving less (in a petrol- or diesel-powered car), Choosing energy efficient lights, Choosing energy efficient appliances, Reducing air travel, Buying products with a low carbon footprint, I take steps to minimise my energy use at home, Recycled as much as possible, Avoided the use of plastic, Bought organic food. Base: n>98*

We also know that friends and family are particularly influential in encouraging action – more so than any societal pressure people feel. How can we not only encourage people to take small actions themselves, but also encourage them to speak up and influence those around them?



Transport

Rising fuel prices, EV discounts and record-breaking car sales set the scene for New Zealand transport in 2021

Fuel prices:
Prices continue to rise, with the discounted retail price for regular petrol increasing by around 33% since the start of 2021, and diesel increasing by around 53%

Clean Car Discount:
The Clean Car Discount came into place in July 2021 – incentivizing the purchase of EVs and discouraging the purchase of new petrol- and diesel-powered vehicles.

The fees however were delayed until 2022.

Record-high new car sales:
2021 saw a record-high number of new car registrations in New Zealand.

It was also the first time an EV model broke into the top 10 most sold vehicles – and top 5 for consumer sales.

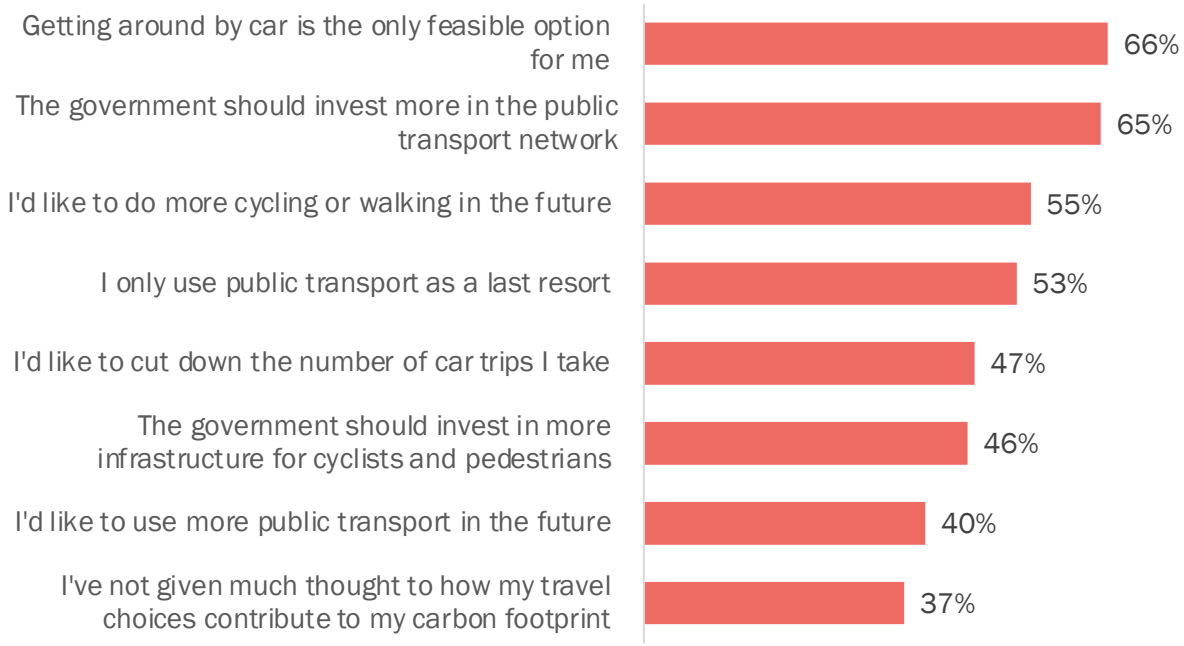
Sources: https://www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/energy-and-natural-resources/energy-statistics-and-modelling/energy-statistics/weekly-fuel-price-monitoring/

https://www.stuff.co.nz/motoring/127441675/recordsetting-2021-a-huge-year-for-new-car-sales

We’re a car dependent nation: two-thirds feel that car is the only feasible option for getting around

But New Zealanders aren’t closed to alternatives, and there are clear opportunities to encourage mode-shift

Transport attitudes: 6MR, (Agree/Strongly Agree)

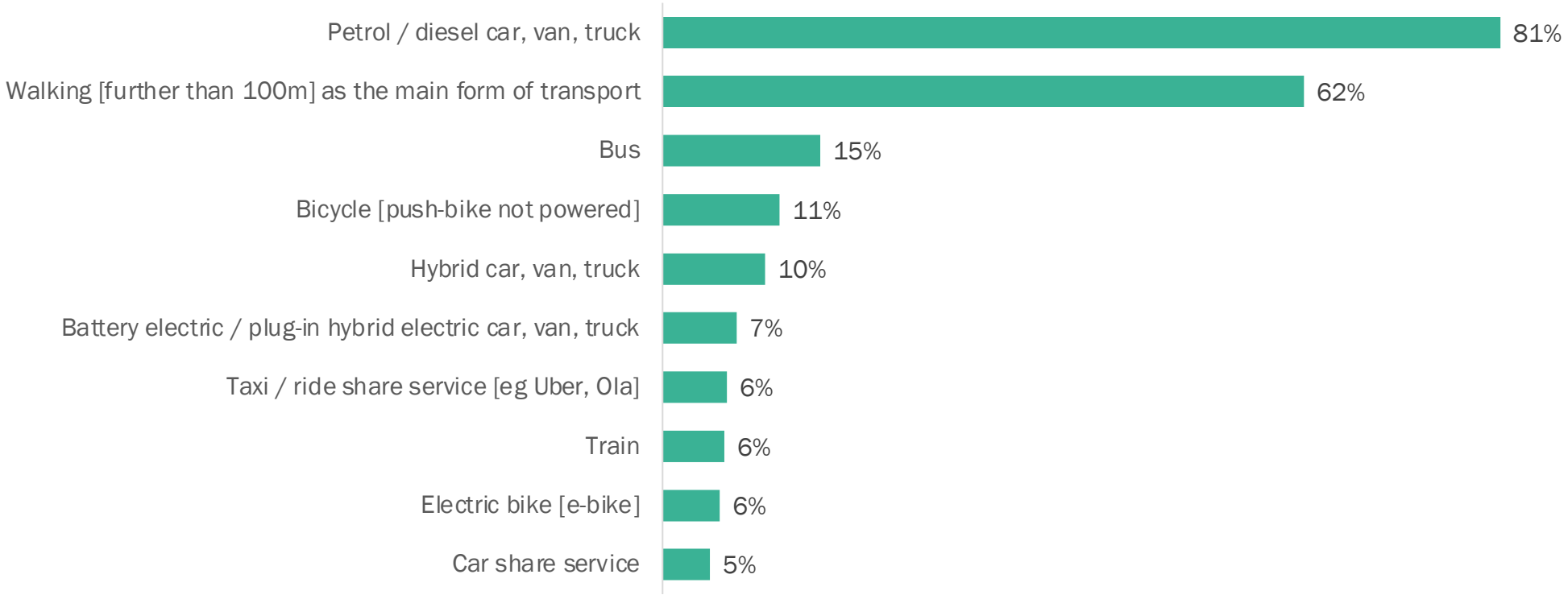


- Around half of us **would like to cut down on the number of car trips** we make – we saw growth in this sentiment coinciding with the October – December quarter, perhaps related to lockdowns and fuel price rises (up 6 % points, a significant change at 90% confidence interval).
- Around 4 in 10 would **like to use public transport more** in future.
- Over half would like to **cycle more** in future,
- And two-thirds of **us support government investment in public transport** infrastructure, while nearly half feel more should be invested to support active modes.

TRANSP_ATT - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about transport? Agree / strongly agree. Base: 6MR (July – December) n=766

Correspondingly, car usage dwarfs public transport and alternative modes

NET taking the transport mode one or more times per week



TRANSP_BEHAV - Thinking about how you get around, how often do you use each of the following methods of transport? This can be for any reason including work, sport or recreation. NET one or more time per week. Base: Jul-Dec n=766

Over 9 in 10 people living in rural areas think getting around by car is the only feasible option for them

And they aren't intending on switching to public transport or active modes in the future

Transport attitudes: 6MR, (Agree/Strongly Agree)

	In a city	In a town	In a rural area	Average
Getting around by car is the only feasible option for me	62%	64%	92% ▲	66%
The government should invest more in the public transport network	63%	66%	72%	65%
I'd like to do more cycling or walking in the future	55%	58%	44% ▼	55%
I only use public transport as a last resort	55%	50%	44%	53%
I'd like to cut down the number of car trips I take	49%	44%	44%	47%
The government should invest in more infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians	45%	51%	44%	46%
I'd like to use more public transport in the future	42%	39%	30%	40%
I've not given much thought to how my travel choices contribute to my carbon footprint	39%	35%	32% ▼	37%

Statistically significant at the 90% level

Statistically significant at the 90% level

TRANSP_ATT - How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about transport? Agree / Strongly agree. Base: Jul-Dec 21: In a city n=479, In a town n=204, in a rural area n=83

Statistically significant change compared to total ▲ ▼

Car uptake is universal – but we see key differences in uptake of public transport across different demographics

Younger, ethnically diverse and city-dwellers show higher usage of public transport

NET taking the transport mode one or more time per week

	Total	Age				Ethnicity			Area		
		20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	NZ European	Māori / Pasifika	Asian	City	Town	Rural
Petrol / diesel car, van, truck	81%	70% ▼	85%	82%	84%	83%	76%	79%	81%	81%	87%
Bus, train or ferry	21%	36% ▲	24%	25%	11% ▼	16% ▼	21%	43% ▲	27% ▲	14% ▼	7% ▼

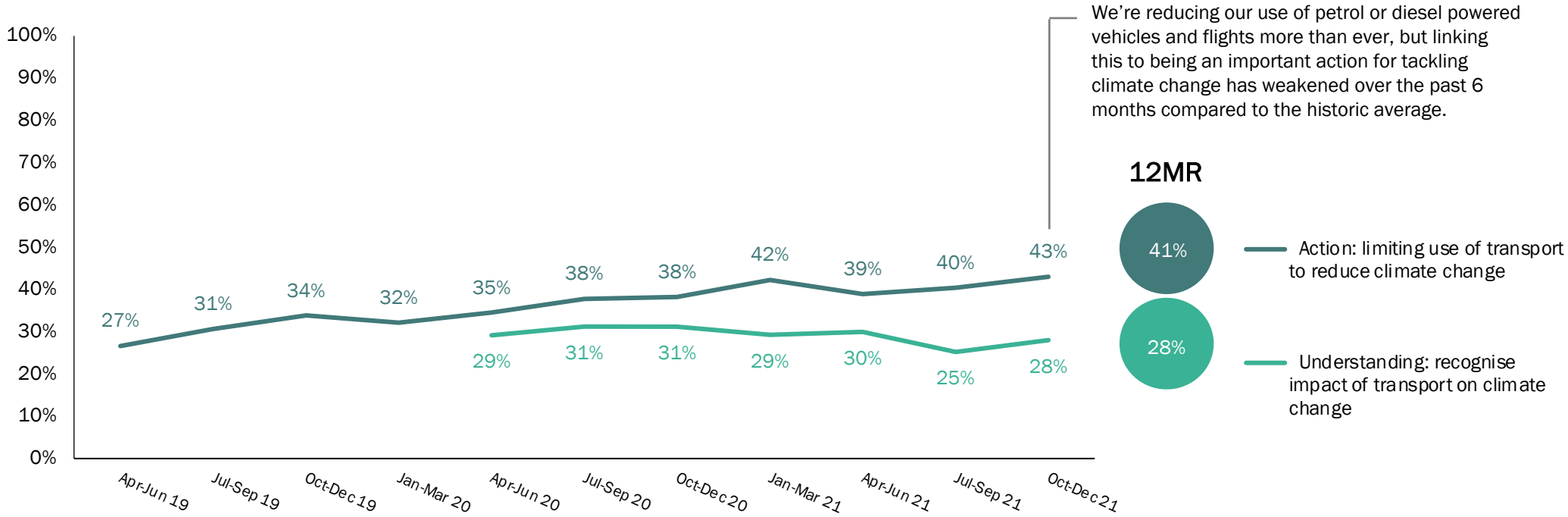
TRANSP_BEHAV - Thinking about how you get around, how often do you use each of the following methods of transport? This can be for any reason including work, sport or recreation (flattened). Base: Jul-Dec 2021, n>83

Statistically significant change compared to total ▲▼

With transport, the gap between taking action and understanding of impact is widening

Many factors will be at play driving the upward shift in people reducing transport: COVID-19 lockdowns, the resulting and enduring working from home trend, closed international borders and soaring cost of fuel will all likely be influencing this trend

Climate Change Actions and Knowledge of Impact



We're reducing our use of petrol or diesel powered vehicles and flights more than ever, but linking this to being an important action for tackling climate change has weakened over the past 6 months compared to the historic average.

12MR

41% — Action: limiting use of transport to reduce climate change

28% — Understanding: recognise impact of transport on climate change

CLIMATE_EFFECT_NEW Which of these actions do you think would have the greatest impact on reducing climate change in New Zealand? (Top 3) Average Reducing our flights + Reducing our use of petrol or diesel powered vehicles. CLIMATE_ACTIONS. Which of the following actions do you take in order to reduce your climate change impact? Average Limited their flights + Limited their use of petrol or diesel powered vehicles –Always/Almost Always Base: Total Sample - 3MR (n=787).

Statistically significant change compared to total ▲▼

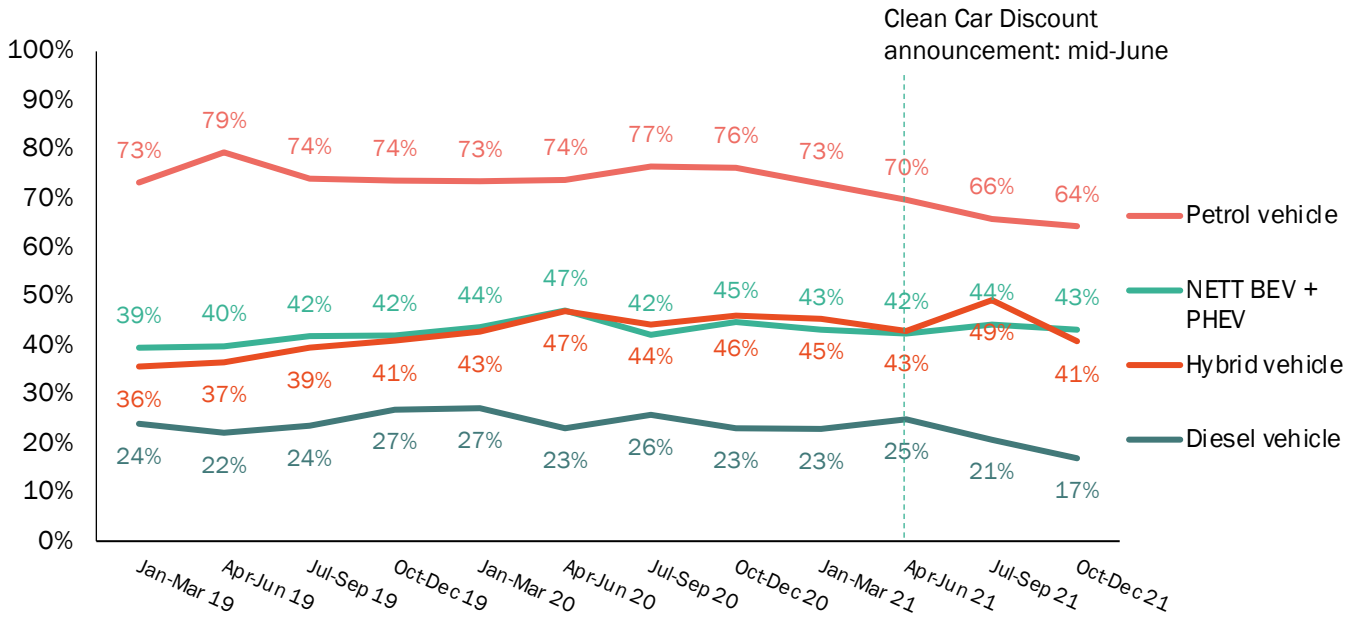
We can see that for all the reported intent, mode shift is hard to achieve: we really are a nation dependent on cars. But New Zealanders – particularly younger New Zealanders – are open to car alternatives. And we're gradually reducing the number of petrol / diesel trips we make over time (no doubt COVID-19 related restrictions have acted as a catalyst here).

But relating this shift to positive climate behaviour is the missing link. And this reinforces the idea of an increasingly disorientated consumer that is less confident on how they can make a climate positive difference.

Consideration for purchasing petrol and diesel vehicles is at an all time low

This hasn't (yet) translated into increased appetite for BEV / PHEV vehicles – and may simply be a reflection of 2021 being a record year for car sales; recent buyers may not be giving serious consideration to any type of vehicle

Vehicle consideration – by quarter



Consideration for petrol vehicles is at an all time low of 64% – and is 10 % points below the historic average of 74%.

Similarly, consideration for diesel vehicles is at an all time low of 17% – and is 8 % points below the historic average of 25%.

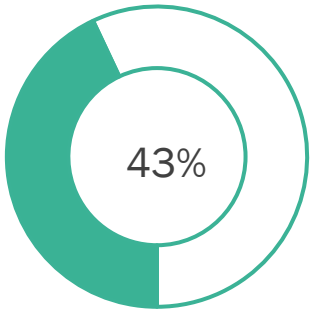
Meanwhile consideration for BEV/PHEVs is stable.

There are a number of different types of vehicles currently being sold in New Zealand. Thinking about your next vehicle purchase, how likely are you to consider the following vehicles? NET Somewhat likely / Very likely. Base: n=740

EV key metrics on a page

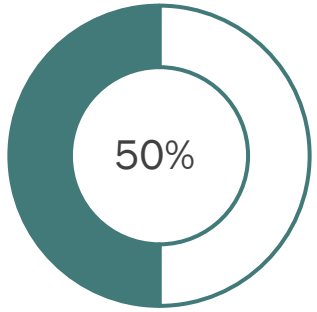
EV Key Metrics

BEV / PHEV Consideration



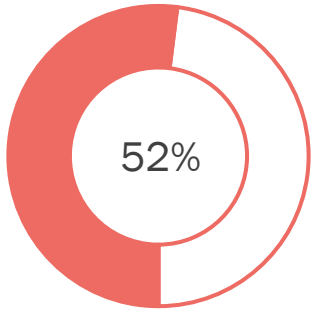
-1 vs last quarter

Confidence



No change vs last quarter

Favourability



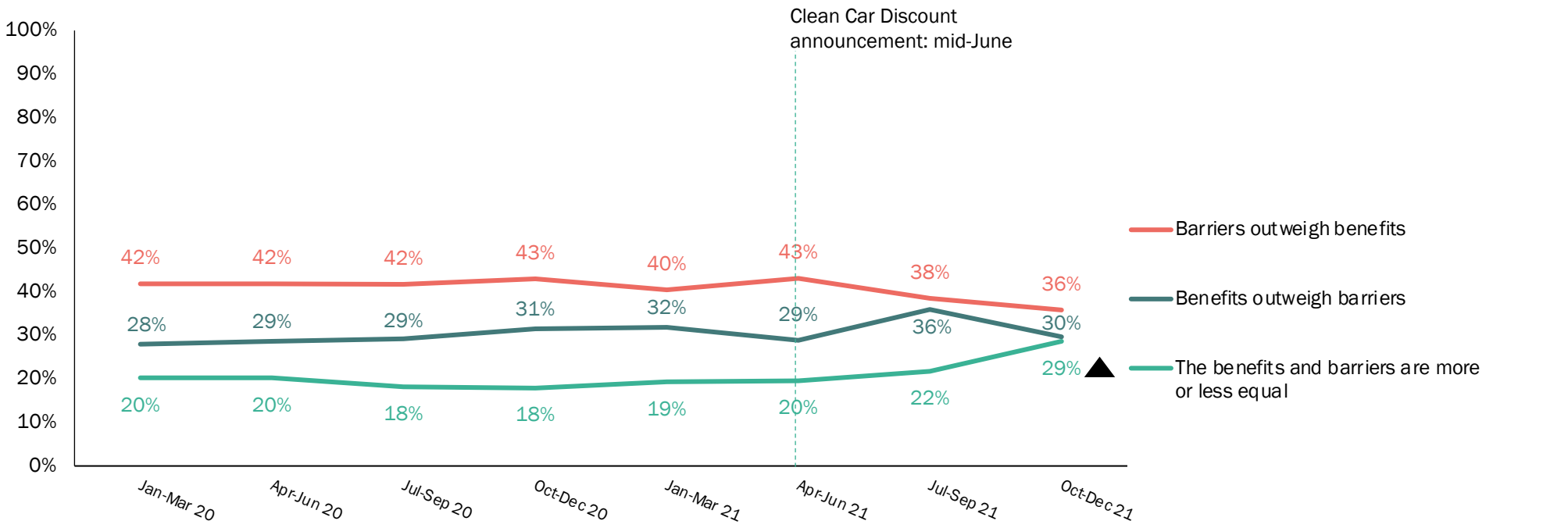
+1 vs last quarter

EV4 *How favourable or unfavourable is your overall opinion or impression of Electric Vehicles? (NET Mainly / Very Favourable);* ***EV5*** *To what extent are you confident that Electric Vehicles can meet your needs? (NET Somewhat / Very Confident);* ***Q177*** *Thinking about your next vehicle purchase, how likely are you to consider the following vehicles? (NET BEV / PHEV);* **Base**: n=740/ 379 New Zealanders.

The perception that EV barriers outweigh the benefits is declining

More people are moving away from believing that the 'barriers outweigh the benefits' to believing that the 'benefits and barriers are more or less equal'.

EV Barriers vs Benefits – by quarter



Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter

Thinking about the benefits and barriers towards electric vehicles, please indicate how the benefits currently compare with the barriers for you personally on the scale below. . Base: n=371

Despite showing a slight decrease, the main perceived benefit of EVs is that they produce less air pollution

Perceived Benefits of EVs

	Jul-Sep 21	Oct-Dec 21	Difference
They produce less air pollution	64%	62%	-2%
They can be charged at home	47%	58%	+11% ▲
They are quiet when driving	47%	57%	+10% ▲
They produce fewer greenhouse emissions	50%	53%	+3%
They're cheaper to run	42%	44%	+2%
They can be charged independent of petrol companies	40%	43%	+3%
They use renewable energy	38%	39%	+1%
They use an innovative technology	30%	35%	+5%
They're cheaper to maintain	20%	24%	+4%
They accelerate faster than petrol cars	13%	18%	+5%
None of the above	7%	13%	+6% ▲

Statistically significant change compared to previous quarter ▲▼

Q178. Which, if any, of the following do you believe are benefits of electric vehicles? Base: Current / intended car owners – 3MR (n=371).

Price is still the biggest perceived barrier – though we see slight increases in battery uncertainty and public charger availability

Perceived Barriers of EVs

	Jul-Sep 21	Oct-Dec 21	Difference
They are not available at an affordable price	64%	63%	-2%
Uncertainty about the battery lifespan and replacement	54%	60%	+6%
There are not enough public chargers available	39%	47%	+7%
They have a driving range that is not suitable for long distance travelling	44%	47%	+2%
It takes a long time to charge them	29%	34%	+5%
They are not tried & trusted yet	24%	24%	NC
There is not a wide range of body types / models available	21%	21%	NC
They have a driving range that is not suitable for my typical day-to-day needs	15%	19%	+4%
I don't know enough about them to consider them	17%	18%	+1%
They are not easily found for purchase	13%	17%	+4%
I'm unsure about their environmental benefits	19%	16%	-2%
They don't perform as well as petrol cars	12%	16%	+4%
There isn't the vehicle type to meet my needs	15%	14%	-1%
None of the above	4%	7%	+3%

Q179. And which, if any, of the following do you think are drawbacks to electric vehicles? Base: Current / intended car owners – 3MR (n=371).

Ngā mihi