



Riding a Bike for Transport

2011 Survey Findings

In March 2011, The National Heart Foundation and the Cycling Promotion Fund conducted an online survey with a random sample of 1000 Australian adults in relation to riding a bike for transport.

MAIN FINDINGS

- ❖ Around 60% of respondents stated they own or have access to a bike.
- ❖ Two in five respondents that owned or had access to a bike had ridden a bike in the past month. Of these, 60% had ridden a bike for transport purposes.
- ❖ The majority of respondents that had ridden a bike did so for either running errands/going to the shops or for leisure and recreational activities. More than 60% of respondents had both cycled for running errands/going to the shops and for leisure and recreational activities.
- ❖ The majority of respondents cycle due to the health and exercise benefits obtained from cycling. Respondents were also likely to be influenced by the economic benefits of cycling, as well as the environmental advantages.
- ❖ A common theme for not cycling more often was due to road traffic conditions or safety. Respondents were likely to rate unsafe road condition, speed/volume of traffic, lack of bicycle lanes or safety as key reasons for not cycling often. Issues such as lack of time or motivation were not significant factors in holding back cyclists.
- ❖ Those that ride a bike for transport, typically ride on quiet roads and alone.
- ❖ Almost 90% of those that ride a bike for transport felt their general health had improved since starting to ride for transport.
- ❖ More than 40% of respondents who do not own or have access to a bike said they prefer other forms of recreation and exercise activities to cycling or don't like cycling at all. Just under a quarter felt cycling was not a safe form of transport (which was also a common reason for cyclists not riding more often).
- ❖ A common theme for not cycling is due to road and safety issues. Unsafe road conditions, volume of traffic and general safety were key reasons for holding back people. Weather conditions were more likely to be rated as a factor than personal matters such as lack of time or motivation.
- ❖ Paved paths along roads physically separated from motor traffic and paved separated trails along rivers and scenic areas were conditions that would encourage people to ride more often (or at all).
- ❖ Almost 70% of respondents were not considering cycling for transport in the near future, however, just over half (52%) of these people indicated that they would like to be able to ride for transport.
- ❖ In general, the majority of respondents agreed that the Federal Government should be doing more to encourage people to use bikes for transport.

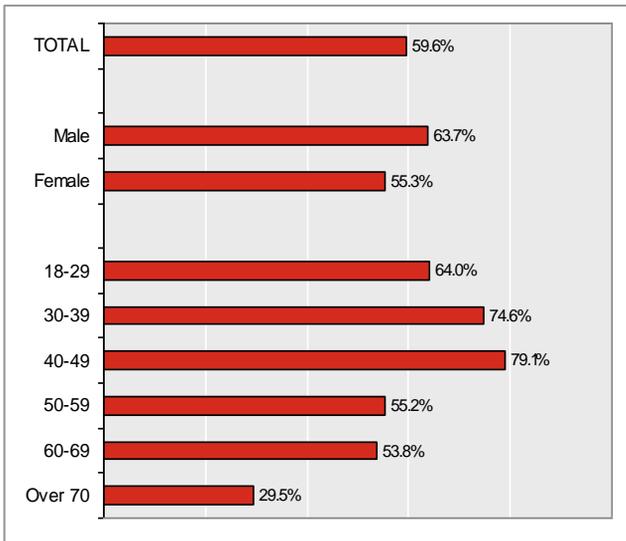


Figure 1: Own or have access to a bike

Q: Do you own or have access to a bicycle?

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

Table 1: Last time rode a bike

Within the last week	25.0%
Within the last month	17.3%
Within the last six months	18.1%
Within the last year	8.2%
More than a year ago	28.5%
Never	0.8%
Unsure	2.0%

Q: When was the last time you rode a bicycle?

Base: Respondents who own/have access to a bike (n=596)

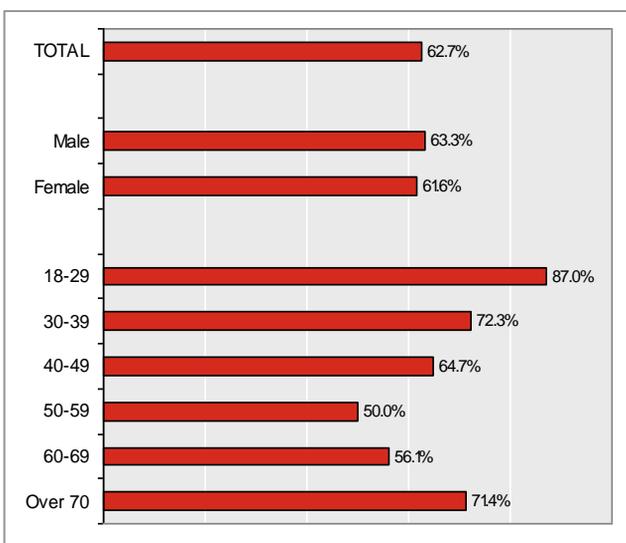


Figure 2: Rode a bike for transport

Q: In the past month, have you ridden a bicycle for transport?

Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike in the last month (n=252)

ACCESS TO A BIKE

- ❖ Overall, 60% of respondents indicated that they either own or have access to a bike.
- ❖ Males were more likely* than females to own or have access to a bike.
- ❖ People aged under 50 years of age were also more likely* to own or have access to a bike than persons aged 50 and over.

(* statistically significant)

LAST TIME RODE A BIKE

Respondents who indicated that they either own or have access to a bike were asked when was the last time they rode a bike.

- ❖ Fewer than half of the respondents had cycled in the past month.
- ❖ More than one in four respondents had not cycled for over 12 months.

RODE A BIKE FOR TRANSPORT

Respondents who had ridden a bike in the last month were asked if they had ridden a bike in this period specifically for transport.

- ❖ Just over 60% of those who had ridden a bike in the last month, indicated that they had done so for transport purposes.
- ❖ Those aged 18-29 years of age were most likely to have ridden a bike for transport in the last month.

RIDING A BIKE FOR TRANSPORT

Table 2: Reasons for riding a bike for transport in the past month

Running errands/going to the shops	78.5%
To leisure and recreational activities	74.1%
To visit family/friends	39.2%
Commuting to work	32.9%
Commuting to school/ University/ TAFE/ education	12.0%
Other	8.2%

Q: In the past month, for which of the following reasons have you ridden a bicycle for transport?

Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the last month (n=158)

Respondents who had ridden a bike for transport in the past month were asked why they ride a bike for transport.

- ❖ The majority of respondents that had ridden a bike did so for either running errands/going to the shops or for leisure and recreational activities. More than 60% of respondents had both cycled for running errands/going to the shops and for leisure and recreational activities.
- ❖ Respondents were also likely to have cycled to visit family or friends or to commute to work. Respondents were less likely to have cycled to places of education (school, University or TAFE).

Table 3: Number of times/hours/kms spent riding for transport

	Commuting to work	Commuting to school/ University/ Tafe	Running errands/going to the shops	To visit family/friends	To leisure and recreational activities
Number of times per week					
1	27.3%	39.1%	24.6%	44.1%	41.4%
2	21.8%	17.4%	32.5%	32.2%	16.4%
3	14.6%	17.4%	16.7%	13.6%	14.4%
4	7.3%	0.0%	9.7%	3.4%	10.6%
5	14.6%	26.1%	7.9%	1.7%	7.7%
6	1.8%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	1.0%
7	7.3%	0.0%	3.5%	3.4%	2.9%
8 or more	5.5%	0.0%	4.4%	1.7%	5.8%

	Commuting to work	Commuting to school/ University/ Tafe	Running errands/going to the shops	To visit family/friends	To leisure and recreational activities
Number of hours per week					
Less than 1	15.5%	42.9%	30.2%	26.8%	16.2%
1	1.6%	1.0%	2.3%	2.3%	2.1%
2	28%	1.4%	2.9%	2.1%	2.0%
3	7%	1.4%	8%	1.6%	1.7%
4	12%	0%	4%	5%	8%
5	3%	1.0%	1%	2%	4%
6	2%	0%	2%	0%	6%
7	7%	5%	0%	2%	2%
8	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%
9	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%
10	3%	0%	0%	2%	0%
11 or more	5%	5%	2%	0%	3%

	Commuting to work	Commuting to school/ University/ Tafe	Running errands/going to the shops	To visit family/friends	To leisure and recreational activities
Number of kms per week					
Less than 1	10.5%	25.0%	11.8%	12.3%	6.7%
2	3.5%	8.3%	26.4%	17.5%	9.6%
3	1.8%	0.0%	10.0%	12.3%	8.7%
4	3.5%	4.2%	7.3%	10.5%	11.5%
5	10.5%	12.5%	7.3%	12.3%	12.5%
6	8.8%	12.5%	7.3%	7.0%	2.9%
7	0.0%	4.2%	2.7%	3.5%	2.9%
8	5.3%	4.2%	6.4%	0.0%	3.9%
9	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	5.3%	3.9%
10-19	24.6%	16.7%	13.6%	14.0%	20.2%
20-29	8.8%	4.2%	2.7%	1.8%	7.7%
30-39	7.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	2.9%
40-49	5.3%	4.2%	1.8%	1.8%	0.0%
50 or more	10.5%	0.0%	0.9%	1.8%	6.7%

Q: How many times per week? How many kms per week? How many hours per week?

Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the last month (commuting to work n=52; commuting to school/university/tafe n=19; running errands/going to the shops n=124; to visit family/friends n=62; to leisure and recreational activities n=117)

Table 4: Reasons for riding a bike for transport

It is healthy and good exercise	89.9%
It is economically beneficial	70.9%
It is environmentally friendly	68.4%
It is convenient	55.7%
To avoid congestion	23.4%
Bicycle facilities provide direct access	19.6%
It is faster than a car or public transport	17.7%
Poor access to public transport	12.0%
Shower/change facilities are available	7.6%
No access to other forms of transport	7.0%
Other	3.8%

Q: In general, what are the main reasons you ride a bicycle for transport? (multiple response)
 Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the past month (n=158)

RIDING A BIKE FOR TRANSPORT

Respondents who had ridden a bike for transport in the past month were asked what were the main reasons they ride for transport.

- ❖ Nine in ten respondents cycle due to the health and exercise benefits obtained from cycling.
- ❖ Respondents were also likely to be influenced by the economic benefits of cycling, as well as the environmental advantages.
- ❖ Very few respondents cycled as a result of poor access to either public transport or other forms of transport.

Table 5: Reasons for not riding a bike for transport more frequently

Unsafe road conditions	67.1%
Speed/volume of traffic	52.5%
Lack of bicycle lanes/trails	48.1%
Weather conditions	44.3%
Destinations too far away	36.7%
No place to park/store bicycle	26.0%
Don't feel safe riding	25.3%
Too hilly	23.4%
No place to change/shower	17.7%
Don't like wearing a helmet	16.5%
Not enough time	15.2%
Not fit enough	11.4%
Health problems	5.7%
Nowhere to store clothes	5.1%
None	5.1%
Unsure of best route	4.4%
Don't feel confident riding	3.8%
Other	3.2%

Q: Which of the following, if any, discourage you from riding a bicycle for transport more often? (multiple response)
 Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the past month (n=158)

NOT RIDING A BIKE FOR TRANSPORT MORE OFTEN

Respondents who had ridden a bike for transport in the past month were asked what discourages them from riding a bike for transport more often.

- ❖ A common theme for not cycling more often was due to road traffic conditions or safety. Respondents were likely to rate unsafe road condition, speed/volume of traffic, lack of bicycle lanes or safety as key reasons for not cycling often.
- ❖ Issues such as lack of time or motivation were not significant factors in holding back cyclists.

Table 6: Roads and paths most frequently ride on

Quiet roads	48.1%
Shared paths (pedestrians and bicycles)	17.7%
Busy roads	14.6%
Footpaths	10.1%
Road bicycle lanes	9.5%

Q: When riding for transport, do you mainly ride on ...?
 Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the past month (n=158)

Table 7: Persons mainly ride with

Alone	88.6%
With one other person	9.5%
With two other people	1.3%
With three or more people	0.6%

Q: When riding for transport, do you mainly ride ...?
 Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the past month (n=158)

Table 8: Level of riding experience

Beginner	17.7%
Intermediate	46.2%
Experienced	36.1%

Q: What do you consider your level of riding experience?
 Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the past month (n=158)

BIKE RIDING BEHAVIOUR

- ❖ Of those respondents who had cycled for transport in the past month, most did so on quiet roads, significantly outweighing the proportion that cycled on busy roads.
- ❖ Surprisingly, cyclists were around three times more likely to cycle on quiet roads than on shared paths, and five-times more likely than on designated road lanes for bicycles.

RIDING EXPERIENCE

- ❖ The overwhelming majority of respondents cycled alone, with cyclists very unlikely to cycle with three or more people at the one time.

LEVEL OF RIDING EXPERIENCE

- ❖ Only one in three cyclists class their level as experienced.

IMPROVEMENT IN GENERAL HEALTH

- ❖ Of those who had ridden a bike for transport in the past month, close to 90% indicated they felt their general health had improved since starting to ride for transport.

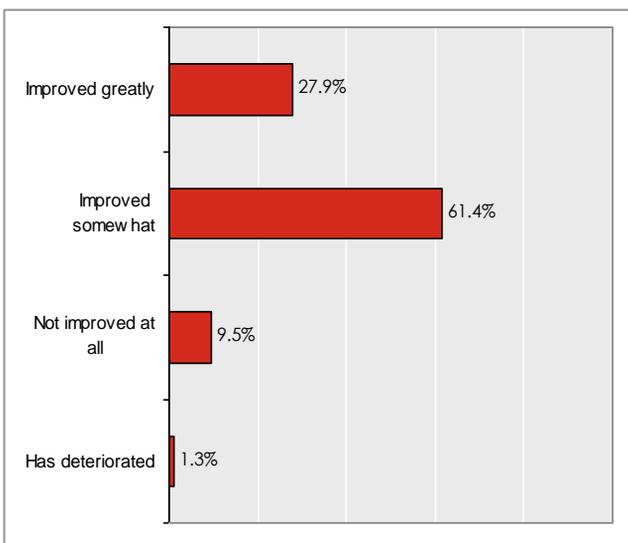


Figure 3: Improvement in general health

Q: Since starting riding for transport would you say your general health has ...?
 Base: Respondents who have ridden a bike for transport in the past month (n=158)

Table 9: Reasons why do not have access to a bike

Prefer other recreation/Exercise activities	25.0%
Riding a bicycle is not a safe method of transportation	23.3%
Riding a bicycle is not a convenient method of transportation	21.3%
Don't like riding a bicycle	18.1%
No time to ride a bicycle	14.6%
Other	13.1%
Don't know how to ride a bicycle	11.4%
Cost	9.2%
No place to store a bicycle	8.4%
Health reasons	5.0%
Age	4.5%

Q: What are the reasons you do not have access to a bicycle? (multiple response)
 Base: Respondents who do not have access to a bike (n=404)

Table 10: Like to be able to ride for transport or short trips

Yes	61.2%
No	38.8%

Q: Would you like to be able to ride for transport or short trips?
 Base: Respondents who do not have access to a bike or have not ridden a bike for transport in the last month (n=842)

Table 11: Reasons why do not ride a bike for transport

Unsafe road conditions	46.4%
Speed/volume of traffic	41.8%
Don't feel safe riding	41.4%
Lack of bicycle lanes/trails	34.6%
Destinations too far away	29.9%
No place to park/store bicycle	23.5%
Do not own a bicycle	22.5%
Weather conditions	22.1%
Not fit enough	21.8%
Too hilly	19.6%
Don't feel confident riding	18.6%
Not enough time	16.7%
Don't like wearing a helmet	15.7%
No place to change/shower	14.6%
Health problems	14.4%
Nowhere to store clothes	6.6%
Other	4.9%
Unsure of best route	3.9%
Need to transport other people (eg children)	2.3%
Don't know how to ride a bike	1.4%

Q: What are the main reasons you do not ride a bicycle for transport? (multiple response)
 Base: Respondents who would like to be able to ride for transport or short trips (n=515)

DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A BIKE

Respondents who indicated that they do not own or have access to a bike were asked the reasons why.

- ❖ More than 40% of respondents who do not own or have access to a bike said they prefer other forms of recreation and exercise activities to cycling or don't like cycling at all.
- ❖ Just under a quarter felt cycling was not a safe form of transport (which was also a common reason for cyclists not riding more often).

WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO RIDE FOR TRANSPORT OR SHORT TRIPS

- ❖ Of those respondents who do not currently ride a bike for transport, just over 60% indicated that they would like to be able to ride for transport or short trips.

Respondents who do not currently ride a bike for transport, but indicated that they would like to be able to, were asked to identify the reasons why they do not currently ride a bike for transport or short trip.

- ❖ Once again, a common theme for not cycling is due to road and safety issues. Unsafe road conditions, volume of traffic and general safety were key reasons for holding back people.
- ❖ Weather conditions were more likely to be rated as a factor than personal matters such as lack of time or motivation.

Table 12: Reasons for not being interested in riding a bike for transport

Health/medical reasons	17.7%
Age	14.4%
Unsafe/dangerous road conditions	12.8%
Other	11.9%
Prefer to walk	10.1%
Prefer car/public transport	9.2%
Don't feel safe riding	6.4%
Too hilly	6.4%
Need to transport other people (eg children)	5.5%
Destinations too far away	4.9%
Don't feel confident riding	4.6%
Speed/volume of traffic	4.3%
No storage	3.7%
Don't know how to ride a bike	2.8%
Ride for recreation only	2.5%
Weather conditions	1.2%
Not enough time	1.2%
Not fit enough	0.6%
Don't own a bike	0.6%

Q: What is the main reason you are not interested in riding a bicycle for transport, even short trips? (verbatim)
 Base: Respondents who are not interested in riding a bike for transport (n=515)

REASONS FOR NOT BEING INTERESTED IN RIDING A BIKE FOR TRANSPORT

Respondents who were not interested in riding a bike for transport were asked to identify the reasons why they were not interested in riding for transport.

- ❖ The most common reason for not being interested in riding a bike for transport was health and/or medical reasons or age (older respondents were significantly less likely than younger respondents to have access or own a bike).
- ❖ Unsafe or dangerous road conditions, and preferring to walk, drive or catch public transport were also common reasons frequently mentioned.

Table 13: Likelihood of cycling in the future

I am not considering cycling for transport within the next six months	68.7%
I am seriously considering cycling for transport within the next six months	15.2%
I intend to cycle for transport in the next month	6.6%
I have been using a bicycle for transport over the last six months	3.0%
I have been cycling regularly for transport for more than six months	6.5%

Q: And finally, which of the following statements best describes you...?
 Base: All respondents (n=1000)

LIKELIHOOD OF RIDING A BIKE FOR TRANSPORT

- ❖ Overall, one in ten respondents indicated that they had been using a bike for transport for at least the last six months, with a further one in six seriously considering cycling in the next six months.
- ❖ The overwhelming majority of respondents were not considering cycling for transport in the near future.



ENCOURAGE THE USE OF BIKES

All respondents were asked which conditions would encourage them to ride a bike more than they currently do (or at all).

- ❖ The majority of respondents (over 80%) agreed that paved paths along roads physically separated from motor traffic and paved separated trails along rivers and scenic areas would encourage them to ride more than they do.
- ❖ Over 70% agreed that education for motorists on how to deal with bicyclists in traffic, secure bicycle parking at destination and more bicycle racks, benches or restrooms would encourage them.
- ❖ Fewer respondents (57%) indicated that improved end of trip facilities such as showers and clothes storage would encourage them to ride more than they do.

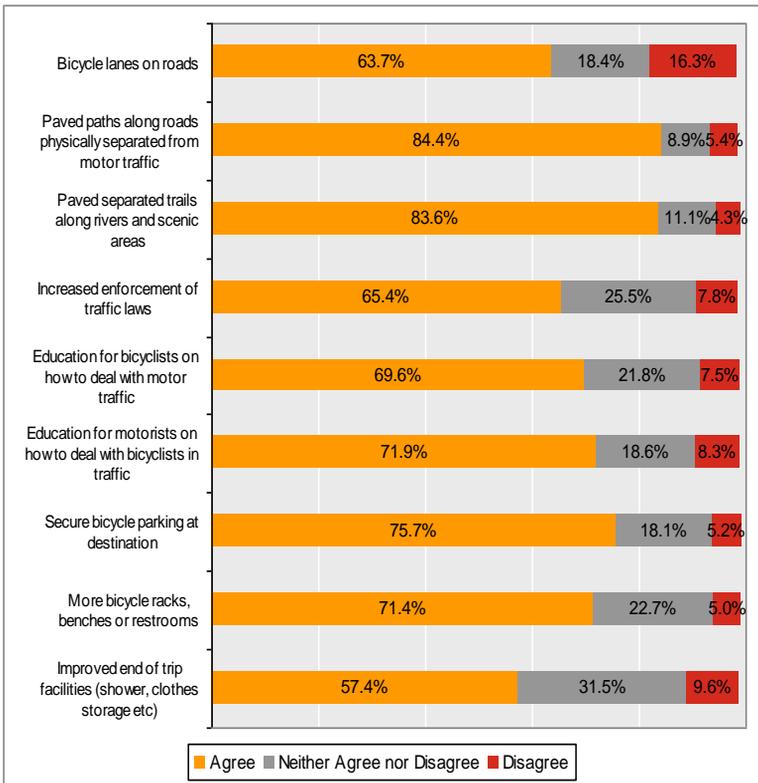


Figure 4: Conditions that would encourage the use of bikes

Q: Regardless of whether or not you own a bicycle, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree that the following conditions would encourage you to bicycle more than you do today (or at all).

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

WHAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE DOING

All respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with a number of statements about what they think the Federal Government should be doing in relation to using bikes for transport.

- ❖ Just over 80% agreed that the Federal Government should be doing more to promote a cycle safe culture. 70% agreed that the Federal Government should be doing more to encourage people to ride a bike to school.
- ❖ Over 60% agreed that the Federal Government should be doing more to encourage people to use bicycles for transport, doing more to encourage people to ride a bicycle to work, and offering incentives to get more people to use bicycles for transport.

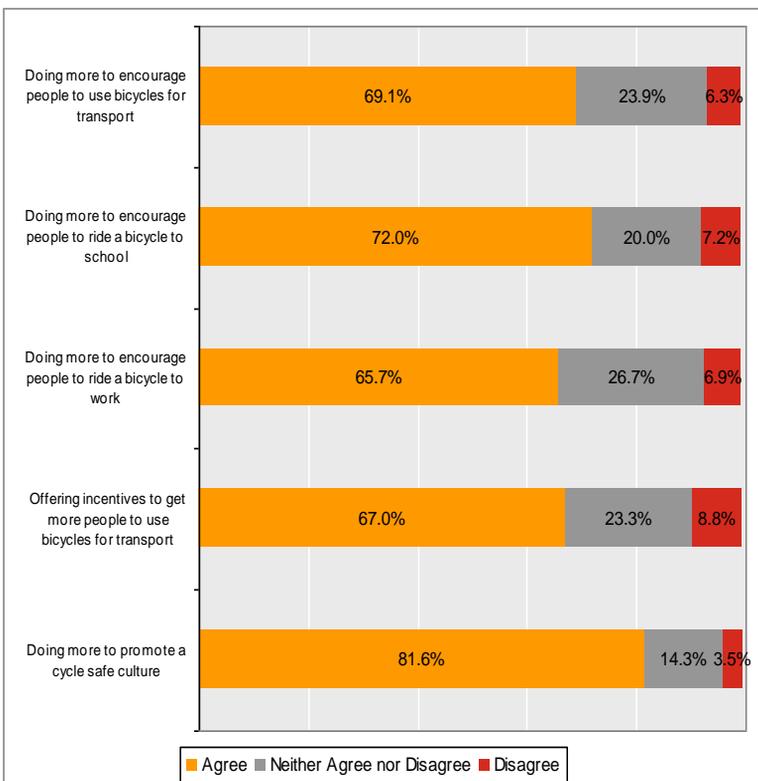


Figure 5: Agree that the Federal Government should be...

Q: Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree that the Federal Government should be...?

Base: All respondents (n=1000)