

Active Transport Research – a study of community attitudes and behaviours in a coronavirus environment:

Key Results Summary for MAV

June 2020 | Survey by Intuitive Solutions for VicHealth

Survey details

- Online panel survey, in field 18-24 June 2020 as Victoria was still in Stage 2 restrictions, a week before the Stage 3 restrictions for certain postcodes came in.
- Total sample of n = 1,000 Victorian respondents aged 18+
- Representative of Victorian population across gender, age, and metro/regional location:
 - 77.1% of respondents based in metropolitan Melbourne, 22.6% located across regional Victoria
 - 50.3% female respondents, 49.4% male respondents
 - Representative sample across age categories

Key findings

Concerns about travelling

- More than one in two (55%) Victorians were concerned with one or more aspects of travel (i.e., how they would get to work, study and other appointments post-coronavirus) as restrictions are lifted
- Safety was a major concern for both walkers and cyclists – One in three (32%) Victorians said a lack of lighting influenced their decision to walk, while almost two in five (37%) occasional cyclists (i.e., those who cycle once a month but less than once a week) don't feel safe cycling on roads or near cars
- Younger Victorians (particularly the 18-24-year old's) reported higher levels of concern about travel as restrictions ease than other age groups
- Females and people in metropolitan Melbourne reported higher levels of concern about travel as restrictions ease, compared with males or those in regional areas

Anticipated mode of travel when restrictions lift

- Around **one in five (22%)** Victorians who own a bike report they are likely to **ride** to work/study more as restrictions ease than they did pre-coronavirus.
- Around **one in four** Victorians report they are likely to **walk** more to work/study or other commitments (22% and 28% respectively) when restrictions lift
- Almost one in two (49%) Victorians who do not normally drive to work would consider driving rather than using public transport as we recover from coronavirus

Public support for changes that support more walking and cycling

- More than two in three (68%) would support Government (state and local) changes to enable people to **walk** more often for transport e.g., introduce footpaths, more lighting on walkways, more pedestrian crossings etc.
- More than one in two (55%) would support Government changes to enable people to **ride** more often for transport e. g., introduce wider bike lanes or separated bike lanes, more lighting on bike paths, more park and ride options etc.

Public transport

- One in two respondents (50%) were concerned about using public transport as restrictions are lifted
- **Key concerns included:**
 - 22% of respondents were concerned about overcrowding / people too close to each other
 - 18% Lack of physical distancing / hard to keep social distancing
 - 16% Poor behaviour of others / complacency
 - 12% Cleaning/cleanliness (lack of, poor processes etc).
- Three in four (76%) Victorians who don't usually drive to work/study said they would limit or change their use of public transport due to coronavirus:
 - 37% will avoid public transport for the time being
 - 20% will use it when it's less busy
 - 19% will use it on fewer days.
- Meanwhile, almost three in four (74%) people who don't usually drive to their personal/family commitments will limit or change their use of public transport:
 - 33% will avoid public transport for the time being
 - 23% will use it when its less busy
 - 18% will use it on fewer days.

People driving to work/study or personal/family commitments

- Around one in two Victorians who don't normally drive would 'definitely drive' or 'consider driving' rather than use public transport as restrictions ease
 - 49% of those going to work/study
 - 52% of those going to personal/family commitments
- Nearly all Victorians who normally drive would 'definitely drive' or 'consider driving' when restrictions ease
 - 96% of those going to work/study
 - 94% of those going to personal/family commitments

Walking

- 34% of respondents were walking more often for recreation in June 2020 compared to pre-COVID (Jan/Feb 2020) (although 24% are doing it less often)
- More than two in three (68%) people support Government (both State and Local) changes to enable people to walk for their work/study/personal and family commitments more often
- Aside from distance, safety concerns were the biggest barriers preventing people walking for transport (i.e., to work/study or to personal commitments):
 - No lighting / too dark (32% reported this influences their decision to walk)
 - Not enough footpaths (17%)
 - Don't feel safe walking having to share paths with cyclists (16-17%)
 - Don't feel safe walking near roads or cars (16-17%)
 - Personally, don't feel safe walking (15-16%).

Cycling

Changes in cycling behaviour

Compared to January/February 2020, respondents reported mixed changes to their cycling habits in the three months prior to the survey (i.e., when social distancing measures were introduced):

- fewer people were cycling to work/study; 10% reported they had done so more often, whilst 18% reported they had done so less often;
- for cycling to personal/family commitments - 14% had done so more often, whilst 16% had done so less often;
- more people cycled for recreation; 23% had done so more often, 22% less often.

Future intentions cycling

- As restrictions lift, one in four (22%) cyclists reported they were likely to cycle to work or study more than they did in Jan/Feb 2020

Changes that would support increased cycling behaviour

- 67% of cyclists indicated that having bike lanes that were physically separated from the road would encourage them to cycle to work/study more
- 51% of cyclists reported that on-road painted bike lanes would encourage them to cycle to work/study more
- For the people who occasionally cycle for personal and family commitments, introducing bike lanes that are physically separated from the road is the key change most likely to motivate this cohort to ride more often