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### **'Bike culture' enjoys limited receptivity among Canadians**

Although 41% agree that new road and traffic infrastructure projects should prioritize bicycles over automobiles, Canadians are the least favourable of 28 countries polled

**May 24, 2022** — A new Ipsos survey ahead of the World Bicycle Day to be celebrated on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022, finds that most adults across 28 countries consider cycling plays an important role in the reduction of carbon emissions (on average, 86% do so) and in the reduction of traffic (80%). While there is a global consensus on bicycles' key role to reduce carbon emissions and traffic and there is widespread support for assigning a higher priority to bicycles in new infrastructure projects, agreement on these aspects is one of the lowest in Canada.

While Canadians are in general favourable towards bicycles as a method of transportation, only 4% prefer to use a bicycle for small distances of 2Km/1 mile, putting Canada at the bottom of the list of 28 countries in bicycle usage for small distances. Further, only 16% of Canadians ride a bicycle at least once a week, again, the lowest in 28 countries. While the long winters are likely a prohibitive factor for normalizing year-long biking preferences, Canadians also highlight safety concerns: Over two-thirds feel cyclists in their area disrespect traffic rules & regulations (65%), cyclists represent as much danger to pedestrians as automobiles (63%) and are in general, a danger to drivers (60%). Half (48%) feel cycling from one place to another in their area is too dangerous.

These are some of the findings of a survey of 20,057 adults under the age of 75 conducted between March 25 and April 8, 2022 on Ipsos's Global Advisor online survey platform.

#### *Reducing Canada's carbon footprint with cycling*

There is a global consensus that cycling plays an important role in the reduction of carbon emissions as well as contributes to a reduction of traffic. Looking at the opinion of Canadians specifically, although a large majority (79%) of Canadians believe that cycling has a big impact on reducing one's carbon footprint, Canada is one of the least likely countries to believe so. Canadian opinion not only trails behind the peak consensus in countries such as China and Peru (94% each), but it is also behind the global country average of 86%. Residents of Great Britain, Norway and the United States share Canadians' opinions at 78% each, while Germany sits last at 77%.

Interestingly, Canadian women (83%) are significantly more likely than men (75%) to say that cycling plays an important role in the reduction of carbon emissions.

Similarly, in comparison to the global country average of 80%, much fewer Canadians (63%) believe that cycling has an important part to play in the reduction of traffic. Canada and the United States are the two countries least likely to agree (63% and 62%, respectively).

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### *Cycling as a solution in Canada*

When talking about the general opinion of various methods of transportation used in their community, 78% of Canadians are generally favourable towards bicycles. Although high, favourability toward bicycle in Canada trails behind automobiles (84%) which enjoys the first position on the list and is followed by electric bicycles (e-bikes) at 73%, motorbikes at 65%, lorries/trucks at 54% and standup scooters at 50%.

The global landscape of favourability towards various modes of transportation differs from that of Canadians – globally, cycling enjoys a higher level of favorability (82%) than do all other forms of transportation and automobiles, as well as e-bikes, are neck-in-neck at second and third spots (74% and 73%, respectively).

Methods of transportation used in their community	% Favourable	
	Global Average:	Canada (Comparison to Global average)
<b>Bicycles</b>	82%	78% (-4 pts vs. Global)
<b>Automobiles</b>	74%	84% (+10 pts vs. Global)
<b>Electric bicycles (e-bikes)</b>	73%	73% (At par with Global)
<b>Motorcycles/Mopeds</b>	59%	65% (+6 pts vs. Global)
<b>Stand-up Scooters</b>	53%	50% (-3 pts vs. Global)
<b>Trucks</b>	43%	54% (+12 pts vs. Global)

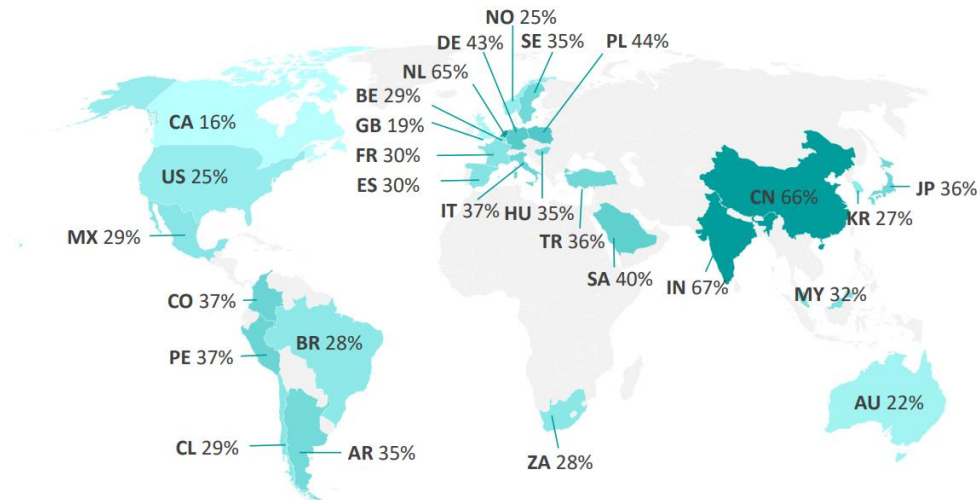
Further, among the 28 countries polled, Canada has the lowest proportion of adults riding a bicycle at least once a week (16%) versus the global average (35%). This is despite 67% of Canadians knowing how to ride a bicycle, ranking 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 28 countries listed.

Canadian men (25% vs. 8% among women) are much more likely to ride a bike once a week or more. Regionally, Quebecers (19%) and Ontarians (18%) record the higher ridership (weekly or more frequently), followed by British Colombia (15%), Prairies (14%), Alberta (13%) and the Atlantic (3%).

A quarter of Canadians ride a bicycle for exercise (23%), not far behind the global average of 28%. Although a gender difference in usage of biking for exercising is recorded in the global average as well (Globally: Men 32% vs. Women 23% - 8 pt. gap), the difference is higher in Canada (Men: 29% vs. Women 17%, -12 pts gap).

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### % OF ADULTS RIDING A BICYCLE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK



When it comes to commuting short distances (2-KM/1-Mile), driving in one's own vehicle (43%) or walking (38%) are the most typical mode used by most Canadians. Only 4% of Canadian adults use a bicycle as their usual mode of transportation for a 2-kilometre or 1-mile distance, putting Canada at the bottom of the list of 28 countries in bicycle usage for small distances. The United States sits close behind at 6%, tied with Australia, Great Britain, South Africa and Spain. On the other end of the spectrum, cycling is the most common mode of transportation for short local trips in the Netherlands (45%) and China (33%) and is also widely used in Japan (27%), India (21%), Germany (21%), and Belgium (20%).

Linked to the ridership, bike ownership in Canada is also much lower than in many other countries. While it is as high as ~70% in European countries such as the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden, it stands close to one in three in the two North American countries (Canada: 36%, United States: 37% vs. Global country average of 42%).

Canadians living in large city suburbs (44%) are significantly more likely to own a bike that they use personally than those in large cities (27%). Bike ownership for personal use in rural areas (38%) or small cities (36%) is closer to the overall country average (36%).

#### *Bicycling safety a factor in adoption*

While the long winters in Canada would no doubt mean that 'weather' is likely a factor behind low bike usage in Canada, safety and traffic violation concerns are also highlighted in the survey.



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More than six in ten Canadians feel cyclists in their area disrespect traffic rules and regulations (65%), a concern felt more strongly among older Canadians aged 50-74 (73%) compared to those under 35 (55%), as well as among residents in Quebec (76% vs. Ontario 64%, BC 62%, Alberta 59% and Atlantic 55%).

A majority of Canadians also see cyclists as much of a danger to pedestrians as automobiles (63%), once again felt more strongly among those aged 50-74 (68%) compared to Canadians under 35 years (55%). Adding further to the concern list, 60% of Canadians see cyclists as a danger to drivers, a shared fear among all age groups. From a cyclist's point of view, almost half (48%) of Canadians believe that cycling from one place to another in their area is too dangerous, higher among those aged 50-74 (52%) than those under 35 (41%).

This is despite the fact that when asked about the cycling infrastructure in their area, nearly half of Canadians (45%) say that cycling infrastructure (e.g., have dedicated bike lanes) in their area is excellent. Quebec residents (61%), followed by British Columbians (51%) are most likely to rate the provincial biking infrastructure as excellent. In comparison, Ontario stands at 41%, while Atlantic (35%), Alberta (34%) and Prairies (27%) are further down the list.

### *Looking ahead: Prioritization of bicycles in road and traffic infrastructure projects*

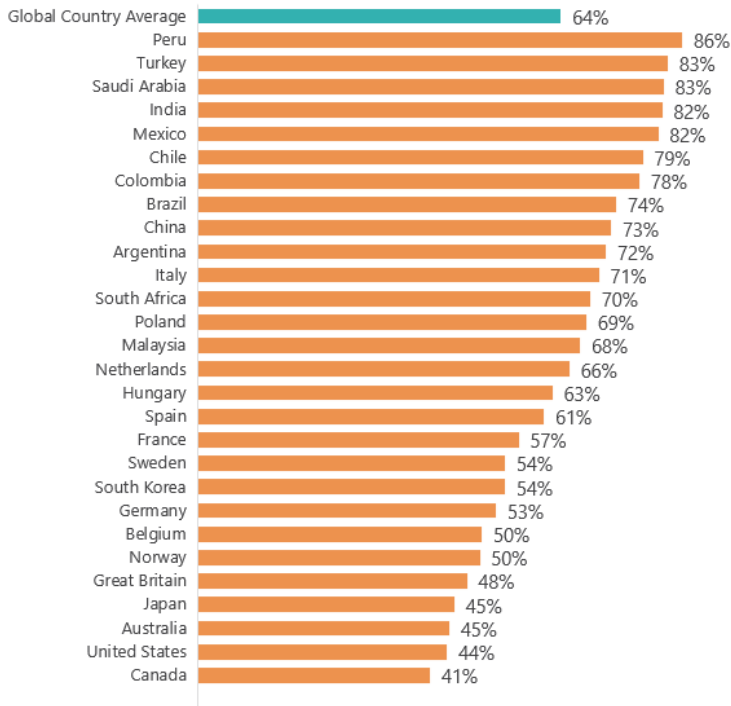
Globally, twice as many agree as disagree (64% vs. 36%, on average per country) that new road and traffic infrastructure projects in their area should prioritize bicycles over automobiles. Support is higher than average in all emerging countries surveyed. The only countries where fewer than 50% agree are Canada, the U.S., Australia, Japan, and Great Britain while opinions are evenly split in Belgium and Norway.

Not only is Canada among the few countries where more disagree than agree, but Canadians are the least likely among 28 countries to believe that the new road and traffic infrastructure projects in their area should prioritize bicycles over automobiles. While Canadian men and women share this opinion, younger Canadians (35 years or below), are much more likely to support creating an infrastructure better suited to biking needs (Under 35 yrs: 49% vs. 37% among those 35 yrs or older).



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### "NEW ROAD AND TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN MY AREA SHOULD PRIORITIZE BICYCLES OVER AUTOMOBILES" (% AGREE)



Base: 20,507 online adults across 28 countries  
 The "Global Country Average" reflects the average result for all the countries and markets where the survey was conducted. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result.  
 The samples in Brazil, Chile, China (mainland), Colombia, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population.



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### About the Study

These are the findings of a 28-country Ipsos survey conducted March 25 – April 8, 2022, among 20,057 adults aged 16-99 in Norway, 18-74 in the United States, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, and 16-74 in 22 other countries, via Ipsos's Global Advisor online survey platform.

Each country's sample consists of ca. 1,000 individuals in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China (mainland), France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the United States, and ca. 500 individuals in Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and Turkey.

The samples in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the United States can be taken as representative of these countries' general adult population under the age of 75.

The samples in Brazil, Chile, China (mainland), Colombia, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Turkey are more urban, more educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. The survey results for these markets should be viewed as reflecting the views of the more "connected" segment of their population.

The data is weighted so that each market's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of the adult population according to the most recent census data.

The Global average reflects the average result of all the countries and markets where the survey was conducted that year. It has not been adjusted to the population size of each country or market and is not intended to suggest a total result.

Where results do not sum to 100 or the 'difference' appears to be +/-1 more/less than the actual, this may be due to rounding, multiple responses, or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.

The precision of Ipsos online polls is calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 4.8 percentage points. For more information on Ipsos's use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

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### About Ipsos

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