



# The Road Safety Authority

## Garda Enforcement National Survey

January 2017

Prepared for:



Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre  
Road Safety Authority

and Irish International BBDO

Prepared by  
John O'Mahony

J.7908

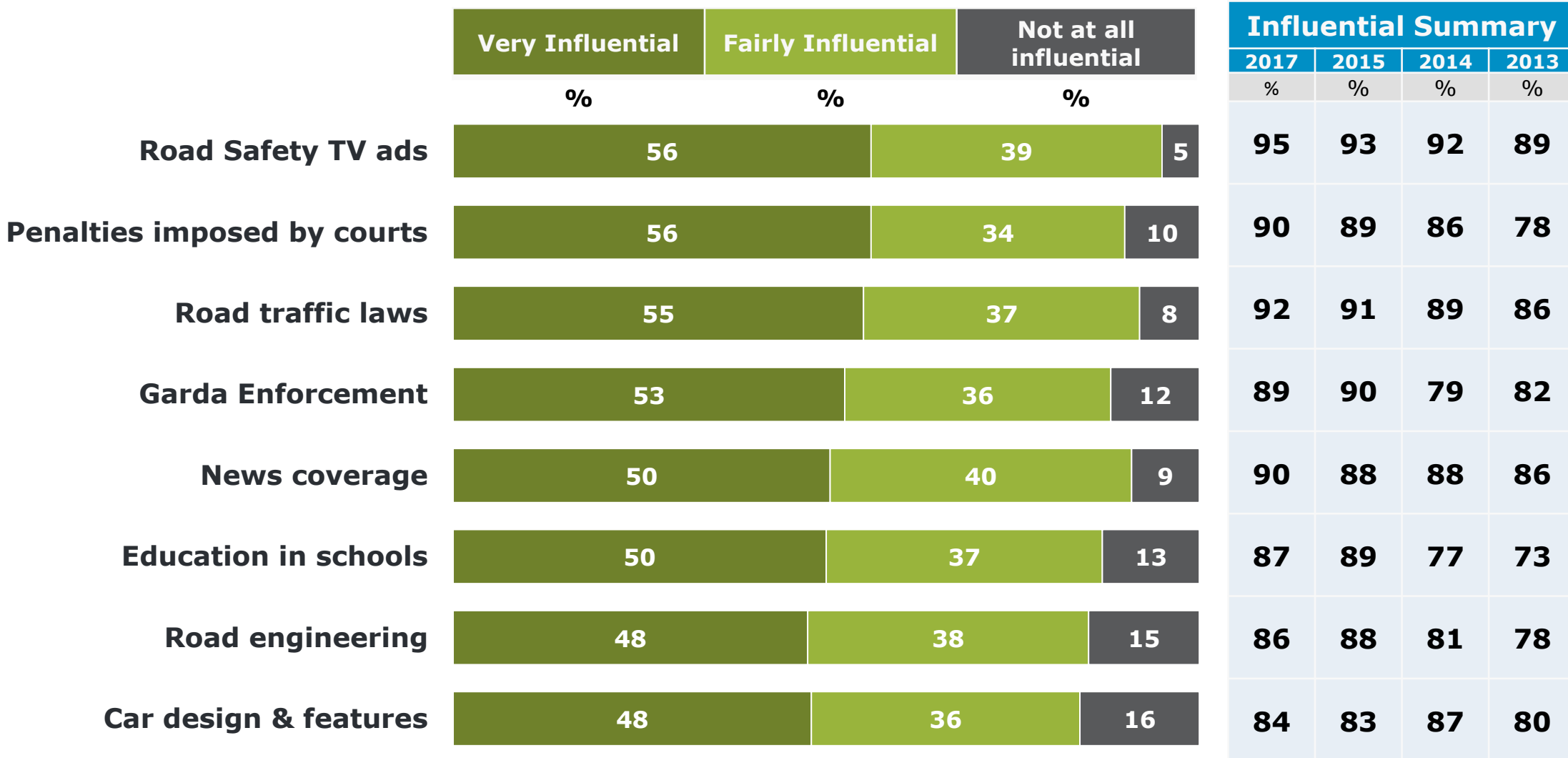


# Research Background & Objectives

- This research study, on behalf of the Road Safety Authority, examined the attitudes of Irish adults in relation to a series of issues relating to road safety and the enforcement of traffic laws by An Garda Síochána.
- A national survey was conducted via B&A's face-to-face Barometer survey with a nationally representative sample of 976 adults aged 16 years+.
- The survey addressed the following key issues:
  - ❖ How influential key factors have been in saving lives on Ireland's roads
  - ❖ Attitudes towards the number of Gardai currently enforcing traffic laws on our roads
  - ❖ Rating of the number of Gardai on our roads who enforce a range of traffic enforcement activities
  - ❖ Frequency of passing through a Garda checkpoint on Irish roads in the past 6 months
  - ❖ Frequency of observing types of driving behaviour among road users on Irish roads in the last 6 months
  - ❖ Whether the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána has increased or decreased
  - ❖ Should the Government prioritise funding of An Garda Síochána to support their efforts to enforce road safety laws
- Survey interviewing was conducted in January 2017 and comparisons to previous research are provided where relevant.

# Road Safety – Key Influential Factors

Base: All Adults N – 976



While all factors are clearly considered important, road safety TV ads lead the list of the most influential factors in saving lives on Irish roads.



Q. Deaths on Irish roads are now at their lowest level since records began. How influential or not do you think each of the following factors have been in saving lives on Ireland’s roads?

# Road Safety – Key Influential Factors

Base: All Adults N – 976

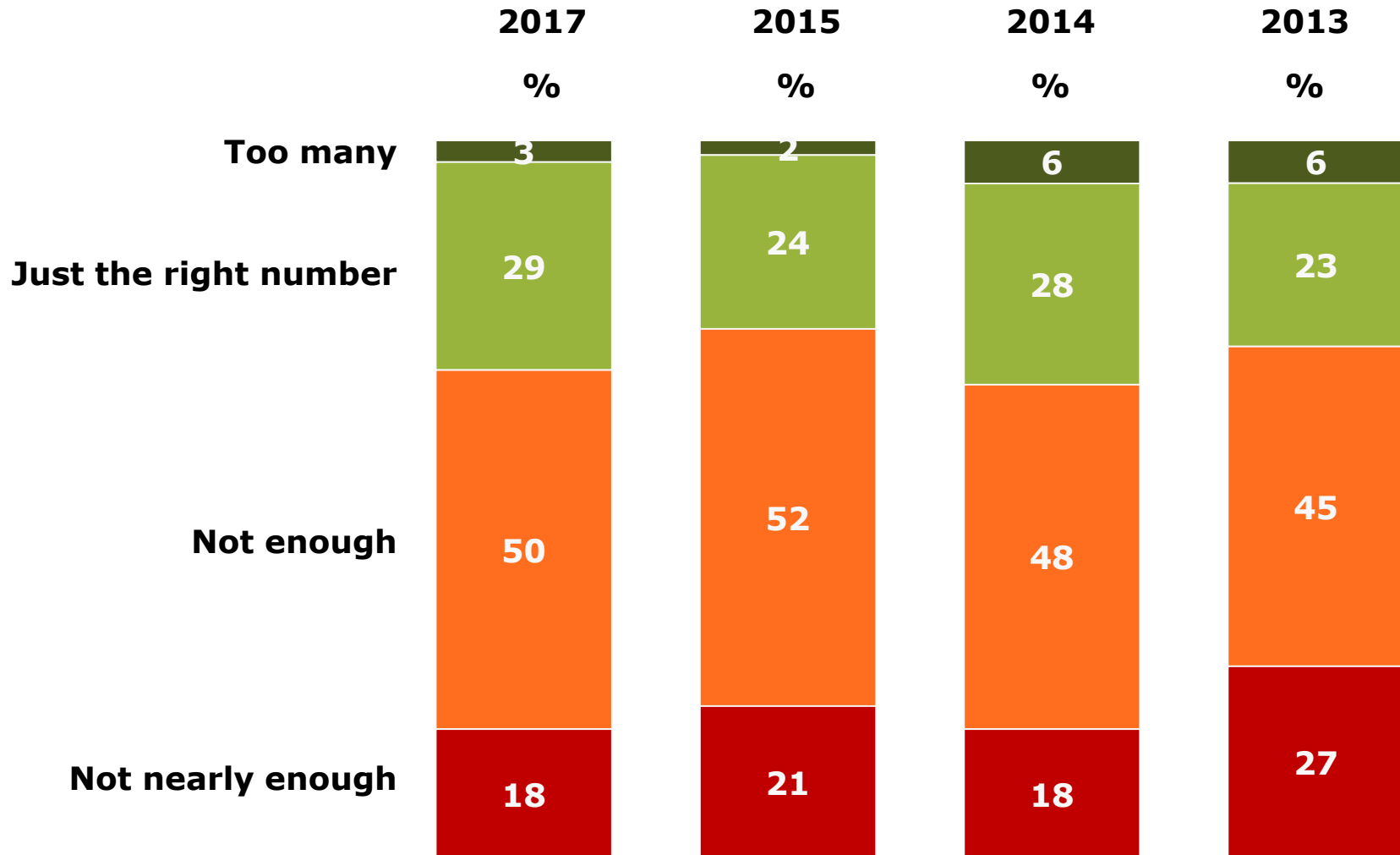
Very Influential	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Area	
		Male	Female	-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural
<i>Base:</i>	976	495	481	111	148	292	251	174	283	256	264	173	628	348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Road Safety TV ads	56	51	<b>61</b>	53	57	56	54	59	58	52	50	<b>66</b>	56	57
Penalties imposed by courts	56	54	57	53	57	56	54	56	53	60	53	58	54	58
Road traffic laws	55	53	56	55	54	58	50	57	60	56	45	59	54	56
Garda Enforcement	53	51	54	53	52	54	51	53	54	56	44	60	53	53
Education in schools	50	46	54	44	52	51	47	56	57	52	37	56	50	51
News coverage	50	46	55	42	49	52	51	56	52	51	44	56	47	55
Road engineering	48	47	48	37	48	51	44	56	58	47	34	53	48	48
Car design & features	48	49	47	39	51	50	46	49	58	43	35	57	50	44



Q. Deaths on Irish roads are now at their lowest level since records began. How influential or not do you think each of the following factors have been in saving lives on Ireland's roads?

# Number of Gardaí Enforcing Traffic Laws

Base: All Adults N – 976



68% of Irish adults believe there are not enough/not nearly enough Gardaí currently enforcing traffic laws on 'our' roads.

# Number of Gardaí Enforcing Traffic Laws

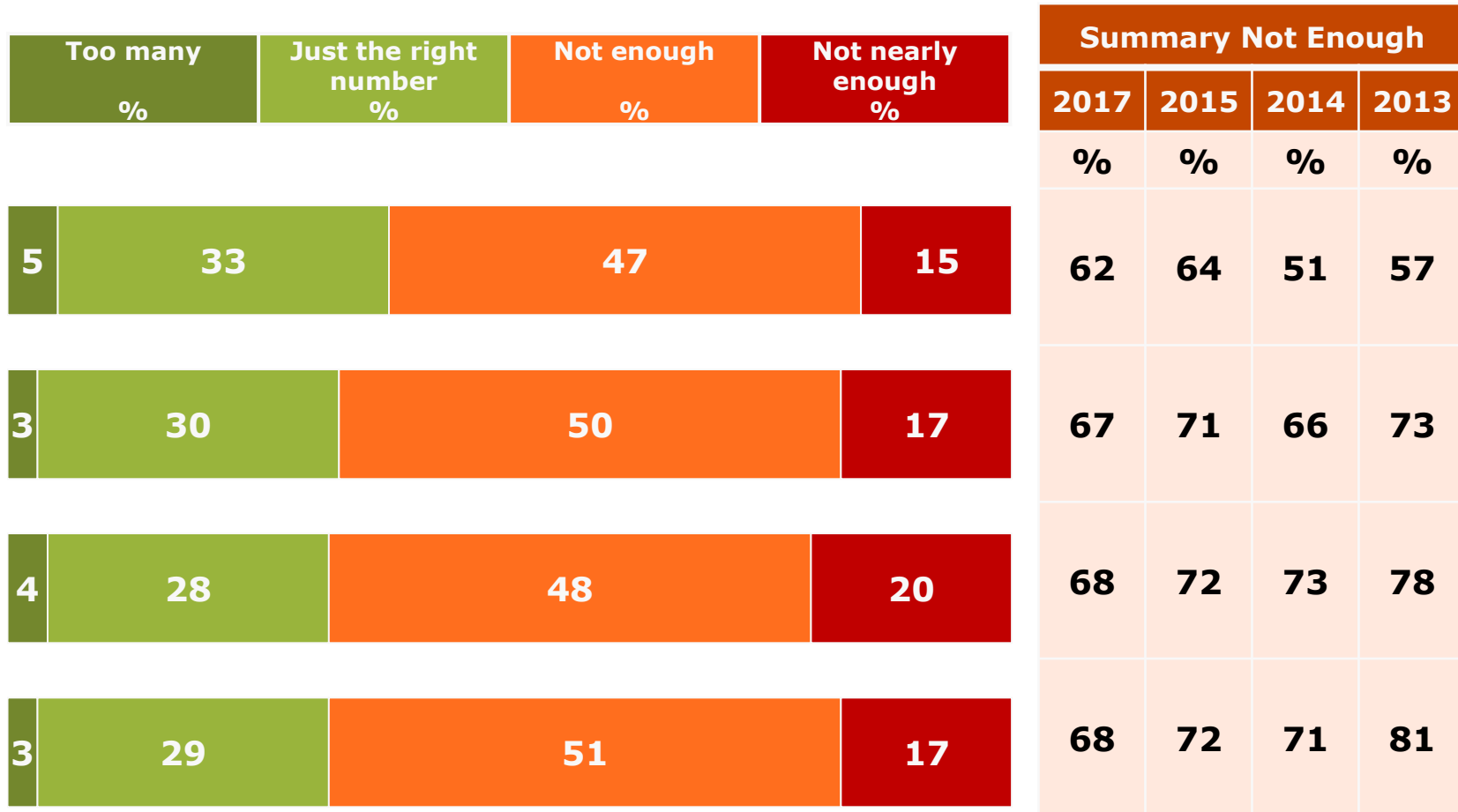
Base: All Adults N – 976

Very Influential	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Area	
		Male	Female	-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural
Base:	976	495	481	111	148	292	251	174	283	256	264	173	628	348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Too many	3	4	3	3	5	4	2	2	4	2	5	2	3	4
Just the right number	29	30	28	44	34	26	22	23	33	30	21	33	29	29
Not enough	50	46	53	42	47	52	53	51	34	60	60	44	44	58
Not nearly enough	18	20	16	11	15	17	24	24	29	9	14	21	24	9
Summary not enough	68	66	69	53	62	69	<b>77</b>	<b>75</b>	63	69	<b>74</b>	65	68	67

Those aged 50 years + are most likely to believe there are not enough Gardaí currently enforcing traffic laws on our roads.

# Number of Gardaí and Traffic Enforcement Activities

Base: All Adults N – 976



The view that there are insufficient Gardaí on the roads is consistent across the tested traffic enforcement activities.

Q. And thinking specifically about each of the following traffic enforcement activities, how do you rate the number of Gardaí on our roads who enforce each:

# Number of Gardaí and Traffic Enforcement Activities

Base: All Adults N – 976



Not enough/not nearly enough	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Area	
		Male	Female	-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural
<i>Base:</i>	976	495	481	111	148	292	251	174	283	256	264	173	628	348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The number of Gardaí enforcing <b>speed limits</b>	62	62	62	49	55	64	<b>71</b>	68	57	63	70	56	61	63
The number of Gardaí enforcing <b>drink driving limits</b>	67	67	67	52	66	69	<b>75</b>	70	61	68	75	63	67	68
The number of Gardaí enforcing <b>mobile phone offences</b>	68	67	68	56	64	68	<b>75</b>	73	64	67	76	59	68	68
The number of Gardaí enforcing <b>dangerous driving offences</b>	68	69	67	56	65	69	<b>76</b>	72	63	67	74	69	67	69

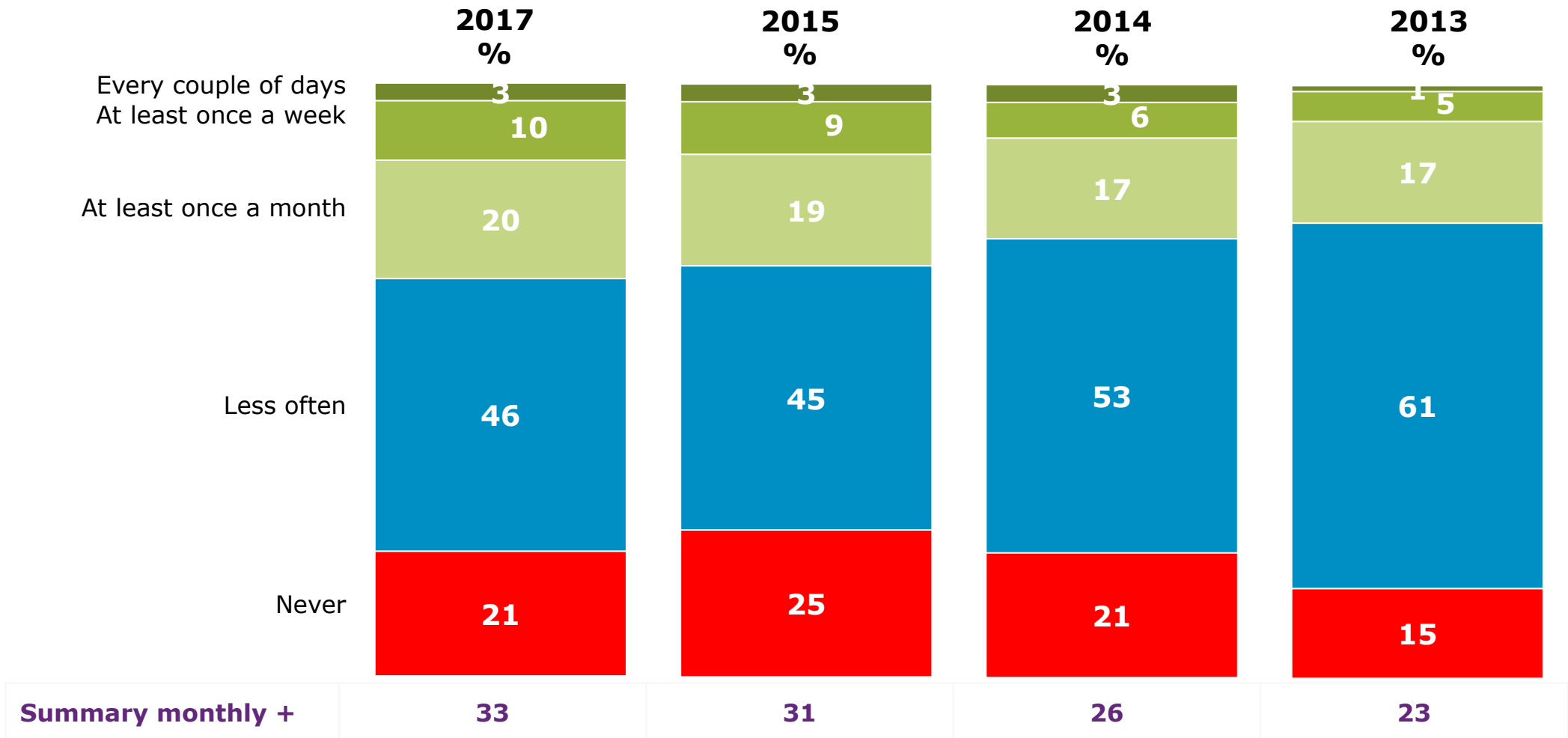


Q. And thinking specifically about each of the following traffic enforcement activities, how do you rate the number of Gardaí on our roads who enforce each:



# Passing Garda Checkpoints

Base: All Adults N - 976



1 in 3 Irish adults recall passing through a Garda Checkpoint on an at least monthly basis in recent months (corresponding figure in 2013 was 23%)



Q. How frequently, on average, have you passed through a Garda checkpoint on Irish roads in the past 6 months, either as a driver, a passenger or other road user? It does not matter if you yourself were stopped or not.

# Passing Garda Checkpoints

Base: All Adults N - 976



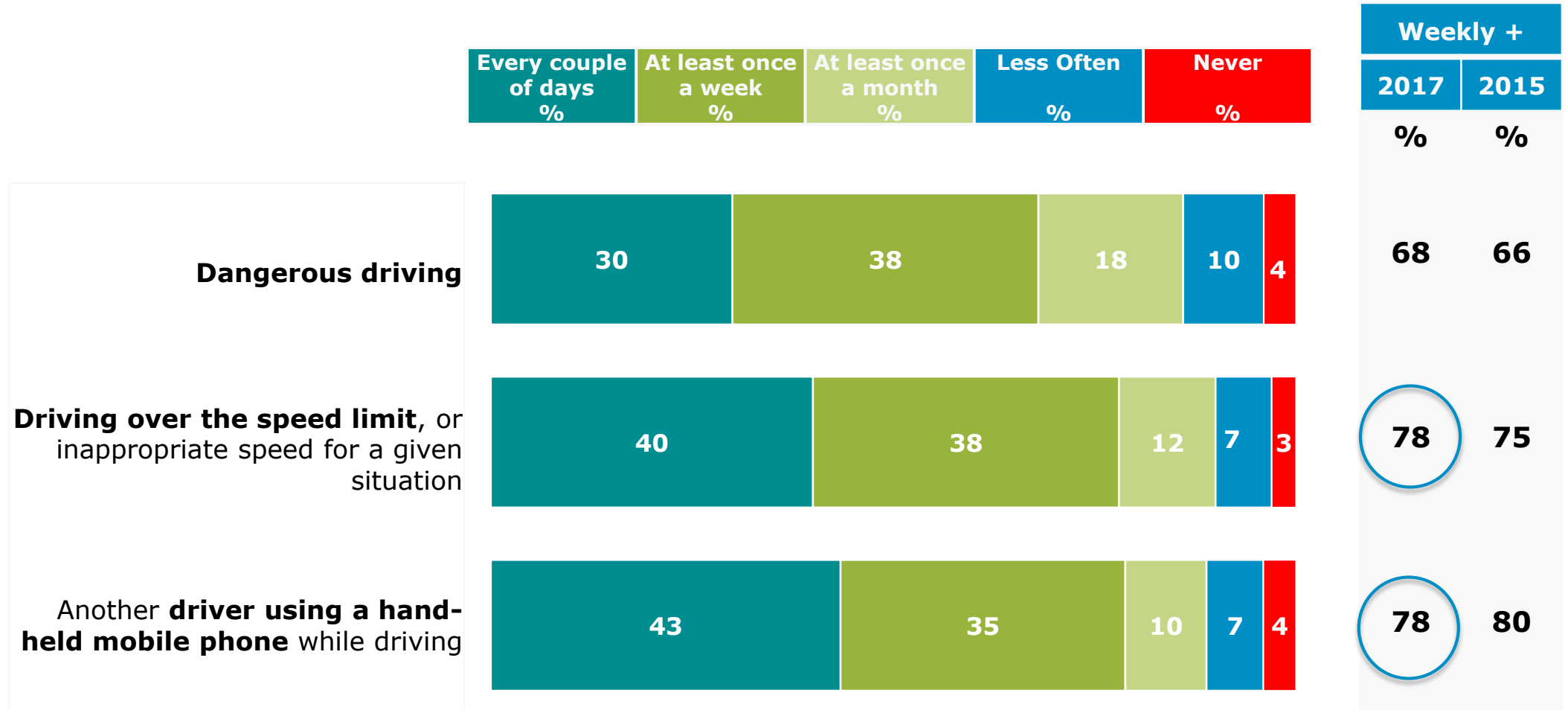
Not enough	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Area	
		Male	Female	-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural
Base:	976	495	481	111	148	292	251	174	283	256	264	173	628	348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Every couple of days	3	5	2	2	6	3	2	4	5	2	2	4	5	1
At least once a week	10	10	10	9	9	10	12	8	10	9	9	11	9	11
At least once a month	20	22	18	17	24	23	17	15	17	21	17	27	19	21
Less often	46	47	46	46	37	49	54	46	40	49	52	43	43	52
Never	21	17	24	25	23	16	15	28	27	19	19	15	24	15
Monthly +	33	37	30	28	39	36	31	27	32	32	28	42	33	33



Q. How frequently, on average, have you passed through a Garda checkpoint on Irish roads in the past 6 months, either as a driver, a passenger or other road user? It does not matter if you yourself were stopped or not.

# Observed Dangerous Road Behaviour in Past 6 Months

Base: All Adults N – 976



Over 3 in 4 adults witness driving over the speed limit and motorists using hand held mobile phones on at least a weekly basis.



Q. How frequently, on average, have you observed each of these types of driving behaviour among road users on Irish roads in the last 6 months?

# Observed Dangerous Road Behaviour in Past 6 Months

Base: All Adults N – 976

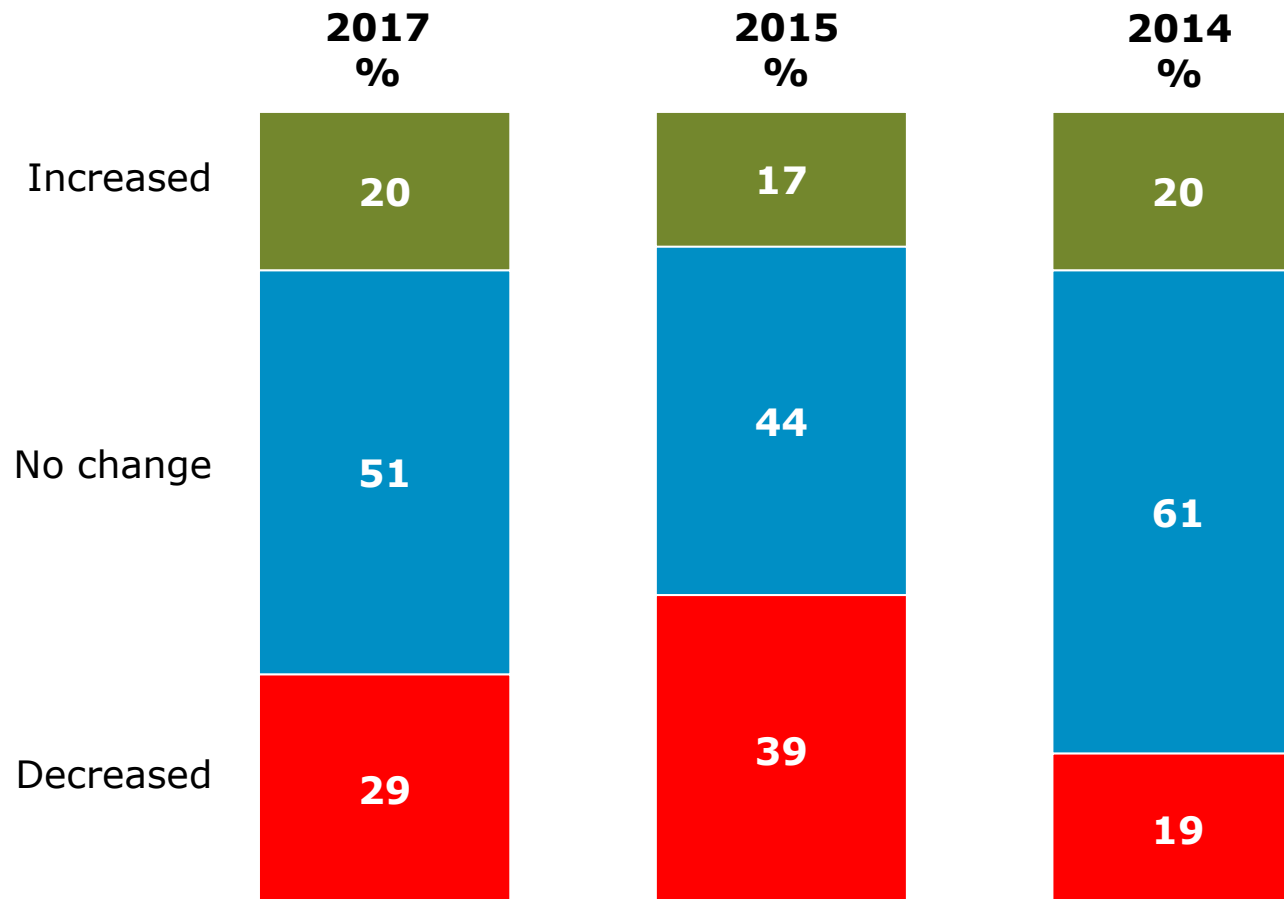
Weekly +	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Area	
		Male	Female	-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural
<i>Base:</i>	976	495	481	111	148	292	251	174	283	256	264	173	628	348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Another driver <b>using a hand-held mobile phone</b> while driving	78	<b>82</b>	76	70	81	81	81	76	73	79	<b>86</b>	76	80	76
<b>Driving over the speed limit</b> , or inappropriate speed for a given situation	78	81	74	69	<b>82</b>	79	<b>82</b>	71	76	75	<b>84</b>	76	<b>82</b>	71
<b>Dangerous driving</b>	68	<b>72</b>	65	57	<b>74</b>	<b>73</b>	71	61	69	68	<b>75</b>	62	<b>73</b>	62



Q. How frequently, on average, have you observed each of these types of driving behaviour among road users on Irish roads in the last 6 months?

# Level of Garda Enforcement Since January Last Year

Base: All Adults N – 976



20% of Irish adults think the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána has increased in the past 12 months; 29% think it has decreased.



Q. Do you think that the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána has increased or decreased since January 2016?

# Level of Garda Enforcement Since January Last Year

Base: All Adults N – 976

Every couple of days	Total	Gender		Age					Region				Area	
		Male	Female	-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Dublin	Leinster	Munster	Conn/Ulster	Urban	Rural
<i>Base:</i>	976	495	481	111	148	292	251	174	283	256	264	173	628	348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Increased	20	21	19	22	<b>25</b>	20	17	15	18	<b>24</b>	18	20	19	22
Decreased	29	30	28	23	25	28	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>	25	31	24	<b>39</b>	26	<b>33</b>
No Change	51	49	54	55	50	52	48	51	57	45	58	41	55	45

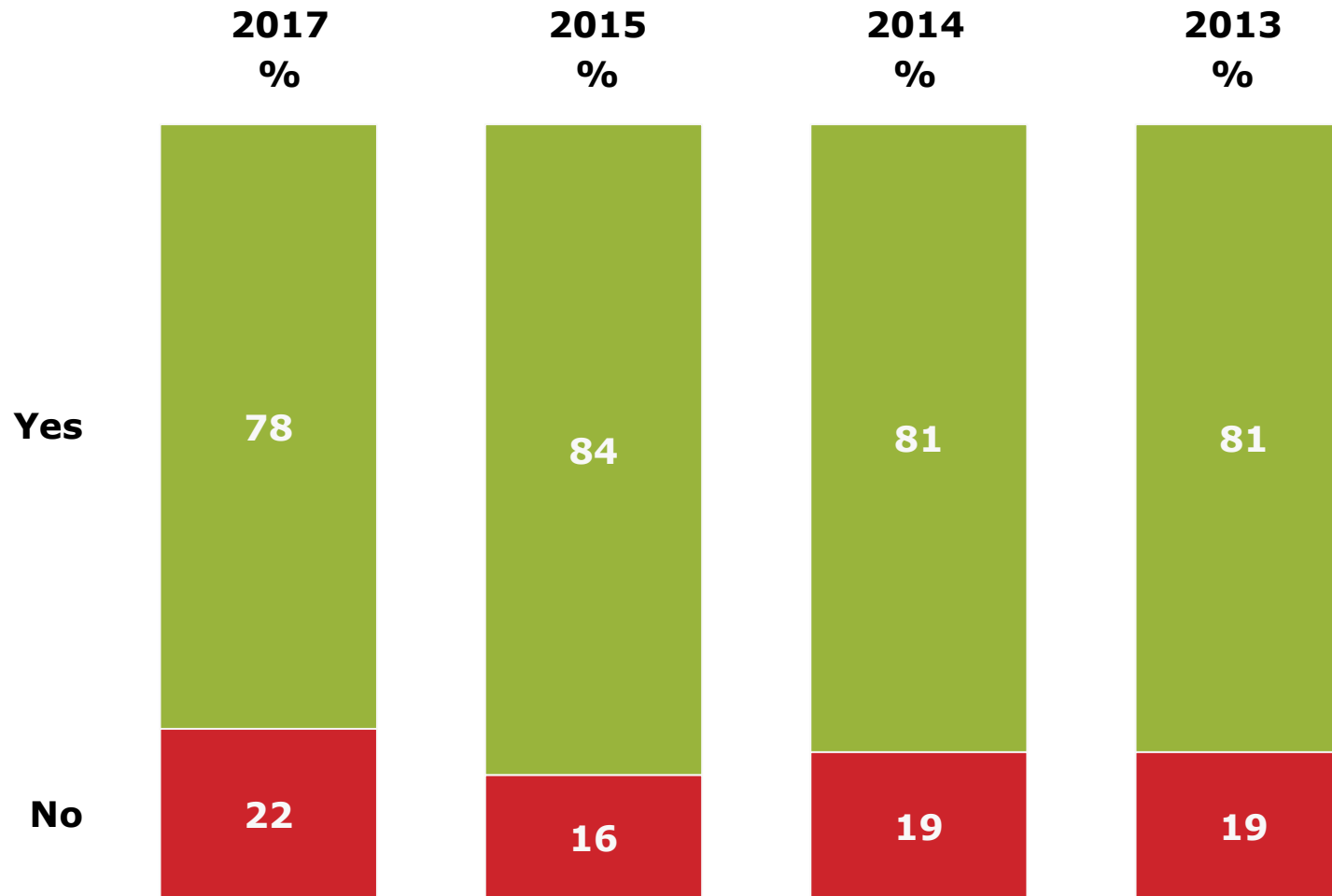
A perceived decrease is especially apparent among older age groups and in rural areas.



Q. Do you think that the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána has increased or decreased since January 2016?

# Should the Government Prioritise Funding of An Garda Síochána to Enforce Road Safety

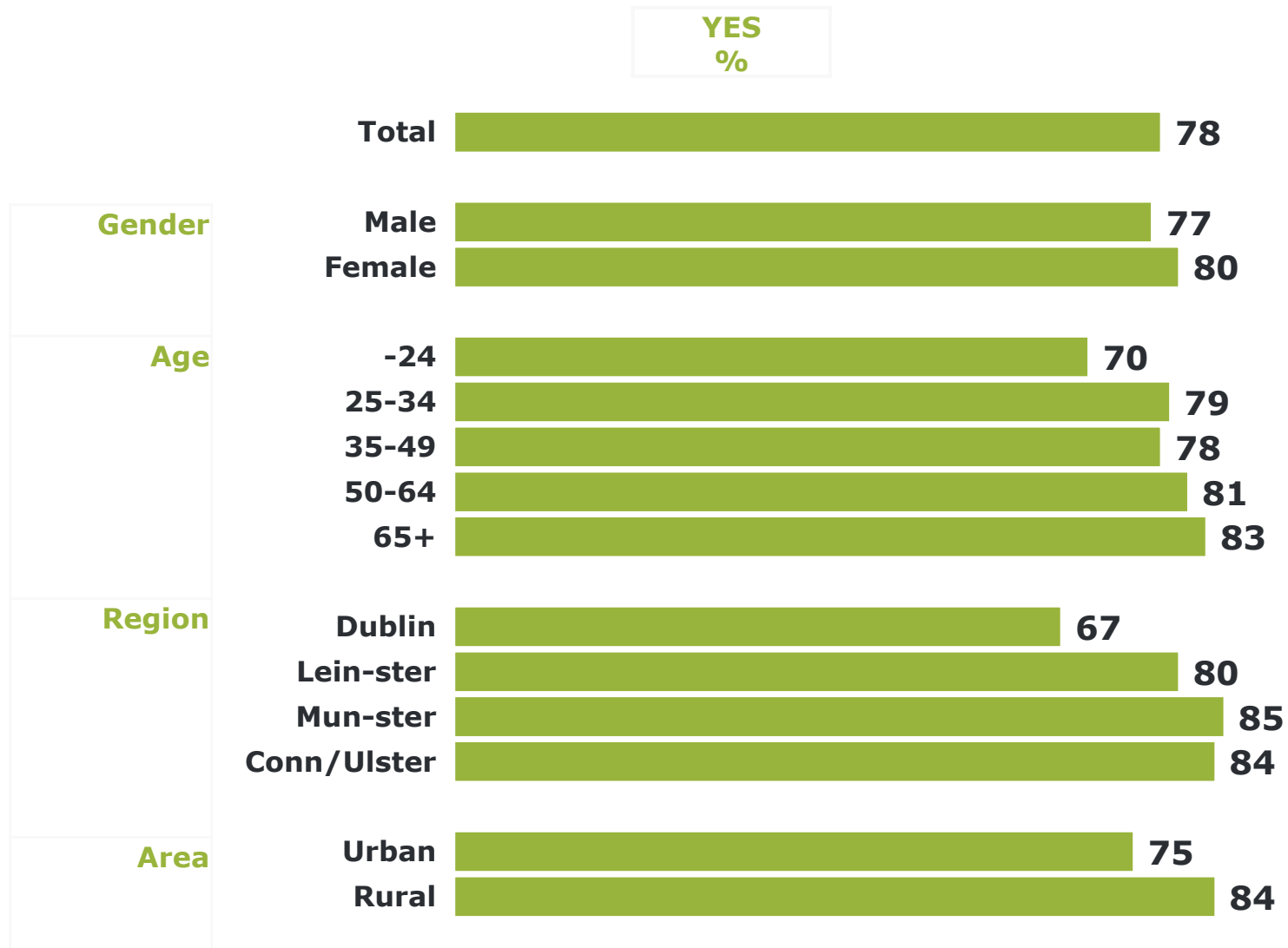
Base: All Adults N – 976



78% believe the Government should prioritise funding of An Garda Síochána to support their efforts to enforce road safety laws; a level of support largely consistent with previous years.

# Should the Government Prioritise Funding of An Garda Síochána to Enforce Road Safety

Base: All Adults N – 976



Q. In your opinion, should the Government prioritise funding of An Garda Síochána to support their efforts to enforce road safety laws?



# Summary & Conclusions

- While all factors are clearly considered important, road safety TV ads lead the list of the most influential factors in saving lives on Irish roads.
- 68% of Irish adults believe there are not enough/not nearly enough Gardaí currently enforcing traffic laws on 'our' roads. Those aged 50 years + are most likely to believe there are not enough Gardaí currently enforcing traffic laws.
- 1 in 3 Irish adults recall passing through a Garda Checkpoint on an at least monthly basis in recent months (corresponding figure in 2013 was 23%).
- Over 3 in 4 adults claim to witness driving over the speed limit and motorists using hand held mobile phones on at least a weekly basis.
- 20% of Irish adults think the level of enforcement of road traffic laws by An Garda Síochána has increased in the past 12 months; 29% think it has decreased. A perceived decrease is especially apparent among older age groups and in rural areas.
- 78% believe the Government should prioritise funding of An Garda Síochána to support their efforts to enforce road safety laws; a level of support largely consistent with previous years.

# Thank You



**BEHAVIOUR & ATTITUDES**

MILLTOWN HOUSE  
MOUNT SAINT ANNES  
MILLTOWN  
DUBLIN 6

+353 1 205 7500  
info@banda.ie

[www.banda.ie](http://www.banda.ie)