

Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Bag Ban

Environment and Sustainable
Development Directorate

September 2012



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Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Bag Ban - Survey 2012

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BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The ACT Plastic Shopping Bag Ban (the ban) was introduced on the 1st of November 2011, following a four month transition period commencing 4 July 2011. The ban is a high profile issue in the ACT and it is important to fully understand consumer attitudes and reactions to the ban. With the ban having been in place for ten months, the ACT Government's Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (the Directorate) is conducting an interim review of the ban, exploring its impact on consumer shopping behaviour and the community's opinions regarding it.

Piazza Research is an independent ISO 20252 quality certified market and social research firm. It was selected to conduct a survey of consumer attitudes to support the review process.

Methodology

A telephone survey was the selected methodology as it provided the most reliable option to sample a wide range of shoppers across Canberra.

Questionnaire design

The interview questionnaire was designed based on input from Directorate management and in collaboration with Piazza Research consultants. The survey was designed to be succinct to minimise respondent burden and could be administered by phone in 3.5 to 4 minutes. Most questions were 'closed' (or tick-box) format with one question allowing for respondents to elaborate on their answer.

Data collection

Piazza Research conducted the survey from its data collection centre in Phillip ACT, between Thursday 06th of September and Wednesday 12th September 2012. Calls were made on weekday evenings as well as on a Saturday to capture a diverse demographic.

Sample Design

A random sample of residents across the ACT was selected based on an electronic telephone directory available to the research industry. The primary grocery shopper of each household was interviewed.

A total of 604 responses were achieved. For the 95% confidence interval, results to this survey are calculated to be accurate to within +/- 4.1% margin of error.

Quality Assurance System – This project complies with the ISO 20252 Market, Opinion and Social Research Standard.

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Data Processing and Analysis

Interviewers entered responses directly into a CATI database at the time of interviewing. Piazza Research used its own statistical software and 'Q' to analyse survey results. Software validation and post data-entry checks were conducted to ensure data integrity before analysis.

A descriptive analysis was performed to produce graphs, tables and frequency counts.

Results were also presented with a breakdown by age category of respondents.

Treatment of open-ended question – Open-ended (or free form) responses were analysed for content, then summarised. Consultants developed a coding frame for this question, sorting similar types of answers into descriptive categories. These groupings were then statistically analysed.

Rounding error – Percentage results have been rounded to the nearest whole per cent. Percentages in some graphs may total slightly more or less than 100%.

Please note: Breakdown results for age categories '25 and under' and '25 to 30' may be less reliable due to lower number of responses within these age groups. Age category '25 and under' has not been included in written commentary due to low reliability.

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SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

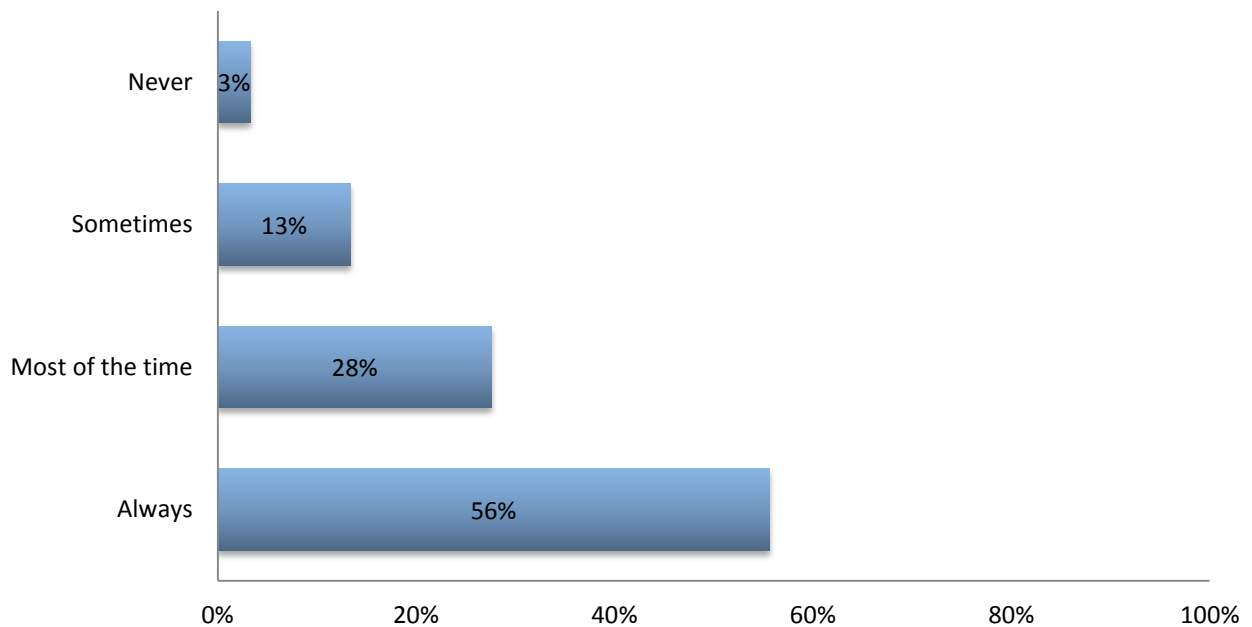
- Most primary shoppers (84%) reported taking reusable bags *always* or *most of the time*. Only 3% stated they *never* did. Respondents aged 51 or over were the most likely (58% to 67%) to *always* take re-usable bags. 25 to 30 year olds were more likely than others to report *never* taking reusable bags (11%).
- 85% of primary shoppers agreed that as a result of the ACT Plastic Shopping Bag Ban, they now take their own bags more frequently. This result was broadly consistent across different age categories (72% to 88% agree).
- Most primary shoppers (73%) disagreed that as a result of the Plastic Bag Ban they must now plan their shopping trips.
- Over half (56%) of primary shoppers disagreed that they were already using their own shopping bags before the ban was implemented. This result was consistent across most age categories except for the 25-30 year old group where 83% disagreed.
- A minority of shoppers (36%) reported that even with the bag ban, they mostly don't use reusable bags and they buy shopping bags as necessary. Age groups under 30 years were more likely than others to agree with this statement.
- The majority of primary shoppers (58%) supported the ACT Plastic Bag Ban, 33% did not and 9% were still unsure. While the majority of shoppers from every age group supported the ban, a trend was apparent showing the younger people were, the more likely they were to support the ban.
- The majority (69%) of primary shoppers did not want to see the bag ban widened to cover all plastic bags.
- Almost all ACT primary shoppers (94%) wanted all plastic bags to be made biodegradable. This result was consistent across all age groups.
- The idea of placing a national levy on plastic bags to use the money for litter reduction around the country was supported by the majority (54%), although a sizeable proportion (46%) did not support this. A breakdown by age showed the older people were, the less likely they were to support a national plastic ban levy; although the majority of all age groups (excepting 61-70 years) supported a levy.
- Two-thirds (66%) of primary shoppers would like the ban to be implemented nationally. People aged between 31 and 50 were more likely to support a national approach than other groups with between 73% and 75% of this age bracket showing support.
- 70% of ACT primary grocery shoppers did not want the ban to be overturned.

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Question 1. Are you the primary groceries shopper in your household?

NOTE: This question was not analysed as it was a filter question to target the most relevant population sample.

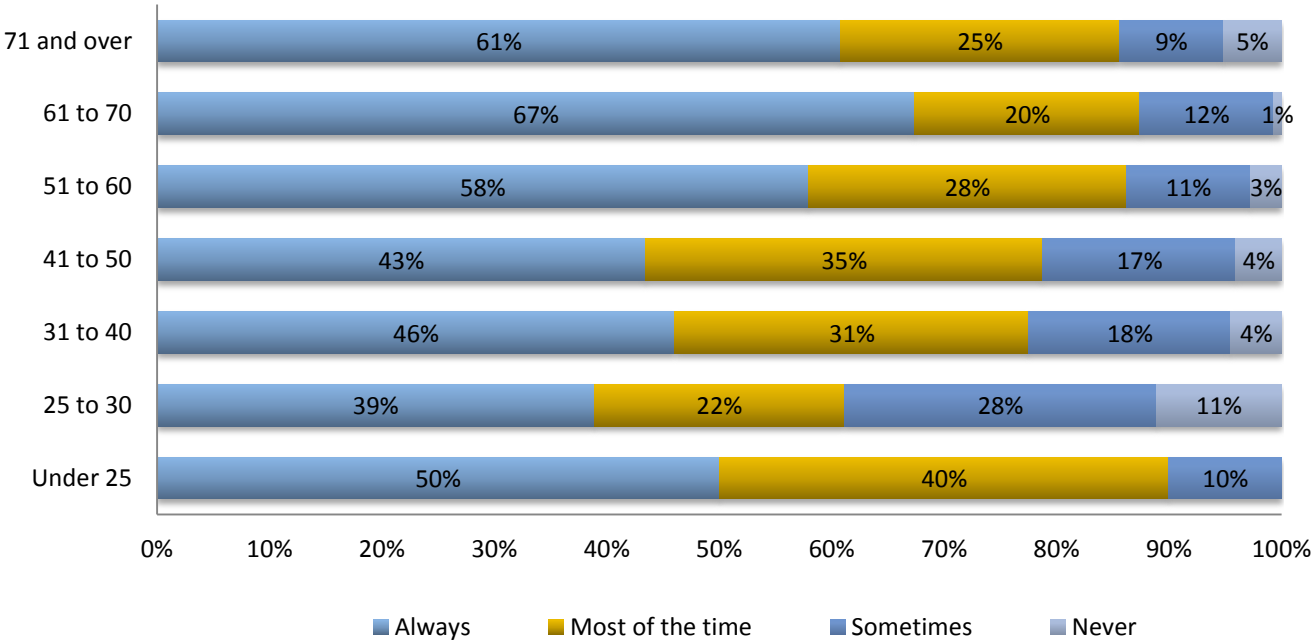
Question 2. How often would you say you take reusable bags when you go shopping?



Base= 604

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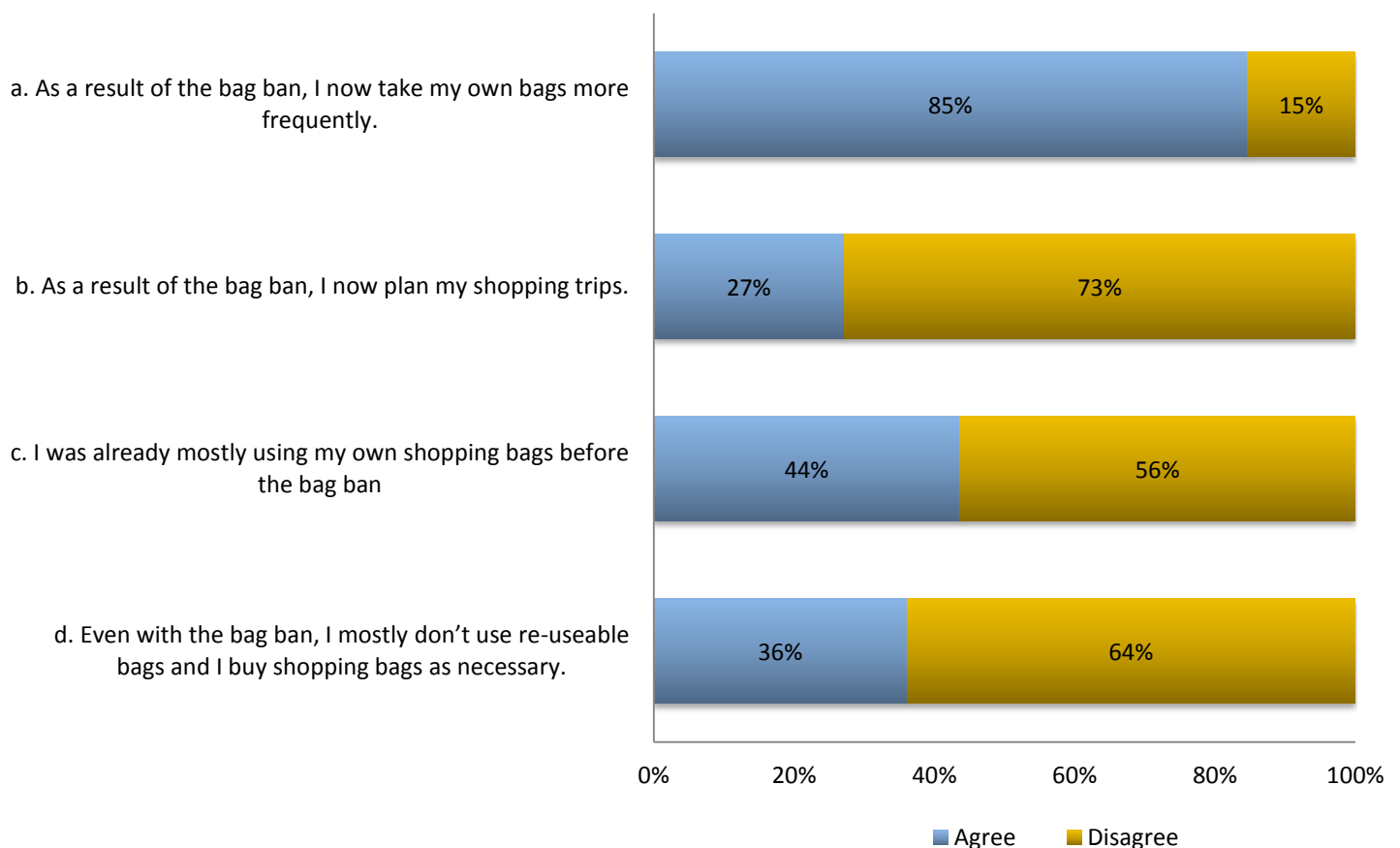
Question 2 by age categories.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

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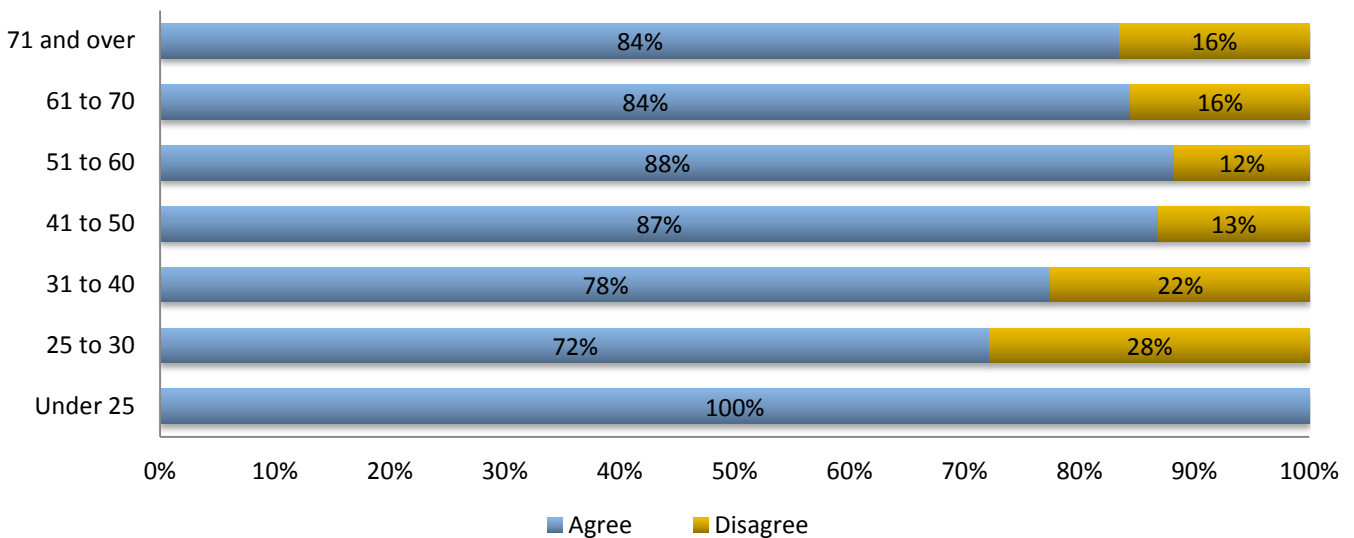
Question 3. Can you please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about the way the Plastic Bag Ban has influenced the way you shop?



Base MIN= 603
Base MAX=604

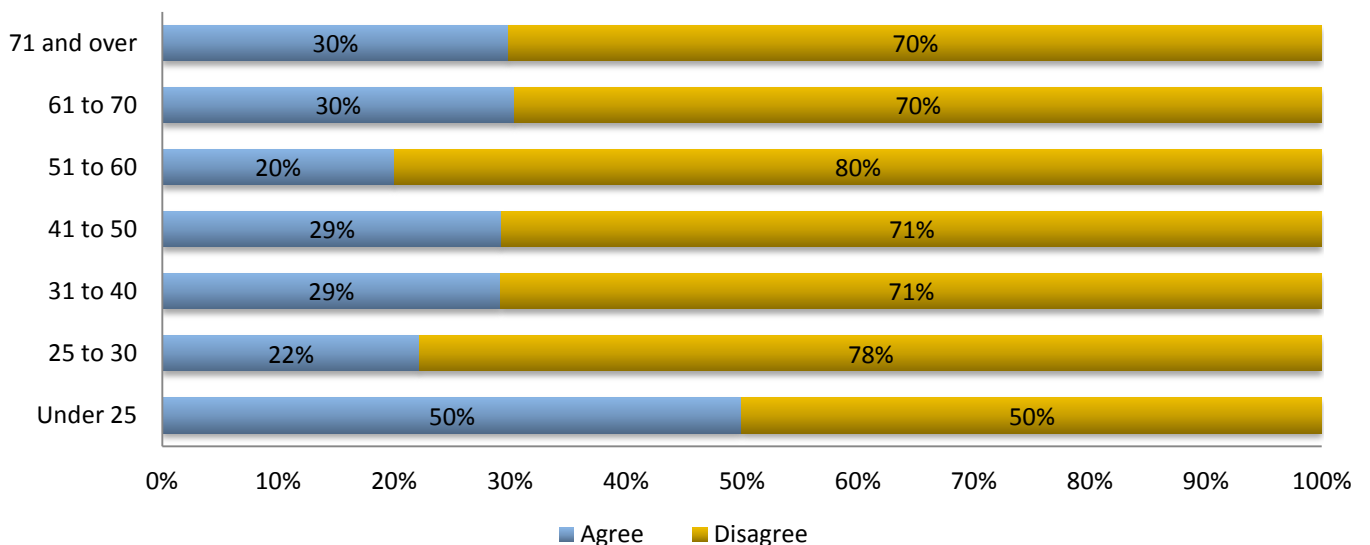
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Question 3a by age categories. As a result of the bag ban, I now take my own bags more frequently.



Base MIN=10
Base MAX=145

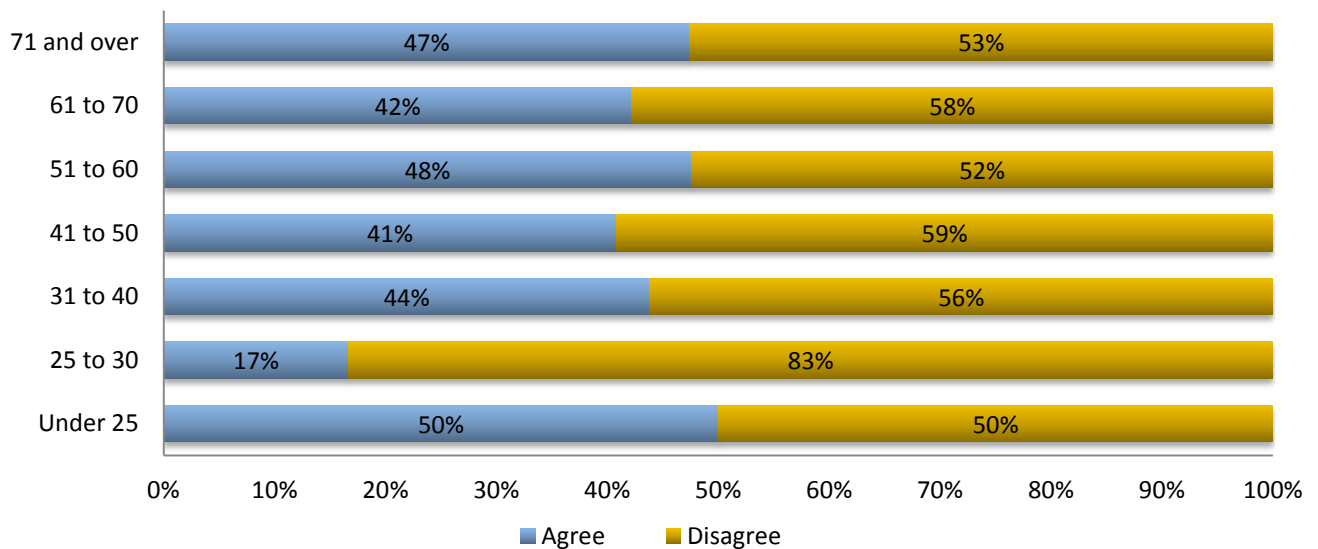
Question 3b by age categories. As a result of the bag ban, I now plan my shopping trips.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

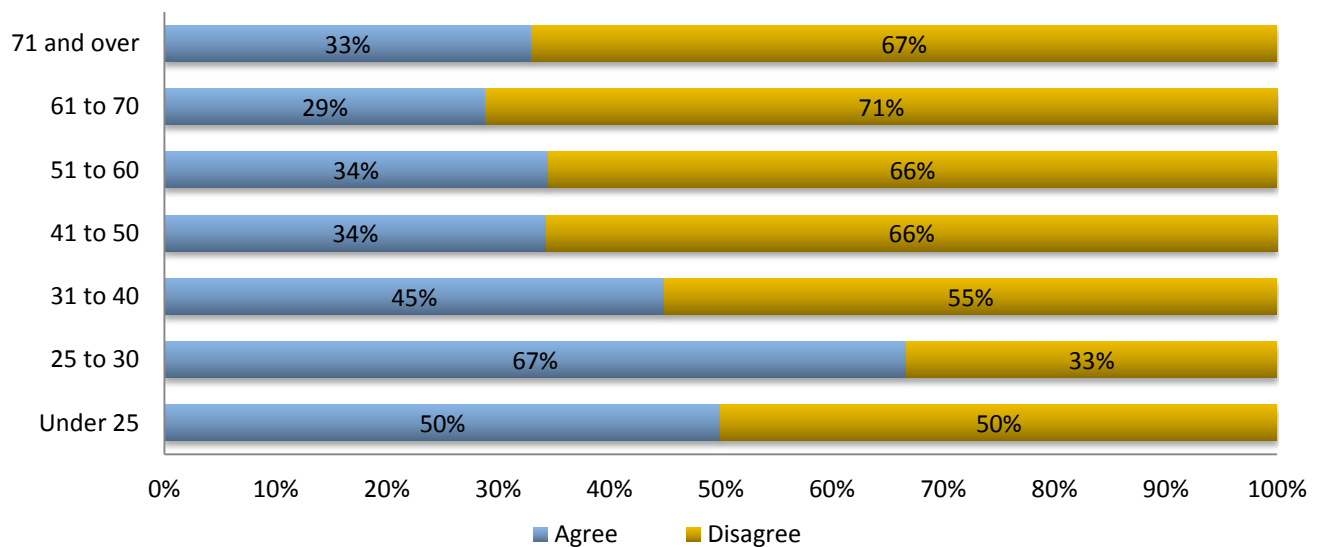
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Question 3c by age categories. I was already mostly using my own shopping bags before the bag ban.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

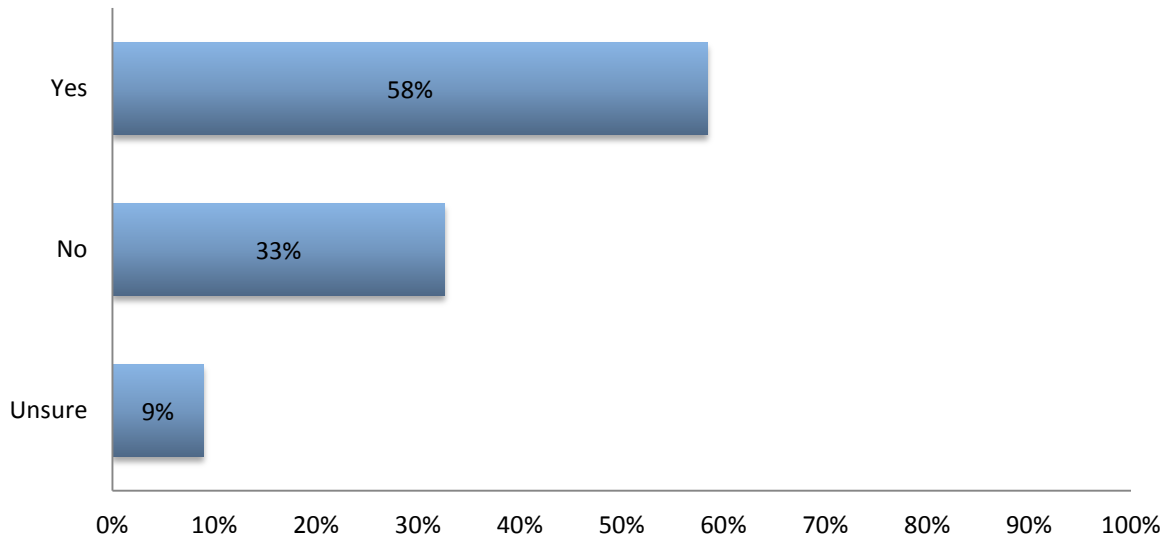
Question 3d by age categories. Even with the bag ban, I mostly don't use re-useable bags and I buy shopping bags as necessary.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

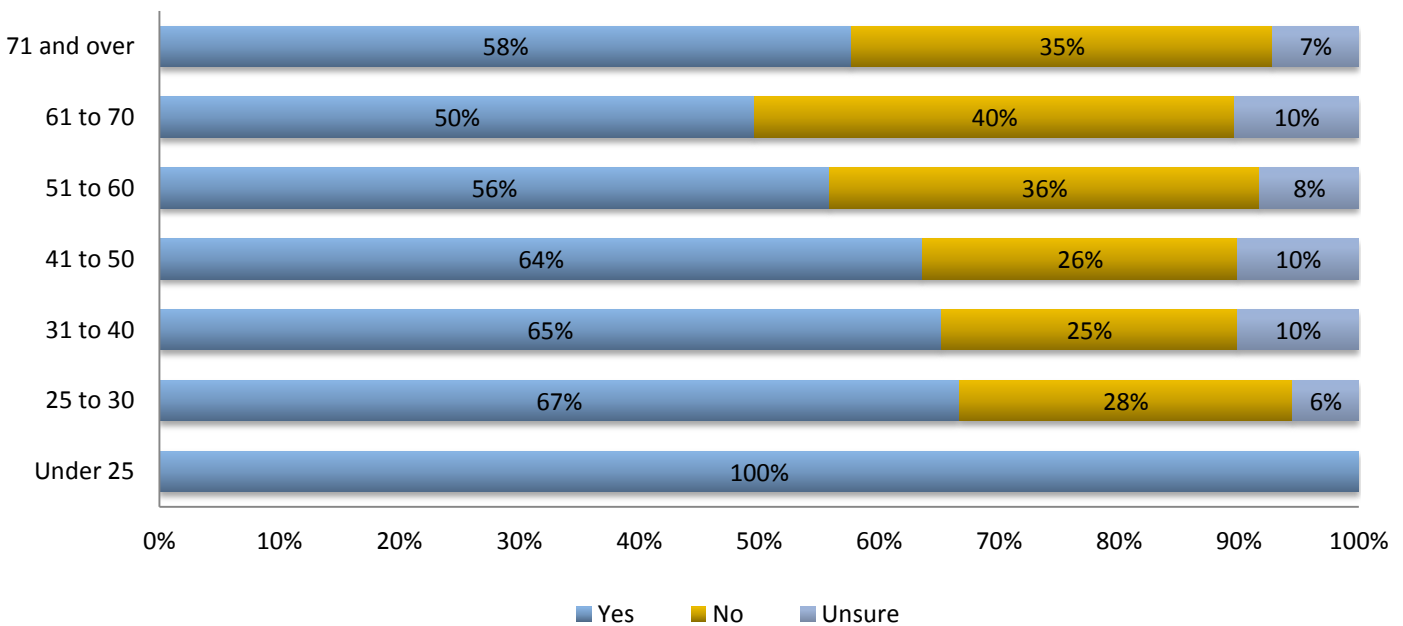
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Question 4. Do you support the ACT Plastic Bag Ban?



Base= 604

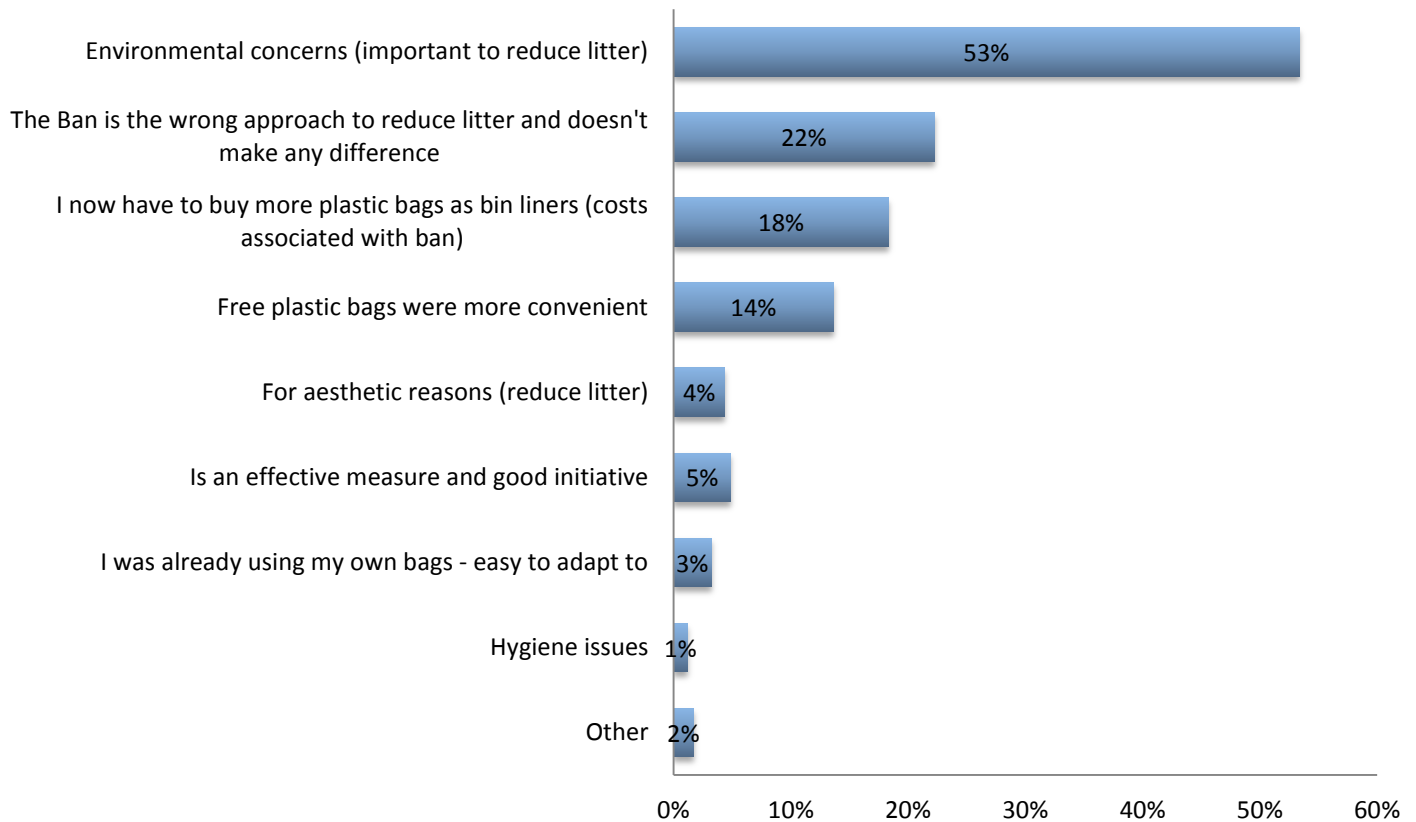
Question 4 by age categories



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

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Question 4a. What is the main reason for your answer?

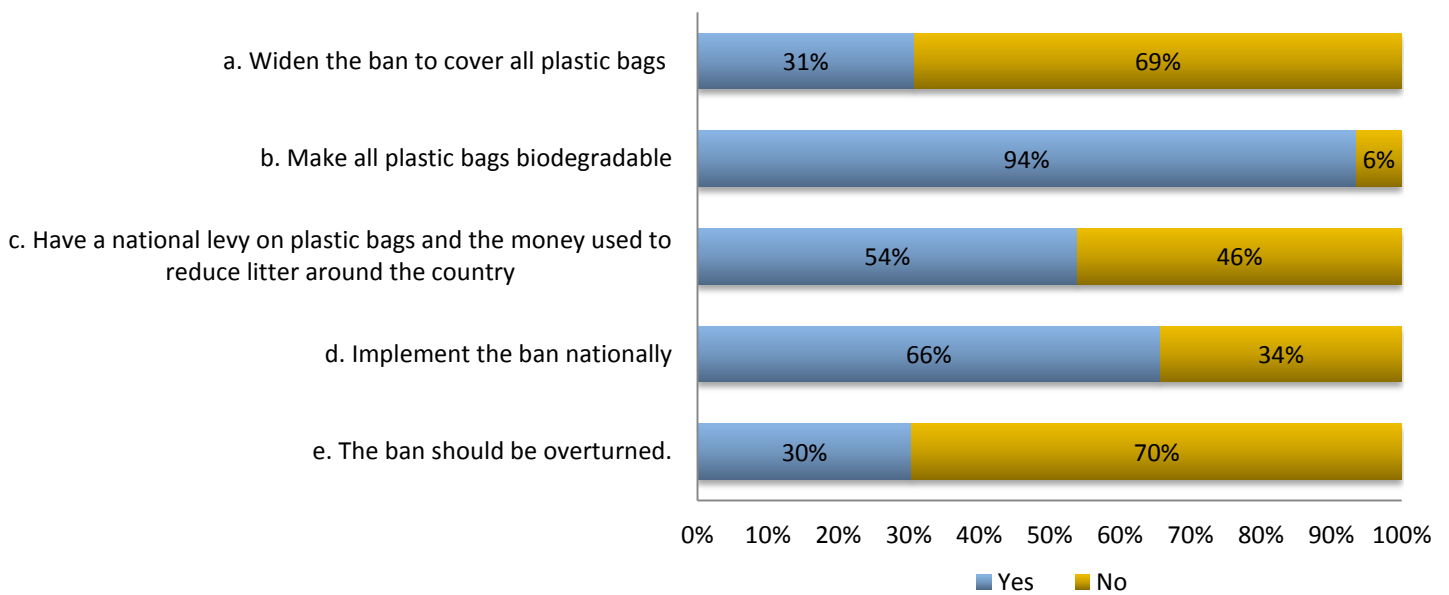


Base= 594

NOTE: Percentages in this graph may add to greater than 100% as respondents were able to provide more than one answer.

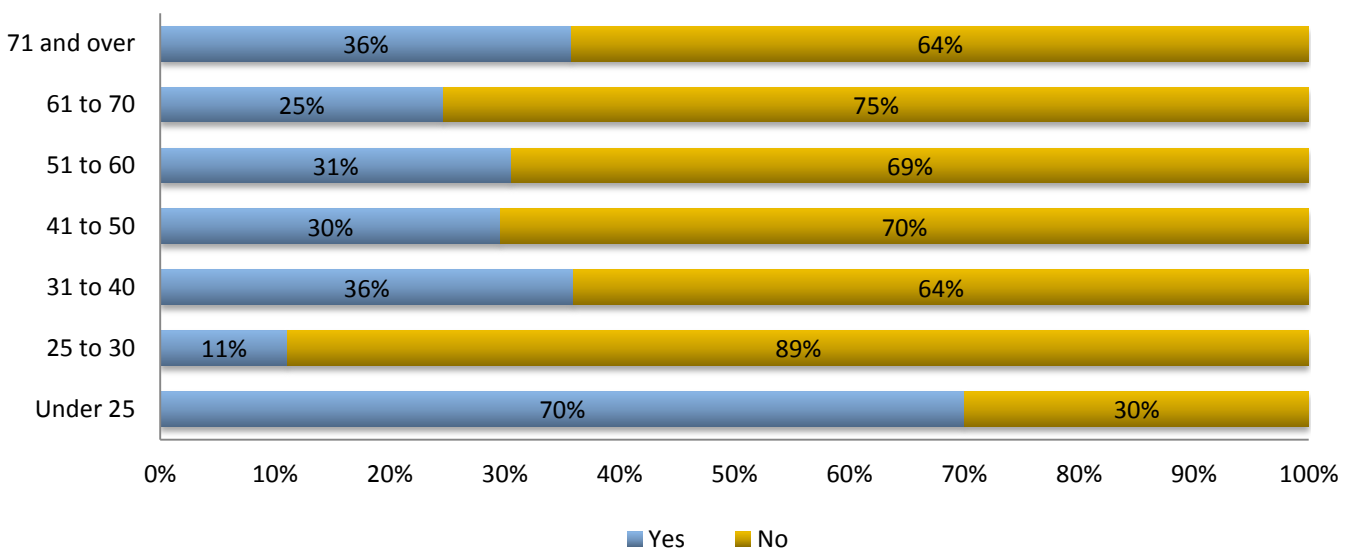
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Question 5. Would you want to see any of the following changes to the current Plastic Bag Ban?



Base MIN=593
Base MAX= 601

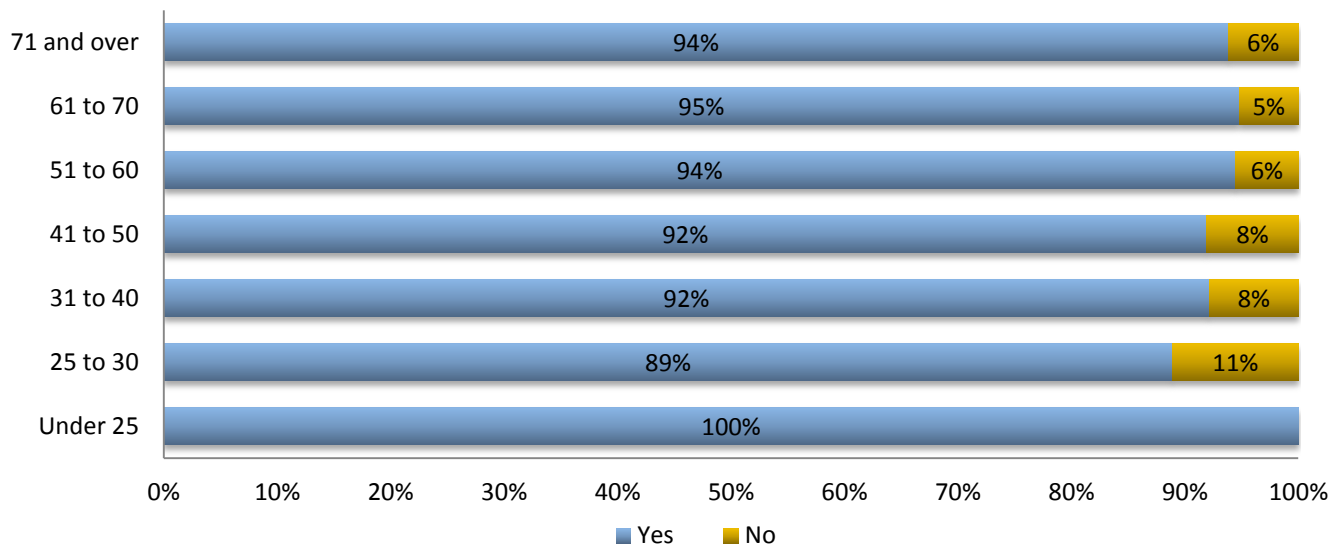
Question 5a by age categories. Widen the ban to cover all plastic bags.



Base MIN=10
Base MAX= 144

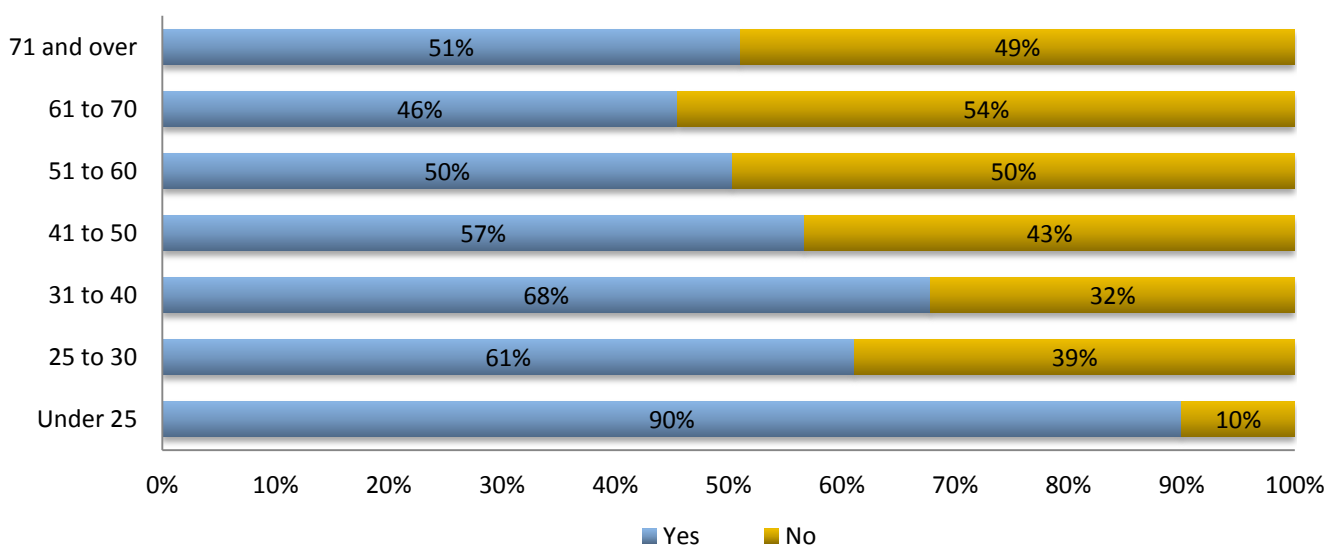
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Question 5b by age categories. Make all plastic bags biodegradable.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 144

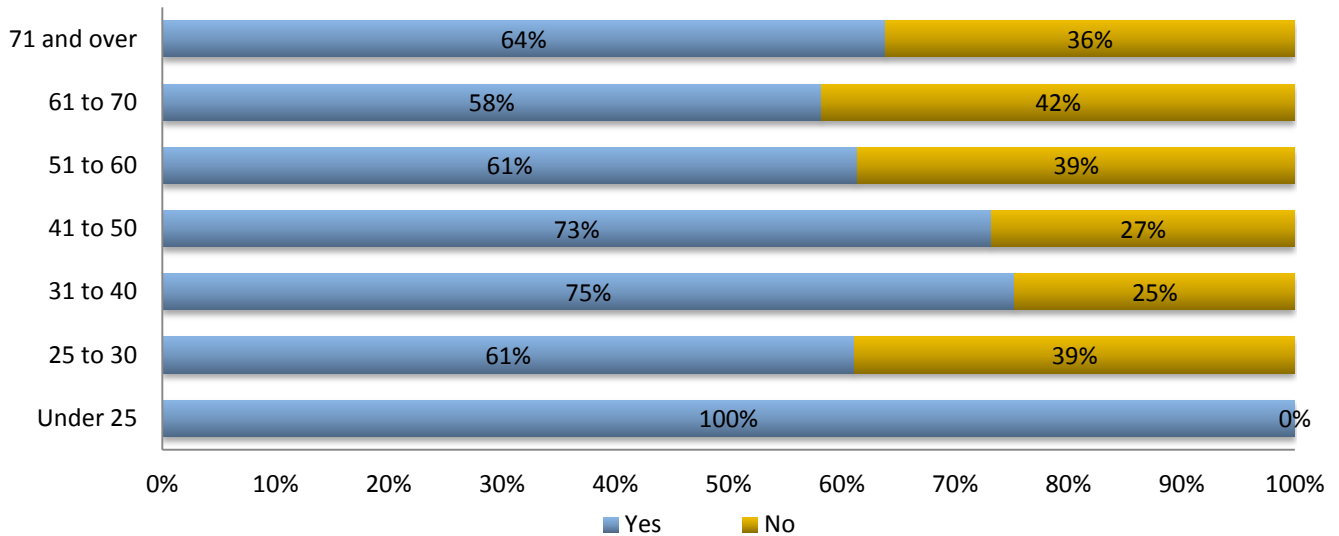
Question 5c by age categories. Have a national levy on plastic bags and the money used to reduce litter around the country.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 143

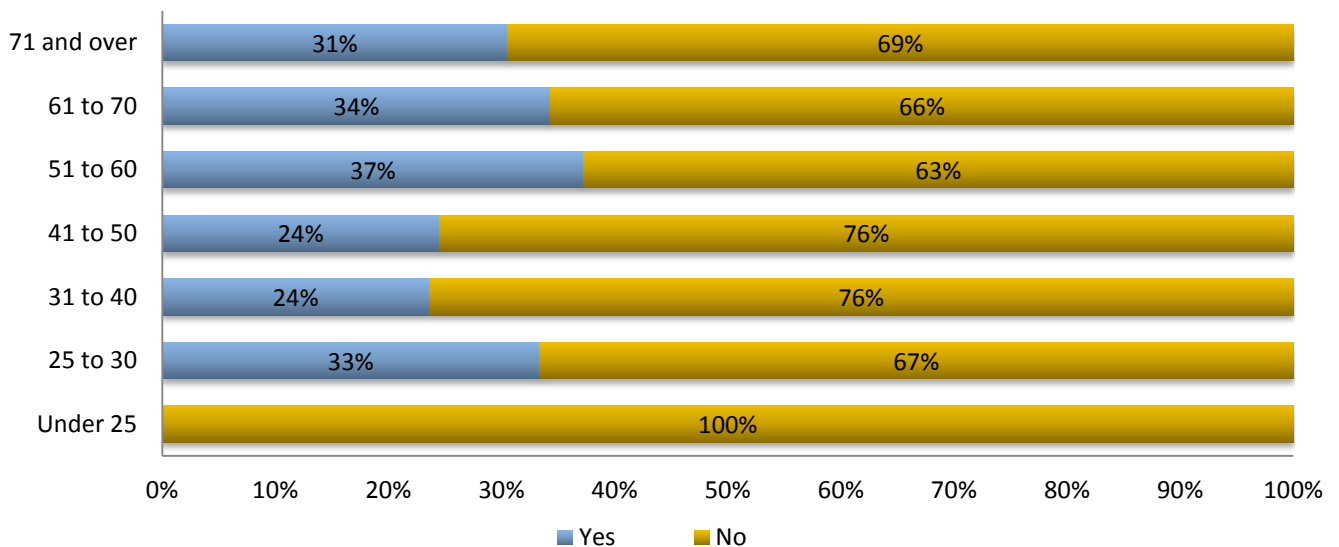
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Question 5d by age categories. Implement the ban nationally.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

Question 5e by age categories. The ban should be overturned.

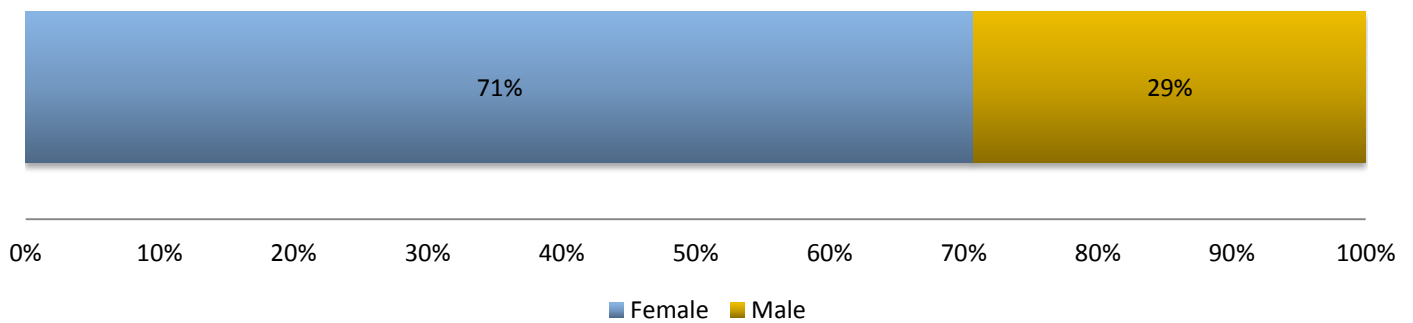


Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 145

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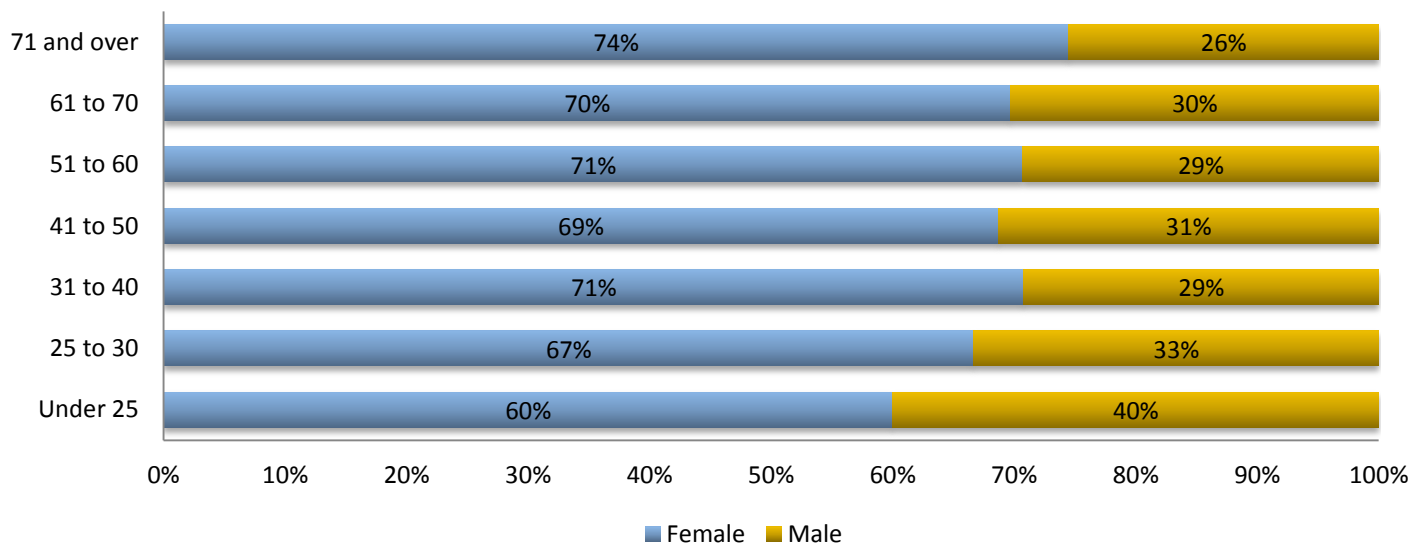
DEMOGRAPHICS

Question 6. Customer gender profile.



Base= 591

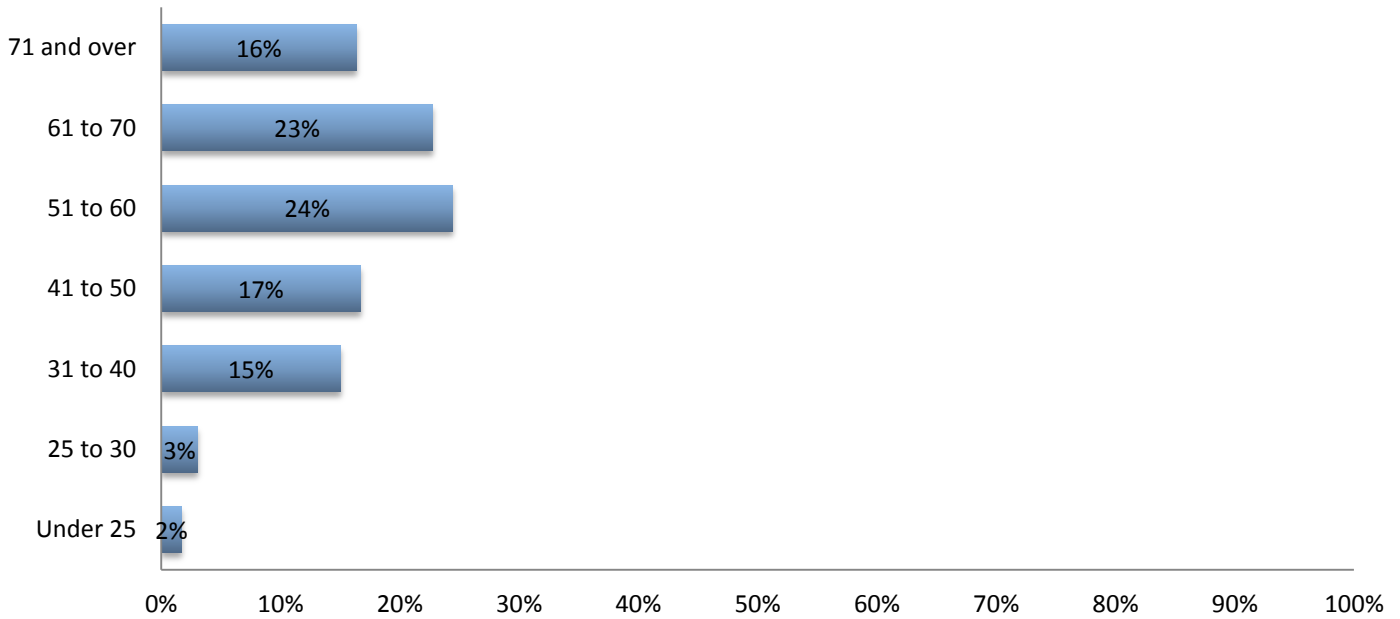
Question 6. Customer gender profile by age categories.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 140

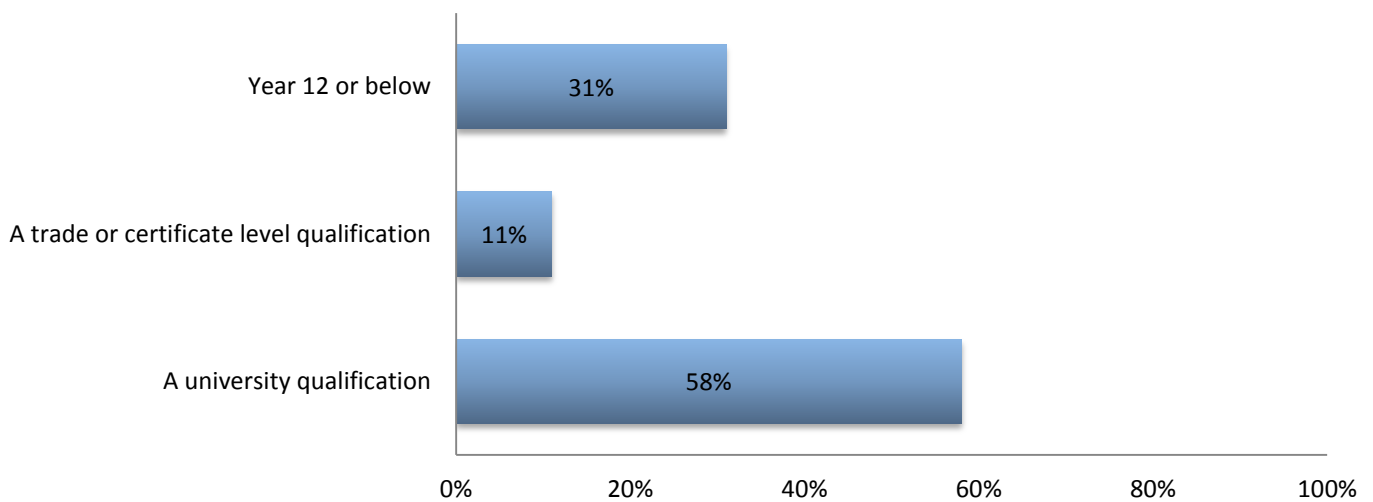
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Question 7. Customer age profile.



Base= 593

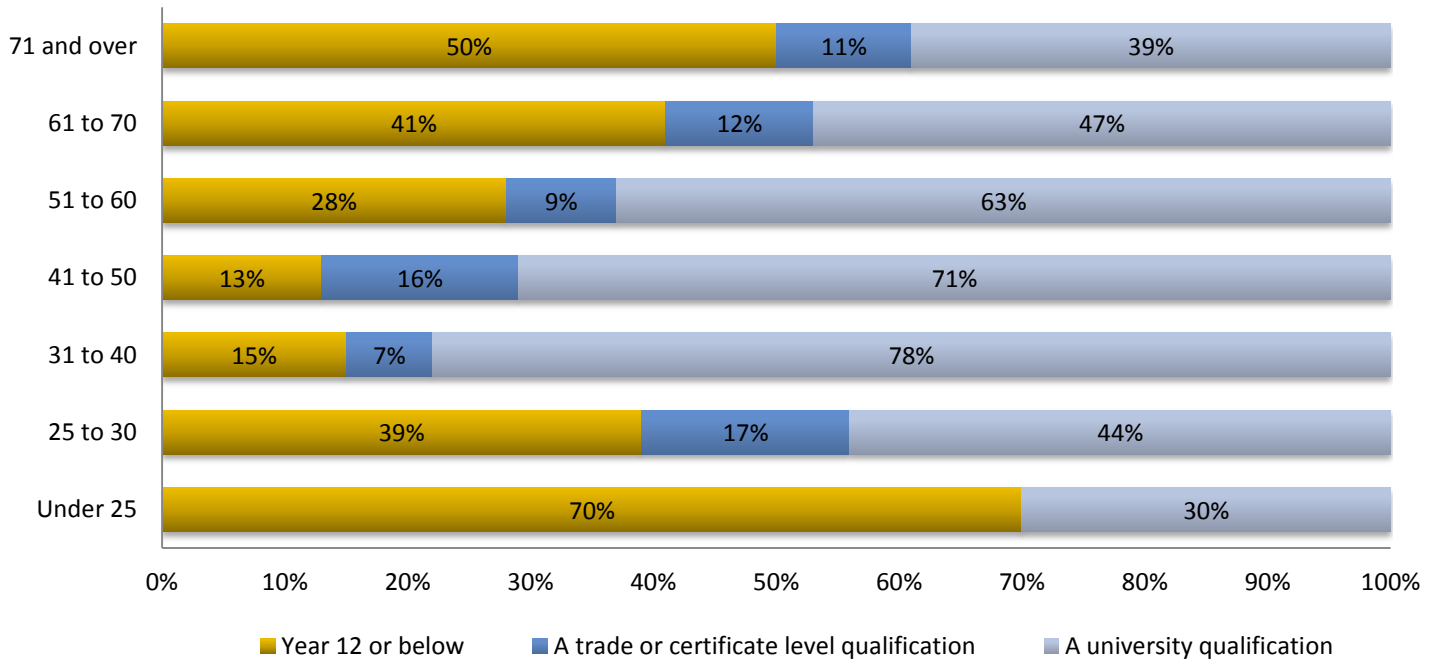
Q8. Customer education profile.



Base= 588

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Q8. Customer education profile by age categories.



Base MIN= 10
Base MAX= 140

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Attachment 1: Questionnaire

- 1.** Are you the **primary** groceries shopper in your household?
- Yes ₁ No ₂
- THANKS – (end survey)*
- 2.** How often would you say that you take reusable bags when you go shopping? (Would you say...
- a. Never ₁
- b. Sometimes (or I often forget) ₂
- c. Most of the time ₃
- d. Always ₄
- 3.** Can you please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about the way the Plastic Bag Ban has influenced the way **you** shop:
- | | Agree | Disagree |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. As a result of the bag ban, I now take my own bags more frequently . | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| b. As a result of the bag ban, I now plan my shopping trips. | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| c. I was already mostly using my own shopping bags before the bag ban | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| d. Even with the bag ban, I mostly don't use re-useable bags and I buy shopping bags as necessary. | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
- 4.** Do you support the ACT Plastic Bag Ban?
- Yes ₁ No ₂ *(Don't prompt)* Unsure ₃
- 4a** ...Thank you. And what is the **main** reason for your answer?
[Type as free text here – keep answer short]
-
- 5.** Would you want to see any of the following changes to the current Plastic Bag Ban?
- | | Yes | No |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Widen the ban to cover all plastic bags | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| b. Make all plastic bags biodegradable | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| c. Have a national levy on plastic bags and the money used to reduce litter around the country | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| d. Implement the ban nationally | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| e. Or ... The ban should be overturned. | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
- 6.** *Record gender (DON'T ASK)*
- Female ₁ Male ₂
- 7.** How old are you?
-
- 8.** Which is the highest level of education you have achieved?
- a. Year 12 or below ₁
- b. A trade or certificate level qualification ₂
- c. A university qualification (Advanced diploma, Bachelor Degree, Grad. Diploma, Post Grad Degree) ₃

Demographics

Thanks you for your answers, we're almost finished...Now we need to collect information about the types of people who have answered the survey.

Survey End.

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This report was produced by Piazza Research Pty Ltd Ph (02)6282 4963, for the ACT Government Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate
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Project reference number: #ESDD270812