



Report on Barriers to Reduce and Reuse Behaviours

June 2021



Research project undertaken May 2021 Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago districts

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Objective of research

The overarching objective of the survey was to identify the barriers preventing reduce and reuse behaviour in the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago districts. The research has enabled us to develop a baseline understanding of the barriers to reduce behaviours and the results will be used to target our community engagement activities to have more impact.

The objective was achieved through the completion of online surveys of 1,003 people who reside in the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago areas.

Methodology

Sample size - calculation

A target sample size of 600 responses was calculated using a confidence level of 95% and a 4% margin of error for the population base of the Central Otago and Queenstown Lakes districts in 2020 (71,300).

Survey Design

The survey questions were developed in 2019 by Wastebusters with input from Rebecca Prince-Ruiz, founder of Plastic Free July. Ms Prince-Ruiz has extensive behaviour change expertise and has completed similar surveys in Western Australia. The draft survey questions and collection

methodology was reviewed by Ms Prince-Ruiz, and feedback was incorporated into the final version. The draft survey was also tested by Wastebusters staff and local residents and refined accordingly.

In 2021 the questions were reviewed to incorporate insights and feedback from the 2019 responses. A few minor changes were made.

Survey completion

People primarily completed this survey via an online link to a google form provided in an email or on Wastebusters' website and Facebook pages.

The survey was promoted via:

- Social media - shared on community forums and groups, Wastebusters, Sustainable Queenstown and CO REAP Facebook pages.
- Partners Sustainable Queenstown and Central Otago REAP - via social media and email.
- Direct emails to residents associations, community groups and sporting clubs.

As an incentive for completing the survey three \$150 dinner vouchers were offered as a prize - one in each region.

Key observations and insights

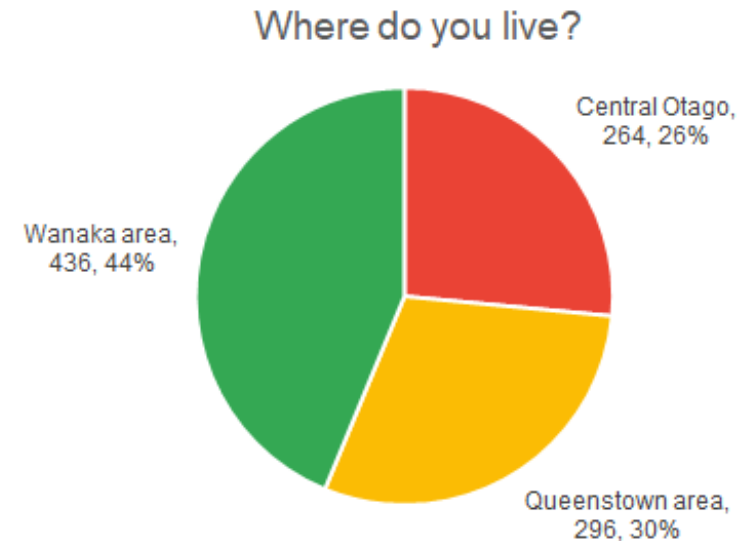
- For people to adopt reduce and reuse behaviours such as using a reusable cup for takeaway drinks they need a range of support mechanisms. Firstly they need to understand the issues and be motivated to adopt alternative behaviour to help solve the problem. They need good alternatives that don't cost them a lot and are accessible, for example a cup lending scheme for when they forget. They need businesses to encourage and support the behaviour change. And then they need support to transition to a permanent habit (e.g. shopping guides, online information, incentives, education and reminders).
- For behaviours with a high uptake there are few barriers and the main ones are "I forgot" or "I didn't plan ahead". For example, in Wānaka the % of people using a reusable cup has increased by 20% since November 2019. During this timeframe a single-use-cup free campaign has been running and 24 cafes have introduced cup lending schemes and most cafes are encouraging BYO cups and taking other steps to reduce takeaway coffee cup usage.
- For behaviours that have a low uptake the barriers are varied and present challenges for people across the whole process. For example taking your own container for takeaways which currently has just 8% of respondents saying they "Always" or "Usually" do this. When asked what stops them 70% of people selected at least two things and 30% selected three or more. Factors such as it doesn't occur to them, it's not an option where they go, not wanting to be a nuisance and not having the right container are common alongside the standard "I forgot" or "I didn't plan ahead".
- Behaviours around repairing, shopping secondhand first, and using pantry refill services are complicated by accessibility, availability and price. Overall people will 'usually' or 'sometimes' do these things but the presumption is that if certain barriers (such as inaccessibility and inconvenience) were removed they would do them more often.

- The main reasons that people do not use their own cups/bags/containers are that they forget or they didn't think they'd need it. These were the same findings in 2019. Deposit and return schemes for reusable items have the potential to overcome these barriers.
- Most people are extremely or very concerned about the impact their consumer choices have on the environment and the amount of waste they create. Levels of concern did not vary significantly by region, age, gender or income level.
- As expected, COVID-19 has impacted behaviours and concerns. For example, people are more concerned about hygiene and sanitising, as well as being more budget conscious than they were in 2019. This is aligned with the nationwide 'Better Future Report 2021' by Colmar Brunton, which found that the number one concern for New Zealanders was "the economic fallout of COVID-19".
- Overall, price, health, and environmental impact are the main influences on shopping choices and people are most concerned about plastic in the oceans and the amount of single-use packaging being used.
- People want businesses to do more to support their waste minimisation efforts such as encouraging BYO container options and giving feedback to their suppliers about reducing single-use packaging.
- 79% of people want to learn more about ways to reduce and reuse for example local shopping options and more online information and community workshops.

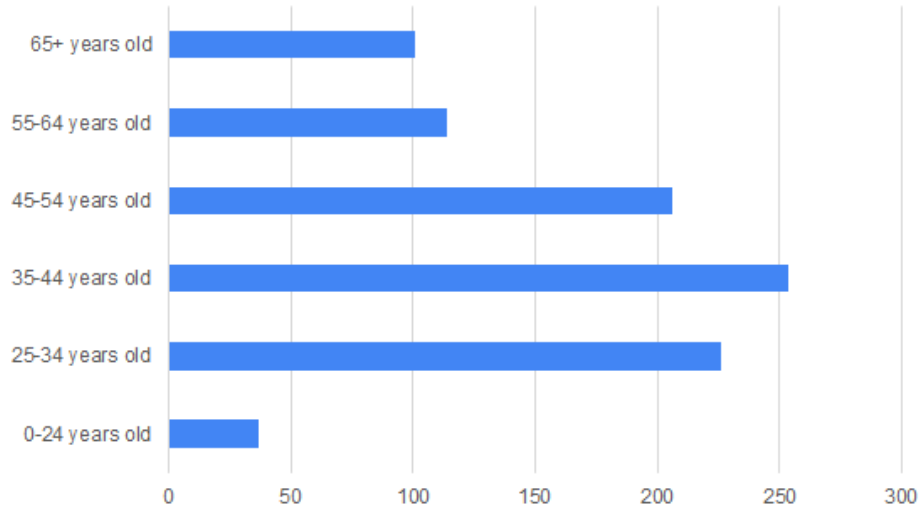
Profile of respondents

1,003 participants in total, representing 1.4% of the total population base of 71,300. This was a 47% increase in the response rate from 2019.

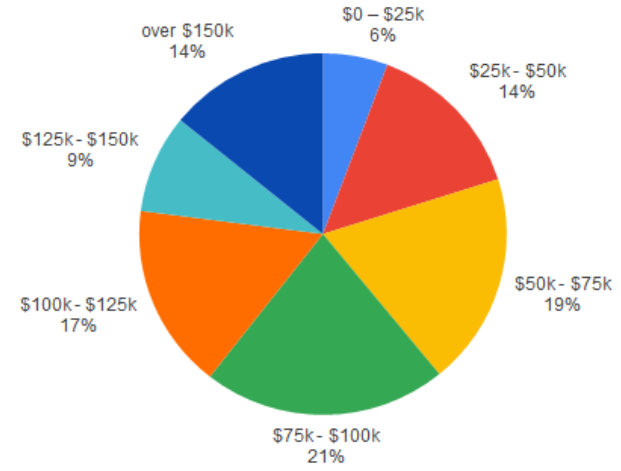
- Residents of Wanaka (436, 44%), Queenstown (296, 30%) and Central Otago (264, 26%).
- 81% of respondents are female-identifying, 17% male-identifying.
- The majority of respondents (67%) do either all or most of the household shopping.
- There is a relatively even representation of household income brackets between \$25K - \$125K, and over \$150K. A small percentage were in the \$0-25k (6%), \$125-\$150K (9%) and over \$150k bracket (14%).
- Age groups are not necessarily represented by a similar number of respondents, for example only 37 of the 1,003 respondents are in the 0-24's group.
- Compared to local census data there is an underrepresentation of people aged 55+ who took the survey. They make up 30% of the local population but only 12% of the survey respondents. There is also an overrepresentation of the 35-44 age group who make up 27% of respondents compared to 14% of the population.
- The profile of the average respondent is 35-44, living in Wanaka with a combined household income over \$50,000, who does most of the shopping (and has not participated in Plastic Free July).



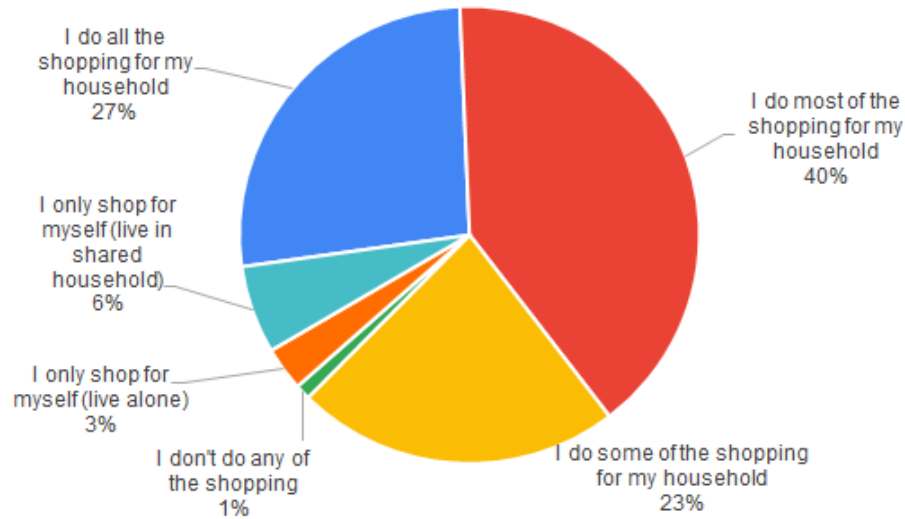
What is your age?



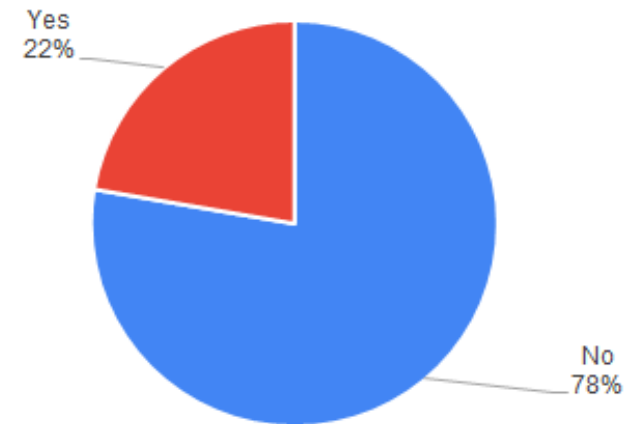
What is the combined total income of your household?



What is your role in relation to household shopping?



Have you ever participated in Plastic Free July?



Behaviours that reduce waste and increase reuse

Survey question - For nine different behaviours we asked *How often do you...*

Answer options

- *Always*
- *Usually*
- *Sometimes*
- *Once in a while*
- *Thinking of doing*
- *Never and don't plan to*
- *Other (not applicable, not possible)*

If the response was anything other than “Always” - respondents were asked *What stopped you from doing this?*

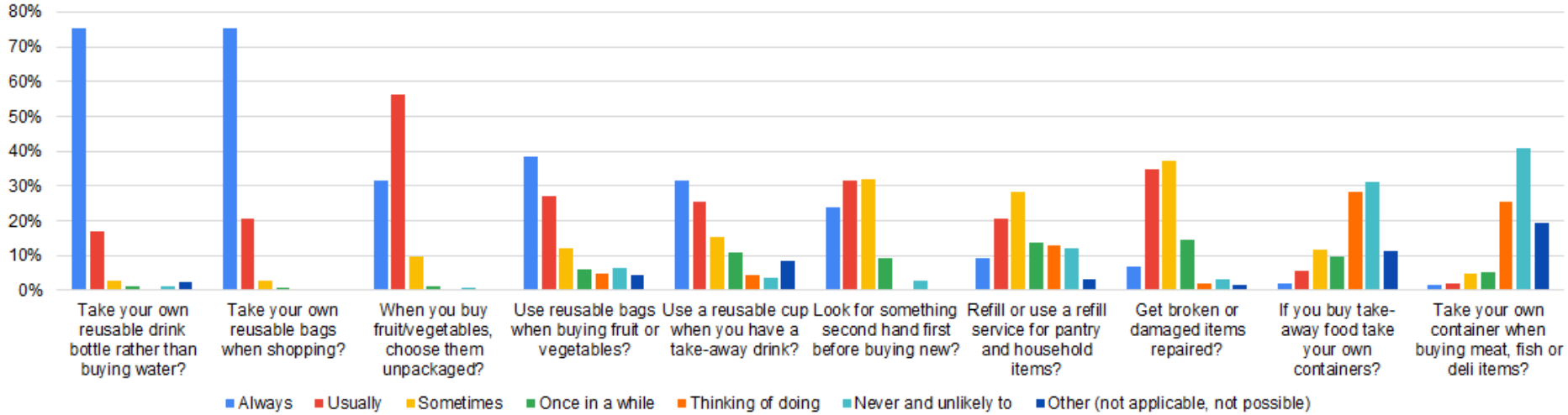
The list of barriers were specific to each behaviour (refer to charts for each behaviour on pages 11-22).

Summary of responses

- As in 2019, the majority of respondents always or usually use their own shopping bag (96%), drink bottle (92%) or cup (57%).
- Within Wānaka, specifically, there was significant change in the use of single-use cups between 2019 and 2021. See page 25 for year on year comparison by region.
 - *“I always take a reusable cup or forgo a coffee”* - Female, 45-54, Queenstown
 - *“I can never be seen with one of these [single-use] cups. It would break my daughter's heart and make her feel her message hasn't even reached her Mum.”* - Female, 55-64, Wānaka

- Most people do not take their own containers for takeaways or deli products, either because they did not know if they could or for hygiene reasons.
 - *“Covid has impacted income so cost is important. Covid also impacts hygiene practice not keen on lots of exposure to other peoples reused items if not sanitized.”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka
 - *“Didn't even realise this was an option!”* - Female, 35-44, Queenstown
- For some behaviours, such as repair, secondhand and refill options, the barriers are more complex such as accessibility, availability and price. Due to complexity and higher systemic barriers, people's values are not always reflected in their actions.
 - *“I don't have time, I don't know where to go to get it fixed”*- Female, 25-34, Queenstown
 - *“I'm not sure how to do it, Limited options”* - Male, 25-34, Queenstown

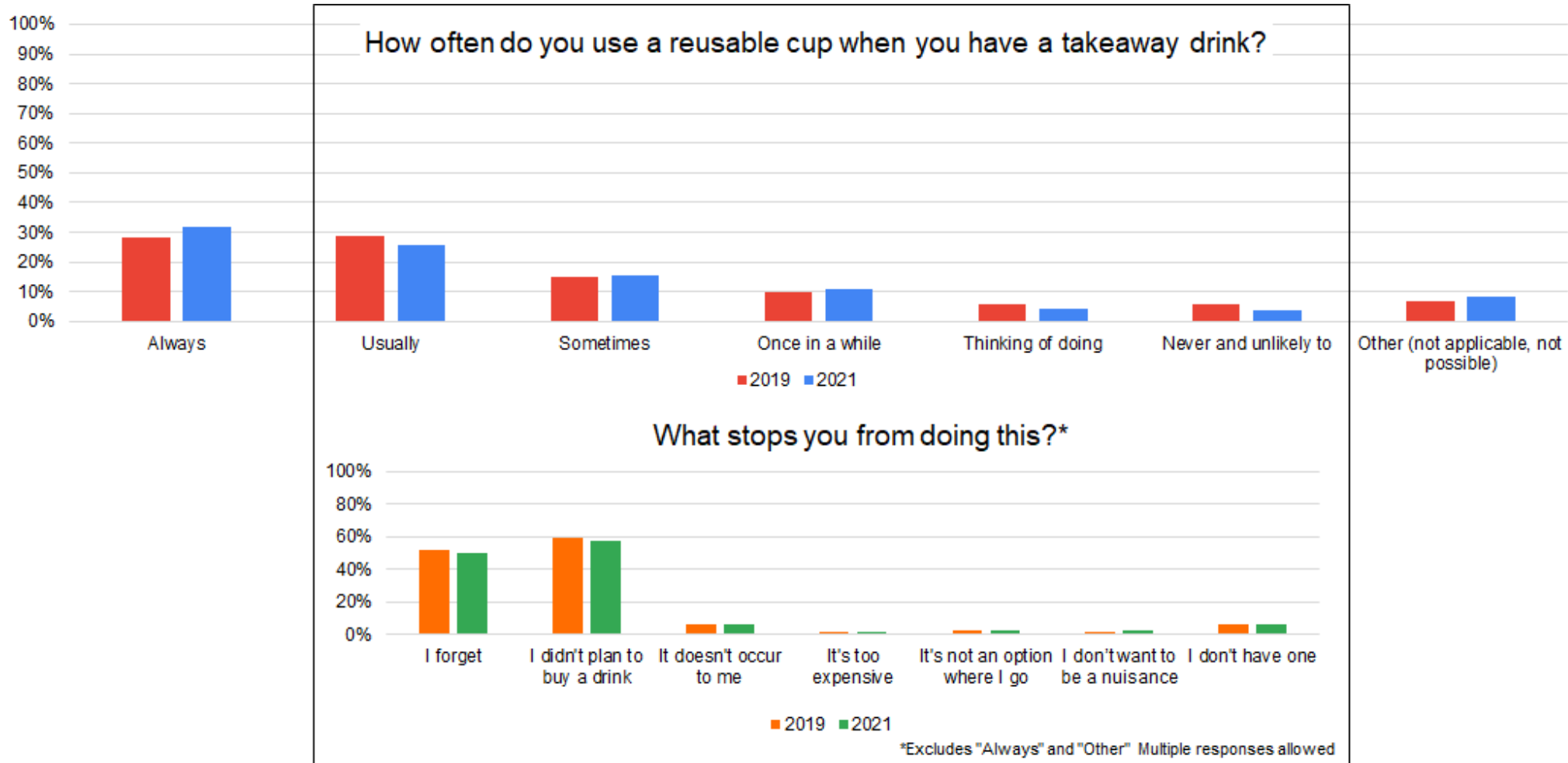
How often do you.....

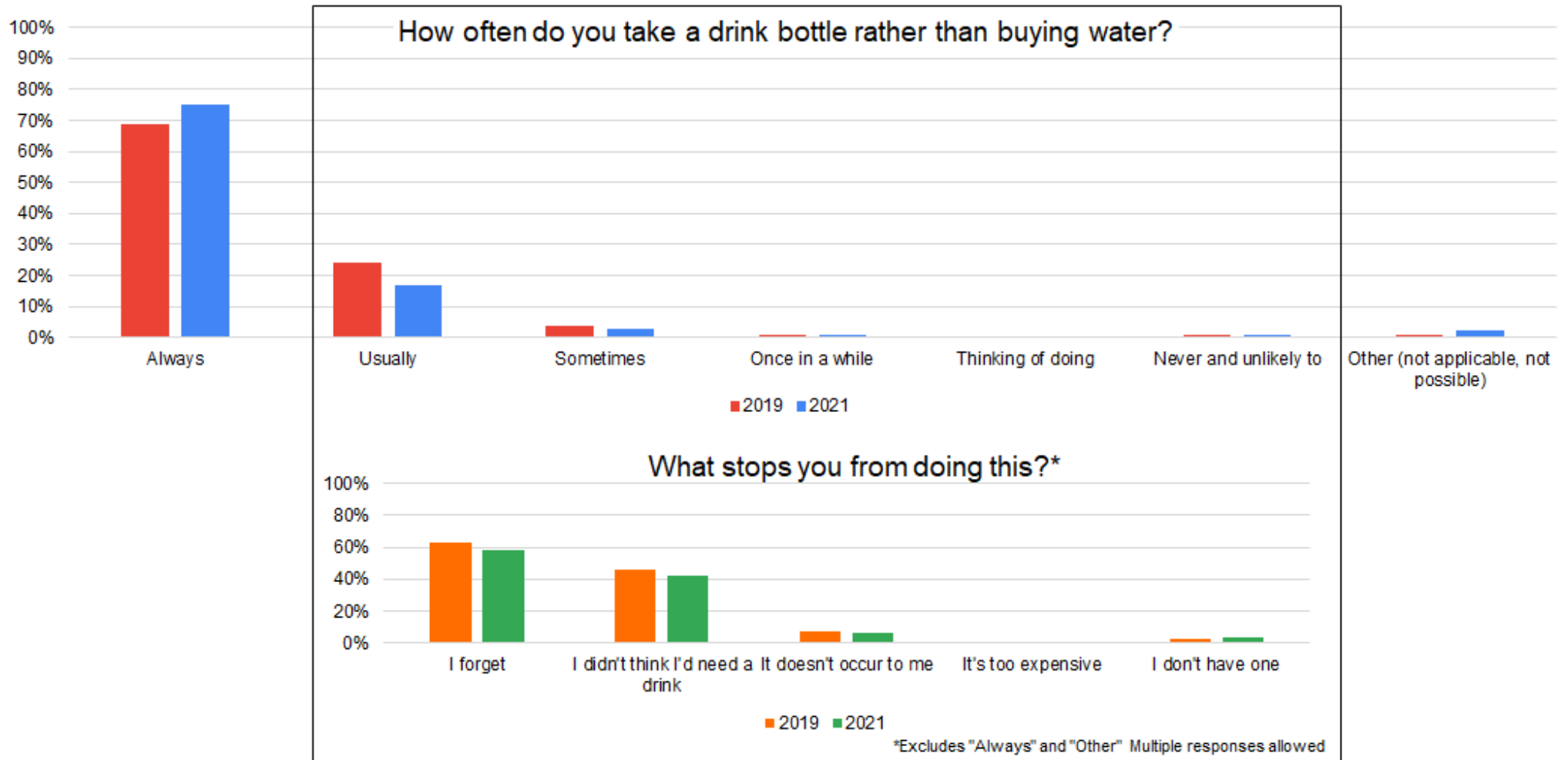


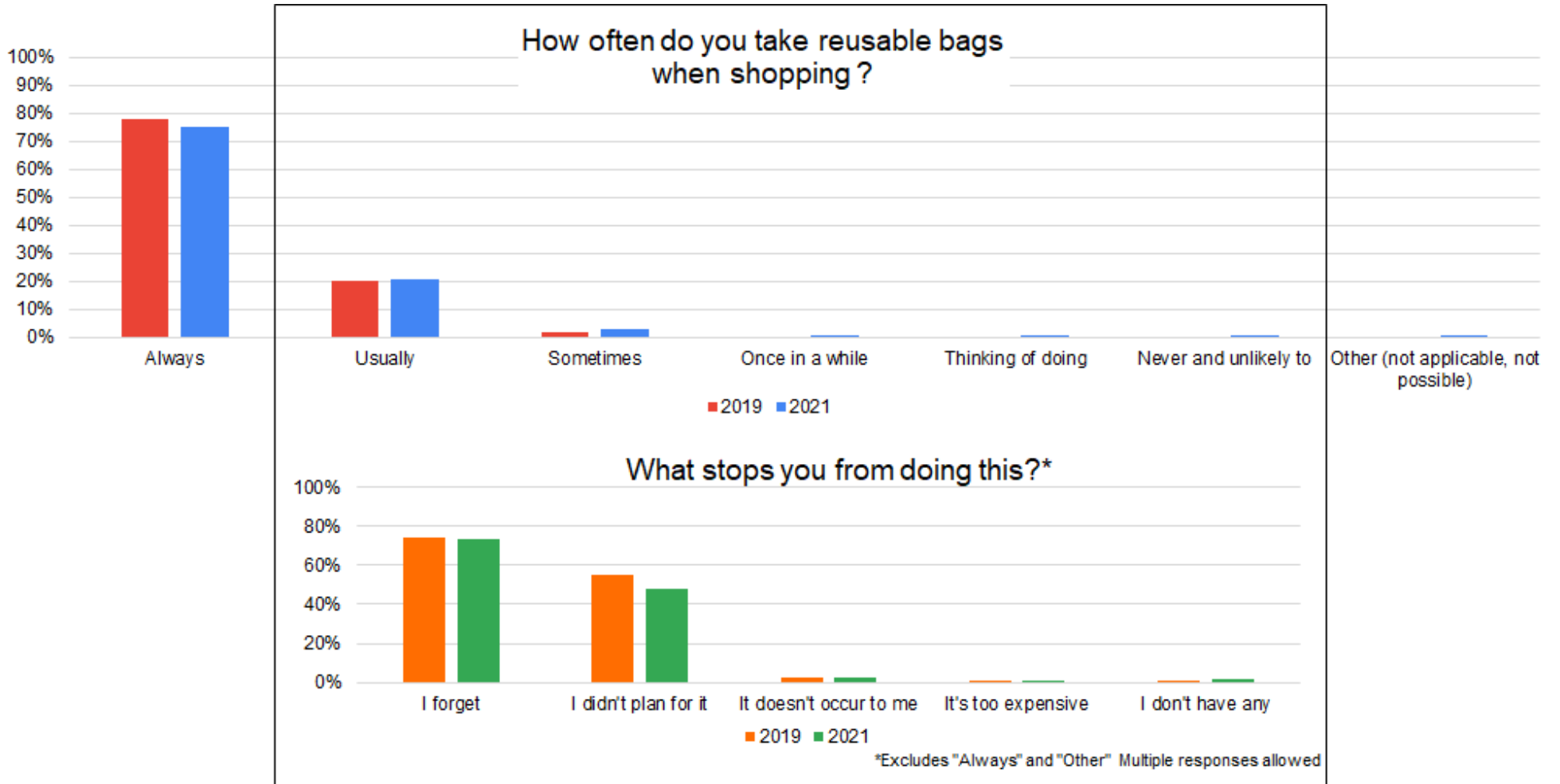
Barriers - what stops you from doing this?

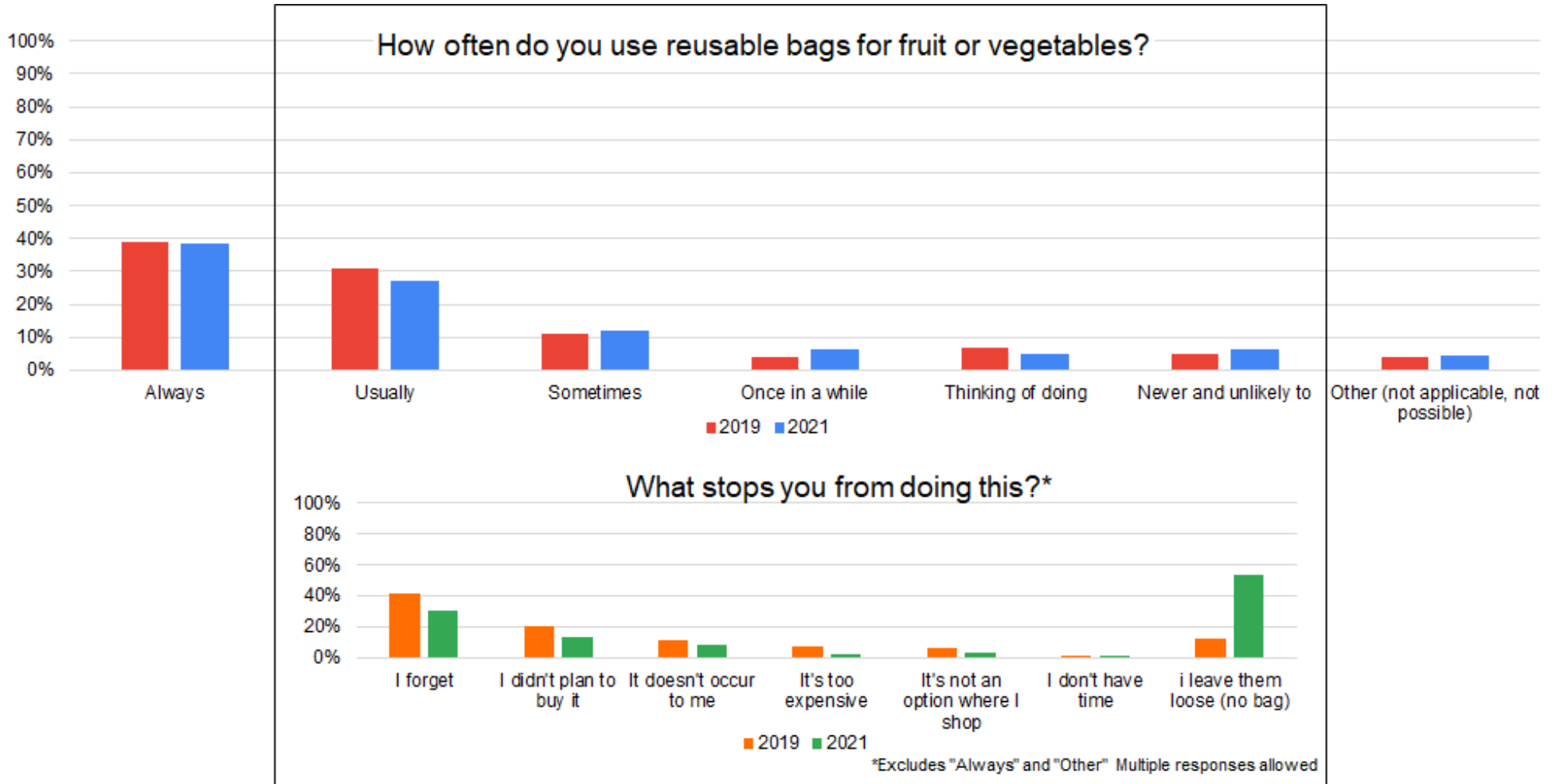
Summary of responses

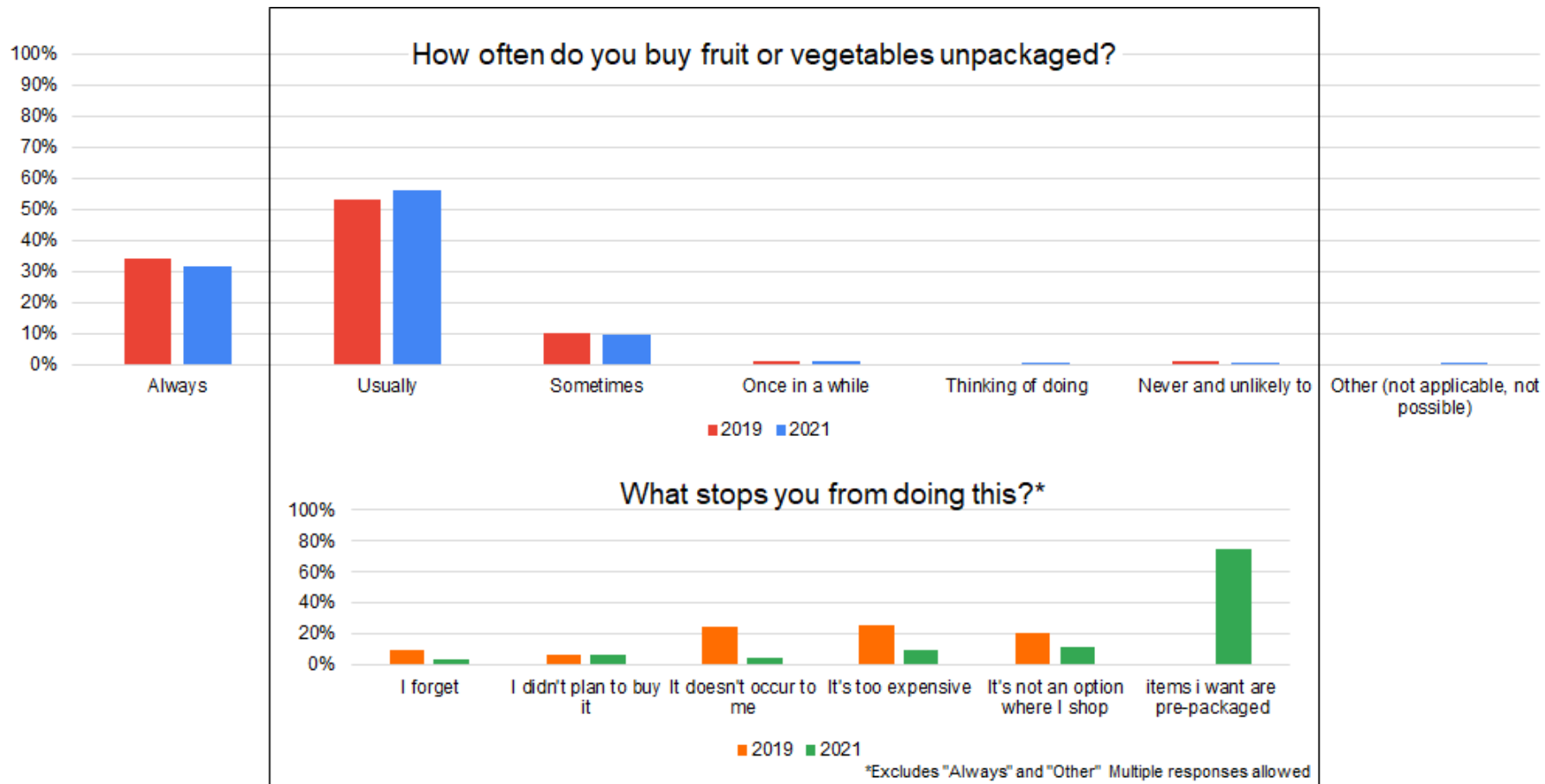
- The 2019 and 2021 results were similar across all behaviours. The most significant difference, of 5%, was with regards to BYO containers. In 2021, more people are ‘never and unlikely to’ bring their own containers for takeaways or meat/deli products.
- “I forgot” or “I didn’t plan to” are the main barriers for most reusable options (bags, bottles, cups) - the same as 2019.
 - *“I have one at work, but if I’m out and about I don’t carry one”* - Female, 45-54, Queenstown
 - *“I’m not thinking ahead...combination of not having the container to hand and forgetfulness”* - Female, 45-54, Wānaka
 - *“Take away is usually a last minute purchase, so don't always have containers with me”* - Female, 35-44, Queenstown
 - *“I have a couple of cars and if I take the wrong car then my shopping bags get left behind”* - Female, 35-44, Queenstown





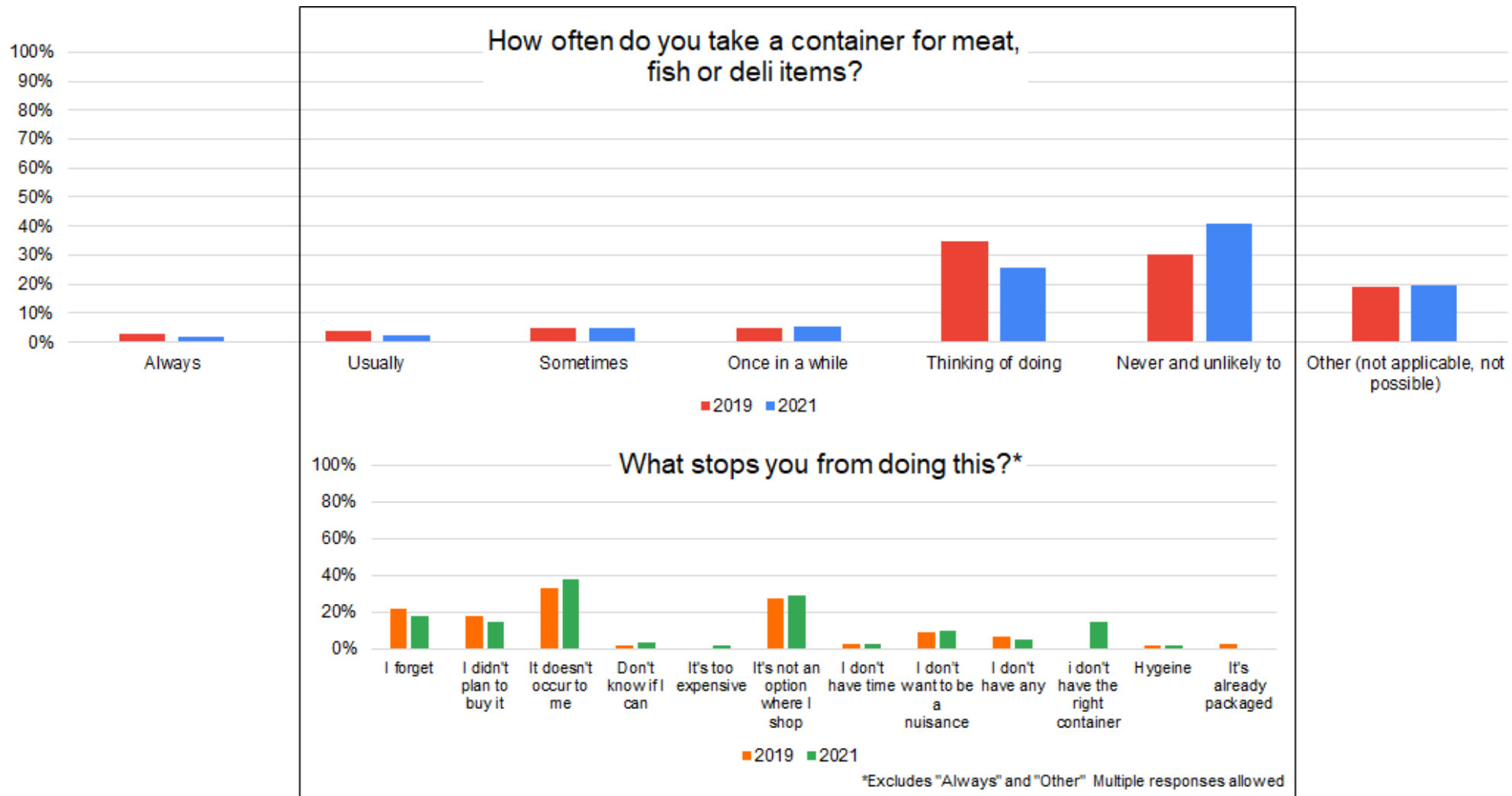




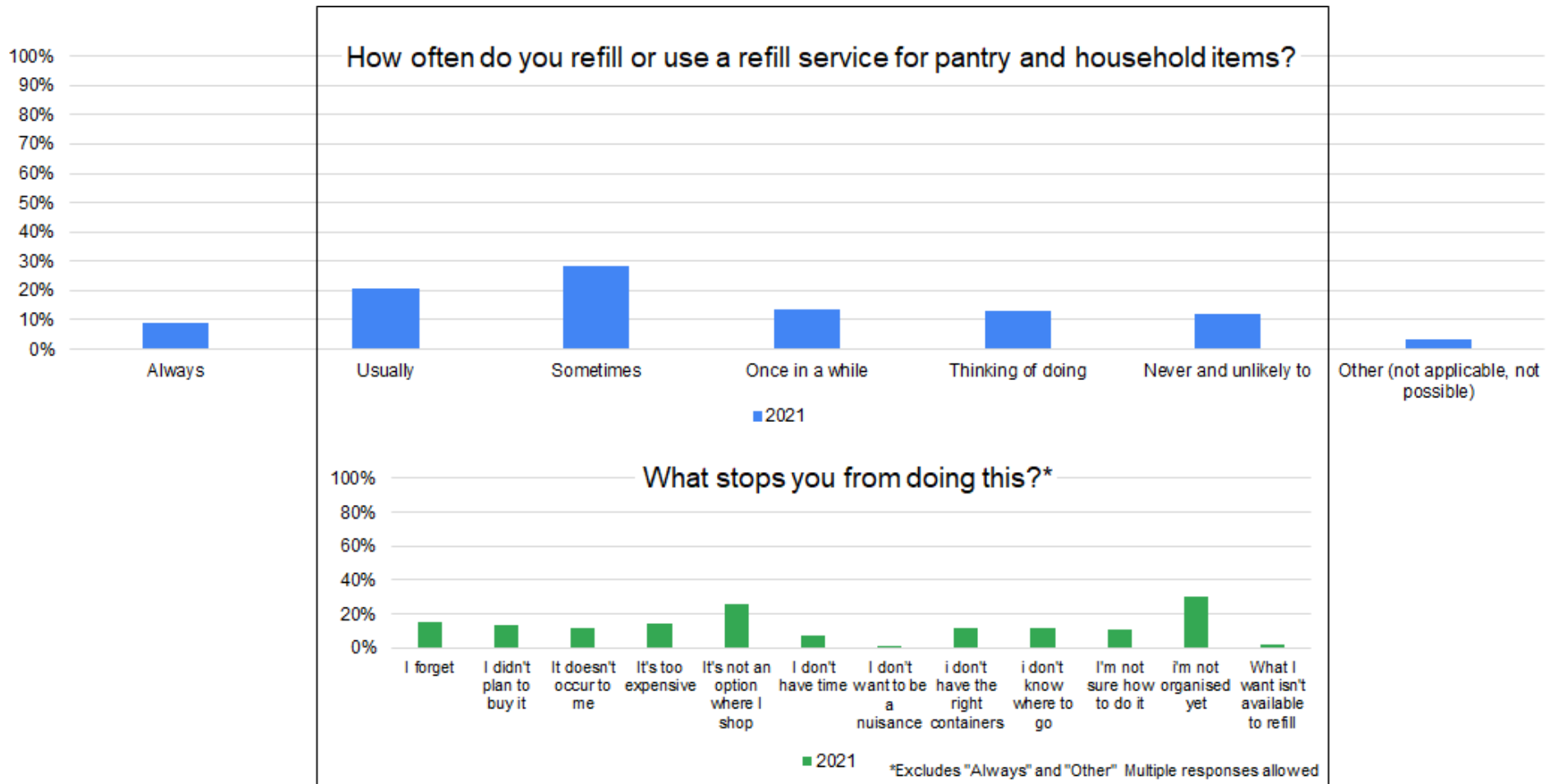


- People are more likely to usually buy their fruit and vegetables unpackaged but the main barrier is that items they want already come prepackaged. Price is also a barrier:
 - *“Value for money buying pre-packed is sometimes better”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka
 - *“Saving the bags for picking up dog poo!”* - Female, 55-64, Queenstown
 - *“Veges go soft very quickly in the reusable bags. They keep longer in the plastic bags”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka

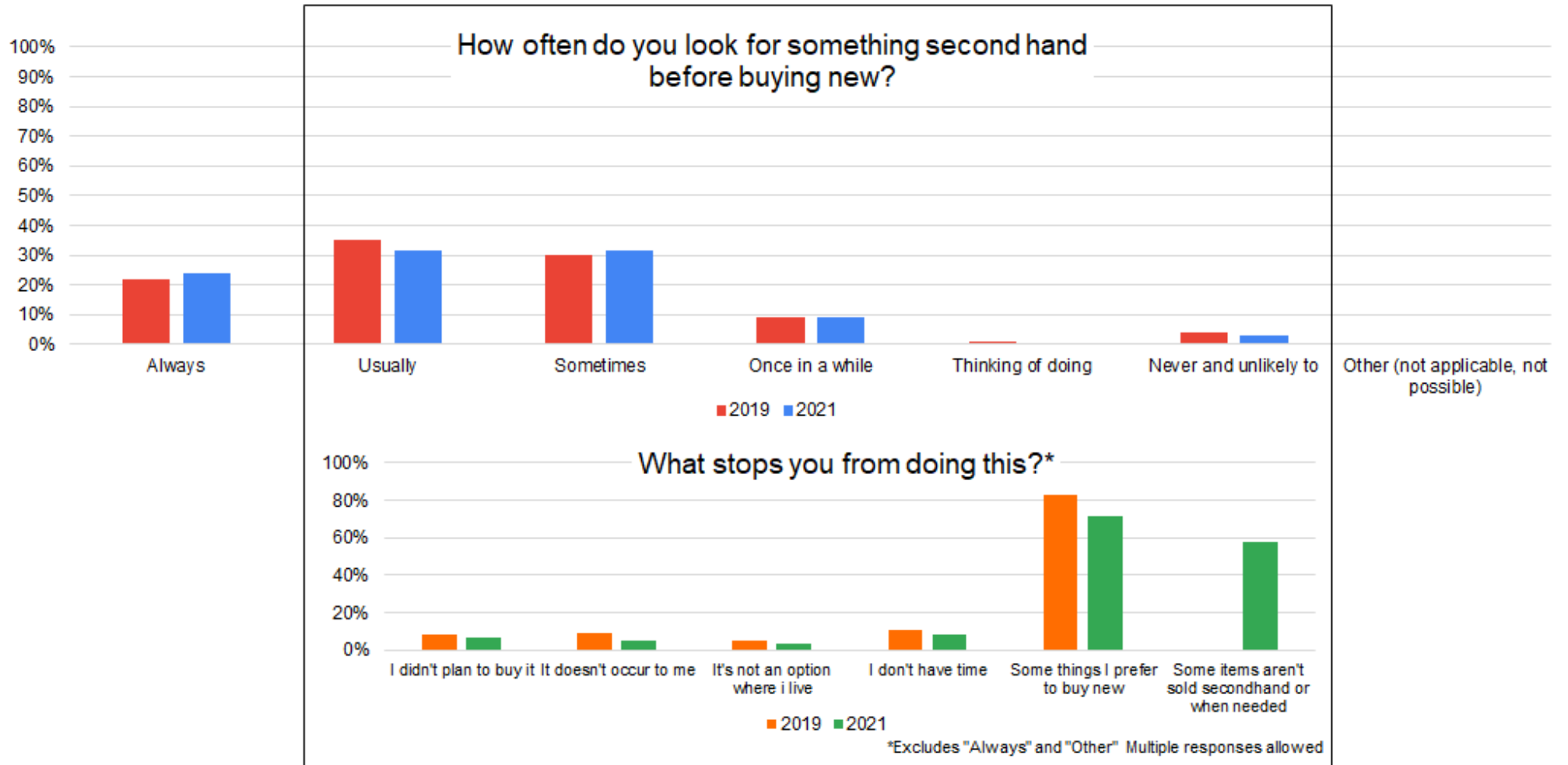


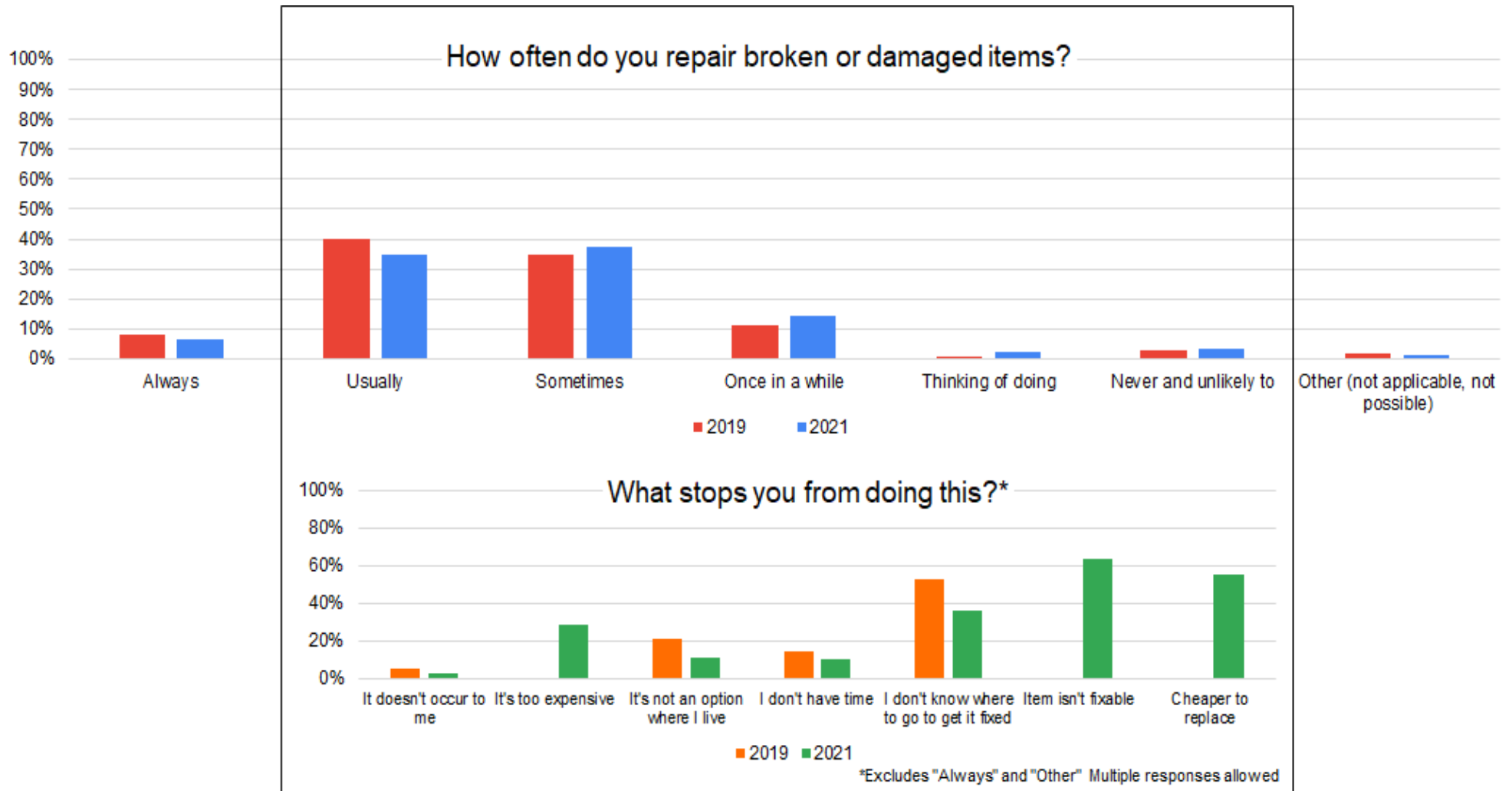


- With regard to taking containers for takeaways and deli items, most people are either “never and unlikely to” (72%) or “thinking about it” (53%). These are noticeably higher percentages than in 2019 - “never and unlikely to” is up by 20% and “thinking about it” is down by 13%. These differences are likely a reflection of the impact of COVID19 and increased concern about hygiene.
 - *“I much prefer to have my food supplied in their plastic or cardboard dishes, cleaner I’m sure.”* - Male, 65+, Wānaka
- People also noted that it did not occur to them that they could take their own container for takeaways or deli items. They would like it to be more publicised, incentivised and encouraged by the businesses.
 - *“I’m not sure if it is a common practice and if it is ok to do”* - Female, 25-34, Wānaka
 - *“No one advertises that they allow this”* - Female, 25-34, Central Otago
 - *“I don’t want to be a nuisance, plus the butcher uses plastic on his scales to measure the meat so I feel like I’m not really achieving anything”* - Female, 45-54, Wānaka
 - *“Never thought to ask although not really an option most places”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka
 - *“Returnable (charge a deposit like soft drink bottles used to have) s/s containers at butcher and deli would work well and be worthwhile to reduce plastic film wrapping but you can bet the farm that bureaucracy will prevent it.”* - Male, 65+, Wanaka



- With regards to using refill options, the barriers are more numerous and complex (see chart). The main barriers for people are “It's not an option where I shop” (26%) or “I’m not organised yet” (30%).
 - *“I'm not sure how to do it, Limited options”* - Male, 25-34, Queenstown
 - *“I don't have time, Laziness (a “one stop shop” is so convenient)”* - Female, 45-54, Wānaka
 - *“It's time consuming and messy”* - Female, 45-54, Wānaka





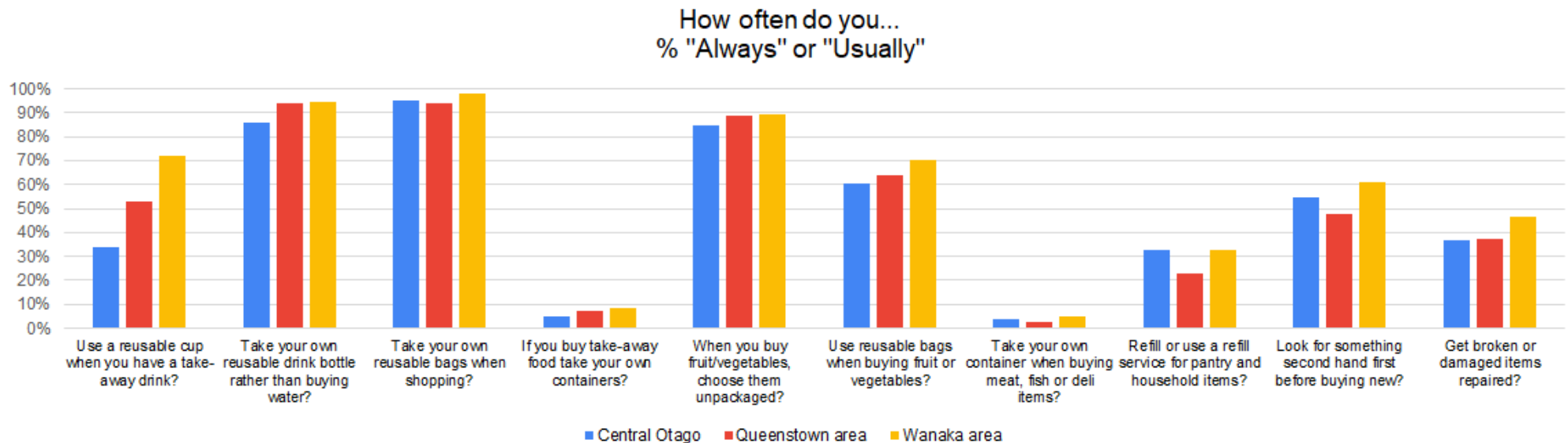
- For repair and secondhand options, the barriers are again more complex than with reusables. For example access to repairers may be limited or certain items may not be available secondhand or when needed.
- Most people (55%) always or usually look for secondhand items first, but sometimes this is not an option due to the product or the area.
 - *“Depends on what I am buying but I often try to look for second hand options”* - Male, 35-44, Queenstown
 - *“Sometimes buying secondhand is more time/effort than the cost saving is worth, but I still usually do”* - Female, 25-34, Queenstown
- With regard to repairing broken items, people appear to be restricted by either limited options or they are unsure where to go.
 - *“A lot of items aren't designed to be fixed - but we do when we can”* - Female, 65+, Wānaka
 - *“Item isn't fixable, Cheaper to replace, tend to repair most things except electrical items not sure who does this in Wānaka”* - Male, 55-64, Wānaka

Does age change our behaviour?

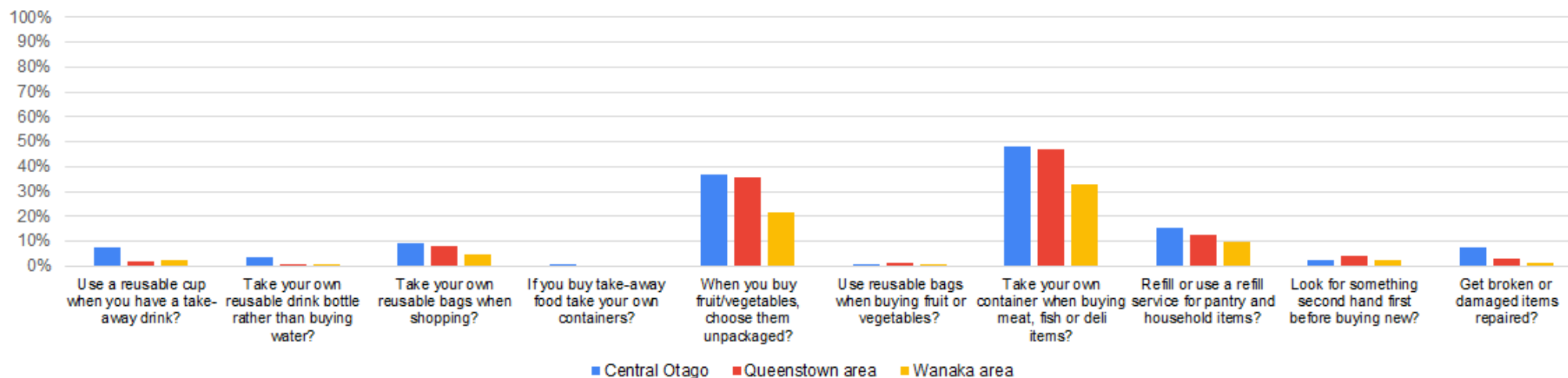
- Across all age groups there were only a few minor differences in attitudes and behaviours around reducing and reusing:
 - 65% of 35-44 year olds always or usually use a reusable cup compared to 36% of over 65s (average across all ages 57%). However, many in the older age bracket noted that they are less likely to have a takeaway coffee so therefore would not be needing a reusable cup.
 - 90% of over 65s always use reusable bags, compared to 62% of 25-34s.
 - When it comes to secondhand, 76% of 0-24 year olds will always or usually look for a preloved item before buying new, while only 34% of over 65s do the same. (The comparatively high number of 0-24's who ticked "Always" for most behaviours may not be representative of that demographic. 37 of the 1,003 respondents were in this age group.)
 - Very few across all age groups take their own container for take aways or meat/deli products.

Behaviours - across the regions

- Across most behaviours there were also no distinct differences between regions. The exception to this is using a reusable cup. In Wānaka more people (72%) will 'Always' or 'Usually' use their own cup than in Queenstown (53%) and Central Otago (34%).
- When it comes to 'Looking for something secondhand first', people will always or usually do this more in Wānaka (62%) and Central (55%) than Queenstown (47%), perhaps a reflection of Wastebusters presence in both Wānaka and Alexandra.

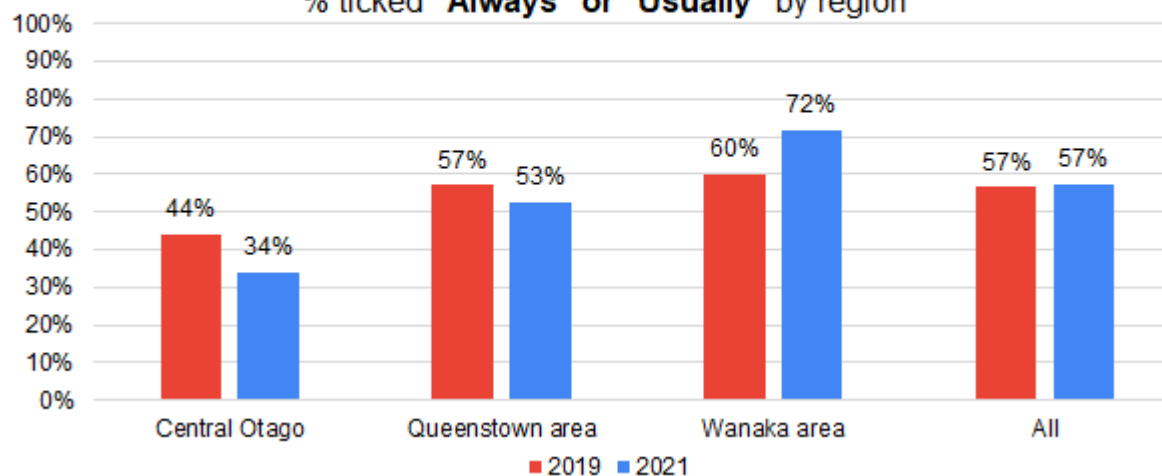


How often do you... % "Never and Unlikely To"



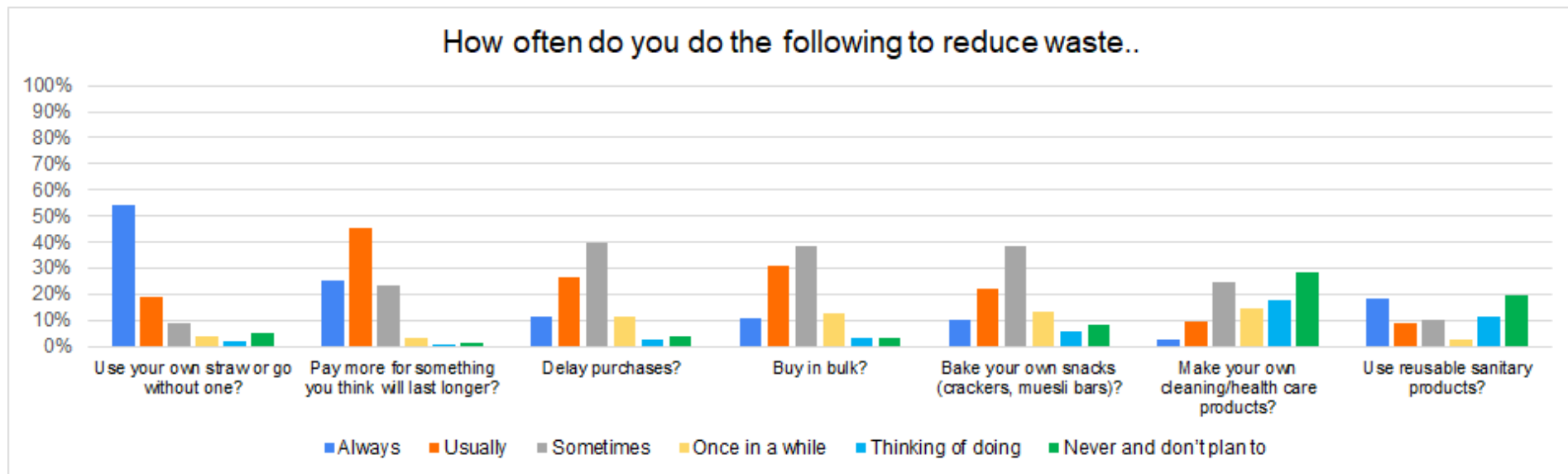
Since October 2019, Wānaka has had an active group, single-use cup free Wānaka (SUCfree), with the goal of eliminating single-use cups by 2022. The campaigning by SUCfree Wānaka, which has supported a number of cafes to remove takeaway cups, introduce cup lending schemes and has engaged with the community around the problem with single use cups likely correlates with the high uptake of this behaviour in the Wānaka area.

How often do you use a reusable cup when you have a take-away drink? % ticked "Always" or "Usually" by region



Other behaviours

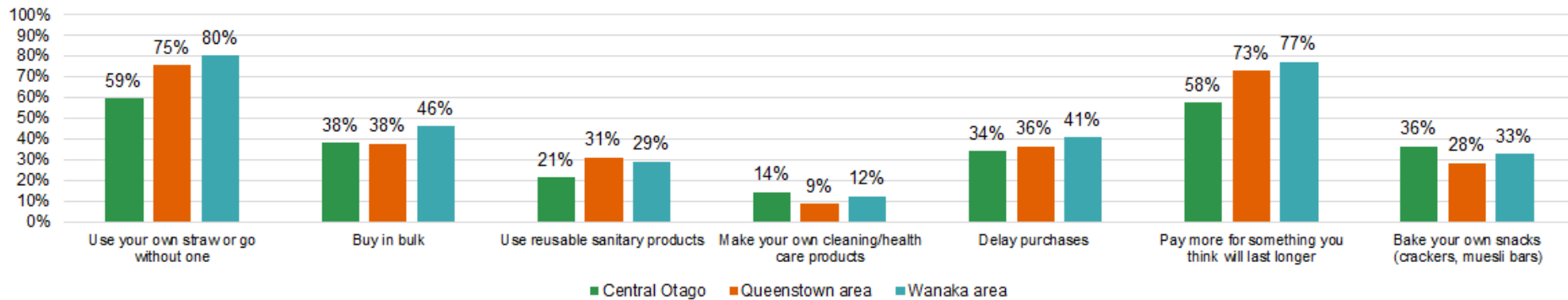
- For this question around behaviours to reduce waste, we did not ask what prevented people from doing so.
- The 2019 and 2021 results were similar across all these behaviours within a 5% variance.
- People are happy to delay purchases, or spend more on items that they know will last.
- When it came to ‘making your own’ (eg. snacks and cleaning products) people were mostly ‘sometimes’ doing so or ‘thinking of doing’ which indicates that perhaps as education or resources (eg. recipes, and workshops) are more available people will transition to more regularly doing so.
- When analysed by ages these results did not vary notably.



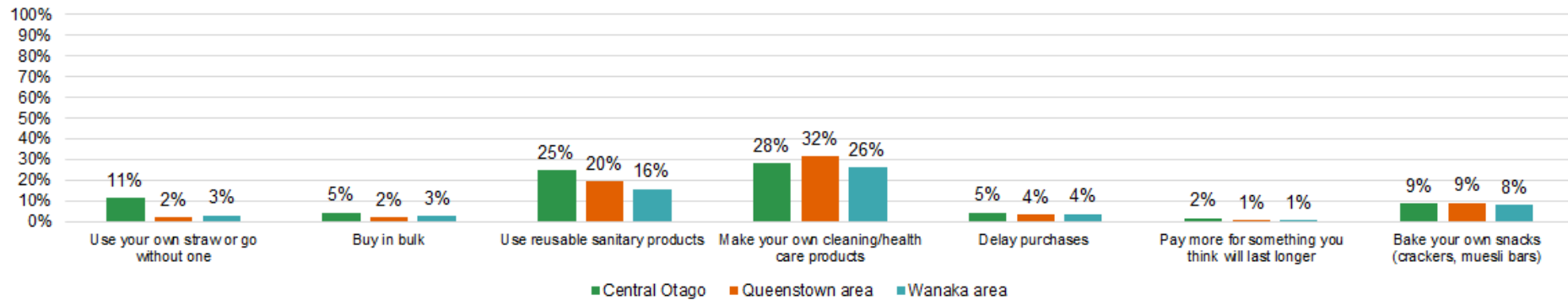
Other behaviours - across the regions

- The results across the survey area were fairly similar, however there are a higher number of people in Wānaka than in the other areas who will usually or always do these things, such as buy in bulk, use their own straw, and pay more for something that will last longer.

How often do you do the following to reduce waste?
"Always" or "Usually"



How often do you do the following to reduce waste?
"Never and unlikely to"



Concern for Environmental Issues

Survey question - *“How concerned are you about...” (1 not concerned - 6 extremely concerned)*

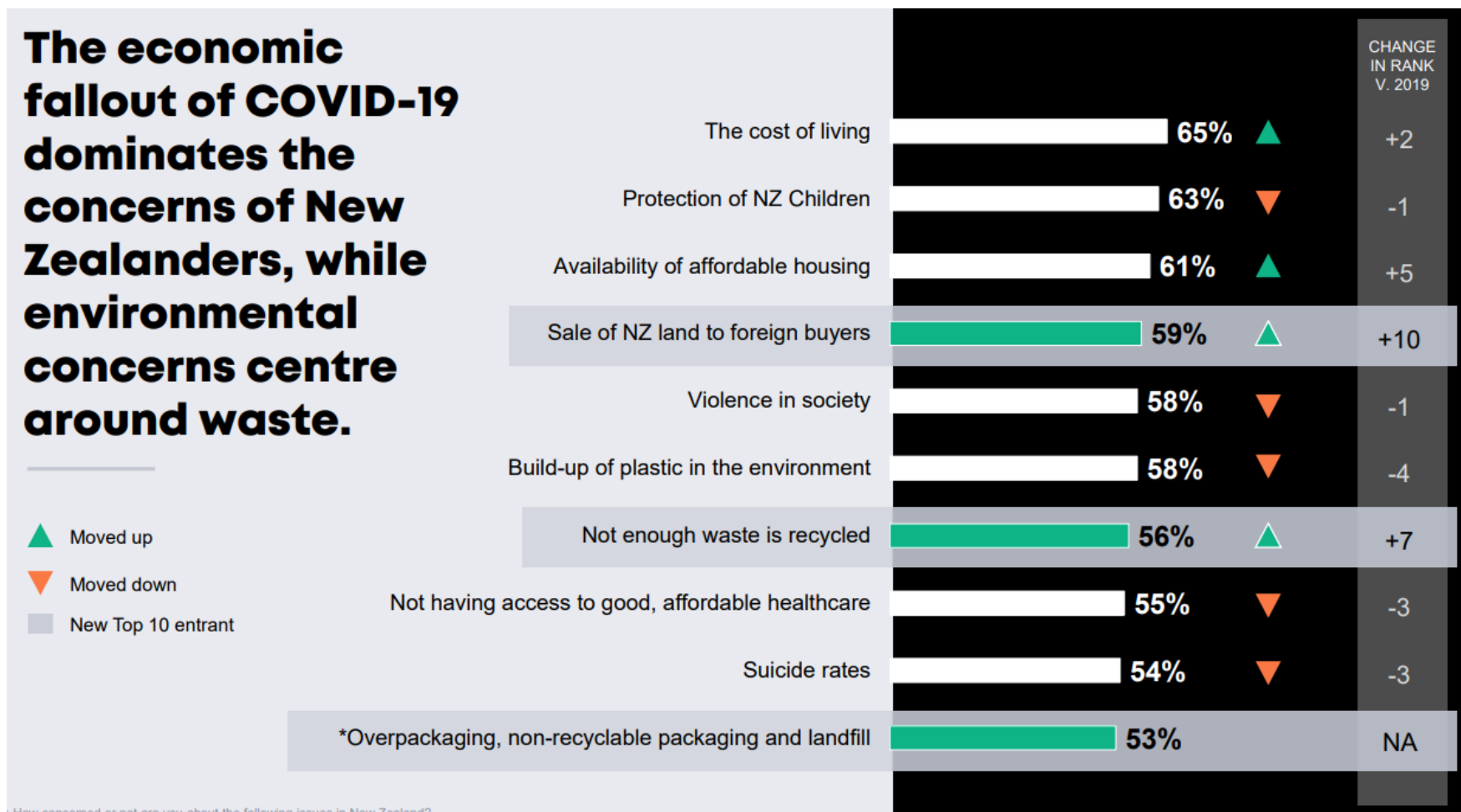
1. *Plastic in our oceans*
2. *Amount of single-use packaging being used*
3. *Wasteful use of resources*
4. *The environmental impact of cheap clothing and shoes*
5. *The amount of waste going into landfill*
6. *The impact of waste on climate change*

Summary of responses

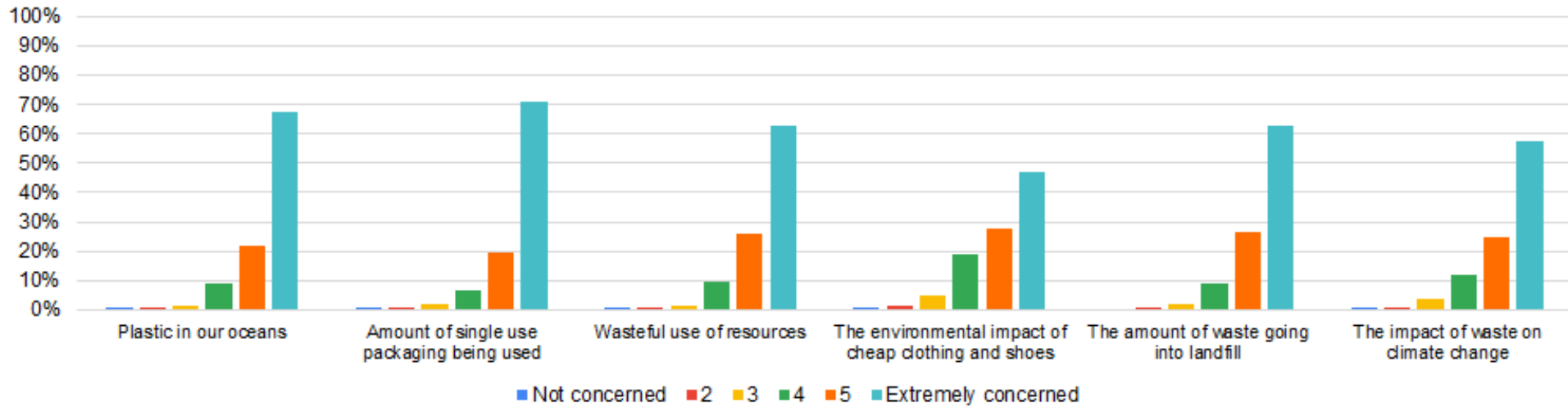
- People in the region are extremely concerned overall about the impact their choices have on the environment. This is aligned with the findings of the nationwide Colmar-Brunton poll in ‘Better Futures Report 2021’. ‘Overpackaging, non-recyclable packaging and landfill’ entered New Zealanders top 10 concerns after having no ranking in 2019, while ‘not enough waste is recycled’ was up seven places. See figure below.
- Plastic in the oceans and the amount of waste going to landfill are of the most concern in the region with 92% of people noting they are very or extremely concerned about these issues.
 - *“We are extremely environmentally conscious in our household, the issues we often face are due to outside factors. For example: the restrictions on what can be recycled in NZ and availability of alternatives to traditional supermarket shopping (bulk foods outlets).” - Female, 35-44, Queenstown*
 - *“It's silly to ask consumers to do the heavy lifting when they are paying for the service and even worse when we know the companies are the biggest offenders - at least here in NZ. I worked somewhere where they would dump literally tons of metal and plastic every week, never recycled anything. I worked in construction and the amount of wasted materials is absurd, not to mention they would light on fire some of their rubbish.” - Male, 35-44, Wānaka*

- There is no distinct difference from the 2019 results for this question, however there is an increase (4%) in concern around the environmental impact of cheap clothing/shoes.
- When broken down by region, people in Wānaka are more likely to be extremely concerned about all the issues mentioned than those in Queenstown or Central, within a range of 10%.

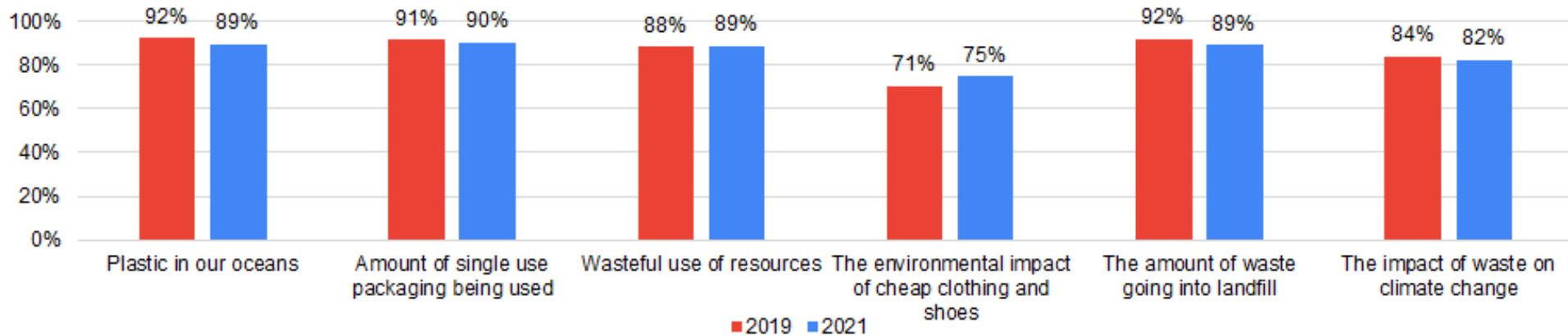
Sustainable Business Council, Colmar Brunton: 'Better Futures Report 2021':



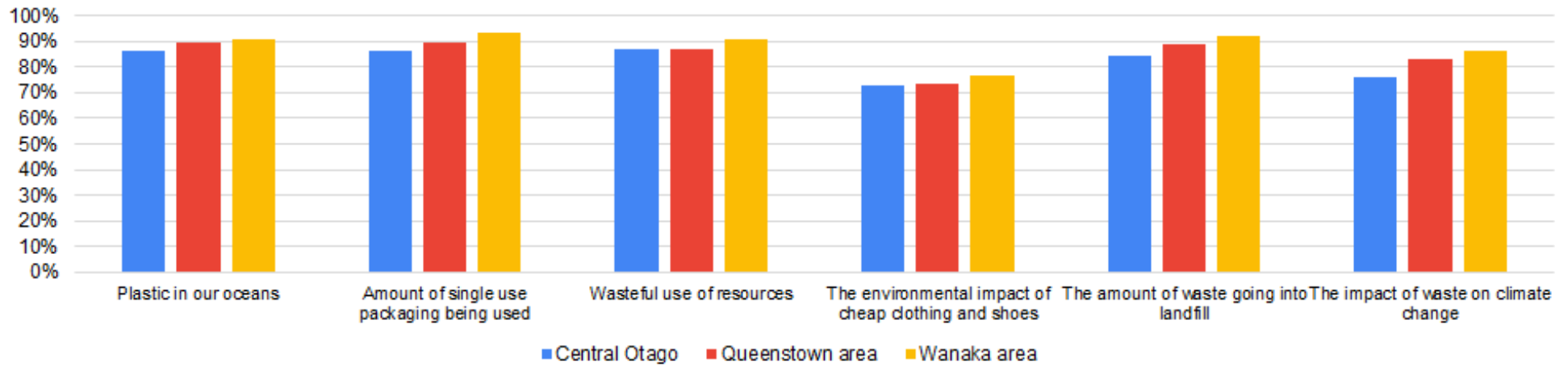
How concerned are you about...



Very or extremely concerned about % of total (comparison to 2019)

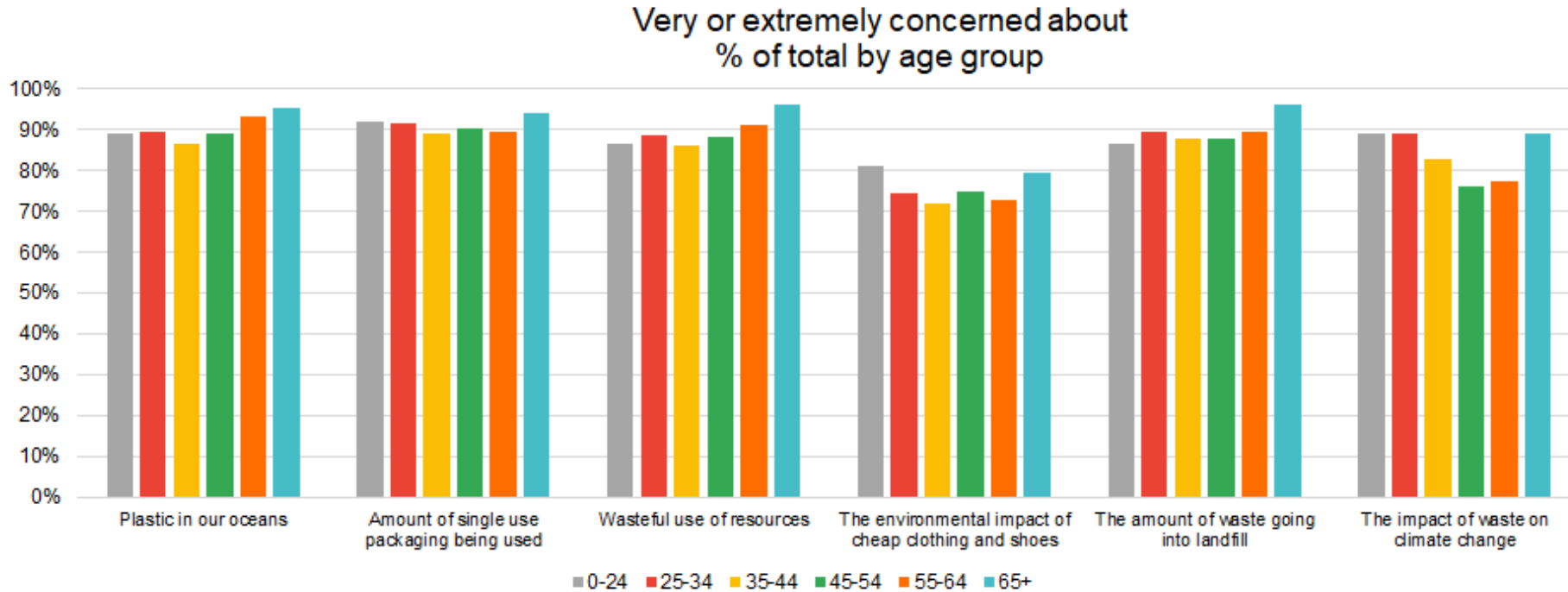


Very or extremely concerned about % of total by region



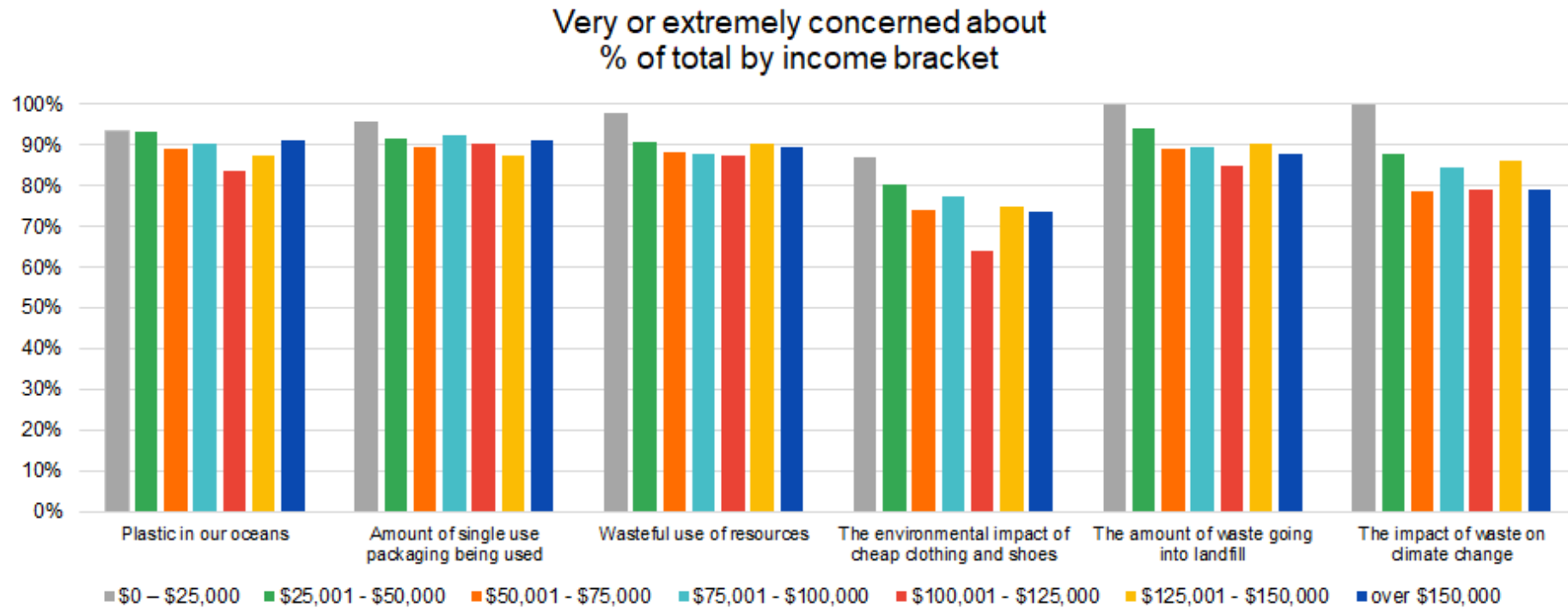
Does age affect our concern for different environmental issues?

- With regard to concern for environmental issues there was no discernable difference across age groups; the large majority are 'very' or 'extremely' concerned about all the issues than the middle age groups.



Does income affect our level of concern?

- Across all the issues, those in the lower income bracket were the most likely to be 'extremely concerned' while those in the middle \$100-125k bracket were the least likely.
- In 2019 the results did not show such a distinct pattern.



Factors that influence our consumer choices

Survey question - “What factors influence your consumer choices?” (1 not important - 6 extremely important)

Answer options (multiple answers allowed)

1. *Healthy choices*
2. *Impact on environment and our oceans*
3. *Minimal packaging*
4. *Reducing waste to landfill*
5. *Convenience*
6. *Price*
7. *Trusted brand*
8. *Like buying new things*
9. *Social norms*

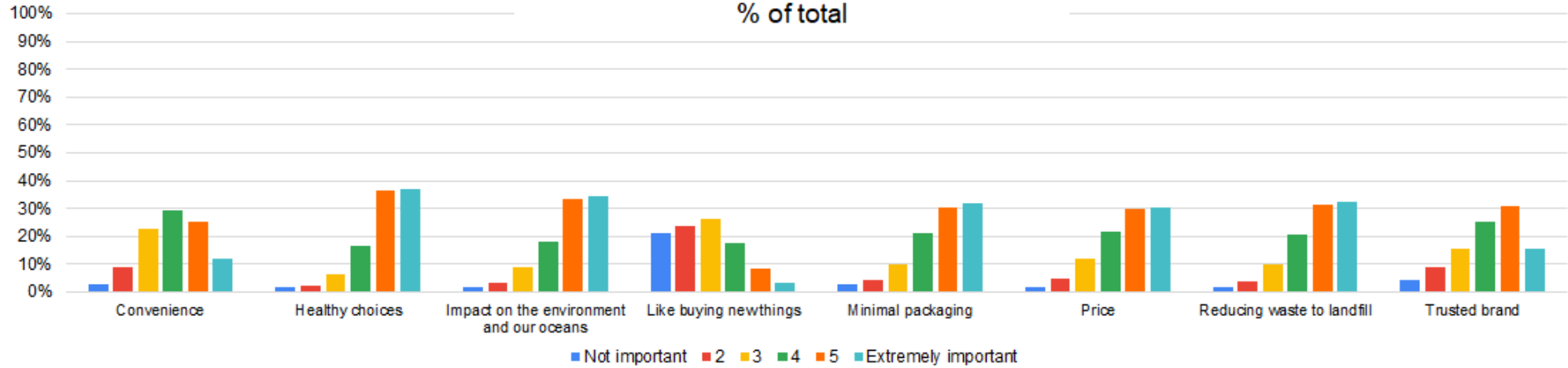
Summary of responses

- The top two factors that people noted as being ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ important influences on their choices are:
 - Healthy choices: 73% (down from 75% in 2019).
 - Impact on the environment and oceans - 68% (down from 70% in 2019)
- At 20%, the ‘most important’ factor for people in 2021 was ‘price’ (up 3% on 2019), followed closely by ‘impact on the environment’ (19%).
- 19% of respondents said it was too hard to pick the most important reason.
- There was very little emphasis placed on the importance of ‘buying new things’.

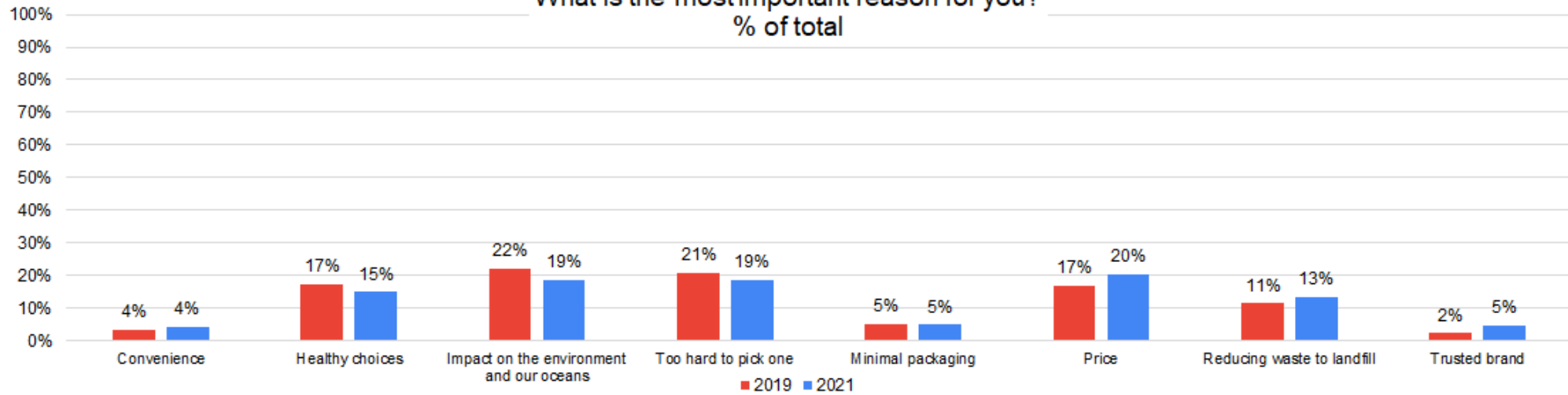
- When asked about other influences, the common factors mentioned were:
 - Quality
 - Availability
 - Company ethics
 - Location of production

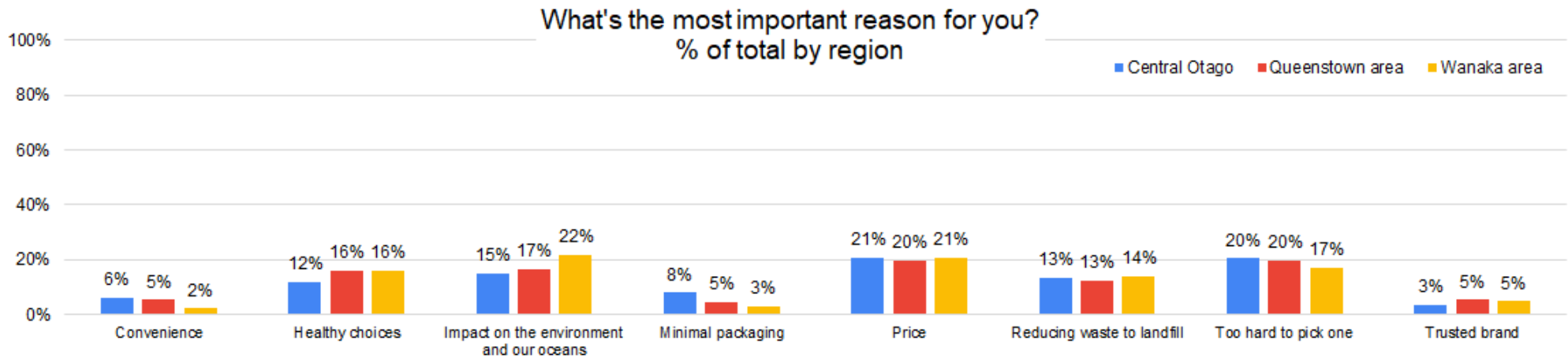
- The number of respondents ticking multiple factors as being highly important indicates the need to constantly weigh up choices.
 - *“It is always a struggle between price, eco-friendly packaging and healthiness”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka
 - *“I think environmentally for things like food, but not when it comes to an item like reading glasses. But increasingly looking for natural un-packaged products for food, clothing, household items, cleaning items etc”* - Female, 55-64, Wānaka
 - *“I used to be extremely packaging / sustainability conscious... But then I had kids (including twins), and life became significantly more difficult to spend the time, effort and money to make sustainable choices all the time.”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka
 - *“Safety (ie bike helmets) quality, price really depends on what the item is, secondhand no longer works with my kids items now they're older, hard on gear and wear through things before outgrowing. Food wise budget brands cheaper but plastic packed.”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka
 - *“Sometimes I don't have a choice - dietary issues”* - Female, 45-55, Wānaka
 - *“Misinformation, sometimes I think I am doing a lot better than I am and I get corrected”* - Female, 35-44, Wānaka

What factors influence your consumer choices % of total



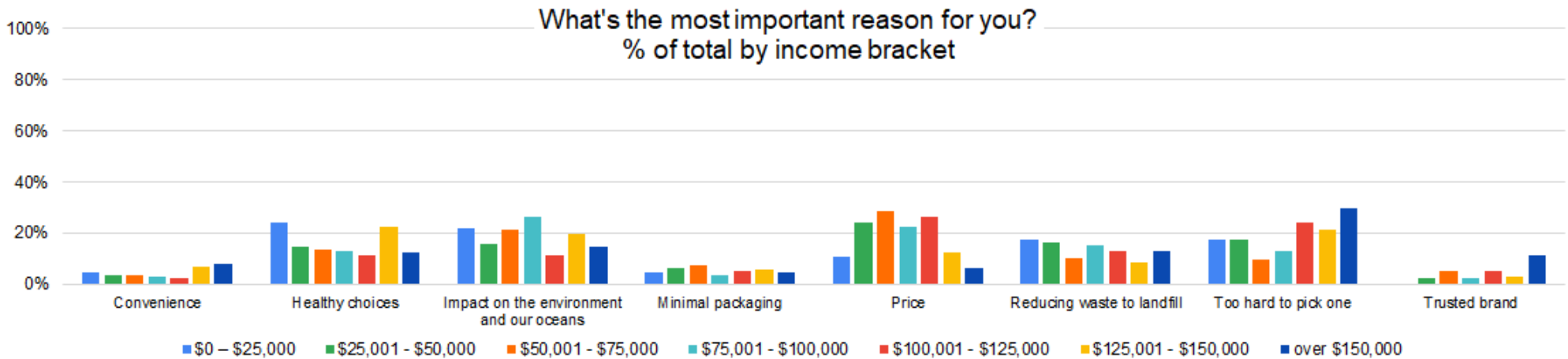
What is the most important reason for you? % of total





Does income affect our sensitivity to price?

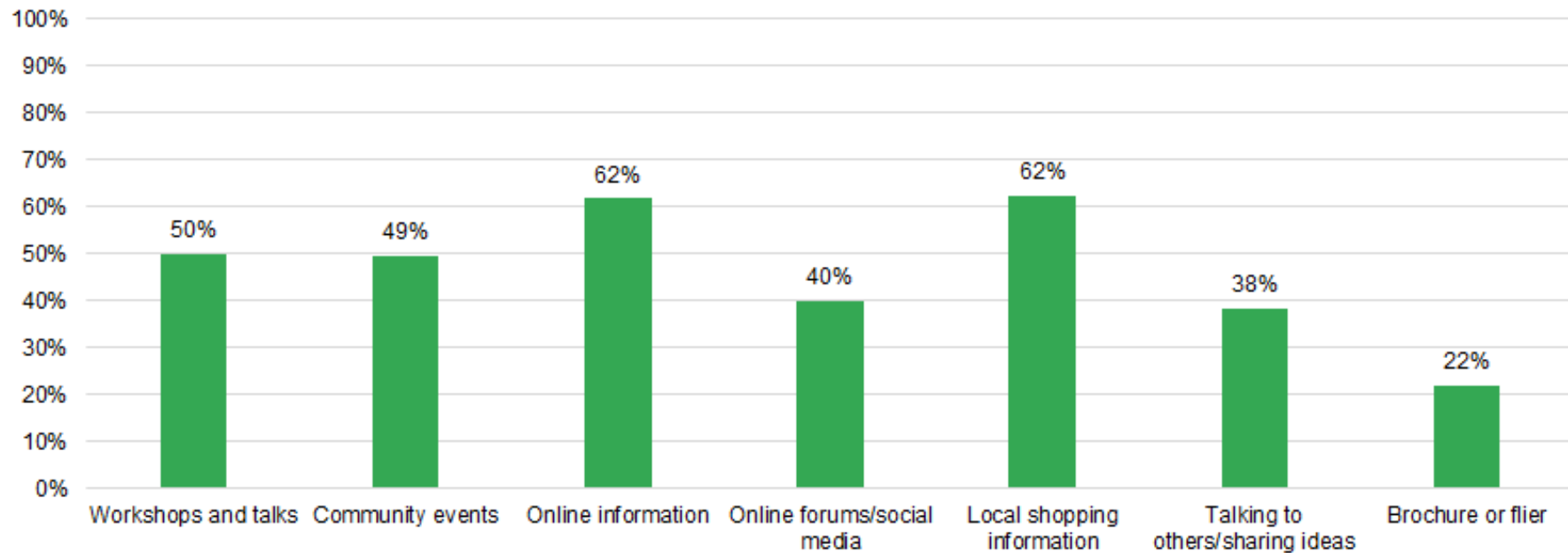
In all income brackets price is an important influence on consumer choices, however in both the under \$25,000 and the over \$150,000 income brackets there are less for whom it is extremely important.



Learning more about reducing waste

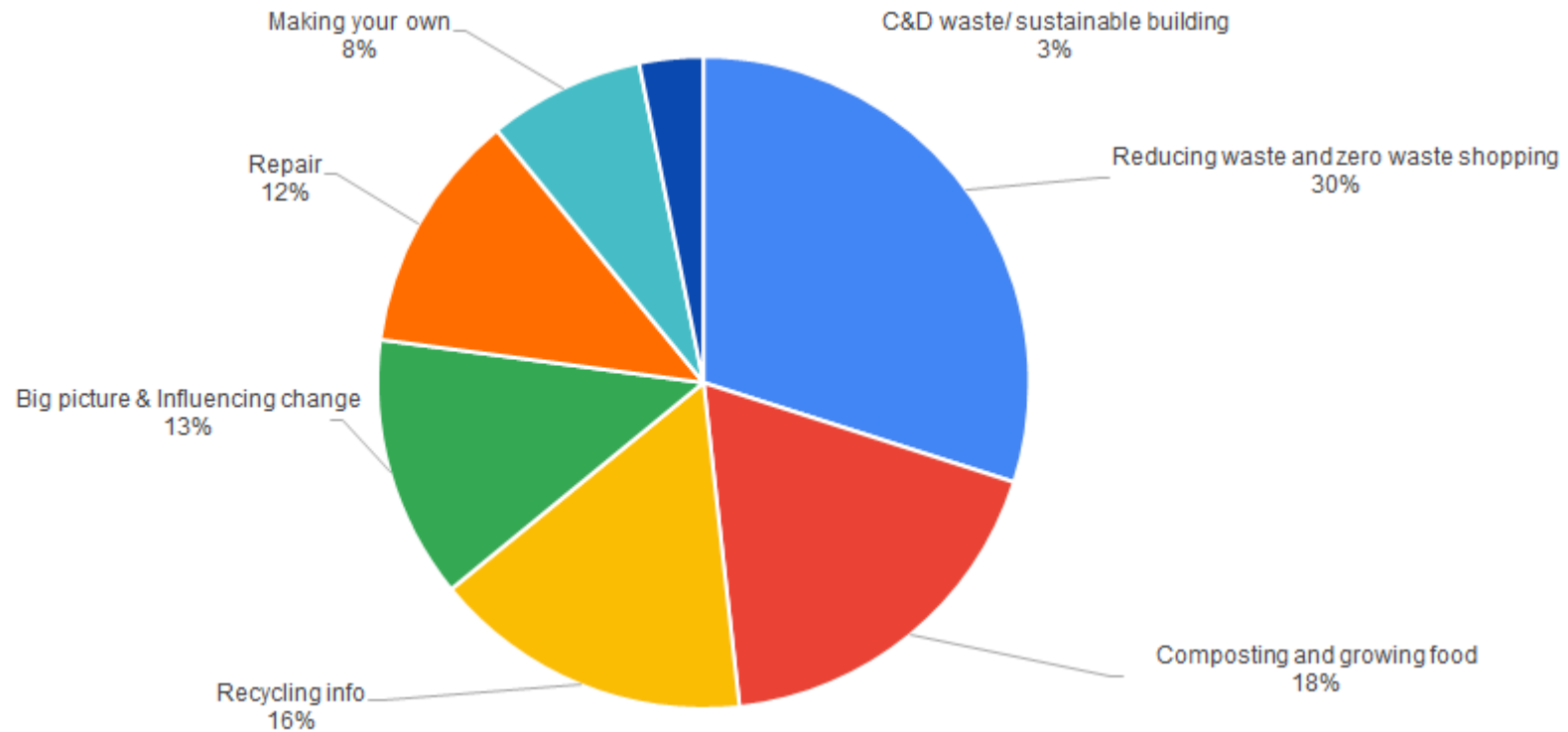
Survey question - “What additional local support of information would help you reduce your waste?” (multiple answers allowed)

- 79% of respondents are interested in learning more to help them reduce their waste.
- The top two areas they want further support on are local shopping information (62%) and online information (62%), the same numbers as in 2019.



When asked what specific information they would like to learn about, the top topics were:

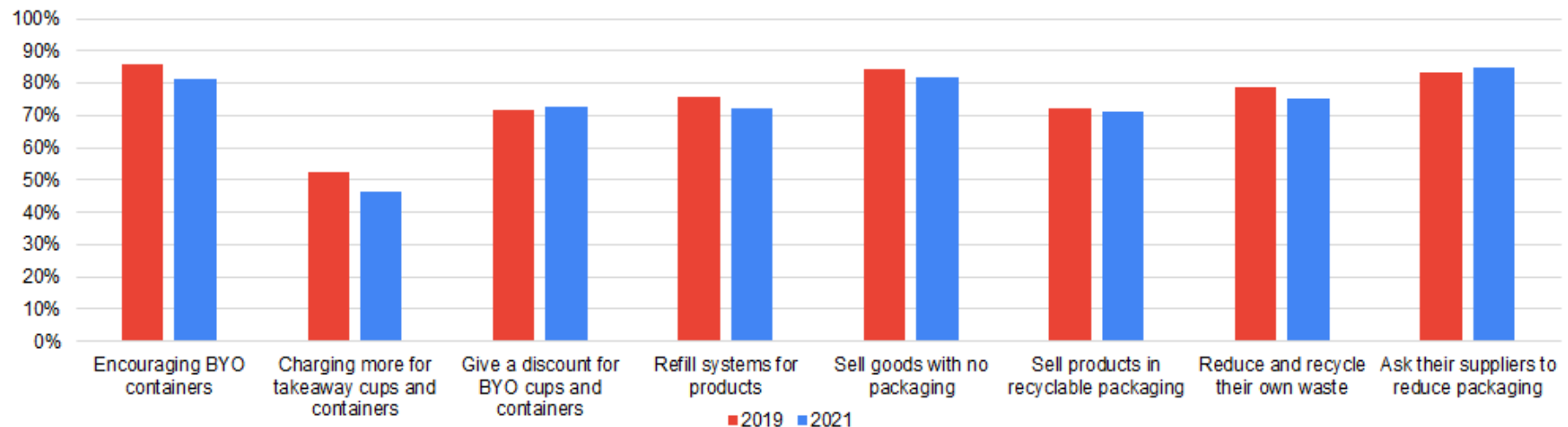
- Information about reducing waste and zero waste shopping
- Composting and growing food
- Recycling information



People want businesses to do more to support their waste reduction efforts

Survey question - “What would you like local businesses to do to help our community reduce waste?” (multiple answers allowed)

- There is strong support for businesses to encourage BYO containers (81%) and for businesses to ask their suppliers to reduce their packaging (85%).
 - “I feel as though there isn't enough drive from a lot of businesses, customers can always pass on information but the suppliers should be targeted” - Female, 25-34, Wānaka
 - “I often feel that there is so much pressure on the end user and not enough on the producers to change their behaviours. eg Surely we have the technology to change our bread packaging from plastic to something else” - Female, 45-54, Wānaka
 - “Returnable (charge a deposit like soft drink bottles used to have) s/s containers at butcher and deli would work well and be worthwhile to reduce plastic film wrapping but you can bet the farm that bureaucracy will prevent it. I haven't taken a plastic supermarket bag for forty years but compared to the plastic packaging inside the bags this is largely symbolic” - Male, 65+, Wānaka



Further thoughts from respondents:

Survey question - *“Is there anything else you would like to tell us?”*

- *“I think the key to stopping people using single-use products is to make it affordable and convenient for them to do so. If stores subsidised reusable produce bags then people wouldn’t complain if the plastic bags were taken away. The coffee cup program in Wanaka is fantastic; if you make it easy for consumers then it’s a no-brainer.”* - Female, 35-44, Queenstown
- *“At the end of the day we the people should pressure the government for legislations that put the brunt of recycling into the companies' obligations and of course the Government should build proper recycling facilities”* - Male, 35-44, Wānaka
- *“Environmental groups are quick to promote so-called “green” products without understanding the full life cycles. For example, electric cars - when there is not a solution in NZ to recycle the lithium batteries etc.. I understand that there is no arrangement for shipping currently. No product stewardship here!!!”* - Male, 65+, Queenstown
- *“Sometimes I think, why should I have to go out of my way or pay more or go without something to avoid plastic when other people or companies aren't doing anything and having a much bigger impact than me, what's the point?”* - Female, 35-44, Wanaka
- *“QLDC should build a commercial composting plant for the district!”* - Female, 35-44, Wanaka

Future opportunities and challenges

- This survey identified several areas of potential growth and change with regard to reduction and reuse awareness and behaviour.
- Wastebusters will use the information gleaned to:
 - Inform future campaigns and initiatives
 - Create helpful workshops and further online resources
 - Target our community engagement activities to have more impact
 - Set in motion a culture change with local retailers and food businesses to encourage consumers to BYO containers and cups
- Examples may include:
 - Meeting with food retailers to discuss takeaway options
 - Helping our communities to advocate for better producer responsibility and transparency, particularly around recycling options
 - Accessible information or workshops around what can and can't be recycled and where it goes
 - Education resources around what will end up in the landfill
 - Promoting local initiatives to reduce waste, and local shopping information
 - Recipe ideas (cleaning products and snacks)
 - Resources and tips for people who are further along the waste-free journey, not just for those starting out
- We plan to undertake this, or a similar survey again to analyse if there has been a change in attitude and/or behaviour around reduction and reuse in the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago areas.

Wastebusters: to zero waste and beyond...

