The National Cycling Strategy 2011-2016 sets out the objective to double cycling participation by Australians between 2011 and 2016. To measure performance towards this objective, the Australian Bicycle Council commissions a National Cycling Participation Survey which has been conducted in 2011, 2013 and 2015. The survey provides estimates of cycling participation (measured in the past week, month and year) across Australia and for each state and territory.

Key findings from the 2015 study were as follows:

- 17.4% of the Australian population had ridden in the previous week, 24.3% had ridden in the previous month and 36.3% had ridden at least once in the previous year.
- Participation rates are highest in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory.
- Young children have the highest levels of cycling participation: 49% of 2 to 9 year old children had ridden in the previous week, decreasing to 37% of 10 to 17 year olds.
- Of those who cycled in the past month, a much higher proportion did so for recreational purposes (85.5%) compared to those who cycled for transport purposes (30.2%). This divide has increased since 2011 when fewer of those who cycled did so for recreational purposes (80.9%) and more did so for transport purposes (32.3%).
- Males are more likely to participate in cycling than females with 22% of males and 13% of females having ridden in the past week.
- Among those who had ridden in the past week, the average time ridden was 2.75 hours.
- Around 54.3% of households have at least one bicycle in working order.

While bicycle ownership has remained steady in comparison to the 2011 National Cycling Participation Survey, there has been a small but statistically significant decrease in the level of cycling participation in Australia between 2011 and 2015.
Why Cycling Participation Matters

Increasing the number of people riding a bicycle for transport and recreation will benefit Australia by improving health, productivity, the environment and community liveability.

More people riding a bicycle will:

> help reduce urban traffic congestion (which is estimated to cost Australia $53 billion by 2031\(^1\)).

> improve air quality and reduce noise in our neighbourhoods, making where we live healthier and happier.

> reduce the carbon emissions from transport (which is currently responsible for 17.2% of Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions\(^2\)).

> increase activity levels in the community to reduce the cost we all bear for inactivity (which is estimated to be $13.8 billion in 2008\(^3\)).

Riding a bicycle for transport and recreation benefits individuals by:

> improving health and wellbeing in the short-term and throughout life.

> reducing personal and family expenses (bicycles are inexpensive compared to cars which cost between $5,000 p.a. and $25,000 p.a. to run\(^4\))

> saving time, especially on short trips (when travel time is measured from door to door, journeys up to 5 km are generally faster by bicycle)

> connecting people to their community and environment

> providing all ages with a sense of freedom and fun.

Even if you don’t ride a bicycle, you benefit when others do, with less congestion, a cleaner environment, and healthier, more liveable communities.

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1 Infrastructure Australia, *Australian Infrastructure Audit*, 2015.