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# New data reveals improving safety is biggest factor in encouraging cycling in world's largest cities

Generational gap emerges as the impact of COVID-19 changes the way millennials are prioritizing cycling across cities worldwide



Amsterdam, June 3, 2021 - A new online study, commissioned for World Bike Day by VanMoof in partnership with YouGov, seeks to understand the changes to people's mobility habits throughout the pandemic in European and North American cities – specifically around new mobility behaviors and attitudes towards urban public space. The results show that despite the widely publicized “e-bike boom” and mass cycling adoption seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, people still do not feel safe cycling on the streets of some of the world's major cities. Millennials, however, appear to be surging ahead in terms of their cycle-first behavior patterns and determination to change their city's transport status quo. In the US, attitudes towards e-bikes and city mobility have undergone huge change over the course of the pandemic in cities on both coasts. The data was collected from over 3,000 adults across five of the world's biggest cities: London, Paris, Berlin, New York, and Los Angeles.

Some of the top takeaways from the study include:

- **People most concerned for their safety:** 43% of all people living in the five cities sampled said that feeling safer would encourage them to cycle more. This makes safety the strongest factor across all age groups for both men and women. More cycle lanes (34%) and less chance of bike theft (33%) were the next most important factors to encourage more cycling in each city.
- **People feel it is more important for their city to prioritize cycling:** One in three people (34%) across all cities surveyed said it's more important to them that their city prioritizes cyclists now than before COVID-19. Almost double the number of 18-34 year olds (46%) think prioritizing cyclists is important compared to those over 55 years of age (24%). This compares with an average of 20% who said cycling would be their preferred mode of transport getting to work/school and back in a pre-pandemic [2019 Future Cities survey](#) conducted across six European countries.
- **New York shows increased importance for cycling prioritization:** 41% of New Yorkers say it's more important to them now that the city prioritizes cyclists than before the pandemic hit. This percentage rises to a majority of 68% among 25-34 year olds.
- **E-bikes more likely to be chosen for city journeys:** Attitudes towards e-bike use have undergone the biggest change in the US cities of New York and Los Angeles, with 35% of New Yorkers and 32% of LA residents more likely to choose an e-bike for short journeys since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. A huge 64% of 25-34 year olds in New York say they would now be more likely to choose an e-bike for their city journeys. To put that in context, only 24% of Europeans across eleven countries said they were "likely to buy or use" an e-bike in a July 2020 [survey](#).
- **E-bike adoption enthusiasm strongest among under 35s:** 35% of 18-34 year olds are more likely to make the switch to an e-bike for short journeys around all five cities since the impact of COVID-19.

Insufficient cycling infrastructure in cities discouraging people from cycling more

A major finding of the study is that huge unresolved issues around cycling infrastructure and incentives continue to discourage people from cycling. This is most notable when it comes to lacking infrastructure for cyclists' safety, which was the highest contributing factor across every city.

*“It’s an incredibly exciting time for e-bikes, for bike commuting, and for cycling generally. What this data shows us is that the waves of cyclists breaking onto the roads of our biggest global cities need to feel much safer to sustain their new habits. A greater share of road space and better infrastructure will allow people healthier, greener, and cleaner ways to get around our cities.”*

— Ties Carlier, co-founder, VanMoof

The pandemic has also supercharged America’s desire to choose an e-bike instead of a car to get around New York and Los Angeles. This finding reflects the advantage an e-bike’s motor assistance gives American riders in larger, sprawling cities initially designed for cars, not people. The pandemic is showing signs of impacting people’s attitudes to the urban public realm: millennials are now asking more from their city’s policy makers, calling on them to support cycling more than any other age group. Millennials are also showing more willingness to switch to biking for intercity travel altogether. The study found there’s virtually no difference between men and women’s current attitudes to biking in their cities since the pandemic – the gender balance across each location illustrating cycling’s universal appeal.

*“This data points to our cities having to evolve a more human-first and cycle-friendly future. Contemporary culture is rejecting the car-centric highways of the past. The improvements for cyclists in many of these cities in the last few years is welcome. But it’s clear now that people want a far more comprehensive mobility mix to be a cornerstone of any liveable city, and not just an optional extra in a society built for, and ruled by, cars.”*

— Taco Carlier, co-founder, VanMoof

\*\*All figures are from YouGov Plc unless otherwise stated. Total sample size was 3016 adults in New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris and Berlin. Fieldwork was undertaken between 18th and 23rd May 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all city adults (aged 18+).

[VanMoof Blog: A year into the bike boom: how mindsets and behaviors are shifting in favor of a two-wheeled world](#)

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## About VanMoof

*VanMoof was founded in 2009 by Taco and Ties Carlier, two Dutch brothers with a vision of the perfect city bike. Now their bikes are changing cities and leading the current wave of people choosing e-bikes. VanMoof's sleek, multi-award winning rides offer a high-tech and feature-rich experience for a devoted worldwide community of 150,000 riders and growing. The iconic integrated frames mirror a fully integrated end-to-end company that has upended the bike industry by taking complete ownership of everything from design to production, from sales to after-service. One of Europe's fastest growing companies, VanMoof is on course to redefine the future of urban mobility and get the next billion on bikes. VanMoof Brand Stores can be found in Amsterdam, Berlin, London, New York, Paris, San Francisco, Seattle, and Tokyo, with expansion planned to 50 cities worldwide through dedicated Service Hubs by the end of 2021. Available at [vanmoof.com](http://vanmoof.com).*

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