

Road safety of gig workers: A perfect storm of risk factors?

Feeding the Giant

Nicola Christie, UCL

What is the gig economy?

The gig economy involves people who do not get paid a salary but get paid per gig or a 'piece rate' whereby service providers are linked to service users via an app.

Our study:

- How is safety taken onto account in driving, riding or cycling for work
- Interviews - 48 in depth interviews with drivers, riders and their managers
- Survey -Online survey – over 200 responses

Reported here: *Christie, N., & Ward, H. (2019). The health and safety risks for people who drive for work in the gig economy. Journal of Transport and Health. doi:10.1016/j.jth.2019.02.007*



Safety management

INTERVIEWS:

- Companies only interested in 'the life of a parcel than the person delivering it'
- Virtually no training given
- No safety equipment given
- Disregard of safety

SURVEY:

- No safety training
- No safety equipment such as a high visibility vest
- Company does not care about their safety whilst working
- Responsibility should be shared

Fatigue

INTERVIEWS:

- Mentally and physically fatigued
- Worked for multiple courier companies some working three weeks of 12 hour days without a break
- One cyclist reported falling a sleep on her bike and subsequently crashed
- One driver had to slap his face to keep awake and travelled at 'only' 50 mph on the motorway to limit any damage if he crashed
- Some taxi drivers had long commutes (2 hours) to London to work

SURVEY:

- 16% experienced severe fatigue e.g. struggling to stay awake



Distraction

INTERVIEWS:

- Handled their phone whilst riding to accept jobs
- The app beeping at them to announce jobs was a distraction



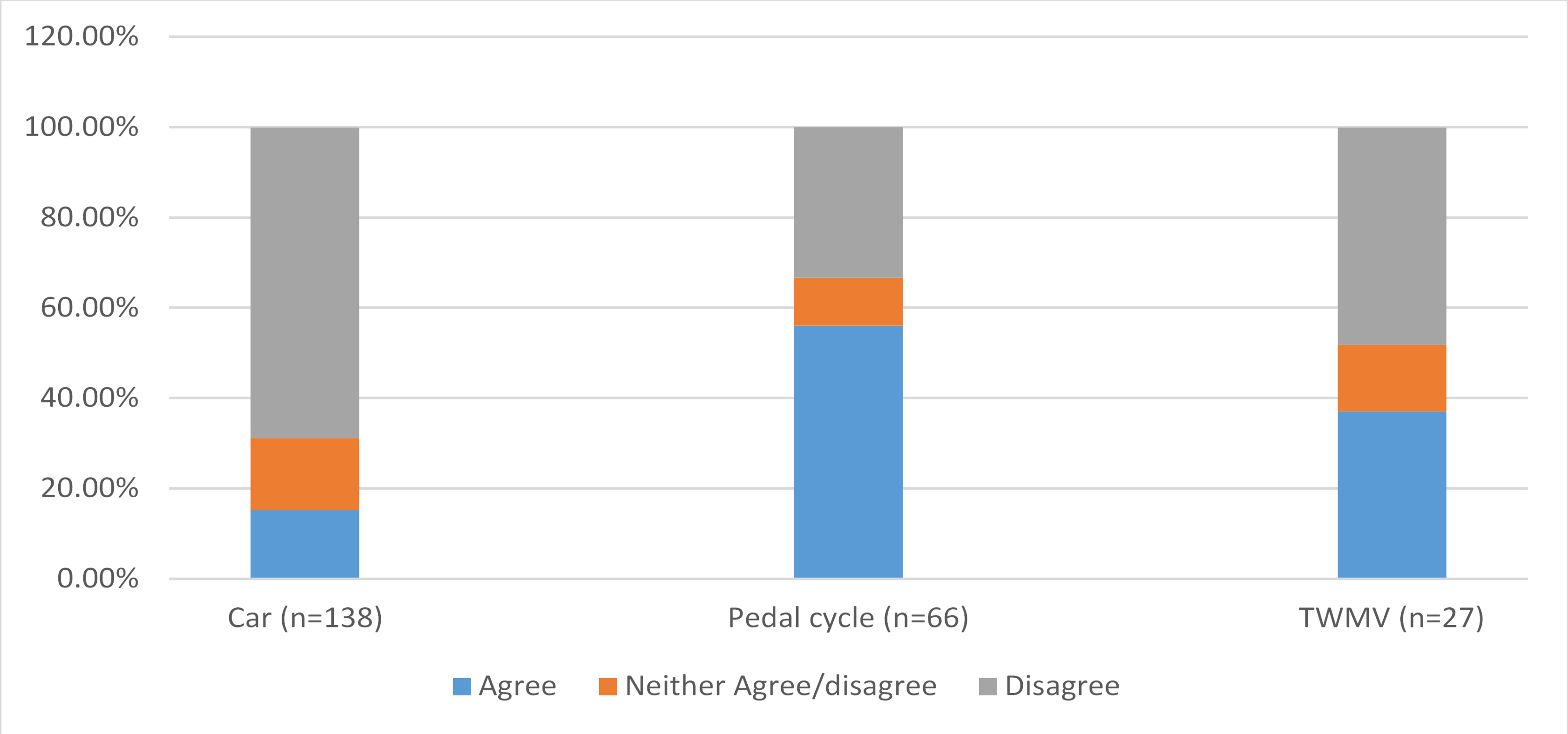
SURVEY:

- 40% of those using an app found them to be distracting whilst driving or riding



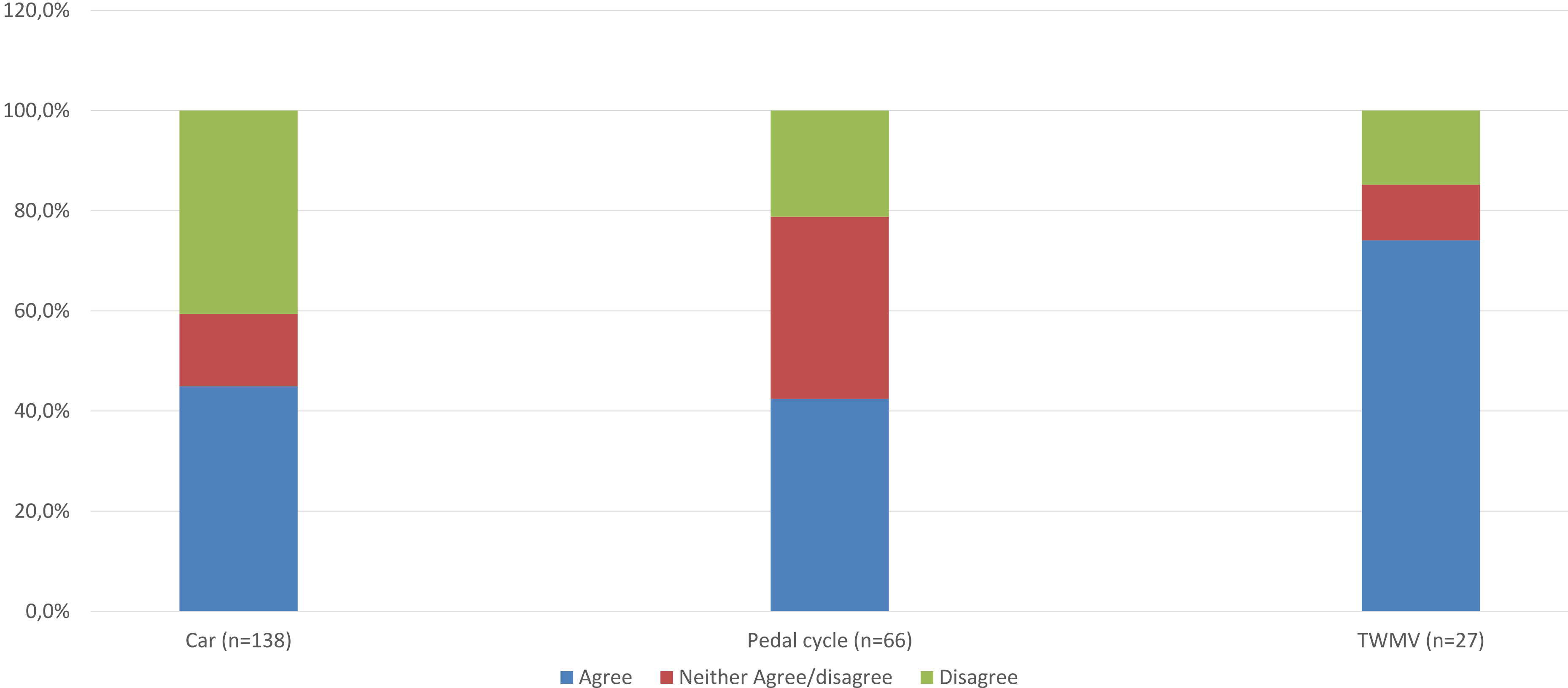
Violations: traffic lights

% level of agreement with statement "I have driven/ridden through a red light when I've been under pressure" by vehicle used for gig work



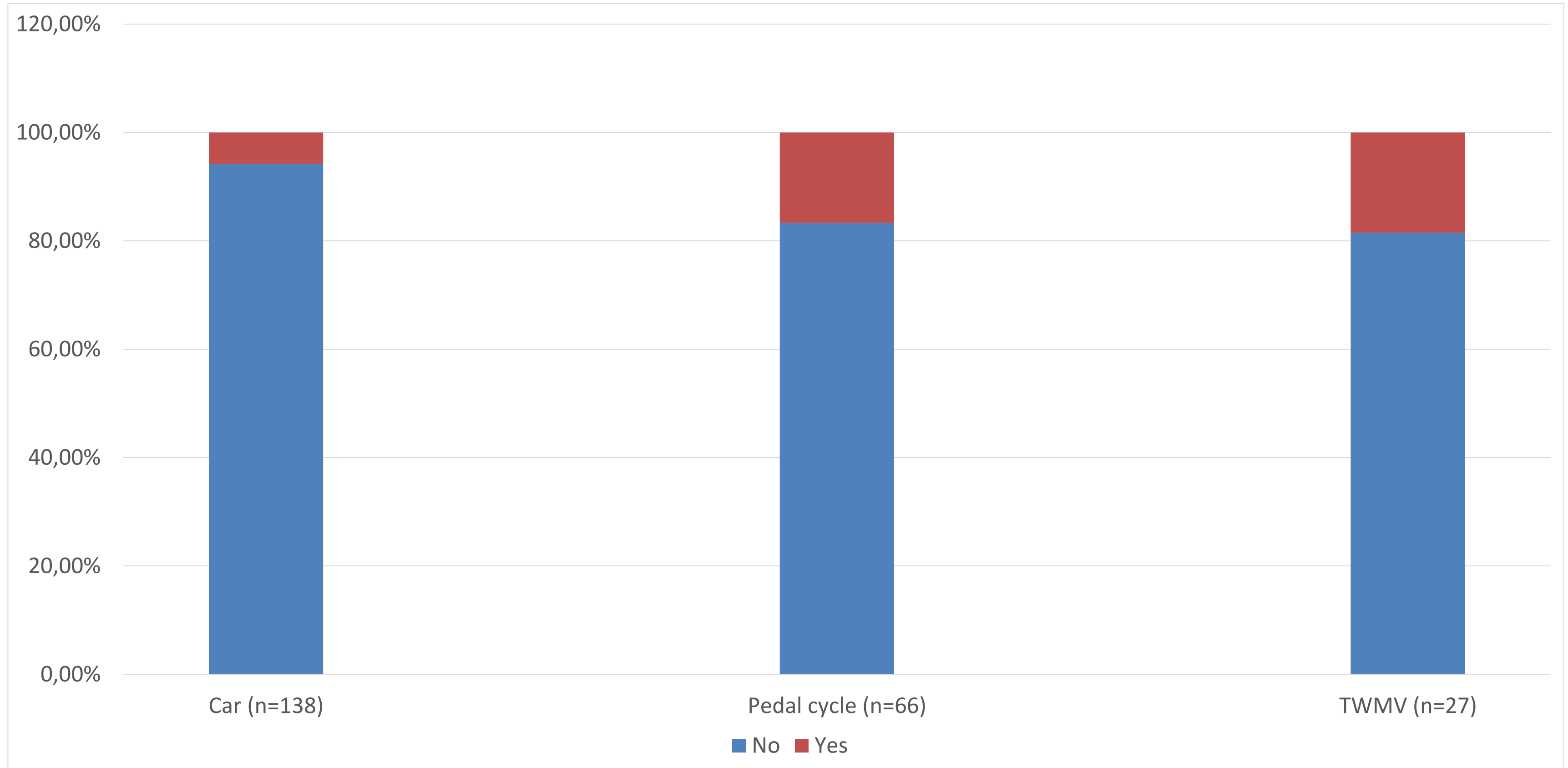
Violations: Speed

% level of agreement with statement "The time pressure of gig work can make you travel over the speed limit" by vehicle used for gig work

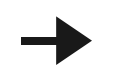
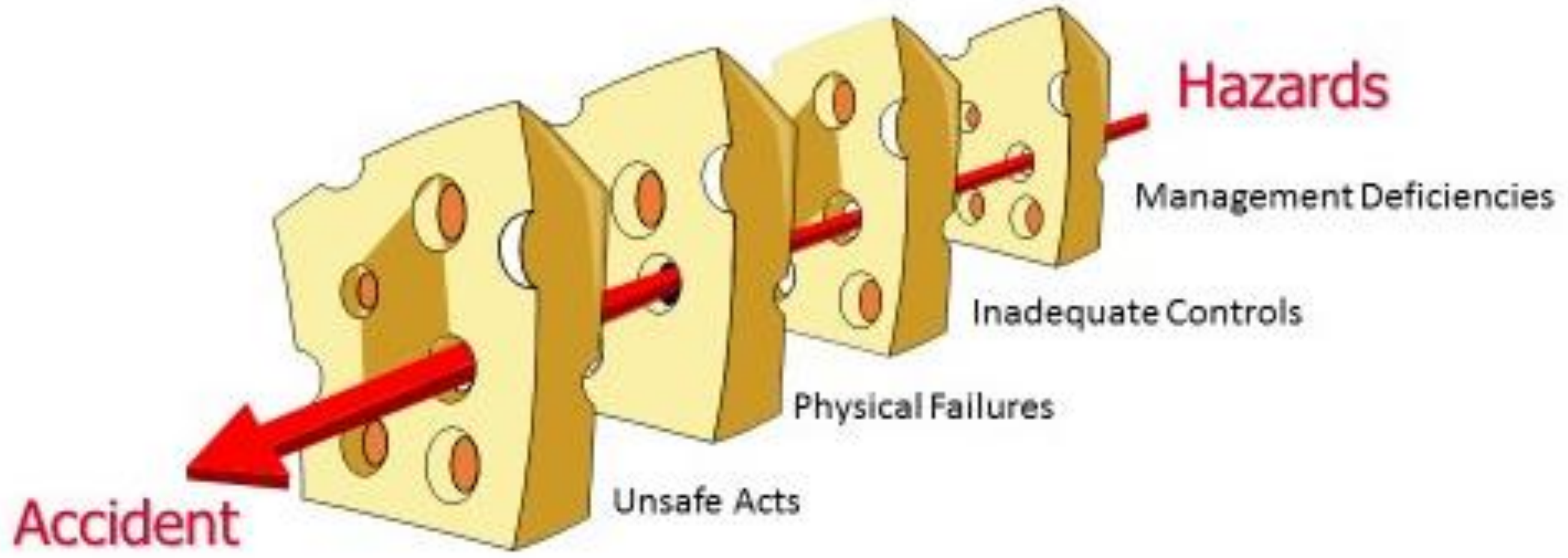


Collisions

% reporting that someone has been injured in a collision they were involved in when driving as a gig worker



James Reason's "Swiss Cheese" Model of Accident Causation (1990)

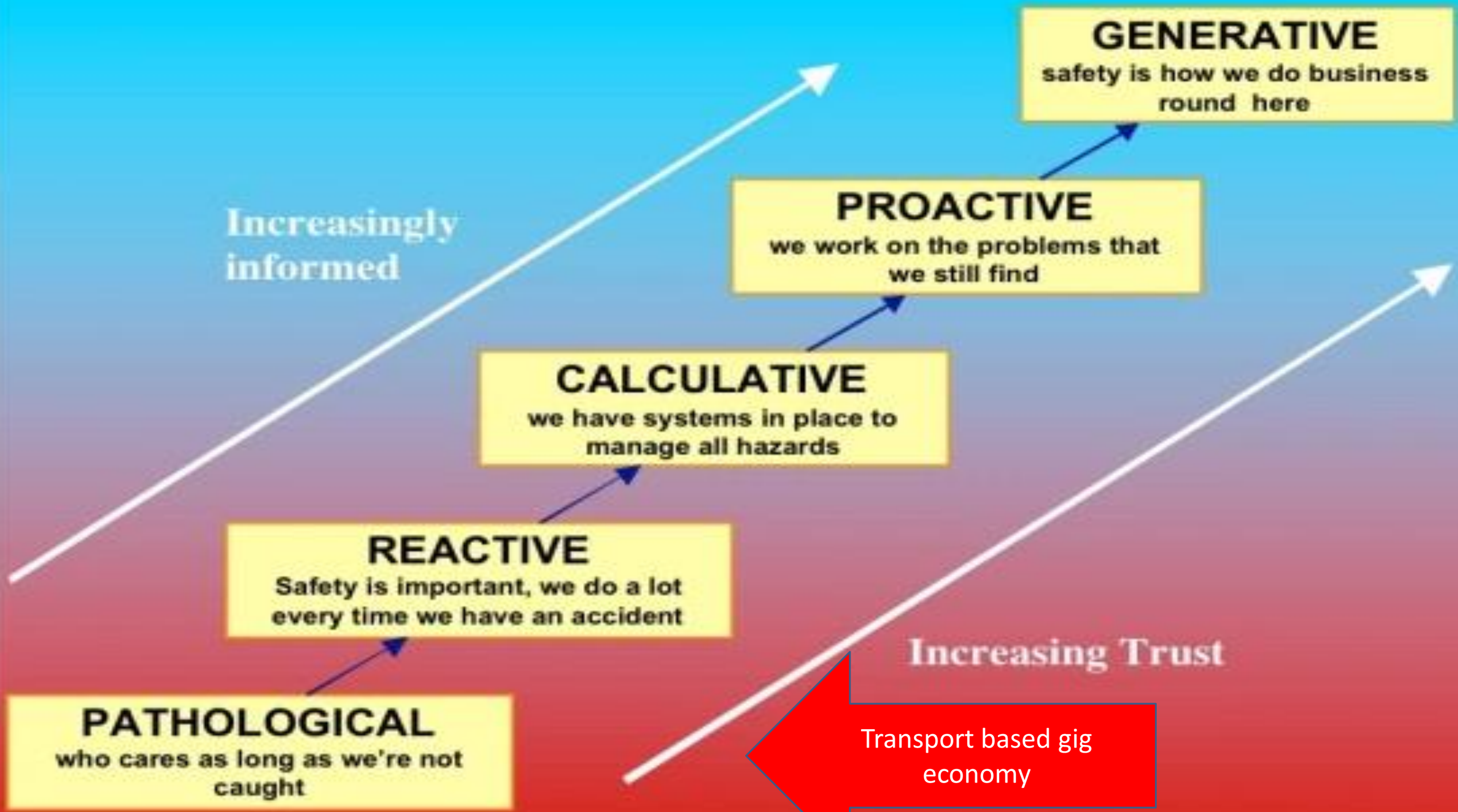


A perfect storm of risk factors?

Latent conditions	Hazards	Unsafe acts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No risk management or training on riskNo manager who caresNo accountabilityTime pressuredSelf-regulated (no control on hours)Incentive/piece rate basedApp based- work via phoneBusy complex urban areasWork for multiple companies - no monitoring of driving hoursIncentivised to work in adverse weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Physical and mental workloadLong hoursPressure to deliver quickly to earn moneyNo risk management or risk trainingDistracting work interfaceAdverse working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Falling asleepViolations: speeding, red light runningDistraction

Collision trajectory







EUROPE.URBANISMNEXT.ORG

URBANISM NEXT EUROPE
2021 

Thank you!

Do you have any question?

Ask Nicola Christie, Nicola.christie@ucl.ac.uk

 [@UrbanismNextEU](https://twitter.com/UrbanismNextEU) [#UNextEU](https://twitter.com/UrbanismNextEU) 