



MTB Rider Survey

Reopening UCI Ranking MTB XCO



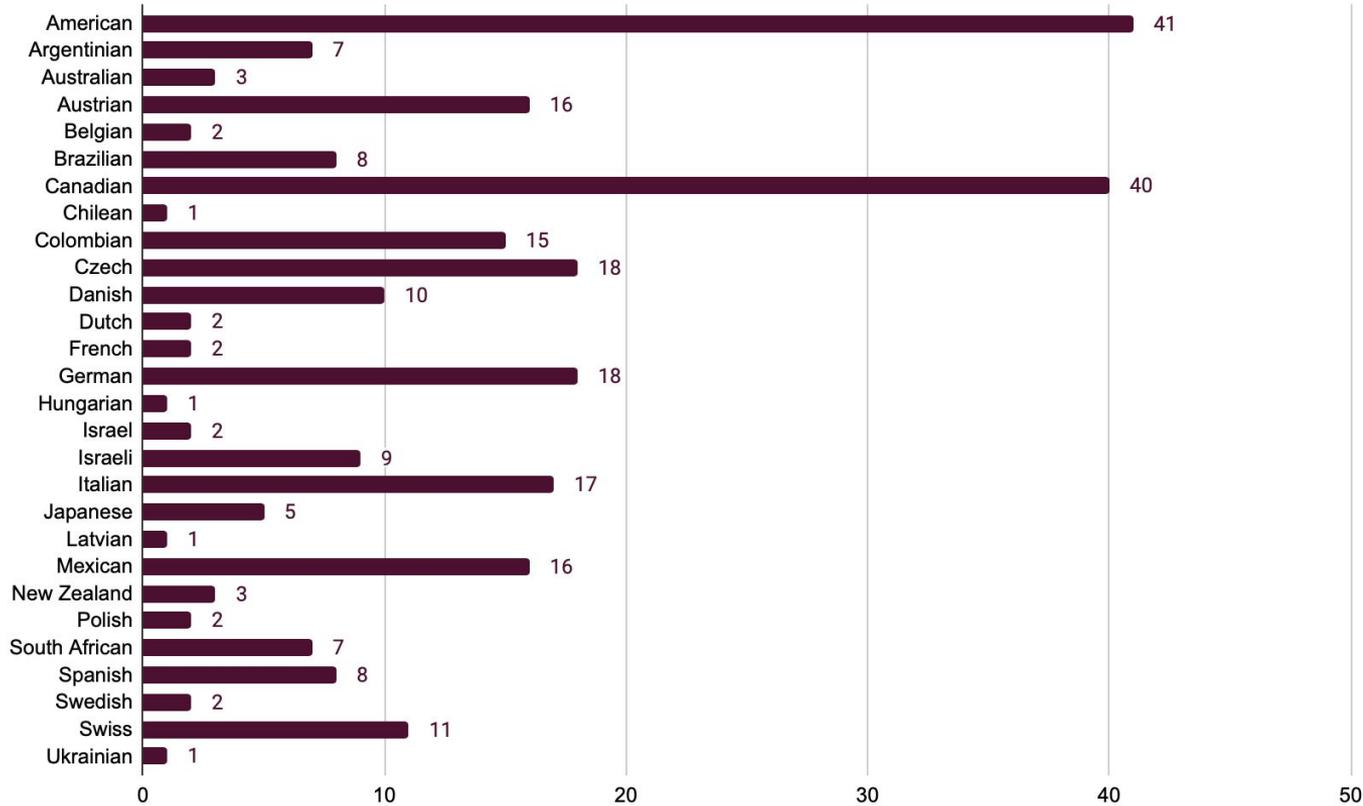
Following a period without racing due to Covid-19, the UCI opened the UCI MTB XCO ranking from July 2020 and onwards. The TCA understands that the communication of the reopening of the ranking has caused a lot of concern and pressure amongst MTB riders. Although the riders were informed that the starting position at the 2020 World Cups and World Championships will be determined by the ranking from 3rd of March 2020, riders are worried about the way the UCI points awarded since July will (or won't) influence start positions at other races and 2021 World Cups.

To give a real reflection of the riders views, the TCA has carried out a survey amongst MTB riders (across male and female riders). This survey was completed by **265 riders from 26 countries** during the period from mid-July until mid-August 2020.

Apart from asking the riders about their opinion on the UCI's decision, the survey focused on the availability of races where a considerable amount of UCI points can be gathered (national and continental championships), the ability to race and travel and the financial impact of Covid on riders.

The following pages, present the results of the survey.

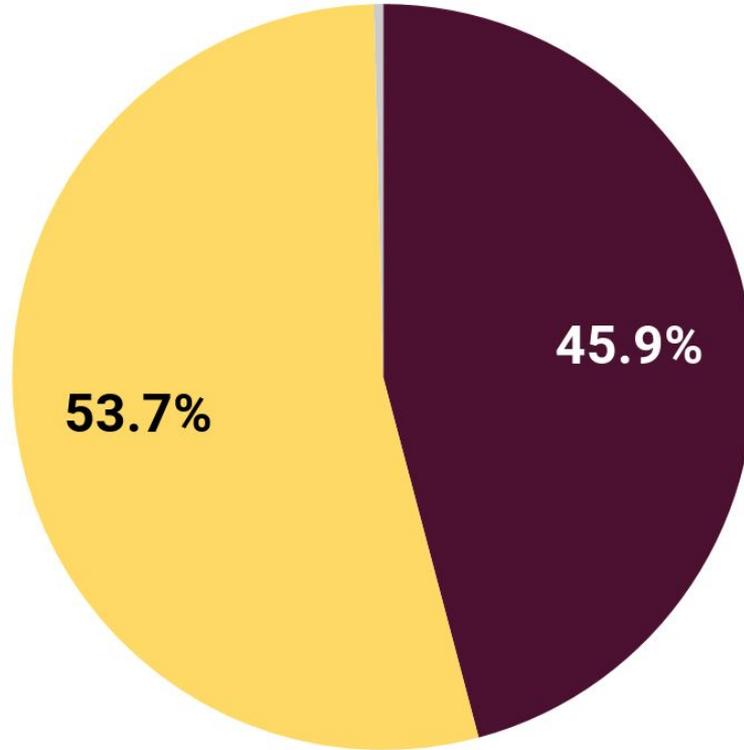
Overview of the surveyed riders - Nationality



Overview of the surveyed riders - Gender



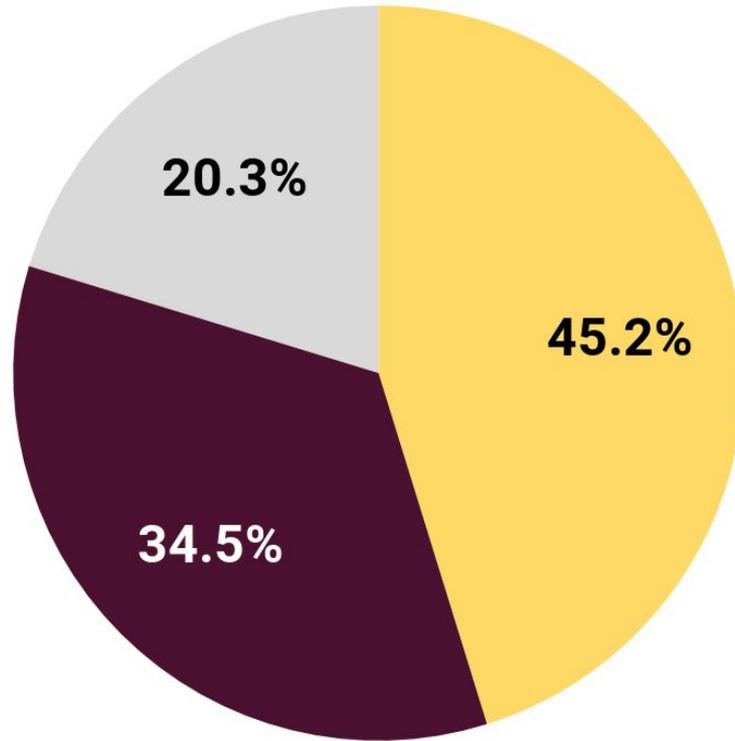
- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say



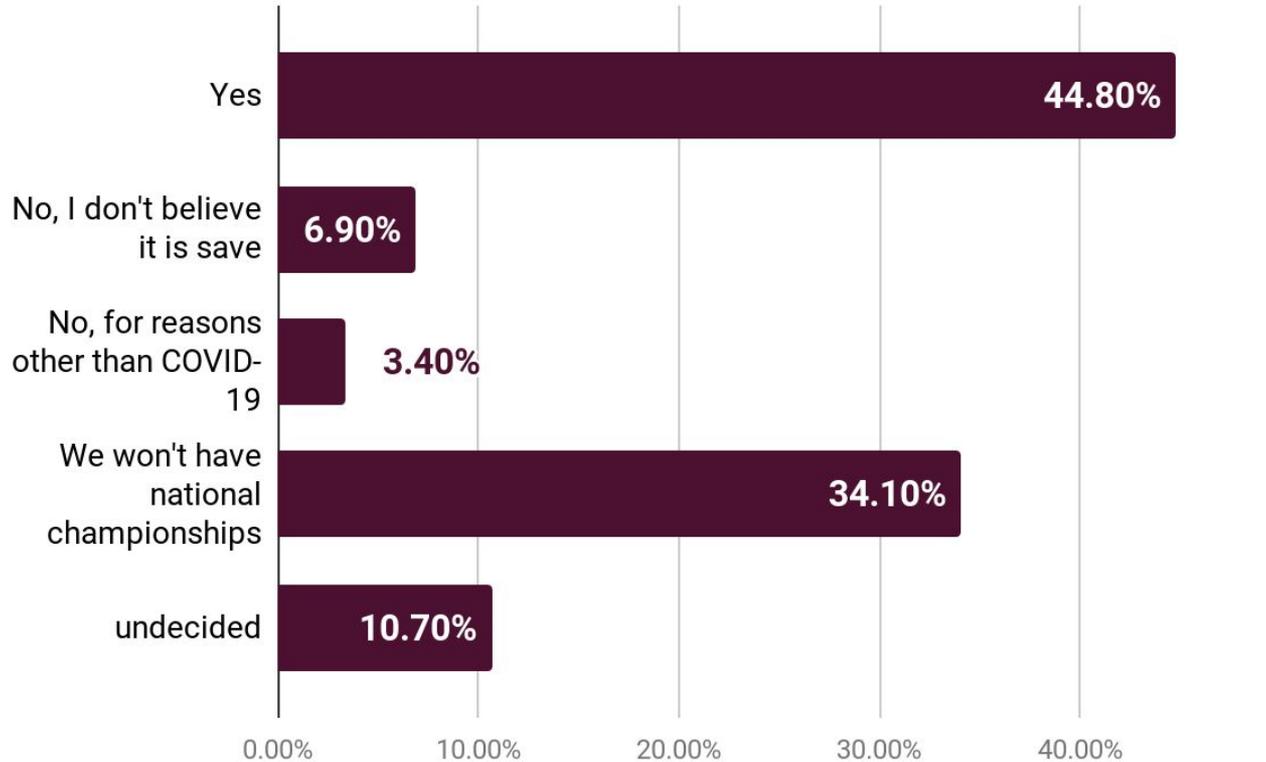
Has or will your nation host a National XCO Championship in 2020?



- Yes
- No
- Unclear



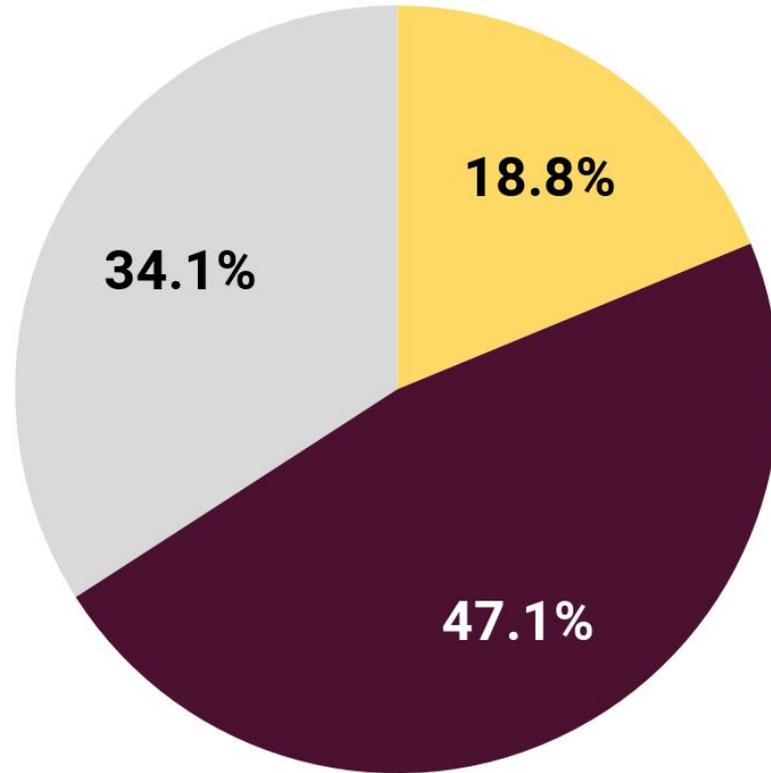
Have or will you take part in your National XCO Championships?



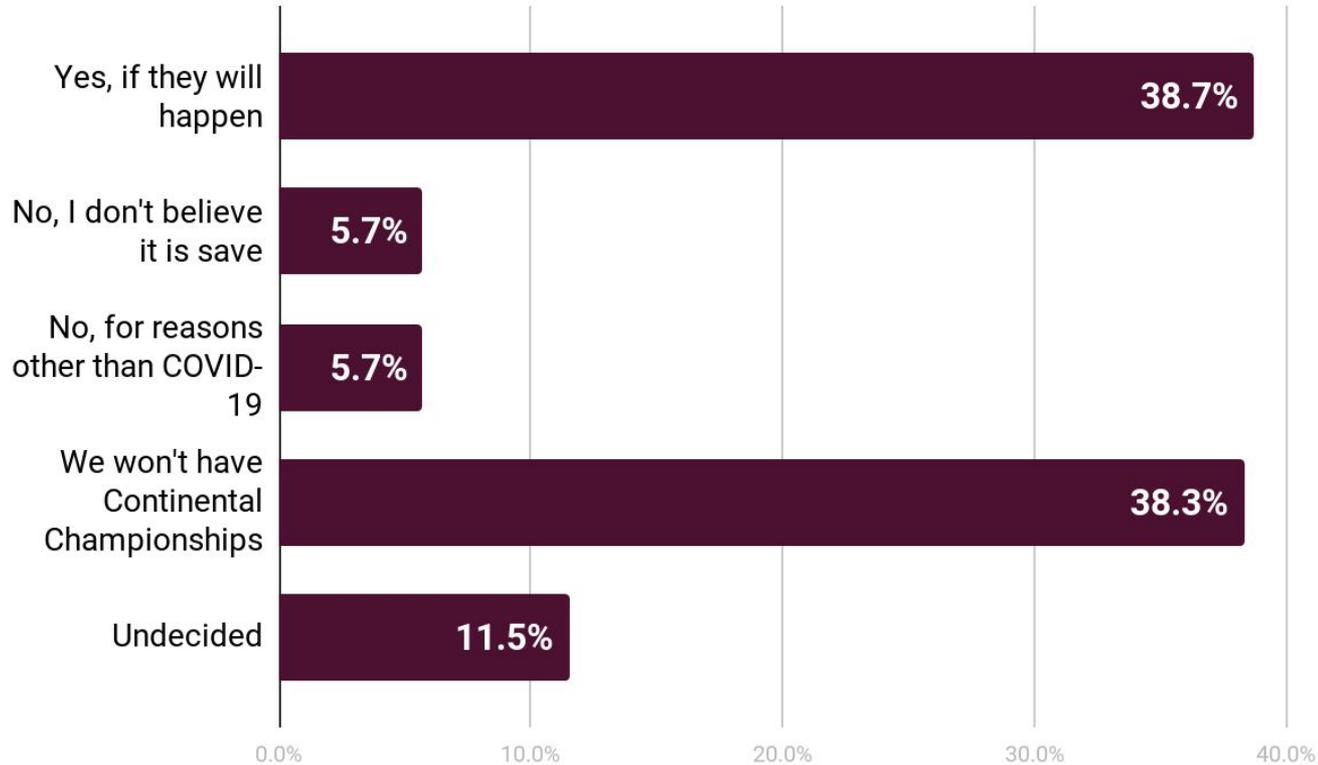
Has or will your continental XCO Championship occur/red in 2020?



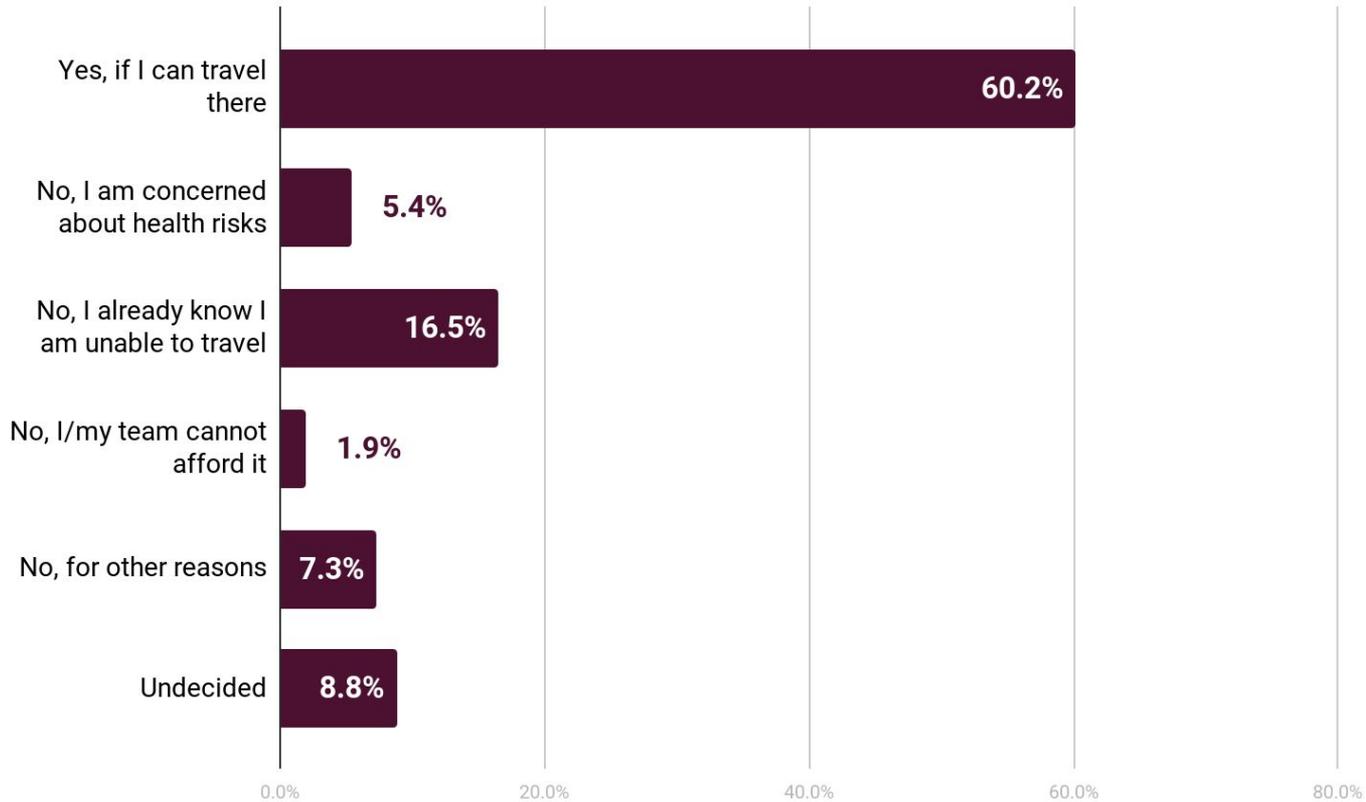
- Yes
- No
- Unclear



Have or will you take part in your Continental XCO Championship?



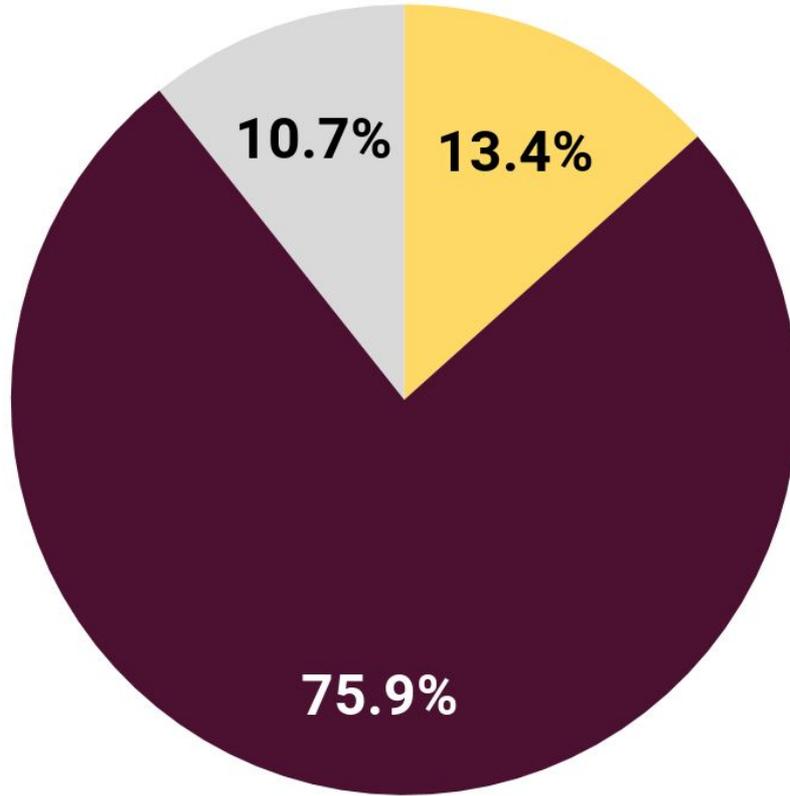
Are you planning to race the two World Cups in Nove Mesto?



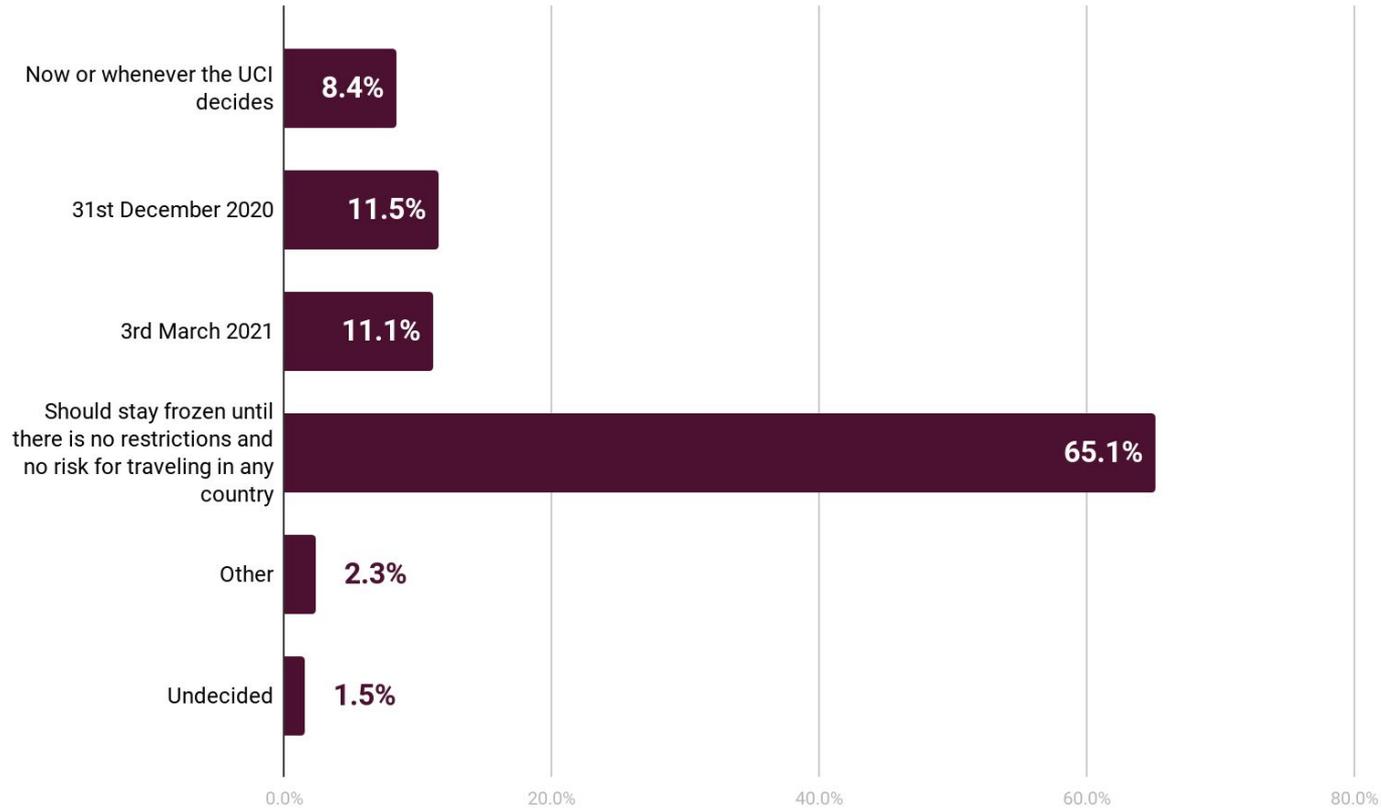
Do you support the UCI's decision to open the UCI ranking per July 2020?



- Yes
- No
- Undecided



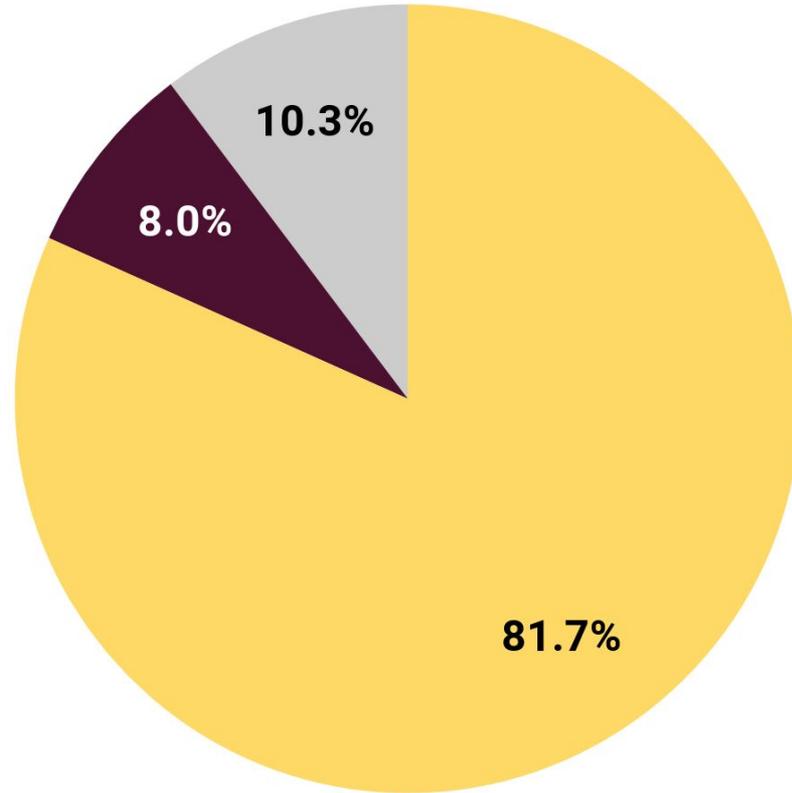
In your opinion, when should the ranking be reopened?



Would you participate in your national XCO Championship even if points remain frozen?



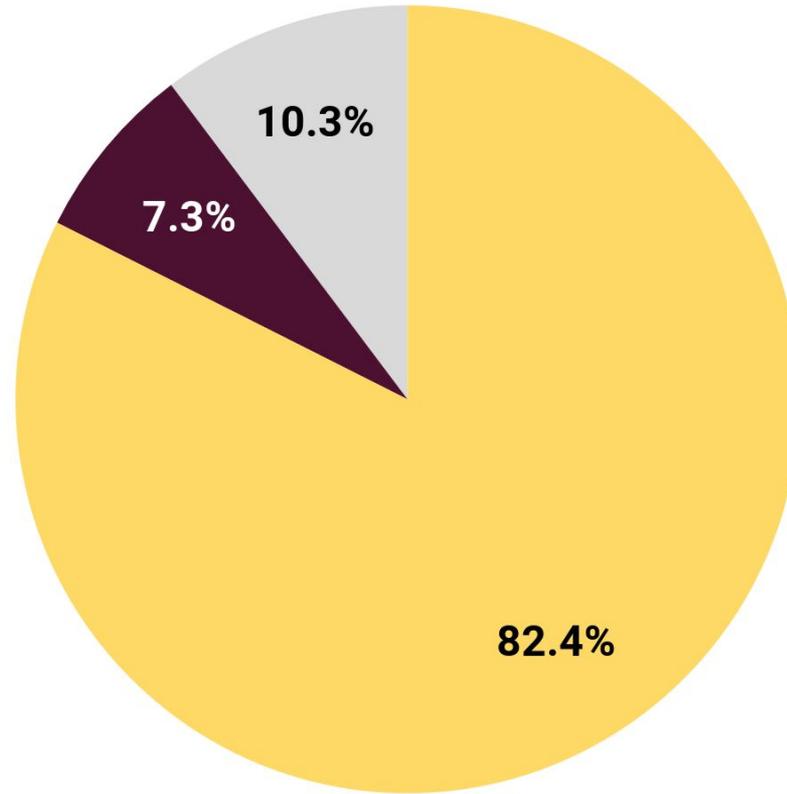
- Yes
- No
- Undecided



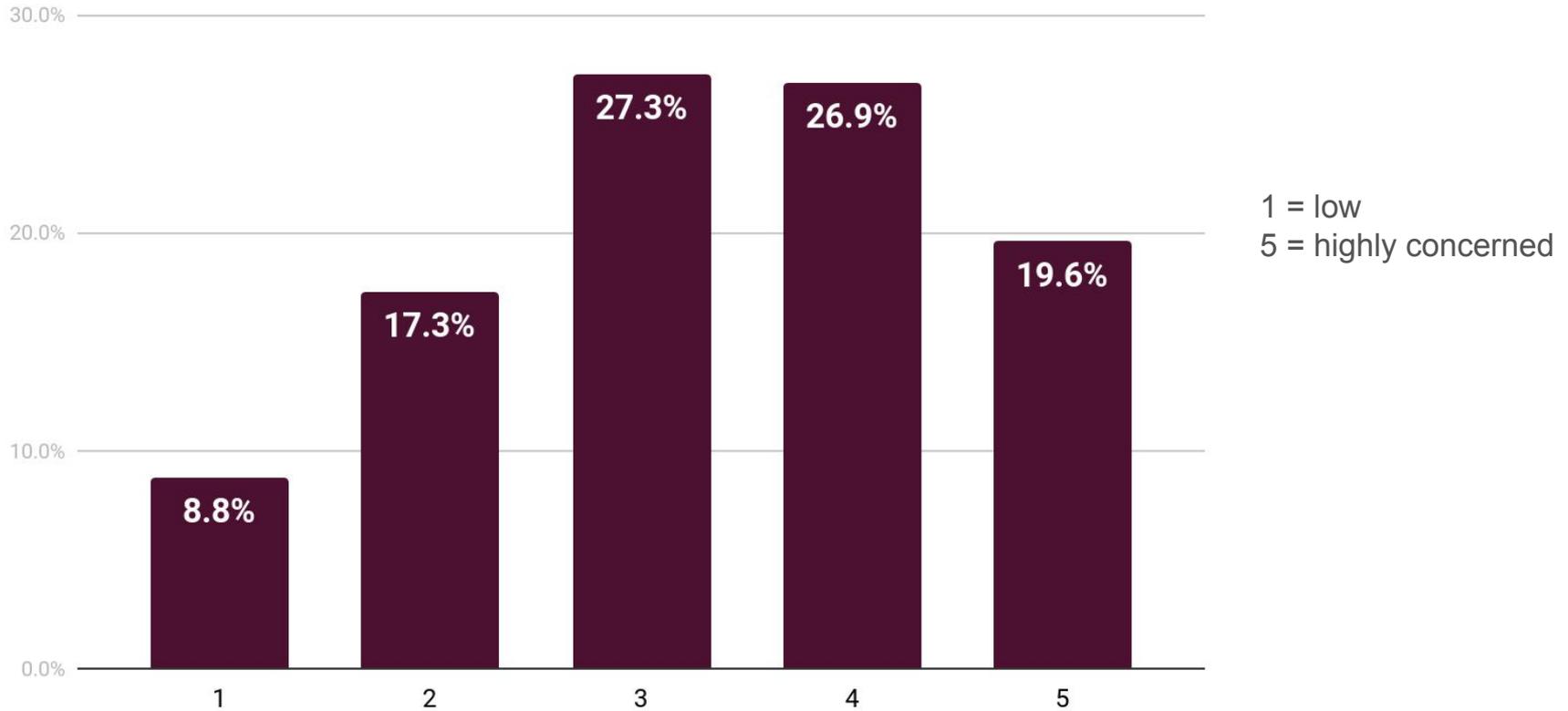
Would you participate in other XCO races even if they don't award any UCI points?



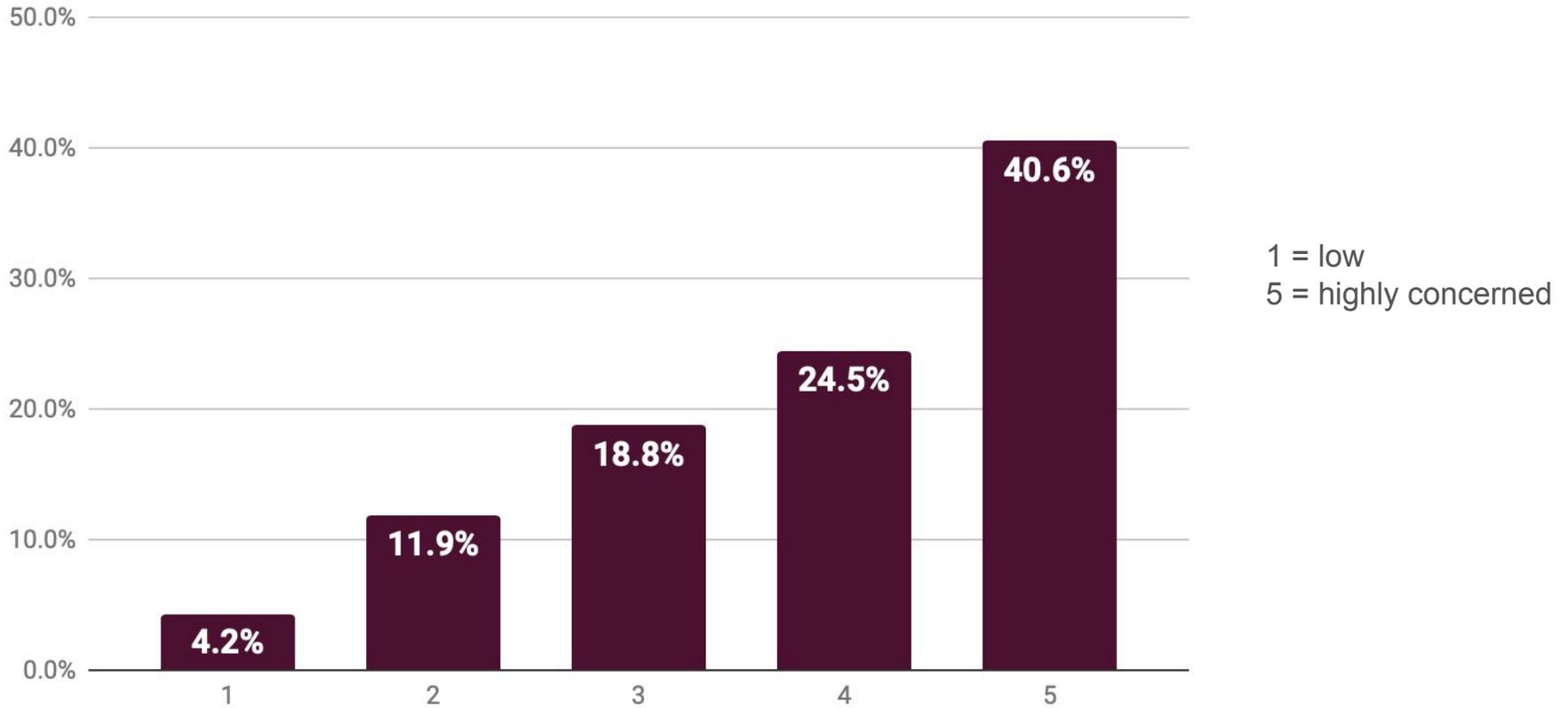
- Yes
- No
- Undecided



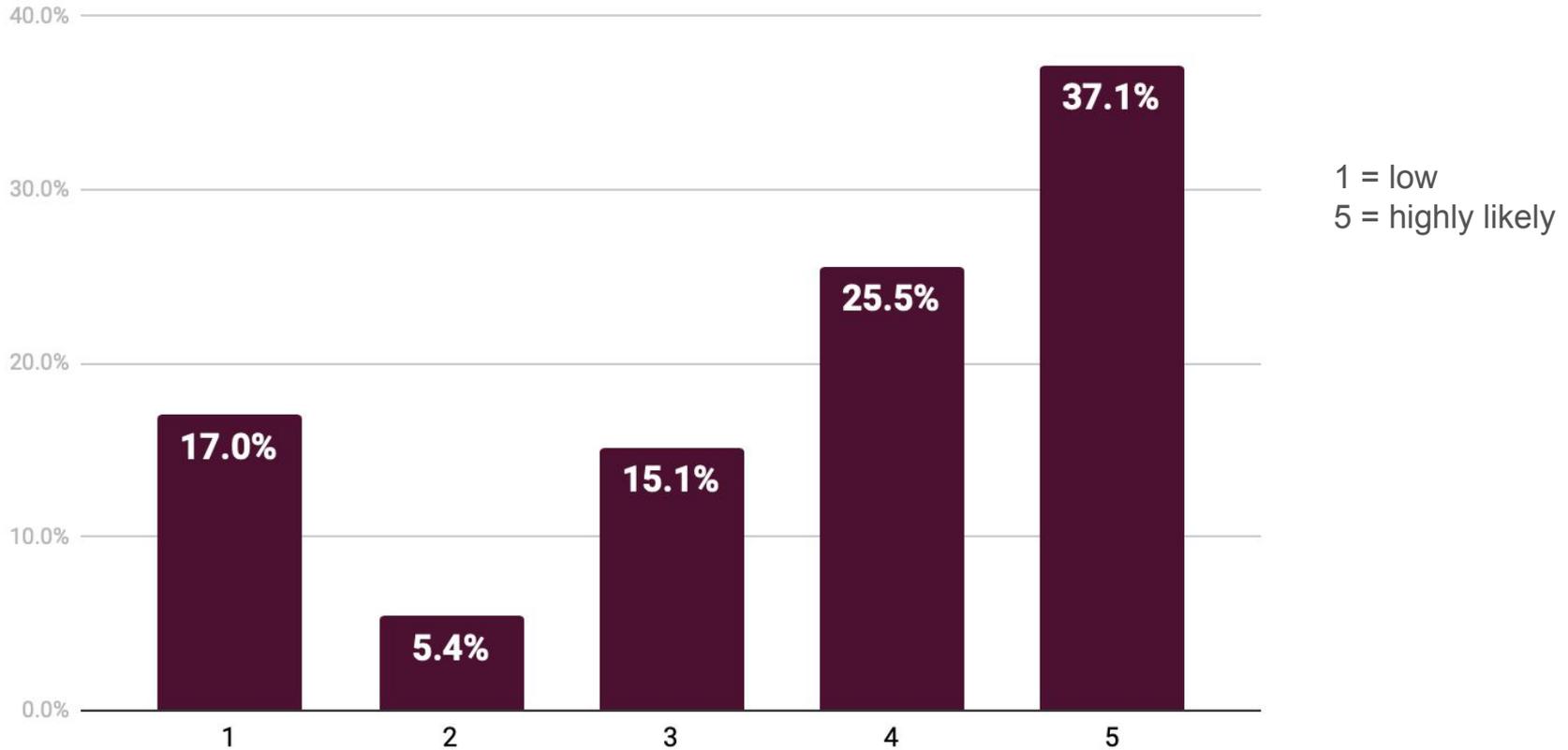
How concerned are you about the COVID-19 risk while traveling for races?



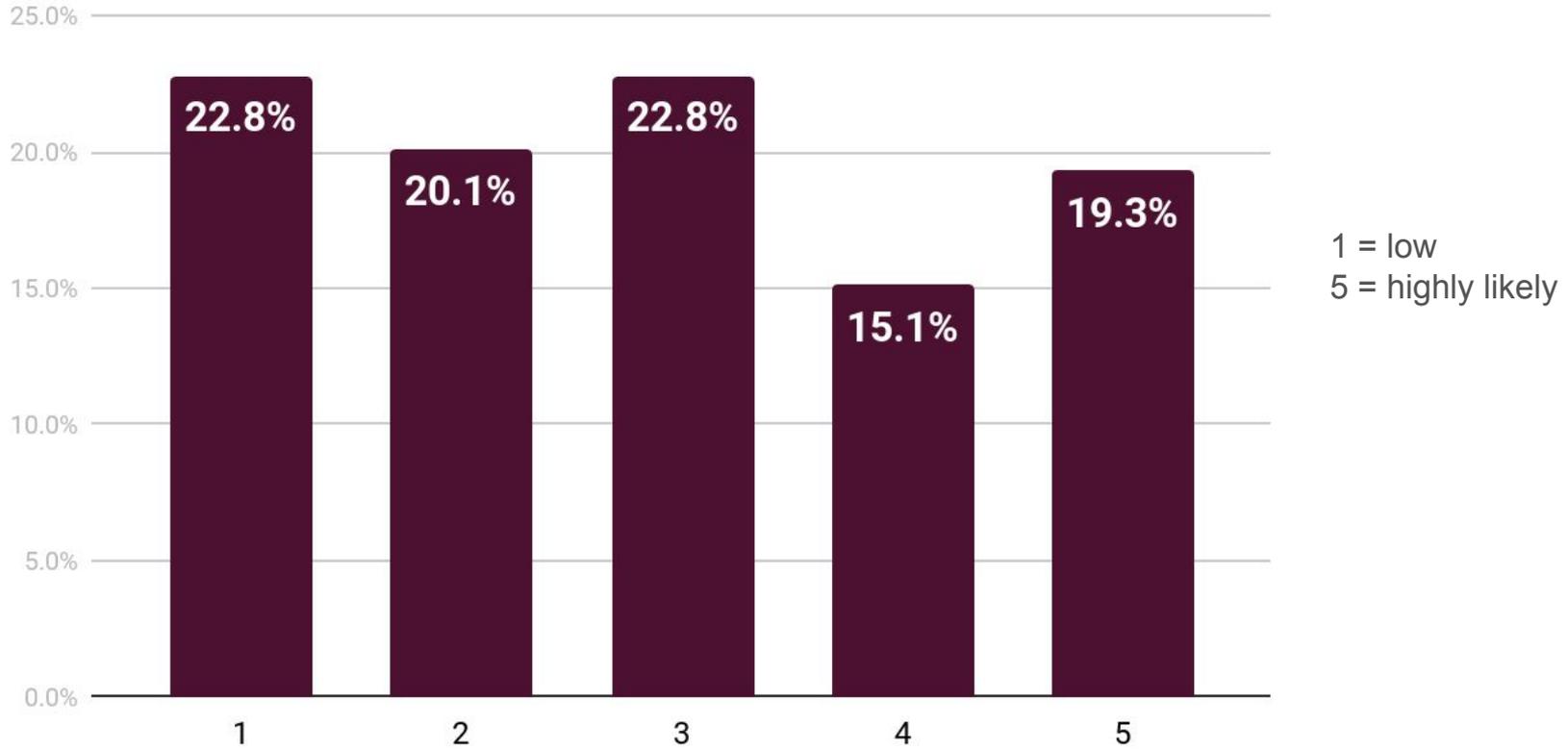
How concerned are you about the risk of being quarantined while traveling for races?



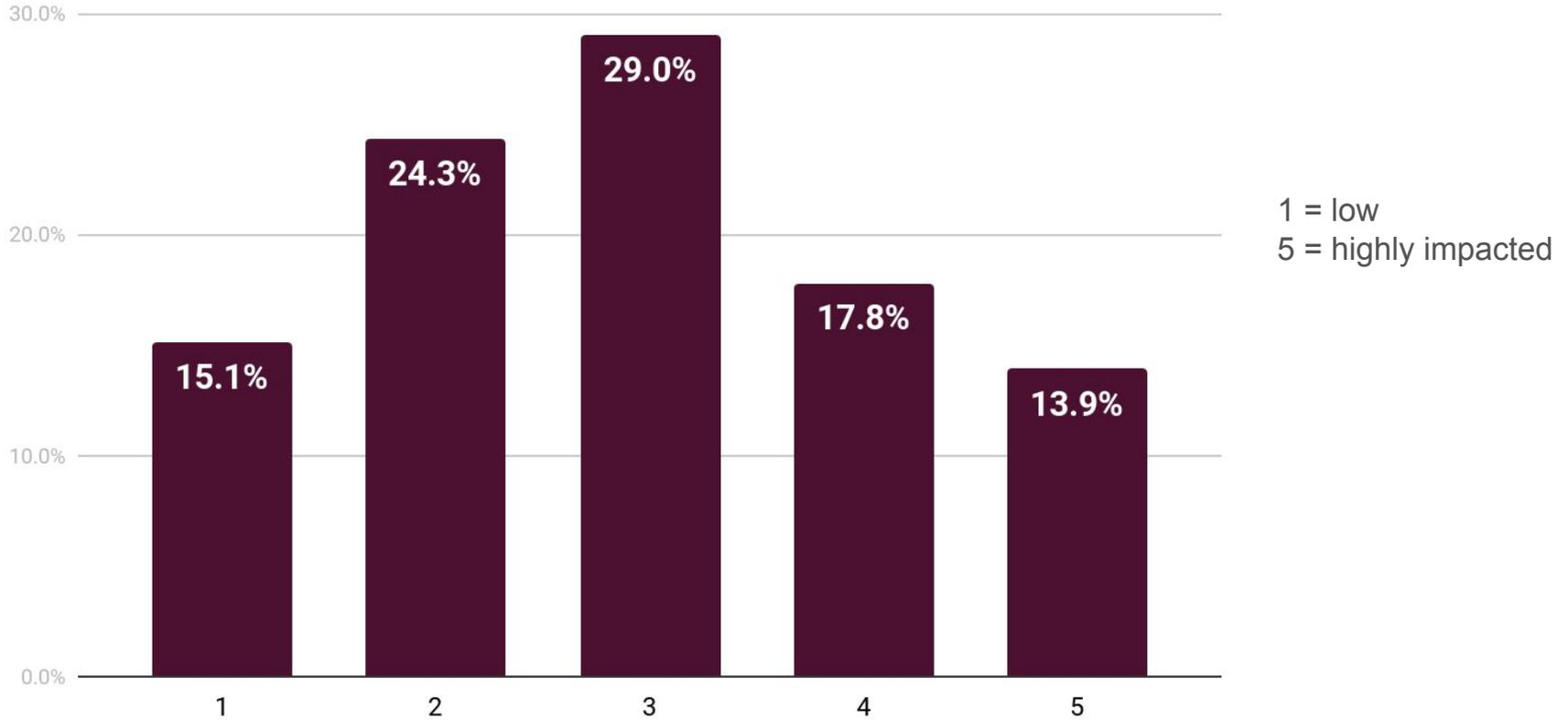
How likely are you to travel for races within your nation?



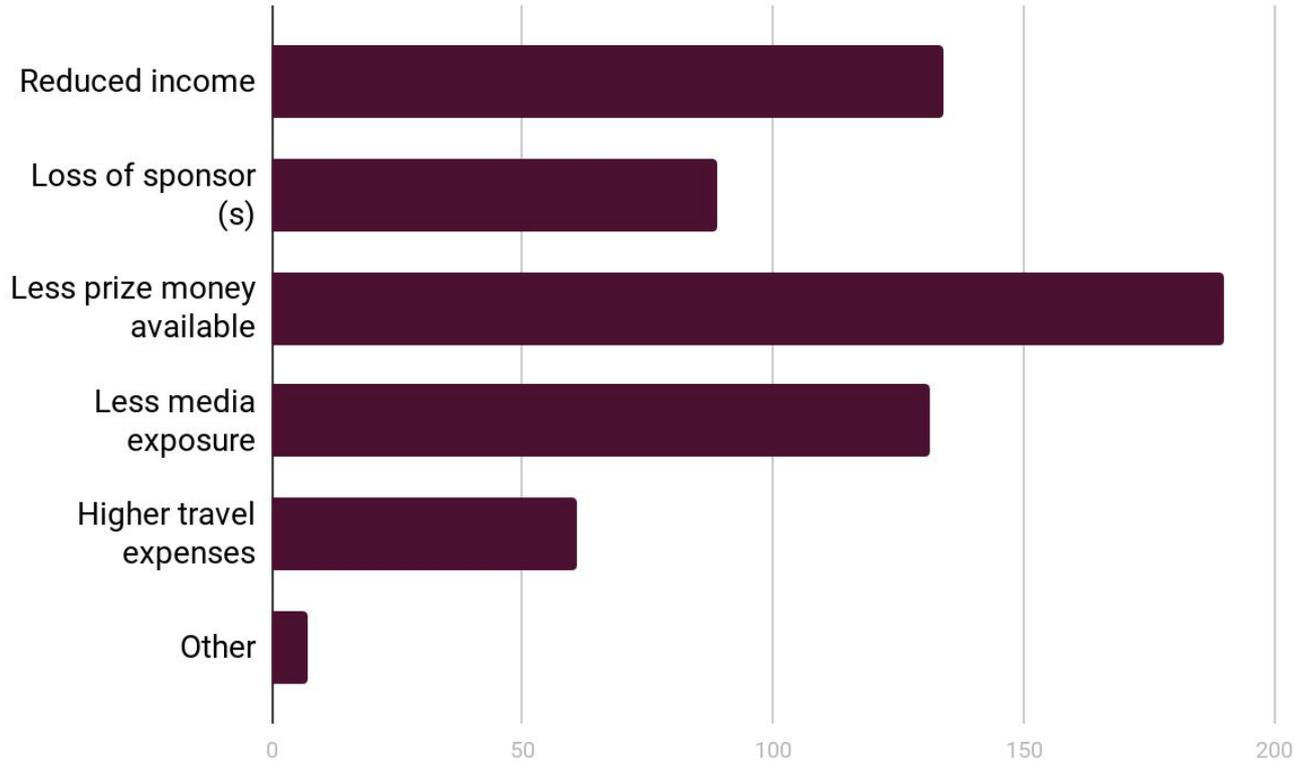
How likely are you to travel internationally for races?



What impact has COVID-19 had on you financially?



How has COVID-19 impacted you financially?



265 responses

Note: Responders could choose one or more of this set of options, therefore no percentages are shown in this chart.



»NZ is in a fortunate position as we have Zero Covid-19 cases currently in the community. Life for me was quite normal back home after we completed our lock-down and returned to zero cases. Because of this favourable situation in NZ this has also meant that European countries have allowed New Zealanders to travel into Europe which I have since done and am currently based in Germany. We were lucky in NZ to have our National and Oceania Continental Champs held already in January but other countries are not so fortunate. I for one will be racing and competing at various races in Europe, Swiss Cups etc with UCI points awarded. I plan to return home after the World Champs in October as my Visa for travel to Europe will be up by that stage. I will have to quarantine for 2 weeks in a Government chosen hotel and it is highly possible I will have to cover the cost of this stay myself by the time I return home. It was certainly not an easy decision for me to leave NZ knowing that I was in a very safe and low risk place at home and also knowing that I will have to Quarantine upon my return. There are still many unknowns as to what the situation will be like when the time comes for me to return home. Even though I am here and will be racing and likely collecting points in 2020 I personally don't agree that points should be awarded until the global Covid-19 situation is much more contained and countries from South America, North America, Asia etc can travel and aren't restricted from hosting UCI races in their own country also.«



»In my opinion the decisions by the UCI are not correct. We as citizens of the World should not be contributing to the pandemic. The UCI is putting pressure on people to travel internationally which is banned, or requires special permission from many countries. It is unethical. We are going to areas which are likely unable to cope with the virus already without additional people coming to the area. The UCI is placing their financial needs over that of the safety of the people around the world, their own staff, race organizers and the riders and teams. It takes a huge number of people to be in one venue travelling from all across the World to host a World Cup or World Championship. We are all desperate to race but unfortunately this is not the safe or responsible decision. The situation in Europe is unstable and unpredictable. The points situation is another situation which we all understand the reasons why this is not fair. The integrity and fairness of our sport is so important and this is being compromised by the current response from the UCI.«

»As my opinion, it's better to reduce the need to travel internationally. Each nation should organize events for the local riders. The UCI should approve X events for each nation.«



»I think a lot of athletes are anxious both about everything surrounding returning to racing (travel risks, health risks), but will feel pressured to race if points are made available again. From a personal standpoint, I feel it's the right thing to do to keep points frozen during this global pandemic. This is something that affects the entire world and in the grand scheme of things, bike racing is very small and should not be the priority -- global health is the priority. If my government advises me not to travel, I feel I should heed that advice. I know every country is in a different position AT THIS POINT IN TIME, but each place has been affected and could be affected once again at any given moment. What I'm struggling with -- and from my conversations with other athletes they are also struggling with -- is the constant uncertainty. So if the UCI could help make even one more thing certain (ie. points will remain frozen at least for the rest of 2020), then I feel that will take some anxiety away from riders.«

»The current Covid situation in almost every country outside of Europe is worsening. The USA won't have any UCI races for the rest of the year because of the worsening pandemic. Canada has cancelled all UCI races. All of South America is in no condition to host races even though many top ranked racers are present there. By reopening points, the UCI is encouraging many to travel internationally (to Europe) in a time where traveling internationally may only worsen the pandemic and drag it out longer across the whole world.«



»By re-opening the ranking, UCI is disrespecting the equality, fairness, fair-play. By reopening the ranking, it creates a double advantage for those that can race because their ranking moves forward easier because less peoples are racing for the points and showing at races while others are simply losing their points and ranking. Also, I travelled to California for the us cups that were cancelled, waste of money, and scared to travel to more races that might be cancelled last minute with the financial lost to be assumed be the athlete or it's sponsors. Being pressured to travel and race is putting us at risk as well as anyone we are around, ultimately we are not doing the best job to keep our country safe.«

»The UCI should keep the ranking frozen until all countries can compete again.«

»In Argentina it is complicatted right now to move between cities and more even between provinces. we are not allowed to travel abroad. No news about National or Continental Championships.«



»By re-opening the ranking, UCI is disrespecting the equality, fairness, fair-play. By reopening the ranking, it creates a double advantage for those that can race because their ranking moves forward easier because less peoples are racing for the points and showing at races while others are simply losing their points and ranking. Also, I travelled to California for the us cups that were cancelled, waste of money, and scared to travel to more races that might be cancelled last minute with the financial lost to be assumed be the athlete or it's sponsors. Being pressured to travel and race is putting us at risk as well as anyone we are around, ultimately we are not doing the best job to keep our country safe.«

»With races in Europe it puts pressure on me to want to travel even with the high costs and covid 19 risks. Especially when uci points are awarded. I have little support as a privateer so makes for a tricky decision. My other concern is travelling to Europe with the uncertainty of more races being cancelled when I get there. Is there a confirmed race calendar of the remaining races that are not canceled eg Cat 1 races?«



»I think the decision by the UCI to open the points is totally irresponsible and shows lack of concern for riders wellbeing. No one should be punished more due to the Pandemic, Riders will still race weather there are points on offer or not. It needs to be fair for ALL countries.«

»But I thought that the UCI points given in the next couple of months, are not actually 'real'. We will start the world cups + world champs + the first worldcup next year after 3 March 2020??«

»We are all in the same boat this is a world wide pandemic. We need to think of safety and then fairness. I feel it's unfair to re-open ranking when half the world is still stuck in lockdown and can not even travel within their own country let alone to Europe.«

»I would like to know at least 1 month if world cup/ world champ is going to happen. Or I would almost prefer a white year at this point and already know that those World cup/world champ are not going to happen.«



»The two (2), 2020 UCI World Cup Races Nove Mesto and the 2020 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS in Austria should be canceled due to the COVID19 Pandemic.«

»Estoy muy perjudicado con el sueldo y las carreras y los gastos continúan casi igual tengo mi familia que depende de mi.«

Google Translate: *»I am very damaged with the salary and the careers and the expenses continue almost the same I have my family that depends on me.«*

»I would say that it's unfair that some countries can't travel and make races. For me the ranking is very important towards the olympic games and due to the pandemic almost all the international races in israel are cancelled. So if at the end i won't make it because lack of points i would say it's not fair.

On the other hand im trying now to get to europe for the big races so if the UCI plans on changing it's last statement about the ranking i would say it should happen asap because people like me invests a lot of money on this travel to europe these days.«



»I think it is important to take into account the athlete's position on the matter of opening up the UCI ranking. Thanks very much for putting together this survey to address this issue. We are living in an unprecedented time and there is no perfect solution to everything we are working through, but if we work together to keep our sport functioning together we have the potential to come out of this challenge stronger than before. I believe there is sufficient motivation to race without UCI points and rankings on the line. We want to race but we want to do so in a responsible and ethical way because the challenge of COVID is much larger than bike racing.«

»If the UCI is to open up the points ranking again, I think they should create a fair atmosphere, creating races in the countries that can not travel or get to any UCI races, so that there is a fair spread of points available to all racers.«

»Necessitando de visto para entrada na Europa, já que o ranking está em andamento.«

Google Translate: *»Needing a visa to enter Europe, as the ranking is in progress.«*



More than a third of riders have not had or will not have NATIONAL championships in 2020 while for 20% it is still unclear.

47% of riders have not had or will not have a CONTINENTAL championship in 2020 while for 34% it is still unclear.

Overall we can conclude that a clear majority of riders are willing to race (abroad) if they are able to travel and if races are organized even if there are no UCI points awarded at the races.

The majority of riders is at least somewhat concerned about the COVID-19 risk and 40.6% is highly concerned about the risk of being quarantined while traveling for races.

76% does not support the UCI's decision to award UCI points per July 2020.

65% thinks the rankings should stay frozen until all global restrictions are lifted and there are no travel restrictions and documented COVID-19 risks in any country.



To relief riders from the pressure to travel and give all MTB riders a fair competition and opportunity to gather UCI points in preparation of Tokyo Olympics, the TCA, on behalf of the survey participants, urgently asks to reconsider the opening of the UCI ranking.

Contact

Ariane Lüthi
arianeluthi@gmail.com
TCA rider representative
