KINTO Join's 2025 'Ireland on the Move' Report

Gauging commuter journeys, preferences, experiences and challenges across Ireland.

Key Findings

- Driving by car **(51%)** is the most popular primary mode of transport for commuting in Ireland
- **91%** of those that commute by car are always/mostly driving alone
- Average cost on commute per day is **€10**
- Biggest frustration with current commute revealed to be traffic delays/congestion
- **45%** find their commute stressful
- **71%** would prioritise an employer/ university that provided a free or low-cost shuttle bus from their locality to your place of work
- **65%** are more likely to stay in a job with more favourable commuting options including shuttle services, etc.
- **39%** believe their university/workplace has a responsibility to take action to meet sustainability goals and regulations
- **36%** believe educational institutes/ employers should incentivize employees to travel more sustainably

Foreword – Patrizia Niehaus, CEO

Time-poor. Environmentally-conscious. Digitally-savvy. These are all words that spring to mind when we think about the generations that are coming through universities and workplaces today. However, in contrast to the forward-thinking outlook of modern consumers, it could be argued that the commuting landscape in Ireland is somewhat inefficient, unsustainable and unsupported.

To truly gauge commuter journeys, preferences, experiences and challenges, we commissioned research by Censuswide to survey 1,000 people who commute to work or university in Ireland. In addition to highlighting trends and patterns, it indicated a desire for more communal and sustainable ways of travel.

As well as suggesting that many people are not travelling how they would like – constrained by a lack choice, services and infrastructure – it also indicated that the commute plays a major role in career decisions. In other words, the commute is highly influential when it comes to the choices people are making, not to mention the impacts we are having on the planet.

However, with education and incentivisation, micro-level actions could have a large-scale impact in this area. It could take the desire of commuters for alternative modes of transport and turn it into widespread behavioural change across entire communities.

Commuters have a pivotal role to play, but so too do organisations, including businesses and educational institutes. Support needs to be provided to educate people on the commuting options available to them and to encourage engagement with same.

Alongside the awareness piece, there is also an implementation piece. Whilst large-scale infrastructure upgrades will take time and investment, having the means to identify and avail of alternative modes of transport at the touch of a button via an app could be transformative today. Similarly, company shuttles bringing teams to work and reward schemes acknowledging the responsible decisions of students could be highly influential.

Given the cost-of-living crisis and the hybrid working model, it is imperative that commuters are equipped with the knowledge, flexibility and capability of choosing more sustainable travel.

In turn, both people and organisations can be on their way to a more communal, more sustainable approach to commuting.Not only does this help people, but it also makes sense in terms of environmental reporting and CSRD regulation for businesses. It can position organisations as leaders and make them stand from the competition, thus enabling them to better attract and retain the best people, not to mention the perks of having a more satisfied, productive workforce or student body.

If organisations take the lead, they can support their own sustainability objectives and empower people to make more sustainable decisions. In turn, we can all help Ireland take a step closer to fulfilling its environmental targets and put us on a path to a better planet.

The modern consumer & modes of transport

The modern consumer is an avid user of technology, values their time, cares about the planet, and seeks convenience and flexibility. Undoubtedly, this is having an impact on their choice of and preference for modes of transport when it comes to commuting.

However, such choices and preferences are also impacted by external factors. From the location of their workplace or university and the expectations of their employer or tutor to the infrastructure in their area and the cost of public transport services, it's not a straightforward decision.

The bottom line is that there are numerous elements that factor into the means by which commuters get to where they need to go. So then, how are people getting to work and university in Ireland?

Our research found that driving by car was the most popular primary mode of transport for commuters – with more than half (51%) getting around by getting behind the wheel.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a much larger proportion of Gen X respondents drive by car when compared to Gen Z respondents – 63% compared to 32%. Of those who commute by car, 91% always or mostly commute by car alone.

Therefore, not only are a large proportion of people choosing to drive a car as their main mode of transport, it appears that people are largely driving solo which means more vehicles, more congestion, and more emissions.

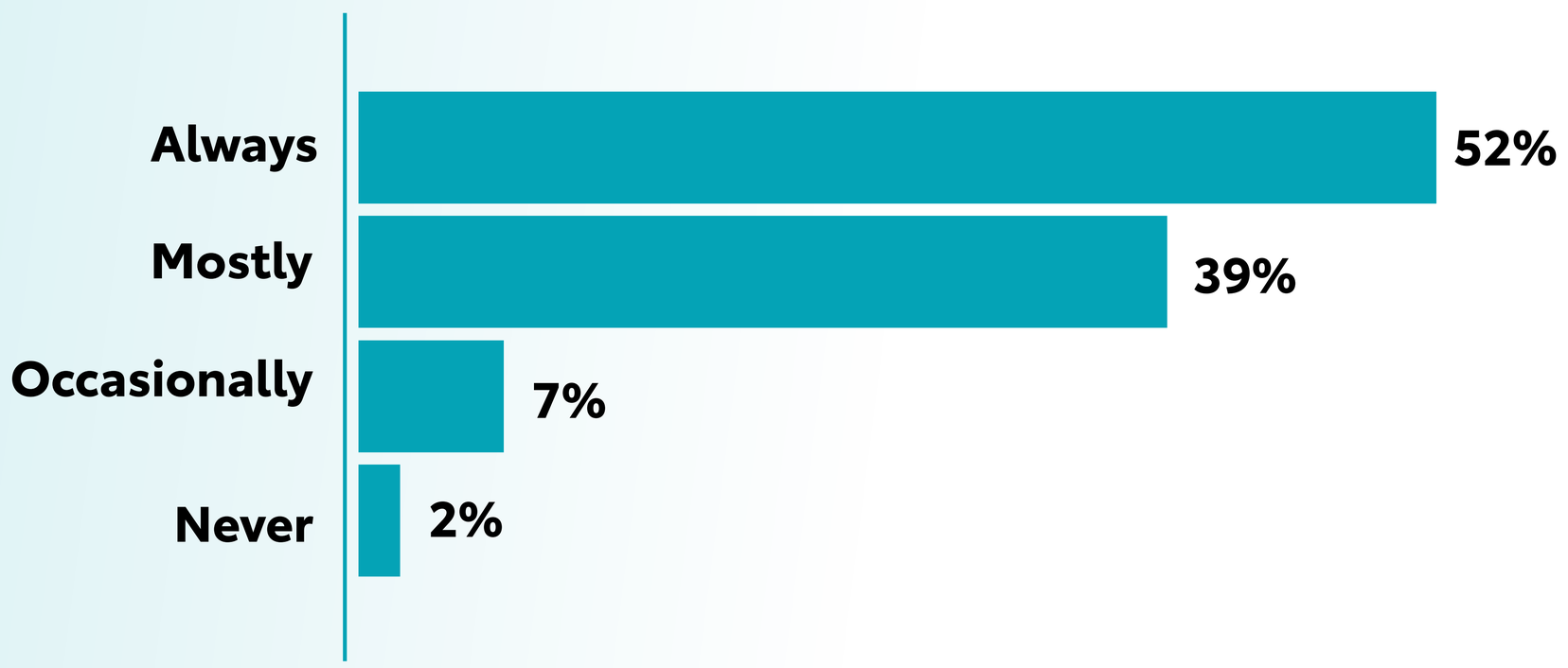
Driving by car (51%) was followed by bus (20%) and then walking (9%) in terms of the most used primary modes of transport among commuters. Bus was found to be the most popular primary mode of transport among those who live in urban areas (at 32%) – tied with driving by car (also 32%).

The top reasons among those who drive to work or university are that it's more time-efficient (48%), it's the only option (43%), and there is inadequate access to public transport (34%). Meanwhile, bus commuters opted for that option because it's cheaper (50%), it's the only option (34%), and it's more sustainable (27%). As for walkers, they were motivated by it being cheaper (47%), more sustainable (30%), and the only option (26%). Evidently, choice is not something that a lot of commuters in Ireland have, with many indicating that their mode of transport is their "only option".

It may also be supported by the fact that 48% have never tried a different mode of transport for their commute. Furthermore, among all respondents, the leading driving factor for their primary mode of transport was time efficiency (40%), highlighting that people are keen to minimise the time spent on journeys to work or university. Arguably, this may also indicate that people want to be as efficient and productive with their time as possible – which means less time spent getting places and more time actually doing things.

Bus was the most preferred mode of transport, with 25% revealing they would travel by this means if it was available. It was closely followed by train (24%) and walking (23%), however one in ten (10%) said they would prefer to commute via company/university shuttle.
Perhaps revealing the dissatisfaction with the choice of current commuting methods, more than half (51%) have considered changing their commute method. This is not ideal for the modern consumer who seeks convenience and flexibility. It also begs the question as to what impact commuting is really having on people.

The modern consumer & modes of transport



Have you ever considered changing your commute method?

Travel taking its toll

Whether they travel by car, bus or foot, commuting is a big part of people's daily or weekly lives. There are those who have personal responsibilities which could see them travelling a long way to their destination. Then there are others who may have to spend more on their journey to have the job or do the course they want. Whatever the reason, the commute is a necessary part of life for most people. Turning then to what the average commute looks like, our research found that commuters in Ireland are travelling (on average) a distance of just under 17km for a one-way trip, with Gen X revealed to have the longest commute (at 18.3km). In terms of the counties where the average commute is longest, these were found to be Roscommon (30.56km), Wicklow (24.97km) and Westmeath (23.76km). Meanwhile, the counties where the average commute was shortest were Longford (6.13km), Waterford (9.58km) and Donegal (11km).

Unsurprisingly, these findings were similarly reflected in the average commuting time – which was estimated to be just over 35 minutes one way (1 hour and 10 minutes per day). The counties with the longest commute were Roscommon (approx. 66 mins), Monaghan (approx. 64 mins) and Wicklow (approx. 43 mins). On the other end of the spectrum, the shortest commute times were among respondents in Waterford (approx. 21 mins), Donegal (approx. 21 mins) and Longford (approx. 22.5 mins).

Those who commute by train have the longest average commute (approx. 55 mins), whilst eBike commuters spend the least time on their journeys (approx. 18 mins).

When it comes to commuting costs, the average cost per day came in at €10. The counties where people's commutes are the most expensive were Roscommon (€22.17), Kilkenny (€15.50) and Wicklow (€15.18).

Those in Westmeath (€4.96), Donegal (6.54) and Longford (€6.63) are spending the least on their commutes across the country.

As with the distance, those who travel by train have the most expensive journey, coming in at €13.14, with eBike commuters having the least expensive commute (€4.71) – not including walkers.

Of course, commuters will always have to travel distances, invest time and spend money on their journeys to and from work or university. However, these findings do reveal that there are perhaps areas across Ireland where public transport isn't as accessible or available. It may also highlight that certain workforces or student bodies are losing a significant amount of time per week just getting to where they need to go, therefore potentially impacting their satisfaction and productivity levels.

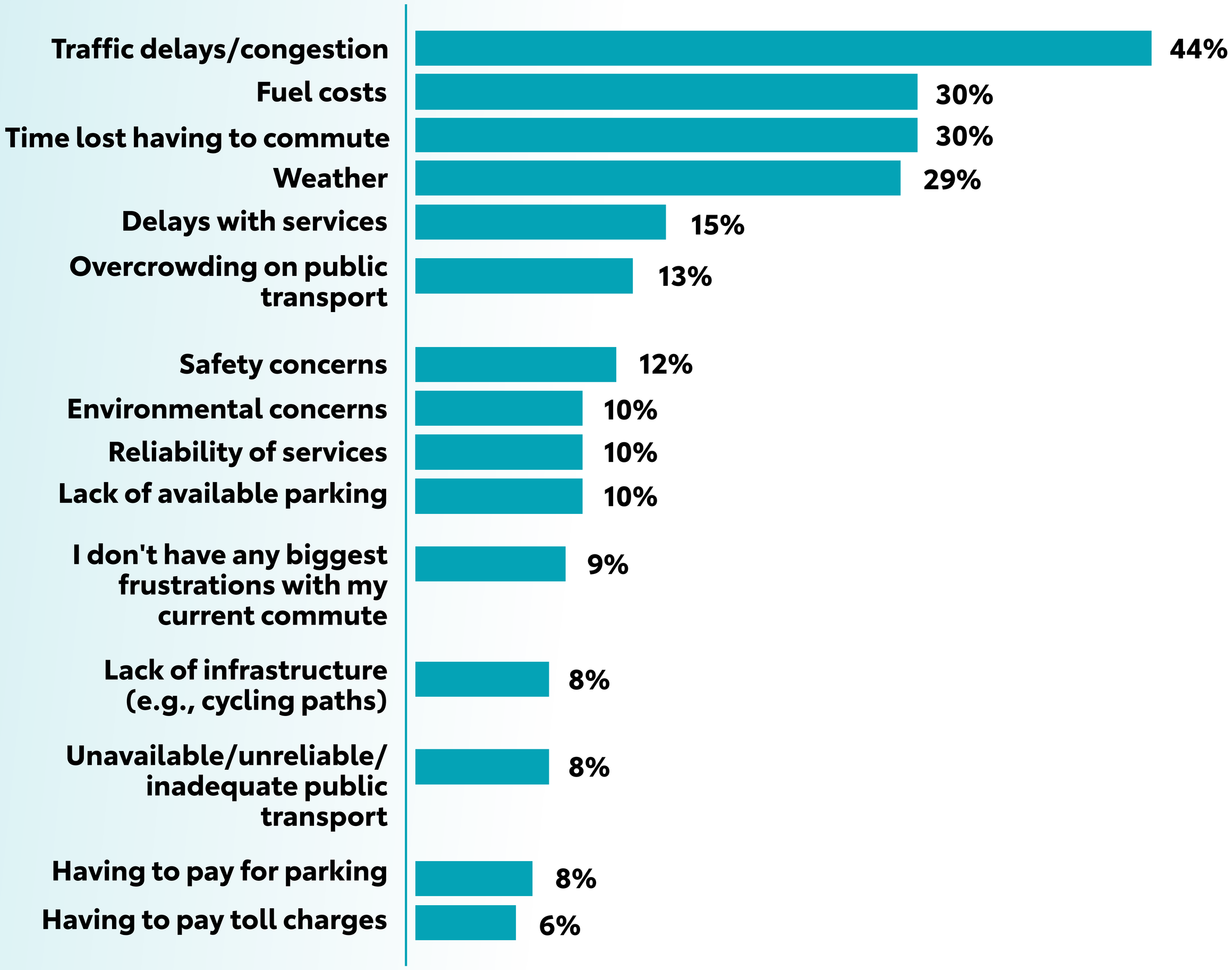
If the biggest frustrations of commuters are anything to go by, that argument certainly stands up.

Traffic delays/congestion was the most cited frustration (44%). This was followed by fuel costs and time lost having to commute, both 30% respectively.

The top five frustrations were finished off by weather (29%) and delays with services (15%) – perhaps explaining why some 45% of people find their commute stressful.

This is something that business leaders, university coordinators and HR managers need to consider in terms of talent strategies and sustainability initiatives which can better support commuters – especially those in areas where public transport is less accessible or commute journeys are particularly long. As well as easing the stress of commuters, which can have an impact on professional or academic performance, this makes sense from an environmental perspective. Furthermore, it could potentially help position businesses or universities in a more favourable position in terms of talent attraction and retention.

The modern consumer & modes of transport



When commute & career collide

Especially since the pandemic, flexibility has become more of a priority for people and the hybrid way of working or studying remains the norm – or should we say expectation? As a result, the agile workstyles once considered a luxury have now become a necessity, with the potential commute playing an ever more crucial role in prospective employees' decision-making.

In fact, almost two thirds (65%) of survey respondents revealed that available commuting options play a part in their decision-making process in selecting a new job. A similar proportion (68%) would refuse a job if the commute was too long, with more than a third (35%) admitting that they are looking for a new job to have better commuting options – again highlighting the importance of choice.

This increased to 42% among 18-34-year-olds.

Tying in with the influence and importance of the commute but delving into the detail, over half (55%) of commuters would avoid a city-based job if there were no parking options. Some 58% revealed that they are more likely to take a job with favourable commuting options (including shuttle services), with 65% more likely to stay in a job with more favourable commuting options (including shuttle services). This suggests that organisations which offer employees the ability to avail of other commuting options could have a competitive advantage in terms of the talent landscape.

It appears that shuttle services in particular appeal to commuters, with 71% saying they would prioritise an employer or university that provided a free or low-cost shuttle bus from their locality to your place of work. Furthermore, 57% wish their university or workplace encouraged shuttle services/carpooling and a slightly smaller proportion (53%) would like to use a company-provided carpooling app for their commute.

In other words, people would be open to more communal and sustainable modes of transport if they were actually available. This is solidified by the fact that 45% have considered carpooling and 31% have actually tried it. Therefore, the demand for alternative modes of transport is there but the choice or variety is lacking.

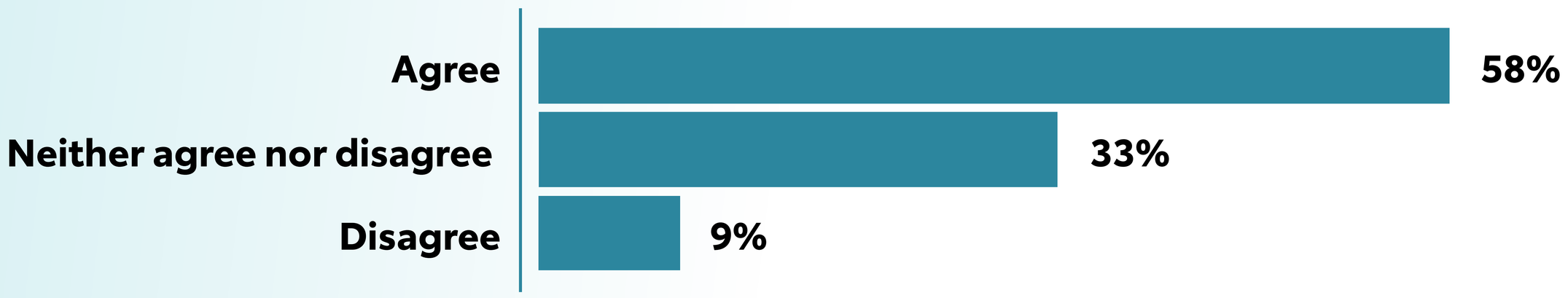
What may also be lacking is the awareness that having such options is also likely to deliver benefits for the organisation, with more than three quarters (76%) of commuters revealing they would be more satisfied in their work or studies if their commute wasn't as stressful and a similar proportion (71%) believing they would be more productive.

It goes without saying that a more satisfied, productive workforce or student population is advantageous in terms of output and performance. That's not to mention the need for organisations to comply with regulations and reporting requirements, or the potential to reduce emissions.

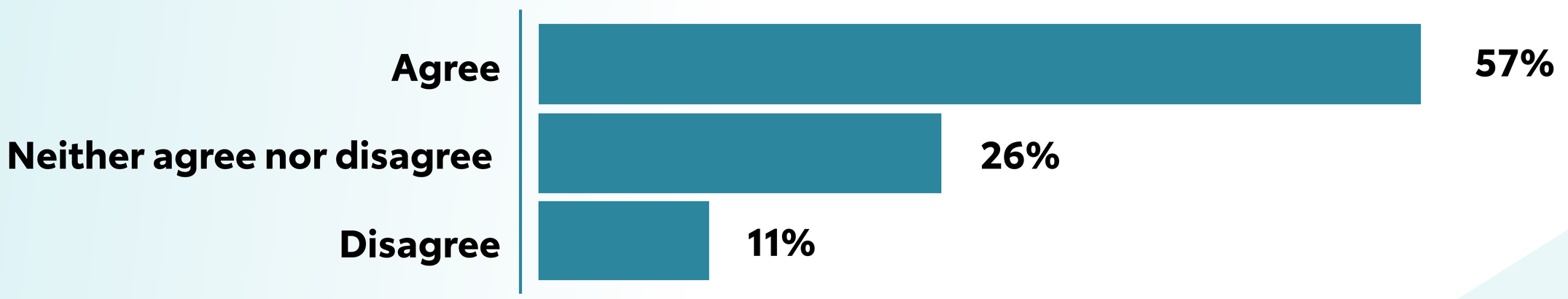
Given the increasing pressure on people to go into the office – felt by 51% of our survey respondents – business leaders and managers need to be more proactive in this area. By taking action, they have the power to make commuting more favourable and help ease some of the difficulty that 42% of people are experiencing in terms of balancing their professional and personal responsibilities as a result of their current commute

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

I would be more likely to take a job with favourable commuting options including shuttle services



I wish my university/workplace encouraged shuttle services/car-pooling



The onus on organisations to take the wheel

In order to encourage and facilitate change when it comes to commuting methods, both education and action are needed. However, it's important to note that micro-level actions taken today can drive macro-level change for the future.

As for where the responsibility for change lies, our study found that 62% think their university or workplace should help improve commuting options for students and employees and the same proportion agree that their university or workplace should be more involved in supporting the commuting experience for students and employees. This indicates a need not only for more variety but a better experience. Whilst same would undoubtedly benefit commuters, they feel that organisations have a responsibility in this space as a result of their own sustainability objectives. In fact, well over a third (39%) believe their university or workplace has a responsibility to take action to meet sustainability goals and regulations.

Furthermore, some 60% believe it is important for their workplace or university to provide commuting solutions as part of its sustainability efforts – highlighting that this is one area where action could be, but perhaps isn't being, taken and more importantly an area which could have a significant impact. Taking this one step further, more than a fifth (22%) think employers or educational institutes should be responsible for their commuting emissions.

Given that only 26% of commuters believe their workplace or university is doing a good job at meeting sustainability goals and regulations, there is a clear gap between the expectations of commuters and the actions of organisations.

In light of the most prominent mode of transport as revealed by our research – driving by car – 45% of commuters think that employers or universities should contribute to public transport costs to promote alternatives to solo driving. Meanwhile, 39% think rewarding more sustainable modes of transport could help to achieve this aim and 36% believed carpooling programmes or apps could also help.

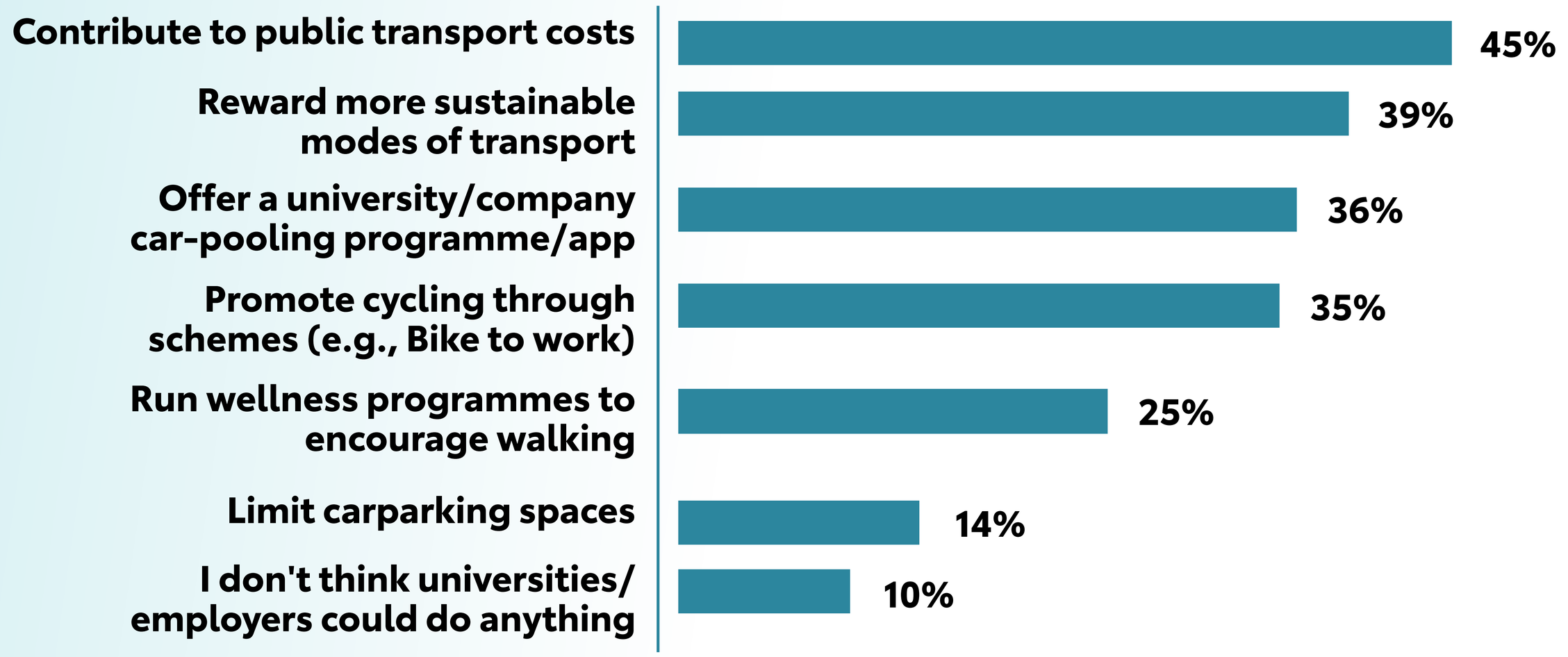
The promotion of cycling through schemes (selected by 35% of respondents) and wellness programmes to encourage walking (cited by 25% of respondents) were also viewed as effective ways of promoting alternatives to solo driving.

Of course, creating programmes within companies and educational institutions is only the first step, these need to be promoted and engaged with. How can this be achieved? Some 36% believe educational institutes/employers should incentivise employees to travel more sustainably.

In terms of the employer-provided benefits to help incentivise a shift to a more communal/sustainable method, the top five were more flexible work hours (46%), tax reduction incentives (37%), additional time off work (36%), a rewards points programme (29%), and free coffee or treats (also 29%).

Engagement is therefore crucial across the board when it comes to bringing about more sustainable commuting in Ireland. People have to engage by raising frustrations, trying new methods and embracing such initiatives. Similarly, organisations need to engage by educating, supporting and rewarding people. Doing this enables commuters to have more choice, organisations to be more responsible, and the planet to be more protected.

What could universities/employers do to promote alternatives to solo driving? (Select all that apply)



Afterword

Whether it's going into the office every other day or heading to university tutorials a few times a week, commuting is a necessity for most people. What also appears to be a necessity is greater choice, awareness and support for commuters.

Based on our research, the people of Ireland are lacking variety and availability when it comes to how they travel for work or study. This is costing them. It's costing them time, money, and stress. The thing is it's also costing the organisations and institutions they are travelling to as a result of heightened inefficiency and dissatisfaction.

We all need to work towards a world where sustainable travel isn't a luxury but the standard. There is a clear demand for less reliance on cars. There is also clear benefit from having shuttles services or bike-to-work schemes.

It benefits people by giving them more choice and helping them to travel how they want, enabling them to be more satisfied and productive in both their professional and personal lives.

It also benefits organisations because they – arguably even more so – have a responsibility to reduce emissions and meet targets. They also benefit from being active in this space which can help in terms of competitiveness and talent.

Whilst the bigger picture elements, such as infrastructure and service quality, will take time to address, there is nothing stopping business and universities from driving change and leading commuters on the road to more sustainable travel today.

Recommendations

At KINTO Join, we support and enable more sustainable commuting. Here are four practical actions to help organisations get started and make a real difference:

1. Understand what's happening today

Before you can act, you need to know how your people are commuting. How many are driving alone? How much parking is really needed? What's the impact on stress, emissions and satisfaction?

We're currently offering **free access to our mobility survey** to help you get started with this step — quickly and with real data.

2. Make sustainable options convenient and easy

People may not give up the convenience of a car for unreliable public transport — but they might for an **easy-to-organise carpool** or **a direct shuttle.**

Use technology to make alternative options visible, accessible and seamless. If it's not as easy as driving, most won't switch.

3. Make commuting engaging

Whether it's a bit of fun or a free coffee, incentives matter. Use **gamification, rewards, and workplace competitions** to nudge better choices.

We've gathered some simple, no-cost ideas to help get you started – **see our free Green Paths guide**

4. Track and adjust

Once you've launched a new programme, keep reviewing. What's working? What's being used? Where is the uptake?

Small changes can make a big difference — and data helps you stay on course for impact.

Ready to understand and improve how your people commute?

We’re currently offering **free access to our Mobility Survey tool**, to help you get a clear picture of how your employees or students travel—and where you can make the biggest impact. Whether you're looking to reduce emissions, ease parking demand, or boost retention through better commuting options, we’re here to help

Sign up today and take the first step towards smarter, more sustainable commuting.

SIGN UP

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