TU Dublin TFI NTA Smarter Travel Survey 2024

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
TU DUBLIN
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

MAY 2025

CONTENTS

Prepared by the Office of the
Vice President for Sustainability

Lead authors Dr Lorraine D'Arcy,
Rebecca Brady & Rebecca Flanagan

Introduction and context

Transport for Ireland's (TFI) Smarter Travel Behaviour Change Programme is a national, voluntary initiative that supports higher education institutions (HEIs) and workplaces in implementing travel plans aimed at encouraging sustainable and active commuting. These travel plans promote environmentally friendly transport choices among students and staff. A key component of this effort is the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Smarter Travel Survey, which provides essential data to guide decision-making.

In 2022 and 2024, researchers at TU Dublin contributed to the redesign of this survey, aiming to tailor it more effectively to the University's specific context and sustainability goals, including the target of full decarbonisation by 2040. With five campus locations across Dublin—each with distinct geographic and transport characteristics—it was essential that the revised survey capture the diverse commuting patterns and needs of all campus users. Furthermore, under the Public Sector Mandate for Climate Action, TU Dublin is required to develop a Sustainable Mobility Plan to address and reduce Scope 3 carbon emissions, which represent a significant share of the University's overall carbon footprint.

Any such plan requires a University-wide approach to transport and mobility initiatives at TU Dublin. To support this, TU Dublin's Sustainability Office collaborated with the NTA to distribute and analyse a survey aimed at informing a comprehensive understanding of the University's needs. This report presents the key findings from that analysis.

Engagement

Awareness of the survey among TU Dublin students and staff was crucial to its success. A dynamic engagement campaign ran from 6–26 November 2024, supported by Class Representatives, Faculties and Schools, Communications & Marketing, the University Executive Team (UET), Green-Campus, and the Students' Union.

Eighty sustainable travel-themed prizes with a total value of €1,350 were heavily promoted to encourage participation in the survey. These included x20 €50 Great Outdoors vouchers x15 €10 Kennedy's Café vouchers x40 €5 Butlers Chocolate Café vouchers and x5 Smarter Travel goodie bags. Prizes were awarded at the end of each week during the data collection rather than when the survey closed. This strategy sought to garner excitement about the survey and to generate word-of-mouth endorsement among the student and staff body. Below is the timeline and strategy for the Smarter Travel engagement campaign.

- A page was developed on the TU Dublin website to host the survey link and received almost 3,000 page views during the data collection period,
- Two 'all student and staff' emails were sent from the Office of the VP for Sustainability, and one from the Office of the President,
- Weekly announcements were made via student and staff update emails,
- 26 posts and stories on Instagram had 38,396 views, reaching 12,332 accounts,
- As part of a student travel Vox Pop series, 4 videos published across Instagram and YouTube had 7,790 views and 5,700+ 'Impressions',
- Students and staff endorsed participation in the survey widely across other platforms including BlueSky, LinkedIn, and internal Teams channels,
- Presentations at Student Class Representative and Climate Leadership training events encouraged student and staff leaders to promote the survey to their peers,
- Branded promotion featured on digital platforms, including videos on-digital screens, signatures on staff emails and screen savers for all student-facing PC screens
- 1,000 flyers were distributed across all campuses. In response to low participation in Tallaght, two Student Ambassadors ran an info stand and handed out flyers.

Response rate

TU Dublin's Smarter Travel Survey 2024 received 1,954 responses, representing an overall response rate of 6%—with 26% of staff and 4% of students participating. While this marks a decrease from the 20% overall response rate achieved in the 2022 survey (36% staff and 12% students), the 2024 response remains sufficiently robust to support meaningful analysis. Notably, staff engagement increased compared to the 2019 survey, which saw an 8% overall response rate (18% staff and 7% students). This improvement may reflect the lasting impact of the successful engagement strategy implemented in 2022. However, this effect appears less evident among students, possibly due to the turnover and introduction of a new student cohort. A key difference between the 2022 and 2024 campaigns was a significantly lower investment in prizes as an incentive for taking the survey.

Survey responses are broken down by staff and student status across each campus in Table 1. For data presentation, the campuses based in the City Centre have been grouped in contexts where data was comparable for these sites. The high staff response to the survey across all campuses is informative as these trip patterns and behaviours are indicative of longer-term travel patterns compared to student trips which only account for the duration of their studies. Both cohorts are important to consider as each has distinct characteristics concerning trip decision determinants such as residential location, trip affordability, time, and access to a car. The University has a responsibility to enable as many sustainable journeys as possible for both students and staff, particularly as students are at a formative stage in life when travel habits developed now are likely to influence their future behaviour.

The sample consists of 44% male, 52% female and 1% non-binary, respondents, with some participants choosing not to disclose their gender. The high female response rate is particularly valuable, given the growing global recognition of the more complex travel needs often experienced by women—such as heightened safety concerns and a disproportionate share of caregiving responsibilities[1]. Additionally, 14% of respondents reported having a

1. TII-Travelling-in-a-Womans-Shoes-Report_Issue.pdf

% (Number) of Staff & Students on each campus that responded to survey			
Campus	Staff % (n)	Students % (n)	Total % (n)
Aungier Street	29% (106)	4% (170)	6% (276)
Blanchardstown	27% (86)	3% (100)	5% (186)
Bolton Street	21% (104)	4% (224)	5% (328)
Grangegorman	25% (424)	6% (463)	9% (887)
Tallaght	32% (140)	3% (137)	5% (277)
TU Dublin	26% (860)	4% (1094)	6% (1954)

Table 1: 2024 response rates by campus and staff/student status

Age of Respondents		
	Staff n=856	Students n=1088
Under 25	2%	75%
25-34	8%	13%
35-44	23%	6%
45-54	39%	5%
Over 55	29%	1%

Table 2: Age profile of sample

chronic illness or disability that affects their ability to engage in certain physical activities, such as walking or cycling for transport. A further 3% of respondents reported having a chronic illness or disability that impacts their ability to drive.

The median age of respondents is between 25-34 years. Table 2 outlines the age distribution of the student and staff profiles. While 75% of student respondents were under the age of 25, 91% of the staff that completed the survey were aged between 35 and 65 years.

How we travel

Travel patterns vary significantly between students and staff across TU Dublin campuses. Unsurprisingly, Grangegorman, Aungier Street and Bolton Street campuses have a higher proportion of travel by active travel modes and rail / light rail compared to Tallaght and Blanchardstown campuses (Table 3). Across most campuses, bus travel accounts for the highest share of trips, with the exception of Tallaght, where the dominant mode is private car use by solo drivers. Notably, the Blanchardstown campus reports the highest rate of carpooling, with 13% of respondents either driving or riding as a passenger with others to the same location. Since 97% of respondents indicated that they are based at a single campus, the data reflects regular commuting patterns to one primary location.

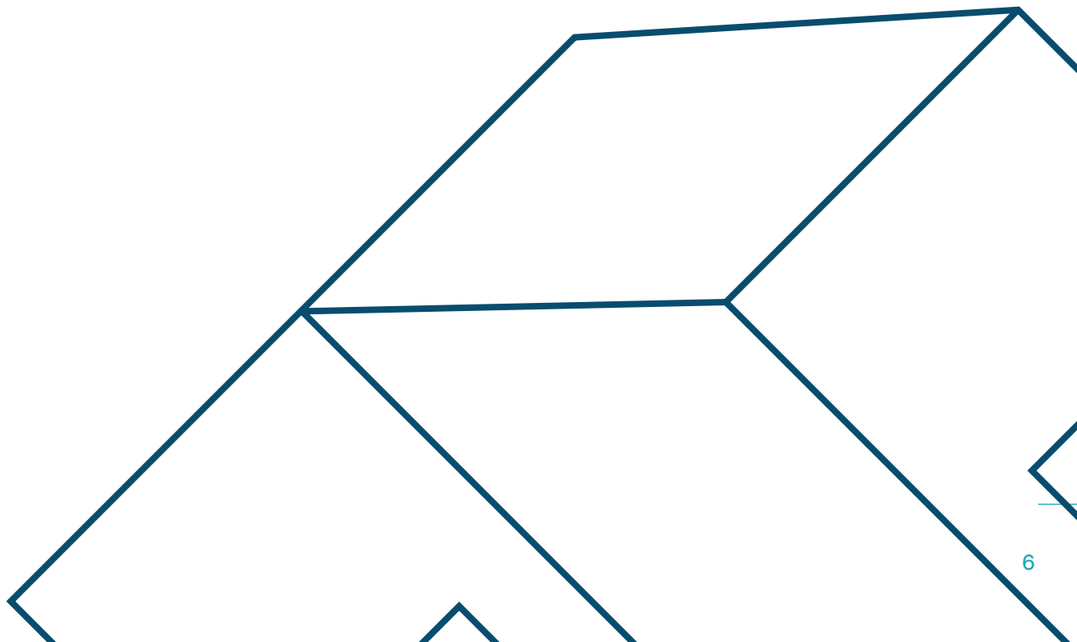
	On foot	**Bike**	**e-bike**	**Bus, minibus, coach**	**Luas**	**Train or DART**	**TU Dublin Shuttle Bus**	**Driving alone or in lorry /van**	**Carpooling /passenger in car**	**e-scooter or motorcycle**	**Work mainly remotely**
Aungier Street n=276	9%	6%	1%	41%	11%	15%	0%	13%	3%	1%	<1%
Blanchards -town n=184	3%	3%	2%	40%	0%	3%	1%	34%	13%	1%	0%
Bolton Street n=328	8%	9%	1%	38%	9%	23%	<1%	7%	2%	2%	1%
Grange -gorman or other n=886	10%	10%	1%	30%	13%	18%	<1%	12%	4%	1%	1%
Tallaght n=276	4%	3%	0%	28%	5%	3%	<1%	47%	9%	1%	0%
Total n=1950	8%	8%	1%	33%	10%	15%	<1%	19%	5%	1%	1%

Table 3: Mode distribution by campus location. Bold values are most frequent modes.

* Bolton St includes Linen Hall, Auinger St includes FOCUS, City-Other includes smaller campus sites in the city such as Broadstone or Berresford Street. Respondents were not required to give more detail on their location.

2. Canal-Cordon-Report-2021.pdf (nationaltransport.ie)

A more informative pattern emerges when travel patterns are analysed by student and staff status (Table 4). Students across all campus locations predominantly use public transport to travel to campus. In contrast, staff commuting patterns vary significantly by location. At the Tallaght and Blanchardstown campuses, the majority of staff travel by private car. However, at the Grangegorman, Aungier Street and Bolton Street campuses, staff use a wider mix of travel modes. Among staff at these City Centre based campuses, 46% commute by public transport, while 28% use active travel modes and 25% travel by private car. An impressive 19% of staff trips to Grangegorman, Aungier Street and Bolton Street campuses are made by bicycle, including e-bikes, significantly higher than the citywide cycling modal share of just 5%[2]. In contrast, only 4% of students at Grangegorman, Aungier Street and Bolton Street campuses reported cycling to campus, this city-wide percentage is comparable to the proportion of students cycling (4%). The percentage of trips crossing the canals on foot is 9%, which is comparable to the walking trips taken by students (9%) and staff (7%) to the City Centre campuses.



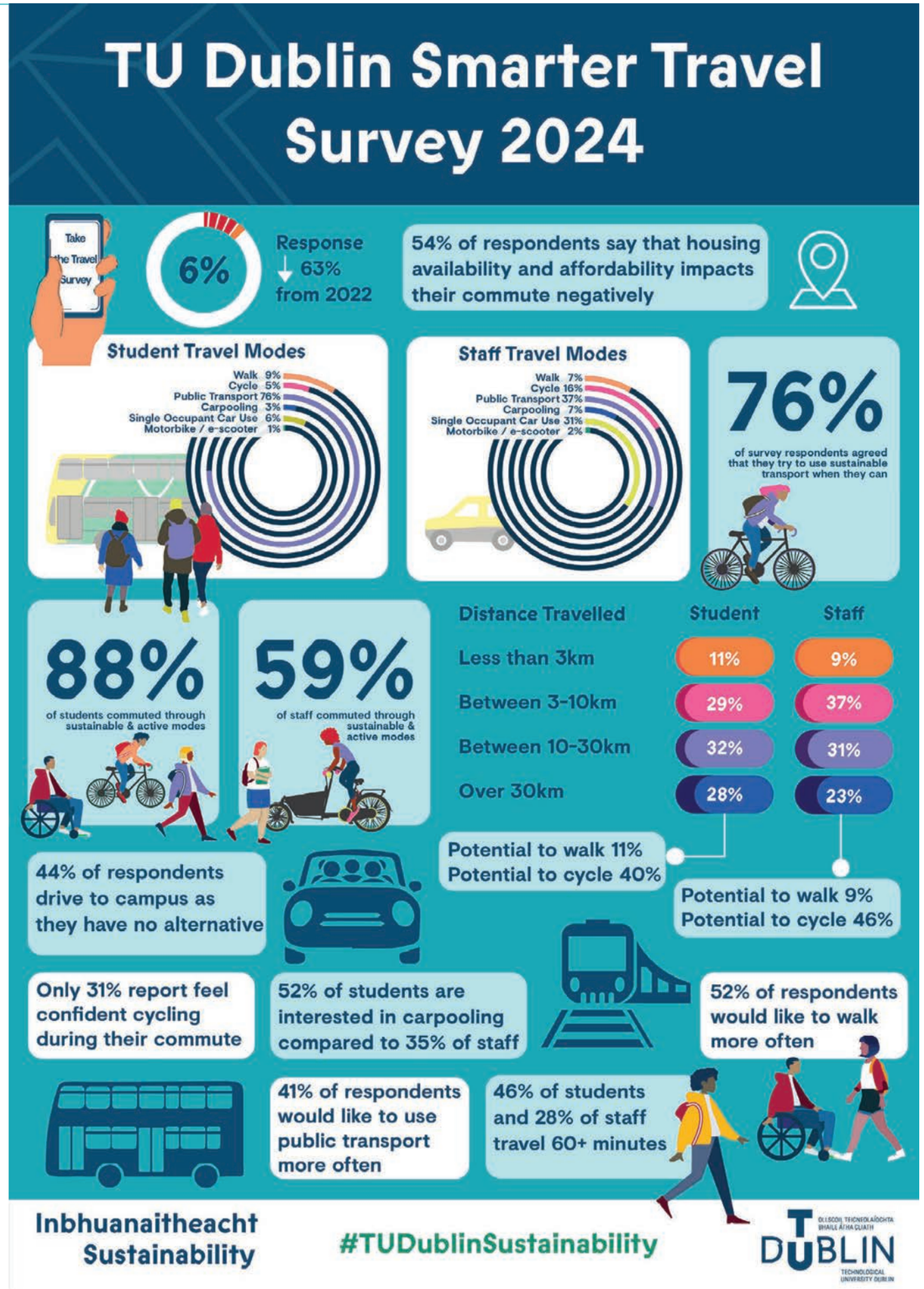


Figure 1: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Staff and Student Survey Key Findings

	On Foot	Cycling (inc e-bike)	Public Transport	Private Vehicle	Motorcycle or Scooter
Blanchardstown staff n=86	0%	7%	15%	77%	1%
Blanchardstown students n=98	5%	4%	68%	21%	1%
City staff n=622	9%	19%	46%	25%	2%
City students n=853	10%	4%	79%	7%	1%
Tallaght staff n=139	3%	5%	10%	81%	1%
Tallaght students n=137	5%	1%	64%	29%	2%
Staff total 2024	**7%**	**16%**	**37%**	**39%**	**2%**
Staff total 2022	8%	16%	32%	43%	1%
Staff total 2019	8%	14%	37%	41%	2%
Students Total 2024	**9%**	**4%**	**76%**	**11%**	**1%**
Students Total 2022	9%	5%	76%	11%	0%
Students Total 2019	6%	4%	78%	10%	1%

Table 4: Campus mode summary for staff/students including summary of 2022 and 2019 data

Travel mode patterns among TU Dublin students and staff have remained relatively stable in recent years, with modest shifts in preference and usage:

Staff

Among staff across all campuses, there has been a slight increase in public transport use, rising from 32% in 2022 to 37% in 2024, returning to levels similar to 2019 (37%). Private vehicle use has dropped slightly since 2022, from 43% to 39%, which may reflect the early impacts of sustainable transport investment across the Dublin region.

Students

Among students across all campuses, modal share has been remarkably consistent, particularly in terms of public transport, which remains the dominant mode. In both 2022 and 2024, 76% of students reported using public transport, only slightly down from 78% in 2019. Car use remained at 11%, with minimal change across recent years. Walking increased slightly from 6% in 2019 to 9% in 2024, while cycling remains low (4% in both 2024 and 2022). The cycling rate is significantly lower than Census 2022 data that indicates 10% of students in Dublin City cycle to college[3].

While student travel behaviours have remained relatively stable, staff are showing a modest shift away from private car use in favour of public transport. This trend may reflect an increase in public transport service and availability, greater awareness of sustainable travel, evolving post-COVID commuting patterns, or the influence of institutional sustainability initiatives.

There have also been considerable improvements to public transport in Ireland with the NTA reporting a record number of public transport trips. A combination of fare reductions and service improvements has led to a national satisfaction rate of 82%[4]. In Dublin, 50% of the BusConnects network is complete with a 48% increase in ridership along these routes compared to 8% along non- BusConnects routes. There is still considerable work to be done on the BusConnects project with many key radial routes undergoing a judicial review process before they can be tendered for construction. The delivery of the remainder of the routes will provide even greater opportunity for modal shifts for TU Dublin students and staff.

Sustainable and active travel in TU Dublin

Overall, 76% of respondents to the survey travel by a sustainable mode to campus; 88% of the students travel sustainably compared to 59% of staff (Table 5). This is significantly higher than the 45% average reported in the NTA Household Travel Survey for Dublin City and Suburbs[5]. This indicates that people at the University are already engaging with sustainable transport at levels significantly above the broader urban average.

Usage is particularly high at campuses based in the City Centre, where over 90% of students at Aungier Street, Bolton Street, and Grangegorman travel sustainably. These figures reflect a strong cultural and practical uptake of sustainable transport among students and are a positive indicator of long-term behavioural trends. In the campuses based in the City Centre, 84% of survey respondents travel to campus by sustainable modes, 93% of students and 73% of staff. Bolton Street has the highest proportion of both staff (77%) and students (94%) using sustainable and active travel modes among all TU Dublin campuses. This suggests particularly strong infrastructure, accessibility, or cultural factors supporting / at that location. Further exploration of the data could help identify what is working well at this location and inform strategies that could be implemented across other campuses.

3. Travel to School, College and Childcare - CSO - Central Statistics Office

4. TFI Smarter Travel Partner Webinar Slides, 13th May 2025

5. NTA National Household Travel Survey 2022

Proportion of Sustainable and Active Travel			
Campus	Students	Staff	All
Aungier Street	91%	71%	83%
Blanchardstown	78%	22%	52%
Bolton Street	94%	77%	89%
Grangegorman or other	92%	73%	83%
Tallaght	69%	18%	44%
TU Dublin	88%	59%	76%

Table 5: Proportions of sustainable travel across campus

At the Tallaght campus, 44% of survey respondents travel to campus by sustainable modes, 69% of students and 18% of staff. At the Blanchardstown campus, 52% of survey respondents travel to campus by sustainable modes, 78% of students and 22% of staff. Several factors may contribute to the lower uptake of sustainable and active travel among staff, including limited access to reliable public transport and work schedules that reduce commuting flexibility. The survey contains a wealth of attitudinal and contextual data that could shed light on these differences, and further in-depth analysis is encouraged to better understand the specific barriers at these locations. In tandem with this analysis, targeted interventions—such as infrastructure improvements, workplace supports, or tailored communications—may help to increase staff engagement with sustainable travel.

Distance travelled

How people travel to campus will be influenced by the distances that they must travel. Several factors contribute to these distances, most notably the availability and affordability of housing in Dublin, as well as the length of study programmes for students and contract durations for staff.

Figures 2 and 3 give an overview of the distances travelled and trip times for the total sample. Table 6 gives a breakdown by campus and by student or staff status. Similar to modal choice, there are distinct differences in the travel requirements between students and staff for all campus locations. Of the total sample, 18% travel over 40 km to campus, and 13% travel for more than 90 minutes. This is comparable to the findings from 2022 (17% more than 40km and 13% more than 90 mins). The 2024 survey extended the distance reporting option and found that 4% (n= 82) of the total sample travel over 100km to campus. Of those travelling more than 100km to campus, 44% are staff and 56% are students. The majority (65%) rely on public transport, while 30% drive alone, 4% carpool, and 1% primarily work remotely.

With relation to travel time patterns among staff, 28% report commuting for more than 60 minutes, which is similar to the 30% recorded in 2022. A further 45% commute for 30-to-60 minutes, making this the most common journey duration for staff overall. Shorter commutes of under 30 minutes account for 27% of staff respondents.

Students continue to report longer commute times compared to staff. In 2024, 46% of students commuted for more than 60 minutes, up slightly from 42% in 2022. Only 18% of students commute for under 30 minutes, compared with 27% of staff. These patterns align with the distance data and suggest that students are more likely to live farther from campus or spend longer commuting. Overall, the findings indicate a consistent trend across years, reinforcing the relationship between commute distance, mode, and time.

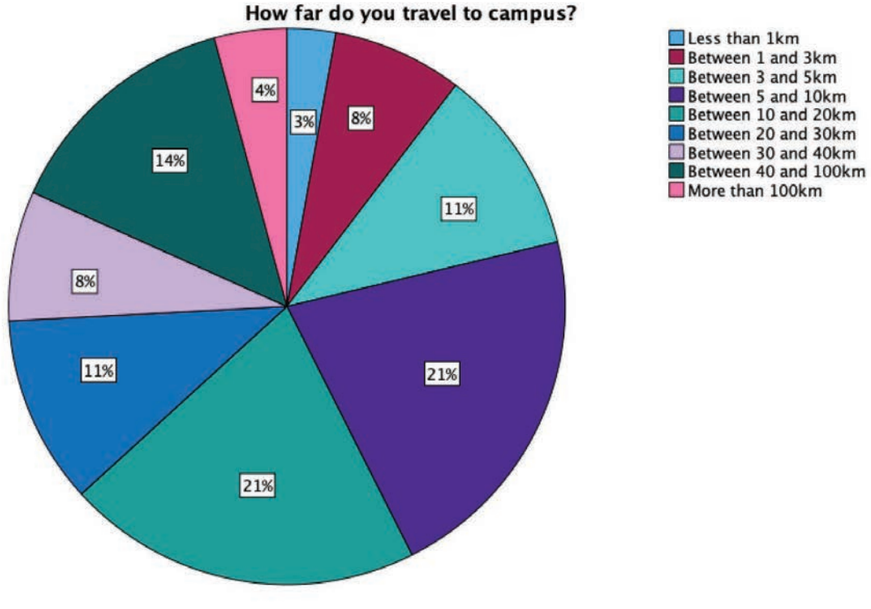


Figure 2: Distance travelled to campus for full sample (n=1947)

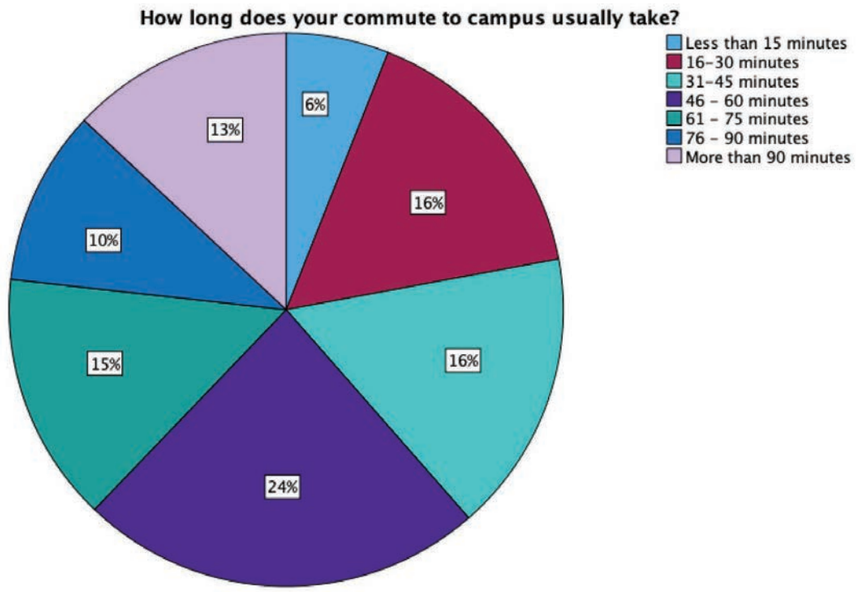


Figure 3: Commute times full sample (n=1953)

The 2024 survey extended the commute time reporting option and found that 13% (n= 254) of the total sample travel over 90 minutes to campus. Of those travelling more than 90 minutes to campus, 30% are staff and 70% are students. Over 20% of all students in Tallaght and Blanchardstown commute to campus for longer than 90 minutes. This metric, along with the distance data, suggests that students are more likely to live farther from campus and spend longer commuting. Most students travelling this distance (89%) rely on public transport, while 7% drive alone, 3% carpool, and 1% use an e-scooter. For staff, there is a smaller majority of public transport use (68%), followed by driving alone (29%), while the remaining 3% is split equally between cycling, carpooling and working mainly remotely.

	Distance				**Time**		
	Less than 3km	**Between 3-10km**	**Between 10-30km**	**More than 30km**	**Less than 30 minutes**	**30-60 minutes**	**More than 60 minutes**
Blanchardstown staff n=85	4%	29%	42%	25%	34%	48%	18%
Blanchardstown students n=100	12%	29%	29%	30%	23%	38%	39%
City staff n=633	11%	41%	28%	21%	25%	44%	31%
City students n=852	11%	27%	33%	28%	16%	36%	49%
Tallaght staff n=140	6%	24%	37%	33%	31%	47%	21%
Tallaght students n=137	10%	36%	29%	26%	29%	39%	32%
Staff total 2024	9%	37%	31%	23%	27%	45%	28%
Staff total 2022	11%	35%	32%	22%	30%	40%	30%
Students Total 2024	11%	29%	32%	28%	18%	36%	46%
Students Total 2022	12%	28%	33%	26%	20%	39%	42%

Table 6: Travel Distance and Time by campus and student/staff

Between 2022 and 2024, both staff and students at TU Dublin experienced a slight shift toward longer commute distances and durations. The proportion of students commuting more than 60 minutes increased from 42% to 46%, while staff with commutes over 30 minutes also rose from 70% to 73%. There was a small decline in the percentage of individuals living within 3km of campus, suggesting a gradual geographic spread. These changes may reflect broader national housing or transport pressures.

The increase in the proportion of staff commuting longer than 90 minutes may reflect remote working practices implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, and commute trips may be less frequently taken than in 2019. Further multilevel statistical analysis is warranted to explore the relationship between mode choice, time, distance, and ease of access to public transport.

Distance as a proxy for active travel potential

Trip distance is often used as an indicator for a potentially active trip, with up to 3km considered a potential walkable commute and up to 10km considered a potential trip by bike. It is acknowledged that not all these trips may be viable as active travel trips for several reasons, such as the perception of safety and comfort, however, this metric gives a good indication of potential. In the next section, each of the three main campus locations are considered in this context.

Aungier Street, Bolton Street and Grangegorman

Total: 11% travel less than 3km, 44% travel less than 10km

Students: 11% travel less than 3km, 39% travel less than 10km

Staff: 11% travel less than 3km, 26% travel less than 10km

Currently, 20% of those travelling to Aungier Street, Bolton Street and Grangegorman campuses are travelling actively, which gives the University a potential increase of 24% of people walking or cycling, with a 2% potential increase in walking. Staff cycling rates are high at 19%, while 4% of students cycle to campus. It is important to note that 46% of staff and 79% of students travel by public transport, which also includes an active component, usually walking, to or from the public transport connection.

There is potential for an increase in active commuting to all campuses based in the City Centre, and investment is warranted to work with students and staff to increase these modal shares. Like the other campus locations, engagement is ongoing with Dublin City Council and transport agencies to highlight where improvements are needed can greatly improve the potential for more sustainable trips.

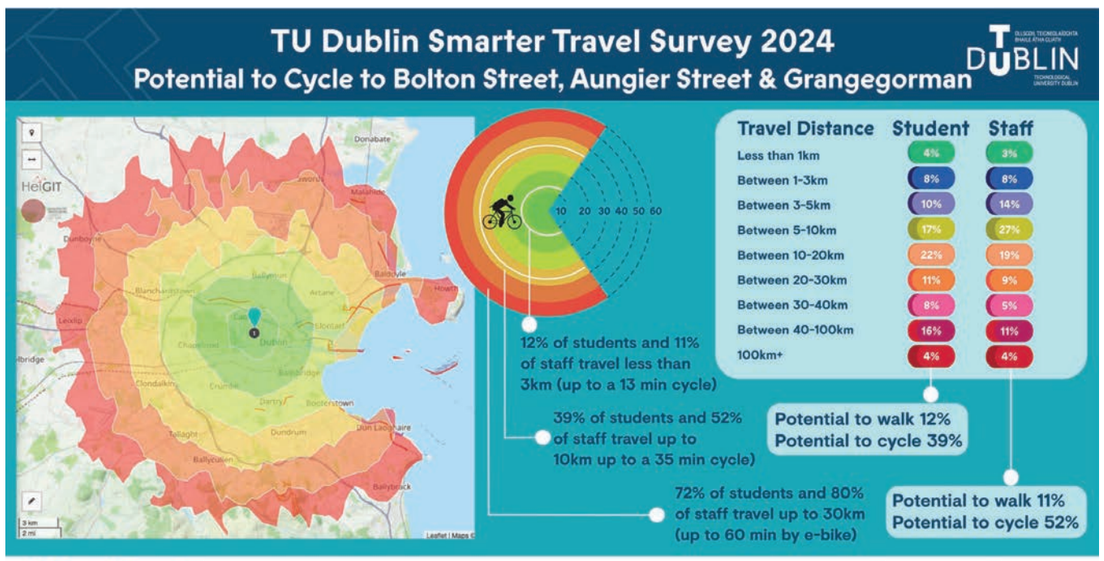


Figure 4: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Survey 2024 potential to cycle to Aungier Street, Bolton Street and Grangegorman

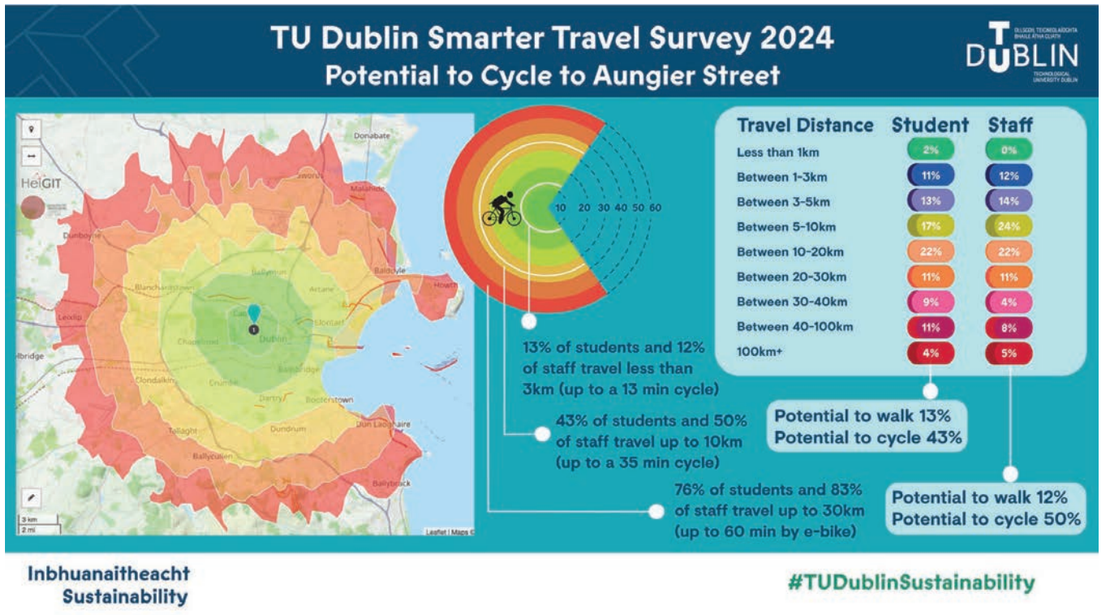


Figure 5: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Survey 2024 potential to cycle to Aungier Street

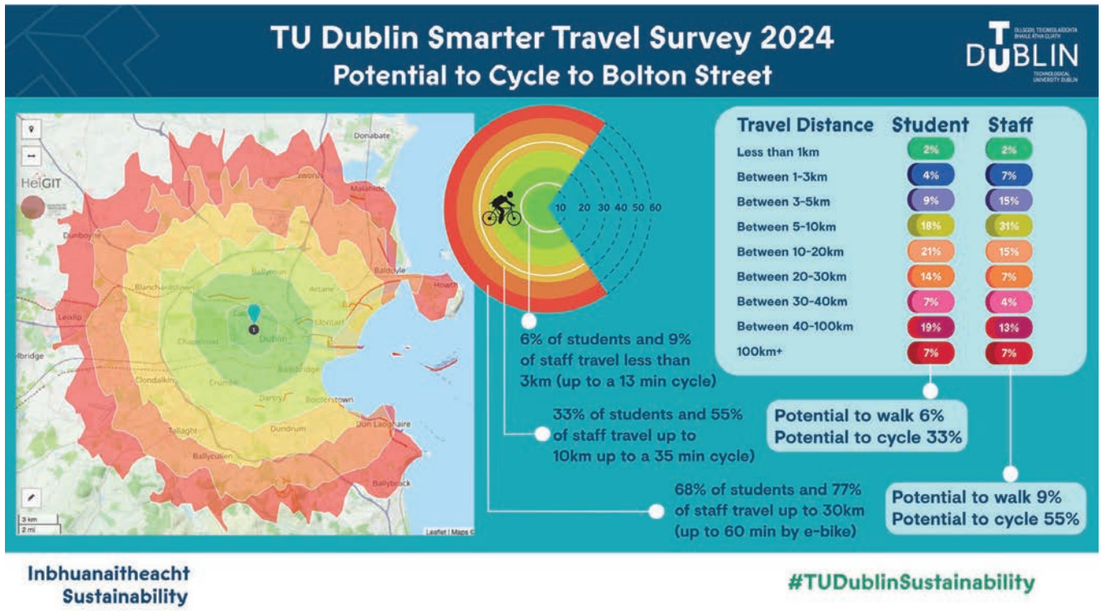


Figure 6: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Survey 2024 potential to cycle to Bolton Street

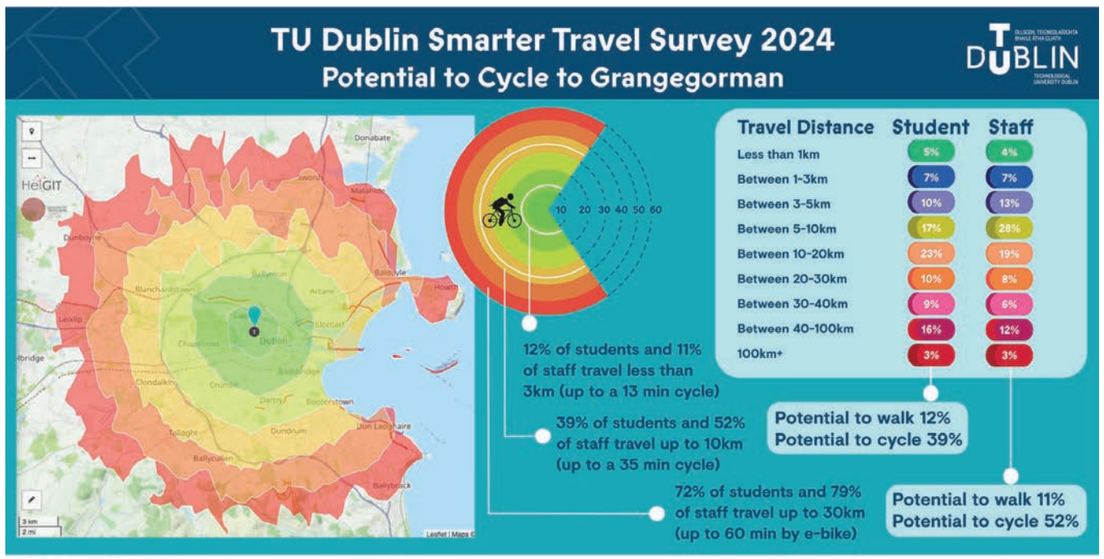


Figure 7: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Survey 2024 potential to cycle to Grangegorman

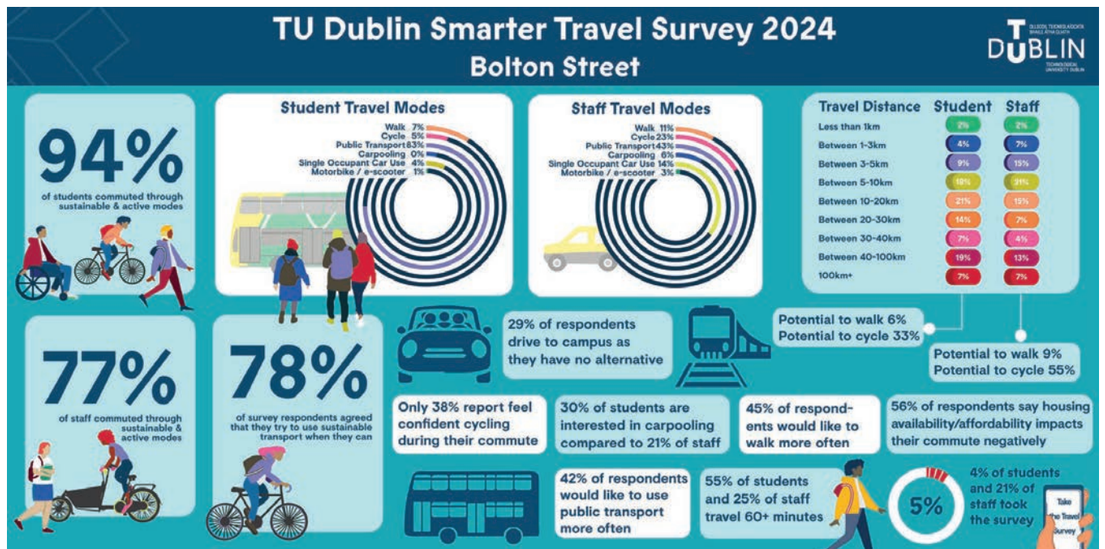


Figure 9: TU Dublin Smarter Travel 2024 survey Bolton Street key findings

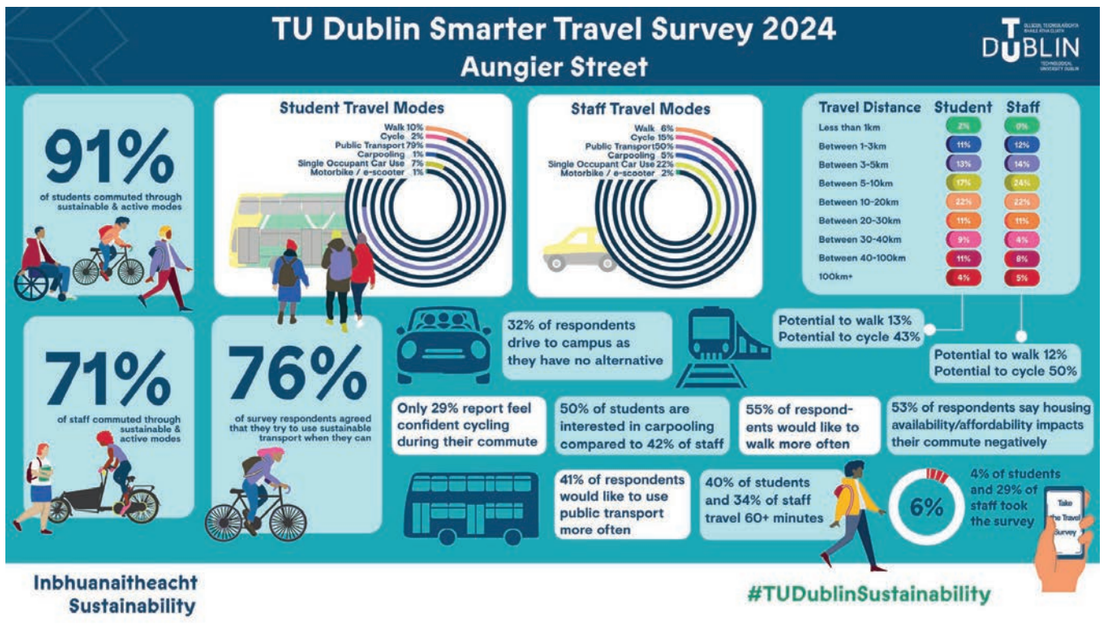


Figure 8: TU Dublin Smarter Travel 2024 survey Aungier Street key findings

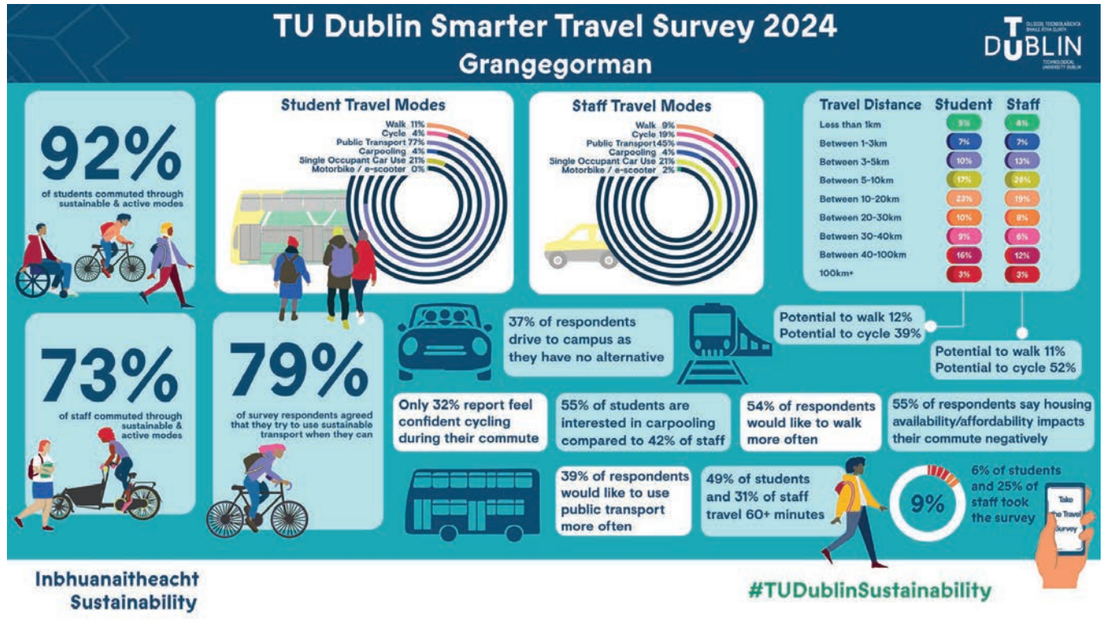


Figure 10: TU Dublin Smarter Travel 2024 survey Grangegorman key findings

Blanchardstown

Total: 8% travel less than 3km, 37% travel less than 10km

Students: 12% travel less than 3km, 41% travel less than 10km

Staff: 4% travel less than 3km, 33% travel less than 10km

Currently, 8% of those travelling to the Blanchardstown campus are doing so actively. Currently, no staff, and 5% of students walk to the campus, which gives us a potential overall increase of people walking by 5%. There is currently a cycle modal share of 5% with potential to increase this by 33%. Staff cycling rates are at 7%, with 4% of students cycling to campus. The public transport modal share is also high for the Blanchardstown campus among students (68%) but comparably low for staff (15%).

TU Dublin's Sustainability and Campus & Estates teams have been engaging with Fingal County Council and other institutions with large commuter numbers in the Blanchardstown area to explore the potential to improve active and sustainable transport connections. An Opportunities Framework has recently been completed for the Blanchardstown campus highlighting many opportunities to work towards. Larger strategic projects underway in the area include the Tolka Greenway, Grand Canal Greenway and the BusConnects Routes 5, L62 and L62, each of which will have segregated cycle tracks.

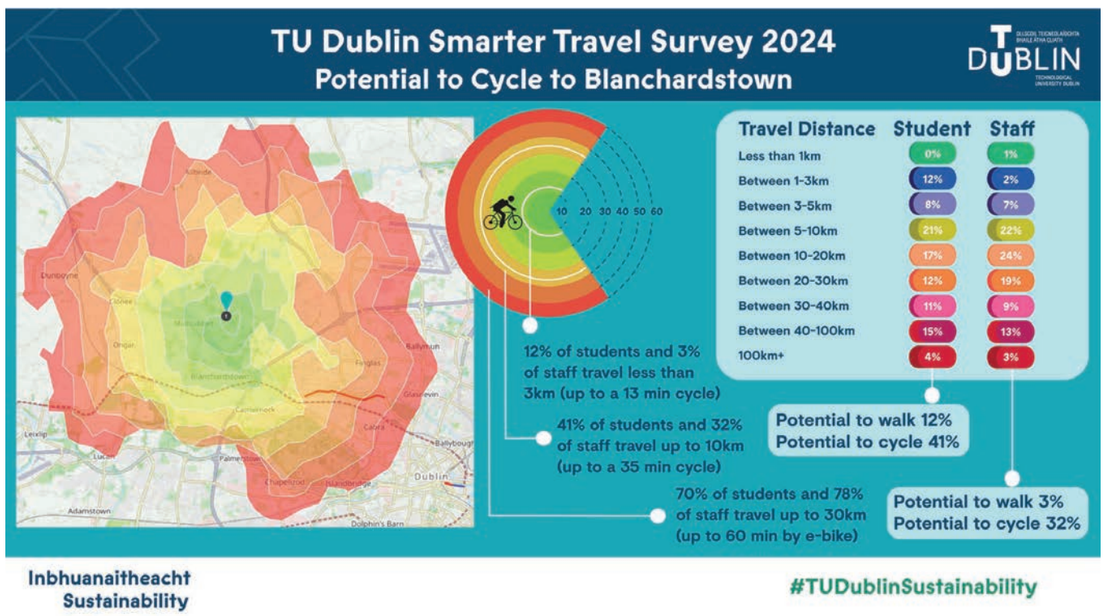


Figure 11: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Survey 2024 potential to cycle to Blanchardstown

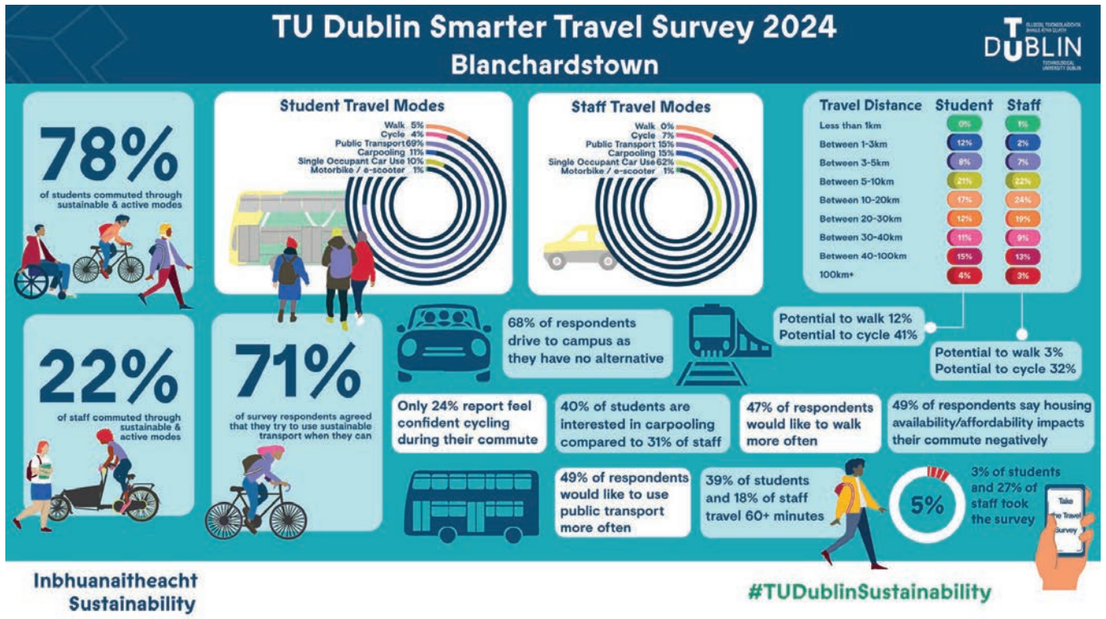


Figure 12: TU Dublin Smarter Travel 2024 survey Blanchardstown key findings

Tallaght

Total: 8% travel less than 3km, 38% travel less than 10km

Students: 10% travel less than 3km, 45% travel less than 10km

Staff: 6% travel less than 3km, 30% travel less than 10km

Currently, 7% of students and staff are travelling actively, which gives us a potential increase of 31% of people walking or cycling, with a 4% possible increase in walking. The greatest potential is increasing cycling. It is important to note that 10% of staff and 64% of students who travel by public transport also incorporate an active component, usually walking to or from the public transport connection. Working with local authorities and the NTA to improve the key routes to the campus, such as South Dublin County Council's Dublin 24 Rapid Implementation Cycle Network project[6], which has completed phase 1, and improving the walking and cycling infrastructure within the campus can enhance the experience for commuters and increase the numbers travelling actively or using public transport. An Opportunities Framework has recently been completed for the Tallaght campus, identifying a range of initiatives to enhance the campus environment—including measures to promote active and sustainable transport.

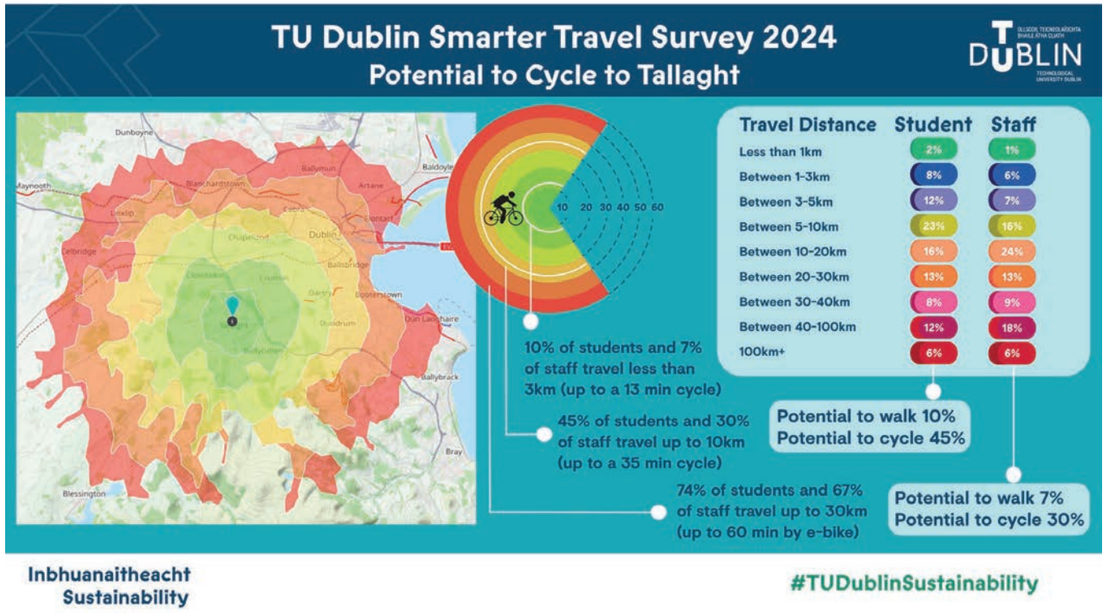


Figure 13: TU Dublin Smarter Travel Survey 2024 potential to cycle to Tallaght

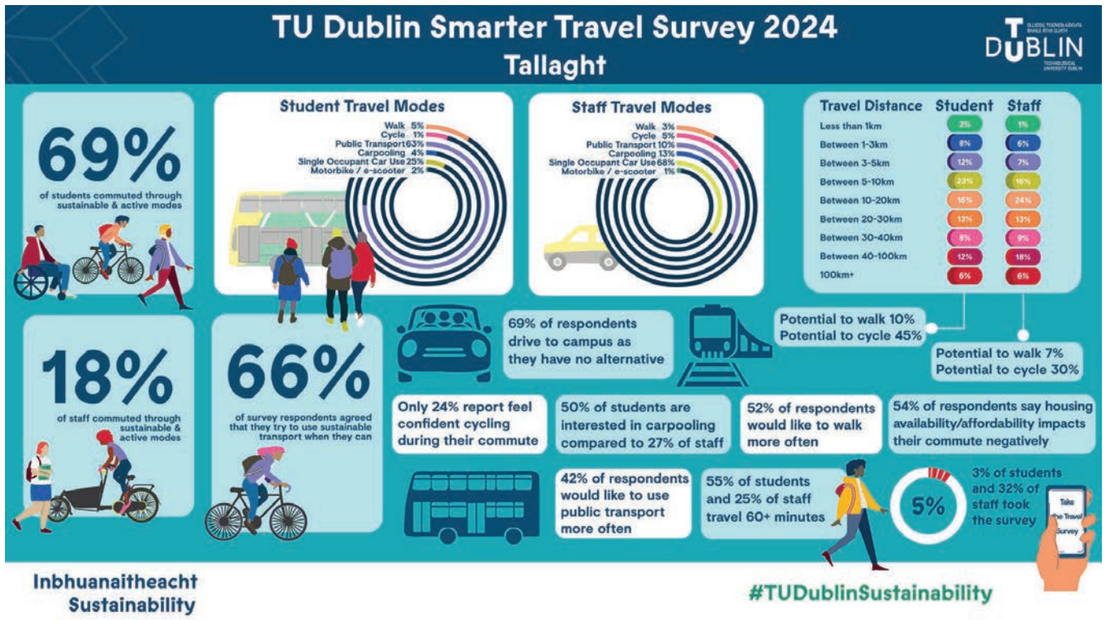


Figure 14: TU Dublin Smarter Travel 2024 survey Tallaght key findings

6. Dublin 24 Rapid Implementation Cycle Network - SDCC

Time of arrival and departure from campus

It is usual for travel surveys to collect information on arrival and departure times to campuses. This is to establish if more variability in working hours could alleviate traffic congestion within the vicinity of a campus or to potentially reduce commute times if people have the option to travel during off-peak hours. Given the nature of academic timetables, this is not as relevant for some staff as others, with many student and staff respondents replying with 'depends on my 'timetable' in the comment fields. In general, arrival and departure times from campus are within the 7:00am to 10:00am (77%) morning peak and 4:30pm to 6:00pm (60%) evening peak.

Remote working and learning

Understanding patterns of remote working and learning is useful for identifying opportunities to manage demand on campus facilities and transport networks. Staff across all campuses are consistently more likely than students to work remotely, with this pattern most pronounced on Fridays. On average, 42% of staff report working from home on Fridays, compared with just 16% of students. Conversely, Wednesday sees the lowest rates of remote activity, aligning with peak on-campus presence for both groups.

While the overall trend is consistent, there are some differences across campuses. Staff at campuses based in the City Centre report the highest levels of remote working, particularly on Mondays and Fridays, suggesting the influence of commute distance or more flexible working arrangements.

Student travel patterns remain relatively consistent throughout the week, with only slight variations by day or campus. This suggests that in-person attendance continues to be the norm for most students.

Days Remote Working or Learning					
Campus	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
Blanchardstown staff	22%	17%	14%	26%	29%
Blanchardstown students	8%	10%	10%	10%	10%
City staff	30%	20%	22%	21%	46%
City students	9%	11%	10%	9%	17%
Tallaght staff	24%	21%	18%	21%	33%
Tallaght students	10%	13%	6%	10%	12%
All staff	28%	20%	21%	22%	42%
All students	9%	11%	9%	9%	16%

Table 7: Proportion of staff and students working or learning remotely per campus

Reasons for mode choice

Across the full sample, the main reasons for mode choice were quickest (37%), lack of an alternative (27%) and cheapest (14%). Those travelling to the Tallaght campus reported a lack of an alternative as the main reason (36%), and similar reasons were reported in Blanchardstown (43%). Quickest was the primary consideration for those on campuses based in the City Centre (40%).

When the data was considered by modal choice, walkers chose to do so as it was quickest (43%), cheapest (17%) and for exercise and fitness (15%). Cyclists also chose to do so as it was quickest (57%), for exercise and fitness (11%) and for environmental impact (9%). Speed was again a factor for public transport (34%), followed by the lack of an alternative (33%) and price (18%). Those that chose to travel by private vehicle reported quickest (34%), lack of alternative (32%), reliability (11%), other commitments (5%) and safety concerns (5%) as the top reasons for their modal choice. Of those that listed safety concerns as their primary motivation for private vehicle usage, 76% were female and 24% were male, while 95% were white Irish and 5% were Asian or Asian-Irish. Motorcyclists/ scooter users listed speed (80%) as their main reason for mode choice with the remaining equally choosing lack of alternative (5%), reliability (5%), safety concerns (5%) and environmental impact (5%). Only car drivers had more than 0.3% report other commitments as the main reason for their modal choice.

Of those that travel to campus by car, 38% report not needing their car during the day, but 51% report sometimes needing their vehicle during the day and the remaining 11% aways needing their vehicle during the day. Of those that travel by car, 47% report needing it for pick-ups or drop-offs on their commute, such as the school run or other caring responsibilities. Of those, 59% are female and 41% are male, while 81% are staff and 19% are students.

Parking

Bicycle and e-bike Parking

Of those that travel to campus by bicycle or e-bike, 26% park indoors, 21% use outdoor sheltered areas, and 54% use outdoor unsheltered areas. On the Bolton Street campus, 84% of all bicycle parking is in outdoor unsheltered areas, followed by 63% on the Tallaght campus, 49% on Grangegorman, 33% on Aungier Street and 30% in Blanchardstown.

When asked to indicate facilities which would encourage more sustainable commuting, 64% of respondents who own a bicycle suggested secure and covered cycle parking (Blanchardstown 70%, Grangegorman 68%, Bolton Street 61%, Aungier Street 53% and Tallaght 50%).

In relation to infrastructure for non-standard bikes, 10% of bicycle users would like to see more cycle parking for non-standard bikes available. 30% of bicycle users on the Blanchardstown campus would like more cycle parking for non-standard bikes available, along with 18% of those in Bolton Street and 8% on Grangegorman.

Car Parking

Of those who travel to campus by car, 85% park on campus, 6% use off-street parking, while the remainder rely on on-street parking. Regarding availability, 60% of respondents report always having a parking space available on campus, 29% say a space is sometimes available, and 11% report never having access to a space.

When examined by student and staff status, disparities emerge. Only 4% of staff report never having a space available, compared to 32% of students. Among students who commute more than 40 km to campus, 47% report never having access to parking, and an additional 19% say they only sometimes do.

Parking Access and Chronic Health Conditions

Access to parking was also examined among individuals who reported having a chronic condition that limits physical activity. On the Tallaght and Blanchardstown campuses, no respondents with such a condition reported never having access to parking. In contrast, significant accessibility challenges were observed on other campuses: 43% of respondents on Bolton Street with a chronic condition reported never having access to a parking space, compared to 29% on Aungier Street and 26% on Grangegorman. The proportion of respondents with a physical activity–limiting chronic condition who reported sometimes having access to parking includes: Aungier Street (31%), Bolton Street (15%), Tallaght (15%), Grangegorman (14%), and Blanchardstown (15%). Notably, on the Bolton Street campus, no respondent with a chronic condition reported always having access to a parking space.

Interest in behaviour change interventions

When embarking on any behaviour change interventions, it is important to consider what people report would help them change their travel behaviours but also to review case studies, research, and evaluation of interventions to inform a strategy. Priority needs to be given to the projects with the greatest potential impacts, notwithstanding the potential for high-impact, low-cost and quick-win projects. For example, in the survey, students and staff were asked which of the following list would encourage them to walk or cycle or interest them if they were available on campus.

The TU Dublin Sustainability Office has been working with Campus Planning and Campus & Estates to develop a 'register of opportunities' for projects and apply for funding for their implementation. The data from previous survey reports also informed opportunities frameworks for the Tallaght and Blanchardstown campuses. This work is ongoing with several information campaigns, national behavioural intervention programmes implemented, and support infrastructure installed including bicycle fixing stations. A comprehensive list was submitted to the NTA as part of the Smarter Travel Mark application for which TU Dublin was awarded a silver award[7]. Using data from this survey and previous surveys, opportunities for tailored interventions on campus' can be identified.

Eighty-two percent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I would like to use sustainable transport to reduce my impact on the 'environment' and 76% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I try to use sustainable transport when I can'.

However, barriers to change may include a lack of choice or affordability. For example, 44% of the respondents indicated that they use their car to commute to campus as they have no alternative, 39% report that driving a car is the most effective way to commute and 31% of the total sample report feeling confident cycling a bike during their commute.

7. TU Dublin awarded Silver by National Transport Authority's Smarter Travel Mark | TU Dublin

Initiatives to increase walking or cycling	Sample	Cyclists (inc e-bike)	Private Vehicle Users
Increased safety at public transport stops	30%	14%	29%
Increased safety on public transport	27%	14%	24%
Better walking links to public transport stops	25%	8%	17%
Lockers provided or improved	19%	31%	12%
More quiet walking/cycling routes to campus	17%	38%	9%
Cycle parking covered and secure	17%	64%	12%
More segregated cycle routes	17%	59%	10%
Increased security on campus	15%	24%	15%
More shelter on walking routes around campus	15%	8%	7%
Shower areas increased or improved	15%	34%	14%
More entry points onto campus	15%	10%	9%
Benches	13%	5%	2%
Cycle parking increased	10%	37%	6%
Personalised info about sustainable transport options	10%	4%	7%
More pedestrian crossings	10%	4%	3%
Drying room for gear provided	10%	31%	8%
Information on Park & Ride	9%	3%	13%
E-bike charging station	5%	8%	5%
Shared bike/e-bike/cargo bike scheme	5%	4%	3%
More cycle parking for non-standard bikes	4%	10%	3%
Better disability-friendly access routes	3%	2%	1%
e-scooter parking spaces	2%	1%	2%

Table 8: Initiatives to increase walking or cycling

Fifty-two percent would like to walk more often, 44% would like to cycle more often, 41% would like to use public transport more often and 28% would like to carpool more often. 52% agree or strongly agree that they travel the way they do out of habit. Other than having no alternative, the main reason for choice of travel modes is that it is the quickest (37%) and cheapest option (14%).

Fifty-four percent of respondents report that housing availability and affordability effects their commute in a negative way. 74% of students and 45% of staff said they would participate more in campus activities if their commute was less restrictive.

All these factors are important considerations when designing interventions and identifying target groups to work with. Further data analysis is warranted to inform decision-making. The most popular potential initiatives from the survey to increase sustainable and active travel were (% agreement).

The top incentives are different depending on if respondents travelled to campus by bike or private vehicle. Private vehicle users most frequently selected improvements to public transport safety and accessibility, with 29% citing increased safety at stops and 24% citing safety on board, suggesting these may be perceived barriers to modal shift. Improvements in walking links to public transport were also more relevant to this group than to cyclists.

In contrast, cyclists and e-bike users prioritised infrastructure and end-of-trip facilities. The most frequently selected initiative among cyclists was secure, covered cycle parking (64%), followed by more segregated cycle routes (59%) and increased cycle parking capacity (37%). A significant proportion also highlighted the need for showers (34%), lockers (31%), and drying rooms (31%), underscoring the importance of supporting facilities for active commuters.

Cyclists also gave a higher ranking to having bicycle maintenance classes and having a cycle service station than those that do not travel by bicycle. However, 33% of those that travel by private vehicle were not interested in these potential initiatives.

Physical activity

79% of survey respondents reported meeting the HSE's physical activity guidelines. This is an impressive result, as the national average is only 37%[8].

Respondents generally viewed their campus as walkable; Grangegorman 94%, Tallaght 84%, Blanchardstown 80%, Aungier Street 79% and Bolton Street 70%. However, in response to the question 'how often do you walk or jog on campus', much fewer people indicated that they always or sometimes do this; Grangegorman 43%, Tallaght 30%, Blanchardstown 43%, Aungier Street 34% and Bolton Street 30%. There was no significant difference between student and staff perceptions of walkability or frequency of walking/ jogging across each campus.

More respondents who walked (90%), cycled (96%), or used public transportation (76%) viewed their commute as part of their physical exercise routine than those who used a private vehicle (25%) or motorbike/scooter (28%).

Campus perceptions

Perceptions of the campus environment—such as safety, cleanliness, and the presence of crime—can play a significant role in shaping whether individuals feel comfortable walking, cycling, or spending time outdoors on campus. This in turn influences travel decisions, particularly sustainable ones which generally have an active element. This section explores

8. Irish Sport Monitor 2022

how these factors may influence decisions to engage in active travel or physical activity in and around TU Dublin campuses. Campus improvements to support physical activity also align with the Healthy Campus Charter which TU Dublin is a signatory of.

Campus character

Perceptions of campus spaces varied widely across TU Dublin locations. The Grangegorman campus received the most positive responses, with 56% agreeing that it is a unique area with personality and character. This was followed by Aungier Street (46%) and Bolton Street (44%). Fewer respondents agreed with this statement at the Tallaght (31%) and Blanchardstown (29%) campuses, where higher proportions were neutral or disagreed.

These differences suggest that some campuses may offer more visually or socially engaging environments that could better support casual physical activity, wayfinding, and time spent outdoors.

Ease of mobility

Younger respondents are more likely to agree that their campus is hilly, making it “difficult to walk, wheel, push, or run”, with 23% of those under 25 years and 21% of those aged 25–34 years expressing agreement. The level of agreement with this statement declines steadily with age, dropping to just 8% among those over 55 years. This pattern is similar across all campuses and suggests that perceptions of hilliness may not be directly related to physical ability but could reflect differing expectations or familiarity with the environment.

It is also possible that younger respondents were more likely to interpret the question through a more socially and environmentally conscious lens, considering inclusivity and mobility barriers from a systemic perspective, not just personal inconvenience. In contrast, older respondents may have answered based on their personal experience, which could, in part, explain the age-related trend observed.

Respondents with a chronic disability impacting physical activity were more likely to agree that the campus is hilly and difficult to walk, wheel, push, or run (23%) compared to those without a disability (17%). However, when the data is broken down by individual campuses this relationship is only significant at the Grangegorman campus ($x^2(2) = 12.40$, $p = .002$). The absence of significant differences elsewhere most likely reflects a smaller number of respondents with mobility-related conditions. It is the recommendation of this report that ease of mobility around each campus be explored further with a focus on those with mobility issues. The question should also be re-worded to assess personal mobility experiences.

Feelings of safety on and around campus

Over half of all respondents (52%) agreed or strongly agreed that their campus has a high rate of crime. Perceptions varied by location. Respondents based at Bolton Street reported the highest concern, with 68% agreeing that the area has a high crime rate and just 6% disagreeing. Blanchardstown and Tallaght campuses also reported elevated concern, with 59% and 52% agreement, respectively. Respondents based at Grangegorman and Aungier Street campuses were slightly less likely to perceive high crime, though agreement still exceeded 44% on both campuses. These findings suggest that perceptions of crime are a concern for a significant proportion of the University community and may influence feelings of safety. There was no statistically significant difference in perceptions of campus crime across gender ($x^2(2) = 0.79$, $p = .674$).

Perceptions of campus lighting vary notably by location. Respondents from the Aungier Street campus were the most likely to agree that their campus is well lit at night (46%), followed by the Grangegorman campus (37%). Almost half of respondents (48%) at the Blanchardstown campus disagreed with the statement, suggesting significant concern about lighting in that area. Bolton Street and Tallaght campuses also had higher levels of disagreement, at 44% and 40%, respectively. There was a statistically significant difference in perceptions of campus lighting between male and female respondents ($x^2(2) = 28.99$, $p < .001$), with women more likely to report that campus areas are poorly lit at night. This suggests that lighting may be more of a safety concern for female respondents.

A significant proportion of respondents reported avoiding certain areas on or around campus, with a stark contrast between day and night-time behaviors. While 38% overall said they avoid places during the day, this jumps to 72% at night. The pattern holds across all campuses, highlighting widespread concerns about safety after dark.

Campus-level differences are also evident. During the day, Bolton Street (49%) and Aungier Street (46%) campuses had the highest levels of reported avoidance, while Blanchardstown (40%), Grangegorman (32%) and Tallaght (35%) campuses were lower. At night, avoidance is high across the board (Aungier Street 76%, Blanchardstown 75%, Bolton Street 75%, Tallaght 68% and Grangegorman 70%).

These findings suggest that perceptions of safety significantly influence how campus spaces are used—particularly at night—and point to a need for improved lighting, design, and visibility in key areas to support safe and inclusive access.

E-Scooters

Following recommendations from the 2022 report, the 2024 survey included targeted questions on e-scooter use. Just 1.1% of respondents reported using an e-scooter for some portion of their commute to campus. The data indicates that the e-scooter is a complementary mode of transport rather than a full commute replacement - especially for people with longer commutes.

Notably, 73% of e-scooter users reported using them for less than half of their total commute, with 84% relying on public transport as their primary mode. Commute distance varied, with 23% travelling between 1-5 km, 23% travelling between 5-10 km, and over half (54%) commuting more than 10km. This suggests that e-scooters are particularly valuable for first- or last-mile travel among longer-distance commuters, extending the reach of public transport and making it more accessible and convenient for commuters[9].

In terms of demographics, 68% of e-scooter users were students and 32% were staff, with no meaningful differences between genders. While the sample size is small (n=22), some tentative patterns emerged across campus usage. The Grangegorman campus accounted for the highest share of users (36%), followed by Bolton Street (23%), Blanchardstown (18%), Tallaght (14%), and Aungier Street (9%) campuses. These differences may reflect infrastructure or accessibility differences across campuses; however, further data is needed to draw reliable conclusions.

Next steps with the data

TU Dublin's Sustainability Office has worked with the NTA to obtain an anonymised version of the survey dataset that will allow researchers at TU Dublin to investigate further campus-specific needs that will inform the needed investment and interventions across the Univeristy.

9. Fearnley, N., Johnsson, E., & Berge, S. H. (2020). Patterns of e-scooter use in combination with public transport.

The robust sample size allows TU Dublin to undertake multilevel statistical analysis, such as the examples outlined in this report.

As the 2022 survey questions are comparable to the 2024 survey, the next phase of analysis will conduct a detailed comparison between the 2022 and 2024 datasets and with previous years where data is comparable. This will allow for a clearer understanding of emerging trends when data is examined by campus and by student or staff status, helping to identify where shifts in travel behaviour may be occurring.

Data was also collected in the survey on domestic and international work-related travel. In previous surveys this was not sufficiently robust to inform meaningful discussion. Following previous feedback to the NTA, new questions were developed to enhance the survey. This data will be used alongside other travel-related data, and travel procurement and expenses, to inform scope 3 reporting requirements as they come into effect. The first step with the data is to triangulate the data with other sources to test it for validity and reliability.

Further investigations will be undertaken into the data with an intersectional lens. In this report, examples of where gender and ability have informed perspectives have been highlighted. More work will be done to further explore these effects and the role of gender, caring responsibilities, ability, time spent travelling, and other data items that influence travel decisions.

This data gives TU Dublin a robust mechanism to monitor the impacts of our transport and mobility interventions and to generate a transport scope 3 emission profile to inform investment decisions. This baseline will also serve to guide and strengthen targeted engagement with local authorities and national transport agencies. It will support TU Dublin in securing funding and delivering sustainable travel improvements that address entire journeys across the national transport system—not just the segments occurring on or between TU Dublin's campuses.


db
dublinbikes