



Údarás Náisiúnta Iompair
National Transport Authority

Taxi driver research

Wave 6

National survey
September/October 2022





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Introduction

Introduction

- This report details the findings of a representative survey of taxi drivers in Ireland.
- This is the sixth iteration of this study, and was, as previously, undertaken by telephone, with a list of SPSV licence holders provided by the NTA for interview.
- A survey of taxi consumers has been undertaken online in tandem, covering a similar topic and aimed at understanding taxi usage and attitudes towards taxis.
- Where possible, findings have been compared with previous waves of this study, and with previous iterations of the NTA Taxi Fare Review study.
- This waves includes a section on the experiences of those with electric vehicle taxi's.



Objectives

The core objective of this survey was:

Understand the current operating costs for taxi drivers in Ireland in terms of their vehicle, usage of third-party booking services and the working hours.

- This research aimed to understand:
 - ❖ Other costs associated with operating a taxi
 - ❖ Perceptions towards electric vehicles
 - ❖ Experiences of those who drive an electric vehicle taxi



Methodology

A representative survey of taxi drivers in Ireland.



Sample Size:

668 Taxi Drivers
115 WAT Drivers
194 Electric vehicle Drivers



Quota Controls:

Quota controls in place on region and split of taxi renters and owners. The sample included a booster of WAT and electric vehicle drivers.

Weights:

Corrective weighting on region, split of owners/renters and those with electric vehicle and WAT taxi's was applied to ensure that we had a representative sample of drivers, comparable with previous waves.



Fieldwork Dates:

16th September – 22nd October 2022

Context:

All pandemic restrictions have been lifted and there is currently no mandatory requirement to wear masks on public transport.



CATI Interviewing

Interviewing was undertaken by experienced B&A Telephone Interviewers. The team are mostly working from home at present, but the same quality control and supports are available.

Research Timeline



Mar 2020

Government close schools on Friday 13th with a view to opening on 29th March....



Apr/May 2020

Office workers work from home while parents continue home schooling. Restaurants, pubs and non-essential retail outlets remained closed. **Strict lockdown measures.**



Jun 2020

Roadmap to reopening the country is underway: **shopping centres & restaurants reopen** under strict guidelines.



Jul 2020

Personal services, such as hairdressers and barbers, and creches **open** once again, and some employees return to the office.



Aug 2020

Preparations underway for the return to school. Some **slight sense of normality** with more people dining out, etc.



Sep 2020

Children go back to school. Government announce new 5 Level plan, later moving **Donegal & Dublin into Level 3.**



Oct-Nov 2020

Moved to **Level 3** (only outdoor dining allowed). On 21st Oct, country moves to **Level 5 for 6 weeks** (until 1st Dec) with all non-essential retail and restaurants closing.



December 2020

Non-essential retail outlets & services (e.g. hairdressers) **opened** on 1st Dec, but **on 24th** country moved back into **Level 5**: all restaurants, bars & non-essential retail outlets/ services closed once again.



Jan-Mar 2021

High case numbers leads to extended **Level 5 lockdown** for Q1 2021, with all restaurants restricted to delivery and non-essential retail/services closed. Schools partially reopened in March for the youngest and oldest children.



Apr-May 2021

All children back to school and some **restrictions eased**. Outdoor meet ups permitted in small groups, but hospitality remained closed & working from home encouraged. Non-essential retail & professional services back



Jun 2021

Outdoor dining re-opened. Test events being rolled out and vaccine programme opened up to under 50s.



Jul-Aug 2021

Indoor dining for those vaccinated opened on 26th July, while further **test events** (e.g. outdoor music festival) were held in July also. At the end of August it was announced that almost all restrictions would be lifted on October 22nd



Sep-Oct 2021

Limited restrictions remain in place as masks continue to be a requirement in crowded spaces. Important to note that fieldwork finished on 11th October before further changes to restrictions on 22nd October.



Feb-March 2022

Easing of nearly all pandemic restrictions. From 28 February **face masks are no longer mandatory**, although still recommended on public transport. Public health measures in schools removed and advice for close contacts, testing and isolation changed.



Sept-Oct 2022

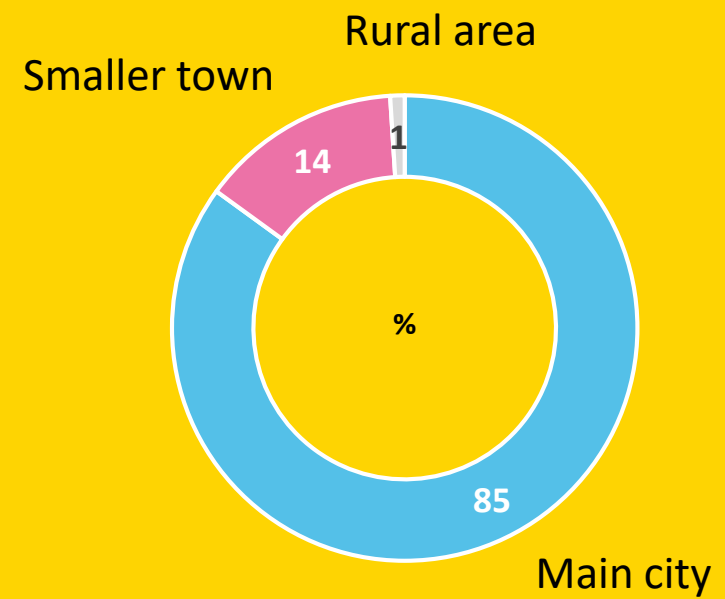
No pandemic restrictions currently in place.



1. Profile of sample and vehicle

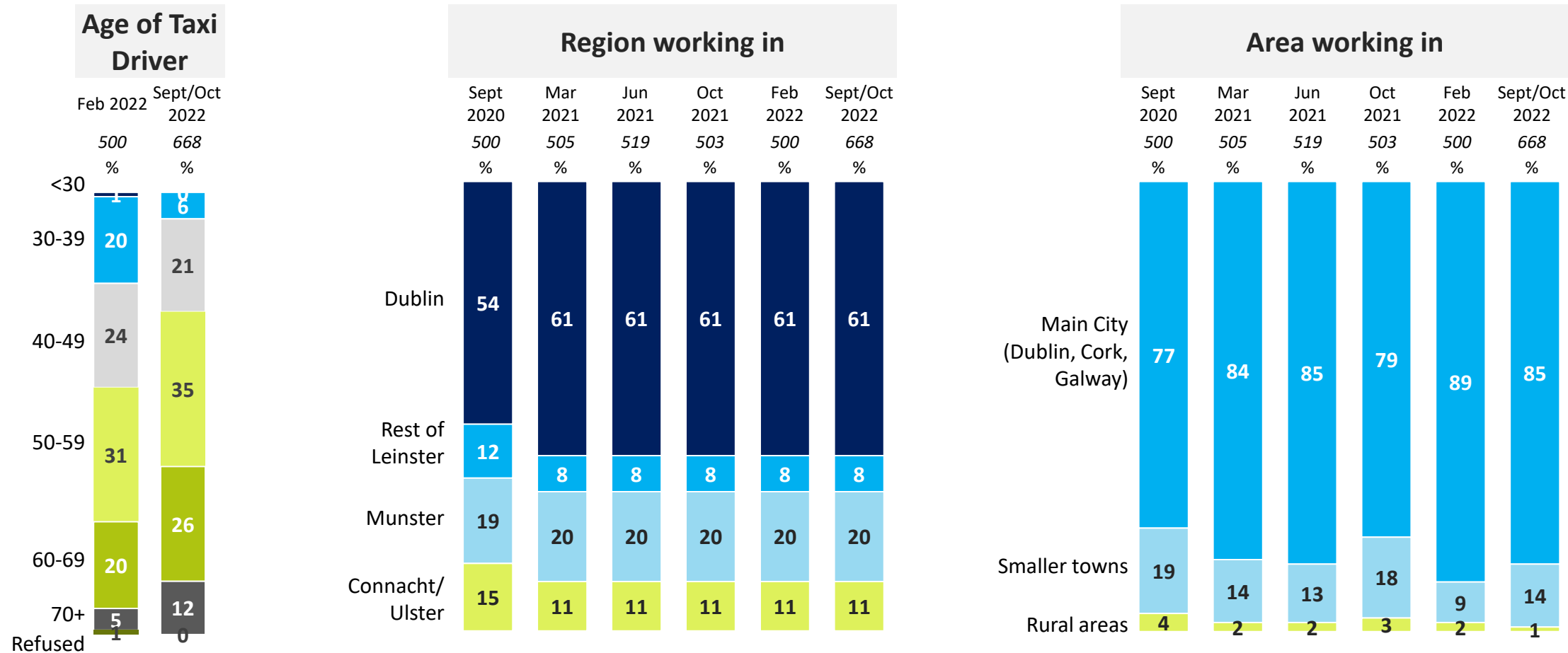


**85% of drivers operate in
a main city**



Profile of taxi drivers interviewed

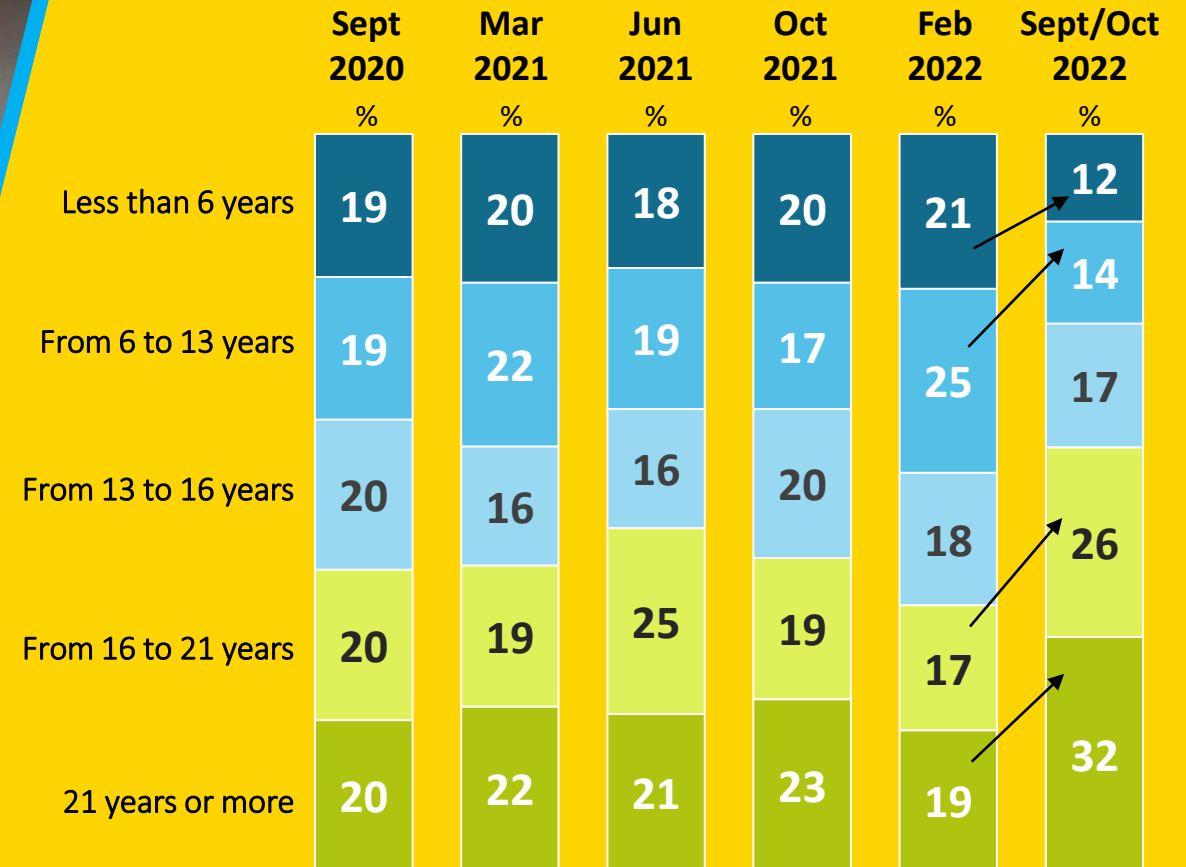
Base: 668 taxi drivers



Slightly older profile of drivers that were surveyed in this wave with most between 50-69 years old.

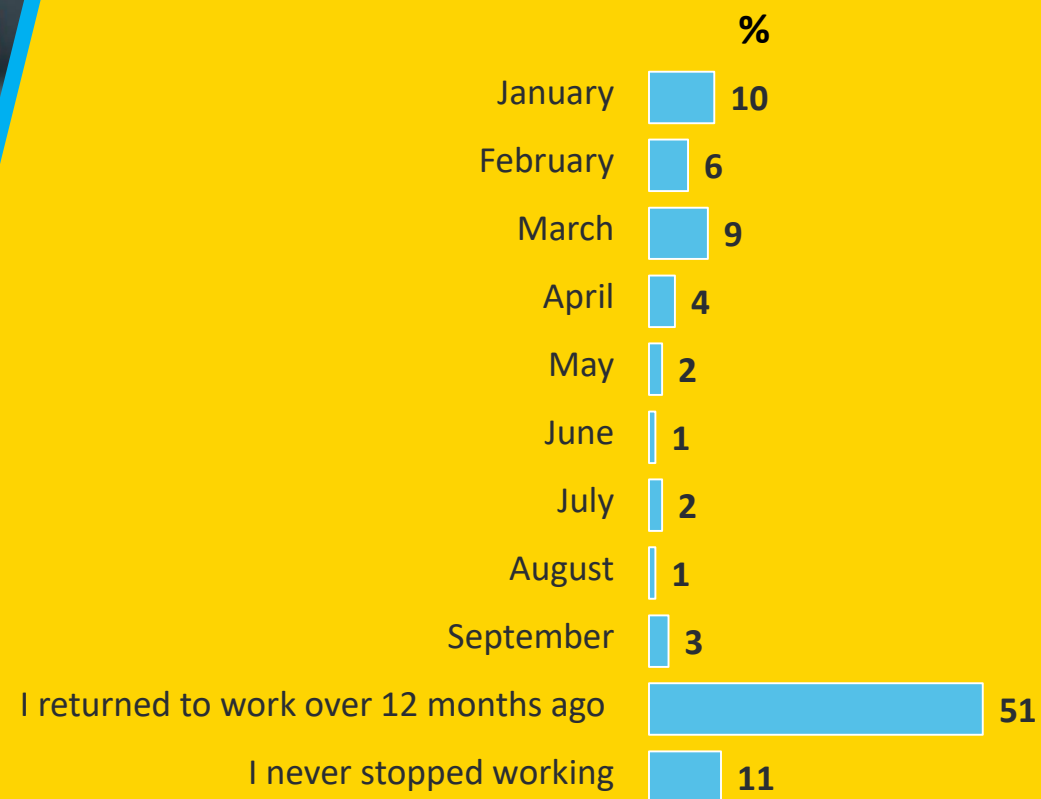


18 years is the average length of time taxi drivers have been working. Fewer reported working 13 years or less in this wave



On average taxi drivers do
43,866 Km
per year

Half of taxi drivers
returned to work
over 12 months ago



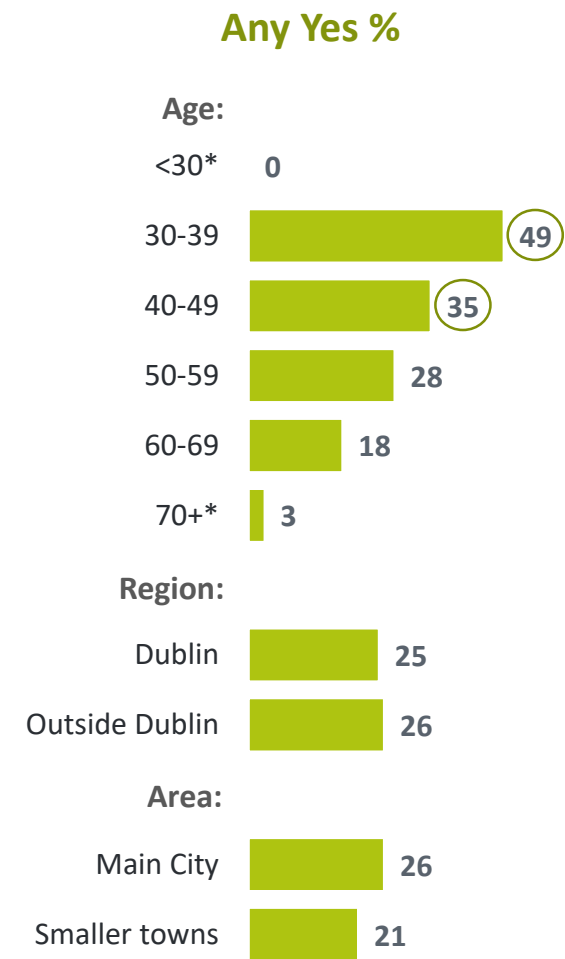
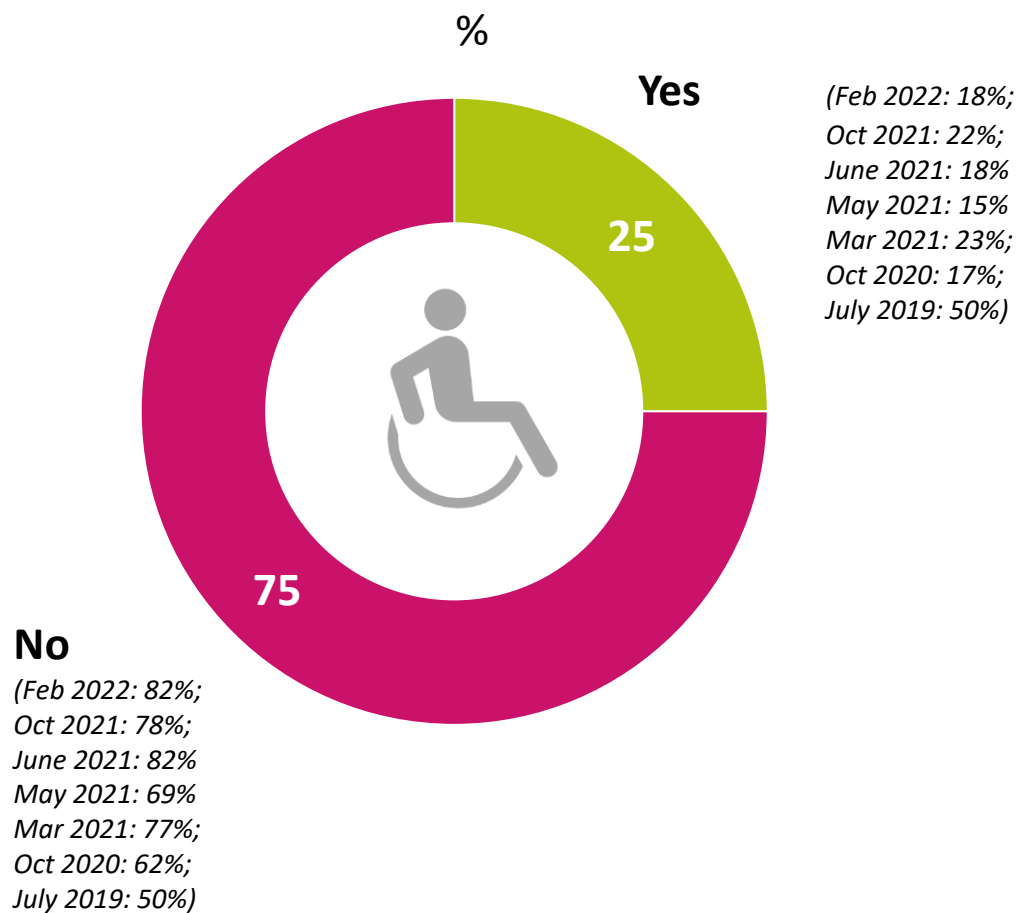


84% of taxi drivers are driving a 5 seater vehicle.

		%	June 2021	Oct 2021	Feb 2022
5-seater	<div><div></div></div>	84	80%	77%	75%
6-seater	<div><div>5 </div></div>		7%	7%	15%
7-seater	<div><div>2</div></div>		5%	7%	4%
8-9 seats	<div><div>9</div></div>		9%	9%	6%

1 in 4 drive Wheelchair Accessible vehicles

Base: 668 taxi drivers



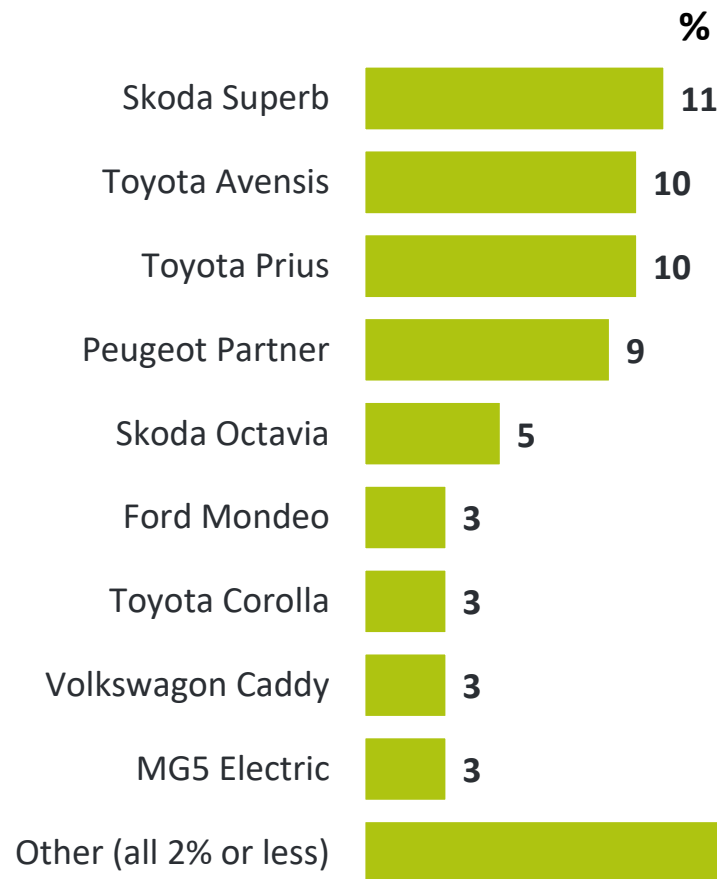
The percentage of respondents driving wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) increased from Feb '22 (+7%pts) and is more in line with October '21.



Taxi drivers who have wheelchair accessible vehicles report an average 15% of their fares are for wheelchair users or customers requiring mobility assistance

Vehicle make/model

Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle

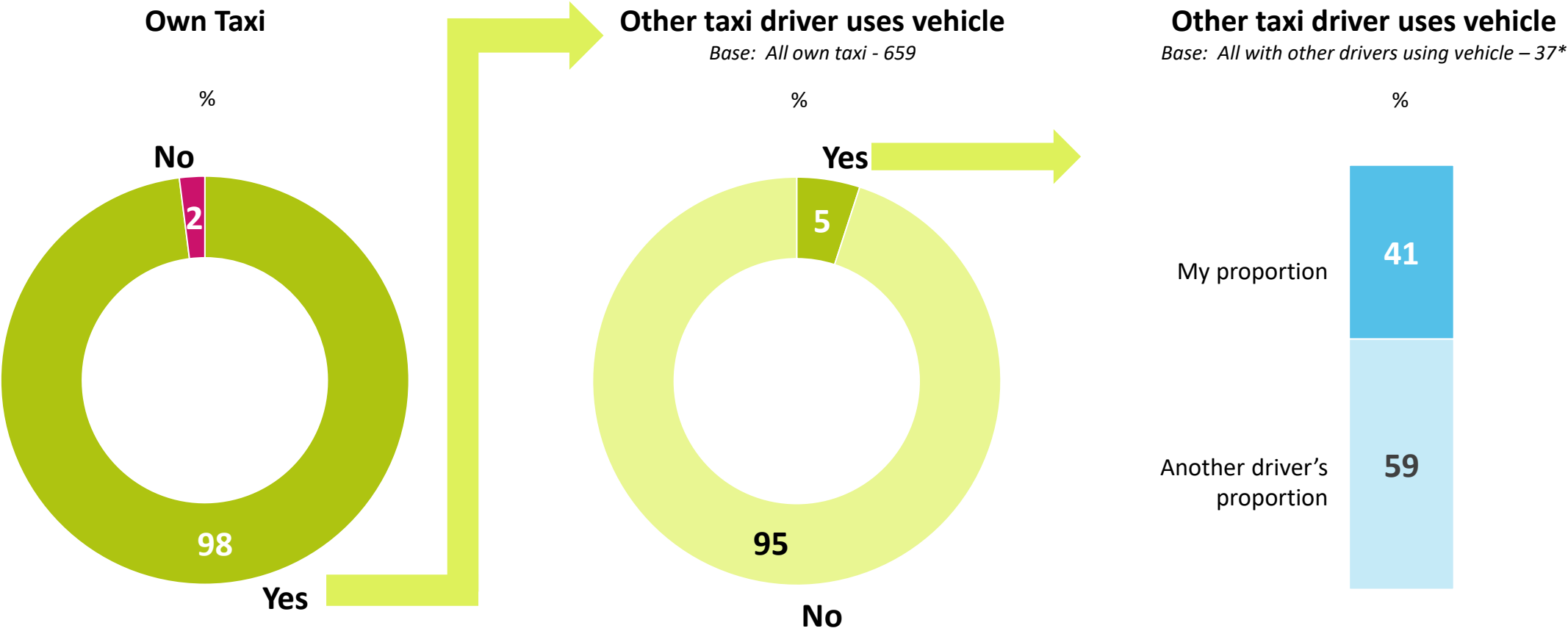


Feb 2022	2019	2017	2014
%	%	%	%
9	6	-	-
14	11	28	33
18	3	4	7
5	21	-	-
9	5	8	9
2	4	-	-
2	1		
3	7	10	4
-	-	-	-

Over 1 in 10 taxi drivers have a SKODA Superb, however taxi drivers use a wide range of different vehicle makes and models.

Taxi ownership and use

Base: 668 taxi drivers



**Caution: small base*

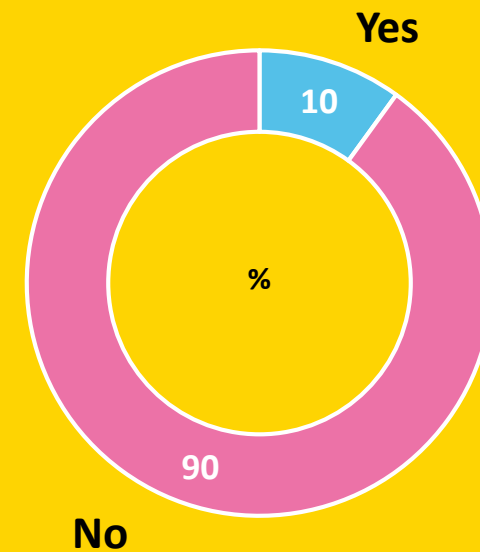
98% of drivers own their taxi. Of those who own their taxi very few have another driver using their vehicle (5%).



Of the 10% of owners who own more than one taxi, 7.7 is the average no. of taxis owned

Do you own more than one taxi/a fleet of taxis?

Base: All own taxi - 659

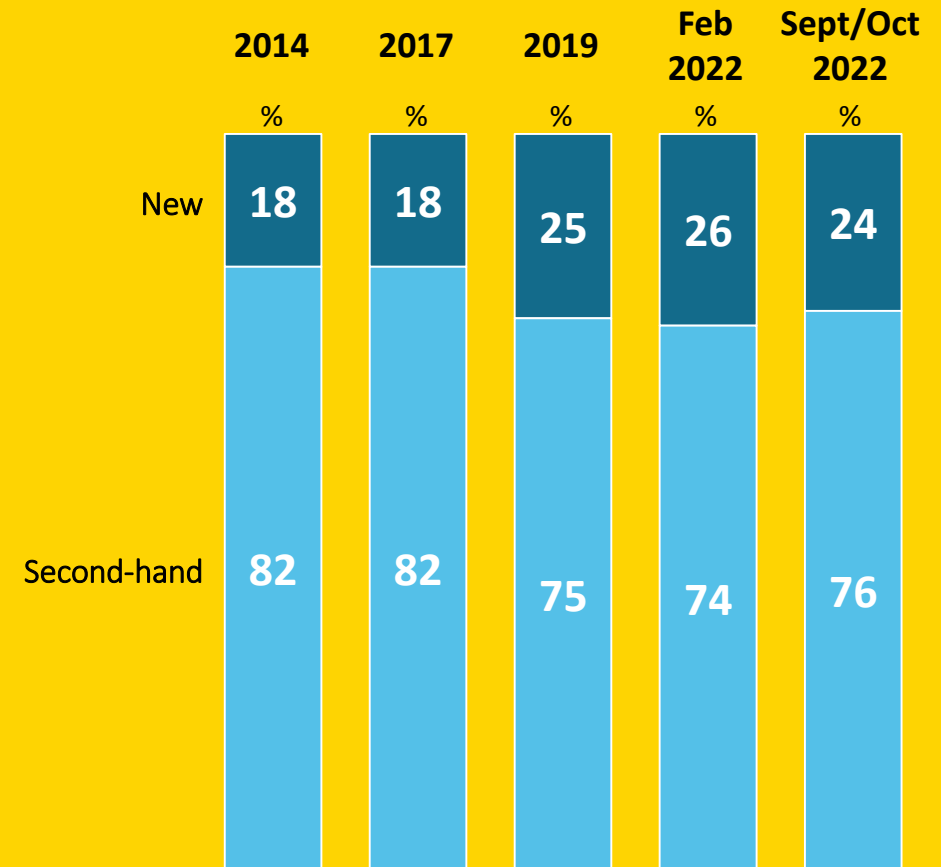




24% of drivers bought their vehicle new

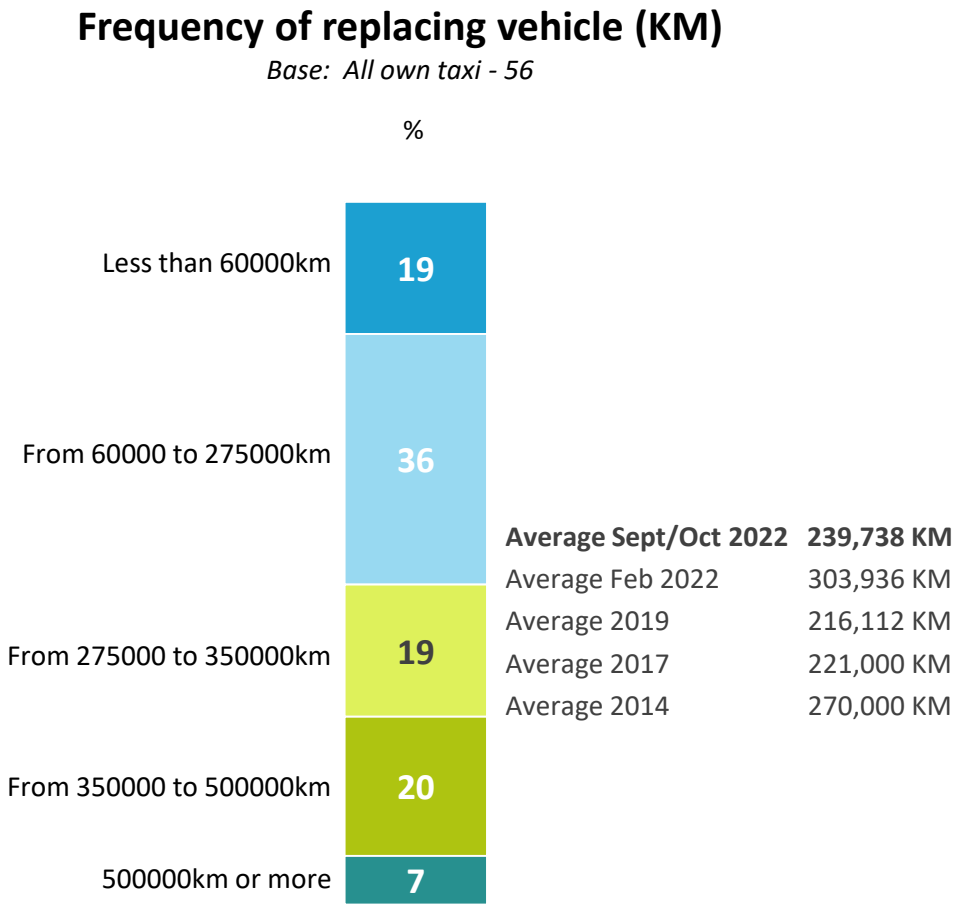
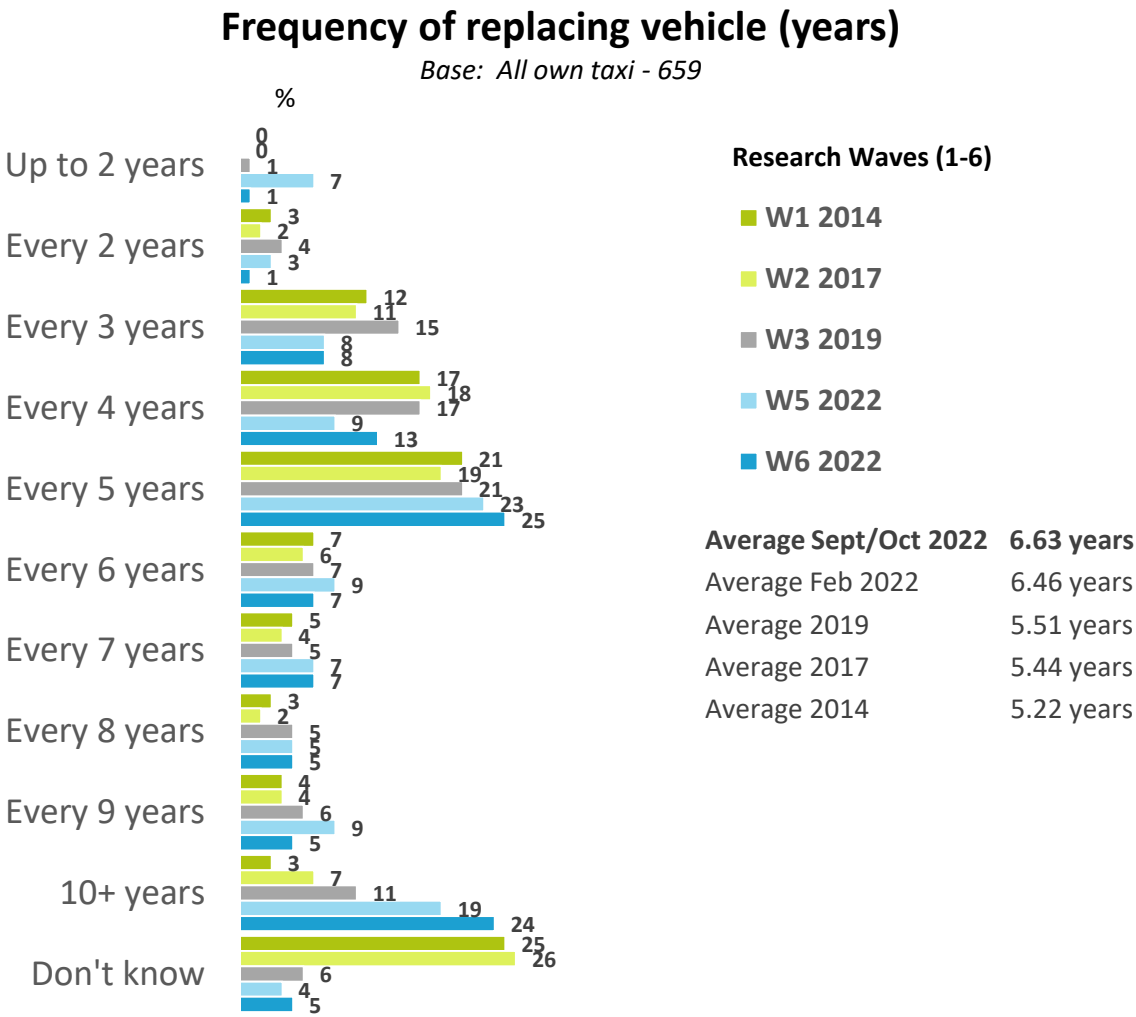
Vehicle Purchased

Base: taxi drivers with own vehicle - 659



Frequency of vehicle replacement

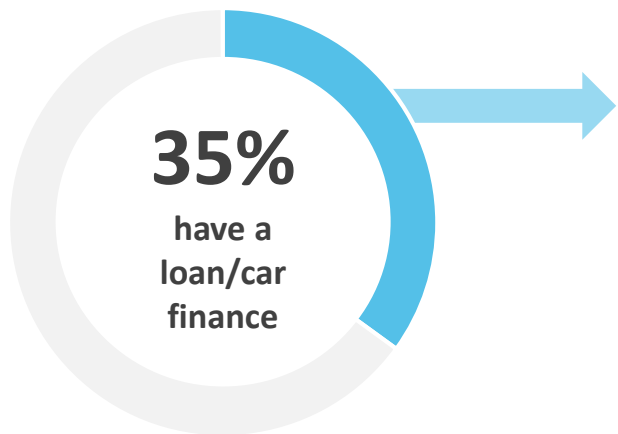
Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle



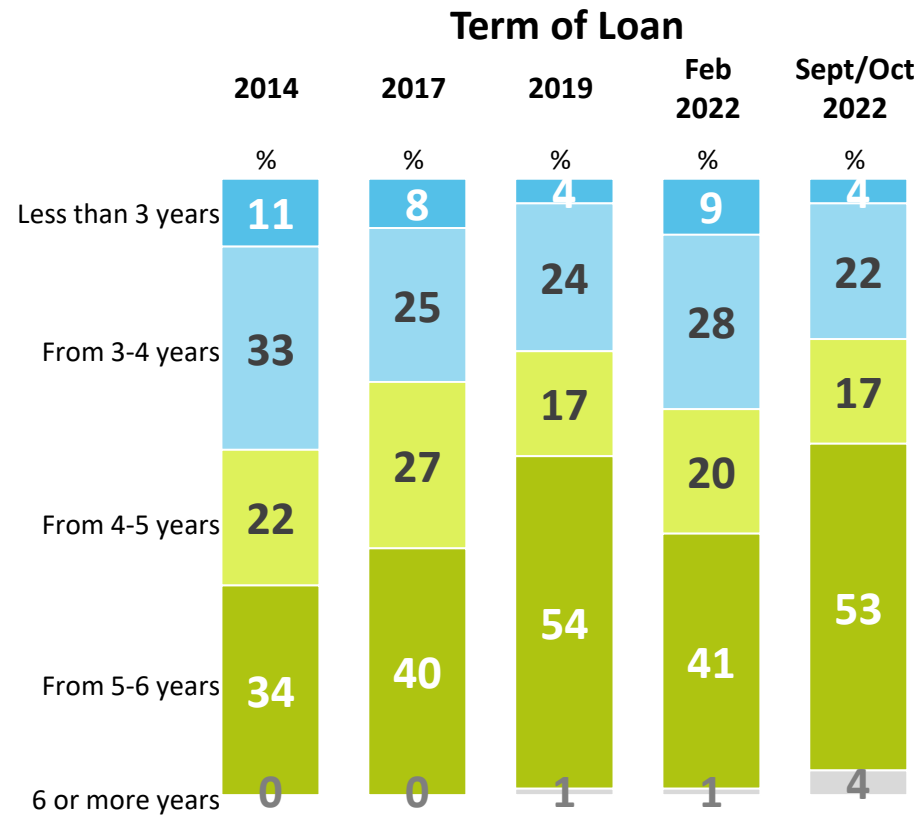
On average drivers replace their vehicle after 6.63 years or after doing 239,738 KMs.

Loan/car finance

Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle



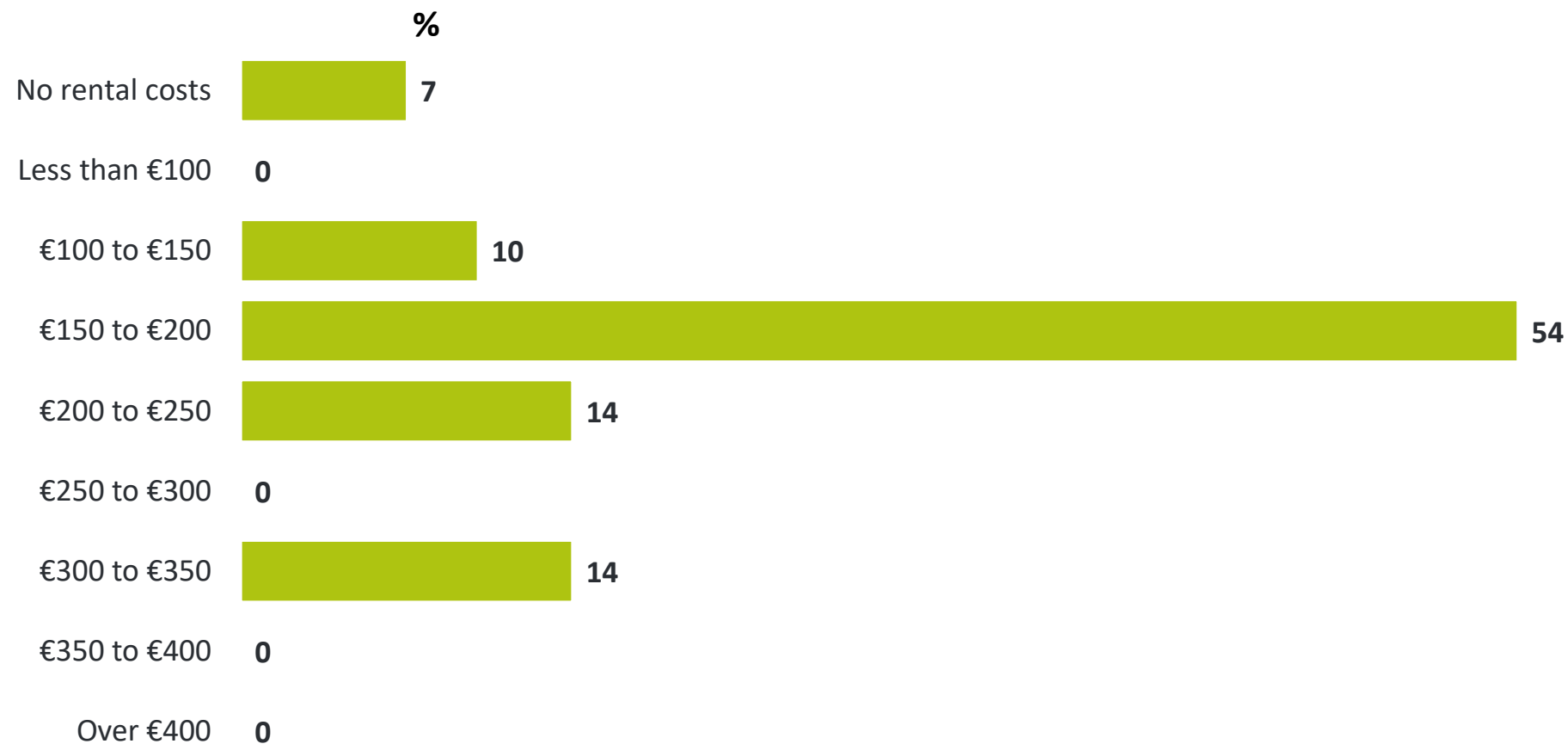
(2017: 31%;
2019: 39%
2019: 47%;
Feb 2022: 23%)



35% of drivers have a car loan with 53% having a term of 5-6 years, an increase from Feb '22.

Rental costs of taxi

Base: 9* taxi drivers who rent a taxi



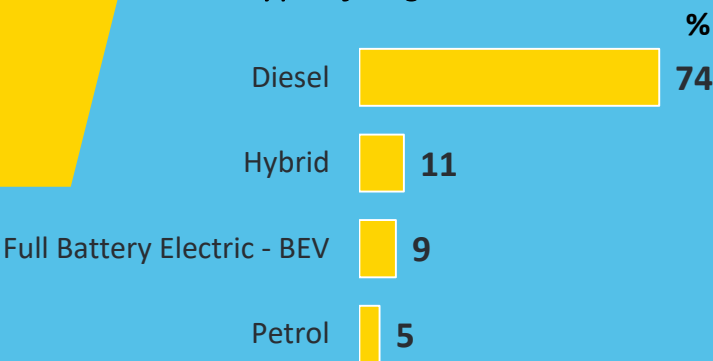
*Caution: extremely small base

Of those who rent a taxi the cost per week for the majority (54%) is between €150 and €200.



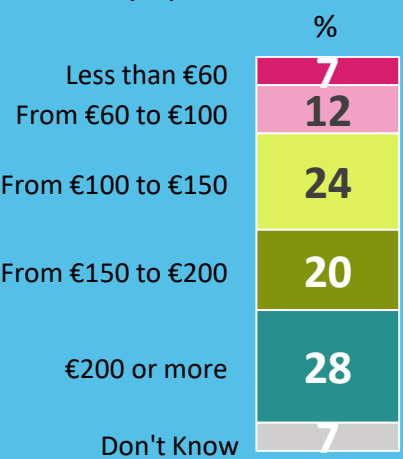
1.8 litres
is the average engine
capacity of their vehicle

Type of Engine in Vehicle



Feb 2022	2017	2014
%	%	%
63	81	74
19	N/A	N/A
4	N/A	N/A
13	17	26

Weekly spend on vehicle fuel/electricity



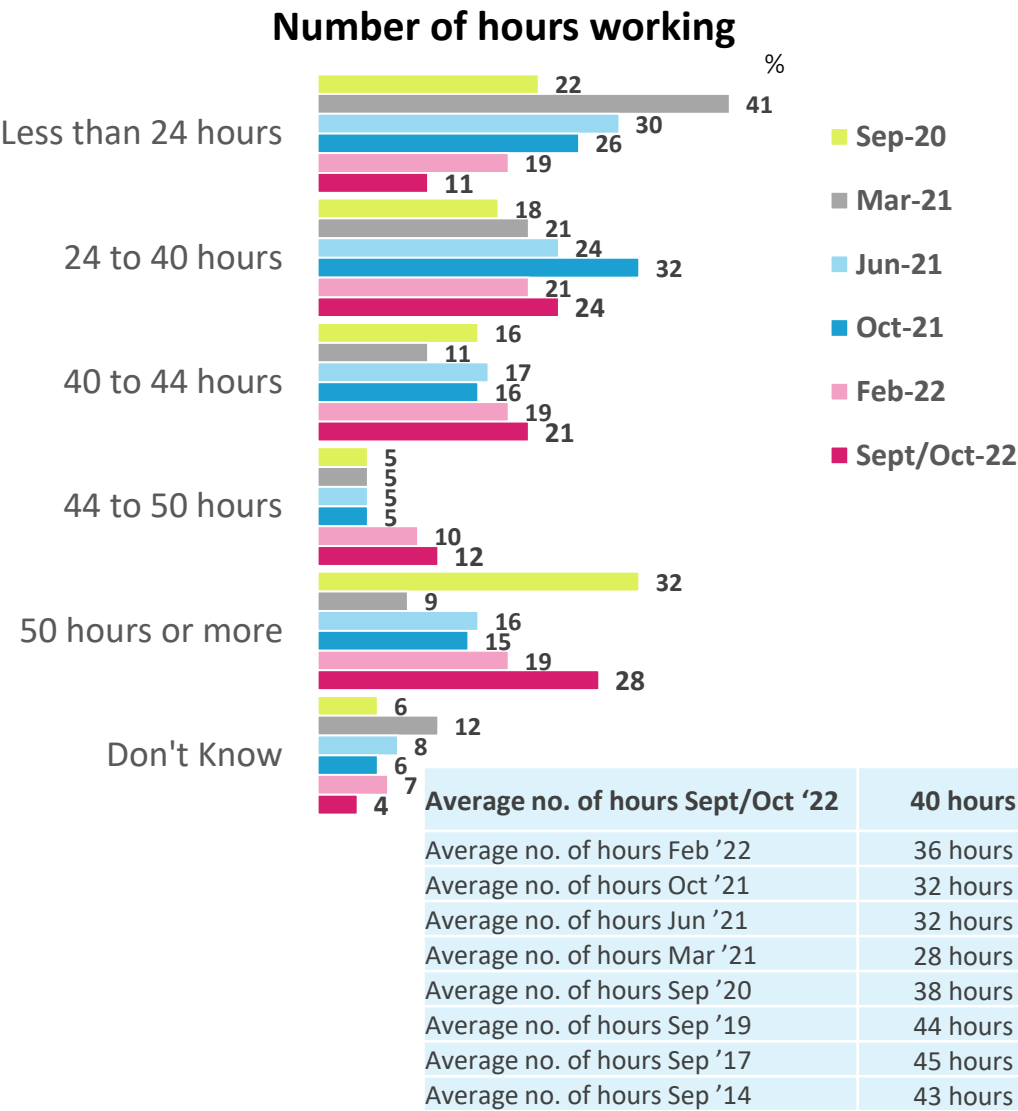
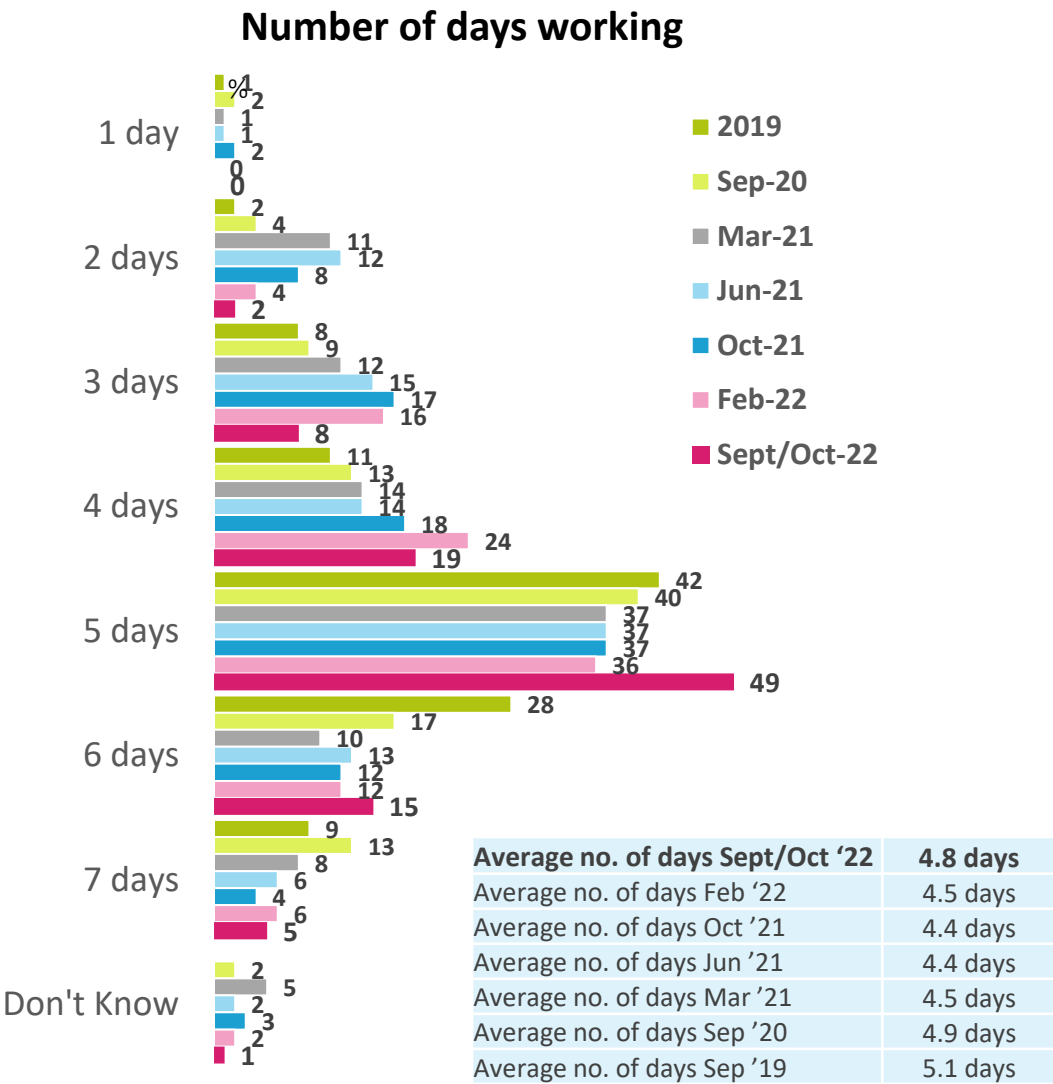
Average Weekly Fuel Spend:
Sept/Oct 2022: €158.45
Feb 2022: €137.78
2019: €115.63
2017: €103.00
2014: €119.00



2. Current working trends

Current working days

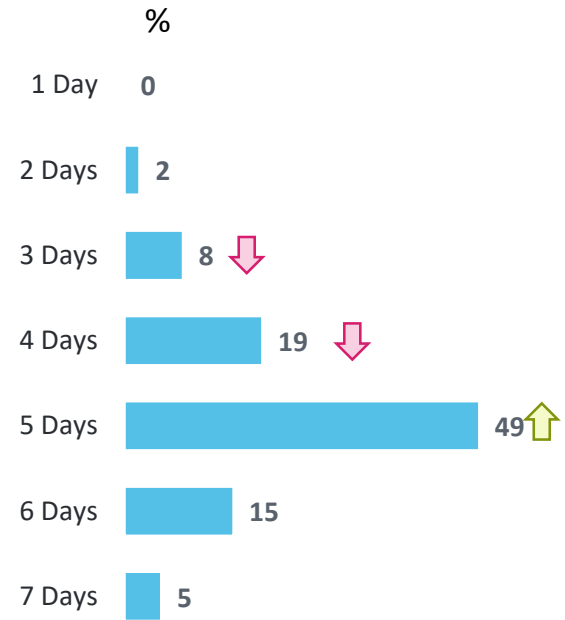
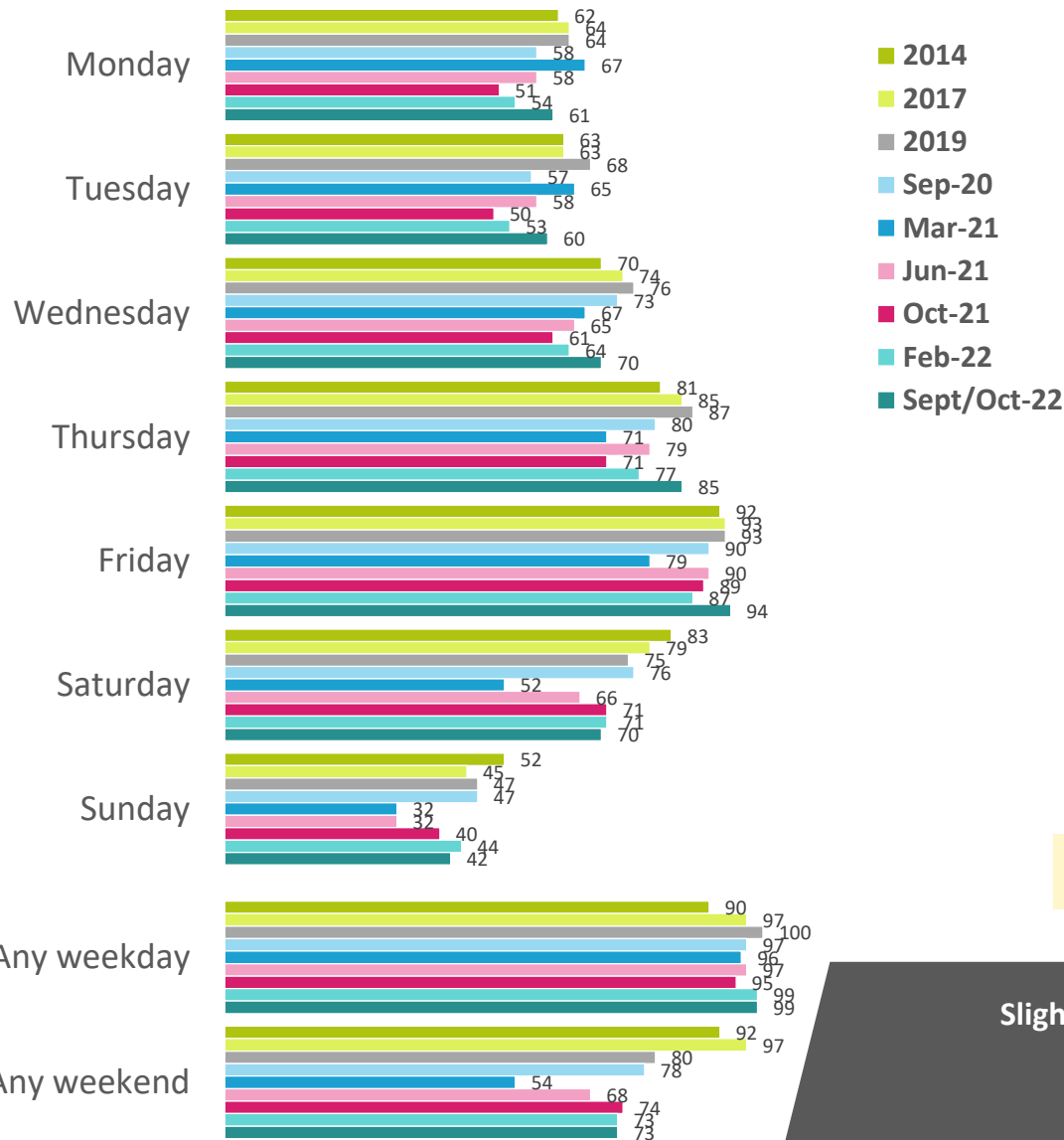
Base: 668 taxi drivers



The average number of days worked has slightly increased and is in line with Sep '20 at 4.8 days a week. With the average number of working hours also increasing since Feb '22 (+4 hours).

Days typically worked

Base: 668 taxi drivers



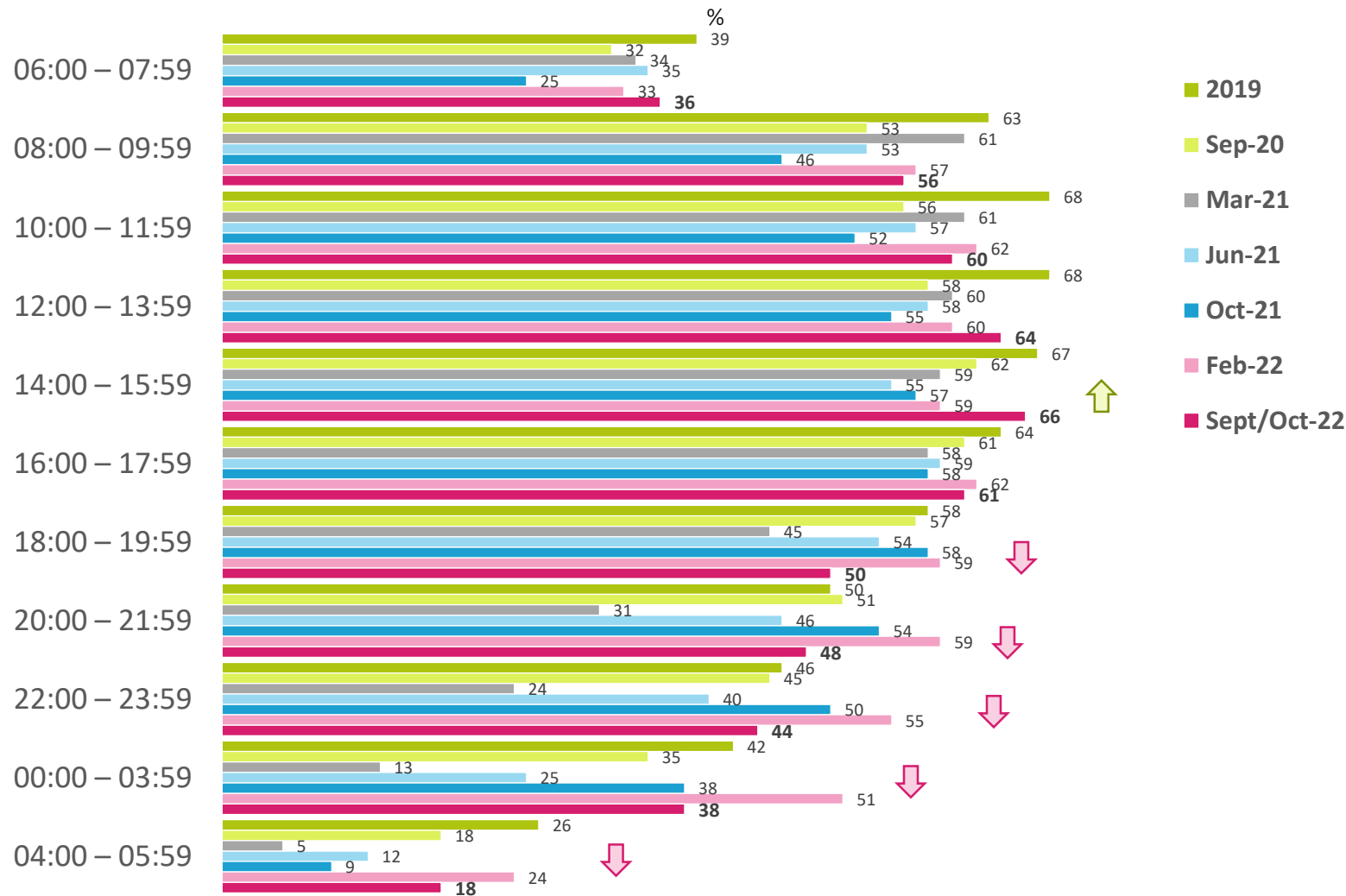
Region	
Dublin	Outside Dublin
336	332
%	%
0	0
1	4
8	7
18	22
52	45
15	15
6	5

Average number of days	4.84	4.9	4.75
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Slight increase in working Monday-Friday compared to the last wave of research. Working on Thursday increases +8%pts with Saturday and Sunday in line with Feb '22. Thursdays and Fridays are the most common amongst operators.

Time normally work

Base: 668 taxi drivers



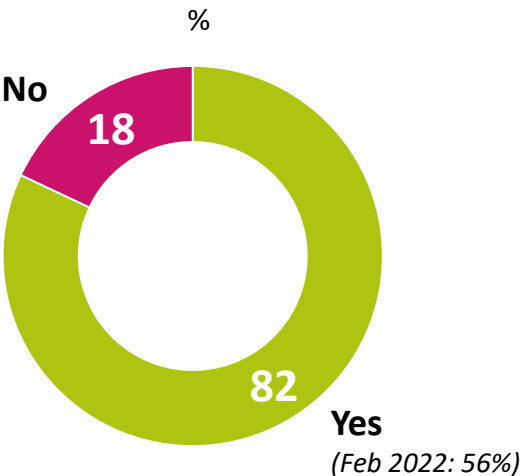
Total	Region	
	Dublin	Outside Dublin
668	316	322
%	%	%
36	38	33
56	57	55
60	63	57
64	65	64
66	63	70
61	57	65
50	47	56
48	46	51
44	41	47
38	35	43
18	21	14

Working between 6:00-7:59 and 12.00-15:59 has increased compared to Feb '22, with working at later time periods decreasing.

Night time working

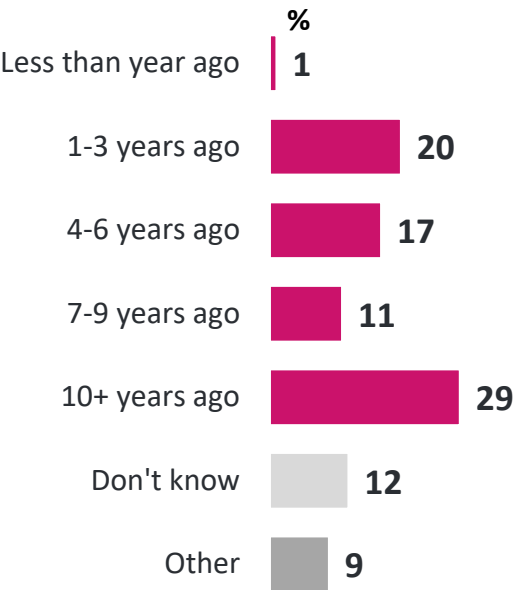
Base: All Taxi Drivers do not work 12pm to 5.59am - 371

Ever Worked Nights



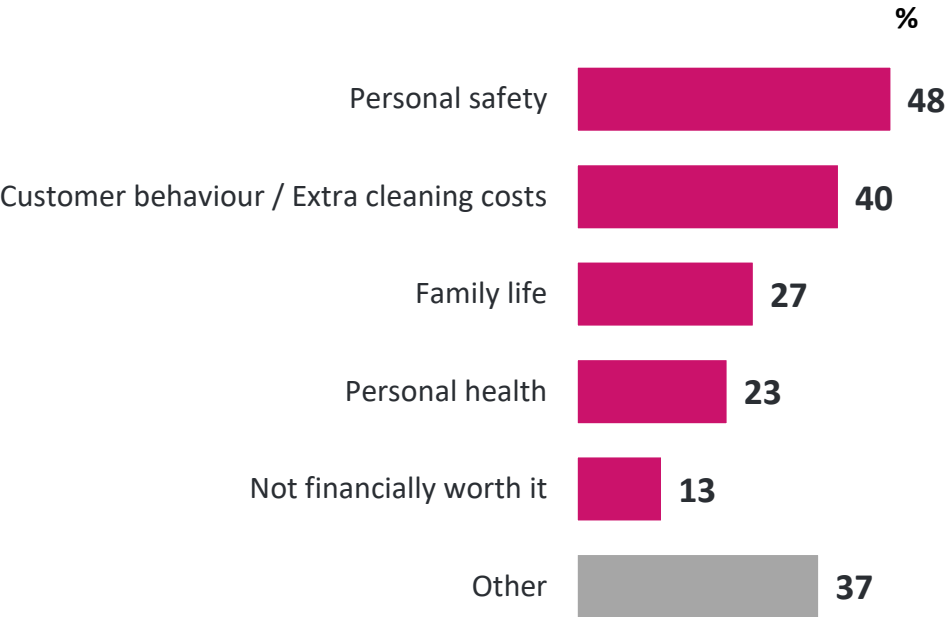
When stopped working nights

(Base: All who ever worked nights – 287)



Reasons for stopping working nights

(Base: All who ever worked nights – 371)

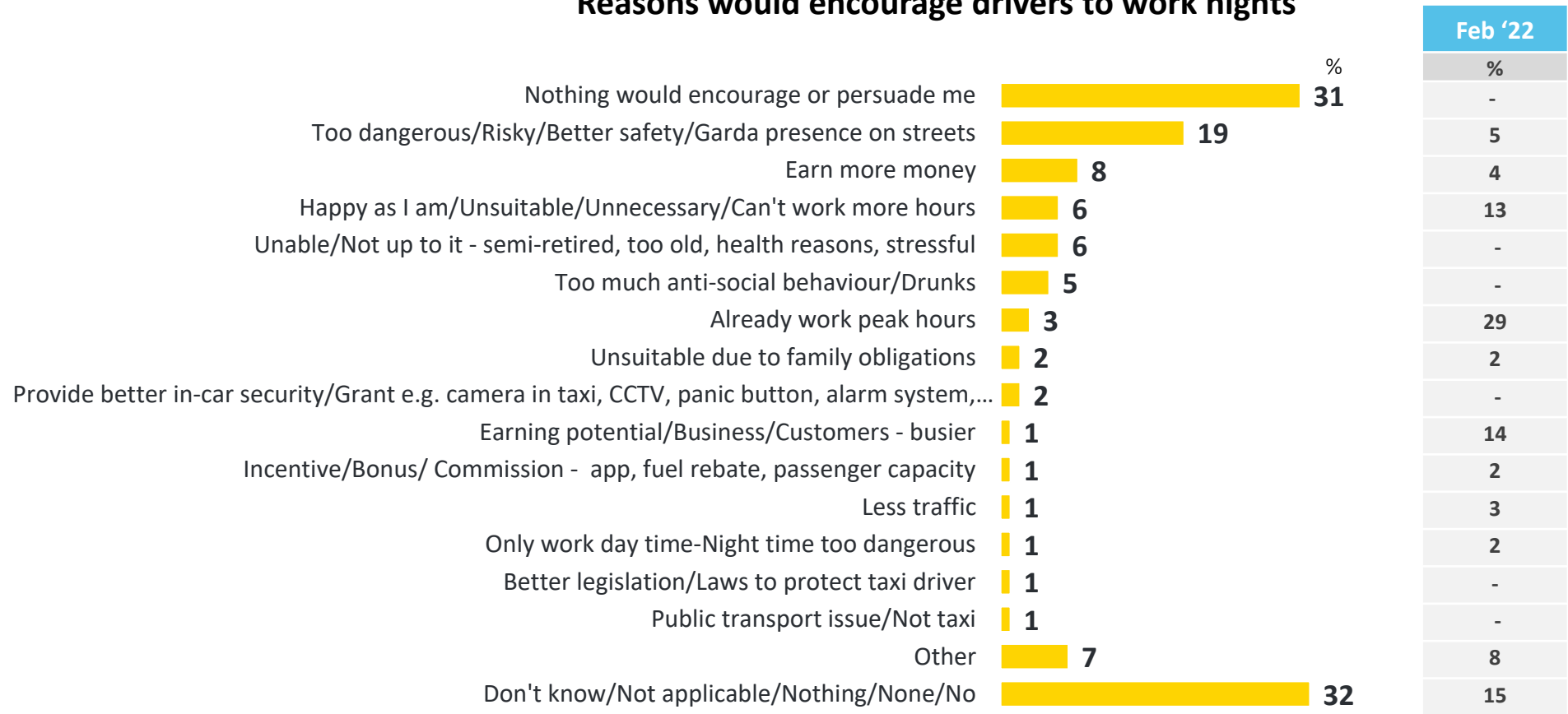


Of those who state they don't currently work nights (12pm - 05:59) just over 4 in 5 have ever worked nights. Of those who have stopped working nights 48% cite the reason being personal safety and 40% cite customer behaviour/extra cleaning costs.

What would encourage working at night?

Base: 668 currently working taxi drivers

Reasons would encourage drivers to work nights



Almost 1 in 3 state nothing would encourage them to work nights, 19% cite better safety measures and 8% the opportunity to earn more money. It should be noted that the National Maximum Taxi Fare which increased from 1 September 2022 included an average increase of 12%, with more weighting towards premium times (20:00 – 08:00) to encourage more operators to work at peak time to meet demand.



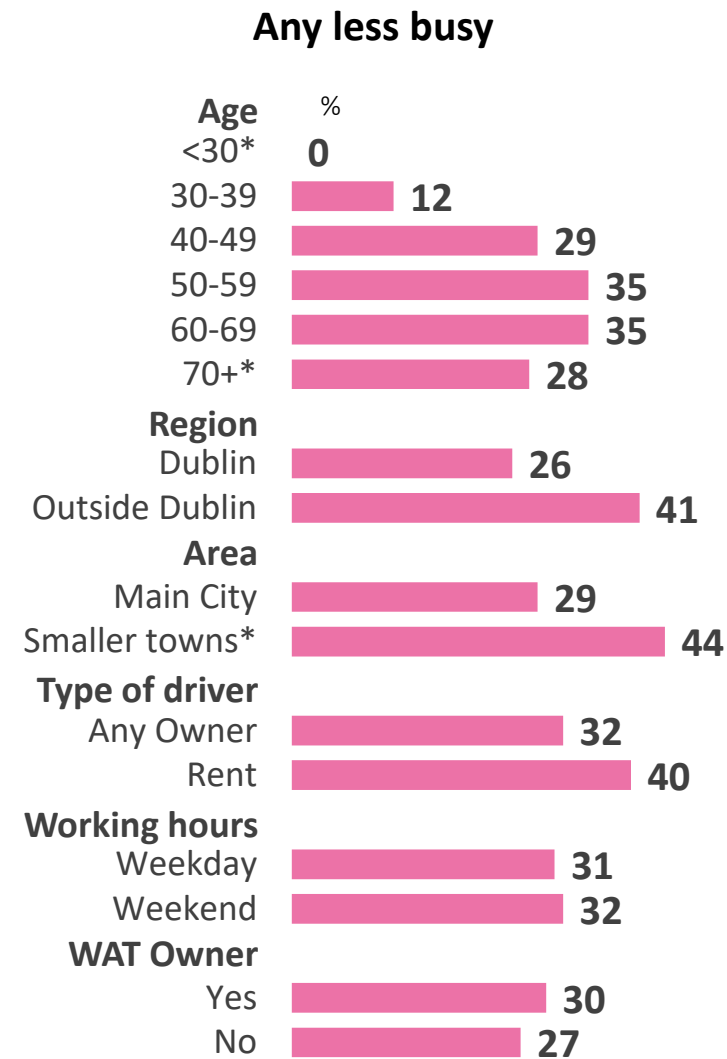
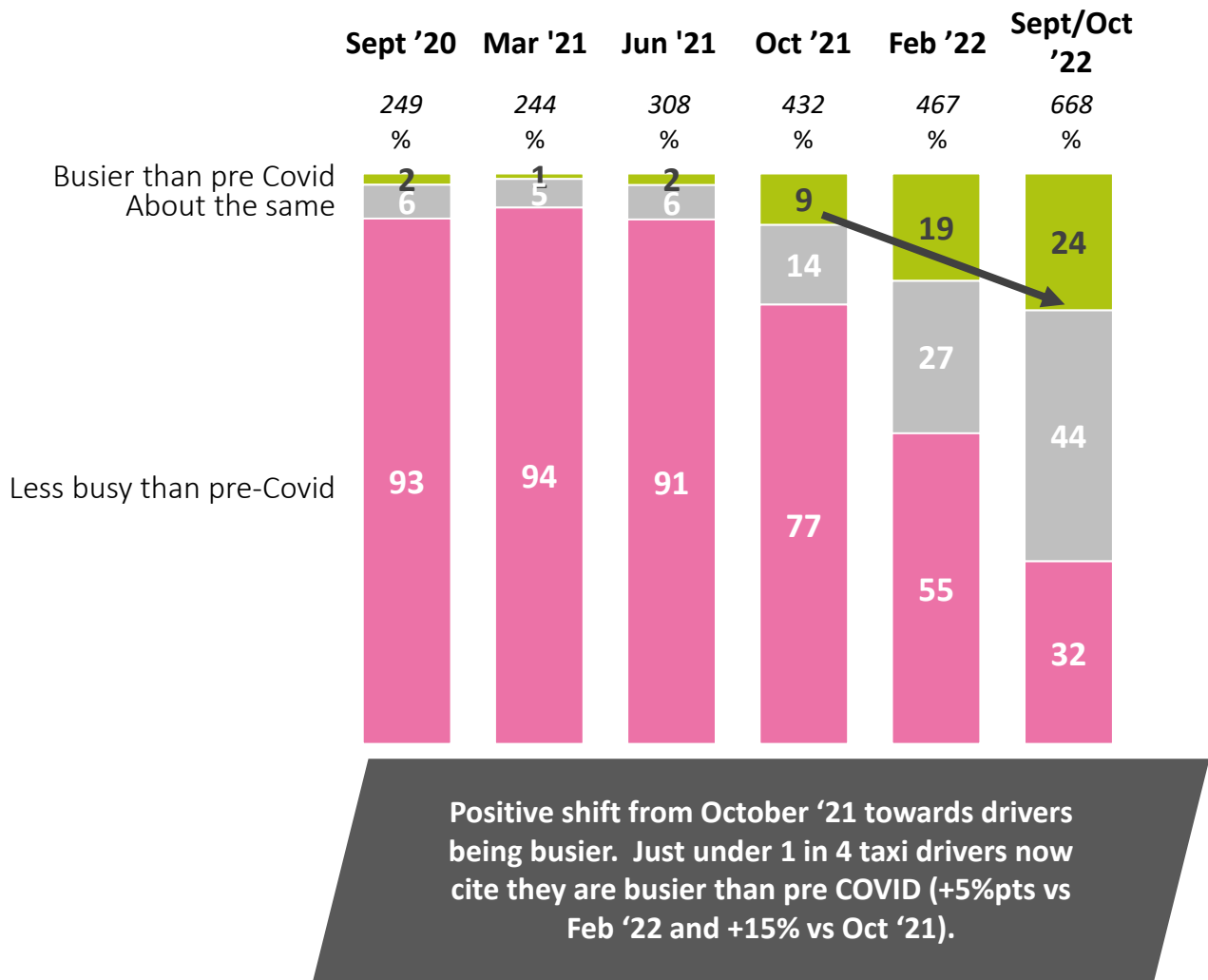
Shift towards drivers
being busier.

A third (32%) of working
taxi drivers are less busy
than they were pre-
COVID.

(-23% pts vs February 2022)

Demand for taxi services compared with pre COVID

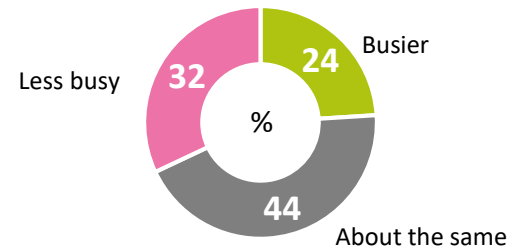
Base: 668 taxi drivers



Business compared with pre-Covid

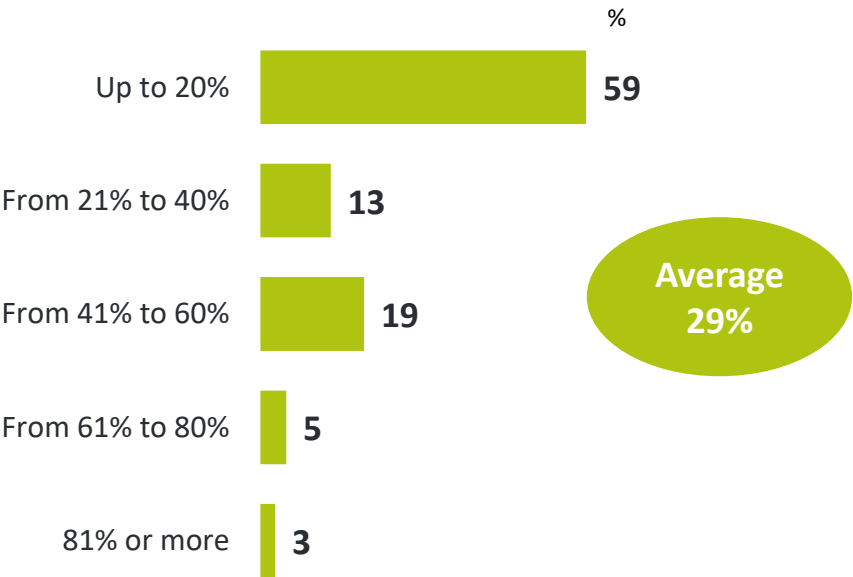
Base: Busier than Pre Covid N – 156/Less Busy than Pre Covid N - 215

Demand compared to pre COVID



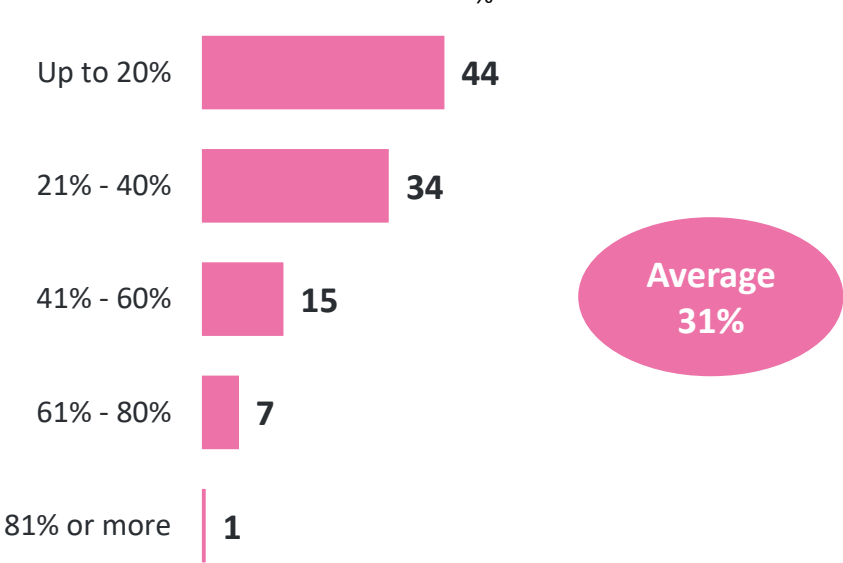
% Busier Than Pre Covid

(Base: 156)



% Less Busy Than Pre Covid

(Base: 215)



Of those who state they are busier than pre-COVID times, on average drivers are 29% busier.

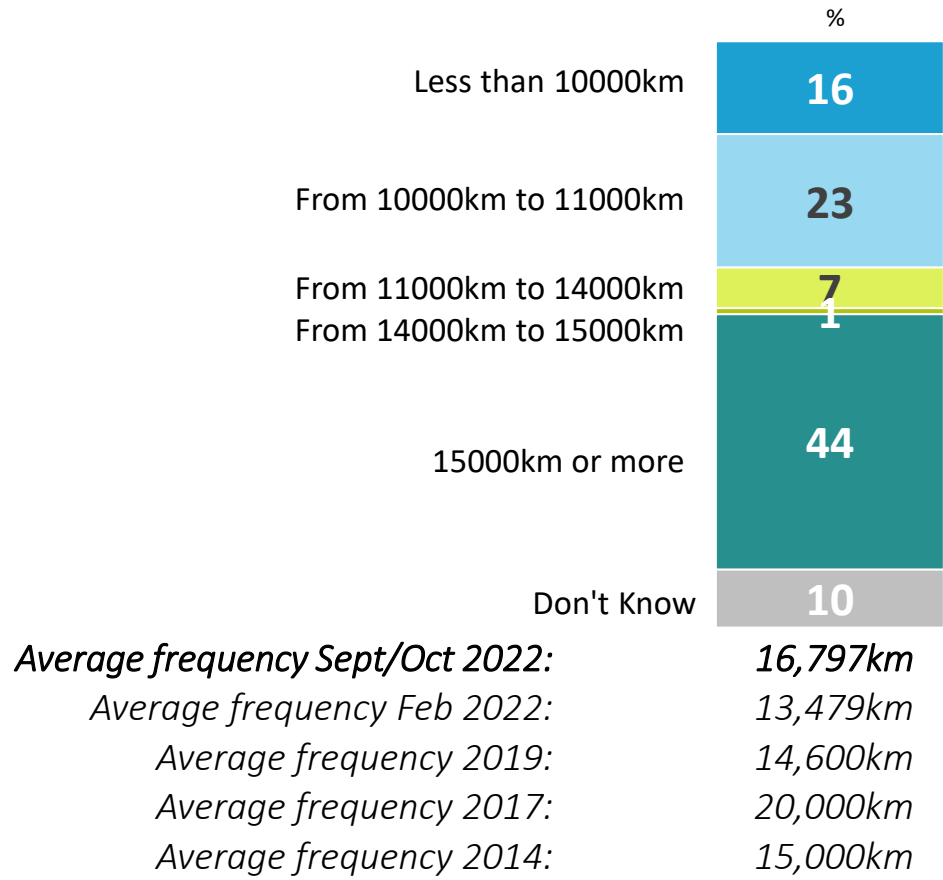


3. Other costs

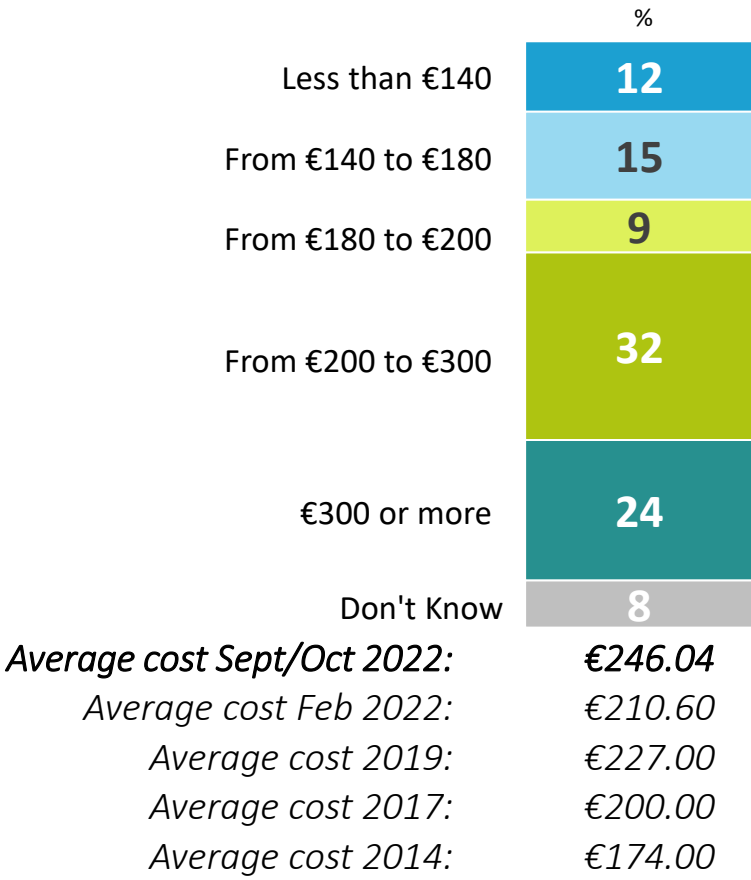
Vehicle service

Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle

Frequency of getting vehicle fully serviced



Cost of full service

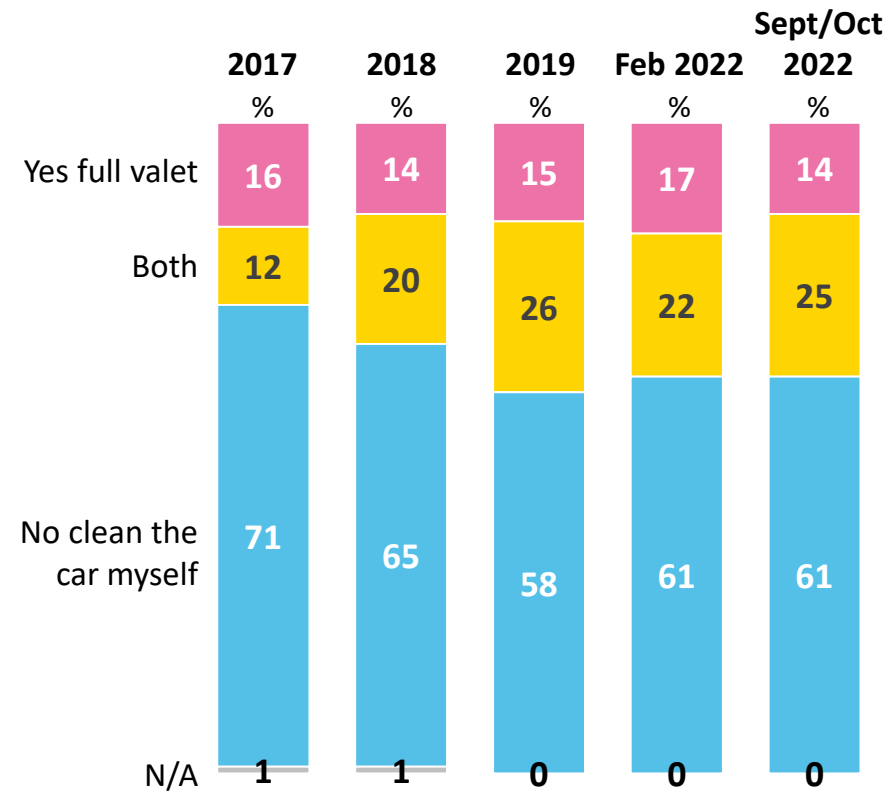


On average drivers service their vehicle after 16,797 KMs at an average cost of €246 (an increase of €35.4 from Feb '22).

Full valet service

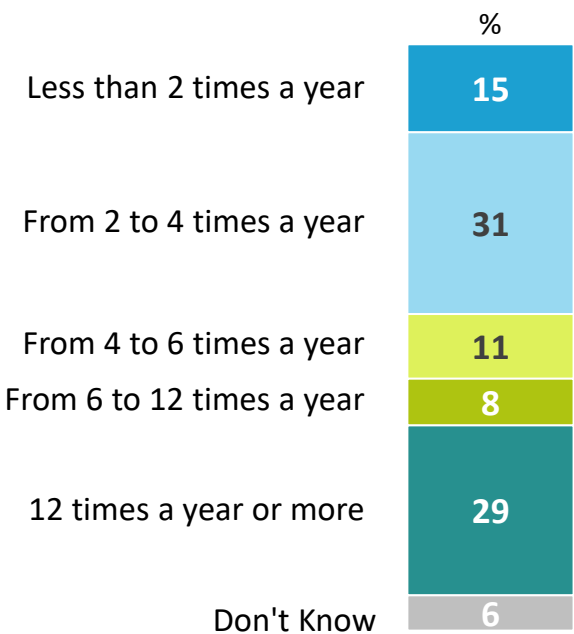
Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle

Valet services used



Frequency of getting valet service

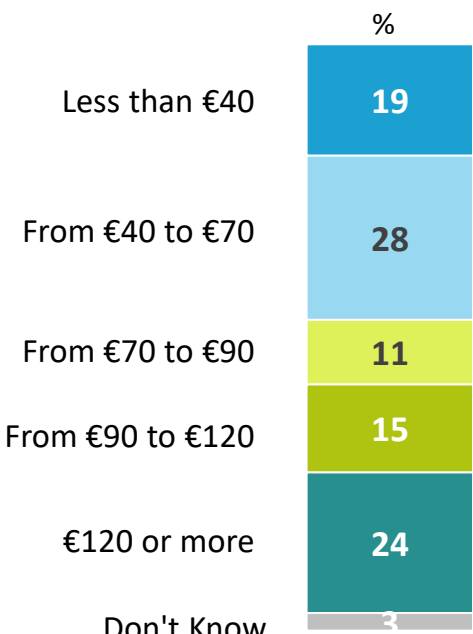
(Base: All getting valet service – 245)



Average no. valets in Sept/Oct 2022: 12
Average no. valets in 2022: 32
Average no. valets in 2019: 10
Average no. valets in 2017: 5
Average no. valets in 2014: 8

Cost of full valet service

(Base: All getting valet service – 245)



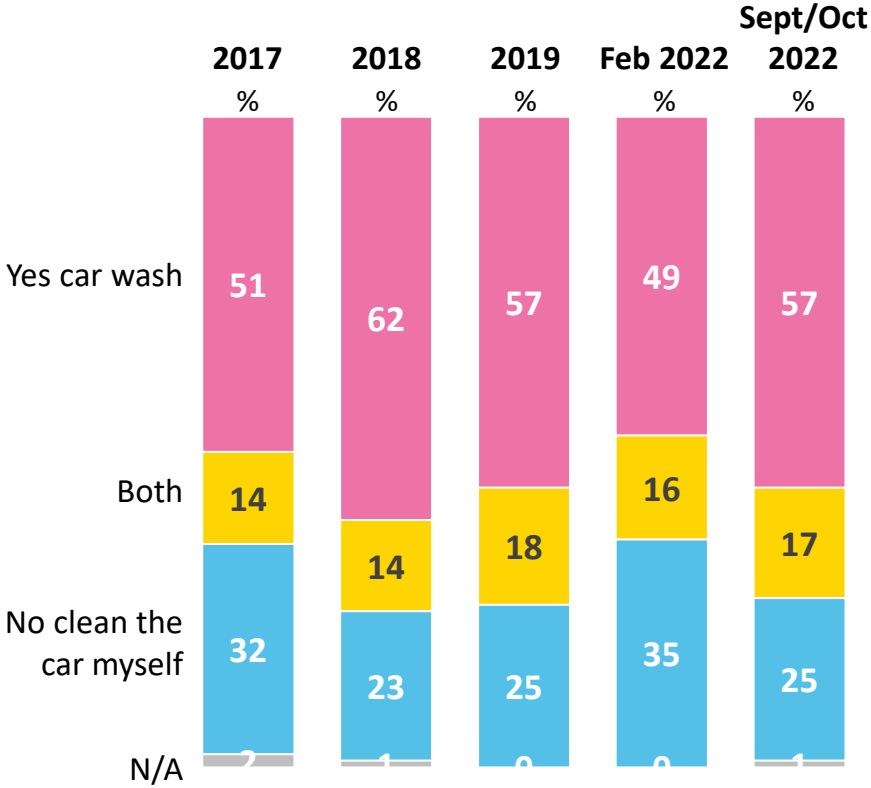
Average cost of valet in Sept/Oct 2022: €80
Average cost of valet in 2022: €82
Average cost of valet in 2019: €75
Average cost of valet in 2017: €83
Average cost of valet in 2014: €71

39% of drivers do a full valet service on their vehicle with 29% of those getting a valet service 12 or more times a year with the average cost being €80.

Car wash

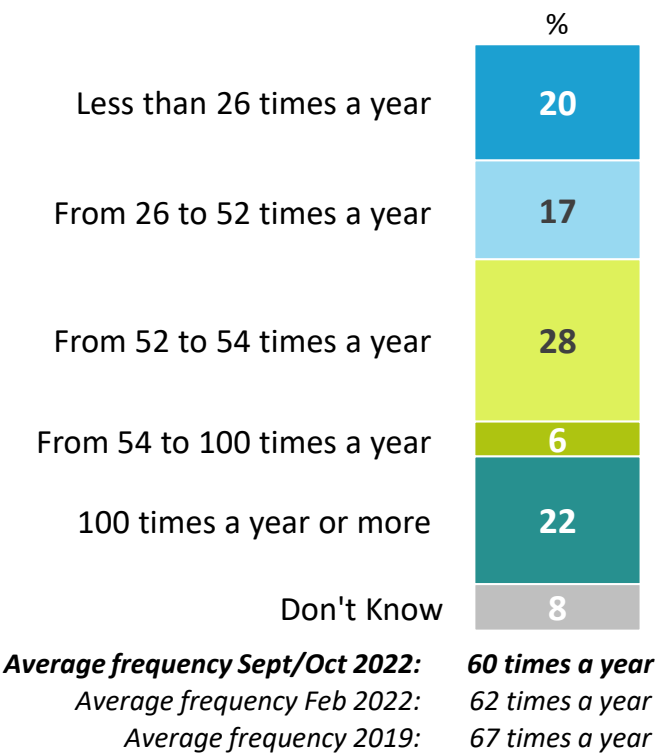
Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle

Valet services used



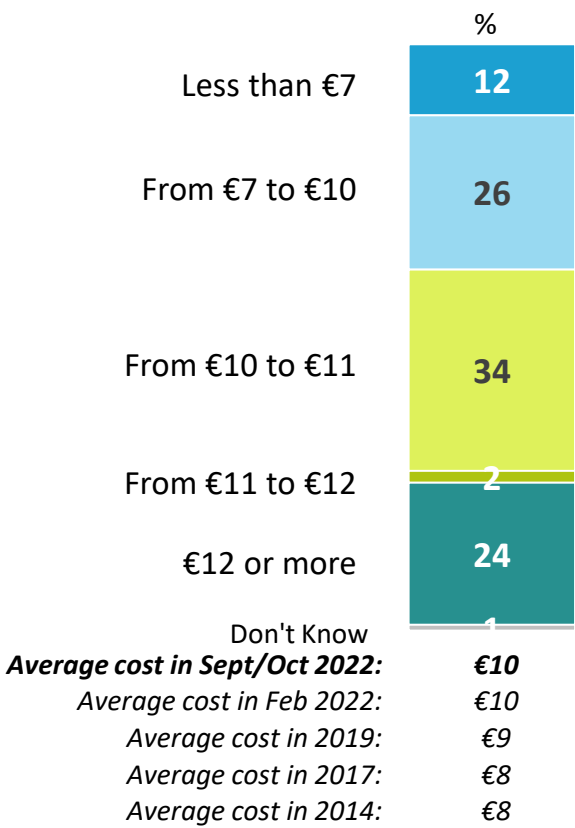
Frequency of getting car wash

(Base: All getting car wash – 479)



Cost of car wash

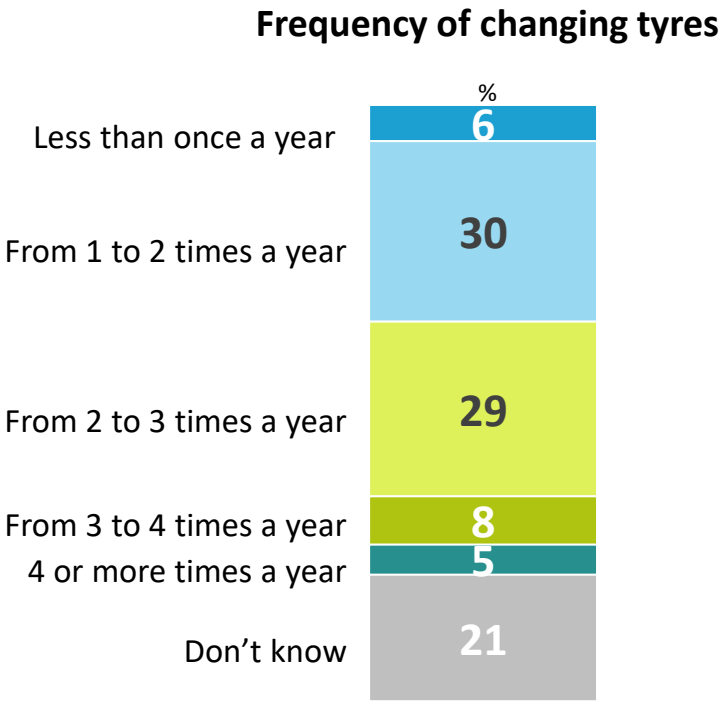
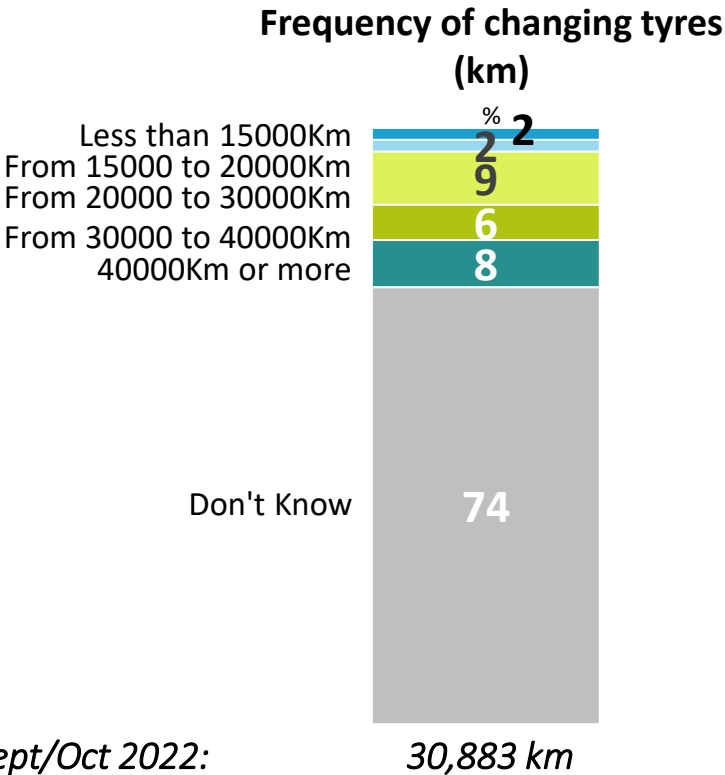
(Base: All getting car wash – 479)



Just under 3 in 4 drivers get their vehicle washed at a car wash. On average drivers get their car washed 60 times a year at the average cost of €10.

Car tyres

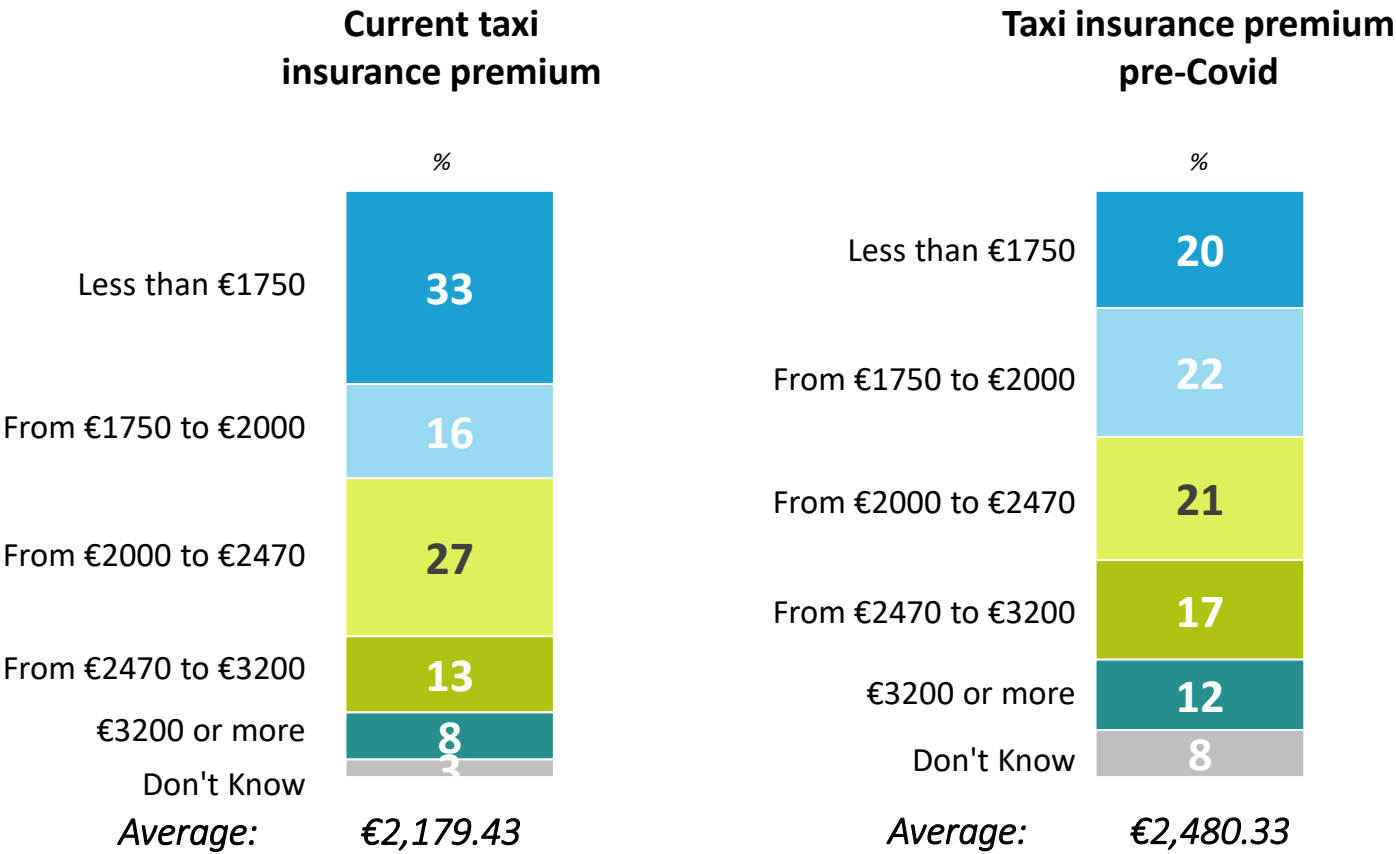
Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle



74% of drivers state they don't know after what distance they change their tyres.

Taxi insurance

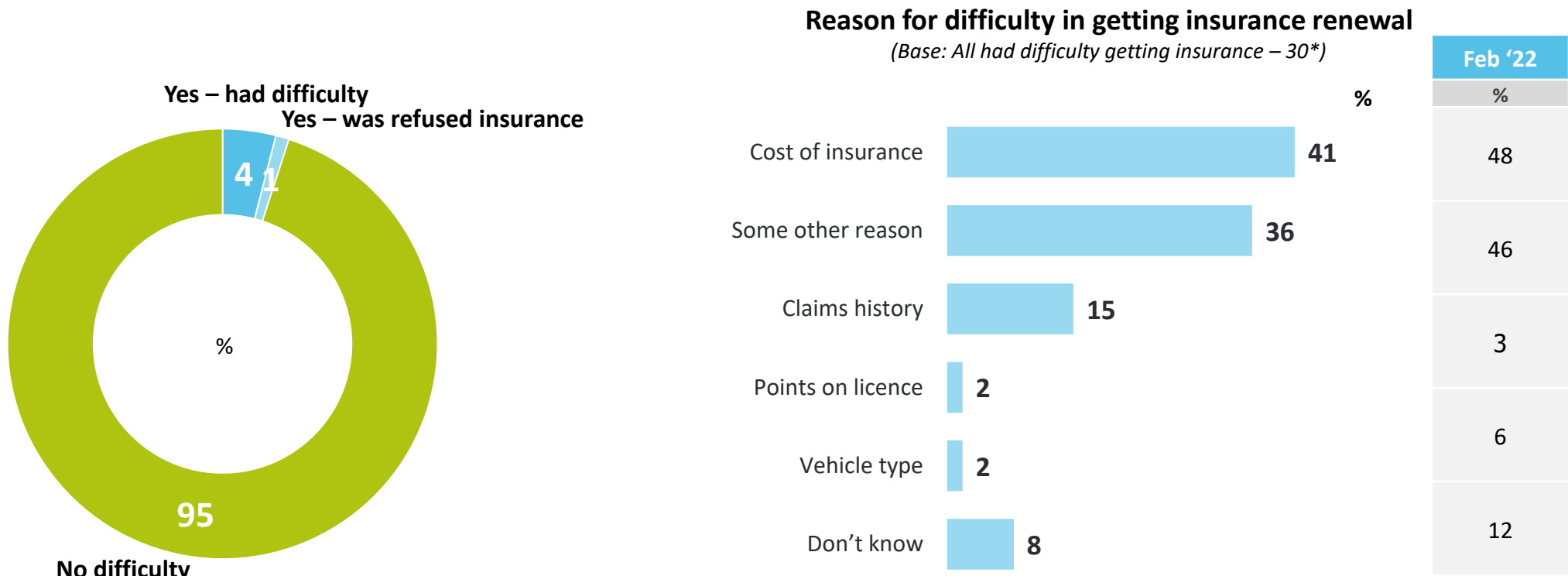
Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle



The average cost of insurance is €2,179.43, €300 less then pre-COVID.

Difficulty renewing taxi insurance

Base: 659 taxi drivers with own vehicle



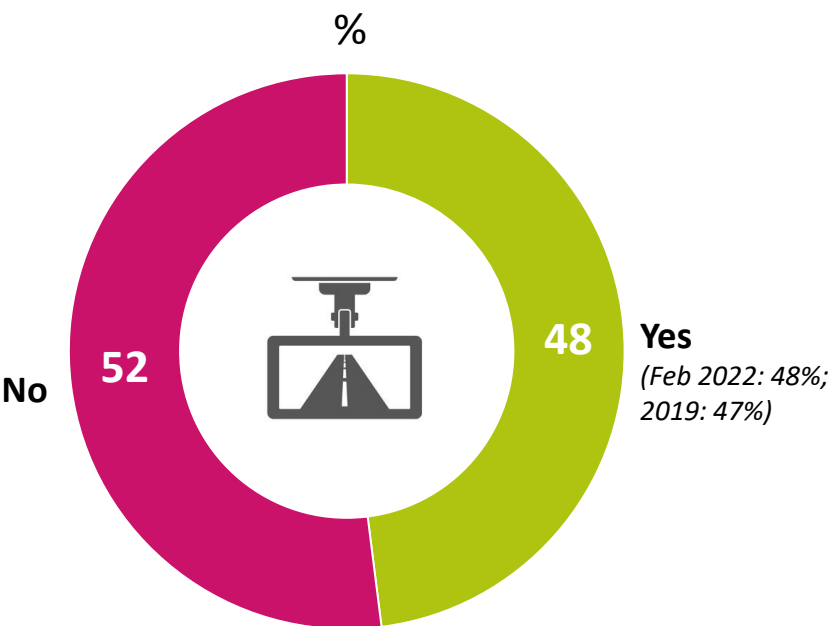
4% of drivers had difficulty renewing their taxi insurance the key reason being the cost of insurance (41%).

*Caution: Low base size

Incidence of dash-cam and internal security camera

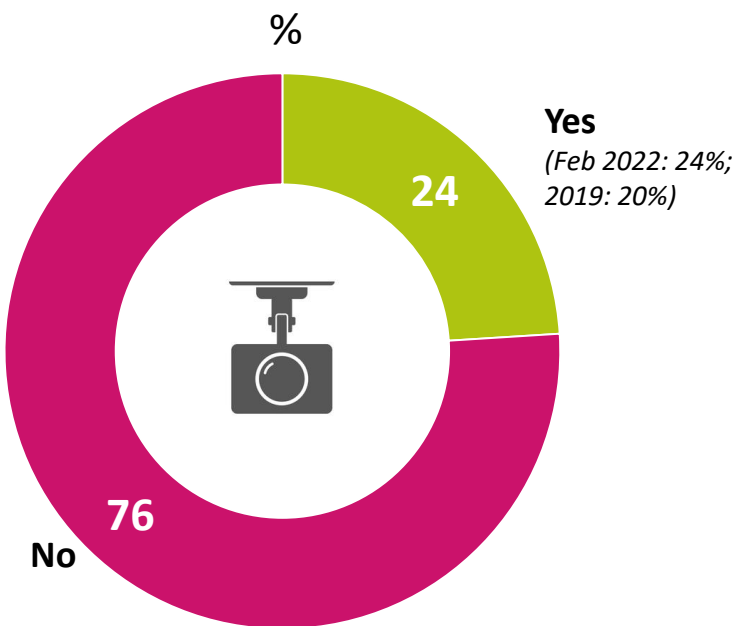
Base: 668 taxi drivers

Dash-Cam in Vehicle



Average spend on a dash-cam 2022: €211.36
Average spend on a dash-cam 2022: €190.46
Average spend on a dash-cam 2019: €271.33

Internal Security Camera in Vehicle



Average spend on a security camera 2022: €247.38
Average spend on a security camera 2022: €200.37
Average spend on a security camera 2019: €225.47

Just under half of driver have a dash cam, with an average cost of €211.36. Just under 1 in 4 drivers have an internal security camera with an average cost of €247.38. Incidence of having a dash-cam is in line with the last wave of research, but the average cost has increased.

Drivers have invested in
additional safety measures

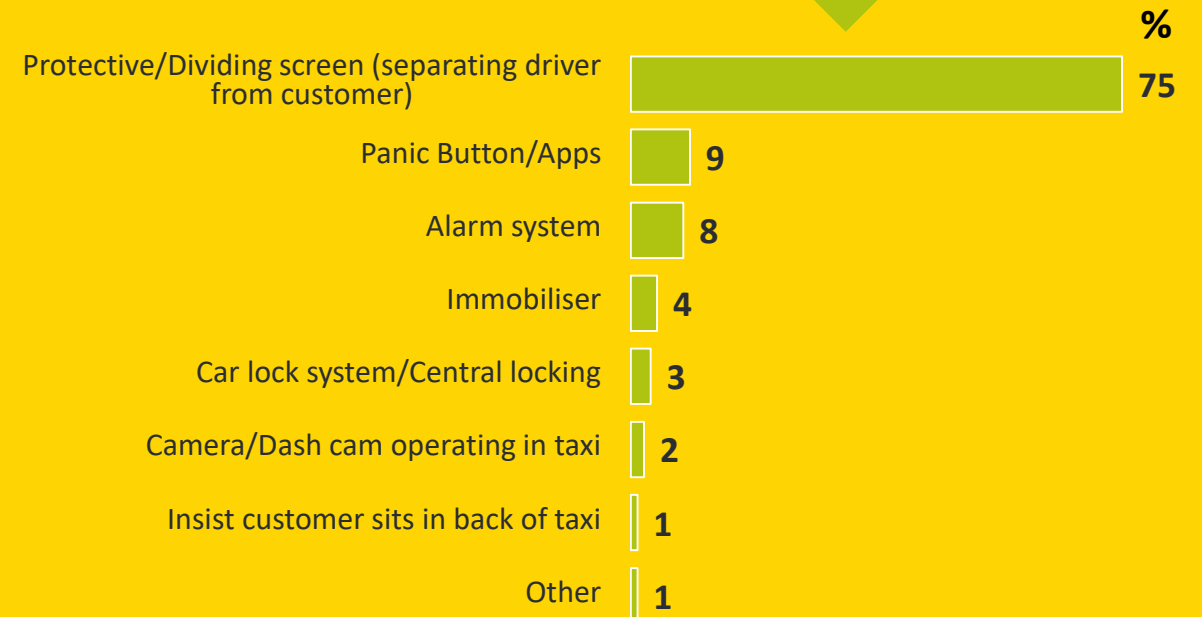
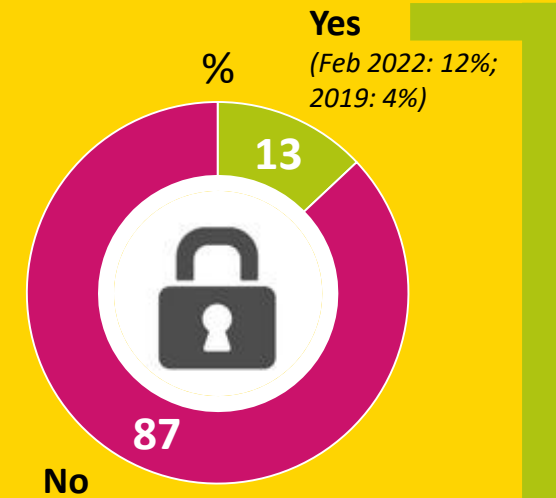
€171.87

(Feb 2022: €156.36; 2019: €36.15)

is the average amount spent by
drivers on additional security
measures for their vehicle



Additional security measures

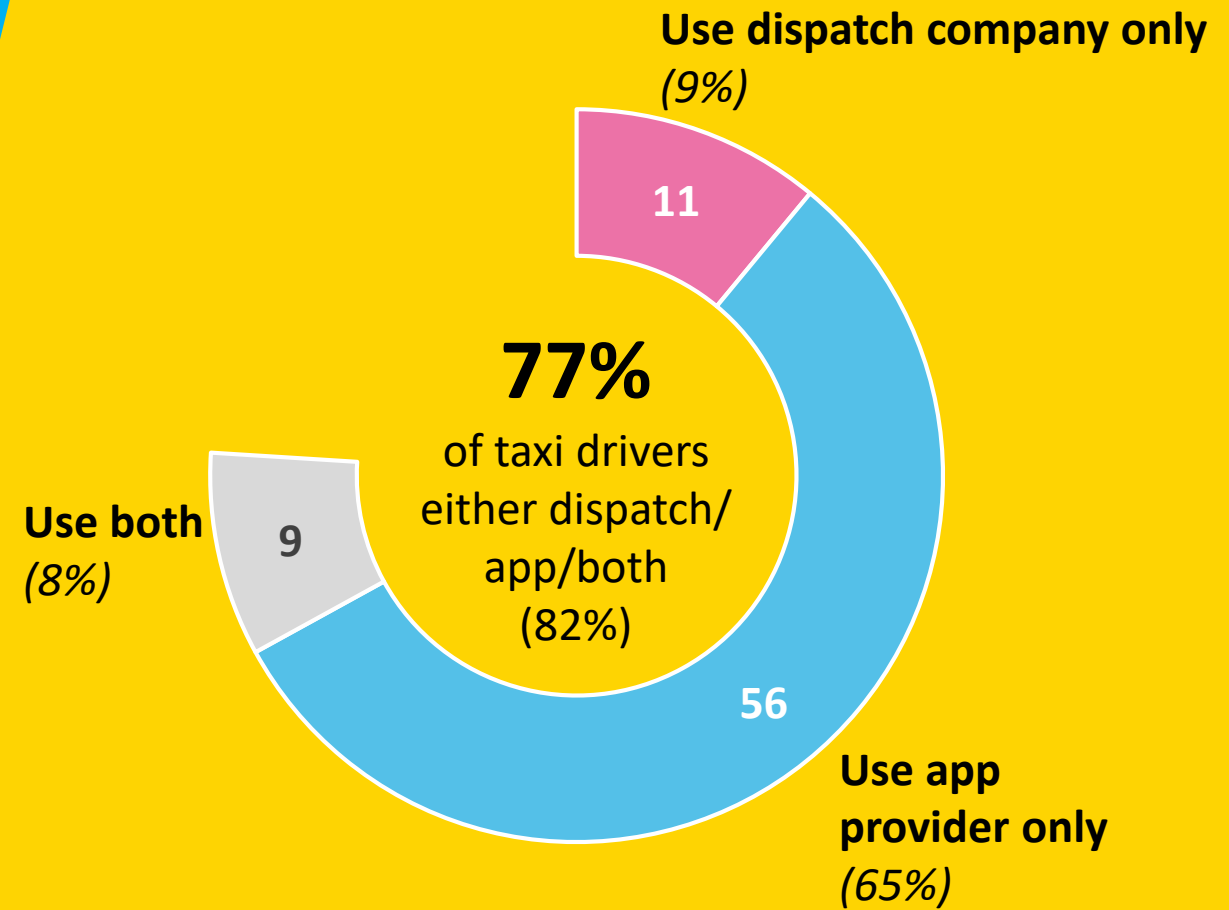




4. Use of apps and dispatch companies



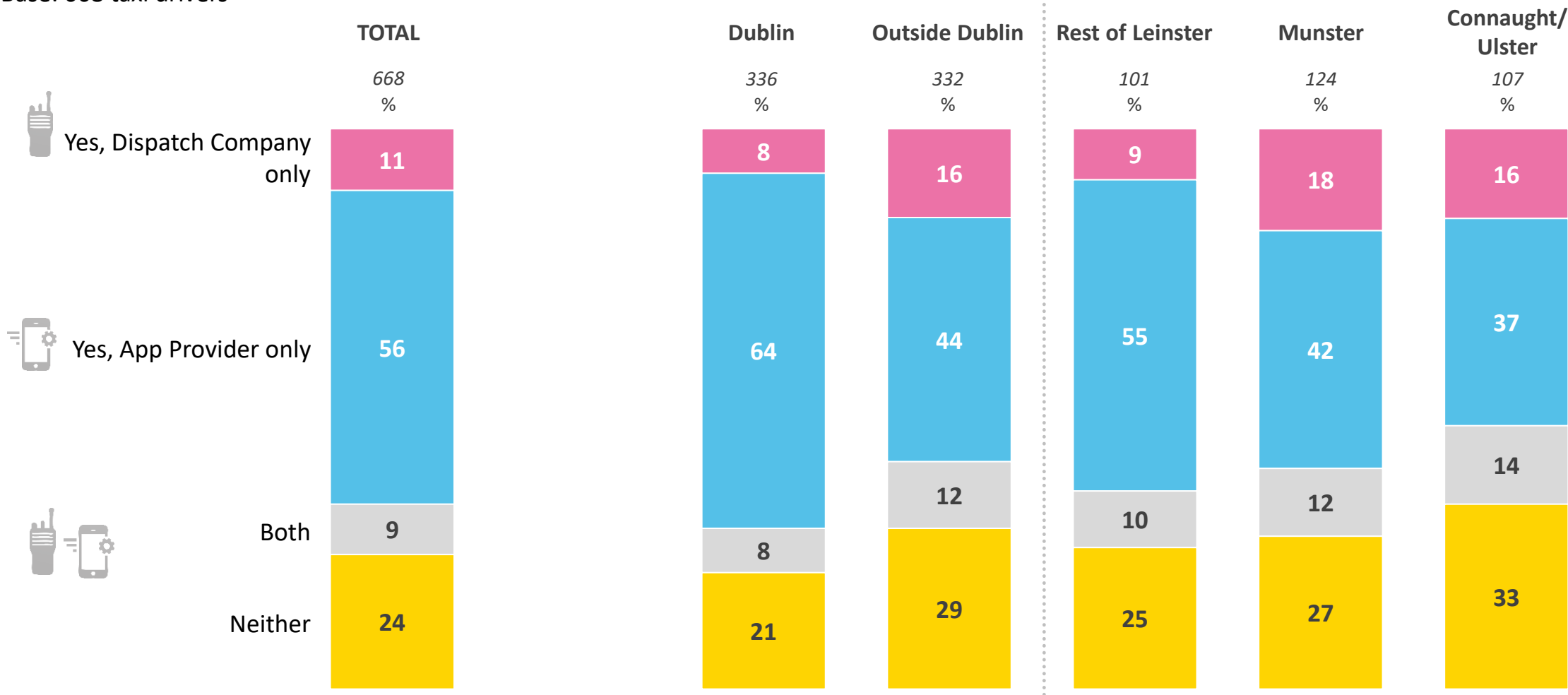
Use of apps/dispatch



(% Feb 2022)

Use of apps/dispatch

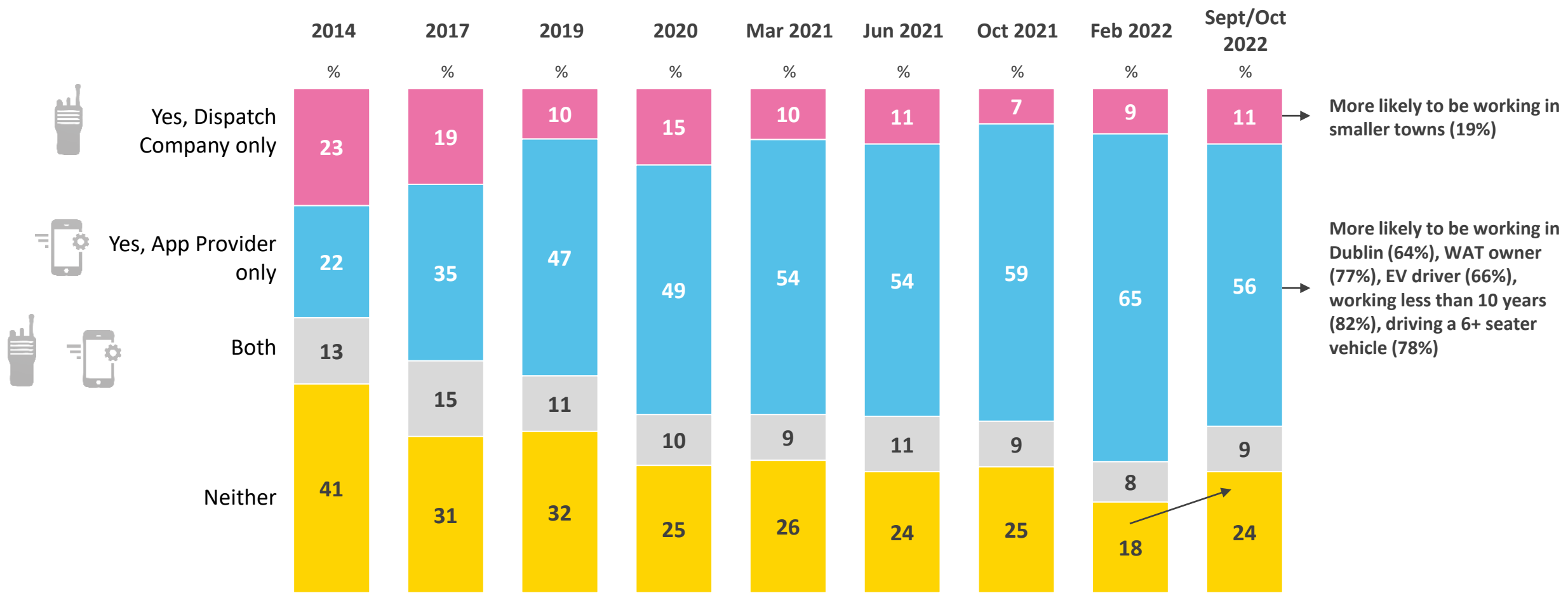
Base: 668 taxi drivers



24% of drivers use neither an app or dispatch company, this is higher outside of Dublin particularly in Connaught/Ulster.

Taxi Driver Affiliates

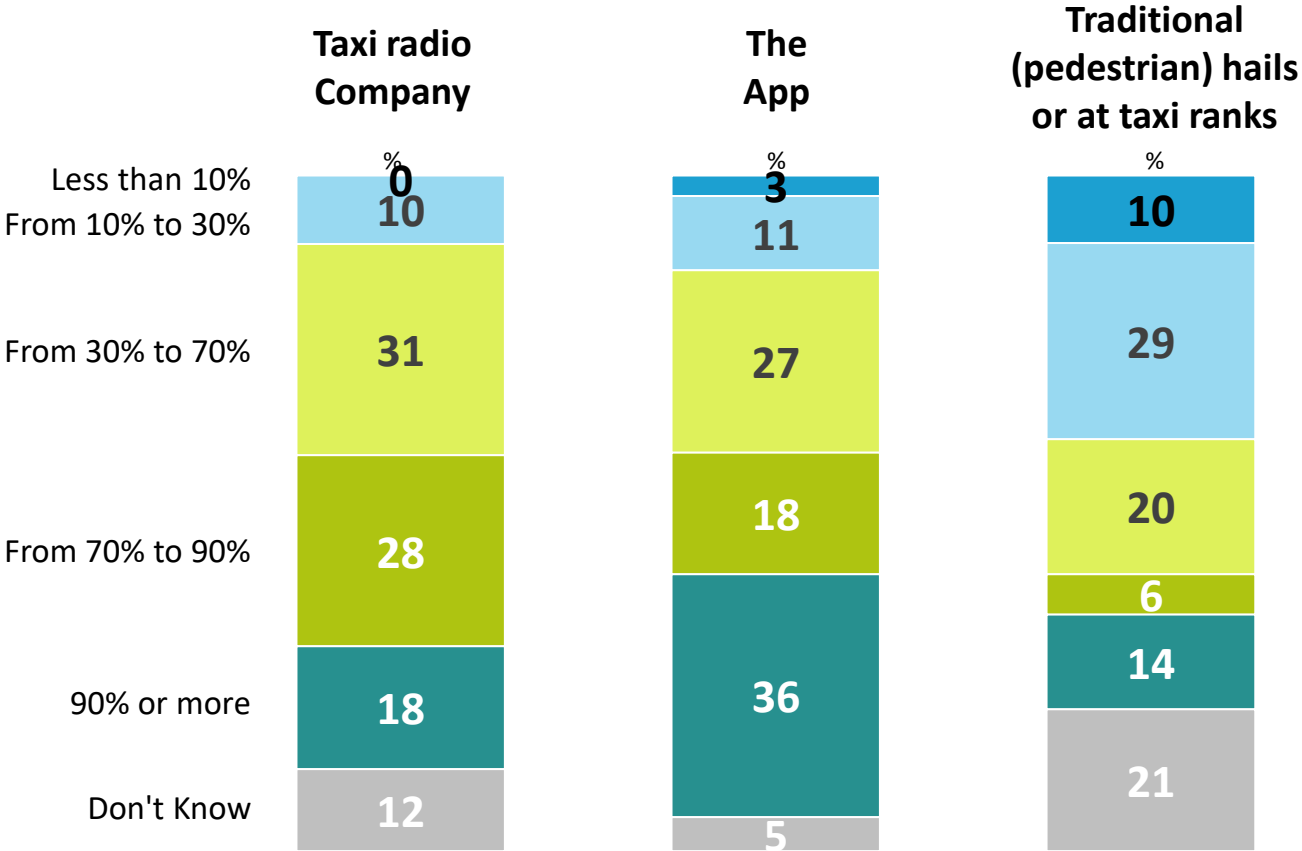
Base: 668 taxi drivers



Less drivers are using an App provider only (-9%pts) with more using neither an app or dispatch company (+6%pts) with figures more in line with Oct '21.

Proportion of work acquired via...

Base: 668 taxi drivers



The App accounts for the largest percentage of work with 36% stating 90% or more of their work is acquired through an app. The taxi radio company also accounts for a substantial amount of work with 28% stating they get 70%-90% of their work through this method. Traditional hailing accounts for a lower percentage of work.



€79.02

**is the average weekly fee
charged by radio taxi
companies**

(Feb 2022: €64.88;
2019: €99.84;
2017: €100.00;
2014: €94.00)
%

Less than €10	11
From €10 to €40	5
From €40 to €80	27
From €80 to €100	17
€100 or more	40

Profile of taxi drivers x affiliates

Base: 668 taxi drivers



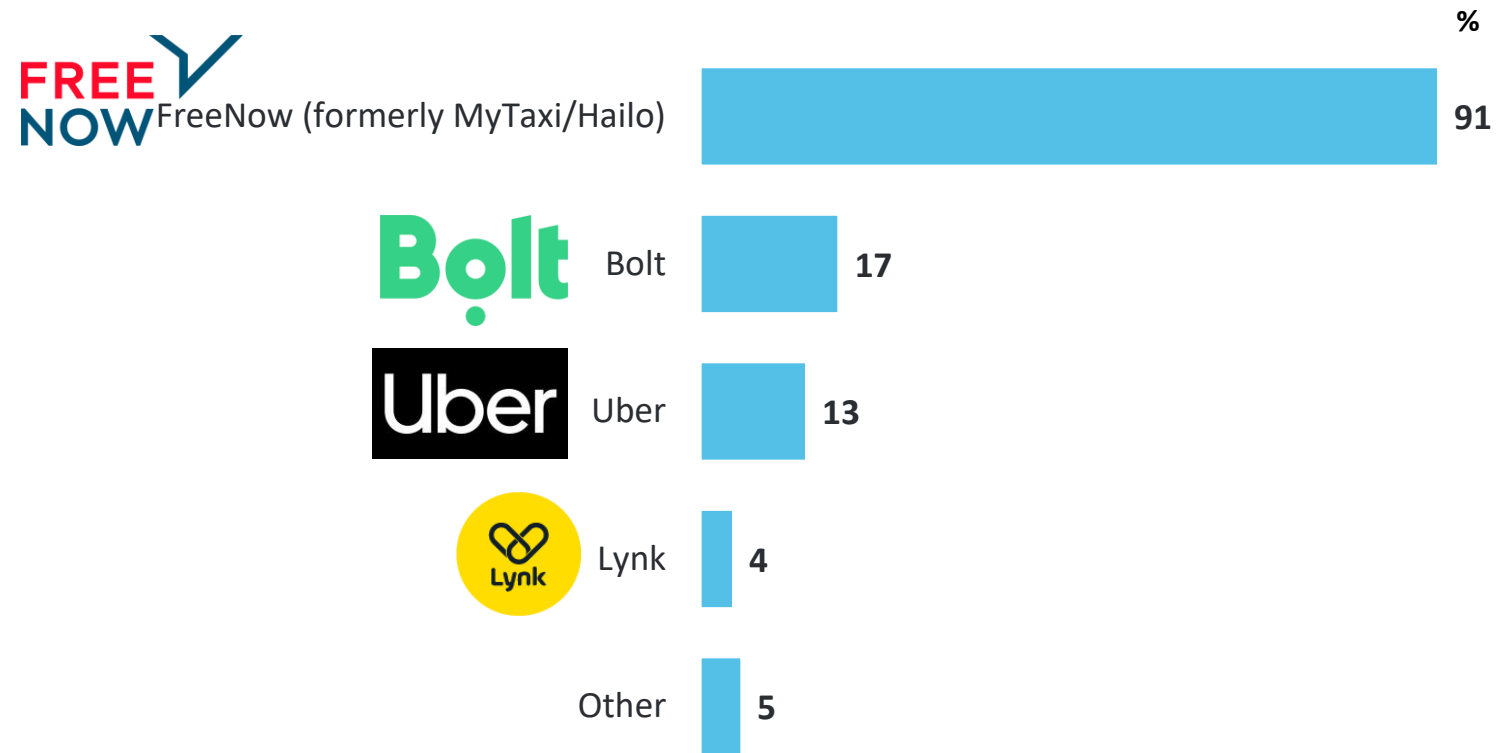
		All Taxi Drivers	Yes, Dispatch Company only	Yes, App Provider only	Both
Base:		668	74	378	63
		%	%	%	%
Age	Under 30*	0	-	0	-
	30-39	6	3	9	0
	40-49	21	16	27	18
	50-59	35	29	35	45
	60-69	26	38	21	22
	70+*	12	13	8	14
Region	Dublin	61	44	70	49
	Rest of Leinster	8	7	8	9
	Munster	20	33	15	26
	Conn/Ulster	11	16	7	16
Type of Driver	Any Owner	80	71	83	78
	Rent	20	29	17	22
WAV Owner	Yes	25	10	32	20
	No	75	90	68	80

Those drivers aged 30-49 years old are more likely to use an App provider only.

*Caution: small base

App currently used

Base: 441 taxi drivers using apps



Feb 2022	2019	2017	2014
%	%	%	%
96	92	90	90
14	-	-	-
6	7	6	-
1	5	6	-
1	4	10	12

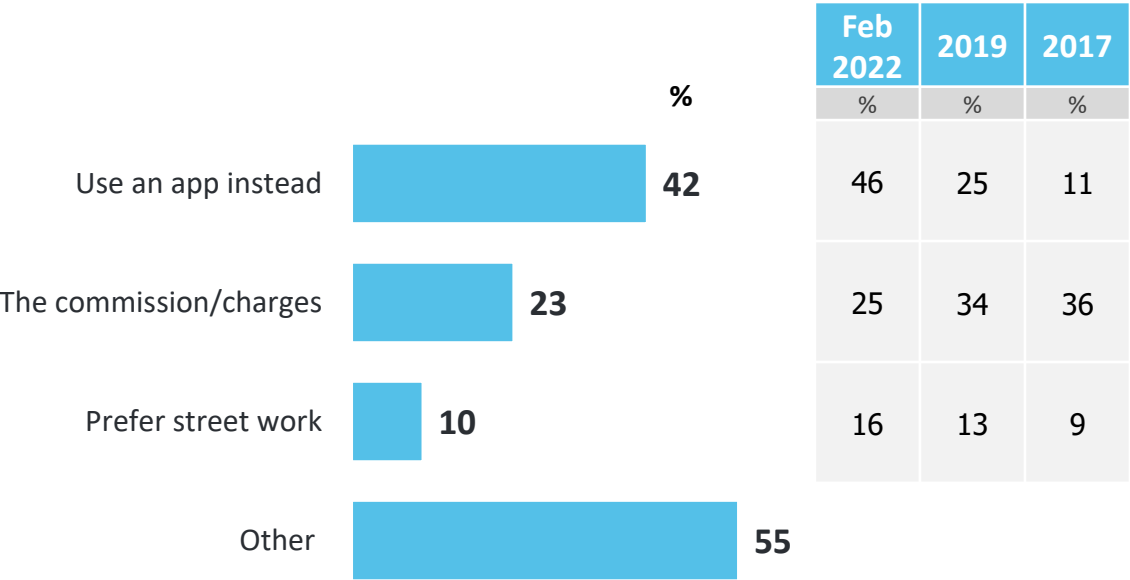
FreeNow remains most prevalent although decreases slightly from Feb '22 (-5%pts) with Uber increasing slightly (+7%pts).

Reasons for not using a radio company/app service

Base: 668 taxi drivers

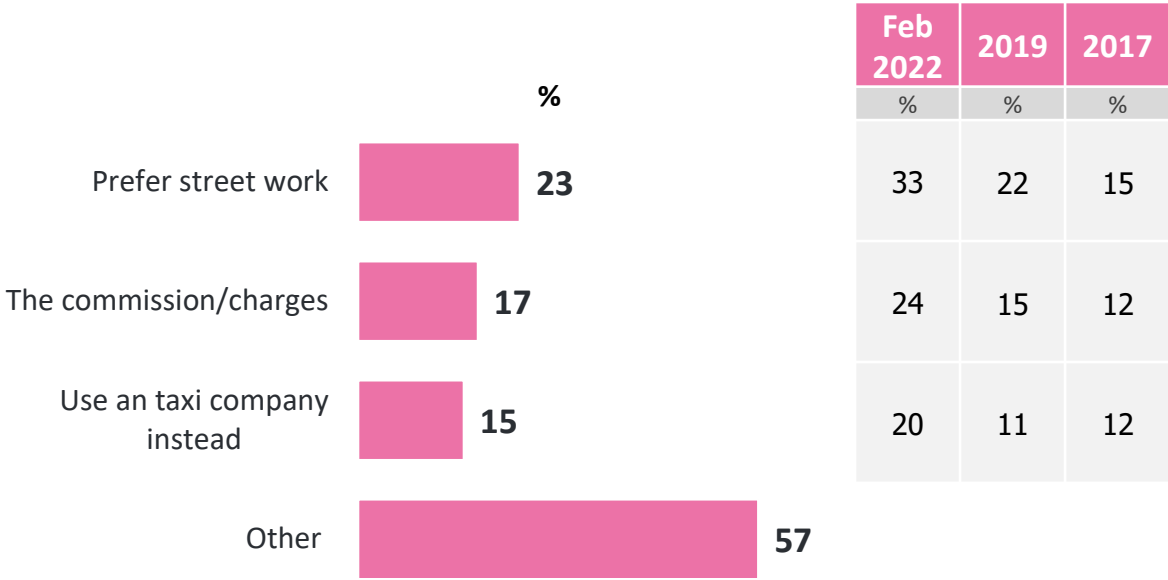
Reasons for not using a radio company

Base: Taxi Drivers not using radio company - 531



Reasons for not using an app service

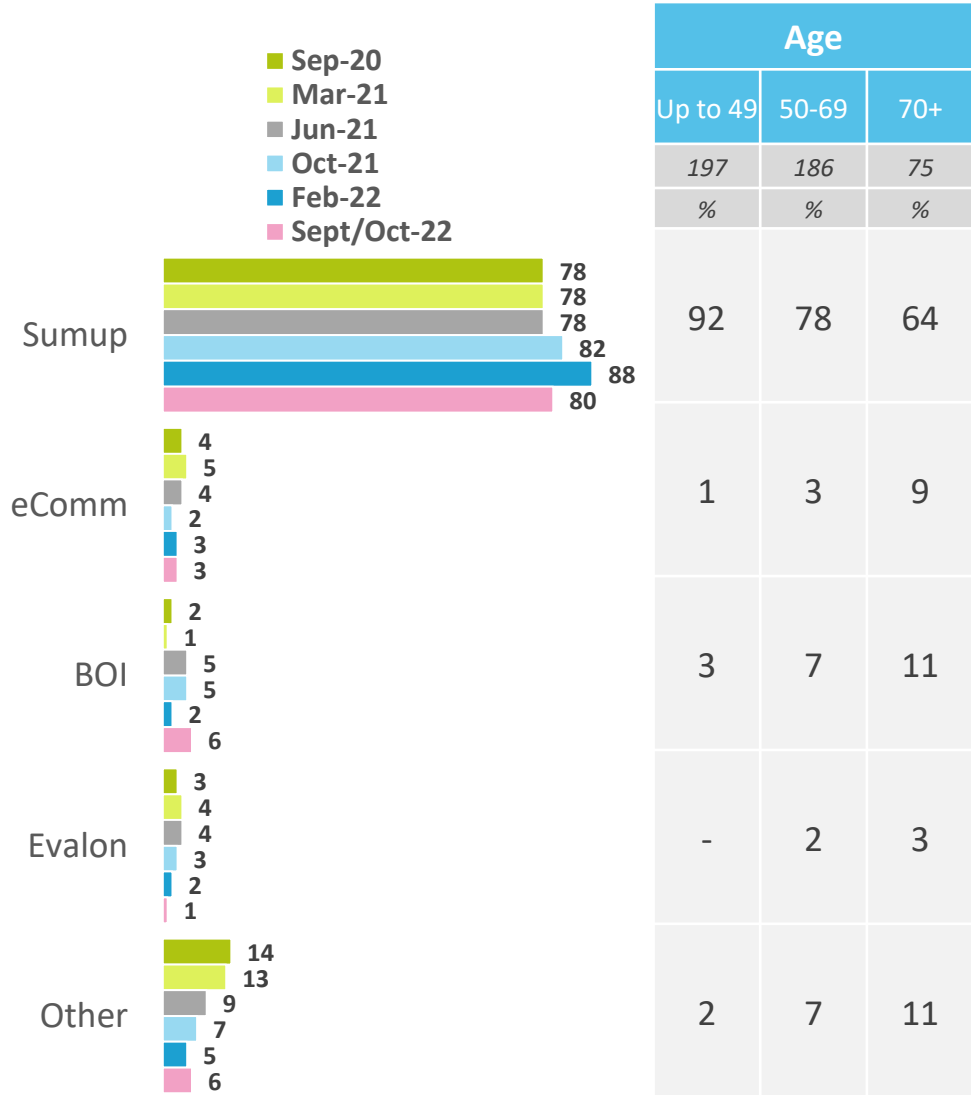
Base: Taxi Drivers not using app service - 227



Of those who don't have a dispatch company 42% state the reason is because they use an App instead while 23% state the reason is due to the commission charge. Of those who don't use an App 23% state the reason is that they prefer street work; a decrease of -10%pts from the last wave of research.

Type of terminal used

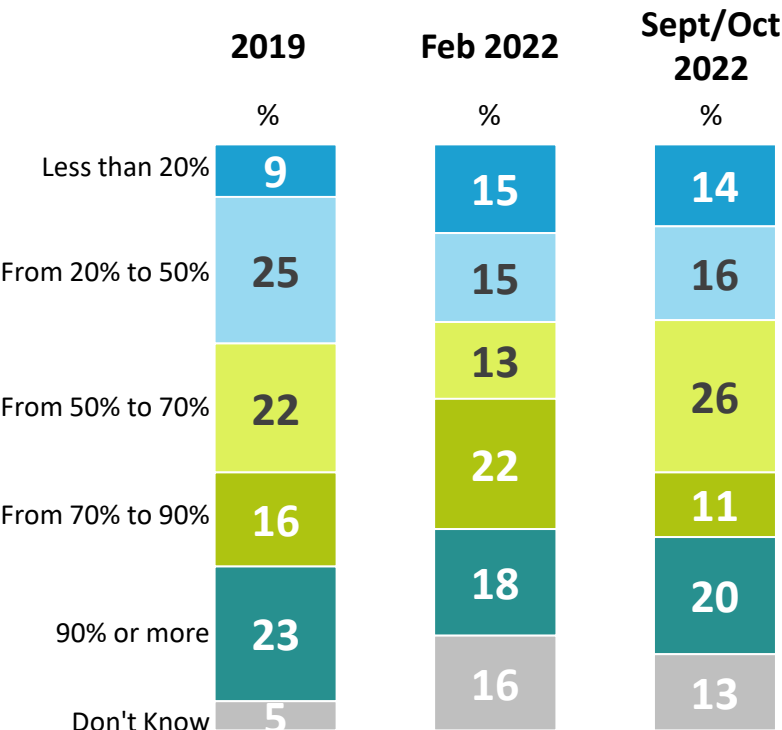
Base: 668 taxi drivers



8 in 10 have a Sumup card device (-8% pts vs February 2022)

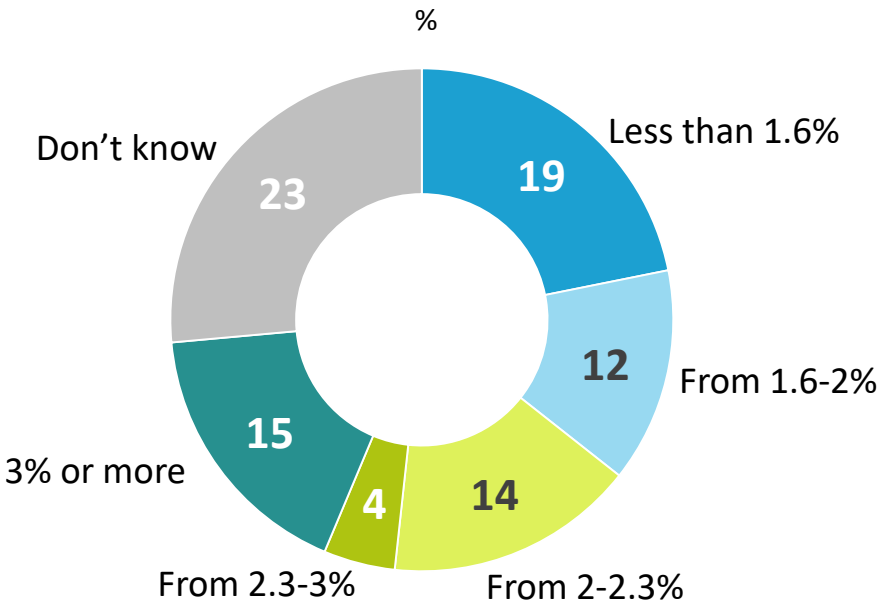
Proportion of trips paid by cashless/contactless

Base: 668 taxi drivers



Age		
Up to 49	50-69	70+
156	406	75
%	%	%
12	15	14
11	15	30
23	27	26
11	12	8
30	18	10
12	13	11

Percentage of each credit card payment charged by provider



Average Credit Card Service Charge:
Sept/Oct 2022: 3.34%

2021: 3.41%
2019: 3.43%
2017: 4%
2014: 6%

Average Credit Card Service Charge Sept/Oct 2022:

Up to 49: 3.71%
50-69: 3.13%
70+: 3.41%

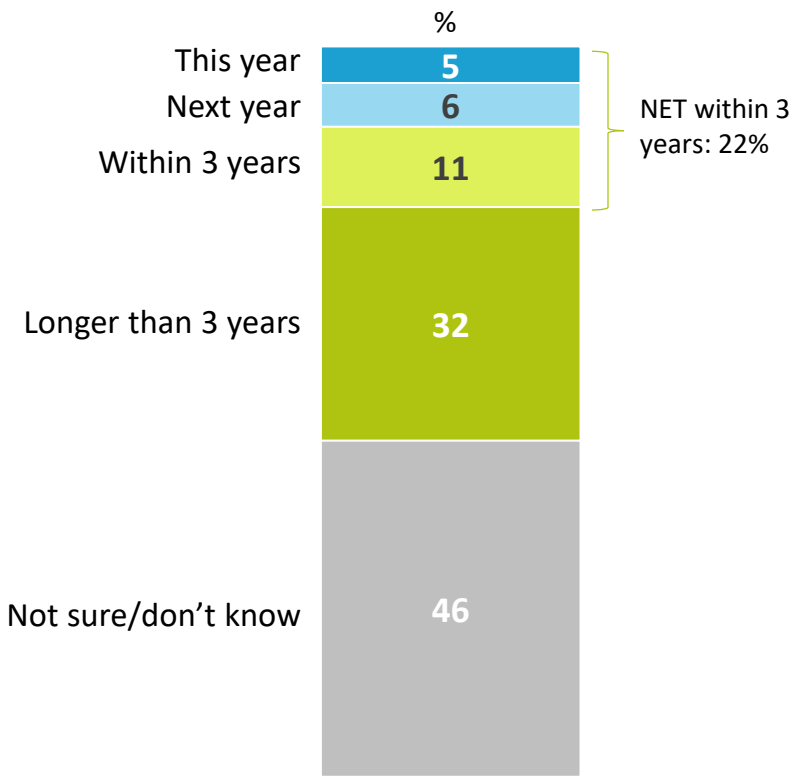


5. Electric vehicles

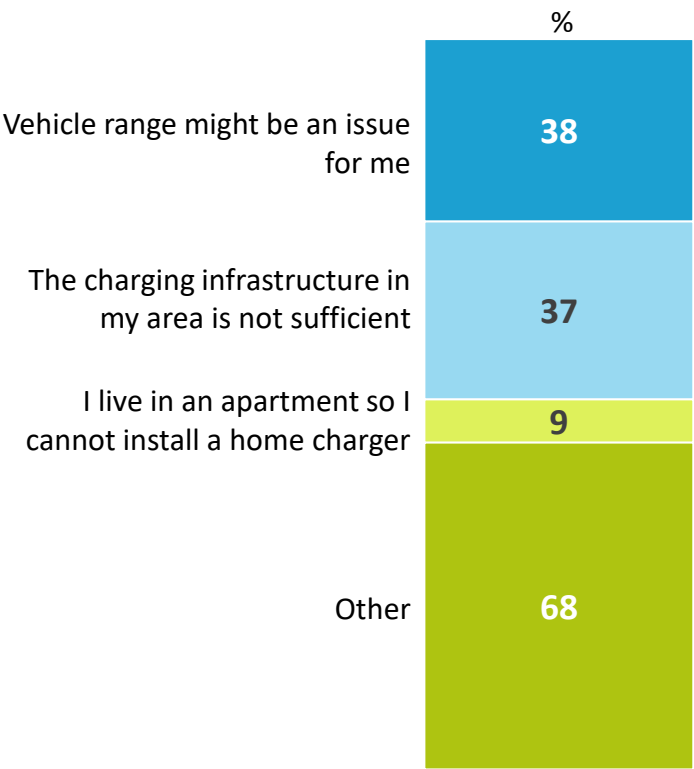
Plans to transition to electric vehicle

Base: All not driving electric vehicle - 474

Plan to transition to full battery electric vehicle



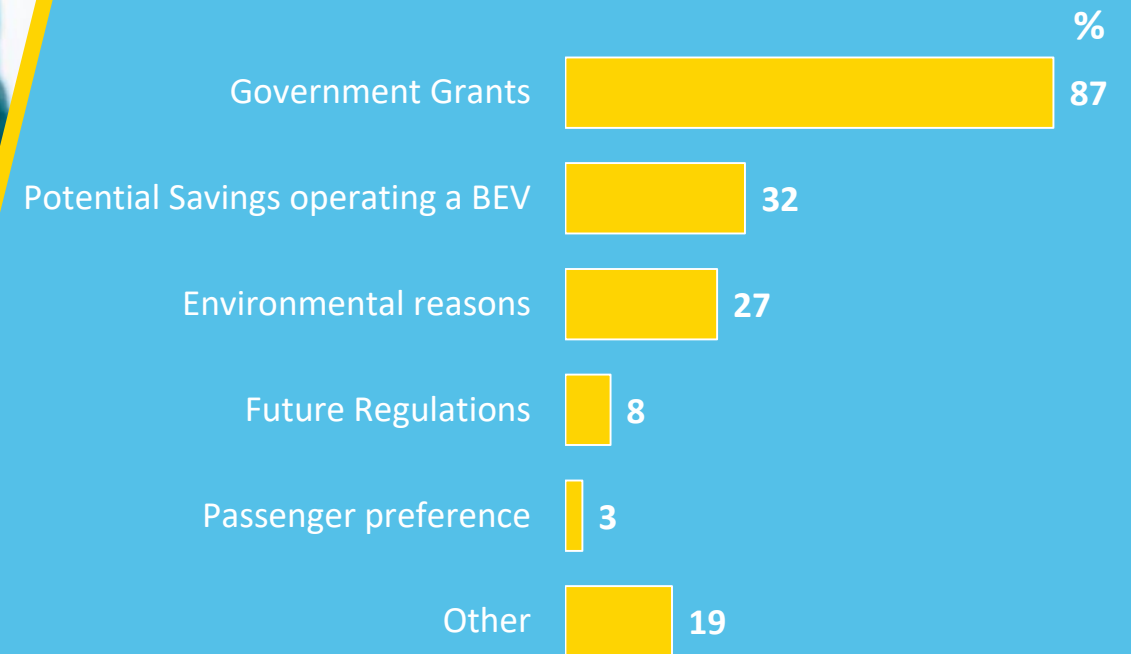
Concerns about transitioning to an electric vehicle



Of those not currently driving an electric vehicle 46% are unsure of when they will transition to an electric vehicle with just under a third stating longer than 3 years. Vehicle range and charging infrastructure are the key concerns in making the transition.



Government grants are the key motivators to purchasing an electric vehicle

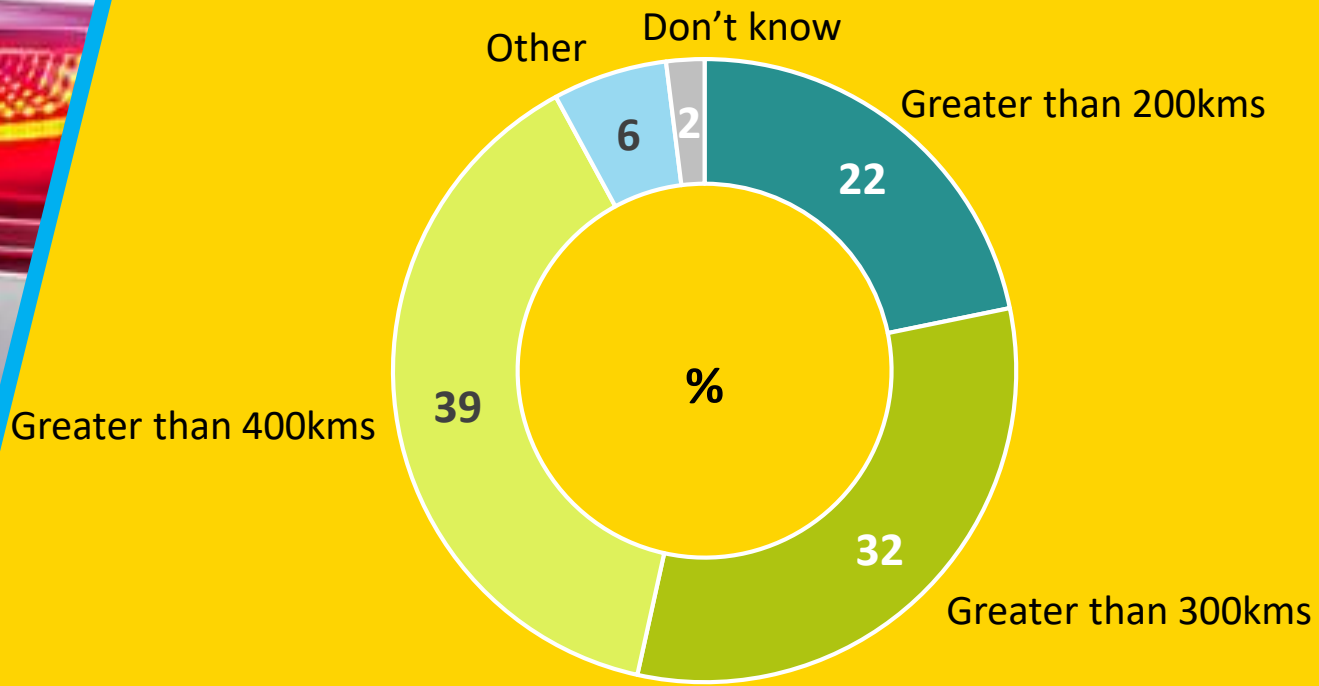


€99.02
is the average weekly
saving on running costs

*Base: All electric vehicle (EV)
owners - 194*



**39% of EV drivers state they
can travel more than 400Kms
on a full charge**

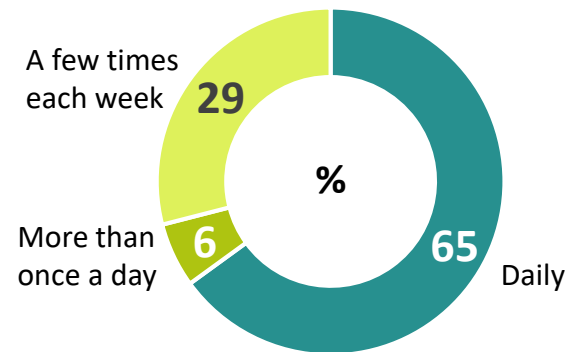


*Base: All electric vehicle (EV)
owners - 194*

EV charging

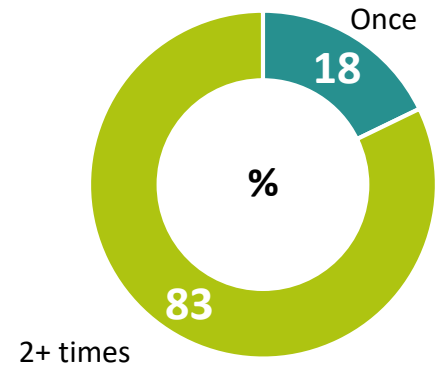
Base: All EV owners - 194

Frequency of charging EV



Number of charges per day

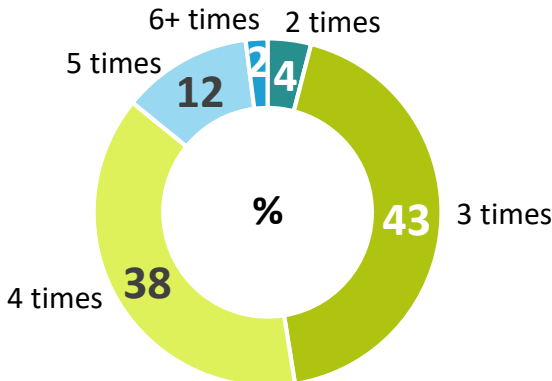
(Base: All who charge EVs more than once a day – *15)



Average: 2.03 times per day

Number of charges per week

(Base: All who charge EVs a few times a week – 54)

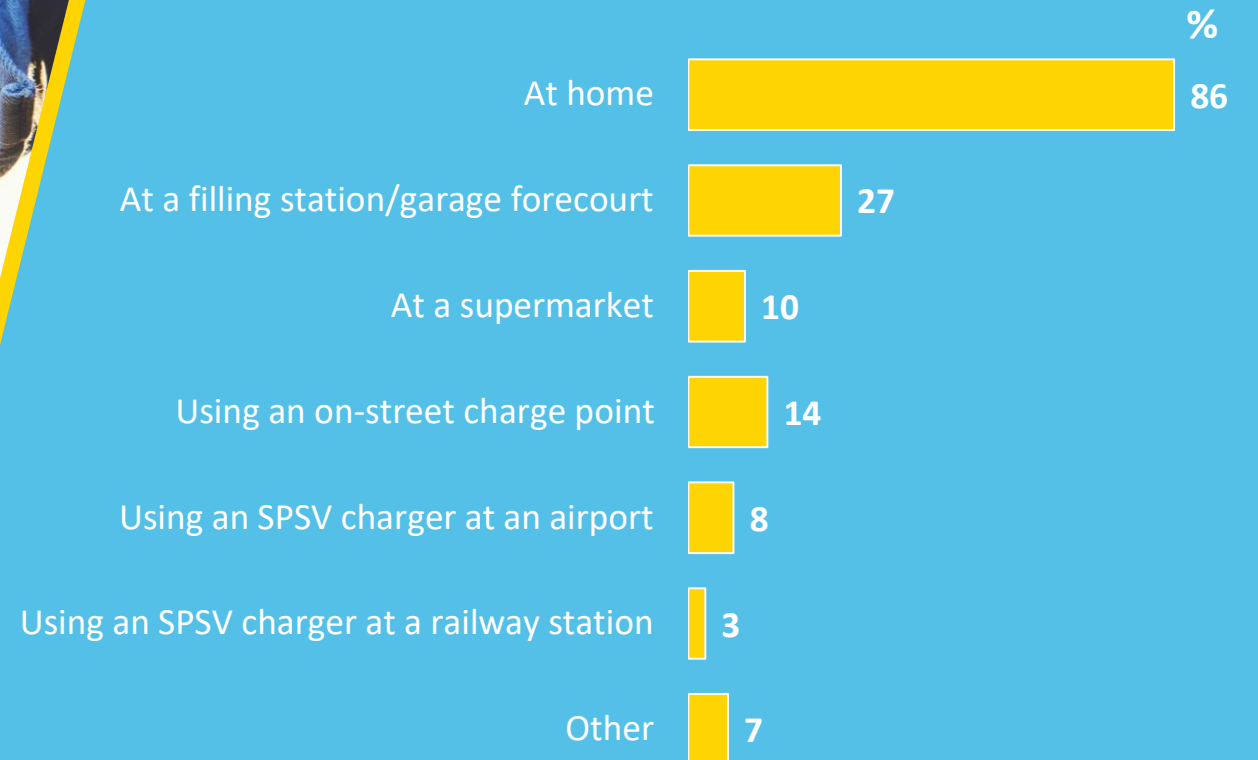


Average: 3.65 times per week

65% of EV drivers are charging their taxi daily, of those 83% are charging their vehicle multiple times a day.



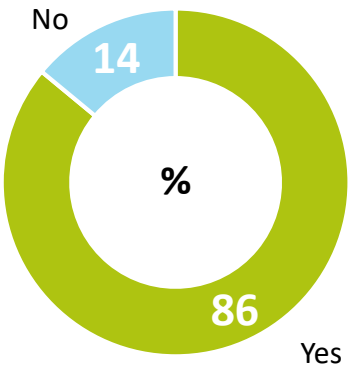
86% charge their EV at home



EV charger at home

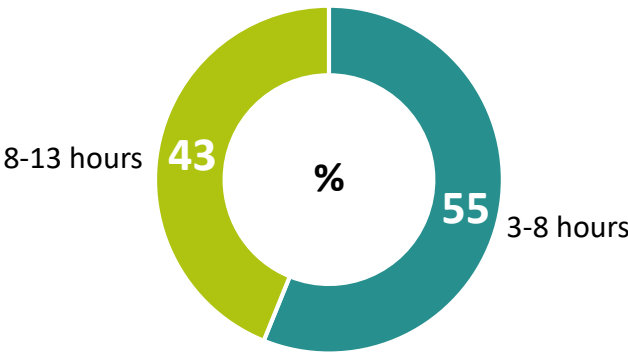
Base: All EV owners - 194

EV charger at home



Hours to fully charge EV at home

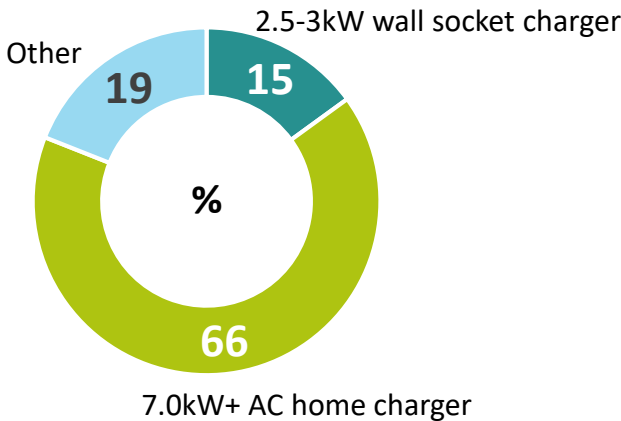
(Base: All with EV charger at home – 170)



Average: 6.88 hours

Type of charger at home

(Base: All with EV charger at home – 170)

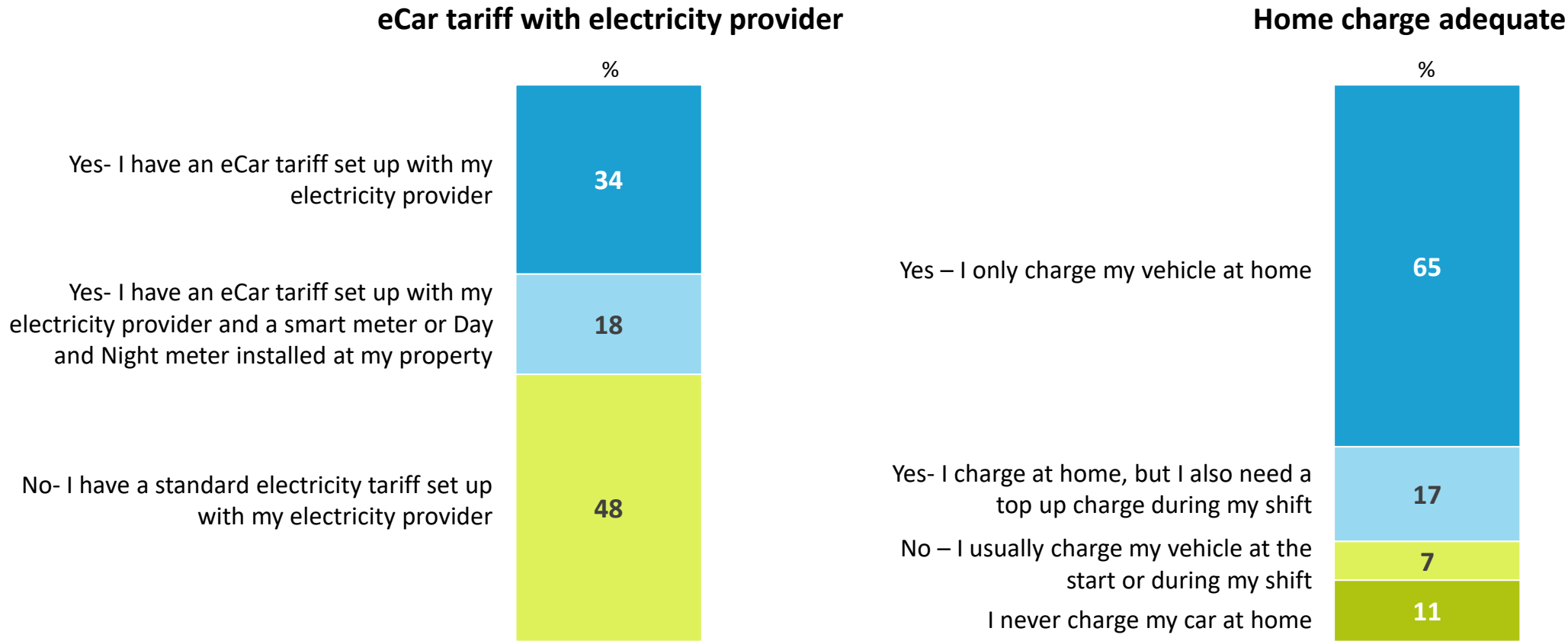


86% of EV drivers have a charger at home. On average vehicles take 6.88 hours to charge with two thirds having a 7.0kW AC home charger.

*Caution: small base

eCar tariff and adequacy of home charger

Base: All EV owners - 194

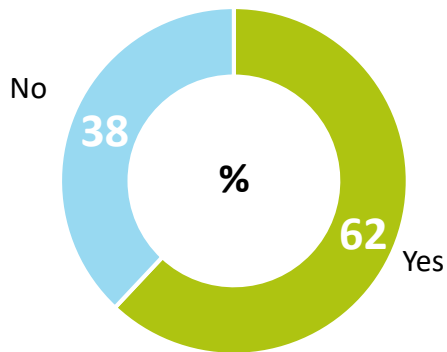


Almost half do not have an “eCar” electricity tariff with their energy provider. 65% operate a full shift without needing to charge.

EV charger locator apps

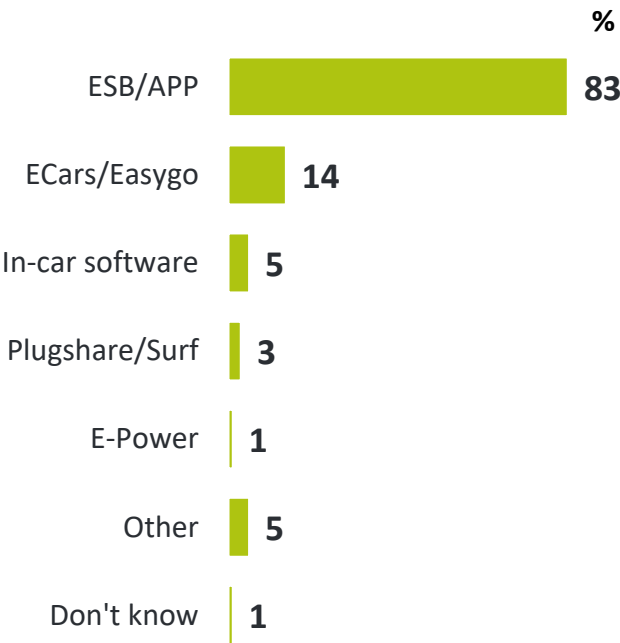
Base: All EV owners - 194

Use EV charger locator app



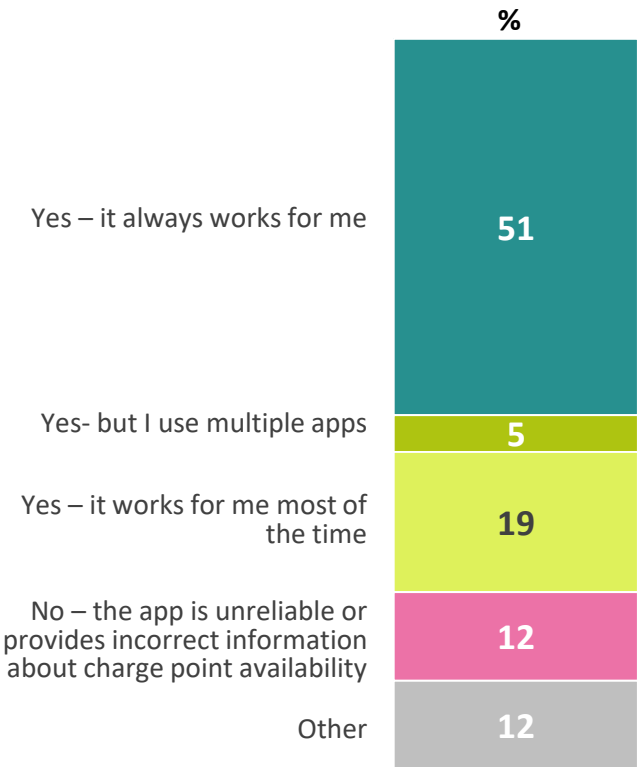
App used

(Base: All use app – 133)



Reliability of app

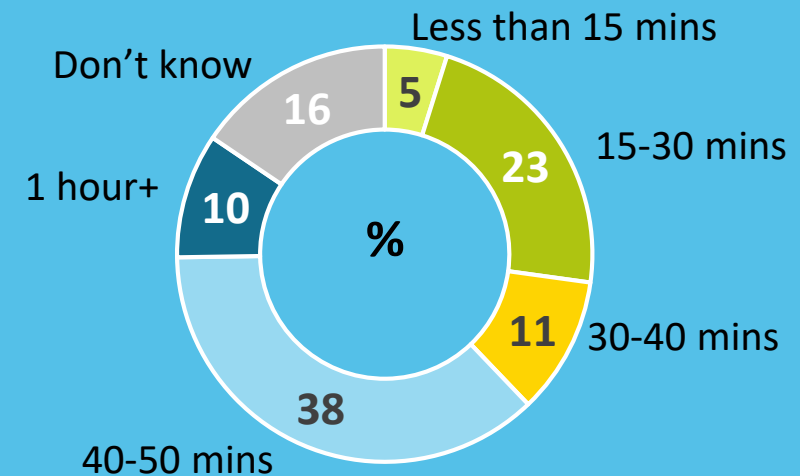
(Base: All use app – 133)



63% use an EV charger locator app with ESB being most popular (83%). Only 12% do not find their app reliable.



59% state a typical top-up charge takes 30+ minutes



Base: All EV owners - 194

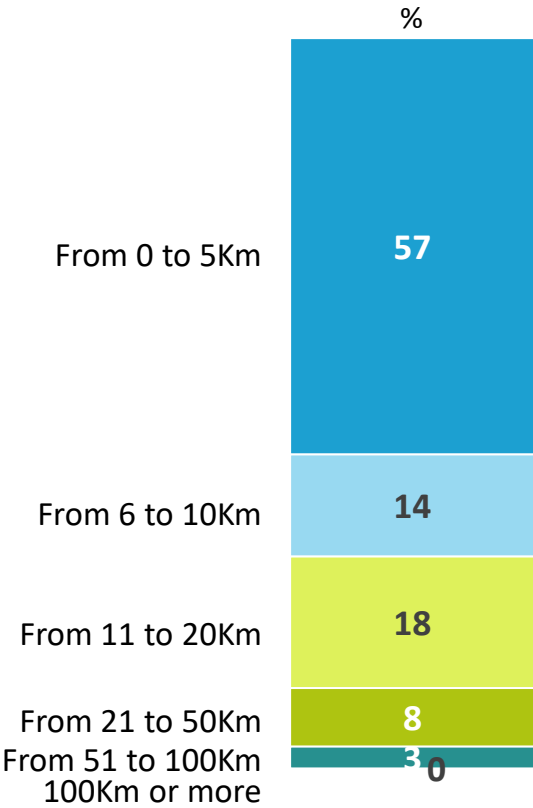
Distance travelled

Base: All EV owners - 194

Kilometres travelled on a normal working day



Kilometres travelled from home to working area

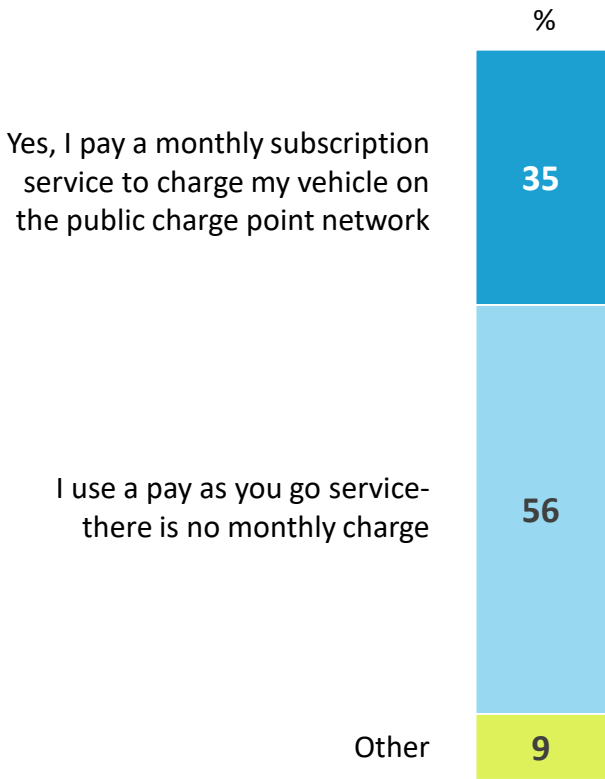


Just under 71% of EV drivers travel less than 200Kms per day with 57% traveling less than 5Kms from home to their working area.

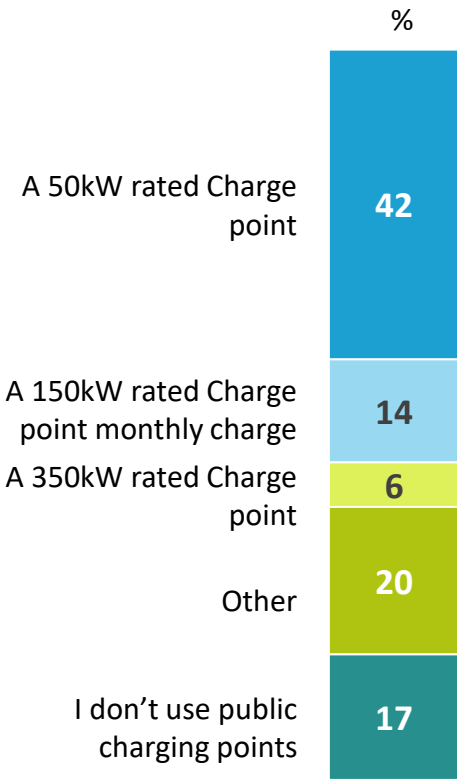
EV charging

Base: All EV owners - 194

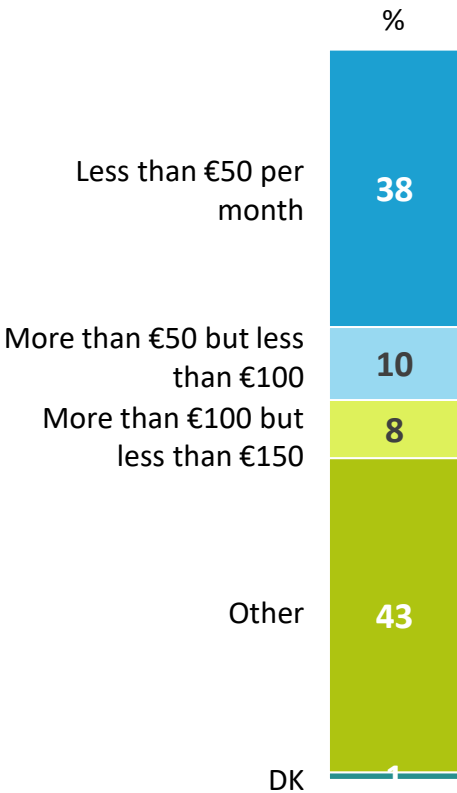
Monthly subscription or a pay as you go EV charging service



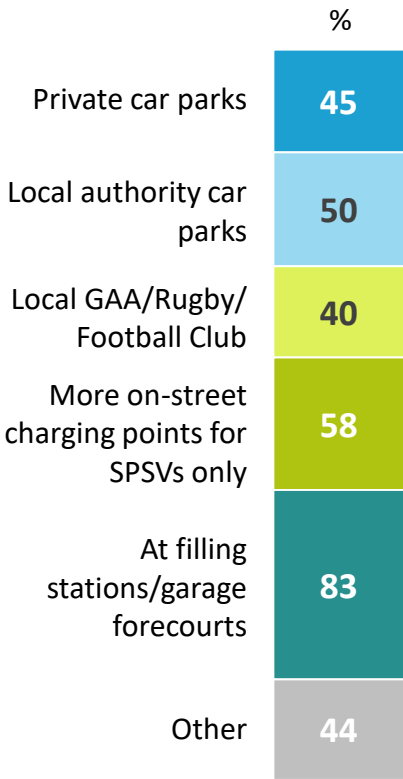
Preferred charging points



Monthly cost of charging on public charging points



Like to see more SPSV chargers installed



56% of electric vehicle drivers use a pay as you go service, 42% prefer a 50kW rated charge point with 48% being charged less than €100 a month.



6. Key findings

Key Findings - Wave 6

Working trend

- On average drivers are working 4.8 days a week and 40 hours a week.
- Increase in working between 06:00-07:59 12:00-15:59 with working later and in the early hours of the morning decreasing.
- Of those not currently working nights (12pm to 5:59am) 82% state they used to work nights. 29% stopping at least 10 years ago.
- The top reasons for no longer working at night are: personal safety (48%) and customer behaviour/extra cleaning costs (40%).
- 31% state nothing would encourage them to work nights, 19% state better safety measures and 8% earning more money.
- Of those not currently driving an electric vehicle 46% are unsure when they will transition to an electric vehicle. 32% state longer than 3 years.
- 38% cite the vehicle range, and 37% the charging infrastructure, as key concerns to transitioning.

Other costs

- Drivers get their vehicle serviced on average after 16,797 Kms at an average cost of €246.04
- 39% have a full valet service, on average 12 times a year at an average cost of €80.
- 74% get their vehicle washed on average 60 times a year at an average cost of €10.
- 74% are unsure of after how many Kms they change their tyres.
- The average cost of insurance is €2,179.43, lower compared to pre-COVID.

Have a dash cam:	48%	<i>Average spend</i> €211.36
Have internal security camera:	24%	€247.38

Apps and dispatch companies

- 56% of drivers use app provider only, 11% dispatch companies only and 9% use both and 24% use neither.
- Average weekly cost for radio companies: €79.02.
- Most use the FreeNow app (91%) which charges on average 14.79% per journey.
- Sumup is the most commonly used card terminal (80%).

Electric vehicles

- 87% of electric vehicle drivers state government grants motivated them to purchase and electric vehicle.
- On average electric vehicle drivers save €99.02 weekly in running costs.
- 39% state they can travel more than 400Kms on a full charge.
- Most (65%) are charging their electric vehicle daily.
- 86% have an EV charger at home.
- 62% have an EV charger locator app.



Explanatory Note

In some instances throughout this report, the figures in any one chart may not add to 100%. While in some cases this may be down to the fact that the respondent was given multiple answer options and allowed to select more than one.

In others, where the figures are one or two percentage points off 100%, the reason is likely to be a rounding error. This is a standard occurrence in market research statistics and does not negate the accuracy of our findings.