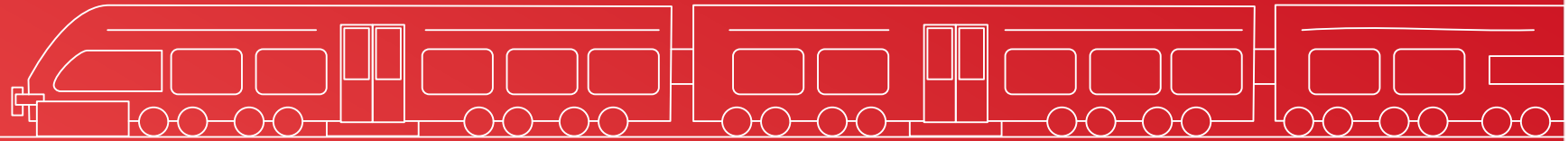




Avanti West Coast passenger experience survey

November 2022

Introduction



Transport Focus has been monitoring the experience of passengers travelling with Avanti West Coast and TransPennine Express. This follows the implementation of reduced timetables by both train companies.

This report summarises the findings of a survey of almost 600 passengers travelling with Avanti West Coast in the last 28 days. A separate report details the findings for passengers travelling

with TransPennine Express.

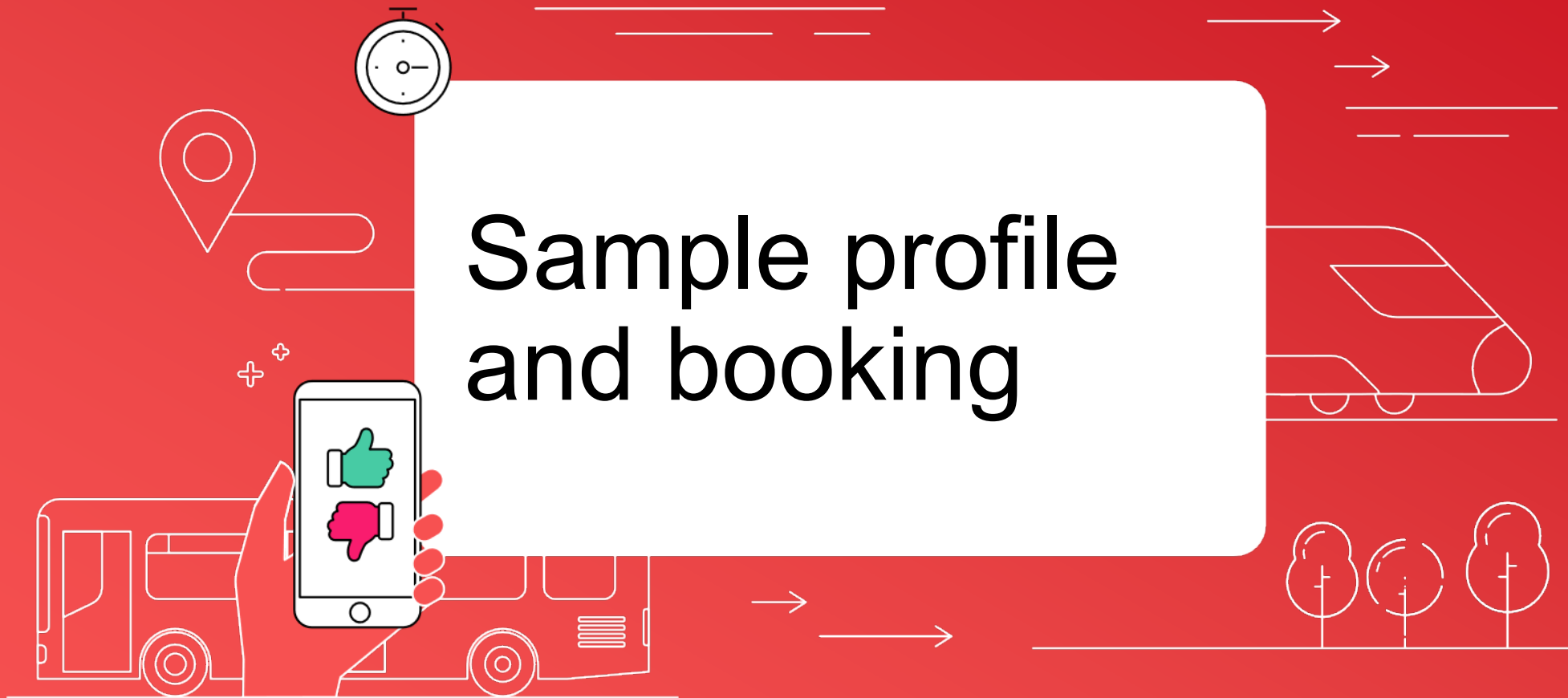
The survey asked passengers about the experience on their last journey, including the process of booking their journey, punctuality, level of crowding and information during disruption.

The survey used a nationally representative online panel. Fieldwork was conducted from 11-18 November 2022.

Key findings

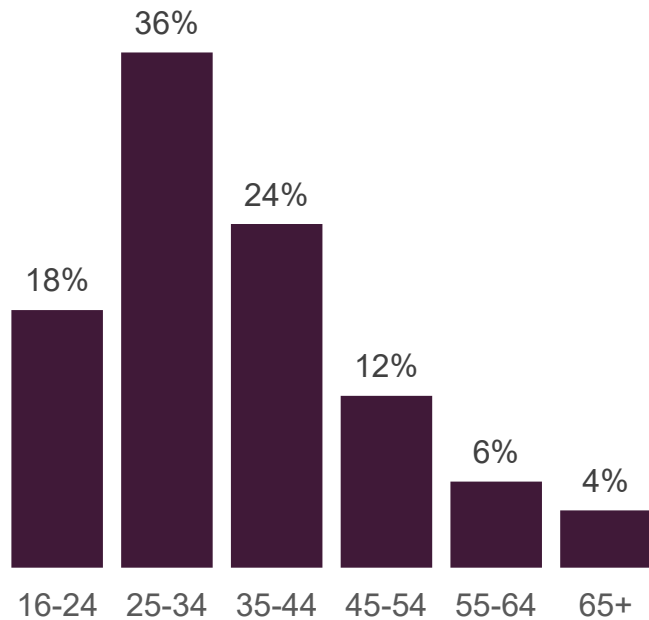
- Around eight in 10 (83 per cent) found the range of train times available for their journey sufficient
- One in four (28 per cent) said they experienced a delay, cancellation or change to their scheduled departure time.
- Of those who were delayed, four in 10 (44 per cent) rated the communication about the delay as good.
- Just over half (55 per cent) rated the level of crowding on board the train as good.
- Overall around three quarters (78 per cent) were satisfied with their last journey.
- While most passengers' journeys were satisfactory, the comments from passengers show that for some the impact of repeated disruption has been significant.

Sample profile and booking

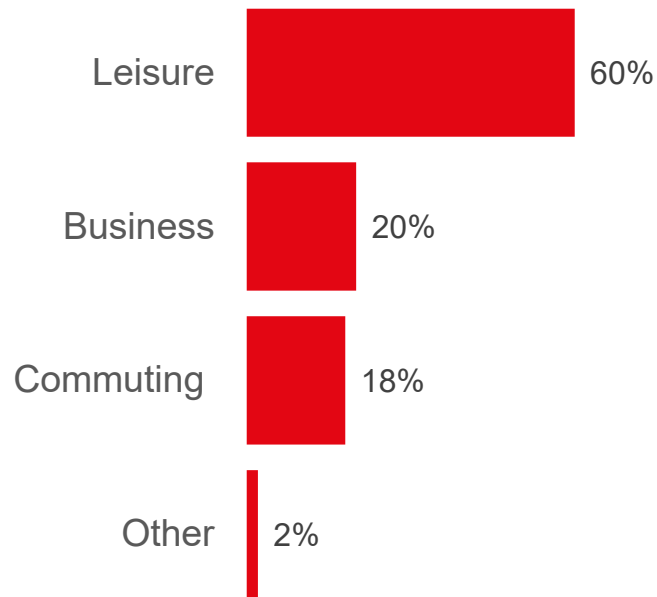


Sample breakdown

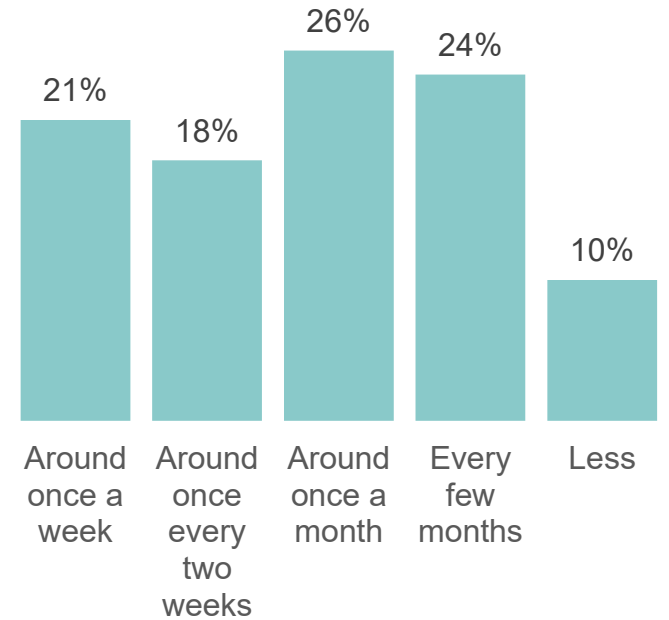
Age breakdown



Journey purpose (most recent journey)



Frequency of travel on Avanti West Coast

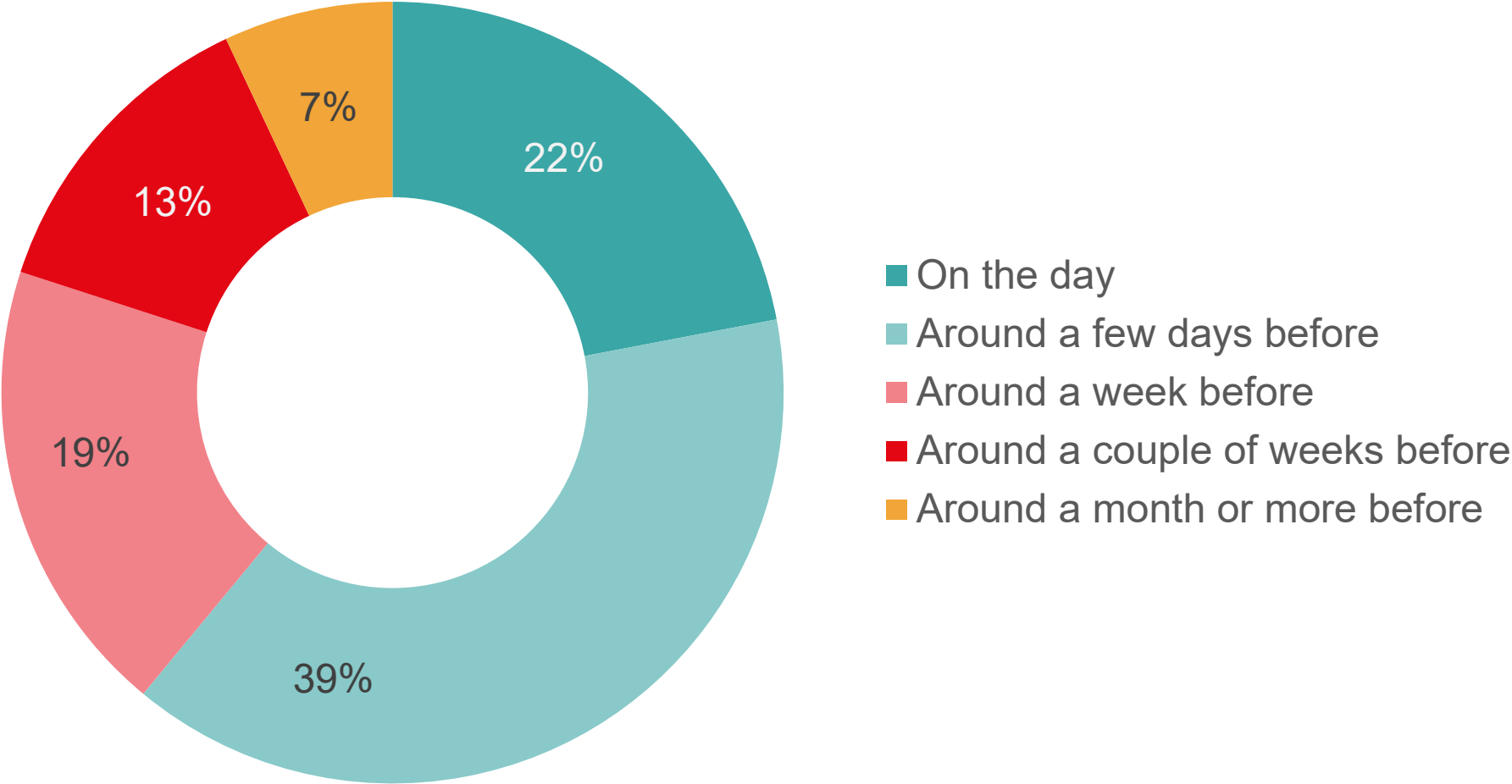


27 per cent live in the North West, 24 per cent in the West Midlands, 23 per cent in London and 7% in Scotland

Total sample: 594 people who had used Avanti within previous 28 days

Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding

Six out of ten booked their ticket on the day or within a few days of travel

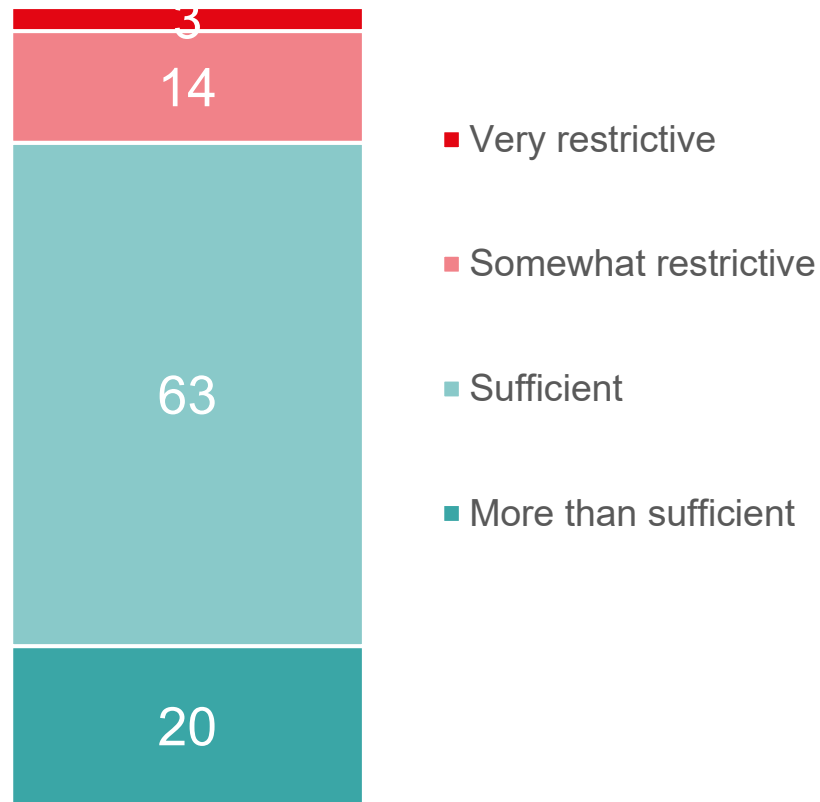


Q7: How far in advance of travel on your outward/return journey did you book your ticket? Sample size = 594

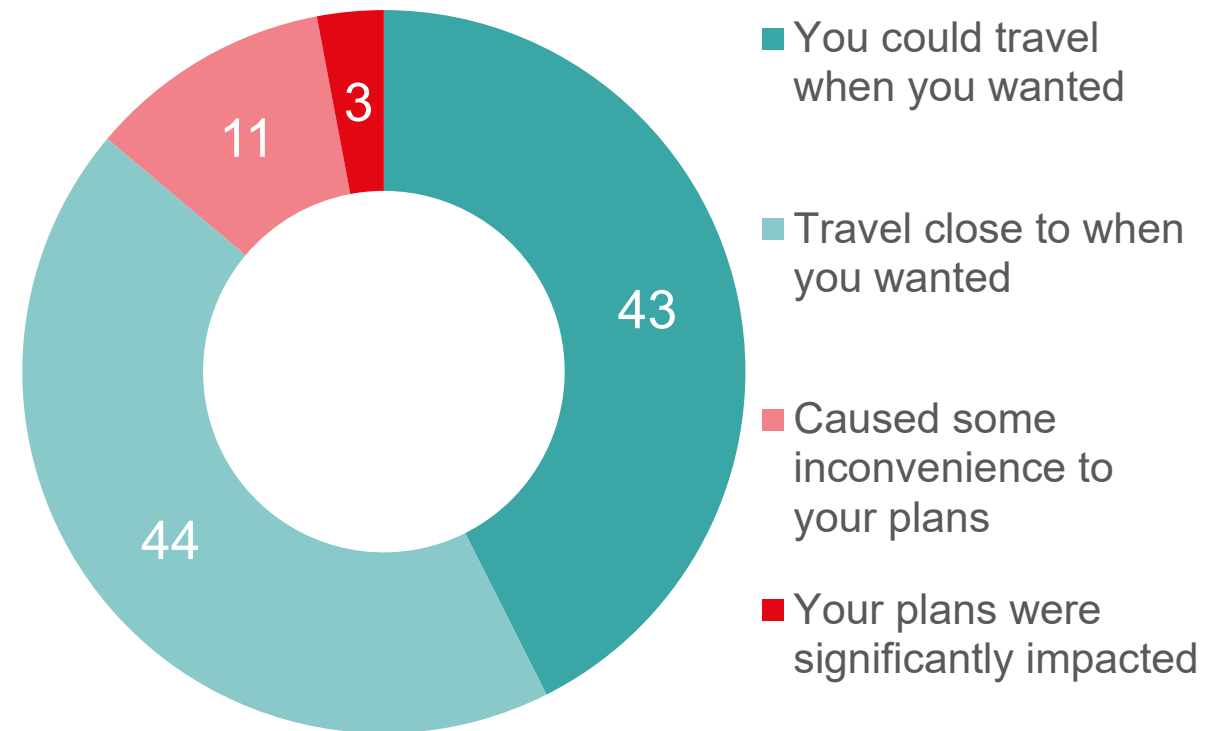
Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding .

Most thought the train times were sufficient and could travel close to when they planned – although some were inconvenienced

The range of train times were...



This range meant they could...

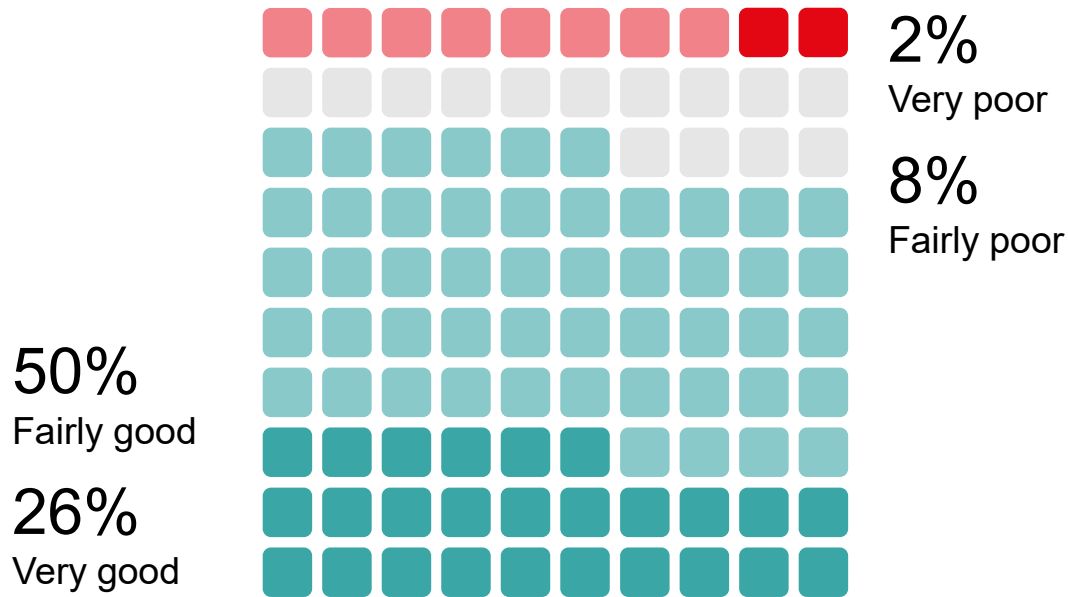


Q: When you saw the range and times of train services available for your outward/return journey, did you think them....? Q And did the range of train services available mean....? Sample size = 594.

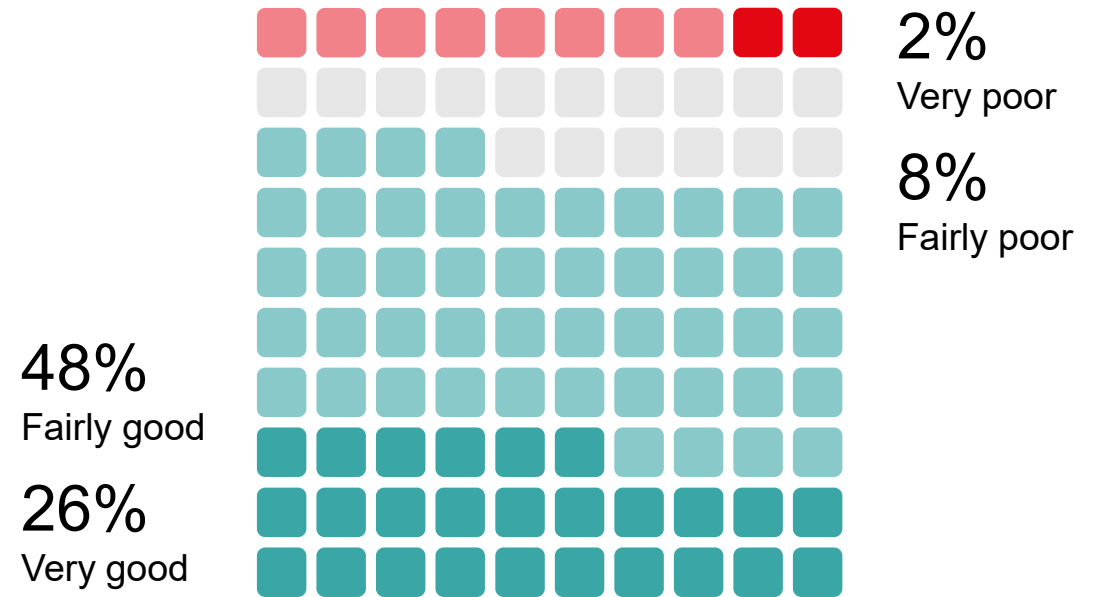
Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding .

Ratings of the booking information available and process of booking generally good – but most rate as ‘fairly’ not ‘very’ good

Rating of information about train times and timetable



Overall, rating of choice of trains, information provided and process of booking the train



Q10: How do you rate the information provided about the outward/return train times and timetables? Q13: Overall, how do you rate the choice of trains, information provided and process of booking the train. Excludes those who said 'not applicable'. Sample sizes: 590 and 592

Passenger comments about the process of booking trains...

“

Booking and choosing the trains was simple because there were a lot of options and the steps were clear on how to do it.

”

“

Difficult to book open returns. Have to stick to one train in the afternoon. Very restrictive. Worried about avanti trains being cancelled. Email on the day saying it was cancelled when it wasn't.

”

“

It was straight forward on trainline as I could consider other train companies too, but Avanti worked out better time wise. It was easy to select time wise and add my seat preferences.

”

“

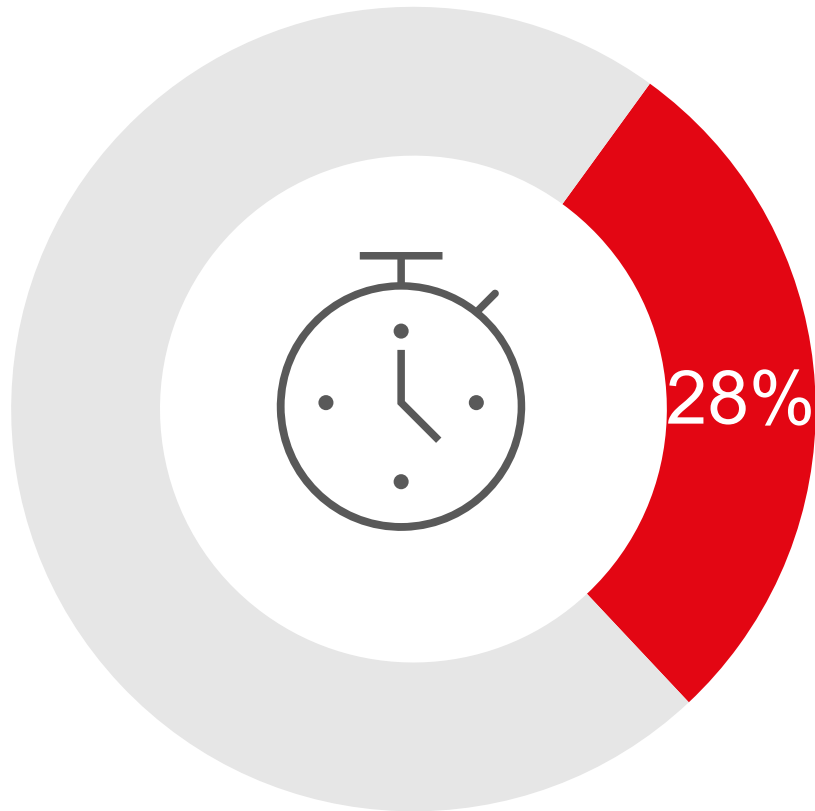
Very limited service, not able to book advance tickets for a weekend journey so had to travel earlier than intended and take annual leave from job. Very unimpressed by Avanti service over past weeks.

”

Journey experience



When making their journey, almost three in ten experienced a timetable change or delay. Mixed views on how it was handled



“

“Very poorly. No update for when next train was due. Unhelpful station staff. In the end I just got on the next train but it wasn’t clear whether I should have.”

”

“

“Information from the staff was really good and although it was annoying I was impressed. I was treated really well and made the situation better.”

”

Comments about how the cancellation or change to the scheduled time of train was handled

It was handled quite well. As soon as it happened people were there to support passengers and get alternative travel sorted.

Didn't get advance warning, checked by accident and noticed the timings were no longer on the schedule.

I received an email from Avanti notifying me of the changes but they did not make it clear which trains I was able to use.

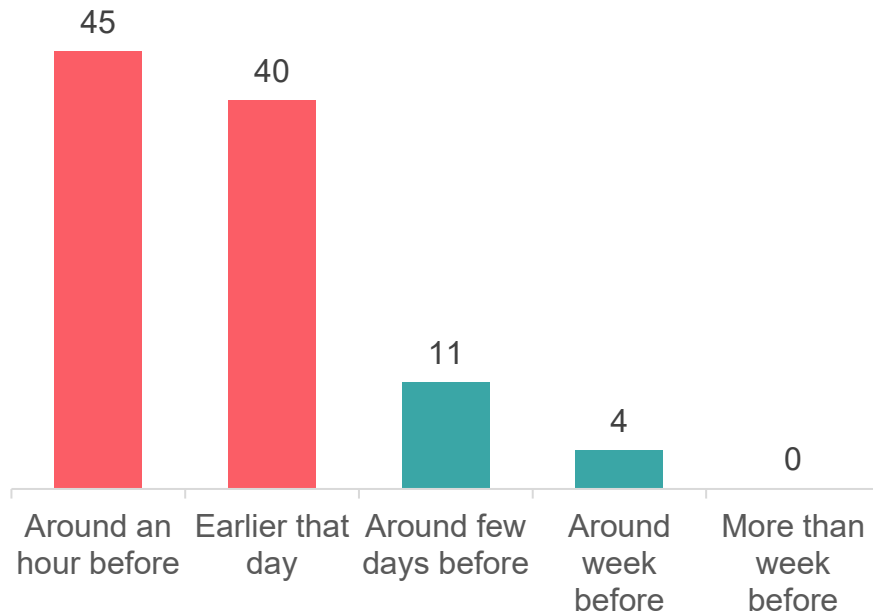
Nobody seemed to know what was happening. Station staff didn't know which trains were running and which weren't.

It wasn't handled at all well and we ended up losing our reserved seats and standing in an overcrowded train for over two hours.

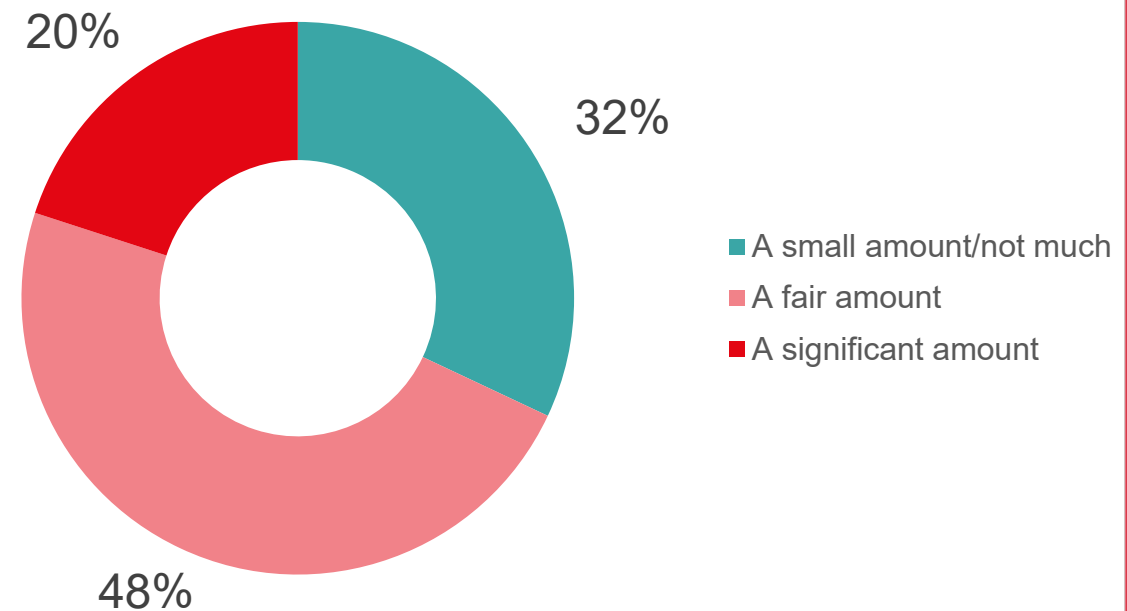


The majority found out about the change to their train on the day. The delay often had an impact on their plans

When told train wouldn't run as scheduled...

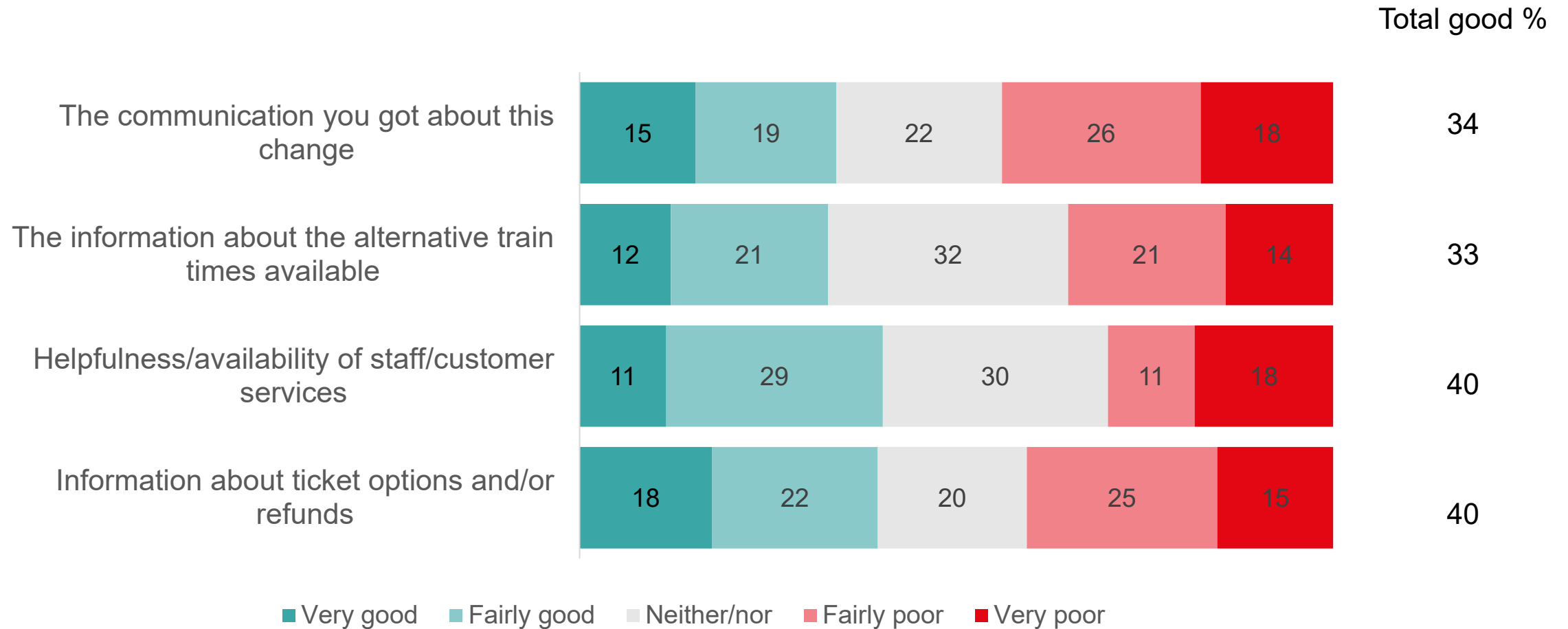


And impact this had...



Q7: How far in advance were you told the outward/return train you booked wouldn't run as scheduled? Base size: all those who experienced cancellation on the day, removed from timetable or offered bus replacement. Sample size = 91.

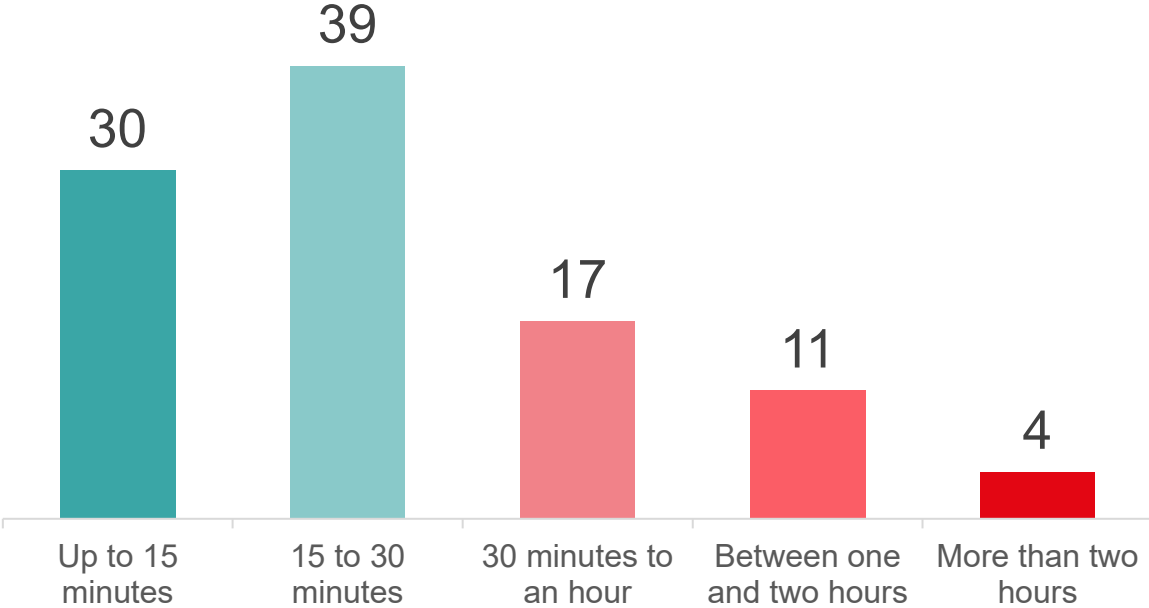
The majority did not feel that the way the situation was handled was good



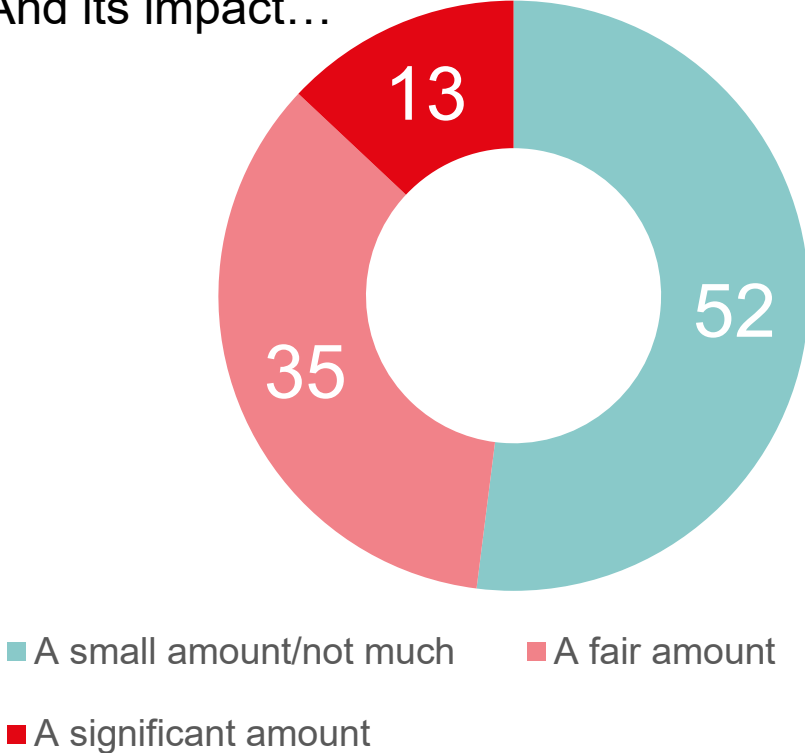
Q. In terms of the change to the scheduled time of your outward/return train, how would you rate.... Base size: all those who experienced cancellation/delay before departure. Exclude those who said 'not applicable'. Sample sizes from top to bottom = 91, 91, 87, 91.

A third were delayed by more than 30 minutes. The delays had an impact for many users

Delay time...

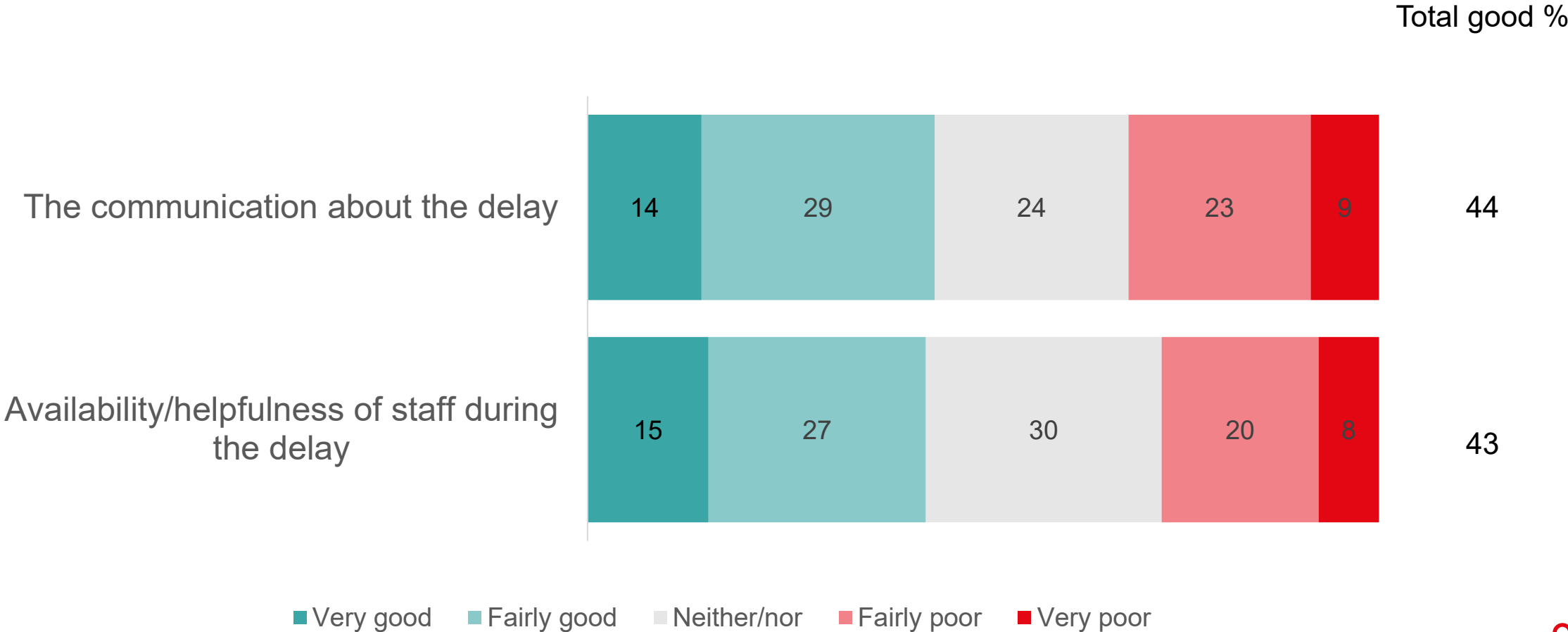


And its impact...



Q: You said you had delays on your outward/return journey, roughly how long were you delayed in total? Q: How much did the delay impact on your plans for that day? Sample size (all those delayed): 139

The communication about the delays was rated poor by around a third



Q. How would you rate....

Base size: all those who experienced delays; excludes those who said 'not applicable'. Sample sizes top to bottom = 139 and 131.



Comments about how the delay was handled

Information from the member of staff was very helpful, just waited on the platform for the rest of the time.

We stood in the cold and no one communicated anything.

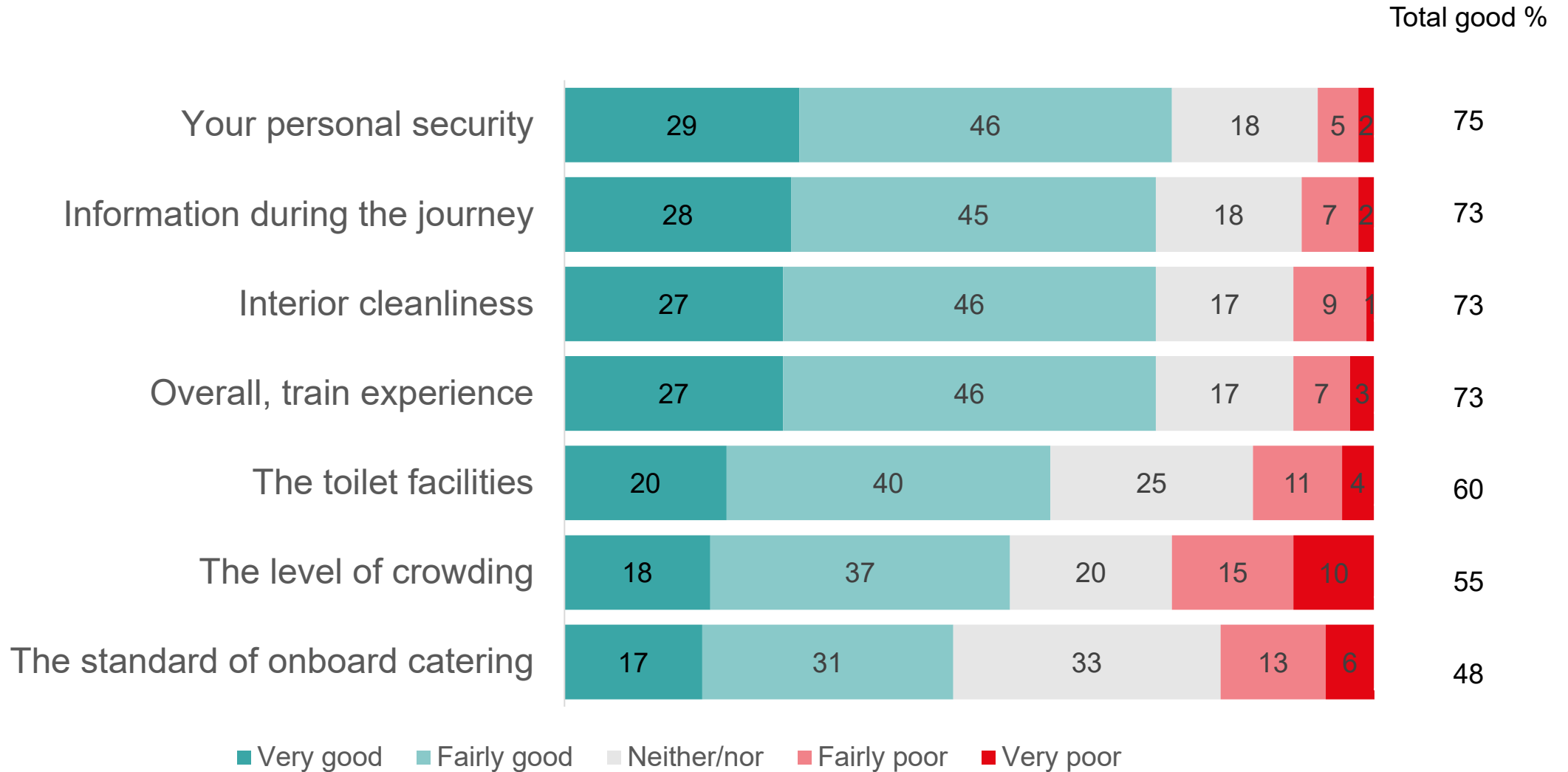
Nothing extra was offered, this train just took longer to get into Euston and my plans were already ruined by the previous change of timing so I just sat and took it,

Nobody seemed to know what was happening. Station staff didn't know which trains were running and which weren't.

Lights went off, train was mobbed, missed connecting train and had to book a taxi for £50. Missed my friend's training event and didn't get into my accommodation until 1am, which as a young woman in a unfamiliar place was terrifying.

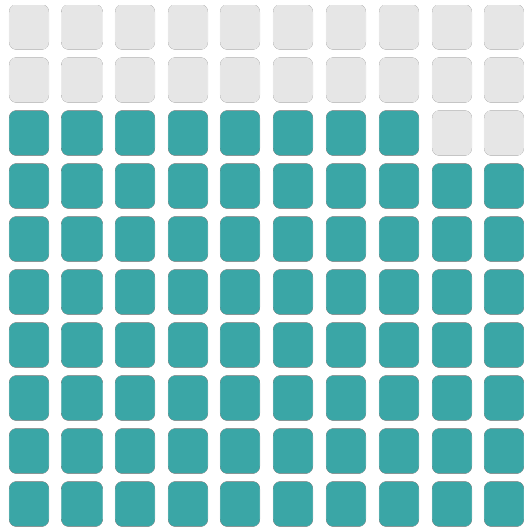


A quarter rated the level of crowding on board as poor



While on the outward/return train with Avanti, how would you rate: i) Information during the journey; ii) Interior cleanliness; iii) The level of crowding; iv) The standard of onboard catering; v) Your personal security; vi) The toilet facilities. Overall how would you rate you experience while on the train. Base sizes exclude those who said 'not applicable'. Sample sizes from top to bottom: 588, 592, 591, 458, 578, 481, 594.

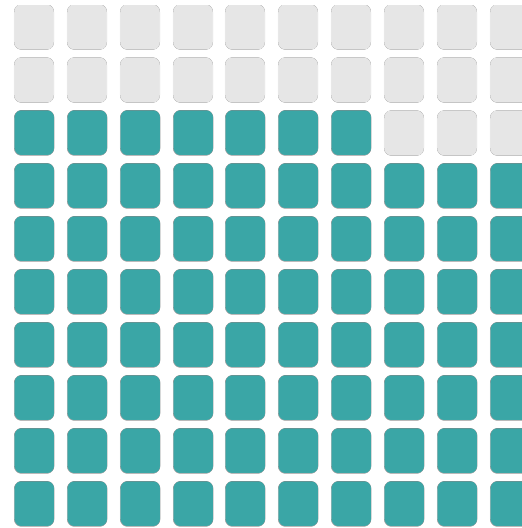
Three quarters were satisfied with their journey overall....



Overall journey

78%

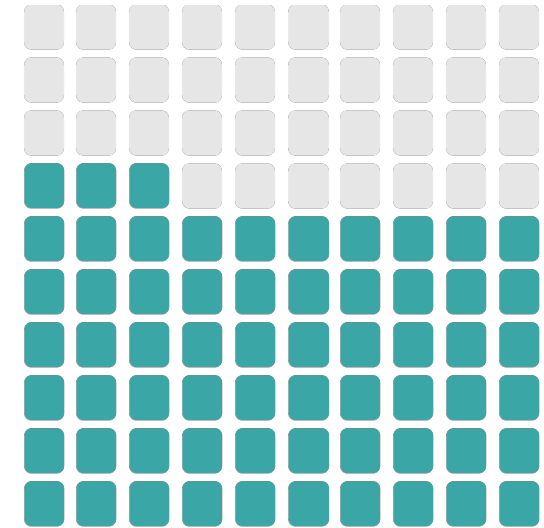
satisfied



Punctuality

77%

satisfied



Value for money

63%

satisfied

Q30: We would like to know how you rate your overall experience on that outward/return journey. How satisfied were you with your outward/return journey for? Sample size = 594

Passenger comments about the journey overall...

“

Overall the journey was relaxing. I felt safe and found that staff on the train were happy to help when needed.

”

“

Pendolino trains horrible. All GWR and lots of local trains in London have sockets with each seat. Even the Megabus has sockets. Train on major route has no sockets with every seat. Trains claustrophobic and feel dated. Not enough luggage space either.

”

“

The train was in a fine condition however the sudden cancellation of the previous train made this one extremely crowded. As it was only a short journey it was fine but had it been much longer it would have been very unpleasant.

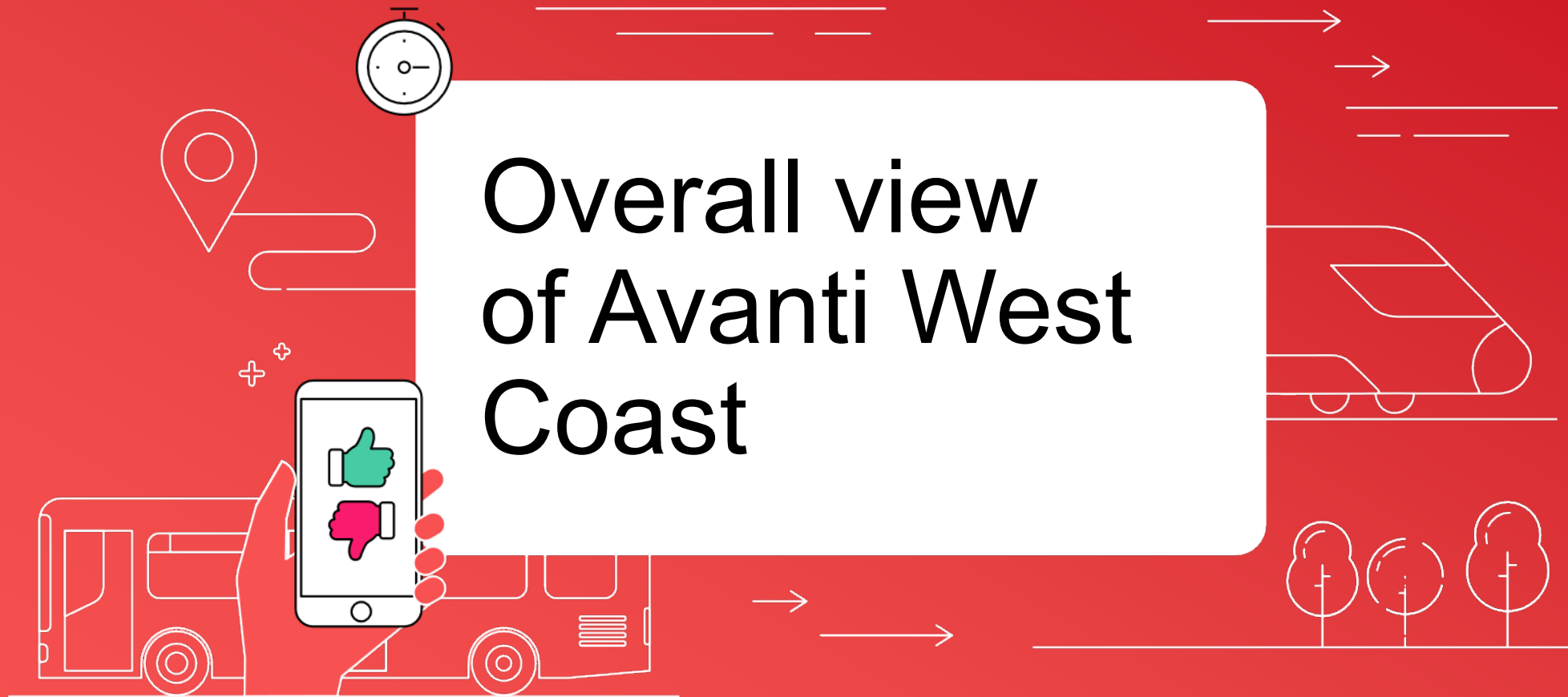
”

“

Extremely poor, hundreds of pounds on a first class ticket to be delayed and confused by bad staff and lack of information and a change of train timings only a matter of hours before my departure.

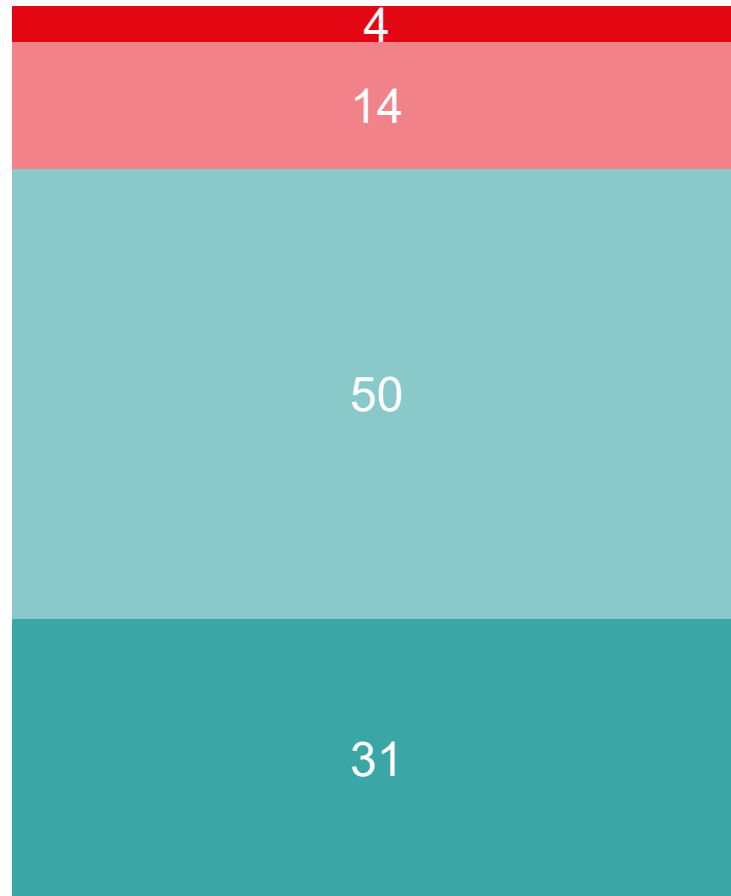
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Overall view of Avanti West Coast



Eight out of ten think Avanti is trustworthy, although 'fairly' trustworthy is most common response

Overall how much do you trust Avanti...



- Do not trust them at all ●
- Have limited trust in them ●
- They're fairly trustworthy ●
- Trust them a great deal ●

Q: All things considered and on balance, how much do you trust Avanti. Sample size = 594

Comments about current views of Avanti services generally

The trains are often late and very very overcrowded with no seats even when you have booked one!!

...constantly changed or cancelled. Unable to book trains in advance meaning I've missed various family events. Tickets are expensive once released. I think it needs urgent improvements or a new service should take over.

Good, but typically expensive - usually cheaper to travel by air

Very poor, impacts my ability to see my family as I cannot drive so have no alternative but to use west coast line.

Always cancellations on the days and usually there are issues with seats because of cancellations. I have had people sit in my reserved seat before.

they need to add more trains, but the onboard experience is very good



Passenger comments about how the reliability of Avanti's service has impacted them more widely

“

Trains cancelled last minute or unable to book a train in advance or ridiculous priced tickets. The train service from Avanti West Coast has impacted my mental health

”

“

I've almost entirely given up on Avanti and use LNWR for my trips to London now from Crewe. Much more reliable and cheaper.

”

“

I have to plan ahead and leave more time, for example travelling back late the night before events so I don't risk being late on the day due to delayed or cancelled trains.

”

“

I no longer trust that I can do a trip to London from Glasgow in a day, so I now have to book hotels.

”

Contact

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