



Awareness and effect of £2 bus fare

February 2023

Introduction



Transport Focus wanted to understand more about awareness of the recently introduced £2 bus fare and whether it has led to more journeys being made on buses.

From 1 January the government introduced a £2 capped single bus fare in England (outside of London). Participation in the scheme is voluntary and some bus companies chose not to take part but most major bus operators offer it. A £2 capped fare was introduced in Greater Manchester,

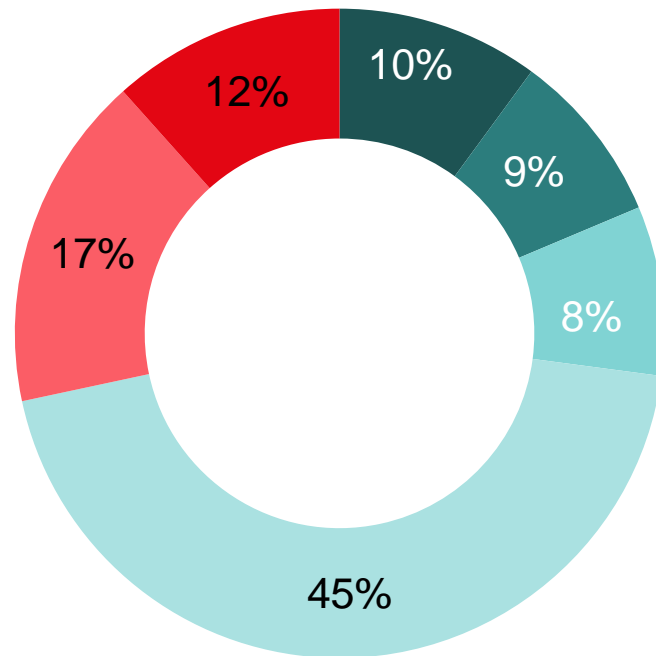
Merseyside and West Yorkshire in autumn 2022.

Transport Focus obtained the views of 1108 people; a representative subset of 2000 people across Great Britain interviewed over the weekend of 20-22 January 2023.

This report focuses on fare payers (under age 65) within England who live outside London. The questions we asked are shown in the appendix.

Just over a quarter use buses at least once a month. One in ten say they will never consider using them.

Frequency of using buses



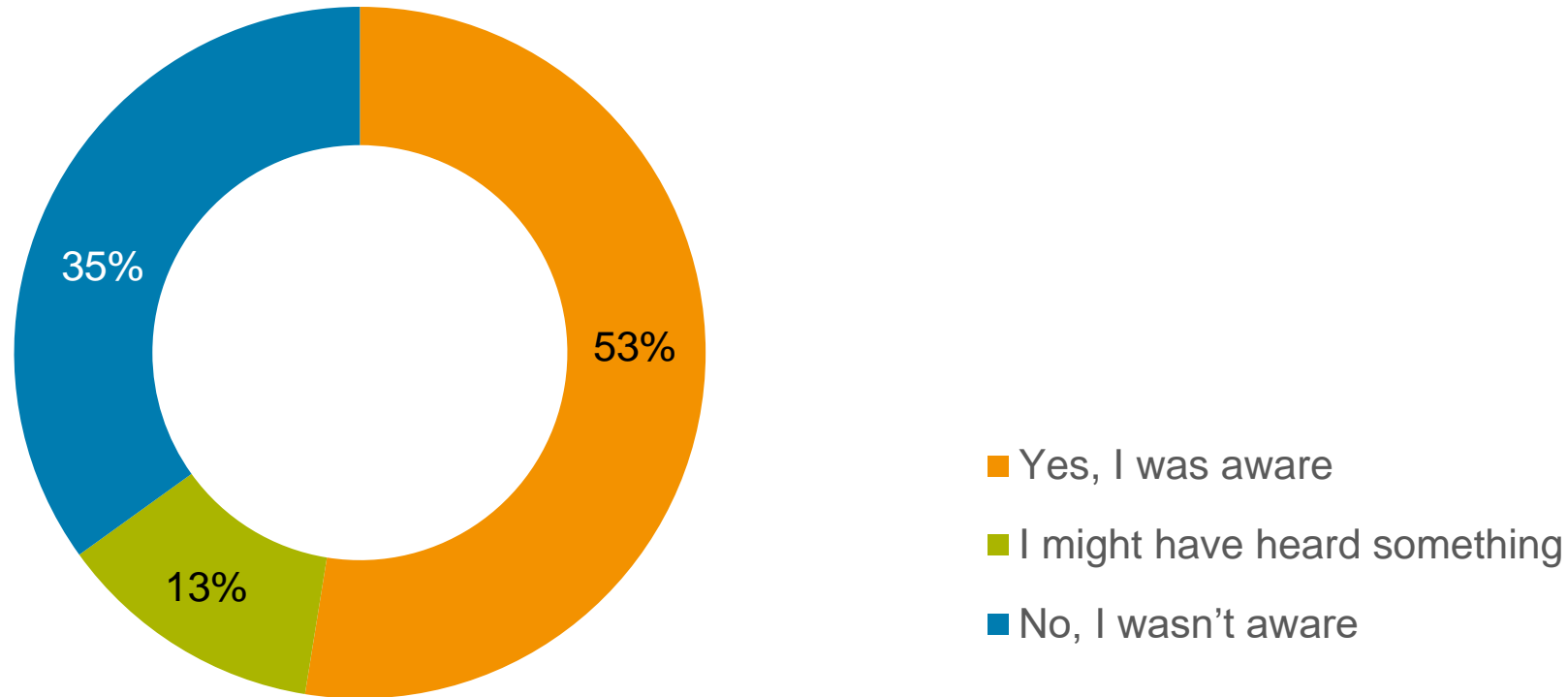
- Use at least several times a week
- Use around once a week
- Use at least once a month
- Use occasionally /only when I need to
- Never use buses but might consider using them
- Never use buses and would never consider them

Q2. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65. Sample = 1108

Just over half are aware of the £2 capped single bus fare

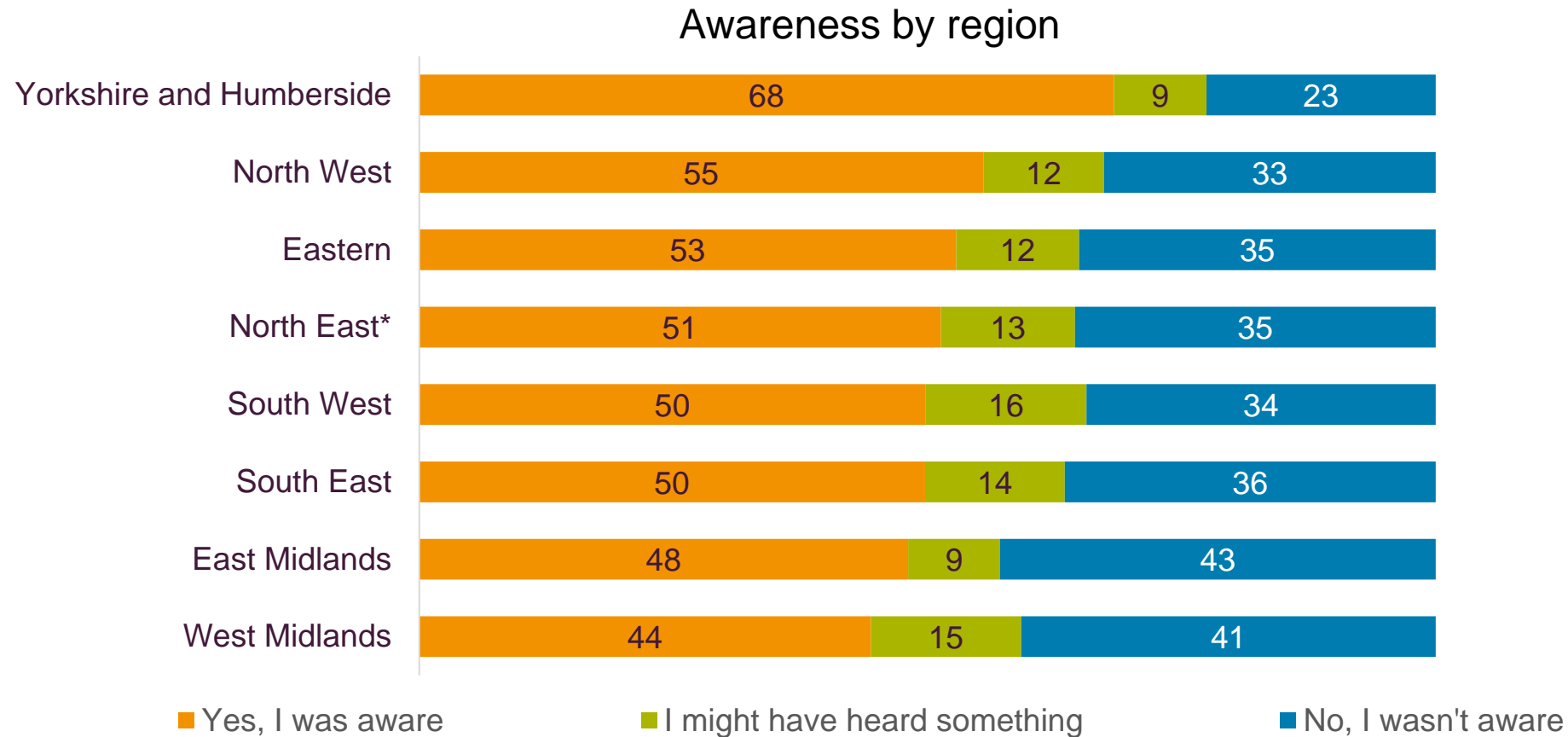
Awareness of the £2 capped fare



Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

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Highest awareness in Yorkshire and Humberside, lowest in West Midlands



Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

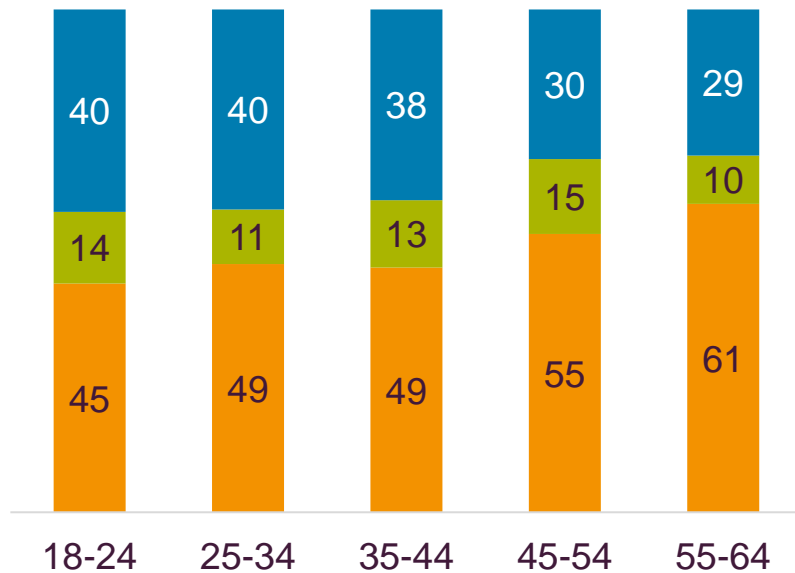
* Low sample size low (59) result should be treated indicatively.

Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65.

Sample sizes: awareness by Region (categories top to bottom): 132, 185, 125, 59; 125, 212; 109 and 161.

Two thirds or more of regular users are aware of the £2 fare cap

Awareness by age

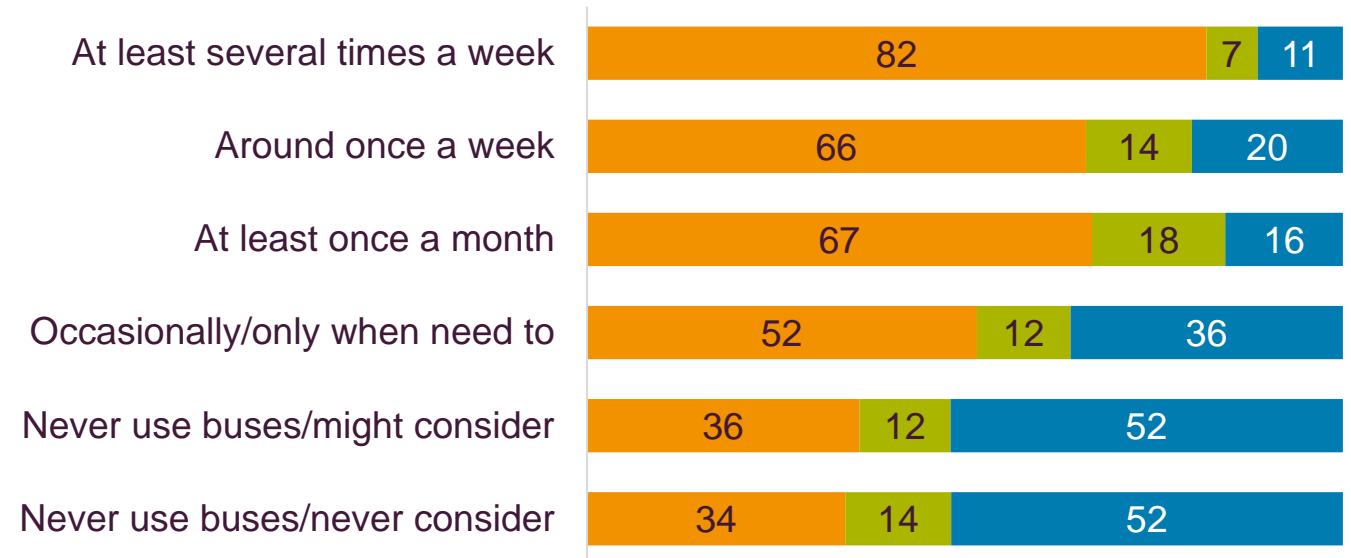


■ Yes, I was aware

■ I might have heard something

■ No, I wasn't aware

Awareness by frequency of use



Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

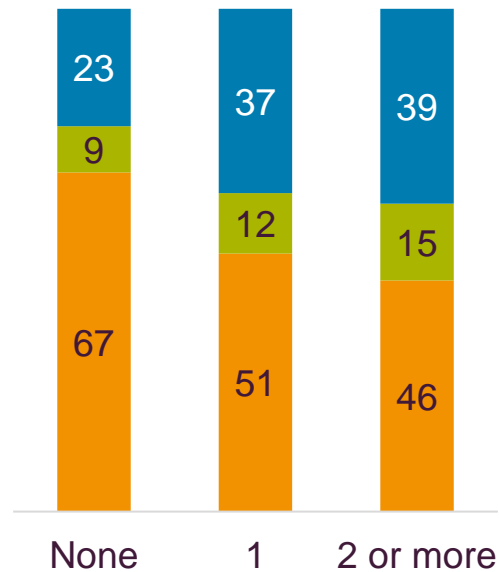
Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65.

Sample sizes: awareness by age (categories left to right): 163; 251; 244; 212 and 238. Awareness by frequency of use (categories top to bottom):

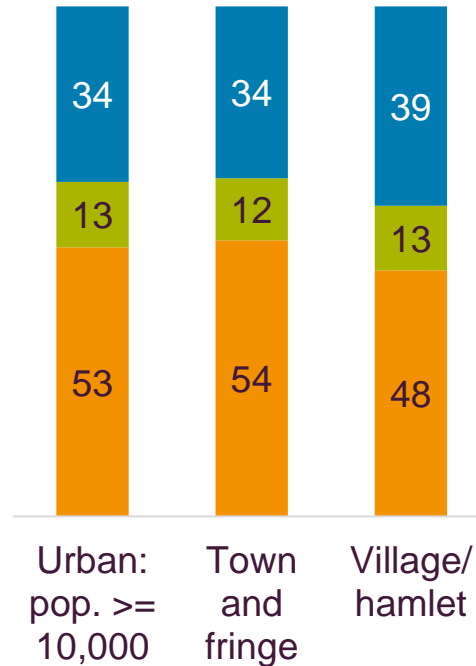
115; 95; 91; 504; 176; and 127.

Awareness of the £2 fare cap is highest in households without cars

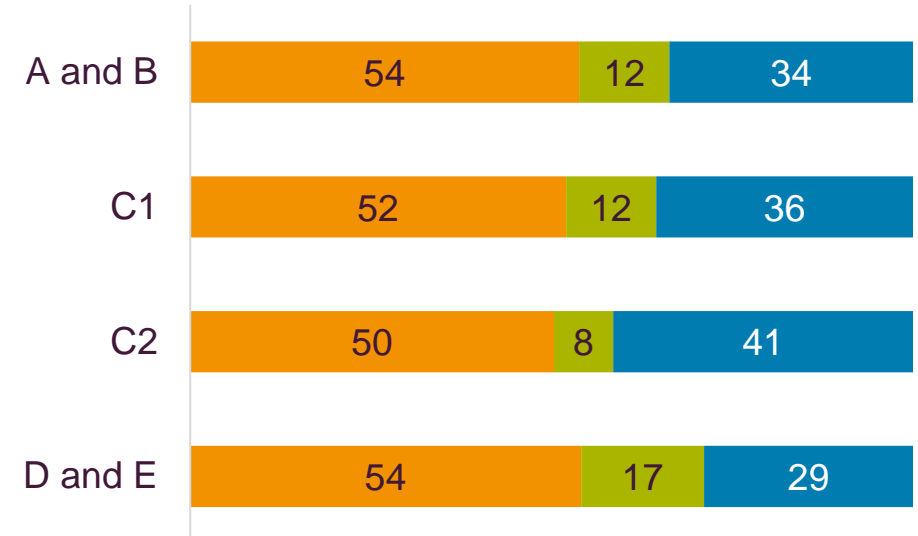
Awareness by number of cars in household



Awareness by urban/town/rural



Awareness by social grade



■ Yes, I was aware

■ I might have heard something

■ No, I wasn't aware

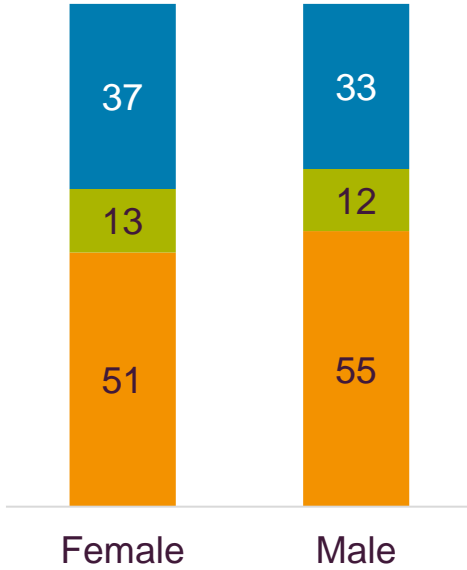
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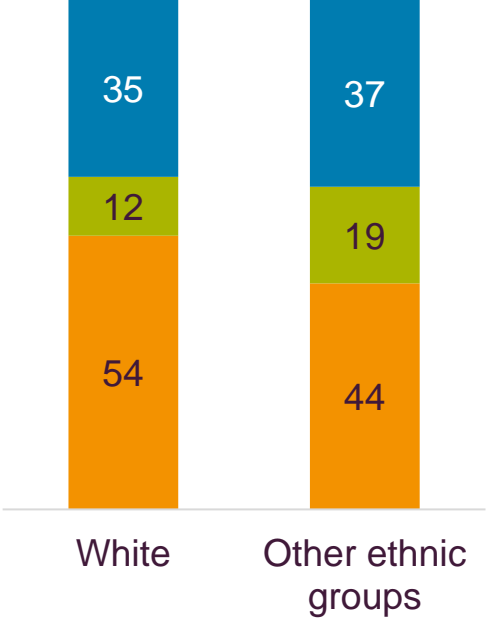
Sample sizes: awareness by cars in household: 224; 557; 327. Awareness by location (categories left to right): 458; 457; 193. Awareness by 'social grade' (categories top to bottom): 254; 205; 307; and 277.

Lower household income groups more aware of £2 fare cap

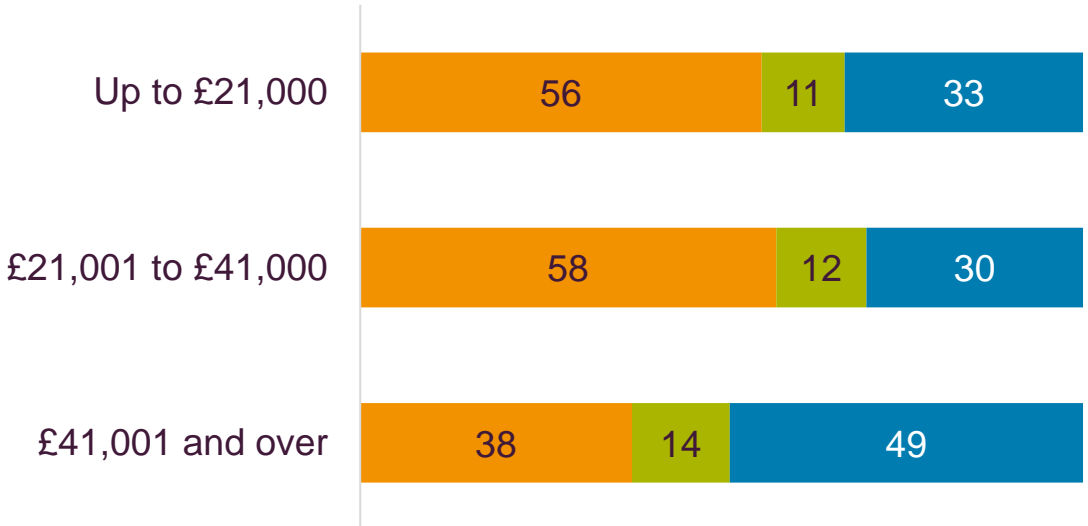
Awareness by gender



Awareness by ethnicity



Awareness by income



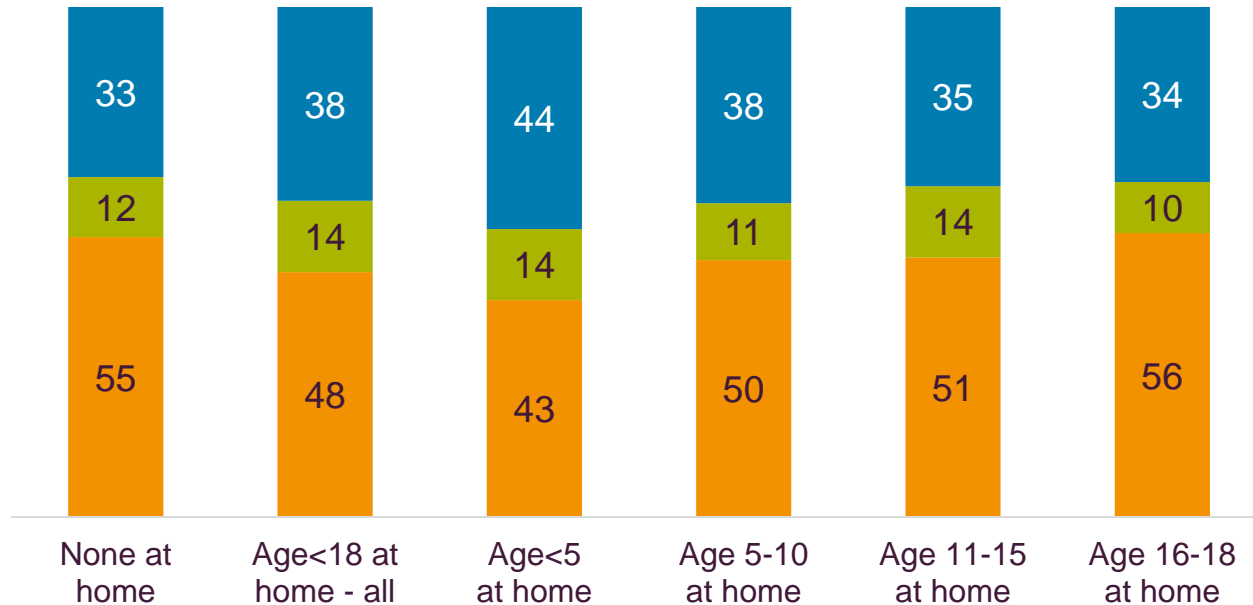
■ Yes, I was aware
 ■ I might have heard something
 ■ No, I wasn't aware

Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?
 Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65.
 Sample sizes: awareness by gender (categories left to right): 570; 536. Awareness by ethnicity (categories left to right): 1059; 149. Awareness by 'income' (categories top to bottom): 374; 489; and 176.



Awareness lower for those with young children at home and higher among those who are not working

Awareness by age of children at home
(can have children in more than one age group)



Awareness by work status



■ Yes, I was aware

■ I might have heard something

■ No, I wasn't aware

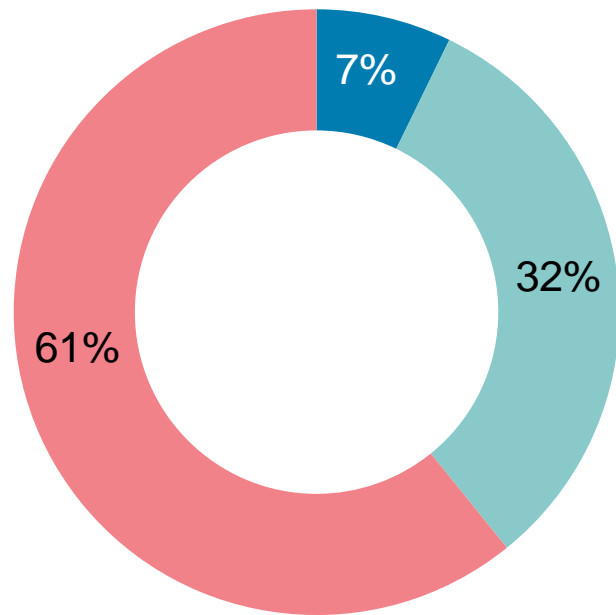
Q2. Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65.

Sample sizes: awareness by whether having children at home (categories left to right): 726; 382; 130; 172; 132; 80. Awareness by work status: 532; 252; 324.

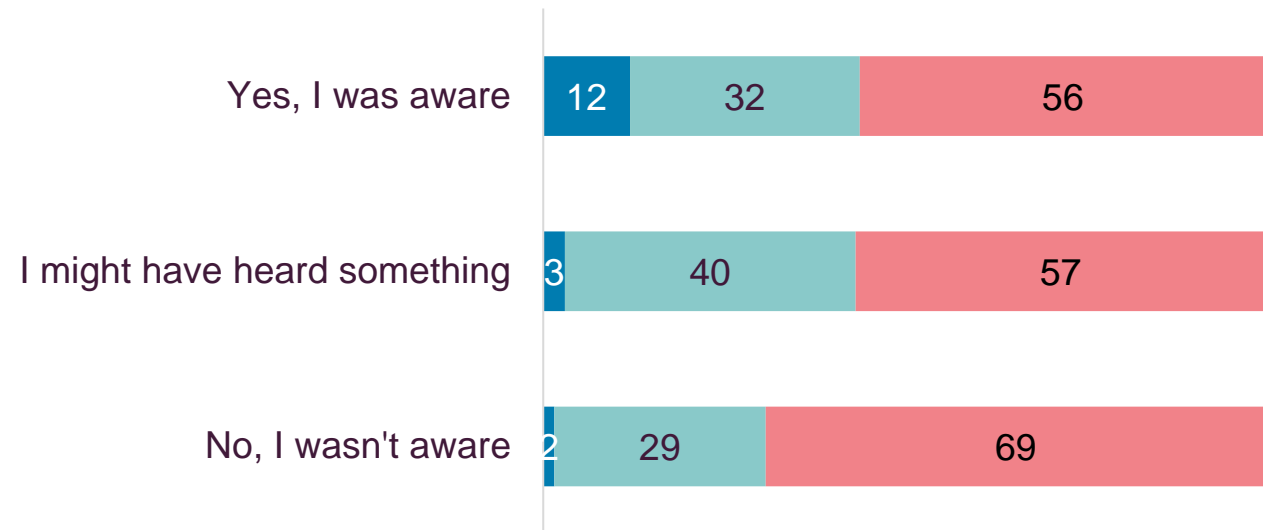
One in eight of those who were aware of the £2 fare say that it has already increased their bus use

£2 fare increased bus use



■ Yes - I am already using buses more ■ Yes - I might use buses more but haven't yet ■ No - it makes no difference

£2 fare increased bus use by awareness of fare

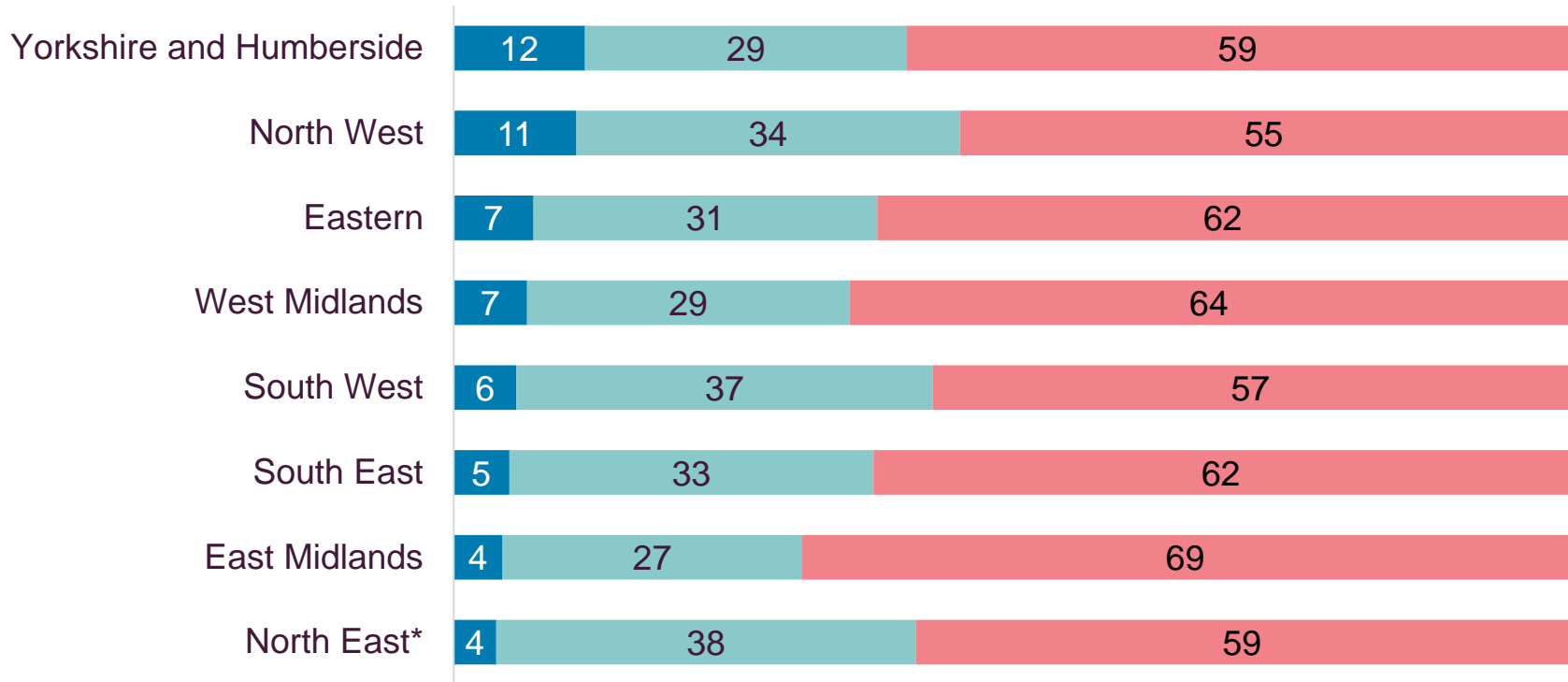


Q3. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65. Left chart sample size = 1108. Right chart sample sizes, categories top to bottom: 579; 141; and 388.

Yorkshire and Humberside and North West regions seen the highest bus use increase resulting from the £2 fare cap

£2 fare increased use by region



■ Yes - I am already using buses more
 ■ Yes - I might use buses more but haven't yet
 ■ No - it makes no difference

Q3. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

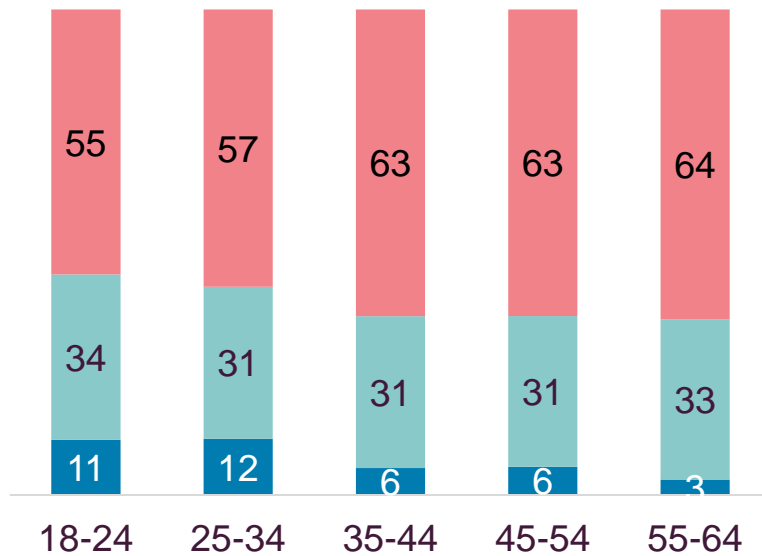
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 Sample sizes: increased use by Region (categories top to bottom): 59; 185; 132; 161; 109; 125; 212; and 125.

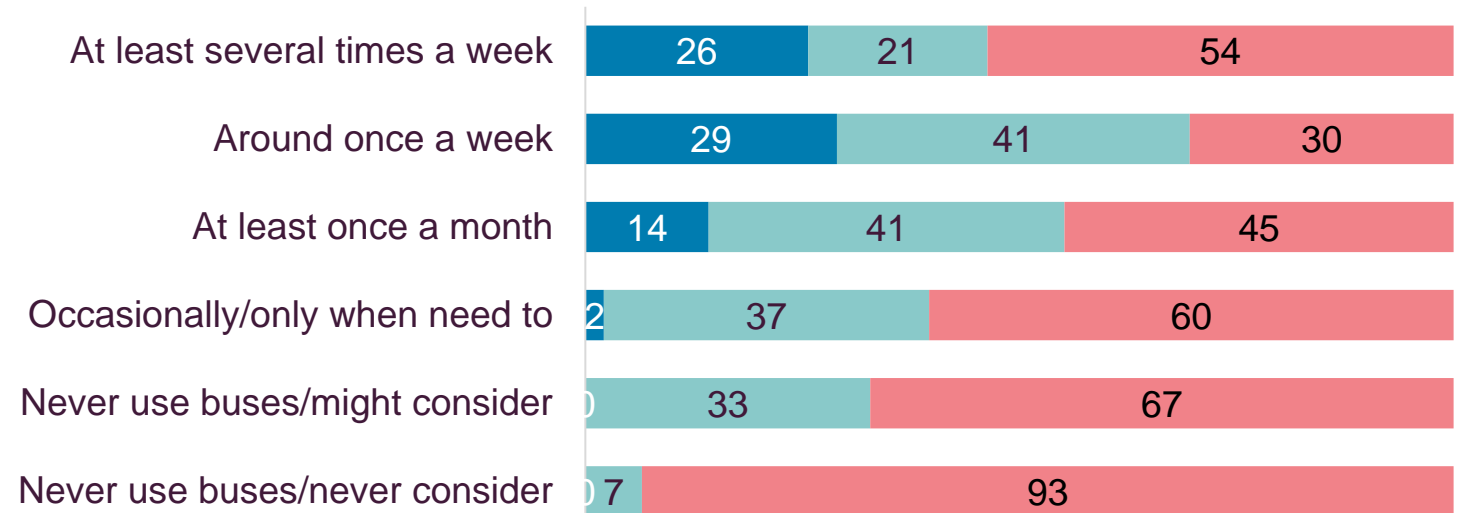


More frequent users and those younger have increased use of buses due to £2 cap

£2 fare increased use by age



£2 fare increased use by frequency of use



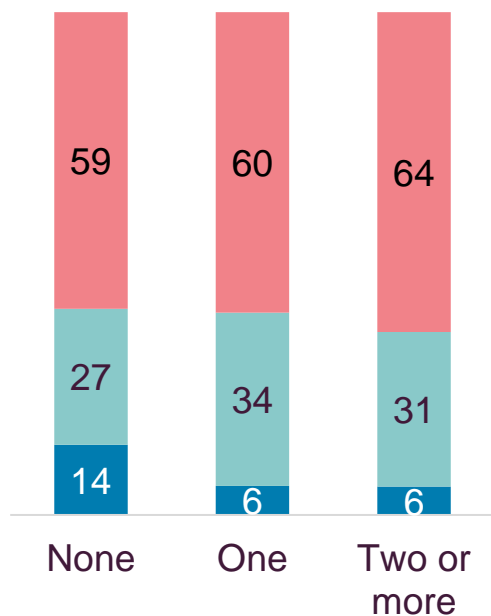
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 ■ No - it makes no difference

Q3. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

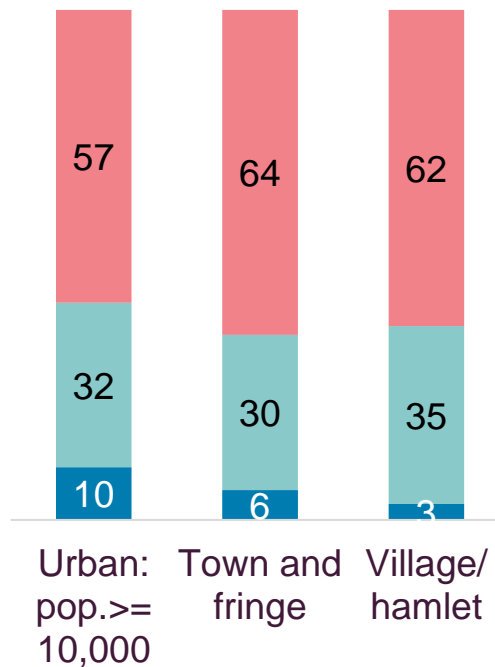
Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65. Sample sizes: whether £2 increased use by age (categories left to right): 163; 251; 244; 212 and 238. Whether £2 increased use (categories top to bottom): 115; 95; 91; 504; 176; and 127.

Increase in use due to £2 cap is higher among those without a car

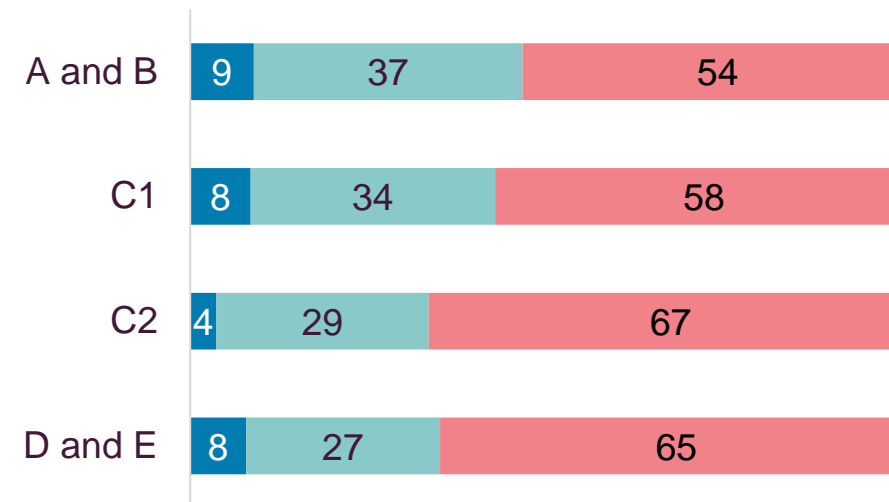
£2 fare increased use by cars in household



£2 fare increased use by urban/town/rural



£2 fare increased use by 'social grade'



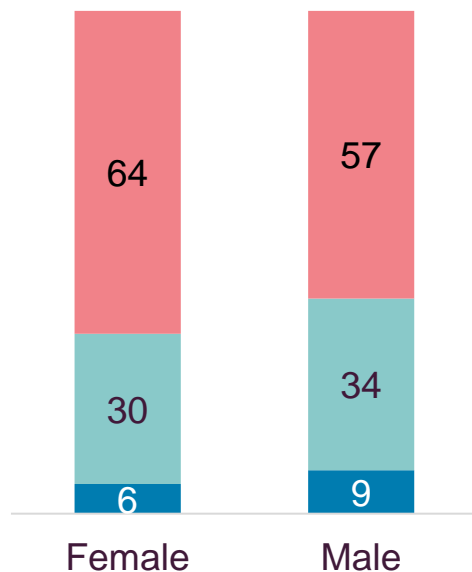
■ Yes - I am already using buses more
 ■ Yes - I might use buses more but haven't yet
 ■ No - it makes no difference

Q3. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

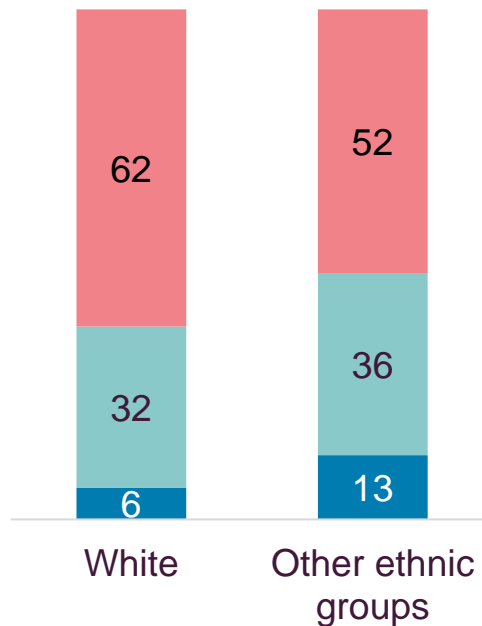
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 Sample sizes: increased use by cars in household: 224; 557; 327. Increased use by location (categories left to right): 458; 457; 193.
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Increased bus use occurred more within other ethnic groups

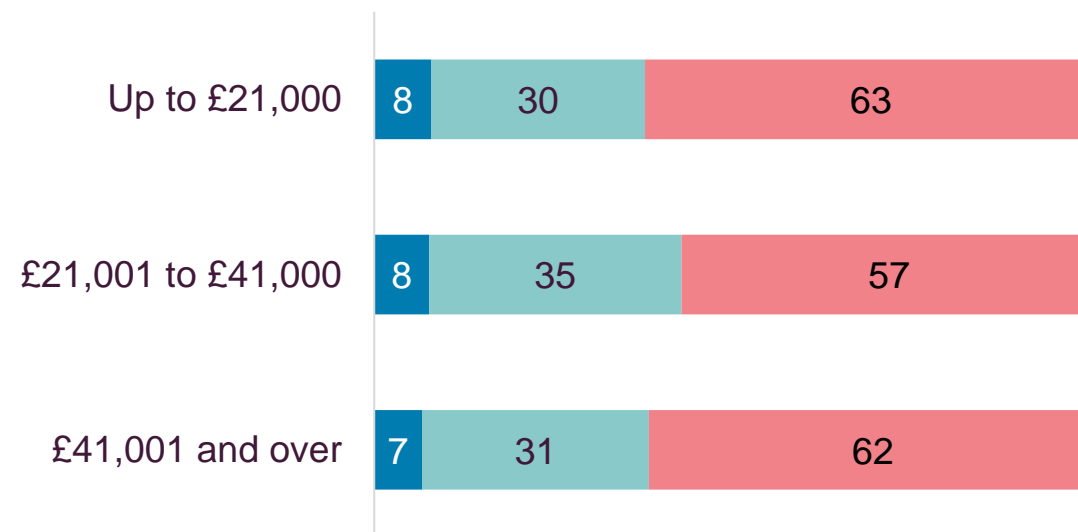
£2 fare increased use by gender



£2 fare increased use by ethnicity



£2 fare increased use by income



■ Yes - I am already using buses more
 ■ Yes - I might use buses more but haven't yet
 ■ No - it makes no difference

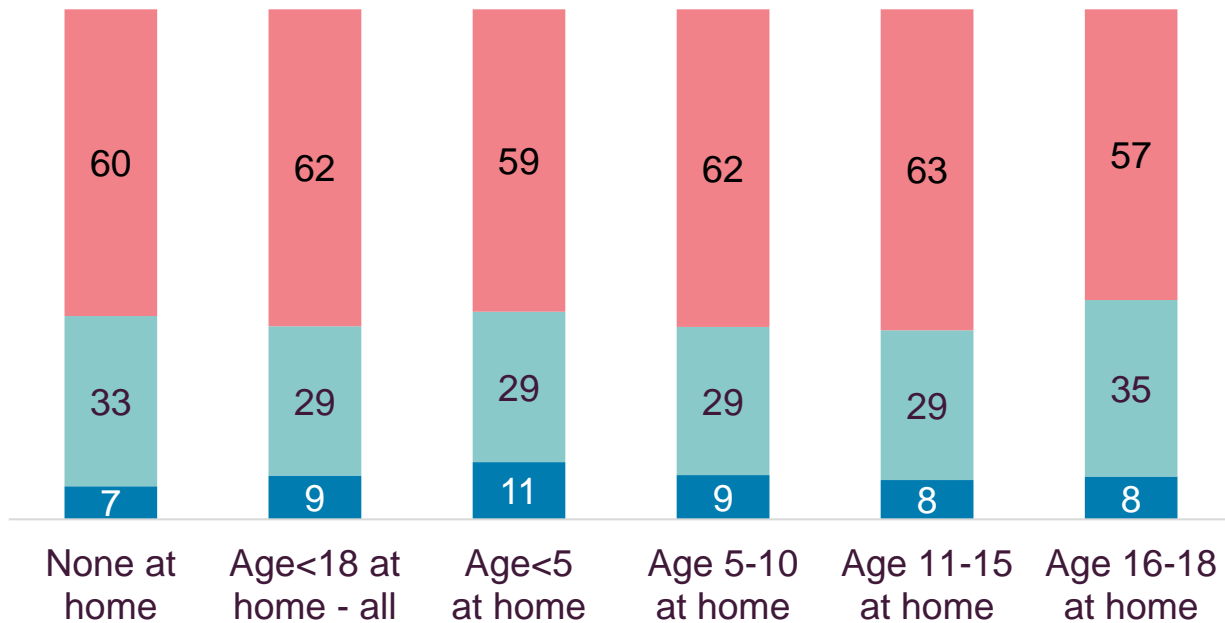
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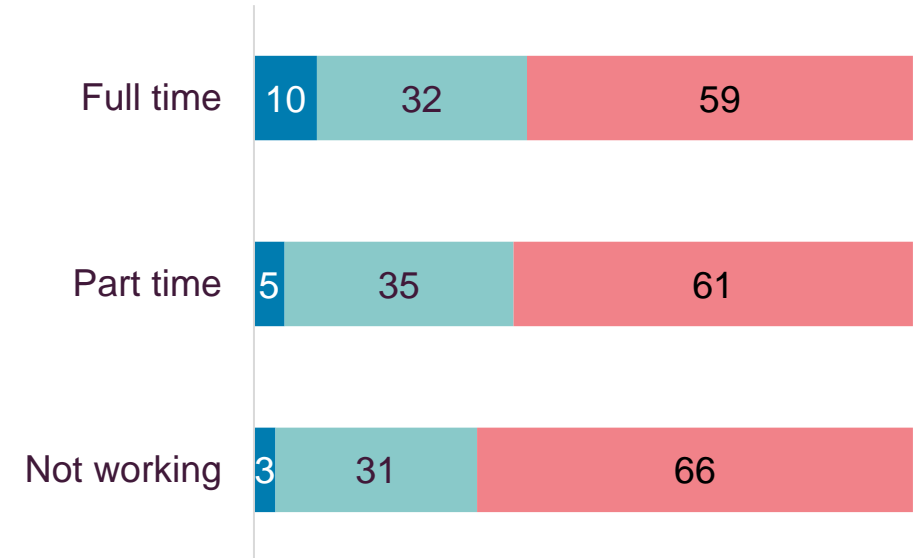
Sample sizes: increased use by gender (categories left to right): 570; 536. Increased use by ethnicity (categories left to right): 1059; 149. Increased use by 'income' (categories top to bottom): 374; 489; and 176.

Increased use higher among full time workers

£2 fare increased use by children at home
(can have children in more than one age group)



Whether £2 fare increases use by work status



■ Yes - I am already using buses more
 ■ Yes - I might use buses more but haven't yet
 ■ No - it makes no difference

Q3. Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses?

Report on awareness and effect of £2 bus fare - February 2023. Those living within England outside of London and age under 65. Sample sizes: increased use by whether having children at home (categories left to right): 726; 382; 130; 172; 132; 80. Increased use by work status: 532; 252; 324.

Comments about the £2 fare



Comments from those who are travelling more due to the £2 fare



My normal single ticket is £3.70 and I am therefore making a saving every time I catch the bus. I am now taking the opportunity to try places I haven't been to for a while and travelling by bus.


Yorkshire and Humberside, female, age 56

I feel like this is more of an appropriate price.

North East, male, age 24

It is so cheap and easy to get around by only paying £2. This will encourage me to use it more often.

East of England, male, age 48



Cheaper and easier than driving and parking.


East of England, female, age 30

It certainly makes it more affordable to afford buses during the cost of living crisis.

North West, male, age 27

My usual return fare to the nearest town is £9.60, so to be able to do the same journey for £4 for a while is amazing. I have no car so I am reliant on buses, so this is a great incentive to have and will give me more mobility and options, whilst saving money also.

East Midlands, female, age 44



Comments from those who might use bus more as a result of the £2 fare



It could work out cheaper than driving and paying for parking also will reduce pollution.

South East, female, age 62

Well because it used to be extortionate to get from my house in the outer suburbs to the town centre and not value for money as only a 15 min ride but now I feel it is fair.

North West, female, age 31

Would be handy for a day out at this new price.

North West, female, age 34



It will be cheaper than using the car and worth the inconvenience.

South West, female, age 60

I'm aware of spending in the cost-of-living crisis, and capping the bus fare would make me less concerned about racking up larger bus fees.

South East, female, age 22

Would make me less likely to use alternatives and consider the bus.

East of England, male, age 48



Comments by those who said the £2 fare would make no difference to their use of buses



Buses aren't reliable so I go by car so I know I will get there on time.

East Midlands, female, age 34

I buy a monthly ticket which is still the same price.

Yorkshire and Humberside, male, age 51

I very rarely use buses anyway, so I would be prepared to potentially pay more than this for the journeys I do take when necessary.

South West, female, age 23

I don't like buses they are not clean.

West Midlands, female, age 33



By time 4 of us get a return it's a lot.

East of England, male, age 44

It still takes long to get to your destination compared to tram and train.

North West, male, age 19

A day ticket would cost the similar amount to £4, which is two journeys capped at £2. So for me, this price cap doesn't make a difference for me.

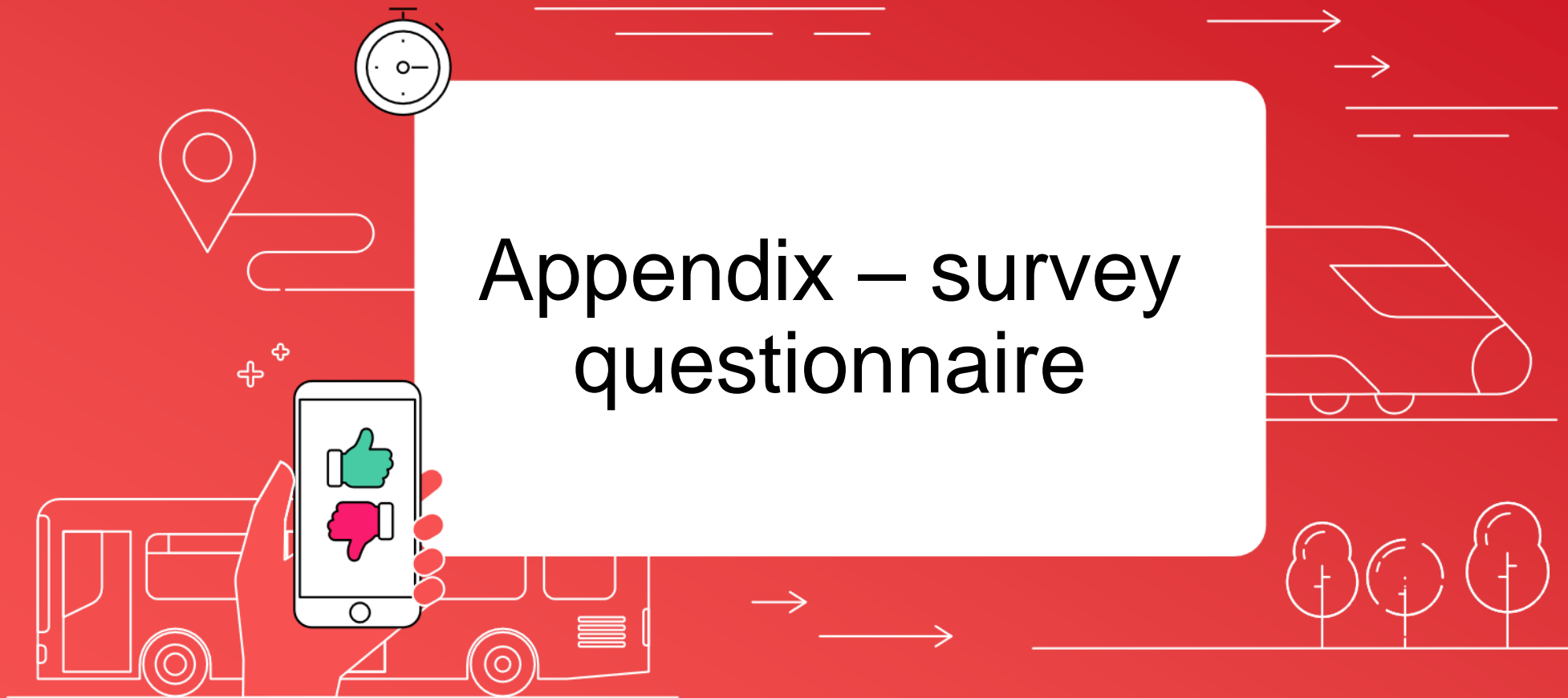
South West, male, age 21

From where I live a £4 return journey is still more expensive than using a car park in town.

South East, female, age 62



Appendix – survey questionnaire



Survey questions: awareness and effect of £2 bus fare

Q1 Which of these best describes how you use buses?

- a) Use at least several times a week
- b) Use around once a week
- c) Use at least once a month
- d) Use occasionally /only when I need to
- e) Never use buses but might consider using them
- f) Never use buses and would never consider them

a) Q2 Are you aware that many bus companies outside London have introduced a capped or maximum fare of £2 for a single journey?

- b) Yes, I was aware
- c) I might have heard something
- d) No, I wasn't aware

Q3 Does the £2 capped fare make any difference to your use of buses

- a) Yes – I am already using buses more
- b) Yes – I might use buses more but haven't yet
- c) No – it makes no difference

Q4 Please tell us how and why the £2 capped fare [PIPE IN BASED ON Q3 ANSWER: has made you use buses more/might make you use buses more/makes no difference to your bus use]

TEXT FILL

Contact

Any enquiries about this report should be addressed to:

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London

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www.transportfocus.org.uk

Transport Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council

Transport Focus is the independent consumer organisation representing the interests of:

- rail passengers in Great Britain
- bus, coach and tram users across England outside London
- all users of England's motorways and major 'A' roads (the Strategic Road Network).

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

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