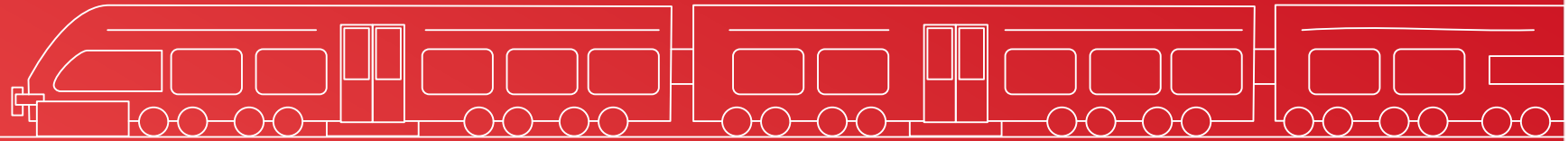




Avanti West Coast passenger experience survey

March 2023

Introduction



Transport Focus has been monitoring the experience of passengers travelling with Avanti West Coast and TransPennine Express.

As part of this work Transport Focus commissioned a survey in November 2022 to understand experiences when booking journeys, punctuality, levels of crowding and information during disruption.

Transport Focus has undertaken a second survey to see if the passenger experience has

improved following the implementation of new timetables in December 2022.

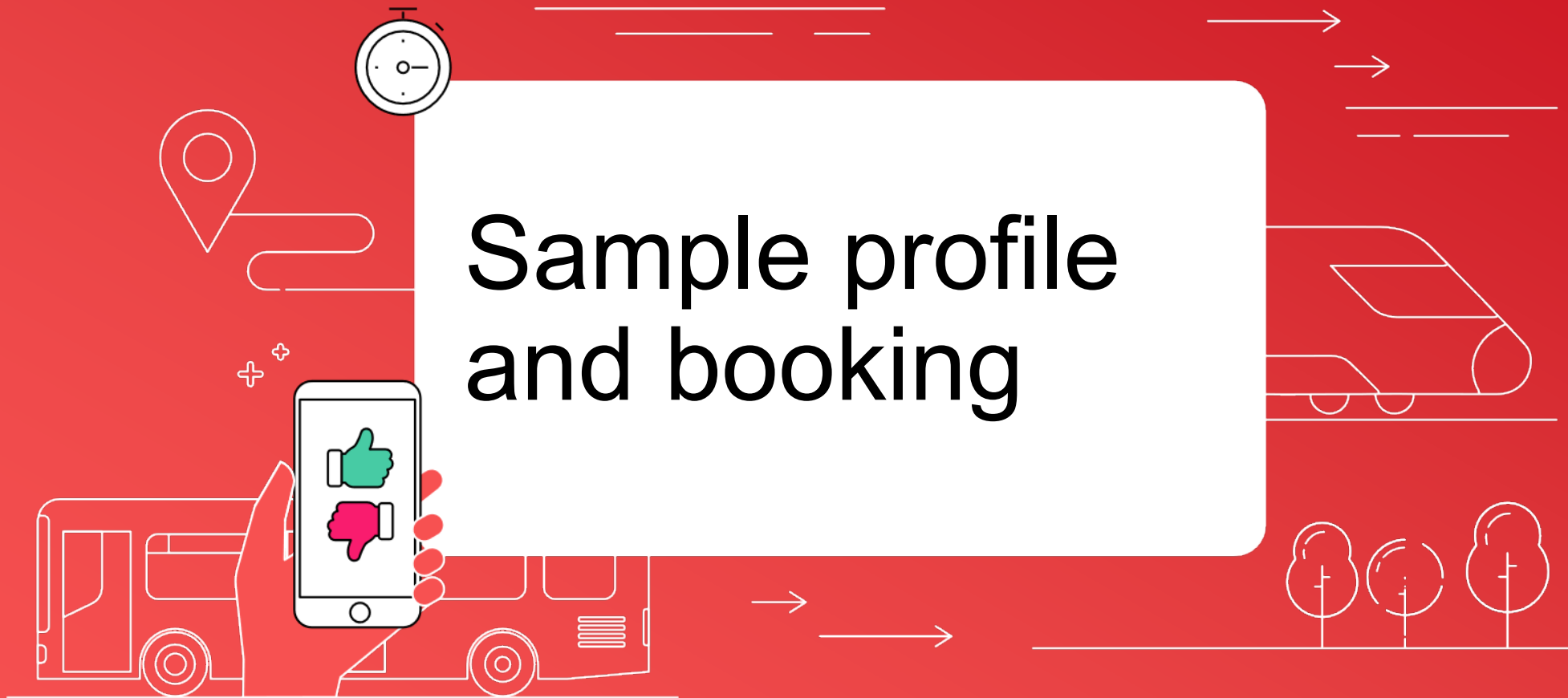
This report summarises the experience of 500 Avanti West Coast passengers who travelled in the 28 days prior to being surveyed. A separate report details the findings for passengers travelling with TransPennine Express.

The survey used a nationally representative online panel. Fieldwork was conducted between 3-15 February 2023.

Key findings

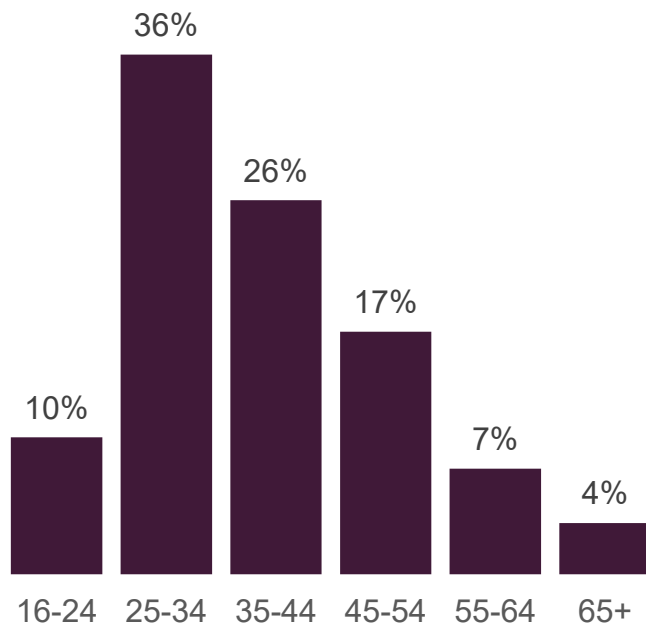
- Little change in overall journey ratings (80 per cent good) compared to November 2022 (78 per cent).
- The proportion who experienced a timetable change or journey delay is still significant at one in four (25 per cent) compared to 28 per cent in November 2022.
- Rating of information provided when trains are changed has improved a little but still only four in ten rate most aspects as good.
- When delays occurred, rating of communication and staff are unchanged, with less than half saying it was good.
- Ratings for the on-train experience are similar to in November 2022, but there was a slight improvement in ratings of crowding levels.
- Eight in ten said they trust Avanti, unchanged since November 2022. Again, the majority said 'fairly' trustworthy rather than trust a great deal.

Sample profile and booking

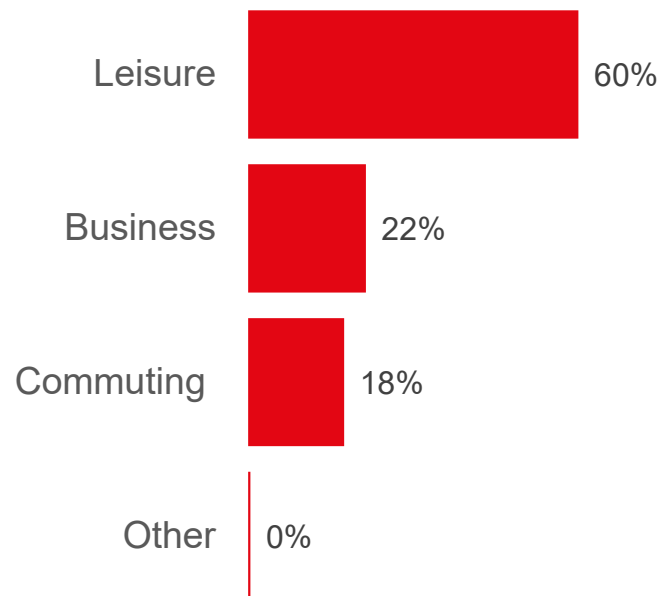


Sample breakdown

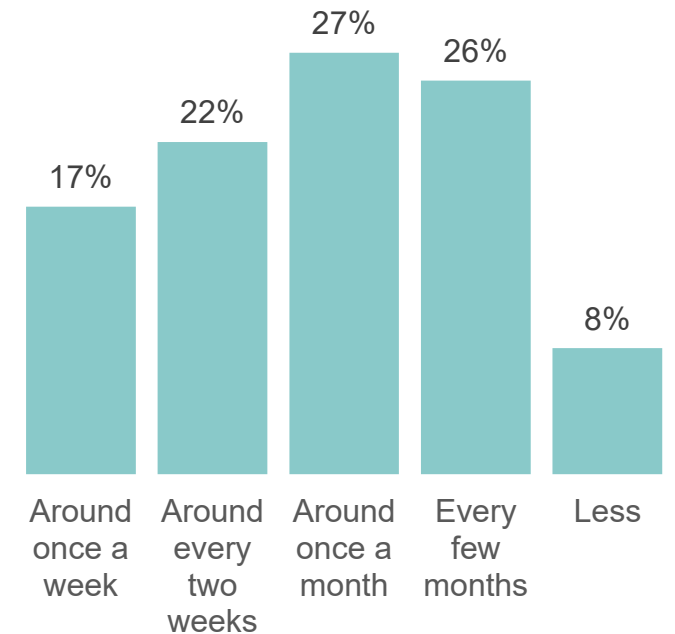
Age breakdown



Journey purpose (most recent journey)



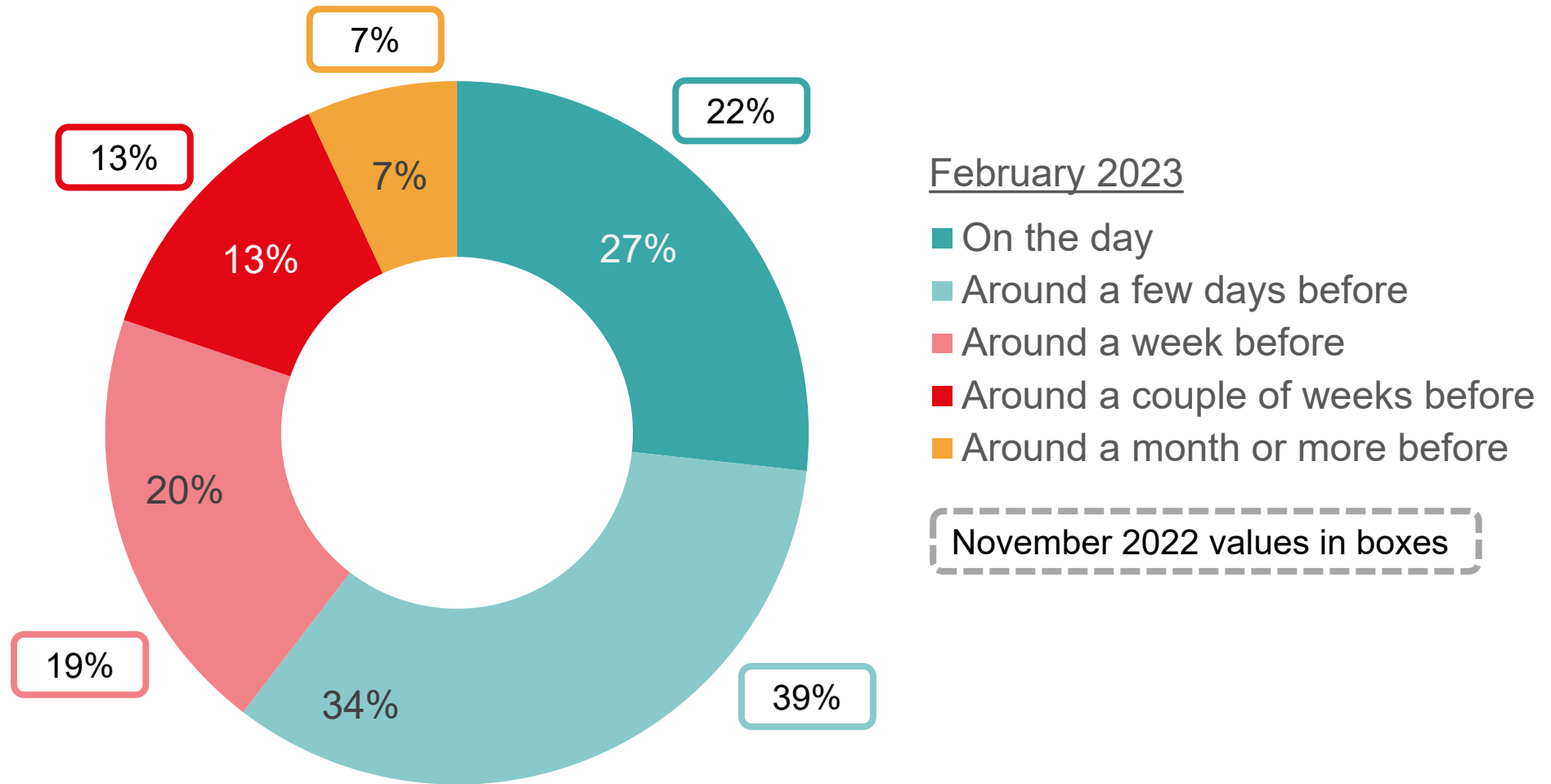
Frequency of travel on Avanti West Coast



Total sample: 501 people who had used Avanti within previous 28 days

Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding

The majority booked on the day of or within a few days of travel, similar to November 2022

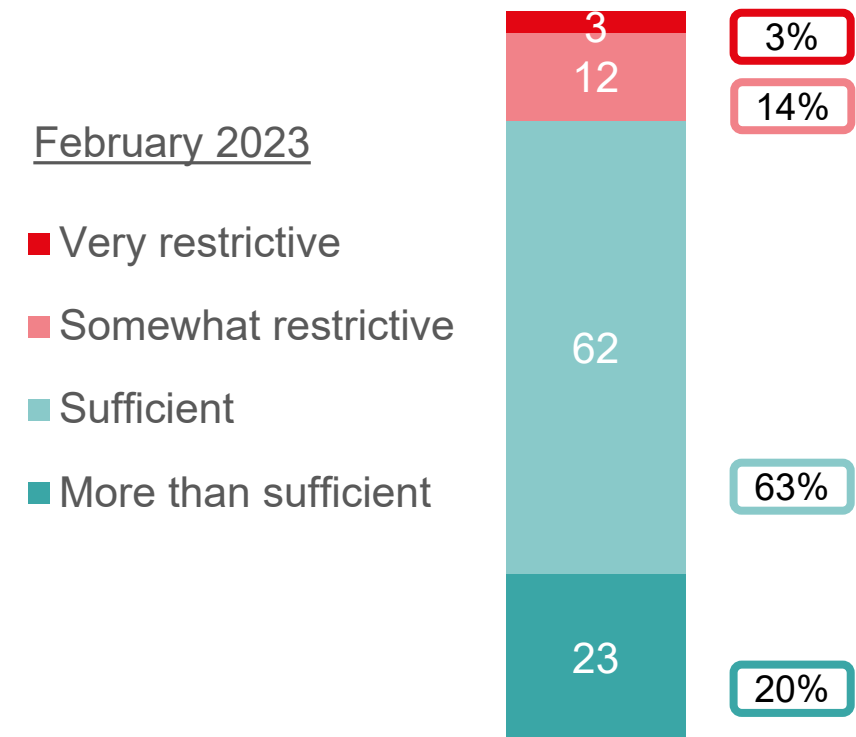


Q7: How far in advance of travel on your outward/return journey did you book your ticket? Sample size = 501

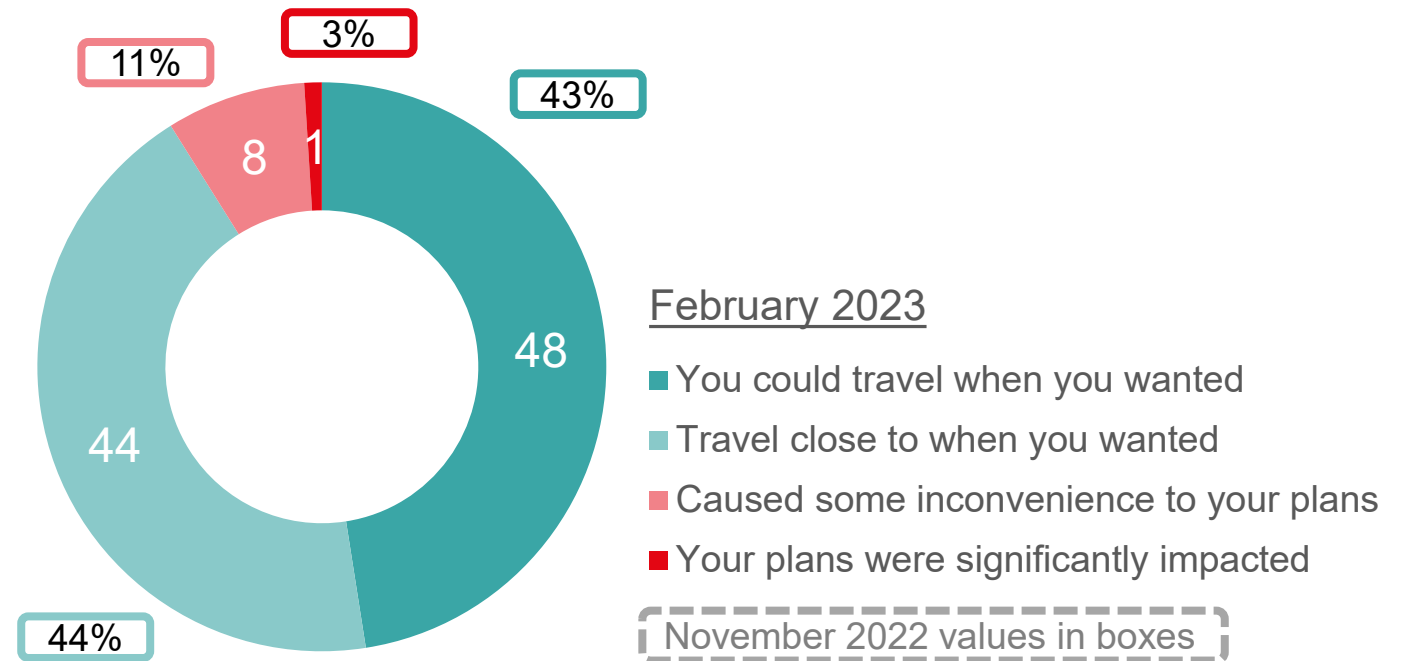
Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding .

Most thought train times sufficient and could travel close to when they planned – similar to November 2022

The range of train times were...



This range meant...

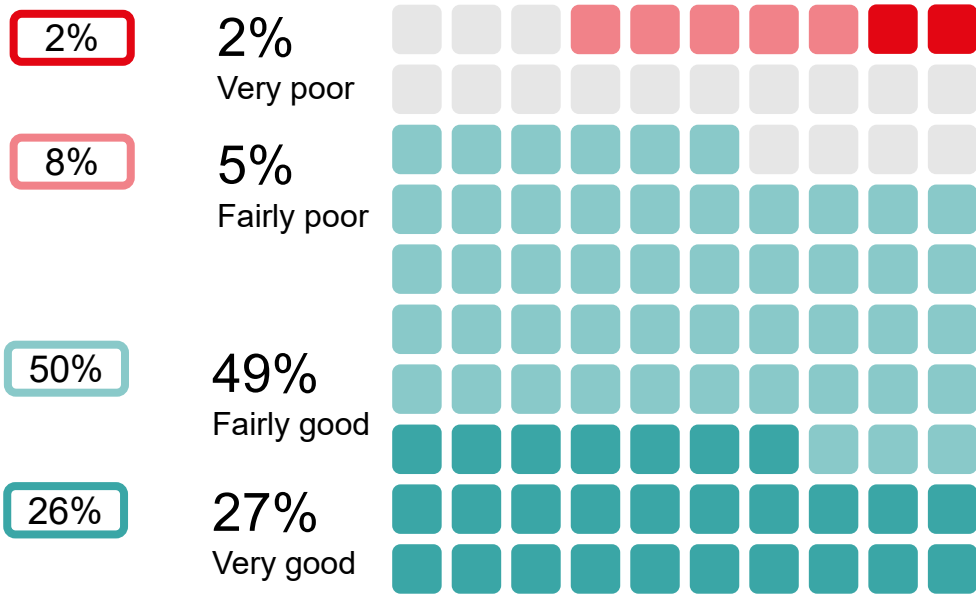


Q: When you saw the range and times of train services available for your outward/return journey, did you think them....? Q And did the range of train services available mean.....? Sample size = 501.

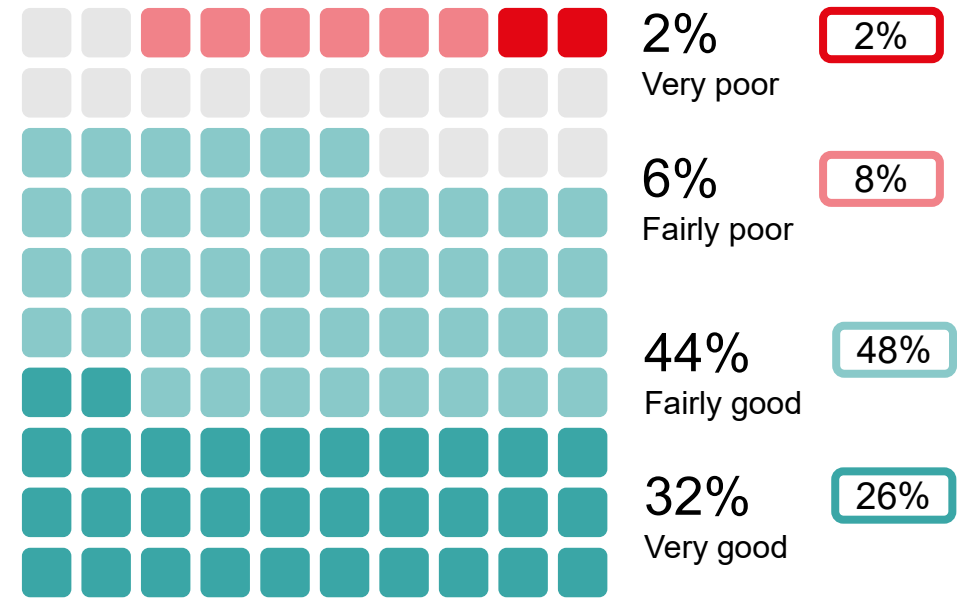
Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding .

Most rated information on choice of trains and booking process as good, as in November 2022. This time more rated it very good

Rating of information about train times and timetable



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



November 2022 values in boxes

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: 501 and 501

Passenger comments about the process of booking trains...

“

When booking a train ticket its relatively easy I mostly go into the station to do it but sometimes in the past I've used an app. which is really easy to use as well (*fairly good*)

”

“

The process is simple and fast with all relevant info provided (*very good*)

Ok but didn't get advised train was cancelled (*neither good nor poor*)

”

“

Booking with Avanti has been a shambles. It is no longer worth booking a seat reservation as it is never available when you come to claim it (*fairly poor*)

”

“

The process is relatively straightforward but it would be better is there were more options and flexibility available (*neither good no poor*)

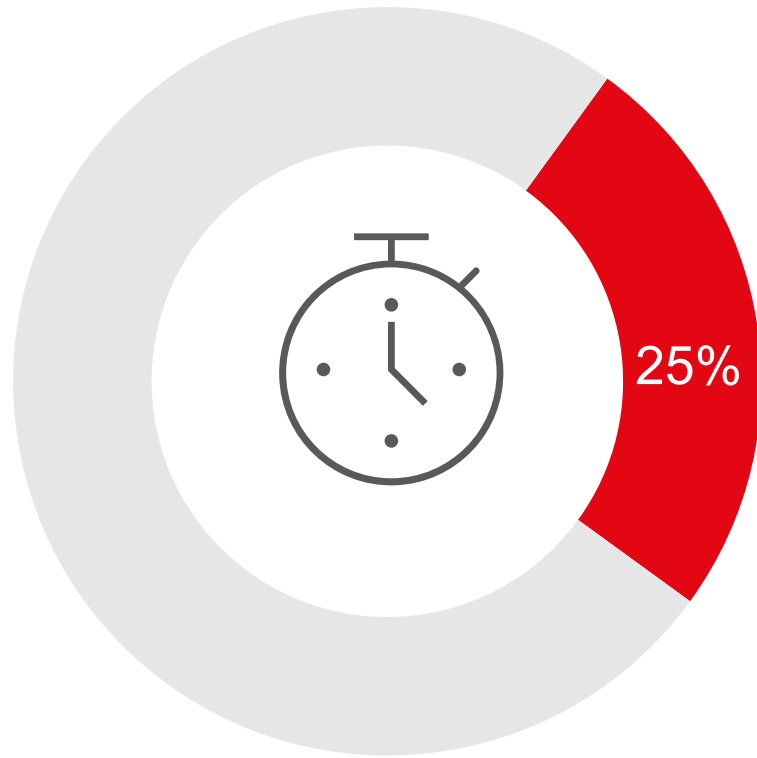
Easy to use (*very good*)

”

Journey experience



A quarter said their journey was changed or delayed, slightly lower than in November 2022



28% in November 2022 survey

“ _____
It was not handled at all, I had to search for an alternative myself
_____ ”

“ _____
There wasn't much in the way of human communication and it felt like I was a little lost.
_____ ”

How cancellations or changes to the scheduled train times were handled

All they did was apologise offer a refund or alternative routes.

Like with flights Avanti could notify via app in advance (maybe more than an hour) if its experiencing delays and the new scheduled time.

Not great as people just piled on the next train.

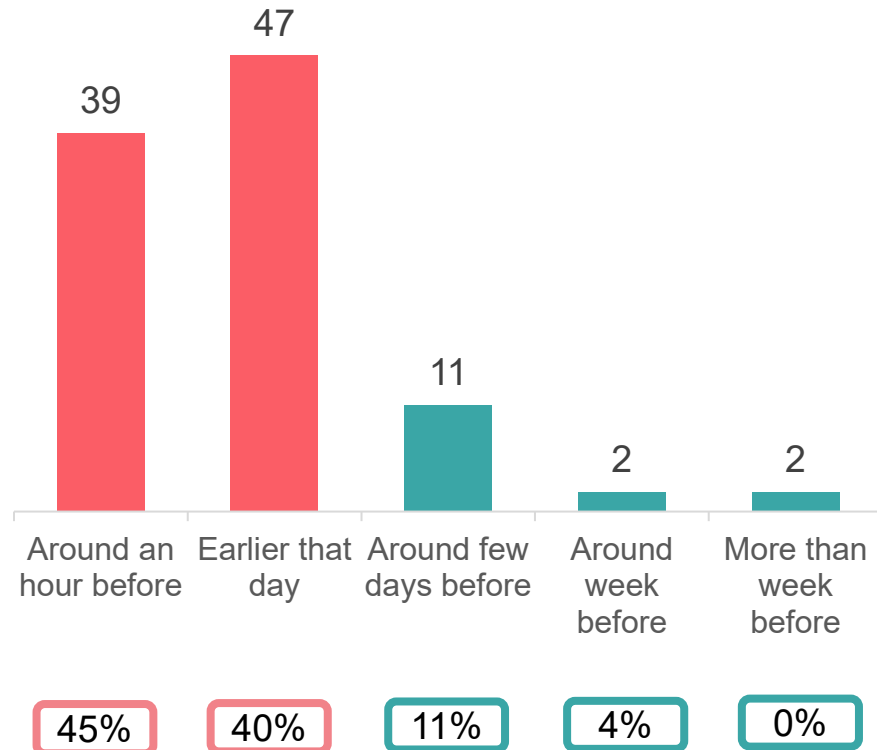
The train was advertised as cancelled on the screen only. No help from staff

It was handled with great care and respect

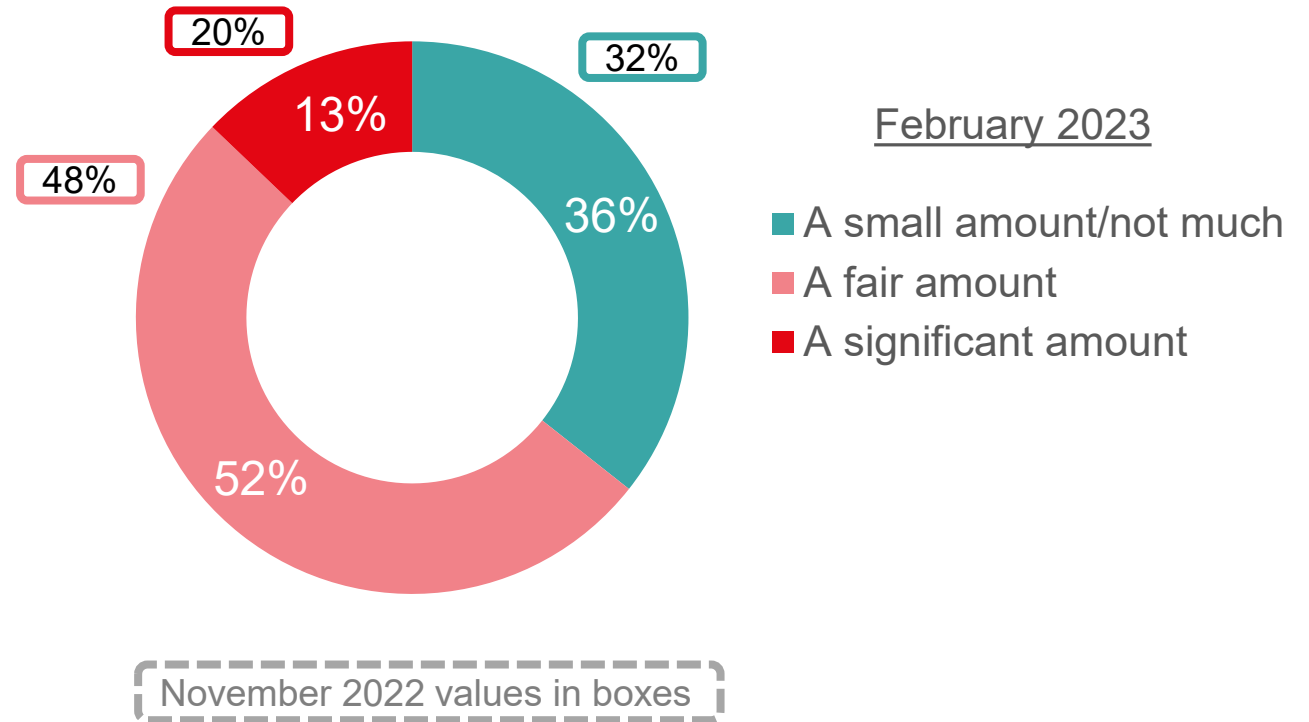


As before, most found out about change to their train on the day. Two thirds felt this had impacted their plans

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



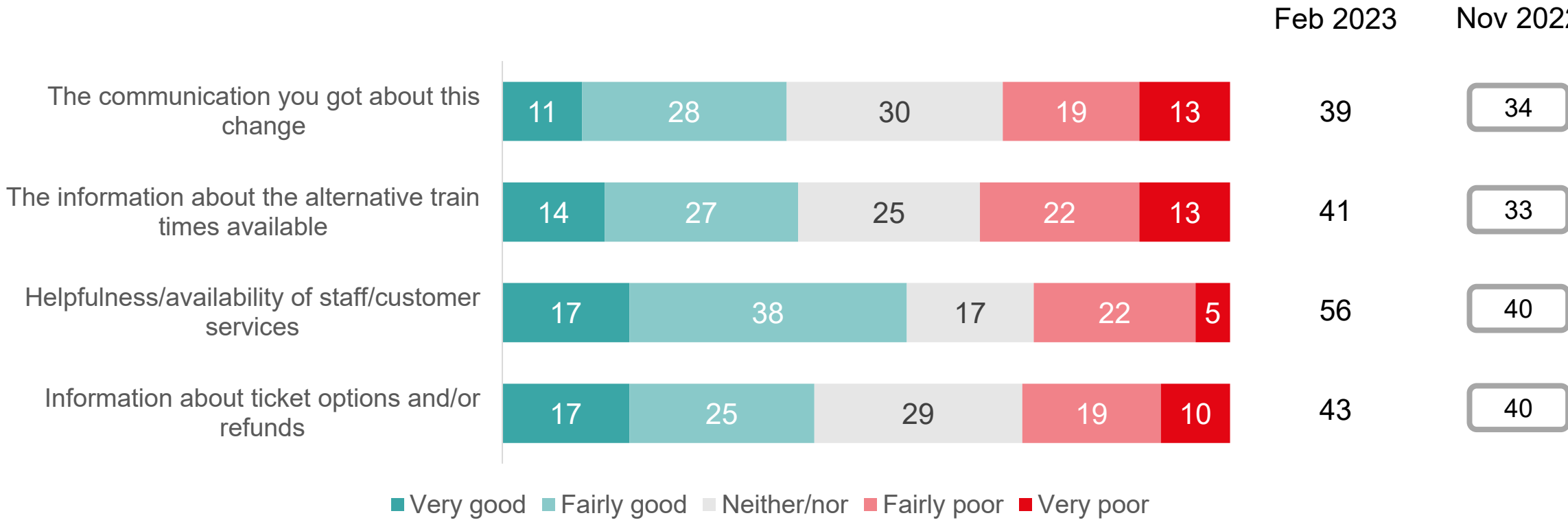
And impact this had...



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.

CARE: SMALL SAMPLE SIZES = 64 and 64

The ratings suggest some improvement in handling of changes to train times, but many still rate these aspects as not good



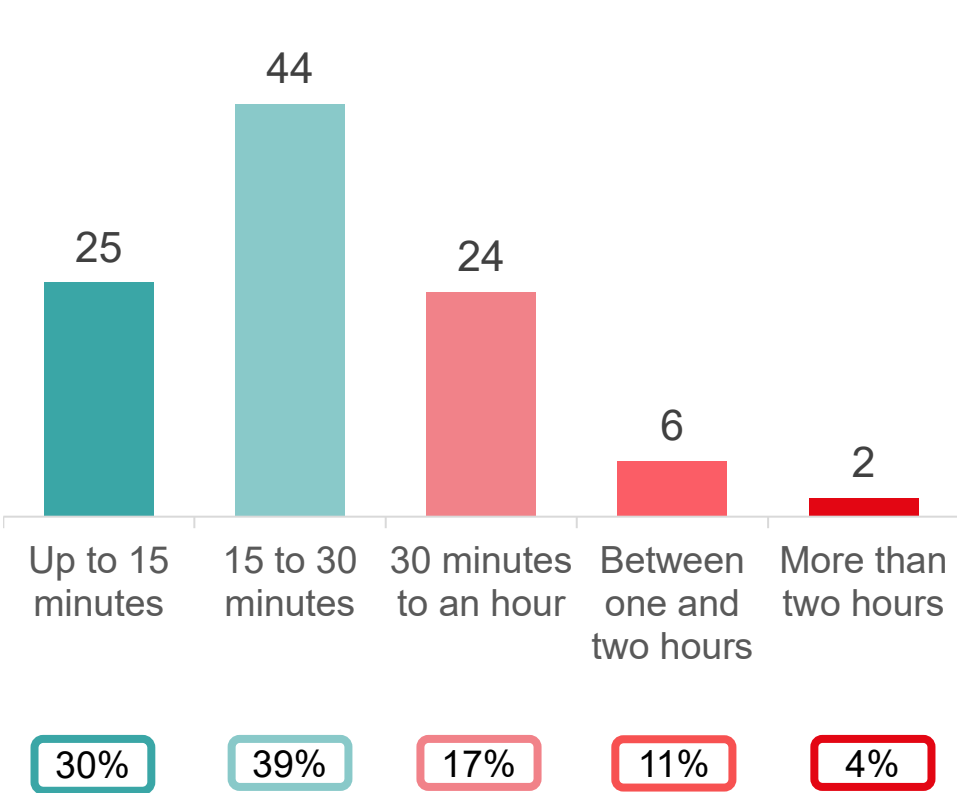
Q. In terms of the change to the scheduled time of your outward/return train, how would you rate.... Base size: all those who experienced cancellation/delay before departure. Exclude those who said 'not applicable'.

CARE: SMALL SAMPLE SIZES = 64; 64; 63; 64.

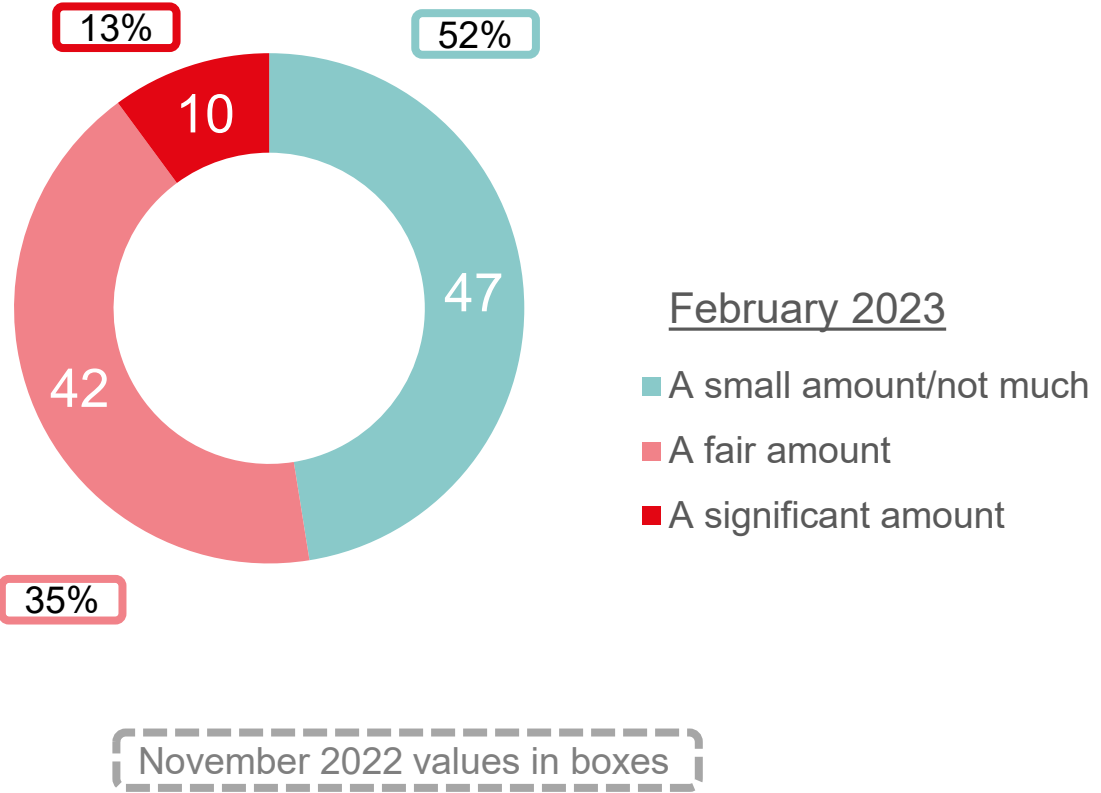


Around a third of those who experienced a delay were delayed by 30 minutes or more – similar to November

Amount of time delayed ...

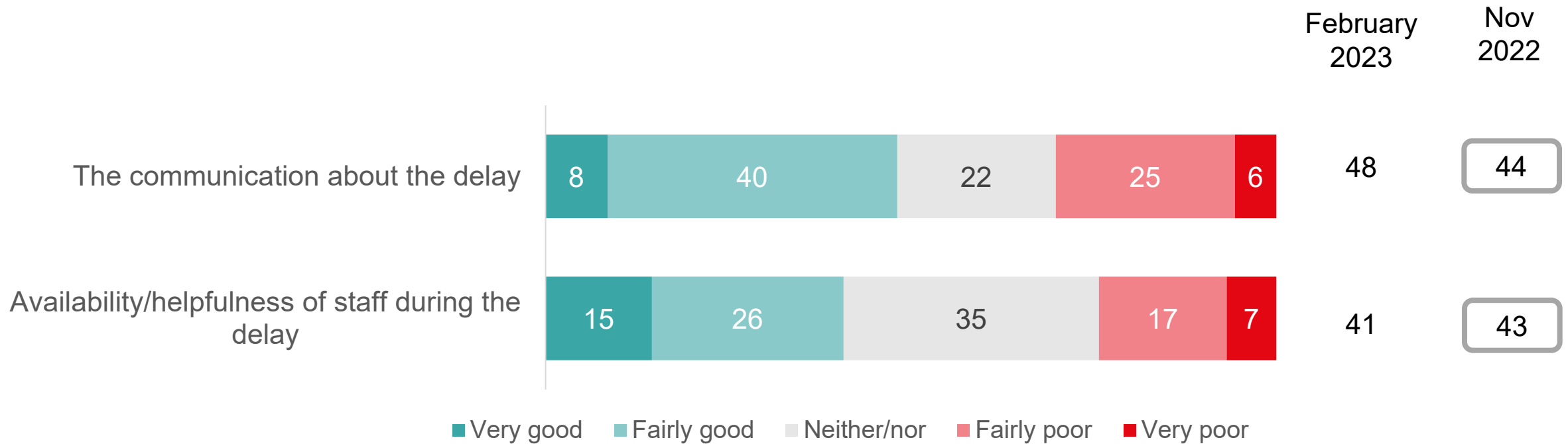


And its impact...



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): 106

Ratings of communication and staff help during delays is similar to November 2022 – less than half rated it as good



Q. How would you rate.... all those who experienced delays; excludes those who said 'not applicable'.

Sample sizes top to bottom = 106 and 103.

Comments about how the delay was handled

The only information I got was from the conductor from Liverpool to Crewe.

I got the information myself via app and website and not the station.

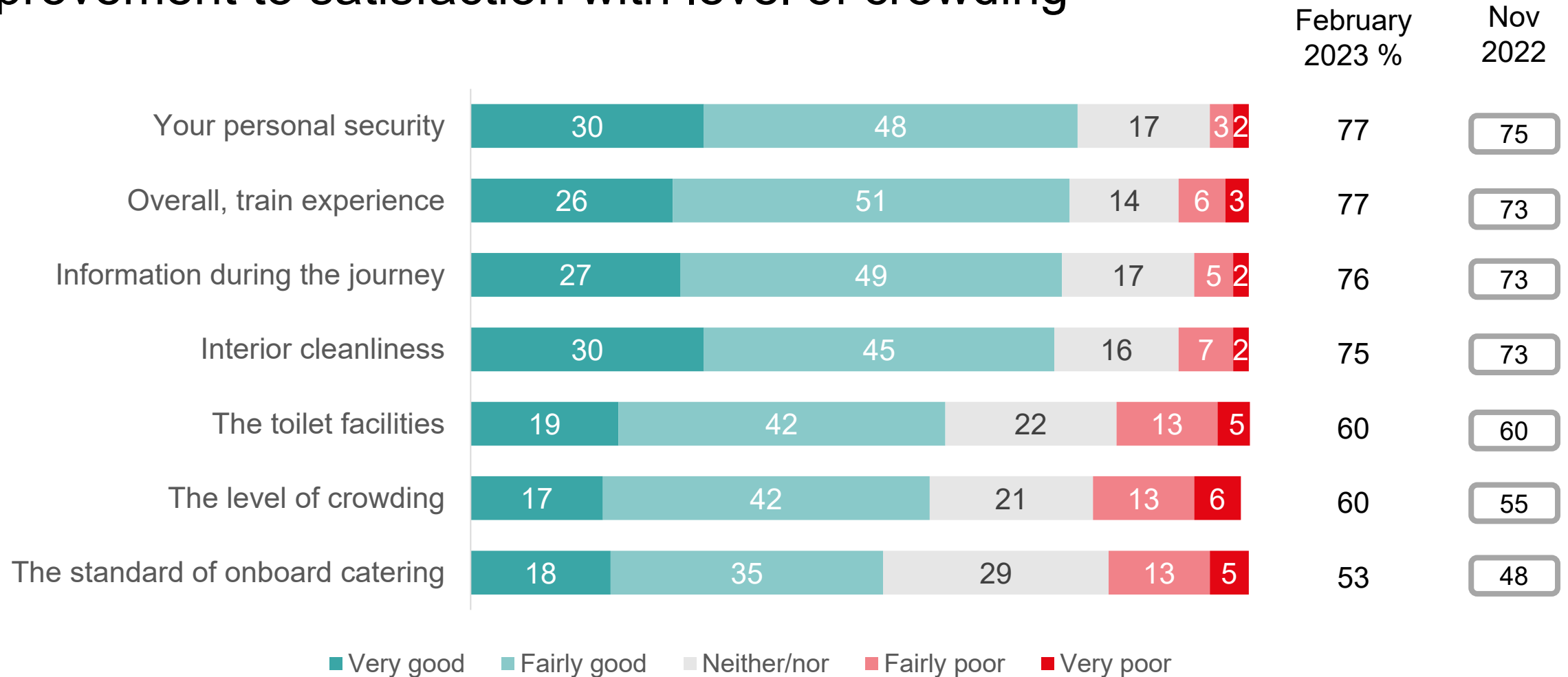
It was just displayed on the board at the station.

It will be great to have a update and notification from a app to keep my schedule.

It was communicated well but my options that were available to me wasn't very clear.



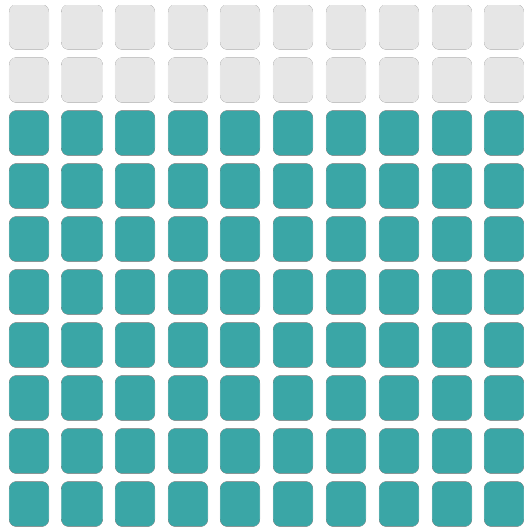
On-train ratings are similar to November 2022, with a small improvement to satisfaction with level of crowding



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. Charts exclude those who said 'not applicable'. Sample sizes from top to bottom: 484, 501, 497, 501, 424, 498, 380.

Overall journey ratings are similar to November 2022

Satisfaction with....



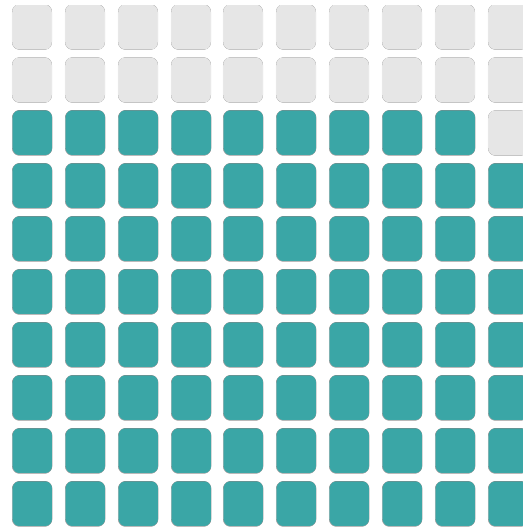
Journey overall

80%

February 2023

November 2022

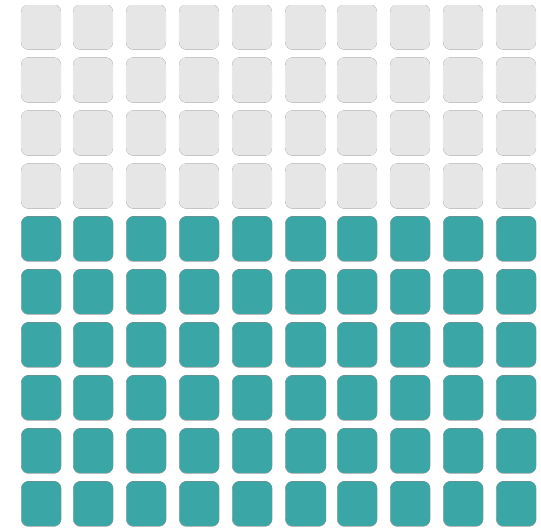
78%



Punctuality

79%

77%



Value for money

60%

63%

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 = 501

Passenger comments about the journey overall...

“

Much better than the outward journey as we were able to sit down & it was nowhere near as crowded *(fairly satisfied)*

Typical train journey, quite busy and no seat but got us from A to B *(fairly satisfied)*

”

“

It was okay, but only okay *(neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)*

It was fine but it was frustrating that it was delayed getting back which meant I was home much later after a long day *(neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)*

”

“

Very good, easy and straightforward despite the delay! *(very satisfied)*

Great - price point did make me question whether I should drive in the future *(very satisfied)*

”

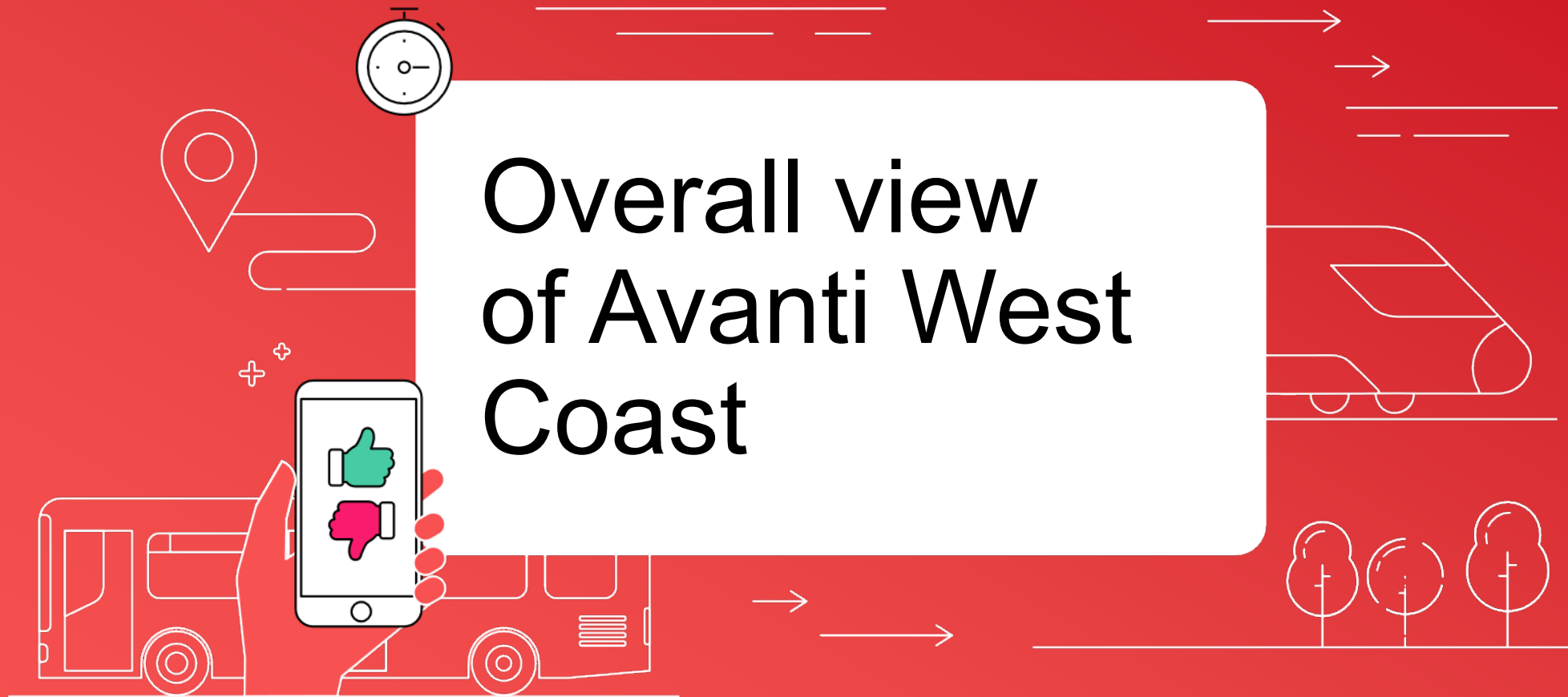
“

Very poor and MUST improve very soon *(very dissatisfied)*

Train late the service is awful so unreliable *(fairly dissatisfied)*

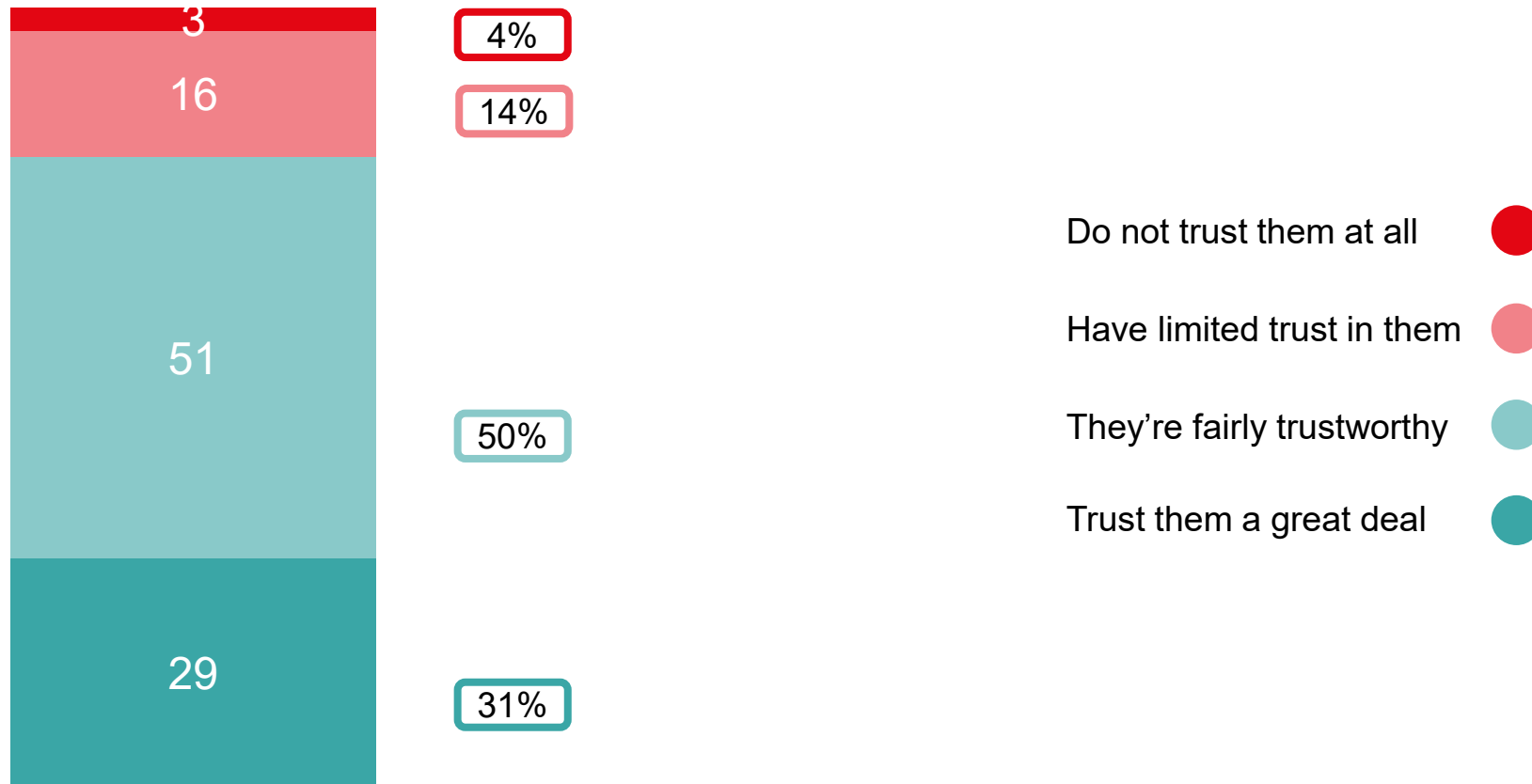
”

Overall view of Avanti West Coast



Trust levels have not changed since November 2022. Eight in ten think Avanti trustworthy, but majority say 'fairly' trustworthy

Overall how much do you trust Avanti...



Q: All things considered and on balance, how much do you trust Avanti. Sample size = 501

Comments about current views of Avanti services generally

One of my favourite train service as their staff are really nice and cleanliness is very good!

Think they could improve standard travel, update coaches

They have a good service, usually arrive and depart on time.

The trains are nice, fast, clean. Sometimes can be crowded, sometimes there are delays.

Based on previous experiences and also the return journey on 14 Jan, I feel Avanti is unreliable, trains are late or cancelled too often.



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



Meetings cancelled repeatedly due to their staff issues, can't plan weekends away due to never knowing if you'll get back (or there in time) charged a fortune.



It has meant that my train times has been more efficient which means I get to work earlier.

Very much so has impacted my business and I've lost a lot of customers.



The reliability of them has improved greatly which in turn has made my commute to work more punctual

It makes me want to travel by train less. I'd rather drive and have comfort in knowing what time I'll reach my destination.



Certainly encourages me to use this service again at the right price.

A lot with work, I travel from London Euston to Manchester at least once a week



Contact

Any enquiries about this report should be addressed to:

Jordan Sargeant - senior policy advisor
Jordan.sargeant@transportfocus.org.uk

Transport Focus
Albany House, 94-98 Petty France, London, SW1H 9EA

www.transportfocus.org.uk

Transport Focus is the operating name of the
Passengers' Council

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

© 2023 Transport Focus