

Evaluating information needs when travelling by train

Smarter Information, Smarter Journeys

A research study conducted for Transport Focus and the Rail Delivery Group

Final debrief





What this report includes

1. Research goals, method and headlines
2. Overall attitudes towards rail travel and information provision
3. The rail journey stages – gathering information and satisfaction with provision at each stage
4. The most important information for passengers – when trains are running normally
5. The most important information for passengers – when trains are affected by unplanned disruption
6. Final thoughts – areas for improvement and summary



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*The SISJ programme “aims to achieve **a step-change in customer experience** through the provision of **better customer information**, and by providing customers with **all the information they want, when and how they want it**”*

Rail Delivery Group (RDG) website



Recapping the objectives

The SISJ programme wants to ensure that **the railway understands passengers’ information needs when planning and making a journey, and that this information is readily available to them**

To achieve this, the programme wants to:

- determine the **actual drivers of customer behaviour** (as opposed to simply examining the current user experience which is well understood from other research)
- compare and contrast **information needs during ‘normal times’** and **during unplanned disruption** (including passenger priorities as to the information required at such times)
- consider the specific requirements of **disabled passengers**, including those with visual or hearing impairments
- ultimately, understand **how to prioritise investment** with a view to delivering the information customers want

Phase one – Qualitative research

- 6x 90-minute focus groups with 5x 60-minute tele-depths with those with additional requirements
- Fieldwork took place from 31st October to 11th November
- Participants ranged from young to old, were from different parts of Britain and they travelled for a variety of reasons
- Around one-third of the participants had a disability as it was agreed that this is a critical audience to hear from

Type	Life stage	Journey purpose	Other factors to be included
Focus groups	x2 Younger (18-34)	x1 Commuter x1 Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of small/larger origin stations • Long and short distance journeys • Mix of travel frequency • x8 to have a disability (cognitive, sensory and mobility) • SEG • Ethnicity
	x2 Middle aged (35-54)	x1 Commuter x1 Business	
	x2 Older (55+)	x1 Business x1 Leisure	
x5 depth interviews	Mixture	Mixture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x frequent travellers • 3 x less frequent travellers

Phase two – Quantitative survey

- 20-minute online survey among 4046 rail passengers aged 18+ who have travelled by train in the last:
 - Week (n=1644)
 - Month (n=1091)
 - Year (n=906)
 - Or over a year ago (n=405)
- Fieldwork took place from 22nd December to 10th January – see appendix for more details
- Data weighted to proportions set by a nationally representative CATI omnibus of those who have travelled by train, carried out in August 2022
- Good spread achieved, including those who are disabled (n=1092)

Quota		Weighted %	Unweighted Base
Age	18-24	13%	490
	25-34	22%	885
	35-44	20%	842
	45-54	15%	634
	55-64	16%	659
	65+	14%	536
Gender	Male	49%	1970
	Female	51%	2063
SEG	A	12%	461
	B	25%	1008
	C1	25%	1028
	C2	18%	689
	D	10%	408
	E	10%	411
Overall region	North	30%	1236
	Midlands	29%	1106
	South	41%	1704

More detail on the profile of the sample can be found in the appendix.

01

Customers expect to be kept informed across the different stages of their journey, and expect smarter information today based on how other companies engage with them

Passengers use a range of different information sources to help them at each stage of their journey

When trains are running normally, there are high levels of satisfaction with the current provision of information across the different journey stages. However, this does differ by audience

When trains are affected by unplanned disruption, all passengers are likely to feel more dissatisfied with the provision of information at each stage

02

The top priorities when trains are running normally are busyness updates of trains/ stations on the day of travel, information about onward connections and providing a joined-up system for planning journeys door to door

Well informed staff are important but as a hygiene factor – getting this wrong will frustrate passengers, but there is less potential to drive satisfaction

There are differences by audience. For example, well-informed staff become a priority for business travellers whilst the availability of parking spaces becomes more important to commuters

The propositions for when trains are running normally are likely to have a small impact on overall satisfaction with information provision, which differs by audience

03

When trains are affected by unplanned disruption, the top priorities are estimates of the time when normal services will resume, and on-board information about the delay (via Control Rooms)

The validity of tickets on other services/routes is a top priority for business travellers whilst information about alternative routes/ less affected trains to take is a top priority for commuters

The propositions for when trains are affected by unplanned disruption are likely to have a slightly larger impact on overall satisfaction with information provision

04

Generally, passengers would like to get information via apps/websites, digital screens and announcements

They tend to be willing to download an app to get information, and in some cases provide contact details/ sign up to a messaging service

It is important not to focus on information solutions that are entirely digital – older passengers, those with disabilities and digitally excluded passengers are less confident using these channels and would prefer other methods of communication

Ultimately, high numbers of passengers say that they would be more willing to travel by train if any of the information propositions were provided – there is a **general need for better information and communication**

When it comes to disruption in particular, passengers are significantly more likely to agree that they need more **up to date** information during disruption. **Alternative routes should be easier to understand, and staff should be more knowledgeable**











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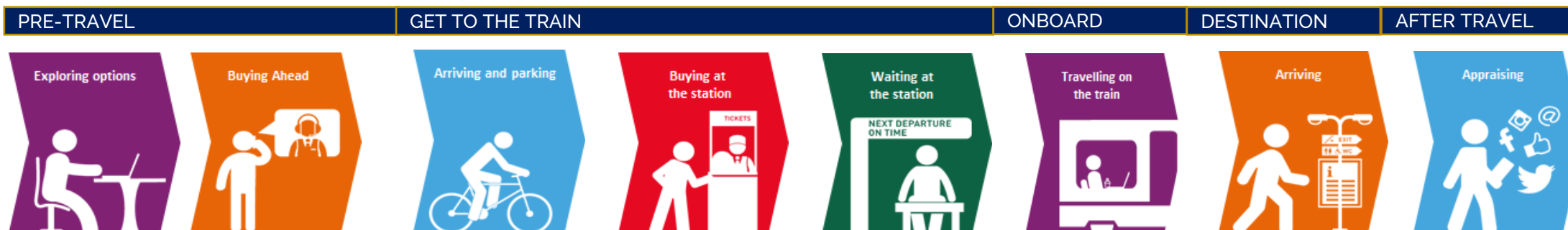
The future vision

We shared RDG's vision for future rail travel with passengers for feedback during the qualitative phase of research (please see below). The quantitative research also involved gathering insight on what passengers use, and their satisfaction with, the provision of information at each stage.

PRE-TRAVEL	GET TO THE TRAIN	ONBOARD	DESTINATION	AFTER TRAVEL			
<div><div>Exploring options</div><div></div></div> <p>"I can see which journey is best for me by comparing the door-to-door journey to see which is faster, cheaper, most comfortable and better for the environment"</p> <p>"It's easy for me to find out important information e.g., train busyness, assistance services, facilities, retail and cleanliness"</p> <p>"The benefits of traveling by rail are made clear"</p> <p>"I can use my virtual assistant or phone maps provider to plan my journey"</p>	<div><div>Buying Ahead</div><div></div></div> <p>"It is simple and easy to understand the options for which ticket to buy, whichever way I'm buying a ticket"</p> <p>"Regardless of the ticket format, I understand how to use it"</p> <p>"My personal requirements are taken into account when options are presented, and I can book everything I need at once"</p> <p>"If I have a multi-modal journey, tickets for all stages are provided"</p>	<div><div>Arriving and parking</div><div></div></div> <p>"I am notified in advance to reassure me that the train is on time or give me early warning and viable alternatives if there is disruption"</p> <p>"I can reserve a space for my vehicle"</p> <p>"I am told exactly where to go to find a parking space for my vehicle"</p> <p>"If I can't park my vehicle, I am given alternative suggestions, If possible"</p> <p>"I am given helpful suggestions for how to get to the station, factoring things like traffic, metro-transport and the weather"</p>	<div><div>Buying at the station</div><div></div></div> <p>"Its easy to find where to go to buy a ticket or how to get help if I am unsure about using the app"</p> <p>"It is simple and easy to understand the options for which ticket to buy, whichever way I'm buying a ticket"</p> <p>"Cheaper & better value options are proposed"</p> <p>"Staff members are friendly, well informed and able to answer my questions"</p> <p>"Screens and announcements are clear, accurate, relevant, timely and accessible"</p>	<div><div>Waiting at the station</div><div></div></div> <p>"I receive notifications telling me the status of my train, when/where to go for my platform, where to stand, and helpful prompts on facilities"</p> <p>"I can navigate the station using my maps app"</p> <p>"Disruption is communicated proactively. There is genuine recognition of the inconvenience and clear guidance on alternative options"</p> <p>"Screens and announcements are clear, accurate, relevant, timely and accessible"</p>	<div><div>Travelling on the train</div><div></div></div> <p>"I receive notifications telling me the location of my train, expected arrival time, onward travel information and the location of onboard facilities in relation to where I am sat"</p> <p>"I can seek assistance digitally if I need to"</p> <p>"Journey planners take account for disruption in real time, meaning that I can use them to find out options for which way to go if needed"</p> <p>"Disruption is communicated proactively. There is genuine recognition of the inconvenience caused"</p>	<div><div>Arriving</div><div></div></div> <p>"Prior to arrival, I am notified on where to go next to get to my end destination; this integrates with my maps app to provide me a clear path through the station"</p> <p>"I am notified in advance if my onward journey from the station is likely to be disrupted and helpful suggestions are made for what to do"</p> <p>"I am told or can find out in advance what retail and facilities there are at the station"</p> <p>"Station staff are welcoming, friendly and able to help me"</p>	<div><div>Appraising</div><div></div></div> <p>"I am asked how my journey was and my feedback is taken seriously"</p> <p>"I know who to contact and its easy to make a complaint if there has been an issue, or to provide positive feedback if the experience has been good"</p> <p>"If I am entitled to Delay Repay it's automatically paid back to me and I am told about it with an apology"</p> <p>"I can contact my train company using whichever channel I want, and they will listen and respond appropriately"</p>

Qualitative testing showed that passengers felt that the future vision brings the rail industry up to current standards, rather than exceeding expectations

It is considered as bringing the rail industry up to “the basics” that other industries are already demonstrating

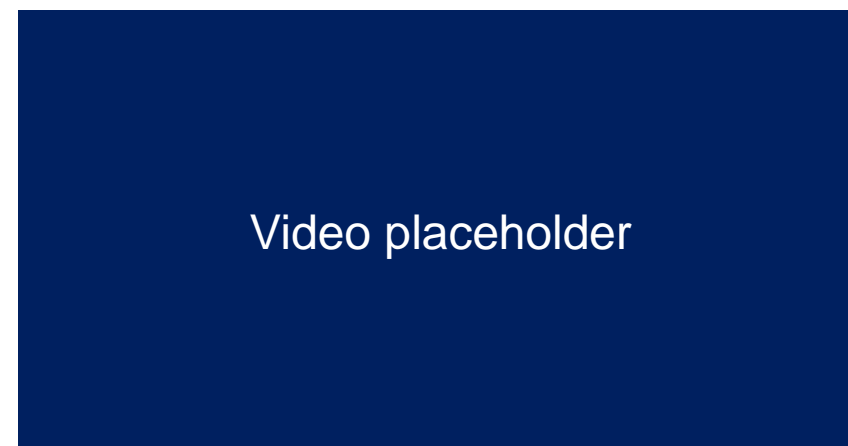


There is a desire to have this experience now rather than wait until 2030

The vision is perceived to be achievable but the call out of 2030 sounds too far in the future and a long time to wait for such improvements. However, it is acknowledged that achieving this vision will be a challenge due to the fragmented nature of the rail network, the cost of investment to do so and the on-going issues with old rolling stock

In addition, there is a perception that the rail network needs to focus on small, incremental improvements rather than aiming for one, big and significant improvement

The vision is laudable, but the rail network is currently a long way from delivering it today



“Get the basics right first, then really modernise it”

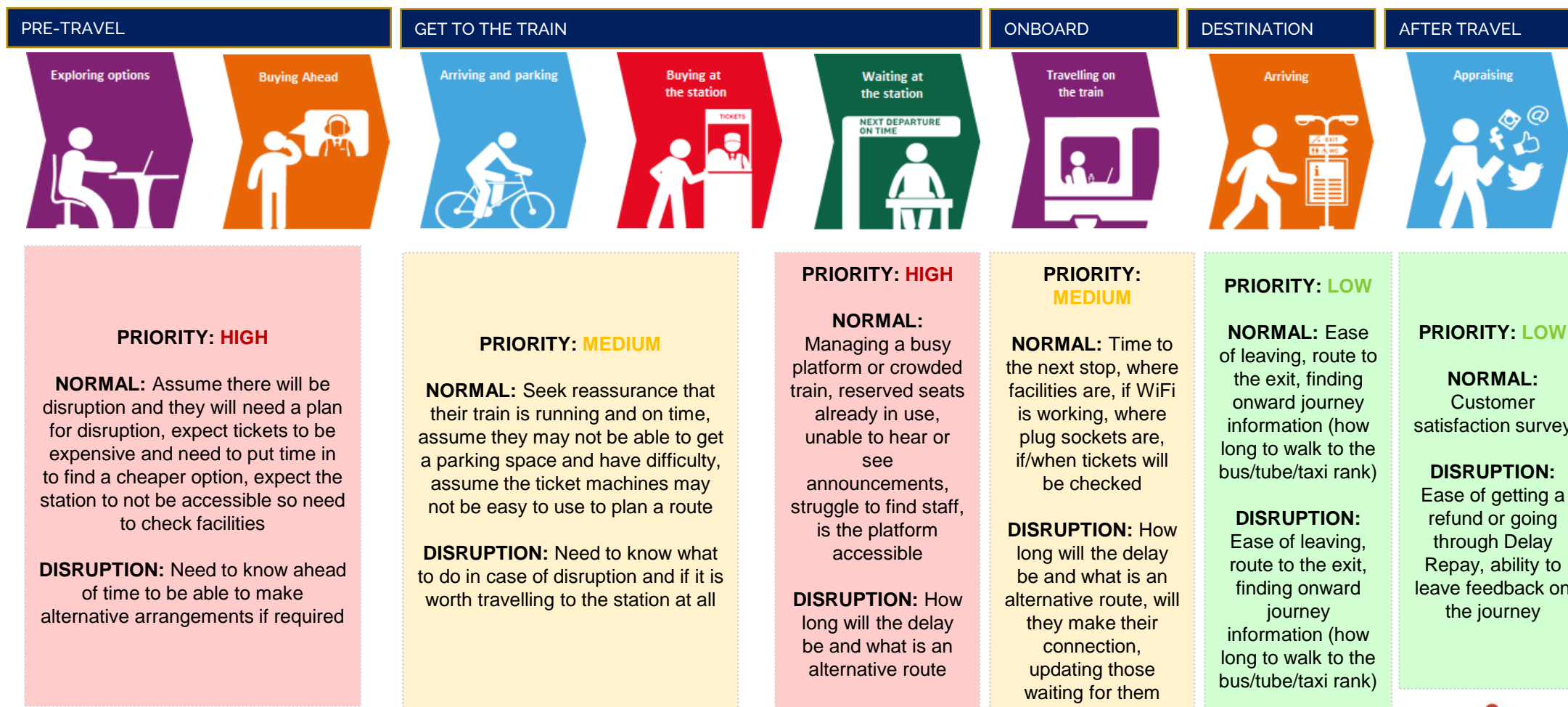
Male, Commuter

“Why can’t we have this now?”

Male, Leisure

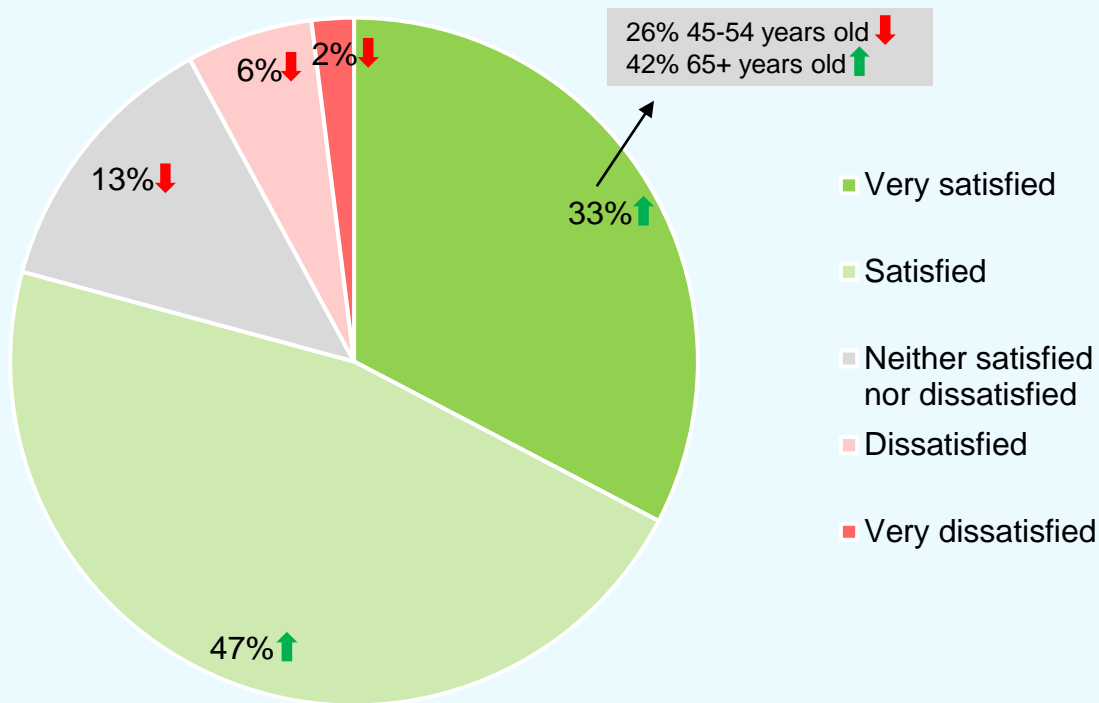
Unsurprisingly, there were differences in attitudes towards the provision of information when trains are running normally and when they are affected by unplanned disruption

Improving communications when trains are running normally is important, but there is an “elephant in the room” of on-going disruption and communication that is often perceived to be poor during this time. The communication needs for business as usual are because people expect it will not be easy and simple, often due to disruption

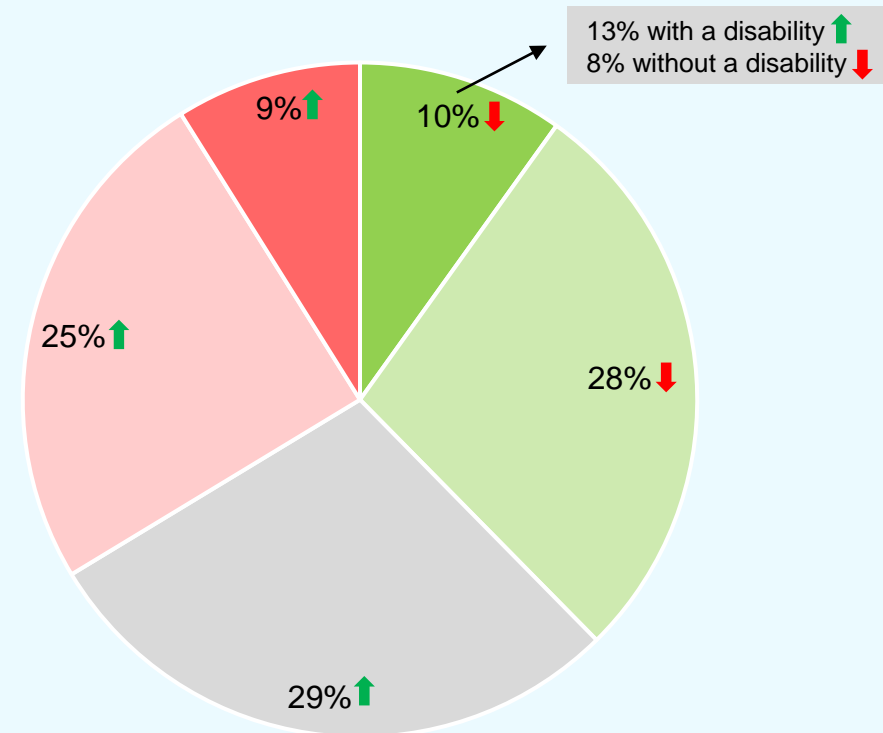


This difference in opinion is reflected in the quantitative findings; a third are very satisfied with the information provided by the railway when trains are running normally, and this drops significantly when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

Satisfaction with information provided when trains are running normally



Satisfaction with information provided when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

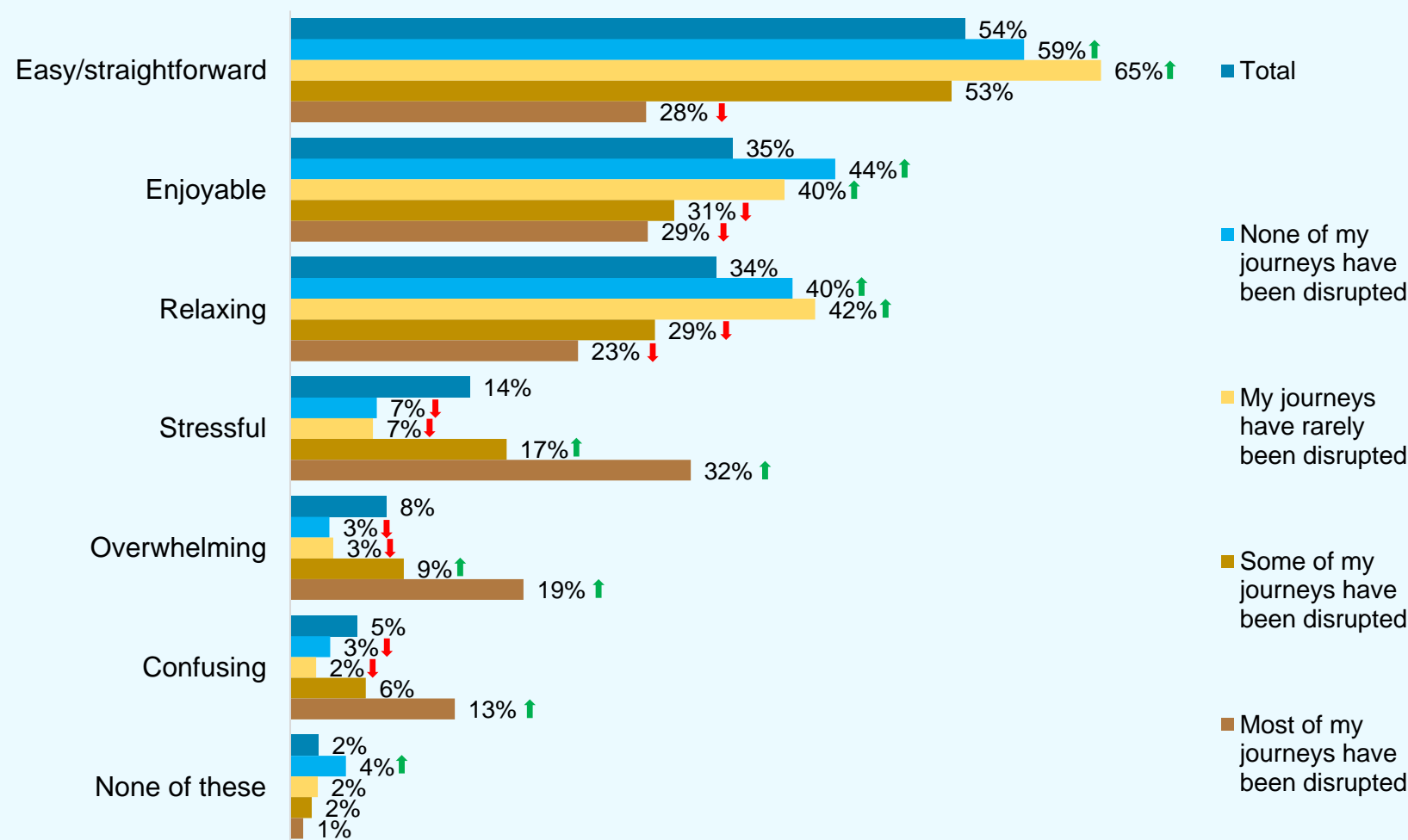


81% of the sample have experienced unplanned disruption at least 'rarely' in the last 12 months when travelling by train, 51% have experienced it at least some of the time

↑ ↓ Significantly higher / lower at 95% confidence level

Most passengers find train travel easy and straightforward when their trains are running normally. However, those who have experienced disruption on some or most of their journeys are more likely to say that they find train travel stressful, overwhelming and confusing

Feelings about travelling by train when they are running normally



Generally, **disabled passengers** who have travelled on trains affected by unplanned disruption are less likely to find train travel easy/straightforward or enjoyable, and are more likely to feel overwhelmed and confused

Overall, **younger people** who have experienced disruption at **least some of the time** find it more stressful and overwhelming than those aged 65+; this may be partly explained by the fact that younger people are more frequent travellers

Those who **always travel with children** are significantly less likely to find it easy/straightforward and relaxing compared to those who never travel with children

↑ ↓ Significantly higher / lower at 95% confidence level



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The qualitative phase of work revealed that there is a general sense that the rail network is falling behind when it comes to communication

Passenger expectations are strongly influenced by the experiences they have with other providers, leaving the railway network behind the curve. This creates a perception that the railway could be “doing more” to keep them informed and up to date with their journey

“Smarter information, smarter journeys” are already out there

Especially when it comes to digital apps and mobile updates, other travel companies are leading the way compared to the rail network:

- With regular push notifications for when there are delays or disruption, or even just reassurance that things are running smoothly
- Maps showing exactly where your vehicle is and accurate time estimates of when it will arrive
- Location sharing features to keep others informed of your journey process
- Alerts of potential disruption ahead of time and alternative routes offered
- Easy to manage notifications and able to turn them off if not required
- Tickets and planning your journey all in one place for ease and simplicity
- Ability to book a specific seat especially for those traveling in groups



“If you’ve got the Amazon app, it tells you how far away it is...”

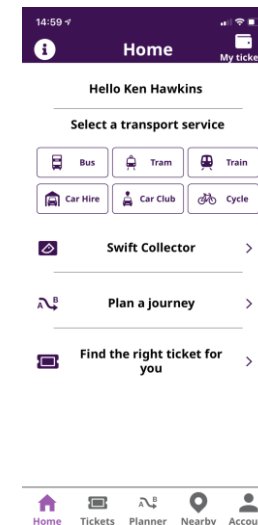
Male, Leisure

Multiple digital solutions are in use for rail travel

The rail network is being beaten by others at their own game with ways to plan journeys, book tickets and receive updates that are perceived to be better, easier and simpler

Local services and multinationals are doing a good job at offering information:

- This is the case with both third-party apps such as Google maps, Trainline, and public funded apps including TfL Go and Transport for West Midlands
- The ability to plan journeys and increasingly purchase tickets online is highly appreciated as is the ability to plan multi-modal routes in one place
- TfL Go was particularly appreciated by older audiences with Freedom passes to plan their travel who were less familiar with City Mapper or Google Maps
- The ability to see where there are delays in real time and be offered alternative routes and solutions was highly appreciated, as was the ability to get notifications and alerts if a planned journey was disrupted
- Trainline is still a “go-to” for many when planning rail travel, especially longer journeys for both work and leisure. However, it is limited in terms of the level of detail offered e.g., where a booked seat is in relation to the train you will be travelling on (e.g., is it in the first carriage, in the middle of the train, etc.), not being able to book a specific seat, and having to pay booking fees



“Trainline has real-time information, but it doesn’t tell you about what services the train has got...”

Female, Leisure

It is important not to focus entirely on digital-only channels of information

Although seen as “the way things are going” and how modern companies operate and communicate with customers, digital communication – and apps specifically – are not the only way. There are concerns, especially in the context of rail travel, if apps become the primary way that the rail network communicates

DIGITAL WEAKNESSES

- Potentially exclusionary:
 - Older audiences, those on lower incomes especially those with limited data packages/older phones, visually impaired passengers
- “App fatigue” with low enthusiasm for having to get and retain “another app”
- Potential safety issue at stations if looking at their phone, not where they are going
- Potential to be “cut off” if Wi-Fi is not available or the battery runs low
- Feeling “hassled” by unwanted notifications and updates if there are “constant” notifications
- Concern over having the most up-to-date version of the app just when you need it

DIGITAL STRENGTHS

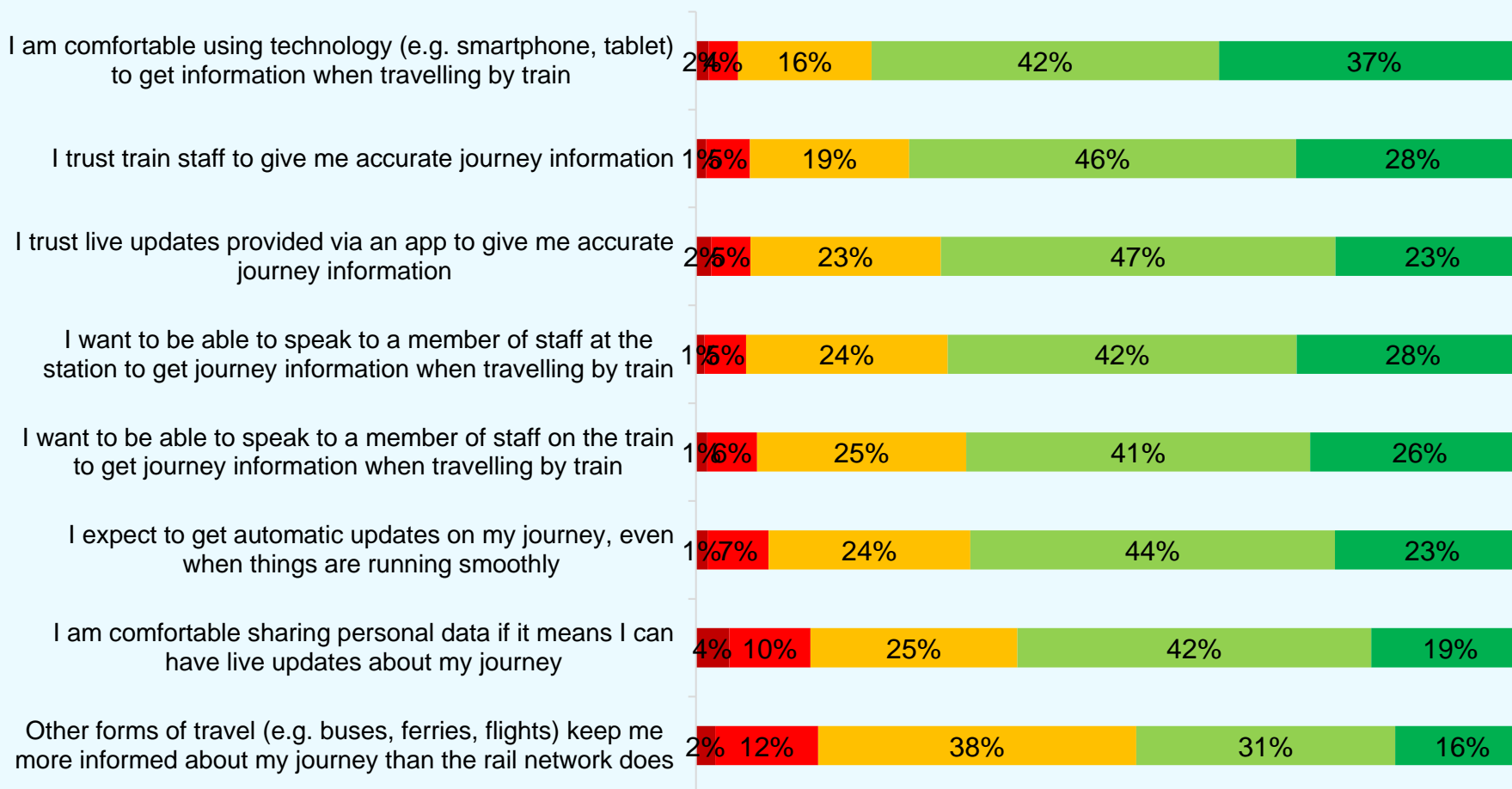
- “They have my data anyway” so there is the potential for more personalized information and updates to be bespoke to your journey or personal accessibility needs and requirements
- Should be the most up to date information and updated in real time
- Able to transmit large amounts of information to people at the same time
- Mobile phones are highly relied on, and many passengers are used to using their phone for updates and communication
- Able to easily share updates and information with others as required
- Feels modern and in-line with other industries who are moving in the same direction

However, the quantitative research shows that four in five passengers report feeling comfortable using technology, though this does differ by audience

Similar numbers trust apps to give them accurate information as they do train staff. Despite this, a majority want to be able to speak to train staff either at the station or on the train to get information

Level of comfort with, and expectations of, receiving information

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree



77% say that they find apps easy to use – over 65s find them the most difficult

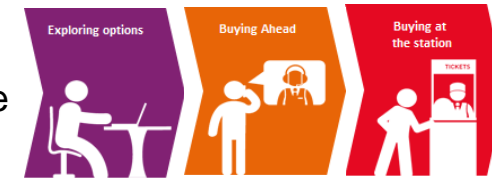
Those aged 65+ are significantly less likely to feel comfortable using technology and are also less likely to trust apps to give them accurate information

Those who travel weekly are significantly more likely to be comfortable using tech, trust apps, expect automatic updates and be comfortable sharing personal data

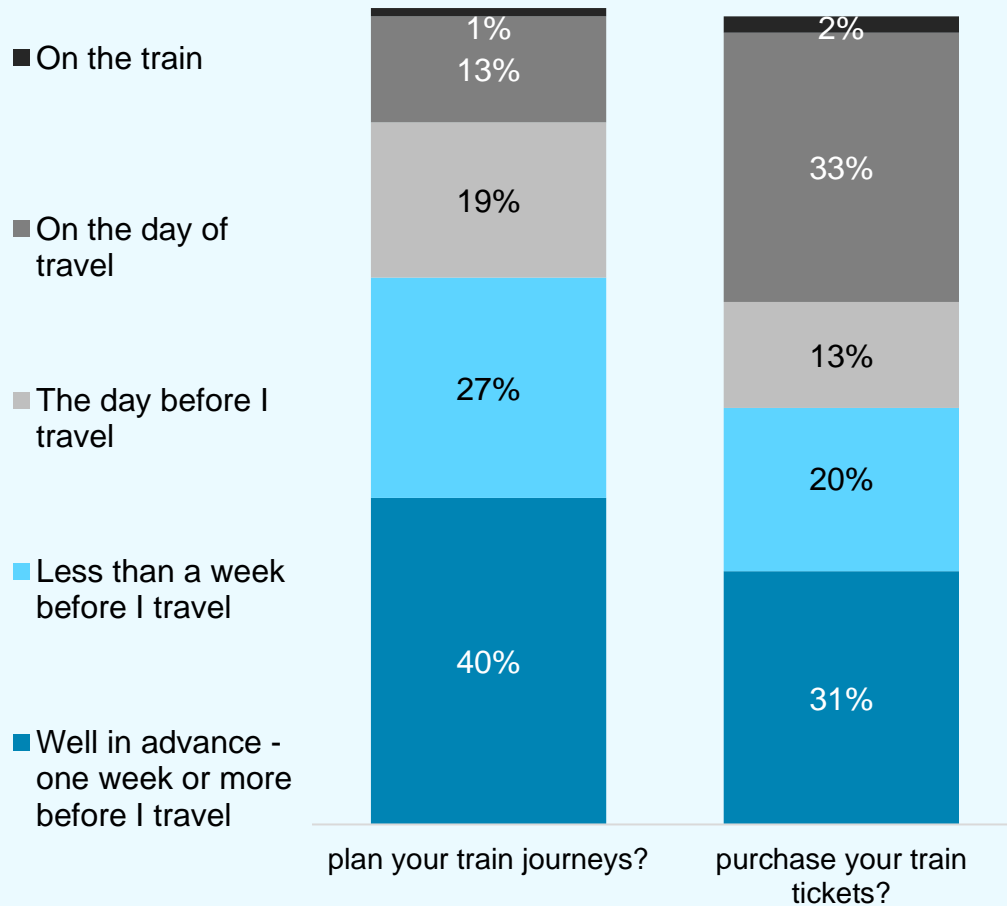
Leisure travellers are significantly more likely to trust train staff to give them accurate information

Most passengers plan their train journeys and purchase their tickets in advance (two or more days before), and they find this easy to do

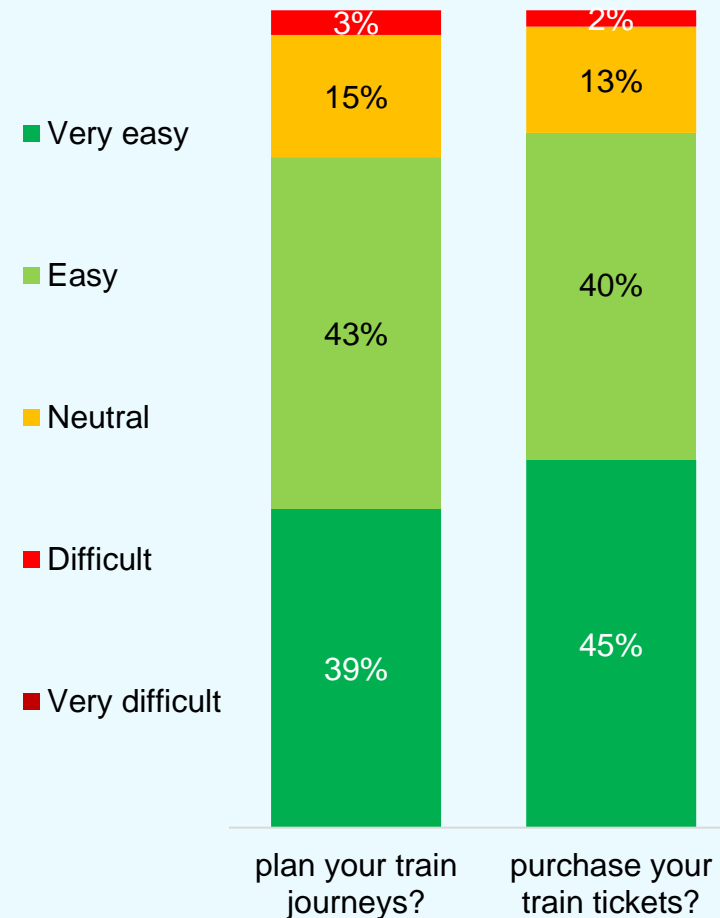
Leisure travellers are significantly more likely to plan their journeys well in advance, but are also more likely to buy their tickets on the day, compared to other travellers



When do you generally...

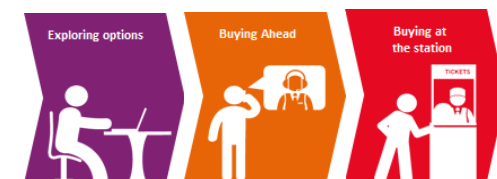


How easy or difficult do you find it to...

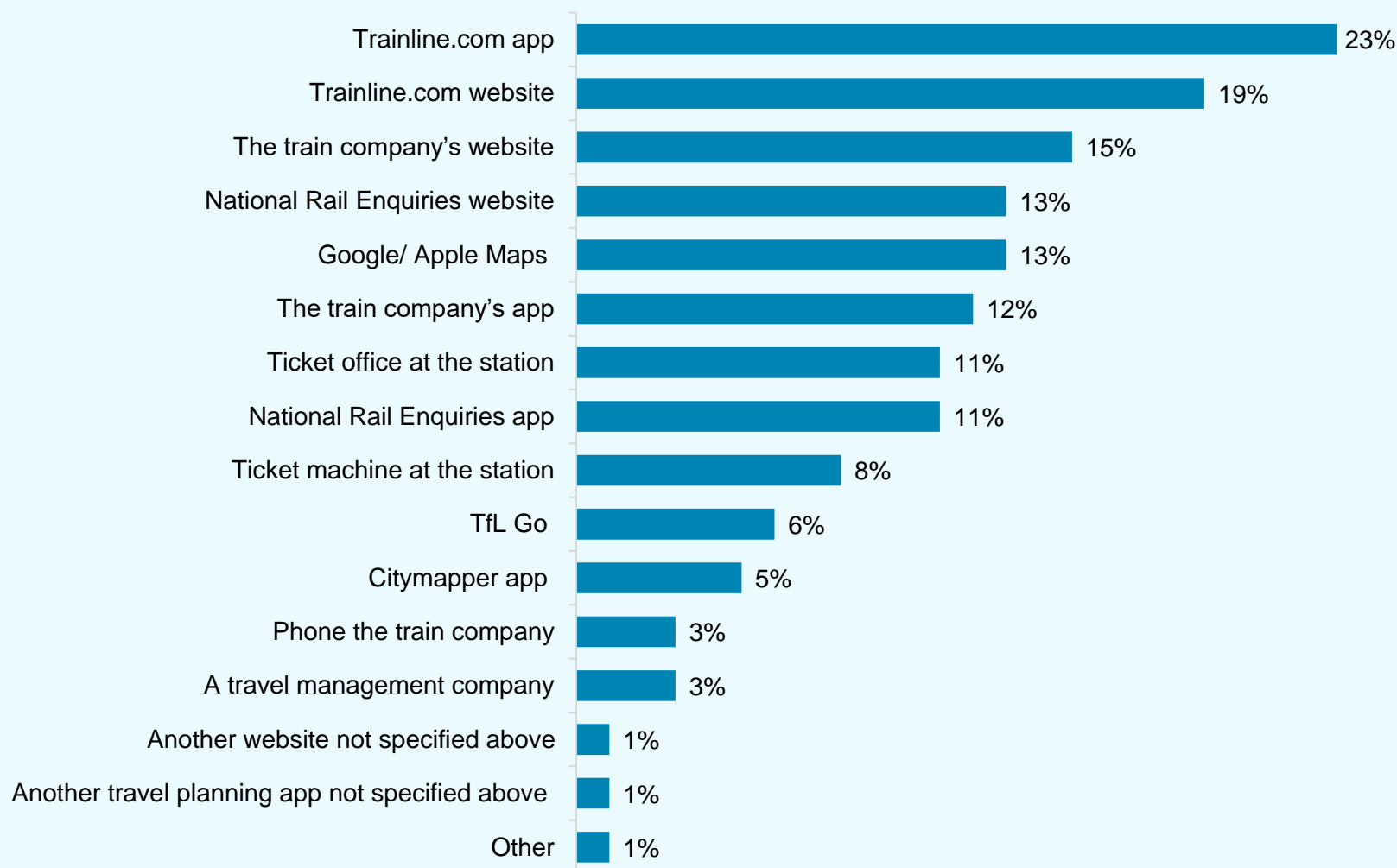


Those who are comfortable using technology to get information when travelling by train and those who find apps easy to use are more likely to find it very easy to plan their journeys and purchase their train tickets than those who are not

Passengers tend to mainly use apps/ websites to plan their journeys. Almost a quarter use the Trainline app, followed by the Trainline website and train operating company specific websites



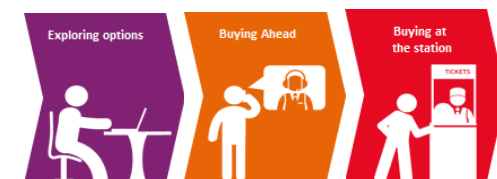
Sources used to plan train journeys



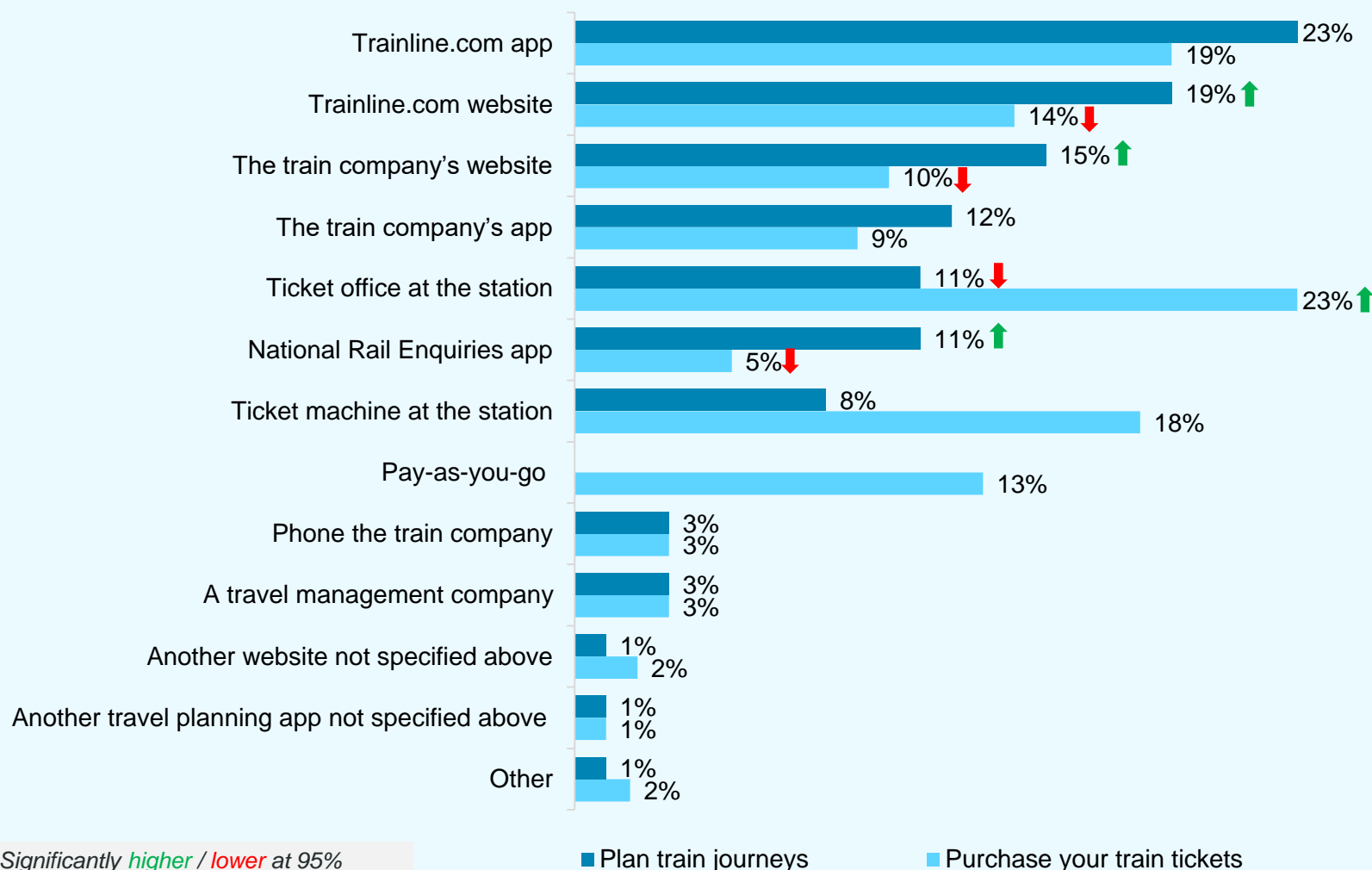
Commuters are significantly more likely to use apps such as Citymapper, TfL Go, and other maps apps to plan their journeys. Trainline is significantly less likely to be used by those who live in London

18-34 year olds are significantly more likely to use Google/Apple Maps to plan their journeys than other age groups

Passengers tend to either purchase tickets at the station or using the Trainline app and website. Pay-as-you-go is commonly used – mainly by those who live in London



Sources used to plan train journeys and purchase tickets



18-34 year olds are significantly more likely to use the Trainline website and app to purchase their tickets

Those **aged 65+** are significantly more likely to use the ticket office at the station to purchase their tickets

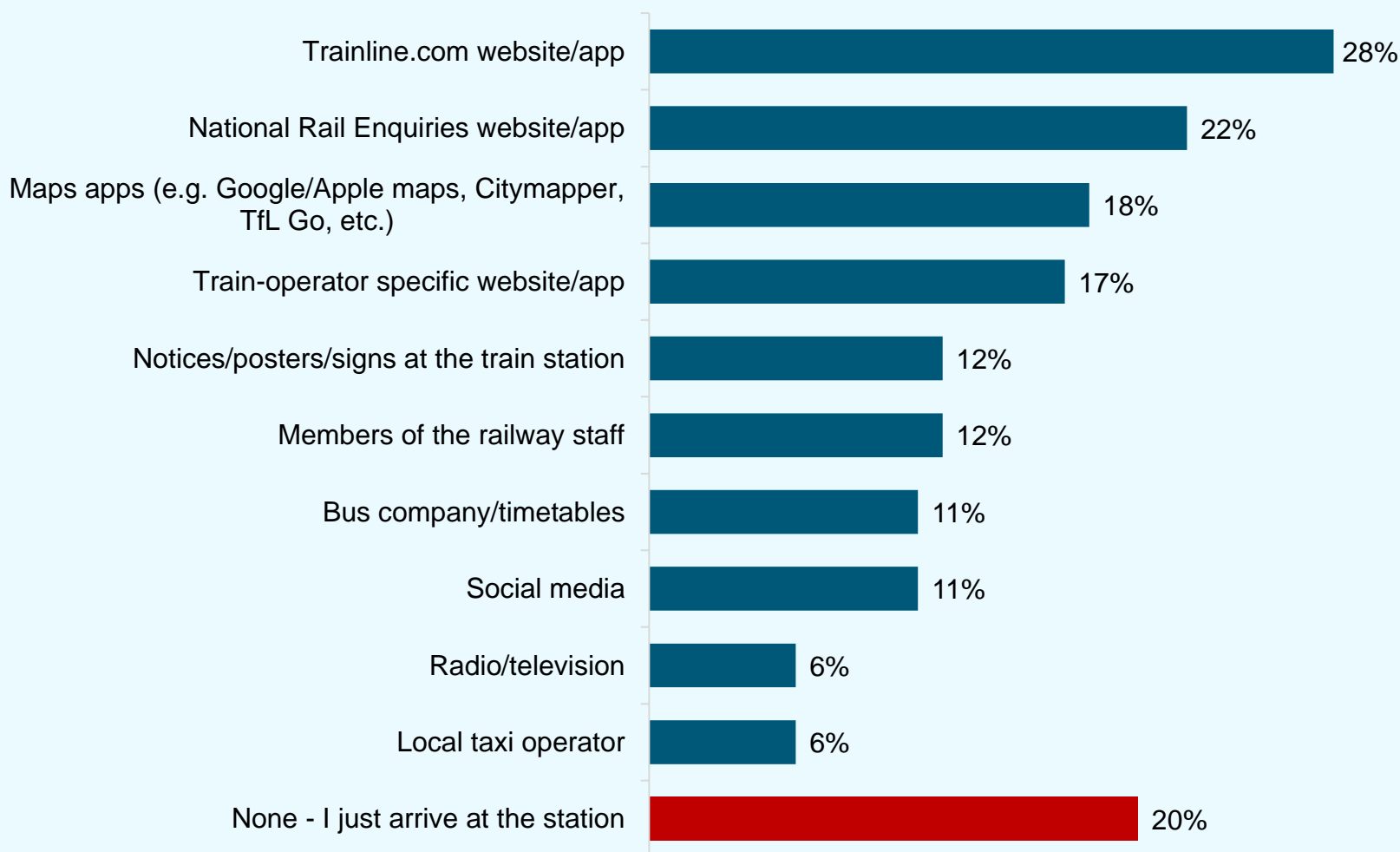
Those who **travel less frequently** are significantly more likely to use a ticket office to buy tickets, compared to more frequent train travellers

↑ ↓ Significantly higher / lower at 95% confidence level

Trainline continues to be the most frequently used source of information by passengers before they get to the station, but one in five say that they do not check for/ receive any information at all



Sources used to get information before setting off or on the way to the station



Weekly train travellers are significantly more likely to use apps/websites/social media than those who travel less frequently. They are also significantly more likely to speak to members of staff

Leisure travellers are significantly more likely not to use any sources of information before starting their journey compared to commuters and business travellers

18-24 year olds are significantly more likely to use apps/websites/social media than 65+ year olds

Older people are also significantly more likely not to use any sources of information before setting off or whilst travelling to the train station

Live digital screens and announcements are commonly used by passengers to get information at several points across their train journey

Passengers are most likely to use apps/ websites on their device when they are onboard the train and if it has been affected by unplanned disruption, compared to any other stage of their journey



Information sources used at the station, onboard the train and on arrival at destination station

	At the station	Onboard the train		On arrival at destination station
		Running on time	Delayed due to unplanned disruption	
Live digital screens	52%	37%	33%	31%
At-station/ onboard announcements	36%	41%	41%	21%
Members of staff	28%	22%	27%	23%
Apps or websites on my device (e.g. Trainline, National Rail Enquiries, train-operator specific apps/websites, etc.)	27%	29%	32%	27%
Information points	18%	-	-	18%
Signs/ posters/ notices	16%	14%	13%	18%
Help points	10%	-	-	10%
None of these	8%	13%	9%	26%

Those who **travel frequently** are significantly more likely to use apps/websites and help points throughout their journey

In comparison, those who **travel less frequently** are significantly more likely to use screens and announcements at the station, and not to use any sources of information when onboard the train (regardless of disruption)

Younger people are significantly more likely to use apps/ websites whereas older people are more likely to use screens at the station, and announcements at the station and on the train

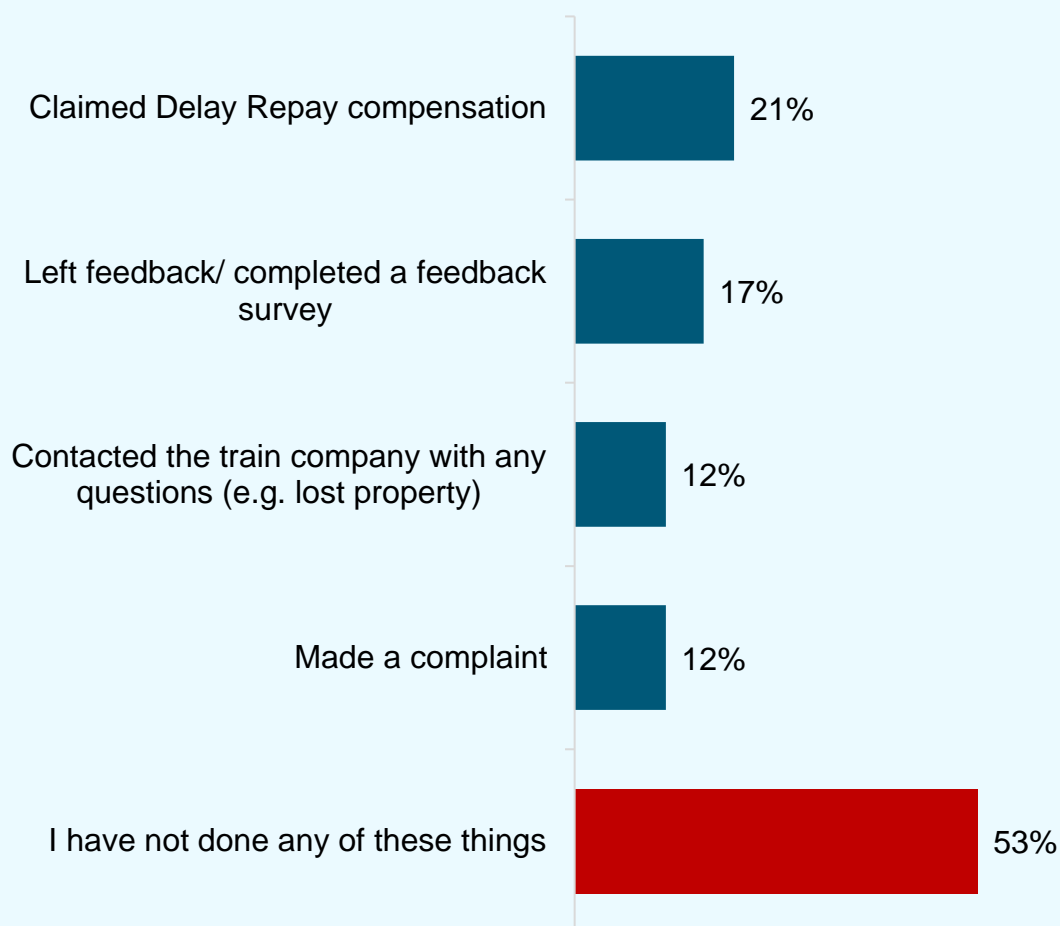
Those with **a disability** are significantly more likely to use a member of staff for help at the station; there are no significant differences when it comes to members of staff otherwise

Most passengers have never contacted the train company for any reason after travelling. If they have, it was most likely to claim Delay Repay compensation

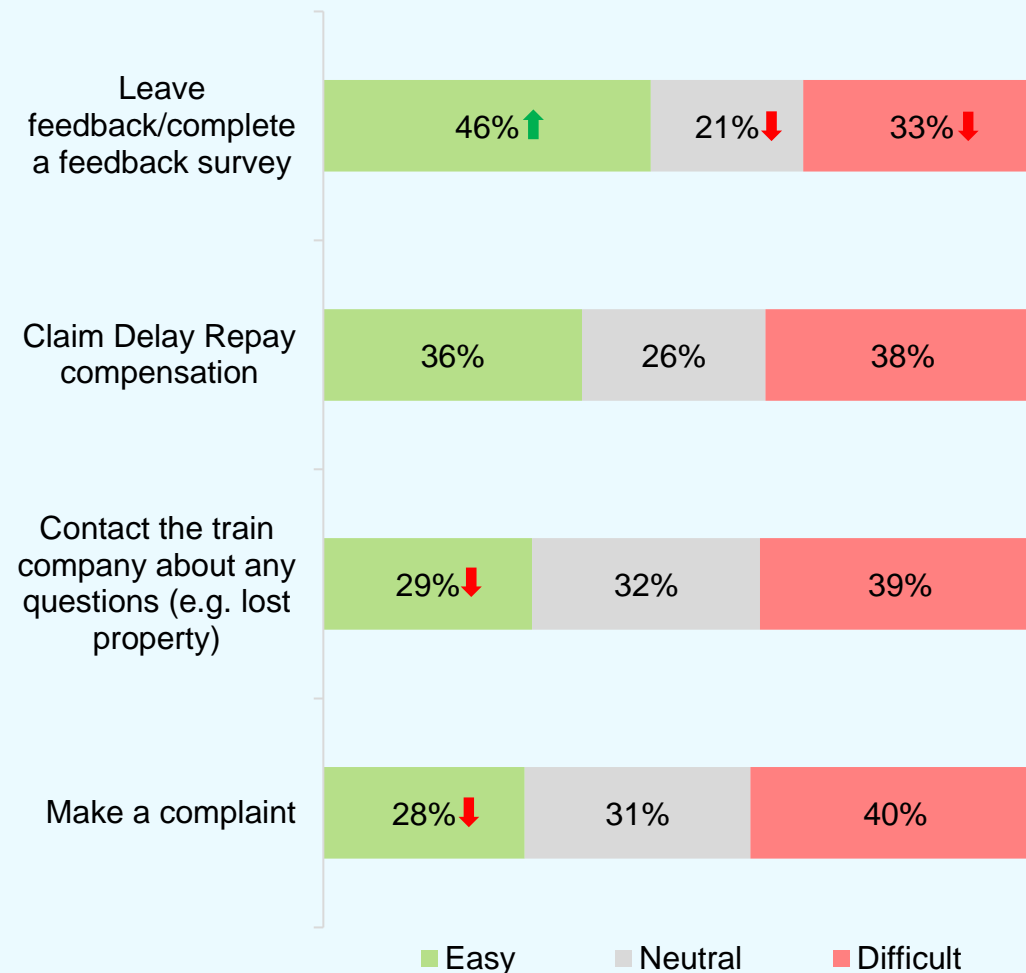
A third or more of passengers have found it difficult to carry out activities after their train journey; leaving feedback is reported to be easiest whilst making a complaint is hardest



What passengers do after their train journey



Ease of completing activities after train journey



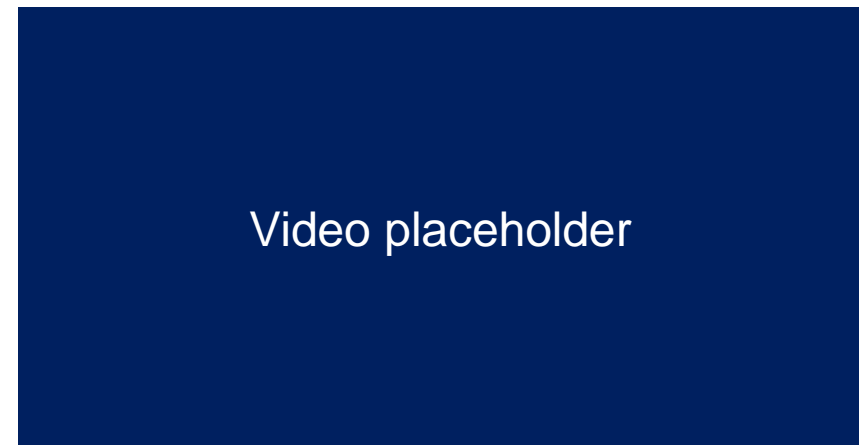
↑ ↓ Significantly higher / lower than 'Total' at 95% confidence level

The qualitative phase of work showed that there is a need to rebuild trust and satisfaction

Multiple participants had stories of where they received poor communication or had a frustrating experience with their rail travel. There is a clear need to rebuild trust that the information provided will be both **accurate and reliable**

Expectations are low

- Some experience poor communication at their local station, with display boards they cannot read, announcements they cannot hear, or updates that later prove incorrect
- Incorrect and late notice information creates a feeling of distrust that passengers are deliberately not being told all the information
- For those with additional requirements (e.g., wheelchair users, visual impairment), the challenges of travelling on the railway and hard to find information creates a barrier to them considering the railway as a way of travelling
- Improved communication can be perceived as a “sticking plaster” against other more significant issues e.g., information about over crowding on match days could be avoided if additional services were put on
- Ultimately, there is a need to rebuild trust and improved communications can be an important step in that direction



“...suddenly it’s cancelled, they must know it’s going to get cancelled”

Commuter, Female

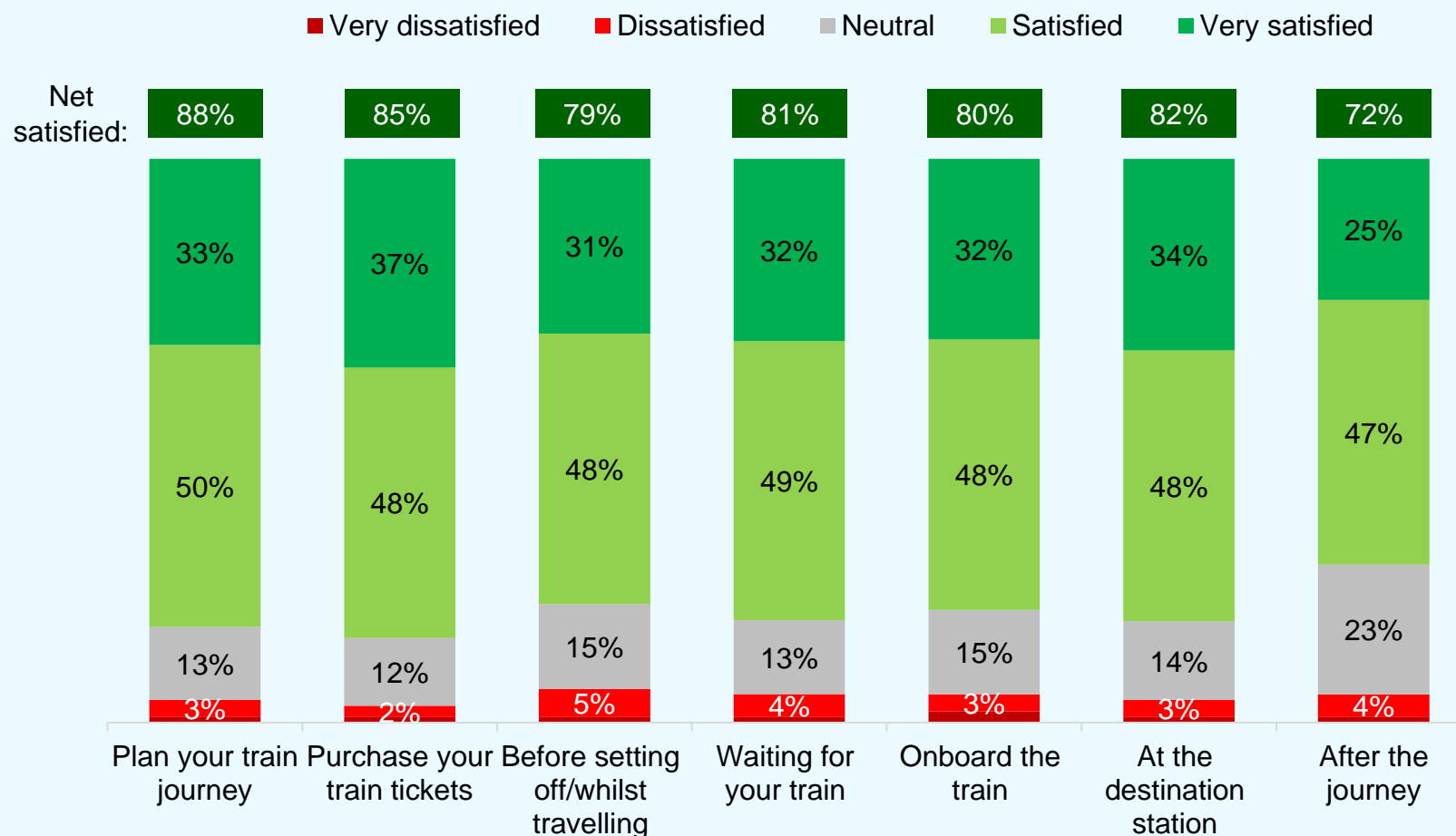
“A lot needs to be done to build some bridges”

Leisure, Female

Overall, when trains are running normally, passengers have high levels of satisfaction with the provision of information across the different journey stages. However, this does differ by audience

Despite lower levels of satisfaction after the journey, the qualitative research showed it is in the earlier stages when good provision of information is most important

Satisfaction with information provision across different journey stages when trains are running normally



Overall, **younger travellers** tend to be significantly less satisfied at every stage of their journey before they reach their destination station

Those with a **disability** are also significantly less satisfied across their journey

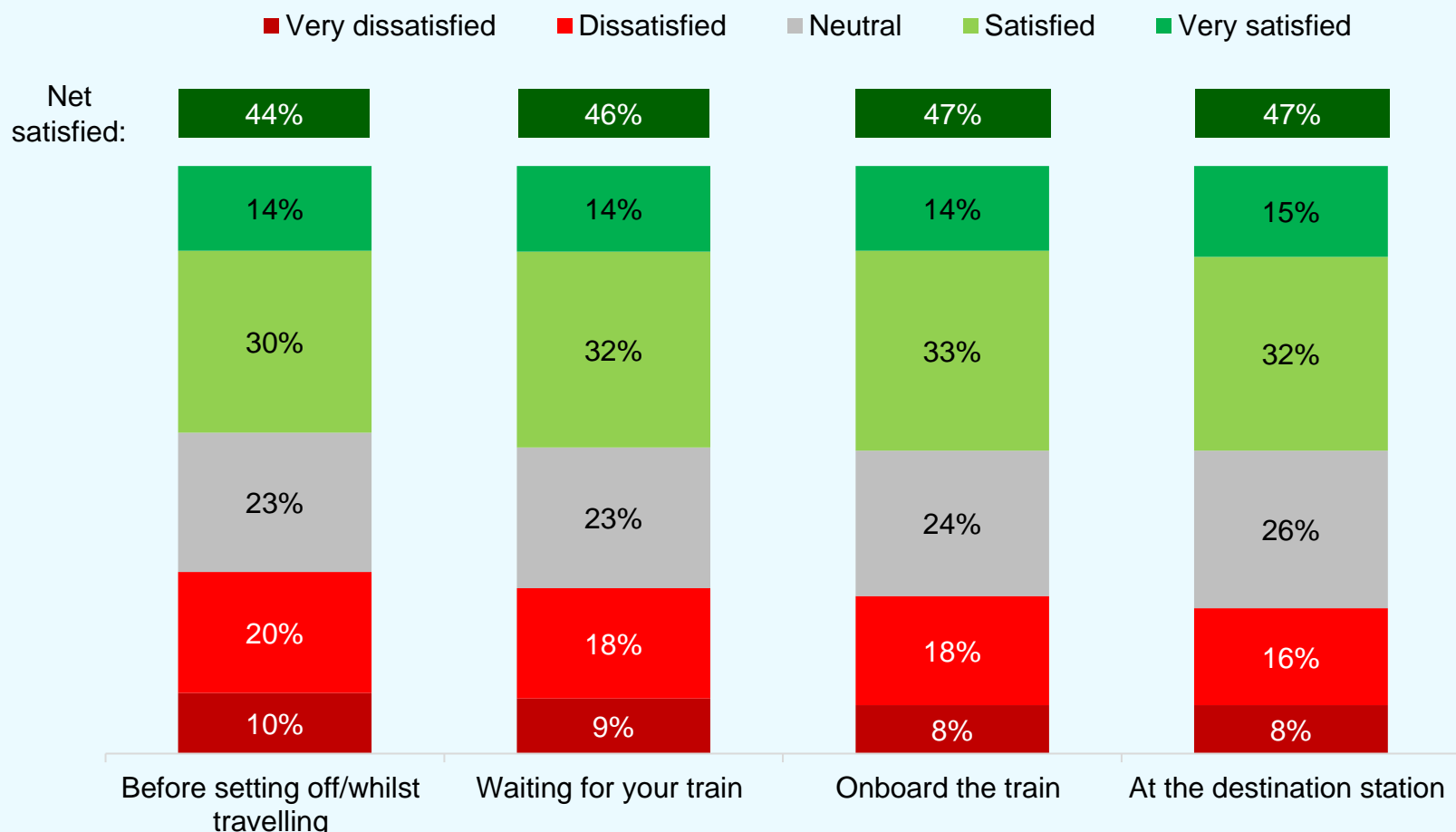
Less frequent travellers are less likely to be satisfied with planning their journeys and purchasing their tickets than their counterparts

Commuters are significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with information before setting off, whilst travelling to the station, and when onboard the train, than leisure or business travellers

Personal business travellers also tend to be significantly less satisfied across several of the journey stages

When trains have been affected by unplanned disruption, levels of dissatisfaction increase; passengers feel most dissatisfied with the provision of information before they reach the station, this drops slightly once at their destination station

Satisfaction with information provision across different journey stages when trains are affected by unplanned disruption



Similar audience trends can be seen with satisfaction of the information provision when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

Younger passengers are significantly less likely to be satisfied with the information provision when they are waiting for their train and when onboard the train

Those with a **disability** are less likely to be very satisfied with the information before they set off

Weekly travellers are significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with the information at every journey stage

Commuters are significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with the information available to them whilst waiting for their train and whilst onboard than leisure travellers

Respondents were not asked about their satisfaction with planning journeys/ purchasing tickets during disruption.



What this report includes

1. Research goals, method and headlines
2. Overall attitudes towards rail travel and information provision
3. The rail journey stages – gathering information and satisfaction with provision at each stage
4. The most important information for passengers – when trains are running normally
5. The most important information for passengers – when trains are affected by unplanned disruption
6. Final thoughts – areas for improvement and summary

Measuring stated importance - MaxDiff trade-off exercises

This study sought to understand the impact on overall satisfaction of introducing new types of information when travelling by train. The first stage of this was to measure stated importance

Stated importance

- Three 'trade-off' exercises (MaxDiff): rail travellers saw screens with four randomly selected propositions
- They had to pick which is most important and which is least important to them. This exercise was repeated around a dozen times
- The resulting scores provided a ranking of which types of information passengers say are important to them

MaxDiff one: Information propositions – trains running normally

The availability of parking spaces before you arrive at the train station
How to book a parking space at the train station (if that service is offered)
Busyness of the train/ the stations you are travelling from/to <u>when booking your ticket</u>
Live updates about the busyness of the train/ the stations you are travelling from/to <u>on the day of travel</u>
Details of the facilities at the stations you are travelling from/to and how to find them (e.g. toilets, cafes, shops, charging points, availability of wi-fi)
Accessibility information about the station (e.g. lift locations, step-free access)
Details of the facilities on the train (e.g. toilets, buffet car, charging points)
One joined-up system to plan your journey door to door on all types of public transport
Information about the environmental impact of your train journey vs other forms of transport
Information about onward train connections
Where best to wait on the platform for a reserved seat on the train/ a less busy carriage
How to navigate through the station so you can avoid the crowds or avoid any steps / escalators
Information available to help you locate available customer service staff at the station/ on the train
Staff that are well informed and able to help you and answer your questions

MaxDiff two: Information propositions – trains affected by unplanned disruption

Estimates of the time when services will be back to normal
Alternative routes or less affected trains to take instead
If the ticket you have is valid for other services/ routes
Live updates about the busyness of the train/ the stations you are travelling from/to during disruption
One joined-up system to plan your journey door to door on all types of public transport which is updated during disruption
Information available to help you locate available customer service staff at the station/ on the train during disruption
Announcements about disruption are shared visually in text format via screens on board the train
Information about disruption on the network provided in video format with a presenter explaining the disruption and offering advice on alternative travel options / what to do
Information about the delay when you're on the train provided directly from the train control room

The next slide explains how derived importance was measured, and how to interpret this against stated importance

Derived importance

Derived importance is what we have modelled as the impact of the information propositions on overall satisfaction with the current information provision when travelling by train. This is an implicit measurement based on how passengers have rated their recent experience vs how they would rate their experience if each of the information propositions were introduced

Structure of the following slides

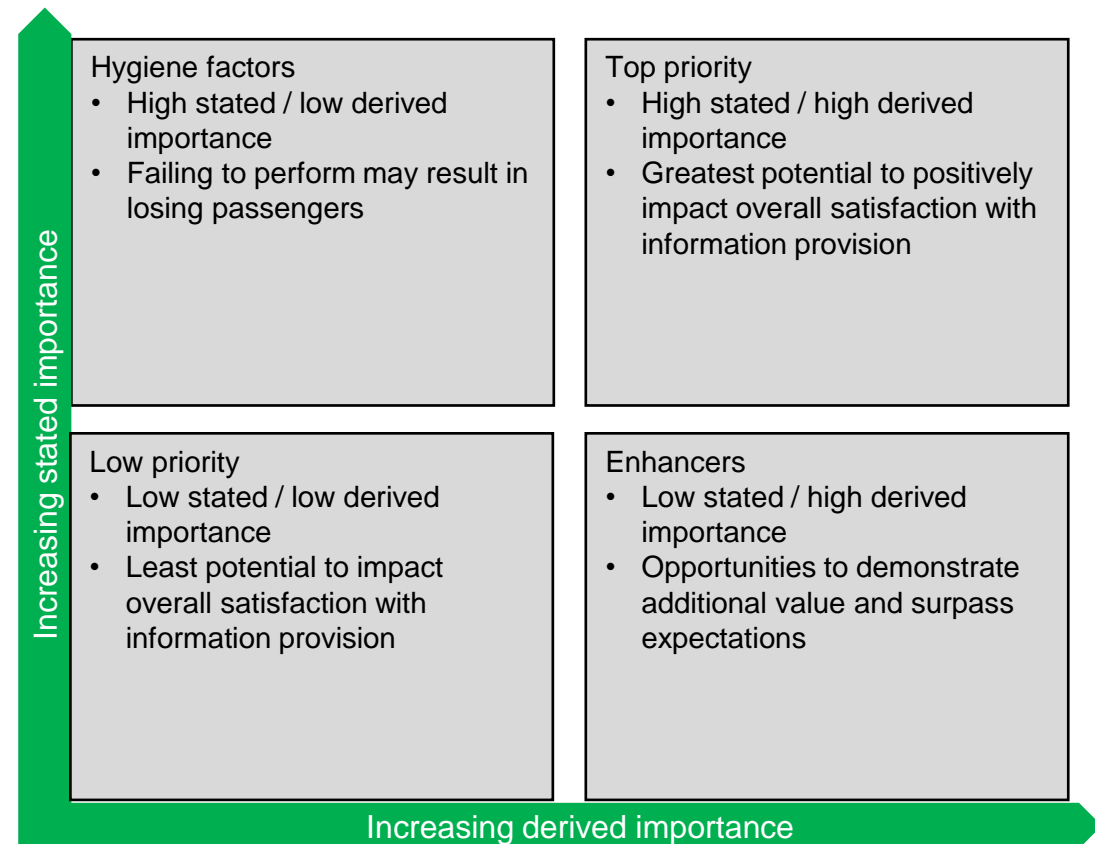
The structure of the following slides is as follows;

- A bar chart showing the stated importance of the different types of new information
- A scattergraph which compares the stated importance of the propositions to derived importance, by all passengers and those with a disability

The derived models

Some of the statements (e.g., one joined-up system to plan journeys) tend to come quite low on some of the models. This may be explained by the fact this has less to do with information communication, and more to do with process, ease, etc.

How to interpret the scattergraphs – stated vs derived importance:

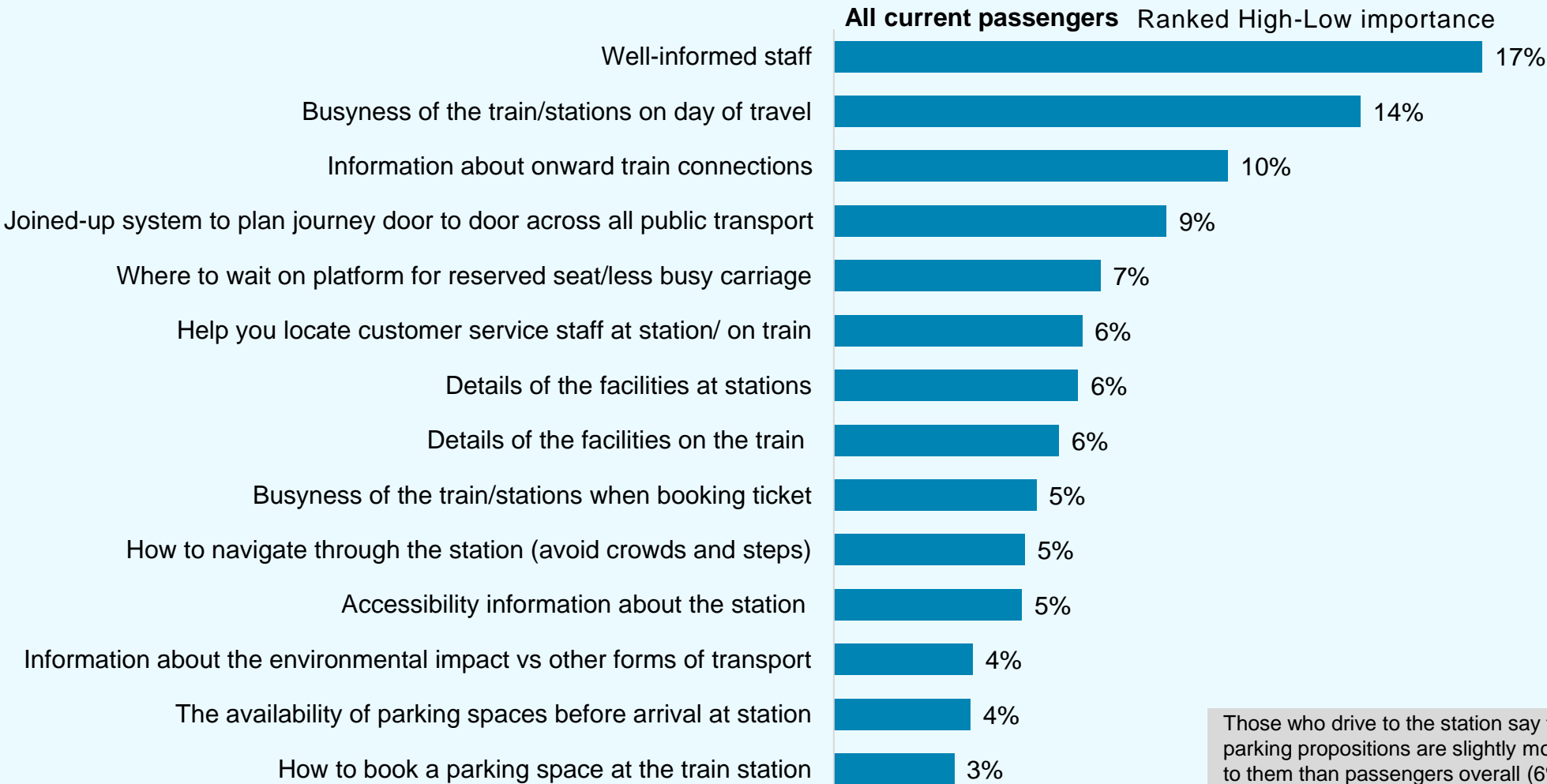


Passengers say that well informed staff are most important to them, followed by live updates about busyness on the day of travel and information about onward connections

Trains running normally

Passengers say that booking a parking space is least important to them

Stated importance of the propositions when trains are running normally

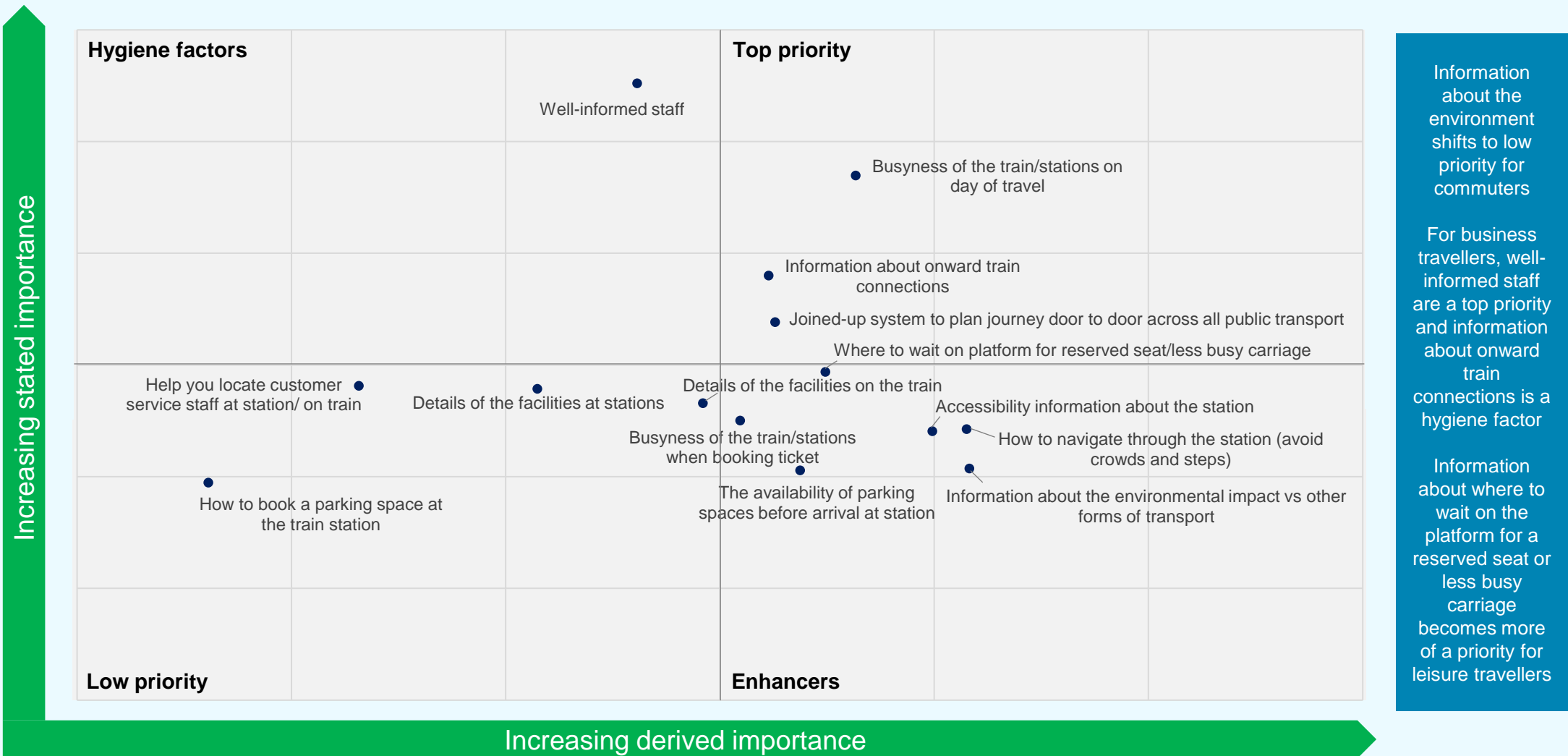


Those who drive to the station say that the parking propositions are slightly more important to them than passengers overall (6% and 4%)

NB: Full proposition text in notes

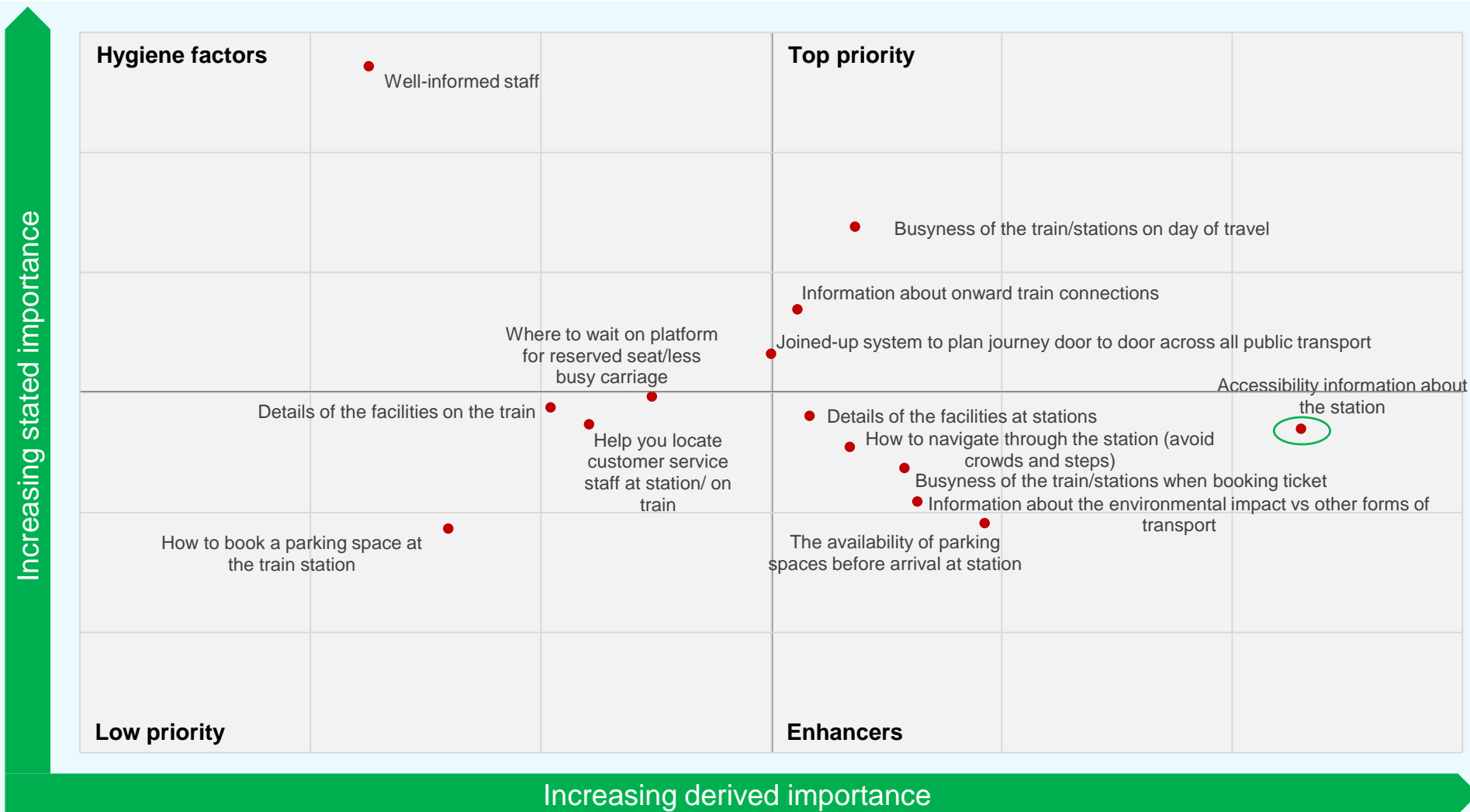
Well informed staff are important but as a hygiene factor – getting this right may not necessarily delight passengers but getting it wrong will frustrate them

The top priorities overall are providing passengers with information on the busyness of the train/stations on the day of travel, information about onward connections and providing a joined-up system for planning journeys door to door



NB: Full proposition text in notes

For disabled passengers, the top priorities are very similar to passengers in general. However, information about accessibility at the station becomes more important – it provides an opportunity to demonstrate additional value



NB: Full proposition text in notes

The propositions for when trains are running normally are likely to have a small impact on overall satisfaction with information provision. The impact is smaller on the satisfaction of commuters and those with a disability

Satisfaction with information provision when trains are running normally

Base line satisfaction score (net: satisfied and very satisfied) when trains are running normally					
Overall	Commuters	Business	Leisure	Personal business	Disability
79.8%	75.3%	76.6%	82.0%	76.8%	80.3%

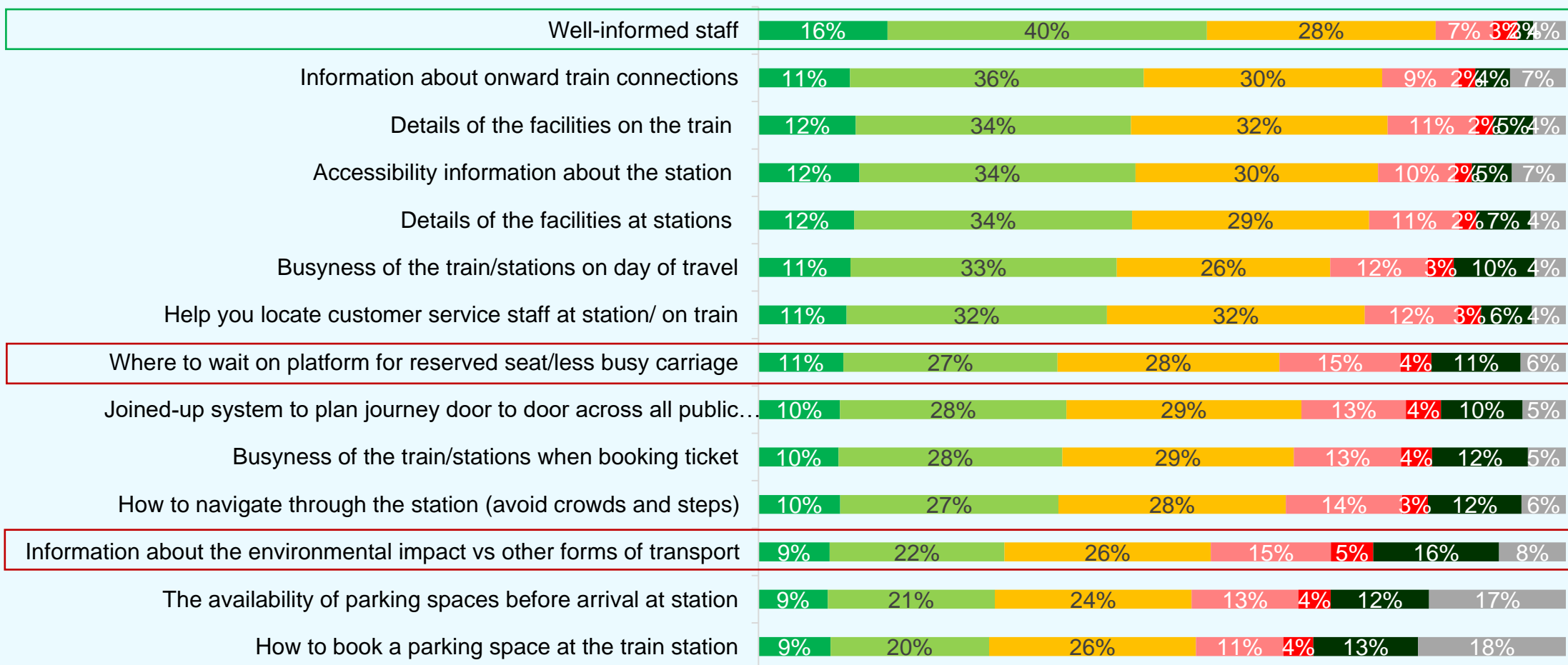
Proposition	Predicted uplift of each proposition					
	Overall	Commuters	Business	Leisure	Personal business	Disability
Busyness of the train/stations on day of travel	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	0.9%	1.7%	0.7%
Information about onward train connections	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%	0.8%	1.1%	0.5%
How to navigate through the station (avoid crowds and steps)	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
Staff that are well informed and able to help you and answer your questions	0.8%	0.4%	1.2%	0.8%	0.6%	0.2%
Busyness of the train/ the stations when booking ticket	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%
Accessibility information about the station	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.9%
Joined-up system to plan journey door to door across all public transport	0.7%	0.9%	1.6%	0.7%	0.1%	0.5%
Where to wait on platform for reserved seat/less busy carriage	0.7%	0.1%	0.6%	0.8%	0.3%	0.3%
Details of the facilities on the train	0.6%	0.4%	1.1%	0.5%	0.6%	0.2%
Information about the environmental impact vs other forms of transport	0.6%	0.1%	0.8%	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%
The availability of parking spaces before arrival at train station	0.4%	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0.9%	0.4%
Details of the facilities at stations	0.4%	0.1%	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%
Help you locate customer service staff at station/ on train	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	1.6%	0.2%
How to book a parking space at the train station	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%

There are high levels of agreement that the current information provision is good/excellent in several areas, with the majority thinking that staff are well-informed

However, around one in five passengers think that the railway is currently doing poorly at providing information around where to wait on the platform and about the environmental impact of trains

Rating of current information provision when trains are running normally

■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Average ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ Unaware the railway provided this ■ Don't know/ not applicable



NB: Full proposition text in notes

The qualitative phase of work showed that some passengers have low levels of awareness of what is available

We heard repeated requests for communication and information updates or access to information that is already available – but is too hard to find or isn't known about

Making the basics more easily accessible

- There is a desire for information that in some cases, is already available but only if you know where to go and where to look
- For example, there were repeated requests to be able to check train departures before leaving for the station and limited awareness of being able to access this information via National Rail Enquires. There was also low awareness of being able to sign up for alerts on regular routes
- These are often seen as “the basics” that the rail companies are not delivering now – even though that capability is there and has been for some time
- There is a need for improved communication about what information is already out there and available for those traveling by rail. Information that is found is often felt like a “secret” or “a way round” the rail companies e.g. split fares sites or journey planners that offer a longer but cheaper route

Video placeholder

“If I didn't know Edinburgh, as a wheelchair user, I wouldn't know that not all the entrances are... accessible”

**Leisure,
Wheelchair user,
Female**

“Getting regular updates via text from travel companies”

Commuter, Female

Overall, passengers would prefer to get most information via digital screens or an app/website when trains are running normally

Preferred way of receiving information when trains are running normally

	App/ website	Text message/ email/ push notification	From a member of staff	Announcements (at the station or on the train)	Digital screens (at the station or on the train)
Busyness of the train/ the stations when booking ticket	38%	21%	19%	33%	40%
Busyness of the train/stations on day of travel	38%	24%	18%	42%	48%
Details of the facilities at stations	36%	19%	23%	30%	40%
Accessibility information about the station	31%	17%	29%	33%	40%
Details of the facilities on the train	30%	16%	22%	38%	41%
Joined-up system to plan journey door to door across all public transport	48%	24%	17%	27%	36%
Information about the environmental impact vs other forms of transport	35%	21%	21%	27%	33%
Information about onward train connections	36%	22%	26%	43%	49%
Where to wait on platform for reserved seat/less busy carriage	31%	21%	25%	35%	41%
How to navigate through the station (avoid crowds and steps)	29%	16%	27%	33%	40%
Help you locate customer service staff at station/ on train	27%	17%	31%	39%	41%
The availability of parking spaces before arrival at train station	40%	26%	15%	-	-
How to book a parking space at the train station	40%	25%	18%	21%	23%

Those **aged 65+** are significantly less likely to prefer using an app/website for several of the types of information listed

Those with a **disability** are significantly more likely to prefer texts/emails/push notifications about the busyness of the train/station on the day of travel than those without a disability

People with a **disability** are also significantly more likely to prefer a member of staff to provide them with several of the types of information listed

Passengers who are **comfortable using tech** and apps are significantly more likely to prefer to receive all types of information in app/website form

'Staff that are well-informed and able to answer your questions' has been removed because the different channels do not apply

NB: Full proposition text in notes

Passengers are least likely to be willing to provide their contact details in order to receive information; some are willing to download an app and receive notifications

What passengers are prepared to do to receive the information when trains are running normally

	Download an app	Provide contact details	Sign up to messaging service with email/ phone number	Buy my ticket in advance	Buy my ticket online/ on an app	Receive notifications on personal device	None of these
Busyness of the train/ the stations when booking ticket	36%	13%	21%	27%	26%	30%	13%
Busyness of the train/stations on day of travel	41%	14%	23%	24%	25%	34%	13%
Details of the facilities at stations	34%	14%	20%	22%	21%	27%	15%
Accessibility information about the station	31%	13%	20%	22%	20%	28%	16%
Details of the facilities on the train	32%	12%	20%	19%	19%	29%	17%
Joined-up system to plan journey door to door across all public transport	42%	14%	21%	25%	25%	30%	11%
Information about the environmental impact vs other forms of transport	25%	15%	22%	22%	21%	29%	11%
Information about onward train connections	37%	13%	22%	24%	23%	32%	12%
Where to wait on platform for reserved seat/less busy carriage	32%	13%	20%	22%	21%	32%	15%
How to navigate through the station (avoid crowds and steps)	35%	13%	19%	19%	17%	28%	16%
Help you locate customer service staff at station/ on train	30%	13%	20%	19%	18%	29%	18%
The availability of parking spaces before arrival at train station	35%	16%	23%	27%	26%	28%	12%
How to book a parking space at the train station	32%	16%	24%	23%	27%	28%	11%

Older travellers are significantly less likely to download an app to receive information about the busyness of trains/stations, station facilities, onward train connections, where to wait on the platform and how to locate customer service staff

Those with a **disability** are significantly more likely to sign up to a messaging service to receive information about the busyness of trains/stations on the day of travel and about the environmental impact vs. other forms of transport than those without a disability

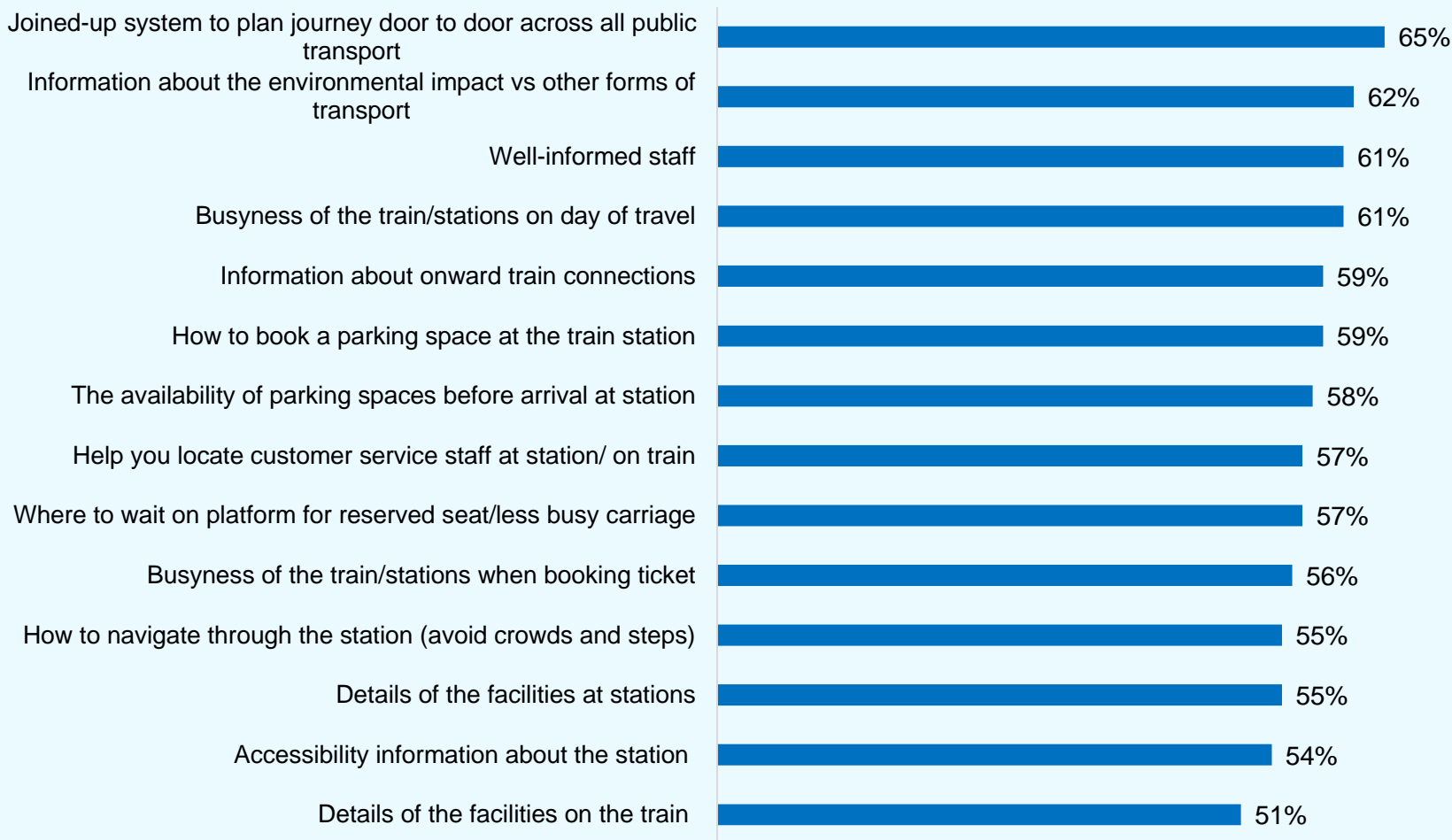
'Staff that are well-informed and able to answer your questions' has been removed because the options do not apply
NB: Full proposition text in notes

All the different types of information would encourage the majority to travel by train more in the future

Trains running normally

This could suggest that, overall, general improvement to information provision is valued by passengers and makes them feel positively toward travelling by train

Net: Likelihood to travel by train more in the future if information is provided



Commuters are significantly more likely to report that they would travel by train more if live updates about the busyness of trains/stations and train facility details were provided, in comparison to leisure travellers

25-34 year olds would be significantly more likely to travel by train if they were informed of the busyness of trains/stations, station facilities, where to wait on the platform and well-informed staff than older age groups. These findings also apply to those with a **disability**

NB: Full proposition text in notes



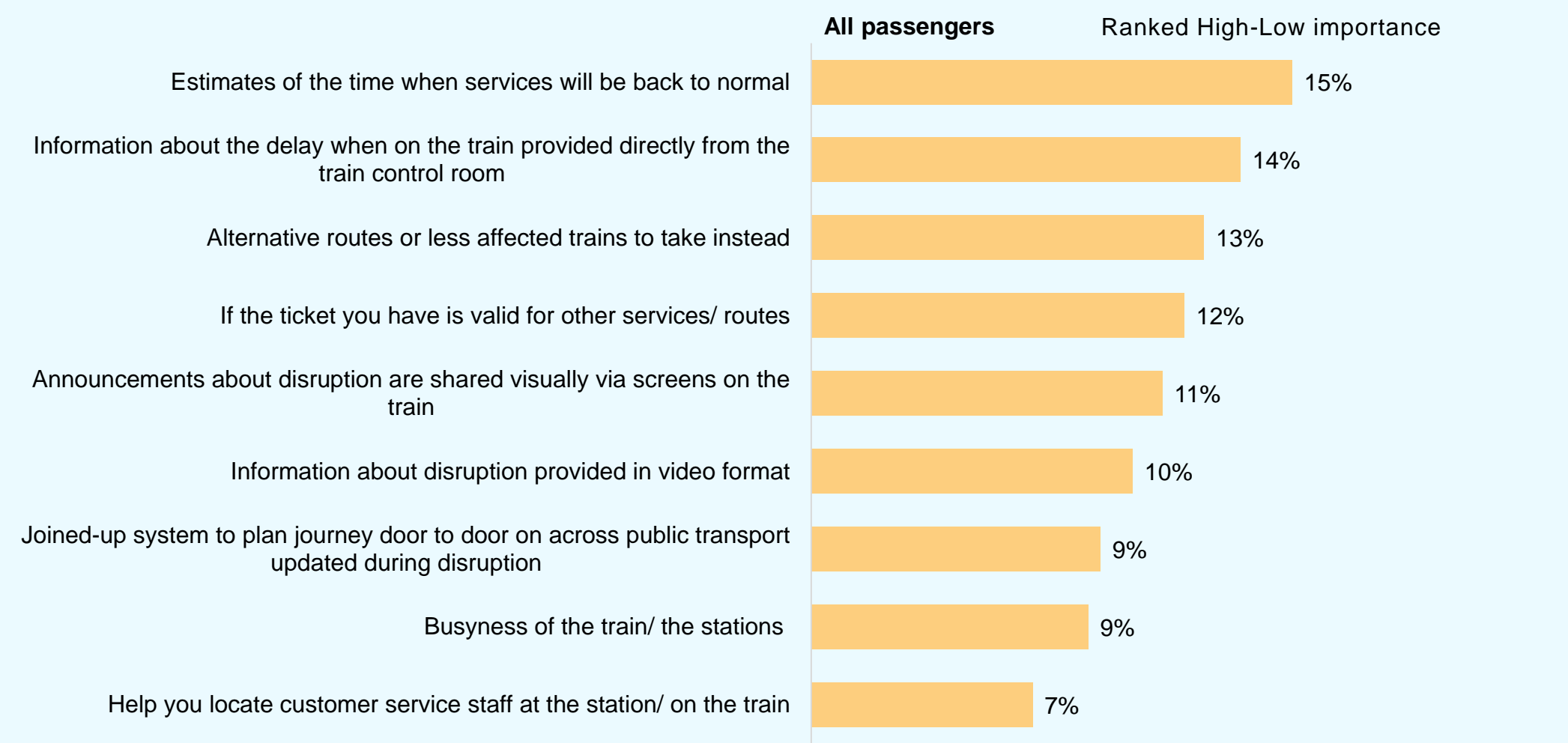
What this report includes

1. Research goals, method and headlines
2. Overall attitudes towards rail travel and information provision
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5. The most important information for passengers – when trains are affected by unplanned disruption
6. Final thoughts – areas for improvement and summary

Passengers say that estimates of the time when services will be back to normal and disruption information provided directly from the control room are most important to them

Passengers are less likely to say that a joined-up system to plan journeys door to door, the busyness of the train/stations and the location of customer service staff are important to them during disruption

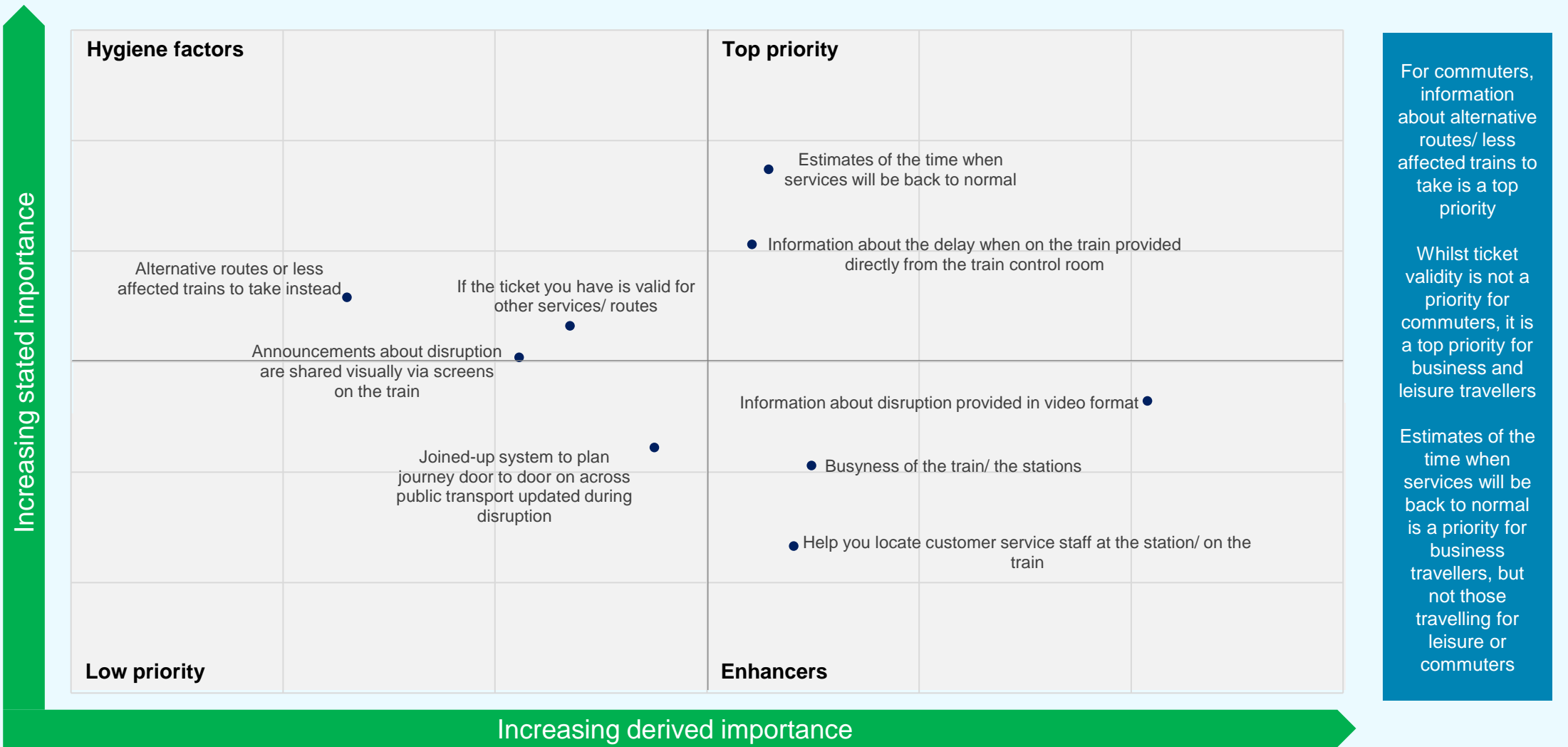
Stated importance of the propositions when trains are affected by unplanned disruption



NB: Full proposition text in notes

It follows that the top priorities for passengers are estimates of the time when normal services will resume, as well as information about the delay being provided directly from the control room when on the train

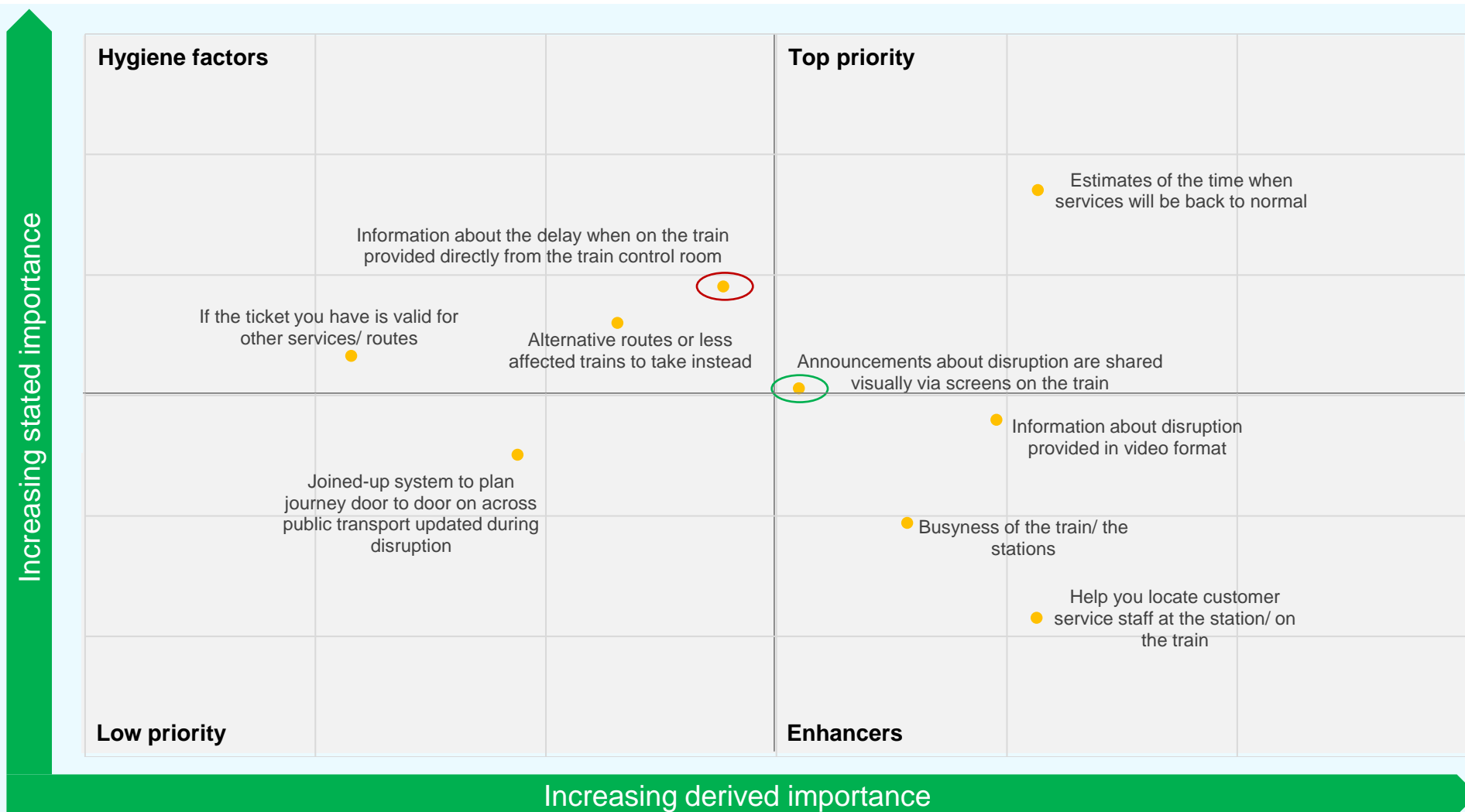
Information about alternative routes to take, the validity of tickets on other services/ routes, and announcements shared visually on screen are hygiene factors – it is important to get these right, but they do not have as much potential to impact satisfaction



NB: Full proposition text in notes

Announcements about disruption being shared visually on the train is a top priority for passengers with a disability, along with estimates of the time when services will be back to normal

Information about the delay when on the train provided directly from the train control room becomes a hygiene factor for disabled passengers



NB: Full proposition text in notes

Disrupted journey information seems to have a much bigger impact on overall satisfaction with information provision, than when trains are running normally

Satisfaction with information provision when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

Base line satisfaction score (net: satisfied and very satisfied) when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

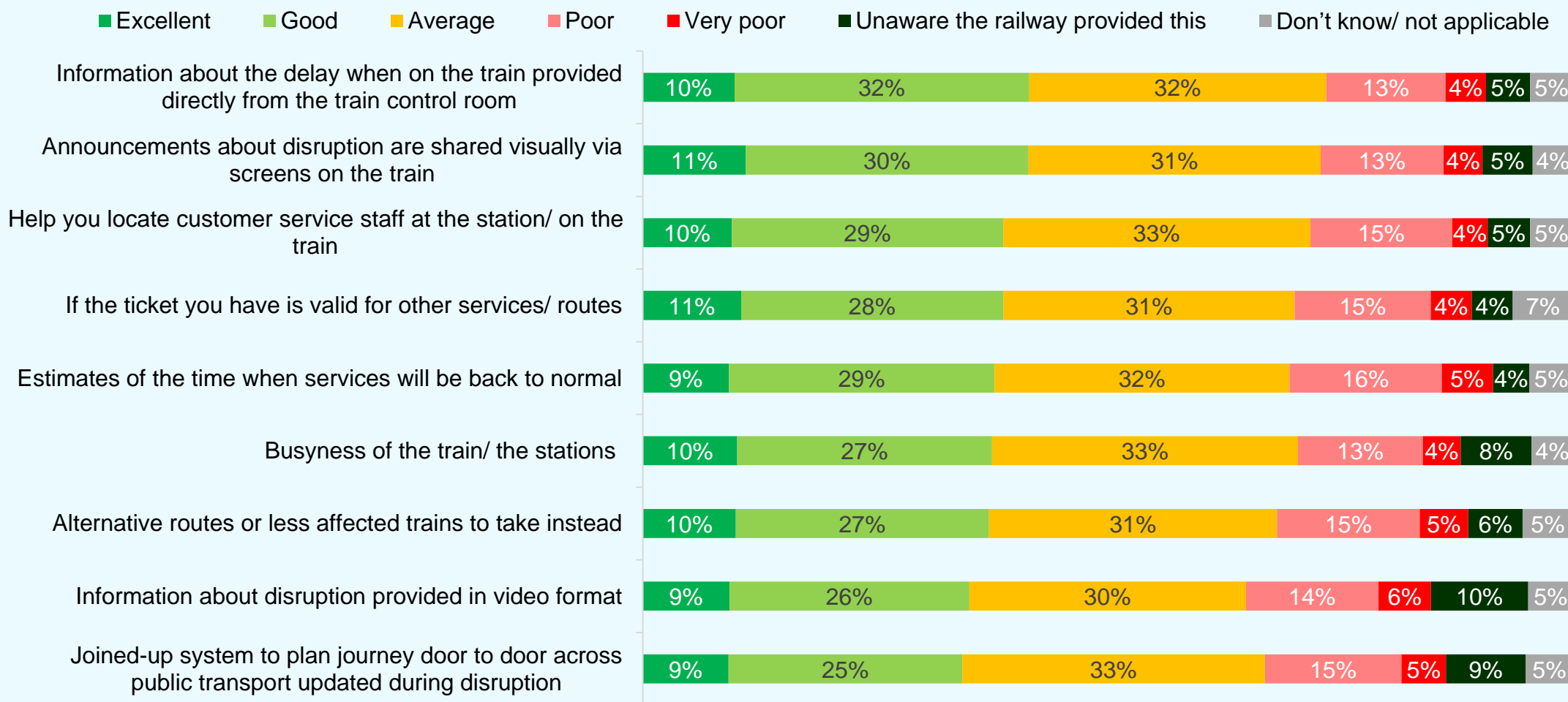
Overall	Commuters	Business	Leisure	Personal business	Disability
37.6%	36.6%	36.9%	37.1%	42.2%	41.8%

Proposition	Predicted uplift of each proposition					
	Overall	Commuters	Business	Leisure	Personal business	Disability
Information about disruption provided in video format	7.6%	5.8%	9.2%	5.7%	7.1%	5.8%
Estimates of the time when services will be back to normal	4.9%	5.2%	2.8%	7.9%	6.1%	6.8%
Information about the delay when on the train provided directly from the train control room	4.8%	10.4%	8.9%	7.1%	0.4%	3.9%
Busyness of the train/ the stations	4.1%	4.3%	6.7%	6.4%	5.6%	4.2%
Help you locate customer service staff at the station/ on the train	3.6%	7.1%	0.7%	5.1%	2.8%	5.6%
Joined-up system to plan journey door to door across public transport updated during disruption	2.5%	0.5%	7.9%	4.1%	3.8%	1.3%
Alternative routes or less affected trains to take instead	2.3%	9.5%	1.3%	2.6%	5.4%	2.7%
If the ticket you have is valid for other services/ routes	2.2%	2.5%	6.1%	7.8%	0.7%	0.5%
Announcements about disruption are shared visually via screens on the train	1.9%	2.5%	5.7%	2.0%	5.9%	4.4%

NB: Full proposition text in notes

Around 1 in 5 passengers think the railway is doing poorly with providing the disruption information listed below. Less than half think the current provision is good/excellent for any of the types of information

Rating of current information provision when trains are affected by unplanned disruption



NB: Full proposition text in notes

During disruption, more passengers would prefer information to be shared via announcements and from a member of staff, compared to when trains are running normally. This suggests that they would value hearing from somebody directly

Please refer to slide 43 for the findings when trains are running normally

Preferred way of receiving information when train is affected by unplanned disruption

	App/ website	Text message/ email/ push notification	From a member of staff	Announcements (at the station or on the train)	Digital screens (at the station or on the train)
Estimates of the time when services will be back to normal	37%	29%	29%	45%	42%
Alternative routes or less affected trains to take instead	41%	28%	31%	43%	42%
If the ticket you have is valid for other services/ routes	39%	29%	33%	37%	36%
Busyness of the train/ the stations	34%	24%	22%	35%	36%
Information about disruption provided in video format	37%	21%	-	-	35%
Information about the delay when on the train provided directly from the train control room	31%	20%	27%	33%	33%
Joined-up system to plan journey door to door across public transport updated during disruption	39%	25%	22%	32%	32%
Help you locate customer service staff at the station/ on the train	31%	21%	28%	38%	36%

Passengers aged 65+ are significantly less likely to prefer an app/website for estimates of the time when services will return to normal, information on alternative routes, the validity of tickets and live updates about busyness

Those with a disability are significantly more likely to want to be able to ask a member of staff about alternative routes to take and to have information directly from the control room shared via announcements

'Announcements about disruption are shared visually via screens on the train' has been removed because the different channels do not apply
NB: Full proposition text in notes

Passengers are prepared to download an app, particularly to receive estimates of the time when services will return to normal and to understand alternative routes

Around a third are also willing to receive notifications on their personal device

What passengers are prepared to do to receive the information when train is affected by unplanned disruption

Please refer to slide 44 for the findings when trains are running normally

	Download an app	Provide contact details	Sign up to messaging service with email/ phone number	Buy my ticket in advance	Buy my ticket online/ on an app	Receive notifications on personal device	None of these
Estimates of the time when services will be back to normal	40%	15%	23%	20%	22%	35%	11%
Alternative routes or less affected trains to take instead	42%	15%	24%	22%	22%	33%	10%
If the ticket you have is valid for other services/ routes	38%	15%	22%	24%	23%	33%	10%
Busyness of the train/ the stations	35%	13%	20%	21%	19%	29%	11%
Information about disruption provided in video format	33%	14%	21%	20%	19%	28%	14%
Information about the delay when on the train provided directly from the train control room	31%	13%	20%	20%	19%	26%	16%
Announcements about disruption are shared visually via screens on the train	36%	13%	20%	19%	19%	28%	16%
Joined-up system to plan journey door to door across public transport updated during disruption	37%	14%	24%	19%	21%	30%	10%
Help you locate customer service staff at the station/ on the train	34%	12%	20%	17%	17%	30%	17%

Less frequent travellers and those aged 65+ are more likely to say that they would not do any of the things listed to receive this information

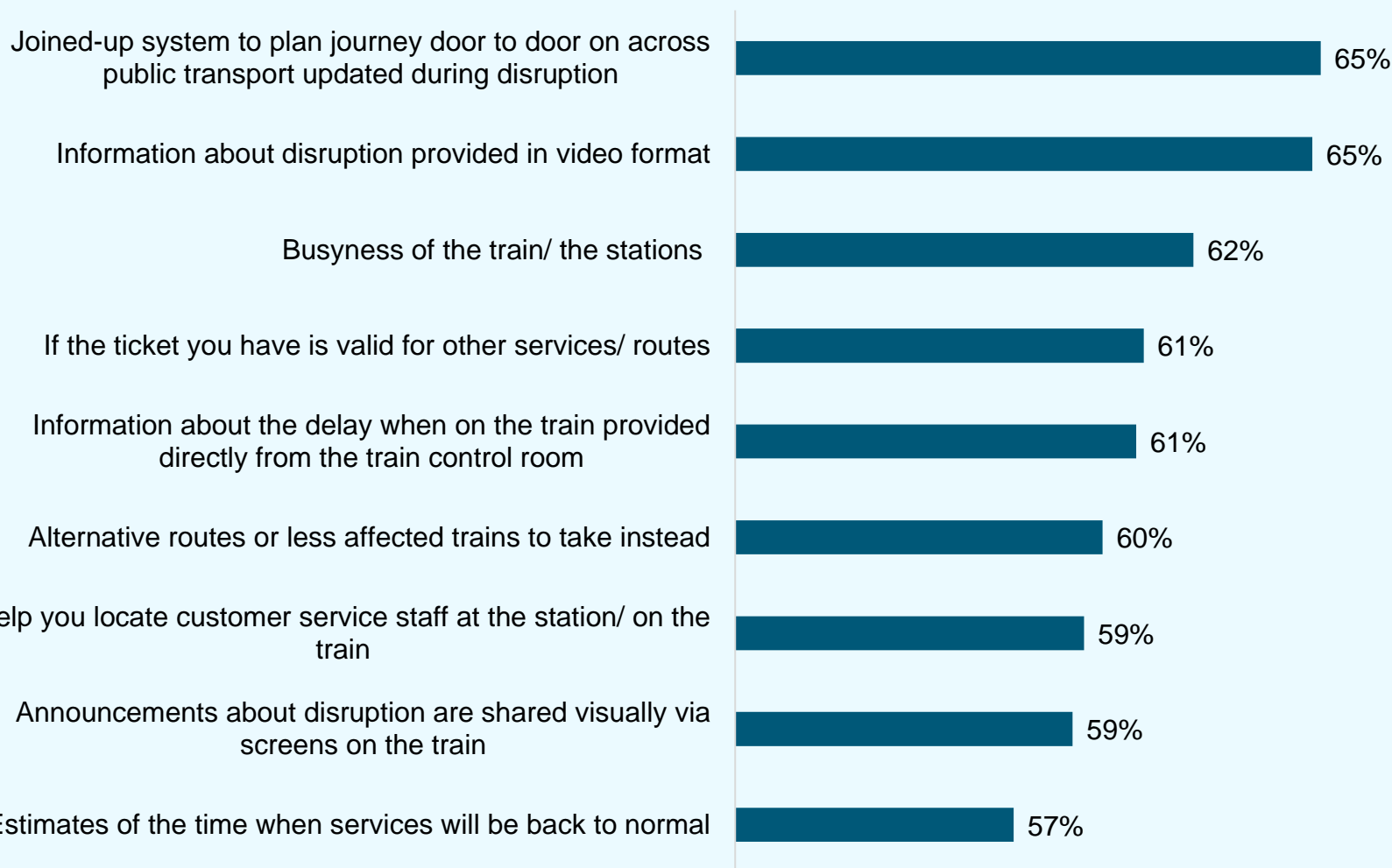
Those with a disability are significantly less likely to say that they would do ‘none of these’ in order to receive information. They tend to be more willing to leave contact details/ sign up to a messaging service, than those without a disability

NB: Full proposition text in notes

Similar to the impact of the provision of information when trains are running normally, the majority report being more likely to travel by train if they receive new/ better information during disruption

A joined-up journey planning system again has the biggest impact, followed by information via video

Net: Likelihood to travel by train more in the future if information is provided



Commuters would be significantly more likely to travel by train if information about alternative routes or less affected trains was shared

65+ year olds are significantly less likely to say that information about alternative routes or less affected trains to take instead, their ticket being valid for other services/routes and announcements about disruption being shared visually via screens would make them travel more

NB: Full proposition text in notes



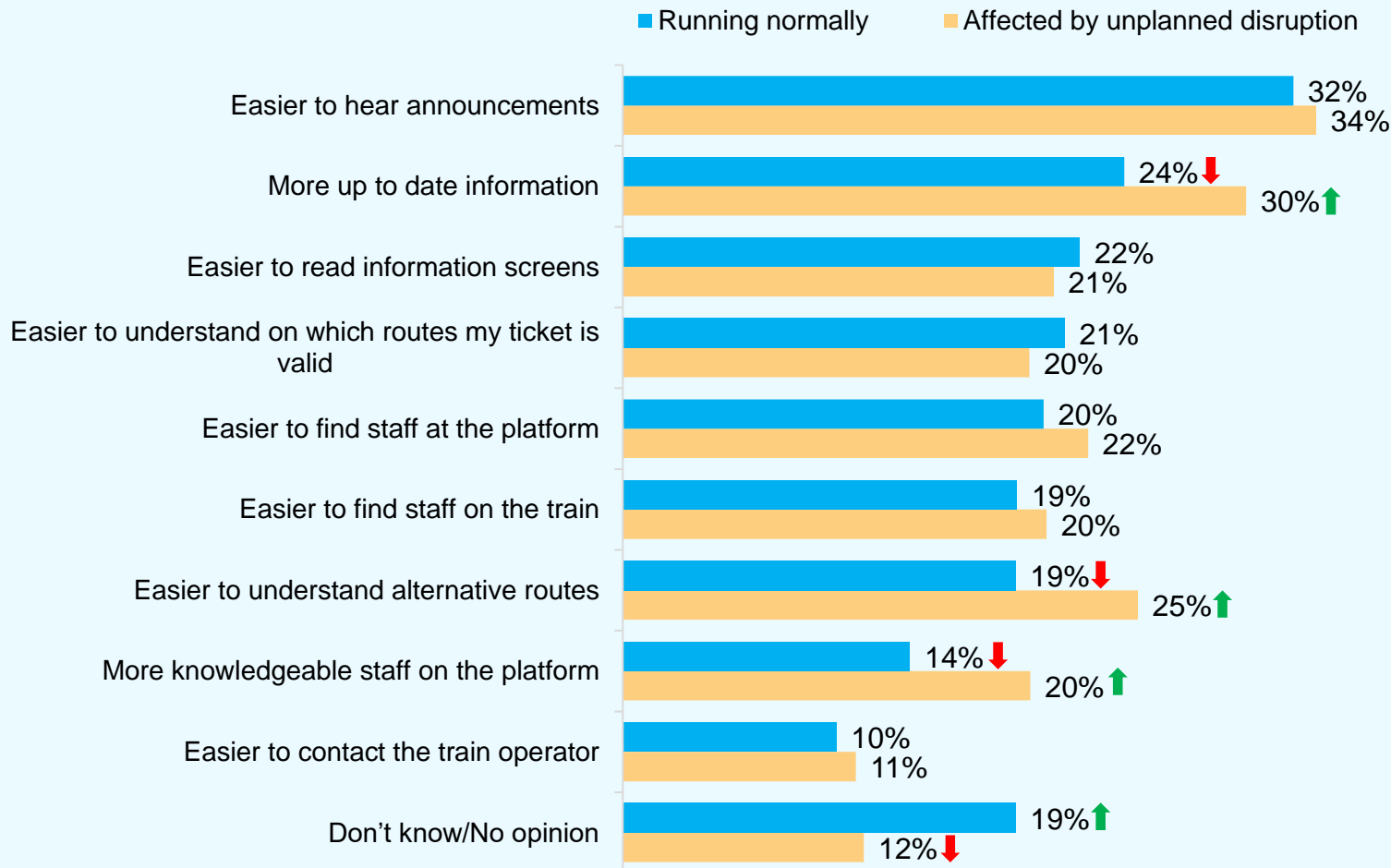
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6. Final thoughts – areas for improvement and summary

Passengers are significantly more likely to agree that there needs to be more up to date information during disruption, it needs to be easier to understand alternative routes and there need to be more knowledgeable staff

Regardless of the running of the train, passengers think that announcements need to be easier to hear

Areas for improvement



25-34 year olds are significantly more likely to say that it should be easier to contact the train operator when the train is running normally than 55+ year olds. Those aged 18-24 years old think that it should be easier to understand alternative routes than 65+ year olds

Those with a disability are significantly more likely to say that it should be easier to contact the train operator and find staff on platforms and trains than those without a disability when trains are running normally

↑ ↓ Significantly higher / lower at 95% confidence level

Information needs include clearer onboard announcements and being told the reason behind any delays

Improving information when trains are running normally

- When trains are running normally, passengers tend to find the information to be sufficient as it is, especially in comparison to when trains are affected by unplanned disruption
- There is a need for clearer onboard announcements, and/or digital screens in carriages which share the same information as announcements which would help those who cannot hear very well

"Nothing needed when going well"
Commuter, 45-54, Male

"Maybe more staff on hand to help those who struggle to see or hear announcements"
Leisure, 18-24, Female

"Would be nice to get regular updates about your train prior to arriving at the station"
Leisure, 35-54, Female

"Digital information on the train explaining what time we are due at the next stop, to help keep track of the journey."
Business, 35-44, Male

"Announcements that can be heard clearly and don't sound like 'mumble, mumble, mumble: Platform 1'"
Personal business, 55-64, Female

"Digital info board in carriages as the tannoy service is hard to hear and has many different dialects"
Leisure, 65+, Female

Improving information when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

- Passengers would like to know quickly why there has been a delay to their train/ as well as to be updated on how long the delay will last and what the impact is on other train services
- They mention digital boards/ screens, announcements, notifications, apps, emails and text messages as ways to be communicated with

"Advance text/emails"
Personal business, 65+, Male

"Tell us what the delay is, provide us with more information, more frequent updates"
Leisure, 18-24, Male

"Quicker information when it happens and directed to repay website, info on how much you can claim. Less apologies"
Leisure, 55-64, Female

"Have a better idea of why the train is delayed and how long the disruption will last"
Commuter, 55-64, Female

"I think the information should be communicated quicker with better updates and what the actual issues are. People like to be informed."
Commuter, 45-54, Male

Summary

The information needs of passengers travelling when trains are running normally **differ** to when trains are affected by unplanned disruption

There are **lower levels of satisfaction** with the current information provision when **trains are affected by unplanned disruption**. Passengers also feel more stressed, overwhelmed and confused in these situations

However, some audiences are also less likely to feel satisfied with information provision when trains are running normally, such as younger people, disabled people and more frequent travellers

When trains are running normally, passengers' top priorities (at a total level) are **updates on the busyness of trains/stations** on the day of travel, **information about onward connections** and providing a **joined-up system** for planning journeys door to door

When it comes to disruption, passengers are significantly more likely to agree that they need more **up to date information** during disruption, it needs to be **easier to understand alternative routes** and there need to be **more knowledgeable staff**

When trains are affected by unplanned disruption, the top priorities are **estimates of the time when normal services will resume**, and **information about the delay being provided directly from the control room to the train**

Ultimately, the majority of passengers say that they would be more willing to travel by train if any of the information propositions were provided – there is a **general need for better information and communication**.

And it is important to consider those who are less tech confident and **avoid information solutions that are entirely digitally-focused**. Generally, older passengers, those with disabilities, and digitally excluded people are less confident using apps/websites/notifications and would prefer other channels of communication

Quadrangle Research Group
The Butlers Wharf Building
36 Shad Thames

London SE1 2YE
quadrangle.com
+44 (0)20 7357 9919

Research. For decision makers.



There are some distinct differences in the profile of travellers in our sample

- Commuters are significantly more likely to be younger and to travel weekly
- Business travellers tend to be younger and travel frequently
- Leisure travellers are likely to be older and travel less frequently

	Commuting	Business	Leisure	Personal business
18-24	20% ↑	17% ↑	10% ↓	15%
25-34	32% ↑	28% ↑	18% ↓	30% ↑
35-44	21%	28% ↑	19% ↓	22%
45-54	17%	14%	14%	13%
55-64	9% ↓	8% ↓	21% ↑	11% ↓
65+	2% ↓	5% ↓	19% ↑	9% ↓

	Commuting	Business	Leisure	Personal business
Travel weekly	82% ↑	66% ↑	21% ↓	48% ↑
Travel monthly	13% ↓	19% ↓	28% ↑	27%
Travel every six months	4% ↓	11% ↓	35% ↑	15% ↓
Travel yearly	2% ↓	4% ↓	16% ↑	11%

Arrows denote data that is significantly higher (↑) or lower (↓) at the 95% confidence level

To note – consideration of interview date

Fieldwork for this quantitative phase of work took place from 22nd December to 10th January. During this time, many people were off work for Christmas (and consequently may have been travelling less). There were also rail strikes w/c 2nd January

In order to understand if there has been an impact on the findings because of this time period, the date that respondents took the survey has been considered

As expected, those who took the survey on 9th or 10th January were significantly less likely to say that they had travelled in the last week. At an overall level, there are no differences in satisfaction depending on when respondents took the survey