



Strategic Roads User Survey

2022/23 Summary

Key findings

The Strategic Roads User Survey (SRUS) measures the consumer experience driving on England's motorways and major 'A' roads, the strategic road network managed by National Highways on behalf of the Government. In this report we present a summary of findings for 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Overall, 73 per cent of road users were satisfied with their last motorway or major 'A' road journey, an improvement on last year's 69 per cent. Satisfaction with journey time (71 per cent) continues to be at a similar level to overall satisfaction, having also improved on last year's 67 per cent. Management of roadworks continues to be one of the weaker performing areas (48 per cent, no change from last year) albeit this question is answered only by drivers passing through roadworks on their journey.

Looking at results for individual roads*, the A303 achieves the highest level of overall satisfaction (85 per cent), followed by the M5 and M40 (both with 82 per cent satisfied). These three roads also top the table for satisfaction with journey time (A303 81 per cent; M5 84 per cent; M40 79 per cent).

The M40 also performs well on quality of road surface (83 per cent satisfied), just behind the M4 (rated highest at 84 per cent) and tops the table in terms of feeling safe (92 per cent), followed closely by the A30 (91 per cent).

“Re-surfaced smart motorway, good condition, extra lane for driving.”

M27, very satisfied

The M40 was the most highly rated road last year** (79 per cent) so has maintained its strong performance. The M5 has improved both its overall satisfaction rating (74 per cent last year) and its position in the rankings.

The A27 receives the lowest level of overall satisfaction (59 per cent), followed by the A12 (61 per cent). Both are rated poorly on quality of road surface, with the A12 continuing to score lowest for this by some margin (A12 44 per cent; A27 59 per cent). Drivers travelling on the A27 also encountered higher than average levels of congestion (16 per cent versus nine per cent for all roads) and recorded lower satisfaction with journey time (62 per cent versus 71 per cent for all roads).

Of the motorways, the M6 has the lowest level of satisfaction (66 per cent), as it did last year, although its score has improved (59 per cent in 2021/22). Almost half of those travelling on the M6 passed through roadworks (48 per cent versus 24 per cent for all roads) and more experienced heavier traffic (35 per cent heavy/congested versus 24 per cent for all roads) and lower levels of satisfaction with journey time (65 per cent versus 71 per cent for all roads).

“Terrible tarmac conditions in places, matrix signs not up to date, unwarranted smart motorway speed limits.”

M6, fairly dissatisfied

There is some variation between National Highways' regions – the South West region scores highest by some margin with 80 per cent overall satisfaction, maintaining its position as the best performing region. Other regions score between 70 and 73 per cent, with the North West and M25 region scoring lowest (70 per cent).

For motorway journeys, those that included a 'smart' section had lower levels of satisfaction than those that did not include a smart section (smart 69 per cent; no smart 76 per cent). Among those smart motorway journeys, 'all-lane running' schemes scored higher than 'dynamic hard shoulder' and 'controlled' schemes (all-lane running 71 per cent; dynamic hard shoulder 65 per cent; controlled 66 per cent).

Smart motorways were also rated lower for feeling safe (smart 77 per cent; not smart 84 per cent), although there was little difference between the three types of smart motorway in terms of feeling safe.

“Clear road signs, managed speed limit allowing flow of movement.”

M42, very satisfied

All this information can be viewed in the Transport Focus data hub, www.transportfocus.org.uk/data-hub. New data is added each month.

* among those with 100 survey responses or more

** the A303 had fewer than 100 survey responses in 2021/22 so did not feature in the ranking of individual roads last year

Satisfaction with journeys on England's motorways and major 'A' roads

Satisfaction scores



"Great road. Not much traffic. Beautiful scenery. Stop off points. No delays."

A303, very satisfied

"Clear road and signage was clear for roadworks that were taking place."

M5, very satisfied

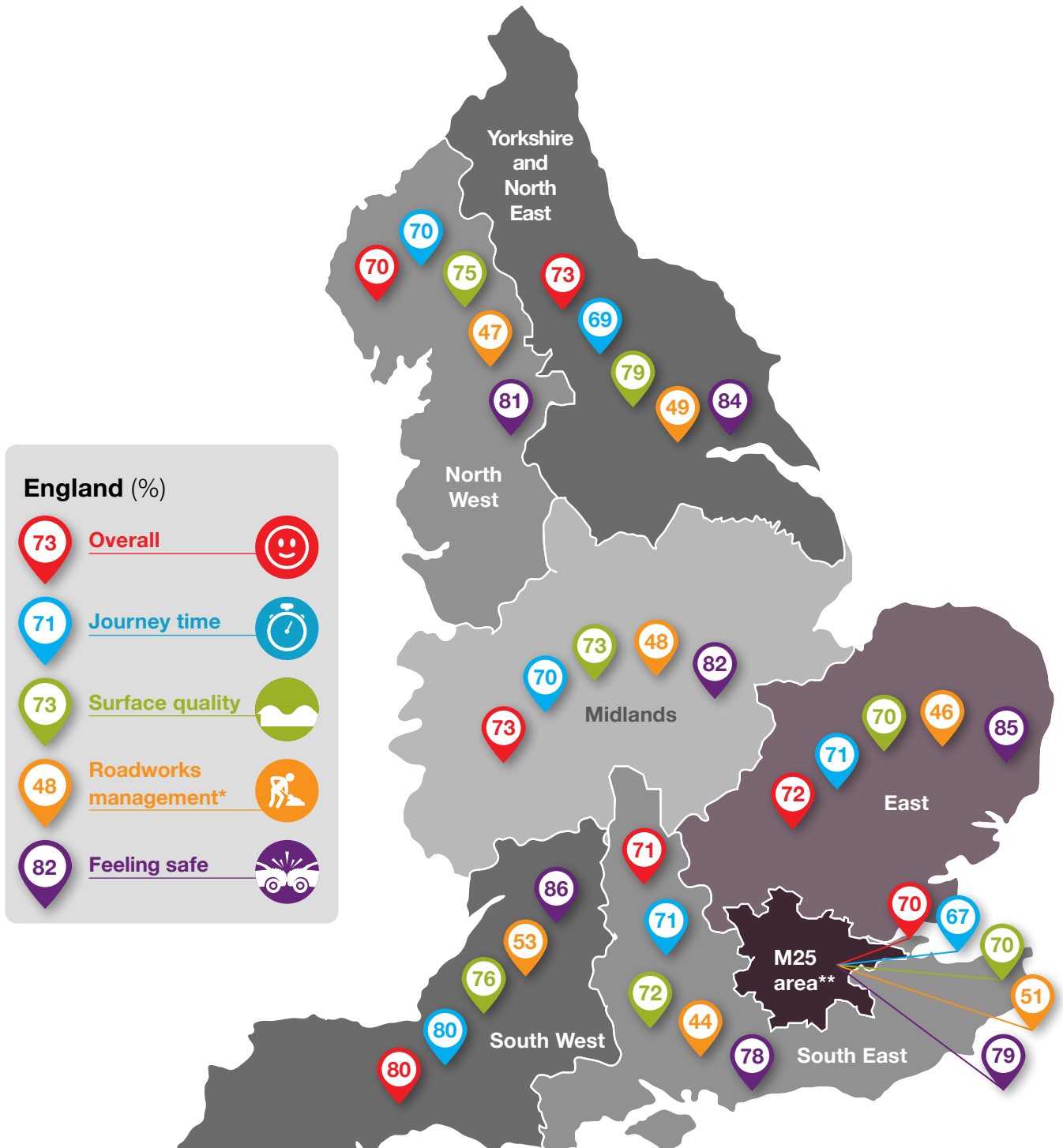
"The trip was fine what is such a shame is the amount of rubbish on the sides of the roads. I have travelled on this road for nearly 30 years and the amount of rubbish in the last few years has got much worse. They used to pick up rubbish - what has happened?"

A27, fairly satisfied

"Smart motorways are death traps."

M27, very dissatisfied

Journey satisfaction by National Highways region



“Traffic not too heavy, road in good condition, made good time.”

M40, very satisfied

“The state of the A12 road surface is terrible, added to that the on-going roadworks make it a fairly unpleasant journey.”

A12, fairly dissatisfied

* Roadworks management question answered only by those passing through roadworks on their journey
 ** Roads managed by Connect Plus on behalf of National Highways
 Satisfaction = very satisfied and fairly satisfied combined

Overall satisfaction by sub-group (%)

 **Overall satisfaction = 73%**

- Motorway users – **73**
- Major 'A' road users – **72**
- Motorway journey included a 'smart' section – **69**
 - All-lane running – **71**
 - Dynamic hard shoulder – **65**
 - Controlled - **66**
- Motorway journey – no 'smart' section - **76**
- Age 17-34 – **73**
- Age 35-59 – **72**
- Age 60+ - **74**
- Male – **71**
- Female - **75**
- Disability – **72**
- No disability – **73**
- Passed through roadworks – **58**
- Did not pass through roadworks – **80**
- Car drivers – **74**
- Vans – **64**
- LGV/HGV (3.5 tonnes or more) – **59**
- Battery electric cars - **72**
- Commuter – **69**
- Any work reason – **65**
- Leisure – **75**
- Weekday AM peak – **70**
- Weekday PM peak – **68**
- Weekday off-peak – **73**
- Weekend/bank holiday – **76**

Which factors influence road user satisfaction?

Analysis of SRUS data shows the following aspects of the journey to have the greatest influence on road users' overall satisfaction with their journey. In order, they are:

Satisfaction with journey time

Journey time compared to expectation

Whether there were delays caused by things other than roadworks

Level of traffic

How safe it felt on the road

- When the journey took less time than expected, 93 per cent were satisfied overall, compared with 37 per cent among those whose journey took longer than expected.
- Among those not experiencing delays caused by things other than roadworks, 80 per cent were satisfied overall, but among those who were held up 44 per cent were satisfied.
- Among those who experienced light traffic, 88 per cent were satisfied overall, whereas only 26 per cent of those experiencing congestion were satisfied overall.
- 79 per cent of those who felt safe while travelling were satisfied overall, whereas among those who did not feel safe 37 per cent were satisfied.

Among those drivers who passed through roadworks during their journey, satisfaction with the management of those roadworks is also a key driver of overall satisfaction.

- Among those satisfied with management of roadworks, 79 per cent were satisfied overall, compared with just 27 per cent of those dissatisfied with management of roadworks.

The results of this analysis are consistent with those in previous years.

These influences can be seen clearly in the overall satisfaction scores. For example:

- Among those satisfied with journey time, 91 per cent were satisfied overall. When dissatisfied with journey time, just 12 per cent were satisfied overall.

This year the analysis was extended to look at what influences overall satisfaction within each National Highways region. There was little difference between the results by region, indicating that what influences satisfaction is consistent across regions.





Analysis of the data was carried out using a Gamma coefficient technique, alongside Pearson's correlation coefficients.

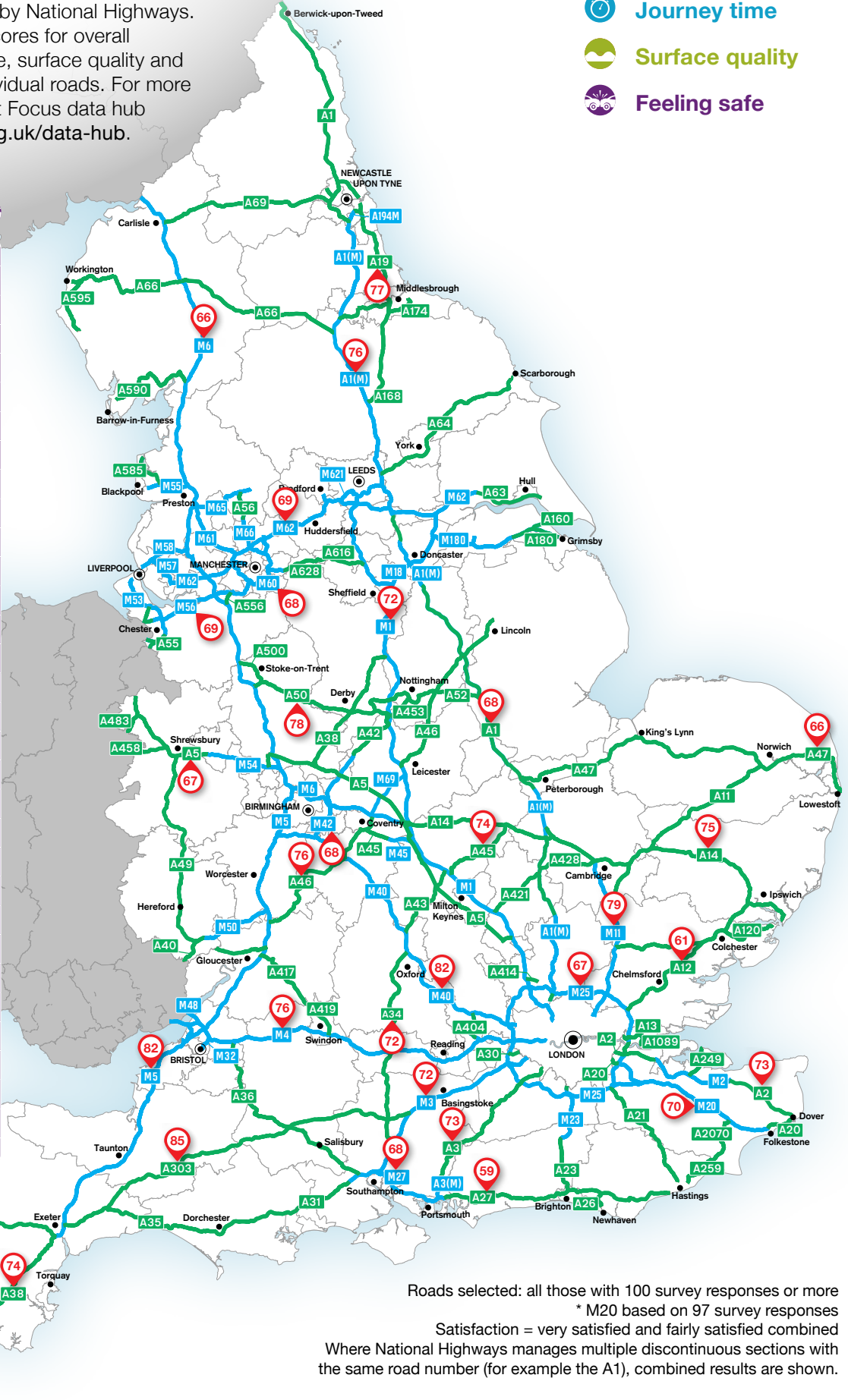
Strategic Roads User Survey 2022/23

- results for selected roads

The Strategic Roads User Survey measures satisfaction with journeys on the motorways and 'A' roads managed by National Highways. This map shows how scores for overall satisfaction, journey time, surface quality and feeling safe vary for individual roads. For more detail, visit the Transport Focus data hub www.transportfocus.org.uk/data-hub.

-  Overall
-  Journey time
-  Surface quality
-  Feeling safe

				
	%	%	%	%
A303	85	81	75	84
M5	82	84	78	86
M40	82	79	83	92
A30	79	76	81	91
M11	79	76	71	80
A50	78	71	62	79
A19	77	75	82	86
M4	76	74	84	80
A46	76	75	71	87
A1(M)	76	75	79	86
A14	75	76	69	86
A38	74	71	78	83
A45	74	70	67	83
A3	73	70	73	82
A2	73	72	63	79
M3	72	71	76	78
M1	72	67	82	79
A34	72	76	65	71
M20*	70	73	60	69
M62	69	64	77	79
M56	69	67	73	83
A1	68	65	71	82
M27	68	67	76	77
M60	68	65	77	78
M42	68	66	72	80
M25	67	65	65	77
A5	67	71	68	81
A47	66	64	61	82
M6	66	65	68	75
A12	61	65	44	81
A27	59	62	59	75



Roads selected: all those with 100 survey responses or more

* M20 based on 97 survey responses

Satisfaction = very satisfied and fairly satisfied combined
Where National Highways manages multiple discontinuous sections with the same road number (for example the A1), combined results are shown.

Facts about SRUS

- SRUS uses a 'push to web' method where households within a representative sample of the driving population in England are sent a letter inviting them to complete the survey, which they then do online.
- The survey asks about various aspects of journey experience.
- An interactive map is integrated into the questionnaire and 'understands' which part of a journey is on the strategic road network.
- Results are weighted to ensure they are representative of vehicle mileage across the strategic road network.
- This report contains data from April 2022 to March 2023 and is based on 9006 interviews.
- Transport Focus's delivery of SRUS since April 2021 has been supported by the research agency BMG Research.
- The factors influencing satisfaction are determined using a Gamma coefficient technique, a nonparametric bivariate test that quantifies the strength of relationship between the results for each individual SRUS question and overall satisfaction.

Contact Transport Focus

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Transport Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council