

New poll findings: Soaring petrol prices and cost-of-living crisis boost popularity of rail travel

August 4, 2022



British travellers are increasingly turning to the train this summer because petrol prices and concerns about climate change have become important factors in deciding their travel plans, according to a poll of over 1,000 people commissioned by Trainline.

Cost has become the number one worry for people when deciding how to travel, with 61% saying they were more concerned about cost now compared to last month. As a result, despite recent disruption, rail has been the fastest-growing mode of transport among those surveyed, with 31% saying they have been using the train more in the past month. Three-in-ten travellers said that rail being cheaper was a key reason for taking the train, making it one of the top three factors along with speed of journey (47%) and convenience (37%).

Meanwhile the main reason given for driving less was rising petrol prices, with 51% saying the cost of fuel was why they had left the car behind – hardly surprising when according to the RAC's Fuel Watch unleaded petrol prices have risen by over 25% so far this year alone. This is particularly true for older respondents,

with 57% of those aged 60 or above saying they had travelled less by road due to the increase in petrol prices.

And there are early signs that July's record-breaking heatwave has influenced public behaviour, with 36% of Brits now worrying more about the environmental sustainability of their journey. Most of these people (61%) specifically highlight July's extreme hot weather as the reason for their environmental concerns, which is a worry that spans the generations: even more people aged 60+ base their environmental concerns specifically on July's heatwave, than the typically environmentally-aware 18-29 generation (63% v 60% respectively).

As a result of these concerns, more people are now deciding their travel plans based on the environmental footprint of their journey (36%) than traditional transport bugbears like overcrowding or lateness (both 32%).

Mike Hyde, Chief Data Officer for Trainline, comments: "Soaring petrol prices are turning people away from their cars and towards trains, meaning more and more Brits are making the environmentally-friendly travel choice. At Trainline, we're focused on helping our customers during the cost of living crisis, by always finding them the cheapest available ticket for their journey."

Top features on the Trainline app to help encourage more people to travel by rail include:

- **SplitSave**, which finds clever combinations of tickets to save you money on most routes across the UK – it automatically 'splits' your trip into multiple legs, without any need for you to change trains or seats unnecessarily.
- **Digital Railcards**, which save a third off the price of travel on eligible journeys. There's nearly a digital Railcard for everyone – plus Trainline are currently offering 33% off the one-off cost of buying a railcard at www.thetrainline.com/trains/great-britain/railcards
- **Carbon calculator**, which calculates the carbon emissions for your trip so you can know how it compares to other, less-sustainable transport options.

Photo credit: Shutterstock