

Commuters' Transport Mode(s), Reasons and Preferences Differ by Home-to-Work Distance

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Background

- Wellington City has the highest proportion of people walking to work in New Zealand
- Distance is the strongest correlate of walking and cycling for transport
- However, home-to-work distance is often not considered when examining work travel patterns and preferences

Research objective

- To examine commuters' current transport to work modes, reasons and preferences by home-to-work distance in Wellington City

Survey methodology 2023

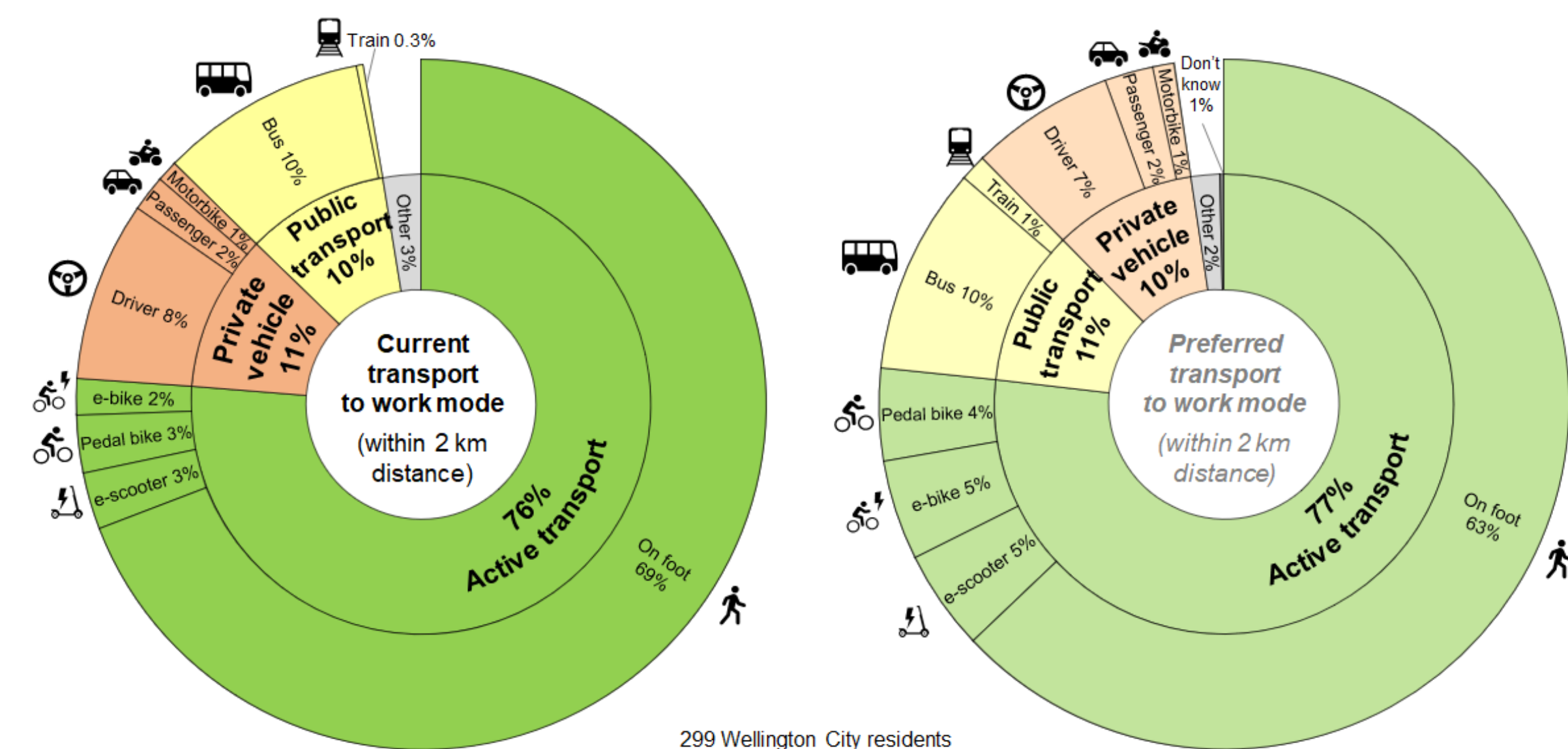
- Pōneke / Wellington Transport Survey (10-15 minute online survey)
- 1671 Wellington City residents who worked and travelled to work (age 18+ years; 60% female) completed the survey in 2023
- Respondents reported:
 - Current mode(s) of transport to work
 - Reasons for their current mode(s) of transport to work
 - Preferred mode(s) of transport to work
- Home-to-work distance was calculated based on the street centroid where respondents lived and worked
- Data analysis: Chi-square tests

Results

Current and preferred modes of transport

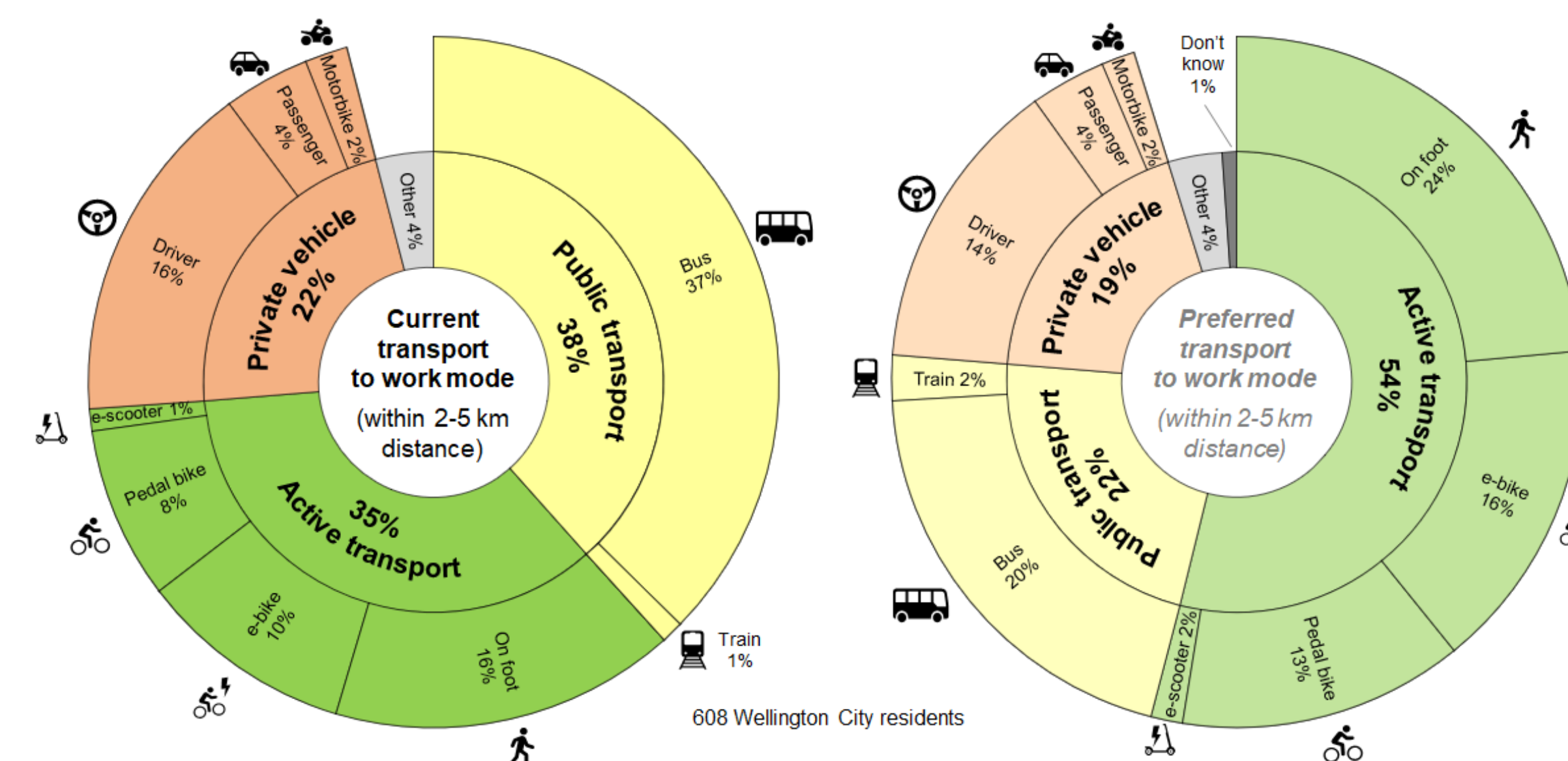
Up to 2 km (within walking distance)

Three-quarters of respondents used and preferred to travel to work by active transport



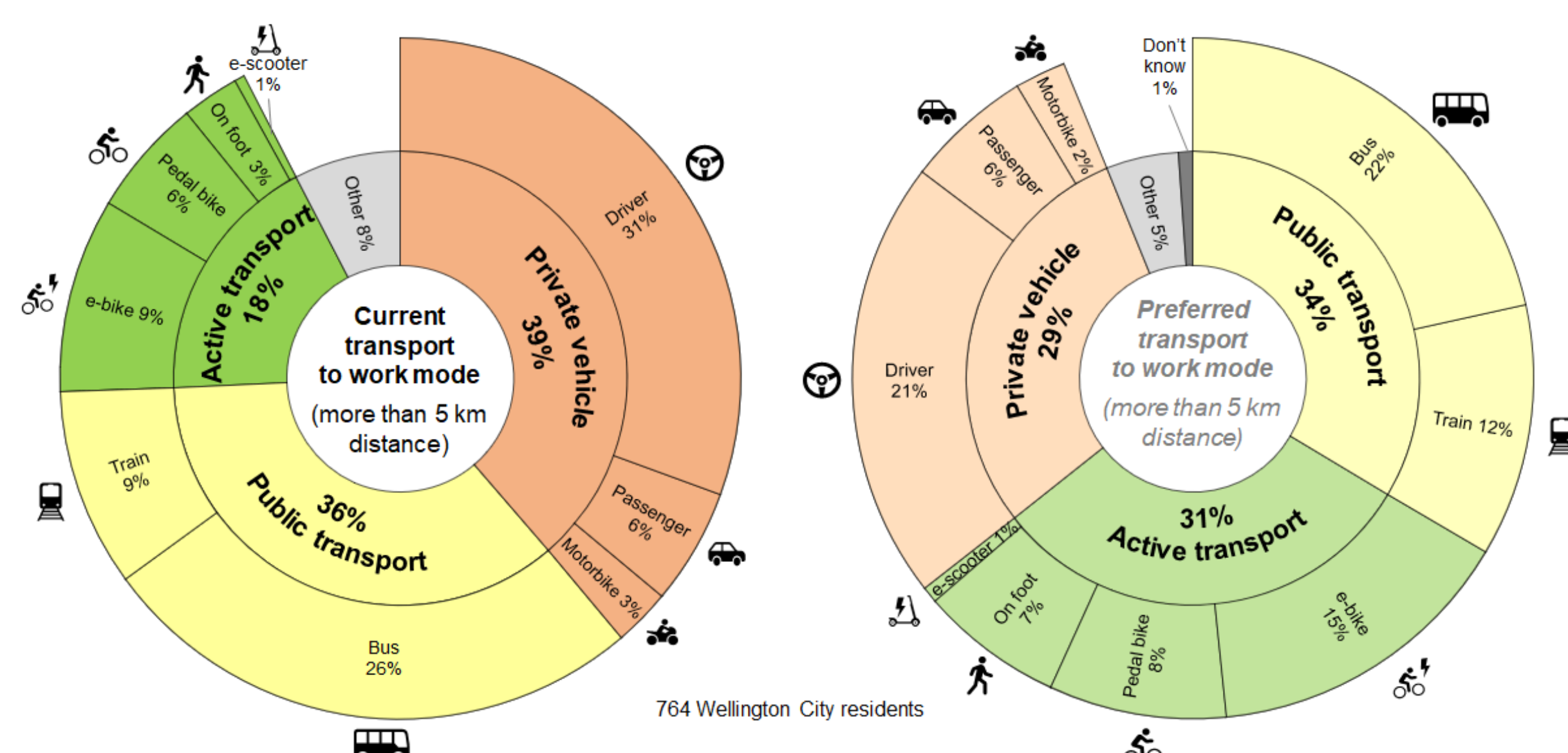
2 km to 5 km (within cycling distance)

One-third of respondents travelled to work by active transport whereas more than half preferred to use active transport modes



More than 5 km (beyond cycling distance)

One-fifth of respondents used and one-third preferred to use active transport modes

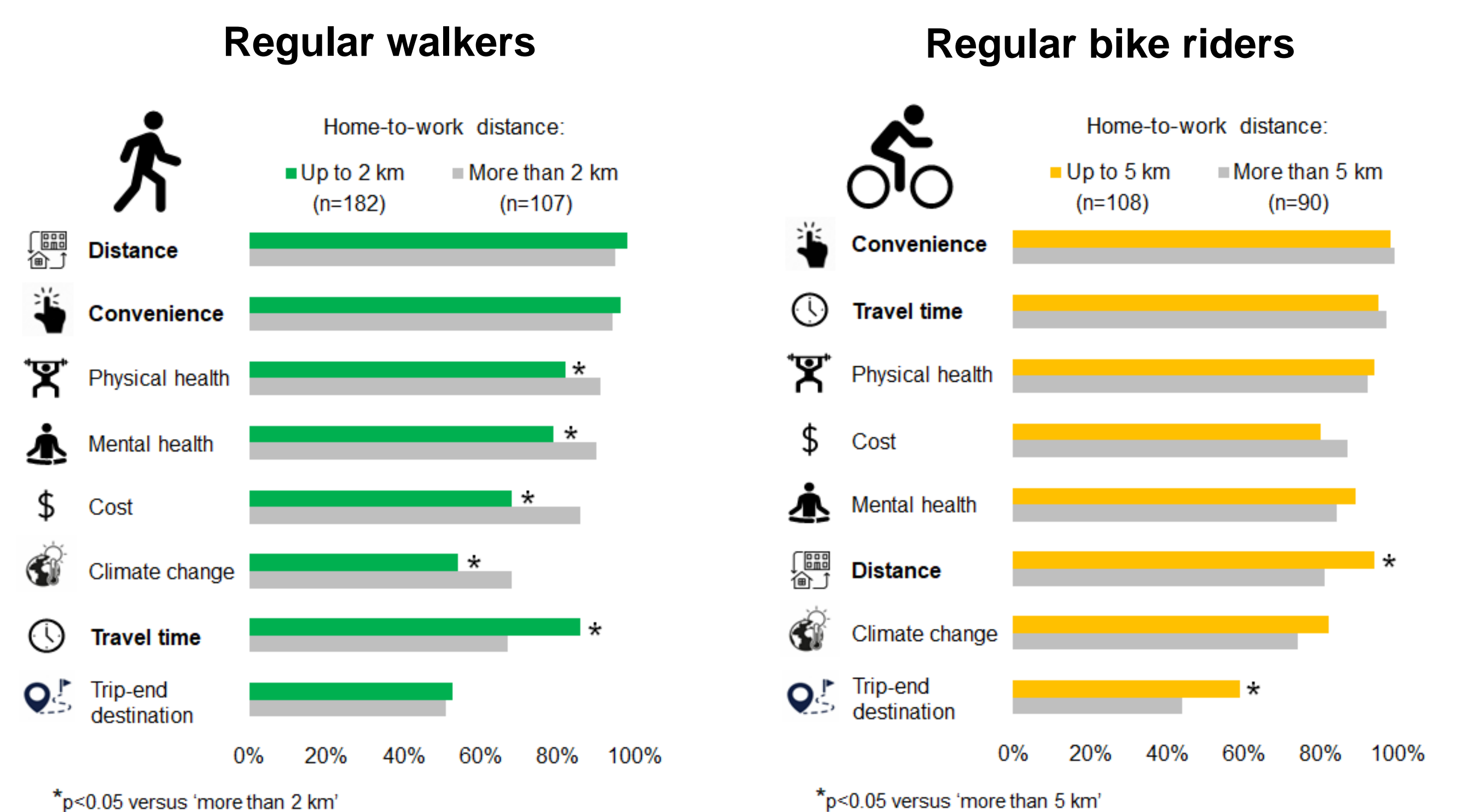


● Survey question for current mode(s) of transport to work: 'How do you usually travel from home to work?'
● Survey question for preferred mode(s) of transport to work: 'If you had a choice, how would you prefer travel from your current home to your current work?'

Reasons for current modes of transport to work

*Regular transport users refer to respondents who used a particular mode of transport to work on 3 or more days per week and reported using all other modes less frequently.

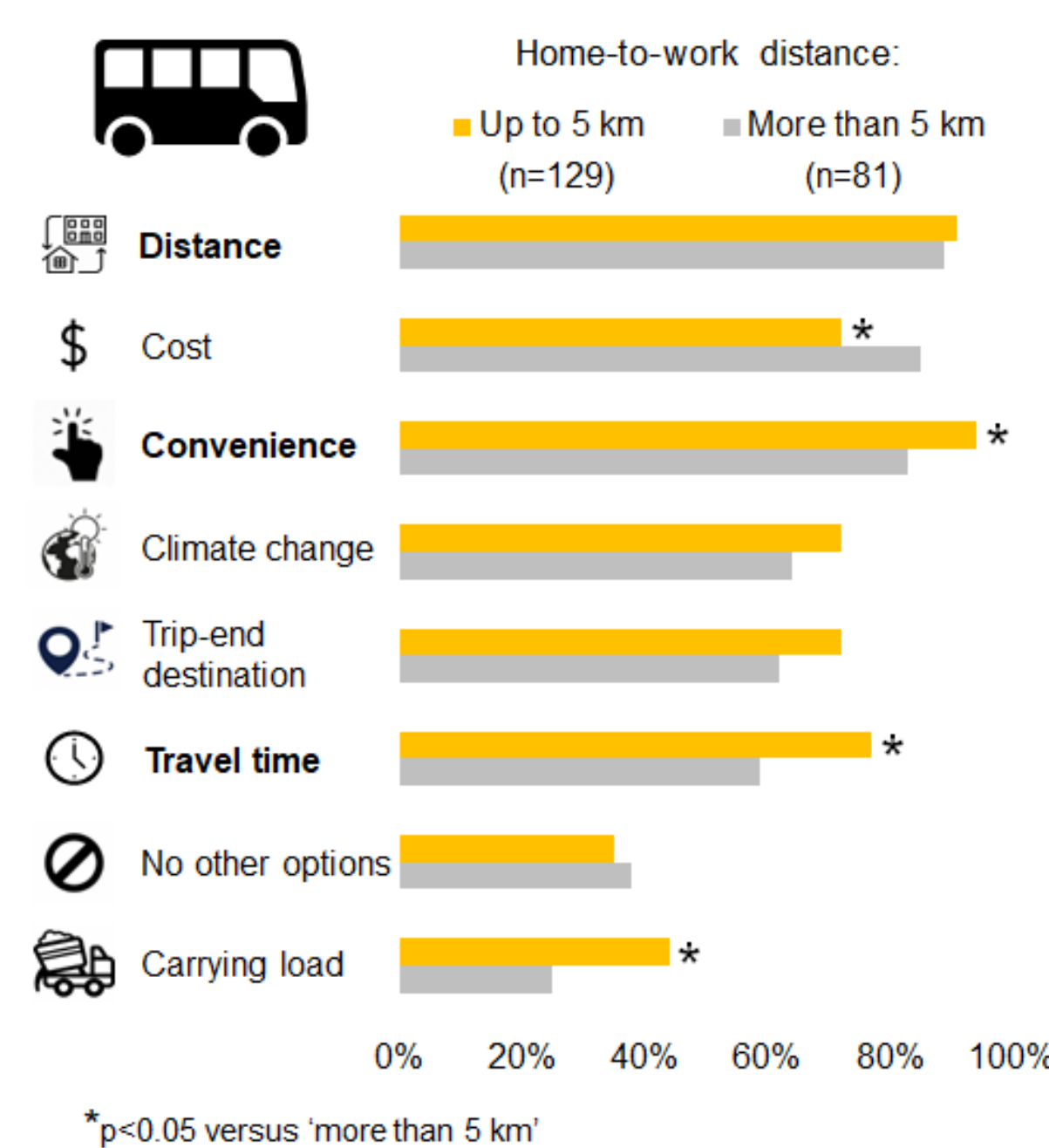
Convenience, distance and travel time were among the most frequently reported reasons by different transport user groups, irrespective of home-to-work distance



• **Physical and mental health** were commonly reported reasons by people who regularly walked or rode a bike to work

• **Cost and climate change** concerns were frequently reported reasons by regular walkers, bike riders and public transport users

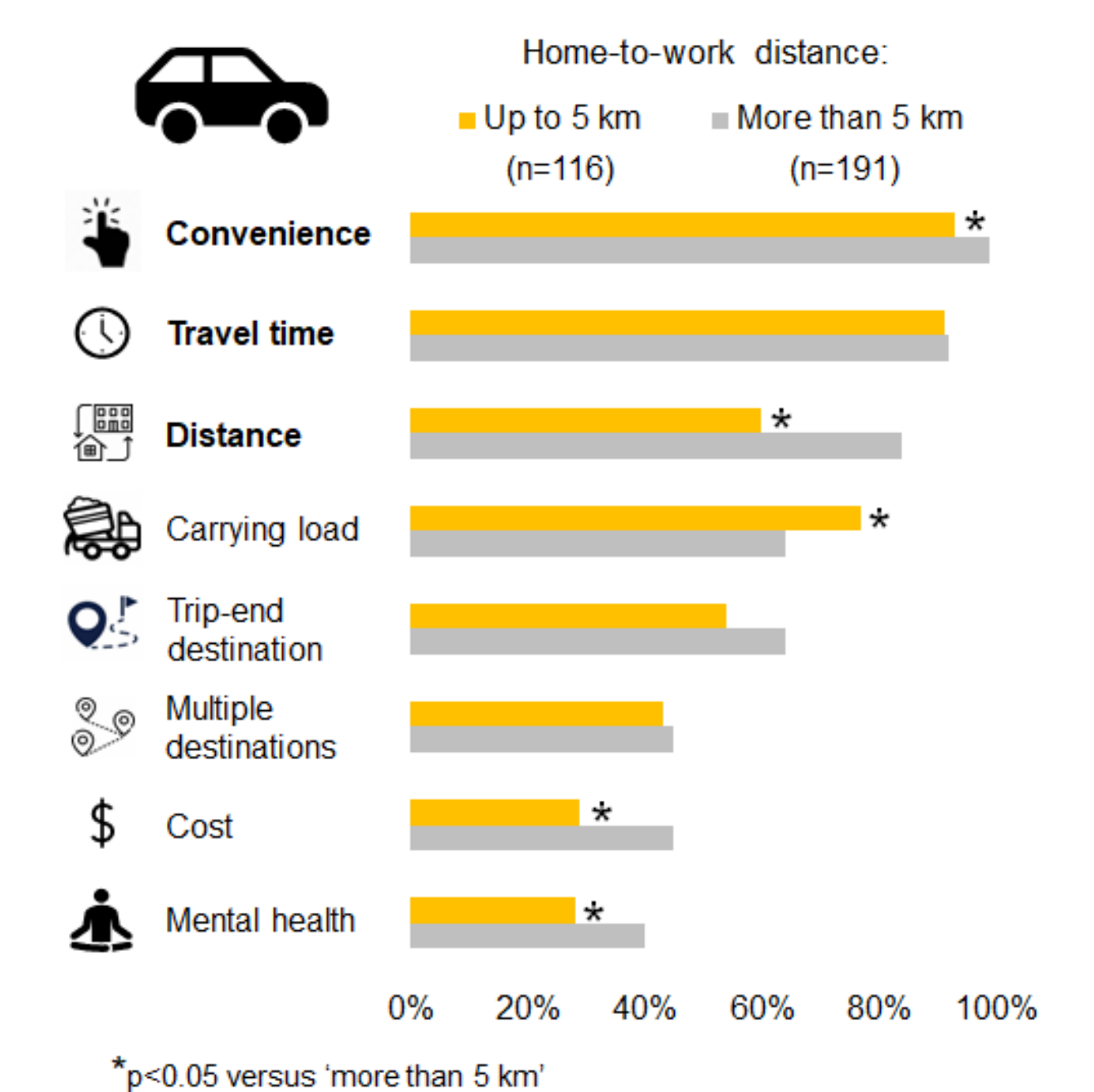
Regular public transport users



• **Carrying load** was reported as a reason by two-thirds of regular private vehicle users and nearly half of regular public transport users

• **Trip chaining** was reported as a reason by approximately half of regular private vehicle users

Regular private vehicle users



Conclusions

- Analysis and reporting of commuters' travel to work patterns, reasons for mode choice, and preferences should consider travel to work distance and views of different transport user groups
- Understanding context-specific enablers and barriers to walking and cycling for transport is essential for supporting mode shift and achieving health and environmental benefits

Acknowledgements

- This research was conducted by the Wellington City Council City Insights Team. Data collection was completed in collaboration with the Wellington City Council Research and Evaluation Team
- The survey methodology has been approved by Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee (April 2023; Reference AREC23_03)