

Why do people travel the way they do? 2020

Read the whole study [here](#).

Campaigns to promote active mobility

The [LIFE CARE4CLIMATE](#) project aims to encourage Slovenians to walk or cycle more often for their daily journeys.

[Research](#) shows that most of our daily journeys to school or work or to run errands are still made by car, even for distances of up to five kilometres that could be walked or cycled. Almost a fifth of people use a car even for journeys of up to one kilometre. The use of private cars accounts for a large share of greenhouse gas emissions from transport, and these emissions are still rising. If more people walked or cycled instead of driving for short daily journeys, this would have a significant impact both on reducing emissions and on their health and sustainable development.

That is why at the Institute for Spatial Policies (IPoP), we are developing campaigns to promote active mobility. Active mobility, which includes walking, cycling, skateboarding and scootering, is the ideal solution for covering distances of up to five kilometres. To design activities in a meaningful way, we wanted to know why people develop certain travel habits. **Why do they drive to work or school when they could easily walk or cycle the distance in a very short period of time? And under what conditions are they willing to change their habits?**

Car travel is the easiest and most comfortable

A survey of travel habits shows that respondents think very practically rather than ideologically when choosing how to travel. Most people do not choose to use a car, also for short distances, because they feel that a car reflects their lifestyle or is a symbol of their status. However, 56.1% of those who most often use a car for everyday journeys say they do so because they enjoy driving.

The highest proportion of respondents who use their car for their daily journeys use it when the weather is bad (90.5%) or because it is the fastest mode of transport (90.1%), while a large proportion use it because they consider it the easiest (81.9%) and the most comfortable (80.6%) way to travel. Alternatively, they choose to use their car when they have luggage (87.3%) or because they have other errands to run (83%). Most find the distance too long to walk or cycle (83.6%) or find walking or cycling too time-consuming (74.7%).

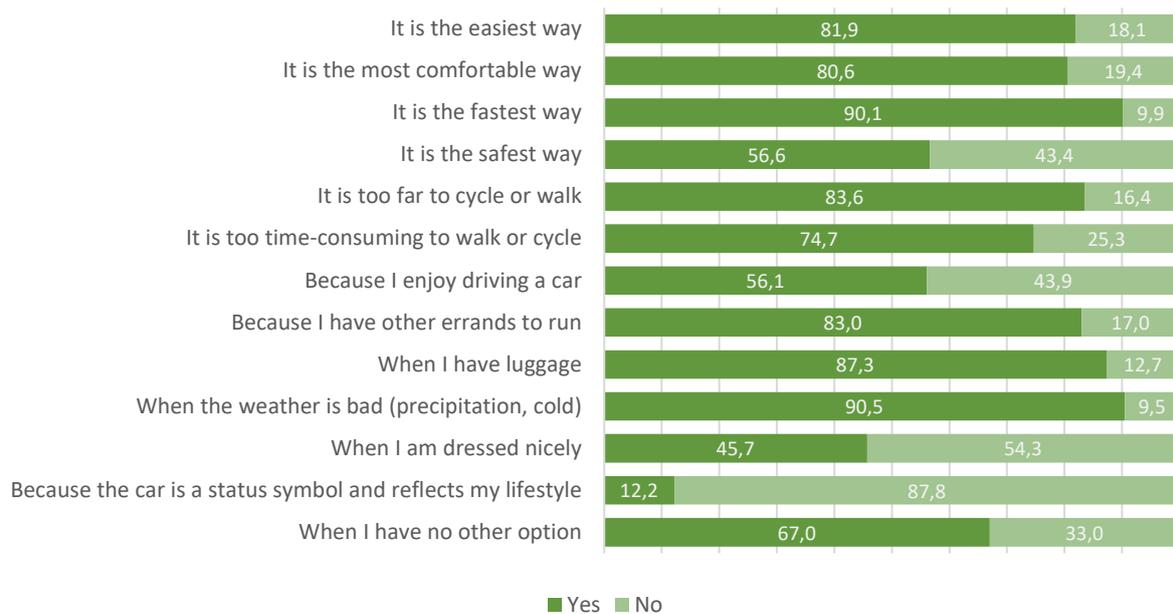


Figure 1: Reasons why respondents most often use a private car for everyday transport (n = 1680).

Unsuitable conditions for walking and cycling

We also looked at why they do not use any of the active modes of transport. Some of the most common reasons cited by respondents as barriers to walking were the lack of adequate infrastructure or cycle lanes (31.1%), dangerous traffic situations (25.2%), multiple commitments (23.5%) and unpredictable weather conditions (20.2%).

Almost a third of respondents answered that they do not choose other modes because they have a car (30.6%), which confirms the role of the car as the primary mode of transport. This is a population group that owns a car and makes practically all journeys by car without even considering other options.

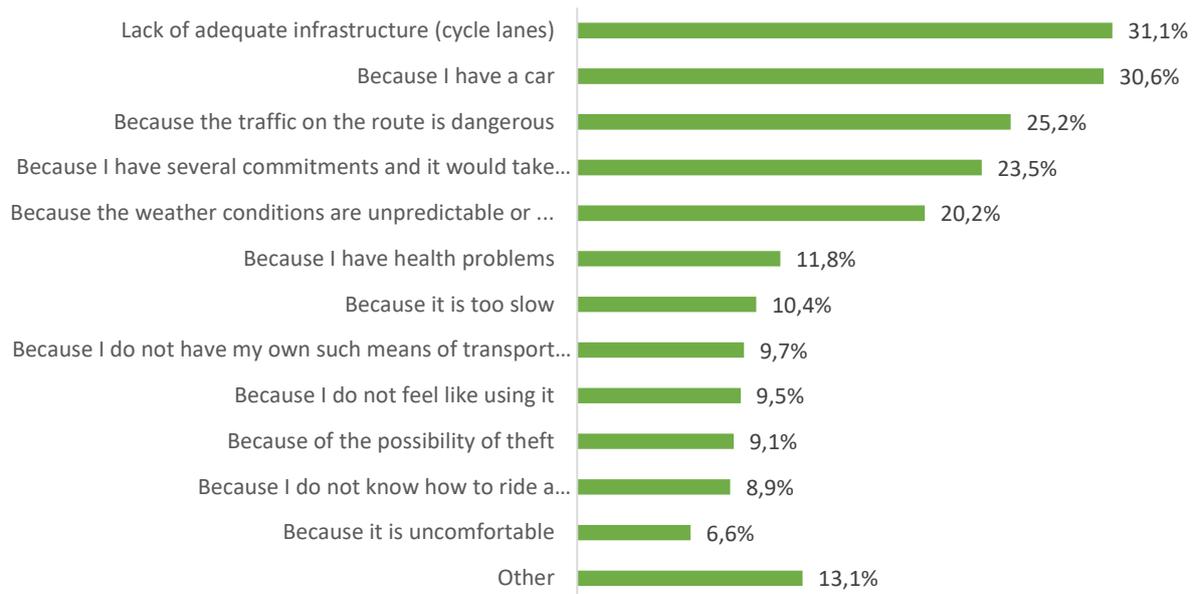


Figure 2: Reasons why respondents do not use active modes of transport more often (n = 1526).

Rain is the most disruptive

As weather is a common reason why people choose to travel by car rather than use any of the active modes, the survey also looked at what kind of weather is the most disruptive to travel.

Precipitation is the most important factor influencing the decision on how to travel. As many as 72.7% of respondents answered that precipitation has a strong or very strong influence on their deciding not to choose active mobility options. Low temperatures have a strong or very strong influence on this decision for 53% of respondents, while high temperatures have a strong or very strong influence for 19.2% of respondents.

People are not yet well aware of the significant urban warming resulting from global warming and do not consider it to be as disruptive to travel as rain.

Better infrastructure is needed to get more people to use a bicycle for everyday transport

The survey also looked at the conditions under which respondents would be willing to switch from driving to walking, cycling or using other similar modes of transport.

A total of 52.1% of respondents would be willing to switch from their car to a bicycle or other similar means of transport if the infrastructure was better (cycle lanes), 52% would be willing to do so if cycle links were safer, and 45.6% would be if they had the option of safely storing their bicycle or other similar means of transport at their destination.

Incentives from the government and employers, additional facilities at the destination (changing rooms and showers at work), and more affordable prices for bicycles and similar means of transport have slightly less potential to make change happen. A good third of respondents would be willing to swap their car for a bicycle if this had a proven beneficial effect on their health. Of all the answers offered, financial sanctions, i.e. making driving a car more expensive, for example through taxation or more expensive parking, have the least potential to make change happen.

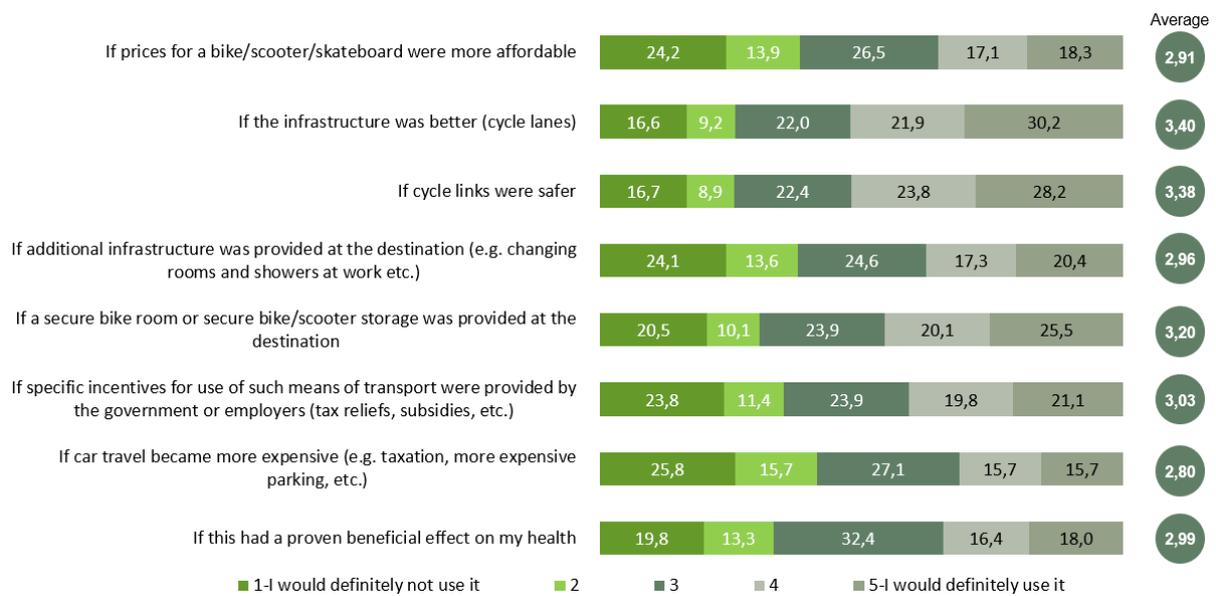


Figure 3: Willingness, in principle, to replace the car with an active means of transport for everyday journeys (n = 2.859).

Walking would be an option in the event of heavy traffic

The strongest motivating factor for people to switch from driving to walking is heavy traffic, in which case 58.1% of respondents would choose walking. This confirms our previous assumptions that travelling by car is still sufficiently convenient and that the traffic is not so heavy as to discourage people from using the car.

Health is also a strong motivating factor, as 57.3% of respondents would choose walking if they had health problems or needed to be more physically active. And 46.7% of respondents would do so if this had a proven beneficial effect on their health.

More than half (50.3%) of respondents would rather walk than drive if safe and comfortable conditions for walking were provided, such as wide pavements, raised crossings and trees.

As in the case of switching from driving to cycling, the least motivating factor for people to switch from driving to walking is an increase in the cost of driving a car, because of which only 37.6% of respondents would choose to walk.

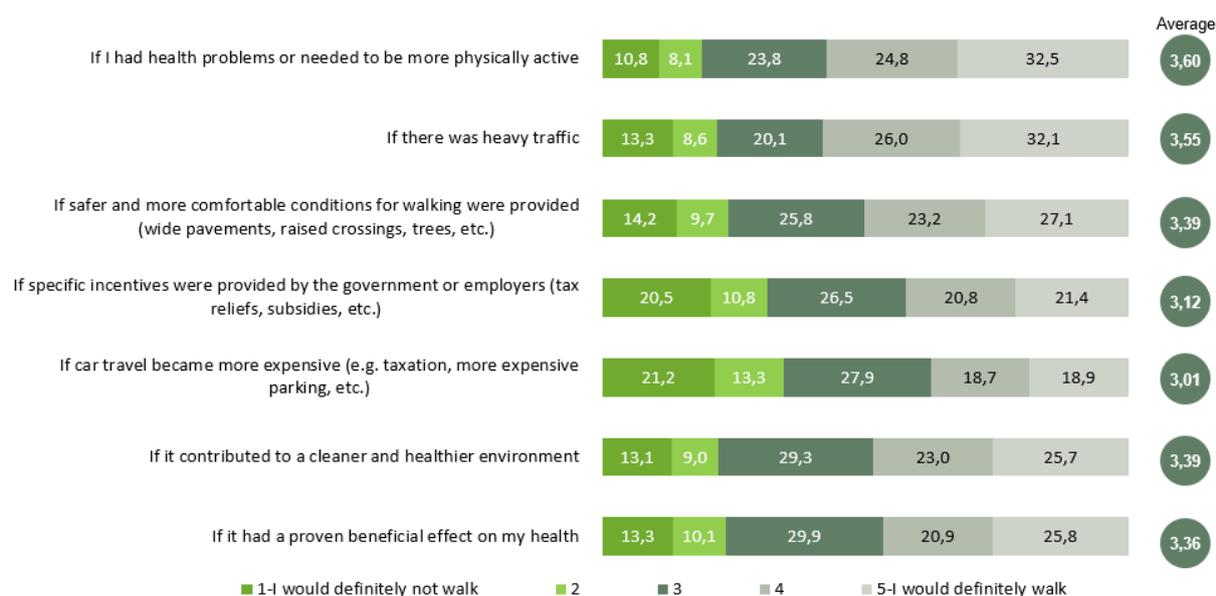


Figure 4: Willingness, in principle, to switch from driving to walking for daily journeys (n = 2.859).

Findings

The results of the survey show that **car use is still attractive enough for most daily journeys**, as respondents consider it an easier, more comfortable and faster way of travel compared to active modes of transport.

Respondents say that **infrastructure conditions for walking, cycling or using other active modes of transport are not adequate or at least are not attractive enough**. This is somewhat surprising given the investment in cycling infrastructure in most Slovenian municipalities in recent years. Hundreds of kilometres of new cycling and walking links are also planned for the future. The impact of these investments on travel habits can probably be expected in the coming years, without neglecting the impact of soft measures. Respondents may need to be better informed about improved cycling opportunities, as they may not even be aware of them.

Respondents also see the equipment of their daily destinations as a barrier to active mobility.

Workplaces and educational institutions should be better equipped with both changing rooms and adequate storage facilities for bicycles and similar means of transport. Active mobility needs should therefore be taken into account in spatial planning and building interventions, and travel by bicycle and on foot should be normalised.

Financial measures, both incentives and sanctions, **could also to a certain extent contribute to changing travel habits**, as around a third of respondents confirmed that they have the potential to make change happen, this applying to both walking and cycling.

Taking into account the conditions cited by respondents for changing travel habits, we will need to **pay considerable attention to the practical aspects when designing campaigns**. These include how to organise everyday journeys so that most of them can be made on foot or by bicycle, how to equip oneself for different weather conditions, and how to organise luggage transfer or transport.

Health is also a strong motivating factor, and there is probably still some work to be done to raise awareness of the benefits of daily exercise, which in most people is easiest to accomplish if they change their travel habits.

In developing our future activities, we will therefore focus on:

- raising awareness of changing infrastructure,
- linking active mobility and health,
- raising awareness of active travel to work and school as a normal form of travel,
- normalising active travel,
- raising awareness of practical solutions to make active mobility more comfortable.

The survey "Why do people travel the way they do" was carried out under the LIFE IP CARE4CLIMATE (LIFE17 IPC/SI/000007) project, an integrated project co-funded by the European LIFE Programme, the Climate Change Fund and the project partners.

Why do people travel the way they do? 2022

What does the second survey carried out in 2022 tell us about the baseline survey carried out in 2020?

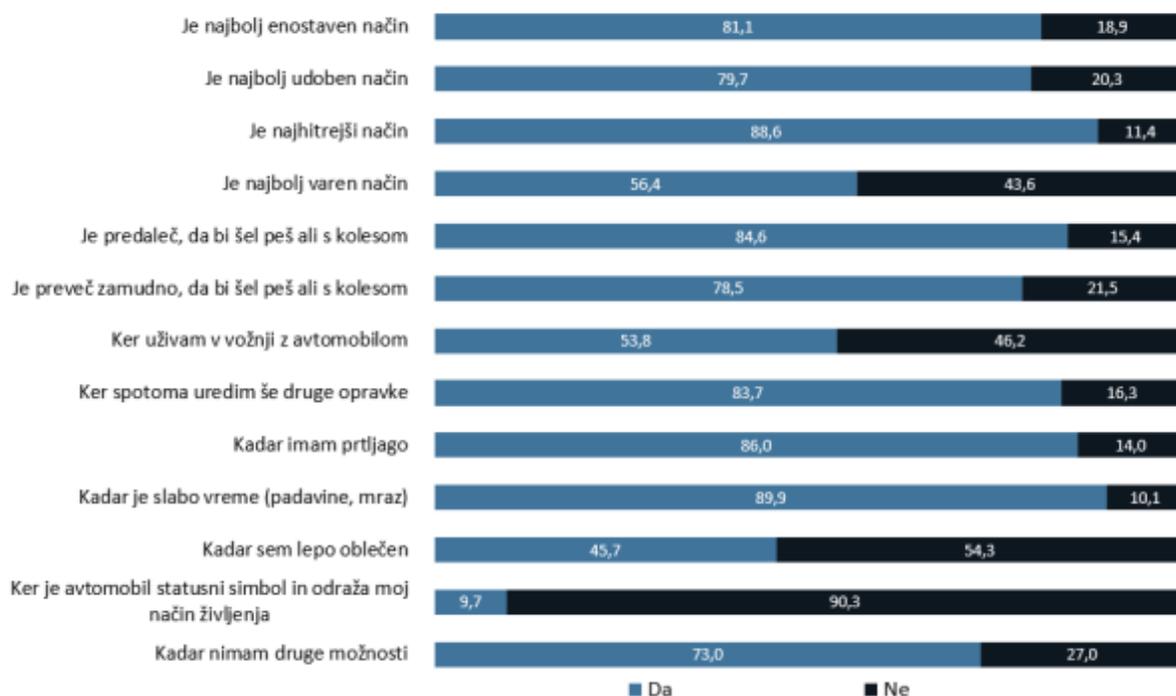
The comparison of the 2022 data with the 2020 data shows that **the travel habits of people in Slovenia have not changed significantly**. There are, however, some differences compared to previous years which indicate changes in the travel habits of Slovenian men and women.

Compared to the 2020 survey, there has been something of a "radicalisation" of the target population groups: those who lead a healthy lifestyle and those who are environmentally conscious have become slightly more aware of both climate change and the impact of mobility habits on human health, while motorists still prefer driving by car, although they seem to be relaxing their views on some issues. The epidemiological measures in 2022, however, had the greatest impact on changing the travel habits of families.

The COVID-19 epidemic had a direct impact on changing the travel habits of primary school children and kindergarten children, as car use to get to and from school has noticeably increased. Although some measures to curb the epidemic were still being implemented at the time of the 2022 survey, it remains an open question whether this is a temporary travel trend or whether these are already new travel habits.

A third of respondents believe that they changed their travel habits during the epidemic. As the key reasons for the change, they cite health, as it is healthier to walk and cycle, and the suspension or restriction of public transport services during the epidemic.

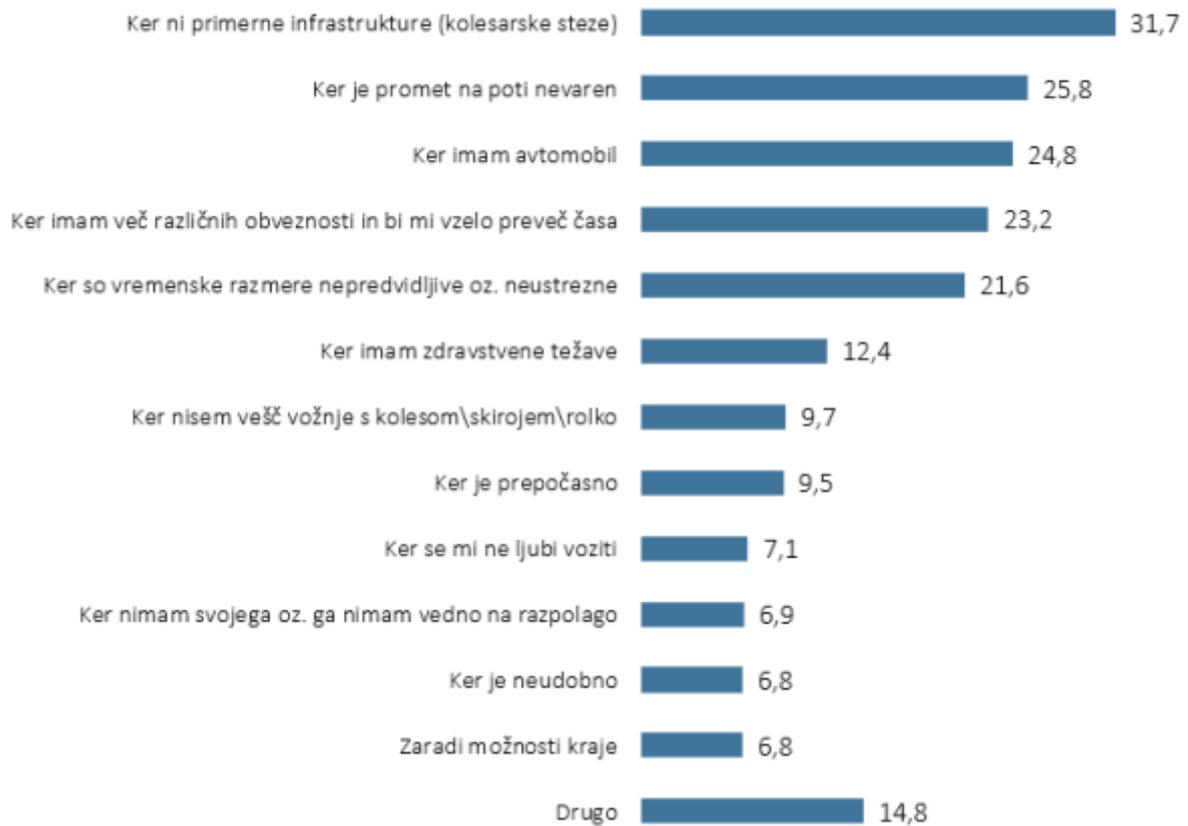
Slika 16: Razlogi, da anketiranci za vsakdanje prevoze najpogosteje uporabljajo osebni avtomobil (n = 1.118).



The highest proportions of respondents who use a car use it when the weather is bad (89.9%) or because it is the fastest mode of transport (88.6%). The smallest proportions of respondents use a car because it is a status symbol and reflects their lifestyle (9.7%); **this proportion has decreased**

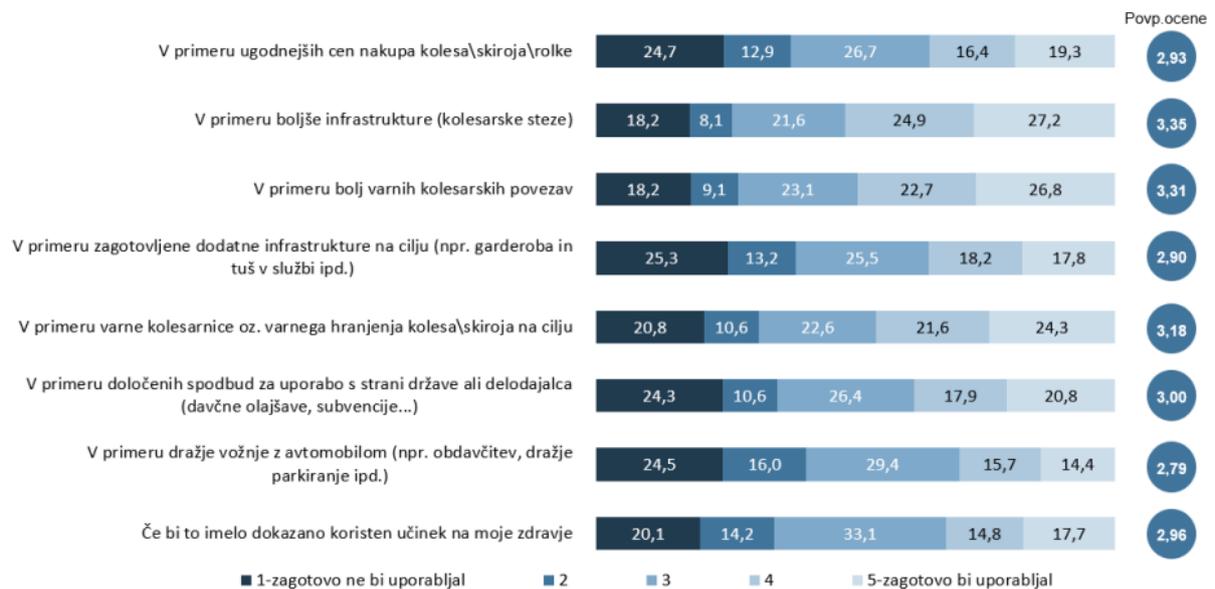
from 2020 (12.2%), which is encouraging. Just under half of respondents choose to travel by car when they are dressed nicely (45.7%).

Slika 11: Razlogi, da anketiranci ne uporabljajo pogosteje aktivnih načinov prevoza (n = 1.064).



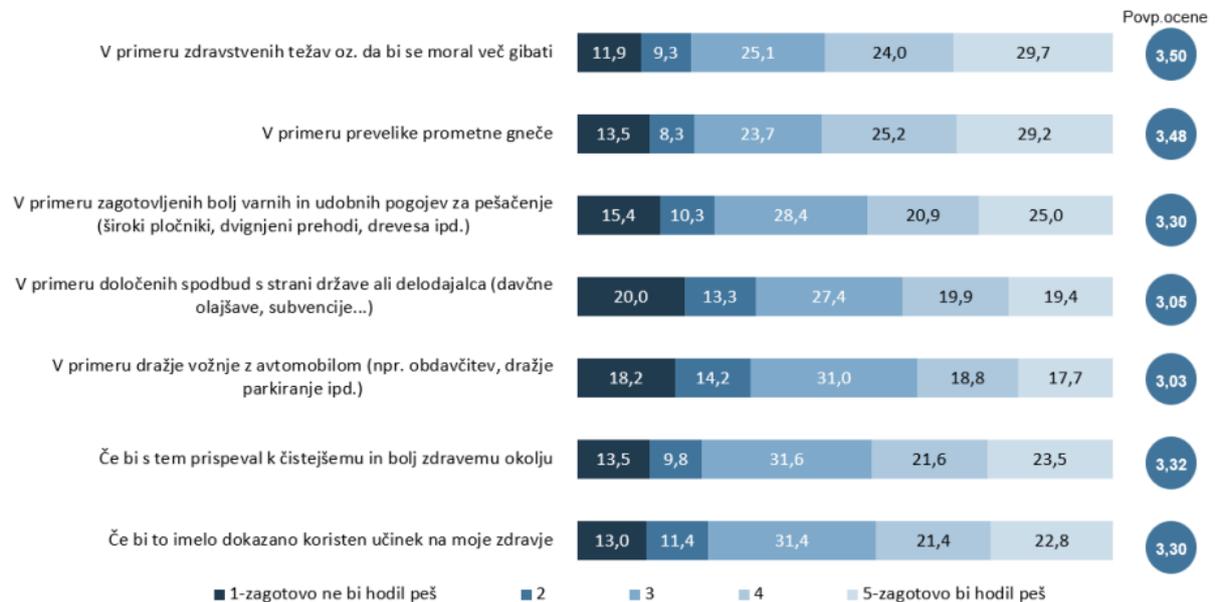
A third of those who never or rarely use one of the active modes of transport (bicycle, scooter, skateboard) do not use it due to the lack of adequate transport infrastructure (31.7%). A quarter of those who do not use these modes of transport do not use them because they consider them unsafe (25.8%), while a similar proportion of respondents prefer to use a car instead (24.8%).

Slika 18: Načelna pripravljenost za zamenjavo avtomobila z aktivnimi prevoznimi sredstvi za vsakdanje poti (n = 2.077)



Respondents were asked under which circumstances they would swap their car for an active mode of transport for their daily journeys. They would be most willing to use a bicycle/scooter/skateboard if there were better infrastructure (mean score 3.35) and safer cycling links (3.31) and least willing to do so if car travel became more expensive (2.79).

Slika 20: Načelna pripravljenost zamenjave uporabe avtomobila za vsakdanje poti s hojo (n = 2.077)



Respondents would be most willing to travel on foot if they had health problems (mean score 3.50) or if there was heavy traffic (3.48) and least willing to travel on foot if car travel became more expensive (3.03).

The highest proportion of respondents engage in walking as part of their sporting (49.7%) and leisure (46.4%) activities. They mainly use their bicycle for leisure (17.5%) and sporting activities (17.7%) and use public transport to get to school or college (14.2%). **Compared to the 2020 data, this proportion has fallen by 10%.** People most often use their car for business errands (71.8%) and for large purchases (71.1%).

Reasons for (not) using different means of transport

A good third of respondents who never or rarely use a private car do not use it more often because they prefer to cycle or walk. A similar proportion of respondents do not use a car often because they do not always have one available, while a third of respondents prefer to use public transport.

A third of those who never or rarely use an active mode of transport (cycling, scootering, skateboarding) do not use it more often because they consider that there is no adequate transport infrastructure for that purpose. A quarter of them do not use it because they have a car for this purpose, and a similar proportion consider such modes of transport unsafe.

The reasons why respondents use or do not use a particular mode of transport identified in the 2022 survey do not differ from those identified in the 2020 survey.