

Fewer Kiwis drive daily than one year ago – AA Insurance

55 per cent drive every day, down from 75 per cent in 2016

Auckland –25 November 2020 - If you're male, aged 60+ or live in Wellington then you're significantly more likely to be driving less than a year ago, according to the latest AA Insurance Lifestyle and Driving Survey+.

"In fact, the survey undertaken in June and July after the nationwide lockdown, showed Kiwis across the board continue to drive less frequently than they did in 2016, despite a small increase in 2018," says Amelia Macandrew, Customer Relations Manager for AA Insurance. "And it's a trend that looks set to continue."

Interestingly, the decline in driving everyday appears to be mainly 'driven' by those over 30, with only a third of those over 60 now driving daily.

In 2016, 75% of those surveyed drove every day, last year it was 64% and, perhaps unsurprisingly, this year it dropped further to 55%. Similarly, the percentage of those driving only a few times a week is increasing, from 19% in 2016 to 34% in 2020. The groups who are driving less are 45% of those aged 60+ (up from 29% in 2019), 40% of Wellingtonians (24% in 2019), and 36% of men (20% in 2019).

"Although the lockdowns have influenced this year's results, they were only temporary," says Amelia, "and as NZTA statistics show*, traffic for work journeys had largely returned to normal after the first lockdown, with Auckland moving towards a recovery after the second lockdown to match the steady national recovery. Our data showed a similar picture, with claim numbers back on track by July, and our repairers outside Auckland remaining busy throughout."

According to AA's survey, 45% of Kiwis say that the main use of their car is for travel to work. This year, a significantly higher proportion of Aucklanders are using their car mainly for travel to work – up from 41% in 2019 to 50% this year.

Of particular interest is the way drivers are thinking about their future on-road habits, says Amelia.

“While 79% believe they’ll be driving the same amount over the next 12 months, 13% say they’ll be driving less, with Wellingtonians (22%) the most likely of all regions. Reasons behind this decision include changes in working needs (particularly working from home), increased use of public transport, location changes and looking after the environment.”

The long-term picture over the next three to five years looks similar, with Kiwis significantly more likely to say that they’ll actively use their car less in the future (31%) than in 2019.

Once again, Wellingtonians (40%), men (34%) and those aged 60+ (39%) are more likely to agree they’ll actively be using their car less, while Wellingtonians are significantly more likely than the general population to say that they will be using public transport more (44% vs 20%).

The flip side to this decrease in car use is the growth in alternative modes of transport. Despite the current 2% ownership of both electric bikes and scooters, there remains the intention (15%) by Kiwis to move towards these modes of transport over the next three to five years, and particularly by those 39 years and under (20%).

“Over the next five years, almost three quarters (72%) of Kiwis say they’ll consider buying a hybrid vehicle, and 69% an electric one,” continues Amelia. “For almost half of respondents, the current main obstacle is cost, but it’s interesting to see these alternatives squarely on people’s radar.”

+During June and July 2020, which was after the national lockdown, AAI surveyed 1,100 regular Kiwis aged 18 years or over about their driving. The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=1,100 is plus or minus 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

*www.nzta.govt.nz

2020 Kiwi Lifestyle & Driver Survey statistics from AAI:

- 55% of Kiwis drive every day, 64% in 2019, 71% in 2018, 68% in 2017, 75% in 2016
- 34% of Kiwis drive a few times a week, 28% in 2019, 21% in 2018, 24% in 2017, 19% in 2016
- Of those who drive daily, the percentage is higher among males (59% drive every day), 18-29 year olds (67%), 40-49 year olds (65%) and those in Canterbury (64%). 34% of people drive a few times a week – this is significantly higher among 60+ year olds, with 57% saying they only drive a few times a week
- 34% agree that they drive less now than they did a year ago. Increasing agreement with driving less is driven by those aged 60+ (29% in 2019, 45% in 2020), those in Wellington (24% in 2019, 40% in 2020), and men (20% in 2019, 36% in 2020).
- 39% disagree that they drive less than they did a year ago and are more likely to be 50-59 years (48%) and from Canterbury (47%)
- The majority (79%) of respondents plan to drive the same amount over the next 12 months, 7% more frequently, and 13% less frequently. The plan to drive less frequently has increased among those in the North Island (10% in 2019, 16% in 2020). Those in Wellington (22%) are significantly more likely than the general population (22% vs 13%) to say they'll drive less frequently over the next 12 months, which was generally attributed to:
 - Changes in work needs, particularly working from home
 - Using public transport more
 - Location changes
 - Environmental reasons
- Those intending to drive more over the next 12 months will generally do so because of:
 - Less working from home, due to lockdown being over
 - Other changes in work needs
 - Travelling around the country more, doing more activities
 - Location changes
- 69% are likely to consider purchasing an electric vehicle, but for 48% this would only be considered if they could afford it
 - *“Electric is better low maintenance option”*
 - *“The cleaner the energy, the better”*
 - *“If I am going to go electric, I would go the whole hog rather than “halfway” which still would need petrol on long trips”*
- 72% are likely to consider purchasing a hybrid vehicle, but for 47% this would only be considered if they could afford it



- *“So, we can travel long distances with peace of mind.”*
- *“I don't think there is an adequate network of charging stations/vehicle range currently to make an electric vehicle feasible to me”*
- *“More dependable and less expensive”*

ENDS

About AA Insurance

AA Insurance is an independently operated, New Zealand-based joint venture between the New Zealand Automobile Association (NZAA) and Vero Insurance New Zealand Limited (VINZL). Since 1994 we have demonstrated trusted expertise in home, contents and car insurance in New Zealand, and in 2018 introduced commercial small business insurance. We underwrite our own policies and sell direct to New Zealanders. Our nearly 800 staff look after over 440,000 customers with more than 880,000 policies.

We proudly partner with Eden Park, support youth charity Blue Light, and have been consistently recognised by: Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands (10 consecutive years since 2011) and Quality Service Award for Car Insurance (since 2015), Canstar Blue Most Satisfied Customers (2013-2018), and the Colmar Brunton Corporate Reputation Index (since 2015) that recognises New Zealand's most successful companies. Last year, AA Insurance was also named Consumer's 2019 People's Choice award winner for car, home and contents.

AA Insurance has an A+ (Strong) Insurer Financial Strength Rating given by Standard and Poor's (Australia) Pty Ltd. For further information visit aainsurance.co.nz.

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