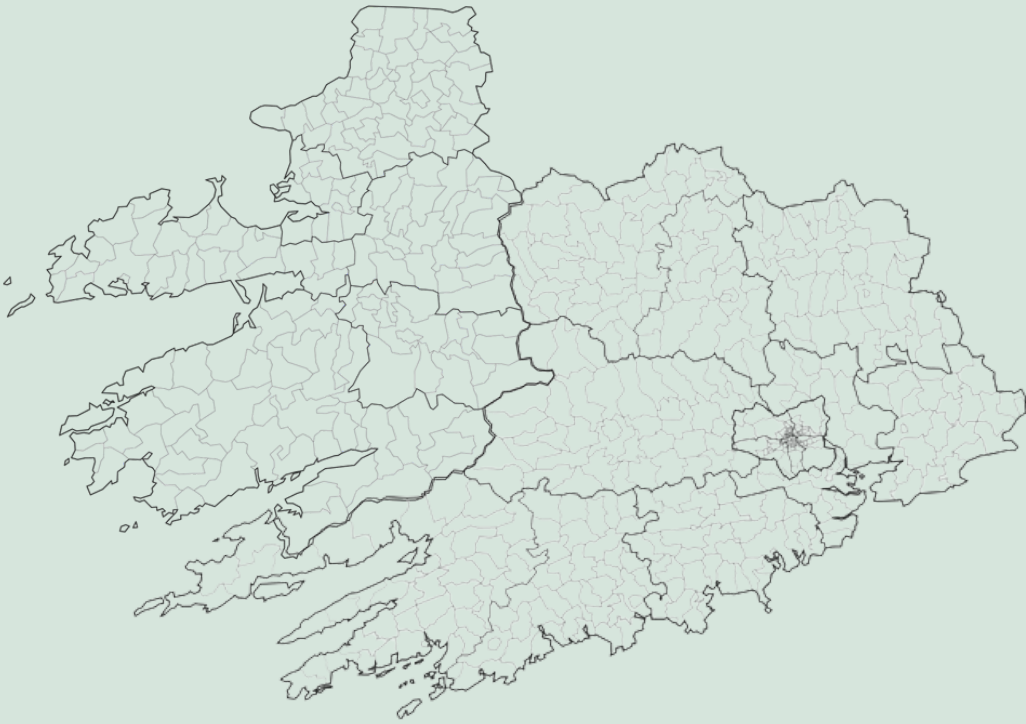


MTU Students' Union

COMMUTER SURVEY REPORT

Published 2026

Aontas na Mac Léinn Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University Students' Union

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Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the teams behind the UL Student Life 'Commuter Survey Report' (2026) and the TUSSU 'The Cost of Getting There: Transport and Travel' (2025) report, both of which served as inspirations behind the MTU Students' Union Commuter Survey report.

We would like to thank everyone who helped with the creation of this report and with the rollout of the survey. Special thanks to Kasia Lange, Martina Culloty, Laura Woods, Jennifer Healy, Mike Quirke, Des Foy, Damien Locke, Louise Byrne, Keith Brown, MTU Cork and MTU Kerry Admissions Offices, and to each and every student who shared their experiences with us.

About

Munster Technological University Students' Union (MTUSU) represents students across the six campuses of Munster Technological University (MTU) and continuously works to improve and enhance the student experience on and off-campus. In addition to organising student entertainment and events, MTUSU also promote welfare and education through campaigns and student advice. The MTUSU officers are elected by students, for students and make sure that the student voice is heard throughout MTU. MTUSU are also a member organisation of Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éireann (AMLÉ), Ireland's national student union.

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PREFACE

When I ran for the position of Vice President for Welfare & Equality, I wanted to put an emphasis on our commuter students and to allow their voices and opinions to be heard. I am extremely thankful for the support and participation that this survey has allowed, but I am equally dismayed that it has come to this point.

When did we allow students to be priced out of accommodation, priced out of fuel, priced out of food, priced out of public transport and ultimately, priced out of a chance to get the 'university experience'?

As a student of MTU Kerry, it was clear to me over my three years that there was a problem in regard to student retention, student participation and student morale as a result of commuting. This was very clear when I was the MTU Kerry Students' Union Societies Officer in 2025/2026 and it is even more evident now.

Commuting puts a huge strain on students, from taking up hours of their time each day, taking away opportunities to take part in campus life, to affecting them mentally and impacting their academic performance. The MTUSU Commuter Survey illustrates this from students' own lived experiences and testimonials.



I would like to thank each and every MTU student who took the time to take part in this survey. This report highlights the struggles that our students face everyday. Many of our students are being punished for climbing the rungs of a broken ladder.

We need to see more from our government, our transport providers and MTU when it comes to actively supporting students including the building of MTU-wide student accommodation, reliable and affordable public transport and better supports for commuter students.

-Alan O Brien

Alan O'Brien
Vice President for Welfare & Equality (Kerry Campuses)
MTU Students' Union

PREFACE

My name is Emma Hume, and I served as Vice President for Welfare and Equality with MTU Students' Union across the Cork campuses for the 2026/27 academic year. As part of my manifesto, I wanted to ensure that students' voices were heard.

Throughout my time as both an undergraduate and postgraduate student, I came to understand that the student experience begins long before arriving to classes. For many students, commuting means early mornings, long journeys, transport costs and uncertainty affecting students' finances, wellbeing and ability to fully engage with university life.

This survey gave students across MTU campuses the opportunity to share their lived experiences. Their responses have provided valuable insight into the realities of commuting and the changes needed to better support students. Thank you to every student who took the time to fill out the survey and share their experiences, your voices deserve to be heard and your experiences recognised.

This report is a call to action, highlighting the need for proper, accessible and efficient commuting infrastructure across every MTU Cork campus. Students deserve reliable, affordable and practical ways to get to and from college, regardless of where they live or how they travel.

The experiences shared throughout this report represent real challenges and real opportunities for change. My hope is that this report will be a starting point for lasting change, ensuring that student voices inform the decisions that affect them.

Commuting should never be a barrier to education.



Emma Hume

Emma Hume
Vice President for Welfare & Equality (Cork Campuses)
MTU Students' Union

Executive Summary

In recent years, commuter students have made up more and more of the MTU student body. Students are travelling extreme distances, from across all parts of the country, just to get an education. This is not exclusively an MTU issue, this is a national crisis.

In August 2026, a Switcher.ie report on 'Ireland's cheapest student towns' found that Tralee, Co. Kerry had the sharpest increase in the cost of living for a student out of any of the student towns in their study. Tralee placed number 6 out of 12 in the study, while Cork City placed number 11. With rent, grocery and fuel prices surging, this leaves students in Tralee and Cork paying €1,496 and €1,667 on average. As a result of these high costs, many students have no other choice but to commute to MTU each day.

The lack of publicly funded, purpose-built student accommodation across MTU and around the country adds to an already extreme cost of living and cost of college crisis for students, with students being pushed onto the private renters' market. A 'Student Contribution Fee' of €2,350 adds even more financial strain on students.

Many students live in areas that are not served by public transport, and as a result, have to drive their own car or rely on parents and friends to get to university. This adds more congestion to roads, longer traffic times and puts more pressure on parking, a system that is already at capacity. Those that do live in areas serviced by public transport face unreliable services and timetables, delays and increased travel times. An increase of 15-35% to public transport fares at a time when students cannot rely on public transport to bring them to university on time is unreasonable, unsustainable and adds another cost to students who simply cannot afford it.

Addressing the needs of commuter students requires action from MTU, the Higher Education Authority, Cork County Council, Kerry County Council, the National Transport Authority and Rialtas na hÉireann. MTUSU commits to advocating for better services for commuter students and to ensure that their voice is heard on a local and national scale, from the lecture halls to the Dáil.

-MTUSU Executive Team 2026 / 2027

Methodology

This data was collected via a student survey hosted on Microsoft Forms. The MTUSU Commuter Survey was shared with students via their student email, MTUSU social media platforms, class representative group chats and on-campus advertising.

The survey consisted of 14 multiple choice options, with several questions featuring an 'Other' option for students to give more specific answers, or answers that differed from the range. The MTUSU Commuter Survey was open for a period of fifteen day, opening on Monday, October 12th 2026 from 8am and closing on Monday, October 26th, 2026 at 5pm.

At the end of the survey students were asked to share a testimonial on their experiences commuting to MTU, if they felt comfortable doing so. In total, 1,118 students left a testimonial, 73.60% of all answers.

This is the first MTUSU Commuter Survey and we hope that MTUSU officers and teams will continue this in future years.

The findings are based on full-time and part-time students attending all MTU campuses. In total, 1,519 students responded to the MTUSU Commuter Survey, making up 9.69% of the student body of MTU*.

*excluding Minor and Special Purpose Awards.

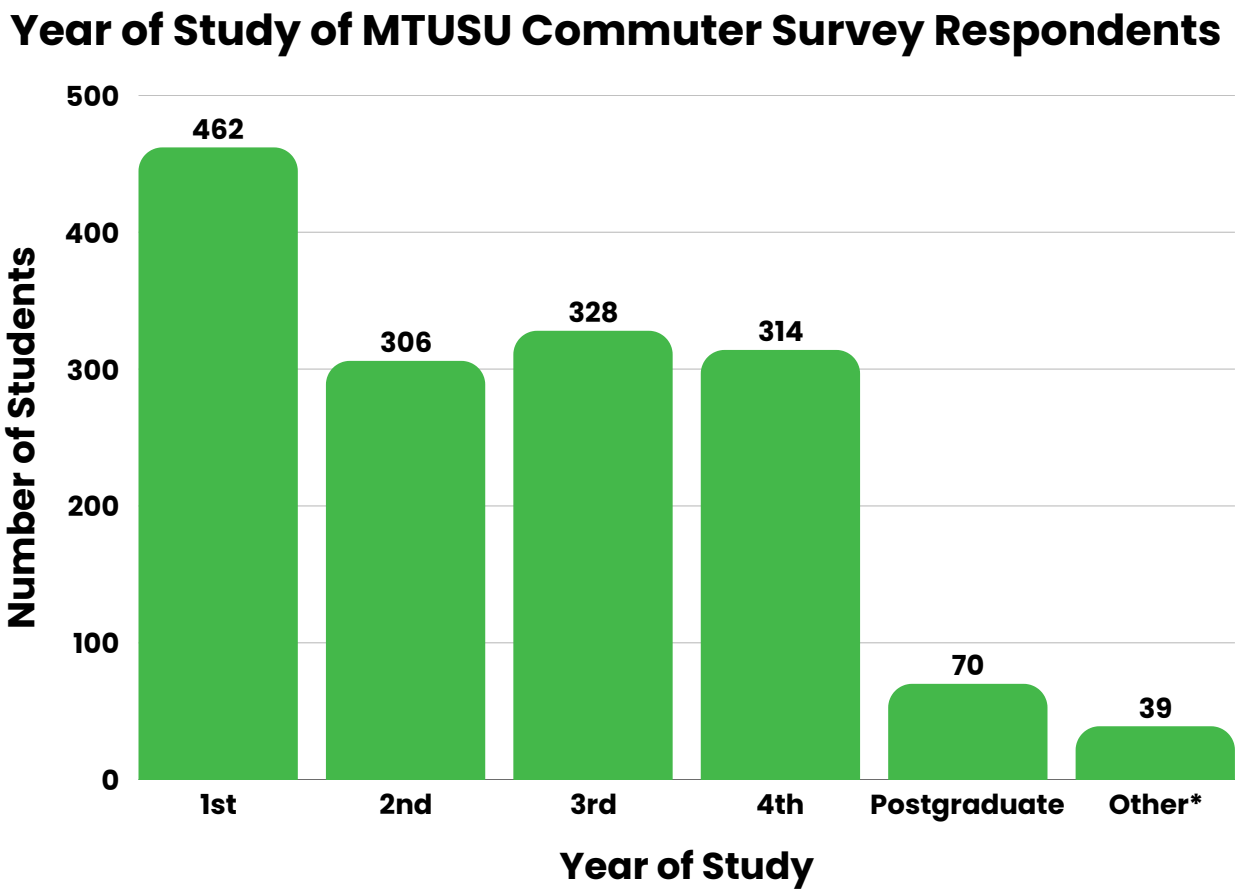
OVERVIEW

1519 Responses

15 Days
12.10.26 - 26.10.26

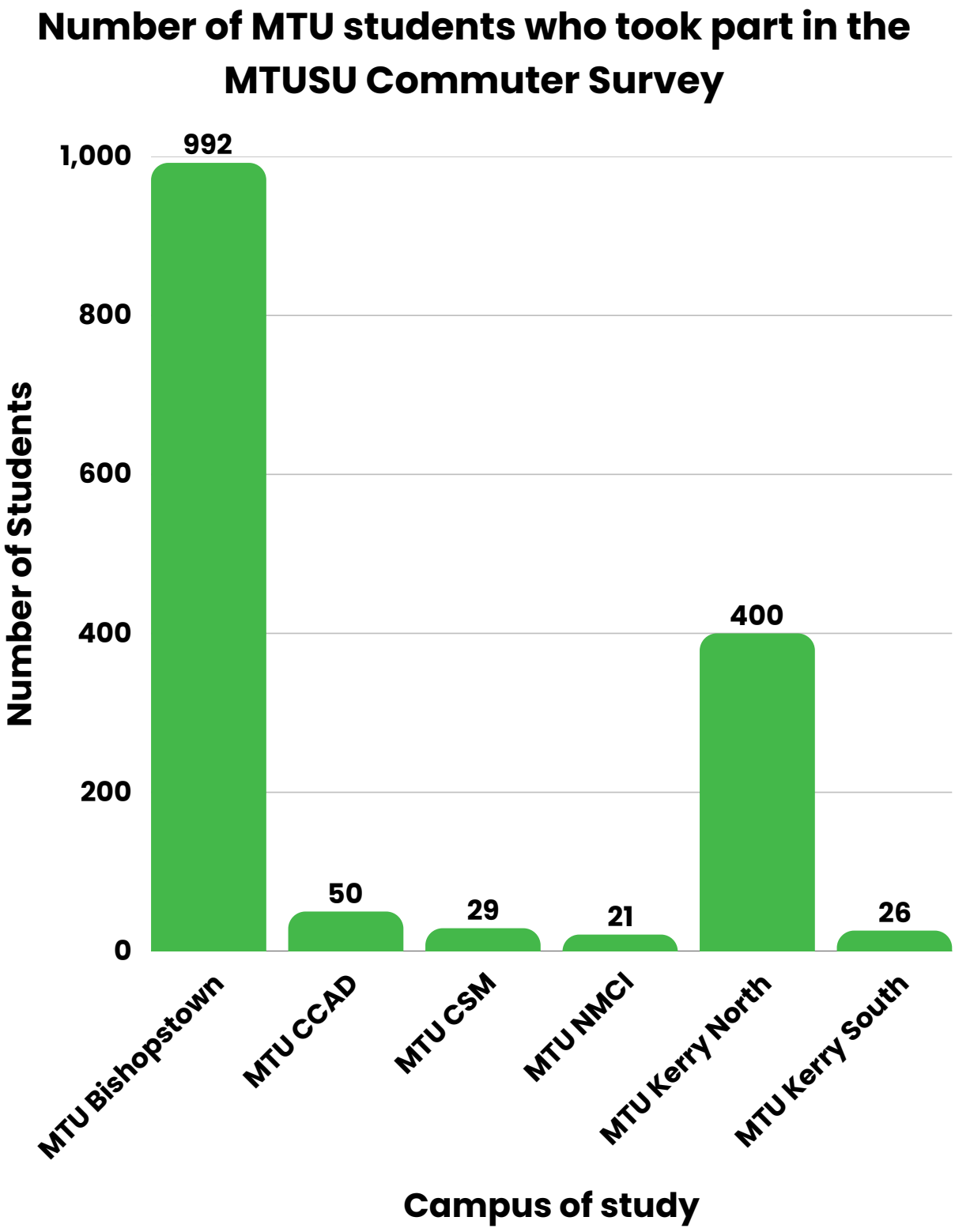
94.04% Undergraduate

4.46% Postgraduate

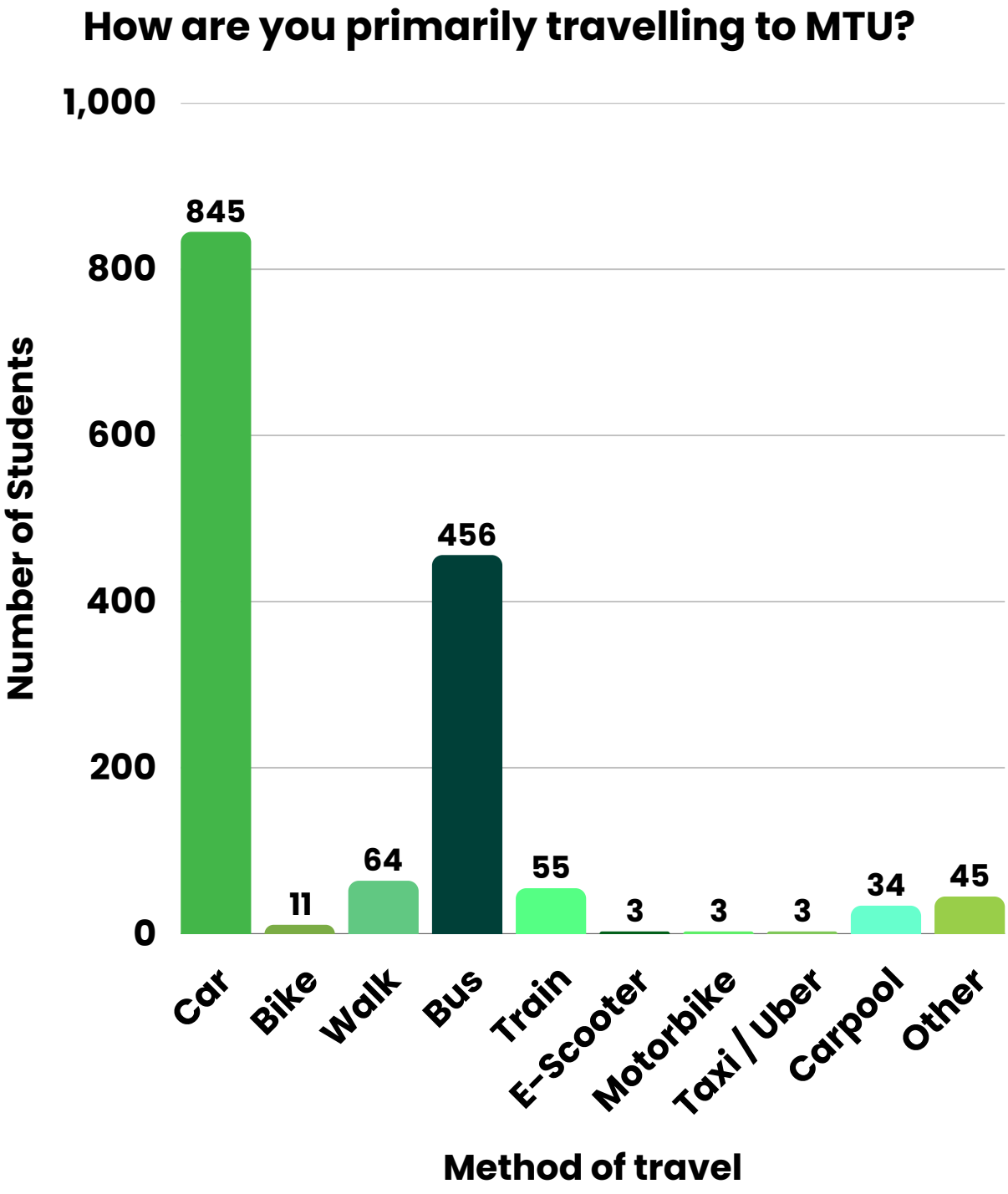


*Respondents studying Apprenticeship programs through MTU.

MTUSU Findings

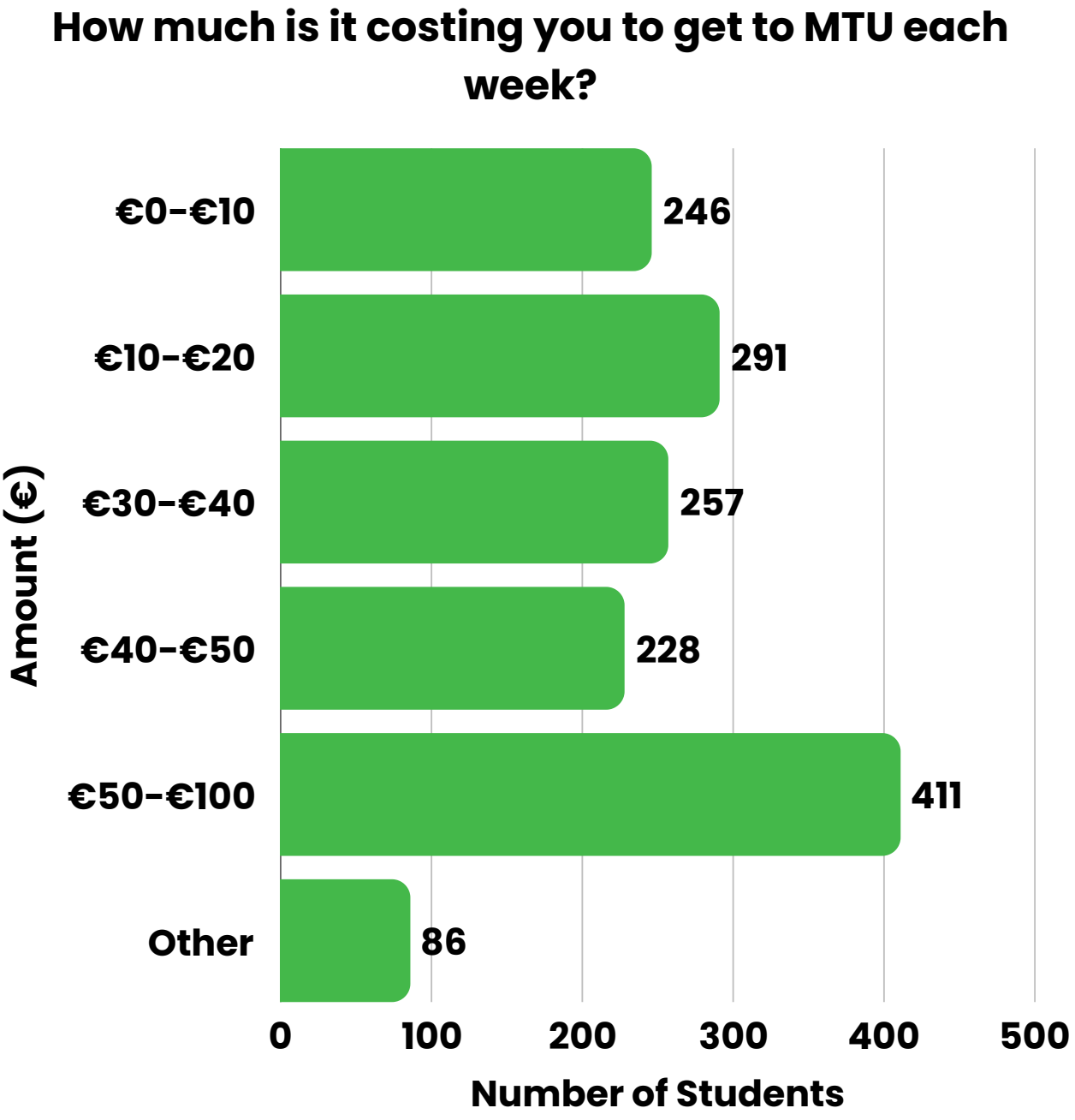


MTUSU Findings



The majority of MTU students drive to university (55.62%, 845 students). 2.96% (45 students) chose 'Other' as an option. The most common 'Other' response was taking a combination of bus and train daily (37.77%, 17 students).

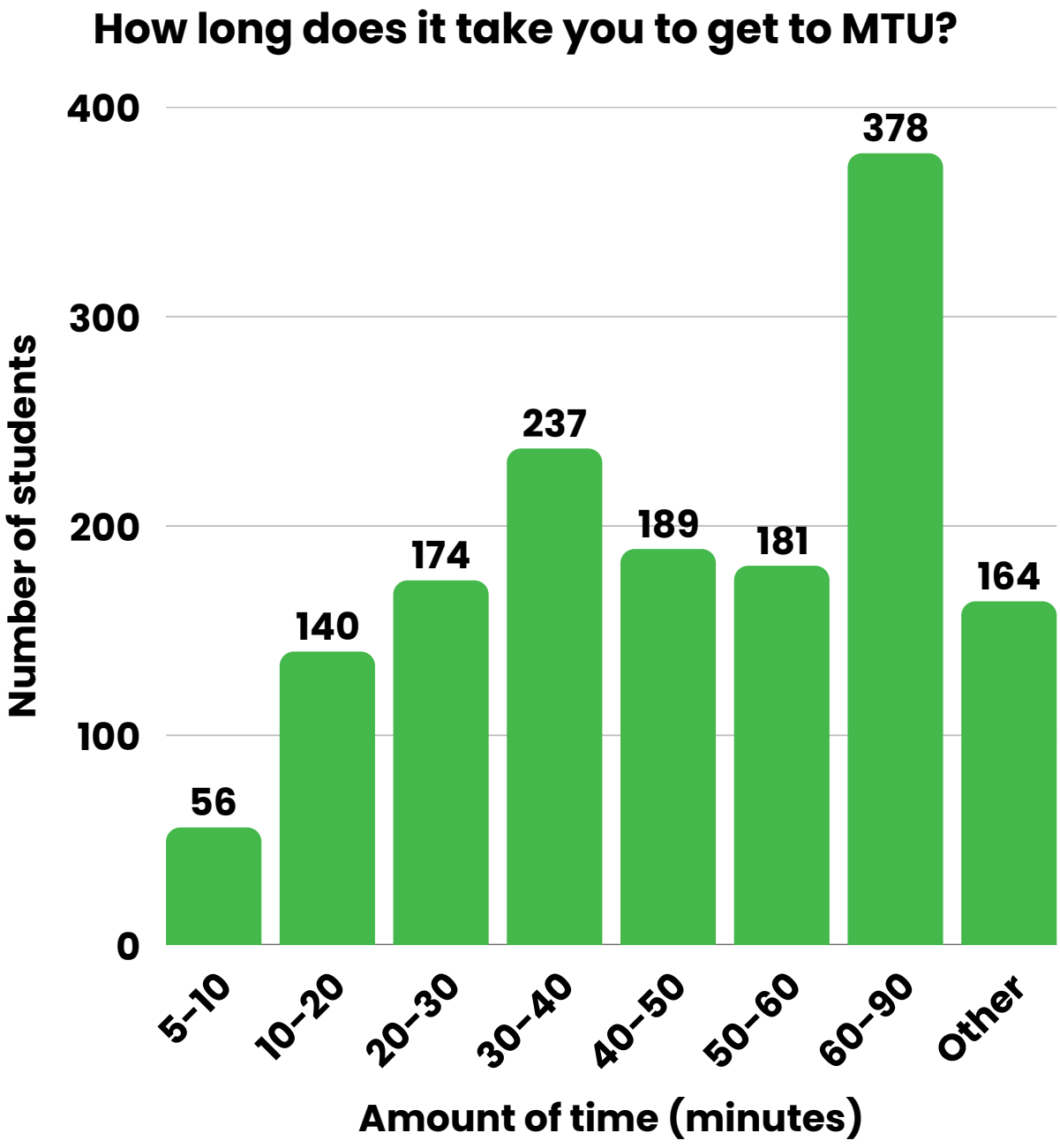
MTUSU Findings



27.05% of respondents (411 students) are spending between €50-€100 weekly to commute to MTU. 5.66% (86 students) selected 'Other' as an option. The majority of 'Other' responses (53.48%, 46 students) said they are paying over €100 a week. 6.97% (6 students) of 'Other' responses said they are paying over €200 a week.

The highest reported commute weekly was €300.

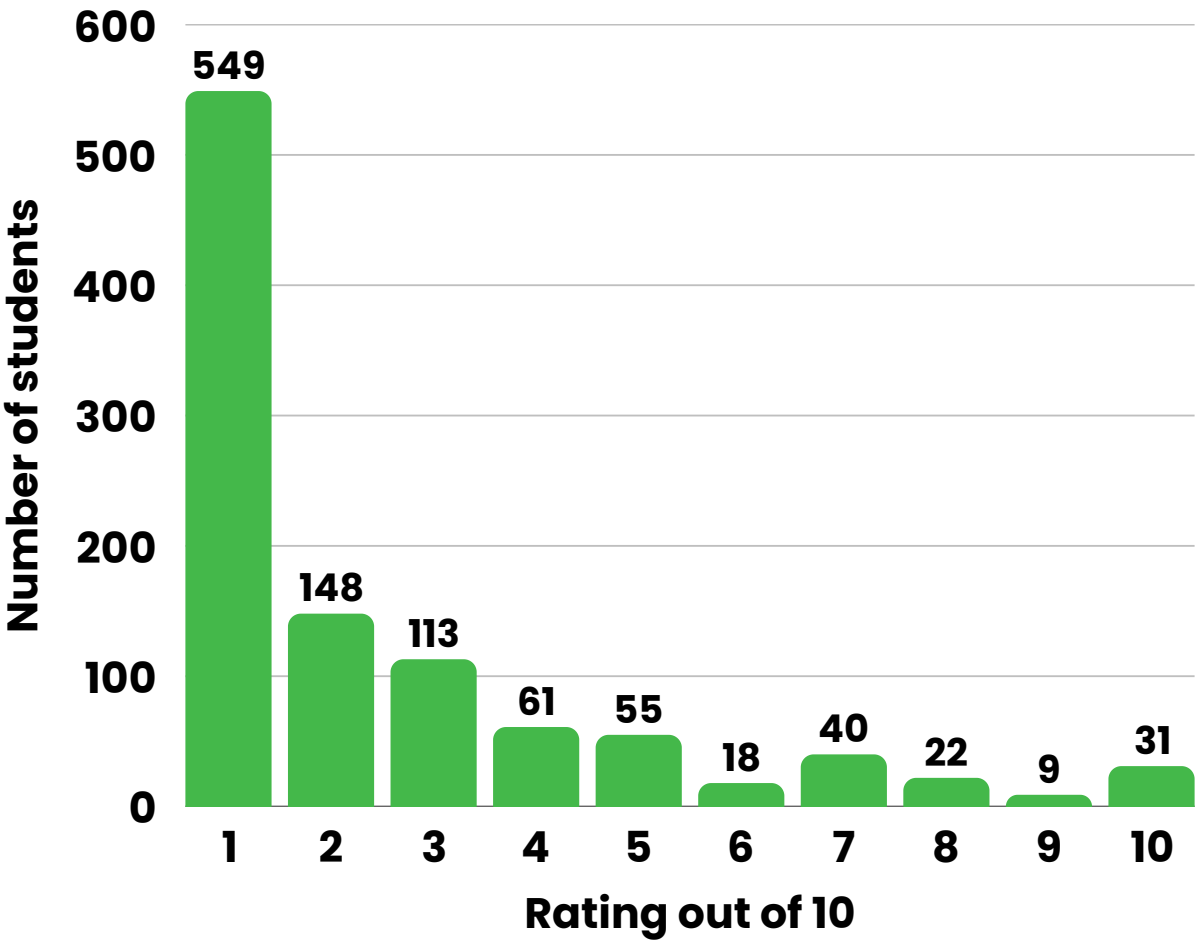
MTUSU Findings



27.88% (378 students) of respondents say they are experiencing commute times of 60-90 minutes daily. 10.79% (164 students) selected 'Other' as an option. 85.97% (141 students) who chose 'Other' are commuting over 90 minutes daily.

The longest reported daily commute was 4 hours each way, 8 hours in total.

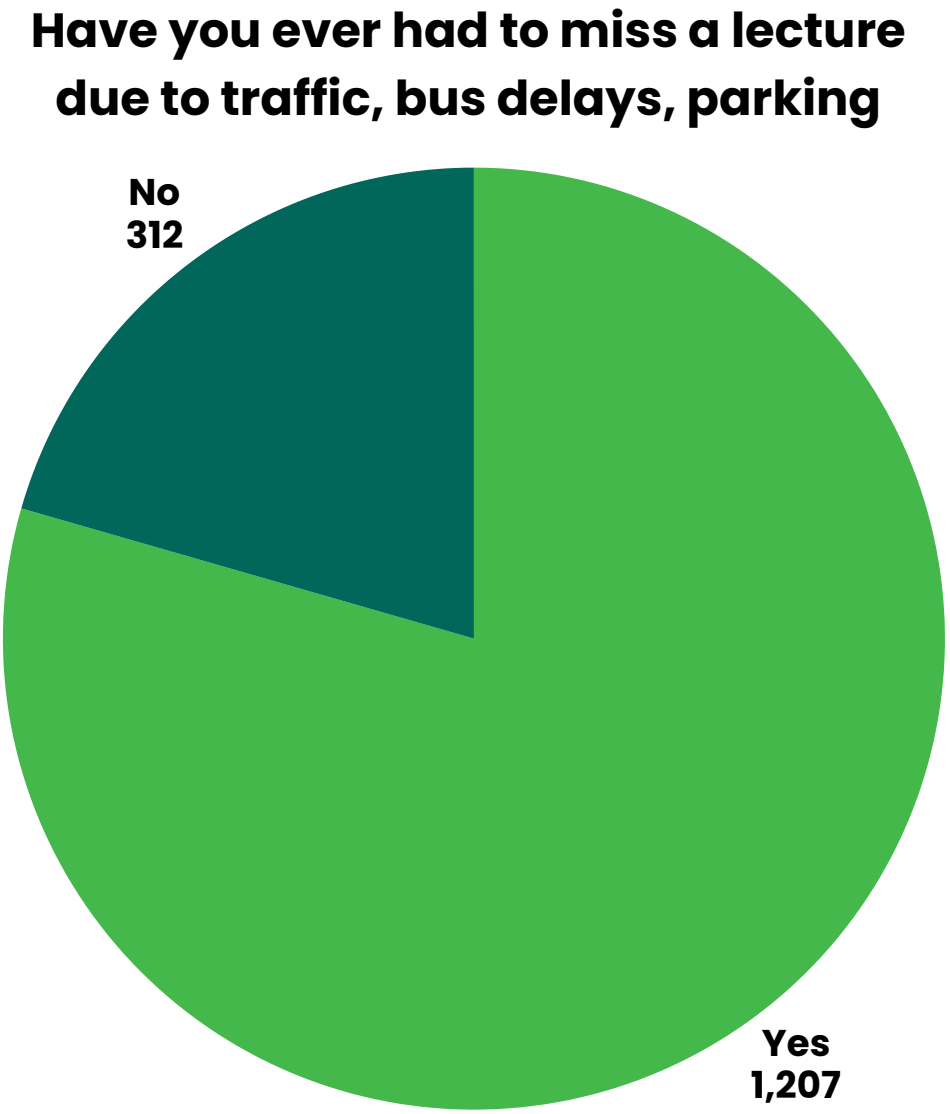
MTUSU Findings



Average rating of 2.54

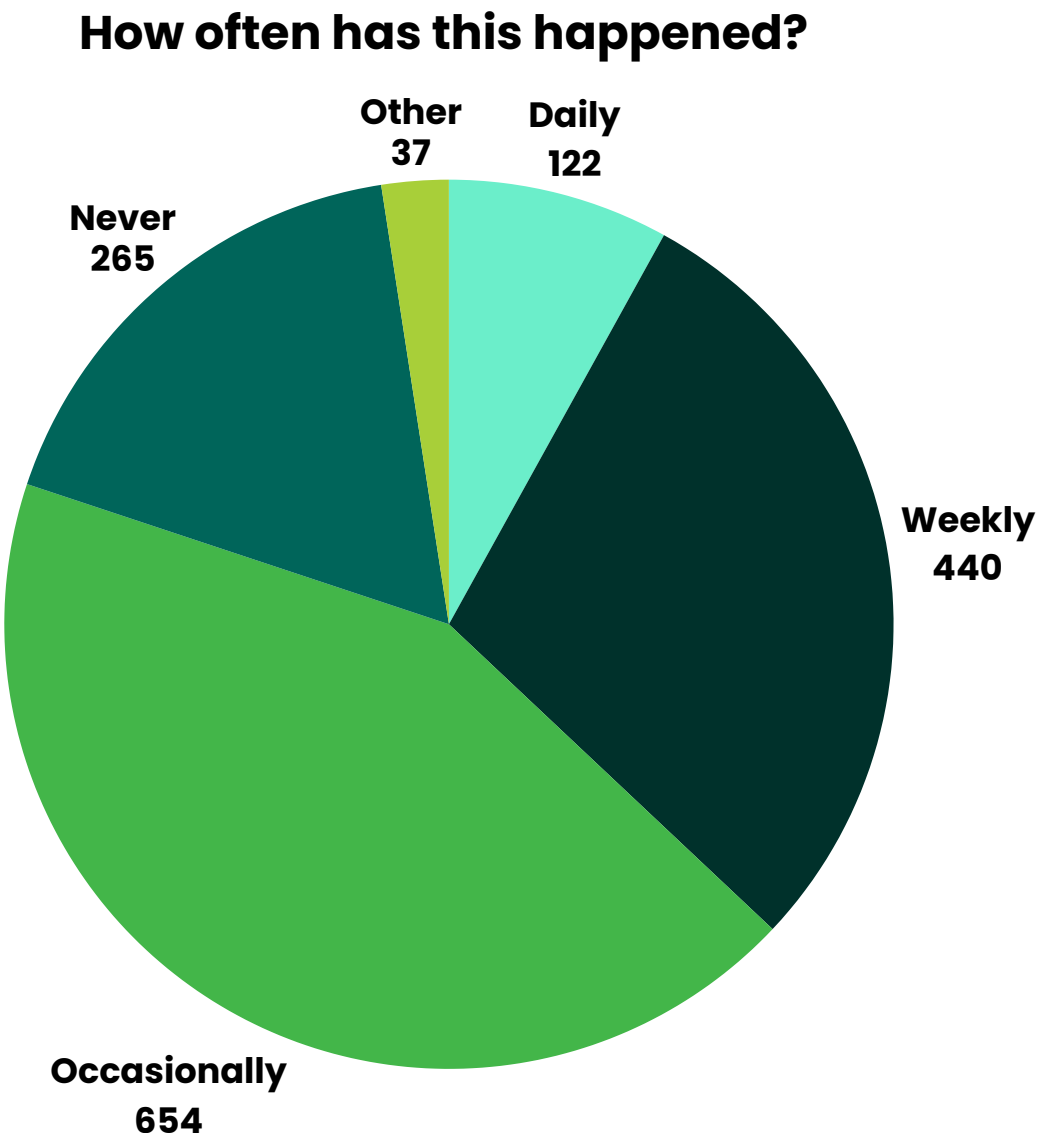
36.12% (549 students) rated MTU parking 1/10.
The average rating for parking across all MTU campuses was 2.54/10.

MTUSU Findings



The majority of MTU students, 79.46%, (1,207 students) said that they have had to miss a lecture due to traffic, bus delays, parking, etc. 20.54% (312 students) said that they have not had to miss a class due to traffic, bus delays, parking, etc.

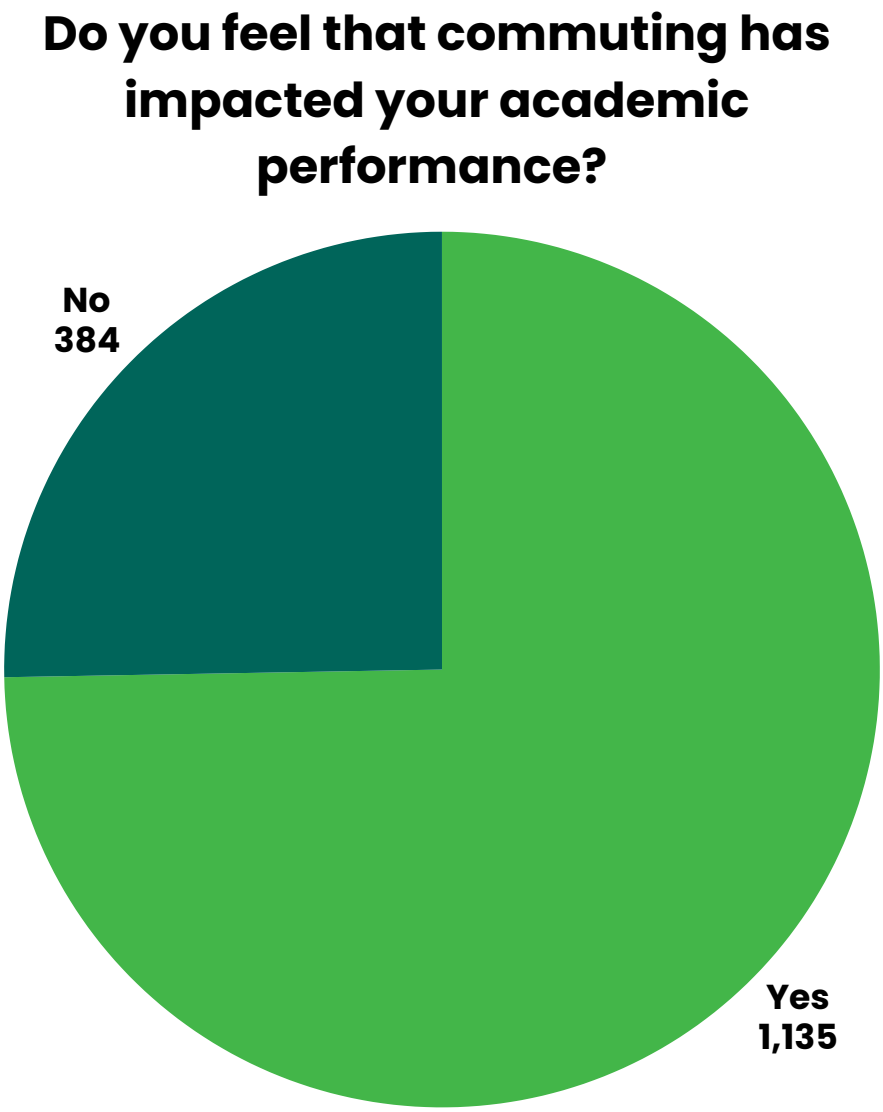
MTUSU Findings



43.05% (654 students) said that they have missed a lecture occasionally due to traffic, bus delays, parking, etc. 28.96% (440 students) said this has happened weekly, 17.44% (265 students) said they have never missed a lecture due to traffic, bus delays, parking, etc. 8.03% (122 students) said this has happened daily. When combined, 37.99% (562 students) of all student responses are missing class at least once a week.

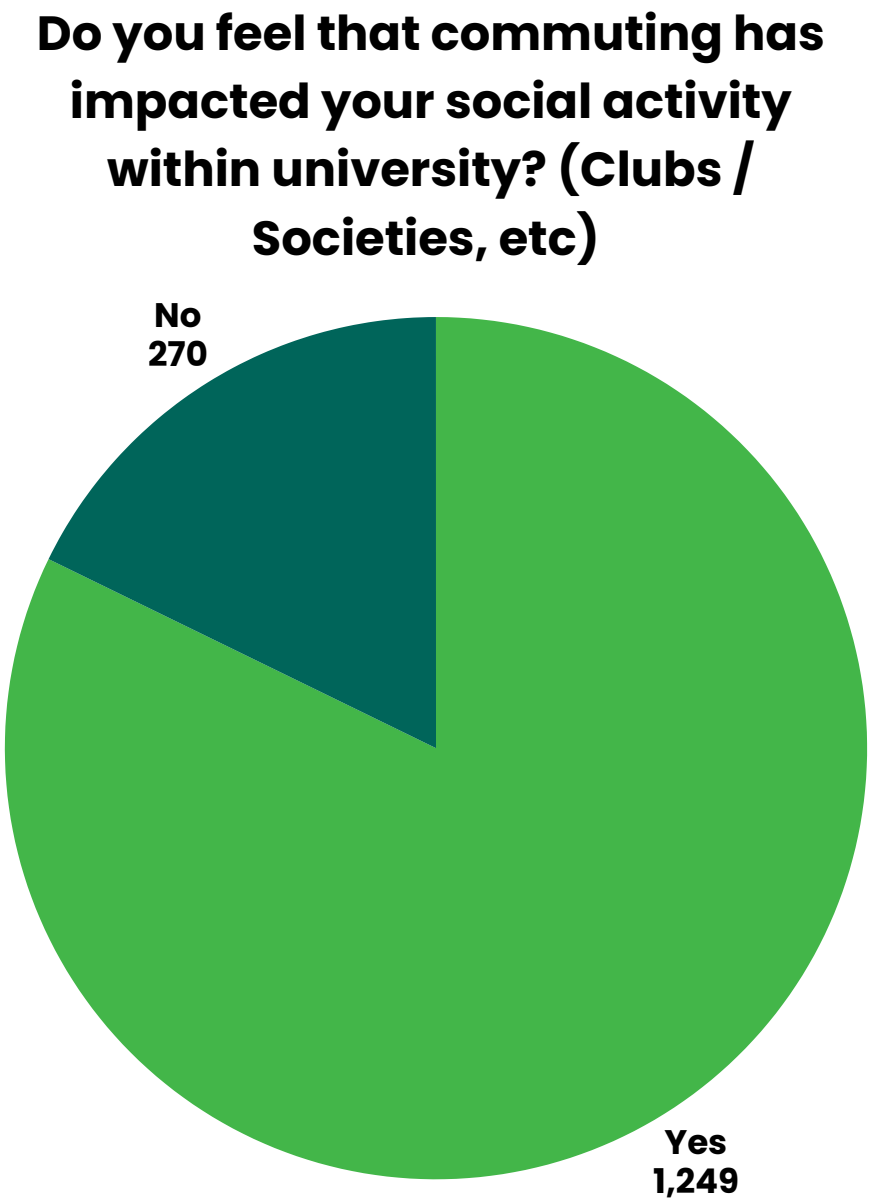
2.43% (37 students) gave an 'Other' response. The most common 'Other' responses (32.43%, 12 students) mentioned that they have to leave hours earlier in the morning to avoid being late. Other responses included only being a few minutes late to a lecture.

MTUSU Findings



The majority of MTU students said that they do feel that commuting has impacted their academic performance, with 74.73% (1,135 students) selected 'Yes'. 25.27% (384 students) selected 'No'.

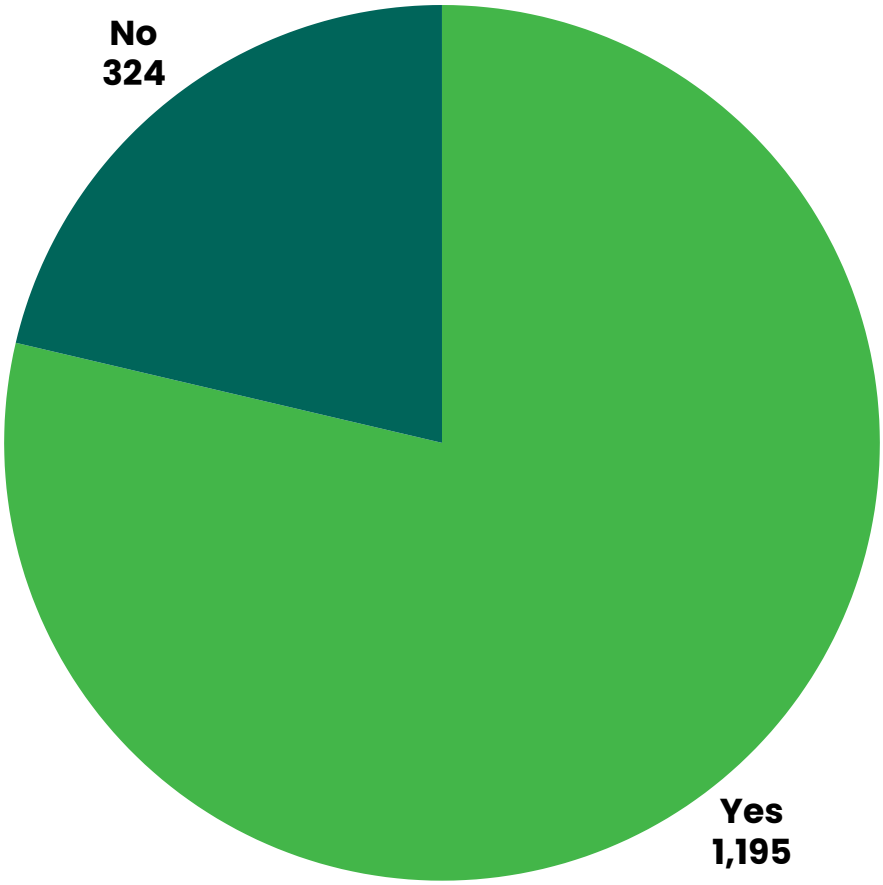
MTUSU Findings



The majority of MTU students said that they do feel that commuting has impacted their social activity within university, for example, participation in Clubs and Societies, etc. 82.23% (1,249 students) said that they do feel commuting has impacted their social activity within university, while 17.77% (270 students) said that commuting has not impacted their social activity within university.

MTUSU Findings

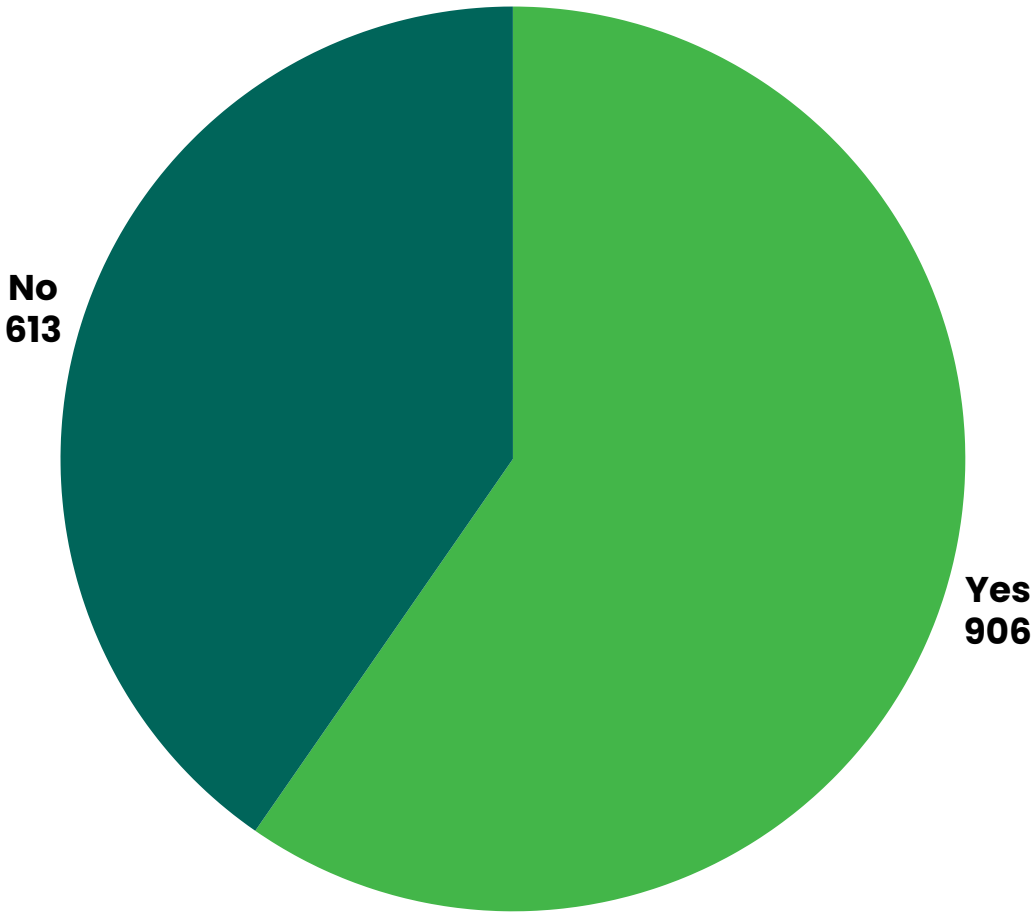
Do you feel that commuting has impacted your ability to partake in student nightlife events?



The majority of MTU students said that they do feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife events. 78.67% (1,195 students) said that they do feel commuting has impacted their social activity within university, while 21.33% (324 students) said that commuting has not impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife events.

MTUSU Findings

Has commuting had a negative impact on your mental health?



The majority of MTU students said that they do feel that commuting has impacted their mental health. 59.64% (906 students) said that they feel that commuting has impacted their mental health, while 40.36% (613 students) said they feel commuting has not impacted their mental health.

MTU Cork Findings

1093 students took part in the MTUSU Commuter Survey on the Cork campuses, making up 72% of all student responses:

- 65% Bishopstown Campus
- 3% Crawford College of Art & Design (CCAD)
- 2% Cork School of Music (CSM)
- 2% National Maritime Collge of Ireland (NMCI)

When asked about their primary mode of transport, MTU Cork students responded:

- 56.99% (623 students) drive.
- 0.73% (8 students) cycle.
- 2.19% (24 students) walk.
- 31.01% (339 students) take the bus.
- 3.20% (35 students) take the train.
- 0.09% (1 student) e-scooter.
- 0.27% (3 students) motorbike.
- 0.18% (2 students) take taxis / ubers.
- 1.92% (21 students) carpool.
- 3.38% (37 students) chose 'Other'.

The most common 'Other' responses were a combination of bus and train (45.94%, 17 students), a combination of car, bus and train (18.91% or 7 students) and walking and train (8.10% or 3 students).

When asked how much their commute to MTU is costing them weekly, MTU Cork students responded:

- 14.54% (159 students) spend €0-€10 weekly.
- 19.76% (216 students) spend €10-€20 weekly.
- 17.93% (196 students) spend €30-€40 weekly.
- 16.01% (175 students) spend €40-€50 weekly.
- 26.80% (293 students) spend €50-€100 weekly.
- 4.94% (54 students) selected 'Other'.

The most common 'Other' options ranged €100 and above (57,40%, 31 students).

The highest amount responded for a weekly commute to MTU Cork was €220.

MTU Cork Findings

When asked how long it takes to get to MTU, MTU Cork students responded:

- 1.00% (11 students) said it takes them between 5-10 minutes.
- 5.21% (57 students) said it takes them between 10-20 minutes.
- 10.52% (115 students) said it takes them between 20-30 minutes.
- 15.27% (167 students) said it takes them between 30-40 minutes.
- 12.80% (140 students) said it takes them between 40-50 minutes.
- 13.08% (143 students) said it takes them between 50-60 minutes.
- 30.00% (328 students) said it takes them between 60-90 minutes.
- 10.52% (115 students) said it them longer than 90 minutes.
- 1.55% (17 students) reported varying amounts of time.

The longest reported commute time to MTU Cork was 8 hours daily.

When asked how they find parking at MTU, MTU Kerry Cork students responded:

- 29.55% (323 students) chose not to respond.
- 44.83% (490 students) rated parking 1/10.
- 10.97% (120 students) rated parking 2/10.
- 5.67% (62 students) rated parking 3/10.
- 3.01% (33 students) rated parking 4/10.
- 1.64% (18 students) rated parking 5/10.
- 0.09% (1 student) rated parking 6/10.
- 0.91% (10 students) rated parking 7/10.
- 1.09% (12 students) rated parking 8/10.
- 0.09% (1 student) rated parking 9/10.
- 2.10% (23 students) rated parking 10/10

Of those that responded, MTU Cork parking received an average score of

2.01 out of 10.

MTU Cork Findings

When asked whether they had ever had to miss a lecture due to traffic, bus delays, parking,etc, MTU Cork students responded:

- 86.18% (942 students) said they had missed a lecture due to traffic, bus delays, parking, etc.
- 13.82% (151 students) said they had not missed a lecture due to traffic, bus delays. parking, etc.

When asked how often has this happened, MTU Cork students responded:

- 9.60% (105 students) said this has happened daily.
- 34.40% (376 students) said this has happened weekly.
- 42.45% (464 students) said this has happened occassionally.
- 11.52% (126 students) said this has never happened.
- 2.01% (22 students) chose an 'Other' response.

The majority of 'Other' responses (63.63%, 14 students) mentioned that they had never missed a lecture due to leaving their home 2-3 hours earlier than needed. Other responses included being late to class when relying on public transport.

When asked whether they think that commuting has impacted their academic performance, MTU Cork students responded:

- 81.52% (891 students) said that they feel commuting has impacted their academic performance.
- 18.48% (202 students) said that they do not feel commuting has impacted their academic performance.

When asked whether they think that commuting has impacted their social activity within university (Clubs / Societies, etc), MTU Cork students responded:

- 85.82% (938 students) said that they feel commuting has impacted their social activity within university.
- 14.18% (155 students) said that they do not feel commuting has impacted their social activity within university.

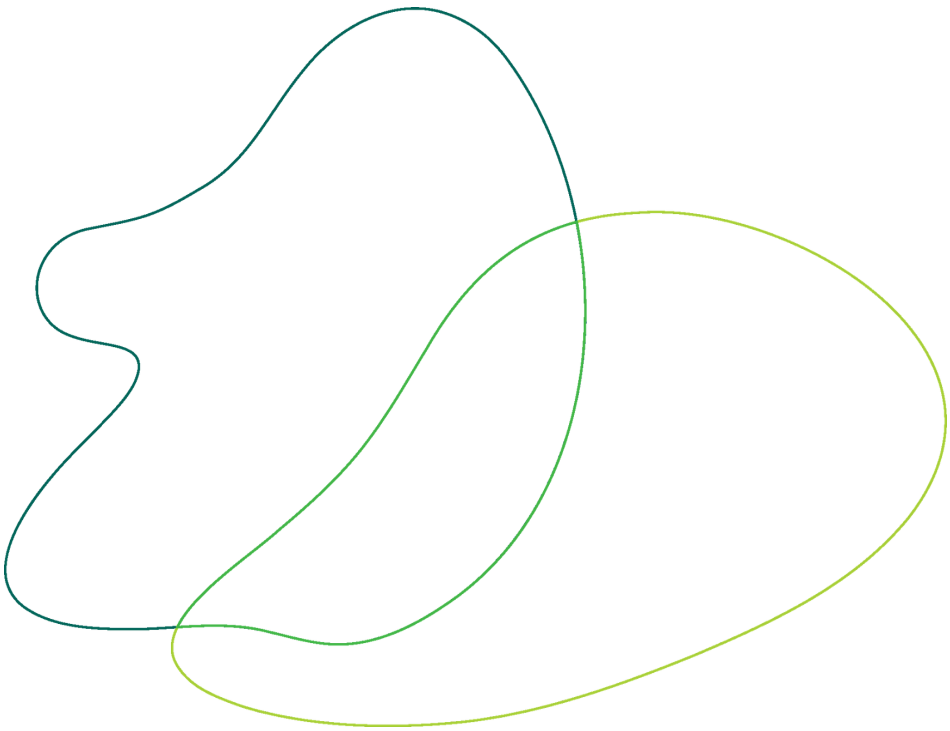
MTU Cork Findings

When asked whether they feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife, MTU Cork students responded:

- 82.62% (903 students) said that they feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife.
- 17.38% (190 students) said that they do not feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife.

When asked whether they feel that commuting has impacted their mental health, MTU Cork students responded:

- 66.79% (730 students) said that they feel that commuting has impacted their mental health.
- 33.21% (363 students) said they don't feel that commuting has impacted their mental health.



MTU Kerry Findings

426 MTU Kerry students took part in the MTUSU Commuter Survey, making up 28% of all responses:

- 26% (400 students) from MTU Kerry North Campus.
- 2% (26 students) from MTU Kerry South Campus.

When asked about their primary mode of transport, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 52.11% (222 students) drive.
- 0.70% (3 students) cycle.
- 9.62% (41 students) walk.
- 27.69% (118 students) take the bus.
- 4.69% (20 students) take the train.
- 0.46% (2 students) e-scooter.
- 0.23% (1 student) take taxis / ubers.
- 3.05% (13 students) carpool.
- 1.40% (6 students) chose 'Other'.

The most common 'Other' options were a combination of walking and taking the bus, alternating between their car and motorbike, alternating between their car and the bus or a combination of walking, bus and train.

When asked how much their commute to MTU is costing them weekly, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 21.59% (92 students) spend €0-€10 weekly.
- 18.07% (77 students) spend €10-€20 weekly.
- 14.55% (62 students) spend €30-€40 weekly.
- 12.67% (54 students) spend €40-€50 weekly.
- 27.93% (119 students) spend €50-€100 weekly.
- 5.16% (22 students) selected 'Other'.

The most common 'Other' options ranged from €100 and above (68.10%, 15 students).

The highest amount responded for a weekly commute to MTU Kerry was €300.

MTU Kerry Findings

When asked how long it takes to get to MTU, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 10.78% (46 students) said it takes them between 5-10 minutes.
- 19.95% (85 students) said it takes them between 10-20 minutes.
- 13.84% (59 students) said it takes them between 20-30 minutes.
- 17.13% (73 students) said it takes them between 30-40 minutes.
- 11.50% (49 students) said it takes them between 40-50 minutes.
- 9.15% (39 students) said it takes them between 50-60 minutes.
- 11.73% (50 students) said it takes them between 60-90 minutes.
- 5.86% (25 students) said it them longer than 90 minutes.

The longest reported commute time to MTU Kerry was 4-5 hours daily.

When asked how they find parking at MTU, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 35.21% (150 students) chose not to respond.
- 13.84% (59 students) rated parking 1/10.
- 6.57% (28 students) rated parking 2/10.
- 11.97% (51 students) rated parking 3/10.
- 6.57% (28 students) rated parking 4/10.
- 8.68% (37 students) rated parking 5/10.
- 3.99% (17 students) rated parking 6/10.
- 7.04% (30 students) rated parking 7/10.
- 2.34% (10 students) rated parking 8/10.
- 1.87% (8 students) rated parking 9/10.
- 1.87% (8 students) rated parking 10/10

Of those that responded, MTU Kerry parking received an average score of

4.02 out of 10.

MTU Kerry Findings

When asked whether they had ever had to miss a lecture due to traffic, bus delays, parking,etc, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 62.2% (265 students) said they had missed a lecture due to traffic, bus delays, parking, etc.
- 31.8% (161 students) said they had not missed a lecture due to traffic, bus delays. parking, etc.

When asked how often has this happened, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 3.99% (17 students) said this has happened daily.
- 14.78% (63 students) said this has happened weekly.
- 44.83% (191 students) said this has happened occassionally.
- 34.03% (145 students) said this has never happened.
- 2.34% (10 students) chose an 'Other' response.

The majority of 'Other' responses (60%, 6 students) mentioned that they had been late to class but not missed the lecture.

When asked whether they think that commuting has impacted their academic performance, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 57.27% (244 students) said that they feel commuting has impacted their academic performance.
- 42.73% (182 students) said that they do not feel commuting has impacted their academic performance.

When asked whether they think that commuting has impacted their social activity within university (Clubs / Societies, etc), MTU Kerry students responded:

- 73.01% (311 students) said that they feel commuting has impacted their social activity within university.
- 26.99% (115 students) said that they do not feel commuting has impacted their social activity within university.

MTU Kerry Findings

When asked whether they feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 68.54% (292 students) said that they feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife.
- 31.46% (134 students) said that they do not feel that commuting has impacted their ability to partake in student nightlife.

When asked whether they feel that commuting has impacted their mental health, MTU Kerry students responded:

- 41.31% (176 students) said that they feel that commuting has impacted their mental health.
- 58.69% (250 students) said they don't feel that commuting has impacted their mental health.

Recommendations & Call to Action

The findings of the MTUSU Commuter Survey show the academic, social, mental and financial strain that the commuter students of MTU are facing. In order for these issues to be addressed, serious, pragmatic action needs to be taken from MTU, the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the National Transport Authority (NTA), local and national governments. While MTUSU commits to supporting commuter students as much as possible, MTUSU-led iniatives are not enough to combat this local and national crisis.

MTUSU recommends and calls upon the following actions to be taken:

1. Delivery of Affordable On & Off-Campus Student Accommodation across MTU:
Responsibility: MTU, Department of Further and Higher Education, Irish Government.

Call to Action:

- MTU to publish and expand its accommodation strategy to adequately service all six campuses of MTU.
- MTU to provide accessibile and affordable, not-for-profit student housing to MTU students.
- The Irish Government must support this by enabling and introducing:
  - A national student accommodation reform on rent prices, with a maximum cost of €125 a week.
  - Capital investment for publicly owned, affordable student housing.
  - Affordable not-for-profit accommodation models.
  - The Government must ensure that Cork and Tralee continue as Rent Pressure Zones.

Recommendations & Call to Action

2. Improvement of Reliability & Frequency of Transport Options Servicing MTU:
Responsibility: NTA, Irish Rail, MTU, Local Authorities.

Call to Action:

- The National Transport Authority conduct an assessment on the reliability and frequency of all of their transport services that stop at MTU Cork and MTU Kerry, specifically looking at providing additional morning and evening services.
- Irish Rail conduct an assessment on the reliabilty and frequency of all of their routes that service Kerry and Cork, specifically looking at providing additional morning and evening services.
- MTU commits to working alongside the NTA and Irish Rail to improve transport services for its students.
- MTU commits to conducting regular meetings with its own transport providers to look at improving the reliabilty, frequency and overall student experience of MTU students availing of those services.
- MTU to advocate alongside local authorities on the implementation of TFI Live Bikes across MTU campuses to promote greater sustainability.
- MTU to advocate for an increase in bicycle lanes across Cork and Kerry to allow MTU students to safely commute to MTU via bicycle and E-scooter.

3. Abolish Public Transport Fare Hikes from January 2027:
Responsibility: NTA.

Call to Action:

- The NTA to reverse its September 2026 announcement of public transport fare hikes of between 15-30% from January 2027.
- The NTA to keep or reduce current public transport fares in a bid to increase public transport usuage.
- The NTA to conduct an assessment of the cost of introducing free public transport for all students.

Recommendations & Call to Action

4. Enhance Student Supports for Commuter Students across MTU:
Responsibility: MTU.

Call to Action:

- MTU to assess the feasability of creating additional commuter student supports, such as:
  - Reformed timetables such as emphasis on morning and evening lectures.
  - Hybrid options for lectures, where possible.
  - Review of attendance policies.
  - Enhancement of supports such as fuel vouchers, food vouchers, student financial supports and services, food banks and meal prices.

5. Greater Collaboration, Co-Ordination, Engagement and Advocation between MTU and Relevant Bodies:
Responsibility: MTU, HEA, Irish Government, NTA, Local Authorities.

Call to Action:

- MTU must strengthen its relationships with local and national bodies to greater improve services and engagement.
- Commuter students must be mentioned and advocated for in university policy development, accommodation development plans, transport infrastructure.
- Increased collaboration between MTU and local authorities in the increased improvement of student safety.

Recommendations & Call to Action

6. Uphold Commitments set out in MTU's 'Sustainability Strategy 2025 to 2035':
Responsibility: MTU.

Call to Action:

- MTU to uphold the commitments set out in the 'MTU Sustainability Strategy 2025 to 2035' in relation to the following:
  - **Target Date: 2025 -** A *"Full Transport Carbon Footprint to be established, to include staff and student commuting, intercampus travel, university-related travel both nationally and internationally"*.
  - **Target Date: 2026 -** An *"MTU Green Travel Strategy to be developed, to include site-specific plans for all campus access and parking, and action plans designed to minimise parking requirements, local pollution and carbon emissions through "measures for walking, cycling, car-pooling, public transport, Electric vehicles and bike and multimodal transport and through the development and mobilisation of critical relationships"*.
  - **Target Date: 2027 -** *"Provide facilities for sustainable and active travel - including shower facilities and facilities for clothes drying and storage - across all campuses"*.
  - **Target Date: 2028 -** *"All MTU campuses to be mapped and managed for sustainable transport, including safe pedestrian and cyclist entrances and pathways, priority parking for car-pooling, adequate safe, accessible and covered bike parking, and adequate EV charging facilities"*

Conclusion

The MTUSU Commuter Survey has illustrated that MTU commuter students are struggling financially, mentally, socially and academically. MTU students are travelling from all over Ireland to get to class on-time and home again safely in the evening. Students are couch surfing and staying in their cars overnight as they can't afford fuel and rent, leaving classes early to get home as they're dependent on public transport, and skipping meals to save costs.

The findings of the MTU Commuter Survey showcase the results of a broken system. They showcase the realities that many MTU students face daily. The financial burdens, the social isolation and the academic distress. An overwhelming majority of students who responded to the survey are facing a negative university experience. This isn't good enough, MTU students deserve better.

This report serves as a call to action to MTU, relevant policy makers and transport providers to improve the experiences and services that commuter students are facing daily. The implementation of purpose-built student accommodation across MTU, an improvement of timetables and reliability from transport services and more commuter student-friendly initiatives and supports are needed across the board.

This is not a quick and easy fix but the foundations need to be established now to help future commuter students. The recommendations and calls to action from this report will not just benefit commuter students, but all students who choose to study at MTU.

'Succeeding Together' is the motto of MTU, yet, this is not the reality that many of our students are facing.

References

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TESTIMONIALS

In total, the MTUSU Commuter Survey received 1,118 testimonials from students. The below are only a select few of the stories, experiences and frustrations felt from commuter students across MTU.

"Absolute misery. The whole thing genuinely makes me regret coming to MTU in the first place. I miss lectures almost every other day just because I cant find parking and if I wanted to come earlier I would have to leave home at 5:30 in the morning. I come in every morning hanging tired, uninterested and dreading the long commute home in the evening, where I am nearly falling asleep at the wheel. Lecturers get mad at me for being late, I've missed an assessment trying to park the car, spent a small fortune on diesel, spending €8 a day to park in Leisure World when I can't get parking, maintenance, the list goes on and on. I get home in the evenings and collapse into bed, often until the next morning without so much as stirring. Commuting drains the life out of me. I feel like commuters as a whole are completely overlooked as for example, my lecturers casually put on extra missed classes on often at 5 o clock in the evening, societies hosting events happening later in the evening that would make it about 8 or 9 o clock before we get home. Commuting has made it near impossible to have a social life in college. There is some mornings when I wake up and just cant face it. I wish I never came here. Its a disaster."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

"There is no parking & we have no access to a shuttle but are continuously being told how wonderful our park & ride & shuttle is. We still oddly enough pay the same fees."

-MTU CCAD Student

"Hard to make friends since most in my course live on campus or near Tralee. Nights out have to book a hotel so I don't go to many. For sports it's a long day to finish at 4 and wait until 7 for training. Sometimes I stay the night in the car and park up in Tralee somewhere to cut down on fuel. Miss out on college life in general and the grants are useless as I'm not able to apply for any. My parents earn about the cut off even though my dad is not working at the moment but they can't afford to put 3 of is through college and accommodation and in general the cost of living now."

-MTU Kerry Student

TESTIMONIALS

"Commuting has had a significant impact on my college experience, both financially and academically. Finding parking in the mornings and afternoons is extremely difficult, and there have been occasions when I arrived early but still could not find a parking space. I have spent hours driving around Bishopstown trying to find somewhere to park without risking being clamped. This causes unnecessary stress, wastes time and sometimes affects my ability to get to class on time. The rising cost of living also makes commuting more difficult, as I have to manage fuel costs alongside other college and personal expenses. Commuting can be physically and mentally exhausting, particularly when I have long days on campus. I believe MTU needs to do more to support commuting students by improving parking availability, providing more affordable transport options and considering the financial pressures students face. Commuting should not be an additional barrier to accessing education."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

"Commuting has definitely affected me. I find I haven't been able to partake in any of the nightlife, I can't join any clubs or societies because I simply can't go to any events that are organised by them. I find my mental health has been affected because I have to get up at six in the morning and I'm not home until nearly half past six. My bus is always late and sometimes there's not enough room for everyone to get on the bus and sometimes there's then I'm stranded. I'm exhausted all of the time and if I have to hang around the bus station I feel uncomfortable as there are many people there who have made me uncomfortable"

- MTU Kerry Student

"The way CSM is treated is an absolute joke. It may as well not be a part of MTU. We have none of the services offered in Bishopstown, but yet we pay the same fees. We need parking, we need realistic access to a gym, we need discounted food, we need drinkable water!!"

-MTU CSM Student

"Trying to pick what days are most important as I can't afford fuel for all 5 days."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

TESTIMONIALS

"I commute from Dublin and stay in digs for 4 nights which isn't cheap, it impacts me financially and mentally as I have a child at home and I also have my own rent / bills to pay."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

"Commuting makes college feel much more challenging. It's exhausting having to deal with the stress of packed buses and buses not showing up, also it makes the days feel incredibly long, if I have a lecture at 9am I have to wake up at 6am to be there on time. When I finish a long day, instead of a small walk or a short ride home, I have to walk to the bus station 30 minutes before the bus is coming as it gets so busy, and then I have an hour on this bus until I get home. I often think how much easier studying would feel if I could afford to live closer to my campus. I find myself crashing on friends couches because I'm so tired that it's easier than getting the bus and having to wake up so early the next morning. It's very challenging, particularly as a fourth year student."

-MTU CCAD Student

"I drive 4 hours a day to make it to college and back, it costs me about €120 a week in fuel. By the time I get home I eat, complete some assignments and go to sleep. I then get up at 6am and repeat. I have no time to socialise, no time to exercise, and no time to decompress. Weekends are not free, as I have to catch up on what I missed during the week. To be honest, term time is painful, and I am looking forward to being free of it. There is no enjoyment while attending college."

- MTU NMCI Student

"I can't attend clubs before and after lectures because I need to drive or get a bus / train. I've never gone out for a college night out either."

-MTU Kerry Student

"I find that I spend more time commuting than in a classroom and I have no time to go to training anymore, spend time with my family or meet friends. I am constantly drained because of this. I am currently on a waiting list for accommodation but I'm not sure if I'll even be able to afford it. I'm genuinely contemplating on dropping out because of the toll this is taking on me."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

TESTIMONIALS

"I have less time and am permanently exhausted and have to leave at early hours to get parking and not home until late. I have no life outside commuting and college."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

"I've missed/been late to many lectures and have had to spend so much money on paying €2.50 for parking every 2 hours. This especially applies for when I have lectures from 9.30 to 5.30pm. This cost is also increased if I forget to pay for parking in between lectures and receive a €40 ticket. I am in the Cork School of Music so being able to get into college to practice for my instrument is vital to my degree, and considering all these costs, I often have to miss on practice time as I don't have the funds to top up my parking. Furthermore, given the general cost of living I'm working on the weekends, which takes away those two days to catch up on lecture notes I've missed, and lost practice time. Many of these house could be remedied with parking spaces for college student at the Cork School of Music. Being apart of MTU, the complete absence of student parking for their CSM students is ridiculous."

-MTU CSM Student

"There's no proper infrastructure for commuting to campus. Public transport isn't a realistic option from where I live, so I have no choice but to drive. That means getting up at 6am for a 40+ minute commute, because if I arrive any later there's a real risk of not finding a parking space and being late for class. Because of traffic, I also can't join any clubs or societies, since staying on campus in the evening would mean a much longer journey home. The early starts, long days and constant stress about parking and traffic leave me with less time and energy to study, and I'm not performing to the academic standard I'd be happy with. Overall, the lack of transport options is affecting both my mental health and my academic performance, and it has cut me off from the social side of college life."

-MTU Bishopstown Student

"Worried that I wont be able to afford the bus every day, let alone eat."

-MTU Kerry Student



Aontas na Mac Léinn Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University Students' Union

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