

MEDIA RELEASE

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Kiwis leave cars at home and walk instead

Kiwis are ditching their cars and taking to their feet as petrol costs see many of us changing our travelling habits, the latest Research New Zealand polling shows.

The poll found 59 percent of New Zealanders said they were using their cars less often as a result of higher petrol costs. This is an increase on the 32 percent of Kiwis who said they were using their car less when polled by Research New Zealand in February this year.

Research New Zealand director Emanuel Kalafatelis said it was a remarkable change in stated behaviour given the short space of time between polls.

“The cost of fuel is clearly hitting New Zealanders hard enough to make them change their behaviour. The fact that this latest poll was taken in winter is also interesting as you’d expect people would turn to their cars more when the weather is bad.

“We asked those participants who said they were using their cars less what they have started doing instead and 48 percent of them said they were now walking more often. Perhaps it shows that we often drive our cars short distances that could easily be walked instead.”

Mr Kalafatelis said walking was by far the most common alternative to driving the car, but 21 percent said they were not travelling as much, 18 percent were car pooling and 17 percent were using public transport.

Females were more likely to be using their cars less, than men were, 64 percent of females, compared to 52 percent of males.

Research New Zealand polling was conducted between 15 June and 24 July.

The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between 15 June and 24 July. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.5 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.



Participants were asked: *If you own a motor vehicle, do you now drive it less often as a result of petrol price increases?*

And, which of the following have you started doing (or you are doing more of) as a result of using your motor vehicle less?

Table 1: Driving behaviour as a result of petrol price increases

If you own your own motor vehicle, do you now drive it less often as a result of these increases?

	Base =	Total	Male	Female
		500	234	266
		%	%	%
Less		59	52	64
More		0	0	0
Same		32	38	27
Do not have a car/Do not drive		9	10	9
Total		100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Table 2: Replacement behaviour

Which of the following have you started doing (or you are now doing more of) as a result of using your motor vehicle less?

	Base =	Major urban		
		Total	city	Other
		295*	144	151
		%	%	%
Using public transport		17	21	14
Car pooling		18	23	14
Walking		48	57	40
Changed your motor vehicle for a more fuel efficient vehicle		10	8	11
Not travelling as much		21	14	26
Doing something else		20	21	18

Note: Total may exceed 100% because of multiple response.

*Sub-sample based on those who said they were driving their car less.

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