2026 Spring Biannual Survey Results

October 2026

Survey Sample and Administration

Survey open from

05/06/2026 to 05/31/2026

48,518 survey invites sent

- 48,348 sent to Ventra customers who opted in to receive emails and have ridden at least once per month from February through April 2026
- 170 sent to CTA customers who signed up via Car Card to be contacted when a survey becomes available

Total sample size:

2,012*

- 1,938 via Ventra invites (email response rate = 4.0%)
- 51 via Car Card (15 via QR code, 36 via invites)
- 23 via Library Flyers distributed to South and West Side branches

Sample proportional to service area population based on customer ZIP code, with oversampling in areas with traditionally low response rates

Respondents rode CTA at least once between February and April 2026 and were **targeted by frequency**:

- **Frequent Riders**, defined as using CTA Bus or Rail at least 1-3 days per week,
  made up 81% of total sample (1,629 respondents)
- **Infrequent Riders**, defined as using CTA Bus or Rail at most 1-2 days per month,
  made up 19% of sample (383 respondents)

Survey made available in

English, Spanish, and Polish

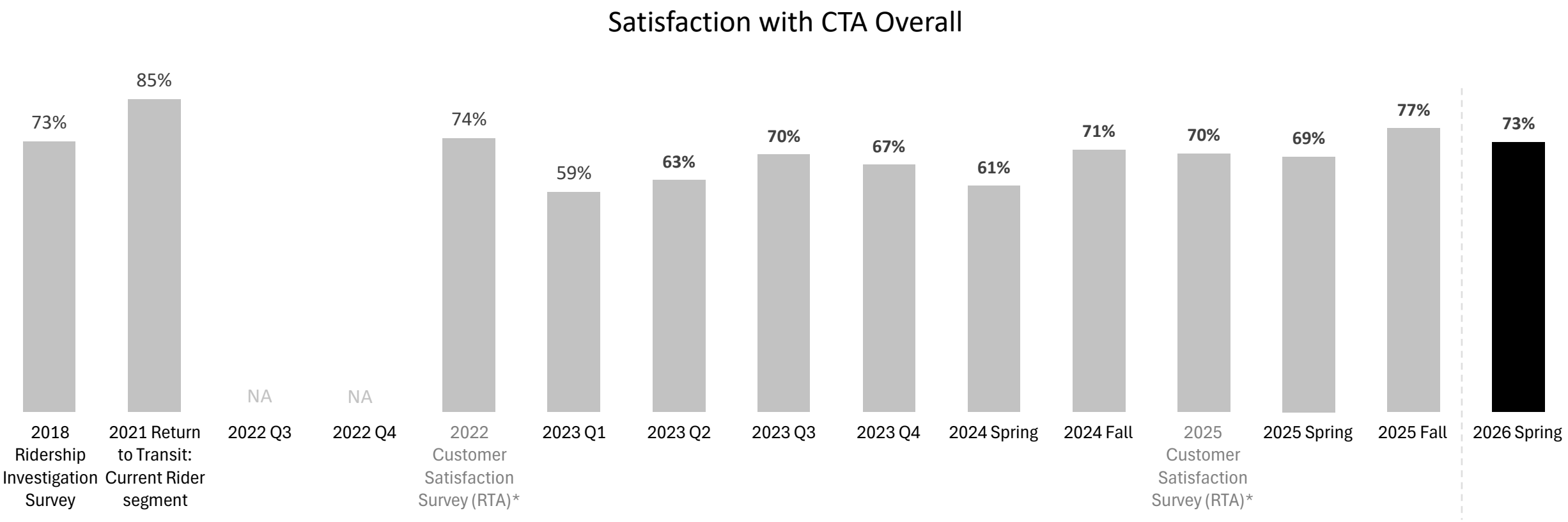
17 completed in Spanish, 1 completed in Polish

Final data **weighted to align primary bus route groups and rail branches** with actual ridership in February through April 2026

*Total sample results valid at the 95% confidence level with a margin of error of +/-2.0%.

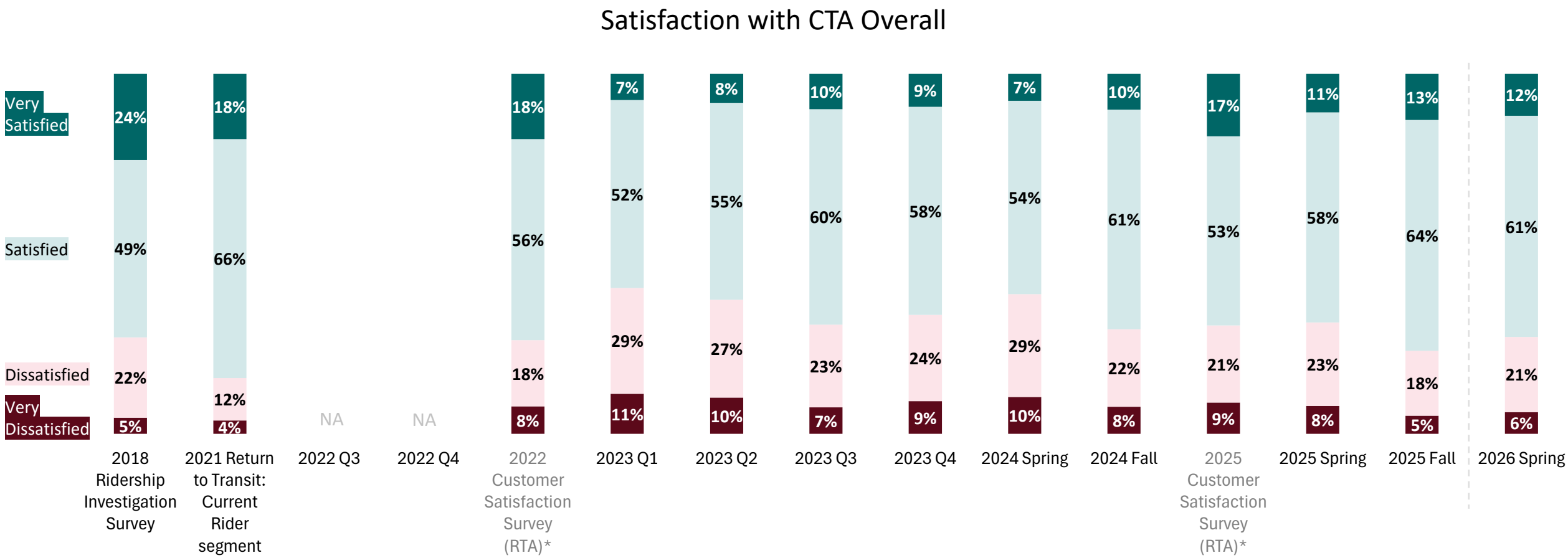
Satisfaction

73% of riders are satisfied with the CTA, a 4-point increase from the same time last year



*2022 and 2025 Customer Satisfaction Surveys are conducted by RTA on behalf of CTA and asks overall satisfaction on a 10-pt scale, so may not be directly comparable to other survey results listed.

The growth in satisfaction is primarily among those who are satisfied but not very satisfied



*2022 and 2025 Customer Satisfaction Surveys are conducted by RTA on behalf of CTA and asks overall satisfaction on a 10-pt scale, so may not be directly comparable to other survey results listed.

For the bus, satisfaction with reliability and weekday wait times saw the most growth this year

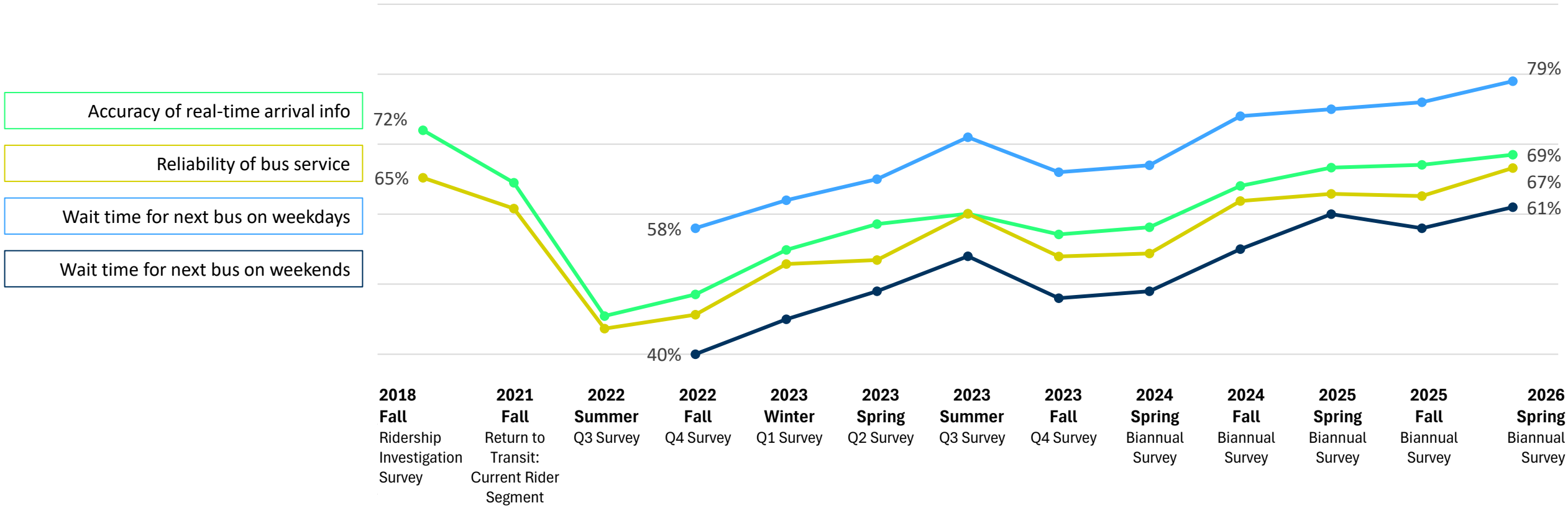
Satisfaction with Bus Attributes



▲ ▼ Indicates increase or decrease year over year

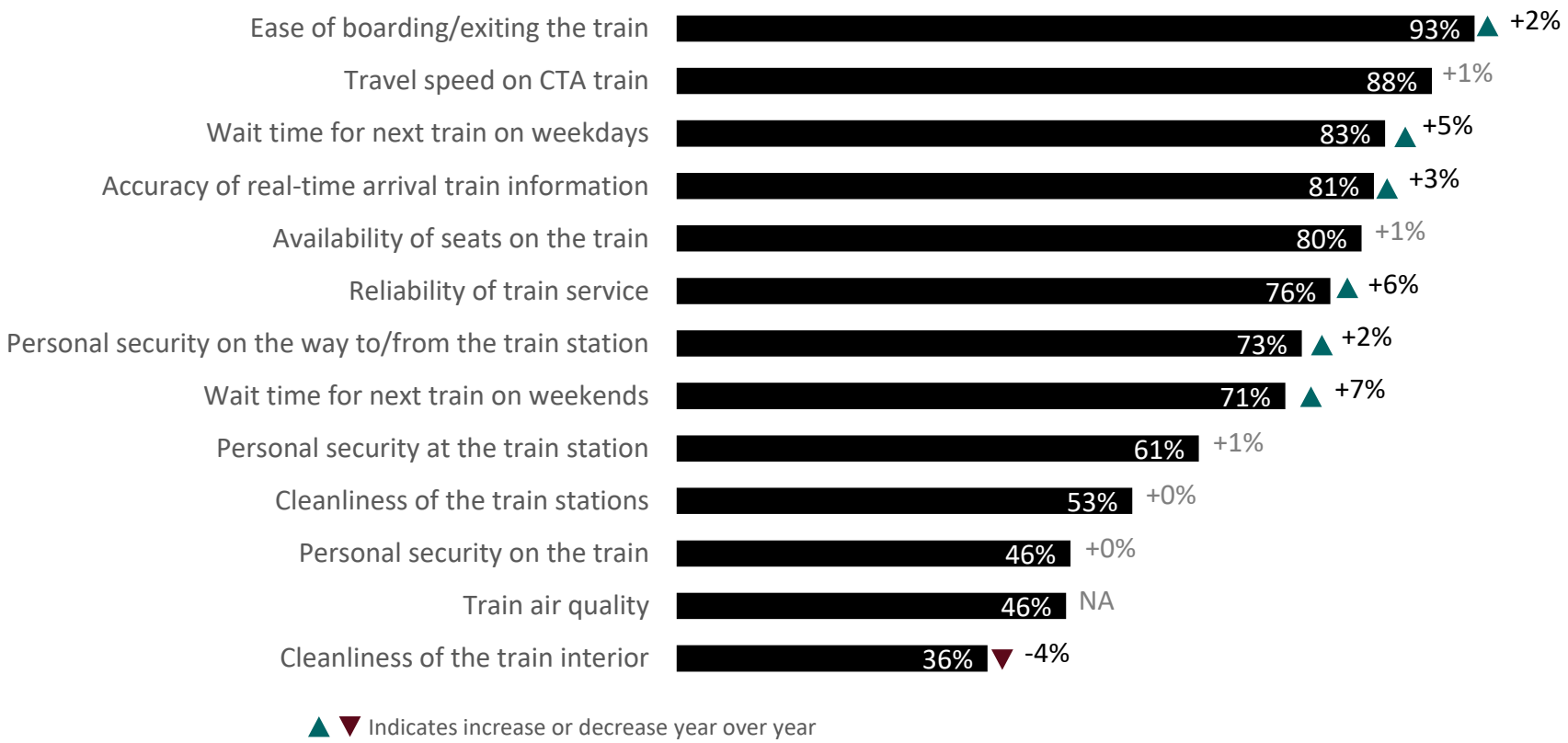
Wait times and reliability are higher than pre-pandemic levels

Satisfaction with Key Bus Attributes – **Accuracy, Reliability, and Wait Time**



The train has seen improvements in many metrics, especially weekend wait times

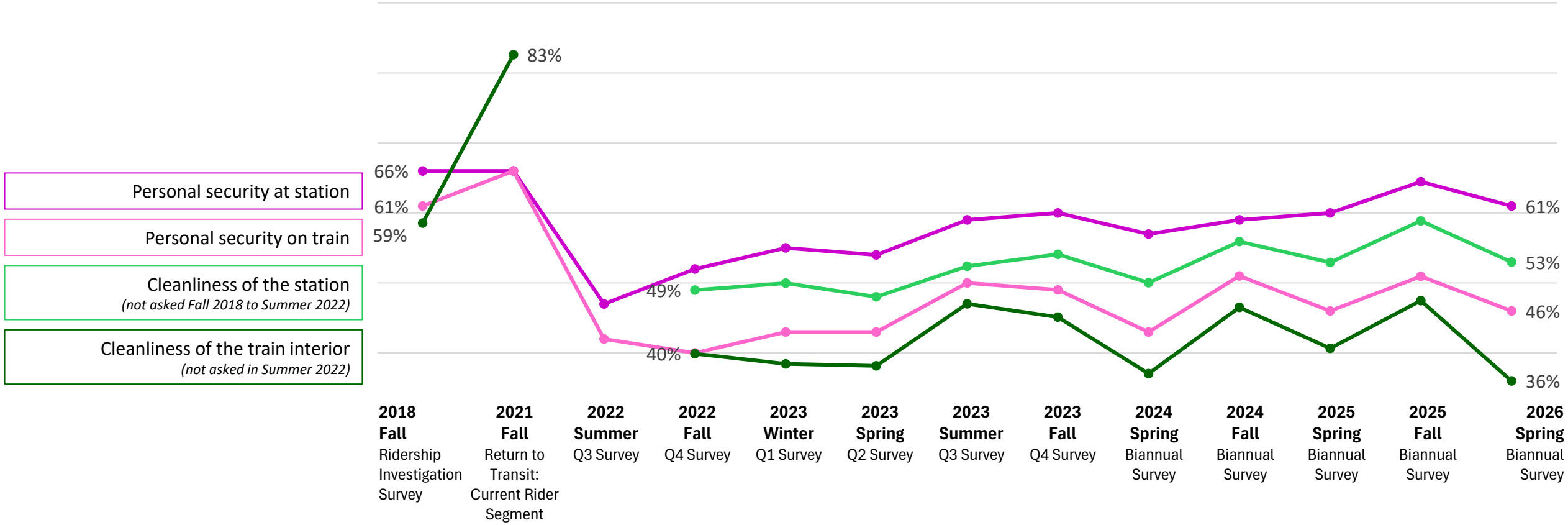
Satisfaction with Train Attributes



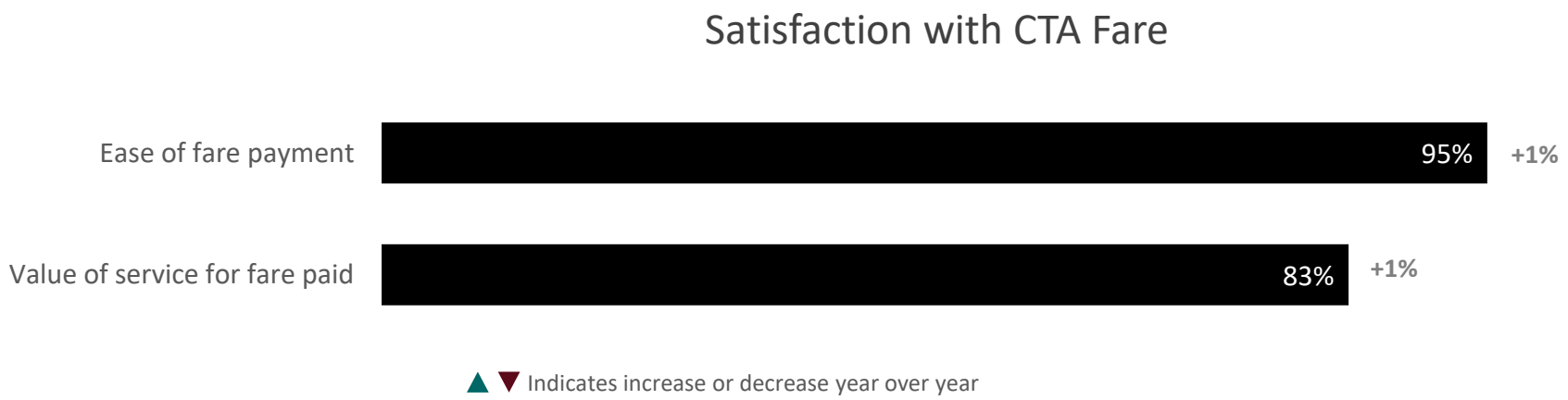
▲ ▼ Indicates increase or decrease year over year

Progress with personal security on the train and cleanliness of train interiors is stagnant

Satisfaction with Key Train Attributes – **Security and Cleanliness**



Most remain satisfied with ease of payment and value of fares

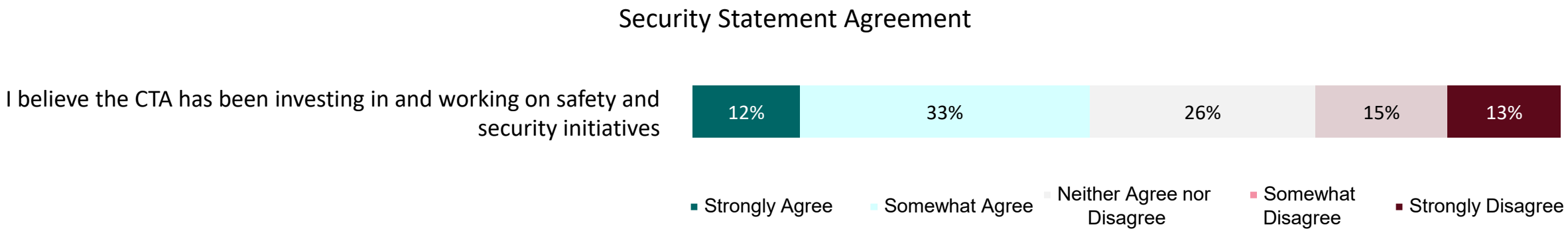


Security is consistently a top priority in deciding to ride

Which of the following improvements would encourage you to ride CTA more frequently?	2026 Spring	2025 Fall	2025 Spring	2024 Fall	Spring 2024
If there was better security on board	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**
If there was better security at stations/stops	**2**	**3**	5	**2**	5
If buses were faster and more reliable	**3**	**2**	**2**	**3**	**1**
If service came more frequently during weekends	4	5	4	4	7
If vehicles/stations were cleaner	5	7	8	8	8
If service came more frequently during weekdays	6	4	**3**	5	**2**
If real-time arrival information for buses was more accurate	7	6	7	6	4
If trains were faster and more reliable	8	8	6	7	6
If real-time arrival information for trains was more accurate	9	9	9	9	9
If CTA fares were lower/more affordable	10	10	10	10	10
If payment system for CTA, Metra, and Pace was integrated to make transfers between services more seamless	11	11	11	11	11

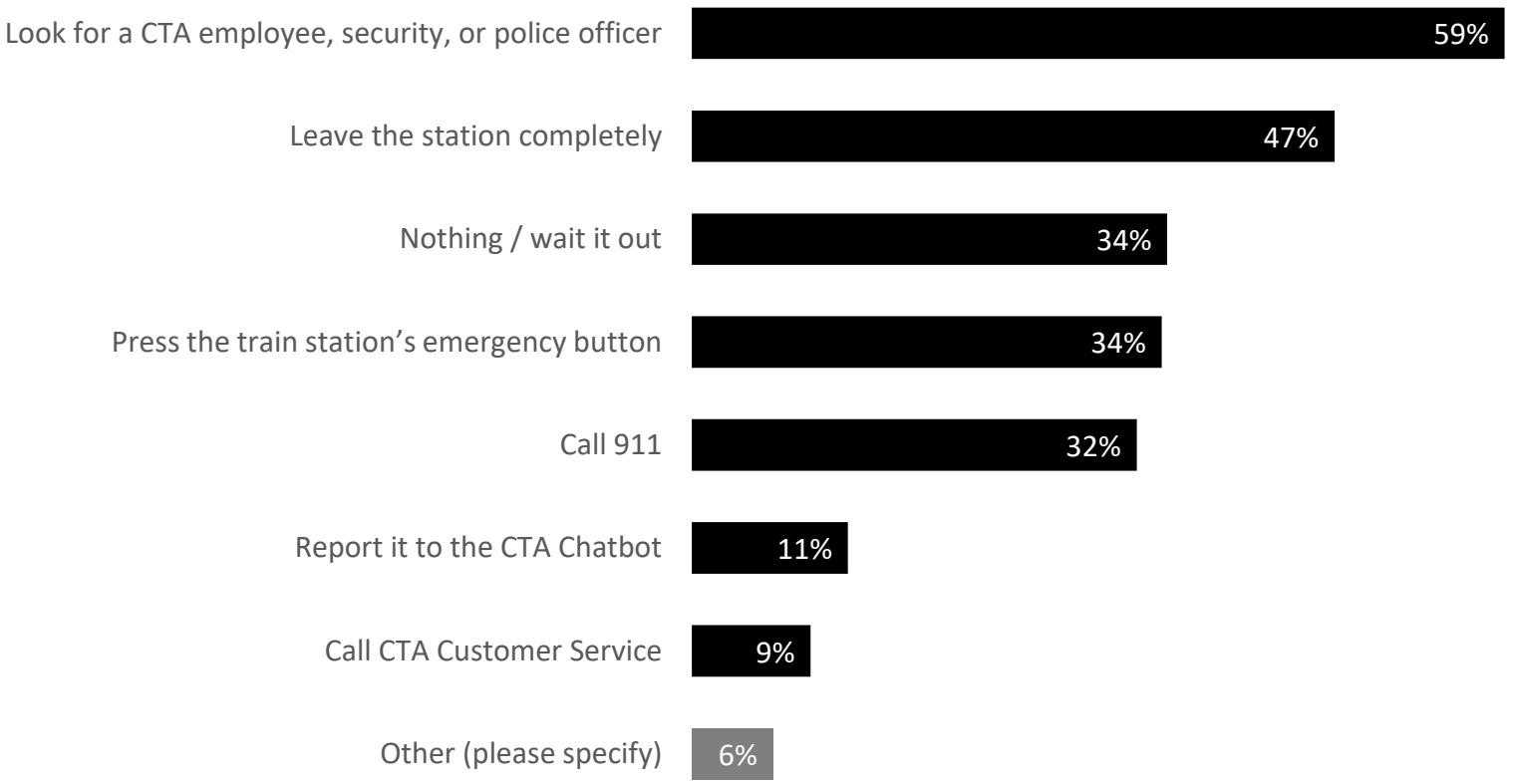
Security Event Reactions

45% of riders believe the CTA has been investing in security initiatives



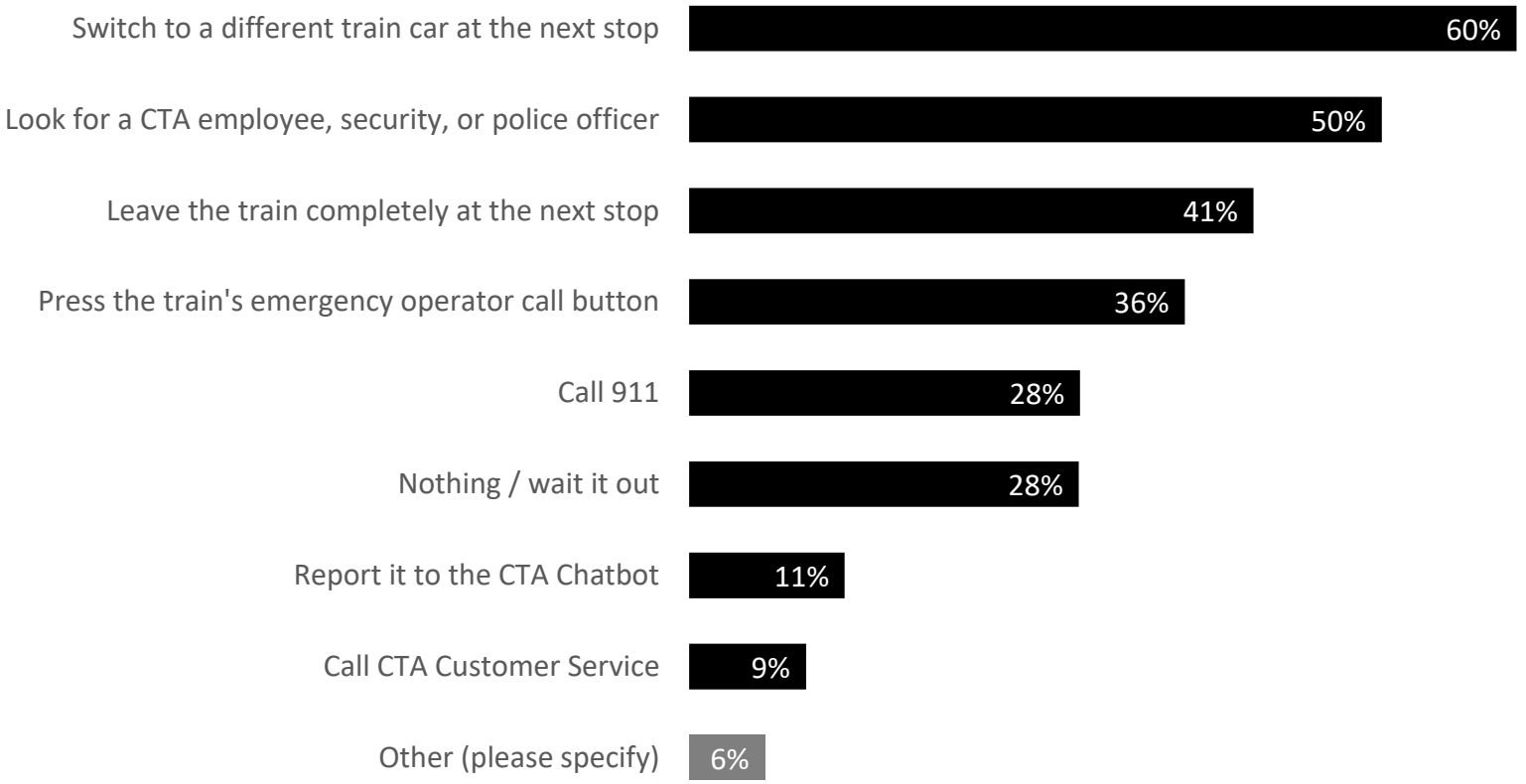
Most don’t use the security button when there is a security event at the station

If you notice someone making threatening comments toward passengers at a CTA station, what actions are you most likely to take? Select all that apply.



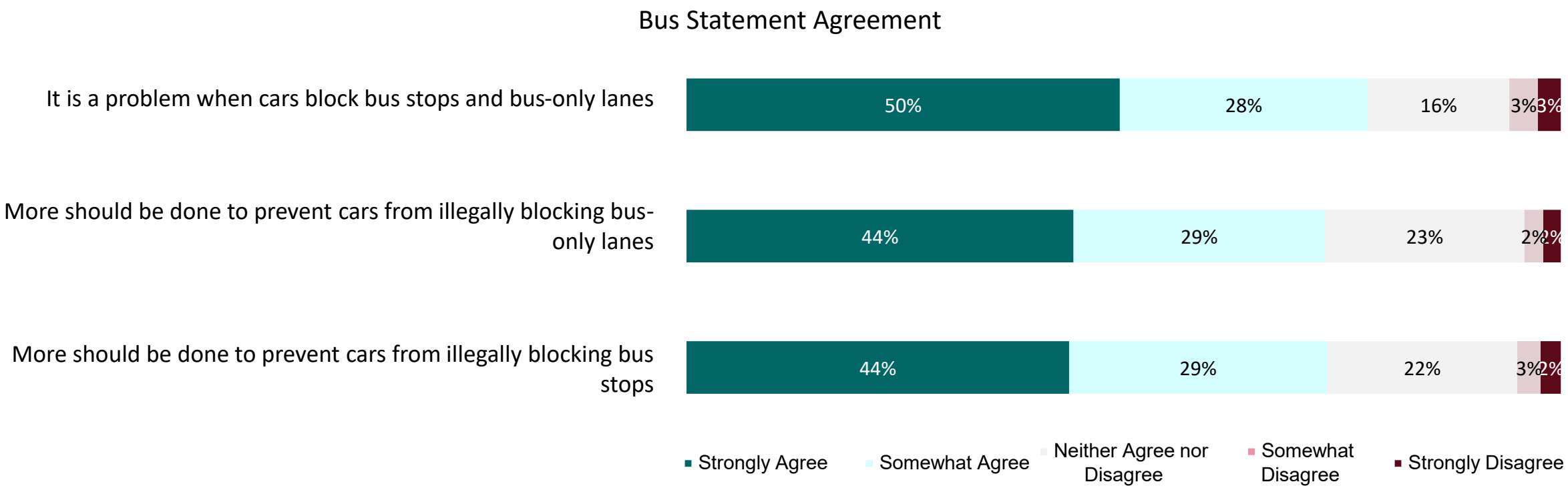
When a security event occurs on the train itself, the majority say they would simply change train cars

If you notice someone making threatening comments toward passengers aboard the CTA train, what actions are you most likely to take? Select all that apply.



Bus Initiatives

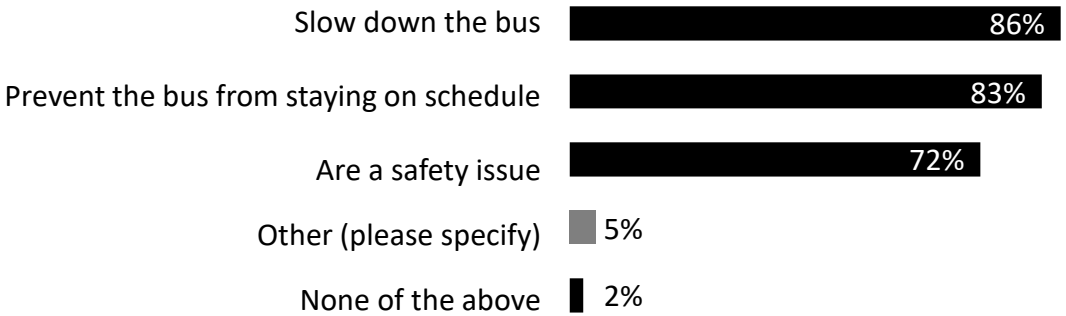
Majority agree it is a problem when cars block bus stops and bus lanes



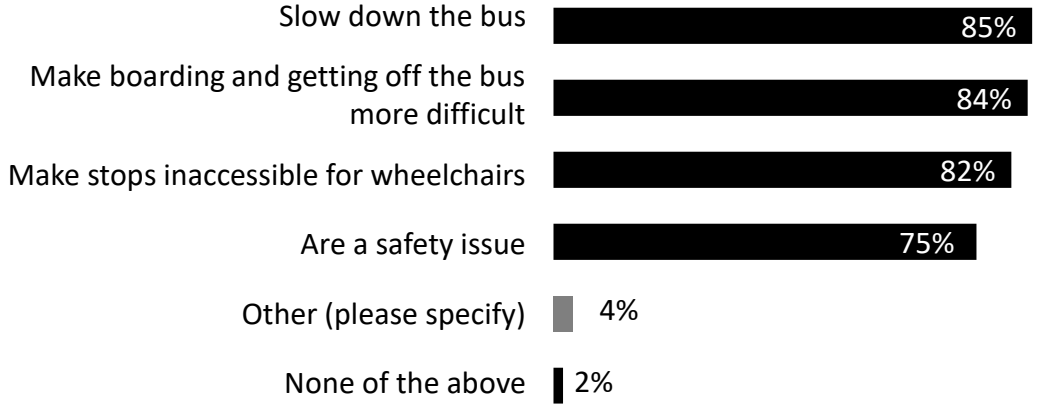
Riders recognize how cars blocking bus stops and bus lanes slow down the bus

What impacts do cars have when they…?

…Use bus-only lanes

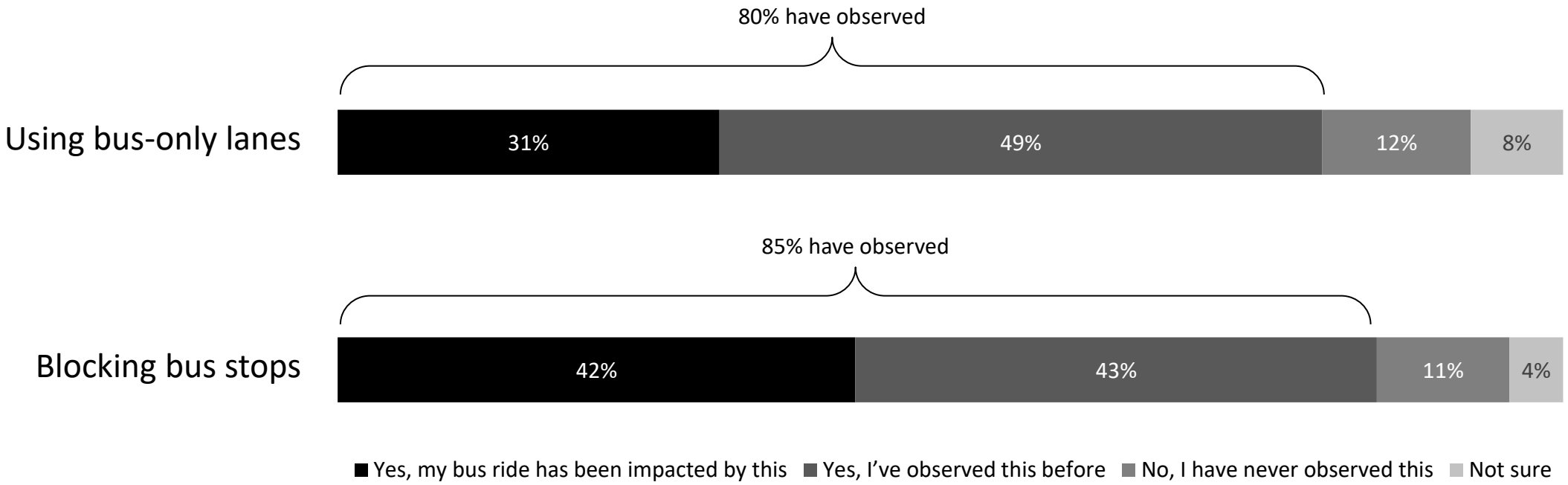


…Block bus stops

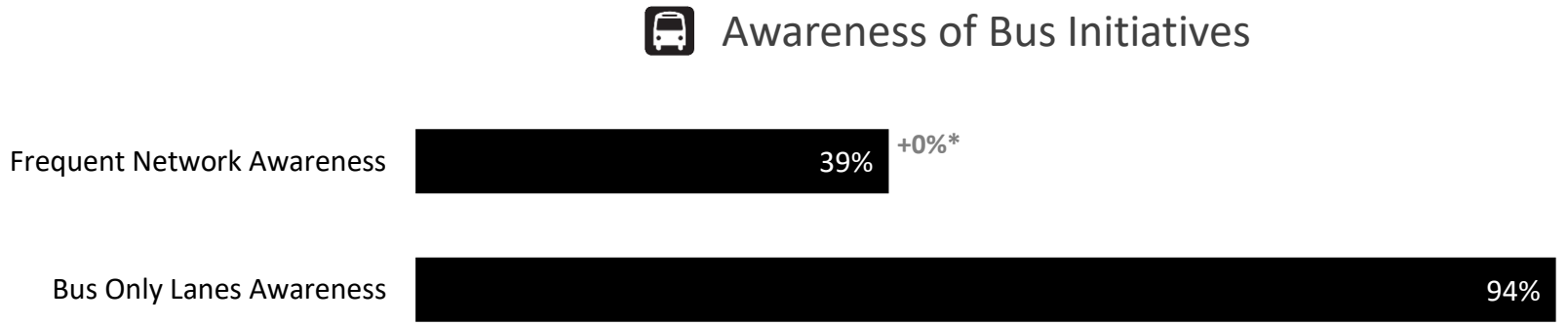


Most have seen cars using bus stops and bus lanes at some point

Have you ever observed cars…?



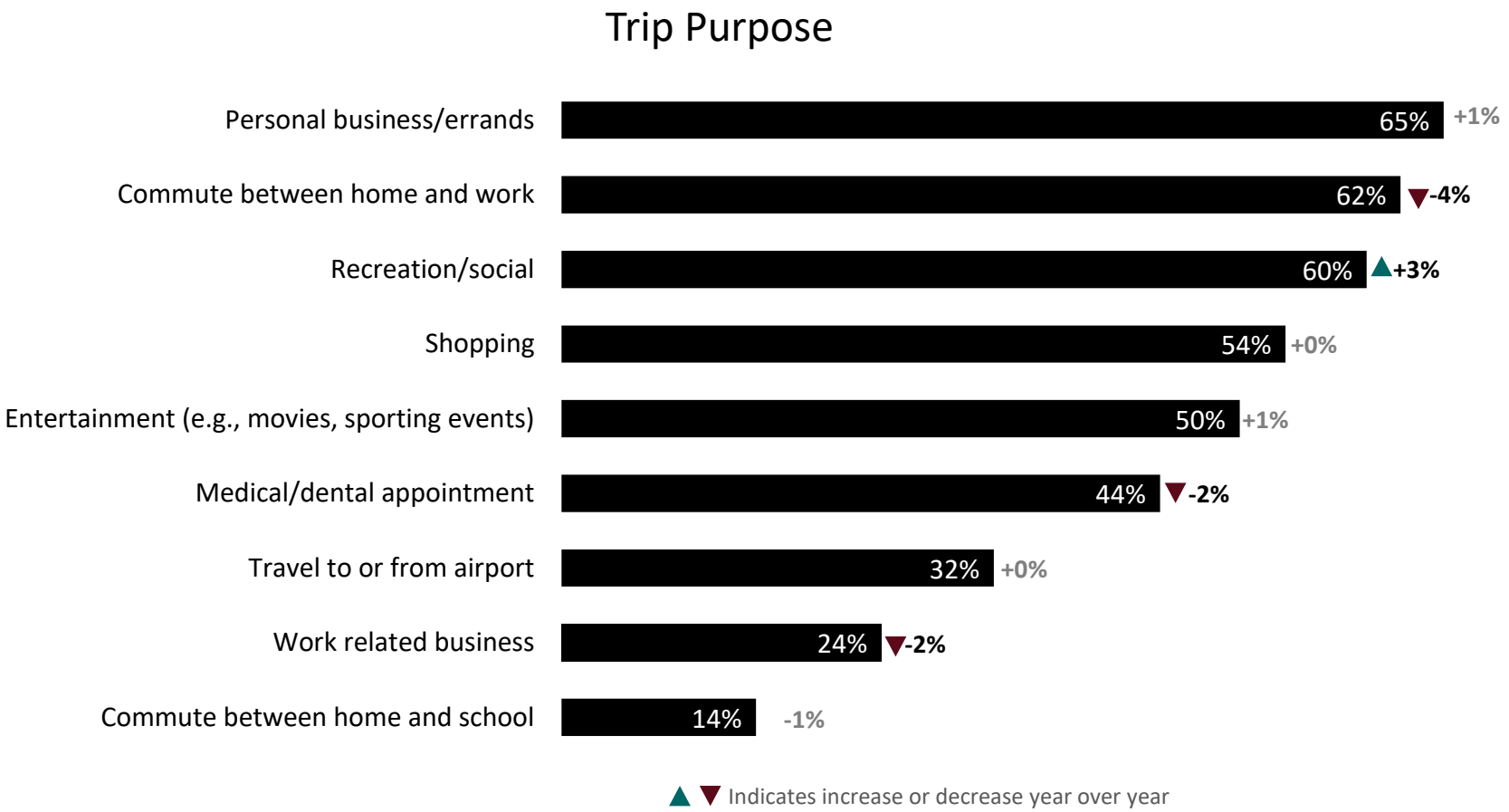
39% of riders are already aware of CTA's Bus Frequent Network



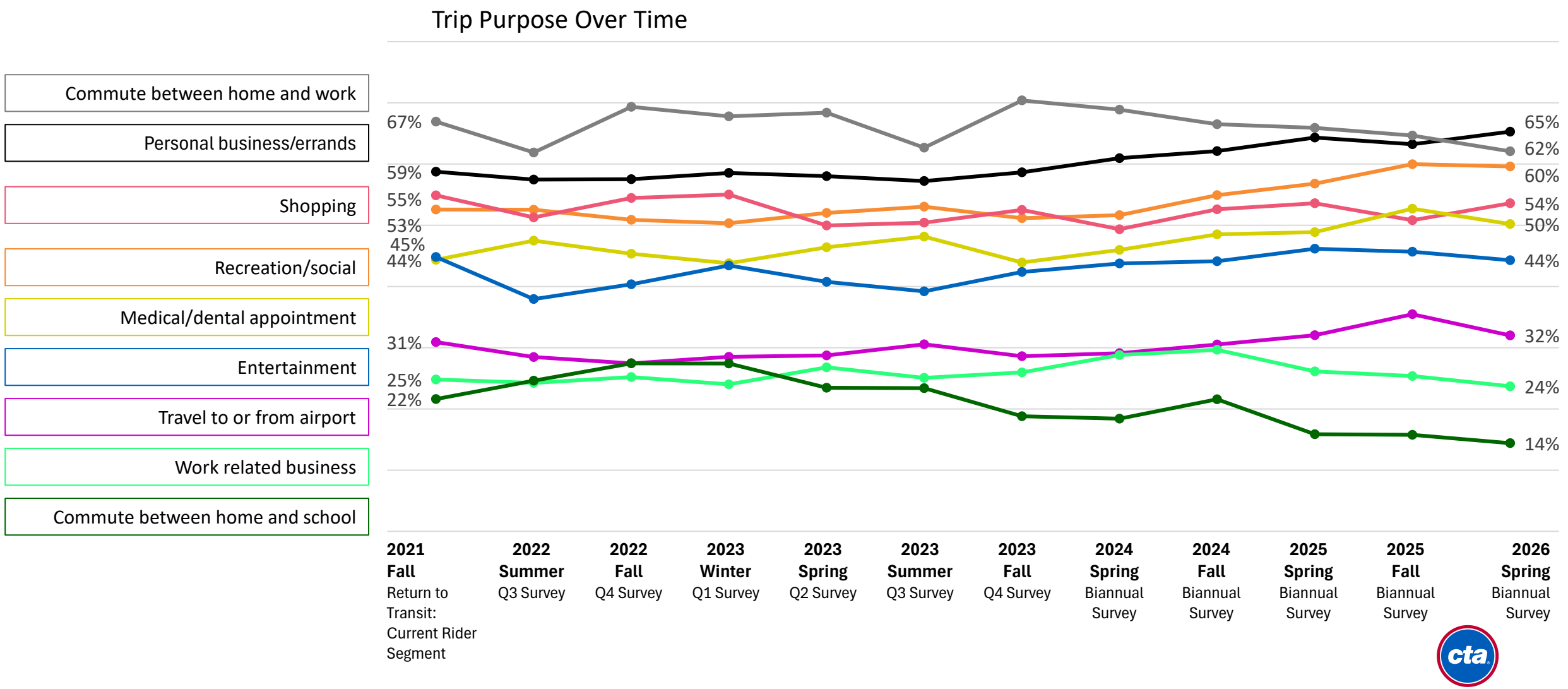
*Question added Fall 2025; showing change from Fall 2025 to Spring 2026 instead of year over year

Trip Purpose and Mode Share

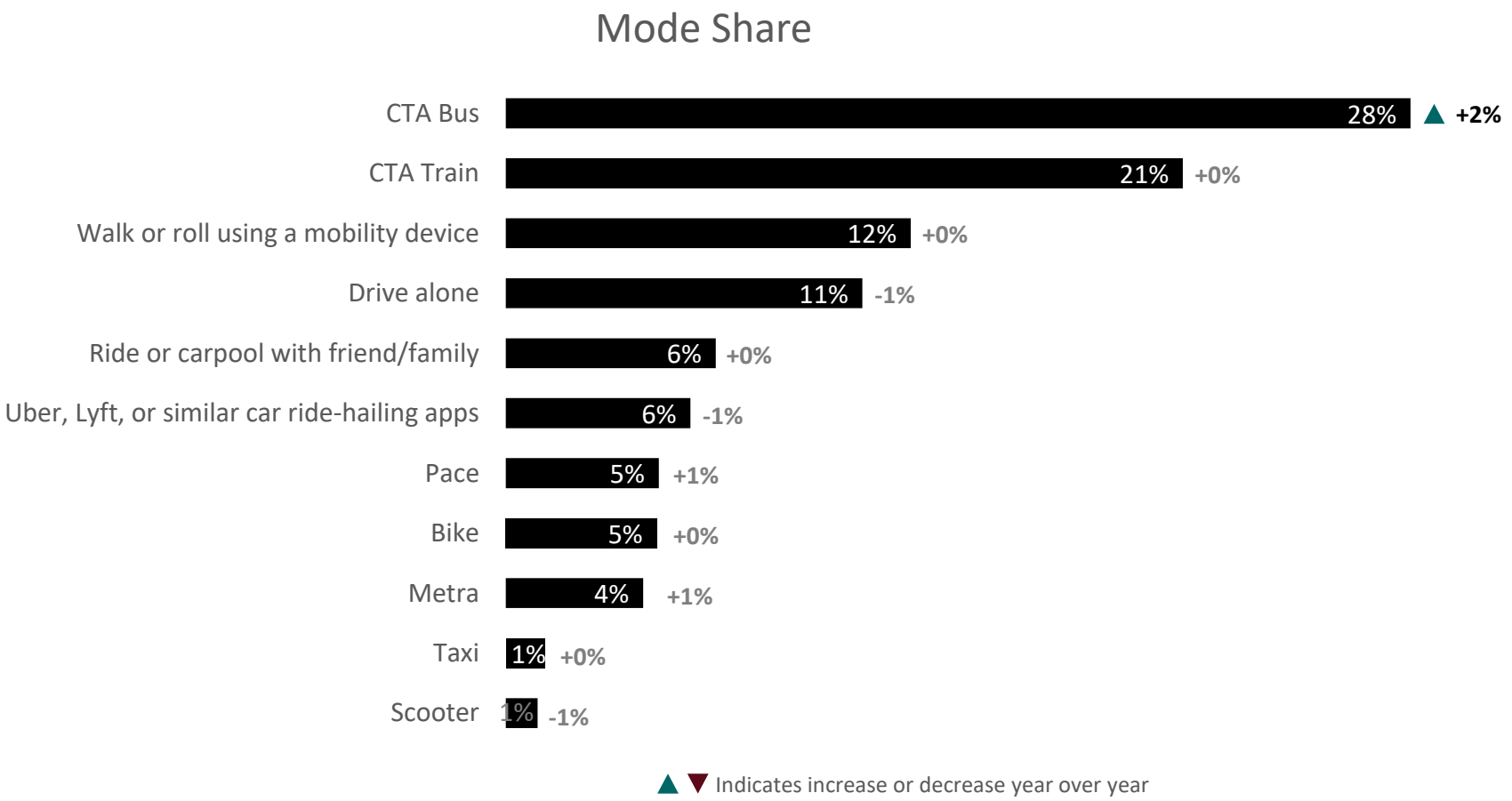
Personal business/errands is the top CTA trip purpose, and recreation/social trips have grown the most year over year



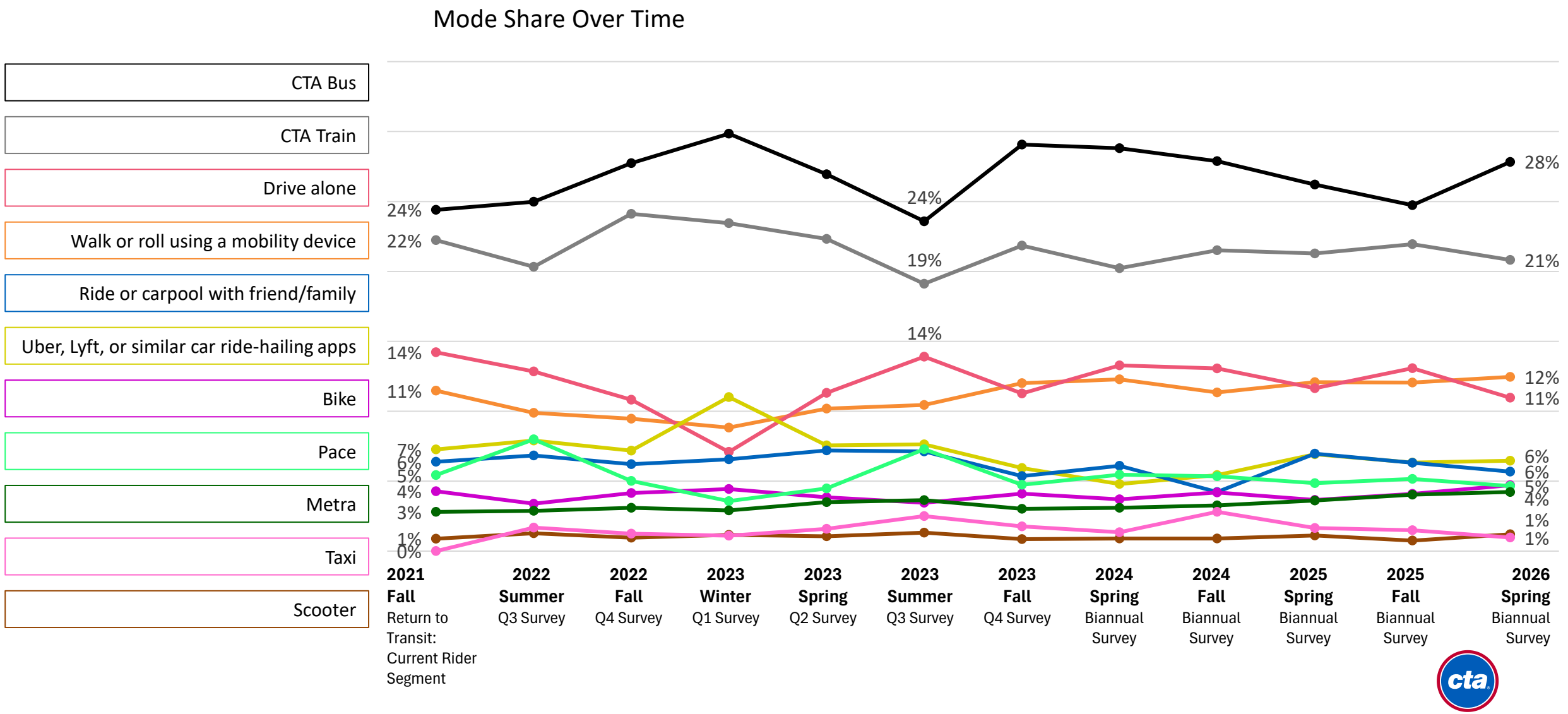
The percentage of riders who use CTA for work commutes has been declining since Fall 2023



Mode share is generally slow to change

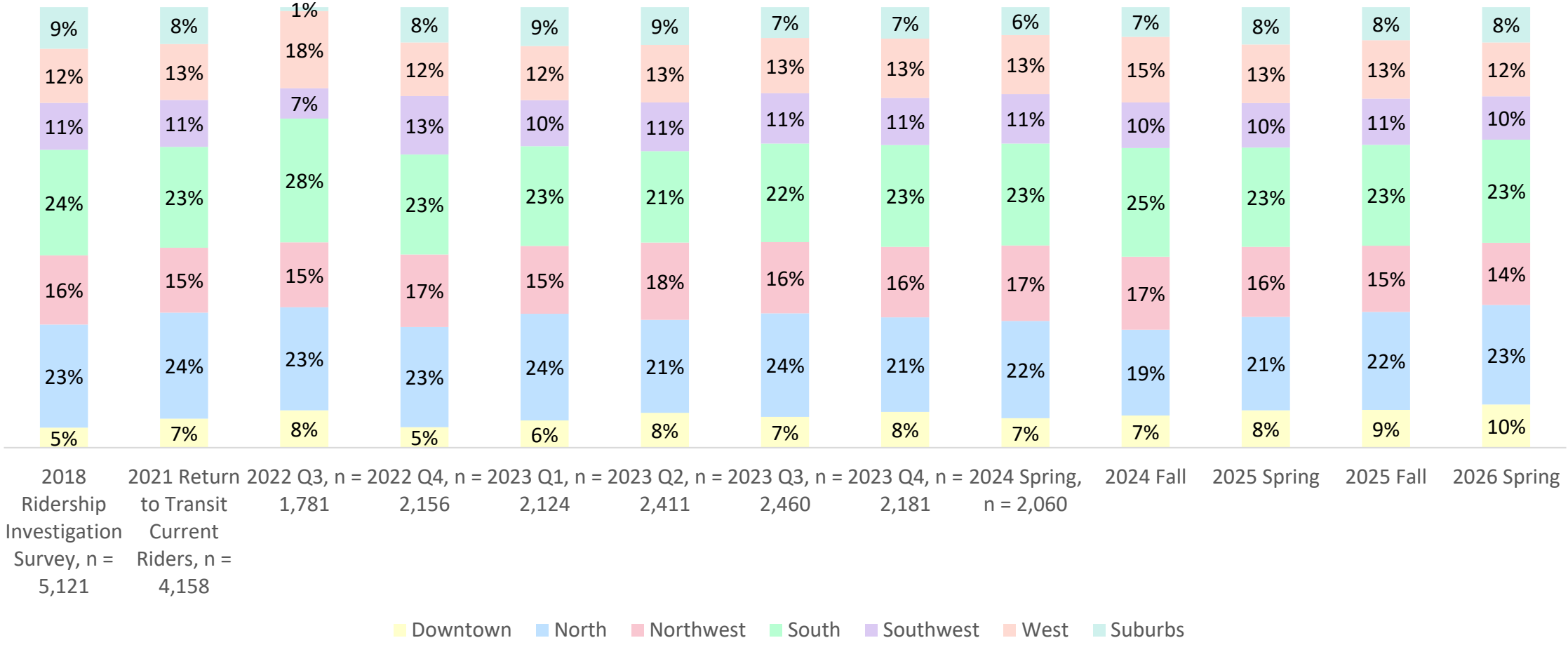


Bus and train are the main modes of transportation for CTA riders, but most compliment their transit ridership with additional ways to get around

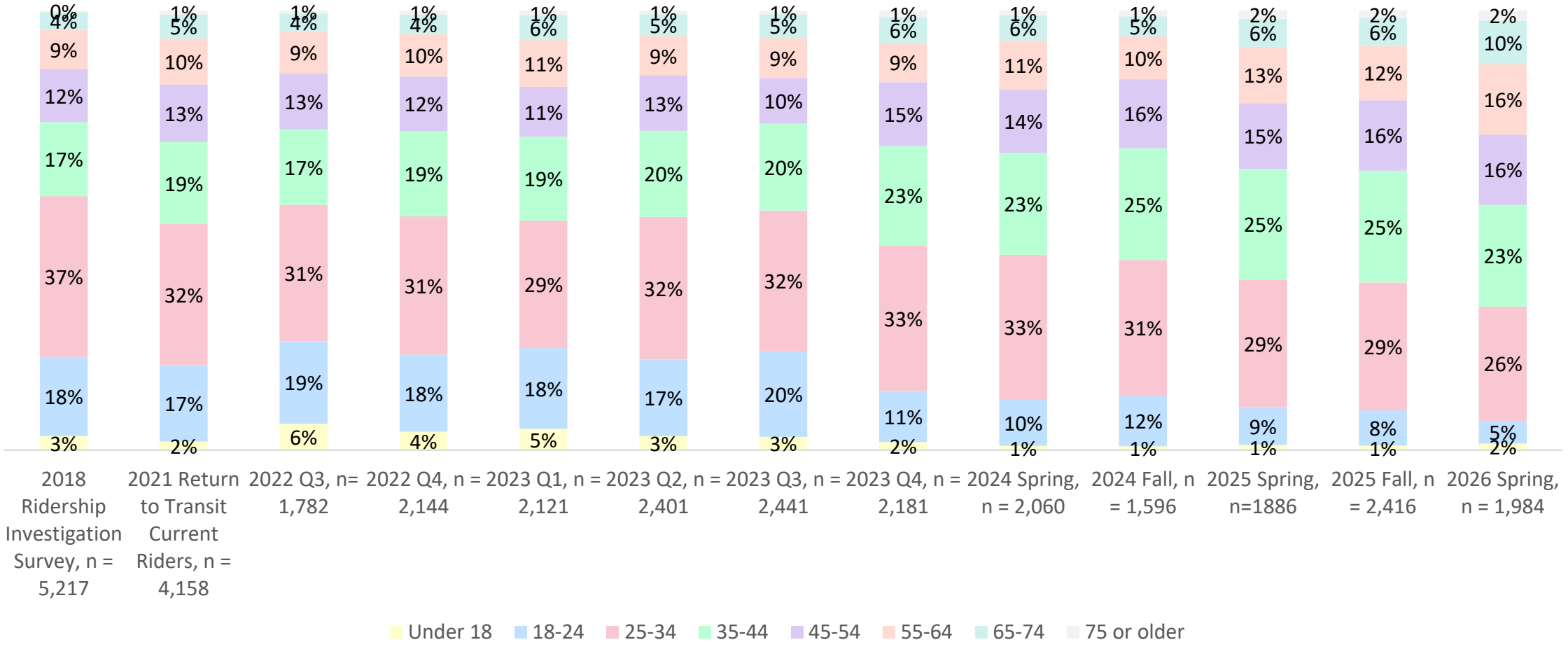


Demographics

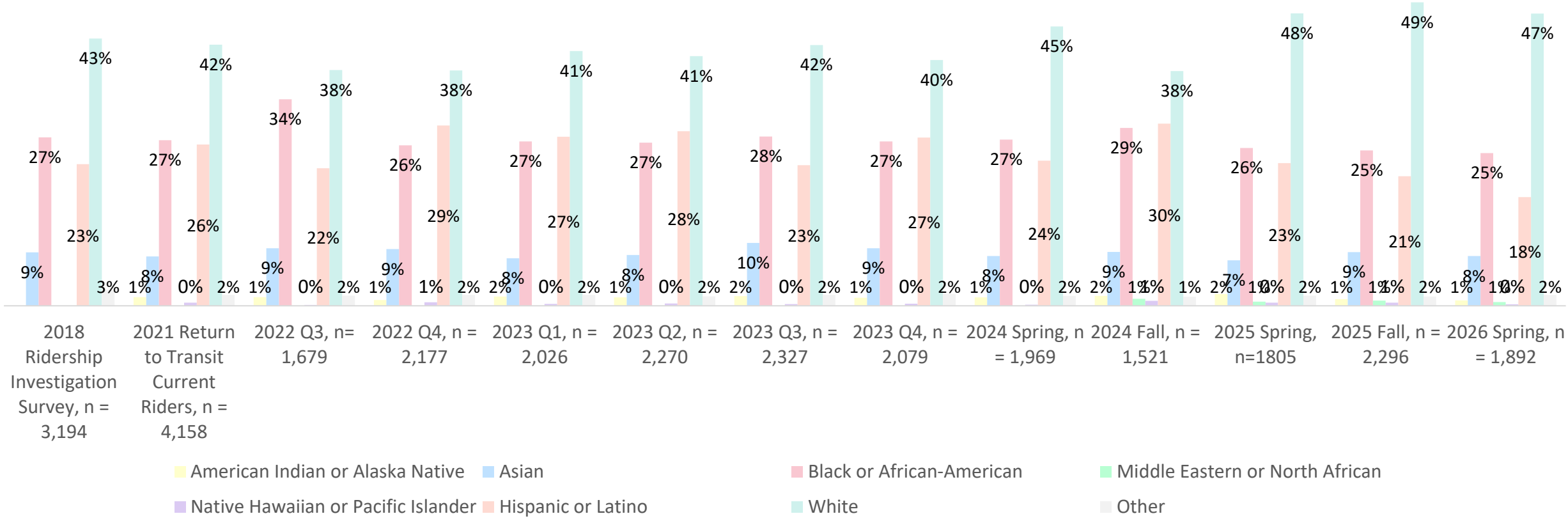
Region


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10%
2018 Ridership Investigation Survey, n = 5,121
2021 Return to Transit Current Riders, n = 4,158
2022 Q3, n = 1,781
2022 Q4, n = 2,156
2023 Q1, n = 2,124
2023 Q2, n = 2,411
2023 Q3, n = 2,460
2023 Q4, n = 2,181
2024 Spring, n = 2,060
2024 Fall
2025 Spring
2025 Fall
2026 Spring
Downtown
North
Northwest
South
Southwest
West
Suburbs

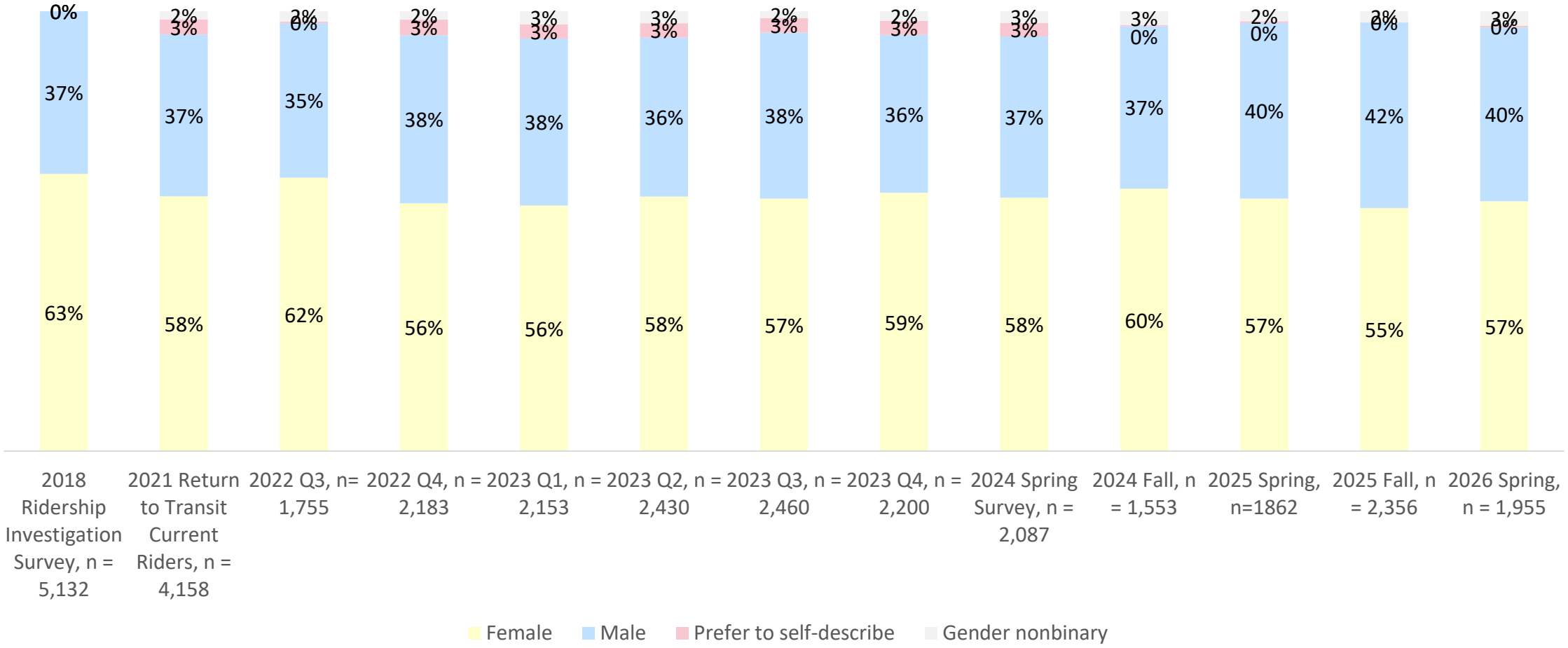
Age


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16%
23%
26%
5%
2%
2018 Ridership Investigation Survey, n = 5,217
2021 Return to Transit Current Riders, n = 4,158
2022 Q3, n= 1,782
2022 Q4, n = 2,144
2023 Q1, n = 2,121
2023 Q2, n = 2,401
2023 Q3, n = 2,441
2023 Q4, n = 2,181
2024 Spring, n = 2,060
2024 Fall, n = 1,596
2025 Spring, n=1886
2025 Fall, n = 2,416
2026 Spring, n = 1,984
Under 18
18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74
75 or older

Ethnicity (Select all that apply)



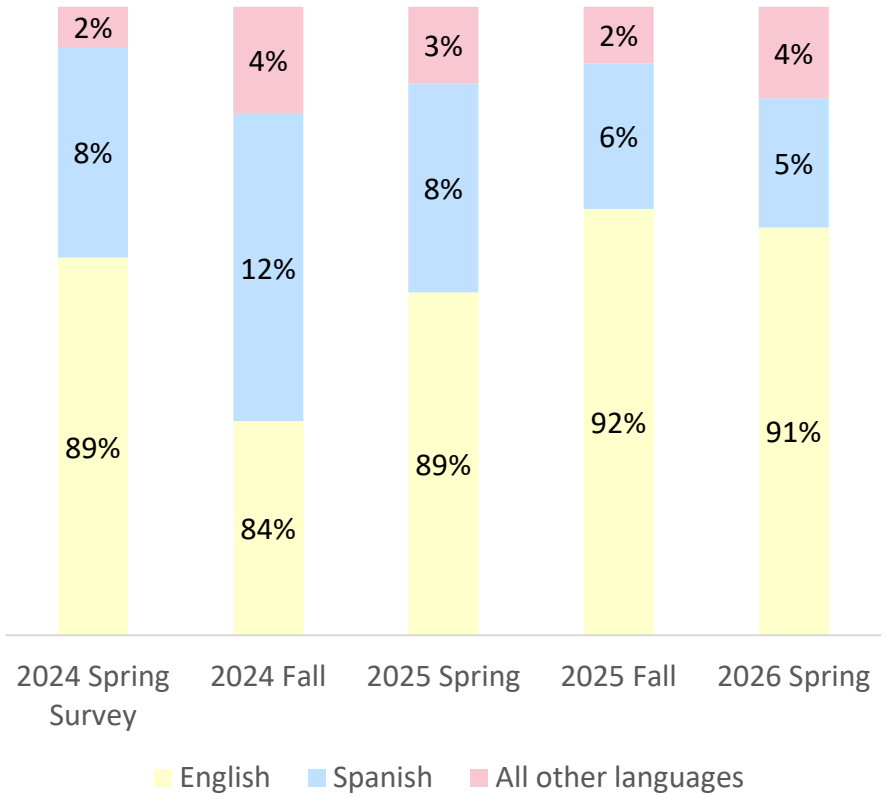
Gender


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42%
55%
3%
0%
40%
57%
2018 Ridership Investigation Survey, n = 5,132
2021 Return to Transit Current Riders, n = 4,158
2022 Q3, n= 1,755
2022 Q4, n = 2,183
2023 Q1, n = 2,153
2023 Q2, n = 2,430
2023 Q3, n = 2,460
2023 Q4, n = 2,200
2024 Spring Survey, n = 2,087
2024 Fall, n = 1,553
2025 Spring, n=1862
2025 Fall, n = 2,356
2026 Spring, n = 1,955
Female
Male
Prefer to self-describe
Gender nonbinary

Language and English Proficiency

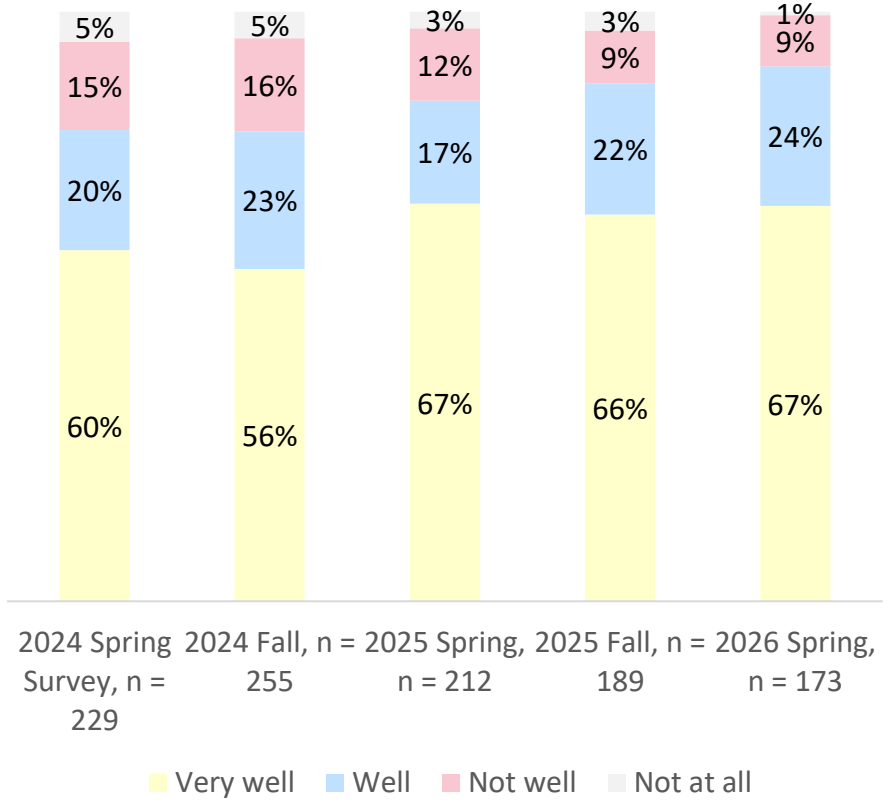
Primary Language Spoken at Home

(Among all respondents)

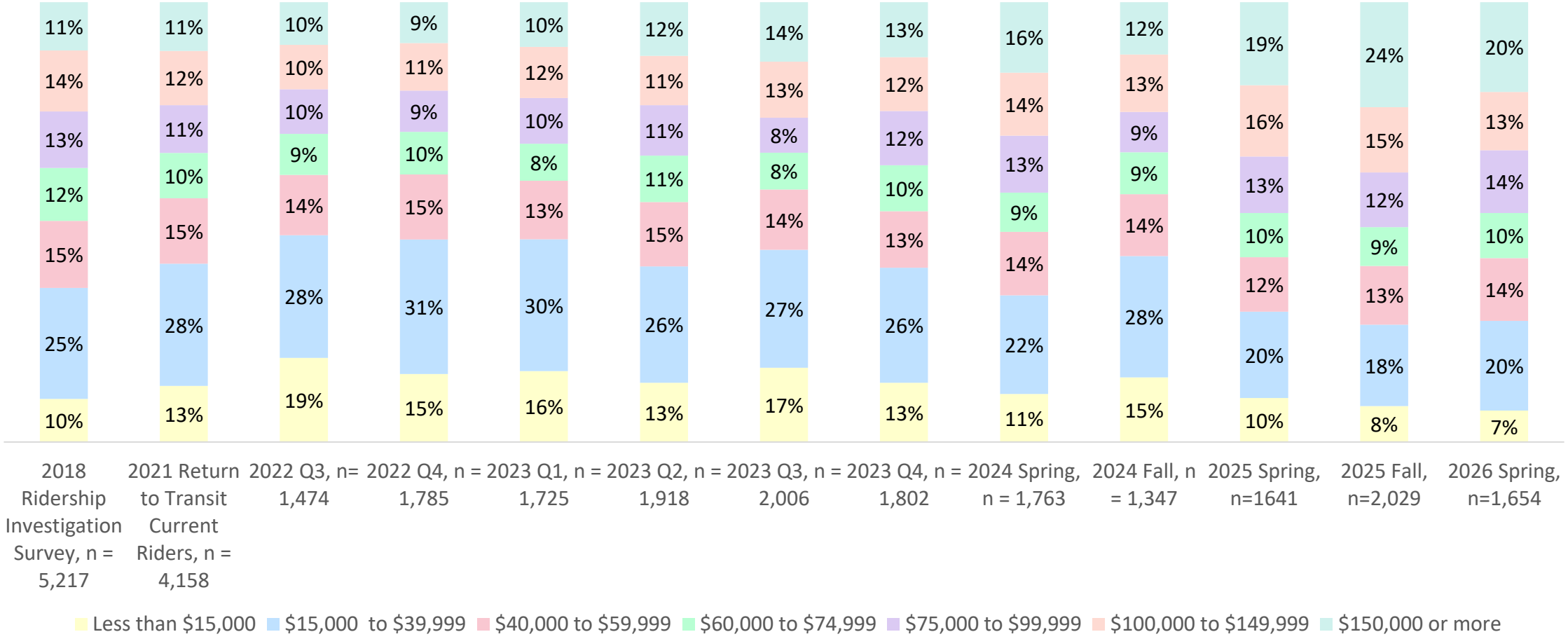


English Proficiency

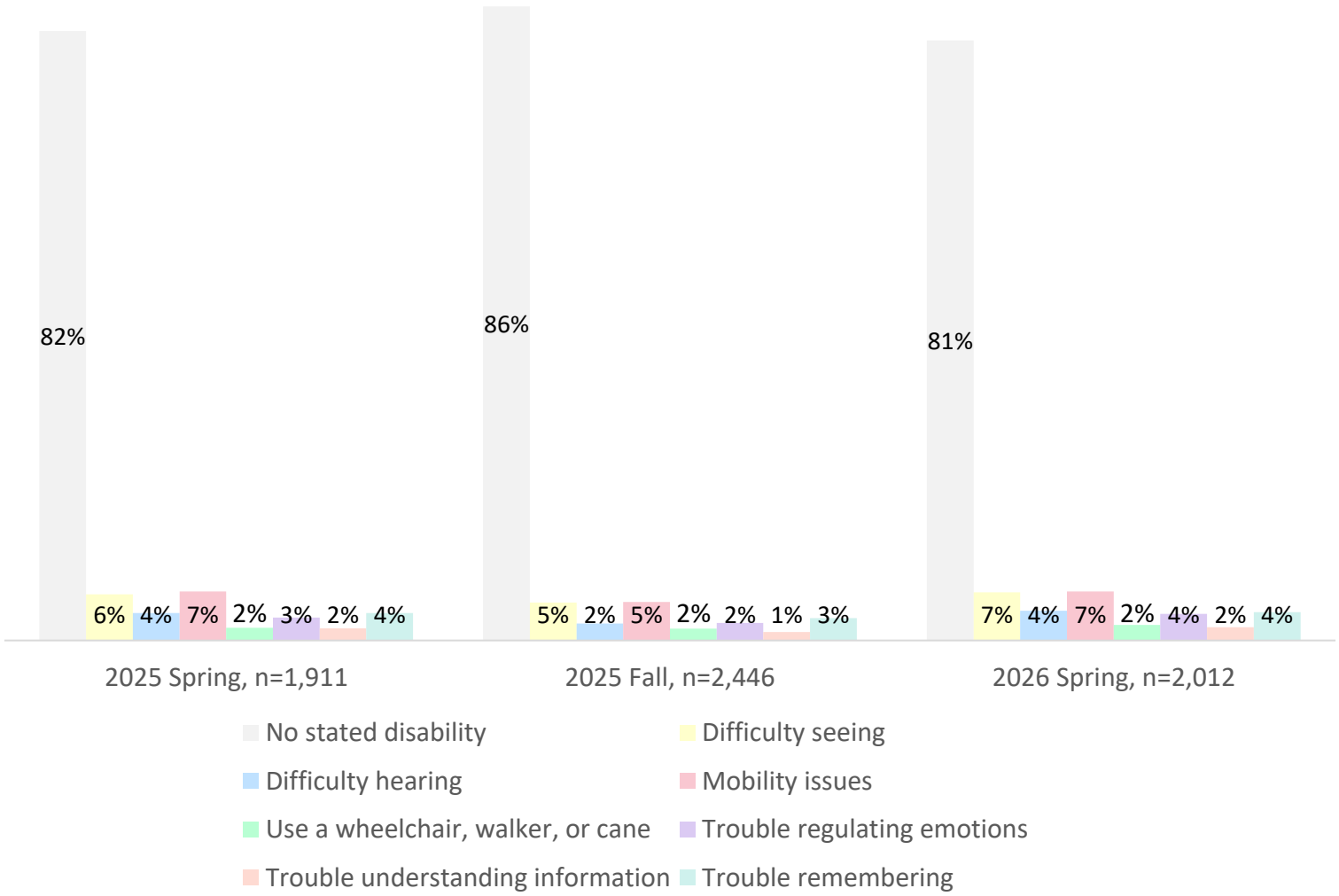
(Among respondents whose primary language spoken at home is not English)



Household Income



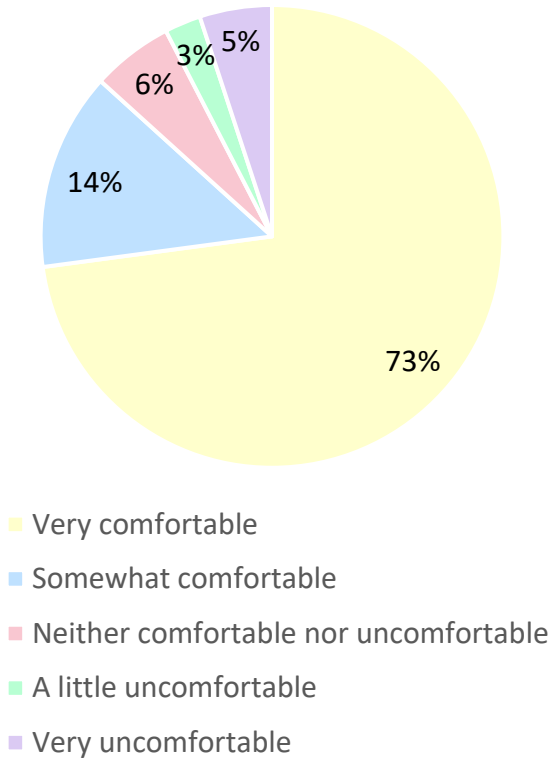
Disability Status



Tech Comfort for Trip Planning

How comfortable are you with using apps on a smartphone to plan your trips?

New for 2026 Spring, n=1,988



Caretaker Status

Do you travel with any of the following individuals other than yourself on CTA at least once a month?

New for 2026 Spring, n=2,012

