



Public Attitudes to Electric Vehicles

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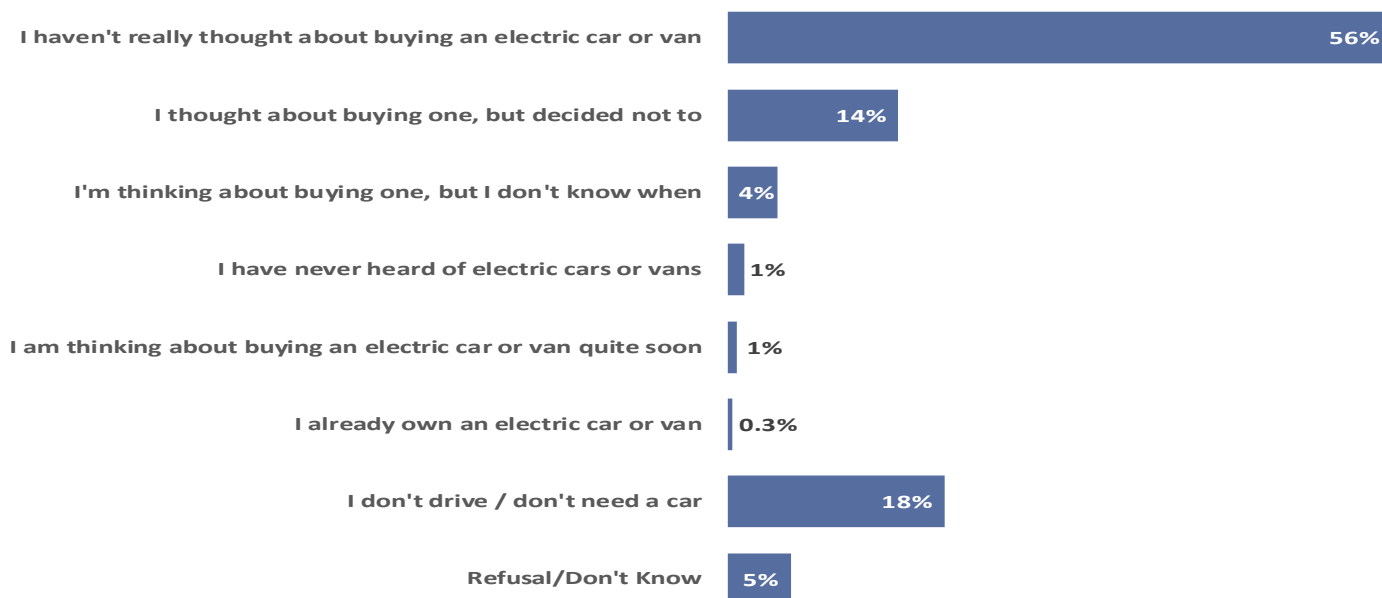
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Key Findings

The 2014 survey results found that:

• Only **5% of respondents** said that they were thinking about buying an electric car or van, 56% said that they had not thought about buying one with an additional 14% saying that they had thought about buying one and decided not to.



• Drivers reported that the most important things they considered when buying a car or van were, **cost** (85%), **reliability** (78%), **safety** (66%) and **comfort** (53%).



• Drivers reported that the most important factors **putting them off** buying an electric car or van were **recharging** (40%), and the **distance travelled on a battery** (39%) followed by **cost** (33%) and **lack of knowledge** (16%).

• Drivers reported that the most important factor that would **encourage them to buy** an electric car or van was **cost** (37%). Other factors included **distance travelled on charge** (20%), **recharging** (17%) and **environmentally friendly** (16%).

About this release

This publication presents statistics on public attitudes to electric vehicles. The report is based on a survey module, which was included in the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) February 2014 Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (formerly the Omnibus Survey).

This is the first time this module has been carried out. Although some of the questions were derived from a previous module on [public attitudes to transport](#), the questions have been reworded and the data are no longer comparable.

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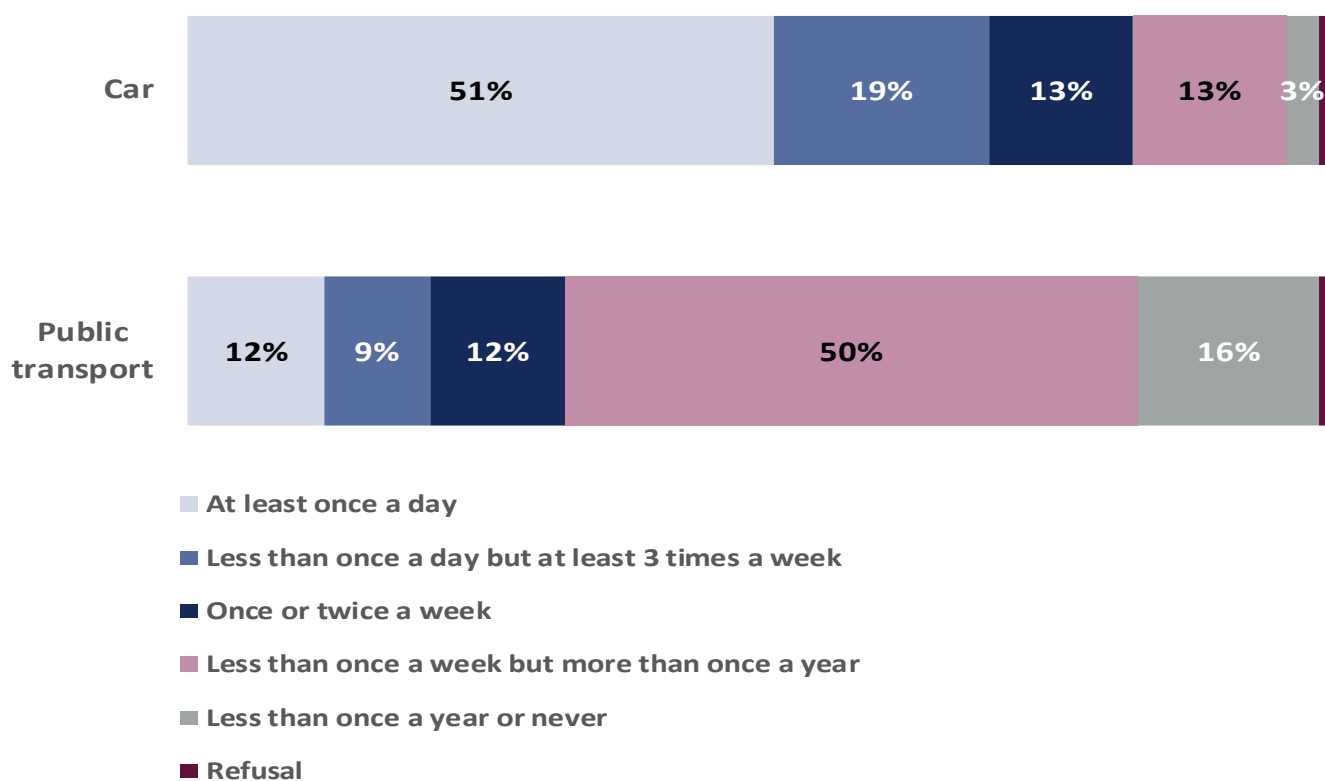
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1. Background Information

Some background information on respondents travelling patterns was also collected. This included:

- Over 80% of respondents reported **travelling by car as a driver or passenger** at least once or twice a week: of which 51% travelled at least once a day, 19% at least 3 times a week and 13% once or twice a week.
- A third of respondents reported **travelling by public transport** at least once or twice a week: of which 12% travelled at least once a day, 9% at least 3 times a week and 12% once or twice a week. In addition, 16% reported travelling by public transport less than once a year or never.

Figure 1: Frequency of car and public transport use (Table ATT0501, ATT0502)



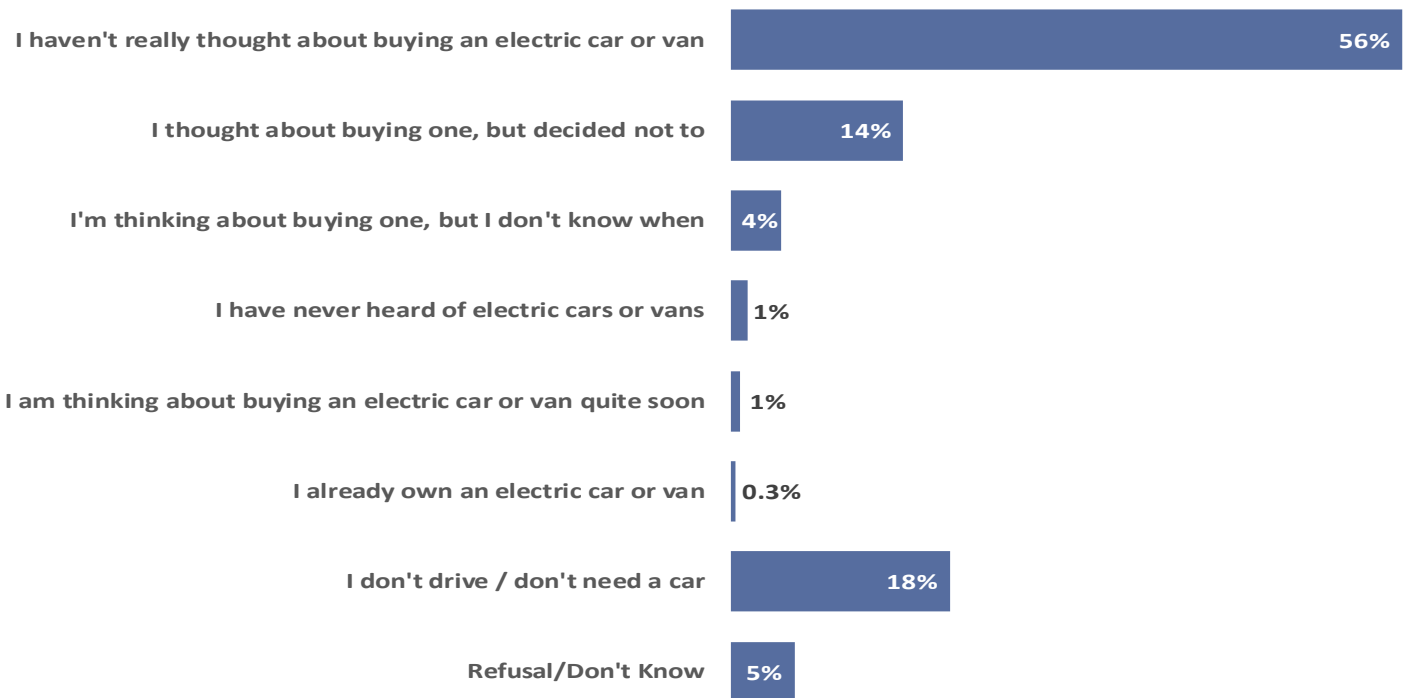
Source: ONS Omnibus Survey February 2014. Unweighted base: 962 (all respondents).

2. Knowledge and attitudes to electric cars and vans

All respondents:

- Less than 1% (0.3%) of respondents already owned an electric car or van.
- Only 5% of respondents said that they were thinking about buying an electric car or van, 56% said that they had not thought about buying one, with an additional 14% saying that they had thought about buying one and decided not to (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Attitudes to electric cars and vans (all respondents) (Table ATT0503)



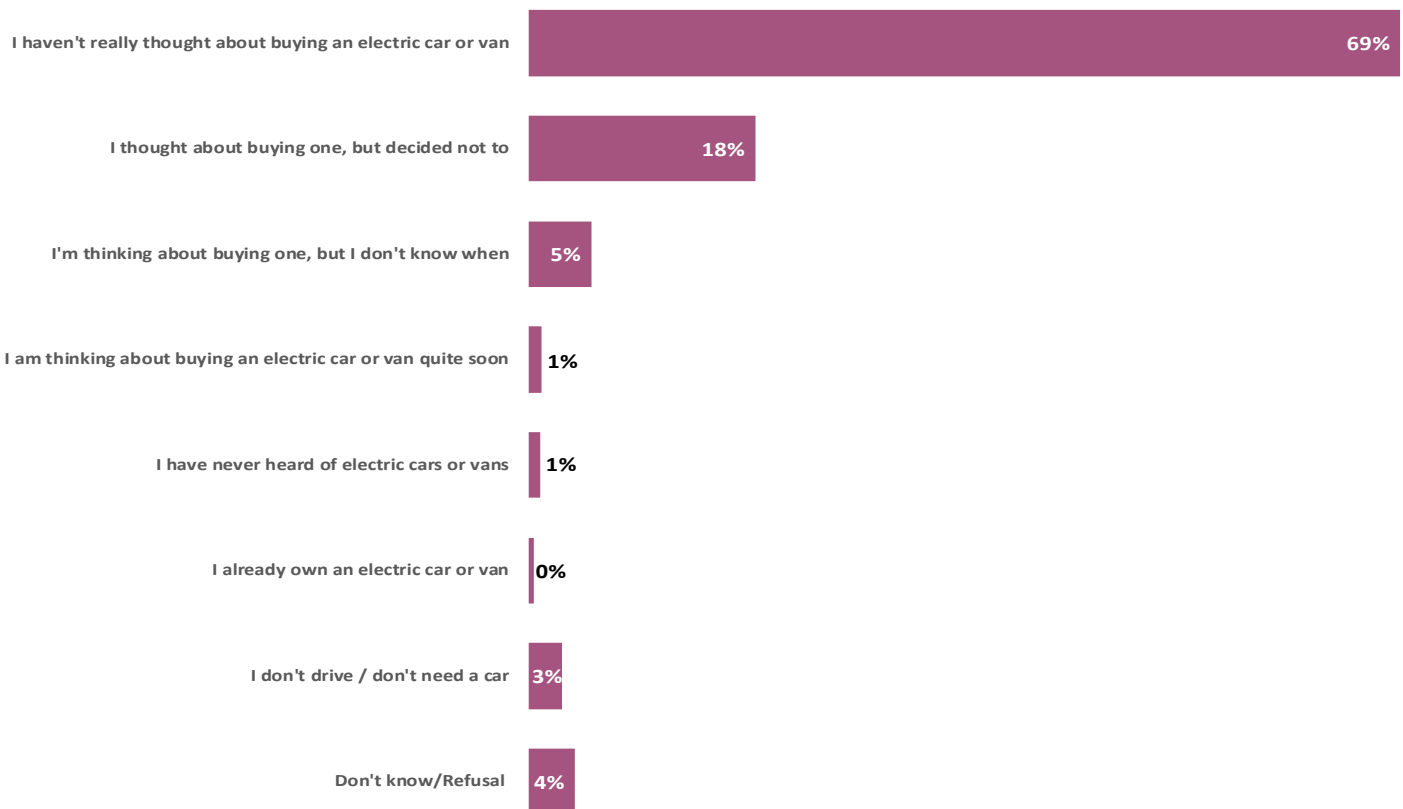
Source: ONS Omnibus Survey February 2014. Unweighted base: 962 (all respondents).

- Men were more likely to report having considered buying an electric car or van but deciding not to than women. Women were more likely to report not driving or needing a car.
- Those with a degree were more likely to report that they had thought about buying an electric car or van but decided not to, or were still thinking about buying an electric car or van, but not sure when than those without a degree. Those without a degree were more likely to report that they don't drive or don't need a car.

Drivers:

- When only considering those with a full driving licence, the percentage of respondents who had not really thought about buying an electric car or van rose to 69%. In addition, 18% of respondents had thought about buying one but decided not to, with a further 6% saying that they were thinking about buying one (Figure 3).
- Women drivers were more likely to say that they hadn't really thought about buying an electric car or van.

Figure 3: Attitudes to electric cars and vans (drivers only) (Table ATT0503)



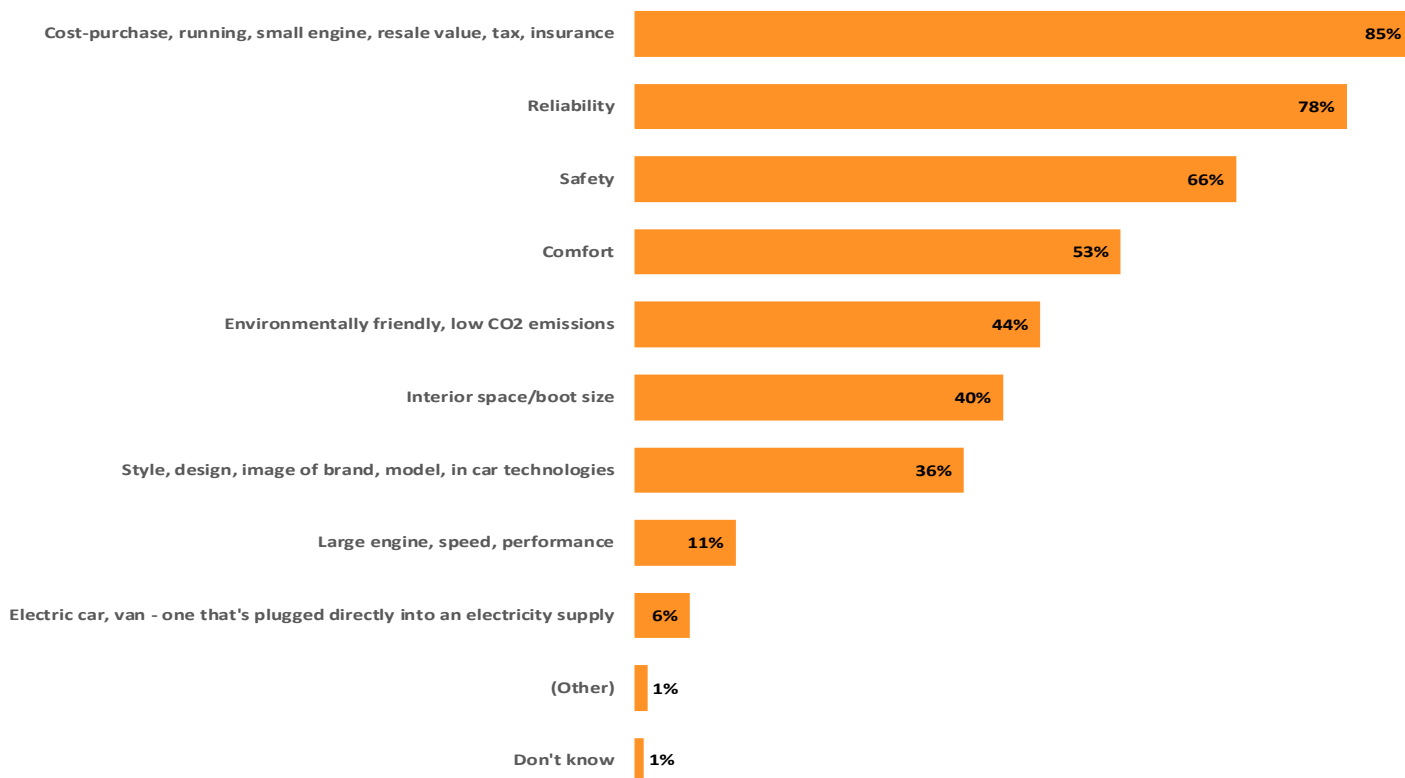
Source: ONS Omnibus Survey February 2014. Unweighted base: 679 (full licence holders).

- Those drivers with a degree were more likely to report that they had thought about buying an electric car or van but decided not to, or were still thinking about buying an electric car or van, but not sure when.
- Adding provisional drivers into the analysis does not change these result.

3. Important factors when buying a car or van

- Drivers reported that the most important factors they considered when buying a car were cost (85%), reliability (78%), safety (66%) and comfort (53%) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Factors considered important when buying a car or van (Table ATT0504)



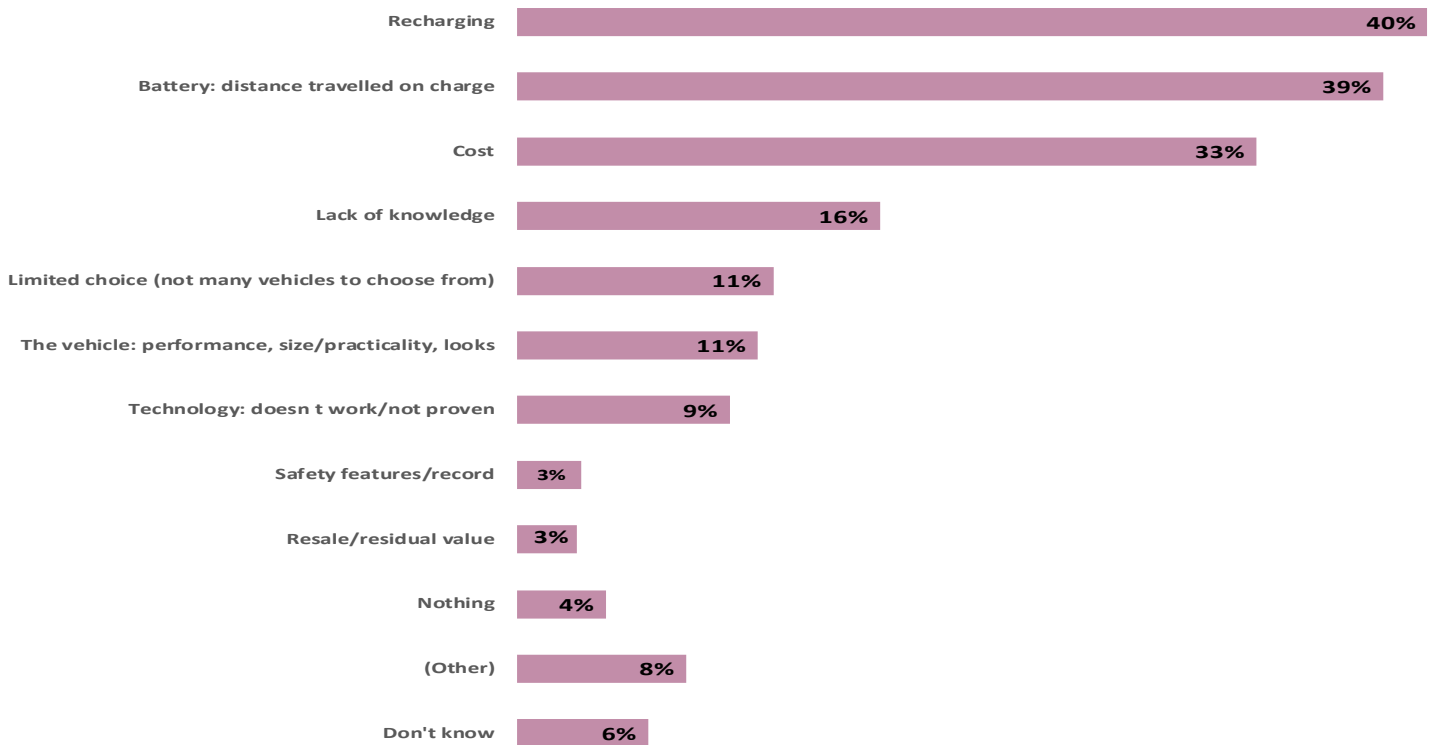
ONS Omnibus Survey February 2014. Unweighted base: 670 (Full driving licence holders). More than one answer was allowed so percentages can add to more than 100%.

- Of those reporting cost as a factor to be considered, the most important costs were cost of purchase followed by fuel/recharging costs, maintenance and insurance (Table ATT0505).
- Men were more likely to report a large engine, speed and performance as being important.
- Those over 65 were less interested in style than those under 55.
- Those with a degree were more interested in cars being environmentally friendly, their style and having a large engine.
- When reporting costs, men thought that the resale value was more important than women did whereas women were more concerned about vehicle excise duty.

4. Factors deterring people from buying an electric car or van

- Drivers reported that the most important factors putting them off buying an electric car were recharging (40%), and the distance travelled on a battery (39%) followed by cost (33%) and lack of knowledge (16%) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Factors discouraging buying an electric car or van (Table ATT0506)



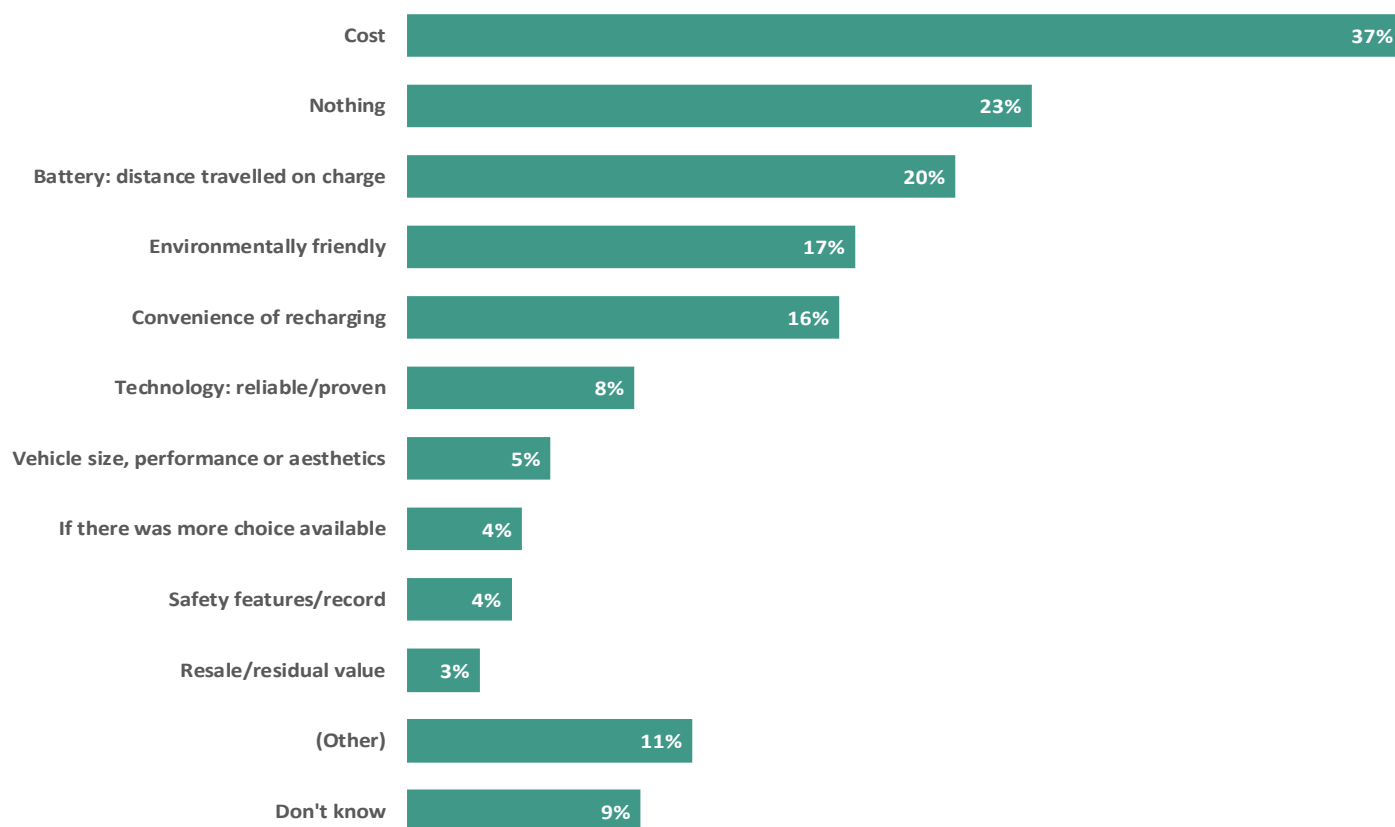
ONS Omnibus Survey February 2014. Unweighted base: 664 (Full driving licence holders). More than one answer was allowed so percentages can add to more than 100%.

- Of those reporting that costs was a deterrent, the most important costs were purchase, maintenance and fuel/recharging followed by resale value and insurance. (Table ATT0507).
- Of those reporting recharging as a deterrent, the most important factors were the availability of charging points or lack of charging points combined with distance travelled and concerns about running out of charge. There were also concerns about the time taken to recharge and the frequency of needing to recharge the battery.
- Women were more likely than men to say that they had a lack of knowledge of electric cars.
- Those with a degree were more likely to be concerned about the distance travelled on charge and the vehicle itself.
- Of those reporting that costs was a deterrent, men were more likely to be concerned about the resale value than women and those without a degree were more concerned about fuel/recharging costs and maintenance costs.

5. Factors that would encourage people to buy an electric car or van

- Drivers reported that the most important factors that would encourage them to buy an electric car were cost (37%) followed by “nothing” (23%). Other factors included battery (distance travelled on charge) (20%), environmentally friendly (17%) and convenience of recharging (16%) (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Factors encouraging buying an electric car or van (Table ATT0508)



ONS Omnibus Survey February 2014. Unweighted base: 662 (driving licence holders). More than one answer was allowed so percentages can add to more than 100%.

- On costs, the most important was purchase cost, followed by fuel/recharging costs, maintenance, insurance and vehicle excise duty.
- There were no gender differences between the responses.
- Older age groups, in particular those 65 and over, were more likely to say that nothing would encourage them to buy an electric vehicle.
- Those with a degree were more likely to say that cost, battery (distance travelled on charge), convenience of recharging and environmentally friendly vehicles were more encouraging factors than those without a degree. In addition those with a degree were much less likely to say that nothing would encourage them to buy an electric car.

6. Strengths and weaknesses of the data

The ONS Opinions and Lifestyle (Omnibus) Survey is a random probability survey of adults aged 16 and over living in private households in Great Britain. Adults are interviewed face to face in their homes. The response rate of 53% for the February 2014 survey, resulted in a sample size of 962. ONS Opinions and Lifestyle (Omnibus) survey uses a stratified random probability sample design and data are weighted to reflect the region/age/gender distribution of Great Britain. For further technical details of the survey see the technical report at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/products-and-services/opn/index.html>.

7. Background notes

1. The Public Attitudes to Transport web page provides further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release. The tables are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-public-attitudes-to-transport>.
2. For the questions on the purchase of cars, respondents were able to give multiple answers so the percentages add up to more than 100%.