

# Canal Cordon Report 2018

Report on trends in mode share of vehicles  
and people crossing the Canal Cordon

2006 to 2018



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background to Data Collection

Since 1980, Dublin City Council (DCC) has been conducting traffic counts at 33 locations around the cordon formed by the Royal and Grand Canals. The counts are conducted during the month of November each year. Since 1997 the counts have been conducted over the period between 07:00 and 10:00.

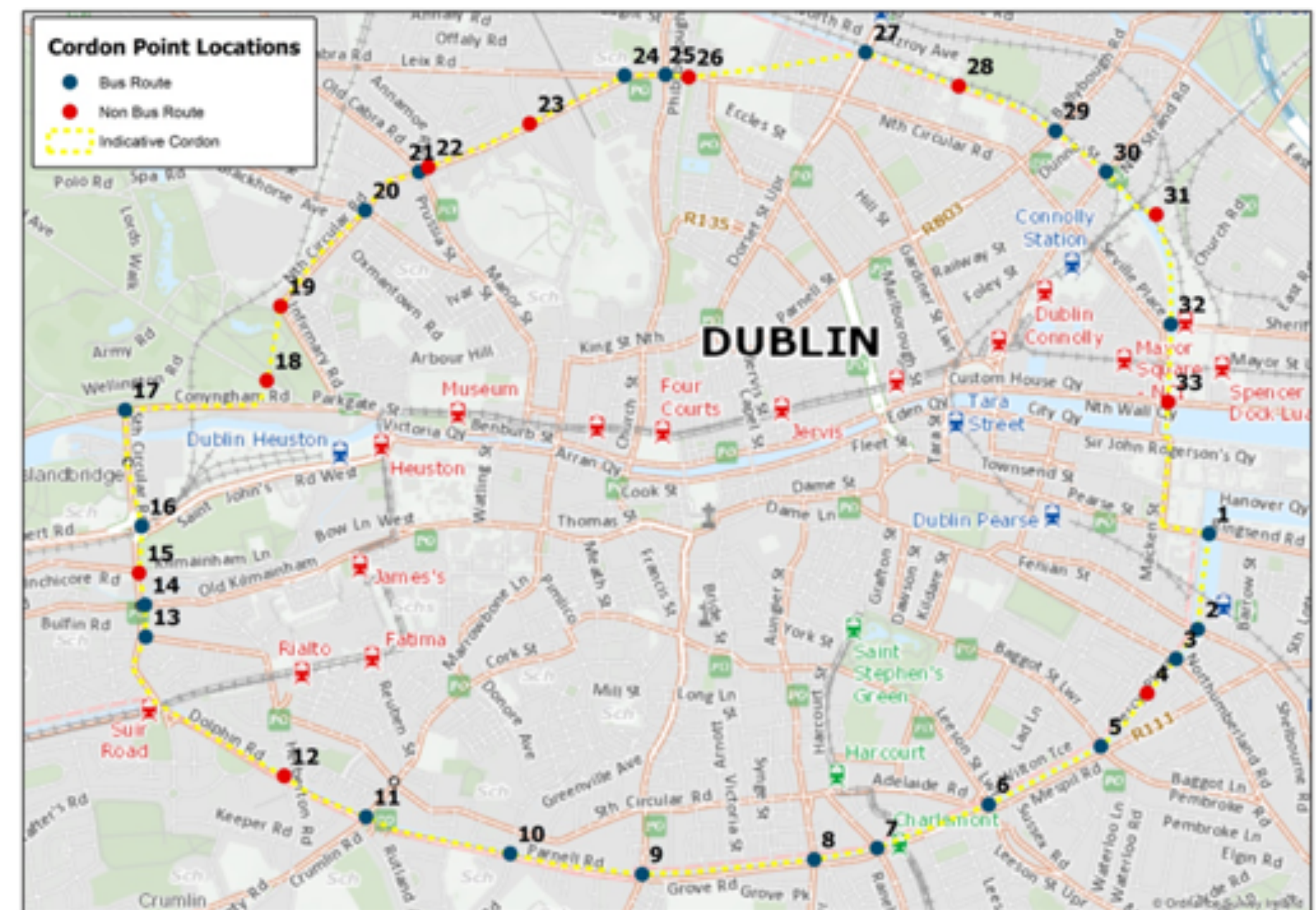
Between 1997 and 2009, the Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) collected data from a number of sources on people crossing the Canal Cordon into Dublin's City Centre in the AM peak period between 07:00 and 10:00. The National Transport Authority (NTA) subsumed the DTO in 2009, and has continued to collate this data on an annual basis.

Combining the two sets of data enables the tracking of trends in the modes of travel that people are using to travel into the City Centre for the period 2006-2018.

## 1.2 Definition of the Canal Cordon

Map 1 illustrates the Canal Cordon and the 33 locations on the Cordon where data is annually collected on the movement of people in the AM peak period between 7:00 and 10:00. As the name suggests, the cordon has been chosen to ensure (as far as possible) that any person entering the City Centre from outside must pass through one of the 33 locations where the surveys were undertaken. It should be noted that the data as presented in this report refers to movements of people in one direction only (i.e. inbound into the city centre) across the various cordon points.

All 33 cordon points are on routes for general traffic into the City Centre, while 22 of the cordon points (shown in blue in Map 1) are on bus routes into the City. People using DART and suburban rail services to enter the City Centre cross the cordon close to cordon points 2, 16 and 31 in Map 1, while those travelling on the two LUAS lines cross the cordon at points 7 and 13.



Map 1 Canal Cordon Showing all 33 count locations



1.3 Data Sources

Data on the movement of people across the Canal Cordon has been assembled from a number of sources as outlined below:

- Dublin City Council has undertaken surveys at the Canal Cordon in November annually since 1980. Surveys are undertaken over two days at each location and an average across the two days is reported. The survey counts pedestrians, cyclists, cars, taxis, buses, goods vehicles and motor bikes crossing the cordon points in the inbound direction in the three hour, AM peak period 0700-1000.
- To complement the Dublin City Council Canal Cordon annual surveys, Dublin Bus have undertaken their own surveys annually on a single day at each location in November. This is not necessarily the same day as the DCC cordon counts. Since 1997 this survey has counted the number of passengers on all buses (including privately operated bus services)<sup>1</sup> crossing inbound over the canal cordon points. This survey is undertaken at the 22 cordon points that are on bus routes into the City (shown in blue in Map 1).
- Since 2012, Iarnród Éireann has undertaken a census of passengers boarding and alighting on all services passing through all stations on the national rail network on a single day. In 2018 the national rail census was carried out on 15th November. Prior to 2012 and since 1997, Iarnród Éireann had undertaken a similar passenger census for services operating within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA)<sup>2</sup>. Analysis of this data enables a calculation of the numbers of rail passengers crossing the three Canal Cordon points (inbound) between 07:00 and 10:00 on the census day.
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)<sup>3</sup> undertakes an annual census of passengers boarding and alighting at all LUAS tram stops. This census is undertaken on a single day in November. It has been undertaken every year since both LUAS lines became operational in 2004. This data enables calculation of the number of LUAS passengers crossing the two Canal Cordon points (inbound) between 07:00 and 10:00 on census day.

By combining these four data sources, the NTA and DCC have been able to compile a comprehensive picture of the modes of travel used by people travelling across the Canal Cordon into the City in a typical AM peak period. There may be gaps in the data compiled in certain years, and some changes in the survey methodology for the DCC cordon counts have been introduced in recent years.

The introduction of LUAS also had a significant impact on the data trends. For these reasons, the analysis of trends in chapter 2 of this report is restricted to the years 2006 – 2018. For these 12 years, there is a consistent and continuous set of data that enables a direct comparison of mode share trends.

1. Surveyors board all Dublin Bus services at the cordon point and conduct a count of passengers. For non-Dublin Bus services (such as Bus Éireann and privately operated services) experienced surveyors estimate the volume of passengers on board as the bus crosses the cordon point.

2. When the Census was GDA only, passengers who began their trip outside of the GDA would still be counted once they completed their trip within the GDA. For example a passenger travelling from Cork to Dublin would be counted crossing the Cordon at point 16 i.e. departing Parkwest and Cherry Orchard station.

3. Previously Railway Procurement Agency (RPA)



# 2. Traffic Surveys - Vehicles, Cyclists, Pedestrians

## 2.1 Overview

This Chapter of the report records the data collected from the traffic counts only, which records the numbers of vehicles of different types and the numbers of cyclists and pedestrians. It does not include the public transport surveys which supplement the traffic counts with the additional passenger numbers on the various modes of public transport. That information is included in Chapter 3 of this report.

Table 1 below presents the total numbers of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists crossing the Canal Cordon inbound between 07:00am and 10:00am from 2006 to 2018. Figure 1 illustrates this data in graphical format.

Mode	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bus	1,680	1,740	1,814	1,704	1,688	1,539	1,503	1,539	1,504	1,528	1,652	1,637	1,837
Car	58,664	58,686	58,897	58,897	58,047	55,745	55,343	54,458	53,033	53,064	51,908	50,158	48,820
Taxi	3,825	4,583	5,079	4,980	4,809	4,862	5,277	5,458	4,955	4,699	4779	4,098	4,399
Walk	17,114	18,594	18,360	14,618	15,092	14,551	17,070	17,495	19,711	18,727	21,473	24,936	23,858
Cycle	4,829	5,676	6,143	6,326	5,952	6,870	7,943	9,061	10,349	10,893	12,093	12,447	12,227
Goods	2,291	1,445	1,223	1,087	993	1,176	1,099	1,045	1,087	1,096	1,093	1,024	1,153
M.Bike	2,395	2,429	2,375	2,060	1,656	1,485	1,425	1,423	1,372	1,390	1,464	1,532	1,477

Table 1 – Vehicle, cyclists and pedestrians crossing the Canal Cordon by mode of travel 2006-2018

Vehicles by mode crossing the Canal Cordon 0700 - 1000  
2006 - 2018

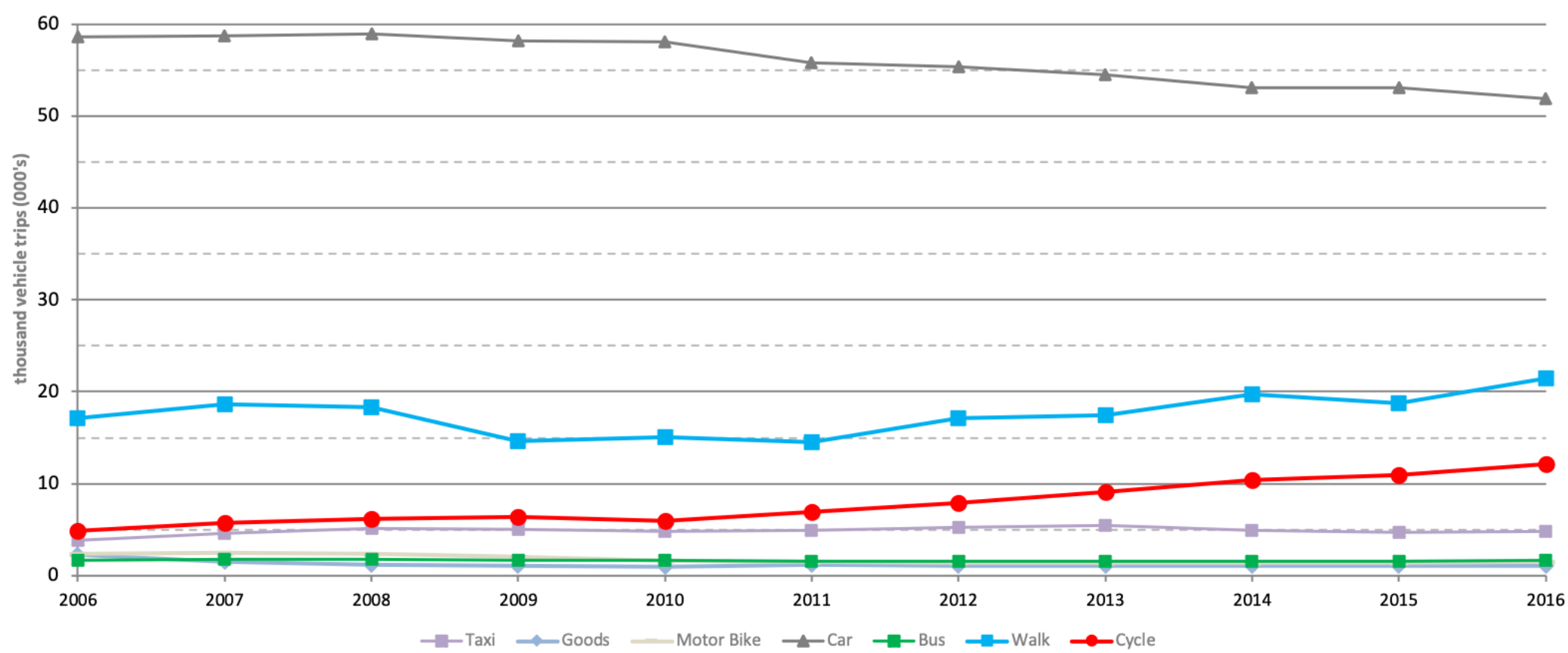


Figure 1 – Vehicle, cyclists and pedestrians crossing the Canal Cordon by mode of travel 2006-2018

The next sections provide an analysis of this data by mode of travel, identifying the trends in the number of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists crossing the canal cordon during the AM peak period from 07:00-10:00. In Chapter 3, this analysis is supplemented with additional public transport patronage data to provide a full picture of the travel trends in person terms across the canal cordon.

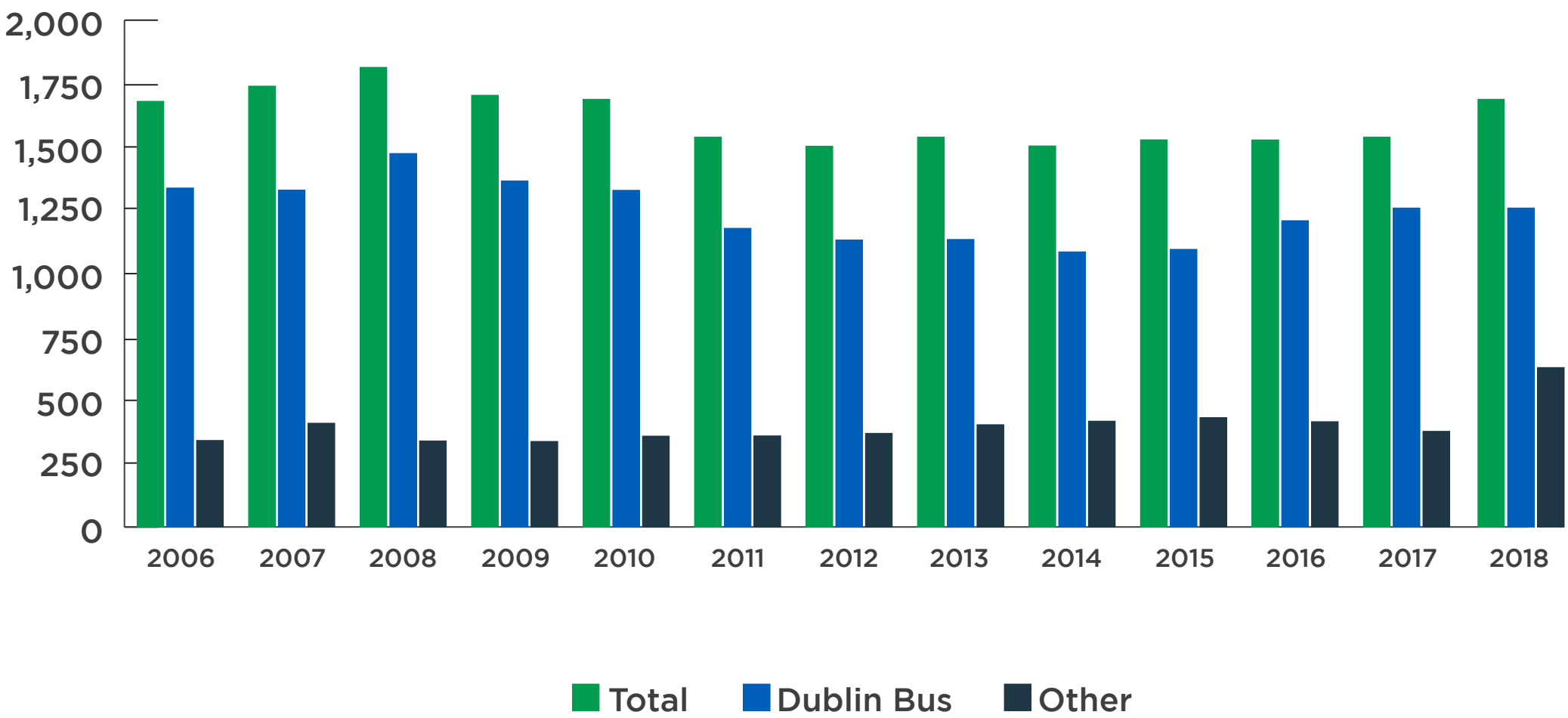
2.2 Numbers of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians crossing the Canal Cordon by mode

2.2.1 Buses

Between 2017 and 2018, there has been a slight increase in the number of buses crossing the cordon from 1,637 to 1,837. However within this total, Dublin Bus vehicle numbers increased only slightly by 1% whereas buses operated by Bus Éireann and private operators increased markedly by 51%.

In the period 2006-2018 the total number of buses crossing the cordon has increased by 9%.

Number of Buses Crossing Cordon in AM Peak Period, 2006-2018

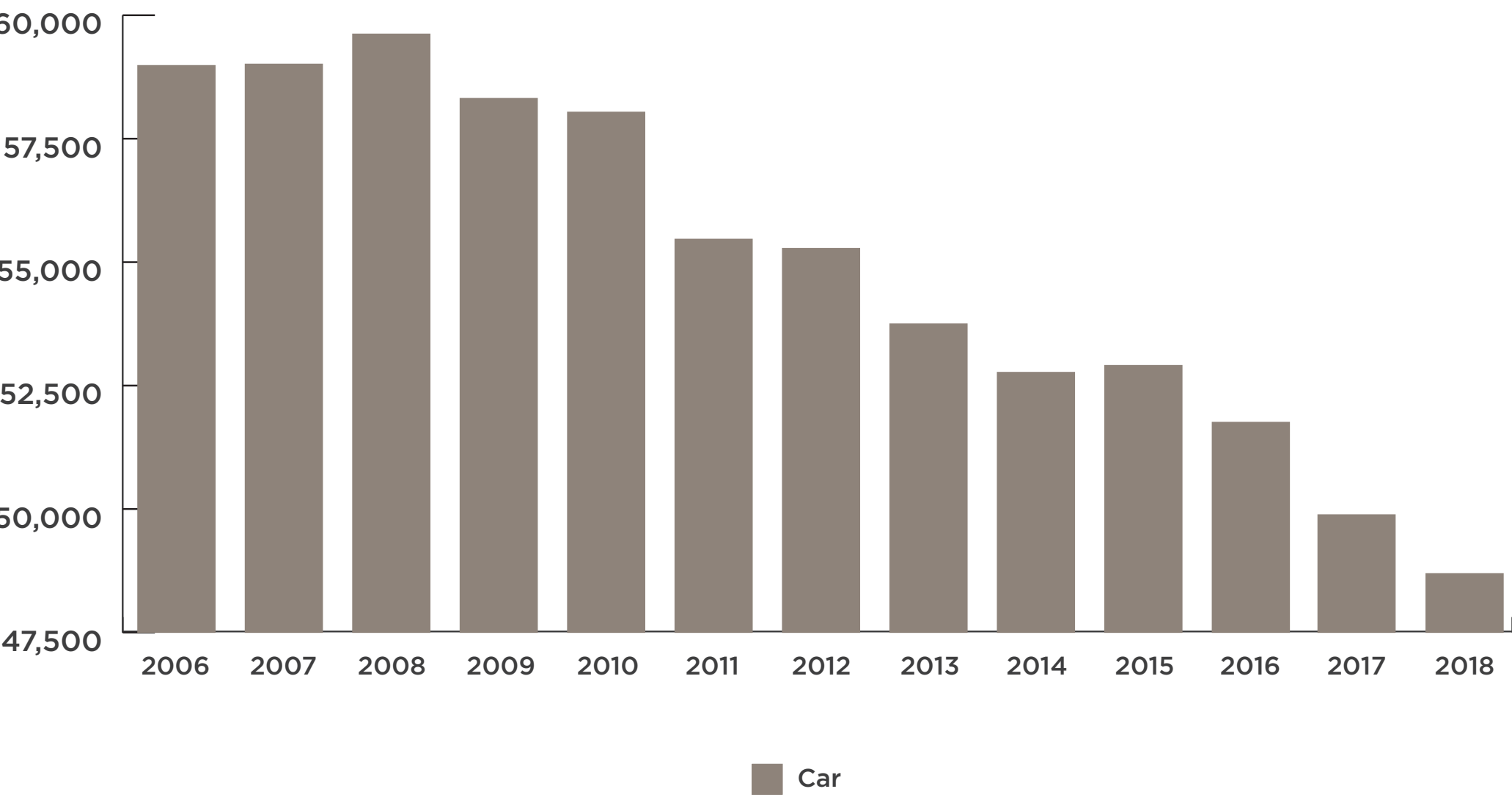


2.2.2 Cars

Continuing the trend of recent years, there was a decrease in the number of cars crossing the cordon from 50,158 to 48,820 between 2017 and 2018. This represents a decrease of just under 3%.

In the period 2006-2018 the peak year for cars crossing the canal cordon was in 2008 with almost 59,000 vehicles. The 2018 figure represents a decrease of 17%, or 10,077 cars, since this peak.

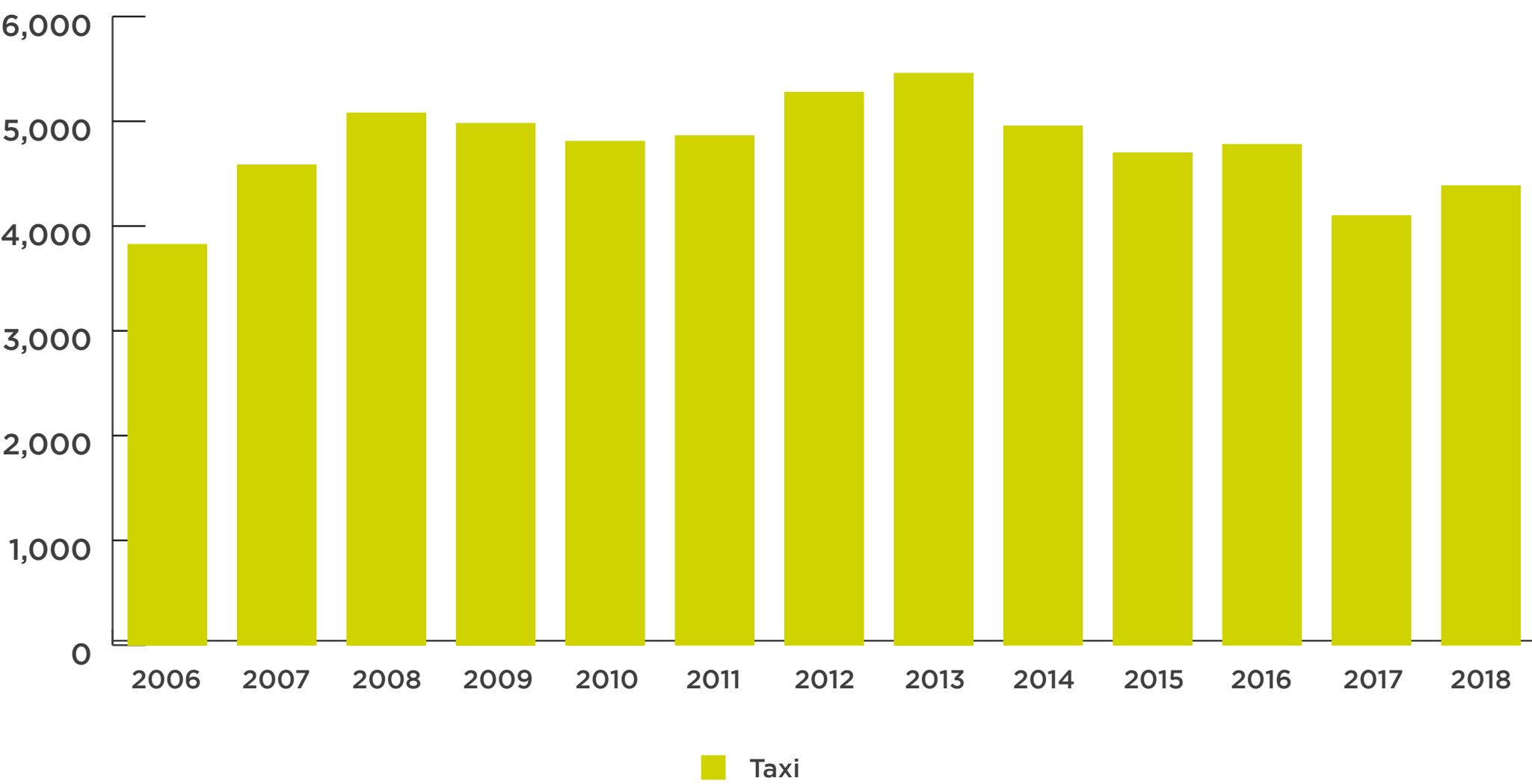
Number of Cars Crossing Cordon in AM Peak Period, 2006-2018



2.2.3 Taxis

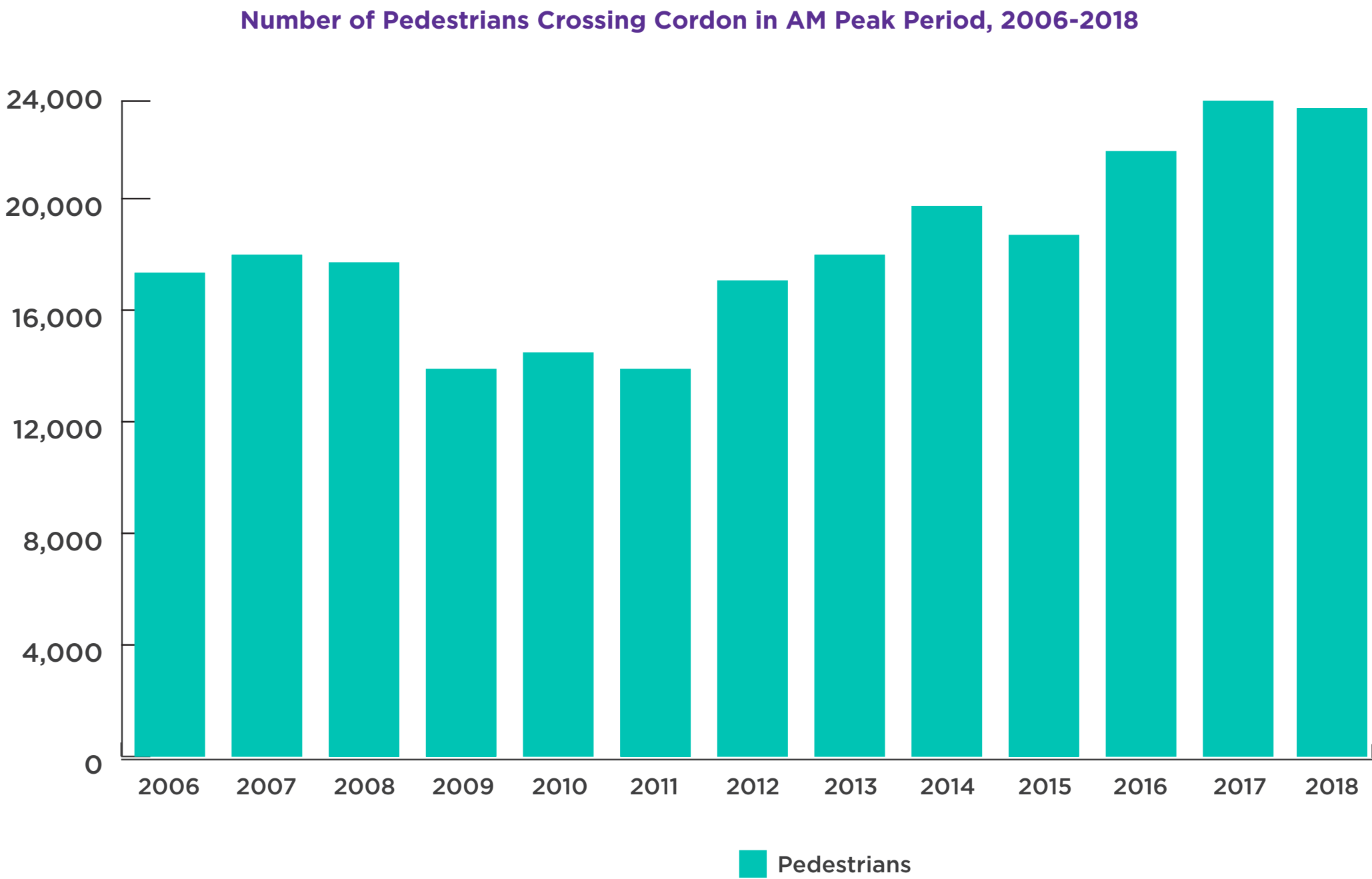
Taxis made up 6% of all cars crossing the canal cordon in 2006. This increased to 7.55% in 2017 and this upward trend has continued in 2018. 2018 saw a significant rise in the number of taxis crossing the cordon in the AM peak period from the previous year, up by 7% or 301 vehicles.

Number of Taxis Crossing Cordon in AM Peak Period, 2006-2018



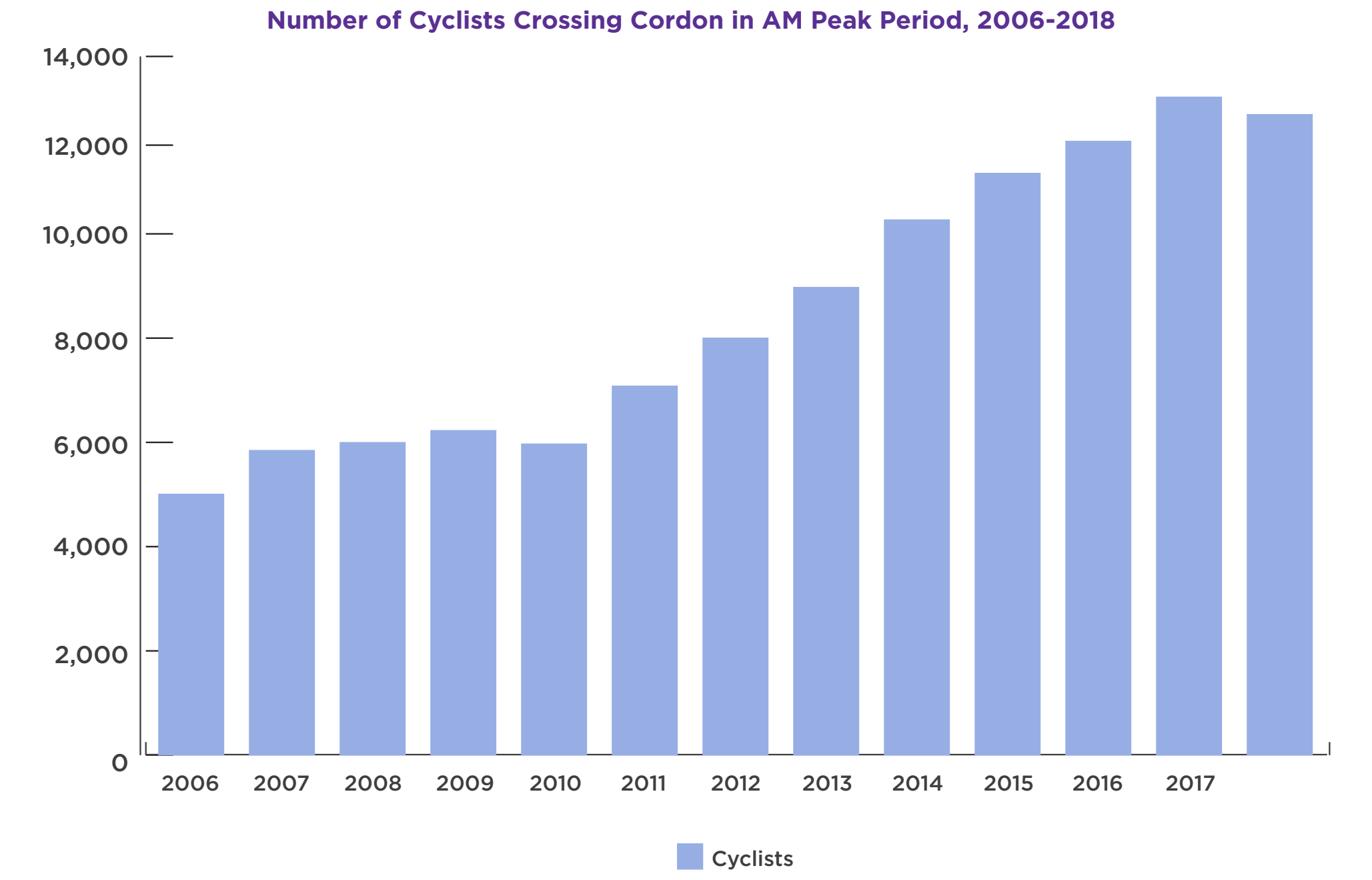
2.2.4 Pedestrians

The number of pedestrians crossing the canal cordon has decreased from 24,936 in 2017 to 23,858 in 2018, a decrease of almost 4% or 1,078 people. In the period 2006 to 2018, there has been a 39% increase in the number of pedestrians crossing the cordon during the AM peak period.



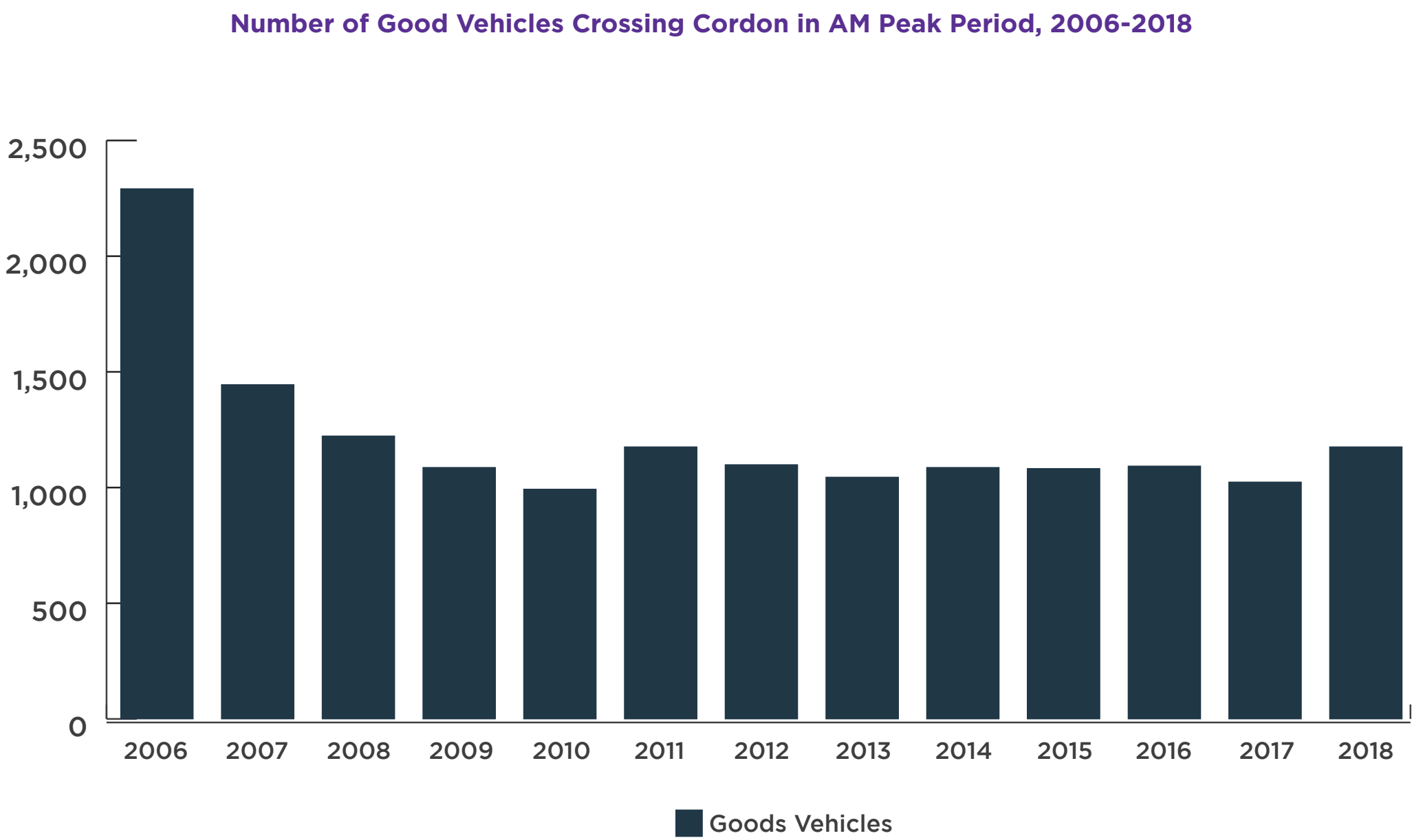
2.2.5 Cyclists

There has been a slight drop in cyclists crossing the canal between 2017 and 2018 with numbers decreasing by 2%. There had been a steady year on year growth in the number of cyclists crossing the cordon since 2010. In 2018, 12,227 cyclists crossed the cordon in the AM peak period. This represents an upsurge of 153% when compared with 2006.



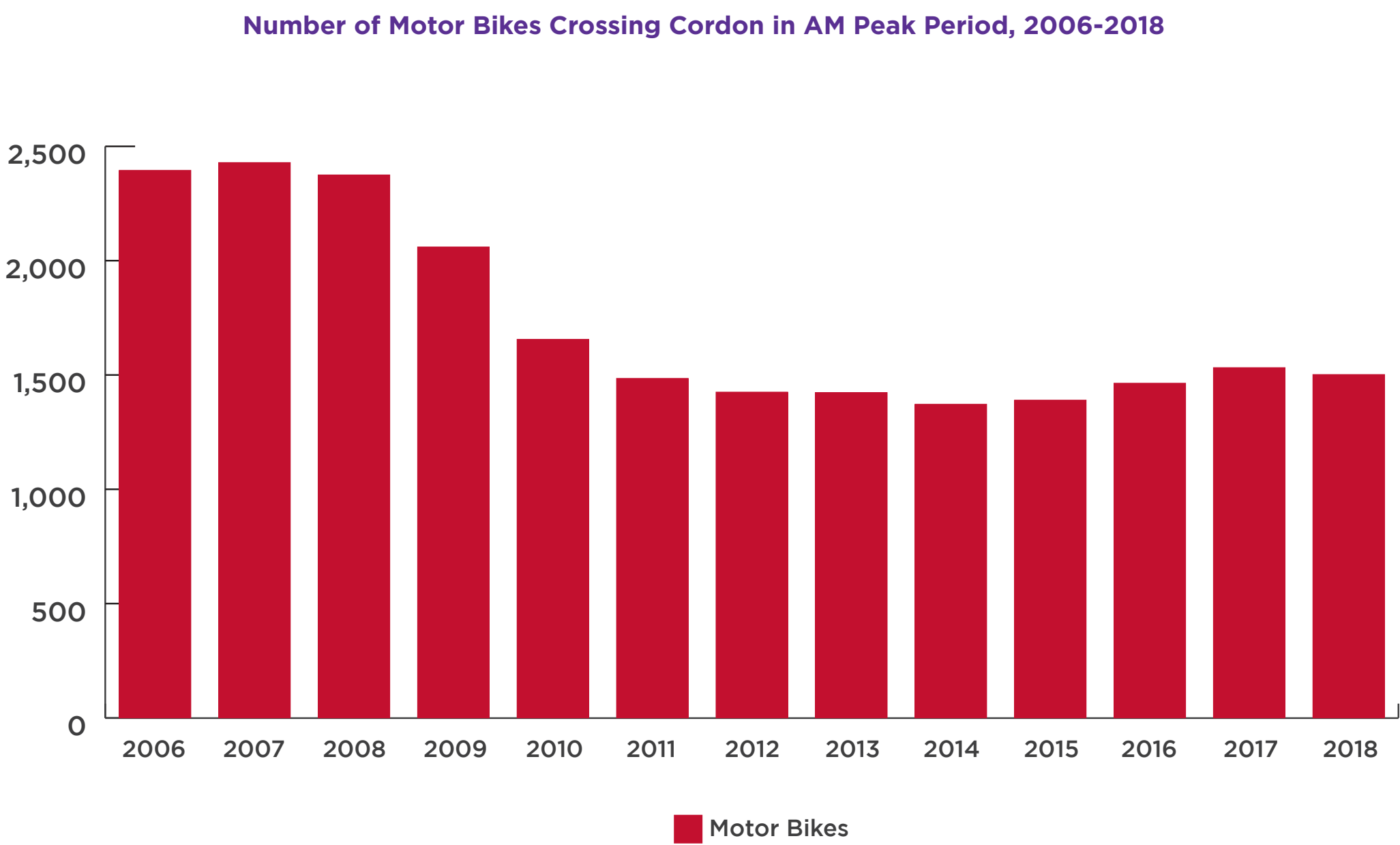
2.2.6 Goods Vehicles

The number of goods vehicles crossing the Canal Cordon in the AM Peak has remained relatively static over recent years, but has recently shown an increase of 13% between 2017 and 2018 following smaller rises between 2015 and 2016. Overall, the volume of goods vehicles crossing the cordon has remained broadly unchanged since 2009. Over the longer period from 2006 to 2018 however, the number of goods vehicles crossing the cordon has decreased by almost half at 50%. The majority of that decrease, 70%, occurred in the period 2006-2007, and coincided with the opening of the Dublin Port Tunnel in 2006 and the implementation of the HGV Management Strategy in 2007.



2.2.7 Motor Bikes

There has been a slight decrease of 4% in the number of motor bikes crossing the canal cordon between 2017 and 2018. In the period 2006-2018 the volume of motor bikes crossing the cordon in the AM peak has fallen by roughly 38%. However the declining trend seems to have stabilised since 2012.







# 3. Traffic and Transport - Overall Movements

## 3.1 Overview

While Chapter 2 reports the number of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians crossing the canal cordon, this chapter supplements that information with the data obtained from the public transport surveys, to give the overall number of people travelling into the central area of the City.

Using that supplementary data, Table 2 gives the total numbers of people crossing the canal cordon inbound in the AM peak period between 07:00-10:00 for 2018 and for each year since 2006, broken down by mode of travel. The data is displayed in graphical format in Figure 2.

Means of Travel	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bus	59,874	57,201	60,438	56,168	50,420	54,251	52,007	56,177	56,671	57,584	56,572	60,798	64,206
Rail	33,534	35,692	32,324	25,723	23,580	22,932	23,999	24,969	24,866	29,521	31,309	34,409	34,471
LUAS	9,029	9,171	9,242	8,776	9,111	9,949	10,014	10,835	11,670	12,503	12,254	11,953	13,835
All Pubic Transport	102,437	102,064	102,004	90,667	83,111	87,132	86,047	91,981	93,207	99,608	100,135	107,160	112,512
Car	76,850	71,597	67,732	71,043	71,978	69,681	68,626	68,072	64,169	65,269	64,885	61,694	60,537
Taxi	1,453	2,154	1,930	2,739	2,260	2,674	3,271	3,111	2,775	2,960	2,724	2,623	2,156
Walk	17,114	18,594	18,360	14,618	15,092	14,551	17,070	17,495	19,711	18,727	21,473	24,936	23,858
Cycle	4,839	5,676	6,143	6,326	5,952	6,870	7,943	9,061	10,349	10,893	12,089	12,447	12,227
Goods	2,291	1,445	1,223	1,087	993	1,176	1,099	1,045	1,087	1,096	1,093	1,024	1,153
Motorcycles	2,395	2,429	2,375	2,060	1,656	1,485	1,425	1,423	1,372	1,390	1,464	1,532	1,477
Total Person Trips	207,379	203,959	199,767	188,540	181,042	183,569	185,481	192,188	192,670	199,943	203,863	211,416	213,920

Table 2 - Numbers of people crossing the Canal Cordon by mode of travel 2006-2018

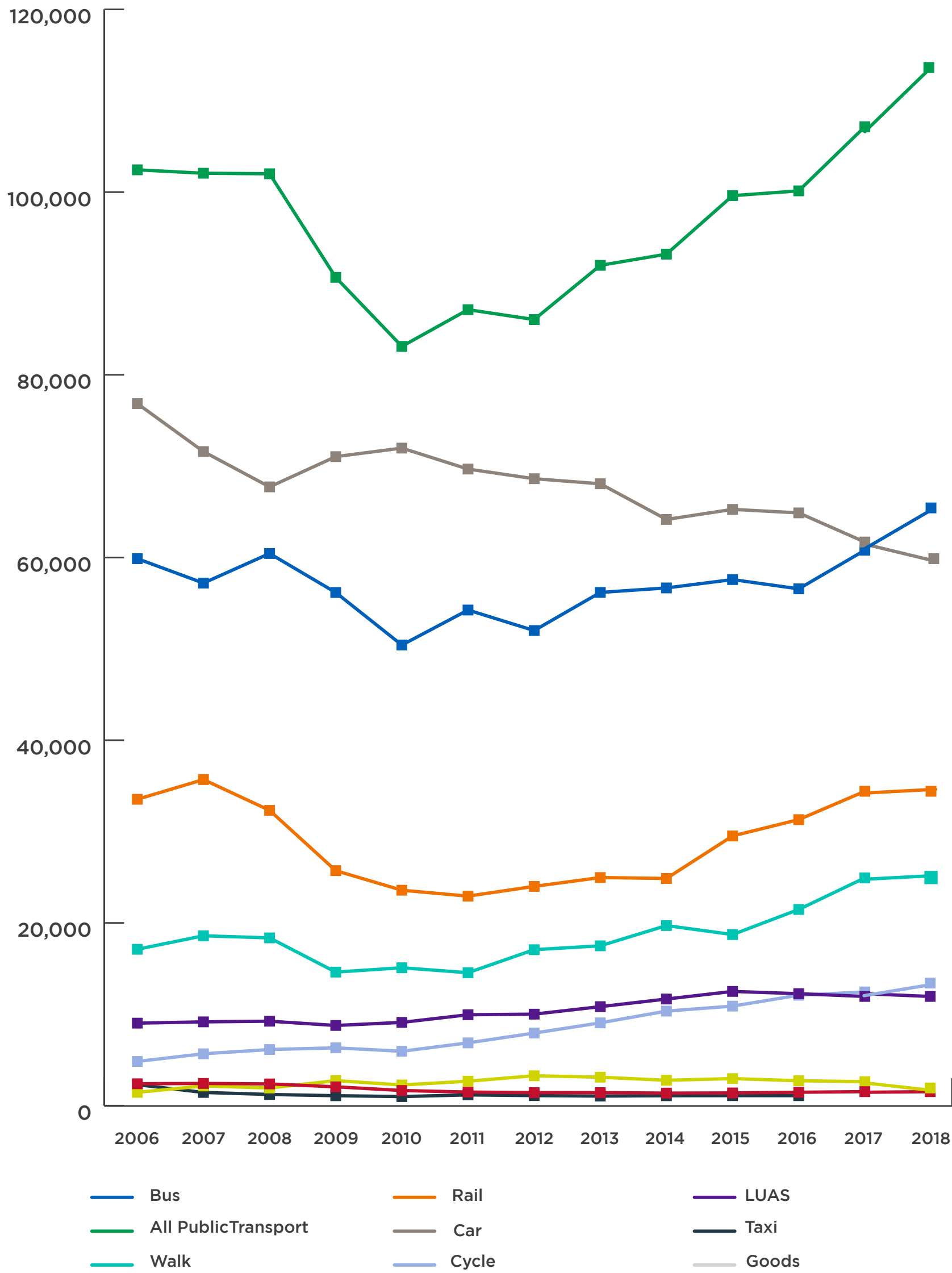


Figure 2- Numbers of people crossing the Canal Cordon by mode of travel 2006-2018

3.2 Percentage mode share of people crossing the canal cordon

Table 3 gives the percentage mode share for all modes of travel used by people crossing the canal cordon inbound between 07:00 and 10:00 for the years 2006 to 2018. The trend is graphed in Figure 3.

Means of Travel	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bus	28.9%	28.1%	30.3%	29.8%	27.9%	29.6%	28.0%	29.2%	29.4%	28.8%	27.8%	28.8%	30.0%
Rail	16.2%	17.5%	16.2%	13.6%	13.0%	12.5%	12.9%	13.0%	12.9%	14.8%	15.4%	16.3%	16.1%
LUAS	4.4%	4.5%	4.6%	4.7%	5.0%	5.4%	5.4%	5.6%	6.1%	6.3%	6.1%	6.0%	6.5%
All Pubic Transport	49.4%	50.0%	51.1%	48.1%	45.9%	47.5%	46.4%	47.9%	48.4%	49.8%	49.1%	50.7%	52.6%
Car	37.1%	35.1%	33.9%	37.7%	39.8%	38.0%	37.0%	35.4%	33.3%	32.6%	31.8%	29.2%	28.3%
Taxi	0.7%	1.1%	1.0%	1.5%	1.3%	1.5%	1.8%	1.6%	1.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.2%	1.0%
Walk	8.3%	9.1%	9.2%	7.8%	8.3%	7.9%	9.2%	9.1%	10.2%	9.4%	10.5%	11.8%	11.2%
Cycle	2.3%	2.8%	3.1%	3.4%	3.3%	3.7%	4.3%	4.7%	5.4%	5.4%	5.9%	5.9%	5.7%
Goods	1.1%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Motorcycles	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Total Person Trips	207,379	203,959	199,767	188,540	181,042	183,569	185,481	192,188	192,670	199,943	203,863	211,416	213,920

Table 3 - Mode share of people crossing the Canal Cordon by mode of travel 2006-2018

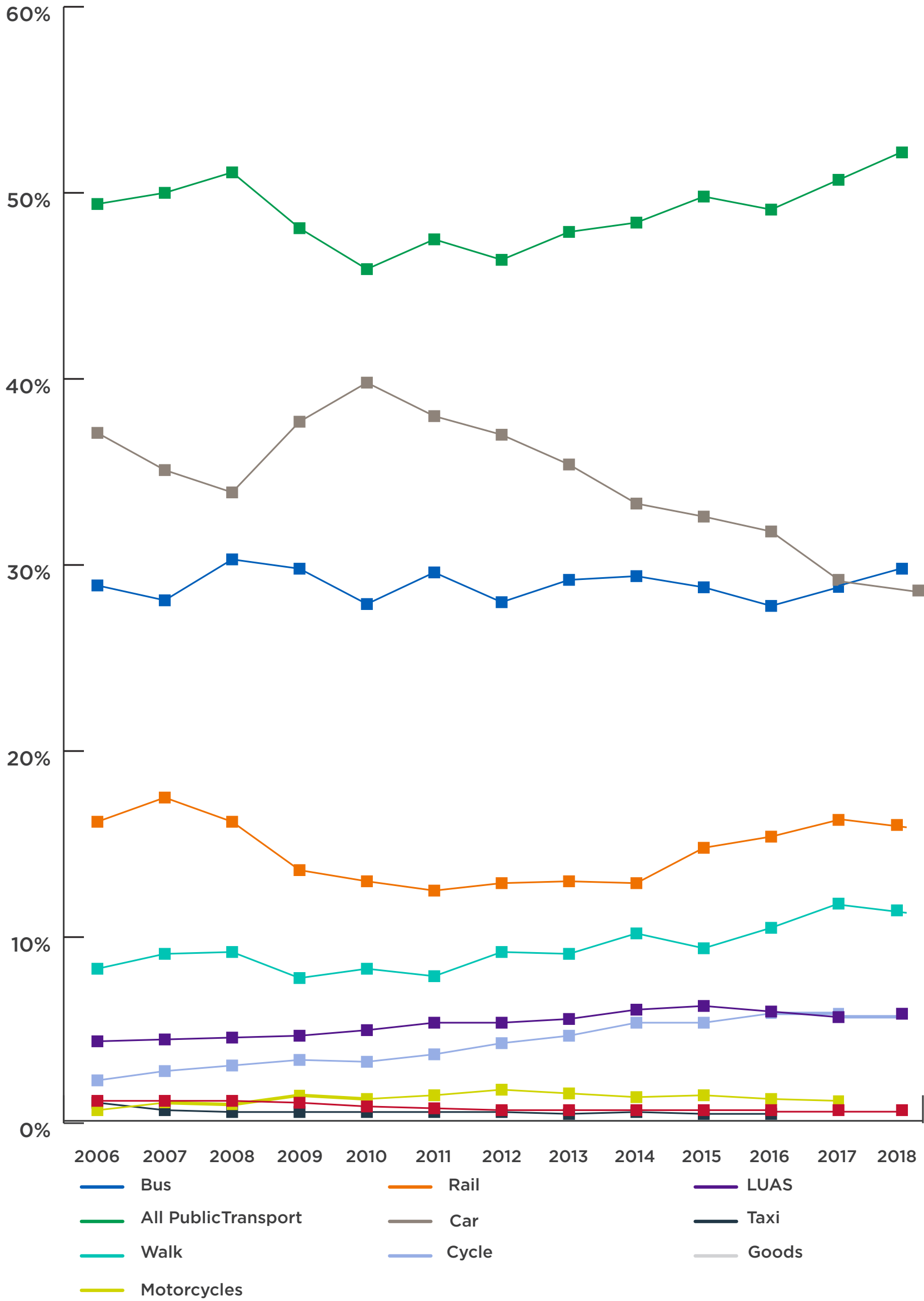


Figure 3 - Mode share of people crossing the Canal Cordon by mode of travel 2006-2018

### 3.3 Trips Crossing the Canal Cordon by Sustainable Modes

The tables below show the number and mode share of trips crossing the canal cordon in the AM peak period by sustainable modes during the period 2006 to 2018. Sustainable modes consist of public transport, active modes (walking and cycling) and taxi.

Means of Travel	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sustainable Modes	125,843	128,488	128,437	114,350	106,415	111,227	114,304	121,648	126,042	132,188	136,421	147,166	150,753
Car, Goods and Other Modes	81,536	75,471	71,330	74,190	74,627	72,342	71,150	70,540	66,628	67,755	67,442	64,250	63,167
	207,379	203,959	199,767	188,540	181,042	183,569	185,454	192,188	192,670	199,943	203,863	211,416	213,920

Table 4 – Numbers of people crossing the Canal Cordon by sustainable modes of travel 2006-2018

Means of Travel	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sustainable Modes	61%	63%	64%	61%	61%	61%	62%	63%	65%	66%	67%	70%	70%
Car, Goods and Other Modes	39%	37%	36%	39%	41%	39%	38%	37%	35%	34%	33%	30%	30%

Table 5– Mode share of people crossing the Canal Cordon by sustainable modes 2006-2018

During the 2018 AM peak period (7am to 10am), 70% of all inbound trips crossing the canal cordon were made by a sustainable mode (walking, cycling public transport or taxi). The sustainable mode share has grown year on year since 2010. In the last 12 years the share for sustainable modes has grown by 9 percentage points.

In 2018 150,753 trips crossed the cordon by sustainable modes in the three hour AM peak period. This is the highest level of mode share and person trips by sustainable modes since the cordon count began. This represents 24,910 more person trips by sustainable mode than were made in 2006.

The graphs below show the trend in trips by sustainable modes for the 12 year period 2006 – 2018.

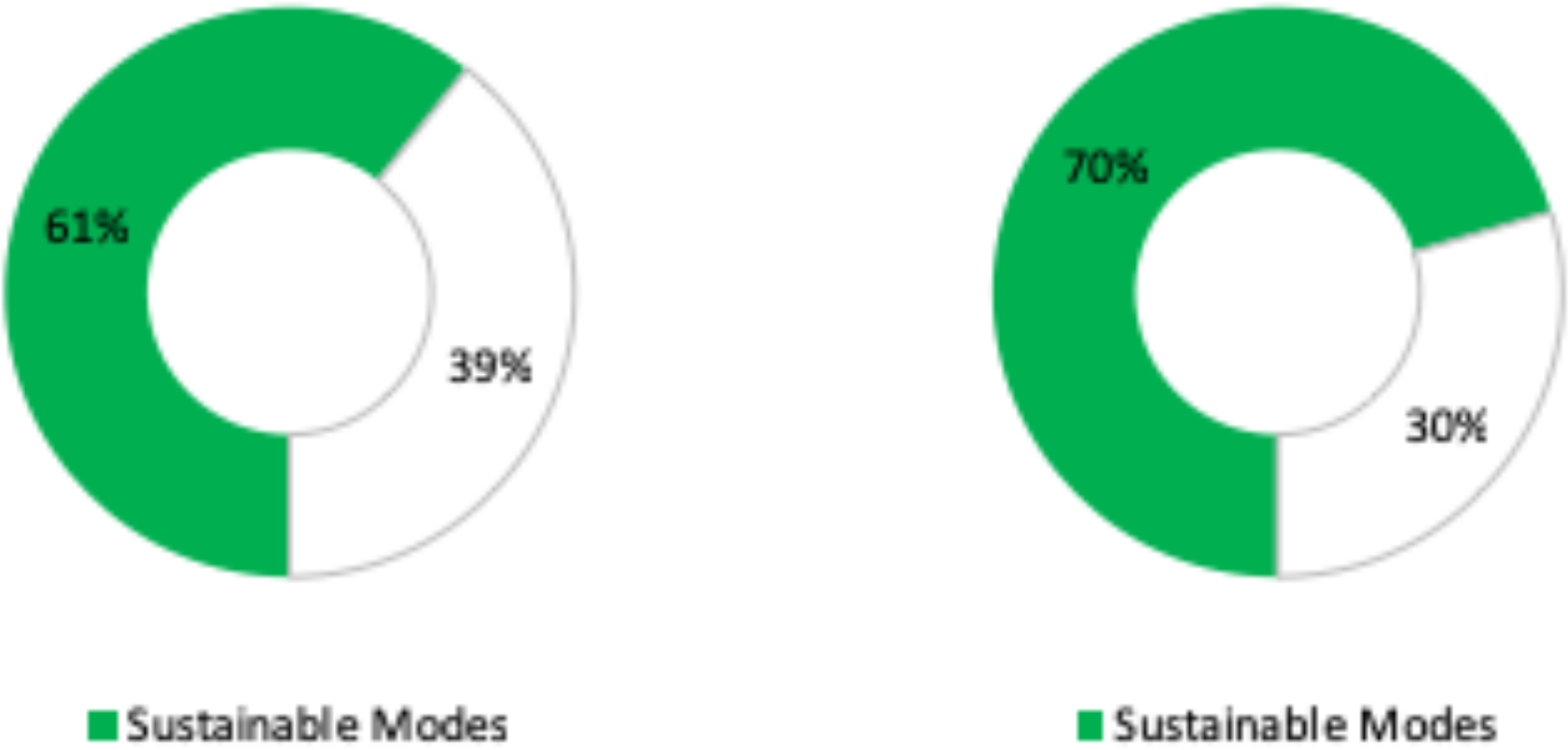


Figure 4 – Mode share of people crossing the Canal Cordon by sustainable modes 2006 & 2018

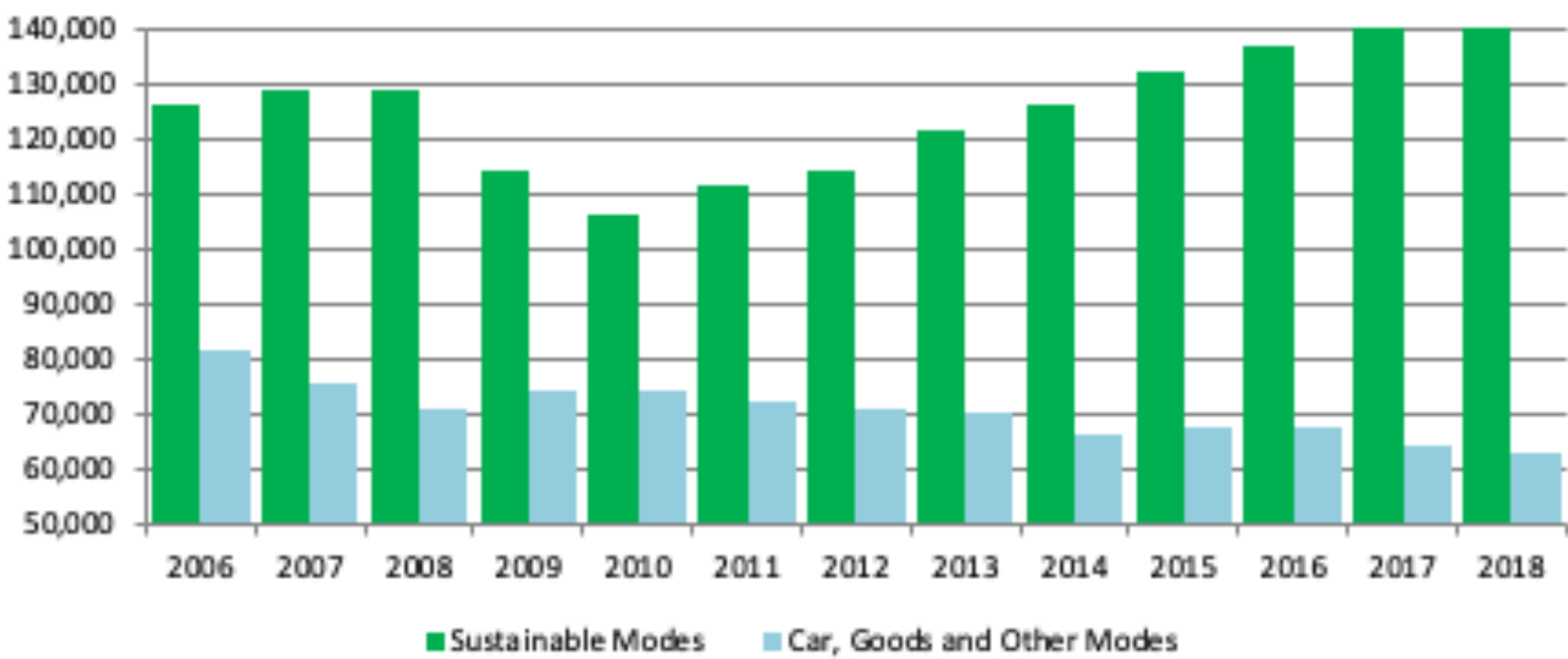


Figure 5 – Numbers of people crossing the Canal Cordon by sustainable modes of travel 2006-2018

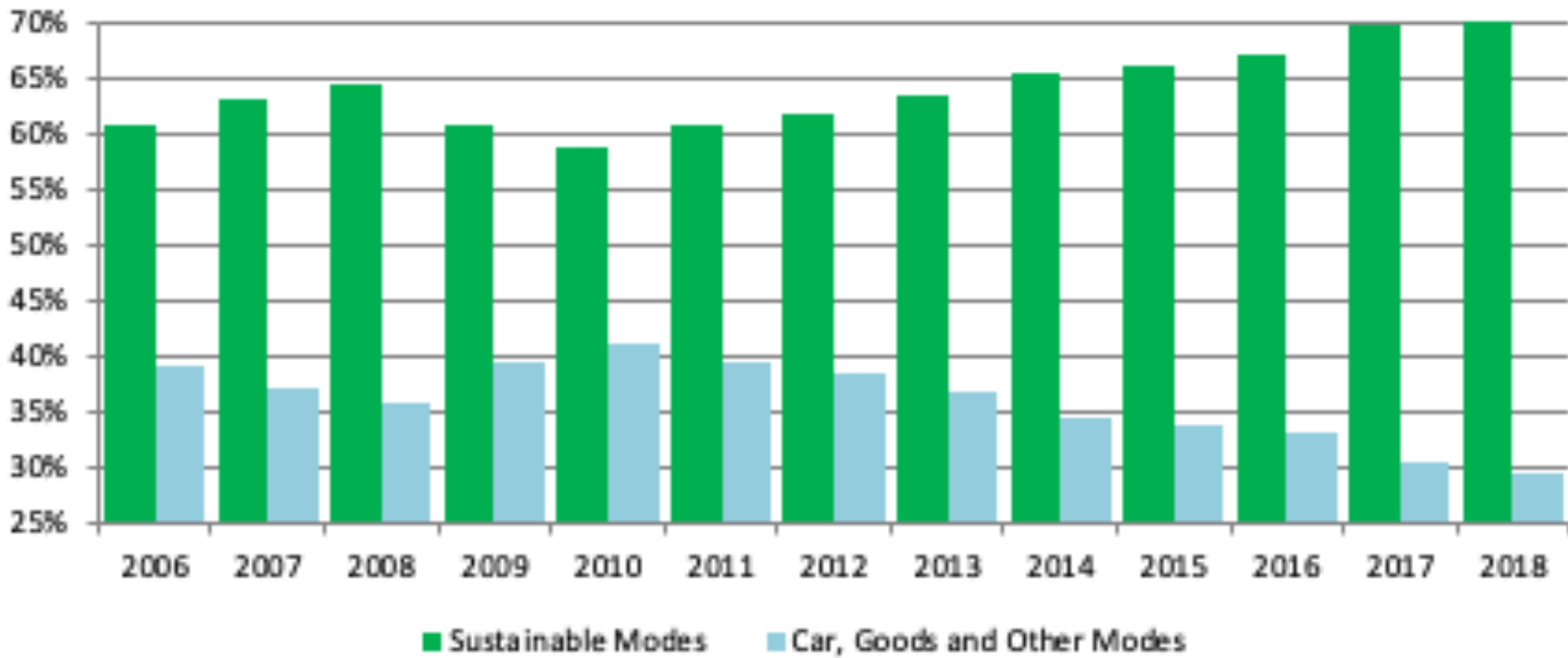


Figure 5 – Numbers of people crossing the Canal Cordon by sustainable modes of travel 2006-2018



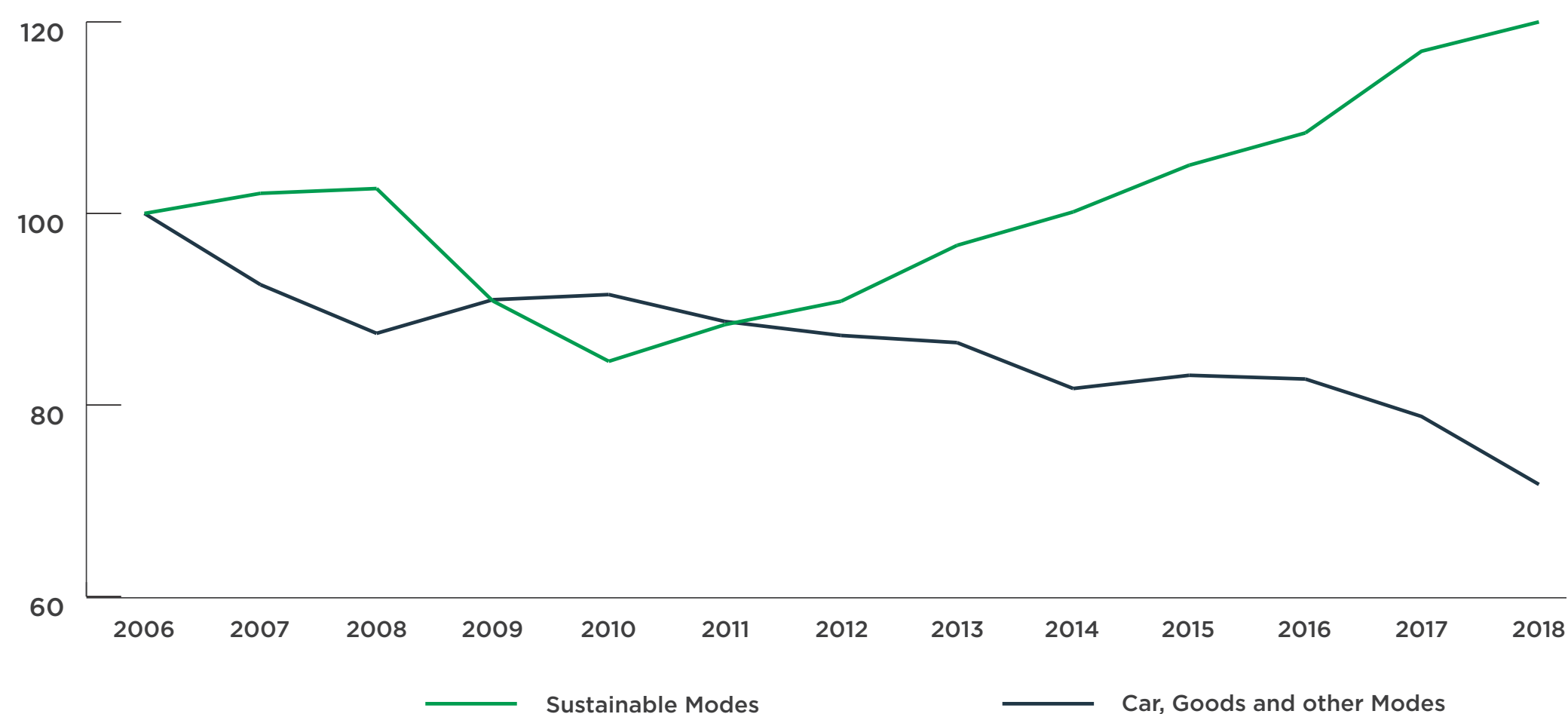


Figure 7 - Relative increase/decrease in use of sustainable and other modes 2006-2018  
INDEX: 2006 = 100



## 4. Commentary on Canal Cordon Trends

### 4.1 Overall Trends

As shown in Table 3 and Figure 3, the total number of people crossing the canal cordon in the AM peak period (07:00-10:00) increased slightly by 1.2% between 2017 and 2018. This is an increase of 2,504 person trips, bringing the total number of people crossing the canal (inbound) in the AM peak period to 213,920. There is a continual annual increase in the number of people crossing the canal in the AM peak from 2006.

### 4.2 Public Transport Usage

Between 2017 and 2018, there was an increase of 5% in the number of public transport users crossing the cordon between 07:00 and 10:00. In 2018 over 112,500 people used public transport to get into the City Centre on census day.

There was a marked increase in the use of LUAS (16%) whilst rail and bus both showed smaller increases. Continuing a trend of growth since 2014, rail showed an increase of 0.2% relative to 2017, while bus saw a growth of 6% on 2017 figures. Overall, since 2006, the number of public transport passengers has increased by 5%.

4.3 Mode Trends

A summary of the key changes in travel across the canal cordon set out above is described below:

In percentage terms mode share for bus travel across the canal cordon in 2018 is now 30%. This is an increase of over 1% on 2017 figures, and almost equal to the peak bus mode share of 30.3% in 2008. In absolute terms bus patronage increased in 2018 by almost 3,408 person trips, and now carries just over 64,000 people into the City Centre in the AM peak period. This represents 57% of all public transport trips into the City Centre in the peak period.

The mode share for rail across the canal cordon in 2018 was 16.1%. This figure is almost equivalent to last years’ which was the highest since the peak rail mode share of 17.5% in 2007. Intercity, Suburban Rail and DART had lost a significant share of travel into the City Centre between 2007 and 2014. However this trend reversed in 2015 and steadily increased up to 2017 seeming to have stabilised in 2018. Rail mode share has increased by 3.6% since its low point of 12.5% in 2011.

Car mode share (excluding taxis) declined in 2018, continuing the year on year decline since 2010. Overall since 2006, car usage has declined by approximately 21%. Car use declined by 2% between 2017 and 2018. On census day 2018 over 16,000 less cars entered the City during the AM peak period than on census day 2006.

Walking has decreased by almost 4% between 2017 and 2018. Walking levels were at their highest since the cordon count began in 2017 (11.8%) and seem to have stabilised in 2018 with a walk mode share of 11.2%. There are now over 36,000 “active trips” (walking and cycling) cross the canal cordon during the AM peak period, more than is carried by the entire heavy rail network for the same period.

Cycling has presented a steadily increasing trend between 2006 and 2017. It is currently represented by a mode a share of 5.7%, showing a slight drop (0.2%) drop from its 2017 figure. Whilst overall cycle numbers are up 153% on 2006 levels, the cycle mode share has more than doubled in the same period.

Over 2,000 people entered the City by taxi in 2018 - this represents an 18% decrease on 2017 levels. The observed decline of taxi use in 2018 is a continuation of the trend since 2012, when taxi use peaked at over 3,270 passengers crossing the canal in the AM peak period.

The number of motor cyclists entering the City has reduced slightly since 2017 (by 4%). However the trend remained relatively flat between 2015 and 2017 (5-6% increase). Motor cycle mode share has remained static at 0.7% in 2018.

The number of goods vehicles entering the City during the AM peak period has declined by over 49% since 2006. The mode share for goods vehicles has remained relatively unchanged since 2007. Between 2006 and 2007 the goods vehicle mode share fell by almost 40%. Goods vehicle volumes in 2018 have slightly increased, with just over 1,150 vehicles crossing the canal cordon in the AM peak period.

Since 2010, there has been a trend of increasing mode share for sustainable transport modes, with a consistent level of increase each year. In 2018 the overall mode share for sustainable transport modes – walking, cycling and public transport was 70% maintaining its highest levels since the canal cordon counts began in 2006.

Goods vehicles and journeys by car and motor bike now account for only 30% of the trips crossing the canal cordon.

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