



Healthy Campus Case Study



HEA

An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas
The Higher Education Authority

Physical Activity Levels & Transportation Factors of Students in Trinity College Dublin

Institution/ Organisation

Trinity College Dublin

Who leads/ led the project?

Associate Professor Dr Cuisle Forde

Date and timeframe

2025-ongoing

Project Rationale

Trinity College Dublin's central city campus is served by extensive public transport, walking, and cycling infrastructure, with no routine student parking provided. In 2023, 69% of respondents commuted by public transport, a substantial increase since 2011, while walking and cycling declined significantly. These trends highlighted the need to assess physical activity linked to commuting. Supported by sustainability-focused policies and its urban setting, Trinity was used as a living laboratory for transport research.



Project Overview/ Summary

Planning

- Ethics approval obtained in March 2025.
- Prospective participants: Trinity's students, including students registered with Disability Services.

Implementation

- Study design: Mixed-methods study with three optional components:
 1. Anonymous survey to investigate physical activity, and transport use (n=29).
 2. Accelerometers used to obtain an objective measure of physical activity during commuting and campus movement (n=20).
 3. Semi-structured interviews conducted to explore lived experiences of campus navigation and commuting with/without disability (n=10).

Outreach & engagement

1. Poster presentation and interactive educational activities to engage students at EU Researcher's night in September 2025.
 2. Online promotion via social media and gatekeepers.
- Voluntary participation: Students may choose one, two, or all three study components.

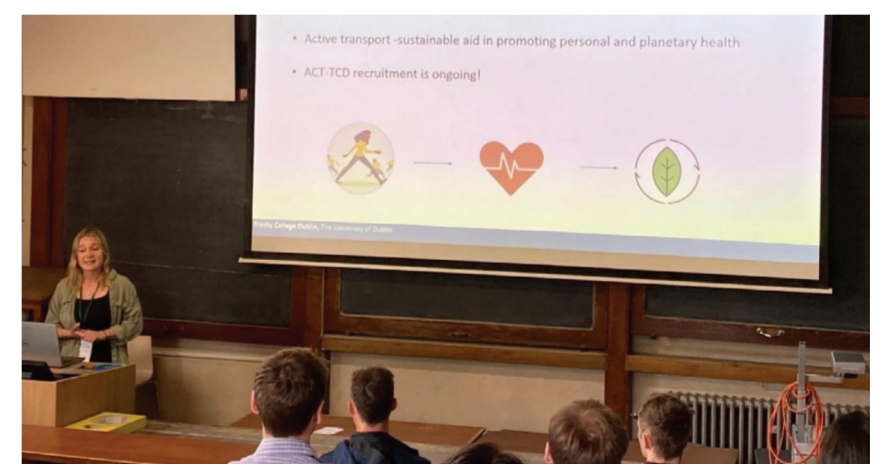
Data analysis and Outcome •

- Analysis: Integration of quantitative and qualitative data to inform campus health promotion strategies, accessibility improvements, and policy recommendations.
- Outcome: Generate evidence to support interventions for increasing active commuting, physical activity, and inclusion of students with disabilities on campus.

Key Learning Points

While recruitment is still ongoing, preliminary findings from students not registered with Disability Services have already provided valuable insights:

- On average, participants (n=20) accumulated 76.3 (±44.9) minutes of daily moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA), with 30% of their total daily MVPA being connected to transport. College-related transport contributed 18% to total activity. These findings suggest that transport and the university environment play an important role in supporting physical activity.
- Survey results (n=29) showed that students' most reported transport mode was walking (42%), followed by train (17%) and bus (14%). The most reported reasons for choosing their usual mode of transport were that it was the quickest (26%), and cheapest (17%) option, followed by habit (9%), and being an environmentally friendly option (7%).
- Advice for others is to allow additional time and targeted strategies for inclusive recruitment, and to consider the broader transport and environmental context when designing health promotion initiatives.



Limerick Framework for Action		Whole Campus Approach	Type of Evaluation
Policies	Research	Health Focused Area (Pillar 5)	Process Evaluation
Partnership	Celebrate		Outcome Evaluation
Students			Summative Evaluation



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

