

Summary:

2009 Norwegian Travel Survey – key results

The Norwegian National Travel Survey 2009 is the sixth national survey. Almost 29,000 persons aged 13 or more were interviewed about their access to transport, short trips taken on a daily basis, and longer journeys undertaken less frequently. The survey shows that the percentage living in multiple car households has increased from 2005 to 2009. In the same period the quality of public transport has improved. The percentage of trips made by car drivers declined from 2005 to 2009, while more trips were made by public transport and by foot. The average trip is longer than in 2005. For the longest trips, air travel has increased at the expense of car trips.

The sixth National Travel Survey

The National Travel Survey 2009 (RVU 2009) is the sixth national survey of travel behaviour conducted in Norway. The first was done in 1985, the next four in 1992, 1998, 2001 and 2005.

The National Travel Surveys cover personal travel of all types, including short trips taken on a daily basis and longer journeys undertaken less frequently, as well as all modes of transport, including walking. The purpose of the National Travel Surveys is to obtain information on people's travel activity and travel patterns. Among other things, the surveys are intended to reveal:

- the scope of travel
- the purpose of travel
- how people travel
- how travel activity varies among different groups of the population

In RVU 2009, approx. 29,000 persons from 13 years on were interviewed. Around 10,000 of them constitute a representative sample of the entire country; the remainder is supplementary regional samples.

Increased access to cars

Access to cars is one of the most important factors affecting choice of mode. In 2009, 85 per cent of the population belonged to a household with at least one car, one third had two cars and seven per cent had three cars or more. The percentage living in multiple car households increased from 38 in 2005 to 42 in 2009.

Almost three out of four has a driver's licence and access to a car. Men continue to have better access to cars than women. Other characteristics of those with good access to a car are high income and high level of education, age 45-54, and couples with children. There are also considerable differences in access to cars according to where respondents live. People living in Oslo have the least access to cars, whereas those living in smaller towns and in sparsely populated areas have the best access. Also people living in areas surrounding the big cities have ample access to cars.

Where one lives is the most important factor for the kind of public transport available. The quality of public transport, measured by departure frequency and distance to the bus or tram stop, is clearly best for people living in Oslo. Also those living in Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger do relatively well, whereas people living in areas surrounding the large cities face a considerably poorer level of service.

Of those who stated what sort of service is available to them, 26 per cent reported very good service, 44 per cent good or fairly good, whereas 30 per cent have poor or very poor public transport. Compared with 2005, the percentage reporting very good public transport has increased from 24 per cent.

A large proportion of the population own a bicycle, 77 per cent, while 11 per cent own or have access to a moped or motorcycle.

Fewer, but longer car trips in daily life

The National Travel Survey defines a trip as any movement outside the lot where one lives, regardless of length, duration or purpose. Once the destination is reached, the trip is considered completed. One or more modes of transport may be used for a trip. Walking and cycling are reckoned as independent modes of travel on a par with motorised modes of transport.

In 2009 the population undertook an average of 3.3 trips per day. This includes 14 per cent that do not travel in the course of an average day. There is a slight increase from 2005 in the percentage that do not travel. Almost a third makes 1-2 trips. The same percentage make 3-4 trips, while 26 per cent make five trips or more.

The average trip is 12.0 km, an increase from 2005, and lasts for 24 minutes. The average length travelled per day by each person is 42.1 km, again an increase from 2005. A large proportion of daily trips are short. 42 per cent are less than 3 km, 32 per cent are between 3 and 10 km, while 27 per cent are 10 km or longer. Men, economically active people, people with high income and high education levels and those living in the Oslo region travel the longest.

The number of car trips declined, while the number of trips by foot increased compared to 2005. In 2009, 52 per cent of all trips were made by car drivers. This is a slight decline from 2005. Along with trips taken as a passenger, trips by car represent two out of three trips. One trip in five takes place on foot, and a total of one out of four trips is made without the use of motorised vehicles. Trips on public transport constitute ten per cent of all trips. Most of these are by bus. In Oslo, tram and rail account for every second trip by public transport.

The typical characteristics of those who use the various modes are quite different:

Car users:

- have at least two cars in their household
- have always access to a car
- are poorly served by public transport
- are men
- are aged 35-54
- are economically active

Pedestrians:

- do not have access to a car
- are well served by public transport
- are women
- are under 25 or over 75 years of age
- are single

- are not economically active
- have a low income
- live in the four largest cities

Users of public transport:

- have neither driving licence nor a car
- are well served by public transport
- are under 25 years of age
- live in Oslo
- have a low income

Stability in the purpose of trips

The purpose of daily trips may be divided into three main areas:

- trips related to paid work and school/education
- trips related to unpaid work for the household
- trips related to leisure time

Work trips constitute 18 per cent of all individual trips, but are often connected with trips for other purposes, such as shopping, taking children to activities or picking them up etc. On weekdays, work trips represent nearly a third of all trips between main destinations as home and work. Both their scope and concentration in time and space mean that work trips determine the size of both public transport and the road system. In addition there are business trips, two per cent, and trips to and from school, four per cent.

Nearly 30 per cent of daily trips are related to shopping. More than half of these involve grocery purchases, which can be described as work for the household. Some shopping trips may be described as a form of leisure activity. On average, people make nearly one shopping trip per day. Accompanying children to activities and trips for other care purposes constitute 11 per cent of daily trips.

Leisure trips are 19 per cent of daily trips, and travel related to private visits 13 per cent.

Compared to 2005 the changes in the travel purposes are slight.

More air travel on longer trips

In 2009, people over the age of 12 took an average of 1.6 long trips per month.¹ This is about the same number as in 2005. More than half of the population

¹ Trips of 100 km or longer one-way and trips abroad, regardless of trip length, are considered long trips.

took a long trip. One in three had 1-2 such trips per month, while only eight per cent took five or more long trips.

Holiday and leisure travel dominate long trips. Every third trip takes place in the context of a holiday, with visits coming in addition. Altogether these two purposes constitute 56 per cent of long trips. Work-related trips represent 20 per cent. Private errands, i.e. shopping trips, medical trips, trips to accompany or pick up a child or other person etc. constitute 16 per cent, whereas organised leisure activities related to sport, politics etc. represent two per cent of the volume of travel.

Cars are used on most long trips domestically, 68 per cent, while 15 per cent fly; five per cent take the train and six per cent the bus. There has been an increase in air travel from 13 per cent in 2005.

For holiday and leisure trips abroad (with overnight stays), travel by air is the dominant mode of transport at 69 per cent. There has been an increase since 2005, when the percentage of trips by air was 60 per cent.