

Summary:

Travel behaviour 1998 – journeys of 100 km or more

The 1997/98 National Travel Survey is the latest of three such surveys undertaken in Norway. The two previous surveys were conducted in 1984/85 and 1991/92. The aim of the surveys is to provide knowledge of the extent of travel by the public, where people travel, by which method, and differences in travel patterns according to residential area and other sociodemographic characteristics.

The travel surveys cover all types of personal travel, both daily travel activities and longer journeys undertaken less frequently. This report covers long distance journeys, i.e. journeys of at least 100 km within Norway or journeys undertaken between Norway and abroad.

The 1997/98 Travel Survey was conducted by telephone and covered a sample of the population aged 13 and older. The respondents were asked to provide information about their travel activities including any journey of at least 100 km that he/she had undertaken in the month prior to the interview. In addition, background information on themselves and the family of which they were a member was requested. A total of 8838 persons were interviewed. The results were “expanded” such that they represented the total population in Norway aged 13 and above as of 1.1.97, corresponding to 3.63 million persons.

Four of ten undertake a journey within Norway at least once a month

Every month an average of 42 percent of the population aged 13 and above undertakes a long distance journey within Norway. This corresponds to about 1.55 million persons. There are broad variations in the extent of travel among these. Three of four undertake just one or two journeys while a small group takes six or more journeys each month. This group corresponds to only about one percent of the population but accounts for 11 percent of all long distance journeys undertaken.

There is nevertheless a considerable number – 58 percent of the population – who do not travel. In consequence the mean number of journeys is low. On average, the population aged 13 and above undertake 1.08 journeys per month exceeding 100 km. Expressed another way this corresponds to 0.54 return journeys.

Private travel dominates

Holiday/leisure and travel for the purpose of visiting friends/family comprise the most important purposes and account for almost a half of all journeys exceeding 100 km. These journeys are important within all distance categories, but in particular they are relevant within medium-distance journeys (150-300 km).

Correspondingly, work-related journeys are distance-conditional in as much as there is a distinction between journeys above and below 300 km. These are of greatest significance on the longest journeys where they account for every third journey while they account for only about 20 percent of journeys less than 300 km.

Men continue to travel more than women

The extent of travel varies with gender. This is associated, among other things, with differences in work patterns, job status and access to various means of transport. Not surprisingly, men account for a larger proportion of journeys (55 percent). In addition, a larger share of men travels. While 46 percent of all males 13 years and above undertake at least one journey of 100 km or more each month, the corresponding percentage for women is 39.

It is particularly work-related journeys where the differences are significant. Men undertake three of four work-related journeys although they account for only 54 percent of employed persons. The proportion of journeys undertaken by women has increased, however during the 1990s, from about 17 percent in 1992 to 23 percent today. For personal travel there is no significant difference between the sexes.

Those resident outside the larger cities undertake most inland journeys

The need for and possibility to undertake long distance journeys vary according to residential location. This is, among other things, due to differences in income, employment, service facilities, and access to transport between the regions as well as between urban and rural areas.

The Travel Survey shows that those resident in the larger centres, i.e. the ten largest urban settlements in Norway, travel the least. This applies to both work-related and private journeys. Regarding the latter this is associated with the fact that service facilities are less well developed outside the urban areas. Those residing in rural districts, for example, travel more frequently for purposes such as shopping, medical and health, and so forth. Regarding work-related journeys, commuting to/from workplace may explain differences in as much as those resident in smaller townships have a larger proportion of journeys to/from the workplace.

Air transport take market shares

The car has been and remains that means of transport selected by the majority when undertaking a long distance journey. For journeys between 100 and 300 km the car occupies a special position. Eight of ten choose the car for these journeys, and this has not changed since the previous survey in 1992.

On journeys in excess of 300 km the car is, however, yielding to the plane. The 1997/98 Travel Survey indicates that 47 percent of journeys in this category are undertaken by plane as against 31 percent in 1992. We would nevertheless point out that other transport statistics indicate a lower market share for air travel. We should therefore exercise caution when interpreting data from the 1997/98 survey and, rather, attach importance to the *trends* manifest in both transport statistics and the Travel Surveys; the plane has captured significant parts of the market for journeys

exceeding 300 km during the 1990s. The deregulation of passenger air transport has not been negligible in this development.

For other forms of transport there have been only minor changes. Both bus and train have maintained their market share with 6 and 8 percent respectively, while ferry/boat play only a marginal role in the long distance travel market.

One of ten travels abroad each month

Eleven percent of the respondents stated that they had undertaken at least one journey abroad during the previous month. This corresponds to about 400,000 persons aged 13 and above. There is a far smaller variation in the extent of such journeys than for journeys within Norway. Among those travelling abroad, 95 percent have travelled once or twice while only five percent have undertaken more than one return journey.

77 percent of journeys abroad are for private purposes. Not unexpected, these are dominated by holiday and leisure-travel (58 percent). While visits to friends and relatives accounted for more than one in four inland journeys, these account for only nine percent of private journeys abroad. The development has continued in the same direction as for inland travel; the number of work-related and private journeys has increased while the proportion of holiday and leisure-time journeys has fallen.

Men also dominate travel between Norway and abroad, and corresponding to inland travel differences between sexes are particularly pronounced for work-related journeys. Concerning place of residence, the situation is the opposite of that noted above – those resident in the ten largest urban areas are over-represented on journeys between Norway and abroad. These account for 52 percent of the survey sample, but account for 65 percent of all journeys.

Not surprisingly, Sweden is the most popular destination, followed by Denmark and the United Kingdom.