

Summary:

2005 Norwegian Travel Survey – key results

Twenty years of National Travel Surveys

The Norwegian National Travel Survey 2005 (RVU 2005) is the fifth national survey of travel behaviour conducted in Norway. The first was done twenty years ago, in 1985, the next three in 1992, 1998 and 2001.

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 investigate 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 in the population

In RVU 2005, 17,514 persons over the age of 12 were interviewed. Around 10,000 of them constitute a representative sample of the entire country; the remainder is supplementary regional samples.

Increase in access to cars

Access to cars is one of the most important factors affecting choice of mode. In 2005, 87 per cent of the population belonged to a household with at least one car, one third have two cars and seven percent have three cars or more. This is an increase compared with 2001. In 2001, 64 per cent said that they always had access to a car; in 2005 this share had risen to 68 per cent.

Access to a car varies. Men continue to have better access to cars than women. Other characteristics of those with good access to a car are that they have high incomes and levels of education, are in the age group 45-54 and are 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 a car, whereas those living in smaller towns and in sparsely populated areas have best access. Also people living in areas surrounding the big cities have good access to cars.

In the 1990s, the percentage of young people aged 18-24 with driving licences fell. In 2005, the relatively low percentage of driving licence holders in this group remained at the same level as 2001, 73 per cent. Among young people, the primary reasons for not having a driving licence are that they do not need one and cannot afford it.

Where one lives is the most important factor for the kind of public transport available. The quality of public transport, i.e. the distance to the bus or tram stop and departure frequency 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 have considerably poorer service.

Of those who stated what sort of service is available to them, 24 per cent reported very good service, 46 per cent good or fairly good, whereas 30 per cent have poor or very poor public transport. Compared with 2001, this is an improvement on a national basis, when 38 per cent reported poor or very poor public transport.

A large proportion of the population owns a bicycle, 76 per cent. Here there has been no change from 2001. Nor has there been any change regarding ownership of, or access to, a moped or motorcycle: 10 per cent own such vehicles.

More trips and more car use 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 2005 the population undertook an average of 3.3 trips per day. This is a slight increase from 2001, when the average was 3.1. No more than 12 per cent do not travel in the course of an average day. Around a third make 1-2 trips. The same percentage make 3-4 trips, while 26 per cent make five trips or more. There is a slight increase from 2001 in the percentage that travel.

The average trip is 11.1 km, a slight reduction from 2001, and it takes 20 minutes. The total length travelled per day for each person is 37.4 km, a slight increase from 2001. A large proportion of daily trips are short. 41 per cent are under 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 education levels and those living in the Oslo region travel the longest.

The increase in the number of trips is primarily linked to trips as car driver, from 1.6 trips per person per day to 1.8, an increase of 12 per cent. The number of trips for the other modes of travel is stable. In 2005, 54 per cent of all trips were made by car drivers. This is a slight increase from 2001, and a clear increase since 1992. 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 eight percent of all trips. Most of these are by bus. In Oslo and vicinity tram and rail account for a larger percentage of trips on public transport than bus, and the percentage of trips by train is twice as high as in the rest of the country.

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 35-44
- have children
- are economically active

Pedestrians:

- do not have access to a car
- are well served by public transport
- are women
- are under 25 or over 67 years of age
- are single
- are not economically active

- have a low income
- live in the four biggest 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 19 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. This is a slight increase from 2001. 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 10 per cent of daily trips.

Separate leisure trips are 17 per cent of daily trips, and travel related to private visits 13 per cent.

Compared to 2001 the changes in the breakdown of travel purposes are slight.

More long trips and an increase in air travel for holiday trips

In 2005, people over the age of 12 took an average of 1.6 long trips per month.¹ This is a clear increase in the number of trips since 2001. More than half of the population 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 18 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 three per cent of the volume of travel.

Cars are used on most long trips domestically, 71 per cent, while 13 percent fly, seven per cent take the train and six per cent the bus. There has been an increase in car use since 2001.

For holiday and leisure trips abroad, travel by air is the dominant mode of transport at 60 per cent. There has been an increase since 2001, when the percentage of trips by air was 54 per cent.

Holiday cabins and boating

For the first time the survey asked about the ownership and use of boats and holiday cabins. Cabins as well as boats help generate transport. Weekend excursions are often related to visits to a cabin or the use of a boat. Approximately 40 per cent of the population owns or has access to a holiday home or cabin, nearly all of which are within the country.

Characteristics of cabin owners:

- Persons in the age group 55-66 years
- Couples with children
- Top managers and administrators
- Persons with high household incomes

On average, cabin owners use their holiday homes 1.2 times per month. The most avid cabin users are:

- Persons aged 55-66
- Couples without children

¹ Trips of 100 km or longer one-way and trips abroad, regardless of trip length, are considered long trips. In 1998, trips abroad were also required to be 100 km or longer. This was changed in 2001.

- Top managers and administrators and craftsmen
- Residents of Finnmark and Vest-Agder counties

Nearly a third of the population owns or has access to a boat. The most common type of boat is a small motorboat (7 m or shorter): 68 per cent of boat owners have this kind of boat. Only three per cent own a sailboat, while 17 per cent have a large motorboat and 12 per cent a small boat without a motor.

With regard to the most common type of boat, there is little variation in owner characteristics. It is popular in most demographic groups. What characterises the other types of boat owner is:

Small boat without a motor:

- Elderly
- Single
- Occupation in primary industries
- Low household income
- Live in Oppland and Hedmark

Large boat with a motor:

- Age group 55-66 years
- Couples without children
- Vocational education
- Live in Møre og Romsdal and Vest-Agder
- High household income

Sailboat:

- Persons with occupations requiring a college degree
- High level of education
- High household income
- Live in or near Oslo

From April to October, a third of respondents use their boat several times a week. Just over a fifth use it an average of once a week, and the same percentage use their boat two to three times a month, while nearly a quarter use it less frequently or never.