

## WHAT CAN THE NATIONAL TRAVEL SURVEY TELL US ABOUT TRAVEL IN THE LAST YEAR?

### How often did people travel?

- In 2021 people in England made on average 757 journeys over the course of the year, about 15 each week. This was similar to 2020 (739) yet lower by 21% compared to 2019 (953). This is most likely due to the travel restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic.

### How far do people travel?

- On average, the distance people in England travelled was 4,329 miles, similar to 2020 (4,334). This was 33% lower than in 2019 (6,500), with the rules imposed to control the pandemic continuing to have an effect in 2021.

### How do people travel?

- The most common method of travel in 2021 was by car (59% of trips) or by walking (31% of trips), almost identical to 2020. The proportion of trips made by car fell by 2 percentage points compared with 2019, while the proportion of trips made on foot increased by 5 percentage points.

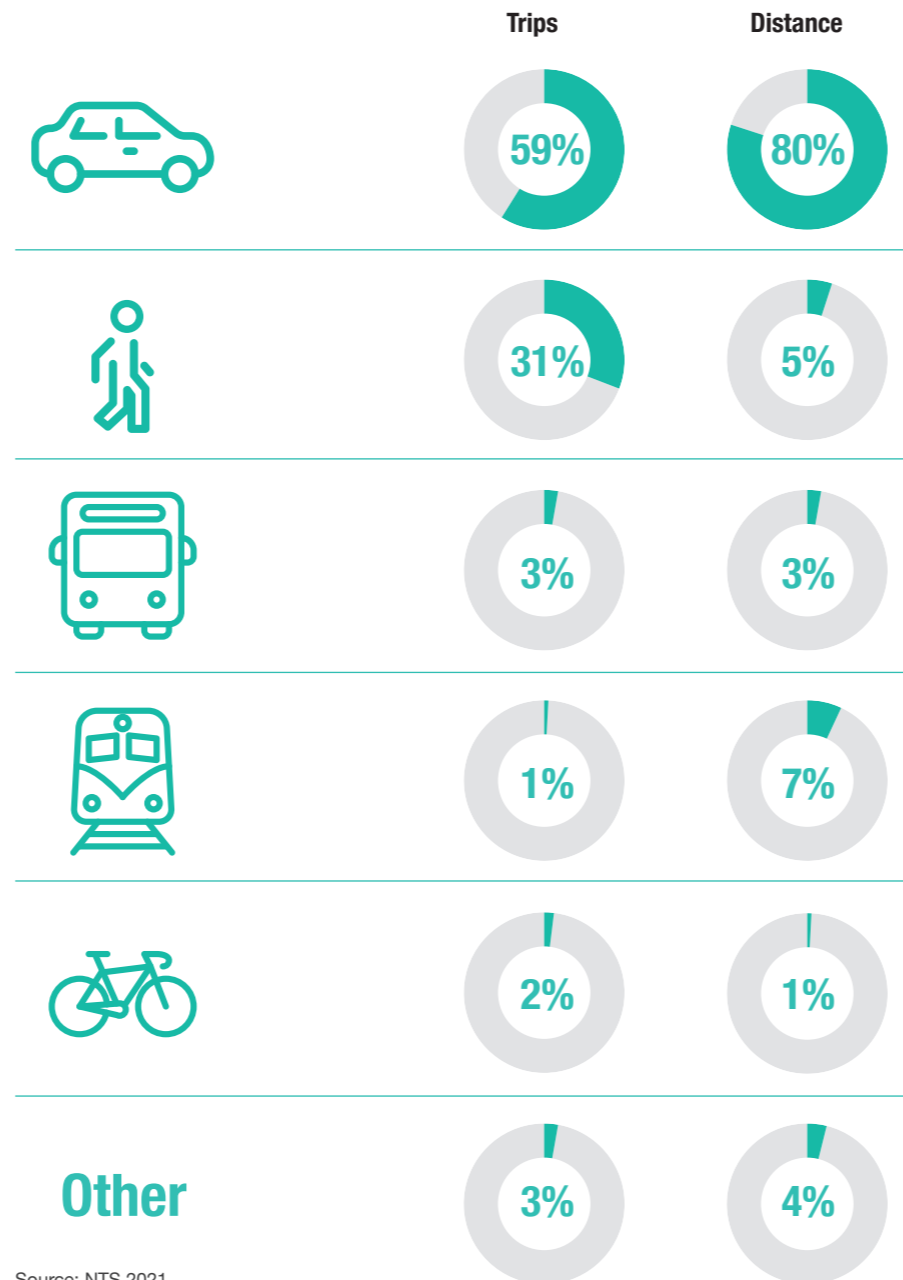
### Why do people travel?

- People most often made a journey for shopping (18%) and walking (14%).

### Who was travelling in 2021?

- Similarly to 2020, women travelled more often (793 trips) compared to men (719 trips) in 2021. However, men travel 14% further on average. This is likely because men are travelling more miles when commuting.

## MOST FREQUENT WAYS OF TRAVELLING



Source: NTS 2021

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Department  
for Transport

**NatCen**  
Social Research



# NATIONAL TRAVEL SURVEY

### TRAVEL TRENDS

- In 2021 people travelled 4,329 miles on average. This is the lowest yearly average on record.
- On average, in 2021, people spent 273 hours travelling, a decrease from the 2019 average of 370 hours.
- In 2021, males made fewer trips (719 trips per person) than females (793 trips per person).

A survey carried out by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) on behalf of the Department for Transport







## WHAT IS THE NATIONAL TRAVEL SURVEY?

As you go about your daily life, the chances are that you have to travel somewhere. Some journeys we make can be routine, such as a journey to work. Some are more occasional, like a trip to see friends or relatives in another part of the country. Others are more spontaneous, like a short walk to the local shop to buy a newspaper.

The government makes decisions about transport services that affect how you travel. It needs up-to-date and reliable information on how people actually travel to ensure its policies are well developed and its transport plans are appropriate. The best way to get this information is to ask people, like you, about the different journeys they make, and the National Travel Survey does just that. Where, why, how and how far people travel are all questions the survey tries to answer.

## HOW DOES THE SURVEY WORK?

Each year, a representative sample of addresses in England is chosen at random. This is gathered from a public list of addresses across England kept by the Post Office. The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), an independent social research organisation, then invites the people who live at these addresses to take part in the survey.

The information gathered in this way is used to help create a national picture of how we travel, which can then be used by the Department for Transport for improving and developing transport policy in England.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

People just like you have previously been chosen and told us about their travel experiences, and we have learned a lot from this. But people's behaviour and needs change so it is important that we continue to collect information every year. This is particularly important as we look at travel as the pandemic moves into the past, as well as understanding the use of electric vehicles with a growing concern for the environment.

Now is your chance for your travel needs to be recognised. It doesn't matter how much or how little you travel and to get a good, representative picture, we need to include people of all ages and backgrounds. You are not expected to hold any special knowledge about travel.

Taking part in the survey is voluntary. However, if you decide not to join in, this means that your experience – and the experience of people like you – will not be heard by the government.

## WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO?

Taking part is easy. A NatCen interviewer will visit your home to ask you, and any other people who live with you, questions about travel. These cover subjects including: how you get to work, to school and to the shops; satisfaction with your local transport services, and any transport difficulties; and about road accidents that you or anyone else (including children) have been involved in.

When the interviewer visits your home, they will be able to give you more information on this survey. The interview will be arranged for a time that suits you.

## HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

The government uses the data for transport planning and policy development. For example, previous survey results allowed public authorities to study the travel of school children and to predict future traffic levels. The findings are also used by academics, businesses and the general public, as well as by campaigning organisations representing a wide range of groups, including motorists, cyclists, motorcyclists, the elderly, rural communities and children.

## IS THE SURVEY CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes. The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Department for Transport (DfT), which are responsible for the data, are bound by the same code of confidentiality. Your answers will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act, and used for statistical purposes only. Your details will only be known to the team processing the survey results at NatCen and DfT. We won't pass on your name or address to anyone else. Your data and information will be securely stored and deleted after two years.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

You can find more information for people taking part in the survey at NatCen's National Travel Survey website: [www.natcen.ac.uk/nts](http://www.natcen.ac.uk/nts)

**IF YOU WISH TO CONTACT NATCEN ABOUT THIS SURVEY PLEASE WRITE TO:**

FAO: National Travel Survey team

NatCen Social Research

35 Northampton Square

London

EC1V 0AX

Telephone: **0800 652 4568**

Email: [info@natcen.ac.uk](mailto:info@natcen.ac.uk)

**YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL TRAVEL SURVEY, INCLUDING ITS FINDINGS, ON THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT WEBSITE:**

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics)

Telephone: **020 7944 3077** (DfT NTS enquiry number)

Email: [national.travelsurvey@dft.gov.uk](mailto:national.travelsurvey@dft.gov.uk)

**A large print version of this leaflet is available on request.**