Travel Survey for Northern Ireland
In-depth Report
2020

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https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/travel-survey-northern-ireland

Key Points

- Each person travelled, on average, 4,550 miles in 2020 (approximately 12.5 miles per day).

- On average, 826 journeys were made per person in 2020 (just over 2 journeys per day).

- In 2020, the average time each person spent travelling was 279 hours (approximately 46 minutes per day).

- On average, in 2020, people living in urban areas made around the same number of journeys as people living in rural areas (urban: 831 journeys; rural: 820 journeys) and spent a similar amount of time travelling as people living in rural areas (urban: 280 hours; rural: 277 hours). However, rural residents travelled further than urban residents (urban: 3,550 miles; rural: 5,772 miles).

- In 2020, 65% of all journeys were made by car, 27% by walking, 3% by public transport (Ulsterbus, Metro, Other Bus, Northern Ireland Railways, Black Taxi) and 2% by cycling.

- Over two fifths (42%) of all journeys were less than two miles long in 2020. More than half (54%) of these journeys were on foot while 41% were by car. The car was the dominant mode of transport (83%) for journeys of two miles and over.

- In 2020, more than two fifths (43%) of all journeys were made for leisure and other purposes (visiting friends, entertainment, social activities, sports activities, holiday, day trips, just walking, other), 18% for shopping and 16% for commuting and business.

- Three quarters (75%) of all respondents took a walk lasting at least 20 minutes once a week or more.

- In 2020, 14% of all respondents cycled once a week or more.

- Around three times as many respondents travelled on the bus once a week or more (15%) as travelled on the train once a week or more (5%).

Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) 2020

Department for Infrastructure
An Roinn
Bonneagair
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NISRA
Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency
Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann
um Staitisticí agus Taighde

Average journeys by main mode

Other

3% 2%
2%

27%

826 journeys per person

65% of all journeys

Why people travel

% of journeys

43%	Leisure & Other
18%	Shopping
16%	Commuting & Business
12%	Education & Escort education
7%	Personal business
4%	Other escort

How often people walk*

% of respondents

Every day**	42%
At least once a week	33%
At least once a month	9%
At least once a year	2%
Less than once a year or never	13%
Varies according to time of year	1%

*includes walks of at least 20 minutes

** "Every day" also includes walking every working/school day but not at weekends

Average distance travelled by mode

Other

2%
6% 1%

6%

4,550 miles travelled per person

84% of total distance travelled

Journeys by urban-rural split*

	Urban	Rural
Car	59%	74%
Walk	33%	21%
Bus/Train	4%	2%
Bicycle	2%	1%
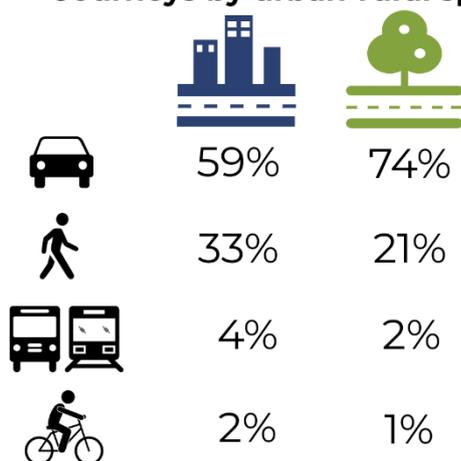
*Urban-rural information is based on the areas where respondents live

Travelling to work

% of workers

80%	
7%	
6%	
4%	

Contents

About this publication

TSNI In-depth Report 2020

This is the second release of 2020 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) results following the publication of the Headline Report. The report contains information on personal travel for Northern Ireland residents, how they travel (modes), why they travel (purposes) and includes urban-rural breakdowns of key tables. It contains more detailed analysis on journeys taken by the Northern Ireland population in 2020 (including breakdowns by gender). Further information about the survey is available in the User Information section on page 57. Due to changes to the survey methodology in 2020, there have been a number of changes to the report detailed in the next section.

How the COVID-19 pandemic has affected 2020 data collection and reporting

This report covers the January to December 2020 time period and, as such, includes data collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and data collected during the pandemic. The key effects this has had on reporting the data are highlighted below along with some of the changes made to the 2020 report as a result.

Survey methodology changes mean results are not directly comparable with previous years

There were a number of significant changes to the survey methodology in 2020 in response to the pandemic to ensure the data could continue to be collected safely. More details of the changes are given in Changes to 2020 data collection methodology (page 62) in User Information. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years and caution should be taken in reaching any conclusions if making these comparisons. More information about this is given in Appendix D (page 76).

Change from previous reports:
The commentary within the report focusses on 2020 data without making comparisons to previous years.
Each chart highlights that the survey methodology changed in 2020.

Weighting the data

The achieved sample in the first quarter of the year (pre-pandemic) was nearly the same as that for the second, third and fourth quarters combined (during the pandemic). The same number of households were selected each month but the response rate dropped during the pandemic. Therefore, to ensure an even spread over the whole year, all the data were weighted by quarter. Further details on the investigations into weighting the data are in the section Impact of changes on reporting 2020 data in User Information (page 63).

Change from previous reports:
This is the first time since the survey began that the data have been weighted.

Reporting 2020 as a single year

It was decided that due to the methodology changes and because 2020 is an exceptional year, it would not be appropriate to combine 2020 data with previous years. This will limit the analysis that can be done as the sample size is reduced by reporting only one year instead of the usual three years combined.

Change from previous reports:
Single year charts (e.g. 2010 to 2020) have been added as 2020 is being reported as a single year. Charts with three years combined data for previous years (e.g. 2008-2010 to 2020) have been retained to match the reporting in previous publications. The usual three year charts have retained the same number with an "a" added. Equivalent single year charts have the same number with a "b" added.

Lower response rate and reduction in achieved sample

The response rate for the TSNI reduced from 59% in 2019 to 25% in 2020. The lower response rate and change to reporting 2020 as a single year have led to a reduction in the achieved sample compared to previous years and will limit the analysis that can be done.

Change from previous reports:
The achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for certain breakdowns normally included in

this report, for example, age and gender. Where this is the case, tables/charts have either been amended or removed. The details of the tables/figures that have been amended/removed and the reasons for the change are given in the relevant section of the report. In addition, the full list of changes to tables/figures are detailed in the section Changes to tables and figures from previous In-depth Reports in User Information (page 63).

Questions only asked from January to March 2020

With the move to telephone interviewing, the questionnaire was streamlined and some of the questions were removed. Questions that were only asked from January to March cannot be reported as a full year of data is needed.

Change from previous reports:

Tables, figures and commentary that refer to questions that were only asked from January to March have been removed from this report. The details are given in the relevant section of the report and also in the section Changes to tables and figures from previous In-depth Reports in User Information (page 63).

Reporting 95% confidence intervals

With the reduction in the achieved sample due to the lower response rate and reporting a single year of data, the precision of survey estimates is reduced.

Change from previous reports:

To assist with gauging the level of uncertainty in the data, 95% confidence intervals have been added to a selection of the charts for the most recent two periods of data (2019/2017-2019 and 2020).

What is a confidence interval?

The error bars ( ]) in a number of the charts in this report show 95% confidence intervals. A 95% confidence interval shows the range around a central estimate that we are 95% confident* contains the true value of the population.

For example, in 2020 each person travelled, on average, 4,550 miles with a 95% confidence interval of +/- 352 miles. This means we can be 95% certain* that the true figure for the Northern Ireland population (if we surveyed everyone and not just a sample) falls between 4,198 and 4,902 miles i.e. the values indicated by the error bars around 2020 in Figure 1.1a and Figure 1.1b (page 4).

* If 100 samples were chosen from the population giving 100 confidence intervals, we would expect 95 of these confidence intervals would contain the true population value.

Technical Report

Full details of the changes to the survey methodology and data analysis and reporting in 2020 and the weighting can be found in the TSNI Technical Report 2020.

Tables accompanying the report

Further information and breakdowns of the 2020 data are available in the spreadsheet accompanying this report. This includes analysis by 14 travel modes, 15 journey purposes and a full breakdown of all responses given to a question. For ease of comparison, numbering matches the tables in previous In-depth Reports (up to 2015-2017). Relevant tables in the spreadsheet are highlighted in 'Further reading' at the end of each section.

Accessibility

If this document is not in a format that meets your needs, please contact us to discuss your requirements.

Section 1: All travel modes

In 2020:

On average, Northern Ireland residents travelled 4,550 miles

The average number of journeys made per person was 826

The average time spent travelling was 279 hours per person

Distance, journeys and time spent travelling summary (all modes)

Northern Ireland residents travelled, on average, 4,550 miles per person in 2020 (approximately 12.5 miles per day).

On average, 826 journeys were made per person in 2020 (just over 2 journeys per day).

The average journey length in 2020 was 5.5 miles.

The average time each person spent travelling in 2020 was 279 hours (approximately 46 minutes per day). The average journey time in 2020 was 20 minutes.

Figure 1.1a: Distance 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year
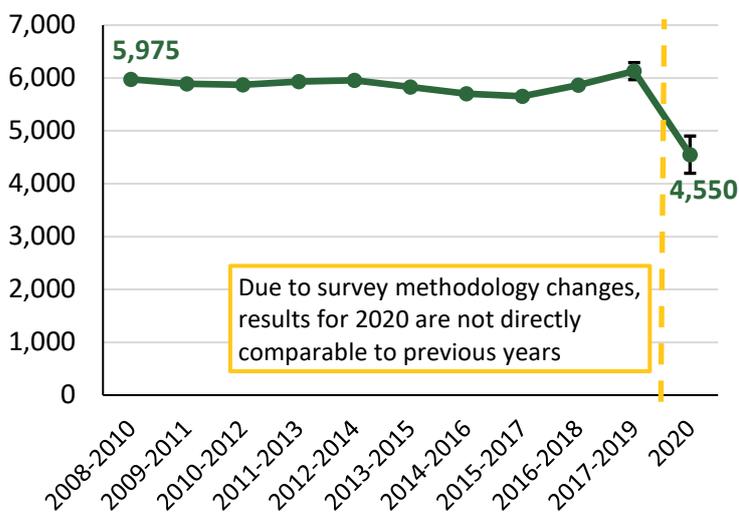
Figure 1.1b: Distance 2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year
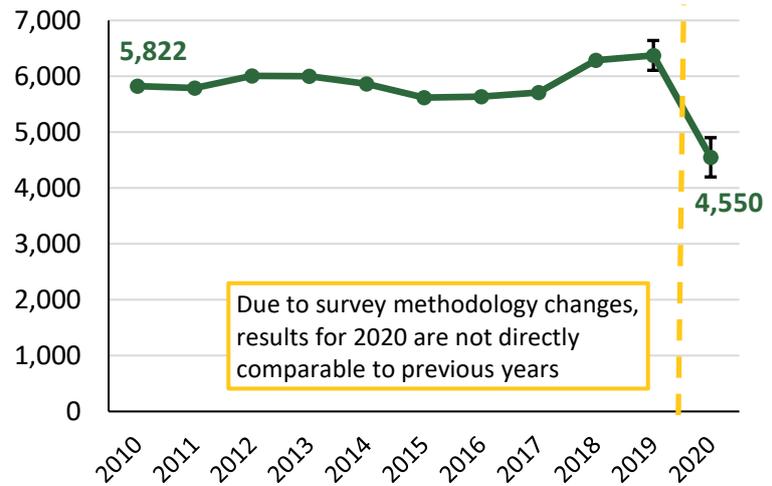
Figure 1.2a: Journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
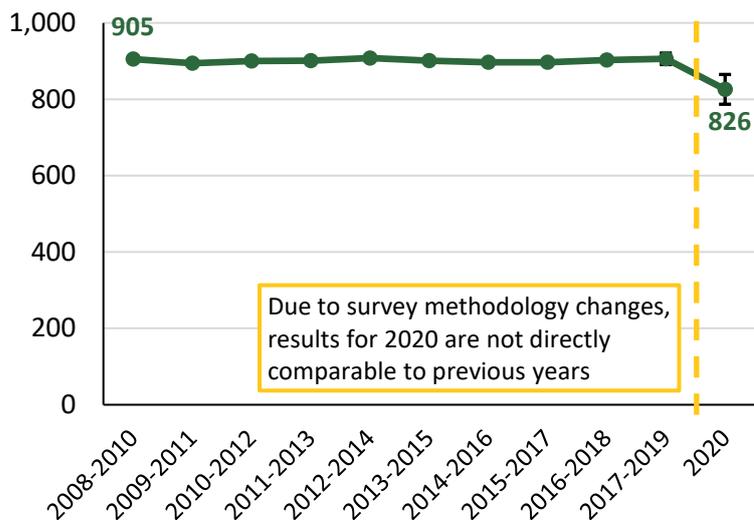
Figure 1.2b: Journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
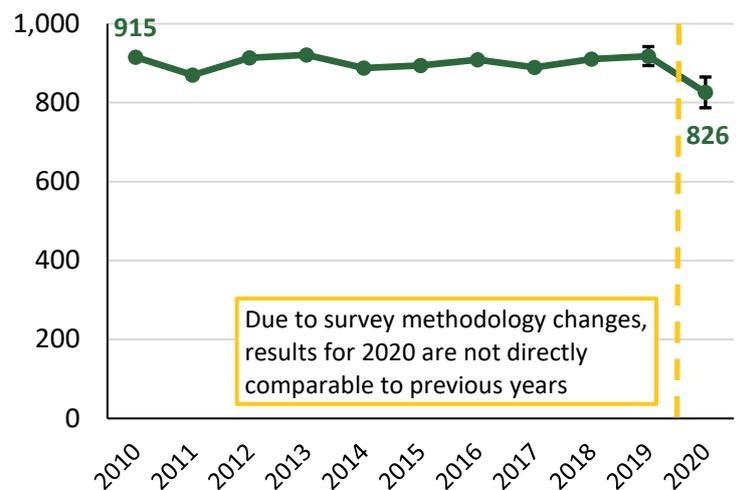
Note: ⊥ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see <u>What is a confidence interval?</u> on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years.   See <u>About this publication</u> section (page 1) for details.

Figure 1.3a: Time 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year

301

279

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years
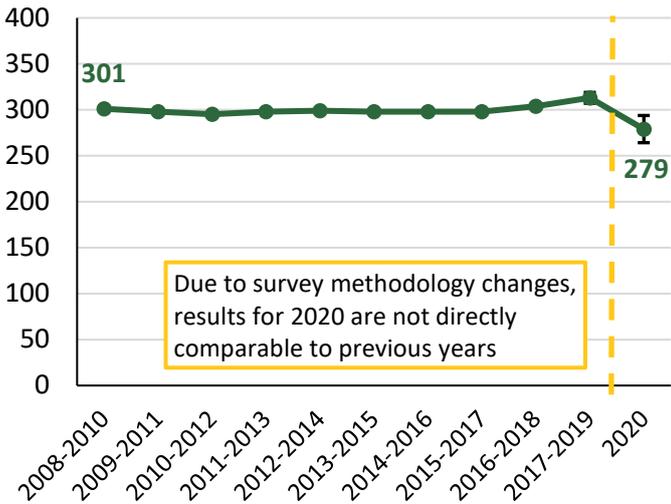
Figure 1.3b: Time 2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year
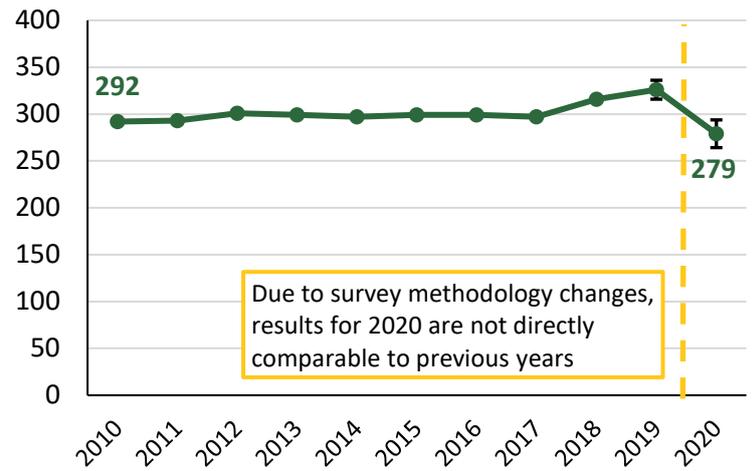
292

279

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

Comparison of travel modes

Car travel made up the majority of miles travelled per person with more than four fifths (84%) of total distance travelled by car in 2020. Public transport and walking both accounted for 6% of the total distance travelled.

Figure 1.4a: Average distance travelled per person per year by mode: 2013-2015 to 2020[1]
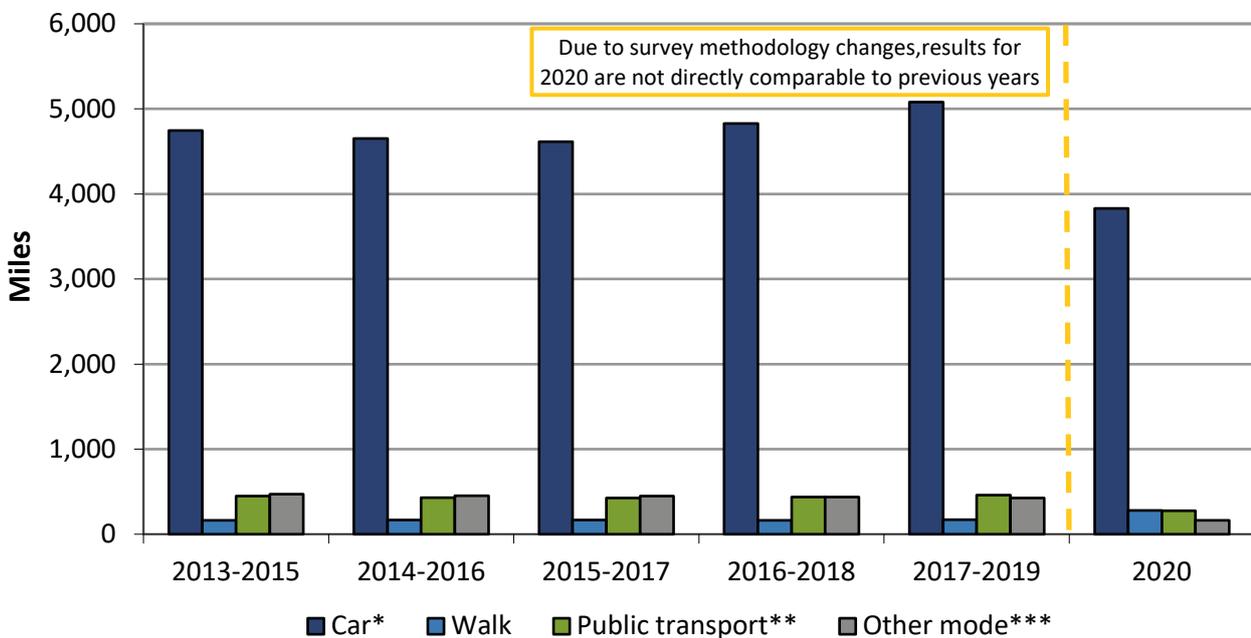
Due to survey methodology changes,results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

■ Car*   ■ Walk   ■ Public transport**   ■ Other mode***

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years.   See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

* Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

** Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black taxi'

*** Other modes includes 'Bicycle', 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode

Figure 1.4b: Average distance travelled per person per year by mode: 2015 to 2020[1]
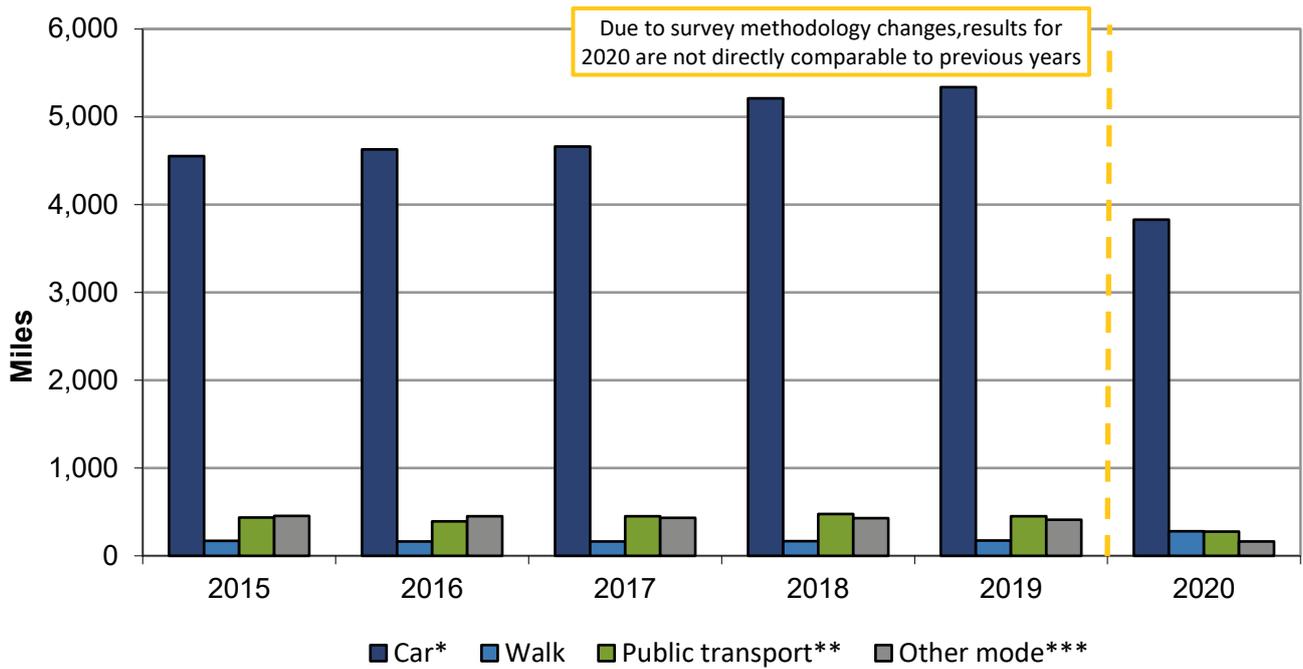
Car journeys made up the majority of all journeys taken. Just under two thirds of journeys (65%) were by car during 2020. Walking accounted for more than one quarter of journeys (27%) and public transport made up 3% of all journeys.

Figure 1.5a: Average number of journeys per person per year by main mode: 2013-2015 to 2020[1]
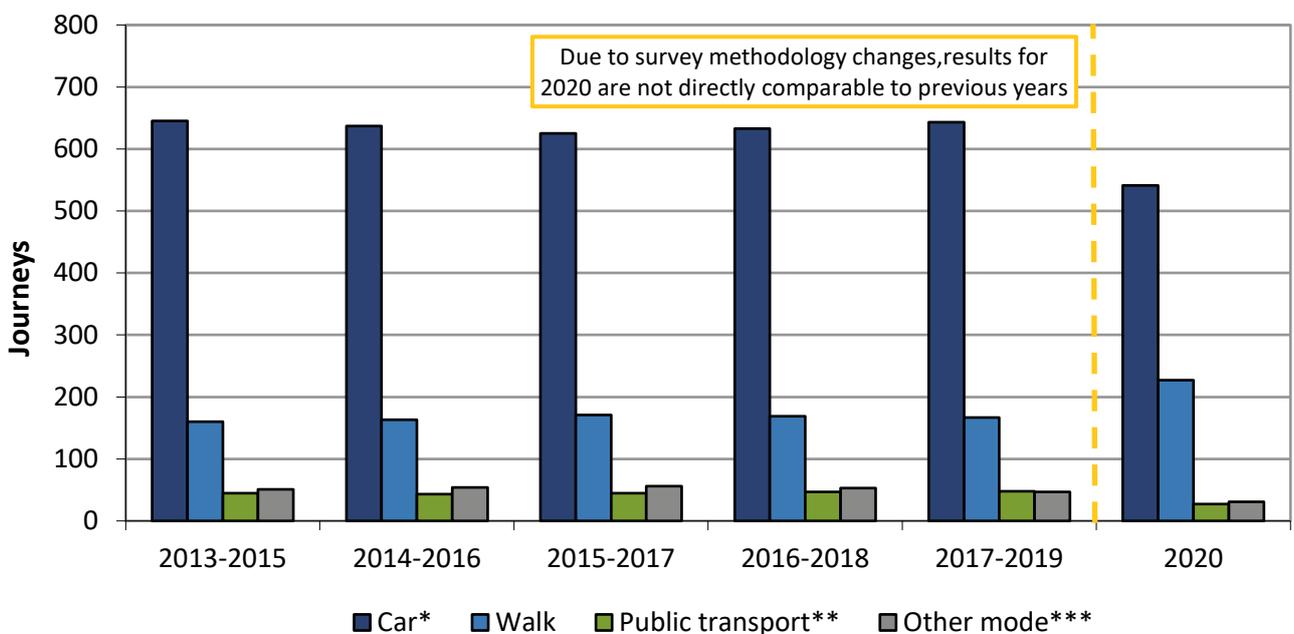
[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

* Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

** Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black taxi'

*** Other modes includes 'Bicycle', 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

Figure 1.5b: Average number of journeys per person per year by main mode: 2015 to 2020[1]
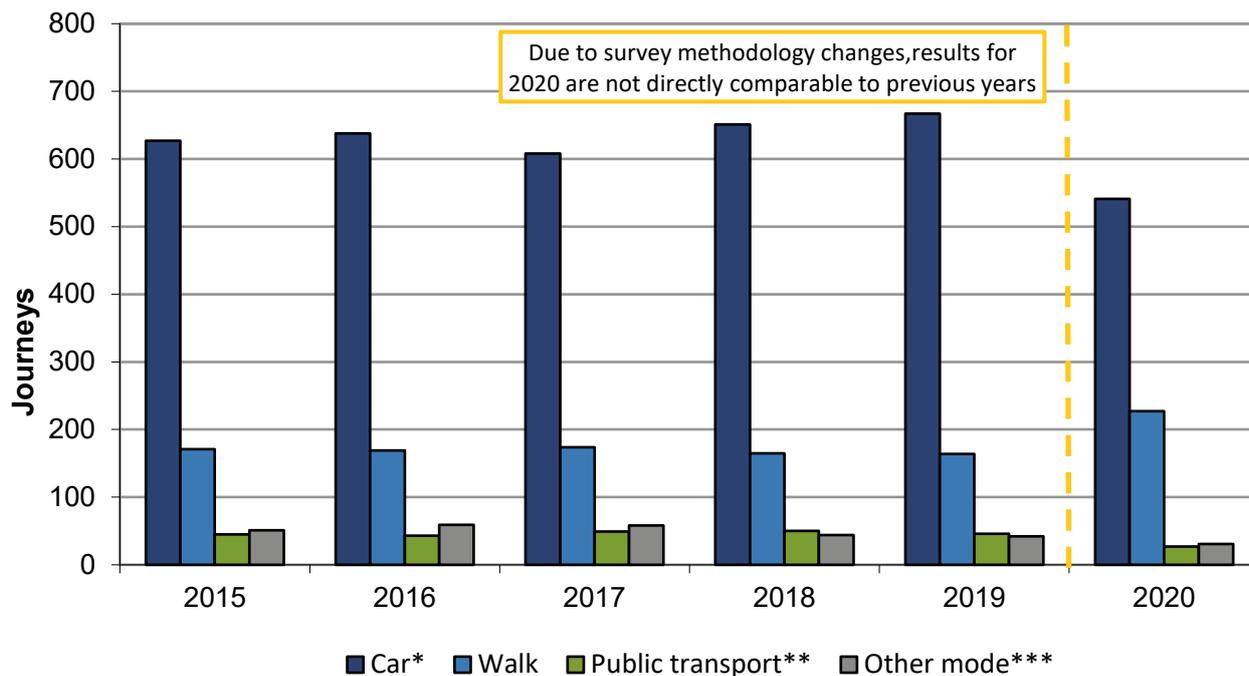
[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.
* Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'
** Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black taxi'
*** Other modes includes 'Bicycle', 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

Journeys by Local Government District (LGD)

This section, including Figure 1.6, cannot be reported for 2020 as the achieved sample is too small to produce robust analysis for the usual LGD breakdown.

Average number of journeys by distance

Over two fifths (42%) of all journeys were less than two miles long. More than half (54%) of these journeys were on foot while 41% were by car.

More than one quarter (28%) of all journeys were 2 miles to less than 5 miles long. Just over three quarters (77%) of these journeys were by car while 15% were on foot.

The car was the dominant mode of transport (83%) for journeys of two miles and over.

The majority of journeys were less than 10 miles long (84% of all journeys in 2020).

Table 1.1: Journeys per person by distance and main mode[1]: 2020

Journeys

Mode of travel	Journey Distance							
	< 1 mile	1 to <2 miles	2 to <5 miles	5 to <10 miles	10 to <25 miles	25 to <50 miles	50 miles & over	All journeys
Walk	87	102	36	2	-	-	-	**227**
Bicycle	1	5	5	3	1	-	-	**16**
Car[2]	41	103	180	96	86	28	7	**541**
Public transport[3]	-	3	8	9	5	1	1	**27**
Other[4]	1	4	5	2	3	1	-	**15**
All modes	**130**	**217**	**234**	**112**	**95**	**30**	**8**	**826**

[1] See Definitions section on page 72 for definitions of individual travel modes. A further breakdown of modes can be found in Table 3.3 of the accompanying spreadsheet.

[2] Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

[3] Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black Taxi'

[4] Other includes 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

Variations in travel by sex*

On average, males made a similar number of journeys to females in 2020 (males: 809 journeys, females: 844 journeys). However, males travelled 27% further than females, averaging 5,076 miles in 2020, compared to 4,010 miles for females.

The car was the most commonly used main mode of transport for both males (65%) and females (66%).

A similar proportion of journeys were made on foot by males (26%) and females (29%).

Males made a higher proportion of cycling journeys (3%) than females (1%).

Table 1.2: Journeys per person by main mode[1] and sex: 2020*

Percentage/Journeys/Miles

Travel modes	All males	All females	All persons
Walk	26%	29%	**27%**
Bicycle	3%	1%	**2%**
Car[2]	65%	66%	**65%**
Public transport[3]	4%	3%	**3%**
Other[4]	3%	1%	**2%**
All modes	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**
Number of Journeys	809	844	**826**
Distance travelled (miles)	5,076	4,010	**4,550**

(See Table 8.1.4 in the TSNI Technical Report 2020 for Confidence Ranges)

[1] See Definitions section on page 72 for definitions of individual travel modes. A further breakdown of modes can be found in Table 3.6 of the accompanying spreadsheet.

[2] Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

[3] Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black Taxi'

[4] Other includes 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

* Please note, the achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for the age and sex breakdown normally reported in this section and Table 1.2. However, it is sufficient to produce analysis by sex only and the section has been updated accordingly.

Difficulty with travel due to physical disability or long-standing health problem*

Overall, 18% of respondents said they had some difficulty with travel due to a physical disability or long-standing health problem (see definition on page 74). There was no real difference between males (16%) and females (20%) in terms of difficulty with travel due to a physical disability or long-standing health problem.

* Please note, the achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for the age and sex breakdown normally reported in this section and Figure 1.7. However, it is sufficient to produce analysis by sex only and the section has been updated accordingly.

Breakdown of "Public transport" and "Other" modes of travel

Data on the individual modes of travel that make up the "Public transport" mode e.g. Metro and Ulsterbus, NI Railways and the "Other" mode e.g. Motorcycle, Taxi, are available in the spreadsheet accompanying the report. Tables 3.1 to 3.4 and 3.6 in the spreadsheet contain data on these individual modes of travel (see "Further reading" section below). Please note that some individual modes of travel cannot be reported as the achieved sample in 2020 was too small for robust analysis.

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 2.1: Distance, journeys & hours travelled per person per year
- Figures 2.1a & 2.1b: Average distance travelled per person per year by mode
- Figures 2.2a & 2.2b: Average number of journeys per person per year by main mode
- Table 3.1: Average distance travelled per person per year by travel mode
- Table 3.2: Average number of journeys per person per year and average journey length by main mode
- Table 3.3: Journeys per person per year by distance and main mode
- Table 3.4: Journey time by main mode
- Table 3.6: Journeys per person by main mode and sex
- Table 5.1: Difficulty with travel due to physical disability by sex

Section 2: Walking

In 2020:

On average, people living in Northern Ireland walked 280 miles

The average number of walking journeys made per person was 227

The average time spent walking was 89 hours per person

Walking summary

In 2020, walking accounted for 6% of total distance travelled. On average, 280 miles were walked per person in 2020.

Over a quarter (27%) of all journeys in 2020 were walks. There were 227 journeys walked per person in 2020. On average, walks were 1.2 miles in length in 2020.

Walking accounted for nearly a third (32%) of total time spent travelling in 2020. The average time spent walking per person was 89 hours in 2020, around 15 minutes per day. The average walk lasted 23 minutes in 2020.

Figure 2.1a: Distance walked 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year
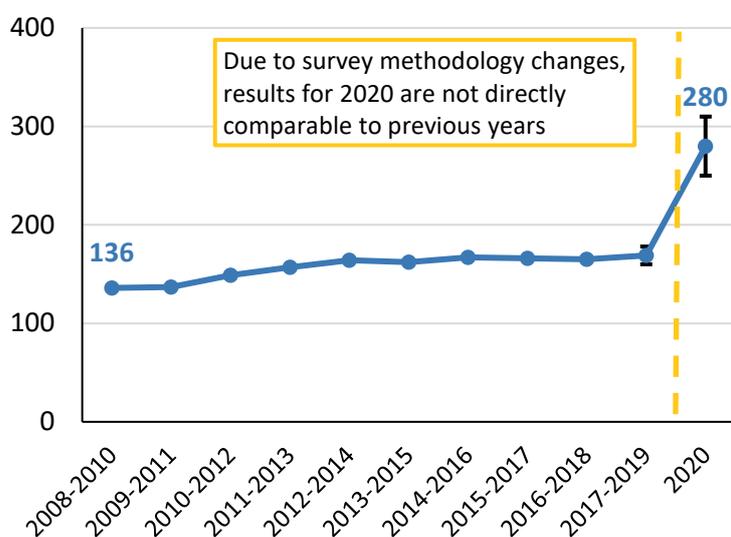
Figure 2.1b: Distance walked 2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years
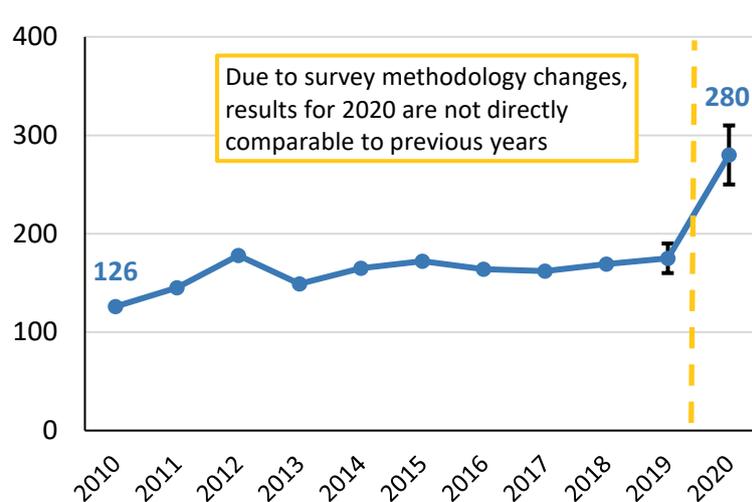
Figure 2.2a: Walking journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
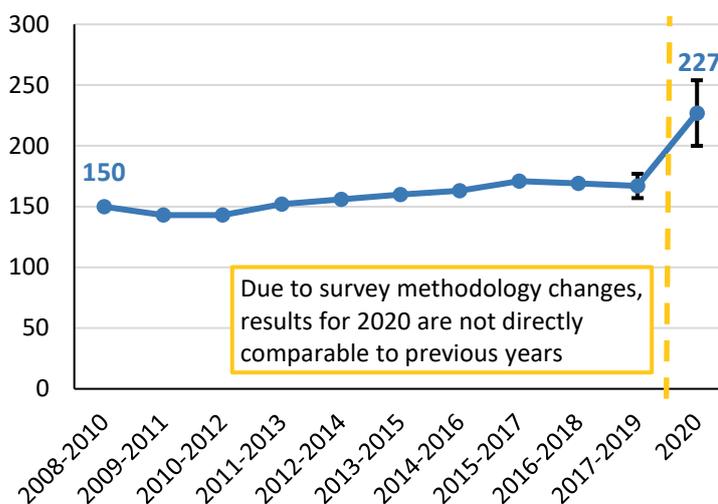
Figure 2.2b: Walking journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
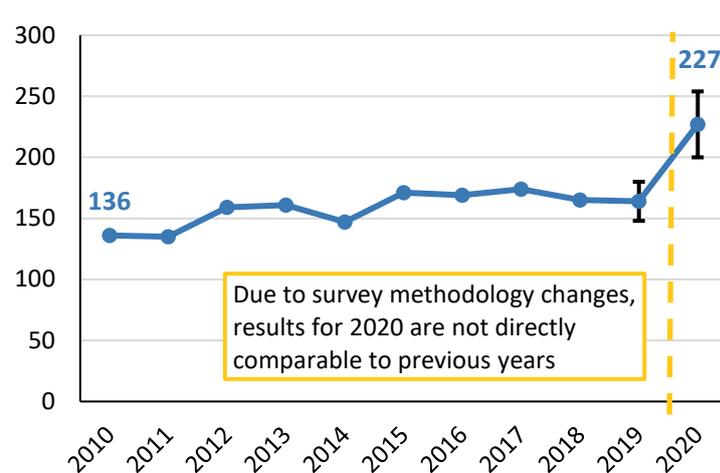
Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

Figure 2.3a: Time spent walking 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years
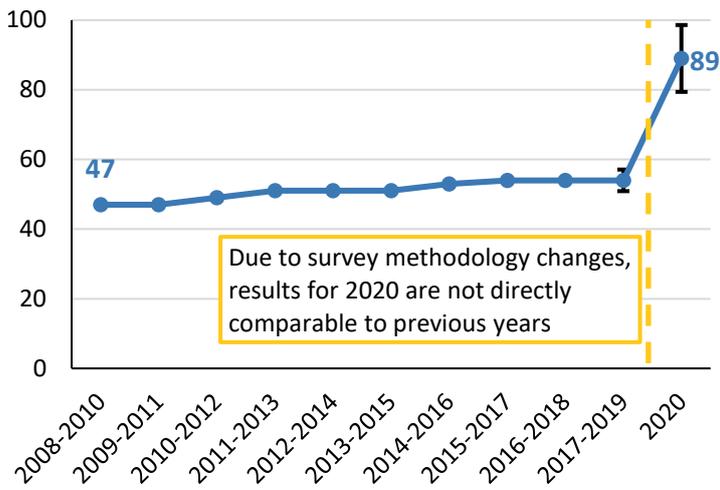
Figure 2.3b: Time spent walking 2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year
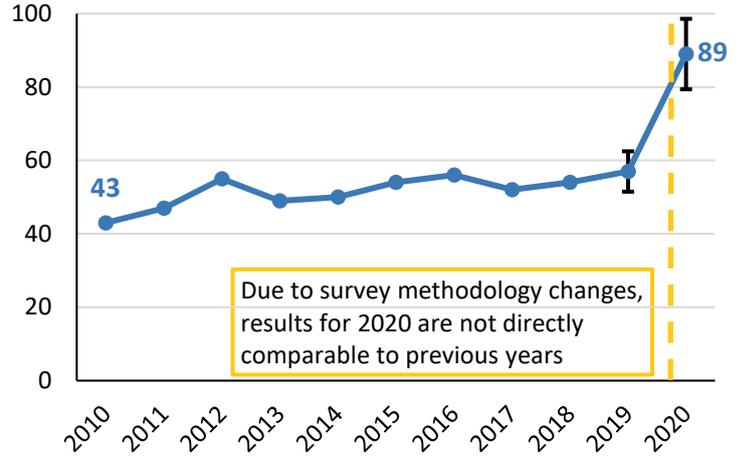
Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

Walking frequency

Three quarters (75%) of all respondents (everyone taking part in the survey) took a walk lasting at least 20 minutes once a week or more, with a further 9% walking this length of time at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Just over two fifths (42%) of respondents stated that they walked 20 minutes or more every day (this includes those that walk this length of time every working day/school day but not at weekends). This is almost four times as many as those who never walked for 20 minutes or more (11%).

Figure 2.4: How often do you walk anywhere for 20 minutes or more?*: 2020

Unweighted sample size = 751   Frequency of walking for 20 minutes or more*
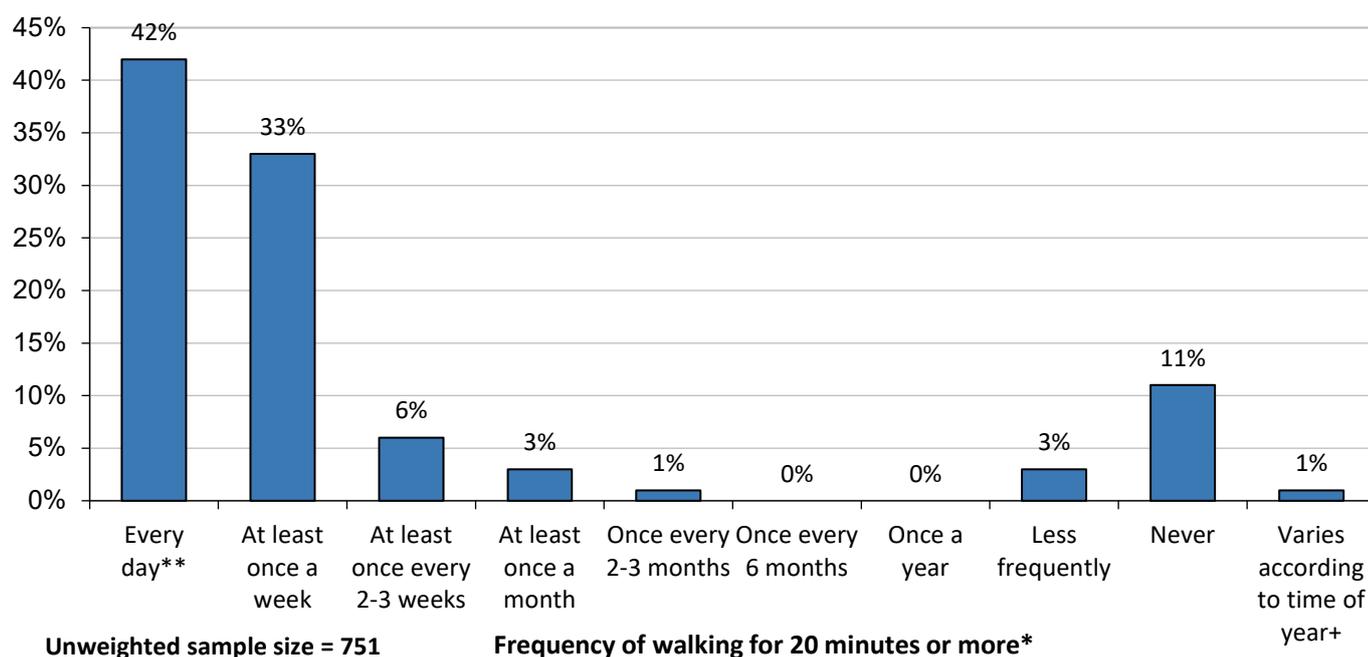
*Includes all walks of 20 minutes or more whether for leisure or with a purpose (e.g. to go to the shops).

** "Every day" is selected if the respondent walks 20 minutes or more every working day/school day but not at weekends as well as if they walk 20 minutes or more every day.

+ Spontaneous answer. Note that from April 2020 onwards that the question format changed, following the move to telephone interviewing. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8). This answer option was not read out but was available to code if the respondent gave the answer spontaneously.

Looking only at those who walked for 20 minutes or more (i.e. did not state "never"), 84% walked this length of time once a week or more and a further 10% walked this length of time at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Incentives to walk more often

Respondents aged 16 and over, giving a face to face interview, who stated that they walked for at least 20 minutes (i.e. did not state "never") were asked what would encourage them to walk more often.

"Better weather" (28%) was the most commonly mentioned incentive that would encourage the respondent to walk more often.

Almost one third (31%) stated that they already walk as much as they can and a further 11% said that nothing would encourage them to walk more often.

Figure 2.5: What would encourage you to walk more often?: 2020
(selected responses*)
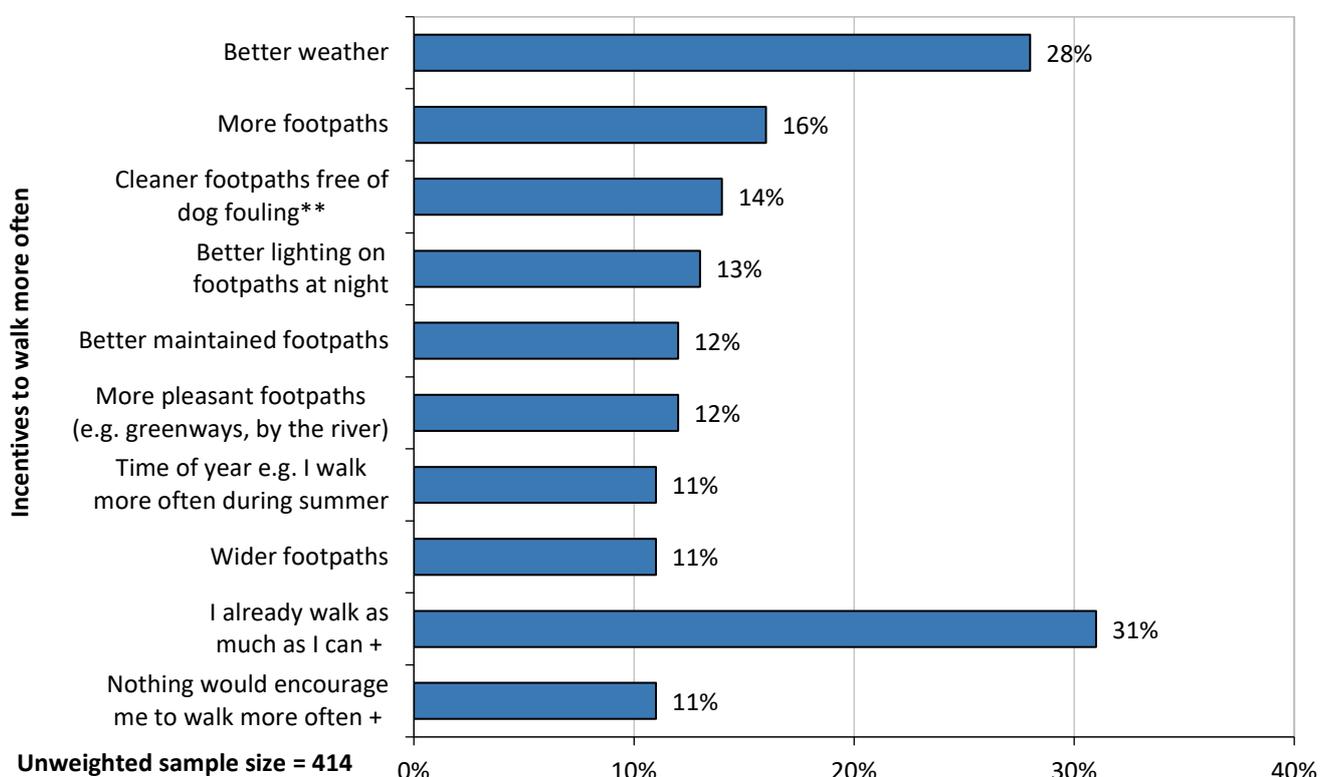
Unweighted sample size = 414

Percentages sum to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

*Respondents could choose from a show card with 24 answer options (including "Other") from January to March 2020 (full breakdown given in accompanying spreadsheet). Note that from April 2020 onwards, following the move to telephone interviewing, show cards could no longer be used but interviewers coded spontaneous responses from the same set of answer options. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8).

**Answer option added in 2017 (reported from 2017-2019).

+ Spontaneous answer January to March 2020. Note that from April 2020 onwards, following the move to telephone interviewing, all answers were spontaneous. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8).

Unsafe situations when walking by the road

Respondents aged 16 and over, giving a face to face interview, who stated that they walked for at least 20 minutes once a year or more were asked which situations made them feel unsafe when walking by the road.

The most frequently stated situations that made the respondent feel unsafe were "No footpath" (31%), "traffic travelling above speed limit" (29%), "heavy traffic" (25%), and "motorists driving without consideration of pedestrians" (25%).

A quarter (25%) stated that they always feel safe when walking and an additional 8% said that they never walk by the road.

Figure 2.6: Which situations make you feel unsafe when walking by the road?: 2020 (selected responses*)
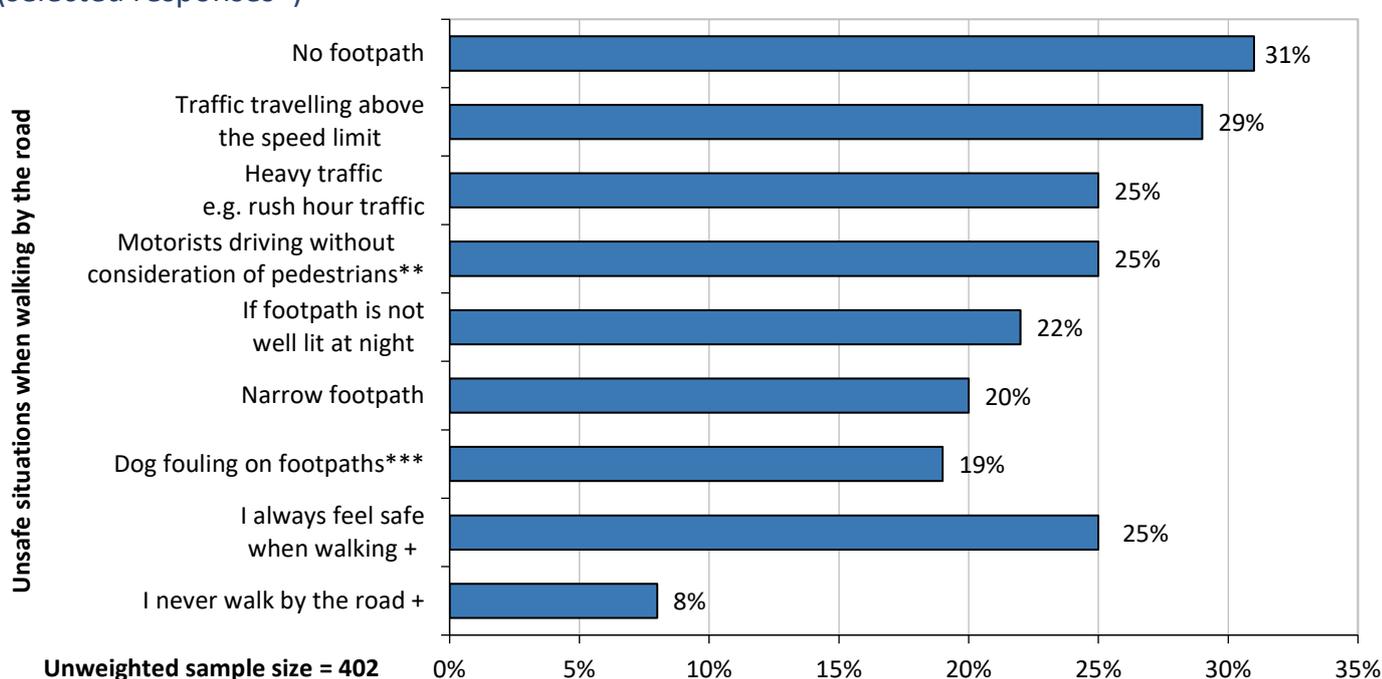
Percentages sum to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

*Respondents could choose from a show card with 18 answer options (including "Other") from January to March 2020 (full breakdown given in accompanying spreadsheet). Note that from April 2020 onwards, following the move to telephone interviewing, show cards could no longer be used but interviewers coded spontaneous responses from the same set of answer options. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8).

**Full answer option - Motorists driving without consideration of pedestrians (e.g. not slowing down if pedestrian is crossing the road)

***Answer option added in 2017 (reported from 2017-2019).

+ Spontaneous answer January to March 2020. Note that from April 2020 onwards, following the move to telephone interviewing, all answers were spontaneous. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8).

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the underlined accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 3.1: Average distance travelled per person per year by travel mode
- Table 3.2: Average number of journeys per person per year and average journey length by main mode
- Table 3.4: Journey time by main mode
- Figure 5.7: How often do you walk anywhere for 20 minutes or more?
- Figure 5.8: What would encourage you to walk more often?
- Figure 5.9: Which situations make you feel unsafe when walking by the road?

Section 3: Cycling

In 2020:

On average, Northern Ireland residents cycled 67 miles

The average number of cycling journeys made per person was 16

The average time spent cycling was 7 hours per person

Cycling summary

Cycling accounted for 1% of total distance travelled in 2020. On average, 67 miles were cycled per person in 2020.

In 2020, 2% of all journeys were cycle rides. There were 16 journeys cycled per person in 2020.

On average, bicycle journeys were 4.1 miles in length in 2020.

Cycling accounted for 2% of total time spent travelling in 2020. Average time spent cycling per person was 7 hours in 2020. The average bicycle journey lasted 26 minutes in 2020.

Figure 3.1a: Distance cycled 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

19

67
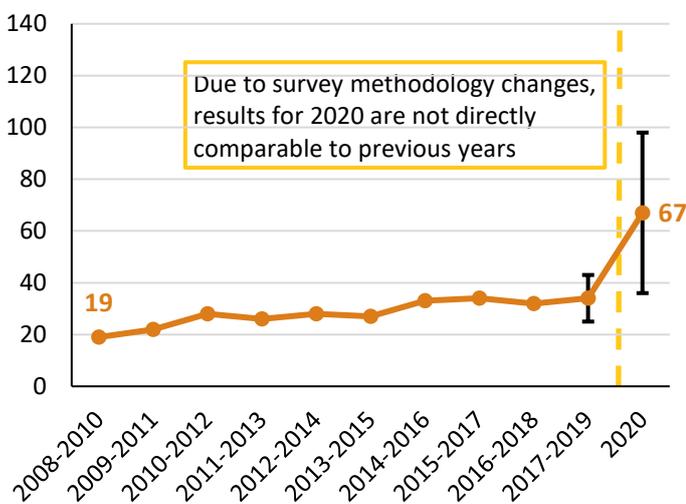
Figure 3.1b: Distance cycled 2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

24

67
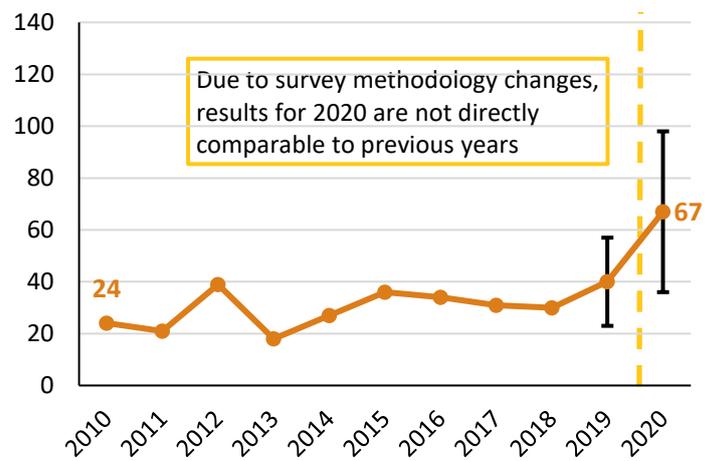
Figure 3.2a: Cycling journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

6

16
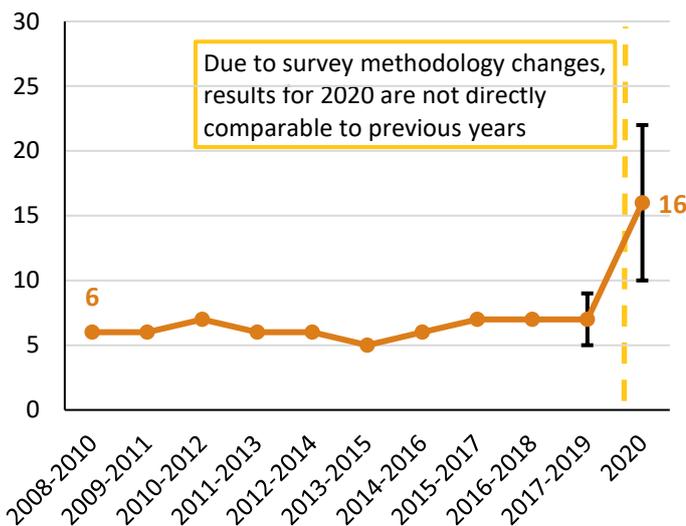
Figure 3.2b: Cycling journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
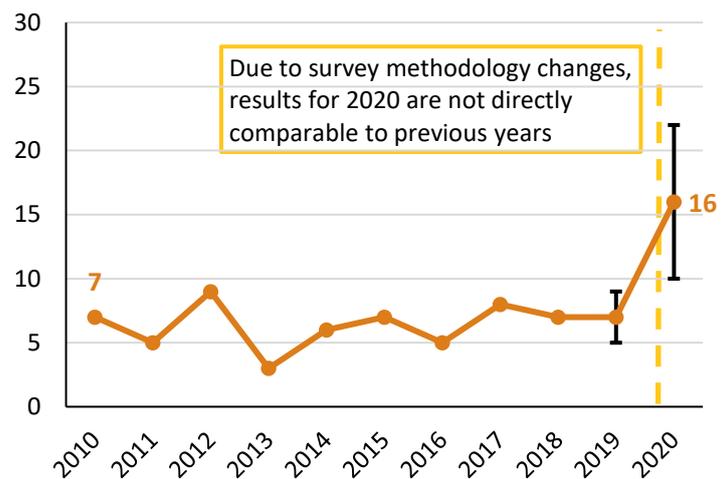
Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

7

16

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

Figure 3.3a: Time spent cycling 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average hours spent travelling per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years
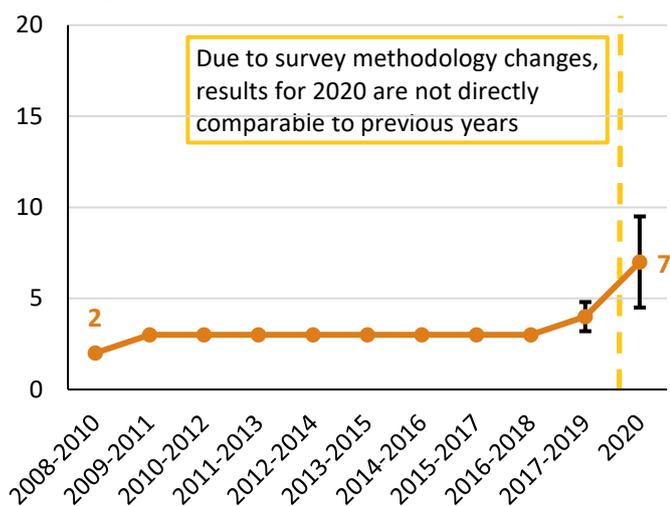
Figure 3.3b: Time spent cycling 2010 to 2020[1]
Average hours spent travelling per person per year
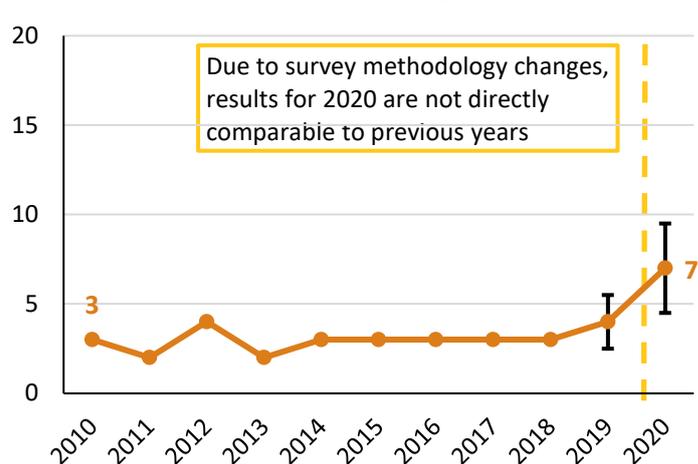
Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Note: ▯ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

Bicycle ownership

In 2020, 16% of households have one bicycle, just over a quarter (26%) have two bicycles or more, while almost three fifths (58%) of households did not own any bicycles.

Figure 3.4: Household bicycle ownership 2020

more than 3
7%

3 bicycles
4%

2 bicycles
14%

1 bicycle
16%
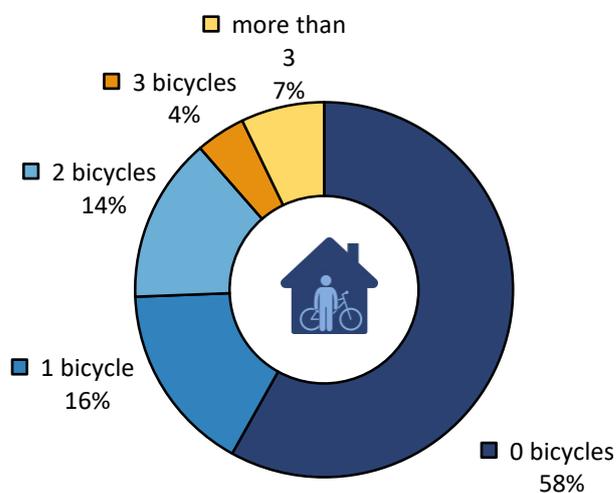
0 bicycles
58%

Bicycle usage*

This question is asked to everyone taking part in the survey (all ages, face to face and proxy interviews). In 2020, three in ten (30%) had cycled in the last 12 months.

Cycle usage is higher among males: 38% of males had cycled in the last 12 months compared with 22% of females.

* Please note that the achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for the age and sex breakdown normally reported in this section and Figure 3.5. However, it is sufficient to produce analysis by sex only and the section has been updated accordingly.

Cycling frequency

Respondents who had cycled in the last 12 months (referred to as cyclists in this report) were asked a follow up question to determine how often they cycled.

Around four times as many cyclists reported that they cycle every day (12%), including those that cycle every working day/school day but not at weekends, as those who only cycle once a year (3%).

Nearly half (48%) of all cyclists cycled once a week or more and an additional 24% cycled at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Figure 3.6: How often do you cycle?*: 2020

Unweighted sample size = 207   Frequency of cycling journeys*
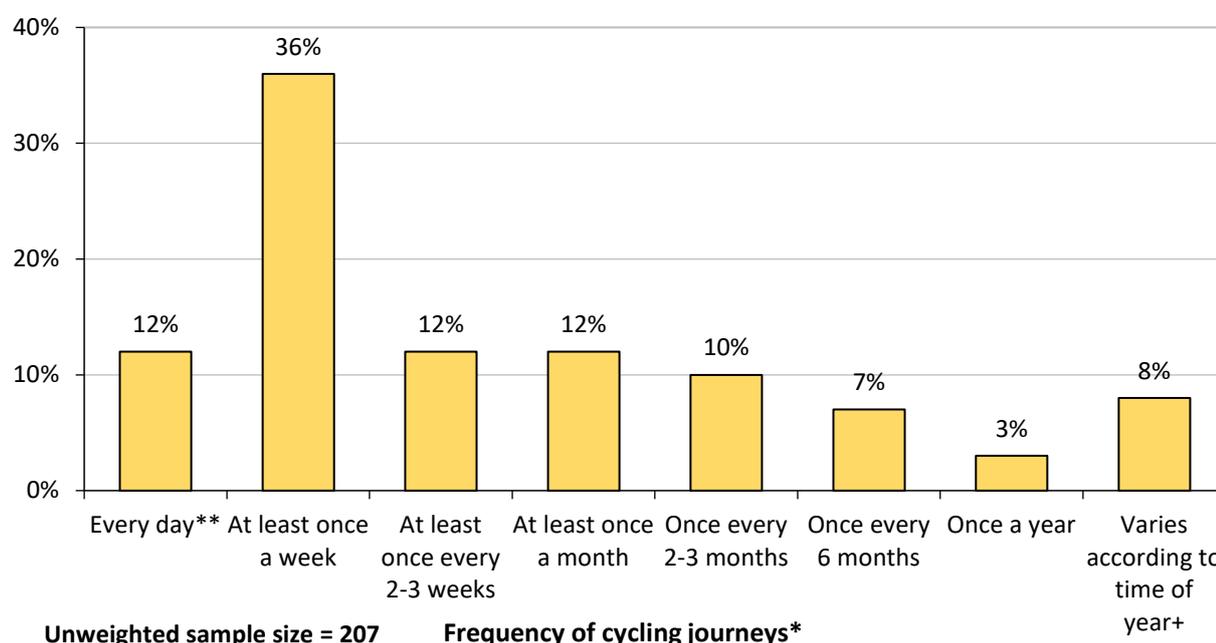
* This question is only asked if the respondent is a cyclist i.e. has cycled in the last 12 months. Includes all cycle journeys whether for leisure or with a purpose (e.g. travelling to work). Only journeys where the bicycle is ridden independently are included i.e. it is not counted if the child is riding on a child seat on an adult's bicycle or if the child's bicycle is attached to an adult's bicycle.

** "Every day" is selected if the respondent cycles every working day/school day but not at weekends as well as if they cycle every day

+ Spontaneous answer. Note that from April 2020 onwards that the question format changed, following the move to telephone interviewing. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8). This answer option was not read out but was available to code if the respondent gave the answer spontaneously.

Looking at all respondents, including those who hadn't cycled in last 12 months, 14% cycled once a week or more and a further 7% cycled at least once a month (but less than once a week). Seven in ten (70%), cycled less than once a year or never.

Incentives to cycle more often

This section, including Figure 3.7, cannot be reported for 2020 as the achieved sample is too small to produce robust analysis for the usual breakdown of incentives to cycle.

Unsafe situations when cycling on the road

This section, including Figure 3.8, cannot be reported for 2020 as the achieved sample is too small to produce robust analysis for the usual breakdown of unsafe situations when cycling.

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 3.1: Average distance travelled per person per year by travel mode
- Table 3.2: Average number of journeys per person per year and average journey length by main mode
- Table 3.4: Journey time by main mode
- Table 5.3: Household bicycle ownership
- Table 5.4: Cycled in the last 12 months by sex
- Figure 5.4: How often do you cycle?

Section 4: Public transport

In 2020:

On average, Northern Ireland residents travelled 276 miles on public transport

The average number of public transport journeys made per person was 27

The average time spent travelling on public transport was 17 hours per person

Public transport[+] summary

In 2020, 276 miles were travelled per person on public transport, 6% of total distance travelled.

In 2020, 3% of all journeys were on public transport. There were 27 public transport journeys per person in 2020. On average, public transport journeys were 10.5 miles in length in 2020.

Public transport accounted for 6% of the total time spent travelling in 2020. On average, 17 hours per person were spent travelling by public transport in 2020, around 3 minutes per day. The average public transport journey lasted 38 minutes.

Figure 4.1a: Distance by public transport[+] 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average miles travelled per person per year
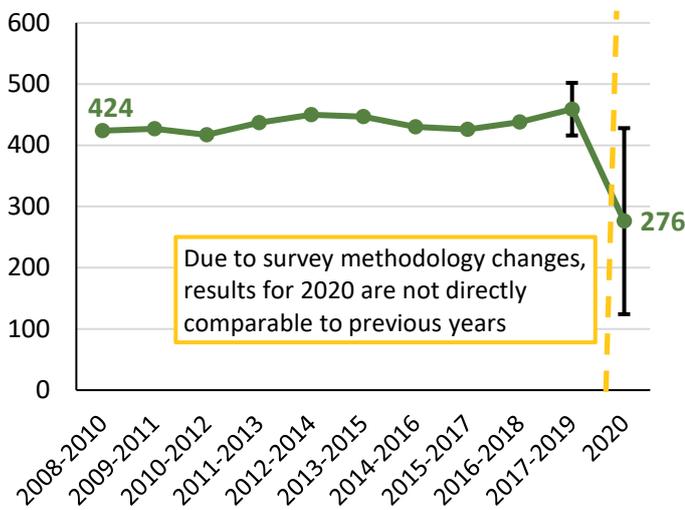
Figure 4.1b: Distance by public transport[+] 2010 to 2020[1]

Average miles travelled per person per year
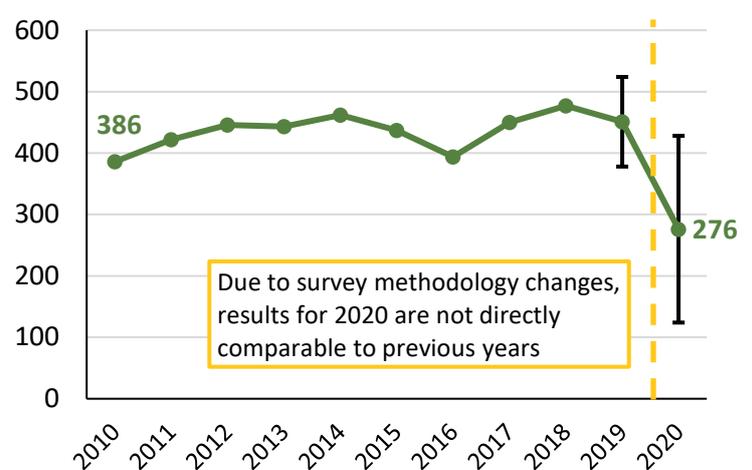
Figure 4.2a: Public transport[+] journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average journeys per person per year
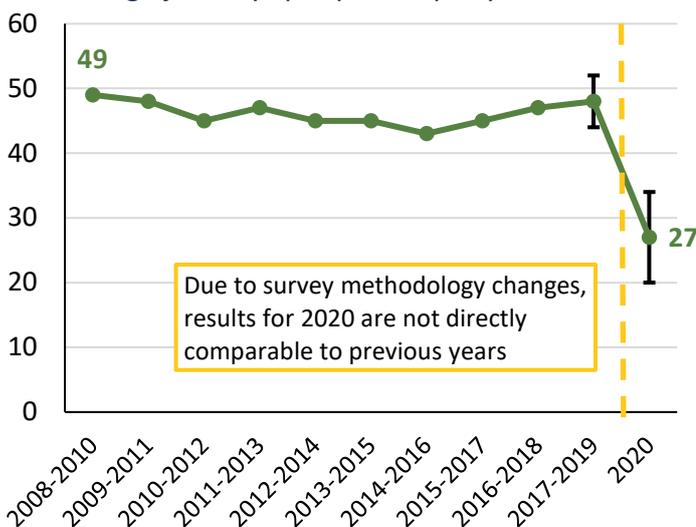
Figure 4.2b: Public transport[+] journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
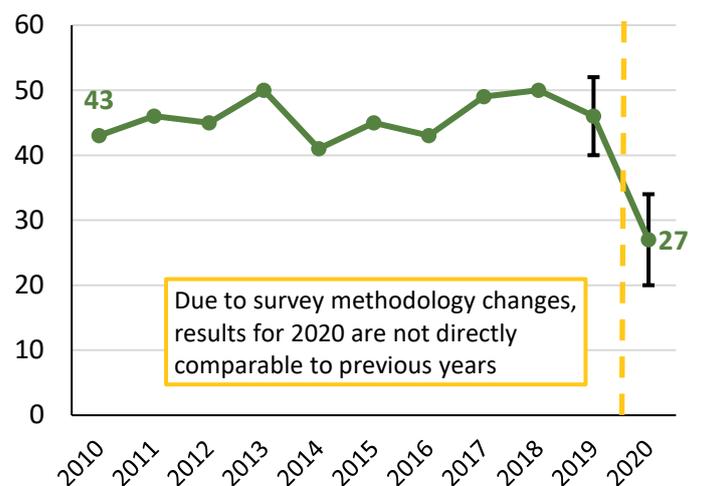
Average journeys per person per year

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years.   See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

+ Public transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black taxi'.

Figure 4.3a: Time spent on public transport[+] 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years
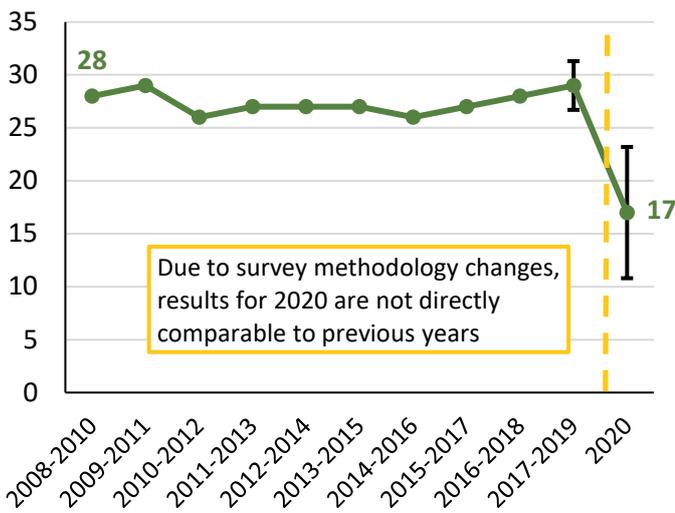
Figure 4.3b: Time spent on public transport[+] 2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

+ Public transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black taxi'.

Frequency of bus use

Fifteen percent of all respondents (everyone taking part in the survey) travelled on a bus once a week or more and a further 13% travelled by bus at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Almost a third of respondents (32%) stated that they never travelled by bus.

Figure 4.4: How often do you travel on a bus?: 2020
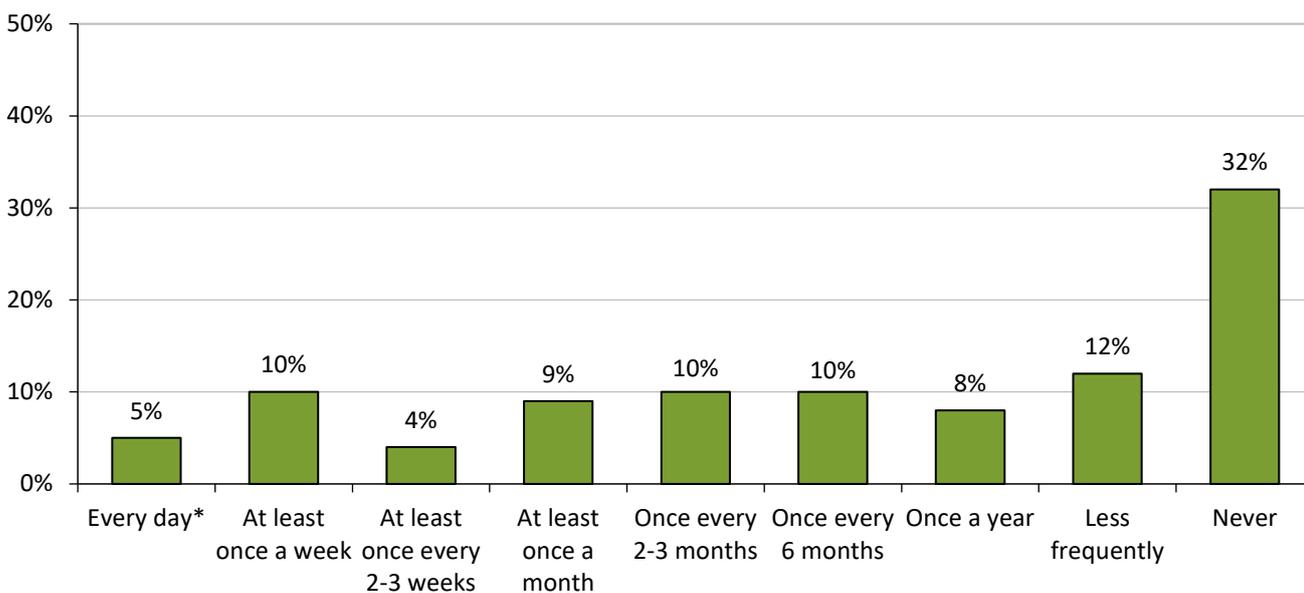
Unweighted sample size = 751   Frequency of travelling on bus

* "Every day" is selected if the respondent travels on a bus every working day/school day but not at weekends as well as if they travel on a bus every day.

Looking only at bus users (i.e. those who did not state that they never travelled by bus), over one fifth (22%) took a bus once a week or more and a further 18% travelled by bus at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Frequency of train use

Five percent of all respondents (everyone taking part in the survey) travelled on a train once a week or more and an additional 7% travelled by train at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Just over two fifths of respondents (41%) stated that they never travelled by train.

Figure 4.5: How often do you travel on a train?: 2020

Unweighted sample size = 751

Frequency of travelling on train
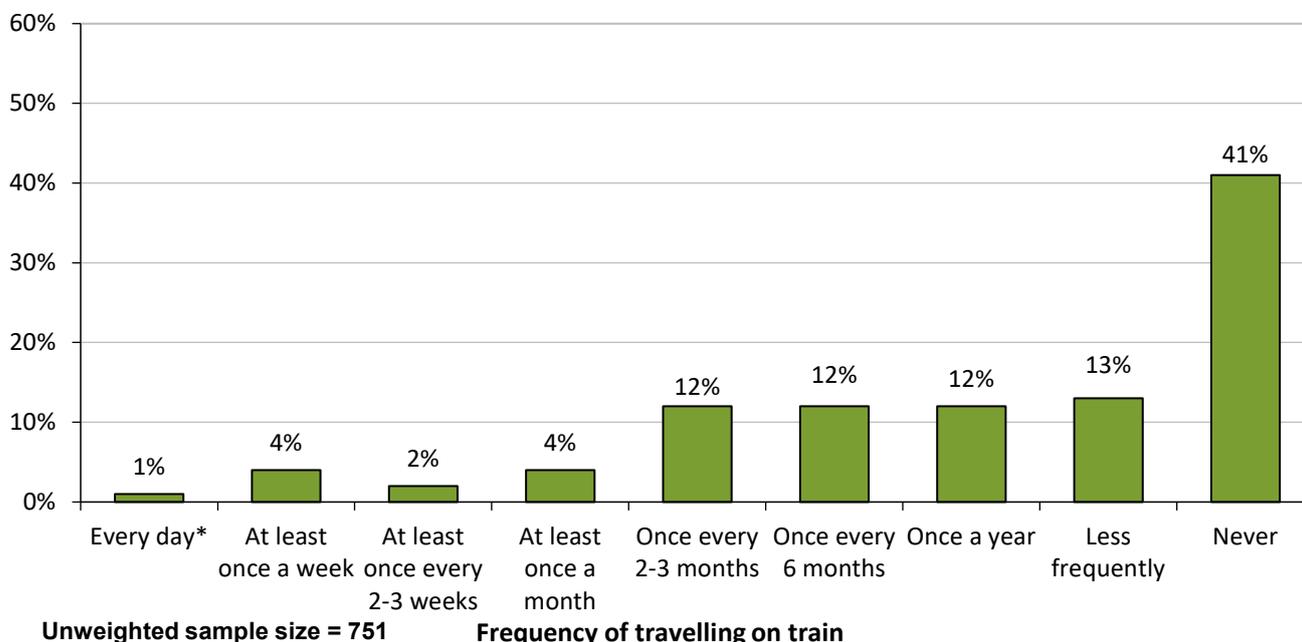
* "Every day" is selected if the respondent travels on a train every working day/school day but not at weekends as well as if they travel on a train every day

Looking only at train users (i.e. those who did not state that they never travelled by train), 8% took a train once a week or more and an additional 12% travelled by train at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Comparison of bus and train usage

There are more bus users (68%) than train users (59%).

Frequency of bus usage is higher than train usage. Looking at everyone taking part in the survey, around three times as many respondents take a bus once a week or more (15%) as take a train once a week or more (5%).

Satisfaction with local public transport

Respondents aged 16 and over, giving a face to face interview, were asked how satisfied they were with public transport services which operate near their home. Over a third (36%) said they don't use local public transport. Of those who used local public transport, four fifths (80%) said they were satisfied with their local public transport services.

Incentives to use local public transport more often

Respondents aged 16 and over, giving a face to face interview, were asked what improvements would encourage them to use local public transport services more often.

The most popular improvements to local public transport services were "more frequent evening services" (19%), "more frequent weekend services" (18%), "more destinations or routes" (17%), and "more frequent day services" (17%).

In addition, 19% said nothing would encourage them to use local public transport more often, another 15% stated that no improvements were necessary and a further 4% said that they already use local public transport as much as possible.

Figure 4.6: What improvements could be made to encourage you to use local public transport services more often?: 2020

(selected responses*)
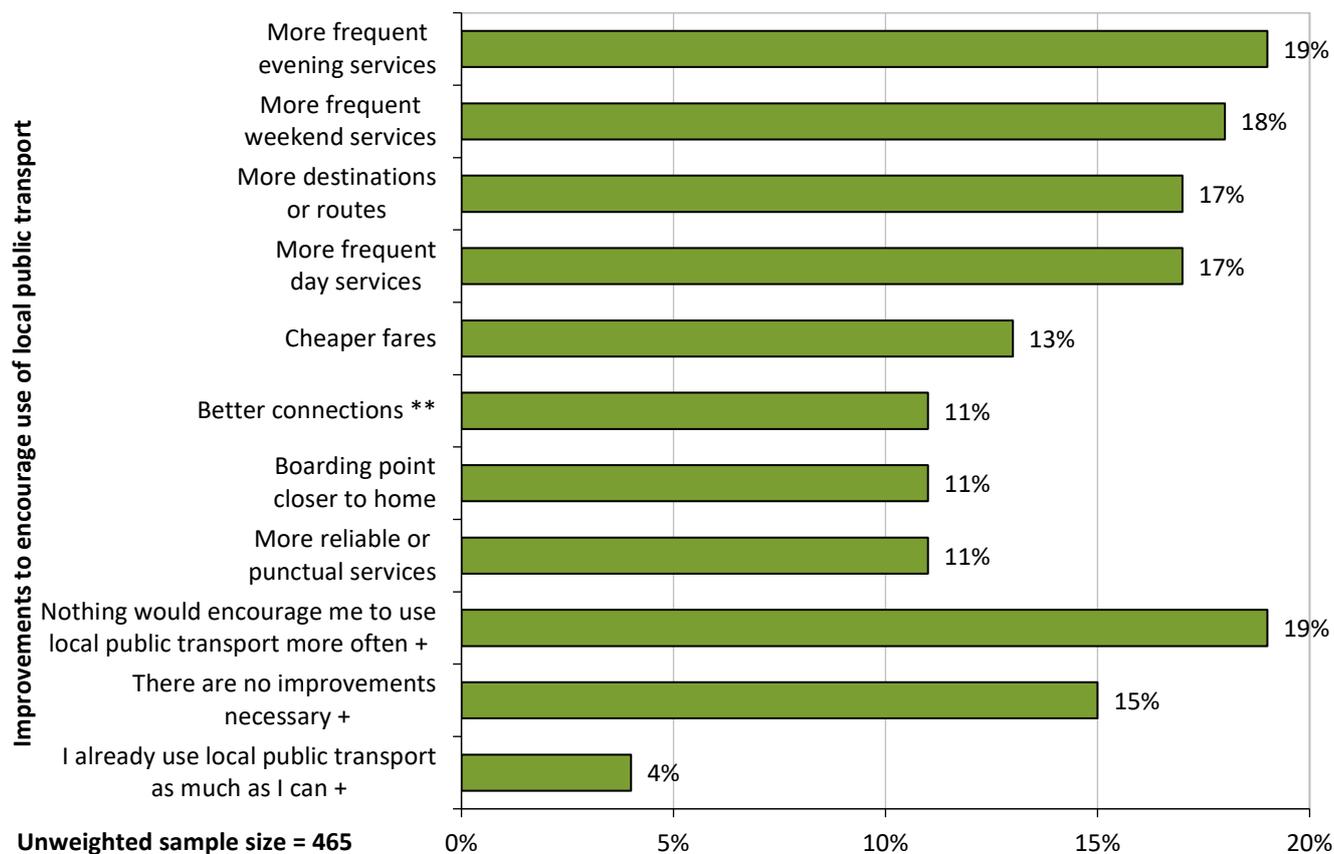
Percentages sum to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

* Respondents could choose from a show card with 22 answer options (including "Other") from January to March 2020 (full breakdown given in accompanying spreadsheet). Note that from April 2020 onwards, following the move to telephone interviewing, show cards could no longer be used but interviewers coded spontaneous responses from the same set of answer options. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8).

** Answer option added in 2017 (reported from 2017-2019).

+ Spontaneous answer January to March 2020. Note that from April 2020 onwards, following the move to telephone interviewing, all answers were spontaneous. See TSNI Technical Report 2020 for details (Changes to show card questions, page 8).

Access to public transport

Please note that this section, including Table 4.1, Figure 4.7, Table 4.2 and Figure 4.8, cannot be reported for 2020 as the questions on bus/rail service frequency and the time taken to walk to the nearest bus stop/train station were only asked from January to March.

Park & Ride

Frequency of using Park & Ride

Park & Ride is the term used when the vehicle you are travelling in is parked in a designated Park & Ride car park and a train or a bus is then taken to your destination. For respondents aged 16 and over, a question was asked on how often they used Park & Ride. This question applied whether they were a driver or a passenger in the vehicle.

One percent of respondents used Park & Ride once a week or more with a further 4% using it at least once a month (but less than once a week).

Just over seven in ten respondents (71%) said they never used Park & Ride.

Figure 4.9: How often do you use Park & Ride?: 2020
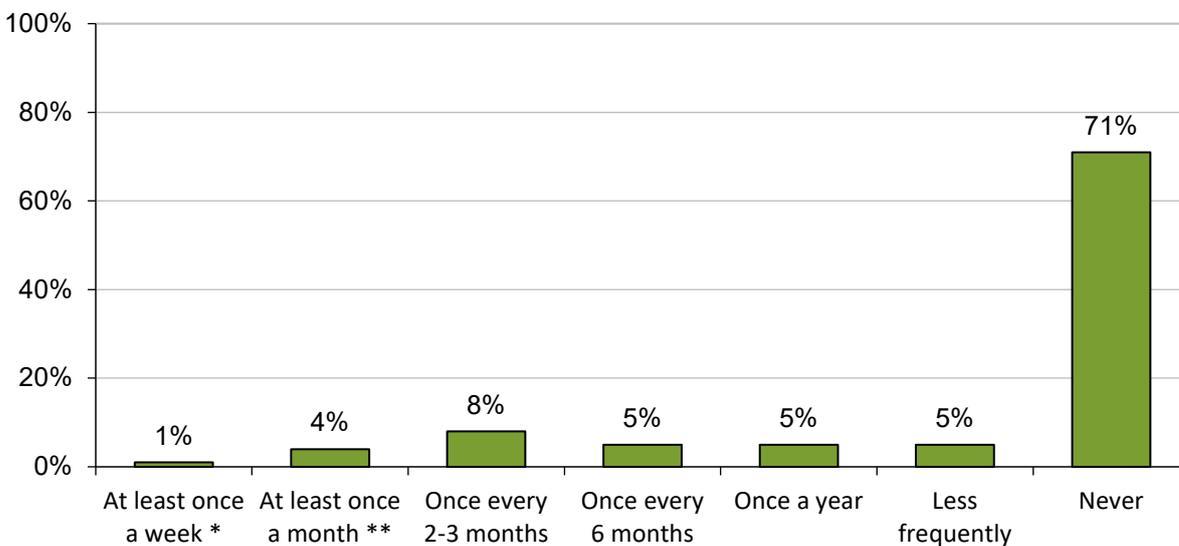
Unweighted sample size = 656   **Frequency of using Park & Ride**

* "At least once a week" combines the answers "Every day" and "At least once a week". "Every day" is selected if the respondent uses Park & Ride every working day but not at weekends as well as if they use Park & Ride every day.

** "At least once a month" combines the answers "At least once every 2-3 weeks" and "At least once a month"

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 3.1, Table 3.2 & Table 3.4
- Figure 5.10: How often do you travel on a bus?
- Figure 5.11: How often do you travel on a train?
- Figure 5.12: What improvements could be made to encourage you to use local public transport services more often?
- Figure 5.15: How often do you use Park & Ride?

Section 5: Driving, driver and passenger trips

In 2020:

On average, people living in Northern Ireland travelled 3,831 miles by car

The average number of car journeys made per person was 541

The average time spent travelling by car was 161 hours per person
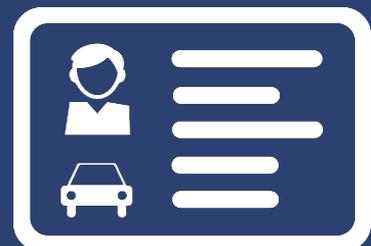
Car[+] travel summary

In 2020, more than four fifths (84%) of the total distance travelled was by car. On average, 3,831 miles were travelled by car per person in 2020.

Just under two thirds of journeys (65%) in 2020 were by car. There were 541 car journeys per person in 2020. On average, car journeys were 7.1 miles in length in 2020.

Car travel accounted for almost three fifths (58%) of total time spent travelling in 2020. On average, 161 hours per person were spent travelling by car in 2020, around 26.5 minutes per day. The average car journey lasted 18 minutes in 2020.

Figure 5.1a: Distance by car[+] 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year
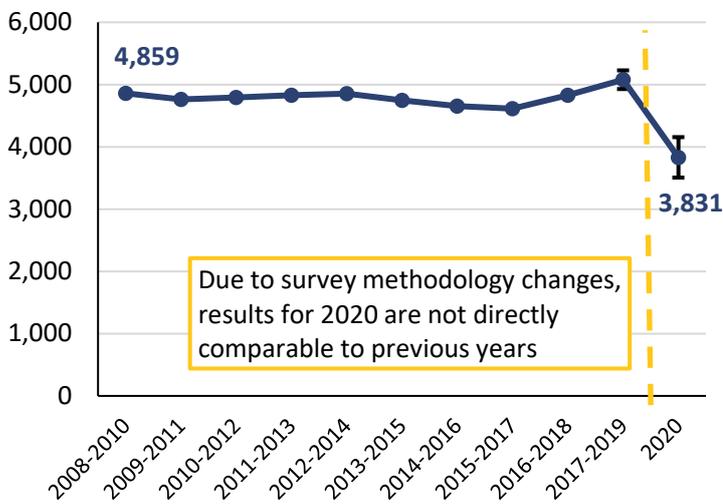
Figure 5.1b: Distance by car[+] 2010 to 2020[1]
Average miles travelled per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years
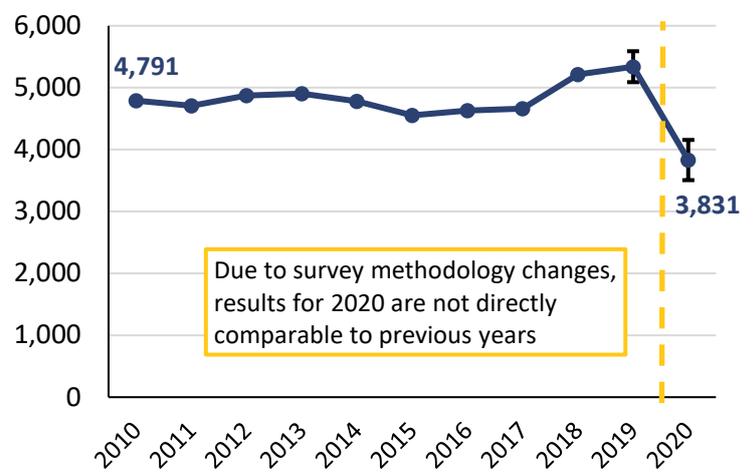
Figure 5.2a: Car[+] journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
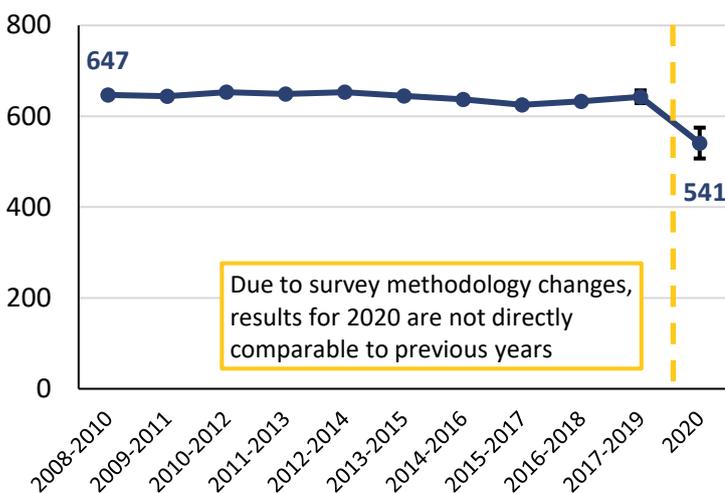
Figure 5.2b: Car[+] journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
Average journeys per person per year
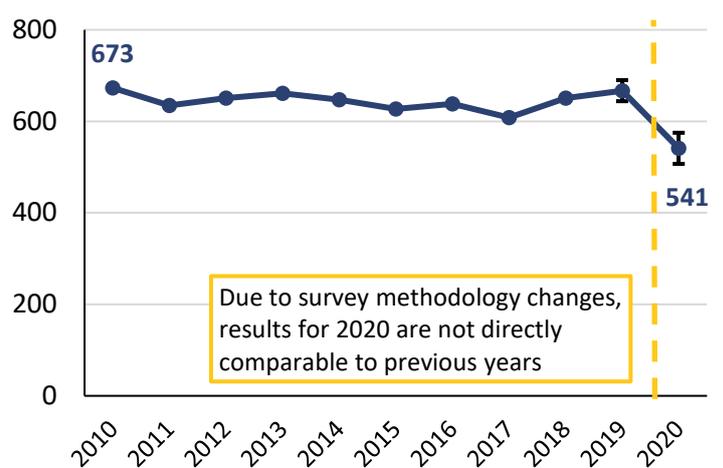
Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Note: Ι show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years.   See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

+ Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

Figure 5.3a: Time spent travelling by car[+] 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average hours spent travelling per person per year
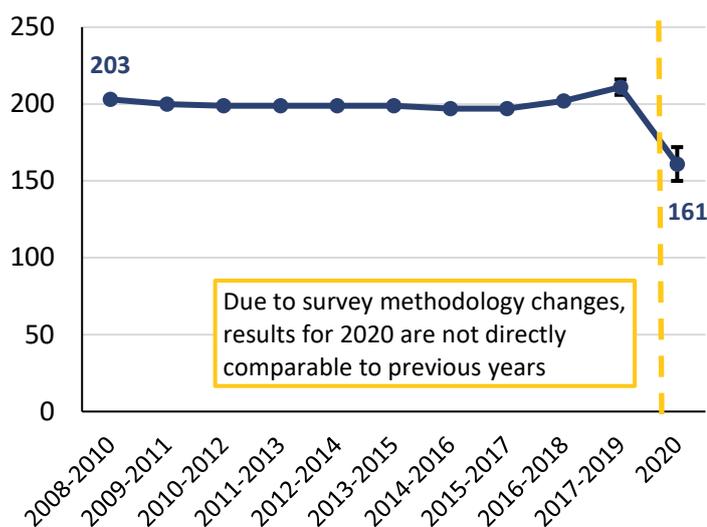
Figure 5.3b: Time spent travelling by car[+] 2010 to 2020[1]
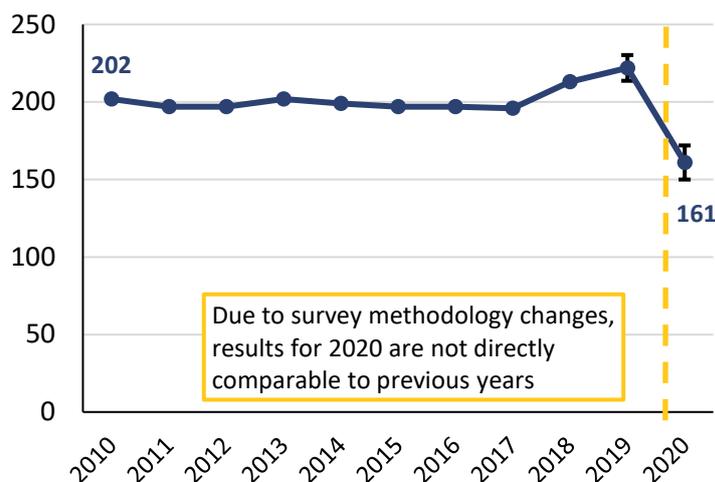
Average hours spent travelling per person per year

Note: ∫ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

+ Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

Trends in car ownership

Please note that this section, including Table 5.1, cannot be reported for 2020 as the vehicle questionnaire, the usual source of these data, was only asked from January to March.

Driving licence holding (persons aged 17+)*

In 2020, 84% of respondents hold a full car driving licence. The proportion of men with a full car driving licence (84%) is similar to women (83%) for those taking part in the survey in 2020. Please note that these results are not directly comparable to those of previous years[1].

Figure 5.4a: Driving licence[2] holders 2008-2010 to 2020[1]
% aged 17+ holding driving licences[2] by sex
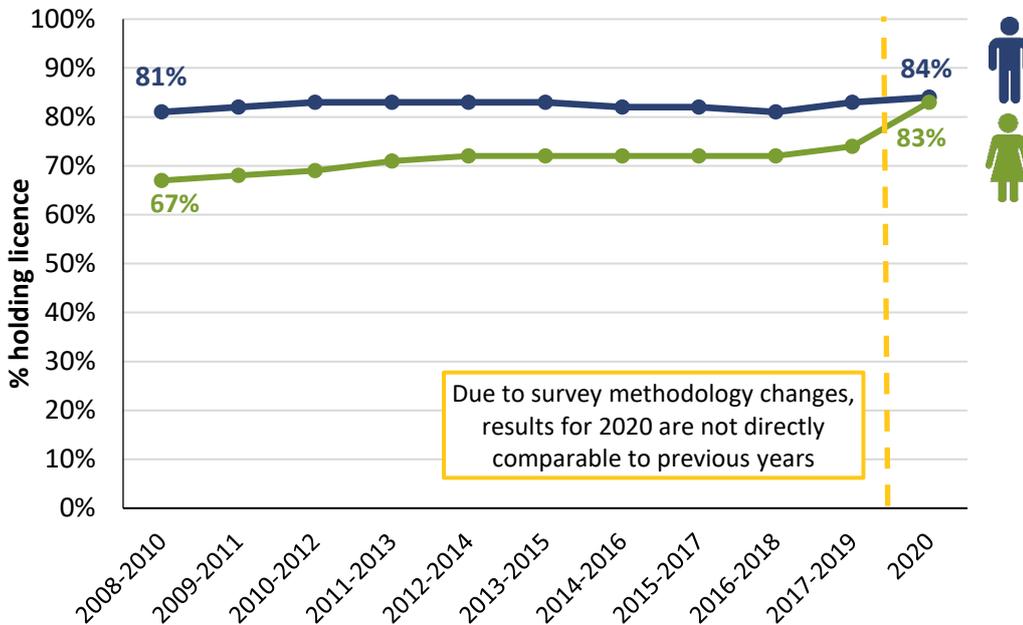
Figure 5.4b: Driving licence[2] holders 2010 to 2020[1]
% aged 17+ holding driving licences[2] by sex
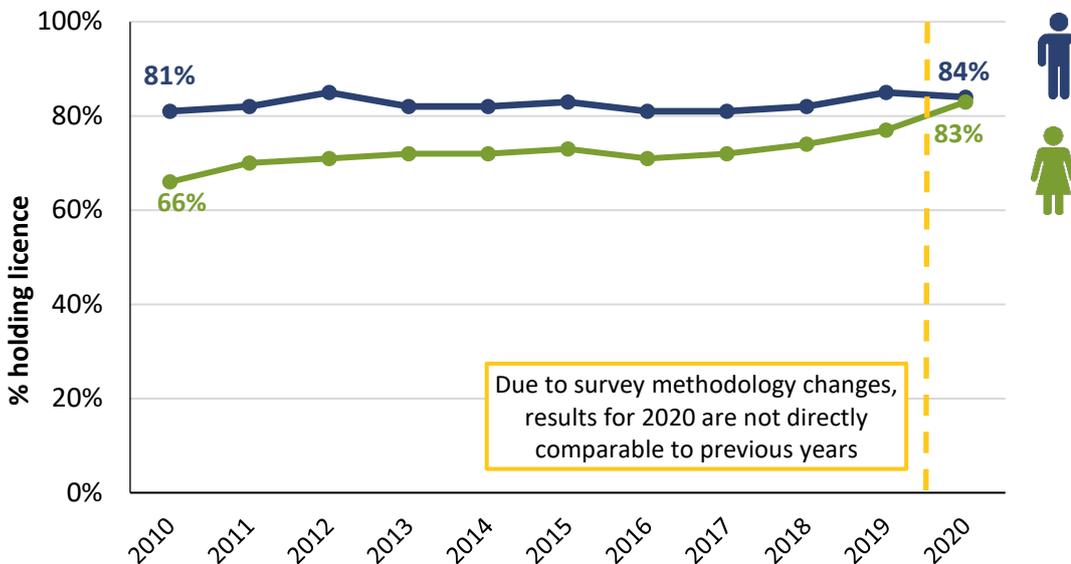
[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

[2] Not including provisional licences, Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) licences or Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) licences

* Please note, the achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for the age and sex breakdown normally reported in this section and Figure 5.5. However, it is sufficient to produce analysis by sex only and the section has been updated accordingly.

Annual vehicle mileage and reason for vehicle use

Please note that this section, including Table 5.2, cannot be reported for 2020 as the questions on annual vehicle mileage and reason for vehicle use were only asked from January to March.

Section 6: Journey purpose

In 2020:

25% of the total distance travelled was for commuting & business purposes

43% of all journeys made were for leisure and other purposes

The longest journeys were for commuting & business (8.6 miles) and the shortest journeys were for education & escort education (2.8 miles)

Travel by journey purpose

In 2020, more than two fifths (43%) of all journeys were made for leisure and other purposes (to visit friends, to take part in entertainment, social activities or sports activities, to go on holiday/day trips, just walking, other), 18% for shopping and 16% for commuting and business. Education and escort education journeys (e.g. a schoolchild going to school, a student going to college/university, a parent taking a child to school) accounted for 12% of all journeys. Journeys to services, such as the bank, doctor or library (classified as "personal business" journeys) made up 7% of all journeys.

Figure 6.1: Number of journeys per person 2020:
Proportion in each journey purpose group[1]
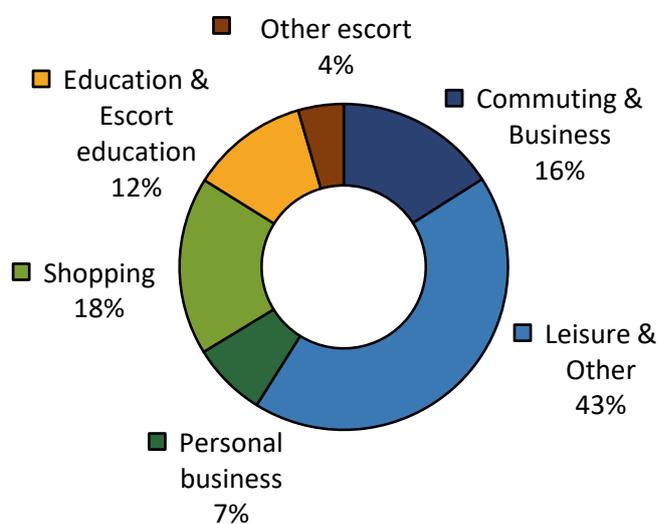
[1] See Definitions section on page 70 for types of journey purpose. Leisure and Other category includes 'Visit friends at private home', 'Visit friends elsewhere', 'Entertainment/public social activities', 'Sport participate', 'Holiday base', 'Day trip', 'Other including just walk' and 'Undefined purpose'.

Looking only at single journey purposes, the most popular reasons for residents making a journey were 'other including just walk' (20%), which are mostly made up of walking journeys made just for pleasure/exercise, and shopping (18%).

Figure 6.2a: Journeys by purpose[1] 2008-2010 to 2020

Average journeys per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Legend: Commuting & Business, Leisure & Other, Personal business, Shopping, Education & Escort education, Other escort
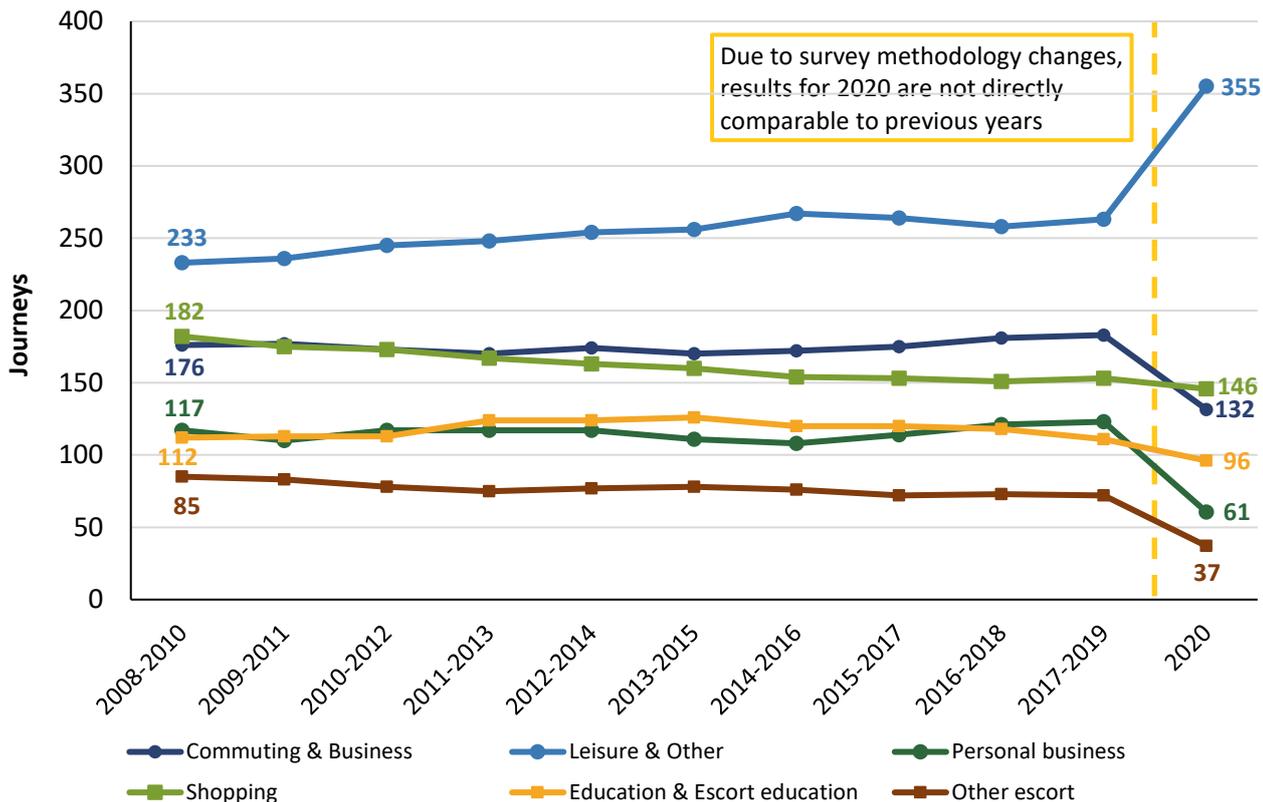
Figure 6.2b: Journeys by purpose[1] 2010 to 2020
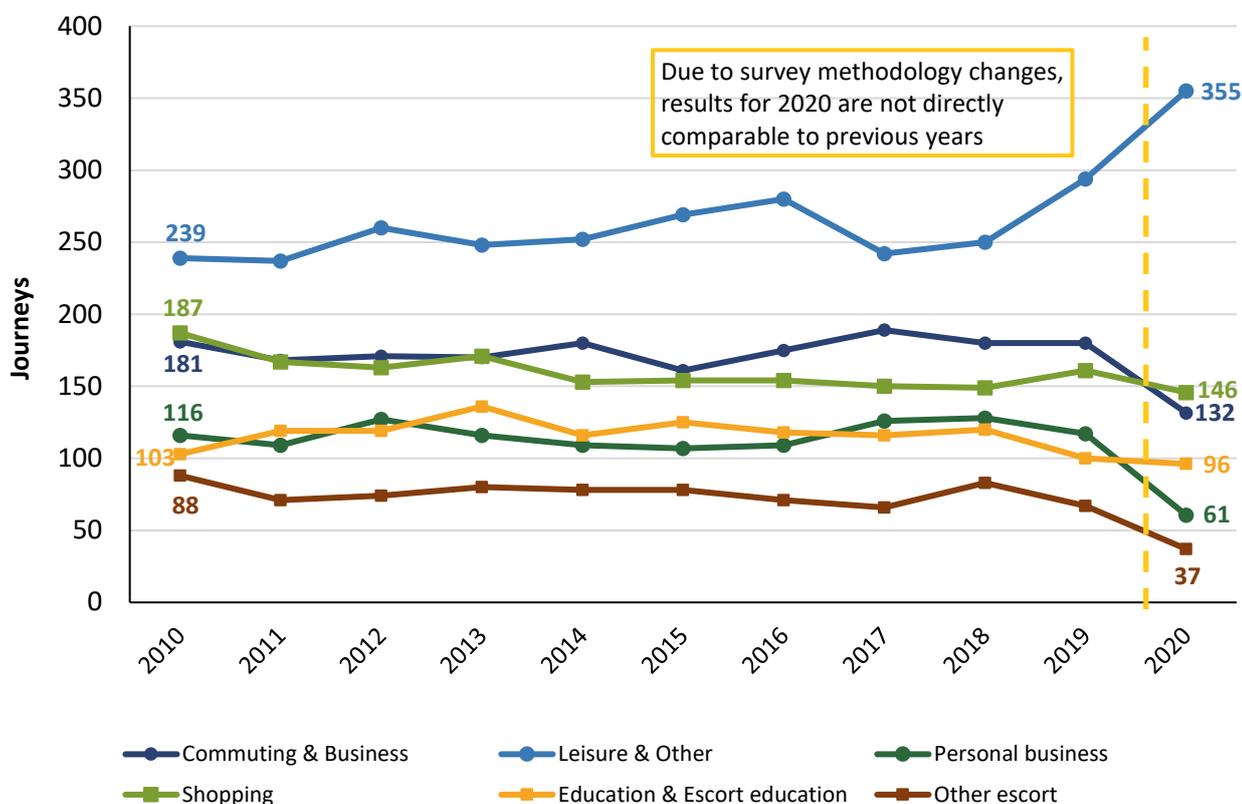
Average journeys per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Legend: Commuting & Business, Leisure & Other, Personal business, Shopping, Education & Escort education, Other escort

[1] See Definitions section on page 70 for types of journey purpose. Leisure and Other category includes 'Visit friends at private home', 'Visit friends elsewhere', 'Entertainment/public social activities', 'Sport participate', 'Holiday base', 'Day trip', 'Other including just walk' and 'Undefined purpose'.

In terms of miles travelled, almost two fifths (39%) of the total distance travelled was for leisure and other purposes, a quarter (25%) for commuting and business, 16% for shopping and 10% for personal business.

Figure 6.3: Distance travelled per person 2020:
Proportion in each journey purpose group[1]
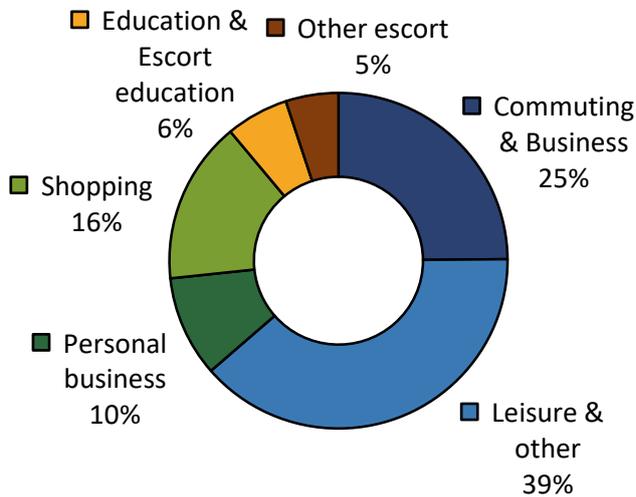
Figure 6.4a: Distance travelled by purpose[1] 2008-2010 to 2020
Average miles travelled per person per year
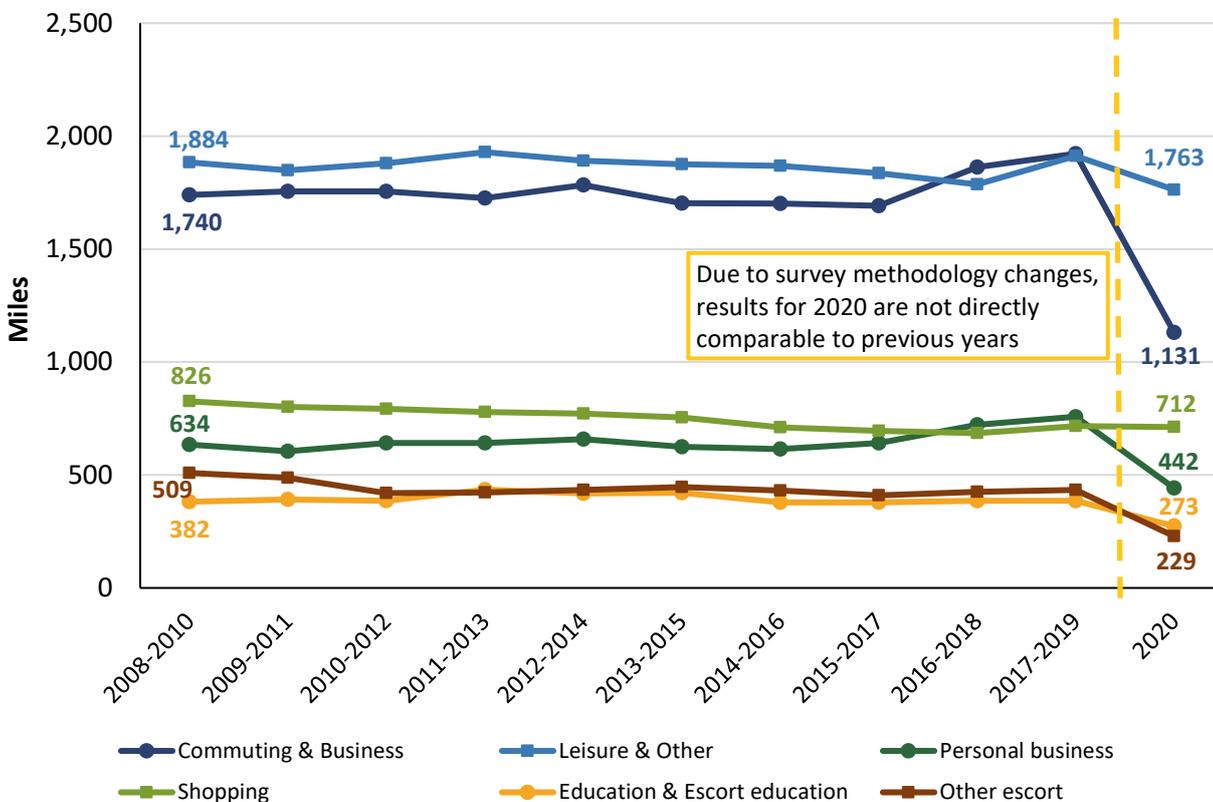
[1] See Definitions section on page 70 for types of journey purpose. Leisure and Other category includes 'Visit friends at private home', 'Visit friends elsewhere', 'Entertainment/public social activities', 'Sport participate', 'Holiday base', 'Day trip', 'Other including just walk' and 'Undefined purpose'.

Figure 6.4b: Distance travelled by purpose[1] 2010 to 2020

Average miles travelled per person per year

Due to survey methodology changes, results for 2020 are not directly comparable to previous years

Legend:
- Commuting & Business
- Leisure & Other
- Personal business
- Shopping
- Education & Escort education
- Other escort
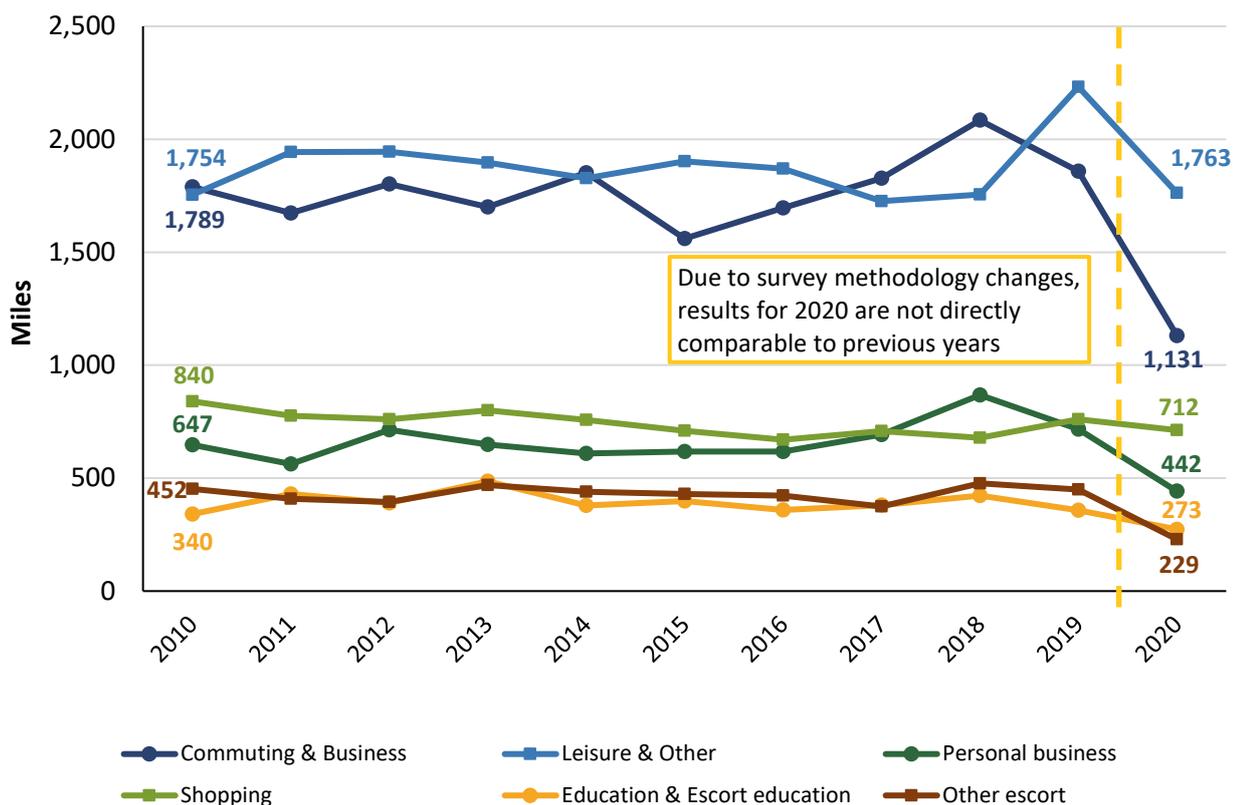
Average journey length

In 2020, the longest journeys were those made for commuting and business (8.6 miles), while the shortest journeys were those made for education and escort education (2.8 miles).

Figure 6.5: Average journey length by purpose[1]: 2020
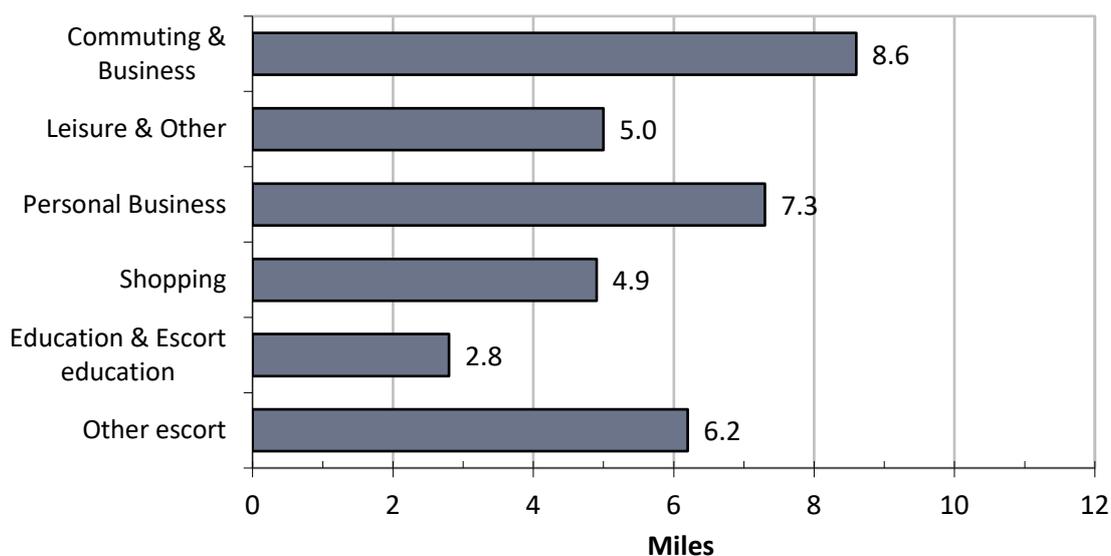
[1] See Definitions section on page 70 for types of journey purpose. Leisure and Other category includes 'Visit friends at private home', 'Visit friends elsewhere', 'Entertainment/public social activities', 'Sport participate', 'Holiday base', 'Day trip', 'Other including just walk' and 'Undefined purpose'.

Purpose of travel by sex*

Males made a higher proportion of commuting and business journeys (19%) than females (13%) whereas females made a higher proportion of education and escort education journeys (14%) than males (9%). Males made a similar proportion of shopping journeys (16%) to females (19%).

Looking only at single journey purposes, the most common reasons for males making a journey were 'other including just walk' (21%), commuting (16%) and shopping (16%). For females, the most popular reasons for making a journey were 'other including just walk' (19%) and going to and from the shops (19%).

Males and females made the same proportion of personal business journeys (7%). 'Personal business' includes journeys to the bank, post office, library, church, playgroup, doctor or optician.

Females made more journeys (14%) for the purpose of accompanying someone (i.e. escort education and other escort) than males (9%).

Table 6.1: Journeys per person by sex and purpose[1]: 2020*

Percentage/Number/Miles

Journey purpose[1]	All males	All females	All persons
Commuting & Business	19%	13%	**16%**
Leisure & Other[2]	44%	42%	**43%**
Personal business	7%	7%	**7%**
Shopping	16%	19%	**18%**
Education & Escort education	9%	14%	**12%**
Other escort	4%	5%	**4%**
All purposes	**100%**	**100%**	100%
Number of journeys	809	844	**826**
Distance travelled (miles)	5,076	4,010	**4,550**

(See Table 8.1.5 in the TSNI Technical Report 2020 for Confidence Ranges)

[1] See Definitions section on page 70 for types of journey purpose

[2] Leisure and Other category includes 'Visit friends at private home', 'Visit friends elsewhere', 'Entertainment/public social activities', 'Sport participate', 'Holiday base', 'Day trip', 'Other including just walk' and 'Undefined purpose'.

* Please note, the achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for the age and sex breakdown normally reported in this section and Table 6.1. However, it is sufficient to produce analysis by sex only and the section has been updated accordingly.

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 4.1: Travel per person per year by journey purpose
- Figure 4.1: Average journey length by purpose
- Figure 4.2: Number of journeys per person: proportion in each journey purpose group
- Figure 4.3: Distance travelled per person: proportion in each journey purpose group
- Table 4.2: Journeys per person by sex and purpose

Section 7: Travelling to work

In 2020:

On average, workers living in Northern Ireland travelled 1,841 miles commuting

The average number of commuting journeys made per worker was 233

The majority of workers (80%) travelled to work by car or van

Commuting summary

On average, workers living in Northern Ireland travelled 1,841 miles to go to or from work in 2020.

In 2020, the average number of commuting journeys made per worker was 233.

On average, workers' commuting journeys were 7.9 miles in length in 2020.

Figure 7.1a: Distance for commuting 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average miles travelled per worker[+] per year
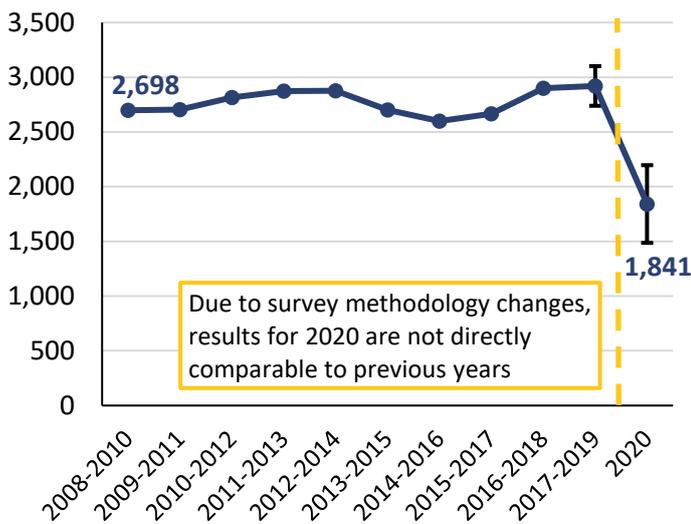
Figure 7.1b: Distance for commuting 2010 to 2020[1]

Average miles travelled per worker[+] per year
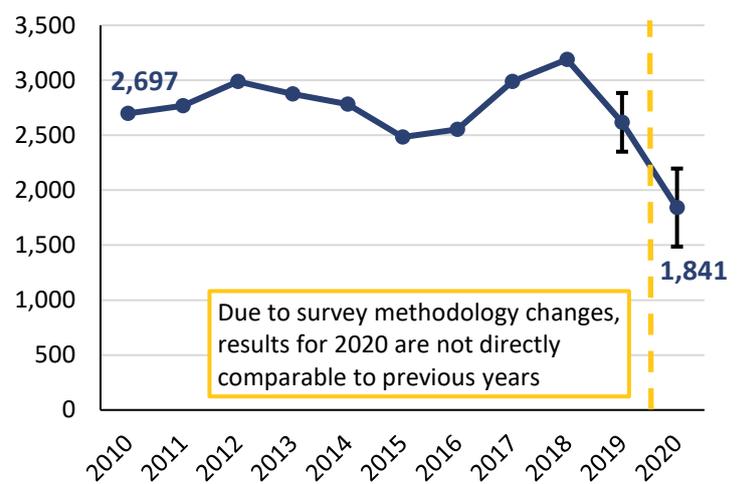
Figure 7.2a: Commuting journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average journeys per worker[+] per year
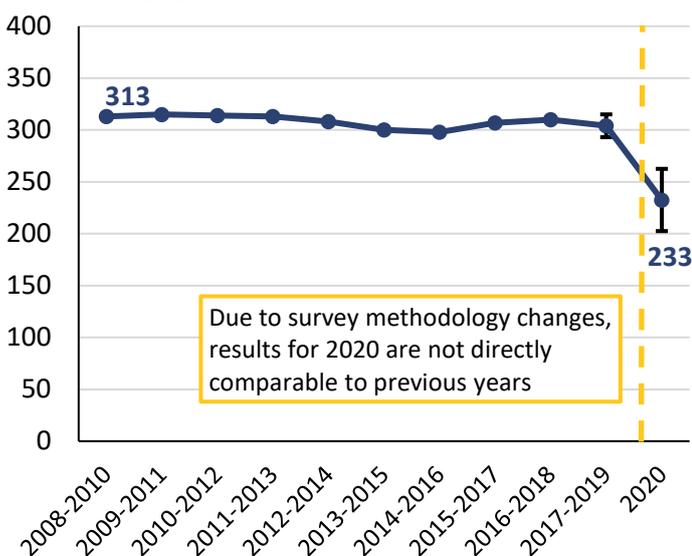
Figure 7.2b: Commuting journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
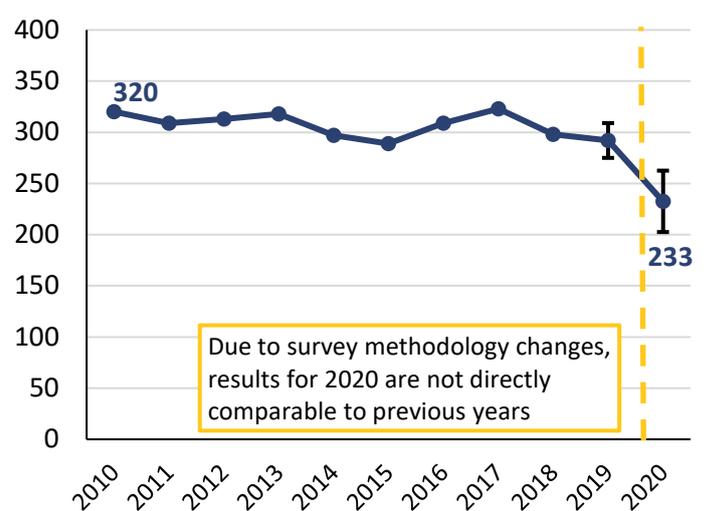
Average journeys per worker[+] per year

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

+ Averages have been calculated based on number of workers: respondents who stated they were in paid employment last week.

Method of travel to work

In addition to filling in a diary of their actual travel, respondents are asked their 'usual' mode of travel to work.

The majority of workers (80%) usually travelled to work by car or van in 2020.

Seven percent of workers usually walked to work in 2020.

In 2020, 6% of workers usually travelled to work by public transport (bus or train).

Table 7.1: Method of travel to work: 2008-2010, 2013-2015, 2017-2019 and 2020[1]

Method of travel to work	Percentage of workers (excluding those who worked at home)			
	2008-2010	2013-2015	2017-2019	2020[1]
Car/van	82%	82%	82%	80%
Motorbike/moped/scooter	1%	0%	0%	0%
Bicycle	1%	1%	1%	4%
Bus	4%	4%	5%	4%
NIR train	1%	2%	2%	3%
Walk	9%	9%	9%	7%
Taxi/minicab*	..	1%	1%	0%
Other*	2%	1%	1%	3%
All methods of travel	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years.   See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

* The "Taxi/minicab" category was first added in the 2012 survey. Prior to this, travel to work by taxi was included in the "Other" category.

Number of people in vehicle when travelling to work by car/van

The workers who usually travelled to work by car/van were asked a follow up question to determine the number of persons travelling in the car/van (including the respondent) when going to work. The number includes all adults and children in the car/van (e.g. children being dropped off at school on the way into work).

The majority drove to work on their own (86%). One in ten (10%) travelled to work with one other person in the car/van and the rest (4%) had 2 or more other people in the car/van when they travelled to work.

Figure 7.3: How many people would normally be in the car/van when you are travelling to work (including the respondent)?*: 2020
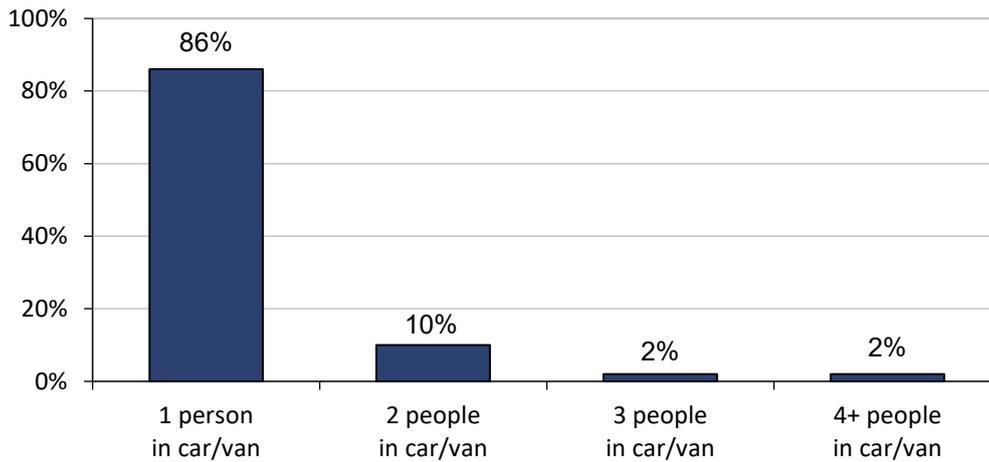
Travel to work - Number of people travelling in car/van*

Unweighted sample size = 260

*Includes all adults and children in the car/van (e.g. children being dropped off at school on the way into work, adults sharing the journey into work). If the number in the vehicle varies during the journey, the maximum number during the journey is recorded. If the number varies during the week, the number of persons who make the journey at least 3 days a week are recorded. If the number varies from week to week, the number who travelled in the car/van during the week of the survey is recorded.

Difficulties travelling to work - car, van or motorcycle users

Difficulties if using car, van or motorcycle to travel to work

Respondents who usually used a car, van or motorcycle to travel to work were asked if they had any difficulties. The majority (71%) stated that they had no difficulties.

The most common difficulty when travelling to work by car, van or motorcycle was "traffic congestion/roadworks" (mentioned by 25% of respondents).

Figure 7.4: Difficulties experienced travelling to or from work by car, van or motorcycle: 2020 (Selected responses*)
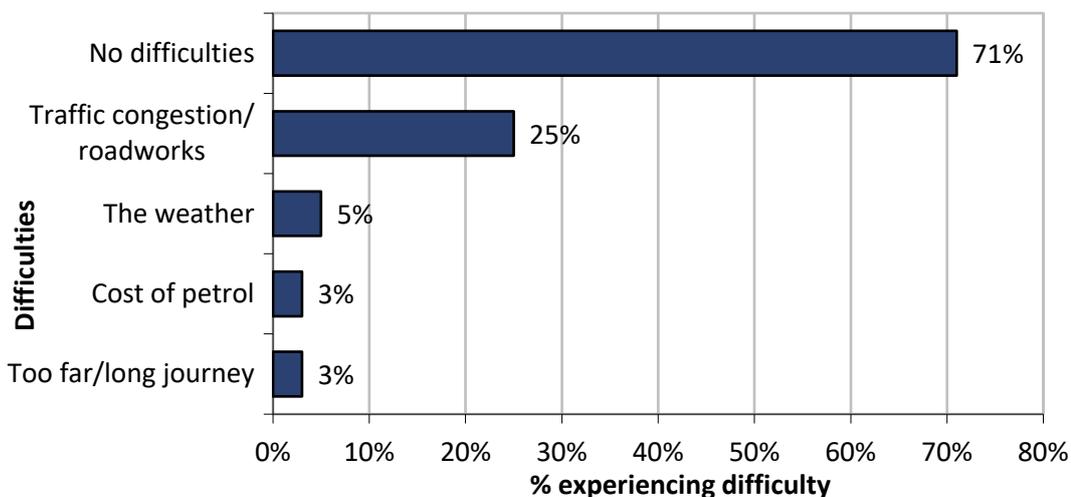
Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple responses

* Respondents answer spontaneously and their responses are coded from 10 answer options (including "Other"). See accompanying spreadsheet containing data used in the In-depth Report tables for a full breakdown of all responses given.

Difficulties if not using car, van or motorcycle to travel to work*

When asked how easy or difficult it would be to make the journey to work in some other way, 55% said it would be quite difficult or very difficult.

* Figure 7.5 and the associated commentary cannot be reported for 2020 as the achieved sample is too small to produce robust analysis for the usual breakdown of difficulties if not using car, van or motorcycle to travel to work.

Difficulties travelling to work – users of other forms of transport

This section, including Figure 7.6, cannot be reported for 2020 as the achieved sample is too small to produce robust analysis for the usual breakdown of difficulties using other forms of transport when travelling to work.

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the underlined accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 4.1: Travel per person per year by journey purpose
- Table 4.3: Method of travel to work
- Figure 4.4: How many people would normally be in the car/van when you are travelling to work (including the respondent)?
- Figure 4.5: Difficulties experienced travelling to or from work by car, van or motorcycle

Section 8: Shopping

In 2020:

On average, people living in Northern Ireland travelled 712 miles for shopping

The average number of shopping journeys made per person was 146

Shopping summary

The average distance travelled for shopping was 712 miles per person in 2020.

In 2020, the average number of shopping journeys made per person was 146.

On average, shopping journeys were 4.9 miles in length in 2020.

Figure 8.1a: Distance for shopping 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average miles travelled per person per year
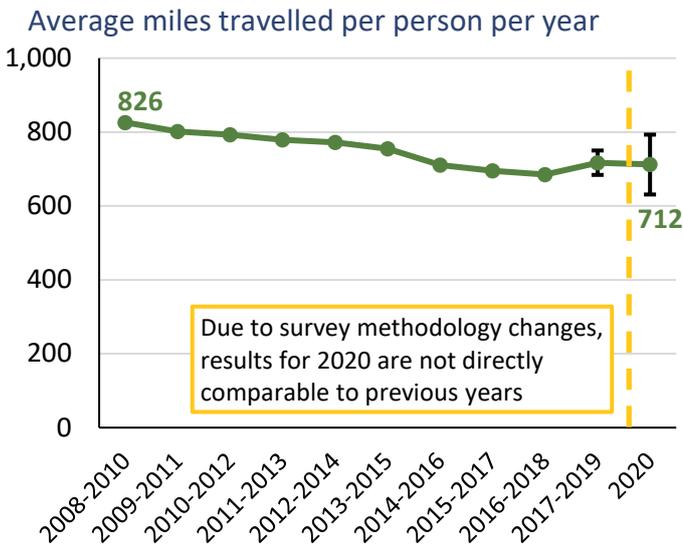
Figure 8.1b: Distance for shopping 2010 to 2020[1]

Average miles travelled per person per year
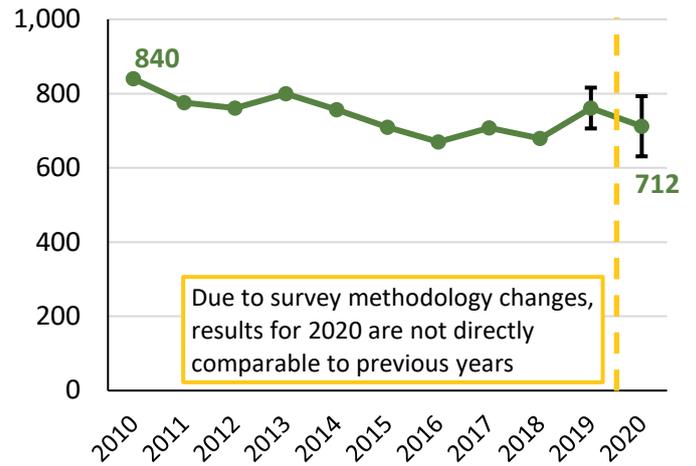
Figure 8.2a: Shopping journeys 2008-2010 to 2020[1]

Average journeys per person per year
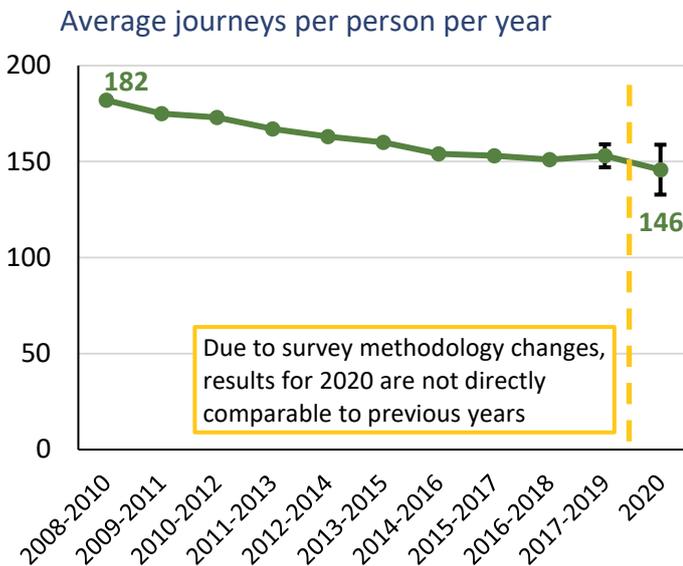
Figure 8.2b: Shopping journeys 2010 to 2020[1]
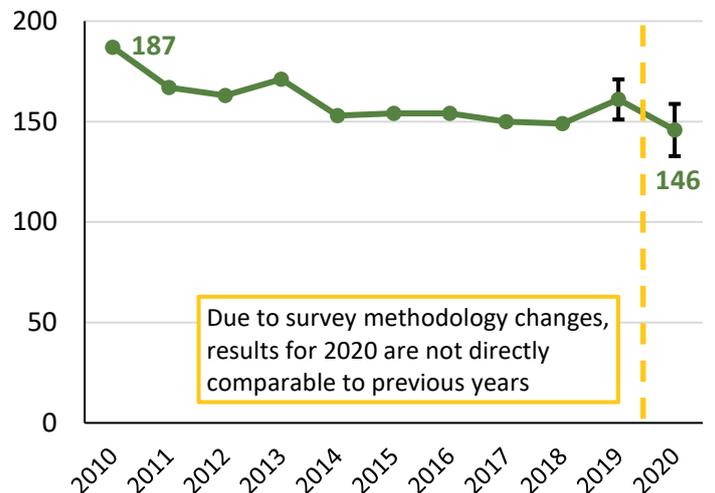
Average journeys per person per year

Note: ⌶ show 95% confidence intervals around the central estimate (see What is a confidence interval? on page 2).

[1] The survey methodology changed in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years. See About this publication section (page 1) for details.

Travelling to do main food shopping

Please note that this section, including Table 8.1, cannot be reported for 2020 as the questions on travelling to do main food shopping were only asked from January to March.

Difficulties travelling to do main food shopping

Please note that the following sections, which include Figures 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5, cannot be reported for 2020 as the questions on difficulties travelling to do main food shopping were only asked from January to March:

- Difficulties travelling to do main food shopping - car, van or motorcycle users
- Difficulties if not using car, van or motorcycle to do main food shopping
- Difficulties travelling to do main food shopping – users of other forms of transport

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 4.1: Travel per person per year by journey purpose

Section 9: Key tables by urban-rural

In 2020:

Rural residents travelled further (5,772 miles) than urban residents (3,550 miles)

Urban residents took a similar number of journeys (831) as rural residents (820)

On average, urban residents spent around the same time travelling (280 hours) as rural residents (277 hours)
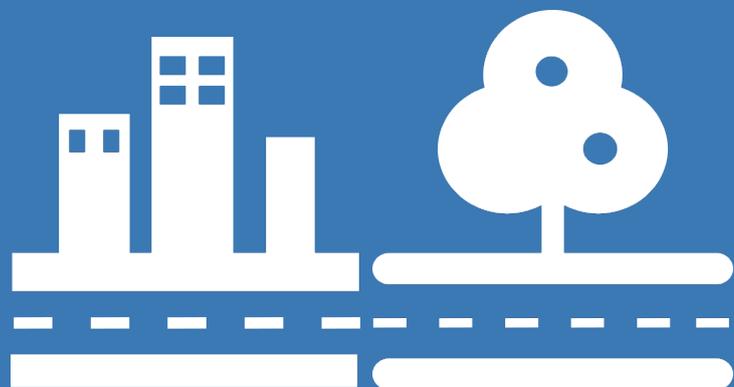
Distance travelled by mode and urban-rural split

People living in rural areas travelled further (5,772 miles) than people living in urban areas (3,550 miles) in 2020.

For urban residents, one tenth (10%) of total distance travelled was on foot, higher than rural residents (4%). Similarly, urban residents walked more than one and a half times the distance (340 miles) that rural residents walked (207 miles).

For rural residents, nine tenths (90%) of total distance travelled was by car, higher than urban residents (76%). Rural residents also travelled more miles by car (5,223 miles) than urban residents (2,692 miles).

Eleven percent of the total distance travelled by urban residents was on public transport (Ulsterbus, Metro, Other Bus, NI Railways and Black Taxi), higher than rural residents (3%). However, there is no real difference comparing average distance travelled by public transport per person for those living in urban areas (383 miles) and those living in rural areas (145 miles) i.e. the difference is not statistically significant.

Table 9.1: Average distance travelled per person by travel mode[1] and urban-rural split[2]: 2020

Travel mode[1]	Miles per person		
	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland
Walk	340	207	**280**
Bicycle	74	59	**67**
Car[3]	2,692	5,223	**3,831**
Public transport[4]	383	145	**276**
Other[5]	62	138	**96**
All modes	**3,550**	**5,772**	**4,550**

[1] See Definitions section on page 72 for definitions of individual travel modes

[2] See Definitions section on page 73 for urban-rural definition. Note that urban-rural definitions in TSNI publications from 2013-2015 are based on the updated 2015 settlement classifications.

[3] Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

[4] Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black Taxi'

[5] Other includes 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

Number and length of journeys by main mode and urban-rural split

In 2020, residents of urban areas took around the same number of journeys (831) as residents of rural areas (820). However, on average, journeys taken by people living in rural areas tend to be longer (7.0 miles) than journeys taken by people living in urban areas (4.3 miles).

A third (33%) of all journeys taken by urban residents were walks, more than rural residents (21%). Similarly, urban residents made a higher number of walking journeys (272) than rural residents (172).

Looking at car journeys as a proportion of all journeys, nearly three quarters (74%) of all rural residents' journeys were by car, higher than for urban residents (59%). Rural residents also took more car journeys each year (606) than urban residents (487).

There is no real difference comparing the proportion of all journeys taken by people living in urban areas on public transport (4%), to people living in rural areas (2%). Looking at the average number of public transport journeys per person, urban residents took more of these type of journeys (35) than rural residents (18).

Table 9.2: Average number of journeys per person and average journey length by main mode[1] and urban-rural split[2]: 2020

Main mode of travel[1]	Average number of journeys per person			Average journey length (miles)		
	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland
Walk	272	172	**227**	1.2	1.2	**1.2**
Bicycle	21	11	**16**	3.6	5.2	**4.1**
Car[3]	487	606	**541**	5.5	8.6	**7.1**
Public transport[4]	35	18	**27**	11.5	8.2	**10.5**
Other[5]	16	13	**15**	3.8	10.4	**6.4**
All modes	**831**	**820**	826	**4.3**	**7.0**	**5.5**

[1] See Definitions section on page 72 for definitions of individual travel modes

[2] See Definitions section on page 73 for urban-rural definition. Note that urban-rural definitions in TSNI publications from 2013-2015 are based on the updated 2015 settlement classifications.

[3] Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

[4] Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black Taxi'

[5] Other includes 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

Time spent travelling by main mode and urban-rural split

Urban residents and rural residents spent around the same amount of time travelling in 2020. Urban residents travelled 280 hours on average (about 46 minutes per day or 12 days). Rural residents travelled on average 277 hours (around 46 minutes per day or 12 days).

Average journey times were the same for people living in urban areas and people living in rural areas (20 minutes).

More time was spent walking by people living in urban areas (106 hours) compared to people living in rural areas (67 hours).

Rural residents spent more time travelling by car (190 hours) than urban residents (138 hours).

Urban residents spent more time travelling by public transport (24 hours) than rural residents (8 hours).

Table 9.3: Time spent travelling per person and average journey time by main mode[1] and urban-rural split[2]: 2020

Main mode of travel[1]	Time spent travelling per person (hours)			Average journey time (minutes)		
	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland
Walk	106	67	**89**	23	23	**23**
Bicycle	7	7	**7**	20	38	**26**
Car[3]	138	190	**161**	17	19	**18**
Public transport[4]	24	8	**17**	42	29	**38**
Other[5]	5	5	**5**	17	21	**19**
All modes	**280**	**277**	**279**	**20**	**20**	**20**

[1] See Definitions section on page 72 for definitions of individual travel modes

[2] See Definitions section on page 73 for urban-rural definition. Note that urban-rural definitions in TSNI publications from 2013-2015 are based on the updated 2015 settlement classifications.

[3] Car includes 'Car driver', 'Car passenger' and 'Car undefined'

[4] Public Transport includes 'Metro and Ulsterbus', 'Other bus', 'NI Railways' and 'Black Taxi'

[5] Other includes 'Motorcycle', 'Other private', 'Taxi', 'Other public' and 'Undefined mode'

Travel by purpose and urban-rural split

In 2020, for people living in urban areas, nearly half (46%) of all journeys were for leisure and other purposes (to visit friends, to take part in entertainment, social activities or sports activities, to go on holiday/day trips, just walking, other), 18% for shopping and 15% for commuting and business. Just over one in ten (11%) of journeys were for education and escort education (e.g. a schoolchild going to school, a student going to college/university, a parent taking a child to school). Journeys to services, such as the bank, doctor or library (classified as "personal business" journeys) made up 6% of all journeys.

For people living in rural areas, just under two fifths (39%) of all journeys were for leisure and other purposes, 17% for commuting and business, 17% for shopping, 13% for education and escort education and 9% for personal business.

Looking only at single journey purposes, the most popular reasons for urban residents making a journey were for 'other including just walk' (22%) and shopping (18%). The most popular reasons for rural residents making a journey were for 'other including just walk' (18%), shopping (17%) and commuting (14%).

Urban residents made an average of 181 'other including just walk' journeys in 2020, which are mostly made up of walking journeys made just for pleasure/exercise. This was similar to the average number of journeys made by rural residents (145 journeys). However, urban residents travelled further than rural residents for 'other including just walk' journeys: 256 miles per urban resident compared to 180 miles per rural resident.

Urban residents made an average of 148 shopping journeys in 2020, around the same as rural residents (143 shopping journeys). Although the average number of shopping journeys was similar, rural residents travelled further than urban residents when going to the shops: 1,014 miles per rural resident compared to 465 miles per urban resident.

Urban residents took a similar number of commuting journeys (111) compared with rural residents (116). However, on average, rural residents travelled around double the distance to get to work (1,232 miles per person) compared to urban residents (601 miles per person).

In terms of miles travelled, half (50%) of the total distance travelled by urban residents was for leisure and other purposes, 22% for commuting and business, 13% for shopping and 7% for personal business.

In terms of miles travelled, three tenths (30%) of the total distance travelled by rural residents was for leisure and other purposes, 27% for commuting and business, 18% for shopping and 12% for personal business.

Table 9.4: Travel per person by journey purpose[1] and urban-rural split[2] 2020

Journey purpose[1]	Average number of journeys per person			Miles per person			Average journey length (miles)		
	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland	Urban areas	Rural areas	All Northern Ireland
Commuting & Business	126	138	**132**	787	1,551	**1,131**	6.2	11.2	**8.6**
Leisure & Other[3]	386	317	**355**	1,789	1,730	**1,763**	4.6	5.5	**5.0**
Personal Business	53	71	**61**	231	699	**442**	4.4	9.9	**7.3**
Shopping	148	143	**146**	465	1,014	**712**	3.1	7.1	**4.9**
Education & Escort education	88	107	**96**	166	405	**273**	1.9	3.8	**2.8**
Other escort	31	44	**37**	112	372	**229**	3.6	8.4	**6.2**
All purposes	**831**	**820**	**826**	**3,550**	**5,772**	**4,550**	**4.3**	**7.0**	**5.5**
Journeys per worker:									
Commuting & Business	..	..	**273**	..	..	**2,372**	..	..	**8.7**

[1] The purpose of a journey is governed by what the person did at the end of the journey. However, for journeys 'home' the purpose is governed by the start of the journey. This means, for example, the purpose of a journey from the shops to home is 'shopping'.
See Definitions section on page 70 for definitions of types of journey purpose.

[2] See Definitions section on page 73 for urban-rural definition. Note that urban-rural definitions in TSNI publications from 2013-2015 are based on the updated 2015 settlement classifications.

[3] Leisure and Other category includes 'Visit friends at private home', 'Visit friends elsewhere', 'Entertainment/public social activities', 'Sport participate', 'Holiday base', 'Day trip', 'Other including just walk' and 'Undefined purpose'.

Travel to work by urban-rural split

This section, including Table 9.5, cannot be reported for 2020 as the achieved sample is too small to produce robust analysis for the usual urban-rural breakdown of travel to work.

Access to public transport by urban-rural split

Please note that this section, including Figure 9.1, Figure 9.2, Table 9.6 and Table 9.7, cannot be reported for 2020 as the questions on bus/rail service frequency and the time taken to walk to the nearest bus stop/train station were only asked from January to March.

Driving licence holders by urban-rural split*

Rural residents aged 17+ are more likely to hold a full driving licence (91%) than urban residents aged 17+ (78%).

Table 9.8: Full driving licence holders[1] by urban-rural split[2] 2020*

	All adults aged 17+
Urban areas	78%
Rural areas	91%
All Northern Ireland	**84%**

[1] Not including provisional licences, Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) licences or Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) licences

[2] See Definitions section on page 73 for urban-rural definition. Note that urban-rural definitions in TSNI publications from 2013-2015 are based on the updated 2015 settlement classifications.

* Please note, the achieved sample for 2020 is too small to produce robust analysis for the age, sex and urban-rural breakdown normally reported in this section and Table 9.8. However, it is sufficient to produce analysis by urban-rural only and the section has been updated accordingly. Analysis of driving licence holders by sex is available in the section Driving licence holding (persons aged 17+) on page 33.

Further reading

For further information and breakdowns on the statistics and charts in this section, please refer to the following tables in the accompanying spreadsheet:

- Table 6.1: Average distance travelled per person by travel mode and urban-rural split
- Table 6.2: Average number of journeys per person and average journey length by main mode and urban-rural split
- Table 6.3: Time spent travelling per person and average journey time by main mode and urban-rural split
- Table 6.4: Travel per person by journey purpose and urban-rural split
- Table 6.8: Full driving licence holders by urban-rural split

Appendix A: User Information

User engagement

In 2018, ASRB conducted a series of TSNI user engagement meetings with key users. Following on from this, in 2019 ASRB conducted a review of the content and format of the current TSNI reports in order to develop a more concise, accessible and relevant set of reports whilst ensuring that they continue to meet our users' needs.

As part of this, an eight week user consultation was carried out, closing on 2 July 2019. An online survey was used to collect responses. 93 full and partial responses were received. The results of this survey were published in September 2019, alongside a Statement of User Needs indicating future work that will be carried out on TSNI outputs.

Redesign of TSNI reports

Following on from the user consultation, we developed and implemented a new format In-depth Report for the 2016-2018 TSNI data. The new format was then applied to the 2017-2019 Headline Report. The reports have been updated to reflect current statistical and data visualisation methods to make it more user-friendly and accessible, while retaining all information previously reported.

In addition, the proposal receiving the most positive response in the consultation was the production of themed publications. We have therefore reorganised the information in the In-depth Report into themed sections. These relate to different travel modes, journey purposes and an urban-rural section so users can easily identify the data they are most interested in. These new themed sections also better reflect current policy needs and interests.

To make the results more digestible, large tables and charts have been reduced in size:

- Travel modes were grouped from 14 categories into 5 commonly used modes: Walk, Bicycle, Car, Public transport, Other.
- Journey purposes were grouped from 15 categories into 6 commonly used purposes: Commuting & Business, Leisure & Other, Personal business, Shopping, Education & Escort Education, Other escort.
- Where there are a large number of answer options to a question, selected responses have been reported (In-depth Report only).

All the tables from previous In-depth Reports are available in the spreadsheet accompanying this report, including analysis by the 14 separate travel modes, the 15 separate journey purposes and a full breakdown of all responses given to a question. For ease of comparison, the table numbers in the spreadsheet match the table numbers in In-depth Reports up to 2015-2017.

Symbols and Conventions

Rounding of figures - In tables where figures have been rounded to the nearest final digit, there may be an apparent slight discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total shown.

Multiple response questions - Respondents have the option to provide more than one response to these types of questions and therefore if individual percentages are summed they may add to more than 100%. These types of questions have been highlighted with the footnote "Percentages (may) sum to more than 100% due to multiple responses".

Show card questions and Spontaneous answers

When there are a large number of answer options, particularly for multiple response questions, a show card (a card with the answer options written out) was used up to March 2020. This enabled the respondent to select all the answers that are relevant to them. A spontaneous answer is one that is available for selection by the interviewer, if the respondent gives that response, but it is not on included on the show card. These are generally one off answers such as "I already walk as much as I can" or "Nothing would encourage me to walk more often".

Change in 2020

Following the move to telephone interviewing from April 2020, show cards could no longer be used. For questions with a long list of answer options, all responses were spontaneous and interviewers coded them from the same set of answer options. For questions with a short set of answer options, interviewers could read out the list of options (running prompt) but the spontaneous answer options were not read out.

Weeks in a year - It is assumed in this report that there are 52.14 weeks in the year.

Symbols

The following symbols have been used where averages have been calculated:

- **..**   = not available/insufficient number of cases in sample
- -   = negligible (less than 0.5 (including 0))

Insufficient number of cases in the sample (..) includes analysis based on less than 50 journeys.

Conversion factors for miles and kilometres

The following conversion factors may be of use:

1 Mile   = 1.609 Kilometres
1 Kilometre   = 0.6214 Miles

Respondents – The travel diary and some individual interview questions are asked to all persons in the household taking part in the survey (the full sample). This includes both adults and children and face to face and proxy interviews. In addition, some individuals completed a travel diary but not an individual interview. The majority of the individual interview questions have been asked to a subgroup of the full sample as children are only included in a small number of questions. Where it is not clear, it is highlighted in the bullet points whether a question is asked to the full sample or a subgroup.

Face to face interview – An interview with the respondent in person

Proxy interview – An interview completed by someone else on behalf of the respondent

Men and women
Men = Males aged 16 and over, except where otherwise stated.
Women = Females aged 16 and over, except where otherwise stated.

Cyclists – Persons who stated that they cycled during the last 12 months.

Bus users – Persons who stated that they have travelled on a bus (i.e. did not state they never travel on a bus).

Train users – Persons who stated that they have travelled on a train (i.e. did not state they never travel on a train).

Workers – Persons who stated they were in paid employment last week.

Analysis by area - For urban-rural tables, area has been assigned based on where the respondent lives.

Statistical significance

Change in 2020 – no comparison with previous years
There were a number of changes to the survey methodology in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. See Changes to 2020 data collection methodology section (page 62) for more details. Therefore, 2020 results are not directly comparable to those of previous years and caution should be taken in reaching any conclusions if making these comparisons.

In previous reports, statistical significance tests were carried out between the latest results and previous years to see if there had been an increase, a decrease or no change. The commentary within this report focusses on 2020 data without making comparisons with previous years.

Comparison of 2020 results (males/females, urban/rural)
Only those differences which are which are statistically significant (p < 0.05) have been highlighted in the commentary within this report and are denoted in the text as higher/lower, more/fewer etc. It means that there is at least a 95% probability that there is a genuine difference between results and the difference is not simply explained by random chance or sample error.

Where the term 'similar', 'no real difference', 'no real change', 'in line with' or ' around the same' has been used when comparing results, it means that there is no significant difference between results being compared.

Selected responses – For charts where there are a large number of answer options, we have reported on selected responses. See spreadsheet accompanying this report for a full breakdown of all responses given to a question.

Travel included in the survey - Only travel within Northern Ireland (and inshore islands) is included.

Grouped travel modes and journey purposes

Travel modes and Journey purposes have been grouped as follows:

Category in current report	Categories in previous reports
Walk	Walk
Bicycle	Bicycle
Car	Car driver, Car passenger, Car undefined
Public transport	Metro and Ulsterbus, Other bus, NI Railways, Black Taxi
Other	Motorcycle, Other private, Taxi, Other public, Undefined mode
Commuting & Business	Commuting, Business
Leisure & Other	Visit friends at private home, Visit friends elsewhere, Entertainment/public social activities, Sport participate, Holiday base, Day trip, Other including just walk, Undefined purpose
Personal business	Personal business
Shopping	Shopping
Education & Escort education	Education, Escort Education
Other escort	Other escort

See spreadsheet accompanying this report for analysis by the 14 separate travel modes and the 15 separate journey purposes.

Background to the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI)

The TSNI is based on the National Travel Survey (NTS), as used in Great Britain up to 2012 (NTS coverage changed to England only from 2013). It began in Northern Ireland as a continuous survey in 1999 (after a pilot survey). It is conducted over a calendar year (from January to December). The first results were published in 2003 for the period 1999-2001. This latest report covers the 2020 time period.

Data for single year/three years combined

Three years combined

As the sample size is relatively small, 3 years of data would normally be combined to ensure the analysis carried out is robust. This ensures that a wide range of analysis can be carried out.

Single year

For certain stable groups of the sample where it is established that there is a large enough sample size, it is possible to report limited information for shorter (one year) periods of time.

Reporting 2020 as a single year

It was decided that due to the methodology changes and because 2020 is an exceptional year, it would not be appropriate to combine 2020 data with previous years. This will limit the analysis that can be done as the sample size is reduced by reporting only one year instead of the usual three years combined.

Topics covered in this report

This report covers the following: All travel modes (Section 1), Walking (Section 2), Cycling (Section 3), Public transport (Section 4), Driving, driver and passenger trips (Section 5), Journey purpose (Section 6), Travelling to work (Section 7), Shopping (Section 8) and Key tables by urban–rural (Section 9).

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) statistics were designated as National Statistics in March 2011 following a full assessment against the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Since the assessment by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- To better communicate uncertainty and change, in the 2020 report, 95% confidence intervals were added to a selection of the charts for the most recent two periods of data (2019/2017-2019 and 2020).

- Following the TSNI user consultation in 2019, from the 2016-2018 edition onwards, the report has been completely redesigned and reformatted to make the report more accessible and user friendly, while retaining all information previously reported. Further details are available in the Redesign of TSNI reports section on page 57.

- Published a Background Quality Report in September 2018 and updated in July 2020.

- Included tables that were previously published separately in the Additional tables report, from the 2014-2016 edition onwards.

- Included tables that were previously published separately in the Urban-Rural report, from the 2015-2017 edition onwards.

    Added a summary page of infographics to summarise the key points in the report in an easily accessible format from the 2015-2017 report onwards.

- Moved from a 2 star to a 3 star rating on the Tim Berners-Lee 5-star rating of linked open data. This was achieved by making the publication tables available in ODS (Open Document Spreadsheet) format from the 2014-2016 report onwards.

Current and future developments

Two reports have been published based on analysis of the 2020 TSNI data. The first, the headline report, containing key figures was published in March 2022. This report, the in-depth report, contains more detailed results. A significant amount of extra work was required to investigate the 2020 data (see How the COVID-19 pandemic has affected 2020 data collection and reporting (page 1)). This additional work combined with the delay in receiving the TSNI 2017-2019 datasets, which delayed the publication of the 2017-2019 reports, continues to

have a knock-on effect on the usual publication timetable of the TSNI reports. The previous In-depth Report (2017-2019) was released in Summer 2021 but, in the past, the In-depth Reports would be issued in the Winter.

A technical report was published in May 2022 containing information on 2020 survey response rates and confidence ranges, the survey methodology and questionnaire. The [2020 technical report](#) also contains full details of the changes to the survey methodology, data analysis and reporting in 2020.

The next report will be the TSNI Headline Report and publication is currently planned for Winter 2022/23. It will be necessary to consider the best way of reporting the 2021 data and issues such as whether weighting is required. This may affect the format of the report and publication date.

One of the key projects to develop the TSNI is the review of the current database structure. In its current format the TSNI has an extremely complex structure which makes it difficult to analyse. Detailed knowledge of what to include and exclude and how to interpret the output is required. Each time a new piece of analysis is run there is a time consuming checking process to ensure the data are correct. A number of alternatives are being considered and the chosen option will be implemented once it has been determined which provides the most clear-cut database structure and the most efficient way to run queries. Once in place, this will enable dissemination of the TSNI database via the University of Essex Data Archive and the Open Data Portal allowing access to researchers for secondary analysis. Recent events have caused delays to any development in this area. A date for this will be determined once resource allows the project to proceed.

Changes to 2020 data collection methodology

To maintain their interviewers' and the public's safety, face to face interviewing was suspended by Central Survey Unit (CSU) for all their surveys in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following intensive work by CSU, the TSNI became a telephone survey which commenced in April 2020. The same number of households were selected every month as for the face to face survey and advance letters and reminder letters were sent out to the selected households. The household was then asked to contact CSU if they were interested in taking part in the survey and an interviewer phoned them at a suitable time.

There were some further changes to the methodology such as travel diary data collection, with responsibility for completion moving from respondents to interviewers (who received journey details over the telephone). In addition, the questionnaire was streamlined with some questions removed and changes to how some questions were asked or presented.

Full details of the changes to the survey methodology are available in the [2020 Technical Report](#).

Impact of changes on reporting 2020 data

The pandemic and these significant changes to the survey methodology have had an impact on the reporting of the data. Full details of the changes to the data analysis and reporting are available in the 2020 Technical Report. A summary is given below:

Comparison with previous years

Due to the changes, the 2020 results are not directly comparable to previous years. Caution should be taken in reaching any conclusions if making these comparisons (further details are in Appendix D (page 76)). Therefore the commentary within the report focusses on 2020 data without making comparisons to previous years.

Reduction of achieved sample

The suspension of face-to-face interviewing led to a lower response rate to the survey and a reduced achieved sample in 2020. The response rate fell from 59% in 2019 to 25% in 2020. In addition, it was decided that due to the significant survey methodology changes and because 2020 is an exceptional year, it would not be appropriate to combine 2020 data with previous years. The sample size will therefore be further reduced by reporting only one year instead of the usual three years combined. This has limited the analysis carried out in 2020 and the scope of the In-depth Report. Some examples of this are given below:

- Some data can only be reported at Northern Ireland level i.e. not reporting further sub-population breakdowns e.g. Local Government District level data.
- Some breakdowns have been changed as the achieved sample sizes are too small to produce analysis for the usual breakdown e.g. tables with data by age and gender have been changed to tables with data by gender.
- The achieved sample size for certain data not collected from the full sample is too small for robust analysis.
- Details of the Tables and Figures affected are in the section below "Changes to tables and figures from previous In-depth Reports".

Questions only asked from January to March 2020

With the move to telephone interviewing, the questionnaire was streamlined and some of the questions removed. Questions that were only asked from January to March 2020 cannot be reported as a full year of data is needed. Details of the Tables and Figures affected are in the section below "Changes to tables and figures from previous In-depth Reports".

Changes to tables and figures from previous In-depth Reports

There have been a number of amendments to the tables within the report for 2020 and these are highlighted in the table below:

Tables amended in 2020	Change from previous In-depth Reports
Table 1.2: Journeys per person by main mode, age and sex	Table amended from age, sex and main mode to sex and main mode only
Table 6.1: Journeys per person by age, sex and purpose	Table amended from age, sex and purpose to sex and purpose only
Table 9.8: Full driving licence holders by age, sex and urban-rural split	Table amended from age, sex and urban-rural split to urban-rural split only

A number of tables and figures could not be reported in 2020. These are listed below along with the reasons that they cannot be reported:

Tables/Figures not reported in 2020	Reason
Figure 1.6: Journeys per person by main mode and LGD	Achieved sample too small to be reported by LGD.
Figure 1.7: Difficulty with travel due to physical disability by age and sex	Achieved sample too small for usual breakdown. Breakdown by sex reported in the commentary.
Figure 3.5: Cycled in the last 12 months by age and sex	Achieved sample too small for usual breakdown. Breakdown by sex reported in the commentary.
Figure 3.7: What would encourage you to cycle more often?	Achieved sample too small for robust analysis.
Figure 3.8: Which situations make you feel unsafe when cycling on the road?	Achieved sample too small for robust analysis.
Table 4.1: Bus service frequency	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 4.7: Time taken to walk to nearest bus stop	Question only asked from January to March
Table 4.2: Rail service frequency	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 4.8: Time taken to walk to nearest NI Railways station	Question only asked from January to March
Table 5.1: Household car ownership	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 5.5: Driving licence holders by age and sex	Achieved sample too small for usual breakdown. Breakdown by sex in Figures 5.4a & 5.4b.
Table 5.2: Annual vehicle mileage	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 7.5: Difficulties travelling to or from work if not using car, van or motorcycle	Achieved sample too small for robust analysis.
Figure 7.6: Difficulties experienced travelling to or from work by other forms of transport	Achieved sample too small for robust analysis.
Table 8.1: Method of travel to do main food shopping	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 8.3: Difficulties experienced travelling by car, van or motorcycle to do main food shopping	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 8.4: Difficulties if car, van or motorcycle not used to do main food shopping	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 8.5: Difficulties experienced travelling by other forms of transport to do main food shopping	Question only asked from January to March
Table 9.5: Method of travel to work by urban-rural split	Achieved sample too small to be reported by urban-rural.
Figure 9.1: Time taken to walk to nearest bus stop by urban-rural split	Question only asked from January to March
Figure 9.2: Time taken to walk to nearest NI Railways station by urban-rural split	Question only asked from January to March
Table 9.6: Bus service frequency by urban-rural split	Question only asked from January to March
Table 9.7: Rail service frequency by urban-rural split	Question only asked from January to March

Please note that when a table/figure has been removed, the original numbering of the remaining tables/figures has been retained.

Weighting the data

Weighting by quarter

This report covers the January to December 2020 time period and, as such, includes data collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and data collected during the pandemic. The achieved sample in the first quarter of 2020 (pre-pandemic) was nearly the same as that for the second, third and fourth quarters combined (during the pandemic). The same number of households were selected each month but the response rate dropped during the pandemic. If nothing had been done, there would have been a bias in the data towards January to March results (pre-pandemic). Therefore, to ensure an even spread over the whole year, the data were weighted by quarter. This is the first time since the survey began that the data have been weighted.

A check of previous years of data showed that there was a relatively even spread of the sample over the year and weighting by quarter made little difference to the data. Therefore, there has been no need to weight previous years by quarter.

Investigating other weighting options

Other weighting options based on demographic factors were carefully considered and investigated such as weighting by gender, age, multiple deprivation quintile and various combinations of these. However, for the majority of the analysis of the TSNI 2020 data, it was found that these weights made no significant difference to the results. Therefore, the 2020 data have only been weighted by quarter.

Technical report 2020

More information on the work carried out weighting the TSNI 2020 data is available in the [2020 Technical Report](#).

Survey methodology

Information for the survey is collected using two methods: a computer interview and a paper travel diary. From January to March 2020, the interview was conducted face to face and the paper travel diary was left with the respondent for completion. From April 2020, following the suspension of face to face interviewing, the interview was conducted over the telephone. The paper diary was completed by the interviewer who received details of the respondent's journeys over the telephone.

The seven day travel diary collects information on all journeys 50 metres or more. Details collected for each journey include the purpose of the journey, the length of the journey and the method of travel. Personal information is also collected in a computer interview. This allows details such as age, sex, working status, etc. to be linked to the journey data.

In order to minimise the burden of completing the travel diary, information on short walks (i.e. under one mile in length) are only collected on day one. The data on short walks are then grossed for the full travel week so that results in this report include short walks for the full seven day period.

Sample design

In 2020, a sample of 1,920 addresses was drawn from the NISRA Address Register using a methodology that is designed to provide representative geographical coverage across Northern Ireland. The NISRA Address Register is maintained by NISRA's Census Branch and is created by merging the POINTER database with additional records, and removing duplicates and communal establishments.

All persons in the household (including children) are eligible for the survey.

415 households and 771 persons were interviewed for the TSNI over the time period 1 January to 31 December 2020.

Uses of the TSNI

The TSNI is the only source of information on how, over the region as a whole, people use different forms of transport to meet their travel needs as individuals or family groups. It provides information to inform government policy, set objectives and to monitor performance in relation to transport and travel in Northern Ireland, for example in the draft Programme for Government 2016-2021. It provides information on areas such as active travel, safe and sustainable travel, accessible transport and equality monitoring. Data from the TSNI has been used in the development of the NI Transport Model. It is also used in a variety of publications as well as the TSNI reports. This includes the annual NI Transport Statistics publication (from 2013-14), NI Road Safety Strategy to 2020 Annual Statistical Report (from 2016) and the annual NI Environmental Statistics report. Private companies may use the data to look at travel trends, academics for research and other government Departments and Agencies to inform cross-cutting policy and strategy development.

Data quality assessment

A [Background Quality Report](#) has been published on the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland website. It was updated in July 2020.

Data are collected by the Central Survey Unit (CSU) and the sample is selected to be representative of the Northern Ireland population. Data undergo various validation checks as part of the processing. CSU is the leading social survey research organisation in Northern Ireland and is one of the main business areas of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), an Agency within the Department of Finance. The Unit has a long track record and a wealth of experience in the design, management and analysis of behavioural and attitude surveys in the context of a wide range of social policy issues. CSU procedures are consistent with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

Note that all survey estimates are subject to a degree of error and this must be taken account of when considering results. This error will be reasonably small for the majority of Northern Ireland level results using three years of data combined but care should be taken when looking at results based on smaller breakdowns.

Guidance on using the data

Data at Northern Ireland level for three years combined are robust. When figures are broken down into sub-regional level the sample size is reduced. Consequently, data analysis at sub-regional level is limited. For similar reasons, data analysis for single years is limited.

Sampling errors

Data are from a sample survey i.e. not asked of the whole population of Northern Ireland. Therefore when looking at the figures, the confidence intervals/ranges associated with the figures should be noted.

What are Confidence intervals/ranges?

○   As estimates made from a sample survey depend upon the particular sample chosen, they may differ from the true values of the population.

○   This variance from the true population value is measured using a confidence interval. The confidence intervals published for TSNI data are 95% confidence intervals. This means there is a 95% probability that the true population value is contained within the range of values given. Further details are given in What is a Confidence Interval? (page 2).

○   Where charts contain 95% confidence intervals, these are indicated by shaded areas or error bars ( ).

○   95% confidence interval tables are available in the 2020 technical report published in May 2022 on the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland statistics webpage.

Data validation

As TSNI databases have continued to be validated as part of the data analysis process, a small number of discrepancies have been discovered and corrected figures appear in this current report. Where appropriate, these have been flagged with a footnote to explain that figures have been revised from previous reports. The corrections are minor and therefore have not warranted a recirculation of previous reports. However, revised figures are available on request from ASRB should they be required (see front of the report for contact details).

Mode of travel/Main mode of travel

Mode is the form of transport used for a stage of a journey. The main mode is the form of transport used for the greatest length of the journey.

Average distance travelled

For average distance travelled by mode tables in this report, mode of travel is used. This means the actual mode of travel used during each stage of the journey is captured by the data analysis. For example, if a journey consisted of 2 stages, a 1 mile walk to the train station followed by a 10 mile train journey, 1 mile would be assigned to "walk" mode of travel and 10 miles to "public transport" mode of travel.

Note that there was a change to the travel diary in 2018, adding in a tick box to indicate if the journey crossed the border. Only the portion of the journey distance travelled within Northern Ireland up to the border is recorded (consistent with how this information has always been reported). When comparing single years 2017 and 2018, a significant increase in the average distance travelled was noted: from 5,708 miles in 2017 to 6,286 miles in 2018. This may be connected to the travel diary change. Average distance travelled has remained at a similar level comparing 2018 (6,286 miles) to 2019 (6,374 miles) and no further increase has been observed. Note that there is no real difference between 2017, 2018 and 2019 comparing proportion of total distance travelled by each travel mode. There has been some investigation of the 2018 and 2019 cross-border journeys but no wide-scale issues were noted. We will continue to monitor this and see if the trend of higher average distance travelled continues in subsequent years.

2020 update: We have been unable to explore this further in 2020 as results are not directly comparable with previous years due to the impact of the pandemic and changes to survey methodology.

Number of journeys/Average journey length/Journey time

For the Number of journeys/Average journey length/Journey time by mode tables in this report, main mode of travel is used. This is because whole journeys are being tabulated not stages or parts of a journey. For the example above (a 1 mile walk to the train station followed by a 10 mile train journey), this means the main mode of travel, "public transport", would be assigned to the journey. The walking element is not captured in the data analysis.

Please note that the majority of journeys are only one stage which means that both the mode and main mode of travel would be the same.

Appendix B: Definitions

Personal Travel

The Travel Survey for Northern Ireland is concerned with all personal travel within Northern Ireland, provided the main reason for the journey is for the person themselves to reach the destination.

Geographical Coverage

Only travel within Northern Ireland (and inshore islands) is included. This means for a journey to Dublin for example, only the portion of the journey to the border is included.

Journeys

A journey is defined as a one-way course of travel having a single main purpose. Outward and return portions of a return journey are treated as two separate journeys. A journey cannot have two separate purposes. A brief call is a relatively incidental stop for a subsidiary purpose e.g. stopping for petrol. If only a brief call is made the journey is not broken up into smaller journeys.

Stages

A journey consists of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the form of transport or when there is a change of vehicle requiring a separate ticket.

Households

A household consists of one or more people who have the sampled address as their only or main residence and who either share at least one main meal a day or share the living accommodation.

Mode of travel/Main mode of travel

Mode is the form of transport used for a stage of a journey. The main mode is the form of transport used for the greatest length of the journey.

Distance travelled

The length of any journey stage is the distance actually covered by the traveller and not the distance "as the crow flies".

Series of calls journeys

Travel involving a number of stops for the same main purpose and using the same form of transport are treated as one continuous series of calls. Series of calls can only be used for

shopping and journeys in the course of work. A doctor's round for example would therefore consist of one journey to visit the first patient, one series of calls journey to all the other patients, and one journey from the last call back to the surgery or home.

Journeys excluded

The survey is only concerned with travel involving a person moving from one place to another in order to reach that destination. Travel involving the movement of freight and for people paid to walk (e.g. policemen, postmen, etc.) is excluded.

Travel in the course of work for certain occupational groups is therefore excluded (e.g. bus drivers, conductors, taxi drivers, crew of public transport vehicles, crew of public vehicles such as fire engines, or ambulances); travel in industrial or agricultural equipment (cranes, bulldozers, tractors, etc.); travel in specially equipped vehicles used in the course of a person's work (police patrol cars, AA/RAC repair vehicles, Post Office vans, etc.).

Generally travel off the public highway (i.e. on private land) is excluded. An exception to this is cross-country walking, running, hiking or mountain climbing which is included even if on private land. Travel in public parks and on greenways is included.

Children's play is excluded.

Leisure travel which is not competitive to public transport is also excluded (e.g. a boat trip for pleasure).

Journey purpose

The purpose of a journey is governed by what the person did at the end of the journey. However, for journeys 'home' the purpose is governed by the start of the journey. This means for example the purpose of a journey from the shops to home is 'shopping' when analysing the data.

Types of journey purpose

Commuting and Business

Commuting journeys include journeys to a usual place of work from home, or from work to home.

Business journeys are journeys in the course of work i.e. journeys made as part of a person's paid job to or from a place other than the usual place of work. Business journeys include a journey in the course of work back to the work base. This category includes all work journeys by people with no usual place of work (e.g. site workers) and those who work at or from home.

Education and Escort Education

Education journeys include journeys to or from school or college, etc. by full time students, students on day-release and part time students following vocational courses.

Escort education journeys are made to accompany a school child or student to their school/college e.g. a mother taking her child to school.

Other escort

An *escort* code is used when the traveller has no purpose of his or her own, other than to escort or accompany another person. Escort commuting for example is escorting or accompanying someone from home to work or from work to home. Escort education journeys are presented separately, in the Education and Escort Education category, for the purposes of this report.

Shopping

Shopping includes all journeys to shops or from shops to home, even if there was no intention to buy.

Personal Business

Personal business journeys include visits to services, e.g. hairdressers, laundrettes, dry-cleaners, betting shops, solicitors, banks, estate agents, libraries, churches; or for medical consultations or treatment. This category also includes journeys for eating and drinking when the respondent is alone or at work.

Leisure and Other

The *visit friends elsewhere* code includes journeys where the main purpose was to eat or drink other than when the respondent is alone or at work. It also includes journeys to meet friends other than in a private home but where the main purpose is still to socialise with particular persons rather than visit a particular place.

The *entertainment/public social activities* category includes journeys for all types of entertainment, public social activities and unpaid voluntary work. Examples include cinemas, political meetings, non-vocational evening classes.

The *sport participate* category includes journeys to take part in all outdoor activities. It also includes, for example, squash, badminton, swimming, boxing, wrestling, weight training, judo and karate.

Holiday base journeys include journeys within NI to or from any holiday base (includes stays of 4 or more nights with friends or relatives).

Day trip journeys include journeys for pleasure (not otherwise classified as social or entertainment) within a single day.

Other including just walk

- *Just walk* journeys are walking journeys made just for pleasure.

- The categories "Other non escort" and "Cross country/walk/hike/mountain climbing" are also included.

Undefined purpose includes the total of the "missings" (where the journey purpose was omitted), the "social undefined" and "purpose undefined" categories.

Modes of travel

Walk

Walks of 50 metres or more are collected on day 1 and walks of 1 mile or more on days 2-7 (see information on grossing short walks in the).

Bicycle

The *bicycle* category includes travel on all forms of bicycle or tricycle not mechanically propelled, with the exception of children's toy bicycles or tricycles not primarily intended as a means of transport. Children who accompany an adult on a journey e.g. a visit to the shops on these bicycles (where the adult is walking) are coded as having walked there.

Car

For the purpose of this report '*car*' travel includes travel in all 3 or 4-wheeled cars. Note that vans, lorries, jeeps and land rovers are included under "Other private" in the "Other" category.

Car undefined is used when, for example someone has put in the travel diary that they travelled somewhere by car and hasn't then proceeded to complete the column to say if they were a car driver or passenger for that particular journey. When the respondent is under 17, this is coded as car passenger as a person under 17 shouldn't be a car driver. However, when it is not possible to work out if they are a driver or passenger, this is coded as car undefined.

Public transport

Public transport includes travel by Ulsterbus, Citybus/Metro, Other Bus, Northern Ireland Railways and Black Taxi.

Citybus/Metro covers all those regular bus services, which provide short distance travel within urban or suburban areas in and around Belfast. Citybus changed to Metro in February 2005. Metro integrated Citybus and greater Belfast Ulsterbus services.

Unless specified, the *Ulsterbus* category includes regular *Ulsterbus* services and express services.

The *other bus* category includes private hire buses, 'coaches', excursion tour buses, and any other buses not classified above.

The *NI Railways* category includes all travel by train. Non-purposive train travel (e.g. at fun fairs) is irrelevant to the survey.

Black taxis include taxis which operate like a minibus. Note that private hire taxis are included under "Taxi" in the "Other" category.

Other

The *motorcycle* category covers all two wheeled motorised vehicles used for private transport.

For this report generally van and lorries are included in the *other private category*. (Vans with side windows behind the driver's seat are coded as cars.) Also included are land rovers and jeeps, invalid carriages, motorised wheelchairs, caravans, dormobiles, minibuses, private aircraft, etc.

Private hire taxis are included in the *taxi* category.

Public transport not specified elsewhere, e.g. by aircraft, is included under *other public transport*.

Undefined mode is the total of the "missings" (where the method of travel was omitted), the "unspecified private" and the "unspecified public" categories.

> *- Unspecified private -*This code should be used where you know the method of transport was 'private' but where you cannot be specific and the respondent is not available to ask.

> *- Unspecified public -*This code should be used where you know the method of transport was 'public', e.g. because a fare has been paid, but where a specific method cannot be ascertained.

Urban/Rural

Data has been assigned to urban or rural areas based on where the respondent lives.

In TSNI publications up to 2012-2014, the urban-rural classification was based on the 2005 Report of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group.

A review of the classification and delineation of settlements was carried out in 2015. There were number of changes including updating the settlement classifications previously based on

Census 2001 populations to Census 2011 populations and changing the threshold between settlements classed as urban and those classed as rural from a population of 4,500 to 5,000. Full details are available in the [Review of the Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements report](#) published in March 2015:

From 2013-2015, the urban-rural breakdown in the TSNI reports is based on these updated 2015 classifications:

Bands A to E = Urban (settlements with a population of 5,000 or more)

Bands F to H = Rural (settlements with a population of less than 5,000 or open countryside)

Caution should be taken when comparing urban-rural figures in this report with urban-rural figures in reports prior to 2013-2015. It is, however, worth noting that some analysis was carried out on 2013-2015 data comparing the old 2005 urban-rural classifications with the updated 2015 urban-rural classifications (see Appendix 1 in TSNI Urban-Rural Report 2013-2015). It was found that none of the comparisons were statistically significantly different meaning that, for these results, there was no real difference between the old and updated urban-rural indicators.

Other definitions

Difficulty with travel due to a physical disability or long-standing health problem

The respondent is said to have difficulty with travel due to a physical disability if they have answered yes to one or more of the 4 following questions: "Do you have any physical disability or other long-standing health problem that makes it difficult for you to…" "…go out on foot?", "…use buses or coaches?", "…use trains?" or "…drive a car?".

Appendix C: Related Information

Related surveys carried out in other areas of Great Britain and Republic of Ireland can be found at the following links:

- The Department for Transport collect travel data for the residents of England using face to face interviews and a 7 day travel diary in their National Travel Survey. The latest release was for 2021 information and was published in August 2022 on the [Department for Transport website](#).

- Transport Scotland collect personal travel data for residents of Scotland using a one day travel diary in their Scottish Household Survey. The latest release was for 2020 information and was published in January 2022 on the [Transport Scotland website](#).

- The Welsh Government collect information on active travel as part of the National Survey for Wales, although this does not include a travel diary. The latest active travel release was for 2019-20 information and was published in December 2020 on the [Welsh Government website](#).

- The Republic of Ireland Central Statistics Office collect detailed information on the domestic travel patterns of Irish residents in their national household survey. The latest release was for 2019 information and was published in July 2020 on the [Central Statistics Office website](#).

Appendix D: Notes on Travel Survey for Northern Ireland 2020

NISRA suspended all face-to-face household interviews in the middle of March 2020 due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Following intensive work by Central Survey Unit, the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) became a telephone survey which commenced in April 2020. For the remainder of the reporting period, all interviews carried out on the TSNI were conducted by telephone.

Details of the changes to the survey methodology, data analysis and reporting in 2020 are available in the TSNI Technical Report 2020.

There are a number of factors which users should take into consideration when interpreting the 2020 results and care should be taken when comparing these to previously published findings from the survey.

1. While survey methodology changed, the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the resultant introduction of new public health regulations, guidance and advice may have also fundamentally changed peoples' behaviour and attitudes. It is difficult to separate out change caused by the methodological adjustments and actual behavioural change at this point in time;

2. The change in data collection mode from face-to-face to telephone may have altered how people responded to the survey;

3. The change in data collection mode also necessitated some streamlining of the questionnaire and changes to how some questions were asked or presented as well as the response categories associated with them. This may also have implications for how people responded to the survey;

4. The achieved response rate on the survey in 2020 was 25% and this is a lower response compared to the achieved response rate of 59% in 2019. This has reduced the number of cases at the household and individual levels. With the reduction in sample size due to the lower response rate and reporting a single year of data, the precision of survey estimates is reduced. To assist with gauging the level of uncertainty in the data, 95% confidence intervals have been added to some of the charts.

Any changes within the 2020 data compared to previous years have to be considered in the context of all of the above.

Care should be taken in reaching any conclusions based on 2020 data and comparisons to previous years. It would be advisable to look at changes in behaviour or attitudes contained in the 2020 results over the next couple of years, particularly when data collection on the survey returns to face-to-face mode and society returns to normal, to see if they are part of a permanent changing trend.