



**The evolution of public transport:
an analysis of national statistics** **Summary
Report 2015:15**

**The evolution of public transport:
an analysis of national statistics** **Summary**
Report 2015:15

Transport Analysis

Address: Torsgatan 30

SE-113 21 Stockholm

Phone: 010 414 42 00

Fax: 010 414 42 10

E-mail: trafikanalys@trafa.se

Webaddress: www.trafa.se

Publisher: Brita Saxton

Publication date: 2015-08-24

Summary

This report presents the shares of total travel accounted for by public transport and how they have evolved, based on statistics from the Swedish National Travel Survey (NTS). The definition used here emphasises regional travel, although the shares of medium-distance inter-regional journeys by public transport are also considered. The term “public transport” here includes the traditional modes of public transport on land, i.e., bus, metro, tram, and train. The base case comprises all available alternatives, including car driving, cycling, and walking (and, in the case of inter-regional journeys, flying). This definition differs in several respects from those used in the public transport industry,¹ which usually refers to “market share”, where “public transport” also includes taxi use but does not encompass non-market modes such as cycling or walking.

The share of regional journeys by public transport has increased somewhat, from 11 per cent in 2005/06 to 13 per cent in 2011–2014. This increase is attributable to a decrease in travel via other modes of transport, including cycling and walking, while the number of trips by public transport has remained constant. Cars are otherwise the completely dominant mode of transport in terms of number of trips, except in two cases: trips for leisure and recreation, and trips taken by young people aged 6–17 years. In this latter group, cycling and walking are instead dominant (albeit only in terms of the number of journeys taken). The car is also dominant in terms of transport mileage (i.e., total distance travelled).

It is in Sweden’s major urban areas, primarily the Stockholm region, that public transport plays the greatest role in the transport system. The inhabitants of Stockholm county annually take four times as many regional journeys using public transport as do the inhabitants of rural counties, twice as many as do the inhabitants of Sweden’s two other major urban counties, and three times as many as do the inhabitants of other counties. Perhaps surprisingly, the increase in the share of travel accounted for by public transport has occurred not in the major urban counties, but rather within the “other counties” group, i.e., counties that contain large and medium-sized population centres.

Public transport is most significant when it comes to trips to and from work and school, 20 per cent of which are via public transport; these are also the trips whose share has increased since 2005/06, by roughly 2 percentage points. For other purposes, public transport is used in only 6 per cent of journeys on average. The lowest share is for leisure and recreation trips (4 per cent), where cycling and walking are the dominant modes of transport.

The highest share of public transport trips (20 per cent) involve young people aged 6–17 years, followed by women of working age (18–64 years), at 14 per cent. However, it is primarily men of working age who account for the increase in the total share of travel by public transport, as their share has risen from 9 to 11 per cent. People 65 and older travel the least by public transport, only 5 per cent of their travel involving public transport.

The share of regional transport mileage accounted for by public transport has also grown, from 14 per cent in 2005/06 to 17 per cent in 2011–2014. Here again, men of working age have increased their share of public transport use in terms of *distance travelled* even more than in terms of *number of trips* taken, i.e., from 10 to 14 per cent. Most of this increase

¹ E.g., the Swedish Public Transport Association and the 21 regional public transport authorities (RPTA).

derives from travel by car, roughly 3 percentage points. There has been no significant change in the case of medium-distance inter-regional main trips (100–1000 kilometres each way), where the share of travel accounted for by public transport has held steady at 18 per cent, measured in terms of both number of main trips and transport mileage.

The report concludes with a brief global analysis and a look forward, with some reflections on how the boundaries between private and public transport modes may be blurred due to private ride-sharing initiatives enabled by the latest technological developments.



Transport Analysis is a Swedish agency for transport policy analysis. We analyse and evaluate proposed and implemented measures within the sphere of transport policy. We are also responsible for official statistics in the transport and communication sectors. Transport Analysis was established in April 2010 with its head office in Stockholm and a branch office in Östersund.