

National Travel Survey: 2010

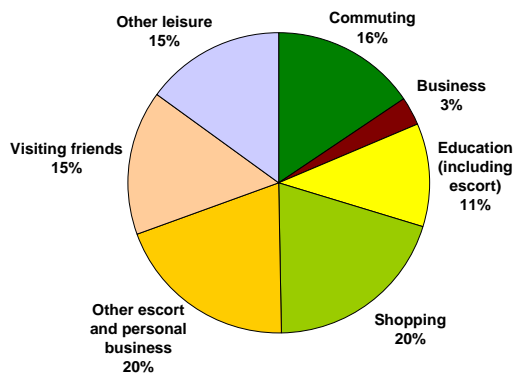


Why people travel

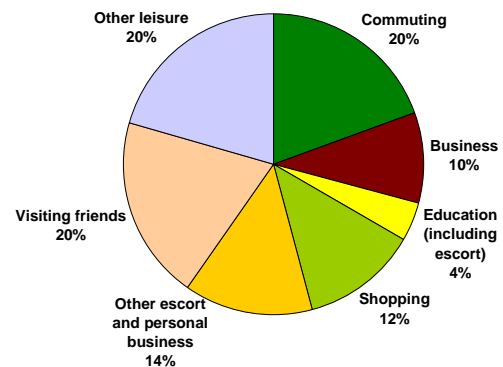
This section provides details of the reasons why people travel.

Purpose share: Great Britain, 2010
(NTS web tables NTS0401 and NTS0402)

Average number of trips

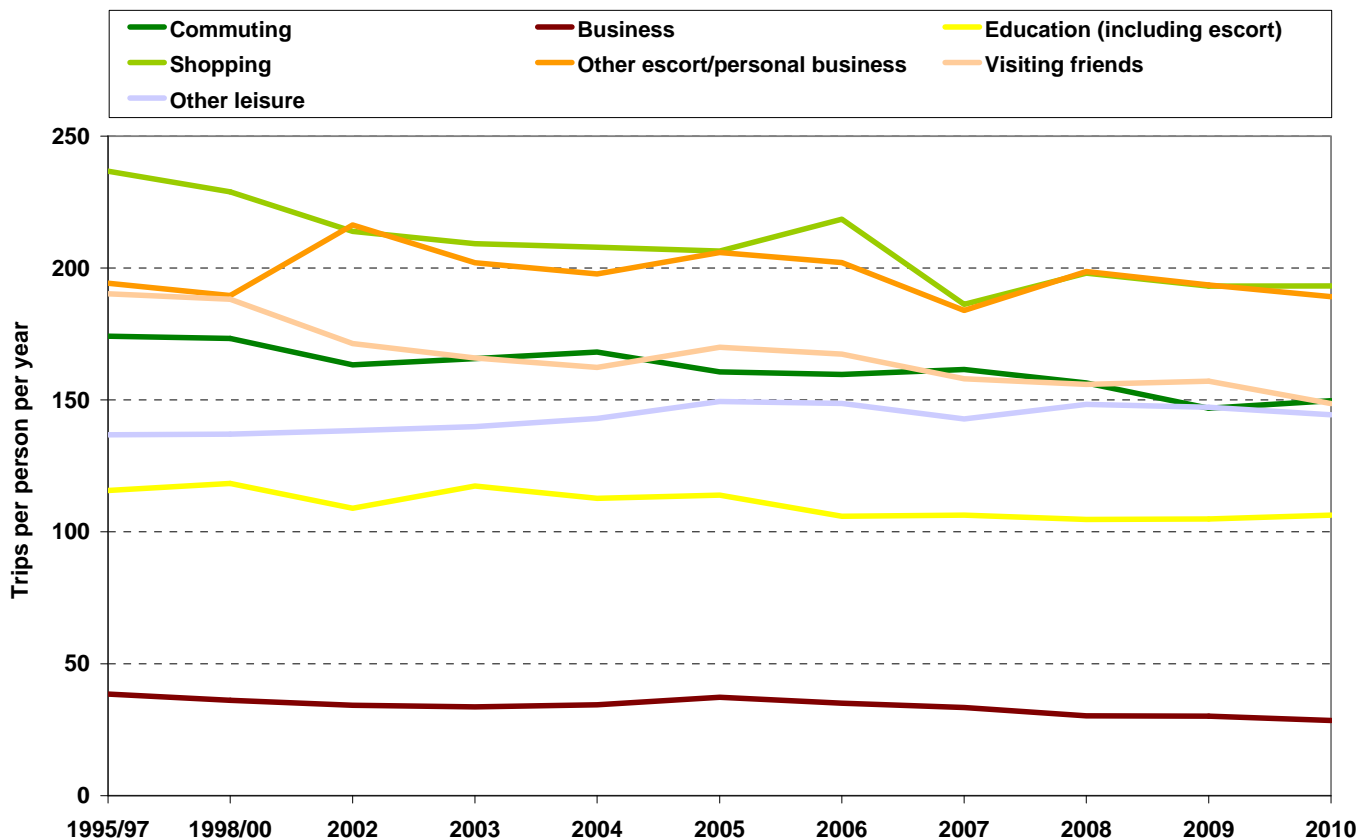


Average distance travelled



- On average, persons in Great Britain made 193 shopping trips in 2010, which accounted for 20% of all trips. These trips tend to be shorter than average (4.3 miles in 2010) and therefore shopping only accounted for 12% of distance travelled.
- Commuting accounted for 16% of trips and business accounted for a further 3% in 2010. These trips tend to be longer than average, so accounted for a higher proportion of the average distance travelled, at 20% and 10% respectively.
- Most of the decline in overall trips rates between 1995/97 and 2010 can be accounted for by a fall in shopping and visiting friends. On average people made 18% fewer shopping trips per year in 2010 than they did in 1995/97. Trips to visit friends declined by 22% during this period, with the fall entirely due to visiting at private homes rather than elsewhere.

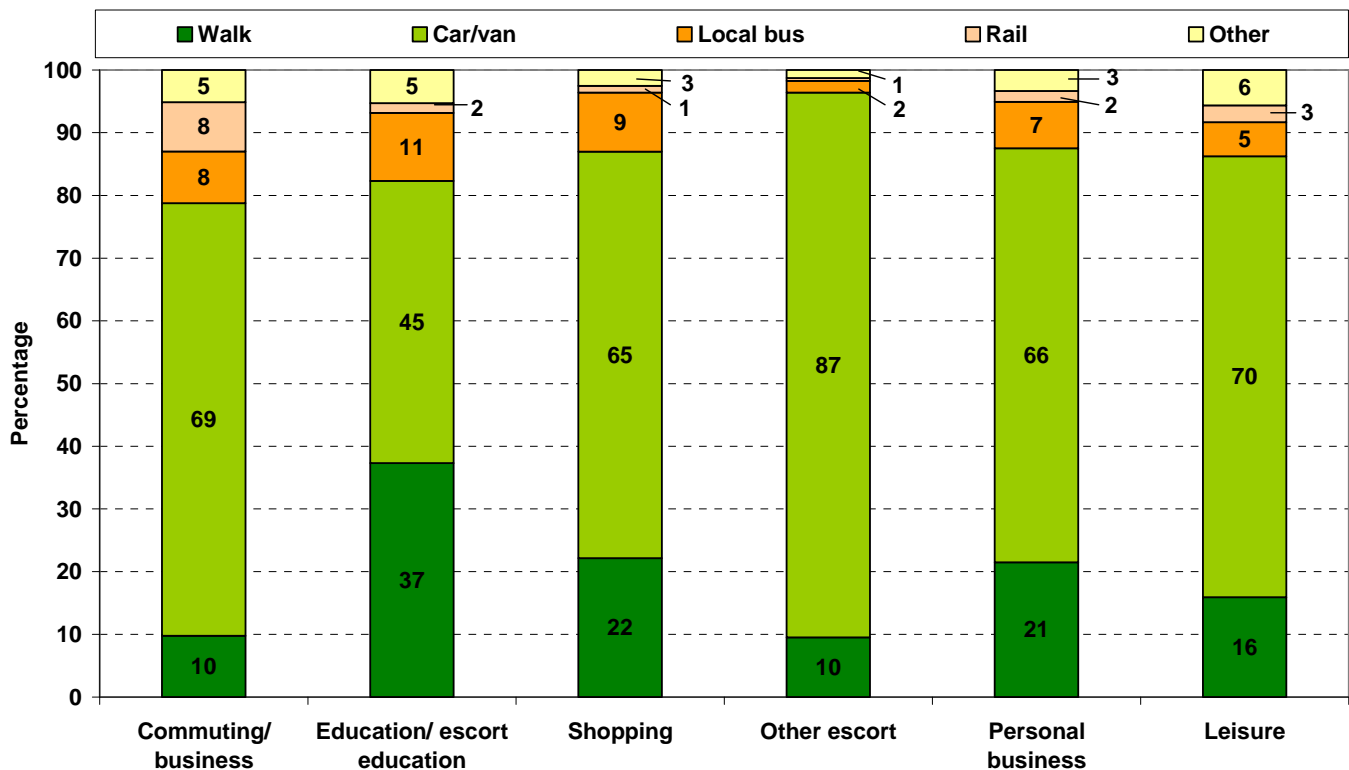
Average number of trips per person per year by trip purpose: Great Britain, 1995/97 to 2010
(NTS web tables NTS0403)



- The trend of falling numbers of shopping trips over time is associated with a switch from more frequent, short shopping trips on foot, to longer, less frequent car trips.
- Between 1995/97 and 2010 the number of commuting trips decreased by 14%, from 174 to 150 trips per person per year. The average distance travelled for commuting fell by a lesser amount between 1995/97 and 2010, by 6% (from 1,425 to 1,342 miles per person per year) due to the average length of a commuting trip increasing by 9% (from 8.2 to 9.0 miles). Both commuting trips and distance increased in 2010 for the first time since 2007.
- Business trips have fallen continuously since 2005, while the distance travelled fluctuates year to year. Business distance increased in 2010 (by 7%).

Trips by main mode and purpose: Great Britain, 2010

(NTS web table NTS0409)



- In 2010, 69% of commuting/business trips were made by car. The 8% of commuting/business trips made by rail represents the majority share of all rail trips at 53%. More than a third (37%) of education trips were made by walking, however the car was the most frequently used mode (45% of trips). Walking accounted for 22% of shopping trips, 21% of personal business trips, and 16% of leisure trips.

Long distance trips

- In 2006/10¹ visiting friends at their home was the most common trip purpose for trips over 50 miles, accounting for 22% of these trips. This was followed by business trips which accounted for 18% of long distance trips. Holidays within Great Britain accounted for the largest proportion of trips of over 250 miles.

Trip chaining

The NTS defines a trip as a one-way course of travel with a single main purpose. The majority of trips start or finish from home but some travel involves more complicated sequences of trips.

- In 2010, 42% of all trips finished at home. Of all escort education trips, 72% were followed by a trip to home; 8% of escort education trips were followed by a trip to work or business.

¹ 2006/10 represents 5 years of combined data.

Detailed statistics (tables and charts) on “why people travel” can be found on National Travel Survey 2010 web page at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/national-travel-survey-2010>, table numbers [NTS0401 to NTS0410](#).

Background notes

1. Further information about the National Travel Survey can be found at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/national-travel-survey>

2. Full guidance on the methods used to conduct the survey, response rates, weighting methodology and survey materials can be found in the National Travel Survey 2010 Technical Report at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/national-travel-survey/nts2010-technical.pdf>

3. A Notes & Definitions document which includes background to the NTS, response rates, sample size & standard error information and a full list of definitions can be found at:

<http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/releases/national-travel-survey-2010/nts2010-notes.pdf>

4. There are a number of apparent discontinuities between pre and post-2002 in the categorisation of purposes. The definitions have not changed but central coding may have improved the quality. Categories particularly affected are other escort, sport: participate, and entertainment/public activity. There is an apparent under-recording of shopping trips in 2007 and 2008 and, to a lesser extent, other short trips such as other personal business and visiting friends at home.