

Main mode of transport to work on Census day

HIGHLIGHTS:

- More than four in five commuters (82%) used a car, van or truck as their main mode of transport to get to work on Census day in 2013.
- In 2013, the use of walking/jogging (6.8%) and cycling (2.9%) for commuting on Census day was similar to the use in 2001 (7.1% and 3.1% respectively).
- The use of public transport to get to work has increased a little from 2001 to 2013 (5.2% to 5.7% of commuters).
- People aged 15–19 years had the highest use of active transport (19.6% of commuters) and public transport (11.0%).
- The highest use of active transport was in Nelson (18.3%) and Wellington (15.2%), while Wellington had the highest use of public transport (17.3%).



Relevance of mode of transport to health

Walking and cycling are beneficial forms of transport for human health and the environment. These benefits include increased physical activity levels, and no air pollution, noise pollution or greenhouse gases. Studies have shown that active commuting (such as walking or cycling to work) is associated with an 11% reduction in cardiovascular risk (Hamer & Chida, 2008). Use of public transport also increases physical activity, reduces air pollution (by not taking a private vehicle), is safer than travelling by private vehicle, and can improve mental health (British Medical Association, 2012).

Data for this indicator

The New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings collects the main means of travel to work that adults used to travel the longest distance to their place of employment on Census day (for example, by bicycle, bus, walking or jogging). The indicator results are presented for *commuters*, that is, the usually resident population aged 15+ years who were employed and who travelled to work on Census day (this excludes people who did not go to work or who worked from home). In this factsheet, 'car, truck or van' includes: driving a private car, truck or van; driving a company car, truck or van; and being a passenger in a car, truck, van or company bus. 'Active transport' includes walking, jogging and cycling. 'Public transport' includes public bus and train.

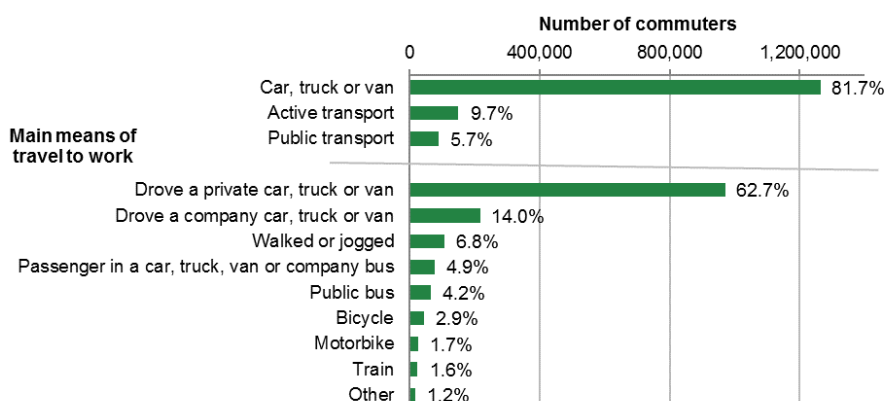
More than four in five commuters used a private motor vehicle to get to work

In 2013, most commuters (82%) used a car, truck or van as their main mode of transport to get to work on Census day (Figure 1).

Overall, 9.7% of commuters used active transport (defined as walking, jogging or cycling). This included 6.8% of commuters who walked or jogged to work, and 2.9% of commuters who cycled to work.

A further 5.7% of commuters used public transport (public bus or train).

Figure 1 : Main means of travel to work on Census day, among commuters, 2013 (number and percentage of commuters)



Notes: 'Car, truck or van' includes (i) driving a private car, truck or van, (ii) driving a company car, truck or van, and (iii) being a passenger in a car, truck, van or company bus. 'Active transport' includes walking, jogging and cycling. 'Public transport' includes public bus and train.

Source: 2013 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings

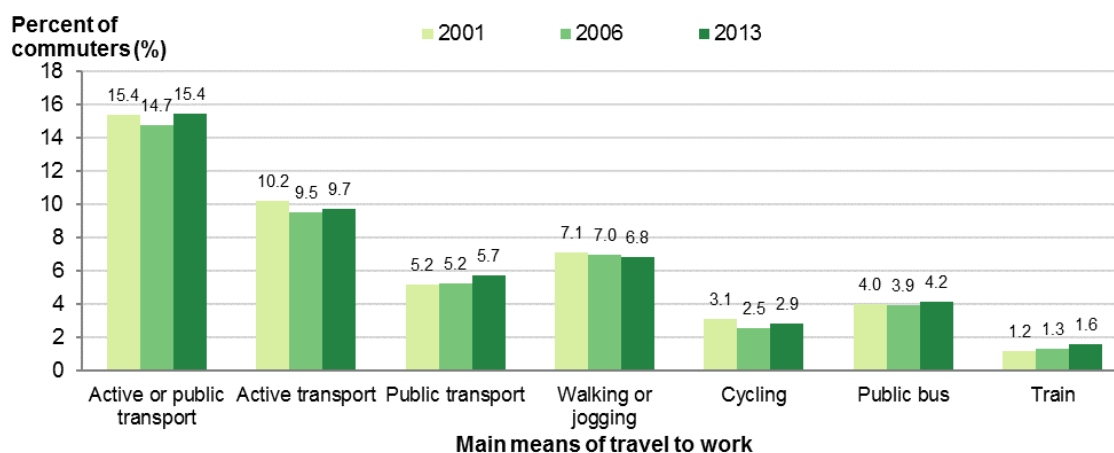
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Small increase in the use of public transport since 2001

The percentage of commuters using public transport increased slightly from 2001 (5.2%) to 2013 (5.7%) (Figure 2). However, the percentage of commuters who walked or jogged to work decreased slightly from 2001 (7.1%) to 2013 (6.8%). Cycling use had changed little from 2001 (3.1%) to 2013 (2.9%).

Overall, there has been little change in the combined use of active or public transport to travel to work between 2001 (15.4%), 2006 (14.7%) and 2013 (15.4%). There has also been little change in the use of a car, truck or van over this time, from 2001 (82.3%) to 2006 (83.0%) and 2013 (81.7%).

Figure 2 : Use of active transport and public transport as the main means of travel to work on Census day, among commuters, 2013 (percentage of commuters)



Notes: 'Active transport' includes walking, jogging and cycling. 'Public transport' includes public bus and train.

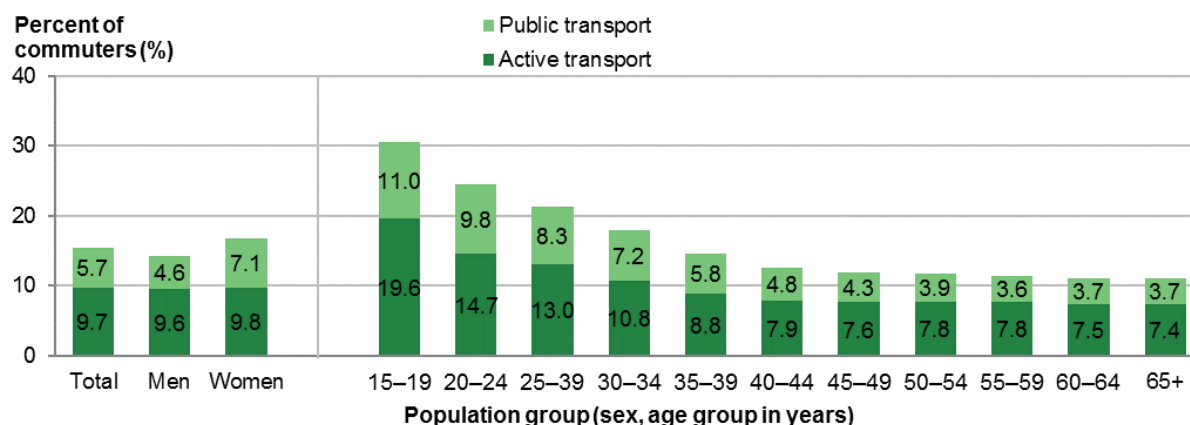
Source: 2013 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings

Women and 15–19-year-olds have the highest use of active and public transport

In 2013, women had a higher use of public transport (7.1% of commuters) than men (4.6%) as their main means of travel to work on Census day. Men and women had similar use of active transport (9.6% and 9.8% respectively) (Figure 3).

By age group, young adults aged 15–19 years had the highest use of active transport (19.6% of commuters) and public transport (11.0%). By contrast, people aged 40 years and over had the lowest use of active transport (7–8%) and public transport (3–5%).

Figure 3 : Use of active or public transport among commuters, by sex and age group, 2013 (percentage of commuters)



Notes: 'Active transport' includes walking, jogging and cycling. 'Public transport' includes public bus and train.

Source: 2013 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings

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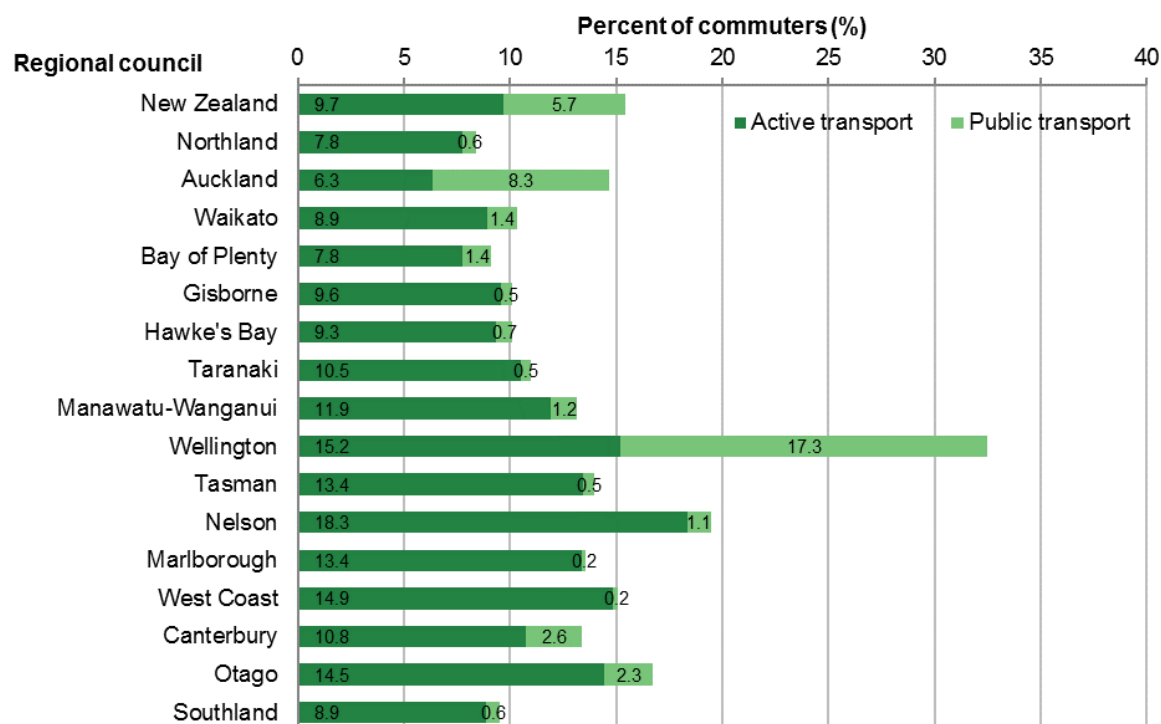
Highest levels of active and public transport use in the Wellington and Nelson regions

There were substantial regional differences in the use of active transport (walking, jogging or cycling) and public transport (bus or train) in 2013 (Figure 4).

The Wellington region had the highest level of public transport use (17.3%), and the second highest level of active transport use (15.2%). Auckland had the second highest rate of using public transport (8.3%). Nelson had the highest use of active transport (18.3%). Other regions with high rates of active transport use included West Coast (14.9%), Otago (14.5%), Marlborough (13.4%) and Tasman (13.4%).

By comparison, less than 10% of commuters used either active transport or public transport in Northland, Bay of Plenty and Southland.

Figure 4: Use of active or public transport among commuters, by regional council, 2013 (percentage of commuters)



Notes: 'Active transport' includes walking, jogging and cycling. 'Public transport' includes public bus and train.

Source: 2013 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings

DATA SOURCES

Data come from the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings (2001, 2006, 2013). For more information about this indicator, see the metadata sheet.

RELATED INDICATORS

Related environmental health indicators for transport, available from the EHINZ website (www.ehinz.ac.nz), include:

- Number of motor vehicles
- Household travel time by mode of transport
- Active transport to and from school
- Unmet need for GP services due to lack of transport
- Transport injury hospitalisations and deaths
- About transport and health (information factsheet).

REFERENCES

British Medical Association. (2012). *Healthy transport = healthy lives*. <http://bma.org.uk/transport>

Hamer, M., Chida, Y. (2008). Active commuting and cardiovascular risk: A meta-analytic review. *Preventive Medicine* 46:9–13.

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