

Public Transport

What this is about...

The continued reliance on the motor vehicle in New Zealand's six largest cities has created congestion pressures and affects the ease of travel in a region. Consequences include wasted time in travelling or moving goods, individual stress and frustration and even living and working in a local area because of the problems in getting about the region.

Greater use of public transport can have important effects on citizens' wellbeing, such as:

- a means of travel for those who can't afford a motor vehicle or those families that choose not to have an additional motor vehicle
- minimising the stress of congestion along highways and city roads
- reduced motor vehicle emissions of carbon monoxide
- a safer and cheaper public transport service resulting from economies of scale.

Current strategies, such as the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy, place a high importance on improving passenger transport and improving access by encouraging medium density housing around transport nodes.

This indicator highlights the use of different modes of public transport in each region. Data presented below measures the number of trips made not the number of patrons using public transport. It provides information about passenger preferences and trends. Public transport includes buses, trains and ferries provided by or licensed by regional authorities. This indicator also discusses citizens' perceptions of public transport.

What did we find ?

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT USE

A study of transport in New Zealand found that from 1991 to 1996 across Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury Regions:

- the use of buses decreased in each of the regions
- the use of trains reduced in the Wellington Region during that period
- the use of trains increased in the Auckland Region during that period.¹⁶⁷

NUMBER OF TRIPS MADE BY DIFFERENT FORMS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, BY REGION (1991 AND 1996)¹⁶⁸

	Auckland		Wellington		Canterbury	
	1991	1996	1991	1996	1991	1996
Buses	33,747,349	31,150,000	16,232,384	12,358,492	9,024,637	8,386,632
Trains	1,052,183	2,065,865	10,840,000	8,561,000	0	0
Ferries	1,238,773	1,580,357	120,000	120,000	28,999	27,226
Total	36,038,305	34,796,222	27,192,384	21,039,492	9,053,636	8,413,858

Data Source: Bachels, Newnam & Kenworthy 1999

¹⁶⁷ Bachels, Newnam and Kenworthy. 1999. Indicators of Urban Transport Efficiency in New Zealand's Main Cities.

¹⁶⁸ Data for Auckland Region is for 1991/92 and 1995/96; whereas data for Wellington and Canterbury regions are 1990/91 and 1995/96.

The table below indicates the total kilometres travelled in each region, by mode. Between 1991 and 1996:

- length of journeys by motor vehicle increased in each of the regions
- length of journeys by bus decreased in each of the regions
- length of journeys by train increased in Auckland, but decreased in Wellington.

KILOMETRES TRAVELLED (MILLION KILOMETRES), BY REGION (1991 AND 1996)

	Auckland		Wellington		Canterbury	
	1991 (km)	1996 (km)	1991 (km)	1996 (km)	1991 (km)	1996 (km)
Motor vehicle	7,450	9,335	2,813	3,106	2,627	3,065
Buses	239	216	91	69	56	52
Trains	17	28	207	196	0	0
Ferries	4	5	1	1	0	0
Total	7,710	9,584	3,112	3,372	2,683	3,117

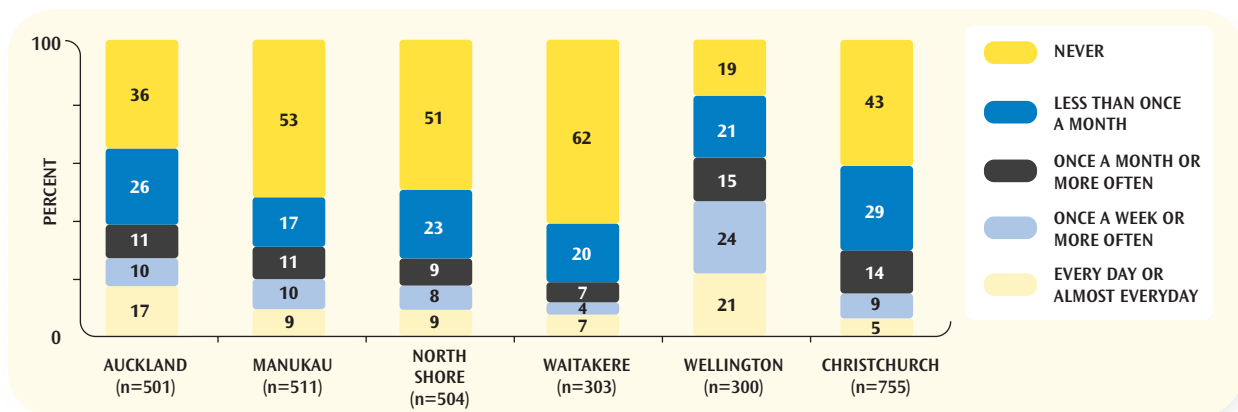
Data Source: Figures are derived from Bachels, Newnam & Kenworthy, 1999

FREQUENCY OF USE

Respondents to citizens' surveys undertaken in the six largest cities were asked to indicate how often they had used public transport in the previous twelve months. Compared with other cities, a high proportion of citizens in Auckland City and Wellington City indicated that they use public transport every day. Relatively low proportions of respondents to the Manukau, North Shore and Waitakere City surveys stated that they use public transport. The relatively higher figures for Auckland and Wellington Cities may be linked to the higher proportion of citizens who use public transport to travel to work in the central business district.

When asked why they do not use public transport, the most common response citizens gave was that they prefer to use their own car. Other reasons given included inconvenient destinations, inconvenient time tables, feeling that the car is more convenient, and no transport service available.

FREQUENCY OF USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT,¹⁶⁹ BY CITY (2000)



Data Source: Citizens' Surveys

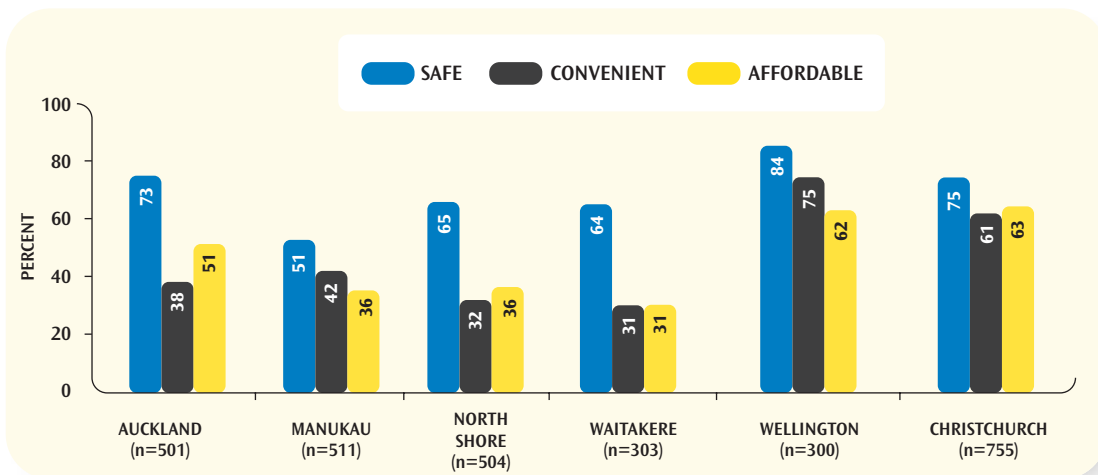
169 Respondents to the Christchurch survey were asked how often they had used public transport in the previous 12 months. Respondents to all other surveys were not provided with a time limit.

PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Respondents to the citizens' surveys were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed that public transport is safe, convenient and affordable. All respondents were asked these questions, regardless of whether or not they used public transport.¹⁷⁰

- Overall, relatively high proportions of respondents felt that public transport was safe, especially those in the cities of Auckland and Christchurch. However, respondents to the Manukau survey were less likely to agree with this statement.¹⁷¹
- Respondents from Wellington and Christchurch were more likely than respondents in Auckland cities to agree that public transport was convenient and affordable. In particular, three quarters of respondents from Wellington agreed public transport was convenient.
- Within the Auckland Region, respondents from Auckland City were more likely to agree that public transport is affordable. This result may well be influenced by that city's proximity to the central business district, in which many respondents may work. In line with this, relatively smaller proportions of residents from North Shore and Waitakere Cities agreed that public transport is affordable.
- Key reasons for dissatisfaction with public transport were timing, frequency and destination.

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO 'STRONGLY AGREE' OR 'AGREE' THAT PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS SAFE, CONVENIENT AND AFFORDABLE, BY CITY (2000)



Data Source: Citizens' Surveys

170 Quite significant proportions of respondents to all surveys indicated a "don't know" response to these three questions.

171 One quarter (27%) of respondents to the Manukau survey indicated a "don't know" response to this question.