

National travel survey 2021

Research material

The data of the national travel survey was collected during 2021 and it forms a statistically representative sample of the mobility of Finns over the age of 6. In total, more than 24,000 Finns participated in the study.

The 2021 study was conducted at a time when restrictions were placed on restaurants and gatherings of people in addition to recommendations for remote working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The restrictions had a significant impact on the mobility of people. For example, remote working and learning, limitations on public events, restrictions on restaurants and the avoidance of social contacts affected passenger traffic and the use of transportation services, which is reflected in the research results.

The research results of 2021 should be interpreted keeping in mind the background presented above. The results of the 2016 survey provide a basis for comparison regarding the movement of normal times.

Key figures of mobility

In 2021, Finns made an average of 2.3 domestic trips/person/day and traveled 34 kilometers/person/day on these trips. The total number of trips and the distance traveled is significantly lower compared to previous studies. Since the 1974 survey, the number of daily trips has remained close to three trips per person. The distance of trips has remained at around 40 kilometers since 1999.

Main mode of transportation	Number of trips (mil. trips)	Distance travelled (mil. km)
other	117	2,104
car, passenger	625	14,817
car, driver	1,993	38,785
rail	93	2,912
bus	181	2,256
cycling	332	1,288
walking	1,002	1,962

Yearly number of domestic trips and distance travelled by the main mode of transportation.

Survey year	Total trips (trips/person/day)	Distance travelled (km/person/day)	Total duration of trips (min/person/day)	Average distance of trips (km/trip)	Average duration of trips (min/trip)
2016	2.73	40.7	73.4	14.9	26.9
2021	2.28	33.6	67.0	14.8	29.4

Key figures of mobility in the surveys of 2016 and 2021.

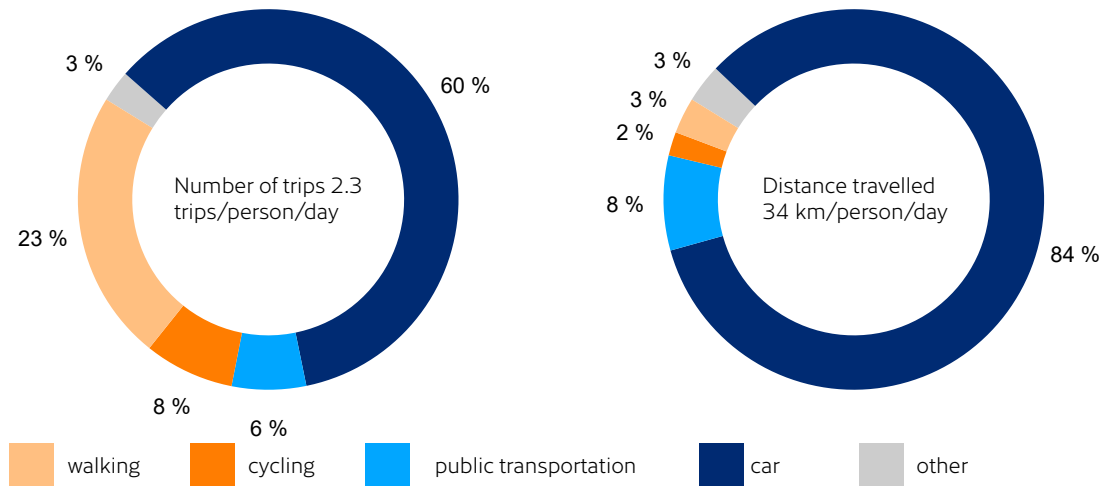
Modes of transportation

60% of all domestic trips were made by car, either as a driver or a passenger. The second most common mode of transportation was walking, with 23% of trips. The share of trips made by bicycle was 8% and those made by public transport 6%. There were no significant changes in the modal share of transportation compared to 2016.

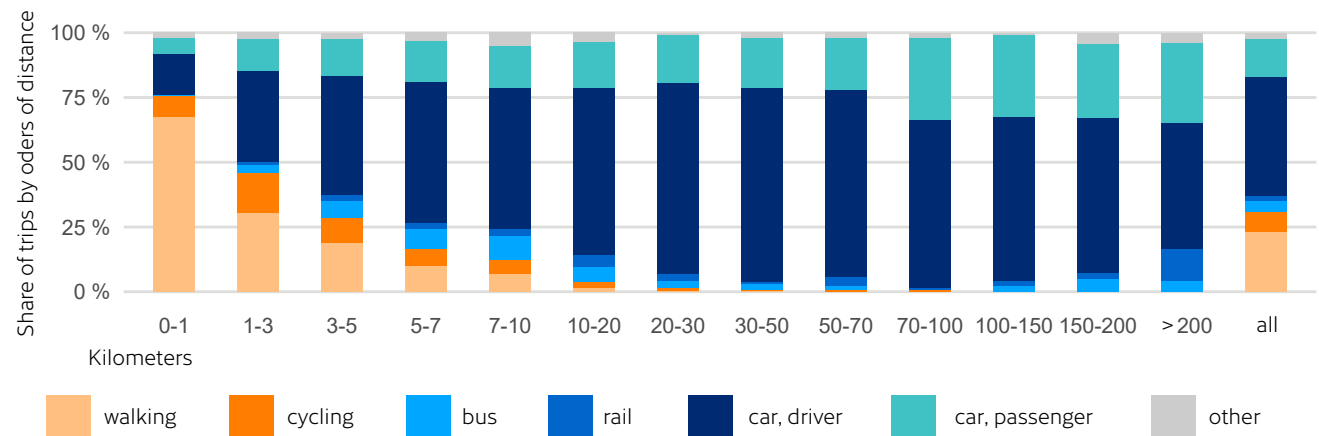
84% of the distance travelled was made by car as a driver or passenger. The share of distance travelled by walking and cycling was a total of 5% and by public transport 8%.

In the study, the modal share of trips varied greatly depending on the length of the trip. Most of all trips over 5 kilometers were made by car as the driver. The share of walking and cycling was highest on short trips: 68% of trips less than one kilometer were made on foot and 8% by bicycle, from trips of one to three kilometers the corresponding shares were 30% and 16%.

33% of all trips would have had an alternative mode of transportation. Respondents felt that there were alternatives most often for bicycle and train trips, and the least for trips made by car as a driver. Depending on the purpose of the trip, an alternative mode of transportation would have been most often possible for school, study and work trips.



The modal share of domestic trips by number of trips and distance travelled.



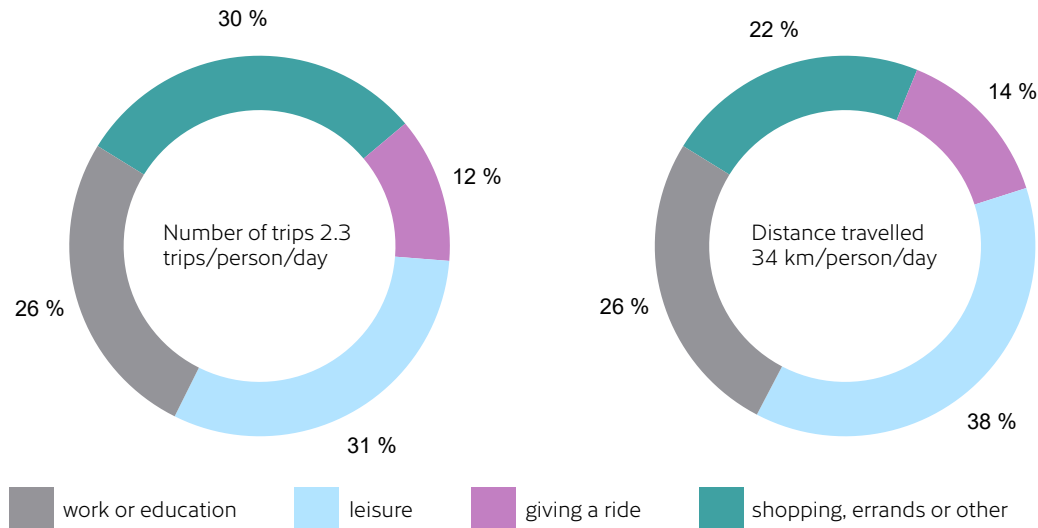
The modal shares of domestic trips by the distance of trips.

Purpose of trips

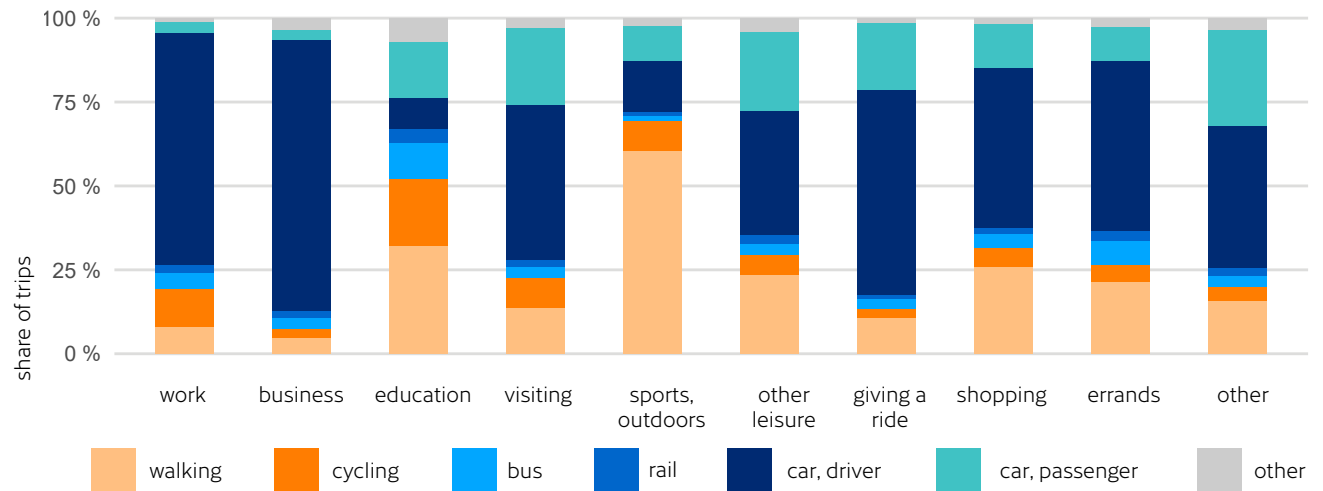
The purpose of a trip is determined by the main destination of the trip. In 2021, the most trips were made in the group of leisure trips. They accounted for 31% of all trips. Trips related to shopping and errands accounted for 30% and trips related to work or education accounted for 26% of all trips. Out of the distance travelled, leisure trips held the largest share of 38%.

In 2021, the number of trips and the distance travelled for business trips decreased only slightly compared to 2016. In 2021, the number of leisure trips and distance travelled on leisure trips decreased the most. Trips involving giving a ride was the only group of trips in which distance travelled increased slightly from 2016. This result might have been affected by a change of the question concerning trips giving a ride.

The purpose of the trip had a significant impact on which mode of transportation was chosen for the trip. More than half of the trips related to outdoor recreation and exercise were made on foot. The share of walking was also high for educational, shopping and other leisure trips. The shares of cycling and public transport of all trips were the largest in trips related to education. Most of the work and business trips as well as giving a ride were made by car, as well as about half of shopping, shopping and visiting trips.



The share of the number of trips and distance travelled by the purpose of trips.



Modal share of different groups of trips by their purpose.

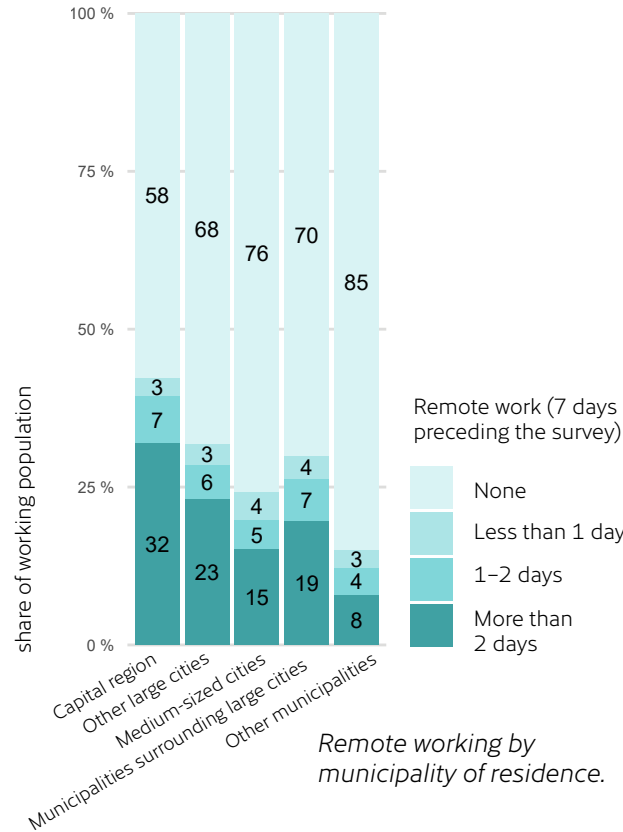
Remote work

Remote working was more common during the study than before. In 2021, 29% of working people who responded to the survey worked remotely during the seven days preceding the survey day, while the corresponding proportion in 2016 was 22%. The proportion of those who worked remotely for more than two days in 2021 was 20%, while it was only 5% in 2016.

The respondent's education influenced remote working: the higher the education, the higher the share of remote work. Those who completed primary and secondary education did the least amount of remote work during the previous seven days (13%) and those who completed doctoral degrees the most (78%).

The amount of remote working also varied by region. The most remote work was done in the capital region, where 42% of employees worked remotely during the previous seven days. In other large cities, the proportion of those who worked remotely was 32%, in the surrounding municipalities of large cities and small towns, 30%, in medium-sized cities 24% and in other municipalities 15%.

The impact of remote work on the total amount of mobility was very small in 2021, because people who worked more remotely compensated for the saved work trips with other trips, especially leisure trips.

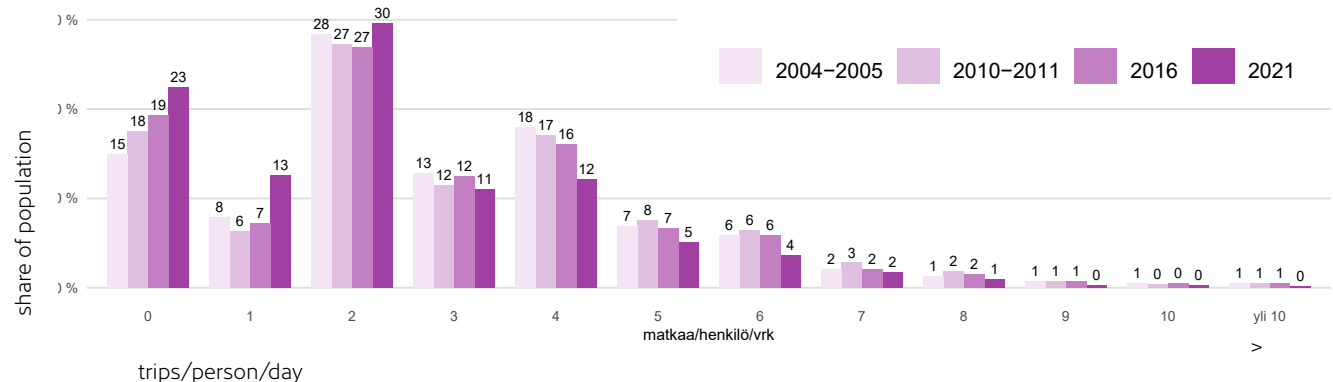


Immobility

In this study, immobility refers to a situation where a person did not make any trips during the study day.

Immobility increased by four percentage points from 2016. In 2021, a total of 23% of Finns were immobile during the survey day. In addition to the share of people who made no trips during the day, the share of people who made only one trip increased significantly: the share was 13% in 2021, compared to 7% before.

Immobility increased the most in the 65–74 age group (7 percentage points for men and 9 percentage points for women). Among those over 74, 38% of men and 44% of women were immobile.



Share of people by the number of daily domestic trips in the years 2004-2005, 2010-2011, 2016 and 2021.

Mobility by groups of municipalities

The grouping of municipalities, Finnish municipalities are divided into groups that are as similar as possible in terms of mobility.

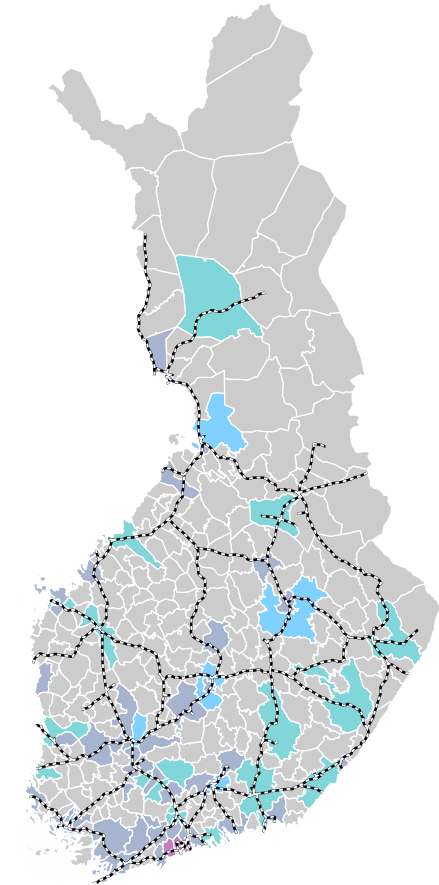
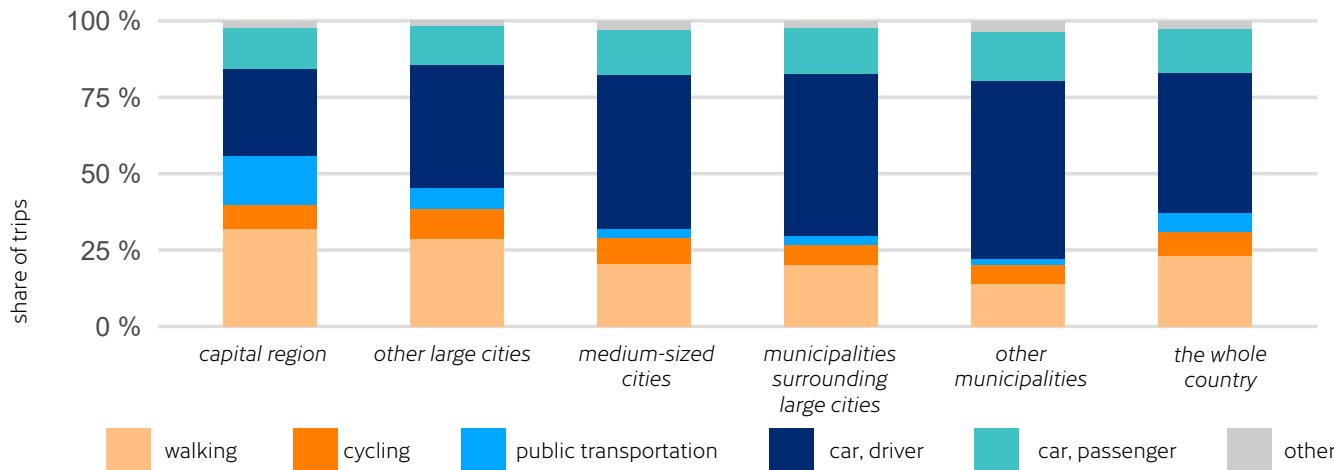
There was only very little variation in the total number of trips made by Finns who lived in different groups of municipalities. In 2021, the fewest trips were made in the capital region (2.2 trips/day) and the most in other large cities and in municipalities surrounding large cities (2.4 trips/day). Number of trips in 2021 were lower in all municipal groups than in 2016.

The greatest distance travelled in 2021 was in the group of other municipalities, 40 km/person/day, and the smallest in the capital region and in the group of other large cities, 29 km/person/day.

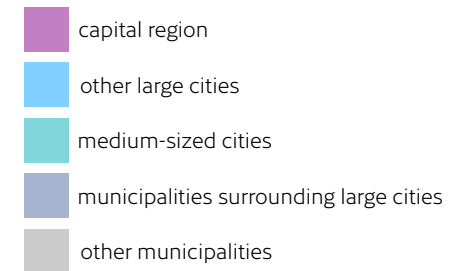
The total distance travelled decreased compared to 2016 in all groups of municipalities, the least in the capital region (-3 km/person/day) and the most in other large cities (-10 km/person/day).

The proportion of journeys made using sustainable means of transport was highest in the areas with the densest land use, i.e. the capital region and other large cities.

The share of distance travelled by car as a driver was more than half in all groups of municipalities. The largest share was in the group other municipalities, where 70% of the distance travelled was done as a car driver.



Source: NLS general map (5/2022), Statistics Finland 2021



The modal shares of domestic trips by groups of municipalities.

Research method

The 2021 national travel survey was carried out as a sample study. The sample was taken from the population information system of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and it represents people over the age of 6 living in Finland. The sample size was 25,000 in the national section and a total of 63,000 people in the regional samples. The survey response rate was 27%.

The study was carried out as a multi-method study. The answer options for the survey were an online form (cell phone and computer), a telephone interview and a letter form. The interviews were conducted in Finnish, Swedish and English. Answering online was also possible in Russian. 49% of the respondents answered online (on a computer or mobile device), 41% by phone and 11% by letter.

Reliability of results

The results of the sample survey contain uncertainties due to the sampling. If the research were to be repeated several times, the selected sample, the received answers and the generalized key figures would be slightly different each time. This variation and its importance are measured using margins of error. The confidence interval for the number of trips for each mode is presented below for a 95 percent confidence level.

The differences in the number of trips in 2016 and 2021 can be considered significant in relation to the margin of error for practically all modes of transportation. Only in the category of other modes of transportation the change fall within the margin of error. The distances travelled includes more variation and the margin of error is greater.

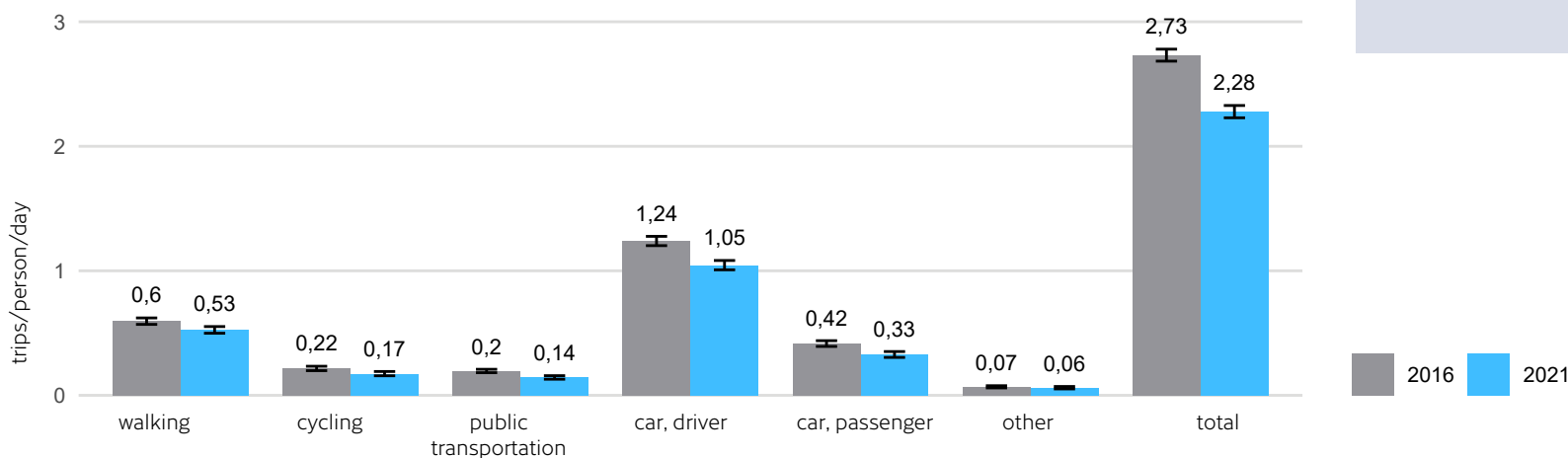
National travel survey

The national travel survey is a survey that describes the mobility of Finns quite comprehensively. It gives an overview of the mobility of Finns and demographic, regional and temporal differences. The survey has been conducted approximately every six years since 1974.

The results of the survey are used in decision-making regarding transport and in the planning of transport services and land use. In addition, the goal is to collect basic data as a basis for various studies and traffic modeling.

More information about the survey

More information about the survey and more material can be found at www.hlt.fi



The number of domestic trips in 2016 and 2021 as well as the confidence interval for 95% certainty.