

# Hands Up Scotland Survey 2017

## Statistical News Release (24 May 2018)

An Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

This statistical news release reports key results from the 2017 Hands Up Scotland Survey on mode of travel to schools and nurseries in Scotland. This document accompanies the Hands Up Scotland Survey 2017 National Summary Report and National Results tables.<sup>1</sup>



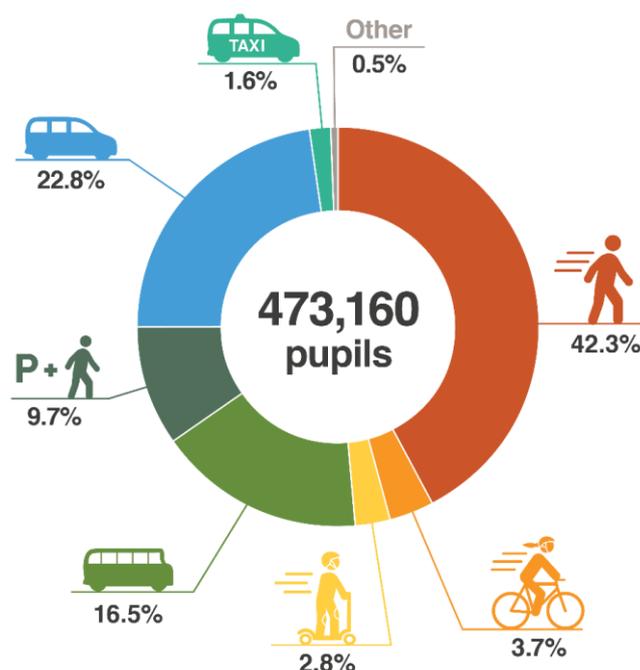
The annual Hands Up Scotland Survey is published by Sustrans as an Official Statistic in Scotland. The survey is funded by Transport Scotland to provide an accurate and up-to-date picture of how pupils travel to school. The survey is now in its tenth year.

The travel modes are categorised as follows:

- **Active travel:** walking, cycling and scooter/skate,
- **Public sustainable travel:** bus,
- **Multi-mode travel:** park and stride (driven part of the way by car and walk the rest),
- **Private motorised travel:** driven (car) and taxi.

## National results 2017

**Chart 1: National travel modes: proportion of participating pupils travelling by different modes (all school pupil responses excluding nursery children), 2017.<sup>2</sup>**



### Active travel

48.8% (230,756) of school pupils (state and independent schools combined) said they normally travel to school in an active way, with walking the most common mode of travel to school.

- 42.3% of school pupils (200,032) said they normally walk to school.
- 3.7% of school pupils (17,617) said they normally cycle to school.
- 2.8% of school pupils (13,107) said they normally scooter or skate to school.

### Public sustainable travel

16.5% of school pupils (78,175) said they normally travel to school by bus.

### Multi-mode travel

9.7% of school pupils (46,087) said they normally park and stride to school.

### Private motorised travel

24.5% of school pupils (115,780) said they normally travel to school using private motorised transport:

- 22.8% of school pupils (108,107) said they are normally driven to school in a car.
- 1.6% of school pupils (7,673) said they normally travel to school by taxi.

## Response rates 2017

### School response rates

In 2017, a total of 3,234 schools and nurseries took part in the survey from all 32 local authorities in Scotland. 2,009 were schools and 1,225 were nurseries. Of this, 1,989 state schools (primary, secondary and SEN), participated which equates to 79.1% of all registered state schools in Scotland.

Between 2016 and 2017, there has been a 1.4 percentage point increase in state school (primary, secondary and SEN) pupil response rate. The total number of state schools, responding to the survey has increased from 1,923 in 2016 to 1,989 in 2017, but remains lower than the maximum of 2,045 schools in 2015.

### Pupil response rates

In total, 515,005 nursery children and school pupils took part the survey. 473,160 were school pupils and 41,845 were nursery children. 466,956 state school (primary, secondary and SEN) pupils participated, which equates to 67.8% of all state school pupils enrolled in Scotland.

## National results 2017: by school type

Annual results highlight the extent of variation in travel behaviour between different school types and care should be taken when interpreting results across school types due to considerable variation in pupil response numbers. Due to rounding, row percentages may not always add up to 100.0%, and category totals may not always add up to the values presented for individual travel modes.

### Nursery schools

- 42.3% of nursery children reported normally travelling to school by an active mode.
- 3.1% of nursery children reported normally travelling to school by public sustainable transport.
- 4.0% of nursery children reported normally travelling to school using multi-mode travel.
- 50.3% of nursery children reported normally travel to school using private motorised transport.

### All state school (primary, secondary and SEN) comparison

- Primary school pupils reported the highest level of active travel to school of all school types, at 53.1%, followed by secondary school pupils at 42.7%.
- The highest level of bus usage is reported in secondary schools, at 34.5% of pupils compared to 32.8% of SEN pupils and just 6.3% among primary school pupils.
- 12.6% of primary school pupils reported park and stride as their usual mode of travelling to school, compared to 4.5% of secondary school pupils.
- Secondary school pupils reported the lowest levels of travel to school using private motorised transport of all school types, at 17.3%, compared to 27.8% of primary school pupils and 60.3% of SEN school pupils.

**Table 1: National travel modes: by school type (state schools), 2017.<sup>3</sup>**

School type	Walk	Cycle	Scooter /Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
Nursery	35.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.1%	4.0%	49.3%	1.0%	0.4%	<b>41,845</b>
Primary	43.7%	5.2%	4.3%	6.3%	12.6%	26.2%	1.5%	0.2%	<b>298,717</b>
Secondary	41.3%	1.3%	0.2%	34.5%	4.5%	16.1%	1.2%	1.0%	<b>166,404</b>
SEN	2.8%	*	0.0%	32.8%	*	4.1%	56.1%	3.9%	<b>1,835</b>

### State and independent school comparison

- Pupils in state schools reported higher active travel levels (49.2%) compared to independent schools pupils (17.0%).
- A lower percentage of state school pupils (16.5%) reported normally travelling to school by bus, compared to 19.8% of independent school pupils.
- 9.7% of state school pupils reported travelling to school using multiple modes, compared to 14.7% of independent school pupils.
- A lower percentage of state school pupils normally travel using private motorised modes at 24.2% compared to 47.2% of independent school pupils. 22.5% of state school pupils reported normally travelling to school by car compared to 46.5% of independent school pupils. However, more state school pupils (1.6%) travel to school by taxi, compared to 0.7% of independent school pupils.

**Table 2: National travel modes: by school type (state schools and independent schools), 2017.<sup>3</sup>**

School type	Walk	Cycle	Scooter /Skate	Bus	Park & Stride	Driven (car)	Taxi	Other	Total
State schools	42.7%	3.8%	2.8%	16.5%	9.7%	22.5%	1.6%	0.5%	<b>466,956</b>
Independent	14.1%	1.4%	1.5%	19.8%	14.7%	46.5%	0.7%	1.3%	<b>6,204</b>

## National results comparison: 2008-2017

As 2010 was the first year all local authorities took part, this is used as the baseline year for the purpose of analysing trends. Percentage point change has been calculated based on the rounded figures presented in this statistical news release. For reference, with regard to national all school trends, a 0.1 percentage point change is equivalent to roughly 500 pupils.

### Active travel

Since the survey started in 2008, active travel to school has remained the most frequently reported mode of travel to school across Scotland.

- Overall, there has been a steady decline in school pupils reporting walking to school, from 45.8% in 2010 to 42.3% in 2017.
- The survey has recorded an increasing trend in cycling amongst school pupils, from 2.8% in 2010 to the highest recorded levels of 3.7% in 2017.
- The percentage of pupils who say they normally scooter or skate to school increased from 0.7% in 2010 to 2.8% in 2013, where it has remained fairly constant, fluctuating between 2.8% and 2.9%. In 2017, 2.8% of pupils said they normally scooter or skate to school.

### Public sustainable travel

Overall, bus use has decreased from 18.2% in 2010 to 16.5% in 2017. This is the lowest ever reported bus use, with a 1.3 percentage point decrease in bus use between 2015 and 2016, and a further decrease in 2017.

### Multi-mode travel

The percentage of pupils normally travelling to school by park and stride has increased from 7.4% in 2010 to 9.7% in 2017. Between 2010 and 2015 park and stride to school rose slowly to 7.8%. Between 2015 and 2016, this increased by 1.5 percentage points (to 9.3% in 2016), and has increased by a further 0.4 percentage points in 2017.

### Private motorised travel

Levels of private motorised transport use have fluctuated slightly over the last eight years, from a low of 23.0% in 2013 to a joint high of 24.5% in 2010 and 2017.

- The proportion of pupils being driven to school in 2017 is similar to 2010 levels, at 22.8% and 22.9% respectively. However, levels have fluctuated year on year. No clear trend has emerged, with levels ranging between a low of 21.4% in 2013 and a high 22.9% in 2010.
- Taxi use is the least frequently reported of the motorised travel modes. Whilst levels appeared to be increasing, with a high of 1.8% reported in 2016, this has returned to a low of 1.6% in 2017, which is fairly consistent with previous years.

**Table 3: National travel categories: all schools (excluding nursery) 2008 – 2017.**

Year	Active travel	Public sustainable travel	Multi-mode travel	Private motorised travel	Other	Total
2008	51.8%	18.2%	6.1%	23.4%	0.5%	<b>396,377</b>
2009	49.9%	18.1%	6.7%	24.9%	0.4%	<b>415,804</b>
2010	49.3%	18.2%	7.4%	24.5%	0.5%	<b>439,401</b>
2011	49.9%	18.2%	7.5%	24.0%	0.3%	<b>427,104</b>
2012	49.7%	18.2%	7.8%	23.9%	0.5%	<b>457,488</b>
2013	50.3%	18.8%	7.5%	23.0%	0.4%	<b>467,397</b>
2014	50.4%	17.7%	7.8%	23.5%	0.5%	<b>487,147</b>
2015	49.7%	17.9%	7.8%	24.1%	0.4%	<b>480,161</b>
2016	49.3%	16.6%	9.3%	24.1%	0.6%	<b>458,145</b>
2017	48.8%	16.5%	9.7%	24.5%	0.5%	<b>473,160</b>

## Technical Notes

### Data collection

Data collection for the Hands Up Scotland Survey occurs on an annual basis in the second week of September. In 2017 data collection took place between 11th and 15th September. In 2018 data collection will take place between 10th and 14th September.

All 32 local authorities in Scotland are invited to take part in the Hands Up Scotland Survey. The survey is designed to record information about any and all pupils enrolled in nursery, primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools in Scotland.

This approach is designed to produce a large national dataset which can be used to examine information on mode of travel to school in detail at a national, local authority and school level as well as by school type and year group.

Pupils of primary and secondary school age are asked to respond to the Hands Up Scotland Survey themselves. Assistance may be provided to nursery or SEN school pupils by a parent, guardian or member of school staff when responding to the survey, depending on the level of support required.

### Response rates

There are limitations to the comparability of data across years and school types; although survey design and methodology have remained consistent, response rates vary considerably over the 10 years that the Hands Up Scotland Survey has been conducted, and across school types. Survey receipt and response rates as a percentage of equivalent schools in Scotland and equivalent Scottish school roll are calculated using the Scottish Government Education Statistics. Data on both the number of schools and their pupil roll is available for state primary, secondary and SEN schools from the Scottish Government. Pupil roll numbers are not published for state nursery or independent schools in Scotland.

Survey receipt and response rates as a percentage of Scottish/LA school roll and as a percentage of all schools in Scotland/LA are calculated using Scottish Government Education Statistics. As above this is only available for state primary, secondary and SEN schools. It is therefore not possible to calculate these receipt or response rates from nursery or independent school types.

### School type

‘All state schools’ includes primary, secondary and SEN schools only.

‘All schools’ includes primary, secondary, SEN and independent schools only.

Nursery data is presented separately as the number of nursery school respondents has more than tripled since data was first collected.

## Interpreting results

The aggregated national-level results are not necessarily based on the same pupils each year as the same local authorities/schools/pupils might not respond to the survey each year. The survey data is not weighted to take this into account. This may have implications for year on year comparison; particular caution should be applied when attempting to draw conclusions from small percentage point changes. For further information regarding school participation please refer to Table 1.5 Local authority response rates: number of schools surveyed, and Table 1.6 Local authority response rates: number of schools returning data, in the Hands Up Scotland Survey National Results data tables, available from Sustrans' website, available at:

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

Where the number of responses is low (totalling less than 100), care should be taken when interpreting results. Moreover, fields with a small number of responses may see large changes in percentage between years.

A number of variables may impact on travel behaviour from year to year (e.g. weather conditions, school mergers, closures and relocations) as well as policies and schemes introduced by central and local government or individual schools. Therefore, caution should be applied when seeking to understand annual variations.

As the Hands Up Scotland Survey is carried out over a one week period, weather conditions may differ considerably from year to year. It should be noted that weather conditions have an impact on travel choices and may influence pupil response to the survey, although the phrasing of the survey question aims to overcome this limitation as much as possible.

Due to rounding, row percentages may not always add up to 100.0%, and category totals may not always add up to the values presented for individual travel modes.

In 2008, the first year of the survey, Sustrans Scotland offered a prize draw as an incentive for school participation.

In 2013, Sustrans Scotland offered a prize draw as an incentive to receive responses from all year groups. Between 2012 and 2013, the percentage of state schools responding to the survey increased from 77.0% to 78.7%. However, it is not possible to ascertain whether a proportion of these schools were encouraged by the incentive or whether this increase in school responses was the continuation of an overall trend. In 2016, an online survey platform was made available to schools, in addition to sending paper survey forms to local authority officers for manual data entry. Availability of the online survey platform continued in 2017 and local authority officers decided which method was most suitable to offer to schools in their area. The majority of local authorities opted to utilise the online survey platform but some continued with manual data entry by collecting paper survey forms from schools. Between 2015 and 2016, the percentage of state schools responding to the survey decreased from 81.1% to 76.0%. However, response rates recovered in 2017, increasing to 79.1%, which is more in line with previous survey years. It is not possible to ascertain whether this initial decrease in response rates was a result of the change in data collation method, or other unrelated factors.

It is not possible to ascertain whether the survey mode options were read out in the same order in each school or class that participated between 2008 and 2015, as the mode options presented on the survey form were tabulated. The order of presentation was consistent between 2008 and 2012, and 2013 to 2015, but inconsistent between these two time periods. From 2016, the modes have been listed, removing any ambiguity. It is not possible to ascertain whether any observed differences in mode share between these years were as a result of these changes, or other unrelated factors.

Percentage point change has been calculated based on the rounded figures presented in this summary report. If users wish to calculate percentage point change based on unrounded figures, please refer to the relevant tables in the Hands Up Scotland Survey National Results data tables, available from Sustrans' website, available at:

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

## Confidentiality

Where a percentage represents a value of between one and four pupils, it has been suppressed to maintain anonymity of respondents and replaced with an asterisk (\*). Where suppressed data is included in the mode category calculation, the value for that category has also been suppressed.

## Official Statistics Publication

The Hands Up Scotland Survey has been designated an Official Statistic in Scotland by Parliamentary Order and is produced in line with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The code covers a range of measures, such as relevance, integrity, quality, accessibility, value for money and freedom from political influence.

A Parliamentary Order was passed designating Sustrans as Official Statistics Providers as of 1st June 2012 prior to the publication of Hands Up Scotland Survey 2011 results. The primary aim of Official Statistics in Scotland is to provide an

accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful picture of the economy and society to support the formulation and monitoring of economic and social policies by government and others.

More information on the standards of Official Statistics in Scotland is available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/About>

## Enquiries

For media enquiries relating to the information contained in this, or any other Hands Up Scotland Survey documents, please contact Sustrans' Press Office on 0131 346 3010 or email at [press@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:press@sustrans.org.uk)

Non-media enquiries about Hands Up Scotland Survey should be made to Sustrans' Hands Up Scotland Survey team, Sustrans Research & Monitoring Unit, 2 Cathedral Square, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5DD or email:

[HandsUpScotland@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:HandsUpScotland@sustrans.org.uk)

Where users wish to undertake more detailed analyses for a specific project and these documents do not provide the required information or format, a data request may be submitted. To submit a data request, please read the information and download the data request form at:

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-scotland-survey-data-request>

Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit assesses the impacts of Sustrans' work and evaluates the interventions of partners and clients across the UK, including extensive work with schools and young people. More information is available at:

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-services/what-we-do/research-monitoring-and-evaluation>

## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup> Documents available at: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

<sup>2</sup> Table 2.1 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>

<sup>3</sup> Table 2.3 in supplementary National Results Excel file available to download from: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/hands-up-scotland-survey>