

Cars: Private v Public Interest

1

Examine the data on the way people travelled to work in 1958 and 1998. What are the main changes over this 40 year period and what factors may have brought about these changes? Discuss your views with the rest of the group.



2

Read the data relating to car ownership. Compare the trends between the regions with respect to the number of cars per household. Can you suggest any reasons for the differences between these areas:
a) at present? b) over time?

3

What are the advantages and disadvantages of rising car use from the viewpoint of: a) car users b) society as a whole?
Which is the most efficient for society: a) private cars, b) buses, c) trams/subways?

4

Devise a plan to cope with the expected changes in car use. Is there a role for mass transport e.g. buses, trains?
Evaluate the plan from the viewpoint of: a) car users, b) businesses c) government expenditure and income.

5

Carry out a data collecting exercise of your own about :
a) How the members of your family travel to work and car ownership.
b) Carry out a similar survey by asking some of your neighbours and teachers the same questions.
Explain to those questioned the reasons for your survey and mention that there is a similar question on the census form on April 29th, 2001.

Citizenship 1 | Activity sheet
Citizenship 1 | Teachers' notes

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Theme Cars and travel to work as a community concern.

This unit provides information on transport trends. It contains data on car ownership and use, and on the methods of transport that people use to get to work. The accompanying activities focus upon the decisions that have to be made to manage transport policy in the interests of the whole community.



The 2001 Census includes the following transport related questions:

- How many cars or vans are owned, or available for use, by one or more members of your household?
- How do you usually travel to work?

The answers to these, when they are collated, will provide valuable information for government decision making on transport issues.

Curriculum context

While designed to meet the new Citizenship requirements at Key Stages 3 and 4, the unit can be used in PSHE, Economics, Geography or Politics.

Classroom ideas

Introduction

A suitable introduction to the activities would be to collate information on how students travel to school and the time taken to do so. This could open into a brainstorm to identify students' awareness of transport problems.

Activities

- The activity sheet is provided as a focus for group work. Students can work their way through the questions as a prelude to presenting their answers to the whole class and discussing the issues that arise.
- An alternative is to set up a group task based upon working out a transport master plan for the local area and then to subject the proposals to a mock public enquiry. This provides an opportunity to develop the language and to identify the social costs and social benefits of alternative transport policies, and to assess the impact on different groups (e.g. car owners, pedestrians, businesses). The role that pressure groups and mass action campaigns play in our society could also be discussed in the context of transport and fuel.

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What does the census ask about transport?

The census asks households to record the number of cars or vans they either own or have access to.

This includes any company cars or vans that are available for private use by members of the family.

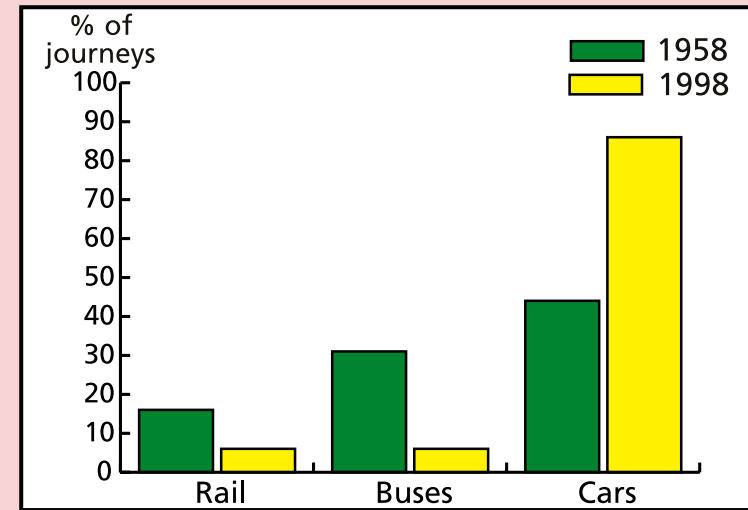
In addition the census asks us to record how we travel to our place of work each day.



Source: Public Record Office

Travelling to work

Changing trends in transport from 1958 to 1998.



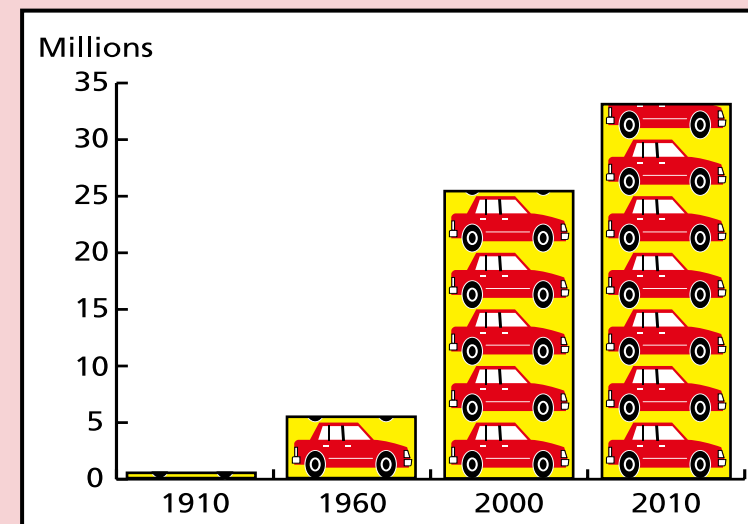
Source: Social Trends



Source: Public Record Office

More and more cars

Total car ownership (including projected figures).



Source: Social Trends

Why is this information useful to the government?

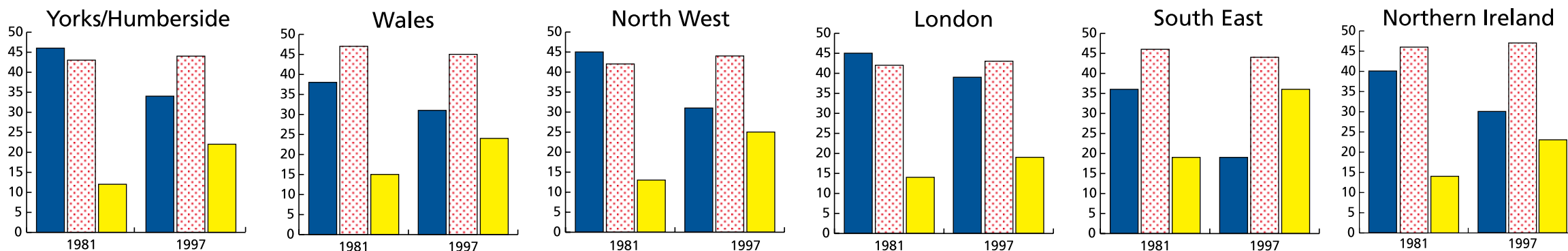
The census data collected on transport and travel tells the government and planning authorities about the trends in vehicle ownership. As the census asks everyone the same questions at the same time it provides a comprehensive picture of transport patterns throughout the UK.

This data is extremely important for planning government policy and allocating money for public spending. It helps with the planning of roads and public transport services on a national and local basis.



Trends in vehicle ownership

Percentage of households.



Source: Regional Trends