

8 May 2008

Coverage
United Kingdom



UK regions reveal their green credentials

Regional Trends 40

Differences in the way the UK countries and the regions of England contribute to our impact on the environment are revealed in the new issue* of *Regional Trends* released today by the Office for National Statistics.

For example, recycling has increased strongly across all regions in the four years from 2002/03 to 2005/06. Households in the East of England recycled 34 per cent of their waste in 2005/06, the highest of any region and almost double the rate of recycling in 2002/03.

The North East has recycled the lowest proportion of household waste in each year from 2002/03. Nevertheless, the North East is also the region that has seen the greatest improvement in this time with a trebling of the proportion of waste recycled.

Overall, the amount of household waste has remained broadly the same over the four years from 2002/03 to 2005/06. London produces the least waste per household per week at 21kg per week in 2005/06.

By contrast, Northern Ireland households generate the most with 26kg per week, reflecting the larger average household size in Northern Ireland than in Great Britain.

The largest reduction has been in the North East which has reduced its waste per household every year from 2002/03, a total reduction of 6 per cent.

Regional Trends seeks to contribute to decision making at national, local and European level, and to inform debate about the current state of the nation. It brings together data from a wide range of sources, both from within government and outside, to give a comprehensive statistical picture of the countries and regions of the United Kingdom.

Issued by

Office for National Statistics
Government Buildings
Cardiff Road
Newport
NP10 8XG

Contact

Media Office 0845 604 1858

www.statistics.gov.uk

Other 'green' indicators show that people in London, walked the furthest and cycled the furthest in 2005/06 with an average distance travelled of 230 miles and 50 miles respectively. Cycling distance has increased by 43 per cent in London since 2003/04 whereas it has decreased by 21 per cent in the West Midlands.

However, the number of licensed cars in Great Britain grew steadily across the ten-year period 1996 to 2006 to just under 28 million. During this time, London had only a 9 per cent increase, the smallest amongst the English regions, while the North East and East Midlands had the largest increases with 30 per cent. The average increase for England was 24 per cent.

New car registrations in 2006 were, on average, 10 per cent less than in 2001 with London showing the most marked decrease with a 25 per cent reduction.

During the period 2003/04 to 2005/06 the average distance travelled by person by car increased by over 3 per cent to nearly 5,900 miles per year. People in the South West travelled the furthest, an average of 7,100 miles in 2005/06, which represents an increase of 1 per cent over the time period.

The East Midlands, however, had the largest percentage decrease with over 7 per cent. People in London travelled just over 3,100 miles in 2005/06 by car, the lowest by far across the regions and this represents a decrease of 2 per cent since 2003/04.

The distance travelled by car far exceeds the distance travelled by any other means of transport. However, there have been notable increases in rail travel across Great Britain during the period 2003/04 to 2005/06.

During this time, the average distance travelled by rail increased by just under 28 per cent with Yorkshire and The Humber having the largest percentage increase of nearly 93 per cent followed by the East Midlands with a 73 per cent increase. The West Midlands was the only region that saw a reduction in the distance people travelled by rail - of nearly 37 per cent.

Air travel has increased substantially over the last few years, the largest increase being at Stansted Airport which had 23.7 million passengers in 2006, representing an increase of 73 per cent from 2001. The regional airports of Liverpool, Bristol and Southampton have all seen a doubling of passenger numbers in this time.

Regional Trends, marking its 40th edition, shows the diversity that exists across the UK, both between and within regions. It also contains three feature articles, taking an in-depth look at three examples of how regional data can be valuable, for example to policymakers or researchers.

Other key statistics from *Regional Trends* include:

- The North East saw its population fall by 3.1 per cent, while the South West increased its population by 16.9 per cent, over the period between 1981 and 2006. The UK average increase was 7.5 per cent.
- Death rates continued to decline in all areas, and in 2005 there were 9.7 deaths per 1,000 population for the UK as a whole ranging from 7.1 in London to 10.8 in the North East.
- Cancer remains a relatively common cause of death, accounting for over one quarter of each region's mortality in 2005.
- Median gross weekly full-time earnings for men in London reached £596 in April 2007, but their female counterparts earned £90 per week less at £506. In other areas of the UK earnings for both men and women were lower – Northern Ireland had the lowest figure for men at £425 per week, while £345 in the North East was the lowest for women.

****Regional Trends 40***

Palgrave Macmillan £45. ISBN 978 1 4039 9386 1

Available free on the National Statistics website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/regionaltrends40

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. All the data presented in *Regional Trends* have been released previously and are brought together in *Regional Trends*.
2. Separate news releases are also published today on all the separate regions of England: [North East](#), [North West](#), [Yorkshire and The Humber](#), [East Midlands](#), [West Midlands](#), [East London](#), [South East](#) and [South West](#).
3. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
4. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. Not all the statistics contained within this publication are national statistics because it is a compilation from various sources. © Crown copyright 2008.