




Youth on the Move

Young People and Transport
in the 21st Century

What can governments do to involve young people in transport planning decisions?

What measures will shape young peoples' travel choices?

What data is needed to capture youth mobility needs?



Collect data on young people's mobility patterns, needs and expectations to enhance policies and planning

Providing decision makers with robust data on young people's travel patterns, choices and views on transport will help better calibrate transport policies.

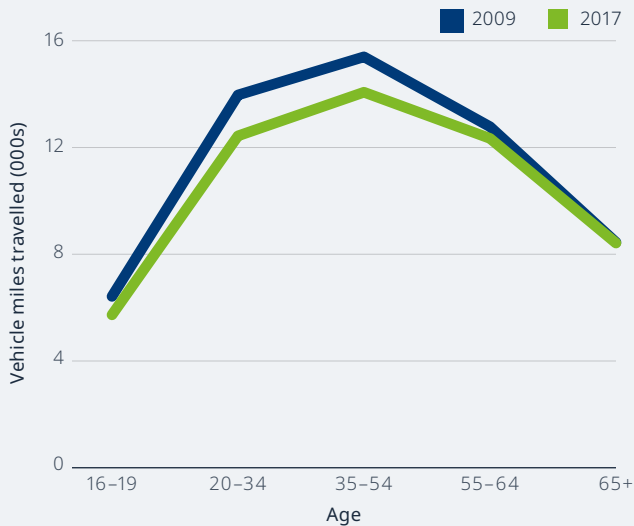
National travel surveys should collect data disaggregated by age, gender, income and other demographic factors. Such data collected consistently, at regular intervals, will provide nuanced insights and help to assess the impact of policies that target youth mobility.

While one-off surveys provide insights, such surveys cannot be used to analyse trends over time. Qualitative data must also be collected to differentiate between the travel patterns, preferences and safety concerns of young men and women. This added perspective will enable inclusive and effective policies.

Figure 1

Young and less car-dependent?

Average annual vehicle miles travelled by age group in the United States, 2009 versus 2017



Source: US DOT, 2017; 2019



Include young people in transport planning and decision-making processes

Young people should be actively involved in planning and decisions on transport-related issues. Creating youth advisory committees and engaging youth organisations will ensure their voices are heard, and their specific needs are considered.

While there are barriers to youth participation, it could improve decision-making and, in turn, improve facilities and services for young people.

Understanding and addressing the mobility challenges young people face requires proactively engaging youth from the national to the local level.

Youth advisory committees should also collaborate with sectors linked to transport, such as health, education, environment, housing and urban planning, to ensure the best outcome for youth mobility.

Proactively shape youth mobility behaviour for long-term sustainable transport outcomes

Car dependency is declining among young people in high-income countries. In low- and middle-income countries, young people travel on foot, on bicycles and by informal or formal shared transport.

Policy makers should seize this opportunity to shape long-term sustainable travel behaviour by investing in well-connected public transport services, a dense network of shared mobility options and well-developed walking and cycling infrastructure.

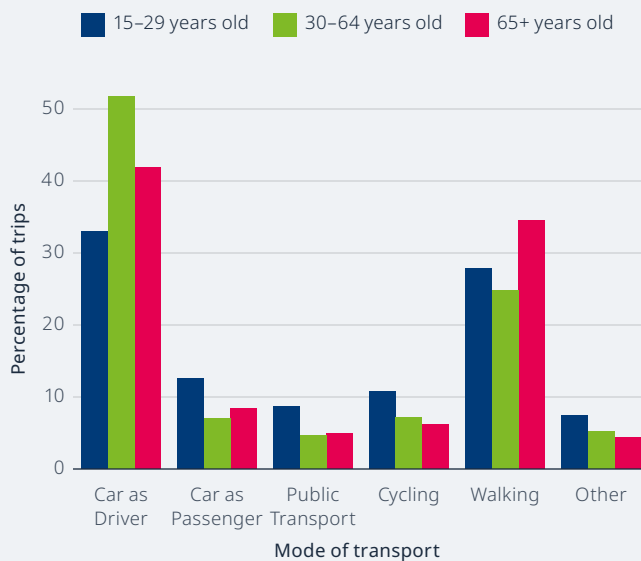
Additionally, offering tax credits to cycling commuters, subsidies for purchasing e-bikes and subsidies on public transport can support youth mobility as young people typically have lower incomes and struggle to cover rising transport costs.

Young people use multimodal transport more than other age groups, and policy makers can leverage this. Providing alternatives to car-based lifestyles is essential to behavioural change.

Figure 2

The trips we take

Distribution of the number of trips by main travel mode by age group in European Union member countries (EU27), 2022



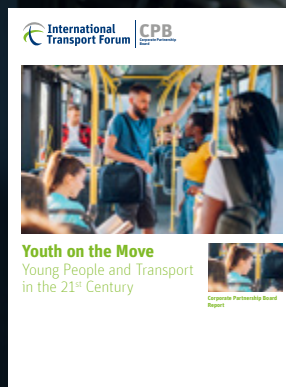
Adopt soft measures to influence young people's travel choices

"Soft" measures that complement investments in infrastructure and incentives such as tax credits or subsidies can increase an individual's inclination to walk, bike or use public transport.

Policy makers can shape youth mobility from an early age through educational campaigns and training programmes encouraging active mobility and public transport use.

Promotional events should position sustainable transport options as healthy, enjoyable and trendy to influence young people's choices.

Schools should be accessible by walking and cycling as well as by school bus. For example, policy makers could consider introducing so-called "walking school buses", where a group of children walk to school supervised by adults.



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This report addresses the absence of young people's views in transport policy formulation. To better align solutions with challenges, reviewing young citizens' travel patterns and behaviours, identifying their expectations regarding mobility and life opportunities, and investigating their mobility-relevant experiences, capabilities and skills are essential.



Available for download:

www.itf-oecd.org/youth-move-transport

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