



# PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

## Active Travel

Scottish Government Debate, 14:00 on Wednesday 7 January 2015

### Key points

- We welcome the Scottish Government's decision in this debate to draw attention to recent advances in active travel policy.
- However, as can be seen from the data presented below, Scotland continues to lag far behind the true success stories in active travel development across Europe.
- Investment in active travel by the Scottish Government, and Scotland's Local Authorities, remains far too low for the transformational change in conditions for walking and cycling that are called for in the Government's vision for active travel.

### 1. Trends in walking and cycling since 1999

- 1.1. The trend in commuter **walking** rates in Scotland over the last ten years is flat, with the rate at 13.2% in both 2001–02 and 2012–13. Fortunately the trend in the four largest cities is positive, with walking rates increasing since 1999–2000, reaching their highest in Edinburgh at 23.4% in 2012–13.<sup>1</sup>

Commuter Walking Rates in Scotland 1999–2013

	1999/2000	2001/2002	2003/2004	2005/2006	2007/2008	2009/2010	2012/2013
<b>Aberdeen</b>	18.0%	17.9%	14.8%	14.0%	14.0%	20.1%	21.3%
<b>Dundee</b>	15.0%	14.6%	17.0%	20.0%	18.6%	18.6%	16.5%
<b>Edinburgh</b>	17.0%	17.2%	18.0%	17.9%	20.1%	19.1%	23.4%
<b>Glasgow</b>	14.0%	12.6%	12.7%	15.2%	14.1%	13.9%	14.0%
<b>Scotland</b>	13.7%	13.2%	12.8%	13.4%	12.2%	12.9%	13.2%

- 1.2. **Cycling** rates remain very low in Scotland. The most notable improvement is in Edinburgh which most recently achieved a 6.6% share of commutes. This is within reach of the Scottish Government's 10% cycle share target for 2020 and is helped by the council's policy to increase its investment in cycling by 1% a year from a start of 5% in 2012. Aberdeen and Glasgow also have a positive cycle rate trend, but more needs to be done in these cities and Scotland as a whole to accelerate the increase in cycling, especially if the Government's 10% target is to be met. Unfortunately the trend in Dundee is going the wrong way.

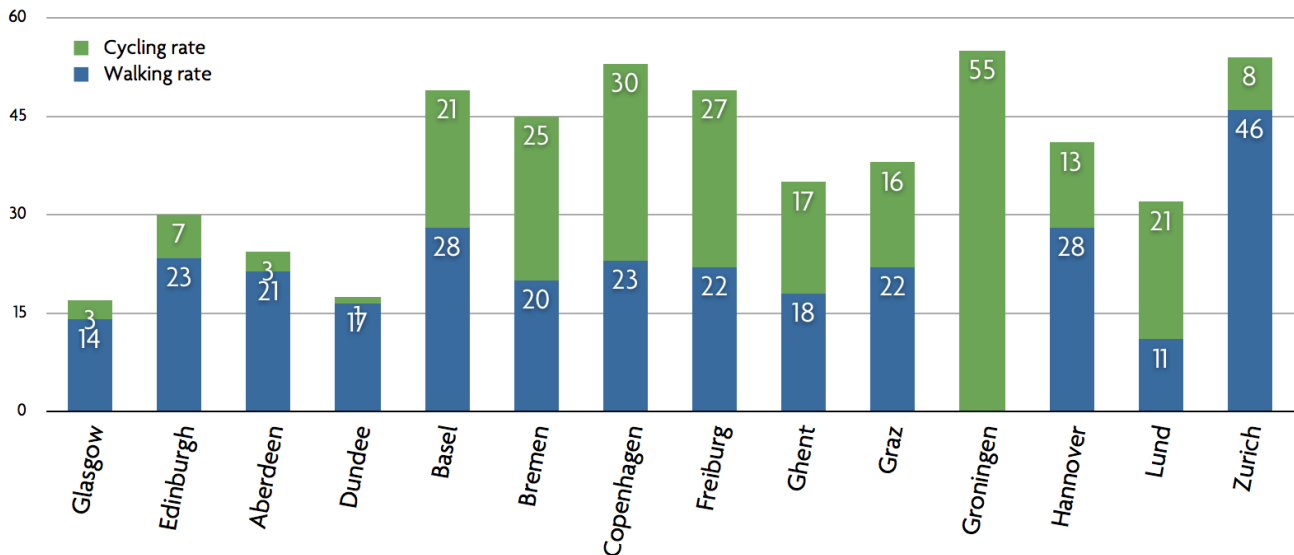
Commuter Cycling Rates in Scotland 1999–2013

	1999/2000	2001/2002	2003/2004	2005/2006	2007/2008	2009/2010	2012/2013
<b>Aberdeen</b>	2.0%	1.5%	0.8%	2.4%	3.5%	3.6%	3.0%
<b>Dundee</b>	1.0%	2.3%	1.8%	1.4%	2.0%	1.1%	1.0%
<b>Edinburgh</b>	3.0%	4.1%	4.3%	3.4%	6.0%	7.3%	6.6%
<b>Glasgow</b>	1.0%	1.7%	1.6%	2.3%	2.2%	2.9%	2.9%
<b>Scotland</b>	1.7%	1.5%	1.7%	1.8%	2.0%	2.3%	2.3%

## 2. Scotland lags far behind the leaders in active travel across Europe

2.1. These most recent figures show **walking** rates in Aberdeen and Edinburgh are comparable to most of the European cities studied for our 2010 report *Civilising the Streets*. However, walking rates in Dundee, Glasgow, and Scotland as a whole are far too low. And despite recent improvements in the Edinburgh **cycle** modal share (to 6.6%), it is clear that even this success story leaves even that city severely lagging behind the true leaders in cycle development across Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Walking and cycling rates in Scotland & in selected cities across Europe



## 3. Scottish Government investment in active travel remains inadequately low

3.1. In 2008, the Association of Directors of Public Health published a report which called for 10% of transport budgets at national and local level to be spent on active travel.<sup>2</sup> Along with hundreds of other national organisations across the UK, we support this demand. However, despite this, only 1-2% of the Scottish transport budget goes into supporting active travel. (We are unable to cite a specific figure given the continued opaqueness of the Scottish Budget.)

3.2. The Government's transport budget has increased massively in the past four years: since budget year 2011/12 (roughly equating to the start of the current parliamentary session), the overall transport budget has increased by over £300m (from £1776.9m in 2011/12 to £2080.1m in 2015/16). However, the Government has decided to prioritise spending on unsustainable modes of transport: since budget year 2011/12, expenditure on 'Motorways and Trunk Roads' has increased by 36%.<sup>3</sup>

3.3. It is clear that there is ample resources within the Scottish Government's own budgets to transform conditions for walkers and cyclists in Scotland. So the lack of adequate investment in active travel can clearly be attributed to the decisions taken by the Scottish Ministers themselves.

.....

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish data presented in the tables in this briefing is from [Scottish Household Survey: Local Area Analysis](#), Table 1: Employed adults (16+) not working from home - usual method of travel to work. The Continental data is from the Transform Scotland 2010 report *Civilising the Streets*, and is hence now a few years out of date – <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/civilising-the-streets-project.aspx>. However, as we are aware of continued active travel development in a number of these cities, we expect that some of these walking and cycling rates may now be higher than that reported here. Note also that the Groningen data was a combined walk/cycle figure (as no separate data was available at the time of publication of the report).

<sup>2</sup> Association of Directors of Public Health (2008): *Take Action on Active Travel* – <http://www.adph.org.uk/?s=take+action+on+active+travel>. This report has received the support of over 100 organisations from across the UK, including such groups as the Institute of Highway Engineers, Royal Institute of British Architects, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Royal College of Physicians and many other prestigious and professional bodies central to public health, environment and transport policy and practice.

<sup>3</sup> From £520.3m in 2011/12 to £694.8m for 2015/16.