

Project Aegle

Press Release

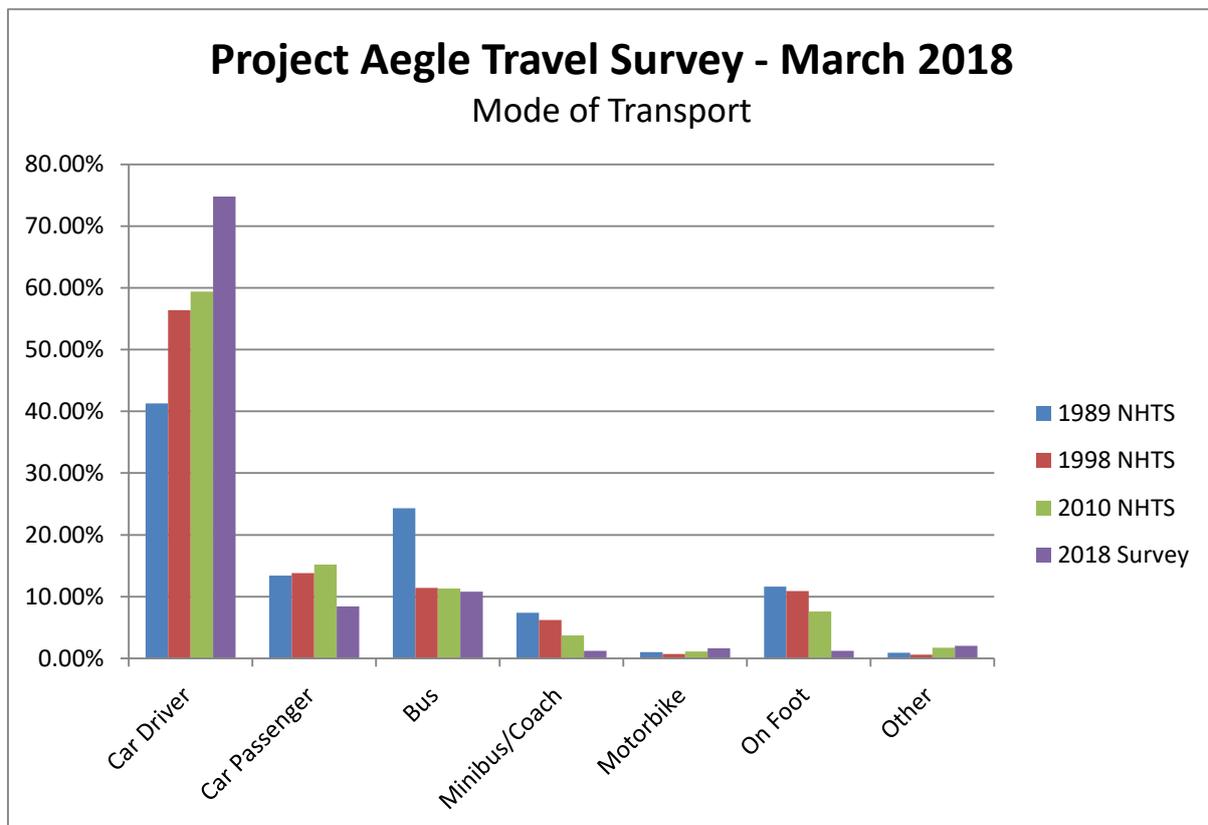
Car usage increases from 74.6% to 83.2% between 2010 and 2018

Travel survey shows increase in car dependency in Malta

A travel survey carried out by Project Aegle concluded that 83.2% of respondents used a car to travel. 10.8% of trips were done by bus whilst 1.2% were done by coach/minibus. 4.8% of trips were done by other modes of transport including 1.6% with motorbikes, 1.2% on foot and 0.8% on bicycle.

The below table and chart compares the results of the travel survey carried out in March 2018, with the three National Household Travel Surveys (NHTS) carried out since 1989 by the Maltese Authorities.

Project Aegle Travel Survey - March 2018				
Mode of Transport	YR 1989	YR 1998	YR 2010	YR 2018
Car Driver	41.30%	56.40%	59.40%	74.80%
Car Passenger	13.40%	13.80%	15.20%	8.40%
Bus	24.30%	11.40%	11.30%	10.80%
Minibus/Coach	7.40%	6.20%	3.70%	1.20%
Motorbike	1.00%	0.70%	1.10%	1.60%
On Foot	11.60%	10.90%	7.60%	1.20%
Other	0.90%	0.60%	1.70%	2.00%



The sustained increase in car use and dependency is very evident in the results. This is further exacerbated by the 10.1% of car users being passengers (8.4% of all respondents) which is significantly

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lower than previous years. It is also the lowest in all the surveys meaning that there are more cars being used on the road.

Bus usage has increased from 32 million passenger trips in 2011 to 48 million passenger trips in 2017. This increase however was not a result in a modal shift from private to public car use as the choice of buses has reduced slightly from 11.3% to 10.8%. It is important to state that the survey reflects the travel behaviour of Maltese residents and therefore does not take into consideration the significant increase of foreign residents living and working in Malta, and the increase in tourism numbers all of which typically contribute towards increased use of alternative modes of transport.

Trips done on foot have also reduced significantly from 7.6% in 2010 to just 1.2% in 2018, whilst trips done by minibus/coach reduced from 3.7% to 1.2%. This may reflect the smaller sample size of the survey, but is definitely indicative of travel choices in Malta.

Motorbike use on the other hand, increased slightly from 1.1% to 1.6% which follows the increase in motorcycle registrations and driving licences in recent years.

Nicoletta Moss, Project Manger of Project Aegle explained that it is likely that the Maltese Authorities will carry out another National Household Travel Survey in 2020 to keep the approximate 10-year gap between each survey. “Given the significant changes in travel patterns, mobility and the economic situation in Malta in recent years, we felt the need for a more immediate understanding of people’s travel patterns, which is why we carried out this survey. It is encouraging that 45.2% of respondents that did not use their car, actually had access to a car. This means that they chose an alternative mode of transport. This is also a risk because they can very easily switch back to using their car which would worsen the situation in Malta.”

The survey was coordinated by Prof. Maria Attard, Head of Geography and Director of the Institute for Climate Change and Sustainable Development at the University of Malta, and collaborator within Project Aegle. “We embarked on this initiative to take stock of the situation and current travel patterns. We also hope to raise awareness with the public so as to better understand the current situation and inform public debate”, explained Prof. Maria Attard.

The survey took place between the 1st and 6th March. It was carried out over the phone to random households selected from local electoral and telephone registers. There were a total of 250 valid respondents who answered a number of questions related to their last trip. This included the origin and destination, the mode of transport, the purpose of the trip, and the duration of the trip.

Project Aegle is a foundation set up by many of Malta’s leading experts to help us lay out the problem and inform the public about the causes for traffic congestion and parking problems, its symptoms and possible solutions. The foundation is actively working on new solutions to improve mobility through the greater utilisation of vehicles, public transport, and an intelligent approach to work and travel. Project Aegle is also a platform where people are encouraged to share their ideas, collaborate, and receive support in implementing solutions to the mobility problem.

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