The Danish National Travel Survey

Fact sheet about cycling in Denmark

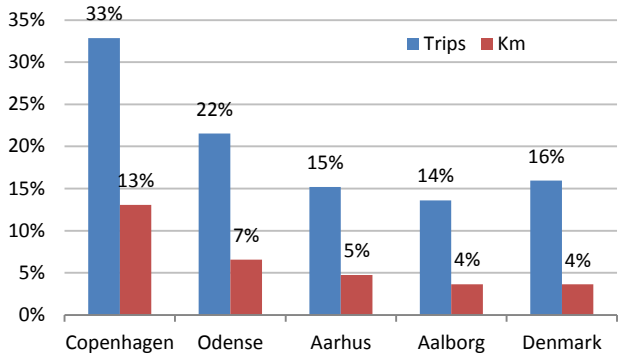
DTU Transport
Institut for Transport

Cycling in Denmark

In Denmark cycling is a very important part of the overall transport, which is different from many other countries. On average Danes aged 10-84 years make 0.47 bike trips per day, with an average length of 3.2 km per trip, which corresponds to 1.5 km per day. The average figures cover large variations geographically and between different population groups. Compared to cycling levels among other countries in western Europe and North America, Denmark is in the upper end together with Germany and the Netherlands. At the low end are the United States and the United Kingdom.

Bike share of trips

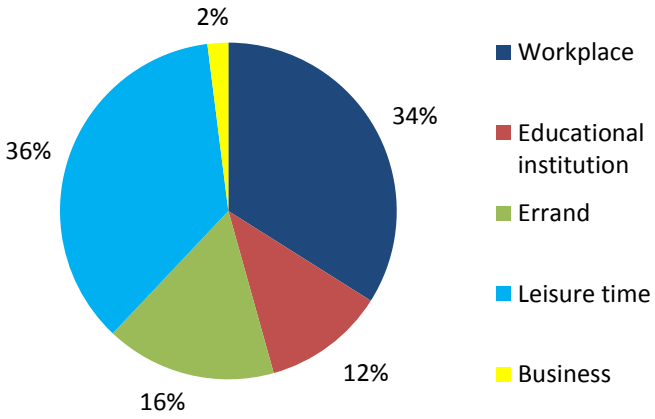
The city in Denmark with the highest bike share of trips and kilometers is Copenhagen where 33 % of all trips are done by bike and the bike share of the total transported kilometers is 13 %. The respective shares for the whole country are respectively 16 % and 4 %.



Bike share of trips and kilometers, 2011-2013

Trip purpose

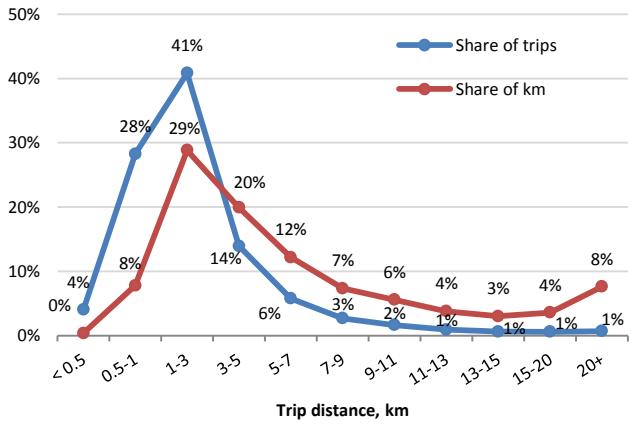
The distribution of bike transport by purpose of the trip measured in kilometers illustrates that commuting to either workplace or educational institution predominates with a total of 46 %.



Share of total bike kilometers 2011-2013

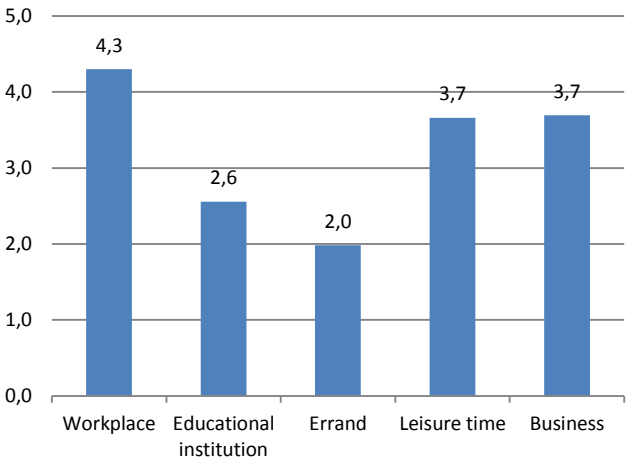
Trip distance

In Denmark, 87 % of all trips and 57 % of the overall driven kilometers on bike are made up of trips that are shorter than 5 km. Only 4 % of the trips are longer than 11 km, but due to the length of the trips they account for 18 % of the overall driven kilometers on bike.



Distribution of trips on bike across trip distance (km), 2011-2013

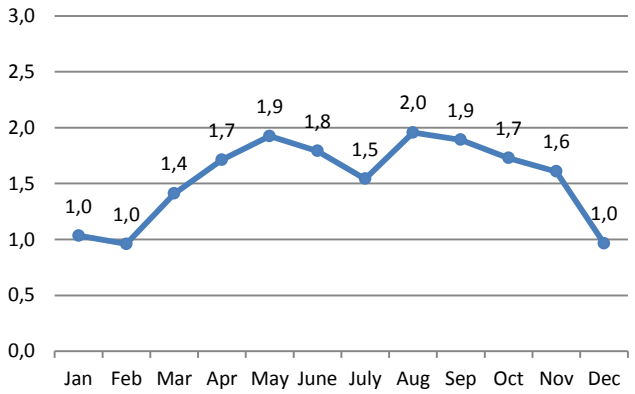
Looking at the average trip length on bike the trips for workplace are the longest with 4.3 km. The shortest trips are errands having an average length of 2 km.



Average trip length (km) on bike, 2011-2013

Seasonality

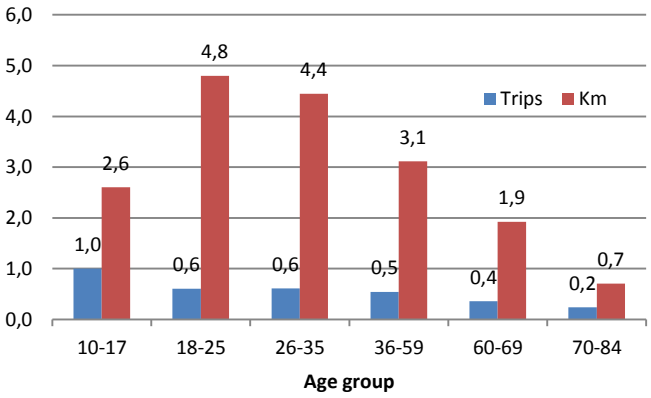
The average distance on bike calculated on a monthly basis displays quite distinctly seasonality. On average Danes are cycling 43 % less in each of the three winter months than in the rest of the year. Due to the holiday period the amount of cycled kilometers per person also drops in July.



Average distance (km) on bike on a monthly basis, 2011-2013

Young people have the highest cycling levels

Individual factors such as age and gender have direct associations with biking. 53 % of the trips on bike are made by women while men are biking longer distances with 51 % of the kilometers on bike.

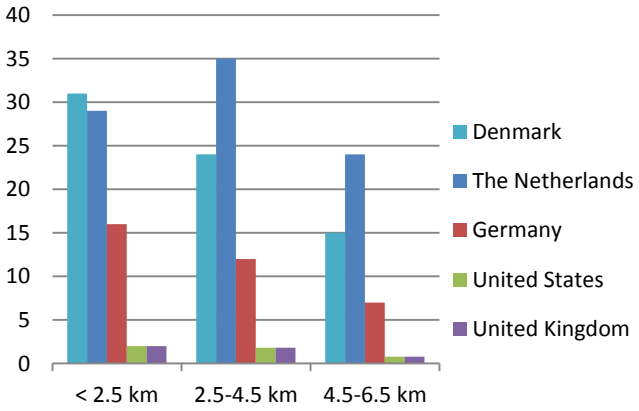


Transport on bike, trips and km per person per day, 2011-2013

The amount of kilometers on bike per person per day is highest in the age group 18-25 years after which it is decreasing. The children do not drive as far as the adults, only 2.6 kilometers per person per day, but they have more trips per person per day than the adults.

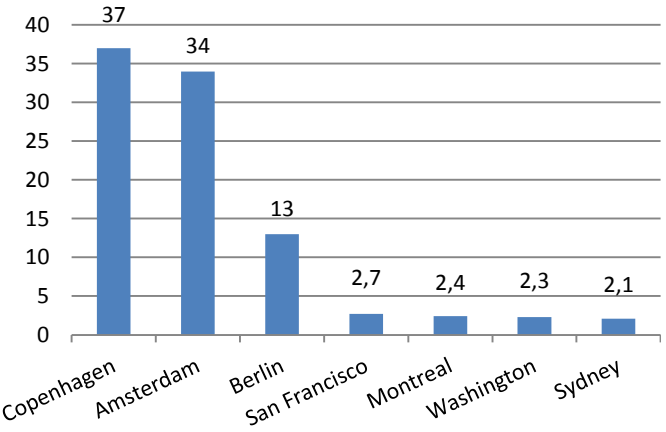
Comparing to other countries

Comparing cycling in Denmark with other countries, shows that within the same trip distance categories, there are large differences among countries in bike mode share. In the United States and the United Kingdom they cycle for only 2 percent of trips shorter than 2.5 km, compared to bike mode shares of 31 percent in Denmark, 29 percent in the Netherlands, and 16 percent in Germany.



Bike mode share (percentage), 2010 (Pucher and Buehler, 2012)

Cycling rates in European cities are in general much higher than in Australia, Canada and the United States. This can e.g. be illustrated by the share of commuters who bike to work.



Bike mode share (percentage) of workers commuting (Pucher and Buehler, 2012)

In Copenhagen the bike mode share of commuters is 37 percent and in Amsterdam it is 34 percent. The four cities in North America and Australia all have a bike mode share lower than 3 percent.

Facts about The Danish National Travel Survey

The Danish National Travel Survey is an interview survey which serves to document the travel behavior of the Danish population. The survey has been conducted on a regular basis since 1992, and it is the best standardized source of knowledge on how Danish residents travel. Further information can be found on www.tudata.dk or by contacting Data- and Modelcenter at DTU Transport.