

UJ State of Transport Opinion Poll reveals public transport concerns

According to the latest independent survey of transport opinion in the country, South Africans have identified transport as one of the three most pressing issues for the fourth year in a row with the other two issues being health and education. Issues like the state of the economy, and infrastructure and employment were also identified but received a lower rating.



Dr Rose Luke

The University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS) released the Institute's State of Transport Opinion Poll (2015/2016), a survey gauging South Africans' confidence in transport. The fourth annual survey of over 1,000 adults across South Africa showed that transport is still one of the highest priorities in our society today. In the 2015 survey, all issues were ranked higher than in previous years, possibly indicating increasing urgency in the need to address the issues.

According to UJ's ITLS researcher Dr Rose Luke, "The single greatest concern that people have regarding transport is the quality, accessibility, and frequencies of public transport."

Other major issues include safety, taxi-related concerns, the condition of road infrastructure and the affordability of transport. Safety in public transport is a much higher concern than it has been in the past. In general, the results reflect that the same transport issues have been highlighted as important for the past few years, possibly indicating that these issues have not yet been adequately addressed.

Concerns regarding the e-tolling system peaked in 2013 and now appears to be diminishing in importance.

Transport facilities

Respondents were also asked to give their opinion on the conditions of selected transport facilities and services, i.e. BRT, taxis, buses and rail services, roads and congestion.

BRT services continue to be well received, with almost 70% of both Western Cape and Gauteng residents indicating these services as very good. Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape respondents were generally positive about the quality of their roads, however, respondents from all the other provinces indicated this as very poor. Despite the concerns highlighted regarding taxi services, coverage, frequencies and flexibility were generally regarded as very good in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and North West province. In many instances, this may be explained by the lack of alternatives.



Mke Gerhardt via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Only 37% of South Africans feel that transport in their local area is better now than a year ago, down from 39% in 2013/14 and 42% in 2012/13, indicating a deterioration in the perception of the quality of transport in their local areas. People who indicated that transport in their local area was worse than a year ago, mentioned issues such as inadequate public transport, taxi-related issues, deteriorating infrastructure, increased congestion and irresponsible drivers as their main reasons.

Generally, the respondents' perspectives on the state of local transport have remained largely unchanged over the past four years, however, South Africans appeared to be far less enthusiastic on the state of national transport. Most respondents indicated that they do not envisage significant improvements in transport in the short to medium term.

Law enforcement and adherence to traffic laws

Respondents were asked for their opinions on the state of law enforcement and adherence to traffic laws on our roads. Although respondents were divided on this issue, it appears that people from metropolitan areas recognise a higher level of non-adherence to traffic laws than other areas.

Perceptions regarding law enforcement differ across age groups. Older respondents indicated that they believed that there is a general culture of non-adherence to traffic laws, whereas younger respondents indicated the opposite. A large portion of South Africans, however, believes that law enforcement should be stricter and that there should be considerably more law enforcement. Elimination of corruption and better training of traffic officers were also highlighted.

The State of Transport Opinion Poll is the first survey to measure transport opinions on a regular basis and aims to be a reliable indicator of South Africans' changing attitudes towards transport.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>