Uk traffic congestion getting worse says new report

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Traffic congestion in cities across the UK has got significantly worse over the past year, according to a new report out today.

The fourth annual Traffic Index from TomTom shows average journeys in 2013 took 27% longer than they would in free-flowing traffic – up from a 26% delay in 2012.

Traffic jams in 10 out of Britain's 17 biggest cities have become worse over the past 12 months - in London, Brighton, Sheffield, Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham, Portsmouth, Cardiff, Belfast and Southampton.

Congestion levels have also failed to improve in Edinburgh, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle and Glasgow.

The only two local Councils who can congratulate themselves are Leeds-Bradford and Bristol where congestion is down.

The report also suggests that drivers using rat runs may actually be making their journeys slower. The data shows that local roads have twice as much lost travel time (32%) as main roads (15%).

And British commuters are now spending 10 working days a year stuck in traffic, up from nine days a year ago*.

The TomTom Traffic Index shows that Belfast remains the most congested city in the UK, with journey times 36% slower than free-flow traffic throughout the day – peaking at 78% longer in the morning rush hour and 75% in the evening.

Second is London with journey times 34% slower, rising to 63% in the evening peak. Close behind is the Scottish capital Edinburgh, where travelling during the morning rush hour takes 60% longer than usual.

Despite the slight drop, Bristol is still the fourth worst UK city for congestion, with traffic 32% slower than free-flow. Brighton (31%) is in fifth place.

Sheffield (8th place) and Leicester (11th) have recorded the biggest increases in congestion over the past year.

Traffic expert TomTom analysed over ten trillion pieces of data worldwide to compile its traffic index, which showed that Moscow remains the most congested city globally with congestion at 74%, rising to road rage levels of 141% in the evening peak. Istanbul (62%) is in second place, followed by Rio de Janeiro (55%) – and that's before the World Cup invasion!

"Traffic congestion is nothing new, and continues to be a global challenge," commented Harold Goddijn, CEO of TomTom. "The traditional responses to congestion - such as building new roads or widening existing ones - are no longer proving to be effective.

"Real time traffic information can help drivers find the quickest shortcut on their journey, and assist governments to make smarter decisions to improve traffic flow for their cities," he said.

The TomTom Traffic Index is the only global measurement of traffic congestion comparing travel times during non-congested hours with travel times in peak hours experienced by passenger vehicles. The Index takes into account local roads, main roads and motorways, across 180 cities in six continents.

The UK TomTom Traffic index is available for download here:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/1rz7ag8p2vl9jxt/TomTom Traffic Index 2013 annual UK.pdf

Infographics are available here:

https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B_x9K2uR-EeQLXh5YUViRFd6Unc&usp=sharing

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The UK's most congested cities, ranked by overall Congestion Level, for the calendar year 2013 compared with 2012:

Rank City Congestion 2013

Congestion 2012
1 Belfast 36% 35%
2 London 34% 32%
3 Edinburgh 34% 34%
4 Bristol 32% 33%
5 Brighton 31% 30%
6 Manchester 26% 26%
7 Leeds-Bradford 26% 29%
8 Sheffield 26% 22%
9 Liverpool 25% 25%
10 Nottingham 25% 23%
11 Leicester 25% 22%
12 Newcastle 23% 23%
13 Birmingham 23% 22%
14 Portsmouth 22% 20%
15 Cardiff 22% 21%
16 Glasgow 22% 22%
17 Southampton 20% 19%

* The number of working days a year stuck in traffic is calculated by measuring the number of hours lost in traffic congestion across the UK to calculate the total average delay per year in morning and evening peak hours. This is done assuming a typical 30 minute commute trip each way, for an entire year. The equivalent of 10 working days lost is the average across all UK cities included in the report.

It is estimated that time lost as a result of traffic congestion costs the UK economy £2 billion a year and the situation is set to get worse despite a £28 billion plan for road improvements in the UK. The Government has forecast four million more drivers on UK roads by 2030 and that, by 2040, the volume of traffic will have risen by 40%.

About the TomTom Traffic Index

Separate European, North American, Australia/New Zealand and South Africa Traffic Index reports are available. To download the Traffic Index reports, go to www.tomtom.com/trafficindex

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