

# Traffic congestion rises across the UK says new report

Submitted by: Peptalk Communications

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Oxford has seen the biggest increase in traffic congestion of anywhere in UK, according to new figures released by TomTom.

Oxford has risen from sixth to third place in a nationwide congestion ranking which shows nearly a third (31.2%) of its main roads are clogged with traffic.

Traffic expert TomTom has measured the top 50 most congested areas across Britain in the past six months. Findings suggest that while congestion is worst in London and Edinburgh, it has increased most in Oxford - by 2.2% since March.

Belfast has seen the second biggest increase in congestion, followed by Bolton, Southampton and Sheffield. In Scotland Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen are all in the top 10 cities that have seen the biggest increase in traffic jams in the past six months.

Road congestion is estimated to cost the UK economy £20 billion a year in lost production\* It is also estimated that a reduction of just five per cent in travel time for all business travel on the roads could generate around £2.5 billion of cost savings, by reducing missed appointments and speeding up delivery times\*\*.

The new research marks the launch of the TomTom International Traffic Foundation. The not-for-profit Foundation will bring together key stakeholders from academia, industry and policy-making to collaborate to reduce traffic congestion. It will nurture talent in the field of traffic management, funding PhD and post-doctorate research, publishing research papers and hosting a number of traffic-related events.

The study shows that, perhaps unsurprisingly, London is the most traffic clogged city in the country, with 36 per cent of roads significantly more congested during rush-hours than at off-peak times. At number two is Edinburgh with a congestion rate of 33 per cent.

Behind Oxford in fourth place is Belfast where 31 per cent of roads are classed as congested, followed by Bradford (30 per cent), Manchester (30 per cent) and Birmingham (28 per cent).

The least congested big towns or cities are Northampton, Warwick and Chesterfield, all with congestion rates of less than 10 per cent. Only five in the top 50 have seen congestion fall over the past six months: Bedford, Colchester, Newport, York and Chester.

TomTom's research is based on its real travel time database, which has collected more than four trillion speed measurements to date with over a billion new measurements recorded each day.

This year is the anniversary of the launch of the TomTom Traffic Manifesto, a mission to reduce traffic congestion. A TomTom spokesman said: "Many people may be surprised to find that places like Oxford, Belfast and Bolton have suffered big increases in levels of traffic congestion.

"If 10 per cent of drivers use a live navigation system such as TomTom HD Traffic which is updated over the air every two minutes, there will be a 'collective effect' that reduces journey times in congested areas for all drivers by up to five per cent."

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Notes to editors:

Roads are considered congested when peak time traffic is 70 per cent slower than at off-peak times. All UK towns and cities with over 50,000 inhabitants were analysed.

\* Irving Yass (2010) "Delays Due to Serious Road Accidents" RAC Foundation, London.)

\*\* Eddington Transport Study (2006)

Table 1: Top 10 most traffic clogged cities in the UK

- 1 London
- 2 Edinburgh
- 3 Oxford
- 4 Belfast
- 5 Bradford
- 6 Manchester
- 7 Birmingham
- 8 Aberdeen
- 9 Southampton
- 10 Nottingham

Table 2: Biggest increase in traffic congestion (September 2011 versus March 2011)

- 1 Oxford
- 2 Belfast
- 3 Bolton
- 4 Southampton
- 5 Sheffield
- 6 Edinburgh
- 7 London
- 8 Glasgow
- 9 Cambridge
- 10 Aberdeen

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About TomTom:

Founded in 1991, TomTom (AEX:TOM2) is the world's leading supplier of in-car location and navigation products and services focused on providing all drivers with the world's best navigation experience.

Headquartered in Amsterdam, TomTom has over 3,500 employees and sells its products in over 40 countries.

Our products include portable navigation devices, in-dash infotainment systems, fleet management solutions, maps and real-time services, including the award winning TomTom HD Traffic. For the world's most up-to-date route planner, including live traffic information go to [www.tomtom.com/livetraffic](http://www.tomtom.com/livetraffic)

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