

BBC NEWS**ENGLAND**

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Transport spending 'skewed towards London'

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The government spends more money on transport projects for Londoners than on those for the rest of the country combined, a think tank says.

The Institute for Public Policy Research North says £2,700 is spent per person in London compared with £5 per head in the north-east of England.

In a report out this week IPPR North says there is a "sharp disparity".

The government says its investment strategy is to maximise economic benefits for the country as a whole.

'Deeply unfair'

Ed Cox, Director of IPPR North, said: "Skewed spending benefiting London and the south-east is nothing new but these new figures are truly shocking and will strike most people as deeply unfair."

The BBC's Transport Correspondent Richard Lister says the report claims the infrastructure strategy is "entrenching the North-South divide".

IPPR North says almost half of the 20 biggest taxpayer-funded transport projects benefit only London and the south-east.

The Department for Transport said London is a global capital which supports a large number of commuters and it points out the government had recently approved additional investment of £1.4bn in transport schemes outside London.

But analysis by IPPR North shows almost half of major transport projects involving public funding benefit only London and the south-east, accounting for 84% of planned spending.

IPPR North says the "cost benefit analysis" equation currently used to decide where investment is targeted is wrong and that lack of spending constrains growth in the north of England.

Mr Cox conceded that much of the spending in London was due to the Olympics but he added: "If the government continue to use a system that reinforces the dominance of London and the south-east we'll all be worse-off in the long-run as the south becomes more congested while the north continues to fall behind in terms of growth."

IPPR North has called for a review of all future infrastructure projects ahead of the 2014 Spending Review.

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69.Likelife

18TH DECEMBER 2011 - 11:36

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London gets Crossrail and Thameslink, Manchester gets Metrolink and Northern Hub. Over 1 billion journeys were made on the tube last year,

that's about the same as the whole National Rail network. Network Rail is spending £5 bn on the Great Western & spent £9bn on the West Coast. Nottingham & Edinburgh are getting tram extensions/trams. But I do believe more needs to be spent elsewhere too.

55.origami Penguin

18TH DECEMBER 2011 - 11:24

+6

The glaringly obvious point to be made, here, is that transport spending in London doesn't just benefit local residents. It's all the people who commute in to work every day, tourists, students, visitors to theatres and galleries, people travelling through to other destinations, and the rest. Yes, the disproportionate spending in the capital is grossly unfair, but your figures are misleading.

46.Aardvark

18TH DECEMBER 2011 - 11:09

+29

I'm incredulous, aghast, stunned & astonished!. Spending skewed towards London? We've known this for years. Lottery money to the Brighthouse & Rastrick Brass Band.....or a capital arts project or opera? To be skewed even more by the London Olympics? And blaming the Tories for this inequality? Presumably there was a huge swing in spending when Labour left power? No, I didn't think so.

32.HELEN_of_TROY

18TH DECEMBER 2011 - 11:00

-29

There are approximately 8 million people who live in Greater London. Only 5 million in Scotland. It seems logical that such a high population density in one area needs money spent on transport. Factor in also all the tourists and then the Olympics.

I live in Scotland, I am Scottish but even I can see London has a good claim to the money being spent on its transport system .

29.zrzavy

18TH DECEMBER 2011 - 10:54

-5

The cost is probably due to the "engineering works" which have for years closed the Underground at the weekend. The system became dilapidated. The problem is, even the Jubilee and DLR, which are new lines, needed work as well. So were these new lines poorly constructed in the first place? In 2002 the metro in Prague was flooded to street level. It was rebuilt in one year!! Why so slow here?

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