

# Road transport in Spain is more efficient during financial crisis periods

March 4 2015

---



Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Thanks to the development of an analytical method, members of the Transport Research Centre (TRANSyT) from the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) have established the main factors influencing the GHG emissions trends as a result of the road vehicle traffic in Spain. The results show that this type of transportation tends to

be more efficient during crisis periods than in economically prosperous periods.

This study was conducted from 1990 to 2010 when researchers identified different periods according to relevant factors affecting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and other gases contributing to GHG. Spaniards purchased more cars in 1990 and consequently the emissions increased due to the growth rate of vehicles. Later, tax policies boosted the purchase of diesel vehicles due to lower prices and [growth rate](#) of purchasing power. This meant an increase of kilometers covered by road and the growth of vehicle rate what caused a steady increase of energy consumption and GHG emissions.

The financial crisis started in 2007, causing a fall in the transport activity and a greater [energy efficiency](#) of road transport. Since then, populations have adapted their behavior to real needs through a reduction of kilometers covered by car. This adaptation was caused by factors such as unemployment, lower incomes and new energy efficiency policies implemented since 2004, Plan E4. All this shows the inefficiency of road transport in economically prosperous periods and the importance of adopting suitable fiscal policies in order to reduce the carbon footprint.

Although this research was conducted in a specific place and at a certain time, the proposed methodology can be applied to many diverse cases and can be also useful for comparisons among countries. The analysis carried out in Spain provides relevant information that can help to define measures and strategies to take advantage of the recent decline of road transport demand. The recommended policies include bringing back the policies that encourage the purchase of smaller and more efficient vehicles in order to obtain a low carbon fleet. Other recommendations are the use of alternative means of transport and reducing car dependency, promoting efficient management strategies of traffic and infrastructures by using Information and communications technology

(ICT).

This study, published in the *Energy Policy* journal, concluded that Spain has reached a crossroads that could mean a paradigm change in [road transport](#).

**More information:** Sobrino, N.; Monzón, A. (2014.) "The impact of the economic crisis and policy actions on GHG emissions from road transport in Spain". *Energy Policy*, 74, pp.486-498. [DOI: 10.1016/j.enpol.2014.07.020](#)

Provided by Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

Citation: Road transport in Spain is more efficient during financial crisis periods (2015, March 4) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-03-road-spain-efficient-financial-crisis.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.