

Academic Reading Practice Test 84

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1. Switch off your mobile phone and electronic devices.
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Advantages of Public Transport

Public transport is more efficient than cars. A new study conducted by the Murdoch University's Institute for Science and Technology Policy (ISTP) for the World Bank has demonstrated this. The study compared the percentage of wealth poured into transport by 37 cities around the world. The public and private costs of building, maintaining and using a transport system was included.

The study says that the Western Australian city of Perth is a city with minimal public transport. As a result, 17% of its wealth is spent on transport costs. On the other hand, few European and Asian cities spent as little as 5%. ISTP Director and Professor Peter Newman, said that these more efficient cities were able to put the difference into attracting industry and jobs or creating a better place to live.

According to Professor Newman, in comparison, the larger Australian city of Melbourne is a rather unusual city. He explains it as 2 cities: 'A European city surrounded by a car-dependent one'. Melbourne's large tram network has lowered the car use in the inner city. As most other Australian cities the outer suburbs have the same car-based structure. The increase in demand for accommodation inside suburban Melbourne proposes a change in many people's choice as to where they live.

This is a new, broader way of considering public transport issues, says Newman. The case for public transport has been made in the past on the basis of environmental and social justice considerations rather than economics. However Newman believes that the study shows 'the auto-dependent city model is inefficient and not enough in economic as well as environmental terms'.

Even though bicycle use was not included in the study, Newman noted that the two most 'bicycle friendly' cities - Amsterdam and Copenhagen - were very efficient, even though their public transport systems were 'not special but reasonable'.

The supporters of road networks reject the models of cities with good public transport by arguing that such systems would not work in that particular city. One objection is climate. Some people mentioned that they couldn't make proper use of public transport due to its extreme weather. Newman rejected this and said that public transport has been successful in both Toronto and Singapore and, in fact, he has checked the use of cars against climate and found 'zero correlation'.



Road lobbies are on stronger ground when it comes to other physical features. For example, for a city as hilly as Auckland it would be hard to develop a really good rail network, says Newman. He does note, however, that despite being hilly cities, both Hong Kong and Zurich have made a success of their heavy and light rail systems.

'The more democratic the process, the more public transportation is preferred,' Newman argues. He considers Portland, Oregon, a good example. Federal money was granted to build a new road a few years ago. However, local pressure groups instead wanted a referendum on whether to spend the funds on light rail. The rail idea was successful, and the railroad performed admirably. More rail systems were built in the years that followed, drastically altering the city's landscape. Portland has a similar population density to Perth, according to Newman. People avoided situations that forced them to spend more than half an hour travelling to work in the United Kingdom for at least 6 centuries. Trains and automobiles allowed people to live farther apart without having to travel longer distances. However, public infrastructure has not kept up with urbanisation, resulting in severe traffic congestion and much longer commute times.

There is a widespread belief that people who have more wealth encourage living farther out where cars are the only useful transport. The example of European cities refutes that. They are richer than their American counterparts but do not have the same level of car use. Car use has actually fallen in Stockholm in recent years as the city has become larger and wealthier. This notion is made much more forcefully in a new study. Automobile use is higher in developing Asian cities like Jakarta and Bangkok than in wealthier Asian cities like Tokyo and Singapore. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank prohibited the construction of public transportation in later-developing cities, forcing residents to rely on vehicles, resulting in huge traffic jams.

The Urban Village report, which used Melbourne as an example, Newman believes is one of the greatest studies on how cities constructed for cars may be transformed to rail use. It was discovered that forcing everyone into the city centre was not the most effective strategy. Instead, the proposal recommended the creation of urban villages at hundreds of sites, mostly around railway stations.

As people were no longer forced into cities it was once assumed that improvements in telecommunications would lead to more dispersal in the population. The ISTP team's research however reveals that the population and job density of cities increased or stayed constant in the 1980s after decades of decline. The explanation for it is that it is valuable to place people working in related fields together. Our future world will mostly depend on the creativity of humans, and that flourishes where people come together face-to-face.'



Advantages of Public Transport IELTS Reading questions

Question 1-5

Complete the notes below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/ OR A NUMBER** from the passage for each answer.

1. Public transport is more _____ than cars.
- 2.
3. Murdoch University's (ISTP) conducted the study for the _____.
- 4.
5. In _____ 17% of its wealth is spent on transport costs.
- 6.
7. On the other hand, few _____ and Asian cities spent as little as 5%.
- 8.

Peter Newman is the Director of _____ and a Professor.

Question 6-9

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading Passage?

Write

YES if the statement agrees with the claims of the writer

NO, if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer

NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

1. As the demand for accommodation inside suburban Melbourne increases, it changes many
2. people's choice as to where they live.
- 3.
4. Population and job density of cities decreased or stayed constant in the 1980s after decades
5. of decline.
- 6.
7. Forcing everyone into the city centre is not an effective strategy.
- 8.

In Auckland it would be hard to develop a really good rail network.



Question 10-14

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage for each answer.

1. Melbourne's large _____ network has lowered the car use in the inner city.
- 2.
3. The case for public transport has been made in the past on the basis of environmental and _____
4. social justice considerations rather than _____.
- 5.
6. Amsterdam and _____ were very efficient, even though their public transport systems _____
7. were 'not special but reasonable'.
- 8.
9. The supporters of _____ reject the models of cities with good public transport by _____
10. arguing that such systems would not work in that particular city.
- 11.

The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank prohibited the construction of public transportation in later-developing cities, forcing residents to rely on _____, resulting in huge traffic jams.

[Click Here to Check Answers](#)



Answers for IELTS Academic Reading Practice Test 84

1. efficient	2. World Bank	3. Perth	4. European
5. ISTP	6. Yes	7. No	8. Yes
9. Yes	10. tram	11. economics	12. Copenhagen
13. road networks	14. vehicles		

How many questions did you get right?

Correct Answers (Out of 13)	Your Next Step
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