

CENSUS 2016 CENTRAL OKANAGAN HIGHLIGHTS

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Journey to Work



Journey to Work: Key results from the 2016 Census

More Canadians commuted to work in 2016 and a greater proportion took public transit than ever before.

For most working Canadians, commuting is part of daily life. Since 1996, the number of commuters has risen by 3.7 million or 30.3% to 15.9 million in 2016.

Access to public transit is closely tied to urban land use. With the population increasing in urban areas, traffic congestion is also rising. With more congestion, commuting times are getting longer for commuters using road networks.

Commuters spent an average of 26.2 minutes travelling to their workplace in 2016, up 0.8 minutes from 2011 (25.4 minutes). In 2016, the average commuting time was 24.1 minutes for car commuters and 44.8 minutes for public transit commuters.

Use of public transit has edged up since 1996

Public transit—whether bus, subway, train, commuter rail, or ferry—is an important way for people to get to and from work every day. In Canada, the proportion of people commuting to work by public transit has edged up with every census since collection of this information began in 1996, rising from 10.1% that year to 12.4% in 2016. This slow but steady growth represents

a 59.5% increase in the number of public transit commuters (+734,350) over this 20-year period, a much higher pace of growth than the 30.3% increase in the number of all commuters over the same period.

The extent to which public transit is used in the different CMAs depends on several factors, including: population density, concentration of jobs in sectors that are well serviced by public transit, the cost of using cars compared to public transit, the availability of parking close to work, the quality and speed of service, and so on.

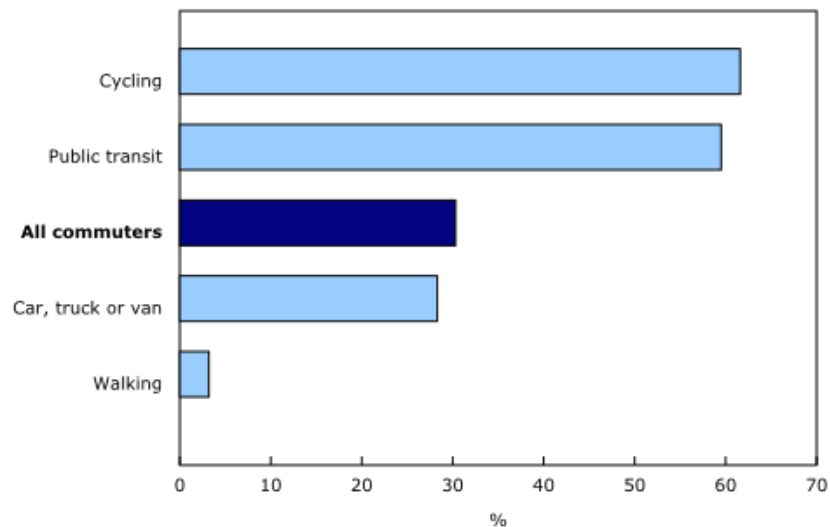
In general, the largest CMAs are much more likely to have a well-established public transit system, which encourages people to use it to get to their workplace.

Active Transportation

Walking or cycling to work, also known as active transportation, is more common when the workplace is close to where the person lives, and can be further influenced by the availability of paths or assigned roadways along the route.

The percentage of employed people walking or bicycling to work declined by 1.2 percentage points compared with 20 years earlier, falling from 8.1% in 1996 to 6.9% in 2016. All of the decline was among commuters walking to work (from 7.0% in 1996 to 5.5% in 2016). The number of people cycling to work has risen by 61.6% since 1996, more than twice the pace of overall commuter growth.

Growth in the number of commuters by main mode of commuting, Canada, 1996 to 2016



Walking or cycling to work was more common in some metropolitan areas. In Victoria, 16.9% of commuters used active transportation to get to work, the highest proportion of all CMAs (COEDC: Kelowna CMA is 7.2%).

The proportion of private vehicle commuters has edged down since 1996, notably in the three largest CMAs

Driving is part of everyday life for many Canadians, whether for personal activities or for getting to work. A private vehicle remained by far the most commonly used main mode of commuting to work in 2016—with four in five employed Canadians using a car, truck or van.

The three largest CMAs of Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver had larger declines in the share of private vehicle commuters than the national average, ranging from a 2.9 percentage point decline over the 20-year period for commuters living in Montréal, to a 7.9 percentage point decrease in Vancouver. This was the first time that all three CMAs saw their share of private vehicle commuters fall below 70.0% since comparable data on the mode of transportation became available in 1996.

The share of workers using a private vehicle to get to work also decreased notably in Kelowna (COEDC: -3% in Kelowna CMA), Victoria and Oshawa from 1996 to 2016. In Kelowna and Victoria, the share of commuters walking or cycling and using public transit increased (COEDC: +32% in Kelowna CMA), while in Oshawa, there was a higher proportion of commuters using public transit.

The average one-way commuting time rises from 2011 to 2016, mostly attributable to public transit

Commuters spent an average of 26.2 minutes travelling to their workplace in 2016, up 0.8 minutes compared with 25.4 minutes in 2011, the first time these data were collected.

Nationally, most of the increase in overall commuting time was attributable to a longer average commute for those whose main mode of commuting was public transit, which rose 1.9 minutes to 44.8 minutes in 2016.

Various international studies show that long commutes, particularly in a private vehicle, affect people's health and overall productivity. Although the average private vehicle commute was 24.1 minutes, there were 853,610 people working in 2016 who spent at least one hour getting to work in a private vehicle each day, up from 815,770 in 2011. In both 2011 and 2016, this represented nearly 7.0% of all private vehicle commuters.

Commuting Duration and Mode of Transportation in the Kelowna CMA by Community

	Avg commute time (min)	Car, truck or van (%)	Public Transit (%)	Active Transport (%)
Kelowna CMA (Central Okanagan)	19.8	86.1	3.9	7.2
District of Lake Country	23.7	91.4	1.9	2.9
City of Kelowna	18.1	83.8	4.3	9.3
City of West Kelowna	22.5	90	3.5	3.1
WFN IR9	22.5	89.3	3.6	3.7

WFN IR10	20.3	92	3.2	2.4
District of Peachland	27.9	91.5	4.0	2.0
Central Okanagan RDA East	21.8	94.1	1.2	1.5
Central Okanagan RDA West	35.4	93.8	0.0	3.4

COEDC Commentary

Kelowna CMA commute times are lower than the provincial and national averages

- With the exception of Peachland and Central Okanagan West, communities in the Kelowna CMA enjoy average commute times below the provincial and national averages of 25.9 minutes and 26.2 minutes respectively.
- Commuters in the City of Kelowna had the lowest commute times in the region with an average commute of 18.1 minutes. They were also the most likely to commute by sustainable methods with 4.3% taking public transit and 9.3% walking or cycling to work.

Distance from home to work up slightly from 1996

In 2016, workers commuted a median distance of 7.7 km one-way to go from home to their usual place of work. This was up slightly from a median distance of 7.0 km in 1996.

The median one-way distance for people who drove to their usual place of work increased slightly over the 20-year period, from 7.8 km in 1996 to 8.7 km in 2016. There was a similar increase among public transit commuters, whose median one-way distance rose from 7.1 km to 7.9 km over that period. The median one-way distance was little changed for workers who cycled to work (2.8 km in 1996 versus 2.9 km in 2016) and for those who walked (1.0 km in 1996 versus 0.9 km in 2016).

The proportion of workers working at home and with a usual place of work both decline over time

Where Canadians work are grouped into four main categories: those with a usual place of work; those who work at home; those who have no fixed workplace address; and those who work outside Canada.

The proportion of employed people who commuted to a usual place of work declined from 83.9% in 1996 to 80.6% in 2016. The proportion of Canadians working at home has also been slowly declining, from 8.2% in 1996 to 7.4% in 2016.

The three CMAs with the highest shares of people working at home were in British Columbia. Kelowna had the highest proportion at 9.3%, followed by Victoria (8.4%) and Vancouver (8.2%). These CMAs also had some of the highest proportions of people working in professional, scientific and technical services, such as engineers (including computer engineers), accountants and various kinds of consultants.

COEDC Commentary

- The Kelowna CMA (Central Okanagan) has the highest share of people working at home in Canada (9.3%), above the provincial share of 8.5% and the national share of 7.4%.
- The top 3 industries (NAICS) for those working at home in the region include: Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (23.2%); Healthcare and Social Assistance (8.3%); and Construction (7.9%).

Larger share of employed Canadians with no fixed workplace in 2016

People can have no fixed workplace because the type of work they perform requires them to frequently switch their work location. Examples are construction crews, truck drivers, salespersons, independent contractors or temporary agency employees.

The proportion of people working at home or at a usual place of work declined from 1996 to 2016, while the share of workers in Canada with no fixed workplace location grew by 3.9 percentage points to 11.5%.

Most employed people with no fixed workplace location in 2016 worked in construction (31.2%), administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (10.8%), and in transportation and warehousing (10.7%). The occupational distribution of those with no fixed workplace has changed very little since 1996.

Wood Buffalo had the highest proportion of out-of-province workers in 2016

Relatively few commuters (1.2% in 2016, including cross-border city regions) had a usual place of work in a province or territory other than the province or territory of their usual residence.

In 2016, 18.2% of workers whose usual place of work was in Wood Buffalo had a permanent residence outside Alberta. In 2011, the proportion was 15.4%. About 4,000 Wood Buffalo workers were permanent residents of British Columbia in 2016, and about another 4,000 resided in Atlantic Canada.

The high proportion of out-of-province workers in this region is attributable to the large portion of people working in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas sector (36.5%) and in construction (13.3%).

Canada - United States comparison

The measurements of commuting in the Canadian census (2016) and the American Community Survey (2016) are very similar, allowing for some comparisons in commuting between these two countries.

In 2016, 12.4% of Canadian workers commuted by public transit—over double the proportion in the United States (5.4%). As well, 5.5% of commuters in Canada walked to work, compared with 2.9% of American commuters.

As mentioned earlier, nearly one in eight Canadians carpooled. In the United States, almost 1 in 10 Americans shared the ride to work in 2016. In the United States, 80.4% of commuters drove alone, compared with 67.4% of Canadian commuters.

The average time needed to get from home to work was not much different in Canada compared with the United States. The average commute time in Canada was 26.2 minutes in 2016, compared with 26.6 minutes in the United States.

Commuting destination for employed labour force having a usual place of work – Regional District of Central Okanagan

	Total commuting destination	Commute within CSD of residence	%	Commute to different CSD within CD of residence	%	Commute to different CSD and CD within province or territory of residence	%	Commute to a different province or territory	%
Central Okanagan	72,150	49,025	68%	17,915	25%	3,810	5%	1,400	2%
Kelowna	48,975	43,675	89%	2,730	6%	1,705	3%	865	2%
Lake Country	4,620	1,050	23%	2,755	59%	685	15%	135	3%
West Kelowna	11,660	3,250	28%	7,490	64%	690	6%	235	2%
Peachland	1,515	285	19%	950	62%	240	16%	45	3%
Westbank First Nation	2,750	630	23%	1,880	68%	160	6%	80	3%
Central Okanagan RDA East	1,460	75	5%	1,270	87%	100	7%	15	1%
Central Okanagan RDA West	575	35	6%	320	56%	200	35%	15	3%

*CSD – Community Census Subdivision (i.e. Kelowna, Lake Country, West Kelowna, Peachland, Westbank First Nation, Central Okanagan RDA East, Central Okanagan RDA West)

*CD – Census Division (i.e. Central Okanagan)

COEDC Commentary

- Central Okanagan East has the highest percentage of workers commuting to a different community census subdivision (87%) while Kelowna has the lowest percentage at 6%.
- Central Okanagan West has the highest percentage of workers commuting to a different census division (35%) followed by Peachland (16%) and Lake Country (15%).
- 2% of workers living in the Regional District of Central Okanagan commute to a different province or territory for work, the majority of those workers live in Kelowna (865 out of 1400).

Top Destinations for Work outside of Central Okanagan

	# of individuals commuting to destination	% of employed labour force
Vernon, BC	1365	1.9%
Penticton, BC	745	1.1%
Wood Buffalo, AB	635	0.9%
Vancouver, BC	410	0.6%
Calgary, AB	140	0.2%

COEDC Commentary

- The top two destinations for Central Okanagan residents outside of the CMA are Vernon and Penticton.
- The top destination outside of the Okanagan is Wood Buffalo (Fort McMurray) with slightly less than 1% of Kelowna CMA residents commuting to the area for work in 2016.

Useful Census Links – Journey to Work

[The Daily: Journey to work: Key results from the 2016 Census](#)

[Focus on Geography Series, Kelowna CMA, 2016 Census, Journey to work](#)

[Data Tables, 2016 Census – Journey to work](#)