Long car commutes

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Telling Canada's story in numbers

Jason Gilmore, Statistics Canada
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Canada

UNECE Quality Indicator

- Presentation is focused on Quality of Employment variable 3C3, **Commuting Time**, within Dimension 3 ("Working Time and Work-Life Balance")

- As described in our Handbook Interpretation Guidelines:

  - *For people with jobs outside of the home, travel to and from the workplace can extend the working day and shorten leisure and family time. Furthermore, commuting time between work and home can also be stressful, tiring and expensive.*

Data source

- Statistics Canada has been collecting data on commuting since 1971, in our Census every five years

- In 1996, mode of transport was added

- In 2011, questions on Commuting time and Time leaving for work were added

- This presentation is based on 2011 data (Census/National Household Survey (NHS))
    - 2016 data on commuting will be released to the public on November 29, 2017

- 30% of households completed the NHS in 2011

Overview and focus of the presentation

- In 2011, 15.4 million Canadians commuted to work.
- 74% of commuters drove to work, and another 6% were passengers in a car.
- The average one-way commute in Canada in 2011 was 25.4 minutes, 24km straight-line distance (average), 7.7km (median).
- The average car commute was 23.7 minutes.
- The average public transit commute was 42.9 minutes (which includes wait times and time used for other commute modes such as walking to transit).
- <u>Long commutes</u> have the biggest impact on work-life balance, health, and other personal domains. This is particularly true of car commutes.
  - **Long car commutes is the focus of this presentation.**

04/10/2017

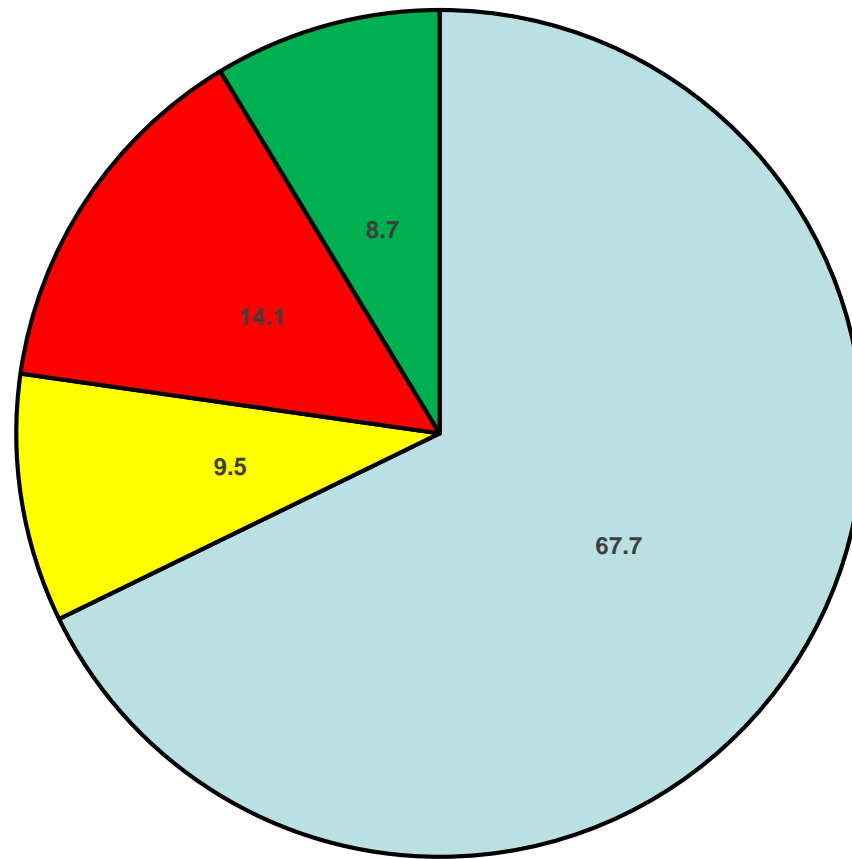# International research: Effects of long car commutes

- Long car commutes can have impacts on a person's health, their safety and their pocket books. For example:

- Studies show that longer commutes are associated with **poor physical and mental health outcomes**.

  - These and other studies show a distinction in negative health outcomes in **mode of commuting**, with those with long commutes in private vehicles being <u>more likely</u> to have these outcomes than those with long commutes who use public transit.

- Some other studies indicate long-duration and long-distance commutes in cars have an association with **vehicle accidents**.

- Long commutes can also put **strain on family relationships and social capital**.

- There are also personal financial impacts related to **buying, repairing and maintaining** a vehicle for long commutes, and **environmental impacts** associated with the cars themselves, especially when idling in congested traffic.

- At the community level, more time spent in cars means more traffic congestion, which has impacts on **infrastructure costs and on people's overall productivity** (i.e., more time in a car means less time at work or at home).

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NHS results for long car commutes

- There were 816,000 people working in 2011 who spent at least one hour getting to work in a car each day.
  - This represented nearly 7% of all car commuters
- For those with a long commute in a car, their average straight-line, one-way commute distance to a usual work location was nearly 57 kilometres (km), and the median distance was 34 km.
- The average one-way commute time for long commutes in a car was nearly 74 minutes.
  - Among these commuters, 32% took longer than the average

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Long car commuters in 2011: breakdown by commuting time ranges

■ 60 to 74 min.   ■ 75 to 89 min.   ■ 90 to 119 min.   ■ 120+ min.

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Demographic analysis: sex and age

- Men accounted for 69% of all long car commuters
  - For perspective, men represented 52% of all commuters
- 53% of long car commuters were aged 35 to 54
  - 47% of all commuters were in this age range

Demographic analysis: family status

- Long car commutes to work can have health and social impacts on families.

- 376,000 or 46% of all long-duration car commuters were part of a couple with children.

  - This compares with 39% of all commuters being part of a couple with children.

- More than half of these long commuting couples with children have young children (under age 15).

  - Almost 80,000 or 20% of all long car commuters in couples have very young children (under age 6).
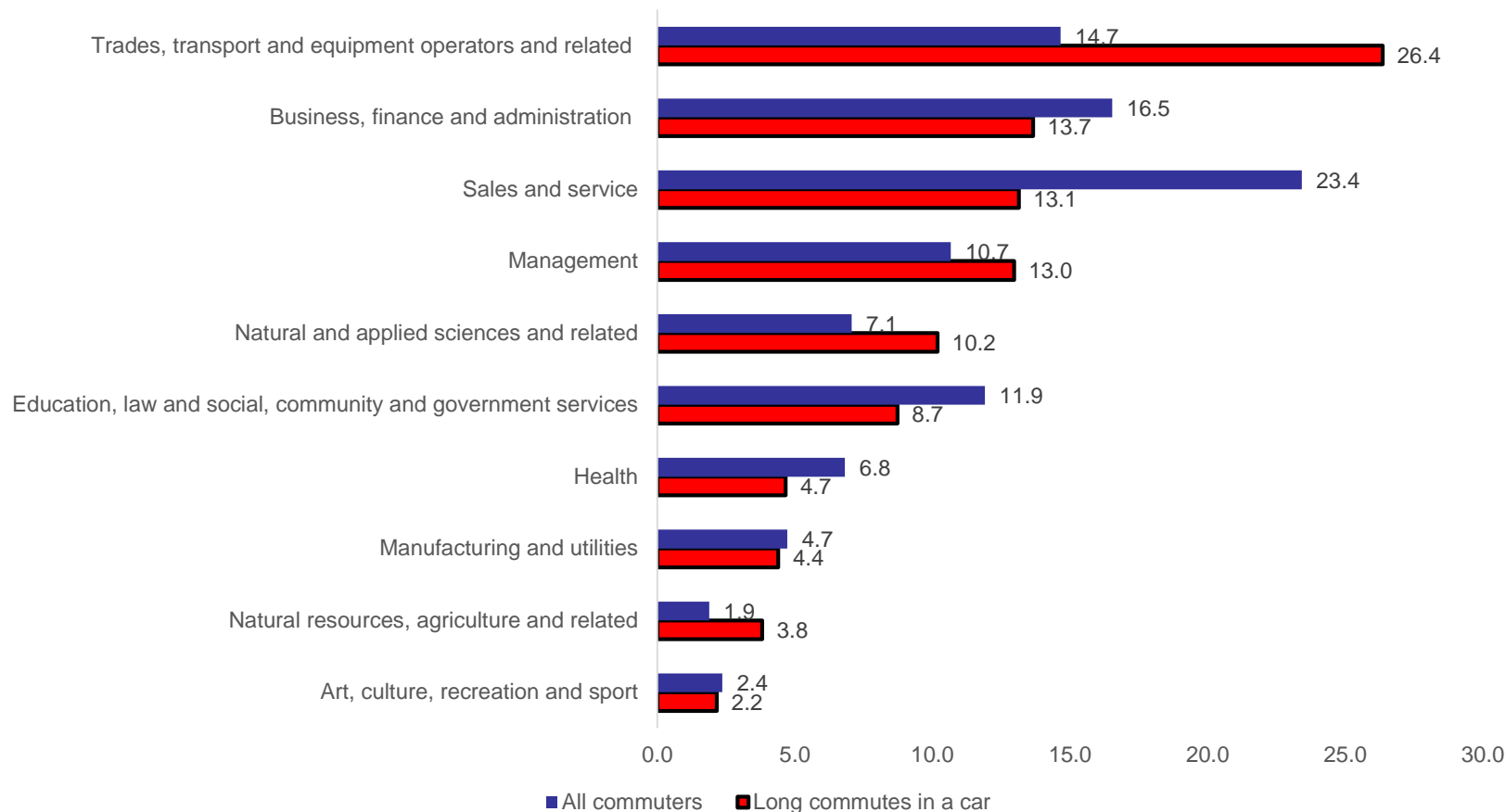
Commuting characteristics: carpooling

- **17%** of all car commuters shared a ride with at least one other person

- **23.5%** of all car commuters travelling 60 minutes or longer shared a ride to work

- For long commuters who drove alone, their average commuting time was **73.8 minutes**

- Average commuting time was **74.8 minutes** for carpoolers with a long commute

  - **73.7** minutes for 2 carpoolers
  - **77.1** minutes for 3+ carpoolers
    - Difference likely related to more dropoff/pickup time

Commuting characteristics: type of work

- 26% of long car commuters were in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations
  - People in this occupational group represent 15% of all commuters
- 30% of all long car commuters have no fixed place of work (the work they perform requires them to regularly switch their work location).
  - This helps explain the high proportion of long car commuters in trades and transport

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Proportion of commuters by occupation group, and type of commuter

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Commuting characteristics: time leaving home for work

- Whether to beat traffic or to make sure they get to work on time, many long-duration car commuters leave very early in the morning.

- 17% of long car commuters leave home from 5:00am to 5:59am

  - 6% of <u>all</u> commuters leave home in this time frame

- Another 14% of long car commuters leave at 6:00am, compared with 6% of all commuters

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Long car commuters: Where are they working?

- The Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) has the largest population in Canada (5.9 million), and the second largest in terms of geographic size, at 5,900 square kilometres
  - Over 1,000 people live there per square kilometre
- 18% of all Canadian commuters with a usual workplace work in the Toronto CMA
- 33% of all long car commuters with a usual workplace work in the Toronto CMA
- Montreal has 12% of all commuters, 18% of long car commuters

Conclusions/take-aways:

- Worth looking at 2016 data when available: are things getting better, worse?

- Perform deeper analyses (e.g., regression analysis, odds ratios) and try to control for multicollinearity

Questions?

Thank you/Merci