Travel Time to Work in the United States: 2019

American Community Survey Reports

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In 2019, the duration of the average one-way commute in the United States increased to a new high of 27.6 minutes, and a record 9.8 percent of commuters reported daily one-way commutes of at least 1 hour.[1] While commuting time has increased in the United States, the national estimate masks notable differences across demographic characteristics, mode, and geography. This report begins by summarizing trends in travel time among U.S. workers between 2006 and 2019 using single-year data from the American Community Survey (ACS). The report then moves on to take a closer look at patterns in travel time along selected characteristics using 2019 ACS estimates.
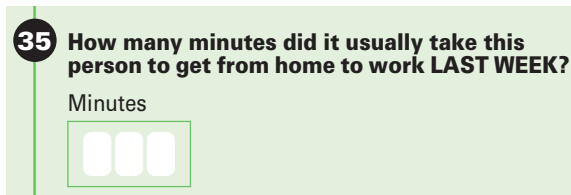
Among other questions related to work travel, the ACS asks respondents how long it takes them to travel to work (Figure 1).[2] The 2019 ACS 1-year estimates collected commuting data throughout calendar year 2019; therefore, these data necessarily reflect the situation prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. These data will provide a baseline for understanding the impact of the pandemic and the resulting economic crisis and recession that began in early 2020. In 2019, approximately 148 million

Figure 1.
Question on Travel Time to Work From the American Community Survey: 2019

35 **How many minutes did it usually take this person to get from home to work LAST WEEK?**

Minutes

Note: See additional details at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/questionnaire-archive.2019.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

U.S. workers commuted to a workplace.[3, 4] Workers who worked from home are not included in information presented in this report, unless otherwise stated. The increase from 2018 to 2019 of about one-half of a minute for the average commuter's daily commute is the latest in a series of small increases in average one-way travel time.

In 2006, the average travel time for the nation was 25.0 minutes.[5] The increase of about 2.6 minutes between 2006 and 2019 represents an overall rise of about 10 percent over 14 years (Figure 2).[6]

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[1] The U.S. Census Bureau reviewed this data product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and has approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied to this release. CBDRB-FY20-POP001-0178.

[2] ACS questions related to travel focus only on commuting and do not include nonwork trips.

[3] In 2019, nearly 9 million workers, or 5.7 percent of all workers, typically worked from home.

[4] The ACS means of transportation categories were updated in 2019 to better capture the ways people in the United States travel to work. This report uses the updated categories.

[5] Estimates for Puerto Rico are not included in this report.

[6] Average commute times in the report are one way, from home to work.

What is the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is an annual, nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely social, economic, housing, and demographic data for the nation, states, congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities. It has an annual sample size of about 3.5 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters (e.g., nursing facilities and prisons).[1] The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation and every municipio in Puerto Rico (the Puerto Rico Community Survey).

[1] Group quarters were added in 2006, the second year of full implementation. For more information, please see "American Community Survey Design and Methodology" located at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology/design-and-methodology.html>.

Beginning in 2006, ACS 1-year estimates have been released annually for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. Beginning in 2010, ACS 5-year estimates have been released annually for all geographies down to the block-group level. Beginning in 2015, ACS 1-year supplemental estimates have been released annually for geographic areas with populations of 20,000 and greater. The ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates are all period estimates that represent data collected within particular intervals of time—12 months and 60 months, respectively. For information on the ACS, visit <www.census.gov/acs>.

Figure 2.
Average Travel Time to Work in the United States: 2006 to 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)
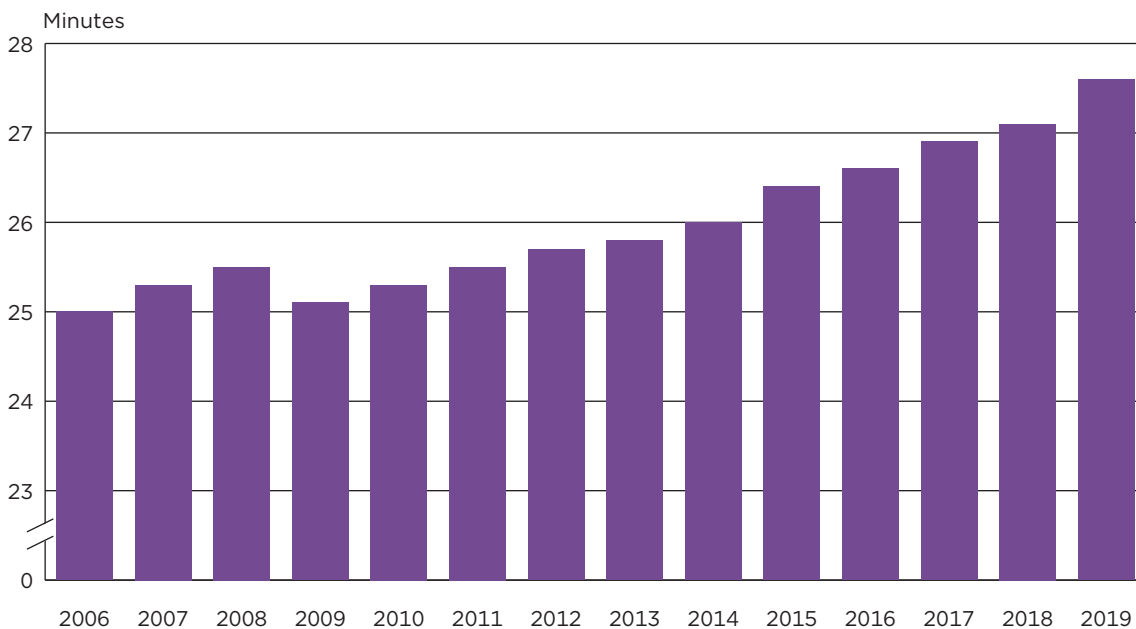
Note: See Appendix Table 1 for estimates and margins of error. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 to 2019 American Community Surveys, 1-year estimates.

Average travel time increased most years (relative to the prior year) between 2006 and 2019.[7] The decrease in travel time between 2008 (25.5 minutes) and 2009 (25.1 minutes) coincides with the decrease in labor force participation charted in the aftermath of the financial crisis of the late 2000s.[8]

While average travel time offers one key national measure of commuting, it masks variation in travel time among U.S. workers. Table 1 shows the distribution of average travel time among U.S. commuters, presented in discrete intervals. In 2019, 14.9 percent of workers had one-way commutes between 15 and 19 minutes, the most common interval. Travel times of 90 minutes or more were less typical, at 3.1 percent of commuters. Travel times of less than 5 minutes were also relatively uncommon, at 2.7 percent of commuters.

Longer commutes became more common between 2006 and 2019, while shorter commutes became less common. Figure 3 highlights the share of commuters reporting travel times of less than 10 minutes and of at least 60 minutes or more between 2006 and 2019. In 2006, 14.8 percent of commuters reported travel times of less than 10 minutes; this group declined to 11.9 percent by 2019. Conversely, the percentage of workers reporting commutes of 60 minutes

Table 1.
Travel Time to Work: 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Travel time	Percent	Margin of error (±)
Less than 5 minutes	2.7	0.1
5 to 9 minutes	9.2	0.1
10 to 14 minutes	12.9	0.1
15 to 19 minutes	14.9	0.1
20 to 24 minutes	14.1	0.1
25 to 29 minutes	6.6	0.1
30 to 34 minutes	13.9	0.1
35 to 39 minutes	3.2	0.1
40 to 44 minutes	4.1	0.1
45 to 59 minutes	8.5	0.1
60 to 89 minutes	6.7	0.1
90 or more minutes	3.1	0.1

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation /code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Table 2.
Time of Departure and Average Travel Time to Work: 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Time	Percent	Margin of error (±)	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)
12:00 a.m. to 4:59 a.m.	5.1	0.1	35.2	0.2
5:00 a.m. to 5:29 a.m.	4.0	0.1	35.4	0.2
5:30 a.m. to 5:59 a.m.	4.8	0.1	30.8	0.2
6:00 a.m. to 6:29 a.m.	8.9	0.1	32.8	0.1
6:30 a.m. to 6:59 a.m.	9.6	0.1	28.2	0.1
7:00 a.m. to 7:29 a.m.	14.7	0.1	29.3	0.1
7:30 a.m. to 7:59 a.m.	12.0	0.1	24.3	0.1
8:00 a.m. to 8:29 a.m.	11.5	0.1	26.5	0.1
8:30 a.m. to 8:59 a.m.	5.5	0.1	23.2	0.1
9:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m.	23.9	0.1	23.8	0.1

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation /code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

or longer increased from 7.9 percent in 2006 to 9.8 percent in 2019.

In 2019, average travel time to work also varied by time of departure for the workplace (Table 2). Workers leaving home during the earliest hours of the day, from 12:00 a.m. to 4:59 a.m. and from 5:00 a.m. to 5:29 a.m., had the longest average travel times to work, at 35.2 and 35.4

minutes, respectively.[9] However, these two groups made up a relatively small proportion of all commuters, at 5.1 and 4.0 percent, respectively. A majority of workers, approximately 57 percent, left for work from 6:00 a.m. to 8:29 a.m. Among this group, those leaving from 6:00 a.m. to 6:29 a.m. reported the longest average travel time to work, at 32.8 minutes.

[7] Average travel times for 2012 and 2013 were not significantly different from one another.

[8] For more information on labor force participation between 2008 and 2009, see the *Labor Force Participation Rate for Selected Age Groups: 2008 and 2009 document* located at <https://www2 .census.gov/library/publications/2010/acs /acsbr09-09.pdf>.

[9] The travel times for 12:00 a.m. to 4:29 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. to 5:29 a.m. were not statistically different from each other.

Figure 3.
U.S. Workers Traveling Less Than 10 Minutes or at Least 60 Minutes: 2006 to 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Percent
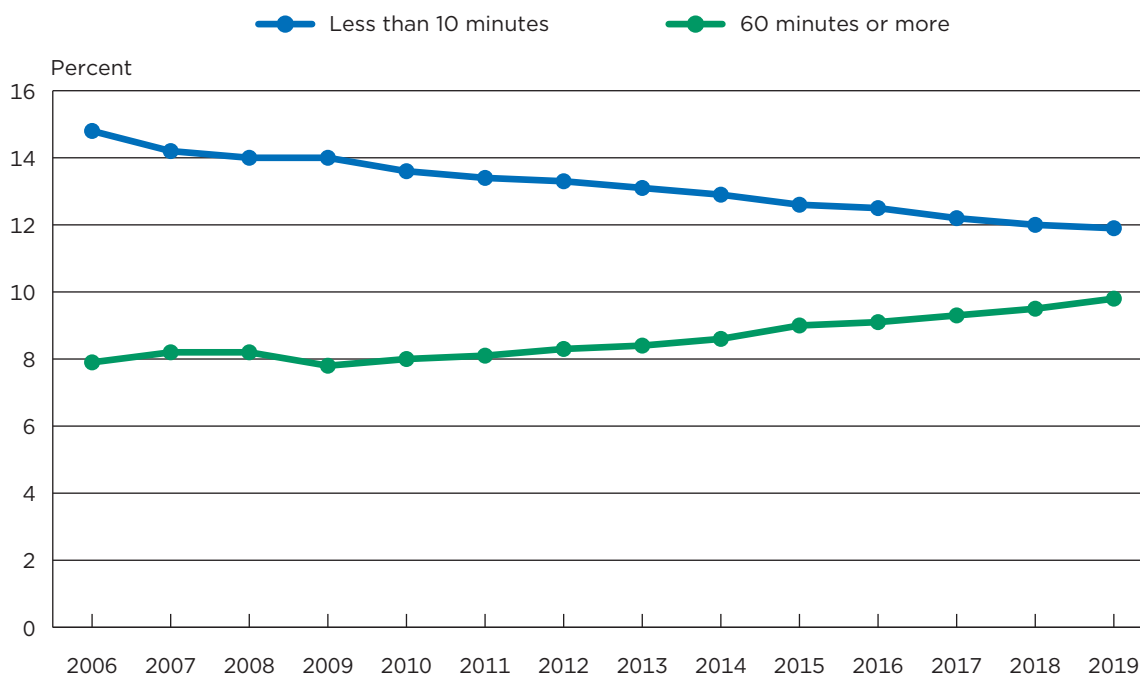
Note: See Appendix Table 2 for estimates and margins of error. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 to 2019 American Community Surveys, 1-year estimates.

In addition to asking about travel time, the ACS asks respondents how they get to work. More than three-quarters of workers drove alone to work in 2019 (see Appendix Table 3). Commutes may involve multiple transportation modes, but respondents are restricted to indicating the single mode used for the longest distance. Figure 4 shows average travel time by means of transportation to work. Commuters who drove alone reported an average travel time of 26.4 minutes in 2019, about 1 minute shorter than the national average. Workers who commuted by bicycle and walking had even shorter commutes of 21.2 minutes and 12.6 minutes, respectively.

Workers who carpooled or took public transportation reported longer than average commutes. In 2019, the average travel time to work among carpoolers was 28.5 minutes. The longest average travel times were associated with various forms of public transportation. For example, workers who traveled to work by bus had an average commute of 46.6 minutes. Workers who traveled by typically longer-distance public transportation modes, such as long-distance train, commuter rail, or ferryboat, had the longest one-way average travel time at 71.2 minutes, more than double the national average.
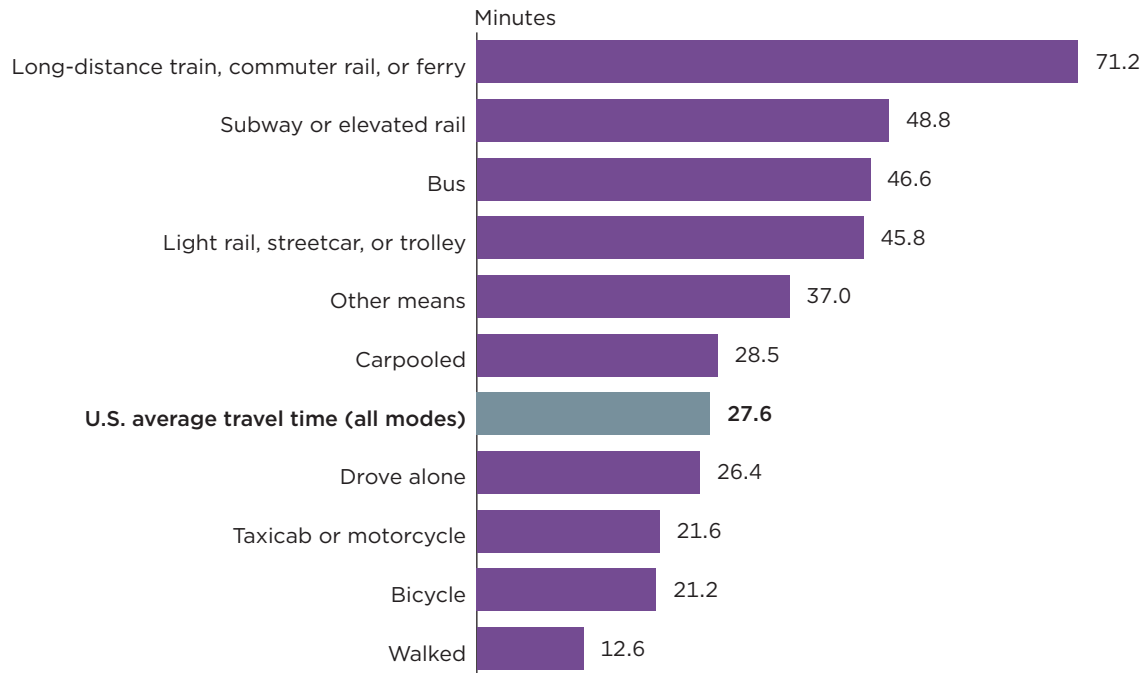
Geographic differences in travel time become evident when sorting workers by the type of community in which they live. Metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas (metro or micro areas) are county-based geographies with a high degree of interconnectedness represented by commuting ties.[10] Table 3 presents average travel times by different geographies and their respective components. Workers living in metro or micro areas are grouped by residence inside

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[10] Metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas include a core urbanized area and the county or counties that contain it and any adjacent counties with a high degree of commuting-based interconnectedness. A detailed definition can be found at <www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content /uploads/2018/09/Bulletin-18-04.pdf>.

Figure 4.
Average Travel Time to Work by Means of Transportation: 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Minutes

Means of Transportation	Minutes
Long-distance train, commuter rail, or ferry	71.2
Subway or elevated rail	48.8
Bus	46.6
Light rail, streetcar, or trolley	45.8
Other means	37.0
Carpooled	28.5
U.S. average travel time (all modes)	**27.6**
Drove alone	26.4
Taxicab or motorcycle	21.6
Bicycle	21.2
Walked	12.6

Note: See Appendix Table 3 for estimates and margins of error. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Table 3.
Average Travel Time to Work by Geography: 2006 and 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Geography	2006		2019		Change	
	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)	Difference (2019–2006)	Margin of error (±)
Nation	25.0	0.1	27.6	0.1	2.6	0.1
Metropolitan statistical area.	25.6	0.1	28.1	0.1	2.5	0.1
Principal city.	24.2	0.1	26.5	0.1	2.3	0.1
Not in principal city.	26.4	0.1	29.1	0.1	2.7	0.1
Micropolitan statistical area	21.1	0.1	23.0	0.1	1.9	0.2
Principal city.	16.5	0.2	18.3	0.2	1.8	0.2
Not in principal city.	23.3	0.1	25.4	0.2	2.1	0.2
Not in metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area. .	22.8	0.1	25.2	0.2	2.4	0.2

Note: Geographic definitions (metropolitan and micropolitan) may not be identical for 2006 and 2019. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 and 2019 American Community Surveys, 1-year estimates.

or outside of a principal city.[11] Workers in metro areas had a longer average commute time in 2019, at 28.1 minutes, compared to workers in micro areas and areas not in a metro or micro area. Among workers in metro areas, travel time varied based on residence inside or outside of a principal city.[12] Workers in metro areas living outside of principal cities had the longest average one-way travel time, at 29.1 minutes, while those residing in the principal cities of metro areas had an average travel time of 26.5 minutes.

The same general relationship is evident among workers who reside in micropolitan areas. Workers living in principal cities of micropolitan areas in 2019 had a shorter average travel time (18.3 minutes) than those living elsewhere in micropolitan areas (25.4 minutes). This trend has held historically: in 2006, workers living in principal cities in micropolitan areas also had shorter average commute times than those not living in principal cities.

Table 4.
Average Travel Time to Work by Metropolitan Area Population Size: 2019
(Workers 16 years and over living in metropolitan areas who did not work from home)

Metropolitan area size	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)
5 million or more	33.1	0.1
3 million to 4.9 million	30.3	0.1
1 million to 2.9 million	26.5	0.1
500,000 to 999,999	25.2	0.1
300,000 to 499,999	23.9	0.1
Less than 300,000	22.6	0.1

Note: See Appendix Table 4 for an expanded version of this table with average travel times for those living within principal cities and outside of principal cities by metro size. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Within large metro areas, where dense concentrations of people and industry contribute to diverse transportation options, workers generally had longer commutes. Table 4 displays average travel time to work for workers in metro areas, sorted into six groups according to the total resident population of the metro area. Workers living in metro areas with populations of 5 million or more had the longest average travel time, at 33.1 minutes. Workers in the smallest metro areas, those with fewer than 300,000 residents, had the shortest average travel time, at 22.6 minutes.

Table 5 shows average commute times and the percentage of workers reporting short and long commutes for metro areas with populations of at least 1 million, sorted by total population.[13] Among large metro areas, the New York-Newark-Jersey

City, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area stands out with the longest average travel time, at 37.7 minutes, and the highest percentage of workers with commutes of at least 60 minutes, at 22.7 percent. The Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Area and the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA Metro Area are also notable, with average travel times of 35.6 minutes and 35.2 minutes, respectively.[14] Numerous factors, such as population size, geographic expanse, and a complex mix of transportation modes, may contribute to comparatively long average travel times in these large metro areas. Many of the nation's largest metro areas with comparatively high travel times offer a diverse set of transportation options, including numerous forms of public transportation such as bus, subway, and long-distance train (see Figure 4). The New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area, with the nation's

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[11] This brief uses metropolitan and micropolitan area definitions based on the U.S. Office of Management and Budget delineation from September 2018. More information can be found at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/metro-micro.html>.

[12] The largest city in each metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area is designated a "principal city." Additional cities qualify if specified requirements are met concerning population size and employment. The title of each metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area consists of the names of up to three of its principal cities and the name of each state into which the metropolitan or micropolitan statistical area extends. More information about metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas is located at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/metro-micro/about.html>.

[13] Population estimates are from the Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019 located at <www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2010s-total-metro-and-micro-statistical-areas.html>.

[14] Average travel times for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metro Areas and the San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA Metro Areas were not statistically different.

Table 5.
Travel Time to Work Indicators for Metropolitan Areas With Population of at Least 1 Million: 2019—Con.
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Metropolitan area name	2019 total population estimates	Total workers	Margin of error (±)	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)	Percent less than 10 minutes	Margin of error (±)	Percent 60 minutes or more	Margin of error (±)
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA	19,216,182	9,490,268	30,187	37.7	0.2	6.4	0.2	22.7	0.3
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	13,214,799	6,525,348	19,587	31.7	0.2	6.5	0.2	14.4	0.3
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI	9,458,539	4,730,881	17,829	32.4	0.2	7.9	0.3	14.4	0.3
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX.	7,573,136	3,805,142	21,322	28.6	0.2	8.1	0.3	9.3	0.3
Houston-The Woodlands -Sugar Land, TX.	7,066,141	3,371,952	23,206	30.7	0.3	7.4	0.4	11.4	0.4
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV. .	6,280,487	3,374,979	17,599	35.6	0.3	5.9	0.2	18.3	0.4
Miami-Fort Lauderdale -Pompano Beach, FL.	6,166,488	3,036,115	19,925	30.3	0.3	6.6	0.3	11.1	0.5
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD . .	6,102,434	3,013,833	16,219	30.8	0.3	9.1	0.3	12.3	0.4
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Alpharetta, GA.	6,020,364	2,978,627	22,940	32.5	0.3	6.8	0.4	14.2	0.4
Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ	4,948,203	2,341,707	15,720	27.9	0.3	9.6	0.4	8.7	0.4
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH.	4,873,019	2,649,813	13,986	32.6	0.3	8.6	0.3	15.6	0.5
San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley, CA	4,731,803	2,438,609	16,380	35.2	0.4	6.6	0.4	19.4	0.5
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA.	4,650,631	2,000,758	16,497	33.9	0.5	8.8	0.4	18.4	0.6
Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI.	4,319,629	2,043,078	14,136	27.5	0.2	9.0	0.3	7.7	0.3
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA.	3,979,845	2,100,080	15,678	31.6	0.3	7.6	0.4	12.5	0.4
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	3,640,043	1,963,547	11,574	26.1	0.2	9.8	0.4	6.0	0.2
San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA	3,338,330	1,671,791	14,287	27.2	0.3	7.6	0.4	8.0	0.5
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL.	3,194,831	1,488,779	14,156	28.3	0.3	9.2	0.5	9.4	0.5
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	2,967,239	1,620,439	11,940	28.8	0.3	7.2	0.4	8.2	0.4
St. Louis, MO-IL.	2,803,228	1,394,219	8,325	26.0	0.3	10.2	0.4	5.6	0.4
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD.	2,800,053	1,412,890	14,469	31.7	0.4	7.8	0.5	13.3	0.5
Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC.	2,636,883	1,329,275	13,095	27.7	0.4	8.9	0.5	8.2	0.5
Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	2,608,147	1,290,880	14,047	30.2	0.5	6.6	0.5	9.5	0.8
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	2,550,960	1,216,469	13,624	27.4	0.4	9.5	0.6	7.9	0.5
Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA.	2,492,412	1,270,095	9,201	26.8	0.4	10.7	0.5	7.8	0.4
Sacramento-Roseville-Folsom, CA.	2,363,730	1,108,303	11,518	28.2	0.4	9.4	0.5	8.9	0.5
Pittsburgh, PA.	2,317,600	1,142,265	9,684	27.7	0.3	11.4	0.5	8.6	0.5
Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	2,266,715	1,075,208	10,385	25.9	0.4	7.8	0.5	5.2	0.4
Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown, TX	2,227,083	1,204,161	11,317	27.7	0.4	9.1	0.5	8.7	0.6
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN.	2,221,208	1,107,809	11,186	25.8	0.4	10.7	0.6	6.0	0.4
Kansas City, MO-KS	2,157,990	1,098,306	10,073	23.9	0.3	11.9	0.7	4.0	0.3
Columbus, OH	2,122,271	1,085,889	10,687	25.0	0.4	10.8	0.6	5.2	0.4
Indianapolis-Carmel-Anderson, IN.	2,074,537	1,031,534	11,076	25.6	0.4	11.1	0.8	5.4	0.5
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	2,048,449	985,487	9,132	24.9	0.3	11.0	0.6	4.7	0.3
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	1,990,660	1,024,286	10,027	30.3	0.4	6.3	0.5	11.7	0.6

See source at end of table.

Table 5.

Travel Time to Work Indicators for Metropolitan Areas With Population of at Least 1 Million: 2019—Con.

(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Metropolitan area name	2019 total population estimates	Total workers	Margin of error (±)	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)	Percent less than 10 minutes	Margin of error (±)	Percent 60 minutes or more	Margin of error (±)
Nashville-Davidson—Murfreesboro—Franklin, TN	1,934,317	1,013,325	9,194	28.5	0.4	8.8	0.6	9.4	0.6
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC	1,768,901	891,657	9,716	24.6	0.4	11.2	0.7	5.5	0.4
Providence-Warwick, RI-MA	1,624,578	820,031	8,819	27.2	0.5	11.2	0.7	9.2	0.6
Milwaukee-Waukesha, WI	1,575,179	787,139	9,007	23.5	0.4	11.7	0.6	4.0	0.4
Jacksonville, FL	1,559,514	752,683	12,065	27.3	0.5	9.0	0.8	6.6	0.6
Oklahoma City, OK	1,408,950	671,488	7,991	23.7	0.3	11.0	0.7	4.5	0.4
Raleigh-Cary, NC	1,390,785	713,752	8,882	27.4	0.5	7.5	0.6	7.1	0.6
Memphis, TN-MS-AR	1,346,045	622,375	10,195	24.8	0.6	10.6	1.0	4.2	0.5
Richmond, VA	1,291,900	659,986	8,822	25.9	0.5	9.0	0.6	5.5	0.5
New Orleans-Metairie, LA	1,270,530	600,263	7,344	26.5	0.6	11.1	0.9	8.2	0.7
Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN	1,265,108	619,088	7,248	24.2	0.5	10.1	0.9	4.2	0.5
Salt Lake City, UT	1,232,696	644,308	7,525	23.3	0.5	10.9	0.8	4.5	0.6
Hartford-East Hartford-Middletown, CT	1,204,877	614,743	7,505	24.2	0.4	11.7	0.8	5.3	0.5
Buffalo-Cheektowaga, NY	1,127,983	550,508	6,520	21.7	0.4	14.1	0.9	3.1	0.4
Birmingham-Hoover, AL	1,090,435	502,772	8,330	28.1	0.7	8.0	0.8	7.8	0.7
Grand Rapids-Kentwood, MI	1,077,370	545,994	7,507	21.9	0.4	14.4	0.8	4.4	0.6
Rochester, NY	1,069,644	525,560	6,547	21.4	0.4	15.0	0.9	3.5	0.4
Tucson, AZ	1,047,279	462,246	6,127	25.1	0.6	10.4	0.9	5.0	0.5

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 Population Estimates and 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

largest pubic transportation system, had the longest average travel time among large metro areas.[15]

Among metro areas with a population of at least 1 million people, smaller metro areas, such as Columbus, OH, tended to have average travel times that were shorter than the national average. Among individual metro areas of less than a million people (not shown), average travel times were generally shorter than those of their more populous counterparts. Still, there were some notable smaller metro areas with exceptionally high average travel times. These exceptions were often smaller metro areas situated within commuting distance of a larger metro area within the same region. For example, the East Stroudsburg, PA Metro Area, located within commuting distance of the New York metro area, had an average travel time of 39.7 minutes, considerably higher than the national average of 27.6 minutes.[16]

SUMMARY

Average travel time to work in the United States increased almost every year from 2006 to 2019. The average one-way

travel time to work increased by 2.6 minutes between 2006 and 2019, representing a notable increase in time expenditure for the average worker. The share of workers experiencing commutes of 60 minutes or more was greater in 2019 than in 2006, while the share of workers experiencing commutes of less than 10 minutes declined. In 2019, workers who walked or bicycled to work experienced shorter than average commuting times. Compared with workers who drove alone, commuters traveling by public transportation had longer average travel times.

Dense public transportation networks are generally only available to workers residing in large metro areas, and this subset of workers reported longer travel times in 2019 than those in micro areas or elsewhere. Some of the longest average travel times were among workers living in metro areas with very large populations. The nation's largest metro, the New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area, also had the longest average commute time in 2019 among metro areas with populations of at least 1 million people.[17]

Average travel time to work is one key aspect of commuting captured by the ACS. As the transportation environment and commuting patterns change, the ACS will continue to provide detailed information on the commuting experiences of workers in the United States.

[15] The New York metro area had the highest percentage of public transit commuters (30.9 percent). In addition, Metropolitan Transportation Authority New York City Transit had the highest number of unlinked passenger trips. More information on the American Public Transportation Association *2020 Public Transportation Fact Book* can be found at <www.apta .com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-2020 -Fact-Book.pdf>.

[16] The 2019 ACS 1-year estimate for East Stroudsburg, PA Metro Area was 39.7 minutes, with a margin of error of 3.0 minutes. This was not statistically different from the New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area.

[17] While the East Stroudsburg, PA Metro Area is a smaller metropolitan area, it is in close proximity to the New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA Metro Area.

SOURCE AND ACCURACY

The data presented in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2019. The estimates based on this sample describe the actual average values of person, household, and housing unit characteristics over this period of collection. Sampling error is the uncertainty between an estimate based on a sample and the corresponding value that would be obtained if the estimate were based on the entire population (as from a census). Measures of sampling error are provided in the form of margins of error for all estimates included in this report. All comparative statements in this report have undergone statistical testing and comparisons are significant at the 90 percent confidence level. In addition to sampling error, nonsampling error may be introduced during any of the operations used to collect and process survey data such as editing, reviewing, or keying data from questionnaires. For more information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors, please see the "2019 ACS 1-year Accuracy of the Data (US)" document located at <www.census.gov /programs-surveys/acs/technical -documentation/code-lists.html>.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Appendix Table 1.
Average Travel Time to Work in the United States: 2006 to 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Year	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)
2006	25.0	0.1
2007	25.3	0.1
2008	25.5	0.1
2009	25.1	0.1
2010	25.3	0.1
2011	25.5	0.1
2012	25.7	0.1
2013	25.8	0.1
2014	26.0	0.1
2015	26.4	0.1
2016	26.6	0.1
2017	26.9	0.1
2018	27.1	0.1
2019	27.6	0.1

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 to 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Appendix Table 2.
U.S. Workers Traveling Less Than 10 Minutes or at Least 60 Minutes: 2006 to 2019
(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Year	Less than 10 minutes		60 minutes or more	
	Percent	Margin of error (±)	Percent	Margin of error (±)
2006	14.8	0.1	7.9	0.1
2007	14.2	0.1	8.2	0.1
2008	14.0	0.1	8.2	0.1
2009	14.0	0.1	7.8	0.1
2010	13.6	0.1	8.0	0.1
2011	13.4	0.1	8.1	0.1
2012	13.3	0.1	8.3	0.1
2013	13.1	0.1	8.4	0.1
2014	12.9	0.1	8.6	0.1
2015	12.6	0.1	9.0	0.1
2016	12.5	0.1	9.1	0.1
2017	12.2	0.1	9.3	0.1
2018	12.0	0.1	9.5	0.1
2019	11.9	0.1	9.8	0.1

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 to 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Appendix Table 3.

Average Travel Time to Work by Means of Transportation: 2019

(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Means of transportation	Estimate	Margin of error (±)	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)
U.S. average travel time (all modes)	**148,000,000**	**169,600**	**27.6**	**0.1**
Drove alone	119,200,000	145,400	26.4	0.1
Carpooled......................................	13,900,000	82,350	28.5	0.1
Walked...	4,153,000	43,360	12.6	0.1
Bus	3,601,000	34,900	46.6	0.3
Subway or elevated rail.........................	2,936,000	29,090	48.8	0.2
Other means	1,571,000	27,460	37.0	0.8
Long-distance train, commuter rail, or ferryboat..	998,600	17,880	71.2	0.6
Bicycle...	805,700	19,870	21.2	0.3
Taxicab or motorcycle...........................	607,700	14,140	21.6	0.5
Light rail, streetcar, or trolley...................	242,800	8,667	45.8	0.9

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

Appendix Table 4.

Average Travel Time to Work by Metropolitan Area Population Size and Geographic Component: 2019

(Workers 16 years and over who did not work from home)

Metropolitan area size and community type	Average travel time	Margin of error (±)
5 million or more		
Total	33.1	0.1
Principal city...........................	33.4	0.1
Not in principal city	32.8	0.1
3 million to 4.9 million		
Total	30.3	0.1
Principal city...........................	28.2	0.1
Not in principal city	31.7	0.1
1 million to 2.9 million		
Total	26.5	0.1
Principal city...........................	25.0	0.1
Not in principal city	27.6	0.1
500,000 to 999,999		
Total	25.2	0.1
Principal city...........................	22.4	0.2
Not in principal city	26.8	0.1
300,000 to 499,999		
Total	23.9	0.1
Principal city...........................	21.1	0.2
Not in principal city	25.8	0.2
Less Than 300,000		
Total	22.6	0.1
Principal city...........................	19.0	0.1
Not in principal city	25.2	0.2

Note: For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.