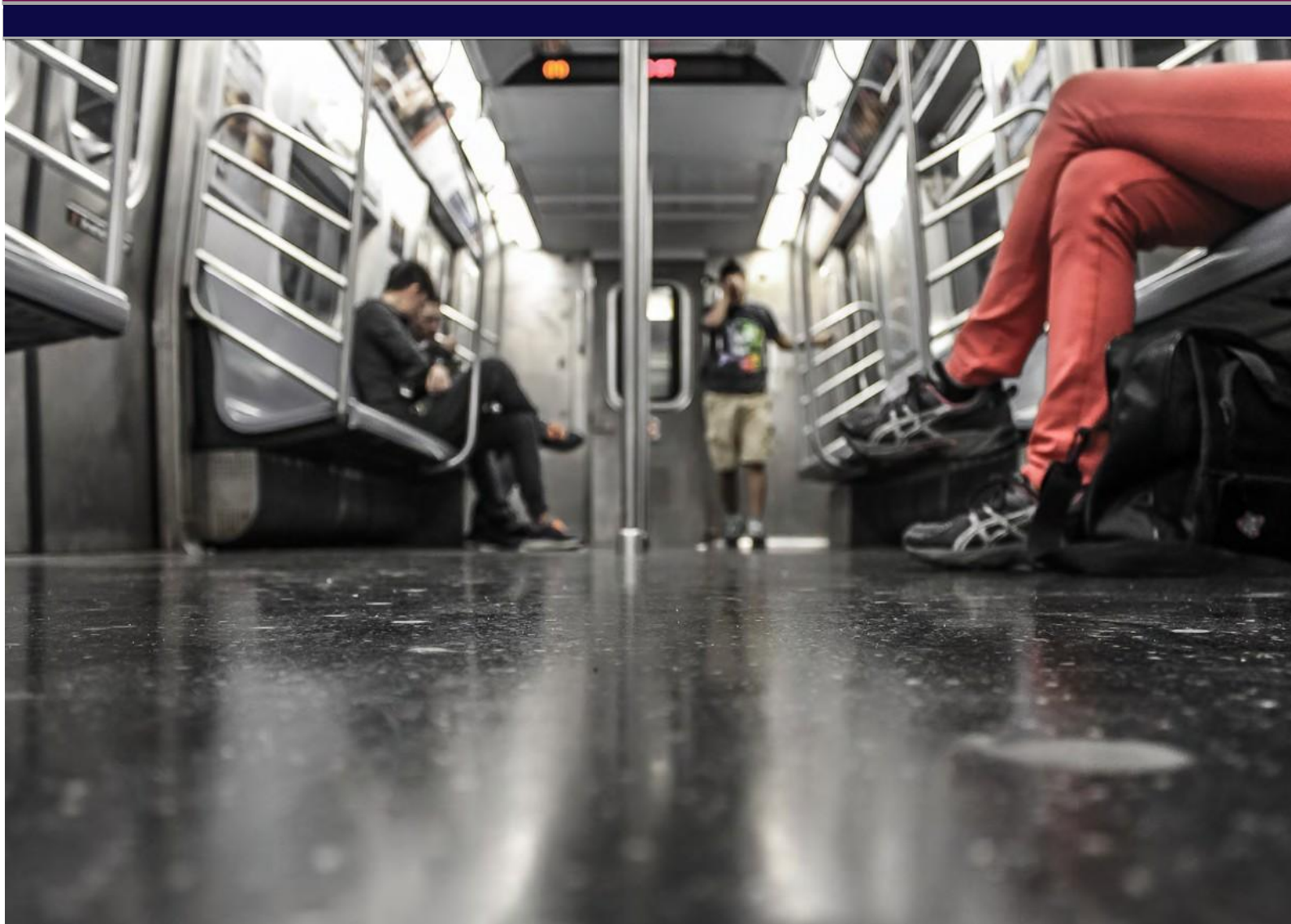


Mobilizing Justice Partnership

A National Survey on Transport Poverty: Survey Overview and Data Collection

Matan E. Singer, Ignacio Tiznado Aitken, Catherine Morency, Hubert Verreault, Samuel Duhaime-Morissette, Howaida Hassan, and Steven Farber

August 2025



**MOBILIZING
JUSTICE** _____

Towards Evidence-Based
Transportation Equity Policy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	2
ABOUT MOBILIZING JUSTICE	2
ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT.....	3
SURVEY OVERVIEW	4
DATA COLLECTION.....	5
SAMPLING STRATEGY	6
HOW TO CITE	9
CONTACT	9

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding for the survey design and data collection was provided by Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

ABOUT MOBILIZING JUSTICE

The Mobilizing Justice Partnership is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Based at the University of Toronto Scarborough, the national intersectoral research partnership aims to understand and address transportation poverty in Canada and to improve the well-being of Canadians at risk of transport poverty. Learn more at <https://mobilizingjustice.ca>.

Mobilizing Justice (MJ) is a multidisciplinary and multisectoral partnership that currently includes 12 universities, 8 municipal governments, 6 provincial and federal agencies, 8 non-profits, and 7 private sector firms (Table 1). The partnership spans 6 provinces, two states, and 10 metropolitan areas. Our interdisciplinary academic team is composed of economists, epidemiologists, geographers, civil engineers, sociologists, and urban planners. Our non-governmental partners represent professional bodies, unions, nonprofit advocacy groups and think tanks, social service providers and new transportation technology companies.

Table 1: Mobilizing Justice Partners

Universities	Governments and Agencies	Businesses and Community Organizations
CIRRELT (Université de Montréal)	Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain (ARTM)	Amalgamated Transit Union Canada
CIRODD (École de Technologie Supérieure)	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Canadian Institute of Planners
McGill University	City of Calgary	Canadian Urban Institute
McMaster University	City of Edmonton	Canadian Urban Transit Association
Memorial University	City of Toronto	Centre for Active Transportation
Simon Fraser University	City of Vancouver	ESRI Canada
University of British Columbia	Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO)	Federation of Canadian Municipalities
University of Manitoba	Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada	Pantonium
University of Oregon	Metrolinx	Pembina Institute
University of Texas Austin	Region of Waterloo	RideShark
University of Toronto	Statistics Canada	Spare Labs
University of Waterloo	Translink	Transit App
	Toronto Transit Committee (TTC)	United Way of the GTA
	Ville de Montreal	Urban Strategies
	York Region	

We acknowledge that our team does not represent or speak for equity and sovereignty seeking groups. But this team is committed to creating meaningful opportunities and capacity building for individuals and organizations across Canada who are working towards mobility justice in

their communities. Many individuals working across this project bring equity-based lenses from both their own lived experiences and professional expertise to the project's governance, research, and operations. We are always looking out for opportunities to deepen our own equity practice, and we invite members of the community to work with us collaboratively to achieve shared goals.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to summarize the research efforts of Mobilizing Justice partners and researchers in developing the *National Survey on Transport Poverty*. The document includes sections detailing the survey design and development, sampling strategy, and data collection.

SURVEY OVERVIEW

Although equity and inclusion are part of provincial and municipal policy goals in Canada (Government of Canada, 2017), there has been no attempt to date to collect data and understand the scale of transport poverty at a national scale. Therefore, MJ has conducted the first-ever large-scale survey of transportation poverty and transportation-related social exclusion across Canada. Transportation poverty refers to situations where socio-economic marginalization combines with transportation barriers to mutually reinforce problems in peoples' lives, preventing them from thriving. Transportation-related social exclusion is the outcome of transport poverty, as it results from the activities that people miss out on because of one's transportation situation, things like missing job interviews and doctors' visits, as well as feelings of isolation.

The theoretical scope of the survey has grown since its initial conception, as our partners have called for a greater focus on transportation and mobility justice. Transportation justice refers to the prioritization of marginalized and disadvantaged travellers in the allocation of transportation resources, while mobility justice calls us to center the voices, needs, and aspirations of residents from equity- and sovereignty-deserving communities.

Thus, the survey had two main objectives:

- Design and implement a state-of-the-art survey on transport poverty and transport-related social exclusion in Canada.
- Understand transportation barriers, suppressed demand, and what combination of transport provisions might be considered a necessary baseline to eliminate transport poverty.

The collaborative survey design process started with a workshop that included 48 participants from 7 provinces, two-thirds of whom worked in government, non-profits, industry or were recruited community members. The workshop included brainstorming regarding the most important elements to account for in the questionnaire. Participants brainstormed over 900 responses in Mentimeter, an audience engagement platform, and raised another 140 points in breakout discussions. The workshop organizers then coded the Mentimeter comments into key topics to produce a workshop outcomes report. The MJ's A1 Working Group then utilized the workshop outcomes report to develop possible survey questions that were tested by the Mobilizing Justice Community and Equity Advisory Table (CEAT) through multiple co-creation sessions.

The A1 team moved to pilot the survey by developing an extensive set of questions addressing various perspectives of transport justice based on CEAT feedback, engagement with the project's leadership committee, and advice from other activities related to the MJ partnership. The identified questions were devised into a set of four pilot survey scenarios related to the 'Perceptions' section of the survey. This section focused on, among other things, safety concerns, issues faced accessing or using transportation options and opportunities, availability of transportation options, and ease of access to various destinations. The objective was to test various sets of questions, assess consequent total survey duration and burden, and the quality of gathered data. A pool of 748 respondents maintained by the Polytechnique research group was used for testing. Respondents were invited through an email and randomly allocated one of

the scenarios when they logged in. Insights from the four pilot survey scenarios were compiled and shared with CEAT members and additional Mobilizing Justice partners for final feedback.

Following the iterative survey design process, five main themes of interest were finally included in the survey:

- (i) Barriers and constraints
- (ii) Wellbeing outcomes
- (iii) Satisfaction and gaps
- (iv) Suppressed and excess travel
- (v) Aspirations

Unlike previous research involving travel diaries, our survey collected novel information about the suppressed demand for travel by asking respondents to consider what trips or activities they did not make over the specified period and why.

DATA COLLECTION

A professional survey firm was used to target and collect data from low-income households as well as a representative control sample from various regions across the country. The final sample includes over 27,000 respondents, including close to 20,000 low-income households, defined as before-tax annual household income below \$60,000. The focus on low-income households stems from the understanding that this group (which are considered priority populations within this partnership) is subject to multiple sources of structural marginalization, including but not limited to age, recent immigration, racialization, lone-parent families, and food-insecurity.

Data were collected from 41 Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) across Canada. Data were also collected for areas outside CMAs, which were considered as a single unit in each Province. This allowed sampling non-urban places. This geographic coverage yields important information about the scale, causes, and effects of transport poverty within different structurally marginalized groups and across all regions of Canada.

The data collected includes extensive demographic information about the socio-economic and household situation of the sampled population. The sample size collected seeks to capture individual and household level data from different income levels (i.e., low and middle-high income households), urban, suburban, and rural and equity-seeking groups in vulnerable populations from across Canada.

The survey was designed by a team led by Prof. Catherine Morency at Polytechnique Montréal, where the survey server resides. The survey company recruited participants using available panels and additional digital recruitment techniques by sending participants to the web-based survey housed at the Polytechnique Montréal.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

The recruited sample has the following characteristics:

- The main goal was to collect data in Canada's 41 Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs). 400 responses were targeted for 25 CMAs. In the other 16 (smaller) CMAs, the sample size ranged between 220 and 385 responses.
- 400 responses were collected for each of the non-CMA areas of each province.
- For selected CMAs, 400 responses for each Census Subdivision (CSD) were collected according to the list of CSDs in the detailed table below.
- 225 responses were collected for Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon combined.
- A target was set for at least 30% of the sample to come from households with before-tax annual household income below \$60,000.
- The final sample was weighted by age, gender, household size, and household income to be proportionally representative by quota region, as listed in Table 2. In some cases, weighting attributes and/or geographic regions had to be amalgamated due to sample size.
- The survey company provided the estimated attainable sample size via panel recruitment methods and via alternative recruitment techniques (including, but not limited to, digital marketing, phone interviews, or address-based methods) per each geography. The final sample size for each sampled geographic area is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample Size by Geography

GEOGRAPHY	Total Sample
1. Toronto CMA	<i>3143</i>
1a. Toronto CSD	388
1b. Mississauga CSD	392
1c. Brampton CSD	388
1d. Markham CSD	393
1e. Vaughan CSD	393
1f. Oakville CSD	395
1g. Richmond Hill CSD	396
1h. Other CSDs in Toronto CMA	1183
2. Ottawa CMA	<i>1194</i>
2a. Ottawa CSD	505
2b. Gatineau CSD	398
2c. Other CSDs in Ottawa CMA	291
3. Hamilton CMA	399
3a. Hamilton and Brantford CSD	540
4. Kitchener – Cambridge – Waterloo CMA	741
5. London CMA	307
6. Barrie CMA	324
7. Kingston CMA	358
8. Greater Sudbury / Grand Sudbury / Thunder Bay CMA	380
9. Guelph CMA	371
10. Peterborough and Belleville – Quinte West CMA	346
11. St. Catharines CMA	130
12. Windsor CMA	566
13. Oshawa CMA	209
P1. Rest of Ontario (Non-CMA)	68
14. Montréal CMA	<i>1609</i>
14a. Montreal CSD	403
14b. Laval CSD	400
14c. Longueuil CSD	403
14d. Other CSDs in Montreal CMA	403
15. Sherbrooke CMA	314
16. Saguenay CMA	363
17. Trois-Rivières CMA	364
18. Québec CMA	<i>802</i>
19. Québec CSD	402
19b. Other CSDs in Quebec CMA	400
20. Drummondville CMA	337
P2. Rest of Quebec (Non-CMA)	1045

GEOGRAPHY	Total Sample
21. Vancouver CMA	2378
21a. Vancouver CSD	395
21b. Surrey CSD	393
21c. Burnaby CSD	397
21d. Richmond CSD	397
21e. Coquitlam CSD	250
21f. Other CSDs in Vancouver CMA	546
22. Victoria / Nanaimo CMA	198
23. Abbotsford – Mission / Chilliwack CMA	378
24. Kelowna / Kamloops CMA	311
P3. Rest of British Columbia (Non-CMA)	710
25. Calgary CMA	806
25a. Calgary CSD	431
25b. Airdrie CSD/Rocky View County CSD/Other CSD's in Calgary	375
26. Edmonton CMA	1201
26.a Edmonton CSD	442
26.b Strathcona County CSD/St.Albert CSD/Spruce Grove CSD/Stony Plain CSD	400
26.c Other CSD's in Edmonton CMA	359
27. Lethbridge / Red Deer CMA	376
P4. Rest of Alberta (Non-CMA)	423
28. Winnipeg CMA	799
28a. Winnipeg CSD	625
28b. Other CSDs in Winnipeg CMA	174
P5. Rest of Manitoba (Non-CMA)	400
29. Saskatoon CMA	397
30. Regina CMA	399
P6. Rest of Saskatchewan (Non-CMA)	398
31. Halifax CSD	379
P7. Rest of Nova Scotia (Non-CMA)	416
32. Moncton CMA	399
33. Saint John / Fredericton CMA	398
P8. Rest of New Brunswick (Non-CMA)	400
34. St. John's CMA	401
P9. Rest of Newfoundland and Labrador (Non-CMA)	397
P10. Prince Edward Island	334
P11. Nunavut, Yukon, Northwest Territories	223
Total Sample	27,216

HOW TO CITE

Any use of this document or other related data or documents in publications or other outputs (e.g., reports) should include the following citation:

Morency, C., Hassan, H., Duhaime-Morissette, S., Verreault, H., Palm, M., Tiznado-Aitken, I., & Farber, S. (2024). *The National Survey on Transport Poverty*. Mobilizing Justice Partnership.

CONTACT

For any questions, please contact the Mobilizing Justice Partnership at mj.utsc@utoronto.ca.