



## 2017/2018 Regional Travel Survey In-Depth Analysis Growth in Telework Eligibility & Frequency

In the Fall of 2019, TPB staff began releasing the preliminary results of the Regional Travel Survey. TPB staff asked regional stakeholders to offer questions that the RTS might help inform. The RTS is a once-a-decade household travel survey which collected detailed information about households and their daily travel obtained from a travel diary. The piece is part of a series of responses to thought-provoking questions offered by our stakeholders.

### QUESTION

What are the temporal patterns of teleworking? How are they changing?

### INTRODUCTION

This question explores the temporal patterns of teleworking, which include work from home arrangements provided by employers and self-employed persons working from home. Teleworking offers benefits for both employees and employers in the region such as allowing more flexibility in work schedules and potentially helping to increase worker productivity and morale<sup>1</sup>; it may also produce transportation benefits such as reducing traffic congestion. While teleworking is not offered by all employers, a growing number of employers are allowing their employees to work from home, at least on a part-time basis. Therefore, it is important to understand the prevalence of telework in the region. The 2007/08 Household Travel Survey (HTS) and the 2017/18 Regional Travel Survey (RTS) can provide some insights on temporal changes in teleworking behavior.

### APPROACH

We examined two major dimensions of teleworking in this question: telework eligibility and telework frequency. Respondents indicated if their primary employer offers telework (telework eligibility) as well as the number of weekday telecommutes per week. We compared telework eligibility and telework frequency reported by respondents who live in the TPB Planning Region observed in either of the two surveys.

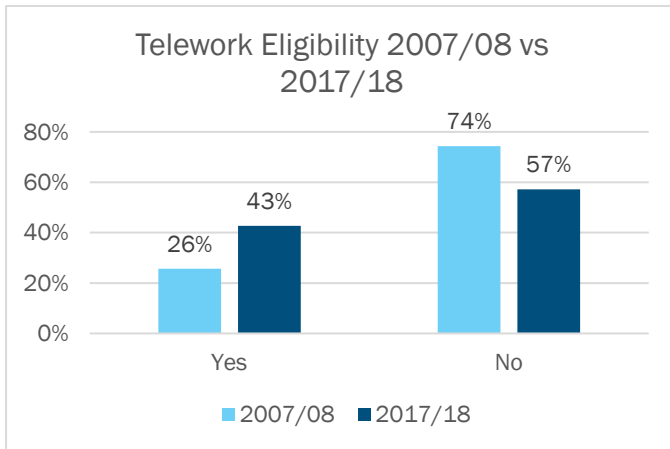
Detailed breakdowns of each part of this question are shown in the tables and charts below, with key takeaways for each. Highlighting is used in certain tables for emphasis. In advance of preparing these responses, the tabulations were reviewed for accuracy and robustness. To create these tables for the TPB Planning Region, the survey results were expanded using weights that considered the probability of selection of individual households as well as adjustments for household size, workplace location, and Metrorail ridership.

### ANALYSIS AND KEY FINDINGS

#### A. Telework Eligibility in 2007/08 vs 2017/18

Telework Eligibility	2007/08 (%)	2017/18 (%)	Diff (%)
Yes	26	43	17
No	74	57	-17

<sup>1</sup> Choudhury, Prithwiraj, Cirrus Foroughi, and Barbara Zepp Larson, 2021. "Work-from-anywhere: The productivity effects of geographic flexibility," *Strategic Management Journal*, 42, no. 4, 655-683.

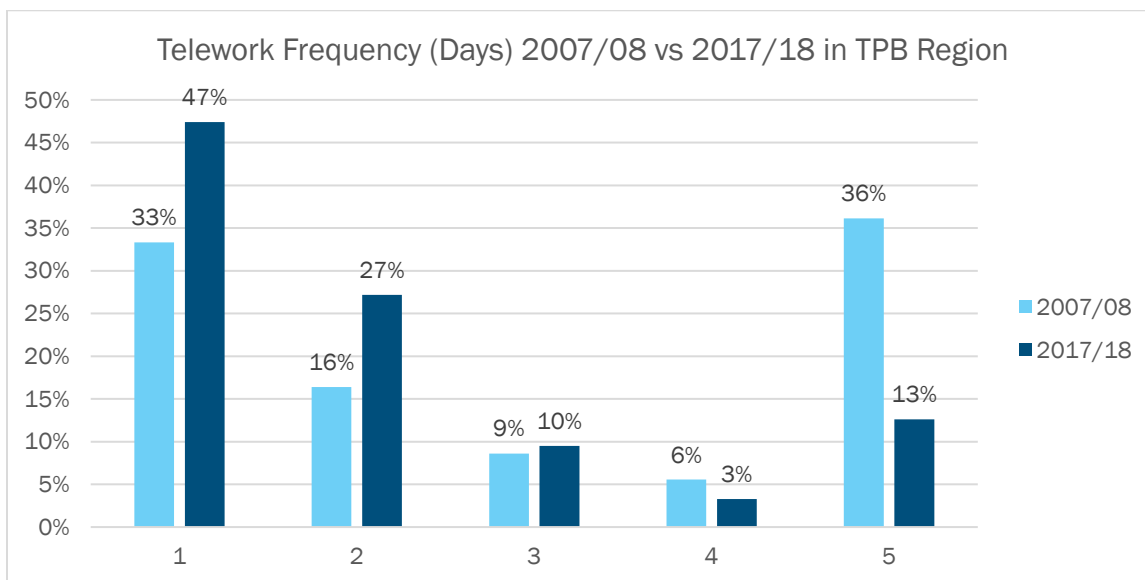


**Key findings for telework eligibility:**

- The percentage of workers eligible to telework in the TPB region has increased dramatically over the past 10 years, from 26 percent in 2007/08 to 43 percent in 2017/18, which is an increase of 17 percentage points.

**B. Telework Frequency (Days per week) in 2007/08 vs 2017/18**

Telework Days	2007/08 (%)	2017/18 (%)	Diff (%)
1	33	47	14
2	16	27	11
3	9	10	1
4	6	3	-3
5	36	13	-23



Key findings for telework frequency (days per week) 2007/08 vs 2017/18:

- The share of workers who telework one day per week and two days per week increased by more than 10 percent. However, the share of workers who telework full time fell by more than 20 percent.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Comparing data from the 2007/08 HTS and the 2017/18 RTS, teleworking has increased in the TPB region except for workers who are teleworking four or more days per week.

- A comparison of telework eligibility found that a larger share of workers in the TPB region are eligible in 2017/18 compared with ten years prior. This suggests that teleworking is becoming an increasingly popular option in the region.
- For telework frequency, based on the comparison between the two surveys, more workers are teleworking one or two days per week and fewer workers are teleworking full time in 2017/18. However, it should be noted that this is not an apples-to-apples comparison since the HTS asked about *reported* telework in the past week, while the RTS asked about teleworking for a *typical* week.

These findings have important implications for commuter travel in the region, as more teleworking results in fewer work trips. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the stage has been set for increased work from home; these trends will likely be magnified in the post-COVID normal period.