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### How much time do East Texans spend commuting? - February 2020

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# Hibbs Newsletter

Hibbs Institute for Business & Economic Research

February 2020

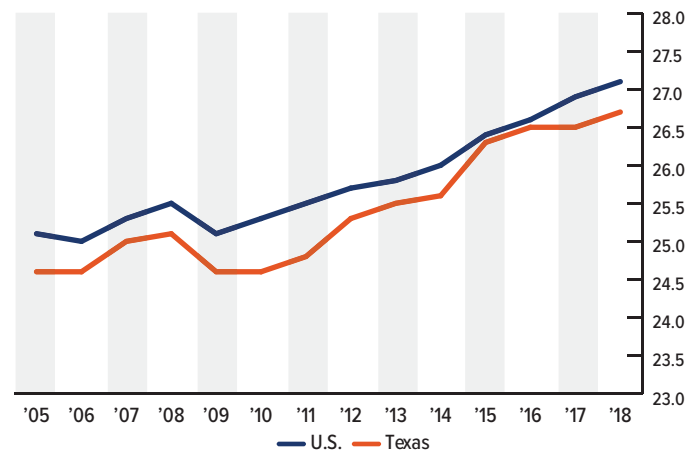


In this issue of the Hibbs Newsletter, we discuss key characteristics of the commuting workforce in the U.S. with a focus on East Texas.

The commute to work might be one of the most regular trips individuals take in their everyday life. Longer commuting time implies additional expenses (gas, maintenance of vehicle, etc.) and even some physical issues, such as less sleep, more body-fat, etc.<sup>1</sup> Yet, time is the main loss. In 2018<sup>2</sup>, U.S. commuters spent an average of 27.1 minutes getting to work every day. Commuting two ways for five working days over 50 weeks in the year yields 225.8 hours per person. This means that, collectively, Americans spent 35 billion hours on the road commuting to and from work in 2018.<sup>3</sup>

The commuting time to work for an average American is not only relatively high, but it shows an increasing trend. It has been consistently rising since 2009, from 25.1 minutes to the current levels of 27.1. Researchers note that this rise is part of a larger trend: As the U.S. becomes largely suburban, jobs have been shifting from major cities to suburban centers.<sup>4</sup> Although lower than the U.S. average, the commuting time to work in Texas has also increased consistently in the same time frame, from 24.6 minutes in 2009 to 26.7 minutes in 2018 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Average Commuting Time to Work in the US and Texas, 2005–2018



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

<sup>1</sup>From "Commuting distance, cardiorespiratory fitness, and metabolic risk" by Hoehner, C. M., Barlow, C. E., Allen, P., & Schootman, M. (2012). American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 42(6), 571–578.

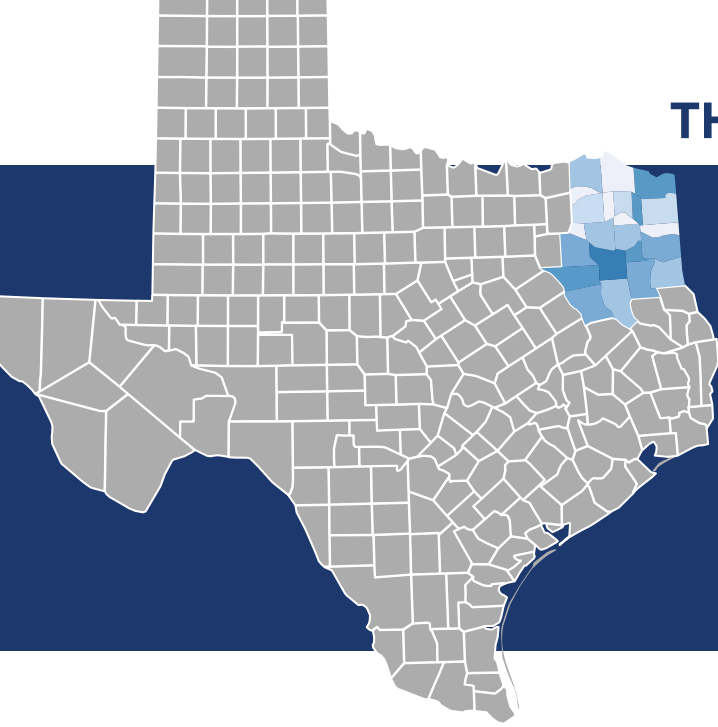
<sup>2</sup>The most recent figure available. Table S0801; Commuting Characteristics by Sex. ACS 1-Year Estimates; U.S. Census Bureau. data.census.gov

<sup>3</sup>27.1 minutes (average in 2018) x 2 (two-way commuting to work) x 5 (working days per week) x 50 (working weeks per year) /60 (converted into hours) x employed civilian population. The number of employed civilian labor force, 16 years and over, in the U.S. was 155,546,303 (2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates; Table B28007).

Employment status of the civilian population by sex and age. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit01.htm

<sup>4</sup>From "The growing distance between people and jobs in metropolitan America" by Kneebone, E. & Holmes, N. (2015). Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings Institute. Retrieved from: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Srvy\\_JobsProximity.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Srvy_JobsProximity.pdf)

# THE WORK FORCE OF EAST TEXAS



The average commuting time to work in East Texas varies widely. While counties such as Rains and Van Zandt have average times of 34.9 and 34.4, respectively, Bowie and Titus have average times below 20 minutes (17.9 and 18.8, respectively). See [Table 1](#). Most of the people in both counties, Bowie and Titus, have a city that functions as a labor center to local workers (Texarkana and Mt. Pleasant, respectively); only 3.6% of Bowie workers (5.4% in Titus) travel for more than 60 minutes to their working place. Nearly 50% of workers in Rains and Van Zandt counties travel more than 30 minutes to find their working place; several other counties in East Texas follow a similar pattern. The dynamics of people who work in a different county to where they live is studied for Tyler, Longview and Texarkana in the following sections.

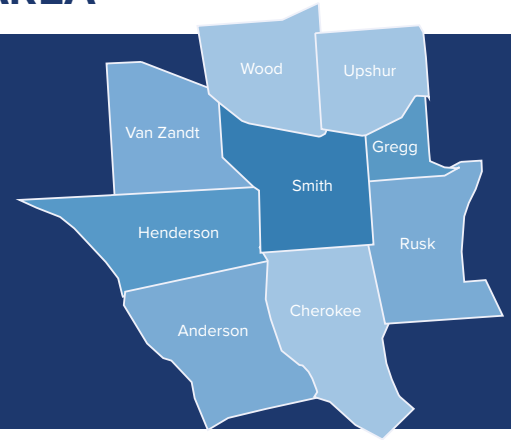
**Table 1. Commuting Time to Work in East Texas Counties**

County	Average commuting time to work (minutes)	Less than 10 minutes (%)	10 to 19 minutes (%)	20 to 29 minutes (%)	30 to 59 minutes (%)	60 or more minutes (%)
Anderson	23.7	19.0%	32.8%	20.9%	19.8%	7.5%
Bowie	17.9	20.0%	46.6%	18.7%	11.0%	3.6%
Camp	26.0	12.6%	37.3%	16.6%	23.1%	10.4%
Cass	24.0	19.3%	27.0%	17.3%	30.2%	6.3%
Cherokee	24.4	19.5%	31.1%	17.0%	25.4%	7.0%
Delta	31.5	14.4%	21.0%	14.9%	38.2%	11.4%
Franklin	23.9	26.5%	26.4%	13.7%	24.3%	9.2%
Gregg	20.4	21.1%	37.3%	20.1%	17.3%	4.2%
Harrison	20.9	18.0%	36.3%	19.6%	22.5%	3.5%
Henderson	30.6	17.4%	26.8%	14.8%	24.0%	17.1%
Hopkins	23.3	24.3%	33.8%	15.3%	18.0%	8.6%
Lamar	20.3	22.2%	43.7%	14.3%	14.2%	5.7%
Marion	31.4	13.3%	18.6%	16.6%	40.5%	11.1%
Morris	23.8	18.6%	24.1%	23.3%	26.0%	7.9%
Panola	25.9	23.5%	25.9%	14.8%	25.3%	10.5%
Rains	34.9	16.1%	21.6%	13.5%	26.1%	22.8%
Red River	30.7	19.4%	15.6%	15.8%	40.4%	8.8%
Rusk	24.3	19.8%	28.1%	19.1%	26.2%	6.7%
Smith	23.8	13.1%	32.8%	24.2%	24.1%	5.7%
Titus	18.8	26.4%	38.3%	16.3%	13.5%	5.4%
Upshur	27.8	15.5%	20.8%	20.6%	34.9%	8.1%
Van Zandt	34.4	16.4%	22.3%	13.4%	25.6%	22.4%
Wood	30.2	20.1%	23.6%	15.2%	26.2%	14.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

# WORKFORCE COMMUTING IN THE TYLER AREA

The commuting to work dynamics differ from county to county. Some counties have the largest commuting times due to long commuting distances, while some others are due to traffic conditions. This is why the commuting mileage to work is herein explored in addition to the commuting time to work. **Table 2** depicts the estimated mileage that people living in the Tyler area (nine counties) commute to work. Out of 264,000 workers in the Tyler area, nearly 105,000 individuals live less than 10 miles away from their working place; over 70,000 commute more than 50 miles to reach their working place. Anderson County has the largest percentage of workers that commute longer distances to their working place with 40.3% of their local employed workforce traveling more than 50 miles. **Figure 2** provides a visual representation of percentage shares per category for each county in the Tyler area.

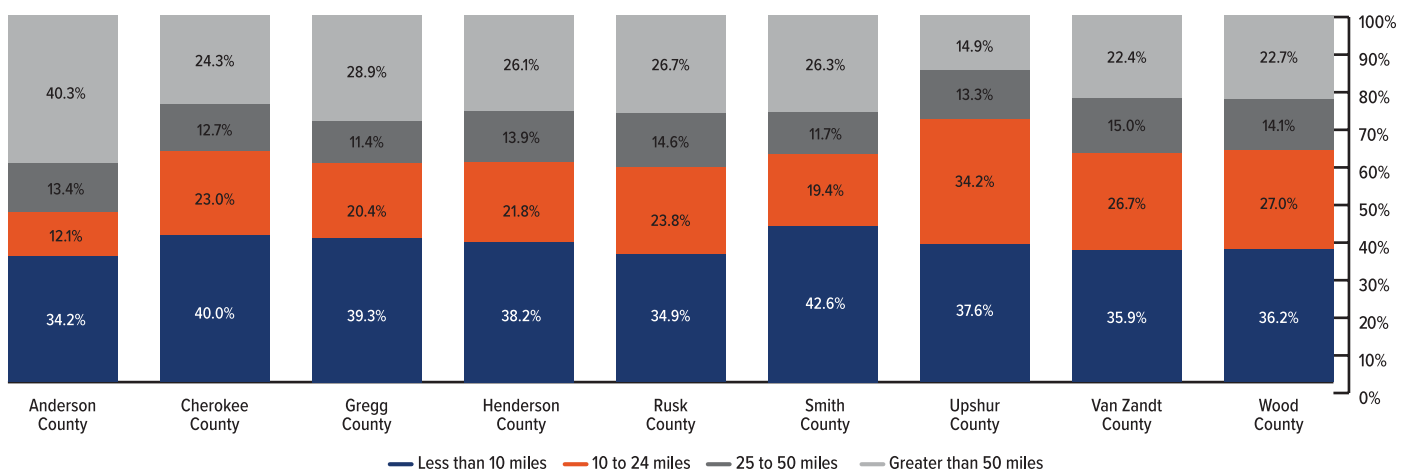


**Table 2. Commuting Mileage to Work of the Tyler Area Counties and Their Corresponding Employed Labor Force**

	Anderson County	Cherokee County	Gregg County	Henderson County	Rusk County	Smith County	Upshur County	Van Zandt County	Wood County
Total, All Jobs	15,016 100.0%	15,164 100.0%	75,829 100.0%	16,188 100.0%	12,304 100.0%	103,344 100.0%	6,328 100.0%	10,784 100.0%	9,045 100.0%
Less than 10 miles	5,137 34.2%	6,069 40.0%	29,771 39.3%	6,182 38.2%	4,288 34.9%	44,019 42.6%	2,378 37.6%	3,872 35.9%	3,275 36.2%
10 to 24 miles	1,817 12.1%	3,493 23.0%	15,485 20.4%	3,527 21.8%	2,929 23.8%	20,036 19.4%	2,165 34.2%	2,879 26.7%	2,440 27.0%
25 to 50 miles	2,016 13.4%	1,930 12.7%	8,678 11.4%	2,253 13.9%	1,799 14.6%	12,125 11.7%	844 13.3%	1,619 15.0%	1,276 14.1%
Greater than 50 miles	6,046 40.3%	3,672 24.2%	21,895 28.9%	4,226 26.1%	3,288 26.7%	27,164 26.3%	941 14.9%	2,414 22.4%	2,054 22.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

**Figure 2. Commuting Mileage to Work of the Tyler Area Counties and Share by Category**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

# WORKFORCE COMMUTING IN THE TYLER AREA (CONTINUED)

Smith County is a relevant labor center to the region. In 2017, out of the 103,344 individuals who worked in Smith County, 46,989 (45.5%) commuted from a different county to work in Smith; 56,355 (54.5%) worked and lived in Smith County (Figure 3). According to the U.S. Census estimates, 19,507 (18.9%) of the jobs in Smith County are performed by an individual who commutes to work from a contiguous county (Tyler Area). See Figure 4. Henderson and Cherokee are the counties with more individuals commuting to Smith County with 4,493 and 3,249, respectively (Table 3).

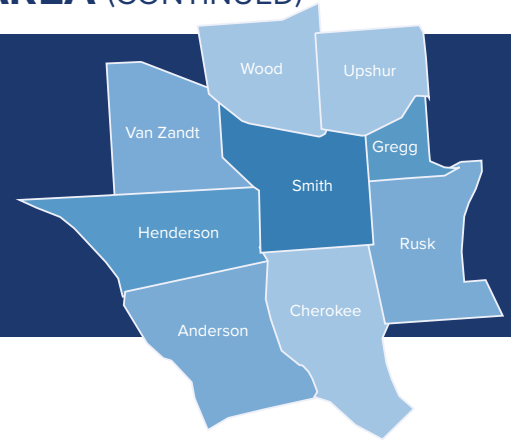
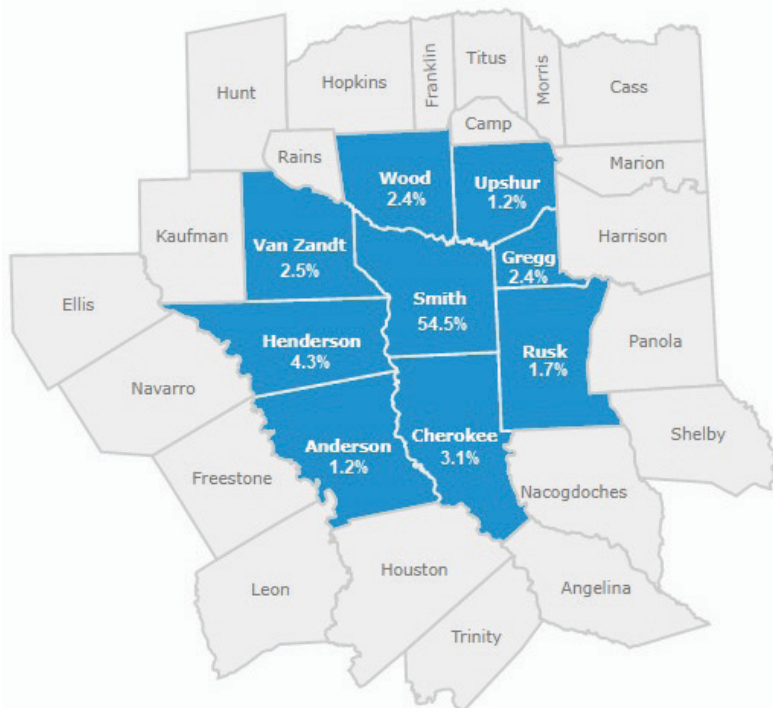


Figure 3. County Inflow/Outflow - Smith County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Figure 4. Percentage of Smith County Workers that Live in the Tyler Area (Commute to Work)



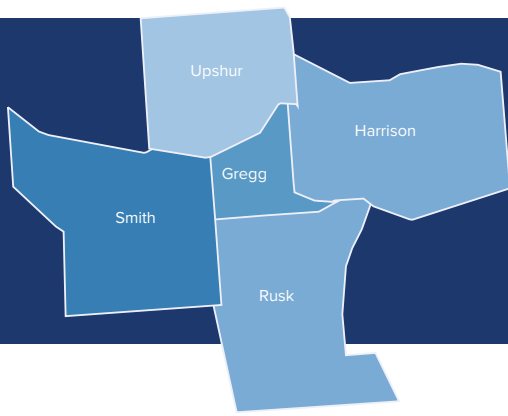
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Table 3. Smith County Workers and Where They Live (Top 15 Counties)

County	Count	Share
Total Jobs	103,344	100.0%
<b>Smith</b>	<b>56,355</b>	<b>54.5%</b>
<b>Henderson</b>	<b>4,493</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
<b>Cherokee</b>	<b>3,249</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
Dallas	3,100	3.0%
<b>Van Zandt</b>	<b>2,629</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
Harris	2,516	2.4%
<b>Gregg</b>	<b>2,511</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
<b>Wood</b>	<b>2,440</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
Tarrant	2,217	2.1%
<b>Rusk</b>	<b>1,778</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
Collin	1,210	1.2%
<b>Upshur</b>	<b>1,208</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Anderson</b>	<b>1,199</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
Harrison	1,168	1.1%
Denton	1,007	1.0%
All Other Locations	16,264	15.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

# WORKFORCE COMMUTING IN THE LONGVIEW AREA



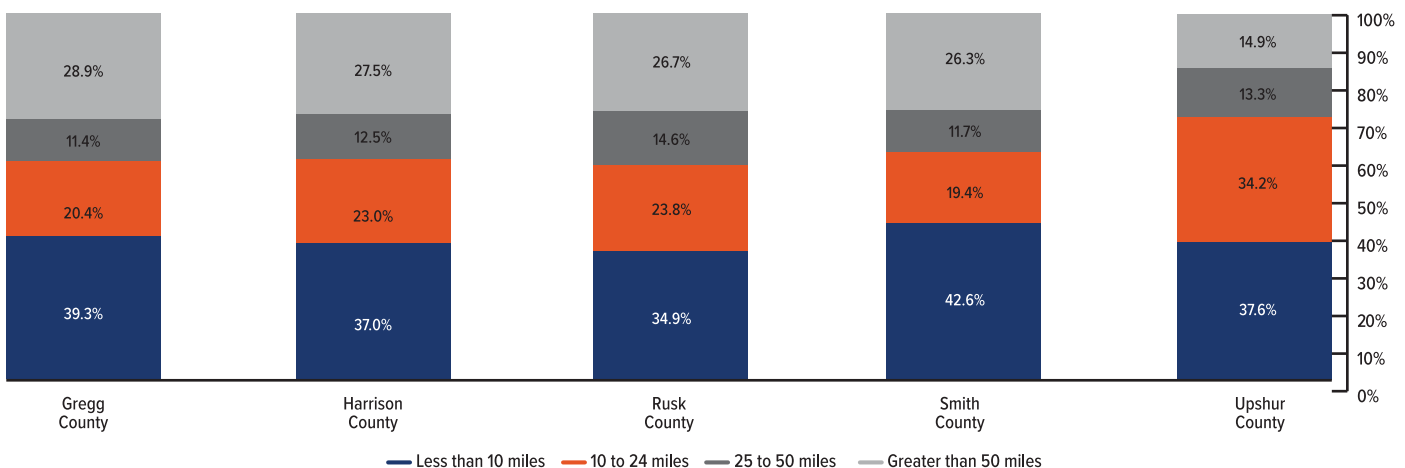
**Table 4** depicts the estimated mileage that people living in the Longview area (five counties) commute to work. Out of nearly 218,000 workers in the Longview area, almost 88,000 individuals live less than 10 miles away from their working place; almost 59,000 commute more than 50 miles to reach their working place. Gregg County has the largest percentage of workers that commute longer distances to their working place with 28.9% of their local employed workforce traveling more than 50 miles. **Figure 5** provides a visual representation of percentage shares per category for each county in the Longview area.

**Table 4. Commuting Mileage to Work of the Longview Area Counties and Their Corresponding Employed Labor Force**

	Gregg County	Harrison County	Rusk County	Smith County	Upshur County
Total, All Jobs	75,829 100.0%	19,897 100.0%	12,304 100.0%	103,344 100.0%	6,328 100.0%
Less than 10 miles	29,771 39.3%	7,371 37.0%	4,288 34.9%	44,019 42.6%	2,378 37.6%
10 to 24 miles	15,485 20.4%	4,570 23.0%	2,929 23.8%	20,036 19.4%	2,165 34.2%
25 to 50 miles	8,678 11.4%	2,482 12.5%	1,799 14.6%	12,125 11.7%	844 13.3%
Greater than 50 miles	21,895 28.9%	5,474 27.5%	3,288 26.7%	27,164 26.3%	941 14.9%

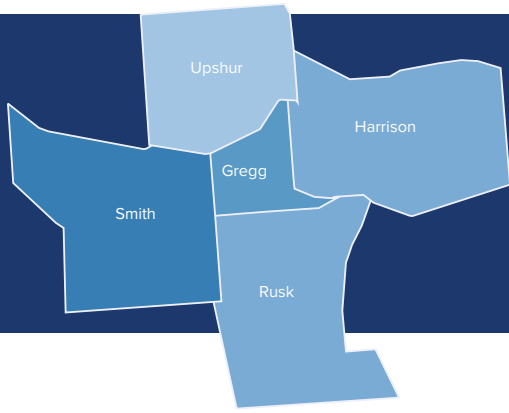
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

**Figure 5. Commuting Mileage to Work of the Longview Area Counties and Share by Category**



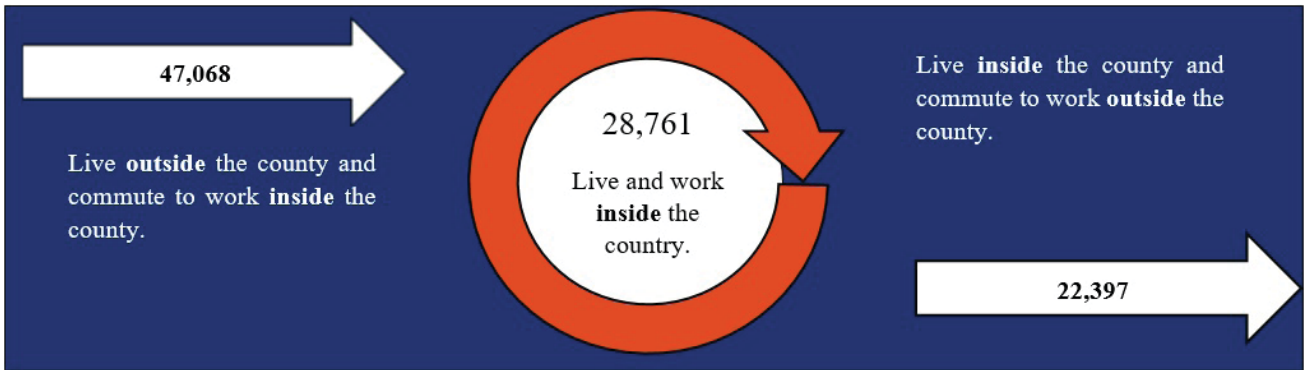
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

# WORKFORCE COMMUTING IN THE LONGVIEW AREA (CONTINUED)



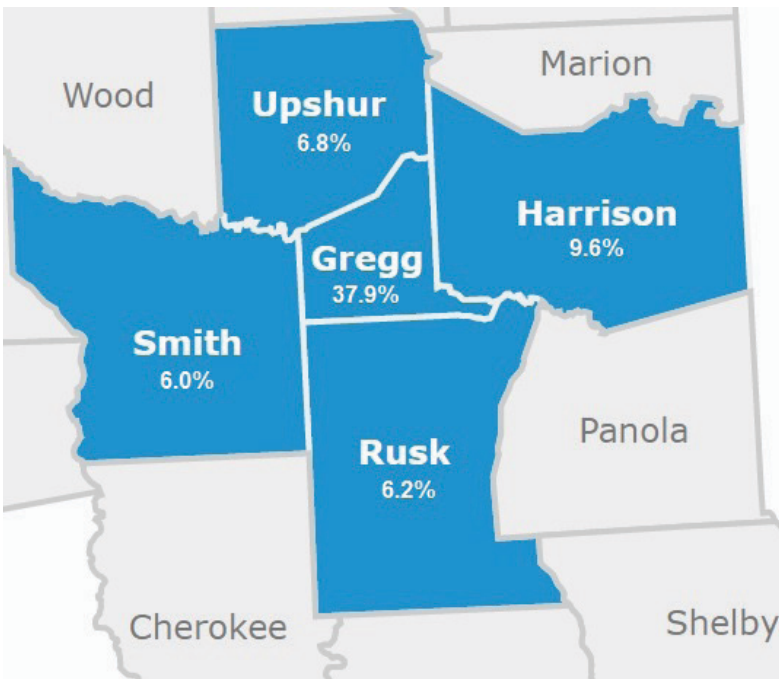
Gregg County is also a relevant labor center to the region. In 2017, out of the 75,829 individuals who worked in Gregg County, 47,068 (62.1%) commuted from a different county to work in Gregg; 28,761 (37.9%) worked and lived in Gregg County (Figure 6). According to the U.S. Census estimates, 21,704 (28.6%) of the jobs in Gregg County are performed by an individual who commutes to work from a contiguous county (Longview Area). See Figure 7. Harrison and Upshur are the counties with more individuals commuting to Gregg County with 7,288 and 5,193, respectively (Table 5).

Figure 6. County Inflow/Outflow - Gregg County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Figure 7. Percentage of Gregg County Workers that Live in the Longview Area (Commute to Work)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

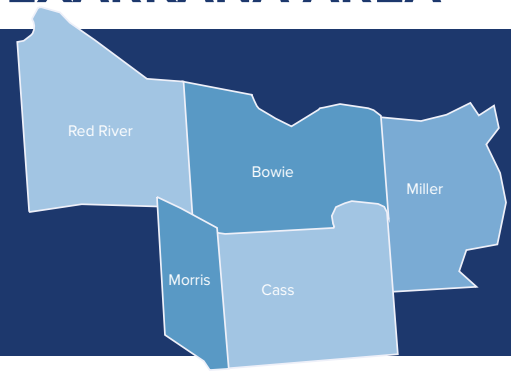
Table 5. Gregg County Workers and Where They Live (Top 15 Counties)

County	Count	Share
Total Jobs	75,829	100.0%
<b>Gregg</b>	<b>28,761</b>	<b>37.9%</b>
<b>Harrison</b>	<b>7,288</b>	<b>9.6%</b>
<b>Upshur</b>	<b>5,193</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
<b>Rusk</b>	<b>4,698</b>	<b>6.2%</b>
<b>Smith</b>	<b>4,525</b>	<b>6.0%</b>
Harris	3,182	4.2%
Dallas	1,615	2.1%
Tarrant	1,374	1.8%
Panola	810	1.1%
Cherokee	788	1.0%
Wood	760	1.0%
Collin	682	0.9%
Bowie	679	0.9%
Bexar	633	0.8%
Marion	609	0.8%
All Other Locations	14,232	18.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

# WORKFORCE COMMUTING IN THE TEXARKANA AREA

**Table 6** depicts the estimated mileage that people living in the Texarkana area (five counties) commute to work. Out of nearly 69,000 workers in the Texarkana area, over 32,000 individuals live less than 10 miles away from their working place; almost 18,000 commute more than 50 miles to reach their working place. Bowie County has the largest percentage of workers that commute longer distances to their working place with 28.4% of their local employed workforce traveling more than 50 miles. **Figure 8** provides a visual representation of percentage shares per category for each county in the Texarkana area.

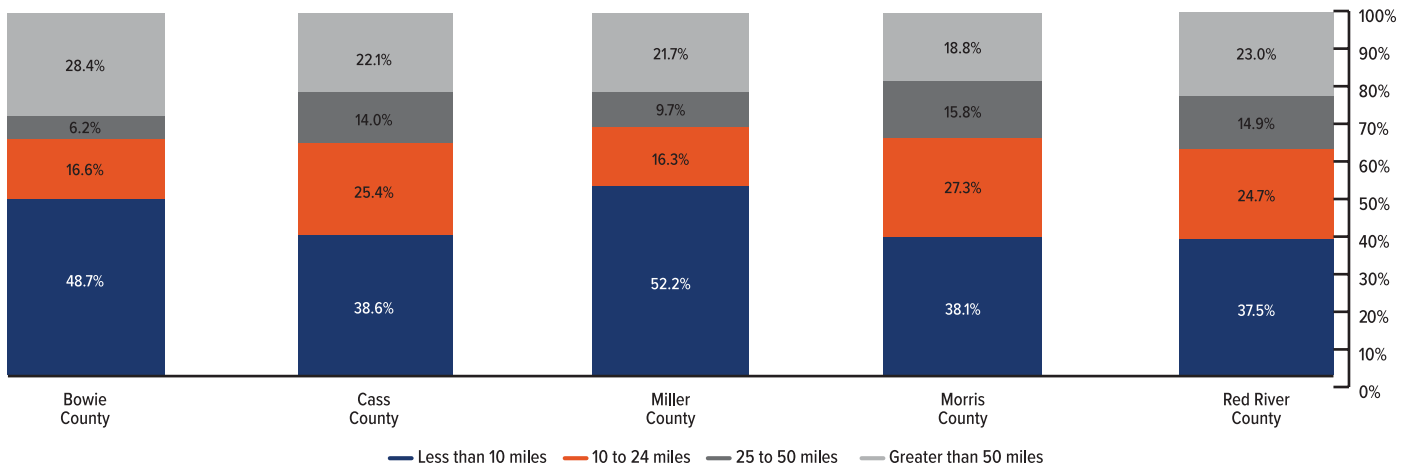


**Table 6. Commuting Mileage to Work of the Texarkana Area Counties and Their Corresponding Employed Labor Force**

	Bowie County	Cass County	Miller County	Morris County	Red River County
Total, All Jobs	42,605 100.0%	6,803 100.0%	13,342 100.0%	3,317 100.0%	2,611 100.0%
Less than 10 miles	20,747 48.7%	2,623 38.6%	6,971 52.2%	1,264 38.1%	978 37.5%
10 to 24 miles	7,086 16.6%	1,726 25.4%	2,179 16.3%	906 27.3%	644 24.7%
25 to 50 miles	2,657 6.2%	952 14.0%	1,300 9.7%	524 15.8%	389 14.9%
Greater than 50 miles	12,115 28.4%	1,502 22.1%	2,892 21.7%	623 18.8%	600 23.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

**Figure 8. Commuting Mileage to Work of the Texarkana Area Counties and Share by Category**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.



# WORKFORCE COMMUTING IN THE TEXARKANA AREA (CONTINUED)

Bowie County is also a relevant labor center to the region. In 2017, out of the 42,605 individuals who worked in Bowie County, 21,882 (51.4%) commuted from a different county to work in Bowie; 20,723 (48.6%) worked and lived in Bowie County (Figure 9). According to the U.S. Census estimates, 8,233 (19.3%) of the jobs in Bowie County are performed by an individual who commutes to work from a contiguous county (Texarkana Area). See Figure 10. Miller (Arkansas) and Cass are the counties with more individuals commuting to Bowie County with 5,975 and 1,915 respectively (Table 7).

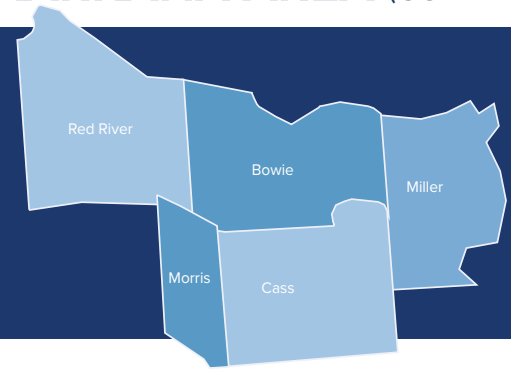
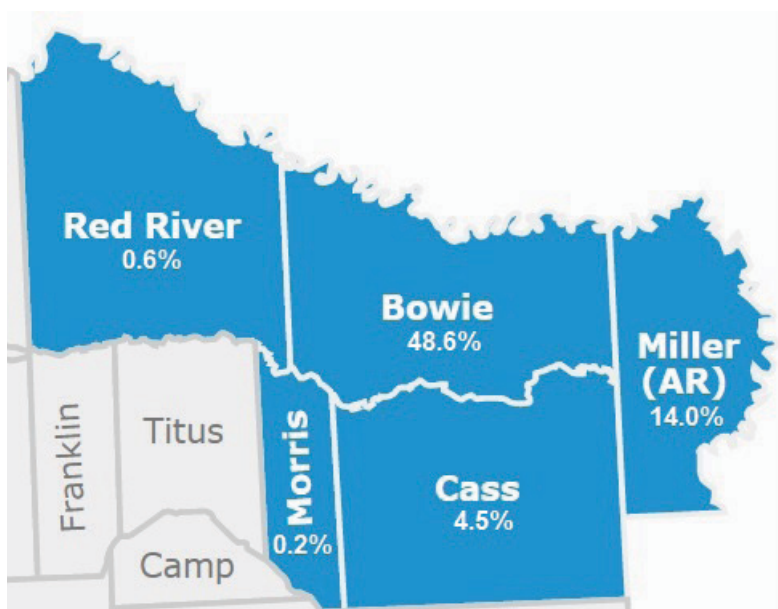


Figure 9. County Inflow/Outflow - Bowie County (2017)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Figure 10. Percentage of Bowie County Workers that Live in the Texarkana Area (Commute to Work)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Table 7. Bowie County Workers and Where They Live (Top 17 Counties)

County	Count	Share
Total Jobs	42,605	100.0%
<b>Bowie</b>	<b>20,723</b>	<b>48.6%</b>
<b>Miller</b>	<b>5,975</b>	<b>14.0%</b>
<b>Cass</b>	<b>1,915</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
Dallas	871	2.0%
Little River	762	1.8%
Tarrant	762	1.8%
Harris	652	1.5%
Bexar	547	1.3%
Collin	425	1.0%
Gregg	391	0.9%
Smith	361	0.8%
Travis	343	0.8%
Hempstead	322	0.8%
Denton	311	0.7%
Lamar	307	0.7%
<b>Red River</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
<b>Morris</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
All Other Locations	7,595	17.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

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The Hibbs Institute for Business and Economic Research is a unit of The University of Texas at Tyler's Soules College of Business. The mission of the Hibbs Institute is to provide expert research and analysis for businesses, local government and economic development councils with the common goal of increasing economic activity and personal income in East Texas.

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