

On the road again: Vehicle ownership, miles driven continue to rise

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Credit: University of Michigan

Ownership of cars and light trucks are on the upswing, says a University of Michigan researcher.

In his 10th report in a series examining changes in various aspects of motorization in the U.S. since 1984, Michael Sivak of the U-M Transportation Research Institute found that light vehicle-ownership rates per person and per household are at their highest levels since 2008

and 2009, respectively.

The ownership rate per person for 2016 (the year with the latest available data) is .766, while the rate per household is 1.968. Per person rates have increased four straight years and household rates have gone up three years in a row.

However, both rates are below their peak in 2006—down 2.5 percent per person and 4 percent per household. The rate per person for 2016 is at about the same level of 2003, while the rate per household is at the same level of 1994.

Sivak also examined annual distances driven per person and per household, both of which peaked in 2004. While the two rates for 2016 are down 5.3 percent and 7 percent, respectively, from their maximum levels, they have risen for three consecutive years.

The distance-driven rate per person for 2016 (8,819 miles) is about the same as it was in 1999, while the rate per household (22,649 miles) is about the same as it was in 1995.

Sivak's report used data from the Federal Highway Administration, ProQuest and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Provided by University of Michigan

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