

# **THE REASONS FOR THE RECENT DECLINE IN YOUNG DRIVER LICENSING IN THE U.S.**

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IN YOUNG DRIVER LICENSING IN THE U.S.

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16. Abstract <p>This survey examined why a substantial percentage of young adults currently do not have a driver's license, and the future plans of this group concerning obtaining a license. The survey yielded useable responses from 618 persons aged 18 to 39 without a driver's license.</p> <p>The top eight reasons (primary or secondary) for not having a driver's license were as follows: (1) too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license (37%), (2) owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive (32%), (3) able to get transportation from others (31%), (4) prefer to bike or walk (22%), (5) prefer to use public transportation (17%), (6) concerned about how driving impacts the environment (9%), (7) able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead (8%), and (8) disability/medical/vision problems (7%).</p> <p>Of the respondents, 22% indicated that they plan on never getting a driver's license. On the other hand, 69% expect to get a driver's license within the next five years.</p> <p>Young adults without a driver's license—in comparison with the general population of the same age—tend to have less education and higher unemployment. However, the present study was not designed to investigate whether there is a causal relationship, or the direction of the effect if there were such a relationship.</p>					
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## **Introduction**

A recent series of our papers concerning driver-licensing trends (Sivak and Schoettle, 2011; 2012a; 2012b) have documented the decreasing frequency of obtaining a driver's license for younger members of the population (i.e., under 40 years of age), both in the U.S. and in other countries. However, limited information exists regarding the underlying causes of this decline.

An analysis of licensing trends in 15 countries (Sivak and Schoettle, 2012a) found a significant relationship between Internet users per capita and reduced rates of licensing for younger adults. Other studies have attempted to further describe the source of this decline, but with limited success (Davis and Dutzik, 2012; Delbosc and Currie, 2013; Taylor, Ralph, Blumenberg, and Smart, 2013; Williams, 2011). These studies examined the attitudes of young adults and the potential influence of recent societal changes, including graduated licensing; changes in transportation and communication technologies; changes in the social status attached to driving and car ownership; and the so-called boomerang effect with young adults returning to live with their parents. But the methods of these studies were often not specifically focused on why individuals chose to delay getting (or not to get) a license. (One part of the study by Williams [2011] did attempt to specifically analyze the reasons for delay in licensing, but only for a narrow sample restricted to 15- to 18-year-olds.) As such, previous studies were not conclusive on the question of delayed licensing for young adults as a whole.

Therefore, the current study was designed to specifically assess the reasons younger adults chose to delay (or forego) obtaining a driver's license. A survey was administered to young adults, 18 to 39 years old, who do not currently possess a valid driver's license, directly asking these individuals to describe the underlying reasons for not having a license and whether they plan to get a license in the future.

## **Method**

### **Survey instrument**

An online survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)), a web-based survey company. A questionnaire was developed to examine several issues related to an individual's decision not to obtain a driver's license. The main issues addressed were as follows:

- Primary reason for not obtaining a driver's license
- Secondary reason(s) for not obtaining a driver's license
- Future plans for obtaining a license

Information related to daily online activity, the availability of other licensed drivers in the household, and additional demographic information was also collected for inclusion in the analysis. The full text of the questionnaire is included in the appendix.

### **Respondents**

SurveyMonkey's Audience tool was used to target and recruit individuals in the U.S. between the ages of 18 and 39 from SurveyMonkey's respondent database. The recruitment resulted in 4,572 replies from potential respondents. Two selection criteria were then applied:

- 1) Only individuals who reported not currently having a valid driver's license were included.
- 2) Respondent age was then verified and required to be between 18 and 39. Additionally, a target quota of approximately 100 responses per age group was set, leading to the exclusion of otherwise qualified individuals as some age-group quotas were filled.

Usable surveys were received for 618 respondents. Although 717 were initially qualified to complete the survey, 99 individuals did not finish after starting the survey, were excluded during the prescreening process due to their age-group quota being full, or were excluded due to disqualifying answers given later in the survey.

The final response rate (i.e., total completed divided by total eligible, or 618/717) was 86%. The percentage of individuals *not* qualified to complete the survey (3,855 out of 4,572 reported that they do have a valid license) was 84.3%. This value is consistent with the percentage of individuals 18 to 39 with a driver’s license in the current U.S. population—84.7% (Sivak and Schoettle, 2012b). Age and gender breakdowns for the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1  
Age and gender breakdowns for the final 618 respondents.

Demographic		N	%	
Age group	18-19	18	99	16.0
		19	99	16.0
	20-29	20-24	115	18.6
		25-29	99	16.0
	30-39	30-34	108	17.5
		35-39	98	15.9
Gender*	Female		386	62.8
	Male		229	37.2

\* There were 3 cases with unspecified gender.

## Results

### Primary reason for not obtaining a driver's license

Respondents were asked: (Q4) “What is the MAIN reason you do not currently have a driver's license?” Respondents were allowed only one response to this question. The most common response (see Table 2) was “too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license” (26.9% overall). The second most common response related to the cost of owning and maintaining a vehicle (14.6%), followed by the ability to get transportation from others (12.1%).

An age effect for this top response is evident in Table 2; more than twice as many in the youngest age group gave this answer (37.9%) than in the oldest age group (16.5%). Though less commonly stated as reasons for not obtaining a license, the oldest age group (30-39 years old) was more likely than the youngest group (18-19 years old) to indicate that they have a medical problem or disability (11.2% vs. 1.0%), are concerned about the environment (4.9% vs. 1.0%), have a fear of driving (3.9% vs. 1.0%), or have some legal issue (4.4% vs. 0.5%).

In terms of gender effects (see Table 3), female respondents were more likely than males to indicate that they have not yet learned to drive (6.2% vs. 1.7%), have a fear of driving (3.1% vs. 0.4%), or have some legal issue preventing them from obtaining a license (2.3% vs. 0.9%). Males were more likely to say that they could communicate or conduct business online (5.7% vs. 2.1%).

Table 2  
 Percentage of responses, by age group, for the question [Q4]:  
 “What is the MAIN reason you do not currently have a driver’s license?”  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

Reason	Age group			Total
	18-19	20-29	30-39	
Too busy or not enough time to get a driver’s license	<b>37.9</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>26.9</b>
Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive	16.7	12.1	15.0	14.6
Able to get transportation from others	14.6	10.3	11.7	12.1
Prefer to bike or walk	12.1	8.9	9.2	10.0
Prefer to use public transportation	2.5	13.1	13.6	9.9
Disability/medical/vision problem	1.0	6.1	11.2	6.1
Other reason	5.1	8.4	2.9	5.5
Never learned or still learning to drive	4.5	6.5	2.4	4.5
Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead	3.0	2.8	4.4	3.4
Concerned about how driving impacts the environment	1.0	3.3	4.9	3.1
Do not like to drive/afraid to drive	1.0	1.4	3.9	2.1
Legal issue	0.5	0.5	4.4	1.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 3  
 Percentage of responses, by gender, for the question [Q4]:  
 “What is the MAIN reason you do not currently have a driver’s license?”  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

Reason	Gender		<i>Total</i>
	Female	Male	
Too busy or not enough time to get a driver’s license	<b>25.9</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>26.9</b>
Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive	13.5	16.2	14.6
Able to get transportation from others	13.5	10.0	12.1
Prefer to bike or walk	11.1	8.3	10.0
Prefer to use public transportation	9.1	11.4	9.9
Disability/medical/vision problem	5.7	7.0	6.1
Other reason	5.2	5.7	5.5
Never learned or still learning to drive	6.2	1.7	4.5
Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead	2.1	5.7	3.4
Concerned about how driving impacts the environment	2.3	4.4	3.1
Do not like to drive/afraid to drive	3.1	0.4	2.1
Legal issue	2.3	0.9	1.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

### **Secondary reason(s) for not obtaining a driver's license**

Respondents were asked: (Q5) “Are there any ADDITIONAL reasons you do not currently have a driver's license?” Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to include all additional reasons. The most common response was “no additional reasons” (40.7%). (Respondents were not allowed to select additional reasons if this option was selected.) The second most common response related to the ability to get transportation from others (21.2%), followed by the cost of owning and maintaining a vehicle (19.7%).

Table 4 shows responses by age. The youngest age group was more likely than the middle or older groups to indicate that they were able to get transportation from others (29.5% vs. 16.5% and 18.2%, respectively). They were also more likely to say that they were too busy or did not have enough time to get a license (21.4% vs. 8.0% and 5.3%). The oldest age group was more likely than the younger or middle age groups to mention being able to communicate or conduct business online (7.5% vs. 3.5% and 3.2%). The oldest group was also least likely to have a fear of driving (0.0% vs. 2.3% and 3.7%). An expected age effect was observed for respondents reporting they have not yet learned to drive, with decreasing frequency as age increased (an inverse relationship).

When the top responses were analyzed by gender (see Table 5), female respondents were more likely than males to report being able to get transportation from others (23.0% vs. 17.8%), that they have not yet learned to drive (2.6% vs. 0.5%), or have a fear of driving (2.9% vs. 0.5%). As with the previous question, male respondents were more likely than females to report being able to communicate or conduct business online (7.1% vs. 3.4%).

Table 4

Percentage of responses, by age group, for the question [Q5]:  
 “Are there any ADDITIONAL reasons you do not currently have a driver’s license?”  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**; percentages sum to more than 100 because selection of more than one reason was allowed.)

Reason	Age group			<i>Total</i>
	18-19	20-29	30-39	
*No additional reasons*	<b>31.8</b>	<b>43.6</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>40.7</b>
Able to get transportation from others	29.5	16.5	18.2	21.2
Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive	15.6	22.3	20.9	19.7
Prefer to bike or walk	13.9	12.2	13.9	13.3
Too busy or not enough time to get a driver’s license	21.4	8.0	5.3	11.3
Prefer to use public transportation	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.0
Concerned about how driving impacts the environment	5.2	5.3	8.0	6.2
Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead	3.5	3.2	7.5	4.7
Other reason	2.3	3.2	1.1	2.2
Never learned or still learning to drive	3.5	1.6	1.1	2.0
Do not like to drive/afraid to drive	2.3	3.7	0.0	2.0
Disability/medical/vision problem	0.0	2.1	1.6	1.3
Legal issue	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.2

Table 5

Percentage of responses, by gender, for the question [Q5]:

“Are there any ADDITIONAL reasons you do not currently have a driver’s license?”  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**; percentages sum to more than 100 because selection of more than one reason was allowed.)

Reason	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
*No additional reasons*	<b>39.9</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>40.7</b>
Able to get transportation from others	23.0	17.8	21.2
Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive	20.7	18.3	19.7
Prefer to bike or walk	13.2	13.7	13.3
Too busy or not enough time to get a driver’s license	12.9	8.6	11.3
Prefer to use public transportation	7.2	9.6	8.0
Concerned about how driving impacts the environment	5.2	8.1	6.2
Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead	3.4	7.1	4.7
Other reason	3.2	0.5	2.2
Never learned or still learning to drive	2.6	0.5	2.0
Do not like to drive/afraid to drive	2.9	0.5	2.0
Disability/medical/vision problem	1.1	1.5	1.3
Legal issue	0.3	0.0	0.2

### **Combined summary of all reasons for not obtaining a driver's license**

Tables 6 and 7 present summaries of all reasons given by respondents for not obtaining a driver's license in Q4 (primary reason) and Q5 (all secondary reasons) combined, by age and by gender, respectively. Because this is a summary of multiple responses, the percentages add to more than 100. Paralleling the results for the primary reason for not obtaining a license, the most common response was "too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license" (36.9% overall). The second most common response related to the cost of owning and maintaining a vehicle (32.0%), followed by the ability to get transportation from others (30.9%).

While "too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license" was the most common overall response, it was inversely related to age, with decreasing frequency as age increased (from 56.6% for the youngest group to 21.4% for the oldest group). Moreover, the most common response for the oldest age group was that owning and maintaining a vehicle was too expensive (34.0%). The youngest age group was more likely than the middle or older groups to say that they were able to get transportation from others (40.4% vs. 24.8% and 28.2%, respectively). Conversely, the youngest group was less likely to prefer the use of public transportation (9.6% vs. 20.1% and 20.9%). Concern about the environment, ability to communicate or conduct business online, medical problem or disability, and legal issues all increased in frequency as respondent age increased. The frequency of respondents who had not yet learned to drive decreased as age increased.

Female respondents were more likely than males to indicate that they were able to get transportation from others (34.2% vs. 25.3%). Females were also more likely than males to report that they have not yet learned to drive (8.5% vs. 2.2%), have a fear of driving (5.7% vs. 0.9%), or have some legal issue preventing them from obtaining a license (2.6% vs. 0.9%). Male respondents were more likely to report being able to communicate or conduct business online (11.8% vs. 5.2%).

Table 6

Percentage of responses, by age group, for all reasons given in both Q4 and Q5.  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**; as a summary of multiple responses,  
 percentages sum to more than 100.)

Reason	Age group			<i>Total</i>
	18-19	20-29	30-39	
Too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license	<b>56.6</b>	<b>33.6</b>	21.4	<b>36.9</b>
Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive	30.3	31.8	<b>34.0</b>	32.0
Able to get transportation from others	40.4	24.8	28.2	30.9
Prefer to bike or walk	24.2	19.6	21.8	21.8
Prefer to use public transportation	9.6	20.1	20.9	17.0
Concerned about how driving impacts the environment	5.6	7.9	12.1	8.6
Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead	6.1	5.6	11.2	7.6
Disability/medical/vision problem	1.0	7.9	12.6	7.3
Other reason	7.1	10.7	3.4	7.1
Never learned or still learning to drive	7.6	7.9	3.4	6.3
Do not like to drive/afraid to drive	3.0	4.7	3.9	3.9
Legal issue	0.5	0.5	4.9	1.9

Table 7

Percentage of responses, by gender, for all reasons given in both Q4 and Q5.  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**; as a summary of multiple responses, percentages sum to more than 100.)

Reason	Gender		<i>Total</i>
	Female	Male	
Too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license	<b>37.6</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>36.9</b>
Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive	32.1	31.9	32.0
Able to get transportation from others	34.2	25.3	30.9
Prefer to bike or walk	23.1	20.1	21.8
Prefer to use public transportation	15.5	19.7	17.0
Concerned about how driving impacts the environment	7.0	11.4	8.6
Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead	5.2	11.8	7.6
Disability/medical/vision problem	6.7	8.3	7.3
Other reason	7.5	6.1	7.1
Never learned or still learning to drive	8.5	2.2	6.3
Do not like to drive/afraid to drive	5.7	0.9	3.9
Legal issue	2.6	0.9	1.9

### **Future plans for obtaining a license**

Respondents were asked: (Q6) “When do you plan to get a driver’s license?” Overall, 21.5% said they plan on never getting a driver’s license. For those saying that they will never get a driver’s license, the oldest age group was the most likely to give this response (35.4%), with decreasing frequency as age decreased (21.5% and 7.1%, respectively). Males were also more likely to say “never” than females (26.6% vs. 18.7%).

The majority of respondents said that they do have future plans for getting a license (78.5%). For those who do plan to get a license, the youngest age group is the most likely to say they will get one in the next five years (90.4%), with decreasing frequency as age increased (70.5% and 47.5%, respectively); females were more likely than males to respond in this range (76.2% vs. 57.2%). For more long-term plans, the oldest group was the most likely to say six or more years (17.0%), with decreasing frequency as age decreased (7.9% and 2.5%, respectively). It was more common for males to say they planned to get a license in six or more years (16.1%) than it was for females (5.2%).

Table 8  
 Percentage of responses, by age group, for the question [Q6]:  
 “When do you plan to get a driver’s license?”  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

Reason	Age group			<i>Total</i>
	18-19	20-29	30-39	
Never	7.1	21.5	<b>35.4</b>	21.5
In less than 1 year	<b>64.1</b>	<b>46.7</b>	18.4	<b>42.9</b>
In 1 to 5 years	26.3	23.8	29.1	26.4
In 6 to 10 years	1.5	2.8	11.7	5.3
In more than 10 years	1.0	5.1	5.3	3.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 9  
 Percentage of responses, by gender, for the question [Q6]:  
 “When do you plan to get a driver’s license?”  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

Reason	Gender		<i>Total</i>
	Female	Male	
Never	18.7	26.6	21.5
In less than 1 year	<b>47.7</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>42.9</b>
In 1 to 5 years	28.5	22.7	26.4
In 6 to 10 years	2.6	10.0	5.3
In more than 10 years	2.6	6.1	3.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

### Additional demographic results

Tables 10 through 14 present summaries of additional demographic information for the respondents. The most common attributes for the young adults without a driver's license in this survey are as follows:

- Most have never had a valid driver's license (84.5%).
- Most spouses or partners do have a valid driver's license (65.9%).
  - However, approximately half of respondents (46.4%) currently have no spouse or partner.
- High school graduate was the most frequent education level completed (36.6%).
- Nearly half are currently unemployed (45.8%).
  - When including full-time students, 66.4% are currently unemployed.
- Most respondents spend from 1 to 4 hours per day online (49.0%).

Table 10  
Percentage of respondents who have ever had a valid driver's license.  
(The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

Have you ever had a valid driver's license?	Percent
Yes	15.5
No	<b>84.5</b>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 11  
 Percentage of respondents with a spouse, partner, or significant other  
 having a valid driver's license.  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

Does your spouse, partner, or significant other currently have a valid driver's license?	Percent	Applicable percent
Yes	35.3	<b>65.9</b>
No	18.3	34.1
Not applicable	<b>46.4</b>	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12  
 Highest level of education completed.  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Percent
Some high school	14.9
High school graduate	<b>36.6</b>
Some college	26.5
Associate degree	6.0
Bachelor degree	8.4
Graduate degree	7.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 13  
 Current level of employment.  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

What is your current level of employment?	Percent
Full-time employment	18.8
Part-time employment	14.9
Full-time student (and not employed)	20.6
Not currently employed (including retired)	<b>45.8</b>
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 14  
 Hours per day spent online.  
 (The most frequent response is shown in **bold**.)

How many hours per day do you spend online communicating with friends and family or conducting business?	Percent
0 hours	8.1
1 to 4 hours	<b>49.0</b>
5 to 8 hours	22.3
9 to 12 hours	12.5
13 to 16 hours	2.9
17 or more hours	5.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>

## Discussion

### Why do some young adults decide not to obtain a driver's license?

Our survey examined both the primary and secondary reasons for not having a driver's license among young adults 18 through 39 years of age. Because the patterns of the two sets of responses were similar, we will combine all reasons given in the discussion below. The top eight reasons were as follows:

- (1) Too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license (36.9%)
- (2) Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive (32.0%)
- (3) Able to get transportation from others (30.9%)
- (4) Prefer to bike or walk (21.8%)
- (5) Prefer to use public transportation (17.0%)
- (6) Concerned about how driving impacts the environment (8.6%)
- (7) Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead (7.6%)
- (8) Disability/medical/vision problems (7.3%)

*Being too busy to obtain a license* (#1 reason) is generally determined by an individual's personal priorities. The frequency of this response decreased as age increased (56.6%, 33.6%, and 21.4%, respectively).

The #2 and #3 reasons for not obtaining a license (*owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive* and *able to get transportation from others*) are generally supported by the underlying demographics of the respondents. Specifically, when compared with the general population 18 to 39 years old, respondents in this survey had much higher levels of unemployment (45.8%; 66.4% when including full-time/nonworking students), and a smaller proportion (22.0%) had completed an associate degree or higher. For comparison, unemployment for the same age group in the U.S. population is 10.5% (BLS, 2013), and 37.4% have completed an associate degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013a). The ability to get transportation from others is likely aided by the fact that the majority (65.9%) of spouses or partners have a valid driver's license. (Though not measured in this study, it is likely that most parents of younger adults living at home also possess valid driver's licenses.)

The #4 and #5 reasons were *prefer to bike or walk* and *prefer to use public transportation*. The importance of these reasons likely reflects the increased urbanization

of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013b) and is indirectly influenced by the #6 reason (*concerned about how driving impacts the environment*). Overall, 8.6% of the respondents selected concern about the environment as a reason, with the 30- to 39-year-olds selecting this reason more frequently than the two younger groups (12.1% vs. 5.2% and 5.3%). The youngest age group was more likely to be able to get transportation from others than the other two age groups (40.4% vs. 24.8% and 28.2%), as were females in comparison with males (34.2% vs. 25.3%).

The #7 reason—*able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead*—was selected by 7.6% of all respondents, but by 11.2% of those between 30 and 39 years of age. Male respondents were more likely to report being able to communicate or conduct business online (11.8% vs. 5.2%).

In a regression performed on data from 15 countries (Sivak and Schoettle, 2012a), we found that the number of Internet users per capita was inversely related to the frequency of obtaining driver's licenses among young persons. The results from the current study suggest only a modest association between these two factors, given that only 7.6% of respondents selected *able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead* as a primary or secondary reason. Furthermore, it could be that high Internet usage may be a *consequence* of not having a driver's license and being unable to readily drive whenever needed. (Daily Internet usage was relatively moderate for the respondents in this study, with 49.0% reporting one to four hours per day of online activity. At the two extremes, 20.6% of respondents reported nine or more hours of use while 8.1% reported no use at all).

The #8 reason—*disability/medical/vision problems*—was selected by 7.3% of all respondents, but by 12.6% of those between 30 and 39 years of age.

### **What are the long-term plans of young adults without a driver's license?**

Our results suggest that 21.5% of persons 18 through 39 years of age who currently do not have a driver's license plan to never get one. The corresponding percentages for those aged 18 to 19, 20 to 29, and 30 to 39 are 7.1%, 21.5%, and 35.4%, respectively. Male respondents were more likely to plan on never getting a license than females (26.6% vs. 18.7%).

On the other hand, 69.3% of persons between 18 and 39 years of age who currently do not have a driver's license plan to get a license within the next five years. The corresponding percentages for those aged 18 to 29, and 30 to 39 are 90.4%, 70.5%, and 47.5%, respectively. Females are more likely than males to get a license within the next five years (76.2% vs. 57.2%).

### **Driver's license, education, and employment**

This study found that young adults without a driver's license—in comparison with the general population of the same age—tend to have less education and higher unemployment. However, the present study was not designed to investigate whether there is a causal relationship between having a driver's license on one hand and education and employment on the other hand, or the direction of the effect if there were such a relationship. Focus on these issues in future studies promises to be fruitful.

## Conclusions

This survey examined why a substantial percentage of young adults currently do not have a driver's license, and the future plans of this group concerning obtaining a license. The survey yielded useable responses from 618 persons aged 18 to 39 without a driver's license.

The top eight reasons (primary or secondary) for not having a driver's license were as follows: (1) too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license (37%), (2) owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive (32%), (3) able to get transportation from others (31%), (4) prefer to bike or walk (22%), (5) prefer to use public transportation (17%), (6) concerned about how driving impacts the environment (9%), (7) able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead (8%), and (8) disability/medical/vision problems (7%).

Of the respondents, 22% indicated that they plan on never getting a driver's license. On the other hand, 69% expect to get a driver's license within the next five years.

Young adults without a driver's license—in comparison with the general population of the same age—tend to have less education and higher unemployment. However, the present study was not designed to investigate whether there is a causal relationship, or the direction of the effect if there were such a relationship.

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## Appendix

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### Driver's Licensing Survey (via SurveyMonkey)

1) Do you currently have a valid driver's license?

Yes (including a suspended license) → *Thank respondent and exit survey*

No

2) What is your age?

18

19

20-24

25-29

30-34

35-39

3) Have you ever had a valid driver's license?

Yes

No

4) What is the MAIN reason you do not currently have a driver's license?

*Please select ONLY ONE main reason.*

Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead

Able to get transportation from others (friends, parents, etc.)

Concerned about how driving impacts the environment

Disability, medical problem, or vision problem

Do not like to drive or afraid to drive

Legal issue

Never learned or still learning to drive

Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive

Prefer to bike or walk

Prefer to use public transportation (bus, train, taxi, etc.)

Too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5) Are there any ADDITIONAL reasons you do not currently have a driver's license?

*Select ALL additional reasons that apply.*

No additional reasons

Able to communicate and/or conduct business online instead

Able to get transportation from others (friends, parents, etc.)

Concerned about how driving impacts the environment

Disability, medical problem, or vision problem

Do not like to drive or afraid to drive

Legal issue

Never learned or still learning to drive

Owning and maintaining a vehicle is too expensive

Prefer to bike or walk

Prefer to use public transportation (bus, train, taxi, etc.)

Too busy or not enough time to get a driver's license

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6) When do you plan to get a driver's license?

*Please select your best estimate.*

Never

In less than 1 year

In 1 to 5 years

In 6 to 10 years

In more than 10 years

7) Does your spouse, partner, or significant other currently have a valid driver's license?

yes (including a suspended license)

no

not applicable (no spouse, partner, or significant other)

8) What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Some high school

High school graduate

Some college

Associate degree

Bachelor degree

Graduate degree

9) How many hours per day do you spend online communicating with friends and family or conducting business?

This includes email, chat, instant messaging, Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media or online communications.

*Please enter from 0 to 24 hours.*

10) What is your current level of employment?

*Please select only ONE option that best describes you.*

Full-time employment

Part-time employment

Not currently employed

Retired

Full-time student (and not employed)