BC ATUS WAVE-2 REPORT

OKANAGAN REGION

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Executive Summary

The British Columbia Activity-Time Use Survey (BC ATUS) is a longitudinal study funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada, designed to understand time-use patterns and travel behaviors in B.C. This report covers the Okanagan region.

The core component of the survey was to collect information about how individuals spend time in the physical and virtual spaces including in-home, out-of-home and online activities. In the Okanagan, Sleeping is universal, followed by In-home Maintenance and In-home Recreation & Exercise, signaling the prominence of home-based management, leisure, and fitness. Work at the workplace is reported by 36.1% of individuals, while Work from Home is reported by 19.4%, reflecting a continued regional adaptation to remote work practices post-pandemic. Participation in Online Shopping (5.6%) and Online classes at home (4%) further indicates the digitalization of daily activities.

Residents allocate significant portions of their day to both in-home and work activities. Work at the workplace averages around 8 hours per person per day, while the average duration of Work from Home is around 6.4 hours. Other notable durations include School (5.45 hours), In-home Recreation and Exercise (5 hours), and In-home Personal Business (1.2 hours).

Travel is predominantly car-based in Okanagan. Auto drivers account for 67.7% of trips, walking for 11.5%, and Public Transit for 5.4%, with cycling and other modes comprising only a small share (≈3%).

Travel behavior is found to vary by Work arrangements. For example, on an average, Remote Workers travel less than Commuters. Differences also emerge at the travel mode and distance analysis. For example, Commuters record longer travel as auto driver than Remote Workers.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions mirror these travel patterns. Hybrid workers produce the highest daily emissions, followed by Commuters, Students, Remote workers, and Non-workers. Remote workers generate significantly less emissions than commuters, underscoring the environmental benefits of reduced commuting.

Overview

The British Columbia Time Use Survey (BC ATUS), funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada's Climate Action and Awareness Fund, is a longitudinal study aimed at understanding time use patterns and travel behaviors in British Columbia. This report presents findings from the second wave of the survey, conducted in two parts: between October and December 2024, and between February and March 2025[1]. This analysis focuses specifically on the Okanagan region – a smaller urban area with a population of approximately 250,000.

Survey Content

The core component of the BC ATUS web-survey is the 24-hour activity log, which collects information on all activities including out-of-home such as work at the work place, in-home such as work-from-home and online activities such as online shopping and virtual care (**Figure 1**). For out-of-home activities, data for a total of 22 activity categories were collected; whereas, data for in-home and online activities included 16

[1] The wave 2 survey was conducted in two parts due to Canada Post strike.

categories. In the case of in-home and online activity categories, the broad idea was to mostly include the categories that has an out-of-home counterpart. For all types of activities, start-time, end-time and location information were collected. For out-of-home activities, travel mode, vehicle and transit used, and travel companion information were also collected. After cleaning and processing, the wave 2 of the survey yielded a sample of 2391 individuals (i.e., 1481 in Metro Vancouver and 910 in Okanagan) living in 1594 households.

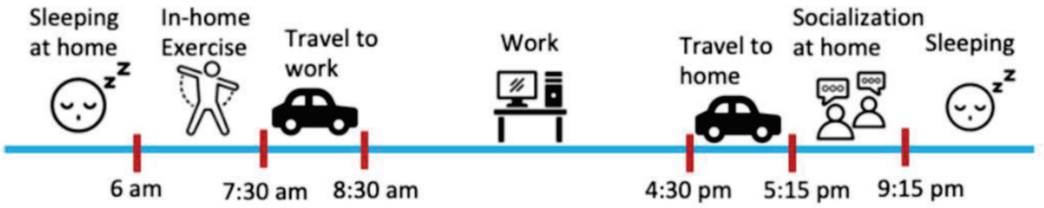

Figure 1 Example activity log of a person

How We Live, Work, and Play

In the Okanagan region, the most common activity is Sleeping, with the entire population spending time on sleep each day. This is followed by In-home Maintenance (activities such as cleaning, cooking, laundry, or meal preparation) with a participation rate of 95.59%. In-home Recreation and Exercise is the third most common activity category, involving 80.15% of individuals, which reflects a strong inclination toward home-based leisure and fitness routines. By comparison, far fewer people engage in Recreation and Exercise outside the home (only 23.15% of individuals), highlighting the tendency to favor indoor or at-home options for physical activity and entertainment. Notably, a significant share of the population continues to participate in traditional work and educational activities, albeit with shifts in how these are carried out. Work at the workplace involves 36.05% of individuals, indicating that over one-third of Okanagan residents were at a job site or office on any given day. At the same time, Work from Home was reported by 19.40% of individuals, demonstrating the ongoing prevalence of remote work in the region. Other noteworthy activities include In-home socializing, Shopping, with participation rates around 20 %. Digital and online engagements are modest but significant: Online shopping (5.6 %) and Online Classes at Home (4.0 %) signal a gradual shift toward digital modes of consumption and learning.

Overall, the persistence of home-based activities, the continued role of out-of-home work and recreation, and the rise of digital engagements illustrate Okanagan's evolving lifestyle patterns in Wave-2. These trends underscore a balance between traditional activities and the ongoing adaptation to digitalization and post-pandemic lifestyle shifts (**Figure 2**).

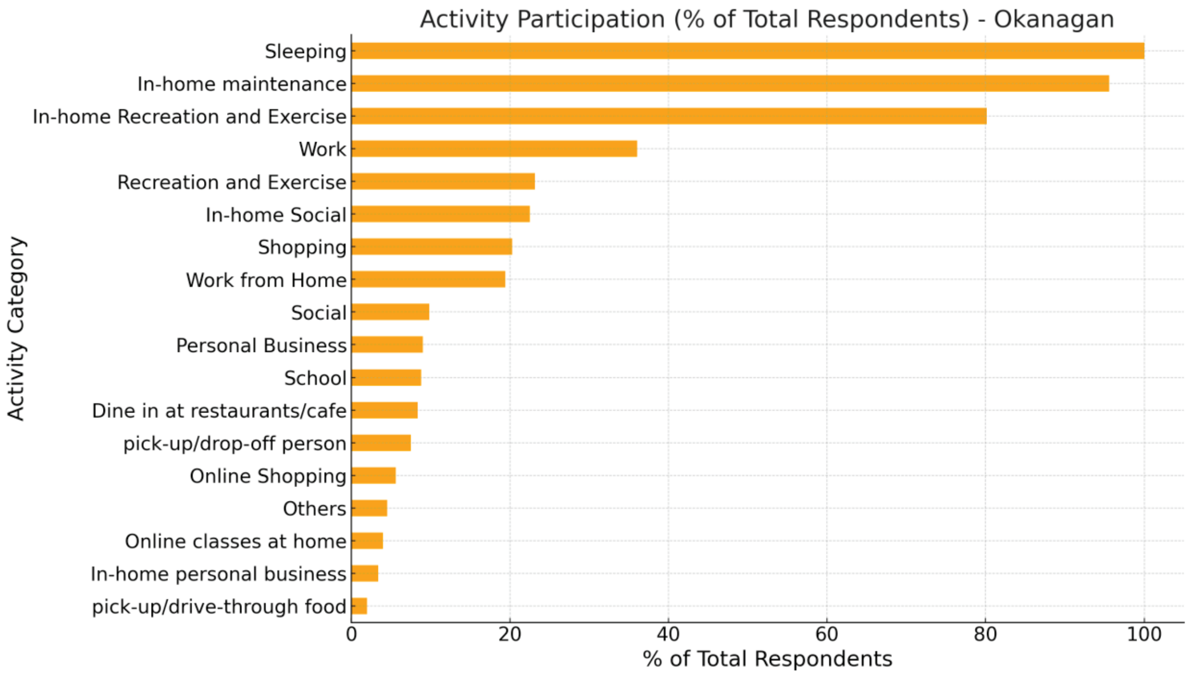

Figure 2 Activity Participation in Okanagan

How We Use Our Time

Okanagan residents allocate substantial portions of their day to work, education and personal care (**Figure 3**). Sleeping has the longest duration at around 8 hours, underscoring its essential nature. Work at the workplace records one of the longest daily durations at 7.88 hours per person, reflecting the intensity of traditional work commitments. Work from Home remains a significant part of daily routines, averaging 6.36 hours per person. In-home Maintenance occupies about 5.5 hours, while In-home Recreation & Exercise averages around 5 hours per person. School activities require 5.45 hours on average for participants, indicating the considerable time devoted to education. Other notable durations include Online Classes at Home (3.5 hours), Social activities (about 3.4 hours) and In-home Personal Business (around 1.2 hours). These patterns emphasize the centrality of work and personal care activities in the Okanagan.

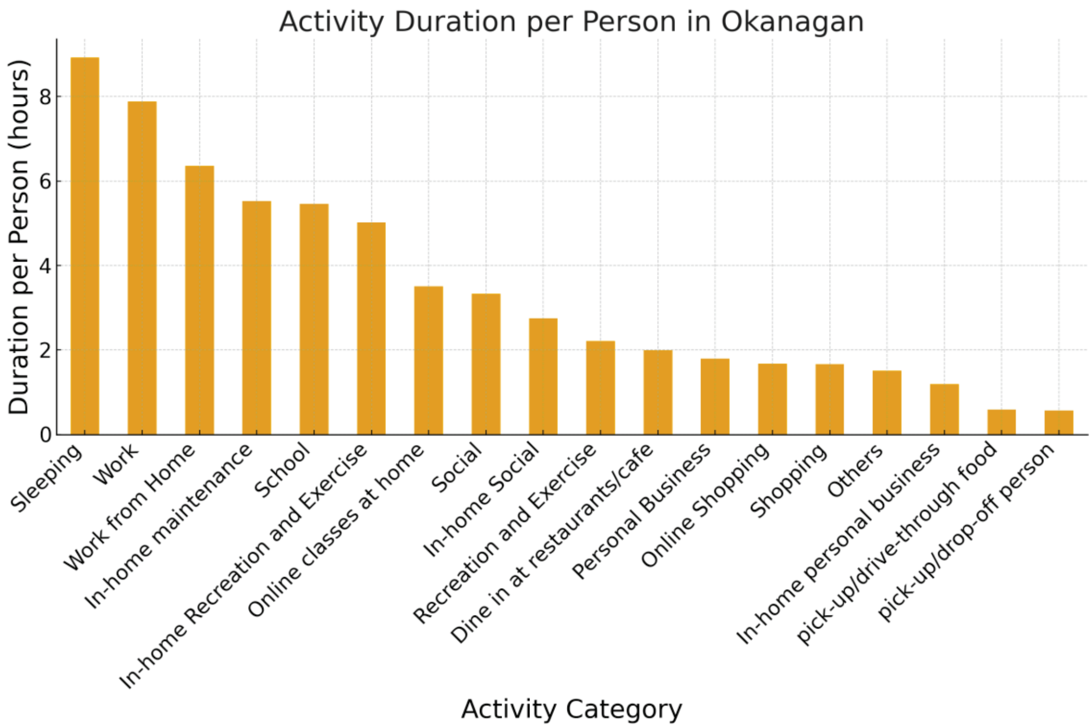

Figure 3 Average activity duration for each activity category in Okanagan

How We Get Around

Transportation in the Okanagan is overwhelmingly car-dominated (**Figure 4**). Auto drivers account for 67.7 % of all trips, with Auto passengers adding another 9.8 %. Public Transit accounts for just 5.4 %, indicating limited reliance on buses. Walking makes up 11.5 % of trips, while Cycling and other modes collectively account for only a few percent of trips (≈3 %). These figures demonstrate that, as of late 2024, alternative transportation modes remain underutilized in the Okanagan, and most residents continue to depend on personal vehicles for daily mobility.

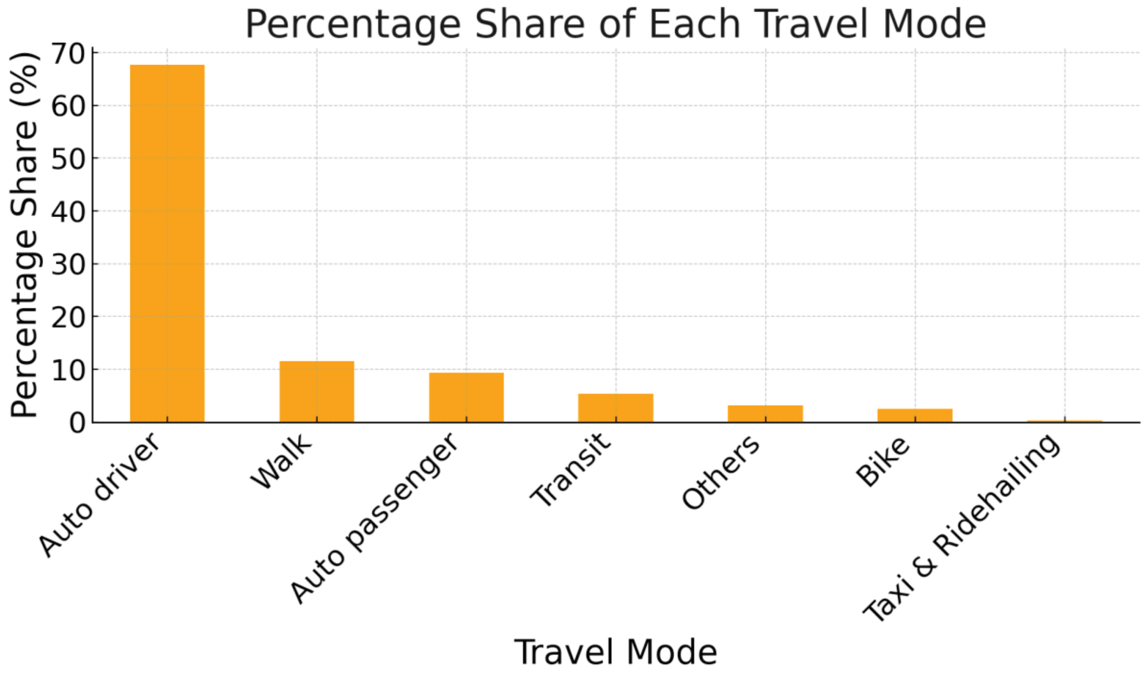

Figure 4 Transportation mode share in Okanagan

Mode Share Across Work Arrangements

The purpose of this section is to investigate how travel varies by work arrangement. The respondents from Okanagan region have been divided into six work arrangement categories:

- Commuters (34.07%): Individuals who fully work at the workplace.
- Remote workers (13. 78%): Individuals who fully/mostly work from home.
- Hybrids (3.09%): Individuals who some days work from home and some days work at the workplace.
- Students (6.84%): People who attended school in-person or online.
- Non-workers (36.16%): Retired and unemployed population, who do not have the mandatory work commitment.
- Others (6.06%): Persons who do not fall under any of the above categories and selected this category as their employment status.

The mode-share patterns in the Okanagan show contrasts between groups (**Figure 5**). Commuters and non-workers rely most heavily on cars, with driving dominating their travel (about 70%). Remote workers' patterns are similar, though with slightly less driving and slightly higher share of trips as passenger. Hybrid workers stand out for a more balanced mix, showing less dependence on driving (58% driving) and greater participation in walking (17%) compared to other groups.

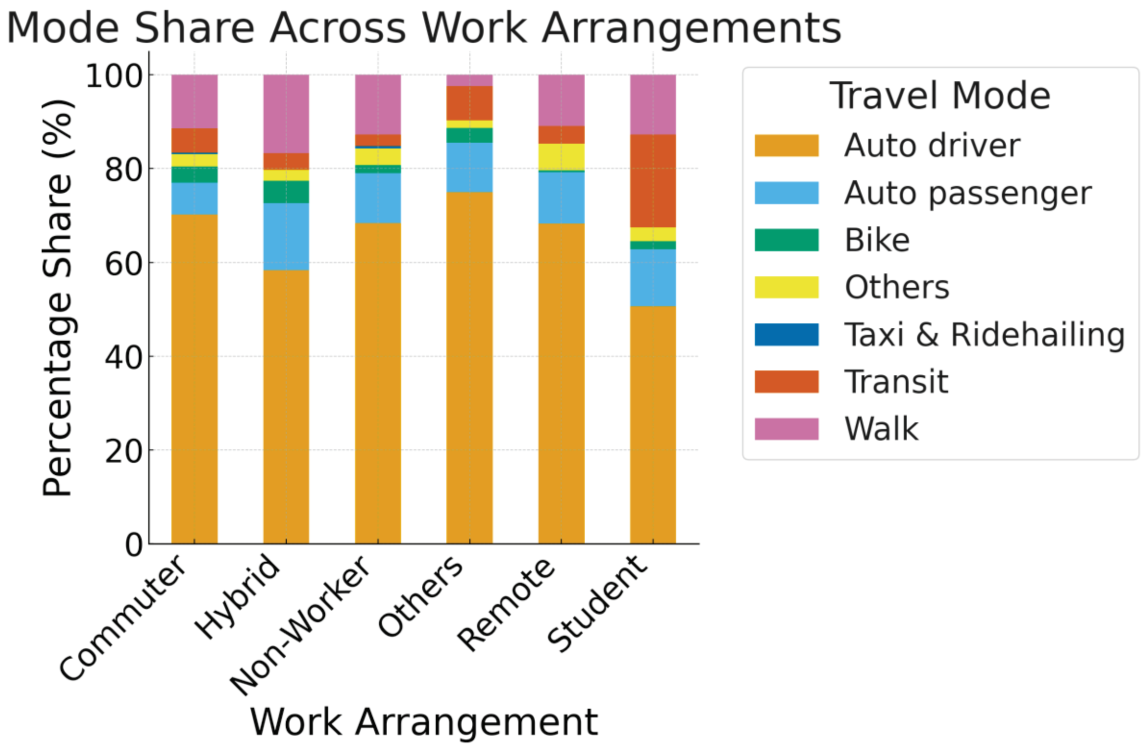

Figure 5 Transportation mode preferences by work arrangements in Okanagan

Distance Traveled

The average distance traveled per person per day in the Okanagan is 25.65 km per day. Distances vary markedly by work arrangement (**Figure 6**). Commuters average 26.9 km per person per day, reflecting the demands of daily travel to workplaces. Remote workers cover significantly less ground—about 21.6 km per day—highlighting the impact of telecommuting. Non-workers record the lowest travel distances, at 21 km per person. Students also travel reasonable long distance on an average (27.5 km per person).

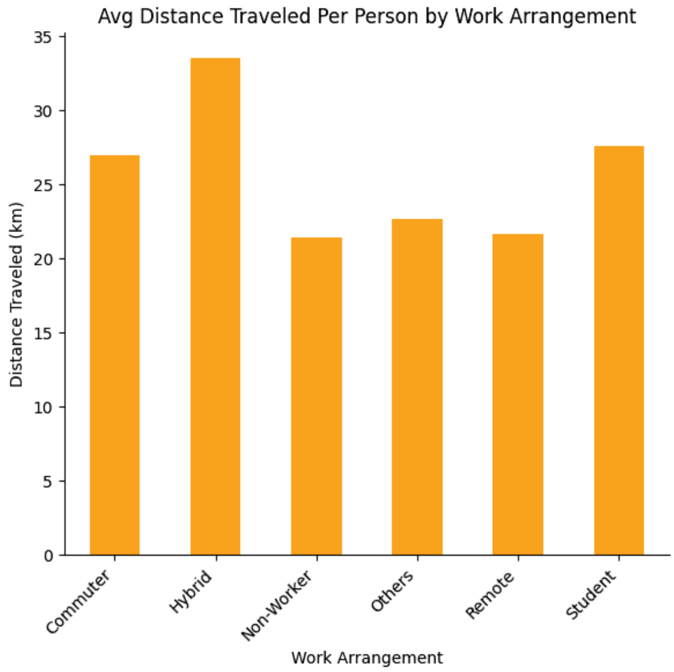

Figure 6 Distance traveled per person per day by work arrangement category in Okanagan

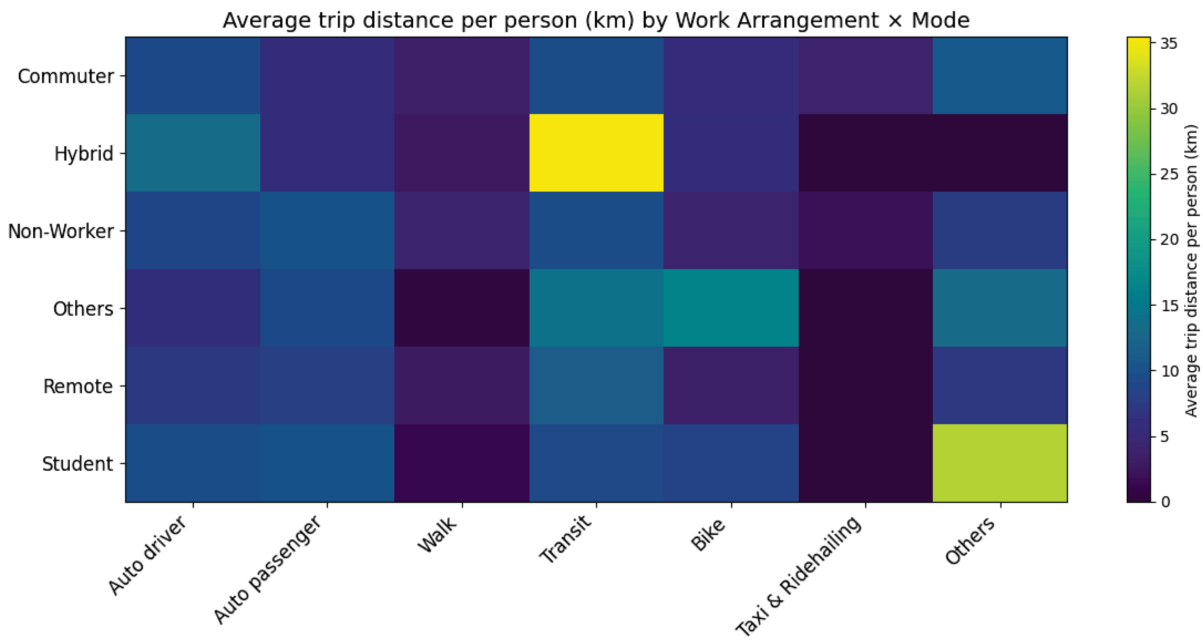

Figure 7 Average trip distance per person (km) by work arrangement across different travel modes

In the Okanagan, commuters and remote workers show distinct travel patterns across modes (**Figure 7**). Commuters generally travel farther than remote workers across most modes, underscoring the effect of daily workplace journeys. Remote workers, while traveling less overall, still record significant distances on transit (11.3 km) when they do travel. Hybrid workers stand out for especially long transit trips, reflecting occasional but substantial commutes. Students travel patterns resemble commuters, though at slightly shorter ranges, while non-workers make shorter, localized trips overall. Across all groups, walking and biking remain short-distance modes, reinforcing their role as neighborhood-level travel (**Figure 7**).

GHG Emissions

Greenhouse-gas emissions were estimated based on the average distance traveled per person across all modes. The average GHG emission in the Okanagan is 4.71 kg per person per day. Emissions vary significantly by work arrangement (**Figure 8**). Hybrid workers produce the highest emissions, reflecting their substantial travel distances despite having flexible schedules. Commuters follow them, probably driven by consistent workplace travel. Remote workers exhibit the lowest emissions, reflecting their reduced travel needs and greater potential reliance on low-emission modes for likely shorter travel near home.

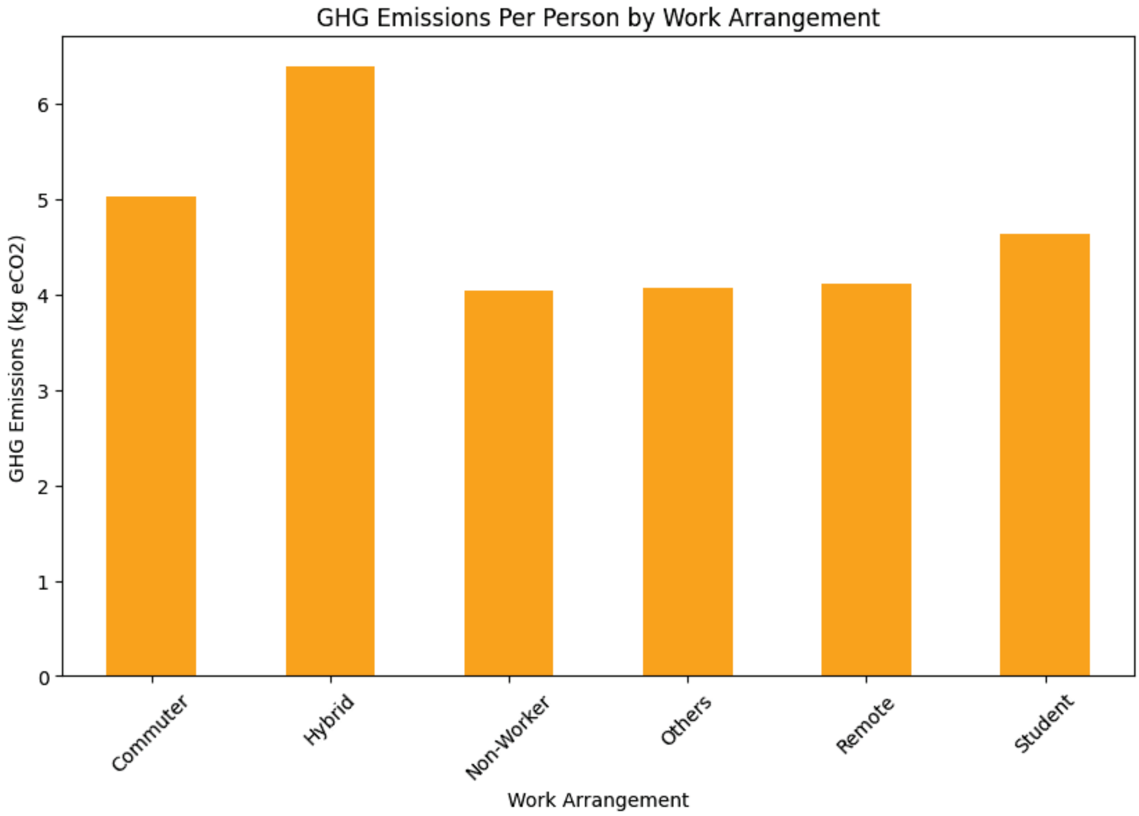

Figure 8 GHG emissions per person per day by work arrangement across all modes in Okanagan