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BTS Data

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Contact: Dave Smallen

Tel: 202-366-5568

North American Transportation Statistics: Over 107 Million Personal Vehicles Entered the U.S. in 2008

More than 107 million personal vehicles entered the United States in 2008, 28.7 million from Canada and 78.9 million from Mexico, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) (Table 1). Additionally, 10.8 million trucks, 394,000 buses, and 40,000 trains entered the U.S. in 2008 ([NATS database, Table 12-3](#)).

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, released the data today as part of the fifth annual update of the North American Transportation Statistics (NATS) online database.

The [NATS online database](#) also includes data on U.S. trade and transportation with Canada and Mexico. Goods valued at more than \$964 billion crossed the U.S. border in trade with Canada and Mexico in 2008, 6.1 percent higher than the previous record set in 2007, despite the economic downturn that began in the middle of the year, according BTS (Table 2).

U.S. merchandise trade with Canada and Mexico, its two largest trading partners, rose by more than \$335 billion or by 53.2 percent in the five years between 2003 and 2008 (Table 2).

This fifth annual update of the NATS database contains the most comparable transportation-related data available from the United States, Canada, and Mexico in a one-stop online resource. The NATS database is co-sponsored by BTS and the U.S. Census Bureau with the federal-level transportation and statistical agencies of Canada and Mexico.

The value of freight shipments moving between the United States, Canada and Mexico grew at an average rate of nearly 8.9 percent per year between 2003 and 2008. The total value of U.S. freight shipments with Mexico grew 56.0 percent or 9.3 percent annually. Goods shipped in trade with Canada grew 51.5 percent or 8.7 percent annually (Table 2).

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Trucks carried 58 percent of this freight measured by value - \$554 billion in 2008. Rail carried 15 percent, followed by maritime with 10 percent, pipeline with 9 percent, and air with 4 percent. Pipeline was the largest modal increase in shipment value from 2007 to 2008 - \$28 billion, followed by maritime, up \$19 billion, and air, up \$3 billion ([NATS database, Table 6-1c](#)).

New data in the NATS database shows America's top gateways for trade with Canada and Mexico. In 2008, Detroit was the top road gateway with \$101 billion in international road shipments passing through that gateway (Table 3).

The NATS-OD figures show, among other things, the importance of the various modes of transportation involved in the movement of goods between Canada, Mexico and the U.S., and presents statistics indicating the relationships among transportation, international trade, economy, security, energy and the environment. Additionally, the NATS-OD incorporates technical and methodological footnotes in English, French and Spanish to provide users with interpretation and analysis.

A product of the North American Transportation Statistics Interchange established in 1991, the NATS database provides three-country comparative information on transportation activity and its impact. It covers the following subject areas: country overview, transportation and the economy, transportation safety, transportation's impact on energy and the environment, domestic freight activity, North American merchandise trade, international merchandise trade, domestic passenger travel, North American passenger travel, international passenger travel, transportation infrastructure, and vehicles.

This year's NATS-OD includes a new indicator on greenhouse gas emissions by the transportation sector. This new indicator was developed in response to the need for harmonized data to support environmental and transportation decision-making at national and trilateral levels.

With text available in English, French, and Spanish, the NATS database can be found at <http://nats.sct.gob.mx/>

Table 1 – 2008 Vehicle Crossings into the United States

	From Canada	From Mexico
Personal Vehicle	28,677,703	78,856,542
Truck	5,894,551	4,866,252
Bus	127,233	266,414
Train	29,780	10,262

Notes:

Truck crossings: Number of arriving trucks; does not include privately owned pick-up trucks.

Train crossings: Rail data for U.S.-Mexico border are for rail (loaded and unloaded) containers and U.S.-Canada numbers are for number of trains, not containers.

Privately owned vehicle crossings: Number of privately owned vehicles (POVs) arriving at a particular port. Includes pick-up trucks, motorcycles, recreational vehicles, taxis, snow-mobiles, ambulances, hearses, and other motorized private ground vehicles.

Bus crossings: Number of arriving buses at a particular port, whether or not they are carrying passengers.

SOURCE: North American Transportation Statistics Online Database, available at <http://nats.sct.gob.mx/nats>, November 2009.

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**Table 2 - U.S. Merchandise Trade with Canada and Mexico by Freight Transportation Mode
(Billions of current dollars)**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Percent change, '03 - '08	Annual growth rate (%) '03 - '08
Total trade with Canada and Mexico	629	712	790	866	909	964	53.2	8.9
Air	28	32	33	36	38	41	43.9	7.6
Pipeline	32	38	52	57	59	88	171.2	22.1
Rail	96	108	116	129	138	140	46.7	8.0
Road	404	453	491	534	555	554	37.2	6.5
Water transport	38	46	58	70	74	73	145.0	19.6
Total: percent change from previous year 2003-2008	4.2	13.1	10.9	9.7	4.9	6.1	-	-
Total trade with Canada	394	445	499	534	562	597	51.5	8.7
Air	20	23	23	24	26	28	36.7	6.4
Pipeline	32	38	51	56	58	86	168.0	21.8
Rail	65	75	80	86	91	93	43.9	7.6
Road	241	269	295	314	325	320	32.8	5.8
Water transport	11	14	18	21	25	32	190.3	23.8
Total: percent change from previous year 2003-2008	6.0	13.1	12.2	6.9	5.2	6.2	-	-
Total trade with Mexico	236	267	290	332	347	367	56.0	9.3
Air	8	9	10	11	12	13	62.5	10.2
Pipeline	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.8	1.0	1.4	830.1	56.2
Rail	31	34	37	43	46	47	52.5	8.8
Road	163	184	196	219	230	234	43.8	7.5
Water transport	27	32	40	49	49	61	126.7	17.8
Total: percent change from previous year, 2003-2008	1.4	13.2	8.9	14.5	4.5	5.8	-	-

NOTE: Individual modes do not sum to total trade figures because the total excludes freight moved by "other modes" such as aircraft from manufacturer to customers, pedestrians carrying freight, and miscellaneous.

NOTE: Due to the rounding of certain numbers tabulated, sum totals of U.S.-Canada and U.S.-Mexico trade vary slightly.

SOURCE: North American Transportation Statistics Online Database, available at <http://nats.sct.gob.mx/nats>, November 2009.

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Table 3 - Top 10 U.S. Gateways Trading with Canada and Mexico by Road
Ranked by 2008 Road Trade Value
(millions of dollars)

Rank	Gateway	2008
1	Detroit, MI	101,188
2	Laredo, TX	89,547
3	Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	58,958
4	Port Huron, MI	44,390
5	El Paso, TX	42,199
6	Otay Mesa, CA	31,724
7	Hidalgo-Pharr, TX	21,857
8	Champlain-Rouses Point, NY	19,119
9	Pembina, ND	16,003
10	Blaine, WA	15,239

SOURCE: North American Transportation Statistics Online Database, available at <http://nats.sct.gob.mx/nats>, November 2009.

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