QUARTZ

CONGESTED

These cities have the world's worst traffic congestion—but that could change fast

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By Dan Kopf for The commuting revolution

Data editor



Bumper to bumper.

In the world's biggest cities, the demand to drive far outstrips the supply of roads. As a result, commuters in major metropolitan areas face massive congestion.

Traffic analytics company Inrix puts out annual data on which cities in the world <u>have the most</u> <u>congestion</u>. In 2019, the two cities that topped the list were Bogota, Colombia and Rio de

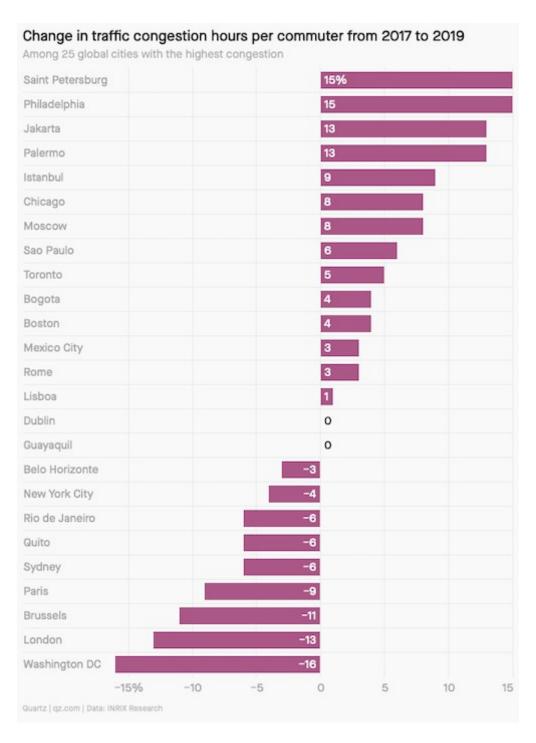
Janeiro, Brazil, with the average person losing 191 hours and 190 hours to traffic each year, respectively. Inrix's data comes from millions of GPS-enabled devices in cars—data that is then used to power a number of navigation softwares, including Google Waze.

City	Country	2019
Bogota	Colombia	191 hours
Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	190 hours
Rome	Italy	166 hours
Paris	France	165 hours
Belo Horizonte	Brazil	160 hours
Mexico City	Mexico	158 hours
Dublin	Ireland	154 hours
Istanbul	Turkey	153 hours
Sao Paulo	Brazil	152 hours
Saint Petersburg	Russia	151 hours
Jakarta	Indonesia	150 hours
London	United Kingdom	149 hours
Boston	United States	149 hours
Chicago	United States	145 hours
Quito	Ecuador	144 hours
Philadelphia	United States	142 hours
New York City	United States	140 hours
Brussels	Belgium	140 hours

High congestion can be due to a variety of factors. Bogota's traffic is largely a result of weak <u>public transportation options</u>. The congestion in Rio de Janeiro is partly caused by its <u>mountainous geography</u>, funneling cars to a small number of throughways. Also, the number of cars in these cities is steadily rising—as in other mega-traffic cities like Mexico City, Sao Paolo, and Jakarta. Population increases and economic growth have led to more middle-class

families that can afford a car.

There is hope for high traffic cities. Inrix's data suggests cities can quickly reduce traffic by aggressively charging for use of roads or expanding public transportation infrastructure. From 2017 to 2019, average time in congestion in London fell by 13%. That decline is likely the result of a <u>doubling of the congestion charge</u> to enter London's center for older, high-emissions cars.



Take me down this rabbit hole

The coronavirus—and the sudden drop in public transit demand and overall reconfiguring of our lives—is providing a unique opportunity to reshape the way we move through cities, and to ensure that future plans consider the needs of every group to access opportunities, but especially those short-changed by transit planning until now.



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