

Publication

Observed impacts of the Covid-19 first wave on travel behaviour in Switzerland based on a large GPS panel

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In Switzerland, strict measures as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic were imposed on March 16, 2020, before being gradually relaxed from May 11 onwards. We report the impact of these measures on mobility behaviour based on a GPS tracking panel of 1,439 Swiss residents. The participants were also exposed to online questionnaires. The impact of both the lockdown and the relaxation of the measures up until the middle of August, 2020 are presented. Reductions of around 60% in the average daily distance were observed, with decreases of over 90% for public transport. Cycling increased in mode share drastically. Behavioural shifts can even be observed in response to the announcement of the measures and relaxation, a week before they came in to place. Long-term implications for policy are discussed, in particular the increased preference for cycling as a result of the pandemic.

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