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People expect to use their bike or car more after pandemic, new snapshot study indicates

An 11-country [survey](#) that contrasts mobility habits before COVID-19 with October 2020 shows that people expect to prefer individual forms of transport (bike, car) and more local travel after the pandemic.

The survey was conducted among a representative sample of 11,273 consumers in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain.

Across the 11 countries, the survey finds that:

- A change in mobility habits is most pronounced in terms of public transport, where there is a noticeable drop (10 percentage points) in people using it every week.
- Public transport (68%) and long-distance buses/bus stations (67%) score the highest in terms of people feeling insecure regarding COVID-19 contamination. These are followed by trains/train stations and flights/airports (both at 61%).
- Once the pandemic over, people expect to use individual forms of transport (bikes, cars) more than before it started.
- Once the pandemic is over, people expect to travel abroad less than before it started.

Monique Goyens, BEUC Director General, commented:

"In an era of mass-teleworking and physical distancing, it is no surprise to see a drop in public transport use and a general uneasiness about situations where people come into close proximity of one another. Although expectations do not necessarily translate into real-life decisions, this snapshot illustrates that COVID could affect people's transport decisions well beyond the crisis.

"Climate change hasn't taken a sabbatical as the world fights COVID. People's transport perceptions could easily affect the success of large-scale policy initiatives such as the Green Deal. It is therefore imperative to boost cycling through more dedicated infrastructure, to mitigate an untenable surge in car use, and to counter lingering hesitation around the use of public transport."

Background information

The main results and policy recommendations can be read [here](#). These recommendations focus on 1) Keeping public transport attractive; 2) Promote walking and cycling as alternatives to car use; and 3) Restoring trust in long-distance travelling.

The survey was spearheaded by the joint statistical department of Test Achats/Aankoop (Belgium), Altroconsumo (Italy), DECO Proteste (Portugal) and OCU (Spain), and conducted in cooperation with Verein für Konsumenteninformation – VKI (Austria), dTest (Czech Republic), Forbrugerrådet Tænk (Denmark), Stiftung Warentest (Germany), Lietuvos vartotojų organizacijų aljansas – LVOA (Lithuania), Consumentenbond (the Netherlands), and Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije – ZPS (Slovenia).

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