MOBIS-COVID19/02

Results as of 13/04/2020

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Abstract

To slow down the spread of the coronavirus, the population has been instructed to stay at home if possible. This measure consequently has a major impact on our daily mobility behaviour. But who is being affected, and how? The MOBIS-COVID-19 research project, an initiative of ETH Zurich and the University of Basel, is a continuation of the original MOBIS study. The aim of the project is to get a picture of how the crisis is affecting mobility and everyday life in Switzerland.

Keywords

GPS logger; Travel diary app; COVID-19; Corona virus; MOBIS; Mobility behaviour; Switzerland

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Zusammenfassung

Um die Ausbreitung des Coronavirus zu verlangsamen ist die Bevölkerung angewiesen worden, wenn möglich zu Hause zu bleiben. Diese Massnahme hat daher einen grossen Einfluss auf unser tägliches Mobilitätsverhalten. Doch wer ist davon betroffen und wie? Das Forschungsprojekt MOBIS-COVID-19, eine Initiative der ETH Zürich und der Universität Basel, ist eine Weiterführung der originalen MOBIS-Studie. Ziel des Projekts ist es, ein Bild zu erhalten, wie sich die Krise auf die Mobilität und das Alltagsleben in der Schweiz auswirkt.

Schlagworte

GPS logger; Travel diary app; COVID-19; Corona virus; MOBIS; Mobility behaviour; Switzerland

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Introduction

On March 16, 2020, 3700 participants who completed the MOBIS study between September 2019 and January 2020 were invited to reinstall the GPS Logger and Travel Diary App ‘Catch-My-Day’, developed by MotionTag, to record their mobility behaviour during the period of special measures implemented to control the spread of the Corona Virus. The first 4 weeks of mobility data from the original MOBIS Study is taken for each participant as a baseline against which to compare current mobility patterns. These 4 weeks start place anywhere between 1st September and 15th November, depending on the participant. Only trips in Switzerland are currently considered, although data on cross border travel is available.

The following figure shows the number of registered and tracking participants per day. A running panel of around 250 participants were already tracking before the sample was reinvited. This allows results for the weeks before the MOBIS-COVID-19 study was officially started, although the sample size is a lot smaller, and hence the results.

In the MOBIS study, participants were only eligible if they used a car at least 3 days a week - which skews the sample away from the Swiss general population.

The number of tracking participants each day used to calculate the average daily values includes all participants who recorded tracks before or after that date. This allows the consideration of those who stay at home while still allowing for survey dropouts.

The GPS Travel diary used, Catch-My-Day (for iOS and Android) can have a 2-3 day delay before the tracks are available for analysis. The scaling by active participants accommodates for this, but the results of previous reports may change when the report is updated.

Participation

Differences in the distributions

The following charts show the characteristics of the MOBIS-COVID-19 sample compared to the original MOBIS Sample. There are some small differences, but generally the samples are consistent. This chart will be extended to compare to the relevant census data.

Average daily distance

Change in kilometers travelled by transport mode

Change in kilometers travelled by:

Reduction in kilometers travelled by Canton

Table 1: Change in kilometers travelled by home canton (%)

Canton	N	Mar-02	Mar-09	Mar-16	Mar-23	Mar-30	Apr-06
Aargau	64	-25	-41	-71	-58	-51	-51
Basel-Landschaft	148	-13	-8	-60	-60	-58	-55
Basel-Stadt	28	-14	-36	-71	-74	-66	-54
Bern	157	-30	-33	-66	-59	-56	-51
Geneva	104	7	-45	-69	-60	-56	-61
Schwyz	13	-6	12	-42	-67	-45	-49
Solothurn	16	-13	-41	-62	-65	-53	-44
Vaud	239	-7	-22	-64	-70	-67	-63
Zurich	552	-16	-25	-60	-58	-56	-49

Activity space and daily travel radius

A commonly used definition of the activity space is the 95% confidence ellipse of the activity locations, in this case weighted by duration. In the following analysis, the activities at the home location are included, for those that had the app activated on that day. This is an important metric which gives an idea of the area in which travel is being performed. The daily travel radius is also presented.

Table 2: Change in activity space area (%)

Week		# Activities/day	Change	Area (km ²)	Change	Daily Radius (km)	Change
Baseline-2019	Weekday	7.00		194.02		12.79	
	Weekend	6.18		262.94		13.83	
Mar-02	Weekday	6.12	-13%	174.48	-10%	10.92	-15%
	Weekend	5.65	-9%	181.93	-31%	11.30	-18%
Mar-09	Weekday	6.37	-9%	120.27	-38%	10.25	-20%
	Weekend	5.47	-12%	91.58	-65%	8.80	-36%
Mar-16	Weekday	4.81	-31%	35.86	-82%	5.69	-56%
	Weekend	3.56	-42%	27.79	-89%	3.71	-73%
Mar-23	Weekday	4.38	-37%	37.86	-80%	4.92	-62%
	Weekend	3.94	-36%	57.94	-78%	4.99	-64%
Mar-30	Weekday	4.77	-32%	47.12	-76%	5.37	-58%
	Weekend	4.34	-30%	31.16	-88%	5.19	-62%
Apr-06	Weekday	4.83	-31%	50.43	-74%	5.75	-55%
	Weekend	4.12	-33%	70.44	-73%	4.88	-65%

Hourly counts

The number of trips started per hour. The y axis is normalized by the maximum hourly value in the graph.

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