

'I want to ride my bicycle!' People set to change mobility choices post-lockdown

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New research suggests a significant proportion of Trinity's staff and student population that formerly relied on public transport will now choose to walk or cycle to campus when it fully re-opens after lockdown.

Among the reasons provided for such a shift were that [public transport](#) options in Dublin's [city](#) center were inadequate even when operating at capacity pre-COVID, and that public health guidelines are not enforced on public [transport](#), raising safety concerns.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 16% of those surveyed walked and 10.4% cycled to Trinity. Once the [campus](#) re-opens fully, 27.3% intend to walk and 27.8% intend to cycle.

The research, which synthesized over 2,500 responses from staff and students surveyed in June and July 2020, did however also find that many people still harbor all-too familiar fears around how safe cycling and walking in Dublin is. Some of those people indicated they too would be likely to switch to walking or cycling to Trinity if there were safer options.

"Our research shows how travel to our city center campus may change as restrictions ease. One of the key findings is that as travel returns to the campus that it is likely to be done by more active modes with some reluctance to use public transport options," said Professor Brian Caulfield, from Trinity's School of Engineering.

"Trinity's campus is one of the most sustainable in the world when it comes to mobility with less than 1% of staff driving to the campus each day. This research demonstrates the appetite of staff and students to embrace active modes of transport when returning to the campus and also shows the need for the plans that Dublin City Council is implementing in the city to ensure that social distancing can still take place.

"Given that there will be a significant reduction in public transport capacity for the foreseeable future it is crucial that we continue working together to promote active modes of transport. By enabling remote

learning and working we can bridge this gap that the reduction in public transport capacity creates."

Most people would like to continue working/studying from home at least some of the time

The research, just published in the journal of Case Studies on Transport Policy, also provides an interesting snapshot into the minds of a city center workforce and student body adjusting to life working and studying from home, and considering how the 'new normal' may affect their attitudes in the future.

The majority of staff members are keen to continue working from home at least some of the time post-lockdown (29.9% preferring to do so one or two days a week, and 60.4% preferring to do so 3+ days a week).

Although students are less keen to continue studying from home some of the time, the majority would prefer not to be on campus all the time (26.1% would prefer to study from home 3+ days a week, and 43.2% one or two days a week).

"This research emerges from a collaboration between researchers in all three Faculties within Trinity College Dublin, Healthy Trinity, and Dublin City Council," added Sarah Bowman, Director of Strategic Engagement & Impact Assessment, and a co-author of the paper. "It's a model of cross-sector, transdisciplinary research that seeks to provide data and analyses that encourage evidence-informed decision making."

More information: Brian Caulfield et al. Re-open our City and Campus post-Covid: A case study of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, *Case Studies on Transport Policy* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.cstp.2021.02.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cstp.2021.02.016)

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