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By [Patrick Troy](#) / Updated: 05 May 2020

## [13 April 2020 - weekly summary: How has COVID-19 affected mobility?](#)

Submitted by [Patrick Troy](#) on 14 Apr 2020

**Picture:**

**STAY  
HOME**



**Region:**

Europe-wide

**Country:**

Europe-wide

**Topic:**

COVID-19

**Link:**

[How is coronavirus affecting the global transport sector? Live updates](#)

**Body:**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has called for people all over the world to stay at home to reduce the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). National governments across the globe have responded by imposing new and varied legislation to ensure that this vital advice is taken.

Helping to reduce the number of key workers who travel by bus and train, the Berlin-based bike

rental provider 'Deezer Nextbike' has been offering bicycles free of charge for the first half-hour of use. This offer applies to multiple loans a day and will be available until 19 April. Virologists have emphasised the effectiveness of riding bicycles instead of using public transport and have stated that it reduces the risk of infection threefold;

1. firstly, by reducing the rider's chance of contracting the virus;
2. secondly, by reducing the number of other travellers an asymptomatic infected person will encounter, and;
3. thirdly by making buses and trams less crowded, making it easier to maintain a distance from fellow travellers.

The Deputy Public Transport Minister of Greece, Yiannis Kefalogiannis, has announced new measures applying to all public transport - buses, trams, trains, and ferries - lasting until at least 30 May. These measures set a limit on the maximum capacity of vehicles - restricting them to 50% to ensure social distancing rules can be followed. Taxi cabs with up to five seats can now only carry one passenger, although a parent can accompany a minor.

The whole of Romania has been put under quarantine with the military deployed to ensure that quarantine requirements are being adhered to. As a result, the Bucharest subway and bus services have been left almost empty. The state of emergency will continue for another month and for the first time in 30 years, over the Easter weekend, all public transport was closed, including the subway, buses, trolley-buses, and trams.

With a variety of mobility restrictions in different countries, travel data has been used to gain insights into the average daily distances covered by citizens. CEO of OnAudience.com, Maciek Sawa, said 'Political, social and economic changes strongly influence our mobility' and the data analysed by the company shows a significant decline in movement in France, Spain, and Poland after the WHO officially labelled the outbreak a pandemic. In Italy movement remained high until restrictions were imposed on 7 March. Britain was the last of the studied countries to implement restrictions and falls in movement have only been observed over the last few weeks.

With restrictions on movement in place, Italian environmental association 'Legambiente' has taken this opportunity to study solutions to pollution. The Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research published a study showing NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the Po valley decreasing by 40-50% in just one month. It is expected that greenhouse gas emissions across Italy in the first quarter of 2020 will be 5-7% lower than in the same quarter of 2019. While more time is needed to study the effects on particulate matter levels this information will be crucial in future solutions to climate change.

For more information please see the following websites:

- [Bicycle shops remain open, nextbike rental bikes are cheaper;](#)
- [How is coronavirus affecting the global transport sector? Live updates;](#)
- [Europe in Isolation: a New OnAudience.com Mobility Report;](#)
- [Legambiente: we use these unfortunate days to study solutions to pollution.](#)

**For a detailed list of online resources, guidance materials, and COVID-19 related transport and mobility discussions, please see the links in Eltis article [Maintaining essential mobility during a pandemic](#).**

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