

# COVID-19 and Public Transport

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“Public transport as public space in European cities: Narrating, experiencing, contesting” (PUTSPACE)

# The study: outline

Survey (as of 19/10/2020): In total 2173 responses; 1119 full responses / In Dutch, English, Estonian, French, German, Russian, Swedish

Interviews: 49 in Tallinn, Brussels, Stockholm & 3 German cities in May - June, 2020

Key questions:

how the uses, experiences and understandings of public transport may have changed following the outbreak of Covid-19

focus on feelings, emotions and practices

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Language: English [Change the language](#)

## Covid-19 and Public Transport Mobility

In this survey, we are interested in how the uses, experiences and understandings of public transport may have changed following the outbreak of Covid-19 (commonly referred to as "coronavirus"). We invite you to answer some questions regarding your use of public transport before and after the Covid-19 outbreak. We will also ask some questions regarding your social profile. Completing the questionnaire takes about 10 to 15 minutes.



# Public transport as a vector of disease

- “You meet many people when you go [with PT] and it’s these meetings that **you can get infected by anything. I hadn’t really thought about this before.** Previously you met people all the time, at work, in public transport, so it hasn’t mattered [for me]. But I think I will continue to bike more because of this insight.” (Stockholm, F20-29, interviewed 5 June 2020)
- “I already knew how uncomfortable it is for other passengers when I **cough.** Then I tried to wait until the next stop, keeping my breath. Then **I went off the bus and coughed outside,** and waited for the next bus. Went one stop on foot and home with the next bus.” (Tallinn, F60-69, interviewed 19 May 2020)

Following the COVID-19 outbreak, how would you describe the atmosphere in public transport? Please provide any keywords that come to your mind

108 distance

93 calm

68 quiet

52 tense

44 fewer

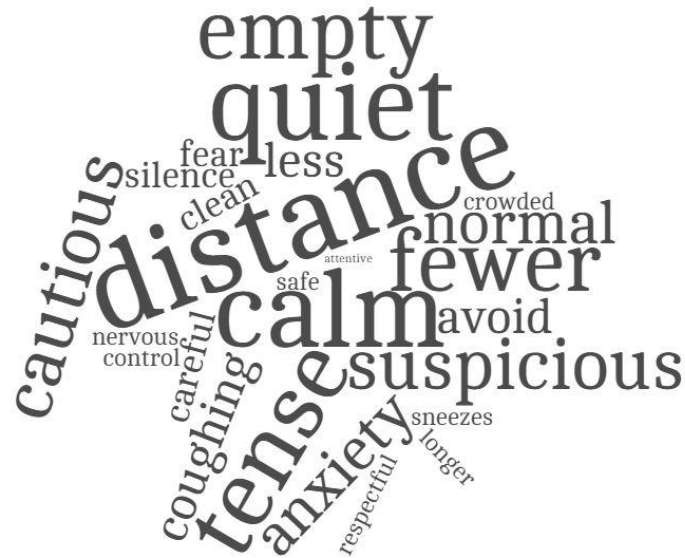
41 empty

29 cautious

24 suspicious

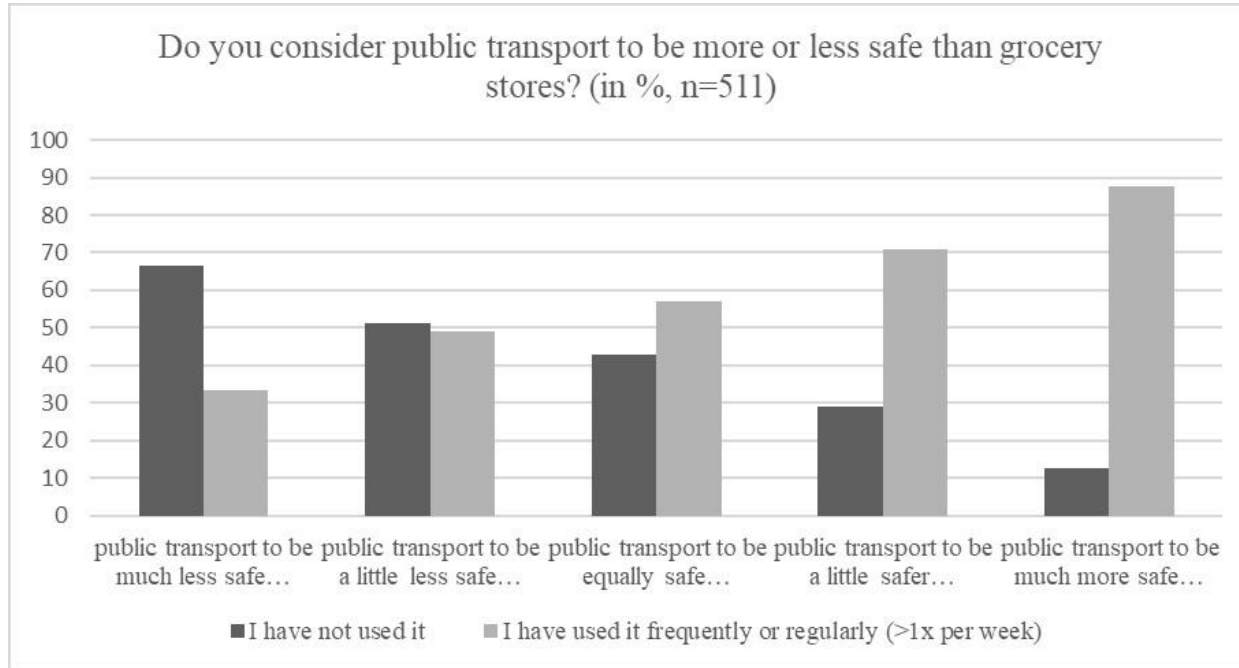
20 anxiety

20 less



Produced by Tonio Weicker (IfL, Leipzig)

# How PT compares to other public space?



No correlation with:

- Age
- Gender
- Income

# There are also other things to worry than COVID-19

- “While I am **relieved that there are so few people** using public transport whenever I take a metro/bus/tram, it also feels very disconcerting. **I feel more self-conscious about my personal safety about the risk of being mugged** in a metro or at the metro station due to it being so quiet, but at the same time I feel relieved that there is a lesser risk of contracting Covid-19 with so few customers on board.” (Brussels)
- It happened then that there was a lot of such **rapid braking** and for this reason I preferred to sit. But now, if I go on, then at the time of COVID there was a lot less people on buses and one get to sit always. There is just 3-4-5 persons apart from bus driver and then there was no more this danger, that there would be traffic jams and, well, **everything went smoothly**. (Tallinn, F40-49, interviewed 15 May 2020)

# Bus drivers fearing for their lives

- “In the initial stage we were **terrified**, we who drove the buses. People were pouring in. We **wanted the front doors closed**, but the bus companies said no, since SL [transit authority] said no. [...] Then we closed them off ourselves so no one could use the front. [...] At that point, before we were allowed to close the doors, there were **ten bus drivers seriously ill** at my bus garage. [...] And then **guards were sent** out to tear down the tape and paper that closed off the front, and **forced bus drivers to open the front door.**”  
(Stockholm, F50-59, interviewed 4 June 2020)

