

New study sheds light on the darker side of business travel

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Credit: Petr Kratochvil/public domain

A new study, 'The dark side of business travel: A media comments analysis', by academics at the University of Surrey and Lund University, published today in the journal *Transportation Research Part D*, analyses

first hand responses on the impacts that frequent business travel can have on individuals.

The study is an in-depth analysis of the online public responses to media reporting on an earlier research paper titled 'A darker side of hypermobility', which looked at the different ways that frequent travel, or hypermobility, can affect individuals - including its negative health, social and family impacts. This earlier paper led to global online media reporting on which the public was able to leave comments in many instances, and the present study analyses the personal accounts left in these comments.

The new study highlights that individuals tend to either 'flourish' or 'flounder' in careers that include frequent business travel. The 'flourishing hypermobile' views frequent business travel as an integral part of their happiness and identity, whereas the 'floundering hypermobile' experiences frequent business travel as a source of unhappiness that endangers their health and psycho-social wellbeing.

Findings in the report reveal that a large proportion of business travellers want to reduce the amount of time they spend on business travel. However, the research shows that these individuals do not take the necessary steps to reduce travel as they believe it's not something they have the ability to control. The report concludes that it will be up to organisations themselves to develop policies to help protect their employees from the darker sides of business travel.

Speaking about the publication of the new research paper, lead author Dr Scott Cohen from the University of Surrey said: "As more and more people are required to travel frequently for work, the impacts of travel on the workforce is an issue of rising importance on the public agenda.

"In the next 10-15 years it is very possible that we will see lawsuits being

brought against companies who don't take actions to help reduce their employee's business travel. As this paper concludes, business travel reductions for individuals are unlikely to take place unless they are driven top down by a Human Resources department with a clearly defined wellbeing strategy for corporate [travel](#)."

More information: Scott A. Cohen et al, The dark side of business travel: A media comments analysis, *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment* (2017). [DOI: 10.1016/j.trd.2017.01.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2017.01.004)

Provided by University of Surrey

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