

How Spanish children get to school: New study on active commuting

February 17 2021



Patricia Gálvez-Fernández, main author of this research. Credit: University of Granada

The researchers analyzed how Spanish children and adolescents get to school, based on studies examining the commuting patterns of 36,781 individuals over a 7-year period (2010-2017).

Researchers from the University of Granada (UGR) have conducted the most comprehensive study to date on how Spanish [children](#) and [young people](#) get to school each day, to determine the active commuting rate.

The results showed that, between 2010 and 2017, in the region of 60% of Spanish children and adolescents actively commuted to school, with no significant variations being observed during this period.

The study, which was recently published in the prestigious *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, analyzed information drawn from 28 studies conducted throughout Spain, covering a total sample of 36,781 children and adolescents. To date, no study has been performed in Spain with such a large sample and such a longitudinal perspective, based on data collected over 7 successive years.

The results show how the overall trend of active commuting to school remained stable during 2010-2017, except for a sporadic increase in the rate among adolescents in 2012-2013. The UGR researchers highlight how promising these results are, as all similar studies previously carried out in different countries and in Spain showed a dramatic decline in the percentage of young people showing active mobility over time. Furthermore, they highlight that no significant association was found between the rate of active commuting to school and the period of economic crisis that Spain underwent in the period analyzed.

The findings therefore indicate that the commitment shown in today's society toward promoting measures and strategies for increasing active commuting to [school](#) seems to be paying dividends. This activity is not only good for young people's health but is also beneficial for the environment, and efforts must continue to ensure long-term positive results in the quest for a more active society and a healthier environment.

More information: Patricia Gálvez-Fernández et al, Active commuting to school among 36,781 Spanish children and adolescents: A temporal trend study, *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports* (2021). [DOI: 10.1111/sms.13917](https://doi.org/10.1111/sms.13917)

Provided by University of Granada

Citation: How Spanish children get to school: New study on active commuting (2021, February 17) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-spanish-children-school-commuting.html>

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