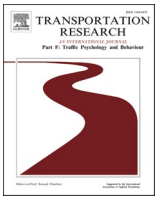
Transportation Research Part F: Psychology and Behaviour 116 (2026) 103427

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Transportation Research Part F: Psychology and Behaviour

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/trf



Perceptions and use of travel time in Switzerland: Activities, transport modes, and perceived usefulness

Corinne Moser [a,*], Lorenz Meyer [b]

[a] FHNW School of Applied Psychology, Institute for Market Supply and Consumer Decision-Making, Riggenbachstrasse 16, CH 4600 Olten, Switzerland
[b] econcept AG, Gerechtigkeitsgasse 20, CH-8001 Zürich, Switzerland

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Travel time use
Usefulness of travel time
Multitasking
Transport mode
Survey

ABSTRACT

As mobility is an essential part of modern life, people spend a substantial amount of time travelling. This paper investigates how people travelling in Switzerland use and evaluate their travel time, using a quantitative online survey ($N = 2{,}056$). While considering a representative distribution of trip purposes and a broad variety of transport modes, the survey focused on a recent trip made by participants. Participants reported their activities while travelling and evaluated the usefulness of their travel time.

Findings show that most travellers did not perceive their travel time as being wasted. Instead, many used it to relax, consume media, reflect, or engage socially – activities that varied substantially depending on the transport mode. For example, passengers on long-distance trains were more likely to read, work, or engage in digital media. Car drivers reported focusing on the ride or listening to audio content. Walking and cycling were often associated with physical activity and personal reflection.

Regression analyses further revealed that trip duration, transport mode, and activity type significantly influence how travellers evaluate the usefulness of their travel time. Perceived usefulness of travel time was highest among train passengers and lowest among car users and cyclists, highlighting the importance of attentional demands.

1. Introduction

Mobility is an essential part of modern life. Consequently, people spend a substantial amount of time travelling (e.g. Ahmed & Stopher, 2014). Across different European countries and cities, people spend, on average, 1 h and 20 min travelling per day (Armoogum et al., 2022). Considering the substantial amount of time spent travelling, a good understanding of how people utilise and perceive their travel time is essential for designing efficient and user-centred mobility systems.

1.1. Research perspectives on travel time

Research has taken different perspectives on travel time. A prominent strand of research based on economics focuses on people's willingness to pay to reduce travel time (value of travel time savings, e.g. Binsuwadan et al., 2023; Hartwig et al., 2024; Schmid et al.,

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: corinne.moser@fhnw.ch (C. Moser), lorenz.meyer@econcept.ch (L. Meyer).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2025.103427
Received 15 April 2025; Received in revised form 27 October 2025; Accepted 27 October 2025
Available online 26 November 2025

2019; Shires & De Jong, 2009; Wardman et al., 2016; Wardman & Lyons, 2016). Respective monetary values are highly relevant for decision-making, such as in cost-benefit analyses for transport infrastructure decisions (Schweizerischer Verband der Strassen- und Verkehrsfachleute VSS, 2009). They depend, among other factors, on the transport mode, trip purpose, and distance, as well as the socioeconomic characteristics of travellers (Schmid et al., 2021). Typically, monetary values for saving travel time are lower for public transport than for car use, reflecting the multitasking options in public transport that allow for using travel time in various ways (Hartwig et al., 2024).

Related to that approach, studies also investigated the monetary values that people assign to travel times, i.e. the time spent travelling (Jara-Diaz, 2020; Schmid et al., 2021). These monetary values also depend on mode choice, with negative values for car (including car-sharing and ride-pooling) and walking, and positive values for public transport and biking (Schmid et al., 2021). Together with other studies (Hartwig et al., 2024), this suggests that travellers may perceive their travel time as wasted or as useful, depending on the mode chosen and the respective service qualities or multitasking options offered.

Another strand of research on travel time focuses on people's subjective experiences while travelling. The notion that travel time can be useful is, for example, implied by the hypothetical teleportation test (Mokhtarian & Salomon, 2001). This test has been used in mobility surveys to ask participants if they would teleport themselves to their destination if it were possible. In a survey (Humagain & Singleton, 2020), 62 % of participants expressed a preference for teleportation. The remainder preferred to travel conventionally, particularly those who were cyclists and pedestrians. Those who preferred to teleport aimed to save time, whereas those who opted against it valued the experience of travelling itself as enjoyable or productive.

Travel conditions, such as the transport mode and the reliability of transport modes, play a crucial role in how travellers evaluate their travel time and whether they perceive it as wasted or useful (Cornet et al., 2022). Depending on these conditions, travellers can undertake various activities during their travel time. These activities themselves are highly relevant for people's evaluations of travel time (De Vos et al., 2023). For instance, engaging in activities that simply pass the time, such as scrolling on their mobile phone without purpose, may lead to a perception that it is a waste of time. Perceiving travel time as useful does not necessarily mean it is used productively in the sense of engaging in paid work activities. Activities such as relaxing, engaging in social media, social interactions, sleeping, or 'disconnecting' from work can be experienced as a useful use of time by travellers (Cornet et al., 2022).

1.2. Research on travel time use

Recognising the relevant impact of activities while travelling, several studies, including the large-scale EU Horizon 2020 Mobility and Time Value project (MoTiV), have investigated people's activities while travelling (Cornet et al., 2022; Malichová et al., 2022; MoTiV Project, 2025; Nathanail & Karakikes, 2019; Pourhashem et al., 2024). Studies highlight the pivotal role of digitalisation as well as increased online connectivity (Wardman & Lyons, 2016). On public transport modes, in particular, these processes have had a significant impact on the possibilities available to travellers during their travel time, enabling productivity or personal enjoyment (Cornet et al., 2022; Malichová et al., 2022).

Previous research analysed activities undertaken while travelling through smartphone applications (Malichová et al., 2022), observations (Gamberini et al., 2013; Keserű et al., 2020), or surveys (Singleton, 2020), each study applying its own list of activities. Keserű and Macharis (2018) reviewed 58 studies on people's use of travel time. They studied activities performed during travel as well as the variables that impact them. Their review of methods for researching travel activities revealed that, to date, there is no established set of travel activities and respective categories to be used in further research on this topic. This is due to the rapid development of boundary conditions for travel activities (e.g. digitalisation), which has resulted in activities changing dynamically over time.

According to Keserű and Macharis (2018), transport mode is a crucial factor in deciding travel activities. This is mainly because, depending on mode choice, travellers need to dedicate more or less cognitive effort to the act of travelling itself. The more effort travellers need to dedicate to operating the mode of transport, the less likely they are to make active use of travel time. Driving a car limits activities to more passive ones (e.g. listening to music or podcasts, or relaxing), while public transportation enables more active and productive activities. In line with this, Singleton (2020) investigated how travel time is used across different transport modes. He analysed twenty-three activities aggregated into two main categories: using information and communication technologies (ICT) and passive activities. As expected, passengers (in trains or cars) used their travel time for a broader diversity of activities compared to car drivers. For cyclists and pedestrians, movement represented their primary activity. However, the relationship between transport mode and activities may be bidirectional. Individuals may also choose a specific mode of transport based on the activities they plan to undertake during the trip. For instance, a person who intends to read documents in preparation for a meeting may opt for public transport.

Transport mode is also relevant for travellers' perception of the usefulness of their travel time (Van Acker et al., 2025). Data from a recent European-wide study indicate that people judge their travel time as most useful when walking or cycling and as most wasted when driving a car or riding a local bus (Cornet et al., 2022).

Other studies focused on trip duration and travel time use. According to Keserű and Macharis (2018), longer trips were more likely to be used for more active activities (e.g. reading), while shorter trips are used for more passive activities (e.g. doing 'nothing', people watching, relaxing). An observational study investigated the activities of passengers during short trips on the London Underground (Gamberini et al., 2013). The activity observed most often was technology use (e.g. ICT), and 'other activities' (activities not specified in the researchers' codebook). Conversations with others and reading a book or newspaper were observed less often. Only a few used their travel time to eat, drink, or sleep. While investigating long-distance (>100 km) trips in Europe, authors found that browsing the internet was negatively correlated with the perceived usefulness of travel time. In contrast, accompanying someone had a positive correlation with the perceived usefulness of travel time (Malichová et al., 2022).

1.3. Goals and contributions of this study

There is a growing body of scientific literature on travel time use and its perceived usefulness. However, while existing studies encompass a variety of transport modes (e.g. Pourhashem et al., 2024; Van Acker et al., 2025), they often lack differentiations between perspectives (e.g. between car drivers and car passengers) or between public transport categories (e.g. between buses, trams, regional or long-distance trains). Acknowledging the crucial role of transport mode in activities and passengers' perception of their travel time (Cornet et al., 2022; Keserű & Macharis, 2018), respective differentiation seems relevant for a better understanding of travellers' use and perception of travel time.

The goal of this paper is to analyse the use of travel time and its perceived usefulness, considering differentiated perspectives. The study focuses on the following two research questions.

- How do people in Switzerland use their travel time, and how do different transport modes shape activities undertaken when travelling?
- How useful is travel time for people travelling in Switzerland?

The present study provides insights from a quantitative online survey among travellers in Switzerland ($N = 2{,}056$), which considers different trip purposes representative for Switzerland (BFS & ARE, 2023), different trip durations, as well as a broad variety of transport modes, including various public transport types and perspectives from both car drivers and car passengers. Switzerland is an interesting case for studying travel time use (Table A1 in the Appendix provides an overview of recent average daily travel times in Switzerland) due to its extensive, reliable, and frequently used public transportation system (Orth et al., 2013; Schad & Sonderegger, 2009). Public transport is pertinent in relation to the study of travel time, as it allows passengers to engage in a broad variety of activities without the need to focus on operating the transport, unlike when driving a car or riding a bicycle (Keserű & Macharis, 2018; Singleton, 2020).

Taken together, this study provides the first nationwide quantitative analysis of how people in Switzerland use and perceive their travel time, distinguishing among a wide range of transport modes, including various public transport options as well as the perspectives of car drivers and passengers. The findings illustrate how a high-quality, multimodal transport system, such as that in Switzerland, shapes both activity patterns while travelling and the perceived usefulness of travel time, offering insights that can inform improvements in transport design and the passenger experience in comparable contexts.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. Section 2 outlines the materials and methods. Section 3 presents the results in relation to the research questions. Section 4 discusses the findings and limitations and provides implications for future research and transport policy.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Sample

We collected data through a quantitative online survey with a sample of $N = 2{,}056$ people living in Switzerland recruited by an ISO-certified panel company (ISO 20252:2019). Our sample size is consistent with comparable studies in this field (e.g., Malokin et al., 2019; Olsson et al., 2013). It was determined based on our predefined quotas (see Section 2.2), as well as an a priori sample size calculation (Kang, 2021). Our sample is gender balanced. Compared to the residential population of Switzerland, the sample is on average slightly older, has a higher proportion of people with a tertiary education degree (e.g. bachelor's or master's degree), and a lower employment rate. In our sample, ownership of cars, motorbikes, and mopeds is slightly lower, while ownership of e-bikes is slightly higher than in the Swiss residential population. Ownership of bikes is comparable. For a detailed sample description and comparisons with statistics for Switzerland, refer to Table A2 in the Appendix.

2.2. Quotas

For the questionnaire, we defined two different quotas to structure the sample, namely, trip purpose and transport mode. Participants first indicated all trip purposes on a given day. Based on our predefined quota for trip purpose (see below), participants were directed towards a specific trip purpose and asked about transport modes used for it. Based on our predefined quota for transport mode (see below), participants were further asked about a specific trip travelled by a particular transport mode.

Quota for trip purpose: The trips analysed in the survey should mirror the actual distribution of trip purposes of those travelling in Switzerland. To establish this quota, we relied on the most recent census data at the time the survey was conducted (BFS & ARE, 2017). We used the mean share of travel time for specific trip purposes as the basis to define our quota. Table 1 presents the average shares of travel time of different trip purposes in Switzerland. For example, on average, 9.5 % of daily travel time is spent on commuting to work. The table also displays our quota goals based on these values. The quota could be achieved as planned. Thus, our data represent the distribution of trip purposes for Switzerland.

Quota for transport mode: We did not rely on census data for defining this quota, as in Switzerland, the largest share of travel time is spent walking or driving a car (see Table 2 and Table A1 in the Appendix). As both walking and driving only allow a reduced set of activities to be undertaken during travel time, we decided to oversample public transport options to allow larger subsamples of trips by transport modes that offer a greater potential for engaging in different activities. This quota was also achieved as planned.

Table 1
Quota for trip purpose. Quotas are subsamples of the total sample of $N = 2{,}056$.

trip purpose	average share of travel time in Switzerland (BFS & ARE, 2017)	quota goal	achieved quota
commute to work	9.5 %	10 %	11 % ($n = 217$)
commute from work	9.5 %	10 %	10 % ($n = 211$)
commute to the place of education	3 %	2.5 %	3 % ($n = 53$)
commute from the place of education	3 %	2.5 %	3 % ($n = 51$)
shopping	15 %	15 %	14 % ($n = 259$)
business trip	5 %	5 %	5 % ($n = 102$)
leisure	50 %	50 %	50 % ($n = 1{,}032$)
accompanying others, service trip	4 %	5 %	5 % ($n = 96$)
total	100 %	100 %	100 % ($N = 2{,}056$)

Table 2
Quota for transport mode. Quotas are subsamples of the total sample of $N = 2{,}056$.

transport mode	average share of travel time in Switzerland (BFS & ARE, 2017)	quota goals	achieved quota
walking	36 %	15 %	15 % ($n = 309$)
bike	5 % (including e-bike)	10 %	10 % ($n = 204$)
e-bike	see bike		
inline skates, skateboards, etc.	unknown		
motorbike	1 %		
car (as driver)	41 %	15 %	15 % ($n = 307$)
car (as a passenger)	unknown	10 %	10 % ($n = 207$)
bus	6 % (including tram, metro)	5 %	5 % ($n = 105$)
tram, metro	see bus	5 %	5 % ($n = 106$)
s-train	8 % (all trains, including long-distance train)	15 %	15 % ($n = 313$)
long-distance train	see s-train	25 %	25 % ($n = 505$)
total	100 %	100 %	100 % ($N = 2{,}056$)

2.3. Questionnaire

Screen-out and quota: First, participants indicated if they had left their home either a day prior to or two days prior to answering the survey. Participants who had not left their homes during this period were excluded from the study. Participants who left their homes recently were asked about all trip purposes (one day or two days before completing the survey). Based on the predefined quota, participants were asked about the transport modes they used for a specific trip purpose. According to the specified quotas in Tables 1 and 2, participants either continued the survey or were excluded from the study.

Sociodemographic data: Participants provided their sociodemographic data (e.g. gender, age, educational level) and information about their household (e.g. ownership of vehicles); see Table A2 in the Appendix for details.

Focus on a specific trip: Based on their previous responses and the predefined quotas for trip purpose and transport mode, participants were directed to a particular trip they had taken during the two days preceding the survey. They were instructed to focus on a specific trip, including its purpose, the day it occurred, and the transport mode used. The respective instruction was given, e.g. 'for the following questions, please refer to your *commute from home to work yesterday by long-distance train*'. The following items focused on this specific trip:

- **Trip duration**: Participants were asked to indicate the trip duration. For the subsequent analyses, trip duration was collapsed into three categories: 1–15 min, 16–60 min and more than 60 min.
- **Activities**: Participants were asked to indicate the primary activity they engaged in during the selected trip. As described in the introduction, there is no established set of activities during travel. This is why we compiled a list of activities based on previous research (Keserű et al., 2020; Keserű & Macharis, 2018; Malichová et al., 2022; Singleton, 2020) and added more activities to cover all transport modes (e.g. engaging in sports while biking or walking). In the survey, participants were shown a selection of options that are legally possible for the respective transport mode (for example, there was no 'sleeping' option for car drivers). Participants were also offered the option of naming a different activity not included on the list. Participants' notes were thoroughly checked, and, where applicable, coded into existing options. Participants first chose a primary activity, and subsequently, they could choose up to two additional activities. The complete list of activities is presented in Table 3 of the results section.
- **Judgment of subjective usefulness of travel time:** Three items were developed to measure participants' subjective usefulness of how they utilised their travel time on the specified trip (Cornet et al., 2022). While the first item assesses whether travel time was viewed as wasted, the other items assessed whether travel time could be used to accomplish things ('get things done') or whether people were able to do something for themselves. All items were measured on a scale from 1, 'do not agree', to 4, 'agree' (see Table 5 for details).

The questionnaire contained further questions (Buser et al., 2023), which will not be explained in detail here as they are not relevant for the paper at hand.

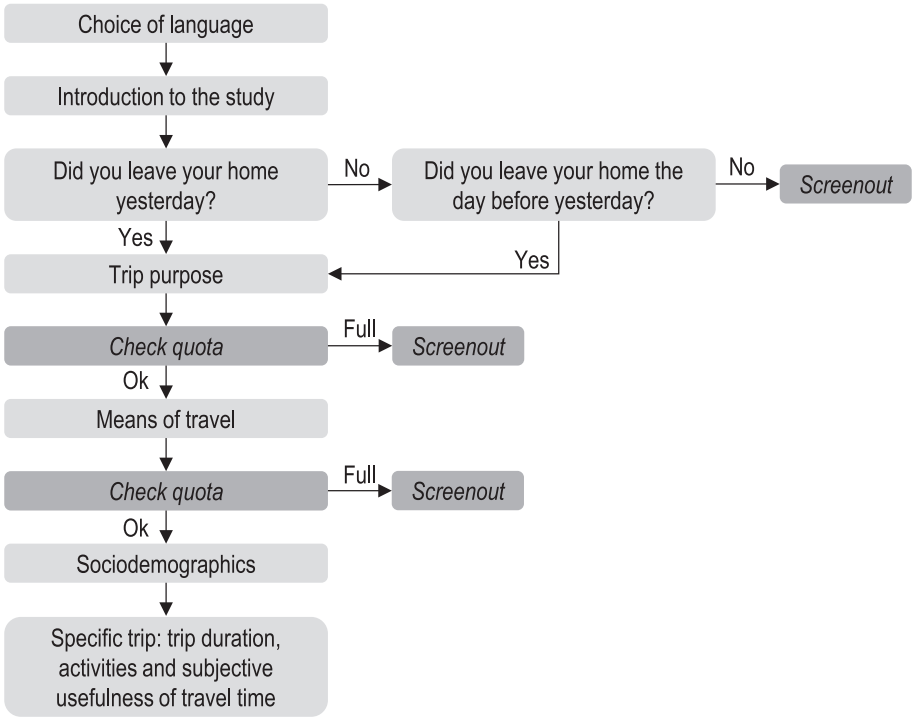


Fig. 1. Survey flow. Survey questions and participant information are displayed in light grey, while quota information is displayed in dark grey.

2.4. Procedure and survey flow

Data collection was carefully timed to avoid the potential influence of measures in place to combat COVID-19 (e.g. mandatory face masks on public transport) on participants' responses. We also aimed at collecting data before the summer vacation period in the Swiss cantons to avoid biased responses resulting from vacation travel. The Swiss Federal Council suspended all measures against COVID-19 on 30 March 2022 (Bundesrat, 2022). We assumed that a period of three months is sufficient for reestablishing stable travel habits after the acute phase of the pandemic (Haggar et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2015). Therefore, data collection took place between 29 June and 13 July 2022, over two consecutive weeks, to ensure that all days of the week, including weekends, were covered. Data were collected in collaboration with Intervista, a professional and ISO-certified panel company based in Switzerland (ISO 20252:2019). Participants were invited to participate in the online survey via email. Filling out the questionnaire took an average of 15.1 min (standard deviation [SD] = 7.9 min). Participants could choose between three languages: 76 % of participants chose German (n = 1,563), 19.6 % chose French (n = 402), and 4.4 % chose Italian (n = 91). This roughly represents the distribution of these three official languages in Switzerland (EDA Präsenz Schweiz, 2024). Fig. 1 gives an overview of the survey flow.

2.5. Data analysis

Data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. First, we examined the frequency distributions for different activities when travelling and categorised these activities. Second, we analysed how transport modes and categorised primary activities are associated by means of a Chi2-test. Third, we performed a series of multiple linear regression models to assess how transport mode, trip purpose, travel time and activity type are related to people's perceived usefulness of their travel time. As the usefulness items were measured on 4-point-scales, we additionally calculated ordinal regression models as a robustness check. These results were highly consistent with the multiple linear regression models reported in the results section.

3. Results

3.1. How do people in Switzerland use their travel time, and how does transport mode shape activities undertaken when travelling?

Participants reported how they used their travel time for a specific trip undertaken one or two days prior to taking the survey. Table 3 shows an overview of the primary activity that participants engaged in during their trip. Only twenty-five participants mentioned an activity that was not presented in the questionnaire. While demonstrating the wide range of activities, it is essential to interpret the frequency distribution with caution, as public transport trips were oversampled in this study (see Section 3. Materials and methods for details).

Table 3
Primary activity on a specific trip. Frequencies and percentages. Percentages refer to $N = 2{,}056$.

primary activity	frequency, %	media consumption, reading	relaxing and reflecting	communication, social	focusing on the ride	sports, eating and leisure	working, education	other
talking to someone	346, 16.8 %			x				
looking out the window/enjoying the ride	302, 14.7 %		x					
listening to music, radio, or podcasts	285, 13.9 %	x						
reading (digital or on paper)	174, 8.5 %	x						
focusing on the ride	171, 8.3 %				x			
switching off, relaxing, sleeping	111, 5.4 %		x					
reflecting/thinking	109, 5.3 %		x					
exercising, doing sports	96, 4.7 %					x		
working (e.g. emails, business calls)	77, 3.7 %						x	
using social media	64, 3.1 %	x						
writing private messages or chatting	55, 2.7 %			x				
caregiving/accompanying (e.g. children)	52, 2.5 %			x				
surfing the internet	47, 2.3 %	x						
watching movies/video clips	31, 1.5 %	x						
playing, solving puzzles (e.g. Sudoku)	31, 1.5 %					x		
eating/drinking	27, 1.3 %					x		
making private calls	27, 1.3 %			x				
something else	25, 1.2 %							x
studying	16, 0.8 %						x	
online shopping	5, 0.2 %					x		
doing handicrafts (e.g. knitting)	3, 0.1 %					x		
celebrating, partying	2, 0.1 %			x				
Total	2,056	601	522	482	171	162	93	25

Table 3 indicates how the primary activities have been grouped into categories. As there is (at the time of writing) no established standardised set of activities or categories in the research community (Keserű & Macharis, 2018), we developed our own categories by clustering activities that are similar to each other in terms of content (e.g. working and studying). As their primary activity, 29 % of participants engaged in media consumption and reading, around 25 % spent their travel time relaxing or reflecting, 23 % engaged in communication or other social activities, 8 % had to focus on their ride, 8 % were engaging in sports, eating or were engaged in leisure activities, and 5 % used their travel time for working or studying. Again, these percentages should be interpreted with caution due to the oversampling of public transport options. Therefore, the following analysis considers the various transport modes.

Further, we analysed whether there are systematic differences in primary activities for different transport modes (Table 4). As the

Table 4
Primary activity on a specific trip by transport mode. Frequencies and percentages. Percentages refer to the primary activity. Reading example: of those who engaged in media consumption and reading, 7.2 % walked. Orange cells represent standardised residuals > 2.0 and light blue cells represent standardised residuals < –2.0. Category 'other' (chosen 25 times) was omitted for this analysis.

category (primary activity) $N = 2{,}031$	walking ($n = 302$)	bike, e-bike, motorbike ($n = 196$)	car driver ($n = 304$)	car passenger ($n = 204$)	bus ($n = 104$)	tram, metro ($n = 106$)	s-train ($n = 310$)	long-distance train ($n = 505$)
media consumption, reading, $n = 601$	43 7.2%	19 3.2%	93 15.5%	23 3.8%	39 6.5%	39 6.5%	133 22.1%	212 35.5%
relaxing and reflecting, $n = 522$	117 22.4%	65 12.5%	39 7.5%	48 9.2%	31 5.9%	32 6.1%	76 14.6%	114 21.8%
communication, social, $n = 482$	72 14.9%	6 1.2%	63 13.1%	126 26.1%	24 5.0%	24 5.0%	60 12.4%	107 22.2%
focusing on the ride, $n = 171$	21 12.3%	48 28.1%	101 59.1%	1 0.6%	0 0%	0 0%,	0 0%	0 0%,
sports, eating and leisure, $n = 162$	48 29.6%	58 35.8%	0 0%	6 3.7%	7 4.3%	6 3.7%	18 11.1%	19 11.7%
working, education, $n = 93$	1 1.1%	0 0%	8 8.6%	0 0%	3 3.2%	5 5.4%	23 24.7%	53 57.0%

'other' category was only chosen twenty-five times, it was omitted from this analysis.

There was a significant association between primary activity and transport mode $\chi 2\,(35) = 980.2$, $p < 0.001$. The effect size, measured by Cramer's V, was 0.31, indicating a medium effect. The following pattern emerged (Table 4): media consumption and reading, as well as working and studying, were associated with using trains, but less so with walking, cycling, and riding in a car as a passenger. Relaxing and reflecting were associated with walking and cycling, but not with driving a car. Communication and social activities were associated with riding in a car as a passenger, but not with cycling. Focusing on the ride was associated with driving a car, but not with using public transport or with riding in a car as a passenger. Sports and leisure activities were associated with walking and cycling rather than with travelling by car (as a driver or passenger) or taking long-distance trains.

3.2. How useful is travel time for people travelling in Switzerland?

Besides judging travel time in general, which revealed that participants seem to enjoy travelling and do not feel that travel time is time wasted (see Fig. A1 in the Appendix for details), participants also judged the usefulness of their travel time for their specific trip. A total of 79 % of participants tended to agree or agreed that their travel time was not wasted. We found that 30 % of participants agreed or tended to agree that they were able to accomplish things during their trip. Just over half (51 %) of the participants agreed or tended to agree that they were able to do something for themselves while travelling. Table 5 displays the average subjective usefulness of travel time.

In the following, we analysed how characteristics such as transport mode, trip purpose, travel time and primary activity while travelling as well as sociodemographics (age, gender) influenced how people judged the usefulness of their travel time. Table A3 in the Appendix displays the respective descriptive statistics. For the subsequent multiple linear regression analyses, all predictor variables were recoded into dummy variables. For all these dummy variables, the most frequent category served as the reference, i.e. long-distance train for transport mode, leisure for trip purpose, 16–60 min for travel time, and relaxing and reflecting for primary activity.

First, we analysed how the predictor variables — sociodemographics, transport mode, trip purpose, travel time, and primary activity — are related to participants' perceptions that their travel time was wasted (Table 6). We observed effects of both gender and age: females were less likely than males to perceive their travel time as wasted, and the likelihood of perceiving travel time as wasted decreased with increasing age. Regarding the transport mode, findings indicated that participants travelling by car, either as a driver or a passenger, were significantly more likely to perceive their travel time as wasted time compared to passengers on long-distance trains. In addition, commuters were significantly more likely to perceive their travel time as wasted compared to leisure travellers. Furthermore, people who spent more than one hour travelling were less likely to perceive their travel time as wasted compared to people travelling between 16 and 60 min, however, this effect is only marginally significant ($p > 0.07$). Examining the primary activities revealed that people spending their travel time with media consumption or reading, or those who had to focus on their ride, were significantly more likely to perceive their travel time as wasted compared to those who relaxed and reflected. However, the regression model only explained a small share of the variance, suggesting that additional factors may contribute to whether people view their travel time as wasted.

Second, we analysed how the same predictor variables were related to participants' perceptions of whether they were able to accomplish things while travelling (Table 7). An age effect was observed, with the likelihood of reporting to accomplish things increasing as participants' age increased. Similarly, although only marginally significant ($p > 0.07$), males were more likely than females to report that they could get things done. Regarding transport mode, analyses showed that participants who walked, cycled, travelled by car (as driver or passenger), rode the bus, or took the s-train reported that they were significantly less likely to accomplish things during travel compared to passengers who took long-distance trains. Additionally, commuters, shoppers and people on business trips reported that they were significantly more likely to accomplish things during travel than leisure travellers. Furthermore, the longer participants travelled, the more likely they were to report being able to accomplish things during their trip. Examining the primary activities revealed that people who spent their travel time working or studying, or engaging in media consumption or reading, were significantly more likely to report having accomplished things during this time compared to those who relaxed and reflected.

Last, we analysed how the same predictor variables were related to participants' perceptions of their ability to do something for themselves while travelling (Table 8). An age effect was observed, with the likelihood of reporting to do something for oneself increasing as participants' age increased. Regarding transport mode, our investigation showed that participants who walked, cycled, travelled by car (as driver or passenger), or rode a bus were significantly less likely to report that they were able to do something for themselves while travelling compared to passengers who took long-distance trains. Also, people accompanying others were significantly less inclined to report that they were able to use their travel time to do something for themselves compared to leisure travellers. Furthermore, the longer participants travelled, the higher the likelihood of reporting being able to do something for themselves. People who spent their travel time working or studying, engaging in media consumption or reading, or participating in sports, eating or leisure

Table 5
Subjective usefulness of travel time on a specific trip. Means (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*). Scale: 1 = I disagree, 2 = I tend to disagree, 3 = I tend to agree, 4 = I agree. $N = 2{,}056$.

item	*M*	*SD*
This travel time was mainly wasted time for me [time wasted].	1.76	0.90
During this travel time, I was able to get things done [accomplish things].	1.93	1.07
During this travel time, I was able to do something for myself [time for myself].	2.42	1.16

Table 6
Linear regression model predicting if time was perceived as wasted (scale: 1 = I disagree, 2 = I tend to disagree, 3 = I tend to agree, 4 = I agree). N = 2,056.

	predictors	B	SE B	β
	constant	2.14	0.09	
SD	male (vs. female)	0.09	0.04	0.05*
SD	age (years)	-0.01	0.00	-0.24***
transport mode	walking vs long-distance train	-0.03	0.07	-0.01
transport mode	bike, e-bikes, motorbikes vs long-distance train	-0.07	0.08	-0.02
transport mode	car (as driver) vs long-distance train	0.32	0.07	0.13***
transport mode	car (as a passenger) vs long-distance train	0.18	0.08	0.06*
transport mode	bus vs long-distance train	0.07	0.10	0.02
transport mode	tram, Metro vs long-distance train	0.13	0.10	0.03
transport mode	s-train vs long-distance train	0.07	0.07	0.03
purpose	commuting vs leisure	0.19	0.05	0.09***
purpose	shopping vs leisure	0.00	0.06	0.00
purpose	business trip vs leisure	0.08	0.09	0.02
purpose	accompanying others, service trip vs leisure	-0.04	0.09	-0.01
time	1–15 min vs 16–60 min	-0.07	0.05	-0.03
time	more than 60 min vs 16–60 min	-0.09	0.05	-0.05
primary activity	working, education vs relaxing and reflecting	-0.02	0.10	-0.01
primary activity	communication, social vs relaxing and reflecting	0.02	0.06	0.01
primary activity	media consumption and reading vs relaxing and reflecting	0.12	0.06	0.06*
primary activity	sports, eating and leisure vs relaxing and reflecting	0.01	0.08	0.00
primary activity	focusing on the ride vs relaxing and reflecting	0.24	0.08	0.07**
primary activity	other vs relaxing and reflecting	0.07	0.18	0.01

Notes: Dependent variable: This travel time was mainly wasted time for me [time wasted]. SD = sociodemographics. Corrected $R^2 = 0.10$ ($p < 0.001$). * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 7
Linear regression model predicting if participants were able to accomplish things (scale: 1 = I disagree, 2 = I tend to disagree, 3 = I tend to agree, 4 = I agree). N = 2,056.

	predictors	B	SE B	β
	constant	1.90	0.10	
SD	male (vs. female)	0.08	0.04	0.04
SD	age (years)	0.01	0.00	0.08***
transport mode	walking vs long-distance train	-0.42	0.08	-0.14***
transport mode	bike, e-bikes, motorbikes vs long-distance train	-0.72	0.09	-0.20***
transport mode	car (as driver) vs long-distance train	-0.82	0.08	-0.27***
transport mode	car (as a passenger) vs long-distance train	-0.48	0.09	-0.13***
transport mode	bus vs long-distance train	-0.34	0.11	-0.07**
transport mode	tram, metro vs long-distance train	-0.11	0.11	-0.02
transport mode	s-train vs long-distance train	-0.18	0.07	-0.06*
purpose	commuting vs leisure	0.12	0.06	0.05*
purpose	shopping vs leisure	0.18	0.07	0.06**
purpose	business trip vs leisure	0.35	0.10	0.07***
purpose	accompanying others, service trip vs leisure	-0.05	0.11	-0.01
time	1–15 min vs 16–60 min	-0.24	0.05	-0.10***
time	more than 60 min vs 16–60 min	0.15	0.06	0.06**
primary activity	working, education vs relaxing and reflecting	0.88	0.12	0.17***
primary activity	communication, social vs relaxing and reflecting	0.02	0.07	0.01
primary activity	media consumption and reading vs relaxing and reflecting	0.17	0.06	0.07**
primary activity	sports, eating and leisure vs relaxing and reflecting	0.02	0.09	0.01
primary activity	focusing on the ride vs relaxing and reflecting	-0.14	0.09	-0.04
primary activity	other vs relaxing and reflecting	0.16	0.20	0.02

Notes: Dependent variable: During this travel time, I was able to get things done [accomplish things]. SD = sociodemographics. Corrected $R^2 = 0.19$ ($p < 0.001$). * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 8
Linear regression model predicting if participants were able to do something for themselves (scale: 1 = I disagree, 2 = I tend to disagree, 3 = I tend to agree, 4 = I agree). N = 2,056.

	predictors	B	SE B	β
	constant	2.61	0.11	
SD	male (vs. female)	-0.03	0.05	-0.02
SD	age (years)	0.00	0.00	0.05*
transport mode	walking vs long-distance train	-0.34	0.08	-0.10***
transport mode	bike, e-bikes, motorbikes vs long-distance train	-0.51	0.10	-0.13***
transport mode	car (as driver) vs long-distance train	-1.03	0.08	-0.31***
transport mode	car (as a passenger) vs long-distance train	-0.76	0.09	-0.20***
transport mode	bus vs long-distance train	-0.29	0.11	-0.06*
transport mode	tram, metro vs long-distance train	-0.16	0.11	-0.03
transport mode	s-train vs long-distance train	-0.12	0.08	-0.04
purpose	commuting vs leisure	-0.03	0.06	-0.01
purpose	shopping vs leisure	0.04	0.07	0.01
purpose	business trip vs leisure	0.01	0.11	0.00
purpose	accompanying others, service trip vs leisure	-0.50	0.11	-0.09***
time	1–15 min vs 16–60 min	-0.38	0.06	-0.15***
time	more than 60 min vs 16–60 min	0.26	0.06	0.10***
primary activity	working, education vs relaxing and reflecting	0.26	0.12	0.05*
primary activity	communication, social vs relaxing and reflecting	-0.06	0.07	-0.02
primary activity	media consumption and reading vs relaxing and reflecting	0.36	0.06	0.14***
primary activity	sports, eating and leisure vs relaxing and reflecting	0.36	0.09	0.08***
primary activity	focusing on the ride vs relaxing and reflecting	-0.36	0.10	-0.09***
primary activity	other vs relaxing and reflecting	0.01	0.21	0.00

Notes: Dependent variable: During this travel time, I was able to do something for myself [time for myself]. SD = sociodemographics. Corrected R^2 = 0.26 ($p < 0.001$). * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

activities reported that they could use their travel time to do something for themselves significantly more often than those who relaxed and reflected. On the other hand, those who had to focus on their ride were significantly less likely to report that they could use travel time for themselves compared to those who relaxed and reflected.

4. Discussion

4.1. Key findings

Most people do not perceive travel time as wasted: Our survey results (N = 2,056) indicate that most people travelling in Switzerland do not perceive their travel time as wasted. This result aligns with a growing body of literature investigating the usefulness of travel time (Cornet et al., 2022; Keserű & Macharis, 2018; Malichová et al., 2022).

At first glance, this may seem inconsistent with the well-established evidence that people are generally willing to pay to reduce travel (e.g. Binsuwadan et al., 2023; Hartwig et al., 2024; Schmid et al., 2019; Shires & De Jong, 2009; Wardman et al., 2016; Wardman & Lyons, 2016). However, these findings address different aspects of travel behaviour: While people may perceive travel time as enjoyable or productive, they usually travel to reach a destination rather than for its own sake. Consequently, even if travellers make use of their travel time and enjoy it, they may still prefer shorter travel times when given the choice.

Travellers engage in a broad variety of activities – particularly on public transport: Our survey results suggest that travellers engage in around twenty activities, ranging from relaxing and social activities to working and sports. The three most common activities were 'talking to someone', 'enjoying the ride', and 'listening to music, the radio or podcasts'. Although working is often associated with how travel time is used (Wardman & Lyons, 2016), only a minority of participants engaged in respective activities (e.g. emails, business calls).

As expected, transport modes are a significant determinant of the types of activities undertaken while travelling (Keserű & Macharis, 2018). While car drivers must direct a large amount of attention towards driving, public transport offers its passengers a broad variety of possible activities. Most passengers on long-distance trains engaged in activities such as media consumption and reading, relaxing or communicating. Only a minority of passengers on long-distance trains used their travel time for work-related or study-related activities.

Overall, the pattern of activities performed when travelling found in our study is congruent with other studies on the use of travel time (Malichová et al., 2022). While the study by Malichová et al. (2022) focused on cars, buses, trains and planes, our study also included active forms of mobility such as walking and biking. Our data indicate that sports and movement, as well as relaxation and reflection, are typical activities engaged in by people who walk and bike.

Perceptions of travel time vary by mode and activity: Our results indicate that travellers using public transport – particularly long-distance trains – are more likely to perceive travel time as useful compared to people travelling by car. People travelling on long-

distance trains were most likely to use their travel time to accomplish things or to do something for themselves. In contrast, car drivers and cyclists tended to view travel time as more wasted, likely due to the attentional demands of these transport modes. This supports the notion that attentional demands influence subjective perceptions of travel utility (Keserű & Macharis, 2018).

People who had to focus on their ride (because they had to operate a car or bike) were most likely to perceive their travel time as wasted. Media consumption was viewed in a differentiated way: some participants perceived media consumption and reading as a waste of time. For others, it meant getting things done or having time for themselves. On the other hand, working or studying while travelling was viewed quite positively by travellers: people engaging in these activities were less likely to perceive their travel time as wasted and more likely to indicate that they accomplished things or had time to themselves. Those who reported engaging in sports (e.g. riding their bike or walking) had a higher probability of indicating that they were able to do something for themselves. This seems to contradict the previously reported finding that cyclists tended to perceive their travel time as wasted. It could be argued that the activity of cycling, in and of itself, does not constitute the source of utility for cyclists. Instead, only if cyclists understand this activity as a sport will they derive utility from it.

Taken together, most individuals travelling derive utility from their activities. These activities can encompass productive endeavours such as working or studying, as well as pursuits like reading, relaxing, or enjoying personal time.

Our findings thus confirm the international line of research implying that most travellers do not perceive time spent during travel as wasted but draw some utility from their use of travel time (Cornet et al., 2022; Mokhtarian & Salomon, 2001; Van Acker et al., 2025). Our research also aligns with other studies in showing that paid work does not represent a preferred travel activity for a significant portion of the general population (Malichová et al., 2022). Furthermore, our research provides detailed insights into how travellers use their travel time across different transport modes in Switzerland. Thereby, it differs between various types of public transport, differentiates between car drivers' and car passengers' perspectives, and also considers active types of mobility such as walking and biking.

4.2. Limitations and further research

This study has several limitations. First, while our sample is representative of Switzerland in terms of gender and trip purpose, it is not representative regarding various socioeconomic characteristics, including education and transport mode. People with a university degree and users of public transport are overrepresented in our sample (see Section 3. Materials and methods, and Table A2 in the Appendix for details). This implies that the observed overall frequencies of activities (Table 3) are not representative of Switzerland but need to be interpreted by considering different transport modes. The oversampling of individuals with a university degree and public transport users likely overestimates the proportion of people who use their travel time for work. This is due to two reasons: People with a university degree are more likely to be working in sectors where remote work is possible (Adams-Prassl et al., 2020; Holgersen et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2024). Furthermore, our data suggest that work is a more common travel activity when taking public transport compared to driving a car. Following this line of thought, the actual proportion of travellers who use their travel time for work in Switzerland is likely to be much smaller compared to the already small share of 3.7 % (Table 3) in our study.

Second, our study relied on self-reporting. This means that participants' perceptions and reported activities may not fully reflect their actual activities or experiences due to recall bias. In addition, people might have neglected to mention activities that they did not perceive as being an activity per se, such as 'doing nothing' or 'waiting'. To prevent memory-related biases, our survey focused on participants' travel one or days prior to the survey: a period that should still be fresh in participants' memories. Although self-reported data is subject to some biases, it is common to rely on self-reporting in behavioural mobility research (BFS & ARE, 2017, 2023; Moser et al., 2018, 2019; Singleton, 2020), as other methods also have disadvantages. Observational studies, for example, may be able to ascertain that people are using their phones. However, they may not be able to differentiate whether people are using their phones for work (e.g. checking emails), shopping, or for personal use.

Third, our study represents a cross-sectional design. Future research should explore longitudinal changes in the use of travel time, its perception and evaluation, particularly in the context of increasing digitalisation and emerging mobility technologies. Respective questions could, for example, be integrated into the Swiss mobility census, which is updated every five years (BFS & ARE, 2017, BFS & ARE, 2023).

Fourth, this study employed specific self-report measures to assess the subjective usefulness of travel time. While these scales were conceptually grounded in prior literature, their psychometric properties have not yet been formally established. Thus, the findings should be interpreted with caution, and future studies are encouraged to conduct thorough validation work to confirm the reliability and validity of these measures.

Fifth, the linear regression model predicting whether travel time was perceived as wasted explained only a small proportion of the variance. This suggests that factors beyond age, gender, mode choice, activity category, trip purpose, and trip duration play an important role in shaping travellers' perceptions of wasted time. This finding points to promising directions for future research, such as more fine-grained analyses of travel activities and travel conditions (see also the following paragraph), or the examination of additional influencing factors.

Sixth, our study focused on general determinants of travellers' perceived usefulness of travel time (age, gender, transport mode, trip purpose, trip duration and primary activity). Future studies could aim for a more fine-grained analysis, for example, by examining specific activities instead of collapsing them into broad categories. Also, other important determinants might be considered: For public transport options, this could include conditions such as seat availability, noise level and crowding. For travelling by car, this could include conditions such as congestion and familiarity with the route. For biking or walking, this could include conditions such as scenic characteristics or perceived safety. Investigating these conditions could lead to a more detailed analysis, providing valuable insights

into the creation of travel conditions that potentially enhance people's pleasure, productivity and health. Future research could also consider interaction effects between different determinants to gain a deeper understanding of their interdependencies. However, such analyses would require a substantially larger sample size. A complementary approach would be to employ qualitative methods, for example in-depth interviews with travellers, to gain deeper insight into their decision-making processes and the complex interactions among specific travel activities including multitasking, transport modes, and travel conditions.

Seventh, our study focused on isolated trips. Future research should consider trip chaining and investigate how it is associated with travel time use.

4.3. Implications for transport policy

Our survey results indicate that most travellers today do not perceive their travel time as wasted, but rather see it as useful time they can use for themselves, for being productive or for engaging in sports. While a large body of studies suggests that people are willing to pay to reduce travel time (e.g. Binsuwadan et al., 2023; Hartwig et al., 2024; Schmid et al., 2019; Shires & De Jong, 2009; Wardman et al., 2016; Wardman & Lyons, 2016) our findings offer a complementary perspective: Travellers might not only benefit from shorter travel times, but they might also benefit from better travel conditions that would enable them to use their travel time in their preferred way. Hence, future mobility solutions are encouraged to strike a balance between improving efficiency by reducing travel times and improving the overall quality of the travel experience (Banister et al., 2019). Measures focusing on the latter might address the design of transport modes, rules or codes of conduct during travel, travel-related services, as well as optimisations at the mobile network level.

From a design perspective, comfortable and spacious seating, along with flexibility in features such as lighting intensity, can significantly enhance travel experiences. Codes of conduct in public transport, such as designated quiet or social spaces, may cater to the specific needs of different traveller groups. Furthermore, travel services — for example, apps providing real-time information — can reduce stress and the cognitive effort required for navigation, thereby creating more opportunities for other activities during travel. Ultimately, enhanced online connectivity can facilitate both productive and enjoyable activities. Designing and implementing such measures requires an appropriate awareness of the needs of travellers among respective decision-makers.

Moreover, our data suggest that pedestrians and cyclists valued their travel experience by combining sports and relaxation or reflection. This reinforces the need to invest in a high-quality and safe walking and cycling infrastructure to maintain and even enhance pedestrians' and cyclists' travel experiences.

Funding Sources

This work was supported by the Swiss Federal Roads Office FEDRO, grant Nr. SVI 2018/007. Writing this paper was further supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (Practice-to-Science Grant, 222859).

Declaration of the use of generative AI tools

During the preparation of this work, the authors used SCISPACE and ChatGPT to identify relevant literature, improve and clarify the language used, as well as to define analysis categories for the activities and to create a first structure for the discussion section based on the results, as well as for the abstract and highlights. After using these tools, the authors reviewed, rewrote, and edited the content as needed, taking full responsibility for the content of the published article.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Corinne Moser: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Supervision, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. **Lorenz Meyer:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Software, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Stephanie Bade, Benjamin Buser and Thomas Schneider for the intense and fruitful collaboration in the SVI project 'How people use travel time' (SVI 2018/007). We would also like to thank Wernher Brucks, the president of the project's steering group, for his support and guidance on how to organise and schedule our survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, we would like to thank all the members of the steering group for their valuable insights and feedback. Also, we would like to thank Julia Kammer and Matthias Hudecek for their valuable feedback on an earlier draft of this paper. Last but not least, we would like to thank the four anonymous reviewers, the senior associate editor and the editor for their constructive feedback, which substantially improved the quality of the manuscript.

Appendix

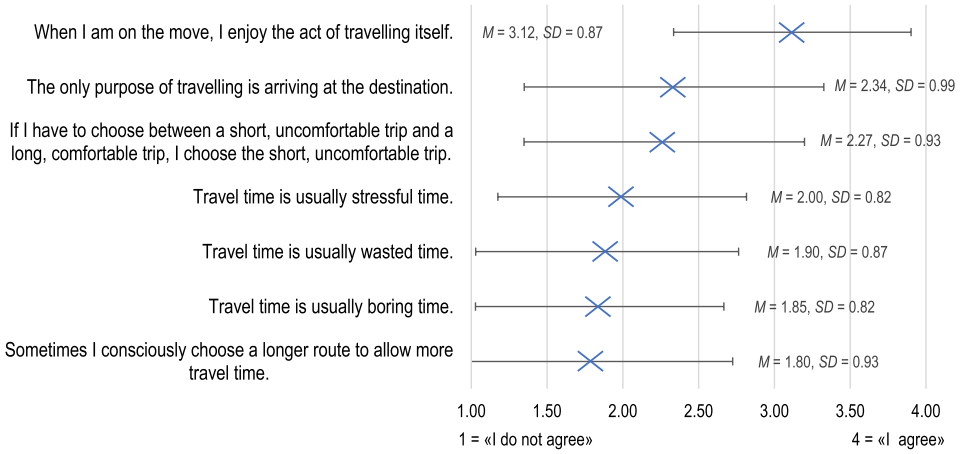


Fig. A1. Perception of travel time in general. Mean values (*M*), error bars represent standard deviations (*SD*). Items based on Mokhtarian and Salomon (2001) and adapted to the Swiss context. Scale: 1 = I do not agree, 2 = I tend to not agree, 3 = I tend to agree, 4 = I agree. $N = 2{,}056$.

Table A1
Average daily travel time in Switzerland (BFS & ARE, 2023).

average daily travel time by transport mode	average daily travel time by trip purpose
average total travel time: 80.6 min covering 30 km • walking, cycling: 35.0 min covering 2.6 km • car: 30.1 min covering 21.1 km • public transport: 8.0 min covering 5.9 km • other (e.g. boat): 1.6 min covering 0.4 km • waiting and transit times: 6 min	average total travel time: 80.6 min • leisure: 41.6 min • commute: 15.5 min • shopping: 12.7 min • education: 4.5 min • accompanying others, service trip: 3.0 min • business trip: 1.9 min • other: 1.4 min

Table A2
Sample description and comparison between the sample and the residential population of Switzerland at the time of the survey (year 2022). $N = 2{,}056$.

characteristics and comparative statistics	sample ($N = 2{,}056$)	Switzerland
gender, $\chi 2\ (1) = 2.67$, $p = 0.10$	• female: $n = 990$ (48 %) • male: $n = 1{,}051$ (51 %) • other, no answer: $n = 15$ (1 %)	year = 2022 (BFS, 2024b): • female: 50.3 % • male: 49.7 %
age, $t(2{,}055) = 9.70$, $p < 0.001$	• $M = 46.6$ years, $SD = 17.7$ years • age span: 16–79 years	year = 2022 (BFS, 2024a): $M = 42.8$ years
education, $\chi 2\ (2) = 286.41$, $p < 0.001$	• compulsory school: $n = 251$ (12 %) • secondary education (e.g. vocational education): $n = 695$ (34 %) • tertiary education (bachelor or master, PhD): $n = 1110$ (54 %)	year = 2022 (BFS, 2023): • compulsory school: 19.4 % • secondary education (e.g. vocational education): 44.4 % • tertiary education (bachelor or master, PhD): 36.2 %
employment status, $\chi^2\ (1) = 256.36$, $p < 0.001$	• in employment: $n = 1448$ (70 %) • else: $n = 608$ (30 %)	year = 2021 (BFS, 2022): employment rate in Switzerland: 83.7 %
ownership of Vehicles, car: $\chi^2\ (1) = 139.32$, $p < 0.001$ bike: $\chi^2\ (1) = 2.59$, $p = 0.11$ e-bike: $\chi^2\ (1) = 13.16$, $p < 0.001$ motorbike: $\chi^2\ (1) = 14.29$, $p < 0.001$ moped: $\chi^2\ (1) = 14.10$, $p < 0.001$	• car - private car: $n = 1354$ (66 %) - company car: $n = 100$ (5 %) • bike: $n = 1291$ (59 %) • e-bike: $n = 477$ (23 %) • motorbike: $n = 191$ (9 %) • moped: $n = 49$ (2 %)	year = 2021 (BFS & ARE, 2023): • car: 78 % • bike: 61 % • e-bike: 20 % • motorbike: 12 % • moped: 4 %

Table A3
Descriptives for the different usefulness scales. Means (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*). Scale: 1 = I disagree, 2 = I tend to disagree, 3 = I tend to agree, 4 = I agree. *N* = 2,056.

	characteristics	time wasted, *M (SD)*	accomplish things, *M (SD)*	time for myself, *M (SD)*
gender	female (*n* = 990)	1.73 (0.86)	1.86 (1.05)	2.40 (1.16)
	male (*n* = 1051)	1.79 (0.93)	2.00 (1.09)	2.44 (1.18)
	other (*n* = 8)	1.38 (0.52)	1.63 1.06)	2.88 (0.99)
	prefer not to anwer response (*n* = 7)	1.71 (0.95)	1.57 (0.79)	2.43 (0.98)
transport mode	walking (*n* = 309)	1.57 (0.81)	1.75 (1.04)	2.35 (1.19)
	bike, e-bikes, motorbikes (*n* = 204)	1.67 (0.89)	1.42 (0.89)	2.16 (1.23)
	car (as driver) (*n* = 307)	2.02 (0.98)	1.44 (0.81)	1.62 (0.91)
	car (as a passenger) (*n* = 207)	1.84 (0.88)	1.69 (0.90)	1.91 (0.97)
	bus (*n* = 105)	1.86 (0.93)	1.88 (0.99)	2.44 (1.12)
	tram, Metro (*n* = 106)	1.84 (0.91)	2.13 (1.07)	2.58 (1.07)
	s-train (*n* = 313)	1.81 (0.93)	2.16 (1.07)	2.75 (1.06)
	long-distance train (*n* = 505)	1.66 (0.85)	2.46 (1.10)	3.03 (1.00)
purpose	commuting (*n* = 531)	1.98 (0.97)	2.02 (1.10)	2.48 (1.14)
	shopping (*n* = 295)	1.68 (0.87)	1.88 (1.08)	2.26 (1.18)
	business trip (*n* = 102)	1.78 (0.86)	2.45 (1.18)	2.6 (1.11)
	leisure (*n* = 1,032)	1.68 (0.87)	1.87 (1.03)	2.49 (1.16)
	accompanying others, service trip (*n* = 96)	1.67 (0.78)	1.64 (1.01)	1.7 (1.03)
time	1–15 min (*n* = 553)	1.77 (0.92)	1.56 (0.94)	1.91 (1.09)
	16–60 min (*n* = 960)	1.84 (0.90)	1.96 (1.06)	2.47 (1.13)
	more than 60 min (*n* = 543)	1.63 (0.86)	2.24 (1.12)	2.85 (1.10)
primary activity	working, education (*n* = 93)	1.73 (0.80)	3.1 (0.87)	2.9 (0.96)
	relaxing and reflecting (*n* = 522)	1.61 (0.84)	1.87 (1.04)	2.38 (1.16)
	communication, social (*n* = 482)	1.74 (0.87)	1.82 (0.99)	2.18 (1.11)
	media consumption, reading (*n* = 601)	1.91 (0.93)	2.11 (1.08)	2.79 (1.10)
	sports, eating and leisure (*n* = 162)	1.6 (0.83)	1.78 (1.12)	2.71 (1.16)
	focusing on the ride (*n* = 171)	1.97 (1.04)	1.3 (0.74)	1.45 (0.87)
	other (*n* = 25)	1.64 (0.99)	1.8 (1.26)	2.16 (1.18)

Data availability

The authors do not have permission to share data.

References

Adams-Prassl, A., Boneva, T., Golin, M., & Rauh, C. (2020). Inequality in the impact of the coronavirus shock: Evidence from real time surveys. *Journal of Public Economics, 189*, Article 104245. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104245

Ahmed, A., & Stopher, P. (2014). Seventy Minutes Plus or Minus 10—A Review of Travel Time Budget Studies. *Transport Reviews, 34*(5), 607–625. https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2014.946460

Armoogum, J., Garcia, C., Gopal, Y., Borgato, S., Fiorello, D., Maffii, S., Mars, K.-J., Popovska, T., Schlemmer, L., Vincent, V., Bogaert, M., & Gayda, S. (2022). *Study on new mobility patterns in European cities: Final report. Task a, EU wide passenger mobility survey*. European Commission. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2832/728583.

Banister, D., Cornet, Y., Givoni, M., & Lyons, G. (2019). Reasonable travel time – The traveller's perspective. In B. Mella Lira, M. Givoni, & K. Geurs (Eds), Companion to transport, space and equity (p. 352). Edward Elgar Publishing.

BFS (2022). Erwerbsquote der 55- bis 64-Jährigen im Zehnjahresvergleich deutlich gestiegen. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/22504572.

BFS (2023). Bildungsniveau, nach Migrationsstatus, verschiedenen soziodemografischen Merkmalen und Grossregionen. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/kataloge-datenbanken.assetdetail.29385431.html.

BFS (2024a). Durchschnittsalter der ständigen Wohnbevölkerung nach Staatsangehörigkeitskategorie, Geschlecht und Kanton, 2010-2023. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bevoelkerung/familien/paare.assetdetail.32374885.html.

BFS (2024b). Ständige Wohnbevölkerung nach Alter, Geschlecht und Staatsangehörigkeitskategorie, 2010-2023. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/je-d-01.02.03.02.

BFS & ARE. (2017). *Verkehrsverhalten der Bevölkerung: Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus Mobilität und Verkehr 2015*. BFS/ARE.

BFS & ARE. (2023). *Mobilitätsverhalten der Bevölkerung: Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus Mobilität und Verkehr 2021*. BFS /ARE.

Binsuwadan, J., Wardman, M., De Jong, G., Batley, R., & Wheat, P. (2023). The income elasticity of the value of travel time savings: A meta-analysis. *Transport Policy, 136*, 126–136. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2023.03.013

Bundesrat. (2022). Coronavirus: Wichtige Entscheide des Bundesrats. https://www.uvek.admin.ch/uvek/de/home/uvek/coronavirus/wichtige-entscheide.html.

Buser, B., Moser, C., Meyer, L., Bade, S., & Schneider, T.. *Nutzung der Reisezeit*. Bundesamt für Strassen. https://www.mobilityplatform.ch/fileadmin/mobilityplatform/normenpool/21877_1751_Inhalt.pdf.

Cornet, Y., Lugano, G., Georgouli, C., & Milakis, D. (2022). Worthwhile travel time: A conceptual framework of the perceived value of enjoyment, productivity and fitness while travelling. *Transport Reviews, 42*(5), 580–603. https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2021.1983067

De Vos, J., Ermagun, A., & Shaw, F. A. (2023). Wait time, travel time and waiting during travel: Existing research and future directions. *Transport Reviews, 43*(5), 805–810. https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2023.2220206

EDA Präsenz Schweiz (2024). Sprachen. https://www.eda.admin.ch/aboutswitzerland/de/home/gesellschaft/sprachen.html.
Gamberini, L., Spagnolli, A., Miotto, A., Ferrari, E., Corradi, N., & Furlan, S. (2013). Passengers' activities during short trips on the London Underground. *Transportation, 40*(2), 251–268. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-012-9419-4
Haggar, P., Whitmarsh, L., & Skippon, S. M. (2019). Habit discontinuity and student travel mode choice. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour, 64*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2019.04.022
Hartwig, L., Gühnemann, A., & Hössinger, R. (2024). Decomposing mode-specific values of travel time savings with respect to different levels of travel-based multitasking: A revealed preference study. *Travel Behaviour and Society, 34*, Article 100700. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2023.100700
Holgersen, H., Jia, Z., & Svenkerud, S. (2021). Who and how many can work from home? evidence from task descriptions. *Journal for Labour Market Research, 55*(1), 4. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12651-021-00287-z
Humagain, P., & Singleton, P. A. (2020). Would you rather teleport or spend some time commuting? investigating individuals' teleportation preferences. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour, 74*, 458–470. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2020.09.010
Jara-Diaz, S. (2020). Transport and time use: The values of leisure, work and travel. *Transport Policy, 86*, A7–A13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2019.12.001
Kang, H. (2021). Sample size determination and power analysis using the G*Power software. *Journal of Educational Evaluation for Health Professions, 18*, 17. https://doi.org/10.3352/jeehp.2021.18.17
Keserű, I., Heyndels, E., Dat Ton, T., & Macharis, C. (2020). Multitasking on the go: An observation study on local public transport in Brussels. *Travel Behaviour and Society, 18*, 106–116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2019.10.003
Keserű, I., & Macharis, C. (2018). Travel-based multitasking: Review of the empirical evidence. *Transport Reviews, 38*(2), 162–183. https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2017.1317048
Malichová, E., Cornet, Y., & Hudák, M. (2022). Travellers' use and perception of travel time in long-distance trips in Europe. *Travel Behaviour and Society, 27*, 95–106. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2021.12.003
Malokin, A., Circella, G., & Mokhtarian, P. L. (2019). How do activities conducted while commuting influence mode choice? using revealed preference models to inform public transportation advantage and autonomous vehicle scenarios. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice, 124*, 82–114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2018.12.015
Mokhtarian, P. L., & Salomon, I. (2001). How derived is the demand for travel? some conceptual and measurement considerations. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice, 35*(8), 695–719. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0965-8564(00)00013-6
Moser, C., Blumer, Y., & Hille, S. L. (2018). E-bike trials' potential to promote sustained changes in car owners mobility habits. *Environmental Research Letters, 13*(4). https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/aaad73
Moser, C., Frick, V., Seidl, R., & Blumer, Y. B. (2019). Teaming up for sustainability: Promoting sustainable mobility behaviour through sports clubs in Switzerland. *Energy Research & Social Science, 53*(February), 89–97. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2019.02.016
MoTiV Project (2025). Https://motivproject.eu/about-motiv/objectives.html. About MoTiV. https://motivproject.eu/about-motiv/objectives.html.
Nathanail, E. G., & Karakikes, I. D. (Eds). (2019). Data Analytics: Paving the Way to Sustainable Urban Mobility: Proceedings of 4th Conference on Sustainable Urban Mobility (CSUM2018), 24 - 25 May, Skiathos Island, Greece (Vol. 879). Springer International Publishing. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-02305-8.
Olsson, L. E., Gärling, T., Ettema, D., Friman, M., & Fujii, S. (2013). Happiness and Satisfaction with Work Commute. *Social Indicators Research, 111*(1), 255–263. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-012-0003-2
Orth, H., Carrasco, N., Schwertner, M., & Weidmann, U. (2013). Calibration of a Public Transport Performance Measurement System for Switzerland. *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board, 2351*(1), 104–114. https://doi.org/10.3141/2351-12
Pourhashem, G., Georgouli, C., Malichová, E., Straka, M., & Kováčiková, T. (2024). Factors influencing the perceived value of travel time in European urban areas. *Transportation, 51*(4), 1525–1545. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-023-10376-2
Schad, H., & Sonderegger, R. (2009). *Qualität des öffentlichen Verkehrs in der Schweiz. I. In Jahrbuch 2009: Schweizerische Verkehrswirtschaft* (pp. 97–112). Universität St. Gallen.
Schmid, B., Jokubauskaite, S., Aschauer, F., Peer, S., Hössinger, R., Gerike, R., Jara-Diaz, S. R., & Axhausen, K. W. (2019). A pooled RP/SP mode, route and destination choice model to investigate mode and user-type effects in the value of travel time savings. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice, 124*, 262–294. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2019.03.001
Schmid, B., Molloy, J., Peer, S., Jokubauskaite, S., Aschauer, F., Hössinger, R., Gerike, R., Jara-Diaz, S. R., & Axhausen, K. W. (2021). The value of travel time savings and the value of leisure in Zurich: Estimation, decomposition and policy implications. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice, 150*, 186–215. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2021.06.015
Schweizerischer Verband der Strassen- und Verkehrsfachleute VSS. (2009). Kosten-Nutzen-Analysen im Strassenverkehr: Zeitkosten im Personenverkehr. (No. SN 641 822a). VSS.
Shires, J. D., & De Jong, G. C. (2009). An international meta-analysis of values of travel time savings. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 32*(4), 315–325. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2009.06.010
Singleton, P. A. (2020). Multimodal travel-based multitasking during the commute: Who does what? *International Journal of Sustainable Transportation, 14*(2), 150–162. https://doi.org/10.1080/15568318.2018.1536237
Van Acker, V., Cornet, Y., Milakis, D., Malichová, E., & Ojeda-Cabral, M. (2025). Understanding worthwhile travel time: An empirical study of travel experiences across transport modes. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice, 192*, Article 104336. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2024.104336
Walker, I., Thomas, G. O., & Verplanken, B. (2015). Old Habits die Hard: Travel Habit Formation and Decay during an Office Relocation. *Environment and Behavior, 47*(10), 1089–1106. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916514549619
Wardman, M., Chintakayala, V. P. K., & De Jong, G. (2016). Values of travel time in Europe: Review and meta-analysis. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice, 94*, 93–111. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2016.08.019
Wardman, M., & Lyons, G. (2016). The digital revolution and worthwhile use of travel time: Implications for appraisal and forecasting. *Transportation, 43*(3), 507–530. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-015-9587-0
Zhang, D., Luo, C., & Zi, Y. (2024). Teleworkability and its heterogeneity in labor market shock. *Journal of Asian Economics, 92*, Article 101741. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asieco.2024.101741