

Sustainability | Individual communication

IC - (21234) - ALLOWING CYCLIST TO ROLL ON A PEDESTRIAN STREET: INSIGHTS FROM A PILOT-PROJECT IN MONTREAL, CANADA

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Background and objectives

Among Montreal's 13 pedestrian street summer projects in 2021, two locations (Avenue du Mont-Royal and Rue Wellington) have set up a pilot project considering cohabitation between pedestrians and cyclists by authorizing cyclists to stay on their bike at a slow pace instead of dismounting. Our objective is to evaluate safety issues related to this cohabitation in a specific context: the pedestrian street.

Process and methods (for empirical research)

Our method is based on non-participatory field observation of the cyclists when they were moving along specific street segments (n=4). Previously trained observers collected data (on iPads) on cyclists (age, gender, type of vehicle), their actions (adequate speed, going straight, stopping, etc.) and interactions with pedestrians. Data collection was carried out in blocks of 3 hours, twice per selected segment in July and August 2021.

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

A total of 1371 cyclists were observed. Cyclists behaviours, measured with a pre-determined list of actions they could do as they cycle, did not change much along the stretch: the majority of them rode *straight as prescribed* (66%) and a small proportion only were zig zagging or changed direction (10%). Similarly, a very small minority were considered to cycle "dangerously" (6%), even if this proportion was higher (24%) for users of a wheel-vehicle other than a bicycle (e.g. motorized mobility aid, scooter, etc.). As for the interactions between cyclists and pedestrians, they represent 30% of all their actions while in more than half of these interactions, the cyclist avoided the pedestrian ahead of the potential collision point, a similar proportion in all observation sites.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

Our unique observation dataset shows that the coexistence of pedestrians and cyclists on pedestrian streets generally poses few risks to the safety of users. The success of this pilot project in Montreal could lead to more widespread cohabitation between pedestrians and cyclists on the vast network of pedestrian streets.

Palavras-chave : pedestrian street, road safety, cohabitation