University and cycling agenda for post-lockdown Covid-19 commute

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Abstract: Since the onset of Covid-19 and WHO declaring it a pandemic in March 2020, most of the educational institutions have been closed for physical classes and adapted to online learning platforms. In the future months, the universities (and the rest of schooling too) will be reopened for classes, in a new, adapted way. Students will play a key role in these adaptations and in the centre of the problem will also stand their needs of mobility, for going from home to school. Therefore, and because of the autonomous nature of its students, universities are excellence experimentation labs for testing new forms of active mobility. As a reaction to the pandemic situation, governments around the globe have rolled new biking infrastructure provisions, fiscal incentives and policies for increasing cycling, as an alternative to public transport to short-medium distances. Moreover, bicycling turned out to be a resilient mobility tool through these times, not only because it is a tool for maintaining social distance, but also because it is a healthier transport mode. Since the public transportation will be running at a relatively low occupancy for a time period in future, due to many students fear to use it, local government institutions and municipalities, alongside with key stakeholders such as Universities will have to play a key role in improving cycling adoption conditions for the younger people. Hence, the role of this short paper, is to review the set of policies universities already have in this matter and what challenges and opportunities they face for improving cycling and to push the modal share among university students forward. This paper will use a literature review centred both on the existing policies and on the new strategies of the last months, with the objective to produce a framework aimed to be followed by universities for their own categorization into pro-cycling and non-pro cycling capacities, (acting as a management tool too). This categorization will be focused on social, institutional and infrastructure changes that universities need to follow in the next scholar year for safer commuting trips among the student’s user group.