

The effects of ridesourcing apps like Uber on travel behaviour and traffic externalities

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Abstract

The emergence of ridesourcing platforms such as Uber and Cabify has changed the way people move in cities and challenged existing regulations in several countries around the world. The irruption of these apps provides us with an opportunity to set regulatory rules that encourage more sustainable urban mobility patterns, while taking advantage of the several benefits that such platforms provide to their users.

The seminar discusses the mobility effects and transport externalities of such technologies. An online survey of Uber users conducted in Chile in January 2017 (N = 1600) is presented. Results point to different impacts on daytime and nighttime mobility and to a likely increase in the number of vehicles-kilometers traveled. A Monte Carlo simulation shows the relevance of different parameters that determine whether Uber increases or reduces congestion. Finally, we discuss elements to consider and recommendations for the regulation of these technologies.