

The impact of telecommuting on residential relocation and residential preferences: A latent class model approach

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Abstract

The advance of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has changed travel appreciation of travel distance in various ways. In the context of telecommuting, ICT allows us to work from home one or more days per week. One hypothesis that has been put forward is that because ICTs reduce the frequency of commuting, it allows workers to accept long distances, implying that telecommuters have a different valuation of travel distance than non-telecommuters and would also favour more peripheral residential locations. The question is, however, whether telecommuters can be regarded as a homogeneous group with respect to their valuation of commute distance and residential preferences. To investigate the heterogeneity of telecommuters' and non-telecommuters' preferences, latent class discrete choice models of work relocation probability and preferred residential environment were estimated. The results show that telecommuting is not a factor that can be used to identify segments with different residential preferences. However, within the group of telecommuters, two different classes can be identified: one can be characterised as being sensitive and insensitive to commute distance.

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The Journal is housed at the University of Minnesota and sponsored by the Center for Transportation Studies

Contact JTLU | ISSN: 1938-7849

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