

One Justice for All? Noise Pollution and Different Notions of Distributive Justice

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ABSTRACT

How are noise annoyance, noise exposure at one's home and perceptions of distributive justice of noise pollution related? In an environmental justice survey, we are currently running in two major Swiss cities ($n \approx 3,500$), respondents are presented with a fictitious municipal project to reduce road traffic noise immissions. They are asked to choose among four options of how the project should affect noise exposure of the cities' residents. These options correspond to different justice theories: Bentham's utilitarianism (i.e. maximization of aggregate net benefits), Rawls' contractarianism (i.e. maximization of benefits to the least advantaged), and two aspects of egalitarianism (i.e. "equal benefits to all" or minimization of existing inequalities).

To analyze the relationship between distributive-justice perceptions and one's own perceived and objective noise exposure, we will geocode the respondents' residential addresses and link the survey to spatial data on road traffic noise exposure. This allows analyzing how differences in the perception of justice are related to both individual characteristics – e.g. noise annoyance, subjective noise exposure, environmental attitudes, education, income and further sociodemographic variables – and actual noise exposure.