

# **The COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts in the Cycling Sector: An Exploratory Research of the Consumer`s Behaviour in Portugal**

**Sara Sousa<sup>1</sup>, Fernanda Alberto<sup>2</sup>, Paula López<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Polytechnic University of Coimbra, Coimbra Business School| ISCAC & CERNAS, Coimbra, Portugal <sup>2</sup>Polytechnic University of Coimbra, Coimbra Business School| ISCAC & CEOS.PP, Coimbra, Portugal

<sup>3</sup>Polytechnic University of Coimbra, Coimbra Business School| ISCAC, Coimbra, Portugal

## **Abstract**

With the COVID-19 outbreak and the consequent restrictions to prevent the virus spread, people were asked to deal with a socioeconomic unprecedented transition, affecting all daily life aspects, including the mobility patterns. The individuals` mobility behaviour has suffered considerable changes in the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of the bicycle was considered an extremely reliable option, either through bike sharing systems or through private bicycles. Currently, in 2023, with the declaration by the World Health Organization of the United Nations of the end of COVID-19 as a public health emergency, it is important to analyse the current individuals` behaviour regarding to cycling. The present study proposes to analyse the cyclists` behaviour in Portugal during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the answers gathered through the application of an online survey during the current year of 2023, in Portugal, it is observed a slight decrease in the number of households owning a bicycle, but, at the same time, an increase in the number of individuals who use the bicycle daily. The results also reveal that, during the pandemic, the main motivations for cycling were the promotion of mental and physical health, and the close contact with nature.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; Cycling sector; Consumer`s behaviour; Portugal