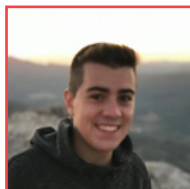


Covid-19 effects on residential patterns of the urban population: willingness and “discourses” analysis in the media in the region of Valencia (Spain)



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Covid-19 brought changes in the residential preferences of part of the urban population. More specifically, confinement in very small spaces had a decisive influence on the preference for larger residences closer to open spaces or natural areas. This research focuses on the large urban areas of the Valencia region. Two types of analysis are carried out. Firstly, based on more than 500 newspaper articles (from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2022), to analyse and see the changes that the media reflected in terms of the residential patterns of the urban population, and to what extent rural areas constituted a focus of attraction for the urban population. Secondly, a survey was carried out among the population in the large urban areas of Valencia (a total of 360 residents), with the aim of assessing their willingness, if they had the economic means, to change their residence from the urban area. These changes in residential patterns were being stimulated even before the pandemic from rural areas, because of their proximity to large urban areas, and the open spaces and its closeness to nature. Indeed, these remote rural areas saw Covid-19 as a window of opportunity for residential relocation of urban families. The results of the surveys show, as well as the newspaper reports, that urban dwellers did show a high predisposition to residential change, but their preferences were clearly for peri-urban areas or, failing that, intermediate rural areas, i.e. within commuting distance and with a good supply of services (especially health and education).

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