



Defending the sidewalk

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The sidewalk should be a place where all pedestrians feel safe, especially older people, small children and people with disabilities. In recent years there have been more and more exceptions, the vehicles that are allowed to drive on the sidewalk. Many sidewalks in Switzerland have been approved for cycling in recent years and new electric vehicles such as electric scooters and Segway have been put on an equal legal level with bicycles.

At the end of 2017, an initiative was submitted to parliament calling for simplified approval of small electric vehicles, such as the monowheel. In addition, the swiss government announced that it intended to double the age on which children were allowed to cycle on the sidewalk. We started a petition with the following demands before the government sent the new traffic rules for consultation:

- Separate paths for pedestrians and cyclists in urban areas
- No bicycles on sidewalks (exception for children up to 8 years)
- No fun and transport vehicles with motors on walking surfaces (electric scooters, post-robots and the like).
- Creation of understandable and practical regulations: Who may drive where?

At the end of the consultation process, we were able to submit 4505 signatures, thus giving more importance to the consultation response of Pedestrian Mobility Switzerland. There was a lot of media coverage both at the launch and the submission of the petition. So far, the campaign was able to prevent the permission of electric motor vehicles on the sidewalk. In the consultation process, the majority of respondents opposed the government's proposal that teenagers should also be allowed to cycle on the sidewalk. In particular, the majority of cantonal governments and the vast majority of police organisations opposed the federal government's proposal. At Walk21 it should be clear whether the campaign was successful. Defending the sidewalk won't stop with this campaign. In Switzerland, cars rarely park on the sidewalk. But in many cities it is tolerated that motorcycles are parked on the sidewalk, although this is forbidden by law. With the advent of freefloating bikes and electric scooters sharing providers, the rules for parking bikes on the sidewalk must be redefined.

More Information in German: <https://fussverkehr.ch/trottoir/> and <https://fussverkehr.ch/aktuell-de/keine-neuen-ausnahmen-welche-die-qualitaet-des-zufussgehens-beeintraechtigen-rettet-das-trottoir/>

More Information in French: <https://mobilitepietonne.ch/trottoir> and <https://mobilitepietonne.ch/actuel-fr/pas-de-nouvelles-exceptions-pejorant-la-qualite-des-deplacements-a-pied/>