

## Guideline **CYCLING – COST-EFFECTIVE MEASURES**



**Cycling is on the rise. For some time now, European cities increased their attention to it. This does not come as a surprise, as this trend offers a long list of advantages for municipalities, organisations and individuals that come from an increased share of biking in the modal split; one prime example is that cyclists virtually emit no harmful emissions. One distinct advantage is that measures to promote cycling are highly cost effective in comparison to other modes of transport.**

Cycling is healthy, flexible, cheap and has virtually no emissions. It produces less external costs and lowers health insurance costs for society. Cycling has list of synergic advantages, for municipalities, society and individuals.

For municipal budgets, cycling has the distinct obvious advantage that infrastructure, if planned well, is very cost-effective. This paper shows a number of important aspects on how to promote cycling from the viewpoint of

municipalities, with a focus on cost effective measures. Beyond infrastructural measures, this paper also discusses potential services, communication tools, campaigns as well as organisational and regulatory measures a city can undertake.

Cycling is relatively cheap - with a budget of less than 10 Euros per head and year many EU cities have reached considerable improvements



in cycling conditions (Vienna, Berlin & many others). To become a front-runner cycling city with well above 20% of modal split, many Dutch and Danish cities invest more than 20 Euros per head and year. Compared to the budget of other modes of transport this is still a low number, however in cycling policy it can change the world.

### Infrastructure

Perhaps the most important precondition for people to cycle is space. Infrastructure sounds costly, so two things need to be said. First, infrastructure for cycling is comparatively affordable, in particular when maintenance costs are considered. And second, while there are also more expensive examples of cycling infrastructure, a city has also more “budget friendly” means of promoting cycling to choose

#### Lyon

Lyon is one of the French cities that have recently done a lot for biking. Not traditionally a biking city, it started with big steps. Between 2004 and 2009, bike lanes increased by 33% and until 2014 by 60%. There are plans for another 75% increase between 2014 and 2020. In 2005, the city also launched its innovative bike sharing programme Vélo’v.

from.

#### Here are a couple of examples:

- On high priority streets, introducing coloured bicycle lanes highlights their distinct purpose.
- Guidance systems help cyclists to find their way.

- Extensions of shared zones and pedestrian zones open to cyclists.
- Extension of residential areas with lowered speed limits
- Opening one-way streets to cycles extends the network and shortens journeys for cyclists.
- Why not adapt to local needs: local traffic ban around school buildings before and after school periods.
- Want to promote cycling in a certain place, but not alter the infrastructure. Just reduce speed limits for motorized vehicles!

One very important piece of infrastructure are parking facilities for bikes. Not only do parking facilities serve as a way to organise parked bikes. They also create possibilities to lock bikes to, and thus create sound and save opportunities for cyclists to park their bike.

A city needs to distinguish between short-, mid-, and long-term parking. For different parking needs there exist different needs for the infrastructure. Parking stands for short-term parking exist in very affordable versions. Boxes for long-term parking tend to have higher requirements and thus higher price tags. However, at train stations, cities have gone beyond just that, building large bicycle parking buildings, like the examples of the “Radstation” in the German city of Münster.





## Services

One of the most important services a municipality has to offer, in order to promote cycling, is to create enough resources as to sufficiently concentrate on the matter. Guiding question here: Do you have enough man-hours to actually work on the subject?

Of course, these resources require municipal budget and up to a certain extend a city might be able to promote cycling without extra personnel. They might be able to integrate the responsibility into existing positions. However, without municipal man-hours, an efficient introduction of measures, including necessary networking and other tasks, might not be realisable.

Include stakeholders into municipal planning. This potentially activates local knowledge and thus improves to quality of planning. It also creates awareness and acceptance of the population. Of course, involving regional and national stakeholders into municipal planning might entail similar advantages.

## Security

Cyclists want to feel safe. Not only while moving, but also when their bikes are parked somewhere. Bike theft or vandalism can have a serious impact on the people's perception of the cycling quality of a city. Two examples of what

a city can be doing are: Installation of a sufficient number of save parking facilities where needed, and the creation of a registry for bikes, so as to identify stolen bikes easier. And of course, it is important to create awareness about the problem, pointing to information and communication measures that will be discussed later.

## Air pollution & Health

In 2010, more than 400,000 people died prematurely in the EU due to air pollution. That makes air pollution the main environmental cause for shortened lives in the EU. The resulting health problems cost society estimated 330-940 billion Euro per year. Over 90% of the urban population in the EU is exposed to concentrations higher than the limit values recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Among the most important pollutants are black carbon (BC), which is a part of particulate matter (PM), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)

## Multimodality

A large percentage of journeys in cities are shorter than five kilometres. Yet, in many cities a large percentage of these journeys are done by car, while they are destined to be made by bike! A good way to ensure that bikes also can be used on longer journeys is to think about multimodality. Where cycling is particularly interesting for short and medium distance trips, in combination with public transport, bikes can compete with cars also on longer journeys.

## Information und Communication

Cities that invest in biking should make sure that they inform about their plans and that they create awareness about the new possibilities they create. There a couple of examples how cities can create awareness at relatively low costs:

- Show the municipality can act as role model.
- Support or organise biking days, for example Critical Mass Events.
- Organise bike fairs.



- Organise guided cycling tours.

### **Copenhagen**

Perhaps Europe's biking capital, with a long lasting history of high modal split, a strong public support for and courageous infrastructural plans in support of cycling. The city has a dense system of biking lanes and streets and even 'highways'. The support goes even so far, that the city hands out chocolate to bikers that drive carefully.

### **Regulatory measures**

Municipalities can input aspects promoting cycling into a number of regulatory branches. NGOs support and call for integrated urban planning. Here we suggest that targets for cycling are considered throughout urban planning processes. New building permissions might only be granted if they include bike parking facilities and are connected to the cycling route system.

A final suggestion is, to integrate or prioritise cycling in mobility management plans, including for schools and companies.

Achieving integration of cycling policies into other regulatory processes requires cross-cutting networking that we mentioned earlier. However, it does not require serious amounts of investments, thus is municipal budget friendly.

### **Think long-term**

When promoting cycling, results can be witnessed within a couple of years. However, changing the modal split towards cycling also requires somewhat of a change in behaviour. That takes time but the benefits are huge. A city must be prepared to invest in cycling not only in the short-term but for longer. Thus, paramount to successful and sustainable cycling promotion are the following points:

- Independent and long-term budgetary commitments to cycling.
- Integration of cycling into central municipal policies.
- Long-term targets and quality management.
- There are different funding sources for cycling. The EU is paying increasing attention to cycling promotion as well.



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## CONTACT

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## ABOUT US

Clean Air is a project by nine European environmental organisations that fight for clean air in European cities. Despite the existing legislative framework and the citizens' right to clean air, continuing violations of air pollution limits remain a problem in many cities. Air pollution threatens health, environment and climate. It's time to take action!

[www.cleanair-europe.org](http://www.cleanair-europe.org)

Started in 2009, the associated campaign "Sootfree for the Climate" aims to reduce diesel soot emissions, which accelerate climate change and pose a threat to public health. To this day twelve European NGOs have joined the campaign.

[www.sootfreeclimate.org](http://www.sootfreeclimate.org)

a project by



project coordination

co-financed by the EU's LIFE financial instrument



associated campaign

