

Let's Bike for a More Sustainable World!

The Graz/Maribor International Bicycle Policy Resolution

The ten point pedalling action program adopted by the 400 delegates from 40 countries on the VeloCity Conference in April 1999

The bicycle benefits individuals, families, communities and society

The bicycle meets ecological and environmental demands. It is a zero-fuel, zero-emission and zero-noise mode of transportation. **The bicycle is an equitable mode of transport.** It is accessible to almost all including children and even some people with disabilities. It supports vicinity, neighbourhoods, compact and mixed-use urban structures, hence it eases mobility. **Investments into bicycle traffic are very cost-efficient.** Bicycle traffic has a high cost/benefit ratio. **Bicycling is healthy and keeps you fit.** When bicycling is integrated into your daily life it keeps you fit without investing extra time and money. **The bicycle is inexpensive to purchase and operate.** It helps cut back your transportation budget. **The bicycle is quick from door to door.** It covers many destinations in a city within competitive journey times. **It also is slow enough** for you to experience city life and to contribute to urbanity and social interactions. **Bicycling is individual and spontaneous.** You are independent from public transport schedules and from car parking spaces. **The bicycle's ally for long distances is public transport.** As a human-powered mode of transport the bicycle is limited in its range. Through bike-and-ride or ride-with-bike these limits can be overcome to the benefit of both modes.

Bicycling faces physical and psychological barriers

The benefits of bicycle traffic are nowhere used to their fullest potential, in some countries not at all. The differences from country to country are enormous: for example The Netherlands with a 27 percent bicycle share in all journeys, or Denmark with 21 percent versus a lot of countries with bicycle shares between zero or five percent and countries which used to have high bicycle shares which are now rapidly declining in the process of motorization.

The physical and psychological barriers restraining bicycle usage are manifold like less social prestige, poor people image, cultural reservations, traffic unsafety, physical obstacles like curbs and holes, bicycle theft and vandalism, too little space within arterial roads, lacking consideration at traffic lights, no bicycle stalls at home or at trip ends.

These barriers vary in their kind and extent in different countries in different parts of the world. Therefore, **bicycle support programs have to be tailored to the specific conditions of each country.**

The bicycle crosses barriers and frontiers

Crossing these barriers needs a lot of permanent efforts and cooperation between bicycle organisations, planners and political bodies.

Bicycle associations on the national, regional and local levels should bring in their knowledge and experience to develop bicycle programs encompassing very different sectors like regional and urban development, public awareness, education, transport law, finance, infrastructure, technology and service.

Political bodies at all levels are requested to support the bicycle as a sustainable mode of transportation, to consider bicycle traffic in all transport plans and programs to its fullest potentials and benefits, and to establish a bicycle program for their area.

Allies in this great task can be found among environmental groups, citizens' associations, health organisations, Agenda 21 groups, town planners and transportation planners, bicycle manufactures, public transport authorities, etc. It should be assured that all population groups are addressed: young and old, men and women, poor and rich.

The national and local efforts should be embedded in **international networks** like "Bicycle Crosses Frontiers" to exchange ideas and experience in order to get more strength in the political arena. The VeloCity Conference welcomes the close cooperation of the World Health Organisation (WHO) - now considering walking and cycling as physically active and health-beneficial modes of transport - which opens new horizons towards different areas of politics for promoting the bicycle.

Let's pedal on all levels for a more sustainable world!

The ten point pedalling action program

- 1. Raise community awareness for a better climate for more cycling**

All public and private sectors should promote cycling as a sustainable mode of transport. Campaigns should target improved attitudes towards cycling and its better image and status.
- 2. Promote bicycle usage in education and professional training**

All countries should integrate cycling in their educational programs. These programs should increase bicycle usage by the young generation and create an awareness of the benefits of sustainable and gentle mobility. The same applies to professional training for all in the community services like engineers, planners, police, health professionals, and driver instructors who need to have a positive consideration of cycling in their decisions.
- 3. Plan land use for bicycle distances**

Town and regional planning should be based on proximity and accessibility to keep distances within bicycle range.
- 4. Minus 10 % per year of accidents involving cyclists**

More cycling with fewer accidents needs a bicycle safety strategy with a benchmark of a reduction of at least ten percent per year. Special consideration should be given to the non-restrictive character of safety measures for cycling.
- 5. At least 3 % of all transport budgets for bicycle traffic**

A minimum of three percent of all public expenditures for transport on the national, regional and local level should be earmarked for promoting bicycling and for bicycle facilities.
- 6. Make urban transport networks fit for cycling**

Cycling needs safe, direct, comfortable and attractive connections which ensure independent mobility for all including children, elderly and people with disabilities. Space for bicyclists should not be provided at the expense of pedestrians.
- 7. Optimise transfers between bicycle and other modes**

Transport modes, interchanges, city and district centres should be reachable, accessible and provide easy transfers. These focal points of bicycle traffic should provide staffed bicycle stations for safe and comfortable parking and servicing. Rental bikes should be available.
- 8. Strengthen the alliance between public transport and cycle traffic**

Theft and weather protected bike-and-ride should be provided at bus and train stops, as well as ride-with-bike in trains during off-peak hours. Railways should generally provide bicycle transport including cross-border connections.
- 9. Include bicycle garages in building regulations**

Building regulations should require bicycle garages as a part of residential buildings similar to the usually demanded car parking spaces. The same applies to the most common destinations of bicycle trips.
- 10. Connecting communities by long distance cycling networks**

Outside the cities, an uninterrupted bicycling network should cover regions and countries and cross frontiers for local recreation and tourism.

Promoting the bicycle as a sustainable and healthy mode of transport and implementing these ten points need incentives, recognition, dissemination and rewards of best practices. Therefore, the VeloCity Conference will consider "Let's Bike" awards to support this process.

VeloCity delegates call upon all countries to define, establish and monitor a national bicycle program; the ten points should be included and tailored to the specific conditions and needs of each country.

Organisers of the conference:

The City of Graz
The City of Maribor
The Government of Styria
The European Cyclists` Federation
The Mkm Cyclists Network of the City of Maribor
ARGUS-Steiermark/Grazer Radfahroffensive Go!
ARGUS Vienna
Institute for Transport Studies, University Bodenkultur Vienna
Institute for Highway Engineering and Transport, University of Graz
The Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Maribor
Austrian Research Association for Highway and Transport

The ten point pedalling action program is based on a questionnaire answered by experts from 23 countries at the University of Kaiserslautern, a first draft prepared by Ulrike Huwer, Mary Elizabeth Gonzalez and Hartmut H. Topp, the results of two conference workshops with participants from 13 countries, and adopted at the final plenary session.