Supporting Policy and Action for Active Environments

SPACEn
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ENVIROMENTS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN EUROPE
A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union
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The SPAcE team would like to dedicate this document to project partner, Liisamaria Kinnunen (1959-2016).
# ENVIRONMENTS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN EUROPE: A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

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Supporting Policy and Action for Active Environments (SPAcE) is a collaborative three year project co-funded by the Sport: Collaborative Partnerships action of the Erasmus+ Programme.

The project links together 10 project partners from 8 different EU countries to achieve the objective of developing sustainable active urban environments in cities and towns across the EU.

The overall aim of the SPAcE project is to make the healthy choice the easy choice through creating healthy urban environments. SPAcE aims to increase the physical activity level of the communities involved in the project, and support and encourage social inclusion through more active participation.

This report aims to summarise the evidence available for the importance of active environments, and present a number of case studies from the project partner countries to illustrate the translation of this evidence into practice.

The evidence clearly shows that aspects of the environment that promote physical activity should be emphasised, such as walkability and accessibility. Alongside this, there is justification for supportive policies and promotions that influence a supportive social environment.

The case studies are a rich mixture of interesting examples from across the region that showcase the SPACE partner countries, but also demonstrates some of the problems and challenges that need to be overcome to create active environments. These include:

- Sustainable traffic plans; continuous planning; and an activity trail in Finland
- Waterfront developments; archeological sites; and driverless buses in Greece
- Cycle lanes; bike parks and gym equipment in Romania
- Pedestrianisation; sport promotion; and car-free days in Italy
- Car-free roads; active transport links; and active schoolyards in Switzerland
- Active infrastructure; cycle promotion; and a health route in Latvia
- Home Zones; active travel policies; and shared space in the United Kingdom
- Activity promotion; pedestrianisation and an ‘Active City’ in Spain

This report shows that there is strong evidence and policy support for interventions that aim to make the healthy choice the easy choice through creating healthy urban environments across Europe. In some cases, these might build upon the existing evidence, and attempt to emphasise features that have been shown to be related to physical activity. In others, there may be justification for trying new innovative approaches that appear to be directly relevant to the case study site, but perhaps have not so far been explored in academic research.
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Supporting Policy and Action for Active Environments (SPAcE) is a collaborative three year project co-funded by the Sport: Collaborative Partnerships action of the Erasmus+ Programme.

The project links together 10 project partners from 8 different EU countries to achieve the objective of developing sustainable active urban environments in cities and towns across the EU. Partners include:

- University of Gloucestershire (UK – Coordinator)
- University of Oxford (UK)
- University of Thessaly (Greece)
- University of Zurich (Switzerland)
- Fit for Life Program (Finland)
- Castilla La Mancha Regional Government of Education (Spain)
- Tukums Municipality (Latvia)
- Brasov Metropolitan Agency (Romania)
- CESIE (Italy)
- The Municipality of Trikala (Greece)

The overall aim of the SPAcE project is to make the healthy choice the easy choice through creating healthy urban environments. SPAcE aims to increase the physical activity level of the communities involved in the project, and support and encourage social inclusion through more active participation.

The project will stimulate enhanced participation in physical activity through the development of urban active environment action plans in five implementation sites (cities/towns) in the EU (Trikala, Greece; Palermo, Italy; Tukums, Latvia; Brasov, Romania; and Castilla La Mancha, Spain). Working groups will be established in these five sites where the action plans will be developed and key personnel will be trained in the use of the “WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT)” in order to provide economic assessments of the impact of initiatives to increase walking and cycling.

The implementation sites will be supported by a further five partners: (Universities of Gloucestershire; Oxford; Thessaly; and Zurich; and the Fit for Life Program). These expert partners are experienced in European and national physical activity policy, practice, implementation and evaluation in developing physically active environments, and are also academic subject experts in national physical activity development and evaluation.
What is an active environment?

The project partners have adopted the following definition of ‘active environments’:

"physical or social environments that provide positive encouragement in helping people to be physically active, and to make the active choice."

Examples of physical environments might be:

- Town centres that have reduced or banned cars and/or have been pedestrianised
- Parks and green spaces that encourage walking and play
- Places with outdoor exercise equipment such as ‘trim trails’
- River or canal paths that have been enhanced to encourage walking
- Cycle infrastructure such as bike paths or signage
- Seats, benches and cafes to encourage people to stop and rest (and therefore walk more)
- Community gardens
- School playgrounds that have been modified to encourage active play

Examples of social environments might be:

- Policies at local or national government level that actively prioritise physical activity including walking and cycling
- Urban planning policies that prioritise walking and cycling over the car
- Tourism policies that promote walking, cycling and active leisure (e.g. tourist trails or subsidised public transport ticket/pass.
- Car free days or walk/cycle events such as ‘Critical mass’
- Mass participation races or events
- Campaigns that promote physical activity to the citizens
- Signs showing walking and cycling times
- Walking or cycling ‘buses’ (schemes where children walk or cycle to school in a group)
- Clubs and social groups for sport and physical activity
- Promotions or subsidy for leisure activities
- Social media that actively promotes physical activity

However, the project is concerned with policy as well as action for active environments. The focus is just as much on examples of strong well-constructed policies as it is on examples of the finished infrastructure or environments. It is an important aim to show solutions that do not require significant financial investment to ensure that the final document is a useful for all countries irrespective of their economic situation.
Aim of this report

This report aims to summarise the evidence available for the importance of active environments, and present a number of case studies from the project partner countries to illustrate the translation of this evidence into practice.

The case studies are a rich mixture of interesting examples from across the region that showcase the SPACE partner countries, but also demonstrates some of the problems and challenges that need to be overcome to create active environments.
EVIDENCE
Introduction

This section summarises the evidence on the relationship between the built environment and physical activity, from the academic literature. It is intended to provide context for the case studies that follow from the SPAcE partner sites. The evidence comes primarily from systematic reviews of academic journal articles, primarily from correlation studies (that look for the relation between two factors) with some intervention studies (that investigate changes when something has been done).

The evidence was identified through a literature search (focusing on review-level evidence for the relation between physical activity and the environment) and papers identified by the expert partners. The vast majority of the evidence comes from the US (with a sizeable number of papers also from Australia) although one paper has specifically reviewed the European literature (1). It is therefore important to consider the extent to which this evidence is directly applicable to cities in Europe. However, it does provide an important context and backdrop for work in the SPAcE sites. In some cases, these might build upon the existing evidence, and attempt to emphasise features that have been shown to be related to physical activity. In others, there may be justification for trying new approaches that appear to be directly relevant to the case study site, but perhaps have not so far been explored in academic research.

Features of an active environment

There is a growing evidence base to describe the features of the built environment that have been associated with increased participation in physical activity. Since around 2002, publications on this topic from the disciplines of public health, exercise science, urban planning, transportation, and leisure science have increased rapidly, and a large number of reviews have aimed to summarize research in this area (2).

A World Health Organization review of interventions on diet and physical activity (3) classified the following as an ‘effective intervention’:

“Environmental interventions targeting the built environment, policies that reduce barriers to physical activity, transport policies and policies to increase space for recreational activity”.

The highest quality research in this area has found correlations between objectively measured attributes of the built environment (such as quantitative assessments of the quality and length of bike paths) and objective measures of physical activity (e.g. using devices such as accelerometers) (4).

A seminal review published in the Lancet in 2012 (5) investigated the environmental correlates of physical activity.
This found that the most robust correlates for children were:
- walkability (street design that means that residents can walk from home to nearby destinations);
- low volume and speed of traffic;
- land-use mix (proximity of homes to destinations such as shops);
- high residential density; and
- access or proximity to recreation facilities.

For adolescents the most important features were:
- land-use mix; and
- residential density. (5)

In adults, transport-related walking and cycling was associated with neighbourhood design aspects, such as:
- Walkability; and
- Street connectivity (grid-like pattern of streets) (5)

While leisure activity among adults was consistently related to features such as:
- Transportation environment (e.g., pavement and safety of crossings);
- Aesthetic variables (e.g., greenness and attractiveness); and
- Proximity to recreation facilities and locations. (5)

An important issue to consider is neighbourhood self-selection. This is the consideration that people who wish to be more active may choose to live in a neighbourhood that supports their activity. In general, studies that consider neighbourhood self-selection find weaker relations with physical activity. However some factors (land use mix, composite walkability indices and neighbourhood type) have been found to be consistently associated with higher physical activity levels even after controlling for neighborhood self-selection. (6)

Among older adults, there are inconsistent findings from the correlates literature, with few features associated with physical activity (7). However, qualitative research among older people clearly identifies five main issues that are perceived as important for physical activity (8):
- pedestrian infrastructure, notably pavements/sidewalks that supported walking independently; and separation from motorised traffic;
- safety, including safety from traffic and from crime and anti-social behaviour;
- access to amenities, including access to exercise opportunities; access to daily destinations; and access to rest areas;
- aesthetics, including the appearance of buildings and streetscape, and natural scenery; and
- environmental conditions, including weather and air quality/noise.
Cycling

A review that focused specifically on cycling found the environmental factors most positively associated with cycling included (9):

- Presence of dedicated cycle routes or paths;
- Separation of cycling from other traffic;
- High population density;
- Short trip distance;
- Proximity of a cycle path or green space; and
- For children: projects promoting ‘safe routes to school’.

Negative environmental factors were perceived and objective traffic danger; long trip distance; steep inclines and distance from cycle paths.

A review of international evidence noted the crucial role of public policy in encouraging cycling, and the importance of using integrated package of many different, complementary interventions, including ‘infrastructure provision and pro-bicycle programs, supportive land use planning, and restrictions on car use’. (10)

Walking

Evidence-based guidance from the UK National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) emphasises a coordinated approach to promoting walking, combining infrastructure and promotion (11):

- Address infrastructure issues that may discourage people from walking, for example, motor traffic volume and speed, lack of convenient road crossings, poorly maintained footways or lack of dropped kerbs, where needed.
- Develop walking programmes for adults who are not active enough, based on an accepted theoretical framework for behaviour change and taking into account recommendations on behaviour change (12).

Interventions to change the environment to support physical activity

While evidence from correlation studies is important in identifying aspects of the built environment that may be related to physical activity, stronger evidence comes from intervention studies. These are studies where some effort has been made to change an aspect of the environment, and the resulting impact on physical activity has been measured. This is more directly relevant to SPAcE partners as we can attempt approaches in our own towns that have been shown to be successful elsewhere.
Review-level evidence (13) shows that a number of important approaches to modifying the environment can be effective in increasing physical activity:

**Walking and cycling infrastructure and promotion of active transport**

Building new facilities for cycling and walking – or improving the quality and reach of existing facilities – is an effective way to increase active travel. In many cases this is part of a more comprehensive attempt to promote active travel. There have been substantial modal shifts in active travel in several international studies that were in direct response to specific transport policies and interventions (14). These approaches were also found to be among the most effective of a very wide range of interventions aimed at reducing obesity, alongside bans or restrictions on unhealthy foods, and altering purchase/payment rules for low-income food vouchers (15).

**Urban design and land-use regulations**

Urban design and land-use regulations, policies, and practices commonly strive to create communities that are pleasant places to live (13). These types of interventions use policy instruments such as zoning regulations and building codes and environmental changes implemented by government policies or developers’ practices. Policies can encourage development based around public transport, and address street layouts, density of development, location of shops, jobs, and schools within walking distance of areas in which people live (16).

**Promotional events**

The Lancet review (13) highlights the potential for events that are tied into environmental strategies promoting alternatives to the car. The best example is the Ciclovia approach that began in Colombia and now exist in nearly 50% of countries in the Americas (17 of 35) (17). These approaches close streets to motorised traffic once a week and enable citizens to walk, run, cycle and take part in community activities. While initially focused on community revitalization rather than on health or transport, these approaches have enormous potential not only to directly benefit the health of the city’s citizens, but to demonstrate the potential for non-motorized transport in the longer term.

**Green space**

Hunter at al conducted a systematic review of the impact of interventions to promote physical activity in urban green space (18). They defined urban green space as all publicly owned and publicly accessible open space with a high degree of cover by vegetation, e.g., parks, woodlands, nature areas, and other green space within the city boundary area. They looked for studies into any attempt to improve or
promote the use of green space such as improving access to green space; improving walking/cycle paths; or improving playground/park facilities. They also considered interventions to specifically promote and encourage use of green space such as awareness, marketing and promotional campaigns, and physical activity programmes in parks and green space.

The review found that there was some evidence to support the use of built environment only interventions for encouraging use and increasing physical activity in urban green space. However, more promising evidence existed for the use of physical activity programmes combined with a physical change to the built environment. These findings highlight that multifaceted green space intervention strategies are likely to have a more significant impact on levels of physical activity than changes to the built environment in isolation (18).

IMPLICATIONS of this evidence for SPACe case study sites

- The evidence for the importance of the environment in promoting walking and cycling is strong, and can be used to justify investment.
- Top priority should be given to prioritising walking and cycling over motorised transport in local planning decisions.
- Aspects of the environment that promote physical activity should be emphasised, notably walkability and accessibility.
- Alongside environmental changes, there are a number of promotional approaches that can be tried, such as car-free days or Ciclovia programmes. However these should not be done in isolation.
EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE
Examples of Practice

Methods

Criteria for the selection of examples were developed through discussion with SPAcE partners during network meetings. Partners were invited to explore examples from their own countries, found through a variety of methods, including:

- Partners’ own knowledge of their city/town and places to be active
- Discussions with local people including officials, planners, and walking/cycling groups
- Local media including social media. Some partners considered putting out an appeal on Facebook or Twitter for ideas for local environments or policies
- Attending public meetings concerning planning or physical activity
- Public policies that are released for consultation or have recently been published
- Web searches

It was anticipated that there would be few examples where there is a clear, measured change in physical activity as a result of a new policy or environmental change. This is due to a number of issues, notably the low priority that tends to be given to evaluation, and the fact that many environmental changes are not initiated by the health sector. We therefore looked for the best available evidence to support each example. This comes from a variety of sources:

- Published evidence (i.e. a journal article) showing a change in physical activity as a result of the environment or policy change
- Counts of pedestrians or cyclists before and after a change
- Participation figures (e.g. numbers taking part in an event)
- Surveys of local people asking about their level of physical activity
- Surveys of local people asking about their views on the environment or policy change
- Media articles
- Opinions of local politicians or officials
- Opinions of other stakeholders e.g. shop owners
- Photographs showing people being active in the environment

Examples were submitted as short powerpoint presentations, which were then discussed at a learning and sharing of good practice symposium and workshop. From 4-6 examples per partner, three examples were selected from each country for inclusion in this report. This was based on:

- evidence of the impact of the environment on physical activity (if available)
- a balance of types of environmental intervention
- innovation
- face validity (i.e. in the absence of any evidence, was the intervention likely to work?)
### Examples of practice

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Background

Hyvinkää is a mid-sized city about 60 km north of Helsinki, with 46,366 inhabitants. The town has a central urban area about 6-8km wide, and around 90% of people live within 4.5 km from the central railway station. The town has around 220 km of streets and the same amount of cycle paths.

Supporting policies

Finland has strong national policies on physical activity and the environment including a National Strategy for Walking and Cycling, and a National Action Plan for walking and cycling. The town of Hyvinkää has a number of supporting policies in place including a ‘Traffic System Plan’ (2013), and a Cycle path design manual for the city. The city has also used the WHO Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) for evaluating the value of increasing cycling and walking in Hyvinkää.

Aims

The town is preparing a ‘Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)’ which focuses on promoting sustainable modes of transport; decreasing passenger vehicle transport; and strengthening the liveability and functionality of the city centre. It is being prepared in partnership with a range of stakeholders in urban mobility planning. It builds upon a massive range of activities carried out in the last ten years aimed at promoting sustainable transport, including:

- Road safety projects including campaigns promoting reflectors, crosswalk safety, bike helmets.
- Driving courses for elderly people.
- Radar speed display system around schools.
- Free cycling maps for residents.

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1 www.lvm.fi/-/kavelyn-ja-pyorailyn-valtakunnallinen-strategia-2020-814209
2 http://www2.liikennevirasto.fi/julkaisut/pdf3/ls_2012-02_kavelyn_ja_pyorailen_web.pdf
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4 http://www.hyvinkaa.fi/globalassets/asuminen-ja-yritykset/tekopankki/liikenne/lisatiedot/pysyva-liikenne_suunnitteluprosessi_promoting_sustainable_mobility_in_Hyvinkää
• Cycling course for all 8 year old children in Hyvinkää.
• Cycling Week promotions including letters for new residents with information about sustainable mobility; campaigns promoting cycling; cycling trips around Hyvinkää; exhibitions; cycling courses for elderly people.
• The establishment of a working group for sustainable mobility.
• Traffic Snake games for promoting sustainable to pupils.
• Systematically collecting data about cycling.
• A ‘Living Street’ experiment to promote a pedestrian/public transport street (2015).

Results
A study in 2008 showed the following modal shares for transport in the city:
• Passenger car: 54 %
• Pedestrian: 24 %
• Cycling: 14 %
• Public transport: 8 %
• Other: 2 %

Surveys of cyclists show that 40-50 % of cyclists continue cycling through winter. Local bus use has grown 44 % in the last ten years. 60 % of the inhabitants of Hyvinkää say they are ‘at least somewhat willing’ to take a longer tour by car if it improves the conditions of other modes of transport in the city centre.

Next Steps
The next steps for the town will be finishing the ‘Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan”; making sure its objectives are achieved, and ensuring ongoing data collection to evaluate the impact of the programme.
Background

Lahti is a large town (population 118,000) in the heart of Southern Finland, well connected to the Helsinki metropolitan area. The town has strived for decades to become a model green city and has made substantial progress toward this strategic goal. Work towards environmental approaches have encompassed all sectors of public services from waste management to nature conservation, energy production, land-use and traffic planning as well as education.

Lahti has traditionally been a very compact city with a walkable and lively city centre. The town is planning to merge with a neighbouring municipality, and then the city’s urban structure will extend east along a highway and railway line. In addition, there will be forestry and agricultural areas and countryside villages.

Supporting policies.

Lahti has a modern and well-functioning bus system with a new transit hub that connects local buses with long-distance coaches and trains. Also, Lahti has an advanced cycling and walking strategy, which is being implemented in 1) master planning, 2) infrastructure and 3) information & marketing.

The town has a well-developed Lahti City Strategy; a Master Plan\(^5\); a Walking and Cycling Development Plan\(^6\); and a Health exercise plan\(^7\), which takes a cross-disciplinary approach encompassing all sectors of public service providers, including planning.

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5 http://www.lahti.fi/yleiskaava
7 http://www.lahti.fi/www/cms.nsf/pages/9CB58D6F598D8AAB225714000461084
Aims

- To increase the modal split of walking and cycling according to strategic goals; with a view on also eliminating CO2-emissions.
- To ensure the majority of citizen can reach services by walking, cycling or public transport.
- To connect walking, cycling and green spaces, including larger recreational areas.
- To improve the safety and comfort of the city for pedestrians, cyclists and public transportation users.

Activities

- In 2013, key goals were prepared together with citizens, policymakers and collaborators. An online-feedback\(^8\) system was created to gather citizens’ opinions. 1,340 responses were gathered about public services, 60 responses were about bikelanes and commuting to work and school by walking or cycling.
- In 2014, four "Our Lahti –evenings"\(^9\) were held in different parts of city. Citizens had to suggest changes to services, surroundings, town planning and transpotation. 107 citizen participated and nearly 400 comments or ideas were collected.
- 36 children aged 7-10 years old drew their ‘dream playground’ on the ground using street chalk and 10 were interviewed. Children spontaneously described constructed playgrounds as well as natural surrounding. Children wished places for adventure and climbing but also appreciated safety.

Results

- The results from this participatory planning process has been stored in the city’s Geographical Information system for use in detailed planning, and have been included in the master plan and written into planning regulations and guidelines. This includes a network of high-quality bicycle boulevards, which has been drawn into the master plan for the first time.

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9 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_7ldUZOL6Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_7ldUZOL6Q)
• The planning regulations now state: “In assigning functions to zones, attention must be paid to the accessibility of services on foot and by bicycle.” And: “In the planning and design of school and kindergarten surroundings, special care is to be given to the continuity of walking and cycling paths, their safety and comfort.”

**Next steps**
The impact of the master plan on walking, cycling, services, urban economy and child friendliness will be assessed by external experts. Measures will include a range of twenty sustainability measures, including accessibility of services and green areas.
Maunula activity trail
By Liisamaria Kinnunen and Tanja Onatsu

Background
The town of Maunula in Finland held a contest focused on innovation in urban planning. The idea of an activity trail was suggested by one senior citizen who found walking difficult in winter because of poor maintenance of the snowy streets in the local neighbourhood.

The City Planning Department’s Transport and Traffic Planning Division commissioned a draft plan of the route from a company that specializes in urban planning. The City Planning Department’s Transport and Traffic Planning Division, land use planning, The Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, the City elderly programme, citizen’s living in Maunula and the inventor of the senior’s activity trail all participated in planning.

Supporting policies
There are a number of supportive policies in place including:

- A decision in principle about health enhancing physical activity by the ministry of social affairs and health and ministry of education and culture in 2002.
- An Act on Supporting the Functional Capacity of the Older Population and on Social and Health Services for Older Persons.
- The Accessible Helsinki plan 2004¹⁰.
- Planning physical activity sites for senior citizens¹¹.
- Work of the city elderly program.

¹⁰ http://www.hel.fi/hki/hkr/en/Helsinki+for+All/The+City+of+Helsinki+Accessibility+Plan
¹¹ Lehmuspuisto & Åkerblom, 2007, Läkkäiden ihmisien liikuntapaikkojen suunnittelu, Arki- ja terveysliikunnan tilat palvelu- ja hoiva-asumisympäristössä, Liikuntapaikkajulkaisu no 94, Opetusministerio
**Aims**

- To enable a safe, well-maintained route for walking all year around.
- To improve the level of physical activity among elderly people.
- To ensure strong attention for detail was placed on accessibility, safety, supervision and maintenance.

The trail was especially planned for elderly people and those physically challenged.

**Activities**

The process led to a 250m long walking route and 150m long extra route that links the local senior citizens’ home and health care centre.

- Guide sign in the beginning of the trail that includes text, embossing and braille.
- Handrail throughout the rail. The fastener of the rail does not block the hand from gliding along the handrail.
- Route info where current location is marked. Signs are in embossing and braille.
- Non-glaring post lights throughout the trail.
- Wide paths makes it possible for two wheelchairs to pass.
- Even ground and different ground textures makes walking safer.
- Curb made from rock to help elders with poor eyesight.
- Benches densely (25-100m) throughout. Different high of benches with armrests were added.
- Birdhouses brings nature closer.

**Results**

- The trail is used by 40-60 years olds for walking and observing nature.
- A survey of 250 users showed that users feel that trail has improved outdoor recreation facilities.
- Seniors living in the neighbourhood think this has provided safe outdoor recreation trail that is well maintained even during winter.
- The trail is well used by nearby senior citizen home inhabitants.
- The Trail cost 230.000€, not much more than a regular trail.
Background information

Thessaloniki is the second largest urban conurbation in Greece (population more than 1 million). It tends to lack adequate public space. The new waterfront development on the eastern segment of the city was proposed to provide citizens with a quality public space for multiple uses, with possibilities for walking, bicycle riding, skating, roller skating, and jogging. The project was a result of an architectural competition launched by the Municipality of Thessaloniki (2001), constructed with the financial contribution of the EU (ESPA). The total budget for the projects amounted to 43,200,00€.

The winning concept treated the waterfront as a borderline that must co-exist with the water. They set out to restructure the paved part of the area; to create a row of 16 ‘green rooms’; and to replace and improve urban furnishing.

The area is 238,800 m² and 3.5 km long and is divided longitudinally into three strips: a) the outer one next to the sea, b) the middle strip which is planted with trees both sides, and c) the inner gardens part which comprises public space and 16 thematic (some historical) gardens where also certain activities can be hosted.

Details of supporting policies

The Municipality of Thessaloniki has traditionally focused on supporting physical activity through mass events. For example they piloted a month-long programme “exercise and recreation in nature” which is supported by the municipality and run by professional trainers, in conjunction with yoga and alternative therapy departments. Events and activities include dancing; eco-fashion events; children events, and photography exhibitions.
Aims

- To improve the urban environment of the city, by creating an upgraded public space, and by increasing green space.
- To create a public space where activities and leisure can co-exist.
- To create a focus to attract domestic and overseas tourists.
- To improve the health condition of the population, by providing an opportunity to walk and cycle which can act as a motivation for doing this also elsewhere.
- To raise the aesthetic standards of the citizens in relation to public space which leads to higher respect for public space.

Activities

The area has been completely transformed and has become a focus for life in the city. Activities taking place are both physical and cultural and include:

- All types of physical activity, including walking, jogging, skating, rolling and of course cycling, most taking place on an individual basis, though events are occasionally organised.
- Bike rentals and events which have helped to increase the profile of cycling among the Thessaloniki residents.
- Cultural events including art exhibitions, discussions, dancing, performances, photographic competitions, workshops, children activities, musical events and parties, etc.
• The new Seafront Rehabilitation project, has been reported to have become ‘everyone’s favourite spot in the city’ according to the site engineer.

Results
The main result is that this new major point of reference for the city has provided space for people to meet and to spend their free time in physical and cultural activities.

Thessaloniki has few public spaces, and places for physical exercise or outdoor cultural events are frequently limited to professionals, teams, or official groups. This space has therefore opened new horizons and created better conditions for visitors.

It is also notable that that the new waterfront has attracted international publicity and has been awarded architectural prizes. This has contributed to its success and increased awareness.

The development has led to the creation of around 700 new jobs\(^\text{12}\), and has attracted environmental businesses such as the firm “bike it” which rents out various kinds of bicycles (standard, foot bikes, robins, quadracycles for 2 or 4 people, etc.) and organises several bike events. (http://bikeitrentals.com/events/)

Next steps
There are a number of proposals for the next steps, including a focus on security and safety in the area; rails to help people who may fall into the sea; and a proposal to add swimming pools as a topical extension to the seafront.

Background information

Athens is the best-known city in Greece, with a wealth of historical and cultural landmarks. The conurbation has a resident population of more than 3.5 million which swells with visitors especially in summer.

Several large-scale projects have been carried out over the last period, especially with relation to the 2004 Olympic Games, focused around improving the environment for residents and visitors:

- Pedestrianisation of the Grand Promenade (Dionysiou Areopagitou St., Apostolou Pavlou St., Ermou St., Kerameikos sq.)
- The redesign of 18 Streets in the Historical Centre of Athens
- Remodelling of squares in Athens’ historical centre (the City plazas) Omonia sq., Syntagma sq., Koumoundourou sq., Monastiraki sq.

The Grand Promenade comprises a huge open Archaeological Park, it connects most of the above historical monuments and it is adjacent to the new Acropolis Museum a major attraction for both Greeks and tourists.
Details of supporting policies
The key policies in Athens that have helped to support these changes have been related to city planning, traffic management and accessibility. The transport plan for the area included a series of pedestrianised zones, traffic calming measures, several metro stations (and minor rearrangements of the public transport and tourist bus routes).

There was no physical activity strategy beforehand; the area was constructed for cultural, tourist and leisure reasons. Physical activity started to take place as a natural consequence of such an intervention. It is interesting to note that health was not an primary intention for the changes, other than the general assumption that improving the environment, adding green spaces, creating open leisure spaces, etc are by definition interventions towards better health.

Aims
The project was the outcome of an architectural competition. According to the winner: “The ultimate goal was to create a focal recreational area which would attract and increase public use and enjoyment. It was to be accompanied by a non-polluting public transportation system”.

Activities
The pedestrianisation of Dionysiou Areopagitou St., and Apostolou Pavlou St. was completed in 2002 and the Ermou-Kerameikos area in 2004.

The intervention project changed drastically the traffic plan in this wider area as, besides pedestrianisation, it has reduced the space for cars and has included several traffic calming interventions (e.g. Kolokotroni St.).

The budget was financed jointly by EU and the Greek State.

The area now hosts all kinds of events. Some are more related to physical activity, such as the ‘Run for peace event’ or individual jogging and walking, and other related to cultural activities such as City of Athens New Year’s Eve and Christmas events, Book fairs, Street Opera events, etc. The Promenade also

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13 Pleias - Diamantopoulos, 2003
serves as the starting point for various other events among which some related to physical activity, such as the popular 5,500 meters race, the ‘Bike Cities’ events starting point (in pedestrian parts cycling is not allowed), or even for political events such as the 21 September 2014 rally for climate change.

Results
The Grand Promenade has become a very popular place for Athenians and tourist to walk and to follow events and activities. The project has brought vibrant life in a place previously occupied by cars, heavy traffic (due to the Acropolis) and a congestion of buses. The construction of the metro has made the place very accessible and has contributed in the reduction of traffic which had the area as its destination, while through traffic is completely avoided.

Next steps
According to a diploma study in the University of Piraeus (Xydias, 2005), 94% of Athenians would like the unification programme to be continued to other places in the wider Athens basin. Being very happy with the development there is not any pressure or more major ideas for the physical development of this particular part of the city.

However, several cyclists ask for bicycle lanes, at least along the Grand Promenade, but this has not yet become an official policy.
Background

CityMobil2 is a multi-stakeholder project co-funded by the EU’s Seventh Framework Programme for research and technological development (commonly known as FP7).

CityMobil2 is setting up a pilot platform for automated road transport systems, which will be implemented in several urban environments across Europe. Automated transport systems are made up of vehicles – usually buses – operating without a driver.

The pilot is being implemented in the Greek city of Trikala, a medium-sized provincial city in the middle of Greece with a central population of about 76,000. The city lies close to Meteora, an important tourist attraction.

Details of supporting policies

The project is led by a reference group that brings together cities and other stakeholders with an interest in automated transport systems. The CityMobil2 Reference Group is open to stakeholders with a keen interest in automated transport systems.

Trikala was the first digital city in Greece. It has been nominated as one of the 21 most intelligent communities worldwide by the Intelligent Community Forum three times in a row (2009, 2010, 2011).

Aims

The main objective of CityMobil2 is to remove the main barriers to the implementation of automated road transport systems in cities. It is hoped that CityMobil2 will deliver:

- An automated road transport service running for at least six months at five sites across Europe
- Guidelines to design and implement an automated transport system
- Improved understand of the interaction between automated vehicles and other road users
- A legal framework proposal for certifying automated road transport systems in Europe
- Showcases at numerous sites across Europe
- Technical specifications for interoperable automated road transport systems, including a communications architecture
Activities
CityMobil2 started in September 2012 and will run for 4 years and has 45 partners drawn from system suppliers, city authorities (and local partners), the research community and networking organizations. The CityMobil2 project involves several cities (or equivalent), which have investigated where and how automated road transport systems (ARTS) could most effectively be implemented.

Next steps
The programme has clarified many of the issues regarding the technical, economic, cultural and legal framework associated with the use of vehicles without drivers.
The aim is to use this expertise in the future and use more vehicles without drivers in urban areas.
Background
The City of Brasov, is a medium-sized city in the centre of Romania, with around 290,000 inhabitants. It is in a mountainous area, but the city itself is relatively flat, allowing for easy cycling in most areas of the city. Cycling is increasing in the city, especially among the young, despite the significant barrier of the cold weather during the 3-5 winter months each year. The municipality is investing in cycle lanes across the city: there are approx. 30 km of cycling lanes in the city of Brasov, both dedicated as well as shared space. There are also plans to include cycle lanes as part of any new road construction or maintenance. Brasov’s first Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan includes a focus on active mobility (walking & cycling) and will include distinct measures to switch from car use to walking and / or cycling.

Relevant policies
The initiative supports the 1st Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan of Brasov aimed at:

- accessibility – ensure that all citizens are offered transport options that enable access to key destinations and services;
- safety and security - improve safety and security;
- environment - reduce air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption;
- economic efficiency - improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the transportation of persons and goods;
- quality of urban environment - contribute to enhancing the attractiveness and quality of the urban environment and urban design for the benefits of citizens, the economy and society as a whole.

Also, the cycling lane network development supports also the local policy for active healthy living through sport. This in turn is a part of the NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SPORT 2013 - 2030 which
encourages local communities to invest in infrastructure and activities that will lead to physically active lifestyles and orient the young generation toward sport. The Municipality has developed a lot of sport related infrastructure such as ski slopes; Olympic skating rinks; an Olympic pool; multipurpose sport hall; outdoor exercise equipment; cycling lanes; hiking routes, etc.

Aims
The City aims to develop a comprehensive cycle lane network, to improve mobility and also to support an active and healthy life style as one of the components for high quality of life in Brasov City. The objective set by the public administration in 2012 was to support future development of 50km of cycle lane by the end of 2018. By 2014, only 10.9 km of cycling lane was built, with another 18.5 km added in 2015.

Activities
Between 2012 and 2014 the first dedicated cycling lanes were built in Brasov as part of a future integrated cycling lane network. During 2015 the cycle lane network almost tripled its size. This reflected the commitments made in the SUMP for Brasov, which presented various scenarios to support active mobility options such as walking and cycling.

Results
There is currently no monitoring of cyclist numbers, but there has clearly been an increase in the number of people using the cycling lane network for their daily trips. The first relevant data will be provided by the end of 2016 when a first evaluation of the SUMP implementation process will be achieved.

One informal indicator is that a major bike sales and repair shop has been opened in the city while the existing bike repair shops are extending their business by opening new repair centers.

Next steps
The cycle lane network will continue to be developed during the next months / years until an integrated network to reach all neighborhoods of the city will be achieved. This will be part of the implementation of the SUMP.

The public policy currently being developed for the historic center includes reclaiming urban space, reducing parking capacity, developing shared spaces and promoting walking as the main mobility options in the historic center.
Background
The city of Brasov has increasing cycling for transport, especially among young people. This has also led to increasing numbers of young people also wanting to use their bikes for fun. As well as going by bike to school or wherever they need to, many young people spend their free time playing on their bikes at informal BMX tracks.

In this case study, an abandoned area of former industrial land was converted to a bike playground.

Supportive policies
The Municipality has a policy for active healthy living through sport (emphasized in the city’s Sustainable Development Strategy) which supports cycling in general. However, not much has been done to in addition to the extension of the city’s cycle lanes. One of the most critical aspects is the attitude of the drivers and pedestrian to cyclists: one of the reasons that the cyclists are sometimes perceived as a ‘danger’ is the fact that those cyclists who want to play with the bike have no organised space to do it.

Aims
*To promote biking as a healthy, fun and safe activity for all.*

Objectives:
- to build a dirt park for young people (bicycle enthusiasts and others)
- to provide an appropriate environment for children and beginners who want to learn to bike and feel good on their bike in a safe and civilised mode
Activities
Volunteers worked together to build a dirtpark over a 5000 sq.m. This has:

- 2 pumptracks areas: big one and small one (for children)
- One dual path for racing
- 2 dirtjumping areas: medium and big
- Large area for urban bike trials
- Street workout area
- Night lighting

The park was financed with donations and sponsorships (the estimated total costs are at least 60,000 EURO) and built by volunteers. Use is free of charge.

Results
Approx 40-50 bikers use the park facilities every day, but this is expected to rise to at least 200 persons/day in the warmer weather. Bike shops have reported increased business and are opening new repair centers.

Next steps
The team intend to implement BikePark Postavaru project – an ambitious path for downhill competitions on Postavaru mountain.
**Background**

The city of Brasov tends to have crowded neighbourhoods with small parks, playgrounds and green areas for children’s play.

The municipality has put into place a number of initiatives to improve the street environment and reduce traffic congestions. They wanted to complement this with a project to stimulate children’s play.

**Relevant policies**

The city Sustainable Development Strategy has a specific objective for **active healthy living** by expanding public spaces for physical activity and sports in residential areas.

Based on this, the municipality started installing gym equipments in order to facilitate outdoor physical activity for people in residential areas: parks and informal green spaces between block of flats.

**AIM:**

Promoting outdoor activities in order to improve the health and state of mind of the people

**Objectives**

- To provide appropriate equipment for adults for physical activities and health improvement
- To increase the number of people who practise outdoor activities
Activities
Outdoor gym equipment has been installed in 17 places in the city. In 2007, the first park gym was tried as a pilot to test people’s response. In 2012 more were installed in 5 locations at citizens’ requests, within rehabilitated parks and green areas. In 2013-2014 a further 11 locations were delivered following citizens’ request.

Results
Over 75% of requests received have been from older people who want to be active outdoors near their home, to look after their health. In the beginning the equipment was used only by young or older people, but little by little more people have become interested in using it.

Next steps
The municipality intends to provide gym equipment for 5 new locations. Unlike previous years, it is planned the installation of such equipment will be suitable for disabled persons.
Italy: Pedestrian Street project in Palermo
By Rosina Ndukwe

Background
Palermo is the capital of the Sicilian region of Italy and the Province of Palermo. It is located in the northwest of the island of Sicily, and is the 5th most populated city in Italy, with an urban area of 855,285 inhabitants.

Although Palermo has many beautiful tourist attractions, it also has problems. The development and facilitation of active environments are hindered due to lack of green spaces and parks. 60% of Palermitans are dissatisfied with the lack of green spaces. There is a large amount of waste on the streets, much of it non-recyclable. Poor road design (narrow streets and no parking) increase danger for vulnerable road users – pedestrians and cyclists.

Supporting policies
The Urban Mobility Service of Palermo supports Urban Traffic Plans, which aim to:

- Improve pedestrian mobility, with definition of squares, streets, routes or pedestrian areas and limited traffic zone
- Improve the mobility of collective public transport
- Reorganize the movement and parking of private motor vehicles

These plans include measures to improve road traffic and traffic calming in all 8 districts of the city.

Supporting initiatives
As there is no government initiative to encourage people to leave the car at home, much progress has been made through local citizens’ initiative (both associations and shops) who put pressure on the city administration. Some associations such as Mobilita Palermo or Palermo Indignata were created with the goal of gathering citizens to back initiatives to make the city more liveable.

Considering this success, the mayor of the city, Leoluca Orlando, supported these initiatives and also announced that he would like more “isole pedonali” (pedestrian zones).
Aims and objectives
The “Pedestrian Street” project aims to reduce the chaotic city traffic to make Palermo more liveable and also support small and medium sized traders and the local economy.

This project was created to make people leave their cars and walk more, in a pleasant street. A lot of cultural events are now organised in the Via Maqueda area, for example, the Week of European Mobility annually in September.

The street is located between the Quattro Canti and the Teatro Massimo, two of the biggest touristic attractions of the city. The project will thus encourage tourism whilst ensuring citizens can also enjoy less noise and traffic on the streets.

Activities
The project is the “pedestrianization” of one of the arterial roads which goes from Teatro Massimo to Quattro Canti (two of the biggest touristic attractions in Palermo city centre). At the beginning of the project, cars could still drive down the street during the lunch break (12pm – 3pm) But since June 2014, access is forbidden all day, from 10am to 10 pm, from Monday to Sunday.

Thanks to the success of the initiative the public administration decided to extend the “pedestrianisation” of via Maqueda until midnight to September 2015 to assess the initiative after the return to full capacity of offices, schools etc. to better evaluate the results and impact to traffic reduction throughout the area of the old town. Only residents have a special authorisation to take this street, which they have to show to the police who regularly patrol the street.

Results
Via Maqueda has become the ‘heart of the city’.
During the weekend, the street is full of people. Every day, it is estimated that between 500 to 600 tourists take this street. Nine new shops have opened on the street and more shops and food businesses continue to open. There are also a lot of cultural events, such as musicians, arts entertainers on the street.

From January 2015, there have been 70 new pedestrian areas created in Palermo

**Next steps**

A further street Corso Vittorio Emmanuele (one of the main streets of Palermo in terms of traffic) has also been pedestrianised (from Porta Nuova to Quattro Canti), two of the main touristic places. There are plans for more pedestrianisation schemes.
Background
Like many European countries, Sicily faces a range of public health challenges. In Italy, obesity rates are low relative to most EU countries, however 10.4% of the population is obese. Childhood obesity in Sicily is problematic: on average 24.1% of the school population are overweight and 13.4% obese (compared to the national average 22.2% overweight and 10.6% obese). Only 33% of children carry out regular sports activities (at least twice a week).

Supporting policies
In recent years, the Italian government has launched a number of plans to tackle obesity. The National Plan of Prevention 2005–2007 devised regional plans to encourage development and implementation at local level of urban environments that favour physical activity, with a specific focus on obesity (especially in children).

The National Health Plan 2011-2013 introduced active ageing into overall health strategies (EY2012 Active Ageing & Solidarity between Generations).

One of the environmental initiatives in support of health promotion was the redevelopment of the area known as Foro Italico in Palermo. This is a 40,000 m² lawn and promenade along the seafront of Palermo that is entirely pedestrian and free to use. Palermitans regularly go there during the week and at the weekends to have a pleasant walk close to the sea, to go running, play sports etc. The area includes benches, trees, ceramic sculptures, a bike path, night lighting and a wide scenic walk along the coast.

The area was redeveloped in 2003 by the municipality of Palermo. After some adjustments, it was opened for public use. The events organised at Foro Italico include “Choose sport for good health”
Aims
The “Choose sport for good health” initiative took place in Palermo, on Sunday, 13th April 2014, from 10am – 7pm, in collaboration with the Sicilian regional council “Sport Nazionale”.

The goal of the initiative is to encourage people to experience new sports for free, and then to encourage them to take part in more sports activities. In this way, the culture of physical activity is promoted but it also favours the idea that sport is accessible to everybody. It is also part of the project “Alimentazione e Sport” (Nutrition and sport), led by Maria Grazia La Valle, president of the Commission “Social Activities” of the Second District of Palermo which set up a programme that promotes sport activity in schools.

Activities
On the 13th April 2014, Foro Italico was transformed into an open-air gymnasium, with three different areas: grass, stage and an area for children. During the day, sport lessons were given for free, for everybody who wanted to participate. Sport activities were offered to all ages.

Results
On the day the promenade was transformed into a large open-air gym. Twenty disciplines of different sporting activities were provided, which transformed a healthy and fun Sunday in Palermo. Activities included Basketball, mountain biking and zumba for children but also fitbox, aerobics and Pilates for seniors and spinbike, and crossfit for people already with sports training.
A lawn and stage area was provided for kids, and access was provided to free tuition from fitness professionals, physical education teachers, and federal instructors who volunteered to join the initiative.

The event received good coverage in newspapers such as “Republica” and in social media.
Italy: Car Free day in Cefalù
By Rosina Ndukwe

Background
Cefalù is a city and comune in the Province of Palermo, located on the northern coast of Sicily, Italy on the Tyrrhenian Sea about 70 kilometres east of the provincial capital and 185 kilometres west of Messina. The town has a population of just under 14,000 inhabitants, and is one of the major tourist attractions in the region. Despite its size, every year it attracts millions of tourists from all parts of Sicily and also, from all over Italy and Europe.

Cefalù aims to be an Eco-friendly town. The traffic in the old town centre is limited and parking is prohibited. Cars are only permitted between the hours of 05:00 – 09:30 and 13:00 -16:00. There are plenty of places to be active including a pine forest, and ‘Villa Comunale’ - an area of green equipped with slides and games for children’s play in the town park.

Supporting policies
The European Mobility Week originated in 1998 as part of the French initiative “In Town Without My Car!” when the Cities close their streets to motor-vehicles for one day. The success of the annual French initiative led to the creation of European Mobility Week in 2002. This is held every year 16–22 September and is organised by the European Commission. The initiative aims to encourage municipalities to
introduce and promote alternative ways of transportation, such as bikes and pedestrian mobility, and to improve public transportation.

In 2014, Cefalù joined the list of participating cities to the 13th Edition of European Week of Sustainable Mobility “Our Streets, Our Choice”. This is linked to their objectives of reducing the air and noise pollution so to make Cefalù a more healthy and liveable city.

**Aims**
The common goal is to reduce the number of cars on the streets, and to encourage local residents and tourists in the city to participate in the overall initiative of European Mobility Week and show their commitment.

The vision is a day 100% without cars, instead opening it to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, in which everyone can enjoy, strictly on foot, the beauty of their city, free from traffic and pollution. NGO Earth Day Italy adopted “Car free day” among the many initiatives promoted in Italy for the European Mobility Week.

**Activities**
Activities for Cefalù citizens, visitors and tourists took place across a whole weekend 19-21 September. The event started from the morning of Friday 19th with a free Eco shuttle service for residents to the city centre and ended in the full implementation of “Car free day” on Sunday 21st September. Activities included:

- Electric train, eco city tours
- Licenced tour guides
- Space Urban Trekking and Workout Studio
- Adult and children biking
Street performers, jugglers and cabaret to circus arts
Test drive free afternoon with the hybrid cars of Toyota Motors R. of Palermo
Workshops
Literary walks and reading
Implementation of the Car Free Day

Results
There were plenty of positive comments from Cefalù residents and visitors who participated in the weekend of sustainable mobility. Favourite activities included the eco-friendly train in the old town and guided tour.

The Sicilian ministry continues to support policies to encourage European local authorities to introduce and promote alternative means of transport, such as the bicycle and pedestrian mobility, and the use of local public transport. Initiatives to promote sustainable ways of travelling and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, noise pollution and congestion will play an important role in the physical and mental wellbeing of all.

Next steps
A number of permanent measures have been implemented:
- Development of public bicycle hiring and sharing systems
- Improvement of infrastructure (new foot bridges, pavements, road crossings, zebra crossings etc.)
- Use of ecological vehicles for public transport fleets
- New traffic regulations: traffic circulation and parking
- Launch of online car-pooling and car-sharing schemes
- Use of clean vehicles
- Launch of awareness-raising campaigns
- Elaboration of educational materials
- Development of travel plans / mobility plans in consultation with local stakeholders
- Permanent access restriction to city centres
- Development of systems and equipment for measuring air quality in public places
- Organisation of regular fora or surveys on public opinions and ideas
Background
Zurich is the largest city in Switzerland, with approx 400,000 inhabitants. Zurich is considered very walkable with high public transport use (on average people walk for 42mins/day) but not very bike-friendly (on average 4 mins/day).

Key policies
Zurich is famous for its extremely dense public transport system, consisting of a well-coordinated network of metro-trains, trams and busses that run approx. every 8-10 minutes.

At the time of this case study, about 10 years ago, supporting policies for active mobility were very limited; specific strategies where only launched as of about 2010.

Aims
The project aimed to increase the quality of the inner-city and reduce car traffic in one of its most attractive areas, through traffic calming the Limmatquai, a main road on the boarder of the river “Limmat” between the main train station and the lake. It is one of the main through-roads of the city, carrying about 20,000 cars and trucks per day.

In June 1999, a public vote was conducted and the population of Zurich voted in favour of a car-free Limmatquai. However it took until 2004 before opposition from politicians and local businesses could be overcome and the work started.

Activities
The Limmatquai was completely rebuilt into a partly or fully car-free boulevard with wide sidewalks and 30km/h speed limits for all modes of transport (incl. trams and taxis).
Results
In 2008, 2 years after completion of the reconstruction works, a survey with 44 businesses and 600 by-passers showed:

- 94% of users preferred the new setting
- 40% arrive by PT, 30% by train, 15% on foot, 8% by car; 2% by bike
- 60% of business owners preferred the new setting
- 16% of by-passers and 25% of business owners noted as a weakness that the Limmatquai has not been made completely car-free.
- Only 7% of business owners (and no by-passers) mention the traffic calming as a weakness. The mentioned advantages (less disturbance from traffic, more attractive for pedestrians, more lively etc.) clearly outweighed mentioned disadvantages by business owners (less parking spaces, more complicated delivery etc.).

In 2009, another by-passers survey showed that more than 80% of participants liked the Limmatquai setting. The most frequently mentioned argument was the traffic situation and the reconstruction.

In 2007, the results of a traffic study were published that compared the situation 2 years before and after the new traffic scheme:

- There was overall no negative effect on the inner-city traffic situation in peak hours (16:00-18:00)
- On some of the by-pass routes, slightly longer travel times were recorded but overall, traffic remained fluid

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14 www.stadt-zuerich.ch/ed/de/index/taz/publikationen_u_broschueren/moberebung_20071.html
• There were only marginal changes for the public means of transport; for some trams travel times even decreased slightly.

• The number of pedestrians increased by 17% (or about 2'000 p./day). Including nearby street segments, pedestrian traffic increased in total by 5%.

• The number of bikes increased by 18% (or about 3’700 bikes/day). The number of bikes using the sidewalks decreased from 38% to 5% and illegal bike traffic in adjacent pedestrian areas decreased.

• A large part of the changes were already seen after the first step, ie. the traffic-calming.

Next steps
The project is now complete so there are no further steps planned. While this is not a low cost measure, it illustrates that well done traffic-calming, ideally supplemented with street re-design can have significant impact on active mobility.
Switzerland: Connecting sub-urban recreation areas by active transport.

By Sonja Kahlmeier

**Background**
This activity takes place in the metropolitan area of Zurich. This is home to 1.9m inhabitants who are spread across 140 communities in 8 cantons. There are many local recreation areas such as the Rhine fall, lakes, rivers, mountains, and historic city centres, e.g. Rapperswil.

Sustainable transport is popular in Zurich: only 27% of trips are by motorized transport, with 37% on public transport, and approximate 35% walking. Hiking and cycling are the most frequent leisure time physical activities.

**Supporting policies**
This project was part of the Federal Office for Spacial Development’s “Demonstration projects spatial planning”, a 5-year programme (2014-2018), run in collaboration with other federal offices (environment, transport, housing, health, sport). The programme provides approx €3.3m for 32 projects that support local / regional / cantonal actors in the testing of new spatial planning approaches that improve quality of life, competitiveness, and solidarity.

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18 [http://www.are.admin.ch/themen/raumplanung/modellvorhaben/index.html](http://www.are.admin.ch/themen/raumplanung/modellvorhaben/index.html)
Aims
The project aimed to connect sub-urban recreation areas by active transport. This was through optimizing walking/cycling/hiking/mountain biking network access to recreation areas:
- in concrete planning projects
- through a new guide on active mobility
- ultimately to include active mobility-access as a mandatory aspect in the urban planning process

The project had a focus on:
- an analysis of “recreation potential” of areas/offers
- collaboration with stakeholders (administration, planners, users, protection interests)
- establishment of specific tools (guide, checklists etc.)
- improvement and strengthening of the sub-urban areas through more attractive recreation offers and active transport access

Activities
In 2014 a new guide for the planning and implementation of attractive infrastructure for cycling/walking for sub-urban recreation areas was developed, funded by the Swiss Roads Authority. The idea was to test it in practice before project submission. The project was coordinated by the Foundation Metropolitan Area Zurich and led by Hiking Switzerland, in collaboration with Switzerland Mobility and the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL.

Results
The project was presented in range of fora and the annual metropolitan area conference. Two test regions were identified, and a third one has been under discussion. Active mobility is now a topic in this region, and has started to be seen as sign of quality for an area. However, the integration of specific measures into ongoing processes is challenging.

Switzerland: Accessibility of school yards & sport infrastructure (ideé sport)

By Sonja Kahlmeier

Background
This case study takes place across Switzerland. The country is strongly decentralized, with 26 cantons that have wide-ranging responsibility for health, roads infrastructure, urban planning etc. However, the use of a national law has helped the environment for physical activity by mandating that school-based play and sport areas and outdoor infrastructure must be accessible also outside of school hours.

Supporting policies
The National law on sport and physical activity promotion (2011) (Art. 12) mandates that 3 hours of physical education must be provided per week in schools in Switzerland. Besides that it also regulates that the cantons are responsible for the provision of opportunities for daily physical activity and sports along with the necessary infrastructure.

20 www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20091600/index.html
Further provisions are made on the cantonal level, usually with the aim that the school infrastructure should allow varied use: where possible combining access to sports and exercise facilities with green spaces, community halls, libraries, other leisure infrastructure or compatible public use. In most cases, play and sport areas and outdoor infrastructure must be made accessible outside of school hours.

**Aims**

The project Idee sport\(^{21}\) aims to use sport as means for:
- violence and substance use prevention
- health promotion
- social integration

**Vision**

To provide in all regions of Switzerland spaces and structures that provide for regular, easily accessible and free opportunities to be physically active and play sports. People create a positive Switzerland, independent of their social status or origin.

**Activities**

The project was initiated in 1999 as a pilot project in one neighbourhood of Zurich\(^{22}\). The goal was to make the sport halls and expensive school sport infrastructures (which were empty in the evenings) and weekends available for youth, in particular from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The project was initially driven initially by one person who was an avid basketballer and initiated the idea of “midnight basketball”. There was a huge response, fast development until it reached a size that needed professional organisation. The idea soon spread and was adapted for different places and for different age target groups.

\(^{21}\) [www.ideesport.ch](http://www.ideesport.ch)

\(^{22}\) [www.ideesport.ch/sites/default/files/Kurzdokumentation_Projekte_Idee%CC%81eSport.pdf](http://www.ideesport.ch/sites/default/files/Kurzdokumentation_Projekte_Idee%CC%81eSport.pdf)
In 2001 the development of regional offices started; there is now a head office and 7 regional offices covering all regions of Switzerland. Staff members come from a variety of backgrounds (sports, social work, animation, social pedagogics) and funding comes from a wide range of sources:

- National ministries, cantons and local communities
- Tobacco prevention fund and Health
- Promotion Switzerland
- Pro Youth foundation and other youth organisations
- Wide range of foundations, some private
- partners (e.g. insurance company)

**Results**

**MidnightSports** has been running since 1999 as an alternative offer to less healthy leisure options on a Saturday night. The programme is for youths aged 13+ and allows access to junior and senior coaches, but also to non-refereed informal games. Evaluation (2013) showed the concept had spread to about 120 sport halls from cities to country side, and now covered approx 11,000 coaches, 2,500 youth coaches and over 100,000 participants/year, of whom 84% were ‘regulars’ and 70% were from a migration background.

**open: sunday** has been running since 2006. This allows the opening of sports halls on winter Sunday afternoons for children 7-12 years of age. This takes place in over 40 locations, and offers play equipments, parcours, and healthy snacks, staffed by a team of junior and senior coaches. This has been complemented by MiniMove which offers the same approach to 2-5 year olds. Evaluation (2013)\(^3\) has shown that in total the programmes attract about 25,000 participants/year, of whom 70%-83% are ‘regulars’.

**Next steps**

The next step is to secure funding for the long term, and possibly to undertake a study of the longer term impact on regular physical activity. Also further activities are being developed, such as ‘KickIt’ for girls.

\(^3\) http://www.ideesport.ch/sites/default/files/Infografik%20MidnightSports.pdf

Background

Tukums is a town in Western Latvia, with around 19,000 inhabitants in the central area, and 10 rural municipalities. The town has good infrastructure for sport and activity: 9 sports grounds; 9 sports gymnasiums; 11.3km of bicycle lanes; and 2 parks.

Supporting policies

Latvia has strong policy support for physical activity with a wide range of published strategies:

- The Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 (Latvija2030)
- The National Development Plan 2014–2020
- The Public Health Guidelines 2011-2017
- The Youth Policy Guidelines 2009 – 2018
- The Environmental Policies Guidelines 2009-2015
- The Sustainable Development Strategy of Tukums Municipality until 2033
- The Integrated Development Program of Tukums Municipality 2011 to 2017
- The Health Promotion Guidelines for Municipalities (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia)

Aim

- to encourage people to be more active in daily life
- to make the environment more green
- to decrease the number of traffic accidents
- to attract more tourists to the municipality
- to improve the quality of life environment
Activities
In 2011 the Municipality drafted an Integrated Development Program of Tukums Municipality 2011 to 2017. This was the basis for a number of key developments:

• Bicycle lanes: Over 8km of bicycle lanes were built [pls check this figure] with the help of EU funding.

• Sports infrastructure: lots if investment was made in sports infrastructure including a sports hall in the village of Sēme; the reconstruction of the sports stadium in Tukums and the sports hall of Raiņa gymnasium in Tukums; and the rebuilding of a gym in Upīša primary school.

• Playground and outdoor exercise equipment: a huge playground was built in Tukums; and an additional 18 playgrounds were later built along with two places with outdoor exercise equipment.

Results
• More people are using the new infrastructure to be more active, either alone or with activity groups
• More people are choosing go by bicycles instead of cars
• Parents feel safer when their kids are using bicycle lanes instead of biking on the streets
• citizens report an improved environment because it increases their quality of life and provides growth of their kids

Next steps
• To open strategies and development plans for new initiatives
• To continue to include bicycle lanes in new infrastructure reconstruction
• To increase the possibility for inhabitants to do different kind of sports
• To involve the society in the improvement of the environment
Background
The town of Tukums in Western Latvia has always had a good commitment to cycling: there are 11.3km of dedicated bicycle lanes and 1142 km of marked cycling routes. The town has a number of supportive policies (see previous case studies) but wanted to focus more on stimulating tourism through cycling.

Aims
- to attract more tourists to the municipality
- to make the environment more green
- to encourage people to be more active in daily life

Activities
In 2011, EU funds in Tukums helped to build an additional 8km of bicycle lanes, with a further 3km added in subsequent years. [pls check figures]

The next step was to use this infrastructure for achieving the aims of the municipality of making the area more attractive to tourists. Tukums Tourism Information Center realised that cycle routes has a potential for attracting tourists to the municipality. In 2014 a number of new promotional projects focused on making the area better known as a cycling destination.

This included:
- cycling route maps
- promotional materials
- cycling website

This material is mainly for tourists but also found to be useful for citizens as it encourages them to cycle more and for greater distances. The material was disseminated in a number of events across the municipality.
Results
There has not been any formal monitoring of tourist numbers but it does appear that there are now more tourists in the municipality and that more people choose to go by bicycle instead of cars. The municipality expressed support for the new initiative as it shows commitment to environmental initiatives while supporting tourism.

Next steps
- To open strategies and development plans for new initiatives
- To continue to develop new cycling routes
- To involve citizens in the improvement of the environment
- To popularise the cycle routes to the inhabitants of municipality
**Background**

The country of Latvia covers 64,589 km² and has 1.9m inhabitants. The country suffers from high rates of cardiovascular diseases and cancer, and has identified physical activity as one of the aspects of its preventative strategy.

**Supporting policies**

- The Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 (Latvija2030)
- The National Development Plan 2014–2020
- The Public Health Guidelines 2011-2017
- The Sustainable Development Strategy of Tukums Municipality until 2033
- The Integrated Development Program of Tukums Municipality 2011 to 2017
- The Health Promotion Guidelines for Municipalities (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia)

**Aims**

- To prevent ill health
- To activate the importance of physical activities in daily life
- To encourage people to be more active in daily life

**Activities**

In 2015 the Ministry of Health created the campaign Active Every Day! To promote the importance of physical activities in daily life. This comprises an information campaign (www.aktivadiena.lv) and a number of pilot activities.

Active everyday campaign plan.
The environmental aspect of this campaign was the creation of health routes in 5 municipalities who were interested in the campaign. The first route was opened in Ogre Municipality. A lot of people came to this event including the President of Latvia. The route is designed to be easy and attractive for everyone.

**Results**

Although there are no quantitative results, the campaign has had a good reception and is still open, with people interested to use the information from the created webpage and to use the new health route.

**Next steps**

- To open strategies and development plans for new initiatives
- To include in the infrastructure reconstruction processes the building of the ‘health routes’
- To involve the society in the improvement of environment with different kind of events
UK: ‘Do it Yourself' streets, Cardiff
By Colin Baker and Tabitha Dickson

Background
Cardiff is the capital city of Wales, in the United Kingdom. This case study is located in Somerset Street in Cardiff, one of the 11 areas where the pilot was carried out. Somerset Street is a short row of terraced houses found near the centre of Cardiff in North Grangetown. A green space had recently been developed close to the street as part of the area’s regeneration programme.

Residents were concerned about noise levels and safety issues caused by inappropriate use of “mini motorbikes” in their street. There are also concerns related to resident parking.

Relevant policies
The UK government has a policy to encourage ‘Home Zones'. These are a street or group of streets where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles share the space on equal terms, with cars travelling at little more than walking pace. The implementation of the government’s programme of home zones has been mixed, with specific difficulties arising in relation to the process of involving residents in some areas.

A consultation carried out by Sustrans (a sustainable transport charity) showed that 70% of residents said they wanted to be involved in improving their streets, rather than the council doing it without them. In response Sustrans established the ‘Do it Yourself’ (DIY) pilot scheme to work closely with residents across England and Wales to develop more affordable people led solutions.

Aims
- Sustrans established the DIY Streets pilot to work closely with residents in 11 areas across England and Wales to develop more affordable people-led solutions.
- Working collaboratively with residents over a number of months to develop the design.
- Work with residents to help shift perceptions about the street from being exclusively a space for cars, to being a space that could have multiple functions.
Activities
The area was transformed through a resurfaced carriageway, significantly upgraded pavement surfaces and replaced street lighting as well as implementing DIY Streets features.

Three build-outs were built in the street (one filled with plants and the other two with trees) to act as speed deterrents as traffic is forced to slow down to navigate around them.

Mosaics were placed around the tree bases to brighten up the street and give it a unique identity. A raised table was been laid down in the centre of the street to further reduce drivers’ speeds.

Trees and plants were added to provide greenery and break up the grey tarmac.

Results
- 58% of residents strongly agreed or agreed that the amount of traffic has been reduced.
- 82% of residents strongly agreed or agreed that traffic speeds had been reduced following the street changes.
- 42% strongly agreed or agreed there is less parking from non-residents.
- Before the DIY Streets project, 28% of residents agreed that the street was pedestrian friendly. Following completion, this increased to 82%.

Next steps
- The group is now working on a toolkit and guidelines being developed to help communities exact change in their streets.
- Continued pilot schemes and trials are taking place, centred around innovation in community street design.
Background
Dundee is a city in Scotland, UK, with a total population of around 140,000. It has a relatively older population, and mortality rates from all causes are significantly worse than Scotland average. Several communities are some of the most deprived in Scotland.

In the Tayside region only 41% of men and 31% of women currently achieve the recommended minimum level of physical activity to maintain good health. Reported levels of active travel to work do not differ significantly from rest of Scotland.

Supporting policies
Smarter Choices, Smarter Places is a £15 million Scotland-wide initiative to encourage Scots to reduce car use in favour of more sustainable alternatives.

Locally, the City Council was attracted by this initiative and became one of seven sustainable travel demonstration communities. The aimed to use transport interventions to address the poor public health of Dundee population; and to improve local facilities for walking, cycling and public transport alongside promotion and information campaigns.

Aim
To achieve a shift in attitude and behaviour towards healthier, more sustainable travel, among target audiences:

- Local residents (13,500 households targeted over two years)
- School children
- University students and staff
- City centre employers
- Members of community groups
- City centre visitors
Activities
The project was launched in May 2009, and used broad range of interventions to identify the best value approach and sustainability, including:

- Cycle training for families
- Personalised Travel Planning
- Bike Library (subsidised hire)
- Public transport ticketing incentives and improvements
- Identified physical barriers
- Small scale infrastructure improvements

Results
The personalised travel planning component of the programme engaged around 9,000 residents and visitors. More than 3,400 householders received personalised active travel advice. 68% of people noticed physical health or mental wellbeing improvements; Approx. 3,000 primary school pupils participated in workshops. 81% reported understanding more about the importance of being active. 27 volunteer Network Rangers were recruited to check routes regularly.

The project appeared to have encouraged uptake via personalised travel planning and family activities. It was successful in using transport interventions as a device to improve public health, and helped to create a volunteer force to ensure that routes are maintained and data collected on a regular basis.

Next steps
Although the main work is complete, Dundee City Council is committed to keeping the Dundee Travel Active brand alive and continues to promote the benefits of active travel.
UK: Poynton, Cheshire
By Nick Cavill

Background
Poynton is a small town in the suburbs of Manchester, England. The town is located on a busy crossroads that carries over 26,000 vehicles per day. This has led to the area being dominated by a “wide, cluttered, signal controlled multi-lane junction.” Local people had for some time noticed that the town centre appeared to be in decline with a notable decrease in retail trade, and local people finding numerous problems crossing the road.

The local town council undertook a radical redesign of the area. Instead of replacing or modernising the traffic-light controlled junction, they instigated a 'shared space' policy.

Supporting policies
• The scheme was commissioned by Cheshire East Council in support of their economic development objectives
• It was supported by the South East Manchester Multi Modal Scheme
• Nationally, the Department for Transport supports an emphasis on walking and cycling through its cycling and walking investment strategy
• There is also national support for the concept of shared space

Aims
• To improve accessibility and connectivity of the retail high street
• To maintain traffic flow through the main arterial road
• To improve accessibility to the residential communities and local railway station
• To regenerate the town centre

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24 Institute of Civil Engineers case study. https://www.ice.org.uk/disciplines-and-resources/case-studies/poynton-town-centre
25 https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cycling
Activities

The town council undertook extensive discussion with local retailers and citizens, and even opened a consultation ‘shop’ in the high street. A radical plan was drawn up for the area, based on ‘shared space’ principles. This deliberately removes barriers between vehicle traffic and pedestrians and gives vehicles and people equal priority.

New paving materials, planting, lighting and street furniture were used and pedestrians prioritised through the new design. The most radical aspect was a total re-design of the major road crossing. In place of the previous traffic lights, two informal ‘roundabouts’ were installed. These are not normal traffic roundabouts but instead use paving and features to encourage drivers to slow down and give way. Signs on entering the village declare that vehicles and people have equal priority. Photo: Daily Telegraph

Results
The new facility opened to traffic in March 2013. The town centre has been completely transformed and is now a pleasant place to shop, as it is so easy to cross the road. Although not everybody supports the scheme, it does appear that the reduction in congestion and priority for pedestrians has been welcomed.

According to one case study report28:

- Average speeds have fallen to around 20 mph, despite the lack of any change in local speed limit.
- Journey times through the centre of Poynton have significantly reduced for traffic and pedestrian delays have dropped.
- There are few vacant premises, and 80% of retailers report increased footfall and turnover.

Shared space principles have been used in the UK before but not on such a major junction with high traffic volumes.

Next steps
The project continues to require maintenance, particularly due to the high levels of heavy good vehicles using the road. There is also the challenge of collecting ongoing data to demonstrate the value of this application of shared space principles.

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28 Institute of Civil Engineers case study. https://www.ice.org.uk/disciplines-and-resources/case-studies/poynton-town-centre
Spain: Irun Sasoian project

By Susana Aznar, Aurora Sánchez, David Sánchez-Mora, Jose Antonio Gutiérrez and Juan Manuel Murua

Background

Irun is a city located in Gipuzkoa (País Vasco, Spain) on the border with France, with a population of around 61,000. The city has plenty of natural areas where a good variety of physical activities take place, including the ecologic park of Plaiaundi, formed by the marshes from the Txingudi bay, where the Bidasoa river ends in the sea, very close to the city center. This area is big (24 hectares) and it is important due to its wetland where almost 175 different species of birds nest. There is also a natural park of Peñas de Aya.

The city of Irun has been recognised as ‘the city of transport’ because its train station and train industry play an important role.

Supporting policies

During 2010, Irun developed its sustainable mobility urban plan. The aim was to reach a new balance between its means of transport, sustainability and improve the quality of urban life. The plan analysed all aspects related to city neighbours and city users’ mobility, with interventions plans on transport, urban spaces, traffic and accessibility.

One of the main goals of the mobility plan was to promote walking and cycling in the city through increasing the length of bike lanes, and improving pedestrian infrastructure.
Aims
• To design, promote and evaluate interventions targeted to improve accessibility to physical activity and, an increase in physical activity opportunities for sedentary people.
• To create, develop and keep a natural environment that promotes physical activity.
• To promote the intersectional action to promote physical activity, based in the concept: ‘physical activity in all policies’
• To reduce inequality in social physical activity determinants and sedentary behaviour.

Irun “Sasoian” addresses three action areas: individual, social and environmental (natural or built), that affect physical activity practice.

Irun “Sasoian” is a multicomponent intervention. It acts at different levels on different local settings mobilising community agents in different programmes all coordinated under the brand “Sasoi”.

The programme is scientifically based on the best strategies or interventions to promote access to and participation in physical activity.

Activities
There are numerous activities as part of the programme. Examples include:
• Ikas Sasoi. 19 intervention have taken place to promote physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour in children.
• Sendia Sasoi. Physical activity promotion for families and young children (6 months to 3 years old) to promote physical activity in the family.
• Nordic Sasoi. Promoting Nordic walking in the city. So far 12 organised walks with different populations: school children, women, elderly, etc.
• Biblio Sasoi. Free pedometers loan at the municipal library.
• Eskailera Sasoi. Promoting the use of stairs instead of the elevator at home. The mayor of the city on the international day of physical activity promotes the use of stairs to improve health and quality of life.
• Urban Sasoi: a guide based on the guidelines to plan and design interventions to promote physical activity in the city.
• Igande Sasoi: family physical activities interventions in the city centre on Sunday morning. Traffic is closed that morning at the city centre.
• Patioetan Sasoi: using school sports facilities outside the school hours under the young demand.
• Urban itineraries: a path network that aims to have a path 10 minutes walk away from people's homes.
• Auzoetan Sasoi: Identifying places for adolescents to play and practice sports in different neighbourhoods.

Results
So far the programme has delivered hundreds of interventions to its various target groups. For example Ikas Sasoi has reached 1,797 school children with 19 programmes, offering 41 types of physical activity, drawing 132 new people into sports centres.

Next steps
All programmes under the SASOI brand will last in time; the main goals and aims are designed on a long term basis. The next steps will be focused on improving the programmes ensuring sustainability.
Background

Pontevedra is a city in the Galicia region in the north west of Spain, with a population of around 82,000. It has a historic city centre and is an important historical and cultural landmark. The city is located on the top of a promontory rock of low altitude surrounded by the Lérez river, juts when this river joins the water from the Pontevedra ria, opened to the Atlantic sea.

The city of Pontevedra is compact and flat. It is the commercial and, services resources centre, of the Rías Baixas area; its economy is based on the services provided (administrative, health, legal and military services), as well as the commercial and leisure business.

Supporting policies

In the 21st century Pontevedra experienced a big cultural change together with a urban transformation based around policies to encourage pedestrians in the city centre. Initiatives include: increasing pedestrians in the city centre, more bike paths, restoring historic and natural features, rehabilitation of buildings, an increase of green areas, walking areas and designing more pedestrian paths. This was achieved through large scale infrastructure investment alongside public campaigns on road safety, road culture and walking to school.
Aims

- To promote fewer cars and more transport by foot. Using the city spaces designed for car parking, to promote physical activities.
- To improve the quality of public spaces. To transform the city towards a ‘child-friendly’ city, with the aim to promote a happier and healthier childhood, combined with a “traffic calming” strategy in all urban space, to increase safety and quality of public spaces.
- To promote pedestrians. Limit the quantity of cars in the city to gain more public space to create walking itineraries with wide areas to walk.
- To make pedestrians at the centre of an intermodal transport strategy.
- To make bicycles a safe transport option
- To provide clear messages to promote active transportation.
- To teach school children and other populations groups about active mobility.
- To increase the percentage of children at walk to school.

Activities

The city has succeeded in limiting the presence of cars in the city, making more public space available for walking. Active transportation by foot or by bike, has made Pontevedra a healthy, easy and safe city. Pontevedra has also been the first city to reduce maximal speed at city centre to 30 km/h.

A transport intermodal system was established based on giving priority to non-motor transport. Free parking spaces in one area was set with a total capacity of 1000 cars. This area acts as a ‘park and walk’ area for people who come to the city from the outskirts, and leave the car, at 10 minutes by foot away, from the city centre.

The city has promoted walking to and from public transport and also in the forests through an “Animated forest programme”, which promotes the planting of trees in natural areas. Cycling has also been promoted through safe bike paths and well-signed bike parking around the city.
Infrastructure and organisation policies have been completed with a persuasive communication policy through: mass media, electronic communication and creativity direct messages. The main pedestrian campaign was the “metrominuto” (underground minute map) which aimed to debunk the perception of walking time between the different urban places.
A full road education programme targeted to school children has helped them to become more familiar with mobility. Also, sessions for elderly people, pregnant women, sports people and special populations have taken place.

**Results**

Thanks to the new mobility system, car travel has diminished and 66% of transportation is done by bike or foot. The majority of people now arrive to Pontevedra by public transportation and then walk everywhere. This has made the city more conformable and pleasant to walk around. This situation favours tertiary economic activity focusing on tourism and trade. Road safety has improved, achieving European aims, reducing incidents and avoiding fatalities.

Thanks to the “Monte Vivo” programme more than 400,000 trees have been planted in the city, improving the quality of urban spaces and promoting walking.
Background
Almansa is a city located in the province of Albacete, in the region of Castilla La Mancha, with a population of around 25,000.

Supporting policies
The city has implemented a physical activity policy. This is focused around:

• Promoting healthy and active lifestyles
• Promoting natural available resources
• Working in a cross-sectional way among different areas

It sets out to establish active and healthy lifestyles as a priority in its local policy, through coordinated action by all Almansa physical activity and healthy lifestyle promotion agents.

Aims
• To develop new physical activities and sports programmes.
• To create new sports events linked to the health benefits (healthy breakfasts, walking/running 10000 steps, etc.)
• To became involved with local schools initiatives.
• To design and to implement an education program for health.
• To promote walking through a: “SENDEROS LOCALES SALUDABLES” plan.
  Promoting the use of local paths to increase walking.
• To be recognised by the Ministry of Health as a Healthy city.

Activities
A local ‘roundtable’ has been set up to promote physical activity, involving Almansa town hall, integrated care management, schools and social/health associations.
This group agreed protocols for programmes before implementation.
Activities included:

- The creation of “senderos locales saludables” (local healthy paths).
- Physical activity programmes to increase and or maintain health have been developed for frail elderly people to avoid falls.
- Programmes for disease people such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), back pain among others.
- Walking paths and itineraries developed to provide these programmes with a tool to promote adherence.
- Supervised exercise programmes that lead on to non-supervised exercise and walking on local paths.

Results

Community programs have been developed to promote physical activity, using walking as a strategy for primary and secondary disease prevention. New local healthy routes have been created to promote walking and a non motorised mobility programme named “almansa camina”, combining health (achieving the health benefits of walking); physical activity (promoting physical activity habit); and culture and tourism (interesting touristic places) has been launched.
4. Discussion

Evidence
This report has demonstrated that there is sufficient evidence in the academic literature to support efforts to create and modify the environment in favour of health-enhancing physical activity across Europe. This evidence comes from a wide variety of study types from cross-sectional studies that describe the relations between an aspect of the environment and measured physical activity, through to intervention studies that measure the impact of a specific change to the environment. Most of this evidence comes from the US or Australia but does appear to be broadly applicable to the European situation.

The evidence clearly shows that aspects of the environment that promote physical activity should be emphasised, such as walkability and accessibility. Alongside this, there is justification for supportive policies and promotions that influence a supportive social environment.

Policy
The examples of practice have shown that across Europe there is a great deal of effort being put into developing and implementing policies that help to shift the emphasis in towns and cities away from the private car and towards walking and cycling and public transport. These are in many cases accompanied by supportive public health or sports policies. The diversity of policy approaches from the case studies demonstrates that there is no 'one size fits all' and that local priorities need to be uppermost when deciding on the range of interventions to be applied.

Implementation
The examples of practice show the vast diversity in approaches to promoting physical activity through modifications to the social, natural and built environments. While some cities choose to tackle the challenge of road transport, others promote physical activity through sport and recreation. However, the examples of practice also demonstrate some of the problems and challenges that need to be overcome to create active environments.

Evaluation
There is, in general, a lack of strong data to show the impact of many of these examples of practice. Many case study sites relied on anecdote or informal feedback to evaluate the impact of their programmes. This remains a major challenge that will be tackled in part through the next phases of the SPAcE project.
Conclusions
This report shows that there is strong evidence and policy support for interventions that aim to make the healthy choice the easy choice through creating healthy urban environments across Europe. In some cases, these might build upon the existing evidence, and attempt to emphasise features that have been shown to be related to physical activity. In others, there may be justification for trying new innovative approaches that appear to be directly relevant to the case study site, but perhaps have not so far been explored in academic research.
Photo Credits

Case study Finland: Hyvinkää sustainable traffic mobility plan
Page 20: Hyvinkää kaupunki
Page 21: Hyvinkää kaupunki

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