

Odense Municipality
Parks and Roads Administration

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PAPER FOR VELO MONDIAL 2006

Development and Promotion of Cycling

ABSTRACT

At the Velo City conference in Dublin 2005 the city of Odense was awarded the honourable Velo Mondial prize: Bicycle Friendly Community Award Platinum.

Odense has managed to develop and promote cycling in a unique way.

Throughout the 1990's Odense increased bicycle traffic by 50 per cent and decreased the number of accidents involving cyclists by 50 per cent too.

However, Odense wanted to continue with this development by increasing the bicycle share of traffic. During the last 5 years, focus has been concentrated on campaigns for children and companies.

We have organised our campaigns to appeal to the end-user. Where our target group is children, we aim our campaigns directly at them, and also at the adults via the children. Our motto is:

- All children can be transported by bicycle, either on their own or with their parents' help.
- Try it yourself - your own experience is important.
- Children are by nature very curious.
- It is fun and everyone can join in.

Although these campaigns were targeted at children, it also had a good effect on families' transport habits in general.

Where our target group is companies, we have concentrated on the health aspect. Our campaigns concerning company bikes were aimed at shorter journeys, which the companies' staff easily could manage by bicycle. Here the employees benefit, and the environmental aspect also comes into focus.

At the Marketplace Session in Cape Town I will present several successful campaigns, targeted both at children and companies. These campaigns have been run on a large scale in Odense, often appealing to thousands of potential cyclists. I will encourage discussions about how different countries and cultures can benefit from each other's campaigns.

Odense has managed to develop and promote cycling in a unique way.

From 1999 to 2002 Odense was the official National Cycle City of Denmark. The Municipality of Odense was allocated half the total budget of DKK 20 million as a subsidy from the Ministry of Transport and the National Road Directorate.

Over the four years the citizens of Odense have made 35 million new cycle journeys. This corresponds to 25,000 extra cycle journeys per day. Bicycle traffic in Odense has increased by 20 per cent. The citizens of Odense now use a bicycle for every fourth journey. The results of Odense Cycle City go against the general trend, which shows a fall in bicycle traffic.

Over half of the new cycle journeys are made by motorists, who have voluntarily decided to change their means of transport. Even though the bicycle traffic in Odense has markedly increased, the project also managed to reduce the number of accidents involving cyclists by 20 per cent. The fact that there are more cyclists on the road seems to have meant that they are more visible to motorists.

The health-related advantages from the project Cycle City have been especially satisfying and have resulted in large savings for the health sector. Concrete savings of DKK 33 million have been demonstrated. In the project period alone these savings were higher than the cost of the project, DKK 20 million. The health-related benefits of the project are not just the concrete financial savings. The project has added 500 years to the total lifetime of the citizens of Odense because people are cycling more. Mortality amongst the 15-49 year olds fell by 20 per cent.

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Do not hesitate to visit our English website www.cyclecity.dk.