

## Workshop: European Cycling Issues

### Fr1/G1: The Bicycle needs a strong Lobby

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#### 1. Advantages of Cycling

Cycling enables mobility almost independently of age, income, driver's licence, oil and image.

Cycling is health-promoting, cost-effective, environmentally friendly, quiet and requires little space also when parking.

Cycling secures and creates jobs in the tourism industry, in the bicycle industry and its suppliers, in trade and various service sectors.

#### 2. Underestimated Importance

Why is it that the bicycle's importance as a health promoting, environmentally and socially compatible means of transportation and as a solution for many urban traffic and environmental problems is so massively underestimated?

The bicycle needs an increasingly stronger lobby

- because it is so cheap
- because it is so simple to use
- because it does not produce any noise and grime
- because it technically does not pose a problem
- because its infrastructure is unobtrusive (What disturbs, is noticed).

#### 3. The German bicycle lobby

The transport consultant Jan Tebbe, together with seventeen others interested in the bicycle as a means of transport founds the German Cyclists` Federation [Allgemeiner Deutscher Fahrrad-Club] (ADFC) on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1979 in his hometown Bremen. The organization should only be continued if the membership numbers at least 100. This target was considerably exceeded already after two weeks with 179.



On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1979 Jan Tebbe fills "14 Dortmund students, who are with professor and 3 attendants on the look-out for attractive cycling facilities in Bremen" (press quotation!) with enthusiasm for his idea. As a result of this some of them after that go on to found the ADFC Dortmund.

To the first meeting for the foundation of the ADFC Erlangen on July 25<sup>th</sup> 1979 forty people appear.

### **September 27<sup>th</sup> 1979**

The structure of the ADFC is built up: Federal Association [Bundesverband] ADFC e.V. [registered society] with subordinate district associations, whose activity areas are oriented on the administrative areas of the Federal Post.

The task and the programme: Lobby, Service, Contact

### **Lobby**

The ADFC organizes the first Velo-city Convention in Bremen from April 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>, 1980 with 400 participants from home and abroad, which causes a great sensation.

And, today, we meet once again in Germany in Munich.

The first ADFC booth at the International Bicycle and Motorcycle Exhibition (IFMA) in Cologne September 19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 1980. Federal Minister of Transport Kurt Gscheidle, however, admires only brand new technical products at the fair. Only in 1984 happens the first ministerial visit at the ADFC booth by Werner Dollinger on the opening tour.

### Service

In 1980 the ADFC agrees with the company "Gothaer" on a discount for its members for bicycle related insurance. The contracting party of the theft insurance changes repeatedly in the following years because the high loss ratio prevents an attractive offer.

Initially, the idea of marking and registering insured bicycles, so that when found they can be returned to their owner, cannot be realized. Only with the introduction of bicycle coding in the 1990s [nineties] and a different concept does it become a success.

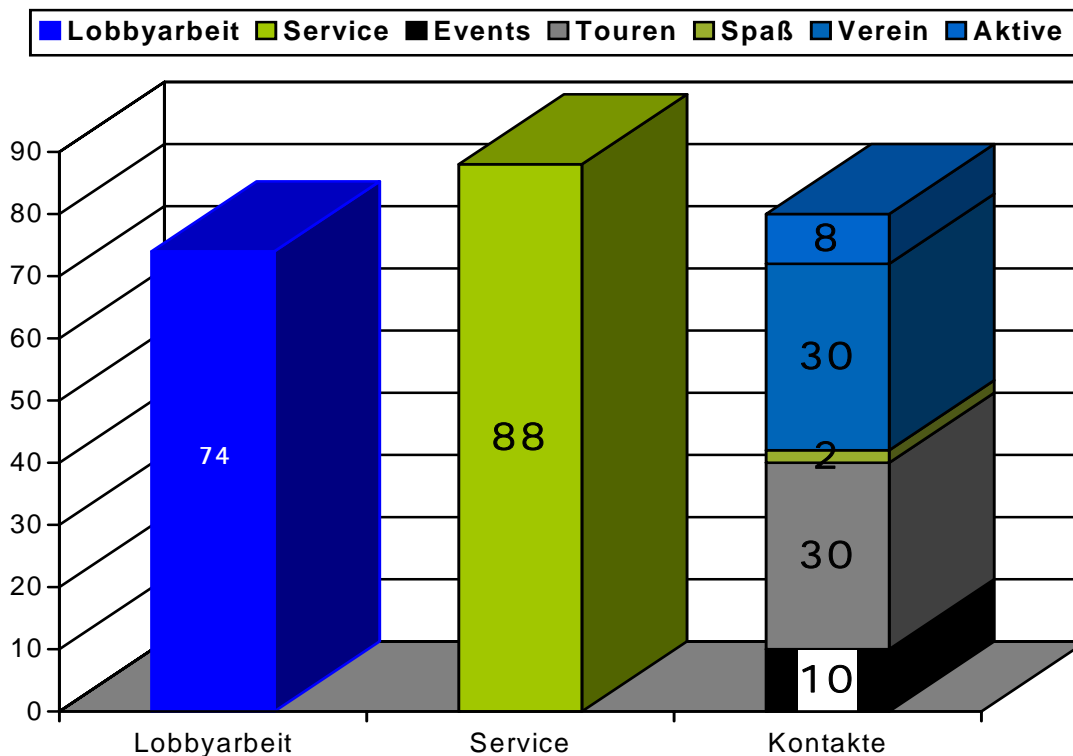
The first ADFC cycle touring maps are published by the printers Haupka Verlag. Over the following years they become a full-coverage work, which, despite some deficiencies brings the ADFC many new members. In 1989 the maps are replaced by the set of maps of the Bielefeld publishing house [Bielefelder Verlagsanstalt] which are still in production and as of April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1995 are complemented by the ADFC regional maps.

The ADFC federal cartography team of specialists develops in 1981 the "Recommendations for the Preparation of Town Cycle Maps" and prepares the "Cyclists' Map Directory". This lists all available cycle maps sorted by administrative districts and is updated repeatedly over the following years. In 1983 it comprises 500 titles.

### Contacts

Political change in the GDR [German Democratic Republic]. 1990. The vain efforts of the ADFC even to obtain permission for federal citizens to be allowed to enter the GDR by bike now find an unexpected wonderful end. The unofficial contacts to environmental groups in the GDR, e.g. to "Ökolöwe" Leipzig, are now maintained openly. The ADFC Bonn provides the impulse for the foundation of the first ADFC district association of the GDR in Bonn's twin town Potsdam.

## 4. Resources



Promising lobby work requires resources.

About 5,000 volunteers are active in the ADFC.

Through their membership subscription mainly the 115,000 ADFC members finance the ADFC activities.

### **What the paying members expect of their membership in the ADFC.**

The strong lobby

- is independent
- is party-politically neutral
- is competent and communicative
- does not only demand but also give
- informs politicians better than their administrations
- provides for its own growth and therefore growing lobby strength
- is oriented to changing socially relevant topics
- finds partners, like-minded people and beneficiaries to the lobby work

Bicycle tourism as the door opener par excellence

Every politician has made a bicycle tour in their youth and thus usually connects it mostly with very pleasant memories. One must arouse these memories and quickly one has a partner, who understands what one is talking about when one talks about cycling. Those that are competent in tourism also understand something about bicycle technology and bicycle infrastructure.

The European holding organization European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) is the umbrella organization of forty-five international bicycle organisations. One of these is the ADFC. With an increasing strengthening of the ADFC the ECF also gets stronger.

ECF stands for:

- Promoting and encouraging cycling throughout Europe and abroad
- Cycling policy at a European level
- Cycle tourism as a sustainable economic factor
- Environment-friendly mobility
- Cycling as a health factor
- Cycling as part of intermodality
- Safety for vulnerable road users

The partner associations in the ECF surely have their own strategies regarding their own resources and the organisation of lobby work.