

Poster Presentation: A Plus in Quality of Life

1c: BYPAD: More Quality for Bicycle Traffic

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Introduction

You are a politician, an official from a local or regional government, a policy maker from a ministry, a policy adviser or advocate from a cycling user group? You are interested in improving the quality of your cycling policy?

There is a tool for this purpose. It is called BYPAD (Bicycle Policy Audit) and was developed by an international consortium of bicycle experts in 1999 as part of an EU project. Two follow-up projects have since that time widened not only the spatial coverage (new EU countries joined such as Spain, Greece, Hungary, Estonia) but also the methodology has been adapted to include cities and municipalities with less than 50.000 inhabitants and regions (including provinces). For each target group we developed a different method with an adapted questionnaire.

Meanwhile more than 100 cities, towns and regions in 20 European countries are evaluating and improving their cycling policy, supervised by 34 certified auditors from these countries.

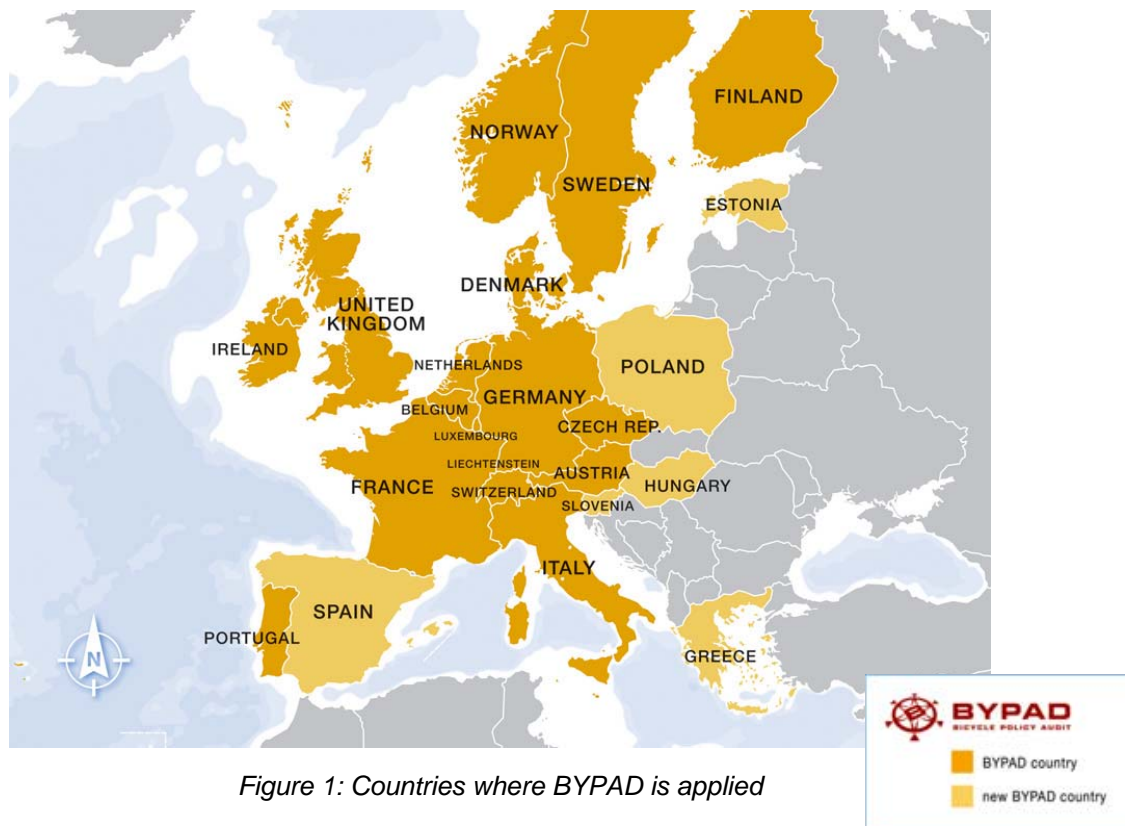


Figure 1: Countries where BYPAD is applied

In this paper an overview is given of the BYPAD methodology and results of its application.

1. Methodology – BYPAD ‘Spiral of Development’

BYPAD is based on the methods of quality management, which have already been used in the business world for many years. BYPAD regards cycling policy as a dynamic process where different components must fit together in order to get a well-balanced sustainable cycling policy. Because each step in this policy process has its own characteristics, BYPAD distinguishes 9 modules, which determine the quality of the cycling policy. The interrelationship between these modules is visualised by placing them on a ‘spiral of development’ (Figure 2). BYPAD not only focuses on the actions in the field but also on the planning, organisation and monitoring of the cycling policy. How a city is organised to implement a cycling strategy is an element which is often neglected. Nevertheless it is the key to a successful bicycle strategy.



Figure 2: BYPAD ‘Spiral of Development’ for towns, cities and agglomerations

The 9 different modules form three main groups: the planning of the cycling policy, the real actions in practice, and the evaluation of the planning and actions. For each of the modules, a list of questions is given to determine the quality level of each module.

Four modules are part of the planning of the cycling policy. The ‘**User Needs**’ module specifically examines how bicycle user needs are ascertained and managed. Attention is drawn towards how the authority involves the users and the way in which the interaction and participation of users in the political decision making process is assured. The module assesses and secures a customer-oriented policy approach. Second, the ‘**Leadership and Co-ordination**’ module examines the impact and commitment of politicians and chief officers on the quality of cycling policy. Do the people in leading positions have an inspiring and motivating impact on cycling policy? Attention is also paid to the existence of steering platforms, both internal and external. On the political level it is interesting to find out who is responsible (one person or the whole city council). This module also examines the way the cycling policy is communicated with decision makers. Is there a continuous exchange of information between the cycling department and all aldermen (elected politicians)? In the case of an agglomeration, it is interesting to understand how the coordination and communication between the different municipalities in the urban agglomeration is organised. Is there consultation between the municipalities and authorities? Is there a permanent cycling policy steering platform, which prepares and advises policy decisions on transport policy? The third module, the ‘**Policy on paper**’ module, examines the existing strategy for cycling policy and the way it is programmed. What is the content of cycling policy and to what extent is it integrated into the broader framework? Other points of interest are the degree of long term planning, (obligatory) arrangements, use of priorities and the dealing with cross-border problems. Finally, the ‘**Personnel & Means**’ module deals with the financial aspects of the cycling policy and with the manpower that is involved in executing that policy. What are the financial sources

for executing a cycling policy and what is done to safeguard financial continuity? Are there financial incentives for starting up innovative bicycle projects? How much effort is put into negotiating budgets for a better cycling policy? By whom is the cycling policy prepared and implemented. It is of interest to know who is involved in the preparation of policy on the official level and to what extent lead officials have a clear impact on the (mobility) policy.

Four modules are 'action modules'. The action modules are the operational element of the local cycling strategy. As a result of the enormous diversity of measures that can be taken, four different modules have been defined. First, '**Infrastructure & Safety**' deals with the implementation and maintenance of cycling-friendly infrastructure. Improving safety is an essential aspect of cycling policy and therefore it is given special attention in this module. The integration of cycling with public transport and additional services such as secure bicycle parking, bicycle stations etc. is also covered in this module. Second, the '**Information & Education**' module examines the way in which the town, city or agglomeration informs its citizens about the cycling policy and which initiatives concerning education and cycle training have been implemented. Next, the '**Promotion & Partnerships**' module focuses on how the cycling policy of the town, city or agglomeration addresses specific target groups and co-operates with partners. What is being done to increase cycle use through awareness raising? What measures are being taken to encourage cycling to work, to school, shopping by bike etc. and how are local employers, schools and colleges, retailers etc. involved? Are there any measures in place to stimulate 'lifelong cycling'? Also the promotion of the image of cycling is addressed in this module. Finally, '**Complementary actions**' address activities or decisions beyond 'pure' cycling policy that can have an effect on cycle use. Two aspects are included. What is being done to curb car use and in what way is land use planning supporting cycling policy? There are different policy domains that indirectly affect cycle use and therefore it is important to focus on these domains in order to avoid counterproductive effects. The city and agglomeration questionnaire also examines the way in which the health effects of cycling are used to encourage cycle use.

Finally, the '**Evaluation & Effects**' module focuses on the actual effects of cycling policy. How does the authority measure the effects of its policy? How is the quality of the process safeguarded? With regard to the effects, how is bicycle use monitored and how are safety levels measured?

2. Methodology – BYPAD 'Levels of Development'

Each module is put on a ladder of development, which indicates the quality level of the cycling policy. On the basis of this ladder of development, the town, city or region can set objectives and it will be possible to follow the evolution of the town's, city's or region's cycling policy.

The quality of each of the nine BYPAD modules is determined separately by assigning to each of them a quality level on the four-stage ladder of development. The overall quality level of the cycling policy results from the weighted average of the quality levels of the single modules. At a glance, the ladder of development shows the strengths and weaknesses of a cycling policy. For each module, quality objectives for the future cycling policy can be defined separately and it is possible to monitor its evolution. When auditing the local cycling policy, each module is given a score based on the answers to the BYPAD-questionnaire. BYPAD distinguishes four quality levels, representing steps on a ladder of development – thus representing further progress of the local cycling policy. Quality improvement is basically step-wise climbing up the ladder of development. This means, at the same time, that a public authority cannot simply change to Total Quality Management overnight.

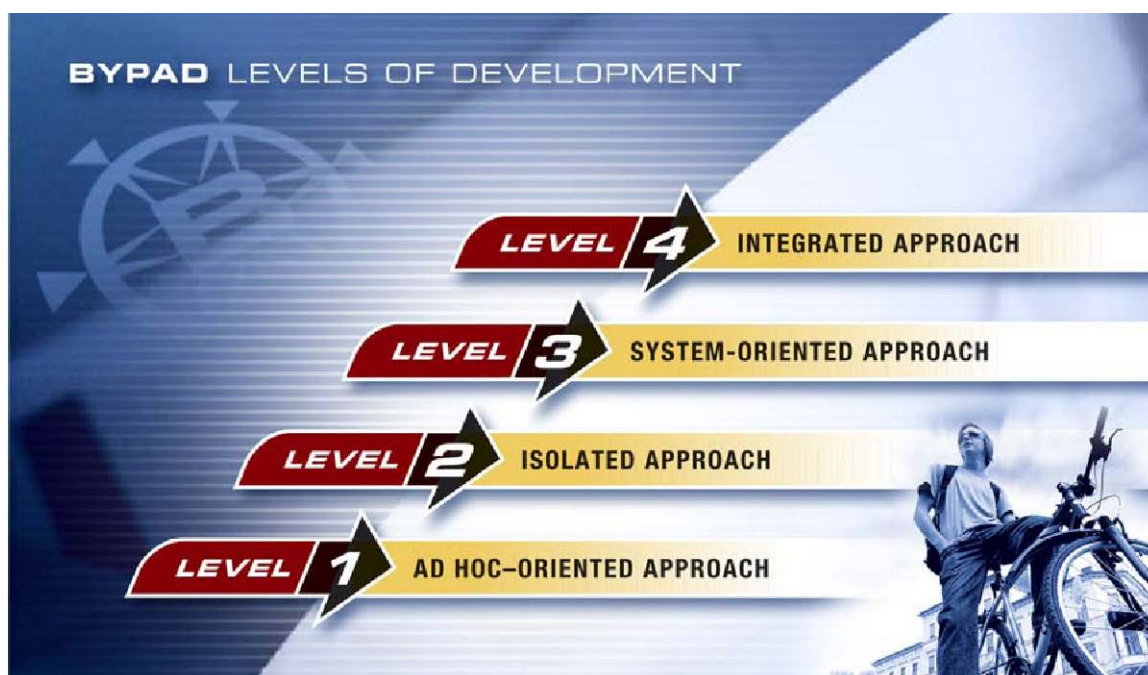


Figure 3: Levels of development in the evaluation of cycle policies

Level 1: Ad hoc-oriented approach

Fire brigade principle:

We get active if it's burning - as long as necessary, and only where necessary.

The first level of development, called the 'ad hoc-oriented' approach, indicates that cycling policy is mainly limited to problem solving. There is a minimum or low level of quality for the cycling policy, characterised by low and irregular budget allocations, little (if any) political commitment, limited communication, informal structures and agreements and rather incidental achieved quality, depending on individual efforts only. If no single characteristics of level one are achieved, then there is no quality level whatsoever.

Level 2: Isolated approach

Robinson Crusoe principle:

We do our job as a good as we can (but without reference to what others are doing).

The second level of development, the 'isolated approach', implies that there is a cycling policy, but it is neither embedded in the overall transport policy nor inter-coordinated with land use, health or environmental policy. Good infrastructure is the main concern of the policy, although some supplementary activities are undertaken.

Level 3: System-orientated

We are pulling together:

We strive to optimise the cycling system and co-operate with several partners.

On the third level, the 'system-orientated' approach, cycling policy is regarded as a system, which is integrated into the overall mobility policy. The political will to stimulate cycle use is expressed through making a political decision to create a sophisticated cycling policy and the allocation of sufficient personnel and means. Cycling policy comprises of a wide range of different measures (e.g. infrastructure, mobility management, services, campaigns, information, education and infrastructure). Various partners contribute and co-operate with each other in the implementation of the cycling policy.

Level 4: Integrated approach

Winning team:

Cycling policy is a permanent task. We are continuously improving and we co-operate with strategic partners.

On the highest level of development, the 'integrated approach', cycling policy is regarded as a continuous task with strong relationships with other policy fields (i.e. environment, health, employment, economy etc.). Measures to encourage cycle use are complemented by measures to curb car use. Quality indicators are recognised as policy instruments. Cycling policy is driven strongly by the politicians and is expressed with good leadership, regular and sufficient allocations of personnel and means and comprehensive cycling expertise within the local or regional authority. Quality indicators are recognised as policy instruments. Besides political support, systematic networking and strategic partnerships characterise the cycling policy. These help to produce synergetic effects through the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experiences with external partners - both horizontally (i.e. with other cities, public bodies, public private partnerships), and vertically (i.e. with higher authorities).

3. Methodology - the BYPAD Process

It is a characteristic of Total Quality Management that all actors are involved. Therefore, there are three parties involved in the BYPAD evaluation group (all called evaluators):

- The politicians, who are responsible for forming the local cycling policy;
- The officials, who prepare and execute the cycling policy;
- The user(group)s, representatives of the local cyclists' organisation...

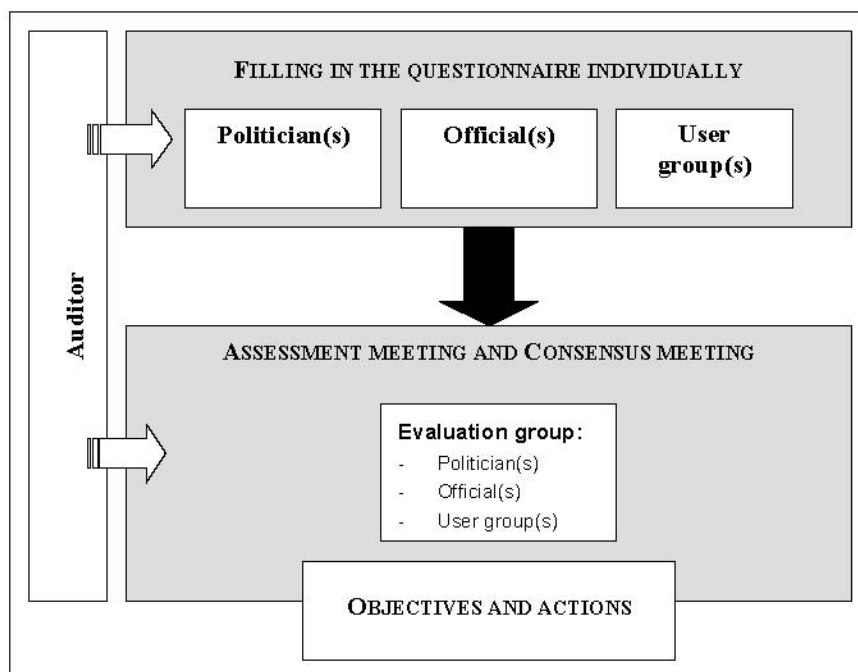


Figure 4: BYPAD process

By involving these three parties in the evaluation and improvement process, they will carry out a self-evaluation of the cycling policy by filling in a comprehensive questionnaire on all the BYPAD-modules. Each party completes this questionnaire separately. Subsequently, this evaluation group will come together for a meeting where they will be confronted with the thoughts of the other members. The aim of this consensus meeting is to discuss the results and to search for a realistic grading of the different assessments. It is also the aim of this meeting to collectively derive the next objectives and measures for the cycling policy.



Figure 5: BYPAD as a dynamic process

A certified BYPAD auditor supports the process. This external and neutral auditor is vital in the BYPAD-method. He evaluates the questionnaires, leads the debates and creates the evaluation and improvement report. Through this auditor an objective evaluation process is assured.

4. Extension of the Methodology

Since 2006 BYPAD is not limited anymore to mid-sized and large cities with more than 50.000 inhabitants, also cities and municipalities with less than 50.000 inhabitants and regions (including provinces) can ask for an audit.

The method for towns is very similar to the one of cities and agglomerations. We use the same modules, but a slightly shorter questionnaire, which is targeted to specific characteristics of smaller public entities (e.g. only one or two officials dealing with the entire mobility policy, no big intermodal nodes with tramways and metros...).

The method for regions uses the same kind of modules for planning and monitoring. Only the modules related to actions differ. Four specific 'action' modules are defined to deal with the specific tasks that intermediary public authorities in Europe might have. It's possible that your region has only tasks in some of these four modules. The '**Regional road authority**' module examines what is being done for safe, quick and comfortable cycling along regional roads and how the maintenance is organised? Second, the '**Tourist & Recreational cycling**' module focuses on tourist and recreational cycling, such as the extension and quality of the tourist-recreational bicycle route network and initiatives to facilitate the orientation of cyclists. Third, the '**Supporting local cycling policy & partnerships**' module focuses on how the region supports the local cycling policy. This support is divided into three topics: infrastructure, knowledge and local campaigns. Which support is given to realise bicycle infrastructure? Is there a structural support of the local administrations in knowledge and coordination by means of a (national) knowledge platform? What is being done in coordination/supporting of local campaigns? What support is given to encourage cycling to work, to school, shopping by bike etc? The educational part is given attention by asking for the initiatives regarding to education and cycle training. Finally, the '**Land-use & Mobility**' module deals with activities or decisions beyond 'pure' cycling policy that can have an effect on cycle use. In what way is the current land-use planning supporting the cycling policy? There are different policy domains that indirectly affect cycle use and therefore it is important to focus on these domains in order to avoid counter-productive effects.



Figure 6: BYPAD 'Spiral of Development' for regions

5. Results

Up to now more than 100 cities in 20 countries have already been convinced of the advantages of BYPAD. 34 auditors from 20 different EU countries have been trained to guide the towns, cities and regions with the implementation of BYPAD. BYPAD-auditors, cities and regions are all part of the BYPAD network where exchange of information and good practices are crucial. A pool of information and experiences of local practice that is constantly elaborated is available on the website. Feedback from auditors and cities helps to improve the BYPAD questionnaire and process.

BYPAD makes that an inventory is made of experiences, insights and knowledge concerning cycling policy in a city or region. It leads to a more comprehensive understanding of cycling policy and helps to find the essentials. In many cities the different members of the evaluation group were brought together for the first time ever, resulting in fruitful discussions. Reports are often first profound documentation ever and the process leads to a better transparency of who is doing what.

At the first glance filling in the questionnaire is sometimes perceived as a lot of work, but once worked through as very enriching and worth the effort. The supervision by an external auditor is essential: he or she takes a neutral position, has experience from other cities and audits and can give lots of inspiration and advice. By the BYPAD audits, local cycling policies usually gain momentum, needs for best practice examples are satisfied and opportunities for learning from each other are provided.

Audits should be regular part of professional project management and repeated after 4-8 years. In cities who did so, we saw an improvement in the quality level of the cycling policy, having meanwhile executed (parts of) the action plan.

BYPAD has been designed for cities and towns that want to improve their own cycling policy. It evaluates the state of the local cycling policy so far, identifies the potentials for improvement and enables monitoring the development of cycling policy. However, BYPAD should not be regarded as a tool for a 'beauty contest' between cities. It is a qualitative method and the result depends to a high degree on the assessments of the local evaluation group. Some cities are more self-critical than others and the expert's opinion of the auditor can have a correcting effect up to a point. Comparison between cities is only possible with restrictions, taking into account differences in framework, responsibilities, policy, level of development and culture.

More information?

For more information see www.bypad.org