

Title

Bicike(lj) – mestno kolo (Self-service bicycle rental system in Ljubljana)

Short description

In 2011 the City of Ljubljana launched the Bicike(LJ) bike sharing system. It is an excellent example of effectively establishing infrastructure with the goal of reducing harmful traffic emissions, improving air quality, and facilitating quick and easy mobility around the city. To achieve the idea, the city of Ljubljana and Europlakat, private outdoor advertising company, have established public-private partnership, which saw Europlakat providing initial funds for system establishing, as well as funds for regular annual maintenance of the system, while in turn being awarded specified locations for billboard placements in the city free of charge for a period of 15 years. It is envisaged that system offers residents and visitors alike a more environmentally- and people-friendly means of transport around town that replaces the usage of private cars. The construction of system was based on similar examples from other cities, like Paris, taking into consideration strengths and weakness, transferring them into local context. It offers automated, almost free of charge, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year access to bikes, which can be used as a convenient mean of transport. If the bike is rented for less than an hour, the renter will not be charged at all; if the period of rental is up to 2 hours, the system charges 1 euro and so on. Currently, there are more than 35 bike stations throughout the city and bikes can be lifted from one station and left to another one. All renters must register themselves; one-week registration costs 1 euro, while annual registration costs 3 euros. It can be used by all persons aged 14 and above, and one of the main concern with the system was the broad set of information required for registration (name, date of birth, physical address, e-mail address, phone number, credit card number) and risks of possible misuse of such information. By 2015 there were around 63000 users, of which 28500 prescribed users with annual prescription. Surveys conducted among users have shown general satisfaction with the system.

Topic

Moving – Active mobility

Characteristics (type, level)

Local/regional invention/product; public, private

Country/Countries of implementation

Slovenia

Aims and Objectives

The aim is to provide simple and practical mean of transportation by riding a bike, thus enabling environmental protection and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, while influencing locals and tourists on choice of local transport.

The objectives are:

- To reduce CO₂ emissions
- To substitute driving car with riding a bike
- To reduce time for finding parking spots
- To physically activate locals and breathe fresh air

Target Group

All inhabitants of Slovenia's capital Ljubljana, capable of riding bikes aged 14 and more, as well as tourists and visitors.

The city of Ljubljana has total of 288307 inhabitants, while Ljubljana metro area has 359648 inhabitants (status on 1.1.2016). Of these, 247419 in the city of Ljubljana and 306080 in Ljubljana metro area are over the age of 14.

Status

Implemented on a continuous basis.

Start and Completion dates

2011 – Present day

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

The system offers automated, almost free of charge, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year access to bikes, which can be used as a convenient mean of transport (to and from work, or to and from school/university), thus eliminating the need to search for a parking spot and saving money.

Effects on:

Health and Wellbeing	Riding a bike is a well-known positive physical activity recommended by health professionals, which poses multiple health benefits on human body.
Vulnerable populations	This practice enables almost free of charge mean of transport within the city, since first hour of bike rental is free of charge. The users have to be subscribed with the system and the annual subscription costs 3 € (euros), which in essence is the only cost for the users.
Environment	Increased usage of bikes as a mean of transport for reaching a working spot or school or university would mean lower usage of cars, thus lowering levels of environmental CO ₂ emissions.

Initiated and/or implemented by

City of Ljubljana as a public partner and Europlakat as a private company within a public-private partnership. It was initiated to offer new, innovative and efficient mean of transport in the city.

Stakeholders and sectors involved

- City of Ljubljana with its' city council and other municipal bodies;
- Europlakat, private outdoor advertising company.

Financial support

It is public-private partnership project; Europlakat, the private partner has invested in implementation and functioning of the system, as well as regular annual maintenance. The city of Ljubljana, as the public partner, has secured bike stations with access to electricity as well as locations for billboard placement for Europlakat purposes, which is part of the agreement between the city of Ljubljana and Europlakat.

Evidence-base

According to studies, self-service rental bike systems, such as Bicike(lj), promote the usage of bikes in general (not only bikes available within the system, but also usage of personal bikes).

Main activities

Set up (procurement of bikes, building of automated bike stations throughout the city, developing of web site for registration and rental reservation) and management of self-service bike rental system. Upon initiation of the system, it was supported with promotional campaign, thus encouraging inhabitants and visitors of Ljubljana to use bikes.

Evaluation

Data analysis of bike usage and population surveys.

Comparisons with similar systems in other countries point out that Bicike(lj) is among more successful systems, as far as frequency of bike rentals is concerned.

Main results

There were more than 13000 users in the first month, by 2015 there were around 63000 users, of which 28500 prescribed users with annual prescription. The highest number of daily rentals is 3227, equaling 11 rides per bike per day. Estimated reduction of CO₂ emission per years is around 500 tons, which would equal 7150 tons reduction for a city with 4 million inhabitants.

Key success factors and barriers

Success factors:

Positive experience from other countries/cities; adequately developed partnership between the public actor (the City of Ljubljana) and private company (Europlakat); solid accessibility of the system to all interested parties; adequate locations of bike stations throughout the city; low usage fees.

Barriers:

Broad set of sensitive personal information required for registering within the system and concerns for misuse of that information; rental not possible for children under the age of 14; no bike seats for children.

INHERIT Perspective

This project has been chosen for inclusion because, at least in theory, it may produce benefits in physical and possibly mental health in individuals through increasing physical activity and by providing less polluted living environment. The intervention itself produces changes to the environmental state, thus influencing individual and communal exposure through increased physical access of bikes at virtual no cost. It has clear emphasis on changing behavior.

More information

www.bicikelj.si

Contact

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