

## Title

**MUBI Bike Buddy**

## Short description

Bike Buddy is a bicycle use mentoring project developed by MUBi - Association for Urban Mobility by Bicycle - which consists of advising and accompanying new bicycle users on their first trips in an urban context. Support is provided by bike buddies - members of MUBi - who accompany new users on their first cycling experiences around the city, sharing their experience, and advising new bicycle users on routes, equipment, safety, legislation, shortcuts and tricks that make it easier to travel around the city by bicycle. These temporary tutors accompany the inexperienced user for two weeks (two / three times a week) on home-work-home journeys, in order to familiarize the new user with the bicycle as a means of transportation in an urban context.

The request for accompaniment and/or counseling is done through an online form; the person in need of assistance gives a brief description of the type of assistance he or she needs. In the case of a request for advice, members provide options for journeys, sometimes each member knows only part of the journey, and at the end the information is processed and from there a final route is generated; in the case of accompaniment requests, the person indicates the point of departure and the point of arrival, based on that data a bike buddy is selected. Soon this practice will be part of the Bike Angel project platform, and requests can be made through this way.

By providing beginners with the monitoring and safety of more experienced bicycle users, this practice works as a facilitator of behavior change. The adherence to this practice is reflected in its national scope, with members in Coimbra, Braga and Aveiro. However, the majority of the members are concentrated in Lisbon and Porto.

## Topic

Moving – Active mobility.

## Characteristics (type, level)

National Intervention.

## Country/Countries of implementation

Portugal.

## Aims and Objectives

Promote sustainable mobility; establish cooperative relations between various bicycle users; facilitate the definition of appropriate routes; and empower new users who feel less secure on cycling paths.

## Target Group

All individuals who use or want to use the bicycle as a means of transportation.

## Status

Implemented on a continuous basis.

## Start and Completion dates

Since 2009.

### Lifestyle and Behavior Change

This practice encourages individuals to adopt a more balanced lifestyle, in which contact with the environment and the practice of physical exercise are integral parts. Decisions about transportation options begins to contemplate more sustainable options previously ignored. In addition, it promotes cooperative behavior between users.

### Effects on:

<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	The use of the bicycle as a means of movement implies a greater contact with the environment and the practice of physical exercise, which has an impact on physical health and mental health (well-being).
<b>Vulnerable populations</b>	First, it is a means of transportation that can be used by people from different social strata, thus fighting social inequality. Secondly, the use of the bicycle makes the movement of the most economically vulnerable people viable and allows substantial savings.
<b>Environment</b>	Compared to cars, the production of a bicycle in terms of carbon emissions is compensated after only 100km of use. Moreover, the bicycle drastically reduces the environmental impact of user's displacements over any other means of transport.

### Initiated and/or implemented by

The practice was initiated by a group of people who felt that the existing responses for cycling users did not address several essential needs. For this purpose, they have based on the Bike Angel practice conducted in Brazil and created MUBi.

### Stakeholders and sectors involved

MUBi is a civic association made up of volunteer cyclists. The practice connects bike users and new bike users of several municipalities in Portugal. There are 109 registered bike buddies. So far, they had 250 requests (40% for in person help and 60% online route help).

### Financial support

This practice has never been funded by any formal program.

### Evidence-base

This practice is based on Bike Anjo, a Brazilian project. Is based indirectly on the empirical evidence underlying that project and by the empirical evidence on the environmental and health benefits of active transportation (e.g. INHERIT Common Analytical Framework).

### Main activities

The main activity is the creation of an internet forum where users can make requests for advice and/or accompaniment and the construction of a cooperation network composed of users.

### Evaluation

The evaluation of the practice is done informally through messages with comments and thanks from some of the users assisted.

### Main results

MUPI Bike buddy generates responses to requests for advice and accompaniment in various areas (users are scattered throughout the country).

### Key success factors and barriers

The main success factors are the commitment and goodwill of the members of the MuBi network. In opposition, lack of funding, the existence of areas that are not prepared for the circulation of bicycles, and the car use convenience compared to the bicycle are considered the main challenging factors for MUBi Bike Buddy.

### INHERIT Perspective

This project has been chosen for inclusion because of its theoretical contribution for increasing active mobility. Ensures training and personal advice for easing the transition to a more balanced lifestyle, by promoting cycling. The use of the bicycle as a means of movement implies a greater contact with the environment and the practice of physical exercise, which has an impact on physical health and mental health. Cycling is a means of transport accessible to people from different social strata, allowing also the reduction of transportation expenses. Moreover, the bicycle drastically reduces the environmental impact of user's displacements.

### More information

[MUBi Bike Budy Webpage](#)

### Contact

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