

# **BYPAD: a benchmarking instrument for local cycling policy?**

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## **1. What is the BYPAD-project?**

BYPAD stands for BiCycle Policy AuDit and is a European research project from the SAVE II program from the Directorate General TREN (Transport and Energy). The BYPAD project runs from September 1999 till April 2001 and is carried out by Langzaam Verkeer (Belgium) the project-coordinator, the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and the Austrian Mobility Research (AMOR).

## **2. Aim of the BYPAD-project?**

BYPAD's aim is to develop a bicycle policy audit instrument that enables cities to evaluate the quality of their present bicycle policy and that advises the cities in which fields they have to improve their future cycling policy.

BYPAD enables the EU Commission to take new actions to promote the bicycle within the framework of sustainable transport. Improving the local cycling policies will have a more profound, long term effect on bicycle use and that way there will be saved energy.

## **3. What is benchmarking?**

The European Commission addresses benchmarking as a tool to improve performance by identifying best performance and best practices and by analyzing the reasons for performance differences. Benchmarking is a dynamic process of continuous improvement of performance by learning from each others. Benchmarks are currently used to compare the performance of a company with a reference standard of excellence for certain parameters. As benchmarking is a tool in the business world, it can also be used as a tool for policy makers for evaluating the efficiency of public policies, comparing factors like costs, innovation, modal split...(ECMC, 1999).

However, there are some problems with benchmarking local cycling policies on European scale. It is very difficult to compare the quality of the cycling policy in different countries and cities:

- There are geographical differences: it is more comfortable to cycle in a flat country than in a hilly region.
- Spatial differences: there are compact and dispersed, big and small cities...
- Climat differences.
- Each country has his own political structures and cultural backgrounds: in countries with a national cycling policy other approaches of local cycling policy are possible than were there are only local strategies.

An other problem is the lack of comparable quantitative data. There are a lot of differences between the methods of collecting data between countries and cities. That way we are comparing apples with oranges.

But there is more: the competitive character of a lot of benchmarking projects shifts up the main goal of quality improvement to quality showing. Therefore it is important that cities who are participating benchmarking projects really want to improve their policy and not only want to show how good they are.

It is also a fact that most of the existing benchmarking systems only focus on the results of a policy: the length of cycle routes, the modal split, the number of accidents...

In BYPAD we focus on the fact that screening the local cycling policy is more than screening results. It is also important to find out how the bicycle policy is achieved. This supposes a broader approach.

#### **4. BYPAD: Total quality management in local cycling policy.**

The BYPAD project is inspired on the experiences of total quality management systems in the business world. Companies want to achieve quality improvement of their products and services by screening the whole (production) process and by involving all the partners (employees, customers). There are different quality management models like for instance the ISO 9000: this is an international standard which has the character of a static control system (norms has to be full-filled) and certification is the main goal. An other interesting model is the EFQM-model. The European Foundation for Quality Management created a more dynamic standard



which is focused on the total development process and where self-evaluation is the main goal. This model is already used since 1988 in European companies.

In BYPAD the existing knowledge on bicycle measures (both infrastructural and non-infrastructural) is combined with concepts from the auditing field. The bicycle policy will be screened through an adapted EFQM-model.

#### **5. The BYPAD philosophy**

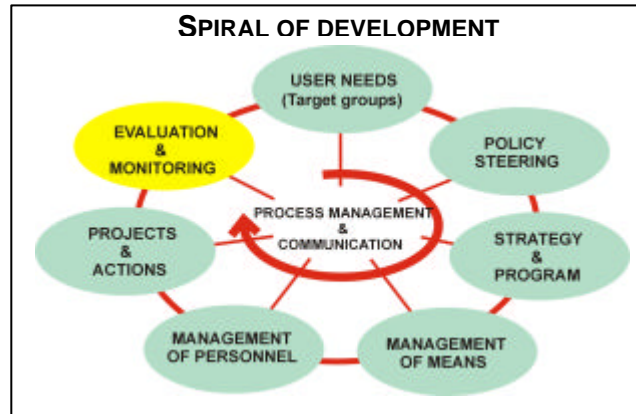
##### **5.1 Spiral of development:**

In BYPAD the cycling policy is seen as a dynamic process which consists of seven modules that influence each other. All the modules together form the whole cycling policy process where not only results but also the organization of the cycling policy is screened.

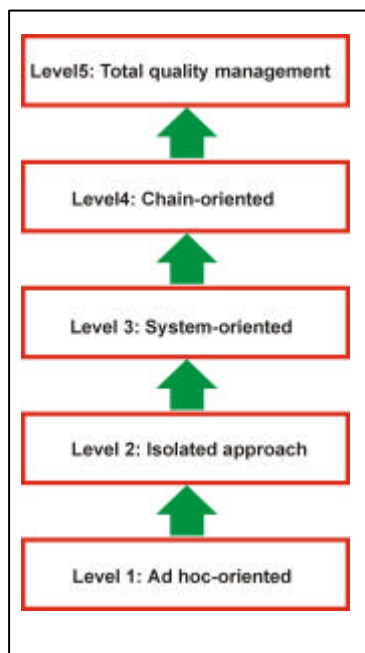
The total cycling policy is approached as a spiral of development with the following modules:

1. User needs: How does the city involve the user groups in the cycling policy?

2. Policy steering: Who is responsible and what is the power of these responsables in local cycling policy?
3. Strategy & Program: Is there a long term vision on cycling policy?
4. Management of means: which (financial) means are available for cycling policy?
5. Management of personnel: amount of personnel, qualifications for cycling policy
6. Projects & Actions: which cycle actions and measures are taken on the field?
7. Evaluation & Monitoring: How are the results of the cycling policy monitored?



## 5.2 Ladder of development



In BYPAD each module will be positioned on a ladder of development. This ladder works as a barometer of the quality of the cycling policy. This way the city sees where the cycling policy stands on the ladder of development for each module and what actions the city has to take to get on a higher level.

So in the first place BYPAD is a self-evaluation instrument and no extern control system. In the second place this ladder of development can be used as a benchmarking tool for comparing different cities with each other and to give cities the opportunity to learn from other cities.

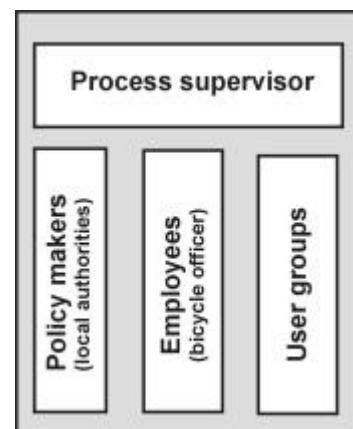
## 5.3 Composition of the evaluation group

In BYPAD for each module there is made a question list with possible situations for each level of development (40 questions in total). In a total quality management process is it of absolute importance that all actors are involved. BYPAD involves the following actors:

- Policy makers: Bench of aldermen, city council
- Employees:

*Staff personnel:* Chief of police, chief of the mobility department, chief of the department urban planning, chief of the department environment...

*Fellow workers:* bicycle officer, public servants of mobility, urban planning, environment,



communication...

- User groups: Advisory bodies, bicycle groups, individual users...

All the questions are discussed in the evaluation group which is supervised by an external process supervisor. This process supervisor also makes a report of the audit process with recommendations towards the city's cycling policy.

By confronting the different ideas of these three different groups there is a lot of discussion but nevertheless it is a very constructive way of working where a lot of new ideas come above.

## 6. Seven European cities in the BYPAD-project



The development of the audit instrument will be done by doing two test-audits in Gent (Belgium) and Graz (Austria) and five audits in Troisdorf (Germany), Birmingham (UK), Zwolle (the Netherlands), Ferrara (Italy) and Grenoble (France). All these cities differ a lot from each other in size, bicycle approach, bicycle use, political structure... The experience we will have in these cities will form the basis for the BYPAD instrument.

The test-audits in Gent en Graz have been done, and the audits in Troisdorf and Birmingham are executed but not reported yet. In autumn of 2000 Ferrara, Zwolle and Grenoble will be screened.

## 7. First impressions of the BYPAD-project

- Focus on both the organizational part as the result part
- First place: self-evaluation
- Second place: benchmarking
- The audit as monitoring instrument (each two years ?)
- Confrontations in evaluation group are very constructive.

In the future the BYPAD-instrument will be an excellent instrument for cities that want to improve their local cycling policy. BYPAD's aim is to become a standard in quality management for local cycling policy.

For more information you can always contact us or surf to the web-side:

<http://www.bypad.org>

## References

- ECMC (1999): *Conference on transport benchmarking: methodologies, applications and data needs*. Paris.
- EFQM (1999): *The EFQM Excellence Model 1999, Public and Voluntary Sector*. Brussels.
- BYPAD (1999): *Phase 1: Development of the BicYcle Policy AuDit*. Langzaam Verkeer, Leuven.

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