

The use of bicycles in the two newly-designed cities.

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In the Netherlands, increasing the use of bicycles is one of the remedies against huge traffic congestion on auto-ways and in residential areas.

In the vicinity of Utrecht, a city 30 kilometers south of Amsterdam, there are two locations where encouraging increased usage of bikes is of paramount importance.

In **Houten** cycling is the most important means of transport. Containing 32,000 inhabitants, living in 16 neighbourhoods, the city is designed primarily for bicycle travel. To travel by car from one neighbourhood to another requires an indirect route utilising a ring road that surrounds the city. The co-use of the bicycle and public transportation is above the national average due to an important railway that intersects the city. Half of the shopping is done on bikes. Only 6% of the children are taken to school by car (national average 45%). The average number of traffic casualties per year is 1.1 per thousand (3.5 nationally).

Leidsche Rijn is the country's largest new city project for almost 100,000 inhabitants. It has a bicycle network that consists of a gridwork of main routes with connecting lines to residential areas. Combined use of public transportation and bikes is encouraged.

Leidsche Rijn will grow to become part of the densely built city of Utrecht with a wide range of municipal functions. The scale is incomparable to Houten's and it requires a totally different traffic structure. And although high priority is given to bike-usage, strict limitation on the accessibility of cars is out of reach.

Despite the big differences, it is helpful to look at similarities that might lead to similar solutions.

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