



ARTICLE FROM THE BOOK:

Cyclists & Cycling Around the World – Creating Liveable and Bikeable Cities

Edited by Juan Carlos Dextre, Mike Hughes & Lotte Bech

Published by Fondo Editorial, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2013

ISBN: 978-612-4146-55-8

4. Safety for Cyclists

This chapter contains two articles dealing with different aspects of traffic safety. The first article covers analyses of traffic safety for cyclists and contains concrete recommendations for the prevention of accidents through better traffic behavior combined with physical changes to the infrastructure. The second article deals with traffic safety at school, describing the Safe Routes to School projects. It contains concrete recommendations for the development of similar projects as part of a sustainable urban mobility policy.

In her article **Traffic safety and perceived safety**, Anne Eriksson illustrates how to cycle and survive. The main topic is how to promote traffic safety for cyclists covering both driver/cyclist behaviour and the cycle/vehicle itself as well as the road infrastructure. Anne starts with her daily work with traffic safety in the City of Copenhagen, where the main political goal is to increase the share of cyclists while at the same time reducing the number of cyclists injured. She makes the important and fascinating distinction between safety and perceived safety, pointing out that some intersections that are perceived as dangerous are the most secure intersections according to statistics, which shows that safety and perceived safety are not always aligned. The cyclist's behavior is important for safety and this is taught to children and young people. It is equally important with car driver training to assess the risk related to cars and cyclists. In her article, she uses statistics to examine the causes of accidents involving cyclists. High speed is the main cause of accidents resulting in serious injury or death. She also highlights accidents with heavy vehicles. Anne also describes typical accidents involving cyclists which occur at intersections, illustrating some of the measures taken to improve traffic safety in Copenhagen for example, separate traffic signals with pre-green for cyclists and withdrawn stop line for cars. Her main advice is to put safety first if you want to improve conditions for cyclists.

In their article **Safe routes to schools**, Pau Avellaneda and Esther Anaya describe the development in the concept of safe routes to school from road safety to community building. They trace the historical development of the projects from road safety initiatives focusing mainly on encouraging active travel to school, up to the present day, when they see it being a part of a global policy covering the recovery of urban space,

traffic calming and promotion of walking and cycling. The projects have many other valuable benefits such as education and engagement of school children and their families in the participative process and also community building. Although there is focus on Barcelona and Spain in general, the article also moves outside these areas, citing examples from UK and Italy amongst others. The authors describe the different stages in the development of a Safe Routes to School project. Although each case will be different, the Action Plan they outline, contains broad categories of action which will be applicable everywhere, such as: "Public space interventions," "Educational and formative actions," "Communication actions," and "Accompanying actions." They see the possibility of using Safe Routes to School as a starting point to reexamine many aspects of mobility, urban space etc, or of integrating it as an important part of a global, sustainable, urban mobility policy.