

Guideline **CARGO BIKES**

Version: November 2015



Transportation of goods and services is one of the main reasons for traffic in urban areas. In recent years, people and companies have been shifting some of these transportation tasks to cargo bikes, thus reducing the need for motorised transport. Designed to meet special load requirements, they can serve several functions. And of course, they are extremely cost effective.

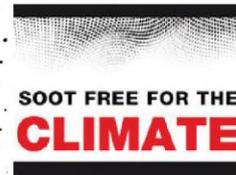
Transportation needs in cities or industrial areas could be met by bicycles at lower cost, often faster, and without a doubt substantially more sustainably than with cars and transport vehicles. And because of these advantages cargo bikes have recently been getting a lot of attention where urban delivery is required, triggered also by the growing transportation demand from e-commerce.

They have already outgrown initial pilot projects and test applications in the last couple of years. Today the use of specialised cargo bikes is

widespread in several cities. Even companies like DHL, BASF and others are investing in them. This does not come as a surprise, given that last-mile delivery costs contribute up to 70% of the total transportation bill. Cargo bikes have a great cost-saving potential, especially for precise delivery in cities.

Potential Applications

Cargo bicycles can be designed for a great variety of uses, ranging from transporting special load requirements, to functioning in challenging



terrains and even serving as mobile food stores. They can potentially transport up to several hundred kilograms. Electrical support engines in Pedelec or electric cargo bicycles can further increase speed, cargo loads and range. They can be used for sales purposes, advertising, tourism, food, trade or gardening. There has been a wealth of projects investigating their potential applications.

Municipal use of Cargo Bikes

Companies are really busy searching for innovative applications for cargo bikes, given the advantages mentioned above. Municipalities can benefit from these, too. Cities should consider cargo bikes for a number of applications.

promoting the use of cargo bikes as a substitute for motorised transport

using cargo bikes for municipal duties.

Municipal Duties

Possible applications for municipalities include administrative transportation duties such as transferring documents between departments. Cargo bikes can also prove very effective for maintenance duties, for example in parks, green spaces or for waste collection. Cities have several options:

1. Outsource selected duties to local cargo bike companies.
 - a. Why not investigate social cargo bike enterprises that combine logistics services with socially beneficial services.

Bremen

The German city of Bremen started a test programme for companies. Interested firms were able to rent a Pedelec or an e-cargo bike at no charge for a period of between 10 days and 4 weeks. The city tried different bicycle types. The goal was not only to persuade commuting employees to use bikes but also to showcase the bicycles suitability for general transport tasks. In 2013, the city acquired 34 pedelecs and four e-cargo bikes for the campaign and the total investment was 100 000 euros.

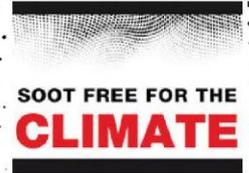
2. Promote the use of cargo bikes in municipal services (municipal role-model function).
3. Invest in a municipal fleet of cargo bikes.

When cities investigate potential applications of cargo bikes, they should always consult competent external experts.

Including cargo bikes in new city fleet purchases might already suffice, but creating a preferred status for cargo bikes in municipal contracts for service companies would give much greater momentum.

Graz

The City of Graz grants subsidies for cargo bike investments worth 50% of the investment costs up to 1000€. Eligible organisations include companies, schools, universities, building and property management companies and some others. The city lists eligible purposes, and limits the number of grants to one bike per institution or company. The paperwork is not too extensive. Since 2011, the programme has supported 34 cargo bikes. The subsidies were planned until the end of 2015.



What can cities do to promote this?

Municipalities could:

- Offer free test programmes for companies.
- Provide subsidies for cargo bike investments.
- Create of parking spaces specifically for cargo bikes.
- Intensively enforce parking violations of transport vehicles (LGVs, HGVs).
- Ban motorised transport locally in combination with specific permissions for cargo bikes.
- Support city-logistics concepts for cargo bikes.
- Support marketing programmes for the use of cargo bikes.

Success factors

- Lower investment costs than motorised transport.
- Lower maintenance costs than motorised transport.
- Zero congestion or parking costs.
- Higher reliability in urban conditions.
- No legal licence requirements for drivers.
- The positive health and environmental impact of cargo bikes schemes makes them a positive part of air quality action plans.

- General promotion of cycling: Where conditions are not conducive to cycling, it is very difficult to promote cargo bikes.



Foto: © Sebastian Hoff

Obstacles

- Small municipalities might not have the necessary resources to implement and run a cargo bike scheme.
- Personnel costs could be greater than capital costs, as potentially more staff are needed for transport by bike than for transport by car.
- Potential insurance and security issues.
- EU harmonisation potentially necessary for varying national legal frameworks (i.e. safety and certification).

Copenhagen

Copenhagen uses bikes for street cleaning, leaf and garbage removal and for park maintenance. The city administration has 20 bikes and smaller municipalities like Frederiksberg own additional ones. The city's street cleaning department is responsible for the maintenance of the bikes.

Final Words

We see a potential for the widespread use of cargo bikes, as they have a long list of advantages. Where cycling conditions are not good, cargo bikes cannot realise their full potential. That is why we advocate the promotion of cycling in general. Crucial to this are consistent management of cycling infrastructure, setting fines for parking violations on cycling infrastructure and enforcing them.



Additional information:

European Cycle Logistics Federation (ECLF) – <http://federation.cyclelogistics.eu/>

CONTACT

Municipalities interested please contact us for further information:



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ABOUT US

Clean Air is a project by nine European environmental organisations that fight for clean air in European cities. Despite the existing legislative framework and the citizens’ right to clean air, continuing violations of air pollution limits remain a problem in many cities. Air pollution threatens health, environment and climate. It’s time to take action!

www.cleanair-europe.org

Started in 2009, the associated campaign “Sootfree for the Climate” aims to reduce diesel soot emissions, which accelerate climate change and pose a threat to public health. To this day twelve European NGOs have joined the campaign.

www.sootfreeclimate.org

a project by



project coordination

co-financed by the EU's LIFE financial instrument



associated campaign

