

BiciBús in Barcelona through a justice lens.

Ecological Economics and Industrial Ecology.

Children have been called indicator species of city health. The presence of children in public spaces and their wellbeing seems to signal healthy urban spaces and good practices in urban design, planning and democratic governance. And what is good for children will ultimately improve the wellbeing for all. Yet, ensuring child health and safety in cities remains an aspiration rather than a reality. Each year, thousands of children are injured on city streets, with motor transportation the first cause of death in people aged 5-29.

In this context is where the BiciBús movement is born. A BiciBús consists of a group of cycling people who have a marked itinerary with a departure and arrival time, and with stops along the route where people can join or leave. Riding in group gives the group security when the city is not ready for children cycle by themselves. It's a way to claim child-friendly cities, and to start school actively and socializing with other colleagues.

This initiative has been around for some time in various parts of the world. However, in 2020 it began to be organized in Vic (Catalonia), under the name Bus Bici, and soon spread throughout the rest of Catalonia. It continued to grow and, when it arrived in Barcelona, the name BiciBús was coined, and the initiative went viral around the world. Now we can find more than 60 routes of BiciBús in Catalonia, and more than a 100 around the world.

For this thesis we propose to look at the BiciBuses of Barcelona. Which are the neighbourhoods with more BiciBús lines? Why are there parts of the city without any line? Is there a barrier for low-income, migrant, or racialized families to have access to a BiciBús? Why has this initiative been so successful in Barcelona? With all these questions we would like to have a deep understanding of the social, political and physical cycling context of Barcelona, and we will try to find how it could become a more cycling child-friendly city.

The person that carries this project would need knowledge on qualitative or mixed methods. They should be enthusiastic about cycling and ecological urbanism, and they should be open to contact and chat with BiciBús organizers, Parents-Teachers Associations, and City technicians and politicians. Ideally, they should speak Catalan, at least they should be fluent in Spanish.

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