Cycling activism and citizen collaboration throug the BiciZen app

Ecological Economics and Industrial Ecology.

Urban cyclists have a deep knowledge of cycling in their city. Using a bicycle in a low cycling city requires deep knowledge on many things: the cycling infrastructure that is more comfortable, places to park, how to lock it so it does not get stolen, and a ton of other things. This knowledge, however, is only shared withing the close environment of the cyclist, but what about we would be able to share it to the wider cycling community? We would be able to report poor infrastructure, to understand how good infrastructure looks like, to learn parking patterns, or to report cycling harassment.

BiciZen is a platform would allow cyclists to share geo-located commentary, experiences, photos, and data about cycling infrastructure, with particular attention to cycle path infrastructure, maintenance, bike parking and theft. With this app we aim to learn about urban mobility, public engagement and cycling through a citizen science platform that empowers urban cyclists with relevant travel information and support cities in their transition to a low-carbon mobility future.

We are doing a pilot in the four cities that participate in this project: Aveiro (Portugal), Barcelona (Catalonia), Tampere (Finland) and Enschede (Netherlands). However, the platform will be global in scope and available in multiple languages, allowing for the circulation of results across Europe cycling networks, associations and related stakeholders.

We will carry out different campaigns to collect data through the app. The campaigns will focus on a specific topic that is of interest to the cycling community such as bike parking, bike theft, obstruction of the cycling path, bike harassment and sexual harassment, or conflicts between users. We will need to make sure to capture the voice of all the cycling community, that is, all income backgrounds, ethnicities, gender and capabilities, to ensure that we are not leaving any cycling experience behind. For this, the student that conducts this project will need to engage with the people that cycle in Barcelona in a critical and creative way.

Once the campaigns are over and the data collected, we will need to analyse it. For this, the student will need to be familiar with quantitative research methods, with special attention to statistical and geographical tools.

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