

## Comparative Bicycle Theft Study between European regions

Ecological Economics and Industrial Ecology specialization

Cycling researchers have suggested that bike theft may be the product of poor urban design, inadequate lighting or poor placement of public on-street bike parking. In response, some cities have provided improved and protected bike parking structures, many of which often occupy considerable public space, and urban designers often criticize for being an eye-sore in the public realm. The private sector has even entered the bike parking market, with companies such as VadeBike ([www.vadebike.es](http://www.vadebike.es)) developing specialized, secure, pay-for parking services. Another proposed solution has been bike registries, that allow bikes to be traced once stolen. The stickers that notify potential bike thieves that the bike has been registered aim to be a deterrent to theft.

At the City Lab Barcelona, a research group at the ICTA-UAB, we are concerned about the effects of bicycle theft as a detriment to urban cycling. Our climate emergency has elevated the significance of bike theft, from what used to be an annoyance, to a key policy challenge that limits sustainable mobility. Last academic year we published a report analyzing the bicycle thefts that took place in the city of Barcelona during the 2021 using data provided by the local police. Since February we have been working in a European scale project collaborating with universities from Netherlands, Ireland, Finland and Portugal that addresses urban cycling through citizen science. Now we have an app where cyclists can report cases of theft, harassment, and other negative situations where you can find yourself daily as an urban cyclist. Our partners from Dublin are also working on processing millions of tweets related to urban cycling in the regions that are being studied.

With the objective of furthering the research on this topic, we identify two possible directions:

First, would be to collect and analyze data from the four different locations (Barcelona, Aveiro, Tampere and Twente) and perform a comparative study using a methodology similar to the one used at the Barcelona theft report of 2021.

Second, would be to compare the different data sources available (Authorities, platforms such as Bikemaps.org, insurance companies, data processed from Twitter and the data collected through BiciZen, our platform) and determine its strengths, weaknesses and uses.

The work from this study would be the foundation for the Bike Theft Barcelona 2022 report.

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