



FACT SHEET S-02 – TARGETING PUBLIC RELATIONS

Introduction

Identification of target groups is a precondition for successful campaigning. Cycling is feasible for almost everybody, which includes young and old, male and female and persons from different social groups. In addition, soft measures should not only target citizens but also planners, politicians and stakeholders of cycling promotion. There will be no single message that appeal to this wide range of target groups. Therefore targeting public relations is crucial. Against the background of constant addressing of people through marketing campaigns, targeted campaigning is promising in order to increase recognisability of cycling campaigns.

Target groups

Traditionally, potential cyclists have been the only target group for cycling promotion. However, in the course of Central MeetBike, partners found that there are more groups with specific needs for information, which should be provided by different means of public relation (see CMB fact sheet S-03). The main target groups can be classified as follows:

Politicians and decision makers: They will be responsible for final decisions on cycling measures and can demand for more sustainable transport planning in general. Therefore they should be aware about the state of the art in cycling planning and about general benefits of cycling.

Transport and urban planners: As

representatives of the city they will have to prepare concrete measures. They should therefore know about the newest design principles in mobility planning.

Stakeholders: They represent various associations and citizen groups that might be affected by cycling measures. Thus they should be informed about municipal strategies and standards in cycling planning.

Citizens: The group of citizens is inhomogeneous with respect to habits, perception and barriers to cycling. Therefore further segmentation considering the following criteria is recommended:

Age, demography, phase of life: In order to promote life-long cycling, persons in all phases of life should be addressed specifically. Research has shown that there are specific times in a person's life, where he/she rethinks

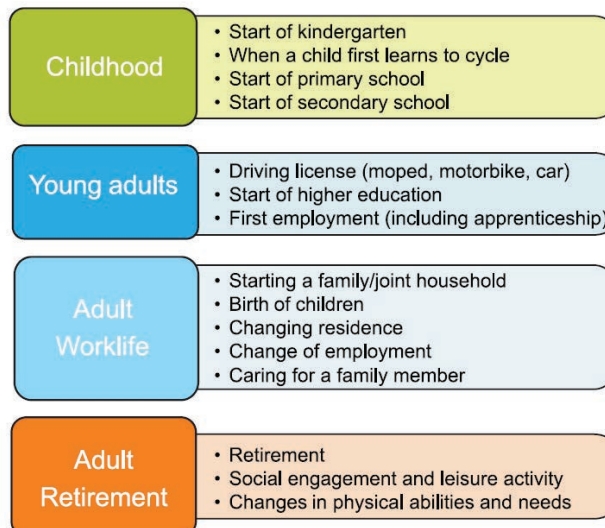
their daily mobility habits. These changes should be used to inform about the benefits of cycling (see figure 1).

Cycling habits: different cycling habits (frequency, purpose of cycle trips) result in varying needs to public relations. Regular cyclists may already be aware of the benefits of cycling, but they need to be continuously rewarded and reassured. In contrast, potential cyclists might be motivated for cycling, if they receive more information on the benefits of cycling and about possibilities of cycling in the city.

Location of place of residence: This mainly determines mobility options. Therefore it might be promising to develop campaigns to e.g. make persons aware that they are living closely to a newly constructed cycling main route that might bring them to their place of work.

Mobility styles: Transport mode choice is not only based on "hard" reasons alone, but also on emotions and symbolism. Research identified three mobility styles that bear high potential for everyday cycling: fun- and performance oriented, nature- and health oriented and avid culture oriented (Deffner et al (2012), p.195).

Figure 1: Opportunities during a life when new routines are formed and thus changes in mobility behaviour are easier (source: Deffner et al (2012), p.194)



More sustainable transport in Central European cities through improved integrated bicycle promotion and international networking

It is recommended to focus on target groups that promise the greatest potential of changing their mobility behaviour. As shown above, each group requires different information. It is recommended to address different groups with different means of public relations (see CMB fact sheet S-03 Means of public relation).

Information in public relation

The information of the campaign should be chosen with respect to the target group addressed. In the course of Central MeetBike the partners found a variety of information that should be spread with the different means (see CMB fact sheet S-03) of soft measures:

- General benefits of cycling
- Road safety - how to improve it
- Information on the city's cycling strategy and on particular projects
- Aid for decision making
- Aid for planners and experts: design standards, legislation
- How to use infrastructure

Due to the currently relatively low share of bicycle traffic in many cities in Central European countries, basic information about the benefits and advantages of cycling and cycling policies for experts, decision makers and citizens should play a major role in the strategy for public relations. It is a major challenge to raise the awareness and acceptance of cycling and to change the minds and attitudes towards cycling in the named countries. The major benefits of cycling that should be communicated can be outlined as follows :

Cycling is flexible and time saving:

Since bicycles are much cheaper than cars, many persons have bicycle easily available. Usually bicycles can be parked much closer to origin and destination than cars. German research found that for trips less than 6 km, the bicycle is the fastest mode of transport considering the whole trip from door to door. Cyclists have more opportunities deciding for a route, since they can use almost every road and many shortcuts.

Cycling contributes to personal

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| School children | Cycling is fun, makes you feel free and independent. You are part of traffic. |
| Adults | Cycling is fun, makes you fit and healthy. |
| Commuters | Cycling saves time and money and keeps you fit. |
| Leisure cyclists | Cycling is a relaxing way to see the local area. |
| Novice cyclists | Cycling is quick, easy and flexible. |
| Females | Cycling is chic, fun and shapes your body. |
| Immigrants | Cycling means freedom of movement and independence. It is quick and easy. |
| Elderly | Cycling is relaxing and good for health. |
| Car drivers | Cycling is fast and convenient and saves money. |

health: Physical inactivity is one of the most important health risks. Cycling as an active transport mode helps to reduce inactivity, which contributes to personal health and savings in national health care systems. Employees cycling to work are less ill, due to improved fitness and immune system.

Cycling can help cities to overcome congestion problems: Congestion is caused by too many cars on the road at the same time. Shifting some the trips done by car to cycling trips will reduce the number of cars on the road.

Cycling can improve quality of living in the cities: Fewer cars on the road provide cities with the option to reduce

capacity for cars in the road network in favour of cycling facilities or urban meeting areas for citizens. This inherently contributes to life quality in urban areas.

Cycling is cost-efficient for households and municipalities: Due to rising prices for fuel and energy, households increasingly have to rethink their mobility habits and have to find alternatives for car use. Replacing car trips with bicycle trip contributes to savings in fuel, parking fees and maintenance of the car. Cycling is also cost ef-

Figure 2: Examples for messages for particular target groups (source: Urbanczyk et al (2010), p.17)

fective for municipalities: cycling infrastructure usually is cheaper regarding construction and maintenance costs.

Cycling is a green technology contributing to environmental protection: Cycling is a zero-emission mode and can thus help cities in meeting EU standards regarding emissions of e.g. CO, CO₂, NO_x and fine particulates, which directly contribute to the health of citizens. Research from Germany has shown that especially promoting longer cycle trips or promotion of alternatives to car possession (where cycling is one element) are especially promising regarding environmental protection (Ahrens et al (2013)).

Lessons learned: Information on cycling should be prepared for different target groups, since each requires different information and should be addressed by different means. According to Central MeetBike experiences, most important target groups are decision makers, planners, stakeholders and citizens. However, the group of citizens is very inhomogenous, which requires further segmentation. The fact sheet indicates some parameters for that. Generally public relation should provide information e.g. on general benefits of cycling, road safety, the local cycling policy and how to use particular infrastructure.

For further resources, links and best practice examples visit the Sustainable Urban Transport Project website: <http://www.sutp.org/>

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Sources / Further literature:

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