GUIDELINES FOR CITY TWINNING

Produced for the SAVE II cycling project:

In Tandem

(Promotion of energy-efficient personal transport in a network of European cities)
ABSTRACT

The WHO Centre for Urban Health launched the In Tandem project (Promotion of Energy-efficient Personal Transport in a Network of European Cities), in cooperation with eight European cities. The overall aim of this project is to promote cycling in cities. It is partially funded by the Commission of the European Union DG TREN, Energy and Transport, under its SAVE programme to promote energy efficiency. During Phase II of the project, twinning exchanges between the partner cities were arranged. The aim of these exchanges was to develop or further develop cycling policy through exchange of information and technology transfer. This document makes recommendations for the twinning process, and suggests city pairings. On completion of the process, cities were expected to write a twinning report, including an action plan and feasibility report for promoting cycling in their city.

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Introduction

The following guidelines are based on the TACIS City Twinning model, and on the work programme of the In Tandem Project (Promotion of Energy-efficient Personal Transport in a Network of European Cities). These guidelines present various options related to the types of twinning exchanges cities might choose along with some practical suggestions for the content of the exchanges. The guidelines are designed primarily to assist partner cities in the twinning process. However there are some obligatory elements which are related to the work programme of the Project.

- **Participation in the twinning exchange.** This is a two-way exchange in which a city will both visit and host a visit by another city in the project to which it is twinned.

- **Preparation of a feasibility report.** On completion of the twinning exercise, each city is expected to write a report on the feasible action that could be taken to develop (or further develop) cycling policy in their own and the target city. This report should include:
  - a statement of the problem and the likely solutions;
  - an action plan for developing or further developing cycling policy within the city; and
  - an assessment of the feasibility of the plan.

- **Participation at second city seminar.** Two representatives from each of the partner cities (city focal point and a political representative) should attend the second city seminar. The feasibility reports will be discussed at that seminar.

1. **Twinning objectives**

   Within the context of the In Tandem Project (Promotion of Energy Efficient Personal Transport in a Network of European Cities), the City Twinning initiative aims to support local authorities to develop or further develop cycling policies in municipalities through twinning and the Transfer of Technology (ToT). While this initiative is aimed at local authorities participating in the second phase of the In Tandem project, the methods used in these guidelines are transferable to other cities.

   The objectives of In Tandem are listed below.

   - **Phase I:** To identify factors and mechanisms within municipalities which have led to pro-cycling policies.

   - **Phase II:** To develop, or further develop, cycling policies in municipalities through twinning and technology transfer.

   - **Phase III:** To disseminate the process and lessons learnt across Europe through the World Health Organization Healthy Cities networks.
In the short term, it is expected that the twinning process among cities will enable acquisition of knowledge and know-how for the further development of cycling policies, as well as increased capacity to implement these policies on the basis of knowledge acquired during the practical training sessions.

By the end of Phase II of the project, it is expected that each city will have produced a report on its own city, which has been written with the assistance of its twin. This report should give:

- a statement of the problems and the likely solutions;
- an action plan for developing or further developing cycling policy within the city; and
- an assessment of the feasibility of the plan.

The knowledge and experience gained during this process will be widely disseminated through Healthy Cities networks, the Healthy Cities Web site, and in seminars and other relevant events.

In the medium- and long-term, measurable progress is expected in the fields of cycling policies, planning and management. It is also expected that the twinning initiative will lead to long-term partnerships among the twinned cities and stimulate new partnerships with other cities.

2. Benefits of twinning

Twinning is a formal and substantive collaboration between two organizations and/or cities.\(^1\)

Formal means that there is a verbal or written agreement between the two organizations or cities. Substantive means that the interaction is significant and its lasts for the period of time i.e. it is not only a one-time interaction. Collaboration means that the two cities work together on a specific cycling project or to exchange information or skills. Ideally twinning should be a two-way process whereby each city benefits from the collaboration.

Twinning can play an important role in increasing the capacity of cities to promote cycling for individuals, families, communities and cities in general through education programmes, professional training and communication strategies focusing on the health benefits of cycling.

The benefits of city twinning include the following:

- **Capacity building.** Twinning can help strengthen the organizations involved through a transfer of skills and knowledge.

- **Exchange of best practices.** Twinning provides opportunities to identify policies, techniques and interventions that have worked and to spread the word about them.

- **Effectiveness.** Twinning that involves collaborating on a specific initiative results in stronger and more effective programmes.

- **Relationship building.** Twinning can help build stronger relationships among cycling organizations within an individual city. These relationships could become important when an organization has a need and can turn to partner organization for assistance.

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\(^1\) TACIS, Twinning Guidelines, 1999.
Networking. Twinning can contribute to greater networking through the snowball effect, i.e. both cities involved in the twinning project are exposed to each other’s existing (mostly local) networks.

Solidarity. Twinning helps to create a feeling of belonging to a larger community. Cities involved in twinning are often inspired by the work of their partners.

3. Forms of twinning

City twinning can take many different forms. Activities within a twinning project generally fall into four categories: training exchanges, information exchanges, technical exchanges, and collaborations on specific initiatives.

3.1 Training exchanges

These can involve internships, on-site training or study tours e.g. one or more persons from one city visiting the partner city for a period of time to learn or impart information and skills.

Internships provide participants with the opportunity to work in another city to gain practical experience and exposure to the different ways in which that city structures and carries out its work. Internships can be one-way (people from one city visit the partner city) or two-ways (the two cities exchange personnel, either at the same time or at different times). The training can be part of the host city’s regular training or it can specifically tailored to the needs of the visiting persons. The internship can be short-term (e.g. 2–3 weeks) or longer term (e.g. six months). In some internships, the visiting persons fill positions in the host city.

On-site training occurs when a person from one city who is experienced in a specific aspect of cycling work (it could be the bicycle programme manager) is invited to provide training to the partner city’s staff, board members, or volunteers associations.

Study tours involve the visiting person or persons touring several cycling associations in the area (including city host) for the purpose of providing or receiving training.

3.2 Information exchanges

These initiatives are similar to training exchanges in that they involve people from one city visiting the host city, but the visits are limited to an exchange of information and do not involve formal training. As with the training exchanges, information exchanges can be done one-way or two-way and can involve study tours.

3.3 Technical exchanges

These involve people from one city travelling to the partner city to help implement a specific cycling program or activity. The visiting persons may temporarily fill positions in the host city (similar to internships).

3.4 Collaboration on technical initiatives

These initiatives involve two cities agreeing to work together to establish a particular programme or to address an issue that affects them both e.g. Sandnes City Bike Foundation, Örebro Health Bikers Campaign.
4. Proposed areas for cooperation on cycling

The theme of the initiative must be an area dealing with cycling policies which is within the competence of the city partner. The projects must address issues related to on-going cycling policies or programmes undertaken by the city partner. Within this framework, fields of cooperation could relate to:

- using health arguments to promote cycling through information campaigns or communication tools;
- the management of urban transport including cycling, planning and land use development with the aim of improving health (increased trips by cycle, increased access to services, etc);
- addressing health, safety and security concerns;
- training the cycling programme manager and city staff including cycling associations and politicians;
- economic development, and the establishment of foundations or public/private partnerships; and
- other areas to be defined by the cities’ priorities.

Each city should define an area of expertise, based on their needs and expectations, which needs to be developed in order to further develop its cycling policies.

5. Obligatory elements

The twinning should include the following elements:

- **Participation in the twinning exchange.** This is a two-way exchange in which a city will both visit and host a visit by another city in the project to which it is twinned.

- **Preparation of a feasibility report.** On completion of the twinning exercise, each city is expected to write a report on the feasible action that could be taken to develop or further develop cycling policy in their own and the target city. This report should include
  - a statement on the problems and the likely solutions;
  - an action plan for developing or further developing cycling policy within the city; and
  - an assessment of the feasibility of the plan.

- **Participation at second city seminar:** Two representatives from each of the partner cities (city focal point and a political representative) should attend the second city seminar. The feasibility reports will be discussed within the second city seminar.

5.1 Preparation for city visits

Each city should define an area of expertise, which needs to be developed in order to further develop its cycling policies, based on their needs and expectations. The twinned cities will fix and agree the form of twinning prior to beginning the process. It is recommended that the related work programme for the exchange will be defined and agreed in advance of the visit, including a budget breakdown. A written commitment is strongly suggested to avoid any misunderstanding between the twinned cities. Copies of the work programme and written commitment should be sent the WHO Centre for Urban Health for information.
5.2 Training in the city

At least one middle and/or senior manager from the city should participate in the process within the other city. A political representative from each city is encouraged to participate in the exchange and in the second city seminar.

5.3 Feasibility report

On completion of the twinning exercise, each city should have produced a report on its own city, which has been written with the assistance of its twin. This report should give:

- a statement of the problems and the likely solutions;
- an action plan for developing or further developing cycling policy within the city, and
- an assessment of the feasibility of the plan.

These reports will be discussed at the second city seminar.

5.4 Second city seminar

Attending this seminar will be the two representatives from each of the partner cities (one a political representative), the project coordinator and staff officer from WHO Centre for Urban Health and external experts.

6. Six key questions

On completion of the twinning exercise, cities will write a report on the feasible action that could be taken to develop or further develop cycling policy in their own and the target city. The following are key questions, which may assist in the analysis of innovative actions in cycling policies.

The questions could additionally be used as a model for twinning exchanges or to build up a case study on each city. Such case studies could be used as deliverables of this phase and for promotion purposes. Each case study should be well documented and written within the same standards.

1. **What was the rationale for the selection of the twinning action/objective in the city?**
   A description of a proposed initiative for the further development of cycling in the context of the city’s existing cycling initiatives (policies, programmes, projects within the city including its aims, the main beneficiaries, innovative aspects, main beneficiaries, involving citizens, health benefits, etc.).

2. **What is the cycling environment within the city?**
   Description of the cycling environment in which the action would be carried out e.g. environmental factors, transportation issues, cycling barriers, specific targeted groups, partnerships, programme manager, opportunities/threats.

3. **Who are the main actors in cycling policies in the city?** Who are the main actors to be involved in the cycling initiative (public authorities, associations, citizens, role of private sector and foundation). Are there already existing relationships between these groups?
4. **If relevant, how was the cycling initiative already implemented?**
   Description of the various implementation stages including studies, planning, consultation, implementation, what needs to be done, what kind of skills are required, what were the costs of the policies, programmes or projects, what technical solutions are used to deal with difficulties, etc.

5. **What steps will be taken to implement the initiative (Action Plan)?**
   Description of the Action Plan for the initiative and how it will contribute to the further development of cycling in the city.

6. **What are the expected health benefits of the initiative?**
   Description of various experience in promoting health benefits, communication strategies, targeted people, how the information was disseminated, new programmes for promoting cycling as a means for short trip transportation, any specific campaign with schools, industries, local authorities, etc.

7. **How is the cycling action transferable?**
   Description of the aspects that could be transferable with the city partner e.g. approach, technological transfer, expertise, skills, which aspects have worked or failed within the city, benefits gained from the experience, conditions that the transfer of technology, skills and/or expertise could be done.

7. **Recommended check-list**

   You may find the following check-list helpful for planning your twinning exchanges. The aim of this check-list is to facilitate future working arrangements between the cities.

   - Fix and agree with the form of twinning prior to beginning the process.
   - Define the level of commitment and involvement that you are ready to give to this initiative.
   - Define and agree upon a work programme for the twinning in advance. A written commitment is strongly suggested to avoid any misunderstanding on either side.
   - The budget breakdown should be completed prior to any travelling.
   - A copy of all material should be sent to WHO–UHC for required reporting to the European Commission.

8. **Evaluation**

   At the end of the process an evaluation should be completed by cities. This will be discussed and agreed at the second city seminar. The evaluation might include some of the following elements:

   - **political commitment** of the local and regional authorities;
   - **relevance** of the project to the needs and constraints of the city partner;
   - **health benefits** of the proposed initiative;
   - **sustainability** of the proposed initiatives following the end of the project;
   - **methodology proposed** to develop and implement the training programme;
likely short- and long-term impacts and multiplier effects of the project;

- intersectoral cooperation between various departments, cycling organizations and citizens;

- networking benefits relating to the type of links that have been established with various partners;

- transferability of the cycling initiatives;

- development approach regarding cycling initiatives, e.g. a step-by-step approach;

- communication strategies to promote cycling initiatives;

- feasibility of the proposed initiatives within each city based on their financial and resource situation;

- cost-effectiveness of the project; and

- ability to demonstrate an innovative approach (such as Sandnes new sturdy design for the City Bike that has solved theft problems with an electronic lock and a subscriber system).

9. Deliverables

A written twinning report should be completed by the project manager in each city at the end of the twinning process. This should include an action plan and feasibility report. It will be used to promote the project and will serve as background material for second city seminar meeting at the end of Phase II.

10. Proposal for twinning of cities

10.1 Rationale

In twinning cities, we have tried to consider the strengths and weaknesses of cities in terms of the following broad themes. (These themes cover a number of steps, which were identified in Phase I of the project as important in developing a successful cycling policy.)

1. planning mechanisms, processes and procedures;
2. construction of paths and facilities (hard measures); and
3. communication and publicity issues (soft measures), and the extent to which health aspects have been emphasized in this process.

Some cities have made progress in all areas, other cities have focused on one or two elements. In making twinning suggestions, the aim was to maximize the overall opportunities for cities to benefit from each others experience, so that each pairing should be complementary. The size of each city was also taken into account.

10.2 City Twins

**Twinning No. 1 – Örebro & Kosice**

Örebro have used a combination or “package” of hard (construction of paths and facilities) and soft (campaigns and publicity) measures. There is currently a special emphasis being placed on soft measures, with a communications strategy being established, and publicity for the health bikers campaign.
Kosice is beginning to develop cycling initiatives. Finance for planning and construction is difficult to obtain. There is a will to develop cycling further, however, the bicycle is not currently perceived as a realistic mode of transport by the inhabitants. Whilst the lack of finance for construction is clearly a significant barrier, Kosice could benefit greatly from the experience of Örebro in publicity and communications to increase cycling, and would like to place specific emphasis on health aspects.

**Twinning No. 2 – Torun & Sandnes**

In Torun, the emphasis has been on “hard” measures such as planning and construction. City planning for new cycle routes exists, and some money is available to construct routes. Barriers to cycling in the city, include the urban environment, land use planning and storage of cycles. To date there has not been much emphasis on “soft” measures, and the twinning process could provide some new ideas and opportunities in this area. The City health plan includes a “safe routes to school” cycling initiative.

Sandnes has implemented a package of measures to increase cycling over a number of years. These include ongoing planning processes, construction of cycle facilities, development of city bikes and communication and publicity programmes. Their comprehensive experience would be of great value to the city of Torun. Health has always been an element in the cycling initiative in Sandnes, and the Healthy City office is involved in an advisory committee. The City health plan links to the ongoing package of measures in Sandnes, including a well established “safe routes to school” initiative.

**Twinning No. 3 – Dublin & Ferrara**

In Dublin in recent years, a comprehensive planning process has been undertaken following the identification of significant “suppressed demand”. This has formed part of broader transportation strategy. The city is currently in the implementation phase, and there is therefore an emphasis on construction of facilities. So far there have been some initiatives to raise awareness, and develop promotion and publicity in relation to specific projects. A “safe routes to school” project is being developed. The city would like to use this SAVE II project as an opportunity to emphasize health aspects more.

A number of successful awareness raising and publicity initiatives have been developed in Ferrara. A planning process has begun in Ferrara, and this is continuing with further cycling studies and consultation processes. The city has identified a need for more hard measures such as cycling lanes, and improved security. The city health plan does not mention cycling, but several initiatives regarding safety and quality of life for cyclists have been undertaken. Ferrara would also like to use this SAVE II project as an opportunity to emphasize the health aspects of cycling.

**Twinning No. 4 – Rennes & Nancy**

Due to forthcoming municipal elections in France, it is unclear whether Rennes and Nancy will proceed in the project. Due to language constraints, if they do proceed, they would both prefer to twin with French speaking cities.